# Bewdley's Big Dig

## Community test pitting report

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Worcestershire Archaeological Society

Explore the Past

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Small Pits, Big Ideas

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## Worcestershire

### Community test pitting report



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# Community Test Pitting in Bewdley

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With finds analysis by Rob Hedge

## Summary

In April and July 2022, 21 test pits were excavated around the historic town of Bewdley, Worcestershire. This community excavation was part of a wider project – Small Pits, Big Ideas – researching rural medieval settlements around the county. Test pits aimed to explore the area's history prior to Bewdley becoming a town, with test pits in Wribbenhall and Ribbesford. Both are recorded as rural settlements in the Domesday Survey of 1086.

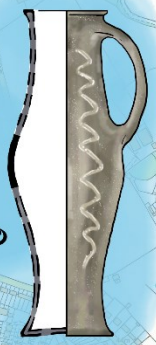
Evidence of prehistoric activity in Bewdley was provided by a small quantity of worked flint on the eastern side of the Severn: a Neolithic/Bronze Age flint from Stourport Road, later prehistoric burnt flint from Netherton Lane, and the early Bronze Age scraper from Blackstone Farm. The sole Roman artefact was a single sherd of Severn Valley Ware pottery from Jubilee Gardens. Small quantities of medieval material dating from the 12th century onwards were present within the town, on both sides of the river: around Load Street and at Netherton Lane. The largest quantity of medieval material came from Ribbesford, at which the test pits have uncovered evidence of a lost medieval settlement around the church dating from the 12th to 14th century.

The frequency and range of finds increased considerably from the 16th to the 19th century, reflecting both the fortunes of the town and the increasing availability and affordability of consumer goods. There was a particularly wide range of later-18th century wares. It is clear that Bewdley was able to source pottery from a wider range than other settlements in North Worcestershire and South Shropshire, due to the ease of transporting goods by river.

# Small Pits, Big Ideas: Bewdley

'Imari'-style dish, 1800-1900

Ceramic toy marble
1700-1900

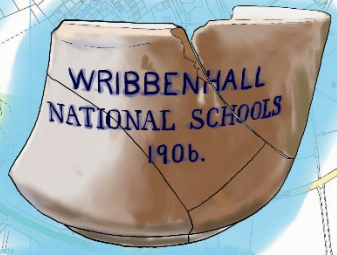


Decorated baluster jug
1200-1500

Clay tobacco pipe
1640-1680

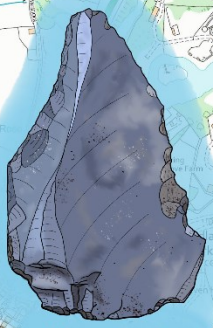

'Cymru am byth' tobacco pipe stem
1700-1900

Redware drinking mug
1500-1650




Commemorative bowl
1906

Lid-seated jar, 1200-1300



Worked flint
4000-1500 BC

Medieval jar (cooking pot)
1170-1350

Stone roof tile 1100-1600

Vitrified clay drainpipe
1870-1970

BEWDLEY
Wribbenhall
Ribbesford
Afon Hafren / River Severn
TP 1
TP 2
TP 3
TP 4
TP 5
TP 6
TP 7
TP 8
TP 9
TP 10
TP 11
TP 12
TP 13
TP 14
TP 15
TP 16
TP 17
TP 18
TP19
TP 20
TP 21

Settlement development 1066-2000
Earliest activity in test pit:
- High medieval 11th-14th century
- Late medieval 14th-15th century
- Transitional 16th century
- Earlier post-medieval 17th-18th century
- Post-medieval 18th-19th century
- Later post-medieval 19th century
- Modern 20th century

0 0.25 0.5 km

Illustration by Rob Hedge 2022

# Introduction

## About the project

Small Pits, Big Ideas helps communities reveal the origins of local villages and their story over time. Relatively little is known about the development of Worcestershire's rural medieval settlements as many are lived in, making large archaeological excavations impossible. By uncovering the archaeology hidden in back gardens, the project brings people directly in touch with their past and shines new light on the story of rural Worcestershire. Between autumn 2021 and summer 2022, six locations will be investigated: Beoley, White Ladies Aston, Wichenford, Badsey, Wolverley and Bewdley.

This project follows a pilot phase in 2017-18[1] and extensive research in East Anglia[2], where this approach has revealed changes caused by the Black Death in 1348-9. Small Pits, Big Ideas was run by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service on behalf of Worcestershire Archaeological Society, with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

## Big Dig weekend

Over the 9th - 10th July 2022 15 'test pits' (Pits 2 -16 & 21) were excavated across the town of Bewdley. One earlier test pit excavated previously, on 21 April 2022, is also included within this report as Test Pit 1. Four further test pits (Pits 17 – 21) were excavated 11th-12th July 2022 by students of Bewdley School and these are also included. A total of 101 people took part in digging the test pits and processing the finds. For most, this was their first hands-on experience of archaeology. Support was provided by staff from Worcestershire Archaeology.

### What is a test pit?

Test pits are mini excavation areas, just 1m by 1m. They are dug in 10cm layers (called 'spits') with the finds from each spit kept separately, so that it's known how deep down they were found. Test pits were mostly excavated down to the 'natural', which is the point at which archaeology stops and undisturbed geology begins. The depth of the Bewdley test pits varied quite widely, ranging from 0.3m – 1.4m below ground level.

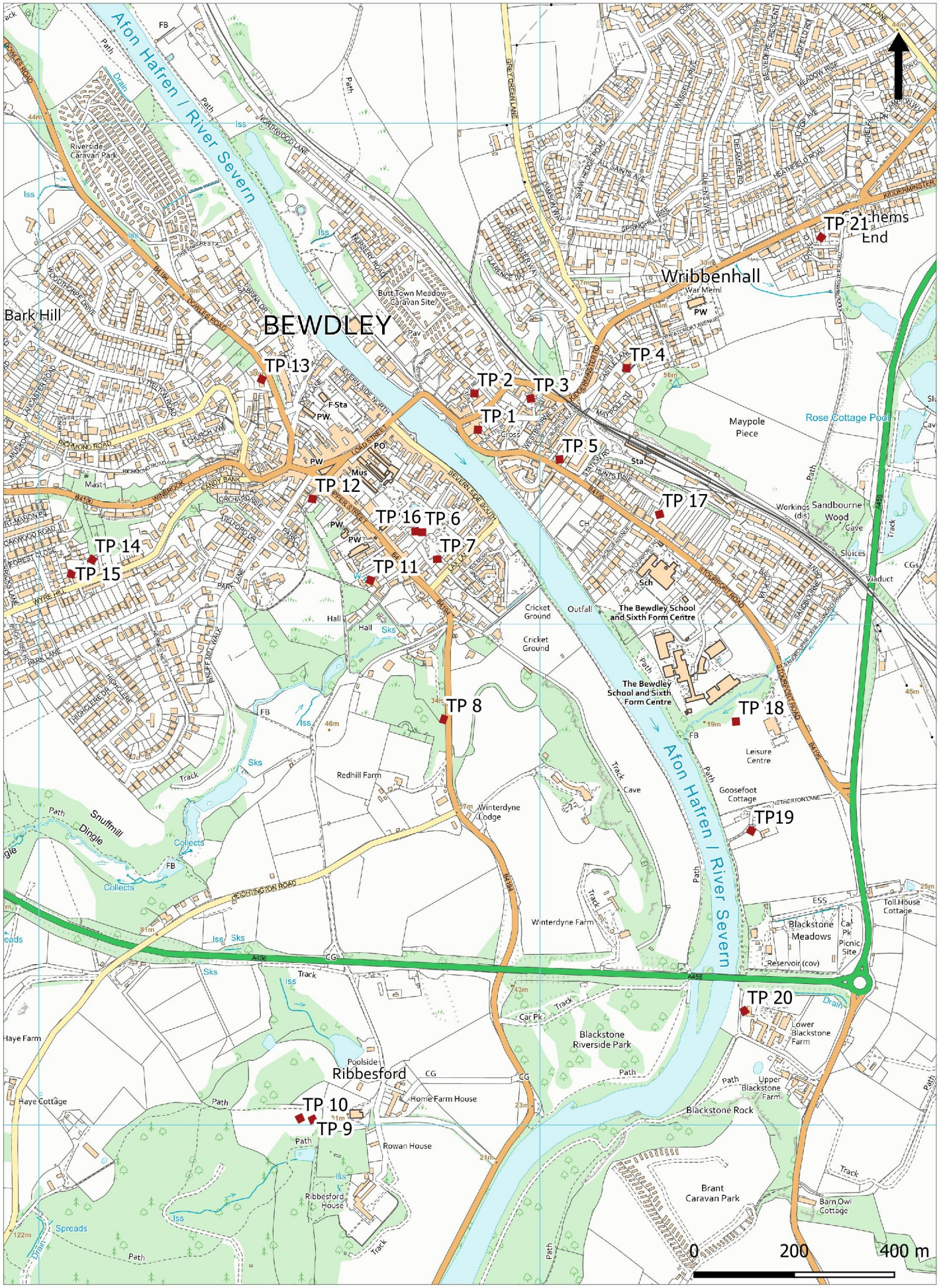
### What were we looking for?

Today our household rubbish is taken away regularly, but in the past rubbish was often thrown out the back of houses. This wasn't just food waste, but broken pots, bits of building rubble and anything else that was old or broken. Back gardens are therefore an ideal place to look for clues. Pottery can be easily dated, as fashions for different styles changed over time. The amount of pottery found in a test pit can give us a rough idea of how nearby people lived at different times in the past.

### Where were the test pits?

Take a look at the map on page 4 to see where the test pits across Bewdley were located.

[1] www.explorethepast.co.uk/2017/11/small-pits-big-ideas-investigating-a-worcestershire-village
[2] Lewis 2016, available online: www.researchgate.net/publication/303316768_Disaster_recovery_New_archaeological_evidence_for_the_long-term_impact_of_the_%27calamitous%27_fourteenth_century






Location of test pits in Bewdley

*Figure 1*

**Photo 1: Test Pit 12 during excavation - test pits were dug in 10cm 'spits' (layers) until the underlying geology was reached (© Sara Jennings)**

**Photo 2: Using a seive to check the soil for finds at Test Pit 7 in Jubilee Gardens (© Sara Jennings)**

## History of Bewdley

*By Heather Flack (Bewdley Historical Research Group)*

There are two Anglo-Saxon charters for Ribbesford. These have no dates, but are thought to relate to the early 11th century.

The Domesday Book of 1086 refers to our area under Kidderminster and among that town's outlying settlements were Wribbenhall, Ribbesford and another Ribbesford. It is not known if the two places called Ribbesford were both on the western side of the River Severn or whether one of them lay on the eastern side. It is clear from later references that Wribbenhall included the area now called Bewdley, so was itself on both sides of the river. At the time of the Domesday survey, the Lord was the King and there is no indication as to the size of the settlements at Wribbenhall and Ribbesford.

About 1100, the King split the manor and gave the land to the east of the river to Manser Biset with Kidderminster and gave the land to the west of the river to the Mortimer family. The Lordship has remained divided.

In the church at Ribbesford there is work attributed to the Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture and dated to about 1140; this is the oldest building in the area. Some time after this, the Mortimer family appears to have "sub-let" the area we know as Ribbesford to a family who took that name, but the Mortimers retained the area to the north (i.e. what we call Bewdley). In 2009 a geophysical survey was carried out on the field behind the church where the farmer often ploughs up debris. Some investigation was then carried out and pottery no later than the 16th century was found.

The first reference to "Bewdley" is in 1275, though in some quarters it continued to be called Wribbenhall for at least another 50 years. By 1300 there was a town on the west bank; this early development was probably along High Street and Load Street. It is believed that by 1400, there was a chapel in Load Street, roughly where St Anne's church now stands. The first bridge was built in the late 1440s.

The oldest known dwellinghouse is in Wribbenhall and is 5, 7 and 9 Stourport Road; it has timbers within dating from 1310. The oldest on the Bewdley side is at 44 and 45 High Street which dates from 1419.

When Edward IV (a Mortimer) became king in 1461, Bewdley became a royal manor and Tickenhill a palace. (His father had built a substantial house at Tickenhill in 1456, parts of which have survived.) The current theory is that Sandy Bank and Wyre Hill was a suburban development of this time and there are several properties along that route which have been dated to the mid-1460s including the Black Boy and the Old Town Hall.

Both Bewdley and Wribbenhall continued to thrive, mainly because the river was a busy highway. The "golden age" was from, say, 1550 to 1800. After the opening of the canal in 1772 and the development of Stourport, there was a general decline, and the coming of the railway in 1862 did not reverse this.

### Want to know more?

For further details, including archaeological sites around Bewdley, take a look at Appendix 1.


Held by Worcestershire Archives (refs. S760-39 and R760-528)

1845 Bewdley & Ribbesford Tithe Maps *Figure 2*


Held by Worcestershire Archives (ref. S760-405)

1852 Kidderminster West of Stour Tithe Map *Figure 3*

## Glossary

**Abraded:** how worn, or not, finds are, is often a good indication of how much they have been moved around in the ground. Pot sherds that have sharp breaks are likely to have been thrown away close to where they were found. The opposite may be the case with abraded sherds.

**Ceramic building material:** This term covers brick, and roof/floor tiles that are made from clay and fired in a kiln.

**Context:** This term refers to the precise location on an archaeological site in which a sherd was found, usually marked by a number. Each different soil layer, pit fill, wall, or deposit will have a separate number. The finds within that deposit can then be used to determine a *Terminus Post Quem* date - the earliest possible date that the deposit could have formed.

**Form:** the shape of a pot. The same potters and kilns often produced lots of different forms for different purposes. Common types include 'cooking pots' or jars, storage jars, pitchers, bowls, and drinking vessels like cups and tankards.

**Fabric:** the composition of the clay used to make the pot. This varies according to the source of the clay. Each production centre used clay from a different (usually very local) source. Other material like small fragments of stone or shell often occurs within the raw clay. Sometimes, coarse material was deliberately added to the pot to make it easier to fire. This is known as 'temper'. Collectively, non-clay materials within a pot are called 'inclusions'. Inspecting the broken edges of a piece of pottery under a microscope allows us to identify the inclusions, differentiate the fabrics, and match them to pieces of known origin in our reference collection (available at https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/)

**Natural**: the 'natural geology' is the point at which archaeological layers stop and undisturbed geology begins. Excavations generally aim to reach the natural, as this means that all archaeological layers have been uncovered in that spot.

**Post-medieval**: archaeological shorthand for the later 16$^{th}$ – 19$^{th}$ centuries. After the post-medieval period is the modern era (1901 onwards). Many pottery traditions span period boundaries, and are therefore recorded as, for example, "post-medieval/modern". Sometimes the same fabrics or wares are given slightly different dates. This is usually because the individual sherd has characteristics which enable the date to be refined.

Medieval: 1066AD – 1539AD

Post-medieval: 1540AD – 1900AD

Modern: 1901AD – 2050AD

**Sherd:** the term for a fragment of pottery

**Slip:** a thin layer added to a pot after it has air dried but before it's fired. Slips are usually added for decoration.

**Spit:** each test pit was divided into 10cm layers, called spits. Spit 1 was 0- 10cm below the ground, Spit 2 was 10 – 20cm and so on. Spits are used to divide up a deposit into fixed depths. They are not the same as a context, which is the name given to an archaeological layer or deposit – spits can be used to divide up a large context or to record the depth in a test pit. Gardens tend to have been dug

over and churned up a lot, so there is usually little difference between the archaeological contexts in a test pit.

**Ware** (for example 'Midlands Purple ware', 'black glazed red sandy ware' or 'earthenware'): The name given to a style of pottery. In the post-medieval and modern periods, pottery fabrics become a lot more homogenous, and the local variations are harder to spot (at least visually). The styles and traditions of potting become more useful than the fabric for identifying the pottery.

# Results

The results from each test pit are described separately below, then drawn together in the conclusion. For details about the method of excavation and deposits found, see Appendix 2. A full list of finds is given in Appendix 3 and descriptions of different pottery types can be found in Appendix 4.

In total, the dig recovered 5261 artefacts, weighing 64.2kg.

## Test Pit 1: 6 Kidderminster Road

This house is recorded as dating from the 17th century and is notable for having a dog wheel in the kitchen. Located in the back garden of the house, this pit was the deepest one of the Bewdley pits to be excavated, being recorded to a depth of 1.40m below ground surface. A blackish-brown silty garden soil made up the top 50cm with a layer of building rubble below then another dark silty layer containing numerous finds. A small sondage showed that this continued to 1.2m, at which depth the ground became clayey yet still contained charcoal and artefacts. At 1.4m the clay became more yellow, but excavation was stopped for safety reasons.

### What do the finds tell us?

A large number of finds were recovered: well-mixed, with 19th century material occurring into the tenth spit, there was nonetheless an increasingly prominent 17th and 18th century presence in lower levels. The earliest material comprised a few examples of flat roof tile that were likely to be late-15th to 17th century. There was also a group of 16th or 17th century orange wares with speckled olive-green glazes that were reminiscent of early Ashton Keynes wares; these are relatively uncommon elsewhere in Worcestershire, but their presence in Bewdley may be explained by heightened levels of river traffic.


**Photo 3: Orange ware pottery (1500-1700), Test Pit 1.**

Although it wasn't possible to reach the natural geology in this test pit, it successfully produced finds that well match the recorded date of this house. The ground had clearly been well worked over and the depth of this pit gives a really clear indication of just how built-up the layers of occupation can be in the centre of Wribbenhall.

## Test Pit 2: Old Police Station, Kidderminster Road

Prior to the construction of the Police Station in the early 20th century there was a building in this location from at least 1736 which was demolished in the 1930s. After the closure of the Police Station in 2013 it was converted into housing. To investigate this earlier building, Test Pit 2 was located in the back garden of one of the terraced properties created by the recent conversion, in a lawned area quite close to a summerhouse.

The archaeological layers consisted of a fairly shallow layer of topsoil and turf over an orangey-brown sand with varying concentrations of stones.

### What do the finds tell us?

Although a small assemblage, Test Pit 2 did yield some medieval material: a sherd from a green-glazed jug decorated with white slip lines, of 13th /14th century date. Another sherd is likely to be 15th or 16th century in date. Beyond these, small quantities of 18th and early 19th century pottery were recovered, along with fragments of 17th to 19th century clay tobacco pipe.

Whilst the deposits encountered withi Test Pit 2 showed a good deal of disturbance, probably during the recent conversion work, some interesting early pottery was recovered. These indicate activity in the area during the medieval period and centuries immediately afterwards. This location was fairly close to the original river bridge, so is likely to have been a busy thoroughfare during that era.


**Photo 4: 13th/14th century medieval pottery, Test Pit 2.**

**Drawing 1 (right): Reconstruction sketch of medieval jug from Test Pit 2, by Rob Hedge**

## Test Pit 3: Lowther's Yard

Test Pit 3 was located in a rear garden of Lowther's Yard. Unfortunately, approximately half of the test pit area became unavailable for excavation due to the presence of a concrete raft at 27cm below ground surface. What remained was essentially excavated to a depth of 80cm below ground surface with a sondage in the western corner excavated one further spit.

A deep deposit of greyish-brown sandy silt was revealed, which contained occasional small stones and charcoal flecks. This became slightly clayey around 80cm below ground level, but the natural geology (base of the archaeological sequence) was not reached.

### What do the finds tell us?

Test Pit 3 contained a large volume of late-18th to early 19th century pottery. Other finds of note included discoloured clay pipe (possibly stout-soaked), the porcelain figure of a lamb, and a bone button.

Despite the reduced area available for excavation, this test pit produced a large quantity of finds that likely match the date of the surrounding buildings. The lack of earlier finds is likely due to the deep deposits encountered. Nevertheless, the bone button is a nice personal find and it is interesting to find evidence for the unusual practice of soaking clay pipes in stout.

**Photo 5: Clay pipe bowl, possibly stout-soaked, Test Pit 3.**

**Photo 6: Bone button, Test Pit 3.**

## Test Pit 4: 4 Castle Lane

Test Pit 4 was located in the rear garden of the house, the garden being terraced in two levels above the patio immediately to the rear of the house. This test pit was severely restricted in the area available for excavation, to a little less than 50% of the 1m$^2$, by the presence of a concrete raft situated 8cm below ground surface on the western side of the test pit. This only allowed a depth of 0.6m below ground surface to be excavated so the natural geology was not reached.

### What do the finds tell us?

Test Pit 4 contained no material pre-dating the late-17$^{th}$ century, and the majority of the assemblage belonged to the late-18$^{th}$ and 19$^{th}$ centuries. Mean pottery sherds size was very small but it contained a remarkable range of post-medieval tablewares, particularly creamwares, pearlwares, and factory-made slipwares ranging from the 1760s to the 1820s.

Despite the restricted area available for excavation, the pottery sherds recovered demonstrate that they had been rolled around in the ground a good deal. Heavy ground disturbance may be due to a garden or midden being well worked over in the past, in addition to 20$^{th}$ century building works. The date range of finds from Test Pit 4 clearly indicate that an earlier dwelling was located in the vicinity. This fits with the site's known history: that modern houses replaced a timber framed building in the mid 20$^{th}$ century. However, it is not possible to know if the late 17$^{th}$ century was the earliest occupation in the area or whether older evidence remains buried, as archaeological deposits extended deeper than it was possible to excavate within Test Pit 4.

## Test Pit 5: 21 Stourport Road

The property hosting Test Pit 5 dates from the early 19th century, although records indicate the area excavated – adjacent to the road – was actually the location of a turnpike tollhouse demolished around 1840. Test Pit 5 was located in the front garden of the house, roughly where the tollhouse once stood, in a grassy area that contained some small trees.

### What do the finds tell us?

The finds from 21 Stourport Road were dominated by large fragments of ceramic building material, including some flat roof tiles that may be later medieval in origin. The majority of the pot was fragmentary and later post-medieval, but there was a handle from a 17th century redware vessel — probably a chamberpot or porringer — from spit 5 (40-50cm below ground).


**Photo 7: Chamberpot/porringer handle, Test Pit 5**

The significant amount of building material found in this pit appears to show that a building was demolished close by, which certainly fits with record of the tollhouse being demolished. The presence of possible later medieval roof tile raises the question of whether the tollhouse reused older building materials or if there was a late medieval building close by. Ceramic roof tiles were encouraged in towns during the medieval period, as they were less of a fire risk than thatch, but still weren't the default choice so are often a sign of wealthy owners or a subtantial building.

## Test Pits 6, 7 and 16: Jubilee Gardens

Opened in 1978, Jubilee Gardens is a public green space to the rear of Bewdley Museum. The area used has been used since the medieval period for gardens, a brickyard and tanneries. Test Pits 6, 7 and 16 were located in different areas of the gardens.

### Test Pit 6

Test Pit 6 was situated in one of the larger grassed areas of the gardens. Beneath the turf and topsoil layer was a very stony soil 20cm-30cm thick with a good deal of disturbance from plant roots. Rubble in the upper spits may come from the demolition of structures previously in this area.

