

Wichenford Big Dig

Community test pitting report

April 2023



Wichenford Big Dig Small Pits, Big Ideas Worcestershire

Community test pitting report



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Explore
the Past

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Community Test Pitting in Wichenford

By Hazel Whitefoot, Nina O'Hare & Heather Rendall

With finds analysis by Rob Hedge

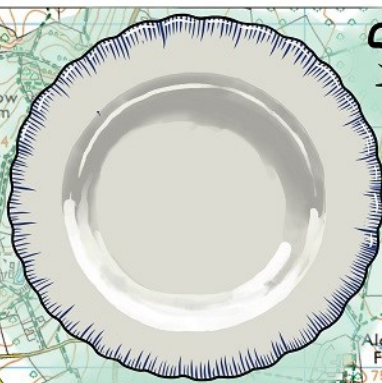
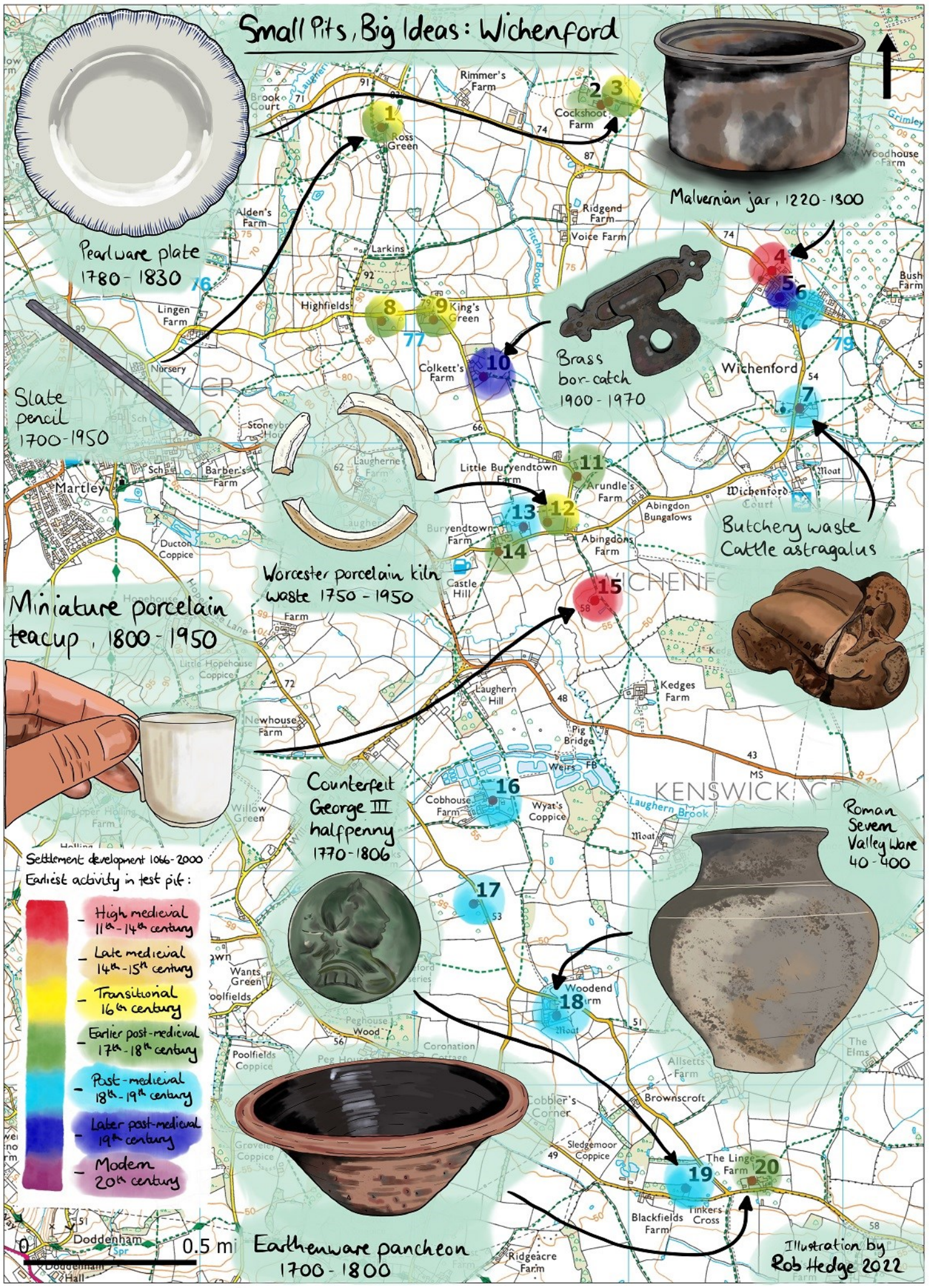
Summary

In April 2022, 20 test pits were excavated across Wichenford, Worcestershire. The community excavation was part of a wider project – Small Pits, Big Ideas – researching medieval settlements around across the county.

Test pits uncovered evidence of activity from the Roman era up to the present day. Only a few sherds of medieval pottery were found, of which the earliest was the rim of a 13th century cooking pot. Small quantities of pottery show activity through the 16th and 17th centuries, before a marked increase in finds broken and discarded during the 18th century. This reflects both the expansion of the settlement and the increased affordability of consumer goods. Artefacts of particular interest included two Georgian counterfeit coins and porcelain that may have been sold off as seconds by the factories in Worcester.

Many of the sites excavated have documentary evidence for medieval and later occupation, whilst four of the sites are thought to have been moated. The lack of medieval finds from most test pits is therefore surprising. Several explanations are feasible, including the possibility that the inhabitants of medieval Wichenford were disposing of their rubbish in a particular, potentially unusual, way that resulted in broken pottery being carefully deposited away from dwellings and spread across their fields instead.

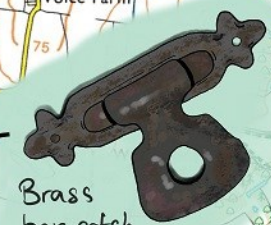
Small Pits, Big Ideas: Wichenford



Pearlware plate
1780-1830



Malvernian jar, 1220-1300



Brass box-catch
1900-1970



Slate pencil
1700-1950



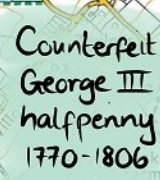
Worcester porcelain kiln waste
1750-1950



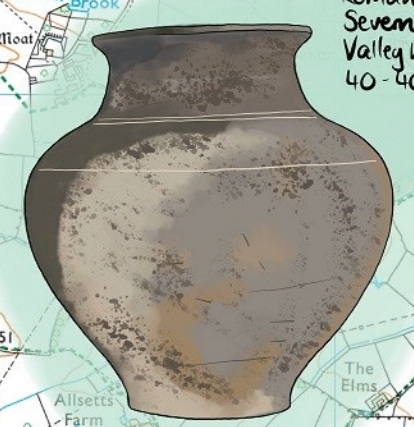
Miniature porcelain teacup, 1800-1950



Butchery waste
Cattle astragalus



Counterfeit
George III
halfpenny
1770-1806



Roman
Severn
Valley Ware
40-400



Earthenware pancheon
1700-1800

- 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

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 2017-18¹](#) and [extensive research in East Anglia²](#), 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 23rd – 24th April 2022, 20 'test pits' were excavated across Wichenford parish. A total of 100 people took part in digging the test pits and processing the finds. For most, this was their first hands on go at 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. In Wichenford this was slightly shallower than expected and generally 30-50cm 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 20 test pits across Wichenford were located.

¹ www.explorethepast.co.uk/2017/11/small-pits-big-ideas-investigating-a-worcestershire-village

² Lewis 2016, available online:

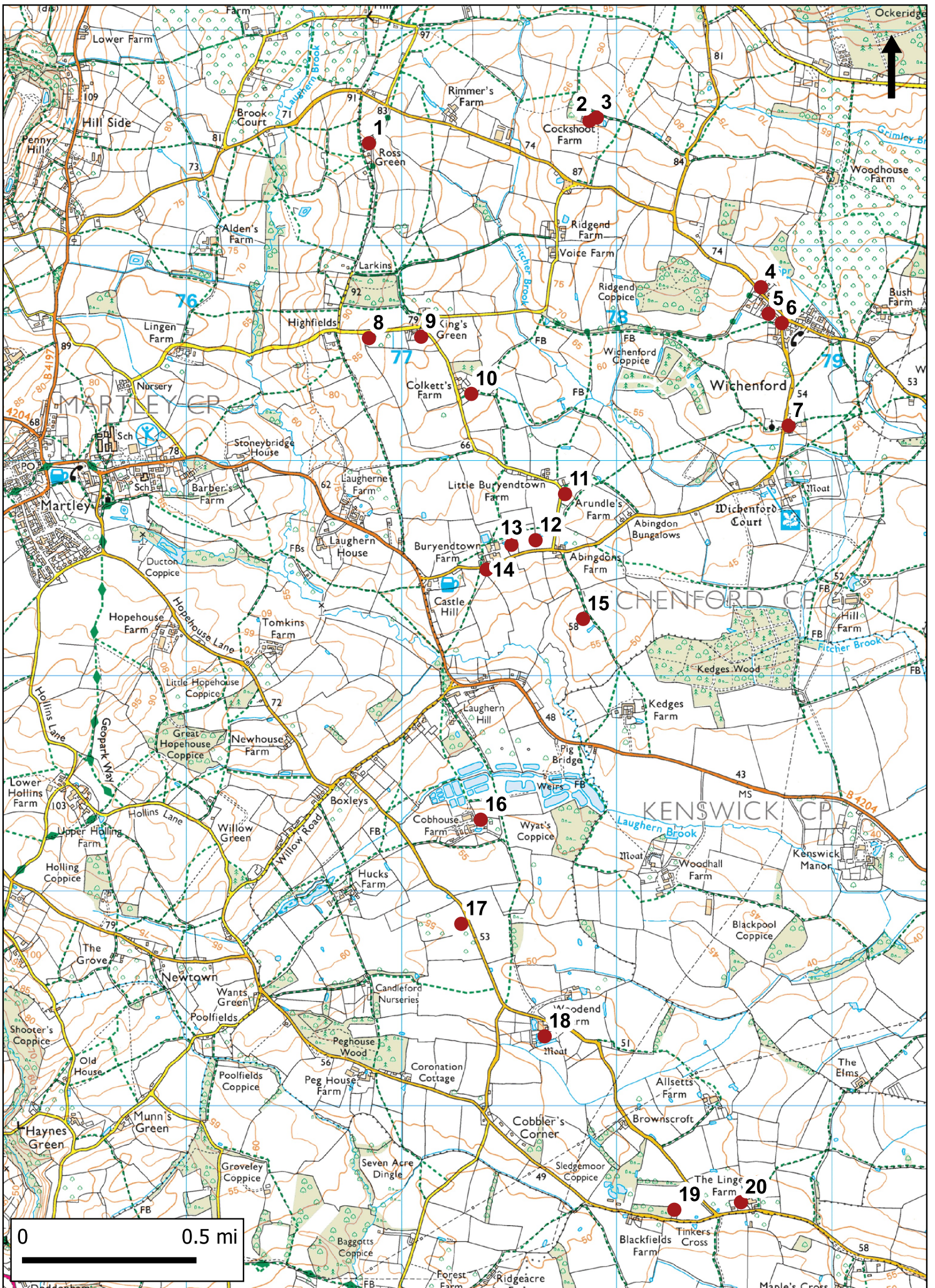
www.researchgate.net/publication/303316768_Disaster_recovery_New_archaeological_evidence_for_the_long-term_impact_of_the_calamitous_fourteenth_century



Photo 1: Test Pit 20 (Lingens Farm) during excavation - test pits were dug in 10cm 'spits' (layers) until the underlying geology was reached.



Photo 2: Recording Test Pit 19 at Lingens Cottage.



Test pit locations in Wichenford

Figure 1

History of Wichenford

By Heather Rendall, Wichenford Local Heritage Group

(Names of test pit locations are highlighted in **bold**.)

Wichenford has the shape of an elongated Pac-Man: with a long, oval body rather than a round one, its 'mouth' is formed by a pinched waist at Laugherne Hill, swallowing the small parish of Kenswick!

It formed part of Wick Episcopi, a large estate given sometime between 757 and 775 to Bishop Milred of Worcester by King Offa of Mercia. It remained in the hands of the Bishops until the 19th century, except for a brief interlude during the Reformation. As a result, we are fortunate to have copious records in the form of rent rolls, court rolls etc.

The earliest relics found so far are a handful of worked flints from the field in front of Bury End Town next to **Symes** dating to the early Neolithic. Another flint was found at **Cockshut** and yet another on land between the two farms. Recently a metal detectorist has been locating Roman coins and brooches right across the village and tessera (mosaic blocks) were found strewn across the centre of the village, indicating that somewhere there is a Roman Villa still to be found!

The earliest document that describes most of the boundary of the present parish is the Anglo-Saxon boundary charter of King Offa in the 3rd quarter of the 8th century. The southern part of the boundary can still be followed today from the Cotheridge border to Laugherne Brook. It records a number of barrows and a tumulus along Willow Road and in the north of the village. These could be Bronze Age or, at the latest, Anglo-Saxon.

In the Domesday Survey of 1086 unfortunately there is no specific mention of Wichenford, as it is part of the record of Wick Episcopi. However, there is mention of a chapel in both Wichenford and Kenswick in 1095, both being rural parishes of the mother church, St Helen's Worcester. This fact presupposes activity and habitation enough to support two chapels within a mile of each other.

In 1189 in Bishop Baldwin's audit we can recognise Osbert Cobbe [**Cobhouse**], who paid a rent of 1 boar and 1 sow to the Bishop. In 1299 in Bishop Gifford's audit more names can be seen, including what will develop into **Lingens** Farm, the Ridge estate lands (Ruggs Place & Ridgend & **Cockshut**) Barons [St Anthonies] atte Wode [**Woodend**] **Arundels**, Caldecote [**Colketts**] in the Hawe [Haw House now Boxley Farm] Salewys [**Little Acre**] att Fenne [**Venn Lane**] atte Birche [Birchend]

We can follow entries in Lay Subsidy Rolls in the 13th and 14th centuries because all of these names reappear and others are recognisable: Abyngdon [**Abingdon's**] atte Brook [Brook Place now lost].

Many of these early settlements are moated: Kenswick, Woodhall, **Woodend**, **Cobhouse**, **Colketts**, **Cockshut** and, of course, The Court.

Recently the open fields around Venn Lane have been mapped and the conclusion drawn that Wichenford had both types of settlement: open countryside with moated farmsteads and a nucleated village with open fields farmed in common around Venn Lane. [**Symes: Little Acre: Deakins**]

One oddity is the number of freeholds in the village that owed nothing to the Bishop. Some Freeholds paid a chief rent and appear to be freeholds granted by a bishop at some moment in time. But others pay absolutely nothing and are surprisingly small in size. For example : **1 Meadow View** on the site of Widow Knowles' house approx. half an acre: **The New House** Kings Green, formerly Stauntons – now lost – approx. 2 acres: **Symes** – now lost – opposite Bury End Town approx. 1 acre.

The Ridge Estate was gifted c 1275 as dowry for his daughter Alice, by William Abingdon to Alexander de Freville of Crown East [Croweneste] It comprised a large L shaped area, running up Rosses Lane [**Orchard Cottage**] and turning east and taking in **Cockshut**. We have a rent roll dated 1359 which details the rental of individual fields for grazing. Another exists from 1477. In both of them are listed field names that are still known today. These records and the fact we have a number of green lanes interconnecting across the parish plus two 'horns' leading off the appropriately named Horn Lane, have led to the theory that the village has long been used for cattle droving and that cattle were rested here before their final walk to the Worcester market.

We have records of houses that have been lost, including **Deakins**, which today is a bare field, and on the site of Atheridge's house in the **Top Orchard** at Kings Green. We have records of older house sites under newer houses: **Lingens Cottage: 10 Malvern View: 1 Meadow View: Orchard Cottage**

Occasionally we know exactly when a house was built: The Forge was built in 1730 – the petition to erect it is in Worcestershire Archives at The Hive. **Orchard Cottage** dates to 1692 when permission was granted to build a new cottage on the site of a formerly derelict house. Today's **Vicarage** was started in 1838 and we have many records of the previous vicarage but just no clear idea where exactly it stood. A previous incumbent placed it in the northwest corner of the garden!

Arundels is unique in as much as its name has not changed over at least 600 years, though from time to time a tenant left his name for a short spell. It has a Grade 2 listed 15th century barn, which we can probably date to 1470 when newly widowed Edith Sherman is tasked with repairing the house and appurtenances. It would be good to think that the barn dates from this refurbishment. In 1474 Roger ap John takes over the tenancy: it is also possible that the barn dates from his time.

As you will have gathered from the above, history lies thick under Wichenford and is writ large in whatever we find. It will all add to the picture we have been building over the last 22 years.

For more detail, see [Appendix 1](#).

Archaeological investigations

A number of archaeological investigations have taken place in around Wichenford which include desk-based assessments, field walking, geophysical survey, building recording, watching briefs and excavation. Work along a pipeline produced artefacts from the Roman period through to the post-medieval period, including medieval pottery and tile and a small evaluation at Cockshoot Farm uncovered evidence of activity there in the 13th and 14th centuries.

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 16th – 19th 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

Test pit: a small area excavated in order to sample a location's archaeology.

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.

Sherd: the term for a fragment of pottery

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 common pottery types can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

Test Pit 1: Orchard Cottage

Documentary evidence exists of permission being granted to build a “Cottage” in this location in 1692, and this permission also refers to an earlier “demolished Cottage” so there seems to have been occupation here for an extended period. The document also refers to the enclosing of some ground that was *“heretofore a little Orchard and garden thereunto adjoining”*.

The test pit was located in a lawned area of the front garden and was excavated to a depth of 50cm. Archaeological layers consisted of a deep blackish brown topsoil over a more compacted clay silt layer. Although the bottom of the archaeological sequence wasn’t reached in this test pit, the lowest level appeared more sterile and so likely represents an interface layer with the natural geology not too far below the level reached.

Finds

Finds consisted of a typical range of post-medieval domestic pottery, dominated by black-glazed redwares ([fabric 78](#)). There were some suggestions of 17th century activity in small quantities of earlier redwares, [Midlands Purple](#), and [Midland Yellow wares](#), but the density of finds increased from the mid-18th into the 19th century. The mean sherd weight was low, and the condition of the pottery was often poor.

Other finds of note included a fragment from a slate pencil.

What does this tell us?

The finds recovered from this test pit fit well with known occupation of the site, with pottery dating from the 17th century onwards. The poor condition of these sherds indicates that they have been heavily disturbed – often by ploughing or gardens being dug over – for a long period of time. The increased quantity of finds from the mid-18th century onwards may simply reflect the growth in the availability of ceramics, rather than being due to a change in the cottage’s size or its occupant’s wealth.

As the natural geology was not quite reached it is possible that evidence for earlier occupation is still to be found further down. However, given the ground disturbance shown by the pottery's worn condition, it seems unlikely that some earlier pottery wouldn't have made it into the upper layers of the test pit.

Test Pit 2: Cockshoots Farm

Cockshoots Farm is built on the site of a moated manor house that was part of the Ridge Estate, owned by William Habington. The estate was broken up in the 16th century and Cockshoots was bought by the Nash family before passing to John Moulding on his marriage to Nash's daughter. Moulding was an avid record keeper who left maps and drawings of the original house.

