

The Avon Valley in the fifth to mid-seventh centuries: contacts and coalescence in a frontier polity?

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St Cross College



Submitted for the Degree of Philosophy in Archaeology

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Abstract

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ABSTRACT: The study of bounded polities is dominated by research which focuses on those landscapes and those sites believed to lie at the territorial core, often overlooking the ‘bounded’ nature of these units. This research, in contrast, advocates that for a new perspective on the development of socio-political units, studies which concentrate on frontier zones should be prioritised. Consequently this thesis refocuses attention on the frontier zones between polities, proposing a methodology for working in and identifying frontier zones and promoting these areas as dynamic landscapes, integral to the emergence, development, and maintenance of socio-political units during the early medieval period.

This methodology combines investigation of the distribution of distinct material culture, burial practices, and patterns of landscape use with an approach more frequently used by anthropologists – the identification of processes characteristic of frontier environments. The Avon Valley, the landscape through which the historically attested 7th century frontier between the Hwicce and Mercia ran, provides the ideal environment in which to explore the origins of early medieval polities. A dataset of 58 sites within this study area is analysed. The focus on the Avon Valley also aims to highlight the potential of this oft overlooked part of the country. It aims to show the wealth of archaeological and toponymic data available and the contribution this region can make to the study of the early medieval period.

The results of this analysis demonstrate that the Avon Valley was divided into an eastern and western zone as early as the 5th and 6th centuries. This has direct implications for the later emergence of the kingdom of the Hwicce. It suggests that between these two zones lay an area of contact and coalescence. This evidence, along with conclusions drawn from comparative studies of placenames, the western Severn Valley, and the middle Trent Valley, was used to set forth two new models for kingdom formation. These models focus on the interactions *between* polities, foregrounding the significance of external relations alongside internal developments.

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Abbreviations

<i>Æthelberht</i>	The Laws of Aethelberht are cited with their law code number and with the page on which they appear in F.L. Attenborough's volume (Attenborough, 2000. The Laws of the earliest English Kings).
<i>Alfred</i>	The Laws of Alfred are cited with their law code number and with the page on which they appear in F.L. Attenborough's volume (Attenborough, 2000. The Laws of the earliest English Kings).
<i>ASC</i>	'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle'; ed. Whitelock. D. et. al. 1961. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: a revised edition, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode used.
<i>Goscelin</i>	Goscelin, the 11 th century hagiographer's, Life of St Mildburg survives as a composite manuscript written in the 13 th century and can be found in BM Add. MS. 34,633. A description of the manuscript, its text, and a translation can be found in Finberg, 1972, pp. 197–216).
<i>Heref</i>	Gospel Book which describes the eastern boundary of the Diocese of Hereford under the title "Hanc discretionem fecit Aethestanus episcopus" and likely, therefore, to date to the episcopate of Bishop Athelstan (1012-1056). Manuscript held in the library of Pembroke College, Cambridge. MS. 302.
<i>S</i>	Anglo-Saxon charters are cited using their 'S' number recorded by P.H. Sawyer's Anglo-Saxon Charters: an Annotated List and Bibliography. London. 1968. The 'Electronic Sawyer', an online manifestation of the 'Revised Sawyer' produced by Cambridge University, launched in 2010 and accessible at www.esawyer.org.uk , was used.
<i>Tax Ecc</i>	'Taxation Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV circa AD 1291'. Record Commission, London 1802. Description of the boundaries of the Diocese of Worcester.
<i>Valor Ecc</i>	'Valor Ecclesiasticus temp. Henr. VIII Auctoritate Regia Institutus, III'. Record Commission, London 1817. A 16 th century map of the boundaries of the Diocese of Worcester

Acknowledgements

This research could not have been completed without the advice and support of a great many people; it isn't possible to name them all here, but I hope that they know who they are and to them I wish to express my sincere gratitude. I could not have done it without you.

I would like to offer my supervisor, Professor Helena Hamerow, my deepest thanks for her patience, advice, encouragement, and wealth of knowledge. Her guidance has led me through both my masters and my doctoral research; through the challenges of part-time jobs, thesis set-backs, chapter re-writes, and split infinitives. I could not have imagined a better supervisor and mentor.

Thanks also go to Professors Chris Gosden and John Blair and Doctor Eleanor Standley for their invaluable comments at Transfer and Confirmation of Status which re-shaped the focus of this research, leading to a far richer and more rounded project.

My sincere thanks go to Paul Booth, John Blair, and John Baker for their comments on various draft chapters. To George Speake, Barbara Yorke, Tania Dickinson, Stuart Palmer, Bryn Gethin, Caroline Rann, Ben Wallace, Stuart Foreman, Anni Byard, Toby Martin, Stuart Brookes and the Landscapes of Governance Project, Tyler Franconi, Matt Austin, and Adam McBride for the sharing of data and their comments on specific topics. I am also immensely grateful to John Pouncett and Chris Green for their help and expertise with ArcGIS.

The informal network of early medievalists at Oxford has proved immensely valuable: Letty, Cliff, Toby, Andreas, Dan, Tori, Vicky, and Sarah, thank you for your conversations and insights over the years.

To Gemma, Tess, Fee, Robyn, Sarah, and Ed, my sincerest thanks for your herculean effort proof reading the final draft.

Finally, I would like to thank those people that have stood by my side and given me the courage to start and the strength to finish. My unfaltering friends and colleagues, always quick to console, celebrate, and distract: Max, Dave, Hannah, Tess, Emily, Laura W, Tim, Adam, Laura S, and Becka. My family, whose decision to live in the Avon Valley was somewhat instrumental to the inception of this project and whose tolerance for my insistence to narrate the history of every town, village, field we pass is without limit: Mum, Dave, and Dad, the incredibly talented photographer who devoted so much time to capturing the essence of the Avon Valley. And to Ed, for being everything: my sounding board, my advisor and editor, my devil's advocate, my sanity, my voice of reason, my best friend and light at the end of the tunnel.

Chapter 1. Introduction.

1.1 Introduction

Traditional approaches to the study of bounded polities tend to focus on those areas and those sites thought to lie at the core. Such methodologies often overlook the 'bounded' nature of these polities, discussing frontier zones only to draw lines on maps, if, indeed, they are discussed at all (for the early medieval period, see various chapters in Bassett, 1989a; and papers in Dickinson and Griffiths, 1999). With the emphasis placed on the territorial centre, these approaches propagate a core-periphery style of research. Successive challenges to this economic and socio-political model have afforded greater agency to frontier zones, which are increasingly seen as feeding back and influencing developments at the core (c.f. Flad, 2013; Franconi, 2014; and Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995 for excellent overviews of this topic). From this new way of thinking about frontier zones a new way of thinking about bounded polities can be offered; through analysing how people distinguish themselves from their neighbours, new insights can be gained as to the origins of polities, their development, and their maintenance.

The central aim of this research, therefore, is to advance an alternative framework for the study of polity formation. This framework focuses on what evidence from frontier zones, rather than territorial cores, can tell us about the origins and development of distinct socio-political units. Before this framework can be applied, however, it is necessary to identify a frontier zone. Consequently, the second aim of this research is to develop a methodology for working in and identifying frontier zones using archaeological data.

Whilst any period would benefit from this research, the early medieval period provides the focus for this thesis. As a period of migration, colonisation, and interaction, the early medieval period lends itself to a study of polity formation. In this cultural milieu, social identities morphed and were juxtaposed against those of their neighbours, giving rise to the precursors of the kingdoms of 7th-century Britain.

One such kingdom was the kingdom of the Hwicce (Figure 1.1). Historical sources suggest that the north-eastern part of this kingdom lay within the valley of the River Avon but, crucially, did not extend along its full length (Ford, 1976, pp. 277–278; Hooke, 2009, pp. 13–17; Stenton, 1971, p. 44).



Figure 1. 1. The early medieval kingdoms of England in the 7th century, showing only the subkingdoms of Mercia. After Yorke (1997), Map 1

The earliest written reference to the kingdom of the Hwicce comes from Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* when, in 603 AD, Augustine was said to have met the "bishops and teachers of the neighbouring British kingdom" at a place called Augustine's Oak on the borders of the Hwicce and the West Saxons (Colgrave and Mynors, 1969, p. 135). Whilst the location of this oak has not been conclusively established, it has been suggested that it lay near the Gloucestershire – Oxfordshire county border, close to the villages of Down Ampney or Kemble (Eagles, 2003, p. 178; Smith, 1965, p. 35). The first charter attributed to a king of the Hwicce, Osric, is in 676 AD (S. 51) and, despite the uncertainty of

this particular charter,¹ Bede's record of the rule of two brothers prior to the succession of Osric suggests the existence of a royal dynasty by the mid-7th century (Stenton, 1971, p. 45). The foundation of the Diocese of Worcester before 680 AD to serve the kingdom (Stenton, 1971, p. 134) additionally suggests that the kingdom of the Hwicce was, by the close of that century, a significant polity. The Tribal Hidage, whilst of debatable origin and date (see Chapter 2.2.3.2 for discussion), appears to support this, assessing the kingdom of the Hwicce at 7,000 hides and making it comparable to the kingdoms of Lindsey and the east and west Saxons (Featherstone, 2001, p. 24). The written sources also suggest a setting within which the kingdom of the Hwicce developed: in the 6th century the region is believed to have been conquered by the Saxon king Ceawlin after his victory over the Britons at Dyrham in 577 AD, then, only half a century later, in 628 AD, Penda wrested control from the Saxons at the Battle of Cirencester (ASC; Stenton, 1971, p. 45).

Stenton (1971) and Hooke (2009) have used three pieces of evidence to establish the extent of the kingdom of the Hwicce: the borders of the Diocese of Worcester; the tribal group of the Dobunni; and place-names. Founded to serve the kingdom of the Hwicce in the 7th century, the close relationship between the Diocese and the kingdom was argued using place-names from within the diocesan boundaries which refer to the Hwicce and charters granted jointly by the rulers of the Hwicce and the church at Worcester (Hooke, 2009, pp. 13–17). Based on this evidence, Hooke argued that the diocesan boundaries reconstructed from 11th, 12th, and 16th-century sources (*Heref, Tax Ecc, Valor Ecc*) also reflected the boundaries of the Hwicce (Hooke, 2009, pp. 13–17). Furthermore, as the diocesan boundaries encircled the core distribution of Dobunnic coinage, she made a link between the two territories (Hooke, 2009, pp. 5–13). The argument can be summarised as: the Dobunnic tribal territory became the early medieval Hwiccan kingdom which, in turn, became the religious diocese of Worcester. Thus, the extent of the kingdom of the Hwicce can be established using archaeological evidence for the Dobunnic territory and the Diocese of Worcester. The final pieces of evidence used

¹ See <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/51.html#> for discussion.

were two place names which lay near to the frontier identified by Hooke (2009, p. 13). The first was a field name documented in a 10th-century charter which may make reference to the “boundary of the Mercians” (S.773²). The second was a later parish name, ‘Bishop’s Tachbrook’, which was believed to contain the Old English element for “something that shows” and, when considered alongside the other elements of the name – ‘Bishop’s’ and ‘-brook’ – might indicate a watercourse that marked the extent of the ‘Bishop’s’, i.e. the Diocese of Worcester’s, land (Hooke, 2009, p. 13). Using these pieces of evidence, Hooke placed the western frontier of the Hwicce approximately in the centre of the Avon Valley, running from northwest to southeast (Figure 1.2)

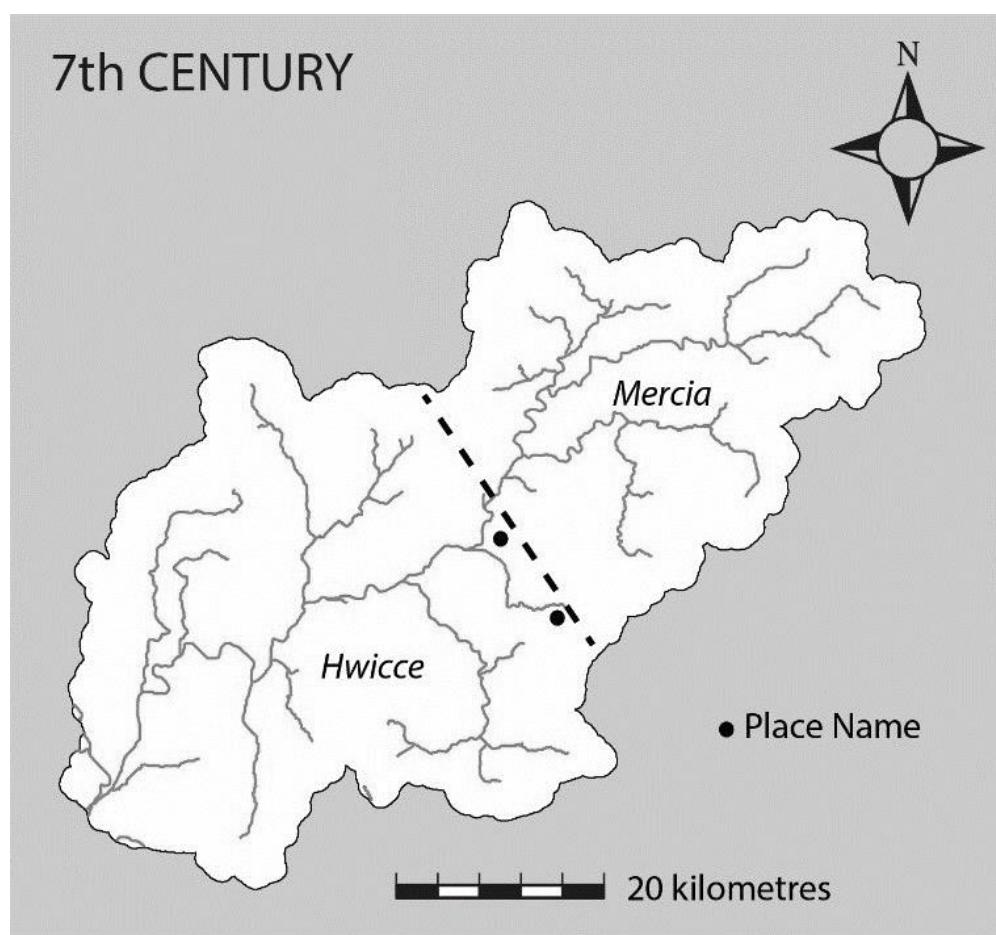


Figure 1. 2. The mid-7th-century frontier after Hooke (2009)

² S. 773 describes the grant of land by King Edgar to Aelfwold at Kinton and includes detailed boundary clauses. The boundaries described include this extract which refers to the ‘mercna mere’ or ‘boundary of the Mercians’: “wellan on mercna mere of mercna mere on succan pyt of succan pyt on grundlinga broc and lang streames of ðam streame of fidestan” (<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/773.html#>). This is translated by Whitelock as “from the springs to the boundary of the Mercians, from the boundary of the Mercians to Succan-pit, from Succan-pit to Grundlinga-brook, along the stream, from the stream to Fidestan” (1996, p. 605).

In another attempt to identify the extent of the Diocese of Worcester, Ford mapped the western boundary with reference to what he described as 'pre-Saxon camps' (1976, pp. 277–278). His argument was that the boundary probably used existing prominent monuments in the landscape, in this case 'camps', to mark its route. He identified a number of these and suggested that the boundary took a course between the valleys of the Blythe and Arrow, crossed the Avon at its confluence with the Leam, cut across the upper course of the Dene to run along the Avon/Thames watershed, and then descended into the Evenlode Valley. To support the position of this boundary, Ford observed that estate linkages described in charters appeared to define zones of common rights, a method for recognising early polities which Oosthuizen believed has some merit (2011, p. 181), which respected his proposed division of the valley (1976, pp. 280–281). Significantly, using a different methodology, Ford's diocesan boundary lay broadly in the same part of the Avon Valley as Hooke's.

The suggestion is, therefore, that the Avon Valley may have lain on the northern edge of the kingdom of the Hwicce; however, the methodologies employed in making this interpretation are far from rigorous. The written sources used by Hooke to recreate the boundaries of the Diocese of Worcester date to centuries after the foundation of the kingdom of the Hwicce (2009, pp. 13–17); the place names used are also not contemporary and are just two examples (Hooke, 2009, p. 13); the use of the territorial extent of the Iron Age Dobunni (Hooke, 2009, pp. 5–13) relies on an unsubstantiated claim that there is a direct relationship between these two groups; Ford gives no definition for 'pre-Saxon camp', nor does he justify his selection of sites from a wider distribution of similar monuments (1976, pp. 277–278); and, finally, the focus is on written sources with very little attention given to the archaeological evidence in the region. It is, however, these written sources and these problems which make the Avon Valley the ideal testing ground for exploring polity formation processes. The written sources can also offer a chronological framework for this research, indicating a highly developed kingdom in the latter half of the 7th century and, thus, implying that the origins and evolution of this kingdom lay in the preceding centuries. It is, therefore, to the 5th, 6th, and early to mid-7th centuries

that this research takes its evidence, drawing additional information from the late Roman period whenever possible.

The development of polities in the early medieval period is a popular subject with academics and many books and papers have touched on the topic (c.f. Bassett, 1989b; Brooks, 1989; Draper, 2004; Hamerow et al., 2013; Petts, 2013; Pretty, 1989; Semple, 2008; Yorke, 2001). Many different regions and many different datasets have been investigated, but the processes of polity formation proposed tend to follow a similar pattern. The point of inception often relates to either the control of late Roman centres or the control of significant landscapes, usually focused on river valleys, or a combination of both. From this initial base of power certain families rose to dominance, presumably by outcompeting their neighbours on social or economic terms. Through agglomeration, either via violence, treaty, perception of mutual benefit, marriage, or a combination of these, dominant groups grew and formed the basis of the kingdoms we recognise in the historical sources of the 7th century. This research makes no objection to this model of polity formation, but instead questions the reliance of many of these models on historical sources and the related focus on 'kings' (c.f. Brooks, 1989, pp. 164–168; Pretty, 1989, pp. 176–178; Yorke, 2001, pp. 13–19), along with the reliance on evidence from regions thought to have been territorial cores (c.f. Bassett, 1989b (Hwicce); Brooks, 1989 (Mercia); Hamerow et al., 2013 (Wessex)). Instead, this research sets out a methodology which focuses on archaeological evidence. This is set within the context of what we know from historical sources, but does not seek to necessarily corroborate one dataset with the other. It uses archaeological evidence from sites of all statuses and does not focus wholly on the elites, proposing a bottom – up approach to the investigation of polity formation. Finally, it considers evidence from a complex and dynamic landscape on the edge of the historically attested kingdoms of the Hwicce and Mercia and moves away from core-peripheral models inherent in many studies of polities.

1.2 Research Questions

In order to achieve the two main aims of this research – to advance an alternative framework for the study of polity formation and to identify a methodology for working in and identifying ‘frontier zones’ – six questions are defined:

- 1) What were the characteristics common to the Avon Valley in the 5th to mid-7th centuries?
- 2) Can any patterns be observed in the distribution of these characteristics? If so, is it possible to define any distinct zones?
- 3) How was authority expressed in the Avon Valley during the 5th and 6th centuries?
- 4) How did the expression of authority change in the 7th century and what might this say about the development of society?
- 5) Can a framework be developed using the Avon Valley dataset to explain the growth of the kingdom of the Hwicce?
- 6) Can any evidence of frontier zone ‘processes’ be identified amongst the characteristics of the Avon Valley?

1.3 Study Area

The Avon Valley was selected as the focus of this research for two reasons. Firstly, it is a valley and, secondly, this particular valley holds significant potential to advance our understanding of kingdom development and the early medieval period in Britain.

The River Avon meanders as a classic lowland river, rising near the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire county boundary and flowing in a south-westerly direction for approximately 130 kilometres to its confluence with the River Severn at Tewkesbury (Figure 1.3).

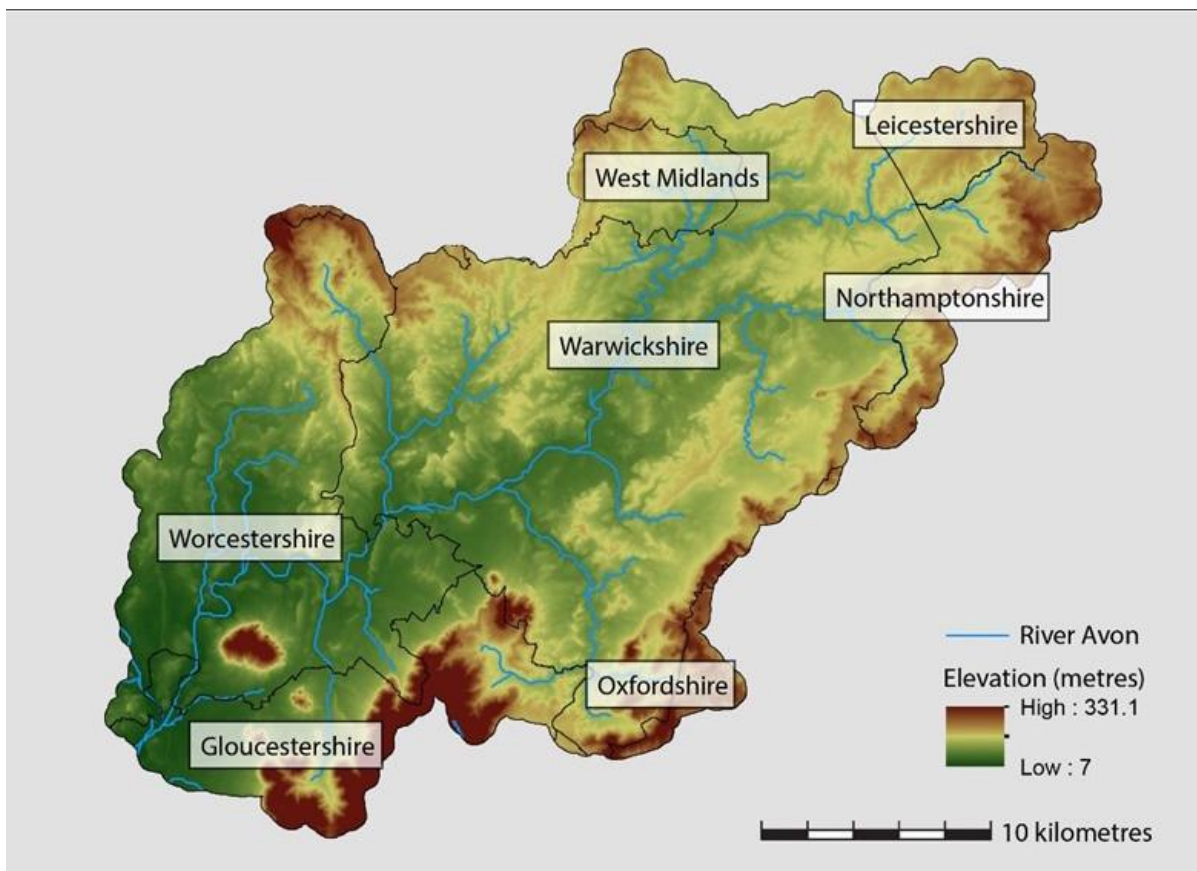


Figure 1. 3. The Avon Valley Study Area

Its valley lies between the upland formations of the Birmingham Plateau to the north, a Carboniferous and Permian outcrop of sandstones, and the younger Cotswold Plateau of Jurassic limestones to the south. Between these uplands the Triassic Mercia Mudstone forms a low lying and rolling vale overlain

in places by Lower Jurassic Lias group clays (Figure 1.4). Glaciofluvial deposits and river terrace gravels predominate in the bottom of the valley creating the fertile Vale of Evesham (Radley, 2011).

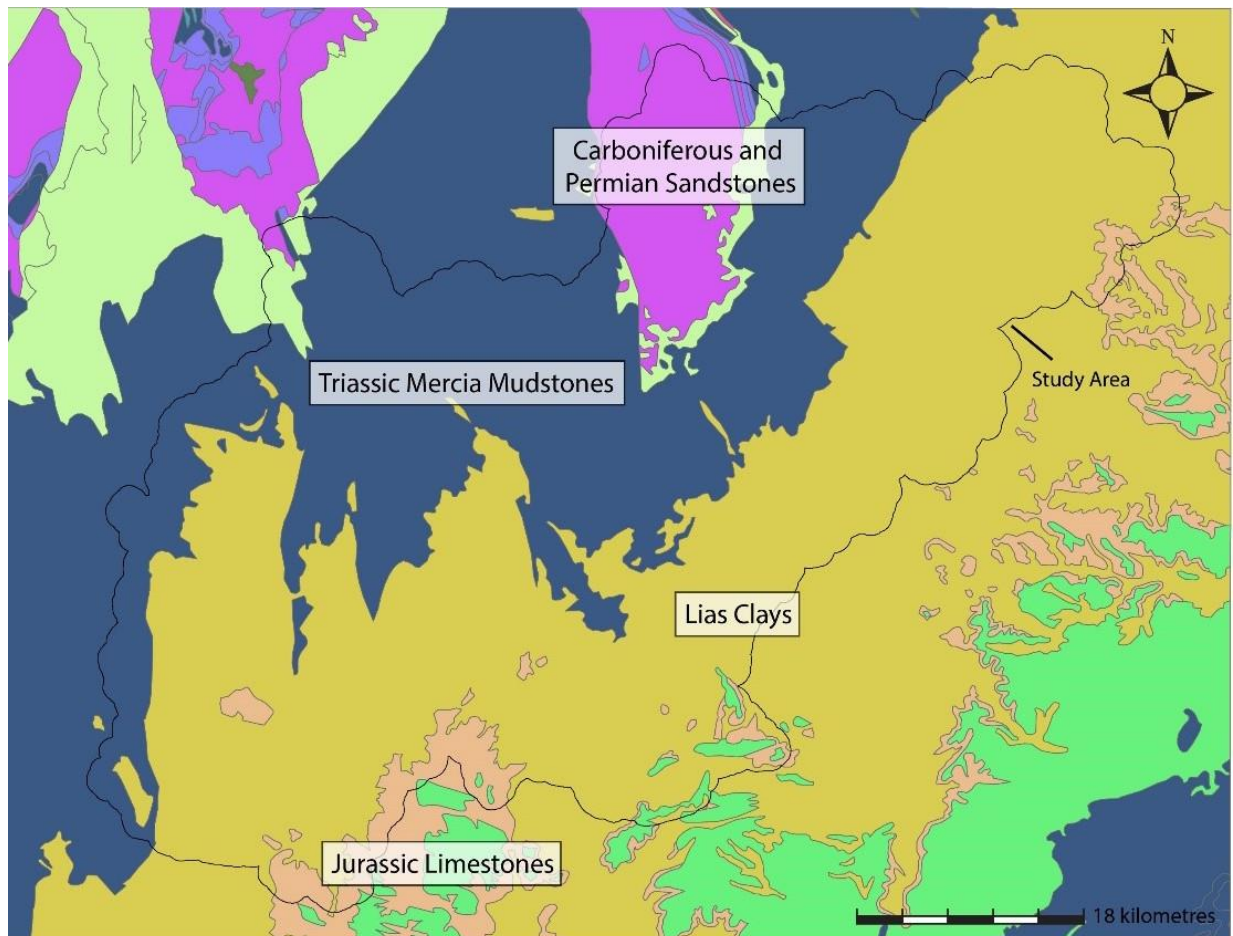


Figure 1. 4 The Bedrock Geology of the Avon Valley. After BGS 1:625,000 scale geology data (Geological Map Data © NERC 2016)

The river divides the valley into a northern region of rising ground and woodland, the Arden, and a southern region of wide valleys and open fields, the Feldon (Carver et al., 2009, p. 127). Roberts and Wrathmell's work, which used 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps to define topographical provinces, identified three main sub-provinces in the valley: the Inner Midlands, the Cotswold Scarp and Vale, and the West Midlands (in Lowerre et al., 2011). The Inner Midlands was characterised by nucleated villages and alternating vales and ridges; the Cotswold Scarp and Vale with a high density of hamlets and villages which extended onto the wide Severn plain; and the West Midlands with dispersed hamlets between tracts of woodland (Figure 1.5). Even to the present day this landscape sustains a

largely rural population, with Coventry being the only major urban centre located within the valley, and developed agricultural industries.³

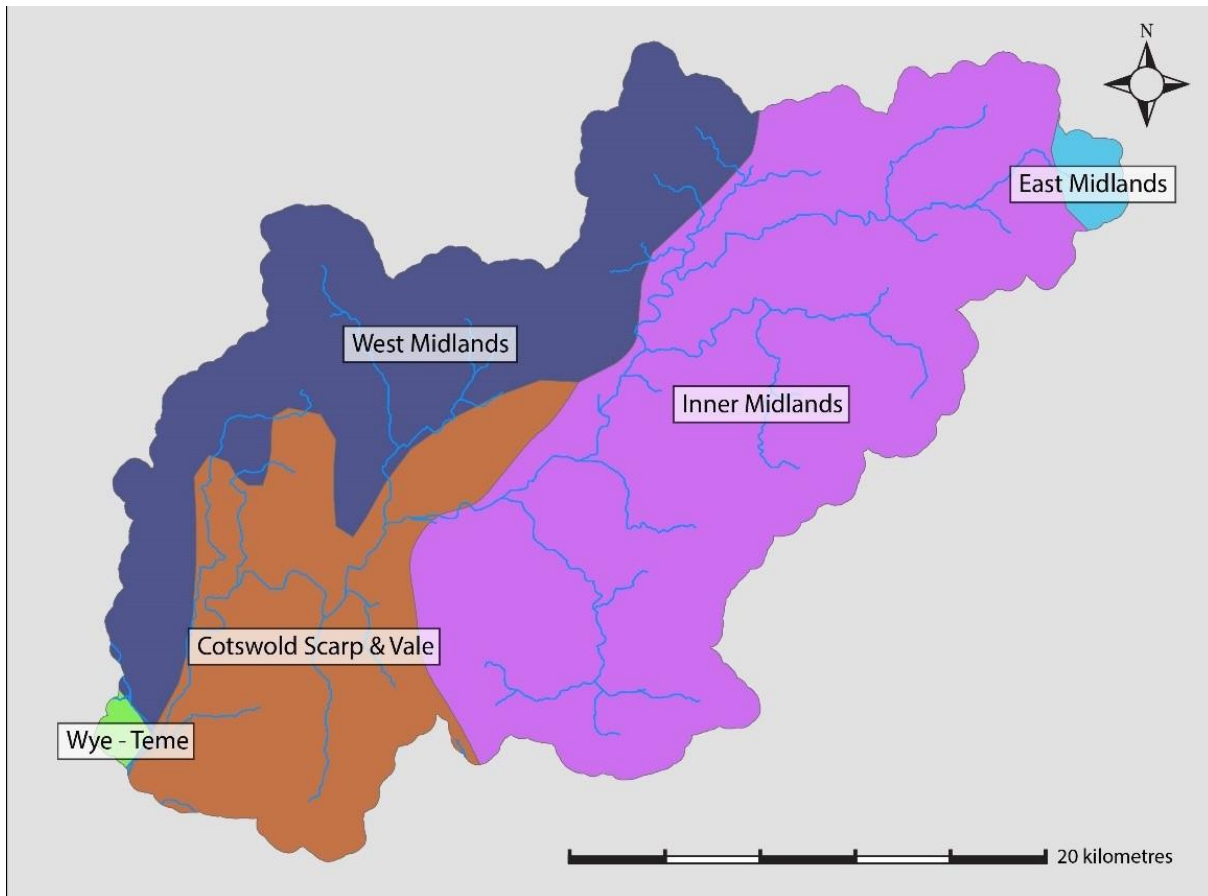


Figure 1. 5 The Sub-Provinces of the Avon Valley, after Roberts and Wrathmell (in Lowerre et al., 2011)

The selection of a valley was favoured over an anthropogenic unit, such as a county or a parish.⁴ This attempted to remove the bias placed on a dataset by a study area defined by modern administrative units which hold little relevance to the early medieval period (Wheatley, 1993, p. 137). The Modifiable Areal Unit Problem recognises that the selection of a study area is arbitrary and influenced by the preconceptions of the researcher. As such, they are subjective and can affect the results of analyses (Harris, 2006, p. 49). By selecting a natural rather than a human unit of land it was hoped that this

³ See Plates 1 – 9 for images characterising the Avon Valley.

⁴ The Avon Valley actually incorporates most of Warwickshire, large parts of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, and smaller areas of Oxfordshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and the West Midlands, see Figure 1.3.

problem will, in part, have been mitigated. Furthermore, it has frequently been shown that river valleys were central to the development of early medieval polities (Draper, 2006; Hamerow et al., 2013; Hooke, 2009, p. 85; Semple, 2008); thus, the selection of a valley as a unit of study should hold some relevance to the 5th to mid-7th centuries *and* should assist research focussed on the growth of early medieval kingdoms. The nature of archaeological recovery also supports the selection of a river valley as a study area. The free-draining character of river gravels, which leads to the development of distinctive cropmarks, large-scale gravel extraction, and modern development in the low-lands means that the archaeological dataset is biased towards river valleys (Esmonde-Cleary, 1982, p. 25; Leech, 1977, p. 3). Such a bias, whilst problematic for studies of uplands, benefits a valley-centric study with many more sites identified in these environments than elsewhere.

Having decided that a river valley should be used to define the area of research, this particular valley was chosen for its potential to add to our understanding of the early medieval period. This part of England suffers from a general lack of research when compared to other regions, such as the Upper Thames Valley, Kent, and East Anglia. There is no book titled *Anglo-Saxon Warwickshire* or *Anglo-Saxon Worcestershire*, no *West Midlands: a gazetteer of Anglo-Saxon and Viking Sites*, no 'Anglo-Saxon West Midlands Electronic Database', and no plans for an Origins of Mercia project.⁵ Consequently, the frameworks by which we attempt to understand the early medieval period rarely incorporate evidence from this region. Sites like Wasperton and Stretton-on-Fosse are sometimes cherry-picked to illustrate specific points, namely ideas of post-Roman continuity, but they are removed from their regional context and lose their true significance. Not only does this mean that the Avon Valley is under-represented in current scholarship on the period, but that narratives developed for early medieval 'England' are really only relevant to certain parts of England, in particular the east.

⁵ c.f. Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire (Blair, 1994), Anglo-Saxon Cambridgeshire (Taylor, 1978), Early Anglo-Saxon Sussex (Welch, 1983), Yorkshire: a gazetteer of Anglo-Saxon and Viking Sites (Points, 2007), A Gazetteer of Anglo-Saxon and Viking Sites: County Durham & Northumberland (Points, 2012), the 'Anglo-Saxon Kent Electronic Database' (Brookes and Harrington, 2008), and The Origins of Wessex Project (Hamerow et al., 2013).

The reasons behind this neglect by archaeologists are not obvious to this author. There is not a lack of evidence in the area as there is a wealth of toponymic, historical, and archaeological data to draw from in the Avon Valley. The English Place-Name Society has conducted and published surveys of all the counties which fall within the valley (Cox, 1998; Gelling and Stenton, 1953; Gover et al., 1936, 1933; Mawer and Stenton, 1927; Smith, 1965) and both Gelling (1992) and Hooke (2009) have devoted further attention to the valley's toponyms. Pre-Conquest charters have also received a good deal of scholarly attention thanks to the Worcester Cartulary and the survival of over 470 pre-Conquest documents relating to the west Midlands (Hooke, 2009, p. 52, 1999, 1990, 1981). Archaeological studies have been conducted too, but for various reasons these have failed to make the impact on scholarship that the valley deserves.

Kate Pretty's doctoral thesis, 'The Welsh Border and the Severn and Avon valleys in the 5th and 6th centuries AD', attempted to bring together the sites of the Avon Valley in one study (1975). Her research into the Welsh Borders and the Severn and Avon Valleys in the 5th and 6th centuries showed both the importance of broadening our research into westerly regions and the benefit of a coherent study. Yet, her work remains unpublished and little known. Furthermore, a number of significant sites, sites which potentially alter the interpretation of the region, have been identified since the time of her research, such as Wasperton (Carver et al., 2009). A greater number of sites have also been written up and published since Pretty's work, for example: Stretton-on-Fosse (Ford, 2003), Beckford A & B (Evison and Hill, 1996), Bishop's Cleeve (Holbrook, 2000), and Alveston Manor (Ford, unpub.).⁶ Ford's article from 1996 represents a second attempt at a cohesive study. However, his article, 'Anglo-Saxon cemeteries along the Avon Valley', looked only at the burial evidence and was particularly focussed on the distribution of material culture; it made no reference to settlements, the landscape, or even wider burial practices. As with Pretty's thesis, Ford's article also suffers from a lack of circulation, being published only in a regional journal seemingly overlooked by early medieval archaeologists, the

⁶ The Alveston Manor report is yet to be published, and with the death of Bill Ford it remains to be seen if it ever will be, but the write up has been completed and is accessible at Archaeology Warwickshire.

Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society. It too has become out-dated and a number of burial sites have been identified since its publication, including: Billesley (Palmer, 2003), Bank Farm, near Dumbleton (Coleman et al., 2006), Walton Cardiff (Hart and McSloy, 2008), and the burial close to the King's Stone, Rollright Stones (Anni Byard pers. comm. May 2015). Thus, despite possessing significant potential for archaeological research, the Avon Valley remains an enigma – unappreciated and overlooked.

