



Gloucestershire

COUNTY COUNCIL

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GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS

WINCHCOMBE

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1998

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank everyone who has helped us to produce the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: Jan Wills, the County Archaeologist who initiated and managed the project and edited the reports, for her help and support; Caroline Jamfrey and Jon Hoyle for the production of the covers and other artwork, Howard Brewer of Gloucestershire County Council and Pat Southern of IBM for support with all our IT problems, and the SMR staff of Gloucestershire County Council for access to the SMR database.

We would especially like to thank the Gloucestershire Victoria County History team, Nick Herbert and John Jurica, for allowing us access to unpublished typescripts of Volume V for the Forest of Dean and to their preliminary work on Northleach.



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A note about the maps

The SMR maps in the original Historic Towns Survey (i.e Maps 18-21) are now out of date and have not been included within this revision although references to SMR numbers remain in the text. For up to date SMR information readers can contact the SMR on 01452 425705 or via email at archaeology.smr@gloucestershire.gov.uk. The other maps have been refreshed using current software and retain their original numbering as referred to in the text.

Original description of SMR maps

SMR maps: these maps show a selection of sites relevant to the discussion of the development of each town. The maps are not intended to provide a comprehensive gazetteer of all recorded archaeological sites in the settlements, and should therefore be only be used in the context for which they were produced. For further information about the archaeology of any area, the Sites and Monument Record should be consulted directly.

Plan component maps: these maps are intended to indicate the most likely areas of settlement in each town during the Medieval and Post-medieval periods, on the basis of present archaeological knowledge. They should not, however, be regarded as definitive, and the interpretations made will require revision as new evidence emerges from future work.



ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS USED IN THE TEXT

Anon	Anonymous
c.	circa
C	Century [e.g. C12]
EH	English Heritage
GSIA	Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology
km	kilometres
m	metres
n.d.	Undated
O.D.	Ordnance Datum
O.S.	Ordnance Survey
PCNFC	Proceedings of the Cotteswold Naturalists Field Club
RCHME	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
SMR 12345	An SMR site which is shown on the accompanying maps
SMR 12345	An SMR site which is not shown on the accompanying maps
TBGAS	Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
TRE	Tempus Rex Edwardus (ie. during the reign of king Edward the Confessor)

PERIODS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

Palaeolithic	500,000 B.C. – 10,000 B.C.
Mesolithic	10,000 B.C. – 4,000 B.C.
Neolithic	4,000 B.C. – 2,200 B.C.
Bronze Age	2,200 B.C. – 700 B.C.
Iron Age	700 B.C. – A.D. 43
Roman	A.D. 43 – 410
Early Medieval	410-1066
Medieval	1066 – 1540
Post Medieval	1540 – 1901
Modern	1901 – present

POPULATION FIGURES

The text for each town considered in the GHTS includes a section about the historic population of the parish in which the settlement lies. This information has been drawn from a variety of sources, mainly taxation returns, ecclesiastical returns and what can generally be referred to as censuses. The nature of these sources often makes it unclear what area was included within the survey, and in many cases suburban developments were excluded from the figures. It is also important to note that the accuracy of the information available is variable, and relates to a society which was not accustomed to the same degree of numerical accuracy demanded today. Some enumerations were the result of antiquarian interest in the growth of settlements and were included within descriptions of the nature of the town, as is the case with the figures given by Atkyns (1712) and Rudder (1779). Other population surveys were required by the ecclesiastical authorities, and in the case of Gloucestershire, there were a number of such surveys in 1563, 1603, 1650 and 1676. The 1563, 1603 and 1676 surveys were intended to indicate the number of communicants, papists and nonconformists in the parish. As the surveys were undertaken by the local clergy, there may well have been a temptation to play down levels of nonconformity. The 1650 survey was intended to give an indication of levels of pluralism, as well as to indicate the general size of the communities served.

The figures recorded in these surveys could be for communicants (i.e. anyone over the age of 16), men and women over 16, men, women and children, men over sixteen only, householders, households or families. In the case of Gloucestershire the figures generally relate to households, families and communicants. In order to gain a better indication of the true size of the population of a parish, calculations need to be made to convert communicants and households into men, women and children of all ages. It has generally been accepted that to convert households into individuals the given figure should be multiplied by 4.25, while to add children under 16 to the number of



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communicants the figure should be multiplied by 1.5, based on the assumption that children made up approximately 33% of the general population.

It is possible to view the figures arrived at by these means as simplistic but it has been shown that they generally fit quite well with data from other seventeenth century sources (see Whiteman A (ed.) 1986, *The Compton Census of 1676*, for a full discussion of the issues). It is not intended that the figures given in the following text should be seen as correct values, but it is hoped that the information will provide an approximate indication of the order of size of the parish at a time when there were few other sources of information available.



THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

town *n.* **1.** a densely populated urban area, typically smaller than a city and larger than a village. **2.** a city, borough or other urban area.

urban *adj.* **1.** of, relating to, or constituting a city or town. **2.** living in a city or town. ~ Cf. **rural**.

1 Introduction

The Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey was undertaken between 1995 and 1998 by Antonia Douthwaite and Vince Devine of the Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service and was funded by English Heritage as part of a national programme of county-based extensive urban surveys of small towns in England. All of the 37 settlements included in the survey once had, or have now, some urban characteristics, and range in date and type from the Roman towns of the Cotswolds through to the Post-medieval industrial settlements of the Forest of Dean and Stroud valleys (Table 1). Not all the settlements are urban at the end of the twentieth century: some are now greenfield sites and others are small villages, although a few have survived as urban foci for modern communities. Both Gloucester and Cirencester were omitted from the project since they were identified by English Heritage as major historic towns, with a considerable history of archaeological investigation meriting individual and detailed study (English Heritage 1992).

The extensive urban surveys were designed as tripartite projects to include: the *enhancement of the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)*, in order to provide a comprehensive database for each settlement, the preparation of *assessment reports* which would summarise the state of archaeological knowledge for each settlement and the design of a *strategy* for the management of the archaeology of each town to be implemented mainly through the planning system. The database is now held as part of the Gloucestershire SMR, while the assessment and strategy reports each take the form of separate volumes covering the administrative districts of Cheltenham, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Stroud and Tewkesbury. All three phases of the projects were based on the use of secondary, published sources, involved no fieldwork and were tightly constrained by the available resources.

Previous work on towns highlighting their archaeological potential and their vulnerability to development was undertaken in various parts of England, including Gloucestershire (Leech 1981), in the early 1980s. Changes in approaches to the management of the urban archaeological resource since then, particularly the greatly enhanced opportunities for its protection from the adverse effects of development through the planning system, prompted the new urban surveys of the 1990s.



2 The concept of urbanism

A town is a permanent human settlement with two chief and essential attributes. The first is that a significant proportion (but not necessarily a majority) of its population lives off trade, industry, administration and other non-agricultural occupations. The second...is that it forms a social unit more or less distinct from the surrounding countryside (Reynolds 1977, ix).

Although most people understand the term “town” in the modern context, the definition of urban areas in the past is far more varied, and modern concepts of urbanism tend to confuse more than they elucidate. For every period contemporary documents reveal a plethora of terms to describe settlements, depending upon their social, economic and legal status. Under the Roman empire there were seven distinct terms which could be used to place a settlement and its inhabitants in its context: *civitas*, *colonia*, *municipium*, *oppidum*, *urbs*, *vicus* and *πολις* (*polis*). Any attempt to equate these words with modern terminology creates considerable confusion as there are just as many English terms to describe the status of any urban settlement: town, city, urban district, municipality, county borough, borough, any or all of which may or may not be a direct equivalent to the Roman terminology. Similarly, there are numerous Early Medieval and Medieval terms relating to settlements, including *vill*, *burghus*, *burh*, *wic* and *urbs*, some of which had very specific meanings while others are more difficult to define with precision.

This varied terminology has led archaeologists and historians to attempt to define urban status in terms of the roles towns played and their physical attributes which have survived in the archaeological record. This approach has been most successful in relation to settlements of the Early Medieval and Medieval periods, based on the work of Beresford (1967) and Biddle (1976), who have defined a town as a settlement possessing a combination of the following:

- 1) defences
- 2) a planned street system
- 3) market(s)
- 4) a mint
- 5) legal autonomy
- 6) a role as a central place
- 7) a relatively large and dense population
- 8) a diverse economic base
- 9) plots and houses of urban type (burgages and burgage tenure)
- 10) social differentiation
- 11) complex religious organisation
- 12) a judicial centre
- 13) the possession of a borough charter
- 14) a reference to the settlement as a *burgus* or representation by its own jury at the *eyre*
- 15) that it was taxed as a borough
- 16) that it sent members to any Medieval parliament

Table 1 below illustrates where there is documentary evidence for some of the main urban characteristics of towns included in the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey:



Town	Defences	Market	Mint	Borough charter	Burgages/ burgess tenure	Legal autonomy
Berkeley		1086	✓		✓	
Bishop's Cleeve						
Bisley		1687				
Blockley						
Bourton-on-the-Water						
Chalford						
Cheltenham		1226			✓	
Chipping Campden		c1180		1154-89	✓	
Cinderford		1869				
Coleford		eC14				
Dursley		1471/2		C12	✓	
Dymock		1225/6		C13	✓	
Fairford		c.1100-35		1221	✓	✓
Frampton-on-Severn		1245				
King's Stanley		1253		C13/14	✓	
Lechlade		1210		c.1235	✓	
Leonard Stanley		1307-27				
Lydney		1268				
Minchinhampton		1269			✓	
Mitcheldean		1328				
Moreton-in-Marsh		1228		C13/14	✓	
Nailsworth		C18				
Newent	?	1253		C13	✓	
Newnham	?	C12		1187	✓	✓
Northleach		1219/20		c.1227	✓	
Painswick		1253			✓	
Prestbury		1249		C13	✓	
St. Briavels		1208		C14	✓	
Stow-on-the-Wold		1107		C12	✓	✓
Stroud		1570-1607				
Tetbury		1211-1287		c.1211	✓	
Tewkesbury		1086		1086	✓	
Winchcombe	✓	1086	✓	1086	✓	
Wotton-under-Edge		1252		1253	✓	

Table 1 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: indicators of urban status in the Medieval period



3 Urbanism in Gloucestershire

3.1 The Roman period

The concept of urbanism is often considered to have been a continental imposition brought to Britain by the invading Roman army during the first century A.D. The geographer Strabo, writing during the late first century B.C. and the early first century A.D. implied that the backwardness of western Europeans outside Italy was due to their hunting and raiding way of life and that once they were converted to a settled agricultural existence, urbanisation would develop of its own accord (Wacher 1995, 33). However, there is evidence that some Iron Age hillforts and enclosures had begun to take on urban functions before the Roman conquest of A.D.43. The Iron Age settlements of Bagendon and Salmonsbury Camp in east Gloucestershire appear to have been densely populated, with streets, arrangements of dwellings and ancillary buildings, along with defences, and to have acted as centres of political, commercial and administrative activity (Friar 1991, 386). Compared with Roman towns they may still have been extremely primitive, and the imperial government would have been keen to establish towns on the Mediterranean scale which were an essential part of the Roman way of life, and also facilitated the tasks of administration, the collection of taxes, education and policing. Towns may also have been seen as a means of furthering the acceptance of the Roman government among the native population.

The earliest Roman towns to develop would have been those on which the administration of the province was based - the *civitates* and the *coloniae* - some of which were based on early forts, while others derived from settlements of veterans who were given land at the end of their period of military service (e.g. Gloucester). Smaller towns developed around the other early forts where merchants and other civilians gathered to service the army, or at other significant locations on the network of Roman roads, such as the Foss Way or Watling Street, to serve the imperial messenger service along with other travellers who would need somewhere to stop overnight, to eat and change horses, and possibly to trade. Unlike the *civitates* and *coloniae*, there is little evidence of planning in many such settlements, which are more likely to have developed organically.