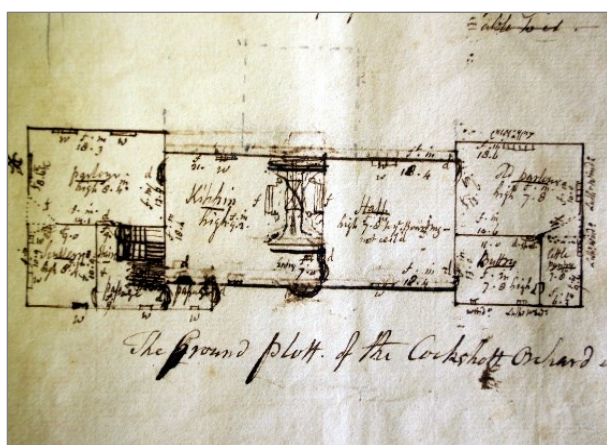


Photo 3: Cockshoots layout from John Moulding's notebook (held by Worcestershire Archives ref. 009:1 BA2636/52)



Photo 4: Exterior of Cockshoots Farmhouse, by John Moulding.

The current farmhouse is a Grade II listed building dating from the 17th century and appears on the earliest available map for Wichenford, the 1838 Tithe Map. However, the Historic Environment Record (HER) search carried out for the project suggests that there was activity here much earlier: archaeological fieldwork on the site identified 13th century occupation (which ties in with documentary evidence) and buildings dating from at least the 15th century. To the north of the house was a pond believed to be the remains of the old moat. Cropmarks to the west, plus the findings from further archaeological work (HER ref. WSM41753), seem to indicate the location of the moat's west side.

The test pit was excavated to a depth of 40cm where it encountered a rather churned-up layer of redeposited natural, which appears to be a modern landscaping layer rather than undisturbed natural geology.

Finds

A small quantity of domestic pottery spanning the later-17th to the early-19th century, including factory-slip [creamware](#) with an annular [engine-turned decoration](#), were recovered. One small piece of clay tobacco pipe had a distinct heel stamp in the form of an 8-spoked wheel, a stamp common among West Country pipes of the later-17th century (see photo 5).

What does this tell us?

Again the finds recovered fit well with the date of the current house, but there is no indication of earlier occupation within the assemblage. As with Test Pit 1, which also did not reach the natural geology, it is possible that earlier artefacts are present further down. There is clearly potential for buried archaeological remains at Cockshoots Farm, given previous fieldwork, it is just unfortunate that this test pit hit an area of heavy ground disturbance.

The clay pipe stem originating from the West Country is an interesting, and quite unusual, artefact as maker's stamps rarely turn up.



Photo 5: Clay pipe with maker's stamp, Test Pit 2 (scale in cm)

Test Pit 3: The Grainhouse

It is not known exactly when the current brick building was built, but it was most likely in place by 1885 as the 1st edition Ordnance Survey appears to show it in this location. Prior to that, a building – most probably timbered and used as a large barn – is depicted to the southeast of the house in John Moulding's 1779 estate map. This building also appears on Wichenford's 1838 Tithe map.

The test pit was excavated to a depth of 40cm and it is possible, although not certain, that this test pit may have just hit natural (i.e. bottom of the archaeological sequence). The archaeological layers consisted of an orangey-brown topsoil overlying a similar coloured but more clayey subsoil.

Finds

In comparison to Test Pit 2 close by, this test pit yielded many more artefacts, although of a similar date range and type. Large quantities of ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered, including fabric 2c roof tiles, a type in use from the late-15th to the 17th century. Activity during the 17th or early 18th-century is also suggested by [Midlands Yellow ware](#) and a sherd of imported Rhenish brown stoneware.

What does this tell us?

The roof tiles found at Test Pit 3 provides evidence of an earlier building in the vicinity – possibly the large barn seen on the 1779 estate map. Pottery dating from the 17th century onwards is likely to come from Cockshoots Farmhouse, as the Grainhouse was not lived in until relatively recently.

The lack of medieval artefacts is striking, as unlike Test Pit 2 that encountered churned up ground, this test pit reached (or was close to reaching) the natural geology. It is possible that archaeological layers around the Grainhouse were truncated and lost during building work or landscaping, yet the presence of 17th and 18th century finds implies that any truncation isn't modern. On balance, it is

therefore most likely that the lack of medieval finds points towards this area being on the periphery of medieval Cockshoots.

Test Pit 4: Orchard View

This house is built on land that was once part of an ancient freehold property on the edge of Wichenford Common. That property appears on a 1745 rent roll as being occupied by Widow Knoll and that it had been “in the family time out of mind’. It is also present on Moulding’s 1779 map, although the land was later divided up with some being taken into the next-door orchard and the rest lying under numbers 1 and 2 Orchard View.

This test pit was fairly tightly situated on a grassed bank to the left-hand side of the driveway. Excavated to a depth of 50cm, which appeared to be the start of the natural geology, it presented a topsoil layer of 20cm overlying a clayey subsoil.

Finds

Although this test pit did not produce a large volume of finds, it did contain medieval material. Three abraded sherds of oxidised glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69) were present; this is a long-lived fabric spanning the late-13th to the early 17th century, so is of limited use for dating. However, there was also a rim sherd of unglazed Malvernian ware ([fabric 56](#)): the rim is from an everted, lid-seated jar. Examples of this type (Type 3) at Deansway (Bryant 2004) dated from the mid to late-13th century.



Photo 6: Medieval cooking pot rim, dated 1220-1300, Test Pit 4.

What does this tell us?

This test pit yielded the earliest medieval pottery found during Wichenford’s Big Dig. The sherds have moved around a good deal in the ground, as shown by their worn condition, so most likely originate from occupation a short distance away rather than on this spot. This is not particularly surprising, given that Test Pit 4 was adjacent to a hedgerow and field beyond, where these finds were probably moved by ploughing in recent centuries. Nevertheless, they do show that people were living somewhere close by in early medieval times, which supports the documentary evidence and gives a tentative medieval origin to Widow Knoll’s cottage.

Test Pits 5 & 6: Malvern View (No. 4 & No. 10)

4 Malvern View was built in 1976 on land that is noted as being arable/pasture on the 1838 Tithe Map (Figure 2 below). The map does, however, depict two dwellings (Myrtle Cottage and Malvern View) in the northwest and southeast corners of the field. An unstratified sherd of medieval pottery (probably the base of a glazed 12th – 14th century jug) is recorded as having been found to the north of Malvern View (Historic Environment Record ref. WSM05127).

Both Test Pits 5 and 6 were located in back gardens, as far from the modern houses as possible. Excavated to a relatively shallow depth of 34cm, Test Pit 5 revealed a consistent orangey-brown topsoil within all three spits. Due to time constraints, this test pit did not reach the bottom of the archaeological sequence as earlier finds may therefore still remain.

Test Pit 6 was at 10 Malvern View, which falls within plot 220 on the 1838 Tithe map. The building within this historic plot of land is believed to lie within 9 Malvern View. The test pit was located in a grassed area to the rear of the house, but excavation was abandoned after spit 1 (10cm) due to the discovery of a power cable.



Figure 2: Extract of 1838 Tithe Map showing the location of two earlier dwellings on the land where Malvern View is built

Finds

The small assemblage of finds from Test Pit 5 was almost entirely mid-19th to 20th century in origin, with small quantities of abraded whiteware sherds. Although undiagnostic, some of the fragments of ceramic building material are likely to be earlier post-medieval, including a section of handmade brick, 2 2/3" thick, which is probably 18th or early 19th century in date.

The top layer of Test Pit 6, all that could be excavated, produced a small assemblage dominated by very small sherds of 19th and 20th century domestic whitewares. This test pit also contained drainage tile, unglazed [redwares](#), and a porcelain waster sherd that is likely to have been incorporated into the soil through use of factory waste as hardcore. The earliest diagnostic sherd was the base of a late-18th or early-19th century [creamware](#) mug.

Test Pits 5 & 6 – What does this tell us?

Unfortunately neither of these test pits reached the bottom of the archaeological sequence, with Test Pit 6 having to be abandoned at a particularly shallow depth, so it is possible that information may have been missed. The assemblages recovered do, however, tie in well with the recorded 19th century dwellings in this area and tentatively imply that they do not significantly predate the 1838

Tithe map. The handmade brick hints at an earlier building in the vicinity, but by itself could be a stray or reused brick rather than evidence of earlier occupation on the site of 4 Malvern View.

Test Pit 7: Old Vicarage

Situated opposite the church, the Old Vicarage is the latest of many houses on this spot. The first mention of a vicarage is in the Register of the Priory, dated 1240, and it was thought to be located in the northwest corner of the garden. A description in the 1585 Church Terriers lists *1 hall, 1 parlour, 4 chambers, a kitchen, a stable, a barn and a house for cattle*.

In the 17th and 18th centuries the house became dilapidated, resulting in the Bishop insisting in 1714 that the then owner (Dr Wall) make it habitable therefore occupation of the vicarage continued. In 1833, Rev Davison embarked upon building a new vicarage on the present site. This was completed in 1834 and further extensive additions were made by Rev Shuker in 1847. Shuker added even more to the house in 1861 and demolished the old farm buildings to build a model farm.

The test pit was located in a small grassy paddock to the west of the house, where historic records suggest that an earlier vicarage was located. Excavated to a depth of 35cm, Test Pit 7 consisted of a turf and topsoil layer over a greyish brown subsoil. Although the natural geology was not reached, the change to a more clayey soil in spit 4 (30cm below ground) may indicate that the change from subsoil and undisturbed ground was close.

Finds

Pottery dates suggest activity no earlier than the late-17th century, with the majority of material being 18th and 19th century in date. Amongst the earliest pottery found are [slipwares](#) and [Nottingham stonewares](#), which may be earlier-18th century, whilst [creamwares](#) and whitewares are typical of the later-18th and 19th centuries. Mean sherd weight was low and the sherds were abraded. Other finds included animal bone with butchery marks, and a shard from a small late-19th to mid-20th century clear glass perfume bottle.



Photo 7: Animal bones, including a cattle astragalus (ankle bone) from Test Pit 7, spit 3.

What does this tell us?

Although placed to investigate the possible location of the medieval vicarage, the finds recovered tie in well with the current 'Old Vicarage' and occupation dating back to the late 17th century. This includes clear evidence of kitchen waste, in the form of animal bones bearing butchery marks, as well as personal objects.

Given historic records for the vicarage, it is surprising that no medieval material was found – even if earlier occupation was elsewhere within the site (rather than the northwest corner), it's likely that some signs of it would be present. The most obvious explanation is that Test Pit 7 didn't get deep enough and that older archaeological layers were missed. The lack of building rubble certainly suggests that the earlier vicarage is either well buried or was located a reasonable distance away. However, a lack of expected medieval activity is a peculiar phenomenon of Wichenford's test pits in

general though, so it may also be that the vicarage's earliest inhabitants – along with other local residents – were particularly careful about where they threw away their rubbish and that early buildings contained no brick elements or tiled roofs.

Test Pit 8: New House orchard

Rent rolls show that in the 1600s there was a cottage on this land with an associated 5 acres of orchard and pasture. A slipware dish previously found in this location hints at domestic occupation around this period.

Test Pit 8 was located on what appears to be a house platform – a raised level area – at the western edge of the orchard. Despite some disturbance from roots, presumably from the orchard, the natural ground appeared to be reached at a depth of 38cm. It was not possible to tell within a small test pit if this clay layer was undisturbed geology or the result of natural clay being built up to create the house platform. Either way, the earliest activity on the house platform appeared to have been reached.

Finds

This is an intriguing assemblage with a quantity of material that belies its location in an orchard and suggests there was formerly occupation of this site. The earliest pottery included the handle of a brown-glazed redware ([fabric 72](#)) mug: these are most commonly 16th century in date. Sparse early [redwares](#) and [slipwares](#) suggest activity through the 17th century, but the volume increased in the mid-18th century, with salt-glazed stonewares and later redwares present. There was one sherd of later-17th to mid-18th century [Westerwald stoneware](#). The latest material comprises pearlwares and annular [engine-turned](#) whitewares of the very late-18th or earliest-19th century, but there is very little material post-dating 1800, suggesting that occupation probably ceased in the early-19th century.



Photo 8: Selection of pottery from Test Pit 8, spit 3.

What does this tell us?

The large quantity and the date of the finds from Test Pit 8 provides fairly conclusive evidence for a dwelling on this site from around, or slightly before, 1600 until the early 1800s. This fits remarkably closely with documentary evidence and supports the suggestion that the flat earthwork at the end of the orchard is an historic house platform.

Test Pit 9: New House

New House was built somewhere between 1838 and 1841 on the site of a barn belonging to a house, Stauntons or Stantons, that was first recorded in 1640. This house no longer exists, but it is believed that it stood where a small paddock now lies in front of the courtyard garden. It is possible, however,

that there may have been occupation on this site significantly before 1640 as a freehold recorded in the 1299 Red Book of Worcester under the name of Richard Prych may refer to this site.

Test Pit 9 was located in the rear garden of the house in an area of grass and vegetation and was excavated to a depth of 50cm, at which depth the natural red clay was clearly seen. The archaeological layers consisted of a fairly shallow topsoil and turf layer with a deeper clayey subsoil beneath that showed some rooting disturbance, most likely from the tree situated in close proximity to the pit.

Finds

Test Pit 9 contained a typical range of post-medieval domestic pottery spanning the 17th to the 19th century, with the majority being in the later part of that range. The earliest artefacts observed were a late-16th or 17th century speckled redware ([fabric 78.4](#)), and a fragment of 2" brick, probably of 16th or early 17th century date. The brick is notable for the preservation of several small fingermarks where it was carried when wet during the laying-out process. Even allowing for shrinkage during drying/firing, the fingerprints are very small and may be those of a child.

Other finds of note include ceramic floor tiles, and a small quantity of smithing slag indicative of metalworking.



Photo 9: Fragment of brick with small (?child's) fingerprints, Test Pit 9.

What does this tell us?

Test Pit 9's finds cover a slightly later date range than those from Test Pit 8 with a majority dating to the period around the construction and initial occupation of the current New House, although some do pre-date this and likely came from the previous dwelling. The fingerprints on the brick fragment are an unusually personal connection with the past. Signs of children are rare, as they typically leave little discernible archaeological trace, so the possibility that these are children's fingerprints is tantalising – do they belong to a child who was playing and inadvertently left evidence on a drying brick, or was the child working for a brickmaker?

Test Pit 10: Colketts Farm

Colketts is a derivative of Coldicott, a name referring to basic overnight accommodation associated with cattle droving. Kings Green is thought to have been an overnight pen for animals (with hurdles blocking the roads) and drovers may have historically made their way to Coldicott for the overnight stay.

The site was moated during the medieval period and remains of the moat survived until it was infilled in the 20th century. Red



Photo 10: Historic photo of Colketts Farmhouse
© Wichford Local Heritage Group

sandstone foundations, still visible until 1998, also indicated that the original house may have medieval origins, although the timber framing was dated to c1660. This stood until 2000, when the farmhouse was rebuilt.

This test pit was located in a lawned area on the southeast side of the house. The deepest quadrant of Test Pit 10 was excavated to a depth of 50cm, where a ceramic land drain was encountered. The archaeological layers consisted of a fairly shallow turf and topsoil layer over a subsoil containing charcoal and fine rooting with the land drain sitting in a layer of churned-up and redeposited natural clay.

Finds

Small quantities of 18th and 19th century domestic pottery were present, including [Nottingham stoneware](#), Manganese mottled ware, and the typical 19th century transfer-printed and hand-painted whitewares. A wide range of 20th century domestic artefacts were also recovered, including a small length of silver jewellery chain, the catch from a small trinket box, and a phial of 'Xylotox' brand epinephrine, a local anaesthetic.

What does this tell us?

This test pit is a good illustration of the range of objects that can be disposed of as rubbish. Unfortunately, the presence of a land drain means that the ground excavated has been heavily disturbed in recent centuries. It is striking that no artefacts pre-date the 18th century and it may be that earlier activity was not reached or – probably more likely – that, in the particular spot excavated, early layers have been truncated by building work, drainage and/or landscaping.

Test Pit 11: Arundels Farm

The name Arundels first appears on the 1275 Lay Subsidy Roll and frequently appears in other documents from 1464 onwards. Although apparently changing names at times, it reverts to Arundels each time. The current brick-built house (built pre-1838) is adjacent to a Grade II listed, 15th century barn that may have been part of a circa 1470 refurbishment or change of tenant in 1474.

The test pit was sited in a grassed area to the east of the barn and was excavated to a depth of 40cm, at which point the natural clay was visible. A fairly shallow turf and topsoil layer overlay a more mixed orange and grey clayey subsoil.

Finds

The general profile of this assemblage suggests activity from the mid to late-18th century onwards. Small quantities of smithing slag may suggest small-scale metalworking activity, and the presence of a small unglazed porcelain waster and a fragment of kiln furniture are likely to be waste from the Worcester factories used as hardcore on the farm.

What does this tell us?

Interestingly, many of the finds were not household rubbish and point towards the site being used for agricultural purposes – smithing and ceramic waste were often used on farms as hardcore. In terms of dates, the finds from this pit do not fit with documentary evidence of occupation from the 13th century, although they do broadly match the date of the present house. As natural was reached

in this test pit, it implies that either the ground has been truncated – possibly when the current house was built – and earlier evidence of occupation lost, or that there wasn't a medieval dwelling adjacent to the barn. This is not necessarily to say that the site was unoccupied in medieval times, but that any house was some distance from the barn. Given the shallow depth of Test Pit 9 and its proximity to a 15th century barn, it is more likely that the ground level has been truncated and earlier evidence lost.

Test Pit 12: Deakins

Deakins (also recorded under various versions of Meachams) first appears in documents in 1577 and is noted as being “1 messuage and 1 noke of land in Buryend” in 1578. Always closely associated with Little Acre (also known as Notts or Salways) next door, the two sites sometimes had the same owner and, occasionally, tenant. Historic map evidence indicates that the original buildings were either demolished or collapsed between 1776 and 1834. Metal detecting finds suggests that their original location lies approximately 25-30 feet from the current field gate.

Test Pit 12 was sited in the open field to the east of Little Acre to try and locate evidence of Deakins. Excavated to a depth of 60cm, this test pit was one of the deepest in Wichenford and consequently the natural geology was not reached in the time available. A dark, stony turf and topsoil layer overlay a much more disturbed deposit that contained a significant amount of building rubble.

Finds

Test Pit 12 contained a small quantity of 17th to 19th century pottery. These are a typical range of whitewares, [redwares](#) and [buff wares](#). It was notable for the large quantity of ceramic building material (CBM), of which a sample was retained. Given the test pit's position in an open arable field, this is likely to corroborate suggestions of a building on this site: the CBM is in large and unabraded fragments. Early handmade bricks of late-15th to mid-17th were recorded; most notably, one 2” brick with extensive organic impressions on the underside had evidently been laid to dry on a bed of straw. These coarse handmade patterns of 2” thickness are typical of 16th century bricks in this area: at the time, brick buildings were relatively uncommon but this could well indicate the presence of a brick chimney. Roof tiles were in fabrics (e.g. 2c) typically dating from the late-15th to 17th century.

