



Small Pits, Big Ideas: Community Test Pitting at White Ladies Aston



Report July 2018

Community test pitting at White Ladies Aston, Worcestershire



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Community test pitting project at White Ladies Aston, Worcestershire

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With contributions by Rob Hedge

Summary

A community test pitting project, Small Pits, Big Ideas, was undertaken in White Ladies Aston by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service in 2017-18, on behalf of Worcestershire Archaeological Society. The project, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, worked with the Green Fingers Project and University of Worcester to enable local Looked After Children to excavate a series of eight test pits in gardens and open spaces across the village of White Ladies Aston, Worcestershire (SO 92167 52241). Test pits were excavated in 10cm spits, following Professor Carenza Lewis' methodology, and pottery was used as a proxy indicator for the presence and density of occupation nearby.

The results from these test pits tentatively suggest that the earliest medieval occupation occurred around the church and ancient trackway, at the northern end of the present village. It is possible that this settlement was part of continuous occupation in the area since the Anglo-Saxon and even Roman era. Little evidence of late medieval and early post-medieval occupation has been found, raising the possibility that the settlement contracted during this period or the occupation focus shifted away from the church to areas not investigated by test pits. During the 17th century many new houses were built on sites that were previously unoccupied, implying that the village grew in prosperity and potentially size at this time, as these dwellings did not simply replace earlier buildings.

1 Project Background

A community test pitting project, *Small Pits, Big Ideas*, was undertaken in the village of White Ladies Aston, Worcestershire (village centred on SO 92167 52241). Small Pits, Big Ideas is a Heritage Lottery Fund project run by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service in partnership with the Green Fingers Project and University of Worcester on behalf of Worcestershire Archaeological Society. The project ran from August 2017 to July 2018, with the main focus being two separate community test pitting events. A talk and finds handling session to the community in White Ladies Aston was given in July 2018, and a lecture will also be given to Worcestershire Archaeological Society as part of their autumn talk series later in 2018.

2 Aims

The main aims of Small Pits, Big Ideas were to:

- Enable local Looked After Children to have a go at archaeological excavation and meaningfully contribute to academic research, helping them to explore their heritage and embrace healthy lifestyles, as well as develop new skills, knowledge and confidence.
- Further our understanding of the form, character and development of a rural medieval settlement in Worcestershire, in particular White Ladies Aston, as it is an area lacking research (Hunt 2011: 176).

This report focuses on analysing and interpreting the archaeology encountered during the project – social outcomes will be fully assessed in the project evaluation.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was led by Nina O'Hare (BA, PCIfA) with assistance from Paul Hudson, Justin Hughes, Victoria Bryant and Emma Chubb. Green Fingers Project staff, led by Joanne Frost, provided specialist support and training for working with Looked After Children and on site supervision during events. Test pits were excavated by small groups of local Looked After Children – 25 took part in total. Each test pit was also assigned an undergraduate archaeology student mentor from the University of Worcester. Rob Hedge (MA Cantab, PCIfA) contributed the finds report, with finds processing assistance from Emma Chubb, and illustrations were produced by Nina O'Hare.

3.2 Documentary research

In order to gain background historical and archaeological information as context for the project, a search was made of the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) for all records within 1km of White Ladies Aston. The HER records details of all archaeological events, monuments and designated heritage assets (Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, listed buildings, registered parks & gardens and battlefields) within the county. Results of this search are summarised below in section 4 and shown in Figures 2-3 – where HER records are mentioned their reference number is given (prefix WSM-), designated heritage assets are given their National Heritage List (NHL) reference.

3.3 Historic maps

- 1713 White Ladies Aston Village Plan – land owned by Bishop Lloyd's Charity (transcription made by M. Jenkins in 2000 is held at by Worcestershire Historic Environment Record: not reproduced here for copyright reasons)

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- 1804 Manor of *Aston Episcopi* boundary map (Worcestershire Archive ref. BA5403/11) – Figure 4
 - 1825 White Ladies Aston Inclosure map (Worcestershire Archive ref. BA4618 r267.6) – Figure 5
 - 1838 White Ladies Aston Tithe map (Worcestershire Archive ref. BA127/2 s850) – Figure 6

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A total of eight test pits were excavated during the project, four in October 2017 and another four in April 2018. The reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological 'events', and site code used for this archive is WSM 69475. The Worcestershire Archaeology project number is P5190.

Test pits were all 1m² and hand excavated in 10cm spits once de-turfed. All excavated soil was hand-sieved through a 1cm mesh to retrieve artefacts and some finds washing took place on site. Each spit was recorded in a pro-forma record booklet and photographed. At the end of the allocated excavation time (two days in October and two and a half days in April), or when test pits reached the natural geology, section drawings were made and photographs were taken, before test pits were backfilling and the turf reinstated. Recording was undertaken by the participating young people, with assistance from their undergraduate mentor and Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service (WAAS) staff.

The fieldwork model used here follows that developed by Professor Carenza Lewis for researching Currently Occupied Medieval Rural Settlements (CORS) and used extensively in East Anglia with considerable success (for methodology in full, see Lewis 2007). Instead of recording conventional archaeological contexts, excavation focused on the recovery of artefacts and the depths at which they are discovered, as Lewis' methodology uses the presence, quantity and condition of pottery as a proxy indicator for occupation. This method of excavating in spits also makes it easy for those without archaeological training to participate.

Seven test pits were excavated in back gardens and the eighth was located in a paddock. Whilst a spread of test pit locations throughout the village was aimed for, and largely achieved, choices were limited to the houses whose owners wished to participate. Test pits were sited by preference close to the back of houses where rubbish was historically often thrown, unless homeowners requested a specific location.

3.5 Artefact methodology, by Rob Hedge

The finds work reported here conforms with the following guidance: for findswork by ClfA (2014), for pottery analysis by PCR/SGRP/MPRG (2016), for archive creation by AAF (2011), and for museum deposition by SMA (1993).

3.5.1 Recovery policy

Participants were encouraged to keep all objects, including those they were unsure about, as stones and other non-archaeological artefacts could be easily discarded later on. The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012: appendix 2).

3.5.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined, identified and quantified. For each test pit, a *terminus post quem* (earliest possible) date was derived from the pottery where possible. All information was recorded on a Microsoft Access database.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

The nature of these types of excavations — in garden soils within a settlement — tends to yield high concentrations of domestic detritus. For the purposes of dating the duration and pattern of human activity, the dating evidence from pottery provides the best resolution. The discussion therefore largely focuses on the pottery recovered.

3.5.3 Discard policy

Discard of finds will only be instituted with reference to museum collection policy and/or with agreement of the local museum. For projects such as this, in which the majority of the artefacts collected would not ordinarily be deemed suitable for deposition with the collecting museum, creative uses of the material in artistic projects or local displays may be encouraged.

4 White Ladies Aston

4.1 Topography and geology

White Ladies Aston is located south-east of Worcester and just east of the A44, between the villages of Churchill to the north and Peopleton to the south. The modern village mainly lies along a single road, with St John the Baptist's Church at the northern edge and Aston Hall Farm towards the southern end. Whilst the village itself is on relatively level topography, to the east the land gently slopes down towards the Bow Brook. A small tributary of the brook lies west and south of the village, forming a loop of land in which White Ladies Aston sits (Fig 1).

The present settlement predominately lies in an area with mudstone bedrock, of the Saltford Shale Member, overlain by sand and gravel of the Ailstone Member, which was formed in riverine environments. No overlying superficial deposits are recorded for the area around Aston Court Farm (Test Pit 1) and the village's eastern periphery. Towards the south-eastern end of the village, from Aston Moat Farm down beyond the eastern edge of Aston Hall Farm (including Test Pit 8), the underlying geology changes to interbedded mudstone and limestone of the Wilmcote Limestone Member, with no recorded superficial deposit (BGS 2018). Across all test pit locations are slightly acidic loamy and clayey soils (Soilscape 2018).

4.2 Historical background

The earliest reference to occupation at 'aet Eastune', meaning East Farm, is from c 977 AD (Mawer & Stenton 1927). A settlement at 'Aston' is then recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 as comprising of ten households (Open Domesday 2018). Northwick manor, within which Aston fell, belonged to the Bishop of Worcester in 1066. The manor at Aston has a complex history of medieval ownership and the original manor of Aston appears to have been split into three: *Aston Episcopi*, which was retained by the Bishop of Worcester, *Aston Bruley*, which ceased to exist as a manor sometime after 1610, and *White Ladies Aston* (Page 1913: 558-560). The latter was first granted by the Bishopric to a Robert de Evercy and his descendants, but in the mid-13th century it was given to the newly founded nunnery at Whistones, then just north of Worcester. Whiston Nunnery, which gave White Ladies Aston its name, held these lands until it was suppressed during the Reformation and its lands sold off. After passing through various owners, Robert Berkeley of Spetchley eventually bought the manor of White Ladies Aston in 1612 (*Ibid.*) – the Berkeley family remain the present owners of much farmland within the parish.

During the reign of Henry II (1133-1189), the boundaries of Feckenham Forest were considerably expanded. White Ladies Aston lay on the southern edge of this expanded Royal Forest and would have been subject to the harsh forest law until c.1300, when the boundaries were reduced again and moved further north (Atkins 2006; WSM42160).

The oldest surviving building in White Ladies Aston is the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist's Church, which has a 12th century nave and chancel (NHL 1258836). No other medieval structures survive within the village and it is unclear what form the medieval settlement took. The present day

village appears to be the remnant of post-medieval occupation, arranged as a cluster of farmsteads and cottages in an interrupted row along Evesham Road. Aston Hall Farm, at the southern end of the village, is 16th century in date with a surviving farmhouse and several outbuildings (WSM02954, WSM02956, WSM30760, WSM51767). At the northern edge of the parish lies the 17th century Green Farm (WSM51765) and 18th century Aston Court Farm (WSM51768). Despite cartographic and oral history evidence for the loss of many timber framed cottages in the early 20th century (e.g. WSM02983), numerous 17th century timber framed houses remain throughout the village, including Redfern House (NHL 1258658), Nightingale Cottage (NHL 1273353), Laburnum Cottage (NHL 1259090) and Rose Cottage (NHL 1273323).

Unusually, White Ladies Aston has both inclosure and tithe maps, dating from 1825 and 1838 respectively (Figs 5 & 6). Worcester Cathedral Library also holds a 1713 map of the Bishop's manor at White Ladies Aston, which covers a strip of land across the western side of the parish from the church to the main Worcester road (now the A44). The most significant change visible in these maps is the existence, and subsequent loss by 1838, of a north-west to south-east aligned road extending from the Old Vicarage past Nightingale Cottage towards the Bow Brook. A former continuation of this road to Green Farm can be seen preserved in field boundaries and a disjointed track also runs south from Nightingale Cottage to join Moat Lane on the 1825 inclosure map (Fig 5). A later note alongside the 1713 map transcription suggests that the Bishop's estate was not well kept during the early 20th century, as it was described in 1957 as being an "awful mess" with derelict cottages and farm buildings (Jenkins 2000).

