# An Archaeological Excavation

# at

# ‘The Hollies’, 1 Bove Town, Glastonbury, Somerset

## GBT 05

**Mendip District Council Planning References:**

**076213/010; ah/arp/1/02/0488**

**Somerset County Museum accession number:**

**18/2004**

Carried out for Mr. D. Atkinson

## Part One: The Text

## Part Two: Appendices

Hollinrake Archaeology Co-Op

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# An Archaeological Excavation at 'The Hollies', 1 Bove Town, Glastonbury

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# An Archaeological Excavation at 'The Hollies', 1 Bove Town, Glastonbury


## Abstract

*An archaeological excavation carried out in advance of a domestic housing redevelopment within the grounds of 1 Bove Town, following on from an archaeological evaluation in 2004, recorded numerous archaeological finds and features from the post-Roman period onwards. Settlement appears to have been continuous from the Dark Ages to the present day. Houses and other domestic structures are ephemeral at best and much disrupted by later landscaping, tree planting and road widening. Changes in orientation of the features, mirroring changes in the town street grid, facilitated phasing. Notable finds included a 12th century silver coin of Roger II of Sicily and a small, 10th century, iron sickle or pruning knife, possibly used for viniculture. The Late Anglo-Saxon and medieval occupation would both seem to be of high status. Pottery kiln waste and 13th century pottery and encaustic tile wasters were recovered in some quantity, although the kiln site was not within the excavation area. Chemical analysis identified the tiles as the product of a tilery supplying a wide area extending as far as South Wales.*


## 1.0 Introduction

**1.1** A planning application to redevelop a garden and tennis court attached to 1 Bove Town by the construction of new dwelling houses prompted an archaeological evaluation, carried out in 2004. Indications of 10th century and medieval occupation recorded during that evaluation led to a planning requirement for a full archaeological excavation of those areas to be destroyed through development.

**1.2** The excavation was undertaken between 1st August and 7th October 2005, and was carried out by Richard Coe, Bruce Eaton, Keith Faxon, Arthur Hollinrake, and Owen Watts and was directed by, and included, Nancy and Charles Hollinrake.

**1.3** The grid reference for the excavation site is: **ST 502 390**.

## 2.0 Topography and Geology (see Figures 1 and 2)

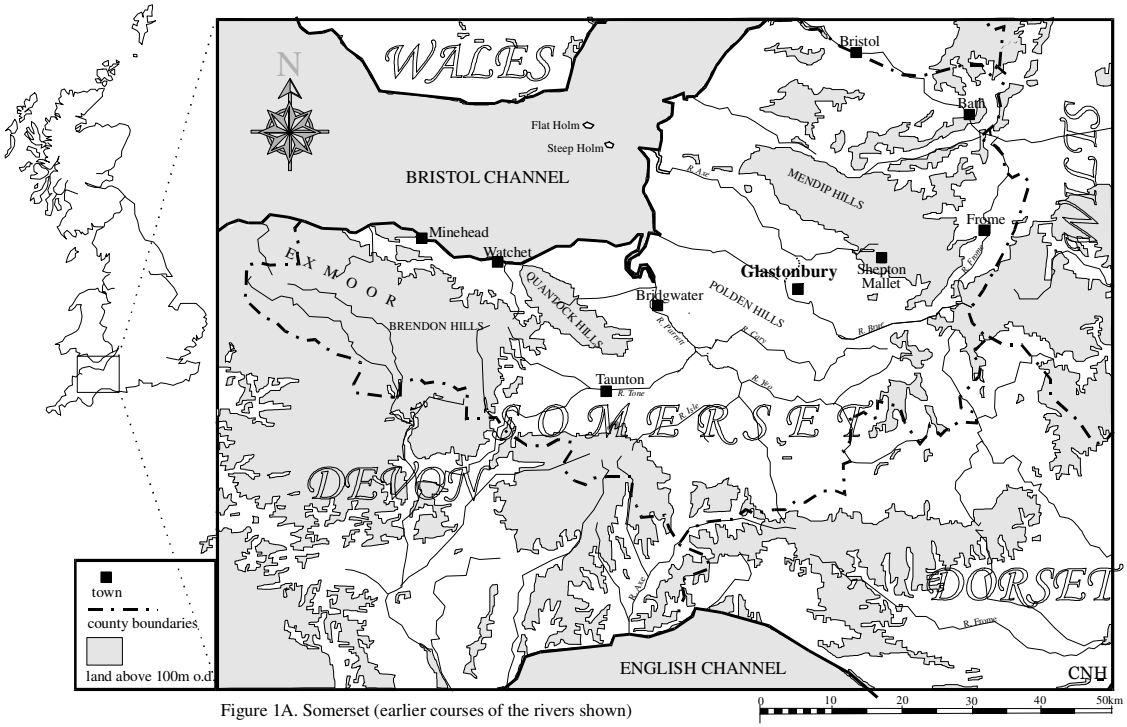



Figure 1A. Somerset (earlier courses of the rivers shown)

**Figure 1**. Location map for Glastonbury.

**2.1** Number 1 Bove Town, a Grade II Listed Georgian property (English Heritage Listed Building number 265864; Somerset Heritage Environment Record number 20523) and latterly a Millfield School boarding house, also known as 'The Hollies', is a large, late-18th/early-19th century house with landscaped gardens and a tennis court. The property stands on the north side of the western end of Bove Town - the old road linking Glastonbury and Wells - and east of the southern end of Wells Road, the modern, A39 road to Wells, established as a turnpike road in the late-18th century (see **3.2** below).

**2.2** Bove Town, the old road to Wells, climbs Edmund Hill - commonly known as Windmill Hill - from the junction with the High Street and Wells Road. The junction of Bove Town and Wells Road stands at around 34m above Ordnance Datum and the summit of Edmund Hill lies at ca.87m a.O.D. The hill continues to slope down to the west, beyond Bove Town and Wells Road, with the High Street falling from about 32m

a.O.D. at the junction with Wells Road down to 17m a.O.D. at the junction with Market Place, approximately 400m west of Bove Town.


**Figure 2**. Location of site within Glastonbury is indicated with a black arrow.

**2.3** The gardens of 1 Bove Town, immediately east of Wells Road, were much higher than the road, standing at about 36m a.O.D., with the tennis court to the east being around 37m a.O.D. The gardens were landscaped in the 19th century with the tennis court added in the second half of the 20th century. Mature trees, mostly established in the 19th century, line the north, south and west sides of the property (see Figure 8).

**2.4** Over the years the authors have observed an old stone culvert wherever the tarmac has been removed from the road, extending from the top of Wick Hollow and running along the course of Bove Town. This culvert still carries a substantial quantity of water and it is likely that an unrecorded spring rises somewhere on the top of the hill. Maintenance of this culvert has been neglected in recent years and this is probably the cause of a small leak arising from the gateway into the site.

The culvert is constructed of slabs of local Blue Lias stone. If it has ever been bonded with mortar, that has all been completely washed away. This feature is part of a system of culverts which has been observed and reported upon in a wide variety of sources going back to 1876 (Netten Radcliffe 1871), most of which still carry water. There has been no firm dating of any of these culverts but it would seem likely that they were laid down by Glastonbury Abbey at some time in the medieval period.

Bove Town's road now carries some of the characteristics of a holloway and Wick Hollow, from which Bove Town emerges near the top of the hill, is a small gorge so it seems probable that the water in the culvert once flowed along the surface as a small stream. It follows, then, that this stream formed the southern boundary of the property whose activity is reflected in the archaeological on this site.

## 3.0 Archaeological Background

**3.1** There has been little archaeological work carried out in this part of Glastonbury and the following information is derived from entries in the county council Historical Environment Record (HER), formerly the SMR, and to references in the English Heritage Extensive Urban Survey volume for Glastonbury (GLA references.) (Gathercole 1997).

**3.2** The Wells Road was constructed in 1792-94, possibly on the line of an older track servicing the common fields north of the town and the windmill on Edmund Hill (GLA/601). Bove Town is the western end of the old road to Wells, in use from at least the medieval period, that would have led pilgrims from the north into the town and the abbey as demonstrated by the slipper chapel, St. Katherine's Chapel (or St. James Chapel), now called 'Jacoby Cottage' (GLA/404) on the north side of the road to the east of the development site.

**3.3** Casual finds of Romano-British and Late-Saxon pottery sherds were recovered by the authors from the junction of Rowley Road and Bove Town in the mid-1980's and towards the east end of Bove Town, on the south side of the street, during the 1990's. In addition, 12$^{th}$-14$^{th}$ century pottery sherds have been recovered from a small ditch below the garden to the rear of 12 Bove Town, on the south side of the road opposite 'The Hollies', also during the 1990's.

**3.4** In September 2002, Mr. Mike Grevatte, owner of number 2 Wells Road, immediately north of 1 Bove Town, kindly brought pottery sherds and artifacts obtained from his garden to C. and N. Hollinrake for identification. The pottery included two late-Saxon sherds, five medieval sherds, a number of post-medieval sherds and a fragment of an ox shoe.

The area containing 2 Wells Road was not developed for housing until the 1920's and was formerly contained within the back gardens, or rear paddocks, of properties fronting onto Bove Town (including 'The Hollies - see para **5** below).

## 4.0 Historical Background

**4.1** The history of Glastonbury is well known and will not be repeated here in any detail. The town formed around and was dependent upon a monastery that had probably been founded before the West Saxon conquest of Somerset in the mid-7th century AD. The monastery was specially favoured by the kings of Wessex who granted large areas of land to the house, both in central Somerset and beyond.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the Battle of Peona in 658AD: "Here Cenwalh fought at Penselwood against the Welsh, and drove them as far as the Parret." (Swanton 2002, 32). There are problems with the early entries of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but it is safe to assume that the West Saxons had taken control of Glastonbury, along with North Somerset, by the mid- to late-seventh century. Glastonbury developed a degree of political importance: w*itangemots* (council meetings) were held there in 745 and in 798, the latter when Mercia controlled Somerset (Hill, 1984, 83).

Although the Viking wars of the 9th and 10th centuries seriously disrupted monastic life in England, no contemporary accounts record any raids by Vikings or Danes on Glastonbury. Saint Dunstan was taught at Glastonbury during this period and after the mid-10th century returned to the monastery as abbot, reforming it as a regular Benedictine house: Monks trained at Glastonbury then proceeded to re-found monasteries over much of southern England.

During the 10th century, the Anglo-Saxon kings of England provided many more land grants to Glastonbury so that by the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066, Glastonbury was, arguably, the richest monastery in the country. In the 10th century Glastonbury was described as an *insula regalis*/ 'royal island' (Stubbs 1874, 6-7; Yorke, 1995, 196). After spending some time at court, Dunstan was appointed to the abbacy of Glastonbury by Eadmund (939-46) (Stubbs, 13-14, 55-6). Eadmund was later buried at Glastonbury, suggesting that he regarded the house as his own (Brooks 1992. 11). Eadred, the succeeding king (946-55) held Glastonbury and Dunstan in special favour, depositing in the abbey "all the best of his goods, namely many title-deeds and the ancient treasures of preceding kings, as well as various precious things he had acquired himself' (*Vita Dunstani* §19, Stubbs 1874, 29).

After 1066, Glastonbury held on to most of its properties, rebuilt the monastery and the abbey church and concentrated its energies on its estates. In 1539, King Henry VIII suppressed the abbey when it was still amongst the three richest monastic houses in England.

**4.2** The origins of the town are unclear. In the Domesday Book survey of 1086, Glastonbury, although described as a town, only contained the households of 21 villagers and 33 smallholders. This implies a population of around 300 people, most of these probably being abbey servants or trades people dependent upon the abbey. Eight smiths were also recorded in the survey and it is possible that these may have been employed on the construction of the new Norman, monastery (Marston 2003, 98).

**4.3** Edmund Hill and the area north of the High Street properties (and north of the properties running off Bove Town) was probably once within Glastonbury's North Field, an extensive, medieval, open field of arable strips that was farmed communally by the abbey's tenants and dependents.

### 4.4 Bove Town

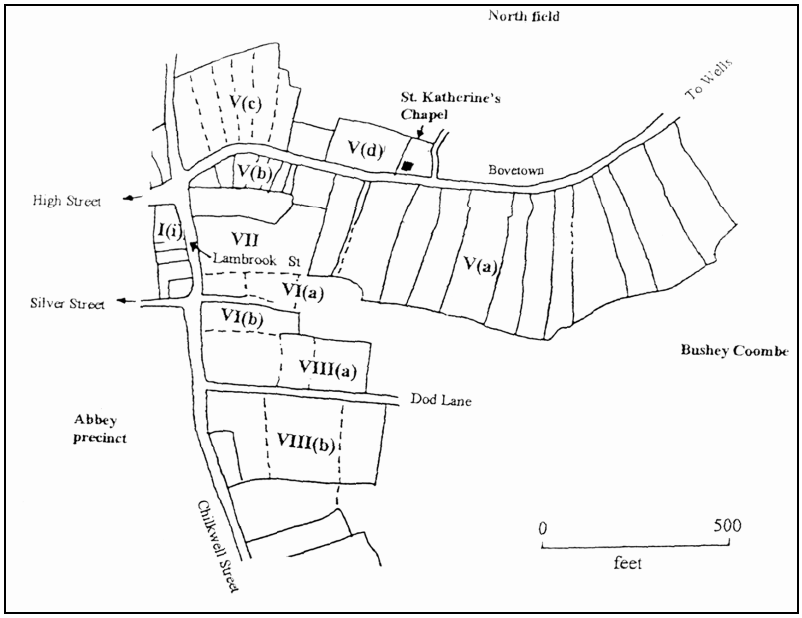



**Figure 3**. Sub-plan units in Bove Town (Va-d), Lambrook Street Close (Via-b) and Dod Lane (VIIa-b) from Marston, figure 2.7. The excavation took place in plot V(c).

The name 'Bove Town' is simply a contraction of 'above town' and the street name is recorded from at least the 13th century.

Information presented in this section, including F**igure 3**, is either copied from or is an abridged version of Marston's discussion (Marston 1997, 80-83). In this section, the development area - 1 Bove Town - is within Marston's **sub-plan unit V(c)**.

> A 1517 survey of Glastonbury shows that most of the messuages, or properties listed for Bovetown were agricultural holdings with large curtilages averaging nearly an acre in size. Indeed, most of these tenants were listed under the section for Edgarley tithing, suggesting that they were regarded as part of the manor of Glastonbury rather than the town. .....19th century maps reveal a series of large, long plots sweeping down the south side of Bovetown with a stream forming the back boundary line (figure 2.7, sub-plan unit Va). ......Significantly the tithe map and award records a number of farms in Bovetown in the 1840's, and the 16th century survey also records bartons (probably barns or farmyards) on three tenements and others had orchards. Sub-plan unit Va may have extended further west by several more plots, and thus all the way down the hill, the rear of the last tenement extending along Lambrook Street and the lower plots meeting up with the back of plots in Launder Close. Sub-plan units Vb and VII may well, therefore, be later creations as the urban part of Glastonbury spread eastwards up the hill.
>
> The three small holdings in Bovetown without extra land in the fields (although one had an orchard) had an average curtilage size of 0.27 of an acre in 1517. .....As they do not fit into the pattern on the south side of Bovetown they were probably located in one or other of the plan-units on the north side of the street.
>
> The tenements at the bottom of the hill in **sub-plan unit Vc** [**the excavation area**] are both shorter and narrower than those on the south, and their size may represent both a difference in function and age, possibly being more urban. Perhaps that sub-plan unit accommodated the three customary tenants in 1517 who held no additional land in the fields, and perhaps a single free tenant who held land in Bovetown also dwelt in this apparently more urbanised area. .....
>
> It seems clear, overall, that Bovetown was an area of Glastonbury where the Abbey's agricultural workers settled along a row-plan street. Many other new towns, for example Shipston-under-Stour (Warwicks), had a 'bond end' where the agricultural tenants and workers were settled although these are generally less regular in appearance than Bovetown.
>
> Property in the street was first directly mentioned in 1249, but a Reginald de Bovetown was recorded in the 1235 survey and the street's origins may be much older. ..... Presumably the agricultural workers were located in Bovetown because it was near the fields in which they worked. It is tempting to speculate that the regular agricultural tofts could have been laid out in the late Saxon period, possibly to accommodate slaves or other demesne workers within easy reach of Glastonbury's North Field.

## 4.4 Discussion of Historical Background

Bove Town is the western end of the old road to Wells and St. Katherine's chapel on the north side of the road is an indication of its importance during the medieval period. It also led to the windmill at the top of the hill. The Wells Road, the modern main road to Wells, was probably not an important routeway until the end of the 18th century.

Marston's work on the evolution of the town plan has identified a number of property 'units' and in this way has demonstrated, among other things, those areas of the town with an urban function or status and those relating to more agricultural, or manorial uses. 1 Bove Town lies within Marston's sub-unit V(c), a small group of narrow plots at the NW end of Bove Town that appear to have a more urban character than the other plot groups on the street, which appear to have housed agricultural labourers.

Marston also suggests that sub-unit V(c) may have housed some of the abbey's customary tenants, or hereditary servants, a group of specialised tenants whose origins go back to the late-Saxon period. The shape of the tenements in unit V(c) suggests that the western end of Bove Town might once have formed either the eastern end or an eastern extension of the High Street.

## 5.0 Historic Maps

Marston based her analysis of the evolution of the town of Glastonbury on these and other maps. The regularity and uniformity of the size of blocks of properties indicated that the core of the town had been laid out by an administrative authority; in other words, it is a planned town. As well as covering the centre of town around the market place, this planning extends along the main roads of the town, including Bove Town, but not all blocks of properties are likely to have been laid out at the same time (Marston 2003, 89-92.)

### 5.1 1722 Corporation Town of Glastonbury SRO ref: DD/SAS C/1461/1


**Figure 4**. Detail of the 1722 Enclosure map courtesy of Glastonbury Antiquarian Society website. http://glastonburyantiquarians.org/site/index.php?page_id=161

The earliest map showing any detail of the development area is a map of the Corporation Town of Glastonbury and the surrounding moors, either recently enclosed or still unenclosed turbary (peat producing area). The map is not clear and shows no details of plot boundaries inside the town but does show that a large house stood on the north side of the western end of Bove Town, probably to the east of 'The Hollies', with possible buildings depicted on the north side of the road against the junction with modern Wells Road (shown on this map).

### 5.2 1821 Glastonbury Parish Map SRO ref: DD/ SAS C/212 (b)

The 1821 parish map was produced when the parish of St. Benedict's was formed and St. Benedict's chapel became a parish church: Land was taken from the parish of St. John's and granted to St. Benedict's. Properties and plots within the proposed development area were all within the parish of St. John the Baptist. An accompanying accounts book provides details of ownership, size and rateable value although some entries are either difficult or impossible to read.

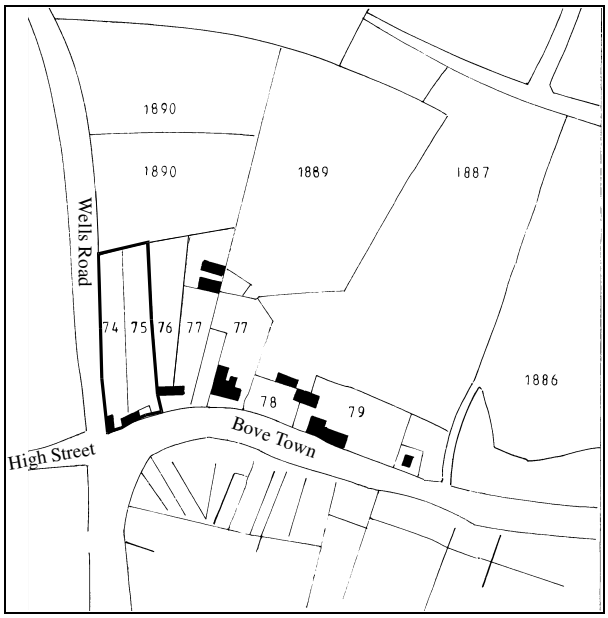



**Figure 5**. Glastonbury St. John's parish map. 1 Bove Town contains **plots 74 to 77.**

| Plot | name | owner | tenant |
|---|---|---|---|
| **74** | Stable and Garden | Mrs. Henshaw | William Bennett |
| **75** | House and Garden | Mrs. Henshaw | James Lawrence |
| **76** | Two tenements and gardens | Robert Bath | J. Chamberlain |
| **77** | House, Yard and Garden | Robert Bath | Himself |
| 78 | Garden | Moses Underwood | Himself |
| 79 | House and Pleasure Gardens | Moses Underwood | Himself |

Table 1. Glastonbury parish map details.

The Wells Road had been constructed by the time that the 1821 map was produced. The long tenements running off Bove Town - Plots 74, 75 and 77 - extend north into the area of the modern houses along Wells Road to the north of the development area including number 2 Wells Road.

