

**The Archaeology of Wiltshire's Towns**  
*An Extensive Urban Survey*

# **LACOCK**

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## The Archaeology and History of Lacock

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Towns are an important component of the historic environment which have developed over many hundreds of years and are under constant development pressures. The archaeological resource within our historic towns is an invaluable and irreplaceable source of data about past societies and the evolution of our culture. Despite these factors the archaeology of many towns, especially the smaller market towns, is poorly understood.
- 1.2. In 1976 the D.O.E. sponsored a study of the archaeology of Wiltshire's historic towns, aiming to assess the relative importance of the towns at different points in time as a basis for future archaeological research. This resulted in the publication of *"Wiltshire Towns: the archaeological potential"* (Haslam 1976). Since then, the book has been one of the key references for archaeologists monitoring urban development and its impact in the county.
- 1.3. An increase in the amount of archaeological and historical data available and changes in legislation such as the introduction of Planning Policy Guidance note No.16, have meant that a reappraisal of the situation is now due. The Extensive Urban Survey of Wiltshire has been commissioned by English Heritage, as part of a National programme, to address the need for a new assessment of urban archaeology in the county. The current structure of the historic county of Wiltshire is two-tier, with the County Council working in conjunction with the four District Councils (Kennet, North Wiltshire, Salisbury and West Wiltshire) and the new unitary authority of Swindon – historically part of the county. The survey aims to map the development of all of Wiltshire's and Swindon's historic towns (Fig. 1) and to assess the extent of the surviving archaeology and built heritage. It is also proposed that the threat of development on the historic environment within the county's towns will be examined.
- 1.4. As far as is known the first towns in Wiltshire appeared during the Romano-British period but all the known examples are now greenfield sites, although some may have given rise to nearby settlements. Most modern towns in the county have their roots as Saxon villages or defended settlements such as Cricklade and Wilton. Many of the villages grew into small towns after the Norman invasion, often focussed around a castle or market and in the early thirteenth century 'planted boroughs', in which individual plots of land were sold by the major landowner.
- 1.5. The definition of a town for inclusion in the survey follows the criteria laid out in Heighway (1972), by which the settlement must possess certain characteristics such as defences, a mint, a market, a street plan, or a judicial centre, and demonstrate such urban attributes as high population, a diversified economic base or a central or key location. For the purposes of the survey, however, the towns should meet these criteria historically, even if they no longer do so. This allows, for example, the inclusion of the five Roman towns in the county, and settlements such as the village of Heytesbury, which was developed as a

planned town in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but which did not succeed as an urban centre. The full list of 34 towns included in the survey and the criteria for inclusion are included as Appendix 1. Lacock satisfies three criteria: it has evidence for a planned street layout (*criteria ii*); it has a documented early market (*criteria iii*); it was the site of a Medieval abbey (*criteria xi*).

- 1.6. The area of study in each town is defined by the size of the town as it stood in 1945, encompassing both the historic core of the town and the older industrial and suburban development. There is an emphasis on the earlier material, and the later Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century development are covered here only very briefly. Although more detailed than Haslam's report, in most cases each study remains no more than a brief summary of the data, and a guide to the location of more detail for other researchers. The extent of the study area for Lacock is depicted in Fig. 2.
- 1.7. The research into each town will be encapsulated into two reports: a summary and assessment of the data gathered and an outline strategy for future management of specified sections of the urban area. This first report is intended to provide a clear and up-to-date synthesis of the available archaeological and historical data for Lacock, with an assessment of the main areas of historic settlement in the town and of the potential and sensitivity of the archaeologically important areas. The assessment reports are compiled from four main data streams: geographical and geological sources for the location and topographical summary; secondary historical sources for the historical outline; recorded archaeological data for the sites and finds information; the archive of the Wiltshire Buildings Record (WBR) for architectural data. The architectural summary is not subject to the same level of research as the other three data streams, and the information presented in the reports is based upon evidence compiled from the existing WBR archive, updated in places by field visits to note non-listed buildings of historic interest, combined with the Department Of The Environment schedule of listed buildings.

## **2. LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 2.1. Modern Lacock is a village lying close to the southern boundary of the District of North Wiltshire, approximately halfway between the towns of Chippenham and Melksham, once on an historic north-south route through the county, now by-passed.
- 2.2. The village lies chiefly upon Terrace Gravels, with the western and northern fringes lying upon Oxford Clay. A small outcrop of Head Deposits lies just to the north of the village. Lacock is drained by a generally east-west aligned stream, the Bide Brook, which joins the River Avon to the north-east of the village (Ordnance Survey 1965). The north-south aligned Avon forms the eastern extent of the historic abbey precinct, which itself defines the eastern edge of the village. Lacock lies at a mean elevation of 45m AOD (Ordnance Survey 1979).

### **3. PAST WORK AND THE NATURE OF THE EVIDENCE**

#### **3.1. Historic Sources**

3.1.1. This is a desk-based study, using material available within the County Council Heritage Services facilities in Trowbridge: the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR); The Wiltshire Reference Library; the Wiltshire & Swindon Record Office; and the Wiltshire Buildings Record. Historical data are generally drawn from secondary sources, normally the Victoria County History and histories of the individual towns, based on recommendations or specific requirements. Data on archaeological investigations and their results are drawn directly from the original reports or publications wherever these are available, but for some poorly recorded finds we have had to rely on passing references or the existing entries in the county SMR.

3.1.2. The use of primary sources in the Record Office is restricted to maps and sometimes other pictorial material, which are consulted to accurately locate individual sites or buildings and to trace the growth of the settlement.