The Roman small towns at Bourton-on-the-Water, Dorn, Dymock, Kingscote and Wycomb (Andoversford) were included in the historic towns survey. At Bourton there are suggestions of continuity of occupation from the Iron Age into the Roman period; the Iron Age enclosure of Salmonsbury Camp lies just over 1km to the east of the Roman small town. The Roman settlement was initially focused around a posting station (*mansio* or *mutatio*) on the Foss Way near its crossing of the River Windrush, but then spread eastwards towards Salmonsbury Camp. Dorn is also thought to have served an administrative function during the later part of the Roman period (the late third to fourth centuries), possibly as a site where the official taxes (the *annona*) were collected; the defences around the eastern part of the site may have been constructed at this time. The Roman settlements at Kingscote and Dymock may also have had military origins – there is a suggestion that there may have been an early fort at Dymock from which a small agricultural and metal-working settlement developed, while considerable material of first century date has been found at Kingscote which then developed into a market centre, covering about 200 hectares by the later fourth century. Unlike the other Roman settlements in Gloucestershire, Wycomb is not associated with any major road and it is thought to have grown up around a site of ritual or religious significance pre-dating the Roman conquest. A settlement would have developed there either to serve the pilgrims and visitors to the site, or as a market centre for surrounding communities which were often associated with ritual sites.

Some Medieval settlements in Gloucestershire may also have developed on sites of Roman activity, including Bisley where there is evidence for Roman ritual activity, possibly associated with the wells; King's Stanley, where there is evidence for a large Roman villa in the area of the later church; and Lydney which lies close to the Roman cult centre at Lydney Park. The nature of the relationship between the Roman and later settlements is not understood, and it is not clear to what extent the existence of Roman activity influenced the siting of later settlements.

The end of the Roman period in Britain is often thought to have been marked by a hiatus in urban life. There is little evidence for continuity of occupation in urban areas into the fifth century in the county, and it appears that the function of the towns died with the culture that they had been founded to sustain (Wacher 1995, 417). The fact that many sites were reoccupied in the later Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods may be due more to the fact that, by accident of geography, the sites were suitable for the economic and administrative functions of the period, just as they had been during the Roman period.



3.2 The Early Medieval period

The popular perception of the Dark Ages as one of deserted Roman towns, dilapidated villas and a reversion to barbarism still persists to a certain extent, and until 50 years ago academics were still debating the question of whether Anglo-Saxon towns existed at all. Roman towns fell out of use for a time, perhaps because they were too superficial an imposition on a society to which the idea of formal towns was alien. It is likely that the renaissance of internal and external trading networks prompted the increased centralisation of the production and sale of goods. From the eighth century specialist trading centres, such as Southampton and Ipswich, developed. Elsewhere the main impetus for urban development may have been a desire to control and promote economic activity, including the striking of coinage. A second important factor in the development of urban communities were the Scandinavian raids of the eighth and ninth centuries, which prompted Alfred and his successors to create the fortified settlements known as *burhs*. Some were established on the sites of Roman towns, while others were newly founded, but all were provided with defences of earth, timber or stone. The interest of the ruling elite in the promotion of towns gathered force throughout the later part of the Anglo-Saxon period, with increasing controls and prescriptions on the activities permitted within and outside urban areas: legislation of Edward the Elder and Aethelstan attempted to restrict trade to the towns, while the reform of the coinage by Eadgar in A.D.973 meant that the coins could only be struck in a burh.

The early church also played a significant role in the development of towns. From the seventh century onwards minsters were founded to serve as centres for the conversion and administration of large areas of England. A minster usually consisted of a church and outbuildings within an enclosure, served by a priest and a number of monastic or secular assistants. Such concentrations of priests would have required goods and services, which would in turn have attracted secular settlement to the area to serve those needs, and it is possible that these complexes may have provided the closest equivalent to towns in England until the creation of the burhs in the ninth century.

The tenth and eleventh centuries therefore saw the steady establishment of towns as centres of trade, finance, administration and ecclesiastical affairs, functions which continued into the post-Conquest period and have come to be viewed as indicators of urban status.

In Gloucestershire there is evidence that early minsters were founded at Tetbury, Berkeley, Cheltenham, Bishop's Cleeve, Blockley, Bisley, Tewkesbury and Winchcombe and it is possible that their existence played a significant role in the development of urban functions at those sites. Winchcombe is also the only example of a burh in Gloucestershire, founded in the seventh or eighth century at the site of an early minster which developed into a monastic house, with a Mercian royal palace and a mint, surrounded by a defensive enclosure. For a while during the early eleventh century, the settlement was important enough to stand at the centre of its own shire - *Winchcombeshire* - until it was incorporated into Gloucestershire c.A.D.1017.

3.3 The Medieval period

From the tenth to fourteenth centuries the process of urbanisation acquired momentum as first royal and then secular and ecclesiastical landlords began to promote existing villages to urban status, or to found completely new towns on virgin sites. Towns were important as a source of income from markets, taxes and tolls. Existing settlements had the added advantage of containing the remains of the Anglo-Saxon administrative structure, with military and fiscal obligations, and many were also episcopal sees. They housed large clusters of the population and many stood at important road junctions or river crossings. Artisans and merchants also found that the towns presented opportunities for the creation of wealth and the advancement of social status.

Medieval landowners were quick to promote the development of urban communities on their land, obtaining income from property rents and tolls levied on trade and commerce. This revenue could be controlled through the establishment of a market in a specific area within the settlement and in the period 1199-1350 around 2500 market grants were issued.

In addition to the foundation of a market, many landlords attempted to promote existing villages to borough status. The grant of a borough charter conferred a number of privileges of administrative, teneurial and legal character, the most important of which was the right to burgage or freehold tenure, for a rent and without labour services. In the period from 1199-1350 c.370 new boroughs were created by the king, lords and bishops. One of the most characteristic features of towns of this period is the burgage plot - long, thin strips of land extending back from the main street which allowed as many burgesses as possible access to the street frontage and the trade



which it afforded. In Gloucestershire at least 22 small towns acquired borough status during the Medieval period, with most charters being granted during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see Table 2).

	TOWN	DATE
1	Tewkesbury	by 1086
	Winchcombe	by 1086
2	Chipping Campden	1154-1189
3	Newnham	1187
4	Berkeley	1190
5	Dursley	C12
	Stow-on-the-Wold	C12
6	Tetbury	c.1211
7	Fairford	c.1221
8	Northleach	c.1227
9	Lechlade	c.1235
10	Wotton-under-Edge	1253
11	Dymock	C13
	Newent	C13
	Prestbury	C13
12	King's Stanley	C13/14
	Moreton-in-Marsh	C13/14
13	Minchinhampton	1300
14	Cheltenham	1313
15	Painswick	1324
16	St. Briavels	C14

Table 2 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: earliest documentary references to borough status.

The units of settlement described as towns during this period were plentiful but remained very small, about 95% of the population of England was still rural, and the main difference between the new towns and the rural villages was that the former contained *a substantial proportion of traders and craftsmen whose services would be drawn on by the villagers of the surrounding area* (Palliser 1987, 55). This pattern of new foundations and promotions continued until the outbreak of the Black Death (1348-1369) which effectively curtailed the creation of new towns. Up to this time, town growth had been achieved mainly through the attraction of immigrants from surrounding rural populations, who were accommodated through the infilling of open areas and the sub-division of existing burgage or tenement plots.

The Norman and later Medieval town was thus an important instrument of political, administrative and economic control, flexible enough both to exert control over an area and to allow it to be exploited commercially. Through this process English towns were adapted to become a major economic force.

The Medieval small towns of Gloucestershire fit into this general pattern. A number of settlements in the central and eastern part of the county, such as Berkeley, Cheltenham, Tetbury, Tewkesbury and Winchcombe had begun to develop during the Early Medieval period, but the vast majority of the towns in the county owe their existence to the Medieval fashion for founding new markets and boroughs during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Table 3 shows the market towns in the county and the dates at which they received their market charters: 15% of all Medieval market grants were made during the twelfth century, and 55% during the thirteenth century.



	TOWN	DATE
1	Tewkesbury	by 1086
	Winchcombe	by 1086
	Berkeley	by 1086
2	Fairford	c1100-1135
3	Stow-on-the-Wold	1107
4	Chipping Campden	c1180
5	Newnham	C12
6	St. Briavels	1208
7	Lechlade	1210
8	Tetbury	1211-1287
9	Northleach	1219/20
10	Dymock	1225/6
11	Cheltenham	1226
12	Moreton-in-Marsh	1228
13	Frampton-on-Severn	1245
14	Prestbury	1249
15	Wotton-under-Edge	1252
16	Painswick	1253
	Newent	1253
	King's Stanley	1253
17	Lydney	1268
18	Minchinhampton	1269
19	Leonard Stanley	1307-27
20	Mitcheldean	1328
21	Coleford	C14
22	Dursley	1471/2
23	Stroud	1570-1607
24	Bisley	1687
25	Nailsworth	C18
26	Cinderford	1869

Table 3 Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey: market charters by date

Amongst the boroughs founded after 1086, some appear to have been added on to existing non-urban settlements, while others could have been new creations. Towns in the first category include Stow-on-the-Wold, Northleach, Moreton-in-Marsh, Chipping Campden, Wotton-under-Edge and possibly Dursley. Such settlements generally comprise a large market area which is sometimes triangular or square, and sometimes formed by widening the main street to allow stalls to be set up along its length, with burgage plots fronting onto all available sides. The earlier settlement, to which the borough was attached, can often be seen in a less regular pattern of property boundaries, usually clustered around the church. Towns of the second category include Fairford, Lechlade and Painswick. These settlements also have a well defined market area, but a more complex street pattern, incorporating more than one main street, with burgages also laid out along the subsidiary streets.

The history of the development of towns in the Forest of Dean, is rather more diverse. Some followed a pattern similar to those outlined above, of foundation and development around a market during the Medieval period and thus have a similar layout, such as Newent and Newnham; St. Briavels was connected closely with the development and administration of the Royal Forest of Dean. Other settlements – Coleford, Lydney and Mitcheldean - were the product of the industrial development of the Forest, based on the exploitation of its natural resources, particularly iron and coal.

The Stroud valleys, which would become such an important area of settlement during the Post-medieval period, show little evidence for urban development during the Medieval period, apart from areas at the edge of the Cotswold Scarp such as Dursley, Bisley and Painswick, where the settlement pattern is similar to that found elsewhere on the Cotswolds. The main reason for this is likely to have been the nature of the terrain, which was



mostly unsuitable for Medieval industries and agricultural exploitation, but which was ideally suited to Post-medieval advances in manufacturing techniques.

3.4 The Post-medieval period

The mid-sixteenth century marked a further important phase in the development of English towns. The dissolution of the Monasteries and the suppression of religious houses, especially friaries, chantries and pilgrimages had an enormous impact on urban life. Large areas of land and buildings were put up for sale, and were converted into houses or redeveloped by their new, secular owners. The economic impact on towns dependent upon church landlords or pilgrimage cults was therefore severe. Other factors also affected the success of the small towns founded during the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. Some failed because they had been poorly located, others because of direct competition from near neighbours, and yet others due to the economic changes of the period. Many of the towns which continued to flourish did so by specialising in a certain product at market, such as cheese, wool, grain or leather goods, while others specialised in a particular industry or manufacturing process.

During the later Medieval period changes to the industrial and commercial geography of England also had a significant effect upon the development of towns in the country. One of the main English exports up to the fourteenth century had been raw wool, which was shipped to the continent where it was made into finished cloth to be sold back to England. The wars with France in the early fourteenth century forced an end to this trade, providing the opportunity for the production of cloth to spread rapidly through the rural areas of England. Within a few years finished cloth had replaced raw wool as one of the country's main exports. Numerous small settlements began to develop in rural areas to service this trade, away from the constraints of the town guilds, which enabled cloth to be produced more cheaply, thereby competing with the Flemish weavers who had dominated the trade up to this time. These settlements were strikingly different from those of earlier towns; they were not confined within town walls and were often not connected to earlier settlements, but took the form of straggling developments along the sides of valleys. The new cloth industry thus allowed small rural settlements in favourable locations to develop into prosperous towns.

The effect of these economic changes was felt very strongly in Gloucestershire where the towns of the Cotswolds had specialised in the marketing of locally produced wool. Many of these towns, such as Northleach and Winchcombe, fell into decline during this time as they were not located in areas suitable for the manufacturing of woollen cloth. Prosperity spread instead to the valleys around Stroud where easy access to high quality Cotswold wool, to abundant supplies of fuller's earth, to water of a quantity sufficient to drive a number of mills and to Bristol as an outlet for the finished product allowed numerous small valley hamlets to develop into towns serving the cloth industry. Three kinds of English cloth were produced, the finest of which was broadcloth; kerseys were a lighter, cheaper and often coarser cloth and worsteds were the cheapest and did not require fulling. Gloucestershire held foremost place in the production of broadcloth, mainly due to the steep-sided valleys in the Stroud area which were well suited to the creation of reservoirs for the large fulling mills, and later for the dyehouses for the coloured cloth which supplanted the finished broadcloth. This is how settlements such as Chalford, Nailsworth and Stroud developed from the later fourteenth century, spread out along the sides of the river valleys and clustered around the mills. Within these towns evidence for the cloth trade is well preserved, not only in the form of large mill buildings, but in the architecture of the houses of the weavers, who produced the cloth, and the large, commodious dwellings of the clothiers who owned the mills, and distributed the wool to be woven.

