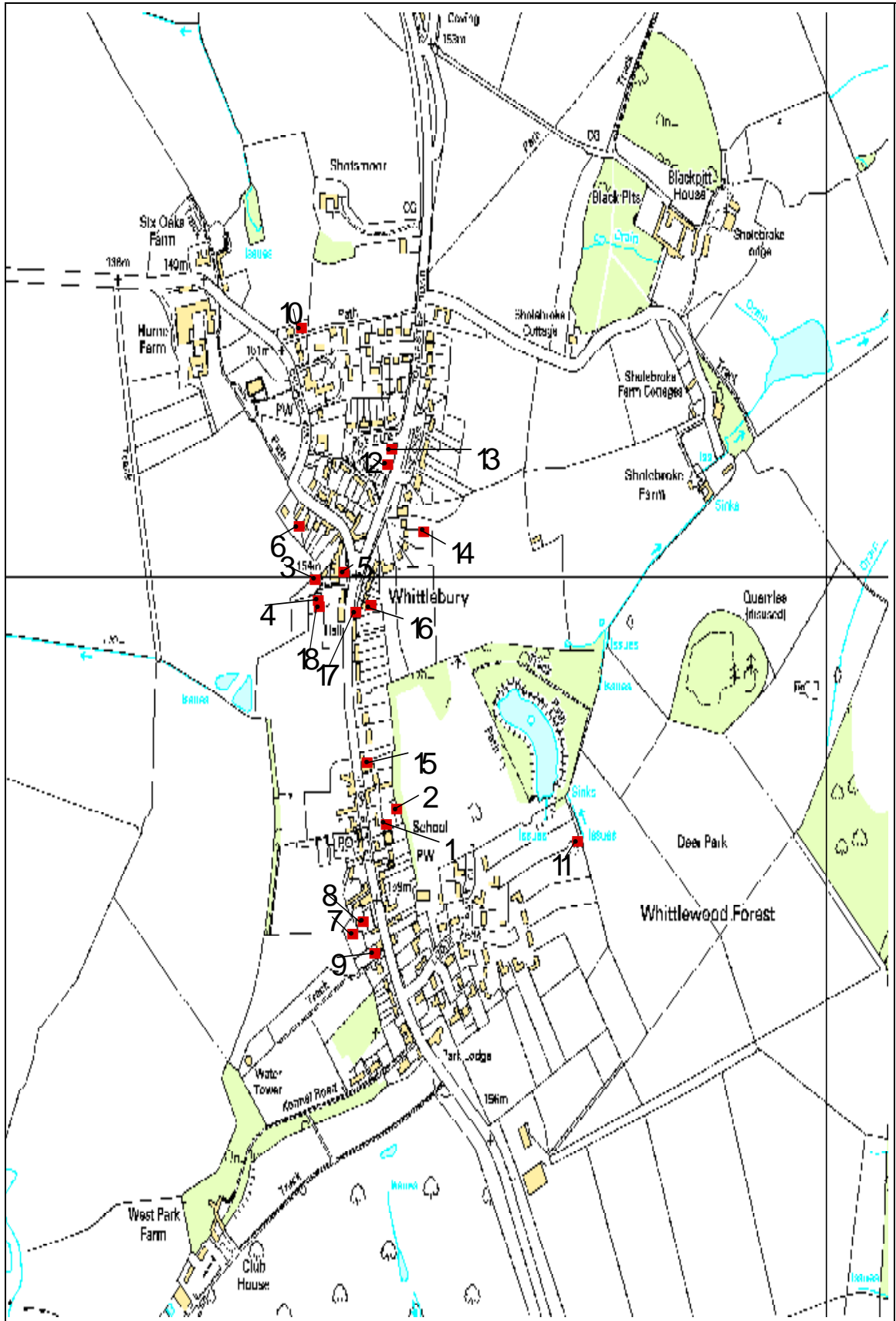


whittlewoodproject

Report on Shovel Test Pits in and around Whittlebury village: July-August 2001



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Whittlebury Shovel Test Pits

