



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Sites & Monuments Record

GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS

NEWNHAM

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A note about the maps

The SMR maps in the original Historic Towns Survey (i.e Maps 37-38) are now out of date and have not been included within this revision although references to SMR numbers remain in the text. For up to date SMR information readers can contact the SMR on 01452 425705 or via email at archaeology.smr@gloucestershire.gov.uk. The other maps have been refreshed using current software and retain their original numbering as referred to in the text.

Original description of SMR maps

SMR maps: these maps show a selection of sites relevant to the discussion of the development of each town. The maps are not intended to provide a comprehensive gazetteer of all recorded archaeological sites in the settlements, and should therefore be only be used in the context for which they were produced. For further information about the archaeology of any area, the Sites and Monument Record should be consulted directly.

Plan component maps: these maps are intended to indicate the most likely areas of settlement in each town during the Medieval and Post-medieval periods, on the basis of present archaeological knowledge. They should not, however, be regarded as definitive, and the interpretations made will require revision as new evidence emerges from future work.



ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS USED IN THE TEXT

Anon	Anonymous
c.	circa
C	Century [e.g. C12]
EH	English Heritage
GSIA	Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology
km	kilometres
m	metres
n.d.	Undated
O.D.	Ordnance Datum
O.S.	Ordnance Survey
PCNFC	Proceedings of the Cotteswold Naturalists Field Club
RCHME	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
SMR 12345	An SMR site which is shown on the accompanying maps
SMR 12345	An SMR site which is not shown on the accompanying maps
TBGAS	Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
TRE	Tempus Rex Edwardus (i.e. during the reign of king Edward the Confessor)

PERIODS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

Palaeolithic	500,000 B.C. – 10,000 B.C.
Mesolithic	10,000 B.C. – 4,000 B.C.
Neolithic	4,000 B.C. – 2,200 B.C.
Bronze Age	2,200 B.C. – 700 B.C.
Iron Age	700 B.C. – A.D. 43
Roman	A.D. 43 – 410
Early Medieval	410-1066
Medieval	1066 – 1540
Post Medieval	1540 – 1901
Modern	1901 – present

POPULATION FIGURES

The text for each town considered in the GHTS includes a section about the historic population of the parish in which the settlement lies. This information has been drawn from a variety of sources, mainly taxation returns, ecclesiastical returns and what can generally be referred to as censuses. The nature of these sources often makes it unclear what area was included within the survey, and in many cases suburban developments were excluded from the figures. It is also important to note that the accuracy of the information available is variable, and relates to a society which was not accustomed to the same degree of numerical accuracy demanded today. Some enumerations were the result of antiquarian interest in the growth of settlements and were included within descriptions of the nature of the town, as is the case with the figures given by Atkyns (1712) and Rudder (1779). Other population surveys were required by the ecclesiastical authorities, and in the case of Gloucestershire, there were a number of such surveys in 1563, 1603, 1650 and 1676. The 1563, 1603 and 1676 surveys were intended to indicate the number of communicants, papists and nonconformists in the parish. As the surveys were undertaken by the local clergy, there may well have been a temptation to play down levels of nonconformity. The 1650 survey was intended to give an indication of levels of pluralism, as well as to indicate the general size of the communities served.

The figures recorded in these surveys could be for communicants (i.e. anyone over the age of 16), men and women over 16, men, women and children, men over sixteen only, householders, households or families. In the case of Gloucestershire the figures generally relate to households, families and communicants. In order to gain a better indication of the true size



of the population of a parish, calculations need to be made to convert communicants and households into men, women and children of all ages. It has generally been accepted that to convert households into individuals the given figure should be multiplied by 4.25, while to add children under 16 to the number of communicants the figure should be multiplied by 1.5, based on the assumption that children made up approximately 33% of the general population.

It is possible to view the figures arrived at by these means as simplistic but it has been shown that they generally fit quite well with data from other seventeenth century sources (see Whiteman A (ed.) 1986, *The Compton Census of 1676*, for a full discussion of the issues). It is not intended that the figures given in the following text should be seen as correct values, but it is hoped that the information will provide an approximate indication of the order of size of the parish at a time when there were few other sources of information available.



THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

town *n.* **1.** a densely populated urban area, typically smaller than a city and larger than a village. **2.** a city, borough or other urban area.

urban *adj.* **1.** of, relating to, or constituting a city or town. **2.** living in a city or town. ~ Cf. **rural**.

1 Introduction

The Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey was undertaken between 1995 and 1998 by Antonia Douthwaite and Vince Devine of the Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service and was funded by English Heritage as part of a national programme of county-based extensive urban surveys of small towns in England. All of the 37 settlements included in the survey once had, or have now, some urban characteristics, and range in date and type from the Roman towns of the Cotswolds through to the Post-medieval industrial settlements of the Forest of Dean and Stroud valleys (Table 1). Not all the settlements are urban at the end of the twentieth century: some are now greenfield sites and others are small villages, although a few have survived as urban foci for modern communities. Both Gloucester and Cirencester were omitted from the project since they were identified by English Heritage as major historic towns, with a considerable history of archaeological investigation meriting individual and detailed study (English Heritage 1992).

The extensive urban surveys were designed as tripartite projects to include: the *enhancement of the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)*, in order to provide a comprehensive database for each settlement, the preparation of *assessment reports* which would summarise the state of archaeological knowledge for each settlement and the design of a *strategy* for the management of the archaeology of each town to be implemented mainly through the planning system. The database is now held as part of the Gloucestershire SMR, while the assessment and strategy reports each take the form of separate volumes covering the administrative districts of Cheltenham, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Stroud and Tewkesbury. All three phases of the projects were based on the use of secondary, published sources, involved no fieldwork and were tightly constrained by the available resources.

Previous work on towns highlighting their archaeological potential and their vulnerability to development was undertaken in various parts of England, including Gloucestershire (Leech 1981), in the early 1980s. Changes in approaches to the management of the urban archaeological resource since then, particularly the greatly enhanced opportunities for its protection from the adverse effects of development through the planning system, prompted the new urban surveys of the 1990s.



2 The concept of urbanism

A town is a permanent human settlement with two chief and essential attributes. The first is that a significant proportion (but not necessarily a majority) of its population lives off trade, industry, administration and other non-agricultural occupations. The second...is that it forms a social unit more or less distinct from the surrounding countryside (Reynolds 1977, ix).

Although most people understand the term “town” in the modern context, the definition of urban areas in the past is far more varied, and modern concepts of urbanism tend to confuse more than they elucidate. For every period contemporary documents reveal a plethora of terms to describe settlements, depending upon their social, economic and legal status. Under the Roman empire there were seven distinct terms which could be used to place a settlement and its inhabitants in its context: *civitas*, *colonia*, *municipium*, *oppidum*, *urbs*, *vicus* and *πολις* (*polis*). Any attempt to equate these words with modern terminology creates considerable confusion as there are just as many English terms to describe the status of any urban settlement: town, city, urban district, municipality, county borough, borough, any or all of which may or may not be a direct equivalent to the Roman terminology. Similarly, there are numerous Early Medieval and Medieval terms relating to settlements, including *vill*, *burghus*, *burh*, *wic* and *urbs*, some of which had very specific meanings while others are more difficult to define with precision.

