

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Croft Cottage, Wetton, Staffordshire.



View of Wetton village looking south-east with earthworks of former Medieval Wetton Manor visible in the field in the centre of shot.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2008 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Mr John Graham to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to Croft Cottage in Wetton, Staffordshire. The monitoring was carried out during groundworks for the creation of a carpark area to serve a recently built semi-detached residence fronting onto Carr Lane. Earthworks associated with the former Medieval manor of Wetton lie in the field located directly to the north of the application area.

No archaeological features or securely stratified artefacts were identified during site monitoring of the excavation area. A made-ground surface (003) was identified underlying the shallow topsoil (001) at the north of the excavation area. From both the topsoil and made ground a mixed period assemblage of ceramic wares was recovered and several pieces of slag.

The artefacts recovered from the site predominantly consisted of modern glazed wall tiles, modern roof tile fragments along with modern ceramic and glass sherds. In addition to these modern finds three sherds of Early Modern (c.17thC-18thC) decorated slipware, one sherd of Cistercian ware (c.1450-c.1600) and three sherds of Derbyshire Early Medieval sandy ware (c.10thC-L11thC) were also recovered from across the topsoil and made ground, namely contexts (001) and (002).

Although the pottery assemblage indicates some level of Early Medieval to Early Modern activity within the vicinity of the excavation area the evidence is slight. The previous geophysics work covering the whole application area indicated that the greatest likelihood for archaeological remains lay in the north of the site in closer proximity to the buried remains of the former Medieval manor. The small concentration of slag and charcoal flecks which was recovered from the along the northern arc of the section wall and adds further support to this being the case.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Archaeological Research Services Ltd on behalf of Mr John Graham. Planning permission had been granted by the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) for the development of two dwellings and a car park on land adjacent to Croft Cottage in the village of Wetton. The dwellings were subject to an earlier watching brief and the present report is concerned solely with the clearance and levelling of ground to the rear of these properties for the creation of a car park area.

