

*Wessex Archaeology*

# A303 BYPASS

WINTERBOURNE STOKE  
WILTSHIRE

FIELDWALKING EVALUATION

47422.01

*FEBRUARY 2000*

**A303 BYPASS, WINTERBOURNE STOKE, WILTSHIRE  
FIELDWALKING EVALUATION**

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## Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Aims and Objectives.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Topography, Geology, Soils and Current Land Use.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Fieldwalking Results.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>3</b>

**Figure 1 Site Location**

**Figure 2 Distribution of burnt flint by weight**

**Figure 3 Distribution of ceramic building material by weight**

**Figure 4 Distribution of worked flint by number**

**Figure 5 Distribution of pottery by period**

## **Summary**

A fieldwalking survey was carried out over three fields at Winterbourne Stoke, Wiltshire, along the preferred route of the new A303. No significant clusters of artefacts indicating human activity were detected.

## **Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Mr Robert Turner of Manor Farm, Winterbourne Stoke (tenant farmers National Trust land) for his co-operation.

The fieldwork was carried out by David Godden, Gemma Smith and Neil Walmsley in November and Angela Batt, Bill Moffat, Caroline Appleton and Rob Court. The finds processing and analysis was carried out by Lorraine Mephram. The illustrations for this report were produced by Rob Goller. The project was managed by Mark Roberts.

## **A303 BYPASS, WINTERBOURNE STOKE, WILTSHIRE FIELDWALKING EVALUATION**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An archaeological evaluation by fieldwalking, of land 1km east-north-east of Winterbourne Stoke and lying immediately to the north of the A303 (Figure 1) was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology between the 16th and the 18th of November 1999 in one field and January 12th 2000 in a further two fields. The evaluation area followed the preferred route of the new A303 Winterbourne Stoke Bypass.
- 1.2 The methodologies used followed those of previous evaluations within the Stonehenge Conservation and Management Programme (see Methodology below).
- 1.3 The first field (Field 3) examined in November 1999 consisted of a c. 700m strip aligned roughly east-west. The second and third fields (Fields 1 and 2) were fieldwalked in January 2000. Field 1 was c. 85m long and Field 2 c. 260m: each fieldwalked area ran along the line of the preferred route of the Winterbourne Stoke Bypass. The areas fieldwalked were 100m wide - 50 metres either side of the centreline of the preferred route.

### **2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 As defined in previous specifications concerning work within the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Area, the general aim was to enhance the available information about the archaeological resource represented within the confines of the site to assist with the formulation of appropriate conservation, management and mitigation measures (Darvill 1993, section 2.3).
- 2.2 The specific objectives were as follows:
  - To sample the topsoil, with a view to assessing the general nature and extent of any artefact distributions lying on the disturbed and mixed overburden.
  - To determine as far as possible the date, function and interpretation of any concentrations identified.

### **3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY, SOILS AND CURRENT LAND USE**

- 3.1 The preferred route runs downhill from the east across Fields 3 and 1 and a dry valley or coombe aligned north-west towards the River Till. The route crosses a short section of watermeadow and runs uphill across Field 2 to the west.
- 3.2 The solid geology of the area consists of Upper Chalk, covered with Eocene Clay-with Flints. The topsoil was typical of southern England chalk downlands, consisting of brown humic rendzina.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The position of the centre line of the preferred route was scaled from the 1:10000 map provided by John Samuel Associates. The fieldwalking pattern was centred on the centre line and consisted of parallel transects at 25m spacing running either east to west or north to south across the field. Each collection transect was 2m wide and the artefact collection was carried out in 25m stints which were given unique collection numbers. This provided an 8% sampling of the area along the line of the route.
- 4.2 The fields were walked along a north to south axis in Fields 1 and 2. Each collection unit was assigned a unique number; Field 1 1000, Field 2 2000 and Field 3 3000. In Field 3 the area was walked along the axis of the proposed route of the bypass.