This varied terminology has led archaeologists and historians to attempt to define urban status in terms of the roles towns played and their physical attributes which have survived in the archaeological record. This approach has been most successful in relation to settlements of the Early Medieval and Medieval periods, based on the work of Beresford (1967) and Biddle (1976), who have defined a town as a settlement possessing a combination of the following:

- 1) defences
- 2) a planned street system
- 3) market(s)
- 4) a mint
- 5) legal autonomy
- 6) a role as a central place
- 7) a relatively large and dense population
- 8) a diverse economic base
- 9) plots and houses of urban type (burgages and burgage tenure)
- 10) social differentiation
- 11) complex religious organisation
- 12) a judicial centre
- 13) the possession of a borough charter
- 14) a reference to the settlement as a *burgus* or representation by its own jury at the *eyre*
- 15) that it was taxed as a borough
- 16) that it sent members to any Medieval parliament

Table 1 illustrates where there is documentary evidence for some of the main urban characteristics of towns included in the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey:



Town	Defences	Market	Mint	Borough charter	Burgages/ burgess tenure	Legal autonomy
Berkeley		1086	✓		✓	
Bishop's Cleeve						
Bisley		1687				
Blockley						
Bourton-on-the-Water						
Chalford						
Cheltenham		1226			✓	
Chipping Campden		c1180		1154-89	✓	
Cinderford		1869				
Coleford		eC14				
Dursley		1471/2		C12	✓	
Dymock		1225/6		C13	✓	
Fairford		c.1100-35		1221	✓	✓
Frampton-on-Severn		1245				
King's Stanley		1253		C13/14	✓	
Lechlade		1210		c.1235	✓	
Leonard Stanley		1307-27				
Lydney		1268				
Minchinhampton		1269			✓	
Mitcheldean		1328				
Moreton-in-Marsh		1228		C13/14	✓	
Nailsworth		C18				
Newent	?	1253		C13	✓	
Newnham	?	C12		1187	✓	✓
Northleach		1219/20		c.1227	✓	
Painswick		1253			✓	
Prestbury		1249		C13	✓	
St. Briavels		1208		C14	✓	
Stow-on-the-Wold		1107		C12	✓	✓
Stroud		1570-1607				
Tetbury		1211-1287		c.1211	✓	
Tewkesbury		1086		1086	✓	
Winchcombe	✓	1086	✓	1086	✓	
Wotton-under-Edge		1252		1253	✓	

Table 1 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: indicators of urban status in the Medieval period



3 Urbanism in Gloucestershire

3.1 The Roman period

The concept of urbanism is often considered to have been a continental imposition brought to Britain by the invading Roman army during the first century A.D. The geographer Strabo, writing during the late first century B.C. and the early first century A.D. implied that the backwardness of western Europeans outside Italy was due to their hunting and raiding way of life and that once they were converted to a settled agricultural existence, urbanisation would develop of its own accord (Wacher 1995, 33). However, there is evidence that some Iron Age hillforts and enclosures had begun to take on urban functions before the Roman conquest of A.D.43. The Iron Age settlements of Bagendon and Salmonsbury Camp in east Gloucestershire appear to have been densely populated, with streets, arrangements of dwellings and ancillary buildings, along with defences, and to have acted as centres of political, commercial and administrative activity (Friar 1991, 386). Compared with Roman towns they may still have been extremely primitive, and the imperial government would have been keen to establish towns on the Mediterranean scale which were an essential part of the Roman way of life, and also facilitated the tasks of administration, the collection of taxes, education and policing. Towns may also have been seen as a means of furthering the acceptance of the Roman government among the native population.

The earliest Roman towns to develop would have been those on which the administration of the province was based - the *civitates* and the *coloniae* - some of which were based on early forts, while others derived from settlements of veterans who were given land at the end of their period of military service (e.g. Gloucester). Smaller towns developed around the other early forts where merchants and other civilians gathered to service the army, or at other significant locations on the network of Roman roads, such as the Foss Way or Watling Street, to serve the imperial messenger service along with other travellers who would need somewhere to stop overnight, to eat and change horses, and possibly to trade. Unlike the *civitates* and *coloniae*, there is little evidence of planning in many such settlements, which are more likely to have developed organically.

The Roman small towns at Bourton-on-the-Water, Dorn, Dymock, Kingscote and Wycomb (Andoversford) were included in the historic towns survey. At Bourton there are suggestions of continuity of occupation from the Iron Age into the Roman period; the Iron Age enclosure of Salmonsbury Camp lies just over 1km to the east of the Roman small town. The Roman settlement was initially focused around a posting station (*mansio* or *mutatio*) on the Foss Way near its crossing of the River Windrush, but then spread eastwards towards Salmonsbury Camp. Dorn is also thought to have served an administrative function during the later part of the Roman period (the late third to fourth centuries), possibly as a site where the official taxes (the *annona*) were collected; the defences around the eastern part of the site may have been constructed at this time. The Roman settlements at Kingscote and Dymock may also have had military origins - there is a suggestion that there may have been an early fort at Dymock from which a small agricultural and metal-working settlement developed, while considerable material of first century date has been found at Kingscote which then developed into a market centre, covering about 200 hectares by the later fourth century. Unlike the other Roman settlements in Gloucestershire, Wycomb is not associated with any major road and it is thought to have grown up around a site of ritual or religious significance pre-dating the Roman conquest. A settlement would have developed there either to serve the pilgrims and visitors to the site, or as a market centre for surrounding communities which were often associated with ritual sites.

Some Medieval settlements in Gloucestershire may also have developed on sites of Roman activity, including Bisley where there is evidence for Roman ritual activity, possibly associated with the wells; King's Stanley, where there is evidence for a large Roman villa in the area of the later church; and Lydney which lies close to the Roman cult centre at Lydney Park. The nature of the relationship between the Roman and later settlements is not understood, and it is not clear to what extent the existence of Roman activity influenced the siting of later settlements.

The end of the Roman period in Britain is often thought to have been marked by a hiatus in urban life. There is little evidence for continuity of occupation in urban areas into the fifth century in the county, and it appears that the function of the towns died with the culture that they had been founded to sustain (Wacher 1995, 417). The fact that many sites were reoccupied in the later Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods may be due more to the fact that, by accident of geography, the sites were suitable for the economic and administrative functions of the period, just as they had been during the Roman period.



3.2 The Early Medieval period

The popular perception of the Dark Ages as one of deserted Roman towns, dilapidated villas and a reversion to barbarism still persists to a certain extent, and until 50 years ago academics were still debating the question of whether Anglo-Saxon towns existed at all. Roman towns fell out of use for a time, perhaps because they were too superficial an imposition on a society to which the idea of formal towns was alien. It is likely that the renaissance of internal and external trading networks prompted the increased centralisation of the production and sale of goods. From the eighth century specialist trading centres, such as Southampton and Ipswich, developed. Elsewhere the main impetus for urban development may have been a desire to control and promote economic activity, including the striking of coinage. A second important factor in the development of urban communities were the Scandinavian raids of the eighth and ninth centuries, which prompted Alfred and his successors to create the fortified settlements known as *burhs*. Some were established on the sites of Roman towns, while others were newly founded, but all were provided with defences of earth, timber or stone. The interest of the ruling elite in the promotion of towns gathered force throughout the later part of the Anglo-Saxon period, with increasing controls and prescriptions on the activities permitted within and outside urban areas: legislation of Edward the Elder and Aethelstan attempted to restrict trade to the towns, while the reform of the coinage by Eadgar in A.D.973 meant that the coins could only be struck in a burh.

The early church also played a significant role in the development of towns. From the seventh century onwards minsters were founded to serve as centres for the conversion and administration of large areas of England. A minster usually consisted of a church and outbuildings within an enclosure, served by a priest and a number of monastic or secular assistants. Such concentrations of priests would have required goods and services, which would in turn have attracted secular settlement to the area to serve those needs, and it is possible that these complexes may have provided the closest equivalent to towns in England until the creation of the burhs in the ninth century.

The tenth and eleventh centuries therefore saw the steady establishment of towns as centres of trade, finance, administration and ecclesiastical affairs, functions which continued into the post-Conquest period and have come to be viewed as indicators of urban status.

In Gloucestershire there is evidence that early minsters were founded at Tetbury, Berkeley, Cheltenham, Bishop's Cleeve, Blockley, Bisley, Tewkesbury and Winchcombe and it is possible that their existence played a significant role in the development of urban functions at those sites. Winchcombe is also the only example of a burh in Gloucestershire, founded in the seventh or eighth century at the site of an early minster which developed into a monastic house, with a Mercian royal palace and a mint, surrounded by a defensive enclosure. For a while during the early eleventh century, the settlement was important enough to stand at the centre of its own shire - *Winchcombeshire* - until it was incorporated into Gloucestershire c.A.D.1017.