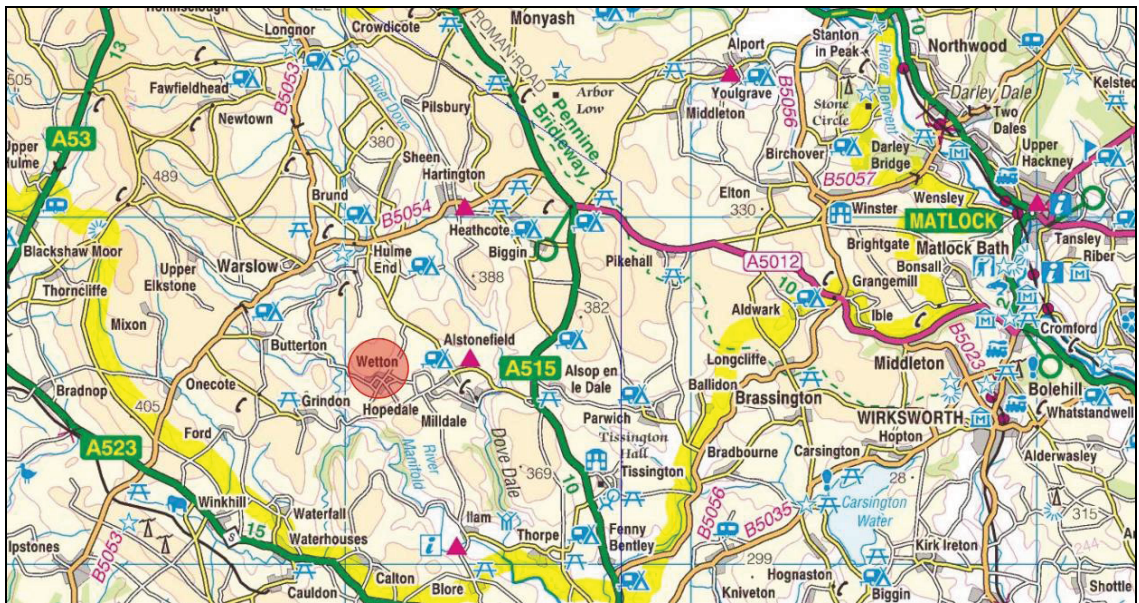
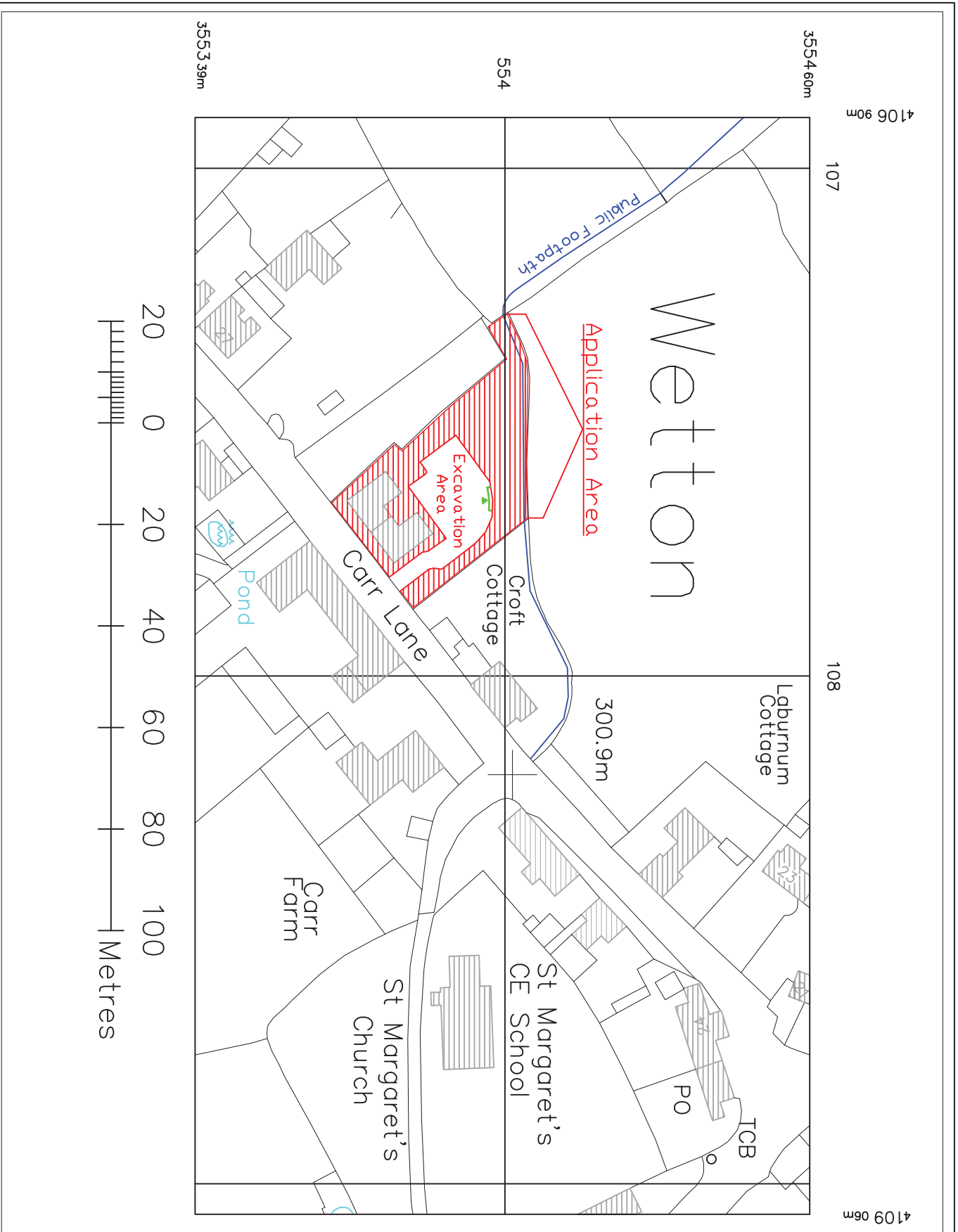


Fig. 1: Site location

1.1.2 The site is centred at NGR SK 1077 5539 and is located in the village of Wetton within the county of Staffordshire close to the border with Derbyshire. The village is approximately 11km north-west of Ashbourne and approximately 19km west of Matlock (Fig. 1). To the north and west of Wetton is the Hamps and Manifold Valleys, an area which is a dedicated Site of Special Scientific Interest.