**Photo 8: Roman pottery, Test Pit 6.**

Test Pit 6 contained a fine group of late-18th century pot in spit 5 (40-50cm below ground): tin-glazed earthenware, pearlware, and porcelain. There was a complete early to mid-17th century clay pipe bowl from spit 7, along with a good selection of 17th and early-18th century pot. Spit 2 yielded the only Roman artefact found during the dig: a rim sherd from a Severn Valley ware jar.

## Test Pit 7

Test Pit 7 was sited to the rear of cottages that front on to Lax Lane, in the hope of finding historic rubbish thrown away by those households. A ford across the river at the end of Lax Lane may have been in use since prehistoric times and was an extremely important crossing point until the first bridge was constructed in the 1440s. Therefore, this area of Bewdley would likely have seen a lot of activity until the ford went out of use in the 18th century.

As in Test Pit 6, the upper layers revealed were quite stony, disturbed by rooting and contained some rubble. At approximately 30cm below the ground surface a large tin can was encountered going into the northern section. This was excavated around for the remaining spits. A patch of dry and compacted, or perhaps trampled, clay was encountered in spit 5. It is possible that is the remains of a path or yard surface.

Finds from test pit 7 were numerous, and mainly 18th to 19th century in date. Earlier material included a single sherd from a later medieval oxidised ware, and some early redwares dating to the 16th or first half of the 17th century.

**Photo 9: Tin can protruding from northern section and baked clay patch on southern side of pit, Test Pit 7.**


**Photo 10: Clay marbles from Test Pit 16, spit 4.**

## Test Pit 16

Test Pit 16 was the third to be located in Jubilee Gardens and was opened due to the planned location at Dog Lane proving to be unviable. The test pit was situated in the central part of the gardens, quite close to Test Pit 6.

This test pit contained a large assemblage, well-mixed in the upper levels, but with the dating profile getting earlier in deeper spits: of particular interest in the upper levels were clay toy marbles (probably 19th century), including one with painted banding: although marbles are a common find, it is unusual to find one with the decoration so well-preserved.

Deeper levels contained a wide range of pottery dating from the late-17th to mid-18th century, and one late-17th century clay tobacco pipe bowl.

## Jubilee Gardens: What do the finds tell us?

These three test pits all produced a large quantity of finds from the 17th – 18th century onwards, with Test Pit 6 producing a particularly large amount. This is not suprising given the area's central location

within Bewdley. The finds reflect the increasing affordability of household goods, and therefore rubbish, from the 18th century onwards, as well as indicating that Jubilee Gardens was used as a convenient place for disposing of waste.

Whilst a few sherds of earlier pottery were found in Test Pit 7, there was very little that pre-date the 17th century and nothing that may relate to the use of Lax Lane's ford prior to the first bridge being built in the late 1440s. Given the depth of later deposits, this is almost certainly due to earlier layers being too far below ground to excavate rather than a true absence of earlier activity.

The only piece of Roman pottery to be found in the Bewdley test pits came from Jubliee Gardens. By itself, it is not enough to give a detailed insight, but it does show that there was activity in the Bewdley area during the Roman period. It is intriguing, although possibly a coincidence, that the sherd was found close to an old ford across the river.

## Test Pit 8: Kateshill House, Red Hill

Kateshill House, built in 1745 by silk merchant Thomas Cartwright, is Grade II listed and built on land that was originally part of Tickenhill Manor – once a Tudor palace and park rebuilt by Henry VII for his son Arthur. The house sits in approximately 2 acres of land and is home to one of the oldest and largest Sweet Chestnut trees in England. Test Pit 8 was located at the end of the garden, quite a distance from the house but relatively close to the road (Red Hill) and some large trees.

Testy Pit 8 was one of the deepest to be excavated, reaching a depth of 1.1m. Under the dark brown topsoil was a thick layer of greyish brown subsoil down to a depth of 1m. This subsoil was quite heavily disturbed by rooting in the upper layers and charcoal was present in most spits. Finds were recovered from all spits but a particularly large number of artefacts, including animal bone, ceramics, glass and tin cans, was encountered at a depth of 90cm below the present ground surface.

**Photo 11: Pottery and glass within the dump of material in Test Pit 8, spit 9.**

**Photo 12: Artefacts recovered from Test Pit 8, spit 9.**

## What do the finds tell us?

Test Pit 8 yielded a large assemblage, which in the upper levels was consistent with other town centre groups: a wide range of late-18th and 19th century pottery, fragments of iron, ceramic building material and roof slate, all mixed with 20th century material suggesting frequent disturbance. Spits 9 to 11, however, yielded a large quantity of big sherds in fresh condition, mostly dating to the later-19th and early 20th centuries. Specific identifiable wares included Ridgway's Lichfield Semi-Porcelain, dating to around the 1880s. Of local interest were four conjoining sherds from a whiteware bowl, printed with 'WRIBBENHALL NATIONAL SCHOOLS 1906'. The significance of the date is unclear, but may relate to the Education (Provision of Meals) Act passed in 1906, which allowed Local Education Authorities to provide free meals to schoolchildren.

**Photo 13: 'Wribbenhall' whiteware bowl, Test Pit 8.**

Overall, the finds recovered match well with the date of building and occupation of Kateshill House. It appears that household waste was being dumped a fair distance from the house, which not surprising given that this was an affluent residence. The presence of large pot sherds and narrow date range from spits 9 to 11 shows that this area was used as a late Victorian and/ or Edwardian rubbish dump and that the ground has been significantly disturbed, and probably added to, since then. There may well be earlier evidence of activity in this area that remains buried.

## Test Pits 9 and 10: Ribbesford

Ribbesford is one of the oldest sites of occupation of the Bewdley area. There are two Ribbesfords included in the Domesday survey and the church dates from around AD 1140. Test Pits 9 and 10 were located in a field immediately to the west of the churchyard. The field was sloping and both test pits were quite elevated in relation to the church. Test Pit 9 was located at the bottom of the field, quite close to the western boundary of the churchyard.

Test Pit 9 was excavated over the dig weekend and again at a later date. A final depth of 1m was reached, with the upper 60cm showing a good deal of consistency. This greyish brown layer is likely the result of hill-wash: topsoil being washed down the slope over many years. Below it was a layer of small angular stones, possibly rubble, then an orangey brown layer.

**Photo 14: Test pit 10 final photo, showing a potential structure in the north-west corner.**

A previous archaeological evaluation in this field had discovered a potential wall and Test Pit 10 was carefully sited close to, but outside of, the evaluation trench to potentially confirm the existence and location of this wall. The excavation of Test Pit 10 was concluded at a fairly shallow depth (30cm) due to the presence of a large amount of rubble and stone making it impossible to excavate further. However, the test pit was successful in uncovering a potential wall in its northwest corner (see photo 14).

## What do the finds tell us?

The upper spits of Test Pit 9 contained few artefacts. However, from spit 4 onwards medieval material began to appear: spits 4 and 5 contained medieval roof tile and Malvernian ware pottery of 15th/16th century date, together with a small quantity of post-medieval pot.

From spit 6 onwards, finds were almost exclusively medieval. They included large, fresh sherds in a wide range of fabrics. Among the dateable form sherds were the rim of a Malvernian lid-seated jar, most common in the 13th century. The majority were sooted, unglazed jars in reduced fabrics, but sherds from glazed whiteware jugs were also noted. Spits 7-10 included further rim sherds and a large jar base, along with small quantities of metalworking waste. Most medieval pottery in rural contexts tends to be abraded from centuries in ploughsoil, having been deposited in middens or muck-heaps and spread onto the fields with fertiliser. But it is clear that the finds from Test Pit 9 are from an undisturbed layer, with large sherds in excellent condition. They are typical of material deposited close to or within a settlement, and suggest the presence of a 12th to 14th century settlement around St Leonard's Church.

**Photo 15: Medieval pottery from Test Pit 9 spit 6 – unglazed Malvernian ware**

Of note is the presence of a peach stone among deposits of charcoal and burnt bone in spit 7: although peaches are known to have been cultivated in England from at least the early-13th century, their remains are not commonly found and are an interesting indicator of the favourable climate of this period.

Test Pit 10 contained fewer finds and lighter upper layers than Test Pit 9, yet the overall profile was very similar. Building material included stone roof tiles, and some ceramic floor tiles that may have originated in the church: such tiles were rare in vernacular buildings. A small quantity of iron objects and a fragment of copper alloy sheet were also found. There were fewer diagnostic pottery sherds, but a piece from a large, roller-stamped glazed jug is typical of the 13th or 14th century.

## Test Pit 11: 5 The Park, off High Street

The Park is an area of Bewdley with documented occupation dating back at least to the early 1600s. Land here was given by the Ballard family in 1599 for a school and in 1606 King James re-founded the school calling it the “Free Grammar School of King James in Bewdley”. The school is now two houses.

Test Pit 11 was very tightly located (due to underground services) in a small, gravelled area butting up against a hedge, fairly close to the house. Below the first 10cm of gravel and topsoil were 60cm of blackish brown clayey subsoil that contained charcoal flecks. This layer was still continuing when excavation had to stop at the end of the dig weekend.

### What do the finds tell us?

Test Pit 11 contained a large and entirely typical later-18th century to 19th century assemblage of domestic pottery, mostly abraded. It was one of few test pits in the town to contain small quantities of iron slag, probably from smithing. Building material included roof slate and tile: one perforated roof slate was a coarse material with a rough finish and a greenish tinge. This is distinctly different to the large quantities of 19th and 20th century Welsh roofing slate typically present in test pits within the region, and may represent pre-19th century use of slates from areas like the Lake District.

One particularly unusual find was a clay tobacco stem stamped with the inscription ‘CYMRU AM BYTH’ (Wales forever). Nationalist slogans on 19th century clay pipes are not uncommon, but most examples from this region relate to the Irish nationalist movement. This pipe is unusual, and parallels are hard to find. It is not clear whether it is a tourist curio, the marker of a proud Welsh maker, a nationalist call to action, or any combination of those.


**Drawing 2: Sketch of pipe stem, Test Pit 11.**

Despite the early 17th century date of the house and probable earlier occupation, the finds from Test Pit 11 are, again, much later in date. The worn nature of pottery sherds shows that the ground has been heavily disturbed. Added to this disturbance is the depth of the archaeological layer excavated, which points towards a deep build up of ground within the last few centuries. This layer of 18th to 20th century finds may be masking earlier activity.

## Test Pit 12: 26 Load Street

Load Street contains some of Bewdley's earliest buildings. Number 26 is not one of these, but is Grade II listed and dates from the mid-18th century. Test Pit 12 was placed here as a routeway between the town to Tickenhill Palace may have run through this way.

Excavated to a depth of 60cm, the records of this test pit describe a fairly thick (40cm) layer of blackish brown topsoil overlying a reddish-brown, sandier subsoil. The latter may actually be an interface layer with the natural geology – base of the archaeological sequence – not far below.

### What do the finds tell us?

Artefacts from 26 Load Street included an attractive example of Imari-style bone china, with underglaze blue decoration enhanced by overglaze red and gold. This style copied the Japanese imports coming into Europe in the late-17th century and early 18th century, superseded by Chinese products in the mid-18th century. English producers including Royal Worcester, Derby and Coalport perfected their versions in the early 19th century. The ink-dark blue and fabric suggest that this is a 19th century English example.

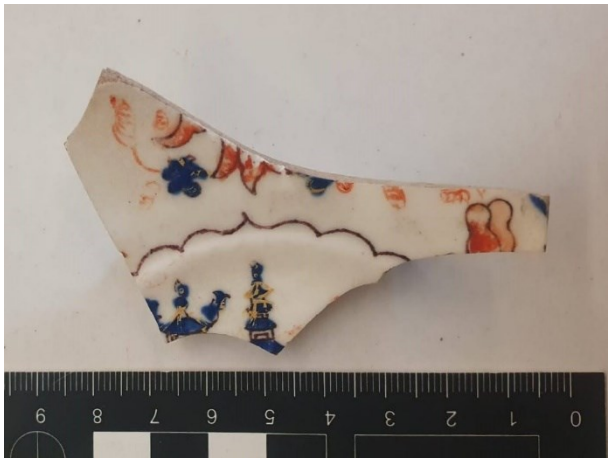


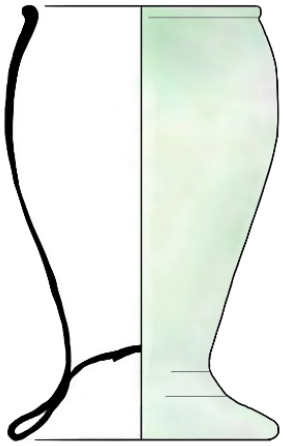
**Photo 16: Imari-pattern porcelain, Test Pit 12.**

**Photo 17: Rim sherd of medieval flared bowl, Test Pit 12.**

Spit 4 contained a clear soda-glass base from a pedestalled vessel of 16th or 17th century date. This is an uncommon survival. Several sherds of medieval pottery were also found: one was from the rim of an unglazed jar — probably a cooking pot — dating from the 12th to 15th century. Another small rim sherd from a flared bowl is probably 14th to 16th century in date.

Overall, Test Pit 12 indicates that there has been activity here since in the medieval period. Given the small quantity of medieval pottery found, it is not conclusive proof of medieval dwellings along Load Street but does show activity within the area. From later centuries Test Pit 12 produced several

slightly higher status finds – a soda glass vessel and fine porcelain. These suggest that Load Street either had some well off residents or traders of fine goods.



**Drawing 3: 16th – 17th century pedestalled glass beaker showing distinctive loop in base, by Rob Hedge**

**Photo 18: Fragment from the base of a pedestal soda glass vessel, Test Pit 12.**

## Test Pit 13: Gibralter House

Gibralter House is situated alongside Dowles Road – the road that passed through the historic parish of Dowles. Test Pit 13 was located in a lawned area, just northwest of the house. Excavation of the test pit was abandoned during spit 2 (10-20cm below ground level) due to the presence of what appeared to be a thick layer of demolition rubble.

### What do the finds tell us?

There were very few finds from Test Pit 13: small quantities of post-medieval roof tile, pottery, iron and animal bone. The earliest find was a sherd of later-17th or 18th century redware (fabric 78); other pottery was late-18th to 19th century in date.

Investigation of a well *c*1m from the test pit showed that terracing of the garden measured approximately 1.5m in depth and had been completed in relatively recent times. Given the depth of landscaping material, it would not have been possible to reach the base of the archaeological sequence within a 1m$^2$ test pit. It also means that the artefacts found may have been brought in from elsewhere, along with material to create the terrace.

## Test Pits 14 and 15: The Black Boy Public House and No. 45, Wyre Hill

Wyre Hill is the location of several 15th century houses and The Black Boy itself is recorded as being the oldest public house in Bewdley, dating from around 1466. Along with several other properties on Wyre Hill, including its immediate neighbours, it is Grade II listed.

Test Pit 14 was located in the beer garden to the rear of the pub in a relatively level, lawned area. The test pit was excavated in full to a depth of 40cm, then half the width excavated to spit 7 (60-70cm) at which depth the natural geology was observed. The archaeological layers consisted of a turf and topsoil layer sitting over a very stony, sandy orangey-brown subsoil.

Number 45 Wyre Hill is not a listed property but is attached to Number 46, a Grade II listed late 17th century cottage. Test Pit 15 was located on the rear lawn, a short distance away from a raised deck area.

The archaeological layers consisted over a dark, organic topsoil over a brighter, more clayey subsoil. Charcoal flecks were observed in all spits. Excavated to a depth of 60cm, the natural geology was not quite reached in this test pit.

### What do the finds tell us?

The finds from Test Pit 14, The Black Boy, were relatively sparse but spanned the 15th/16th to the 19th century. Two artefacts of particular interest are connected to drinking: a small fragment of a 16th or early 17th century stoneware jug, probably of German or Belgian origin, and a sherd of similar date from an early redware mug.

**Drawing 4: Reconstruction of an early redware mug, by Rob Hedge.**

Finds from Test Pit 15 were very similar in character to those from the nearby Test Pit 14, though considerably more numerous. It is one of the few locations within the town to contain domestic material dating to the 16th century: in this case, a small fragment of Southern white ware (fabric 70). The majority of the finds dated from the late-17th to the early-19th century.

The pottery recovered from these two test pits shows occupation in this area of Wyre Hill from the 16th century onwards, but nothing earlier. Given that Test pit 14 reached the natural geology and Test pit 15 probably wasn't far off, it is likely that the lack of medieval pottery reflects a true absence of medieval settlement in this area. This supports the idea that Wyre Hill was an expansion of Bewdley during the mid-late 15th century. It is also interesting that drinking related items were found at the pub, as whilst few in number, they do fit with the site's recorded history as a public house.

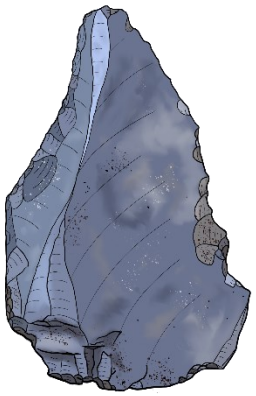
## Test Pit 17: 71 Stourport Road

Stourport Road is the location of the oldest house in Bewdley with Nos. 5, 7 and 9 dating to 1310. Number 71 is located *c*250m to the southwest of these and is a much later house. Test Pit 17 was located in the back garden, in a lawned area fairly close to the house itself where maps show there used to be a footpath.

Below the turf and topsoil layer was a consistent deposit of garden soil, excavated to a depth of 60cm. The natural geology was not reached in this test pit.

### What do the finds tell us?

Finds were well-mixed, indicating that the ground has been well worked over. The assemblage mostly comprised of post-medieval domestic pottery, glass, and a range of brick or tile fragments with a broad date range of late-medieval to post-medieval (AD 1475 – 1900). In addition to these, a prehistoric artefact was also found – a retouched flint flake of Neolithic/early Bronze Age date (4000-1500 BC) from spit 1. This is earlier in date than the Iron Age activity found relatively close by, during an excavation in advance of Bewdley High School's new science block.



**Drawing 5: Worked flint flake, Test Pit 17, by Rob Hedge.**

## Test Pit 18: Bewdley Leisure Centre

Test Pit 18 was located towards the northern edge of the sports field around Bewdley Leisure Centre. The site was previously Netherton House and grounds, which was in existence by the time of the 1852 Kidderminster West of Stour Tithe map. It is shown on maps until at least 1969 (1:25,000 Provisional Edition Ordnance Survey). The test pit was located close to where Netherton House once stood, in an area marked on historic maps with trees and paths – probably a landscaped garden or small woodland.

Only half of the 1m$^2$ was excavated during spit 2, reducing to a quarter in spits 3 and 4 (20-40cm below ground level). The upper two spits comprised of pea grit: the result of landscaping to create the playing fields. Below that a siltier soil was encountered. The natural geology was not reached in this test pit due to a lack of time and extremely hot weather.

### What do the finds tell us?

Upper layers were almost sterile, save for some very small fragments of glass, slag and 17$^{th}$/ 18$^{th}$ century redware pot that must have been brought up through ground disturbance. This will be, at least in part, due to the construction of Bewdley Leisure Centre in 1990 and the associated laying out of the sports fields.

Beneath the grit, a greater range of finds were observed, including more 17$^{th}$/ 18$^{th}$ century pottery and a large lump of iron-rich hearth material, presumably smithing slag from a forge or similar operation. The latter may represent activity pre-dating Netherton House, though the extent of the landscaping is unclear and may have included bringing in material from elsewhere. The pottery found may well tie in with the occupation of Netherton House – as little has been written about the house, any information about it is valuable.

## Test Pit 19: Netherton Lane

An 1852 Tithe map of the area shows a cottage in the location of Test Pit 19, but this cottage had gone by the 1884 Ordnance Survey and others built on slightly different sites. Fieldwalking over a period of time in this area, as recorded in 2000, recovered 3 pieces of flint, a piece of Roman Severn Valley Ware, some abraded medieval pottery and some 16$^{th}$-17$^{th}$ century finds.

Test Pit 19 was located in the vicinity of this earlier dwelling, on the northern side of the field to the rear of The Cottage. The upper two spits consisted of a turf and quite sandy topsoil layer. After spit 2

(20cm below ground level), only 50% of the 1m$^2$ test pit was excavated due to time and extremely hot weather. Below the topsoil was a lighter coloured layer then the natural geology, which was successfully reached at a depth of 60cm below ground.

### What do the finds tell us?

Finds were most numerous in the upper 30cm, with smaller quantities present within a sondage down to *c*50cm. Finds were well-mixed throughout, and included a small scatter of medieval material in poor condition: pottery of 12th to 14th century date included one medieval rim sherd from a jar that was probably produced locally, and conjoining body sherds from a Worcester-type glazed vessel. There were small quantities of 16th/ 17th century pottery — Midlands Yellow and North Devon gravel-tempered wares. The remainder comprised mostly 17th to 19th century pottery.

**Photo 19: Medieval pottery, Test Pit 19.**

This test pit contained three pieces of prehistoric flint: one piece of burnt flint, potentially a later prehistoric 'potboiler'; a small, tested nodule of pebble flint; and a small, burnt medial segment from a blade. The latter is not closely diagnostic: a Mesolithic or early Neolithic date is possible, but it may equally be of Neolithic or early Bronze Age date.

The range of finds from Test Pit 19 closely matches artefacts collected during fieldwalking along Netherton Lane in 2000[3]. Whilst the medieval pottery is quite abraded and may have moved around in the soil a good deal, the quantity suggests that there was medieval occupation in this area – it is a therefore possible that the houses in Netherton Lane are the remnant of a small medieval settlement.

## Test Pit 20: Lower Blackstone Farm

A known Iron Age site, excavated in the 1970s, was located quite close to Lower Blackstone Farm[4]. Discovered through aerial photography, the site comprised a double-ditched enclosure with associated domestic features. Excavation produced evidence of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age activity, in addition to Iron Age occupation and later Roman period agricultural (manuring) practises.

Test Pit 20 was located very close to the steps of the old front door (now out of use) of the farmhouse, the earliest part of which dates from 1589, and went through heavily disturbed and rooted garden soil. Excavation of this test pit ceased at a depth of 30cm below the ground surface due to a lack of time, so the natural geology was not reached.