3.3 The Medieval period

From the tenth to fourteenth centuries the process of urbanisation acquired momentum as first royal and then secular and ecclesiastical landlords began to promote existing villages to urban status, or to found completely new towns on virgin sites. Towns were important as a source of income from markets, taxes and tolls. Existing settlements had the added advantage of containing the remains of the Anglo-Saxon administrative structure, with military and fiscal obligations, and many were also episcopal sees. They housed large clusters of the population and many stood at important road junctions or river crossings. Artisans and merchants also found that the towns presented opportunities for the creation of wealth and the advancement of social status.

Medieval landowners were quick to promote the development of urban communities on their land, obtaining income from property rents and tolls levied on trade and commerce. This revenue could be controlled through the establishment of a market in a specific area within the settlement and in the period 1199-1350 around 2500 market grants were issued.

In addition to the foundation of a market, many landlords attempted to promote existing villages to borough status. The grant of a borough charter conferred a number of privileges of administrative, teneurial and legal character, the most important of which was the right to burgage or freehold tenure, for a rent and without labour services. In the period from 1199-1350 c.370 new boroughs were created by the king, lords and bishops. One of the most characteristic features of towns of this period is the burgage plot - long, thin strips of land extending back from the main street which allowed as many burgesses as possible access to the street frontage and the trade which it



afforded. In Gloucestershire at least 22 small towns acquired borough status during the Medieval period, with most charters being granted during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see Table 2).

	TOWN	DATE
1	Tewkesbury	by 1086
	Winchcombe	by 1086
2	Chipping Campden	1154-1189
3	Newnham	1187
4	Berkeley	1190
5	Dursley	C12
	Stow-on-the-Wold	C12
6	Tetbury	c.1211
7	Fairford	c.1221
8	Northleach	c.1227
9	Lechlade	c.1235
10	Wotton-under-Edge	1253
11	Dymock	C13
	Newent	C13
	Prestbury	C13
12	King's Stanley	C13/14
	Moreton-in-Marsh	C13/14
13	Minchinhampton	1300
14	Cheltenham	1313
15	Painswick	1324
16	St. Briavels	C14

Table 2 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: earliest documentary references to borough status.

The units of settlement described as towns during this period were plentiful but remained very small, about 95% of the population of England was still rural, and the main difference between the new towns and the rural villages was that the former contained *a substantial proportion of traders and craftsmen whose services would be drawn on by the villagers of the surrounding area* (Palliser 1987, 55). This pattern of new foundations and promotions continued until the outbreak of the Black Death (1348-1369) which effectively curtailed the creation of new towns. Up to this time, town growth had been achieved mainly through the attraction of immigrants from surrounding rural populations, who were accommodated through the infilling of open areas and the sub-division of existing burgage or tenement plots.

The Norman and later Medieval town was thus an important instrument of political, administrative and economic control, flexible enough both to exert control over an area and to allow it to be exploited commercially. Through this process English towns were adapted to become a major economic force.

The Medieval small towns of Gloucestershire fit into this general pattern. A number of settlements in the central and eastern part of the county, such as Berkeley, Cheltenham, Tetbury, Tewkesbury and Winchcombe had begun to develop during the Early Medieval period, but the vast majority of the towns in the county owe their existence to the Medieval fashion for founding new markets and boroughs during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Table 3 shows the market towns in the county and the dates at which they received their market charters: 15% of all Medieval market grants were made during the twelfth century, and 55% during the thirteenth century.



	TOWN	DATE
1	Tewkesbury	by 1086
	Winchcombe	by 1086
	Berkeley	by 1086
2	Fairford	c1100-1135
3	Stow-on-the-Wold	1107
4	Chipping Campden	c1180
5	Newnham	C12
6	St. Briavels	1208
7	Lechlade	1210
8	Tetbury	1211-1287
9	Northleach	1219/20
10	Dymock	1225/6
11	Cheltenham	1226
12	Moreton-in-Marsh	1228
13	Frampton-on-Severn	1245
14	Prestbury	1249
15	Wotton-under-Edge	1252
16	Painswick	1253
	Newent	1253
	King's Stanley	1253
17	Lydney	1268
18	Minchinhampton	1269
19	Leonard Stanley	1307-27
20	Mitcheldean	1328
21	Coleford	C14
22	Dursley	1471/2
23	Stroud	1570-1607
24	Bisley	1687
25	Nailsworth	C18
26	Cinderford	1869

Table 3 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: market charters by date

Amongst the boroughs founded after 1086, some appear to have been added on to existing non-urban settlements, while others could have been new creations. Towns in the first category include Stow-on-the-Wold, Northleach, Moreton-in-Marsh, Chipping Campden, Wotton-under-Edge and possibly Dursley. Such settlements generally comprise a large market area which is sometimes triangular or square, and sometimes formed by widening the main street to allow stalls to be set up along its length, with burgage plots fronting onto all available sides. The earlier settlement, to which the borough was attached, can often be seen in a less regular pattern of property boundaries, usually clustered around the church. Towns of the second category include Fairford, Lechlade and Painswick. These settlements also have a well defined market area, but a more complex street pattern, incorporating more than one main street, with burgages also laid out along the subsidiary streets.

The history of the development of towns in the Forest of Dean, is rather more diverse. Some followed a pattern similar to those outlined above, of foundation and development around a market during the Medieval period and thus have a similar layout, such as Newent and Newnham; St. Briavels was connected closely with the development and administration of the Royal Forest of Dean. Other settlements – Coleford, Lydney and Mitcheldean - were the product of the industrial development of the Forest, based on the exploitation of its natural resources, particularly iron and coal.

The Stroud valleys, which would become such an important area of settlement during the Post-medieval period, show little evidence for urban development during the Medieval period, apart from areas at the edge of the Cotswold Scarp such as Dursley, Bisley and Painswick, where the settlement pattern is similar to that found elsewhere on the Cotswolds. The main reason for this is likely to have been the nature of the terrain, which was



mostly unsuitable for Medieval industries and agricultural exploitation, but which was ideally suited to Post-medieval advances in manufacturing techniques.

3.4 The Post-medieval period

The mid-sixteenth century marked a further important phase in the development of English towns. The dissolution of the Monasteries and the suppression of religious houses, especially friaries, chantries and pilgrimages had an enormous impact on urban life. Large areas of land and buildings were put up for sale, and were converted into houses or redeveloped by their new, secular owners. The economic impact on towns dependent upon church landlords or pilgrimage cults was therefore severe. Other factors also affected the success of the small towns founded during the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. Some failed because they had been poorly located, others because of direct competition from near neighbours, and yet others due to the economic changes of the period. Many of the towns which continued to flourish did so by specialising in a certain product at market, such as cheese, wool, grain or leather goods, while others specialised in a particular industry or manufacturing process.

During the later Medieval period changes to the industrial and commercial geography of England also had a significant effect upon the development of towns in the country. One of the main English exports up to the fourteenth century had been raw wool, which was shipped to the continent where it was made into finished cloth to be sold back to England. The wars with France in the early fourteenth century forced an end to this trade, providing the opportunity for the production of cloth to spread rapidly through the rural areas of England. Within a few years finished cloth had replaced raw wool as one of the country's main exports. Numerous small settlements began to develop in rural areas to service this trade, away from the constraints of the town guilds, which enabled cloth to be produced more cheaply, thereby competing with the Flemish weavers who had dominated the trade up to this time. These settlements were strikingly different from those of earlier towns; they were not confined within town walls and were often not connected to earlier settlements, but took the form of straggling developments along the sides of valleys. The new cloth industry thus allowed small rural settlements in favourable locations to develop into prosperous towns.