1.2 Geology

1.2.1 The solid geology of Wetton forms part of the Carboniferous Limestone plateau which is underlain by boulder clay (Aitkenhead *et al.* 2002).






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Site Code: WET08
 Drawing Ref: Wetton Site Plan
 Date: 14/01/09
 Drawn: CB
 Scale: As shown

Figure 2: Site plan showing Application Area outline with car park excavation area highlighted

Key:

-  = Application Area
-  = Buildings
-  = Area where concentration of slag within made ground (002) was noted

Notes:

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1.3 Background

- 1.3.1 In 2000 Trent & Peak Archaeology undertook a field evaluation at Croft Cottage and a watching brief during the excavations of the foundations of the cottages in 2004. This previous work and the present watching brief were conditions of the planning applications primarily due to the fact that the site is immediately adjacent to the buried remains of Wetton Manor (Staffordshire SMR 389).
- 1.3.2 Wetton Manor was a medieval manor house, recorded as the home of the Burgoyne family (SMR 389). Investigations during the 1950s revealed that the building had been substantial with a main hall approximately 12m in length. Finds included large amounts of pottery, dated to the 17th century. The only surviving remains are extensive earthworks which exist within the field to the north-west of Croft Cottage and appear to extend into the development area of the site.
- 1.3.3 The field evaluation and geophysical survey of the site in 2000 revealed that the area which the highest archaeological potential within the development area was in the north-west (Whiteley 2008, pers. comm.). In light of this evidence the plans for the two cottages and car park area were amended in order that this area be preserved *in situ*.

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The excavations were undertaken by a 360° excavator machine using a toothed ditching bucket due to the need to remove bedrock with additional use of a toothless bucket as and when required. The entire process was monitored by an archaeologist from Archaeological Research Services Ltd in order that any features or structures uncovered by the groundworks were identified and could be recorded in accordance with the standards stipulated by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA).
- 2.2 All aspects of the investigation and reporting were carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Code of Conduct, the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Recording* (1999) and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (Revised 1999). All the contexts were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets, and a context register can be found in Appendix I of this report.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Site Deposit Sequence

- 3.1.1 The natural bedrock (004) which was uncovered across the northern half of the site consisted of solid limestone. Immediately above this lay a natural orange-brown clay deposit (003) with inclusions of small to large limestone pieces. This layer varied in depth from 0.1-0.45m in thickness.

- 3.1.2 Above the natural clay was a layer of made-ground of orange-brown compressed silty-clay (002) which contained charcoal flecks, mixed period pottery sherds, a few pieces of slag, all fragments of animal bone and clay-pipe. This made-ground varied from 0.1-0.3m in thickness. Due to the fact that less earth was removed from the southern half of the site than the north it remains unclear how far to the south this layer extends.
- 3.1.3 The south of the site was covered with a modern dark grey-brown clayey-silt subsoil (005) of up to 0.25m in depth at its deepest excavated extent and containing modern building debris from the construction of the new houses and older, but also modern, tile and glass fragments. This layer also contained frequent inclusions of limestone pieces which increased in number to the south of the site. This layer either partially or completely overlies the made-ground of (003).
- 3.1.4 Across the whole site and overlying both (005) to the south and (003) to the north was a shallow dark grey-brown silty-clay topsoil (001) which varied in depth from 0.05-0.1m. The topsoil (001) contained finds of pottery of varied periods, modern glass, ferrous nails, modern roof and wall tiles, small fragments of animal bone and painted mortar.



Fig 3 – Photo looking north showing the basic site sequence of shallow topsoil (001), underlying made-ground (002), natural clay (003), limestone bedrock (004) and the modern subsoil containing inclusions of limestone pieces (005) covering the south of the site in the foreground. Scale: 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m.

