English Heritage Extensive Urban Survey

An archaeological assessment of

Milverton

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County Council

SOMERSET EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

MILVERTON

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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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 2003.

English Heritage has funded two programmes 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 focused 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
Milverton is particularly well documented, and local historians have made readily available a number of the surviving documents, including a useful 1652 rental and survey of Chantry lands (Farley, 1979; Farley & Ekless, 1986).

2. Local histories
There is as yet no Victoria County History coverage for Milverton, but there is a local history by Farley and Ekless (1986). The Somerset Record Office also contains reports by the Vernacular Architecture Group (unfortunately, these could not be consulted during the writing of this report).

3. Maps
There are no detailed maps of Milverton earlier than the 1842 Tithe Map.

III. A BRIEF HISTORY OF MILVERTON
Despite Milverton's sheltered location amongst the low hills at the edge of the fertile Tone Vale, there is very little sign of early settlement on that particular site. From the surrounding area have come flint concentrations, and finds of Roman pottery and coins. These certainly indicate nearby activity, and perhaps settlement, but it is not until the Saxon period that we find evidence of settlement at Milverton itself.

Most of our evidence for Saxon Milverton so far comes from historical references, but the name of the place - interpreted by most sources as meaning "settlement at the mill ford" - also illustrates the original function of the site, which began as a *tun* on a royal estate. The existence of a mill in the pre-Conquest period is confirmed by the Domesday Survey. The Domesday description of Milverton is of particular interest because, although its picture of the 11th century settlement is fairly rural in character, it notes the existence of a market (one of only seven in Somerset in 1086). This implies that Milverton had been or still was a town, and the fact that it gave its name to a hundred and had several sub-manors attached to it during the Saxon period further implies that it was - or had been - a place of some importance. Though there is no direct reference to burgesses at Domesday, there are occasional

references to the 'third penny' (a tax on urban profits) of Milverton being paid from nearby settlements. Just before the Conquest, the settlement was held by Queen Edith, who appears to have been taking a reduced rent. This may mean that the town was particularly in favour, but is often interpreted as signifying financial difficulties in the late Saxon period.

Domesday also records a separate church estate served in 1086 by the King's chaplain. Separate church land holdings in Domesday sometimes indicate the relic of minster estates and this may have been the case at Milverton, which had at least one dependent chapel in the medieval period. But Queen Edith had been in the process of granting control of the church estate to Wells in 1065, and it had been returned to the Bishop's control by the late 12th century. It appears that the estate may have been made up of individual tenement parcels and their rents, as well as agricultural land, for there are later references to the re-granting of some of these tenements, some of which also may have later formed part of the endowment of a chantry in Preston Bowyer.

Milverton itself continued to be held by the Crown, though later in the medieval period it was leased out to various absentee sub-tenants. It had become a borough at least by 1280, when it was represented by its own jury at the Eyre, and it was taxed as a borough from 1306. Probably the economic basis of the town was its market and cloth-working, but both were in decline in the late medieval period. This was slowly reversed from the second half of the 16th century onwards, as a second cloth trade in coarse woollens grew. Yet the Commonwealth Commissioners' survey of 1652 reports the discontinuance of the market. A new market grant (with two annual fairs not referred to in any medieval document) was received in 1708 - a year of rather mixed fortunes since it also saw a quite serious fire in the town (which fell short, however, of wholesale destruction, destroying thirteen properties).

By the late 18th and early 19th century some in Milverton had done very well, and it must have been on the back of the revived commerce of the borough that the Georgian suburb of North Street was created (from an earlier, less crowded, merchants' suburb). But even as the houses were going up - or being refronted - the cloth trade was failing: indeed, Collinson describes it as lapsed by 1791. Problems were increasingly caused by the expansion and mechanisation of the Wellington mills, to which the outworkers of Milverton had previously sent their work for finishing. To some extent the problems were relieved by a silk mill at Preston Bowyer, and by the coming of the railway, which encouraged quarrying and lime-working around Milverton. However, after the closure of the silk mill in the mid 19th century, the population fell, and general stagnation set in, the fairs also being discontinued around that time.

In the 20th century, Milverton has acquired only a limited suburban fringe, despite its proximity to Taunton, and its earlier economic failure has left a well-preserved, attractive little town.

IV. THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF MILVERTON

GENERAL COMMENTS

0.1 Archaeological work in the town
There has been no archaeological work in Milverton, though informal observations have been made during works around the church, and the SMR contains information on artefact finds in the surrounding area.

0.2 Standing structures and visible remains
Milverton's historic plan is well-preserved, not having been cut through by new highways. The town also contains a number of Listed buildings of high quality, with its outstanding feature being the post-medieval suburb of North Street. Many of the buildings appear relatively late from the outside, though they conceal earlier structures. The List should be consulted for full details, but individual buildings are referred to in the text where appropriate.

1. PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN
(Map A)

1.1 Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
There has been no archaeological work in Milverton, though the SMR contains information on artefact finds in the surrounding area.

1.2 Context
Milverton 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 itself - though it should be remembered that it is notoriously difficult for archaeologists to demonstrate a Prehistoric presence in areas subsequently built up. 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. There was certainly significant activity in the area, as the mesolithic and neolithic flint assemblages and the rare early bronze age hoard found nearby show.

1.3 Standing structures and visible remains
There are no visible remains of Prehistoric or Roman activity in the study area.

1.4 Archaeological features, *shown on* **Map A**
1.4.a Communications: Routeways

Not mapped   A number of ridgeways probably passed close to Milverton and it has been suggested that High Street may mark the line of one of them (Aston & Leech, 1977), as might Wood St.

1.4.b Settlement (Rural)

MIV/101   Enclosures
                A cropmark enclosure of possible Prehistoric date is noted in the SMR west of Milverton Court (SMR 44535). It also records possible remains of an enclosure above Haywood Quarry (SMR 44273), whilst noting that this may be a post-medieval field boundary.

                From the SMR.

1.4.c Artefact scatters

MIV/102   Flint scatter (SMR 43299)
                A scatter of neolithic and bronze age flint flakes and tools was found in the early 20th century near a possible convergence of ridgeways.

MIV/103   Bronze Age finds (SMR 43327)
                The SMR contains a record of three bronze age axes found during the construction of the Milverton bypass.

                Both from the SMR and from information supplied by H. Davies (pers. comm.).

Not mapped   A programme of fieldwalking around Milverton has produced many flint flakes and some tools (Davies, 1978). However, at the time of writing no accurate locational data was available.

2. ROMAN
(No map)

2.1 Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
There has been no archaeological work in Milverton, though the SMR contains information on artefact finds in the surrounding area.

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.

Milverton is one of 26 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project at which there is as yet no evidence of Roman settlement on the site of the later town, though there was certainly activity in the area, which was somewhat more accessible to the Romans than the higher lands of West Somerset (as is shown by the presence of a fort at nearby Wiveliscombe).

2.3 Standing structures and visible remains

There are no visible remains of Roman activity in or around Milverton.

2.4 Archaeological features

2.4.a Artefacts

MIV/201   Roman pottery
                 Roman pottery has been recovered from a site west of Milverton.

                 From information supplied by H. Davies (pers. comm.).

Not mapped   Unprovenanced or imprecisely located finds recorded in the SMR include a hoard of 45 Roman
                 coins discovered in the 19th century (SMR 43300).

3. SAXON, MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL
(Maps B and C)

There is insufficient archaeological information to distinguish these three periods in Milverton with confidence.

3.1 Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge

There has been no archaeological work in Milverton, though informal observations have been made during works around the church, and there have been occasional finds of pottery.

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, adminstrative 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.

Milverton is one of fifteen out of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which already had some urban functions or features before the Conquest. In fact it is one of three places which, though not recorded as boroughs in Domesday, may have paid the '3rd penny' (a form of taxation associated with borough status) at least by 1086. It is one of the seven towns at which the probable or possible existence of a pre-Conquest market has been noted (though this figure may be misleadingly low), and one of nine towns in which possible signs of pre-Conquest planning have been noted in the Assessments. Though there is as yet no evidence of a pre-Conquest mint, Milverton was one of the 22 towns associated with a royal estate centre.

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. Though Milverton was not described as a borough before the Conquest, it was one of five of the places with some pre-Conquest urban functions which acquired borough status during the medieval period.

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. Milverton 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 , and, indeed, became a fairly important cloth town.

3.3 Standing structures and visible remains
Much of the medieval and post-medieval - and perhaps the Saxon - plan of Milverton survives. The only Grade I Listed building of these periods is the church (SMR LB 40285), which may also contain the only remaining built fabric of the pre-Conquest period (footings at the north-east corner of lady chapel of church may be pre-Conquest: Bond, c1990). However, there are several high quality houses of known medieval origin, including the Old House (SMR LB 40282), the Fort (SMR LB 40289) and Rocklyn (SMR LB 40310), and others are likely to survive behind later facades. In addition, there are some fine 17th century buildings, some concealed within the 18th century suburb of North Street (eg SMR LB 40264, 40268, 40270).

The Listed Buildings of known medieval and post-medieval origin in the central area are shown on Map B.

3.4 Archaeological components (core), shown on *Map B*
3.4.a Communications
(a) Roads, streets and routeways

MIV/401   Pre-1800 Roads
                 The surviving town plan of Milverton, which survives well, suggests rudimentary gridding out. This probably dates from the revival of the town in the medieval period, but it *could* date, at least in part, from the pre-Conquest period, and it would be of some interest to be able to date the development of the streets more precisely. We have documentary references to particular streets from 1339 onwards (Maynard, 1939), but it is probable that most of the street network shown on Map B was established before that date. One possible exception is the eastern end of High Street, which may to have been diverted to create gardens at some point - though it is also possible that the 'diversion' recalls the shape of a market area (see below).

                 From the 1802 and 1842 maps.

(b) Bridges

MIV/504   Bridges
                 A sequence of high quality bridges, dating from at least the 17th century (the bridge is referred to in 1652 but may be earlier) to the 19th straddles the river and the Preston Bowyer leat.

                 From information supplied by H. Davies (pers. comm.).

3.4.b Military sites
Not mapped   Archery butts existed somewhere along Butts Way, and encroachments upon them are referred to in the 1652 survey. The precise location is not known.

3.4.c Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship
MIV/301   The churchyard (SMR 43296)
                 Milverton's churchyard is exceptionally large and dominates the town. Some sources suggest that

it has expanded across the eastern (or western) end of an early ridge top settlement (eg. Aston & Leech, 1977; and see below, p10, p10, p9). But it is also possible that the churchyard represents the remnant of a large minster enclosure - which could even have once been larger.

The siting of Milverton's church on a ridge above the medieval town suggests a pre-Conquest origin, as does the dedication to St Michael (Bond, c1990). Evidence that it was a minster includes the existence of the separate church estate held by the King's chaplain at Domesday, and of at least one dependent chapel (Langford Budville) in the medieval period. This should not be surprising, given Milverton's position as the head of its hundred and one of a handful of recognised proto-urban market centres in the late Saxon period.

However, little is known of the minster, its extent or its buildings. The present Grade I Listed church (SMR LB 40285) is mostly 14th and 15th century, though it also contains 12th century stonework in its tower. But one source suggests that the footings at the north-east corner of the Lady Chapel may be pre-Conquest work (Bond, c1990), and others suggest that a greater than usual divergence of angle between the tower and the nave may reflect the position and orientation of an earlier church building (eg Maynard, 1939). The latter remains archaeologically unproven. The medieval church contains a notable collection of 16th century carved bench ends and its north wall carries engraved markings for the old game of 'fives'.

The original extent of the churchyard is not absolutely clear. The southern extent is particularly difficult to discern (see MIV/405, p10). On the other hand, the approximate extent to north, east and west is defined by roads, at least one of which has been widened in the second half of the 20th century. But the road verges, on which encroaching development (now cleared) occurred in the medieval or post-medieval period, may also have been church land. Roadside buildings included the surviving priest's house and church rooms on Parsonage Lane (SMR LB 40284). A pre-Dissolution chantry at the north-west corner of the churchyard is also referred to in historical documents, though this may have stood within the boundary wall.

The medieval churchyard contains the base of an early 15th century cross, not *in situ* (SMR LB 40288), and three stones which may have been from the Preston Bowyer chantry endowed with Milverton lands (Maynard, 1939). Occasional skeletons have been unearthed during road or walling works around the churchyard, but there has been no detailed study of the graveyard, and no archaeological work to date the burials, some of which may be from the pre-Conquest period.

The churchyard is based on the 1842 map, and includes the northern, eastern and western road verges as well as the medieval churchyard.

3.4.d Settlement (Urban)

Several theories have been put forward regarding the development of the town of Milverton. Without further archaeological information it is not possible to be very confident either about the relative date of different parts of town, or about the maximum extent of occupation at any given period. For by the time of the earliest detailed maps Milverton was entering a period of decline and it is therefore possible that previously occupied areas had fallen vacant. What follows is therefore somewhat conjectural in nature.

(a) Market places

MIV/403   Market places

Two possible market places are shown on Map B. The more northerly is the more conjectural, for it may represent either the earlier market associated with a ridge-top settlement (R.A. Croft, pers. comm.; and see below) *or* an area of open ground created by a relatively late diversion of High Street (and therefore previously part of the town). Since this area has remained undeveloped since the 19th century, it is possible that archaeological remains may survive to enable the resolution of this question.

The more southerly market place shown represents the possible original extent of the medieval market, which had been significantly encroached upon by the time of the earliest detailed maps. If this is shown correctly, it was a fairly regular rectangular market, fronted by the earliest version of the building which became the Fort (SMR LB 40289) and by tenements to south and west. Limited interventions in the area have shown that the archaeological situation in and around this area is complex, and that successive road diversions, widenings and encroachments have taken place (H. Davies, pers. comm.): further detailed archaeological research will be necessary in order to clarify the course of events.

The position of the post-medieval market cross (SMR 43297), known as Fair Cross in the early 18th century, is shown on the Tithe Map at the south-west corner of the market. The cross may have been of 17th century origin and it is not known whether there was an earlier version. The cross was taken down in 1851: the remains of it have now been moved from their original position.

The market places are both based on the 1842 map.

MIV/410   The fair field
There is some The annual fairs, first granted in 1708, and discontinued in the mid 19th century, were held in the Fairfield, at the west end of High Street. Because of the uncertainty over the original settlement at Milverton, pre-Conquest occupation of part of this site cannot be entirely ruled out. The fair site itself has probably produced numerous artefacts, since part of it has been intensively looted by metal detectorists: as no results have been reported to archaeologists, no details can be given.

From the 1842-1905 maps and information supplied by H. Davies (pers. comm.).

(b) Town plots
MIV/404   High Street and Wood Street
There is some debate about the status of this area. Certain sources (eg Aston & Leech, 1977; Bond, c1990) suggest that it represents the ridge-top focus of the Saxon town - in which case pre-Conquest street planning may be implied. The evidence for this suggestion is nowhere clearly stated, but appears to include the topography and "systematic collection of surface pottery scatters by H. Davies" referred to by Bond (c1990) but not recorded in the SMR.

In addition a high percentage of tenements listed in a 1652 survey as forming part of the chantry lands of Preston Bowyer were in this area. This may be of significance *if* they are to be identified with that part of the chantry endowment which according to Collinson (1791) consisted of 'minster lands', as this *might* imply long-standing tenements originally paying rent to the minster estate.

At least one tenement (that immediately adjacent to Mill Lane) was still in the gift of the church in the 14th century for it was used to provide a vicarage: part of the medieval building or a post-medieval successor may be incorporated within the apparently 19th century building which currently occupies the site (SMR LB 40299). But there are no other Listed buildings of known pre-19th century origin in this area. Nor are there any signs in the plot layout of intensive medieval occupation. Whilst these facts together might be interpreted as supporting the 'semi-abandoned settlement' hypothesis, they could also support other interpretations (R.A. Croft, pers. comm.), such as a relatively late settlement of open land. Archaeological investigation will be essential to the understanding of this area, which has fortunately been little disturbed by destructive modern development. Large open areas remain which may contain important archaeological information.

The mapped areas are based on the 1842 map.

MIV/304   High Street West
               Because of the uncertainty over the location of the Saxon town, an area to the west of the post-
               medieval occupation has been identified as of potential archaeological importance. This will be
               subject to revision in the event of future archaeological work in the area.

               The area shown is conjectural.

MIV/302   Parsonage Lane east
               The hilltop area east of the church has also been put forward as an area of possible Saxon
               occupation (Farley & Ekless, 1986). Again part of the reason for the suggestion is topographic,
               but again fragments of early medieval pottery have been found within the area (R.A. Croft, pers.
               comm.). The southern and eastern parts of the area were certainly occupied more intensively in
               the medieval and post-medieval periods (see below, p10, 11, p?), and there were also encroaching
               developments on the southern verges of North Street, but much of the area around the Parsonage
               has been little developed, and may therefore contain well-preserved remains of Saxon occupation.

               The mapped area is based on the 1842 map.

MIV/407   The Old House and Tithe Barn
               The Old House (SMR LB 44080) was built as the country home of the Archdeacon of Taunton
               in the 15th century, and part of this building survives: since the site was taken over in 1292, it is
               possible that remains of a previous building may also survive (H. Davies, pers. comm.). Stories
               of tunnels connecting the Old House to the Fort suggest the presence of medieval stone drains on
               the site (Farley, 1982). The earlier history of the site, only later occupied by the Vicarage, is not
               known (but see above).

               To the south of the Old House stood a large 12 bay tithe barn, which was demolished in the late
               19th century.

               *The mapped area is based on the 1842 map and on information supplied by H. Davies (pers.
               comm.).*

MIV/405   Parsonage Lane west
               The small area between the churchyard and the possible medieval market may once have been part
               of the minster area, but it has also been put forward as an area of Saxon settlement (Farley, 1982).
               The true history of the area remains to be established through further documentary research,
               perhaps, and by archaeological investigation. By the late 16th century it contained a substantial
               building, the Fort (SMR LB 40289), the grounds of which dominated the area. The Fort contains
               fabric from a 13th century building (Farley & Ekless, 1986), and it is possible that remains of
               other buildings - medieval or earlier - may survive in what became its gardens and orchards
               (which have since remained relatively undisturbed).