## 5.3 1844 Glastonbury Tithe Map and Award

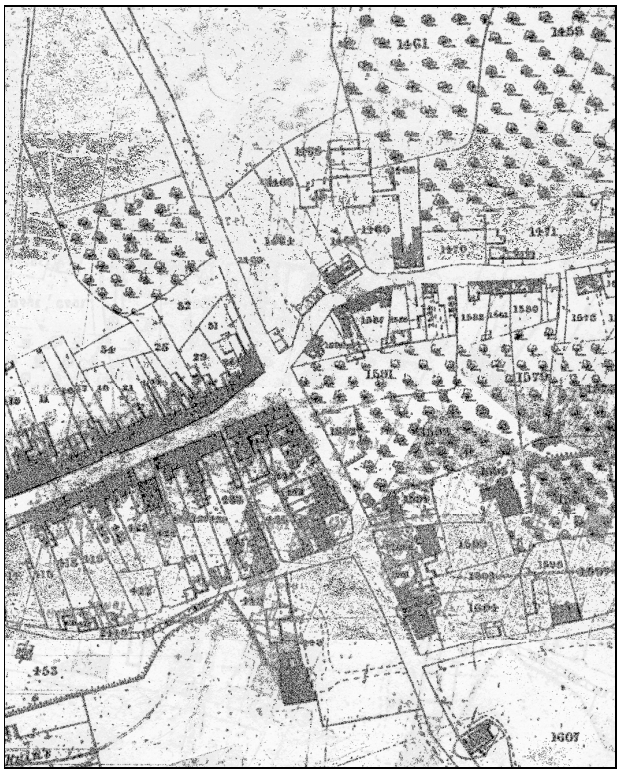


**Figure 6.** Glastonbury tithe map. 1 Bove Town contains tithe map plots 1463, 1464, 1465, 1466, 1467 and 1469.

The following table provides details of the proposed development area extracted from the Tithe Apportionment Book.

| Plot | name | use | owner | tenant |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1459 | Orchard | o | Moses Underwood | Himself |
| 1461 | Orchard | o | Robert Bath Senior | Himself |
| 1462 | Pasture | m | Robert Henshaw | James Somers |
| **1463** | Garden and shed | | Robert Henshaw | William Bennett |
| **1464** | House and Garden | | Robert Henshaw | James Lawrence |
| **1465** | Garden | g | Robert Bath Senior | Himself |
| **1466** | House | | Robert Bath Senior | Richard Marsh |
| **1467** | House | | Robert Bath Senior | John Chamberlain |
| 1468 | Barton and Garden | | Robert Bath Senior | Himself |
| **1469** | House and shrubbery | | Robert Bath Senior | Himself |
| 1470 | Garden | | Moses Underwood | Himself |

Table 2. Glastonbury Tithe Apportionment Book. (o = orchard; m = meadow; g = garden)

There is little change to the either the layout or ownership of the properties in the intervening twenty years between the production of the parish and tithe maps. Robert Henshaw might be the son of Mrs. Henshaw, owner of the development area properties in 1821, whilst the tenants of the properties remain unchanged.

## 5.4 1886 Ordnance Survey 1st ed. 25":1mile

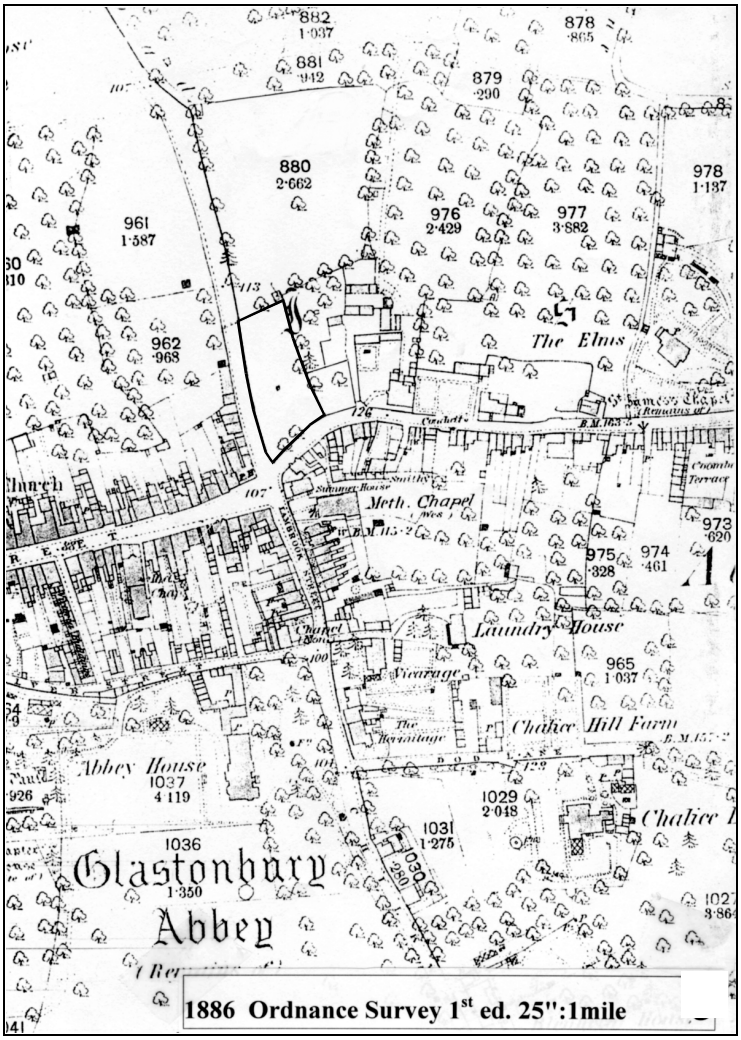



**Figure7**. First edition Ordnance Survey map.

The 1st edition of the O.S. 25" map shows that considerable changes had occurred in the 40 years since the earlier tithe map was produced. The large house at the east end of the development area, tithe map plot **1469**, now 'The Hollies', had been extended with the series of ancillary, or farm buildings to the north still standing (tithe map plot 1468, described as a *barton*, probably a farm).

The houses fronting onto Bove Town to the west of the large house, however, have all been demolished, presumably when the property was landscaped, with trees planted on the road front and elsewhere within the grounds.

## 5.5 1904 Ordnance Survey 2nd ed. 25":1mile

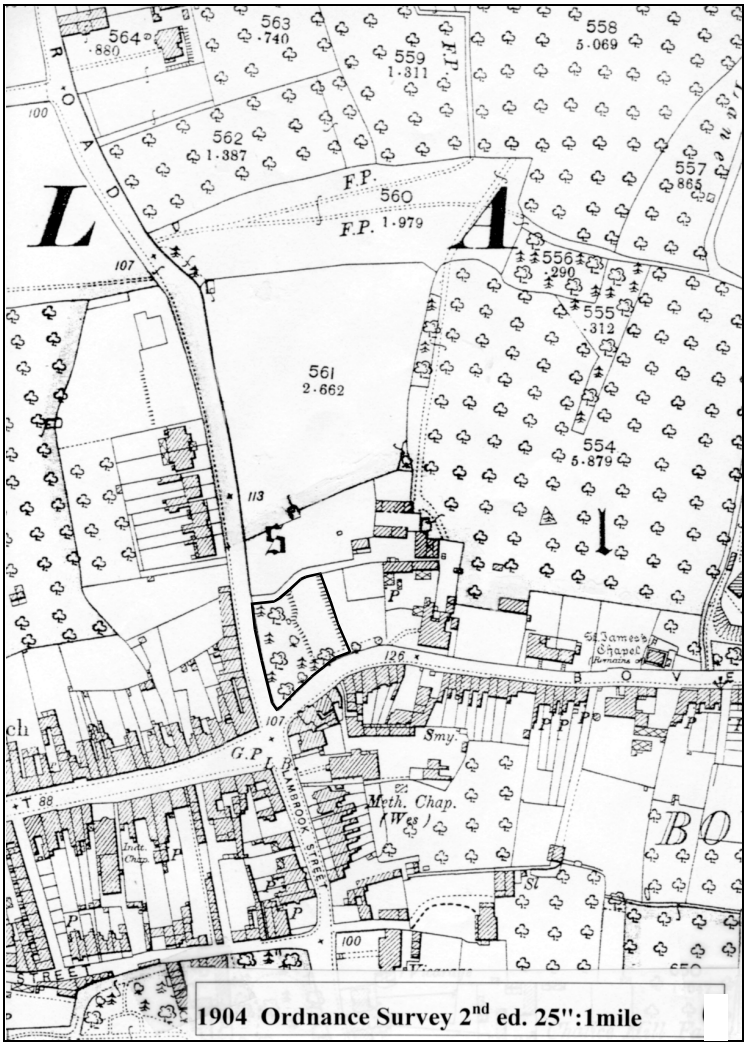



**Figure 8.** 1904 Ordance Survey map.

The 2nd edition of the O.S map series depicts the landscaping within the grounds with more trees planted along both the Wells Road and Bove Town frontages, terracing dividing up the property and a new lane constructed through the centre of the grounds to connect with the ancillary buildings north of the large house. This development, presumably, split the property into two separate holdings.

New housing developments are starting to be built along the Wells Road.

## 5.6 1930 Ordnance Survey 2nd ed. Revised 25":1mile

The 1930's O.S. map shows no real change to either the property or the boundaries and has not been reproduced for this report

## 5.7 c.1970 Ordnance Survey 25":1mile

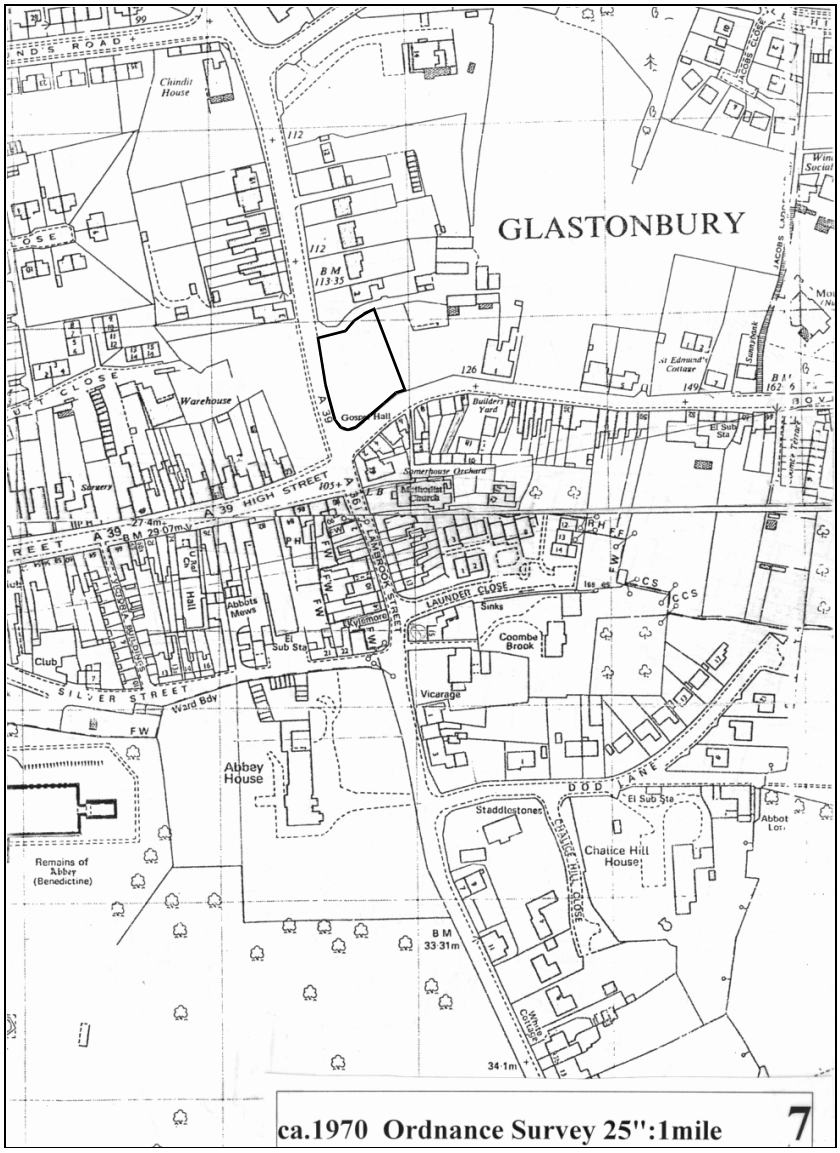



**Figure 9.** Modern Ordnance Survey map.

The modern map shows that the property boundary of 1 Bove Town remained essentially unchanged throughout the 20th century with one important exception: Bove Town has been widened and the junction with the Wells Road has been rounded. These operations will have largely destroyed the buildings recorded on the rates map (Figure 3), and the tithe map (Figure 4).

The major housing developments in this area occurring along the Wells Road, included the construction of new domestic housing to the north of the development area. Since the 1980's, the creation of Rowley Road to the east of 'The Hollies', with the

subsequent development of new housing alongside the road and along the western slopes of Edmund Hill, north of Bove Town, have completely altered the landscape and greatly increased the housing density in this part of Glastonbury.

## 5.8 Discussion of the Historic Maps

The earlier maps, especially the tithe map (Figure 6), depict buildings on the site of the excavation from at least the middle of the 18th century. The rates map (Figure 5) and tithe award record a series of house, gardens and stables. These properties stood until the second half of the 19th century when the grounds of the large house, now called 'The Hollies' and owned by the Bath family, were landscaped and the houses and sheds along the road frontage were demolished, after which the grounds were terraced and conifer and deciduous trees were planted.

Developments in the latter part of the 20th century include the construction of the tennis court and of a new house, 'The Apple Barn', immediately NW of the house.

By the 1970s the sharp south west corner of the property had been rounded and the southern boundary pulled back to widen the bottom of Bove Town. This had the effect of damaging or destroying the archaeological record of these buildings. The trench layout did not extend as far as the current boundaries with the result that the sites of these buildings lay outside of the excavation areas.

## 6.0 The Archaeological Excavation - Methods (see Figure 10)

**6.1** The archaeological excavation investigated those areas within the footprints of the new houses, and those footprints determined the archaeological excavation areas. The proposed arrangement of the new houses and garages resulted in a series of discrete excavation areas, with large baulks of undisturbed ground between the new buildings/excavation areas left undisturbed (see Figure 10).

**6.2** An excavating machine was used to remove the thick deposit of cultivated, garden soil that covered the site. The depth of this deposit had been determined during the earlier evaluation excavation. The machined spoil was heaped above those parts of the site that were to be left undisturbed.

The machining operation was continuously monitored with pottery sherds and artifacts recovered from the cultivated soil collected as unstratified finds.

**6.3** Excavation and recording methods were compatible with the guidelines laid down in the booklet *General Specifications for Archaeological Works in Somerset* issued by The Archaeology Section of the Environment and Property Department, Somerset County Council.

- When archaeological features or deposits were encountered they were cleaned, photographed (using colour slides, colour prints and black and white prints) and planned at a scale of 1:20. Sections and profiles were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate. The entire site was planned at 1:20 and this is where the post-medieval and modern features are recorded.
- A policy of total excavation was applied, except for linear features which were excavated in sections along their lengths, and pits, which were half-sectioned.
- Levels were taken throughout of all archaeological deposits and features and related to Ordnance Datum.
- A single-context recording system was employed and recorded on *pro-forma* sheets. Contexts were accorded the site code GBT05 and numbered sequentially with the initial number being the number of the excavation trench or area. Five trenches were opened in the 2004evaluation, so the two excavation areas were numbered areas 6 and 7; the context numbers for Area 6 started with 'GBT05 601' and continued from there.
- A policy of total finds collection was applied throughout, except for post-medieval earthenwares and factory-produced wares, which were collected and recorded before being discarded. All bone was retained. Finds were bagged by

context; finds from machining or spoil were called 'U/S' to signify that they are unstratified. Finds and artefacts were then marked with the **Somerset County Museum Accession Number: TTNCM 18/2004** plus the appropriate context number plus the site code GBT05.

- A metal detector was employed to scan the surface of archaeological features and deposits and to examine the spoil heaps.
- The excavation archive, including the context sheets, site notebook, levels sheets and photographs, will be deposited in the Somerset Records Office, Taunton and the finds will be deposited in the Somerset County Museum, Taunton.

### 6.4 Phasing see Appendix II and Figure 10

The plan of all archaeological features (omitting post-medieval and modern features) reveals a complicated of features from a range of phases which proved difficult to disentangle. Problems of phasing were exacerbated by the recognition of two aceramic post-Roman phases in evaluation Trench 1, and in Area 7.

Phasing of the features relied upon the matrices reproduced in the appendix. Once the stratigraphic relationships between contexts were established, they were arranged in phases according to the dateable finds in their fills; this method was less useful in the case of the two aceramic phases, however.

The results of the excavation are presented by phase in sequence from earliest to latest (the post-medieval to modern phase is omitted). Detailed arguments for the phasing are presented throughout, but it is important to bear in mind the proviso that, in some cases, the evidence may not be as firm as one would have wished. The data forming the basis for the phasing is presented in the appendices.

The phases were initially organized by the date of the finds:

- **Phase 0**: geology
- **Phase I**: prehistoric
- **Phase II:** Romano-British
- **Phase III:** earlier aceramic
- **Phase IV**: later aceramic
- **Phase V:** Saxon/ pre-Conquest
- **Phase VI:** medieval
- **Phase VII:** post-medieval and modern.

Closer scrutiny of the features prompted some refinement of this system.

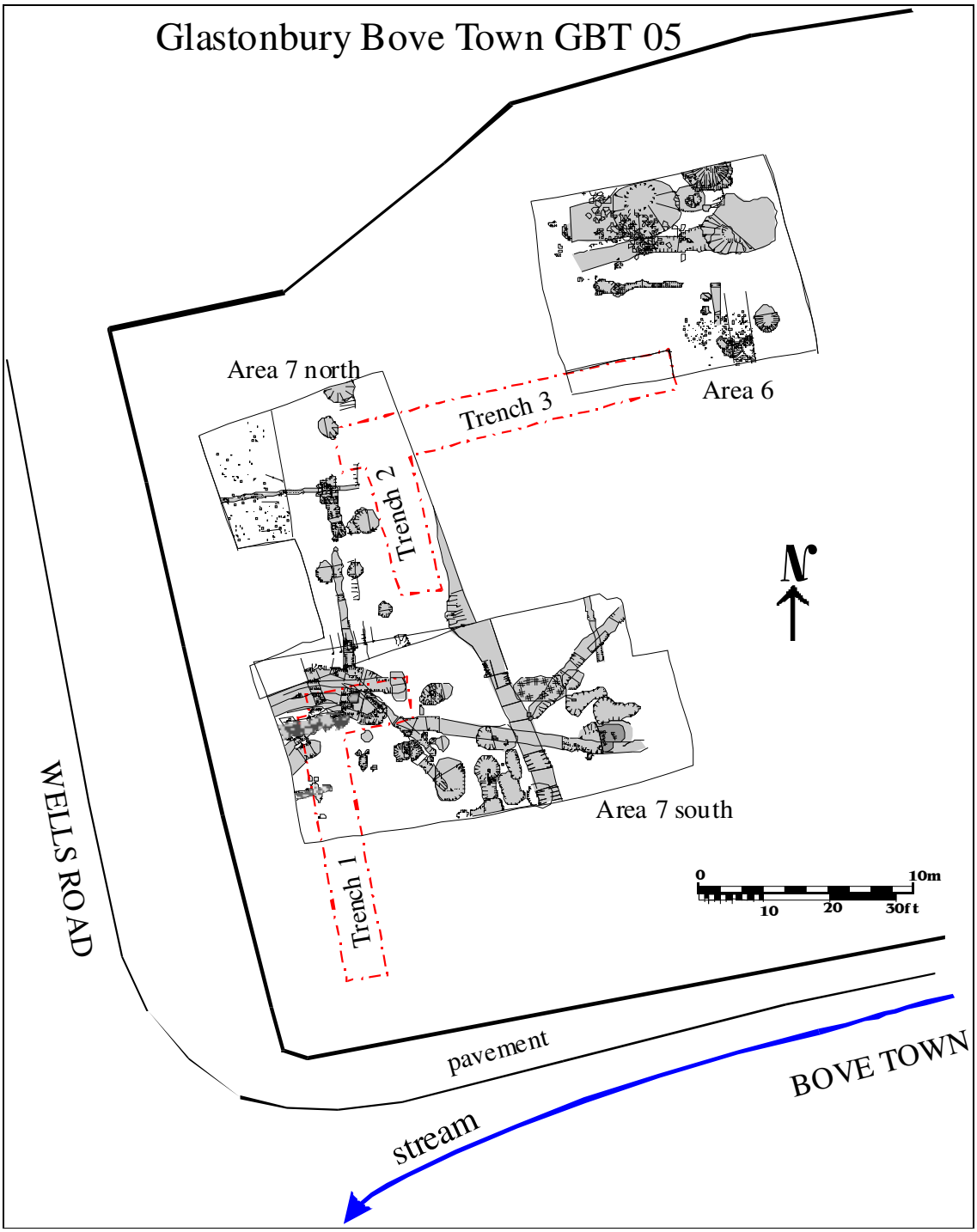



**Figure 10**. Trench location plan showing all archaeological features. The 2004 evaluation trenches are outlined in red. Post-medieval and modern features are not shown.