[3] Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) event number WSM29569
[4] Hurst (2011) Blackstone excavation, available online: https://doi.org/10.5284/1000133

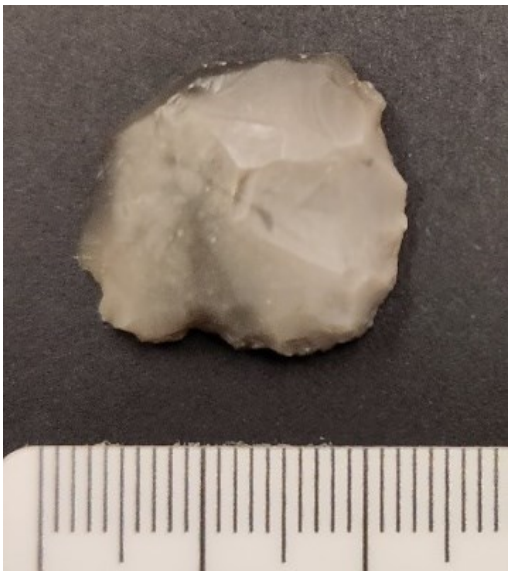


Photo 20: Prehistoric flint, Test Pit 20

### What do the finds tell us?

Remnants of a broken rainwater drain, including a large section of pipe, ran diagonally across Test Pit 20 in spit 2 (10-20cm deep). Finds consisted of typical domestic debris — pottery, glass and clay pipe — of 18th to early 20th century date, as well as ceramic building material and mortar. The group were extremely proud to have excavated the largest find: the section of drain!

The most significant find came from spit 3 (20-30cm deep): a small early Bronze Age thumbnail scraper, 20mm in diameter, of mid-grey opaque flint.

Whilst most of the finds from Test Pit 20 were relatively modern, the prehistoric flint scraper shows just how long people have been visiting or living in the Bewdley area. It ties in well with the results of excavations at Blackstone enclosure, as well as the worked flints from Test Pits 17 and 19. At this site in particular, the earliest evidence of occupation dates from the 18th or 19th century. This corresponds with the date of the current farmhouse and indicates that the farm is probably the first dwelling on the site, as evidence of earlier activity would likely have been become mixed within the spits excavated if present.

## Test Pit 21: Lansdowne, Kidderminster Road

Test Pit 21 was located in the back garden, a moderate distance away from the house. Excavated to a depth of 60cm, the archaeological layers consisted of a moderately deep (40cm) layer of dark garden soil overlying a layer that contained small pieces of red sandstone. Records suggest that this test pit either reached or was close to the natural sandstone geology.

### What do the finds tell us?

Test Pit 21 contained a small domestic assemblage, with a range of late-18th and 19th century pottery. This included examples of attractive hand-painted whitewares of early-19th century date and a range of factory-slip whitewares. The only evidence for earlier activity were fragments of clay tobacco pipe, one of which is likely to be 17th century, and several residual pieces of 17th or 18th century redwares and Staffordshire slipwares. These indicate that the section of the Kidderminster Road was not occupied in medieval times, but has seen increasing use and occupation since the 17th century.

Photo 21: Staffordshire slipware (1670-1800), Test Pit 21

# Conclusions

## Finds summary

Evidence of prehistoric activity in Bewdley was provided by a small quantity of worked flint on the eastern side of the Severn: a Neolithic/Bronze Age flint from Stourport Road, later prehistoric burnt flint from Netherton Lane, and the early Bronze Age scraper from Blackstone Farm. The sole Roman artefact was a single sherd of Severn Valley Ware pottery from Jubilee Gardens. Small quantities of medieval material dating from the 12th century onwards were present within the town, on both sides of the river: around Load Street, and at Netherton Lane. The largest quantity of medieval material came from Ribbesford, at which the test pits have uncovered evidence of a lost medieval settlement around the church.

The frequency and range of finds increased considerably from the 16th to the 19th century, reflecting both the fortunes of the town and the increasing availability and affordability of consumer goods. There was a particularly wide range of later-18th century wares. It is clear that Bewdley was able to source pottery from a wider range than other settlements in North Worcestershire and South Shropshire, due to the ease of transporting goods by river.

## Prehistoric activity

It is striking that all three test pits (17, 19 and 20) that produced worked flint are within 200m of the River Severn's eastern bank. Added to these finds are an Iron Age enclosure further south at Blackstone, where excavations in the 1970s revealed activity throughout prehistory[4], as well as the more recent discovery of Iron Age pits and postholes under Bewdley School science block[5]. Together, these discoveries stretch 1.5km along the riverbank and throughout the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages (10,000 BC – AD 43), demonstrating that people repeatedly visited and used this area over millenia.

## Medieval settlement

### Ribbesford and Netherton Lane

Medieval pottery, dating from the late-11th to mid-14th century, was present in small quantities in the town centre (Test Pit 12) and on the east bank of the Severn (Test Pits 2 and 19). All the material from these test pits was somewhat fragmentary; it shows that there was certainly activity in the area prior to the 14th century, but cannot tell us much about the degree to which the town was developed on either the Wribbenhall or Bewdley sides of the river. However, when the Netherton Lane (Test Pit 19) finds are considered alongside a larger assemblage of medieval pottery from previous fieldwalking in the area – four sherds of cooking pot and 12 glazed 13th – 15th century sherds – it seems likely that a small cluster of medieval settlement was located in this general area, or at least close enough to be farming along Netherton Lane.

[5] Bewdley High School excavation report, available online: https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/record?titleId=3512269

In Test Pits 9 and 10, centred on the hamlet of Ribbesford to the south, larger quantities of medieval pottery were found in good condition, and recovered from deposits containing only medieval material. These confirm the presence of medieval dwellings close to St Leonard's church. Several pot forms were identifiable and mostly dated to the 13th century. Few finds post-dated the 14th century and the assemblage included medieval floor tiles and other building materials that likely come from the church, as well as a probable medieval peach stone. The latter is highly unusual and implies that someone around Ribbesford was well connected and wealthy enough to either buy peaches or the trees to grow them locally.

## Impact of the Black Death

During the 14th century, several crises spread across Britain: the Great Famine in 1315-17, Great Bovine Pestilence of 1319-20 and Black Death in 1348-49. The individual and combined impact of these catastrophes was undoubtedly severe, but differed between places.

Only two locations in Bewdley – Test Pit 2 in Wribbenhall and Test Pit 7 in Jubilee Gardens – produced finds dating to the 150 years after the Black Death (mid-14th to 15th century). This is a pattern commonly seen across Worcestershire and other Big Digs. It is tempting to ascribe the decline in pottery to population crises of the 14th century, but this was — the ravages of war excepted — a time of growth and prosperity for the town. It is more likely to represent the gap after ceramic cooking pots — vastly overrepresented in the archaeological record due to their fragility — ceased to be produced, and before the growth in the range of ceramic forms available to the consumer in the 16th century.

The exception to the above may be Ribbesford. There, evidence of settlement spans the 12th to 14th centuries but then virtually disappears. It is likely that the settlement at Ribbesford shrank in size after this date – eventually becoming the small hamlet that it is today. However, it is not possible to ascertain whether the causes behind this were the Black Death and other catastrophes, or the pull of the growing town at Bewdley.

## Pottery sources

In some ways, the medieval pottery assemblage from Bewdley's test pits is more akin to those from Worcester than to those of rural North Worcestershire. Of the 93 sherds dating to the mid-14th century or earlier, 62 (67%) are in the four most common Worcestershire fabrics: Worcester-type sandy unglazed (fabric 55) and glazed (fabric 64.1) wares, and Malvernian unglazed (fabric 56) and oxidised glazed (fabric 69) wares. At Wolverley, just 6km to the northeast, only 13 out of 55 sherds (24%) from this period were from those four fabrics.

These are small sample sizes, so cannot alone be definitive, but the character of the pottery assemblages does seem to confirm a difference: Wolverley's test pits contained many little-known local fabrics, alongside some whitewares probably produced in Staffordshire. Bewdley's assemblage contained only small quantities of those minor fabrics, and also included wares from much further afield: Brill-Boarstall (from Buckinghamshire) and several sherds of what is thought to be Ham Green, produced in Bristol. The latter is no surprise, given the relative efficiency and low cost of river transport between Bewdley and Bristol[6].

[6] Dyer (1989), page 309

### Wyre Hill

Wyre Hill, on the west side of Bewdley, contains a number of historic timber framed buildings and it has been suggested that this area was developed from the 1460s onwards. The finds from Test Pits 14 and 15 do not contradict this theory, as nothing pre-dating the 1460s was found. This lack of medieval artefacts appears to be a genuine absence, as one test pit reached the natural geology – base of the archaeological sequence – and the other was close to this point. Instead, both test pits produced pottery from the 1500s onwards, which closely match the late 15th century date suggested for Wyre Hill's development. Interestingly, a small quantity of household waste but several drinking vessels were produced from The Black Boy, lending weight to the pub's reported 15th century origins.

## What next?

The results from all six test pit locations were drawn together in a touring exhibition in early 2023. After this, the archaeological finds will either be returned to the landowner or deposited with Museums Worcestershire, depending on their preference. The reports and archaeological records will be stored by the Archaeology Data Service – a publicly accessible digital archive. A copy of each report will also be available on www.explorethepast.co.uk, which is run by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service, and the county's Historic Environment Record.

Archaeological investigations often unearth as many questions as they do answers. It is an ongoing process of gradually piecing together details about the past, so it is hoped that the stories revealed by these Big Digs will be expanded in future. In particular, research is needed into medieval pottery production in the border region of north Worcestershire, south Staffordshire and southeast Shropshire.

## Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the owners who generously hosted a test pit and everyone on the Dig Team and Finds Team, especially Ken MacDonald for leading the finds processing. Without your enthusiasm and hard work these stories would not have been unearthed.

Archaeological support for the weekend of 10th and 11th July was provided by staff from Worcestershire Archaeology – Hazel Whitefoot, assisted by John Jackson – as well as Justin Hughes and Sam Elwell; considerable thanks are due to them for their invaluable support. The fieldwork for 12th and 13th July was led by Rob Hedge, assisted by Nikki Schmidt and colleagues from Bewdley High School, Heather Flack and Joshua Harry. Many thanks to Bewdley Museum for their support and assistance, and to all who helped in other invaluable ways to make Bewdley's Big Dig happen.

The project was coordinated by Heather Flack on behalf of Bewdley Historical Research Group, with assistance from Nina O'Hare (Worcestershire Archaeology). The report was written by Hazel Whitefoot and Nina O'Hare, with additional historic information from Heather Flack. Finds analysis and the summary illustration were undertaken by Rob Hedge, Abbie Horton and Nina O'Hare produced the figures and John Jackson helped to compile this report.

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# Appendix 1: Detailed historical background

## Location and geology

Bewdley parish lies on the north-western edge of Worcestershire, close to the border with Shropshire, along the River Severn. The underlying bedrock is recorded as mudstone and sandstone, with superficial deposits of alluvium and Power Station sands and gravels along the length of the river and within its flood zones (BGS 2023).

## Historical background

Bewdley is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 under the name Wribbenhall and at that time was regarded as an outlier of Kidderminster. Other outliers to Kidderminster include two Ribbesfords, but it is not clear if they were both on the western side of the river. It is certain, however, that Wribbenhall existed on both sides of the river at that point. Unfortunately, there is no indication as to the general size of these settlements as they are listed within Domesday as part of a combined entry. By 1100, the river had become a boundary with the Crown giving the western side to the Mortimer family (who held land extending deep into Wales) and later the Wribbenhall side to Manser Biset.

The name Bewdley (thought to stem from *Beaulieu*, meaning 'beautiful place') doesn't appear until 1275. By 1300 there was a town situated on the west bank of the river, with a ferry in existence by 1336.

After being held by the Mortimers, Bewdley manor was taken over by Richard, Duke of York in 1425 and then passed to Edward, Earl of March in 1459. Once Edward becoming king in 1461, Bewdley became a royal manor and continued to be so through the Tudor period with Tickenhill Palace becoming the home of Prince Arthur, Henry VII's eldest son. He was married in Bewdley (by proxy as both parties were only 13 years of age at the time), to Catherine of Aragon in 1499 and, after his death, his body lay in Bewdley for a night before his interment at Worcester Cathedral in 1502.

A bridge across the Severn was built in the late 1440s and then rebuilt around 1484, due to severe damage to the original bridge. Bewdley became a vital crossing point over the River Severn, as the next nearest was 15 miles away, and developed into a busy inland port with warehouses and hospitality establishments for travellers and traders. The prosperity of the town was also added to by its proximity to the Wyre Forest which, as well as being a medieval hunting forest, provided ready access to wood for building and burning (charcoal production) and bark (for tanning), and also coal.

By 1472, in a Charter of Edward IV, the town name had become Beaudeley - quite close to the modern spelling.

The arrival of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal in Stourport in 1772 gradually reduced the river trade and this decline was further encouraged by the establishment of the railways. Bewdley's importance as a centre for trade dwindled and the modern period is largely represented by an expansion in house building away from the historic town centre, with many of the buildings there being converted into independent shops.

## Archaeological Background

### Introduction

Prior to test pitting, a search of Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) was completed for the areas investigated by test pits – Bewdley and Ribbesford. A total of 364 HER monuments and 56 archaeological activities were recorded within the search area. A summary of these results is presented below and shown in Figures 5-10.

### Prehistory

Some early prehistoric activity in the Bewdley area is indicated by the discovery of a scatter of flints (WSM33624) in the Rifle Range area and others found during field walking exercises at Netherton Lane (WSM29569) and Blackstone (WSM41821). However, more significant activity occurred during the Iron Age as a farmstead, dating from the 2nd to 1st century BC, was located on the bank of the River Severn in the area of Blackstone. Investigated in the 1970s, the settlement consisted of a rectangular double-ditched (one with palisade) enclosure with some internal buildings. Pottery and briquetage recovered indicates trading links with Droitwich and beyond, including the wider area of west and north Worcestershire (Hurst 2011). More recently, Iron Age pits and postholes have also been recorded during work prior to the construction of Bewdley School's new science block (WSM57459).

### Roman to Anglo-Saxon (43AD – 1066)

Relatively little evidence of activity in the Roman period exists but pottery scatters across the site at Blackstone indicate that the Iron Age settlement went into cultivation during the Roman period (although the exact site of the Roman settlement is yet to be located) and a Neronian sestertius was found on the riverbank near Blackstone Farm (WSM72379) (Hurst 2011).

### Medieval (1066 – 1539)

The Bewdley area appears in the Domesday Book under the names of Ribbesford (of which there are two) and Wribbenhall, which are all listed as outliers of Kidderminster. It is not clear if both Ribbesfords were sited on the western bank of the river, or whether one of them lay on the eastern side, but Wribbenhall was on both sides of the river and incorporated the area now known as Bewdley. The parish church at Ribbesford, the Church of St Leonard, is the oldest building in the area dating back to c1140AD.

During the medieval period Bewdley gained street systems and increased settlement The first record of a burgage is in 1367 and in 1376 permission was granted for a market on Wyre Hill. The Victoria County History notes the survival of burgage plots in this area of town and several 15th – 16th century timber buildings are still extant.

Several fishponds are recorded on the HER and Tickenhill was the site of a royal palace and deer park.

### Post-medieval (1540 – 1900)

The post-medieval period was the time when Bewdley really flourished, largely thanks to the busy port on the riverside. Many of the buildings which are now listed on the Historic Environment register date from this period and there are records of churches, chapels, schools, hotels and public houses, assembly rooms, a prison and a brass foundry.

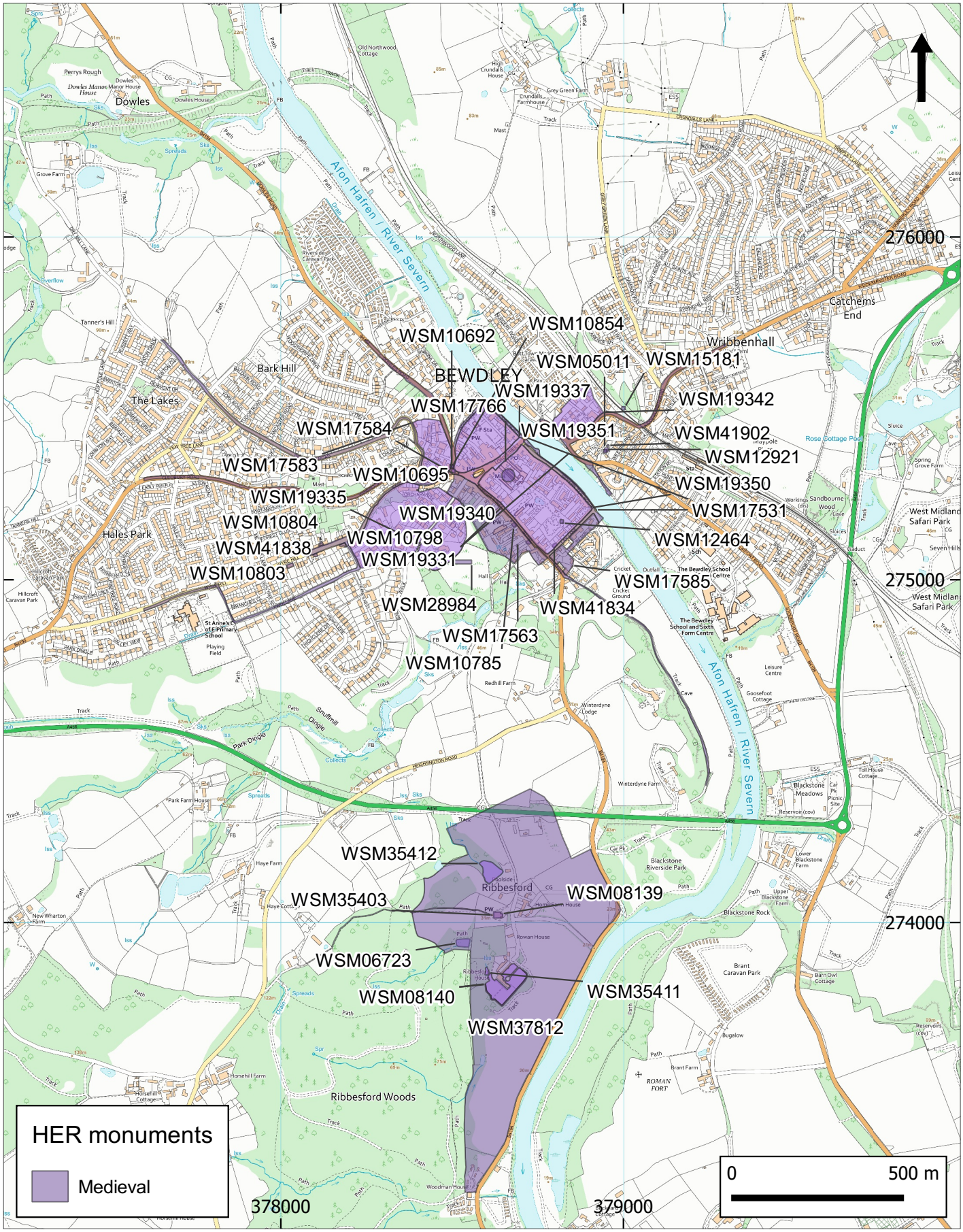
## Archaeological investigations

A moderate amount of archaeological investigation has taken place in Bewdley, the majority of this consisting of desk-based assessments and building recording. Invasive archaeological activities have occurred at Bewdley Fire Station and at Lax Lane, as well as archaeological monitoring work at Beales Corner and Lax Lane. These activities have not recorded any significant archaeological remains beyond modern deposits and truncation.




*Prehistoric and undated monuments recorded on Worcestershire Historic Environment Record*