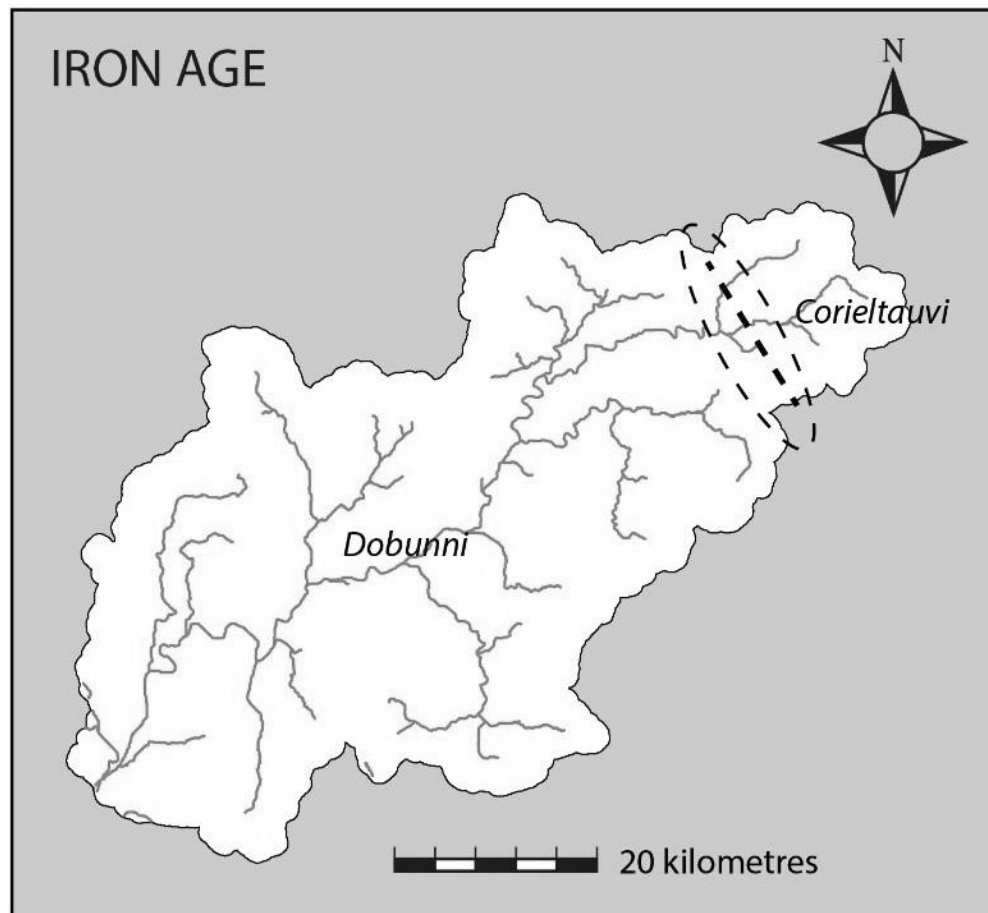


Figure 1. 6 The Iron Age frontier in the Avon Valley after Todd (1973), Whitwell (1982), Van Arsdell (1994), Booth (1996), and White (2007)

Such an oversight on the part of archaeological research, if not a result of a lack of data, is perhaps a consequence of the peripheral nature of the Avon Valley, with a number of researchers having asserted that the valley lay within frontier zones in the Iron Age and Roman periods, as well as in the early medieval period. In the Iron Age, Todd (1973, pp. 13–15), Whitwell (1982), Booth (1996, p. 53), Van Arsdell (1994, p. 24), and White (2007, pp. 38–42), whilst not in total agreement regarding the exact

location, have all argued that the frontier between the Corieltavi and the Dobunni lay in the north-eastern part of the Avon Valley, broadly in the region of Watling Street (Figure 1.6).

In the early Roman period, Webster asserted that the Fosse Way road formed a military frontier (1958, p. 49). However, this interpretation of the Fosse Way has garnered criticism (c.f. Booth, 1996, p. 28; Frere, 1999, p. 62). If the Fosse Way was at one point a frontier, it was a temporary one and the emphasis was on forward movement, with the forts of the Avon Valley attesting to this (Booth, 1996, p. 28). Given that the identification of the Fosse Way Frontier is questionable and that, should it have existed, it was likely to have been short-lived, it is all the more interesting that a distinction can be observed throughout the Roman period between the Avon Valley and the rest of the west Midland region. Esmonde-Cleary regarded the north-western zone of the west Midlands region as ‘traditional’, with its social and ideological structures based on a late Iron Age pastoral economy that did not fit with Roman conceptual frameworks. This contrasted with his south-eastern zone which he characterised as ‘innovative’ and “exhibits, most clearly, the impact of Roman-style cultural markers” (Esmonde Cleary, 2011, pp. 133–142).⁷ Recently, data brought together by the Roman Rural Settlement Project has supported Esmonde-Cleary’s observations, showing how the character of the south-east part of the west Midland region, in which the Avon Valley lies, contrasts with the patterns seen to the north-west: rectangular and masonry buildings are more common on non-villa farms; coins are found more widely; more villas have been identified; and complex farm types are more common than elsewhere in the region. These characteristics mean that the south-eastern part of the west Midland region, and particularly the Avon Valley, share more in common with the south east of England than with the rest of the west Midlands (Brindle, 2014). Thus, whilst the Fosse Way Frontier, if it existed, is likely to have been transitory in its nature, the Avon Valley does appear to have represented a watershed between two characteristically distinct zones in the Roman period (Figure 1.7).

⁷ The Avon valley lies on the north-western edge of Esmonde Cleary’s south-eastern zone.

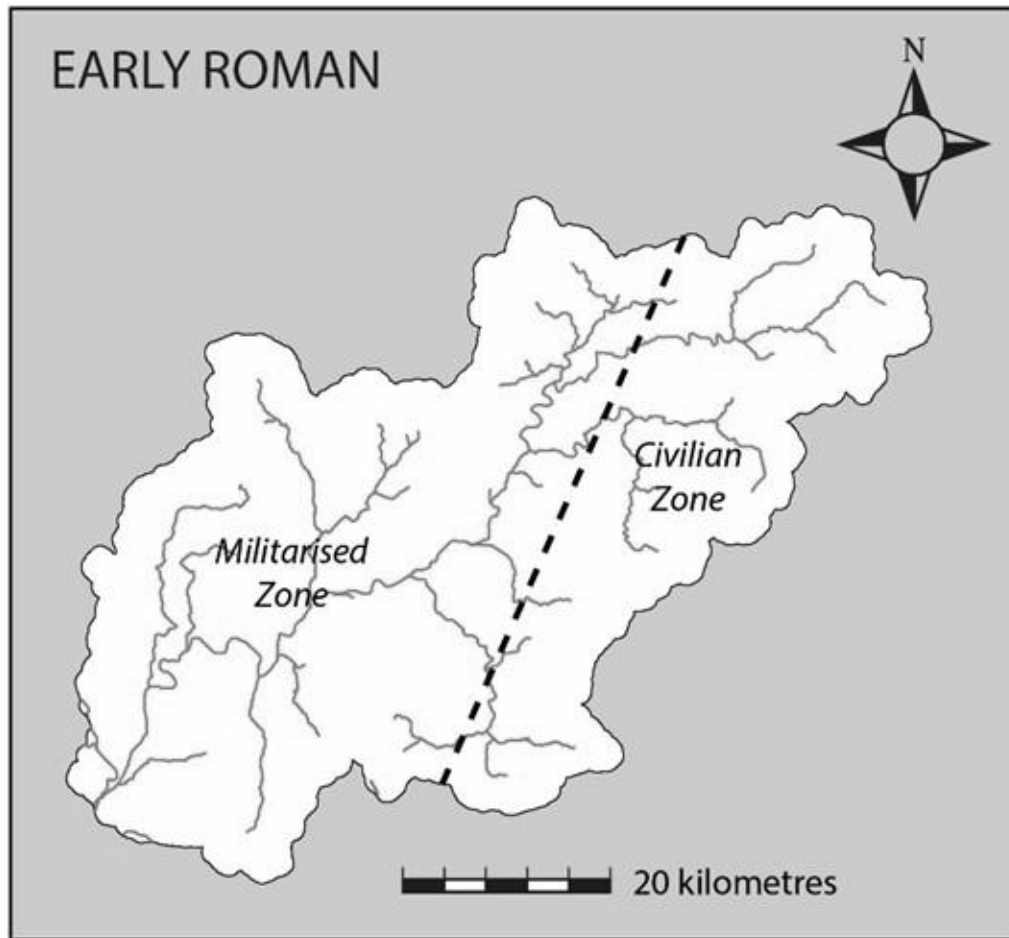


Figure 1. 7. The Fosse Way Frontier after Webster (1958) and Esmonde-Cleary (2011)

If the Avon Valley was, or was perceived to have been, a peripheral landscape, then the lack of research into this valley may be a result of greater weight afforded in academic research to territorial cores at the expense of frontier areas. This investigation aims to refocus research and to use the peripheral position of this valley to its advantage. The attestation in historical sources to a 7th-century socio-political boundary in the valley attracted rather than deterred this research, providing the perfect environment in which to study polity formation from a new perspective and to test a new archaeologically driven methodology for the identification of frontier zones. At the same time this research will advance the study of this neglected region.

1.4 Archaeological Background: the Avon Valley in the Roman period

Before any study of a place and a period can be commenced it is essential to give an overview of the environment from which it evolved. For any study of the early medieval period this entails the daunting

task of summarising the Roman period. Having expanded into the Avon Valley in the early to mid-1st century, the Roman armies would have encountered a landscape divided between the two late Iron Age tribal units of the Dobunni and the Corieltauvi (Booth, 1996, p. 26). This landscape was populated by widespread but patchy settlements which, given the absence of evidence for nucleated sites, apparently lacked significant social stratification (Booth, 1996, p. 28). Roman expansion into the valley was facilitated and maintained by the extensive network of roads which criss-crossed the landscape (Booth, 2002, p. 5). These roads supported the development of the two main forts in the valley, Baginton and Alcester, and possibly two further smaller forts or temporary camps at Budbrooke, Warwick, and Orchard Hill Farm, Stratford (Booth, 1996, p. 28). With two (possibly four) forts, the Avon Valley appears to have represented an area of lower density military presence compared to elsewhere in the west Midlands (Esmonde Cleary, 2011, p. 128). This military presence was not only scarce, but seems to have been short-lived and periodic, confined to the mid-1st century, the late 1st and early 2nd century, and then the late 3rd century (Booth, 1996, pp. 28–30; Booth and Evans, 2002, pp. 301–303; Hobley, 1975, 1973, 1969).

The concentration of known sites may be partially due to recovery biases, such as gravel extraction and modern development; however, a distinction can still be made between the density of sites known from the Avon compared to say the Severn Valley (Esmonde Cleary, 2011, p. 128), which implies the apparent settlement focus in the Avon is, at least in part, a true reflection of identifiably Roman settlement patterns. This distinction has been borne out by the findings of the Roman Rural Settlement Project, whose data suggest that this part of the west Midland region had quite a different character, having more in common with the south-east region of the country than with the rest of the west Midland region (Brindle, 2014).

Nucleated sites, such as Alcester, Chesterton, Tripontium, Princethorpe, Dorn, and Tiddington were, with the exception of the latter, found beside the main roads and in locations where no late Iron Age activity has been identified (Booth, 2002, p. 9, 1996, p. 51). Within the valley, however, Alcester

dominates discussion. Its size, complexity of plan, diversity of building forms, number of late Roman stone buildings, possible mansio and substantial stone warehouse, and its 2nd-century defensive circuit – extensively reinforced and rebuilt in the 4th century – have led excavators to describe the site as the principal Roman settlement in the region and amongst the upper orders of the small towns identified in Roman Britain (Booth, 2002, p. 5, 1996, p. 32). Furthermore, it has been argued that the mansio and the unusually large warehouse, the continued military presence into the 2nd century, and the apparent significance of the town regionally might reflect a local government function, perhaps within the northern territory of the Dobunni (Booth, 1996, p. 32). However, the warehouse, evidence for a large market place, and the town's position beside a major saltway may indicate that the town additionally or alternatively functioned as a major regional economic centre (Cracknell, 1996, p. 134, 1989, pp. 58–59; Cracknell et al., 1994, pp. 257–258).

The other major nucleated sites in the valley are less well understood, but seem to share a number of characteristics: unlike Alcester, there is no evidence of a military phase; they possessed defensive circuits of likely 3rd or 4th century date; there is evidence of substantial buildings; and, with the exception of Tiddington, they lay beside long-distance roads – Chesterton, Princethorpe, and Dorn on the Fosse Way and Tripontium on Watling Street (Booth, 1996, pp. 35–38; Burnham and Wachter, 1990, pp. 249–255; Hingley, 1985; McWhirr, 1981, pp. 60–61; Palmer, 2009; Stanley and Stanley, 1960, 1959; Taylor, 1967). The direct relationship between the Roman road network and these sites, excluding Tiddington, has led to the interpretation that these settlements fulfilled a function related to the collection of tolls or taxes from travellers (McWhirr, 1981, pp. 60–61). Tiddington, on the other hand, has been interpreted as a market which brought together agricultural produce from the local area and attained a moderate level of wealth (Booth, 1996, p. 38; Palmer, 1981, p. 23).

Additional sites, such as Brailes, Stretton-on-Fosse, Marlcliff and Staple Hill south of Bidford-on-Avon, Billesley, and Bidford-on-Avon itself, might usefully be described as minor nucleated settlements (Booth, 1996, p. 39). Again, the Roman road network seems to have been an influencing factor for

growth, with Bidford-on-Avon apparently developing due to its location where Ryknield Street fords the Avon and Billesley's growth seemingly effected by its position on the Saltway mid-way between the markets at Alcester and Tiddington (Booth, 1996, p. 39; Palmer, 2003).

Away from these roads the Avon Valley was dotted with rural settlements and villas, the latter of which were rare in the west Midlands and formed distinct clusters in the Avon Valley, the Cotswold Fringe, and in the hinterland of Wroxeter (Booth, 2002, p. 6; Copeland, 2011; Hurst et al., 2002; Lockett, 2002; McWhirr, 1981). A study of the villas in the valley is severely hampered by a lack of excavation and their role within the local economy is poorly understood (Booth, 2002, p. 7). The complexity of some of the villa sites, particularly the villas of Spoonley Wood and Wadfield outside Winchcombe, Gloucestershire (McWhirr, 1981, pp. 96–97), suggests a degree of wealth, but how this related to the wider economic landscape remains uncertain. Lower status rural settlements are similarly obscure. In the Avon Valley, the use of rectilinear enclosures in the middle Iron Age and late Iron Age at sites like Brandon Grounds and Park Farm, Bidford-on-Avon and the use of curvilinear enclosures on Roman sites such as Bidford Grange makes the dating of sites by their morphology incredibly challenging (Booth, 1996, p. 42). Where Roman dates have been established it is possible to observe concentrations of occupation in the bottom of the Avon Valley and in the valleys of its southerly tributaries extending up on to the edges of the Cotswolds. Careful surveys using aerial photographs in the upper Arrow and Alne valleys have also suggested that occupation stretched north of the Avon towards the Forest of Arden (Booth, 1996, p. 44). At sites such as Furzens Farm, Wyre Piddle and Throckmorton Airfield, both in Worcestershire, it has been demonstrated that, unlike the major nucleated settlements, some of the rural settlements had their origins in the late Iron Age (Lockett, 2002, p. 3) and there also appears to have been a dislocation of rural settlements in the 2nd century which was not seen at the major settlements, as few continued through into the 4th century (Booth, 2002, p. 7).

Very little can be said about Roman burial sites within the Avon Valley as so few examples have been identified. Whilst scattered burials have been identified at Alcester and Tiddington, these are likely to belong to the later Roman period; no formal cemeteries similar to the type known to ring the small town of Dorchester-on-Thames in the Upper Thames Valley have been found (Booth, 1996, p. 45; Harman et al., 1978). Burials have been reported from outside the enclosed settlement of Tripontium, but again these are likely to belong to the late Roman period (Cameron and Lucas, 1966, pp. 139–144) as are the rural cemeteries of Wasperton and Stretton-on-Fosse (Carver et al., 2009, p. 135; Ford, 2003, p. 3). Thus, the funerary practices of the earlier Roman period remain elusive and it has been suggested that the people of the Avon Valley may have continued to practice late Iron Age burial customs (Booth, 1996, p. 45).

More data are available for industry and trade, though the extensive investigations into Alcester continue to bias research. Four industries or resources are said to have characterised the valley and its immediate surrounds: salt, timber, pottery, and agriculture. Immediately to the north-west of the valley lay Droitwich, Roman *Salinae*, a major inland salt production site in the Roman period (Hurst et al., 2006; Hurst and Aitken, 1997; Woodiwiss et al., 1992). As Droitwich was linked to the Avon Valley by a number of roads, it is highly likely that salt was an important commodity traded through the Avon markets, such as Alcester (Cracknell et al., 1994, pp. 257–258). Plentiful timber resources would have been provided by the Forest of Arden which swept along the northern slopes of the valley and Esmonde-Cleary has suggested that wood may have been exported from here to the less forested areas to the south and east (2011, p. 131). The Arden also provided wood for pottery kilns which developed along its fringes at Mancetter-Hartshill, Wappenbury, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Bubbenhall, and Lapworth (Booth, 1996, pp. 47–49; Esmonde Cleary, 2011, p. 128). The extensive industry at Mancetter-Hartshill, which consisted of at least 61 kilns (Booth, 2002, p. 8), lay immediately beyond the northern edge of the valley and dated to the early 2nd to mid-4th centuries. It produced tile and glass along with ceramics and its mortaria were circulated across the Midlands and into the north of Britain as far as Hadrian's Wall (Booth, 1996, p. 47). Whilst far more local in scale, Booth argued that

agriculture would probably have been the most important resource in the valley. Using the faunal assemblages at Alcester he concluded that there was a substantial rural economy supporting urban market centres (Booth, 1996, p. 47). This seems to be sustained by the excavations at Billesley in the hinterland of Alcester, which identified corn drying ovens, a feature which was absent at Alcester (Palmer, 2003, p. 72), and marries with the interpretation of Tiddington (Palmer, 1981, p. 23). Spelt appears to have been the dominant cereal crop, but local variations from this were apparent at sites like Dunsmore where barley was more common (Booth, 2002, p. 8, 1996, p. 46). Cattle dominated the faunal assemblages at Alcester, with kill patterns indicating that cows were kept for meat, dairying, and as draught animals. A lower number of sheep were represented, particularly older sheep; this contrasts with the interpretation that the development of a concentration of palatial 4th-century villas in the Cotswolds, immediately south of the Avon Valley, was related to wool production (Henig and Booth, 2000, pp. 44–45).

Whether or not the west Midlands and the Avon Valley were major exporters to military consumers in the north (Esmonde Cleary, 2011, p. 132), the pottery evidence demonstrates how the area was linked to the rest of Roman Britain – the Oxford, Severn Valley, Malvernian, Dorset, and Nene Valley industries, in particular – though imports from beyond the province and exotica are relatively rare (Booth, 1996, p. 51; Lockett, 2002, p. 7). In the Avon Valley, as in the late Iron Age, the pottery evidence is slightly different from the surrounding region and Lockett remarked upon the higher percentage of Oxfordshire wares here compared to in the rest of Worcestershire (Lockett, 2002, p. 7). Proposing that there may be a link between the distribution of Oxfordshire wares and the concentration of villas in the Avon Valley, Lockett suggested that this part of the west Midlands may have been more economically developed than its neighbours (Lockett, 2002, p. 7). The propensity for the Avon Valley to stand out within the wider west Midlands region and its apparent ties to the Upper Thames Valley and the valleys of eastern England endured into the early medieval period and provide an important line of enquiry in this research.

1.5 Thesis Outline

To best address the aims of this research this thesis is broadly arranged in the following manner. Chapter 2 describes the methodology and datasets used within this research. It also sets out the theoretical framework which guided the development of this methodology and the criteria for data selection. Given the reliance of this research on secondary data, collected by others, a review of the various sources of archaeological data is also presented in this chapter. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 present the first set of results from a valley-wide survey, investigating the distribution of burial practices and the distribution of patterns of landscape use, respectively. Taking the results from the preceding chapters, Chapter 5 examines the role of routeways and existing communities in the 5th and 6th centuries in more detail. To compare and contrast patterns observed in the archaeological data, Chapter 6 then explores the distribution of Brittonic, partly Brittonic, and Old English names which make reference to Brittonic communities or institutions. Chapter 7 presents another comparative study, but this time compares archaeological data from another region, the western Severn Valley, to assess the strength of any conclusions drawn in the Avon Valley and to set the valley within its wider context. This chapter concludes by offering some interpretations for the similarities and the differences observed between the two valleys. Moving in to the 7th century, Chapter 8 explores how elites developed in the Avon Valley using case studies of the great hall complexes at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington and elite burials. Similar to Chapter 7, Chapter 9 presents data from a neighbouring region, this time the middle-Trent Valley. The purpose of this case study is to explore the relationship between the two regions which were to become the kingdoms of the Hwicce and Mercia. Similarities and differences between the two datasets are considered and the process of Mercian expansion considered. Drawing together results from all the preceding chapters, Chapter 10 sets out the evidence for discreet zones in the Avon Valley, assesses the possible identification of frontier zone processes, and proposes two models to explain the development of the kingdom of the Hwicce.

Finally, the thesis is brought to a close in Chapter 11 which summarises the conclusions drawn from this research, their implications for the wider study of bounded polities and early medieval kingdoms,

and the areas of further research that this thesis highlights. The data used in this research are presented in Catalogues 1 – 5. Plates illustrating the Avon Valley landscape are found in Catalogue 6.

Chapter 2. Methods and Datasets.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews approaches to the study of polities and frontier zones, proposes a methodology for the investigation of these, and describes the data used. The methodology, which analyses whether distinct socio-political units existed prior to the 7th century, can be used to set out a new way of thinking about the origins and development of early medieval kingdoms. Scull has argued that whilst the study of early medieval kingdoms often focuses on the 7th century, when written sources attest their existence (see various chapters in Bassett, 1989), clearly those kingdoms did not simply spring into existence around 600 AD (Scull, 1999; Yorke, 2001, pp. 13 & 19). The methodology proposed here will be applied to the investigation of the origins of one such kingdom, the kingdom of the Hwicce.

It has been asserted by Stenton (1971) and by Hooke (2009) that the 7th-century frontier between the Hwicce and Mercia ran through the Avon Valley. Thus, the study area spanned both a supposed frontier zone and, importantly for comparison, areas within two distinct kingdoms. In the Avon Valley, these historically attested kingdoms belonged to the 7th century onwards, yet what is explored here is evidence from the preceding two centuries. This evidence is used to assess whether it is possible to identify the existence of distinct polities prior to the aforementioned kingdoms and whether a frontier zone, identified by specific processes, lay between them.

A *frontier zone* is defined within this research as an “area between” (Parker, 2006, p. 77) where cultural practices meet, mix, and react to external influences (Naum, 2010). In anthropological and archaeological schools of thought they are characterised by both hybridisation and fragmentation (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995, p. 472; Naum, 2010; Parker, 2006, p. 86; Ylimaunu et al., 2014). In such environments, the anthropologist Michael Kearney believed “identities are assigned and taken, withheld and rejected” (1991, p. 58). As with the social groups they delimit, frontier zones can exist and operate at various scales, between neighbours and between polities (Carver, 2011, p. 187; Petts

and Turner, 2011, p. 6; Smith, 1996; Toop, 2011, p. 96). Frontier zones are areas which are fluid and permeable (Booth, 1996, p. 53; Todd, 1973, p. 12); they are the 'elastic areas' between the early medieval kingdoms identified in the Tribal Hidage (Davies and Vierck, 1974, p. 228) and are certainly not 'borders', a term which implies a fixed and recognized line within the landscape (Parker, 2006).

Significantly, frontier zones are now recognised as places of immense social importance, with changes within them feeding back to affect developments at the core of socio-political units (Flad, 2013; Hall, 2009; Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995; Reilly, 1988). Thus, patterns observed in frontier zones can be informative elsewhere in the socio-political units they define. In addition to being integral to core politics, frontier zones are essential in the definition of socio-political identity. As Sarah Semple illustrated with her analysis of Sussex, how territorial frontier zones and entry points were used "might offer insights into the emerging political identities of [polities]" (2008, p. 409). Examples cited by Semple include Sutton Hoo and Bishopstone cemeteries, placed deliberately so as to be viewed by those entering the kingdoms of East Anglia and the South Saxons, respectively (2008, pp. 416–418). These cemeteries demonstrate the importance of frontier zones as places for polities to communicate their identity to outsiders, whether they be merchants, missionaries, or raiders. Furthermore, a territorial frontier serves to both divide and bring people together (Reilly, 1988, p. 161) making these places dynamic and vibrant locations intrinsically linked to socio-political identity and essential to the development of political units. Thus, these interfaces between polities offer an opportunity to explore how polities emerged, their characteristics, and their development.

Whilst the examples used by Semple lay on the coast, a frontier zone which is easier to identify, this research sets out a methodology by which the possible presence of inland frontier zones can be explored using archaeological evidence. This methodology suggests that frontier zones need not be marked by imposing landscape features; they might be more fluid and liable to change. To recognise these frontier zones and the distinct polities they define requires careful examination of the distribution patterns of practices – such as burial practices, material culture, landscape use,

monumental reuse, and place names – to define distinct zones, followed by the examination of the interfaces of these zones to see whether processes characteristic of frontier zones can be discerned.

2.2 Methodological Approach for the Definition of Zones

A traditional approach to the study of polities has been to establish ‘zones’ where particular suites or ‘packages’ of practices can be identified and distinguished from neighbouring ‘packages’. Carver used monumental variability to distinguish ‘zones of intellectual allegiance’, where people thought and behaved the same (2011). He argued that the differences in furnished burial, sculptural traditions, building styles, and manuscripts, when combined, might be used to define intellectual territories in early medieval Northumberland (Carver, 2011). Lemont Dobson’s thesis on the reuse of monuments in the East Riding of Yorkshire (2008) and Ian Smith’s research on the investment in burial rites in south-east Scotland (1996), also utilised monumental variability to identify different socio-political zones. Similarly, Richards and Naylor’s work in Northumberland used the national database of Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) finds to establish a fingerprint for the use of material culture in order to define a distinct Northumbrian zone (2011). In the Adur Valley, Sarah Semple investigated how the position of cemeteries and settlements in relation to each other, existing monuments, and routeways, might be linked to the definition of an early medieval territory (2008).

The strength of this ‘zones’ approach is that it draws upon data from large areas and a range of site types, contextualising interpretations and establishing general patterns; it demonstrates how various types of evidence might be incorporated into the study of socio-political units, particularly burial practices, artefact distributions, and the positioning of sites; and it combines evidence of these practices to define distinct ‘packages’ which characterise particular zones. These zones are then related to socio-political groups, for example Northumbria, in the case of Richards & Naylor (2011). This framework contributes to the research conducted here.

2.2.1 Cemeteries and Social Signalling: The Distribution of Burial Practices

Burial practices were chosen for analysis due to their ability to inform on communal identity (Devlin, 2007; Hakenbeck, 2007; Härke, 2007; Scull, 2013; Stoodley, 2010). In a recent publication on this theme, Scull concluded that the diversity apparent in the furnished burial rite of the early medieval period “may be read as representing elements of distinction within a broader framework of cultural affiliation” (2013, p. 526). In other words, that differences observed within burial practices could be seen as evidence of membership to different cultural groups. Furthermore, the complexity and diversity in these practices should be able to shed light on the societies that created them (Stoodley, 2010, p. 87). Thus, the burial practices of this period can inform on communal narratives and communal membership. Through analysis of the distribution of different burial practices over time and space, therefore, the evolution of communities might be seen and patterns might be observed which could signal the presence of distinct zones where people viewed and treated their dead differently.

Recorded for each site	Recorded for each burial (where possible)
Date Range of Activity on Site	Date
Number of burials Cremation : Inhumation	Radiocarbon Date
Dominant Position of Body Supine, Prone, Side, Flexed	Deposition Cremation : Inhumation
Dominant Orientation of Burials	Position Supine, Prone, Side, Flexed, Decapitated
Number of Rows	Orientation
Inhumations containing Charcoal	Grave Structure or Lining Barrow, Coffin, Plank or Stone Lined, Charcoal
Decapitations	Age
Demographic Composition Child and Juvenile / Adolescent / Young Adult and Adult	Sex
Number of Weapon Burials	Gender
Number of Weapon Burials as a % of Male Population	Stature
Weapon Types	Isotope (Wasperton Only)
Swords	Weapons
Saxon Jewellery Types	Other Grave Goods
Anglian Jewellery Types	
Unfurnished Burials	
Unfurnished Burials as a % of Buried Population	
Associated Monuments	
Associated Sites	

Table 2. 1 Data recorded for each burial site and for each burial

Whilst all aspects of the burial rite were recorded for each site and, where possible, each burial, not all the information recorded was analysed in terms of its spatial distribution in the Avon Valley (Table 2.1).

Firstly, in order to characterise patterns common to the Avon Valley, only those practices present at more than one site were considered, e.g. rows were not used as they were only attested at Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve.⁸ Second, due to preservation and reporting quality, there was simply not enough information to analyse some practices, e.g. osteological data. Third, the uniformity of some practices, namely burial position and the treatment of different genders, means that, whilst they can usefully be included within the characterisation of the practices of the Avon Valley, their distribution did not need analysing. Fourth, associated sites and monuments were not considered in the section on burial practices and instead formed an integral part of the analysis of landscape use. Finally, there was no intention to use all the data collected and such a detailed dataset was only created so that it might enable future research.⁹ With these caveats in mind, the burial practices analysed were: the ratio of inhumation to cremation burials; the orientation of inhumation burials; the presence of charcoal-lined inhumation burials; the relative frequency of weapon burials; and the distribution of dress accessory types. The extents of Alveston Manor, Stretton-on-Fosse, Lower Farm, Wasperton, and Beckford A along with the majority of burials from Beckford B are believed to have been identified and cemetery size is considered throughout (Barnard, 1925; Carver et al., 2009, p. 132; Cook, 1958; Evison and Hill, 1996, pp. 36 & 39; Ford, 2003, p. 77, unpub., p. 95).

2.2.1.1 Cremation Burials

Carver et al., drawing upon the rarity of the cremation rite in the Avon Valley, suggested that where it does occur it may indicate the presence of a different burial custom practiced by a different social group (2009, p. 135). This interpretation, however, has its problems and, whilst it has been recognised

⁸ Bill Ford argued that burials at Stretton-on-Fosse were arranged into rows but this author remains unconvinced (2003). Looking at the cemetery plan and, in particular, the orientation of graves, it seems possible that the inhumations were laid out around a barrow, evidence of which might have been removed through modern quarrying prior to excavation (see Catalogue 1 for plan).

⁹ The complete dataset is found in Catalogue 1

that the introduction of this cremation rite to England in the 5th century and its maintenance through the 6th century was likely to be a “statement of perceived group identity”, one whose origins lie amongst the North Sea communities (Williams, 2002, p. 68), it would be a mistake to solely assign expressions of socio-political identity to this burial rite. Sites where it has been possible to demonstrate progression from cremation to inhumation practices, for example, suggest that changing beliefs within one community may affect the choice to cremate or to inhume and that the arrival of a new social group is not necessary to explain the introduction of a new rite (Scull, 2013). To explore these opposing views, data will be collected from the Avon Valley to analyse temporal and spatial change in the use of the cremation burial practice.

2.2.1.2 Orientation of Inhumation Burials

As part of the suite of practices which make up a burial ‘package’ (c.f. Arnold, 2006, p. 142; James, 1988, p. 220; Lucy, 2002), the predominance of a particular orientation of inhumation may be instructive of evolving beliefs or the presence of different groups of people. At Frénouville, in north-western France, for example, two distinct phases of burial were apparent: one dated to the late 3rd Century, with inhumations aligned north-south, and another dated to the mid-5th Century, with inhumations aligned west-east (Effros, 2003, pp. 141–3). Analysis of whether the orientation of inhumation burials is dictated by geographical or chronological factors – whether it is likely to be a consequence of a burial’s date or its position in the study area – might, therefore, advance research into the internal development of a group or, alternatively, provide evidence for the existence of distinct groups. To conduct this analysis, north-south and south-north burials were assessed together, as were east-west and west-east burials. This was on account of not all the excavation reports recording the position of the head in the burial.

2.2.1.3 Charcoal-Lined Inhumation Burials

Charcoal-lined inhumation burials are defined as inhumations where there is evidence for spreads of charcoal either lining the whole grave, underlying the head or pelvis, scattered across the whole grave, or focussed in particular areas around the body. These burials should not be confused with the charcoal

burials of the 9th to 11th centuries which are often associated with Christian practices and found on consecrated ground. Examples of this later type of practice have been found in burials at the cathedrals in Oxford, Hereford, Worcester, and York (Richards 2002:164; Hadley 2002:218-219) and the monastic site at Bath (Peter Davenport pers. Comm. Feb 2015). It has been argued by Richards (2002:164) and Hadley (2002:218-219) that this rite may have had a symbolic meaning linked to preserving the individual from corruption and securing the integrity of the soul. These burials were, therefore, intrinsically linked to Christian belief in the afterlife. In the pre-conversion period, a different explanation must be sought.

No study into the origin and distribution of charcoal-lined burials in the early medieval period appears to have been conducted and this unusual practice remains enigmatic. In his musings on the topic, Ford has variously suggested a Roman or a Merovingian influence, which came into England via Kent, for the origin of this practice (Ford, 2003, p. 103). By studying the distribution of these burials in England and by comparing early medieval data with Romano-British evidence, it is possible to assess the validity of Ford's claims. It is also possible to assess whether there is any pattern to the distribution of these burials which may indicate the presence of distinct zones within the Avon Valley.

2.2.1.4 Frequency of Weapon Burial

Härke has suggested that variability in the frequency of weapon burials was not solely linked to wealth but also to the contrasting social structures found in different regions (1989, pp. 50–51). In other words, that the selection of individuals for burial with weapons was dependent on social factors dictated by local or regional agendas (Härke, 1989, p. 59). It follows, therefore, that mapping weapon burial frequencies may be able to reveal geographical patterns which might be linked to different socio-political groups.

Heinrich Härke has been analysing the weapon burial rite in early medieval England since the late 1980s (Härke, 2014, 2005, 2001, 1997, 1992, 1989) and his extensive research has led him to the conclusion that: “an Anglo-Saxon inhumation was furnished with weapons not because it was the burial of an

individual warrior - it was furnished with weapons in order to display the status of a family which was of Germanic descent and whose status was also linked to greater disposable wealth" (1992, p. 153). Thus, the inclusion of weapons in a burial bears no relevance to an individual's ability to fight or his experience of fighting (Härke, 2005, p. 205, 1992, p. 152). Furthermore, the peak of the weapon burial rite in the late 5th to mid-6th centuries suggests that the presence of warfare was not a determining factor in the deposition of weapons; at this time there is an interlude between documented battles and it appears that the period was one of relative peace (Härke, 2005, p. 199, 1997, p. 125). The provision of weapons, therefore, was a display of social and political alignment, one that particularly emphasised perceived descent from Germanic lineages. However, the correlation between peak weapon burial and the interlude in warring might suggest that the burial rite also acted as a proxy for war; whereby the heroic ideology of the Germanic conquest could not be expressed through battles and was, therefore, ritually expressed through the display of weapons, themselves a material manifestation of violence, in the grave (Härke, 1997, p. 125). The inclusion of weapons in the burials of the Avon Valley should consequently be seen as evidence of male individuals, or groups of male individuals, with greater disposable wealth, who perceived themselves to be the descendants of Germanic migrants and inheritors of the Germanic conquest myth. These men were buried in cemeteries alongside people not afforded burial with weapons – these graves may be those of both Romano-Britons and lower status migrants (Härke, 2005, p. 202, 1992, p. 153) – thus, the weapon burial rite might additionally be seen as evidence of mixed societies.

In order to explore this possibility, data was collected to investigate the frequency of the weapon burial rite within the Avon Valley. To analyse the frequency of weapon burials amongst the total male population, 50% of the un-gendered or un-sexed individuals at each Avon Valley site were assumed to be male. Weapon burials were then assessed as a proportion of the maximum number of burials assigned a male gender/sex plus half of the individuals where no gender/sex could be established. This method attempts to correct the lack of consideration given to unfurnished graves or graves containing only gender neutral grave goods. It is appreciated that this is a simplified methodology, but it was

hoped that, through considering this alongside proportions of weapon burials per total population and total male population, a more nuanced picture of the weapon burial rite might be achieved.

2.2.1.5 Dress Accessory Types

John Blair explored the social and commercial contacts of the people of the 6th-century Upper Thames Valley through the distribution of a dress accessory characteristic of the area – cast saucer brooches (1994, p. 16). In developing his argument, Blair stated that the scarcity of Anglian material in the 5th-century Upper Thames Valley was evidence of much weaker links between these culturally distinct regions at this time, a situation which he saw as changing by the mid-6th century as inter-regional exchange systems expanded (1994, pp. 9–16). Thus, the distribution of dress accessory types can be used to investigate both the presence of socio-political units and the development of inter-regional contacts.

It is understood that dress accessories moved for a variety of reasons, both as exchanged objects and worn ornaments. Without being able to differentiate between the two means of travel on the current available evidence, no comment is made here on how this material entered the Avon Valley. What was considered was the distribution of material indicating different areas of influence and contact within the Avon Valley. For this analysis, dress accessories were grouped according to generally recognized types and assigned a region of origin (Table 2.2; Åberg, 1926; Carver et al., 2009; Dickinson, 1993, 1979; Ford, unpub.; Hines, 1997; Leeds, 1945; Martin, 2015)).¹⁰ The number of each dress accessory type was then recorded. This was not possible at all burial sites as not all contained dress accessories and not all reports recorded the type of dress accessory present.

¹⁰ All the Great Square Headed brooches known from the Avon valley belong to Hines' Phases 2 and were, therefore, likely to be of an eastern origin.