In the Forest of Dean the settlements which developed during the Medieval period - Lydney, Newnham, Newent, Coleford and Mitcheldean - did not expand or develop greatly between the later Medieval period and the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, when new industrial techniques were developed and large scale mining operations began as the free miners were persuaded to sell their rights to speculators and entrepreneurs. This industrial activity was so concentrated in the area of Cinderford Bridge that a new town developed purely to service the requirements of the mine owners and their workers.

From the mid-seventeenth century the conglomeration of buildings and social classes which had characterised so many Medieval towns was superseded by the introduction of new urban styles from the continent, which reflected the growing prosperity of the period. The concept of large open circuses, squares and terraces of elegant town houses dominated the urban scene for the next two centuries, exemplified in the Gloucestershire context by the development of Regency Cheltenham, with its pump rooms, promenades, elegant terraces and town houses. Elsewhere the picture was not quite so pleasant, the industrial towns also had terraces, but these



were usually 'blind-backed' or 'tunnel-backed' with inadequate sanitation for the large families who occupied them. This form of dwelling can still be seen at Lydney and in the Oldbury development at Tewkesbury (although the houses have been modernised for modern use). Innovations in methods of transport also played an important role in the development of settlements, encouraging the separation of commercial, residential and industrial areas, as people no longer had to live in the same area that they worked. Most of the Gloucestershire small towns show some evidence of nineteenth century redevelopment, and most also have examples of Victorian civic pride in the form of public buildings such as libraries (Stroud) and town halls (Bisley, Stow-on-the-Wold, Nailsworth and Painswick).

4 Conclusions

Perhaps the most striking conclusion of this survey of the historic small towns of Gloucestershire is its demonstration that, despite documentary evidence of the Medieval or earlier origins of the majority of settlements, there is as yet very little archaeological evidence for most of them.

The town centre redevelopments of the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s were not generally preceded by archaeological investigation and during this period many sites of high potential in the historic cores of small towns were destroyed without record. It was not until the later 1980s, and the advent of Planning Policy Guidance 16 (DoE 1990), that a more systematic approach to the archaeological evaluation and recording of sites in small towns became possible. Most recent large scale development has, however, tended to be away from the street frontages in the historic cores of towns, and the archaeological investigation in the latter areas has therefore been on a very small scale.

The summary of archaeological evidence provided by the Gloucestershire Historic Towns Survey assessment reports and the policies contained in the strategies will, however, provide a good basis for ensuring that, in the future, sites of archaeological potential in small towns are managed appropriately and not developed without an assessment of the archaeological implications and implementation of suitable mitigation strategies.

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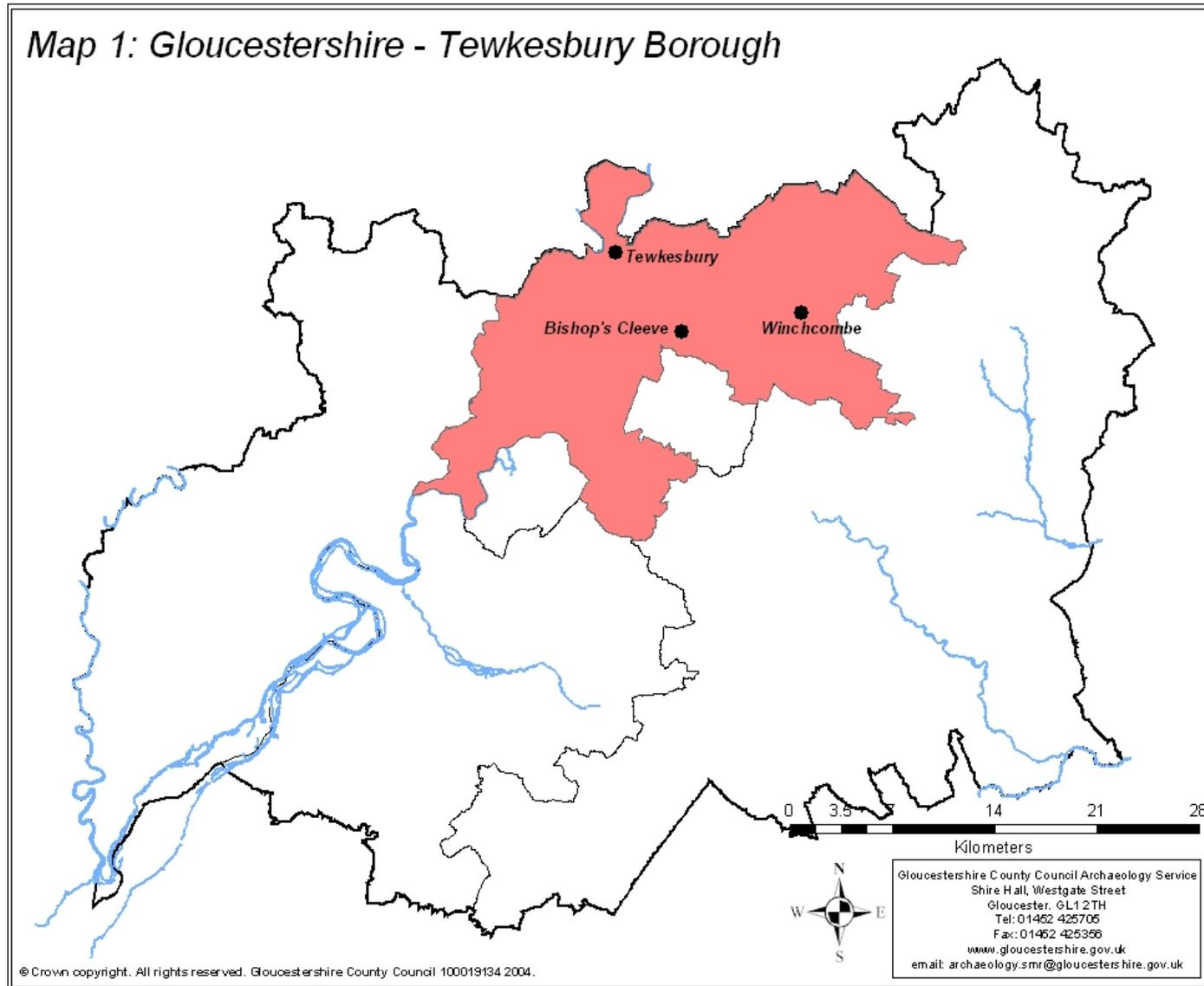
HISTORIC TOWNS IN TEWKESBURY BOROUGH (Map 1)

	Definition	Market	Borough charter	Burgages/ burgess tenure	Legal autonomy
Bishop's Cleeve	Ecclesiastical centre				
Tewkesbury	Medium-sized market town	By 1086	1086	✓	
Winchcombe	Fortified/Royal centre; Small market town	By 1086	1086	✓	

The administrative district of Tewkesbury lies in the northern central part of the county of Gloucestershire, extending from the Severn valley on the west on to the Cotswold escarpment on the east. It includes two significant Medieval urban centres – Tewkesbury and Winchcombe – and the rural settlement of Bishop's Cleeve, all of which probably had earlier origins.



Map 1: Gloucestershire - Tewkesbury Borough





WINCHCOMBE

1 Introduction

Winchcombe (SP 025286) lies in the north-east of the county of Gloucestershire about 10km to the north-east of Cheltenham, at the foot of the Cotswold escarpment and in the southern, upper part of the Isbourne valley. The settlement is situated on a bed of Lower Lias clays and a band of alluvium which follows the course of the River Isbourne, on land which slopes gently down towards the river, from c.110m O.D. on the north and west to c.85m O.D. on the south and east.

Winchcombe rose to prominence during the Anglo-Saxon period, when it was a Mercian royal centre, and in the early eleventh century when it formed the centre of its own shire. However, the decline in the cult of Cynhelm (Kenelm) which was centred on the abbey, and the increasing competition from other markets such as Cheltenham and Tewkesbury, marked the end of Winchcombe's importance during the later Medieval period.

2 The Prehistoric period

There is a small amount of evidence for prehistoric activity within the modern settlement of Winchcombe. A flint assemblage, which has not been precisely dated, was found during excavations in the town between 1962 and 1972 although no definite prehistoric features were recognised (Ellis 1986, 131).

3 The Roman period

3.1 Discussion

Bigland, writing in 1791, believed that *vestiges of Roman occupation, and the dwellings, roads, camps and earthworks of the prehistoric people* could be found in and around the town of Winchcombe. Although the settlement is some distance from the known Roman road network, the quantity of material from this period is beginning to suggest a local settlement.

Roman pottery has been found over much of the area of the modern settlement, including over Abbey Field (**SMR 9876**), on the northern side of Winchcombe church (**SMR 2164**), at SP 021282 (**SMR 7524**), during work on North Street (**SMR 11005**) and during investigations of the Back Lane ramparts to the north of the town (**SMR 5977**). During the 1960s and 1970s a large assemblage of Romano-British pottery and building materials were recovered from the area of the Medieval abbey (**SMR 39** and **4859**), although no definite features were identified. Numerous Roman coins have also been found to the north of the modern town, and the distribution and character of the finds suggests that there was a Roman settlement during the second and third centuries in the area which later became the abbey precinct and the northern side of the Anglo-Saxon burh (Saville 1985, 106).

3.2 Gazetteer of sites

SMR No.	Description	NGR
39	Romano-British pottery and building materials	SP 024283
2164	Black pottery of <i>ancient British date</i>	SP 02302825
2181	Tetradrachm of Maximian	SP 024292
2182	Bronze follis of Constantine I	SP 020291
4859	Roman pottery and masonry	SP02312845
5977	Romano-British tile fragments	SP 024284
7524	Romano-British tile fragments and pottery	SP 021282
7527	Coin of Constantine II, a bone bodkin and some tesserae	SP 024293
9876	Romano-British pottery from Abbey Field	SP 024283
11005	Roman pottery of C2-C3 date	SP 025284

4 The Early Medieval period

4.1 The status of the settlement

It was during the period from c.A.D. 600 until the Norman Conquest that Winchcombe reached the peak of its importance. Winchcombe was the chief settlement of the family or group who became rulers of the Hwicce under Mercian suzerainty sometime before the eighth century A.D. It lay at the centre of a well-defined political and administrative region, at a reasonable distance from Tamworth, which was the Mercian "capital", as well as being



accessible to Wellesbourne and other seats of Mercian royalty (Bassett 1985, 84; Whybra 1990, 10). During the later ninth century, as the threat of Danish incursions increased, King Alfred and his successors constructed a series of fortified settlements, known as *burhs*, throughout the territories of the West Saxons, and it is likely that Winchcombe's significance at this time led to it being included among these strongholds.

Winchcombe appears to have been a focus of interest for the Mercian royal family for a considerable period of time, especially during the reign of Coenwulf, who in the late eighth or early ninth century so endowed the monastery that he was considered to be its founder, even though it had an earlier origin. He also obtained papal privileges for the foundation, and Winchcombe is likely to have been at the centre of a considerable patrimony consisting of monasteries and various other places in the *island of England* (Thacker 1985, 10). Coenwulf was buried at Winchcombe abbey in 821, and his daughter Cwoenthryth appears to have become abbess of both Minster-in-Thanel in Kent, and Winchcombe itself by 827. The patrimony seems to have survived until the end of the ninth century and included widely scattered lands and monasteries in Kent, Middlesex and Gloucestershire, although the core would have been centred on Winchcombe. The abbey was the repository for the family's records and seems to have also been the archive centre for the entire patrimony; it has also been suggested that the site may have acted as a royal treasury (Thacker 1985, 10-11).

Throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, Winchcombe appears in numerous charters as the subject of royal Mercian transactions, and in 825 the town is mentioned as the recognised place of custody for the archives of the Mercian royal house (Whybra 1990, 10). The settlement is known to have possessed a mint and is thought to have also been the site of a Mercian royal palace (Whybra 1990, 10). The status of the Anglo-Saxon settlement at Winchcombe is further illustrated by the holding of a *witenagemot* in the town in A.D.941, which was attended by King Edmund, Wulfstan I, the Archbishop of York, and numerous other bishops and earldormen (Whybra 1990, 10).

