

**The Archaeology of Wiltshire's Towns**

*An Extensive Urban Survey*

**OLD SARUM  
&  
SORVIODUNUM**

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# The Archaeology and History of Old Sarum & Sorviodunum

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Location and Topography.....	5
3. Past work and the nature of the evidence .....	5
3.1. Historic Sources.....	5
4. Historical Outline.....	7
5. Archaeological and Architectural Summary .....	7
5.1. Introduction.....	7
5.2. Prehistory.....	8
5.3. Roman.....	15
5.4. Saxon .....	27
5.5. Medieval (Fig. 7).....	28
5.6. Post Medieval and Early Modern Periods.....	36
5.7. Built heritage.....	38
6. Plan Form Analysis .....	38
6.1. Introduction.....	38
6.2. Prehistoric.....	39
6.3. Roman.....	40
6.4. Saxon.....	41
6.5. Medieval.....	41
6.6. Post Medieval.....	43
7. Assessment .....	43
7.1. Summary of Research.....	43
7.2. Growth of the Town.....	44
7.3. The Archaeological Potential.....	44
8. Sources.....	47
9. Maps .....	51
10. Appendices .....	52

## List of figures

- Fig. 1. Extensive Urban Survey of Wiltshire; Areas Covered*
- Fig. 2. Overview of Study Area*
- Fig. 3. Archaeological Investigations*
- Fig. 4. SMR Entries – Prehistoric*
- Fig. 5. SMR Entries - Roman*
- Fig. 6. SMR Entries – Saxon*
- Fig. 7. SMR Entries –Medieval*
- Fig. 8. Plan Form – Prehistoric*
- Fig. 9. Plan Form - Roman*
- Fig. 10. Plan Form - Saxon*
- Fig. 11. Plan Form - Medieval*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Towns and Cities are perhaps the most important component of our historic environment. They are the result of a constant focus of human activity, unique in its intensity and industry and sustained for periods rarely less than the preceding millennium. They provide not only the industrial, economic and domestic environment of their inhabitants, but also form the economic, and often cultural, nucleus of a wider hinterland. Beyond this towns are the nodes of an economic and cultural network stretching, ultimately, beyond the borders of their own nation states. The resultant physical complexity of towns has provided us with an archaeological record that is an invaluable and irreplaceable source of data about past societies and the evolution of our culture. It is unfortunate that due to the complexity of this resource and, more particularly, its relative inaccessibility, that the archaeology of many towns, especially the smaller market towns, is incompletely understood.
- 1.2 In 1976 the D.O.E. sponsored a study of the archaeology of Wiltshire's historic towns, aiming to provide a synthesis of the known archaeological record of each town and to identify hypotheses and aims for future archaeological research. This resulted in the publication of "Wiltshire Towns: the Archæological Potential" (Haslam 1976). Since then, the book has been the key reference for archæologists monitoring urban development and its impact in the county.
- 1.3 Subsequent legislative change has resulted in enormous growth in the collected archaeological and historical record. In order to address this English Heritage commissioned the Extended Urban Survey, a programme of archaeological assessment of which this document is part. This survey aims to map the development of the historic towns within the geographical county (Fig. 1), to assess the extent of their surviving archaeohistorical resource and to develop heritage management strategies to address the problems of protection and development. Although more detailed than Haslam's report, in most cases each study remains no more than a brief summary of the data, and a guide to the location of more detail for other researchers. The research into each town is presented in two reports: a summary and assessment of the data gathered and an outline strategy for future management of specified sections of the urban area.
- 1.4 This document is intended to provide a clear and up-to-date synthesis of the available archaeological and historical data for the old towns of Old Sarum & Sorviodunum, with an assessment of the main areas of historic settlement, and their archaeological potential and sensitivity. The assessment reports are compiled from four main data streams: geographical and geological sources for the location and topographical summary; secondary historical sources for the historical outline; recorded archaeological data for the sites and finds information; the archive of the Wiltshire Buildings Record (WBR) for architectural data. The architectural summary is not subject to the same level of research as the other three

data streams, and the information presented in the reports is based upon evidence compiled from the existing WBR archive, updated in places by field visits to note non-listed buildings of historic interest, combined with the Department Of The Environment schedule of Listed Buildings.

- 1.5 The area of study in each town is nominally defined by the size of the town as it stood in 1945. In this case, by 1945 the urban core had shrunk to a single attenuated village and scattered outlying settlements. The study area chosen encompasses both the historic core of the towns and the older industrial and suburban development. There is an emphasis on earlier material, and the later Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century development are covered here only very briefly.
- 1.6 Towns are defined by the survey using the criteria laid out in Heighway (1972), by which the settlement must possess certain characteristics such as defences, a mint, a market, a street plan, or a judicial centre, and demonstrate such urban attributes as high population, a diversified economic base or a central or key location. Towns included meet these criteria historically, even if they no longer do so. This allows, for example, the inclusion of the county's five Roman towns and other settlements such as the village of Heytesbury, developed as a planned town in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but which did not succeed as an urban centre. The criteria for inclusion and the full list of 34 towns included in the survey are included as Appendix I and II.
- 1.7 As far as is known the first towns in Wiltshire appeared during the Romano-British period. All known examples are now greenfield sites, although some may have given rise to nearby settlements. Most modern towns in the county have their roots as Saxon villages or defended settlements such as Cricklade and Wilton. Many of the villages grew into small towns after the Norman invasion, often focussed around a castle or market and in the early thirteenth century 'planted boroughs', in which individual plots of land were sold by the major landowner.
- 1.8 Old Sarum & Sorviodunum are the major components of an area of highly complex settlement centred on the Roman small town of Sorviodunum and the Medieval Castle and Cathedral established within the Iron Age hillfort known as Old Sarum. This area satisfies ten criteria, it has: evidence for urban defences (criteria i); some evidence for internal street planning (criteria ii); a documented early market (criteria iii); documents proving an early legal existence (criteria v); a central position for historic trade routes (criteria vi); had a relatively high population from an early date (criteria vii); a diversified economic base (criteria viii); evidence for burgages (criteria ix); it was home to a wide range of social classes (criteria x) and it was seat to a bishopric (criteria xi).

## **2. LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 2.1 The study area (Fig 2) lies in the chalk downland of South Wiltshire, on the northern edge of Salisbury, (the city of New Sarum). It comprises upland cut by the valleys of the Bourne and Avon. The major landscape feature of the area is Castle Hill, a chalk eminence ca 2km long and lying across the confluence of those two rivers. The elevation rises from c.50m AOD in the valley floor to 110m AOD along the chalk.
- 2.2 The hillfort of Old Sarum occupies the north-western extremity of Castle Hill from which it dominates the skyline for miles around. The modern settlement of the same name is grouped around the former RAF base on the plateau to the northeast. Sorviodunum stretches from the hillfort downslope to the edge of the floodplain of the Avon beneath Old Sarum.

## **3. PAST WORK AND THE NATURE OF THE EVIDENCE (Fig. 3)**

### **3.1 Historic Sources**

3.1.1 Material has been gleaned from a wide range of sources. Old Sarum, Stratford and Sorviodunum have been the subject of antiquarian enquiry for the last 150 years at least. The literature ranges from the handwritten volumes of the Hawley Diary to small, succinct excavation reports and substantial works of synthesis (Cunnington 1930, 1934, 1937, Corney 2001, James 2002). Appendix III presents a table outlining the known archaeological investigations and the main works of reference within which they are published. Numbers with an SD prefix refer to sites and findspots in the Urban Survey database and the various figures.

Event	Year	Site Name/Location	Event Type	Excavator	Reference
001	1854	Old Castle Inn paddock	Excavation	Akerman, JY	Akerman 1855
002	1890	Old Sarum	Excavation	Tucker, AJ	Blackmore 1890-91
003	1909-15	Old Sarum	Excavations	St John Hope, WH; Hawley, W; Haverfield F	St John Hope 1910, St John Hope & Hawley 1911, Hawley 1912, 1913, Haverfield 1915
004	1933	East Suburb of Old Sarum	Excavation	Stone, JFS and Charlton, J	Stone & Charlton 1935
005	1955	Juniper Drive, Pauls Dene Estate	Excavation	Algar, DJ & Stone JFS	Stone & Algar, 1956
006	1957	Pipeline, east Side, Old Sarum	Watching Brief	Musty, JWG	Musty 1959
007	1957	Old Sarum	Excavations	Rahtz, PA & Musty, JWG	Rahtz & Musty 1960
008	1958	East Suburbs of Old Sarum	Excavation	Musty, JWG & Rahtz, PA	Musty & Rahtz 1964
009	1961	East Suburb, Old Sarum	Observation	SMARG	SMARG 1963a
010	1961	East Suburb, Old Sarum	Excavation	Rahtz, PA	SMARG 1963a
011	1962	West side of Stratford Road, Stratford sub Castle	Excavation	Stratton, J	SMARG 1963b, Stratton 1966
012	1964	Theological Playing Field, Stratford sub Castle	Excavation	Stratton, J	Stratton 1965, 1966

013	1965	Fisherton Meadow	Excavation	Stratton, J	Stratton 1966
014	1965	West side of Stratford Road, Stratford sub Castle	Excavation	Stratton, J	Stratton 1966
015	1965-6	Post Office Corner/Castle Keep	Excavation	Stratton, J	Stratton 1966, Algar 2002
016	1968	Unlocated – East Gate Area Old Sarum	Watching Brief	Anon	
017	1969	Gas pipeline Salisbury to Kimpton	Watching Brief	Algar, DJ	Algar 1970
018	1971	Castle Hill	Observation	SMARG	SMARG 1972
019	1972	Water pipeline, East Outskirts Old Sarum	Watching Brief	Algar, DJ	Algar 1973
020	1973	Castleford Farm	Watching Brief	SMARG	SMARG 1974
021	1973	Sewer trench, East suburb of Old Sarum	Observation	SMARG	SMARG 1974
022	1977	Theological Playing Field, Stratford sub Castle	Excavation	Stratton, J	Algar 2002
023	1991	Old Castle Inn	Evaluation	AC Archaeology	AC Archaeology 1991b
024	1991	Castle Gate Development	Evaluation	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1991
025	1991	Old Castle Inn	Watching Brief	Cave-Penney, H	Cave-Penney 1991
026	1991	Bishopdown	Field Surface Collection	AC Archaeology	AC Archaeology 1991a
027	1992	Bishopdown	Evaluation	AC Archaeology	AC Archaeology 1992
028	1992	Bishopdown	Geophysical Survey	Geophysical Surveys of Bradford	Geophysical Surveys of Bradford 1992
029	1992	Western Suburbs of Old Sarum	Survey	RCHME	RCHME unpublished
030	1993	Pond Field, Bishopdown	Evaluation	AC Archaeology	AC Archaeology 1993
031	1993	Bishopdown Foul Sewer, NE of the Cemetery	Watching Brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1993
032	1994	Bishopdown	Field Surface Collection	AC Archaeology	AC Archaeology 1994
033	1995	Stratford Road, Stratford sub Castle	Watching Brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1995
034	1996	78 Downsway	Excavation	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1996
035	1997	Salisbury Northern Link Road, Bishopsdown	Evaluation	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1997b
036	1997	SE of Sports Pavilion, Recreation Ground	Watching Brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1997a
037	1998	Land North of the Beehive	Fieldwork and metal detecting	Wessex Archaeology and Avon Valley Search Society	Wessex Archaeology 1998a
038	1998	1 The Rings, Old Sarum	Watching Brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1998b
039	1999	1 Old Sarum Business Park	Evaluation	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1999
040	1999	Old Sarum Airfield	Geophysical Survey	GSB Prospection	GSB Prospection 1999
041	1999	Old Castle Inn	Watching Brief	CKC Archaeology	CKC Archaeology 1999
042	1999	Land between Roselea & Avonview	Evaluation	AC Archaeology	McMahon & Hawkes 1999
043	1999	Land at The Beehive	Evaluation	ASI	ASI 1999
044	2000	Land between Roselea & Avonview	Excavation	AC Archaeology	McMahon & Hawkes 1999
045	2000	Land at The Beehive	Excavation	ASI	Heaton 2003
046	2001	Silverdale/Sorviodunum Cottage, Stratford Road	Evaluation and Watching Brief	Pathfinders	Pathfinders 2001
047	2002	Old Sarum Trunk Main Replacement	Watching Brief/Excavation	Wessex Archaeology	Powell et al 2005

048	2002	Castle Close	Watching Brief	Pathfinders	Pathfinders 2002
049	2003	Orchard House, Stratford Road	Evaluation	Pathfinders	Pathfinders in prep.
050	2003	12 St Lawrence Close	Watching Brief	Pathfinders	Pathfinders in prep.
051	2003	24 Shakespeare Road	Watching Brief	Context One	Context One 2003
052	2003	9 Castle Keep	Test-pitting	Pathfinders	Pathfinders 2003
053	2003	St John's Hospital	Geophysical Survey	Centre for Archaeology	Bartlett 2003
054	2003	Old Sarum Business Park	Evaluation	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 2003

#### **4. HISTORICAL OUTLINE**

4.1 This report is not intended to provide a major historical review of the history of Sorviodunum and Old Sarum and material included here relates mainly to events which might have had some impact on the archaeology of the town or its survival. The information provided here is already set out in greater detail in two recent reports (Corney, 2001) and (James, 2002). Corney in particular points out that this substantial settlement, recorded first in the Antonine Itinerary occupied a nodal point on the Roman road system. Although this critical location had already been defined by the construction of an Iron Age hillfort (which lurks beneath the Medieval defences of Old Sarum) it is not at all certain that much of the prehistoric site was occupied in the Roman period.

4.2 An attempt by Corney (ibid, 22) to assess the importance of the town is frustrated by the lack of investigation and he suggests that the town might have had a regular street grid and to have possessed a Mansio or Imperial staging post. He notes that indications of any defensive system are lacking.