#### **3.2. Archaeological Work In The Town**

3.2.1. This section outlines the known archaeological investigations that have taken place in Lacock. The list is compiled from information in the County Sites and Monuments Record, Excavations Register, and the fieldwork reports kept in the County Archaeology Section in Trowbridge. Others have been added as a result of incidental mention in one of the above sources, and where there is enough information to get at least a general idea of the location of the site. The numbers refer to the map included in this report (Fig. 3).

<b>Event</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Site Name/Location</b>	<b>Event Type</b>	<b>Excavator</b>	<b>Reference</b>
001	1933	Lacock Abbey	Excavation	Unknown	AC Archaeology 1996
002	1991	Lacock Abbey	Geophysical Survey	National Trust	Newman <i>et al</i> 1991
003	1996	Lacock Abbey	Geophysical Survey	GSB Prospection	GSB Prospection 1996
004	1996	Lacock Abbey	Evaluation	AC Archaeology	AC Archaeology 1996
005	1996	Lacock Abbey	Watching Brief	AC Archaeology	AC Archaeology 1996
006	1999	Lacock Abbey	Watching Brief	Jane Harcourt	Harcourt 1999
007	1996	Lacock Rockworks And Water Garden	Excavation	National Trust	Papworth 2000

**Table 1:** Archaeological Investigations in Lacock.

#### **4. HISTORICAL OUTLINE**

- 4.1. This report is not intended to provide a major historical review of the history of Lacock and the material included here relates mainly to events which might have had some impact on the archaeology of the town, or its survival.
- 4.2. The earliest reference to Lacock is the 1086 Domesday Survey, where the listing includes two mills and a vineyard (Ide & Watts 1985). The nature of the listing suggests Lacock to have been a non-urban agrarian settlement in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The origin of the place-name is thought to be from the Old English word *lacuc*, meaning 'streamlet' (Haslam 1976), which may refer to the present Bide Brook. After the Norman Conquest the manor of Lacock was given to Walter d'Evreux, and thence by descendance to Edward of Salisbury, and eventually, by the early 13<sup>th</sup> century to Ela, Countess of Salisbury (*ibid.*).
- 4.3. Ela, in 1229, founded the nunnery which was to dominate the Medieval history of Lacock. The nuns, over the course of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, successfully petitioned for fairs (1237 & 1257) and markets (1242, 1257 & 1260), and it is probably they who were responsible for the development of the small planned town which has survived unspoilt to the present day. The nunnery was founded within the vicinity of the settlement existing at Domesday, which it is believed was supplanted by the Medieval new town (Chew 1956).
- 4.4. Historical records show that Lacock enjoyed a measure of prosperity in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, with market traders visiting from as far away as Salisbury and Gloucestershire. A reference to burgages in the 13<sup>th</sup> century suggests that some form of corporation was in place by that time, and that the town quickly became successful after its foundation (Haslam 1976).
- 4.5. The abbey survived the first wave of the Dissolution, but eventually succumbed in 1539, passing into the hands of William Sharrington, whose descendants the Fox-Talbot family still reside at Lacock Abbey.
- 4.6. Lacock has been associated with the production of cloth since the Medieval period. Although chiefly a cottage-based industry, by the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century there is evidence for the emergence of some mill-based production, although this was always small-scale compared to the nearby cloth centres of Melksham, Calne and Chippenham (Ide & Watts 1985).
- 4.7. Largely untouched by the Industrial Revolution, Lacock was by the 19<sup>th</sup> century a quiet backwater. Both canal and railway by-passed the settlement, which by this time had shrunk effectively to village status. In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the main Melksham to Chippenham road also by-passed Lacock, and by doing so contributed to the unique Medieval atmosphere surviving today.

## **5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY**

### ***5.1. Introduction***

5.1.1. The following is a resume of the archaeological record of the town, drawn from the county SMR and the various excavation reports. Data on surviving buildings come from the Wiltshire Buildings Record unless otherwise stated. The bold print numbers in this section refer to entries in the Urban Survey database, and appear on the sites and findspots location maps in Figs. 4 - 6, which were created from the database and the SMR.

### ***5.2. Prehistory***

5.2.1. There are no recorded sites or finds of prehistoric origin known within the Study Area.

### ***5.3. Roman (Fig. 4)***

5.3.1. Romano-British findspots are restricted to coin finds by metal detectorists. These are known from Folly Cottages (**LA004**), and at two un-named locations to the south-west of the village (**LA021**) & (**LA022**).

### ***5.4. Medieval (Fig. 5)***

5.4.1. Possibly the earliest feature within Lacock is the parish church of St. Cyriac (**LA019**). It is thought that the present church, built by the abbey in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, stands upon the site of an earlier church which served the early Medieval village. The surviving architecture of the church is of 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century date, with 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century renovations (Pevsner 1975).

5.4.2. Lacock Abbey (**LA002**) was founded in 1229 by Ela, Countess of Salisbury. The abbey soon prospered and came to dominate the Medieval development of the town. Much remains of the Medieval cloister range, preserved by William Sharrington who held the abbey after its Dissolution in 1539, but the infirmary range to the east of the main complex was demolished. This range was located by geophysical survey in the 1990s. A series of small archaeological investigations within the recent past have recorded the presence of surviving archaeological remains relating to the abbey at a number of locations within the vicinity of the main range.

5.4.3. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century the abbey had built a tithe barn at a site west of the main range (**LA012**). This building survives today. The abbey also spurred the development of the small market town of Lacock (see Section 6, below). Market activities were centred upon the Market Cross (**LA013**), which today has been moved from its original position in the centre of the Market Place and partially restored.