4.3 Archaeological context

Prehistory

Geology with the potential to contain Palaeolithic remains, dating to Marine Isotope Stage 6 (189,000-128,000 BC), lies across the northern and western portions of the village (WSM56925), although no Palaeolithic finds have so far been recorded from the parish. The earliest known archaeological activity in the area is a Bronze Age barrow at Low Hill (WSM02901), which is located just west of White Ladies Aston alongside the A44.

Roman to Anglo-Saxon (43AD – 1066)

Multiple areas of Roman occupation have been identified in the parish through metal detecting finds and field name evidence, although to date none have been excavated. East of Aston Court Farm, a concentration of Roman finds is suggestive of an early Romano-British farmstead or building (WSM29790), whilst two clusters of 3rd - 4th century AD finds (WSM29791) and Roman to Saxon artefacts (WSM29792) have been found east of Nightingale Cottage. These finds assemblages support local field name evidence of Roman and/or Saxon occupation – Burnt Ground (WSM29596) and Black Meadow (WSM29597). A fourth group of finds found south-west of Aston Hall Farm are indicative of another area of Roman settlement (WSM29675). Continuity of local occupation into the Anglo-Saxon era is attested to by a 6th century cemetery found north-east of White Ladies Aston along the eastern bank of the Bow Brook, during gravel extraction in the mid-19th century (WSM00599).

The description of 'Salt Street' in an Anglo-Saxon boundary charter for Upper Wolverton (WSM30992), to the south of White Ladies Aston, implies that a Saxon and probably Roman road for trading salt from Droitwich passed close by. The probable continuation of a trackway that runs past Nightingale Cottage, seen preserved as a holloway and in later field boundaries, heads towards the Bow Brook; presumably to a ford or small bridge crossing. Whilst undated, areas of probable Roman and Saxon occupation lie along the track and it is most likely to be pre-medieval in date (WSM30702).

Medieval (1066 – 1539)

The layout of medieval White Ladies Aston is not clear. The extent of medieval occupation is thought to lie broadly within the limits of the present day village (WSM29789), although as the

settlement was split between three manors it is perhaps unlikely to have formed a single planned village during this era. One of the medieval manor houses was located at the moated site that now lies within Aston Moat Farm (WSM02903), c 700m south of the 12th century church (WSM02953), and the remnant of a second moat may exist immediately north of Aston Court Farm house (WSM30761). Interestingly, neither of these two sites are part of the Bishop's manor, *Aston Episcopi*, by the time it is mapped in 1713 (Jenkins 2000) and may have belonged to the medieval manors of *Aston Bruley* and *White Ladies Aston*.

Ridge and furrow earthworks survive in many fields towards the edge of the parish and around the shrunken medieval settlement and moated site at Churchill (WSM02921), attesting to the agricultural economy and landscape that supported and surrounded White Ladies Aston (WSM09769, WSM67266-7, WSM67271, WSM67273, WSM70142-3). A medieval moot, or meeting place, may also have existed alongside what is now the A44 (WSM32535).

Post-medieval (1540 – 1900)

During the Civil War, Aston Court was plundered due to being the former residence of the Goods, who were royalist supporters (WSM39790). Direct evidence for this event comes from a collection of musket balls found by a metal detectorist to the south-east of Aston Court Farm, which are thought to result from Cromwell's encampment in 1651 (WSM27217).

Several industrial sites and former ponds also relate to the post-medieval era, including limekilns in the vicinity of Old Gardens (WSM57362, WSM57364) and clay or marl pits around Aston Court Farm (WSM35442, WSM47556).

Modern (1901 – present)

Immediately south of White Ladies Aston, at Wolverton Hall Farm in Peopleton, a World War II Auxiliary Unit Training facility was established (WSM27636). There is no record of any military sites or defensive features existing in the village itself.

4.4 Current land-use

Seven of the eight test pits were located in back gardens and the eighth was in a paddock belonging to Aston Hall Farm (Fig 1).

Test pit locations were as follows:

- Test Pit 1 – back garden of Aston Court Farm house
- Test Pit 2 – back garden of Redfern House
- Test Pit 3 – back garden of Elm Tree Cottage
- Test Pit 4 – back garden of Sandfield Cottage
- Test Pit 5 – back garden of The Old Vicarage
- Test Pit 6 – back garden of Nightingale Cottage
- Test Pit 7 – paddock in the bend of Evesham Road, belonging to Aston Hall Farm
- Test Pit 8 – back garden of Old Gardens

5 Test Pit Results

5.1 Introduction

In this section the test pit results are described, beginning with a general summary of the archaeological contexts encountered and followed by an analysis of the finds. Test pit locations are shown in Figure 1 and detailed deposit descriptions for each test pit are given in Appendix 1.

Photographs of all test pits are included in the appendix as Plates 1-8. Whilst the test pits were excavated in 10cm spits, each spit has been assigned to a context as well – contexts are distinct deposits that represent separate archaeological events, such as the infilling of a pit or ditch, wall or soil layer.

5.1.1 Natural deposits

The natural geology confirms that there is no more archaeology to be found, as all archaeological activity since that geological layer formed will lie above it or be visibly cut into the top. Natural geology was only reached in Test Pit 1, where it was encountered at a depth of 30cm as a pinkish-orange sand with sub-rounded gravel patches (Plate 1). It is probable that ground truncation had occurred in Test Pit 1 as only a garden soil (context 100) overlay the natural substrate.

It is possible that the top of the natural was also reached in Test Pit 6, although this context (602) was not excavated and it is more likely to have been an earlier subsoil or levelling deposit than a gradual interface with the natural geology due to the artefacts found (Plate 6).

5.1.2 Medieval deposits

No undisturbed medieval deposits were encountered during the excavation, although it is common for garden soils to be heavily reworked. All of the medieval artefacts found were present alongside later finds, showing that they have been moved from their original deposition locations.

5.1.3 Post-medieval deposits

Post-medieval garden soils were present in Test Pit 2 (context 201), probably at Test Pit 3 (context 301) and possibly Test Pit 4 (context 401) as well. These layers were all encountered at least 30cm below the present ground level and it is possible that in some cases gardens have been improved or built up with additional topsoil material, which has sealed the post-medieval layer below.

5.1.4 Modern deposits

Topsoil layers in all test pits extended to a depth of 30cm below the present ground level and contained an abundant mixture of post-medieval and modern domestic refuse, predominately pottery and vessel glass (Plates 1-8).

5.2 Artefact analysis, by Rob Hedge

5.2.1 Introduction

Key Terms used in describing archaeological ceramics

Sherd: the term for a fragment of pottery

Form: the shape of a pot. The same potters and kilns often produced lots of different forms for different purposes. Common types include 'cooking pots' or jars, storage jars, pitchers, bowls, and drinking vessels like cups and tankards.

Fabric: the composition of the clay used to make the pot. This varies according to the source of the clay. Each production centre used clay from a different (usually very local) source. Other material like small fragments of stone or shell often occurs within the raw clay. Sometimes, coarse material was deliberately added to the pot to make it easier to fire. This is known as 'temper'. Collectively, non-clay materials within a pot are called 'inclusions'. Inspecting the broken edges of a piece of pottery under a microscope allows us to identify the inclusions, differentiate the fabrics, and match them to pieces of known origin in our reference collection (available at www.worcestershireceramics.org)

Ware: In the post-medieval and modern periods, fabrics become a lot more homogenous, and the local variations are harder to spot (at least visually). The styles and traditions of potting become

more useful than the fabric for identifying the pottery. This is why, in the tables for each test pit, you will see that sometimes the same fabric type occurs in a number of different 'wares', all of different dates.

Context: This term refers to the precise location on an archaeological site in which a sherd was found, usually marked by a number. Each different soil layer, pit fill, wall, or deposit will have a separate number. The finds within that deposit can then be used to determine a ***Terminus Post Quem*** date: the earliest possible date that the deposit could have formed.

Ceramic building material: This term covers brick, and roof/floor tiles that are made from clay and fired in a kiln.

Dates

The following period definitions are used by the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record:

- Medieval: 1066AD – 1539AD
- Post-medieval: 1540AD – 1900AD
- Modern: 1901AD – 2050AD

Many pottery traditions span period boundaries, and are therefore recorded as, for example, "post-medieval/modern". The dates within the tables give the calendar dates between which that type of pottery is thought to be produced. Sometimes, you may notice the same fabrics or wares are given slightly different dates. This is usually because the individual sherd has characteristics which enable us to refine the date. For example, medieval cooking pot rims change in shape over the 300-year period in which they were produced in Worcester. For later pottery, makers' marks can help us to ascribe precise dates.

5.2.2 Overview

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 2 below. It comprised 2447 artefacts, weighing 11.46kg. This included 619 sherds of pottery weighing 1998g. Other finds include: ceramic building material, the majority of which was not closely dateable; clay tobacco pipe fragments; animal bone, mostly domestic butchery waste; metal; coal and charcoal; vessel and window glass.

The artefacts came from eight hand-dug test pits and could be dated from the medieval period onwards (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally poor; the majority of sherds displaying high levels of abrasion. The average sherd size (at 3.2g) was well below average. This poor condition is consistent with their presence within garden soils, which tend to be frequently worked-over and subject to fluctuations in temperature and moisture.

| period | material class | object specific type | count | weight(g) | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------|-----|
| medieval | ceramic | pot | 7 | 41 | |
| | glass | window | 1 | 2 | |
| late med/early post-med | ceramic | pot | 2 | 9 | |
| | ceramic | roof tile | 3 | 139 | |
| medieval/post-medieval | ceramic | brick | 2 | 254 | |
| | ceramic | brick/tile | 375 | 2011 | |
| | ceramic | mortar | 33 | 130 | |
| | ceramic | tile | 41 | 2146 | |
| | glass | unident | 1 | 1 | |
| | glass | vessel | 304 | 1316 | |
| | glass | window | 152 | 224 | |
| | glass/metal | vessel | 1 | 35 | |
| | other waste | burnt material/clinker | 205 | 171 | |
| | post-medieval | ceramic | clay pipe | 37 | 51 |
| ceramic | | pot | 238 | 996 | |
| post-medieval/modern | ceramic | pot | 367 | 915 | |
| | ceramic | pot waster | 5 | 8 | |
| | ceramic | roof tile | 1 | 12 | |
| | ceramic | saggar | 1 | 24 | |
| | ceramic | spacer | 7 | 103 | |
| | stone | stylus | 1 | 1 | |
| | modern | ceramic | door handle | 1 | 13 |
| ceramic | | pot | 4 | 36 | |
| metal | | button | 3 | 8 | |
| metal | | foil | 4 | 4 | |
| metal | | hinge | 2 | 52 | |
| metal | | toy | 1 | 63 | |
| metal | | vessel lid | 2 | 8 | |
| metal/plastic | | unident | 6 | 3 | |
| metal/plastic | | wire | 1 | 3 | |
| other waste | | battery | 2 | 20 | |
| plastic | | | 10 | 13 | |
| undated | | animal bone | | 113 | 167 |
| | | ceramic | pot | 1 | 1 |
| | ceramic | unident | 2 | 2 | |
| | metal | nail | 54 | 388 | |
| | metal | unident | 51 | 993 | |
| | organic | nut/seed | 1 | 1 | |
| | organic | unident | 47 | 45 | |
| | bone | fragment | 1 | 1 | |
| | charcoal | | 143 | 103 | |
| | coal | | 12 | 17 | |
| | shell | shell | 6 | 23 | |
| | other waste | clinker/burnt material | 78 | 170 | |
| | other waste | unident | 81 | 258 | |
| | slag | | 12 | 68 | |
| | slag | slag | 1 | 1 | |
| | slag | unident | 2 | 74 | |
| | stone | slate | 13 | 22 | |
| | stone | unident | 9 | 311 | |
| Totals | | | 2447 | 11457 | |

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

5.2.3 Pottery quantification

All pottery sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2). The tables for individual test pits break down each fabric type into specific wares, where appropriate.