               The mapped area is based on the 1842 map.

MIV/406   Sand Street, the Cross and Fore Street
               These areas probably formed the heart of the medieval borough. On the 1842 map they display
               signs of previous pressure on space in the congestion of buildings, but there are few signs of
               planned blocks of regular, narrow tenements. The most regular layout is that of the north side of
               Fore Street, an area possibly constrained by topography.

               Few details of the development of these areas are known, and relatively few buildings of known
               early origin survive in a Listable condition. Those on the north side of Fore Street include a late
               17th century cottage (SMR LB 40242) and two 18th century houses with possible earlier origins
               (SMR LB 40243, 40244), whilst Sand Street and St Michael's Hill include three 17th century
               houses (SMR LB 40290, 40293, 44620).

Archaeological remains in Sand Street, the Cross and Fore Street may have suffered more than those in other parts of Milverton, for there has been continued commercial activity in these areas since at least the medieval period. However, there has been no archaeological work to test the survival of deposits, and so the potential of the medieval core cannot at present be assessed with confidence.

The mapped areas are based on the 1842 map.

(c) Suburbs

MIV/408   Silver Street and Station Road
Very little is known of Silver Street and the southern part of Station Road. It appears only partly built up on the 1842 map, but without further research it is difficult to know whether this signifies late development or partial abandonment of previously occupied areas. It is therefore one of the parts of Milverton in which the extent of early occupation needs to be tested archaeologically.

Few Listed buildings of any period exist in the areas around Silver Street, but there are two of known early origin on Station Road. The ex-inn Rocklyn (SMR LB 40310), which actually fronts Turnpike, is one of Milverton's few remaining buildings of possible medieval origin (Farley & Ekless 1986) (though it is Listed as a 17th century structure). Rock House (SMR LB 40297) may be of late 17th century origin, though it is 19th century in appearance.

The mapped areas are based on the 1842 map.

MIV/409   North Street
North Street was already a gracious merchants' suburb in the 16th and 17th centuries, occupied by detached, gardened properties. Though refronted in the late 18th and 19th centuries, some of these structures still survive (SMR LB 40264, 40268, 40270, 40273, 40275). Adjacent frontage areas were infilled in the late 18th and 19th centuries with the creation of the Georgian North Street suburb, the rest of which is also Listed (SMR LB 40265, 40266, 40267, 40269, 40271, 40272, 40274, 40276, 40277). The large garden areas are likely to contain post-medieval garden archaeology of some interest. Whether they will contain remains of any earlier occupation remains to be established, for little is known of the earlier history of North Street.

The mapped areas are based on the 1842 map.

3.4.e Industrial sites

Not mapped   There are documentary references to a medieval pottery kiln (SMR 43326) but this has not so far been located.

3.5 Archaeological components (outlying area), shown on Map C

3.5.a Communications: Roads

MIV/401   Pre-1800 roads
Roads in existence by 1802 are shown. However, at least one of these, the turnpike road to Wiveliscombe, may have been built as late as 1786 (H. Davies, pers. comm.), replacing the road past the Court.

From the 1802 map.

3.5.b Manors and estates

MIV/501   Milverton Court
Very few historical details on Milverton Court were available for this report. The Court building itself (SMR LB 40305) is believed to be of late 16th century origin, and it is possible that the entire complex was established in this period. However, an earlier origin cannot at present be ruled out, especially given the site's position in relation to the possibly medieval Milverton Park (see below): 13th/14th century coins have been recovered from its gardens (H. Davies, pers.

comm.). The post-medieval Court could have been developed from an earlier park lodge or farm, if not from a medieval house. Archaeological remains of some importance might therefore survive, perhaps - but not necessarily - directly underneath or adjacent to the present buildings. Further documentary research into the history of the house will be necessary in order to assess more fully the likelihood of medieval remains on the site.

The 1842 Tithe Map, which is the earliest available detailed map of the Court, shows an elaborate complex of buildings including the house and outbuildings which probably included some agricultural buildings. Gardens are not clearly marked. However, the Court lies within a clearly defined regular group of enclosures, abutting an old (?diverted) road to Wiveliscombe. Some of these - especially those closest to the house - are likely to have contained 16th to 18th century gardens, landscaping and driveways (the main drive was constructed c.1666). A large area around the house should therefore be the subject of further survey before any developments are undertaken.

The area around the Court is mapped from the 1842 map. An earlier map of the Court exists (1782), but could not be consulted during the writing of this report.

MIV/402   Milverton Park (SMR 43306)
The SMR includes an entry for a park west of Milverton. Evidence for the park is mainly in the form of field and feature names (eg West Park Covert, Park Spinney), and no historical references to the park have been encountered during the writing of this report.

The SMR does not include a full outline for the park, but it is tempting to suggest that it may have extended as far south as Butts Way and as far east as the medieval town. It is interesting to speculate on the effect of the park on other roads, for at least two routes to Wiveliscombe once passed through it. One of these - possibly the old ridgeway - was blocked in the mid 19th century, and other past diversions are a possibility. The park also contained a separate house at Court Bottom (SMR 44373, once a courtyard dwelling, and - later - limekilns and quarries (see MIV/606, p14).

The suggested park boundary is from the SMR.

3.5.c Settlement (Rural)
MIV/503   Houndsmoor
Houndsmoor is mentioned in Domesday. Though the location of the pre-Conquest occupation has not been ascertained, it is perhaps likely to have been close to - or conceivably within - the triangular road junction at the southern end of the settlement. The largest post-medieval complex (called Houndsmoor) was just north of the triangle, and may represent a high status medieval site. No buildings there survive in Listed condition: indeed, the settlement of Houndsmoor contains only one Listed building, of 19th century date (SMR LB 40259).   There has been no archaeological work in Houndsmoor and the quality and character of the archaeological remains has not been assessed.

From the 1802 and 1842 maps.

MIV/502   General rural development
Other rural development around Milverton included: Smallbrook, a farm referred to in 14th century documents (Maynard, 1939) and at which a 19th century linhay survives (SMR LB 40316); and a number of post-medieval encroachments along Butts Way, at least one of which is referred to in the 1652 survey and rental.

From the 1802 and 1842 maps.

3.5.d Mills

MIV/303   The town mill (SMR 43311)
                 A mill is mentioned at Milverton in the Domesday Survey, and again in 1347 (Maynard, 1939).
                 Both the pre-Conquest and the medieval mill may have been on the same site as that of the post-
                 medieval mill. The mill buildings (SMR LB 40263) consist of a house, of probable 17th century
                 origin, the mill itself, which is probably 18th century, and various 18th century bridges and walls
                 (SMR LB 40262). One overshot wheel, the pit for another and much of the mill machinery
                 survives. The 1842 map also shows another building on the north side of the Brook: this was
                 demolished during the construction of the railway shortly afterwards.

                 From the 1802 and 1842 maps.

Not mapped   The study area also includes part of the mill race for Preston Bowyer mill (SMR 43317).

3.5.e Agricultural sites

Not mapped   The SMR suggests that the name of Olands (SMR 44275) may derive from 'Old Lands', implying
                 abandoned field systems of possible Prehistoric or medieval date. There is no archaeological
                 evidence for this.

3.5.f Artefacts

Not mapped   A programme of fieldwalking around Milverton has produced numbers of medieval and medieval
                 potsherds (Davies, 1978). However, at the time of writing no accurate locational data was
                 available.

4. INDUSTRIAL (LATE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY)
(Map D)

4.1 Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
There has been a little archaeological work relating to the industrial period in Milverton, in the form of a limekiln
survey by SIAS (1976).

4.2 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.

Milverton is one of the 22 or so places which though they did not merit Borough or Urban District status at the end
of the 19th century, remained market centres and can probably still be regarded as towns (though several of them
had sunk towards village status during the course of the century).

4.3 Standing structures and visible remains
There are a number of Listed Buildings of late 18th century or 19th century origin in Milverton, mainly concentrated
in the eastern half of the town. They include many of the buildings in North Street (SMR LB 40265-7, 40269,
40271-2, 40274, 40276-7) which, together with refronted earlier structures, form a fine Georgian suburb.

The Listed Buildings of late 18th and 19th century origin are shown on Map D.

4.4 Archaeological components, *shown on* **Map D**
4.4.a Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Components described under earlier periods are shown more lightly shaded. The only major redevelopments were off Fore Street and Parsonage Lane, where two short-lived industrial sites existed: these have been mapped across earlier components.

4.4.b Communications
(a) Roads
MIV/603   Turnpikes and new roads
                 Turnpikes were set up at Milverton from 1751 onwards, and there was a tollgate at the junction of North Street and Silver Street (SMR 43312). There were road realignments at Milverton Court and at Houndsmoor.

                 Turnpike information is from Murless (1985), and the roads are mapped from the 1842-1905 maps.

(b) Railways
MIV/605   Railway
                 The Taunton to Barnstaple railway (SMR 43373) opened in 1871, and there was a station at Milverton (SMR 43886), with adjacent yards. The railway was closed in 1966 and the Milverton section has now been reused for the bypass.

                 From the 1889 map.

4.4.d Water
Not mapped   A piped water supply system was constructed in the 1880s, running in iron pipes between springs at "Guglets" near Court Farm into several parts of the town, including Sand Street and High Street. The associated pipes were found during the laying of modern pipes across Guglets field in 1995 (information from H. Davies, pers. comm.).

4.4.e Settlement (Suburban)
MIV/601   19th century suburban development
                 There was only a very small amount of suburban expansion in Milverton in the 19th century. This included a landscaped park established at Olands (SMR 43891)

                 From the 1842-1905 maps.

4.4.f Settlement (Rural)
MIV/604   General rural development
                 A few rural plots and farm extensions were established around Milverton in the 19th century.

                 From the 1842-1905 maps.

4.4.g Industrial sites
MIV/606   Quarries and limekilns
                 Several quarries and limekilns existed north and west of Milverton, and are marked on the 1842 and later maps. One disused limekiln still survives in Park Kiln Quarry (SMR 43305, SMR LB 40317). Other areas to the north (SMR 43304) are named after the Park Kiln and may also have contained structures, but no evidence has yet been found that they did so.

                 Two disused limekilns also survive at Ford Bridge Quarry (SMR 43319).

Four limekilns at Haywood Quarry (SMR 43309) were built in 1872 when the Devon and Somerset Railway was built and were probably linked to it by a siding. They had gone out of use by 1912 and a SIAS survey, which recorded them in advance of their destruction by the bypass, located only three structures (SIAS, 1976).

From the 1842-1889 maps and the SMR.

MIV/602   Other industry
          Other industrial sites included a large site in town, which is shown on the 1842 map but had gone out of use by later in the 19th century. This was the Broadmead tannery, which was founded in the late 18th century and employed 74 persons at its height (information from H. Davies, pers. comm.). A number of smaller smithies are also shown.

          The Gas Works were set up on Houndsmoor Lane in 1861, and a smithy on Station Road by 1889.

          From the 1842-1905 maps and information supplied by H. Davies (pers. comm.).

4.4.h Agricultural sites
Not mapped   The pound (SMR 43314) was on Butts Way.

5. 20TH CENTURY
(Map E)

5.1 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.

Milverton is one of 30 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which is not classed as a town in the County Structure Plan.

5.2 Settlement components, *shown on* Map E
5.2.a Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Components described under earlier periods are shown more lightly shaded. Though there have been some suburban redevelopment in previously occupied areas, these have been small scale and are not shown on Map E.

All mapped components are from the 1997 OS digital maps, unless otherwise stated.

5.2.b Communications: Roads
MIV/701   20th century roads
          The major 20th century road development has been the bypass (1975), which reused the old railway line.

5.2.c Settlement: suburban
MIV/702   20th century suburbs and general development
          A moderate amount of suburban expansion has taken place along the roads into the town.

5.2.d Industrial sites
MIV/703   Industry
          20th century industrial sites include a sawmill on Station Road.

V. THE POTENTIAL OF MILVERTON

1. Research interests
Archaeological interest in Milverton focuses on the location of the pre-Conquest town and the establishment of its relationship to the medieval one. Because of the possible shift of focus and subsequent history of certain areas, there is perhaps unusual potential for the survival of important early remains of the town itself.

2. Areas of potentially exceptional preservation
There are no areas of potentially exceptional environmental preservation, except perhaps for the mill site.
3. Limitations
There has been only limited modern development and it is possible that significant archaeological remains survive within the town.

4. Extent of current protection
(Shown on Map F)
There are no Scheduled Monuments in Milverton, but there are many Listed Buildings (see the List for details). An AHAP (Area of High Archaeological Potential) and a Conservation Area have also been defined in Milverton.

The existing constraints in the central area are shown on Map F.

5. Management Proposals
See the Archaeological Guidance Document

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VII. COMPONENT INDEXES

1. Component to map

Component	Map		Component	Map
MIV/101	A		MIV/409	B
MIV/102	A		MIV/410	B
MIV/103	A		MIV/501	C
MIV/301	B		MIV/502	C
MIV/302	B		MIV/503	C
MIV/303	C		MIV/601	D
MIV/304	B		MIV/602	D
MIV/401	B, C		MIV/603	D
MIV/402	C		MIV/604	D
MIV/403	B		MIV/605	D
MIV/404	B		MIV/606	D
MIV/405	B		MIV/701	E
MIV/406	B		MIV/702	E
MIV/407	B		MIV/703	E
MIV/408	B			

2. Component to page

Maps

Map A – prehistoric

Map B – pre-1800 core

Map C – pre-1800 wider area

Earlier components in yellow.

Map D – 19th century

Earlier components in yellow.

Map E – 20th century

Earlier components in yellow.

Map F - Existing designations

Key: Scheduled Monuments   (none),
       Listed Buildings   Grade I (light blue)
                                   Grade II* (light green)
                                   Grade II (green)
       Registered Park (none)
       Conservation Area (green)
       Area of High Archaeological Potential (pink)

MIV/103 - Bronze Age Finds

MIV/101 - Enclosure?

MIV/102 - Flint Scatter

West Park Covert

Higher Park Kiln Covert

Lower Park Kiln Covert

Parkwood Bungalow

River's Wood

Aslant Covert

Kiln (dis)

Quarry (dis)

Town Mill

North Close

98m

96m

99m

Lea Cottage

Mount Farm

Quaking House

154m

158m

157m

MIV/101 - Cropmark Enclosure

MILVERTON CP

Milverton Court

Fairfield

Court Cottages

Milverton

Recrea Grou

PW
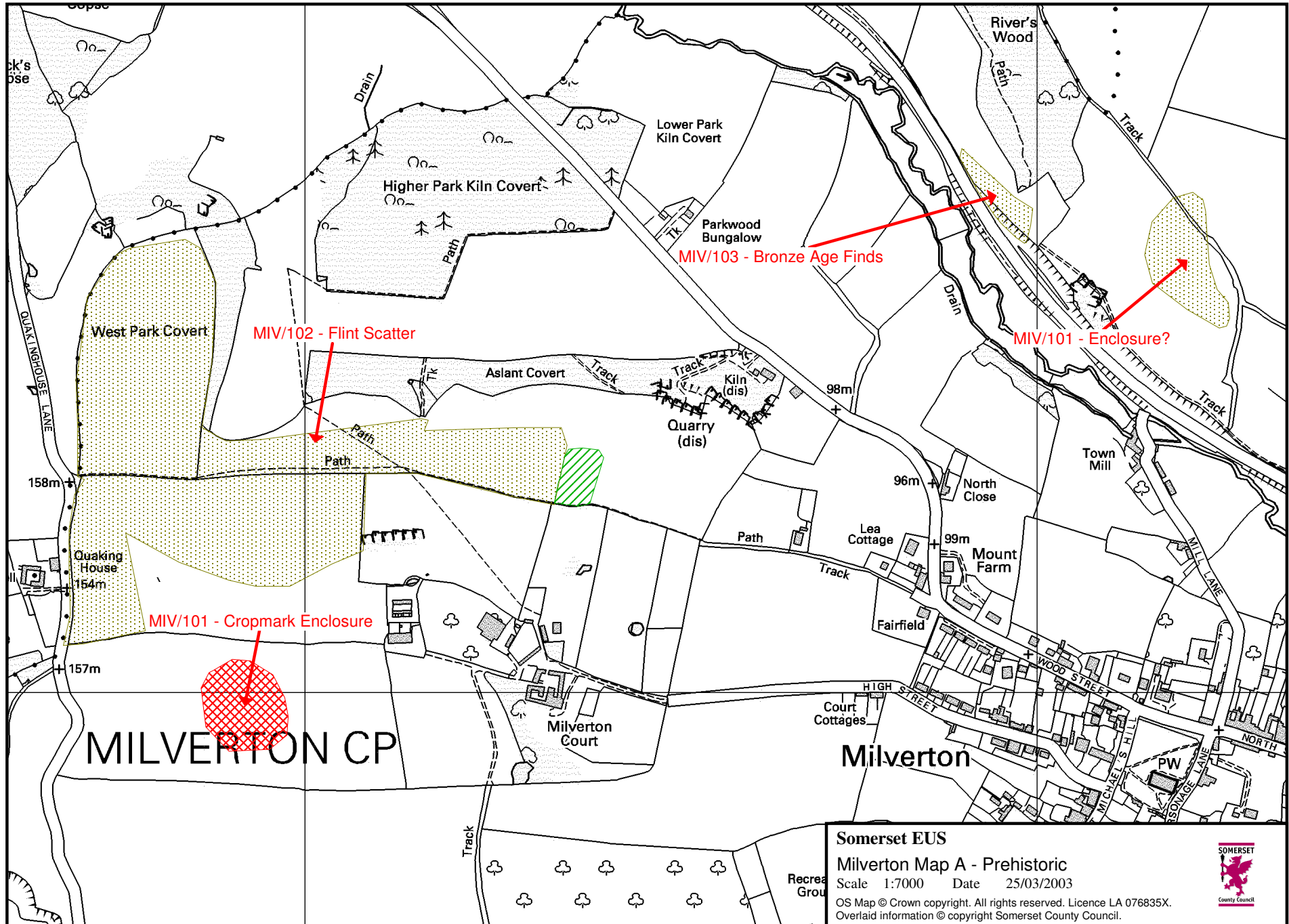
Somerset EUS

Milverton Map A - Prehistoric

Scale   1:7000   Date   25/03/2003

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SOMERSET
County Council

MIV/301 - Churchyard

MIV/404 - Town Plots

MIV/401 - Pre-1800 Roads

MIV/409 - North St

MIV/410 - Fair field

MIV/408 - Turnpike

MIV/304 - Poss Early Occupation

MIV/403 - Early Market?