- 5.4.4. To the south of the abbey, the River Avon is crossed by Packhorse Bridge (**LA001**). This structure is believed to date to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and is first mentioned in association with Galfridus *atte Brigge* in 1333.
- 5.4.5. To the north of the Medieval town is the hamlet of Nethercote (**LA011**), first mentioned in 1337. A number of potsherds and artefacts of Medieval origin were discovered beneath the bridge linking Nethercote with Lacock (**LA010**, Devizes Museum Daybook 1984), and to the west of Nethercote, at Raycroft (**LA020**), 13<sup>th</sup> century and later pottery sherds were recovered from garden soils by the householder. These finds may relate to earthworks surviving within the garden.
- 5.4.6. A number of finds of metal items and coins have been recorded by metal detectors prospecting to the west and south-west of Lacock (**LA014**, **LA015**, **LA016**, **LA017**, **LA018**). These finds are more likely to represent casual losses than the sites of settlement activity.

### **5.5. Post Medieval (Fig. 6)**

- 5.5.1. The land surrounding Lacock Abbey was emparked by William Sharington in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (**LA003**), and is included in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens. The park includes a fishpond. Within Lacock itself, the lock-up or 'blind house' in East Street (**LA009**) is of 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century date, while to the north of St Cyriac's church is the former tanyard and workhouse (**LA023**). Tanning has taken place since at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and a workhouse existed at the site from 1762 to 1859. To the east of the core settlement is Arnolds Mill (**LA008**) associated since 1642 with Richard Arnold. Between the mill and the village a group of three lead tokens were found by a metal detector (**LA007**).

### **5.6. Undated (Fig. 6)**

- 5.1. Two groups of undated earthworks are known within the Study Area. At Nethercote (**LA005**) a group of features are thought to be the headlands to an area of ridge-and-furrow, whilst to the east of Arnolds Mill (**LA006**) is a possibly modified hilltop and possible ridge-and-furrow.

### **5.7. Built Heritage**

- 5.7.1. This section of the report is intended to provide an introduction to the surviving built heritage of Lacock, and as such is not designed to be a comprehensive account of the town's notable structures, but is a selection of the salient architectural features and buildings within the Study Area, including, if present, significant unlisted structures. This data has been compiled by Wiltshire Buildings Record.
- 5.7.2 Detailed lists of historic buildings and architectural detail are included as Appendices 3, 4 & 5. Although individual Grade II listed buildings may be (where relevant) discussed in this section, they are not included as a

comprehensive list in the Appendices, due to the very large quantities of additional data this would involve. Researchers seeking information on Grade II structures are directed to the appropriate Governmental lists of protected buildings.

5.7.3 Lacock is a small, former Saxon settlement which is thought to have been expanded c.1230 when Lacock Abbey was founded. It is one of the best preserved small Medieval towns in England and has a number of burgage houses which are still of cruck construction. Lacock lay on the 'cloth road' from Bath to London until this was re-routed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Despite this change Lacock was largely self-sufficient until the 1940's after which businesses declined. It is now a centre for tourism under the ownership of the National Trust.

5.7.4. **The Thirteenth Century.** Lacock Abbey (grade I) is a mid 16<sup>th</sup> century remodelling and extension of an Augustinian nunnery founded in 1229, of which the cloister court of 13<sup>th</sup> –15<sup>th</sup> century remains. The foundress was Ela, widow of William Longspee. Much of the work was completed in 1247. It was sold to Sir William Sharington, vice treasurer of the Bristol Mint after the dissolution in 1539. He was responsible for the octagonal *Sharington's Tower* and the other octagonal angle turrets, and the west front, described as an important landmark of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Gothic revival. The mid 18<sup>th</sup> century Gothick *Great Hall* is noted as outstanding and contains terracotta figures by VA Sederbach in canopied niches. WH Fox-Talbot (1800-77), pioneer of photography spent his life here and made his first photographic experiments here.

5.7.5 **The Fourteenth Century.** A good deal of the original 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century planted town, a prosperous centre for wool-weaving, remains under successive layers of alteration. There is evidence that the whole south side of High Street may be originally of one build in the 14<sup>th</sup> century or early 15<sup>th</sup> century, from known cruck-framed houses and the even roof-line. Altogether 10 buildings are listed as probably belonging to this period. It has been observed that Lacock's houses are particularly wide to allow for horizontal looms, introduced in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Timber, brick and stone are combined in the 14<sup>th</sup> century Crack House on the corner of Church Street. Not only is this house one of the earliest in Lacock, but its cruck construction is a rare example in southern England.

5.7.6. Among those added at this time are The Corner House, 2 Church Street (grade II\*) which is possibly an early 14<sup>th</sup> century hall house with 3 full cruck trusses, now with an early 17<sup>th</sup> century exterior. Others identified as having an earlier or Medieval core are 1 (Bridge House, 3, 7, 8 & 8A, 9, 10, 11 & 12, 23 & 24, 25 & 26, 27, 28, Church Street, 1, 2 & 3, 4 & 5, 6 & 7, 8, 9-11 (cons), 12, 12A, 15 East Street, 15-17, 18A, 20, 21, 22 High Street (all grade II).