The effect of these economic changes was felt very strongly in Gloucestershire where the towns of the Cotswolds had specialised in the marketing of locally produced wool. Many of these towns, such as Northleach and Winchcombe, fell into decline during this time as they were not located in areas suitable for the manufacturing of woollen cloth. Prosperity spread instead to the valleys around Stroud where easy access to high quality Cotswold wool, to abundant supplies of fuller's earth, to water of a quantity sufficient to drive a number of mills and to Bristol as an outlet for the finished product allowed numerous small valley hamlets to develop into towns serving the cloth industry. Three kinds of English cloth were produced, the finest of which was broadcloth; kerseys were a lighter, cheaper and often coarser cloth and worsteds were the cheapest and did not require fulling. Gloucestershire held foremost place in the production of broadcloth, mainly due to the steep-sided valleys in the Stroud area which were well suited to the creation of reservoirs for the large fulling mills, and later for the dyehouses for the coloured cloth which supplanted the finished broadcloth. This is how settlements such as Chalford, Nailsworth and Stroud developed from the later fourteenth century, spread out along the sides of the river valleys and clustered around the mills. Within these towns evidence for the cloth trade is well preserved, not only in the form of large mill buildings, but in the architecture of the houses of the weavers, who produced the cloth, and the large, commodious dwellings of the clothiers who owned the mills, and distributed the wool to be woven.

In the Forest of Dean the settlements which developed during the Medieval period - Lydney, Newnham, Newent, Coleford and Mitcheldean - did not expand or develop greatly between the later Medieval period and the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, when new industrial techniques were developed and large scale mining operations began as the free miners were persuaded to sell their rights to speculators and entrepreneurs. This industrial activity was so concentrated in the area of Cinderford Bridge that a new town developed purely to service the requirements of the mine owners and their workers.

From the mid-seventeenth century the conglomeration of buildings and social classes which had characterised so many Medieval towns was superseded by the introduction of new urban styles from the continent, which reflected the growing prosperity of the period. The concept of large open circuses, squares and terraces of elegant town houses dominated the urban scene for the next two centuries, exemplified in the Gloucestershire context by the development of Regency Cheltenham, with its pump rooms, promenades, elegant terraces and town houses. Elsewhere the picture was not quite so pleasant, the industrial towns also had terraces, but these were usually 'blind-backed' or 'tunnel-backed' with inadequate sanitation for the large families who occupied them. This form of dwelling can still be seen at Lydney and in the Oldbury development at Tewkesbury (although the houses have



been modernised for modern use). Innovations in methods of transport also played an important role in the development of settlements, encouraging the separation of commercial, residential and industrial areas, as people no longer had to live in the same area that they worked. Most of the Gloucestershire small towns show some evidence of nineteenth century redevelopment, and most also have examples of Victorian civic pride in the form of public buildings such as libraries (Stroud) and town halls (Bisley, Stow-on-the-Wold, Nailsworth and Painswick).



4 Conclusions

Perhaps the most striking conclusion of this survey of the historic small towns of Gloucestershire is its demonstration that, despite documentary evidence of the Medieval or earlier origins of the majority of settlements, there is as yet very little archaeological evidence for most of them.

The town centre redevelopments of the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s were not generally preceded by archaeological investigation and during this period many sites of high potential in the historic cores of small towns were destroyed without record. It was not until the later 1980s, and the advent of Planning Policy Guidance 16 (DoE 1990), that a more systematic approach to the archaeological evaluation and recording of sites in small towns became possible. Most recent large scale development has, however, tended to be away from the street frontages in the historic cores of towns, and the archaeological investigation in the latter areas has therefore been on a very small scale.

The summary of archaeological evidence provided by the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey assessment reports and the policies contained in the strategies will, however, provide a good basis for ensuring that, in the future, sites of archaeological potential in small towns are managed appropriately and not developed without an assessment of the archaeological implications and implementation of suitable mitigation strategies.

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HISTORIC TOWNS IN THE FOREST OF DEAN (Map 1)

	Definition	Market	Borough charter	Burgages/ burgess tenure	Legal autonomy
Cinderford	Industrial town	1869			
Coleford	Small market town	C14			
Dymock	Roman small town; Small market town	1225/6	C13	✓	
Lydney	Small market town; Industrial town	1268			
Mitcheldean	Small market town	1328			
Newent	Medium-sized market town	1253	C13	✓	
Newnham	Medium-sized market town	C12	1187	✓	✓
St. Briavels	Small market town	1208	C14	✓	

About one third of the county of Gloucestershire lies west of the River Severn and the greater part of this area forms the administrative district of the Forest of Dean. The area is geologically and topographically complex and comprises a number of distinct zones: the steep-sided Wye valley which forms its western boundary; the central high ground, much of which is above 200m, consisting of mineral-bearing limestones and sandstones, and now extensively forested; the Leadon valley to the north bordering Herefordshire; and the low-lying land alongside the Severn estuary. The natural resources of the area – sandstone, limestone, iron, coal and timber – have formed the basis of an industrial economy from the Roman period onwards.

The early archaeology of the Forest of Dean is as yet little studied, in particular information about prehistoric settlement is sparse. In the Roman period local iron deposits became the basis of an important industry although the location and nature of the industrial sites and their contemporary settlements remains to be investigated. From the eleventh century the central area was designated as a royal forest, the purpose of which was *the protection of the beasts of the forest* (red, roe and fallow deer, along with wild boar) for hunting, along with the trees and undergrowth which protected them, and which was known as the *vert*. This area was owned by the Crown, and governed by Forest law. The mineral wealth of the area was exploited by the Free Miners, who had the exclusive right to extract coal, iron ore and stone from the Forest, subject to the payment of royalties, which were codified during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Between 1611 and 1613, the Crown allowed the first charcoal blast furnaces to be built in the Forest, and within a generation 12 blast furnaces and 13 substantial forges were operating on a considerably larger scale than ever before. However, due to the government's concern to protect its timber stocks during the later seventeenth century, the industry foundered and had almost reached the point of extinction by the early eighteenth century. It began to revive during the 1820s when smelting works were opened, or re-opened, at Parkend and Cinderford. New iron mines were opened throughout Dean, and by the mid-nineteenth century the Forest was producing over 100,000 tons per annum. However, by the end of the century iron mining and smelting had almost ceased.

Officially, settlement was not allowed within the area of the Royal demesne, but the Forest always attracted large numbers of squatters, poor men attracted by the chances of sporadic employment in the mines as well as by the opportunities for poaching, and who were regularly expelled by the officers of the Crown. In 1735, despite a large-scale eviction only 50 years before, a large number of cottages were recorded to have been erected at the borders of the Forest, the inhabitants of which were said to live by *rapine and theft* (Finberg 1955, 88). In 1788 the number of cottages and encroachments had almost doubled, and upwards of 200 cottagers were said to be resident in the Forest, occupying 589 cottages and 1385 acres of land. It is likely that these people had been attracted by the increasing industrialisation of the area, along with the increased accessibility of some settlements following the construction of new roads from 1761 onwards.