MIV/405 - Fort area

MIV/406

MIV/408

MIV/407 - Parsonage

MIV/302 - Possible Saxon Occupation

Lea Cottage

Mount Farm

Track

99m

Fairfield

Milverton

Cottages

HIGH

Hillfarrance

Sawmill

Drai

B3227

B3227

creation round

School

Olands

Path

CREE DWELL

BANK ROAD

COLES

POV

PW

68m

PW

Somerset EUS

Milverton Map B - Pre-1800 (Core)

Scale   1:4000   Date   25/03/2003

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SOMERSET
County Council

MIV/402 - Milverton Park

MIV/303 - Mill Site

MIV/401 - Pre-1800 Roads

MIV/501 - Milverton Court

MIV/502

MIV/503 - Houndsmoor

Higher Park Kiln Covert

Parkwood Bungalow

k Covert

Aslant Covert

Kiln (dis)

Quarry (dis)

98m

96m

North Close

99m

Town Mill

Ford Bridge Quarry (disused)

Dismantled Ra

Drain

Hillfarrance Brook

Sawmill

Lea Cottage

Mount Farm

Fairfield

Court Cottages

Milverton Court

LVERTON CP

Milverton

White's Cottages

Recreation Ground

School

Olands House

Olands Barn

102m

Marden

Bluecap Cottage

Kestrel Cottage

Auton Dolwells

Auton Farm

The Firs

Allot Gdns

Olands Cottage

Houndsmoor

Leys Bungalow

Houndsmoor Farm

Smallbrook
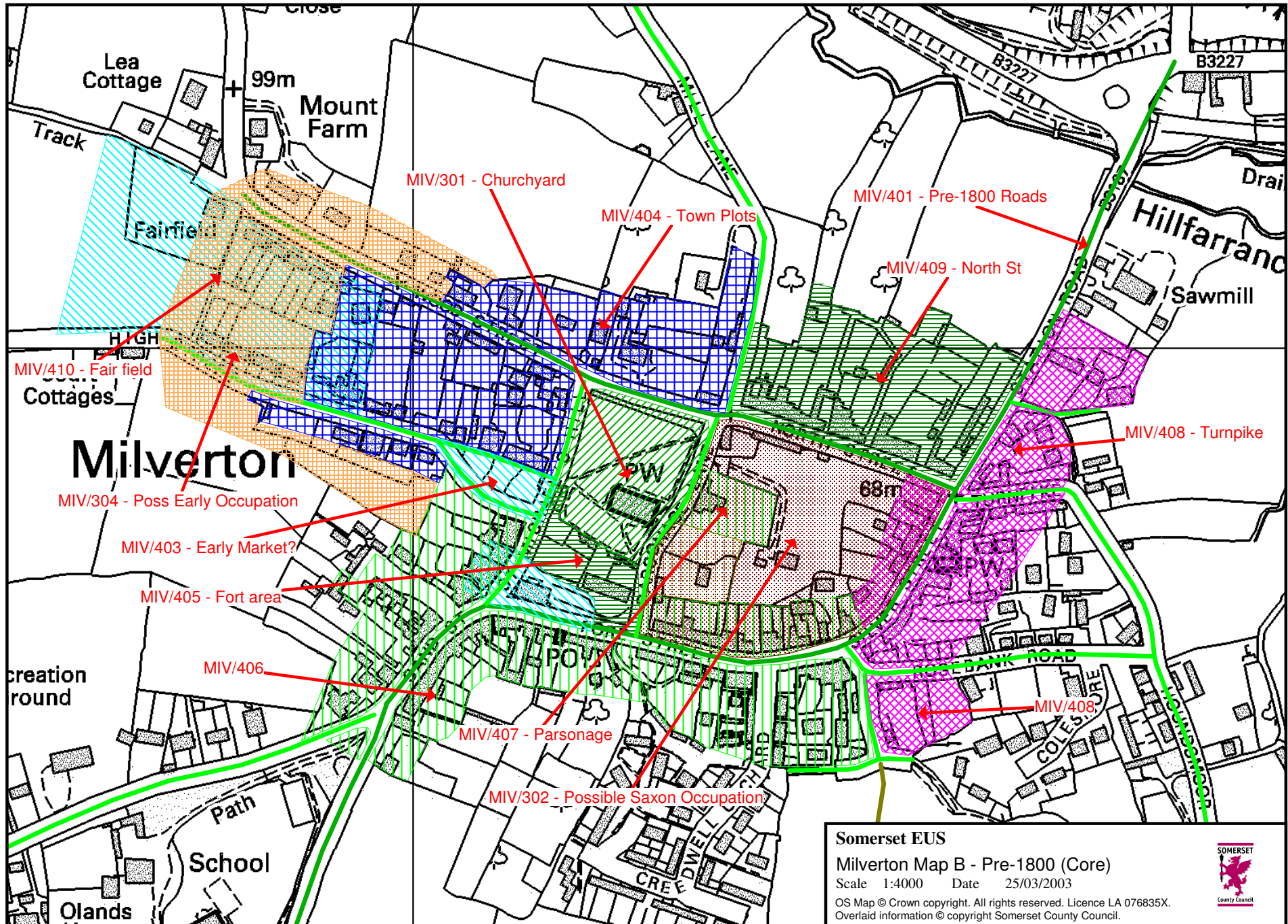
Fox Ba

Lou

Vul Ken

Somerset EUS

Milverton Map C - Pre-1800 (Outlying)

Scale   1:9000   Date   25/03/2003

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SOMERSET
County Council

MIV/606 - Limekilns, Haywood Quarry, Milverton

MIV/606 - Haywood Quarry and Kilns

MIV/606 - Ford Bridge Quarry

MIV/606 - Park Kiln Quarry

MIV/606 - Limekiln

MIV/606 - Limekilns, Ford Quarry, Milverton

MIV/605 - Railway

MIV/604 - Ford Bridge Farm

MIV/602 - Smithy

MIV/606 - Quarry?

MIV/602 - Gas Works

MIV/601 - Olands Park

MIV/601 - The Elms

MIV/602 - Tannery?

MIV/603 - Turnpikes & New Roads

MIV/604 - Houndsmoor Farm

Milverton

Houndsmoor

RTON CP

Parkwood
Bungalow

Aslant Covert

Track

Tk

Path

Path

Path

Quarry
(dis)

Kiln
(dis)

98m

96m

North
Close

99m

Lea
Cottage

Mount
Farm

Town
Mill

Ford Bridge Quarry
(disused)

Dismantled Railway

Track

Drain

Hillfarrance Brook

Sawmill

Fairfield

Milverton
Court

Court
Cottages

HIGH STREET

PW

68m

PO

Foxhill
Barn

Loundshay Manor
Cottage

White's
Cottages

ROSEBANK ROAD

COLESMORE

Recreation
Ground

Olands
House

Olands
Barn

School

BUTTS WAY

102m

Marden

Bluecap
Cottage

The
Firs

Allot Gdns

Olands
Cottage

HUNTASH LANE

Leys
Bungalow

Houndsmoor
Farm

PIX LANE

Pix C

Vulcan
Kennels

Auton
Dolwells

Auton
Farm

Path

Track

Smallbrook

Somerset EUS

Milverton Map D - 19th Century

Scale   1:9000   Date   25/03/2003

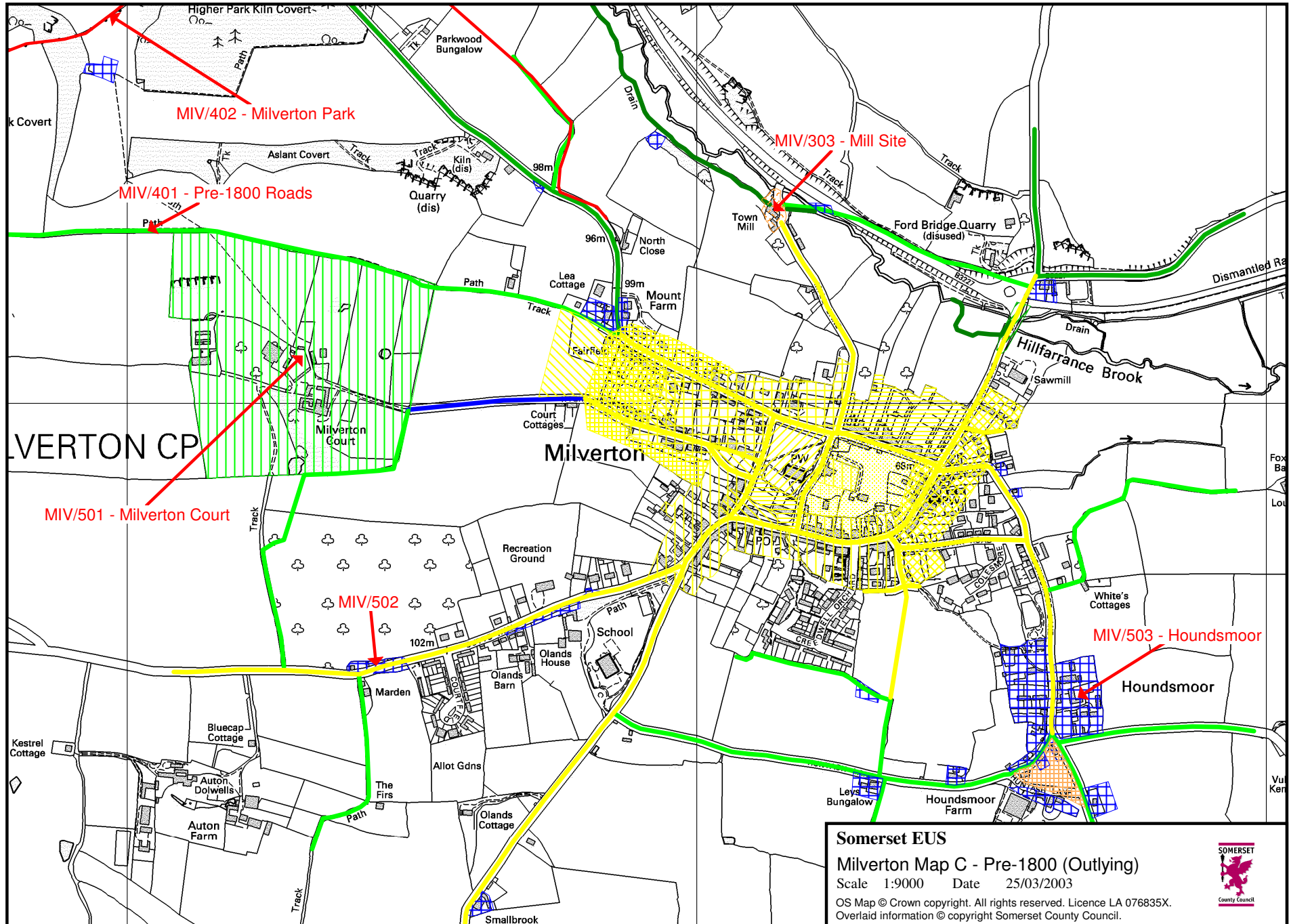OS Map © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence LA 076835X.
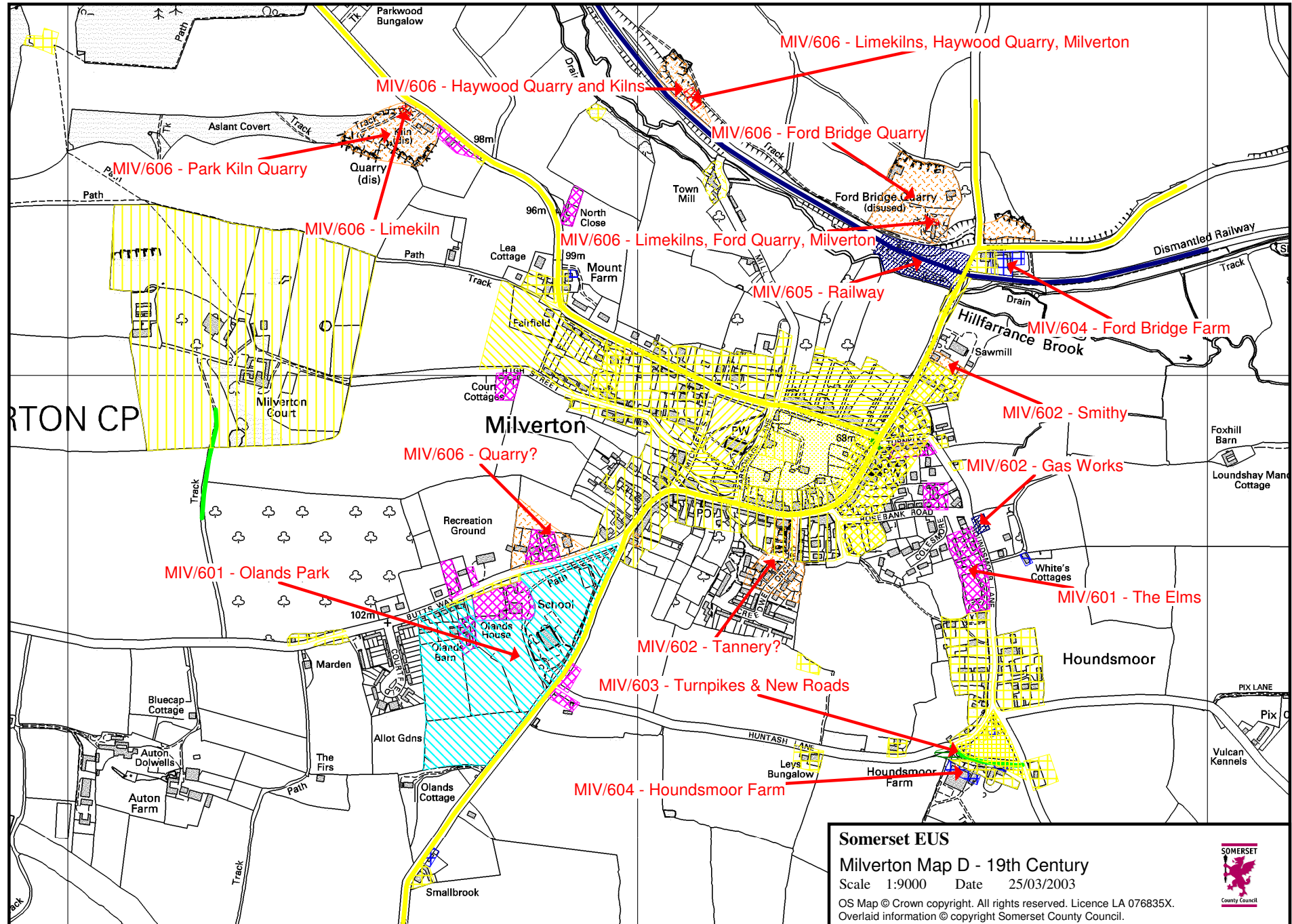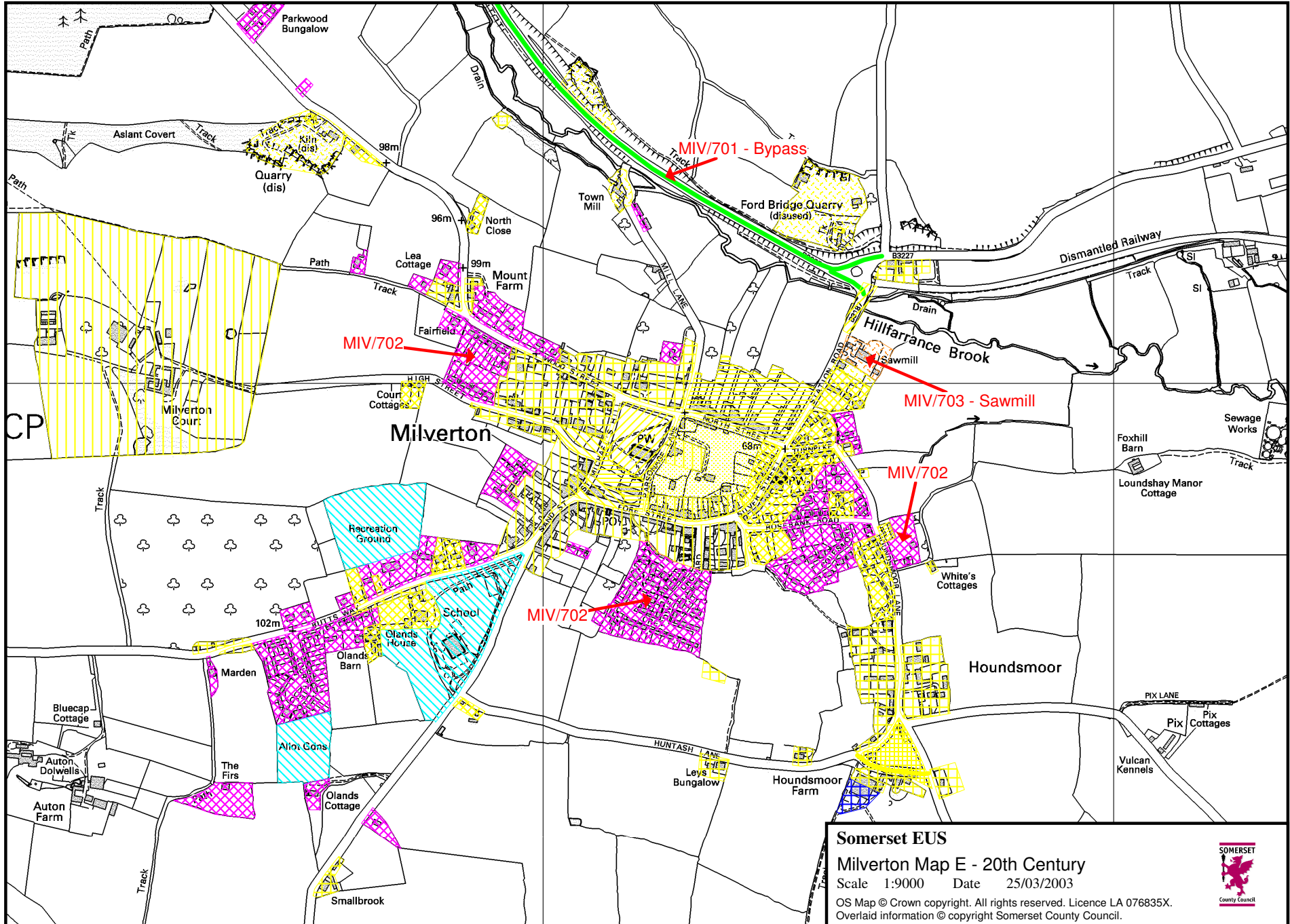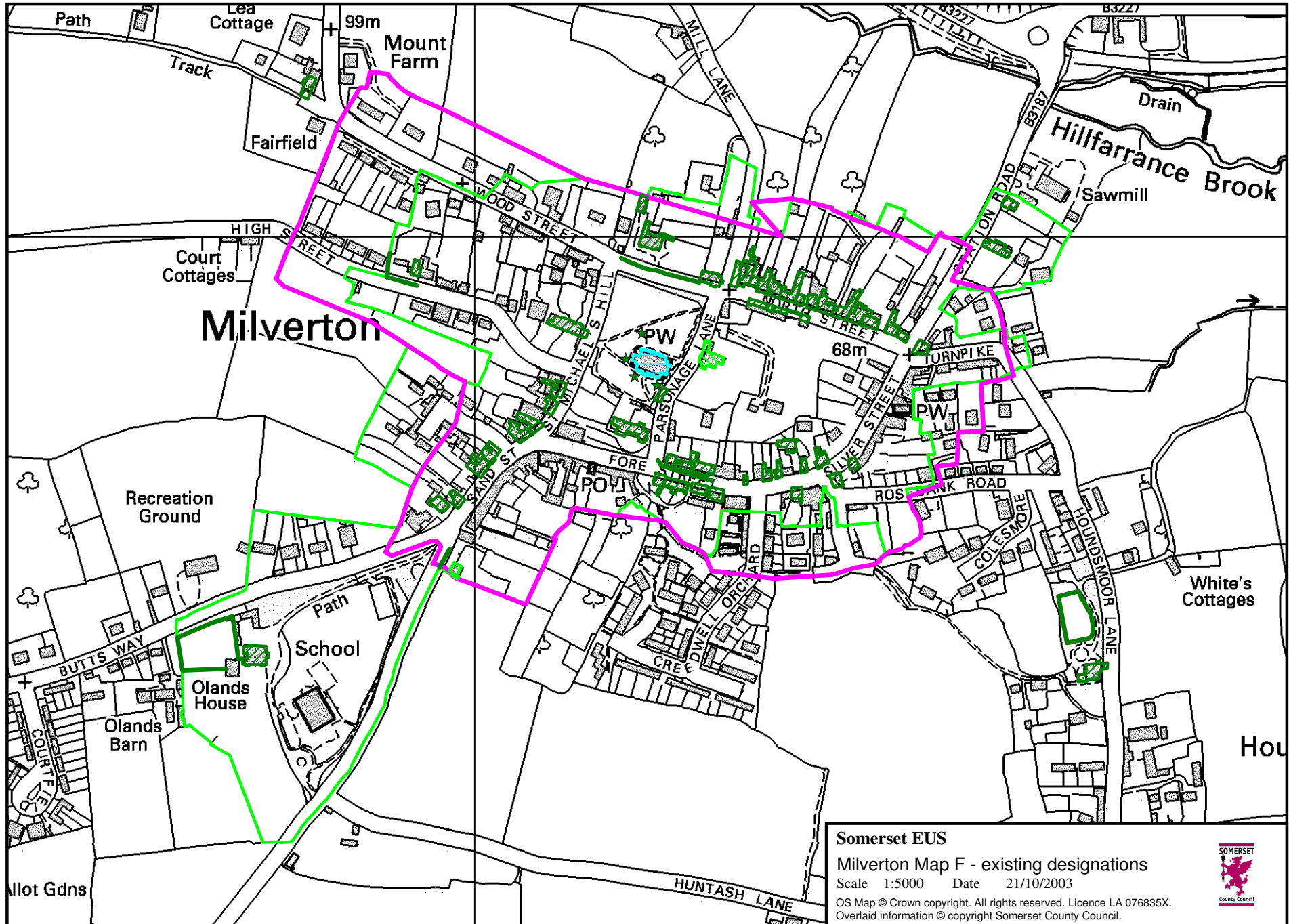Overlaid information © copyright Somerset County Council.