Where mentioned, all specific forms are referenced to the type series within the report for Deansway, Worcester (Bryant 2004).

| Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | count | weight(g) |
|------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Medieval | 53 | Early Malvernian glazed ware | 1 | 9 |
| | 55 | Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware | 3 | 25 |
| | 56 | Malvernian unglazed ware | 2 | 6 |
| | 99 | Miscellaneous medieval wares | 1 | 1 |
| Medieval/Post-medieval | 69 | Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware | 2 | 9 |
| Post-medieval | 75 | North Devon gravel tempered ware | 2 | 33 |
| | 78 | Post-medieval red ware | 126 | 720 |
| | 78.1 | Red sandy ware | 2 | 10 |
| | 81 | Stonewares | 4 | 10 |
| | 81.2 | Westerwald stoneware | 3 | 16 |
| | 81.3 | Nottingham stoneware | 2 | 1 |
| | 81.5 | White salt-glazed stoneware | 7 | 20 |
| | 82 | Tin-glazed ware | 10 | 25 |
| | 84 | Creamware | 59 | 72 |
| | 90 | Post-medieval orange ware | 2 | 17 |
| | 91 | Post-medieval buff wares | 56 | 236 |
| | 100 | Miscellaneous post-medieval wares | 1 | 3 |
| Post-medieval/modern | 83 | Porcelain | 66 | 114 |
| | 83.1 | Worcester porcelain | 1 | 7 |
| | 85 | Whitewares | 256 | 546 |
| Modern | 81.4 | Miscellaneous late stoneware | 6 | 86 |
| | 101 | Miscellaneous modern wares | 6 | 31 |
| Undated | | unidentified | 1 | 1 |
| Totals | | | 619 | 1998 |

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type

5.2.4 Test pits

The finds are discussed below by test pit.

Test Pit 1: Aston Court

Test pit 1 produced 248 finds, weighing 953g.

The pottery from this test pit was a typical selection of 18th century redware, late 18th century creamware, and 19th to early 20th century transfer-printed whitewares. Interestingly, it also contained an unglazed whiteware 'waster' (reject), and fragments of kiln furniture including spacers (rings of white clay used to separate vessels in a kiln) and a piece of a saggar (large coarse clay drums within which pottery was placed to prevent contamination from kiln fumes). These finds are late 18th or 19th century in date. They sometimes turn up in rural settlements around Worcester because sacks of kiln waste were often sold off as rubble by the Worcester porcelain factories.

Other finds included: post-medieval roof tile and brick; a fragment from an iron cooking-pot; fragments of 18th and 19th century bottle glass; and a piece of heavily-pitted potash window glass. Precise dating of small fragments of window glass is difficult, but this type of glass tends to pre-date the late-16th century; the piece is probably, therefore, medieval or very early post-medieval.



Window glass that predates the late 16th century

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date |
|----------|----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|-----------|------------|----------|
| 1 | Post-medieval | 78 | Post-medieval red ware | redware | 3 | 9 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | | | unglazed redware | 6 | 7 | 1700 | 2000 |
| | | 81.5 | White salt-glazed stoneware | white salt-glazed stoneware | 1 | 13 | 1700 | 1800 |
| | | 82 | Tin-glazed ware | tin-glaze earthenware | 1 | 2 | 1590 | 1760 |
| | | 84 | Creamware / pearlware | creamware | 1 | 6 | 1760 | 1820 |
| | Post-medieval/modern | 83 | Porcelain | porcelain | 3 | 8 | 1750 | 2000 |
| | porcelain waster | | | 2 | 11 | 1750 | 2000 | |
| | Modern | 85 | Modern china | hand-painted whiteware | 1 | 2 | 1830 | 1870 |
| | transfer-printed whiteware | | | 7 | 26 | 1830 | 2000 | |
| | undecorated whiteware | | | 4 | 7 | 1820 | 2000 | |
| | Totals | | | | | 30 | 92 | |

Table 3: Test pit 1 pottery

Test Pit 2: Redfern House

Test pit 2 produced 179 finds, weighing 490g.

The pottery from this test pit includes 17th and 18th century redwares and slipware, late 18th century creamware, and 19th to early 20th century whitewares. Among the latter are some early 19th century examples of Spongeware, and some very nice hand-painted early 19th century cups. There are also several sherds of 17th to 19th century tin-glazed earthenware, some late 17th to late 18th century Nottingham stoneware, and a piece of 19th century engine-turned dipped earthenware. A small piece of imported German 'Westerwald' stoneware is also present.



Worcester porcelain: Royal Lily

One lovely find is a small piece of a porcelain teacup in Royal Worcester's 'Royal Lily' pattern. The popularity of this pattern saved the Royal Worcester company, after it impressed King George III so much that he ordered a breakfast service after a visit to the factory in 1788. The motif can be seen today in the planting scheme outside the front of the Hive.

The most significant sherds are two small, very abraded pieces of medieval pottery from spit 2, products of the Malvernian medieval pottery industry. One, with the traces of a thin glaze, resembles Early Malvernian glazed ware: large tripod pitchers in this fabric were made in the late 12th to mid-13th century. The other is a very small sherd of Malvernian unglazed ware, with characteristic reddish-brown surfaces. Cooking pots in this fabric were produced from the late 12th to mid-14th century; most well-dated examples are 13th century.

Other finds include clay tobacco pipe, brick, and roof slate.

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date | |
|----------|-----------------------|-------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------|----------|------|
| 2 | Medieval | 53 | Early Malvernian glazed ware | Early Malvernian glazed ware | 1 | 9 | 1100 | 1275 | |
| | | 56 | Malvernian unglazed ware | Malvernian unglazed ware | 1 | 3 | 1200 | 1400 | |
| | Post-medieval | 78 | | | redware | 26 | 118 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | | | | unglazed redware | 2 | 2 | 1700 | 2000 |
| | | 81.2 | Westerwald stoneware | Westerwald stoneware | 1 | 2 | 1600 | 1900 | |
| | | 81.3 | Nottingham stoneware | Nottingham stoneware | 2 | 1 | 1690 | 1790 | |
| | | 81.5 | White salt-glazed stoneware | white salt-glazed stoneware | 1 | 1 | 1720 | 1770 | |
| | | 82 | Tin-glazed ware | tin-glaze earthenware | 2 | 6 | 1590 | 1760 | |
| | | 84 | Creamware/pearlware | | creamware | 8 | 6 | 1760 | 1820 |
| | | | | | pearlware | 1 | 1 | 1775 | 1830 |
| | | 91 | Post-medieval buff wares | | factory slipware | 2 | 2 | 1775 | 1940 |
| | metropolitan slipware | | | | 1 | 7 | 1600 | 1750 | |
| | slipware | | | | 1 | 5 | 1670 | 1795 | |
| | | | yellowware | 5 | 5 | 1830 | 1940 | | |

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date | |
|----------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|----------|--|
| | Post-medieval/modern | 83 | Porcelain | hand-painted porcelain | 11 | 8 | 1750 | 1810 | |
| | | | | porcelain | 2 | 2 | 1750 | 2000 | |
| | | 83.1 | Worcester porcelain | Worcester porcelain | 1 | 7 | 1780 | 1850 | |
| | Modern | 85 | Modern china | flow blue whiteware | 1 | 3 | 1840 | 1900 | |
| | | | | sponge whiteware | 3 | 4 | 1840 | 1900 | |
| | | | | transfer-printed whiteware | 4 | 4 | 1830 | 2000 | |
| | | | | undecorated whiteware | 7 | 8 | 1820 | 2000 | |
| | | | | whiteware | 3 | 2 | 1820 | 2000 | |
| | 101 | Miscellaneous modern wares | | 1 | 1 | 1900 | 2000 | | |
| | | | | | Totals | 87 | 207 | | |

Table 4: Test pit 2 pottery

Test Pit 3: Elm Tree Cottage

Test pit 3 produced 152 finds, weighing 439g.

This test pit contained a typical range of post-medieval pottery: 18th century redware, late 17th to 18th century manganese mottled ware, and early 19th century transfer-printed and sponge-decorated whitewares. It also produced two sherds of late 16th to 19th century North Devon gravel-tempered ware, and some Ashton Keynes-type redware with an orange glaze.



Three heavily worn sherds of medieval pottery

One very worn fragment of medieval pottery is a 13th to 14th century piece of cooking pot, probably Malvernian unglazed ware; another is a Worcester-type cooking pot of similar date.

Clay tobacco pipe stem and bowl fragments were found, along with some well-worn ceramic building material including a fragment of sandy roof tile of 15th to 17th century date.

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|
| 3 | Medieval | 55 | Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware | Worcester-type unglazed ware | 1 | 2 | 1200 | 1400 |
| | | 56 | Malvernian unglazed ware | Malvernian unglazed ware | 1 | 3 | 1200 | 1400 |
| | | 99 | Miscellaneous medieval wares | oxidised earthenware | 1 | 1 | 1066 | 1500 |
| | Post-medieval | 81 | Stonewares | stoneware | 1 | 4 | 1500 | 1800 |
| | | 75 | North Devon gravel tempered ware | North Devon gravel-tempered ware | 2 | 33 | 1600 | 1700 |
| | | 78 | Post-medieval red ware | orange-glazed redware | 7 | 33 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | | | redware | 2 | 8 | 1700 | 1800 |
| | | | | redware | 1 | 4 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | | | unglazed redware | 1 | 2 | 1700 | 2000 |
| | | 81.2 | Westerwald stoneware | Westerwald stoneware | 1 | 1 | 1600 | 1750 |
| | 91 | Post-medieval buff wares | manganese mottled ware | 1 | 4 | 1680 | 1780 | |
| | | | slipware | 1 | 2 | 1670 | 1795 | |
| | Modern | 81.4 | Miscellaneous late stoneware | late stoneware | 1 | 18 | 1800 | 1950 |
| | | 85 | Modern china | transfer-printed whiteware | 10 | 18 | 1830 | 2000 |
| | | | | whiteware | 3 | 1 | 1820 | 2000 |
| Totals | | | | | 34 | 134 | | |

Table 5: Test pit 3 pottery

Test Pit 4: Sandfield Cottage

Test pit 4 produced 561 finds, weighing 1384g.