Focus of Distribution	Dress Accessory Type
East Anglia and East Midlands	Cruciform Brooch, Small Long Brooch, Swastika Brooch, Great Square Headed Brooch, Wrist Clasps, Girdle Hangers
Upper Thames Valley	Disc Brooch, Saucer Brooch, Small Long Square Headed Brooch
Kent	Composite Brooch, Great Square Headed Brooch
Widespread	Annular Brooch, Penannular Brooch

Table 2. 2. Categories of dress accessory and their assigned focus of distribution.

2.2.2 Analysing Patterns of Landscape Use

Active use of both the human and physical landscape played an important role in the creation of early medieval authority, identity, ideology, and ancestry (Carver, 2011, p. 187; Härke, 2001, p. 19; Semple, 2013, pp. 14–59). In her recent publication, Sarah Semple argued that the use of monuments and the wider landscape were drawn into the creation and maintenance of regional narratives which actively shaped the world views of early medieval communities (2013). Thus, the way in which the landscape was organised can inform upon the communities who made it their home. Additionally, by including evidence from the landscape, the focus of research was not solely placed on burials nor was it confined to *within* early medieval sites, being able to instead incorporate data from outside these sites.

The approach adopted here used methodologies developed by studies across early medieval England: Semple for West Sussex, Yorkshire, and north Wiltshire (2013); Draper for Wiltshire (2006); Dobson for East Yorkshire (2008); and Smith for south-east Scotland (1996). These methods included the establishment of distinct patterns of landscape use which can then be defined as characteristic of separate early medieval communities. Semple, for example, with reference to the reuse of prehistoric monuments, defined patterns of landscape use and burial traditions that were typical of the territories of West Sussex, Deira, and North Wiltshire (2013, pp. 20–26, 27–38, 40–45 respectively). In contrast, but to the same end, Draper focused on the regional pattern of early medieval settlement to identify a distinct signature within Wiltshire (2006). The aspects of the landscape analysed here are: the topography at each site; the reuse of extant sites; the focus of activity on routeways; and the position of great hall complexes.

2.2.2.1 Site Topography

The topographical setting of early medieval sites is a relatively new area of research within the discipline. Howard Williams, whilst acknowledging the importance of physical landscape features for the development of burial sites in the 5th to 7th centuries, only cited studies of prehistoric landscapes (1998, p. 92). Indeed, it does appear to be a more frequently studied topic amongst prehistorians, and Parker-Pearson's (1993) and Tilley's (1996) papers are good examples, but it is a topic which is starting to be addressed by those studying the early medieval period. Williams himself stated that grave orientations were often influenced by natural landscape features (1998, p. 97), thus recognising the importance of the landscape for the development of sites. Draper has taken the study further and argued that nodal places in the early medieval landscape usually developed where three topographical characteristics combined – river crossings, natural springs, and low hills surrounded by marsh (2004, p. 188). Furthermore, he pointed to the topographical elements in many of the earliest Old English settlement names as evidence of the importance of the physical landscape in the shaping of the human landscape (Draper, 2004, p. 78). Baker and Brooks also argued that specific topographical features, in particular, hanging promontories, were favoured for the holding of moots in the Anglo-Saxon period (2013, pp. 149–152). Most recently, Harrington and Welch explored the topography at sites across the south of Britain to assess continuity and discontinuity between the late Roman and early medieval periods (2014, p. 74). Importantly, through their case studies they demonstrated how the positioning of sites might be linked to the political strategies of early political units (Harrington and Welch, 2014, p. 94). In these studies, it was illustrated how the landscape was used to define nodal points, meeting places, and political strategies. It could be argued, therefore, that these studies demonstrate how the position of sites within the landscape can be linked to socio-political agendas.

2.2.2.2 Monumentality and the Reuse of Monuments

The creation and maintenance of communal and elite identity through the reuse of monuments, or 'extant sites' (see below for a definition), in the early medieval period is widely accepted (c.f. Bradley, 1987; Carver, 2011, p. 187; Halsall, 2010, pp. 253–254; Härke, 2001, p. 19; Semple, 2013; Williams,

1998; Yoffe, 2007). Richard Bradley's paper exploring the relationship between the early medieval structures and the prehistoric monuments in the Yeavinger landscape brought the subject to the fore and concluded that, "it seems as if the past was being used in a much more active manner, in order to promote or protect the interests of a social elite" (1987, pp. 14–15). This was developed by Williams who expanded the purpose of monumental reuse to include the construction and negotiation of origin myths, identities, and social structures (1998). In addition, Williams identified a chronological aspect to the practice, with communal burial grounds focusing on these monuments in the 5th to 7th centuries and the rise of an elite practice in the 7th century (1998, p. 103). This, he argued, reflects the development of new elite groups at this time. Finally, research into this practice culminated with Sarah Semple's publication in 2013, which surveyed various regions within early medieval England and was able to demonstrate both the cohesiveness of the practice and its regionality. Thus, within the Avon Valley, any patterns in the construction of monuments and reuse of extant sites may be demonstrative of particular socio-political ideals or concerns and any spatial differences observed in these may represent the presence of different socio-political groups. Given the scarcity of possible examples of monumentality in the Avon Valley (see discussion of two possible sites in Chapter 4.3), this research focuses on monumental reuse.

2.2.2.3 Landscapes and Movement

The importance of main rivers and Roman roads in the early medieval period has often been inferred from the archaeological record. The river-centric nature of early medieval communities and territories, for example, has been widely recognised (Baker and Brookes, 2013, p. 149; Draper, 2004, p. 117; Hamerow, 2012, p. 3; Hamerow et al., 2013, p. 51; Hooke, 2001, p. 161; Semple, 2013, pp. 19–25, 2008, p. 418). Early territorial units appeared to focus on river catchments (Draper, 2004, p. 117) and the place names of such territories often reflected this – the Arosætna in the Arrow Valley, Warwickshire, the Pencersætana in the Penk Valley, Staffordshire, and the Tomsætana in the Teme Valley, Shropshire (Hooke, 2001, p. 161). Settlements, meeting places, and battles have frequently been evidenced at nodal points along the course of major rivers such as at fords and confluences (Baker

and Brookes, 2013, p. 149; Hamerow et al., 2013, p. 51; Hooke, 2009, p. 102; Semple, 2013, pp. 85 & 91). Similarly, Roman roads have been identified as important foci of early medieval activity (Baker and Brookes, 2013, p. 149; Palmer, 2003, p. 51; Reynolds, 2009; Reynolds and Langlands, 2011; Semple, 2013, p. 34). In particular, crossroads have been highlighted as places of significance within the landscape (Reynolds, 2009; Reynolds and Langlands, 2011). These thoroughfares, main rivers and Roman roads, provided access and opportunities for greater visibility and control. They were, therefore, integral to the communication of information between and within early medieval communities (Reynolds and Langlands, 2011, p. 423). How these major routeways were used in the Avon Valley could, therefore, be indicative of wider socio-political agendas and, consequently, any differences in their use may imply the presence of distinct communities.

2.2.2.4 Great Hall Complexes

The 'great hall' complexes of Hatton Rock and Long Itchington are two of just fourteen 5th to mid-7th-century sites where occupation activity (or non-burial activity) has been identified in the Avon Valley. In a dataset dominated by cemetery evidence, their importance for providing information about the living population cannot be overemphasised. Significantly, these sites also allow insight into a period integral to this thesis: the 7th century. For it was within the socio-political climate of this century that both the hall complexes and the boundaries of the diocese of Worcester, believed to delimit the kingdom of the Hwicce, were established.

Great hall complexes are characterised by a number of features which are found in various combinations (James et al., 1984, p. 184). These include: exceptionally large rectangular and substantial earth-fast foundation timber buildings with a large focal building; planned layouts, often showing alignment or 'courtyard' arrangements; and evidence of palisaded enclosures (James et al., 1984, p. 184). The large timber buildings might be identified with the OE 'healles' (as opposed to the OE 'hus'), with floor areas in excess of 100m² (Hamerow, 2011, p. 142), opposing entranceways in the centre of the long walls, and often with annexes at one or both ends (James et al., 1984, p. 184). In excavation it has been repeatedly observed that these buildings were made up of combinations of

square modules, a phenomenon which has apparently been borne out by the evidence from aerial photographs, with the double square being most common (James et al., 1984, pp. 186–189). These great halls first appeared at the very end of the 6th or early 7th century (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 345; Hamerow, 2012, p. 103; Thomas, 2013, p. 127) and Marshall and Marshall have argued that the tradition spread to the Midland region of England from the south and the north (1993, p. 395). However, the strength of their argument is uncertain and obscured both by a lack of excavation at these sites and the paucity of dating evidence sufficient enough to make such claims. In addition, where this building practice arrived from in the north and south of England has been the source of some serious debate (Hamerow, 2011, p. 130; James et al., 1984, pp. 205–206; Marshall and Marshall, 1993). One of the most recent contributions to this debate was Blair's concession that a British origin or influence must be considered a possibility (2013, p. 25).

As with the origins of great halls, opinion regarding the 'ownership' of these sites has also been split. Whilst all agree that they were high-status sites, opinion is divided as to the identity of the high-status individuals at these sites: kings, tribal leaders (Hodges, 1982, p. 49; Marshall and Marshall, 1993, p. 400; Rahtz, 2014; Wilson, 2014), and aristocratic families (Brookes, 2010, pp. 65–67; Hamerow, 2012, p. 103; Millett, 1984, p. 249; Welch, 1992, pp. 47–51) have all been propounded. Whilst the precise nature of the status of the individuals controlling these sites is debated, all are in agreement that these sites represented the upper echelons of early medieval society. As described in *Beowulf*, these halls were central to kinship and the creation and maintenance of lord-retainer relationships through the acts of feasting, gift giving, judicial hearings, land granting, and law making (Rahtz, 2014; Ware, 2005, p. 154). They were also intrinsically linked to cultic activities: the careful alignment of buildings, which may have facilitated procession; placed deposits such as the cache of cattle skulls at Yeavinger D2; tentative evidence of gold smithing at Sutton Courtenay; the association of halls with pre-existing monuments; and the medium of wood have all been suggested as evidence for ritual at these sites (Bintley and Shapland, 2013; Crewe, 2012, pp. 208–209; Hamerow, 2012, pp. 107–109; Shapland, 2013). As Hamerow concluded at Sutton Courtenay, these were composite sites and a range of

functions would have been carried out at them as part of an elite system of control (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 347). Essential to this system was the great hall complex's ability to express the authority of the elite to a wider audience, something which was achieved using a variety of methods.

The ways in which great hall complexes conveyed elite power were numerous and range from physical size, manipulation of resources and labour, organised layouts, production and storage of goods, and public assemblies. Ulmschneider has warned, however, that there has been an overemphasis on the buildings themselves, a potential mistake given increasing discussion about the possibility that high-status sites of the period were ephemeral in nature (2011). She, therefore, suggested that settlement location, association with high status burials, diversity of craft and production, intended display, and patterns of consumption should also be considered (Ulmschneider, 2011). The nature of these elite signifiers were considered in turn and applied to the two Avon Valley sites to assess the presence and role of high-status individuals in this landscape.

2.2.3 Comparative Research

To assess the strength of any interpretations made in the Avon Valley and to contextualise findings within a wider regional setting, two comparative case studies were carried out: the first compared the Avon Valley with the west of the Severn Valley and the Malvern Hills and the second compared data with the middle Trent Valley. The Severn Valley and Malvern Hills were selected for comparison due to the argument made using historical sources that the Avon and the Severn valleys broadly represented the eastern and western extents of the Diocese of Worcester and, therefore, the kingdom of the Hwicce (Stenton, 1971, p. 134). Conversely, the middle Trent Valley, between Lichfield and Newark, was selected as it is believed to have been the territorial core of the kingdom which was to subsume the Hwicce – Mercia (Brooks, 1989, p. 162; Yorke, 2001, p. 20). Together these case studies allow patterns observed in the Avon Valley to be compared and contrasted against a second proposed

frontier zone and a proposed heartland. These studies also broaden our understanding of this west Midland region and situate the Avon Valley within its wider geographical and socio-political setting.

2.2.3.1 *The western Severn Valley and the Malvern Hills*

Historical sources, such as the 11th-century hagiographer Goscelin's *Life of St Mildburg* (*Goscelin*) and the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291 (*Tax Ecc*), suggest that, in the late 7th century the western part of the Severn valley and the upland of the Malvern Hills separated the kingdoms of the Hwicce and the kingdom referred to here as the Magonsætan. The area that becomes the Magonsætan was first recorded as the West Hecani or the Westerna,¹¹ though these names seemed to go out of use before the 9th century (Finberg, 1972, p. 217). Their lands covered the plain of Herefordshire and southern Shropshire to the west of the Severn Valley (Stenton, 1971, p. 46). Very little is known about the reigning family and it is likely that they would have been lost to history had three women of their line not risen to fame within the church and had histories written of them (Stenton, 1971, p. 47). The 11th-century *Life of St Mildburg* (*Goscelin*) records the first king of the Magonsætan as Merewalh who lived c. 625-685 AD and has variously been identified as either the third son of Penda of Mercia or the leader of a local noble dynasty (Finberg, 1972, p. 217; Pretty, 1989, p. 176; Stenton, 1971, p. 47). Gelling's interpretation of the name as 'famous Welshman', might fit with either scenario, implying a level of political expediency on the part of the leaders of this kingdom which neighboured the Welsh kingdoms (1978, p. 95). Whether part of the Mercian royal house or not, the rulers of the Magonsætan, like the Hwicce, had been demoted to ealdorman by the 8th century as Mercia consolidated its strength (Finberg, 1972, p. 224).

A survey of the archaeological data from this region, which appears in its historical trajectory to be comparable with the Avon Valley, allows the observations made in the Avon to be contextualised and the strength of any interpretations tested. Furthermore, this analysis permits a wider understanding of the kingdom of the Hwicce, advancing this research beyond the confines of one small valley.

¹¹ Pretty suggests that these various names may represent different smaller kingdoms, see her chapter, *Defining the Magonsætan*, for further discussion (1989).

2.2.3.2 *The middle Trent Valley*

Mercia has been obscured from history; it had no contemporary chronicler, no informant to which Bede turned for evidence, and no ecclesiastic who left behind instructive collections of letters (Brooks, 1989, p. 159; Brown and Farr, 2001, p. 1). Even the charters issued in the name of the Mercian kings were not for lands within the Mercian heartland; they instead belonged to the kingdoms of Kent and the Hwicce (Brooks, 1989, p. 159). Various reasons have been put forward to explain this historical black hole: Yorke wondered whether the Mercian foundation myth has simply been lost (2001, p. 15); Stafford suggested that a tradition of history writing never developed in the first place (1985, p. 67); Tyler even speculated whether the Mercian elite may have been pre-literate (2005, p. 3); and John Blair simply thinks the destruction of the archives from key Mercian ecclesiastic centres is to blame (pers. comm. Mar 2016). Which of these, if any, is true is uncertain, but we can be more sure of the impact of Viking territorialisation on the region, with the renaming of estates and the reordering of the landscape in a way that concealed the earlier history of the Midlands (Brown and Farr, 2001, p. 1; Welch, 2001, p. 148).

An historical source which has in the past been held up as an example of an early medieval Mercian document is now a subject of debate. The origin of the Tribal Hidage, once believed to have been a Mercian tribute list (Davies and Vierck, 1974, p. 227; Featherstone, 2001), has been brought into question by Nicholas Brooks (1989, p. 159). Brooks argued that if the Tribal Hidage was a list of tributes owed to Mercia then the inclusion of Mercia itself makes no sense. This and the absence of Deira and Bernicia from the list, he believed, point to a Northumbrian origin (1989, p. 159). Such conflicting theories and lack of supporting evidence has led Yorke to conclude that the Tribal Hidage “could be the gateway to understanding the origins of Mercia, but...there are far too many uncertainties for it to support secure hypotheses” (2001, p. 20). We must, therefore, seek the roots of this kingdom elsewhere.

One such alternative source of information is the medieval Welsh poem, the *Marwnad Cynddylan*¹², but even this is not free from controversy. A cursory glance at writings on the origins of Mercia immediately identified conflicting interpretations of this Welsh raid, the battle of Maserfelth c.642, commemorated in the poem. Gelling, following Rowland, interpreted the poem as an account of a battle fought between a noble of Powys and Mercia against a Northumbrian army. This Northumbrian army had pushed deep into Mercian territory, bringing their supply train and their monks into the core of Mercia where the allied Mercian and Welsh forces met them in battle (1992, p. 73). Bassett (2000) and Brooks (1989, p. 169), in contrast, preferred an interpretation which saw the Welsh battle occurring during the time of Northumbrian supremacy over Mercia, with the vengeful Welsh raiding deep within Mercian territory to exact damage upon their enemy Northumbria and the Northumbrian puppet king in Mercia, Eowa. However, they disagreed over the monks: Bassett interpreted these as British monks native to Mercia (2000) whilst Brooks saw these clerics as northerners who had arrived as part of the overlordship of Northumbria (1989, p. 169). Such a brief look at the historical sources does little justice to the wealth of scholarship expounded upon the subject of the origins of Mercia, but it did highlight the potential problems, the contradictions, and the lack of evidence. To counter this it was to archaeology that this research turned.

As with the historical sources, however, the archaeology was not without its limitations. The most significant of these was the paucity of data: the north and central midland regions showed scant evidence of 5th and early 6th-century activity, especially when compared to their neighbours in the east (Brooks, 1989, p. 162; Gelling, 1992, p. 29; Stafford, 1985, p. 83; Welch, 2001, p. 159). Some have attributed this to the late arrival of Anglo-Saxons into the region (c.f. Stafford, 1985, p. 83), whilst others have favoured the dominance of traditional local practices which kept the practices of the migrants at bay (Bassett, 2000, pp. 114–115). Whichever interpretation proves more accurate, the fact remains that there was very little archaeological evidence in the Mercian heartlands which pre-dated

¹² The *Marwnad Cynddylan*, or 'the lament of Cynddylan', survives in a copy of the Red Book of Hergest and the White Book of Rydderch copied by John Davies before 1631 (National Library of Wales manuscript 4973). For a translation of the poem and discussion on the date of its writing see (Rowland, 1990, pp. 120–141 & 174–189)

the first historical sources to refer to this kingdom. This problem was compounded by the lack of a cohesive study of the sites that we do know of and the reliance on antiquarian reports (Brooks, 1989, p. 162; Welch, 2001, p. 149).

Even combined, the historical and archaeological sources left very little information to work with. What they did communicate was that a king, Penda, ruled over a people known as the Mercians from c.626 AD.¹³ At least one king may have preceded him: Cearl who, according to Bede, harboured the exiled Edwin and gave his daughter in marriage to Edwin during the first decades of the 7th century (Higham, 1992; Yorke, 2001, p. 19). Cearl's ability to offer refuge to Edwin, the enemy of the powerful Æthelfrith of Northumbria, would imply that Cearl wielded considerable authority (Higham, 1992) and it might reasonably be assumed, therefore, that the Mercian royal dynasty was not in its infancy. Perhaps then a date for the foundation of this lineage in the late 6th century would be appropriate. Geographically, the core of the Mercian territory is thought to have lain in the middle Trent Valley which was to be later marked by the major Mercian royal centres at Repton, the royal monastery established in the late 7th century; Lichfield, the bishopric established by Chad c. 669 AD; and Tamworth, the royal vill in the 8th and 9th centuries (Brooks, 1989, p. 162; Yorke, 2001, p. 20).

An archaeological investigation, therefore, that focuses on the few sites that lie between Newark, Nottinghamshire and east Staffordshire and which date to the 6th and 7th centuries not only contributes to our understanding of these formative years in Mercia's history, but also enables a comparison to be made with the Avon Valley, another area which was to come under Mercian rule in the 7th century.

2.2.4 Frontier Zone Processes

A major shortcoming of the definition of zones approach outlined above, however, is that too little attention is given to the archaeology on the edges of zones. Across Britain, lines have been drawn on maps between Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Britons and between Wessex, Mercia, and Kent, but no consideration has been given to the archaeology on these lines. In focusing only on defining zones,

¹³ See discussion on the dates of Penda's reign in Brooks (1989, pp. 165–166).

archaeologists have assumed the presence of frontier zones and overlooked their significance. To explore these dynamic parts of the landscape, this research, therefore, attempts to apply a new methodology for the identification of processes characteristic of frontier zones to the Avon Valley dataset. The aim is to test whether these processes can be found in the archaeological data from this case study area and, should they be evident, to assess the implications of this in relation to the development of sites in the valley and the kingdom of the Hwicce.

Cronon, Miles, and Gitlin identified six processes at play in frontier zones: species shifting, market making, land taking, boundary setting, state forming, and self-shaping (1992). These formed the basis of Clark's analysis of western Northumbria in the early medieval period (2011). Whilst Clark was able to demonstrate an early medieval archaeological application for three of these processes – land taking, boundary setting, and self-shaping – the lack of written sources which refer to the Avon Valley prior to the formation of the Hwicce restricts analysis here to only one, the process of self-shaping.¹⁴ Cronon et al. define self-shaping as the creation of new social identities through increased social interaction (1992). Clark used self-shaping at the small settlement of Fremington to explain the presence of Anglo-Saxon building types alongside Romano-British style pottery. She argued that this was evidence of the mixing of cultural practices at a social interface (2011, pp. 124–126).

Lightfoot and Martinez developed the idea of self-shaping further, envisaging frontiers as places of heightened social interaction (1995, p. 472). In their review of the study of frontiers within archaeology, they argued that three flaws pervade traditional approaches: the core-periphery dichotomy which treats frontiers as passive recipients of core innovation; the analysis of frontiers at the macro-scale of regions or pan-regions; and the expectation of clearly defined groups visible in material culture (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995, pp. 475–482). These criticisms were founded in the assumption that frontiers define the outer limits of homogenous groups with archaeologically visible

¹⁴ The other three processes defined by Cronon et al. (1992) are also not applicable to the Avon Valley. State making is specific to the American state system; species shifting relies upon biological differences which cannot be observed using the Avon Valley dataset; and there are no confirmed market sites in the valley until the late 7th or 8th century to the east of Bidford-on-Avon (Naylor and Richards, 2010; Wise and Seaby, 1995).

boundary structures. Traditionally, the people at these frontiers were thought to merely absorb innovations developed at the core and not engage with the people on the other side of the boundary.

Having identified the shortcomings of traditional approaches, Lightfoot and Martinez argued that frontier zones should be seen as places of “cross-cutting, overlapping groups and boundaries” (1995, p. 488), where processes and material culture are affected by different combinations of peoples. Accordingly, frontiers are the frontline of ‘creolization’, which they defined as “the creation, transformation, and syncretization of new cultural constructs” (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995, p. 474). Conversely, this heightened social interaction also leads to active resistance to new ideas, perhaps by communities who stand to gain little from engaging with outsiders. These communities were described as ‘traditionalist’ (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995, p. 485). Thus, rather than being places where archaeologists are able to distinguish distinct edges of material culture distributions, or zones, they argued that frontier zones are characterised by “noise” and “ambiguity of material culture” (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995, p. 482).

To explore this new approach they presented the study of Fort Ross, a 19th-century fur-trade outpost in northern California (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995, pp. 484–486). Here, local leaders actively arranged marriages between their daughters and the men of the fort. These alliances led to cultural exchange, visible in the adoption of new materials and the proliferation of inter-ethnic families. At the same time, those people who did not recognize an advantage from rejecting their traditional base of power and influence refused to adopt the culture of the fur-traders.

Naum’s paper, ‘Re-emerging Frontiers: Postcolonial Theory and Historical Archaeology of the borderlands’ (2010), whilst using a different lexicon, was fundamentally in agreement with the conceptual framework developed by Lightfoot and Martinez (1995) and, indeed, acknowledged the influence of this paper (2010, p. 105). What the earlier paper called ‘creolization’ was recognisable in Naum’s use of the ‘Third Space’ and both papers advocated innovation and fragmentation as features of frontiers. Using the work of the post-colonial theorist Bhabha, Naum described the Third Space as a

place of hybridity, tension, and innovation. Naum argued that, as places of negotiation and personal and communal re-shaping (recognisable in the 'self-shaping' of Cronon et al. (1992)), frontiers should be seen as 'Third Spaces' (Naum, 2010, p. 107).

Naum applied the concept of the 'Third Space' to the study of the settlement of Slavic peasants on south-western Danish islands in the 12th century (2010, pp. 108–116). Naum argued that this process "contributed to the emergence of a multicultural and complex frontier landscape" (2010, p. 110). Two historical sources described contradictory accounts of this frontier, one emphasising its permeability through evidence of extensive migrations, the other painting a picture of two opposed units facing each other across a fixed line. Naum attributed these conflicting interpretations to the agendas of the chroniclers and, thus, highlights the difficulty of understanding frontier zones from the evidence of history alone (2010, p. 111). To correct this, Naum drew place names and excavated evidence of Slavic technologies into the analysis, demonstrating the coexistence of separate Slavic and Danish settlements (2010, pp. 111–112). In contrast, material culture, in the form of the Slavic pottery styles which arrived on the Danish islands, showed cultural mixing over time (Naum, 2010, pp. 112–115). Naum concluded, "hybridity, inbetweenness and ambiguity are features of life and dealings in the frontiers that lack colonial stain...although each frontier is different because it emerges in a very specific historic context, certain cultural and social processes seem to be a common feature of many frontiers" (2010, p. 126).

Ylimaunu et al. (2014) developed Naum's theories of the Third Space and fragmented landscapes by exploring how these processes evolved. Whilst recognising the importance of material culture in the demonstration of these processes, their paper instead focused on how the materiality of space might be studied in order to explore these concepts. They applied this to their case study of the expansion of the Catholic Church into the area of modern Finland in the 13th to 16th centuries (Ylimaunu et al., 2014, pp. 15–17). They explored the stylistic development and the changing physical position of these churches in the landscape through the lens of the 'Third Space' and fragmented landscapes, which

they termed 'thirding' and 'fracturing' (Ylimaunu et al., 2014, p. 6). The earliest churches were small and unimposing structures interpreted as the work of individuals seeking to ally themselves with the newly arrived and powerful representatives of the church. These churches were often found beside major Iron Age socio-economic and ritual centres, and were thus taken as evidence of the blending and hybridisation characteristic of thirding. In contrast, the apparent absence of these churches outside of the coastal areas was regarded as evidence of the rejection of the ideals propagated by the spread of these churches. Thus, the landscape became fragmented or fractured between those coastal areas that embraced these churches and the inland areas which rejected them. The authors went on to consider cemeteries associated with some of these churches and were able to demonstrate the continuation of local burial traditions in the shadow of these new religious centres. These burial practices were found alongside markedly Christian ones and showed the creation of a new and hybrid burial practice. Finally, Ylimaunu et al. also emphasised the importance of engaging with the "broader geopolitics of power" (2014, p. 17), which they achieved through reference to written sources. Combining historical narratives and their theoretical framework, they suggested that the growing ostentation of the churches in this region in the mid-15th century and the increasing adherence to Christian burial practices was a feature of the instability of this borderland. Faced with violent border disputes between the Swedish and Russian kingdoms, the people of this area chose to seek protection from the church and the political power it was allied with, the Swedish Kingdom (Ylimaunu et al., 2014, p. 16). Therefore, what appeared to have been a process of Christianisation was much more tied into socio-political changes.

The most recent contribution to the discussion of processes at cultural interfaces has come from Liebmann's article in the *Journal of Social Archaeology* (2015). Liebmann critiqued the use of the term 'hybridity', defining the term as "the combination and modification of elements from two or more different social groups in ways that challenge pre-existing power relations" (2015, p. 323). He argued that hybridity is a practice and not merely a quality of an object. It combines, transforms, and can concurrently imply disruption. With this definition in mind, hybridity is recognizable in the frontier

processes described above: it is characterised simultaneously by cultural mixing (thirling), the development of new practices (innovation), and the process of cultural renegotiation which incorporates tension and fragmentation (fracturing) (Liebmann, 2015, p. 324). Liebmann himself linked the occurrence of hybridity and situations of cultural interaction, stating that cultural hybridity occurs from the coming together of different people, objects, and ideas. Thus, colonial contexts are an ideal area in which to study cultural hybridity (2015, p. 327). When identifying hybridity archaeologically, Liebmann looked for differences from the norm, which he argued was essential as all cultural phenomena are communal in their nature and, therefore, a mixture of influences (Liebmann, 2015, pp. 337–338). In this way, Liebmann's approach highlighted and suggested a solution to a major problem with the 'processes' approach when applied in isolation – the danger of simply identifying cultural diversity instead of a frontier zone. Following Liebmann, in order to explore whether hybridity is the result of cultural mixing, it is essential to firstly consider the wider practices within which cultural hybridity is believed to have occurred, thus establishing a norm against which to compare uncommon practices.

The 'processes' approach provides a number of opportunities for the exploration of a frontier zone in the Avon Valley. Primarily, it defines processes that are both common features of frontier zones and are archaeologically visible. These features, although a number of different terms were used, might be called: thirling, fracturing, and innovation, the identification of which will be discussed below. In addition, as processes, frontier characteristics are not necessarily artefact-centric and can be explored using combinations of material culture, practices, and landscape use patterns. As Liebmann highlighted, this approach, however, should not stand alone and must be considered alongside wider evidence of cultural practices. In other words, the 'processes' approach must be combined with the 'zones' approach. Only once we identify distinct cultural practices that are likely to represent two or more polities can we test cultural hybridity against the range of 'normal' practices.

Where distinct packages of practices defining spatial zones could be identified within the Avon Valley, data from sites on the interfaces of these zones was further investigated to assess whether the frontier zone processes of thirding, innovation, or fracturing could be distinguished. The results of this analysis can be found in Chapter 10. Within this research, the process of thirding is believed to be evidenced archaeologically by the mixing or combining of cultural practices from different zones. This might manifest in the inclusion of uncommon burial practices alongside practices typical of that zone. It was anticipated that, archaeologically, the processes of innovation and fracturing would be difficult to distinguish between. For example, the development of a new burial practice may be the result of a desire to create a new tradition or the result of choosing to distance one's self from an existing one. As archaeologists, it is unlikely that such a distinction would be preserved for us. Thus the two processes, where there is no information from additional sources, must be considered together. Archaeologically these processes are believed to be visible in the development of unique or the development of new ways of using existing practices.

2.3 Datasets: Sources and Preparation

To achieve the aims of this research, two datasets were needed: the first consisting of a selection of early medieval sites and the second cataloguing features of the physical and human landscape in which the sites were set. The primary criteria for the selection of sites was that they needed to be datable to the 5th to mid-7th centuries. Secondly, sites had to be precisely located geographically, at least to a six figure grid reference. Those sites located only to a parish, for example, could not be used to analyse how landscape use varied due to the imprecise recording of their position. Thirdly, sites had to be reported to a sufficient level so as to allow analysis of the archaeological features and finds present. Single finds, therefore, where no contextual information was recorded, were of limited value. Finally, these sites had to be set within their surrounding landscape. This landscape consisted of pre-existing sites and monuments, referred to here as 'extant sites', major routeways, and topographical features such as hills, valleys, and different soil types. As such, to place the early medieval sites within their

context it was necessary to model both the sites themselves – their location, size, and dimensions – and their landscape.

What follows are details of specific terminology used; a description of the data sources; an explanation of how sites and the landscape were modelled; a reassessment of the dating of some of the early medieval sites; and a description of any limitations of the data.

2.3.1 Terminology

The term ‘extant site’ is used rather than ‘monument’, to refer to all sites predating the early medieval period which are likely to have left visible remains in the 5th – 7th landscape. They include two types of sites: monuments and Roman occupation sites not included under the term ‘monument’. Monuments are defined by Historic England as “any building, structure or work, whether above or below the surface of the land” (<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/hpr-definitions/#m>). This definition was refined by Martin Carver who described a monument as anything which requires “very high investment in resources” for its construction and maintenance (2011, p. 191). In her analysis of monumental reuse, Sarah Semple included barrows, henges, stone circles, hill forts, linear ditch systems, Roman villas, and Roman temples (2013, p. 13). In line with these definitions, the monuments included in this analysis incorporate Roman forts and those used by Semple, with the exception of linear ditch systems which are not present in the study area. The former were included as the construction of a fort would require the mobilisation of significant resources, thus, fitting Carver’s definition of a monument (2011, p. 191). So defined, the monuments of the Avon Valley comprise both prehistoric and Roman sites.

In addition, Roman occupation sites, not including villas or forts, were also incorporated into the analysis of landscape use. These settlements cannot be described as ‘monumental’, yet they were included here due to evidence of reuse in the early medieval Avon Valley. At Billesley, for example, a Roman corn drying oven in a roadside settlement was reused in the mid-6th century as the grave of a male individual who was accompanied by weapons (Palmer, 2003). Thus, Roman occupation sites, as

foci of early medieval activity, were considered alongside and in contrast to the use of monuments. Collectively, these monuments and Roman occupation sites are referred to as extant sites (Table 2.3).

Prehistoric Extant Sites	Roman Extant Sites
Barrow	Barrow
Cursus	Fort
Henge	Temple
Hill fort	Villa
Stone Circle / Standing Stone	Occupation Site

Table 2. 3. The type of extant sites included

‘Major routeways’ refer to the network of Roman roads (see Limitations for discussion on why *Roman* roads were used) and main rivers that traverse the Avon Valley. Only the larger rivers were selected for analysis due to their role in the facilitation and control of movement through the landscape and their greater potential for influencing human activity. Restricting analysis to only the River Avon and its major tributaries was also necessary due to the character of the study area. As a river valley, the study area is saturated by hundreds of watercourses, with most parts lying within a few hundred metres of a brook or a stream. The ubiquity of small watercourses across the study area made analysis of regional variation impossible, with any perceived relationship between early medieval sites and watercourses likely to be merely the result of the high frequency of the latter. With analysis restricted to just the main rivers of the Avon Valley, those used here are: Avon, Leam, Sowe, Stour, Itchen, Arrow, Alne, Dene, Swift, Isbourne, Sherbourne, and Swilgate.

Jones concluded that the Avon was navigable to at least Evesham in the medieval period with accounts from the monastery at Pershore detailing goods brought to the site by water from Bristol, Tewkesbury, and Evesham, the latter of which lies upstream from Pershore. Further upstream, however, the navigability of the river is debatable and Jones, citing Richard de Beauchamp’s proposal to modify the river at Warwick to allow larger vessels to pass in the 15th century, errs on the side of caution, listing only the Lower Avon (below Evesham and) as navigable before the 17th century (2000, pp. 68–69).

The topographical situation of early medieval sites incorporated analysis of the aspect, the general landscape setting (valley bottom, slope, ridge/hill top), the position on a slope (base, lower, middle, upper, crest), a description of slope on site (flat, gentle, steep), riverside and ford-side locations, liability of flooding, geology and land use at each site.

Finally, all dates used within this thesis, unless otherwise stated, are given as Anno Domini (A.D.).

2.3.2 Data Acquisition

Various sources were consulted to create the datasets, including both published and unpublished material. Different methodologies were employed to create the two datasets reflecting the individual purposes of the data: the first dataset, the early medieval sites, formed the focus of the research whilst the second, the landscape, contextualised and allowed more detailed analyses of the former. Historic Environment Records (HER) were used in both datasets whilst the Excavation Index (EI) and the Archaeological Investigations Project (AIP) were used in the first and the National Mapping Programme (NMP), PAS, and topographical data were used in the second.

The early medieval dataset focussed on the distribution and characteristics of archaeological sites dating to the 5th to mid-7th centuries across the Avon Valley. As such, the dataset was primarily concerned with data which can improve our understanding at a monument's level rather than at the level of a particular archaeological event.¹⁵ The distinction between these two types of record is best illustrated by an example: an archaeological investigation commissioned during the laying of a pipeline might consist of three excavations and 35 watching briefs, but might uncover just two sites. This research is concerned with those two sites and not the 38 events that located them. Due to this, it was appropriate to use the local HERs as the main data source as these represent the most complete inventories of sites. To make this survey more robust, the data provided by the HERs were cross-referenced with event based databases: the EI and the AIP.

¹⁵ An 'event' refers to any archaeological investigation conducted, e.g. an excavation, watching brief, or fieldwalking survey on a discrete piece of land and consisting of only one type of technique (Evans, 2013, p. 21).

Through the source information detailed in the HER reports it was possible to further investigate the identified sites. This included consultation of the regional archaeological journals – *West Midlands Archaeology*, *Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*, *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, *Northamptonshire Archaeology*, *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, and *Oxoniensia* – along with published site reports, e.g. Wasperton (Carver et al., 2009) and Beckford (Evison and Hill, 1996), and regional and national surveys, e.g. *Gazetteer of Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites* (Meaney, 1964).

This research methodology identified 58 early medieval sites within the Avon Valley (Figure 2.1). These comprise of 48 sites which contain burials and 14 sites with settlement features or non-burial activity. The dataset (presented as a gazetteer in Catalogue 1), therefore, represents the most comprehensive inventory of the early medieval Avon Valley so far assembled. It aims to engage researchers with the archaeology of this often overlooked region; to facilitate further work in the valley; and to contribute to wider discourse on the 5th to 7th centuries in Britain and in Western Europe.