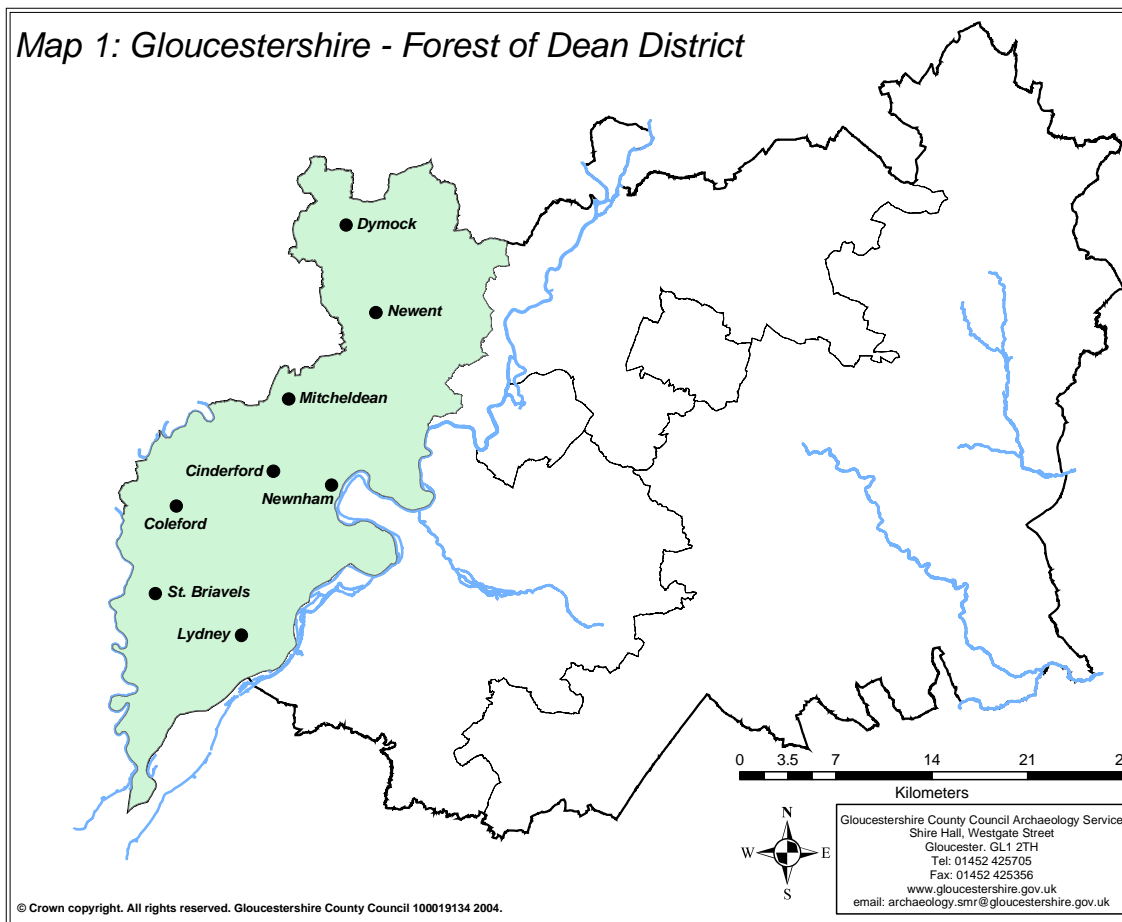
By the later nineteenth century the central Forest of Dean had been developed into a complex industrial zone incorporating coal and iron mines, iron and tinplate works, foundries, quarries, wood distillation works producing an array of chemicals, along with a network of railways and tramroads. The population of the area increased rapidly as the industries grew and many of the Forest towns show evidence for considerable expansion with the construction of new houses and public buildings during this period.



The towns which developed in the district are as diverse as the area. All lie outside the central afforested zone. Dymock has origins in the Roman period and may first have developed as a military site at the junction of two routes. Most of the rest of this group of towns first developed as market centres during the Medieval period, St. Briavels having in addition a specialised function as the administrative centre of the Royal Forest. Cinderford, a much later industrial settlement, gained a distinctive plan based on its origins in assarts on the edge of the Forest in which small industrial sites and associated houses were established.



Map 1: Gloucestershire - Forest of Dean District





NEWNHAM

1 Introduction

Newnham (SO 690115) lies about 16km to the south-west of Gloucester on the eastern edge of the Forest of Dean, on a high bluff above the western bank of the River Severn. The geology of the area is Keuper Marl, with an outcrop of sandstone forming the cliff on which the town is situated.

The town developed at a crossing point over the Severn estuary, probably used from the Roman period onwards and certainly of importance during the Medieval period. The Medieval town developed at the junction of this route with the road along the west bank of the river, adjacent to the castle. Its economy was based on its function as a port; but by the seventeenth century glass making had become an important industry, followed in the eighteenth century by shipbuilding.

2 The Prehistoric period

There is currently no archaeological evidence of prehistoric activity within the area of the modern town.

3 The Roman period

Newnham lies along the course of the Roman road between Gloucester and Caerwent which followed the western bank of the River Severn, and a second route from the Cotswolds into the Forest of Dean may have crossed the river between Arlingham and Newnham. However, despite Roman activity in the general area, there is no evidence for Roman settlement within the modern town.

4 The Early Medieval period

A charter of the early eleventh century records the grant of land and a chapel at Newnham to the monks of Pershore abbey, on the condition that they relocated the King's Hospital from Pershore to Newnham (Leech 1980, 62). Atkins (1712, 575-576) and Leech have both taken this to indicate the existence of a pre-Conquest chapel at Newnham. However, Elrington (1976, 36) believes that the charter refers to another settlement called Newnham in Northamptonshire, or to King's Newnham in Warwickshire, and that the earliest reference to the Gloucestershire Newnham dates to 1086.

5 The Medieval period

5.1 Domesday Book

Newnham, recorded as *Nevneham*, appears among the lands of William, son of Baderon. 3 villagers and 3 smallholders are recorded along with woodland covering an area of one furlong by two (Moore 1982).

5.2 The placename

Domesday Book provides the first record of the place name as *Nevneham*. Later in the Medieval period there were a number of variations on the name including *Nieweham* (1167), *Niewham* (1195) and *Newenham* (1217). The earliest use of the modern form dates from 1492. The name is believed to have two possible meanings, 'the new settlement' or 'watermeadow' (Smith 1964, 198).

5.3 The status of the settlement

Newnham was first recognised as a borough in 1187, and in 1221 the town was represented by its own jury at the eyre (Beresford and Finberg 1973, 114). It is also possible that Newnham may have been represented in Parliament since it is included in the *Nomina Villarum*. Surviving documents indicate that there were 36 burgages in Newnham by 1404, and the number fluctuated over the course of the next century, from 23 in 1434 to 41 in 1512 and 27 in 1542 (Elrington 1976, 31). The town is recorded as having its own prison c.1220, and the borough customs include the payment of a 4d fee by each burgess or other occupant of a house where a fire was kindled (Elrington 1976, 45).

5.4 The manor

The manor of Newnham, which included the twelfth century borough, was held by the Crown until 1327 when it was granted to Thomas de Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk. During the later part of the fourteenth century the estate was



granted to the Bohun family, with whom it remained until the nineteenth century (Elrington 1976, 36). There is no evidence that there was a manor house, other than the castle, in the town (Elrington 1976, 37).

5.5 The castle

A castle (**SMR 5177**) was built at Newnham soon after the Norman conquest, and it has been suggested that it was the first castle built beyond the Severn against the Welsh (Elrington 1976, 30). It is thought to have played a role in the invasion of Ireland in 1171, when Henry II mustered his troops at Newnham prior to embarkation. In the twelfth century land in Newnham was described as lying *by the ditch of the old castle*, and similar descriptions were made c.1240 and 1418, while in the early thirteenth century land in the town was identified as being by the chapel of the old castle. In 1327 a 'William atte Wall' was recorded in the Lay Subsidy, suggesting that he may have lived near the castle (Elrington 1976, 30).

The castle was situated on the high ground at the southern end of the settlement, where the earthworks of a motte and bailey survive. Excavations on the site were undertaken in the nineteenth century, although nothing is known about any discoveries. More recently, masonry fragments are reported to have been found beneath the turf of the Round Green, which runs north from the castle site forming a terraced walk. However, this earthwork is thought to be the landscaped remains of defensive works thrown up by royalist forces in 1647 (Elrington 1976, 33), and the masonry may thus relate to this later embankment.

5.6 The church

By the twelfth century Newnham had a stone church dedicated to St. Peter and a priest to this church was recorded in 1166 (**SMR 5184**). The foundation was a chapelry of Westbury parish church, and remained so until 1309 when the Crown established that Newnham was a mother church and not a chapel of ease. Burials which are thought to have been associated with this church were found in the garden of the house called Riverside during the nineteenth century. In 1230 it was described as the *great church of Newnham*, but erosion of the cliff on which the church stood necessitated its demolition, and the construction of a new church to the south-west before 1380 (**SMR 8410**). Some material from the earlier church, including the windows and a font were incorporated into the second church of St. Peter (Elrington 1976, 46-47).

