

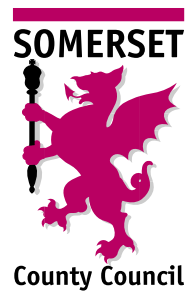
English Heritage Extensive Urban Survey

An archaeological assessment of

# Chard

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# SOMERSET EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

## CHARD

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

by Clare Gathercole

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# SOMERSET EXTENSIVE URBAN EVALUATION

## CHARD

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

*Somerset County Council would like to thank all the people who assisted in the compiling or editing of this report.*

#### I. INTRODUCTION

This report forms one of a series commissioned by English Heritage and prepared by Somerset County Council with the aim of assessing urban archaeology as part of the Monuments Protection Programme. The work was carried out from 1994 to 1998 by Clare Gathercole and Miranda Richardson (from 1996), managed by Chris Webster. The reports are essentially as completed during that period but have been updated by Chris Webster with new archaeological information in early 2001.

English Heritage has funded two programmes to assess the urban archaeological resource - intensive and extensive. The former is restricted to the major historic cities, characterised by a great depth of archaeological remains, a wealth of historical documentation and in many cases, by a great deal of archaeological investigation. The extensive urban surveys cover the smaller towns and are based on information in the local Sites and Monuments Record with limited amounts of new information collected during the project. Once the information has been collected and mapped, attention is focussed on the analysis of the town plan and defining topographic units within the town. This will lead to the preparation of guidance for planners, developers and others involved in the management of the town.

#### II. MAJOR SOURCES

##### *1. Primary documents*

Early Chard is moderately well documented, with a range of early sources relating to the Mediaeval manor and Borough, though the years 1329-1600 have only scanty Borough records. After 1600, the Borough minutes and accounts are well preserved; there is a detailed manor survey of 1602, which lists many properties in the Borough. Not all of these documents have yet been studied; no primary documents have been consulted for this report.

##### *2. Local histories*

There is no VCH coverage of Chard. However, the Chard History Group has produced a series of useful publications, including a local history. These and Green's 1882 article in PSANHS also refer to some of the early documentation, including the 1602 survey.

##### *3. Maps*

The earliest maps date from the late 18th century, and the earliest detailed maps of the Borough are 19th century.

#### III. A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHARD

Chard is the highest town in Somerset, and is situated in a well-watered gap between two uplands. The area is geologically complex, with many faults: several different building materials (including greensand, chalk and chert) as well as limestone and the Axe gravels, have therefore been available for exploitation. There have also been (futile) attempts to find coal seams in the lias east of the town.

The Axe gravels to the south of Chard are the source of a number of prehistoric artefacts, including flint axes, and a hillfort exists on the ridge to the south-west. However, there is as yet no evidence of prehistoric settlement at Chard itself. By the Roman period there seems to have been some level of occupation, with a number of finds of Roman artefacts and occupation debris having been found on the fringes of the modern town. Chard is within a few

miles of the Fosse Way and several villas are known in the surrounding area - at Wadeford, Whitestaunton and South Chard.

The core of modern Chard was in existence by at least the Saxon period, with a small, non-urban settlement probably clustered around the church and at a crossing of routes. This area is now known as the Old Town, though its appearance was altered in the Mediaeval period and before the 16th century it was known simply as the settlement in Oldchard tithing (R Carter and L Hoskins, in litt.). At the time of the Conquest, Chard was part of a large estate belonging to the Bishop of Bath and Wells. This may have been a late purchase by the notoriously acquisitive Bishop Giso (1061-1088), who is named as the holder in the 1084 Gheld Inquest, though there is a charter "of doubtful authenticity" (R. Carter & L. Hoskins, in litt.) which lists Chard amongst the Bishop's possessions in 1065. The rapidity of population increase in the later 11th century may mean that the bishops were capitalising on existing growth or growth potential. Whilst the nature of this early development is uncertain, later patterns of growth suggest that sheep farming, quarrying and market functions were the key.

After the Conquest, the manor remained in the Bishop's hands and included Tatworth, Langham, Forton and Crimchard. In the 13th century, steps were taken to increase the profitability of the estate. The Borough was established in the first half of the century with a charter of Bishop Jocelyn in 1236 granting "a free borough for ever" and setting out the Borough limits and conditions of tenure. The establishment of the Borough involved either the realignment or the re-use of existing routes (one of them the main Exeter through route) in order to lay out the new market areas and burgage plots. The Monday market and fairs were then formalised in 1253 by a charter of Bishop William Button. In 1285, the King confirmed and enrolled the burgesses' privileges, the wording implying a formal acceptance of established practices and promises, which included self-government via the Portreve. In the first half of the 14th century, Chard was represented in Parliament, though it soon ceased to exercise this expensive privilege; the town was taxed as a Borough in 1334.

Chard's economy in the medieval period was based on the cloth industry. Records show that large flocks of sheep were held by the manor long before weaving is first documented. By the post-medieval period, a large area around Chard depended on these activities, with the town acting as the centre of the local cottage industries and managing the trade in and exporting of their products (to France in particular). But the town was devastated by fire, probably in 1577, with most of the cloth stores - and indeed most of the centre of the town - destroyed. The appeal subsequently issued refers to the important role of the town in supporting the labours of "many a thousand poor people within ten miles compass in working the said trade". Recovery in the town was rapid, with many new buildings having been constructed by the time of the 1602 manor survey (not all necessarily as a result of the fire). It remained a centre of woollen cloth production and the number of commercial finishing mills in the town gradually grew: by 1790 there were as many as sixteen.

In the post-medieval period, the Borough became at least partially independent of its ecclesiastical roots and was farmed out to the Pouletts (R Carter & L Hoskins, in litt.). Chard manor and Borough - being still bishops' land and also farmed by the Royalist Pouletts - were seized and sold by Parliament's Commissioners in 1646 (they were returned after the Restoration). Otherwise, the townsmen did not suffer particularly from the Civil War, though both Royalist and Parliamentary armies passed through the town in 1644-5, and troops were billeted nearby. Later in the century, Monmouth twice passed through Chard, and the town was a scene of executions following his defeat in 1685: the infamous Judge Jefferies hung twelve men (only one appears to have been local) on the Hang-Cross Tree.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, Chard continued to be a local market town, despite changes in the road network which had isolated it from the main Exeter route (which now ran through Axminster). Collinson (1791) states that the potato market was the largest in England. There was a corporation seal by 1570; Charles II's charter of 1683 reconfirmed the corporation and granted three fairs and four weekly markets. This charter may also have begun a conflict of portreeve and mayoral systems of municipal government which continued in Chard until the early 18th century.

The setting up of the turnpikes in the late 18th century improved the town's communications: Chard now lay not only at the hub of the local network but also on the main London-Exeter route. There were a large number of coaching inns in the town at this period. Collinson (1791) describes a town still consisting chiefly of two intersecting streets, with many fine houses, but with several grist and fulling mills.

The local wool and cloth industry was badly hit by competition from northern textile mills and Indian cotton in the 19th century. Lace making had virtually replaced it by the 1820s, thanks to the relocation of the Nottinghamshire lace manufacturers. Old mills were converted and new ones established, the industry expanding rapidly in the first half of the 19th century. Lace-manufacturers remained Chard's staple employers until the early 20th century (though linen and rope manufacture was also carried out), but it was an unstable industry locked into a cycle of boom and depression. Indeed, throughout much of the 19th century Chard was an uneasy mix of industrial expansion and deprivation. Bragg's 1840 directory declares that "there are few towns whose outward appearance has undergone such a radical change as that of Chard within the last ten years", and yet in 1842 there were disturbances and a widespread strike in Chard (though these were partly associated with the Chartist movement). The directory entry is referring principally to the recent refurbishment of the market place, but there were other changes. The rapid expansion of the industry in the first half of the 19th century created a need for housing, and Chard contains some early industrial suburbs close to the mills. Elsewhere in the town, Hope Terrace was a construction project intended to create jobs in one of the depressions.

From the mid 19th century onwards, the townsmen made various efforts to stabilise the town's economy, including desperate attempts to leap on the canal and rail bandwagon. There had been many ambitious (and abortive) canal, and later rail, proposals from the late 18th century onwards, many focussing on the idea of joining the Bristol and the English Channels. In the 19th century, a number of local canal and rail ventures were undertaken, but in the context of the rivalry of the railway and canal companies, with each hurrying into schemes in order to prevent the other gaining access to potentially lucrative routes. The townspeople achieved a short-lived canal link to the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, via the Chard Canal which opened in 1842 but became a financial disaster. Meanwhile, the principal rail route established by 1860 ran east-west and bypassed Chard town. Rail branches to south and north eventually reached the town in 1863 and 1866: the railways were more successful than the Canal and continued to operate until the 1960s.

The population of Chard has risen steadily since 1801 and has continued to rise in the 20th century, despite the loss of the town's major industry and its rail links.

#### **IV. THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF CHARD**

##### ***GENERAL COMMENTS***

###### ***0.1 Archaeological work in the town***

There had been very little archaeological work in Chard until relatively recently. However, there have been several watching briefs in the last ten years, and a limited excavation in Silver Street.

###### ***0.2 Standing structures and visible remains***

Survival of post-medieval structures, including Elizabethan buildings, is quite good. There are photographs of some of these in the National Monuments Record, whilst Chard Museum holds a general collection of photographs of the old town.

##### ***1. PREHISTORIC***

###### ***(Map A)***

###### ***1.1 Archaeological work/ state of knowledge***

Whilst there are references to finds of palaeolithic axes and bronze age vessels being found "at Chard" (Aston & Burrow, 1982), the SMR contains no entries for this period within the Chard area.

###### ***1.2 Context***

Chard is one of 37 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project at which there is as yet no strong evidence of Prehistoric settlement on the site of the later town - though it should be remembered that it is notoriously difficult for archaeologists to demonstrate a Prehistoric presence in modern urban areas. Whilst 'towns' were not, generally speaking, a feature of Prehistoric landscapes, many of the same factors which made the site desirable in later periods would already have been operative. Whether or not there was settlement at Chard itself in the later Prehistoric

periods, there is certainly evidence of Prehistoric activity in the area, and it is worth noting that one of the county's more important assemblages of earlier Prehistoric (palaeolithic) artefacts, associated with a semi-nomadic existence, comes from the nearby Axe Gravels.

### **1.3 Standing structures and visible remains**

The hillfort on Bounds Lane is the only standing structure of this period.