## 5 FIELDWALKING RESULTS

### 5.1 General

- 5.1.1 The material recovered during the fieldwalking was primarily burnt flint and ceramic building material. In addition very small quantities of pottery, worked stone and non-local stone were collected. Total quantities collected are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Total quantities of finds collected**

Material type	Number	Weight
Burnt Flint	334	11093 g
CBM	163	3713 g
Worked Flint	100	1507
Pottery	33	405 g
<i>Romano-British</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>11 g</i>
<i>Medieval</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>10 g</i>
<i>Post-medieval</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>384 g</i>
Stone	5	2259 g

### 5.2 Burnt flint (Figure 2)

- 5.2.1 Fields 1 and 3 were covered by a diffuse distribution of burnt flint, of uncertain but presumed prehistoric date. None of the collection units produced significant weights of burnt flint although in two places two collection units producing the highest standard deviations were adjacent; no clusters are visible. Field 2 did not produce either significant quantities or distributions of burnt flint.

### **5.3 Ceramic building material (Figure 3)**

5.3.1 No significant clusters are recognisable. The majority of this material comprises roof tile and brick fragments of post-medieval date. Although, a small number of probable medieval roof tile fragments were recognised, all small and abraded.

### **5.4 Worked flint (Figure 4)**

5.4.1 The fields produced a diffuse scatter of worked flint. The assemblage includes a mixture of patinated and unpatinated pieces, with most pieces exhibiting the edge damage characteristic of a ploughzone assemblage. Tools are limited to two end scrapers and two hammerstones; there are no other retouched or utilised pieces. Technologically the assemblage is mixed, but flake morphology and hammer technique (broad, squat flakes struck using hard hammer technique) suggest a Bronze Age date; there is no evidence here of the presence of an earlier prehistoric component. Considering the location of the site within a World Heritage Area the number and type of flints collected is extremely restricted.

### **5.5 Pottery (Figure 5)**

5.5.1 One sherd of Romano-British pottery (coarse greyware) was collected from Field 3. A medieval sherd was also recovered from this field, while Field 2 produced a second medieval sherd. Both medieval sherds are coarsewares of Laverstock type, probably of 13th century date. The remaining pottery is of post-medieval date.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

6.1 No significant clusters or distributions of any class of artefact were noted. Human activity (i.e. settlement) may have avoided the steep sides of the coombe which covers most of Fields 1 and 3. The similarities between the distributions of burnt flint and CBM may indicate that any patterning has been produced by ploughing rather than representing the sites of human activity.

6.2 Given the location of the fields within a World Heritage Area and the presence of a prehistoric settlement (evidenced by concentrations of burnt flint) to the west of the preferred route and a Roman settlement at Oaklands Hill, to the south, the results of the fieldwalking may be indicative of the arable or pastoral use of the site i.e. the route crosses the fields which lie between settlements.