## 7.0 Phase 0: Geology and Stratigraphy

**7.0.1** The western end of Bove Town stands above the eastern edge of the Lower Lias clay with limestone formation, deposited during the Jurassic period. The upper slopes of Bove Town, the higher slopes to the east and the summit of Wearyall Hill all stand above Middle Lias silts and clays whilst the higher slopes around the base of Glastonbury Tor are formed of Upper Lias clays. The summit of Tor Hill is composed of Upper Lias sands, formerly known as the Midford Sands (Geological Survey).

### 7.0.2 Stratigraphy

Overlying the natural geology, relic cultivation soil and occupation layers survived over much of the site. They are arranged in the Appendix according to the order determined by the stratigraphical matrix, also in the Appendix, from the most recent to the earliest.

As will be seen in the following phased description of the site, the stratigraphic matrix makes it possible to assign different layers to different phases of activity. In reality, however, the soil layers are elements of the ancient soil which would have blanketed the site since the last Ice Age, and which will have been re-worked over the entire life of the site. Hence, the Phase II Romano-British agricultural lynches preserve agricultural soils which acquire medieval finds over the course of their use, manipulation, build-up and truncation. The different colours of these deposits are a product of the amount of organic material incorporated into them: the grey to black colours reflecting simple humic content while the greenish tinges are usually most pronounced in cess pits. Occupation deposits are indicated in the phased plans with stippling.

The sections, especially in the cases of the post holes, strongly suggest that the features have suffered considerable truncation by later activity, especially 19th century landscaping and the creation of a tennis court.

## 8.0 Phases I & II: Prehistoric and Romano-British Agricultural use

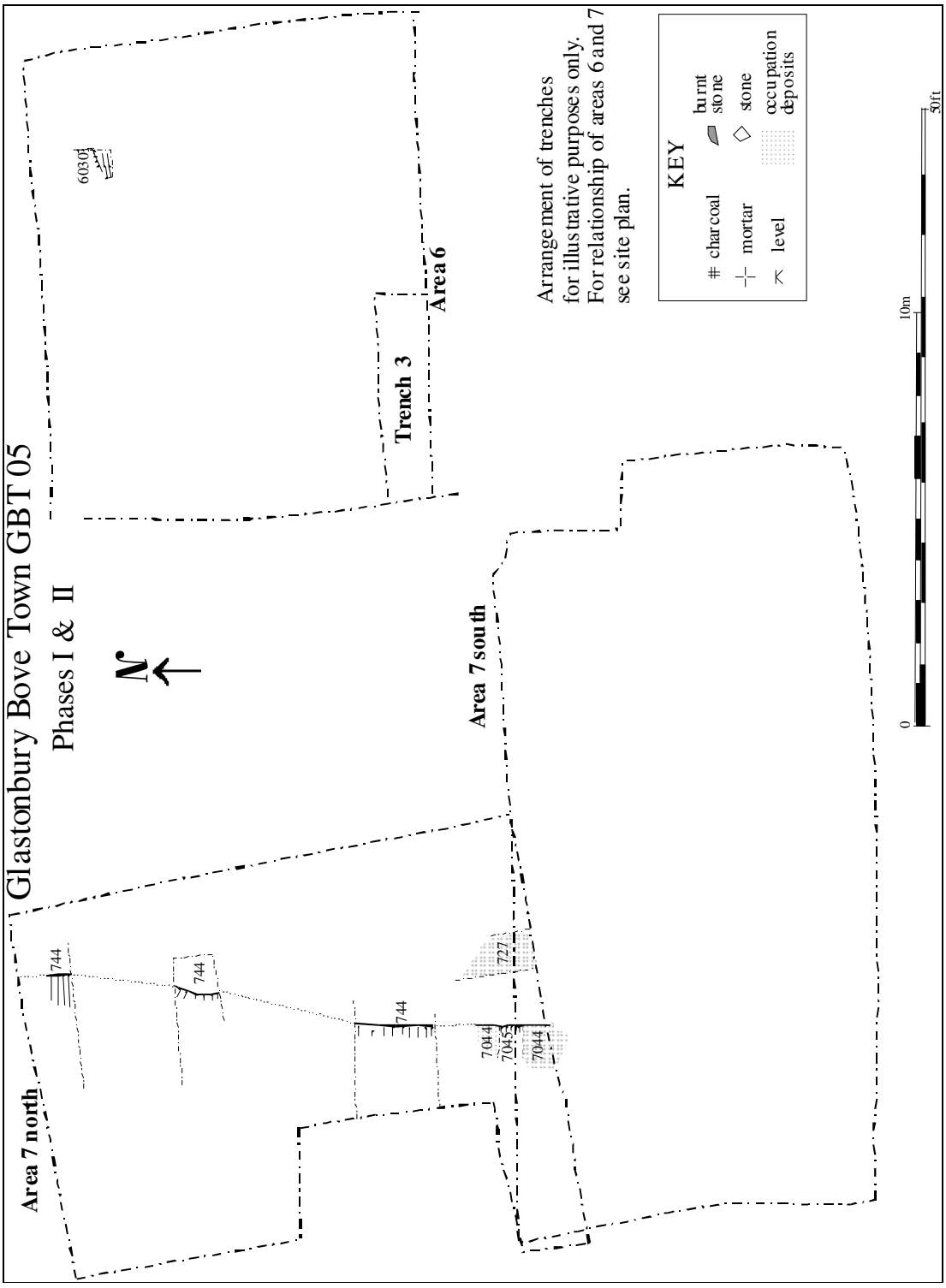


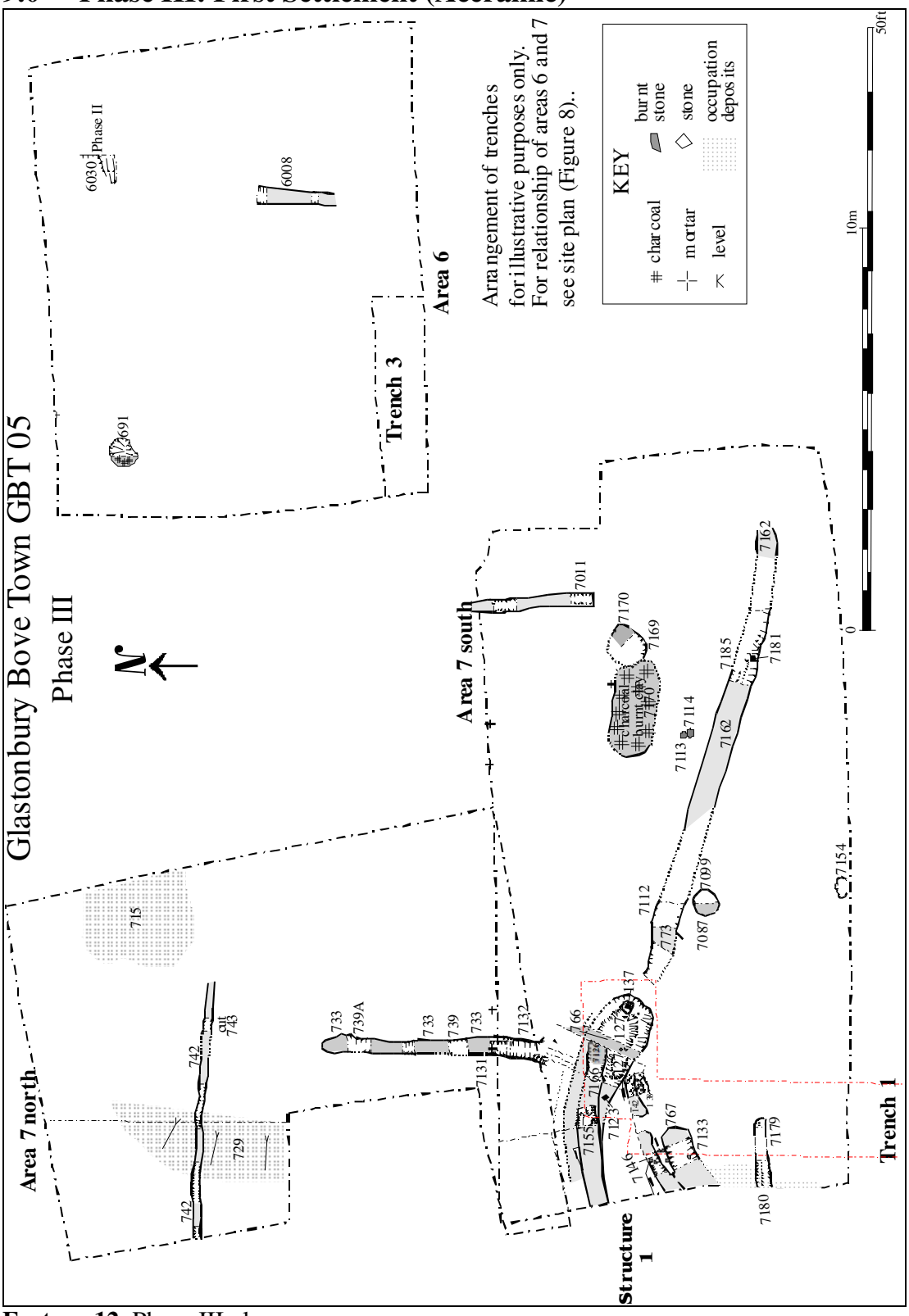

**Figure 11.** Phases I & II plan.

**8.1** The stratigraphic matrix and the finds suggest that layers (**715**), (**727**), (**729**), (**7044**) and (**7095**) probably began forming in the Romano-British period (see Appendix). A large number of aceramic features occur all over the site, however, any of which could belong to Phase II, III, IV or even later phases. Because of the relative abundance of pottery and other datable finds in the Romano-British period, the decision has been taken on this site to assume that the lack of Roman finds indicates a post-Roman date unless there are compelling arguments to the contrary.

**8.2** There was little Romano-British pottery collected from the site, only 40 sherds, insufficient to propose settlement or occupation, and few features containing only Romano-British finds. Finds from deposit (**7044**) did, however, suggest that it represented a cultivation soil built up against the agricultural lynch (**7045**) during the Roman period. It is considered most likely that this continued a practice begun at some time in the prehistoric period and that the Romano-British pottery arrived on site as part of the contents of muck heaps used to fertilise agricultural fields of some antiquity. Feature (**6030**) appears to be of similar date and function.

**8.3** Post holes (**7113**) and (**7114**) and beam slot (**7180**) may belong to Phase II, but, since there is little indication of settlement in this period, they have been allotted to Phase III.

## 9.0 Phase III: First Settlement (Aceramic)




**Feature 12.** Phase III plan.

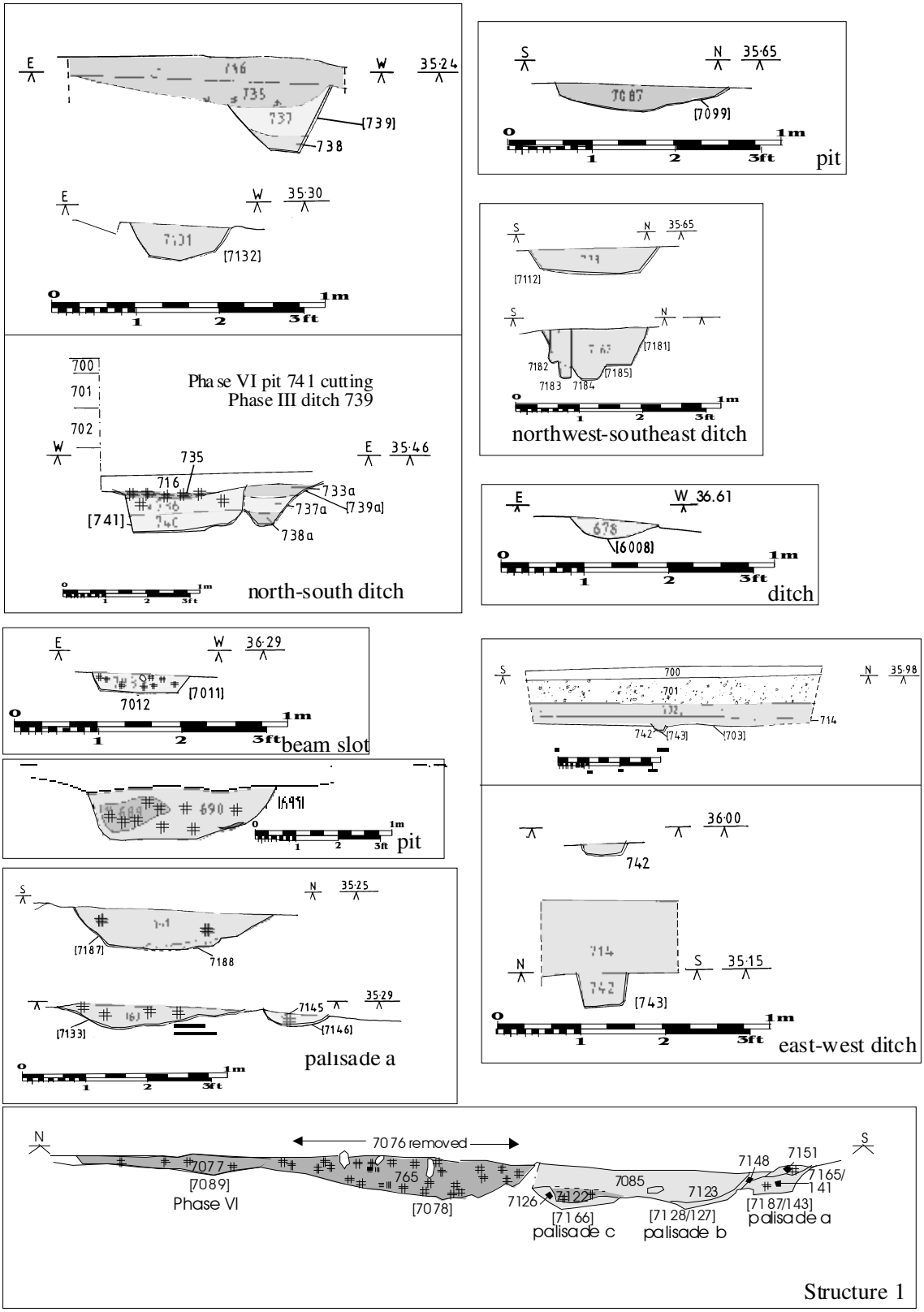



**Figure 13.** Phase III sections

## 9.1 Phase III Archaeological Features and Deposits

The first of two aceramic phases, Phase III was initially defined entirely by aceramic features. Many features containing only Romano-British pottery were originally consigned to Phase II but, in the light of the arrangement of Phase III features, two features were considered to form part of the latter: slots **(7180)** and **(7011)**.

From the end of the Roman administration in Britain in the early fifth century Somerset was largely without pottery until it was reintroduced into the county in the tenth century (SWARF 2008, 175). Phases III and IV could therefore fall anywhere within this time period.

### 9.1.1 North-South Ditches: the first boundary definition

Stratigraphically, the earliest feature in Phase III was a small ditch **(739)** which closely followed the base of the agricultural lynch **(744)** formed in Phase I-II. Oriented on **353˚/173˚** (seven degrees west of north), the ditch appears to come to an end in the middle of Area 7 north. Its southern terminus in Area 7 south is obliterated by other features, so it is impossible to know if it formed a corner and ran west, and there was no sign of the ditch running south in the southern part of the trench. A boundary function is suggested by its size, and this suggestion is reinforced by other features:

- At **355˚/175˚**, Ditch **(6008)** is of similar orientation and size to ditch **(739)**; what is more, its spacial relationship with the lynch **(6030)** echoes the relationship between ditch **(739)** and lynch **(744).**
- Cuts **(7011)** and **(742)** follow similar orientations (**348˚/168˚** and **267˚/87˚,** ten degrees off the right angle) but display different characteristics. With their shallow, narrow profile and flat bases, they would be interpreted as beam slots were it not for their long lengths. It has also been impossible to identify any other elements of buildings of which these features might be a part. Perhaps the timber structures carried by beams in these features functioned as boundary walls, possibly for a garden.

Ditch fill **7132** contained 1 small sherd of C12-14th pottery which could indicate that the ditch, or at least the southern part of it, dated to the medieval period. There were

no other sherds of pottery recovered from the feature, however, and the sherd is so small that it was decided that the pottery must be intrusive, especially since **7132** is cut by the aceramic gully **7078.**

It may be that this collection of features represents the first of a long series of domestic enclosures on the site.

### 9.1.2 Structure 1

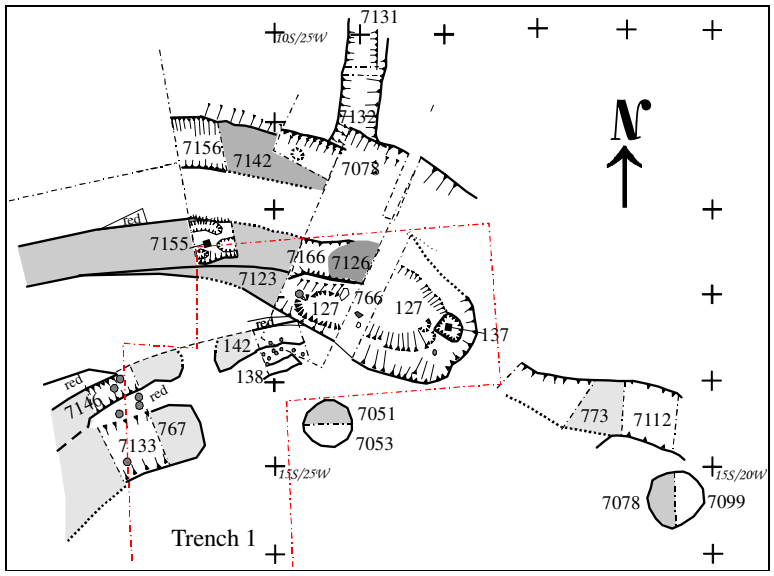



**Figure 14.** The curving gullies of Structure 1 (crosses are from the site grid at 1m).

The southern end of ditch **739** has been obliterated by a complex series of intercutting curving gullies (see Figures 12 and 14). They were clearly visible in the south-west corner of Trench 7 south, but it has been impossible to reveal their full extent; they extend to the west beyond the limits of the excavation, and any southern extension of the gullies there might have been would have been obliterated by later features, both ancient and modern (see Figure 10). These gullies were first excavated in evaluation Trench 1, but here those results are integrated (Hollinrake and Hollinrake 2004) with the findings from the full excavation.

All of the gullies share certain characteristics: while varying in width from 25 to 80 cm, all were very shallow (less than 15cm deep) with flat bases pock-marked with stakeholes which were often seen outside of the gully. It has been possible to distinguish three gullies, described in strategraphic sequence below. Detailed context descriptions of each gully can be found in the Appendix III in the Phased Contexts.

Curving gully **a**, stratigraphically the earliest, appears to be accompanied by a parallel, wider gully of unknown function. Its fill of light grey clay contained lumps of natural clay, suggesting that the gully was backfilled. Charcoal is rare. Gully **b** incorporated a substantial posthole **(127)** in its terminus, which may also have been used for gully **a**; it did not appear to extend beyond the posthole. The fill of this gully and gully **c** contained more frequent flecks of charcoal. This suggests that activity on the site had carried on and possibly even intensified during the lifetime of these gullies.

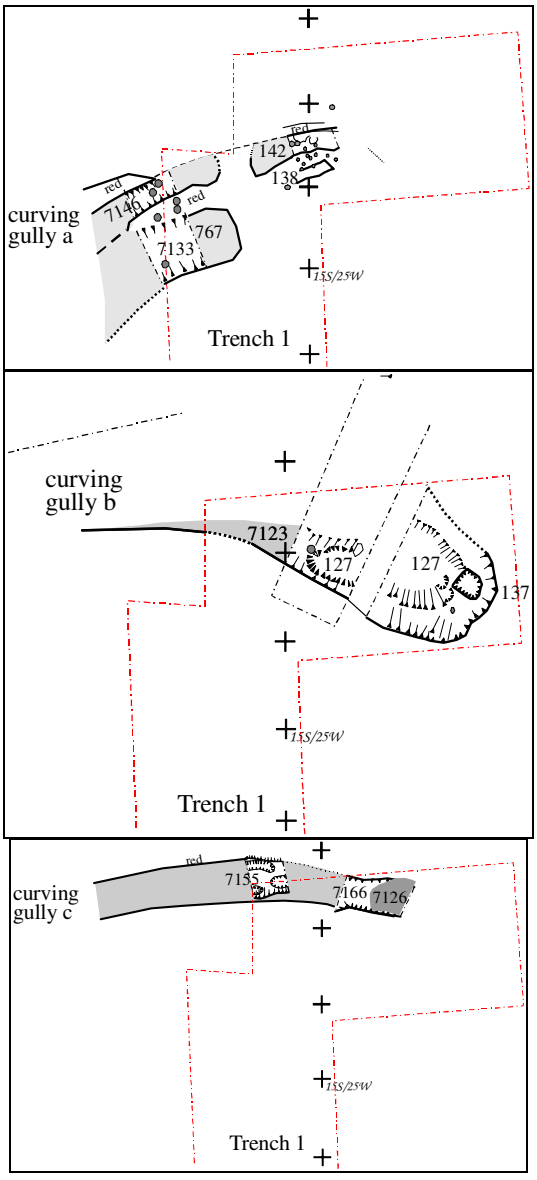



**Figure 15**. The curving gullies of Structure 1 illustrated individually (crosses are from the site grid at 1m intervals).