4.3 Old Sarum itself is recorded early in the Saxon period with a reference in AD552 in the Anglo Saxon chronicle. Noting the fact that Cynric defeated the Britains at *Sarobyrg* an intriguing reference to a British component suggests to Corney and others that Old Sarum may have been the centre of a sub-Roman enclave (ibid 23). Old Sarum was effected by William I shortly after the conquest, with a stone keep and stone east gate built either as original features or added in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

4.4 In the 12<sup>th</sup> century further additions were made including a third tower and by 1140 the motte and much of the outer rampart was strengthened by walling. Details of subsequent events are recorded below (5.5.1), in which a critical point is the provision granted in 1218, for the transfer of the cathedral to its present location in the City of Salisbury.

#### **5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY**

##### ***5.1 Introduction***

5.1.1 The following is a resume of the archaeological record of the town, drawn from the Wiltshire SMR and various excavation reports. Data on

surviving buildings come from the Wiltshire Buildings Record unless otherwise stated. The bold print numbers in this section refer to entries in the Urban Survey database, and appear on the SMR entries location maps in Figs. 4 – 7.

## **5.2 Prehistory** (Fig. 4)

### **5.2.1 Barrows & other Neolithic monuments.**

5.2.1.1 Two long barrows are recorded; one of which is convincing, although neither have been the subject of intensive examination. Other definitively Neolithic monuments are confined to clusters and single examples of pits containing apparently structured deposits. A number of the smaller round barrows may also be Late Neolithic in date. These, again, have not been the subject of intensive examination. The other major classes of Neolithic monument - causewayed enclosures and henges - are conspicuous by their absence.

5.2.1.2 The Rocks Hill Long Barrow (**SD181**) lies a kilometre northeast of Castle Hill, on the false crest overlooking a re-entrant off the Avon valley. It was identified in the summer of 1976 by aerial photography (Hampton & Palmer 1977) and, allowing for the imprecision inherent in transcription, is ca 50m long by 30m wide, oriented with its long axis following the contour at ca 70m AOD. The ditches are 5-10m broad and curve slightly, giving an elliptical shape to the mound area. Within this area Hampton & Palmer identified the traces of what appears to be a stone-lined mortuary chamber 25m long and 15m wide equally divided into two chamber across its long axis. The orientation of the chamber is 10° off that of the flanking ditches.

5.2.1.3 The other long barrow recorded, the Ende Burgh (**SD306**) lies ca 3km northeast of Castle Hill. It was identified as such by Maud Cunnington, though more recent discussion suggests that it may be a much more complex monument comprising two or several round barrows (see “Ambiguities”, below).

5.2.1.4 The most prolific of Neolithic monuments here are clusters of small pits. Their identification as monuments may appear at first perverse, or at least inaccurate, but as Heaton, (2003) has pointed out their function is clearly neither rubbish disposal or storage, nor are they structural elements. Seven groups of three and two pairs have been identified; **SD293** (three groups of three, a single pair), **SD288** (two groups of three), **SD007** (pair), **SD008** (three) and **SD180** (three). The largest concentration (**SD293**) lies 100m northwest of Castle Hill at or about 70m AOD. This set were distributed over ca 100m of pipeline trench in four groups 25 -40m apart. **SD180** lay approximately 1km to the east at a similar elevation. **SD288** consists of two tripartite groups spaced 20m apart along the 75m contour 500m east of Castle Hill. The remaining two clusters, **SD007** & **SD008** lay ca 300m apart on the northeast slope of Castle Hill at about 90m AOD.



All contained sherds of Peterborough Ware (Mortlake), commonly in large unabraded sherds, worked and unworked stone - of which a high proportion of finished tools - animal bone and charred plant remains. Ash formed a consistently high proportion of the soils wherein these finds were contained. The recently exposed examples (**SD293**, **SD288** and **SD180**) were found in close association with tree throws (WA 2002, Heaton 2002)

5.2.1.5 Late Neolithic sites and monuments have yet to be identified, although a continuity of land use may certainly be inferred from the density of earlier Neolithic sites described above and the developed Bronze Age landscape described below. Particularly indicative of that continuity are **SD223** and **SD133**. These are, respectively, the Neolithic and Bronze Age components of a large flint scatter situated on the edge of the Bourne valley, south of Ford.

## **5.2.2 The Earlier Bronze Age**

5.2.2.1 Evidence for landscape use at this phase is, typically, confined to funerary monuments. Four barrow cemeteries (**SD294**, **SD296**, **SD297** and **SD298**) occupy the high ground overlooking Rocks Hill Combe and two more (**SD303**, **SD304**) the plateau to its northeast. A single barrow, **SD013** and an irregularity in the trackway north of settlement **SD232** may indicate further cemeteries on the shoulder of Castle Hill / Bishopdown.

5.2.2.2 **SD294** consists of two groups (North Hill Down North and North Hill Down South) of extant bowl barrows, variously mutilated. The southern cluster of six have later become the focus of a celtic field system, which presently separates them from the group of four 200m to the north. A lone ring ditch survives within the field system. The other three groups (**SD296**, **SD297**, **SD298**) are situated on the southern side of Rocks Hill Combe and are divided by two shallow reentrants off the main axis of the combe itself. All were identified by aerial photography, none have been verified by excavation.

5.2.2.3 The principal cluster is **SD298**, a group of seven ring ditches around the long barrow (**SD181**, above). Two, **SD238** and **SD204** are potentially Late Neolithic, by virtue of their small size. **SD208** is also unusual in that it appears to contain a central pit and may in fact be rectangular rather than circular (Hampton & Palmer 1977). **SD220** and **SD210** are comparatively large and may represent the remains of disc barrows. In any case there is ample variance within the group to suggest a cemetery made up of many of the more complex forms of round barrow.

5.2.2.4 **SD297** consists of nine ring ditches lying ca 200m w of **SD298**. There is a lesser variance in size amongst this group and although a few may represent earlier monuments there is no reason to suggest that they are anything other than bowl barrows. This also goes for **SD296** which consists of six widely scattered ring ditches. The extent of this cemetery, or components thereof, may well be masked by the considerable later

activity at this end of the combe.

### 5.2.3 *Later Bronze Age Settlement*

- 5.2.3.1 Two settlements may be identified, one on the spur north of Bishopdown Farm (**SD287**) and the other immediately north of Castle Hill (**SD293**). Several flint scatters and chance finds suggest widespread activity. Coaxial field systems survive on the south facing slopes of Rocks Hill Combe (**SD299**) and north of Bishopdown Farm (**SD307**).
- 5.2.3.2 The eastern settlement (**SD287**) was discovered within the B1914 pipeline easement and consists of a row of four posthole clusters which correspond in form to the remains of roundhouses with an internal diameter of 7-8m. Artefacts collected from the site were restricted to two features, one of Late Bronze Age date in close association with the largest structure, and one of Middle Iron Age date within the westernmost - and most fragmentary - structure. It lies twenty metres west of SD153, a large scatter of Bronze Age flintwork. The scatter is further associated with **SD307**, a large coaxial field system.
- 5.2.3.3 The western settlement (**SD293**) is unambiguously Middle Bronze Age. It consists of a single 7m diameter roundhouse with central post and a porch to the southeast, directly facing Castle Hill. Artefacts were recovered from the structure itself and from pits in close association with it. Among many undated features were three parallel rows of postholes, equidistantly spaced at 2-2.5 m apart and coaxial with the roundhouse. This may be the remains of a palisade (see also 2.2.6, below).
- 5.2.3.4 Field Systems east of the Avon survive in isolation within a narrow reentrant on the north side of Rocks Hill Combe, on upland north of Bishopdown and around the North Hill Down barrow group. That preserved at Rocks Hill, SD299, consists of two overlapping systems of which the smaller fields, more closely following the contours of the reentrant are likely to be the earlier. The Bishopdown Farm system, **SD307**, is considerably clearer. It survives on the top of a low spur west of the Bourne, overlooking Ford to the north and Bishopdown Farm to the south. Elements also appear to survive on the modern airfield where they are cut through by **SD300** the large cross country linear described below (2.2.2). The North Hill Down field system appears to be a fragment, consisting only of three fields and an adjoining driveway. West of the Avon are a clutch of strip lynchets, **SD206**, and fragments of other field systems **SD229**, within which an enclosure, **SD257** may be identified. All have been identified purely from aerial photographs.
- 5.2.3.5 Two large flint scatters flank the Bishopdown Farm field system. The westernmost, **SD153** consists of tools, waste material, cores and burnt flint distributed over at least a third of a hectare. It lies partly within the southwestern corner of the field system and immediately east of settlement **SD287**. The size of the eastern scatter **SD133**, which is distributed over the northeastern slopes of the spur is more difficult to

assess due to its association with similar Neolithic material **SD223**. It contained both tools and waste material.

5.2.3.6 A single multiple linear boundary, **SD300**, crosses the study area. From a bend in the River Bourne east of Ford, it crosses the airfield at modern Old Sarum and closes the eastern end of the Rocks Hill reentrant, thus shutting off the chalk island of Castle Hill / Bishopdown from the plateau to the northeast. In its course across the landscape, it cuts through elements of the Bishopdown Farm field system and skirts barrow cemetery **SD303**. Various irregularities in its course at this point suggest the former presence of other barrows more closely skirted.

5.2.3.7 Three quarters of a kilometre west of **SD300** and partly parallel with it is a single sinuous line of ditch **SD308**. Similarly to **SD300** it cuts across Rocks Hill Combe and appears to use the Rocks Hill East barrow cemetery as a focus. It is suggested that this feature belongs to the same pattern of landscape use as **SD300**.

#### **5.2.4 Iron Age Settlement & Burial**

5.2.4.1 Excluding the hillfort itself (see below) there are four distinct areas of settlement in the study area, with two outlying settlements, tentatively identified as being of Iron Age occupation, if not origin. The burial evidence consists of seven burials at three sites outside the areas of identifiable settlement (**SD289**, **SD287** and **SD127**) and a single burial within a pit at SD017 (part of **SD301**).

5.2.4.2 The major concentration of Iron Age discoveries recorded are on Castle Hill / Bishopdown, in concentrations **SD301**, **SD232**, **SD149** and **SD001**.

5.2.4.3 **SD301**, situated to the north of Paul's Dene and east of the Old Castle Inn, occupies a south facing position just below the crest of the hill. Finds made here - at four separate sites (**SD014**, **SD015**, **SD017**, **SD018**) include at least twenty-five pits, a trackway, a burial and assorted linear features. The dates thereof are predominantly Late Iron Age, (see also 2.2.5, below) with a small cluster at the top of Hilltop Way representing Early Iron Age material. All discoveries were made in narrow excavations, either as part of watching briefs (Musty 1959) or evaluations (AC Archaeology 1992).

5.2.4.4 **SD232** is situated on the northern flank of the down overlooking Bishopdown Farm. It consists of a dense group of circular features within a discontinuous linear boundary. A sinuous linear feature which climbs the down immediately north of the settlement may represent a track. This site was identified by geophysical survey (AC Archaeology 1992) and interpretation of air photographs and has not been subjected to intensive examination.

5.2.4.5 Finds made at **SD149**, which occupies the southeastern end of Bishopdown, consist of a group of 26 pits, including bell-profiled storage

pits and a V profiled ditch filled with occupation debris. These were discovered in an evaluation in 1992 (AC Archaeology). These finds are associated with a scatter of linear features, some of which (**SD175**) may represent the fragmentary remains of a field system, others within the immediate vicinity of the pits seem more likely to be related to enclosures and trackways related to that settlement. Two outlying linears **SD205** and **SD302** may well be Cross Dykes.

5.2.4.6 **SD001** lies on the opposite side of the Hillfort from these discoveries. Situated on the lower slopes of the hill, almost on the edge of the floodplain, it consists of a scatter of Iron Age occupation debris. It was discovered during the excavation of a gas pipeline through a disused chalk pit.

5.2.4.7 The outlying settlements, **SD295** and **SD305** are not well understood, having been the subject of little intensive examination. Though their morphology suggests dates in the Iron Age, there are equally emphatic Late Bronze Age enclosed settlements. The date of **SD305** is discussed below under "Ambiguities".

5.2.4.8 The burials are all crouched inhumations, and are all dated by their consistency with known Iron Age burial practices rather than by artefact association or C14 dating. The group of four burials at **SD289** were discovered in the base of a n-s oriented ditch with indications that the two northernmost burials occupy the vestigial termini of an earlier similarly oriented feature. The single burial at **SD287** lay 20m west of the settlement area described above. Both of the above were discovered during the B1914 trunk main replacement works during 2001-2002. The group of two, **SD127** was discovered in March 1996 at Downsview Road, 200m southwest of the cross dyke **SD302**.

### **5.2.5 The Hillfort**

5.2.5.1 The hillfort of Old Sarum (**SD004**) dominates the study area. There is, however, a lack of prima facie evidence of the sort commonly associated with hillforts, such as pit clusters, roundhouses, and four post structures. Nevertheless Iron Age material from within the hillfort forms a reasonable percentage of the overall assemblage and the non-discovery of Iron Age structures may well be attributable to later masking.

5.2.5.2 Excavations carried out between 1909 and 1915 (St John Hope and Hawley, 1911 and MSS) focussed largely upon the massive Medieval fortifications and castle mound, and earlier discoveries were fortuitous. These were restricted to the tentative identification of an Iron Age pit and traces of bank predating the Medieval defensive works.

The pit was exposed in an exploratory gallery cut along the old ground surface beneath the Castle Mound. It appeared to be of around eight feet in diameter and probing with a six foot wrecking bar suggested it to be over six feet deep. The bank was exposed in a section cut through the

inner Norman bank, north of the site of the cathedral. It consisted of a low bank four feet high and sixteen feet broad, which had grassed over and then been enlarged to fourteen feet high and forty feet broad. This later phase had also grassed over prior to its truncation by the Medieval curtain wall. Neither discovery produced any dateable material.

The 1957 excavations (Rahtz and Musty, 1960) were similarly targeted upon aspects of the Medieval fortifications, but were able to recover more evidence of Iron Age occupation. This consisted of sherds of unabraded pottery including one from a haematite coated bowl and several coarser sherds of a type identical to the Early Iron Age pottery from **SD018**. The material was recovered from a deposit at the base of the stratigraphic column adjacent to the bank. Indications of an earlier entrance were also recorded.