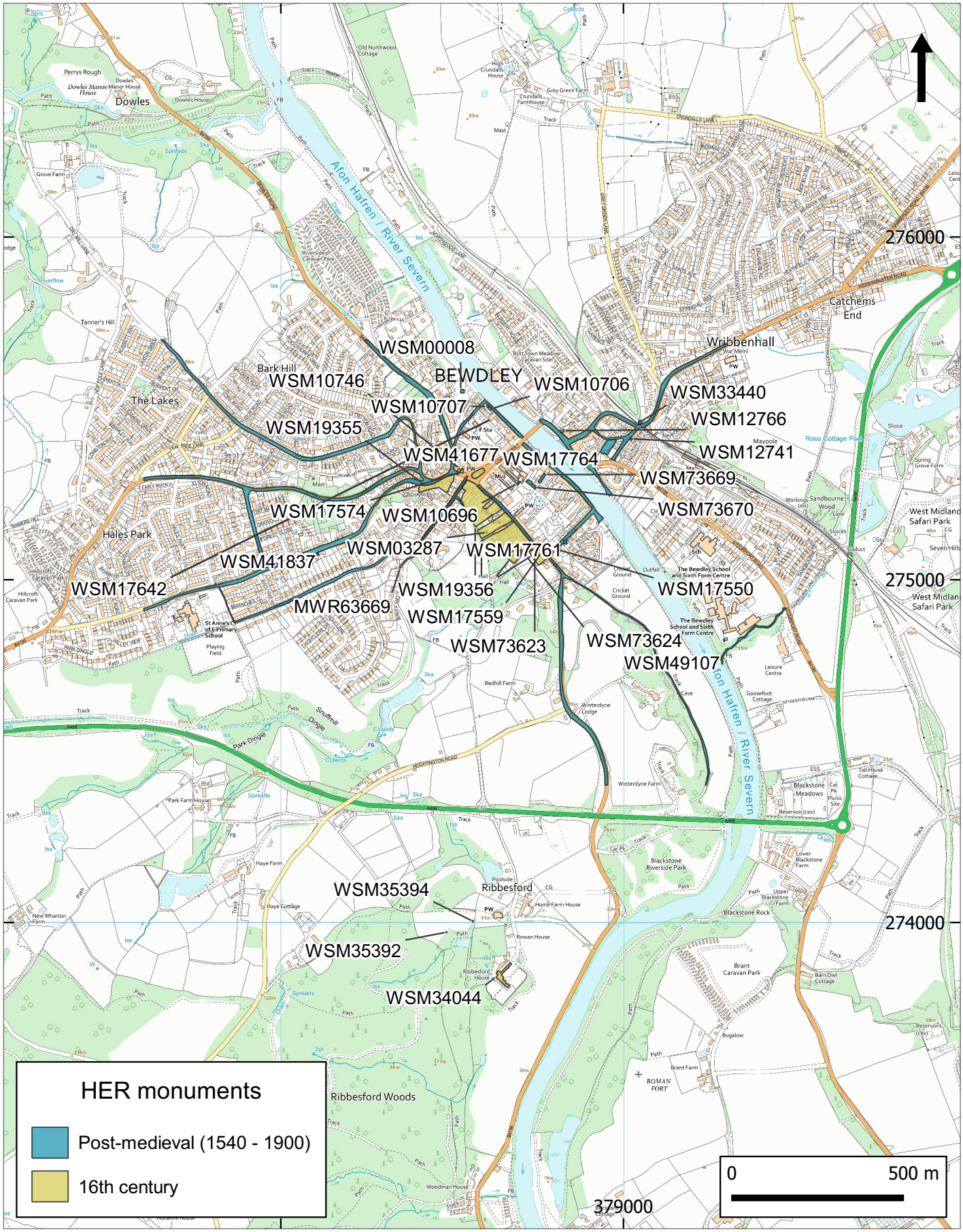
*Figure 4*






*Medieval monuments recorded on Worcestershire Historic Environment Record*

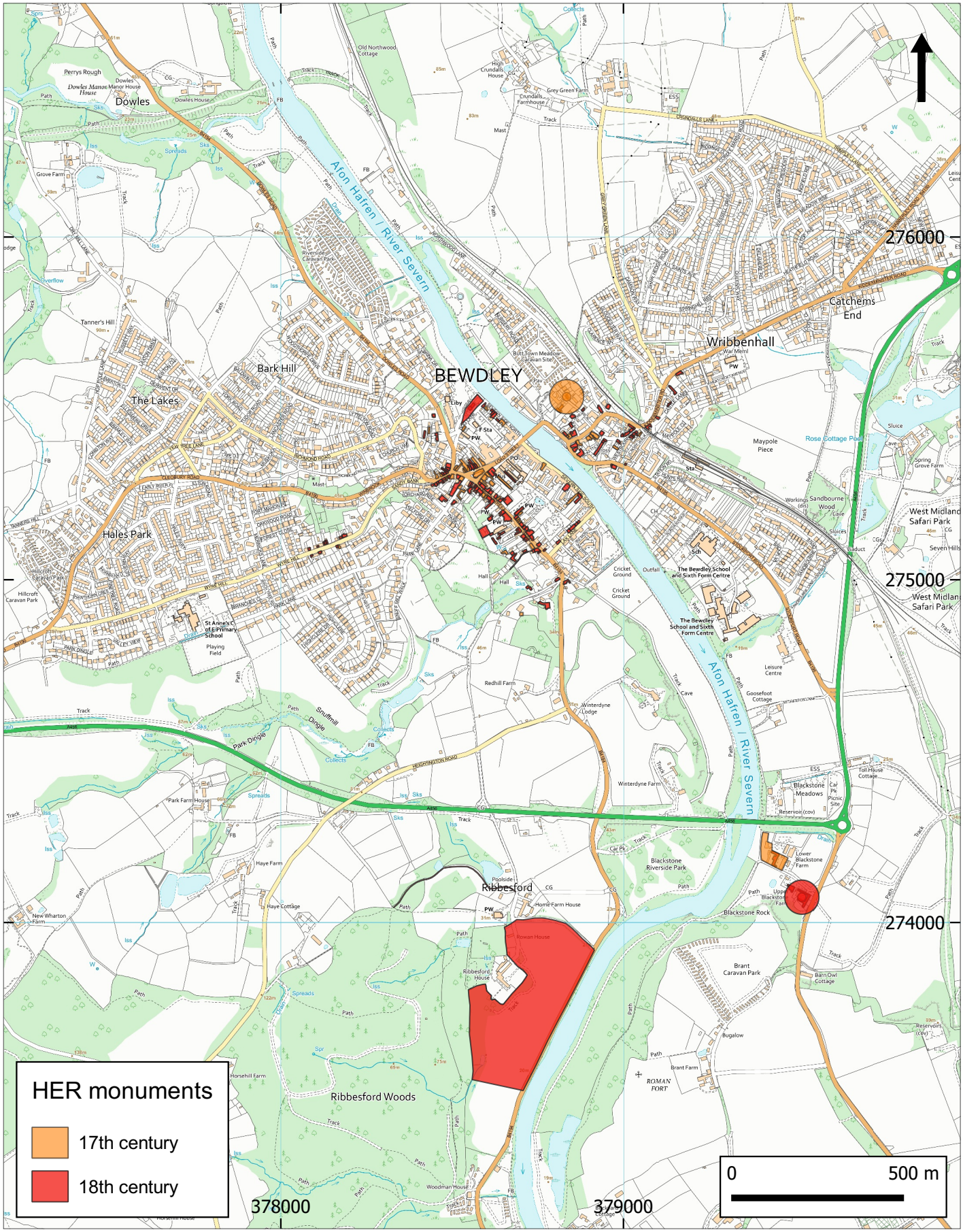
*Figure 5*






*Post-medieval monuments recorded on Worcestershire Historic Environment Record*

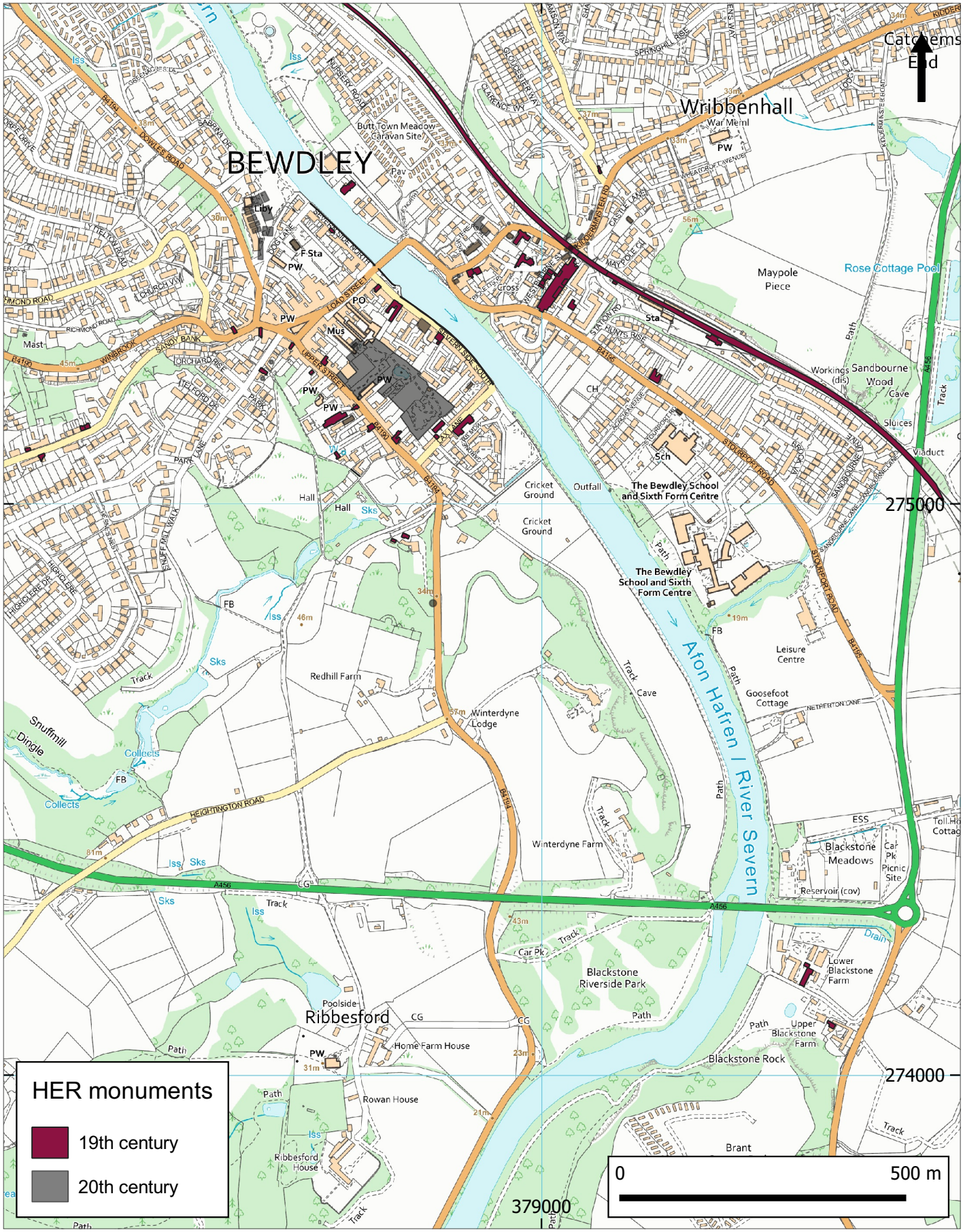
*Figure 6*






*17th & 18th century monuments recorded on Worcestershire Historic Environment Record*

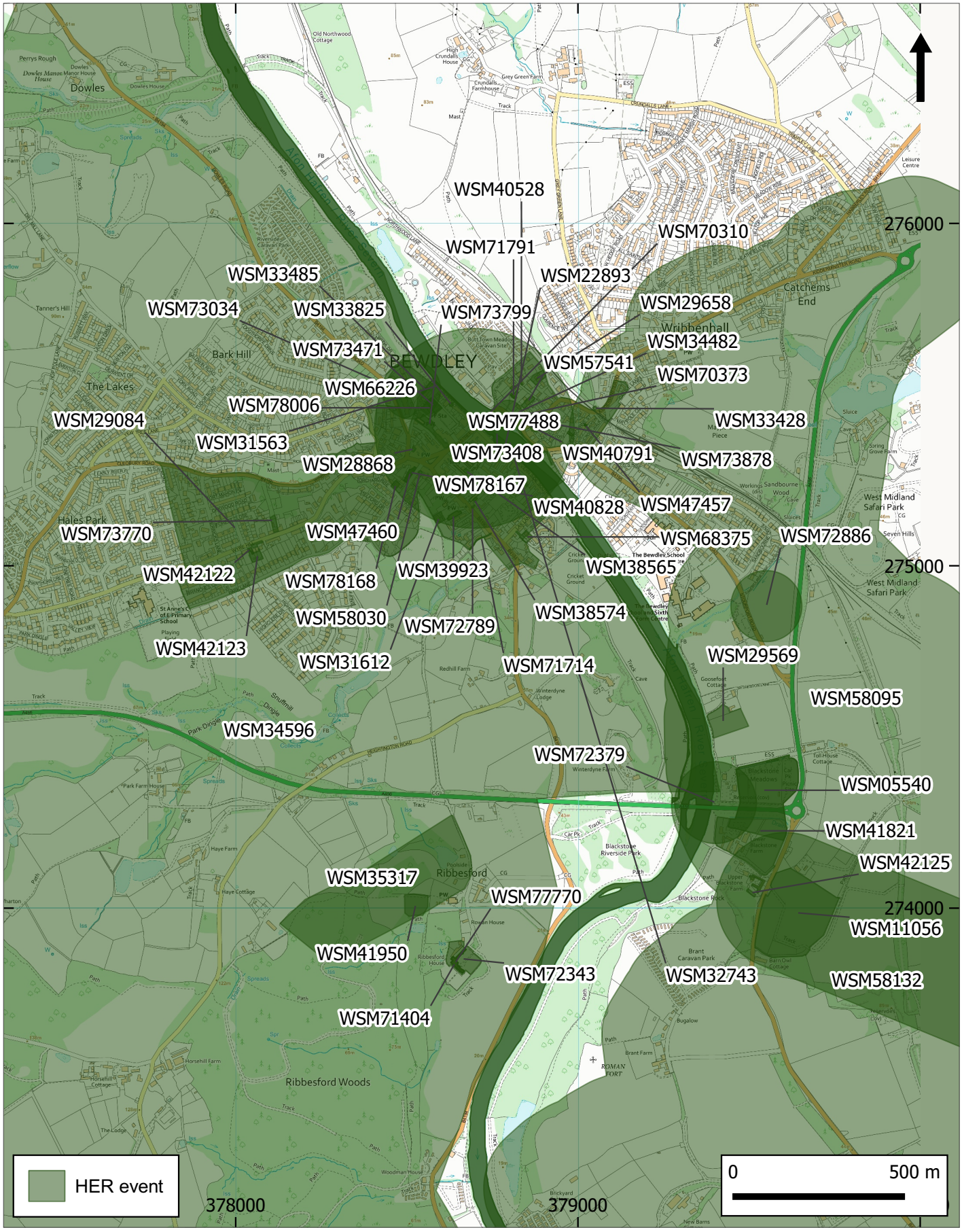
*Figure 7*






*19th & 20th century monuments recorded on Worcestershire Historic Environment Record*

*Figure 8*






*Archaeological events recorded on Worcestershire Historic Environment Record*

*Figure 9*

# Appendix 2: Methodology & spit descriptions

## Project methodology

### Location

Twenty-one test pits were excavated across Bewdley, Worcestershire (SO 7865 7535) on 21st April 2022 and over the 10th – 13th July 2022. Test pits were spread across the town in private gardens, public green spaces and a field to the west of Ribbesford church. Test pits were located by preference close to the back of houses where, historically, rubbish was often thrown.

### Aims

The archaeological aims were to:

- Further our understanding of the form, character and development of rural medieval settlements in Worcestershire, as it is an area lacking research (Hunt 2011: 176).
- Investigate Wribbenhall and Ribbesford to understand more about the area before Bewdley town developed.
- Gather dating evidence for the earliest occupation along Wyre Hill.

### Fieldwork methodology

The fieldwork model used here follows that developed by Professor Carenza Lewis for researching Currently Occupied Medieval Rural Settlements (CORS) and used extensively in East Anglia with considerable success (for methodology in full, see Lewis 2007). Instead of recording conventional archaeological contexts, excavation focused on the recovery of artefacts and the depths at which they are discovered, as Lewis' methodology uses the presence, quantity and condition of pottery as a proxy indicator for occupation. This method of excavating in spits also makes it easy for those without archaeological training to participate.

Each test pit covered a $1m^2$ area and was de-turf then excavated by hand in 10cm spits. Spoil was checked for finds, using a 1cm mesh sieve where possible, and artefacts separated by spit. A pro forma record booklet was used to record soil descriptions and inclusions within each spit, and photographs were taken regularly. The majority of test pits reached natural, but several were not completed due to time constraints. Test pits were photographed and drawn in both section and plan before being backfilled and any turf reinstated. The precise location of each test pit was recorded by GPS.

### Personnel

Fieldwork was undertaken by local volunteers, with the support of Worcestershire Archaeology and Rob Hedge.

### Archive

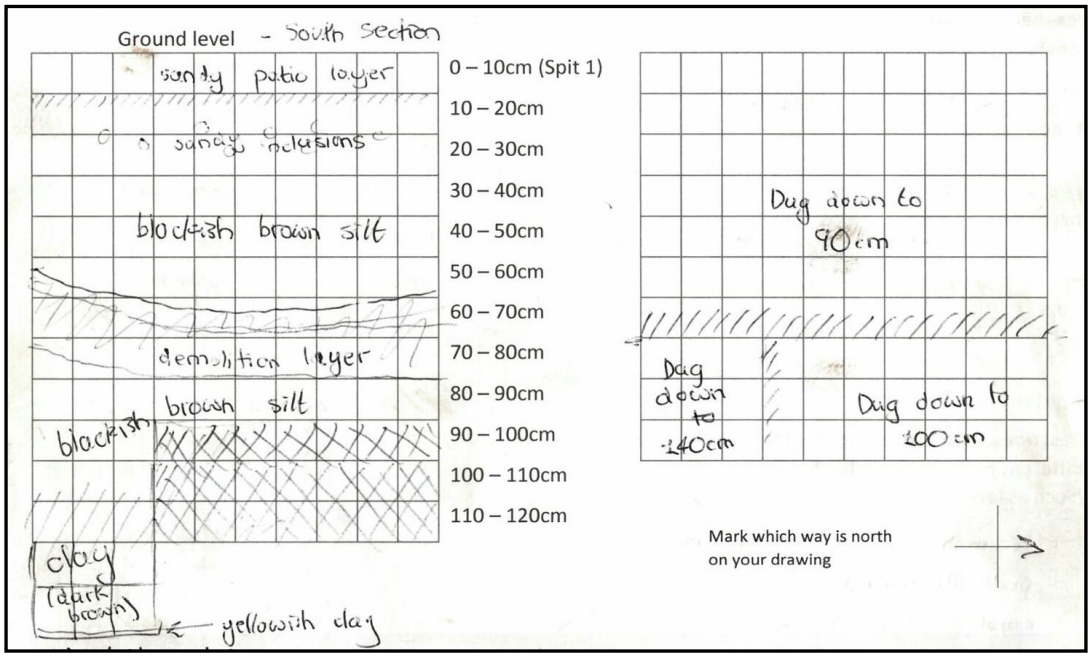
The HER event number for this investigation is WSM71431 and the WAAS project number is CE004. The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology. Subject to the agreement of the landowners it is anticipated that it will be deposited with Museums Worcestershire and the digital archive sent to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

## Spit descriptions

### Test Pit 1: 6 Kidderminster Road (SO 78876 75387)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Primarily firm dark blackish brown silt with a patch of loose light orangey brown sand in the SW corner | Occasional medium stones, medium charcoal and rare small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Firm dark blackish brown silt | Rare medium stones and small roots, occasional medium charcoal | Yes |
| 3 | Firm dark blackish brown silt | Rare small stones and small roots, occasional medium charcoal | Yes |
| 4 | Firm dark blackish brown silt | Rare small stones and small roots, occasional medium charcoal | Yes |
| 5 | Firm dark blackish brown silt with yellowish brown patches throughout | Occasional; small and medium stones, medium charcoal and rare small roots | Yes |
| 6 | Loose mid yellowish brown sandy silt | Abundant large and medium stones, rare medium charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 7 | Firm mid orangey brown silt | Abundant mixed stones, rare medium charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 8 | Firm mid blackish brown silt | Abundant small and medium stones, medium charcoal flecks and rare small roots (charcoal in NW corner) | Yes |
| 9 | Firm mid blackish brown silt | Occasional small and medium stones, medium charcoal flecks and rare small roots | Yes |
| 10 | Loose mid blackish brown clay (sondage in East side) | Occasional small stones and charcoal flecks, rare small roots | Yes |
| 11 | Firm mid blackish brown clay (sondage in SE corner) | Rare small stones, charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 12 | Compact blackish brown clay (sondage in SE corner) | Rare small stones, small roots and abundant medium roots | Yes |
| 13 | Compact blackish brown clay (sondage in SE corner) | Rare small stones and small roots, occasional medium charcoal | Yes |
| 14 | Compact blackish brown clay with yellowish brown compact clay beneath (sondage in SE corner) | Rare small stones, charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |

**Photo 1. Test Pit 1 with spit 14 visible in south-east quadrant**

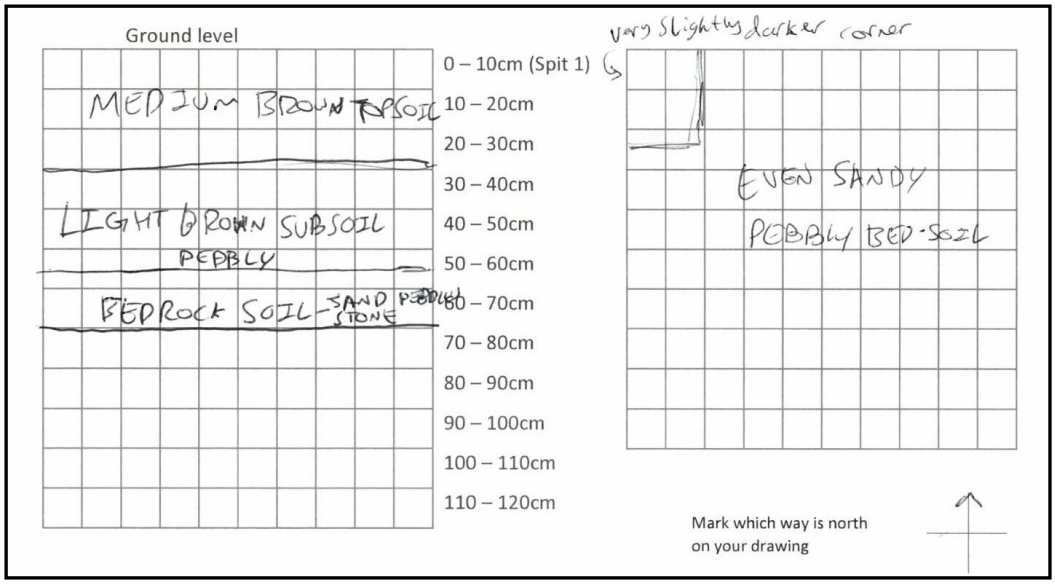



**Drawing 1. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 1**

## Test Pit 2: Old Police Station (SO 78869 75460)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose mid orangey brown sand | Abundant small stones and rare small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose mid orangey brown sand | Abundant small stones and occasional small roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose light orangey brown sand. | Occasional small stones | Yes |
| 4 | Loose mid orangey brown sand | Abundant small stones and occasional small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Loose mid orangey brown sand | Abundant small stones and occasional small roots | Yes |
| 6 | Loose mid orangey brown sand | Abundant small stones and rare small roots | Yes |
| 7 | Loose mid orangey brown sand | Abundant small and medium stones | No |

**Photo 2. North-west facing sectiton of Test Pit 2, spit 7**

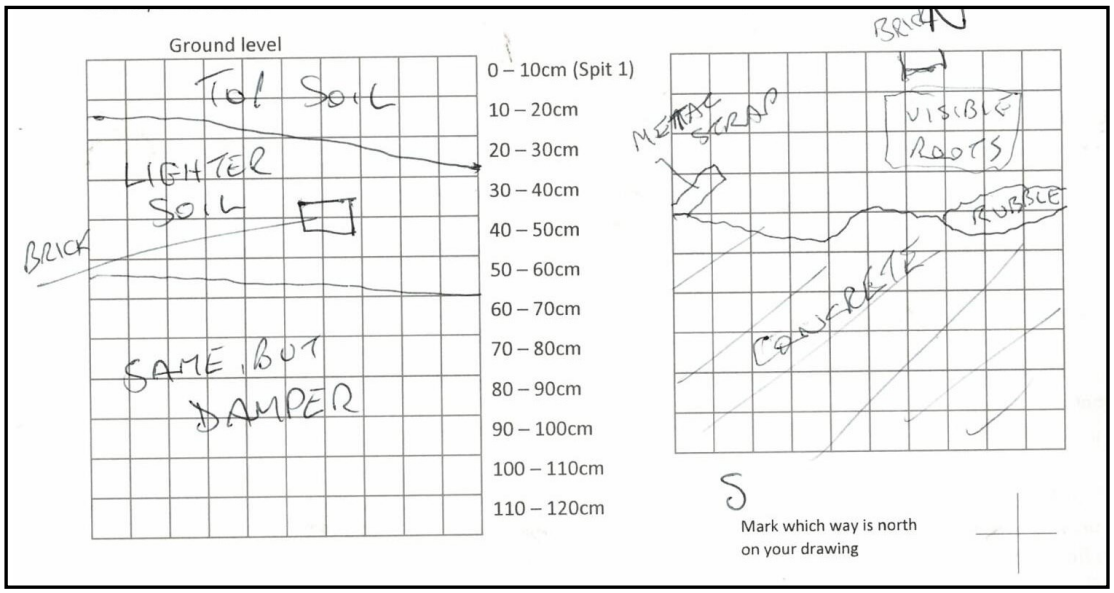



**Drawing 2. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 2.**

## Test Pit 3: Lowthers Yard (SO 78982 75450)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose mid greyish brown sand | Occasional small and medium stones, charcoal flecks and rare roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose dark blackish brown sand | Abundant small stones, charcoal flecks and rare small roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose blackish brown sand. Concrete slab covering southern half of test pit | Abundant small stones, large concrete slab over half the pit | Yes |
| 4 | Loose dark blackish brown sand | Occasional small stones | Yes |
| 5 | Loose dark blackish brown sand | Occasional small stones | Yes |
| 6 | Loose dark blackish brown sand | Rare stones and occasional charcoal | Yes |
| 7 | Loose dark blackish brown sand | Rare stones and occasional charcoal | Yes |
| 8 | Firm sand | Rare stones and occasional charcoal | Yes |
| 9 | Firm dark blackish brown silty clayey sand | Occasional charcoal and large roots | Yes |