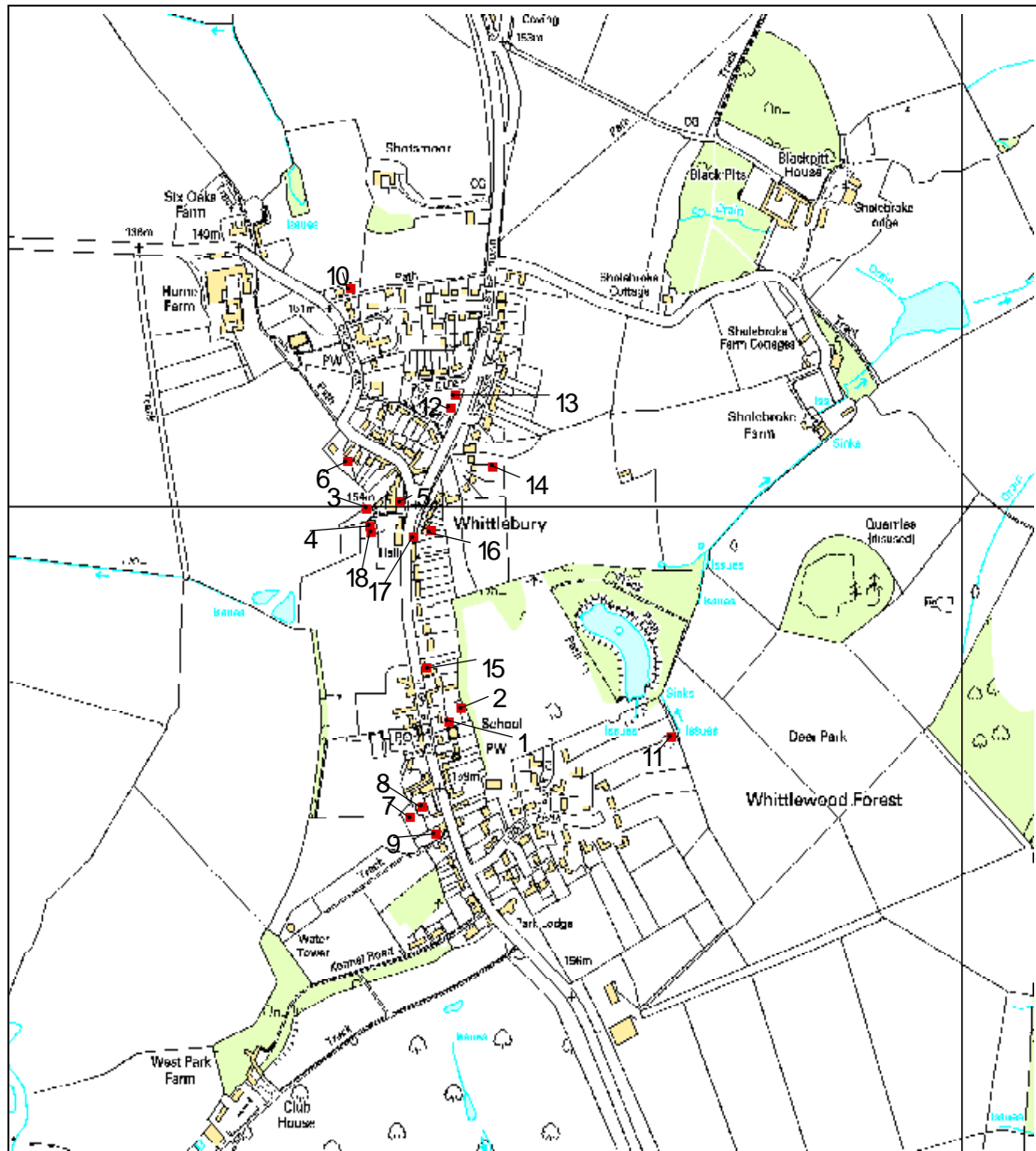
Report on the eighteen Shovel Test Pits sunk in and around Whittlebury, Northants in July and August 2001.