- 5.7.7. In Bridge House Church Street, 9, 10 and 19 High Street the earlier core has not been substantiated by the National Trust's survey. At 7 Church Street the earlier core referred to dates from c1750, and at no.9, 17<sup>th</sup> century. 10 & 11 Church Street have been identified by the National Trust's own vernacular building survey as two halves of a Medieval hall house. A similar arrangement has been noted at 12 and 12A Church Street. 20 Church Street, listed as being 17<sup>th</sup> century, has been found to contain part of a late 14<sup>th</sup>/early 15<sup>th</sup> century hall. At 27 Church Street the jettied first floor front room is said to have contained a hand loom.
- 5.7.8. King John's Hunting Lodge, 21 Church Street (grade II\*) is listed as being a late Medieval house recased in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The main build is a massive raised cruck-framed open hall dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century with windbracing. The heavily framed east wall of the hall is all that remains of a 13<sup>th</sup> century building. There is evidence for a pair of steeply-pointed arched doorways to first floor with a similar pair still extant rising from below present ground level. The original south wall has a fine 14<sup>th</sup> century moulded pointed stone doorway identical to that on no. 8.
- 5.7.9. 2-5 (cons) High Street (grade II\*) is a range of largely cruck-framed 14<sup>th</sup> century –15<sup>th</sup> century houses also containing a fine moulded 15<sup>th</sup> century fireplace in no.3, said to be one of the earliest in the village, and another stone fireplace in no.4. No. 5 is probably a 17<sup>th</sup> century addition.
- 5.7.10 The grade I scheduled Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street is also a scheduled Ancient Monument. The main range of 8 windbraced bays has massive raised 2-tier cruck trusses.
- 5.7.11 **The Fifteenth Century** Lacock Bridge (grade II\*) is the principal bridge over the Avon dating from the late Medieval period, it was originally known as Foot Bridge. Surviving records of the 17<sup>th</sup> century indicate that for much of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Bridge was too dilapidated to be passable to wheeled traffic, and therefore much of the present fabric must be later restoration.
- 5.7.12 The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (grade II\*) is a late 15<sup>th</sup> century rubblestone house with an exceptionally fine front of jettied gables with framing above. The main entrance is a broad passageway with inner doors to rooms. Said to have been built in 1480. It contains a 4-centred arched fireplace dated 1639.
- 5.7.13 Said to be late Medieval, 14-16 Church Street (grade II\*) is a rubblestone and timber range of houses used as the parish workhouse between 1766-1833. The interior of 16 is cruck framed.
- 5.7.14 The Porch House, 14 High Street (grade II\*) dates mainly from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is of timber-frame on rubblestone, with a 14<sup>th</sup> century cruck perhaps retained to show continuity of building. Additions of the 16<sup>th</sup> century & 17<sup>th</sup> century are evident, and the range to the east was largely rebuilt in the early

20<sup>th</sup> by H. Brakspear as a service wing. The number of buildings surviving from this period is listed as 21.

**5.7.15 The Seventeenth Century** There are no notable building dating from this century. The depression in the woollen industry during the last century was continued into the next. No. 2 West Street (grade II) dates largely from this century and was found by the NT survey to retain an earlier cruck, it is thought, to prove continuity of building, as at The Porch House, 14 High Street. Some 12 of these 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings are likely to have replaced earlier buildings on the site such as 22 High Street, which retains earlier fragments. 24 buildings are listed from this period.

**5.7.16 The Eighteenth Century** During this century the number of listed buildings in the parish increased to 54 with 24 of these being in the village itself. Cantax House, Cantax Hill (grade II\*) is a house of c1700, used as the vicarage until 1866. The interior has a fully panelled room and contemporary doors and shutters.

## **6. PLAN FORM ANALYSIS**

### ***6.1 Introduction***

6.1.1 Lacock, in common with all existing Wiltshire towns, has no foundation in the prehistoric or Romano-British periods, although archaeological remains belonging to the Romano-British period are present within the Study Area and prehistoric remains have been recorded just beyond. Historical and documentary archives have clearly identified the presence of a settlement from at least the 11<sup>th</sup> century, although the complete lack of archaeological, documentary or historical evidence prevents a reconstruction of the Saxon topography. As a minor market town, Lacock saw little expansion beyond the Medieval core until the 19<sup>th</sup> century – a pattern common amongst the smaller Wiltshire towns. The advent of the Industrial Revolution had only a negligible impact, with no industrial enterprises, canal or railway to feed growth. Although Lacock enjoyed some prosperity as a coaching stop, it was by the 19<sup>th</sup> century no more than a village.

6.1.2 Owing to the lack of Saxon evidence, the very limited Post-Medieval growth and the absence of industrialisation, only the Medieval phase of Lacock's plan form is explored within this report.

**Table 2:** Plan form components

COMPONENT	COMPONENT TYPE	FIGURE No.
COM1	Abbey & Grounds	7
COM2	Parish Church	7
COM3	Early Market Place	7
COM4	Later Market Place	7
COM5	Probable Extent of Planned Settlement	7
COM6	Possible Site of Earlier Medieval Settlement	7
COM7	Nethercote – Late Medieval Hamlet	7
COM8	Roads	7

## **6.2 Medieval (Fig. 7)**

**6.2.1 COM1 – Abbey & Grounds.** The history and development of the abbey has been well-researched by other writers, and is not described in detail in this report. However, without the abbey Lacock would not have grown into an urban entity, as the abbey was the sponsor of the planned settlement (**COM5**). The figure shows the abbey set within a conjectured area of land, defined on the east by the River Avon, on the south by the Calne road, and to the west by the settlement area. Further documentary research may better establish these boundaries.

**6.2.2 COM2 – Parish Church.** The architectural sequence of St. Cyriacs is well-understood (para. 5.4.1), and the interest in this component is in its potential early origin. It may be that the church pre-dates the founding of the town by the abbey and previously served the village mentioned at Domesday, although no historical evidence exists to prove this.

**6.3.3 COM3 – Early Market Place.** Gardiner (1971) in her National Trust guidebook mentions an early market place occupying the wide portion of street to the east of the parish church. This is thought to have been supplanted by the larger, formal market place (**COM4**) in the southern part of the planned settlement (**COM5**).

**6.3.4 COM4 – Later Market Place.** This component was the site of Lacock's long defunct market from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and until the 19<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by a market cross, now moved (para. 5.4.3).