The pottery from this test pit includes 17th and 18th century redwares and slipware, late 18th century creamware, and 19th to early 20th century transfer-printed whitewares. A 'chequerboard'-patterned piece of German Westerwald stoneware is probably from an 18th century 'krug' tankard: many similar examples bearing the initials 'GR' (George Rex) were imported into Britain in the mid-18th century. Nottingham stoneware and several sherds of tin-glazed earthenware also confirm a lot of activity around the 18th century.

Two sherds of later medieval pottery — oxidised Malvernian glazed ware — are a 16th and early 17th century type of pottery which would have been common in every Worcestershire household.

Clay tobacco pipe, a copper alloy button, and lots of ceramic building material were also found, along with plenty of fragments of animal bone and tooth – the latter probably butchery waste.



*German Westerwald stoneware:
18th century tankard*

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date |
|----------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|-----------|------------|----------|
| 4 | Medieval/ Post-medieval | 69 | Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware | Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware | 1 | 5 | 1400 | 1620 |
| | | | | Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware | 1 | 4 | 1500 | 1630 |
| | Post-medieval | 78 | Post-medieval red ware | abraded redware | 2 | 8 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | | | redware | 5 | 4 | 1700 | 1800 |
| | | | | redware | 29 | 179 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | | | unglazed redware | 4 | 12 | 1700 | 2000 |
| | | 81 | Stonewares | Nottingham stoneware | 1 | 1 | 1690 | 1810 |
| | | 81.2 | Westerwald stoneware | Westerwald stoneware | 1 | 13 | 1725 | 1750 |
| | | 81.5 | White salt-glazed stoneware | white salt-glazed stoneware | 2 | 2 | 1720 | 1770 |
| | | | | white salt-glazed stoneware | 1 | 1 | 1720 | 1770 |
| | | | | white s-g stoneware, scratch colour | 1 | 1 | 1744 | 1775 |
| | | 82 | Tin-glazed ware | powdered tin-glazed earthenware | 1 | 2 | 1630 | 1760 |
| | | | | tin-glaze earthenware | 4 | 3 | 1590 | 1760 |
| | | | | tin-glaze earthenware | 1 | 11 | 1590 | 1730 |
| | | 84 | Creamware/ pearlware | creamware | 14 | 10 | 1760 | 1820 |
| | pearlware | | | 3 | 5 | 1775 | 1830 | |
| | 91 | Post-medieval buff wares | manganese mottled ware | 8 | 39 | 1680 | 1780 | |

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date |
|----------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|---|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| | | | | slipware | 1 | 1 | 1700 | 1800 |
| | | | | slipware | 3 | 21 | 1670 | 1795 |
| | | | | slipware: Staffordshire trail/dot | 2 | 17 | 1670 | 1795 |
| | | | | yellowware | 6 | 15 | 1830 | 1940 |
| | Post-medieval/ modern | 83 | Porcelain | porcelain | 10 | 8 | 1750 | 2000 |
| | Modern | 81.4 | Miscellaneous late stoneware | late stoneware | 1 | 1 | 1800 | 1950 |
| | | 85 | Modern china | edge-moulded whiteware | 3 | 2 | 1800 | 1900 |
| | | | | hand-painted whiteware | 4 | 6 | 1830 | 1870 |
| | | | | transfer-printed whiteware | 23 | 39 | 1830 | 2000 |
| | | | | undecorated whiteware | 20 | 11 | 1820 | 2000 |
| | | | | whiteware | 1 | 1 | 1820 | 2000 |
| | Totals | | | | 153 | 422 | | |

Table 6: Test pit 4 pottery

Test Pit 5: The Old Vicarage

Test pit 5 produced 632 finds, weighing 3184g.

This test pit contained a large quantity of porcelain, including a 'biscuit-fired' porcelain waster, rejected before glazing. A variety and large quantity of 19th and early 20th century whitewares were also present, including examples of Booth's silicon china, and Royal Venton Ware, both probably dating to the early 20th century.

Some Nottingham stoneware and refined earthenware attest to activity in the 18th century as well.

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 5 | Post-medieval | 81 | Stonewares | Nottingham stoneware | 1 | 4 | 1690 | 1810 |
| | | | | stoneware | 1 | 1 | 1600 | 1900 |
| | | 78 | Post-medieval red ware | brown-glazed redware | 1 | 3 | 1700 | 1900 |
| | | | | redware | 7 | 11 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | | | unglazed redware | 17 | 115 | 1700 | 2000 |
| | | | | unglazed redware | 5 | 27 | 1600 | 2000 |
| | | 84 | Creamware/pearlware | creamware | 12 | 11 | 1760 | 1820 |
| | | 90 | Post-medieval orange ware | unglazed orange earthenware | 2 | 17 | 1600 | 1900 |
| | | 91 | Post-medieval buff wares | Whieldon-type ware | 1 | 1 | 1740 | 1775 |
| | | | | yellowware | 2 | 2 | 1830 | 1940 |
| | Post-medieval/modern | 83 | Porcelain | porcelain | 36 | 72 | 1750 | 2000 |
| | | | | porcelain waster | 1 | 3 | 1750 | 2000 |
| | Modern | 81.4 | Miscellaneous late stoneware | late stoneware | 3 | 60 | 1800 | 1950 |
| | | | | hand-painted whiteware | 4 | 34 | 1830 | 1870 |
| | | 85 | Modern china | sponge whiteware | 2 | 2 | 1840 | 1900 |
| | | | | transfer-printed whiteware | 1 | 2 | 1897 | 1936 |
| | | | | transfer-printed whiteware | 1 | 13 | 1906 | 1930 |
| | | | | transfer-printed whiteware | 9 | 14 | 1830 | 2000 |
| | | | | undecorated whiteware | 18 | 47 | 1830 | 2000 |
| | | | | undecorated whiteware | 68 | 147 | 1820 | 2000 |
| 101 | | Miscellaneous modern wares | hand-painted whiteware | 1 | 1 | 1800 | 2000 | |
| | | | whiteware | 1 | 5 | 1800 | 2000 | |
| | whiteware | | 1 | 18 | 1900 | 2000 | | |
| Totals | | | | | 195 | 610 | | |

Table 7: Test pit 5 pottery

Test Pit 6: Nightingale Cottage

Test pit 6 produced 230 finds, weighing 2829g.

This test pit contained large quantities of vessel glass, and some abraded building materials.

The pottery included two pieces of medieval Worcester-type cooking pot. One of these was an unusually fresh and intact section of the rim of a squared-rimmed jar. These distinctive 'type 1' vessels were produced from the late 11th century, and were no longer in circulation by the end of the 12th century. This makes this an exciting find: the earliest definitively dated piece of pottery from these test pits.



Medieval square-rimmed jar of a type commonly made in Worcester from the late 11th to 12th century

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------|------|------|
| 6 | Medieval | 55 | Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware | Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware | 1 | 2 | 1075 | 1400 | | |
| | | | | Type 1 squared-rimmed jar | 1 | 21 | 1066 | 1175 | | |
| | Post-medieval | 78 | Post-medieval red ware | unglazed redware | 1 | 2 | 1600 | 2000 | | |
| | | | | 78.1 | Red sandy ware | redware | 2 | 10 | 1700 | 1800 |
| | | | | 84 | Creamware/pearlware | creamware | 3 | 3 | 1760 | 1820 |
| | pearlware | 2 | 1 | | | 1775 | 1830 | | | |
| | Post-medieval/modern | 83 | Porcelain | porcelain | 1 | 3 | 1750 | 2000 | | |
| | Modern | 81.4 | Miscellaneous late stoneware | late stoneware | 1 | 7 | 1800 | 1950 | | |
| | | | | 85 | Modern china | transfer-printed whiteware | 4 | 8 | 1820 | 2000 |
| | | | | | | undecorated whiteware | 17 | 56 | 1830 | 2000 |
| 101 | Miscellaneous modern wares | 20th century whiteware | 1 | 4 | 1900 | 2000 | | | | |
| Totals | | | | | 34 | 117 | | | | |

Table 8: Test pit 6 pottery

Test Pit 7: Paddock, Aston Court Farm

Test pit 7 produced 163 finds, weighing 1794g.

Besides a healthy quantity of 18th century pottery including a body sherd from a very large redware pancheon (open bowl), this test pit yielded some interesting and attractive mid/late-19th century whitewares, especially examples of sponge-decorated and hand-painted wares.

Kiln spacers, pottery wasters, and a fragment of 'saggar' (large, coarse ceramic drums containing the porcelain within the kiln to protect it from the fumes and ensure even heat distribution) were all pottery production waste, probably from the Worcester porcelain works.



Kiln spacer fragments: probably bought from Worcester porcelain works as hardcore

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date |
|----------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|-----------|------------|----------|
| 7 | Post-medieval | 78 | Post-medieval red ware | redware | 1 | 2 | 1700 | 1800 |
| | | | | redware | 6 | 174 | 1600 | 1800 |
| | | 81.5 | White salt-glazed stoneware | white salt-glazed stoneware | 1 | 2 | 1690 | 1800 |
| | | 82 | Tin-glazed ware | tin-glaze earthenware | 1 | 1 | 1590 | 1760 |
| | | 84 | Creamware/pearlware | creamware | 5 | 11 | 1760 | 1820 |
| | | | | hand-painted creamware | 1 | 3 | 1760 | 1820 |
| | | | | hand-painted pearlware | 1 | 3 | 1775 | 1830 |
| | | | | pearlware | 8 | 12 | 1775 | 1830 |
| | | 91 | Post-medieval buff wares | factory slipware | 4 | 4 | 1775 | 1940 |
| | | | | Jackfield-type | 1 | 51 | 1740 | 1795 |
| | | | | manganese mottled ware | 1 | 1 | 1680 | 1780 |
| | | | | trailed slipware | 2 | 12 | 1670 | 1795 |
| | | | | yellowware | 13 | 46 | 1830 | 1940 |
| | 100 | Miscellaneous post-medieval wares | ?burnt | 1 | 3 | 1680 | 1800 | |
| | Post-medieval/modern | 83 | Porcelain | ?porcelain: burnt | 2 | 3 | 1750 | 2000 |
| | | | | porcelain | 2 | 2 | 1750 | 2000 |
| | Modern | 85 | Modern china | flow blue whiteware | 1 | 2 | 1840 | 1900 |
| | | | | hand-painted whiteware | 2 | 5 | 1830 | 1870 |
| | | | | sponge whiteware | 1 | 2 | 1840 | 1900 |
| | | | | transfer-printed | 16 | 42 | 1820 | 2000 |

| Test pit | Broad period | fabric code | Fabric common name | Specific ware | count | weight(g) | start date | end date |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|
| | | | | whiteware | | | | |
| | | | | undecorated whiteware | 12 | 27 | 1830 | 2000 |
| | | | | whiteware | 7 | 13 | 1800 | 2000 |
| | | 101 | Miscellaneous modern wares | whiteware | 1 | 2 | 1870 | 1940 |
| Totals | | | | | 90 | 423 | | |

Table 9: Test pit 7 pottery

Test Pit 8: Old Gardens

Test pit 8 produced 43 finds, weighing 138g.