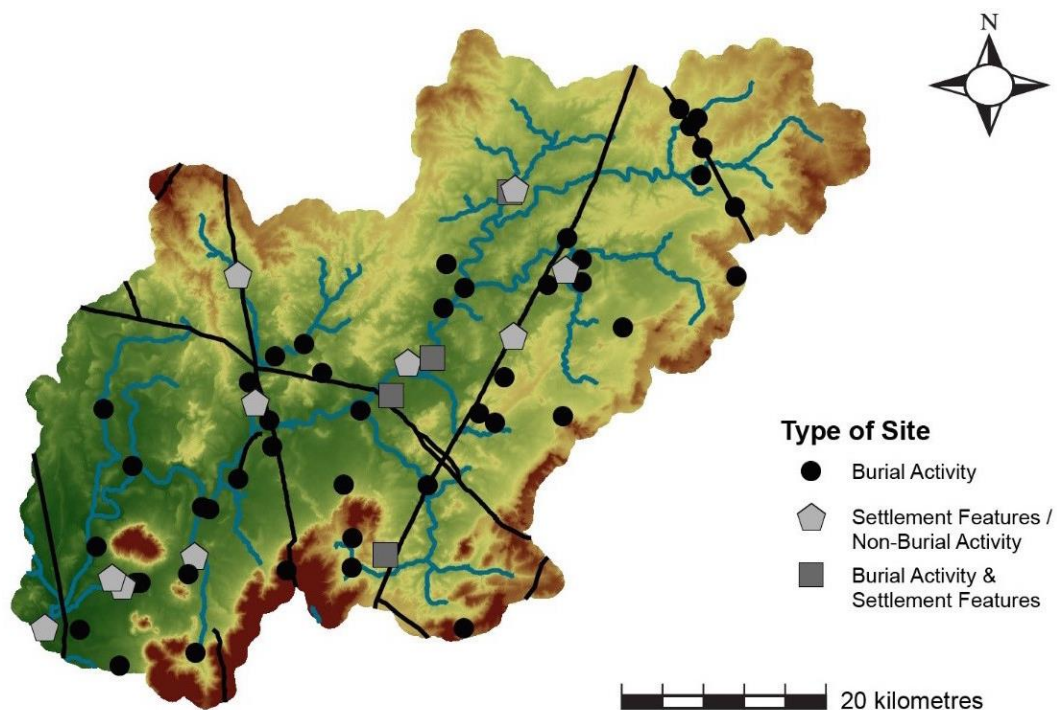


Figure 2. 1. The early medieval sites of the Avon Valley included within this thesis

Moving on to the second dataset, the landscape, the HERs were again used as the main source of data. Unlike the early medieval sites, however, given the time constraints of the project and the nature of the research questions, a less detailed level of information was required. Monument level recording and accessibility are once again reasons why the HERs were used along with the additional advantage of the incorporation of NMP data in some parts of the Avon Valley. The NMP records all archaeological sites and landscapes identified in aerial photographs from the Neolithic to the 20th century. The Avon Valley study area was subject to the projects in South-East Warwickshire and the Cotswolds and in Northamptonshire along with a review of an existing survey of aerial photographs taken as part of the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (Priest and Dickson, 2013). Combined, these projects cover the south east part of the survey area, but leave the majority of the valley, as yet, unsurveyed (Figure 2.2). The results of the NMP, which have been recorded on the HERs in the Avon Valley, were included within the dataset.

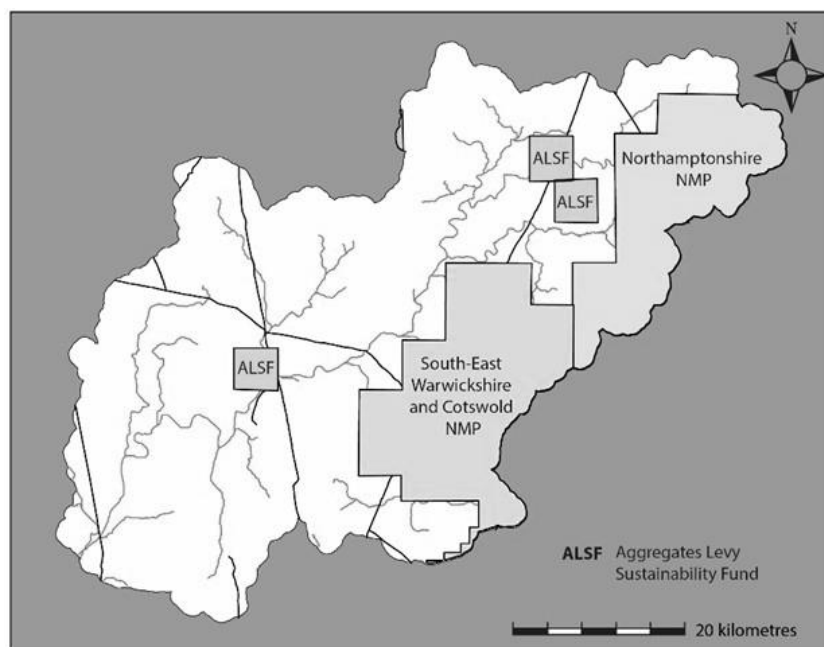


Figure 2. 2. Areas of the Avon Valley where aerial photographs have been reviewed and transcribed as part of the NMPs and ALSF schemes

In addition to HER data, evidence of extant sites recorded in reports of early medieval sites was also included. The quality of this information varies, with some features securely identified and located, as at Wasperton, and others inferred from place-names (Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve) or site outlines suggestive of an existing structure (Beckford A & B). The reliability of each identified extant site was, therefore, considered in any discussion of an apparent relationship between said site and any early medieval sites.

Data from the PAS formed part of the analysis of the landscape surrounding early medieval sites along with providing supporting evidence for the use of routeways. The PAS is opening up exciting opportunities across the UK, not least in the Avon valley (Bolton, 2010). Finds from the late 'Roman' and 'early medieval' periods are plentiful – in the county of Warwickshire alone, there are 507 finds dated to between 350 and 800 A.D.

It is, however, well known that there are weaknesses inherent in the database that must be acknowledged if they are to be mitigated (Naylor, 2013, p. 52; Robbins, 2013). Despite weaknesses, recent work in the Avon valley, by Bolton (2010) and by Naylor and Richards (2010), has advanced our understanding of how the landscape was used in the Iron Age and the Anglo-Saxon period, respectively. The methodology used here, which used data from the PAS with that from the HERs, has been proved to be essential by Brindle's work on Roman rural settlements in Wiltshire (2010). His PAS 'hotspots', observed from a calculated background density of Roman finds, coincided with areas that had undergone intensive metal-detector activity, and may, therefore, be a result of recovery rather than new sites (Brindle, 2010). This cross-analysis helps to prevent the identification of patterns created solely by recovery biases rather than genuine archaeological patterns.

The final aspect of the landscape dataset concerns the topography of the Avon Valley. Information regarding elevation, aspect, slope, and the position of watercourses was derived from the Land-Form

PROFILE Digital Terrain Model (DTM), a 1:10,000 scale mapping dataset.¹⁶ This spatial dataset was utilised within ArcGIS 10.1, a Geographic Information System. The decision was made not to use the position of watercourses shown on modern maps as this has been affected not only by natural processes of erosion, but also by human intervention, such as weirs and canalization. Instead, the watercourses used were mapped within ArcGIS using a tool which extrapolated the path of the watercourse from the shape of the landscape.¹⁷

NATMAP data was also added to the DTM to facilitate analysis of soil distributions. NATMAP Vector is a 1:250,000 scale map showing the different soil associations within England and Wales.¹⁸ Importantly for this research, each soil association includes a description of the crop and land use it can support. Thus, this dataset allowed the mapping of modern agricultural regimes within the Avon Valley.

Once all extant sites, Roman roads, main rivers, and the topographical situation at each early medieval site had been identified, information on each was recorded within two Excel databases. Firstly, the extant sites database records the HER number/name, spatial coordinates, site type, period, and additional notes (Catalogue 2). In total, 273 sites were identified – 199 monuments and 74 Roman occupation sites. The monuments included: 111 barrows, 9 cursus monuments, 6 henge monuments, 20 hill forts, 4 stone circles/standing stones, 5 Roman forts, 3 Roman temples, and 41 Roman villas (see Figure 4.10). Divided into chronological periods, there were 149 prehistoric sites and 50 Roman sites. Second, the topographical database records the aspect, position on slope, and surrounding landscape of each early medieval site in the Avon Valley (Catalogue 4).

2.3.3 Data Preparation and Digitising the Landscape

Analysis within a GIS was deemed the most appropriate way to explore landscape use and to characterise various practices across a wide survey area and between a number of sites. Firstly, spatial

¹⁶ Land-Form PROFILE DTM with scale 1:10,000. © Crown copyright/database right 2014. Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service. This DTM has a cell size of 10 metres and horizontal precision of 0.1 metres.

¹⁷ In places the modelled course of the River Avon did take a different route to that shown on modern maps. This was likely due to modifications to the course of the river and the effect of locks and weirs constructed in the Industrial and Modern periods. However, the coincidence of the modelled river and fords recorded on the HERs, particularly the early medieval Dodda's Ford below Hatton Rock, suggested that the modelled river provided a solid representation of the course of the River Avon for this research.

¹⁸ <http://www.landis.org.uk/data/nmvector.cfm>

analysis within a GIS allows the teasing out of patterns of correlation that traditional mapping alone cannot. Second, the strength of any observed patterns can be tested to ensure that they are not merely a product of chance. Thirdly, a GIS enables the clear presentation of any identified patterns, facilitating discussion and interpretation. To use spatial analysis within a GIS it was necessary to first digitise the location of early medieval sites and landscape features and then to map, where possible, the extent of the early medieval sites. These digitised sites assisted in the characterisation of Avon Valley practices, such as the size of cemeteries and halls. It is the distribution of these characteristics that determine whether any patterns were discernible within the valley. Secondly, once digitised, it was possible to more accurately investigate the relationship between sites and the landscape. Sites are not points on the ground, which is what an uncritical use of the HER and AIP spatial data would create. They are complex and varied, stretching along riverbanks, overlying different soils, and positioned deliberately to create relationships with significant landscape features; these details of a site would be lost if they were reduced to a single, one-dimensional point.

To digitise early medieval sites the location first had to be mapped using the recorded grid reference. To this was added any information regarding the size and shape of the site included in the site report. In the case of the halls at Hatton Rock, and Long Itchington it was also possible to propose height information. This information was essential for the purposes of this research as the size of a site affects its proximity to other landscape features, its visibility, and the soil associations present. A common problem with establishing the extent of a site is methodological – many sites were not excavated in their entirety and extents were either not established or were projections, as at Beckford A (Evison and Hill, 1996). Extents, therefore, were not possible to plot for all sites within the database. Fortunately, they were available for the more intensively excavated/researched and major sites within the region. To those sites where the extent could not be established an arbitrary buffer with a diameter of two metres was added to the single coordinate point. This was to remove some of the bias created by sites which could be digitised to their full extent and which were, therefore, much larger than those that could not. Whilst two metres is an arbitrary number, the sites it was applied to were mostly

individual or small groups of burials and two metres was thought to be an acceptable size for these sites. The exceptions to this were the cemeteries at Rollright, Longbridge Park, and Emscote which would have been larger. However, with no information regarding the dimensions of the cemetery recorded in their reports, they were also assigned the two metre buffer for reasons of consistency.

Modelling the height of a structure was more difficult and less accurate as original height is rarely deducible from archaeological remains. To model the height of the southerly hall at Hatton Rock, the footprint of the building, as seen on aerial photographs, and a wall height of four metres was used. This wall height was derived from the reconstructed length of the Sutton Hoo cauldron's suspension chain (Wilson, 1976, p. 96).¹⁹ To these walls were added roofs with three different pitches creating halls that stood seven, nine, and twelve metres tall. It was thought that, in reality, a building with four metre high walls and an eight metre high roof was unlikely and so it was dismissed from further analysis. To decide which of the two shorter halls should be used in analysis, the buildings were modelled in ArcGIS using an offset DTM to create a three dimensional rendering. It was then possible to test how sensitive the visibility of the hall was using the different heights. This showed that there was very little difference between the visibility of a hall that stood seven metres tall and a hall that stood nine metres tall. As such, for the purpose of this analysis, the nine metre tall hall was used.

Rivers were also modelled within ArcGIS in an attempt to remove changes to their courses created by post-medieval and modern interventions. Elevation data contained within the DTM for the Avon Valley was used to calculate surface run-off.²⁰ Through the calculation of flow direction and flow accumulation, stream channels could be identified. The threshold for the value of the flow accumulation was then increased so that only major rivers were displayed. This produced a network to which stream orders could be added using the values of the flow direction already calculated. These orders divided the rivers into their upper, middle, and lower courses. As rivers flow downstream,

¹⁹ The suspension chain, the cauldron, and the ground clearance over a hearth gave a minimum height for the supporting cross-beam of between 4 – 4.3 meters. This would put the walls at a similar height.

²⁰ An overview of the Hydrology toolbox can be found here:
<http://resources.arcgis.com/en/help/main/10.2/index.html#//009z0000004w000000>

through each course, their size increases; it was, therefore, possible to add a buffer²¹ to each course of the river to reflect the general increase in the width of the river as it flows towards its mouth. This is a simplified methodology and does not take into account any nuances in the profiles of individual rivers, but, short of measuring the width of each river at regular intervals, this is the most accurate representation of the rivers of the Avon Valley that could be achieved within the scope of this research.

A similar methodology was used to more accurately digitise the Roman roads. Using spatial data provided by the HERs, the width of the roads was added using information recorded by Margary (1967). Margary recorded the agger at various points where it was still observable and where it had been established during investigations. For the Avon Valley, he noted the following widths: Fosse Way – 27-40 feet, Watling Street – 24-33 feet, Ryknield Street – 20-30 feet, The Saltway – 21-24 feet (1967, pp. 150–288). The smaller road near Marlcliff was recorded at South Littleton as having a width of 10 feet (Margary, 1967, p. 288). With this information, the main and minor Roman roads in the Avon Valley were assigned a buffer of 30 feet (9.144 metres) and 10 feet (3.048 metres), respectively.

2.3.4 Chronologies

Only those sites belonging to the 5th to mid-7th centuries were included within this research; therefore, it was essential that the date of each potential site was scrutinised and reassessed in light of recent research. In the case of Hatton Rock, for example, the hall complex was originally thought to have been of an 8th or 9th-century date due to a single radiocarbon date obtained from a piece of charcoal slag in the 1970s (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 169). More recently, however, investigations of similar sites suggest that the form and layout of these complexes were typical of the later 6th and 7th centuries.²² This is a limitation of the sources used within this research – they are frequently not updated when new evidence is brought to light which affects their interpretation. Furthermore, a number of sites

²¹ Details on how to use the Buffer tool can be found here:
<http://resources.arcgis.com/en/help/main/10.2/index.html#/Buffer/000800000019000000/>

²² See discussion in Chapter 8.3

were recorded using the broad categories ‘early medieval’ or ‘5th to 7th century’, categories which hid the nuances of this period and which prevented detailed analysis within this research.

For those sites which could only be dated broadly to the early medieval period, their finds assemblages were reanalysed using national brooch typologies developed by Åberg (1926), Leeds (1945, pp. 1–105), Dickinson (1993, pp. 11–44, 1979, pp. 39–80), Hines (1997), Bayliss et al. (2013), and Martin (2015). This created a basic chronology of the main brooch types present in the Avon Valley (Table 2.4) which could be offset against my own corpus of well-stratified brooches from graves within the study area (Table 2.5).

		Date Range (A.D.)											
Object	Sub Type	<400	400-424	425-449	450-474	475-499	500-524	525-549	550-574	575-599	600-624	625-650	>650
Penannular													
Annular													
Disc													
Cast Saucer													
	Geometric												
	Zoomorphic												
	Kentish Influence												
Cruciform (Martin 2015)													
	Phase A												
	Phase B												
	Phase C												
Small-Long													
Great Square-Headed													
Wrist-Clasp													

Table 2. 4. National Brooch Typologies

		Date Range (A.D.)											
Object	Sub Type	<400	400-424	425-449	450-474	475-499	500-524	525-549	550-574	575-599	600-624	625-650	>650
Penannular													
Annular													
Disc													
Cast Saucer													
	Geometric												
	Zoomorphic												
	Kentish Influence												
Cruciform (Martin 2015)													
	Phase A												
	Phase B												
	Phase C												
Small-Long													
Great Square-Headed													
Wrist-Clasp													

Table 2. 5. Avon Valley Brooch Typologies

These Avon Valley brooches have been dated by their association with other grave goods, their position within the cemetery sequence, and their own typological classification. Brooches from Wasperton (Carver et al., 2009), Stretton-on-Fosse (Ford, 2003), Beckford A and B (Evison and Hill, 1996), and Broadway (Cook, 1958) were used. The combined chronologies allowed the re-assessment of both burials which include brooches and single finds.

In general, patterns observed followed the national brooch typologies although there were some delays where new brooch types took time to enter the burial record in this westerly region. The earliest examples of disc and saucer brooches, for example, were not represented and only one example of Åberg's Group 1.1 cruciform brooches has been found – in the parish of Churchover (1926, p. 35).²³ Disc and saucer brooches, where present, may indicate a date as early as the late 5th century, whereas cruciform and small-long brooch types seem to date most frequently to post 500 A.D. The results of this reanalysis are summarised in Table 2.6.

²³ Martin categorised this brooch in his subgroup 1.2.1, leaving the subgroup 1.1 absent from the valley (2015, p. 244).

Site	Previous date	Object(s) used for dating	Suggested new date	Reference
Kinwarton	Early Medieval	Disc Brooch	Late 5 th – Early 6 th	Stoke & Brownsword 1984
Aston Cantlow	Early Medieval	Pair Saucer Brooches Ring/Dot cruciform motif Saucer Brooch	> Late 5 th Mid-6 th	Meaney 1964:257
Cotesbach	Early Medieval	Small-Long and Cruciform fragments	> c.500 A.D.	Finds Report, Leics 2410 & 2878
Princethorpe	Early Medieval	Cruciform Brooch	> c. 500 A.D.	Meaney 1964:262
Churchover	Early Medieval	Small-Long and Cruciform Brooches (with Annular Brooches and Wrist Clasps, found in 6 th – 7 th century contexts in the Avon valley)	6 th – Early 7 th	Meaney 1964:259
Longbridge	5 th – 6 th Century	Florid Cruciform Brooch (with Saucer Brooches which include central garnets dated to the late 6 th)	c.550 – 600 A.D	Meaney 1964:261; Vierck 1970; Aberg Group V 1926:56; Dickinson 1993:17; Martin Sub-group 4.7.1 2015:293
Upton Snodsbury	6 th – 7 th Century	Florid Cruciform Brooch	c.500 – 600 A.D	Ponting 1866:342; Aberg Group V 1926:56; Meaney 1964:281; Martin Sub-group 4.1.2 2015:287
Offchurch	5 th – 6 th Century	Great Square – Headed Brooch	Mid-6 th	Meaney 1964:262; Hines 1997:63-7
Emscote	5 th – 7 th Century	Great Square – Headed Brooch (accompanied by Disc and Saucer Brooches which may suggest late 5 th century activity)	Early 6 th	Chatwin 1926; Meaney 1964:260; Hines 1997:58-63
Ragley	7 th Century	Great Square – Headed Brooch	Late 6 th	Meaney 1964:262 Hines 1997:94-100

Table 2. 6. Reassessed dates of Avon Valley sites.

It is acknowledged that using brooches alone to date sites is over simplistic. It was not possible, however, to use weapon typologies as details of shield boss and spear head types were rarely recorded amongst the older and smaller sites within the Avon valley. New dates derived from these brooches were used only to narrow date spans for these sites and were not taken as definitive. The Avon valley sites would benefit from close dating analysis – using both radiocarbon dating and by creating regional typologies for the major artefact types – it is proposed that this could form the basis of future work.

2.3.5 Limitations

No claim is made that this is a definitive dataset of all 5th to mid-7th-century sites in the Avon Valley; however, it is hoped that the methodology employed has identified all those sites where a report has been written (published or unpublished) and all sites which fit the criteria used here. Within this dataset of sites the main limitation is a strong bias towards burial sites. Only 14 sites with evidence for non-burial activity have been identified and interpretations regarding the living population must acknowledge this.

Further limitations exist within the second dataset, the landscape. Firstly, the HER online summary reports on Heritage Gateway were used rather than requested full reports from the local HERs. It is acknowledged that this will incorporate a weakness into this dataset, but it is thought that the data is sufficient to afford analysis of the landscape in which the early medieval sites were set. Secondly, despite the problems associated with using a single coordinate to represent a whole site, the HER coordinate was used to map the location of extant sites. It was additionally thought to be misleading to add an arbitrary buffer, as was done with early medieval sites where the extent was unknown, given the diversity of site types represented. For example, the extent of a Bronze Age round barrow would be significantly different to that of a Roman small town. Whilst using the HER coordinate introduces a weakness to any subsequent analysis, it was hoped that, given that the digitisation of the precise limits of extant sites would reduce the distance between them and the early medieval sites of the Avon Valley, any patterns observed would still exist if more accurate representations of extant sites were used. Thirdly, NMP data is biased towards those parts of the valley which were surveyed by the project – the southeast. A further problem associated with NMP data was the problem of dating. Sites identified purely through this programme can only be assigned tentative dates through the morphology of visible features. This is both imprecise and possibly misleading as some site types can belong to more than one period – round barrows, for example. In light of this, information was drawn from the early medieval site reports, where possible, to assess the dates offered by the NMP and the HERs.

In addition, the NATMAP data used to characterise soil and agricultural regimes uses modern data and its use within the early medieval period has limited applications. For example, more sophisticated modern farming techniques allow for winter crops in areas that would have been unsuitable in the early medieval period (Mark Robinson pers. comm. Jul 2015). Additionally, NATMAP plots land use which can, hypothetically, be supported by the soils present, it makes no account for human preference. It is, therefore, the optimum land use and not necessarily representative of actual agricultural regimes in the early medieval period. However, without environmental sampling at each of the Avon Valley sites, it was thought that this dataset provides the only opportunity to analyse agricultural regimes at and around sites.

Finally, for a number of reasons, it was necessary to use Roman roads in analysis rather than possible early medieval roads. Firstly, the identification and mapping of early medieval roads is a challenging endeavour (Hooke, 1976, p. 212; Pelteret, 1985, p. 162; Taylor, 1979, p. 85). Despite the difficulties, using historical sources, Hooke (1981, 1976) and Pelteret (1985) attempted to map roads through references in charter boundary clauses, place-names which included references to roads, and early estate boundaries which followed noticeably linear routes. In the Avon Valley, Hooke identified a number of possible early medieval routes; these were the *stræts*, the *wegs*, and the *pæths* described in charters (1976). These possible routes, however, necessarily depend on 8th to 11th-century charters for their identification and were deemed, for the purposes of this study, to be of limited use. Secondly, the routes identified by Hooke were frequently found to follow the main Roman roads that span the Avon Valley – the Fosse Way, Watling Street, Ryknield Street,²⁴ and the saltways of Droitwich (1976). It is, therefore, possible to suggest that the Roman roads in existence in the 4th century and visible, if not in use, in the 8th to 11th century, were used as routeways in the intervening 5th to 7th centuries.

Using historical accounts, Higham for Northumbria (1993, p. 122) and Bishop across the rest of England (2014, pp. 71–74) have observed a close relationship between major Roman roads and the sites of

²⁴ Ryknield Street was formerly known as Buckle Street, itself derived from 'Buggilde stret', recorded in an early 8th-century charter (Smith, 1965, p. 16). See also Plates 10 & 11 for the Fosse Way and Ryknield Street.

early medieval battles. Bishop argued that this pattern reflects continued use of the Roman road network at not just the local, but the inter-regional scale (2014, pp. 71–74). Archaeological evidence for the use of these roads into the 5th century has recently been suggested by the find of a coin during excavations at the Romano-British small town of Dorchester upon Thames. The coin of the House of Theodosius, dating to AD 388 – 402, was found beneath the last in a sequence of road surfaces and implies that the major road that passes through the town from Silchester to Alchester was maintained at least into the 5th century.²⁵ This appears to be supported by evidence from the PAS which records concentrations of early medieval metal finds along the courses of these larger, regional roads in the Avon Valley (Figure 2.3).²⁶

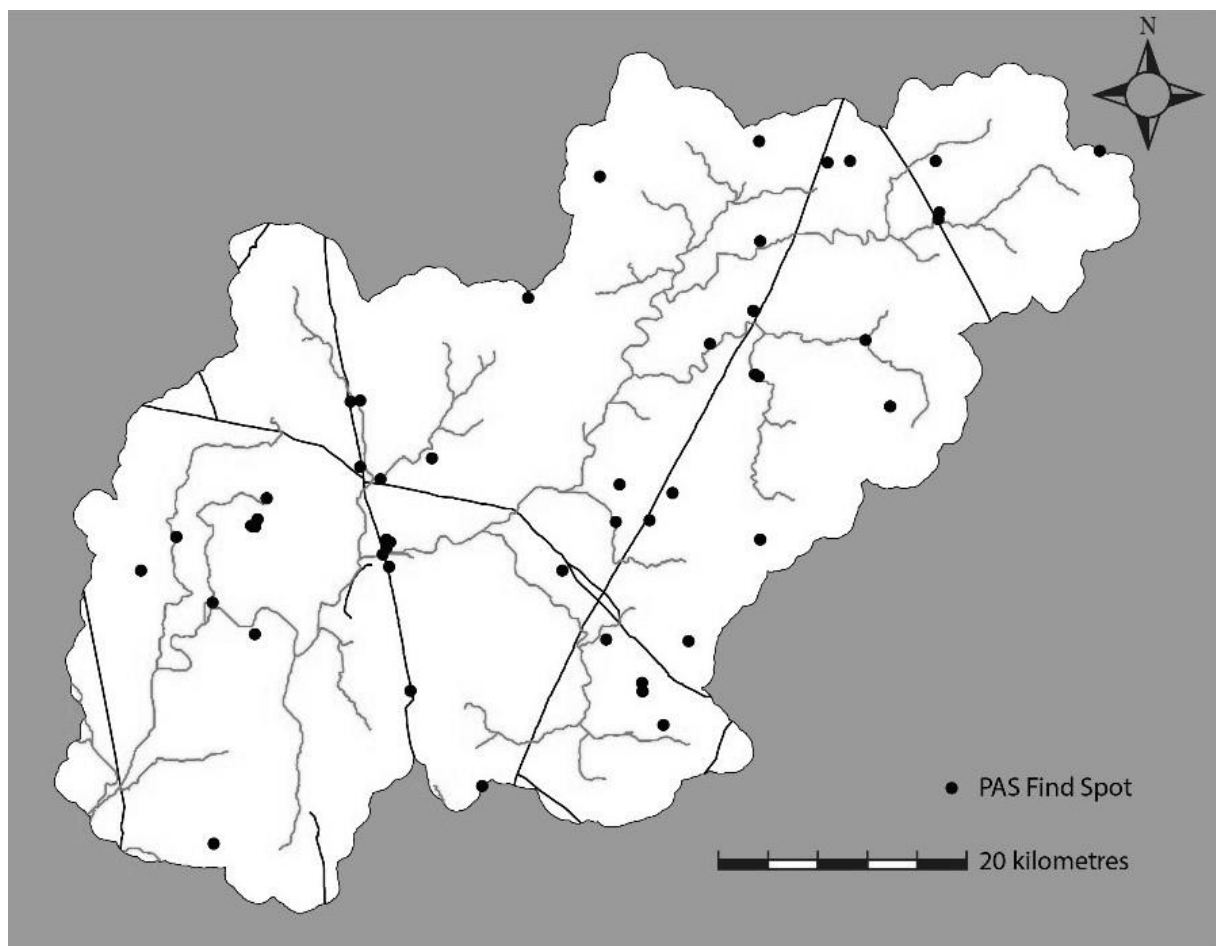


Figure 2. 3. The distribution of early medieval finds recorded on the PAS (May 2015)

²⁵ This coin is yet to be published but was excavated during the Discovering Dorchester Project in July 2014 <http://discoveringdorchester.blogspot.co.uk/> (Paul Booth pers. comm. Jul 2014).

²⁶ For further information on the limitations of PAS data, see (Robbins, 2013)

Thus, given the uncertain projection of identified early medieval roads back into the 5th to 7th centuries, Roman roads which were likely to have remained visible in the landscape were used instead. This does mean that smaller, local roads were overlooked by this research. It is thought, however, that for the purpose of assessing landscape use, the larger, regional roads represented a greater opportunity for the communities of the 5th to 7th century to consolidate their influence and express their identity. This might have been achieved through the control of movement along these roads or the expression of authority and identity at these highly visible parts of the landscape (Reynolds and Langlands, 2011, p. 413).

Chapter 3. Characterising the Avon Valley in the 5th to mid-7th Centuries: The Burial Evidence.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the distribution of various burial practices across the Avon Valley and examines whether any distinct zones can be distinguished. The burial practices selected for analysis here were: the ratio of inhumation to cremation burials; the orientation of inhumation burials; the presence of charcoal-lined inhumation burials; the relative frequency of weapon burials; and the distribution of dress accessory types. The rationale behind the selection of these practices is described in Chapter 2.2.1.

In total, there were 48 sites in the Avon Valley which have evidence of funerary activity dating to between the 5th and mid-7th centuries (Figure 3.1). Due to the antiquity of some investigations, however, and the incomplete and variable quality of others, only nine cemeteries and four other burial sites – three single burials and one site with two isolated burials – have been sufficiently well excavated and recorded to be used in a detailed analysis of burial practices. The reports on these 13 sites contained in-depth information on a wide range of aspects of burial and, key to the study of the rite as a whole, did not confine reporting to grave goods alone (Lucy, 2002, pp. 77–86). As the majority of the burials from these 13 sites were found in the nine cemeteries, these formed the focus of this analysis. These cemeteries comprise approximately 755 inhumations and 228 cremations (Table 3.1).

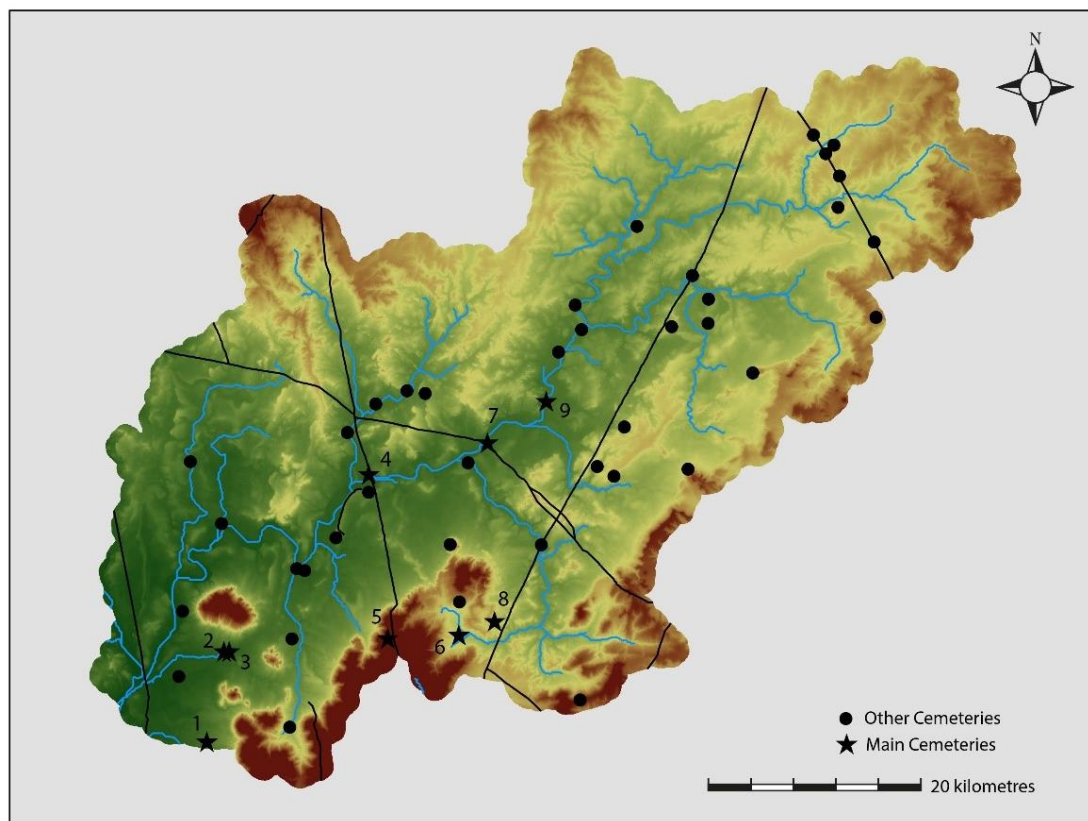


Figure 3. 1 Early Medieval Sites with burial activity in the Avon Valley. Main Cemeteries: 1) Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve; 2) Beckford A; 3) Beckford B; 4) Bidford-on-Avon; 5) Broadway; 6) Blockley; 7) Alveston Manor; 8) Stretton-on-Fosse; 9) Wasperton.

Site ID	Site Name	Date of Burial Activity	Number of Burials		% of Total Burials	
			Inhums.	Crems.	Inhums.	Crems.
1	Alveston Manor	L5th - 7th	81	38	68.1	31.9
7	Beckford A	5th - 6th	28	0	100.0	0.0
8	Beckford B	5th - 6th	108	4	96.4	3.6
10	Bidford-on-Avon	L5th - 7th	264	158	62.6	37.4
13	Blockley	6th	5	1	83.3	16.7
15	Broadway	L5th - 6th	8	0	100.0	0.0
38	Lower Farm	M6th - 7th	26	0	100.0	0.0
53	Stretton-on-Fosse	L5th - 6th	52	0	100.0	0.0
56	Wasperton	5th - 7th	183	27	87.1	12.9
Total			755	228	76.8	23.2

Table 3. 1 Number of burials at the well-recorded cemeteries of the Avon Valley (arranged alphabetically).

From east to west these cemeteries are: Wasperton, Stretton-on-Fosse, Alveston Manor, Blockley, Broadway, Bidford-on-Avon, Beckford A, Beckford B, and Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve. Summaries of these cemeteries and the four other burial sites – Billesley, Aston Cantlow, Walton Cardiff, and Bank Farm, Dumbleton – can be found in Catalogue 1. It was recognised that 13 sites were too few for meaningful analysis, therefore, the remaining 35 burial sites were brought into discussion wherever there was sufficient detail included within their reports.

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Ratio of Inhumation to Cremation Burials

The 5th to mid-7th-century Avon Valley is characterised by a preponderance of inhumation burials and a lack of cremation burials, with approximately 980 inhumations compared to 278 cremations currently identified across 48 sites.²⁷ Before considering whether the distribution of inhumation and cremation burials can indicate the presence of distinct zones, it was necessary to examine whether differences in distribution were, instead, the result of date. Most of the burials in the Avon Valley date to the 6th century, a time when cremation burial was in decline (Scull, 2013, pp. 524–526) and it remains possible that the limited distribution of these burials is a reflection of their date. However, across England, cremation burial does continue throughout the 6th century, albeit with reduced frequency (Scull, 2013, pp. 524–526; Williams, 2002, pp. 60–62). It seems, therefore, that the date of

²⁷ If Milcote Hall has been correctly dated to the early medieval period we can add a further 400+ inhumations to this figure. However, the date of this site was solely derived from the possible presence of weapons with two of the skeletons (Wellstood, 1923). One of these 'weapons' is a metal bar, interpreted as a large blade, and the other a piece of wood, argued to be a club. The quality of preservation was not sufficient to reassess these interpretations and I do not believe there is enough evidence to suggest that these artefacts are weapons, let alone that they are early medieval in date.

the burials in the Avon Valley should not necessarily preclude the inclusion of cremations and that their scarcity in this valley is likely to be the result of another factor.

On current evidence, a progression from cremation to inhumation burial is not clearly demonstrable within the Avon Valley. The 23 cremations found at Wasperton were inserted into an existing cemetery in the late 5th century and form a spatially distinct group which may even have been fenced off from the surrounding inhumations (Carver et al., 2009, p. 135). At Alveston Manor, the 38 cremations identified also do not belong to the earliest phases of the cemetery, instead they date to the mid-late 6th century, coinciding with the height of the inhumation practice on the site (Ford, unpub.). In contrast, a different picture is presented at Bidford-on-Avon and one which allies more closely with the theory that there was progression from cremation to inhumation burials: Wellstood has argued that the fragmentary nature of the cremation urns is evidence that they pre-date the main phase of inhumation at this cemetery (cited in Humphries et al., 1922, p. 97). However, putting aside the methodological difficulties associated with this deduction, this would date the Bidford-on-Avon cremations to before the late 5th century and make them the earliest Anglo-Saxon style burials in the valley. Given the westerly position of Bidford-on-Avon, this seems unlikely. On balance, it appears more probable that the 120 cremations at Bidford-on-Avon, as at Wasperton and Alveston Manor, belong to a later period and were contemporary with the inhumation burials; their poor state of preservation is perhaps the result of disturbance by later 6th or 7th-century inhumations rather than late 5th-century burials. To summarise, what these admittedly few sites imply is that cremation and inhumation were contemporary practices in the Avon Valley during the 5th and 6th centuries. Their distribution within the valley was, therefore, unlikely to be the result of either a site's date or, perhaps, the evolving beliefs of one community and may in fact indicate a community's membership, or perceived membership, to the burial traditions and the socio-political groups where the cremation rite was predominant – eastern England (Scull, 2013, p. 525).

With this in mind, the spatial distribution of cremation and inhumation burials in the Avon Valley was analysed. The geography of the study area, which is broadly oriented east to west, dictated the ordering of the data. Amongst the nine well-recorded cemeteries it was possible to discern a pattern in their distribution: west of Bidford-on-Avon there were only 4 cremations recorded whilst at Bidford-on-Avon and to its east there were 224 (Figure 3.2).



