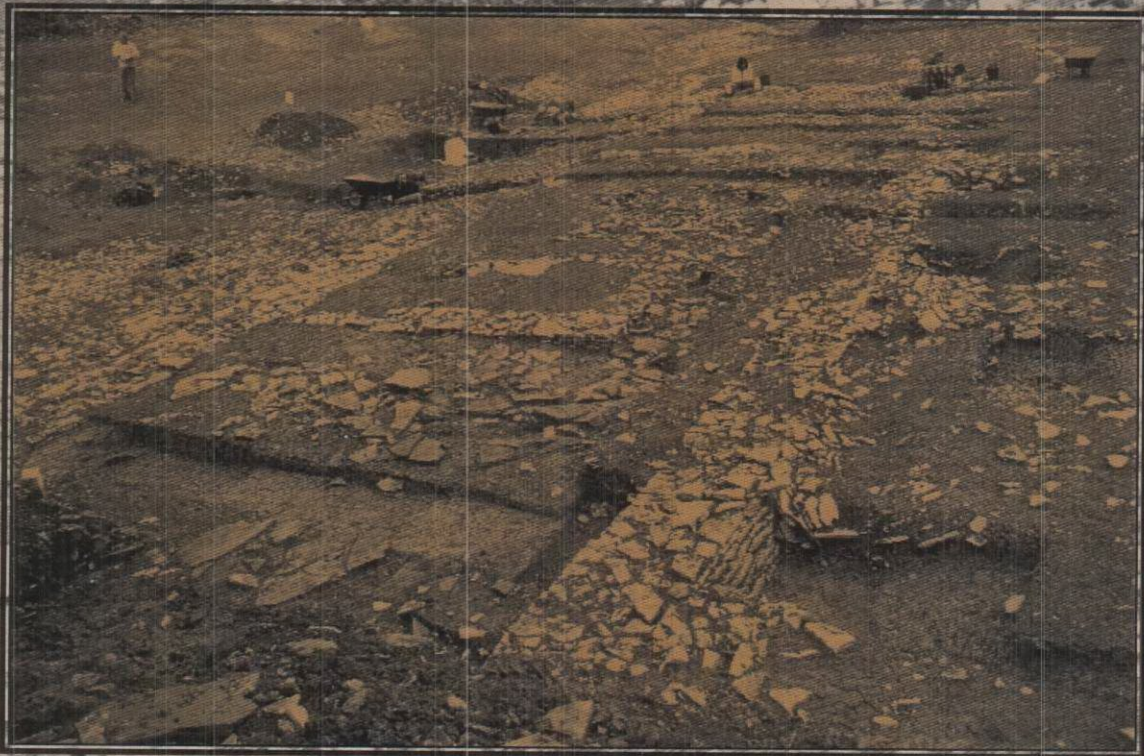


SG-SMR 14103

Archaeological Excavations
at
**'MATFORD', BRADLEY STOKE WAY,
BRADLEY STOKE, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE, 2001.**
for
South Gloucestershire Council



By Jens Samuel



Bristol and Region
Archaeological
Services

Archaeological Excavation
at
**'MATFORD', BRADLEY STOKE WAY,
BRADLEY STOKE, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE.**

Report No. 846/2002

Centred on
N.G.R. ST 625 817

Client: South Gloucestershire Council

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NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

September, 2002.

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EXCAVATIONS AT 'MATFORD', BRADLEY STOKE WAY, BRADLEY STOKE, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE, 2001

By Jens Samuel

(academic referee; Dr. Peter Webster, Cardiff University)

INTRODUCTION

A proposal was submitted to develop land (c.8.82 hectares) to the east of Bradley Stoke Way, Bradley Stoke (Fig.1) as a school and residential housing. The numerous archaeological investigations in the vicinity suggested the need for an archaeological evaluation. Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS) carried out an evaluation programme of fifty-seven trenches during November 2000 (Parry 2001).

Archaeological features from different periods were fairly widely distributed about the site. A small concentration of linear features, tree throws and pits or post-holes were identified in the south-central part of the development area. The latter features were initially identified as early to mid Bronze Age. A probable pond (pers. comm. Adrian Parry) with mostly 3rd century AD Severn Valley wares and sherds dated initially to the same part of the Bronze Age was recorded in the southeastern part of the site. A few features with metalworking waste from the Iron Age or later were located in the eastern and northeastern area of the site. A minor shallow feature with similarly identified Bronze Age pottery was excavated in the southwestern extremity of the evaluation site. An undated series of rectilinear gullies or ditches were investigated in the central and northern areas of the site. Numerous land drains, tree throws and other non-archaeological disturbances of the substrata were recorded scattered across the site.

As a condition of planning permission five large area excavations (A-E, Fig.1) were located to target the *foci* of archaeological potential. BaRAS carried out these area excavations during the spring and summer of 2001. Reg Jackson supervised for the first six weeks. The writer supervised excavation and recording for the remaining fourteen weeks. Bruce Williams was project manager and Ann Linge provided the illustrations.

The area excavations lie on a large parcel of land named 'Matford' in AD1725 (Historical Background). To distinguish the site in question from the numerous excavations carried out in Bradley Stoke the place-name 'Matford' has been adopted for convenience sake.

The site archive will be held at the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery under the accession number BRSMG 2001/38.

The chronological sequence of activity or occupation at the site was as follows:

- Periods I-II:** Late Mesolithic /Early Neolithic to Bronze Age
- Period III:** Iron Age; possibly exclusively late Iron Age, 3rd century BC – 1st century AD.
- Period IV:** Romano-British; 1st – 2nd/3rd centuries AD
- Period Va:** Medieval; Saxo-Norman, AD1000 – 1120
- Period Vb:** Medieval; 12th – mid- 13th centuries
 - including three possible structural phases (?one in Vc):
 - Phase I – ?House C with Parallel Gullies
 - ?Phase II – ?Bake-house or kitchen Addition F to C, possibly with rectilinear Ditch and Gully systems
- Period Vc:** Medieval; mid 13th – mid- 14th century
 - including 2 activity or structural phases:
 - Phase 1 – House A with ?Enclosure Ditch and Ancillary Building B. Blocking of ?House C door (i.e. Phase III) ?and change of use of building.
 - Phase 1a – Pennant Floor of House A
 - Phase 1b – Pitched Lias Floor of House A
 - Phase 2a – Masonry Addition D to House A
 - Phase 2b – Masonry Addition D to House A

Phase 2c – Re-cut of Structure D Terrace Cut

Period VI: Post-medieval and Modern – minor agricultural features

THE SITE (Fig. 1)

The site is centred on NGR ST 625817 and located immediately east of Bradley Stoke Way. It is bounded to the north by the Bradley Stoke Leisure Centre and to the south by Webbs Wood and beyond; Stoke Brook. To the east made up ground and the M4 motorway lie beyond the site boundary.

The northern and eastern areas of the site are relatively flat at 57m-58m above OD. The remaining terrain falls away to the south and west from 56m to 50m above OD. At the southwest extremity the land rises again towards Bradley Stoke Way. Scrub and grass covered much of the site with large patches of dense saplings. A number of ponds and herb-rich grassland were not disturbed by excavations for ecological reasons.

The solid geology of the site consists of mainly Triassic White and Blue Lias limestone with interbedded clays – allocated context number 6004. Littoral facies (mainly clay) occurred along a shallow valley (Bristol district map 1967). A large outcrop of greyish white Rhaetian marl (pers. comm. Paul Stevenson) was located in the north central part of Area E. This was designated as substratum 6485.

The stratigraphic sequence in the five areas excavated usually comprised a thin layer of topsoil and occasionally a patchy subsoil horizon, with substrata occurring at a depth of less than 0.35m. Overlying deposits tended to be thicker in the western part of Area E in a shallow valley. In this area an extensive layer of hardcore, partly overlying archaeological deposits and substrata, was also mechanically and manually removed. During Period VI, mechanical disturbance to archaeological deposits had occurred in Area E, though this was uneven. The complex nature of some masonry structures (occasionally poorly preserved) and associated deposits in Area E necessitated five weeks manual clearance in the main area of medieval occupation. Numerous depressions in the substratum, either naturally occurring or formed as a result of tree growth were recorded in Areas A to D and the eastern parts of Area E. A number of environmental samples were taken from Romano-British and medieval deposits. Considerable vandalism and metal detectorist pilfering occurred at the site, highlighting the problems of security on suburban and rural sites. A metal detector was used during the excavation to retrieve certain objects in Area E.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Fig. 2)

The site is located near the northern extremity of Stoke Gifford parish, formerly in Gloucestershire. A history of this parish can be summarised as follows: At the time of Domesday *Osbern Gifard* held the *manerium* of *Stoche* (Gifford) along with three other manors in Gloucestershire, of which Brimpsfield in Rapsgate Hundred was his residence and castle (Atkyns 1712, 690; Rudder 1779, 698). Three of these manors including Stoke Gifford in *Letberg* (Ledbury) Hundred and Brimpsfield were formerly held by *Dunne* from *comes Heraldo* (that is; King Harold, AD 1066) or in T.R.E. (*tempore regis Edwardi*; AD1042-66). *Dunne/Dons* may have been the same Englishman who still held Bitton manor at Domesday. Stoke Gifford had five hides, four ploughs in lordship, eight villagers, a priest with eight ploughs and four slaves. It was valued T.R.E at £6 and at Domesday £8 (Moore 1982, 50-50.4, 78.13). A hide was as much land as could be ploughed by an eight-ox team in one year. That is, between 60 and 180 acres depending on land quality (Richardson 1986, 10). A hide in northern Stoke Gifford was, due to its heavy soil, more likely to be closer to the smaller figure. In the late 11th / early 12th century Worcester cartulary known as 'Hemming's Cartulary', manuscript B records Osbern Giffard's 5 hides at *Stoke* in *Bernitreu* (Brentry) Hundred (*op.cit.* WoB 15nn). This was because the overlordship was in dispute between the crown and the Bishops of Worcester (*ibid*, note 3,1).