### **1.4 Archaeological features, shown on Map A**

There is no evidence of any prehistoric settlement on the site of modern Chard.

#### **1.4.a Military sites/ Settlement**

##### **CHA/101 The hillfort, Bounds Lane**

The iron age hillfort on Bounds Lane (SMR 53238, SM Som 426) overlooks the site of later Chard. It is an oval enclosure, with a bank and outer ditch; the structure has been badly affected and the banks reduced in height by ploughing. A small amount of iron age pottery has been found on the site. The monument's situation suggests that it may have been intended as a lookout point rather than a truly defensive earthwork.

*Defined from the SMR.*

## **2. ROMAN (Map A)**

### **2.1 Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge**

There are references in the SMR to isolated finds of Roman occupation material and artefacts (chiefly coins) in and around Chard (see below).

### **2.2 Context**

The Roman period was one of deliberate, strategic urbanisation. The area which is now Somerset appears to have been less affected than some other areas by this, in that few really urban sites are known, and this probably reflects its marginal position. However, the widespread distribution of Roman or Romanised settlements shows that the county - particularly east of the Parrett - was heavily populated and exploited in this period.

Chard is one of 12 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project at which there is evidence of Roman settlement in the locality, though not necessarily at the core of the later town. The site is only a little way north of the Fosse Way, the major Roman artery into the south-west; several villas are known nearby and the spacing of settlements along this route indeed suggests that there may have been a small town (so far unlocated) in the vicinity.

### **2.3 Archaeological features, shown on Map A**

There is as yet no evidence of Roman occupation on the site of the Saxon or medieval core of Chard.

#### **2.3.a Settlement**

##### **CHA/201 Crewkerne Road occupation**

Roman building foundations and coins were discovered in a field on the Crewkerne Road in 1856 (SMR 53311): they were not properly recorded. Much of this area has now been built on: no further finds have been reported.

*Defined from the SMR.*

##### **CHA/203 Combe Street occupation**

During an evaluation at the rear of the former Health Centre in Fore Street, a ditch containing Roman pottery was located. The quantity and unabraded nature of the pottery suggested that a settlement (SMR 15436) lay to the east, between the site and Combe Street.

*Defined from the SMR.*

### 2.3.b Artefact scatters

CHA/202

#### Roman coin finds

There have been finds of Roman coins to north and south of the town. That to the north (SMR 53180) was a single coin. However, that to the south (SMR 55312) was a hoard of about 300 coins of the Constantine period.

*Defined from the SMR.*

## 3. SAXON

*(Map B)*

### 3.1 Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge

There is no archaeological knowledge of Saxon Chard.

### 3.2 Context

Though the Post-Roman and early Saxon periods were characterised by a return to non-urban lifestyles, the later Saxon period (from the 9th century onwards) saw the beginnings of a resurgence of trading places and towns. This was controlled, in England, by the Saxon royal families (though it was part of a wider trend), and took place in the context of a network of royal estate administration centres which was already established (in some cases long-established). The reasons for the changes were many and complex, combining defensive, administrative and ecclesiastical considerations with, increasingly, purely commercial aspirations.

As one of the heartlands of the kings of Wessex, Somerset played an important part in the early re-urbanisation of the south, and there are a number of places amongst those studied for this project which can claim to have been towns before the Norman Conquest. However, there are also a number which can claim to have been 'central places' performing more limited, and non-commercial, functions: not all such places developed into towns, but many towns originated in such specialised settlements.

Chard is one of five of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which, whilst it had not developed any really urban functions by the end of the Saxon period, was probably the administrative centre for a royal estate. There were eleven other administration centres in the survey which had developed urban functions by the Conquest (and another six which also had minsters).

### 3.3 Standing structures and visible remains

Though there are no buildings of this period, the earthen boundary bank at Bounds Lane (SMR 53158, see p9) may be of Saxon (perhaps earlier) origin.

### 3.4 Archaeological components (centre), shown on Map B

#### 3.4.a Communications: roads

Not mapped

The medieval Borough appears to have been laid out to the north of the Old Town, and to have involved some diversions of routes. The street plan in the latter area may therefore be at least in part pre-Conquest. It is not clear, however, to what extent the alignments were altered in the medieval period.

#### 3.4.b Manors and estates

CHA/302

#### The manor site

Manor House Farm, formerly Chard Farm, probably represents the focus of the early manor and the remains of several phases of possibly substantial buildings may underlie the largely post-medieval farmhouse (SMR LB 58152). The shaded area follows an almost semicircular boundary which appears on the 1799 map: it is suggested this may be of ancient origin, though further archaeological or documentary research would be useful in this connection. Within the area there may be remains of outbuildings associated with the manor centre. Beyond the marked area, but within the circuit of the back lane (now Summerfields Road) the land may also have been closely associated with the manor centre, though this too is uncertain.

The site of the main buildings will have been repeatedly redeveloped since its postulated Saxon



beginnings. Much of the rest of the shaded area, except along the street frontages, lay open until the 19th century, but has now been developed.

*The area is defined from the 1799 map and the suggestions of Aston & Leech (1977).*

### 3.4.c Burial sites and places of worship

CHA/303

#### The church and churchyard

The church (SMR 53310, SMR LB 58148) probably formed the nucleus of the Saxon settlement. However, there is no direct evidence of the earliest church. The present church (SMR 55310) contains some Norman fabric, but is mainly Perpendicular (dating from the 15th century), and represents a rebuild by a prosperous populace.

In 1990, the church floor was relaid. A watching brief took place as the 19th century floor levels were removed, and fragments of earlier material (including a Norman capital and medieval floor tiles) were recovered from the loose debris. These fragments are thought to represent material replaced during the 19th century restoration of the church. Additionally, apparent foundation trenches of at least one, perhaps two, earlier phase(s) of building were observed: these may represent the earlier medieval church. Pre-19th century floor levels appeared to remain intact in places beneath the layer of loose, though 19th century brick burial vaults and and pipe and duct systems have disturbed many areas. The early deposits were not further damaged by the 1990 work.

The churchyard (of which the pre-19th century extent is shown) has been used for burials at least since the medieval period and possibly earlier. It contains many listed tombstones of 18th and 19th century date.

*The churchyard is defined from the 1799 map.*

### 3.4.d Settlement

CHA/301

#### The Saxon settlement

The Saxon settlement was probably centred on the church, where roads converge, and in Old Town. Within this area there may be the remains of timber structures, probably not very substantial ones, representing dwellings and outbuildings. The precise limits of the Saxon settlement area have not been ascertained.

The archaeological deposits in part of this area, between Mill Lane and Old Town, may have been adversely affected by the Victorian suburbs erected there. To the south of the area, redevelopment has been less dramatic and survival may be better.

*The area shown is based on the suggestions of Aston & Leech (1977).*

### 3.4.e Industrial sites

Not mapped

A mill is recorded on the bishops' estates at Domesday, but this may not have been at Chard itself.

## 3.5 Archaeological features (outlying area), shown on Map D

### 3.5.a Settlement

CHA/305

#### Crimchard

Crimchard formed part of the bishops' estates at Domesday. The forms of the name which occur in early medieval references - "Cynemerstun" in the doubtful 1065 charter and "Cynemerscherde" elsewhere - strongly suggest that a hamlet already existed there in the Saxon period (R Carter and L Hoskins, in litt.). The most likely location for such a settlement is thought to be at the south end of the later settlement, around the pond. It is possible that the remains of early timber buildings and pits may be encountered in this area, though both the location of the Saxon settlement and the extent of any archaeological survival remain to be confirmed.

*The area shown is conjectural.*

CHA/304

Bounds Lane

The Bounds Lane (SMR 53158) boundary bank may be of Saxon origin.

*From the SMR.*

#### **4. MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL**

##### ***(Maps C and D)***

These periods have been mapped together because there is insufficient archaeological information to distinguish them with confidence.

##### **4.1 Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge**

There have been several watching briefs in the centre of the town. One at 37-43 Fore Street in 1987 revealed medieval plot boundaries, though the frontages of these plots had been damaged.

A watching brief and limited excavation were conducted in Silver Street in 1978, producing evidence of a post-medieval clay pipe kiln.

##### **4.2 Context**

Both in Britain and on the continent, the medieval period saw the growth of town foundation and, to an extent, urban living (though the bulk of the population continued to live in villages). The reasons for this growth were many and complex. In England they included both general factors - such as the growth of mercantile trade (especially the cloth trade) - and more specific ones - such as the post-Conquest establishment of a network of (theoretically) loyal magnates and prelates with large estates and commercial privileges. The latter led to the increasing relaxation of the royal stranglehold on the profits of towns and chartered boroughs (where tenants paid cash rents and were free of feudal ties), which in turn enabled the establishment of new purpose-built commercial areas (the majority of places classed as towns in the medieval period have at least some planned elements). Of course, some boroughs were already in existence by the Conquest, and the existing pattern of Saxon urban or semi-urban centres was an important influence on the medieval one. This is evident in Somerset which, like many parts of the south and west (where the majority of the Saxon burhs and boroughs had been established), was peppered with small boroughs in the medieval period.

In archaeological terms, the medieval towns are characterised by evidence of partially planned, intensive occupation of restricted areas. Typical features which may occur include: regular, or semi-regular, street layouts; large market places (usually obscured by later encroachments); blocks of regular, long, narrow, plots end on to the commercial frontage; churchyards, either within the medieval layout or outside it - the latter often indicative of a deliberate shift of activity; regular or irregular suburbs or marginal areas occupied by quays, or industrial sites such as mills; and high status sites such as castles, manor sites and large religious precincts.

Chard is one of 20 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which first acquired urban status in the medieval period, and one of the ten of these 20 which acquired full borough status. It was one of the county's two assize towns in the later medieval period (the other was Taunton). Chard was one of 19 of the 45 towns at which a planned area was laid out in the medieval period partially across or - more commonly - immediately adjacent to an established settlement.

The basic pattern of towns had been established by the end of the middle ages, and there were very few major changes in the post-medieval period, though the economic fortunes of particular towns rose and fell. Nearly all the Somerset towns depended on either cloth manufacture or cloth trade to some extent. Chard was no exception, and was one of many of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which held its own economically for much of this period. It was one of a group of important cloth towns in the south and east of the county.