### **5.2.6 *The Situation prior to the Roman Conquest***

5.2.6.1 Although there is ample evidence of Romano-British settlements succeeding Iron Age settlements and many references in the earlier literature to “Belgic” pottery, none of the material may be conclusively dated to the first century BC. At Old Sarum, for example, a significant quantity of bead-rimmed “Belgic” pottery was recovered, but the excavator was unable to distinguish it stratigraphically from the Early Romano-British and Claudio-Neronic material. (Rahtz and Musty, 1960). This situation, where pottery of native, Late Iron Age character is associated with 1st century AD material, prevails across Castle Hill and Bishopdown (Musty 1960, AC Archaeology 1992), and in the early levels at Sorviodunum itself (Pathfinders in preparation).

### **5.2.7 *Ambiguities***

5.2.7.1 The primary, general, ambiguity amongst the material described above is that of dating, and the bulk of those particular points discussed below - undated linear features, aspects of Ende Burgh and the settlement north of Bishopdown - fall within this area. This is almost inevitable in a body of data largely derived from air photography and prospection during non-archaeological groundworks. The other main point of discussion is the absence of a causewayed enclosure and other major classes of Neolithic monument, given the presence of the long barrow overlooking Rocks Hill Combe. There are also a number of isolated or unlocated prehistoric finds which are presented in Table 2.1, below.

5.2.7.2 While certain classes of field monument - the Rocks Hill Long Barrow, for example - are reasonably easy to identify and then to date by form, the dating of linear landscape features is more equivocal. This problem is not confined to Air Photography Interpretation alone as the greater part of any field system or linear boundary - those parts at a significant remove from settlements - will contain no readily dateable material. It is therefore unlikely that we will ever arrive at an unambiguous date for any of the field systems identified above. A single possible exception may be that north of

Bishopdown, **SD307**, given its proximity to flint scatters **SD223, 133 & 153** and the settlement at **SD287**.

5.2.7.3 The barrow - single long barrow much mutilated (Cunnington 1914) or twin round barrows as is the presently accepted view - of Ende Burgh is part of a cluster of archaeological features of great interest and uncertain date. The barrow component, **SD306**, was identified by Maud Cunnington as a long barrow on the basis of its shape - wedge-like, higher and wider at the northeast end - and the ditch that runs along its sides and southwestern end. Mrs Cunnington ascribed the distinct irregularity of its profile to later, relatively modern intrusion and debasement. More modern opinion identifies it as two round barrows built immediately adjacent to each other with the larger at the northeast, partially surrounded by a single ditch. Both interpretations have merit, in that the monument, now SAM114, has yet to be the subject of intensive examination. What little fieldwork has been carried out on the mound(s) has only muddied the picture further by the discovery of several intrusive Saxon burials. The imprecision regarding the origin of Ende Burgh has implications for that of the immediately adjacent enclosure, **SD305**, the boundary of which incorporates the monument.

5.2.7.4 **SD305** is a large bean shaped enclosure, the indentation of which skirts Ende Burgh along its northwestern face. This indentation is also marked by an interruption in the ditch, while an additional (undated, and possibly quite unrelated) length of curvilinear ditch skirts the southeastern face of the mound(s). It seems therefore that Ende Burgh has been used to provide a component of a complex entrance to the enclosure, perhaps a defensive one. **SD305** clearly post dates Ende Burgh. But when? Dateable material recovered from within the enclosure is exclusively Romano-British, and largely third century. Unfortunately for that apparently unequivocal discovery the Portway bisects the enclosure. which given that the Portway is known to have been built in the first century must mean that the Romano-British material relates to a roadside settlement within a Pre-Roman enclosure.

5.2.7.5 The possible range of origin date for the enclosure is therefore Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age - AD43. It is possible to fine this down. For example, its form and position do not correspond to known types of Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age monument in Wessex and it is likely therefore to postdate the nearby round barrows as well as Ende Burgh, of whatever date that may be. If that is true, its placement in the landscape within, and reusing elements of, a barrow cemetery is more characteristic of such landscape use as the multiple linear **SD300** and its "associate" **SD308** than it is of the earlier field systems.

5.2.7.6 Settlement **SD287**, north of Bishopdown was not conclusively dateable as very little domestic refuse was recovered from it. Soil depths suggest that the site had been subject to some subsequent truncation and this may account for the paucity of finds. Artefacts collected from the site were restricted to two features, one of Late Bronze Age date in close

association with the largest structure, and one of Middle Iron Age date within the westernmost - and most fragmentary - structure. The near presence of a single crouched burial, believed to be of Iron Age date, led the excavators to feel that the balance of probabilities leaned to an Iron Age date for the settlement. It is included here among the Bronze Age evidence because of its close association with **SD153**, a large scatter of Bronze Age flintwork which lies less than 20m away to the east, just off the crest of the slope - and about 10m beyond the end of the pipeline easement.

### **5.2.8 Conclusions**

- 5.2.8.1 The prehistoric landscape at Old Sarum and Stratford-sub-Castle consists of widely distributed domestic, ritual and perhaps administrative monuments many of which are in an excellent state of preservation. A small number of these - Ende Burgh and its adjacent enclosure, the Rocks Hill East barrow cemetery and the settlements across Castle Hill and Bishopdown display considerable time-depth. It is in this process of reuse and reiteration that we can begin to see the transformation of the study area from a landscape element into a place within that landscape.
- 5.2.8.2 That transformation is completed by the construction of **SD300**, the major linear monument which crosses the plateau between the Winterbourne at Ford and the head of Rocks Hill Combe.
- 5.2.8.3 The origin date of the hillfort is unknown, but it is plausibly of a piece with **SD300**, which may be dated (by morphology alone) to the early first millennium BC. It is after this delineation that the major settlement clusters appear on Castle Hill and the process of urbanisation begins.
- 5.2.8.4 These settlements and associated linear features are of particular interest in that they resemble in their distribution the elements of territorial Oppida. This class of monument is a Late Iron Age phenomenon and consists of individual settlements enclosed within intermittent linear boundaries defining large tracts of land. They are confined to the southeast of the country and the better known examples, such as those at Silchester, Colchester and St Albans, became foci for extensive trade and political alliance with the Roman World (Haslegrove and Gwilt, 1997).
- 5.2.8.5 It is possible to clearly identify other areas of settlement, of which the BA and outlying IA components are not particularly relevant to this study except in that they serve to underline the population density within the hinterland of the settlements along Castle Hill and Bishopdown.

## **5.3 Roman (Fig. 5)**

### **5.3.1 Introduction**

Unlike the prehistoric material, the Romano-British is not easily divisible into sub-periods, assemblages being commonly characterised as 1st - 2nd and 3rd - 4th century. In order to avoid this unwieldy form of

characterisation, the assemblages will be dealt with here in a loosely geographical format, dealing with the hillfort, the village, Bishopdown and the hinterland separately. As with the preceding chapter, the single and isolated finds will not be described in any particular detail, but are tabulated (table 3.1) and appear on the accompanying maps and diagrams.

### 5.3.2 The Hillfort

5.3.2.1 In 1915, Professor F Haverfield published a curmudgeonly refutation of the very idea that a Roman town, of whatever size, might once have existed at Old Sarum (Haverfield 1915). His analysis was, while not necessarily a model of tact, accurate within the frame of reference then available.

5.3.2.2 In the earliest years of the 20th century, the only evidence of Roman settlement at the site was its name, found in Iter XII and XV of the Antonine Itinerary. No indication was given as to what sort of place it might have been, and the hillfort was recorded as the site of Sorviodunum, a Roman Station (fig 3.1). Scattered and unlocated finds included 17 coins, a burial, an amphora, a spoon, a padlock spring and a bucket mount. By the time of Haverfield's writing a long campaign of archaeological fieldwork (St John Hope & Hawley 1911 and MSS) had been carried out at Old Sarum (**SD026**). Essentially a program of clearance which exposed the castle visible today, little intrusive excavation was carried out and few Romano-British artefacts added to the assemblage.

5.3.2.3 A single section was cut through the rampart and two galleries were excavated within the motte, striking out horizontally from the base of a well. The section showed that there were at least three phases of rampart, but could give no indication of the periods concerned, while the galleries revealed the corner of a substantial flint wall with ashlar facing courses resting on a pit of apparently Iron Age date. Flint and mortar surfaces were also discovered within the galleries but the conditions - and presumably light - were restricted and no clear picture of them could be gained. No deposits had been revealed that were consistent with Romano-British urban or proto-urban settlement.

5.3.2.4 Thus the balance of probabilities ca. 1915 was, as Haverfield concluded, that:

“ On the whole, it would seem that Sorviodunum cannot be used as a factor in reconstructing the history either of Roman or of early Post-Roman Britain.”

The balance of probabilities was, however, quite wrong.

5.3.2.5 In 1957 Philip Rahtz and John Musty (Musty & Rahtz, 1960) directed a series of evaluation excavations inside Old Sarum, the purpose of which was to trace the course of the Medieval curtain wall and to locate a tunnel



recorded in 1795. In the course of this work they discovered deposits which contained material evidence of intensive Romano-British settlement activity.

5.3.2.6 This material was located in their trenches H and B, both deep, narrow cuttings perpendicular to the inner face of the bank. The material recorded consists of pottery from throughout the Romano-British Period.

“The earliest sherds dated to just before or soon after the conquest, and the series continues with Romanised vessels of allied forms, probably of the later first century. The second century is represented by Samian ware and by coarse pottery and the occupation continues apparently without a break until at least the late third or early fourth century.”

5.3.2.7 While the excavators were unable to clearly describe the context of the finds and admitted that the circumstances of their excavation made the stratification difficult to interpret, aspects of their context recording and the assemblage suggest that the hundreds of sherds - (plus one infant burial, a fire trench, an LHS stamped tile, a brooch and various fragments of building stone) were retrieved from a very complex series of deposits.

5.3.2.8 Rahtz and Musty's description is largely confined to a discussion of the finds, and little mention is made of the matrix within which they were found. A single mention is made of colour - very dark- and the cultural components of charcoal and burnt daub are noted. Other comments on the physical state of the deposits are confined to descriptions of them as variously disturbed. It is however difficult to equate disturbance with the quite specific qualities of the assemblage as quoted above. The survival of an infant burial and a fire-trench within disturbed material is anomalous and it is still more unlikely that disturbance could be so strictly confined to the Roman period, and sandwiched between clearly defined layer stratification of the Late Iron Age and Medieval periods. In all, it seems most likely that the deposits encountered were formed of dark earth, derived from intense activity throughout much of the Romano-British period. Such deposits are notoriously difficult of interpretation, particularly in such restricted conditions as here. They are also distinctively urban.

5.3.2.9 The 1957 works cast Hawley's smaller scale discoveries in a different light, and strengthen the possibility that the building and floors discovered within the motte were Romano-British in date.

### **5.3.3 The Town**

5.3.3.1 The first discovery within Stratford-sub-Castle was made in 1950 by a field investigator of the Ordnance Survey. He noticed, and was able to accurately plot, two dwelling sites (**SD056,057**) and the top of a gravel bank 90m long (**SD309**). The sites were all located in the meadow to the southwest of Stratford road. The two dwellings have recently been the subject of archaeological watching briefs at Sorviodunum Cottage and 6 Castle Keep (see below, **SD 275** and **SD310**).

- 5.3.3.2 These discoveries were followed, in 1962, with the identification of the true course of the Portway - the Roman road from London to Exeter. Particularly hot weather had caused a long stripe of parchmark to appear in the meadows on either side of the road at the east end of the village and over the next three years four trenches were excavated across it. These confirmed the line of the road (**SD046**) and showed that its margins had been densely populated over a length of at least half a kilometre from Fisherton Meadow, west of the Avon to the Theological College Playing Field between the hillfort and the village.
- 5.3.3.3. Of particular interest were the discovery of early building remains west of the Avon (**SD270**) and a building with flint and ashlar walls in the Theological College Playing Field (**SD045**).
- 5.3.3.4 The building remains west of the Avon are remarkable, in that they show an unexpected degree of complexity in the development of the settlement alongside the road. The excavator, John Stratton (1966 pp106-7) recorded material dating to the latter quarter of the first century, and chalk floors underlying the road itself. He interpreted this as suggesting that the houses concerned were those of the road construction gang, who had lived alongside the road as it was being built. The flaw in this argument is discussed below in the Amibiguities section of this chapter.
- 5.3.3.5 The stone building (**SD045**) was considerably less equivocal and Stratton returned to it in the summer of 1977. Excavated in a series of box and linear trenches, a structure ca 20m long and 6 wide was exposed. Its walls were substantial, one metre thick of flint and fine ashlar, on rammed chalk foundations and oriented perpendicular to the Portway. The corner of a similar structure was exposed on the opposite side of the road. The material recovered from the building has never been washed or adequately catalogued, but a brief scan of the unwashed pottery by Mark Corney suggested a third - fourth century date which is consistent with that from the coins (James 2002).
- 5.3.3.6 Significantly, it was clear that both the building and an associated pit had been cut through parts of the road, which strongly suggests that by the fourth century this stretch of the Portway was no longer the main road through the settlement.
- 5.3.3.7 The road was also exposed during the 1965-1966 development of Castle Keep. A watching brief maintained by SMARG (**SD048**) recorded that construction works had exposed two sections of the road and that occupation - here represented in masses of pottery and building material, chalk floors, cobbled yards and an oven - continued alongside the road throughout the estate.
- 5.3.3.8 Similar evidence of continuing and widespread occupation was discovered in 1969 during the excavation of a North Sea Gas Pipeline across the meadow south and west of the estate. This revealed dense, stratified occupation deposits in a band reaching thirty plus metres back

from both sides of the road. In places up to four superimposed floor levels were seen. Occupation material of lesser complexity extended to one hundred metres of either side of the road. Both sides of the settlement appeared to be delineated by ditches approximately six metres wide. The assemblage collected contained material from throughout the Romano - British period (James 2002).