No pottery was recovered, appearing to confirm that test pit 8 lay outside of the historic core of domestic activity within the village. It did, however, contain fragments of undiagnostic brick and tile, together with vessel glass, and a single fragment of post-medieval clay tobacco pipe.

6 Conclusions

Below, the results of the finds analyses are combined together with excavation and historical evidence to assess and summarise each test pit individually. The overall finds assemblage is then discussed and the project results placed within the wider context of Worcestershire and research that has taken place elsewhere in the country.

Test Pit 1

The bulk of this finds assemblage dates from the 18th century onwards, which coincides with the date of the present Aston Court Farm house. Due to the shallow depth at which the natural geology was encountered (30cm below ground level) and fact that it was only overlain by a single, well worked topsoil deposit (see Plate 1), it is likely that re-landscaping associated with the 18th century farmhouse resulted in ground truncation and the loss of earlier archaeological deposits. Nearby medieval occupation is hinted at by a fragment of probable medieval window glass and three pieces of late medieval to early post-medieval roof tile. These building materials suggest a relatively high status building and may support the theory that a medieval moat lay immediately north of the present farm buildings. Aston Court is recorded to have been plundered by Cromwell's army during the Civil War – it is feasible that these fragments of building material relate to this incident, or resulting building demolition/ work.

Test Pit 2

As expected, most of the finds from Redfern House are 17th century or later in date and relate directly to the occupation of this 17th century timber framed building. The presence of abraded medieval pottery less than 20cm below the present ground level demonstrates that these deposits have been heavily re-worked. It is interesting to note that one of the medieval pottery sherds is relatively early in date (late 12th to mid-13th century) and comes from around the time St John's Church was built nearby. Whilst the presence of these two pot sherds indicates that medieval occupation occurred nearby, the possibility that they were spread on fields as part of standard medieval manuring practices cannot be ruled out due to their heavily abraded condition.

Test Pit 3

The test pit at Elm Tree Cottage produced the highest number of medieval pottery sherds, although at a date of 13th – 14th century none of these three sherds relate to the very earliest medieval occupation known in White Ladies Aston. Elm Tree Cottage is located just south of a probable ancient trackway and backs on to a field immediately east that contains earthworks. Whilst most are ridge and furrow earthworks resulting from ploughing activity, meaning that the medieval pottery may have come from manure spreading, these earthworks have never been fully analysed. LiDAR coverage of White Ladies Aston records these earthworks well – an initial assessment of the LiDAR images raises the possibility that a row of medieval buildings (tofts) with adjoined crofts (individual strips of smallholding land) fronted the road that formerly ran between Nightingale Cottage and Aston Moat Farm. This theory would fit with the finds from Elm Tree Cottage, which suggest that it is close to but not on the site of medieval occupation.

Unlike Test Pits 1 and 2, the finds assemblage does not show a clear start date for occupation associated with the present cottage, although a dwelling is likely to have existed on this plot since the 17th century.

Test Pit 4

Sandfield Cottage sits within a cluster of 17th century houses along Evesham Road and lies closer to Aston Moat Farm than the church. A few sherds of 16th to early 17th century pottery suggest that the cottage may have been built early on in the 17th century, but the main bulk of the finds assemblage dates as expected from the later 17th and 18th centuries onwards. The presence of animal bone and a button alongside a high quantity of pottery confirms that this test pit was located over a former midden area, where domestic rubbish was thrown out the back of the cottage.

The excavated deposits have been heavily worked over, as illustrated by the presence of modern pottery over 30m below the present ground level. Whilst this test pit did not reach the natural geology, meaning that further archaeological layers remain unexcavated (see Plate 4), any earlier artefacts present are likely to have been disturbed and mixed up within later layers. It is therefore considered that the absence of medieval pottery from this test pit most likely reflects a genuine absence of medieval occupation – this area probably formed part of the surrounding agricultural landscape until the 17th century. The possibility of undisturbed medieval or earlier layers existing below the depth of excavation cannot be entirely ruled out though.

Test Pit 5

It is clear from this finds assemblage and charcoal stained soil (Plate 5) that the test pit was located over a deposit of 19th and early 20th century refuse, with some evidence for 18th century activity. These dates tie in well with the present house, which was built as a vicarage in the early 18th century and remodelled during the late 18th or early 19th century. This building work, together with the large quantity of porcelain and china found, demonstrates the vicarage's high status within the village and suggests the incumbent vicars' enjoyed an increase in their social standing, or at least more lavish spending, during the 19th century.

The test pit did not reach natural geology due to a lack of time. Below the dump of domestic refuse (context 500) was a considerably lighter, less charcoal stained layer. This lower deposit (context 501) was not fully excavated, but post-medieval finds within the top of it demonstrate that the refuse dump has sealed earlier archaeological deposits. The stark difference in colour and composition of these two contexts implies that extensive soil reworking, common in gardens, has not taken place to churn up and mix these deposits. Unlike Test Pit 4, is therefore considered that the absence of medieval pottery may not reflect a genuine lack of medieval activity at this location.

Test Pit 6

It is perhaps unsurprising that the oldest artefact found came from the test pit adjacent to a holloway and ancient trackway. Interestingly, this late 11th or 12th century pot sherd is not particularly abraded, implying that it has not travelled far from where it was used and thrown away.

Nightingale Cottage is also located near to possible Roman and Saxon settlements further east along the trackway – as the only test pit with physical evidence for the Domesday era settlement recorded at Aston, this pottery is tentative confirmation that there has been continuity of occupation here since the Anglo-Saxon era, if not Roman. The remainder of the finds assemblage relates to occupation of the 17th century timber framed cottage.

Test Pit 7

This test pit was located over an historically recorded farm, first depicted on an 1804 map as 'Lack's Farm' (Fig 4) and present until sometime after 1884, as it is shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey but not the 1903 edition. All artefacts found at Test Pit 7 date from the 18th and 19th centuries, confirming that the farm was most likely built during the 18th century. It is interesting that kiln furniture and waste, probably purchased from Worcester Porcelain Works as rubble for hard standing and trackways, was only found in notable quantities at the two farm sites – Tests Pits 1 and 7.

Test Pit 8

Made ground associated with the extension and conversion of a barn into the present house was found in this test pit (Plate 8). A fragment of clay pipe does suggest though that any artefacts present were incorporated into these re-landscaping deposits. The general absence of finds and charcoal within the soil confirms that this area lay outside the historic settlement and within the agricultural land surrounding White Ladies Aston. Curving boundary divisions and the elongated nature of the plot of land within which Old Gardens sits does suggest that this area may have been subject to medieval ploughing.

6.1 Finds synthesis, by Rob Hedge

The finds reflect a long history of domestic occupation in White Ladies Aston, with evidence stretching back almost 1000 years. Medieval pottery is sparse but present within Test Pits 2, 3, 4, and 6, clustered near to the historic core of the village.

Across the village, there is a notable increase in the quantity of pottery from the mid-18th century onwards. Whilst it may in part reflect increases in population, it is also likely to owe something to the manufacturing innovations that increased both the availability and affordability of refined tablewares from the mid-18th century.

As would generally be expected for a settlement in this area, the residents of White Ladies Aston seem to have sourced their pots from the medieval production centres at Worcester (11th to 14th century) and Malvern (12th to early 17th century). By the mid-17th century, the ubiquitous black-glazed Midlands redwares are dominant, although the tin-glazed earthenwares probably came from southern England or even the Continent. Imports are present in the form of the 18th century German Westerwald stonewares. Slipwares from Staffordshire and also probably the Bristol region make an appearance from the later 17th century, along with other regional products such as manganese mottled ware.

The majority of the 18th century refined wares — including the white salt-glazed stonewares, creamware, Jackfield ware, pearlware, Whieldon ware, and the engine-turned 'factory' slipware — were probably produced in Staffordshire, though a few more local enterprises (such as the Kidderminster creamware kiln) cannot be excluded. The majority of the porcelain is likely to have come from the Worcester works; it is difficult to establish how much was present within local households as opposed to arriving in sacks of factory waste for use as cheap hardcore. Certainly the presence of kiln spacers, wasters, and saggar fragments indicate that the locals were making use of factory waste.

With the advent of cheap, mass-produced whitewares in the 19th century, distribution of tablewares became very widespread. Regional trends are still visible: large quantities of unglazed redwares for agricultural and horticultural use were present within the test pits, representing country potting traditions surviving probably into the early 20th century.

6.2 White Ladies Aston in context

The results from these test pits tentatively suggest that the earliest medieval occupation occurred around the church and ancient trackway, at the northern end of the present village. It is possible that this settlement was part of continuous occupation in the area since the Anglo-Saxon and even Roman era. Little evidence of late medieval and early post-medieval occupation has been found, raising the possibility that the settlement contracted during this period or the occupation focus shifted away from the church to areas not investigated by test pits. During the 17th century many new houses were built on sites that were previously unoccupied, implying that the village grew in prosperity and potentially size, as these dwellings did not simply replace earlier buildings.

Much academic discussion and research is given over to studying the form of medieval rural settlements and whether or not they were formally planned. Within Worcestershire, a broad pattern of rural medieval settlement forms can be seen, with more nucleated settlements occurring in the Cotswold scarp and an increasing tendency towards dispersed settlement forms in the west of the county, although a variety of rural medieval settlement layouts are seen across the region (Hunt 2011: 175).

A clustering of medieval activity can be seen around the church in White Ladies Aston, but due to the limited number of test pits excavated so far it is not possible to see whether other areas of medieval settlement also existed. It is likely that some occupation occurred around the moated site at Aston Moat Farm as well, although results from Test Pits 4, 7 and 8 suggest that settlement did not extend west of the present day Evesham Road or south of Aston Hall Farm.