Stoke Gifford continued in the hands of the Giffard family until John Giffard was captured at the battle of Boroughbridge, attainted and then executed at Gloucester for treason in AD1322. The manor was held of the honour of Gloucester (Atkyns 1712, 690, Rudder 1779, Russell 1989, 31). All Giffard's lands were granted to John Maltravers in AD1327 '...for murdering King Edward II..... [Maltravers] was convicted of high misdemeanours ...' and his estate was seized (Atkyns 1712, 299). Stoke Gifford was granted to Maurice de Berkeley with other lands, after John Giffard's third wife Margaret died in AD1337/38 (*ibid*, 690, 701). Apart from a period of four years the manor remained in Berkeley hands till 1770 when it passed to Elizabeth Berkeley duchess dowager of Beaufort (Rudder 1779, 699). The Beaufort estate of Stoke Gifford was sold by lots in 1915, at which time the area of the site was part of Bailey's Farm (Bailey's Court) – (BRO 9492 (61) S). As most of Stoke Gifford paid tithes to the Beaufort Estate, the Tithe Map of 1842 does not include the area of the site, however it does record that the parish consisted of c.2065 acres. This was divided between 1524 acres of meadow and pasture (some of which was rough), 485 acres arable and 56 acres of woodland. It is notable that the 1842 arable acreage could be considered comparable to the five hides of Domesday when, as postulated above, a Stoke Gifford hide was likely to be less than 100 acres.

Robert Atkyns (1712, 691) also records that the parish contained three hamlets; *Great-Stoke*, *Little-Stoke* and *Harris-Stoke*. These hamlets are termed 'manors' on an estate map of AD1725 by J. Vaston. The Vaston map records all the field-names of the parish. The area of the site is centred in a block of no less than twenty-two fields that are named *Matford* (Fig. 2). These fields are distinguished by qualifiers such as 'Upper Matford', 'Hither Matford.' or 'Matford Ground' etc. The field-name *Matford* is from Old English *maeth* (with the 'th' as in 'the'), Modern English dialect *math*, that is 'mowing' and *ford*, 'ford' (Smith 1964 IV, 153, 126). These fields form a quite cohesive block of approximately 153.7 acres (OS 1950s Maps). To the east a bridge over Bradley Brook in the adjoining parish is still called 'Matford Bridge' but would seem to locate another 'Matford'.

An 1843 map survey of the parish was carried out for the Duke of Beaufort. No schedule accompanied this map in the Gloucester Record Office. Apart from the Vaston map no other direct references to the area of the site could be located at the Bristol or Gloucester record offices. According to Sawyer (1968; and Grundy 1935-6) no Anglo-Saxon charters survive for the parish of Stoke (Gifford). The Stoke Gifford hamlets were not separately listed in the AD1327 lay Subsidy Roll (Prosser 1996, 26): it only lists taxpayers by name not location (Franklin 1993).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SITES IN THE VICINITY (Fig. 3)

Due largely to the huge amount of development in Bradley Stoke; a considerable number of chance finds or archaeological sites have been identified, partly excavated or fully excavated in the vicinity of the site. Much of the post – Palaeolithic period is represented in an area of a little over 1km from the centre of the site. The distribution of sites must be partly as a result of piecemeal investigation in advance of development rather than genuine historical distribution. A chronology for the area can be divided into the following periods of activity and settlement:

Mesolithic and Neolithic – minimal archaeological evidence

Bronze Age – settlement and burial evidence

Iron Age – mostly later Iron Age

Romano – British – settlement and agricultural evidence

Late Saxon – minimal archaeological evidence

Medieval – largely documentary evidence

Post-medieval – farms

The following only represents a brief summary of the significance of these sites:

Mesolithic and Neolithic: A few stone artefacts (an A1 type core, a petit tranchet derivative arrowhead and a polished axe fragment) from Tesco, Savages Wood (SGSMR 7442; Erskine 1994/5, 22-3).

Bronze Age: Two genuine settlement *foci* appear to have existed at Tesco, Savages Wood and the Webbs Farm/Great Meadow area. Early Bronze Age rim-sherds from a pit from Tesco, Savages Wood (SGSMR 7442; Erskine 1991, 11). Also; Early – Middle Bronze Age pottery and flint debitage associated with sub-rectangular, possibly daubed houses. A probable mortuary structure with an inverted urn cremation, and a ?porched round-house dating to the later Bronze Age from the same site, with several hundred loosely associated post-holes, some pits and a few gullies (*op.cit.*, 21, 18). Features from the same period at the adjacent Leisure Centre (SGSMR10574), though not closely dated. Some Bronze Age activity either extended to the northwest, to Patchway Common (SGSMR 8615; Parry pers.comm.) and possibly Brookway Centre (SGSMR 9000; Samuel 1992, 17) or occurred intermittently in this direction. Bronze Age post-holes, pits, gullies and an occupation layer at Webbs Farm (SGSMR 8273; Parry 1992, 39, 20). Possible Bronze Age pottery and contemporary flint scatter at Great Meadow, Bradley Stoke (SGSMR 7441; Erskine & Kidd 1993, 26).

Iron Age: Ditches dated by Kidd to the late or ultimate Iron Age (c.100 BC-AD75; *ibid*, 26-7) at Great Meadow. Iron Age activity extended to the northeast; mid and late-Iron Age residual pottery was retrieved (SGSMR 12775; Burchill in Tavener 1997, 18-9).

Romano-British: Two or three *foci* of quite significant settlement have been revealed by evaluation or piecemeal investigation. Occupation debris and a possible stone Romano-British building (SGSMR 12844) just north of Savages Wood Road and 250m to the south; two cist burials associated with pottery (SGSMR 8768; *ibid*); both sites are thought to be of the 2nd to 4th centuries. A pit at Tesco, Savages Wood (SGSMR 7442; Erskine 1991, 11) might indicate a spread of activity to the northeast.

An extensive settlement, though not necessarily all contemporary, seems to spread possibly from Webbs Farm eastwards to Webbs Wood Road and south to Baileys Court. Residual pottery was found at Webbs Farm (SGSMR 8273). Occupation layers, pottery, roof-tiles and brooches dated at the time to AD50-75 (Erskine 1993, 27,42) were recorded at Great Meadow (SGSMR 7441), as were two extended inhumations. Postholes, pits, a stone wall and a probable rectilinear beam slot were associated with 1st to 3rd century pottery (SGSMR 12775; Burchill 1995, 6-10, Tavener 1997, 14-20) between Bradley Stoke Way and Webbs Wood Road. Inhumations are also recorded in the same area (SGSMR 7676 & 8629) which had been much disturbed by metal detectorists. This settlement, or part of a settlement may have been delimited by a ditch excavated to the southwest of this area (SGSMR 10830). However to the southwest at Baileys Court two substantial stone buildings, walled yards or paddocks and an infant inhumation were associated with artefacts of the 1st to mid- 4th century (SGSMR 8127, Russell 1989, 53-4). This settlement may lie within one or more enclosures (SGSMR 4046)

Late Saxon: Three pottery sherds of BPT 309 were recovered from topsoil or subsoil (SGSMR 7432; Erskine 1991, 50). These were consistent with a date between AD950-1080 (pers.comm Rod Burchill) and were recovered just to the south of the site of the present article.

Medieval: At the same location (SGSMR 7432) 12th-13th and 13th-14th- century pottery was retrieved from the same type of contexts (*op.cit.* 12, 50, *ibid*). Some ?14th- century pottery was recovered during the excavation at Webbs Farm (ASMR 8273), and the farm itself may have medieval origins (SGSMR 3592). To the northwest of the site at Patchway a farm is documented at Patchway or Manor Farm in AD1491 as part of St. Augustines demesne as was another to the west at a location called 'Coleheies' (SGSMR 5390, 5388).

Post-medieval: Three other messuages or tenements documented in AD1536 existed nearby Patchway Farm and another near 'Coleheies' called Pound/Pond Farm had medieval origins (SGSMR 5289, 5391, 5392, 5387; *ibid*). Seventeenth or early eighteenth century farms existed

at Webbs (formerly Woodhouse) Farm and Baileys Court (formerly Baileys Farm) – (SGSMR 3592, SGSMR 8132, OS 1inch 1830; Vaston 1725).