**Photo 3. Test Pit 3 with spit 9 visible in northern sondage**

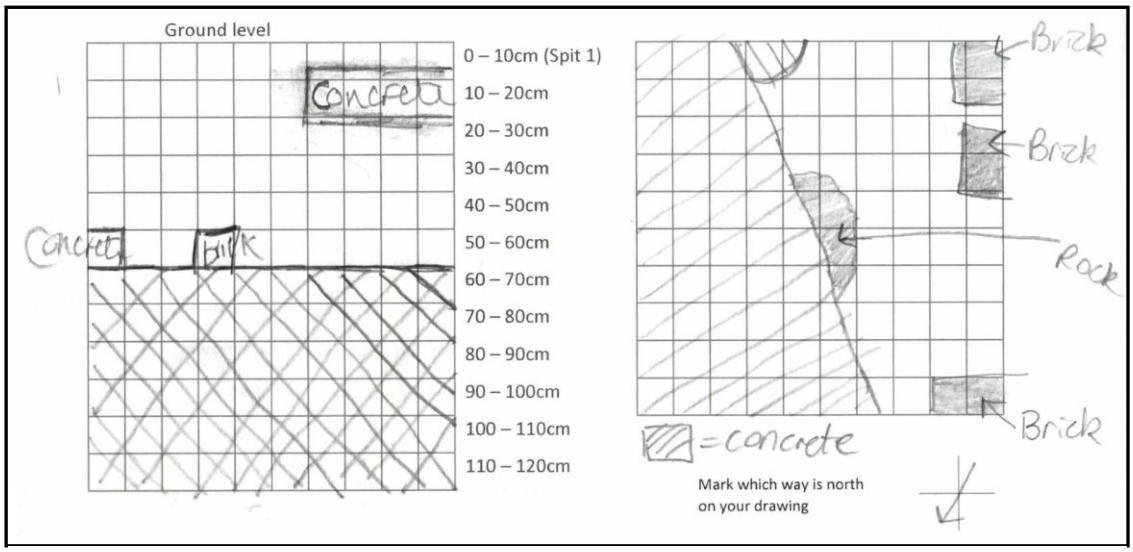



**Drawing 3. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 3.**

## Test Pit 4: 4 Castle Lane (SO 79173 75510)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose mid greyish brown sand | Occasional small stones and rare small flecks of charcoal and roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose mid greyish brown sand | Rare small stones, roots and flecks of charcoal | Yes |
| 3 | Firm mid orangey blackish brown sand | Occasional small stones and flecks of charcoal, rare small roots | Yes |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Firm mid blackish brown sand | Occasional small stones and rare flecks of charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Firm blackish brown sand | Occasional medium stones and rare flecks of charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 6 | Firm mid blackish brown sand | Occasional medium stones, roots and charcoal | Yes |



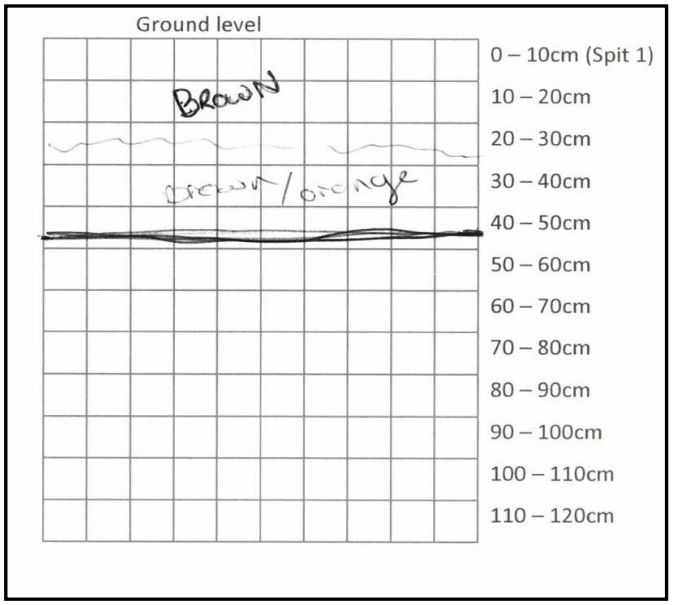

**Drawing 4. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 4.**

**Photo 4. Test pit 4, spit 6.**

## Test Pit 5: 21 Stourport Road (SO 79039 75328)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose mid blackish brown sand | Abundant small stones and small/medium roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose/firm mid blackish brown sand | Abundant small stones and occasional flecks of charcoal and small/medium roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose mid blackish brown sand | Abundant small/medium stones, medium charcoal flecks and small/medium roots | Yes |
| 4 | Loose mid blackish brown sand | Abundant mixed stones, occasional medium charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Loose/firm mid orangey blackish brown sand | Abundant mixed stones and occasional charcoal flecks | Yes |

Photo 5. Test Pit 5.




Drawing 5. Section of Test Pit 5

### Test Pit 6: Jubilee Gardens (SO 78765 75183)

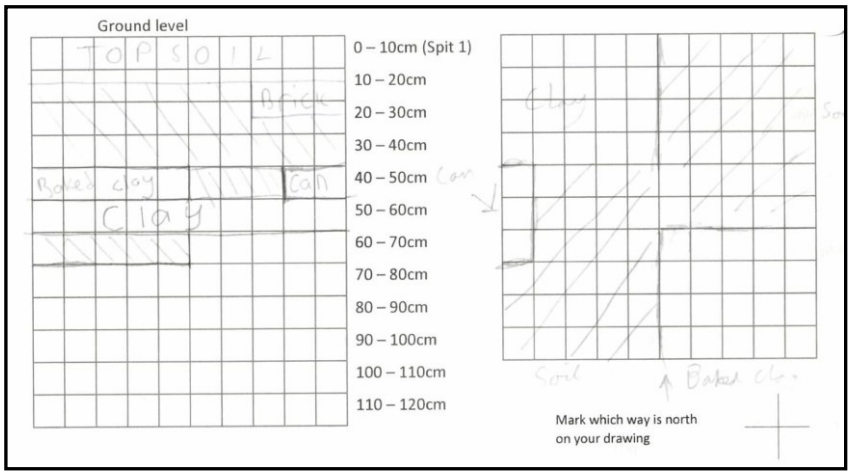
| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Firm dark blackish brown sandy silt | Medium and small stones, rare charcoal and abundant small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Compact blackish brown clay | Abundant large stones and small – medium roots. Charcoal flecks of charcoal | Yes |
| 3 | Firm/compact clay | Medium and large stones, charcoal flecks and large and medium roots | Yes |
| 4 | Firm mid greyish brown sand | Abundant medium stones, rare medium charcoal. Small and large roots | Yes |
| 5 | Firm mid greyish brown sand | Small and medium stones, occasional charcoal and small roots | Yes |


**Photo 6. Test Pit 6 with spit 7 visible in sondage on the left**

### Test Pit 7: Jubilee Gardens (SO 78795 75129)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Firm light orangey brown silt | Abundant medium stones and charcoal flecks, occasional small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Mid yellowish greyish brown clay. Some parts of the soil were yellowish brown clay, changed in parts of the pit, there also spots of charcoal in the clay | Abundant stones and occasional medium roots | Yes |
| 3 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt | Occasional small stones and medium roots. Abundant charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 4 | Compact sandy clay | Occasional small stones, charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Firm mid orangey brown sandy silt | Occasional small stones and roots, abundant charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 6 | Firm mid orangey brown sandy silt (baked clay in SE corner) | Occasional small stones and roots, abundant charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 7 | Firm mid orangey brown sandy silt (baked clay in SE corner) | Occasional small stones and small roots, abundant charcoal flecks | No |


**Photo 7. Test Pit 7 with sondage visible in top right corner**




**Drawing 6. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 7.**

## Test Pit 8: Kateshill House, Red Hill (SO 78808 74810)

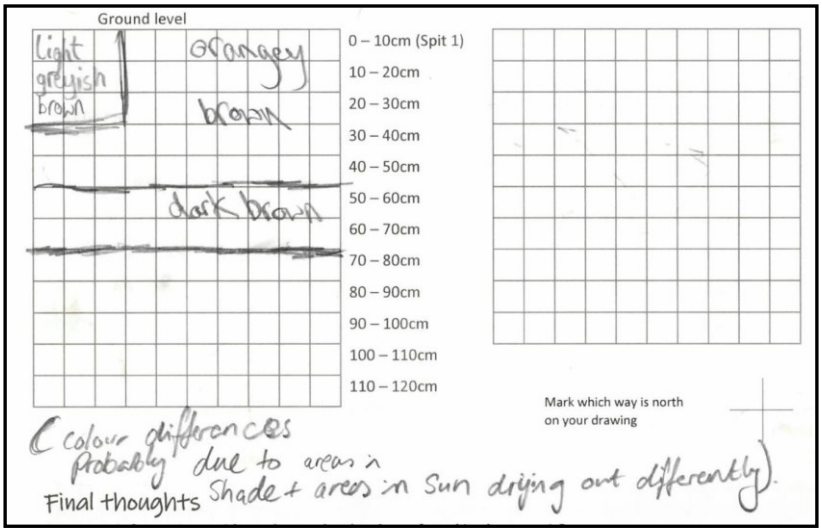
| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose light dark brown sandy clay | Occasional small stones, abundant medium charcoal and roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Occasional small stones and medium charcoal, abundant medium and large roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Rare small stones, abundant charcoal flecks and occasional medium roots | Yes |
| 4 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Very rare small stones, abundant medium and large flecks of charcoal and occasional small roots (concentration of charcoal in the NW and SW corners) | Yes |
| 5 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Rare small stones and small roots, abundant medium and large flecks of charcoal (concentration of charcoal in the NW and SW corners) | Yes |
| 6 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Occasional small – medium stones, abundant medium charcoal flecks and rare small roots charcoal (concentration of charcoal in the NW and SW corners) | Yes |
| 7 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Abundant small – medium stones, small – large charcoal flecks and small roots (concentration of charcoal in the NW and SW corners) | Yes |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Occasional medium stones and small – medium roots, Abundant small – large charcoal flecks (concentration of charcoal in the NW and SW corners) | Yes |
| 9 | Loose light greyish brown sand | - | Yes |
| 10 | Loose light greyish brown sand | Rare small stones and occasional small – large charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 11 | Loose light orangey brown sand | Rare stones, flecks of charcoal and roots | Yes |


**Photo 8. Test Pit 8, spit 11 with south-east facing section**

## Test Pit 9: Ribbesford (SO 78547 74010)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silty clay | Abundant small – large stones and small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silty clay | Abundant small stones and occasional small roots | Yes |
| 3 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silty clay | Abundant small – medium stones and rare small roots | Yes |
| 4 | Compact dark blackish brown silty clay | Abundant small stones and rare charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silty clay | Abundant small stones and rare charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 6 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy silty clay | Abundant mixed size stones and occasional charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 7 | Orangey brown silty clay | Frequent stones and charcoal, occasional CBM | Yes |
| 8 | Orangey brown silty clay (but more clay) | Concentration of burnt material & charcoal in SW corner | Yes |
| 9 | Orangey red brown silty clay with yellowy clay on western side of pit | Occasional small stones, occasional charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 10 | Orangey brown slightly silty clay | Occasional small stones, rare charcoal flecks | Yes |



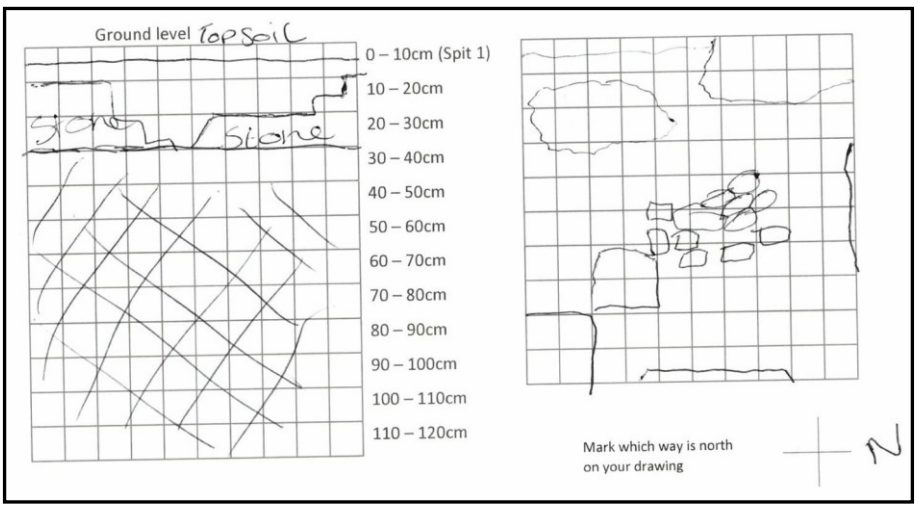

Drawing 7. Section of Test Pit 9

Photo 9. Test Pit 9 final overhead view

Photo 10. East facing section of Test Pit 9, spit 10

## Test Pit 10: Ribbesford (SO 78521 74013)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose light orangey brown sandy silt | Abundant large stones, rare charcoal flecks and occasional small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Firm light orangey brown silt | Abundant large stones and medium charcoal flecks, rare small roots | Yes |
| 3 | Firm light orangey brown silt | Abundant medium – large stones, occasional medium flecks of charcoal and rare small roots | Yes |

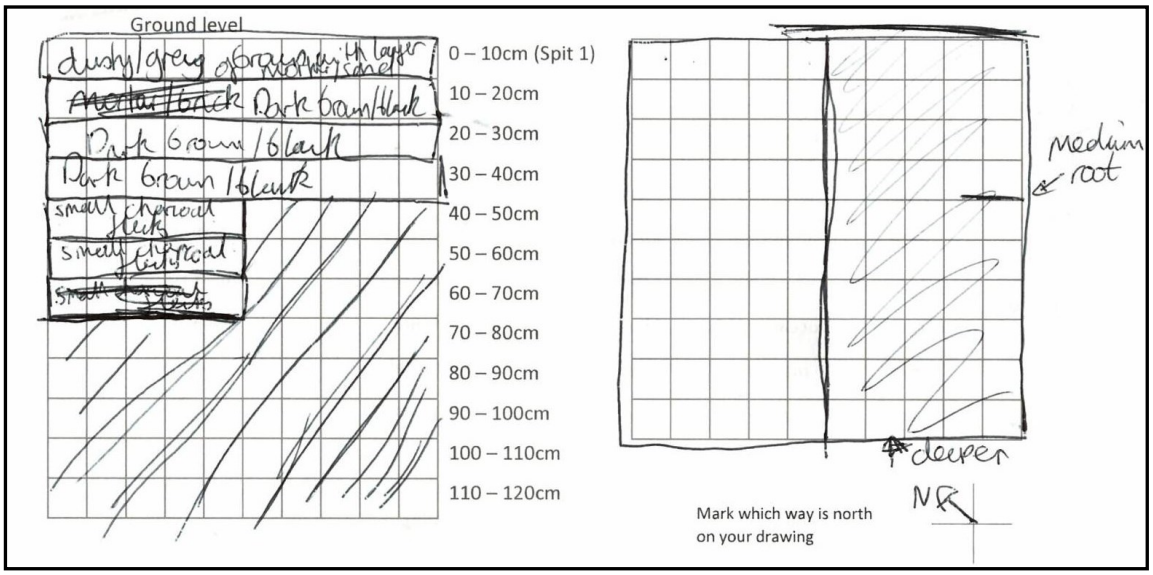



Drawing 8. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 10.


**Photo 11. Test Pit 10, spit 3.**

### Test Pit 11: 5 The Park (SO 78662 75087)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose mid/dark blackish brown clay | Abundant small stones, occasional large charcoal and small – medium roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose dark blackish brown clay | Occasional small stones, medium charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose/firm dark blackish brown clay | Occasional small stones, medium charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 4 | Firm dark blackish brown (sondage in SE half of pit) | Occasional small stones, medium charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Loose dark blackish brown clay | Occasional small stones, medium charcoal and small roots and rare medium roots | Yes |
| 6 | Loose/firm dark blackish brown clay | Occasional small stones, charcoal flecks and rare small roots | Yes |
| 7 | Firm dark blackish brown clay | Occasional small stones, medium charcoal flecks and rare small and medium roots | Yes |




**Drawing 9. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 11**

**Photo 12. Test Pit 11, spit 6**

**Photo 13.Section view, Test Pit 11.**

### Test Pit 12: 26 Load Street (SO 78546 75249)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose blackish brown | Occasional medium stones, medium charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose blackish brown | Occasional small stones, medium charcoal and small roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose blackish brown | Occasional charcoal and roots | Yes |
| 4 | Firm blackish brown | Occasional medium stones, charcoal and roots | Yes |
| 5 | Firm reddish brown (sondage in South side of pit) | Occasional small stones, medium charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 6 | Firm reddish brown sand | Occasional small stones and charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 8 | Firm orangey brown clay (Sondage in NE quarter) Very clayey, lots of small balls of sandy stuff that breaks up between the fingers | Small stones, and roots, occasional charcoal flecks | Yes |

Photo 14. Test Pit 12, working shot

### Test Pit 13: Gibralter House (SO 78445 75488)

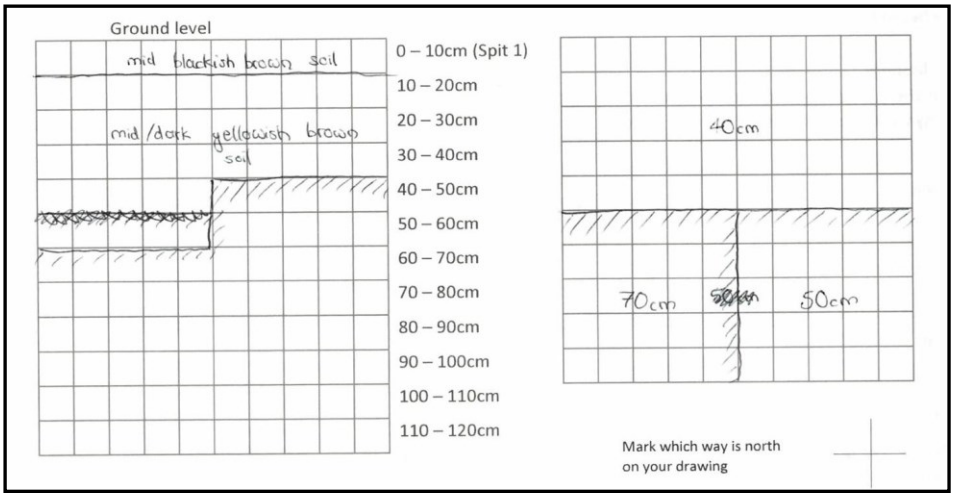
| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Firm dark greyish brown clay | Small – medium stones, charcoal flecks and occasional roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose greyish brown clay | Small stones, rare charcoal and roots | Yes |

**Closed down due to the presence of a significant amount of demolition material.**

### Test Pit 14: The Black Boy Public House (SO 78106 75128)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Compact mid blackish brown | Abundant medium stones, occasional medium charcoal and rare small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Firm mid yellowish brown | Abundant medium stones | Yes |
| 3 | Firm dark yellowish brown and | Abundant medium stones and rare charcoal | Yes |
| 4 | Firm/compact mid yellowish brown sand | Abundant mixed size stones, rare charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Firm mid yellowish brown sand (sondage in half of pit) | Abundant mixed size stones | Yes |
| 6 | Firm mid yellowish brown sand (sondage in quarter of pit) | Abundant mixed size stones and charcoal flecks | No |
| 7 | Firm mid yellowish brown sand (sondage in quarter of pit) | Abundant medium – large stones | No |

**Photo 15. Test Pit 14, spit 7 visible in the south-west sondage**

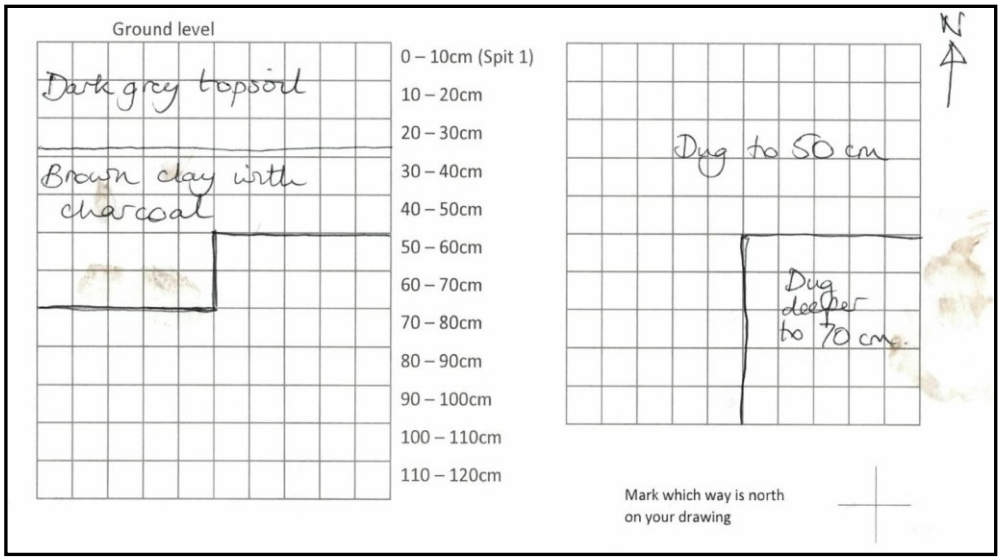



**Drawing 10. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 14**

## Test Pit 15: 45 Wyre Hill (SO 78065 75100)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose dark blackish brown silt. Loamy soil rich in organic material | Rare small stones, charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Firm dark blackish brown silt | Rare stones, charcoal and roots | Yes |
| 3 | Firm dark blackish brown silt, still high in organic material | Occasional medium stones, rare charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 4 | Compact mid orangey brown clay, lots of charcoal flecks after 35cm deep | Occasional medium stones, abundant charcoal flecks (below 35cm) and rare small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Compact mid yellowish brown clay. Less charcoal in this clay layer | Rare small stones, and roots, occasional medium charcoal | Yes |
| 6 | Compact mid orangey brown clay (sondage in SE quarter) | Rare small stones and small roots, abundant charcoal flecks | Yes |

**Photo 16. Test Pit 15, final photograph**



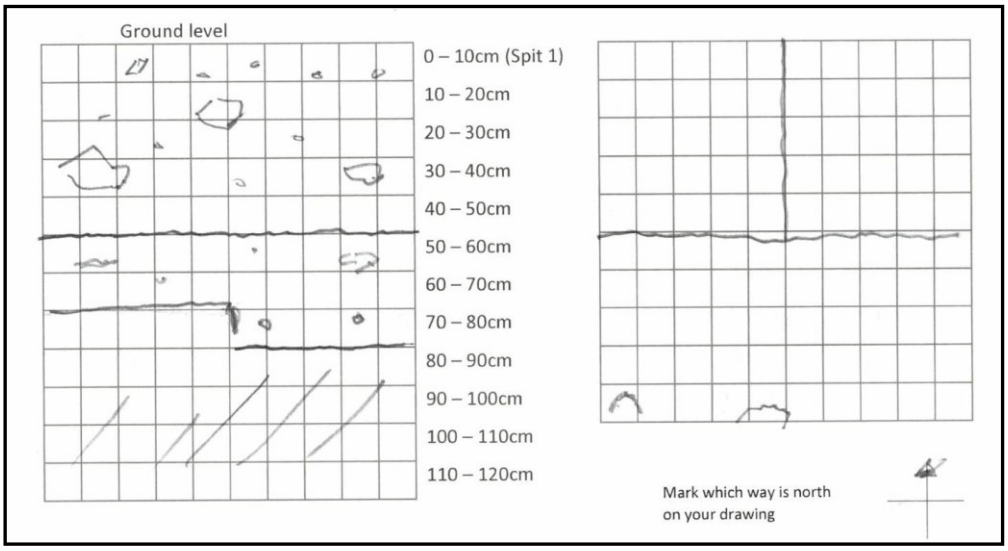

**Drawing 11. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 15.**

## Test Pit 16: Jubliee Gardens (SO 78752 75184)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose blackish brown | Abundant medium stones and small roots, occasional charcoal | Yes |
| 2 | Loose dark blackish brown | Small – large roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose blackish brown silt | Small stones, medium charcoal and occasional medium roots | Yes |
| 4 | Orangey brown sandy clay | Occasional medium roots | Yes |
| 5 | Loose orangey brown sandy clay | Small stones and charcoal flecks | Yes |
| 6 | - | - | Yes |
| 7 | Dark red sandy silt | Abundant medium stones, occasional charcoal flecks and rare medium roots | Yes |
| 8 | Loose orangey brown sandy silt | Small stones, charcoal flecks and occasional small roots | Yes |

Photo 17.Test pit 16

Photo 18. Section view, Test pit 16.