From c.1007 until 1017, Winchcombe lay at the centre of its own shire - Wincombeshire - which is thought to have incorporated the hundreds of *Salesmonesberie*, *Teoboldestan*, *Ciltenham*, *Wacrescymbe*, *Gretestane*, *Witelai*, *Hoelford*, *Celfledetorn*, *Bradelege* and *Derheste* along with *Berintone* and *Cheftesihat* hundreds (Whybra 1990, 20-29). The shire is believed to have been incorporated into Gloucestershire in 1017 following Cnut's conquest of England, although it may have occurred slightly earlier when Cnut and Edmund II divided the kingdom (Whybra 1990, 123-124).

4.2 The abbey (SMR 39)

The earliest documentary evidence for the church is an authentic charter of king Coenwulf of Mercia which can be dated to between 796 and 821. The charter is in the form of a land grant in *Aldantune* which refers to a render from this land to a property *which is situated at Winchcombe*. This could refer to an estate [*villa*], but as a subsequent clause makes reference to the common dues, it is likely that the property referred to was a church (Bassett 1985, 82). According to the *Annales de Winchelcumba*, a Medieval history of the foundation of the monastery, a house for nuns was built at Winchcombe in 787 by Offa of Mercia, and a monastery for 300 monks was built there in 798 by Coenwulf (Kenulph), who, along with his son Cynhelm, was later buried there (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 80). It has, however, been suggested that there may have been a church in Winchcombe before 787, as the rulers of the Hwicce are known to have founded churches elsewhere in their territory by the 670s, including those at Bath and Gloucester (Bassett 1985, 84).

Documentary sources indicate that the abbey church was first dedicated in 811 by Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury, but that by the mid-tenth century the foundation had been re-dedicated to St. Mary, and to St. Cynhelm, whose cult was becoming popular at that time (Graham 1972, 66). Until 969 the foundation was occupied by secular clerks, but they were expelled by St. Oswald of Worcester, who installed Benedictine monks in their stead (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 80), and by the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) the house had become one of the foremost Benedictine monasteries in England (Graham 1972, 66).

During the early ninth century the church at Winchcombe became a Royal burial place, with Cynhelm, Coenwulf's son, being interred there in the early ninth century, and Coenwulf himself being buried in his abbey in 821. Cynhelm is believed to have died between 811 and 821, as an adult, who had been witnessing charters as *dux* or *princeps* between 803 and 811. However, by the mid-tenth century he was being hailed as a child martyr who had been murdered at the behest of his sister, Cwoenthryth (Bassett 1985, 85). The cult of Cynhelm is further discussed in section 5.5.3 below.



The Anglo-Saxon church (**SMR 39**) at Winchcombe is thought to have stood in the immediate area of the later Benedictine abbey, in the angle formed by the junction of the High Street with the path which today leads to the house known as 'Winchcombe Abbey', immediately to the east of the modern parish church (Bassett 1985, 85). The foundations of the abbey church were exposed at least twice during the nineteenth century and showed that the building was not conventionally orientated, as its long axis was about 20 degrees north of east, mirroring the alignment of the two through routes - the High Street and *Peticrueslane* - which ran to the north and south of the site (Bassett 1985, 86).

4.3 The chapel of St. Pancras

Bassett (1985) has identified evidence for a third religious foundation in Winchcombe. In 1546 Leland recorded that in *King Henry 6. tyme one William Winchelescombe, Abbot of Winchelescombe[1454-1474], beganne with the consent of the towne a parish church at the west end of the abbey, where of ould tyme had beene and then was a little chappell of St. Pancrace*. A document of 1320 also refers to a chapel, with a *cellarium* beneath it, standing in the vicinity of the east end of the church of St. Peter. Bassett has suggested that this chapel may have been the original resting place of Cynhelm and Coenwulf before they were translated to the abbey church, and that the burials of other members of the Mercian royal family may also have taken place there (Bassett 1985, 89). He has further proposed that the dedication of the chapel to St. Pancras, the child martyr, may have prompted the assertions of Cynhelm's youth which developed into a religious cult during the century and a half after his death (Bassett 1985, 93-94).

The exact location of the chapel is uncertain, although Bassett has suggested that it may be represented by a small mound in the north-eastern corner of the churchyard, or by a small building which was once attached to the east end of the present church of St. Peter, and which has since been demolished (Bassett 1985, 91-92).

4.4 The town's defences (SMR 39)

Part of the defences of the Anglo-Saxon burh survive as a visible earthwork along the southern side of Back Lane which has been sampled and dated by various archaeological investigations from 1892 onwards. No above ground evidence for the rest of the defensive circuit survives; a number of alternative courses have been suggested, but none has been verified by archaeological evidence.

Excavations have been undertaken along the course of the rampart by Loftus Brock in 1892, Eric Gee in 1939, Norman Painting in 1947, Brian Davison in 1962 and 1963 and John Hinchliffe in 1972. Evidence for two phases of defensive enclosure have been found; the first took the form of a V-shaped ditch beneath the rampart of the Mercian burh, which may have been accompanied by a bank, similar to the defensive enclosure which was found at Tamworth in Staffordshire (Ellis 1986, 131). The exact function of the feature is uncertain but it has been suggested that it may have been part of the original *vallum monasterii* or an Offan circuit (Bassett 1977, 70). The second phase of defences comprised a bank, surviving as a low earthwork, which runs for about 240 metres along the southern side of Back Lane, and which has been found to be typologically Anglo-Saxon. Due to the limited nature of the excavations at that time no evidence for the multiple ditches and wide berms which have been recorded at other sites was revealed (Ellis 1986, 131-133). A stone-fronted rampart appears to have been added at a slightly later date, probably in the late tenth or early eleventh century, when Winchcombe formed the centre of its own shire. The wall itself appears to have survived well into the Medieval period (Ellis 1986, 133).

4.5 Other archaeological evidence for the Anglo-Saxon settlement

Despite the documented importance of the Anglo-Saxon settlement, there is as yet limited archaeological evidence of occupation within the burh. Six unaccompanied inhumations were discovered in North Street at SP 025284 in 1977 (**SMR 11005**), and are thought to date to the Early Medieval period. Carbon-14 determinations suggest that two of the six burials are likely to date from the sub-Roman to mid-Saxon periods, with dates of the sixth to seventh century being given for one, and the eighth to tenth century being given for the second (Saville 1985, 137). The same site has also produced evidence for domestic occupation in the form of pottery, animal bone and smithing debris of tenth to twelfth century date (Saville 1985, 108). Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation within the defensive enclosure has also been attested by the discovery of Ipswich ware pottery during the excavations at the Back Lane rampart (**SMR 4859**).

4.6 The Winchcombe mint

A mint is known to have been operating in Winchcombe from the reign of Eadgar (959-957) to Cnut (1016-1035), and from the reign of Cnut's son Harthacnut (1035-1042) to the reign of William I (1066-1087). It is possible that



the mint existed before this period, but it did not become standard for the name of the mint and moneyer to be placed on the reverse of the coin until the later tenth century. Coins from the Winchcombe mint bear the mint mark PINCELE or PINCL, where the P represents the sound *w*. The site of the mint is traditionally supposed to have been at or near No. 8 Hailes Street (**SMR 18973**), which is still known as the Old Mint House (Donaldson 1978, 24).

In 1900 about 19 coins of the Winchcombe mint were known, including one of Eadgar, four of Aethelred II, four of Cnut, one of Harthacnut, four of Edward the Confessor, one of Harold II and four of William I. According to Adlard, the mint was also active under William Rufus, but no coins of the period are yet known (Adlard 1939, 65). The mint probably ceased to operate during the twelfth century when the number of mints in the entire country was reduced to provide the King and the exchequer with greater control over the quantity and quality of coins struck.

4.7 The Mercian palace

In 1857 a Mr Browne commented that: *Nothing beyond what rests merely on oral tradition as to its [the Palace's] site, can now be told. This is said to have been on the south side of the top of the present High Street, and some of the aged inhabitants who were living within the last twenty years could remember there the remains of an apparently very ancient pile, which they saw demolished to make room for the present large brick residence. These they described as consisting of arches and oddly shaped architectural masses; and affirmed that their forefathers had been accustomed to point to the spot and observe that "there stood king Kenulph's Palace"* (Dent 1877, 151).

A Mercian royal palace is traditionally believed to have existed in Winchcombe, and to have stood a little to the south of the abbey on a site now occupied by Lloyd's Bank, at the eastern end of Abbey Terrace (**SMR 20393**; Donaldson 1978, 20).

5 The Medieval period

5.1 Domesday Book

The Borough of WINCHCOMBE paid £6 in revenue before 1066.

Of this Earl Harold had the third penny, that is 40s. Later it paid £20, with the whole of the hundred of this town. Durand the Sherriff added 100s, and Roger of Ivry 60s. Now, with the three adjoining Hundreds, it pays £28 at 20 [pence] to the ora (Moore 1982).

In the records of Evesham abbey which appear as an appendix to Domesday Book Winchcombe is described in greater detail. The town is referred to as a borough, with 60 burgesses in the time of King Edward, besides which the abbot had 40 burgesses and the abbot of Evesham had two, the Bishop of Hertford held a number now lost, Deerhurst had 2 and a number of secular landholders had 37 altogether from which the king had taxes. Three mills are also recorded.

5.2 The placename

The first documentary reference to the town names it as *Wincelcumb* in c.796. *Winchelcumb(e)* first appears in the early twelfth century, and *Winchcomb(e)* began to be used in the later thirteenth century (Smith 1964, 29-30). The name is thought to mean 'valley with a bend in it', as Winchcombe stands in a bend of the River Isbourne (Smith 1964, 30).

5.3 The status of the settlement

Winchcombe is recorded as a borough in Domesday Book with at least 140 burgesses in the town, indicating that it was the second largest borough in Gloucestershire at that date. From the twelfth century onwards, competition from other market centres and the decline in the importance of the cult of St. Cynhelm steadily reduced the standing of the settlement within the county.

Archaeological evidence for Medieval activity within the area of the Anglo-Saxon burh includes pottery (**SMR 7526**), and a group of burials (**SMR 11005**) found during salvage excavations of several sites on North Street during the 1970s.

5.4 The manor

The manor of Winchcombe belonged to the Crown until 1224 when it was granted to the abbey, where it remained until its dissolution in December 1539 (Leech 1981, 96).



5.5 The abbey (SMR 39)

5.5.1 Documentary evidence

The abbey of Winchcombe stood within the Wessex earldom of Harold II, and William I, thinking that the monks might be hostile to his rule, deposed abbot Godric and entrusted the monastery to Athelwig, abbot of Evesham until Galandus, a Norman monk, was appointed (Graham 1972, 66).

During the thirteenth century it is thought that there were between 50 and 60 monks serving at the abbey and the list of abbey servants during the fourteenth century stretches to around 30 including serjeants to the church, the refectory, the infirmary, the guest hall, a master brewer and a master baker, a master tanner and an unspecified number of wood carriers (Haigh 1947, 109-110). The abbot also had his own servants who numbered over 15, and included a butler, sumpter, messenger, cook, a miller and a carpenter (Haigh 1947, 110). In 1352, just after the Black Death there were still at least 20 monks (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 80), and in 1395 the number was 19 (Graham 1972, 66). The abbot and 24 monks acknowledged the Royal Supremacy in 1534, and the abbot and 17 monks were granted pensions after the surrender of the Abbey in December 1539 (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 80). In 1535 the yearly value of the monastery was given as £759 11s 9d (Graham 1972, 72).

In the Taxatio of Pope Nicholas which was taken in 1291 the temporalities of Winchcombe were assessed at under £110 (Graham 1972, 66), and by the end of the fifteenth century, Winchcombe Abbey was said to be *equal to a little university*, but following the Dissolution very extensive demolition was carried out (Verey 1979, 475). In 1540 many of the monastic buildings were pulled down by Lord Seymour of Sudeley, who also sold off the lead from the roofs. A list of buildings which were to be preserved was made at that time, and included: *the late Abbattes lodging leading from the Northgate to the Southgate of the Frayter with the Kitchyne, Buttre, Pantre, and lodgings within the same bounds. Atte the Lodgings on the west side of the Courte from the Northe gate to the Southe gate with bakinge and Bruynge houses. The late Abbotte's stable, Barnes, Oxhous, and Shepehous.* The buildings which were considered superfluous included: *the Church with the Iles, Chapelles, Steple, Cloister, Chapterhous, Dormitory, Frayter, Fermery, Library, with Chapelles and Lodgings to the adjoininge. An alle oder above not reserved* (Adlard 1939, 25).