THE 2001 EXCAVATIONS

Following an agreement with the County Archaeological Officer a limited programme of excavation was undertaken for Areas A, B and D. It was determined that most deposits in these areas were non-archaeological.

Undatable Features and Deposits

Numerous tree throws, geological undulations and a possible former pond (feature 6162/6160) were investigated in Areas A to D. No artefacts were recovered from the following non-archaeological features or deposits:

Area A (Fig 4)

Deposit 6047 Feature 6132

Feature 6125 Deposit 6167

Feature 6126 Feature 6166

Deposit 6127 Feature 6166

Feature 6168

Area B (Fig. 1)

A number of deposits were investigated but none were excavated to base in this area as it was determined that they were very similar to the numerous non-archaeological deposits excavated in Areas A and C.

Area C (Fig. 5)

Deposits 6006, 6007, 6013, 6016, 6019, 6025, 6029, 6032, 6035, 6039, 6041, 6066, 6074, 6081, 6083, 6084, 6086, 6089, 6106, 6108, 6117 (see Bone Report), 6157 (see Bone Report), 6159 (see Bone Report), 6163

Area D (Fig. 6)

Deposit 6872

Area E

Deposits 6224, 6255, 6274, 6276, 6278, 6284

Artefacts were recovered from the following deposits within probable geological or arboreal features:

Area A

Romano-British 6150: 2nd/3rd century pottery

Medieval 6129: N/D, ?medieval

6136 (patch of subsoil): Cut silver long cross halfpenny AD1247-50 (coin report), two slag fragments (see Assessment of Metallurgical Waste)

6140: 12th- century pottery

Undated 6153: Iron nail

Area B 6139: N/D, ?medieval

Area C (Fig.5)

Pre-Iron Age 6060: flint tablet (see Lithic Report)

6115: broken flint blade (see Lithic Report)

Iron Age 6033: 3rd-1st- century BC

6055: 3rd-1st- century BC

Romano-British 6001: 2nd/3rd- century pottery

6022/6037: 3rd- (possibly 2nd- century pottery)

6052: not closely datable

6062: not closely datable

6069: not closely datable, copper alloy ?stud (SF 1; see Copper Alloy Objects)

	6076: 2nd- century pottery , animal bone
	6079: prob. 2nd- century pottery
	6088: 2nd/early 3rd- century pottery
	6115: prob. 2nd/3rd- century pottery
	6119: 2nd/ 3rd- century pottery
	6150: 2nd/ 3rd- century pottery
	6259: prob. 3rd- century
	6271: not closely datable
Medieval	6023: late 13th- century pottery
	6060: late 13th- century pottery
	6260: mid – late 12th- century pottery
Post-medieval	6069: clay pipe stem
Undated	6069: sheep/goat bones
	6103: iron ?blade
Area D (Fig 6)	
Medieval	6706: mid- 14th- century pottery
Area E (Fig. 9)	
Romano-British	6281: prob. RB
Medieval	6788: ?12th- century , animal bone
No date	6222: pottery
	6227: pottery

Periods I-II: Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic to Bronze Age

The earliest activity recognised at Matford, datable to either the late Mesolithic or early Neolithic was only represented by an unstratified flint flake and the proximal end of a flint blade recovered from the fill (deposit 6048/6068) of a Romano-British pit in Area C (see Period Vb and Lithic Report).

In addition a residual chert knife of the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age was recovered from a medieval rubbish pit (6667) in Area E (Fig. 25.1). A flint core rejuvenation tablet and a few other waste flakes were recorded either as substratum-surface distributed finds, residual from later deposits or unstratified. These were all undiagnostic and could have been struck at any date within the Neolithic or Bronze Age (Lithic Report).

Period III: Iron Age

The small amount of Iron Age ceramic evidence found during the excavation at Matford has been mostly characterised by Lisa Brown as not closely datable *or* late Iron Age; 3rd-1st-century BC. Her re-assessment of the prehistoric pottery from the 2000 evaluation excavation has shown that all this pottery should also be characterised in the same way. Its significance is aired under 'Discussion and Conclusions: Iron Age'. The material from the 2001 excavation was either recovered from non-archaeological features (see above), was residual, or in a few cases may have come from Iron Age features. Possible Iron Age features were confined to Area C.

Area C (Fig.5)

A broad gully or ditch (cut 6096/6172/6215) located in the northern part (Fig. 5) of the area was oriented N-S and was tentatively traced for approximately 15m, cut into substratum 6004. Three similar fills (successively 6097-99) were deposited in the northern part of this feature (at cut 6096). The profile of the latest fills (deposit 6098-99) could indicate that the former was the fill of a narrower re-cut gully; this was not conclusively established. Similarly cut 6096 had an unclear relationship with Romano-British feature 6094 (Fig 7) though the latter feature may have cut 6096. No finds were recovered from fills 6097-99. To the south at cut 6172/6215 the ditch broadened and deepened somewhat but appeared to maintain a consistent profile (Fig 7). Four deposits had filled the ditch in this area (successively 6173/6216, 6217,

6174 and 6175), the earliest of which was a combination of silting and possibly backfilling as its western component (6216) had a high Lias slab content. A few fragments of cattle and sheep/goat bone and tiny fragments of 3rd – 1st century BC pottery were recovered from this primary fill. As the ceramics could easily be considered residual in an undated ditch-fill they should be used only very tentatively to date ditch 6096/6172/6215.

The three later ditch-fills from 6172/6215 were fairly similar silty clays, with some charcoal content. Again a narrower re-cut gully could be postulated when the profiles of fills 6217 and 6174 are considered though a conclusion as proposed above for 6098-99 has been adopted. A Romano-British gully cut the ditch at cut 6172/6215.

It is just possible that the cut feature, partly sectioned further to the south at 6158 was a continuation of ditch 6096/6172/6215; it displayed a rather similar profile to those cuts. However in the intervening area no convincing ditch-fill was traced on the surface of the substratum to link these cuts, though smaller later features disturbed part of that area. Two fills were excavated from cut 6158 (deposits 6157 and 6155). Primary fill 6157 was a yellowish orange silty clay whereas latest fill 6155 was a darker brown hue. Tiny fragments of 3rd-1st century pottery were found in the latter deposit and cattle bone in the former. Feature 6158 cut two deposits (fills 6161 & 6159) from an earlier undated feature, cut 6162/6160, which may not have been natural in origin. No finds were recovered from the primary fill (deposit 6161) of 6162/6160; this fill was of a near identical character to the abovementioned 6157 and was overlain by a blueish grey silty clay (6159). Non-locally occurring Pennant sandstone was noted from the primary fill, while sheep or goat bone was retrieved from the secondary fill. The extent or function of 6162/6160 was not established though it was possibly a large pit. The latter had also cut a minor undated feature which appeared to be non-archaeological (cut 6164).

An irregular pit or scoop (cut 6044) was located to the south east of cut 6158. Of variable depth (to 0.40m) with an irregular base, cut 6044 was fully excavated. This pit was filled by a blueish grey silty clay with frequent Pennant sandstone fragments (deposit 6043). Cattle and sheep or goat bone and two probable Iron Age sherds were retrieved from this deposit. It is only the relatively high concentration of non-local stone which distinguishes this feature from the majority of non-archaeological features in Area C.

Period IV: Romano-British

The Romano-British evidence, discovered during the mitigation programme at Matford was probably confined to only the first and second centuries AD – mostly the latter century (Romano-British and Medieval Pottery). An infilled pond with mostly third century material was however recorded during the 2000 evaluation excavation. Material evidence fell into three categories; that retrieved from non-archaeological features (mostly Area C), residual material from later features (mostly Area E) and Romano-British negative features (mostly Area C with one in Area E). Small ditches, gullies and pits were almost the only types of feature recognised. A likely function has not been ventured for the majority of the pits. Some of the latter contained only a few Romano-British sherds and it is possible that they should be allocated to the group of arboreal or geological features.

Area A (Fig.4)

A broad sub-circular silty deposit (6047) contained by a shallow scoop was recorded in the central part of this area. It is only the number of pottery sherds (18) and the presence of cattle bones that distinguishes this deposit from the numerous non-archaeological deposits in this area.

Area C (Fig. 5)

Three small ditches were recorded extending along the western side of this area. From the north these were 6094, 6112/6051/6261/6288 and 6264/6291/ possibly 6031). They probably represented boundary/drainage features. Cut feature 6031 was either part of ditch 6112/6051/6261 or, more likely ditch 6264/6291, though this was not conclusively established. One section across ditch 6094 revealed that it had a very gradually sloping eastern side, a

narrow base and a steeper western side. It may have cut possible Iron Age ditch 6096/6172 and was filled with a brown silty clay (deposit 6095/6020 – Fig. 7) from which residual Iron Age pottery was also recovered (see Iron Age Pottery). Ditch 6094 was only definitely traced for 4.2m, though it is possible that gully 6170 could have been a continuation of this ditch (see below).