Figure 3. 2 Percentage of inhumation and cremation burials at the well-recorded cemeteries

This pattern continued to be apparent when information from the less well understood sites was considered. Cremations were reported at the possible mixed cemeteries of Welton (Hodgson, 1956; Meaney, 1964, p. 196), Churchover (Meaney, 1964, p. 259) and Marton (Bloxam, 1875, p. 37), the mixed cemetery at Baginton (Ford, 1996, p. 70; Meaney, 1964, p. 257), and the possible double cremation burial in a barrow at Long Itchington (Hooke, 1999, p. 112; Meaney, 1964, p. 217). All of these sites lie to the east of Wasperton. From this limited evidence it was possible to define an area where cremations occurred and where they did not (Figure 3.3). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the area in

which they did occur was in the eastern and central part of the valley, the part closest to the core of the cremation rite in the east of England.

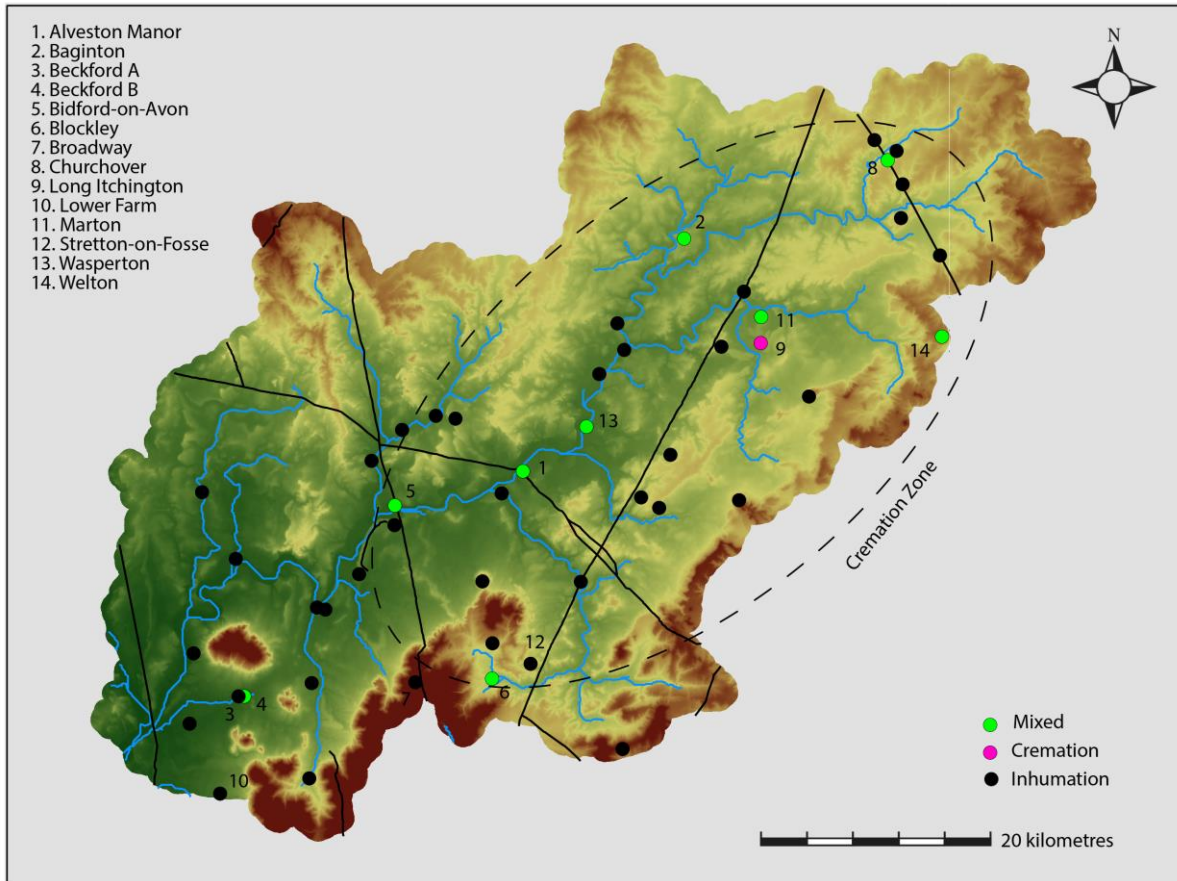


Figure 3. 3. Distribution of Inhumation and Cremation burials across the Avon Valley

A further observation can be made with regards to the distribution of cremations: two of the main cemeteries which fall within the area identified as the cremation zone did not contain any cremations – Stretton-on-Fosse and Broadway. These were not the only sites without cremations in this zone, but they were the only well-recorded cemeteries. The lack of cremations at these two sites is mentioned here as subsequent evidence, presented below, also highlights the presence of different practices in this southern part of the valley. Two scenarios are suggested to explain this absence of cremations. First, Stretton-on-Fosse and Broadway lie on the Cotswold Escarpment which represents the southern limit of the Avon Valley; this area is topographically different to the rest of the valley and is marked by the route of the Fosse Way. The different practices evident at these sites may be suggestive of a

different and distinct group in this region which, given its position, shall be called the 'Fosse Way Environs'. Second, it is possible that internal hierarchical differences between sites within the Avon Valley influenced the practices present at sites. If the inclusion of cremations was reserved for cemeteries with special status, perhaps at the 'central places'²⁸ described by Sayer (2014, pp. 95–99), then the lack of cremations at Stretton and Broadway may just reflect their lower status. If a hierarchy did exist which affected the presence of cremations then a difference can still be discerned across the valley: to the east of Wasperton sites of various sizes included cremations; in the centre of the valley, between Wasperton and Bidford-on-Avon, only the major cemeteries included cremations; and to the west of Bidford-on-Avon, cremations were almost entirely absent. These scenarios will be returned to using further evidence below.

3.2.2 Orientation of Inhumation Burials

As with the distribution of cremation burials, chronological developments provided an unsatisfactory explanation for the variation between the predominant orientation of inhumations at the sites across the Avon Valley. At the contemporary sites of Alveston Manor and Stretton-on-Fosse, Ford's chronology of the burial sequence²⁹ showed that there was no progression from one orientation to the other over time; instead, inhumations favouring the north-south axis and those favouring the west-east axis were contemporary (Ford, 2003, 1996, unpub.). Another explanation, therefore, must be sought. The late 4th-century burials at Stretton-on-Fosse were oriented west-east (Ford, 2003, p. 101) whilst the contemporary burials at Wasperton were predominantly north-south (Carver et al., 2009, p. 135). At both of these sites, therefore, the dominant orientations in the 5th and 6th century followed

²⁸ Sayer's 'central places' are the single or multiple large 6th-century cemeteries found spread out within each regional territory and surrounded by smaller cemeteries. These larger cemeteries appear to have served as a meeting place and commemorative space for more than one community (2014, p. 95).

²⁹ Ford's burial sequence is derived from artefact typologies, burial progression from a founder grave, and regression analysis (Ford, 2003, 1996, unpub.) See discussion of this dating method in the analysis of the weapon burial rite in Chapter 10.4.1.2

the precedent set by the late Roman burials. Consequently, it is possible that it was local tradition which dictated the orientation of burials in the early medieval Avon Valley.

Whilst showing variability, Figure 3.4 suggests that there was some correlation between the most common orientation of inhumation at a site and position within the valley. The cemeteries of Wasperton, Alveston Manor, and Bidford-on-Avon form a core of mixed orientations within an area of west-east/east-west burials. In contrast, those cemeteries in the extreme south-west of the valley – the Beckfords and Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve – were dominated by inhumations with north-south/south-north orientations. The quality of recording to the east of Wasperton is not as detailed as elsewhere and only two reports contain information on orientation – Mount Pleasant and Blacklow Hill. These two sites were not enough to draw conclusions about common practices in this part of the valley, but it is worth noting that at both sites burials were oriented west-east.

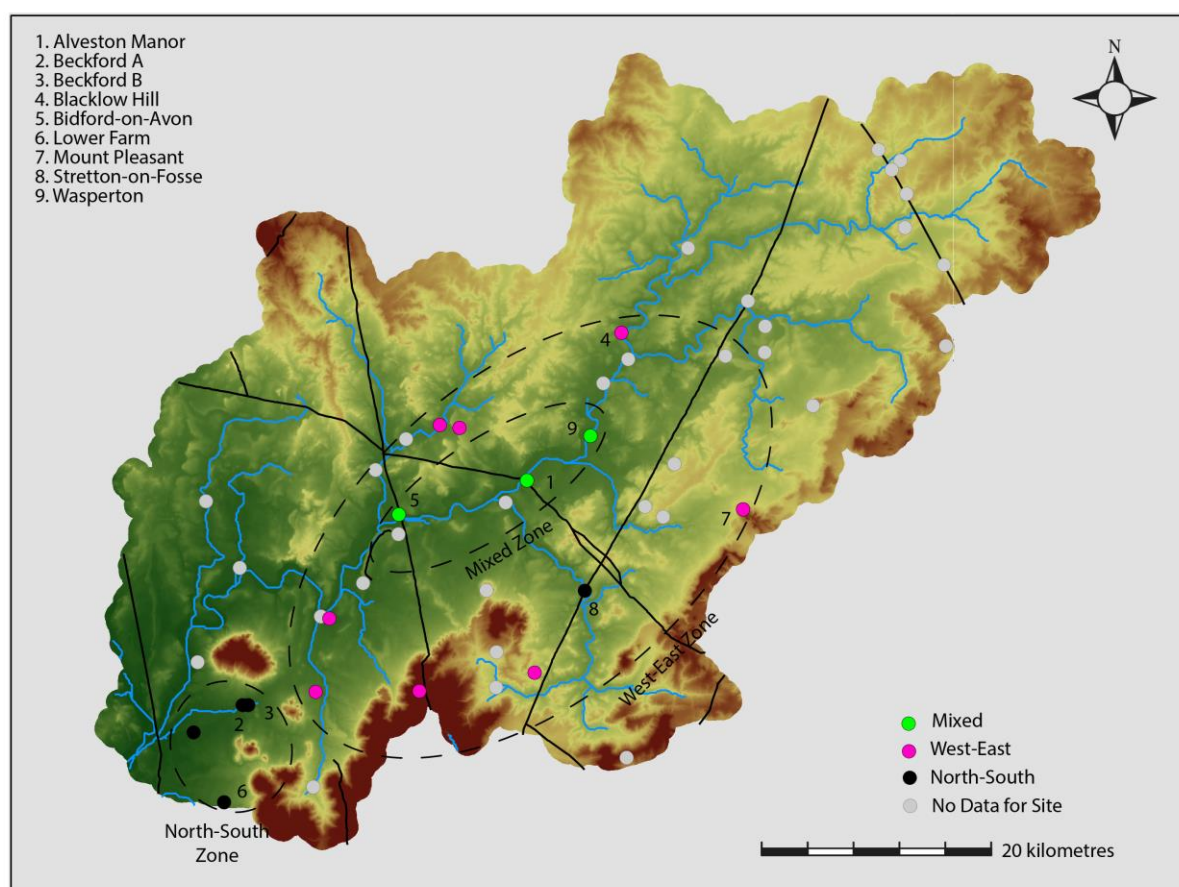


Figure 3. 4 Distribution of the dominant orientation of inhumations at each early medieval burial site

3.2.3 Charcoal-Lined Inhumation Burials

Charcoal-lined inhumations were found in five of the nine well-recorded Avon Valley cemeteries, representing 40 inhumations (Table 3.2). In addition, further examples may have been identified at two of the cemeteries recorded in the 19th century – Kineton and Lighthorne (Figure 3.5).

Site ID	Site Name	Date of Burial Activity	% of Burials which contain Charcoal
1	Alveston Manor	Late 5th - 7th	7.4*
10	Bidford-on-Avon	Late 5th - 7th	10.8*
38	Lower Farm	Mid 6th - 7th	3.8
53	Stretton-on-Fosse	Late 5th - 6th	21.2
56	Wasperton	5th - 7th	0.5

Table 3. 2 The well-recorded cemeteries which contain charcoal-lined inhumations. * Percentage is underestimated due to lack of detail in the Wellstood reports (Humphries et al .1922 & 1923). This number, therefore, represents an absolute minimum.

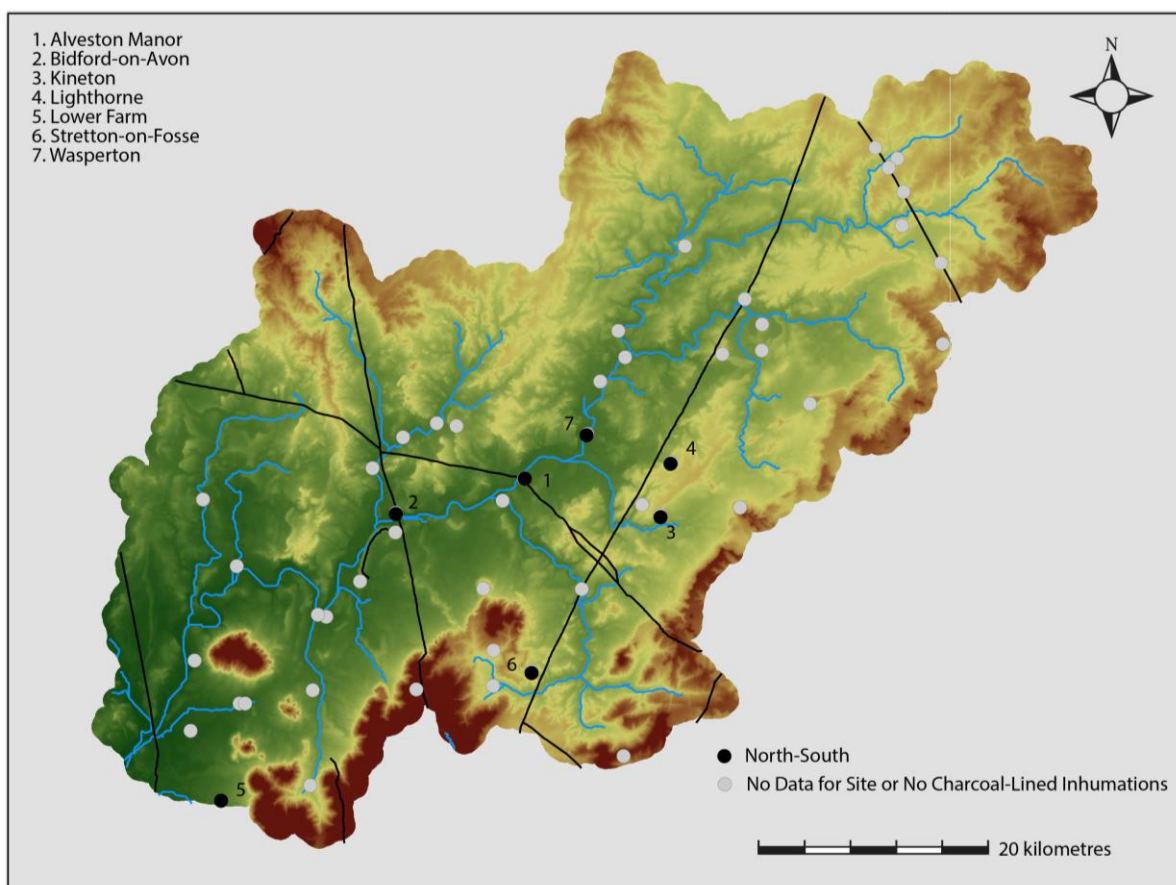


Figure 3. 5. Distribution of Charcoal-lined inhumation burials across the Avon Valley

At Stretton-on-Fosse, Ford argued that the practice may have developed from a Romano-British tradition and drew parallels with the Romano-British barrow burial at Knobbs Crook, Dorset (2003, p. 103). However, within the Avon Valley, and as his own report conceded (Ford, 2003, p. 103), this is not a burial practice known from late Roman burials. The two Romano-British cemeteries, sites 2 and 10, from Stretton-on-Fosse contain no evidence of charcoal deliberately included within the inhumations (Ford, 2003, pp. 4–20). Similarly, at Wasperton none of the late Roman inhumations contain charcoal (Carver et al., 2009). Although the burials in the late Roman cemetery at Tripontium were not well-recorded, a few burials were discussed in detail and no report of charcoal was made (Cameron and Lucas, 1966, pp. 138–144). At Tiddington and Alcester the late Roman burials are also poorly understood and it is possible that the practice of including charcoal in burials did exist, but again no mention of it was made in the reports (Booth, 1994, p. 8; Hughes, 1962; Palmer, 1981, pp. 17–22). Ford's argument that the burial practice has its root in late Roman tradition is, therefore, unsubstantiated by the evidence in the Avon Valley.

Ford also suggested that this practice may have had a Merovingian root; however, Meaney's distribution of these burials, which she terms 'half cremations' shows the flaw in this theory (1964, pp. 16–17). Instead of a focus of these burials in the south-east, as we might expect if Ford was correct, Meaney's catalogue showed that these burials concentrated in the mid-Anglian, northern West Saxon, and Hwiccan areas (Meaney, 1964, pp. 16–17 and see Figure 10.2 in Chapter 10.4.1.1). The distribution of these burials in England and their significance will be considered in Chapter 10.4.1.1 as part of the examination of evidence of frontier zone processes in the Avon Valley.

Returning to the use of this practice within the Avon Valley itself, the half cremation rite was used in different ways (Table 3.3). At Stretton-on-Fosse 21.2% (11 of 52) of the inhumations contained significant deposits of charcoal (although Ford stated that all inhumations contained small amounts of charcoal (2003, p. 103)). In three of these the deposit was over the head, a further four had

concentrations over the pelvis, and three others had deposits over both the skull and pelvis. In one grave, 88, the burial was lined with a substantial charcoal deposit. No unfurnished graves contained charcoal spreads and grave 88 was described as the wealthiest burial in the cemetery. Additionally, only adults were afforded this rite. There was no correlation between sex and position of charcoal and, chronologically, the burials spanned the mid-6th century, c.530-580AD, the period of greatest activity within the cemetery. This suggests that the charcoal rite might be restricted to a social group within the community, one that may have wielded a certain amount of status, included both men and women, excluded non-adults, and continued to distinguish itself throughout the life of the cemetery.

It is probable that the number of charcoal lined burials has been underestimated at Bidford-on-Avon and Alveston Manor. Both sites were excavated by Wellstood in the 1920s (Ford, unpub.; Humphries et al., 1923, 1922) and whilst his report on the latter site showed no charcoal lined burials, later investigations recorded several (Jones, 2010). Despite this, the burials with charcoal at Alveston and Bidford-on-Avon showed different members of the community marked out by this rite and, consequently, do suggest that Stretton-on-Fosse's charcoal rite was unusual within the valley. The date range at Alveston was much more restricted, focussing on the last quarter of the 6th century; included an adolescent and an unfurnished grave; and more varied locations for the position of the spread (Ford, unpub.). The Bidford-on-Avon burials cannot be dated with the same precision but they also showed differences: charcoal was found in many more locations within the grave, a number of unfurnished graves were included, and a child had been buried with charcoal (Humphries et al., 1923, 1922). The individuals included in this practice at these two sites were, therefore, quite different to those at Stretton-on-Fosse. Furthermore, the cemeteries at Wasperton and Lower Farm each contained only one burial with significant deposits of charcoal and Beckford A, Beckford B, and Broadway did not contain any. The burial rite, therefore, does not appear to be the same across the valley. Stretton-on-Fosse's restricted and frequent charcoal rite appears only to be reflected at two other sites – Kineton and Lighthorne.

Burial ID	Date	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex / Gender	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
38.16	M6 - 7th?		S-N	Charcoal below skull - possibly the remains of wooden headrest	Child			
10.26	L5 - 7th?		SW-NE	Charcoal over pelvis				Cu frag
10.46	L5 - 7th?		S-N	Charcoal in area of pelvis		F		Bds
10.59	L5 - 7th?		SSW-NNE	Covered by charcoal layer		M	1Sp	1Kn
10.67	L5 - 7th?		S-N	Charcoal near head				
10.71	L5 - 7th?		W-E	Charcoal throughout				
10.74	L5 - 7th?		S-N	Charcoal between legs				1Kn
10.75	L5 - 7th?		S-N	Charcoal and wood frags		F		2Cr, Bds
10.79	L5 - 7th?		S-N	Charcoal between legs. Arrow and pottery above burial.		F		1Kn, 1Bu, 2Sa, 24Bds, bronze bound bucket
10.83A	L5 - 7th?		SW-NE	Charcoal in area				
10.86	L5 - 7th?		SSW-NNE	Charcoal to right and above feet				
10.89	L5 - 7th?		SW-NE	Charcoal				1Kn
10.91	L5 - 7th?		W-E	Charcoal in area				
10.92	L5 - 7th?		SSW-NNE	Lots of Charcoal		M	1Sp	
10.106	L5 - 7th?		W-E	Charcoal layer above skeleton				
10.108	L5 - 7th?		S-N	Charcoal layer above body				1Kn
10.129	L5 - 7th?		WSW-ENE	Large amount charcoal in area				
10.130	L5 - 7th?		SW-NE	Frgs charcoal, pott, ox bone in area	Child			1Kn
10.135	L5 - 7th?		W-E	Charcoal at left elbow and leg		F		1Kn, 2Ann, 1Bd
10.138	L5 - 7th?		W-E	Charcoal in area		F		1 Pin, 1 Ring, 1 Pot
10.153	L5 - 7th?		SSE-NNW	Charcoal between legs		F		1Kn, Tweezers and Toilet set
10.154	L5 - 7th?		SW-NE	Charcoal under feet		F		1Kn, 1Bu, 2 SqHd, 21Bds
10.179	L5 - 7th?		WSW-ENE	Charcoal evident and two stones over lower half				
1.F1(ii)	577	Right Side	NNE-SSW	Charcoal over skull and pelvis. Wood headrest	Adult			1Bd, 1pot sherd, 1cherrystone
1.F13	576	Left Side, flexed	SSW-NNE	Charcoal flecks throughout	Adult	F		1Ann, 1 Pin, tweezers, 15Bds, 1 Pot
1.F53	580	Supine	SSW-NNE	Charcoal flecks throughout		M	2Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, belt fittings
1.F57(i)	589	Supine	SW-NE	Charcoal traces	Adult			1Kn, 1Bu
1.F57(ii)	589	Right Side, flexed	SW-NE	Charcoal layer	Adoles.			
53.37	530	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal over skull	25-30+	F		2Di, 1 Scoop, 1 Pin, 1 Ring, 1Kn, Cleats, 1 Rivet, 21Bds, Wd obj
53.51	560	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal over skull	28	M	1Sh	1Kn
53.61	550	Supine	W-E	Charcoal over pelvis	22	F		1Bu
53.68	550	Supine	SW-NE	Charcoal over pelvis	28	M		1Kn
53.87	565	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal over skull	35	M	1Sp	1Kn
53.88	580	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal Lining, Decapitated.	25+	M	1Sp, 1Sh	
53.93	550	Supine	WNW-ESE	Charcoal over both skull and pelvis	25	F		2Sa, 1 Pin, 1Bu, 1Kn, 1Bd
53.94	550	Supine	WNW-ESE	Charcoal over skull and pelvis	40+	M	1Sp	
53.95	555	Supine	SW-NE	Charcoal over skull and pelvis	20-25	M	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
53.97	565	Supine	W-E	Charcoal over pelvis	40-45	M		1Bu
53.102	570	On Left	WNW-ESE	Charcoal over pelvis, Head cradle	30-50	F?		2Sa, 19Bds, 1scoop, 2 Pins, 1 Rock Crystal, 1Kn
56.71	6th	Supine	S-N	Charcoal	Adult	M	1Sp	1Bu, 1Kn

Table 3. 3 Charcoal lined inhumations in the Avon Valley

The report from 1861 of quarrying at Pittan Hill, Kineton described ten skeletons with weapons lying on a black substance. Similarly, works on the brow of a hill near Lighthorne before 1846 located two skeletons embedded in “some curious dark substance” and associated with brooches and beads (Meaney, 1964, p. 217). Although less clearly understood there are similarities with Stretton-on-Fosse. Firstly, there is evidence of high social status represented within these burials: Kineton included a sword and the burials at Lighthorne were found close to a hanging bowl with escutcheons. Secondly, these sites are on high ground and not in a valley. Finally, all three sites are found in the vicinity of the Fosse Way. Although these sites might suggest a localized pattern, any interpretation must be tentative. Stretton-on-Fosse’s charcoal burial rite was certainly unusual amongst the other main cemeteries in the valley and similarities might exist between this site and Kineton and Lighthorne, but they remain just three sites. However, it is interesting that these sites also cluster along the Fosse Way (see Figure 3.5 above).

3.2.4 Frequency of Weapon Burial

Analysis of weapon burial frequency showed considerable variability amongst the well-recorded cemeteries of the Avon Valley (Table 3.4). The practice ranged from 7.7% of all burials at Lower Farm, Bishop’s Cleeve to 40% of burials at Blockley. This variability also remained if only the male population was considered. This evidence would suggest that the criteria for burial with weapons varied across the Avon Valley. To explore this, the spatial distribution of weapon frequency was analysed (Figure 3.6). Although Figure 3.6 shows significant difference between sites, it also demonstrated that there was no apparent geographic patterning to the data. Once, the landscape of the valley was taken into account, however, a slight pattern could be discerned (Figure 3.7). The Cotswold Escarpment runs in a north-easterly direction, defining the southern limit of the valley and, when this landscape feature was considered, there was a small amount of evidence for an emphasis on weapon burials in its vicinity. Stretton-on-Fosse and Blockley both lie in this area and were the sites with the highest proportion of weapon burials amongst the maximum male population (66.7% and 80% respectively). Yet again, sites

within the Fosse Way Environs, which encompasses this escarpment, showed characteristics not seen elsewhere in the valley.

Site ID	Site Name	Weapon Burial as % of Population	Date of Burial Activity	% of Male Population with Weapons		
				Max	Min	Min if 50% of unsexed burials are Male
1	Alveston Manor	30.9	L5th - 7th	104.2	100.0	45.5
7	Beckford A	35.7	5th - 6th	76.9	62.5	58.8
8	Beckford B	25.9	5th - 6th	103.7	73.7	58.9
10	Bidford-on-Avon	15.7	L5th - 7th	109.7	91.9	33.5
13	Blockley	40.0	6th	100.0	100.0	80.0
15	Broadway	12.5	L5th - 6th	100.0	100.0	33.3
38	Lower Farm	7.7	M6th - 7th	100.0	100.0	25.0
53	Stretton-on-Fosse	32.7	L5th - 6th	89.5	85.0	66.7
56	Wasperton	18.3	5th - 7th	91.7	91.7	41.0

Table 3. 4 Percentage of weapon burials at the well-recorded cemeteries of the Avon Valley.

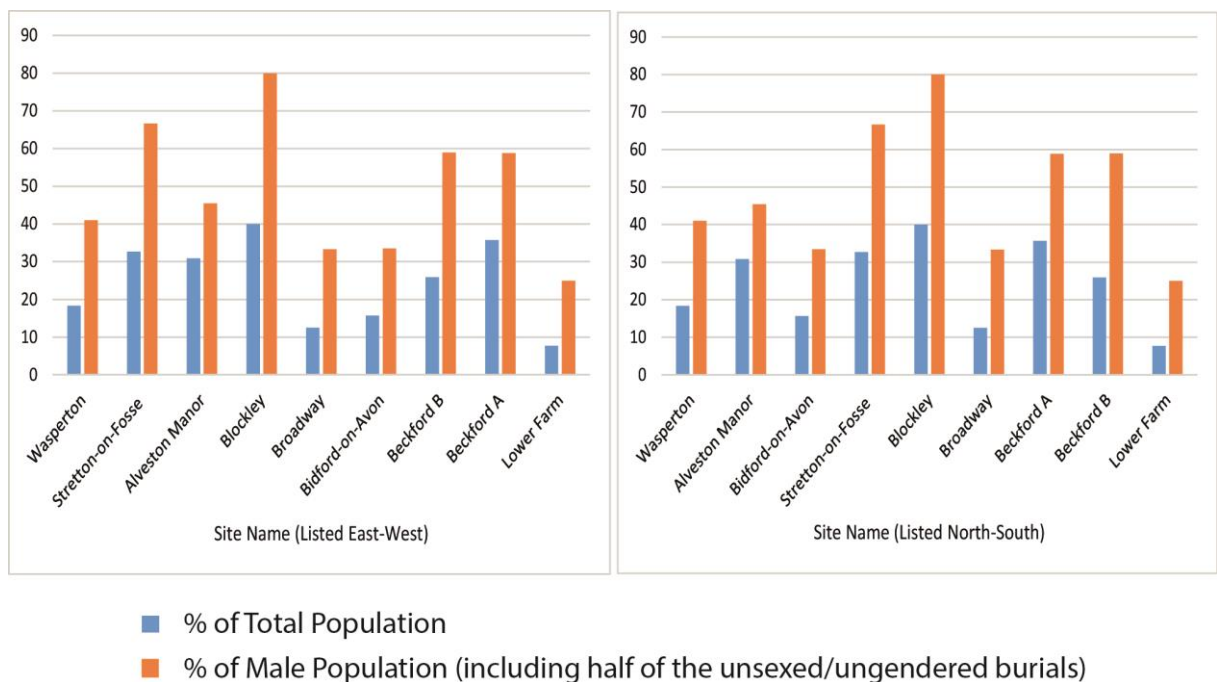


Figure 3. 6. Percentage of weapon burials at the well-recorded cemeteries of the Avon Valley, presented in order from east to west and from north to south

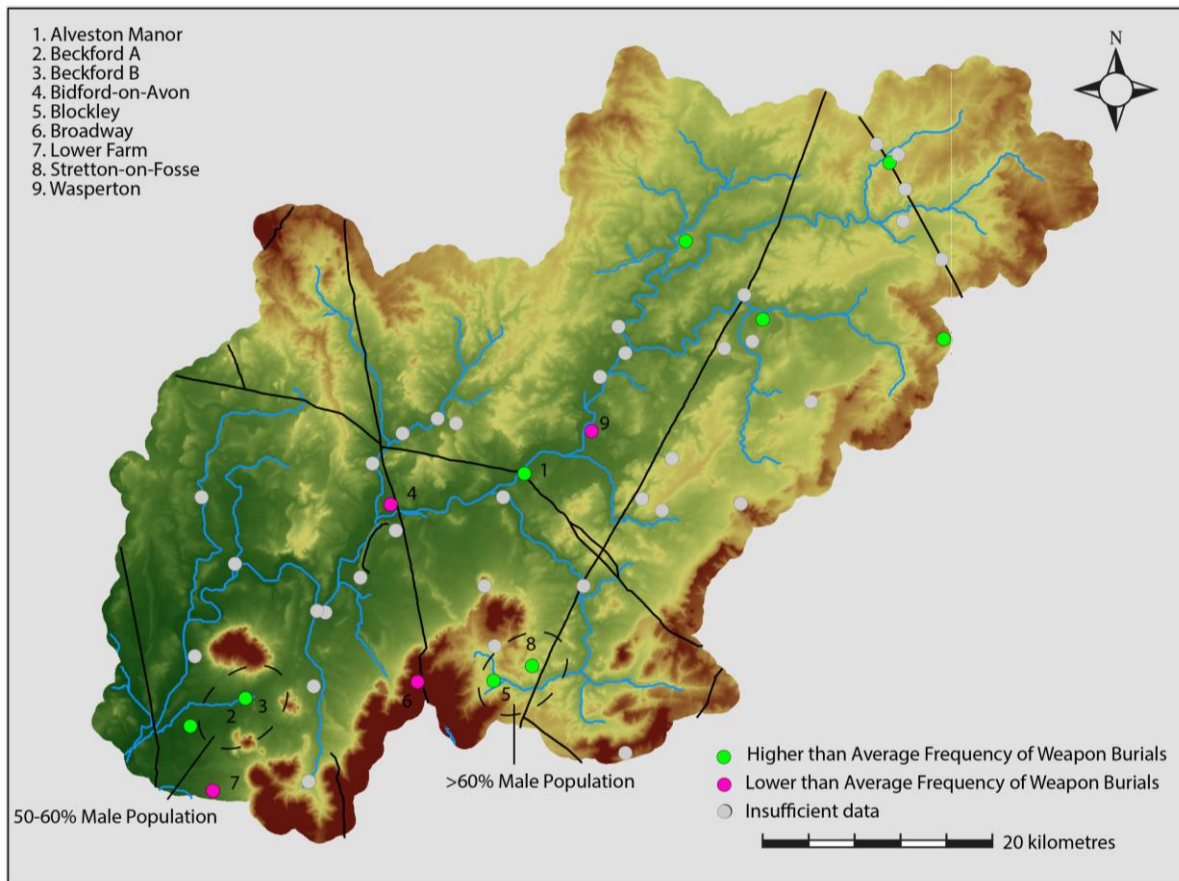


Figure 3. 7. Distribution of weapon burials across the Avon Valley

The frequency of different types of weapon set was analysed to further investigate spatial patterns within the Avon Valley but uniformity in the assemblages prevented the observation of trends (Figure 3.8). Across the valley, the most common combinations were single spears and single spears with a single shield. Beckford A was the only exception, with single shields and double spear and shield combinations being more common than elsewhere. This evidence from the Avon Valley was in line with data from England as a whole (Härke, 1989). Härke's research using 54 inhumation and mixed cemeteries across England showed that c.44% of weapon set combinations contained single spears and c.26% contained single spears and a shield. All other combinations were less than 10% each (Härke, 1989, p. 52). The Avon Valley fits this pattern, perhaps with a slightly greater emphasis on shields than elsewhere. The lack of swords might be indicative of a regional trend but, given the sword combinations in Anglian and Saxon (2.9% and 10% respectively) territories calculated by Härke (1989,

p. 57), this seems to be a product of the Avon Valley's position between these regions rather than a distinct practice in the valley.

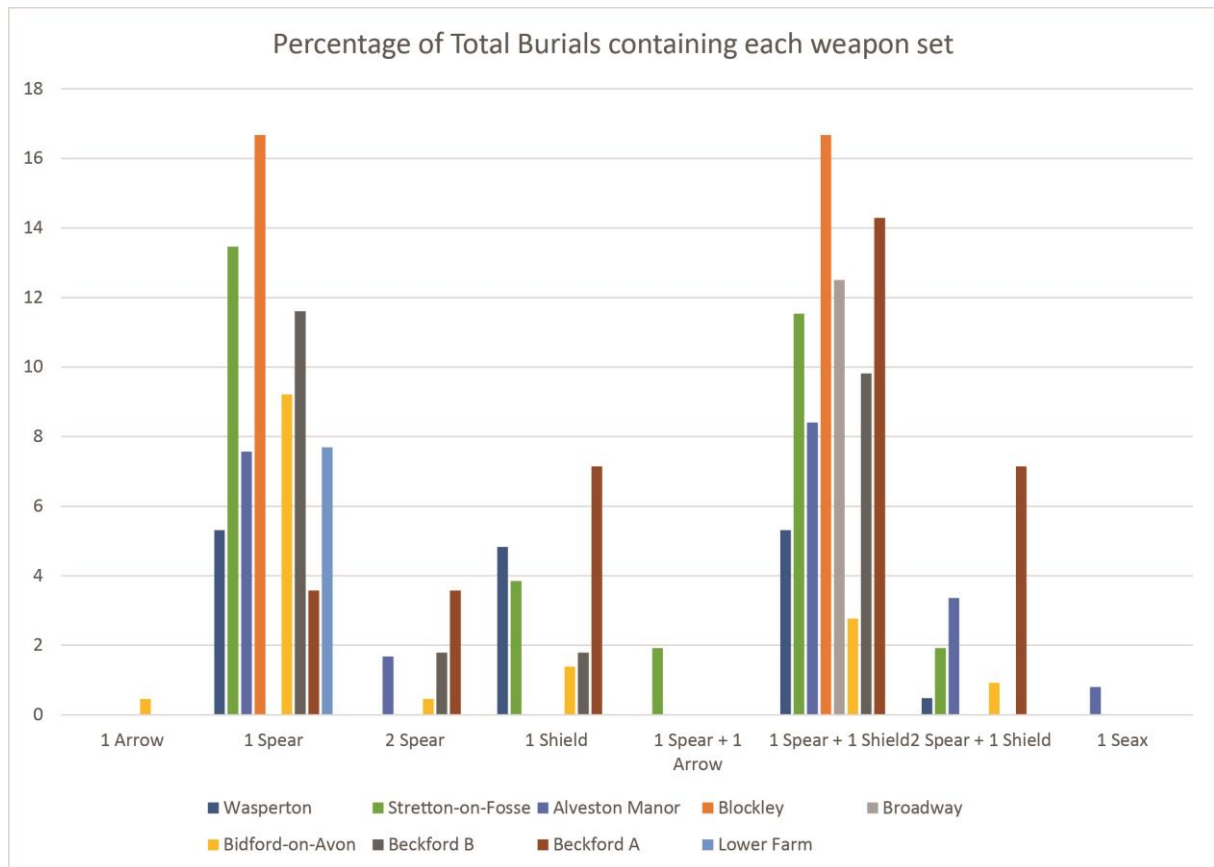


Figure 3. 8. Weapon sets as a percentage of total weapon burials at each of the well-recorded cemeteries

3.2.5 Distribution of Dress Accessory Types

In total, reports from 29 sites included information which could be used in the analysis of dress accessories. However, before exploring the distribution of dress accessory types it was again necessary to assess the impact of chronology. Although any conclusions based on chronological analysis must be tentative as sites were listed based on when they were founded, not taking into account longevity of use, Figure 3.9 does show broad patterns which suggest a shift in sources of material over time. In general, the earliest influences were from the Upper Thames Valley, shifting in the late 5th or early 6th century towards the east, towards the south again in the latter part of that century, and, finally,

swinging further east and to Kent in the 7th century. This same pattern was described by Ford in his consideration of the sequence of burial and of grave assemblages at Stretton-on-Fosse and Alveston Manor (2003, p. 109, 1996, p. 95). Thus, despite Figure 3.9 being rather crude, its correspondence with the evidence from one of the best studied sites in the valley might suggest a certain degree of reality reflected in the patterns shown. From this evidence we might infer that the Avon Valley was situated on the edge of two major production zones – the ‘Anglian’ east and the ‘Saxon’ Upper Thames. Over time the influences of these areas ebbed and flowed, perhaps demonstrating changing political allegiance or investment in the valley.