5.3.3.9 In 1978, as a result of these discoveries Scheduled Ancient Monument 879 was formed of the meadows west of the Avon and Castle Keep, plus the playing fields east of Stratford Road.

5.3.3.10 More recent development within Castle Keep has allowed small scale, but more controlled recording. At No 6 (**SD310**), the footings trenches of an extension revealed the chalk floor and one flint wall footing of a building at least 6m wide, oriented perpendicularly to the Portway. The room or space also contained a small keyhole oven with a Purbeck limestone base. The structure was ca 25m away from the road and its full extent was not exposed. Adjacent to the building on its west side was a small ditch, on the same alignment and beyond that, a large pit. Stratification and material collected from deposits within the building and features suggested that they were of the same phase, being third to fourth century in date. Beneath the chalk floor and on an east-west alignment was a somewhat larger ditch, at least two metres in width and over two metres deep. Material from this feature is earlier, perhaps second century. Full analysis of the finds and stratigraphy have not yet been completed as they are part of an ongoing project (Moffat, forthcoming).

5.3.3.11 These results are similar to, though less complex than, those obtained at Sorviodunum Cottage (**SD274/5**), the property on the northern corner of Castle Keep, and in almost exactly the same position relative to the Portway.

The excavation of footings for the new detached house exposed a column of stratification 21 strata deep, the physical thickness of which averaged one metre. The form of works was watching brief and the stratigraphy was considerably simplified with several features recorded only as groups. The deposits relate to five main phases of activity, of which the lower four (and the bulk of the strata) were Romano-British (fig 3.2). These comprised early cut features followed by a soil accumulation phase, then two phases of building.

5.3.3.12 The earliest phase consisted of four large pits and a group of intercutting pits lying to the southwest of a large ditch or channel which was at least 3m broad, and of unknown depth. Its orientation was difficult to determine but lay between the present line of the adjacent Stratford Road and north-south.

5.3.3.13 Soils sealed these features. The deposits varied in thickness from 200 to 600mm. Their greater depth and compaction over the large ditch suggested that they constituted a deliberately dumped consolidation layer,

within which some soil formation had taken place.

The phases of building are considerably more complex. At their most simplified they relate to two distinct phases of construction, indicated by two sets of superimposed chalk floors.

5.3.3.14 Associated with these were two ovens, several beamslots and pits and a substantial stone built well 2.5m in diameter. At the southeastern extremity of the site the edges of more substantial floor makeup layers were discovered, suggesting that these phases represented the remains of service rooms and ancillary buildings belonging to a townhouse fronting onto the Portway.

The pottery assemblage comprised a small proportion of imported and local finewares but predominantly local coarsewares.

5.3.3.15 On the basis of fabric types and vessel forms present the Romano-British pottery assemblage may be dated as Early Romano-British. No characteristically later fabrics such as finewares from the Oxfordshire and New Forest industries or characteristically later vessel forms were recorded. It is possible that there was also a slightly earlier influence due to the presence of very dark grey coarse sandy fabrics which may represent the continued use of Late Iron Age sandy fabrics in the area.

5.3.3.16 As well as the pottery, the site produced a single fragment of blue green glass, a fragment of worked bone and an entire quern from Charterhouse on Mendip, which had been reused as a post pad. During the excavation of the footings it was particularly noticeable that the upper deposits contained large quantities of Purbeck and Chilmark stone, varieties of greensand and other non-local stones.

5.3.3.17 Other assemblages have recently been collected from Beech Tree House (**SD123**), Castle Close (**SD278**) and The Glen (**SD311**) While that from The Glen simply shows that two phases of Romano-British activity took place, and can provide no more precise dating, those from Beech Tree House and Castle Close result from larger scale works which have provided more data.

5.3.3.18 The assemblage at Beech Tree House comprised two phases of activity, one in the 1st - 2nd centuries and one in the 2nd - 3rd, starting no earlier than AD70 and continuing perhaps as late as AD270 (McMahon and Hawkes 2000). Structural evidence was restricted to the first phase and consisted of two postholes and two pits, sealed in the later phase by a group of rough yard surfaces. Both phases are consistent with deposits resultant from activity in the backyard of a property, The significance of the assemblage lies in the comparatively rare presence of New Forest Ware, particularly in the near vicinity, and in the relative absence, as at Sorviodunum Cottage of mortaria, ceramic roof tiles and nails.

5.3.3.19 In April 2002 a watching brief was carried out at Castle Close, a detached house on the northeastern side of Stratford Road. It revealed the easternmost corner of an enclosure ditch ca 5.5m wide. As far as can be determined this enclosure appears to have been rectilinear and on the same orientation as the Roman Town. Deposits revealed inside the angle of this ditch suggest that it was the outer of a double ditch system, and pottery from the site suggested that they had silted up, or been filled in during the second century. This evidence was interpreted as being indicative of a first century fort. In order to test this hypothesis, a geophysical survey was carried out within the grounds of Orchard House, over an area within which it was reasonable to expect that the enclosure ditch, or ditches, might appear.

The results of this survey were negative in so much as they showed that the enclosure did not extend so far to the northwest. They did however reveal a further enigma, in the form of a large rectilinear anomaly (**SD312**), apparently a large brick building or enclosure with an indication of an entrance on its short southern end. It is quite likely that this is part of the post-Medieval farm of which Orchard House is the remnant, however it is on a very different alignment, inconsistent with the regularity shown in all other Medieval and post Medieval cases (Pathfinders, 2002, Fig 1.1). The structure is undated and is largely included here because of its discovery during investigations into the Roman period. It is also worth noting that although investigations to its north and west have produced no evidence of distinctive archaeological activity, a small testpit dug immediately south of the structure produced significant quantities of Romano-British building material and domestic refuse, consistent in appearance with the upper layers exposed in recent works along the Portway (David James, pers.comm.)

5.3.3.20 Thus a combination of fieldwalking, evaluation, excavation and watching briefs is building up a picture of a large urban settlement alongside the Portway below the hillfort. Detailed data have only been derived from works restricted in scale and their topographical context is not yet fully understood. Some preliminary work using air photographs has been carried out (Corney 2001) and these results form the basis of our perception of the shape of the settlement. Earthwork survey, particularly over the Scheduled Area south of Castle Keep would be of inestimable value.

5.3.3.21 These observations, **SD281**, made during the winter of 2003/2004 noted that the parchmarks running perpendicularly to the Portway adjacent to the river bank could be easily traced on the ground, and appeared as long, low mounds on which the vegetation was extremely thin. These blended into the river bank, and were pierced by a deep cutting through which the stream adjacent to Castle Keep runs. To the southeast of the stream and within the line of the banks described above was a rectilinear depression, an occasional pond in which marsh grass grows all year round.

### **5.3.4 Bishopdown/Castle Hill**

- 5.3.4.1 In 1953 the new residents of Juniper Drive (**SD039**) began to dig their gardens. In the unusually deep and dark soil they found considerable quantities of Roman pottery and domestic refuse. A swift program of test-pitting was set in train by SMARG (Stone & Algar 1955) which determined that the deposit was derived from a Romano - British midden, in the middle of which the new properties had been built. The deposit was maximally 300mm thick and covered an area of at least a quarter of a hectare.
- 5.3.4.2 The assemblage comprised baked clay and perforated stone roof tiles, abundant unabraded potsherds and 14 coins, amongst other domestic refuse. The pottery consisted almost entirely of New Forest ware and dated from the third to fourth centuries AD.
- 5.3.4.3 A further wide scatter of Romano- British material (**SD037**) was discovered during evaluation work around the reservoir on the other side of Bishopdown Track. This consisted of pottery, tile and burnt flint and covered an area of over a hectare.
- 5.3.4.4 A little to the west of and between these two spreads of Romano-British material lies **SD015**, a group of Late Iron Age pits. These were exposed in a pipetrench alongside Bishopdown Track (Musty 1959). These pits all contained Early Romano-British pottery in their upper fills. This also occurs nearby at **SD035**, although the pottery is late Romano-British and in the upper fills of an Iron Age ditch. A further concentration of Romano-British refuse was found on the eastern tip of Bishopdown, at **SD141** - again overlying features of the Late Iron Age.
- 5.3.4.5 This material suggests a considerable intensity of settlement, over a considerable period of time. Unfortunately, it is noticeable that among the mass of features discovered across Bishopdown, not one is convincingly of Romano-British date. All the Roman material collected from the area has either been collected from the upper subsidence fills of distinctively Iron Age features, or from amorphous spreads of domestic refuse. A similar piece of negative evidence is the non-discovery of the conjectured Roman road along Bishopdown toward the New Forest potteries and perhaps Clausentum (Bitterne, Southampton). There is no evidence for this route except in that it makes sense.
- 5.3.4.6 The most peculiar aspect of the Bishopdown evidence is that it appears from the literature that the assemblages are richer in terms of the quantities of material represented than is the case in Stratford, yet they exhibit none of the physical complexity so obvious there. Clearly, the pattern of land use along the down was entirely different from that in the valley bottom and the hillfort.

### 5.3.5 *The Hinterland*

5.3.5.1 Once we descend from the chalk island of Bishopdown / Castle Hill and look north and east into the hinterland, there is a marked drop in the amount of material. With the exception of **SD151**, a scatter of pottery, tile and burnt flint on a low knoll west of the Winterbourne, south of Ford, there are no further settlements identified at this period. The landscape is only marked by the network of roads, to Silchester, Winchester, Amesbury and Exeter, together with a few scattered, isolated finds, field ditches, and burials.

5.3.5.2 Distinctively Roman burials are non-existent, and even those which can be tentatively so identified, **SD034** and **SD032**, are dubious, having been identified by association with small amounts of pottery. Of these **SD032**, a cist burial is the most plausible. All however fall within the considerable concentrations of Medieval burial associated with the Cathedral City.

5.3.5.3 However, it is among the burials that we find the only Post-Roman evidence available. **SD064**, located just to the northwest of the hillfort and adjacent to the Medieval burgages of Newton Westgate, is a cemetery. Only two burials have been recorded from the graveyard, which was disturbed by the North Sea Gas pipeline in 1969.

On the basis of their grave goods - two brooches, a glass bead, iron and bronze objects and an ivory ring, they have been dated to the fifth century.

### 5.3.6 *Ambiguities*

5.3.6.1 Ambiguities surrounding our knowledge of Sorviodunum are in many ways the more interesting avenues of discussion. In common with all towns founded in the Roman period there are general themes, such as when and in what sense the settlement was founded, and what happened between 410 and the settlement's next historic appearance - in this case its conquest by Cynric in 522. More specific questions of Sorviodunum's identity as a settlement also remain to be answered. Although we have some general ideas of its position and extent we do not know its relevance as a town to its hinterland, or where that division may have fallen. These nebulous and largely theoretical debates are all, to an extent, visible within the archaeological record.

5.3.6.2 The problem of Sorviodunum's foundation has been touched upon in the previous chapter from a point of view at the end of the Iron Age and it seems most likely that the town formed out of an existing native centre rather than being founded *per se*. Such a transition may be inferred from the obvious and widespread Late Iron Age activity throughout the study area and a comparable intensity in the Roman period. As was touched upon above, there is however no *prima facie* evidence of activity within this transitional period. One might normally expect to see imported continental goods in assemblages otherwise characterised by Durotrigian or other

indigenous pottery styles. The only extent to which this does occur is after the invasion within the 1st-2nd century assemblages, where coarse sandy pottery resembling Durotrigian material appears to suggest an ongoing local tradition of pottery manufacture. This picture of distinctively indigenous material in use alongside later Roman and Romano-British material has also been noted at the Hillfort, during Rahtz' excavations and in Fisherton meadow by Stratton. It is peculiar that such evidence has not been forthcoming from the period prior to the invasion, particularly as it is presently believed that the Avon formed the western boundary of the Atrebatian sphere of influence and that the Atrebates were in common and fluid contact with the Roman world

5.3.6.3 A similar, and perhaps related, problem is that of the apparent wealth of the Roman town. Just as there is an absence of rich material and imported goods prior to the conquest, there is a similar absence during the Roman period. The assemblage of material is predominantly pottery, almost all of which is of local or insular production. There is practically no glass (one windowglass shard and a bottle base fragment) and very little industrial waste, this being confined to widely scattered slag. There is a single complete amphora, only a few sherds of others and a scarcity of metal artefacts.

5.3.6.4 The metal artefacts are predominantly coins and these, together with the building material and the buildings so far discovered give the only real indication of wealth and sophistication above what one might describe as a Romano-British norm.

5.3.6.5 The analysis of coin loss frequencies at Sorviodunum has shown that for much of its existence the site has produced numbers of coins well in excess of the British mean (James 2002). and consistent with other prosperous towns in the west (Reece 1991 and James 2002). James uses this information alongside relative pottery type frequencies as proof of the urban character of the settlement. One can take the coin frequencies further. The published curve (James 2002) shows Sorviodunum well above the norm for Western Towns (Reece's classification) from the end of the first century until midway through the fourth. While this may indicate that Sorviodunum belongs to one of the other groups identified by Reece and could perhaps be more profitably compared with the towns of eastern Britain, it also shows that the people living in or passing through the settlement were wealthier (or at least more careless) than might be expected in other similar towns in the west.

5.3.6.6 This disparity between evident monetary and material wealth is underlined by the relative quantity and quality of building material recovered. The buildings thus far investigated (see above) all display a quality and sophistication that belie the simplicity and uniformity apparent from the rest of the assemblage excluding the coins. Two possible interpretations immediately present themselves: the town may have been simply a small market town, where the populace made a comfortable living, their small wealth reflected in comfortable, watertight and clean



houses but in no particular material wealth; or what we are seeing are properties on the periphery of a very much wealthier settlement, centred away from the Portway. This possibility is also visible in the way that the 1977 building encroached upon the road, suggesting that by the third century the Portway had become a back lane, rather than the main thoroughfare. Phasing associated with the development of the Portway was also recorded in Fisherton Meadow, where Stratton believed that he had found evidence of a road gang's settlement, subsequently superseded by the road itself. This seems unlikely. The buildings that Stratton described had rammed chalk floors and were associated with apparently substantial amounts of domestic refuse, including samian pottery and the ubiquitous "belgic" material, all evidence of occupation for a period considerably longer than that which one might expect the taskmaster of a roadgang to put up with. It seems far more likely that the Portway - at this apparently late first century point - was built over the remains of an earlier Romano-British settlement.

