

## FINDS

The site has produced a finds assemblage of moderate size, amongst which animal bone and pottery are the best represented categories in terms of quantity. The primary interest here lies in the fact that this is the first assemblage of any size of late Saxon/early medieval date (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century) excavated from the town.

All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and the results are summarised in Table 1. All finds data, including those from evaluation, excavation and watching brief on the site, are held on the project database (Access).

**Table 1: Finds totals by material type (number / weight in grammes)**

Material	Evaluation	Excavation	W/Brief	TOTAL
Pottery	21/284	464/7141	26/493	<b>511/7918</b>
<i>Romano-British</i>	-	4/59	-	<b>4/59</b>
<i>Early / Middle Saxon</i>	-	2/18	-	<b>2/18</b>
<i>Late Saxon / Medieval</i>	20/284	402/5067	12/111	<b>434/5462</b>
<i>Post-Medieval</i>	-	56/1997	15/382	<b>71/2379</b>
Ceramic Building Mat.	-	30/2282	7/270	<b>37/2552</b>
Fired Clay	-	11/145	3/48	<b>14/193</b>
Clay Pipe	-	9/27	4/6	<b>13/33</b>
Stone	9/44	13/3017	-	<b>22/3061</b>
Flint	-	31/991	-	<b>31/991</b>
Burnt Flint	-	6/254	-	<b>6/254</b>
Glass	-	11/402	2/7	<b>13/409</b>
Slag	-	5/577	-	<b>5/577</b>
Metalwork (no. objects)	4	46	-	<b>50</b>
<i>Copper Alloy</i>	-	1	-	<b>1</b>
<i>Iron</i>	4	44	-	<b>48</b>
<i>Lead</i>	-	1	-	<b>1</b>
Animal Bone	162/1576	1191/9059	57/461	<b>1410/11,096</b>
Shell	-	10/94	-	<b>10/94</b>

### Pottery

Pottery provides the primary dating evidence for the site, and largely consists of material of Late Saxon/early medieval date (10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries), with a few residual Romano-British sherds, and a small amount of post-medieval material.

The whole assemblage has been quantified within each context by ware type. The presence of rims and other diagnostic sherds has been noted, and spot dates recorded on a context by context basis.

#### *Romano-British*

Romano-British sherds came from two features – one coarse greyware from ditch 507 and three sherds of Oxfordshire colour coated fineware from pit 518, in both cases residual in later contexts.

#### *Early/Middle Saxon*

Two sherds of organic-tempered ware are dated as early to middle Saxon (5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries). Both are small, abraded body sherds, and both occurred residually in later contexts (ditches 489 and 503).

#### *Late Saxon and Medieval*

The late Saxon and medieval assemblage contains a number of different ware types, most of which are identifiable at least to source area, and which reveal a number of geographically distinct sources of supply to the town. Totals by type are given in Table 2.

**Table 2: Quantification of late Saxon and medieval pot by ware type**

Ware	No. sherds	Weight (g)
Calcareous ware	254	3320
Flint-tempered ware	24	362
Kennet Valley wares	16	95
Laverstock-type coarseware	17	115
Laverstock-type fineware	4	55
Michelmersh-type ware	80	1065
Other fineware	1	37
Other sandy wares	32	381
West Wilts ware	6	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>5462</b>

Most of these wares fall within a broad date range of 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Most common are calcareous wares, which appear here exclusively in jar forms, with simple, everted rims. Oolitic inclusions within some of these wares suggest an origin in the north of the county, although no production centres of this date are known. Similar calcareous wares, in similar jar forms, have been found at Trowbridge, Wilton and Market Lavington (Mephams 1993; Andrews *et al.* 2000; Mephams 2006).

Alongside the calcareous wares are sherds of wheelthrown, reduced sandy wares of Michelmersh-type, in jar forms, comparable to products of a recently excavated kiln in that village (Mephams and Brown forthcoming). One example of curvilinear tooling was observed, as recorded on jars from Wilton (Andrews *et al.* 2000), and one example of a body sherd with multiple open-circle stamps, not so far paralleled elsewhere. Sherds of similar sandy wares in the same contexts, but of a slightly different texture, with oxidised surfaces (recorded here as ‘other sandy wares’), may also be Michelmersh-type products; they include body sherds with applied, stamped strips in the same manner as some of the Michelmersh-type spouted pitchers (Addyman *et al.* 1972).