- 3.1.5 A temporary access road (006) consisting of 0.05-0.1m crushed sandstone had been laid over the topsoil (001) to the east of the site during the construction of the houses and this was partially removed during the present groundworks. This

access road also extended down the eastern side of the houses to meet with Carr Lane (see Fig. 2); no additional excavation was carried out in this access road area.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 The artefacts recovered from the topsoil (001) and subsoil (005) predominantly consisted of modern glazed wall tiles, safety glass sherds, modern roof tile fragments and other plastic and metal debris associated with the recent building work. In addition to this a collection of 42 ceramic sherds were recovered from deposits (001), the topsoil, (002), the made ground and (005), the subsoil. The majority of these sherds were modern tablewares including transfer-printed white wares and cream wares. In addition to these modern finds three sherds of Early Modern (c.L17thC-18thC) decorated slipware, one sherd of Cistercian ware (c.1450-c.1600) and three sherds of Derbyshire Early Medieval sandy ware (c.10thC-L11thC) were also recovered from across contexts (001) and (002), namely the topsoil and made ground.
- 3.2.2 A full specialist report on the ceramic assemblage, prepared by Chris Cumberpatch, is contained within Appendix II of this report.
- 3.2.3 In addition to the ceramic assemblage a very small quantity, 12 pieces, of friable and fragmentary animal bone, including a sheep tooth and medium mammal sized rib fragments was also recovered from the made ground deposit (002) together with 12 small pieces of slag.

4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 No archaeological features were identified during the course of the watching brief.
- 4.2 Both the topsoil (001) and made ground deposit (002) contained small mixed period ceramic assemblages. These finds predominantly consisted of modern wares but also included a low number of Medieval to Post-Medieval sherds. Although these finds indicate some degree of pre-modern activity in the vicinity of the excavated area it is not possible to characterize this any further.
- 4.3 The mixture of this earlier residual material with modern debris and the absence of archaeological features demonstrates that the area has been subject to a considerable level of disturbance including the creation of the made ground layer, modern construction work and the general movement of soil downslope from north-west to south-east.
- 4.4 The small concentration of slag and charcoal flecks along the northern arc of the excavated area could potentially indicate the existence of disturbed primary deposits in the vicinity but based on limited present evidence and the uncertain factor of how the made-ground deposit (002) was created it is not possible to expand on this idea further. or whether all of the soil used in the creation of the made-ground was actually derived from the site itself rather than imported.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 In summary no significant archaeological features or small finds were identified as surviving within the area of groundworks undertaken for the creation of the main car park area.
- 5.2 No features associated with the former Medieval manor house, which survives as earthworks, in the field to the north of the site were uncovered.
- 5.3 In conclusion it can be said that the present excavation work did not disturb any *in situ* archaeological remains.

6. PUBLICITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT

- 6.1. Any publicity will be handled by the client.
- 6.2. Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

7. STATEMENT OF INDEMNITY

- 7.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1. Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved in this project including the client, Mr John Graham, Sarah Whiteley fo the Peak District National Park Authority and the on site groundworkers for all their help in undertaking the watching brief.

9. REFERENCES

Aitkenhead, N., Barclay, W.J, Brandon, a, Chadwick, R.A, Chisholm, J.I, Cooper, A.H & Johnson, E.W. 2002. *The Pennines and adjacent areas*. Nottingham, British Geological Survey.

APPENDIX I

CONTEXT REGISTER

Context	Type	Description
001	Layer	Topsoil
002	Layer	Made ground
003	Layer	Natural clay
004	Layer	Natural limestone bedrock
005	Layer	Modern subsoil (over the south of the site only)
006	Deposit	Modern crushed stone access road/pathway for building access.

APPENDIX II

Specialist Ceramics Report

Pottery from a watching brief at Croft Cottage, Wetton, Staffordshire

C.G. Cumberpatch BA PhD
Freelance Archaeologist

Introduction

The pottery assemblage from Croft Cottage, Wetton, Staffordshire was examined by the author on 9th and 10th January 2009. It consisted of forty-two sherds of pottery weighing 521 grams representing a total of thirty-seven vessels. The details are summarised in Table 1. An undated fragment of the stem of a clay tobacco pipe and two small fragments of glazed wall tile were included with the pottery and are described in Table 2.