5.3.6.7 On balance, it is difficult to believe the small market town hypothesis, largely because the area of settlement thus far identified exceeds 36ha (James 2002). The assemblage also shows interesting variance. The pottery assemblages at the hillfort, on Bishopdown and at Stratford, though parochial, are all obviously different. The hillfort assemblage contains considerable quantities of native pottery alongside Romano-British material and spans the entire Roman period. Most noticeably, it contains almost no New Forest ware. The assemblage from the Bishopdown midden, on the other hand is almost exclusively formed of developed New Forest pottery. The various village sites do not display such immediately obvious peculiarities - at least as far as the pottery is concerned.

5.3.6.8 The structural evidence from the village shows quite marked spatial variation. The roadside sites, the 1977 building, Sorviodunum Cottage, 6 Castle Keep and to an extent Beech Tree House have all produced similar material, relating to substantial townhouses and their domestic use. They also have marked differences, the most obvious of which is that the 1977 building has substantial stone walls, while the others do not. The buildings at Sorviodunum Cottage and 6 Castle Keep, while almost exactly alike in their relative situations on either side of the road differ markedly in the complexity of their stratification, the former being highly complex and the latter essentially a single phase. Beech Tree House is anomalous in that it produced little material by comparison with the other three. The variance within this roadside group is consistent with their being parts of broadly similar properties in a residential zone of the settlement. This is also true of Stratton's other roadside trenches, and the evidence from the pipeline.

5.3.6.9 Spatial variation is also noticeable where investigations have been carried out away from the road. The Castle Close Enclosure is the principle enigma, while the peculiar structure at Orchard House (**SD312**) is oriented approximately north to south rather than the predominant southwest - northeast trend of the bulk of the settlement. Other apparently

Romano-British features share similarly divergent orientations. In 1950 a field investigator from the Ordnance Survey recorded the presence of a 3m broad strip of flint gravel, pottery and tile in a position now approximately 5m west of Castle Keep. The feature was approximately 90m long, oriented slightly east of north and crossed the line of the Portway. On the same occasion he recorded the sites which would subsequently become Sorviodunum Cottage and 6 Castle Keep. At both these sites early linear features were recorded which were oriented with the cardinal points of the compass. The very large ditch or channel at Sorviodunum Cottage was oriented north-south and the single ditch recorded at No. 6 was oriented east-west. With the exception of the church, these and the Orchard House structure are the only features within the village on a NS-EW alignment.

5.3.6.10 Clearly then, the Romano-British archaeological landscape at Stratford and Old Sarum is a highly complex one. The range of variance within the disparate assemblages and the sites from which they come strongly suggest that Sorviodunum was a prosperous community, and a sophisticated one. Nevertheless, our understanding of it is incomplete.

### **5.3.7 Conclusions**

5.3.7.1 This incompleteness in our understanding is not just a matter of the data admitting of more than one interpretation, but often that the data admit of no interpretation at all, except in the very broad brush strokes of the last paragraph above.

This is nowhere more prevalent than in terms of the shape and growth of the settlement. It is possible to identify a complex sequence of occupation within SAM 879 and the properties which divide it. This sequence can be demonstrated to begin at a time around the Roman Conquest and to continue through into the fourth century, and it is tempting to see this area, and more particularly that part southwest of Castle Keep as the core of the Roman Town. The hypothesis does not really stand up.

5.3.7.2 While it is true that the bulk of the material is derived from this area, that may in itself be an artefact, as it is the area which has seen the most disturbance. There is no reason not to think of that density of occupation continuing alongside the Portway from the hillfort to the river. The parchmarks and other features plotted from air photographs (Corney 2001 and Fig. 5) lend weight to this possibility. Such an arrangement makes better sense of the assemblages from the hillfort and across Bishopdown, leaving them less isolated.

5.3.7.3 A simple view of Sorviodunum might be as an unenclosed settlement lining the first century Portway between the hillfort and Tadpole Island, with a suburb on the western bank. The Castle Close enclosure might have delineated a small compound of civil administrative/military function. Increasing prosperity and growth result in a larger street grid and rerouting of the Portway, shifting the centre of the town and leaving the road

adjacent to the 1977 building as a back lane. The activity within the hillfort might be administrative, or very possibly religious, given the tendency of Romano-British temples to occupy native monuments. The quantities of refuse found across Bishopdown may be simply that and the sides of the Bishopdown track - if it existed then - might have been flanked with middens.

5.3.7.4 A grander Sorviodunum would include most of these things. The Castle Close enclosure would be a fully fledged fort, built in AD43, providing winter barracks for a cavalry ala and the forward line of Vespasian's army. The parchmarks identified as streets parallel with the Portway could be seen as the remnants of an incomplete circuit of walls and the pond south of Castle Keep as a harbour.

5.3.7.5 These two interpretations are both equally valid, and both almost certainly wrong. The problem lies in the fractured nature of the evidence. In order to progress beyond this, or other works of synthesis certain of the questions raised above must be addressed. The collection of all surviving assemblages and archives and their assessment, analysis and publication as a single work would be of inestimable value in so doing.

#### **5.4 Saxon** (Fig 6)

5.4.1 The Dark Ages begin here in 552, the date given by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the defeat of the British at Searobyrg by Cynric, King of the West Saxons. They end with the destruction of Wilton in 1003 by the Danish army under Sweyn. The archaeological evidence is confined to a single sherd of grass tempered pottery, items of jewellery, a coin and thirteen burials.

5.4.2 The isolated finds are of little analytical value. The burials (SD066), were excavated in 1890 from the mound of a bronze age tumulus. Originally recorded as Romano-British, reinterpretation of the descriptions of their grave goods led to their reclassification as Saxon in their SMR entry. The archive and assemblage from the burials has been entirely lost, all that remains being Blackmore's report in (Blackmore, 1890-1). They had been buried prone, with their hands behind their backs. This grisly detail suggests execution, and it is by no means impossible that they were buried within the tumulus to add a particular emphasis to their execution. Two probable 5<sup>th</sup> century graves were discovered to the north of Old Sarum during the construction of a pipeline (**SD064**).

5.4.3 Settlement evidence of the Dark Ages is confined to documentary sources. Settlement at the hillfort is inferred, in that there must have been something for Cynric to conquer, and for the people displaced from Wilton (see below) to flee to. Apart from the hillfort, further documentary evidence exists for the presence of a small hamlet of Afene, on the site of the modern Avon Farm.

5.4.4 Avon Farm (**SD122**) has long been identified as the survivor of a Medieval manor and tithing of Avon (Bonney 1969 & VCH var.). The

earliest record of the settlement is found in three Anglo-Saxon charters - the earliest of 972 - all of which refer to lands at, or near Avene or Afene.

## **5.5 Medieval** (Fig. 7.)

### **5.5.1 Castle and Cathedral**

- 5.5.1.1 The first historical evidence of Sarum are her moneyers, Godwine, Goldus and Saewine, arrived from Wilton in 1003 after its sacking by Sweyn.
- 5.5.1.2 This period of the hillfort's history may well resemble that of Cadbury Castle, the Iron Age hillfort reoccupied to protect the mints of Somerset from the Danes. No physical evidence of the early eleventh century has yet been identified.
- 5.5.1.3 The castle at Sarum was founded by William I very soon after the conquest and he was carrying out his business there by 1069/1070. The motte dates from this period, as do the earlier cross banks and initial additions to the Iron Age circuit. These formed an outer bailey occupying much of the eastern half of the fortress, with the cathedral close to the west. The original castle is likely to have been of wood, but by the later 11th century it had been furnished with a stone keep and a stone east gate.
- 5.5.1.4 Early in the following century the courtyard house, forebuilding, kitchens and a third tower were added. By 1140 the motte was enclosed by substantial buttressed walls, and a curtain wall lined all but the northeast quadrant of the outer rampart.
- 5.5.1.5 In 1075 the see of Salisbury was created out of that of Sherborne and the then Bishop of Ramsbury, Herman, became the first Bishop of Salisbury. Although he instigated the building of the first cathedral he died shortly afterwards and it was his successor, Osmund who would consecrate the new building on April 5th 1092.
- 5.5.1.6 Osmund's cathedral was a relatively simple affair. It consisted of an aisled nave ca 40m long, with short transepts, each with small chapels and an apsed chancel. A sacristy was attached to the north transept. The whole structure was 60m long and 40 wide.
- 5.5.1.7 The cathedral close was outside the castle precincts, isolated in the northwest corner of the hillfort. This situation cannot have been particularly comfortable, and certainly did not suit a man of such ambition as Roger, the third Bishop.

Roger came to the Bishopric in 1107, eight years after the death of Osmund, and swiftly began to make his mark. His first work was the construction, ca 1110, of a cellared treasury with vestry above, immediately north of the north transept. Though separately built, this was part of an ambitious expansion, which would ultimately double the size of the cathedral. Bishop Roger's Treasury was the springing point for a new

pair of transepts and choir, the width of which took up the length of the original chancel and apse. East of this a 30m long aisled presbytery led to a grand high altar flanked by north and south chapels. Within the angle of the new east end and treasury a fifty metre square cloister led to a palace of similar scale. There are indications in the placing of the pillars within the choir that Roger also planned to rebuild the nave on the somewhat wider plan of the presbytery. Politics, however, were about to intrude.

- 5.5.1.8 In the course of his ambitious expansion of the cathedral Roger applied to, and got the custody of the castle from Henry I. It was during his Bishopric that much of the stone building was added to the motte and although it is not entirely clear when he took over stewardship of the castle, it is clear that he was responsible for the wall around the motte and the curtain wall.
- 5.5.1.9 Though it is difficult to distinguish cause and effect, Roger's dalliance with castles - he also built them at Sherborne, Devizes and Malmesbury - appears to coincide with overreaching himself politically. It seems that he hedged his bets during the dispute between Stephen and Maud, and lost. In 1139 he was seized, and was compelled to surrender to the king. By Christmas he was dead, and Stephen had come to Sarum and confiscated the treasures of the cathedral.
- 5.5.1.10 The building was completed during the latter half of the twelfth century by the addition of a substantial narthex. This was likely to have consisted of twin towers flanking a west door, although the surviving foundations can give no idea of form beyond their mass. This final addition to Osmund's cathedral was added during the episcopate of Bishop Jocelyn. The fourth bishop was consecrated in 1142, while the castle was constabled by the family of Edward of Salisbury, to whom Stephen had granted it after Roger's removal. Unfortunately, they sided with the empress Maud, which appears to have so annoyed Stephen that he ordered the castle demolished in 1152.
- 5.5.1.11 Bishop Roger's grand designs had not really improved the position of the cathedral. Although things had improved during his stewardship of the castle,, the return to secular stewardship meant that the canons found themselves surrounded by the castle, not just isolated by it. Constant friction between the two users of the fortress culminated in 1215 with the Constable barring the gates to the returning Rogationtide procession. The fifth Bishop, Herbert Poore began negotiations for a transfer of the site and papal consent was given on 29th March 1218.
- 5.5.1.12 In 1219 a cemetery was consecrated, and a temporary chapel built at the site of the future cathedral. Mass was celebrated there by the sixth Bishop, Richard Poore on Trinity Sunday 1219. The site at Old Sarum was not immediately deserted, and the chapel of St Mary (a side chapel at the east end of the south aisle remained in use, at least as late as 1246. In 1237 the secular buildings within the cathedral precincts were ordered demolished and the materials used for the

maintenance of the castle. Finally, permission was granted in 1331 for stone from the old cathedral to be used in New Sarum for the construction of the close wall and other repairs. The side chapel was retained or rebuilt and was still standing and maintained in 1540 (Musty 1962).

5.5.1.13 The fortunes of the castle declined during the same period, though this is likely to have been due to changes in the political climate, rather than the parochial situation. Although a royal castle it was an asset rather than a residence, acting as the administrative and military centre of the shire. By the mid thirteenth century, with the threat of baronial discontent and civil war past, it can have had very little military usefulness. It was occasionally and variously garrisoned until 1360, but the threat of war remained distant. In 1447 the king received no rent from the castle, such was its decayed state, and in 1515 Henry VIII granted Thomas Compton, Groom of the Chamber liberty to knock down and carry the walls away.

## 5.5.2 *Extra-mural Settlement*

5.5.2.1 The activities of the secular masses are far less visible. Fieldwork within the old hillfort, though of restricted scale, has shown that although relatively complex series of buildings exist within the circuit of the outer bailey, they are more likely to be small service buildings associated with the castle than part of the city proper, which lay outside the fortifications. Three areas of settlement can be identified that are contiguous with the fortress and may be considered as part of the city of Sarum. These areas are often referred to as suburbs, a misnomer arising from John Leland's itineraries in which they are thus described. These areas of settlement are, at least in part, the town or city itself, there having apparently been no appreciable settlement within the castle precincts.

5.5.2.2 The eastern district, **SD145**, has been the subject of the most intensive investigation with programs of excavation, evaluation and watching brief having been carried out since the mid nineteenth century. The results obtained have revealed a complex settlement, the extent of which remains unclear. The form of the settlement is also imprecisely understood, but can be broken down into the gross simplification of areas of occupation, burial and industrial activity.

5.5.2.3 Occupation evidence is largely composed of rubbish pits, cess pits and wells, with only three buildings having been conclusively identified. The pits, which have produced material dating from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries, are largely clustered northwest of the line between the junction of Ford Road with Old Castle Road and the end of the deeply incised, modern, Portway. The bulk of these were identified after the ploughing of the pasture immediately adjacent to the hillfort, and fieldwalking suggested that the occupation extended to the base of the rampart. It is at least possible that some of the parchmarks on the other side of the former Roman road also belong to Sarum, rather than Sorviodunum.