SOMERSET
County Council

MIV/701 - Bypass

MIV/702

MIV/703 - Sawmill

MIV/702

MIV/702

Milverton

Houndsmoor

CP

CP

Parkwood Bungalow

Aslant Covert

Quarry (dis)

Kiln (dis)

Track

Tk

Path

98m

96m

99m

North Close

Lea Cottage

Mount Farm

Fairfield

Court Cottages

Milverton Court

HIGH STREET

Path

Track

Drain

Town Mill

MILL LANE

B3227

Hillfarrance Brook

Dismantled Railway

SI

SI

Track

Drain

Ford Bridge Quarry (disused)

Sawmill

STATION ROAD

Foxhill Barn

Sewage Works

Loundshay Manor Cottage

Track

White's Cottages

Recreation Ground

School

Olands House

Olands Barn

Marden

BUTTS WAY

102m

Bluecap Cottage

Auton Dolwells

The Firs

Auton Farm

Allot Gdns

Olands Cottage

Smallbrook

Leys Bungalow

HUNTASH LANE

Houndsmoor Farm

Houndsmoor

PIX LANE

Pix Cottages

Pix

Vulcan Kennels

68m

PW

PO

NORTH STREET

SILVER STREET

TURNPIKE

Somerset EUS

Milverton Map E - 20th Century

Scale   1:9000   Date   25/03/2003

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SOMERSET
County Council

Path
Lea
Cottage
+ 99m
Mount
Farm

Fairfield

Track

HIGH STREET

Court
Cottages

WOOD STREET

MILL LANE

B3227

B3227

Drain

Hillfarrance Brook

Sawmill

Milverton

ST MICHAEL'S HILL

PW

PARSONAGE LANE

MAIN STREET

68m

+ TURNPIKE

PW

Recreation
Ground

SAND ST

FORE

PO

SILVER STREET

ROS PARK ROAD

COLESMORE

HOUNDSMOOR LANE

White's
Cottages

BUTTS WAY

COURTFIELD

Olands
House

Olands
Barn

Path

School

DWELL ORCHARD

CREE

Hou

llot Gdns

HUNTASH LANE

English Heritage Extensive Urban Survey

An archaeological assessment of

Minehead

Clare Gathercole

SOMERSET
County Council

SOMERSET EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

MINEHEAD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

by Clare Gathercole

CONTENTS

Appendix: Maps

SOMERSET EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

MINEHEAD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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 2003.

English Heritage has funded two programmes 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 focused 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
A relatively large amount of primary documentation is available for Minehead, particularly for the post-medieval period. These documents include manor surveys, bailiffs' accounts, court records, charters and churchwardens' accounts. Not all of this material has yet been assimilated by historians. None of the primary documents was consulted for the purposes of this report: the potential exists for a much more detailed study than this one.

2.   Local histories
Minehead has been well-served by local historians. In addition to the early work of Hancock (1903), more recent studies include those of Binding & Stevens (1977) and Lamplugh (1987). The historical content of this report relies largely on these sources. The VCH has not yet covered the area of Minehead.

3.   Maps
The earliest map showing Minehead is a sketch of coastal defences dated to c1544. Another sketch of the town from c1701 also exists, together with an early plan of the harbour. The only other maps to predate the Ordnance Survey surveyors' drawings of c1802 are a large scale plan of Lower Town (c1792), which shows the fire damage of 1791, and an estate map of Staunton Fry (c1770) showing an area on the south side of the town.

In addition to the 19th century Ordnance Survey maps and Tithe Maps, there is an 1822 map showing the Luttrell estate at Minehead.

III.   A BRIEF HISTORY OF MINEHEAD
Minehead lies in a relatively sheltered position in the lee of North Hill, at a convergence point of upland, lowland and coastal landscapes. Though separate small settlements in each of these landscapes have physically grown together only comparatively recently to form the town as it appears today, they have long been linked under one name. The various forms of this name have consistently reflected the importance of the sheltering North Hill to the town. The earliest recorded forms of Minehead's name - *Mynheafdon* (1046), *Maneheve* (1086), *Menehewed* (1225) and *Menedun* (also 1225) - contain elements allied to both Welsh and Old English words for hill or mountain (Welsh *mynydd*, passing into Old English as *myned*; and the English *dun*).

There is abundant evidence of activity around Minehead long before the historic settlements, though there is only limited evidence suggesting actual occupation in the area of the modern town itself. Earthworks, including the Bronze Age barrows of Selworthy Beacon and the Iron Age enclosure and possible field system of Furzebury Brake, survive on the high ground north of the town. A considerable proportion of the flints recovered from the area also comes from the higher land of North Hill and Higher Hopcott (away from land at times prone to flooding). However, a secondary centre of finds exists in the intertidal area, where the remains of a submerged forest survive together with peat deposits: in this environment a number of flints have been found together with planking suggesting possible structures.

It is possible that the known Iron Age sites on North Hill remained the principal settlements until the 8th or 9th century, for it appears that Roman influence in this area was slight. However, certainly by Domesday (1086) there were agricultural settlements at Minehead and Alcombe. There were also several other hamlets and farmsteads in the area, perhaps including Periton, Staunton and Woodcombe, the names of which suggest that they may be of pre-Conquest origin. Fishing is believed to have been taking place here by this date (though it is not specifically referred to in the Domesday Book), but negative evidence, in the form of Minehead's omission from accounts of Viking attacks on the Somerset coast, may suggest that there was no harbour - or settlement - of any importance (though there could be other reasons for the omission).

The manor of Minehead, like that of Alcombe to the south, belonged to the Saxon Algar, and was larger than its other neighbours, Bratton and Mene. All these manors passed to the Mohuns after the Norman Conquest and were administered from Dunster Castle, though the manor of Alcombe and part of the manor of Minehead (together with the tithes) were granted to the great monastic houses - Bath Abbey (as Dunster Priory's endowment) and Bruton - in the early Mediaeval period. But for three hundred years, Minehead remained essentially a small, scattered agricultural and fishing settlement on a feudal estate.

It appears from the available documents that things began to change during the 14th century. A comparison of the c1300 manor survey and the 1383-4 bailiffs' accounts shows that a process of letting out of demesne land and commutation of feudal service for cash rent was under way. This reflects a complex national trend, in which specific events of the 14th century (including the Black Death) played a part. The letting out of blocks of land, and references to waste land reclamation appear to show that the survivors in Minehead were doing well. The Mohuns, on the other hand, had financial problems which forced the widow Joan to sell the reversion of the estates in 1375. Joan herself survived for another thirty years; when she died, her indignant heirs then instigated a lawsuit challenging the sale. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the purchasers, the Luttrells - who were in any case heavily involved in national politics - were slow to take a personal interest in the estates, which were at first primarily a professionally managed source of income for them.

By this time, the harbour at Dunster, which had formerly been most profitable for the Mohun estates, was silting up. It was this which prompted the deliberate development of Minehead as a replacement centre of trade and therefore revenue. In fact, references to a town, port and fair at Minehead occur as early as 1380, before the Luttrells gained full control. But during the 15th century it became, thanks to the influence of its overlord, not only a successful fishing and trading port (with the Luttrells' connections with France encouraging continental trade), but also one of very few departure points for pilgrims to Santiago de Compostella . There were 120 households by 1435, and a market by at least 1461 (though probably earlier). In 1474, burgesses (and a portreeve) are mentioned, implying that some form of incorporation had already occurred. This reference comes from the period (1461-1485) when the Luttrell estates were attainted (due to their Lancastrian sympathies): though the heir's mother remained in occupation at Minehead, circumstances were a little unusual.

Certainly, Minehead was not a planned civic and commercial venture in the mould of Dunster. The town lacked physical coherence, having already assumed the form it retained until the late 19th century, with three distinct foci: Higher or Church Town (around the newly rebuilt 15th century church); Middle or Lower Town (around the mill); and Quay Town. It was a replacement harbour, not a substitute for the showpiece estate centre of Dunster - and the Luttrells were, as later events showed, correspondingly unwilling to encourage the pretensions of its citizens.

From the late Mediaeval period until the late 18th century Minehead's history is dominated by the fortunes of its quays. The early harbour area lay on a creek some way south of the present quay, at the then mouth of the Bratton

Stream. Though this was adequate for small fishing boats and coasters, it was from the beginning difficult to maintain a sufficient depth of water for the ocean going vessels on which Minehead's international trade depended. There are references to problems with silting as early as the 14th century, and to the construction of jetties in the 15th century, with a proportion of the manor's harbour tolls being left with the townsfolk for their upkeep.

Minehead succeeded in retaining its deep water facilities into the 16th century and the town became increasingly important as trade grew. Though much of this was local, or with Wales and Ireland (Leland describes the town as full of Irishmen in the mid-16th century), with wool and livestock being principal commodities, Minehead had a significant role in trading on more exotic imported commodities. In Henry VIII's reign, Minehead possessed more ships suitable for naval use than any other Bristol Channel port, and indeed a 1544 sketch of (proposed?) coastal defence measures shows several large vessels anchored in the bay.

At the accession of Elizabeth I, Minehead was one of only two Somerset ports with port and custom officials. However, though on paper trade was healthy, in fact the condition of the harbour was becoming critical. Despite constant efforts to keep the harbour clear (the townsmen claimed to spend £50 a year on it), a receding tidal maximum was encouraging the formation of a shingle bank which impeded access to the quays. It was agreed by all that urgent, drastic measures were required. However, the Luttrells found themselves temporarily unable to finance any large scheme. Buoyed up by their past profits, and eager to escape any part of the Luttrell tolls and levies, the townsfolk opportunistically petitioned the Queen to grant them Borough status in order that they could take responsibility for the repair of the harbour. Perhaps they sincerely believed that they could manage the harbour better than had the Luttrells, who reluctantly acquiesced to the petition (at least at first), stressing the urgency of repairs in a letter to the Queen. The 1559 Charter of Incorporation, which established a free Borough and Parliamentary representation, was therefore made *conditional* on the fulfilment of the town's obligations with respect to the harbour.

It very quickly became apparent that the mercantile and fishing community of the new town could not afford the radical measures needed to repair the harbour. Appeals were made to the Luttrells, and by 1570 (having left the town to stew for a while) Thomas Luttrell was attempting to raise funds. But he died in 1571, leaving a son, George, in his minority. This, in combination with the naval levies of Elizabeth's reign meant that the harbour continued without major repairs for most of her reign, its condition gradually worsening. When George Luttrell was finally in a position to address the problem, his proposals were accompanied by a demand that the Borough charter, which was a real thorn in his side, be revoked. The burgesses were described by him as "but simple and rude handicraftmen who are fitter to be governed than to govern others" - and they had patently failed to fulfill the terms of the Elizabethan charter. The charter was revoked in 1607, after years of petitions, inquisitions and counter-petitions, though the town retained its Parliamentary privilege. However, George had already embarked on the "Newe Key", which forms the basis of the present harbour. This was usable by 1605 and more or less completed by 1616 (it seems he had much more grandiose schemes which never came to fruition).

The new harbour had a dramatic effect on Minehead's fortunes, though resentment amongst the townsfolk at their loss of status continued and there were periodic petitions for its restoration. Population, which had declined in the later years of Elizabeth's reign, began to rise and the town expanded, particularly around the quay and the market, as trade boomed. In 1626, Minehead was one of 24 English and Welsh seaports ordered to fortify against possible Spanish attacks, and in 1630 Gerard described a little market town with a much frequented harbour. The town saw action in the Civil War in 1642 and 1643. Hertford and his Royalist volunteers escaped through the port in 1642 - at some risk to life and limb, since they had misjudged the mood of the manor and town. The next year Minehead was blockaded and raided from the sea. Though Thomas Luttrell pragmatically backed down at Dunster when the Royalist army threatened, the sympathies of Minehead town remained Parliamentarian.

In the years after the first Civil War, Minehead was extremely busy, sending troops to Ireland and trading. A number of important merchant families established themselves in the town in this period, as did many smugglers. Most trade was still with Wales, the Bristol Channel ports and Ireland, but in the 1670s a fishing fleet went to Newfoundland every year. However, the quay was silting up again by the late 17th century. The harbour accounts from this period (from 1666 to 1800) have survived, and these show how expensive the harbour was to maintain. Works undertaken in 1682 enabled the harbour to take larger vessels, but did not address the root problem and though trade continued to flourish, it was - again - on borrowed time.