##### **4.3 Standing structures and visible remains**

Chard was badly affected by fire in 1577, with many of the medieval structures entirely or partially destroyed. St Mary's Church, SMR LB 58148, was the main exception, though there may be late medieval elements in the largely post-medieval farmhouses of Chard Manor (SMR LB 58152) and Ivy House (SMR LB 58163), and in some other buildings on Fore Street and Holyrood Street. Additionally, fragments of a wall at the rear of the burgages may

survive (SMR LB 55378). The plan of the medieval town survives well, however.

Many buildings survive from the early post-medieval period. Outstanding survivals include the late 16th century Grammar School (SMR LB 58191-2, originally a private house and chapel), the Court House (SMR LB 58181), Godworthy House (SMR LB 58219, now the museum) and the Choughs (SMR LB 58210). There are also several other houses and cottages (as well as a number of listed tombs) dating from the 16th to early 18th centuries, mostly concentrated in the centre of Chard. At Crimchard, there are also a number of farmhouses, including Pollards (SMR LB 58170), Newhouse (SMR LB 58166) and Ivy House (SMR LB 55371). The List should be consulted for full details of the surviving structures.

The listed buildings of medieval and post-medieval origin in the town centre are shown on Map C.

#### **4.4 Archaeological components (centre), shown on Map C**

##### *4.4.a Redevelopment in earlier settlement components*

Those areas described in previous sections are shown more lightly shaded. These include the churchyard (CHA/303) and part of the manor area (CHA/302). Part of the Saxon settlement area may have retained its village character, whilst possible redevelopments along the south sides of Mill Lane and Old Town have been defined across the old settlement area.

##### *4.4.b Communications: roads*

###### CHA/412 The planned market street

The laying out of the medieval Borough may have involved the creation of a major new street (now Fore Street and High Street), about half a mile in length, running east-west to the north of the early nucleus. The exact relationship of this road to the existing network has not been established, however, and it may have been an existing route skirting the marshy ground east of the early settlement nucleus (R Carter and L Hoskins, in litt.).

###### CHA/413 Holyrood Street

It is possible, though not certain, that the main link between the old town and the new, Holyrood St, represents a realignment of the north-west exit to the old village.

###### CHA/414 Field Bars Lane

Field Bars Lane may also represent a diversion of an old route running north-west. Field Bars Lane and Mill Lane served as back lanes for the southern burgages.

###### CHA/517 Pre-1800 roads

Other roads in existence by 1799 are shown. This map postdates the creation of the early turnpikes, but predates the changes in alignment associated with the 19th century turnpike improvements.

*The lines of all roads are from the 1799 map.*

##### *4.4.c Water*

The market street of the medieval town was laid out on a watershed: the north drains to the Ivel and the Bristol Channel, the south to the Axe and the English Channel.

###### Not mapped

The town's water supply was conduited along the main street, but it is not known whether this arrangement is contemporary with the laying out of the Borough. There are many documentary references to the water supply in the post-medieval period, however, and further research would disclose more details than are recorded here.

###### CHA/518 The millstream

A millstream is shown on the 1799 map flowing from the Frog Lane/ Silver Street junction to the millpond which served the Town Mills (the pond still exists). The source of the stream is not clearly marked.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/519 Field Barrow Pond  
A second pond is shown in the land to the south of the High Street burgages. The pond, which was apparently provided in the late 18th century as a water reserve after a serious fire (R Carter and L Hoskins, in litt.), is called Field Barrow pond on the 1841 map; later 19th century maps show sluices at the pond, which was at the time used by the lace mills. This pond has now been filled in, and lies under part of the Mitchell Gardens.

*From the 1799 map.*

#### 4.4.d Burial sites and places of worship

CHA/415 The Priest's house  
The medieval churchyard is described above (p8). The adjacent area also includes land which was occupied in the medieval period by the Priest's House and subsequently by the Church house, poor house and workhouse. Fragments of these, as well as Tudor and later buildings, survive in association with the largely 19th century Holyrood House (SMR LB 58269).

CHA/522 The Hang-Cross Tree  
The "Hang-Cross" tree - so named in the 19th century, though 16th and 17th century references are to "Handcross" - stood close to the LSWR station and was cut down in 1864 to allow the diversion of the road over a railway bridge when the loop line was built. The marked site is approximate. There may have been burials below the tree, but the site has in any case been much disturbed by 19th and 20th century road and rail developments.

*Site approximate, from Bondfield (1931).*

Not mapped The chapel of St in the market place, referred to by Collinson (1791), but mentioned in 14th century documents, was part of the town hall building demolished in the 19th century. There were also two chantries in Chard, St Katherine's and St Mary's, which held the title to many of the burgages. There are records of the townspeople's manoeuvres to recover the freeholds of these lands after the Dissolution (Woodward, 1982). A Baptist congregation was established in 1654.

#### 4.4.e Settlement (Urban) (SMR 53314)

##### (a) Commercial core

CHA/520 The Borough limit  
The Borough limit is described in the charter of 1235: "These are the metes of the same borough - on the east side Schirested [not known], on the south side the gate of our Court [the approach to the church and Manor Farm], on the west side the Staunesmith [probably the mason's beneath Snowdon Hill Quarries], on the north side la Hertybri next to the cross near Kynemecerde [Crimchard]. And we will and grant unto all persons willing to build within these metes an acre each for 12 pence each yearly" (from Aston & Leech, 1977).

The Borough limit remained fixed until 1892, when it was extended (Gifford, 1927). The limit shown, taken from the 1841 Tithe Map excludes most of the old town, and the fields to the south of the High Street burgages. This is the area in which the most intensive medieval and post-medieval urban activity can be expected.

*From the 1841 map.*

CHA/412 The market  
The new street also formed the market place. The guildhall (SMR 53306) divided the eastern and western halves until the early 19th century: this building is also referred to as the "New Work" and there are suggestions in Collinson (1791) that it may have formerly been a chapel of ease. There were also shambles (SMR 53307, in the western half of the market, removed in 1831), which were demolished together with the guildhall in 1834. The market house (SMR 53305) stood in the eastern half of the market, in front of the George Hotel, and was demolished in 1834.

*From the 1799 map. This map also shows the locations of the various structures in the market*

place.

CHA/401

High Street/ Fore Street burgages

The core of the original burgage area is quite clear from early maps. There were regular plots of one acre laid out both north and south of the main street (possibly originally 52, according to the supposed 1206 charter). Parts of a continuous flint and mortar wall, which may originally have marked the backs of the plots, survive (SMR LB 55378). This area has been continuously redeveloped since the medieval period, and therefore if survival is good, sequences of medieval and post-medieval buildings may be expected. Later developments at the outer ends of the street were built broadside on, suggesting a period of less commercial pressure on the frontage in the post-medieval period, and the consequent amalgamation of burgages. However, many of the property boundaries are still in use and others survive in the archaeological deposits. A watching brief at 37-43 Fore Street in 1987 showed that these frontages had been badly damaged by 19th and 20th century redevelopment (Dennison, 1987): the site still revealed post-medieval pits to the rear, and two old medieval plot boundaries. It is thought that many of the burgage plots may be better preserved than this example.

Old road lines may also survive under the medieval burgage areas.

*Defined from the 1799 map and the 1841 town map, together with the suggestions of Aston & Leech (1977).*

CHA/403

Combe Street burgages

The tenements along the southern part of Combe Street may represent a later extension of the burgage plots, or may be contemporary with the laying out of the Borough. More research is needed on this question. The marked areas are likely to contain archaeology similar to that of the High Street/ Fore Street burgages.

*From the 1799 and 1841 maps.*

CHA/402

Holyrood Street/ Bath Street

Development along Holyrood Street and Bath Street may also be of later date than the central burgages, though still medieval: again, more research is needed on this question. There were certainly newly built tenements in 1602, but the implication is that these replaced previous buildings.

*From the 1799 and 1841 maps.*

CHA/501

Other commercial core development

These areas, at the east end of town and beyond the Furnham road junction, are included within the 1841 Borough limit. However, at this date, the areas were not heavily built up, containing a large private residence (Furnham House), one chapel and an inn. It is possible that medieval occupation was more intensive. Much of this area has already been redeveloped in the later 19th and the 20th centuries: the extent of survival of the archaeological deposits is unknown.

*From the 1799 and 1841 maps.*

(b) Suburbs

CHA/502

Silver Street

These areas represent development along Silver Street and Leathern Bridge before the spread of the lace mill complex. The south-eastern side of Silver Street is beyond the Borough limit. The character and extent of medieval development in these areas is unclear. However, in the post-medieval period it appears to have included small scale industrial activity. A limited excavation in Silver Street in 1978/9, prompted by the levelling of a site, recovered a substantial waste dump (SMR 53319) associated with the Webbs' clay pipe kiln (in business in the early 18th century). The dump was in a ditch and the kiln itself was not found, though it is likely to have been located close to the Silver Street site (Minnitt & Murless, 1978). The name Leathern Bridge may also

suggest that the area was used for tanning, though there are no historic references to such activity (R Carter and L Hoskins, in litt.).

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/406

Mill Lane

The area to the south of Mill Lane was partly built up by 1799, but its earlier history is unclear: it lay on the edge of an area of field thought to have been in use by the burgesses in the medieval period. The eastern part of this strip of development housed Oram's Mill by 1841.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/514

East Street

There is a possibility that a strip along the road between the eastern limit of the Borough and Tapstone Farm was partially built up, but the extent and character of any archaeological deposits are not known.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/510

Old Town

These areas represent areas of the Old Town which may have been laid out afresh some time in the medieval or post-medieval period. The 1799 map shows a block of regular plots stretching well back from the street on the south side of Old Town. It also shows two detached dwellings beyond the Vicarage on the lane to Forton. These are shown as Culverhayes and Parslands on the 1841 town map, though the former appears dissimilar in plan to the residence shown on the 1799 map.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/404

Combe Street

The areas at the north end of Combe Street are included within the 1841 Borough, but are not built up at this time, nor in 1799. It is possible that medieval occupation spread further up Combe Street. The character and extent of the archaeological deposits in this area, which became a 19th century suburb, has yet to be ascertained.

*From the 1799 map.*

*4.4.f Industrial sites*

*(a) Mills*

Not mapped

The sites of the medieval mill(s) could not be precisely located, though the town possessed both corn and fulling mills. One mill is recorded in 1086, somewhere on the Chard estates; a fulling mill is mentioned in 1394; and there is one reference in the 1602 survey to a newly built fulling mill in Holyrood Street - possibly implying a rebuild after the fire. There is further documentary evidence of a number of other fulling mills and at least one corn mill (Munday's Mill, recorded 1602, with the Millmead lying to the rear of it) in post-medieval Chard. However, the extent of continuity between these and both earlier medieval mills and later 19th century lace mills is not always clear: further research might elucidate the matter.