Discussion

Only three contexts produced pottery, 1, 2 and 5 and in all but one case the assemblages were of mixed character. The exception, context 5, produced only one sherd of pottery, a piece of transfer printed Whiteware of mid to later 19th century date.

The assemblage from context 1 was the largest from the site and included a wide range of wares with the earliest being a small abraded sherd of Derbyshire Early Medieval Sandy ware (discussed further below). A sherd from a Cistercian ware cup represented post-medieval pottery but the greater part of the group was of early modern and recent date. Early modern wares (broadly dating to the 18th century) included Mottled ware and Slipware. These vernacular tradition tablewares may have been contemporary with the Creamwares although this type continued in production into the early decades of the 19th century, after that of the vernacular tablewares had ceased. The same may be true of the Pearlwares although it may be that these post-date the vernacular tablewares. It seems likely that all of these sherds were residual in an essentially 19th century context as a significant part of the assemblage was of 19th century date (Sponged ware, Cane Coloured ware, Banded ware and transfer printed Whiteware). The presence of such wares was unexceptional and they are a common find on many small rural excavations of this type.

Context 2 produced a smaller group of sherds but one which was similar to that from context 1 in its general characteristics. The most notable sherd from this context was the base of a Derbyshire Early Medieval Sandy ware jar or cooking pot which most probably dated to the period between the mid to late 11th or early 12th century and the early 13th century, although the precise date range is obscure, for reasons discussed in greater detail elsewhere (Cumberpatch 2004). The similarity of this type to the published descriptions of Stafford type ware (Ford 1995:29-31) and the early date ascribed to the latter, suggests that they are closely connected and may represent variants of a local or regional tradition with numerous centres of production. The presence of a thin layer of green glaze inside the pot is unusual but not exceptional and a variant of the unglazed ware has been noted in an assemblage from the village of Bradbourne which bears traces of splashed glaze (author's observation). While the presence of this sherd is of considerable interest, in that it indicates some form of earlier medieval activity in the area of the site, it was residual in character (as was the smaller sherd from context 1), the remainder of the context group being of 18th and 19th century date.

None of the 18th or 19th century wares bore maker's marks to indicate their origin and while a Staffordshire origin is probable, this cannot be assumed without the

evidence of marked sherds, given the widespread manufacture of refined earthenwares and stonewares. The widespread production of vernacular tablewares in the 18th century has rendered terms such as ‘Staffordshire Slipware’ or ‘Metropolitan Slipware’ both misleading and obsolete and as such they have not been used in this report. While a Staffordshire origin is one possibility other ‘country potteries’ also manufactured these types and they cannot be assumed to be regionally distinctive. A comprehensive multi-region programme of petrological and chemical analysis is required to establish the extent and the character of the organisation of circulation of these wares.

Bibliography

Cumberpatch, C.G. 2004 *Medieval pottery production in Derbyshire: a review* **Derbyshire Archaeological Journal** 124;86 – 112.

Ford, D.A. 1995 **Medieval pottery in Staffordshire AD800 – 1600: A review.** Staffordshire Archaeological Studies 7. City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent.