A further harbour scheme by the Luttrells was accompanied by a c1701 "Survey and Description of the Defects of the Pier at Minehead" which survives, with maps. This latest set of improvements, though accompanied by Parliamentary support guaranteeing duties to finance it, was dogged by ill fortune: finally completed around 1714, it was immediately ravaged by storms, and thenceforth required constant repairs, as high water level continued to drop. It is true that trade boomed in the early 18th century (with cloth and livestock still the main commodities), and that Defoe (1724) described Minehead as the safest harbour on the south side of the Bristol Channel and a fine port. However, this took place against a background of soaring costs, passed on to the merchants wherever possible, and growing friction between the merchants and the Luttrells. Whilst the latter constantly needed to increase duties to maintain the harbour, the former saw these as increasingly exorbitant. So, for example, a failed attempt was made by a group of merchants to make Watchet a staple port (to avoid the Luttrells' expensive weigh beam), and the townsmen continued to petition (somewhat unrealistically) for the restoration of their charter. Extra spice was added by the anti-establishment attitudes of a number of Quakers - including influential merchants - in the town. On the other hand, the Luttrells increasingly manipulated the election of Members of Parliament to their advantage, and maintained a tenuous control.

The political turbulence of the town in the 18th century cannot have helped when the problems of the harbour - its state of repair and its high duties - combined with the failure of the local woollen industry (on which much of Minehead's trade depended) really began to bite. Trade and the fisheries declined dramatically in the later 18th century. Collinson, writing in 1791, says:

> "About the beginning of the present century upwards of forty vessels were employed to Ireland. Many others were engaged in the West India, Virginia and Straits trade; and four thousand barrels of herring were at that time shipped here annually for the Mediterranean. But all this is now nearly at an end; the trade is lost; the herrings have left the coast; and there are at present only five or six vessels belonging to the port."

This decline was mirrored in the general fortunes of the town and the late-18th/ early-19th century was a difficult time for Minehead. The town contracted, despite attempts - which included the setting up of the Turnpike Trust - to revive it: there were 34 fewer recorded households in 1783 than in 1705. Then in 1791 the first of two serious fires took place, destroying much of Lower Town. Minehead hit rock bottom. Though grandiose schemes for rebuilding Lower Town were quickly announced, little was actually done: there are descriptions of blackened shells still remaining five years later - and indeed much of the town was not finally rebuilt until well into the 19th century. Many of the worst affected, who had nowhere to live and nowhere to work, simply moved away, and the population once more fell (from 2000 in 1790 to 1480 by 1830). The Luttrells were blamed for their agent's failure to relieve the suffering of the townspeople and there was increasing unrest. Confident of their control of the Parliamentary Borough, the family must have been shocked by the vitriolic opposition they encountered in the closely fought election of 1796. Ironically, the Luttrell comeback, during which they had virtual control of the Parliamentary Borough from 1802 onwards, sealed Minehead's fate: it was classed with the rotten boroughs in the 1832 reform act and disenfranchised. In 1834 injury was added to insult: the port lost its jurisdiction, when Bridgwater's limits were extended to cover Minehead's old waters.

On the other hand, sea bathing became fashionable in the 18th century, and Minehead's development as a resort had already beginning before 1800. The 1794 Universal British Directory says that " a number of persons of fashion have been induced to visit it as a bathing-place" , and several other heady descriptions of its environs exist from the turn of the century. Minehead, offering not only sea-bathing but also relative isolation (despite the new turnpike road which made it newly accessible), was at first an exclusive resort for persons of romantic sensibility, catering for "the pensive or rational pleasures of them who choose to enjoy Nature..." rather than "felicity hunters, the teasing insects of fashion" (Rev. Richard Warner, c1800). Savage (1830) also says that visitors "will not be annoyed by the company of the frivolous part of the fashionable world of whom so many are to be found in some of our watering places at particular seasons of the year." On the other hand, Minehead was short of "gracious lodgings". Many cheaper lodgings existed, a reminder, perhaps, of the town's heyday as a port. Though not considered entirely suitable for the better class of visitor which was anticipated, these lodgings were perfect for gentlefolk in reduced circumstances. Hence, by 1851 the town was already becoming a retirement centre.

A belated campaign of municipal works from the 1860s onwards - at Luttrell expense - transformed the town, particularly Lower Town. The town centre and the main 19th century suburbs were laid out on the ruins of the old town, providing for visitors. Puddle Street became the Parade; Watery Lane became the Avenue; gas lighting, water and sewers were all provided, as was a new church. The coming of the railway - relatively late, after a long campaign by the town - in 1874 had a dramatic effect on Minehead. For the first time, day trippers en masse had direct access to the town (though steamboats and coaches had been coming for some time) and, inevitably, something of its original character as a resort was lost. On the other hand, its economy benefitted enormously. Minehead grew rapidly (the population rose from 1,542 in 1851 to 2,782 in 1901) and in 1894 the Urban District Council was first elected. Its jurisdiction was extended in 1916 to include Alcombe, together with the intertidal area. Though Alcombe was still separate from Minehead's three foci at this time, the town's rate of growth promised to absorb it.

This promise has been fulfilled in the 20th century, though Minehead's development has taken one or two unexpected turns. Until the Second World War, it continued along the path set in the 19th century. The resort's facilities expanded, with the opening of the pier in 1901(enabling pleasure steamers to call at the town, which they did regularly throughout the 1920s and 1930s), the provision of electricity in 1903, and the establishment of a number of pleasure gardens and a cinema.

With the outbreak of war in 1939, a flood of evacuees began to pour into the town and the population rose dramatically. The pier was demolished, as part of the coastal defence preparations, and was not rebuilt after the war, so that the bigger boats could no longer visit Minehead. Not until 1951 when the harbour was given to the Urban District Council by the Luttrells and cleared yet again, did pleasure boats return. However, any diminution in Minehead's holiday appeal has been reversed since 1962 when Butlins opened. Originally conceived as a small camp, it has risen to be Butlins "flagship" and draws thousands of visitors to the town each year. The permanent population has also risen as large numbers of people have retired or been relocated to the sprawling suburbs of the modern town which have now covered most of the low lying land and swallowed the historic settlements.

IV. THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF MINEHEAD

GENERAL COMMENTS

0.1   Archaeological work in the town
Though there has been very little archaeological work in the town itself, Minehead Bay has recently (1996) been the subject of extensive field survey in connection with the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme.

0.2   Standing structures and visible remains
Relatively few Mediaeval structures survive in Minehead, partly because of the fires of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. However, a number of Listed post-medieval buildings cluster in the historic centres of Church Town and Quay Town.

1.   PREHISTORIC
(Map A)
There are extensive prehistoric remains to the north of the town of Minehead. These are beyond the remit of this report, but are detailed in the SMR.

1.1   Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
The SMR records a number of finds of prehistoric artefacts (see below). These are largely chance recoveries, for there has been little archaeological work in the town. The intertidal area has, however, recently been surveyed (McDonnell, 1996), resulting in the improved definition of areas of prehistoric deposits.

1.2   Context
Minehead 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. In the case of Minehead, however, the presence of significant prehistoric remains in the intertidal areas, together with the earthworks and field systems on the uplands to the north, suggest that the main focus of settlement was on the high ground, with exploitation of the coastal area taking place from that base: this accords with the pattern of prehistoric activity in West Somerset, as it is currently understood.

1.3   Standing structures and visible remains
Parts of the submerged forest are visible at low tide.

1.4   Archaeological features, *shown on* Map A
1.4.a   Artefact scatters (inland)
MIN/101   Flint and stone tool finds
                 The SMR records a number of inland sites at which scatters of flint or stone tools have been found around Minehead. These include: SMR 35241, near Hopcott Common, a site which has produced mesolithic and neolithic flints and arrowheads; SMR 35242, a Neolithic scraper, found close to Blenheim Road; SMR 35243, a site south-west of Periton House which has produced thirty neolithic and mesolithic flints; SMR 35244, a mesolithic microlith find at Millbridge; and SMR 33570, flints found near Ellicombe.

                 The artefact finds are defined from the SMR.

Not mapped   Imprecisely located flint finds include a mesolithic axe (SMR 35385).

1.4.b Landscape features and artefacts (intertidal)
MIN/102   Minehead Bay peat deposits, submerged forest and associated finds
                 In Minehead Bay there survive remnants of submerged landscapes, including peat deposits and areas of submerged forest (SMR 35064) which consist of fallen tree trunks, tree boles with root systems, and clay and gravel deposits. These remnants, which have recently been mapped as part of the Minehead Sea Defences Environmental Assessment (McDonnell, 1996), are extensive but unstable and vulnerable. With them have been associated a number of finds suggestive of prehistoric activity. SMR 33782, a site within the submerged forest, has produced mesolithic, neolithic and Bronze Age flints (not all precisely located). Further to the west, possible planks and laid tree trunks have been recovered from the peat deposits: these may represent the remains of a prehistoric structure.

                 The peat deposits in the inter-tidal zone will be analysed in detail over the next five years as part of the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme.

                 From the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report (McDonnell, 1996) and the SMR.

2.   ROMAN
(No map)

2.1   Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
There is no evidence of any Roman presence, or any sub-Roman occupation, in Minehead itself.

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.

Minehead is one of 26 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project at which there is as yet no evidence of Roman settlement on the site of the later town, reflecting the generally reduced penetration of Roman influence into the West Somerset uplands.

3.   SAXON
(No map)

3.1   Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
There has been no archaeological work directly relating to the Saxon period in Minehead. Although there is documentary evidence for scattered pre-Conquest settlement in and around Minehead and Alcombe, the locational evidence is considered insufficient for any attempt at mapping. For this reason, the possible Saxon origins of sites in Minehead are discussed in the next section.

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 8th or 9th century onwards) saw the beginnings of a resurgence of first trading places and then towns, under the control of the Saxon royal families, in the context of a network of royal estate administration centres and subordinate settlements which was already established (in some cases long-established). Though only a relatively small number of places with any claim to be towns existed by the time of the Domesday Survey, many of the subordinate settlements recorded at that point were to become towns in the Mediaeval period. Minehead is one of ten of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which had no urban pretensions before the Conquest but were nevertheless in existence as agricultural settlements.

3.3   Standing structures and visible remains
There are no visible remains of the Saxon period in Minehead.

4.   MEDIAEVAL/ POST-MEDIEVAL
(Maps B to F)
Although a number of sites and areas in Minehead are known to be of Mediaeval (or earlier) origin, the overall level of evidence is not such as to enable the extents or the components of the Mediaeval town to be adequately differentiated from those of the post-medieval. Therefore, these periods are considered together.

4.1   Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
There has been no archaeological work relating to the Mediaeval or post-medieval settlements, except for the recent survey of the intertidal area (McDonnell, 1996).

4.2   Context
Both in Britain and on the continent, the Mediaeval 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 Mediaeval 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 Mediaeval 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 Mediaeval period.

Minehead is one of 20 of the 45 historic towns covered by this project which first acquired urban status (though not in this case borough status) in the Mediaeval period. It was one of eleven of the 45 towns which had a harbour or quays in the Mediaeval period. In this case, unusually, the harbour development, which occured only after the important port of Dunster silted up, was the main impetus behind the urbanisation of the settlement. Minehead is

one of a relatively small number - five - of the Mediaeval towns which consisted of a largely irregular layout (though with some regular tenements) superimposed on an existing settlement (or in this case settlements).

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. Minehead 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. Indeed, it was one of the two most important ports in the county during the post-medieval period.

4.3   Standing structures and visible remains
There are very few standing buildings of Mediaeval origin in Minehead, partly because of later fires. Listed survivals include: the 15th century Church of St Michael (SMR LB 30154) and churchyard cross (SMR LB 30144); the much altered "Old Priory" (SMR LB 30030), which also contains 15th century fabric; and the cross base in Market House Lane (SMR LB 30097).

A much larger number of post-medieval buildings survive, especially around St Michael's Church and to the south of the Quay, in areas less affected by fire. Many of these buildings, largely cottages and farms, are Listed and details of these are included on the SMR.

Archaeological components
Until the 20th century, Minehead consisted of four main settlement foci (Church Town, Lower Town, Quay Town and Alcombe) and a number of outlying hamlets. The scattered nature of the Mediaeval town (SMR 33771) has entailed the production of several maps for this period: the descriptions of some archaeological features have also been arranged geographically.

4.4   Archaeological features (Church or Upper Town), *shown on* Map B
4.4.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Settlement around the church on the hill is of probable pre-Conquest origin, but no attempt has been made to map the extent of earlier occupation.

4.4.b   Communications: Roads and paths
MIN/416, MIN/503

> Pre-1802 roads
> The development of the network of lanes, centred on St Michael's church, which until the 19th century formed the skeleton of Church Town is not fully understood. There is no evidence at all for any formal planning. It would appear rather that the principal Mediaeval tracks and paths (MIN/416), which connected church, harbour, lower town and fields, were gradually supplemented by lanes to enclosed commons and farms. The Ball, originally known as New Street, is thought to post-date Church Street, which was the original main route down to the junction with Quay Lane. Fishers Lane, the steep pathway to the quay, may be of early origin, but must originally have run towards the Mediaeval quay (see p17): the exact course of this track across open land is not known.
>
> *From the 1802 and 1822 maps.*

4.4.c   Water
MIN/406   The holy wells

> There are two holy wells close to St Michael's Church. Pems Well (SMR 33785) is a wishing well of uncertain date: it may be Mediaeval, or perhaps earlier. St Michael's well (SMR 33786) is referred to in 16th century records in Dunster Castle Archive. Its exact location is not recorded in the SMR, but the spring was known in the early part of the 20th century, when its stonework was removed as part of drainage work in St Michael's Lane. The possible site marked here is that of the well shown in 1890 on the road now known as Church Road.
>
> *Pems Well is shown on the 1996 map; the possible site of St Michael's Well is from the 1890 map.*

4.4.d   Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship

MIN/402   <u>The Mediaeval churchyard</u>
St Michael's churchyard (SMR 33769) has been in use since at least the Mediaeval period. Its location - on a coastal hill side and close to springs - is reminiscent of known pre-English Christian sites in the West Country. It is possible therefore that the site could be of much earlier origin, and perhaps contain the remains of very early burials and structures. However, there is as yet no archaeological evidence of this.

The churchyard contains a badly damaged 15th century cross base (SMR 33770, SMR LB 30144). The Grade II* Listed church (SMR 34881, SMR LB 30154) is itself mostly of 15th century origin, though the south porch may be earlier. It was heavily restored in the 19th century, and the 19th century walls and gate are also Listed (SMR LB 30147).

The extent of the churchyard is that shown on the 1822 map.

4.4.e   Settlement (including farms)

MIN/510, MIN/511

<u>Upper Town - pre 1822 settlement</u>
Church Town contained two discernible settlement nuclei until comparatively recently, one (the upper, MIN/510) around the church itself, and another (the lower, MIN/511) at the junction of Church Street, Quay Lane and the Holloway to Lower Town.

Very little is known archaeologically of these settlement areas, which consisted of a mixture of tenements, cottages and farms. There is, however, considerable potential for further documentary research.

The 1822 map, which is the main source for the mapped areas, postdates the two early 19th century fires (of 1811 and 1815) which affected Upper Town.

From the 1822 map.

MIN/527   <u>New Street - possible pre-1815 occupation areas</u>
New Street, which was of probable later Mediaeval or post-medieval origin, is said to have been completely destroyed in the fire of 1815 (Hancock, 1903) and to have remained partly ruinous in the 1830s. The only map of this area predating the fire (the 1802 OS surveyors' drawing) is very small scale, and unclear. An area of possible early occupation has therefore been marked from the appearance of the plots on the 1822 map, but further research might clarify the situation.

From the 1802 and 1822 maps.

MIN/421   <u>Shute Farm</u>
Shute (or Stoates) Farm, close to the church, is of probable Mediaeval origin. It may have originated in the 1400s as a block of land (or "shot") let out from the open field (Binding & Stevens, 1977). It appears from the 1822 map that the building complex was differently oriented before the extension of St Michael's Road in the later 19th century, and the surviving Listed farmhouse (SMR LB 30152) may reflect this orientation (although it is itself probably 18th century). Part of the original farmyard may therefore lie under the road. The farm was renovated in 1822: a description survives of the then new complex, which included house, dairy, cellar, brewhouse, cider house and furze/ turf house.

From the 1822 map and information in Binding & Stevens, 1977.

MIN/509   <u>Upland farms, Church Town</u>
A string of small farms and cottages, including Higher and Lower Moor Farms, and the cottages of Lower Moor, lay to the west of the main settlement nuclei on the edge of the moorland. Since

there is evidence that wasteland reclamation and land enclosure was under way by the late Mediaeval period, it is possible that some of these dwellings may be of Mediaeval origin, though the post-medieval Listed structures (SMR LB 30105-7) are of 16th to 18th century date. Some of these sites - chiefly Higher Moor Farm - now lie deserted.

From the 1822 map.

4.4.f   Market place(s)

MIN/407   Upper Town market place

Minor market areas may have existed in front of the church and at the Cross (at the top of the quay path). The available maps show the early 19th century situation, confused by encroachments onto open space and fire destruction. The mapped areas may therefore not represent the full extent of early open spaces.

From the 1822 map.

4.4.g   Agricultural sites

MIN/502   Upland commons

The limits of enclosure and the edge of the commons in 1822 are shown.

From the 1822 map.

4.5   Archaeological features (Lower Town), *shown on* Map C

4.5.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components

Settlement around the mill in Lower Town is of probable pre-Conquest origin, but no attempt has been made to map the extent of earlier occupation.