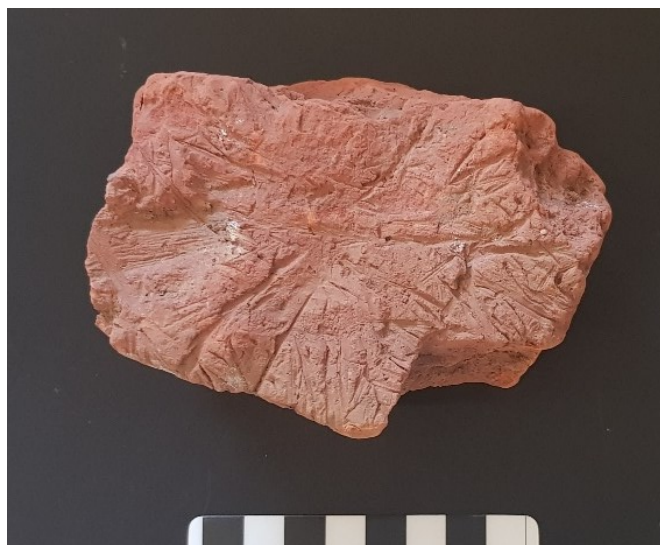


Photo 11: Straw impressions on underside of an early brick, Test Pit 12.

What does this tell us?

Although there was not a great deal of domestic rubbish found in this test pit, the large quantity of building material recovered strongly supports the documentary evidence that there was a building, or buildings, in this area that has since disappeared. The circa 16th century date of the early brick and

tile corresponds well with the documented appearance of Deakins (1577). It is likely that finds from the occupation of the house lie below the demolition layer excavated, so it is possible that these may be earlier in date than the recorded brick and tile.

In terms of an end date, pottery implies that the house may have been occupied until the early 1800s. However, given the small quantity of 19th century pottery it could equally have come from elsewhere and been spread over the field during manuring so is not conclusive evidence by itself.

Test Pit 13: Little Acre

Closely associated with Deakins (Test Pit 12), Little Acre is one of the oldest houses in Wichenford with records of a house on this site dating from as early as the 1461 Edward IV Court Rolls (when it was known as Salways). Records indicate a rebuilding due to deterioration in 1473 – caused by excessive dung being heaped up against the walls – and the existing timbers may date from this time. A large building no longer in existence is depicted between the house and road on a 1776 map of the area.

Test Pit 12 was located close to the house in a lawned area of the rear garden and, although excavated to a depth of 50cm, natural was not quite reached. The spits were extremely consistent in nature being a sterile, and quite stony, orangey brown sandy soil.

Finds

This test pit contained a small but tightly dated assemblage, with most of the pottery falling within a range from the mid to late-18th century, and little evidence of activity after 1820. Notable pieces included moulded examples of white salt-glazed stonewares; some of the earliest widely available white tableware.

What does this tell us?

With documentary evidence of a dwelling in this location from the mid-15th century, and one of these referring to a manure heap against the house, it is surprising that the finds are so tightly dated to a considerably later time period. Once again, it is possible that earlier evidence was not reached before digging ceased. The ground does not appear to have been dug over and finds of different dates churned up, as usually happens in garden soils, so it is possible that earlier layers have been buried below a deep 19th century deposit. However, it seems unlikely that a 40-50cm thick layer of soil was added around this time – before the existence of mechanical diggers – and any modern landscaping would likely have churned up a wider date range of finds.

Test Pit 13 raises questions rather than providing answers: did the test pit just not get deep enough, was it in the wrong place (rubbish was often thrown out the back of houses, but the garden north of Little Acre is shown as a separate orchard on several historic maps) or perhaps rubbish was thrown much further away?

Test Pit 14: Symes

A building in this location is recorded on a 1786 map and 1787 Land Tax Records identify it as part of Bury End Town, a freehold property that owed nothing to the Bishop of Worcester. This could mean

that the freehold is very old, as the estate has been in the hands of the Bishopric of Worcester since the early 8th century. This building had, however, gone by the creation of the 1834 Wichenford map.

Test Pit 14 was located in the field immediately south of Venn Lane and Buryend Town Farm, which is Grade II listed as early 19th century. The test pit was one of the shallowest with natural clay geology being encountered at a depth of 30cm. All spits were recorded as a consistent firm, orangey brown clay and sand mix that contained some stones and charcoal flecks.

Finds

Test Pit 14 contained a small quantity of 18th and 19th century domestic pottery, including pearlware ([fabric 85.11](#)), and robust, black-glazed red earthenwares ([fabric 78](#)). Other finds included clay tobacco pipe stem and fragments of building material.

What does this tell us?

Although shallow, natural geology was reached in this pit and it therefore appears that relatively little material has built up in this area over time. With an 18th – 19th century date range the finds correspond well with the date of the house as shown on historic mapping and may well have come from there, but it is also possible that they may have originated from the farmhouse on the other side of the road. With no earlier material being recovered, it is possible that the test pit wasn't quite in the right place for the earlier house, especially as historic mapping locates it slightly further to the south.

Test Pit 15: Abingdon's Cottage

The current house is converted from old farm buildings and represents the only surviving remains of multiple properties in the village that belonged to the Abingdon (also Abington and Habington) family who owned land here from before the mid-13th century. Whilst difficult to identify records of this specific place, as Abingdon land is often referenced as an entirety, a 1578 rent record seems to refer to this particular site. It is not known exactly where the original house lay, but it may have been sited to the north of the current cottage. Roman coins and brooches found in the area may hint at even earlier occupation.

Located in a lawned area immediately west of the house, Test Pit 15 encountered a solid grey clay that differs considerably from the red clay elsewhere in the parish. It is unclear whether the underlying geology differs slightly in this location or whether it has been imported as a levelling or landscaping layer. Immediately overlying the grey clay was a rubble layer with garden soil above.

Finds

This test pit, located on high ground with a commanding view, yielded evidence for Roman activity in the form of abraded sherds of [Severn Valley Ware](#). Other early material included one sherd of 13th to early 17th century Malvernian ware, and a fragment of iron production slag, probably from a bloomery furnace. Unfortunately, such material is not closely diagnostic, but bloomery furnaces producing this kind of waste were in use throughout the Roman and medieval periods up to c.AD1600.

Among the more unusual finds included an unglazed earthenware spout moulded in the form of a man wearing a turban, and a miniature porcelain cup – the latter is probably from a child's tea set.

What does this tell us?

Whilst much of the assemblage was 18th- 19th century in date and broadly matches the current buildings, the wide time period covered by the finds from Test Pit 15 suggests a long history of activity in the area and that the ground has been considerably churned up over time.



Photo 12: Earthenware spout in the form of a man wearing a turban, Test Pit 15.



Photo 13: Base sherd of miniature porcelain teacup, Test Pit 15.

The piece of Roman pottery, when considered with the coins and brooches found previously, suggests that this is not just a background scatter from activity across the parish but an indication of a Roman site fairly close by. The metalworking waste may also tie in with this activity, but could equally be considerably later in date or have moved some way. Bloomery waste, from the production of iron, is much more unusual than smithing slag, which comes from the working of iron by local blacksmiths. Its presence implies that iron smelting took place within the parish at some point in time.

Test Pit 15 is one of the few in Wichenford to produce medieval pottery. This may have come from a house nearby, but given only one sherd was found it could also be a result of medieval ploughing. Household rubbish was often thrown on the manure heaps that were then spread over fields, and Abingdon's Cottage is surrounded by ridge and furrow earthworks; evidence of medieval ploughing.

The miniature teacup is a particularly interesting find as children do not often feature in the archaeological record.

Test Pit 16: Cobhouse Farm

The name 'Cobbe' is first recorded on a rent roll in 1189 as a swineherd, owing two pigs per year to the Bishop and is similarly recorded in 1299. The first record of ownership dates from 1559 and the southern range of the current house dates from this period,

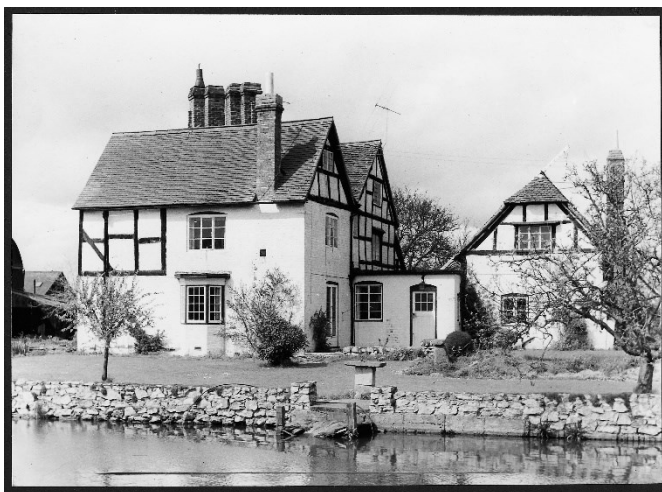


Photo 14: Historic photo of Cobhouse Farm
© Wichenford Local Heritage Group

Historic Environment Record (HER) does not record a moat here, ponds are noted (with one to the south of the house being extant) and are considered to be the moat's remains, particularly as the Tithe map also shows ponds around the house. If the site was moated, then a house may have been here since the 13th-14th century.

Test Pit 16 was located in an area currently used as a vegetable patch, just to the north of the existing farmhouse. Excavated to a depth of 30cm, a dark brown garden soil was revealed overlaying a more sterile and clayey layer. Revisiting the test pit records afterwards (see [Appendix 2](#)), it appears that Test Pit 16 contained the edge of an archaeological feature and that further archaeological deposits remained in at least one half of the test pit.

Finds

Cobhouse Farm test pit contained small quantities of post-medieval pottery, mostly dating from the mid-18th to the late-19th century. They were small and abraded, and probably represent material deposited in a midden and incorporated into the site soils through manuring. Wares represented included utilitarian black-glazed red earthenwares ([fabric 78](#)), late-18th to early-19th century [creamware](#) and pearlware, and mid to late-19th century whitewares.

What does this tell us?

The small size and worn nature of the sherds found in Test Pit 16 suggests that this is material from a midden – these were worked over a good deal and then spread onto fields to improve the ground. The lack of earlier finds is surprising, as the house contains 16th century elements and historic records suggest that site could date back to the 12th century. However, the bottom of the archaeological sequence was not reached, so it is likely that earlier artefacts are just more deeply buried rather than entirely absent.

Test Pit 17: Little Cobhouse

Records indicate that Little Cobhouse was newly constructed in 1765, as James Cresswell is recorded as selling on Cobhouse Farm – after only owning it for four years – but keeping the Little Cobhouse plus eight acres for himself. Grade II listed, the listing description records it as being 17th century with 19th century additions.

Test Pit 17 revealed topsoil overlay a darker subsoil. Below this the ground became thick orangey clay, suggesting that the natural geology was reached.

Finds

This test pit contained a wide variety of post-medieval wares, especially the refined earthenwares and [porcelain](#) of the later-18th and 19th century. Unusually, these fine tablewares outnumbered the more robust utilitarian fabrics; this may be due to the dating, as there was little to suggest much in the way of activity before the second half of the 18th century.

Particularly notable were several discoloured porcelain sherds. They are almost certainly Worcester wares, although not readily identifiable to production centre without further analysis. One was smoke darkened indicating contamination during the glaze firing, possibly from a failure of the saggars (container used to protect vessels from smoke whilst in the kiln). Another had both smoke-darkening and multicoloured blotches. In this respect it was very similar to examples excavated at

Cathedral Square (Griffin 2017). Although these may have been wasters, it is at least equally likely that they may have been sold locally as seconds.

What does this tell us?

Pottery from Test Pit 17 dates from circa 1750 onwards, which strongly support documentary evidence for the Little Cobhouse's construction shortly before 1765. The lack of earlier artefacts implies that the present cottage was built over farmland rather than replacing an earlier dwelling. Possible seconds of Worcester porcelain are an unusual find and they offer an insight into both the desires of Little Cobhouse's early residents, as well as Wichenford's links with Worcester city.



Photo 15: Selection of porcelain from Test Pit 17, spit 2 including possible wasters

Test Pit 18: Woodend Farm

Woodend Farm is a moated timber-framed house and the only test pit site with elements of the moat still surviving. Record of Woodend date back to the 1280 Lay Subsidy Roll, when it was owned by the Atte Woode/Attword family. The land was conveyed to William Habington/Abingdon around 1300 and stayed within that family until 1600, when it passed from Eleanor Gage (nee Habington) to her son. The Gage family then sold it on in the 18th century.

Grade II listed, the house is described in the listing schedule as dating from the early 17th century, however it has produced a tree ring date of 1514.

Test Pit 18 was located close to a back corner of the farmhouse in an area of lawn. It was excavated to a depth of 30cm where a compact, dark brown clay layer was encountered. This could be the natural geology in the area, but is more likely to be an interface layer between the dark brown topsoil and more clay-heavy layer underneath.

Finds

A single sherd of Roman reduced Severn Valley Ware ([fabric 12.1](#)) was the earliest evidence for activity in Test Pit 18. The Roman pot was intermixed with a typical range of later-18th to early-20th century wares, along with 19th century clay pipe. Among the ceramic building material was a fragment 38mm thick, with a smooth upper and sanded lower surface. The broken edges were covered in mortar, indicating its re-use in a structure, but it was probably originally a floor tile of medieval or early post-medieval date. These were not common outside of ecclesiastical contexts, so its presence here is unusual.

One fragment of kiln furniture in the form of a saggur – a container used to protect vessels from smoke during firing – was also found, and is of the type used by the Worcester Porcelain factories.

What does this tell us?

As the bottom of the archaeological sequence wasn't quite reached in Test Pit 18, it is likely that some information was missed. However, the presence of Roman pottery shows that the ground had been churned up over time. This means that even though the earliest deposits were not reached, a

few finds from these layers would still be expected closer to the surface. The lack of medieval pottery may therefore point towards the area being kept clean with household rubbish being thrown away elsewhere – possibly in the moat.

The floor tile (dated 1200 – 1600) is unusual both for being re-used and being found by a house, rather than a church or monastery. It is tempting to suggest that the farmhouse had a grand past, but the floor tile may also have come from religious buildings originally and simply be a thrifty reuse.



Photo 16: Small sherd of Roman pottery (Severn Valley Ware), Test Pit 18



Photo 17: Re-used floor tile, 1200-1600, Test Pit 18.

Test Pit 19: Lingens Cottage

The site of this house was originally called Westfields – most likely a connection with Lingens Farm to the east. Westfields is recorded in Edward IV Court Rolls between 1461 and 1483 when it was held by John Bolt, also tenant of Lingens, but it is not clear if there was a house on the site at this time. It is not until 1680 that there is a definite reference to a dwelling at Westfields. The house is referred to again in a 1782 rent roll, but by 1832 it had disappeared. The current house is depicted on the 1886 Ordnance Survey, so was presumably built between 1832 and 1886.

Located in a grassy area west of the house, Test Pit 19 encountered a particularly deep dark brown topsoil (or a topsoil layer over a very similarly coloured subsoil) that was 40cm deep. Below lay a more compacted and clay-heavy interface layer. A sondage in the northwest corner of the test pit revealed that the natural orange clay began at approximately 60cm deep.

Finds

This test pit was most notable for a large group of 19th century whitewares, including fragments from a platter in a popular transfer-printed pattern called 'asiatic pheasants'. One piece of Royal Worcester Crown Ware could be accurately dated thanks to the presence of the mark: 'Royal

Worcester Crown Ware, rn 701631'. Beneath the mark was a star with 10 dots arranged around, indicating a date of 1926³.

A wide range of 20th century glasswares were recovered, which included a Peck's paste jar, and also a counterfeit coin. Issued between 1770 and 1806, counterfeit George III halfpennies were relatively common and this one was probably struck in Birmingham. For more detailed information see [Appendix 3](#).



Photo 18: Glass jars, including Peck's Paste jar (left), Test Pit 19.



Photo 19: Counterfeit George III halfpenny coin, Test Pit 19.

A little 18th century activity is revealed in the lower layers of the test pit with some [Nottingham stoneware](#) and [redware](#) in spits 4-5 (30 – 50cm down). Several fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) also have a broad 1200 – 1800 date, with some roof tile dating to 1200-1800 and a floor tile fragment dating to 1200-1600.

What does this tell us?

The finds assemblage supports a mid-late 19th century date for the current cottage. Whilst there are hints of an earlier building, in the form of pre-1800 brick and tile fragments, there is no associated pottery and these may simply be the result of manuring activity. The counterfeit coin could quite easily be a stray loss too. On balance, early written references to a house at Westfields most likely to refer to another plot of land. This is not to say that an older house wasn't close by, just that no evidence of pre-1800s household waste was found in Test Pit 19.

Test Pit 20: Lingens Farm

Lingens Farm was originally three parcels of land held in the 13th century by Richard Lilling, Richard Keen and Nicholas King. These names appear again in the 1678 rent roll where a house with land is referred to as Lillings with Keenes and Kings being field names. Documented in the 1461 – 1483

³ Museum of Royal Worcester: www.museumofroyalworchester.org/discover-learn/royal-worcester-factory-marks/

Edward IV Court Rolls it appears that the land parcels had been amalgamated into one holding, but they definitely appear as a single holding by the mid-16th century.

Called Lillings until 19th century, the farm periodically changed to Lingings and back to Lillings again until the 1871 census, when it seems to have become Lingings permanently.

Test Pit 20 was placed in the garden west of the farmhouse, close to the original front door. It was excavated to a depth of 50cm, at which point time ran out even though the natural geology had not been reached.

Finds

The upper levels of Test Pit 20 were comparable to Test Pit 19 and many of the others, with a typical range of abraded post-medieval pottery. However, spit 5 (40-50cm) appears to have encountered a sealed horizon containing glazed earthenwares; Manganese mottled ware; and elements from several [Nottingham stonewares](#) vessels including the base of a mug. The presence of small quantities of white salt-glazed stonewares are typical of mid-18th century deposits. The range is typical of an ordinary rural household of moderate means.



Photo 20: Conjoining sherds, and further sherds, of post-medieval redware pancheon, Test Pit 20.

One sherd of [creamware](#) dates from after 1760 and two early whitewares may push the date forward to the turn of the 19th century, but given these wares' presence in the overlying deposits, their paucity and poor condition, it is perhaps more likely that they are intrusive. The earlier wares are notable for their fresh and unabraded condition, high mean sherd weight, and presence of conjoining sherds. These factors suggest that the pottery was deposited on this spot very soon after breakage and has lain undisturbed since. Overall, then, this indicates primary rubbish disposal from a household on this site, probably between AD 1720 and 1770.



Photo 21: Counterfeit George III halfpenny coin, Test Pit 20.

Test Pit 20 also recovered a counterfeit Georgian coin. Earlier in date than the one from Test Pit 19, this halfpenny dates from 1740-1806 but probably also originates from Birmingham. See [Appendix 3](#) for more detailed information.

What does this tell us?

The fresh nature of the breaks in the sherds from spit 5 indicate that these items were dumped here and haven't moved at all since that time, so the 18th century occupants of this dwelling were doing what was typical of the time and dumping their rubbish right at the back of their house!

As the bottom of the archaeological sequence was not reached, earlier artefacts may still remain to be found, but Test Pit 20 was unusual in providing such a tight date range of finds and such undisturbed material.

Conclusions

Drawing all 20 test pits together, what do they tell us about Wichenford's past?

Finds summary

By Rob Hedge

The dig produced 3461 artefacts weighing 35.5kg. The most numerous were sherds of pottery, of which 1390 were recorded. Other common finds included: brick and tile; glass; animal bone; clay tobacco pipe and iron nails. The earliest potsherds were Roman in date; these were found in Test Pits 15 (Abingdon's Cottage) and 18 (Woodend Farm). Test Pit 15 was also one of two to contain medieval pottery. The other location with medieval pottery was Test Pit 4 (Orchard View). Here, besides the common glazed Malvernian wares of 13th to early-17th century date, there was a rim sherd from a 13th century unglazed Malvernian jar.