Context	Type	No	Wt	ENV	Part	Form	Decoration	Date range	Notes
1	Banded ware	1	1	1	Rim	Cup/mug	Blue band ext on a dark red bodied vessel	C19th	
1	BGCW	1	36	1	BS	Pancheon	Brown glaze int	C18th - C19th	Chipped & abraded
1	BGCW	1	96	1	Base	Pancheon	Brown glaze int	C18th - C19th	
1	BGCW	1	6	1	BS	Hollow ware	Brown glaze int & ext	C18th - C19th	
1	Bone China	1	3	1	BS	Hollow ware	U/Dec	C19th	
1	Cane Coloured ware	1	13	1	BS	Flatware	U/Dec	C19th	
1	Cistercian ware	1	12	1	Foot	Cup	Black glaze int & partially ext	c.1450 - c.1600	
1	Creamware	1	2	1	BS	Hollow ware	U/Dec	c.1740 - c.1820	
1	Creamware	1	12	1	Rim	Dish/bowl	U/Dec	c.1740 - c.1820	
1	Creamware	1	1	1	BS	Flatware	U/Dec	c.1740 - c.1820	
1	Derbyshire Early Medieval Sandy ware	1	2	1	BS	Hollow ware	Smoothed surface ext	C10th - LC11th	Small abraded sherd
1	Lustre ware	1	3	1	Rim	Saucer/bowl	Black printed floral design inside rim under white lustre band	C19th	
1	Mottled ware	1	16	1	Handle & BS	Mug	Mottled glaze int & ext	C18th	
1	Mottled ware	1	6	1	BS	Hollow ware	Mottled glaze int & ext	C18th	
1	Pearlware	1	4	1	Ring foot base	Dish	Hand painted floral design int	c.1780 - c.1840	Angular ring foot base
1	Pearlware	1	1	1	Flake	Flatware	U/Dec	c.1780 - c.1840	
1	Porcelain	1	14	1	Base	?Hollow ware	U/Dec	LC19th - EC20th	Odd base with semi-recessed base & flange
1	Slipware	1	11	1	Base	Dish	Red slip on a light buff body with a wavy white slip line under clear glaze	C17th - E/MC18th	
1	Slipware	1	8	1	BS	Dish	White trailed slip designs int	C18th	
1	Slipware	1	5	1	Base	Hollow ware	Red slip on a pale orange/buff fabric under brown glaze	C18th	
1	Sponged ware	1	2	1	BS	Mug/jug	Blue sponging ext	c.1830+	
1	Stoneware	1	31	1	Rim	Jar	U/Dec	C19th	Impressed line around body, profiled rim
1	TP Whiteware	3	7	1	Double footring base	Plate	Willow	M - LC19th	
1	TP Whiteware	1	6	1	Base	Carver/server	Willow	M - LC19th	Combed on underside of base
1	TP Whiteware	1	2	1	BS	Hollow ware	Flow Blue design ext; very dark blue	c.1840+	
1	TP Whiteware	1	1	1	Rim	Cup/bowl	Flow Blue design int	c.1840+	
1	Whiteware	1	8	1	BS	Hollow ware	U/Dec	M - LC19th	Crazed and flaked
2	BGFW type	1	6	1	BS	Dish/bowl	Patchy thin brown glaze int	C18th	Hard dense buff fabric with occasional non-crystalline grit
2	BSGSW	1	18	1	BS	Dish/bowl	Rouletted band ext	C19th	Sharply everted rim
2	Derbyshire Early Medieval Sandy ware	2	85	1	Base	Jar	Smoothed ext surface; very thin greenish glaze int	C10th - LC11th	A dense black sandy textured fabric containing abundant rounded quartz grains

									from 0.3 - 1mm; Ford 1995: 29
2	Mottled ware	2	2	2	BS	Hollow ware	Mottled glaze int & ext	C18th	Fine buff fabric
2	Slipware	1	9	1	BS	Dish	Trailed and feathered slip; white on red	LC17th - C18th	Press moulded dish; fine dense buff body with red streaks & non-crystalline grit
2	Slipware	1	7	1	Rim	Bowl	Red slip coating int & ext with trailed white slip curvilinear decoration	LC17th - C18th	Fine buff body with non-crystalline inclusions
2	Slipware	2	11	1	Base	Dish/bowl	Red slip int under brown glaze	C18th	Dense buff fabric with quartz, non-crystalline grit & occasional red grit
2	TP Whiteware	2	70	1	Rim	?Jug	Cream finish with fine black printed bamboo or grass design ext	M - LC19th	
5	TP Whiteware	1	4	1	Base	Flatware	Willow	M - LC19th	Flaked on underside
	Total	42	521	37					

Table 1. Pottery from Croft Cottage, Wetton, Staffordshire

1	Wall tile	1	2	1	Fragment	Wall tile	U/Dec	Recent
1	Wall tile	1	1	1	Flake	Wall tile	Multi-coloured design on one side	C20th
2	Clay Tobacco pipe	1	4	1	Stem	Tobacco pipe	U/Dec	Undated
	Total	3	7	3				

Table 2. Wall tile and tobacco pipe fragments from Croft Cottage, Wetton, Staffordshire

APPENDIX III

Project Brief

Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief at 2 Dove Cottage, Rocester, Staffordshire.