The extent of the abbey's properties at the time of its Dissolution was enormous, covering the manors of Winchcombe, Twining, Sherbourne, Stanton, Snowshill, Honeybourne, Dry Marston, Admington, Yanworth, Hazelton, Rowell, Hawling, Charlton Abbots, Naunton, Frampton, Cotes-in-Winchcombe and Sudeley, the Hundreds of Kiftgate, Holford and Gretestan; rents in Winchcombe and Gloucester; the rectories of Winchcombe, Twining, Stanton and Bledington in Gloucestershire alone. The Abbey also held lands in Oxfordshire and Worcestershire (Haigh 1947, 190).

5.5.2 The Cult of St. Cynhelm (Kenelm)

By the later tenth century Cynhelm was being venerated as a child martyr, and between 969 and 978 his name begins to appear in monks' calendars. According to his *passio* Cynhelm was murdered at the age of seven through the machinations of his sister Cwoenthryth and his body was buried beneath a bush in the forest. A dove appeared in Rome and lead searchers to the grave, from where the child's body was removed and taken to Winchcombe to be laid to rest in the Abbey alongside his father. Cwoenthryth, meanwhile, died in disgrace. The *passio* appears to have been composed entirely during the eleventh century when the cult was flourishing, and an epilogue, which is thought to have been written at around the same time describes an impressive array of miracles performed in Cynhelm's name both at his place of burial and elsewhere by the middle of the eleventh century (Bassett 1985, 85). The *passio* describes how *the Royal martyr Kenelm was buried with high-sounding praises in his father's monastery of Winchcombe, where his father's own tomb is honoured with holy memory.* The translation of Cynhelm from a mature adult to a seven year old child venerated as a martyr has been discussed above in section 4.3, and may be connected with a chapel dedicated to St. Pancras which is also thought to have stood in the area of the two churches. Historical evidence contradicts many of the events recorded in the *passio*: Cwoenthryth certainly did not die in disgrace, but appears to have been abbess of both Winchcombe and a monastery at Minster-in-Thanet in Kent. It is also clear that Cynhelm had reached his majority at the time of his death; he had been witnessing charters from 803 until 811, and is more likely to have been assassinated by political rivals than murdered by his sister.



It has been suggested that the cult of St. Kenelm was a fabrication connected with the refoundation of the abbey under Benedictine rule in the tenth century. It may have originated before that time, with Coenwulf taking advantage of the violent death of his son to enhance the prestige of the house, while political events at the time would have meant that the cult remained very local until the tenth century (Thacker 1985, 12). Certainly by the mid-eleventh century, people flocked to his festival from all over England *by yearly custom, on his birthday* according to Cynhelm's *passio* (Bassett 1985, 85). The cult was still important in the twelfth century, when William of Malmesbury recorded that *The little saint's body is solemnly revered, and hardly anywhere else in England is venerated by a greater throng of people attending a festival* (Bassett 1985, 85).

The feast day of St. Kenelm was celebrated on 17 June when the town held a one day fair (Adlard 1939, 20).

5.5.3 Archaeological evidence

The Benedictine abbey church lay immediately to the north of Abbey Terrace, to the east of the parish church of St. Peter, and its conventual buildings are believed to have stood to the north of the church, extending eastwards towards Cowl Lane. A projected plan of the abbey is shown in Ellis (1986, figure 2).

The foundations of the abbey church are known to have been explored on at least two occasions during the nineteenth century. Little is known about the features which were revealed, although it was noted that the church was not orientated strictly east-west, and it is possible that this was due to an attempt to fit the foundation within the existing street pattern. Two coffins were recovered during one of the periods of investigation, one of which was child-sized while the other belonged to an adult. Although there was no evidence to connect them with Coenwulf and his son the discovery strengthened the belief that the Mercian saint had indeed been buried in the church (Bassett 1985, 86).

Excavations during the 1960s and early 1970s revealed evidence for the eastern boundary of the monastic precinct in the form of a ditch and two walls which ran almost parallel with Cowl Lane and the north-south axis of the church as revealed by the 1893 excavations (Ellis 1986, 104). It has been suggested by Ellis (1986, 104) that the southern extent of the precinct followed was marked by the line of the southern side of Abbey Terrace and the sharp kink in this line is likely to represent the south-eastern corner of the precinct.

The precise limits of the precinct are never stated, but at their most extensive, following its twelfth century expansion, it is thought that it enclosed all the land between Malthouse Lane on the west and *Colestrete* (Cowl Lane) on the east, and between Back Lane on the north and the High Street on the south. However, only the northern and eastern limits are well documented, and the other extents are conjectural (Bassett 1985, 86-87).

Work along Back Lane and within the abbey precinct have produced evidence for features associated with the monastic house, including late thirteenth and fourteenth century buildings (**SMR 4859**). One of these buildings appears to have been used for smithing and the second is thought to have been an aisled barn adjacent to a Medieval trackway. The discovery of numerous long iron nails within the remains of the building indicates that the superstructure was probably of wood (Guy 1986, 219). Medieval pottery has been found in various parts of Abbey Field (**SMR 9876**; RCHME 1984/5, 81), and in what is thought to have been the north-eastern corner of the precinct, evidence has been revealed for a series of fishponds (**SMR 11167**; Hoyle 1994, 3).

5.6 The churches of Winchcombe

It has been suggested that Winchcombe once had three churches - the abbey church which was dedicated to Ss. Mary and Kenelm, St. Peter's, the parish church and the church of St. Nicholas (Adlard 1939, 34).

5.6.1 The church of St. Peter

The church of St. Peter (**SMR 8277**) is thought to have been standing by the eleventh century as it is described in the *passio* of Cynhelm. Although the *passio* itself refers to a fictitious event, Bassett suggests that its description of the contemporary settlement is likely to be authentic. The *passio* describes the arrival of the body of the saint at the Abbey where Cwoenthryth (his sister) *was then standing in an upper room of the western church of St. Peter which the breadth of a road separates from the forecourt of the monastery*. It would thus appear that the two churches were in close proximity in the eleventh century, and that the one which was dedicated to St. Peter was not the abbey church but lay to the west of the forecourt of the abbey, and that a road ran between the two (Bassett 1985, 87).



In 1246 Henry de Campden, vicar of Winchcombe, enlarged the chancel and south aisle of the parish church, but as it was feared that his alterations might affect both the abbey precinct and the public highways, he was restrained from reducing the Abbey's entrance to less than 30 feet in width and the public thoroughfare to less than 18 feet (Haigh 1947, 64-65). By the mid-fifteenth century St. Peter's is thought to have become very dilapidated as the townsfolk had begun to worship in the nave of the abbey church. In an attempt to discourage them, abbot William restored the chancel of St. Peter's, hoping that this would provide the inhabitants with an incentive to restore the rest of the fabric. Unfortunately, his beneficence proved to be the downfall of the abbey, for after the Dissolution the people of Winchcombe preferred to retain their own splendid parish church rather than to buy the vast abbey church (Haigh 1947, 158-159).

5.6.2 The church of St. Nicholas

The church of St. Nicholas is believed to have been built before the Reformation, and to have stood at the junction of Bull Lane and Chandos Street (**SMR 20484**). A Court Roll of the reign of Henry VIII makes reference to a tenement and land which are described as lying *in the Parish of St. Nicholas*, and it is thought that the name St. Nicholas Street was in use in the town until the sixteenth century (Adlard 1939, 34).

5.7 The civil war of Stephen and Matilda

Winchcombe suffered during the wars; it was a Royal borough with a castle and abbot Robert was related to the king and probably sympathetic to his cause. In January 1140 Miles, Earl of Gloucester, who supported the Empress Matilda, attacked the town on the western side, plundered it and burned much of it; the inhabitants were driven out or taken prisoner, so that by February 1140 a substantial part of Winchcombe lay in ruins and under the control of a garrison force left by Miles. Meanwhile, Sudeley, which lies about 1km to the south-east was controlled by forces loyal to the king. In 1144 Stephen had intended to attack Matilda's forces at Tetbury, but instead marched on Winchcombe, whose fortifications had been considerably strengthened, and laid siege to it. Donaldson quotes a description of the events which followed: *Some were to keep up a thick and contained shower of arrows, others were to scale the mound on their hands and knees; whilst all the rest were to keep up a constant and untiring circuit around the walls. Every missile that came to hand was to be discharged into its interior. The besieged (but scanty garrison, for many at the news of Stephen's sudden approach had taken flight), unable to endure ye impetuous attack, surrendered the castle under mutual pledges.* Winchcombe was thus once more held by the king, and provided a based for a garrison from where most of Gloucestershire could be controlled (Donaldson 1978, 28).

5.8 Markets and fairs

There is no direct evidence for the location of the main Medieval market at Winchcombe, although it is thought to have been held at the junction of the High Street with North Street (Bassett 1977, 71). North Street was also known as Horse Fair Street, and a horse market, mentioned in a thirteenth century document, is known to have continued to be held there until the mid-twentieth century (Adlard 1939, 14). There appear to have been both a Booth Hall and a Guild Hall in the town during the thirteenth century, which would indicate a relatively high level of trade taking place within the settlement (Dent 1877, 97). During the reign of Edward IV (1461-1483), there are said to have been two draper's shops, several mercers, clothiers, dyers, carpenters, blacksmiths and others all trading in the town (Dent 1877, 109).

5.9 Trade and industry

5.9.1 Commerce

According to Hilton (1957, 89) Winchcombe did not play a leading role in the economy of the West Midlands, mainly because it never regained its former status as a *villa regalis* at the centre of a Mercian shire. The main economic function of the town appears to have been to provide services for the monastery and to act as a local market centre. A letter-close of 1238 exempted the men of the neighbouring village from the obligation to pay a toll on entering Winchcombe unless they were merchants exercising their trade for gain, which would suggest that the town was a recognised centre for local exchanges (Hilton 1957, 90). It is likely that agricultural produce formed the main basis of the economy, although it is possible that the town may have specialised in stock.

5.9.2 Wool

During the Medieval period the abbey's wool provided an important source of trade and income for the town. The first record of wool in Winchcombe dates from 1276 when local merchants were fined for carrying or exporting wool contrary to the king's regulations (Adlard 1939, 58-60). The abbey's estates in the Cotswolds provided pastures for their sheep, and although little information is available about these flocks, what has survived is impressive. In the early fourteenth century Pegolotti, a Florentine, drew up a list of the annual yields



of wool from English and Scottish religious houses, of which there were 202. Winchcombe Abbey was one of only 12 which could be expected to provide 40 or more sacks of wool each year. Although some of the 40 sacks may have come from tithes or were collected from tenant farmers, Pegolotti's figures represent a minimum, and 40 sacks of wool implies that the abbey owned around 8000 sheep and gained an income of about £350 per annum from the trade (Hilton 1957, 91).

There is some evidence that Winchcombe may have become a centre for the manufacture of cloth during a short period in the fourteenth century, for in 1377 tolls were levied there on alum, woad and teasels, all of which were required for the manufacture, dyeing and finishing of cloth (Perry 1945, 52).

5.9.2 Mills

A number of mills are mentioned at Winchcombe in the Evesham abbey records which were compiled c.1100. The locations of these mills cannot be identified with any certainty, although, in 1316 mention is made in the *Landboc* of a mill at Postlip which belonged to the Abbey, and which is thought to have been used as a corn mill (Adlard 1939, 72).

Documentary evidence indicates that there was a fulling mill operating at Winchcombe during the reign of king John, which received 8d damages when the monks of the abbey diverted some water to their own mill (Perry 1945, 52). During the fourteenth century the monks acquired a fulling mill at *Cotes-juxta-Winchcombe*, and prevented competition by inserting a clause into all tenancy agreements to the effect that grist mills were not to be converted to the purposes of the cloth trade (Perry 1945, 52).

5.10 The Castle

During or before the reign of Henry II (1154-1189) there is believed to have been a castle (**SMR 2166**) at Winchcombe on the Cole Street side of the church of St. Peter (Dent 1877, 83), described by Leland as standing *right against the south syde of the church ... caullyd of later dayes (as appeareth by writings in Winchelescombe Abbey) Ivy-Castelle, now a place where a few poore housys be and gardines*. Bigland in 1791 suggested that the Royal residence was the building which later became known as the castle *which was situate in Cole Street on one side of St. Peter's church, lying between the fees of the king and Thomas de Saint Vallery. The spot is not now exactly ascertained* (Bigland 1791, 1474). It is therefore difficult to locate the site of the castle with any certainty, although it is thought to have stood in the area immediately to the south of the parish church.