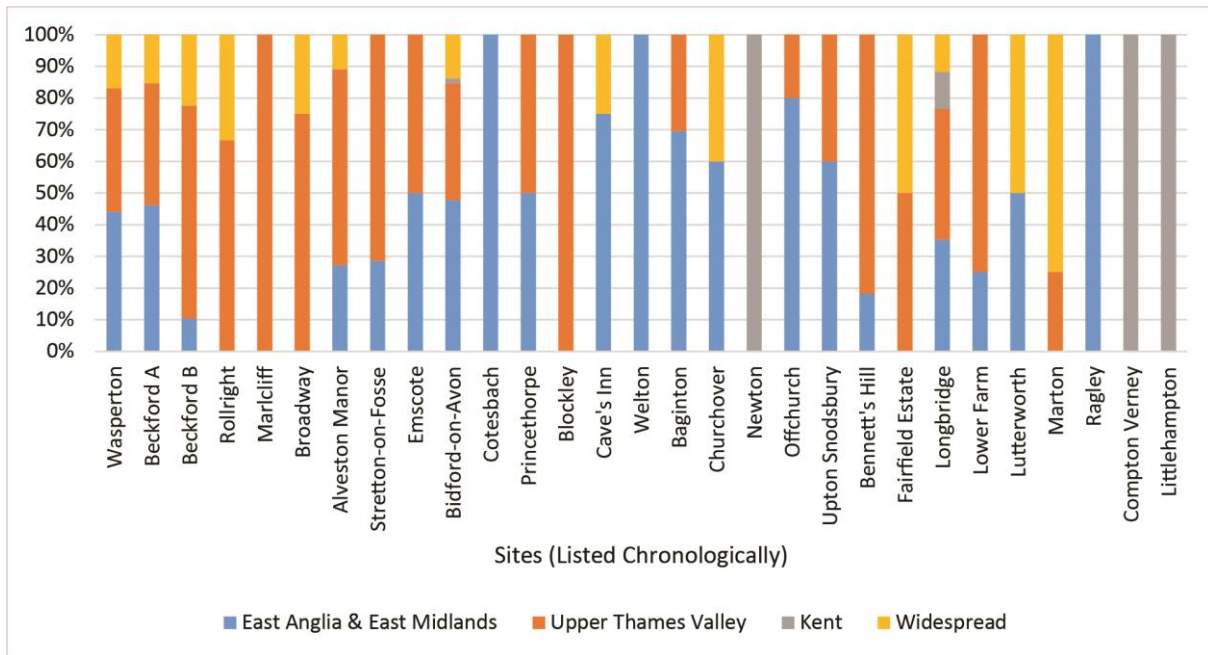


Figure 3. 9. Percentage of dress accessories from each focus of distribution, listed by date of site foundation

With an understanding of how the distribution of material changed over time it was possible to assess any spatial patterning. If the sites with only 7th-century material were temporarily disregarded – Marton, Compton Verney, Ragley, Littlehampton, and possibly Upton Snodsbury – a pattern might be observed (Figure 3.10). The burial assemblages east of Wasperton were dominated by dress

accessories from East Anglia and the East Midlands whereas those burials to the west contained a higher proportion of items from the Upper Thames Valley. The distribution of dress accessory types can, therefore, be arranged into an East Midland/East Anglian zone, a Upper Thames zone, and perhaps even a third ‘mixed zone’, where material from the first two zones appeared in roughly equal parts in the burial assemblages (Figure 3.11).

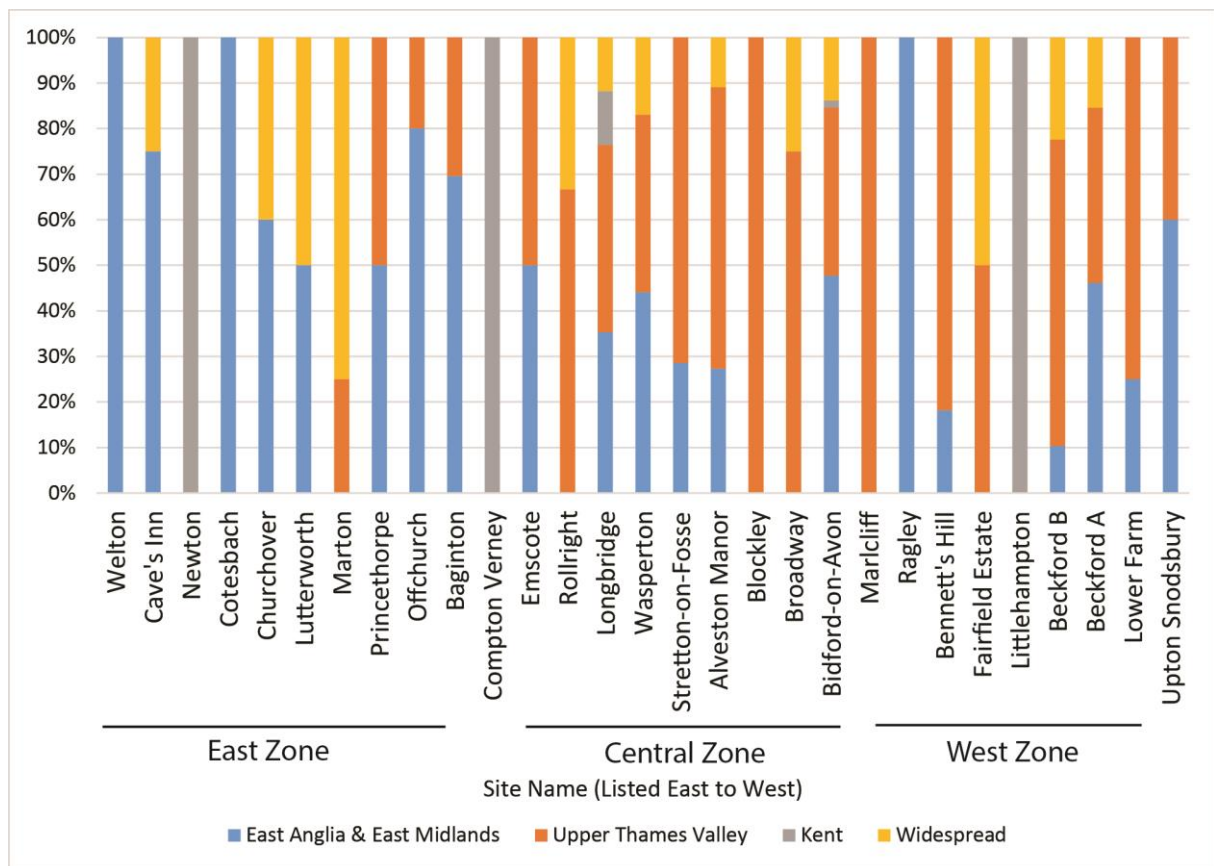


Figure 3. 10 . Percentage of dress accessories from each focus of distribution, listed by position of site

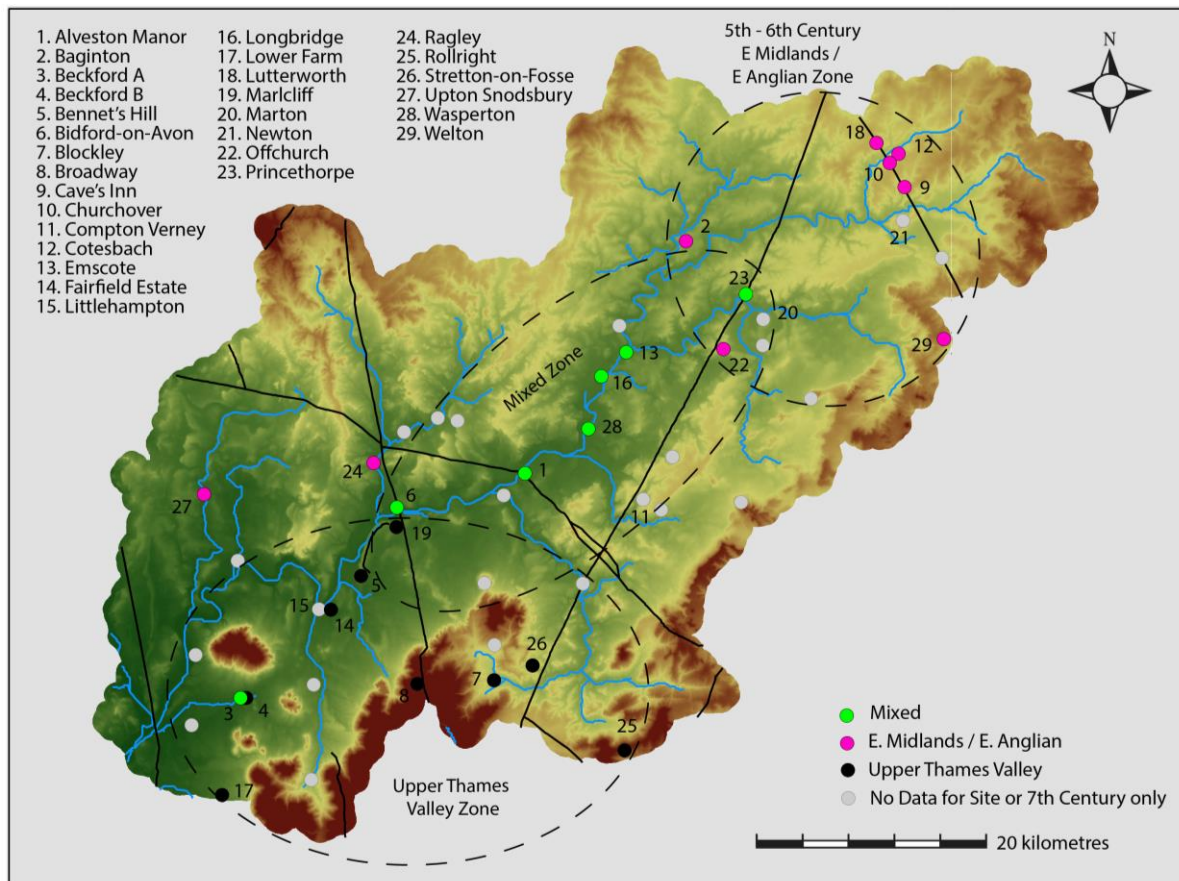


Figure 3. 11. Distribution of dominant dress accessory type across the Avon Valley

3.3 Summary

This chapter has examined five aspects of the burial ritual in the Avon Valley, the distributions of which were not ubiquitous. From the data analysed, distinct zones have begun to emerge: a cremation zone and a non-cremation zone; a predominantly north-south oriented inhumation zone and an opposing east-west zone; a concentration of charcoal-lined inhumations; an area with a higher frequency of weapon burials; and zones where different ratios of dress accessories from the Upper Thames Valley or the east of England exist. These zones overlap to create distinct packages of practices characterised by different combinations of burial customs and material culture. In the west of the valley, cremations are very rare; inhumations in cemeteries are predominantly oriented on the north-south axis; and dress accessories from the Upper Thames Valley dominate. In the east of the valley, cremations are found in cemeteries of all sizes and may also appear on their own; west-east oriented inhumations are most common; and dress accessories from the east of England are more frequent than those from the Upper Thames. Between these two areas, in the central Avon Valley, cremations occur but only in the

large cemeteries; there is a more even number of west-east and north-south oriented inhumations; and, similarly, the ratio of dress accessories from the Upper Thames and east of England is more equal. In this part of the valley there appears to have been a coalescence of different peoples and ideas. A further 'package' may possibly be detected in the south of the valley, in the area of the Fosse Way, for here there is a concentration of charcoal-lined burials and a higher frequency of weapon burials than seen elsewhere in the valley. The emerging pattern from the burial data, therefore, is that distinct zones are identifiable within the Avon Valley where people treated their dead in different ways. Whether these zones or any others can be detected using evidence of landscape organisation is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 4. Characterising the Avon Valley in the 5th to mid-7th Centuries: the Landscape Evidence.

4.1 Introduction

Having considered the distribution of burial practices across the Avon Valley, the focus of analysis now turns to patterns of landscape use. Specifically, this chapter seeks to characterise the organisation of the landscape during the 5th to mid-7th centuries and to assess whether any distinct patterns can be observed. Firstly, the topographical setting of each early medieval site is analysed and mapped. Secondly, evidence for direct relationships between extant sites and early medieval sites is considered. Thirdly, how the proximity between extant sites and early medieval sites changes is examined across the valley. This is followed by analysis of the relationship between early medieval sites and major routeways – Roman roads and main rivers. The chapter concludes with consideration of any patterns observed between the 5th and 6th centuries and the 7th century.

4.2 Site Topography

Analysis of the topographical setting of each early medieval site in the Avon Valley was severely restricted by the type of study area, a river valley; its position in lowland Britain; and the use of modern datasets. The first two problems meant that landscape diversity was scant: for example, no upland areas are present, there are no steep slopes, and no areas of moorland or scrub. Instead the study area is characterised by mostly low lying terrain with gentle slopes and wide river plains. Naturally, there are areas of higher ground, but these are few and, with rare exceptions, these are found on the Avon's watershed. Whilst across the valley the height above Ordnance Datum (OD) ranges between seven metres and 330 metres, the average is just 95.8 metres, emphasising the lack of high ground and the general gentle nature of the landscape (Figure 4.1). In addition, the focus on one river system created a study area oriented towards a single feature, the River Avon. Consequently, the landscape tends to follow a strict pattern: higher ground in the east, near the headwaters of the Avon; southerly facing

slopes to the north of the Avon and northerly facing slopes to the south; flat or gently sloping terrain in the centre of the study area and slopes towards the edge; and pastoral land throughout (Figures 4.2 – 4.4). The result of this was that the landscape of the study area displayed a level of uniformity which prevents archaeologists from observing distinct patterns of landscape use. Furthermore, in such an unchanging landscape it would have been difficult for early medieval groups to use site topography to distinguish their practices, their choices, and potentially their identities from their neighbours.

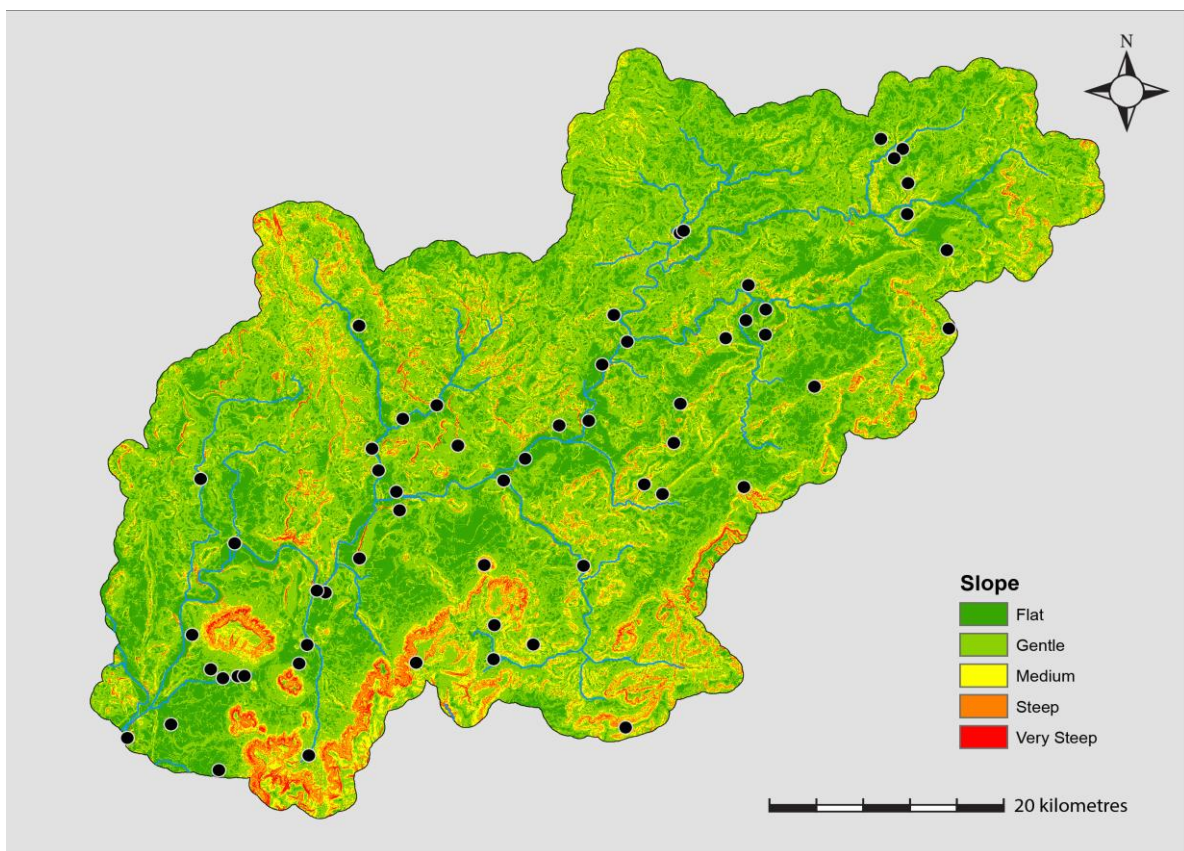


Figure 4. 1. The Topography of the Avon Valley: elevation

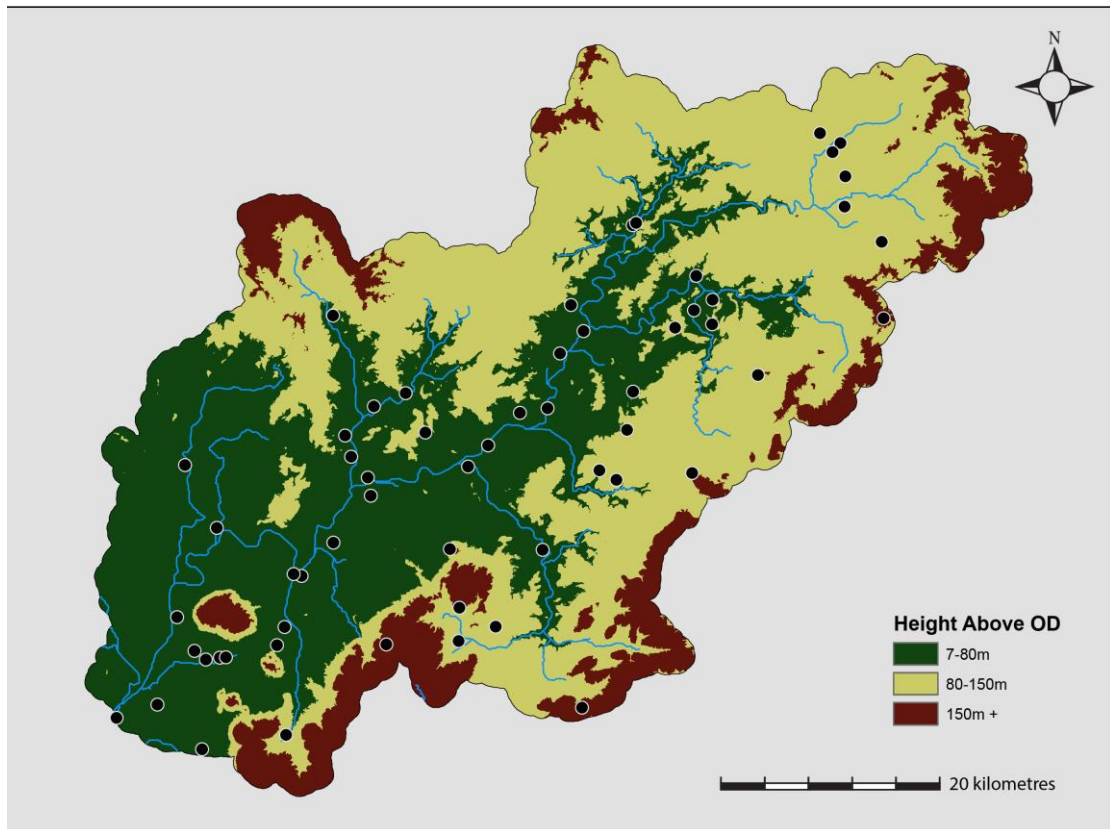


Figure 4. 2. The Topography of the Avon Valley: slope

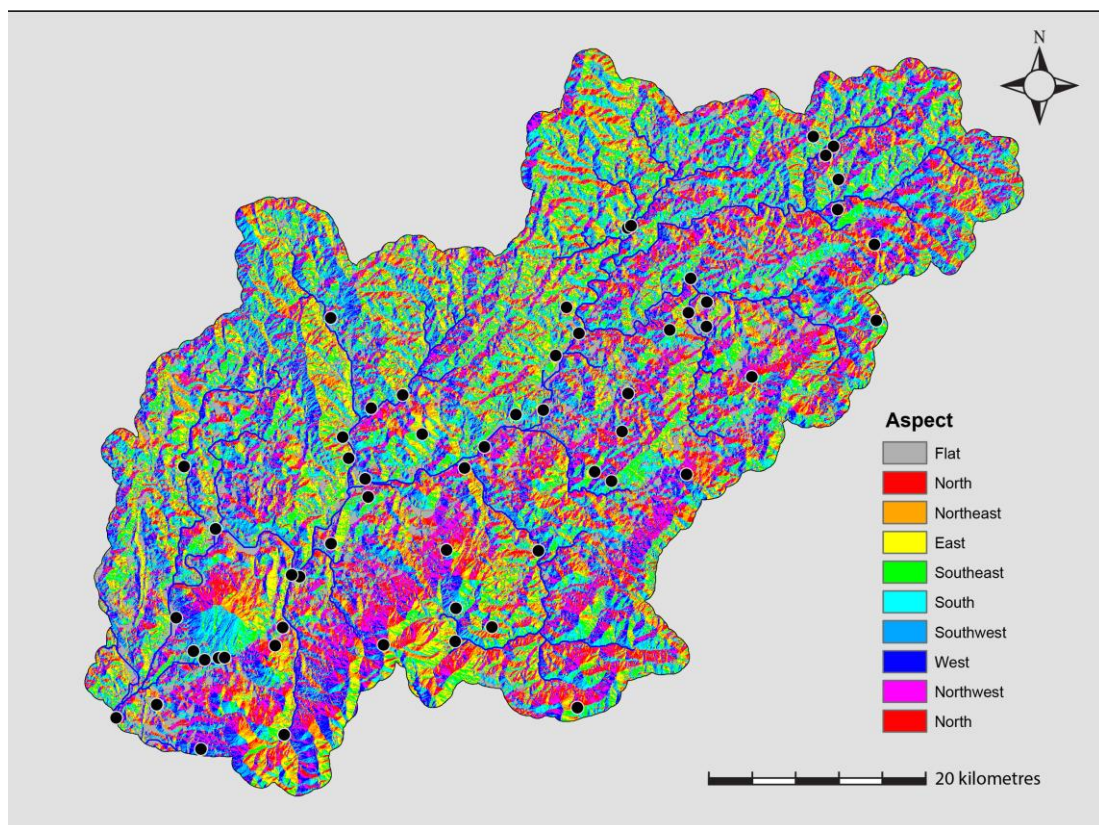


Figure 4. 3. The Topography of the Avon Valley: aspect

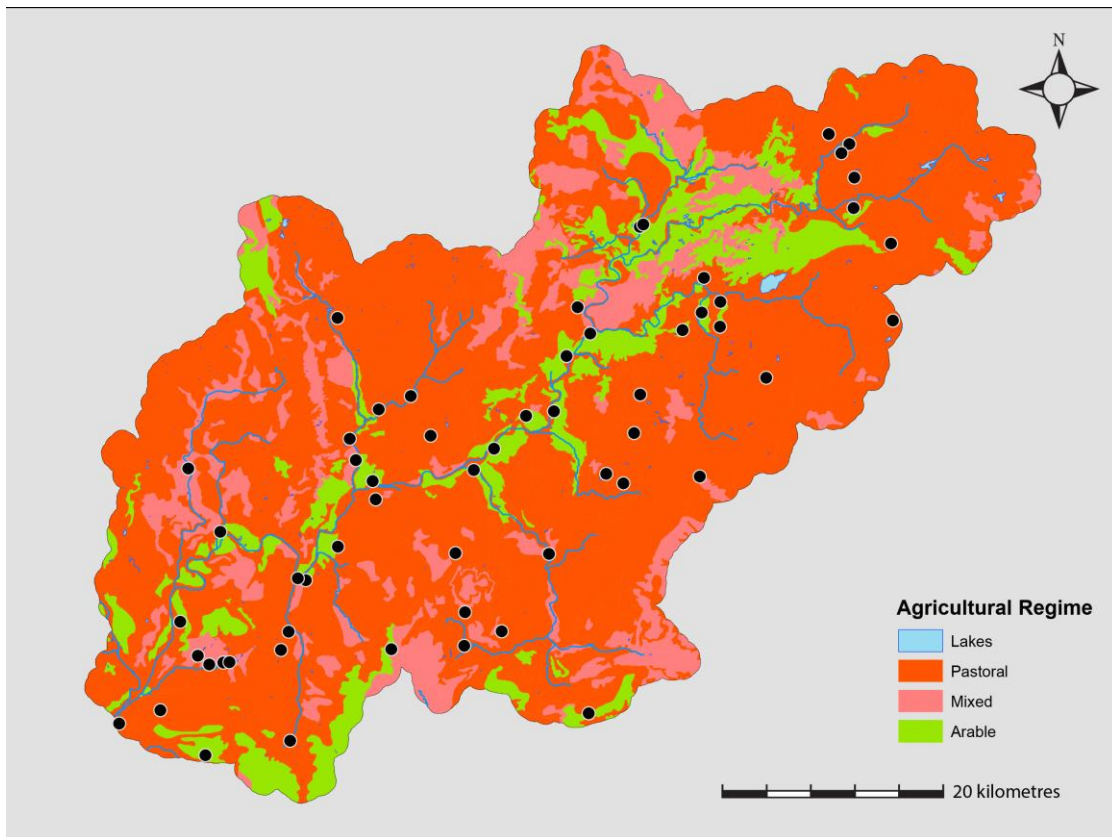


Figure 4. 4. The Topography of the Avon Valley: modern agricultural regime

The third problem derived from our reliance on modern datasets to recreate early medieval topography. In Chapter 2.3.3 it was described how the problem of using modern maps to define water courses was mitigated by modelling these in a GIS, but the problem of soil datasets has not been overcome. Without taking samples at each site it was not possible to identify the soils present in the past and, therefore, the agricultural regimes they supported. Data from the modern NATMAP series was, consequently, of limited use and is presented here only to demonstrate the dominance of pastoral land, a pattern which, given the nature of the landscape, is likely to have been similar to that in the past.

These limitations were substantial, yet two patterns were observed in the selection of different topographical settings of sites (Figures 4.5 – 4.8).³⁰ Firstly, when site aspect was considered, it

³⁰ Topographical data for each site is presented in Catalogue 4.

appeared that major routeways were particularly influential. Across the whole valley, sites seemed to be placed on ground which sloped towards a Roman road or a main river. Secondly, whilst we would expect valley bottom sites to dominate in the west and hill and ridge top sites to dominate in the east, the pattern observed was not so simple. To the west of Ryknield Street, in the lowest and flattest part of the valley, there were a number of hill and ridge-top sites in addition to the anticipated valley bottom sites. Furthermore, in this same area there were a lack of sites placed on the upper part or on the crest of slopes. This created a polarising effect with hill and ridge-top sites dislocated from and substantially elevated above the more common valley bottom, lower slope, and base of slope sites. Interestingly, no similar division was observable across any other part of the valley as sites positioned on mid-slopes predominated.

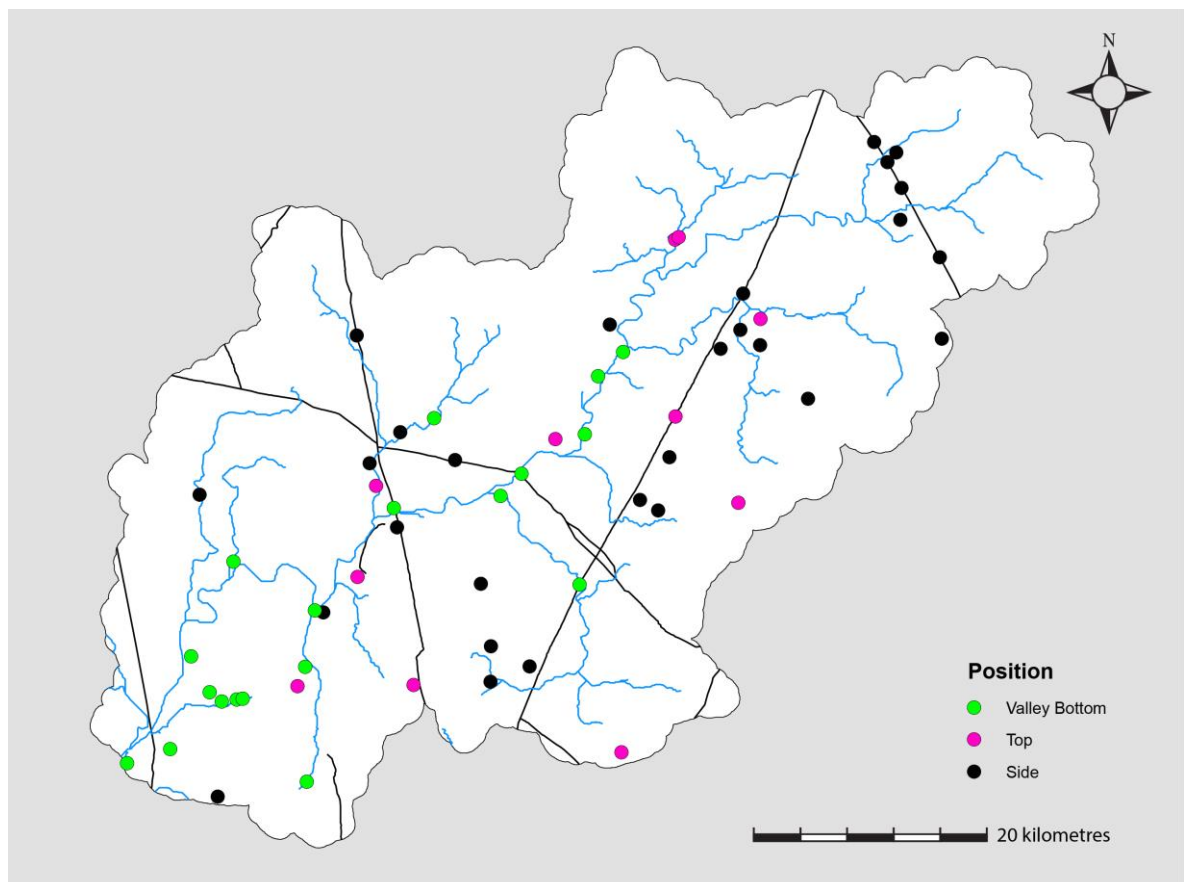


Figure 4. 5. The Topographical Setting of Sites: position

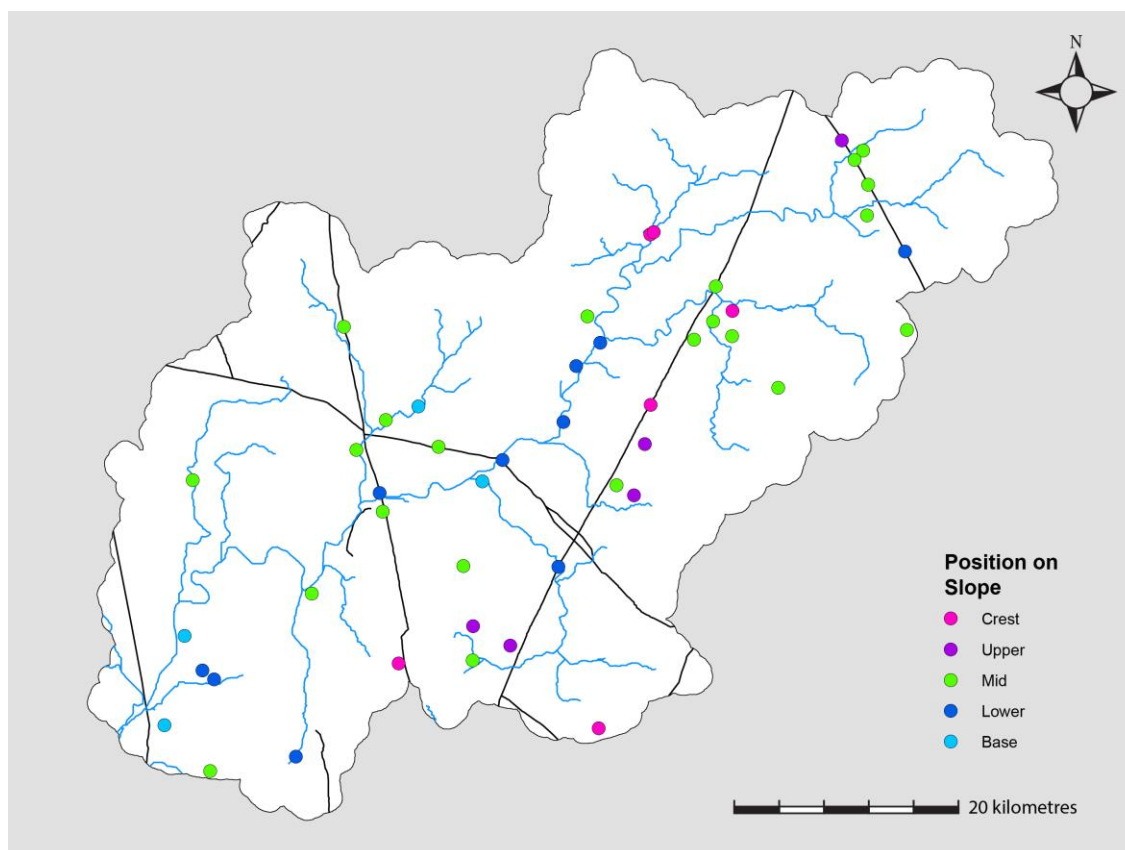


Figure 4. 6. The Topographical Setting of Sites: position on slope

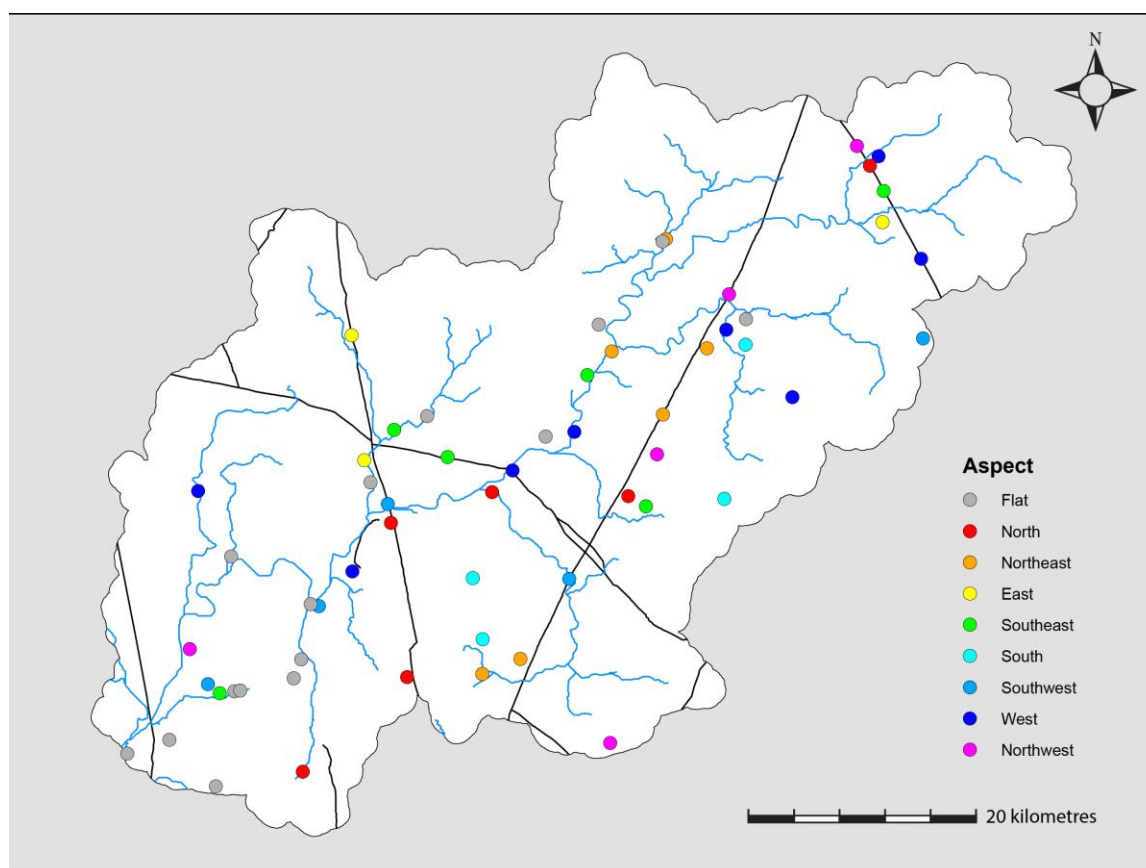


Figure 4. 7. The Topographical Setting of Sites: aspect

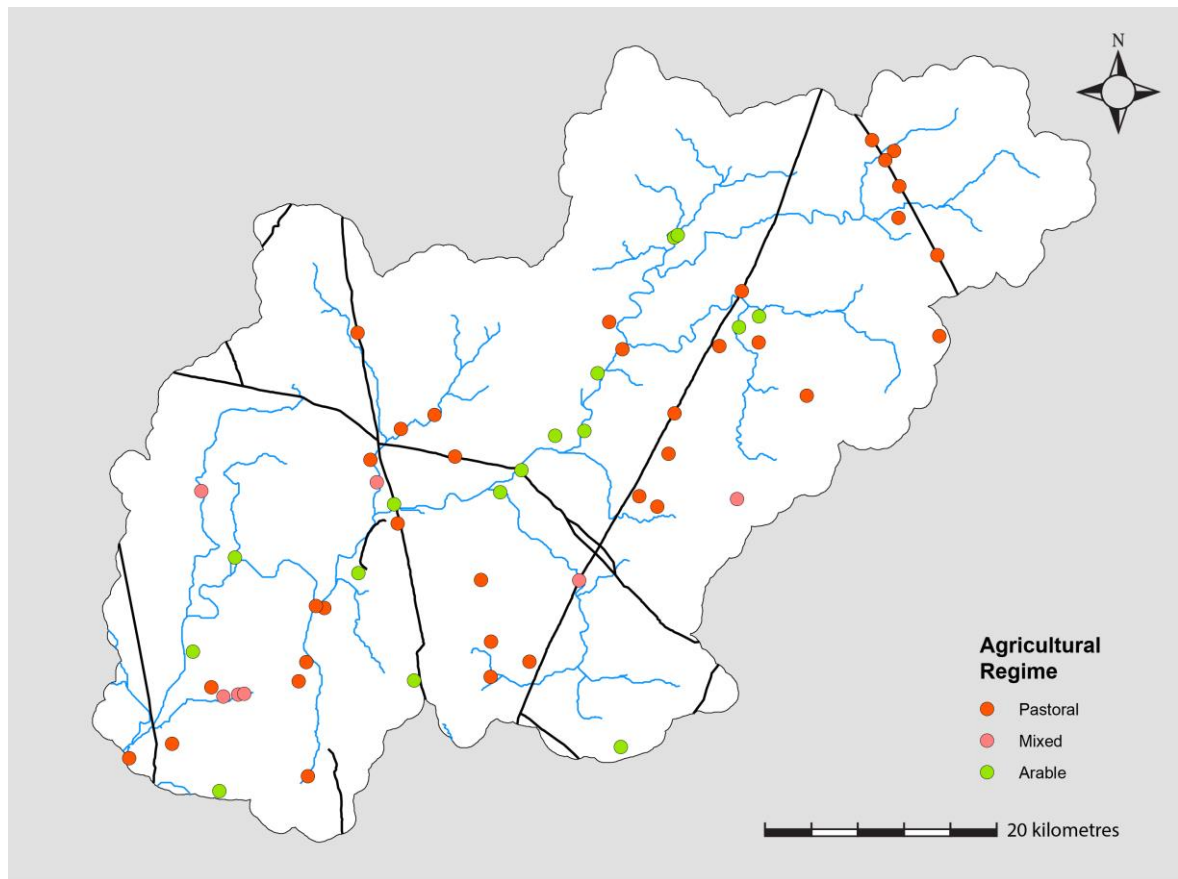


Figure 4. 8. The Topographical Setting of Sites: modern agricultural regime

4.3 Direct Relationships between Sites and Extant Sites

Of the 58 early medieval sites identified in the Avon Valley, 20 have a certain or a possible direct relationship with either a prehistoric or Roman monument, Roman occupation features, or a Roman road (Tables 4.1 – 4.3). This means that over one third of early medieval sites in the valley reused locations already marked by earlier man-made features. It might, therefore, be reasonable to suggest that an association with the past was a concern of the peoples of the Avon. That the figure is not higher might imply that it was only under particular circumstances that a connection with the past was sought or that such a connection was only sought by particular people.