Several test pits contained evidence for the presence of houses that no longer exist: pottery spanning the 16th to the late-18th century in Test Pit 8 (New House top orchard) suggests a house abandoned sometime around the turn of the 19th century. A concentration — in what is now a field — of early handmade tile and brick ranging in date from the late-15th to the early-17th century suggests that Test Pit 12 (Deakins) was indeed the site of a former building.

Whilst the test pits have uncovered evidence for activity in Wichenford during the Roman period, the settlement as we see it today began to take shape during the medieval period. There were only a handful of sherds of medieval pottery, of which the earliest was the rim of a 13th century cooking pot. Small quantities of pottery show activity through the 16th and 17th centuries, before a marked increase in finds broken and discarded during the 18th century. This reflects both the expansion of the settlement and the increased affordability of consumer goods, especially once refined, mass-produced earthenware pottery became available in the mid-18th century.

Bricks and tile dating back to the 16th century probably reflect the more safety-conscious residents adding brick chimneys to their timber dwellings, and the presence of small fingerprints on the handmade bricks (from Test Pit 9) suggests that local children lent a hand.

These finds are a snapshot of life in Wichenford over two millennia; inevitably, they raise further questions. The small quantity of medieval pottery is surprising, especially in the areas where medieval records suggest the presence of early settlement. But — compensating for this scarcity — there is a rich record of domestic life in the 18th and 19th centuries that gives a window into the lives of Wichenford's inhabitants.

Medieval Wichenford

Written records document a settlement at Wichenford from the 8th century onwards, yet the first material evidence found within the test pits dates from the 13th century. This is a similar picture to that of other Big Digs across Worcestershire, in Badsey, Beoley, Bewdley and Wolverley. It would seem that pottery was not widely used in rural Worcestershire households until the late 11th or 12th century, after the Norman Conquest.

Even after AD 1200, there is surprisingly little material from Wichenford's test pits: only six pot sherds definitively pre-date 1630 (four from Test Pit 4, one from Test Pit 8 and another from Test Pit 15). Seemingly in contradiction to this, many of the sites excavated have strong documentary evidence for medieval and later occupation, whilst four of the sites are known or thought to have been moated (Test Pits 2, 10, 16 and 18). So, why hasn't more household rubbish from these centuries been found? There are three main possibilities:

- 1) Test pits were not excavated deep enough so missed the earliest artefacts.
- 2) Sites mentioned in historic records weren't occupied as early as previously thought, with some sites perhaps being fields or farm buildings early on rather than dwellings.
- 3) Medieval household rubbish was thrown away elsewhere, some distance from homes.

Several of Wichenford's test pits didn't reach the natural geology due to the challenges presented by the area's heavy clay soils, so it is certainly possible that evidence of medieval occupation was missed. This would certainly reduce the quantity of medieval artefacts recovered, but is unlikely to account for the almost total absence of medieval pottery – if large amounts of household rubbish had been thrown out the back of medieval houses, then some could be expected from the spits excavated due to gardens soils being churned up over the centuries.

The second possibility – that sites with medieval documentary evidence were not necessarily occupied – could be true for a few locations. Nevertheless, this explanation is unlikely to be true for the majority of test pit sites. It therefore seems likely that the inhabitants of medieval Wichenford were disposing of their rubbish in a very particular way that resulted in broken pottery being deposited away from dwellings. This suggestion is supported by anecdotal evidence that medieval pottery can be found in large quantities on the surface of ploughed fields in Wichenford, especially those around Venn Lane.

Medieval ways of viewing the world were very different to today and drew heavily on the notion of the four elements and interconnected nature of everything. It has been suggested that these ideas applied to different categories of waste as well, with each being attributed different qualities (see Figure 3). Research suggests that broken pottery was routinely added to manure by peasants, and therefore spread over their arable fields, but not to manor dung heaps⁴. It is clear that how and where medieval household waste ended up was complex, which raises the intriguing possibility that Wichenford's inhabitants subscribed to prescriptive, and perhaps slightly unusual, methods of land management.

“To seed the land with pottery might not be the act of a modern farmer, but it would not have been out of place in the medieval world. Indeed the reciprocity of feeding the soil the vessels from which the peasant farmer himself had eaten, in order that in turn the soil would produce crops for the

⁴ Jones, R. 2009 *Manure and medieval social order*.

farmer to eat once more, fits the medieval notion of permeable personhood, and elemental and humoral interconnections, perfectly.” (Jones 2009: 221-222).

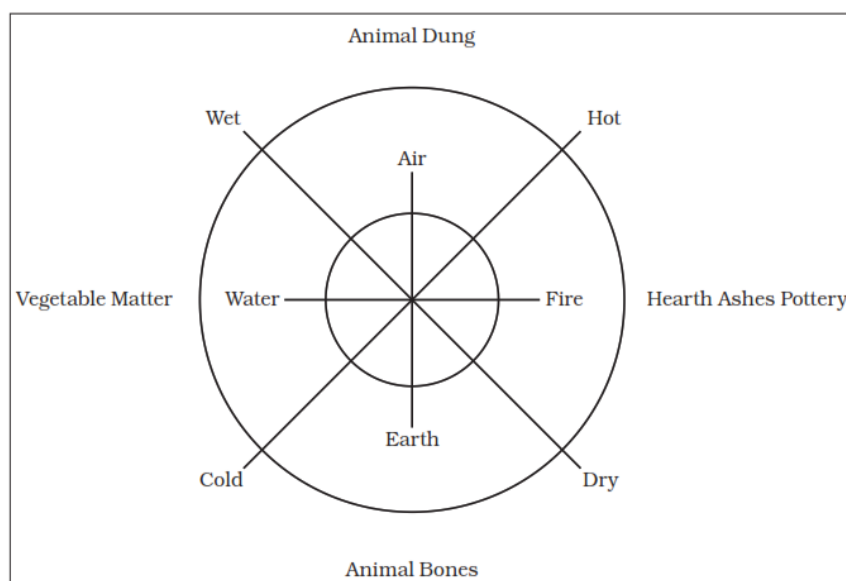


Figure 3: Position of different types of food waste within the elemental wheel. Taken from Jones 2011, p. 8

Later expansion

A large quantity of material dating to the 17th to 19th centuries was found; this is typical of rural settlements and reflects the increasing affordability of ceramic goods as much as the expansion of the settlement.

Across the majority of test pits, pot sherds were generally small, heavily worn and battered. This is typical of pottery that was discarded in rubbish heaps or middens, then later disturbed by gardens being dug over or fields ploughed. The one exception to this being Test Pit 20 where large sherds with very fresh-looking breaks indicate this pottery stayed where it had been dumped. Early 18th century white tablewares and porcelain – including possible seconds – were relatively common in Wichenford, reflecting the village’s proximity to Worcester porcelain factories.

The discovery of two counterfeit Georgian coins is a fascinating discovery and valuable evidence of their circulation in rural areas. Whilst to modern minds they may seem like a sign of nefarious goings-on in Wichenford, in reality counterfeits bronze coins were so common in the 18th century that their presence may have been unremarkable at the time.

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 the owner’s 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.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the owners who generously hosted a test pit and everyone on the Dig Team and Finds Team. Without your enthusiasm and hard work these stories would not have been unearthed.

Archaeological support was provided by Nina O'Hare, Hazel Whitefoot, Jo Losh and Constance Mitchell from Worcestershire Archaeology. Considerable thanks are due to Heather Rendall, Ken MacDonald, Justin Hughes and Rob Hedge for their invaluable support over the test pit weekend, as well as North Worcestershire Archaeology Group. Finds analysis was undertaken by Rob Hedge and John Jackson helped to compile this report.

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Appendix 1: Detailed historical background

Location and geology

Wichenford village is located 6 miles northwest of Worcester and lies within the Malvern Hills District. The topography is rolling lowland over an underlying geology of Sidmouth mudstone formation, with some superficial deposits of alluvium (along the Fitcher Brook) and small areas of sand and gravel (BGS 2023).

The area is characterised by clustered settlement and isolated farmsteads which are surrounded by fields and ancient woodland.

Historical background

By Wichenford Local Heritage Group

Part of the Wick Episcopi, a large estate given to Bishop Mildred of Worcester by King Offa of Mercia between 757 and 775, Wichenford was, apart from a brief period during the Reformation, in the hands of the Bishops until the 19th century.

Much of the current boundary of the parish is described in the Anglo-Saxon boundary charter of King Offa in the third quarter of the 8th century and the southern boundary can still be followed today from the Cotheridge border to Laugherne Brook.

Being part of Wick Episcopi, Wichenford is not mentioned in Domesday 1086 but there is mention of a chapel in 1095, this being a rural parish of the mother church of St Helen's, Worcester. Also a chapel at Kenswick, just under a mile away which implies a level of population that needed two chapels situated so close together.

An 1189 audit for Bishop Baldwin mentions Osbert Cobbe (Cobhouse) and a later audit for Bishop Gifford in 1299 adds other names that have developed into current holdings including Lingens Farm, the Ridge estate lands (Ruggs Place, Ridgend & Cockshut), Woodend ('*atte Wode*'), Arundels, Colketts ('*Caldecote*'), Haw House now Boxley Farm ('*in the Hawe*'), Little Acre ('*Salewys*'), Venn Lane ('*att Fenne*') and Birchend ('*atte Birche*'). These names can be followed through the 13th and 14th century Lay Subsidy Rolls and others, including Abingdon's ('*Abyngdon*'), appear.

Many of these early settlements were moated and recent work has determined that Wichenford had both open countryside with moated settlements and a nucleated settlement with open fields (this around Venn Lane). The village remained a community of dispersed hamlets until relatively recent times (1950s) when the building of the housing estate, and bungalows opposite, created the current village centre around the junction of Venn Lane and Ockeridge Lane.

St Lawrence's Church has its origins in the 12th century but the earliest part of the current church (the nave) dates from 1320 with the tower being added at the end of the 1300s. The first parish priest to be recorded is a 'W of Wichenford' in 1244. A drawing dated 1810 shows the church in some disrepair but this appears to have been rectified by 1814.

The manor house, Wichenford Court, originally held by Urse at the time of the Domesday survey, was in the Washbourne family

Further, more detailed, historical background information can be found in *The Story of Wichenford* by AJ & EM Beach and *Wichenford – An Historic Landscape* by The Wichenford Local Heritage Group.

Archaeological background

Introduction

Prior to test pitting, a search of Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) was completed for the parish and a summary of these results are presented below.

Prehistory

A possible Iron Age enclosure is noted at Cockshoot Farm and two copper alloy late Iron Age coins (WSM 75352/75353) are registered with the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) within the Wichenford area.

Roman to Anglo-Saxon (43AD – 1066)

Again, there are no certain Roman archaeological features in Wichenford, much of the evidence of activity in this area during the Roman period exists in the form of finds registered with the PAS. These include brooches (both Trumpet and Colchester forms) and coins (silver (WSM74655) and copper alloy (two of which were found at Woodend Farm (WSM 38497))).

Roman pottery has also been found in the area – at Woodhouse Farm and during salvage recording along the route of the Broadheath Drought Main in fields just to the south and southwest of the modern village.

Medieval (1066 – 1539)

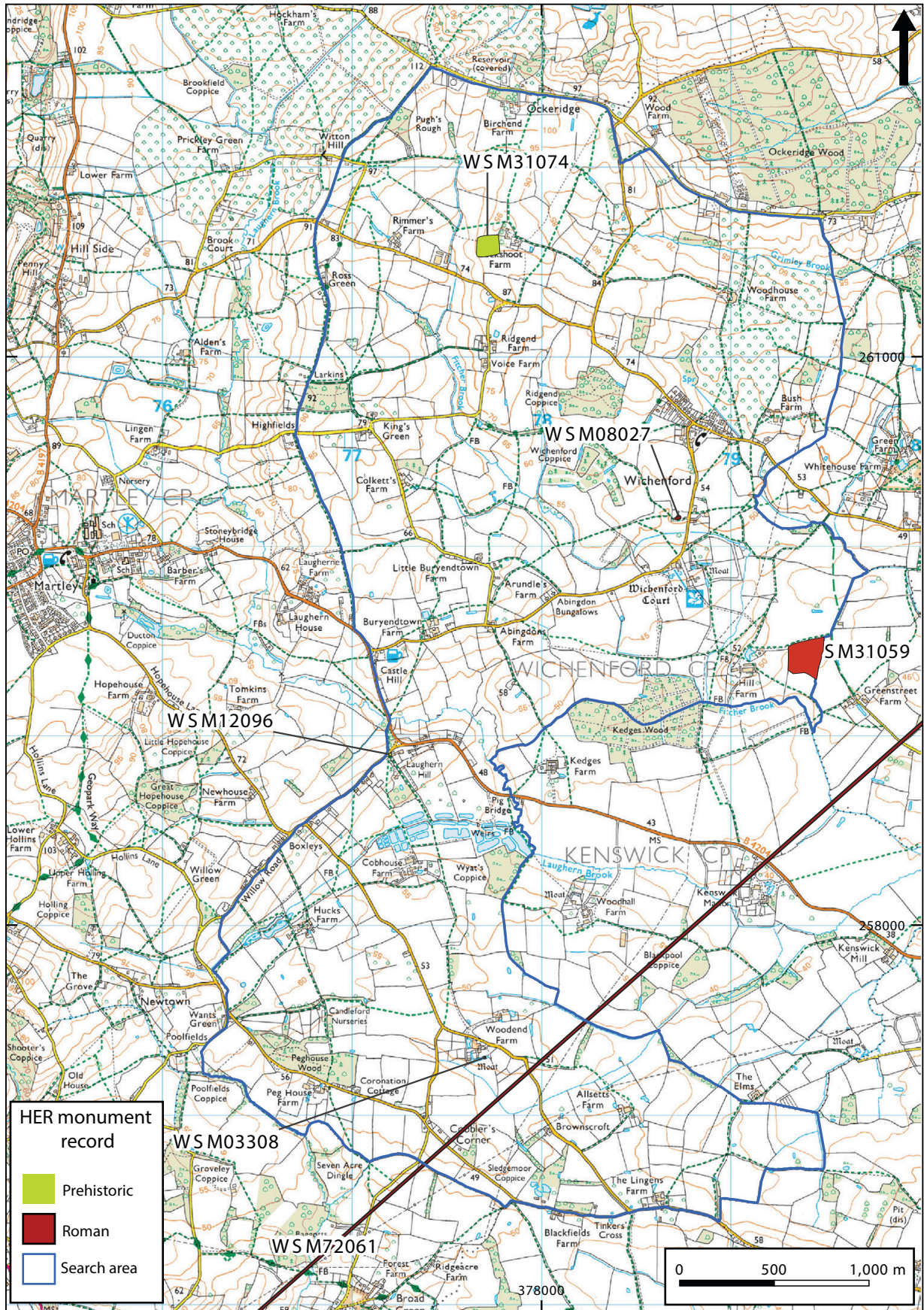
A number of medieval moated sites and deserted settlements are recorded in the wider area. In Wichenford itself Wichenford Court was described as a house with moat, drawbridge and gatehouse; the moat is still visible on the first edition Ordnance Survey. Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks are recorded around a number of farms, including Lingens Farm and Cobhouse Farm, as well as to the west of Abingdon's Cottages and around Wichenford Court.

Post-medieval (1540 – 1900)

The post-medieval period is strongly represented in the Wichenford area with numerous coins recorded and a copper alloy seal matrix. Landscape features such as ponds, a water meadow, ridge and furrow and a drove road also date from this period. A number of farms in the area have buildings dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries.

Modern (1901 – present)

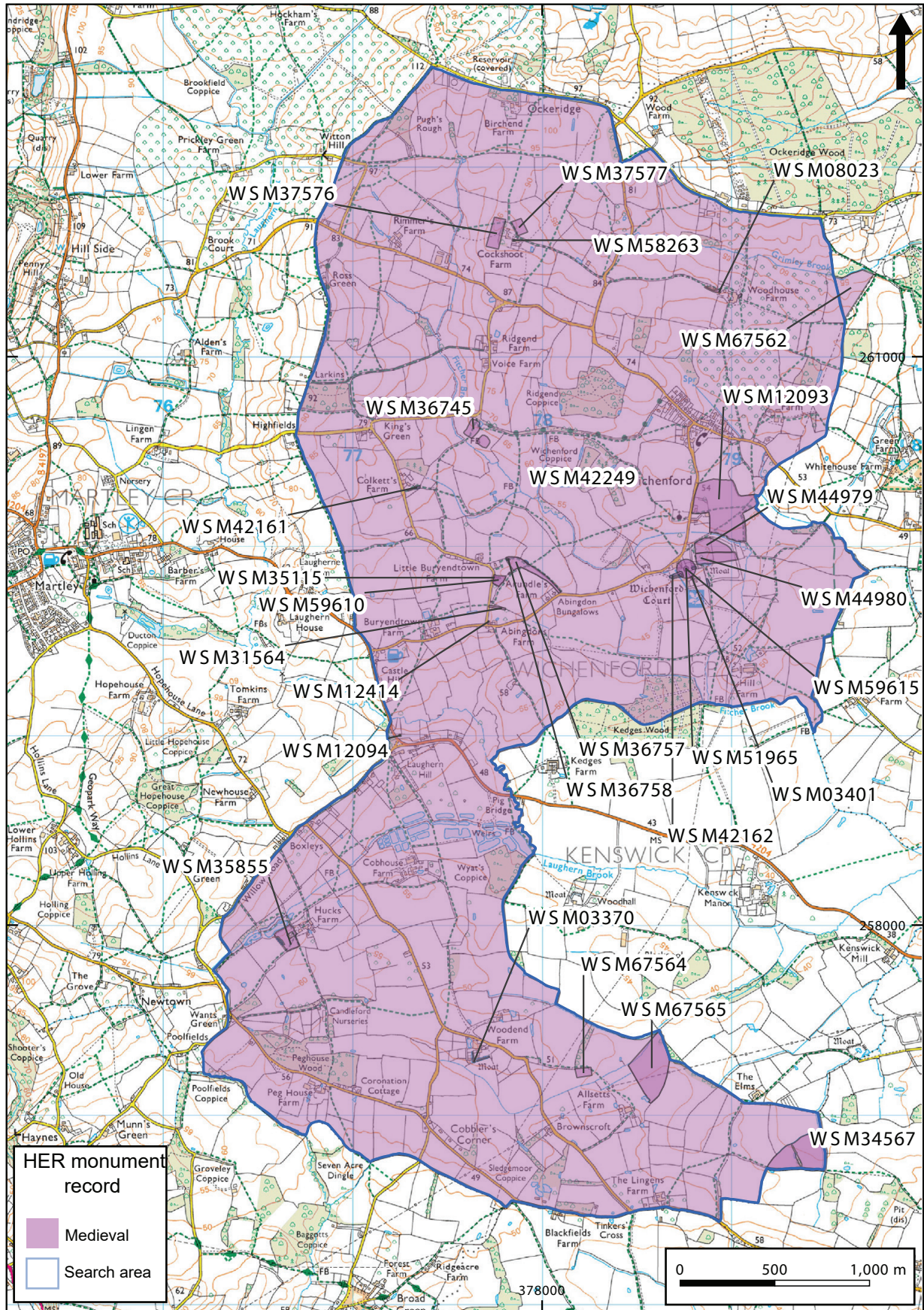
The modern period in Wichenford is almost exclusively represented by houses and numerous farm buildings, including barns, sheds, pigsties and stables. The HER search also notes, from oral evidence, the location of a WWII searchlight battery and some Nissen huts at Buryend Town Farm.