4.5.b   Communications

(a)   Roads, streets and route ways

MIN/416, MIN/503

Pre-1791 roads

Though many of the early roads in Lower Town were obscured by 19th century redevelopment, their alignments were largely preserved. Moreover, the 1792 plan of fire damage in Lower Town clearly shows the streets which existed at that time. Many, if not most, of these were of probable Mediaeval origin. Puddle Street, a broad, damp lane with the stream running down its centre, was the main thoroughfare. At its east end (at Puddle Bridge) it branched: Watery Lane, or "La Lane" (as it is called in Mediaeval documents) led east to the lord's warren; the original cart road led north to join Quay Lane; and the New Road - which had very recently replaced the old footpath to the Mediaeval quay - led directly north-east. At the west end of Puddle Street lay the major crossroads, where the Holloway and Bampton Street (the main routes from Upper Town, Porlock and Alcombe) met Friday Street. Parks Lane was in existence by 1822; though its town end certainly existed earlier, more research might clarify the origins of this route skirting the 19th century remnants of parkland.

It has been suggested that a rudimentary grid plan may have existed in Lower Town. In fact, there is little archaeological knowledge of the development of the plan recorded on the 1791 map; any archaeological observations of exact alignments, frontages and dated roadside developments will therefore be of value.

Most roads marked are shown on the 1792 map. Some, on the margins of Lower Town, are taken from the 1822 map.

(b) Bridges

MIN/417   Lower Town bridges
At least two bridges in Lower Town are referred to in Mediaeval documents. That to the west crossed the stream as it left the Wetehull meadow (on what is now Parks Lane), whilst that to the east crossed the stream at the end of Puddle Street, and was flanked by a ford. There is some confusion over the names of the bridges. The eastern one was certainly known as Puddle Bridge by the 18th century. That to the west may have been called Tothhullbrigge (Binding & Stevens, 1977). There are also references to the "Great Stony Bridge", which may have crossed the stream at the entrance to Frog Street (as the lower end of the Holloway was known).

There is no archaeological knowledge of any substantial stone bridge structure at any of these three sites, though the name of the Great Stony Bridge suggests that at least one existed. Whether any remains have survived the 19th century redevelopments of the area remains to be seen.

The sites are marked from the 1792 map and information in Binding & Stevens, 1977.

4.5.c   Water

MIN/515   The stream
The course of the stream in Puddle Street is shown as it appears on the 1792 and 1822 maps.

From the 1792 and 1822 maps.

MIN/420   The creek
It is stated in the local histories (Hancock, 1903; Binding & Stevens, 1977) that the stream swung north-east beyond Puddle Bridge to form the creek on which the Mediaeval quays were situated (though since water also ran along the lane to the warren, the stream must have forked). It is also suggested that the old stream bed was located during the construction of Blenheim Terrace in the 19th century (Stevens, undated), implying that the stream may have run approximately along the line of the present road, with the original footpath to the quay running alongside it. This does not sit well with references to the North Field lying on the north side of La Lane. There is no well-recorded archaeological evidence of the creek, but archaeological remains may survive beneath the 19th and 20th century developments.

Mapped (very approximately) from information in Hancock (1903) and Binding & Stevens (1977).

4.5.d   Manors and estates

Whilst there is no evidence that a Mediaeval manor house existed in Minehead, there are 14th century Mohun references to the "Court", an early Mediaeval estate administration centre. This is described as containing a grange, cowhouse, wine cellar and chapel; a steward's house probably also existed. There are also references to Courtygate Field, a small field which lay outside the gates of the Court, to its west.

The site of the Court is not known, though there are two strong possibilities:

MIN/410   Possible site of demesne buildings - Court Green
Court Green is generally regarded as the likeliest location of the early estate buildings. Lying just south of the manor mill (see p15) and away from the area most liable to flooding, it has room for the Field to its west (though this cannot have been by the main gate). In contrast to much of Lower Town, Court Green has retained several Listed Buildings (SMR LB 30037-9, 30076), though these are of 17th and 18th century origin. There is as yet no archaeological evidence that the site was distinctive in the Mediaeval period, though the retention of its integrity through the upheavals of the 19th century may itself be of significance.

From the 1792 and 1822 maps, the List and Binding & Stevens (1977).

MIN/426   Tythings Court
                 This is a possible alternative site for early demesne buildings. The late 18th century map shows
                 a triangular Court forming, along with a number of adjacent street frontages, a regular block to
                 the north of the stream. Its name implies that it was the site of the Court for the Tithing, which
                 might well have been linked to early demesne buildings (Binding & Stevens, 1977). Though
                 lower lying and more prone to flooding, this site would have been more convenient for the
                 Mediaeval market place; moreover, a small field could have lain alongside Tythings Court Lane,
                 between the entrance to the Court and lane which became Parks Lane. Again, archaeological
                 evidence is entirely lacking.

                 From the 1792, 1822 and 1840 maps.

MIN/419   The Old Priory
                 The Grade II* Listed Old Priory (SMR LB 30030) is a building of 15th century origin, on a prime
                 site at the point of ingress for goods - and visitors - from the quayside. Documentary evidence
                 suggests that it acted as the manor court and estate office for many years, at least from the 16th
                 century. It has also been suggested as a possible location for the 'Court' (Bond, c1990). The
                 traditional association with the Priory, however, may indicate that the monastic properties were
                 administered here until the Dissolution (although there is little hard evidence for this).

                 The building is defined from the 1792 map.

4.5.e   Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship
MIN/501   Quaker burial grounds (Lower Town)
                 There was a Quaker meeting house and burial ground in Market House Lane in the early 18th
                 century, when it was described as newly built (Hancock, 1903). The probable area in which this
                 lay is marked from information in Binding & Stevens (1977), though further research might
                 pinpoint it more exactly. At least two burials, the bones of which have been recovered and
                 reburied in the churchyard, occurred here.

                 From Binding & Stevens, 1977.

Not mapped   Several sources also refer to a Quaker meeting house on the corner of Butts Lane and Bampton
                 Street (from 1689). References are made to a rented burial ground "walled and enclosed all round
                 with good trees growing therein", which was in use in the early 18th century. It is possible that
                 this is one of the identified burial grounds (see MIN/501), perhaps that at Alcombe (Bond, c1990).
                 There are also records of a number of Quaker burials in the churchyard (Batty, 1983).

4.5.f   Settlement (Urban)
MIN/517   Lower Town - pre 1792 settlement
                 Lower Town was the market and administrative centre of Minehead in the late Mediaeval and
                 post-medieval period, and indeed Leland described it as the fairer part of town in the mid 16th
                 century. There is no evidence that burgage tenements existed, but the town contained a succession
                 of early municipal buildings, including the old Town Hall (of which the site is unknown), the
                 "New" Hall (as it was called in the 17th century) in Friday Street, and the manor offices (see
                 above, p14). There must also have been a good number of substantial merchant dwellings, as well
                 as more ramshackle properties. Though little is known archaeologically of the pre-19th century
                 settlement, the 1792 plan shows how it was then characterised by irregular building crowding the
                 streets and encroaching, particularly, onto Puddle Street.

                 Very little survives above ground of the early town, which was largely obliterated by the Victorian
                 rebuilding. However, it remains possible that archaeological deposits may survive beneath the
                 later town. If so, there may be areas of particularly good preservation along the old stream lines.

                 From the 1792 map.

MIN/522   Lower Town - areas burnt in 1791
                 The 1791 fire started in the Bampton Street mill, and about 70 houses together with their
                 outhouses and warehouses were lost. The effect on Lower Town was devastating, as the 1792
                 map shows. Shown here are the properties which are marked on that map as destroyed in the fire.
                 They may offer particularly interesting archaeological deposits, if earlier building foundations or
                 cellars have survived beneath destruction layers.

                 From the 1792 map.

MIN/404   Lower Town Market Place
                 Though much general market activity appears to have moved into Friday Street (perhaps originally
                 the fish market) in the late 17th or early 18th century, when a new Town Hall was constructed
                 there, it was previously concentrated to the north. An early 18th century survey makes reference
                 to the Old Market and implies that it included not only the square defined by the Almshouses and
                 Market House Lane, but also much of Puddle Street (Hancock, 1903). In part, Hancock's
                 deduction about the Old Market is based on references (to a mill house, two grist mills and a
                 dwelling and malt house called Tanners) which appear to relate to known properties close to
                 Puddle Bridge.

                 The exact extent of the early market is difficult to determine because it had been much encroached
                 upon by the time of the earliest large scale map (1792). The area shown represents the probable
                 core of the Mediaeval market place in Lower Town, but it may have stretched further south, where
                 irregular post-medieval properties suggest encroachment. Also, since the Mediaeval cross (SMR
                 LB 30097) standing by Quirke's almshouses of 1630 has been provisionally identified (in the
                 SMR and by Binding & Stevens, 1977) as the original market cross (SMR 34828), perhaps still
                 in situ, it is possible that an area to the north-east of that marked also formed part of the early
                 market.

                 Such an extensive and open market area would probably reflect the importance of the livestock
                 trade to Minehead. Indeed, there are references in a late lease to the former name of the area
                 around the cross being the Shambles, where cattle were slaughtered and butchers, as well as
                 general provisioners, traded.

                 *The marked area is approximate, based partly on the 1792 map and partly on information in
                 Hancock (1903) and Binding & Stevens (1977).*

4.5.g   Industrial sites
(a)   Mills
MIN/409   The demesne mill
                 This site is almost certainly that of the Mediaeval manor mill, and probably that of the mill
                 mentioned in Domesday. Though little is known of the extent and layout of the early mills, an
                 early 18th century manor survey refers to a house, two water grist mills, a garden and a millpond
                 and water courses on this site: the leat itself is of Mediaeval origin.

                 In the 19th century, there was a corn mill - Town Mills (SMR 33774) - on the site, and this was
                 altered for modern milling in the 20th century. Part of the head pond, leat and wheel pit still
                 survived in the 1970s, by which time milling had ceased, though all the machinery had by then
                 been removed.

                 The area shown includes the conjectured early mill site itself and surrounding land. By the late
                 18th century this area certainly included miscellaneous street frontage developments and this may
                 also have been the case in the Mediaeval period. Although the site may have been less affected

than other parts of Lower Town by the redevelopments of the 19th and 20th century, the extent of archaeological survival is not known.

From the 1792 map and the 1822 and 1840 maps.

MIN/414   The mill near Puddle Bridge
There are references to at least one mill other than the demesne mill in post-medieval Minehead. On the marked site, a new grist mill was built c1590 by James Quirke to replace an earlier grist and fulling mill (Binding & Stevens, 1977). This suggests that a Mediaeval mill may also have been located here (though a 15th century manor survey records only the demesne mill): since the site lies opposite the "Old Priory", it is possible that this may in origin have been part of the property of the Priory (though an alternative site for the canons' mill somewhere upstream of the manor mill has also been mooted).

The mill on this site (SMR 33773) continued to operate until the mid 19th century. In fact on the 1822 map, two separate mills appear to be shown in this area and the flow of the stream is split. The second 'mill', to the south side of the lane, does not, however, show on either the 1792 or the 1840 map, and may be connected with the developing tannery (see below). Further research might clarify the situation.

The mill site has been considerably affected by later 19th century redevelopment of the area, and the extent of archaeological survival is not known.

From the 1792, 1822 and 1840 maps and the suggestions of Binding & Stevens (1977).

(b)   Other industrial sites
MIN/528   The tannery
The tannery (SMR 35154) was in existence by c1737, in association with a glovers: a manor survey of this date refers to an establishment of considerable size (for its time), with over 20 rooms.

From the 1822 map.

MIN/529   Hemp Gardens
Rope making appears to have also been carried out near Hemp Gardens (a street name commemorating the production of the raw material for ropes there), where bollards and pits associated with the industry have been found (these are not precisely located) (Broughton, undated).

From the 1996 map (no boundary defined).

Not mapped   A dyehouse was recorded in Bampton Street in the mid 18th century and there was a ropewalk in what is now Parks Lane (Binding & Stevens, 1977).

4.5.h   Agricultural sites
MIN/411   The open fields
Minehead's North and South Fields lay to the north and south of the main stream. Blocks of land were being separately let in these fields by the 14th century, and they may have been largely subdivided if not enclosed by 1435 (Binding & Stevens, 1977). Remnants of blocks of strips of these fields can be seen on 18th and 19th century maps (still attached to smallholdings in the town), though their original extent had been obscured by that date.

Smaller fields included Wetehull, west of the town by the stream, and Tothhullbrigg (not certainly identified: it may have been the same field). These were winter pastures and meadow (and had largely been leased out by 1384). There was also a small field, Courtygate, outside the Mediaeval demesne buildings, which was available for winter grazing.

The boundaries of the fields have not been defined as there is insufficient information.

MIN/514   The Pound
             The post-medieval pound was on Bampton Street and this may have been the site of the Mediaeval pound also.

             From the 1822 map and Binding & Stevens (1977).

4.5.i Other
MIN/425   The Butts
             The archery butts were located south of Butts Lane in the Mediaeval period (Binding & Stevens, 1977).

             No boundary has been defined.

4.6   Archaeological features (Quay Town), *shown on* **Map D**
4.6.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Occupation alongside the earlier quay may be of pre-Conquest origin, but no attempt has been made to map the possible extent of earlier occupation.

4.6.b   Communications
(a)   Roads, streets and route ways
MIN/416, MIN/503
             Pre-1802 roads
             It is unlikely that there was a 'road' along the seafront until the construction of the early 17th century quay (see GLA/518, p18) demanded it. The Mediaeval quay was reached by Quay Lane, or by footpaths from Church Town and Lower Town. The exact routes of these Mediaeval footpaths have been largely obscured by the moving of the harbour and by later road developments; however, part of the post-medieval path from Church Town to the Quay survives as Church Path.

             From the 1822 map.

(b)   Harbours, quays and shipwrecks
MIN/403   The Mediaeval Quay
             The harbour was deliberately developed by the Luttrells from the 14th century onwards, initially to replace the trading port of Dunster which was silting up. There was perhaps no more than a shingle landing place for fishing boats before this. The first jetty appears to have been destroyed in storms in 1407 and references to the wooden 'juttee' which the Luttrells part-funded in 1421-2 are to its replacement. This structure and its successors (SMR 33775) lay well to the south of the later post-medieval harbour. A map of c1701 shows "The place where the old Peer was but now its becom only a Ridge of Shingle & Beach stones", probably referring either to the late 15th century jetty of Sir Hugh Luttrell, or perhaps to a general accumulation of shingle over a series of Mediaeval constructions (perhaps protecting them). Indeed, throughout the 15th century there are occasional references to the maintenance of the harbour, with shingle build up a problem: in 1483, an order is given for people to stop throwing stones at the "were". Even so, an early 16th century account by a French traveller describes the harbour as the most beautiful in the channel, and as consisting of substantial unmortared boulders.

A sketch of coastal defences apparently dating from c1544 shows a series of breakwaters or jetties along Minehead's coast. Though too sketchy to be of much use for locating archaeological features, it does suggest that the situation at least by the mid 16th century may have been more elaborate than the c1701 map suggests. An area in the lee of the 'juttee' has therefore been marked as of potential archaeological interest.

From the c1701 map.

MIN/516   The Weir pool
               An early attempt to scour the little harbour involved the construction of a tidal pool with sluices, which filled at high tide and was then "flushed" at low tide. This may have been constructed in the mid 16th century. A map connected with the early 18th century harbour improvements notes its position and describes it as "Some remains of a pond which had a Drain leading into ye Peer about highwater mark with severall Sluces to wash out ye sullage of ye Peer when ye tide was out but now its ruined & houses built in ye Place". The houses have subsequently been cleared and the pool underlies a green: the extent to which the feature survives has not been assessed.

               Marked approximately from the c1701 map.

Not mapped   Medieval shipwrecks:
               Whilst no Mediaeval wrecks have been positively identified, the wreck of a Genoese(?) vessel which sunk before 1380 may lie between Mean High Water and the outer limit of the intertidal area. This wreck is potentially of considerable importance (McDonnell, 1996).

MIN/518   The post-medieval quays
               The history of the post-medieval quay schemes is well-documented and much studied. There is no space for details here, though a summary is included in Section II: the local histories should be consulted for further details.

               The first new quay was completed c1616 and, though since much repaired, forms the stub of the surviving quay. Lying some way north of the Mediaeval jetties, it shifted the focus of Quay Town, and temporarily overcame the problems created by falling water levels and shingle deposition. However, it had repeatedly to be repaired and improved. A major extension was built in the early 18th century, and other improving works were carried out at the same time. This was the last major alteration. Though attempts to repair the quay and maintain water depth continued until the late 18th century, the dropping water level defeated the town and there was no further major work until the construction of the Pier at the very end of the 19th century (see p27). The harbour continued to silt up throughout the 19th and early 20th century. It eventually became so dangerous that it was closed in 1947. After the removal of shingle banks, it reopened in 1951 for the use of small boats.

               The early 17th and early 18th century quay structures are Listed together as SMR LB 30150. The quay end houses three late-17th/ early-18th century canons.

               The 17th century quay is from the c1701 map, and the 18th century extension from the 19th century maps.

MIN/523   The post-medieval harbour area/ shipwrecks
               The area shown is that defined by R. McDonnell in the Environment Agency's Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report (McDonnell, 1996). As well as post-medieval structural outworks (breakwaters, back works and mooring posts etc), this area may contain a number of shipwrecks. Of those recorded in the report (from the Wrecks section of the Hydrographic Office), at least four victims of stranding - all dated to the 17th century - may lie within this area. These include two probable Dutch merchant ships (potentially of national significance) and two others (including the "Happy Endurance") of regional significance. There may also be other

smaller boats, and the remains of their cargoes: the early 18th century repair proposals include one for "Two Stops or Cheques to prevent ye Eastwardly winds from making a whirlpool in ye water in ye Peer which often forces ye Ships so as to sink one another".

The marked area also includes a site of timbers dated dendrochronologically to 1466, lying just north of the area marked as the Mediaeval quay on the 1701 map (McDonnell, 1996).

The area defined is from McDonnell's suggestions in the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report (McDonnell, 1996).

Not mapped   The wreck of the Samaritan (1670) may lie between Mean High Water and the outer limit of the intertidal area. At least one other, unidentified, wreck may lie anything up to five miles off shore.

MIN/525   Other coastal works
Other post-medieval coastal works include a masonry structure just south of the Mediaeval quay site.