CHA/410

Town Mills

This mill, Town Mills, is marked on the 1799 map. Its early history is not clear. The mill survived the 19th century, but the area has now been largely redeveloped (though the mill pond still survives).

*From the 1799 map.*

*(b) Other industrial sites*

Not mapped

No industrial areas have been defined in the core, although it is likely that the area along Silver

Street (see above, CHA/502) was partly industrial in character: the late post-medieval clay pipe kiln remains to be discovered in this vicinity. Chard was a centre of the cloth industry and there must have been rack areas as well as fulling mills. All the drying grounds so far distinguished (from field name evidence), however, are concentrated around Crimchard (see below). As well as the fulling mills, a smithy is recorded in the 1602 survey.

#### 4.4.g Agricultural sites

##### CHA/405 Field Bars Lane

The land between the southern burgages and Field Bars Lane is thought to have been rented to the burgesses (perhaps as pasture). It was not included within the Borough and was not developed until the 20th century. Even now only the eastern end has been affected by Crowshute Link and Mitchell Gardens. The main archaeological interest of this area lies in the possibility that the line of a pre-medieval road may survive within it (if Field Bars lane was indeed a diversion of an existing route), though the developments at the eastern end of the area may have affected any such survival.

*This area is defined from the modern map together with the suggestions of Aston and Leech (1977).*

##### CHA/408 Mill Lane

The land to the north of Mill Lane may have originally also been let out, though this area is included within the 1841 Borough limit. The 1799 map provides few details in this area, but by 1841 much of the block is attached to the lace mill. It may be that the land continued to lie open until the expansion of the mill complex and the subsequent creation of Boden Street and its industrial housing. The area to the north of the mill has since been developed.

*Defined from the 1799 map.*

##### CHA/509 Tapstone Farm

The site of Tapstone Farm was occupied by 1799.

*From the 1799 map (name from the 1887-9 map).*

### 4.5 Archaeological features (outlying area), shown on Map D

#### 4.5.a Communications: roads

Chard has at times been on the main Salisbury-Exeter route (the exact periods are uncertain). However, for a time at least in the post-medieval period, Chard was isolated from the major south-west route, which veered south to pass through Axminster. Stukeley (1724) describes the road through Chard as "a very bad road of stones and sand, over brooks, springheads and barren-downs".

##### CHA/517 Pre-1800 roads

Roads mapped by 1799 are shown. There are several differences in alignment from the modern roads, notably to the east of the centre (where the railway went through in the 19th century). The lack of mapped roads to the north and east of the town reflects the extent of Chard Common before the 19th century enclosures and road schemes: Furnham, for instance, lay at the end of the mapped road, though a track continued across the Common.

*From the 1799 map.*

#### 4.5.b Water

##### CHA/523 Streams

A number of streams, which were subsequently diverted for the canal and reservoir work, are marked on the 1799 map.

*From the 1799 map.*

## 4.5.c Settlement (Rural)

CHA/504

Crimchard

The principal outlying settlement was at Crimchard. The original hamlet (see above, p8) may have been at the south end of the settlement around the pond; Ivy House is of medieval origin (though considerably remodelled). However, by 1799, there had been considerable development, possibly because of the settlement's role in the cloth industry. The marked area shows the 1799 extent of settlement: later maps show that this was a mixture of cottages, larger residences and farms (of which some of the post-medieval buildings survive, at: Pollards - SMR LB 58170; Newhouse - SMR LB 58166; Ivy House - SMR LB 58163).

Parts of Crimchard were redeveloped in the 19th century, with the establishment of industrial areas. The extent to which the earlier archaeological deposits have been affected is uncertain.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/513

Langham

There was also occupation at Langham by 1799. In fact, there are documentary references to much earlier occupation - perhaps as early as 1065 (R Carter & Hoskins, in litt.) - though no attempt has been made to map this. There may therefore be remains of early occupation on the mapped site.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/512

Cuttiford's Door

The settlement at Cuttiford's Door was at the very edge of the remaining Common in 1799. There are 16th century references to the Cuttifords there (R Carter & L Hoskins, in litt.). It is possible that this represents the first occupation of the site, but this is not certain.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/507

Farms (various)

Several farms were in existence to the east of Chard by 1799. These include Higher and Lower Touches Farms, Balls Farm and Lordsleaze Farm. The earlier history of these farms is not known; though their positions suggest possible post-medieval enclosure, they may be earlier.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/508

Settlement on the edge of Chard Common

Other dispersed settlement in existence by 1799 along the fringe of Chard Common is probably of post-medieval origin.

*From the 1799 map.*

## 4.5.d Industrial sites

## (a) Mills

CHA/516

Yammer (Amor) Mill

The remains of a corn mill (SMR 53177) were seen when Chard Reservoir was drained in 1930: records of Chard History Society refer to this mill as Yammer Mill, and on a canal proposals map it is called Amor Mill.

*From the SMR.*

## (b) Other industrial sites

CHA/505, CHA/506

Textiles

Cloth drying sites (SMR 55729, 55730, 55735) and washing sites (SMR 55741, 55739) are known at Crimchard (from field names). There was also presumably a dyehouse (CHA/506) down



Dyehouse Lane: the maps do not clearly indicate where this was, but a site has been suggested where detached buildings are shown in the vicinity of springs.

*From the SMR and the 1799 map.*

CHA/409, CHA/503

Quarries

There was a quarry complex (SMR 55692, 55694, 55706) to the north-west of the town which is mentioned in 1235. These were chert, chalk marl and white sandstone quarries and the operation continued until 1870. Some remains can still be seen. The complex includes Snowdon Caves (SMR 53315), which may be in part the remains of old delvings: there are suggestions that the caves were used as a dissenters meeting place in the post-medieval period.

*From the SMR and the 1799 map.*

CHA/511

Quarries

Further quarries to the south of the town are shown on the 1799 map.

*From the 1799 map.*

CHA/407

Sandpits

Zambard Lane (or Sandpit Lane) led to an area of sandpits (Chard History Group, 1973).

*The marked area is conjectural.*

*4.5.e Agricultural sites*

Not mapped      Each tithing had its own open field(s).

CHA/521

The commons

The edges of Chard Common and Snowdown Common in 1799 are shown.

*From the 1799 map.*

*4.5.f Artefact scatters*

CHA/515

Pottery dump

A spread of 16th and 17th century Donyatt pottery was found here (SMR 55369); this seems to indicate an area of rubbish dumping rather than pottery production.

*From the SMR.*

**5. INDUSTRIAL (LATE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY)**  
**(Map E)**

**5.1 Context**

The late 18th and 19th centuries saw some changes to the urban pattern, with the beginning of the emergence of larger centres (often at the expense of smaller ones), linked by vastly improved communication lines (turnpikes, railways and canals). Somerset was not characterised by the kind of large scale industrialisation and urbanisation seen in other counties - indeed, the virtual collapse of its most important industry, which was cloth, affected nearly all of the medieval and post-medieval towns - but some did take place. The changes were reflected in a series of alterations to town governance, which left the county with a total of only fifteen Municipal Boroughs and Urban Districts by the end of the 19th century.

Chard was one of the thirteen existing boroughs and towns which were either Municipal Boroughs or Urban Districts at the end of the 19th century. These varied in character. Chard was one of eight of the 45 towns (all eight of which were either Municipal Boroughs or Urban Districts) which were connected to both rail and canal networks during the 19th century. In all these cases, industrial activity was encouraged, and Chard is one of the towns noted for its

industrial remains.

### **5.2 Standing structures and visible remains**

A large number of late 18th and 19th century buildings survive in the centre of Chard, and many of these are listed. The bulk of the listed buildings are shops and houses along High Street, Fore Street and Holyrood Street, with a small number at Crimchard. These include individual dwellings, such as the mid- and late- 18th century Essex House (SMR LB 58185) and Monmouth House (SMR LB 58189), and small terraces, such as Hope Terrace on Combe Street (SMR LB 58156-7, c1820). Other structures include: non-conformist chapels (eg SMR LB 55387 - Baptist; SMR LB 58200 and 58203 - both Methodist); the Guildhall (SMR LB 58195); a number of inns and hotels (eg SMR LB 58179, 58182); the rebuilt Harvey's Almshouses (SMR LB 58212, c1870); the old Joint Station (SMR LB 58207); and the two lace mills of the 1820s - Gifford's (SMR LB 58251) and Boden's (SMR LB 58147, with its later archway, SMR LB 58146).

### **5.3 Archaeological components, shown on Map E**

#### **5.3.a Redevelopment in earlier settlement components**

Areas described under previous periods are shown more lightly shaded. These include the central burgrave and tenement areas, which continued to function as the commercial core. The frontages were consequently constantly redeveloped. The market, too, was remodelled in 1834, with the demolition of the guildhall, cross and shambles (regarded as obstructions to traffic). The guildhall was replaced by the town hall, built projecting slightly into the street. Part of the Holyrood Street east area has been redefined where the Holyrood Lace Mill was established c1829. The adjacent open area has been redefined for the other major mill, Bodens Mill; other smaller lace mills have not been separately identified, but existed in the Holyrood Street and Mill Lane areas. The open areas to the north end of Combe Street have been redefined as 19th century suburbs and works. Part of the manor area has also been redefined (where the churchyard expanded).

In the outlying area, the only significant redevelopment was at Crimchard, where works were established.

#### **5.3.b Communications**

##### **(a) Roads**

CHA/608

##### The turnpikes

In the second half of the 18th century (1753 onwards), the turnpikes were set up. These significantly improved Chard's communications position: the main London-Exeter route now passed through the town. In the mid-19th century, however, the coming of the railways signalled their end: the opening of the LSWR station in 1863 was combined with the ceremonial demolition of the town's eastern tollgate. Tollhouses were sited at Crimchard (SMR 53308) and Snowdon Hill (SMR LB 58226).

CHA/627

##### 19th century roads on enclosed common

New roads were built as Chard Common was enclosed in the 19th century.

*From the 1841 and 1887-9 maps.*

CHA/628

##### 19th century suburban roads

Some new suburban roads were built, of which Victoria Avenue, parallel to the railway, was the most significant.

*From the 1887-9 map.*

CHA/629

##### Road realignments

There were several realignments of old routes. A new road loop was cut in 1827 at Snowdon Hill to lessen the gradient; the roads crossing the new railway were altered to allow the construction of a single bridge; at Langham, the corner was cut, necessitating the demolition of part of the hamlet; the north end of Combe Street was realigned.