Pottery Concordance and dating

The different pottery types (fabrics) encountered are represented in the table below, together with their Northamptonshire County type-series and Milton Keynes type-series codes where they exist. A date range for the production of this pottery is also included. In the body of the text, fabrics are referred to by the Northamptonshire code only.

Description	Fabric (N)	Fabric (MK)	Date Range
Early-middle Saxon Handmade Wares	F2		450-800
Ipswich Ware	F95		c. 725-850
T1 (1) types St Neots Ware	F100	SNC1	850-1100
T1 (2) type St Neots Ware	F200	SNC1	1000-1200
Cotswold-type Oolithic Ware	F207	MSC1	975-1150
Shelly Coarseware	F330	MC1	1100-1400
Early Medieval Oxford Ware	F345		late 11 th -14 th
Miscellaneous Sandy Coarsewares	F360	MS3	1100-1400
Brill/Boarstall Ware	F324	MC9	1200-1600
Potterspury Ware	F329	MC6	1250-1600
East Wiltshire Ware	F364	MS29	early 11 th -early 15 th
Late Medieval Reduced Ware	F365	TLMS3	1400-?1500
Late Medieval Oxidized Ware	F401	TLMS18	?1450-?1500
Midland Purple Ware	F403		1450-1600
Cistercian Ware	F404	PM15	1470-1550
Midland Yellow Wares	F406	PM38	1550-1700
Red Earthenwares	F407	TLMS12	1500+
Rhenish Stonewares	F408	PM29	1450+
Midland Blackware	F411	PM16	c. 1550-1700
Miscellaneous 18 th -19 th century Wares	F1000		1700-1900
All Romano-British Wares	F1001		RB

Location of Shovel Test Pits



Gazetteer of Shovel Test Pits

WH STP 1

The Orchard, Whittlebury Primary School

Within occupied area of village to east of A413 as depicted on 1610 Whittlewood Map. Designed to investigate the origins and development of the village south along this route. Precisely located over an upstanding earthwork close to back gardens.

- Spit 1-2: 0-200mm; turfline and garden topsoil with fragments of modern CBM and Victorian pottery.
- Spit 3-4: 200-400mm; dark brown clay loam with orange clay deposits. Much CBM, burnt material and charcoal. Artefacts of C18-19 date.
- Spit 5-7: 400-830mm; dark brown clay loam with similar artefacts. Charcoal rich.
- Spit 8: 830mm +; orange glacial sand – natural.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
1	1000	25
2	1000	29
3	329	1
3	407	1
3	429	1
3	1000	77
4	407	4
4	1000	91
5	407	1
5	2000	30
6	329	1
6	407	2
6	429	1
6	1000	27
7	1000	13

This STP was located close to the current back gardens of properties fronting onto the main street. The ground had clearly been disturbed here and stood proud of the general level of the orchard. Excavation revealed that this area had been used as a dump during the C18 and C19. Whilst a couple of medieval sherds were found within the assemblage, these appear to have been residual. That there were so few suggests that occupation was intensive.

WH STP 2

The Orchard, Whittlebury Primary School

Within occupied area of village to east of A413 as depicted on 1610 Whittlewood Map. Designed to investigate the origins and development of the village south along this route. Precisely located close to the wall which follows what appears to be the original extent of the plots.

- Spit 1-3: 0-300mm; turfline and humic topsoil. Frequent modern inclusions of CBM, mortar, and infrequent C19 pottery.
- Spit 4: 300-400mm; dry, fine clay loam with coarse stone inclusions. Frequent post-medieval finds.
- Spit 5: 400-500mm; fine, sandy soil with a mixture of artefacts of different period. This overlay a rough brick wall foundation.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
1	1000	8
2	329	3
2	1000	9
3	1000	14
4	1000	7
5	360	2
5	1000	7

The deposits in this STP had clearly been disturbed as witnessed by the mix of artefacts at similar levels. Excavation revealed the presence of a brick wall, said to be the former boundary between the orchard and the neighbouring property. Any medieval deposits would have been affected both by the construction and demolition of this wall. Medieval pottery was found in small amounts. Again the presence of this material does not suggest intense occupation, but possible proximity to it. No evidence was revealed to help date the establishment of the wall line marking the eastern extent of the orchard, although this appears to follow that line defined on the 1610 Whittlewood Map.