From the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report (McDonnell, 1996).

4.6.c   Water
The creek (MIN/420) is described on p13.

4.6.d   Military sites
MIN/519   The gun battery
The coastal defences sketch of c1544 shows a gun battery at Minehead. The location of this (if it was ever built) is not clear from the sketch, but Binding & Stevens (1977) suggest that it may have been on the site of the new harbour constructed in the early 17th century.

An approximate site has been mapped on the GIS, from the suggestions of Binding & Stevens (1977). For the sake of clarity, this is not shown on Map D.

4.6.e   Settlement
MIN/418   Quay Town (Mediaeval)
The marked area represents a conjectural area of settlement associated with pre-Conquest and early Mediaeval fishing and mercantile activities. It may include the remains of cottages, boat houses (referred to after 1383), herring-smoking houses (referred to in the 18th century) and other structures. The extent of archaeological survival is not known.

Based on the location of the Mediaeval juttee on the c1701 map and on comments in Binding & Stevens (1977).

MIN/520   Quay Town (post-medieval)
The construction of the new quay effectively relocated Quay Town, and waste land north of Weir Pool was rapidly settled. By the end of the 17th century, the new Quay Street (there had not previously been a proper road) was flanked by houses and cottages, including a number of lodgings houses and the customs office.

The properties on the eastern side of Quay Street have gradually disappeared, though some survived into the 20th century (being demolished after severe storms in 1910). Others had already disappeared by the time the Tithe Map was made. The extent to which archaeological remains of these properties might survive is not yet known. In contrast, a number of Listed Buildings of post-medieval origin survive on the west side of Quay Street.

From the c1701 and the 1822 maps.

4.6.f   Industrial sites
MIN/521   The shipwright's yard
                   The c1701 map shows a shipwright's yard on the north side of the post-medieval quay.

                   From the c1701 harbour map.

4.6.g   Agricultural sites: fishweirs
MIN/401   The Fishweirs
                   A series of tidal fishweirs stretches along the West Somerset coast from Gore Point to Lilstock,
                   with the greatest concentration in Minehead Bay. Here, the structures consist of dry stone walls
                   or piles of boulders, usually arranged as broken chevrons (but sometimes as three sides of a
                   square) and positioned, mostly towards low water mark, to funnel the outgoing tide through nets
                   and traps.

                   The Minehead fishweirs (SMR 33348, SM 33730; SMR 33776) , some of which are still in use,
                   are documented from the 13th century onwards, with most of the records relating to their rental
                   from the manor. Five weirs are recorded at Minehead in 1299-1300, and ten in 1380; by 1596,
                   George Luttrell owned 17 fishweirs (though these would not all have been at Minehead). Though
                   the structures have inevitably been often rebuilt in the intervening centuries, some of those still
                   standing are probably of Mediaeval origin and some Mediaeval fabric may survive.

                   The Scheduled area (SM 33730) includes one two-sided and one three-sided stone weir.

                   The weirs were surveyed in 1985 and have recently been resurveyed. The positions of individual
                   weirs have not been mapped on the GIS. However, this information is available in the Minehead
                   Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report.

                   *The areas in which the Minehead fishweirs are found are defined from the SMR (area amended
                   to include all individual weirs shown in the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental
                   Report). They are shown in part on Map D, with the remainder shown on Map F.*

4.6.h   Artefact scatters
MIN/526   Pottery
                   A scatter of post-medieval pottery is recorded from the beach, and there have been other isolated
                   finds in the intertidal zone.

                   From the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report.

4.7   Archaeological features (Alcombe and Staunton), *shown on* **Map E**
4.7.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Settlement at Alcombe and Staunton is of probable pre-Conquest origin, though no attempt has been made to map
the extent of early occupation.

4.7.b   Communications: Roads
MIN/416, MIN/503
                   Pre-1802 roads
                   Though the street plan of Alcombe has been much elaborated in the 20th century, the early routes
                   still survive. A number of roads - none of which were until the 19th century of any great quality -
                   from Minehead, Porlock and Dunster converged at Alcombe Cross (or Staunton Cross), from
                   which also led Marsh Lane, the old lane to the Mediaeval marshland commons. Of the two routes
                   heading south-east, the more southerly was the earlier.

                   From the c1770 and 1802 maps.

MIN/504   Alcombe or Staunton Cross
Alcombe Cross (SMR 33781) was probably a boundary cross and was situated at the Alcombe turnpike. The date of the cross, which has now disappeared, is unclear.

The approximate position is marked from the c1770 Staunton map.

4.7.c   Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship

MIN/422   Mediaeval chapel site, Alcombe
Alcombe was in the parish of Dunster, but was far enough away to warrant a chapel of ease, St Michael's.   This chapel may have continued in use after the Dissolution, when Dunster Priory estates fell to the crown: the date of its closure is unknown.

Binding & Stevens (1977) locate the site through references to it being built near "le lynch": field names opposite Manor Farm include several occurrences of lynch. Moreover, when a barn in Lynch's Orchard was demolished for houses to be built in the 1930s, the foundations of an older building were seen. This may have been the chapel, though the discovery was not extensively recorded.

From Binding & Stevens, 1977.

MIN/501   Quaker burial ground, Alcombe
There was a Quaker burial ground in Alcombe between 1741 and 1780, and 35 burials are recorded. Part of the land was let to the Methodists in 1846, and a chapel was built there. The site has now been partly redeveloped for housing.

From information in Binding & Stevens, 1977.

Not mapped   Hancock (1903) also states that there was a monastic cell on the Abbey's estates, located close to the chapel.

4.7.d   Settlement

MIN/505   Alcombe
Though Alcombe is of probable pre-Conquest origin, time did not allow detailed consideration of its archaeology in this report

The marked settlement areas in Alcombe are based on 19th century maps, except for the Red Lion Inn, apparently larger than its 19th century counterpart and perhaps slightly differently positioned, which appears on the c1770 map of Staunton. A number of post-medieval Listed Buildings survive.

The marked areas are from the 1802 and 1840 maps and the c1770 Staunton map.

MIN/507   Staunton
Settlement at Staunton may be of pre-Conquest origin. However, time did not allow a detailed study of this settlement's archaeology.

The c1770 map of Staunton Fry shows three small settlements, no more than hamlets. Lower Staunton consists of a single major building complex, with attendant industrial site (see MIN/506, p22), and a couple of cottages. At Middle Staunton, there is a single building adjacent to the stream. At Upper Staunton, the c1770 map clearly shows, clustered around the route junctions at both ends of the settlement, a number of buildings which disappeared during the 19th century. Other plots at the eastern end of the settlement have continued in occupation.

The marked plots are from the c1770 map.

MIN/530   Ellicombe
                 Scattered development at Ellicombe is shown on the 1802 map. This includes the house which
                 is now Ellicombe Manor (but is labelled Parsonage on the 1802 map) and Rowe Farm, together
                 with a number of smaller plots, some of which may be agricultural buildings.

                 From the 1802 map.

4.7.e   Industrial sites
(a)   Mills
Not mapped   There is a tradition of a mill at Alcombe, though the exact site is unknown.

(b)   Other industrial sites
MIN/506   The Alcombe limekiln and works
                 Alcombe's lime and sandstone has probably been quarried for centuries. There are certainly
                 references to the quarrying of sandstone in the 16th century. In addition, a licence was granted
                 in 1707 for a search for copper, tin, lead and coal, and five men sank exploratory mines. Though
                 the sites of the shafts are not known, and the attempt is said to have been given up by 1713, there
                 may have been associated activity in the marked area, which is shown on the c1770 map as
                 containing both a limekiln and a copper works (possibly: the map is very faint). The site has
                 subsequently been partially quarried away.

                 From the c1770 map.

4.7.f   Agricultural sites
MIN/502   Commons
                 The edge of the hill commons in 1822 is shown.

                 From the 1822 map.

4.8   Archaeological features (Other outlying areas), shown on Map F
4.8.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Settlement at both Periton and Woodcombe may be of pre-Conquest origin. However, no attempt has been made
to map the early settlement, as insufficient information was available.

4.8.b   Communications
(a)   Roads
MIN/416, MIN/503
                 Pre-1802 roads
                 The road network is shown *as it appears on the 1802 and 1822 maps.*

MIN/504   Whitecross
                 From the 1822 map.

(b)   Harbour and quays
MIN/524   Known Post-Mediaeval shipwrecks
                 These include: The Lamb (wrecked 1736, whilst carrying soldiers to Ireland), reported to survive
                 as a "coherent vessel structure (it was seen in 1975) [Two sites are included in the marked area -
                 the one numbered as the Lamb (site 005) and one which may also represent its location (site 061)].

                 There are also some unidentified wrecks, which may be of post-medieval or 19th century date.

                 From the Minehead Sea Defences Report (McDonnell, 1996).

4.8.c   Water

MIN/424   The millpond
                 The millpond above Higher Hopcott (SMR 33783) may be of Mediaeval origin (Binding &
                 Stevens, 1977.

                 From the 1996 map and information in Binding & Stevens, 1977.

4.8.d   Manors and estates

MIN/415   The Park and Parkhouse
                 The first references to a deer park (SMR 33777) west of Lower Town occur in 1279, and the park
                 was extended by the Luttrells in the 15th century (from 51 to 150 acres). Many "Park" field
                 names - including West Park, Ball Park, Pit Park, and Park Pales - can be traced, and part of the
                 original park boundary may also have survived until the construction of the more recent housing
                 estates. Leland says that the Park had been "destroyed" by Andrew Luttrell in the early 16th
                 century: in fact, the land was temporarily leased out to provide legacies for his younger children,
                 then mortgaged by his eldest son, who died before the mortgages could be redeemed. Disputes
                 connected with the park lands rumbled on into the 18th century and there must be many references
                 to the lands in documents.

                 At its maximum extent, the Park is supposed to have stretched out along the stream towards
                 Whitecross and Woodcombe, though it did not immediately abut the town (there are 14th century
                 references to a plot of waste ground between the park and the mill being enclosed). A suggested
                 boundary is sketched by Binding & Stevens, though it has not been entered on the GIS.

                 Parkhouse Farm is shown as it appears on the 1822 map. No details of its history were ascertained
                 for the this report. A water meadow system (SMR 34515) at Parkhouse was recorded from aerial
                 photographs before the construction of the modern estates.

                 Most of the area of the park, including the site of Parkhouse Farm, has been redeveloped as
                 suburban estates. It is therefore unlikely, though not impossible that remains of any further
                 landscape features associated with the park will be found.

                 *Part of the possible park boundary is shown from the 1822 map. A sketch of the projected park
                 boundary exists in Binding & Stevens (1977).*

Not mapped   Half the tithes of the church and about a fifth of the manor lands were granted to Bath Abbey in
                 the 11th century as part of Dunster Priory's endowment. These lands lay to the south-west of the
                 town. Whilst they are not mapped in this report, the approximate extent is sketched in Binding
                 & Stevens (1977).

4.8.e   Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship

MIN/501   The burial ground
                 There is a tradition that a plague pit or Quaker burial ground (SMR 33778) existed south-west of
                 Lower Town. However, an excavation by P. Hawtin in the mid-1970s failed to locate the site.

                 The site is marked from the SMR.

4.8.f   Settlement

MIN/413, MIN/512

                 Woodcombe (pre 1822 settlement)
                 Settlement at Woodcombe may be of pre-Conquest origin (Binding & Stevens, 1977), though no
                 attempt has been made to map the early settlement. Woodcombe Farm itself probably represents
                 the primary occupation (it is first referred to in the 13th century). Six landholders are referred to
                 in a 1407 rental, so it is possible that some of the houses and gardens shown on the 1802 and 1822
                 maps (not all of which survived the 19th century) may be of Mediaeval origin. A laid out

tenement, clearly in existence by 1802, may be of later date: further research might clarify this.

Woodcombe is no longer separate from Minehead, but only small scale suburban development has taken place, and Woodcombe Farm retains its integrity, containing a largely 18th century Listed farmhouse (SMR LB 30175) with earlier origins. It is possible therefore that there may be significant archaeological survival.

From the 1802 and 1822 maps.

MIN/412, MIN/513

Periton (pre-1822 settlement)

Settlement at Periton is likely to be of pre-Conquest origin, though no attempt has been made to map separately the early occupation. There are certainly Mediaeval references to the settlement; Periton Farm is first referred to in the 13th century, and five landholders are referred to in a 1407 rental, whilst four small farms are mentioned in an early 18th century manor survey.

The actual extent of Periton in 1822 is shown. Two complexes of Listed 18th century structures survive, including one on the former Periton Farm. However, Periton has been absorbed into the suburbs of Minehead and a certain amount of redevelopment has taken place. The extent of archaeological survival has not been assessed.

From the 1822 map.

MIN/405

Hopcott

The origins of the farms at Higher and Lower Hopcott have not been researched for this report. Lower Hopcott appears on the c1770 map, which shows buildings set around a courtyard, possibly slightly to the north of the present buildings and possibly partially beneath the modern road (judging from changes of road alignment). There may also have been a garden area to the east of the buildings. Higher Hopcott appears on the 1802 OS drawings. However, either or both may be of earlier origin.

The farms are defined from the c1770, 1802 and 1822 maps.

4.8.g   Industrial sites: Mills

MIN/408

Bratton Mill

Bratton Mill (SMR 33816) was the manor mill of Bratton (which is not covered by this report). It was first mentioned in the 13th century (though it was of probable earlier origin), and continued in operation probably until the early 18th century. The site is marked as ruined on the 19th century maps. In the 1980s, two mill ponds, the leat and part of the wheel pit (all dry) were still visible.

This site has not yet been affected by modern development, and significant archaeological remains of the Mediaeval mill may survive.

From the 1822 map and information in the SMR.

4.8.h Agricultural sites

MIN/423

The warren

The warren (SMR 35156) and the marshland commons lay to the east of Minehead. Game birds and fish were kept here as well as rabbits, and the Luttrells' fowler lived out here in the 17th century. These areas were very extensive, stretching around the coast to Dunster. Because of their size and their lack of precise definition, no boundaries have been defined on the GIS. Much of the coastal strip was converted into golf links in the 19th century.

The boundaries of the warren have not been defined.

MIN/502   Commons
                  The limits of the upland commons in 1822 are shown. The Staunton map of c1770 also shows
                 the contemporary edges of Ewey Hill Common and Staunton Common; it also illustrates the
                 process of enclosure, showing the "new hedge" to the south of Lower Hopcott.

                 From the c1770 and the 1822 maps.

Not mapped   A vineyard referred to in Mediaeval documents probably lay somewhere near Woodcombe on the
                 south facing slopes of North Hill (Binding & Stevens, 1977).

4.8.i   Artefact scatters
MIN/526   Pottery
                 A scatter of post-medieval pottery is recorded from the beach, and there have been other isolated
                 finds in the intertidal zone.

                 From the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report.

4.8.j Other
MIN/508   The bowling green
                 A bowling green is marked to the north of Quay Town in 1701.

                 From the 1701 map.

5.   INDUSTRIAL (LATE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY)
(Maps G and H)

5.1   Archaeological work in the town/ Archaeological knowledge
There is little archaeological knowledge of industrial Minehead, though the quarrying industry and speculative
mining operations have been subjects of some interest.

5.2 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 Mediaeval 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.

Minehead 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. Minehead was one of a handful of tourist centres
in the county by the end of the 19th century, and one of the two most important coastal resorts (the other being
Burnham). Both resorts were amongst the seven of the 45 towns at which there was large-scale expansion in the 19th
century.

5.3   Standing structures and visible remains
A number of Listed Structures of this period survive in all elements of the settlement. These are mainly villas
associated with the later 19th century expansion of Minehead as a resort, though some late 18th century buildings
also survive.

5.4   Archaeological components (centre), *shown on* Map G
5.4.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Areas described in earlier sections are shown lightly shaded. The distribution of 19th century Listed Buildings shows
that a considerable amount of redevelopment took place in the early settlement areas of Church Town, Lower Town,

Quay Town and Alcombe. However, to a greater or lesser extent, these areas retained their essential character. In parts of Lower Town, on the other hand, change was so wholesale in the 19th century that much of the town centre has been remapped for this period.

5.4.b   Communications
(a)   Roads, streets and route ways

MIN/606   The New Road to the Quay and the turnpikes
                 The earliest of the Minehead, Dunster and Carhampton turnpikes was the New Road to the Quay which is shown on the 1792 map of Lower Town. This road was initiated by a group of merchants in 1762. It replaced the old footpath and required the removal of some property (Blenheim House), the location of which is unclear.

                 The route of the Minehead turnpike in the urban area has not been marked, as its course is not clear.

                 From the 1792 map.

MIN/608   19th century suburban roads
                 A number of major suburban road developments took place, largely in Lower Town, in the 19th century. These included the Parade, the Parks and Park Street, North Road and the Avenue (laid out in expectation of the railway's arrival). However, many of these new roads remained unsurfaced and subject to flooding (particularly in the Parade and the Avenue, old Puddle Street and Watery Lane) for years; building was similarly slow.

                 At the end of the 19th century, the laying out of Bancks Street (which is only partially complete on the 1904 map) further obscured the early town plan. Bancks Street was accompanied by the first of the suburban gridded streets of Lower Town. The Esplanade, too, was created at this time.

                 Developments in Church Town included the realignment of Church Road and the extension of St Michael's Road as part of a network of hillside avenues (Beacon Road, Burgundy Road etc).

                 From the 1842, 1889/90 and 1904 maps.

MIN/625   Other new 19th century roads
                 These included the Porlock road and Warren Road.

                 From the 1889 map.

MIN/626   Pathways on North Hill
                 A number of lanes and pathways on North Hill became formalised during the 19th century, partly in association with land enclosure, and partly in connection with Minehead's tourist industry.

                 From the 1889/90 and 1904 maps.