5.11 Street names

During the reign of Henry III (1216-1272), Winchcombe was said to be so extensive that it possessed eleven streets (although none is named), with a booth hall and a guild hall. Another document written during the reign of Edward IV (1461-1482) does list the roads through the town: Great Street, now lost, but possibly the same as Greet Road; North Street, Cole Street, Mill Street, the street towards the ford; Bete Street, now lost; Hanley Street, lost; Hare Street, lost; Hardiff Street, lost; Lodeford Street (which may be the same as Bodeford Street, which was a lane leading to the ford), Culles Lane and Conygers Lane, both lost. It is possible that some of these names were passage ways between the tenement blocks, instead of being through routes (Smith 1964, 30-31).

6 The Post-medieval period

6.1 The status of the settlement

The decline of the cult of Cynhelm and the dissolution of the Abbey in 1539 marked the end of Winchcombe's role as more than a local market centre, although the settlement retained the title of borough.

6.2 The manor

In 1612 the Whitmore family became lords of the manor, and made a visit there, only to find: *for herriots wee might have had naked children, and for distresses rent, patched petticoats, the common pasture of all the quicke cattle, and when we spake of ffines and rysinge of rents, we had a Charme of Scoulds [raising] their voyces to 'God save the kings and the lawes; and they and their ancestors have lived there And they would live there' and without the danger of hot spittes and scaldinge water and fiery tongues there is no gaineinge of possession* (Adlard 1939, 30).

The situation had not changed much by 1637 when Sir William Wentworth, lord of the manor, exhibited a bill in the Court of Exchequer to try to deal with defaulting renters. The inhabitants of Winchcombe, in their defence, reported that they had *bene and nowe are poor Tradesmen, and such as gett their livinge by handicrafte trade, and*



by retaylinge of small merchandizes and commodities, and have paid all duties assessed, as free-houlders or absolute holders. That they have in all time sold away tenements without deede or writing, and delivered seizin by the delivery of a key -the tenants, being, for the most part, very poor and maintained by charity, not daring to repair them, their houses are groune into such decay, as the danger is groune very great for the kinges subjects to passe by the same - that the number of the poore is exceedingly increased, there is not one housekeeper for them, that is of ability to give almes... (Adlard 1939, 30).

The history of the manor from the later seventeenth century onwards is not certain, but it is likely to have remained in secular hands.

6.3 Ecclesiastical history

6.3.1 Anglican churches

The abbey church was demolished shortly after the dissolution of the monastery in 1539, leaving the newly refurbished parish church of St. Peter as the only religious structure. In 1690 the chancel was partly rebuilt and was given a high roof, and in 1850 the roof of the nave was restored. A further restoration took place in 1872 under the auspices of John Dayton Wyatt, which included the rebuilding of the chancel clerestory and roof and the construction of an embattled parapet (Verey 1979, 473).

6.3.2 Nonconformity

The Baptist movement in Winchcombe began in 1811, and a chapel was erected at around the same time. The meeting appears to have united with a Congregationalist meeting in 1878, when the Union Chapel was built, although a separate Baptist congregation may have resulted from the merger, which continued to meet in the original chapel. The original Baptist chapel stands at SP 025283 (**SMR 8279**) on the south side of the High Street (HMSO 1986, 101-102).

In 1750 John Wesley lodged in the town, and Rowland Hill may also have preached from a house in Hailes Street (Adlard 1939, 43).

The Roman Catholic church of St. Nicholas (**SMR 8278**) stands in Chandos Street, and was built as a school room in 1876. The building was converted and partly restored in 1960 by Peter Falconner, who also designed the presbytery (Verey 1979, 475).

6.4 Markets and fairs

In 1575 Dorothy, Lady Chandos, made an appeal on behalf of the townfolk for measures to ease their poverty, including the privilege of holding a fair *upon the eve, upon the feast and upon the morrow after the feast of St. Martin the Evangelist; and that one market should be held every week upon Thursday* (Dent 1877, 301). Two fairs are thought to have been granted subsequent to this request, held on 25 April and 17 July (Dent 1877, 114).

6.5 Trade and industry

6.5.1 Tobacco

During the seventeenth century tobacco was cultivated in Gloucestershire on a scale great enough to threaten the prosperity of the Virginian growers, as well as to anger the Bristol merchants, who feared a decrease in their carrying trade. The practice also concerned the Government which objected to the losses to the Exchequer due to the decrease in customs duties levied on imports of Virginian tobacco (Hart 1981, 104). In 1619 King James I, who abhorred the smoking of tobacco, proclaimed the growing of the crop in England to be illegal (Hart 1981, 104), although when his officers attempted to have the crops uprooted, the inhabitants of the towns defended their crops with considerable force, and riots followed every attempt to destroy them (Hart 1981, 105). It was not until the price of Virginian tobacco plummeted that the risk of attempting to grow continuously uprooted crops became a futile effort and the production of tobacco in Gloucestershire ceased.

According to Johnson's *New Historical and Pictorial Cheltenham and County of Gloucester Guide* published in 1846, some of the tobacco warehouses were in North Street *but the principal one stood at, or near, the spot at present occupied by the Wesleyan Chapel*, which is thought to refer to the structure in Cowl Lane (**SMR 20394**; Adlard 1939, 70). There is also a field adjacent to the Cheltenham Road which is known as Tobacco Close, and which is thought to have been one of the places in which tobacco was grown until c.1658 (Adlard 1939, 10; 70).



6.5.2 Mills

During the mid-eighteenth century there was a paper mill *very near the town* of Winchcombe at Postlip, and paper moulds as well as paper were manufactured there. A list of tradesmen drawn up in the 1790s included William Durham and Samuel Timbrell, paper makers, and Joseph Hughes, paper mould maker. This branch of industry is thought to have continued until the mid- to late-nineteenth century (Shorter 1952, 155-156).

According to Adlard (1939, 74) one of the town mills stood on the present site of Coates Mill Farm by the Cheltenham Road (SMR 20395), a second stood on the site of Sixty Tanyard at the foot of the Sudeley Street Pitch (SMR 20396), and a third stood at the foot of Mill Lane, just off Gloucester Street. This is thought to have been the Old Town Mill, which is shown on the Ordnance Survey second edition map of the town with extensive mill ponds and leats (SMR 7522).

A silk mill (SMR 20397) was constructed at Winchcombe during one of the many industrial experiments of the nineteenth century. The mill stood on the Isbourne in a damp lane between White Hart Pitch and the Gas Works, and relied chiefly on child labour. The mill closed c.1855, reopened for a short time a little later, and then disappeared leaving only its name in Silk Mill Lane (Adlard 1939, 75).

6.5.3 Tanning

Although tanning is thought to have been a trade which was carried on for a long period in Winchcombe, there are no references to it until the nineteenth century when Thomas Hunt worked his own pits at the bottom of Vineyard Street (Adlard 1939, 74).

The Sixty Tanyard stood at the foot of the Sudeley Street Pitch, and is thought to stand on the site of one of the town's original grist mills (SMR 20396). The tannery itself burnt down and fell into disuse at an unspecified date (Adlard 1939, 74).

A tannery building (SMR 11835) still stands on Hailes Street. It is of four-stories with associated structures including an estate office and a weather-boarded house.

6.5.4 Pin knobbing

Attempts were made to introduce pin knobbing to the town during the nineteenth century, and the Parish Registers of 1836 state that *the pin knobbing machinery lent to this parish some years since for employing the Poor in the Work house be returned to its owner at the cost of this Parish, there being no further use for it* (Adlard 1939, 74).

6.5.5 Documentary evidence

Smith's *Men and Armour for Gloucestershire*, which was compiled in 1608, lists all the able-bodied men in the borough of Winchcombe and gives the trades and occupations in which they were engaged. These included, among others, 16 tailors, 9 husbandmen, 36 labourers, 4 carpenters, 5 shepherds, 11 butchers, 6 clothworkers, 6 shoemakers, 5 smiths, a physician, a barber and a hatter, 5 weavers, 4 bakers and 9 glovers, a victualler and a drummer.

7 The modern settlement

The plan of the historic core of the settlement at Winchcombe has remained almost unchanged from the late Medieval period, as later development has taken place in a piecemeal way, preserving many of the Medieval street frontages and property boundaries. Where modern houses have been incorporated into the core of the town, for example along Silk Mill Lane, they have generally been of a scale and style similar to the older, surrounding properties. Within the Medieval core, there has been some development along the southern side of Back Lane, including a modern school and public library. Some of the school playing fields incorporate the earthwork of the Early Medieval defences. Outside the area of the Medieval town there has been considerable modern development, especially on the northern and western sides of the settlement.

Although a number of sixteenth century buildings have survived in Winchcombe, later development has done much to obscure their presence. The earliest surviving structure in the town is believed to be the George Hotel (SMR 2161) on the High Street which may have been built during the later fourteenth century by the abbey as an inn for pilgrims visiting the tomb of St. Kenelm. The Chandos almshouses (SMR 18998), built in 1573 are also amongst the earliest surviving structures in the town. The rebuilding, redevelopment and refronting of existing buildings took place from the late



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seventeenth century onwards, and most of the houses in Winchcombe present a unified appearance in Cotswold stone, with stone mansard roofs. During the nineteenth century a considerable amount of building was undertaken, mainly in the form of social provision for the inhabitants of the town, including the Sudeley almshouses (SMR 20398; designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott), the town hall and a number of school houses and nonconformist chapels.



8 Population figures (After Percival n.d.)

Date	Communicants	Households	Families	Nonconformists	Inhabitants	Source
1551	700				<i>c.1050</i>	Percival
1563		146			<i>c.621</i>	Percival
1603	862			11	<i>c.1304</i>	Percival
1650			340		<i>c.1445</i>	Survey of Church Livings
1676	1226			35	<i>c.1839</i>	Compton Census
1712		564			2715	Atkyns
1779					c.1960	Rudder
1801					1888	
1901					2699	
1997					4676	

For a full explanation of this table, please see page 6 above.

9 Plan analysis (Maps 22-25)

9.1 Discussion

It is probable that a settlement developed at Winchcombe shortly after the foundation of the monastic house in the eighth century. The Anglo-Saxon foundation is believed to have stood within the area occupied by the Medieval, Benedictine abbey. The extent of the precinct of the early house is also unknown, although it may have occupied an area which stretched from Malthouse Lane on the west to Cowl Lane on the east, and from Gloucester Street on the south to the line of the burh defences along Back Lane to the north (**Area 1**). The foundation of St. Peter's church (**Area 2**) during the eleventh century encroached into the original extent of the abbey's land.

The Anglo-Saxon defences of Winchcombe (**Area 3**) are thought to have been laid out during the ninth century, and to have principally made use of natural features along with some deliberate construction work. The only visible portion of the circuit follows the southern side of Back Lane. Ellis (1986, 134) has suggested that from here it may have followed the course of the stream to the north of Chandos street towards Hailes Street, from where it turned south to follow the north side of the River Isbourne (and initially the line of Silk Mill Lane) as far as a junction with the Back Lane rampart at Malthouse Lane. The only naturally undefended section of this circuit would have been enclosed by the Back Lane ramparts. This circuit would have been 1800m long (the equivalent of an enclosure of 1440 hides), of which the Back Lane rampart comprised 500m, which would have enclosed a diamond-shaped area of about 17 hectares.

Bassett (1977, 69) has proposed two possible courses for the defences. The first circuit is similar to that described above, but extending further to the north-east, along Greet Road to a junction with Hailes Street (**Area 4**). The second proposed enclosure would have extended from the Greet Road/Hailes Street junction to about 150m beyond the course of the Isbourne to the south of the settlement, finally returning to Malthouse Lane and joining the Back Lane ramparts. However, this second proposal seems to represent an exceptionally large area to defend.

Excavated evidence from other English burh sites has indicated the existence of a planned street system within the defences, and it is possible that Winchcombe may have developed a similarly systematic plan. A street, named *Peticrueslane* in Medieval documents is described as running from Malthouse Lane to Chandos Street on a line roughly parallel with Back Lane. The course of this street appears to have been preserved by the line of the rear boundaries of the properties fronting on to the north side of Gloucester Street (**Area 5**). It has been suggested that this street was a Saxon development which may have formed part of a tenth century street grid. Excavated evidence has indicated the existence of a number of trackways within the defences, and a number of existing streets appear to run at right angles to, or parallel with, the defensive enclosure, and which may therefore have been laid out during the Anglo-Saxon period. The High Street, Hailes Street, Chandos Street and *Peticrueslane* all ran parallel to the long axis of the defences, while North Street, Cowl Street and Malthouse Lane are set at right angles to it. Gloucester Street does not conform to this pattern and it has therefore been suggested that it was a Medieval addition to the plan. However, the thirteenth century reference to the street as a *Royal highway* suggests that it may have been an existing routeway which was incorporated into the Saxon town plan.