The function of these curving gullies is not clear. The proliferation of stakeholes suggests that they carried wattle and daub walls and the curve seems to point to the existence of a series of round houses, but the dearth of evidence demands caution in accepting this interpretation. The arcs of the gullies suggest structures of some 12m or more in diameter, a reasonable size for Iron Age roundhouses, so the scale of the features is compatible with known examples from the region; the stone-built round houses at South Cadbury were c11-12m in diameter (Alcock 1972). Other Phase III features may provide additional data to either confirm this interpretation or suggest others. The large posthole/small pit **127,** for example, could have been used by all three of the gullies and is consistent with an interpretation as a door post.

Post-Roman roundhouses have been found in Somerset at Cadbury Congresbury hillfort (Burrow 1981) but these do not exhibit similar methods of construction to the potential building(s) from Bove Town. Dark Age roundhouses constructed entirely of wicker walls with large posts only used for the door jambs excavated at Deer Park Farms, Co. Antrim, (Lynn 1989) are of a similar construction design to what appears at Bove Town, but could be too distant to be considered good parallels. Deer Park Farms does, however, have the advantages of being well-preserved, well-excavated and well-reported; the Irish site does provide evidence that buildings of this type of construction are known from the British Isles in the post-Roman centuries.

### 9.1.3 Ditch

Ditch **(7112/7181)** begins close to post pit **(127)** and extends eastward for more than 12m. A wide, shallow feature with sloping sides and a smooth base, it was filled with firm greenish-grey clay, becoming more green towards the base, containing some animal bone and small stones. Towards the west, one stakehole was observed driven into the ditch at a 45˚ angle where a slit trench **(7185)** was cut into the base of the ditch. The main orientation of the ditch lies at **277˚/97˚** but both of the visible extremities bend slightly away from this angle. This angle seems to correspond fairly well with the other Phase III ditches and walls on the site described above, lying close to a right angle with ditch **(739)**. If the curving gullies are accepted as a roundhouse, Ditch **(7112/7181)**

would be interpreted as a drain away from the door; the greenish tinge to the fill, often found in cess pits, does not contradict this interpretation.

### 9.1.4 Pits

Cuts **(7099)** and **(7053)** are two pits with similar fills of dark greenish grey silty clay which seem to fit best into Phase III, but in the absence of stratigraphic relationships for these features it is best to keep an open mind about their phasing.

Pit **(7169)**, on the other hand, with its accompanying spread of charcoal and burnt clay, was cut by Phase IV ditch **(7171)**, so the phasing of this metal-working hearth is secure. A similar hearth pit in Area 6 **(691)** was sealed by an occupation spread containing 10th-12th century pottery and may belong to Phase IV.

## 9.2 The material culture

The finds from this phase of activity are few, amounting to a quantity of animal bone and some metal-working slag. Although it is possible to speculate that the bulk of the finds from this period may have been swept into a midden somewhere beyond the excavation area, it is difficult to argue from negative evidence. Midden dumps at the fringes of settlement are known from Deer Park Farms and Dinas Powys (Campbell 2007, Figure 69, p. 99), to name but two well-known examples.

## 9.3 Discussion

Although Phase III is difficult to interpret, it is probably safe to conclude that the activity recorded represents domestic settlement. The features include ditches, beam slots, curving gullies and a metal-working hearth. The finds, though sparse, include animal bone, charcoal and slag.

All of this makes the interpretation of the curving gullies as parts of a roundhouse more plausible, given all the appropriate *caveats*. Structure 1 is located at the extreme southwest of the site, where road widening in the mid-twentieth century has removed a corner of the garden. The planting of trees and shrubs has probably damaged much of the archaeology that survived the roadworks. The plan of all features (Figure x above) shows

a concentration of features which will have obliterated the southern counterpart of the proposed door post. In short, we will probably never be able to be entirely confident that there was a roundhouse on the corner of Bove Town, but that interpretation is consistent with the evidence that has been collected.

This corner of the site is elevated above the rest of the town, affording extensive views down to the River Brue (before all the houses were constructed) and benefitting from the stream running down Bove Town. The site is sheltered from the cold east winds by Windmill Hill and Chalice Hill. It certainly attracted settlement in subsequent phases, down to and including the present day.

## 10.0 Phase IV: Reorganization of the settlement (Aceramic)

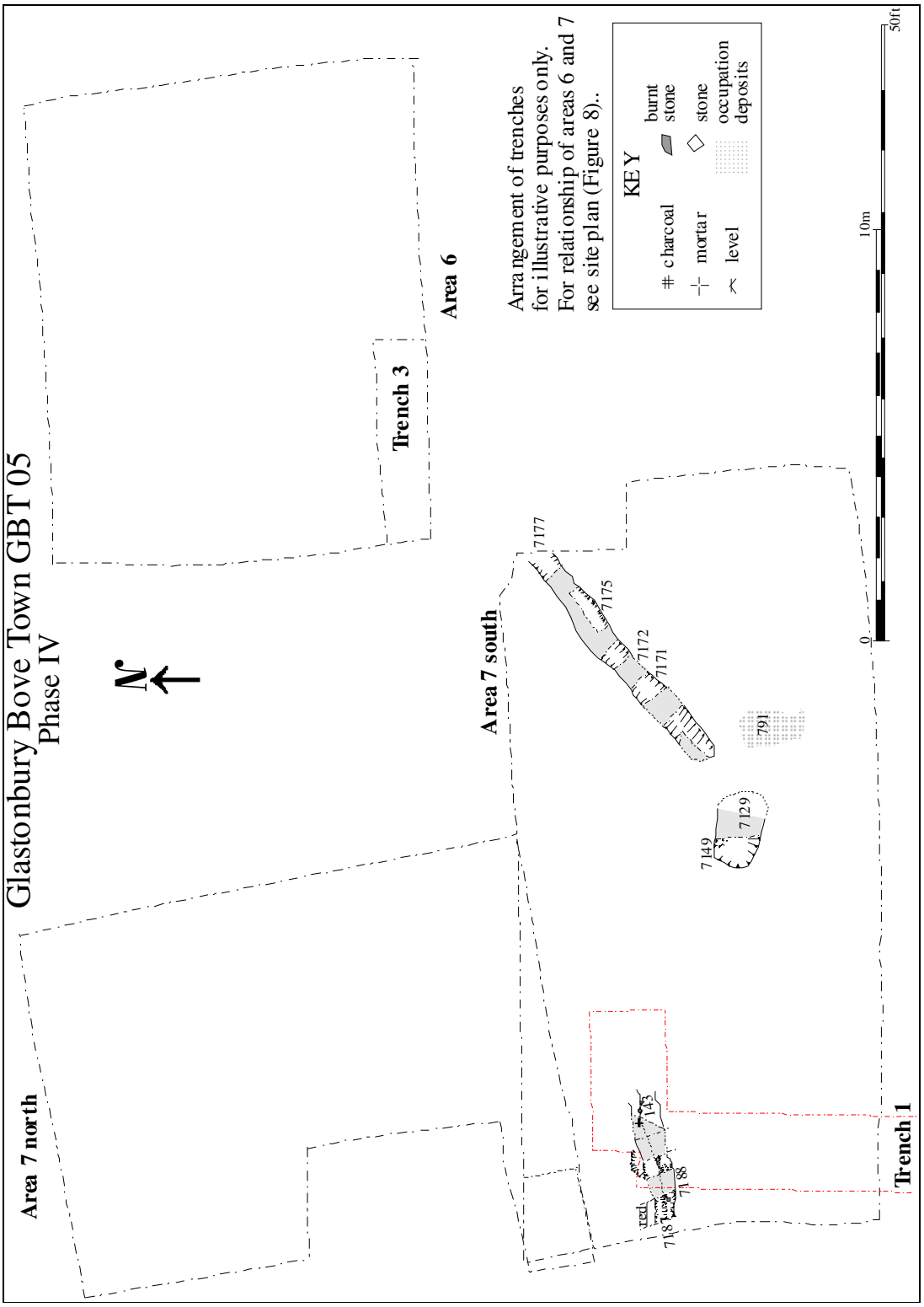



**Figure 16.** Phase IV plan

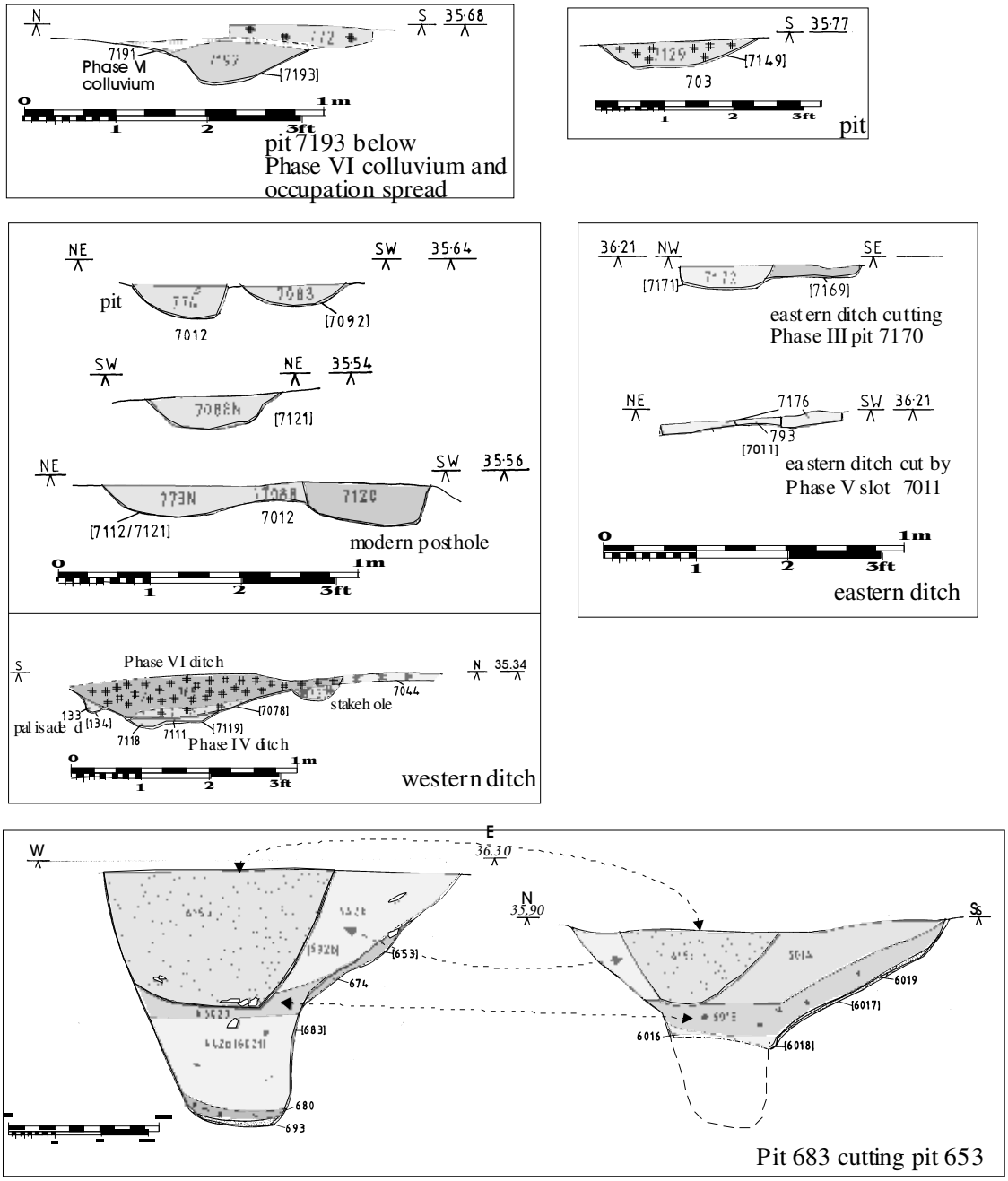



**Figure 17.** Phase IV sections.

## 10.1 Phase IV Archaeological Features and Deposits

Phase IV was distinguished from the earlier, aceramic, Phase III by a change in the orientation of the linear features: gully **(7171)** and ditch **(7187).**

### 10.1.1 Gully (7171)

At **223˚/43˚**, the orientation of this linear feature is quite different from those recorded from earlier phases (**355˚/175˚ 348˚/168˚** and **267˚/87˚**) and was quite obvious on the ground. This shallow cut with sloping sides and a flat base was from 9cm to 35cm deep and varied in width from 60cm to 120cm. It appeared to form a terminus and could not be detected to the west of Phase VI boundary ditch **(7091)**. If it continued far beyond the baulk of Trench 7 south, it probably would not have been seen in Trench 6. The fill was a uniform, compact grey-green silty clay with few finds apart from a scatter of animal bone and fired clay fragments.

Most of the rest of the features of Phases IV and V appear to respect this new alignment, implying that the layout of the site had been reorganized.

### 10.1.2 Ditch (7187)

This feature was first excavated during the 2004 evaluation, where it was given the context number **143**. It cuts through the complex of Phase III curving gullies but is distinguished from them because it is straight. No orientation of this ditch has been attempted due to its short length but the plan shows a rough east-west alignment. Recorded as 22cm deep and 102cm wide, it had steep sides and a flatish base with frequent stake hole, many on the edge of the cut. The frequency of stakeholes suggests that this feature appeared to carry a wattle wall.

### 10.1.3 Pit (7149)

Pit **(7149)** cuts the Phase III ditch **(7112)**, so probably belongs to Phase IV. The pit had been partly obliterated by a large Phase VI ditch, but the enough remains to discern a rectangular plan with rounded corners some 112cm wide and at least 18cm deep with sloping sides and a flat base. It was filled with light green silty clay with moderate amounts of charcoal and animal bone, but no other finds.

## 10.2 Material culture

Little can be said of material culture with such slender evidence. There is also reason to believe that Phase IV is really the early part of Phase V so discussion is best incorporated into the chapter dealing with Phase V.

## 11.0 Phase V: Continuation of Phase IV (C10-C12th)

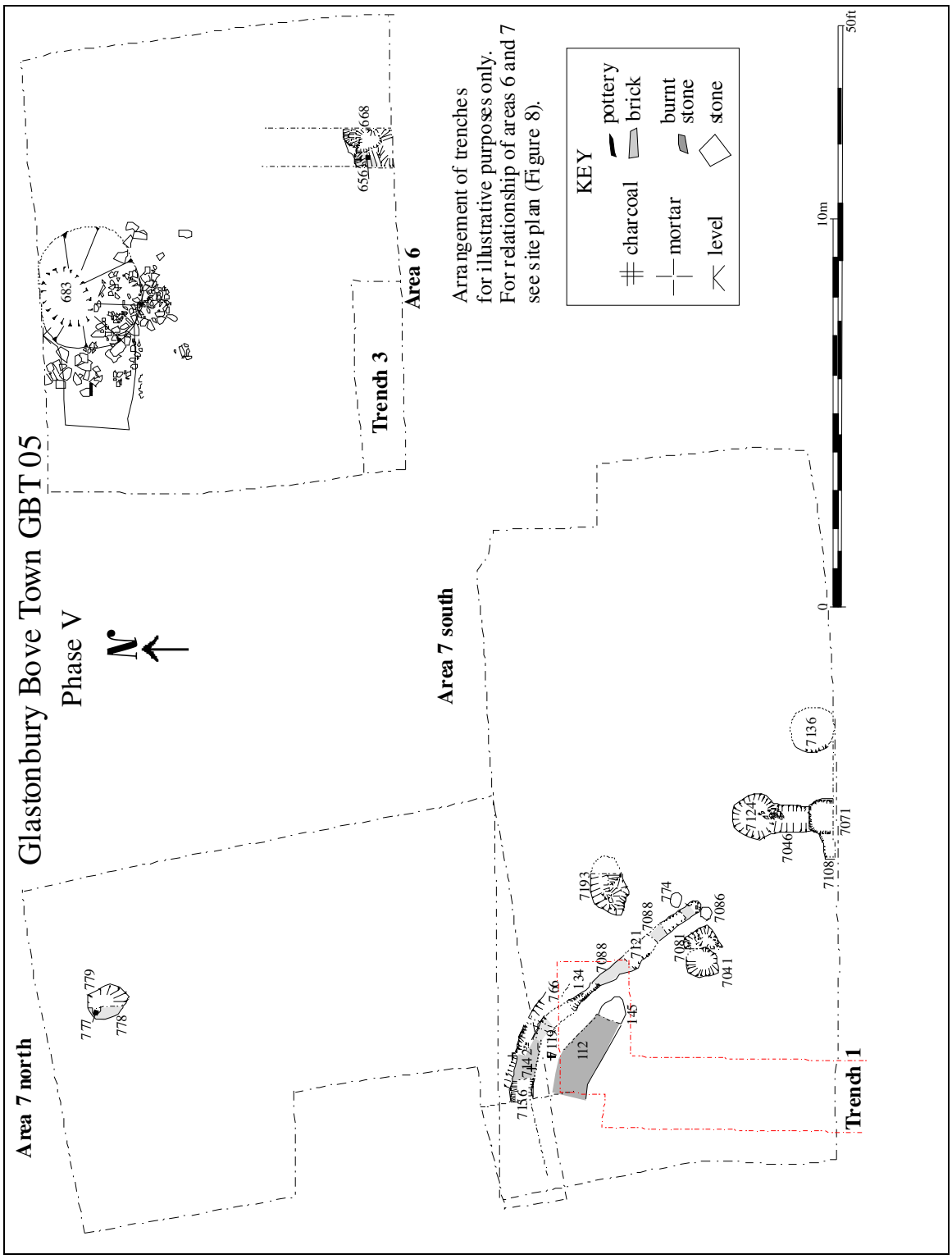



Figure 18. Phase V plan

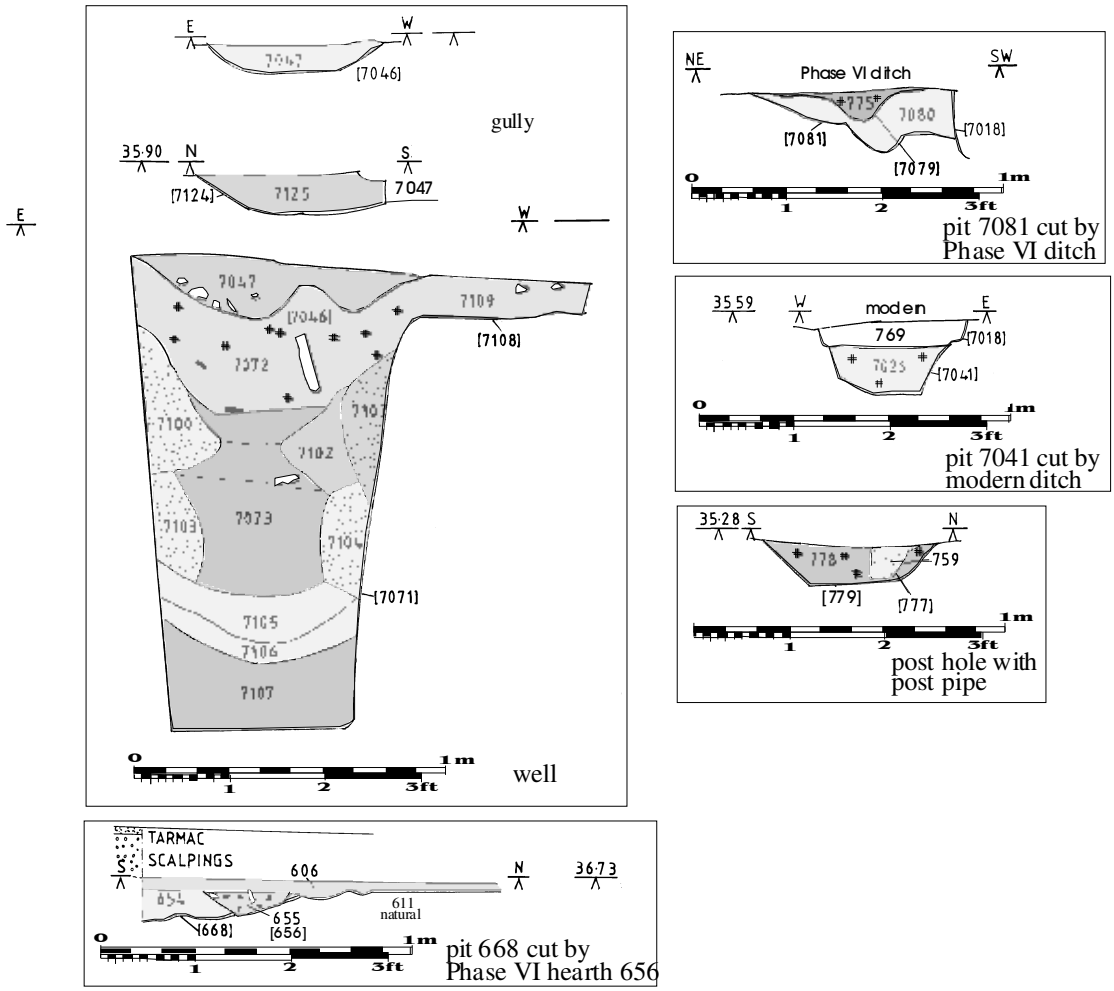



**Figure 19.** Phase V sections**.**

## 11.1 Phase V: Archaeological Features and Deposits

Phase V was originally identified by its pottery: the earliest phase where pottery was routinely in use. As mentioned above, Somerset was virtually without pottery from the collapse of the Roman administration in the fifth century until the reintroduction of pottery some time during the tenth century. More detailed dating is at present unavailable because these aceramic centuries are rarely identified, leading to a paucity of data.