5.5.2.4 The few pits from this area that were excavated were associated with one of the three buildings identified. This structure comprised four walls of differing construction forming a footprint ca 16m long and 10 wide. It was situated at the rear of the then Ford Farm (now Roman's Rest), and was built on top of an earlier trackway following the projected line of the former Roman road. Two phases of building were identified (12-13th and 13th - 14th century) and the excavators (Musty and Rahtz 1964) felt that it was likely that only a part of the structure had been exposed. The other two buildings lie outside the area of occupation, within **SD080**, a substantial cemetery, to which they appear to belong.

5.5.2.5 At least seventy burials have so far been revealed within the cemetery, which occupies a site on both sides of Old Castle Road immediately east of its junction with Ford Road. Investigations in 1933 exposed parts of two buildings almost immediately opposite the junction. One could be loosely dated to the thirteenth century by means of stonework recovered from it, was oriented east-west and contained a stone lined basin, which may have been a font base. The cemetery adjoined it on its southern side, but no graves were noted from within it. The second building had been cut into by several graves, and overlay cess pits which contained 11th - 12th century pottery. The description of the remains of the first building (RCHME 1980, Musty & Rahtz 1964) is entirely consistent with their having been part of a church, and the excavators, Stone & Charlton, suggested that it might be the remnant chapel of St John mentioned by Leland in 1540.

5.5.2.6 The bulk of the burials recorded from north of Old Castle Road were from two shallow mass graves exposed after ploughing in 1960. The skeletons (which were not lifted, but recorded in situ) had been hurriedly buried with many of the bodies overlapping. No gross pathology was noted, and it seems most likely that they were the victims of some form of plague, perhaps the Black Death of 1356.

5.5.2.7 As well as the mass graves, two individual burials were recorded. This shows that the main cemetery also extended this far north, which in turn suggests that the Old Castle Road is a post-Medieval bypass of the decayed east suburb recorded by Leland. As well as this northern group, hearsay records that many other burials have been ploughed up in the area since the nineteenth century. Among these less effectively located burials was one found in 1854 by Akerman, in the infuriatingly vague "field almost opposite the Old Castle Inn". He had been buried with a chalice and paten (now in the British Museum).

These prietly symbols were tentatively dated as 12th century (Musty & Rahtz 1964.) The burial is particularly intriguing. Although it would be egregious to suggest that he was one of the bishops, the presence of the chalice and paten must mean that he was a high ranking churchman, perhaps a member of the cathedra. If that is the case then it is extraordinary that he was not buried within the cathedral precinct. Unless he was in some way disgraced, we must assume that his place of

burial was suitable to his rank and this suggests the presence of an important ecclesiastical complex within the eastern district.

5.5.2.8 Apart from the various chapels within the castle and cathedral precincts, four other churches are known. These are the church of the Holy Cross, St Peter's, St Ethelreda's and St John's.

The church of the Holy Cross was located supra (either immediately outside, or actually above) the main gate of the fortress. It has a long documentary history detailing bequests for its repair and upkeep between 1236 and 1484. By the time of Leland's visit it was entirely ruinous.

5.5.2.9 St Peter's is first mentioned in 1229 as a gift of the king to Wymund the clerk. In 1327 its parson instituted legal proceedings against the chaplain of the Holy Cross. He claimed that his predecessors had received the tithing of the castle and that the chaplain had stolen them. The jury did not uphold his claim, stating that the tithe had passed from the cathedral to the Holy Cross on the transfer to New Sarum. The church was at least still standing in 1343/4 when escaped prisoner's sought sanctuary there.

5.5.2.10 St Ethelreda's history is still more fragmentary. Two bequests are recorded, one in 1351 by the king to the church of St Aldreda and another ten years later to St Ethelred. The dedication suggests a pre-conquest foundation (VCH).

5.5.2.11 St John's is referred to by Leland, and he records a chapel thereof, still standing within the eastern suburb. This was felt to refer to the Hospital of St John the Baptist and St Anthony, a leper hospice of royal patronage and twelfth century foundation and known to have been built somewhere east of the fortress. For some time, though with no particular historical justification, the Ordnance Survey mapped St John's Hospital as having been situated northeast of the fortress, within the angle of the Amesbury and Ford roads. This, and Leland's observations were the foundation of Stone & Charlton's tentative suggestion that the buildings at SD080 might be the Hospital of St John, with both it and Leland's church of St John one and the same. Recent fieldwork suggests otherwise.

5.5.2.12 In 2002 during topsoil stripping for a pipeline easement east of Old Sarum a substantial ecclesiastical complex, **SD286**, was partly exposed. Situated 400m east of SD080, it consisted of the remains of a substantial building and associated graves within and partly overlying an enclosure defined by a series of ditches of at least three phases, sharing a frontage of ca 75m along the south side of Ford Road. Material recovered by hand cleaning was dated to the 12th-13th centuries AD. Although the building contained some internal burials its plan form was not immediately suggestive of a church, and it seems likely that the internal burials are within a chapel which forms part of a much larger building. Geophysical survey carried out on English Heritage's behalf in April 2003 gave inconclusive results, probably as a result of deep ploughing/subsoiling.



- 5.5.2.13 The balance of probabilities suggest that this, rather than SD080, is the site of St John's Hospital and that Stone and Charlton's buildings, and by extension Akerman's Priest, belong to either St Peter's, or St Ethelreda's Church (it is, of course, also possible that Leland's record was entirely accurate and that St. John's chapel was a separate entity to the Leper Hospice and dedicated to a different St John).
- 5.5.2.14 The cemetery and church of **SD080** also lie within the angle described by **SD078** and **SD083**, an area of occupation and chalk quarrying recorded by Musty and Rahtz in 1957. These sites on either side of the Ford road were identified during a pipeline watching brief. They consisted of clusters of pits containing 12th century domestic refuse associated with building remains (**SD078**) and an area of quarrying and lime burning (**SD083**). This area of Medieval domestic and industrial activity was confined to a 120m long strip of pipeline and appeared to be delineated by ditches to its west and south (Musty 1959). If the lines of those ditches are extended to the southwest they conform in a pleasing fashion with the configuration of the roads recorded by Rahtz in 1958. This may suggest that the cemetery, church and lime production areas are all part of a true suburb, arranged alongside a Medieval road towards Ford.
- 5.5.2.15 The pattern of occupation west of the fortress is considerably easier to trace. **SD068** consists of a group of burgage plots flanking Phillips Lane. These are clearly visible as crop marks north of the modern road, and extend southward as earthworks. Ploughing of the pasture between these and the west gate of the fortress, while infrequent, has exposed large quantities of domestic refuse and substantial greensand blocks (Musty & Rahtz 1964, p141). Linear features are also visible as cropmarks within this pasture.
- 5.5.2.16 The arrangement of features appears to consist of a western group of six or seven tofts aligned broadly SW-NE with to their east a less clear group of properties facing the west gate of the fortress. Trackways pass along the northeastern and southwestern edges of the settlement. The alignments of these tracks appears to be preserved in the modern boundaries, the northern path being reflected in the boundaries of No1, the Rings and the southern in the course of the unmade footpath which skirts the edge of the Scheduled Area. It is likely that these are the Medieval roads out of the west gate of the fortress. Phillip's Lane, despite its deeply incised air of great antiquity, does not respect the alignment of the properties so clearly visible on either side of it and must be considered more recent.
- 5.5.2.17 Archaeological evidence from the site is restricted to the record of material exposed by ploughing (above) and to discoveries made during SMARG's watching brief of the 1969 North Sea Gas pipeline. This passed through the eastern end of the site and exposed a number of ditches and cesspits containing twelfth and thirteenth century pottery and domestic refuse, as well as some building stone (Algar, 1970).

- 5.5.2.18 The settlement concerned may be identified with Newton Westgate, mentioned in a lease of 1353, a will of 1361 and again in 1424. (VCH). The name may reflect extra-mural urban growth, perhaps as part of Bishop Roger's twelfth century ambitions.
- 5.5.2.19 Two further settlements, Stratforde SD067 and Avon SD107 can be identified. The former lies at the north end of the modern village of Stratford-sub-Castle, between Dean's Farm and Mauwarden Court. A beautifully preserved Deserted Medieval Village dating from at least 1091, it consists of the earthwork remains of six or more properties apparently fronting onto a lane running alongside the river (RCHME 1980). The deep tofts extend eastward past the church where they are obscured by, or run into the earthwork remains of Newton Westgate.
- 5.5.2.20 As well as this core around St Lawrence's church, scattered finds of Medieval material have been made throughout the modern village, and evidence has been recovered of Medieval occupation in the vicinity of the Portway. The remains of four buildings - or structures of some sort - have been identified.
- 5.5.2.21 The presence of at least three houses is attested by **SD097**, **SD055** and **SD096**, all of which survive as patches of chalk flooring or other building material and scatters of domestic refuse dating between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. None have been the subject of structured investigation. **SD097** was discovered during SMARG's pipeline watching brief; **SD055** was discovered by Stratton while investigating the line of the portway, which it had disturbed, much to the excavator's disgust and **SD096** was recorded by the same OS inspector who located the buildings at 6 Castle Keep and Sorviudunum Cottage.
- 5.5.2.22 Medieval activity was also revealed in the footings trenches of Sorviudunum Cottage (**SD055**), where a small, shallow cellar with chalk block walls and floor was recorded. It may have functioned as an icehouse as the chalk blocks of the cellar floor were quite rounded and worn, but appeared weathered or puddled rather than crushed or rammed.
- 5.5.2.23 Avon (the modern Avon Farm) is rather less well preserved, having been continuously occupied since its foundation. Archaeological investigations during redevelopment of the farm buildings revealed evidence of Medieval occupation and deep subsoil layers. The occupation material contained both early (11th -12th century) and later (13th -14th century) examples of pottery produced locally, at Laverstock. This is consistent with the identification of Avon Farm as the surviving remnant of the manor and tithing of Avon (see above). Documentary and cartographic research carried out as a corollary to the fieldwork suggested that the unsurveyed earthworks to the south and east of the site represent the remains of the hamlet as it existed in 1840, rather than a shrunken Medieval village, as was formerly thought. Six fragments of twelfth century masonry present nearby may well have been purloined at a later date after the cathedral at Old Sarum had fallen into disrepair.

### **5.5.3 Ambiguities**

5.5.3.1 The layout of the castle and cathedral close, and the general background to the history and political interaction thereof are well understood, as are the smaller settlements, where they are known. While it might be expected that further fieldwork within these sites might produce further data and greater detail, there are none of the problems and questions attendant upon Sorviodunum, for example. The principal ambiguities lie with the city of Sarum, outside the castle, and with St John's Hospital.

5.5.3.2 The data from the city is extremely fragmentary and as a result, while a line may be tentatively drawn around an area on the saddle between the east gate and Bishopdown, such an interpretation of its extent is rather speculative. Similarly, little idea can be gained of the layout of the settlement, except that there is clearly a large cemetery approximately at the apex of the Old Castle Road.

5.5.3.3 The ecclesiastical complex at **SD286**, may well be the site of St John's Hospital, although this is not absolutely proven. The results of the geophysical survey are disappointing, not so much in that they were unable to identify a ground plan for the buildings concerned, but that no clear picture emerged of the enclosure within which the complex was built. The triple ditches surrounding the site are fascinating, and the fact that the innermost two ditches were overcut by graves even more so. It is quite possible that the complex was surrounded by a substantial ditch, as a barrier to the disease, and that further expansion was twice required in order to cope with the demands of burial. However, there remains the tantalising possibility that the enclosure predates the complex.

### **5.5.4 Conclusions**

5.5.4.1 Sarum consisted of a reasonably large settlement outside the east gate of a very large castle precinct, within which was the cathedral close. The settlement was plagued by insular political disturbance in the form of friction between the cathedral and castle, and occasionally by civil unrest. It may well be that this has some bearing on the difficulty of recognising the form of the Medieval settlement outside the walls.

5.5.4.2 The settlement appears to have come to prominence firstly in 1003 as the result of the sacking of Wilton, and then as a result of the hillfort being reworked into a castle. It may always have been essentially an extension of the castle, within which the populace might seek refuge in times of trouble - such as the civil war between Stephen and Maud. If this were the case, perhaps most of the civic functions of the town, such as markets and fairs, might have taken place within the outer bailey, thus obviating the need for a borough, such as is seen at Marlborough, or Ludgershall, or any of the developed market towns of the county.

5.5.4.3 Such a situation might well have resulted in a relatively amorphous extramural settlement, largely residential, but also used for burial and the more dangerous industrial processes, such as quarrying and slaking lime.

5.5.4.4 If this was the case, it might explain the relatively indecent haste with which the local merchants and general populace decamped for Bishop Poore's New Sarum and its wide, modern thoroughfares and market place.

5.5.4.5 Such a fickle pattern of settlement may perhaps also be seen in the surrounding villages and the western suburb. The area covered by Medieval occupation is huge, totalling almost a square kilometre, larger, in fact than New Sarum and its Cathedral Close. Were all this area in contemporary occupation, the economic power of Old Sarum would surely have been greater than it evidently was. The cathedral, if relocated at all, would have been built somewhere within the extensive ecclesiastical estates nearby, rather than a mile and a half to the south and uptake of property within the new city would have been slower - and the foundation thereof would have been risky indeed. All the evidence suggests that the pattern of settlement was fluid, with people moving out of the valley into the town, then out again as it grew and subsequently back to the valley floor with the towns slow dissolution.

5.5.4.6 Within the broadest possible terms of accuracy, the largest extent of the settlement at Old Sarum seems to have been of about 16 - 20 hectares (excluding the fortress), stretching from the modern Dean's Farm to the cemetery and lime kilns on the Old Castle Road. The pattern of resettlement, or indeed, its continuation alongside the town is still less clear, although some clues are available in the form of the Post-Medieval village.

## **5.6 THE POST-MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN PERIODS**

5.6.1 The present day character of the village is strongly influenced by the Post-Medieval plan form, dominated by the estate farms: Dean's Farm (**SD314**)- at the northern end of the village - then Mauwarden Court (**SD315**), the Prebendal Estate (**SD316**), Parsonage Farm (**SD317**), Subchanter's Farm and Chancellor's Farm (Orchard House, **SD279**), the boundaries of which are still extant, extending in series down the south-western flank of the road.