The Mercian palace (**Area 6**) is said to have stood at the eastern end of Abbey Terrace, immediately to the south of the monastic house, while the Saxon mint (**Area 7**) may have stood on Hailes Street, although there is no firm evidence to support either suggested location at present.

Benedictine monks were first installed at Winchcombe abbey in A.D.969, and by the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) the foundation had become one of the foremost houses in England. The full extent of the Medieval monastic precinct has not been identified, but it may have originally incorporated a similar area as that of the Saxon monastery. This area appears to have been gradually divided up for different purposes, including land given over for the parish church and churchyard or for housing. The site of the abbey church (**Area 8**) was excavated during the late nineteenth century, when it was found to have stood immediately to the east of the parish church, although separated from it by a holloway, which is still visible as a modern driveway. The cloister and associated monastic buildings stood immediately to the north of the church, and further north still, between *Peticruesslane* and Back Lane were the abbey fishponds, outbuildings, workshops and gardens, including those of the abbot (**Area 9**).

Cowl Lane marked the eastern extent of the Medieval abbey's landholdings. There is documentary evidence that houses were built immediately adjoining this boundary and it may have been here that the fire of 1151, which destroyed many of the abbey's buildings, started, as documents refer to it coming from the burning houses built against the abbey. It was not uncommon for houses to be built immediately against the precinct walls of monastic houses during the Medieval period, and a similar fire, which began in houses next to the wall, is recorded to have damaged many of the claustral buildings at Christ Church, Canterbury. It appears that the houses were rebuilt following the fire, as a document of 1315 names a plot in Cowl Lane as *underwall*. Houses also appear to have been built on the abbey's land to the west of the parish church (**Area 12**). This may have been a deliberate undertaking by the monks to increase their revenues from the rents which would be paid for properties fronting on to the main streets of the town.

The church of St. Peter and its churchyard occupied its present site by the mid-eleventh century (**Area 11**), divided from the abbey church by a holloway. Contemporary documents imply that the Chapel of St. Pancras stood within the churchyard, close to the east end of the church, although its exact location is unknown. A free-standing Lady Chapel was also built within the churchyard, although once again its exact location is unknown. The Medieval church of St. Nicholas, which is named in documents of the period, is thought to have stood at the junction of Bull Lane and Chandos Street (**Area 13**).

Only a few alterations were made to the plan of the town before the Post-medieval period, one of which was the closure of *Peticruesslane* in 1294, as it passed through two gardens which belonged to the abbot, causing him some inconvenience. The abbot promised to make another way through his grounds, but whether he did this is not recorded.

It has been assumed that the Medieval market was held in the High Street (**Area 14**), which formed part of the principal route through the town, along which the most travellers would have passed, and that a horse market was held in North Street (**Area 15**) which was also known as Horse Fair Street. However, the curved area enclosed by Chandos Street and Bull Lane (**Area 16**), may indicate the site of an early market which developed outside the entrance to the abbey, and which became infilled over time.

A number of areas of burgage plots and tenement blocks can be identified in the plan of the town, their forms having been fossilised by modern property boundaries. The most important burgages would have been those which fronted on to Gloucester Street (**Areas 12, 17, 18 and 19**), the High Street and Hailes Street (**Areas 21, 22, 23 and 24**) and on to North Street (**Areas 16 and 20**), as these would have had greatest access to passing trade. The area to the north of Chandos Street (**Area 25**), within the line of the Anglo-Saxon defences, is also likely to have been built up during the Medieval period, although probably not to the same density as other areas.

The abbey mill stood to the south-west of the precinct, on the north bank of the Isbourne (**Area 26**).

After the Dissolution of Winchcombe abbey in 1539, most of the claustral buildings were demolished and the stone removed for building works elsewhere. There appears to have been little building on or use of the abbey's land, possible due to the poverty of the inhabitants at that time, although some infilling of unoccupied areas within the town does appear to have taken place by the later nineteenth century. St. Peter's (**Area 27**) remained the parish



church, and it does not appear that any attempt was made to expand the churchyard into the abbey's lands. The manor also passed into secular hands at the Dissolution, but there is no record that a manor house was built in the town, but rather that the lord of the manor visited upon occasion from his other estates.

The principal tobacco warehouse stood on the site of the present Wesley Chapel in Cowl Lane (**Area 28**) and others are known to have been built in North Street, although they have since been demolished. The nineteenth century silk mill stood in Silk Mill Lane to the south of the Gas Works (**Area 32**), and the Old Town Mill stood on the Isbourne to the south of the High Street (**Area 29**), on the site of the abbey mill. Thomas Hunt's tannery lay at the bottom of Vineyard Street (**Area 30**), and the Sexty Tanhouse stood at the foot of Sudeley Pitch, also close to the river (**Area 31**).

There is little evidence for growth or expansion during much of the Post-medieval period, and it was only during the nineteenth century that the settlement developed beyond the bounds of the Anglo-Saxon defences. The period also saw the addition of public buildings such as the town hall and the Sudeley almshouses. It was at this time that Abbey Terrace was widened to form the large open area to the south of the site of the abbey. Most expansion around the town has taken place during the twentieth century, which has been described in section 7 above.

9.2 Plan components

9.2.1 Early Medieval (Map 22)

1. The abbey of St. Mary and St. Kenelm, showing the possible maximum extent of the precinct
2. St. Peter's church
3. Possible line of the Anglo-Saxon defensive enclosure
4. Alternative line of the defensive enclosure
5. Line of *Peticruesslane*
6. Possible site of the palace of the Mercian kings
7. Possible site of the Anglo-Saxon mint

9.2.2 Medieval (Map 23)

8. Site of the abbey church of Ss. Mary and Kenelm including the area of claustral buildings
9. Area of abbey fishponds, outbuildings, workshops and gardens
10. Land probably held by the abbey
11. St. Peter's church and surrounding churchyard
12. Block of burgage plots built on abbey land
13. Church of St. Nicholas
14. Market area
15. Horse Market
16. Area which may have originally been the site of the market, later infilled with burgage plots
17. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the south side of Gloucester Street
18. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the south side of Gloucester Street
19. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the south side of Gloucester Street



20. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the west side of North Street
21. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the north-west side of Hailes Street
22. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the south-east side of Hailes Street
23. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the south-east side of the High Street
24. Group of burgage plots fronting on to the south side of the abbey precinct
25. Medieval settlement to the north of Chandos Street
26. Site of the Abbey mill

9.2.3 Post-medieval (Map 24)

27. The church of St. Peter and the surrounding churchyard
28. Site of the principal tobacco warehouse on Cowl Lane
29. Site of Old Town Mill
30. Site of William Hunt's tannery
31. Site of the Sixty tannery
32. Site of the nineteenth century silk mill
33. Post-medieval settlement to the north of Gloucester Street
34. Post-medieval settlement to the south of Gloucester Street
35. Post-medieval settlement to the south of Gloucester Street
36. Post-medieval settlement to the south of Gloucester Street
37. Post-medieval settlement to the south of Abbey Terrace
38. Post-medieval settlement to the south-east of the High Street
39. Post-medieval settlement to the south-east of Hailes Street
40. Post-medieval settlement to the north-west of Hailes Street
41. Post-medieval settlement to the east of North Street
42. Post-medieval settlement to the west of North Street
43. Post-medieval settlement to the north of Chandos Street
44. Post-medieval development to the south of Back Lane
45. Post-medieval development to the west of Malthouse Lane
46. Post-medieval development to the south of Gloucester Street
47. Post-medieval development to the south-east of Silk Mill Lane



48. Post-medieval development to the east of Hailes Street
49. Post-medieval development to the east of North Street
50. Post-medieval development to the west of Cowl Lane
51. Post-medieval development to the west of Broadway Road
52. Post-medieval development to the east of Broadway Road



10 Future Research

Recent excavations within, and ongoing research about Winchcombe have raised a number of interesting questions about the origins and development of the Anglo-Saxon burh and the Medieval market town. The main priorities for future archaeological research are:

1. The Roman period: the nature and extent of Romano-British activity in the area of the town is not fully understood. The relationship between the Roman material discovered inside and beneath the Early Medieval defences along Back Lane and the Anglo-Saxon settlement is also unclear. Information indicating whether there was continuity of occupation between the two periods would contribute to studies of the development of urbanism in Gloucestershire and Britain.
2. The Early Medieval period: the date of construction of the Anglo-Saxon defensive enclosure and the period during which it fell out of use is still unclear. In some cases Roman and Anglo-Saxon defences have been shown to have been maintained and used by communities well into the Medieval period.
3. The course of the Early Medieval defensive enclosure: Bassett and Ellis have suggested a number of alternative circuits, but none has been tested.
4. The extent of the precinct of the pre-Conquest abbey: it is unclear from documentary sources and archaeological investigations whether the abbey precinct filled the entire area from the Back Lane rampart to the High Street, and from Malthouse Lane to Cowl Lane.
5. The pre-Conquest settlement: there is some evidence, both from Winchcombe and excavated sites elsewhere in England, for a degree of planning in the setting out of streets and lanes within the burhs. Investigations within the defensive enclosure might reveal evidence relating to the course of *Peticrueslane*, and the date at which it was closed off, as well as the courses of other streets and lanes.
6. The location of the Mercian royal palace and archive: documentary sources indicate it may have stood within the Anglo-Saxon burh.
7. The location of the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval mint: the mint is known from numismatic evidence, but there is no other information about its location or period of activity.
8. The precinct of the Benedictine abbey: questions arising are very similar to those raised about the pre-Conquest foundation above. Nor is there much information relating to the location of most of the monastic buildings, the Chapel of St. Pancras (if it did indeed exist), or the free-standing Lady Chapel connected with the church of St. Peter.
9. The location of the abbey and town mills: despite documentary information, no archaeological evidence has yet been found relating to Medieval mills in the town.
10. The location of the castle: there are some documentary descriptions of a castle at Winchcombe, but no evidence to suggest where it may have stood.
11. The Medieval parish churches: the foundation dates of St. Peter's and St. Nicholas' are unknown, as is the location of the latter, which is only hinted at in Medieval documents.
12. The Medieval settlement: its extent, character and economy.

11 Sources

11.1 Primary historical sources

There are a considerable number of primary sources available for Winchcombe in the form of charters (not all of which are genuine), the records of Evesham Abbey, the *Passio* of St. Kenelm and the *Landboc sive Registrum Monasterii de Winchelcumba*, as well as numerous miscellaneous Medieval documents. These sources provide a vast amount of information about the abbey, but rather less about the town. Where they are referred to in the text, the information has been drawn from secondary sources.



11.2 Secondary historical sources

Although there is no coverage for Winchcombe in the Victoria County History for Gloucestershire, the settlement's history has provoked a number of local studies, the most comprehensive of which was that published by Dent in 1877. The Cult of St. Kenelm has aroused considerable interest over recent years, as has the history of the abbey itself for more than a century, and there is a large number of articles and books about it. Winchcombe also piqued the interest of the antiquarian writers of the eighteenth century, who found much to say about the scanty evidence of the ramparts, and the even more putative existence of the Mercian palace and Medieval castle.

11.3 Archaeological sources

Most archaeological investigations in Winchcombe have been focused on the site of the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval abbeys. During the late nineteenth century, Loftus Brock revealed the site of the abbey church, and since then a number of areas within the precinct have been explored – Ellis (1986) records the work of the 1960s and 1970s which produced evidence for workshops and fishponds belonging to the abbey, as well as providing significant information about the nature of the Anglo-Saxon rampart along Back Lane. Other excavations are known to have been undertaken along the course of the rampart, in 1939 and 1947, but the results have not been published. Saville's work in North Street in 1977 also provided evidence for domestic occupation of the tenth to eleventh and sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Within the last ten years, some very small scale evaluation work has been undertaken within areas of the abbey precinct in advance of development.

11.4 Maps

The map coverage of Winchcombe is exceptionally poor, especially since the Ordnance Survey first edition 25":1 mile map is not available locally. An Inclosure Award map of 1815 does exist, but there is no tithe map available for the parish. The only historic maps available for this study were the Ordnance Survey first edition 6":1 mile map of 1883 and the second edition 25":1 mile map of 1900.