After 1327 the advowson of the church passed with the manor to the Earl of Norfolk, whose successor granted it to St. Bartholomew's Hospital in Bristol in 1343 (Elrington 1976, 48).

A chapel dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen was recorded in 1247, but it is uncertain whether it lay within the church or the castle. However, in 1457 St. Mary's chantry, which may have been the same foundation, had an endowment of various rent charges and lands which were used to pay for a chaplain until the dissolution c.1548 (Elrington 1976, 47). It is likely that the chantry stood within the parish church, and may support the contention that the thirteenth century chapel was in the same building.

5.7 Markets and fairs

There was a market place in Newnham in the late twelfth century, although the date of the market charter is not known, and there are a number of references to shambles and stalls from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries (Elrington 1976, 41). The day on which the Medieval market was held is not known, although by the end of the sixteenth century it was being held on Fridays. It would have stretched northwards up the High Street from the site of the High Cross which stood at the crossroads in the centre of the town, and where market stalls, known as the *shoprow* were recorded in 1540 (Leech 1980, 62). Fairs of the period were held on the feast days of St. Barnabas and St. Luke, and although there are no references to them pre-dating 1603, they are believed to have originated before the fourteenth century, when Newnham was a Crown possession (Elrington 1976, 41).

5.8 Trade and industry

5.8.1 The river crossings

The prosperity of Newnham resulted from its position at a fording and ferry point across the Severn (**SMR 5172**). Before 1803, when the course of the river changed, a natural stone bench provided a fording point between Arlingham and Newnham, with access to the shores by means of sandy banks. The earliest reference to a ferry dates from 1238 when the woman who kept the passage of Newnham was granted an oak by the king in order to build a boat (Elrington 1976, 30). By the early fourteenth century Gloucester abbey had granted their share in the ferry to a man named Richard Head, together with a house and garden in Ruddle, now a small settlement about 0.8km to the south of Newnham (Elrington 1976, 30), and from this time the ferry was



controlled by the manor of Ruddle, rather than the borough or manor of Newnham. The economic implications of this situation are unclear, although waterborne trade would have paid tolls to Ruddle rather than Newnham. The ferry remained in the possession of the lords of Ruddle until the dissolution in the mid-sixteenth century.

5.8.2 The port

Newnham was an important entrepôt for the Forest of Dean area (**SMR 5853**). Its trade in the Medieval period included timber, bark, hides and cloth, its main trading partner being Bristol. The town's relative importance as a port is reflected in the fact that Henry II marshalled his invasion force for Ireland there in 1171. Documents of the thirteenth century mention a number of foreign surnames, including Adam the Flemming and John Lombard, suggesting that some international trade was also taking place from the town (Elrington 1976, 30).

5.8.3 Fishing

Another important local trade associated with the river was that of fishing. Fish were an important source of protein, especially during the winter months when meat was scarce, the restrictive Forest Laws making it illegal to take game from the Royal Forest. Fisheries are recorded from the twelfth century, when Henry II granted exclusive fishing rights on the Severn, as far as Ruddle manor, to Gloucester abbey (Elrington 1976, 43). During the thirteenth century bailiffs are recorded to have bought lamprey and cod in the area for the king's use (Elrington 1976, 43).

5.8.4 The iron industry

An iron industry developed at Newnham during the Medieval period. In the twelfth century, Leofric, the smith of Newnham, granted four houses with a forge to Llanthony priory, indicating that his trade was a prosperous one. Also during the thirteenth century John the Ironmonger held land at Newnham. The extent of the industry is unclear, but there are a large number of iron working mills within the parish, such as that at Ruddle. The nearest sources of iron ore are in the limestone deposits approximately 2km to the west of Newnham, near the modern settlement of Cinderford.

5.8.5 Mills

Two mills were recorded in the manor of Newnham in 1227, both of which stood on Whetstone's Brook. In c.1240 they were named as Upper Mill (**SMR 19977**), which stood 200m west of Culver House, and *the mill of the fee of Sir John of Monmouth* (**SMR 19408**; Elrington 1976, 41). It is likely that both mills were used to grind corn during the Medieval period.

5.8.6 Other industries

A local textile industry is indicated by references to a 'Roger the Wool-monger' c.1220, and in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries dyers were recorded in the Newnham area. There were two mills in Newnham in 1227, both of which stood on the Whetstone's Brook but are thought to have been corn-mills (Elrington 1976, 41). Tanning was also relatively important in Newnham because the bark from Forest trees was readily available, and a Medieval tannery is recorded at Stears in 1276 (Elrington 1976, 42).

6 The Post-medieval period

6.1 The status of the settlement

The borough court continued to meet in the town throughout much of the Post-medieval period. The earliest recorded mayor of Newnham was John Sparke, who held the office in 1542, and in the early seventeenth century it was said that the mayor was elected by a free vote of the burgesses of the town (Elrington 1976, 45).

By the eighteenth century the attractive situation of Newnham, with good buildings and views of the Forest and river began to attract the new middle classes. The fashion for promenading was satisfied by the Round Green earthwork which runs north from the castle forming a terrace walk (**SMR 5183**; Elrington 1976, 45).

6.2 The manor

Newnham manor remained in secular hands throughout the Post-medieval period (Elrington 1976, 37).



6.3 Ecclesiastical history

6.3.1 The church of St. Peter

The church of St. Peter (**SMR 8410**) continued in use throughout the Post-medieval period. Up to 1875 the church comprised nave, chancel, south aisle, small south transept, north porch and west tower. Before 1710 the upper part of the spire had been replaced to reduce the weight on the walls, but the tower was rebuilt in 1832. In 1875 the chancel and south aisle were rebuilt on a larger scale, the upper stage of the tower was rebuilt and the north and south vestries were added. The fire of 1881 destroyed most of the fabric except the tower, but the rebuilding that followed was intended to replicate the previous structure (Elrington 1976, 47).

In 1689 the curate had a house, which may have been the same building as the parsonage house recorded in 1739 and 1768 (Elrington 1976, 47). This building appears to have stood on the upper end of the west side of the High Street, which in 1839 was called the Old Vicarage (**SMR 12735**). In 1889 a new vicarage was built at the northern end of The Green (Elrington 1976, 47).

6.3.2 Nonconformity

Six Protestant nonconformists were recorded in Newnham in the Compton Census of 1676, and houses in the town were licensed for dissenting worship in 1792, 1797, 1814 and 1822. The Newnham and Blakeney Tabernacle was an Independent meeting founded in 1825. Their chapel (**SMR 12392**) stood in Littledean Road and had a congregation of 91 in 1851. A Congregational church was built in the High Street in 1864 (**SMR 17883**), after which the building in Littledean Road was used for a number of secular purposes. A house was registered in 1838 for use by Wesleyans and in 1851 it provided 50 sittings and had a congregation of 23 (Elrington 1976, 49).

6.4 Markets and fairs

By the late sixteenth century Newnham market had come to be held on Fridays, and in the early eighteenth century there was said to be *a great dependence on the markets and fairs* (Elrington 1976, 41). By the later eighteenth century this situation appears to have been reversed; in 1740 the corn market had not been held for several years, apparently because of the poor state of the local roads, and by the 1770s the market was in abeyance as fresh produce was brought daily to the town (Elrington 1976, 41). The fairs do not appear to have prospered any better, and by the early nineteenth century they were mainly for horses and cattle.

6.5 The Civil War

During the Civil War the Royalist garrison stationed at Newnham constructed strong defences at the southern end of the town which survive in the form of an earthwork (**SMR 5183**), known as Round Green, which runs north from the castle. During the eighteenth century the earthwork was used as a recreational walk, and was converted into a promenade during the mid-nineteenth century.