Activity during this phase intensified, as may be seen from the increase in the number of features. . Only features with early Saxon pottery will be included in Phase V unless there are compelling arguments to include them.

### 11.1.1 Ditch (7121)

This ditch follows an orientation of **315˚/135˚**, which is very close to a right angle with ditch **(7171)** at **43˚/223˚.** Although the orientations of these two ditches appear compatible, their methods of construction are quite different. Ditch (7121) varied in depth from 10cm in the southern part to up to 30cm deep where it curves before leaving Trench 7, and the width varies from 50cm to 80cm. Most of these differences may be accounted for by the northern, curving part of the ditch cutting through the soft fills of the Phase III curving gullies, and the occasional stakeholes recorded in the various contexts probably relate to Phase III, since they were not consistently recorded throughout the feature.

It was often possible to detect that the ditch had been re-cut. The fills were brown and greenish-grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks, animal bone fragments, small stones and C10th to C12th pottery sherds. The profiles were mostly a broad U-shape. This feature may have functioned as a drain. Two postholes, **(774)** and **(7086),** are illustrated in Figure 14 at either side of the southern terminus of this ditch, but since neither posthole produced datable finds, they could actually belong to any phase.

### 11.1.2 Ditch (145)

This feature, excavated during the evaluation, appears to mirror the curve in ditch **(7121)** and may represent the same kind of activity, again cutting through the Phase III curving gullies. Most impressive in this feature was the contents of fill **112,** a dark grey loamy clay with frequent charcoal, slag and other occupation debris. As well as containing nails and fired clay, this fill contained 10 sherds of C10th to C11th pottery, a short section of iron chain and a hook that has been interpreted as an agricultural tool. These will be described in greater detail below.

### 11.1.3 Possible well (7071)

A major group of features in Phase V was a deep shaft with associated features against the southern baulk of Trench 7. The 90cm square shaft with rounded corners and nearly vertical sides was sunk to a depth of 1.56m into the solid clay. Ten different fills were recorded: greenish silts of various colours from grey to yellow, interleaved with clean yellow or brown clays with few finds; the darker fills tended to contain the usual cultural material in the form of pottery sherds, bone and charcoal, etc., including a small iron nail. The uppermost context included large flat stones, which also appeared in the vicinity of the gully described below.

Just over 1m to the north was a wide, shallow, bowl-shaped pit **(7124)**, 25cm deep and 120cm in diameter. This was connected to the well shaft by a broad gully **(7046)** 55cm wide and 9cm deep with irregular sides and uneven base; it appeared to be water-worn. Both these features were filled with greyish-green clay silt with the usual inclusions, as well as a lump of slag.

To the west of the shaft **(7071)** was another feature which disappeared under the baulk. The squared feature **(7108)** was 14cm deep x c.55cm wide with nearly vertical sides and a flat base; the eastern edge opened into the shaft. The fill of this feature is similar to the fills of the pit and gully **(7124)** and **(7046)**.

Although there is no sign of a lining, this complex of features appears best interpreted as a well. The associated features may be the remains of a well-cover or winch for raising a bucket or installations of that type. The stream running down Bove Town would be close enough for the ground water to easily penetrate into the well shaft and, if there were any contamination in this stream, the hard Lias clay would filter that out. It would seem from the proliferation of flat stones that the gully **(7046)** may have been paved over, or that there was paving around the well shaft. The pottery from the shaft dated entirely to the C10th-C11th century, and it is possible that this dates the episode when the shaft was backfilled, and that the well (if this interpretation is accepted) had been in use for some time before this.

### 11.1.4 Pit (683)

This is a large pit with a ramp leading into the western side, with a complex series of fills, which was excavated in four quadrants. The profile of the pit tapers from c2.35m diameter at the top to a 1m diameter shaft for the lowest 85cm. The whole pit is c1.8m deep. A much smaller re-cut **(692)** lies entirely within the fill of the earlier cut. To the west was cut **(643)**, which sloped downwards towards the pit. The spread of flat stones around the western side of the pit is probably the remains of flagstone paving in **(643)** and around the southern side of pit **(683)**. Like the possible well **(7071),** the entire feature gives the impression of careful, deliberate construction of a special facility.

The pit **(692)** was re-cut at least once, and probably twice, although it is hard to interpret this earlier pit **(653)** of which so little remains. The fills of ditch **(653)** are notable, however little of them remain, for their contents: abundant quantities of charcoal, slag, occasional animal bone, pottery sherds of the 10$^{th}$ to 11$^{th}$ centuries and a large lamp hewn from a block of Bath stone, described below.

The fills of this feature **(653)**, cut by the large pit **(683)**, contain pottery, mostly of the C10th to C11th, but also a few fragments which have been dated to the C12th century. The same is true of the fills of the large pit **(683)** itself, especially in the upper layers, and of the fill of the re-cut pit **(692)**. One of the implications of this is that all of these features were cut and used in the same phase, suggesting that the earlier cut **(653)** is best viewed as part of the same activity as the rest of the feature, which has been comprehensively cleared out and re-used at least once before being filled one last time before being abandoned.

Another possibility is that the contents of this feature were well-stratified by date and the pottery sherds constitute an important resource for providing a dating sequence for pottery between the C10th and early C12th. It is possible that some of the pottery dated by the current state of knowledge as C12-C13th century might be reassessed as being slightly earlier.

The fills of the pit varied from grey silty clays with abundant charcoal and other cultural material to firm yellow clays with few finds. Some layers contained large blocks of limestone showing signs of wear, probably from the paving mentioned above. This

feature is interpreted as a cess pit and bears close resemblance to a similar feature interpreted as a cess pit excavated at St. Mary le Port, Bristol dated to the C10 to C11th centuries (Rahtz 1985, 71).

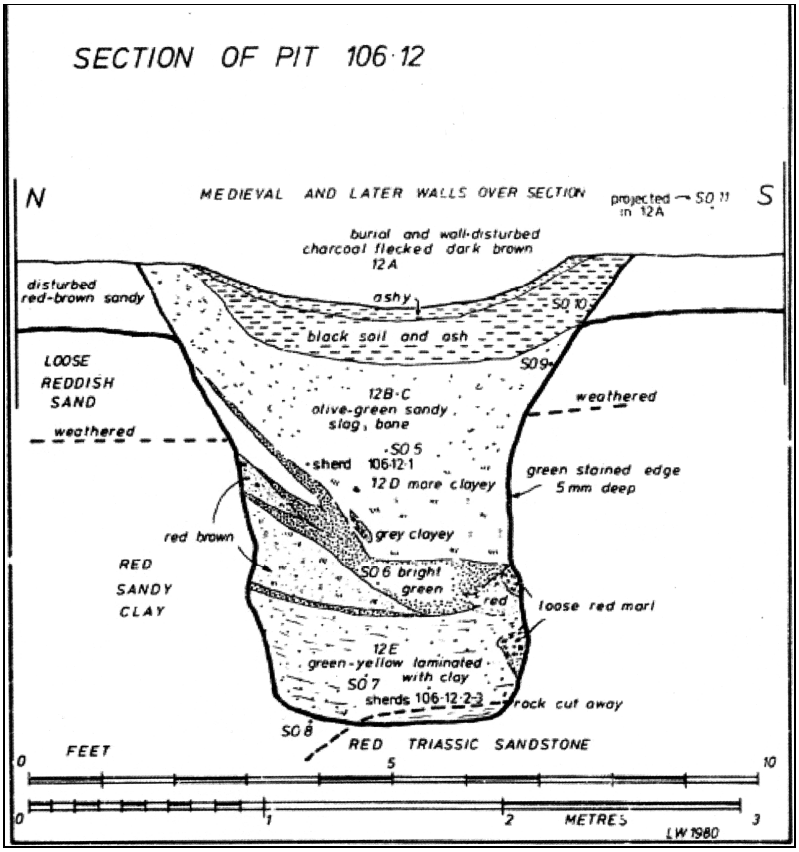



**Figure 20**. Section of C10th-C11th century cess pit from St. Mary le Port, Bristol (Figure 42MF, Rahtz 1985).

### 11.1.5 Pits (779), (7041), (7081), (7193), (7136)

Five pits can be dated to Phase V by their contents. Pit **(779)** was cut by posthole **(777),** which produced a single sherd of possible Iron Age pottery which must be residual; this posthole probably dates to Phase VI, since it is not central to the pit. The small irregular pit contains pottery, animal bone and skull fragments and some charcoal.

Intercutting Pits **(7041)** and **(7081)** and are similar in form and contents: Both are irregular bowl-shaped cuts about 30cm deep and 80cm across filled with firm gray-green silty clay with small orange lenses of natural clay. Pit **(7081)** revealed a flat area which

would be suitable for a post, but the absence of packing stones argues against that interpretation. Both fill contain pottery dating from the C10th to the C12th. The fill of **(7081), (7080)**, included white lime plaster and small slate fragments, while the fill of **(7041)** did not, but contained only pottery of the C10th-C11th.

Some 3 metres to the north lies a similar pit, **(7193)**. Again dug in an irregular fashion, it is slightly larger, measuring between c90cm and c100cm across but dug to the same depth of c30cm. The fill was a dark grey clay with animal bone, fired clay and C10th to C12th century pottery.

Only a small section of pit **(7136)** remained after being cut by the Phase VI ditch **(7091)**, but the fill included C10th-C12th pottery. The dark fill included frequent charcoal flecks and fired clay.

### 11.1.6 Industrial activity (656), (668)

A complex of what appeared to be industrial activity emerged in the southern baulk of Trench 6 after deep trowelling of the Phase VI occupation spread **606**. Pit **(656)** was of the smooth oval shallow bowl-shape cut typical of metal-working hearths. The fill contained frequent small Lias chunks, many burnt, and frequent charcoal flecks and lumps. This hearth was set within the fill of an earlier shallow (20cm) irregular, heart-shaped pit **(668)** up to 130cm across filled with grey-green clay with charcoal, slag, fired clay and oven-lining. These features were set into an area where the natural clay had been disturbed by earlier diggings which were impossible to interpret. At least one stakehole **(670)** was identified in the fill of **(668)**. Some pottery from **(656)** could date as late as the (13$^{th}$-C14th centuries. cMetal-working and other industrial activity continued into Phase VI in this area so it is possible that, despite containing only C10-C12th century pottery, these features were actually formed in Phase VI, so further description follows below, where more similar features are described (See 12.1.3).

## 11.2 Discussion of features and deposits

The orientation of the linear features in Phase IV continues into Phase V. Indeed the only substantial difference between Phases IV and V lie in the presence or absence of datable pottery. The explanation of the shift in orientation still remains to be explored, but it is important to note that, had it not been for the presence of pottery, Phase V would not have been treated as a separate phase of activity, since the following phase, Phase VI, is distinguished by yet another change in orientation. After studying the features it becomes obvious that Phases IV and V were actually the same period of activity; it is therefore proposed to treat them as one phase for the purposes of discussing the material culture (see 11.3). The combined plan is shown below.

The fill of intercutting pits **(7041)** and **(7081)** (see 11.1.5) suggest that a timber building with plastered walls and slate roof was dismantled during the C12th.

## 11.3 Phase IV/V: Material culture

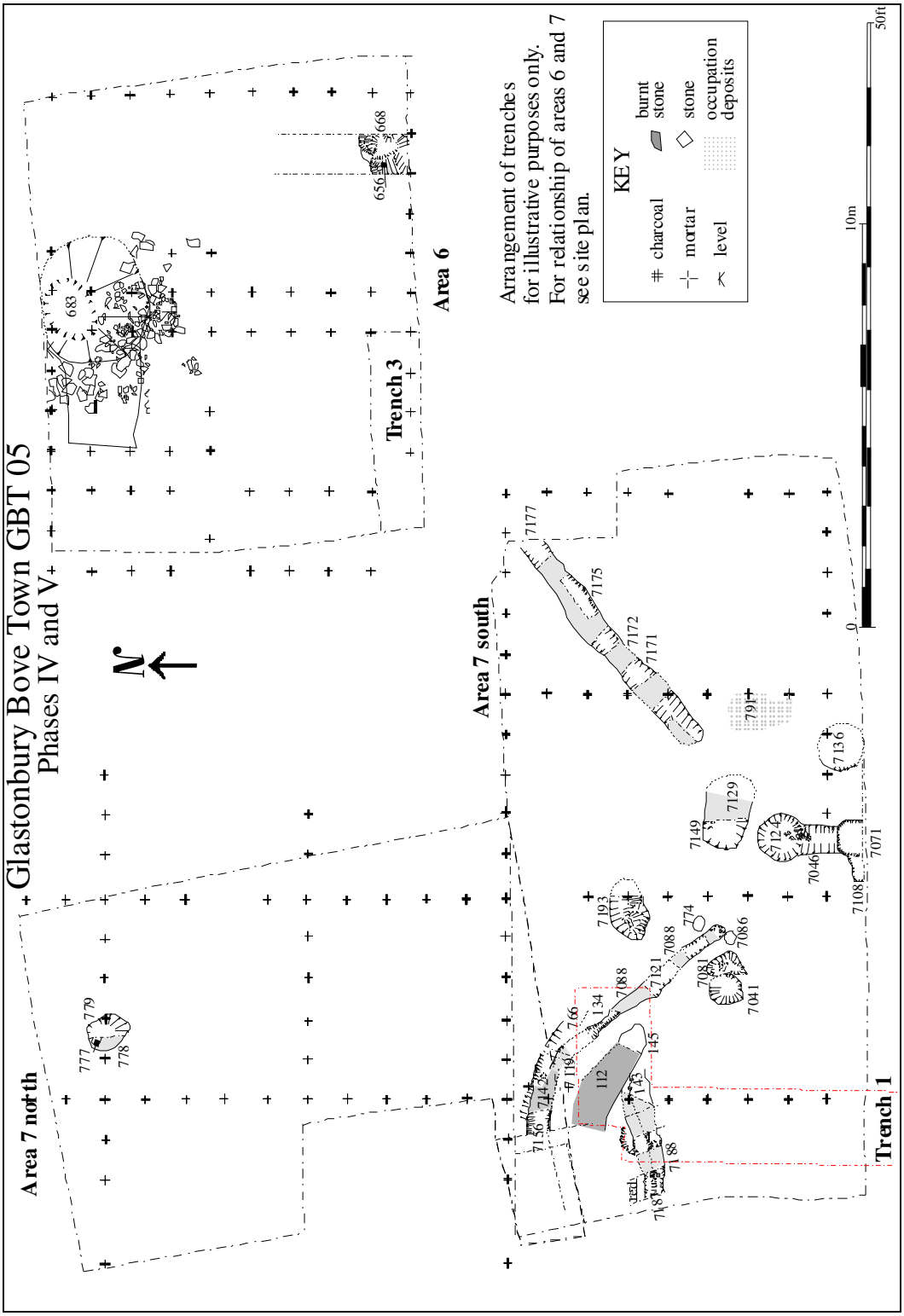



**Figure 21**. Phases IV and V plans combined.

Phase IV/V, then, began with a change in the orientation of the settlement, away from the nearly north-south orientation of the prehistoric fields of Phases I and II, an orientation still being used in the first settlement in the post-Roman centuries, to a new layout expressed by the northeast southwest ditches **(7121)** and **(7171)**. Phase VI/V activity, clustered around the southern part of the site in Trench 7 south, exhibits a largely domestic character. The well **(7071)** could have served a variety of types of activities, but the pits, and especially the large cesspit **(683)** in the northern part of the site, reinforce this domestic interpretation of the site in this period, despite the absence of any discernible building which might have served as a house. Any buildings on the property might well have lain outside the limits of the excavations, where their remains are likely to have received considerable damage by roadworks and the roots of large trees.

### 11.3.1 The pottery

During the life of this phase of the settlement, pottery began to be produced in marketable quantities after a gap in production lasting over four centuries from the fifth to the tenth centuries. That those living on Bove Town could partake of this trade shows that this was a reasonably prosperous household and probably indicates that the markets in Glastonbury date back to the Saxon period, which is likely given the importance of Glastonbury to the House of Wessex (see Historical Background, para. 4 above).

### 11.3.2 The animal bone

The report on the analysis of the animal bones from this phase reveals further signs of prosperity. In the report of the full analysis by Lorrain Higbee, presented in the Appendix, it was possible to isolate the bone from Phase V:

> A small number of identified bones were recovered from securely dated late Saxon contexts ($10^{th}$/$11^{th}$ century), these include posthole 6011, gullies 7046, 7155 and 7156, and pits 7041, 7071, 7107 and 7149. Bones from livestock species were identified and of these cattle bones are marginally more abundant than sheep or pig. (Higbee, p. 22.)

This ratio of animal bones from cattle, pig and sheep is reflected in the animal bone assemblage from the later medieval period.

> A number of species have been identified from the late Saxon/medieval assemblage; of the two hundred and twenty-five identified bones approximately 90% are from livestock species. Cattle, sheep/goat and pig bones are present in near equal proportions, each account for roughly a third of all bones from livestock species. This pattern is a somewhat unusual, most animal bone assemblages from urban areas are generally characterised by either a high percentage of sheep or cattle, or near equal proportions of both, with pig of minor importance. However, several authors have noted that early medieval assemblages, particularly those from high status sites, tend to have relatively high frequencies of pig bone (Grant 1988; Albarella and Davis 1996; Albarella *et al* 1997), a general reflection of the higher rate of meat consumption at these sites. Unfortunately it is not possible to determine if the Bove Town assemblage is part of this countrywide trend due to the broad date range of the material, it is however possible to infer status due to the relatively high frequency of pig bones. This is confirmed by comparison with other sites in the region (Table 4 and Figure 1), which shows that species frequencies are similar to high status sites including Cheddar Palace, Somerset (Higgs *et al* 1979), Launceston Castle, Cornwall (Albarella and Davis 1996), and Okehampton Castle, Devon (Maltby 1982). Locally, the small 10th-12th century assemblage from the Mound site at Glastonbury (Darvill and Coy 1985) has a similar ratio of livestock species. (Higbee, p. 23)

To make this data and the comparison with other site, Higbee presents it in a triangular plot reproduced below:

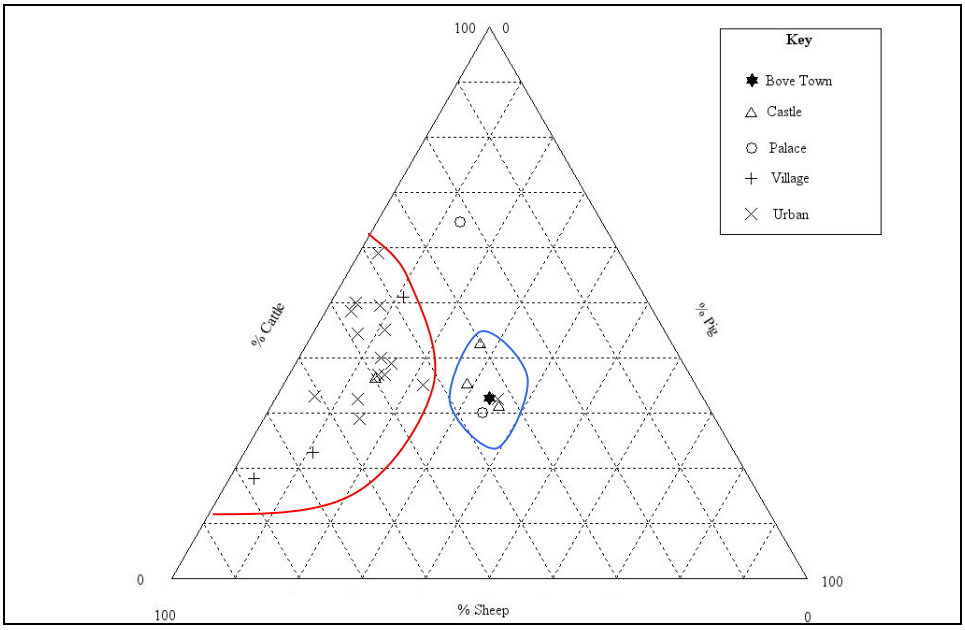



**Figure 22.** Bove Town, Glastonbury: triplot of relative frequency of livestock species from late Saxon/medieval assemblage compared with sites listed in Table 4 (Higbee, Figure 1). The red line highlights the cluster of ratios found in urban and village bone assemblages and the blue oval highlights the ratios found on high-status sites like palaces and castles.