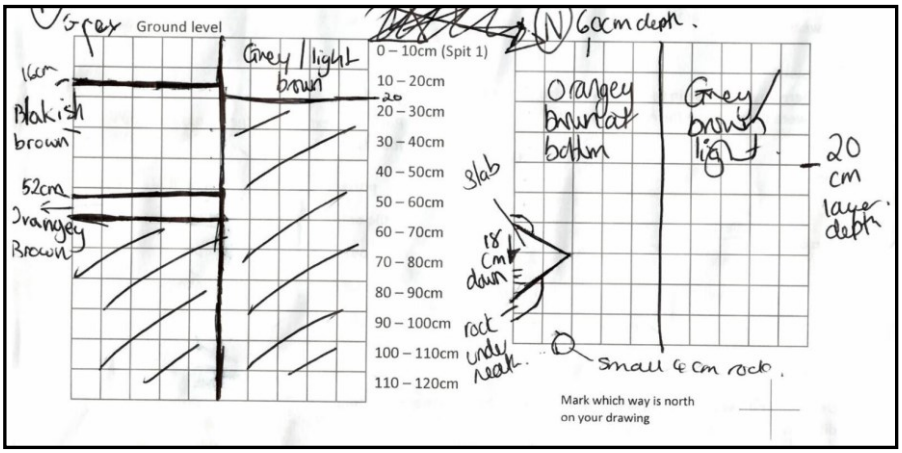



Drawing 12. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 16

## Test Pit 17: 71 Stourport Road (SO 79234 75211)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Compact mid orangey brown sand | Occasional med stones, charcoal flecks and abundant small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Firm mid greyish brown sand | Occasional large stones and medium roots, abundant medium charcoal | Yes |
| 3 | Loose mid greyish blackish brown sandy clay | Abundant medium stones and rare large roots | Yes |
| 4 | Loose mid greyish blackish brown silty clay | Abundant medium stone, occasional charcoal flecks and rare large roots | Yes |
| 5 | Loose mid/dark greyish brown clay | Occasional med stones, abundant charcoal flecks and rare small roots | Yes |
| 6 | Firm sandy clay | Abundant medium stones | Yes |


**Photo 19. Test Pit 17 with spit 6 visible in north-west sondage**

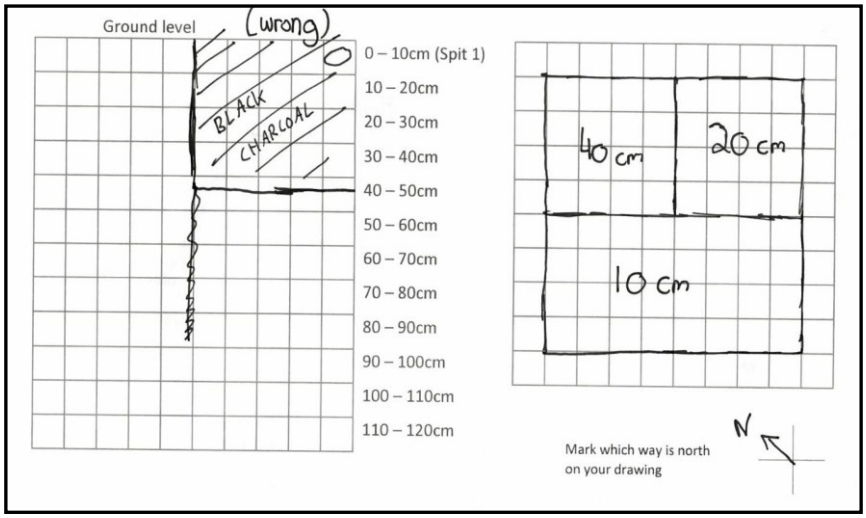



**Drawing 13. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 17**

## Test Pit 18: Bewdley Leisure Centre (SO 79391 74805)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Compact greyish brown | Occasional small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Compact dark greyish brown (sondage in NE side) | Small stones, rare small roots | Yes |
| 3 | Compact mid greyish brown sandy silt (sondage in Northern corner) | Occasional medium stones, medium charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 4 | Firm light greyish brown sand Sondage in Northern corner) | Rare small stones, abundant medium flecks of charcoal and rare small roots | Yes |

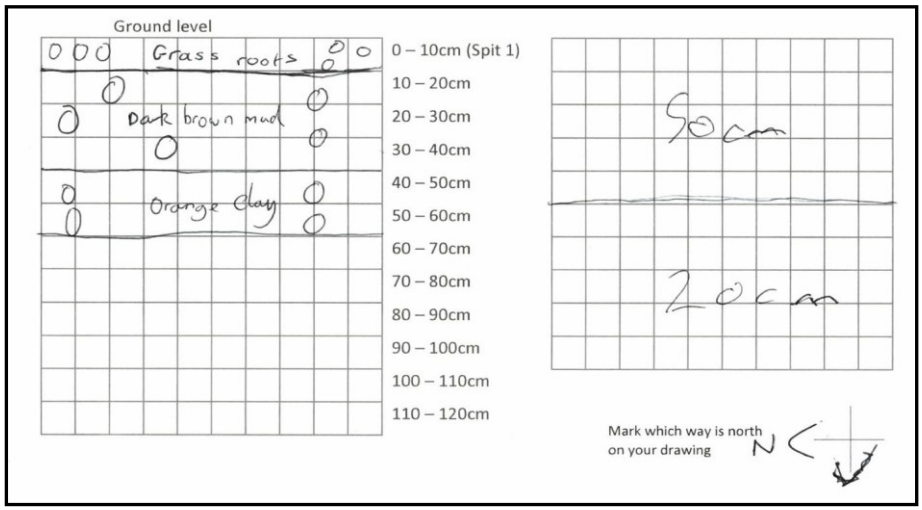

**Photo 20. Test Pit 18 with spit 4 visible in northern corner sondage.**




**Drawing 14. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 18.**

## Netherton Lane (SO 79422 74587)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Firm light greyish brown sand | Small stones, charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |
| 2 | Firm light greyish brown sand | Abundant large stones, occasional charcoal flecks and rare small roots | No |
| 3 | Firm/compact light orangey brown sand (sondage in Eastern side) | Small – medium stones | Yes |
| 4 | Firm light orangey brown sandy silt (sondage in Eastern side) | Occasional mixed size stones, charcoal flecks and rare small roots | Yes |
| 5 | Firm light orangey brown silt with patches of light grey (sondage in Eastern side) | Occasional small and large stones, charcoal flecks and small roots | Yes |

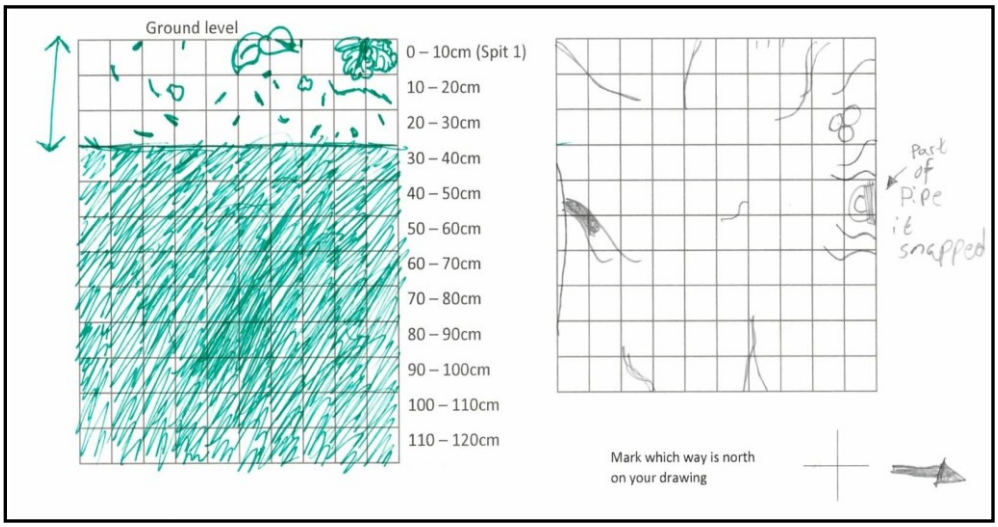



**Drawing 15. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 19.**


**Photo 21. Test Pit 19 with spit 5 visible in eastern sondage**

## Test Pit 20: Lower Blackstone Farm (SO 79409 74227)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Firm mid blackish brown silt | Abundant mixed size stones and mixed size roots | Yes |
| 2 | Compact mid blackish brown clay | Small – medium stones and abundant small – medium roots | Yes |

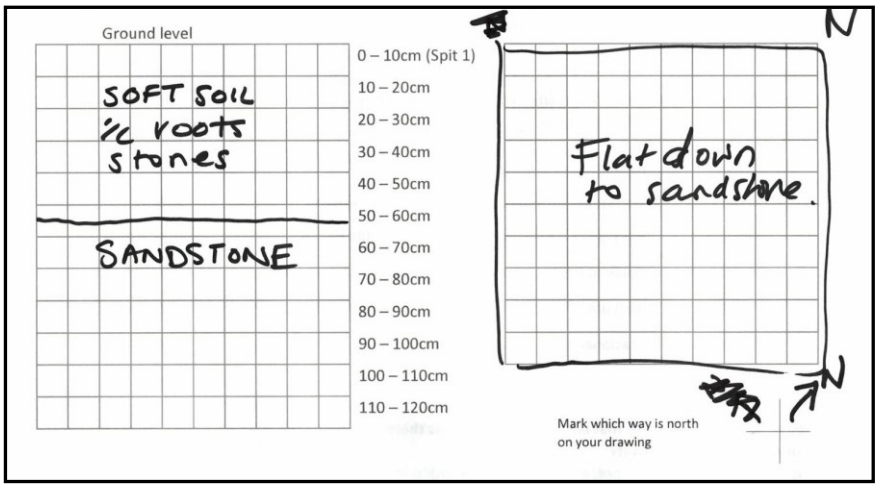



**Drawing 16. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 20**

**Photo 22.Test Pit 20 with spit 2 visible in north-west corner sondage**

## Test Pit 21: Lansdowne, Kidderminster Road (SO 79561 75772)

| Spit no. | Soil description | Inclusions | Artefacts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Loose dark blackish brown silt | Small stones and medium roots | Yes |
| 2 | Loose dark blackish brown silt | Occasional stones, and medium roots | Yes |
| 3 | Loose dark blackish brown silt | Occasional stones, charcoal flecks and medium roots | Yes |
| 4 | Loose dark blackish brown silt | Small stones, occasional charcoal and roots | Yes |
| 5 | Loose dark sand (sandstone at bottom of spit | Medium stones, rare charcoal and medium roots | Yes |
| 6 | Firm sandstone | Occasional stones, rare charcoal and roots | Yes |




Drawing 17. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 21.

# Appendix 3: Finds analysis

## Aims

This assessment aims to quantify, spot-date and sort artefacts according to broad fabric groups, to describe their range and significance, and to draw inferences regarding the development of the settlement through the 2nd millennium AD.

## Recovery strategy

All artefacts were hand-recovered by volunteers under the supervision of WAAS staff and volunteers from local archaeological societies.

## Standards and guidance

The project conforms to standards and guidance issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014) and CIfA's Toolkit for Specialist Reporting, as well as further guidance on pottery analysis, archive creation and museum deposition created by various pottery study groups (PCRG/SGRP/MPRG 2016), the Archaeological Archives Forum (AAF 2011), and the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA 1993).

## Methodology

### Background

This region, at the confluence of the historic counties of Staffordshire, Shropshire, and Worcestershire, is somewhat poorly-understood in terms of medieval pottery. In part, this is because there have been few large, modern archaeological excavations of the type that have traditionally allowed specialists to build up an in-depth picture of pottery typology (e.g. Bryant 2002, 2004; Ratkai 2014). It is also likely that many sites of small-scale medieval pottery production in the region are yet to be detected; potting could be informal, may not have formed the entirety of a producer's livelihood, and small medieval 'Musty'-type kilns may have left relatively little archaeological trace.

#### Shropshire

The study of medieval pottery in Shropshire presents a number of challenges. Barker's (1970) synthesis of 11th to 14th-century pottery in the county set a solid baseline, but the paucity of well-stratified sequences and excavated kiln sites left the chronological sequence 'disappointingly vague' (Barker 1970, 42). In the intervening half-century, significant progress has been made with the publication of a number of large assemblages: key among these is the pottery from the Queen Anne House site, Shrewsbury Abbey (Bryant 2002), which forms the basis for a comprehensive fabric series held by Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. Further work by Rátkai (e.g. 2014) on the pottery of the Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth region has enhanced understanding of the pottery sequence for central and south Shropshire, but it is still centred on towns; knowledge of the dynamics of production and supply in rural south Shropshire remains patchy.

The existence of a *Pottersload* and *Potters Meadow* by a river crossing at Alveley (Baker and Beach 2018, 96), together with 'Potter' personal names recorded from the 16th century onwards, may suggest rural production in this parish, 11km to the north of Bewdley.

### Staffordshire

Although similarly hampered by a paucity of excavated medieval kilns, the overall picture for Staffordshire was outlined by Deborah Ford (1995): a series of iron-rich sandy wares (IRSW) and Midlands white wares (MWW) dominate 13th and 14th-century assemblages, giving way to late medieval orange wares (LMOW) and Midlands Purple which dominate 15th and 16th-century assemblages. Much of the pottery production was concentrated in Northern and Central Staffordshire. Wednesbury was a significant producer in the later medieval period. Early production in south Staffordshire has been suggested based on place-name evidence at Crockington, near Trysull, but the etymology is somewhat uncertain and there is little archaeological evidence to suggest pottery production there (Horovitz 2003).

### Worcestershire

The county-wide fabric system for Worcestershire (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org) has comprehensive coverage of medieval material noted from major sites, but this is inevitably somewhat skewed towards urban assemblages from the central and southern parts of the county. The relative scarcity of large-scale developer-funded archaeological work in the north of the county leaves some gaps.

## Reference collections and concordances

Pottery is referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the Worcestershire fabric reference series. Given its limitations (outlined above), supplementary codes and descriptions from other relevant fabric series have been included where appropriate. Numbers beginning from 400 refer to project-specific fabric types. These have been used where fabrics are sufficiently different from anything in the Worcestershire series to warrant their own numbers. Among these, further concordances may emerge with material in the Shropshire and Staffordshire series in the future. Pottery sherds that could not be identified, or were too small to be identified accurately by fabric, were grouped as miscellaneous by period.

## Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were washed by volunteers. They were examined, classified and quantified under the supervision of Ken MacDonald, who summarised the quantification in an Excel spreadsheet and bagged the finds by material type for each spit. These quantifications were used as the basis for the subsequent analysis by Rob Hedge. Due to the large quantity of material, priority was given to those artefacts readily dateable by eye to relatively narrow date ranges, such as pottery and glass. Other material, such as undiagnostic CBM and iron that could not be reliably dated without further specialist imaging, was typically assigned a broad date range. All information was recorded in Google Sheets.

Individual artefacts or groups of artefacts within each spit were assigned calendar date ranges. For clarity and ease of interpretation, these have been grouped into Periods in the tables below. These reflect changing traditions and technological developments rather than strict historical categories.

Many types of artefact cross these somewhat arbitrary boundaries, and so the quantification tables (tables 3 and 4) include the period range, e.g. 'transitional to post-medieval' to account for these.

| Period | Description | Start date | End date | Centuries |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Prehistoric | -10000 | 43 | - |
| 2 | Roman | 43 | 400 | 1st to 4th |
| 3 | Early medieval | 400 | 1066 | 5th to mid-11th |
| 4 | High medieval | 1066 | 1350 | mid-11th to mid-14th |
| 5 | Late medieval | 1350 | 1500 | mid-14th to 15th |
| 6 | Transitional | 1500 | 1600 | 16th |
| 7 | Post-medieval | 1600 | 1800 | 17th to 18th |
| 8 | Later post-medieval | 1800 | 1900 | 19th |
| 9 | Modern | 1900 | 2000 | 20th |

**Table 1: Period dates**

## Results

### Quantification

The assemblage comprised 5341 artefacts weighing 64.8kg. Finds were recovered from all 21 test pits, although the volumes ranged considerably across the locations.

The following table quantifies the finds by material class and object type.

| Material | Object type | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|
| bone | bird bone | 11 | 11 |
| | horn | 1 | 41 |
| | mammal bone | 341 | 1387 |
| | mammal/bird bone | 14 | 14 |
| | mammal/bird/fish | 17 | 26 |
| | worked: button | 2 | 2 |
| | worked: toothbrush | 1 | 1 |
| bone Total | | 387 | 1482 |
| ceramic | ball | 1 | 3 |
| | brick | 25 | 8970 |
| | brick and tile | 113 | 5690 |
| | brick/tile | 235 | 4201 |
| | ceramic insulator | 1 | 1 |

| Material | Object type | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | clay pigeon | 1 | 8 |
| | clay pipe | 284 | 597 |
| | doll | 2 | 2 |
| | drain | 1 | 6 |
| | drain tile | 19 | 3405 |
| | figurine | 7 | 16 |
| | flat roof tile | 153 | 9870 |
| | floor tile | 3 | 147 |
| | glazed roof tile | 12 | 596 |
| | hearth material | 3 | 99 |
| | marble (clay) | 4 | 12 |
| | pot | 1876 | 10282 |
| | roof tile | 2 | 54 |
| | sanitary ceramic | 1 | 94 |
| | tile | 5 | 872 |
| | wall tile | 35 | 175 |
| ceramic Total | | 2783 | 45100 |
| composite | button | 1 | 1 |
| composite Total | | 1 | 1 |
| concrete | concrete | 1 | 3 |
| concrete Total | | 1 | 3 |
| copper alloy | ?lighter | 1 | 39 |
| | buckle | 3 | 21 |
| | button | 2 | 2 |
| | cog | 1 | 1 |
| | copper pipe | 1 | 25 |
| | cu alloy objects | 4 | 41 |

| Material | Object type | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | sheet | 1 | 1 |
| copper alloy Total | | 13 | 130 |
| cu alloy | cu alloy objects | 1 | 4 |
| cu alloy Total | | 1 | 4 |
| flint | blade segment | 1 | 1 |
| | burnt flint | 1 | 7 |
| | chunk | 1 | 5 |
| | retouched flake | 1 | 3 |
| | thumbnail scraper | 1 | 3 |
| flint Total | | 5 | 19 |
| glass | button | 1 | 1 |
| | marble | 2 | 11 |
| | marble (glass) | 1 | 5 |
| | vessel | 944 | 5615 |
| | window | 221 | 604 |
| glass Total | | 1169 | 6236 |
| graphite | pigeon: clay | 1 | 1 |
| graphite Total | | 1 | 1 |
| iron | bolt | 1 | 142 |
| | fe objects | 453 | 6766 |
| | hook | 1 | 2 |
| | nail | 32 | 168 |
| | spring | 3 | 35 |
| iron Total | | 490 | 7113 |
| lead | cloth seal | 1 | 4 |
| | lead object | 1 | 13 |
| | pipe | 3 | 8 |

| Material | Object type | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|
| lead Total | | 5 | 25 |
| lead alloy | unident | 1 | 15 |
| | window came | 1 | 2 |
| lead alloy Total | | 2 | 17 |
| misc stone | burnt stone | 6 | 104 |
| | calcite | 3 | 15 |
| | disc | 2 | 3 |
| | marble (stone) | 1 | 6 |
| | roof tile | 1 | 504 |
| | vitrified stone | 4 | 64 |
| misc stone Total | | 17 | 696 |
| mortar | cement mortar | 6 | 89 |
| | lime mortar | 15 | 86 |
| mortar Total | | 21 | 175 |
| mudstone | roof tile | 2 | 314 |
| mudstone Total | | 2 | 314 |
| organic | charcoal | 68 | 40 |
| | charcoal briquette | 3 | 92 |
| | coal | 116 | 227 |
| | peach stone | 1 | 1 |
| organic Total | | 188 | 360 |
| paint | paint residue | 8 | 13 |
| paint Total | | 8 | 13 |
| plaster | wall plaster | 8 | 55 |
| plaster Total | | 8 | 55 |
| plastic | button | 1 | 1 |
| | fragment | 1 | 1 |

| Material | Object type | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | light surround | 4 | 2 |
| plastic Total | | 6 | 4 |
| sandstone | floor tile | 1 | 275 |
| | paving stone | 1 | 582 |
| | tracery | 3 | 190 |
| sandstone Total | | 5 | 1047 |
| shell | oyster shell | 32 | 161 |
| | shell button | 1 | 4 |
| shell Total | | 33 | 165 |
| slag | clinker | 13 | 132 |
| | fe slag | 1 | 20 |
| | fuel ash slag | 27 | 137 |
| | slag (fe) | 43 | 600 |
| | slag (unident) | 1 | 3 |
| | smithing slag | 3 | 99 |
| slag Total | | 88 | 991 |
| slate | roof slate | 105 | 832 |
| | slate pencil | 1 | 1 |
| | writing slate | 1 | 3 |
| slate Total | | 107 | 836 |
| **Grand Total** | | **5341** | **64787** |

**Table 2: finds quantification by material and type**

## Pottery

### Roman (Period 2)

A single, heavily abraded sherd of oxidised Severn Valley Ware (fabric 12) of 1st to 4th-century date was recovered from TP6.