*From the 1841 and 1887-9 maps.*

##### **(b) The Canal**

CHA/624

Chard Canal

The Chard Canal (SMR 53321), which ran for 13.5 miles between the basin at Furnham and the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal at Creech St Michael, was the last of the major English canals, and technically advanced. However, it was an ill advised scheme, rushed into at the last (despite years of resistance to the townspeople's blandishments) by the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal Committee, mainly in order to prevent a rival scheme from going ahead. Money was raised mostly from non-local financial speculators. Estimates of the probable cost of the Canal (which had to negotiate a 250 foot high watershed at Chard) and of the likely revenue proved wildly inaccurate: by 1853, the subscribers had lost confidence and the receiver had been called in.

The BER bought the canal for a tiny fraction of its construction cost, largely to forestall the ambitions of the LSWR. The canal was closed in 1866; isolated plots were sold off and the rest was allowed to decay. Parts of the canal have been built over since then, though remains of its course can still be seen in places (eg north of the old Chaffcombe Road canal bridge, now just a hump in the road). Warehouse and office buildings and much of the canal premises' perimeter wall survive (partially buried) on Furnham Road and in the mill which has replaced the basin.

*The line of the Canal is defined from the SMR.*

CHA/623

Chard Incline

The canal was on five main levels, and used inclined planes rather than locks (except for a lock at Dowlish Ford). Lock gates were also used to protect the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal water supply. The Chard incline (SMR 53322) involved a change in level of 86' and employed a water turbine powered hoist to pull the tub boats up. It was the only single track incline in the country. Though the incline itself can be clearly seen, little remains of the hoisting gear or turbine wheel: the engine house was at the bottom of the incline.

*The incline is defined from the 1887-9 map.*

CHA/621

The Canal basin

The basin (SMR 53328) was on the site of the flour mill and has been mainly filled in, though parts of the northern arm may be seen. Some of the buildings were incorporated in the flour mill and recorded when this was demolished in 1999. Four wharves were laid out with similar plans but only two were equipped with warehouses (Graham 1999).

*From the 1841 tithe map.*

CHA/625

Chard Reservoir

The Chard Canal was supplied from the Chard Reservoir, construction of which began in 1839, and which is still now a local amenity area.

*The mapped extent is that shown on the 1841 tithe map.*

CHA/626

Watercourses associated with the Canal

Other watercourses associated with the Canal, either feeding or draining the Basin, are shown from the 1841 tithe map.

(c) Railways

CHA/630

The LSWR

The Chard Canal Company changed its name to the Chard Railway Company in 1847, but had no capital to build anything. The main Exeter line (LSWR) opened in 1860, with a station at Chard Road (renamed Chard Junction in 1872). The town and the Company tried hard to interest the LSWR and the BER in opening branches to the town. The LSWR opened as far as the Town Station in 1863 and continued to work the line: the local company dissolved itself. This line was taken over by the GWR in 1917.

- CHA/618      Town Station  
Town Station was opened in 1863 and continued to operate after the opening of the Joint Station (largely for goods). The LSWR built a further platform at the loop line junction, but plans to construct a new terminus at this point never materialised. Town Station did not close until 1916.
- CHA/631      The BER  
The BER was persuaded to build a branch northwards - largely because it was afraid that the LSWR would gain access to its area by converting the canal (already teetering towards financial ruin) to railway. This line opened in 1866. GWR, the successor of the BER, converted the gauge of the northern branch in 1891 and ran both branches as one line from 1917. The lines closed in 1962 after Beeching, though some goods traffic continued until 1966. Much of the line is still obvious.
- CHA/620      Joint Station  
Joint Station was built to serve both networks. These were of different gauges, so there had to be two sets of platforms. Chard Joint was renamed Chard Central in 1949. The buildings survive.
- CHA/632      The loop line  
When the BER branch was built, the LSWR constructed a loop to the new Joint Station, though they continued to operate the Town Station.

*All the above are defined from the 1887-9 map.*

### 5.3.c Burial sites and places of worship

Not mapped      19th century chapels included: a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, which may be as early as 1814, in Fore Street (SMR LB 58200); the new Baptist chapel in Holyrood St (1842, SMR LB 55387, 58249); a chapel in Fore Street (1859); the Congregational Chapel in Fore Street (1867); the old Meeting House (1873, SMR LB 58212) and the Methodist Chapel, also in Fore Street (1895, SMR LB 58203). These have not been mapped separately.

- CHA/601      The churchyard  
There was a small churchyard extension westward, bringing the churchyard to its current extent.
- From the 1887-9 map.*

- CHA/614      The Friends' burial ground  
A Friends' burying ground is marked on the 1841 town map. The site is now covered by the Fire Station.
- From the 1887-9 map.*

- CHA/609      The cemetery  
The Zembard Lane cemetery includes a listed mortuary chapel (SMR LB 55388) and two listed monuments (SMR LB 55389-90).
- From the 1887-9 map.*

### 5.3.d Settlement (Urban)

#### (a) Commercial core

- CHA/610      Urban fringe development  
There was a small amount of general commercial development at the fringes of the town centre.
- From the 1887-9 map.*

#### (b) Suburbs

Population increased during the 19th century, largely to staff the lace mills. Rather than outward expansion, much of the workers' housing in Chard was built within areas possibly occupied earlier, south of the Borough and north

of the Old Town. This was in the form of cramped courts and rows, with a few better terraces and was relatively late: much of it does not appear on the 19th century maps (see CHA/711, p22).

- CHA/603      Suburbs (various)  
There was a small amount of general suburban development, most of which was either in the vicinity of the Railway or at the north end of Combe Street.
- CHA/616      Large residences (various)  
Larger residences, notably Holyrood House and Oaklands, were built, respectively, in the old town and on the eastern fringes of town.
- CHA/611      The Cricket Ground.
- CHA/622      The Workhouse  
The Union Workhouse (SMR 53316) was built in 1836. It has now been demolished.
- CHA/617      The school.  
  
*All from the 1887-9 and 1903-5 maps.*

#### 5.3.e Settlement (Rural)

- CHA/604      Farms (various)  
There were several new farms set up, largely on the newly enclosed land to the north-east.
- CHA/602      Unclassified occupation  
The nature of some plots, largely in the outlying area of Chard, has not been ascertained. These have been categorised as general 19th century development.  
  
*From the 1887-9 and 1903-5 maps.*

#### 5.3.f Industrial sites

Much of Chard's 19th century industry grew south of the High Street, in what had been a relatively open area (where the burgesses used to have their pasture plots). This area contained the Snowdon collar works, and the Mitchell & Toms Brewery, both postdating the , as well as the lace mills.

- CHA/612      The grist mill  
There was a grist mill in Holyrood Street.  
  
*From the 1887-9 map.*
- Not mapped      There was a mill at Furnham (SMR 53309), in the old Canal Basin area, by the end of the century.
- CHA/613      The lace mills  
Lace making (plain machine net, rather than fancy lace) was established in Chard in the 1820s, as firms relocated from the troubled Midlands. The industry expanded dramatically between 1826 (when there were 49 lace machines in operation) and the 1850s (when there were 360 - though at the time of the 1851 census the mills were in recession, with at least one temporarily out of production). Lace making tended to swing from boom to depression: it was an unstable business. The history of the mills is complex and there is scope for further research, with many documents available (Chard History Group, 1973).  
  
Boden's Mill: Wheatleys was the earliest lace firm in Chard. It took over Coles' six-storey weaving mill in Mill Lane c1822. The buildings burnt down in 1825; they were refurbished on a grand scale with more advanced machinery. This mill had its own gas works: production began in 1837. The gas was used both for the factory and for private consumers' light. This mill became Boden's Mill. Associated with Boden's Mill were the workers' institute (built 1892) and late housing built in the 1890s and 1900s. Boden's closed in the 1930s. The premises was occupied

for some years by metal companies and is now small industrial units. Part of the buildings remain (SMR LB 58147), though the chimney has been truncated.

Gifford's Mill: Holyrood Mill, later Gifford's (SMR LB 58251) was situated east of Holyrood Street. The old mill predated the lace industry. The mill engine is now in an American museum and the chimney has been demolished, though the mill itself still stands. The new mill - the "model factory" - was the last lace mill extension to be built c1900.

*Mapped from the 1841, 1887-9 and 1903-5 maps, with information from Chard History Group (1973)*

Not mapped	Oram's Mill was on the south side of Mill Lane and was in operation in 1830. It was the centre of the 1842 disturbances and was out of production in 1851.
CHA/606	<u>Quarries</u> There were further quarries and lime kilns at Snowdon Hill.
Not mapped	There was late 18th and early 19th century prospecting for coal on Chard Common and shafts were sunk near the Ship Inn in 1826.
CHA/619	<u>The Gasworks</u> Because the mill's gas (see above, CHA/613, Boden's Mill) was too expensive, the "New Gas Company" was formed by a group of townspeople, and a gasworks built off Victoria Avenue. In 1870 the Chard Gas & Coke Co Ltd was set up. This was not very successful until after 1891; in 1903 it was bought out by the Corporation.
CHA/607	<u>Sewage works</u> The sewage works, south-west of the Chard Reservoir.
CHA/605	<u>Industry (various)</u> Other mapped general industry included the Station Road Iron Works (SMR 53317); two smithies on Furnham Road; the Rope Walk near the Old Town Mills; and Crimchard Works. Crimchard Works was originally a rope walk, but was expanded in the late 19th century as an agricultural engineering plant.

*All the above are from the 1887-9 and 1903-5 maps.*

### 5.3.g Agricultural sites

CHA/615 Nurseries.

*From the 1889 and 1904 maps.*

## 6. 20TH CENTURY (Map F)

### 6.1 Standing structures and visible remains

Listed 20th century structures include a telephone kiosk (SMR LB 55377), and the War Memorial (SMR LB 58150).

### 6.2 Context

The 20th century has seen a vast physical expansion of some existing towns, and some expansion in most of the 45 historic towns covered by the project. However, there have only been limited alterations to the overall pattern of urban settlement. The County Structure Plan still contains fifteen settlements defined as Towns: this is almost identical to the late 19th century list of Municipal Boroughs and Urban Districts.

Chard is one of 15 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which is classed as a Town in the County Structure Plan. It is also one of six Towns identified as having an important role in accommodating new

development, which inevitably leaves its archaeological remains under increased threat.