### 11.3.4 The cess pit

While the assemblage of animal bone from Bove Town is smaller than might be desired in a database underscoring significant interpretation, other indications of high status on the site reinforce the data from the animal bone analysis. Cess pits, for example, are rarely encountered in this period, and then usually in high-status sites like the settlement around the important monastery at Milbourne Port (Barnes et. al. 1989) and the site at St. Mary le Port, Bristol, mentioned above. It may be that the cess from rural farming settlements was thrown onto the muck heap to be spread on the fields, although very little study has been devoted to this essential but strictly non-glamorous subject. It would appear that someone emptied the cess pit at least twice, a task unlikely to be undertaken on one's own behalf; it would be preferable to dig a new pit. The great size of the cess pit may also be an indication of high status. The cess pit from Phase VIii **(796)** was far smaller (see 13.1.1 below).

Sites dating to the C10th-C12th centuries are rarely encountered so, although it is impossible to discuss with confidence the general characteristics of sites of this date in the country as a whole, much less in Somerset, discussion and interpretation may be undertaken in the knowledge that every site is an important contribution to the general pool of data relating to the period.

### 11.3.5 The special finds

Having expressed suitable caveats, nevertheless, the finds do appear to point to high-status occupation. While the unique iron chain (**SF 23**) is not necessarily indicative of high status, the grape harvesting sickle (**SF 24**) from the same context **112, ditch (145)** suggests the ownership of a vineyard.

The stone lamp (**SF 8**) can be recognized as a high status object in itself, but a consideration of its use augments this interpretation. The fuel burned in the lamp would have needed to be of the highest quality if the wick was not to produce troublesome fumes; burning tallow produces a foul-smelling smoke. The stone lamp would probably have burned olive oil or whale oil. Although the signs of a contemporary trade in olive oil are few, the temptation to invent a Somerset whaling industry on the basis of this one artefact (plus the one from Bristol) must be resisted. They could have burned bees wax.

Suffice it to say, the options for an acceptable fuel for the lamp are limited and all are expensive.

The coin of Roger II of Sicily was found in a Phase VI deposit, but belongs to Phase V; it is discussed in para. **13.2.3** below.

### 11.3.6 The change in orientation


**Figure 23**. Map of Glastonbury (O.S. 1902). The proposed Saxon grid is marked with a brown dashed line. The Roman road and the road seen on the parchmark survey of the abbey are shown as brown dotted lines. Romano-British pottery is orange dots, Saxon pottery is blue dots. The yellow square marks Victoria Buildings. The Bove Town site is circled with green. (Hollinrake 2008, Fig. 18)

An archaeological evaluation and watching brief on the construction of the new town library recorded some medieval occupation features and an early boundary ditch oriented roughly NE-SW at the south side of the construction site. The boundary ditch

contained no pottery or dateable artefacts but the fill was heavily flecked with charcoal mixed with fragments of fired clay and two radiocarbon14 samples (animal bone) from the base and upper fill of the ditch: These provided dates to two sigma of AD685-956 (AD721-887) and AD901-1159 (AD990-1034) respectively, indicating that it was a pre-Norman Conquest feature (Hollinrake, 1999).

The orientation of this ditch, when extended, duplicated and turned by 90˚, is echoed in various property boundaries, roads and lanes. St. John's church exhibits a similar orientation. Excavations on the west side of Magdalene St. revealed timber slots on a similar alignment (Hollinrake 1992). It would appear that the town has been laid out along two different orientations, the new alignment being principally noticeable in the High Street. Excavations at the Tribunal point to a Norman date for this part of the High Street properties (Hollinrake 1992b) and a watching brief at Victoria Buildings (Figure 18; Hollinrake unpubl.) produced a coin of Richard I from the base of a boundary ditch echoed by modern boundaries, suggesting that the earlier grid was laid out during the Saxon period.

A similar Saxon grid has been proposed for Wells, only six miles to the north, by Prof. Declan Donovan when he was working in the museum in Wells (pers. comm.). A cobbled surface was encountered below the North Tower at Wells Cathedral in the location predicted by Donovan (Hollinrake 2000, 156). Evidence for the existence of such grids will take some time to accumulate but, as at Wells, Glastonbury became an extremely important settlement to the House of Wessex during the Saxon period (see Historical Background above), meriting this sort of special treatment. Glastonbury enjoyed royal favour and prospered. It is probably in this context that the street grid (Figure 18) should be viewed.

If the hypothetical Saxon High Street were extended to the east, it would pass through the property now known as 2 Wells Road, which has been taken from the original property mapped on the 1821 parish map (see Figures 3 to 6 above). The northern boundary of this property is parallel to the suggested line of the Saxon grid The orientation of this grid would be somewhere around **243˚/63˚**. The ditches which identified Phase IV/V were oriented on **223˚/43˚ (gully 7171) and 315˚/135˚ (ditch 7121).** It is a matter of judgement whether these figures, which exhibit a discrepancy as

large as 20˚, are close enough to present a convincing case for the change of orientation demonstrated on the Bove Town site. Any student of Saxon churches will be aware that surveying in that period could be a hit-and-miss affair, and it is difficult to see any other reason behind the change in orientation of the Bove Town property, which produced a layout considered inconvenient enough to warrant another change in orientation in the following phase. But the data currently available does not constitute a compelling argument in favour of the street grid and there may be factors at play of which we are unaware.

Given the historical background of Glastonbury at this time, it comes as little surprise to find evidence of high status in settlement of the pre-Norman Conquest period. The only slight surprise might be in the site's location this far away from the centre of the town at the Abbey and the Market Place. The factors which made the site a favourable location for settlement in Phase III would still apply in Phase IV/V, however, and there is nothing to suggest that the Saxon settlement of Glastonbury need necessarily to have been entirely nucleated, despite the proposed street grid.

If the theory of the Saxon grid is accepted, the implication is that the focus of the site would have been to the north, with Bove Town and its stream acting as a back lane. If this is the case, then the focus of the Saxon period of the site will have been destroyed when 2 Wells Road was constructed.

## 12.0 Phase VIi: Settlement reorganized and expanded (C12-13th)

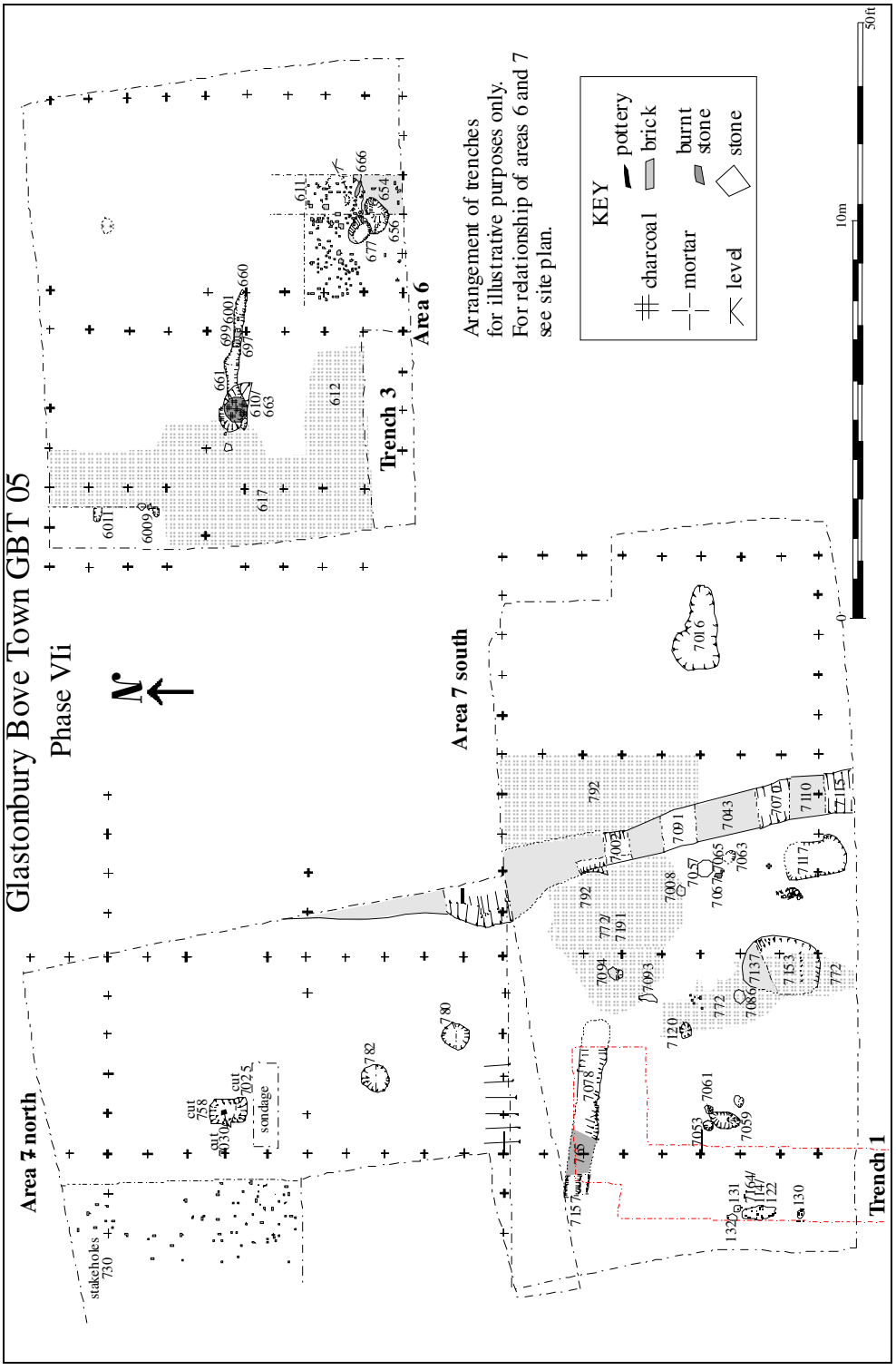



**Figure 24.** Phase VIi plan

## 12.1 Phase VIi: The Features and Deposits

So much activity from Phase VI was recorded, it was found that it was possible to divide the report into the earlier part of the period, Phase VIi, from the latter part, Phase VIii. The earlier phases of the site belong to periods when the archaeological features are seldom seen; for this reason each feature has been carefully and fully described. Since Phase VI, by contrast, represents a far better known period, it is considered that the features do not warrant such treatment. For those who wish more information, the Appendix contains finds and context lists, matrices and the special finds list.

### 12.1.1 boundary ditch (7091)

Phase VI is marked by another major shift in the orientation of the boundary features on the site. Boundary ditch **(7091)** was oriented just west of due north at **337˚/157˚**. This ditch was first seen in the evaluation in Trench 2 and was excavated in five segments during the excavation of Trench 7. The Trench 2 section displayed the clay bank of redeposited clay piled to the east of the ditch; this deposit had been removed for the formation of the tennis court and was missing from the excavation Trench 7. Soil built up behind the bank, creating the lynches visible on parts of the site and showing on the map of the site.

A typical section of the ditch was V-shaped, c0.5-1.0m wide by c0.8-1.0m deep, with a flat base. The steep sides were often stepped. Primary silting could be detected in some sections, where the sides of the newly-exposed ditch weathered, but no re-cuts could be identified. The mixed dark grey and green fill contained quantities of charcoal, bone, pottery and other cultural material. The finds became more frequent towards the south, suggesting that this is where the focus of the settlement lay. A coin recovered from the fill, along with other dating evidence for the origin of Phase VI, will be discussed under Material culture in 13.2 below.

This boundary ditch indicated that the site had been subdivided into at least two different properties, and the nature of the archaeological deposits and finds reflected this

subdivision throughout Phase VI. From this point on, the organization of this paper will reflect this division, and each side of the ditch will be treated as a different property.

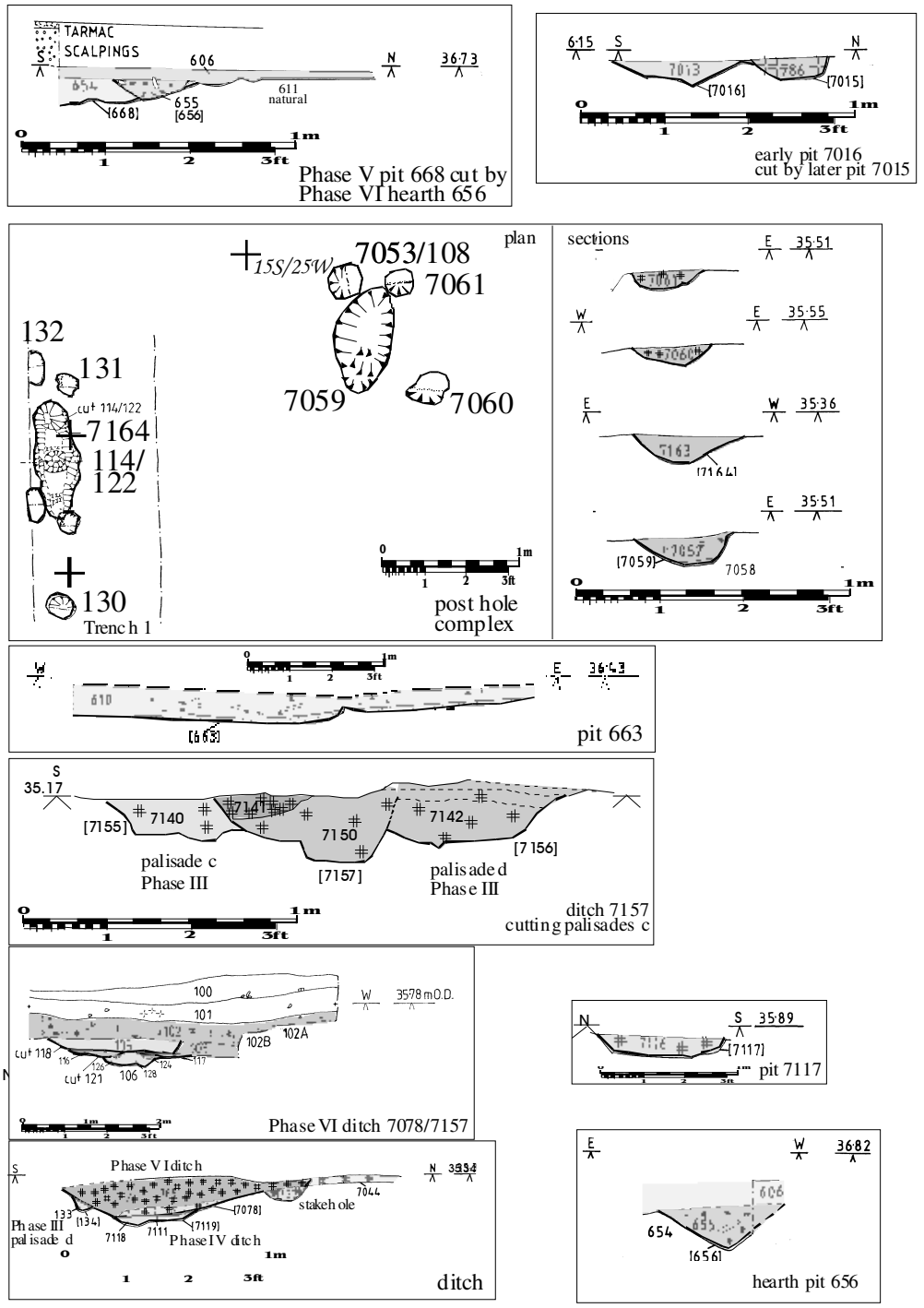



**Figure 25.** Phase Vii sections.

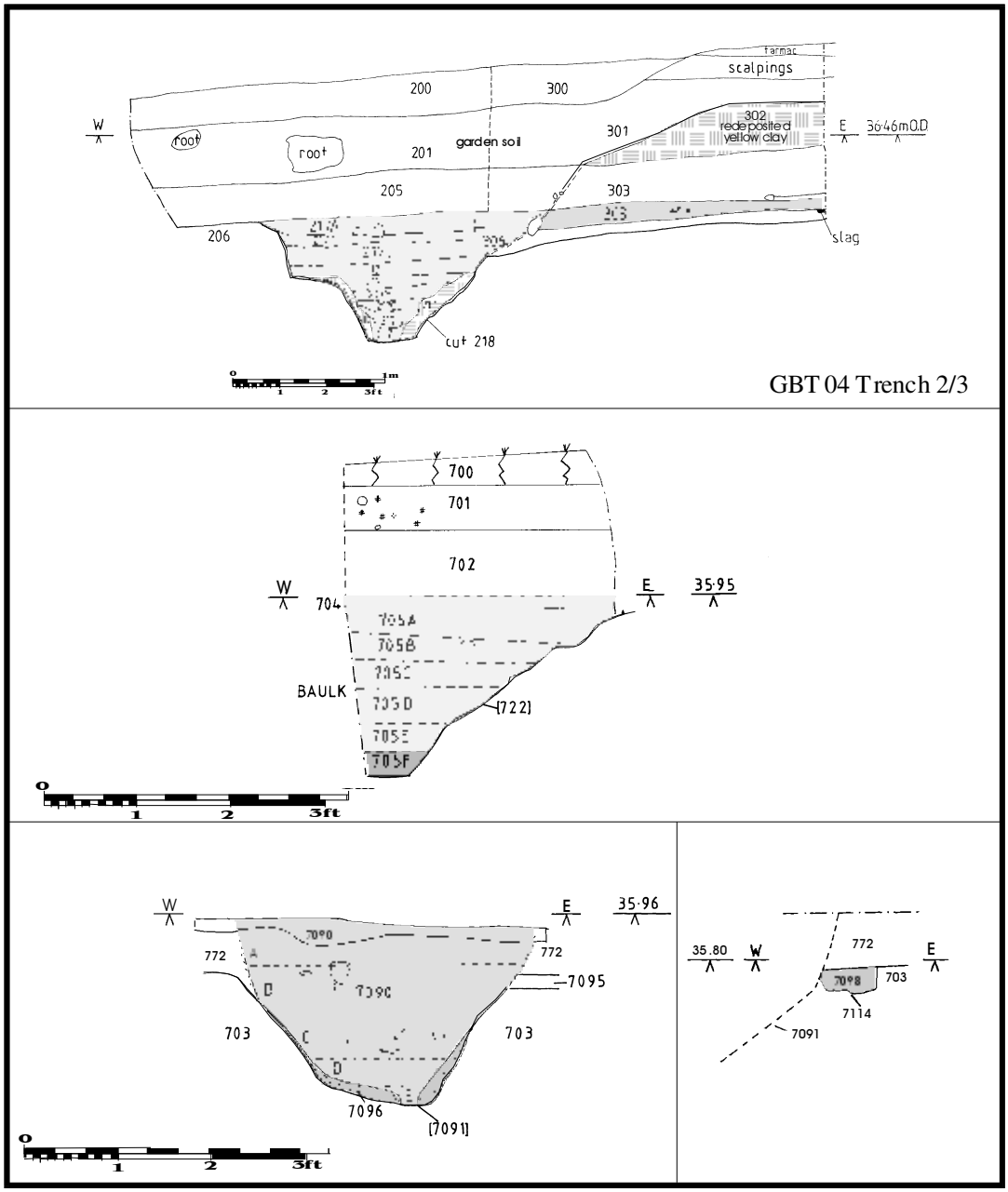



**Figure 26.** Sections of the boundary ditch.

### 12.1.2 The western property

Not many of the features of the previous phase, Phase IV/V, were perpetuated in Phase IV in the western property.. As well as the earlier boundary ditches and smaller pits being out of use, the well **(7071)** was filled in, with only a scatter of stones on the

surface to stabilize the soft fill, and the large cess pit **(683)** ceased to be emptied. Gully **(7078)**, draining as it does to the west, appears to be the one exception. It cuts through the Phase V gully **(7119/7156)** which drained in the same direction. This is the area of the Phase III curving gullies, and, after all the earlier features filled with silts, may have presented a problem soft spot that needed draining. The irregular, broad, shallow cut, with a flat to concave base did not survive well, and it was suggested that it might have been a beam slot. No other features could be identified to suggest a building in this location, however, and its orientation does not match anything else on site, so this interpretation is unlikely to be valid.

South of gully **(7078)** were two complex postholes: **(7164)** and **(7059)**. The former, first excavated during the evaluation in Trench 1, was found to be a triple posthole surrounded by smaller simple postholes. Another similar posthole complex was excavated in Trench 7 of the excavation.