5.6.2 Apart from the buildings of Subchanter's Farm the bulk of the estate buildings of the 17th and 18th centuries still exist in amongst the more modern houses. The plan form of the southern end of the village is dominated by the dogleg of Post Office Corner. North of the road the properties follow alignments already well established in the 18th century (Chandler 1983). The housing estate of which to the south east occupies the historic property of "The Wilderness" . This square property, approximately 2 hectares in size appears to be the reason for the double bend - the earliest record of which is ca 1700 - and is believed to predate it.

5.6.3 The modern Dean's Farm and Stratford Manor occupy parts of a Medieval manorial estate of Stratford Dean and are its only surviving remnants. This pattern is shared by the other estate farms, all of which grew out of Medieval properties, almost all of which were originally possessions of the Bishopric.

Stratford Dean, as its name suggests, was originally the property of the Dean of Salisbury. It is first mentioned in 1225, and subsequently in 1312 and 1336. The existing buildings consist of the Manor House, which is of flint and ashlar (late 16th century) and Dean's Farm, an L shaped house of brick, flint and ashlar (18th century onwards). Both modern properties contain groups of brick and timber outbuildings which are likely to be Georgian and later in date.

5.6.4 Mauwarden Court is one of the most striking buildings in the village, square in plan with two projecting gabled wings facing the road and St Lawrence's church. Entirely of ashlar masonry it dates originally from the early seventeenth century and may have been built for Philip Herbert the then Earl of Montgomery. The estate dates from ca 1412 when it was owned by Richard Mawarden, a knight. The modern building is situated at the head of a grand landscaped garden, which may have originally extended further north into the meadows behind the modern Reading Room.

5.6.5 Prebendal House is the 18th century survivor of the rich Medieval estate of the prebend of Stratford St Lawrence, dating from ca 1217. In 1405 the home farm consisted of a hall, barns, byre and dovecote, with a bakehouse and gates being added by 1425. No trace of these buildings is now visible, except perhaps in the reused masonry in the north wall of the present house. This is of red-brick and unusual form. The north end consists of a Venetian windowed two-story splayed bay of early eighteenth century date which it seems likely may have formed the central feature of a much longer frontage. The lower southern range is an addition of the mid nineteenth century.

5.6.6 Parsonage Farm consists of a front range parallel with the road and a long wing running back at right angles to it. The former is ca 16th century, of two stories, with stone base and upper timber frame. The yellow brick frontage dates from ca 1800. The five bay roof is original and the former hall retains some sixteenth century features. Incorporated into the rear wing is a stone building, probably 17th century, originally freestanding 10ft to the rear of the front range. The first floor has a panelled chamber with coved ceiling, traditionally known as the chapel room. The two parts of the house were joined by a new roof and infilling in the late 17th or early 18th century.

5.6.7 Subchanter's (succentor's) Farm dates from ca 1228 and by 1649 comprised a two story farmhouse, stables and a five bayed barn and granary. Nothing of the property now remains, although its boundaries

may have been fossilised between Parsonage Farm and Chancellor's Farm.

Chancellor's Farm survives today as Orchard House, a long red brick building apparently of 18th century origin. The frontage onto Stratford Road is Georgian with a central doorway of ca 1800. The estate dates from at least 1328 and by 1649 had a house with hall, kitchen, parlour, buttery, milk house and four lodging chambers.

5.6.8 The topography of the southern end of the village is similarly dominated by boundaries which were extant in 1700 which may well have a Medieval origin. Aspects of their morphology, and more specifically the morphology of those boundaries (**SD318**) which made up part of the rotten borough of Old Sarum (Chandler 1983), suggest that in its latest state the Medieval town of Old Sarum may have extended as far as the river.

Archaeological evidence, however, does not bear this out. In the several campaigns of fieldwork that have been carried out along the line of the portway from the theological college playing field to the river only sparse Medieval occupation has been noted, and certainly nothing like the quantities of refuse that one might expect from the burgages of a Medieval town. Equally, the amount of post-Medieval material recovered from the area is more consistent with rural occupation than an urban population. Overall, it seems more likely that the boundaries are resultant from fluctuations in the ownership of the estate properties and reflect the needs, and greed, of individual landowners. The greed being again reflected in the perpetuation of the Borough of Old Sarum as an electoral unit until the Reform Bill of 1832.

## **5.7 BUILT HERITAGE**

5.7.1 This section of the report is intended to provide an introduction to the surviving built heritage of the town. However, in the case of Old Sarum itself, the pattern of surviving structures conveys little of relevance to subsequent development of the City of Salisbury and other historic buildings in the area relate to adjacent hamlets and villages, again conveying no message relating to urbanisation. Details are provided in Appendices 3 – 5, and the principal structures are described in 5.6 above. A detailed description of the structures at Old Sarum in RCHME 1980.

## **6 PLAN FORM ANALYSIS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

6.1.1 The study area differs considerably from the zones accessed in other Wiltshire EUS reports containing a substantial area of prehistoric landscape. An attempt has been made to subdivide the area in order to phase this into a series of components, which are listed below.

COMPONENT	PERIOD	COMPONENT TYPE	FIGURE No.
COM1	Bronze Age	Cemetery	8
COM2	Prehistoric	Settlement	8
COM3	Iron Age	Hillfort	8
COM4	Iron Age	Occupation	8
COM5	Iron Age	Settlement	8
COM6	Roman	Settlement	9
COM7	Roman	Settlement	9
COM8	Roman	Settlement	9
COM9	Roman	Roads	9
COM10	Roman	Cemetery	9
COM11	Roman	Cemetery	9
COM12	Saxon	Occupation	10
COM13	Saxon	Cemetery	10
COM14	Saxon	Cemetery	10
COM15	Medieval	Castle Cathedral, Settlement	11
COM16	Medieval	Suburb	11
COM17	Medieval	Suburb	11
COM18	Medieval	Settlement	11
COM19	Medieval	Settlement	11
COM20	Medieval	Hospice	11

**Table 2:** Plan form components. (The period column denotes the period within which that component had its origins)

## 6.2 Prehistoric (Fig 8)

- 6.2.1 **COM1 – Bronze Age Barrow Cemetery.** Three clusters of ring ditches indicating location of former Bronze Age round barrows are located to the north of Old Sarum and represent the presence of a substantial community in the area in the early Bronze Age. (5.2.2)
- 6.2.2 **COM2 –** A series of events have revealed traces of prehistoric settlement (including both Neolithic and Bronze Age activity) at three locations scattered across the stony area. (5.2.1 – 4) Much of this occupation may be contemporary with the development of barrow cemeteries forming COM 1.
- 6.2.3 **COM 3 –** The Iron Age hillfort underlying the Medieval defences of Old Sarum is believed to date from circa. 700 BC on the evidence of pottery found during the 1957 excavations. (see 5.2.5.2 above) The hillfort occupies a prominent location overlooking the river Avon.
- 6.2.4 **COM 4 –** An area of Iron Age occupation extending west of the hillfort. A similar area of extra mural settlement has been found at Battlesbury hillfort overlooking Warminster.
- 6.2.5 **COM 5 –** An extensive zone of Iron Age settlement following southeast from the Iron Age hillfort along the higher ground towards the confluence of the rivers Avon and Bourne. Much of this evidence has been acquired during the course of building development and its nature is far from clear. The sub-evidence of related field systems is available from aerial photography. (5.2.4.5)

### **6.3 Roman Period (Fig 9)**

- 6.3.1 Sorviodunum represents perhaps the most evocative and enigmatic part of this archaeological landscape. As we have seen, its presence, absence, size, shape and importance have been debated for the last hundred years at least. Its accurate delineation is perhaps the most important of any of the research aims which will be identified in this document. Presently available data identifies three main components of settlement, the roads which service them and elements of the cemeteries which once accepted their dead.
- 6.3.2 **COM 6** - The main part of the small town is currently identified as occupying the south-eastern end of the village of Stratford-sub-Castle, with indications that it may have straddled the Avon at Tadpole Island. (5.3.3) This belief is based upon the series of investigations carried out by Stratton and company in the late sixties and early seventies and subsequent PPG16 work. This body of data constitutes the largest and most coherent element of the excavated record. Other parts of the Roman settlement have been less well served.
- 6.3.3 **COM 7** - The next most coherent body of data is that recovered from the Paul's Dene Estate and the fields on Bishopdown. So far no structural remains have been discovered, but the quantities of domestic refuse certainly declare the presence of extensive middens, if not in situ occupation. (5.3.4)
- 6.3.4 **COM 8** - The hillfort can be identified as having been at least partly occupied. (5.3.2) Structural remains have been identified within the Castle Motte, and Musty's excavations around the tunnel mouth in the Outer Bailey encountered stratigraphy of the period containing material spanning the first to third centuries AD. This suggests firstly that the hillfort was occupied throughout the main period of Sorviodunum's prosperity - very little material of the fourth century has been recovered thus far - and secondly, that at or about 1000 AD Roman buildings still survived within the monument.
- 6.3.5 **COM 9** - These three areas of settlement - which may well have been parts of a contiguous whole - were serviced by at least four roads and possibly as many as six. The roads east to Silchester and Winchester are well documented as is that westwards to Dorchester. A further road runs north along the line of the modern Amesbury road, and has been proven by excavation. The road from the Mendips can be reliably traced as far as the Wylve valley, but the manner in which its traffic may have arrived at Sorviodunum is unclear. It is entirely possible that the present northwest gate of the hillfort and Phillips Lane represent a survival of this road, but there is no direct evidence of this. Margary drew the Mendip road as joining the Dorchester road on the western bank of the Avon, but gives no indication of why he thought this. The sixth route is that postulated towards modern Southampton, leading to



the Roman settlements on the Itchen and Test. Though it seems unlikely that the high dry ground along Bishopdown was not part of the ancient track which runs down the east bank of the Avon connecting Old Sarum with Ogbury and points north, there is not even fragmentary evidence for a Roman route between Sorviodunum and Clausentum.

- 6.3.6 **COM 10** - Among the hundreds of burials noted and recorded within the area around and north of the road junction at Old Sarum, a few have been identified as Roman. The predominance of Medieval graveyards in this area has made identification difficult - and perhaps in some cases impossible. The identification of this area as a potential Roman cemetery is based upon their custom of placing burials alongside roads out of town and on the practical fact that where one Roman burial exists, it is highly unlikely to be alone.
- 6.3.7 **COM 11** - A second potential cemetery may be identified on the northwestern flank of the hillfort, at the corner of Phillips Lane. Two fifth century burials are known from this spot, having been disturbed by the North Sea Gas pipeline of 1969. This site represents the only present link from the Roman Period to the Saxon and may represent a continuity of occupation, death and burial. It is also, of course another indicator that Phillips Lane may represent the Sorviodunum end of the Mendip road.

#### **6.4 Saxon (Fig. 10)**

- 6.4.1 **COM 12** - Saxon material is very rare within the study area, although the presence of scattered grass-tempered pottery and a mention in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle attest to the existence of one Searobyrg. The only reliable clue to Saxon occupation in the area comes from the description of Cynric's defeat of the Britons there. The balance of probabilities must suggest that the hillfort is the site of Searobyrg. It is unclear whether Old Sarum was occupied permanently at that time, or represented a temporary refuge as it did in 1003. The Phillips Lane burials are a tantalising clue. If, as seems likely, they do represent a continuity of occupation - perhaps the burials of foederati serving a local, post Roman leader, then they also suggest that occupation may have continued up to, and perhaps beyond, Cynric's victory.
- 6.4.2 **COM 13, COM14** – Locations of two Saxon cemeteries are known to the north-west and south-east of Old Sarum (5.4.2).

#### **6.5 Medieval (Fig.11)**

- 6.5.1 The Medieval city of Sarum can be divided into two components, the fortress - including both Castle and Cathedral Close, and the city centre, clustered on the saddle between Castle Hill and Bishopdown. Two areas of probable suburbs may also be identified, together with St John's Hospice. The outlying settlements of Avon and Stratford complete the Medieval picture.

- 6.5.2 **COM 15** - The fortress includes both the Cathedral Close and the Castle precincts. (5.5.1) The received wisdom is that there was little or no other occupation within the circuit, however, this has not been subjected to any particularly rigorous analysis. Musty and Rahtz' work covered barely a percentage of the area concerned and the early twentieth century activity was almost entirely concerned with the clearance of rubble obscuring the major buildings. There are sufficient peculiarities in the topography of the baileys and in the disparate nature of the data collected in Musty and Rahtz' prospections to suspect that the true picture must be a great deal more complex than is currently accepted.
- 6.5.3 The main settlement beyond the walls is very poorly understood. It is possible to identify some roads or trackways, and some elements of detail - the positions of various cemetery units for example. However the precise locations of the recorded ecclesiastical buildings largely eludes us, as does any hint of the arrangement of streets, or recognisable dwellings. In fact, our knowledge of Sarum is effectively as incomplete as our knowledge of Sorviodunum.
- 6.5.4 **COM 16** - The suburbs of the city are also the subject of ongoing debate. Newton Westgate has been identified - with equal certitude - with a group of cropmarks outside the north-western entrance of the fortress and alongside the Portway to its southwest. (see Fig. 7, **SD068**) The ambiguity in the name, considering that the fortress-cum-city does not have a West Gate is inconvenient. There does at least seem to be a suburb to the northwest, the cropmarks and various finds made during the 1969 pipeline cutting seem unequivocal. The name of this settlement remains unproven. The evidence for a suburb southwest of the fort derives from map regression, which seems to show the survival of burgages. There is as yet no physical evidence of medieval settlement in this area.
- 6.5.5 **COM 17** – As set out in 5.5.2.2 above there is much evidence from archaeological excavation and watching briefs of an eastern suburb of considerable size, including a cemetery of at least 70 burials. Evidence which dates some of the buildings, this settlement clearly flourished long after the transfer of the cathedral to New Sarum. (5.5.2.2 - 7)
- 6.5.6 There is however abundant evidence of outlying settlement. The villages of Avon (**COM 18**) and Stratforde (**COM 19**) can be identified with some confidence. The full extent of either is not entirely clear. Avon can be clearly identified with Avon Farm, on the west bank of the Avon. This can be proven by documentary evidence and physical archaeological evidence. Stratforde is less easy to unequivocally identify by documentary means, but its physical presence is undeniable in the earthworks which surround the church and crowd the modern village on its northern flank. There is some evidence that part of the

earthwork group belongs with the suburb at the head of Phillips Lane. Part of the ambiguity in identifying Stratforde by documentary means lies in the fact that the names Stratford, Stratforde, Stratford Common, and Stratford under the Castle are used freely throughout. It is entirely possible that these names refer to different hamlets or parts of the same settlement, and this is perhaps borne out in the scatters of medieval material recovered from the southern end of the village.