Extensive investigations by Professor Carenza Lewis have demonstrated that Currently Occupied Rural Settlements (CORS) in East Anglia typically have their origins in the late Anglo-Saxon or medieval era. Many of these settlements then display a sharp decline in pottery finds during the 14th and 15th centuries, interpreted as population and settlement reduction due to the Black Death. On the whole, it is only during the post-medieval period that these settlements pick up again and grow (Lewis 2009). Within Worcestershire, very few excavations aimed at researching the origins, form and growth of rural settlements have taken place, so it is not yet known how the development of CORS within Worcestershire compares to other regions.

A similar pattern of late medieval decline and post-medieval renewal can also be seen in the White Ladies Aston test pitting results. However, caution is needed due to the small scale of the investigations, meaning that detailed conclusions cannot be reliably extrapolated from the limited dataset – Lewis has suggested that 15 to 30 test pits are needed to form an adequate picture (Lewis 2007). It is also worth noting that the Black Death broadly coincides with a decline in the use of ceramic cooking pots, which typically form an integral part of medieval pottery assemblages in Worcestershire, in favour of metal cooking vessels (Derek Hurst *pers comm*).

6.3 Research frameworks

The West Midlands Regional Research Framework states that in "Worcestershire, despite some significant, essentially documentary, case studies, [medieval] rural settlement has not been sufficiently prioritised" (Hunt 2011: 176). This test pitting project therefore makes an important contribution to a neglected area of research. More excavation and research is needed though, both in White Ladies Aston and CORS across Worcestershire in order to establish detailed histories of individual villages and patterns that can be compared with other regions. It is hoped that this project will be just the beginning of many to take place across Worcestershire.

7 Significance

These test pitting results add valuable knowledge to our understanding of how and where the settlement of White Ladies Aston developed. Significantly, it has also provided the first archaeological evidence for early medieval occupation in the village and demonstrates the

potential value of test pitting projects in rural settlements within Worcestershire. Further test pits are clearly needed to enhance our understanding of occupation at White Ladies Aston, but as this is only the second community test pitting project in a Worcestershire village, it is an important step towards redressing the research imbalance between deserted and currently occupied rural medieval settlements.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Further archaeological work

A second phase of test pitting in White Ladies Aston, to add to the current results, would be extremely valuable. However, the current methodology needs reviewing as most test pits did not reach the natural geology, meaning that earlier archaeological layers remain unexcavated.

This problem was also encountered during the community test pitting project at Hanley Castle in 2010-11. Deep post-medieval 'dark earth' deposits were recorded there, resulting from pottery industry waste and domestic fuel debris, which partially accounted for several test pits not reaching the bottom of the archaeological sequence (Webster *et al.* 2012). Test pits were also excavated in one day, rather than the two days taken here. A few test pits in White Ladies Aston, especially Test Pits 4 and 7, encountered deep post-medieval waste deposits as well, although these are likely to be localised dumps rather than a widespread deposit, as at Hanley Castle.

Due to the social aims of *Small Pits, Big Ideas*, test pits were excavated by Looked After Children under expert guidance and supervision. The group of participating children were younger (mostly 8-12 years of age) than those who participate in the highly successful *Higher Education Field Academies*, run in East Anglia by Carenza Lewis and Access Cambridge Archaeology. From an archaeological point of view, future test pitting work is likely to be more successful if undertaken by teenagers and adults, with different or more heavily supported archaeological activities designed for younger children. Several Green Fingers staff reported that the excavation days were too long for some of the children who participated, so a revised programme of activities would hopefully be beneficial to young participants as well as improving the archaeological outcomes.

8.2 Discard and retention

The majority of the pottery — with the exception of the medieval pottery and a small quantity of significant post-medieval material — is not considered likely to meet Museums Worcestershire collection criteria. An alternative use, in local display, a local teaching collection, or artistic use, could be considered.

9 Project Summary

A community test pitting project, Small Pits, Big Ideas, was undertaken in White Ladies Aston by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service in 2017-18, on behalf of Worcestershire Archaeological Society. The project, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, worked with the Green Fingers Project and University of Worcester to enable local Looked After Children to excavate a series of eight test pits in gardens and open spaces across the village of White Ladies Aston, Worcestershire (SO 92167 52241). Test pits were excavated in spits, following Professor Carenza Lewis' methodology, and pottery was used as a proxy indicator for the presence and density of occupation nearby.

The results from these test pits tentatively suggest that the earliest medieval occupation occurred around the church and ancient trackway, at the northern end of the present village. It is possible that this settlement was part of continuous occupation in the area since the Anglo-Saxon and even Roman era. Little evidence of late medieval and early post-medieval occupation has been found, raising the possibility that the settlement contracted during this period or the occupation focus shifted away from the church to areas not investigated by test pits. During the 17th century many

new houses were built on sites that were previously unoccupied, implying that the village grew in prosperity and potentially size at this time, as these dwellings did not simply replace earlier buildings.

10 Acknowledgements

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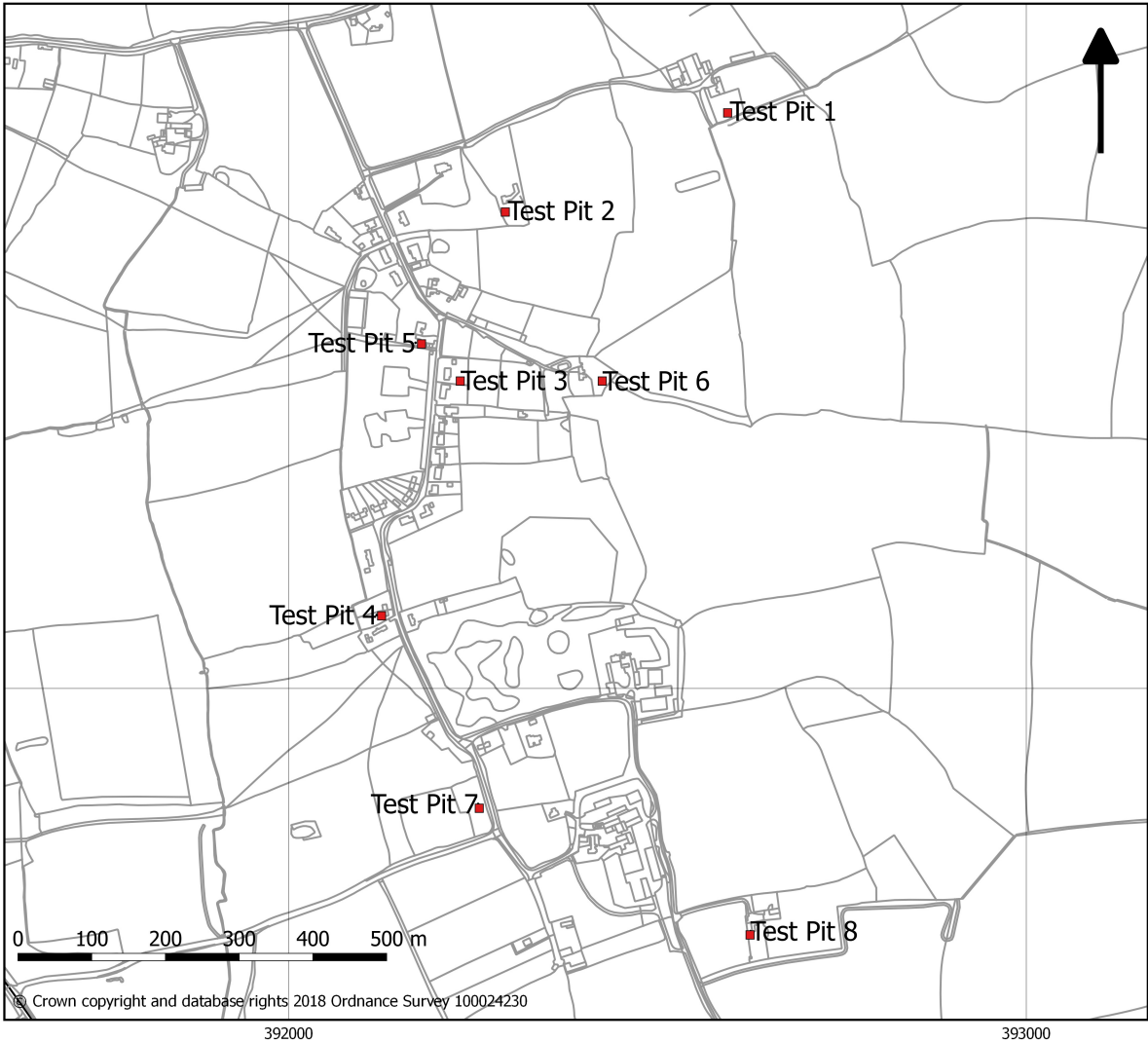
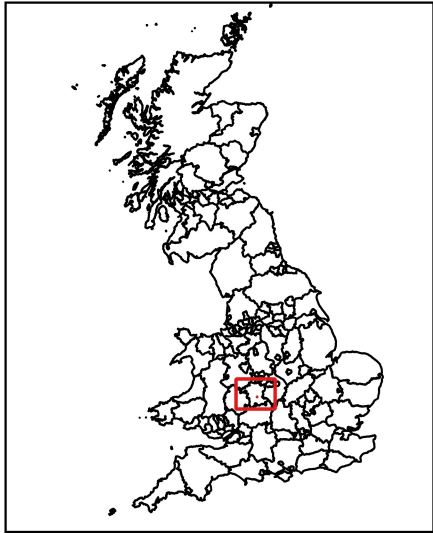
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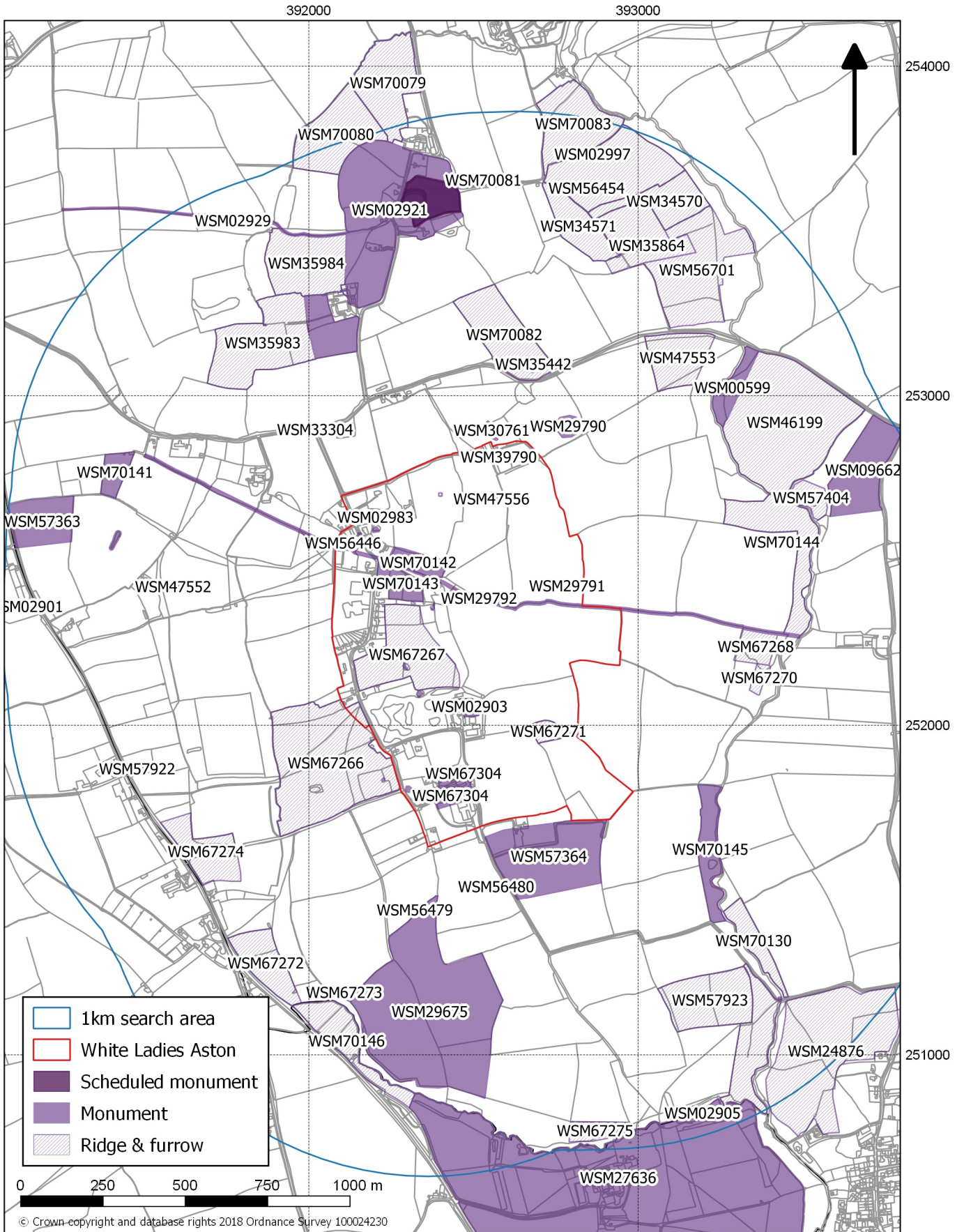
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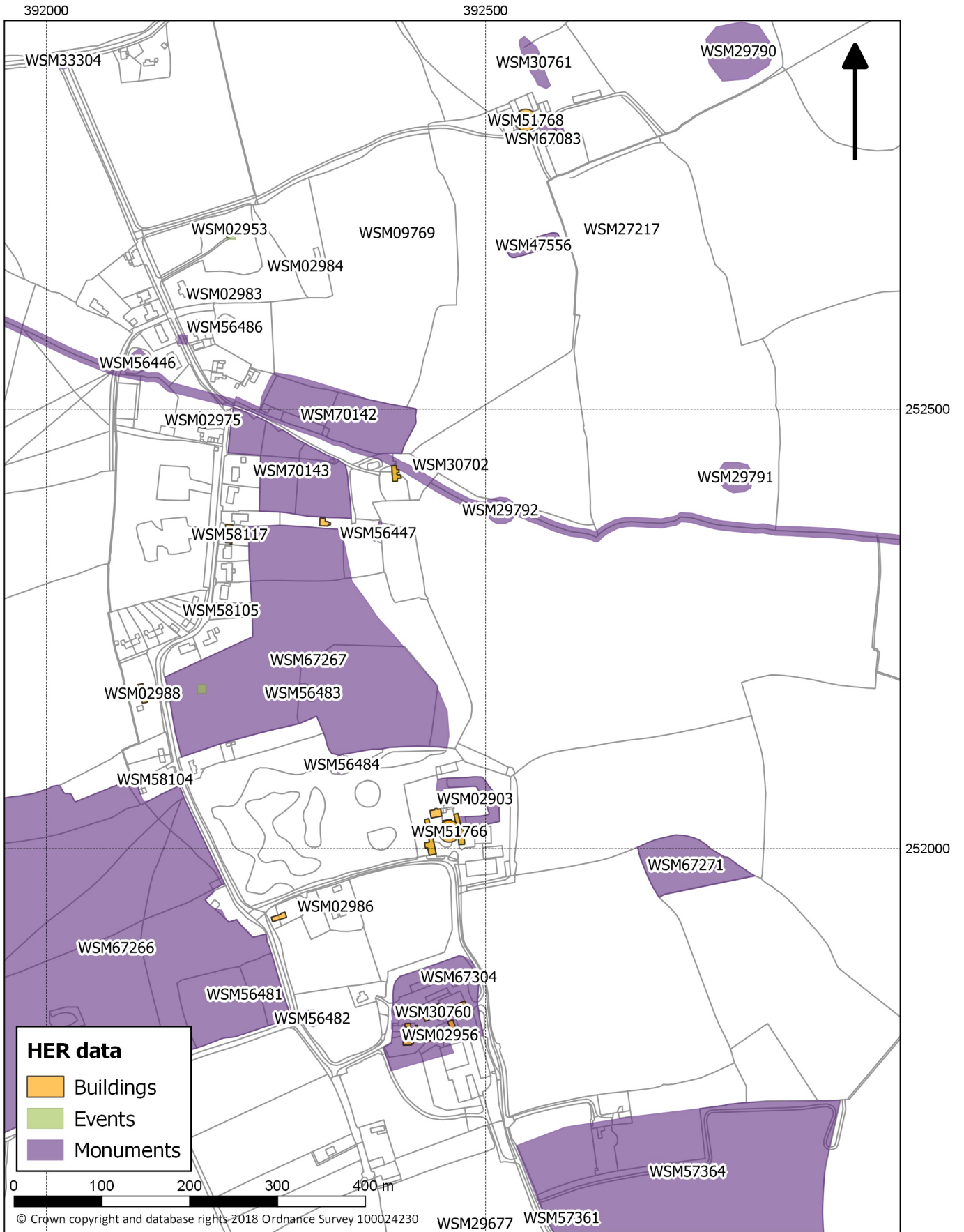
Location of test pits