### **6.3 Settlement components, shown on Map F**

#### *6.3.a Redevelopment in earlier settlement components*

Areas described under previous periods are shown more lightly shaded. General redevelopment continued in the medieval core. Parts of this area have been redefined: to the north of the High Street and Fore Street, where the backs of some of the burgages have been encroached upon; and on either side of Holyrood Street, where the road layout has been altered and areas of housing built. The back of the manor area, the south-east side of Old Town and parts of Crimchard have been developed as suburbs. Some of these developments may have had a significant impact on the archaeological deposits.

All defined elements are from the 1995 OS digital maps unless otherwise stated.

#### *6.3.b Communications: roads*

##### CHA/712 20th century roads

There have been minor adaptations of the road network in the 20th century, usually in connection with the establishment of residential and industrial estates. There have been no major road developments.

#### *6.3.c Military sites*

##### CHA/713 Anti-tank lines

The Taunton Stopline, constructed in 1940/41 ran along the railway to the east of the town. This comprised anti-tank ditches and obstacles covered by fire from pillboxes. For details of these sites, the SMR should be consulted. A wartime security store for the Westminster Bank was also constructed off Combe Street.

*From the SMR.*

#### *6.3.d Burial sites and places of worship*

##### CHA/710 Cemetery extension.

#### *6.3.e Settlement (Urban)*

##### *(a) Commercial core*

##### CHA/707 Urban development

Small scale commercial development.

##### CHA/709 Business Park.

##### *(b) Suburbs*

##### CHA/702 20th century suburbs (various)

Estates have been built, mainly to the north, east and south of Chard.

##### CHA/705 20th century suburbs (various)

These schools, parks and sports fields include large areas of undeveloped land.

##### CHA/711 Mill suburbs

Around the lace mills and to the south of Mill Lane are early suburbs associated with the lace mills (built partly in the 19th century).

#### *6.3.f Settlement (Rural)*

##### CHA/701 Unclassified 20th century occupation (various)

Scattered unclassified plots lie to the north and east of Chard.

##### CHA/706 Farms (various)

New farms and farm extensions.

**6.3.g Industrial sites**

- CHA/708      Industrial estates  
Industrial estates straddle the old railway line to the east of Chard.
- CHA/703      The Gasworks
- CHA/704      The new reservoir

**V. THE POTENTIAL OF CHARD****1. Research interests**

The main research interests in Chard focus on the relationship of the medieval and earlier settlement plans, on the location and state of preservation of the early mill sites, and on the complex of 19th century lace mills.

**2. Areas of potentially exceptional preservation**

Chard is predominantly a dry site, with no obvious major areas of potential environmental preservation in the historic core. However, the valley of the Forton Brook may be of potential in this respect (R Carter & L Hoskins, in litt.).

**3. Limitations**

There has been a considerable amount of post-war development in archaeologically important areas of Chard. Damage to the archaeological resource has occurred particularly in Old Town in the area between Mill Lane and the church (affecting the early settlement and later medieval occupation); there has also been scattered damage to medieval frontages and backs in the burgage area.

**4. Extent of current protection**

(shown on Map G)

Both a Conservation Area and an AHAP exist at Chard. There are no Scheduled Monuments in the town itself, but there are many Listed Buildings along the High Street, Fore Street and Holyrood Street, and around the church.

**5. Management Proposals**

See the Archaeological Guidance Document.

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## VII. COMPONENT INDEXES

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## Maps

### **Map A - Prehistoric and Roman**

### **Map B - Saxon**

Key: Components shown on earlier maps are shown in yellow.

### **Map C - Medieval and post-medieval core**

Key: Components shown on earlier maps are shown in yellow.

### **Map D - Medieval and post medieval**

Key: Components shown on earlier maps are shown in yellow.

### **Map E - 19<sup>th</sup> century**

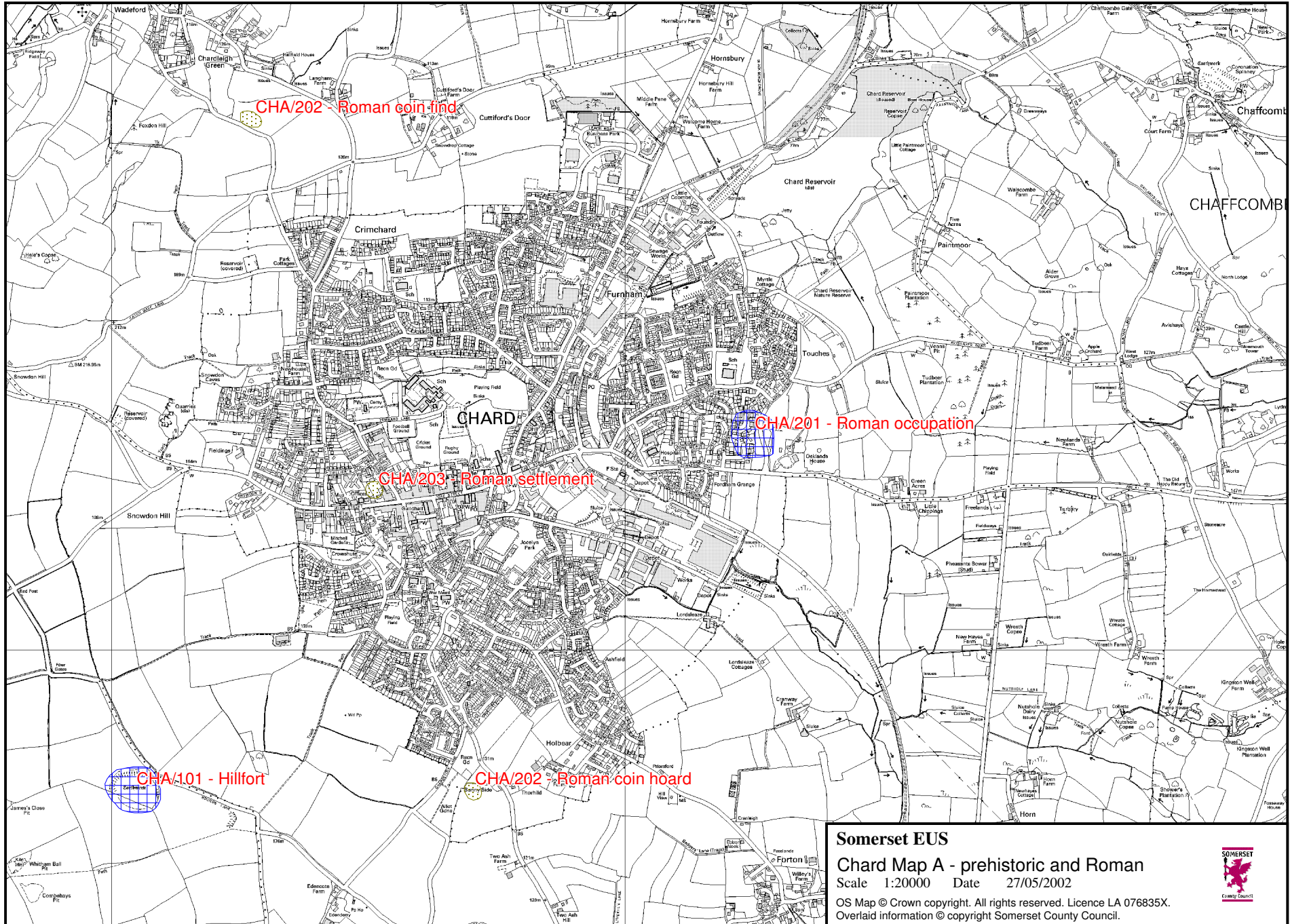
Key: Components shown on earlier maps are shown in yellow.

### **Map F - 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Key: Components shown on earlier maps are shown in yellow.

### **Map G - Existing constraints**

Key: Listed Buildings                      Grade I (light blue)  
    Grade II\* (light green)  
    Grade II (dark green)  
Conservation Area (light green)  
Area of High Archaeological Potential (pink)