In the same contexts are a small number of sherds containing patinated flint inclusions; only one vessel form is present, a jar with everted, simple rim. Again, similar fabric types are known from Trowbridge, Market Lavington and Wilton. A single sherd of a glazed, decorated tripod pitcher in Laverstock-type coarseware was recorded, from pit 520. These pitchers have been previously recorded as ‘South East Wiltshire pitchers’ (e.g. Vince 1981), but the similarity of fabric type with the products of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Laverstock kilns suggests an earlier production centre in this area.

The largest groups of 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century pottery came from ditch 523 (103 sherds), pit 518 (85 sherds) and its recut 511 (143 sherds).

Other wares occur in much smaller quantities, and some have a slightly later date range (or at least a currency extending later than the 12<sup>th</sup> century). Other flint-tempered and calcareous-/flint-tempered wares potentially fall within two ceramic traditions, from the Kennet Valley and from west Wiltshire. Wares of 'Kennet Valley' type have a wide distribution across west Berkshire and north-east Wiltshire, and have a lengthy currency, from at least the 11<sup>th</sup> century through to the 13<sup>th</sup> century; one possible source is in the Savernake Forest, where the place-name *Crockerstrop* is recorded (Vince 1997, 65). 'West Wiltshire' wares have a distribution centres on Warminster and were probably products of the medieval Crockerton industry; they have a similarly lengthy currency through the medieval period (Smith 1997). 'West Wiltshire' wares are generally micaceous, and have been distinguished on that basis here, although the distinction between these and the 'Kennet Valley' wares is not always clear.

Laverstock-type wares are also present in small quantities; as well as the tripod pitcher already noted, there are coarseware jar forms of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century type, some scratchmarked, and a few 13<sup>th</sup> century glazed and decorated finewares (ditch 463, pit 497 and pit recut 511). One other glazed fineware, probably also of 13<sup>th</sup> century date, is of unknown source (pit 497).

#### *Post-Medieval*

The remainder of the assemblage (71 sherds) is post-medieval, and comprises sherds of coarse earthenwares (redwares, and Verwood-type earthenware from east Dorset), tinglazed earthenware, English stoneware, creamware and modern refined whitewares. A large proportion of the post-medieval assemblage came from cut 425.

#### **Ceramic Building Material**

Most of the ceramic building material consists of fragments of medieval flat roof tile, in characteristic coarse, poorly wedged, pale-firing fabrics. One post-medieval unglazed floor tile and two post-medieval brick fragments came from cut 425.

#### **Worked and Burnt Flint**

The worked flint assemblage consists of 31 pieces, all hard hammer struck, with a potential date range of Early Neolithic to Late Bronze Age. Raw materials consist almost entirely of locally-derived pale grey to brown gravel flint; condition ranges from fresh to edge-damaged; some have a light grey patina.

The majority of the assemblage comprises flakes and broken flakes which are not chronologically distinctive. There are two possible Late Bronze Age cores – large, crude, and irregular - although both may simply be dressed nodules; retouched pieces are limited to a pair of notched flakes.

A few pieces of burnt, unworked flint were also recovered, of unknown date and origin.

#### **Stone**

The stone includes one whetstone (pit 536) and ten lava quern fragments (one from ditch 416 and nine from evaluation trench 2). The rest of the stone shows no obvious signs of working but could represent building materials – two pieces of micaceous sandstone, and two of shelly limestone, could derive from roof tiles. Other pieces are of limestone, in various shapes and sizes.

### **Metalwork**

Metalwork includes objects of copper alloy, iron and lead. Only one copper alloy object was recovered – a small, rectangular buckle of post-medieval date (subsoil 401). The iron objects are all heavily corroded, and some remain unidentified at this stage. Most appear to represent nails and other structural items, but there are at least three knives (one from ditch 416, two from pit recut 511), one possible awl (pit 518), one possible punch or chisel (pit 428) and one rectangular buckle (pit 482). The single lead object is a small, tapering strip of unknown function (pit 526).