## Medieval/transitional (Periods 4-6)

### *Dating*

Pottery dating to Period 4 (late-11th to mid-14th century) was present in small quantities in the town centre (TP12), and on the east bank (TPs 2 and 19). All the material from these test pits was somewhat fragmentary; it shows that there was certainly activity in the area prior to the 14th century, but cannot tell us much about the degree to which the town was developed. In test pits 9 and 10, centred on the hamlet of Ribbesford to the south, larger quantities of medieval pottery were in good condition, and recovered from horizons containing only medieval material. Several diagnostic forms, including lid-seated rims in Malvernian unglazed ware (fabric 56) are typically associated with a 13th-century date.

Only a handful of sherds of late medieval (Period 5, mid-14th to 15th century) pottery were recovered, most notably from test pits 2 and 7. This is a common pattern in the ceramic signature of the region, and it is tempting to ascribe this decline to population crises of the later-14th century, but this was — the ravages of war excepted — a time of growth and prosperity for the town. It is more likely to represent the gap after ceramic cooking pots — vastly overrepresented in the archaeological record due to their fragility — ceased to be produced, and before the growth in the range of ceramic forms available to the consumer in the 16th century.

From the beginning of the 16th century, 'Transitional' (Period 6) wares appear in the assemblage. Examples from Test pits 14 and 15 on Wyre Hill include drinking vessels in regional redwares (fabrics 72, 78.4), a sherd of Southern white ware (fabric 70) from Surrey/Hampshire, and small quantities of continental stonewares.

The growing availability of a wide range of regional ceramics from the later-16th century is represented by the presence of Midlands Yellow (fabric 77) and North Devon gravel-tempered wares (fabric 75).

### *Sources*

In some ways this assemblage is more akin to those from Worcester than to those of rural North Worcestershire. Of the 93 sherds in fabrics originating in the mid-14th century or earlier, 62 (67%) are in the four most common Worcestershire fabrics: Worcester-type sandy unglazed (fabric 55) and glazed (fabric 64.1) wares, and Malvernian unglazed (fabric 56) and oxidised glazed (fabric 69) wares. At Wolverley, just 6 km to the northeast, only 13/55 (24%) of sherds from this period were from those 4 fabrics.

These are small sample sizes, so cannot alone be definitive, but the character of the rest of the assemblage does seem to confirm a difference: Wolverley contained many little-known local fabrics, alongside some whitewares probably produced in Staffordshire. Bewdley's assemblage contained only small quantities of those minor fabrics, and also included wares from much further afield: Brill-Boarstall (from Buckinghamshire) and several badly-abraded sherds of an iron-poor fabric that is thought to be Ham Green, produced in Bristol. The latter is no surprise, given the relative efficiency and low cost of river transport between Bewdley and Bristol (Dyer 1989, 309).

## Post-medieval (Periods 7-8)

From the 17th century onwards, the assemblage is dominated by black-glazed redware (fabric 78); these came from a wide range of sources, but most are likely to have originated in Staffordshire. Unusually for North Worcestershire, a number of the coarse earthenwares were in orange fabrics with orange or green glazes, some resembling Ashton Keynes products. These are more typical of assemblages along the lower Severn, and may have been opportunistically traded upriver by boat.

Manganese mottled wares mugs were evidently popular in the later-17th to mid-18th century. Stoneware drinking vessels were mostly Nottingham products (fabric 81.3), but there was one sherd of Westerwald (fabric 81.2). A small quantity of 17th/18th century English tin-glazed earthenware (fabric 82) was present, but the 18th-century refinement of white tablewares is marked by small quantities of white salt-glazed stoneware (fabric 81.5).

In the late-18th century, creamwares (fabric 84) and pearlwares (fabric 85.11) in a wide variety of decorated forms — hand-painted, engine-turned, banded, and marbled — appear to have been very common. Overall, creamwares outnumbered pearlwares by almost 5:1, a ratio broadly similar to that observed at Wolverley. Whether this is due to local production of creamwares is difficult to say: although convenient, the Kidderminster industry was relatively short-lived, and similar proportions have been noted elsewhere in the county (e.g. Wichenford). A small quantity of porcelain (fabric 83) likely to have been produced in Worcester in the later-18th century was observed, including a sherd from test pit 6. None of this early material bore closely diagnostic patterns or forms. Of note among the 19th-century porcelain were sherds of English Imari from test pit 12.

From the mid-19th century, the widespread availability of plain and decorated whitewares (fabric 85) was visible across all of the test pits. Besides the ubiquitous transfer-printed ‘blue and white’ were a range of engine-turned variants, ‘shell-edge’ wares, and some hand-painted wares of high quality.

One early-20th century pot of local interest was recovered from test pit 8, printed with ‘WRIBBENHALL NATIONAL SCHOOLS 1906’. The significance of the date is unclear, but may relate to the Education (Provision of Meals) Act passed in 1906, which allowed Local Education Authorities to provide free meals to schoolchildren.

| Period | Fabric code | Supplementary code | Count | Weight (g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2: Roman | 12 | Severn Valley Ware | 1 | 14 |
| 2: Roman Total | | | 1 | 14 |
| 4-5: High/Late medieval | 99 | ?Brill-Boarstall | 1 | 3 |
| | | Misc medieval wares | 4 | 19 |
| | 404 | Sandy oxidised with iron ore | 1 | 1 |

| Period | Fabric code | Supplementary code | Count | Weight (g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | sandy oxidised with sandstone and iron | 3 | 35 |
| | 410 | angular quartz, sandstone and iron | 1 | 6 |
| | 411 / 64.2 | Fine glazed whiteware | 5 | 19 |
| 4-5: High/Late medieval Total | | | 15 | 83 |
| 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 69 | Oxidised glazed Malvernian | 2 | 13 |
| | 99 | Late medieval oxidised ware | 1 | 10 |
| | | Misc medieval wares | 1 | 9 |
| 4-6: High medieval to transitional Total | | | 4 | 32 |
| 4: High medieval | 55 | Worcester-type unglazed | 11 | 63 |
| | 56 | Unglazed Malvernian | 35 | 407 |
| | 63 | Brill-Boarstall | 1 | 3 |
| | 64.1 | Worcester-type sandy glazed | 14 | 45 |
| | 99 | Misc medieval wares | 8 | 33 |
| | 400 | Medieval white ware with iron ore | 2 | 13 |
| | 409 | Grey igneous | 1 | 10 |
| | ?143 | Ham Green (Bristol) | 2 | 53 |
| 4: High medieval Total | | | 74 | 627 |
| 5-6: Late medieval / transitional | 99 | Misc medieval wares | 1 | 2 |
| 5-6: Late medieval/transitional Total | | | 1 | 2 |
| 5-7: Late medieval to post-med | 70 | Southern white ware | 1 | 1 |
| 5-7: Late medieval to post-med Total | | | 1 | 1 |
| 6-7: Transitional / early post-med | 72 | RW brown-glazed | 3 | 31 |
| | 75 | North Devon gravel-tempered | 2 | 5 |

| Period | Fabric code | Supplementary code | Count | Weight (g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 77 | Midlands Yellow | 20 | 82 |
| | 78 | Redware black-glazed | 1 | 1 |
| | 78.4 | RW speckled | 9 | 62 |
| | 81 | Continental stoneware | 5 | 13 |
| | | unident stonewares | 5 | 55 |
| | 90 | Post-medieval orange wares | 1 | 18 |
| | | Transitional orange wares | 5 | 16 |
| | 91 | Transitional buff ware | 1 | 2 |
| | 100 | Misc post-med | 1 | 5 |
| 6-7: Transitional/early post-med Total | | | 53 | 290 |
| 7-8: Post-med | | Astbury | 2 | 4 |
| | | Redware black-glazed | 64 | 294 |
| | 78 | RW brown-glazed | 1 | 1 |
| | | RW slip | 1 | 2 |
| | | RW unglazed | 46 | 401 |
| | 83 | Porcelain hand-painted | 2 | 4 |
| | | Porcelain | 5 | 15 |
| | | Porcelain hand-painted overglaze | 3 | 12 |
| | | Creamware | 139 | 301 |
| | | CW encrusted | 4 | 7 |
| | | CW inlaid slip | 1 | 4 |
| | 84 | CW misc factory slipware | 5 | 7 |
| | | CW Mocha | 6 | 12 |
| | | CW moulded | 1 | 6 |
| | | CW trail slip | 1 | 3 |
| | 85.11 | Pearlware | 22 | 57 |
| | | PW inlaid slip | 2 | 3 |

| Period | Fabric code | Supplementary code | Count | Weight (g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | PW misc factory slipware | 2 | 3 |
| | | PW plain | 7 | 22 |
| | | PW transfer-printed | 2 | 4 |
| | 100 | Misc post-med | 5 | 9 |
| 7-8: Post-medieval Total | | | 321 | 1171 |
| 7-9: Post-med to modern | 78 | RW unglazed | 81 | 653 |
| | 83 | Porcelain | 6 | 5 |
| 7-9: Post-medieval to modern Total | | | 87 | 658 |
| 7: Earlier post-med | 78 | Redware black-glazed | 180 | 1283 |
| | | RW brown-glazed | 10 | 85 |
| | | RW slipware | 1 | 2 |
| | | RW yellow | 1 | 3 |
| | 81 | Misc post-med stoneware | 1 | 1 |
| | 81.2 | Westerwald | 1 | 3 |
| | 81.3 | Nottingham | 21 | 43 |
| | 81.5 | White salt-glazed stoneware | 13 | 32 |
| | | WSG scratch blue | 1 | 1 |
| | 82 | TGE hand-painted blue | 1 | 12 |
| | | TGE hand-painted Poly | 2 | 21 |
| | | TGE plain | 9 | 19 |
| | | Tin-glazed earthenware | 4 | 15 |
| | 83 | Porc hand-painted (blue) | 2 | 2 |
| | | Porcelain | 2 | 14 |
| | 90 | Metropolitan slipware | 1 | 6 |
| | | Orange slipwares | 3 | 9 |
| | | Post-medieval orange wares | 11 | 221 |

| Period | Fabric code | Supplementary code | Count | Weight (g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Black-glazed buff ware | 2 | 20 |
| | | Buff unglazed | 2 | 5 |
| | | Buff ware | 1 | 1 |
| | | Manganese-mottled | 28 | 89 |
| | 91 | Misc buff wares | 1 | 1 |
| | | Staffordshire | 2 | 6 |
| | | Staffordshire comb | 8 | 55 |
| | | Staffordshire trail | 4 | 87 |
| | | Unident slipware | 2 | 2 |
| 7: Earlier post-medieval Total | | | 314 | 2038 |
| 8-9: Later post-med / modern | 78 | RW unglazed | 6 | 51 |
| | | RW yellow-glazed | 1 | 9 |
| | 81.4 | Misc late | 64 | 1385 |
| | 83 | Porcelain | 15 | 38 |
| | | Semi-porcelain | 14 | 48 |
| | 85 | Whiteware banded | 4 | 16 |
| | | WW colour test | 1 | 3 |
| | | WW gilt | 2 | 75 |
| | | WW hand-painted | 14 | 103 |
| | | WW hand-painted Poly | 1 | 2 |
| | | WW plain | 413 | 1330 |
| | | WW sponge | 1 | 2 |
| | | WW transfer-printed | 258 | 903 |
| | | WW unglazed - waster? | 1 | 4 |
| | 91 | Black-glazed buff ware | 1 | 19 |
| | | Yellowware | 70 | 523 |

| Period | Fabric code | Supplementary code | Count | Weight (g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Yellowware annular | 1 | 2 |
| | 100 | Misc post-med | 1 | 3 |
| 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern Total | | | 868 | 4516 |
| 8: Later post-med. | 83 | Porcelain: imari | 2 | 17 |
| | | Semi-porcelain | 6 | 105 |
| | 85 | Whiteware banded | 5 | 6 |
| | | WW cable | 1 | 3 |
| | | WW engine-turned | 4 | 6 |
| | | WW flow blue | 2 | 2 |
| | | WW hand-painted | 17 | 211 |
| | | WW marbled | 1 | 1 |
| | | WW misc | 1 | 1 |
| | | WW Mocha | 1 | 1 |
| | | WW shell edge blue | 12 | 28 |
| | | WW shell edge green | 2 | 3 |
| | | WW trail slip | 1 | 1 |
| | 85.11 | PW transfer-printed | 1 | 22 |
| | 100 | Misc post-med | 47 | 138 |
| | | Misc post-medieval | 1 | 23 |
| | | Misc post-medieval wares | 3 | 2 |
| 8: Later post-medieval Total | | | 107 | 570 |
| 9: Modern | 78 | RW unglazed | 7 | 33 |
| | 83 | Porcelain | 2 | 12 |
| | 85 | WW transfer-printed | 4 | 137 |
| | 101 | Misc modern | 17 | 98 |
| 9: Modern Total | | | 30 | 280 |
| **Grand Total** | | | **1876** | **10282** |

**Table 3: pottery fabrics by period**

## Ceramic building material

Ceramic building materials are difficult to date in this region, especially where fragments are small and lack diagnostic features. Generally speaking, brick was rare before the later-15th century, and before the 17th century tended to be restricted to chimneys. From the 17th century onwards it became more common, but there are (as yet) few consistent documented trends in fabrics.

Flat roof tile was widespread within urban areas from the 13th century onwards. Medieval and early post-medieval fabrics are relatively well-documented for Worcester (Fagan 2004), but the majority of tiles in use in Bewdley are more likely to have been locally made. There is, furthermore, a problem of residuality: it is very common to encounter flat roof tile re-used in later structures. Ridge tiles are less common in archaeological assemblages: this is largely due to the difficulty of identifying small fragments, the fact that they are typically less likely to fall and shatter, and the low overall proportion of them within a roof. They were generally glazed, although unglazed examples are also found.

Small undiagnostic fragments can generally only be assigned a broad 13th to 18th-century date. However, there were a number of trends that could be observed from larger fragments.

## Roof tile

Within the majority of the test pits, fragments of flat ceramic roof tile were ubiquitous. Most were locally-made, hard-fired post-medieval examples. Diagnostic fragments were rare, but the common presence of rounded iron nodules is comparable to tiles from the Worcester area (Griffin 2008), where it is generally associated with deposits of 16th to 18th-century date, and is most common in 18th-century contexts.

Transitional/early post-medieval tiles were common, typically sandy, fully-oxidised with sanded upper edges and nibs. Several examples were recovered from test pits 1 and 15. Demonstrably medieval tiles within the town were scarce, although examples with reduced cores from test pits 12 and 16 were of 13th to 15th-century date; one example with large clay pellet inclusions from test pit 18 is probably later medieval or transitional.

The Ribbesford test pits (9 and 10) produced a range of medieval ceramic roof tiles, including glazed ridge tiles. Test pit 10 also contained a mudstone peg tile of similar date. Ceramic and stone tiles — especially glazed ridge tiles — were not commonly used in vernacular buildings in a rural hamlet, so these examples are likely to have come from either the nearby St Leonard's Church, or a dwelling of some status such as a manor house.

## Brick and other tile

Brick fragments were common: most dated to the 18th or 19th century, though a few coarse, hand-made overfired examples with characteristic igneous rock fragments were present in test pits 9 and 14. These were thought to be 16th or 17th-century in date.

Several fragments of floor tile which are likely to be medieval in date were recovered from Ribbesford, but none had diagnostic features. Some curved and/or flanged tiles were probably fragments of late-18th or 19th-century land-drainage tile

## Other materials

### Slag

The assemblage contained relatively little slag, and much of this was clinker and undiagnostic fuel ash slag that may have been domestic in origin. Ironworking slag comprised just 45 pieces, weighing 710g. Only test pits 11 and 18 contained sufficient slag to suggest evidence of metalworking. Most were small and undiagnostic, with the exception of a piece of smithing hearth from Test pit 18, but all were consistent with smithing rather than iron production. This is a notable contrast to Wolverley's test pits, from which 279 pieces of ironworking slag weighing 7.1kg were recovered, including some evidence for bloomery production. It suggests that iron production may have been excluded from the town, perhaps confined to the more dispersed woodland settlements such as Wolverley.

### Glass

A large quantity of window glass and domestic vessel glass was recovered. The majority dated to the 19th and early-20th centuries, though many test pits yielded small quantities of earlier bottle glass dating to the later-17th or 18th centuries. Test pit 12 contained the most significant glass artefacts: small quantities of pre-18th century window glass, and an unusual survival: a clear soda-glass base from a pedestalled vessel of 16th or 17th century date.

### Flint

Five pieces of flint were recovered, all of which came from the test pits on the east bank of the river. Test pit 17 contained a retouched flake of Neolithic or early Bronze Age date (c4000 - 1500 BC). Test pit 19 contained three pieces: one burnt flint, potentially a later prehistoric 'potboiler'; a small tested nodule of pebble flint; and a small, burnt medial segment from a blade. The latter is not closely diagnostic: a Mesolithic or early Neolithic (10,000 - 3000 BC) date is possible, but it may equally be later Neolithic or early Bronze Age (3000 - 1500 BC).

A short distance to the south, test pit 20 contained a finely-worked thumbnail scraper, 20mm in diameter, of early Bronze Age date (2500 - 1500 BC).

### Clay pipe

Clay pipe fragments were numerous: there were no identifiable stamps, but a number of diagnostic bowls were recovered. The earliest was an early to mid-17th century bowl from test pit 6. Later-17th century examples were noted from test pits 6, 7, 12 and 16. 18th-century examples included a spurred bowl from test pit 4. Among the stem fragments was an unusual stamp: the inscription 'CYMRU AM BYTH' (Wales forever). Nationalist slogans on 19th-century clay pipes are not uncommon, but most examples from this region relate to the Irish nationalist movement. This pipe is unusual, and no parallels have yet been found.

### Bone

The animal bone assemblage comprised typical domestic butchery waste, but test pit 12 contained two pieces of worked bone: a button of post-medieval date, and a fragment from a later-19th or early-20th century toothbrush. A 19th/20th century bone button was recovered from test pit 3.

The majority of the bone came from domesticated mammals, but in test pit 10 a medieval deposit rich in organic material contained small bones, including a fish vertebrae.

### Miscellaneous finds

Miscellaneous finds of note included clay toy marbles from test pit 16. These were 18th or 19th-century in date; on one complete marble, parallel bands of red hand-painted decoration survived.

A small disc of lead also from test pit 16 bore traces of an embossed motif on one face; it is typical of cloth seals of the 16th to 18th century.

Among the organic material from a medieval deposit in test pit 10 was a fragment from a peach stone: these are relatively uncommon finds from medieval contexts, although documentary references attest to their presence in Britain from the early 13th century (Hedrick 1917, 35).

## List of finds by test pit

The following table outlines the quantity and date of each type of material from each test pit.