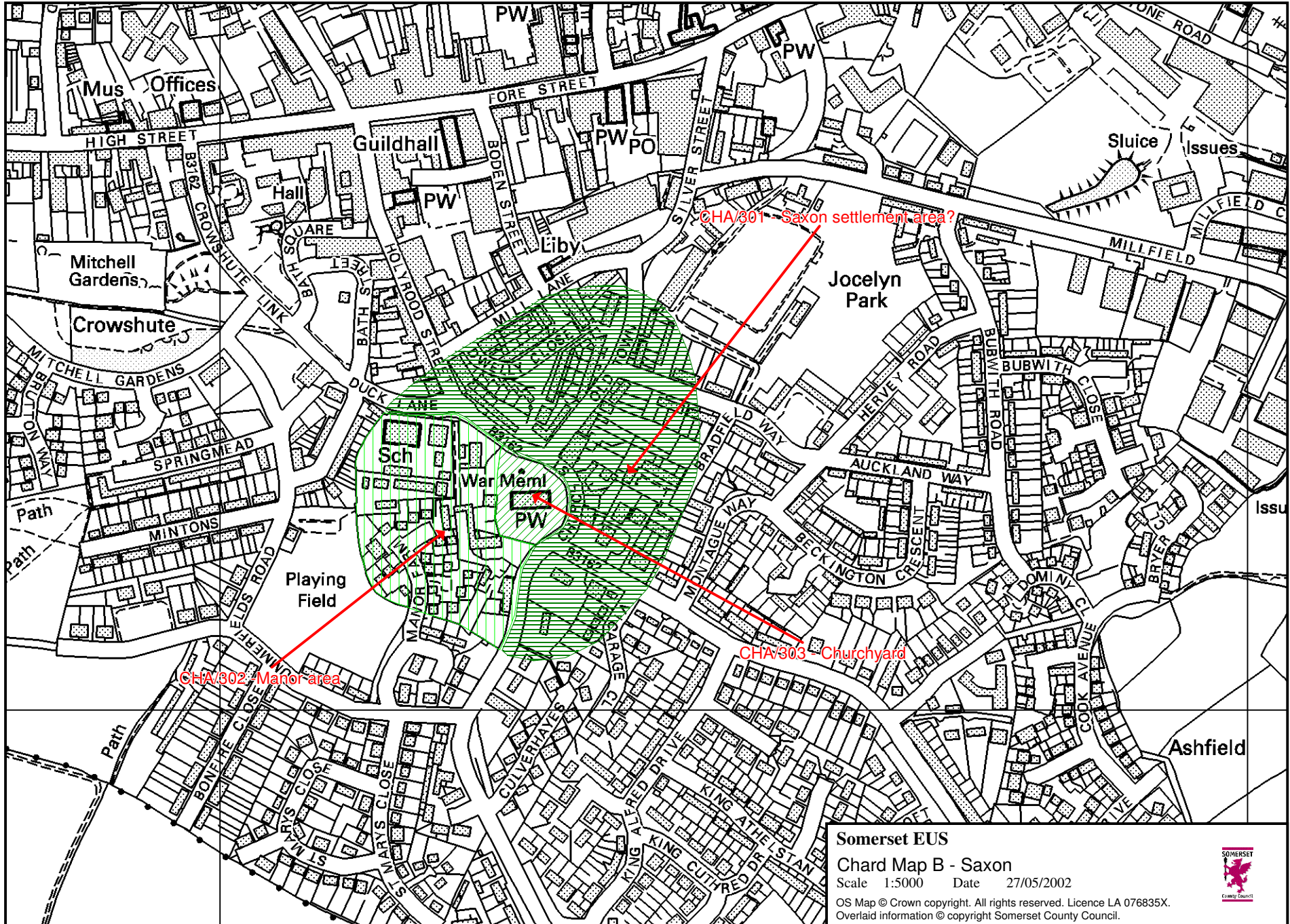
**Somerset EUS**

**Chard Map A - prehistoric and Roman**

Scale 1:20000 Date 27/05/2002

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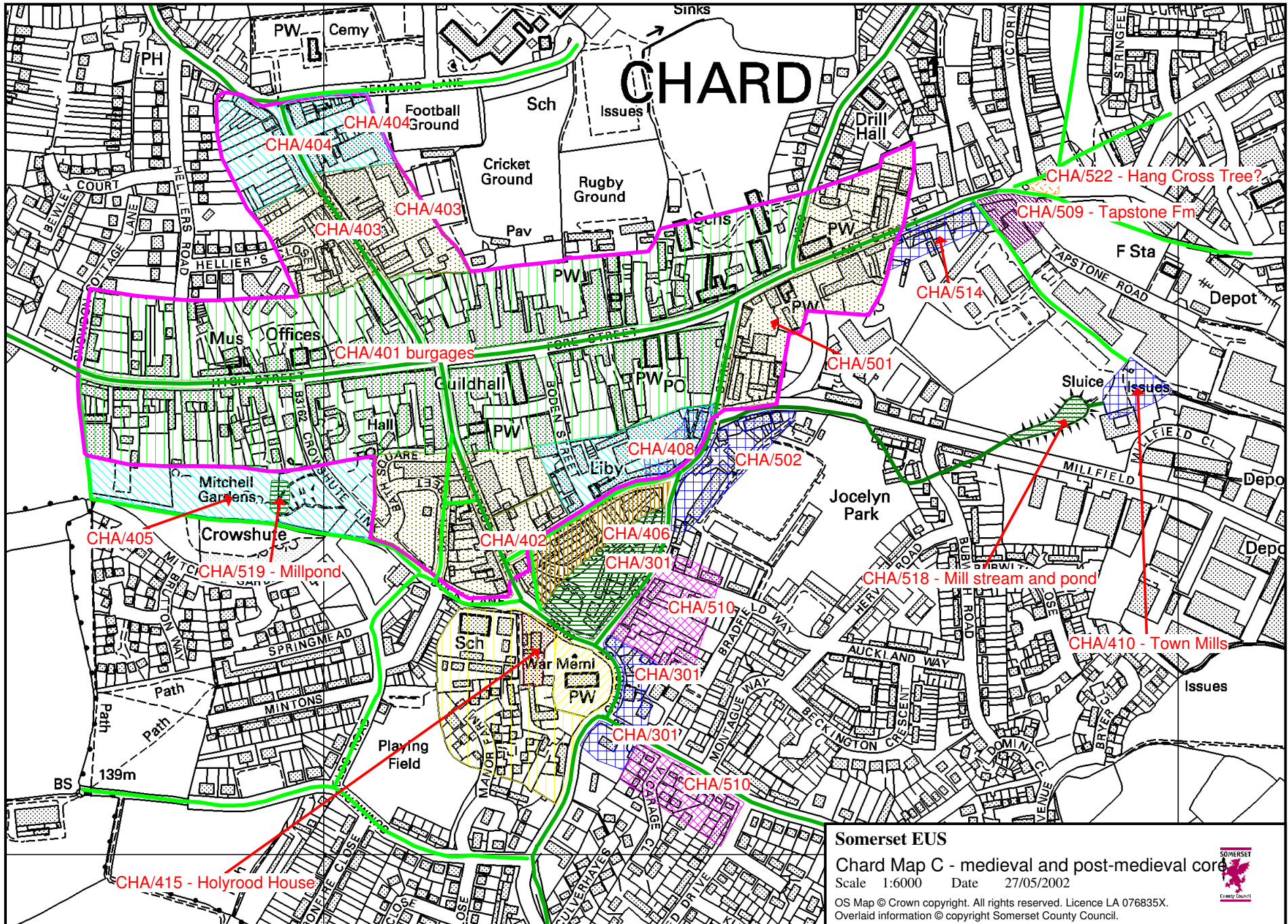
Chard Map B - Saxon

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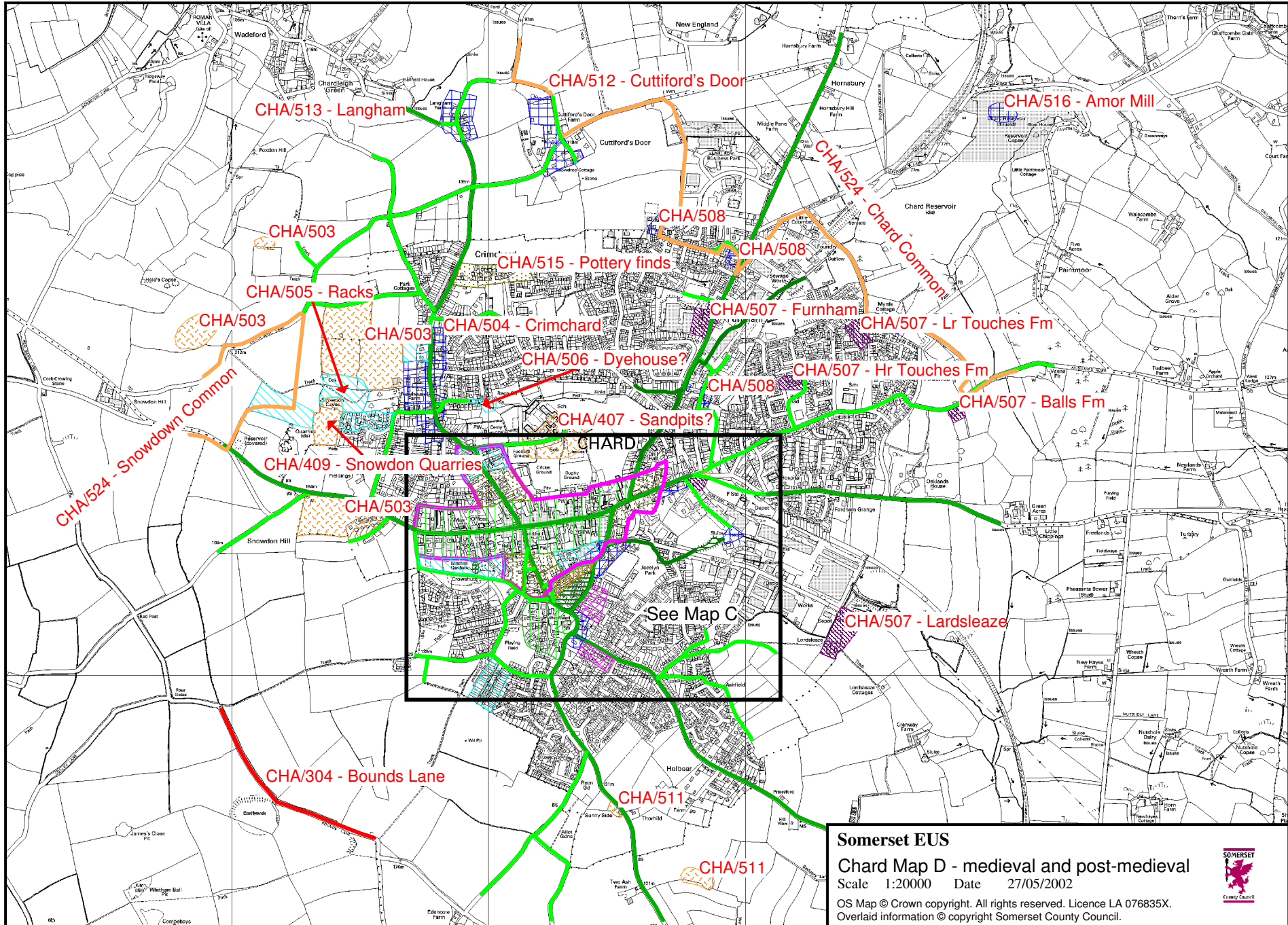
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Chard Map C - medieval and post-medieval core