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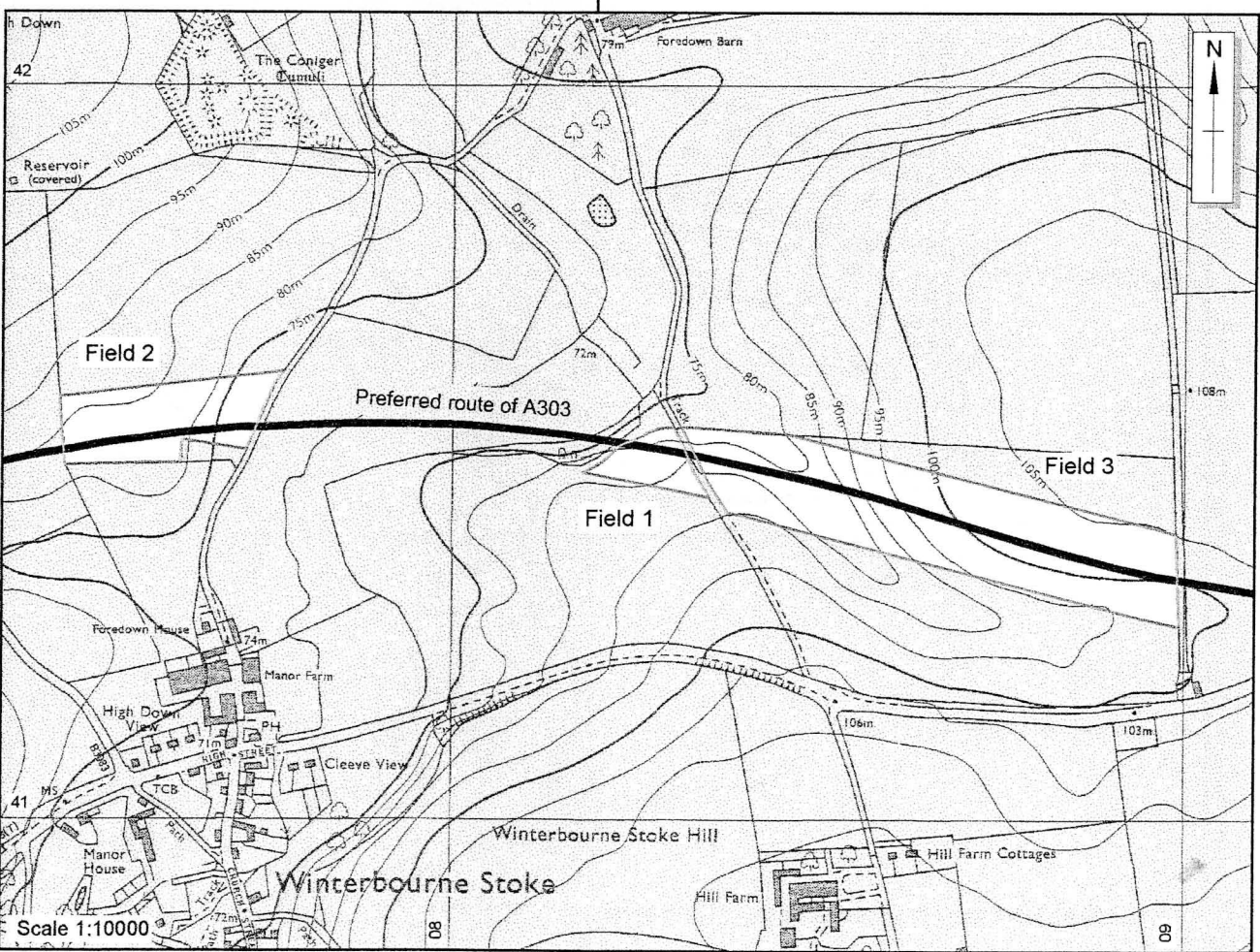