WH STP 3

6 High Street

Within paddocks at the rear of cottages set on the Silverstone Road T junction. Designed to investigate the possibilities of occupation and usage in the area around the church. Most northerly paddock.

- Spit 1-3: 0-300mm; turfline and dark brown humic clay loam. Including much modern material.
- Spit 4-8: 300-800mm; orange/brown clay with high frequency of gravel and pebbles. Contained pottery and other artefacts of medieval, early medieval and possible Roman date. No distinction could be made between these deposits and natural. Only when spits were encountered without artefacts could natural be thought to have been found.
- F1: Domestic animal burial found at -380mm below modern turfline. No cut could be identified in the section.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
0	329	2
0	330	1
0	345	2
0	360	2
1	407	1
1	1000	3
1	1001	1
2	1000	1
3	407	3
4	329	8
5	329	6
5	330	1
6	324	4
6	360	6
7	330	1
7	360	1

The deposits in STP 3 and 4 are very similar. It is difficult to understand their formation. The lower deposits appear to be very similar to the natural glacial gravels, but the inclusion of artefacts suggests that these have been disturbed. One possible explanation might be that the natural was disturbed by various ploughing events. The quantity of pottery might, however, suggest occupation in the near vicinity. Certainly, it is clear that the assemblage suggests activity in this area over several centuries and implies that this was indeed the early historic core of the village.

WH STP 4

6 High Street

Within paddocks at the rear of cottages set on the Silverstone Road T junction. Designed to investigate the possibilities of occupation and usage in the area around the church. Central paddock towards westward flowing stream.

- Spit 1-3: 0-300mm; turfline and dark humic garden soil. Containing post-medieval artefacts.
 Spit 4-8: 300-800mm; orange/brown clay with frequent gravel inclusions. Much early pottery, including ?Iron Age, Roman, early medieval and medieval material.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
2	329	1
2	403	1
3	329	2
4	329	1
5	324	6
5	329	6
5	345	2
5	360	13
6	329	2
6	360	5
7	330	1

The formation of these deposits appears to be the same as STP 3. There is a noticeable increase in medieval material in the lower deposits, especially Spit 5. It is likely that the stony layers have not been disturbed by modern activity. Again quantitative analysis of the pottery suggests close proximity to occupation and is further evidence for the early establishment of the settlement focus.

WH STP 5

Dolly's Cottage, 8 High Street

Within front garden of Dolly's Cottage, 8 High Street, set on the Silverstone Road T junction. Designed to investigate the possibilities of occupation and usage in the area around the T junction.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil. Much modern material.
 Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; garden soil with few inclusions other than a mix of medieval and post-medieval pottery.
 Spit 4: 300-400mm; lighter brown clay loam with clay and chalk inclusions. This deposit had been disturbed by the laying of an electric cable at -350mm below modern turfline.
 Spit 5: 400-500mm; only visible in northern half of excavation. Many gravel inclusions. Excavation was terminated due to time and to the dangers of the exposure of the electric cable.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
1	1000	1
2	329	1
2	360	1
2	1000	4
3	329	1
3	1000	1
4	329	2
4	1000	3
5	1000	1
6	329	1

6	1000	1
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The sequence of exposed strata suggests the same formation processes as those identified in STP 3 and 4. Natural, however, was not encountered here and the possibilities of earlier deposits remains high. There is a clear mix of artefacts of different periods which might result from the laying of the electric cable. No features were encountered, however, to suggest that this precise location had been occupied before the present cottages were constructed. Nevertheless, the quantity of medieval pottery again suggest proximity to an occupation site.