**6.3.5 COM5 – Planned Settlement.** The unusually well-preserved Medieval core of Lacock is believed to be a planted settlement established by the abbey during the course of the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Gardiner 1971). The rectangular grid of streets, incorporating a large market place (**COM4**), and the regularly spaced, long, narrow property boundaries – probable burgages – are signature traits of such developments. As a powerful financial entity the abbey would naturally wish to control a local forum for trade and commerce. At Lacock this activity appears to have largely replaced, rather than extended, the pre-existing village, although some vestiges of early settlement may be traced (**COM6**).

- 6.3.6 **COM6 – Possible Early Settlement Area.** This component represents a possible remnant of pre-13<sup>th</sup> century settlement, based upon topographical evidence. The north-south road upon which this area is focussed is an ancient and important trade route linking known Saxon settlements such as Chippenham, Melksham and Westbury. COM6 extends south along this road to the crossing of the Bide Brook, whereupon the planned settlement takes over. Although it is possible that this ‘ribbon’ of settlement represents later Medieval expansion it is also possible that it is part of a low-density, minor settlement of farmsteads of early origin. The built heritage within this component is no earlier than 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century, and archaeological research is required to determine the validity of this model.
- 6.3.7 **COM7 – Nethercote Hamlet.** This small cluster of dwellings is first referred to in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (para. 5.4.5). There is no evidence for an earlier origin.
- 6.3.8 **COM8 – Roads.** The roads depicted in Fig. 7 are those linking adjacent settlements of known Medieval origin and internal routes within the planned settlement.

## **7 ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 *Summary of Research***

- 7.1.1 Much of the historical and documentary research in Lacock has focussed upon the abbey, which is consequently well-researched and understood, although a succession of small archaeological investigations have demonstrated how such knowledge is rarely complete. Rather less is known of the development of the planned town or its precursor, although ongoing architectural research by WBR and the National Trust is increasing our understanding of the built heritage of the village. The local history study of the Lacock woollen industry by Ide & Watts (1985) has contributed greatly to our understanding of cloth production in a small town, but also underlines the need for a VCH study of the area to pull together the many aspects of the settlement’s history in one comprehensive volume.
- 7.1.2 Archaeological research has concentrated upon small development opportunities within the vicinity of the abbey. However, several deserving areas for research exist elsewhere within the Study Area. These are explored in Section 7.3, below.

### **7.2 *The Growth of the Town (Fig. 8)***

- 7.2.1 It is difficult to judge to the extent of early settlement at Lacock given the paucity of available evidence. The later Medieval extent of settlement can, however, be defined with some confidence, given the exceptional preservation of the historic built environment and topography. The whole area of the planned settlement can be easily defined in plan, along with the area of the

abbey, the ribbon settlement north of the planned area, and the hamlet at Nethercote.

- 7.2.1 Lacock's dwindling fortunes in the Post-Medieval period meant that very little growth occurred until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By the end of that century farmsteads and large private houses had been established north of the village, and more modest dwellings constructed to the south. Growth over the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been extremely slow, and is restricted to four single plot developments.

### **7.3 The Archaeological Potential**

- 7.3.1 One of the principal aims of this phase of the Extensive Urban Survey is to examine the archaeological potential of the town to assist with the development of a management strategy in the later phase of the project. Whilst all of the core town may be considered important archaeologically, it is necessary to try to highlight those areas of greater interest, either because of the importance of the remains or because better than average preservation is expected there.
- 7.3.2 Archaeological research may usefully be directed at any aspect of the planned settlement and its early Medieval predecessor. The complete absence of prior archaeological work in secular Lacock is to an extent a reflection of the lack of recent development in the settlement, and of the protected nature of many of the properties. Having said that, research archaeology within any available burgage plots may shed light on the density and chronology of occupation within the Medieval town, the nature of activities conducted within individual burgages, and may produce cultural evidence from the fill of refuse pits – usually sited to the rear of properties, away from any buildings.
- 7.3.3 Archaeological investigation within St. Cyriacs church may determine the presence of an earlier, pre-13<sup>th</sup> century church on the site. Although it is recognised that a significant development-generated archaeological project here is unlikely, churches and churchyards are occasionally subject to minor interventions such as underpinning, damp-proofing, and the cutting of drainage and service trenches, all of which offer the opportunity for archaeological observation on this site of local importance. The opportunity to observe any excavation within the church itself would be of particular interest, given the common Medieval practice of rebuilding a church directly upon the site of its predecessor (Rodwell 1989).
- 7.3.4 The site of early settlement within Lacock is unclear, and archaeological research both within the area of 'ribbon' settlement north of the planned town, and between that area and St. Cyriacs, may be a fruitful area within which to begin prospecting for such evidence.

7.3.5 The abbey, although well-researched, still produces archaeological surprises, as demonstrated by recent phases of archaeological work within the vicinity of the main range. Given the protected status of the abbey, and its National Trust guardianship, the future of the archaeological resource at this site may be considered reasonably secure.

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## 10. APPENDICES

**Appendix 1:** Towns included in the Extensive Urban Survey of Wiltshire, with reference to urban criteria defined by Heighway (1972).