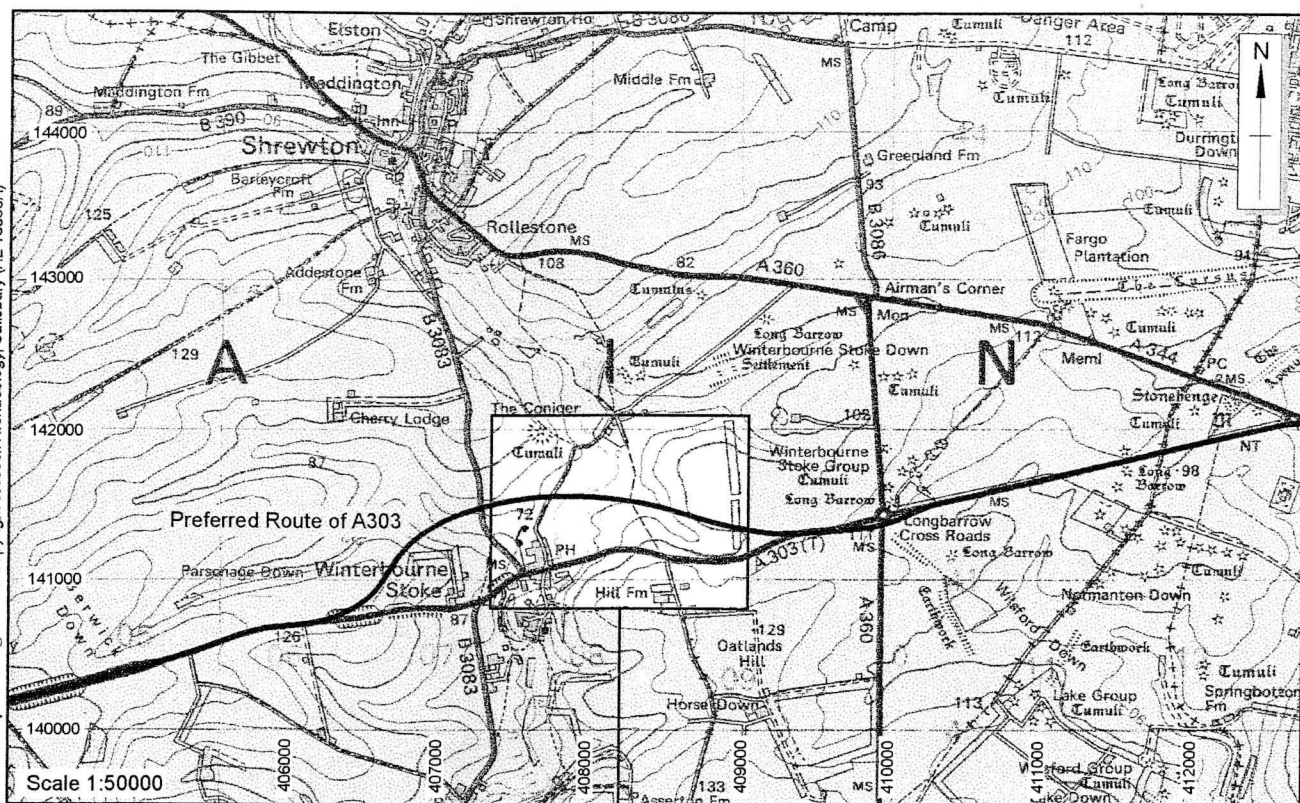
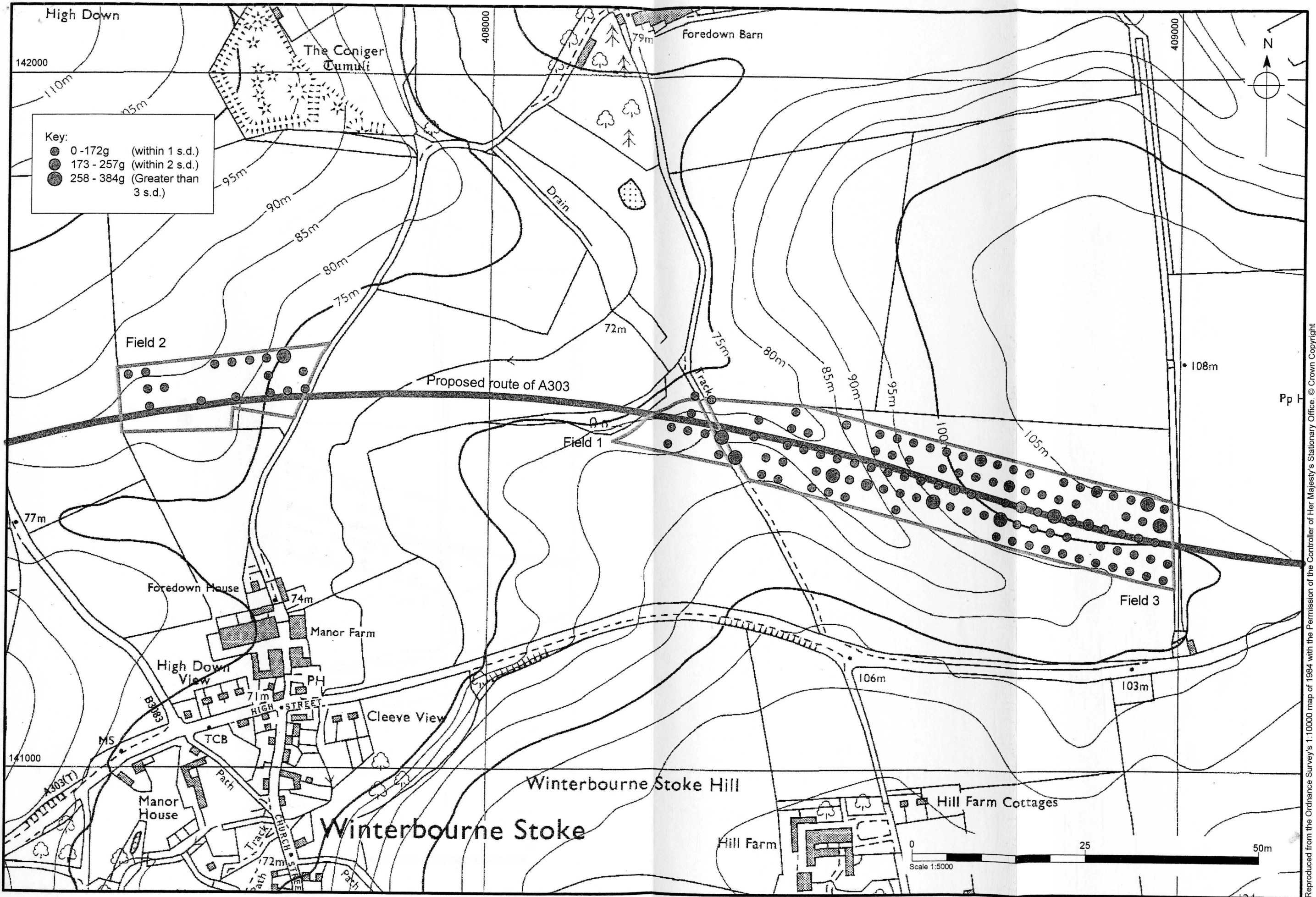