WH STP 6

Wellstood House, 13 Church Way

Located at the back of houses fronting Church Way. Wellstood House is the last house to the south of the road before the church. Designed to investigate medieval land usage on the ridge around the church.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and dark humic topsoil. Bone, modern ceramic, CBM, etc. Heavy root action has interfered with this strata.
- Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; dark humic clay loam with CBM and stone inclusions. Much charcoal. Post-medieval artefacts.
- Spit 4: 300-400mm; more gravelly soil with post-medieval artefacts.
- Spit 5-6: 400-500mm; gravel and charcoal with lumps of clay. High concentration of bird bones.
- F1: 500mm; possible surface made up of dense concentration of limestone.
- F2: 500-600mm; cobbled surface made up of flint and limestone covering the whole of the STP. This overlay natural glacial gravel deposits.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
1	329	2
1	1000	1
6	407	1
F1	329	1

Few medieval artefacts were found within this STP. The discovery of a cobbled surface at -500mm provides the context for these deposits. This surface appears to have been laid on natural, possibly levelled before construction. This process may have removed any medieval deposits. The post-medieval artefacts above this surface provide the terminus ante quem for this surface. This surface may form part of a yard constructed at the back of the current houses fronting Church Way. Thus, despite its proximity to Whittlebury's burh, this STP proved sterile in terms of the central research questions posed by the project.

WH STP 7

54 High Street

Situated in back paddocks of house in southern part of the village. Set beyond a wall which appears to mark the back of plots shown on the 1610 Whittlewood Map. Excavated in tandem with WH STP 8 which was located within these plots, 30m east of STP 7. Designed to investigate the development of the village to the south.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and humic topsoil. Modern artefacts
- Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; dark brown humic clay loam with modern material
- Spit 4: 300-400mm; stony humic soil and yellow sandy clay. Root action has disturbed this layer. Includes CBM, charcoal, pottery and wood.
- Spit 5-6: 400-600mm; orange glacial sand, including medieval pottery as well as more recent material. Lower levels identified as natural.

F1: Area of dark humic soil interpreted after excavation as root or animal disturbance.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
4	324	3
4	1000	1

The majority of spits show signs of modern disturbance. In living memory, the area had been used as a wood yard. The presence of medieval pottery might have resulted from manuring. The STP was set back from the road, possibly outside the plots shown on the 1610 Whittlewood Map, and thus possibly part of the medieval field system. The lack of stratigraphic build-up is paralleled in other STP in the southern part of the village. These contrast starkly with those in the northern part of the village. Together with the absence of early material, this is indicative of the later development of the village south along the A413.

WH STP 8

Fox and Hounds Public House, 44 High Street

Located to south of pub car park, and excavated in association with WH STP 7. Designed to investigate the development of the village to the south.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and gravel deposit identified as hardcore surface of pub car park extension.
 Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; dark humic garden soil. Containing modern CBM, pottery and glass.
 Spit 4: 300-380mm; orange-brown glacial sand and gravel. No artefacts, interpreted as natural.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
1	1000	5

The shallow deposits encountered here are reminiscent of STP 7 and again suggest that the area had not been intensively occupied. In fact no medieval artefacts were recovered, thus suggesting a blank plot that was never occupied.

WH STP 9

54 High Street

Situated in the back garden towards the house set at the southern extremity of the village. The aim was to excavate as close to the road frontage as possible to contrast encountered features and artefacts with STPs set further back from the road, notably STPs 7 and 8.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and garden soil containing C19-20 material
 Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; dary brown humic soil with much charcoal, containing modern ceramic, CBM and glass.
 Spit 4-5: 300-450mm; orange glacial sand with infrequent flint pebbles. Very few artefacts in the upper layer. No artefacts in lower layers and interpreted as natural.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
2	404	1
2	407	3
2	409	1
3	324	1
4	407	2

Despite the attempt to move this STP towards the road frontage, this did not greatly affect the assemblage that was recovered. Once again this was dominated by post-medieval material. It is possible that STPs 7, 8 and 9 all lie outside the area of the medieval village, and were only later colonised as the population of the village expanded. This suggests that the 1610 Whittlewood Map does not accurately depict the true extent of the medieval village, but records the village state with additional post-medieval elements.

WH STP 10

Averys Orchard, Church Way

In back garden of house, locate close to surviving ridge and furrow. The property lies north of the church. Designed to test whether this area was occupied during the middle ages, or whether it was simply incorporated within the field system.