	Site	Extant Site	Description
Possible Direct Relationship	Beckford A & B	Round Barrow	Excavators believed the cemetery outlines may indicate reuse of two prehistoric barrows
	Chesterton	Roman settlement	Possible 5 th century activity cut into the upper layers of the Roman settlement
	Long Itchington	Barrow	Maximum of two burials, probably cremations, within a barrow. Not certainly prehistoric.
	Marlcliff	Ryknield Street and Roman buildings	Objects which may be associated with burial activity found beside Ryknield Street in an area where at least four Roman buildings have been identified.
	Marton	Barrow	Minimum of three burials, probably some cremations, within a barrow. Not necessarily prehistoric.
	Sedgeberrow	Roman settlement	Possible 7 th century activity suggested by pottery finds in an area of concentrated Roman material
	The Lunt	Roman fort	Possible 5 th century activity cut into the upper layers of the Roman fort

Table 4. 1 Certain direct relationships between early medieval sites and extant sites

	Site	Extant Site	Description
Intrusive or immediately adjacent activity on Roman roads.	Cave's Inn	Watling Street	Burials recorded either side of Watling Street (Adjacent but not intrusive).
	Churchover	Watling Street	Burials cut within Watling Street.
	Halford	Fosse Way	Burials along the edge of the Fosse Way. (Adjacent but not intrusive)
	Ipsley	Ryknield Street	Post holes cut into Ryknield Street
	Kilsby	Watling Street	Burials cut within Watling Street
	Lutterworth	Watling Street	Single burial within Watling Street.

Table 4. 2 Possible direct relationships between early medieval sites and extant sites

	Site	Extant Site	Description
Certain Direct Relationship	Bank Farm	Roman Ditch	Single burial placed into a Roman field ditch
	Billesley	Roman corn drier	Single burial placed within a corn drying oven in a Roman roadside settlement
	Hatton Rock	Round Barrow	Probable hall building cut into the ring ditch of a round barrow
	Meon Hill	Hill Fort	Single burial within the ramparts of an Iron Age hill fort
	Rollright	Prehistoric Megalithic monuments	Cemetery and recently discovered single burial immediately adjacent to the various monuments which make up the Rollright Stones
	Walton Cardiff	Roman ditch	Two burials partly cut into and aligned on a Roman ditch, part of a wider field system
	Wasperton	Roman cemetery and field system	Cemetery established within the bounds of an existing late Roman burial site, formerly an agricultural enclosure

Table 4. 3 Early medieval sites within or immediately adjacent to Roman roads

Where a direct relationship between an earlier feature and early medieval activity is certain, Roman field systems are the most commonly reused. The single burial at Bank Farm (Coleman et al., 2006, p. 20) and the two burials at Walton Cardiff (Hart and McSloy, 2008, p. 75) are both placed within field ditches and the cemetery at Wasperton is located within a Roman enclosure (Carver et al., 2009, p. 19). In the latter example, however, the late Roman cemetery is as likely to have been the intended focus for early medieval burial. Excluding Wasperton, the only grave goods of these early medieval burials in Roman field systems were found with Burial 9 at Walton Cardiff, which had been cut into what was described as the “silted up” remains of a Roman ditch. The objects included 95 amber beads, 4 glass beads, and a buckle (Hart and McSloy, 2008, p. 75). At Billesley another Roman feature associated with agriculture was reused for burial: a corn drier, from within a Roman roadside settlement (Palmer, 2003, p. 74). The individual buried here is likely to have been an adult male and was accompanied by a spear and shield (Palmer, 2003, pp. 56 & 65).

At quite a different scale to those burials beside Roman agricultural features are those that reuse large and visually dominant prehistoric monuments. These include the single burial within the ramparts of Meon Hill hillfort and the burials clustering around the Rollright Stones megalithic complex. As with

the Billesley burial, the inhumation on Meon Hill included a spear and shield (Meaney, 1964, p. 261). The 5th and 6th-century cemetery at the Rollright Stones is poorly understood, but artefacts retrieved include various brooches and beads (Meaney, 1964, p. 260; Salzman, 1939, p. 358). The recent discovery of a 7th-century high status female burial close to these stones implies that the significance of these monuments endured throughout the early medieval period (Anni Byard pers. comm. May 2015). The alignment of the halls at Hatton Rock between two round barrows (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 167; Rahtz, 1970, pp. 140–141) is another example of activity focused on highly visible monuments, and, the site is very important, not only as one of the few early medieval non-burial sites to reuse an extant site in the valley, but also as a rare example of a great hall complex.

A further seven sites *may* have had a direct relationship with an earlier extant site (Table 4.2). The excavators at the cemeteries of Beckford A and B remarked that the circular and oval outlines of the cemeteries may indicate the reuse of two large prehistoric barrows (Evison and Hill, 1996, pp. 27 & 31). Evidence of possible 5th-century activity has been identified cut into the upper layers of the Roman sites of Chesterton (Taylor, 1967) and the Lunt (Hobley, 1975, p. 5) and 5th or 6th-century artefacts have been identified close to Roman buildings located at Marlcliff (Hingley et al., 1987). Similarly, a 7th-century sceatta and pottery have been recovered from an area of concentrated Roman material at Sedgeberrow (Price and Watson, 1984). The small groups of burials beneath barrows at the nearby sites of Long Itchington and Marton (Bloxam, 1875, p. 37; Meaney, 1964, pp. 217 & 261) may represent a localised tradition of their reuse, or could possibly represent rare examples of monument construction in the early medieval Avon Valley (see below).

Finally, six early medieval sites were positioned either within or lining Roman roads (Table 4.3). The majority of these relate to Watling Street, where burials are recorded cut into the road surface at Churchover, Kilsby,³¹ and Lutterworth and are described as lying either side of the road at Cave's Inn (Brown and Hannan, 1978, p. 88; Liddle, 1986; Meaney, 1964, pp. 145 & 259). A similar practice was

³¹ A reference is also made in the Kilsby report to burials found within Watling Street near Welton in 1845, one of which was reportedly found with a spearhead (Brown and Hannan, 1978, p. 91).

observed at Halford, where workmen repairing the Fosse Way uncovered three inhumations, one reportedly with a javelin, spearhead, and possibly part of a shield (Meaney, 1964, p. 260). In quite a different manner, post holes were observed at Ipsley, cut into the surface of and running down the centre of Ryknield Street. These may have been associated with a structure and a cobbled surface adjacent to the road which has been dated by a 5th or 6th-century francisca found lying directly on the cobbles (Fasham, 1988, pp. 14–17).

These sites which reuse extant sites are found throughout the valley, in the valley bottoms and on higher ground (Figure 4.9), but distinct patterns can be observed. The focus of burials within and along Watling Street has already been remarked upon and can clearly be seen in the east of the valley. Interestingly, these sites are spatially distinct from sites which reuse prehistoric and Roman monuments or Roman occupation features. Opposing this, in the south-west of the valley is a cluster of sites which reuse or may reuse Roman field systems and areas of activity at large prehistoric barrows. Between these two clusters, in the centre of the valley, there lies a concentration of sites which certainly reuse extant sites. Furthermore, at these sites there is both evidence of high status activity and the use of highly visible monuments or remains. The cemetery at Wasperton is unique within the valley, having its roots in the 4th century (Carver et al., 2009, p. 135), and, whilst the continuity of the cemetery was likely to have influenced early medieval activity here, a link to the past was clearly an important part of the significance of this site. The alignment of the hall structures at Hatton Rock between two round barrows (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 167; Rahtz, 1970, pp. 140–141) was likely to have been part of a carefully designed statement of authority. The two isolated male burials with weapon sets at Meon Hill and Billesley are rarities within the valley and, whilst one is within the ramparts of a hillfort on one of the most prominent hills in the valley and the other is within a corn drier in a minor Roman settlement, their locations do share some common features. The Meon Hill burial was undeniably located to reference a significant landmark in the valley and it is probable that, to a lesser degree, so was the Billesley burial. The Roman site at Billesley grew up alongside a saltway between the 1st and 4th centuries (Palmer, 2003). Initially involved in agricultural processing, it seems

the site may have developed a roadside function. Half way between the declining Roman centre at Alcester and the major cemetery at Alveston Manor and on an important routeway, the remains of this settlement were likely to have been highly visible. Inserted deliberately into a corn drier, we must assume that the structure of the drier was clearly discernible within the landscape and may have formed a landmark.

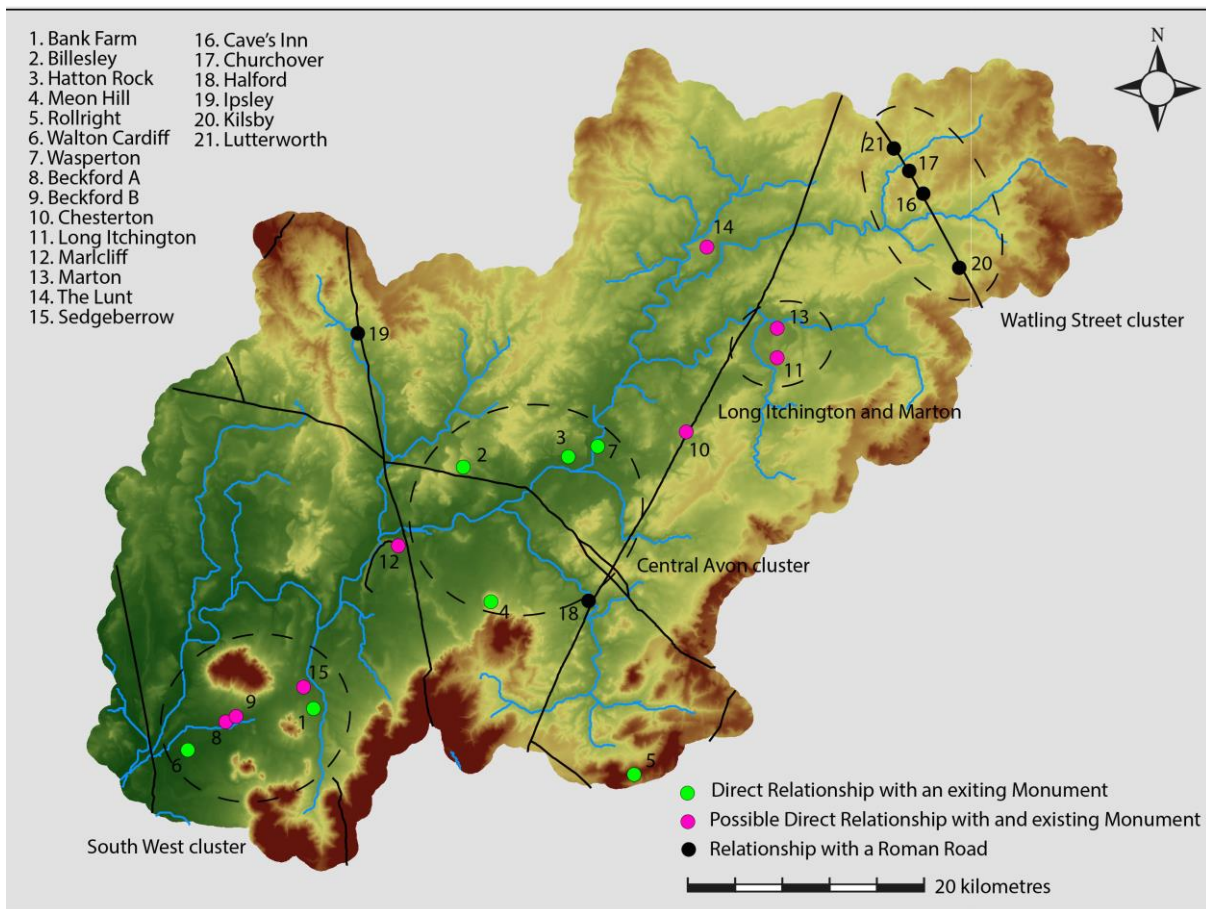


Figure 4. 9. The distribution of early medieval sites which reuse extant sites in the Avon Valley

Turning to the two adjacent sites of Long Itchington and Marton, there is a possibility that these two sites do not represent monumental *reuse*, but are examples of monumental *construction* in the early medieval period. At Long Itchington, a prehistoric date for the round barrow was suggested by the description of the early medieval burials as being 'secondary', yet no explanation was given as to how this conclusion was arrived at (Meaney, 1964, p. 217). The burials within a barrow at Marton are

described neither as primary nor secondary (Bloxam, 1875, p. 37; Meaney, 1964, p. 261) and no report exists with sufficient detail to reassess the site. Thus, whilst there is no evidence to say that these two sites are not prehistoric, there is no evidence to suggest that they are. To the east of these sites, near Churchover on Watling Street, there are two barrows which may warrant an early medieval date. In the 17th century, William Dugdale wrote of a tumulus which “puts passengers beside the usual road” (in Meaney, 1964, p. 259).³² The road referred to is Watling Street and the tumulus, therefore, must be of post-Roman foundation. The lack of other reused prehistoric monuments in this part of the valley, may also support the possibility that the burials at Long Itchington and Marton were primary burials within early medieval barrows.

4.4 Proximate Relationships

Analysis of the direct relationships between extant and early medieval sites has begun to show distinct patterns of landscape use in the Avon Valley. It has also suggested a relationship between early medieval sites and Roman roads. Association with earlier structures was apparently of importance, but, rather than being ubiquitous, associations were manifested in different ways in different parts of the valley. These patterns can be explored further by widening analysis to include sites which are close to or “proximate” to earlier sites, monuments, and roads. This analysis focuses on those sites which are within 500 metres of an extant site or Roman road. Having introduced one type of routeway, analysis then goes on to consider the relationship between early medieval sites and another important type of routeway – rivers.³³

The first task was to consider the overall distribution of extant sites and routeways in the Avon Valley. This was required to check whether any patterns observed between these and early medieval sites were merely a consequence of varying concentrations of the former. Using the Euclidian Distance tool

³² Dugdale’s report may be supported by the place-name ‘Pelgrimslowe’ recorded in 1350 at the place now known as Gibbet’s Hill (Gover et al., 1936, p. 104).

³³ The distance between early medieval and extant sites was measured using the Near Tool in ArcGIS: : <http://resources.arcgis.com/en/help/main/10.2/index.html#/Near/00080000001q000000/>

within ArcGIS,³⁴ it was possible to measure the distance between different types of extant sites and routeways and all parts of the Avon Valley. This information was used to create 'background signatures' which show how the distribution of these changed at 10 kilometre intervals across the landscape. These signatures were then compared with the median distance between early medieval sites and each type of extant site and routeway (see Catalogue 5).

The results of this analysis showed distinct distributions of early medieval sites, independent of the distributions of extant sites and rivers.³⁵ This suggests that any proximate relationship observed between these is unlikely to merely be the result of a concentration of extant sites or rivers. For example, in the 40 – 50 kilometre interval the average distance between all parts of the landscape and a prehistoric monument is almost five kilometres, but the median distance between prehistoric monuments and early medieval sites is just over one kilometre. Furthermore, this analysis showed that, in general, early medieval sites favoured parts of the landscape marked by earlier structural remains.

4.4.1 Sites and Extant Sites

Extant sites are found across the Avon Valley, focussing mostly on the valley bottoms of the major rivers and with notable concentrations in two upland areas: the Cotswold Escarpment on the southern edge of the Avon Valley and on Bredon Hill, an isolated hill, itself once part of the aforementioned escarpment (Figure 4.10). In contrast, the upland on the northern limit of the valley, the edge of the Midland Plateau, seems to be devoid of extant sites. It is likely that this was in part due to preservation and recovery biases caused by the major settlements of the West Midlands – Solihull, Birmingham, and Coventry – and the presence of the Arden Forest. Whilst this lack of data hindered discussion of this northerly area, the distribution of extant sites elsewhere comprehensively covered the rest of the valley, providing sufficient data for the examination of any patterns of landscape use in the main part

³⁴ Details on how to use this tool can be found here:

http://resources.arcgis.com/en/help/main/10.2/index.html#/Euclidean_Distance/009z0000001p000000

³⁵ See below for discussion of Roman roads.

of the valley. Furthermore, the apparent riverine focus of both extant sites and early medieval sites allowed for detailed comparison between both datasets. Finally, the distribution of all types of extant sites – prehistoric and Roman monuments, and Roman occupation sites – across the whole valley meant that a finer level of analysis might be achieved, one which explores patterns of proximity between early medieval sites and different types of extant sites. These patterns were used to both characterise the practices common to the Avon Valley and to assess whether distinct zones can be observed amongst the packages of these practices.

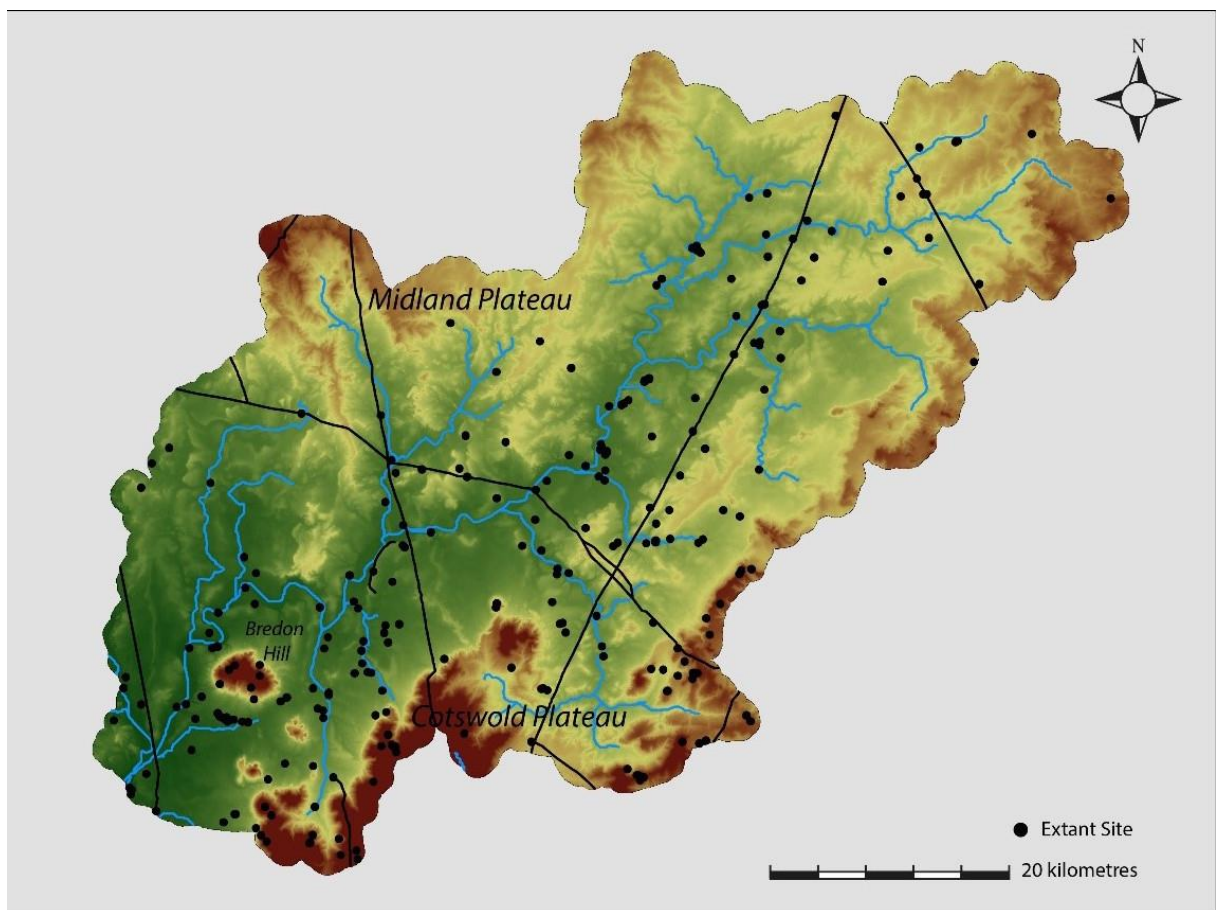


Figure 4. 10. The distribution of extant sites in the Avon Valley

4.4.1.1 Prehistoric Monuments

Analysis of how the median distance between early medieval sites and prehistoric monuments changed across the Avon Valley suggested the presence of distinct practices within the valley.³⁶

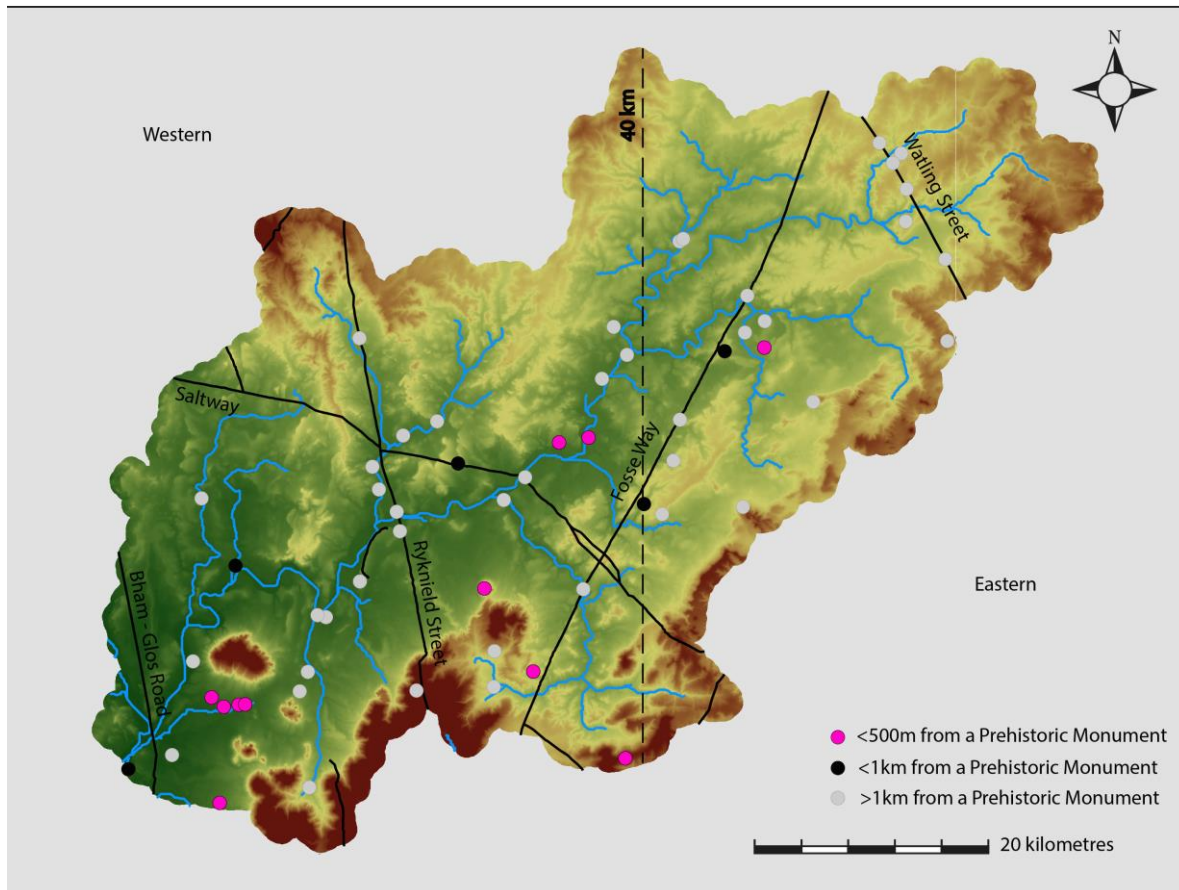


Figure 4. 11 The distribution of early medieval sites within one kilometre of a prehistoric monument

In the Avon Valley, a total of 16 early medieval sites lie within one kilometre of a prehistoric monument and, of these, 11 lie within 500 metres. The majority of these sites, 14/16 within one kilometre and 10/11 within 500 metres, are found west of a point approximately 40 kilometres into the valley (Figure 4.11). Conversely, east of Watling Street no early medieval sites lie within one kilometre of an identified prehistoric monument and only two sites which lie within a kilometre of a prehistoric monument are found to the east of the 40 kilometre mark – Long Itchington and

³⁶ Whilst this analysis included all types of prehistoric monument present in the Avon Valley, it should be mentioned that, given their high number, 110 of 149 monuments, prehistoric barrows dominated the dataset and, therefore, the discussion.

Offchurch. The contrast between the patterns of reuse in the east and the west of the valley is compounded by the uncertain date of the prehistoric monuments in the east, all of which are round barrows (see discussion above regarding Long Itchington and Offchurch).

To the west of Wasperton, the pattern was quite different. Not only were there more frequent occasions of close physical relationships between early medieval sites and prehistoric monuments but the types of monuments and their relationship with the early medieval sites often made their identification as 'prehistoric' more certain: at Wasperton, long barrows were found immediately outside the late Roman and early medieval cemetery; at Rollright, the site used by the early medieval cemetery was already marked by the presence of standing stones (Meaney, 1964, p. 260; Salzman, 1939, p. 358); the single inhumation at Meon Hill was inserted into the ramparts of an Iron Age hillfort (Meaney, 1964, p. 261); and the burials at St Anne's Church, Wyre Piddle lie within a kilometre of a cursus in Figure 4.11. Even round barrows could be demonstrated to be of prehistoric date – at Beckford A & B, Evison and Hill (1996, pp. 27–33) have made a convincing argument that the size and shape of the cemeteries were suggestive of the presence of large Bronze Age round barrows and at Hatton Rock the positioning of one of the hall structures slightly over a ring ditch (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973) would imply that the barrow was of sufficient antiquity to be able to place a hall on its eroded remains without impairing the building's structure or usability.

Thus, a distinction could be drawn between patterns across the Avon Valley. Roughly to the east of Wasperton and Compton Verney, there was little evidence for close or direct relationships with prehistoric monuments and, where there does appear to be activity on monuments, this was focussed upon round barrows whose prehistoric date is uncertain. To the west, not only was there a greater number of early medieval sites reusing or close to prehistoric monuments, but the type of monument used was more varied and their prehistoric date more certain.

4.4.1.2 Roman Monuments

Unlike prehistoric monuments, the paucity of Roman monuments in the Avon Valley limited discussion regarding the pattern of their reuse in the early medieval period and patterns might only cautiously be observed. In contrast to the pattern seen with prehistoric monuments, the majority of early medieval sites within 500 metres of a Roman monument were found east of the 40 kilometre mark (Figure 4.12). Whilst this majority was only slim, four out of seven sites, it was more significant when we consider that Roman monuments were more common in the western half of the valley and we might, therefore, have expected the number of early medieval sites within 500 metres of a Roman monument to have increased rather than decreased. Whilst the background signature showed how the average distance between the landscape and Roman monuments decreased, there was no equivalent decrease in the median distance between early medieval sites and these monuments (Catalogue 5). Instead, on average, in the western half of the valley, early medieval activity was further from Roman monuments than in the east. At 40-50 kilometres and 70-80 kilometres, the distance between sites and monuments even exceeded the background signature, implying that, on average, parts of the landscape further away from Roman monuments were favoured for early medieval activity.

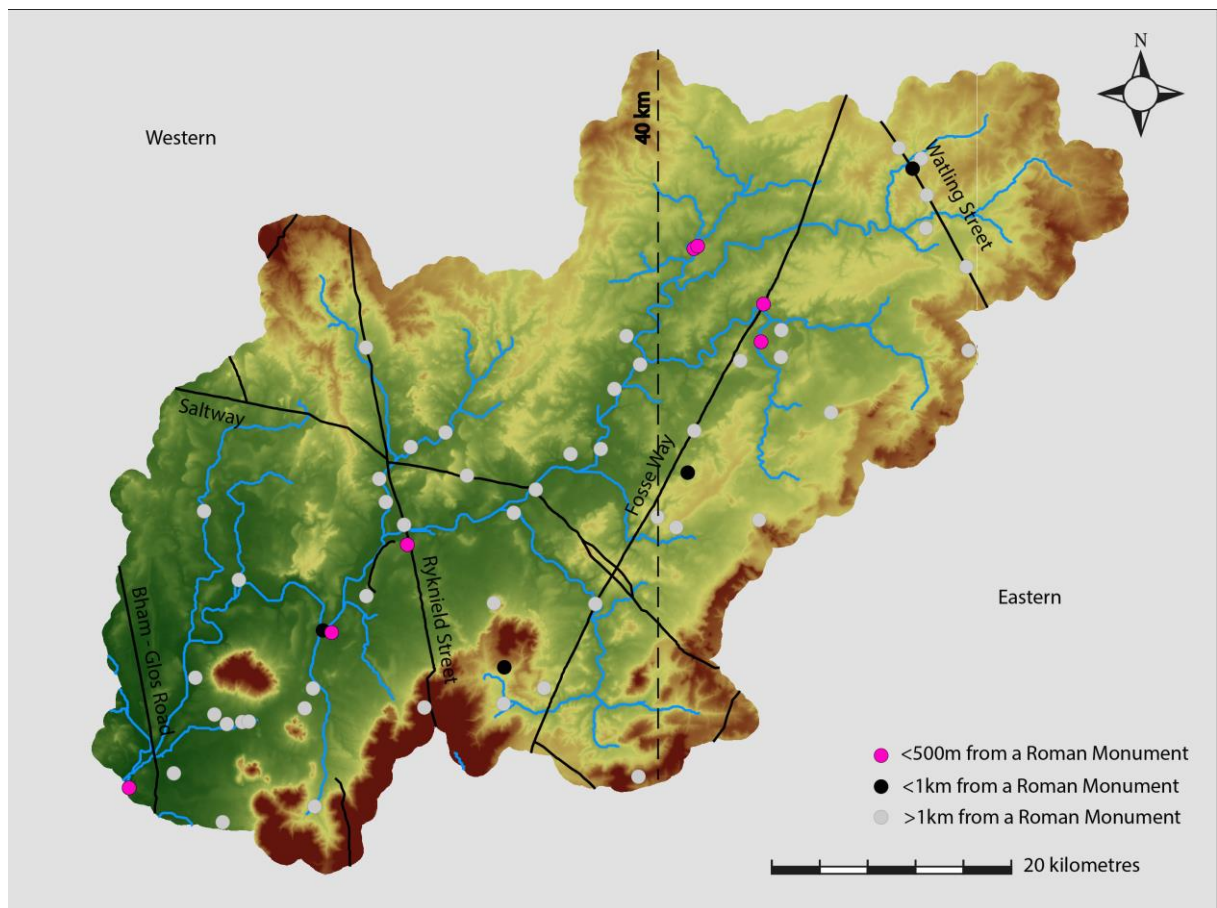


Figure 4. 12 The distribution of early medieval sites within one kilometre of a Roman monument.

A slight difference between the east and the west may also be discerned in the type of Roman monuments reused. In the east of the valley, early medieval activity was found both within and outside the Roman fort, The Lunt, on the Baginton Plateau; beside sites identified as villas, at Princethorpe, at Snowford Bridge, Long Itchington, and at Lighthorne; and at Churchover, close to a mound identified as a Roman barrow. In contrast, in the central and western parts of the valley, only villas attracted early medieval activity. This distinction was further explored by the addition of data from Roman occupation sites.

4.4.1.3 Roman Occupation Sites

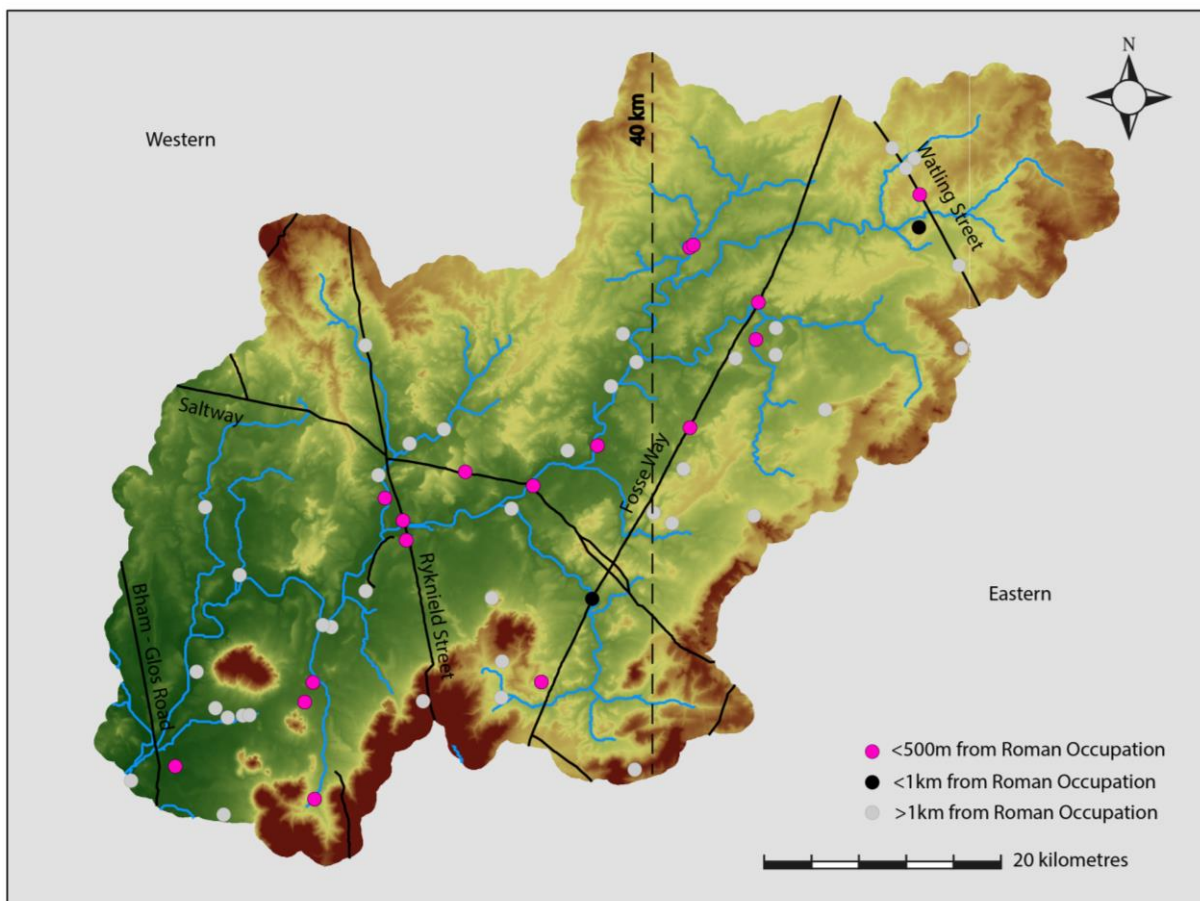


Figure 4. 13 The distribution of early medieval sites within one kilometre of a Roman occupation site

Across the Avon Valley, early medieval activity within 500 metres of a Roman occupation site was more frequent than that observed between Roman monuments and early medieval sites and was also more evenly spread, with no apparent patterns of distribution (Figure 4.13). In particular, across the whole valley there was a strong correlation between early medieval sites and Roman occupation sites on the Roman road network. The early medieval sites close to Roman roadside settlements are: Cave's Inn on Watling Street; Princethorpe, Chesterton, Halford, and Stretton-on-Fosse on the Fosse Way; Broom, Bidford-on-Avon, and Marlcliff on Ryknield Street; and Billesley and Alveston Manor on the Alcester to Ettington Saltway. The use of Roman roads will be explored in more detail in the subsequent section on major routeways. What is significant here, however, are not the sites which saw activity in the early medieval period, as they span the whole valley, but those Roman roadside sites which did not become a focus for activity in the 5th to mid-7th centuries.