To the southwest, ditch 6112/6051/6261/6288 was traced for c.16.6m, was of a rather sinuous plan and survived to extremely variable depths. The northern terminal was excavated at 6112. Finds were only retrieved at cut 6261. In that area the ditch profile displayed a rather broad flat or concave base up to 0.55m deep and was filled by a yellowish brown, archaeologically sterile, primary silt (6262). Pottery sherds were retrieved from secondary fill 6263. Immediately to the east, small ditch 6264/6291 had a flatter profile with a narrower base cut into substratum 6004 and a similar pair of fills (successively 6265 and 6266). Twenty-two pottery sherds and animal bone were retrieved from secondary fill 6266. At 6264 this small ditch was cut by probable modern disturbance 6267 (Fig.7). The southern terminal of either the latter ditch or ditch 6112/6051/6261/6288 was traced at cut 6031. Here the ditch was shallower and had three fills; a patchy primary silt (6083), a secondary deposit; 6046/6078 and a tertiary; 6030. Pottery and animal bone were recovered from the latter two fills.

In the extreme south-east of Area C part of a shallow rectilinear gully with a terminal was revealed (gully 6009/6019). A brown silty clay (deposit 6018/6010) was excavated from this irregular-based feature. A few sherds of pottery and relatively numerous Pennant sandstone fragments were noted from this gully fill. Not enough of this rather ephemeral feature was revealed to suggest a function for it.

A discrete gully or the continuation of small ditch 6094 was excavated at cut 6170. This feature had cut possible Iron Age ditch 6172 and contained a dark brown fill (6171) with rare charcoal (Fig. 7). The full extent of this feature was not established.

A narrow irregular shallow curved gully (6065) was located in the west-central part of the site. The full extent of this feature was not traced as it had been cut by Romano-British pit 6093 (see below). No function could be postulated for this minor feature.

Five (mostly gentle sided) pits no deeper than 0.50m were excavated in this area (6049, 6056, 6057, 6093 & 6116). Their fills (6048/6068, 6054, 6058, 6092 & 6115 respectively) were for the most part characterised as greyish brown silty clays with rare charcoal flecking. Only pit fills 6054, 6058 and 6092 distinguished themselves with above average sherd counts or the presence of animal bone - cattle and sheep/goat from the former.

Period Va: Saxo-Norman; 11th – first quarter of the 12th century (Fig.8)

Identifiable Saxo-Norman features were confined to Area E and were mostly characterised by artefactual evidence from non-archaeological deposits or non-structural features such as pits or gullies, though a group of three or more post-holes at the extremity of one area suggest a not inconsiderable structure. At present it is not possible to refine the dating of much of the pottery from this site period. A minority of features (pits 6523 and 6736) however might be considered pre-Conquest. Some of the Saxo-Norman wares technically have a date range of AD950-1080, though on this site it is more likely that their dates fall in the 11th century (Roman and Medieval Pottery).

Area E (Fig. 8, Plates 1 & 2)

The Saxo-Norman archaeology revealed in Area E can be divided into three types of negative features cut into substrata 6004 and 6485; (1) possible lime extraction and other pits (2) short narrow gullies, and (3) post-holes. The majority of these features were located in the eastern part of this area. No definite function could be assigned to some of the first two types of feature.

Type (1): Feature 6736 was a circular scoop with a greyish brown silty clay fill (deposit 6737). A few sherds dating between AD1000-1070 were recovered from this feature.

Two shallow pits of comparable size (cuts 6740 and 6783) were excavated near the eastern end of Area E. Two grey or dark brown fills (deposits 6748 and 6741/6749) with relatively high sherd counts and a few animal bones were excavated from the former pit. Pit 6783, though of a similar gentle-sided morphology to pit 6740, was perhaps less likely to have been backfilled than the latter pit. A silty pit fill (deposit 6784), which lightened towards the base, was excavated from pit 6783 and sherds of pottery dated AD1070-1120 were recovered. Pit 6740 was cut by period Vb pit 6765.

A group of twelve or thirteen possible lime extraction pits (cuts 6523, 6543, 6728, 6602, 6608, 6516, 6619, 6676, 6680, 6746 (fill 6747/6679, Plate 1), 6659 (fill 6660), 6665 (fill 6666) and 6661 (fill 6662) were cut into substratum 6485 or near to that outcrop during Period Va. Two or more fills were excavated from the majority of these pits (though 6516 contained only a single backfill; 6515); the earliest of which were greyish white primary silts without finds. Quantities of Saxo-Norman or possible Saxo-Norman pottery and animal bone were recovered from the overlying dark greyish brown, occasionally charcoal-rich, deposits backfilled into these pits. A very similar or identical deposit (6656) overlaid and spread beyond the extremities of these pits. Pit 6676 cut the edge of Saxo-Norman 'gully' 6770. Pit 6665 appeared to cut pit 6746. Pottery predating AD1080 was retrieved from the fill of pit 6523.

Further to the south a near circular pit (cut 6776) was only preserved to a depth of 0.21m, but contained two fills. The earliest, laying in the base and the sides (pit-fill 6778) was a silty clay with a heavy concentration of charcoal and ash. The overlying fill, 6777, also had a high charcoal content and a single sherd of later 11th- century pottery. Soil samples were taken from both pit fills. Dating must remain conjectural with this feature.

Saxo-Norman pottery was retrieved from the quite silty fill of oval pit or scoop 6783 (fill 6784). This feature might have represented a cess-pit.

Type (2): A short gully-like feature (6750/6770) also contained fills with Saxo-Norman pottery. It varied between 0.23m to 0.30m deep and was filled with greyish brown or greyish white silty clay fills (6751, 6752 and 6771) from which animal bone was also recovered. This gully-like feature was cut into substratum 6485.

Further to the north east a broader gentle-sided gully (6781/6744) contained a similar fill to the latter feature. Numerous late 11th- or 12th- century sherds were recovered from the fill (deposit 6782/6745).

Type (3): Three closely located postholes (6761, 6816 and 6818) of similar dimensions were located in the north east corner of the area. Between 0.26 and 0.30m deep with fairly steep sides, they were filled with very similar deposits; a greyish yellow silty basal fill, overlain by a black or dark grey clay with rare charcoal flecks. Some sections revealed the secondary fills had the morphology of weathering cones (Plate 2). A further posthole to the east (cut 6768) with a slightly lighter fill, had been adversely disturbed by heavy plant though may have belonged to this group (though the recovered pottery may place this feature in Period Vb). Few stones from the four postholes could be characterised as post-packing though some had weathering cones. Pottery from the posthole trio dated broadly to the late 11th/12th centuries but could possibly be confined to AD1070-1120. It is unfortunate that these post settings were discovered late in the excavation as they could have represented part of a larger group extending beyond the excavation north baulk. They almost certainly formed part of a structure. Two further oval deposits (6881-2) to the southeast and in line with this group had latest deposits similar to that of posthole 6768, though they were only test investigated. These deposits (6881 and 6882) might also have been posthole fills.

Summary for Periods Vb and Vc

Topsoil stripping of the largest area excavation (Area E), closest to Bradley Stoke Way unexpectedly exposed the foundations of a complex of masonry structures with associated deposits and a complex of ditches and gullies further to the east (Fig. 9). Manual exposure and excavation revealed that three structures were certainly roofed buildings; Buildings A, B and C

– two of which may be dwelling houses, one of which (Building C) had a possible bake-house/kitchen extension (Structure F) while a further one or two appeared to be unroofed structures (Structures D and E). These buildings were arranged in a sub-rectangular configuration disposed around an open space on the slopes of a small valley. Associated and contemporary deposits, layers and surfaces with an array of artefacts and domestic debris inferred that the set of masonry structures represented a farm complex of some status with a site history likely to predate the 13th century and extending into the first half of the 14th. Some time during the later period the complex was abandoned. Quite extensive robbery of building stone appears to have occurred.

Period Vb: Medieval; c.AD1120 to the mid- 13th century (Figs.9 & 23)

Due to the presence of Period Va evidence described above, the origins of the settlement at Matford should almost certainly be sought in the 11th century, though potential structural evidence was only marginally exposed. Numerous features including a ditch and gully system and probably a masonry building in two phases in Area E can be attributed to Period Vb which extended to the first or second quarter of the 13th century. A single feature was identified in Area A.

Area A

In the central area of Area A (Fig. 4) a large fairly shallow sub-rectangular scoop or pit (cut 6138) was cut into substratum 6004. The feature was half sectioned and a small east-west linear depression was noted in its base. A brownish grey silty clay (deposit 6139) was excavated from scoop 6138 from which a few sherds of possible 12th- century pottery and slag fragments (the latter not recovered) were recorded.

Area E (Figs. 9 & 10, Plates 3 & 4)

Building C; Phase I, ?AD1120/1140 - 1200

This building was totally exposed but had been recently mechanically disturbed and almost all of the overlying layers removed. It was oriented E-W and long-ways up the western valley slope at right angles to Building A (Plate 3). In the first building phase shallow often ill-defined construction trenches had been let into yellow or red silty substrata 6715, 6507, 6852, 6443, grey green clay (substratum 6004) or stream alluvium 6205/6713 in the base of the valley. Some stressed quoins survived at wall corners, otherwise, wall construction was very similar to Building A (see Period Vc). Only a fragment of the southern elevation (wall 6322) had been preserved (1.4m long) but it did survive to about six courses. This wall had been truncated by field drain 6203 and probably by recent mechanical disturbance.