- Spit 1-3: 0-300mm; dark brown humic garden soil. Pottery and glass, with a mixed date range.
- Spit 4: 300-400mm; orange brown silty soli with stone inclusions and chalk.
- Spit 5: 400-500mm; many large stone inclusions with modern material.
- Spit 6-10: 500mm-1m; clean dark brown clay loam with very few inclusions but including post-medieval as well as medieval pottery. A C19 field drain was encountered at -900mm below modern ground level.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
2	330	1
3	329	1
6	329	1
9	360	1

The presence of a C19 field drain has clearly disturbed earlier deposits. A rational formation of the strata can be proposed. Spits 1-3 represent modern garden soil. Below this a layer of stones has formed at the bottom of the tilled soil. This overlay a deep deposit of humic soil which is likely to represent a medieval ridge. Ridge and furrow survives immediately to the west. This has, of course, been partially disturbed by the cut for the field drain, explaining the presence of later material at considerable depths. It is interesting to note that the field drain is orientated with the ridge and furrow.

WH STP 11

19 Lodge Park

New development in southern part of village to the east of the main road. The area was formerly occupied by Whittlebury Lodge. Some formal garden features survive, notably a prospect mound against which the STP was located. Aimed at understanding the pre-lodge landscape and assessing whether the prospect mound had been set on an earlier earthwork.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; garden soil with C19 artefacts
- Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; more compact orange soil overlying gravel on top of a cobbled surface.
- Spit 4-5: 300-500mm; orange glacial sand with stone inclusions and flecks of charcoal in upper layers. This deposit turns sterile and has been interpreted at natural.
- F1: Brick soakaway cut into the base strata orientated north-south in eastern half of the STP. Encountered at -350mm below modern turfline.

This STP has clearly been affected by landscaping associated with the gardens of Whittlebury Lodge. The gravel and cobbles might be interpreted as a path around the mound as shown on plans for the lodge gardens. The soakaway must also date from this period. Medieval pottery was found, but is unlikely to be in situ, however, it does suggest that this

area may have been ploughed at this period. The absence of strong evidence for settlement is not surprising. This STP is the most remote of those dug during the season from what is thought to be the historic core of the settlement.

WH STP 12

Vicarage Close Green

An area of open ground has been preserved to the north of the village, on the western side of the main road, 100m north of the Silverstone Road T junction. Two STPs were set towards the road frontage to assess whether this area had been formerly occupied, or whether it was part of an infield system in the medieval period.

- Spit 1: 0-150mm; turfline and humic topsoil. Modern artefacts
 Spit 2-3: 150-300mm; fine light brown clay loam with small stones, a mixture of pottery and other artefacts of all periods.
 Spit 4-5: 300-500mm; orange brown glacial gravel with charcoal, pottery and chalk in the upper layers, becoming sterile. Interpreted at the lowest level as natural.

Spit/Feature	Fabric	No. of Sherds
2	329	4
2	330	1
3	329	5
3	330	1
3	360	2
4	329	9
4	330	1
4	345	2
4	360	2

This STP shows the classic signs of plough disturbance at different periods. The dark humic upper layers must be interpreted as the remnants of post-medieval ploughing, whilst the stony lower layers are akin to those deposits found elsewhere in the northern part of the village, notably STPs 3 and 4. The recovery of such significant finds of medieval pottery (and possibly Roman pottery) is interesting. This may result from occupation of the site, but it is more likely that this area was part of Whittlebury's infield where manuring would have been more intense. This result should be tested by the excavation of further STPs in the general vicinity. The assemblage compares well, for instance with that recovered from STP 13 only 20m further north.

WH STP 13

Vicarage Close Green

Excavated in tandem with STP 12, designed to address exactly the same research issues. See above.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and dark brown humic topsoil with medieval pottery.
 Spit 2: 100-200mm; orange brown gravel and clay, with mixture of medieval and post-medieval artefacts.
 Spit 3: 200-300mm; very hard orange gravel and clay with numerous medieval sherds, overlying natural glacial gravels.

Spit/Feature	Fabric	No. of Sherds
1	329	3
2	329	3
3	329	13

The formation of this stratigraphy parallels that observed in STP 12. Again the quantity of medieval pottery is of interest when compared with the types of assemblage found in the southern part of the village.