Figure 1



HER monuments

Figure 2



HER events, monuments & listed buildings in White Ladies Aston

Figure 3



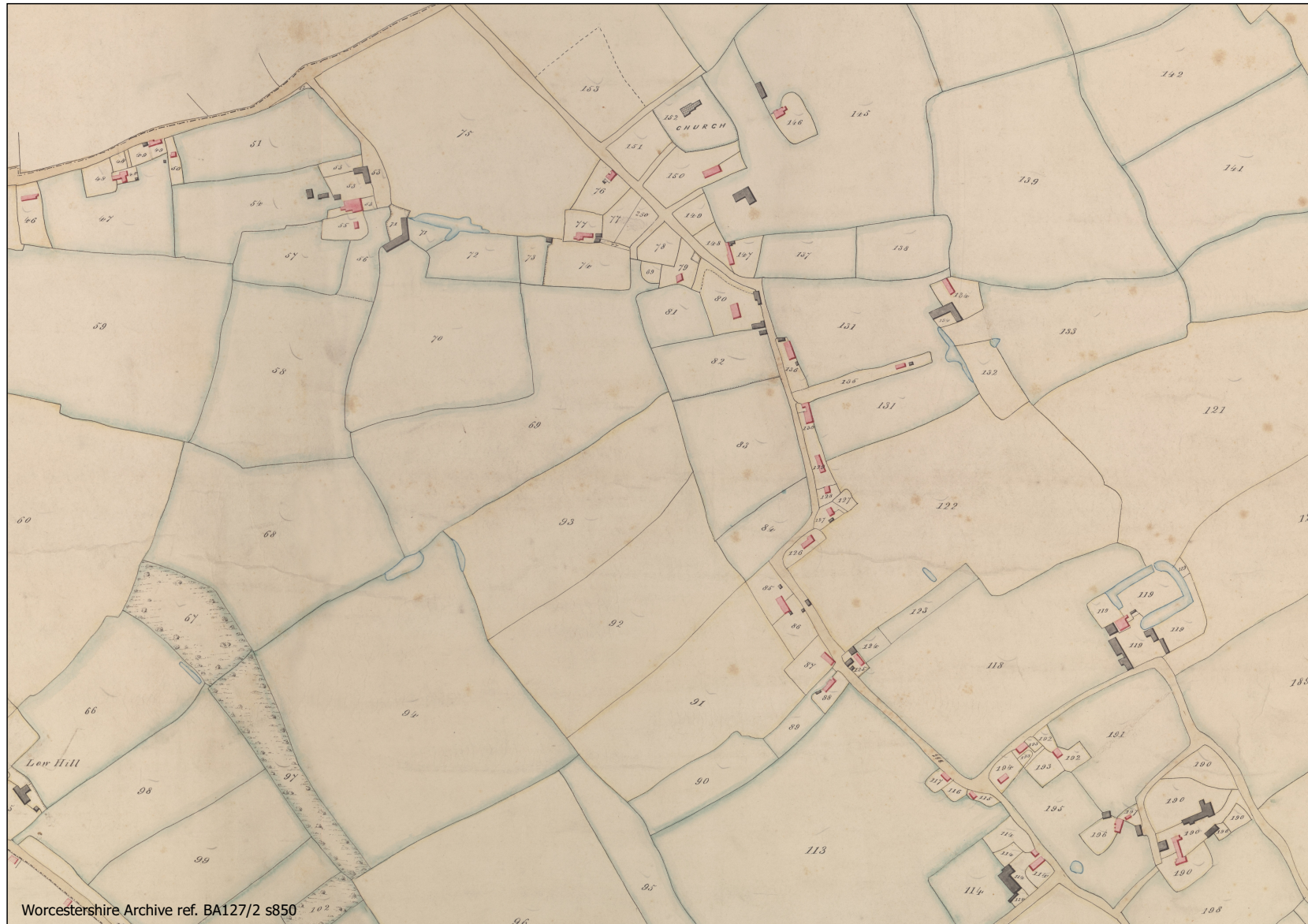
1804 Manor of Aston Episcopi boundary map

Figure 4



1825 White Ladies Aston Inclosure Map

Figure 5



Worcestershire Archive ref. BA127/2 s850

1838 White Ladies Aston tithe map

Figure 6

Plates



Plate 1: Natural gravel and sand geology at base of Test Pit 1 – photo looking north



Plate 2: Test Pit 2, showing top of spit 3 – photo looking south-east



Plate 3: Final depth of Test Pit 3, showing unexcavated spit 5 – photo looking north



Plate 4: Side of Test Pit 4 showing section through layers excavated – photo looking north



Plate 5: Side of Test Pit 5 showing dark layer of rubbish and hearth waste with lighter layer below just appearing – photo looking north