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Prehistoric and Roman monuments recorded on the HER

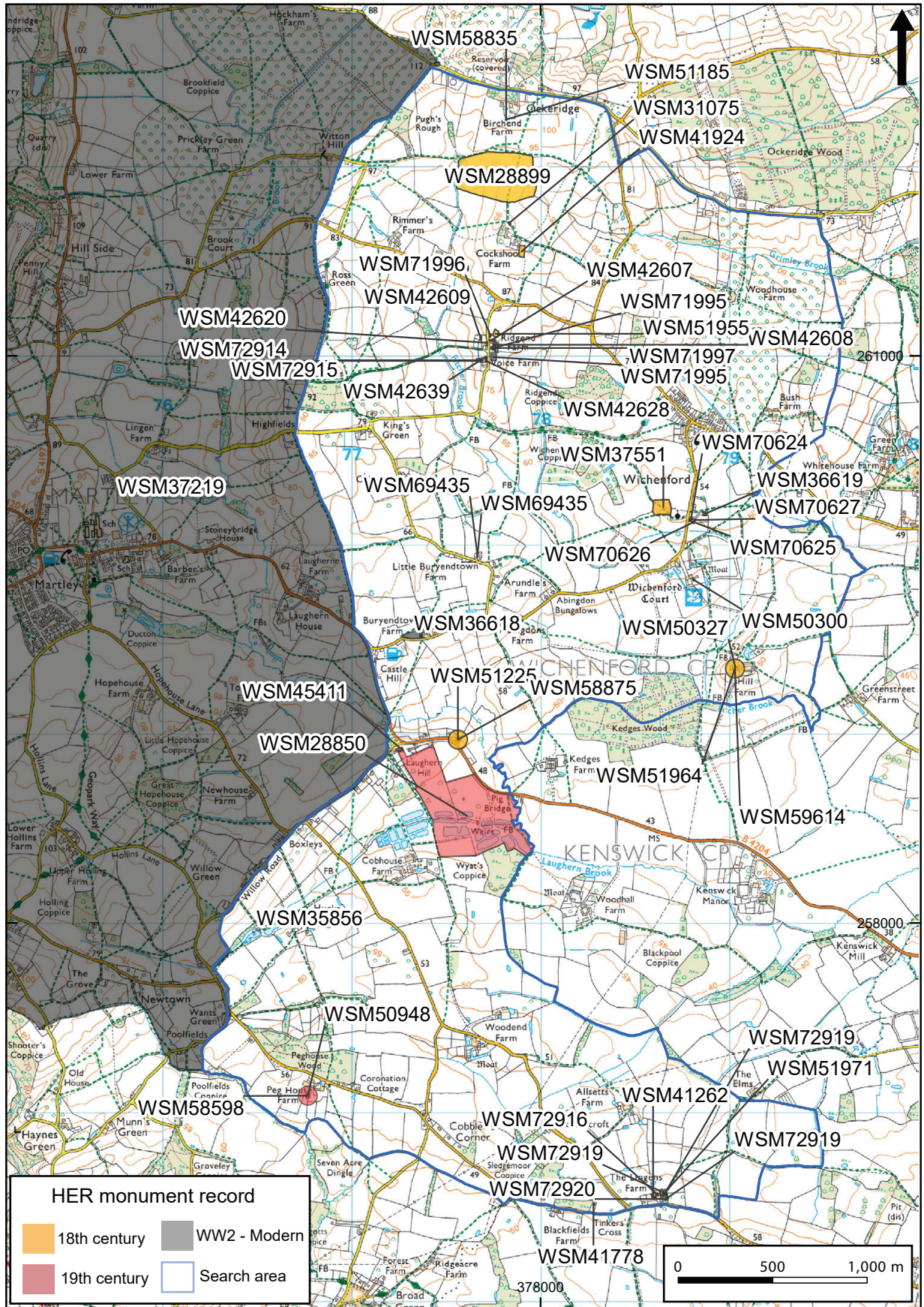
Figure 4



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Medieval monuments recorded on the HER

Figure 5



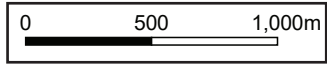
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18th century to modern monuments recorded on the HER

Figure 6

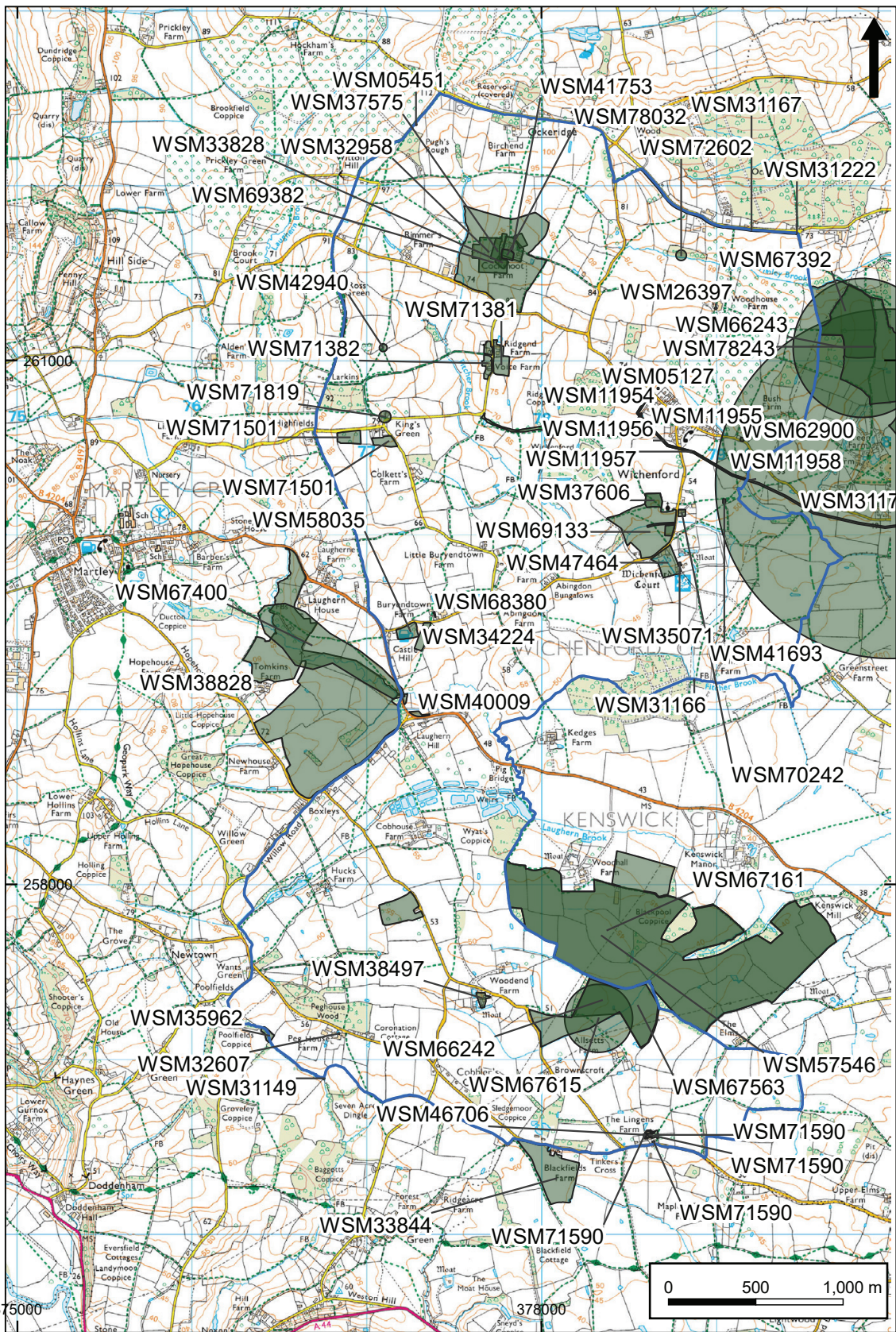


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Historic farmsteads

Figure 7



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Events recorded on the HER

Figure 8

Appendix 2: Methodology & spit descriptions

Project methodology

Location

Twenty test pits were excavated across Wichenford, northwest of Worcester (SO 77428 59279) over the 23rd – 24th April 2022. Test pits were spread across the parish in private gardens and fields. Test pits were located by preference close to the back of houses where rubbish was historically 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 plots with extensive historical records in order to establish a picture of the medieval Wichenford's layout and establish the nature of archaeological evidence remaining at sites of documented occupation.

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 1m² 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 and the presence of a service cable in one instance. 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, Worcestershire Young Archaeologists' Club and North Worcestershire Archaeology Group, with the support of Worcestershire Archaeology.

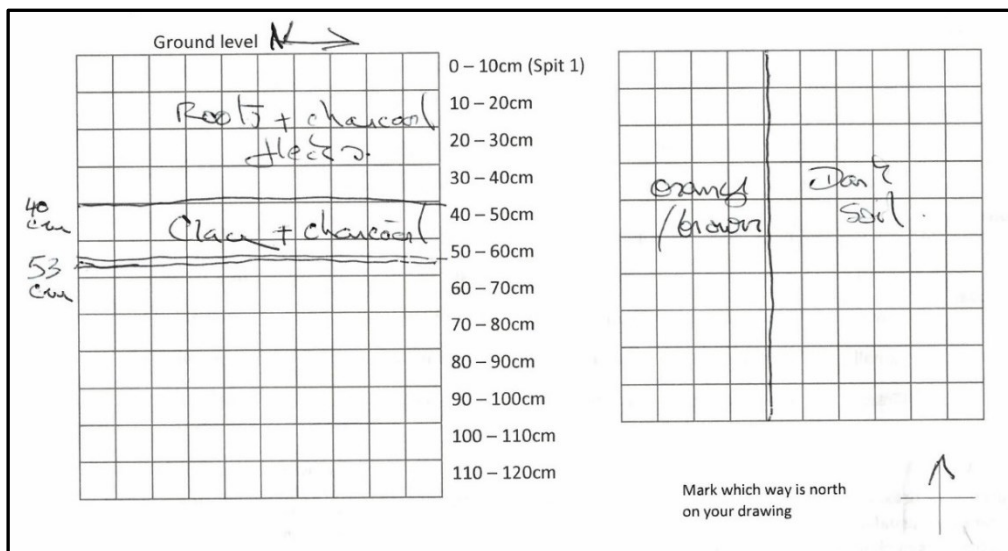
Archive

The Historic Environment Record (HER) event number for this investigation is WSM71096 and the WAAS project numbers are CE004 and P6127. The project archive is currently held at the offices of Worcestershire Archaeology in The Hive, Worcester. 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 records

Test Pit 1 (SO 76847 61476)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm dark Blackish brown silt	Occasional medium stones, occasional charcoal flecks and occasional medium roots	Yes
2	Firm dark blackish brown silt with some lumps of clay	Occasional small stones, occasional charcoal flecks and occasional medium roots	Yes
3	Firm dark blackish brown silt	Occasional small stones, occasional charcoal flecks and abundant medium roots	Yes
4	Firm/compact dark blackish brown silt	Occasional small stones, occasional charcoal flecks and abundant medium roots	Yes
5	Firm/compact silty clay	Rare stones, occasional charcoal flecks and rare small roots	Yes



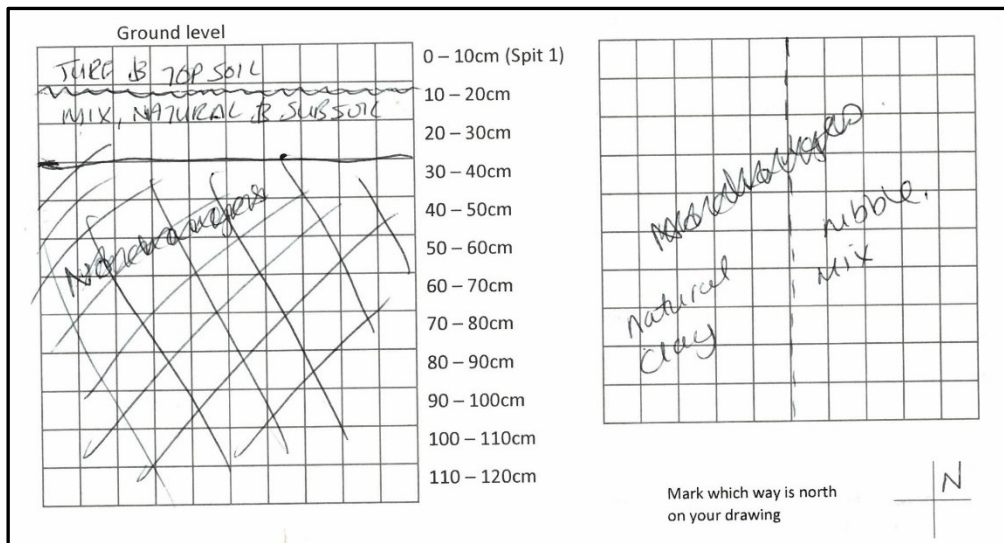
Drawing 1. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 1. Each square equals 10cm.



Photo 1. Test Pit 1, spit 5 visible in eastern sondage

Test Pit 2 (SO 77869 61577)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Loose mid orangey brown	Medium stones, occasional roots	Yes
2	Firm mid orangey brown clay	Occasional small stones, occasional small roots	Yes
3	Compact mid orangey brown clay	Charcoal flecks, occasional small roots	Yes



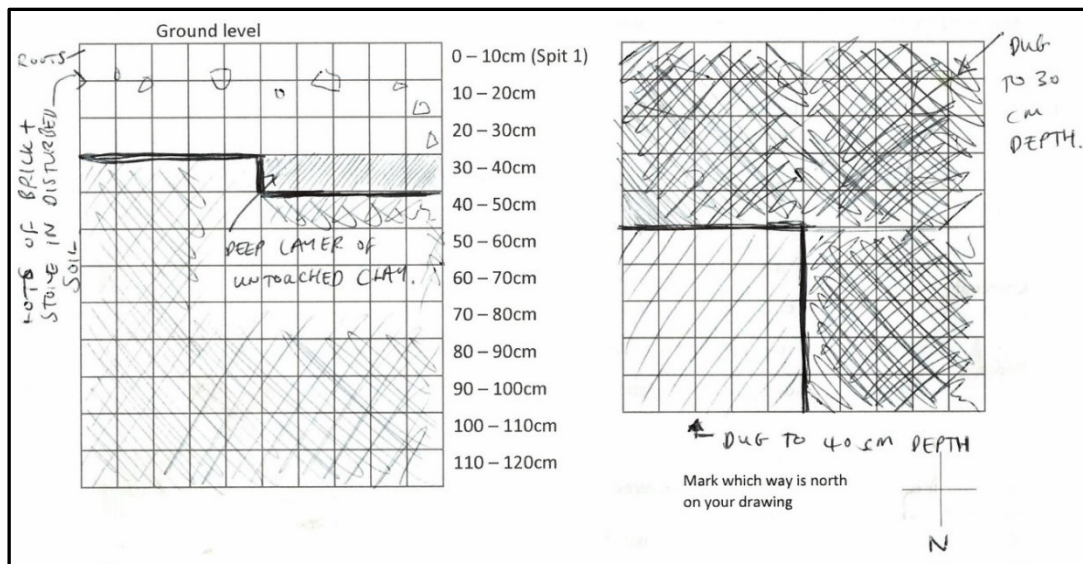
Drawing 2. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 2



Photo 2. Test Pit 2, spit 3

Test Pit 3 (SO 77909 61595)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Compact mid orangey brown sand	Occasional medium stones, Occasional medium charcoal flecks and rare small roots (Concentration of charcoal to the NE of centre)	Yes
2	Compact mid orangey brown sandy clay	Abundant large and medium stones, rare charcoal flecks and rare small roots. (layer of brick/tile in the sw half of spit)	Yes
3	Compact mid orangey brown clay	Rare medium stone, Occasional charcoal flecks and rare small roots	Yes
4	Compact mid/dark orangey brown/blackish brown clay. Sondage of 50cm x 50cm only in the NE quadrant taken down to 40cm depth	Rare small stones	No



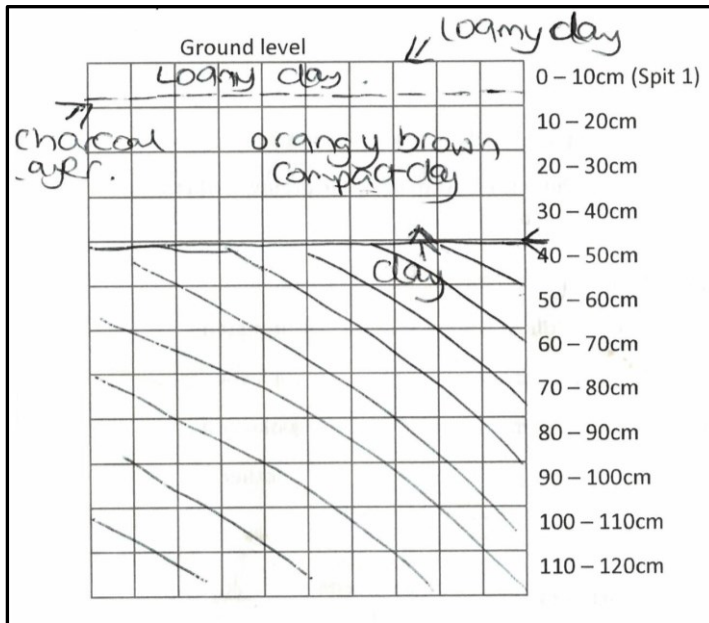
Drawing 3. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 3



Photo 3. Test Pit 3, spit 4 showing in north-eastern quadrant sondage

Test Pit 4 (SO 78669 60806)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Compact mid orangey brown silt and clay	Rare stones, Charcoal flecks and abundant medium roots. (Layer of charcoal at 5cm depth)	Yes
2	Mid orangey brown clay	Rare stones, rare charcoal and abundant roots	Yes
3	Compact light orangey brown clay	Rare stones and abundant roots	Yes
4	Compact light orangey brown clay	Rare stones, charcoal flecks and abundant roots	Yes
5	Compact light orangey brown clay	Rare small stones, occasional flecks of charcoal and rare small roots	Yes



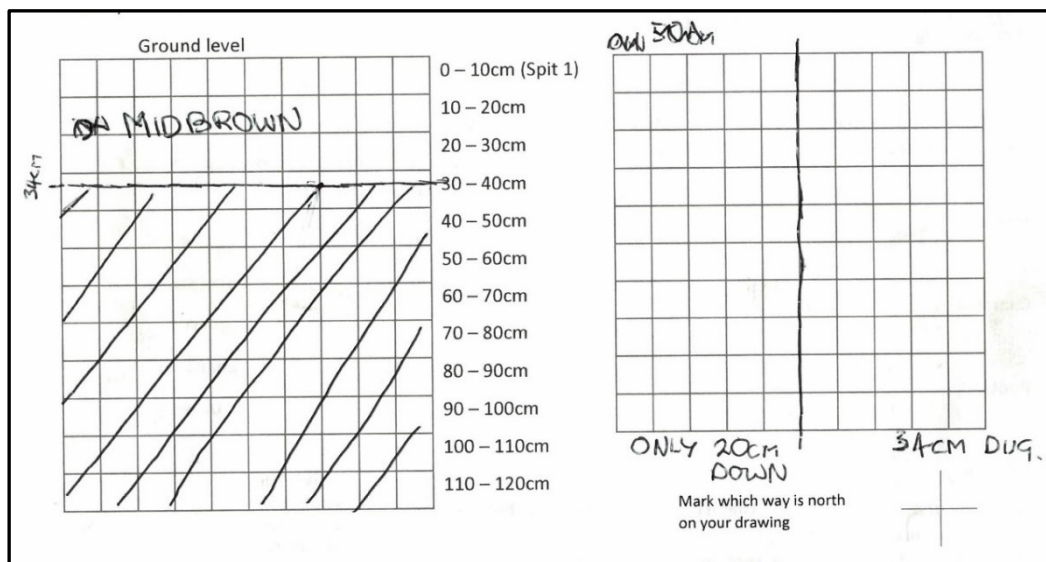
Drawing 4. South facing section of Test Pit 4