- 6.5.7 **COM 20** - The final major component of the medieval landscape is the site of St John's Hospice. Identified in 2000 during pipeline cuttings. This lies half a kilometre east of the city along the Ford road. Though subject to only a minimally intrusive examination prior to its preservation in situ, the exposed remains were of some complexity. They include a large ecclesiastical building and cemetery, enclosed within triple ditches. Many of the graves overlie the internal ditches and it is unclear whether the ditches belong to an earlier monument or represent the expansion of the curtilage of the Leper Hospice.

## **6.6 *The Post Medieval Period***

- 6.6.1 The Post-Medieval elements of this landscape are dominated by estate farms. These are largely clustered along the Stratford Road between the Manor House and the Portway. Avon Farm, and the one remaining detached cottage are the survivors of the hamlet of Avon. Avon survived as a hamlet until at least 1841, while Stratford appears to initially have been subsumed in the estate farms, reappearing in the late eighteenth century.

## **7 ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 Summary of Research**

- 7.1.1 A valuable account of the history of archaeological excavations at Old Sarum is set out in James, 2002. He points in particular to the extent of excavations carried out by the Society of Antiquaries prior to the First World War with little activity until 1957 when excavations within the defences indicated occupation from the early Roman period.
- 7.1.2 From the late 1950s through to the present day, casual finds made during the course of development schemes, watching briefs carried out on pipelines and other projects carried out by the Salisbury Museum Archaeological Research Group, and more recently planning conditions placed on developments in sensitive areas close to Old Sarum have all resulted in gradual uncovering of archaeological detail.

A result of these recordings and discoveries have indicated that the Roman settlement is extensive, its boundaries as yet undefined and that aerial photography is making a significant contribution to the understanding of this layout.

Equally, the extent of development of Medieval settlements in the area, appears to be surprisingly complex and extensive, presumably driven by the aftermath of the functions established at Old Sarum and subsequently moved to New Sarum.

## **7.2 Growth of the town**

- 7.2.1 It is the practice in the Wiltshire Extensive Urban Survey Reports to delineate the main phases of the growth of each town. This report covers two elements of urbanisation. The first being the Roman town of Sorviodunum, the second the Medieval focus on the prehistoric fortification subsequently labelled Old Sarum.
- 7.2.2 The Roman plan form (Fig. 9) suggests that the principal element of the Roman urbanisation lay along the Roman road to the southwest and on present evidence this component cannot be subdivided. Its form implies linear development in phases along the road, perhaps with a core and subsequent development a formal organisation including a street grid. An extension of this settlement (**COM 7**) is mapped to the south-east to the Roman road. At present therefore it is impossible to be certain of a growth pattern within this complex.
- 7.2.3 In relation to the Medieval foundations of Castle and Cathedral – and settlement – within Old Sarum itself the sequence of development is reasonably clear. These processes are of course curtailed by the demolition of the castle and the removal of the cathedral to its new site.

In view of the nature and paucity of the evidence therefore no mapping of these processes has been accomplished.

## **7.3 The Archaeological Potential**

- 7.3.1 The primary objectives must be to establish the extent of the Roman town and the Medieval city. Characterisation of the pattern of settlement, and burial, within these urban units would also be desirable. Of similar importance is the possible Oppidum on Bishopdown; this is a theoretical construct at present, but its implications for future development are profound.
- 7.3.2 The single most important conclusion of this synthesis is that the vast publication backlog must be addressed. The correlation and analysis of the existing archives and assemblages would go a long way towards answering the principal research and management questions raised here.
- 7.3.3 It is possible to identify the following distinct research targets:
- the extent of the roadside settlement of Sorviodunum.

- the nature and extent of Romano-British settlement along Bishopdown.
- the extent and arrangement of medieval settlement outside the main gate of the fortress
- the existence or otherwise of the possible Oppidum along Bishopdown
- the extent to which Medieval building has disrupted or masked earlier features in the interior of the fortress
- the presence or absence of a medieval suburb along the Portway.
- the extent of the cemetery outside the northwest gate of the fortress
- the date and extent of the northwestern extra-mural suburb the date range of occupation of the village of Stratforde, and the quality of the archaeological resource represented by its earthworks.
- the date of the building identified as St John's Hospice, its associated burials and enclosure ditches and their collective extent.

7.3.4 The above constitute the major research aims arising from this synthesis. There are other, smaller scale, and highly specific issues. These are:

- Do parchmarks in the riverside meadow at Stratford represent the roads, defensive walls or harbour of Sorviodunum?
- What is the date of the pond feature adjacent to the allotments at Stratford, and what is it?
- Are the unsurveyed earthworks at Avon Farm the remains of the medieval hamlet, or are they post-medieval?
- Does the Rocks Hill East longbarrow contain a stone mortuary house, and what is the barrow's general state of preservation?
- Are the unsurveyed earthworks in Hudson's field part of the Roman town, or do they relate to other periods of activity?

7.3.5 The status quo, whereby the archaeological resource is protected and overseen by the County Archaeological Service has resulted in an enormous increase in information since the inception of PPG16 in 1991. However the dataset has now increased to such a level that an overarching research design is required. Naturally, any development in the area can be overseen and managed using the research frameworks outlined above, but the collection of multiple small datasets

is inefficient, and costly to the individual clients. Secondly, data collection would remain development led and there would inevitably be many null results. The proliferation of grey literature enumerating small or non-existent assemblages would not be particularly helpful. It would be better to develop a system whereby site investigations were carried out individually, but reported on collectively. This could perhaps be arranged or administered by the County Archaeological Service. It would require stringent specification but would result in considerably increased usability of data and information and considerable reduction in per capita cost.

7.3.6 A further possibility would be to have contract works undertaken under the aegis of a community based research project. At present, Old Sarum and Stratford are the focus for proposed fieldwork projects by the U3A's Spire group and by students and pupils of Salisbury College. If these disparate small scale projects could be grouped under a local research design, together with the results of contract works, they could be extremely valuable, and their results published together as a single document. The Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine might be a suitable vehicle for this.

7.3.7 In essence, the archaeological landscape at Old Sarum and Stratford-sub-Castle is at present administered within a framework of responses suited to material of local and regional importance. It has become clear that the study area contains an archaeological resource which can illuminate our knowledge of major transitional phases in our national history. For example, the scatters of Neolithic pits and associated monuments may help to understand the formation of societies on the cusp of a modern, settled relationship with the land. Further societal developments may be traced in the implications of later prehistoric land division and the Late Iron Age use of the hills which dominate the study area. The Roman small town of Sorviodunum may help us understand more about the lives of the general population of Roman Britain, and the transitional periods at either end of the occupation. The medieval city and its associated settlement may further provide data relating to the early relationship of Church, State and Populace. In all these things this archaeological landscape should be considered of at least national importance. The formulation of a conservation plan, within which programmes of ongoing research, development and publication could run is considered of pressing necessity, in order that we may proceed beyond works of synthesis such as this.

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## **9. MAPS**

**1773.** Wiltshire map series, No: 15. Andrews & Dury.

**1820.** Map of the county of Wiltshire. Greenwood (Chandler 1998).

**1886.** Ordnance Survey, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1:500 series.

**1900.** Ordnance Survey, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1:2500 Series.

**1921.** Ordnance Survey, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1:2500 Series.

**1941.** Ordnance Survey, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (with revisions), 1:2500 Series.

**1970.** Ordnance Survey, Geological Survey of Great Britain (England & Wales), Sheet 298, Salisbury, 1" to 1 mile.

## **10 APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I      Towns included in the survey**

	Town	Criteria
1	Amesbury	ii, iii, xi, xi
2	Bradford-on-Avon	iii,vi   viii, xi
3	Calne	ii, iii, ix
4	Chippenham	i, iii, iv, viii, ix, x, xii
5	Cricklade	i, ii, vi
6	CUNETIO	i, ii, iii,. v
7	Devizes	ii, iii, v, ix, xi
8	Downton	i,, ii vi
9	DUROCORNOVIUM	i, vi
10	EASTON GREY	iii, iv, v, ix
11	Great Bedwyn	ii, iii, ix
12	Heytesbury	ii, iv
13	Highworth	ii, vi, ix
14	Hindon	ii, iii, xi
15	Lacock	ii, iii, v, ix
16	Ludgershall	i, iii, iv, xi
17	Malmesbury	iii, ix
18	Market Lavington	ii, iii, iv, xi
19	Marlborough	ii, iii, viii
20	Melksham	ii, iii, xii
21	Mere	iii, viii, xi
22	Ramsbury	i, ii, iii, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, x, xi,
23	Salisbury	i, iii, ix ii, vi
24	Sherston	iii, viii
25	SORVIODUNUM / Old Sarum	i, ii, iii, v, vi, vii, viii,ix,x, xi.
26	Swindon	i, vi, xi
27	Tilshead	ii, iii, viii
28	Tisbury	ii, iii, iv, vii
29	Trowbridge	iii, viii
30	Warminster	i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, vii, ix, xi
31	Westbury	ii, iii, v, ix, xi
32	Wilton	ii, vi
33	Wootton Bassett	
34	VERLUCIO	

## **APPENDIX 2          Urban Criteria set out in Heighway (1972)**

i)          Urban Defences: A town, at some time in its history, might have a wall, or bank and ditch with wooden defences.

ii)        Internal Street plan: A town may be planned at any moment in its history; part of its street pattern may display evidence of deliberate planning, such as a grid lay-out. A street plan with provision for a market place will also distinguish a town.

iii)      Market: Perhaps the only indispensable criterion, although a market alone does not distinguish a town. The date of a market charter is usually taken in this study as indicating the date by which the place had become a town.

iv)      Mint: The existence of a mint often denotes a town.

v)        Legal existence: This aspect of the town was one of the first to be studied and formed the basis of most of the early studies of towns. It has long been evident that legal history, once a favoured method of study, does not provide the only clue to urban origins, in which economic causes play an important part. However, the date of a borough charter or the dates of taxation at borough rates or of the town's parliamentary franchise may provide a date from which the place may be called a town.

vi)      Position: A town may have a central position in a network of communications and this can be a clue to its importance. This can be a difficult criterion to assess as it involves knowledge of the age of the road system in relation to the town itself, the past navigability of rivers, and other related problems.

vii)     Population: A town will often have or have had a high density and size of population compared with surrounding places.

viii)    Diversified economic base: Archaeological or documentary evidence might suggest a diversified economic base, particularly a concentration of various crafts in one area, and evidence of long distance trade. For earlier periods, only archaeological evidence can determine this; it is a reflection on the state of urban archaeology that so little is known of this aspect.

ix)      House plot and house type: The town-plan may show long, narrow 'burgage-type' plots; surviving houses will be urban rather than rural in form.

x)        Social differentiation: A town should contain a wide range of social classes and especially possess a middle class. House types, demonstrated in the earlier periods by archaeology, again form part of the evidence.

xi)      The presence of a complex religious organisation may also denote a town; i.e. the possession of more than one parish church or the existence of

other institutions, especially monastic.

xii) Judicial centre: A town may be a centre for courts of national or local status.

### **Appendix 3: Listed Buildings by Schedule Category (Refer to Dept. of National Heritage schedule for Grade II buildings).**

#### **Grade I**

Remains of Old Sarum Castle & Cathedral, (late 11C/early 12C, 12C, & 13C – AM

#### **A**

St Lawrence's Church, Stratford Road (early 13C, 14C, 15C, 16C, 17C, 18C)

#### **Grade II\***

Marwarden Court, Stratford Road (late 16C/early 17C, 1710, 19C)

### **Appendix 4: Buildings Survival by century**

#### **12<sup>th</sup> Century**

Remains of Old Sarum Castle & Cathedral, 12C-13C - AM

#### **13<sup>th</sup> Century**

St Lawrence's Church, Stratford Road (early 13C, 14C, 15C, 16C, 17C, 18C)

#### **16<sup>th</sup> Century**

Little Thatches & Old Forge Cottage, Stratford Road  
Parsonage Farmhouse, Stratford Road (& late 18C)  
Old Castle Inn, Old Castle Road (second half, C18/C19)  
Marwarden Court, Stratford Road (late 16C/early 17C, 1710, 19C)

#### **17<sup>th</sup> Century**

?Forecourt side walls of Parsonage Farmhouse, ?Boundary wall to east of Parsonage Farmhouse, Barn to Parsonage Farmhouse, Stratford Road  
Flint Cottage & Home Cottage, Church Close, Granary to Dean's Farmhouse, Stratford Road (17C/early 18C)

#### **18<sup>th</sup> Century**

Moreton Cottage, Dairy Cottage, Post Office & Shop (Old Sarum View),  
Former stable block to Marwarden Court, Stratford Road  
Prebendal House, Stratford Road (1700)  
The Old Laundry, Avon Side, Forecourt wall to Marwarden Court, Dean's Farmhouse, Stratford Road  
Orchard House, Stratford Road

#### **19<sup>th</sup> Century**

The Cottage, Stratford Road (1800-30)  
Cottage to north of Old Laundry, Railings & gate in front of Orchard House, Stratford Road (c1800)

Pittsmead, Stratford Road, (early)  
Avon Lodge Stratford Road (c1830)  
Statue of Sidney Herbert, Victoria Park (1863)

### **20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Church of St Francis, Castle Road (1938)

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