The eastern gable (wall 6208) was preserved to six courses and had been constructed in a foundation trench (cut 6206) the same width as the wall (0.95m). A section was excavated to the east of this wall through a series of deposits of which the latest were hillwash layers 6859 and 6687 (Fig. 21). The latter overlaid a layer of Lias rubble in a greyish brown matrix (6210/6505) representing collapse from wall 6208. This in turn overlaid Lias cobbling (6211) consisting of pebbles and small blocks from which pottery of AD1120-60 was recovered. This cobbling seems to have represented a path or 'extended ford' which was in evidence further to the south (6212 and 6615), running along the base of the valley. Cobbling 6615 was exposed in a sondage excavated to the west of Building A (see Period Vc; Associated Features). Cobbling 6211 abutted wall 6208 and overlaid a silty hillwash (layer 6507), into which the previously mentioned foundation trench (cut 6206/6514) had been cut. The underlying deposits are described under Palaeochannels.

The north elevation (wall 6198/6320/6221) had been stepped to allow for the valley incline and had been constructed in a broad, shallow construction trench or terrace (cut 6431/6324/6317), extending to the north. Primary silting (deposit 6432), and two rubble layers (6399 and 6398 successively) were excavated from or overlying construction trench 6431. A few medieval sherds (which were unlikely to be 13th century or later) were recovered from layer 6399. A 1.1m gap (doorway 6857) gave access to the north. A sherd of possible 12th

century pottery was recovered from the top of the fill (6316) of wall construction cut 6431 in the interior of the building. Slight vestiges of a levelled linear construction platform (cut 6324) cut through red silt 6443, 2.1m west of door 6857, indicated that a western gable had existed (wall 6858). Phase I of this building therefore had an original length of 9.8m externally, giving a length-width ratio of c.1.81:1, based on a rectangular shape.

Recent disturbance had removed the material evidence for wall 6858, though the morphology of a surviving area of slab flooring (masonry 6199) appeared also to support the wall's former existence. Floor 6199 consisted of two courses of fairly thick Lias slabs within a brown clay matrix (context 6219). A pottery sherd of AD1120/1140-1200 was retrieved from deposit 6219. Large fragments of this floor and a similar possible pathway (masonry 6859) were recorded in doorway 6857 and to the north, (Plate 4) in the base of shallow terrace/trench 6431. Just to the north of construction cut 6431, a possible post-hole base (cut 6433) was sealed by rubble layer 6398 and might also have been associated with doorway 6857, though no dating evidence was retrieved from its fill (deposit 6434).

A section to the north of the north east corner of the building (walls 6198 and 6208) showed that a pitched Lias and Pennant revetment (masonry 6698) had been constructed 1.3m to the north, set into alluvium 6207. This revetment was constructed in the base of the valley, presumably to direct intermittent stream flow away from the corner of Building C. Revetment 6698 was overlain by gritty blue silty clay with organic flecking (layer 6699), a layer of rubble (6642) deriving from wall 6198 and yellowish brown alluvium (6641) from which residual Romano-British pottery was recovered. The corner of the building had however been damaged by intermittent stream flow.

A Red silt (6852/6444) was recorded within the eastern, down-slope part of Building C. A small amount of pottery of AD1140-1200 was recovered from this silt. Apart from Floor 6199 only vestiges of internal building deposits survived. A small shallow deposit of yellowish brown silt (6196) overlay red silt 6852. In the region of twenty pottery sherds dating between AD1120-1200 were recovered from deposit 6196. As mentioned above, wall 6322 was the only fragmentary evidence for the south elevation of Building C. No westward extending construction cut, or potential post piers were in evidence to complete the ground plan of this building. The small amount of dating evidence obtained from Building C suggests a construction date between AD1120/1140-1200 but the evidence is not conclusive, due to the lack of overlying stratigraphy. The construction date of Structure F, its western extension, is even more problematical for the same reason and the total lack of artefacts from the vicinity of the structure.

Building C; Phase II (Structure F) (Fig.10, Plates 5 & 6)

In Phase II a large extension was added upslope (Structure F) and to the west of Building C. (Fig. 10) Approximately half of this extension had also been removed by recent disturbance. Two walls (6321 and 6200) survived to indicate that the north elevation of Building C had been extended by c.4.3m externally and the extension was the same width as Phase II. The west gable of Phase II (wall 6200) was preserved to five or six courses and constructed with stressed quoins, brown silty clay bonding and a slight exterior battering. Internally there was enough evidence preserved to indicate that the southern half of wall 6200 began to arch towards the centre of the extension (Plate 5). The opposite was true for the northern part of the wall where a structure; masonry 6319, identified as a possible flue (pers. comms. Vanessa Straker, David Haigh), was tied into the wall (Plate 6). Here the construction cut for wall 6200 had been excavated deeper, and the wall survived to about twelve thin even courses. Charcoal flecked redeposited natural clay (deposit 6701), 0.16m thick was excavated from the base of the structure (Sample 74). Overlying, a charcoal rich greyish brown sandy clay 0.22m thick (deposit 6700) was removed and sampled (Sample 13). A thin layer of rubble in a brown silty clay (6318) overlaid the latter deposit. No artefacts were recovered from these deposits.

Wall 6321 returned eastwards and abutted wall 6221, though it was set in a much shallower construction trench and therefore only preserved to two or three courses. Recent disturbance had removed half its width.

If the identification as a flue for masonry 6319 is correct, then one possible implication that follows is that Building C functioned as a dwelling in phase I and II. This is implied if Structure F can be thought of as a bake-house or kitchen, with the remains of an oven in the form of masonry 6319. Alternative uses for Building C are of course possible (see Discussion and Conclusions; Medieval Settlement). Phase III is detailed in Period Vc.

Ditch and Gully Systems (Figs. 9, 11, 12, 13 & 14)

Two closely situated parallel gullies had been dug into substratum 6004, near the northern boundary of Area E. These gullies were roughly on the same axis as Building C. Both termini of gully 6625/6541 were traced but those of 6548/6612 were not, though both features were found to measure 9m or more. Neither gully was preserved to more than 0.20m deep and all sections revealed flattened 'v' shaped profiles or a flat base. Fairly thick yellowish green silting was excavated from the base of most gully sections though no finds were retrieved from these deposits. However the south terminus of 6625 was much shallower than the rest of the sections investigated and four sherds of 12th century pottery were retrieved from the terminal fill (6624). Shallow secondary fills (c.0.10m) had accumulated over the base silting deposits at cuts 6541 and 6612; deposits 6540/6626 and 6613 respectively: 12th century pottery and animal bone were recovered from both. A thicker hill-wash 6617/6547/6609 sealed gully and fill 6548 and 6623. Saxo-Norman and 12th century ceramics, and a residual Romano-British pottery sherd were recovered from this layer. These gullies may be contemporary with Phase I of Building C.

A reasonably substantial right-angled ditch (6477/6491/6483) was cut into substrata 6004 and 6485 twelve metres or more to the east and up slope of Building A (Fig. 13). This ditch was in rough alignment to that building, though its southern part curved to the southwest towards the slope of the 'wooded dell'. It appeared to be a major drainage/boundary feature possibly excavated in the later 12th or earlier 13th centuries. Three sections and two shallower sondages were excavated across this ditch to confirm its course and investigate deposits and profile. The most northern section at cut 6483 revealed a 1.3m wide ditch preserved to 0.40m deep with a primary silt (6502) overlaid by secondary and tertiary fills (6501 and 6484), the latter of which also sealed the ditch in this area. Immediately to the east of the ditch, substratum 6485 had been disturbed to a depth of 0.15m (deposit 6873) by what might have been stock activity. No finds were retrieved from any of the foregoing deposits but in the other two full ditch sections to the south, dating evidence and animal bone were obtained from later fills. At cuts 6477 and 6491 very similar profiles and sequences of deposition as at 6483 were observed in this ditch (Fig. 13, Plate 7): A thin yellowish grey primary silt 6500/6504 laid in the base and partly up the sides, this was followed by further minor silting events either along the east (deposit 6499) or west (deposit 6877) sides of the ditch. At cut 6477 a thick, brown-mottled yellowish grey silty clay with medium to large Lias slabs (fill 6482) overlay silting events 6500 and 6499. Ditch fill 6482 may have accumulated mostly by back-filling, whereas at cut 6491 the major ditch fill (deposit 6490) was similar to fill 6501, mentioned above; a greyish brown clay which possibly accumulated through both silting and backfilling. Ditch fill 6482 was overlain by deposit 6476 a thin greyish brown clay. Three sherds of mid-late 13th century pottery were recovered from fill 6482. Fifteen sherds of 12th century pot were recovered from ditch fill 6490 at cut 6491, and a few from a partial section to the east; deposit 6691-2. To the northwest of 6477 a vertical-sided flat-based posthole (cut 6874) 0.30m deep, was located close to the ditch (Plate 8). No dating evidence was retrieved from posthole 6874. However a grey silty clay (6880) overlain by light brown silty clay (with packing stones - fill 6876), not unlike ditch-fill 6482/6692, were excavated from this feature. This similarity may be evidence, though tenuous, that the backfilling of the ditch in this area occurred just before or contemporaneously to the

digging and packing of posthole 6874. This would divide both these events from the first phase of activity (ditch digging) into a second phase of activity.