Photo 4. South-facing section of Test Pit 4

Test Pit 5 (SO 78692 60670)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm orangey brown silty clay	Abundant small stones, rare charcoal flecks and occasional small roots	Yes
2	Firm mid orangey brown silty clay	Occasional small stones, Occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional small roots	Yes
3	Firm mid orangey brown silt	Occasional small stones, occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional small roots	Yes
4	Firm mid greyish brown silty clay	Rare small stones, Occasional medium flecks of charcoal and occasional small roots. (Concentration of charcoal towards W edge of pit)	Yes



Drawing 5. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 5



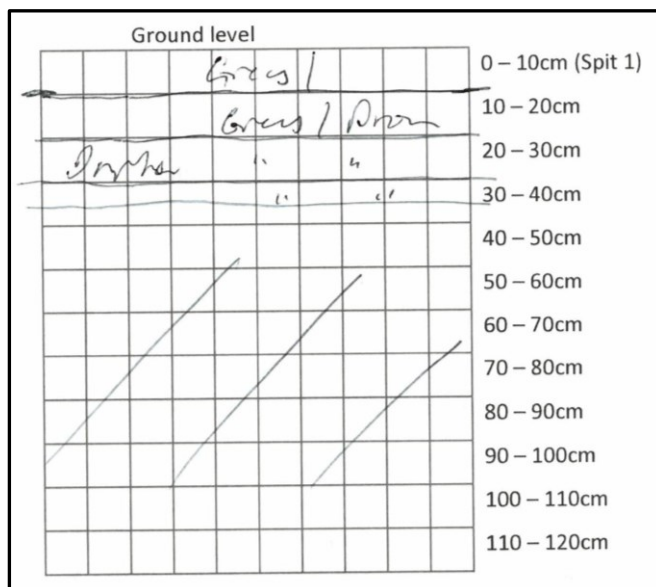
Photo 5. Test Pit 5, spit 3

Test Pit 6 (SO 78749 60653) Closed due to power cable

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Loose light orangey brown clay (contains organic matter so clay easily breaks up)	Occasional small stones, occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional small roots	Yes

Test Pit 7 (SO 78797 60162)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm mid greyish brown silt	Occasional medium stones, occasional medium charcoal and abundant medium roots	Yes
2	Firm dark orangey brown silt	Rare small stones, rare charcoal flecks and abundant large roots	Yes
3	Firm dark greyish brown silt	Abundant small and medium stones, rare charcoal flecks and abundant mixed roots	Yes
4	Compact dark blackish brown clay	Occasional medium stone, rare charcoal flecks and occasional medium roots	Yes



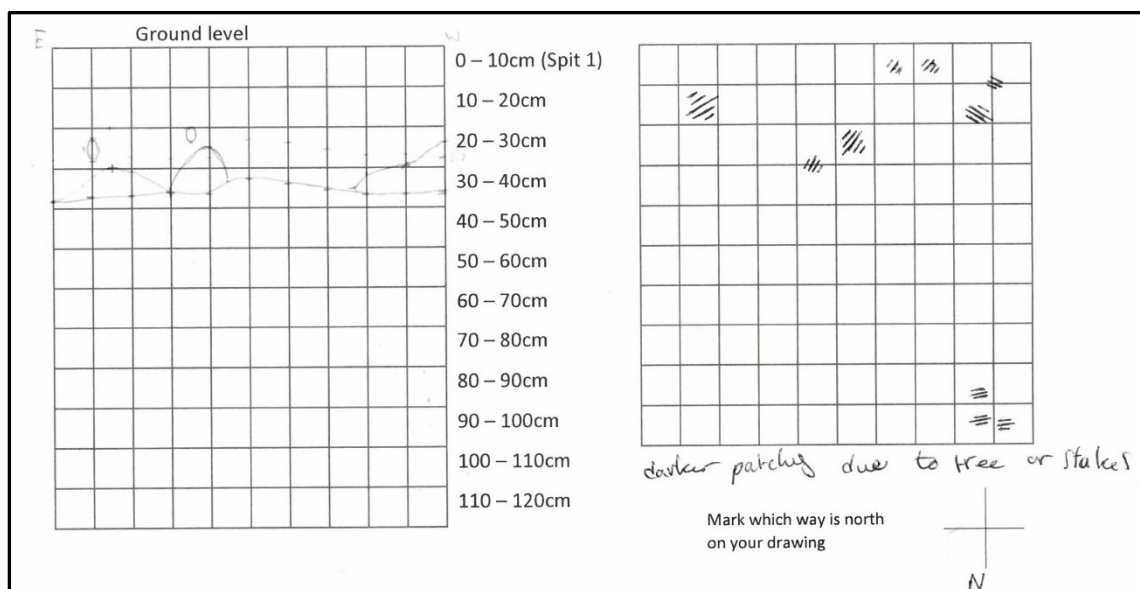
Drawing 6. South-facing section of Test Pit 7



Photo 6. Test Pit 7, spit 4

Test Pit 8 (SO 76848 60569)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm mid orangey brown clay	Rare stones, charcoal flecks and abundant roots	Yes
2	Firm mid orangey brown clay (paler patch to the west of centre)	Occasional small stones, occasional charcoal flecks and abundant small roots	Yes
3	Firm mid orangey brown clay	Occasional small stones, occasional charcoal flecks and rare small roots	Yes
4	Firm mid orangey brown clay with darker irregular patches of rooting	Rare medium stones, occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small roots	No



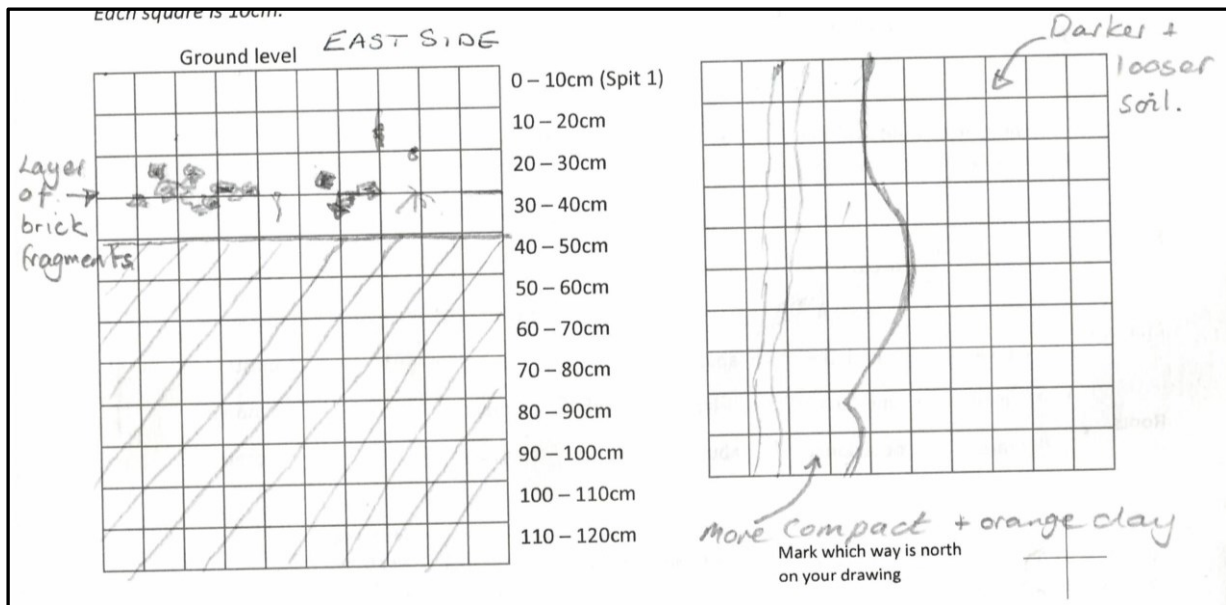
Drawing 7. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 8



Photo 7. Test Pit 8, spit 4

Test Pit 9 (SO 77090 60573)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm dark blackish brown silt	Occasional small stones, occasional medium charcoal and abundant medium roots	Yes
2	Firm/compact dark blackish brown silty clay	Abundant small river worn pebbles, occasional medium roots and abundant medium roots	Yes
3	Firm/compact dark blackish brown silty clay	Abundant small/medium stones, occasional medium charcoal flecks and abundant medium roots	Yes
4	Compact dark blackish brown clay	Occasional small/medium stones, medium charcoal flecks and occasional medium roots	No



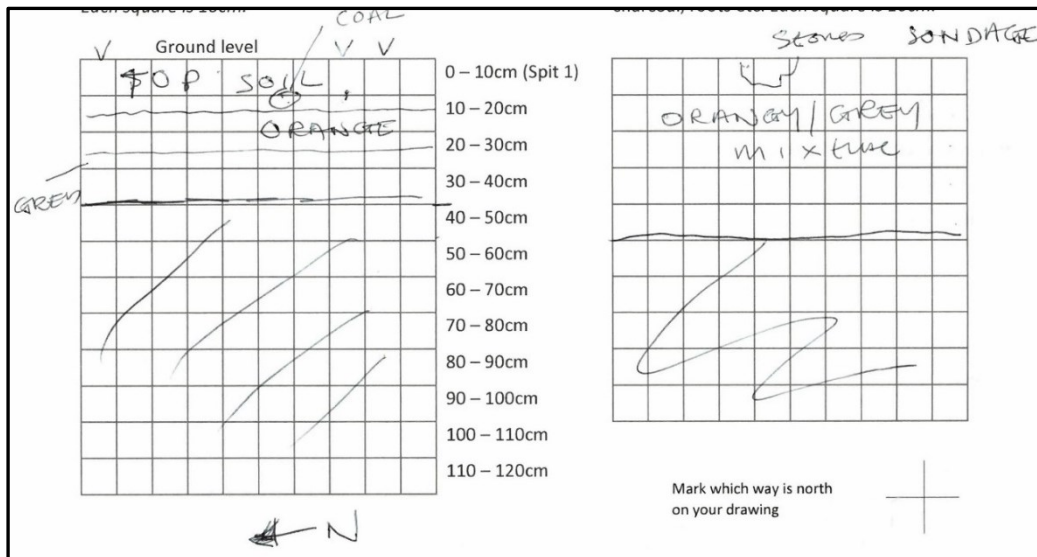
Drawing 8. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 9. Each square equals 10cm.



Photo 8. Test Pit 9, spit 4 visible in eastern sondage

Test Pit 10 (SO 77322 60310)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Loose mid orangey brown sand /silt	Abundant medium/large stones, occasional charcoal flecks and abundant medium roots	Yes
2	Firm mid orangey brown sand/clay	Abundant medium stones, occasional medium charcoal and abundant medium roots	Yes
3	Compact mid orangey brown clay	Abundant large charcoal and abundant small roots	Yes
4	Compact mid orangey brown clay with grey clay patches	Rare small stones, abundant medium charcoal and abundant small roots	Yes
5	Compact mid orangey brown clay	Encountered drainage pipe so digging stopped	-



Drawing 9. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 10



Photo 9. Test Pit 10, spit 4 with ceramic land drain starting to appear in sondage

Test Pit 11 (SO 77760 59836)

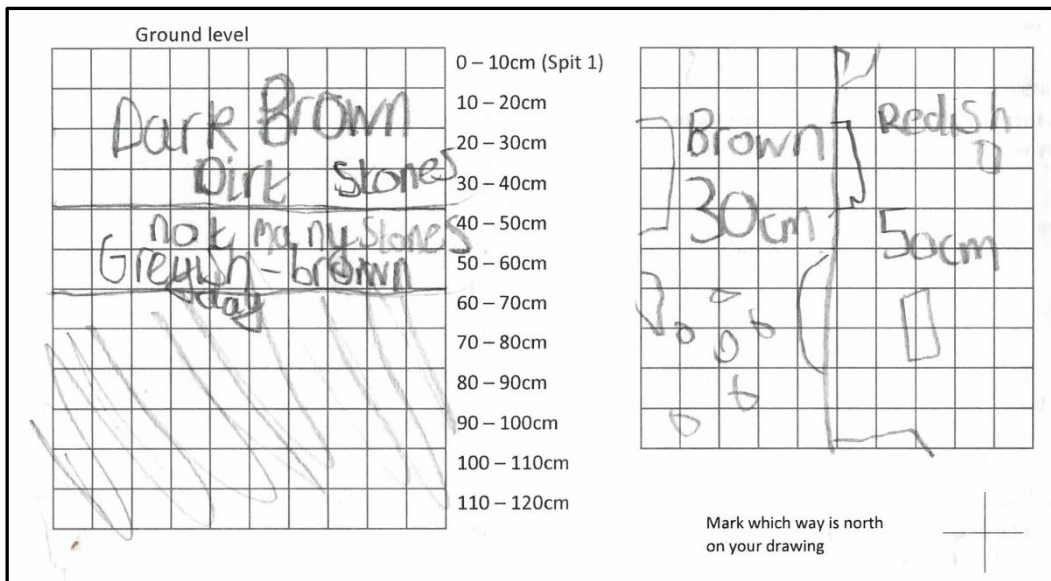
Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm greyish brown	Occasional stones and medium roots	Yes
2	Firm mid greyish brown becoming compacted clay	Medium stones and rare charcoal flecks	Yes
3	Compact mid orangey brown clay. 1m x 50cm sondage in west side of test pit	Rare/occasional stones	No
4	Compact light/mid orangey brown clay. 1m x 50cm sondage in west side of test pit	Occasional large stones in eastern edge	No



Photo 10. Test Pit 11, spit 4 visible in eastern sondage

Test Pit 12 (SO 77622 59611)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Loose dark blackish brown sand/silt	Abundant mixed stones, occasional charcoal flecks and rare small roots	Yes
2	Loose mid blackish brown sand	Occasional medium stones, occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small roots	Yes
3	Loose mid blackish brown sand	Occasional small stones	Yes
4	Loose mid blackish brown sand	Abundant large and small stones	Yes
5	Compact dark greyish brown clay	Abundant medium stones, rare charcoal flecks and rare small roots	Yes



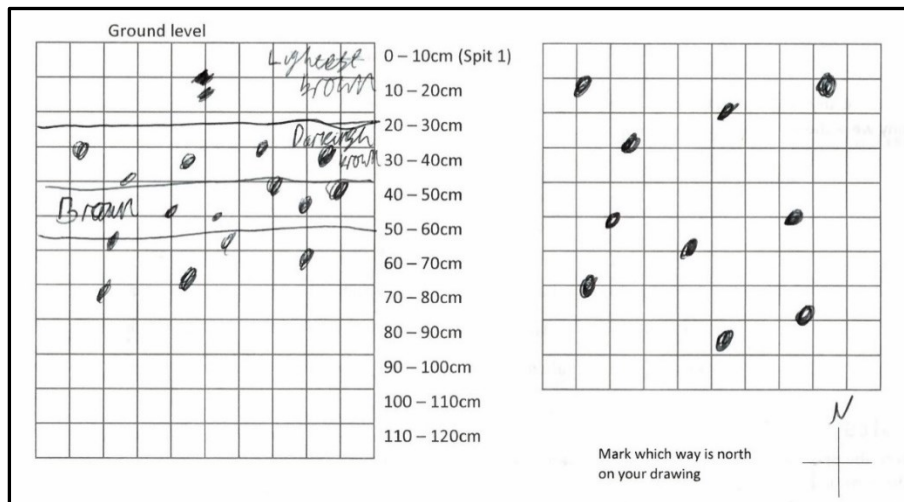
Drawing 10. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 12



Photo 11. Test Pit 12, spit 5 visible in eastern sondage

Test Pit 13 (SO 77508 59606)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Compact light orangey brown sand	Occasional med stones	Yes
2	Compact light orangey brown sand	Abundant mixed sized stones	Yes
3	Compact mid orangey brown sand	Occasional mixed sized stones, occasional charcoal flecks and rare small roots	Yes
4	Compact reddish-brown clay	Occasional medium stones and a very large boulder in SW quadrant	Yes
5	Compact mid orangey brown clay	Occasional large and small stones, medium charcoal and rooting	Yes



Drawing 11. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 13



Photo 22. Test Pit 13, spit 5

Test Pit 14 (SO 77391 59495)

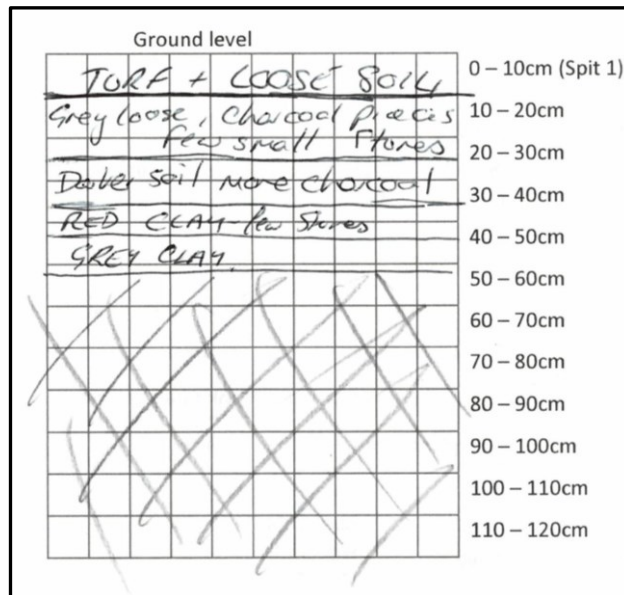
Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm Light orangey brown sand	Occasional mixed sized stones, Rare medium charcoal and occasional small roots	Yes
2	Firm light orangey brown sand/clay	Occasional mixed sized stones, rare charcoal flecks and occasional small roots	Yes



Photo 33. Test Pit 14, spit 2

Test Pit 15 (SO 77846 59264)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Compact mid blackish brown	Rare stones, occasional charcoal and rare roots	Yes
2	Compact mid blackish brown clay	Occasional medium stones, occasional medium charcoal and rare small roots (charcoal focused in SW corner and east side)	Yes
3	Compact mid blackish brown clay	Rare small stones, occasional med charcoal and occasional small roots	Yes
4	Compact light greyish brown clay (hard patch of clay in NW side)	v occasional stones, v occasional charcoal and occasional small roots	Yes



Drawing 12. Section of Test Pit 15



Photo 14. Test Pit 15, spit 5

Test Pit 16 (SO 77372 58329)