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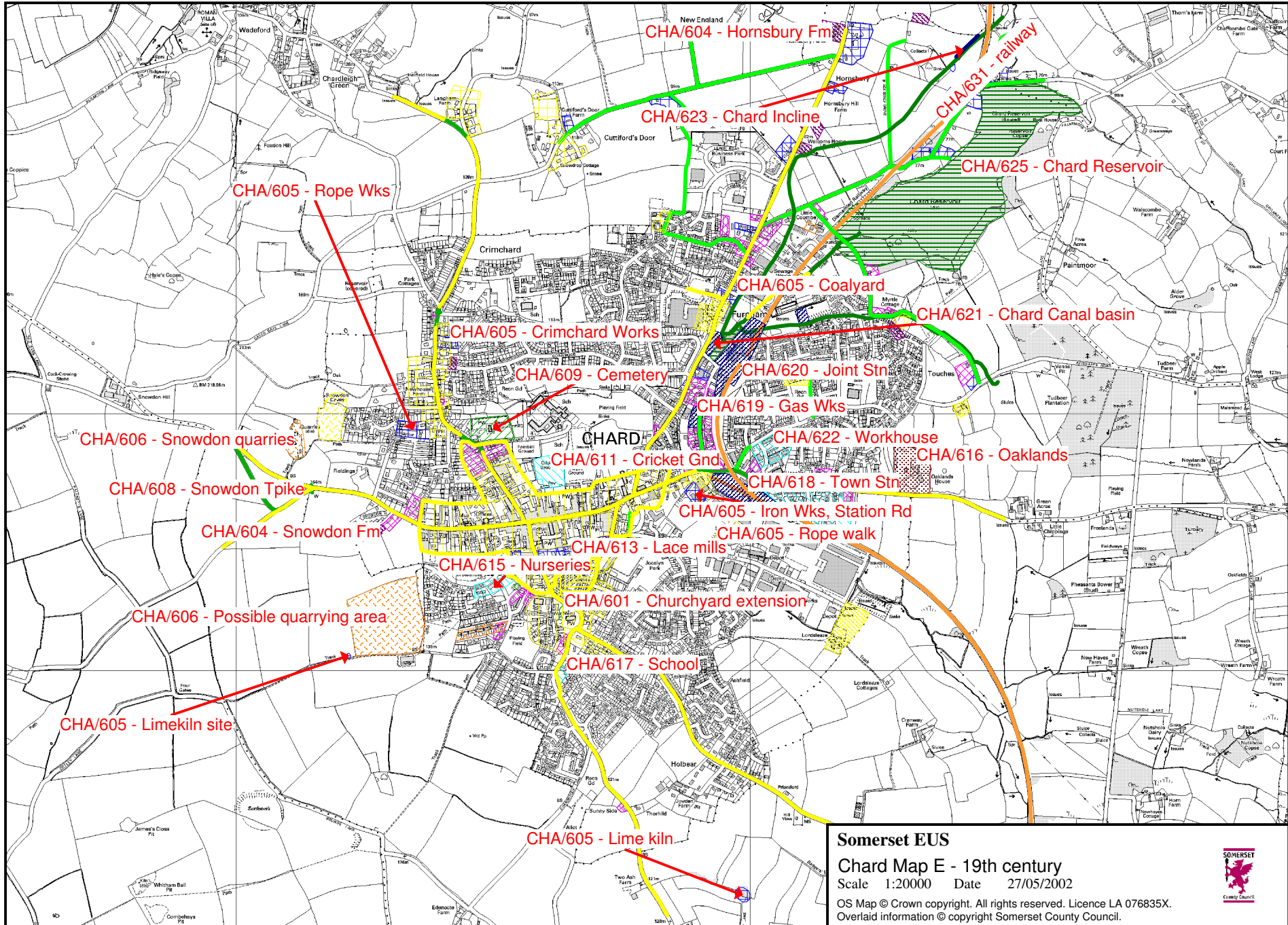


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Chard Map D - medieval and post-medieval  
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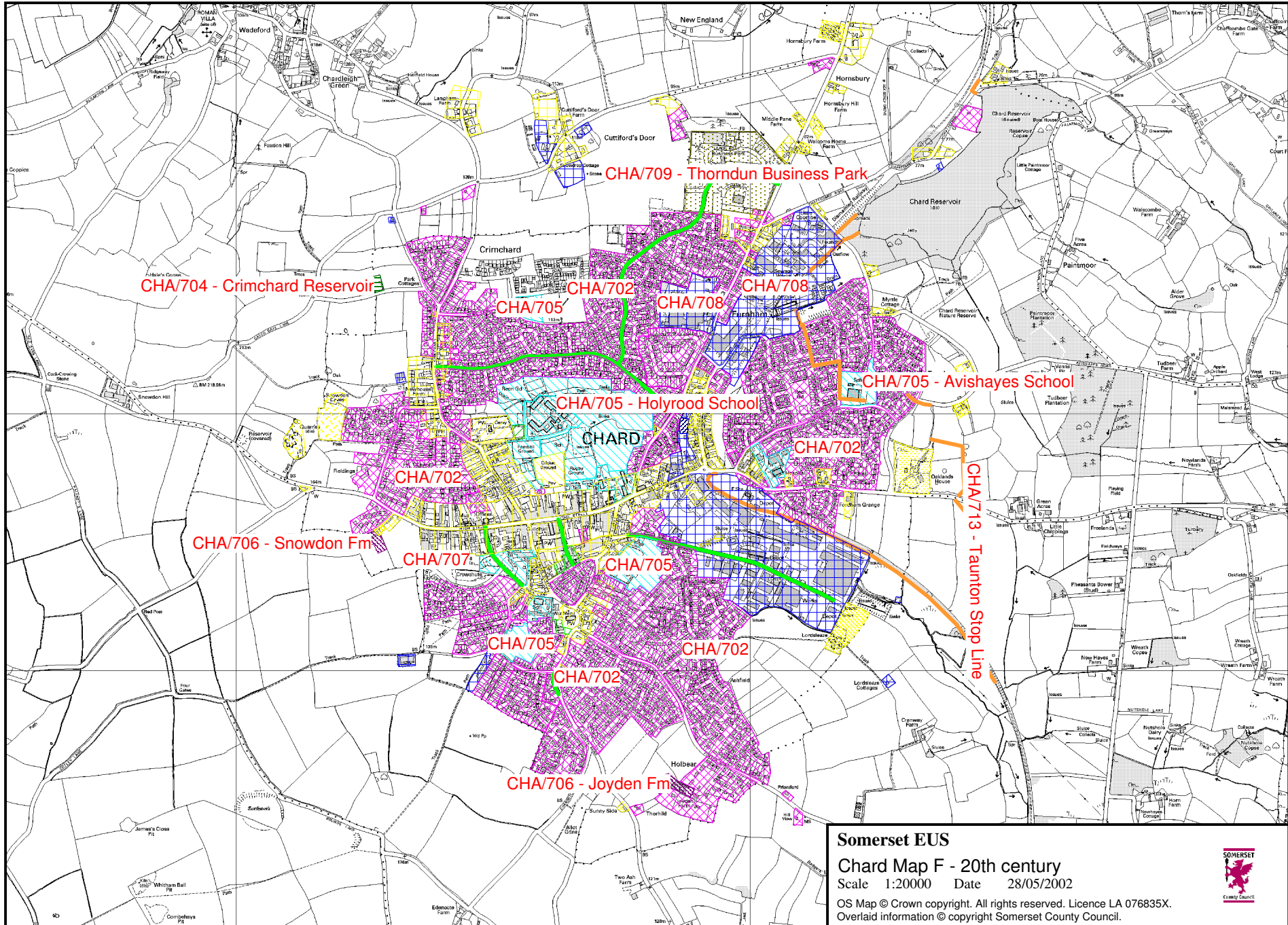
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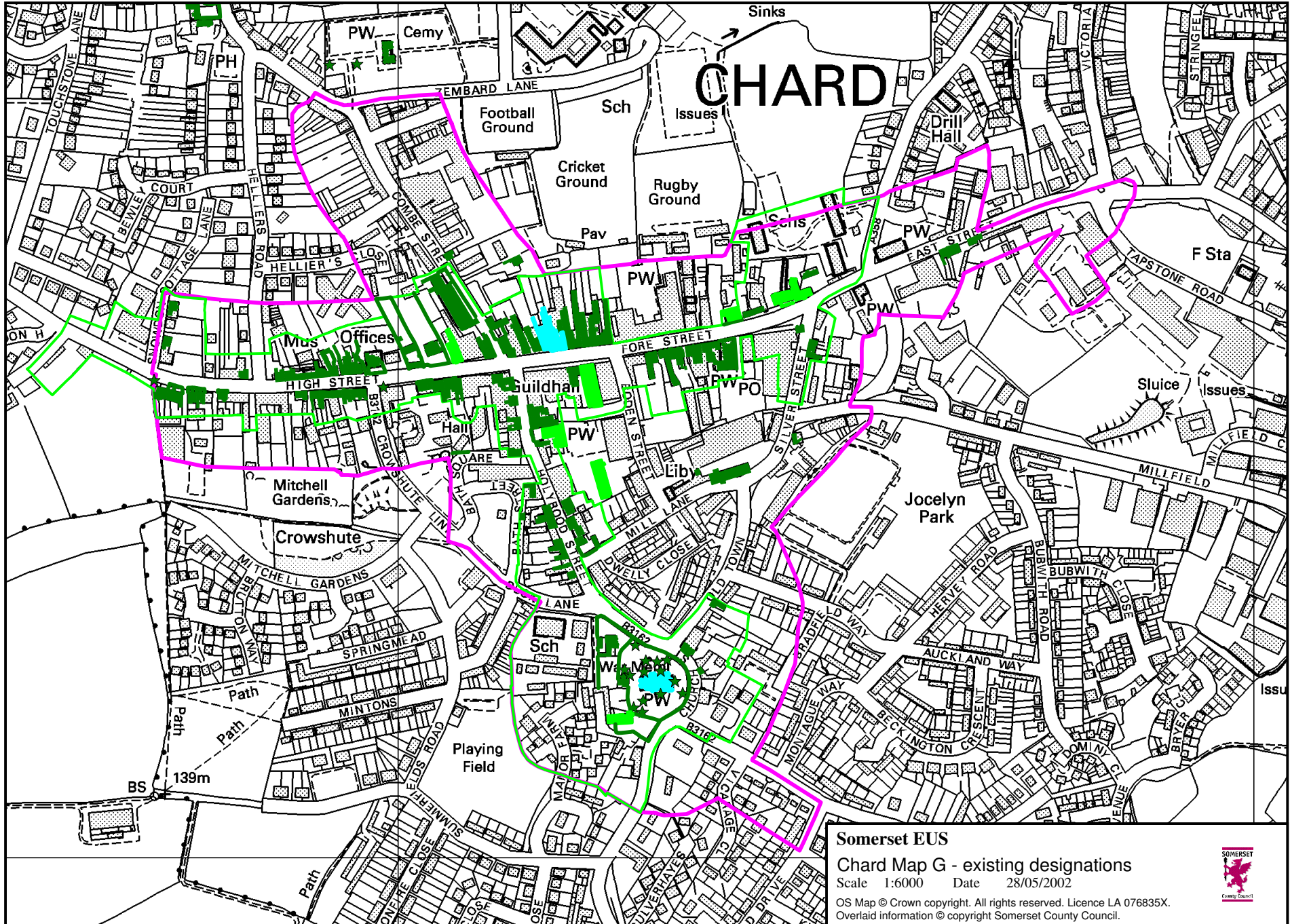
Chard Map E - 19th century

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Chard Map G - existing designations

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