### **Other Finds**

Other finds recovered from the site comprise small quantities of post-medieval clay pipe stems, undiagnostic fired clay, post-medieval glass bottle/jar, ironworking slag, and oyster shell.

### **Animal Bone**

Although the whole animal bone assemblage from all stages of fieldwork has been scanned, quantifications in Tables 3 and 4 include only the bone from the excavation. Conjoining fragments that were demonstrably from the same bone were counted as one bone in order to minimise distortion, and therefore specimen counts (NISP) given here may differ from the absolute raw fragment counts in Table 1. There may also be some discrepancies when bone is fragile may fragment further after initial quantification. No fragments were recorded as ‘medium mammal’ or ‘large mammal’; these were instead consigned to the unidentified category. No attempt was made to identify ribs or vertebrae (except the atlas and axis) to species, although large numbers of these bones were noted where they occurred.

**Table 3: Taphonomic characteristics of the assemblage; proportions of bones as a percentage of NISP rather than raw counts**

	Gnawed	Looseteeth	Unidentified	Butchery	Burnt	Measure	Age	Total (NISP)
Late Sax / Early Med	6	8	64	14	3	6	15	936
Med	9	0	59	18	0	5	23	22
Post-med	8	0	72	20	0	0	28	25
Undated	0	33	67	44	11	0	0	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>992</b>

The bones originated mainly from features of Late Saxon / Early Medieval date, some of which contained earlier Romano-British pottery, and with few from later periods (**Table 3**). The largest quantities of bone originated from pits 511 and 518, and ditch 523, from more than one fill in each of these features. Post-medieval and modern bones have been combined.

95% of the 992 bones were in good condition, with 49 in excellent condition (mainly from the post-medieval period) and only four in poor condition (from a single post-

medieval cut and one fill in a Late Saxon / Early Medieval pit). Correspondingly, the proportion of teeth lost from the jaw by erosion or fragmentation was low in the post-medieval assemblage, although the proportion of unidentified bone was high in this period, perhaps partially due to scavenger activity destroying the bone, and butchery fragmenting the bones into less easily identifiable pieces (also reflected in the absence of any Post-medieval bones complete enough to be measured).

Gnawing was present throughout and will have affected the assemblage to an extent, although at a relatively low level. Loose teeth are particularly well-represented in the undated contexts, and this portion of the assemblage also contains no measureable or ageable bone, perhaps a result of fragmentation from reworking or the methods of butchery or deposition. The Late Saxon / Early Medieval assemblage contained a relatively high proportion of loose teeth, but these were often in the same context as the jaw from which they had been lost, and fragmentation probably occurred post-depositionally.

Approximately a third of bones could be identified, and the species proportions varied by phase, from a Late Saxon / Early Medieval predominance of sheep/goat (sheep but no goats positively identified) to a majority of cattle in the later periods of occupation (Table 4). The proportion of pigs is relatively high, especially in the Late Saxon / Early Medieval period, and this is also the period where a variety of other species are represented, probably due to the larger size of the assemblage. Fish, however, were only observed in the medieval assemblage, and one cat jaw was recovered from a Post-medieval pit that contained early medieval ceramic.

**Table 4: Species percentages (as proportion of identified bones)**

	Horse	Cattle	SheepGoat	Pig	Dog	Deer	Cat	Bird	Fish	Total identified (NISP)
Late Sax/ Early Med	2	16	53	24	2	1	0	3	0	336
Med	0	44	11	22	0	0	0	0	22	9
Post-med	0	43	29	14	0	0	14	0	0	7
Undated	0	33	33	33	0	0	0	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>355</b>

The number of ageable bones is relatively high, partially due to the large number of sheep/goat mandibles, and includes foetal individuals. Several bones could be sexed, 55 measured, and ten with pathological modifications can facilitate interpretation of animal treatment and health.

Butchery marks were seen on a large number of bones, mainly consisting of helical fractures from marrow extraction, chops to portion the carcass and a few cuts from filleting and disarticulation. Some ribs showed splintering consistent with snapping of fresh bone during consumption. A small but significant number of bones had been burnt, and the position and extent of scorching on some could be used to indicate cooking activity. An odd texture and appearance, similar to that documented as 'ivoried' but more translucent, almost marbled, was observed on 51 bones from Late Saxon / Early Medieval pits and ditches. This effect has been noted on many sites and linked to cooking, although other interpretations have been suggested, and it is interesting that it is so prevalent on the Late Saxon / Early Medieval bones here.