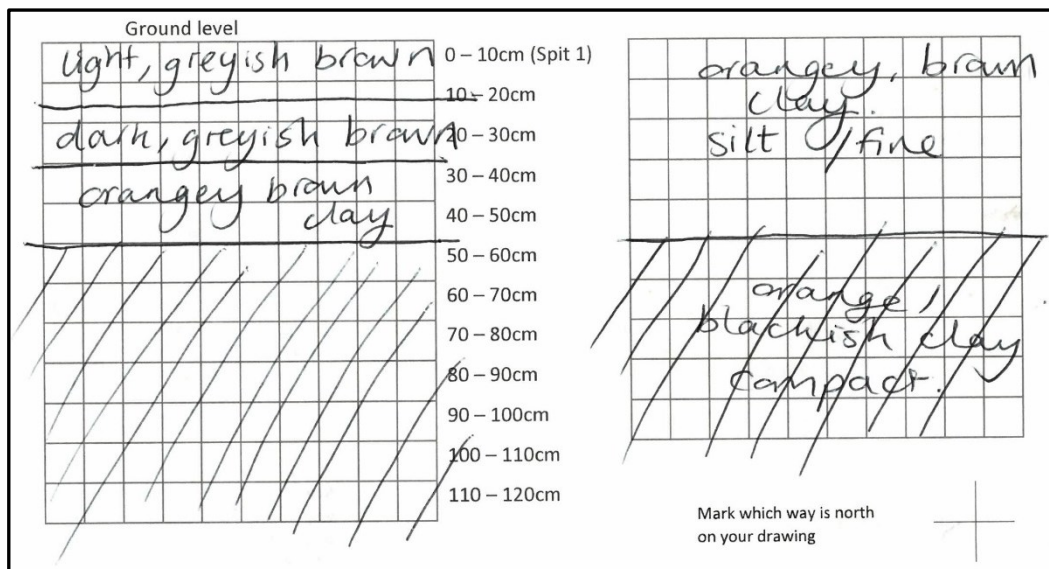
Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Compact mid chocolate brown clay	Rare small stones, rare charcoal flecks and rare roots	Yes
2	Compact mid blackish brown clay	Occasional small stones, occasional medium charcoal and rare roots	Yes
3	Mid greyish brown clay	Rare stones and rare charcoal	Yes



Photo 15. Test Pit 16, spit 3

Test Pit 17 (SO 77278 57846)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm dark yellowish-brown clay	Abundant medium charcoal and occasional roots	Yes
2	Firm mid blackish brown clay	Rare charcoal and some roots	No
3	Compact mid greyish blackish brown clay	Large stones, occasional charcoal and large roots	Yes
4	Firm orangey brown clay	Occasional charcoal	Yes
5	Compact dark orangey brown clay	Occasional charcoal	Yes



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



Photo 16. Location of Test Pit 17

Test Pit 18 (SO 77666 57320)

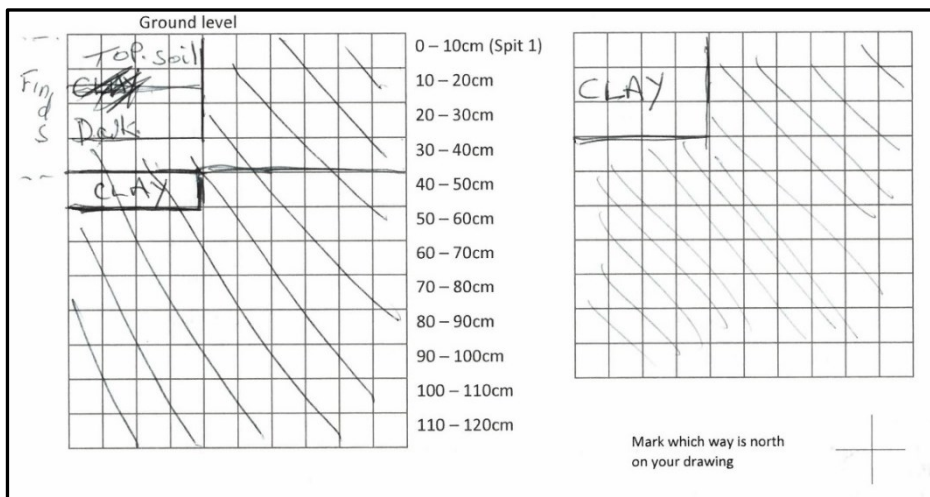
Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Firm mid greyish brown silt	Occasional medium stones, rare medium charcoal and abundant medium roots	Yes
2	Compact dark greyish brown clay	Occasional medium stones, occasional charcoal flecks and rare medium roots (charcoal in SW corner)	Yes
3	Compact mid orangey brown clay. Stake hole in centre west side of test pit	Rare medium stones, rare small roots	Yes



Photo 17. Test Pit 18, spit 3

Test Pit 19 (SO 78262 56514)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Compact mid/dark blackish brown clay	Occasional stones and charcoal	Yes
2	Loose dark blackish brown	Occasional rare stones and occasional small roots	Yes
3	Loose/firm mid blackish brown	Occasional rooting	Yes
4	Firm mid orangey brown clay	Rare stones, charcoal flecks and rare roots	Yes
5	Compact mid greyish brown clay with a hard area in the NW corner	Rare large stones	No



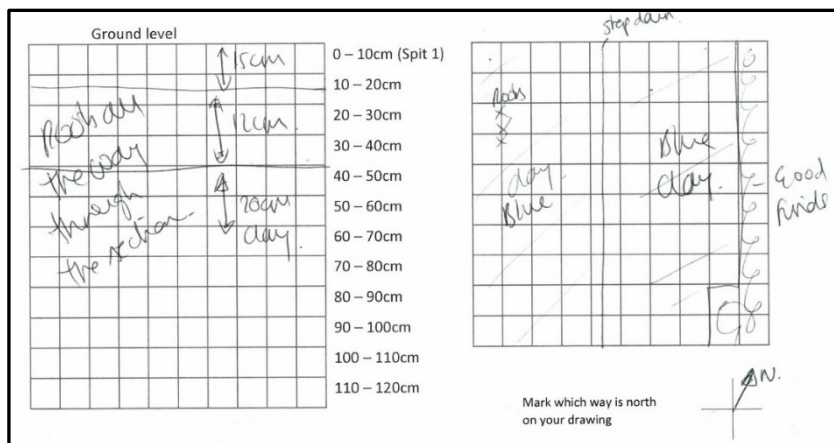
Drawing 14. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 19



Photo 18. Test Pit 19 with spit 5 visible in north-east sondage

Test Pit 20 (SO 78585 56551)

Spit no.	Soil description	Inclusions	Artefacts
1	Loose mid blackish greyish brown sand	Rare small stone, rare charcoal flecks and abundant large roots	Yes
2	Loose mid greyish blackish brown sand/clay	Occasional small stones, occasional charcoal flecks and abundant large roots	Yes
3	Mid/dark greyish blackish brown sand	Occasional small stones, rare charcoal flecks and abundant medium roots	Yes
4	Loose/firm mid greyish blackish brown sand/clay	Rare small stones, occasional charcoal flecks and abundant small roots	Yes
5	Compact mid/dark greyish blackish brown clay. Sondage to 60cm excavated on the eastern half	Rare medium stones, rare charcoal flecks and occasional small roots	Yes



Drawing 15. Section (left) and plan (right) of Test Pit 20



Photo 19. Test Pit 20 with spit 5 visible in eastern sondage

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 policy

All artefacts were hand-recovered by volunteers under the supervision of WAAS staff and volunteers from local archaeological societies. Where a significant quantity of post-medieval or modern building material was encountered a sample was retained and the remainder left on site.

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

Reference collections and concordances

Pottery is referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the Worcestershire fabric reference series (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org). For post-medieval fabrics, the Worcestershire series is somewhat incomplete, so supplementary codes and descriptions from other relevant fabric series have been included where appropriate. 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 3461 artefacts weighing 35.5kg. Finds were recovered from all 20 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	mammal bone	272	2436
bone Total		272	2436
ceramic	brick	12	3542
	brick and tile	454	9474
	clay pipe	82	139
	drain tile	32	281
	floor tile	6	1268
	kiln furniture	4	10
	pot	1390	7241
	roof tile	28	1793
	saggar	1	22
	sanitary ceramic	1	162
	tile	8	155
	unident	5	16
	wall tile	1	44

Material	Object type	count	weight(g)
	waster pot	19	98
ceramic Total		2043	24245
concrete	concrete	2	290
concrete Total		2	290
copper alloy	battery terminal	1	7
	box catch	1	1
	buckle	2	15
	cartridge	2	10
	hinge	3	42
	machine part	1	10
	vehicle washer	1	7
copper alloy Total		11	92
glass	medicine phial	1	5
	vessel	429	3330
	window	194	442
glass Total		624	3777
graphite	graphite rod	4	4
graphite Total		4	4
iron	barbed wire	1	10
	bracket	3	322
	fixings	2	9
	iron object	58	897
	iron plate	2	57
	misc objects	19	220
	nail	212	1550
	nails and screws	6	29
	plate	2	39
	tent peg	1	17
	unident	1	44
	washer	3	17
iron Total		310	3211
lead	lead fragment	2	18
	lead sheet	1	10
	window came	1	1
lead Total		4	29
lead alloy	?pipe union	1	6
lead alloy Total		1	6
metal	battery	2	38
	washer	1	4
metal Total		3	42
mortar	cement mortar	15	339

Material	Object type	count	weight(g)
	lime mortar	5	35
mortar Total		20	374
organic	charcoal	15	8
	coal	32	54
	leather	2	2
	oyster shell	6	26
organic Total		55	90
plaster	lime plaster	24	151
	moulding	1	1
	wall plaster	14	56
plaster Total		39	208
plastic	fitting	2	1
	label	2	1
plastic Total		4	2
silver	chain	4	1
silver Total		4	1
slag	clinker	9	48
	fuel ash slag	3	39
	hearth material	2	21
	iron slag	1	7
	misc slag	1	33
	smelting slag	1	10
	smithing slag	4	136
	unident	2	14
slag Total		23	308
steel	cutlery handle	1	2
	knife	1	24
steel Total		2	26
stone	roof slate	38	245
	sandstone	1	120
	slate pencil	1	1
stone Total		40	366
Grand Total		3461	35507

Table 2: Finds quantification by material and type

Pottery fabrics

Pottery represents the key dating evidence for activity on the site, as the most common dateable artefact. The earliest sherds were Roman Severn Valley wares (fabrics 12 and 12.1). Medieval wares comprised local Malvernian unglazed (fabric 56) and oxidised glazed (fabric 69) wares.

Transitional wares of broadly 16th-century date were restricted to one sherd of early redware (fabric 72), although small quantities of Midlands Purple (fabric 108) and Midland Yellow (fabric 77) also span the transitional and early post-medieval periods.

A greater range and quantity of wares of later-17th to 18th-century date were observed, including Staffordshire slipwares, Nottingham stoneware, and a wide range of redware (fabric 78) forms. Hand-painted tin-glazed earthenwares were present in small numbers, the majority coming from the 18th-century pot group in test pit 20. White salt-glazed stonewares of mid-18th century date were followed by increasing numbers of later-18th century creamware, pearlware, and early whitewares. Among these refined earthenwares were examples of factory slipwares, mostly annular, but also including a striking example of 'surface agate' decoration. Whitewares of the 19th century were a typical range of hand-painted and transfer-printed vessels, including the ubiquitous willow pattern and asiatic pheasants. A range of porcelain and semi-porcelain were present, including a small quantity of late-18th or 19th-century examples of Worcester wares. Later Worcester products included earthenware 'Crown ware' with a date stamp indicating production in 1926.

Period	Fabric code	Fabric description/subtype	count	weight (g)
2: Roman	12	Ox SVW	3	35
	12.1	Reduced SVW	1	1
2: Roman Total			4	36
4: high medieval	56	Unglazed Malvernian	1	18
4: high medieval Total			1	18
4-6: High medieval to transitional	69	Oxidised glazed Malvernian	4	20
4-6: High medieval to transitional Total			4	20
5-6: late medieval/transitional	72	early redware	1	17
5-6: late medieval/transitional Total			1	17
5-7: late medieval to post-medieval	108	Midland Purple	1	8
5-7: late medieval to post-medieval Total			1	8
6-7: transitional to post-medieval	77	Midland Yellow	4	14
	78.4	RW speckled	5	66
6-7: transitional to post-medieval Total			9	80
7: early post-medieval	78	RW black	226	2794
	81	Misc stonewares	1	2

Period	Fabric code	Fabric description/subtype	count	weight (g)
		Rhenish	1	6
		Westerwald	4	4
	81.5	WSG	18	50
	82	TG blue HP	2	2
		TGE	2	7
		TGE HP blue	9	64
	84	CW FMSW Surface Agate	1	2
	90	early post-med Orange wares	7	15
		Metro Slip	1	7
	91	Black outer, brown inner	3	35
		Black-glazed	1	1
		Mang mot	6	9
		Mng mot	4	22
		Staffordshire	40	311
	7: early post-medieval Total			326
7-8: post-medieval	78	RW black	1	3
		RW brown-glazed	2	14
		RW slip	1	7
		RW unglazed	40	216
	81.3	Nottingham stoneware	52	257
	83	Porc	1	2
		Porc HP	9	19
		Porc HP Poly	1	3
		Porc TP	3	5
	84	CW	79	148
		CW annular	1	1
	85	WW annular	7	13

Period	Fabric code	Fabric description/subtype	count	weight (g)
		WW shell blue	1	1
	85.11	PW	6	8
		PW blue	6	9
		PW blue shell	3	20
	90	Post-med orange wares	6	79
	91	Misc	6	26
		FS YW trail-slip	1	2
		Mang mot	5	11
		Staff	1	1
	100	Misc post-med	11	21
		Basalt	1	8
	7-8: post-medieval Total			244
7-9: post-medieval/modern	78	RW unglazed	8	37
	83	Porc	24	65
		waster/test	2	3
7-9: post-medieval/modern Total			34	105
8: later post-medieval	83	Porc	1	1
	85	WW	2	1
		WW annular	3	43
		WW blue sponge	2	4
		WW cable	1	1
		WW flow blue	4	12
		WW HP	25	123
		WW HP blue	4	9
		WW HP Poly	3	5
		WW poly sponge	1	5
	100	Misc post-med	4	8

Period	Fabric code	Fabric description/subtype	count	weight (g)	
8: later post-medieval Total			50	212	
8-9: later post-medieval/modern	78	RW brown-glazed	3	20	
		RW unglazed	18	77	
	81.4	Misc late	35	415	
	83	Porc	5	7	
		Porc HP	1	2	
		Porc TP	2	7	
		Semi-porc	2	3	
	85	WW	346	862	
		WW annular	1	2	
		WW annular blue	7	63	
		WW HP	6	21	
		WW HP Poly	2	4	
		WW TP	128	366	
		WW TP blue	76	351	
	90	later Orange wares	3	34	
	91	Misc	1	2	
		YW	40	117	
	100	Misc	27	152	
	8-9: later post-medieval/modern Total			703	2505
	9: modern	85	WW HP	3	1
WW Royal Worcester Crown ware			1	3	
101		Misc modern	9	31	
9: modern Total			13	35	
Grand Total			1390	7241	

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 but are long-lived. There is, furthermore, a problem of residuality: it is very common to encounter flat roof tile re-used in later structures.

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

Flat roof tile

Although a medieval origin could not be ruled out for much of the tile, the absence of any tiles with a reduced core suggests that the majority were no earlier than the late-15th century. This is typical of rural assemblages and does not reflect the absence of buildings, simply that the majority of rural medieval structures were thatched.

A small quantity of Worcester-type fabric 2c tile was observed: this spans the late-15th to at least the end of the 17th century (Fagan 2004).

Flat roof tile with small rounded iron slag inclusions (tile fabric 5) is also present across the site. At sites around Worcester (Griffin 2008), this tile is generally associated with deposits of 16th to 18th-century date, and is most common in 18th-century contexts.

Brick

Fragments of handmade bricks of 2" thickness were recovered from test pit 12: these are traditionally associated with mid-15th or 16th-century construction of brick elements such as chimneys, though bricks of this thickness are likely to persist through the 17th century.

Coins

By Murray Andrews

Two coins were recovered during test-pit excavations at Wichenford, and they are described in the catalogue below.

The coins were found in Test Pits 19 and 20, and both are contemporary struck counterfeits of copper alloy Georgian halfpence issued in the mid- to late eighteenth century. The earliest coin is modelled on 'Old Bust' halfpenny issued for George II in 1740-54, while the later coin is modelled on a First Issue halfpenny issued for George III in 1770-5 (Peck 1960). Both coins are struck from neat but low-quality dies, the later coin having a distinctive sharp-angled bust, and were probably issued in Birmingham before 1806 (cf Smith and Mossman 2012).

The counterfeiting of bronze coins was an endemic problem in Georgian England, reflecting both a shortage of official halfpence and farthings after the cessation of mint production in 1725-8, 1755-69, and 1776-96, as well as a rising demand for low-value specie for wage payments and transactions in towns and villages during the Industrial Revolution. It was particularly widespread from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, with contemporary estimates suggesting that 20-50% of bronze coins

circulating in England in 1753 were counterfeits (Smith and Mossman 2012, 266), a figure that rose further into the 1770s and 1780s (Robinson 1972; Rhodes 1989). While counterfeit bronzes were struck at a number of locations in Britain and North America, most examples in English circulation were made in Birmingham using equipment and techniques borrowed from the local button industry (Selgin 2008, 30), and the term ‘Brummagem ha’pence’ quickly became synonymous with counterfeit bronze coinage throughout the Georgian and Regency periods (Barnard 1926, 351). The problem remained unresolved until the introduction of a new regal bronze coinage at the turn of the nineteenth century, which was mass-produced under licence at Matthew Boulton’s Soho mint in 1797, 1799, and 1806-7. These coins were issued on a large enough scale to drive many of the earlier counterfeits out of circulation, a process that was finalised in 1814-7 by the official demonetisation of earlier Georgian halfpence (Craig 1953, 266-7).

Documentary evidence suggests that the circulation of counterfeit bronze coins was well-established in Worcestershire by the mid-eighteenth century. In 1750 the mayor of Worcester, Samuel Parkes, published a notice in *The Worcester Journal* (10 May 1750, 3) decrying the ‘great numbers of base and counterfeit halfpence...[which] continue to be daily utter’d in and about this City’, and threatened to prosecute retailers who accepted them in payment. His efforts were clearly unsuccessful, and by 1751 local tradesmen could claim that as many as a half of the bronze coins circulating in the county were counterfeits (*The Worcester Journal*, 4 April 1751, 3). Later attempts by tradesmen to stem the flow of counterfeits by means of private boycotts (*Berrow’s Worcester Journal*, 30 May 1776, 2) also had limited effect, and the evidence of coin hoards from Ripple (deposited 1775+), Badsey (deposited 1799+), and Bayton (deposited 1806+) suggests that counterfeit halfpence and farthings formed a significant proportion of Worcestershire’s bronze currency into the first decade of the nineteenth century (Abdy et al. 2012, 245, no. 206; Andrews forthcoming). The Wichenford finds offer an important snapshot of this currency in circulation, and demonstrate the potential reach of counterfeits beyond the major towns and manufacturing centres into the surrounding countryside.