A rectilinear gully and ditch system set at right angles to, and up-slope of, Building A appeared to lead to and was generally contemporary with curvilinear ditch 6477/6491/6483. It consisted of two parallel gullies 6758/6798 and 6824/6831 c.5m apart and extending eastward from the curvilinear ditch. The gullies were joined by a north-south ditch or gully (cut 6791/6827) which extended northwards and west beyond them. Another gully (6794/6822) extended north from gully 6824/6831 for more than 12m. These features had quite steep sides and variable base profiles; in four of the sections excavated heavily oxidised primary silts were recorded (Fig. 14). As with the curvilinear ditch no finds were recovered from this initial silting but they were in evidence in the overlying darker secondary fill. A few residual sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the sections at cuts 6758, 6827 and 6831 and conjoined sherds from a vessel of AD1070-1120 were retrieved at 6798 (gully fill 6759). Late 12th/early 13th century pottery was recovered from gully fill 6825 at cut 6824; 12th century sherds from ditch fill 6789 and gully fills 6757 (cut 6758), 6795 and 6810 (cut 6794). Slag weighing 850g was also recovered from fill 6825 (Assessment of Metallurgical Waste). The system cut an undated amorphous feature (6828). Of slightly different character; feature 6658 was a shallow, fairly broad elongated lozenge shape with two fills. The primary fill (deposit 6727/6726) was a mottled light grey silty clay, with a few Lias pebbles, from which nine sherds of 12th century pottery and a bone fragment were recovered. A grey/brown mottled fill (6655) with 12th century pottery and animal bone overlaid 6727. It is possible this feature represented the terminus of a gully, very roughly parallel to gully 6794, and continued to the south as very shallow deposits 6726 (12th century pottery) and 6672/6807 (12th and mid-late 13th century pottery) to eventually join with gully 6824.

These ditch and gully systems might have been contemporary with Phase 2 (Structure F) of Building C, however, this must remain conjectural due to the lack of dating evidence from this structure. Both these ditch/gully systems are likely to have gone out of use by the mid – late 13th century. Their alignment however, apparently influenced post-medieval field boundaries (see Period VI).

One very shallow feature probably datable to this period was a longer linear gully base noted in two discontinuous lengths; features 6833 and 6724. Probable gully base 6833 was only preserved to a depth of 0.06m though in places it was nearly 0.30m wide and extended for more than 7m. A greyish brown silty clay (6834) was excavated from a small section, from which a sherd of possible 12th century pottery was recovered. A further, slightly more substantial length (cut 6724) and gully junction was excavated to the northwest. This gully extended beyond the extent of excavation and a further length was partly exposed extending at right angles in a southwest direction. Six sherds of 12th century pottery and a few animal bone fragments were recovered from the brownish yellow fill (6725) excavated from this gully junction.

Period Vb Associated Features (Figs. 8, 14 & 15)

Many of the associated features of Period Vb were pits dug with obscure functions.

Pits

A small steep sided lozenge-shaped ?rubbish pit (cut 6479) had been cut into substratum 6004 just to the east of Building A terrace cut 6328 (Fig.17). Primary (deposit 6475) and secondary fills (deposit 6478) were greyish brown or brown silty clay; mid or late 12th century pottery was recovered from the primary fill.

A shallow sub-circular scoop (6738) located in the northern part of Area A was filled with a brownish yellow deposit (6739) with a single sherd of pottery of this period.

A very large (in plan) though relatively shallow (c0.40m) pit (cut 6667) with gently sloping sides was investigated in the east-central part of Area E. A thin greyish white primary silt (6832) with charcoal and 12th century sherds was partly excavated from the base of pit 6667 (Fig.14). Three or more dark or black silty clay fills, all with varying charcoal content, were encountered when two unconnected sections were excavated. Fill 6815 overlaid primary

silt 6832. A large charcoal lens within the latter deposit was allocated context 6812; a considerable number of 12th or late 12th – early 13th century pottery sherds and a few animal bones were recovered from these contexts. In addition a largely intact though unfinished limestone mortar (SF 132, Fig.25.2) was also retrieved from pit fill 6815. This deposit was overlain by a pair of less thick fills; deposits 6668/6813 and 6796. Residual Romano-British and 12th century pottery were recovered from these and a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age chert ?knife (SF 133) was retrieved from 6813 (Lithic Report, Fig. 25.1). Certainly the later uses for this pit was for rubbish disposal.

Near pit 6667, an oval shallow scoop (6673) was cut into the substratum. 12th century pottery was recovered from it's fill (deposit 6674).

A large shallow lozenge shaped oval pit (6765) with gently sloping sides was cut into substratum 6004 east of feature 6658. Four fills, preserved as tip lines of various thickness, had been deposited in the pit; successively 6764, 6753, 6763 and 6754. These fills varied in colour from yellow and greyish yellow to grey. Saxo-Norman and broadly 12th century pottery was retrieved from the earliest fill (6764): the rest of the fills were backfilled also probably in the 12th century. This pit cut Saxo-Norman pit 6740.

In the eastern extremity of Area E a large, 0.50m deep pit (cut 6230), with a possible shallow channel-like projection to the south was cut into substratum 6004 where a pair of Lias limestone bedding planes met. Two fills were deposited (successively 6241 & 6229) in this pit. Fill 6241 was a near black clay with orange sandy clay inclusions. Eight or nine sherds of 12th century pottery were retrieved from the overlying fill 6229; a yellowish grey silty clay with charcoal. No obvious function could be proposed for this feature though it might have represented a cess-pit .

A group of five apparently associated fairly deep oval or slightly curved elongated pits (cuts 6804/6820, 6774, 6792, 6779 and 6766) were located near the north east extremity of Area E. All were filled with similar silty or very silty clay from which 12th century pottery (saving 6779) was retrieved. These pits might have represented cess-pits, though almost no bone was retrieved from their fills.

Small Postholes (Fig. 8)

Two shallow truncated uncertain posthole bases (cuts 6649 & 6682) with near vertical sides, were cut into substratum 6004 to the west of feature 6658. Small fragments of 12th century and undateable pottery were recovered from their fills. A more substantial possible posthole base (cut 6652) was located in the east central part of Area E. The northeast sides were vertical, it's base flat, it was preserved to 0.14m deep and sherds of 12th century pottery were recovered from the secondary fill of this feature (deposit 6653). Cut 6652 did not seem particularly associated with other features unless it could be related to the two above mentioned possible postholes 6682, 6649 and two shallow depressions 6729, 6799, all of similar diameter and admittedly Saxo-Norman pottery was recovered from the primary fill (deposit 6654). Taken together the small postholes might have indicated part of an insubstantial fence line though it is obvious that large evidence gaps are missing for this postulated structure.

Small Gullies (Fig. 8)

Six short, curved and narrow gullies were located in the north east part of Area E. Gully 6519 could have just conceivably been dug as a small construction slot for a short length of fence, as much of it's base was relatively flat and it's sides were relatively steep. This however must remain conjecture in the absence of conclusive evidence; two other gullies in this area were less like construction slots. Late 11th or 12th century pottery and an intrusive roof tile fragment were retrieved from the grey silty fill (deposit 6517) of this feature. A seemingly unconnected narrower curved gully (cut 6647) was located north east of 6519. The northern sides of 6647 however, were near vertical suggesting a possible slot function. Four sherds of 12th century pottery were recovered from the silty fill (deposit 6648) of 6647. Gully 6735 had a 'u' shaped profile, was only 0.11m deep and had been cut by a post-medieval field drain. Two sherds of 12th century pottery were recovered from deposit 6733, the fill of this gully. It had

been cut into what appeared to be a silted-up linear depression (Feature 6637/6644, fills 6638/6734/6645). A few Saxo-Norman and 12th century pottery sherds were recovered from the fills of this feature. An undated curved gully (cut 6755) somewhat similar to gullies 6519, 6647 and gully 6735 was located further to the east. To the south another 12th century curved gully was located near pit 6667.

Period Vc: Medieval; Area E; mid 13th – mid 14th centuries (Figs.9 & 23, Plate 9)

Phase 1a; Building A, The second half of the 13th century (Figs. 16, 17 & 18, Plate 9)

This phase consisted of the main construction phase of Buildings A and presumably B. Nearly all of Building A was exposed. It's external length – width ratio was 2:1 and it was oriented NW-SE. For Building A, a terrace was cut into the east side of the valley to accommodate the construction of the east elevation (wall 6186). The eastern part of the terrace (cut 6437/6453/6328/6416/6298/6295/6332) broadened towards the south from 0.80m to 2.15m, presumably to act as a drain for run off from the hillside and from the building itself. This feature extended beyond the bounds of excavation but is likely to have drained towards the presently wooded dell which leads towards Stoke Brook. The morphology of this terrace could be described as more in the form of a very broad construction trench (Plate 9) in that its western side (6295/6453) was excavated as a short steep declivity to lock the lower masonry courses of wall 6186 into the hill side (Fig 16). Wall 6186 had three constructional components (context numbered separately) founded on the base of the terrace cut: A core of redeposited greenish blue silty clay with occasional Lias rubble (6400), overlying this a brown clay matrix with laid rubble (6294) and lastly faced Lias (and rarely Pennant) flagstones and blocks in regular courses (6186), base-battered to the east (the exterior) and vertical to the west (the interior), bonded with the same type of brown clay. Wall 6186 survived to nine even courses and was intermittently founded on a blueish green clay leveling deposit (6430). The other elevations of Building A, though less well preserved (walls 6187, 6287 and 6302), and those of Buildings B and C were constructed in a very similar fashion, often laid in simple, shallow foundation trenches or linear 'platforms' on the valley slopes. It is quite possible the partial discontinuity of walls 6187, 6287 and 6302 indicates post-collapse/demolition *and* robbery as there did not appear to be sufficient collapsed masonry (from a single story building, for example) *in situ* down-slope of these walls.