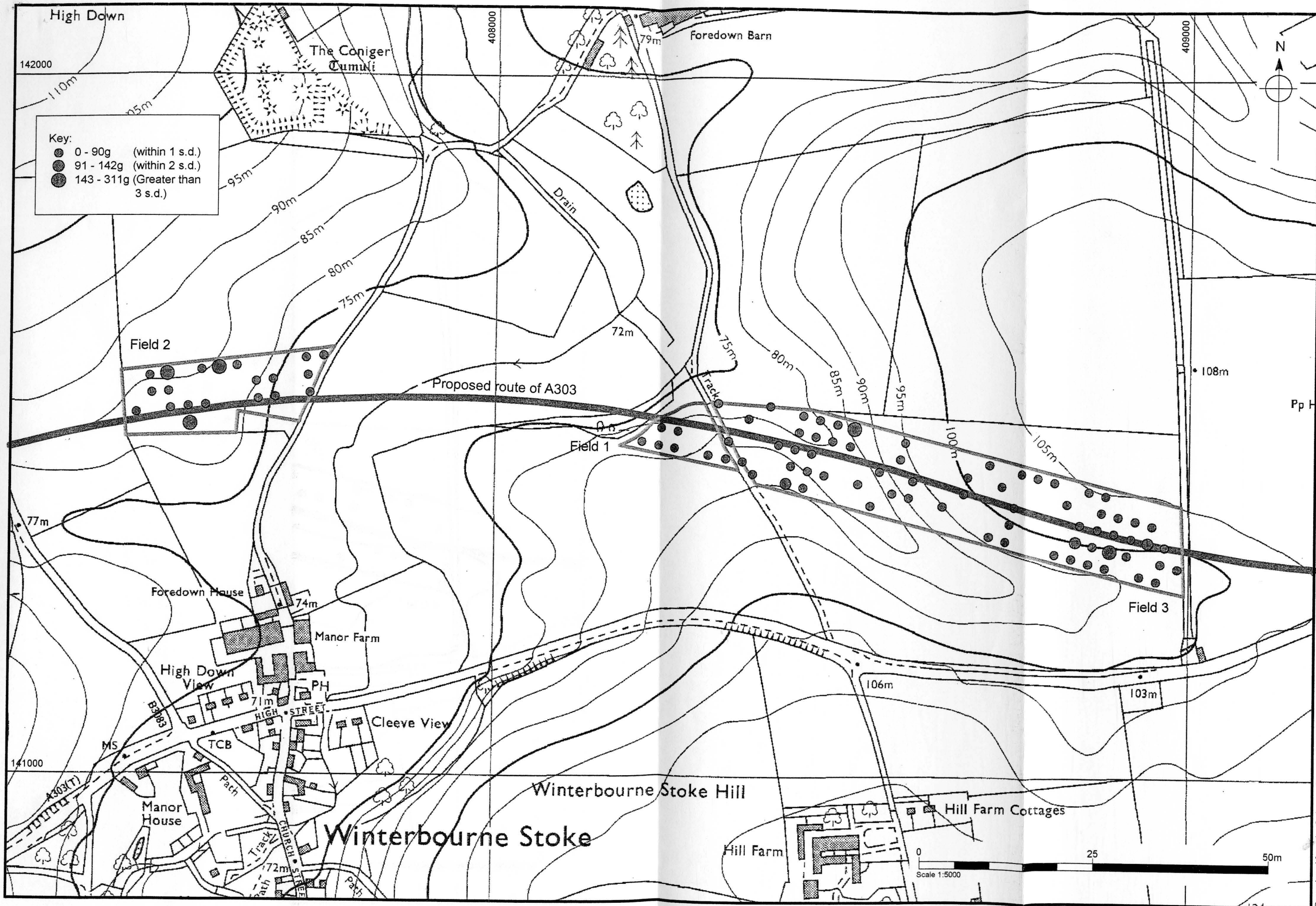
Figure 1: Site location





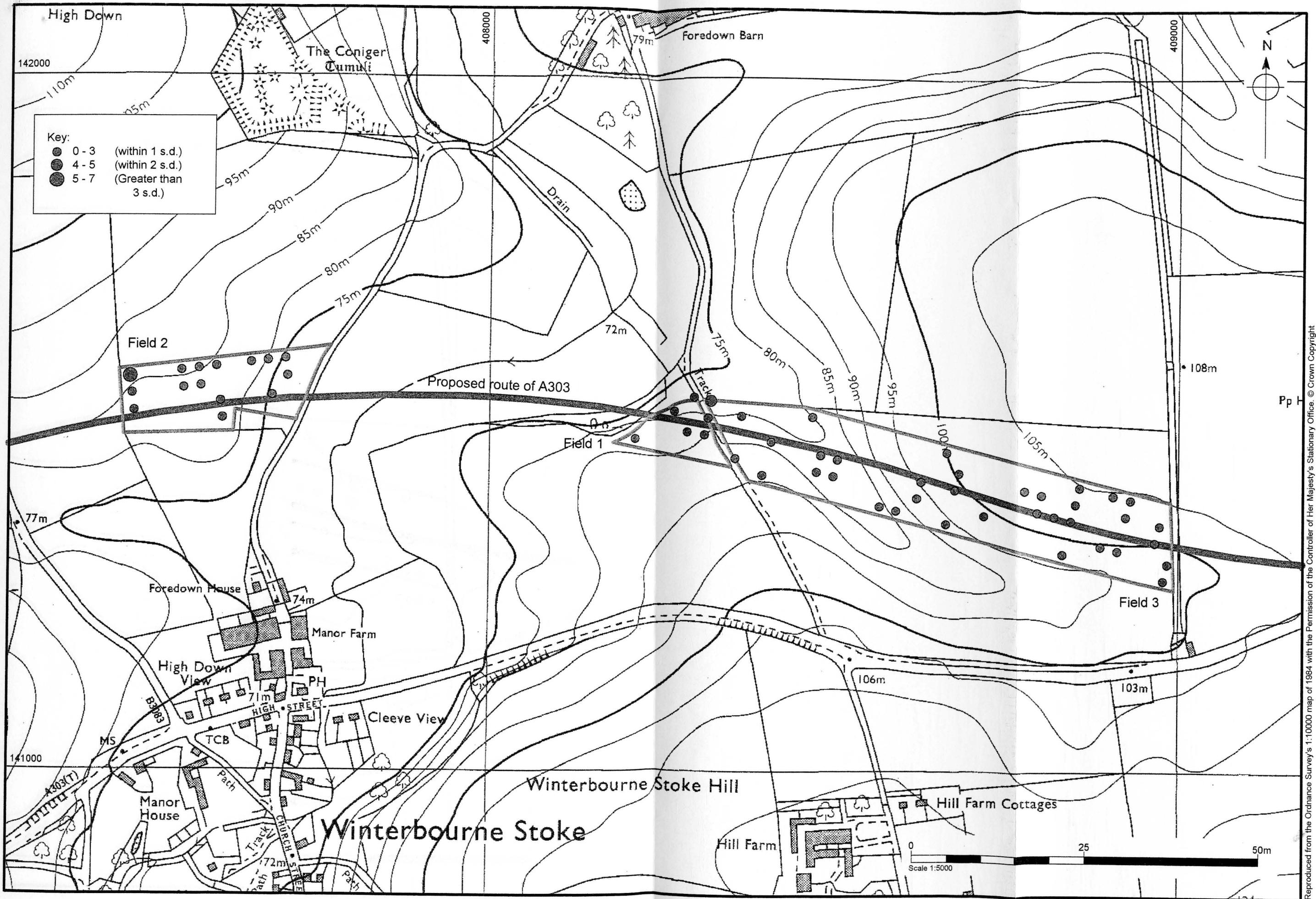
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Figure 2: Distribution of burnt flint by weight