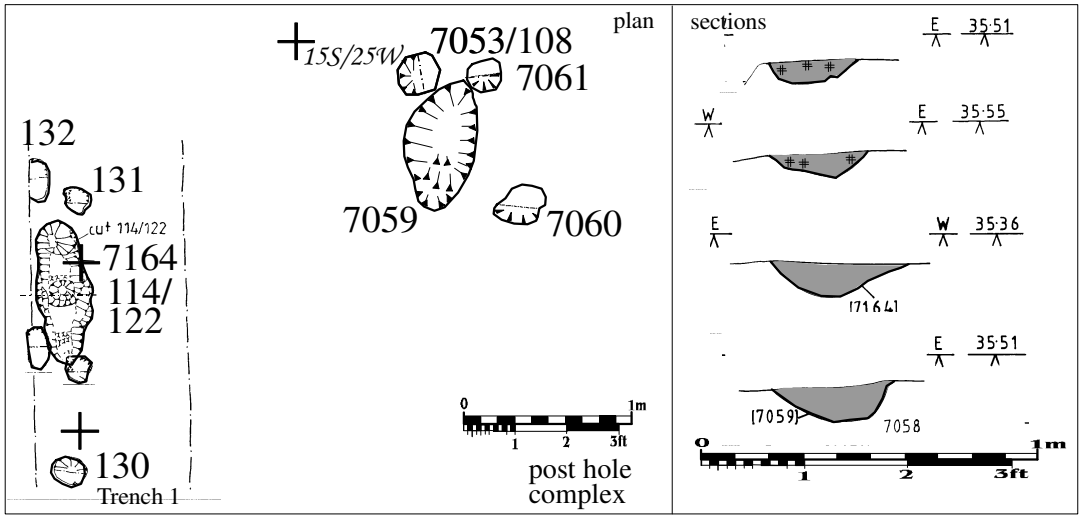



**Figure 27**. Triple postholes (the two top sections are 7061 and 7060).

These two postholes were the only indication of any buildings on the site, and it is possible that the other postholes of a structure lay outside of the limits of the excavation, but that is only one of a number of possible explanations. The sections suggest that the features have been much truncated.

Similarly, it is impossible to discern any pattern in the spatial patterning of any of the other postholes, even the two matching postholes **(780)** and **(782)**. Smaller posthole **(7086)**, producing no finds, has been placed in several phases to see which it best suits,

with the result that it sits in each of them equally well. This is only an example of the situation with many undated postholes which may be seen in several of the phased plans of the site. Although occupation spreads are indicated on the plans, they were usually quite thin and it was often impossible to be certain whether a post- or stakehole pre-dated or post-dated the layer. Even postholes with datable pottery may well belong to a later phase.

Three pits were recorded from this phase: **(7153)**, **(7117)**, and a complex pit **(7030/7025/758)** which was re-cut twice. This latter pit complex contained amounts of charcoal which might lead to an interpretation as metal-working hearths were it not for the flat base of **(7025)**; hearth pits are normally bowl-shaped. It is possible that these pits were used for some unknown industrial purpose, however, since they do not appear to have functioned as post-pits.

Two pits are located to the south of Trench 7 south: **(7117)** and **(7135)**. Both are wide and shallow, of indeterminate purpose.

Occupation spreads survive in Phase VI, i and ii. These were removed in several locations in Trench 1, usually revealing nothing but natural. In the northwestern corner of the Trench, however, removal of the Phase VIii occupation spread **714** revealed a mass of small stakeholes **730** with no discernible pattern.

### 12.1.3 The eastern property

Activity in the eastern property was distinguished from the domestic occupation in the western property by its industrial nature. In Trench 7 only one pit could be allocated to this phase: **(7016)**. The rest of the Phase VIi features lay in Trench 6 and fall into two main groups: slot **(660)**, with its associated postholes, and hearth pits **(677)** and **(656)** with their surrounding stakeholes and deposits.

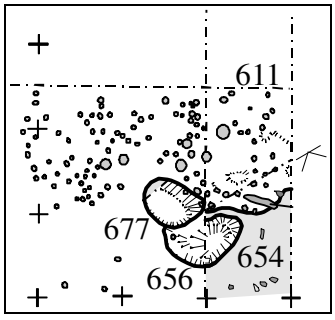



**Figure 28**. Hearth pits and stakeholes

.

Pit **(7016)**, an irregular, bowl-shaped cut, was filled with slag and was probably used as a metal-working hearth, possibly for bronze. In Trench 6, two intercutting hearth pits **(656)** and **(677)** were found surrounded by a mass of stakeholes and small postholes collectively numbered **(675)**. Hearth **(656)** has already been described above as part of Phase VI/V, since it contained only pre-Conquest pottery and cut through the fill of an earlier pit. In contrast to the situation in the western property, the industrial activity in the eastern property seems to be a continuation of Phase VI practice.

Under 2 metres to the north lies slot **(660/661**) with its row of postholes **(697**), **(699)** and **(6001)**. This complex of features might have formed part of a workshop around the metal-working hearths, but no other sign of such a structure was detected. The western end of this slot was cut by another hearth pit **(610/663).**

## 12.2 Discussion of Phase VIi features and deposits

Although the orientation of Phase VI is close to that of Phases I and II, it is most unlikely that this was a deliberate reversion to the original orientation; too much time had elapsed during Phase IV/V for the memory of the earlier orientation to have persisted. It is much more likely that this had always been a more convenient orientation for the site. For one thing, it was closer to a right angle with the stream running down Bove Town. More discussion of the layout of the site can be found in the discussion in section **13.2** below.

## 13.0 Phase VIii: C13-15th

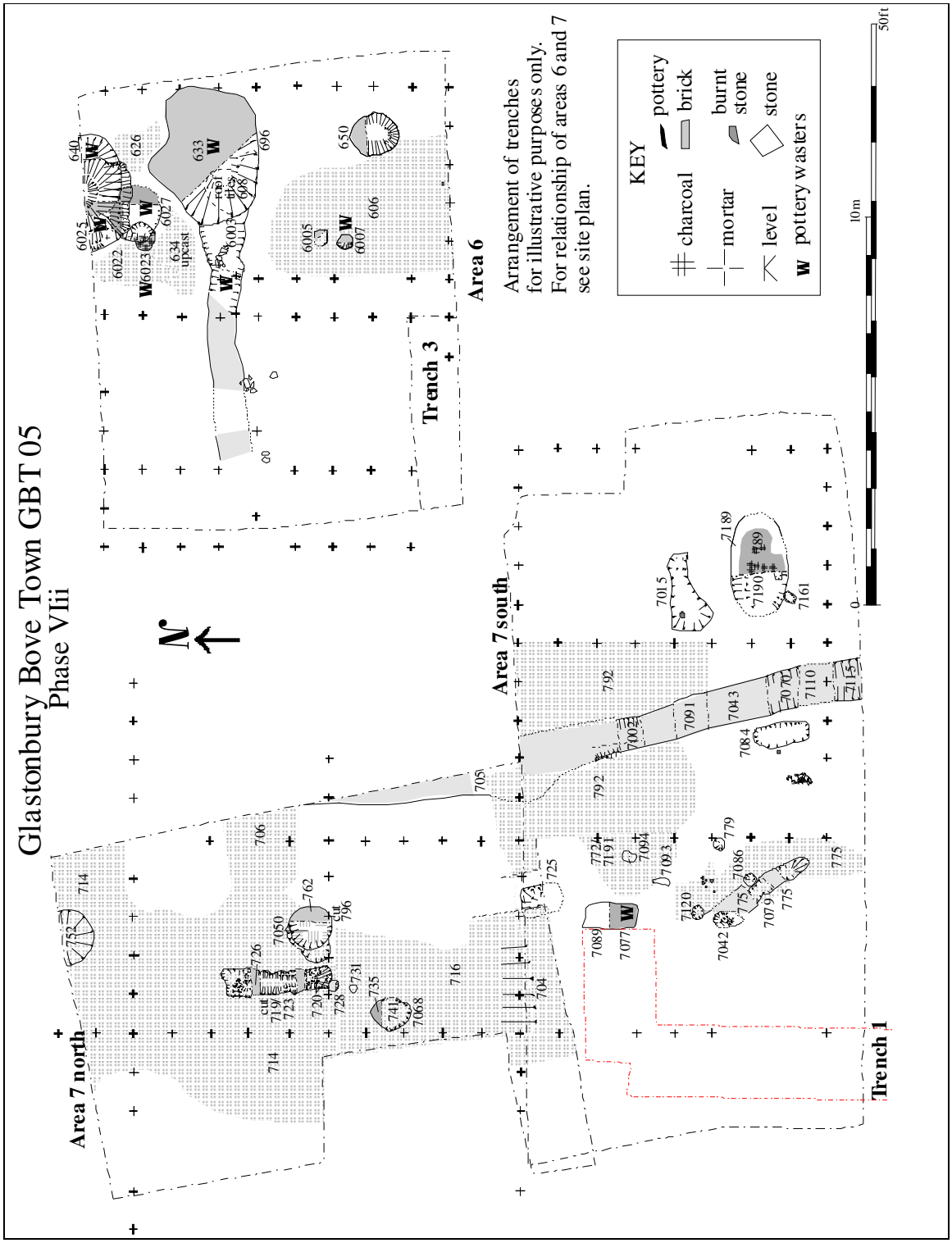



**Figure 29**. Phase VIii plan

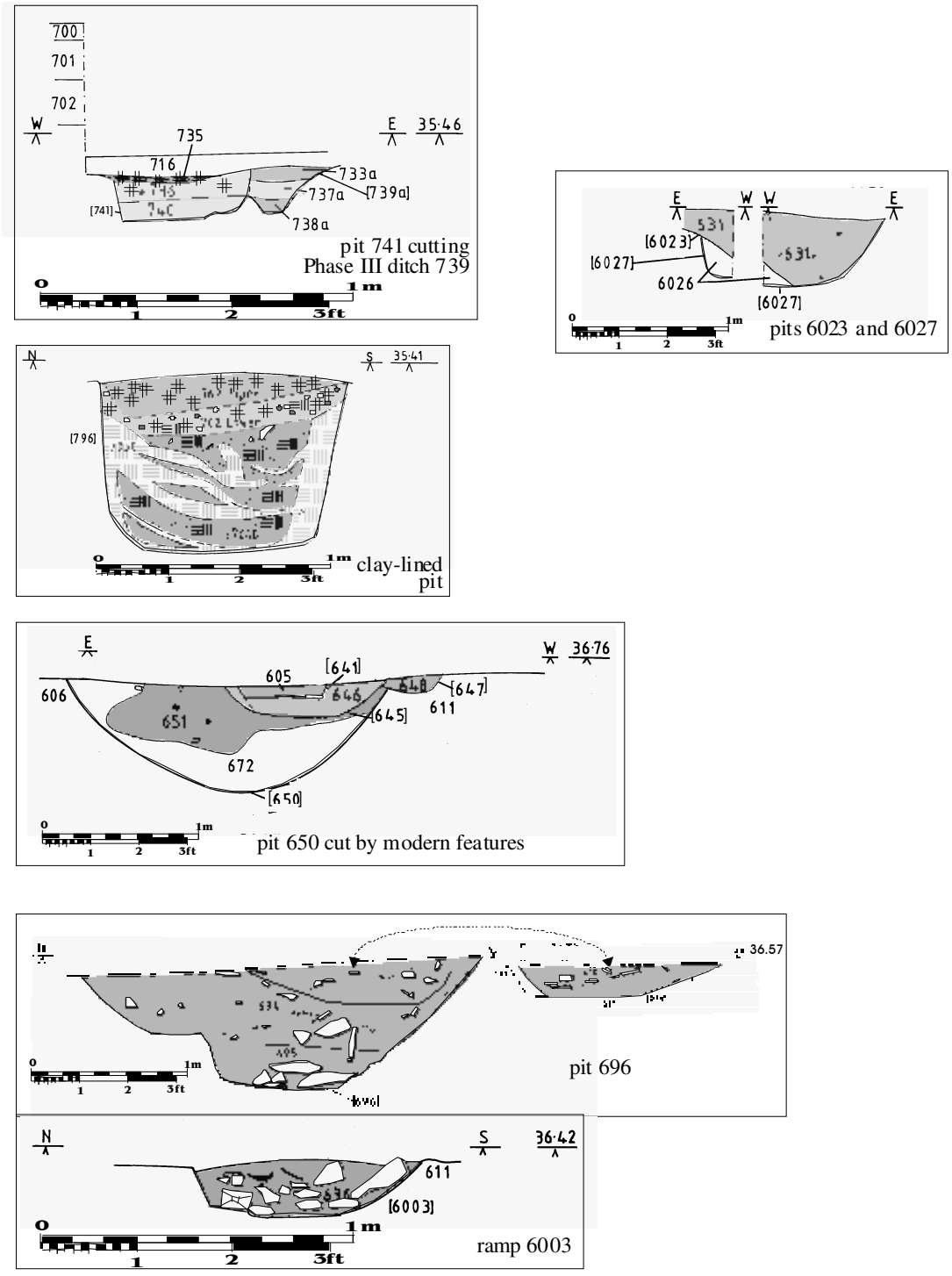



**Figure 30.** Phase Viii sections.

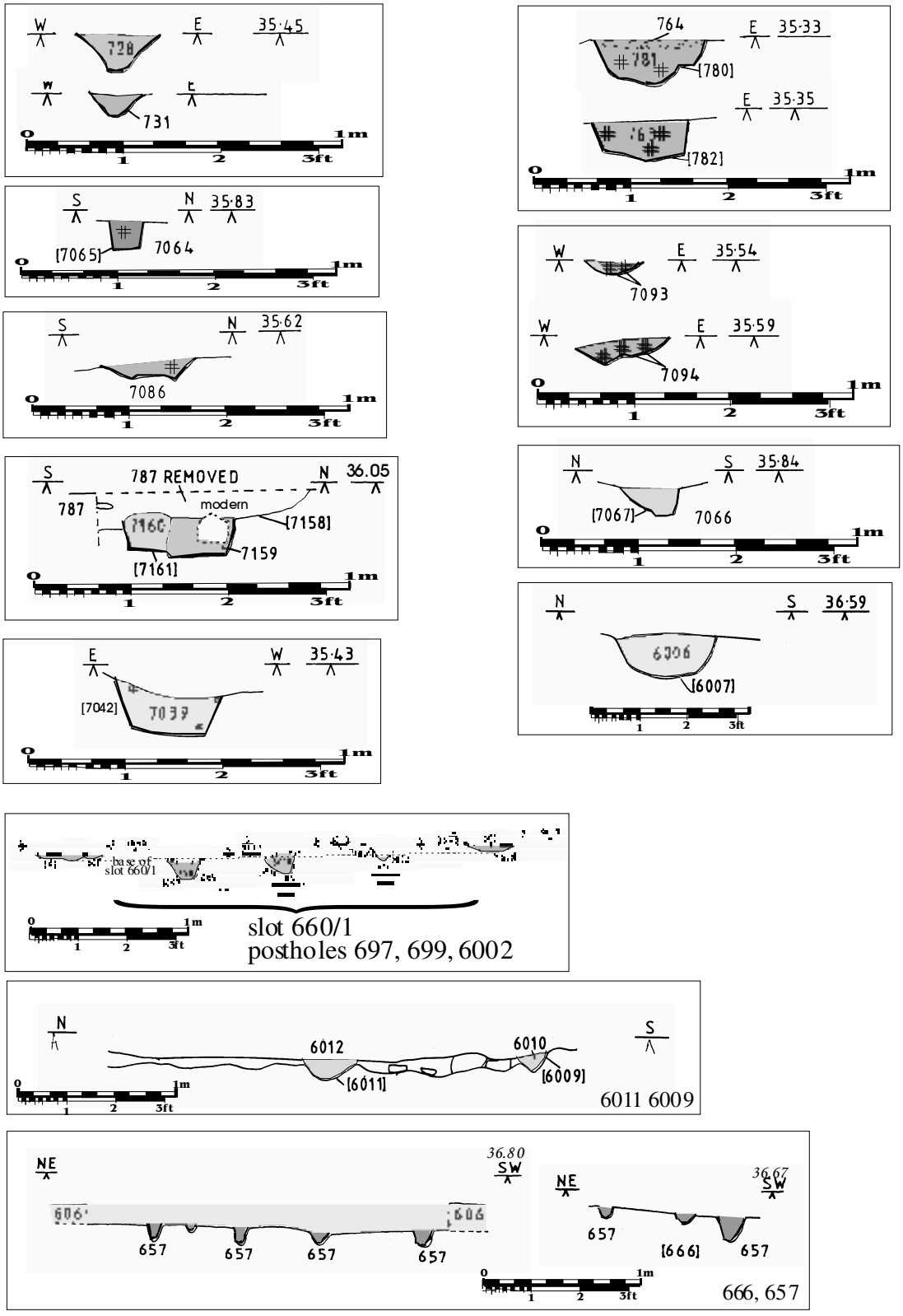



**Figure 31.** Phase VI posthole sections.

## 13.1 Phase VIii: The Features and Deposits

The boundary ditch **(7091)** split the site into two zones, each of which subsequently followed a different trajectory: the western property continued in domestic use while the eastern property became dedicated to industrial production in pottery and encaustic floor tile manufacture.

### 13.1.1 The western property

#### The privy

Clusters of features can be detected in the western property in Phase VIii. To the north was a close collection of two pits **(796)** and **(741)** and a complex slot **(719)**. Cess pit **(796)** was constructed with a clay lining and, in contrast with the much larger Phase V cess pit **(683)**, was apparently only used once. Close to the pit was a shallow north-south slot with a base pock-marked with stakeholes which appears to have carried a wattle wall. This has been interpreted as a privy. The function of pit **(741)** is uncertain.

#### The southern cluster

Shallow, narrow gully **(7079)** is the most distinctive of a cluster of features in the south of Trench 7, separated from the privy cluster by some three metres. This slight, ephemeral feature seems to respect the alignment of Phase IV/V, but must have been used in Phase VI, judging from the many finds datable to the 13$^{th}$ and 14$^{th}$ centuries in its fill. An array of postholes in its vicinity are mostly undated, so can not be relied upon to indicate a structure ( see **7.6.1** above). Another clay-lined cess pit **(752)** lay three metres away at the extreme north of Trench 7 north.

Pit **(7084)**, lying east of the gully next to the boundary ditch, was c70cm deep and carefully lined with clay. Its function is unclear as is that of pit **(7089)**, similar in size and shape but without a clay lining. Another pit with a rectangular plan **(725)** was shallow, at only c11cm depth.

Large, albeit shallow, spreads of dark occupation horizons were recorded from this period, sometimes obscuring earlier features. Spread **792** even obscured the upper fills of the boundary ditch, which was not cleared after silting up.

### 13.1.2 The eastern property

The industrial character of the eastern property intensified in this period. The Phase VIi pit **(7016)** was replaced by pit **(7015)**, both probably being metal-working hearths. To the south lay clay-lined pit **(7190)**, containing abundant charcoal and fired clay that left no doubt about its function as an industrial hearth. In Trench 6 the area of the Phase VIi metal-working hearths was covered with the occupation spread **606**. Another bowl-shaped pit **(650)** contained a large charcoal-rich deposit with slag, fired clay and a crucible fragment, suggesting that this, too, was a metal-working hearth. Two large postholes - **(6005)** and **(6007)** - were near this pit, but no other evidence of a possible structure could be identified.

To the north, there was a cluster of large inter-cutting pits - **(696)**, **(6027)**, **(6025)**, **(640)** and **(6023) -** backfilled with a variety of domestic materials and re-deposited natural clay. Within the fills of these irregular pits were a large quantity of pottery wasters, suggesting that they were clay pits for a near-by pottery factory. The kilns did not fall within the boundaries of the excavation trenches, but must have been somewhere close, probably within the same property. Likewise, there was no sign of the workshops where the pots would have been thrown.

The largest pit **(633)** was so great, that a ramp **(6003)** had been created to help extract the clay from greater depths. Large flat stones from the ramp could have functioned as hard standing for easier access, but most of the stones, especially the cache of roof tiles **608** in one corner of the pit, could have been reject pieces from robbing of a stone building. The fills of these pits are all quite similar, containing as they do fragments of Doulting and Lias stone, Lias roof tiles, ceramic floor and ridge tiles, pottery and tile wasters, burnt clay, charcoal and domestic refuse like pottery and animal bone.

## 13.2 Material culture

### 13.2.1 The boundary ditch

The creation of the boundary ditch effected a marked discontinuity with the Phase VI/V settlement, not merely in the subdivision of the property but in the radical re-alignment of the layout. Such a fundamental change would be easier to put into practice if the earlier settlement had been abandoned and derelict for some time. There was no sign of the Great Fire of 1184 (ref) on site, although deposits representing the fire have been detected in the past and recently dated in Glastonbury Abbey (Hollinrake 2007). The impact of the Fire was no doubt felt throughout the town and could have prompted or provided an opportunity for a change in layout.

The boundary ditch appears on the 1821 rates map (Figure 5) between the two following plots:

| Plot | name | owner | tenant |
|---|---|---|---|
| **74** | Stable and Garden | Mrs. Henshaw | William Bennett |
| **75** | House and Garden | Mrs. Henshaw | James Lawrence |

and on the tithe map (Fig. 6) as a dashed line between plot 1463 and 1464:

| Plot | name | use | owner | tenant |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1463** | Garden and shed | | Robert Henshaw | William Bennett |
| **1464** | House and Garden | | Robert Henshaw | James Lawrence |
| **1468** | Barton and Garden | | Robert Bath Senior | Himself |
| **1469** | House and shrubbery | | Robert Bath Senior | Himself |

By the 1st edition OS map (Figure 7) the house and shed on the western property had been demolished and their boundary obliterated to create a garden for 'The Hollies' (EH listing number 1345430, where it is described as 'probably early 19th century'). The listed building was formed from the barton and farm recorded on the tithe map, where its footprint is similar to that recorded in the same spot on the tithe map.