6.6 Trade and industry

6.6.1 The port (**SMR 5853**)

The River Severn continued to be a focus of economic activity throughout the Post-medieval period. The port at Newnham provided an outlet for goods produced in the town and in the Forest of Dean, and imported commodities for this whole area. During the sixteenth century Newnham's chief trading partners were Bristol and Gloucester, while in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries merchandise was also carried to Ireland. Later, goods were brought down from Birmingham for re-consignment to London. In the 1650s Forest timber was passing through the port, whilst in the 1680s the chief cargoes were cider and glass. From this date until the mid-eighteenth century most of the shipping carried oak bark to Ireland, for use in the tanning industry. During the later eighteenth century a trade was established in the shipping of coal, but later difficulty in navigation at Newnham resulted in the trade being relocated to Gatcombe, which was more conveniently situated close to the Gloucester and Berkeley canal.

The port of Newnham stood on Newnham Pill at the northern end of the town, and in 1775 there was a small quay there, which by 1850 belonged to the Newnham Pill Company. By this time the Pill had also been culverted, and was falling out of use (Elrington 1976, 32). In 1755 a Newnham merchant named Robert Pyke built a new quay complete with cranes and a warehouse, which considerably increased the capacity of the port. This new quay may have been located about 1km upstream at Hawkins Pill (Elrington 1976, 32). A regular



traffic continued to London, Bristol and Ireland but Newnham's place as the premier port passed to Bullo Pill (SMR 5619), to the south of the town.

6.6.2 Shipbuilding

From the mid-eighteenth century, if not before, Newnham had a locally important shipbuilding industry. In 1764 and 1778 it was claimed that the shipbuilders of Newnham built two of the largest ships launched so far up the river, at a burden of 180 and 400 tons respectively. In 1778 a ship of 600 tons was also launched and a number of other ships were built at the town between 1783 and 1802 (Elrington 1976, 32).

6.6.3 Glassmaking

There may have been a glasshouse in Newnham by 1616 (Kenyon 1983, 8), and a glass making industry had certainly been established by 1662 when James de Hugh, a glass maker, was married in the town (Elrington 1976, 42). The following year land just south of Newnham Pill was leased to James Legree who had a glass house there in 1671. By 1696 it was noted that there were two bottle factories in the town (Kenyon 1967, 9). Glasshouses were also recorded during the eighteenth century when the Wilcox brothers ran their *Great Glasshouse* in the town, but it appears that this factory had ceased production by 1715, as the parish was unable to collect the rate from it (Kenyon 1967, 9). During the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, although continuing to produce some glass, Newnham also became involved in the reprocessing of *scorcia*, a by-product of iron slag which was crushed in stampers (large powerful crushers) to produce a fine powder which was used in the glass industry. The slag for crushing came from the charcoal furnaces of the Forest of Dean, and the finished product was transported to the bottle manufacturers of Bristol. The *scorcia* was transported from the Forest iron workings in large blocks, some of which were used in buildings in Newnham.

6.6.4 Other trades and industries

Numerous other trades and industries were undertaken at Newnham through the Post-medieval period. Smith's *Men and Armour for Gloucestershire in 1608*, which lists the able-bodied men of the manor along with their trades, reveals that the town supported a population of traders including three coopers and glovers, a millwright, a sieve-maker and a turner. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the traders recorded included apothecaries, glaziers, haberdashers, skimmers and printers (Elrington 1976, 43). A verdigris factory was also established by a group of London druggists which operated into the early nineteenth century (Elrington 1976, 43).

6.6.5 Mills

The two Medieval mills continued to work into the Post-medieval period. In 1851 the upper mill was said to have long since fallen into decay, but there is no reference to the second mill after 1698 when its name was given as Hodges Mill (SMR 19408; Elrington 1976, 41).

6.7 The railway

In 1809 a mineral railway line from Bullo Pill was opened, which later became known as the Forest of Dean railway (SMR 5704). The South Wales line (SMR 11185), which ran from Gloucester to Chepstow opened in 1851, having bought the Forest of Dean line in 1850 for conversion to larger locomotives, with a station at Newnham (SMR 19411), a halt at Ruddle and a goods station at Bullo Pill (SMR 19410). The main line station at Newnham was finally closed in 1964 (Elrington 1976, 35).

7 The modern settlement

There was relatively little new building in the town between the mid-nineteenth and late twentieth centuries, although six pairs of houses were built along Station Road before 1901. During the 1930s the local council built houses near the railway line, which formed the basis of a small estate of about fifty houses completed in the later 1960s. A further group of houses was built on the Littledean Road during the 1950s and 1960s and a group of private houses nearby was completed in 1968.

Many of the houses along the High Street were rebuilt or refronted during the eighteenth century, which has given the street an attractive appearance. Some timber-framing is still visible at the backs of many of these houses, and associated outbuildings indicate that some structures had an earlier origin. The majority of the buildings in the town date from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, although two have survived from the sixteenth century. These are Kingston House (SMR 12547) and The Old House (SMR 12566), both of which were refronted during the eighteenth century. Many of the seventeenth century and later buildings incorporate black blocks of dross from the glass industry.



8 Population figures

Date	Communicants	Households	Families	Nonconformists	Inhabitants	Source
1563		55			c.234	Percival
1603	300			4	c.454	Percival
1650			136		c.578	Survey of Church Livings
1676	266			6	c.405	Compton Census
1712		90			400	Atkyns
1779					c.1000	Rudder
1801					821	
1851					1288	
1901					1184	
1997					1308	

For a full explanation of this table, please see page 6 above.

9 Plan analysis (Maps 39-41)

9.1 Discussion

Newnham developed along the course of one of the main Medieval routes between Gloucester and South Wales. The importance of this road is reflected by the construction of a castle at the southern end of the settlement (**Area 3**) in the years immediately following the Conquest. The castle would have stood on relatively high ground, overlooking the river, from where it would have been able to control the crossing point as well as boats passing up and down the Severn.

A church on The Nab (**Area 1**), to the south-east of the main road through the settlement, was used until the fourteenth century, when erosion forced the inhabitants to build a second church further inland, on a site to the east of the castle (**Area 2**).

The Medieval borough was laid out to the north of the church and castle, along the course of the main road which followed the high ground to the west of the river, and on either side of the route to the river crossing which lay to the east of the main street, along what is now Passage Lane and Severn Street (**Area 16**). Good evidence for burgage plots has been preserved within the properties fronting on to both sides of the High Street, the boundaries of which have been preserved within the modern town plan (**Areas 6-12**). On the eastern side of the High Street, the plots stretched as far east as a back lane formed by Back Street and Church Street (**Areas 7, 9, 11 and 13**). At the northern end of the settlement (**Areas 10-13**), the pattern of burgage plots is less regular than those to the south (**Areas 6-9**), which may indicate a difference in date, with the northern tenements which lie on lower ground and further away from the castle and church perhaps being laid out at a later date. Medieval settlement may also have stretched along the lower ground, immediately to the west of the river (**Area 14**), and may have been connected with the activities of the Pill (**Area 15**).

The market would have been held in the High Street (**Area 4**), which was wide enough to incorporate a large number of stalls. The shop row, recorded in 1340 may have run south from the clock tower, along the centre of the street (**Area 5**), and semi-permanent stalls were removed from this area as part of an improvement scheme in the 1770s.

In c.1703 Newnham was described as *one long entire street*, suggesting that the town had achieved its present form by that date. During the eighteenth century the earthworks dug to the north-west of the site of the castle by the royalist forces during the Civil War became a fashionable area on which the inhabitants could promenade, and by the nineteenth century they had been converted into *an agreeable terrace walk* (**Area 23**). The main development of the town during the Post-medieval period was in the form of the rebuilding or refronting of existing buildings along the High Street, Back Street and Church Road, and the infilling of unoccupied areas behind the main street frontages (**Areas 28-30 and 32**). The route to the river crossing appears to have been abandoned at some point between 1839 and 1881 and the course of the eastern end of the lane leading to the river side was shifted to the south, presumably due to difficulties in the navigation of the river which forced the relocation of the crossing.