Building A was divided by an internal brown-clay-bonded wall (masonry 6194) constructed on the surface of substratum 6004. The interface between walls 6194 and 6187 did not survive but it is possible the former may not have been tied into the latter. In the absence of conflicting evidence wall 6194 was however allocated to Phase 1a also. It divided Building A into two unequal rooms (1 & 2) at ground level (Fig 17).

Very little of the interior of Building A had been terraced to produce a flat foundation for flooring (Figs. 16 & 18), rather the upcast (deposit 6195/6193/6419) from it's drain/wall construction-terrace described above, was spread over the surface of substratum 6004 to level the topography. This levelling deposit must have been revetted by the western elevation (wall 6187) of Building A, though subsequent to abandonment, collapse/possible demolition and probable robbery, erosion had reduced layer 6195/6193/6419 (and wall 6187) to the morphology of the underlying topography. Late 13th century pottery, ceramic roof tile and a burnt bone fragment were recovered from layer 6419, the northern part of the leveling deposit in Room 2. Some late 13th and early 14th century pottery and ceramic roof tile were recovered from levelling layer 6195 or the surface of this deposit. A thin, patchy clay layer with charcoal lenses and Lias slabs (6450) overlay levelling deposit 6195 in the southeastern corner of the building. The former represented the remains of bedding for a Pennant sandstone floor (masonry 6192). A sherd of likely 13th century ceramic roof tile was recovered from layer 6450. Floor 6192 abutted wall 6287; the southern gable of the building, but was very fragmentary and only partly *in situ* in the southeastern, up-slope part of Room 1. Slightly to the north, Pennant sandstone flooring (6711) had been laid at a level 0.06m higher than the small amount floor 6192 that

remained *in situ* in Room 1. Again flooring only survived fragmentarily, but a thick underlying Lias slab-step (6702) at the southern extremity of floor 6711 delimited the levels between these two floor surfaces. This step coincided with the terminal of wall 6194 where a gap or doorway joining the rooms had existed. Only displaced fragments of Pennant flooring (masonry 6420) survived in the northern part of the building. Special Find 118 a casket key (Fig. 25.3) likely to be of the 14th century (see Iron Objects) was recovered from the brown soil matrix associated with floor 6420.

A structure-like row of upright thin Lias slabs (6710) extended diagonally across Room 2. Despite appearances, when excavated it was found to be part of a geological bedding plain. Overlying 6710 a simple sub-rectangular arrangement of thin Pennant slabs (masonry 6455) had been set within levelling deposit 6193. Early 14th century pottery was recovered overlying masonry 6455. This Pennant arrangement represented a mostly preserved hearth-curb. Within this curb a heat-affected clay (deposit 6280) with charcoal lenses extending beyond it to the east, was recorded. Pottery dating from the late 13th century, carbonised bone and a nail were recovered from the surface of, or from hearth deposit 6280. Later 13th century pottery was recovered from a thin brownish grey matrix with a few Pennant and Lias fragments (collapse layer 6454) overlying hearth deposit 6280.

A pit of unknown use (cut 6703), much disturbed by land drain 6401, had been cut into the substratum in the east central part of Building A. It was not possible to confirm whether the pit, pre-dated, was contemporary with or cut the floor of Phase 1a, due to the very fragmentary nature of the latter. Late 13th century pottery was recovered from the brown silty clay fill (deposit 6688) excavated from this pit.

No incontrovertible evidence for a door was recorded for Building A.

Thin Lias cobbling (masonry 6614) west of Building A in the base of the valley overlying substratum 6004 (Fig 18) may well be datable to this sub-phase due to the relatively numerous mid/late 13th century sherds recovered from it (see below Deposits west and east of Building A).

Phase 1b; Building A, *The first half of the 14th century* (Fig. 18, Plate 10)

In Phase 1b Pennant Floor 6192 was replaced by a pitched stone floor consisting of Lias limestone slabs and a few re-used Pennant slabs in a brown silty clay matrix (6256/6421). A residual pottery sherd of AD950-1080 was recovered from the matrix of floor 6256. Pitched floor 6421 respected and was slightly raised from hearth 6455/6280. Again this floor was best preserved in the eastern up-slope parts of this building. Little or no definite stone flooring was recorded between wall 6194 and the hearth of Building A, though a slightly unusual structure (masonry 6684) had been added to the northeastern corner of wall 6194. Upright Pennant and Lias slabs had been set within layer 6193 and into substratum 6004. These may have represented packing or supports for a short wooden screen. A few Lias blocks formed a face along the top of the Pennant sandstone component of structure 6684, implying that the former had abutted some type of vertical structure such as suggested (Plate 10). Brown silty clay with animal bone (deposit 6685) was excavated from the interstices of structure 6684.

A fragmentary rectilinear structure (masonry 6689), consisting of a single row of Pennant sandstone slabs was set within levelling deposit 6193 and pitfill 6688 (Plate 10). The structure was not quite at right angles to Building A. No flooring was preserved within masonry structure 6689. Though almost fully excavated, no convincing function could be deduced from the existing remains of this small structure though it seems appropriate to allocate it to this phase of Building A.

Late 13th to mid 14th pottery and a few residual ?12th century pottery sherds, iron carpentry nails, pig, cattle, bird and sheep/goat bones were recovered from several similar or identical rubble collapse layers within the building or overlying the walls, some with moderate charcoal flecking; 6285, 6428, 6447, 6686, 6189, 6191 and 6415. A considerable number of early to mid 14th and some late 13th century pottery sherds, ceramic roof tile, nine iron carpentry nails, part of a horseshoe of AD1300-1350 (SF 5, Fig. 25.7), cattle, sheep/goat and pig

bones were recovered from the overlying or immediately adjacent topsoil or subsoil base 6247/6185/6152/6188. The majority of the pottery recovered and the spout from a 14th century copper alloy ewer (SF8, Fig. 25.4) overlaid Room 1 and the extreme south of Room 2 (context 6152).

Deposits to the west and east of Building A. (Figs. 16 & 18)

Several layers were sectioned to the west of, and down slope of Building A (6550/6549, 6495, 6496, 6497, 6551, 6552 and 6189). Apart from layer 6495, which consisted largely of Pennant roof tiles and layer 6496 which was mostly hillwashed clay these layers had varying percentages of collapsed Lias masonry and a small amount of charcoal. A few mid and mid-late 13th century pottery sherds were recovered from the earliest collapse layer 6550/6549 and a few sherds from the first half of the 14th came from the tile collapse 6495. Sections sited to investigate Building A's terrace cut (6437/6543/6328/6416/6298/6295/6332; Fig. 16) showed that silty layers of hillwash (deposits 6311, 6417, 6327, 6300, 6425, 6423, 6394, 6395, 6340, 6452, 6439, 6445, 6448, 6449, 6480, 6856) were interleaved with collapse or demolition deposits; 6446, 6447, 6718, 6323, 6422, 6424, 6333, 6334. Mid / late 13th-century, early to mid 14th-century pottery with numerous ceramic ridge tiles (unlikely to be earlier than the mid-13th century), some of which doubled as louvers, 500g of slag and Pennant sandstone roof tiles were recovered from some of these hillwash layers. (see Roman and Medieval Pottery and Ceramic Tile).

Phase 1; Associated Features and Building B (Figs. 9, 18 & 23)

A substantial ditch (cut 6315/6213), generally associated with Phase 1 extended northwest from the eastern corner of the northern gable (wall 6302) of Building A (fig. 9). Sections across the undisturbed, northern part of the ditch revealed a fairly broad shallow (0.25m deep) profile narrowing and turning to the west before a shallow terminal. Small Pennant slabs and brownish grey clay (fill 6214) had been backfilled into the terminal. Pottery sherds dated between AD1280 to 1340 were recovered from a basal fill of this ditch (deposit 6314), excavated near the northern extremity of Structure D (See Phase 2 below). Though very little depth was preserved to the west, this ditch appeared to be traceable as an opposed and parallel curvilinear discontinuous feature (cut 6488) to the west, which was not as long as eastern ditch 6213/6315. Together they composed what appeared to be an enclosure with an entrance formed by the northern terminals.

Thin hillwashes 6458 and 6305/6640 overlaid much of ditch 6315/6213. A few 12th century pottery sherds were recovered from hillwashes 6458 and 6640.