Several deposits contained a large proportion of bones from the head and feet which may be butchery waste, and several deposits of articulated lower limbs indicate direct, rapid deposition (perhaps also primary butchery waste) into some features.

Three worked fragments were recovered from two Late Saxon / Early Medieval ditch segments; object 36 is a polished piece with rounded flattened ends, one roe deer-sized radius had been worked into a wedge shape and a piece of long bone had been fashioned into a rod.

## **POTENTIAL AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS**

The site at Salisbury Road has produced a relatively small finds assemblage, within which only pottery and animal bone are present in any significant quantity. Its significance, however, lies in the fact that this is the first assemblage of any size of late Saxon/early medieval date (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century) excavated from the town, although earlier Saxon material has been found on a nearby settlement site at the Countess roundabout just outside the town (Wessex Archaeology 1995; 2003).

In a wider context, Late Saxon/early medieval material has not been commonly found within Wiltshire, although comparable assemblages exist from Wilton, Warminster and Trowbridge, while larger assemblages from the wider region such as Romsey, Winchester and Southampton also provide useful comparanda.

This assemblage, then, has the potential to make a useful contribution to an understanding of Late Saxon/early medieval activity in Amesbury, and within the wider area. The pottery can add to our knowledge of ceramic production and distribution at this period, particularly through the identification of regionally traded wares. The bone originates from securely dated deposits and is in good condition, with some interesting deposits that could directly reflect activity. The potential for understanding animal husbandry in this area is moderate, and interpretation of how and which animals were raised and selected for meat consumption can be made, as well as better understanding of the exploitation of non-food and wild animals. The means by which domestic animals were butchered and deposited can be ascertained to an extent. The large number of sheep/goat mandibles can be used to interpret seasonality and flock structure.

## **METHOD STATEMENT**

### **Introduction**

Of the total finds assemblage, only pottery and animal bone warrant further detailed analysis. Any comment on other finds categories will utilise data already recorded as part of the assessment phase.

### **Pottery**

All pottery will be subjected to detailed analysis, involving identification of fabric and form, following the standard Wessex Archaeology recording system for pottery (Morris 1994) and nationally recommended nomenclature for post-Roman vessel forms (MPRG 1998). The pottery will be briefly described and discussed within its local and regional context, with reference to potential sources, chronology and any

functional implications. A small selection of vessels will be illustrated as a representative type series (maximum ten vessels).

### **Animal Bone**

Further work should focus on the Late Saxon/early medieval assemblage, and a full record should be made of the species, elements and characteristics of each fragment, to include butchery, measurements, etc. Analysis should then be carried out to investigate taphonomic processes, carcass manipulation and methods of animal husbandry. The results should then be compared to other similarly dated sites and feature types to determine the nature of occupation and infer aspects of the status and function of this site.

## **STORAGE AND CURATION**

### **Museum**

It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum, Salisbury. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project. Deposition of the finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

### **Conservation**

No immediate conservation requirements were noted in the field. Finds which have been identified as of unstable condition and therefore potentially in need of further conservation treatment comprise the metal objects.

Metal objects have been X-radiographed as part of the assessment phase, as a basic record and also to aid identification. On the basis of the X-rays, the range of objects present and their provenance on the Site, two objects (knife, possible punch) have been selected for further conservation treatment, involving investigative cleaning and stabilisation.

### **Storage**

The finds are currently stored in perforated polythene bags in 7 cardboard or airtight plastic boxes, ordered by material type, following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990).

### **Discard Policy**

Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. In this instance, any discard could target the burnt, unworked flint, and the undiagnostic fired clay. The discarding of any artefacts will be carried out only with the complete agreement of the Museum.

The discard of environmental remains and samples follows the guidelines laid out in Wessex Archaeology's 'Archive and Dispersal Policy for Environmental Remains and Samples'. The archive policy conforms to nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002) and is available upon request.

### **Archive**

The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts and ecofacts, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995).

### **Copyright**

The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms with the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

### **Security Copy**

In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Archaeological Record (English Heritage), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

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