WH STP 14

Starlings, Chestnut Drive

A property set back east from the main road in the northern part of the village. Back garden location in an area thought to have been part of the medieval ploughlands. Designed to act as a control against which evidence from more central village STPs could be set.

- Spit 1-2: 0-200mm; turfline and humic garden soil. Medieval pottery and modern ceramics.
- Spit 3: 200-300mm; heavier brown clay loam with flint and stone inclusions. Modern and medieval pottery. Overlying natural.
- F1: Shallow gully containing similar deposit as Spit 3, cut into the orange yellow natural clays. Only 20mm deep and approximately 200mm wide. Orientated east-west across the centre of the STP.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
1	329	2
2	1000	6
3	329	2
3	330	1
3	345	1

The simplicity of the stratigraphic sequence encountered in this STP was to be expected and is witness to the area being part of the medieval and post-medieval ploughlands rather than forming part of the village itself. The feature might be interpreted as the bottom of a post-medieval ploughmark, although the evidence is slim.

WH STP 15

49 High Street

An STP set immediately behind a post-medieval property lying on the main road, within the southern development of the village. An unique opportunity to excavated close to the road frontage to the east. This STP could be compared with others excavated to the north and south which by necessity had to be set further back from the road.

- Spit 1-2: 0-200mm; crumbly, humic soil, with frequent CBM, ceramic, bone and metalwork inclusions.
- F1: Intrusive circular depression dug into F3. First exposed at -300mm from modern surface. Cut was 190mm deep. Possible post-medieval pit.
- F2: Circular post hole filled with loose crumbly dark soil, encountered at -350mm below current ground level. Post hole bottomed at -510mm from surface.
- F3: Dense hard yellow clay with many stones and a well-defined surface with cobbles in SE corner. Probably late medieval surface.
- F4: Stakehole in SW corner, encountered at -460mm from modern ground surface. Bottomed at -600mm from surface.

F5: Stakehole in NW corner, encountered at -460mm from modern ground surface. Bottomed at -560mm from surface.

Spit/Feature	Fabric	No. of Sherds
2	329	2
2	404	4
2	407	2
2	1000	9
3	329	7
4	324	2
4	329	12
4	404	1
4	408	2
4	1000	1
F3	329	27

The opportunity to excavate close to the road frontage was exceptional. Despite the proximity to the current building and manhole cover, the deposits were remarkably undisturbed. With the exception of a Victorian pit which cut through the cobbled surface, the medieval deposits may be considered to be in situ. A sequence of structural elements could be defined, including a single posthole, possibly associated with the late medieval cobbled surface. Sealed below this surface, and cut into the natural glacial sand were two stakeholes. It remains unclear, however, whether these features were internal or external to a medieval habitation. The quantity of medieval pottery here, far outweighed that from all other STPs excavated in Whittlebury. This provides the strongest evidence for buildings set along the main road, close to the plot fronts. The absence of early material is once again apparent from the assemblage, and argues for an expansion of the village south from its historic core in the north at some point after 1250, a date arrived at by the ubiquitous presence of Potterspurty wares in this part of the settlement.

WH STP 16

11 High Street

The property is located immediately opposite the Silverstone Road T junction. Designed to assess whether this area had been occupied and whether the road junction acted as a settlement focus. The STP was located in the back garden, 40m from the main road frontage.

- Spit 1-2: 0-300mm; turfline, modern disturbed garden soil and builders' rubble.
- Spit 3-5: 300-600mm; dry clay loam with very frequent flints and gravel. Very few exotic stones. Compares well with deposits found elsewhere in the northern part of the village. Medieval and ?Roman pottery. Worked flint.
- Spit 6: 600-700mm; as above with worked flint, turning sterile and considered natural.