	<b>Town</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
1	Amesbury	ii, iii, xi, xi
2	Bradford-on-Avon	iii,vi viii, xi
3	Calne	ii, iii, ix
4	Chippenham	i, iii, iv, viii, ix, x, xii i, ii, v, xii
5	Cricklade	i, ii, vi
6	CUNETIO	i, ii, iii,. v
7	Devizes	ii, iii, v, ix, xi
8	Downton	i,, ii vi
9	DUROCORNIVUM	i, vi
10	EASTON GREY	iii, iv, v, ix
11	Great Bedwyn	ii, iii, ix
12	Heytesbury	ii, iv
13	Highworth	ii, vi, ix
14	Hindon	ii, iii, xi
15	Lacock	v
16	Ludgershall	i, iii, iv, xi
17	Malmesbury	iii, ix
18	Market Lavington	ii, iii, iv, xi
19	Marlborough	ii, iii, viii
20	Melksham	ii, iii, xii
21	Mere	iii, viii, xi
22	Ramsbury	i, ii, iii, v, vi, vii, viii,
23	Salisbury	ix, x, xi, ii, iii, ix
24	Sherston	i, vi
25	SORVIODUNUM	iii, viii
26	Swindon	iii, v
27	Tilshead	i, vi, xi
28	Tisbury	ii, iii, viii
29	Trowbridge	ii, iii, iv, vii
30	Warminster	iii, viii
31	Westbury	i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii,
32	Wilton	vii, ix, xi ii, iii, v, ix, xi
33	Wootton Bassett	ii, vi
34	VERLUCIO	

## Appendix 2: Urban Criteria set out in Heighway (1972)

- i) *Urban Defences*: A town, at some time in its history, might have a wall, or bank and ditch with wooden defences.
- ii) *Internal Street plan*: A town may be planned at any moment in its history; part of its street pattern may display evidence of deliberate planning, such as a grid lay-out. A street plan with provision for a market place will also distinguish a town.
- iii) *Market*: Perhaps the only indispensable criterion, although a market alone does not distinguish a town. The date of a market charter is usually taken in this study as indicating the date by which the place had become a town.
- iv) *Mint*: The existence of a mint often denotes a town.
- v) *Legal existence*: This aspect of the town was one of the first to be studied and formed the basis of most of the early studies of towns. It has long been evident that legal history, once a favoured method of study, does not provide the only clue to urban origins, in which economic causes play an important part. However, the date of a borough charter or the dates of taxation at borough rates or of the town's parliamentary franchise may provide a date from which the place may be called a town.
- vi) *Position*: A town may have a central position in a network of communications and this can be a clue to its importance. This can be a difficult criterion to assess as it involves knowledge of the age of the road system in relation to the town itself, the past navigability of rivers, and other related problems.
- vii) *Population*: A town will often have or have had a high density and size of population compared with surrounding places.
- viii) *Diversified economic base*: Archaeological or documentary evidence might suggest a diversified economic base, particularly a concentration of various crafts in one area, and evidence of long distance trade. For earlier periods, only archaeological evidence can determine this; it is a reflection on the state of urban archaeology that so little is known of this aspect.
- ix) *House plot and house type*: The town-plan may show long, narrow 'burgage-type' plots; surviving houses will be urban rather than rural in form.
- x) *Social differentiation*: A town should contain a wide range of social classes and especially possess a middle class. House types, demonstrated in the earlier periods by archaeology, again form part of the evidence.
- xi) The presence of a *complex religious organisation* may also denote a town; i.e. the possession of more than one parish church or the existence of other institutions, especially monastic.
- xii) *Judicial centre*: A town may be a centre for courts of national or local status.

## **Appendix 3: Listed Buildings by Schedule Category**

### **Grade I**

Lacock Abbey with Stable yard, Lacock Abbey (mid 16C, 13C-15C, 18C)  
Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street (C14, AM 258)  
Church of St Cyriac, Church Street (14C, 15C, 1861, 1902-3)

### **Grade II\***

2-5 (cons) High Street (14C-15C)  
Lacock Bridge (late Medieval-17C, 19C)  
14-16 Church Street (late Medieval-17C) King John's Hunting Lodge, 21 Church Street (late Medieval, 18C)  
Village Cross in schoolyard, High Street (late Medieval) AM 664  
The Corner House, 2 Church Street (14C, 17C)  
The Porch House, 14 High Street (14C fragment, C15, 16C & 17C)  
The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C)

### **Scheduled Ancient Monument**

Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street (C14, AM 258)

## **Appendix 4: Buildings Survival By Century**

### **13<sup>th</sup> Century**

Lacock Abbey with Stable yard, Lacock Abbey (mid 16C, 13C-15C, 18C)

### **14<sup>th</sup> Century**

Church of St Cyriac, Church Street (14C, 15C, 1861, 1902-3)  
Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street  
The Corner House, 2 Church Street (& 17C)  
3, 4 & 5, Church Street  
8 & 8A Church Street (14C-15C)  
20 Church Street (14C-15C)  
2-5 (cons) High Street (14C-15C)  
12, 12A High Street (14C-15C)

### **15<sup>th</sup> Century**

The Porch House, 14 High Street (14C fragment, C15, 16C & 17C)  
18A, 20, 21 High Street (Medieval core)  
6 & 7 High Street (Medieval core)  
Lacock Bridge (late Medieval-17C, 19C)  
14-16 Church Street (late Medieval-17C)  
King John's Hunting Lodge, 21 Church Street (late Medieval, 18C)  
Chamberlain's House, 1 East Street (late Medieval)  
12A East Street (late Medieval)  
Village Cross in schoolyard, High Street (late Medieval)  
3 West Street (late Medieval)  
The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late)

7, 9 Church Street  
8 High Street  
5 West Street (probably)

### **16<sup>th</sup> Century**

10 High Street  
5-7 Cantax Hill (poss. 16C origin)  
The Fox-Talbot Museum & Abbey Lodge, High Street (mid)  
Sundial on terrace s.e. of Lacock Abbey  
10 Church Street (or earlier)  
23 & 24 Church Street (or earlier)  
Barn to e. of Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street (or earlier)  
Manor Farmhouse, High Street (or earlier)  
The George Inn, West Street (or earlier)  
15-17 (cons) High Street (16C-19C)  
16 & 17 East Street (late 16C/early 17C)  
The Folly, 1 Folly Lane (16C or early 17C)