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 51 | 147 |
| | ceramic | brick and tile | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 12 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 11 | 157 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 7 | 13 |
| | | drain tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 28 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 3 | 167 |
| | | | 5-7: Late medieval to post-med | 15 | 1979 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 105 |
| | | pot | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 10 | 72 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 26 | 144 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 6 | 51 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 6 | 20 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 50 | 180 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 6 | 30 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 2 | 17 |
| | copper alloy | cog | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-8: Post-medieval | 5 | 48 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 48 | 155 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 1 | 12 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 6 | 24 |
| | | window | 7-8: Post-medieval | 7 | 9 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 11 | 17 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 90 | 680 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 9 | 236 |
| | | nail | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 12 |
| | lead alloy | unident | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 15 |
| | | window came | 5-8: Late medieval to post-med | 1 | 2 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 11 | 22 |
| | plastic | button | 9: Modern | 1 | 1 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 5 | 21 |
| | | shell button | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 4 |
| | slag | fuel ash slag | 10: Undated | 2 | 11 |
| | | smithing slag | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 1 | 35 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 4 | 9 |
| 1 Total | | | | 402 | 4436 |
| 2 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 3 | 4 |
| | ceramic | clay pipe | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 18 | 28 |
| | | flat roof tile | 5-7: Late medieval to post-med | 1 | 77 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 25 |
| | | pot | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 1 | 3 |
| | | | 5-6: Late medieval/transitional | 1 | 2 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 9 | 35 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 4 | 5 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 15 | 50 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-8: Post-medieval | 3 | 9 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 6 | 23 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 1 | 2 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 3 | 20 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 11 | 324 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 4 | 218 |
| | | nail | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 2 | 12 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 1 | 3 |
| | plaster | wall plaster | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 4 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 2 | 11 |
| 2 Total | | | | 89 | 857 |
| 3 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 21 | 96 |
| | | worked: button | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | ceramic | brick | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 110 |
| | | brick and tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 16 | 726 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 28 | 61 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 26 | 74 |
| | | drain tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 4 | 83 |
| | | figurine | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 4 | 10 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 3 | 222 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 14 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 8 | 404 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 33 | 187 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 4 | 3 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 9 | 48 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 110 | 479 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 11 | 113 |
| | glass | marble | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 11 |
| | | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 128 | 470 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 103 | 352 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 2 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 15 | 118 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 19 | 336 |
| | | nail | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 11 | 68 |
| 3 Total | | | | 561 | 3989 |
| 4 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 9 | 184 |
| | ceramic | brick and tile | 6-8: Transitional to post-med | 14 | 674 |
| | | ceramic insulator | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | clay pipe | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 5 | 8 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 19 | 35 |
| | | flat roof tile | 6-8: Transitional to post-med | 1 | 158 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 24 |
| | | hearth material | 10: Undated | 2 | 80 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 49 | 200 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 5 | 18 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 121 | 279 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 12 | 53 |
| | | wall tile | 9: Modern | 21 | 56 |
| | composite | button | 9: Modern | 1 | 1 |
| | copper alloy | buckle | 9: Modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | cu alloy objects | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 5 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | cu alloy | cu alloy objects | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 4 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 90 | 275 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 5 | 103 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 5 | 55 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 8 | 61 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 51 | 881 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 3 | 2 |
| | slag | fuel ash slag | 10: Undated | 1 | 8 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 3 | 52 |
| 4 Total | | | | 432 | 3219 |
| 5 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 7 | 16 |
| | ceramic | brick | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 6 | 3462 |
| | | brick and tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 17 | 1212 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 8 | 198 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 4 |
| | | flat roof tile | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 2 | 283 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 21 | 120 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 14 | 108 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 14 | 24 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 4 | 5 |
| | copper alloy | cu alloy objects | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 4 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 3 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 8 | 20 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 4 | 9 |
| | iron | nail | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 2 | 8 |
| | | | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 2 |
| | sandstone | paving stone | 10: Undated | 1 | 582 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 4 | 8 |
| 5 Total | | | | 117 | 6068 |
| 6 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 40 | 278 |
| | ceramic | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 19 | 43 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 11 |
| | | drain tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 5 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 8 | 473 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 2 | 202 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 4 | 307 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 67 |
| | | pot | 2: Roman | 1 | 14 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 11 | 79 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 14 | 88 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 47 | 379 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 46 | 120 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 10 | 38 |
| | | tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 211 |
| | copper alloy | ?lighter | 9: Modern | 1 | 39 |
| | | buckle | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 9 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-8: Post-medieval | 11 | 41 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 3 | 7 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 33 | 59 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 8 | 22 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 1 | 1 |
| | iron | spring | 9: Modern | 3 | 35 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 13 | 70 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 14 | 176 |
| 6 Total | | | | 295 | 2775 |
| 7 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 15 | 58 |
| | ceramic | ball | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 3 |
| | | brick | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 26 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 1272 |
| | | brick and tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 2 | 34 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 6 | 68 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 40 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 37 | 60 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 6 |
| | | drain tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 7 | 230 |
| | | figurine | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 2 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 5 | 434 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 7 | 234 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 70 |
| | | hearth material | 10: Undated | 1 | 19 |
| | | pot | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 1 | 10 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 6 | 32 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 33 | 72 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 2 | 11 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 61 | 431 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 98 | 341 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 17 | 34 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 24 | 126 |
| | | wall tile | 9: Modern | 13 | 105 |
| | copper alloy | copper pipe | 9: Modern | 1 | 25 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | cu alloy objects | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 32 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 88 | 347 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 17 | 288 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 5 | 12 |
| | iron | fe objects | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 74 | 1253 |
| | | nail | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 9 | 40 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 3 | 17 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 2 | 4 |
| | slag | fe slag | 10: Undated | 1 | 20 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 19 | 211 |
| 7 Total | | | | 564 | 5967 |
| 8 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 5 | 62 |
| | ceramic | brick | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 1082 |
| | | brick and tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 4 | 86 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 5 | 105 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 4 | 46 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 2 |
| | | figurine | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 3 |
| | | flat roof tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 7 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 9 | 95 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 10 | 75 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 8 | 25 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 60 | 1753 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 2 | 182 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 4 | 137 |
| | | sanitary ceramic | 9: Modern | 1 | 94 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 3 | 8 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 9: Modern | 36 | 1540 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 2 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 4 | 19 |
| | graphite | pigeon: clay | 9: Modern | 1 | 1 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 15 | 61 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 41 | 1254 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 2 | 42 |
| | | nail | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 21 |
| | lead | lead object | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 13 |
| | | pipe | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 3 | 8 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 6 | 11 |
| | slag | smithing slag | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 1 | 29 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 9 |
| 8 Total | | | | 234 | 6772 |
| 9 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 58 | 182 |
| | ceramic | brick | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 1 | 381 |
| | | brick and tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 1 | 23 |
| | | brick/tile | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 6 | 12 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 15 | 27 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 11 | 338 |
| | | | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 2 | 85 |
| | | floor tile | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 1 | 106 |
| | | glazed roof tile | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 11 | 520 |
| | | pot | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 7 | 50 |
| | | | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 2 | 13 |
| | | | 4: High medieval | 68 | 557 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 1 | 1 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 14 | 26 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 8 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 17 | 190 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 8 | 10 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 3 | 6 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-8: Post-medieval | 7 | 28 |
| | | window | 7-8: Post-medieval | 3 | 8 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 32 | 264 |
| | | nail | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 7 |
| | misc stone | burnt stone | 10: Undated | 1 | 40 |
| | | calcite | 10: Undated | 3 | 15 |
| | organic | charcoal | 10: Undated | 58 | 36 |
| | | peach stone | 10: Undated | 1 | 1 |
| | sandstone | tracery | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 3 | 190 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 2 | 2 |
| | slag | slag (fe) | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 2 | 12 |
| 9 Total | | | | 341 | 3138 |
| 10 | bone | mammal/bird bone | 10: Undated | 14 | 14 |
| | | mammal/bird/fish | 10: Undated | 17 | 26 |
| | ceramic | brick/tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 2 | 267 |
| | | pot | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 5 | 19 |
| | | | 4: High medieval | 2 | 53 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 2 |
| | | tile | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 1 | 10 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 423 |
| | copper alloy | sheet | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 1 | 1 |
| | iron | hook | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 2 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | nail | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 4 |
| | mortar | lime mortar | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 14 | 76 |
| | mudstone | roof tile | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 2 | 314 |
| | organic | charcoal | 10: Undated | 10 | 4 |
| | sandstone | floor tile | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 1 | 275 |
| 10 Total | | | | 73 | 1490 |
| 11 | bone | bird bone | 10: Undated | 11 | 11 |
| | | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 60 | 118 |
| | ceramic | brick | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 290 |
| | | brick and tile | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 3 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 11 | 813 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 14 | 26 |
| | | drain tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 9 |
| | | flat roof tile | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 6 | 284 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 7 | 376 |
| | | marble (clay) | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 2 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 14 | 25 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 20 | 183 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 26 | 95 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 72 | 239 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 13 | 25 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 88 | 248 |
| | | window | 7-8: Post-medieval | 8 | 16 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 19 | 44 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 5 | 47 |
| | | | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 22 | 279 |
| | misc stone | disc | 10: Undated | 2 | 3 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | marble (stone) | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 6 |
| | slag | slag (fe) | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 14 | 141 |
| | slate | roof slate | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 4 | 94 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 12 | 28 |
| | | slate pencil | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | writing slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 3 |
| 11 Total | | | | 435 | 3409 |
| 12 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 9 | 16 |
| | | worked: button | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | | worked: toothbrush | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | ceramic | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 17 | 33 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 1 | 69 |
| | | | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 1 | 260 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 60 |
| | | pot | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 1 | 10 |
| | | | 4-6: High medieval to transitional | 1 | 9 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 6 | 17 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 18 | 40 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 14 | 87 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 18 | 164 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 53 | 160 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 12 | 38 |
| | glass | marble (glass) | 9: Modern | 1 | 5 |
| | | vessel | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 1 | 5 |
| | | | 6-8: Transitional to post-med | 4 | 22 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 14 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 15 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 8 | 10 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | window | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 3 | 4 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 4 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 2 | 19 |
| | | nail | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 2 | 8 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 24 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 2 | 3 |
| | plaster | wall plaster | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 2 | 15 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 2 | 8 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 7 | 18 |
| 12 Total | | | | 196 | 1141 |
| 13 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 1 | 1 |
| | ceramic | drain tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 41 |
| | | flat roof tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 211 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 92 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 3 | 10 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 13 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 5 | 13 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 4 | 51 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 10 | 52 |
| | iron | nail | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 3 | 13 |
| | plastic | fragment | 9: Modern | 1 | 1 |
| 13 Total | | | | 33 | 498 |
| 14 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 2 | 4 |
| | ceramic | brick | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 673 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 4 | 6 |
| | | flat roof tile | 6-8: Transitional to post-med | 5 | 855 |
| | | pot | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 2 | 5 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 2 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 2 | 7 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 5 | 15 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 6 | 28 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 4 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 3 | 36 |
| | | nail | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 4 |
| 14 Total | | | | 34 | 1639 |
| 15 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 12 | 47 |
| | ceramic | brick and tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 59 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 20 | 35 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 1 | 44 |
| | | | 5-7: Late medieval to post-med | 3 | 92 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 1 | 28 |
| | | marble (clay) | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | | pot | 5-7: Late medieval to post-med | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 4 | 8 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 19 | 22 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 3 | 9 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 31 | 176 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 68 | 92 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 8 | 10 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 6 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 35 | 73 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 2 | 4 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 7 | 29 |
| | misc stone | burnt stone | 10: Undated | 1 | 44 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 1 | 23 |
| 15 Total | | | | 222 | 804 |
| 16 | bone | horn | 10: Undated | 1 | 41 |
| | | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 25 | 97 |
| | ceramic | brick | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 140 |
| | | brick and tile | 6-8: Transitional to post-med | 8 | 1434 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 29 | 79 |
| | | figurine | 8: Later post-medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 3 | 636 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 8 | 366 |
| | | marble (clay) | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 9 |
| | | pot | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 6 | 61 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 24 | 44 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 9 | 158 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 23 | 222 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 36 | 483 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 2 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 10 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 47 | 452 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 22 | 53 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 11 | 63 |
| | lead | cloth seal | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 1 | 4 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | misc stone | roof tile | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 1 | 504 |
| | organic | charcoal briquette | 9: Modern | 3 | 92 |
| | shell | oyster shell | 10: Undated | 3 | 43 |
| | slag | slag (fe) | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 4 | 50 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 21 |
| 16 Total | | | | 273 | 5066 |
| 17 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 18 | 64 |
| | ceramic | brick | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 639 |
| | | brick/tile | 5-8: Late medieval to post-med | 58 | 1856 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 50 | 1490 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 5 | 11 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 4 |
| | | doll | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 2 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 4 | 6 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 6 | 33 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 4 | 4 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 35 | 106 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 4 | 7 |
| | | wall tile | 9: Modern | 1 | 14 |
| | copper alloy | button | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | flint | retouched flake | 1: Prehistoric | 1 | 3 |
| | glass | button | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 47 | 444 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 13 | 221 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 17 | 35 |
| | iron | bolt | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 142 |
| | | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 12 | 356 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | misc stone | vitrified stone | 10: Undated | 4 | 64 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 53 | 104 |
| | paint | paint residue | 9: Modern | 8 | 13 |
| | slag | clinker | 10: Undated | 13 | 132 |
| | | fuel ash slag | 10: Undated | 18 | 100 |
| | | smithing slag | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 1 | 35 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 5 | 59 |
| 17 Total | | | | 384 | 5946 |
| 18 | ceramic | brick | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 53 |
| | | brick/tile | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 15 | 47 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 2 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 1 | 36 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 1 | 20 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 4 | 4 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 2 | 4 |
| | | window | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 1 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 7 |
| | mortar | lime mortar | 6-8: Transitional to post-med | 1 | 10 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 6 | 4 |
| | slag | fuel ash slag | 10: Undated | 5 | 16 |
| | | slag (fe) | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 16 | 358 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| 18 Total | | | | 60 | 566 |
| 19 | ceramic | brick | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 4 | 280 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 307 |
| | | brick/tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 42 | 179 |
| | | | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 44 | 193 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 3 | 4 |
| | | flat roof tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 12 | 337 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 5 | 127 |
| | | floor tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 33 |
| | | pot | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 4: High medieval | 4 | 17 |
| | | | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 6 | 10 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 6 | 13 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 25 | 85 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 9 | 23 |
| | concrete | concrete | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 3 |
| | flint | blade segment | 1: Prehistoric | 1 | 1 |
| | | burnt flint | 1: Prehistoric | 1 | 7 |
| | | chunk | 1: Prehistoric | 1 | 5 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 7 | 15 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 3 | 3 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 3 | 1 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 6 | 54 |
| | misc stone | burnt stone | 10: Undated | 1 | 12 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 18 | 22 |
| | plaster | wall plaster | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 2 | 18 |
| | plastic | light surround | 9: Modern | 4 | 2 |
| | slag | slag (fe) | 4-9: Medieval to modern | 6 | 36 |
| | | | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 1 | 3 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 6 | 22 |
| 19 Total | | | | 224 | 1813 |
| 20 | ceramic | brick | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 3 | 255 |
| | | brick/tile | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 4 | 23 |
| | | clay pigeon | 9: Modern | 1 | 8 |
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 2 |
| | | drain tile | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 3 | 3009 |
| | | flat roof tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 3 | 59 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 9 | 231 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 1 | 4 |
| | | floor tile | 9: Modern | 1 | 8 |
| | | pot | 7-8: Post-medieval | 18 | 26 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 1 | 1 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 3 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 8 | 10 |
| | flint | thumbnail scraper | 1: Prehistoric | 1 | 3 |
| | glass | vessel | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 9 | 72 |
| | | | 9: Modern | 11 | 16 |
| | | window | 9: Modern | 64 | 148 |
| | iron | nail | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 3 | 9 |
| | mortar | cement mortar | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 21 |
| | slag | fuel ash slag | 10: Undated | 1 | 2 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 4 | 22 |
| 20 Total | | | | 149 | 3932 |
| 21 | bone | mammal bone | 10: Undated | 5 | 13 |
| | ceramic | brick/tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 10 | 126 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 4 | 8 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | clay pipe | 7-8: Post-medieval | 8 | 22 |
| | | drain | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 6 |
| | | flat roof tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 1 | 8 |
| | | pot | 6-7: Transitional/early post-med | 1 | 5 |
| | | | 7-8: Post-medieval | 4 | 13 |
| | | | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 8 | 36 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 11 | 44 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 51 | 135 |
| | | | 8: Later post-medieval | 3 | 27 |
| | | roof tile | 7-8: Post-medieval | 2 | 54 |
| | copper alloy | buckle | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 11 |
| | | button | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 1 | 1 |
| | glass | vessel | 7-9: Post-medieval to modern | 12 | 55 |
| | | | 7: Earlier post-medieval | 1 | 2 |
| | | | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 25 | 58 |
| | | window | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 22 | 34 |
| | iron | fe objects | 4-9: Medieval to post-med | 13 | 148 |
| | misc stone | burnt stone | 10: Undated | 3 | 8 |
| | mortar | cement mortar | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 5 | 68 |
| | organic | coal | 10: Undated | 16 | 21 |
| | plaster | wall plaster | 7-8: Post-medieval | 3 | 18 |
| | slag | slag (unident) | 10: Undated | 1 | 3 |
| | slate | roof slate | 8-9: Later post-medieval/modern | 8 | 34 |
| 21 Total | | | | 220 | 958 |
| R | ceramic | glazed roof tile | 4-5: High/Late medieval | 1 | 76 |
| | | tile | 4-7: High medieval to post-med | 2 | 228 |
| R Total | | | | 3 | 304 |

| Test Pit | Material | Object type | Period | Count | Weight(g) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grand Total** | | | | **5341** | **64787** |

**Table 4: Finds from each test pit by period and type**

## Conclusions

The small quantity of prehistoric and Roman material is typical of rural landscapes in the region, reflecting a long history of settlement.

Small quantities of medieval material dating from the 12th century onwards were present within the town, on both sides of the river: around Load Street, and at Netherton Lane. Diagnostic forms mostly come from cooking pots produced during the long-13th century (c1180 - 1320). Whether or not these reflect the early years of the town is hard to determine, for they are relatively sparse and in poor condition, and may have been deposited in agricultural soils. The largest quantity of medieval material came from Ribbesford, at which the test pits have uncovered evidence of a lost medieval settlement around the church.

Within the town, the frequency and range of finds increased considerably from the 16th to the 19th century, reflecting both the fortunes of the town and the increasing availability and affordability of consumer goods. There was a particularly wide range of later-18th century wares. It is clear that Bewdley was able to source pottery from a wider range than other settlements in North Worcestershire and South Shropshire, due to the ease of transporting goods by river and Bewdley's key location for overland trans-shipment to east and west.

## Significance

The assemblage is large and the majority does not warrant retention. However, retaining the Roman and medieval material and a representative sample of the better-preserved post-medieval pottery and clay pipe would be worthwhile, subject to Museums Worcestershire's advice. Local display and educational use in teaching or handling collections would be appropriate.

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# Appendix 4: Common pottery types

### Fabric 12: Severn Valley ware, 1st to 4th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/63

These Roman pots are the most common type found across Worcestershire. They came in a wide variety of forms, including as jars, bowls, tankards and flagons. Vessels were made in Malvern, in both reduced and organically tempered versions, as part of a widespread regional pottery tradition – production of similar pottery is known from sites along the Severn Valley as far south as Shepton Mallet and Wroxeter in the north.

### Fabric 55: Medieval cooking pot, 12th to 14th century

Coarse, earthenware cooking pots were made in most major towns and cities across medieval England. We often find them covered in soot from cooking fires.

They're often dull grey or brown, with a gritty texture and visible inclusions, and can be hard to distinguish from Iron Age and Roman fabrics at first sight.

In the later medieval period, technological advances and increasing wages (due to labour shortages caused by the Black Death) made metal pots more affordable, and ceramic cooking pots disappear from the archaeological record.

Most found in this area were made in or around:

**Worcester** (Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware, fabric 55): https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/2

**Malvern** (Malvernian unglazed ware, fabric 56): https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/3

### Fabric 62: Deritend ware, 13th to 14th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/47

Decorated jugs from the Deritend area of Birmingham. The fabric is generally orange all the way through and the surface may be decorated with painted white lines and a sparse green glaze.

### Fabric 63: Brill-Boarstall ware, 13th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/26

Made in Buckinghamshire, these highly decorated jugs are found across Oxfordshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire. Jugs tend to have a green glaze and be decorated with roller stamps, extra clay strips or faces, or painted with red and white slip. The fabric varies from pale orange to buff and pale grey.

## Fabric 64.1: Worcester-type ‘sandy’ ware, 13th to 14th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/5

Highly decorated jugs and pitchers covered in splashes of green lead-based glaze were made in most major cities in the medieval period.

They tend to have inclusions, visible by eye, of quartz, stone or shell, and will vary in colour: often with a grey core and buff/orange/brown surfaces

## Fabric 72: Brown glazed speckled ware, 15th to 17th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/48

Also known as Cistercian ware, these cups were glazed inside and out. Their speckled appearance comes from small pieces of sand in the glaze that haven’t fused. The fabric is usually orange when fired at lower temperatures and dark red/ purple at higher temperatures.

## Fabric 77: Midlands yellow ware, late 16th to 19th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/191

Pale yellow was the most sought-after colour, but the lead glaze (which can be shiny or dull) is more often bright yellow. Large vessels tend to be made from red clay and have a white slip between the body of the pot and yellow glaze.

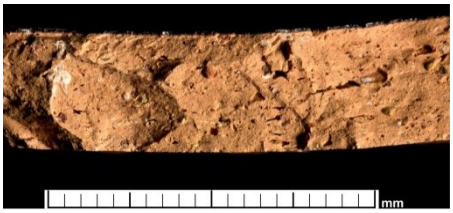
## Fabric 78: Post-medieval ‘redware’, late 16th to early 19th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/196

Cheap and robust, this earthenware pottery has a red body with few visible inclusions, and glossy dark glaze. It was the staple of a country household, made in a wide variety of forms including ‘pancheons’ (mixing bowls), mugs, and chamberpots.

It emerged from earlier 'Cistercian'-type wares, the most common form being fine walled drinking vessels with multiple handles, known as 'tygs' https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/forms/441 .

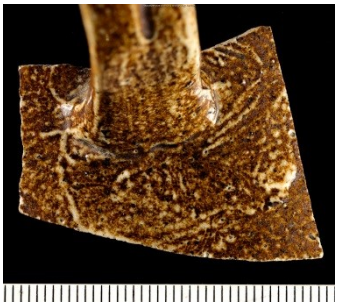
Black or dark brown glazes are common in the upper Severn valley, but further south products from the Ashton Keynes-type industry appear, which tend to have orange glazes.




Earlier examples often have a bubbly or streaky glaze. By the 18th century they tend to have a smooth and even glaze. Although tablewares are largely replaced by other refined earthenwares (such as creamware) by the late 18th century, larger forms like pancheons continue well into the 19th century.

### Fabric 81.3: Nottingham stoneware, late 17th to 19th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/195



This early English stoneware is usually thin-walled with a dark brown surface. It can be identified by the presence of a thin white line visible between the fabric and the glaze.

Other types of stoneware are also found in Worcestershire, including those imported from abroad e.g. Siegburg stoneware https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/40 and Westerwald stoneware https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/194

### Fabric 81.4: 'Late stoneware', 19th to early 20th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/200

This hard-fired stoneware has a very fine fabric and smooth orange, brown of buff-coloured surfaces. Sometimes a brown or white glaze was added. Marks from throwing are sometimes visible on the inner surfaces. Vessels were used for fluid storage—inkpots, beer bottles, condiment jars etc. — right up until the mid-20th century.

### Fabric 82: Tin-glazed earthenware, 17th to 19th century

Sometimes referred to as 'Delft' after its most famous production centre, this attractive white-glazed pottery was made in England from the early 17th century, copying the Dutch potters. The fabric is soft and cream-coloured, and the pots often have a pinkish or bluish tint. In the later medieval period, tin-glazed earthenwares were imported in small quantities from Italy, Spain and Holland, although they are difficult to tell apart.

Italian mailica (fabric 82.2): https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/42

South Netherlands tin glazed (fabric 82.3): https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/39

Seville ware (fabric 82.4): https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/37

Italian tin glazed (82.7): https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/201

### Fabric 85: Transfer-printed whiteware, 19th to 20th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/199

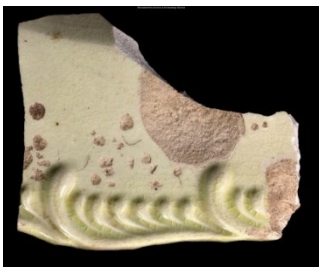
Commonly referred to as 'Victorian china' or 'blue-and-white', this mass-produced tableware is common from 1800 onwards. It has a very fine white core, white glaze and printed patterns in blue, red, black or green.

Watch out for similar-looking earlier pottery such as:

### Fabric 83.1: Porcelain, mid-18th century onwards

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/192

Can be distinguished from other whitewares by holding it up to the light – true porcelain has a translucent appearance. Often with hand-painted decoration.



### Fabric 84: Creamware, late 18th to early 19th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/193

Cream-coloured glaze, sometimes moulded. Rarely decorated.

### Fabric 91: Post-medieval 'slipware' pottery, 17th to 18th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/189

Brightly decorated plates and dishes with yellow and brown/red patterns were popular in ordinary 17th/18th century households. They usually have a buff-coloured fabric. The elaborate patterns were made by trailing red and white 'slip' (liquid clay) over the plate before glazing and firing.

### Fabric 108: Midlands Purple, late 14th to 18th century

https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/53

Common across the midlands, these highly fired pots tend to have a purple tinge and a dark patchy glaze on the outside. They were made in a variety of forms, particularly cups and jars.

### Engine-turned dipped earthenwares, late 18th to early 20th century

These brightly-coloured bowls, jugs and mugs are often mistaken for modern pots, but were first made by Wedgewood in the 1760s. Look out for tree-like 'mocha' decoration, multi-coloured 'cats-eyes' and cables, and geometric patterns and bands in different colours, produced by turning on a lathe. The fabric is smooth, white/light-grey, and the vessels are thin-walled.