It is possible that a thin Lias cobbled layer (6614) originally functioned as an extended ford/path in the floor of the valley (Fig. 18), and should be allocated to Phase 1a (see above). This deposit overlaid stream alluvium or hillwash 6554 to the west of Building A and a Pennant sharpening stone or saddle quern (SF192) was recovered from its matrix. Very similar cobbling (6861) was in evidence further to the south between Buildings A and B and may have been a continuation of 6614.

Building B (Fig. 19, Plate 11)

More than three quarters of this building was exposed (Plate 11). It is possible Building B can be generally allocated to Phase 1 of Period Vc. It was built on the same axis and at right-angles to Building A on the opposite side of the valley with a length – width ratio of 1.57:1. The walls were of near identical construction to those of Building A, save that an intramural doorway c.1.25m wide (masonry 6546) gave access through the northwest elevation (wall 6464) (Fig. 19). Walls 6464, 6463 and 6462 and were preserved to six, seven or eight regular courses. A length-ways section through the partly robbed and collapsed pitched Lias floor (masonry 6442/6451) revealed that no floor levelling of substrata had been attempted. Floor 6451/6442 had been laid directly on two underlying silty layers closely resembling substrata; 6474 and 6493 (Fig.19). Though otherwise homogeneous and sterile, 12th century pottery was recovered from 6474 and pottery dated to AD1140 to 1200 was recovered from 6493. Floor 6451/6442

was set within a brown silty clay matrix, from which a single sherd of presumably residual 12th century pottery was recovered.

Lias rubble cobbling (masonry 6855) had been laid immediately north of this building and led along wall 6464 towards the wooded dell. This had been somewhat horizontally truncated by modern disturbance but it consisted of a lower component of small-medium Lias fragments sometimes overlain by larger Lias and Pennant slabs a few centimetres thick. A fairly well preserved pitched stone surface (masonry 6466) was laid externally to wall 6462. Lias slabs had been set upright on a horizontal bed of the same stone-slab type. No artefacts were recovered from the brown silty clay matrix that the upright slabs of surface 6466 were set in.

Two silty layers (6392 & 6393) had accumulated in the eastern interior of the building overlying floor 6442/6451. The earliest deposit (6392) had a small amount of collapsed masonry from wall 6462 but in general terms comparatively little collapsed masonry was in evidence in and around Building B, perhaps inferring extensive stone robbery. A few sherds of medieval pottery which were tentatively datable to the 11th century, a tap slag fragment and an iron nail were recovered from the interior silty layers. A single earlier medieval sherd and modern pottery sherds were recovered from the topsoil base (6286) overlying the silty layers or the walls of the building. A 14th century oxshoe (SF 100, Fig. 25.5) was recovered from the surface of pitched stone surface 6466.

To the northwest of the building a partly preserved dry-stone Lias-built drain 6330 underlay silt 6331. No definite capstones were in evidence and the drain walls only survived to two courses. A shallow gully (6336) had been cut into the underlying silt between the remains of the opposing drain walls. Drain 6330 could not be closely dated or phased but it would not be unreasonable to assume general contemporaneity with other medieval masonry.

Phase 2; Structure D (Building A) (Fig. 17)

During Phase 2 at Building A an extension was added to the north gable of the building. This was designated Structure D as it was less than certain that it represented a roofed room or rooms. No convincing floor layers (or definite roof tiles from the structure) were recorded. In addition, though disturbed by heavy plant, Structure D appeared to be in more than one phase or sub-phase. Uneven preservation and the lack of vertical stratification necessitates only a partial thesis for this structure. Bonding material for the three main wall components; 6461, 6526/6555 and 6719/6720 was often difficult to define, with the recording of colours and consistency of potential bonding much influenced by overlying and surrounding deposits. The following descriptions are therefore only tentatively allocated to Phases 2a and 2b, Structure D.

Phase 2a; Structure D (Building A) (Figs. 16 & 17, Plate 12)

The major walls of this structure were of similar construction to those of Building A, saving that little Pennant sandstone was noted in the coursing or cores.

Two parallel walls (6555/6526 & 6461) extended north from wall 6302 (Building A's north gable), though only physical evidence that wall fragment 6526 abutted the latter wall existed (Figs. 9 & 17). They appeared to extend the east and west walls of Building A. The full southern extent of wall 6461 appeared not to be preserved. However from an investigation of the space between the latter and gable 6302, a gap or doorway of c.0.9 – 1m could possibly have intervened. Only a shallow construction platform (cut 6627) let into substratum 6004 was discernible in section for the latter wall (Fig. 16, Section 162) though in one section (no. 94) this was preserved as a platform broader than the wall. Though the remains of wall 6461 had been distorted by erosion it appeared to be significantly wider (c.1m) than eastern wall 6555/6526 (c.0.7m). The other differences between these walls, though significant, did not seem on balance to preclude them being of the same phase - however a possible, perhaps less likely alternative, is aired in Discussion and Conclusions; Medieval Settlement; Phasing and Interpretation below. The remains of wall 6461 consisted in the main of small to medium slabs and rubble possibly bonded with brown silty clay, surviving up to four thin courses, though some larger slabs were in evidence on the external (western) face. The potential doorway in this wall has already been referred to; the wall apparently terminated before the end of the structure. As mentioned a

fragment of wall 6526 survived abutting Building A. The construction platform for this wall (cut 6557/6411; let into substratum 6004 and cutting the eastern edge of Ditch 6315) was fairly well defined when Structure D was sectioned (Fig. 16, Section 94). Wall 6526 was laid on a levelling deposit of yellowish green silty clay (deposit 6408/6527) and had partly collapsed to both east and west. Further to the north (Fig. 16, Section 162) the wall had been almost completely robbed though a remnant levelling deposit remained (deposit 6408). To the north the wall was better preserved, designated context 6555 and was contemporary with a short western return (wall 6307) with an in-turn (Fig. 17). The corner of these walls had been damaged by post-medieval field drains 6401 and 6864 but there was ample evidence preserved to indicate a contemporary intermured Lias – built inlet (masonry 6866) through wall 6555, led to what may have been a water collection tank. This feature was formed by the in-turn of wall 6307 and southern Lias wall (masonry 6709) tied with wall 6555 (Fig. 22). Inlet 6866 led from a cut interpreted as shallow terracing 6410/6524 (However see Discussion and Conclusions; Medieval Settlement; Phasing and Interpretation) to the east of wall 6555/6526. The potential tank had no stone base but was constructed on the base of a flat cut (6867) – (Plate 12) which almost certainly sufficed for wall 6307 as well. Construction cut 6867 cut Phase 1 ditch 6315. Two deposits were excavated from cut 6867 within the tank: a greenish brown gritty clay with charcoal (layer 6697 – the earliest), overlying the latter was a mottled reddish brown sandy silt with charcoal (deposit 6696) from which chicken bone, mollusc shell and 14th century pottery was recovered. Unfortunately most of the deposits in this possible tank were excavated before inlet 6866 was revealed or it's eastern wall (6709) indicated the nature of this feature. In consequence only a minimum environmental sample was recovered from near inlet 6866 (deposit 6712).

Phase 2b Structure D (Building A) (Figs. 16, 17 & 22, Plates 12 & 13)

An overflow drain (masonry 6531/6847) extended down-slope from ?tank 6709 and across the interior of Structure D. It was structurally separate from the tank and consisted of a few courses of Lias slabs on the northern side, it was poorly preserved in it's western down-slope extent (6847), and had a slab Lias/Pennant base. The partly preserved southern side comprised of upright Lias slabs set into substratum 6004. The northern Lias coursing abutted the in-turn of wall 6307 with a partly constructed parallel face. A thin deposit of brown silty clay (6532) was preserved overlying the up-slope base slabs of this drain. Two sherds, not-closely datable, of medieval pottery were recovered from deposit 6532. As mentioned overflow drain 6531 led westward. It crossed but appeared to be contemporary with the very disturbed remains of wall 6719 (Fig. 17, Plate 13). Some parts of the eastern and western faces of this wall were ill-defined while others were preserved to two or four courses. Possible vestiges of brown to reddish brown bonding survived. Similarly the construction cut for wall 6719 was only tenuously defined with the wall apparently filling much of the cut. Rubble 6616 overlaid wall 6719. Wall 6719 abutted wall 6461 to the east. A return; masonry 6720, extending eastward was contemporary, though narrower (0.6m) than wall 6719 and survived as one to three courses with little bonding in evidence. A recess with no evidence for a stone base, but otherwise defined by upright Pennant slabs (masonry 6868) was located in wall 6720 at it's junction with wall 6719. Wall 6720 extended fragmentarily eastwards towards wall 6307 but was not on line with it and may only have been superficially tied with that wall. Some Lias slabs of wall 6720 and the north coursing of overflow drain 6531 overlapped but it was unclear if this indicated one was tied to the other. A disturbed and fragmentary masonry projection extended for a short distance north of the corner of walls 6719/6720. A possible length of shallow wall construction platform (cut 6871) was excavated 2.85m to the north of and on line with the latter masonry projection. Though fragmentary, taken together these features may indicate the presence of an almost completely removed wall. Alternatively the masonry projection might be the remains of a buttress; the northwest corner of Structure D was built on a fairly steep part of the valley slope in this area.