Test Pit	Context	Description	Date
19	4	Contemporary counterfeit of a halfpenny of George III, copy of First Issue. Obv: [GEORGIVS III REX], laureate and cuirassed bust r. Rev: [BRITAN NIA], Britannia seated l. Die axis 180°, diameter 26.8mm, weight 6.77g. Wear 3/3, corrosion 2/2	1770-1806
20	2	Contemporary counterfeit of a halfpenny of George II, copy of Old Bust Issue. Obv: [GEORGIVS II REX], laureate and cuirassed bust l. Rev: [BRITAN NIA], Britannia seated l. Die axis 180°, diameter 27.1mm, weight 7.13g. Wear 4/4, corrosion 2/2	1740-1806

Table 4: Coin catalogue

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	44	84
	bone Total			44	84
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	48	605
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	10	16
		pot	5-7: late medieval to post-medieval	1	8
			6-7: transitional to post-medieval	2	6
			7-8: post-medieval	25	68
			7: early post-medieval	60	893
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	62	90
			8: later post-medieval	4	6
		sanitary ceramic	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	162
	ceramic Total			213	1854
	copper alloy	cartridge	8-9: Later post-med/modern	2	10
	copper alloy Total			2	10
	glass	vessel	7-8: post-medieval	6	29
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	5	20
		window	7-8: post-medieval	23	29
			8-9: Later post-med/modern	16	55
	glass Total			50	133
	iron	nail	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	9	120
		plate	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	34
	iron Total			10	154

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	mortar	cement mortar	8-9: Later post-med/modern	4	193
		lime mortar	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	3	14
	mortar Total			7	207
	organic	coal	10: undated	5	7
	organic Total			5	7
	plaster	wall plaster	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	8	20
	plaster Total			8	20
	slag	unident	10: undated	2	14
	slag Total			2	14
	stone	roof slate	8-9: Later post-med/modern	1	4
		slate pencil	7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	1
	stone Total			2	5
1 Total				343	2488
2	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	2	50
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	1	1
			7: early post-medieval	1	4
		drain tile	7-8: post-medieval	1	58
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	4	3
			7: early post-medieval	3	17
		roof tile	7: early post-medieval	2	25
	ceramic Total			14	158
	glass	window	8-9: later post-med/moder	1	1
	glass Total			1	1
	slag	fuel ash slag	10: undated	1	23

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	slag Total			1	23
	stone	roof slate	8-9: Later post-med/modern	1	5
	stone Total			1	5
2 Total				17	187
	3 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	19	381
	bone Total			19	381
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	67	2221
		pot	6-7: transitional to post-medieval	2	8
			7-8: post-medieval	12	42
			7: early post-medieval	18	72
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	19	37
		roof tile	6-7: transitional to post-medieval	4	329
	ceramic Total			122	2709
	glass	vessel	7-9: post-medieval/modern	9	19
			8-9: Later post-med/modern	1	1
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	23
		window	7-9: post-medieval/modern	2	2
			8-9: Later post-med/modern	5	3
	glass Total			20	48
	iron	misc objects	7-9: post-medieval/modern	11	124
		nail	7-9: post-medieval/modern	79	315
	iron Total			90	439
	organic	oyster shell	10: undated	4	10
	organic Total			4	10

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	slag	hearth material	10: undated	2	21
		iron slag	10: undated	1	7
	slag Total			3	28
	stone	roof slate	8-9: Later post-med/modern	3	7
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	1
	stone Total			4	8
3 Total				262	3623
	4 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	1	1
	bone Total			1	1
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	8	61
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	4	4
		pot	4-6: High medieval to transitional	3	19
			4: high medieval	1	18
			7-8: post-medieval	1	7
			7: early post-medieval	2	3
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	2
	ceramic Total			20	114
	glass	vessel	7-8: post-medieval	1	2
	glass Total			1	2
	iron	bracket	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	67
		nail	7-9: post-medieval/modern	3	25
	iron Total			4	92
	lead alloy	?pipe union	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	6
	lead alloy Total			1	6

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	organic	charcoal	10: undated	3	1
	organic Total			3	1
4 Total				30	216
	5 ceramic	brick	7-8: post-medieval	1	159
		brick and tile	7-8: post-medieval	4	29
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	8	57
		pot	7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	1
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	3
			9: modern	1	1
		tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	3	20
	ceramic Total			21	270
	glass	vessel	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	2
			9: modern	2	4
	glass Total			4	6
	mortar	cement mortar	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	29
	mortar Total			2	29
	organic	charcoal	10: undated	1	1
	organic Total			1	1
	plastic	fitting	9: modern	2	1
	plastic Total			2	1
5 Total				30	307
	6 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	3	5
	bone Total			3	5

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	ceramic	brick and tile	7-8: post-medieval	14	49
		drain tile	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	28
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	7	34
			7: early post-medieval	1	5
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	22	82
		tile	7-8: post-medieval	2	81
		unident	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	4	14
		waster pot	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	1
	ceramic				
	Total			52	294
	copper				
	alloy	hinge	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	14
	copper				
	alloy Total			1	14
	iron	nail	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	10
	iron Total			3	10
	organic	coal	10: undated	7	6
	organic				
	Total			7	6
	plastic	label	9: modern	2	1
	plastic				
	Total			2	1
6 Total				68	330
	7 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	10	97
	bone Total			10	97
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	65	524
			7-8: post-medieval	6	145
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	2	3

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	15	44
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	3
			7: early post-medieval	3	11
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	17	35
			8: later post-medieval	3	5
		roof tile	6-8: transitional/post-medieval	1	10
	ceramic				
	Total			113	780
	glass	vessel	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	10	25
		window	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	13	17
			9: modern	1	1
	glass	Total		24	43
	iron	nail	4-9: Medieval/post-medieval	3	12
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	2	11
		nails and screws	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	6	29
		washer	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	10
	iron	Total		12	62
	lead	lead sheet	10: undated	1	10
	lead	Total		1	10
	mortar	cement mortar	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	27
		lime mortar	7-8: post-medieval	1	17
	mortar	Total		4	44
	organic	charcoal	10: undated	11	6
	organic	Total		11	6

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	plaster	moulding	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	1
	plaster Total			1	1
	slag	clinker	10: undated	4	33
	slag Total			4	33
	stone	roof slate	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	11	41
	stone Total			11	41
7 Total				191	1117
	8 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	3	2
	bone Total			3	2
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	13	229
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	6	16
			7: early post-medieval	10	26
		pot	5-6: late medieval/transitional	1	17
			6-7: transitional to post-medieval	2	30
			7-8: post-medieval	2	2
			7: early post-medieval	25	115
			8: later post-medieval	2	1
	ceramic Total			61	436
	glass	vessel	7-8: post-medieval	3	20
		window	7-8: post-medieval	4	2
			8: later post-medieval	1	1
	glass Total			8	23
	iron	misc objects	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	8	96
		nail	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	9	48
	iron Total			17	144

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	organic	coal	10: undated	2	1
	organic				
	Total			2	1
8 Total				91	606
		mammal			
9 bone	bone	bone	10: undated	5	120
	bone				
	Total			5	120
	ceramic	brick	7: early post-medieval	1	535
		brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	8	241
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	2	4
		floor tile	7-8: post-medieval	3	364
		pot	6-7: transitional to post-medieval	3	36
			7-8: post-medieval	1	4
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	5	30
			7: early post-medieval	16	123
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	19	52
			8: later post-medieval	1	1
		roof tile	6-7: transitional to post-medieval	1	415
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	242
			8: later post-medieval	2	86
		waster pot	7-9: post-medieval/modern	3	10
	ceramic				
	Total			67	2143
	glass	vessel	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	7	17
			9: modern	2	17
		window	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	3
	glass				
	Total			11	37
	iron	barbed wire	9: modern	1	10

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
		nail	7-9: post-medieval/modern	8	117
	iron Total			9	127
	mortar	cement mortar	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	45
	mortar Total			3	45
	slag	fuel ash slag	10: undated	2	16
		smithing slag	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	2	98
	slag Total			4	114
	stone	roof slate	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	11	84
	stone Total			11	84
9 Total				110	2670
10	bone	mammal bone	10: undated	1	29
	bone Total			1	29
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	4	26
			4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	2	3
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	5	111
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	3	4
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	1	2
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	1
			7: early post-medieval	3	2
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	12	16
			9: modern	1	1
	ceramic Total			32	166
	copper alloy	box catch	9: modern	1	1

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
		buckle	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	6
		machine part	9: modern	1	10
	copper alloy			3	17
	glass	medicine phial	9: modern	1	5
		vessel	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	1
			9: modern	6	12
		window	9: modern	1	11
	glass			10	29
	graphite	graphite rod	9: modern	3	3
	graphite			3	3
	iron	fixings	7-9: post-medieval/modern	2	9
		nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	6
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	9	79
	iron			12	94
	metal	battery	9: modern	1	19
	metal			1	19
	mortar	cement mortar	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	45
	mortar			3	45
	organic	coal	10: undated	16	24
	organic			16	24
	silver	chain	9: modern	4	1
	silver			4	1
10	Total			85	427

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
11	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	2	22
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	1	1
		drain tile	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	5	76
		kiln furniture	7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	1
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	5	38
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	2	4
			7: early post-medieval	1	2
		tile	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	6	32
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	3	54
		waster pot	7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	1
ceramic Total				27	231
concrete	concrete	9: modern	1	138	
concrete Total				1	138
glass	vessel	9: modern	1	3	
		8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	1	
		9: modern	6	14	
glass Total				8	18
iron	bracket	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	191	
		nail	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	1	3
			4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	1
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	5	24
		plate	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	1	5
		washer	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	7
iron Total				11	231
slag	clinker	10: undated	5	15	

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
		smithing slag	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	13
		slag Total		6	28
11 Total				53	646
	12 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	2	37
		bone Total		2	37
	ceramic	brick	5-7: late medieval to early post-med	3	1385
			6-7: transitional to post-medieval	1	1348
		brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	12	138
			7-8: post-medieval	11	296
			7: early post-medieval	4	634
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	4	4
		kiln furniture	7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	2
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	9	65
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	3	2
			7: early post-medieval	12	133
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	29	63
		roof tile	5-7: late medieval to early post-med	8	509
		wall tile	9: modern	1	44
		ceramic Total		98	4623
	glass	vessel	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	7
		window	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	2
		glass Total		5	9
	iron	nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	12	78
		iron Total		12	78

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	lead	window came	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	1
	lead Total			1	1
	mortar	lime mortar	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	4
	mortar Total			1	4
	organic	coal	10: undated	1	3
	organic Total			1	3
12 Total				120	4755
13	bone	mammal bone	10: undated	1	3
	bone Total			1	3
	ceramic	brick	7-8: post-medieval	1	7
		brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	15	323
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	6	8
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	9	9
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	3	10
			7: early post-medieval	26	120
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	54
	ceramic Total			63	531
	glass	vessel	7-8: post-medieval	2	3
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	4	21
	glass Total			6	24
	iron	nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	3	9
	iron Total			3	9
	organic	leather	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	2

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	organic				
	Total			2	2
	slag	smithing slag	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	25
	slag Total			1	25
13 Total				76	594
14	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	3	24
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	2	5
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	1	1
			7: early post-medieval	9	76
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	5	6
			8: later post-medieval	1	4
		unident	10: undated	1	2
	ceramic				
	Total			22	118
	iron	nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	4	15
	iron Total			4	15
14 Total				26	133
15	bone	mammal bone	10: undated	8	11
	bone Total			8	11
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	8	328
			4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	11	109
			6-8: transitional/post-medieval	13	255
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	1	1
			7: early post-medieval	1	1
			8: later post-medieval	3	4
		kiln furniture	7-9: post-medieval/modern	2	7
		pot	2: Roman	3	35

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
			4-6: High medieval to transitional	1	1
			7-8: post-medieval	20	49
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	4	4
			7: early post-medieval	17	88
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	103	238
			8: later post-medieval	6	10
	ceramic				
	Total			193	1130
	copper alloy	battery terminal	9: modern	1	7
	copper alloy	Total		1	7
	glass	vessel	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	6	5
			8: later post-medieval	4	19
			9: modern	10	53
		window	9: modern	11	13
	glass	Total		31	90
	iron	bracket	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	64
		nail	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	6	33
			4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	6
	iron	Total		8	103
	metal	battery	9: modern	1	19
		washer	9: modern	1	4
	metal	Total		2	23
	plaster	lime plaster	5-8: late medieval/post-medieval	24	151
	plaster	Total		24	151
	slag	smelting slag	2-6: Roman/medieval	1	10

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	slag Total			1	10
	steel	cutlery handle	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	2
		knife	9: modern	1	24
	steel Total			2	26
	stone	roof slate	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	6
	stone Total			2	6
15 Total				272	1557
	16 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	2	2
		bone Total		2	2
	ceramic	brick	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	5	108
		brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	12	70
		drain tile	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	23	80
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	4	12
			7: early post-medieval	2	2
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	11	31
		roof tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	1	11
	ceramic Total			58	314
	copper alloy	hinge	9: modern	2	28
	glass	vessel	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	5
			9: modern	4	9
		window	9: modern	8	24
	glass Total			15	38
	iron	nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	11	107

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
		unident	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	44
	iron Total			12	151
	slag	misc slag	10: undated	1	33
	slag Total			1	33
	stone	roof slate	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	13
	stone Total			3	13
16 Total				93	579
	17 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	13	41
	bone Total			13	41
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	25	243
			7-8: post-medieval	5	79
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	3	3
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	3
		drain tile	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	1	15
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	31	54
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	6	10
			7: early post-medieval	6	16
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	108	341
			8: later post-medieval	6	14
			9: modern	3	1
		roof tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	5	45
		ceramic Total			202
	glass	vessel	7-8: post-medieval	9	31
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	49	161
			9: modern	2	3

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
		window	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	6	9
			9: modern	11	31
	glass Total			77	235
	graphite	graphite rod	9: modern	1	1
	graphite Total			1	1
	iron	iron object	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	4	77
		nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	19	241
	iron Total			23	318
	lead	lead fragment	10: undated	2	18
	lead Total			2	18
	plaster	wall plaster	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	3	19
	plaster Total			3	19
	stone	roof slate	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	3	17
	stone Total			3	17
17 Total				324	1473
	18 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	39	121
	bone Total			39	121
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	31	1323
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	3	5
			8: later post-medieval	1	2
		floor tile	4-6: High medieval to transitional	1	114
		pot	2: Roman	1	1
			7-8: post-medieval	9	48
			7: early post-medieval	2	10
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	33	170

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
			8: later post-medieval	1	1
		saggar	7-8: post-medieval	1	22
	ceramic				
	Total			83	1696
	glass	vessel	7-8: post-medieval	9	15
			9: modern	1	1
		window	8: later post-medieval	4	6
			9: modern	11	28
	glass	Total		25	50
	iron	iron object	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	3	27
		nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	18	200
	iron	Total		21	227
18	Total			168	2094
	19	mammal bone	10: undated	40	348
	bone	Total		40	348
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	11	329
			7-8: post-medieval	11	429
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	1	1
		drain tile	9: modern	1	24
		floor tile	4-6: High medieval to transitional	1	370
			7-8: post-medieval	1	420
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	14	54
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	7	38
			7: early post-medieval	3	57
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	230	1226
			8: later post-medieval	25	169

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
			9: modern	8	32
		roof tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	2	121
		waster pot	7-9: post-medieval/modern	12	79
	ceramic			327	3349
	concrete	concrete	9: modern	1	152
	concrete			1	152
	copper alloy	buckle	9: modern	1	9
		vehicle washer	9: modern	1	7
	copper alloy			2	16
	glass	vessel	7-8: post-medieval	1	35
			8: later post-medieval	5	157
			9: modern	246	2468
		window	9: modern	46	128
	glass			298	2788
	iron	iron object	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	45	121
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	6	672
		iron plate	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	57
		nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	4	85
	iron			57	935
	organic	coal	10: undated	1	13
		oyster shell	10: undated	2	16
	organic			3	29
	plaster	wall plaster	9: modern	1	9

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	plaster				
	Total			1	9
	stone	roof slate	8-9: later post-medieval/modern	2	67
	stone Total			2	67
19 Total				731	7693
	20 bone	mammal bone	10: undated	81	1154
	bone Total			81	1154
	ceramic	brick and tile	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	26	521
		clay pipe	7-8: post-medieval	14	23
		pot	7-8: post-medieval	74	338
			7-9: post-medieval/modern	1	2
			7: early post-medieval	117	1586
			8-9: later post-medieval/modern	20	27
			8: later post-medieval	1	1
		waster pot	7-9: post-medieval/modern	2	7
	ceramic Total			255	2505
	glass	vessel	7: early post-medieval	6	97
			8: later post-medieval	5	45
		window	7: early post-medieval	17	59
			9: modern	2	2
	glass Total			30	203
	iron	nail	4-8: Medieval/post-medieval	1	5
		tent peg	9: modern	1	17
	iron Total			2	22
	plaster	wall plaster	4-7: Medieval/post-medieval	2	8

Test Pit	material	object type	period	count	weight(g)
	plaster				
	Total			2	8
	stone	sandstone	10: undated	1	120
	stone Total			1	120
20 Total				371	4012
Grand Total				3461	35507

Table 5: Finds from each test pit by period and type

Conclusions

The presence of small quantities of Roman pottery is typical of this area, in which scattered rural settlements in the hinterland of Worcester can be detected through a low-intensity but extensive background scatter of artefacts.

It is more surprising that there is so little medieval pottery, even from locations for which medieval origins are attested through place-name evidence. Although the sampling density of 1m test pits is low, the presence of medieval pottery in just two of the 20 test pits is less than expected. Given the large quantities of pottery from the 17th century onwards, and the very good rates of recovery of even tiny sherds, it is unlikely that recovery bias is a factor. The medieval occupants of settlements like Wichenford are not likely to have had difficulty in obtaining pottery, as recent excavations at Temple Laugherne (Griffin 2021) demonstrate. It is possible that soil conditions have degraded some of the medieval pottery, although there is nothing strikingly hostile about the local geology. It is perhaps most likely that specific middening or rubbish disposal practices account for the scarcity of pottery around the areas of settlement.

Across the majority of the test pits, the average pottery sherd size was small, and sherds were heavily worn and battered, with a mean sherd weight of 4.4g. This is typical of pottery that was discarded in rubbish heaps or middens, which were left to rot (sometimes for years) before being spread on the fields as fertiliser. Once within a garden soil or field, the pot could be further disturbed by ploughing or digging of the soil, and by the effects of weathering. The one place in which pottery appears to have been dumped soon after breakage, and to have lain undisturbed since, is in the lower levels (spits 4 and 5) of test pit 20: within spits 4 and 5 of this pit, there were large sherds — some of which could be refitted — of 18th century date. These had a mean sherd weight of 11g.

The general range of pottery from the 17th to the 20th century is typical of a rural Worcestershire settlement, but with a few notable features: generally the profile is skewed later, with a notable increase in numbers from the mid-18th century onwards. This is partly due to the advent of affordable mass-produced tablewares, beginning with White salt-glazed stonewares and increasing through the mid to late-18th century with creamwares, pearlwares, and then whitewares, but it may also suggest an increase in settlement density at this point. Engine-turned earthenwares of the late-

18th and early-19th century were well-represented, in a wide range of colourful and geometric patterns.

The proximity to the Worcester porcelain industry of the mid-18th to 20th century can be seen through the presence of 'waster' sherds, most of which were unglazed fragments that had broken or been rejected after the first firing. 'Spacer' rings for separating wares during firing, and a fragment of saggar (a large ceramic drum used to shield pottery from the fumes and soot of the kiln) were also noted. Waste material is known to have been sold off in sacks by the factories for use as hardcore, and is a common find in the fields of Worcester's hinterland. Several more unusual pieces of porcelain with blotchy splashes of multicoloured glaze might have been sold as 'seconds'.

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 or 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 maiolica (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>

Translucent appearance and 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 Wedgwood 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.