### **17<sup>th</sup> Century**

Sundawn, 2 Chapel Hill; The Carpenters Arms, Church Street, 4 & 5, 6 & 7, 8 East Street, 22 High Street (with earlier fragments); 2, 3 & 4 Nethercote Hill; 1 West Street

The Old Coaching House, 8 The Wharf (c1600)  
1 & 2 Lovers' Walk, Nethercote Hill (or earlier)  
Saddler's Green, 7 The Wharf (or earlier)  
11 West Street (early)  
2 West Street (early)  
12 & 12A West Street (mid)  
2 & 3 East Street (late)  
Thatch Cottage, Wick Lane (C17 or early 18C)

### **18<sup>th</sup> Century**

7 Bowden Hill; 2 Cantax Hill; The Surgery, Cantax Hill; Outbuilding to rear of Manor Farmhouse, High Street, Outbuilding to n. of Stable Court at Lacock Abbey; The Packhorse Bridge, Nethercote Hill, 1 Nethercote Hill; Stable to Cantax House, to rear of 6 & 7 West Street; Cottage adjacent to 4 Folly Lane, Wick Lane  
White Hall Farmhouse, Mons Lane (1710)  
Bridge House, 1 Church Street (early, on earlier core)  
The Red Lion Inn, High Street (c1730)  
9, 19 High Street (mid)  
11 High Street (mid)  
The columns, north of drive to Lacock Abbey (mid)  
Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)  
8 & 9, 10 West Street (mid-late)  
The Red House, 13 Church Street (1778)  
3 Cantax Hill (late)  
The Lock-up, East Street (late)  
5 West Street (late)

6 & 7 West Street (late)  
8-11 (cons), East Street (late 18C/early 19C)

### **19<sup>th</sup> Century**

Church of St Stephen, Chapel Hill (1812)  
The Old Malthouse, Bewley Lane (early)  
Town Bridge, Cantax Hill (early)  
Milestone at junction with Corsham Road, Chippenham Road (early)  
Drying Shed in Tanyard, Church Street (early)  
14 East Street (early)  
Granary at Manor Farm, High Street (early)  
Lacock Primary School, High Street (1824)  
Strode House, The Wharf (1830-40 on earlier core)  
The Tanyard, 1-3 (cons) Church Street (1833)  
Coach house to The Old Malthouse, Bewley Lane (c1840)  
The Old Brewery House & attached premises, Bewley Lane (c1840-50)  
15 East Street (early-mid)  
Wharf Cottage, The Wharf (early-mid)  
The Old Rectory, Cantax Hill (1865-6)  
18 East Street (late)  
The Village Hall, East Street (1889)

### **20<sup>th</sup> Century**

18 High Street (early)  
The War Memorial, West Street (1920)  
K6 Telephone Kiosk, Melksham Road  
**Part or p**(after 1935)

## **Appendix 5: Individual Architectural Details**

### **13<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Ashlar & rubblestone:** Lacock Abbey  
**Pointed arch doorway:** King John's Hunting Lodge, 21 Church Street

### **14<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Rubblestone:** Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street (C14, AM 258)  
**Coped gables:** Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street (C14, AM 258)  
**Timber framing:** 4 & 5 Church Street  
**Full crucks:** The Corner House, 2 Church Street (early, on late Medieval core), 3 Church Street  
**Partially concealed crucks:** 8 & 8A, 14-16 (cons) Church Street  
**2-tier cruck trusses:** Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street (C14, AM 258)  
**Raised cruck trusses:** 12 & 12A High Street (14C-15C)  
**Windbraces:** Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street (C14, AM 258); 12A High Street  
**Cusped windbraces:** Lacock Abbey  
**Pointed arched doorway:** 8 & 8A Church Street  
**Cusped lights:** The Porch House, 14 High Street

## **15<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Hall house:** 6 & 7, 8 High Street

**Rubble limestone:** Lacock Bridge; The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C)

**Limestone & timber-framing:** The Porch House, 14 High Street

**Stone slate roof:** The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C); The Porch House, 14 High Street

**Jettying:** The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C); The Porch House, 14 High Street

**Timber framing:** The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C)

**Box-framing:** 8 High Street

**4-centred arch doorway:** The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C)

**Pointed arched doorway:** King John's Hunting Lodge, 21 Church Street (late Medieval, 18C)

**Hollow moulding:** The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C)

**Hollow moulded mullions:** 15-17 High Street

**Raised crucks:** King John's Hunting Lodge, 21 Church Street (late Medieval, 18C), 18A High Street (Medieval)

**Cruck truss:** 12A East Street (late Medieval)

**Collar & tie truss:** The Porch House, 14 High Street; Lacock Abbey

**Windbracing:** The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C); King John's Hunting Lodge, 21 Church Street (late Medieval, 18C); Lacock Abbey

**Panelled ceiling:** The Porch House, 14 High Street

**Moulded fireplace:** 2-5 (cons) High Street

## **16<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Rubblestone:** Barn to e. of Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street

**Timber framing:** 5-7 (cons) Cantax Hill

**Stone slate roof:** Barn to e. of Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street

**Tudor arched fireplace:** The Porch House, 14 High Street

**Hollow moulded mullions:** The Fox-Talbot Museum & Abbey Lodge, High Street

**Windbraced roof:** 5-7 (cons) Cantax Hill; Barn to e. of Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street

**Late cruck trusses:** Barn to e. of Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street

**Cambered collars:** Barn to e. of Tithe Barn at Manor Farm, High Street

**Tie beam & angle strut trusses:** Manor Farmhouse, High Street

**King-post trusses:** The Fox-Talbot Museum & Abbey Lodge, High Street; The Porch House, 14 High Street

## **17<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Limestone Rubble:** Apple Tree Cottage, 15 Bowden Hill; The Corner House, 2 Church Street (early, on late Medieval core); 2 & 3 East Street; 2 Nethercote Hill; 11, 12 & 12A West Street; 1 West Street; The Old Coaching House, 8 The Wharf