The boundary ditch, which had gradually silted up without being re-cut, was excavated in spits, keeping the finds separate. Comparison of the finds from the lowest fills with the Phase V finds recovered an assemblage of pottery of much the same date, and the preceding spits contained a sequence of pottery of increasingly later dates, displaying no gap in the sequence. There is no evidence in the finds sequence to suggest

that there was a hiatus between the ending of the life of the Phase V occupation and the beginning of Phase VI..

A rare coin of the mid 12th century (see **special finds**, below) was found within the ditch silts but, unfortunately it cannot be used to date the creation of the ditch, since it was found in a context dating to the 13th to 14th centuries at the top of the silts. The date of this coin places it at the cusp of the transition from Phase VI/V to Phase VI and it may well constitute a find belonging to the former phase of activity.

### 13.2.2 The animal bone

The observations on the Phase IV/V animal bone assemblage apply equally to the Phase VI assemblage, with the exception that far more bones were available from the later deposits than the earlier giving the later assemblage greater statistical significance. Nevertheless, animal bone from Phase V deposits constituted livestock species in roughly equal proportions of cattle, pigs and sheep, with cattle being lightly more numerous (Higbee, this volume).

The Phase VI assemblage, then, serves to reinforce the evidence from the earlier Phase V bones as symptomatic of a high-status diet. The cuts of meat recovered indicate that the bone is largely the result of kitchen waste rather than butchery and the age of the bones indicates that animals were culled for prime beef, mutton and pork rather than for breeding or by-products such as milk and wool. Bones from other species include horse, dog, red deer and roe deer. A piece of antler had been sawn in preparation for antler-working. The Abbot had two deer parks in Glastonbury - Wirral Park and Norwood Park – and these are the most likely sources of the deer bones, a high-status animal forbidden to all but the aristocratic. Chicken, goose and buzzard was also identified. Higbee suggests that this assemblage came from a high-status household.

### 13.2.3 The special finds

Obverse Reverse

**Figure 32.** Silver ducalis of King Roger II of Sicily (1105-1154), Palermo mint, issue of 1140-1154 (**SF 25**). Photograph courtesy of Steve Minnett, South West Heritage Trust. Not to scale

This coin is so rare in Britain that the County Museum Service had to send it to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for identification. They describe the obverse as 'Christ Pantocrator facing' and the reverse as 'Roger Duke of Apulia standing left, his father King Roger II of Sicily enthroned right, between them the patriarchal cross' (Grierson and Travaini 1988, 120 and 626; Sarafin Petrillo and Travaini 1987, 97-126.)

In order to understand how such a rare coin could arrive in Glastonbury, it is important to understand something of King Roger of Sicily. 'In the early decades of the 11th century, Norman adventurers came to southern Italy, initially to fight against the Saracens or the Byzantine Empire. These mercenaries not only fought the enemies of the Italian city-states, but in the following century they gradually became the rulers of the major polities south of Rome.' (Matthew 1992, 21.) Using his father's dukedom in Apulia, in the south of Italy, as a base Roger enlarged his kingdom. Alarmed by his rise to power, the Pope recruited an army to invade Sicily in 1136. It was upon Roger's victory in 1139 that he issued a new type of coinage, the *ducat*, named after his dukedom. Ruling from Palermo in Sicily, Roger became one of the greatest kings in Europe. Using the strategic position of Sicily, he controlled the maritime traffic in the Mediterranean,

and established a brilliant court, attracting great scholars, military men and admirals from the Greek, Byzantine and Arabic world. He was one of the major supporters of the Second Crusade (1147-1148). He died in 1154 in Palermo, where his tomb may still be seen in the Cathedral, one of his many churches (Keen 1968).

Against this background, how may the presence of this Sicilian coin in Glastonbury be explained? First, it must have been brought to Glastonbury by someone who had been to the Mediterranean, either a foreigner from the south or a returning visitor. Although the centre of pilgrimage, Glastonbury had no known routine contacts with Sicily and such normal trading would have taken place in the ports, like Bristol. Traders are unlikely to have carried many coins which could not be used in Britain. It would seem more likely that this coin would have been brought back home by a visitor to the Mediterranean, but it would make an unlikely pilgrim's souvenir. If it were not a souvenir, could it have constituted payment? The date-range of the coin issue brackets the time of the Second Crusade and Glastonbury may well have made a contribution, including in the form of manpower. In the 12th century Glastonbury was required by the system known as the *servitum debitum* to maintain 40 knights, some in houses close to the Abbey. Many of these knights were also enfeoffed with lands held in return for military service (Marston 2003, 105-6).

The coin is not inconsistent with the other high-status indicators belonging to the Phase VI/V settlement at Bove Town, so it is unlikely to have been carried there by a thief from another property. Whether Bove Town was an appropriate location for a knight's dwelling is an issue that will be addressed in the Discussion below. The proposition that it was is a plausible scenario and appears to fit the available evidence, but it is far from proven, but this remarkable coin probably carried with it a similarly remarkable story.

## 13.3 Discussion

### 13.3.1 The site

The characteristics which recommended 1 Bove Town as a suitable site for settlement have already been outlined in the discussion of Phase III, the earliest

settlement on the site. By the time of Phase VI, the road layout familiar today was in existence, highlighting that the site may also have been regarded as having strategic importance since it rises above an important road junction: to the north a farm track went through the open field towards the causeway to Wells, Bove Town mounted Windmill Hill to the east and then descended the hill to reach the same causeway, to the south the route to Pilton led over the only firm land bridge to the solid higher ground outside of the marshy Somerset Moors and all of these routes met at the top of the High Street at this point. The Abbey and the town are visible from this elevated position.

### 13.3.2 The buildings

By Phase VI the signs of domestic occupation are abundant, but there is very little indication of buildings or building methods, either in this phase or in the previous Phase IV/V. The major dwelling houses probably lie at the fringes of the site, on the road frontages, and any remains will have suffered obliteration by road works or severe damage by tree roots. Many structures will have been built in timber, leaving postholes and beam slots, although the surviving medieval buildings in Glastonbury are stone-built. It is during Phase VI that traces of mortar began to be identified in the fill of the features, indicating the presence of stone-built structures somewhere on the site. Perversely, these buildings can leave fewer archaeological traces than seemingly less robust timber structures. The 15$^{th}$ century almshouses in the entrance of the Abbey, excavated by Woods in 1987 are a case in point (Woods, 1995). Maps and even photographes showed the location of a row of well-built stone houses, yet excavation revealed on the faintest traces. The stone walls had no foundations, resting on the hard clay, and these had been removed in the 1960s leaving no trace, as had the flagstone floors. It is possible, therefore, that some of the unexplained postholes and slots in this phase constitute the timber elements of stone buildings, but this is impossible to prove. The traces of mortar in the fills of some features strongly suggest the existence of mortared stone buildings, but the absence of mortar does not prove the absence of stone buildings, since it is possible to bond stone buildings with clay alone.

The evidence of the Phase VIii clay pits in Trench 6 seems to indicate the presence of stone buildings with clay floor tiles and stone roof tiles (but see the

discussion of the finds in para. 14.0 below). Certainly the stone in the pits does not come from the site itself; the Doulting stone is a yellow freestone quarried in Shepton Mallet, 12 miles to the east, used for architectural features such as doorways, windows and quoins and the Lias comes from the quarries in Street, 5 miles to the east. The local stone, Tor Burr, was quarried on the top of the hill and was often used in buildings, but it is a hard fossiliferous sandstone which cannot be dressed and was only used in low status building and walls and when the stone from the other quarries was unavailable. It might appear that the demolition rubble from the clay pits derived from a well-built house on the site, but it is advisable to exercise caution. Large pits might be filled with debris from another site or even from several sites. The lack of mortar in most of the fills of these pits is inconsistent with the debris coming from this site.

### 13.3.3 The change in orientation

The Phase VI boundary ditch can be seen on the historic maps from 1821, the earliest map of the properties on Bove Town (Figure 5) but dates from a much earlier time. Unfortunately, the finds from the lowest fill of the ditch cannot be dated any more precisely than the 12$^{th}$ or 13$^{th}$ century. The best evidence for the date of this ditch lies, therefore, in the Abbey's Chartulary entries for properties on the High Street, which, as has been argued above (see 11.3.6), was moved from a previous Saxon orientation to its present position in the post-Conquest period. New properties were laid out on both sides of the new High Street, although Marston noted some properties to the north of the Market Place (in the area of the hypothetical Saxon grid) had slightly curving boundaries and a difference in their north-south alignment that might reflect earlier landscape features (Marston 2003, 65). The evidence for the Saxon grid had not come to light by the time she wrote this.

The earliest mention of the High Street was in c1265 (Marston 2003, 60; GC, 2, no. 496, p. 300) and the moving of the High Street was likely to shift the emphasis of settlement on the north side of Bove Town towards the hypothetical track following the stream which had previously acted as a back lane. Bove Town is first mentioned in 1235 (Marston 2003, 82), but this excavation demonstrates that settlement in this part of Glastonbury is much older than that.

Since this time, the indications are that the property boundaries and especially the orientation have remained fairly stable. The reorientation and subdivision of the Phase IV/V property would have been easier if the property had remained in the same hands and Marston's suggestion that this is the area of settlement of the Abbey's agricultural servants is consistent with this observation (**4.3** above). She also pointed out that the area of the present excavation differed from the rest of Bove Town and may have been more urban in character, all of which is consistent with the Abbey being the owner of the site in the medieval period.

## 14.0 The Finds

**14.1** The earliest finds are prehistoric flint flakes and flint core fragments which were found as residual sherds in later contexts. Approximately 50 flint flakes and tool fragments were recovered, many probably arriving on the site through colluvial action, with soil moving down the hill slope as a result of either agriculture or settlement.

**14.2** No pre-Roman pottery sherds were recovered although a very few sherds were too small and abraded to be certain of their date and could be prehistoric. Romano-British sherds were also found as residual finds in later contexts, with around 40 sherds recovered, including sherds within a relic soil that appears to have collected at the base of early agricultural terraces.

**14.3** The great majority of pottery sherds found during the 2004 evaluation and the 2005 excavation are dateable to between the 10th and the 15th centuries. This collection includes a very large collection of pre-Norman Conquest pottery sherds, broadly dateable to the 10th and 11th centuries, which are not generally found in any quantity on archaeological sites.

**14.4** Most urban sites contain relatively large quantities of medieval pottery sherds, and 1 Bove Town is no exception. What is special about this site, however, is the very large number of **kiln wasters** found, including pottery fragments, fragments of glazed

roof, ridge and floor tiles (although not encaustic, floor tiles), as well as numerous fired clay fragments deriving from kiln lining. Many of the fired clay, lining fragments show stick and wattle impressions. The pottery wasters are sometimes in reduced fabrics but are mostly oxidized, generally with a hard, fine fabric with few, or no, visible inclusions. The pottery is fairly obviously made from local Lias clay. Pottery handles are often fluted. Many, probably most, of the pottery wasters derive from jugs with applied strips and bosses, often with fluted bases, and plain or flat-topped rims. Some pots have applied leaves or foliage as decoration. Unlike the pottery sherds, floor and roof tile wasters often have abundant limestone or calcite tempering. Tiles and pottery seem to have been fired together, as some tile wasters have pottery fragments fused to their surfaces. The wasters can all be broadly dated to either the 2nd half of the-13th or to the latter-13th and early-14th centuries (fluted bases were mostly out of use by the LC14th – John Allan, pers. comm.), and very obviously represent a kiln site in the immediate vicinity (although not within the 2004/2005 investigation areas). The distribution of the wasters suggests that the kiln site was probably located immediately to the north or to the north-east of the excavation area, on land that has been developed for housing over the last fifty years.

In June 2010, John Allan, the archaeologist appointed by Glastonbury Abbey Trustees to supervise work at the Abbey, inspected the Bove Town wasters. Recognizing similarities with pottery and tile in the Abbey collection, he commissioned further analysis of a selection of wasters as part of the Glastonbury Abbey Archaeological Archive project supervised by Prof. Roberta Gilchrist of Reading University. M.J. Hughes undertook plasma spectromtery analysis (ICPS) (see Appendix VI) which recorded the *chemical fingerprint* of the Bove Town kiln. The original intention was *'to compare against the pottery against the pottery, and against decorated floor tiles analysed from Glastonbury Abbey.*' The analysis has the added advantage of being able to identify the products of the Bove Town kiln in assemblages wider afield.

Chemical fingerprints demonstrated that Glastonbury Abbey tile groups 1-7 were produced at the Bove Town kiln, although *'Groups 3/6 contain minor amounts of lime, higher that in other groups, suggesting a slightly different clay source*.' Hughes goes on to suggest that a geological division cutting through Glastonbury might account for these

slight differences. A dump of wasters recovered from Silver Street recorded elevated levels of lime, leading to the suggestion that another kiln existed nearby. The Glastonbury Abbey tiles from the Bove Town kiln have been classified by Harcourt into the following groups:

- Group 1 – The earliest surviving group of tiles were those found in a dump incorporating wasters found in Silver Street (Ellis, 1981). Complex pressed encaustic designs were enhanced by incising of the detail. Geometric border designs and incised detail are both similar to examples from Clarendon Palace. These techniques are not seen in other Glastonbury tiles and it is suggested that this kiln was replaced by a new enterprise in a different location.
- Group 2 – Arched tiles to form circular patterns with foliate decoration. Fragments were recovered from Beckery Chapel, which was extensively restored by John of Taunton, abbot from 1274.
- Group 3 – Large heraldic tiles, also found at Cleeve Abbey, Bridgwater Friary, Gloucester and Wells cathedrals. High quality tiles commissioned to celebrate the marriage of Edmund of Cornwall to Margaret de Clare in 1272.
- Group 4 – Heraldic tiles as in Group 3 with the addition of other heraldry having royal connections, also found in Cleeve Abbey, Bridgwater Friary, Gloucester and Wells cathedrals, Gloucester Blackfriars, Tintern Abbey and Raglan and Chepstow castles. The indications are that this was *'a large and well-organized industry'*. Geometric foliar designs predominate.
- Group 5 – Foliate scrolls with mythical beasts, these tiles produced by highly-skilled craftsmen were unique to Glastonbury.
- Group 6 – Square tiles with animals in foliate roundels, also found in Whitham Friary.
- Group 7 – *'A large group with a diverse repertoire of designs*' including heraldic, geometric and stylized foliage designs. One tile with the arms of Edward III suggests a date of c. 1340s. Naturalistic undulating stems with foliage. These were the last products of the Bove Town kiln.

This analysis provides a date-range for the Bove Town kiln in production by the last quarter o the 13th century to the middle of the 14th. Later tile groups appear to have been made outside of Glastonbury.

In contrast to the tiles, the highly-decorated jugs made by the Bove Town kiln were not much in use in the Abbey (Allan et al, 2015). It is thought that they might be intended for a wider market. The date-range for the tile wasters – from late 13th century to mid 14th – is in keeping with the dating of Phase Viii as derived from the pottery and the phasing.

## 14.5 Special Finds

For the Anglo-Saxon period, the iron, link chain is a unique find. This was found in the same feature as a small iron sickle or hook, dateable by associated pottery to the later-10th or early-11th century. The small sickle is believed to be a reaping hook and its small size might indicate its use for vini-culture. The warm period that fell between the 10th and the 13th centuries encouraged the growth of vineyards in southern England and the abbey owned several vineyards, both in Glastonbury, on the south side of Wearyall Hill, and on some of the nearby islands, including Meare and Panborough.

Only one coin was found: this was a silver ducalis of King Roger II of Sicily, dateable to the middle of the 12th century. This is likely to have reached Glastonbury through the agency of the Crusades. Twelfth century Sicily, like England, was a Norman kingdom and had good relations with English kings.

A stone lamp, broadly dateable by associated pottery to the 10$^{th}$ to 12th centuries, was made from a pale, shelly limestone, possibly Bath Stone. A similar object, also made from limestone, was recovered from medieval deposits at St. Mary-le-Port, Bristol (Rahtz and Watts, 1985).

Other special finds include fragments of carved bone and decorated, copper alloy fragments, probably indicating a relatively high status for the occupants during the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods.

## 14.6 The Bove Town tilery and pottery

**1.** The change of use of the Bove Town site from high status settlement in Phase V to industrial site in Phase VI might be considered a decline in status of site, but judging by Higbee's bone analysis. (see Appendix), those occupying the western propertycontinued to enjoy a high-status diet. According to Harcourt's analysis, the Bove Town kilns were *'a large and well-organized industry'*, producing large quantities of *'high quality tiles' ...'with a diverse repertoire of designs.*' Tiles were commissioned from a wide area, extending into South Wales. (Prior to the discovery of the Bove Town kiln, the wide distribution of this factory's products led to speculation that it was probably located somewhere just south of Gloucester (Harcourt p. 281.) This must have been the workplace of the team lead by a master craftsman, able to command respect and a

suitable reward for their expertise. The distribution of the highly decorated jugs has yet to be researched.

**2.** Pottery manufacture extended north of Area 6 to an unknown extent, but must surely have filled the northern half of tithe map field 1464. This would have been restricted accommodation for a large industry and much of the clay must have come from the immediate vicinity rather than from the plot itself. Slight variation in the clay source of Group 1 tiles has led to speculation that the industry was originally located close to the dump of wasters recovered from excavations at Silver Street (Harcourt, 280.). Further reflection on the logistics of production would emphasize how much easier it is to move raw clay than to move pottery kilns and the restricted size of the site of production reinforces the impression that the potters would have to look further afield for clay than the property could provide. The simplest interpretation would be that the kilns were set up on site at Bove Town and not moved afterwards.

**3.** This is the first medieval floor tilery to be discovered in Somerset, although tileries have been excavated in other parts of Britain. The kilns themselves were normally square in plan, ca. 1.6m across, sunk into a pit. Tiles to be fired were stacked on edge (Lowe, 8). Harcourt reported tiles and pottery fused together so the jugs might have been fired along with the tiles in the same kiln (see 14.4 above). Firing normally took at least 24 hours.

As well as a kiln, the tilery and pottery would have needed workshops associated with forming of the clay into vessels and tiles, often undertaken on a sanded surface. These were usually timber buildings. Outside of these would have been piles of clay, weathering or being mixed with a variety of tempering materials such as crushed limestone and sand. Paved puddling pits would have been used to wash the clay (Pearson 2011). All of these structures await discovery at Bove Town.

## 15.0 Summary and dating of phasing

### Phase I and II: agricultural fields

**pre-historic to 5th century AD**

- Prehistoric fields that continue in use throughout the Roman period.
- North-south agricultural lynches.

### Phase III: Earliest settlement.

**post-Roman (5th - 6th century) to early Saxon (7th -8th century)**

- Boundaries and possible walls set into the base of the north-south lynches and following the same alignment.
- Complex structure with curving wattle walls, probably a round house but too damaged by later activity to be certain.
- Metal-working hearth pit.
- **Aceramic**; Roman pottery out of production and out of use.

### Phase IV: Settlement continues, layout re-organized

**early Saxon (8th - 9th century) to middle Saxon (mid 10th century)**

- Settlement boundaries re-aligned to northwest - southeast with ditches.
- Drains cut through area of earlier curving wattle walls but no structures identified.
- **Aceramic**.

### Phase V: Continuation of Phase IV

**middle Saxon (mid 10th century) to post-Conquest (11th century)**

- Settlement layout retained, well and large cesspit added.
- High-status diet
- Special finds include stone lamp and Sicilian coin.
- Small metal-working hearth
- No structures identified, but domestic occupation indicated.
- **Pottery re-introduced** into Somerset

## Phase VI: Boundaries re-aligned and site subdivided into western/domestic and eastern/industrial

**12th to 15th century.**

**Phase VIi**

- Settlement continues through site re-organization into eastern and western properties. Very few features retained from earlier phase.
- Two large triple posthole complexes may represent elements of a timber building, but evidence is inconclusive.
- Western property retains domestic character and signs of high status (e.g. animal bone ratios).
- Eastern property has industrial character: several metal-working hearths.

**Phase VIii**

- Western property - settlement continues.
- High-status diet continues.
- Two cess pits, one with possible privy, and a collection of pits and post-holes, but no structure identified.
- Mortar traces begin to appear in the fills of features: mortared stone buildings introduced.
- Eastern property - metal-working continues
- Pottery manufacture introduced.
- No structures identified, but the remains of stone buildings used as backfill of large clay pits. May or may not come from this site.

**Postscript**

Analysis of the heraldic floor tiles in Glastonbury Abbey Group 7 demonstrates that the Bove Town tilery was still in production in the 1340s (see 14.4 above). Later tiles were made outside of Glastonbury. It is tempting to conclude that the cessation of manufacturing was a product of the general chaos caused by the Black Death, but this is impossible to prove.

When the farm recorded in 1822 was upgraded into a fine town house called the Hollies, the landscaping for gardens and a tennis court removed almost all of the upper stratigraphy. Research on the post-medieval development of the site must depend on written sources. Detailed local history research is beyond the scope of this paper, but the evidence of the rates map shows that by 1822 the Bove Town site hosted a farm, outbuildings, stable and dwelling houses. In the meantime, all memory of the Bove Town tilery and pottery works appears to have been lost.

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