(b)   Railways

MIN/601   The Taunton to Minehead Railway
                 In 1856, the Luttrells proposed the extension of the West Somerset Mineral Railway to Minehead and offered free access to the harbour. Though royal assent was obtained, this scheme came to nothing. A further proposal (1863) for a broad gauge line to Minehead initially suffered from lack of capital: it was not until 1874 that the railway reached the town. The Taunton to Minehead line (SMR 33462), which was converted from broad gauge in 1882, was operated by the Bristol and Exeter Railway (subsequently the Great Western). Though it was closed by BR in the 1960s, it was reopened as a private line, the West Somerset Railway, in 1974.

The Railway Station and a goods shed to the north-east are both Listed (SMR 35155, SMR LB 35459; SMR LB 35460).

From the 1889 map.

(c)   Harbour and quays

MIN/611   The Pier

Though there had been some 19th century formalisation of the old ship yard north of the Quay, the Pier was a development of the very end of the Victorian period: it opened in 1901. It was 700' long, and constructed of cast iron, steel and timber. The construction of the pier also the rebuilding of part of the harbour wall and the slipway; a sea wall and esplanade were also built in 1901. The pier was removed in 1940.

From the 1890 and 1904 maps.

MIN/621   The sea wall and promenade

These were in existence by 1900.

From the 1904 map.

5.4.c   Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship

MIN/610   St Andrew's Church

The Grade II* Listed St Andrews Church (SMR LB 30174) was built in 1880 for the expanding Lower Town.

From the 1889 map.

MIN/619   St Michael's Churchyard extension

From the 1890 map.

MIN/624   Other chapels

There were a number of Non-conformist chapels in the town. These included those of: the Methodists (SMR LB 30149), opened c1877 in the Avenue; and the Baptists (SMR LB 30111), opened c1821 in the Parks. The Catholic church on Alcombe Road, which opened late in the 19th century, replaced an earlier chapel on the Butts.

Where mapped separately, these are from the 1889/90 and 1904 maps and information in the List.

5.4.d   Settlement

MIN/618   Church Town

In the 19th century, there was some small scale redevelopment within the two early nuclei of Church Town. Despite the burgeoning road network, there was by 1904 only limited suburban growth, this being concentrated both immediately adjacent to the church and along St Michael's Road, where the realigned Shute Farm also stood.

From the 1890 and 1904 maps.

MIN/609   Lower Town - expansion and rebuilding 1822 - 1889

In the wake of the disastrous fires of 1791 and 1815, much of Lower Town was gradually rebuilt. Though the plan did not at first alter significantly, it became more regular as new blocks and terraces were laid out along the new streets. The new developments were geared principally to the growing holiday and retirement trades, and included many 'villas' suitable for use as lodgings. However, much of the centre of Lower Town was also rebuilt and here were constructed fine commercial and municipal buildings such as the Town Hall (1889, SMR LB 30157) and the Midland Bank (SMR LB 30051). The laying out of Wellington Square in front of St Andrew's

Church also enabled the 18th century statue of Queen Anne (SMR LB 30173, Grade II*) to be suitably displayed.

From the 1842, 1889 and 1904 maps.

MIN/629   The auction mart (Lower Town)
A new market place was deliberately developed adjacent to the railway station in the late 19th century.

From the 1904 map.

MIN/614   Quay Town
Residential development was not extensive in the 19th century, though some new properties were erected, mostly at the southern end of the post-medieval settlement area.

From the 1889/90 and 1904 maps.

5.4.e   Industrial sites
MIN/602   Limekilns (Quay Town)
Brick and stone built limekilns were situated on the Quay (SMR 33772), and at the present junction of Blenheim Rd and Northfield Rd.

From the SMR and the 1822 and 1890 maps.

MIN/613   Quarries and gravel pits
North of the Quay was an area of gravel pitting, whilst an old quarry is marked opposite Shute Farm in Church Town.

From the 1890 map: no boundary has been defined.

MIN/627   The Gasworks (Quay Town)
The town gasworks was established as part of the Luttrells' municipal improvements. The town had gas street lighting by 1869.

From the 1890 map.

MIN/622   Shipbuilding (Quay Town)
Ships were also built on the beach near the timber yard at the end of Blenheim Road in the 19th century.

From Binding & Stevens, 1977.

MIN/628   Saw mills (Quay Town)
There was a timber yard and saw mill at the south end of Quay Street by the mid 19th century. This both imported and exported timber.

MIN/616   Slaughterhouses and tannery (Lower Town)
The tannery (SMR 35154) in the Avenue was in existence by the early 18th century and its previous incarnation is shown lightly shaded on the map. However, it expanded in the 19th century and continued in operation until the 1930s, when the site was redeveloped as a cinema.

A slaughterhouse behind Bampton Street was in existence by 1889.

From the 1822 and 1889 maps.

Not mapped   There were at least four malthouses by 1842, and a mineral water works by 1888.

5.4.f   Agricultural sites
MIN/615   Fisheries
                  The 19th century maps name some fish pools: Crab Pool lay just off the south end of Quay Street.

                  From the 1889/1890 map.

5.4.g   Other
MIN/630   Pit Park
                  An odd field formation visible on the 1822 map (but not on earlier or later maps) is probably to
                  be identified with the cock-fighting and circus area (Pit Park) mentioned by Webber (WSANHSN
                  vol 24). The site is now under a modern estate.

                  From the 1822 map.

5.5   Archaeological components (outlying area)*, shown on* **Map H**
5.5.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Those sites described in earlier sections are shown lightly shaded. There was some redevelopment in these areas,
especially in Alcombe and, to a lesser extent, Periton. There were few major alterations, however, and very little
has been remapped for this period.

5.5.b   Communications
(a)   Roads, streets and route ways
MIN/605   The "New Road to Minehead"
                  On a very faint part of the c1770 map of Staunton manor is marked a "new road to Minehead",
                  running slightly to the east of the old Dunster road and close to a boundary cairn at the edge of
                  Staunton Common. This road does not appear on subsequent maps.

                  From the c1770 map.

(b) Harbour and quays
MIN/604   The shipwreck
                  At least one shipwreck (SMR 35391) of possible 19th century (or earlier) date lies exposed on the
                  beach off Minehead.

                  From the SMR.

Not mapped   Several wrecks are documented but not precisely located. The wreck of the *Tartar* (1882) may
                  lie between Mean High Water and the outer limit of the intertidal area. The wrecks of the *Industry*
                  (1817), the *Elizabeth and Jane* (1833), the *Lark* (1834), the *Topsy* (1869) and the *Janet* (1876)
                  may lie between Mean High Water and five miles out.

5.5.c   Water
MIN/617   Reservoir
                  The water company was formed in 1874, and reservoirs were constructed to the west of Church
                  Town and near Woodcombe.

                  From the 1889 and 1904 maps.

5.5.d   Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship
MIN/623   Alcombe Church
                  Building of St Michael's Church, Alcombe, commenced in 1900 and it was opened in 1903. It
                  was extended in 1937.
                  From the 1904 map.

MIN/624   The Methodist Chapel, Alcombe
                 The Methodist Chapel in Alcombe was built on part of the old Quaker burial ground.

                 From the 1889 map.

5.5.e   Settlement (Alcombe)
MIN/607, MIN/620
                 Alcombe, Staunton and Ellicombe (19th century)
                 Development at Alcombe, Staunton and Ellicombe in the 19th century consisted of a mixture of
                 suburban housing - such as Alcombe Lodge and Dunster Lodge - and farm extensions.

                 From the 1840 map.

5.5.f   Settlement (Other outlying)
MIN/631   Outlying 19th century settlement
                 Scattered developments occurred around the main settlement foci. Some of these - such as Higher
                 Woodcombe, or Periton House, were of significant size, whilst others may have been agricultural
                 buildings: details have not been ascertained for this report.

                 From the 1842, 1889/90 and 1904 maps.

5.5.g   Industrial sites
MIN/603   The Brickworks
                 Of the brickworks at Minehead, that on Warren Point (SMR 33779) adjacent to Warren House
                 (which is also marked) began operations c1750, and closed c1919. It is now buried beneath part
                 of Butlins.

                 The other brickworks, the Victoria Brick & Tile Works (SMR 33780) in Alcombe, opened in
                 1897 (though the name "Brickland" given to the field on the Dunster Tithe Map (1843) suggests
                 there might have previously been brick making on the site). The actual works were on the north
                 side of the road, whilst to the south was a large clay pit. The works closed in 1947 and the
                 northern land has been redeveloped for housing, whilst the clay pit is now used as a caravan site.

                 From the 1889 and 1904 maps.

MIN/602, MIN/613
                 Quarries and limekilns
                 Many quarries were cut or continued in use in the 19th century. Those marked on the maps
                 include ones at Higher Moor, Whitecross, west and south of Periton, around Hopcott, and at
                 Alcombe. Those at Alcombe were extensive, and were accompanied by limekilns. Part of the
                 area marked for quarrying earlier in the century was, however, being used for housing by 1904.

                 From the 1840, 1889/90 and 1904 maps.

MIN/616   The Tanyard (Alcombe)
                 Alcombe Tanyard was in existence by 1817. It may have closed by 1851 (when no tanner is
                 recorded in the census) (Binding & Stevens, 1977), and was certainly closed by the end of the
                 century. The site has subsequently been redeveloped for housing.

                 From the 1840 map.

MIN/632   Smithies (Alcombe)
                 Smithies are marked at Alcombe on Marsh Lane and opposite Nut Tree Field.

                 From the 1889 map.

5.5.h Other
MIN/612   Leisure facilities
                 There was a racecourse on the beach, but there are no records of any associated structures. The
                 golf course was established during the 19th century: its extent is not shown, though the pavilion
                 is marked.

                 *From the 1889 and 1904 maps and the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report
                 (McDonnell, 1996).*

6.   20TH CENTURY (Map I)

6.1 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. Minehead 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 one of seven
towns which has seen extremely high levels of expansion in the 20th century (the same seven as saw large scale
expansion in the 19th century).

6.2   Standing structures and visible remains

There are three Listed Buildings of 20th century date, though two of these (the Market House, SMR LB 30108; and
the Grade II* Listed Kildare Lodge, SMR LB 30162) are dated to 1902 and 1903 respectively. The remaining
building, SMR LB 3019, is Edwardian.

6.3   Settlement components, *shown on* Map I
6.3.a   Redevelopment in earlier settlement components
Components described in earlier sections are shown lightly shaded. There have been few major redevelopments in
the town, with the exception of the tannery site (replaced by a cinema by 1938) and Warren Point brickworks (now
beneath part of Butlins). Parts of Quay Street were much rebuilt in the early 20th century following the storms of
1910, though the new building respected the plan of the old settlement (and has therefore not been separately
mapped). Parts of the outlying settlements have been affected by later suburbs, but only Parkhouse and the Park
have been obliterated by this.

All mapped components are from the 1938 map and the 1996 OS digital maps, except where stated.

6.3.b   Communications
(a)   Roads, streets and route ways
MIN/707   20th century roads
                 An extensive network of suburban roads has developed in the 20th century: some of the more
                 important arteries have been mapped. The major approach routes to the town have also been
                 altered with the construction of the new A39 and Seaward Way.

(b)   Railways
MIN/709   Railway branch
                 A railway branch linked the saw mills to the main line by 1938. This has since disappeared,
                 though its route can still be traced.

(c)   Harbour and quays
MIN/702   Shipwrecks
                 20th century shipwrecks include the steamship, the *Pelican*, stranded in 1928.

                 From the Minehead Sea Defences Scheme Environmental Report (McDonnell, 1996).

MIN/705   <u>Sea wall and slipways</u>
The sea wall has been extended, in 1918 and at later dates. New slipways were also constructed in the 1930s.

6.3.c Water
MIN/710   <u>20th century reservoirs</u>
Reservoirs were created to serve Alcombe and the growing suburbs.

6.3.d   Military sites
Not mapped   There are a number of World War II beach defences around Minehead, including a gun emplacement (SMR 35359) and several pillboxes (SMR 35360, 35388, 35389 and 35390). The SMR should be consulted for details.

6.3.e   Burial sites, religious houses and places of worship
MIN/701   <u>The cemetery</u>
Porlock Rd cemetery was in existence by 1938.

6.3.f   Settlement
MIN/706   <u>20th century residential development (general)</u>
Map I shows the pattern of 20th century expansion to the south and west of the historic settlements of Minehead, linking them to Alcombe. This expansion has been largely suburban in character.

MIN/704   <u>Parks and gardens</u>
Parks and gardens laid out in the early part of the 20th century include the Parks walk (1920s) and Blenheim Gardens (1925).

(a)   Leisure areas
MIN/703   <u>Butlins/ campsites</u>
A number of camp and caravan sites and leisure areas have been established in the 20th century. Of these, Butlins is by far the largest, dominating the eastern side of the town. Butlins opened in 1962: the original swimming pool, which predated Butlins, lay to the west of the complex, and has now gone.

6.3.g   Industrial sites
MIN/708   <u>20th century industry (general)</u>
Early 20th century industrial sites included quarries and brickworks of 19th century origin, which continued to operate well into the 20th century. They also included a saw mill (SMR 33784) linked by a branch line to the railway. This has now been subsumed into the industrial and trading estate between Butlins and Lower Town, on which the bulk of Minehead's more recent industry is concentrated.

V.   THE POTENTIAL OF MINEHEAD

1.   Research interests
Minehead's harbours and foreshore (including the intertidal area) have been the subject of more research than the town itself. But much remains to be learnt about the Mediaeval harbour and the intertidal zone. The development of Minehead's settlement and street pattern is particularly complex, and archaeological input into its study would also be of value.

2.   Areas of potentially exceptional preservation
Much of Minehead is both dry and affected by development. Possible wet areas may exist in Lower Town and in the harbour area, but these areas have been much disturbed.

3. Limitations

Though Minehead was prosperous in the later Mediaeval and the post-medieval periods, settlement remained somewhat scattered. The town does not, therefore, have one concentrated core of archaeology in quite the same way as other historic settlements, though it has several smaller, less intensively occupied areas.

4. Extent of current protection
(Central area shown on Map J)
Minehead contains a number of Listed Buildings, though none is Grade I. The only Scheduled Monument in the area covered by this report is SM 33730 (the fishweirs). The Conservation Areas were redesignated in 2003, the former 3 becoming 4 (Quay Street, higher Town, Wellington Square and Whitegate Road). The Alcome conservation area was enlarged at the same time. AHAPs have been delineated which cover the historic centres together with a large area of the harbour and foreshore to the east. In addition, much of the area around Minehead (not covered by this report) falls within Exmoor National Park or is owned by the National Trust.

5. Management Proposals
See the Archaeological Guidance Document.

VI. SOURCES

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3. Maps

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c1792   Map of Lower Town showing fire damage: SRO DD/L 1/10/35A
1802   OS surveyors' drawings at 3": fiche in SSL
1822   The Manor and Parish of Minehead: SRO DD/L 297/2
1842   Minehead Tithe Map: fiche in SSL
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1888-90   OS 1:2500: fiche in SSL
1904   OS 1:10560
1938   OS 1:10560
1996   OS digital map data

VII.   COMPONENT INDEXES

1.   Component to map

Component	Map	Component	Map
MIN/101	A	MIN/421	B
MIN/102	A	MIN/422	E
MIN/401	D,F	MIN/423	F
MIN/402	B	MIN/424	F
MIN/403	D	MIN/425	C
MIN/404	C	MIN/426	C
MIN/405	F	MIN/501	C,E,F
MIN/406	B	MIN/502	B,D,E,F
MIN/407	B	MIN/503	B,C,D,E,F
MIN/408	F	MIN/504	E,F
MIN/409	C	MIN/505	E
MIN/410	C	MIN/506	E
MIN/411	C	MIN/507	E
MIN/412	F	MIN/508	F
MIN/413	F	MIN/509	B
MIN/414	C	MIN/510	B
MIN/415	F	MIN/511	B
MIN/416	B,C,D,E,F	MIN/512	F
MIN/417	C	MIN/513	F
MIN/418	D	MIN/514	C
MIN/419	C	MIN/515	C
MIN/420	C,D	MIN/516	D

MIN/517	C		MIN/615	G
MIN/518	D		MIN/616	G,H
MIN/519	D		MIN/617	H
MIN/520	D		MIN/618	G
MIN/521	D		MIN/619	G
MIN/522	C		MIN/620	H
MIN/523	D		MIN/621	G
MIN/524	F		MIN/622	G
MIN/525	D		MIN/623	H
MIN/526	D,F		MIN/624	G,H
MIN/527	B		MIN/625	G
MIN/528	C		MIN/626	G
MIN/529	B		MIN/627	G
MIN/530	E		MIN/628	G
MIN/601	G		MIN/629	G
MIN/602	G,H		MIN/630	G
MIN/603	H		MIN/631	H
MIN/604	H		MIN/632	H
MIN/605	H		MIN/701	I
MIN/606	G		MIN/702	I
MIN/607	H		MIN/703	I
MIN/608	G		MIN/704	I
MIN/609	G		MIN/705	I
MIN/610	G		MIN/706	I
MIN/611	G		MIN/707	I
MIN/612	H		MIN/708	I
MIN/613	G,H		MIN/709	I
MIN/614	G		MIN/710	I

2. *Component to page*

Maps

Map A – Prehistoric

Map B – Medieval and post-medieval Higher Town

Map C – Medieval and post-medieval Lower Town

Map D – Medieval and post-medieval Quay Town

Map E – Medieval and post-medieval Alcombe

Map F – Post-medieval wider area
Earlier components in yellow.

Map G – 19th century core
Earlier components in yellow.

Map H – 19th century wider area
Earlier components in yellow.

Map I – 20th century
Earlier components in yellow.

Map E - Existing designations
Key: Scheduled Monuments   (dark blue),
       Listed Buildings   Grade I (light blue, none)
                                   Grade II* (light green)
                                   Grade II (green)
       Registered Park (brown, none)
       Conservation Area (green)
       Area of High Archaeological Potential (pink)