**Timber-framing:** 3 & 4 Nethercote Hill; 1 & 2 Lovers' Walk, Nethercote Hill; 1 West Street; The Old Coaching House, 8 The Wharf;

**Stone slate roof:** The Corner House, 2 Church Street (early, on late Medieval core); 2 & 3 East Street; 2 Nethercote Hill; 11 West Street; 12 & 12A West Street; 1 West Street; The Old Coaching House, 8 The Wharf

**Thatch:** 3 & 4 Nethercote Hill

**1½ storey:** 2 Nethercote Hill; 3 & 4 Nethercote Hill; 11 West Street

**2-storey:** 2 & 3 East Street; The Old Coaching House, 8 The Wharf

**Dormer windows:** 2 & 3 East Street; 11 West Street; The Old Coaching House, 8 The Wharf

**Chamfered doorway:** 12 & 12A West Street

**Hood over doorway:** 12 & 12A West Street

**Archway:** 15 East Street

**Ovolo-moulded mullions:** The Corner House, 2 Church Street (early, on late Medieval core)

**Reserved chamfer mullions:** 11 West Street; 12 & 12A West Street

**Ogee-moulded mullions:** 15 East Street; 2 & 3 East Street

**Oriels:** 1 West Street

**Hoodmoulds:** 15 East Street; 11 West Street

**Beams with moulded stops:** The Corner House, 2 Church Street (early, on late Medieval core)

**Open-well stair:** The Porch House, 14 High Street

**Stone fireplace:** The Corner House, 2 Church Street (early, on late Medieval core); The Sign of the Angel, 6 Church Street (late 15C); 8 & 8A Church Street; The Porch House, 14 High Street; The Old Coaching House, 8 The Wharf

**Stud partition with lath and plaster:**

**Panelling:** The Corner House, 2 Church Street (early, on late Medieval core); The Porch House, 14 High Street

## **18<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Coursed limestone rubble:** 3 Cantax Hill; The Red House, 13 Church Street; 21 High Street; 15 East Street (early-mid); 8 & 9 West Street; Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core); 5 West Street

**Brick and ashlar dressings:** The Red House, 13 Church Street; The Red Lion Inn, High Street

**Rustication:** The Red House, 13 Church Street

**Moulded bands and blocking courses:** The Red House, 13 Church Street; 8 & 9 West Street

**Centre or side portion(s) broken forward:** The Red Lion Inn, High Street

**Moulded cornice:** 21 High Street; The Red Lion Inn, High Street

**Parapet:** The Red Lion Inn, High Street

**Coped verges:** 3 Cantax Hill; The Red House, 13 Church Street

**Hipped dormers:** Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)

**Gabled dormers:** The Red House, 13 Church Street

**Stone slate roof:** 3 Cantax Hill; 21 High Street; 15 East Street (early-mid); 8 & 9 West Street; Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core); 5 West Street

**Plain tile roof with stone slate verges:** The Red House, 13 Church Street

**Bridgewater tile roof:** The Red Lion Inn, High Street

**2-storey:** 21 High Street; Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core); 5 West Street

**3-storey:** The Red Lion Inn, High Street  
**Pedimented doors:** 8 & 9 West Street  
**Bolection-moulded architraves:** Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)  
**Beaded architraves:** 8 & 9 West Street  
**Moulded architraves:** The Red House, 13 Church Street; The Red Lion Inn, High Street; Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)  
**Chamfered doorway:** 5 West Street  
**Door hood on brackets:** 3 Cantax Hill; The Red Lion Inn, High Street; 5 West Street  
**6-panel doors:** 3 Cantax Hill; 21 High Street; 8 & 9 West Street  
**6x6 sashes:** The Red House, 13 Church Street; 8 & 9 West Street; Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)  
**Ogee-moulded mullions:** 3 Cantax Hill; 21 High Street  
**Venetian window:** 5 West Street  
**Bolection-moulded fireplace:** 21 High Street; Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)  
**Closed-string stair:** Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)  
**Panelling:** Grove House, 14 West Street (mid, on earlier core)

## 19<sup>th</sup> Century

**Limestone ashlar with rubble to rear:** Strode House, The Wharf  
**Squared coursed limestone rubble with freestone dressings:** The Old Brewery House, Bewley Lane; Church of St Stephen, Chapel Hill; The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street; 15 East Street; Lacock Primary School, High Street  
**2-storey:** The Old Brewery House, Bewley Lane; 14, 15 East Street  
**3-storey:** The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street  
**Slate roofs:** The Old Brewery House, Bewley Lane; The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street; 14, 15 East Street; Lacock Primary School, High Street; Strode House, The Wharf  
**Coped verges:** The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street  
**Bands and strings:** 14 East Street; Strode House, The Wharf  
**Pilaster strips:** Strode House, The Wharf  
**Porch:** Strode House, The Wharf  
**4-panel door:** Strode House, The Wharf  
**Bracketed hood over door:** The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street; 14 East Street  
**Arched doorway:** Strode House, The Wharf  
**Over- and Fanlights:** 15 East Street; Strode House, The Wharf  
**Chamfered mullion windows:** The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street  
**6x6 sashes:** The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street; 15 East Street; Strode House, The Wharf  
**8x8 sashes:** The Tanyard, 1-3 Church Street; 14 East Street  
**Round-arched windows:** The Old Brewery House, Bewley Lane;  
**Segmental-headed windows:** The Old Brewery House, Bewley Lane;  
**King post roof:** The Old Brewery House, Bewley Lane;  
**Tudor revival style:** Lacock Primary School, High Street

**Additional Notes**

Churchyard monuments not included