Spit/Feature	Fabric	No. of Sherds
1	329	1
1	407	1
1	1000	2
2	324	1
2	407	3
2	1001	1
3	324	1
3	329	1
4	329	5

4	360	3
5	329	2
5	330	2

The depth of disturbed 'natural' is again of significance and appears to act as witness to long periods of activity. But again it is difficult to ascertain whether this was occupation or agricultural. Given the positioning of this property close to the intersection of the major roads, it might be thought to be occupation, but this cannot be claimed with any degree of certainty. In fact, the amounts of pottery and the lack of structural features undermines this argument, if compared with other STPs in the village. The significance of the T junction as a focal point therefore remains unknown.

WH STP 17

10 High Street

Located in the back paddocks of cottages set on the Silverstone Road T junction. This STP was located 20m south of STP 4, on the edge of the westward flowing stream. Designed to assess the potential of this area for the recovery of occupational information in the proposed historic core of the village.

- Spit 1-3: 0-300mm; turfline, topsoil and dark brown humic soil with much modern ceramic, glass etc.
 Spit 4: 300-400mm; hard yellow and stony clay loam with late medieval pottery.
 Spit 5-6: 400-600mm; very stony yellow clay loam with some charcoal and medieval pottery.
 Spit 7-8: 600-800mm; stony glacial gravel with no inclusions. Natural.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
4	329	3
4	360	3
4	1001	1
5	360	6
5	1001	2
6	207	1
6	329	3
6	345	2
6	360	1

Intrinsically, these deposits are the same as STPs 3 and 4, with the exception of the depth of modern disturbance at the higher levels. The STP was located on the banks of a small westward flowing stream. Maintenance of this water course may have caused the disturbance at the higher levels. Quantities of medieval pottery, however, does suggest proximity to habitation.

WH STP 18

11 High Street

The STP was located on the main road verge, adjacent to the site of a known pre-Christian burial. Designed to recover further evidence for the dating and understanding of the burial, and to investigate occupational evidence within the heart of the historic core of the village.

- Spit 1-2: 0-200mm; turfline, topsoil with much modern inclusions.
 Spit 3-4: 200-500mm; soft sandy loam with substantial amounts of modern pottery, glass and CBM, together with medieval pottery.
 Spit 5: 500-650mm; yellow clay with few inclusions.

F1: In NW corner a deep cut filled with loose dark humic soil, with late medieval pottery inclusions. First encountered at -720mm below current ground level. Flat bottom at -1.16m below ground level.

<i>Spit/Feature</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No. of Sherds</i>
1	329	2
1	330	1
1	345	1
1	1001	1
2	329	1
2	1001	2
4	324	1
4	329	2
5	329	1
6	329	3
F1	329	9
F1	345	2
F1	360	1

Despite its appearance as a man-made cut, the function of F1 could not be established. That it contained late medieval pottery suggests that it is not another grave cut akin to that found only 2m away to the south. The highest strata are known to have been raised in the excavation of the driveway to the south. In living memory, the presence of a row of Elm trees along the verge may have disturbed the strata. There is no evidence for medieval occupation. Subsequent to the season, further excavations have taken place in the back garden of this property to provide foundations for an extension. The owner, who was present at our excavations, undertook a watching brief and reports the recovery of a number of possible worked flints and some possible medieval pottery. No bones were disturbed. It looks more and more likely, therefore, that the pre-Christian burial is a lone burial and not part of a large cemetery.

Tentative Conclusions

Whilst the number of STPs remains small, thus requiring all conclusions to be drawn tentatively, some broad assertions, which might be tested through the excavation of further areas, can be made here.

First, early material, including Romano-British wares and early medieval ware appears to be confined to a small area around the Silverstone Road turning. This might suggest that the early focus of the village formed around this point. Other archaeological evidence points to a large oval enclosure around the church which may represent the *burh* or fortified point after which the village takes its name.

Secondly, in the southern part of the village and extending along the A413 axis, the pottery is largely late medieval or post-medieval. This points to a major expansion of the village after 1250. It appears to have been planned and undertaken in a single phase, hence the regularity of the house plots on either side of the road. It does not suggest slow growth of the village over decades as a result of population expansion. The reasons for this redesign are currently unknown, but might lie with the fate of other settlements in the parish, for example a deserted medieval site between Lordsfield Farm and Doves Farm.