The Post-medieval port of Newnham was also at Newnham Pill (**Area 24**), immediately to the north-east of the modern town. Quays and warehouses are also shown to the south of this area on the tithe and Ordnance Survey maps (**Area 25**), which may indicate the sites of similar Medieval features and it was also in this area that at least one of the Post-medieval glasshouses was located.

The modern development of the town has been described in section 7, above.

9.2 Plan components

9.2.1 Medieval (Map 39)

1. Site of the church on The Nab
2. The church of St. Peter and surrounding churchyard
3. The site of the Medieval castle
4. The market place
5. Site of market stalls until c.1775
6. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the west side of the High Street
7. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the east side of the High Street
8. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the west side of the High Street
9. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the east side of the High Street
10. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the west side of the High Street
11. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the east side of the High Street
12. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the west side of the High Street
13. Possible area of burgage plots fronting on to the east side of the High Street, obscured by later development
14. Area of Medieval settlement immediately to the west of the river
15. Newnham Pill
16. Course of the Medieval route to the river crossing

9.2.2 Post-medieval (Map 40)

17. St. Peter's church and the surrounding churchyard
18. Area of Post-medieval settlement fronting on to the west side of the High Street
19. Area of Post-medieval settlement fronting on to the east side of the High Street
20. Area of Post-medieval settlement fronting on to the west side of the High Street
21. Area of Post-medieval settlement fronting on to the east side of the High Street
22. Area of Post-medieval settlement fronting on to the west side of the High Street
23. Civil War defensive earthworks, later known as the Round Green
24. Newnham Pill



25. Area of quays shown on the Ordnance Survey 1881 map
26. Area of Post-medieval development to the south of the site of the castle
27. Area of Post-medieval development to the west of the river
28. Area of Post-medieval development to the west of Church Street
29. Area of Post-medieval development to the west of the High Street
30. Area of Post-medieval development to the west of Back Street
31. Area of Post-medieval development to the east of the High Street
32. Area of Post-medieval development to the west of the High Street
33. Area of Post-medieval development at the northern end of the town
34. Area of Post-medieval development to the west of the River Severn

10 Future research

Priorities for future work include:

1. The location of the Roman river crossing, the course of the road and the location of any contemporary settlement.
2. The location of the King's Hospital and evidence for the church on The Nab, both of which are known only from documentary sources.
3. The full extent and date of the Medieval castle. There is a suggestion that the bailey may have extended further to the east.
4. The precise location of the first post-Conquest church, although its site may have been lost to the erosion of the cliff on which it is believed to have stood.
5. The full extent, character and economy of the Medieval borough, archaeological evidence for which may have survived beneath the modern settlement.
6. The location and extent of the Medieval quays.
7. The date, character and full extent of the Civil War defences.
8. The location and extent of the Post-medieval quays at Newnham Pill.
9. The locations of the Post-medieval industries of Newnham, especially the glassworks.

11 Sources

11.1 Primary historical sources

There are a number of original documents relating to Newnham including Early Medieval and Medieval charters. These have not been consulted directly, but where they appear in the text they have been drawn from secondary, published sources.

11.2 Secondary historical sources

Newnham has been covered in the Victoria County History for Gloucestershire, and there are also a number of useful articles published in the local journals about the history and development of the town.



11.3 Archaeological sources

Several archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the area of the modern settlement, mainly in the area of The Green, although these have not yet produced evidence for Medieval occupation. The site of the castle was partially excavated during the nineteenth century, although the results of this work are not known. There have also been few chance finds of archaeological material which might indicate occupation or activity in the area before the Anglo-Saxon period.

11.4 Maps

The earliest maps available for the Newnham area are the tithe map of 1839 and the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1881, both of which show clearly the main features of the layout of the Medieval and Post-medieval town.

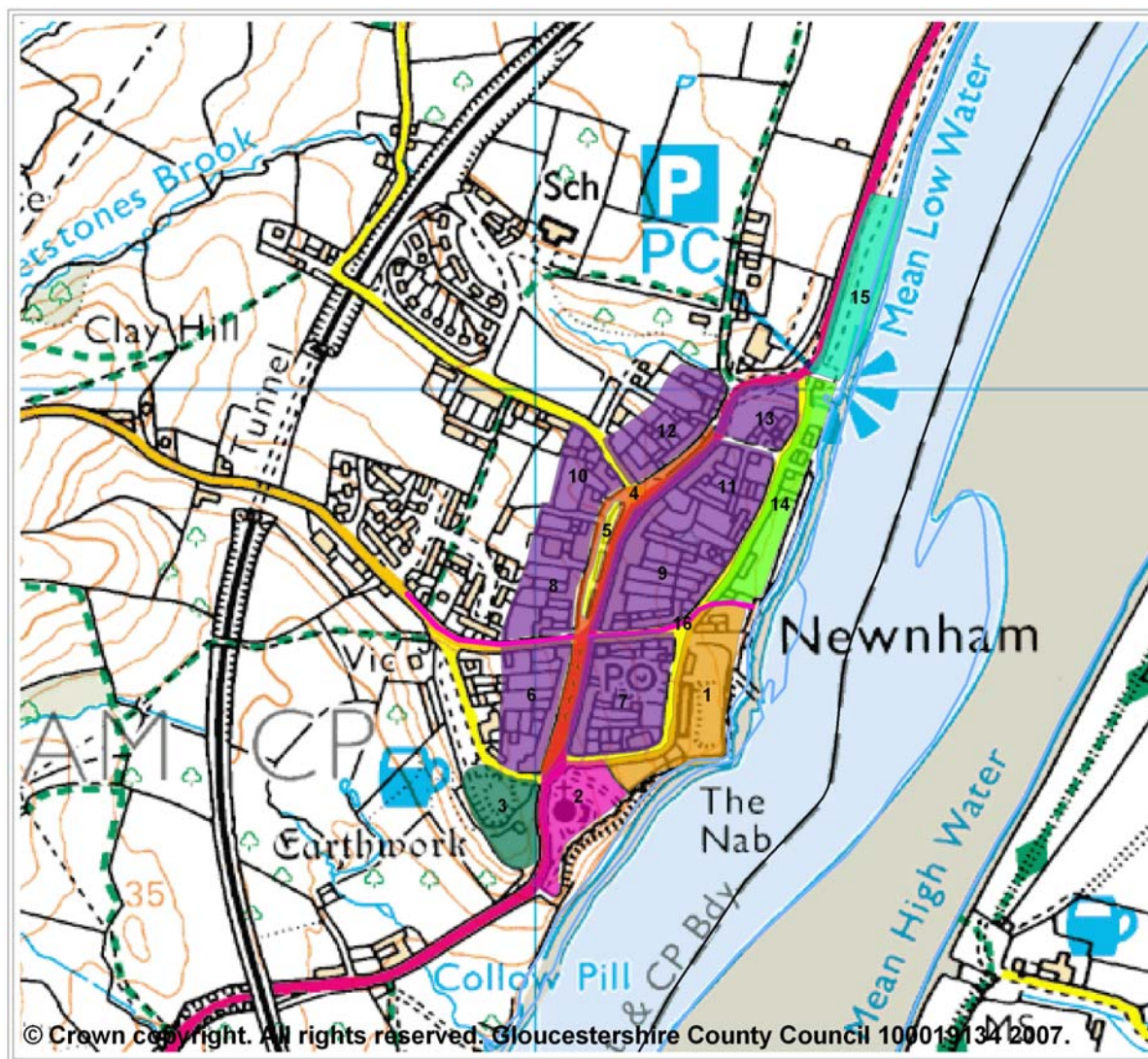
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12.2 Maps

- Tithe map, 1839
Ordnance Survey first edition 25": 1 mile map, 1881



MAP 39
Newnham
Medieval Plan
Components

Legend

- Area of settlement
- Burgage plots
- Site of church on the nab
- C14 Church & churchyard
- Market infill
- Market place
- Newnham Pill
- Site of the castle
- Original route to crossing

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