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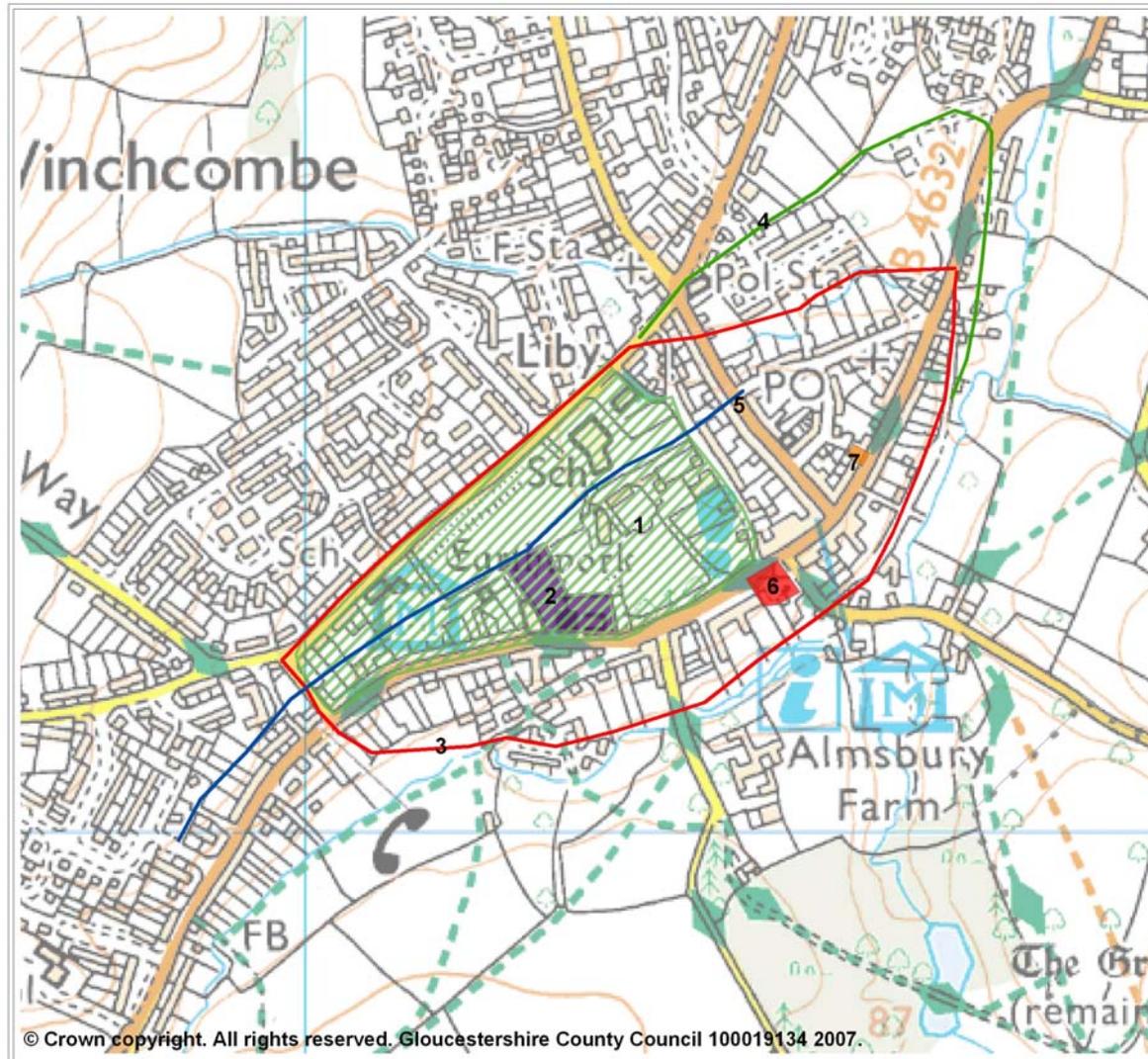
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12.2 Maps

- Inclosure Award for Winchcombe (Greet and Sudeley), 1815
Ordnance Survey first edition 6":1 mile map, 1883
Ordnance Survey second edition 25":1 mile map, 1900



MAP 22:
Winchcombe:
Early-Medieval Plan Components

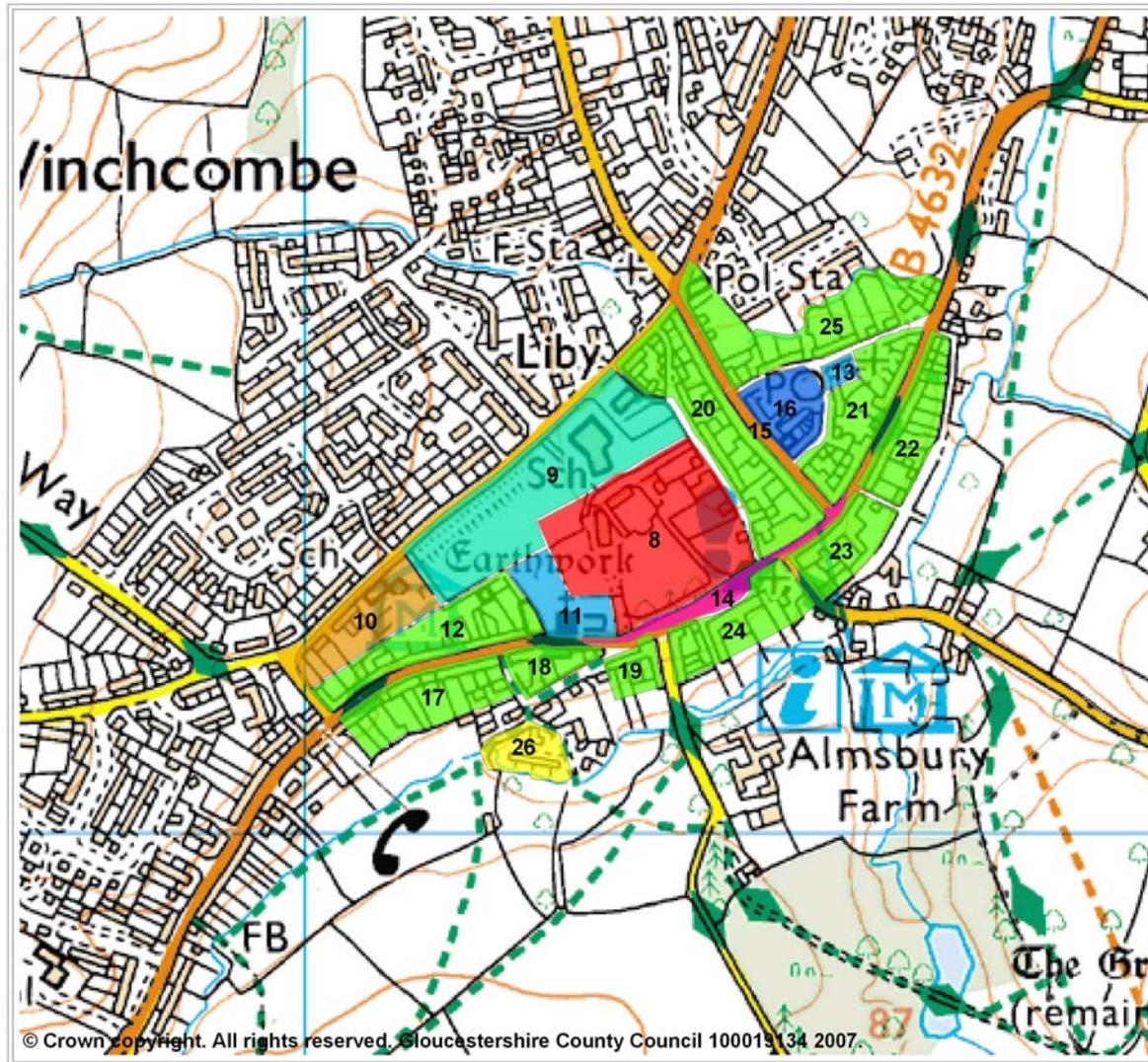
Legend

- Peticruces Lane
- Possible extension to defences
- Probable line of defences
- St Peter's church
- Abbey & precinct
- Site of the mint
- Site of the palace

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 SCALE: 1:5,857
 DATE: 04 October 2007
 DRAWING NO: Map 22

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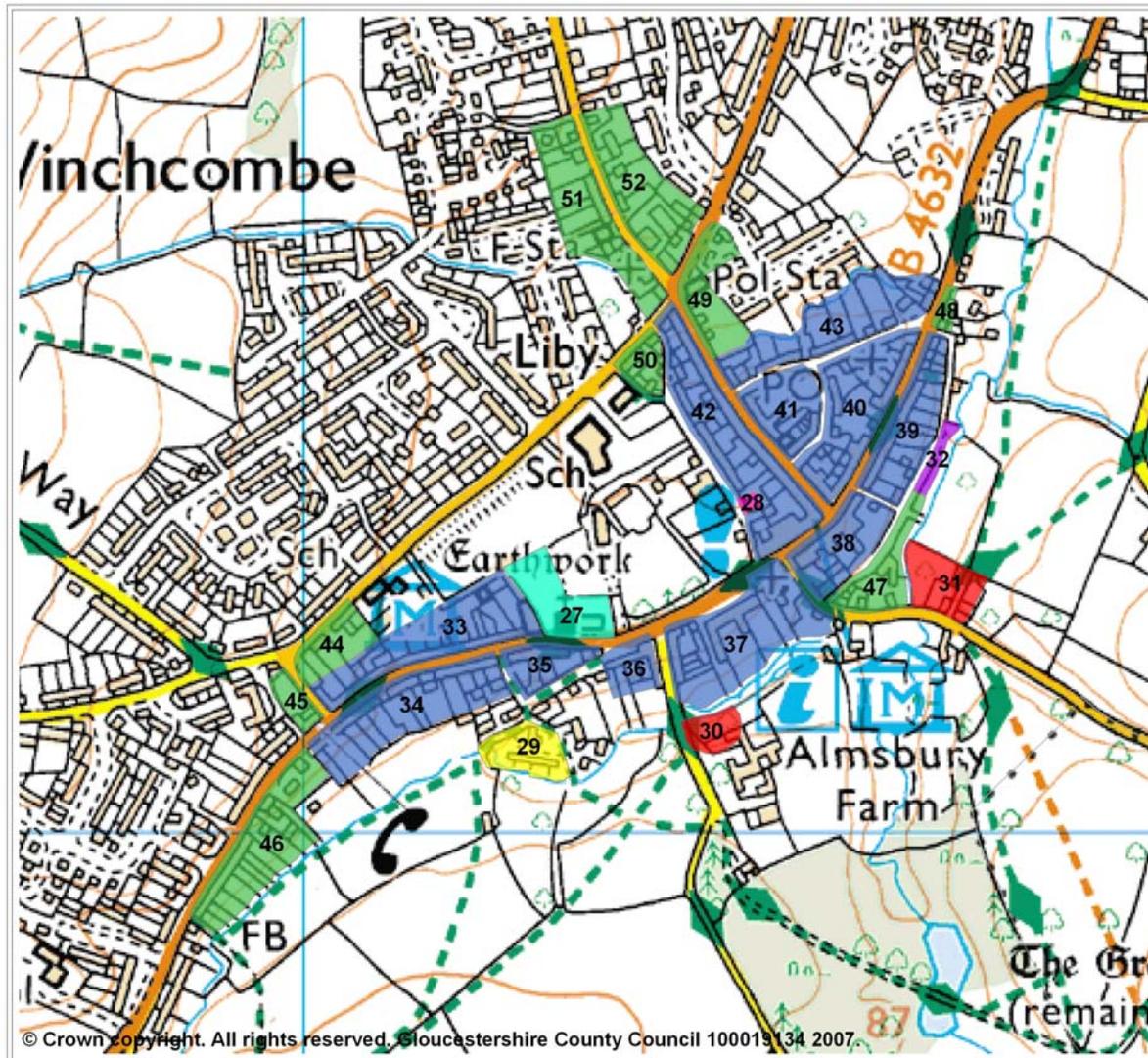
MAP 23:
Winchcombe:
Medieval Plan Components

Legend

- Abbey Mill
- Abbey church & cloisters
- Burgage plots
- Fishponds, workshops & gardens
- Market place
- Other abbey lands
- Parish church
- Possible market area

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MAP 24:
Winchcombe:
Post-Medieval Plan Components

Legend

- Post-medieval development
- Post-medieval settlement
- Tobacco Warehouse
- Silk Mill
- St Peter's Church
- Tannery
- Town Mill

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