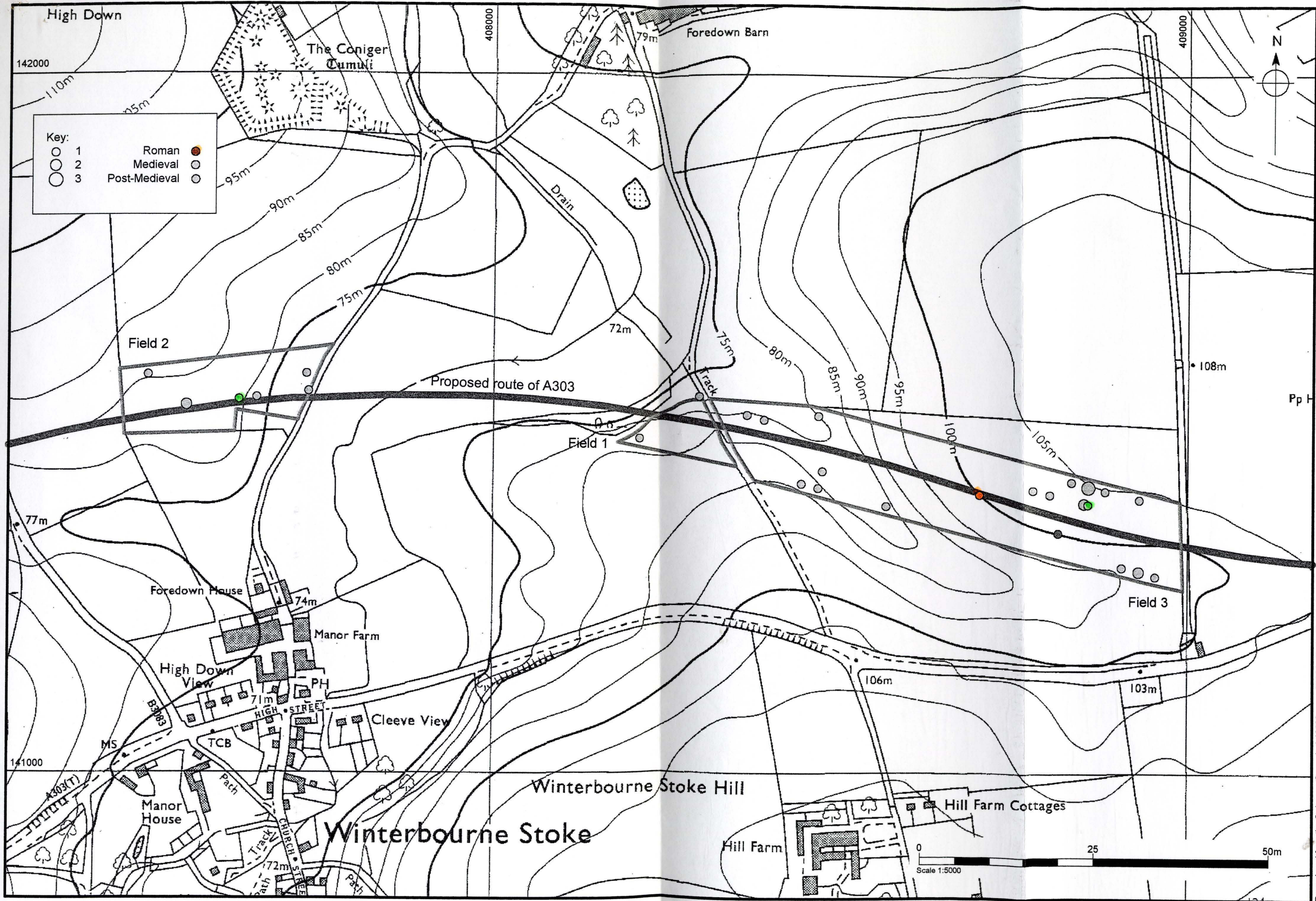
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Figure 3: Distribution of ceramic building materials by weight



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Figure 4: Distribution of worked flint by number



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Figure 5: Distribution of pottery by period