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief will be maintained during ground works associated with the development of Croft Cottage, Wetton, Derbyshire. Full planning permission has been given by the Peak District National Park Authority for the development of two dwellings and a car park area (Application No. NP/SM0207/0172). The site borders the earthwork remains of medieval Wetton manor (Staffordshire SMER 389). Archaeological investigations were undertaken at the site in 2000 revealing that the area with the highest potential for archaeological survival on site was in the north-western sector (PDNPA Brief).
- 1.2 A representative from Archaeological Research Services Ltd will be present during all ground works. If any significant archaeological remains are encountered during the development works, these will be recorded following the IFA *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2001) and the English Heritage volume 'Management of Archaeological Projects' (MAP2).



Fig. 1 Location Map of Wetton, Derbyshire

2.0 Archaeological recording

2.1 A written, drawn and photographic record will be maintained during the watching brief and all significant archaeological remains will be recorded and/or retrieved. All significant architectural features will be photographed (with scale) *in situ* and their location recorded on a plan of the site. Where archaeological features and/or deposits are identified during the watching brief, then a sufficient quantity of the said features will be investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed. All features thus investigated will be recorded in plan and section and significant archaeological finds recovered will be retained for analysis. The stratigraphy, where relevant and apparent, will be recorded within the area of the excavation. A plan of the excavated areas will be maintained, features noted and section lines recorded. All drawings will be carried out at an appropriate scale and all contexts will be recorded using a single context recording system. The site archive will include plans and sections at an appropriate scale, a scale photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent.

3.0 Artefact and Ecofact collection and recording

- 3.1 All stratified finds will be collected by context. Uncertified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest. Finds of "treasure" will be reported to the Coroner in accordance with the Treasure Act (1996).
- 3.2 Collection policies for structural remains and industrial residues have been set out by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA, 1993). The presence of such materials within a context will be recorded even where comprehensive retention is not considered appropriate.
- 3.3 It is not considered likely that waterlogged, palaeoenvironmental or human remains will be encountered at any stage of this project. However, should such remains be identified work will cease and a meeting arranged between Archaeological Research Services Ltd, the landowner and the Development Control Archaeologist to discuss further procedures.

4.0 Post-Excavation Methodology

- 4.1 A report will be prepared that will contain, as a minimum the elements as identified in the IFA Standard and Guidance for the 'Archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures' (2001). The report will also include elements from the Standard and guidance for 'Archaeological watching briefs' (2001), annex 1 where these differ from the standard building recording report previously referred to.
- 4.2 The report will contain the following elements:
- A non-technical summary.

- The identity of the organisation and individuals carrying out the work (in particular the names of the project director, site supervisor and any specialists).
- Introductory statements.
- The aims and objectives of the project.
- Methodology.
- Structural description.
- Analysis.
- A conclusion.
- Supporting illustrations to include drawings and photographs at recognised scales.
- Supporting data.
- An index to and the proposed location of the archive.
- References.

4.3 Two copies of the final report will be supplied to the Peak District National Park Authority. A digital copy of all text will also be supplied in Word format. A copy of any specialist reports relating to the project will also be supplied to the Senior Conservation Archaeologist.

5.0 Archiving

5.1 The archaeological contractor will ensure that the site archive (including any artefacts recovered) are deposited in an acceptable condition with Derby Museum and Art Gallery which is registered with the Museums and Galleries Commission and approved for the storage of archaeological archives.

5.2 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. All parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the HER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

6.0 Health and Safety

6.1 Health and Safety will take priority over archaeological requirements. A full risk assessment will be prepared in advance of the fieldwork. The requirements stipulated within this project design will be varied in the interests of health and

safety following consultation and agreement with the Senior Conservation Archaeologist.