Plate 6: Test Pit 6 just before backfilling, with large iron object protruding out of test pit edge – photo looking north-west



Plate 7: Side of Test Pit 7 showing thick dark layer of household rubbish and lighter layer below just beginning to appear – photo looking east



Plate 8: Step in Test Pit 8 after encountering plastic sheeting filled with gravel (on left) – photo looking north

Appendix 1: Context descriptions

Test Pit 1

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|----------------|--|-------|---|
| 100 | Topsoil | Soft dark brownish-black loam with frequent charcoal and occasional sub-rounded pebbles and material culture, including patches of crushed egg shells. | 1 – 2 | 0 – 30cm |
| 101 | Natural | Mid pinky-orange clayey sand with patches of sub-rounded pebbles. | 3 | 30cm + |

Test Pit 2

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|-----------------------|--|-------|---|
| 200 | Topsoil | Soft dark brownish-black sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks, pottery and rare sub-angular pebbles. | 1 – 3 | 0 – 25cm |
| 201 | Garden soil / subsoil | Mid orangey brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks, rooting, pottery, brick fragments and glass. | 4 | 25 – 38cm |

Test Pit 3

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|----------------|---|-------|---|
| 300 | Topsoil | Friable mid orangey-brown sandy silt with frequent rooting from adjacent beech hedge, fruit stones, rare charcoal flecks, pottery and other material culture. | 1 – 3 | 0 – 30cm |
| 301 | Subsoil | Friable light orangey-brown sandy silt with infrequent sub-rounded pebbles, occasional rooting and rare charcoal flecks. | 4 – 5 | 30 – 50cm |

Test Pit 4

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|-----------------------|--|-------|---|
| 400 | Topsoil | Friable dark brownish-black loam with occasional charcoal flecks, small and medium sub-rounded pebbles, rooting and cultural material (pottery, glass, slate and clay pipe). | 1 – 3 | 0 – 30cm |
| 401 | Garden soil / subsoil | Friable mid orangey brown sandy silt with abundant charcoal flecks, occasional small sub-rounded pebbles and cultural material. | 4 – 5 | 30 – 50cm |

Test Pit 5

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|----------------|--|-------|---|
| 500 | Garden soil | Moderately compact dark brownish-black sandy loam, covered by gravel, with frequent charcoal flecks, pottery, glass and small sub-rounded pebbles. | 1 – 4 | 0 – 40cm |
| 501 | Subsoil | Moderately compact mid orangey-brown clay silt with frequent small sub-rounded pebbles/ gravel element and occasional charcoal and pottery. | 5 | 40 – 44cm |

Test Pit 6

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|------------------|--|-------|---|
| 600 | Topsoil | Moderately compact dark brownish-black clay silt with occasional charcoal flecks, sub-rounded pebbles and material culture, including brick fragments and ferrous objects. | 1 – 2 | 0 – 20cm |
| 601 | Subsoil | Moderately compact mid orangey-brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and sub-rounded pebbles. | 3 | 20 – 35cm |
| 602 | Earlier subsoil? | Mid brownish-orange sandy clay containing charcoal flecks, pottery and frequent sub-rounded pebbles. Context only just visible at base of test pit. Potentially a mucky interface with the natural substrate, but 602 is more likely to be an earlier subsoil. | 4 | 35cm + |

Test Pit 7

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|---------------------------------------|---|-------|---|
| 700 | Topsoil | Moderately compact dark brownish-black clay silt with frequent charcoal flecks, rare small sub-rounded pebbles and frequent material culture. | 1 – 5 | 0 – 45cm |
| 701 | Activity layer, possibly made ground? | Mid brownish-orange clay silt containing pottery, occasional charcoal flecks and rare small sub-rounded pebbles. | 6 | 45cm – 48cm+ |

Test Pit 8

| Context | Classification | Description | Spits | Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits |
|---------|------------------------|---|-------|---|
| 800 | Topsoil | Friable dark blackish-brown clay silt containing moderate rooting, infrequent glass, brick fragments, and rare charcoal pieces. | 1 – 4 | 0 – 25cm |
| 801 | Construction layer | Moderately compact mid greyish-brown silty clay containing building rubble, sub-rounded pebbles and rare charcoal flecks, overlying plastic sheeting filled with gravel to western side. | 4 | 25 – 30cm |
| 802 | Subsoil / made ground? | Moderately compact mid orangey-brown silty clay containing rare charcoal flecks. Only seen underneath plastic sheeting in excavated step on eastern side of the test pit. May be subsoil or a construction/landscaping related deposit. | 5 – 6 | 30 – 40cm + |

Appendix 2: Common types of local medieval and post-medieval pottery

11.1 Medieval cooking pot, 12th to 14th century

Coarse, earthenware cooking pots were made in most major towns and cities across medieval England. We often find them covered in soot from cooking fires.

They're often dull grey or brown, with a gritty texture and visible inclusions, and can be hard to distinguish from Iron Age and Roman fabrics at first sight.

In the later medieval period, technological advances and increasing wages (due to labour shortages caused by the Black Death) made metal pots more affordable, and ceramic cooking pots disappear from the archaeological record.

Most found in this area were made in or around:

Worcester (Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware, fabric 55:
<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/2>)

Malvern (Malvernian unglazed ware, fabric 56:
<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/3>).

11.2 Worcester-type 'sandy' ware, 13th to 14th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/5>

Highly decorated jugs and pitchers covered in splashes of green lead-based glaze were made in most major cities in the medieval period.

They tend to have inclusions, visible by eye, of quartz, stone or shell, and will vary in colour: often with a grey core and buff/orange/brown surfaces

11.3 Oxidised glazed Malvernian ware, 13th to early 17th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/6>

This pottery, made in the area around Hanley Castle, is usually orange, sometimes with a grey core, and has a mottled orange glaze with green speckles caused by the addition of copper. It was made from the 13th century onwards, but is most commonly found within deposits of 16th to early 17th century date – in this period in this it was virtually the only local earthenware available.

11.4 Post-medieval 'redware', late 16th to early 19th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/196>

Cheap and robust, this earthenware pottery has a red body with few visible inclusions, and glossy dark glaze. It was the staple of a country household, made in a wide variety of forms including 'pancheons' (mixing bowls), mugs, and chamberpots.

It emerged from earlier 'Cistercian'-type wares, the most common form being fine walled drinking vessels with multiple handles, known as 'tygs' <https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/forms/441>.

Black or dark brown glazes are common in the upper Severn valley, but further south products from the Ashton Keynes-type industry appear, which tend to have orange glazes.

Earlier examples often have a bubbly or streaky glaze. By the 18th century they tend to have a smooth and even glaze. Although tablewares are largely replaced by other refined earthenwares (such as creamware) by the late 18th century, larger forms like pancheons continue well into the 19th century.

11.5 North Devon gravel-tempered ware, late 16th to 18th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/190>

This pottery is common in the lower Severn valley and sometimes appears further upriver. It has a mottled green glaze on the internal surface (and sometimes externally on jugs), and contains lots of coarse quartz and gravel inclusions. It's often pink or buff in colour, sometimes with a grey core.

There is a variant without large inclusions (<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/197>), known as 'gravel-free' or, confusingly, '*non-gravel tempered North Devon gravel-tempered ware*'!

11.6 German salt-glazed stonewares, 16th to 18th century

(E.g. <https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/40> and <https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/36> , other types also occur)

Huge quantities of stoneware drinking vessels from places like Cologne, Frechen, and Siegburg in Germany, and Raeren/Aachen in Belgium, were imported into England from the 14th century onwards. Most examples found in Worcestershire are salt-glazed vessels of 16th or early 17th century date, which often have a dimpled brown external surface.

Some have designs stamped on the neck, the most famous of which is a bearded face, supposed to represent a 'Wildman' figure similar to the 'Green Man' in British folk mythology. They're often also called 'Bellarmines' - after a deeply unpopular churchman, Cardinal Bellarmine, famous for his anti-alcohol and anti-Protestant stance.

11.7 Post-medieval 'slipware' pottery, 17th to 18th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/189>

Brightly decorated plates and dishes with yellow and brown/red patterns were popular in ordinary 17th/18th century households. They usually have a buff-coloured fabric. The elaborate patterns were made by trailing red and white 'slip' (liquid clay) over the plate before glazing and firing.

11.8 Manganese mottled ware, late 17th to mid-18th century

Produced in Staffordshire, this earthenware has a pale buff-coloured fabric and a brown lead glaze with dark streaks achieved by the addition of manganese to the glaze.

11.9 Nottingham stoneware, late 17th to 19th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/195>

This early English stoneware is usually thin-walled with a dark brown surface. It can be identified by the presence of a thin white line visible between the fabric and the glaze.

11.10 Westerwald stoneware, 17th to 19th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/194>

This attractive grey stoneware with elaborate patterns in blue and purple was imported from Germany – unlike local earthenwares, it was not porous and so was a popular choice for drinking vessels.

11.11 Tin-glazed earthenware, 17th to 19th century

Sometimes referred to as 'Delft' after its most famous production centre, this attractive white-glazed pottery was made in England from the early 17th century, copying the Dutch potters. The fabric is soft and cream-coloured, and the pots often have a pinkish or bluish tint. In the later medieval period, tin-glazed earthenwares were imported in small quantities from Italy, Spain and Holland, although they are difficult to tell apart.

11.12 Engine-turned dipped earthenwares, late 18th to early 20th century

These brightly-coloured bowls, jugs and mugs are often mistaken for modern pots, but were first made by Wedgwood in the 1760s. Look out for tree-like 'mocha' decoration, multi-coloured 'cats-eyes' and cables, and geometric patterns and bands in different colours, produced by turning on a lathe.

The fabric is smooth, white/light-grey, and the vessels are thin-walled.

11.13 Transfer-printed whiteware, 19th - 20th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/199>

Commonly referred to as 'Victorian china' or 'blue-and-white', this mass-produced tableware is common from 1800 onwards. It has a very fine white core, white glaze and printed patterns in blue, red, black or green.

Watch out for similar-looking earlier pottery such as:

11.14 Creamware, late c18th to early c19th

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/193>

Cream-coloured glaze, sometimes moulded. Rarely decorated

11.15 Porcelain, mid c18th onwards

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/192>

Translucent appearance and hand-painted decoration

11.16 'Late stoneware', 19th to early 20th century

<https://www.worcestershireceramics.org/fabrics/200>

This hard-fired stoneware has a very fine fabric and smooth orange, brown or buff-coloured surfaces. Sometimes a brown or white glaze was added. Marks from throwing are sometimes visible on the inner surfaces. Vessels were used for fluid storage—inkpots, beer bottles, condiment jars etc. — right up until the mid-20th century.

11.17 Clay tobacco pipe, 17th to early 20th century

Common from the early 17th century right through to the turn of the 20th century, fragments of pipe stem and occasionally curved pieces of pipe bowl are common finds in post-medieval contexts.