Two of the largest identified Roman settlement sites in the west of the Avon Valley, the small town of Alcester, the largest Roman site in the valley, and the enclosed station at Dorn on the Fosse Way, currently show very little or no evidence of reuse in the early medieval period (Booth, 1989; Booth and Evans, 2002, pp. 114–115; Burnham and Wachter, 1990, pp. 253–255; Hughes, 1962; McWhirr, 1981, pp. 60–61; Meaney, 1964, p. 257; Stokes and Brownsword, 1984).³⁷ This contrasted with early medieval activity found at or adjacent to all the main settlements in the east of the valley: Tripontium, Princethorpe, and Chesterton (Hingley, 1985; Lucas, 1984, p. 31; Meaney, 1964, p. 262; Taylor, 1967). Instead, in the west early medieval activity appeared to more frequently occur at small agricultural or rural sites: at Walton Cardiff (Hart and McSloy, 2008), Bank Farm, Dumbleton (Coleman et al., 2006), and Billesley (Palmer, 2003). Thus, there seemed to be an additional distinction between patterns of reuse in the east and the west of the valley; in the former, Roman enclosed stations became the focus of early medieval cemeteries, whilst in the latter, smaller Roman sites were used for the burial of one or two individuals.

The cemeteries of the central Avon Valley – Wasperton, Stretton-on-Fosse, Alveston Manor, and Bidford-on-Avon – on the surface, may appear more akin to the eastern tradition of establishing cemeteries beside larger Roman sites, however, closer investigation suggested that this might not be the case. Firstly, Wasperton and Stretton-on-Fosse were both Roman rural settlements, they were not major centres. Furthermore, the reuse of these sites in the early medieval period may have been influenced by the presence of prehistoric monuments in the area, and not the Roman settlements alone.³⁸ The cemetery at Alveston Manor lay to the west of the Roman ‘industrial’ settlement of Tiddington. It was not, however, beside the 4th-century phases of this settlement which had migrated further east along the flood plain and included a defensive circuit which may have still been visible in the 5th century (Biddulph, 2005). It seems likely, therefore, that the determining factor in the positioning of the early medieval cemetery was not the Roman settlement, but the fording point on

³⁷ A summary of the scant evidence of early medieval activity at Alcester is presented in Chapter 5.3.2

³⁸ See footnote in Chapter 2.2.1

the River Avon, immediately to the north-west of the site. A similar scenario might be envisaged at Bidford-on-Avon which also lies on a ford of the River Avon. Roman activity has been identified in the area of the cemetery (Webster and Cherry, 1980, p. 230), but, as yet, no distinct Roman settlement has been identified and it remains possible that the ford, again, attracted activity and not a Roman site.

4.4.2 Sites and Major Routeways

When exploring both direct and proximate relationships between sites and extant sites, it became apparent that there was considerable activity within or beside Roman roads in the early medieval period. This is in keeping with studies elsewhere which concluded that Roman roads were important foci for activity in the 5th to 7th centuries (Baker and Brookes, 2013, p. 149; Palmer, 2003, p. 51; Reynolds, 2009; Reynolds and Langlands, 2011; Semple, 2013, p. 34). To explore this feature of the Avon Valley's character, the distribution of sites in relation to these major roads was analysed. This analysis was then followed by an investigation of the relationship between sites and the River Avon and its main tributaries. Across early medieval England, the river-centric nature of settlement patterns and territorial units has been recognised (Baker and Brookes, 2013, p. 149; Draper, 2004, p. 117; Hamerow, 2012, p. 3; Hamerow et al., 2013, p. 51; Hooke, 2001, p. 161; Semple, 2013, pp. 19–25, 2008, p. 418), and analysis here aimed to understand whether this could be seen in the Avon Valley. In addition, this chapter aims to explore how the physical relationship between Roman roads and main rivers and early medieval sites changed across the valley, to see whether any distinct patterns of land use can be observed.

4.4.2.1 Roman Roads

Across the valley Roman roads attract activity in the early medieval period: with one exception, where there is a road there is 5th to 7th century activity within or beside its course. Conversely, and unsurprisingly, where there is no Roman road, there is no activity beside it (Catalogue 5). It is not possible, therefore, to simply use distribution to characterise the use of these landscape features or to analyse whether there were any distinct patterns in the way in which they were used. Consequently,

evidence from the PAS and information about the 10th- century hundredal boundaries was drawn into this analysis.

Firstly, the PAS evidence, although not large for the early medieval period pre-650 AD, implied that all the Roman roads in the Avon Valley were still in use in some way during this time (see Figure 2.3, Chapter 2.3.5). Any differences in the positioning of sites along their courses, therefore, were less likely to simply reflect the use or abandonment of these roads and were more likely to reflect how these roads were perceived and used by communities.

Turning then to the positioning of sites, Figure 4.14 shows sites within one kilometre and within 100 metres of a Roman road. It was not necessary to include a 500 metre category as all sites closer than 500 metres were also less than one hundred metres from a Roman road. Four of the main Roman roads in the Avon Valley are marked by such sites, with only the road from Birmingham to Gloucester in the far west of the valley (currently) showing no evidence of early medieval sites. The greatest concentration of sites on a Roman road is along Watling Street, on the eastern edge of the Avon Valley. Four sites lie along approximately 18 kilometres of road giving an average of a site per every 4.5 kilometres. If the uncertain site at Gibbet Hill, where four skeletons were reported (Meaney, 1964, p. 259), is included, the average drops to 3.6 kilometres. This is compared to an average of 15.25 kilometres on the Fosse Way, 10.65 kilometres on Ryknield Street, and 17.73 kilometres on the Salt Way. The use of Watling Street as a focus for early medieval activity was, therefore, not paralleled elsewhere in the valley. This mirrors the 10th-century hundreds in the valley: as it passes through the Avon Valley, Watling Street formed the boundary between six hundreds: Bumbelowe, Guthlaxton, Marton, Guilsborough, Alwardsley, and Gravesend. In contrast, and despite its greater length within the valley, the Fosse Way coincided with hundredal boundaries in only two places.³⁹ Watling Street was, on average, a narrower road than the Fosse Way (Margary, 1967, pp. 150–288) and there is no reason, therefore, to assume that its preferential reuse in the early medieval period was the result of

³⁹ It was possible to assess the position of hundreds in the Avon Valley by the kind donation of data from the Landscapes of Governance project: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/assembly>

it being a more visible feature than the Fosse Way. Thus, it remains possible that the use of Watling Street is evidence of different social practices belonging to a different social group. Of course, it may also be evidence of the road fulfilling a different function within the same, wider regional system.

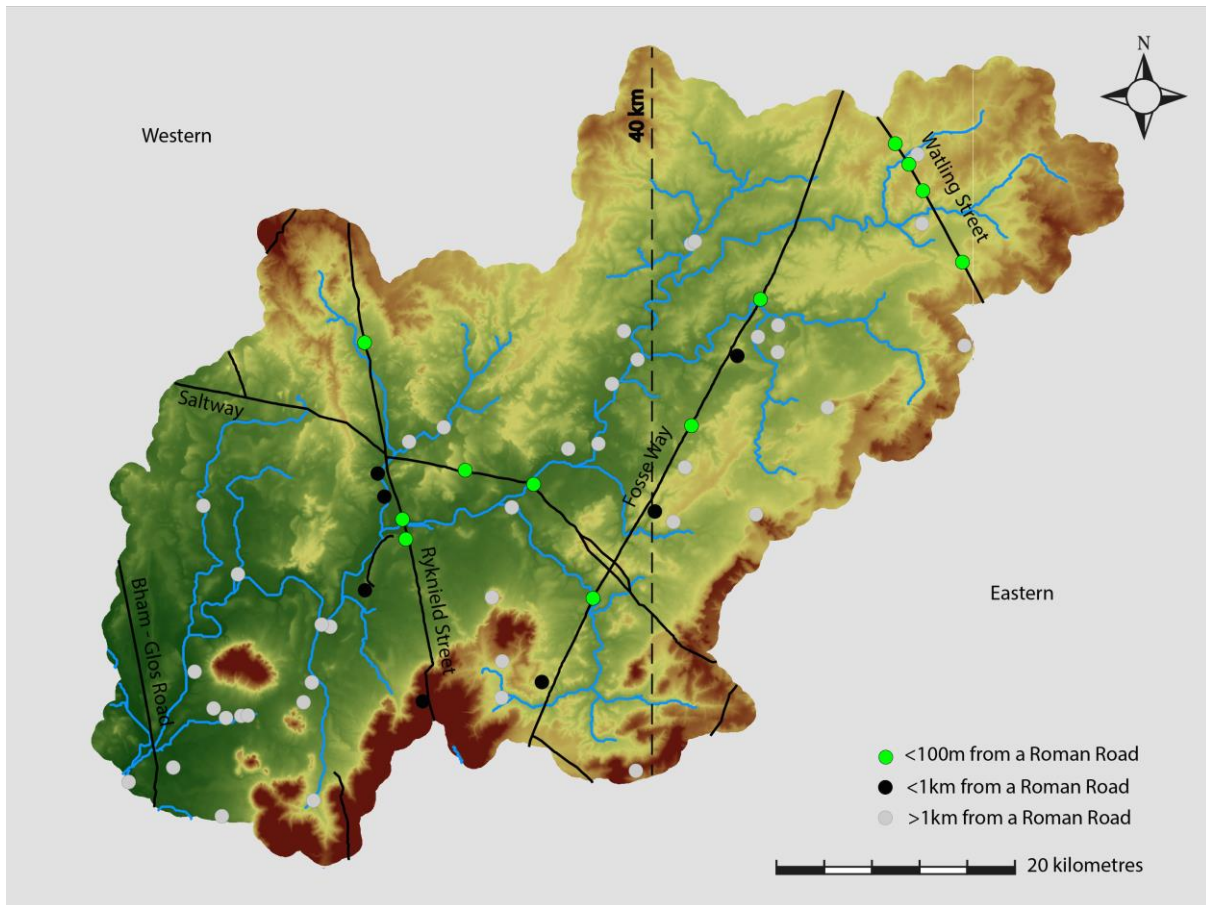


Figure 4. 14. The distribution of early medieval sites within one kilometre of a Roman road

Further evidence, however, that Watling Street did lie within a different zone to the rest of the valley might be found in the type of locations represented at early medieval sites besides Roman roads. On Watling Street, four of the five possible roadside sites, Gibbet Hill, Kilsby, Churchover, and Lutterworth were found on land not previously marked by Roman occupation sites. In contrast, with the exception of Halford, in the rest of the valley, all roadside sites were found beside or within areas used for occupation in the Roman period. Whilst no suggestion is offered to explain why this might be the case, it has significance for the identification of different zones within the valley.

4.4.2.2 Main Rivers

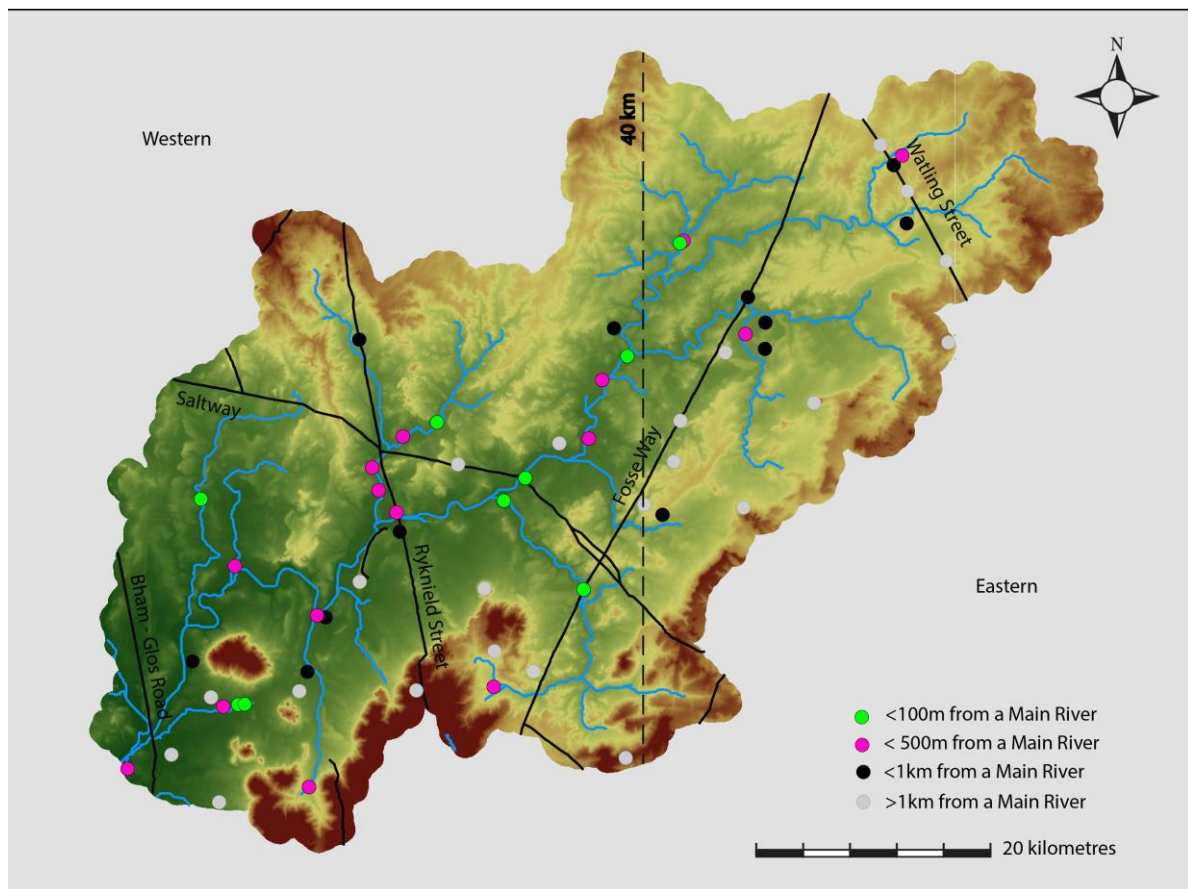


Figure 4. 15 The distribution of early medieval sites within one kilometre of a main river

Despite of the widespread presence of main rivers across the Avon Valley, when creating a background signature for the main rivers in the valley it appeared that there was a closer relationship between early medieval sites and major watercourses in the west of the valley (Catalogue 5). This pattern was explored further by mapping those sites which lie particularly close to rivers (Figure 4.15). Given the nature of the study area – a river valley – most sites lay within one kilometre of a main river. Similarly, a number of site lay within 500 metres and analysis, therefore, focused on sites within 100 metres of a river.

In total, nine sites lie within 100 metres of a major river course – Baginton, Milcote Hall, Upton Snodsbury, Halford, Alveston Manor, Beckford A & B, Emscote, and Aston Cantlow – all of which are

found in the central and western parts of the Avon Valley. There are no sites within 100 metres of a major river until approximately 38 kilometres into the valley and only two within 500 metres. This supports the pattern seen with the background signature, that there was a closer relationship between the position of sites and major rivers in the west of the valley than in the east.

Before assessing the significance of this apparent pattern, it is important to discuss the characteristics of the rivers of the Avon Valley. In the central and western parts of the valley, the River Avon is a much larger watercourse than it is in the east, being in its lower course. Whilst this might explain the greater significance of riverside locations beside the Avon in the western part of the valley, to explain the greater emphasis placed on the tributaries in this part of the valley needs more thought. The tributaries in the central and western parts of the valley are equivalent in size to those in the east, yet they were more frequently used as foci of activity in the early medieval period. The author would argue that it is possible that this was due to the position of these tributaries on more accessible parts of the River Avon (Jones, 2000, pp. 68–69). As more easily accessible locations, with greater opportunity for communication with travellers, a characteristic identified by Reynolds and Langlands as vital in the early medieval landscape (2011), the riverside locations in the central and western part of the valley may have held more significance than those in the east. Thus, the differences observed between the east and the west of the valley may be better understood as the result of accessibility and not as evidence of different zones or different communities.

4.5 The Seventh Century

The position of elite late 6th and 7th-century sites is considered in Chapter 8. New non-elite sites of this period, without traces of 5th or earlier 6th-century activity, are scarcer; this appears to be due to the difficulty of dating 'non-elite' artefacts to the 7th century (see Chapter 8 for a definition of elite artefacts). Pottery from Sedgeberrow, Aston Mill Farm, and Kemerton Sewage Works may indicate the use of these settlements into the 7th century (Price and Watson, 1984; Dinn and Evans, 1990; Fagan et al., 1994), but this relies on pottery typologies which have not satisfactorily been developed for this

particular region. Radiocarbon dates from North Street, Winchcombe (Saville, 1984, pp. 135–136) suggest that some similar unfurnished burials elsewhere in the valley may also date to this later period, but without a programme of carbon dating this cannot be confirmed. Using material culture only four non-elite burial sites may be assigned to the late 6th or 7th centuries: Blacklow Hill, Lutterworth, Walton Cardiff, and Lower Farm, Bishops Cleeve (Ford, 1996, pp. 69–70; Liddle, 1986; Hart and McSloy, 2008, pp. 74–75; Holbrook, 2000). Blacklow Hill and Lutterworth, however, are dated by single artefacts, a seax and girdle hanger, respectively. Only one of the two inhumations at Walton Cardiff was furnished, but this included 99 beads of 6th or possibly 7th century date. Based on various artefacts from different graves, the cemetery at Lower Farm appears to date most securely to this period.

Looking at the distribution of these sites, there is a concentration of non-elite late 6th or 7th-century activity in the south-west of the valley (Figure 4.16). Three of these sites are dated using pottery, and thus their attribution to this period is insecure. However, even if these are disregarded, the three remaining sites form a cluster in this area. Interestingly, these non-elite sites do not seem to correspond with a concentration of elite sites dating to the same period. The location of the elite sites is the focus of analysis in Chapter 8, but some comparisons are given here.

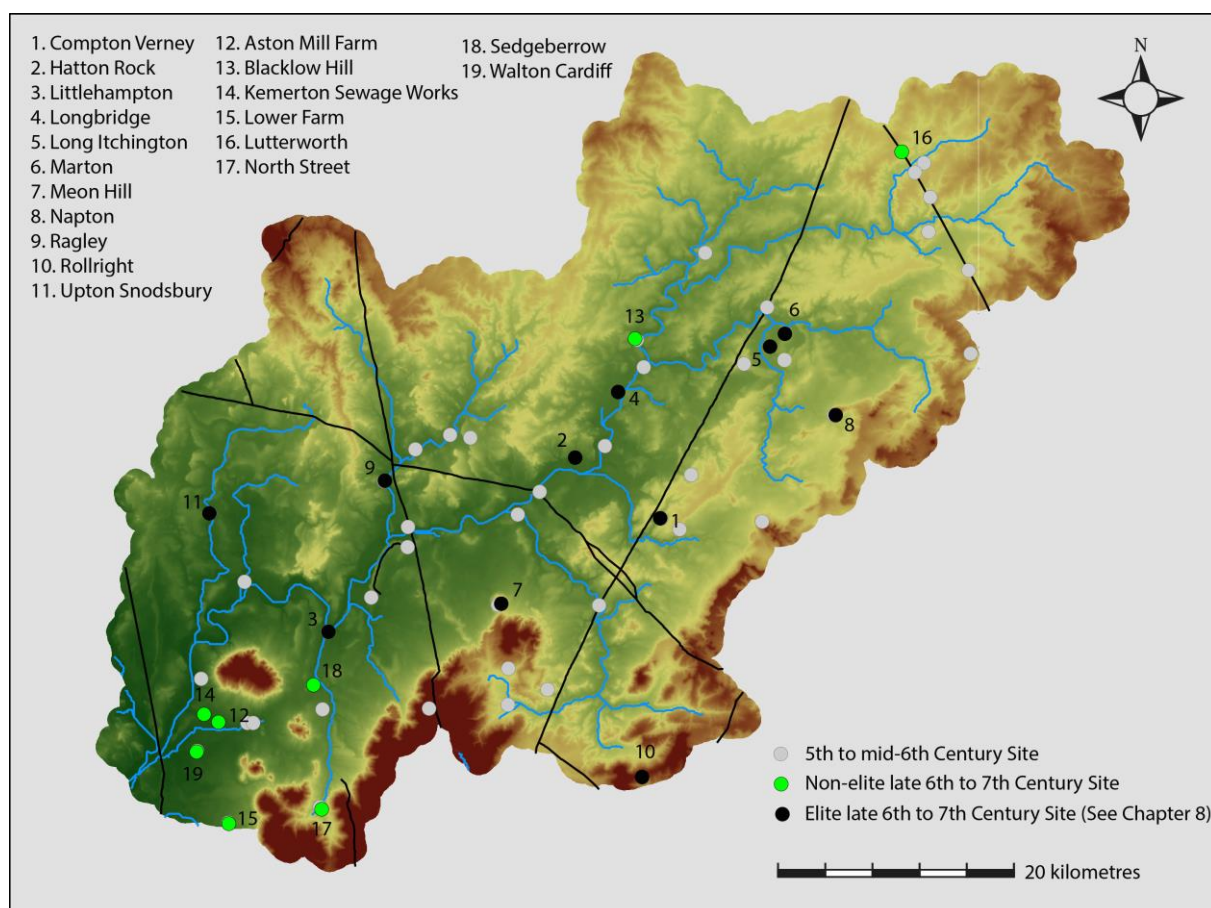


Figure 4. 16. The distribution of late 6th or 7th-century sites

In many ways the landscape settings of the 7th-century sites resemble those of the 5th and 6th centuries. Sites are found throughout the valley, but valley-bottom sites tend to be favoured. Prehistoric monuments and late Roman settlement features continue to act as foci for activity: the barrows at Hatton Rock, the megalithic complex at Rollright, and the Roman villa at Snowford Bridge, Long Itchington, for example. A distinction, however, does exist when the role of the site is considered. In the 5th and 6th centuries the cemeteries which appear to have had a more local function are those which reuse existing monuments, including sites like Stretton-on-Fosse, Wasperton, and the Beckfords. In contrast, the sites which may have had a regional role – Bidford-on-Avon and Alveston Manor – currently show no evidence of this practice. Conversely, in the 7th century both of the great hall complexes of Hatton Rock and Long Itchington, which are thought to have had an important position within the hierarchy of settlements in the region, reused landscapes marked by earlier monuments. Proximity to and visibility of main rivers, continued to be a factor in the positioning of

sites. Alongside the subtle change in the reuse of monuments there also appears to have been a change in the way Roman roads were used. With the exception of Lutterworth, sites of the 7th century were no longer positioned on the main Roman road network, but were found at a greater distance from these long-distance routeways. They still used slopes which directed views towards these, but the close physical relationship had been altered.

4.6 Summary

In summary, this chapter has analysed the landscape setting of the early medieval sites in the Avon Valley. It has considered the topography of these sites, their relationship to prehistoric and Roman sites, and their proximity to Roman roads and main rivers. It has shown those practices common to the valley as a whole, in particular the focus of activity in areas marked by earlier sites and noticeable concentrations along many of the main rivers and Roman roads (see Chapter 5 for further analysis of the river and road networks). At the same time, it has revealed distinct patterns of landscape use within the valley: dislocated valley-bottom and hill and ridge-top sites to the west of Ryknield Street; Watling Street's unusually high concentration of sites, both within and alongside the road and next to major Roman sites; two clusters of monumental reuse in the south-west and central parts of the valley; a possible monumental building tradition and a slight concentration of sites close to Roman monuments in the east of the valley; an absence of early medieval activity close to major Roman sites in the central and western parts of the valley; and, finally, a higher frequency of sites positioned beside navigable parts of the river network.

Many of these distinct patterns appear to relate to those zones identified by suites of burial practices. The eastern Avon Valley, for example, with its strong focus of activity on Watling Street, its frequent reuse of and proximity to Roman sites, and its possible monumental building tradition, coincides with the part of the valley where cremations are found on sites of all sizes, where west-east oriented inhumations are most common, and where dress accessories tend to originate from the east of

England. Together, this combination of burial practices and patterns of landscape used may indicate the presence of different groups within the Avon Valley.

Finally, it is worth drawing attention to the central Avon Valley, that part of the valley where burial practices were most diverse and suggested a coalescence of people and ideas. It is in this part of the valley that the clearest examples of the reuse of large and visible prehistoric monuments has been identified – at Hatton Rock and Meon Hill. The hall complex at the former and the isolated weapons burial at the latter, both of which are unusual within the context of the valley, seem to attest to the presence of elites at these sites. These sites and their positions in relation to the wider valley will be considered in Chapter 8.

Chapter 5. The Avon Valley in the 5th and 6th centuries: routeways and existing communities

5.1 Introduction

Chapters 3 and 4 illustrated how major cemeteries developed in the 5th and 6th centuries beside major routeways in the Avon Valley. They also highlighted the influence of Roman remains on patterns of landscape use in the early medieval period. This chapter further investigates these two characteristics of the Avon Valley, seeking to understand both their development over time and their wider context. This analysis incorporates the valley-wide approach adopted in preceding chapters alongside more detailed investigation of case studies. Firstly, the role of routeways is considered in relation to activity at fording points and at 'road blocks'. Secondly, two case studies are presented which look at the trajectories of two very different Romano-British communities as time moved into the early medieval period: assessing evidence for small-scale continuity at Wasperton and proposing a relationship between Roman Alcester and early medieval Bidford-on-Avon.

5.2 The Role of Routeways: the physical control of movement and the display of authority

The positioning of sites in relation to 'major routeways' was analysed to see how movement through the Avon Valley may have been influenced through displays of authority or, in some parts of the valley, controlled. The term 'control' refers to the physical prevention of travel. Control may have occurred at sites which developed beside natural obstacles, such as fords, and at sites which created their own hindrance to travel, such as road blocks (see below). Before presenting the results of this analysis it is necessary to return to the definition of 'major routeways' outlined in Chapter 2.3.1 and 2.3.5. As is described in detail in Chapter 2.3.5, inter-regional Roman roads were selected for analysis. These roads together with the main rivers of the Avon Valley constitute the network of major routeways used.

Secondly, in order to explore whether influence over movement along routeways was significant it must first be established that routeways were themselves important. This is made difficult by the lack of attention paid by academics to the subject of identifying Anglo-Saxon routeways (Pelteret, 1985, p. 155; Reynolds, 2009, p. 420). Whilst this presents a limitation to this study, the theoretical importance of routeways has at least been recognised in this period and they are now seen as facilitating interaction between communities and, depending on their scale, between regions (c.f. Draper, 2006, p. 73; Hooke, 2001, p. 161; Oosthuizen, 2013, p. 124; Palmer, 2003, p. 51; Reynolds and Langlands, 2011, p. 416; Semple, 2008, p. 410).

The significance of routeways was tested archaeologically by exploring whether there was any relationship between high-status or regionally important sites and artefacts and routeways. In particular, nodal points were investigated to see if they became the focus of activities not seen elsewhere. In a geographical sense, 'nodal point' is used to refer to a place in the landscape where two or more routeways intersect; however, it might also usefully be applied to parts of the route network where travel can be readily manipulated, for example, at places where roads narrow or pass through challenging terrain which restricts passage. Such investigations are dependent on an assessment of the wider landscape. It is not possible, for example, to say whether a ford was treated in a 'special' way without first establishing 'normal' practices in a region. Thus, a regional study such as this provided the ideal opportunity to explore questions of display and control within the 5th to 6th-century landscape.

5.2.1 Fording Points

Fords create natural nodal points in a landscape, bringing together overland and riverine traffic, and forcing travel into narrow tracts of land. In the Avon Valley, five 5th to 6th-century cemeteries are located beside places where a Roman road crosses a river – Alveston, Bidford-on-Avon, Churchover, Halford, and Princethorpe, and thus their continued maintenance and use as fords is inferred. Mapping late 4th to 7th-century finds from the PAS makes it possible to identify additional crossings which could have been in use in the early medieval period. Taken together the evidence suggests that, of the 17

fords of the Roman road network, 11 were the focus of activity between the late Romano-British and early medieval periods. Five of the six remaining fords are not known to have been foci of early medieval activity. These fords are on small watercourses which, being less of a hindrance to travel, may have presented less opportunity for control (Table 5.1). The relatively strong evidence for early medieval activity at ford sites suggests their importance to 5th and 6th-century communities.

Site	River	Road	Description of river at ford	PAS Finds from vicinity
	Avon	Watling Street	River	Coin of Valentinian I (364-378AD) Cruciform Brooch (500-600AD)
Churchover	Swift	Watling Street	River	-
	Smite Brook	Fosse Way	Small watercourse	-
	Avon	Fosse Way	River	-
Princethorpe	Leam	Fosse Way	River	11 coins from Magentius to Gratian (350-383AD)
	Dene	Fosse Way	Small watercourse	-
	Wagtail Brook	Salt Way	Small watercourse	-
Halford	Stour	Fosse Way	Large River	-
Tiddington & Alveston Manor	Avon	Salt Way	Large River	-
	Knee Brook	Fosse Way	Small watercourse	-
Bidford-on-Avon	Avon	Rykniel Street	Large River	51 coins from Magnentius to Theodosius (350-395AD) and five 5 th – 6 th Century Brooches.
Alcester	Arrow	Salt Way	Large River	37 coins from Magnentius to Theodosius (350-402 AD) and two 5 th -6 th Century Brooches.
Alcester	Arrow	Rykniel Street	Large River	As above
	Arrow	Rykniel Street	River	Two 5 th -6 th Century Brooches
	Shell Brook	Salt Way	Small watercourse	-
	Carrant Brook	Roman Road	River	7 coins from Constantius II to the House of Valentinian (350-378 AD)
	Avon	Roman Road	Large River	As above

Table 5. 1 The fords on the Roman road network in the Avon Valley

This can be explored further through a study of two of the largest sites in the valley – the late 5th to 7th-century cemeteries at Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon – both of which lie beside fording points on the River Avon. The cemetery at the Stratford-upon-Avon hotel, Alveston Manor, has rarely featured in wider syntheses as the site report has never been published. The archaeologist tasked with reporting on the 1934-35 excavations and tying in the material from his own excavations in 1970-71 died before he was able to see the report in print. A draft version of his report was located at Archaeology Warwickshire and provides the only detail we have of these excavations (Ford, unpub.). Subsequent work in the early 21st century, combined with these earlier investigations, has identified a total of 119 burials (Ford, unpub.; Jones, 2010, 2002). The distribution of the graves and the identification of a possible boundary ditch led Ford to believe that the majority of the cemetery has been uncovered and that few graves remain to be found (unpub., p. 95).

The challenges presented by publication continue at Bidford-on-Avon, but here the future is less bleak as Tania Dickinson and Sue Hirst are currently working on a report of the rescue excavations conducted between 1971 and 1994 (Tania Dickinson pers. comm. Jan 2015). As this is a work in progress, analysis here relied on the piecemeal reports and the original excavations by Humphries et al. in the 1920s (Booth and Hodgson, 1990; Ford, 1971; Hirst, 1975; Humphries et al., 1923, 1922; Webster and Cherry, 1980, p. 230). Victorian quarrying and the fragmentary nature of the investigations mean that it is probable that not all the burials have been identified. Of those uncovered, the quality of the earlier reports makes the total number excavated difficult to establish. Having scrutinised the evidence, Tania Dickinson cautiously places the figure at around 264 inhumations and 158 cremations, but acknowledges that there could be as many as 500 individuals (pers. comm. Jan 2015). With between c.426-500 individuals, Bidford-on-Avon was the largest early medieval cemetery in the region and represented the most westerly example of the major mixed-rite cemeteries of the 5th to 7th-century furnished burial tradition.

The unusual size and diversity of practices present at the cemeteries of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon has been highlighted in Chapter 3 and it is possible that these sites held 'supra-local' status in the valley. The term 'supra-local' is used here to suggest that these cemeteries incorporated either people or practices from beyond their immediate locale and, thus were of greater importance than other cemeteries in the valley. Further evidence of this status might be recognised in two inhumations at Bidford-on-Avon: Inhumation 182 (Inh. 182) and HB2. Inh. 182 stands out not only for its number and quality of grave goods, but also because of the link it implies to a site on the southern slopes of the valley – Stretton-on-Fosse. This burial was accompanied by an iron knife at the waist, an iron spearhead at the left shoulder, an iron shield boss plated with copper alloy and gold over the left arm, and a bronze bowl placed on a wooden plank above the skull. The bowl was formed out of a single sheet of bronze with the sides turned over to form a rim. Protruding from this were two triangular lugs pierced with circular holes which held an iron handle (Humphries et al., 1923, p. 276). In form this bowl is identical to the description of the 'Gotland cauldron' from inhumation F88 at Stretton-on-Fosse. This second cauldron was also found in a position associated with the head, although in this grave it took the place of the skull which had been removed and placed on the left femur (Ford, 2003, pp. 55–56). Similarities between these graves continued with the inclusion of a spearhead and copper alloy plated shield boss in F88 (Ford, 2003, p. 55). It is possible that these two graves, amongst the most-richly furnished in their respective cemeteries (Ford, 2003, p. 103; Humphries et al., 1923, pp. 275–276), belonged to a shared elite tradition which spanned the wider region of the Central Zone in the valley. A second inhumation at Bidford-on-Avon, HB2 or Dickinson's 'cunning woman' (1992), also implies the existence of complex social stratification through the presence of individuals thought to have held specialist roles. HB2 was buried with a range of items believed to be amuletic – particularly 12 objects interpreted as miniature buckets, an antler cone, and a knife with an unusually long, decorated bone handle reminiscent of a scalpel – in nature and was interpreted as that of a woman fulfilling a dedicated healing and prophetic function within the community (Dickinson, 1992).

A review of the cemetery evidence has been presented in Chapter 3, but we should probe deeper and ask why these sites (and these fords) stand out amongst the other cemeteries in the Central Zone. What properties do these sites possess which made them significant within the context of the Avon landscape?

Firstly, the position of these sites at fords on the main river, the Avon, may explain their importance. Bisecting the valley, the river as it passes by these sites would have been an impediment to over-land travel, hindering movement through the landscape. Points where the river could be crossed would, therefore, hold added significance. The necessity to pass through these points to continue onwards would create an environment ideal for elite manipulation and control. Besides the crossing of the river by road traffic, the meeting of road and river also offers the possibility of trans-shipment between road and river traffic. That the river was navigable as far up as Bidford-on-Avon is suggested by accounts from Medieval Pershore Abbey which detailed goods delivered by boat from Evesham, approximately 12 kilometres downstream from Bidford-on-Avon (Jones, 2000, pp. 68–69). Thus, this location may have brought together over-land and riverine traffic.

There are, however, other sites which lie beside fords on the River Avon but did not develop to the extent of our two case studies. There must, therefore, have been another factor affecting their favourable growth. It is here that we turn to the other feature of a ford – the road. The Roman roads that cross the Avon beside these two sites were not only regional, long-distance routeways, but they were, significantly, also salt ways.

The cemetery at Alveston Manor lay beside a Roman road which traversed the valley on a north-west to south-easterly course, running through Alcester, crossing the Avon at Stratford and then the Fosse Way before descending into the Upper Thames Valley. This route is identifiable as one of six known pre-Conquest salt roads which radiated out from the inland salt wells at Droitwich (Hooke, 2009, p. 124; Taylor, 1979, p. 96). At Bidford-on-Avon, the Roman Ryknield Street, which linked into the Droitwich network at Alcester, met a second salt way, which ran west from Evesham, at a crossing on

the River Avon (Hooke, 1981, p. 134; Maddicott, 2005; Naylor and Richards, 2010). Further evidence for the transport of this commodity in the vicinity was found in a place-name immediately to the west of Bidford – Salford Priors (Hooke, 1981, p. 134; Maddicott, 2005, p. 47), first recorded in the early 8th century as ‘Saltford Major’ (Gover et al., 1936, p. 220). Whilst no archaeological evidence can demonstrate continuity of production at the Droitwich wells between the Romano-British and early medieval period, two early to mid-8th-century charters do attest to their use (Hooke, 1981, p. 135; S. 102 & 1824).⁴⁰ A further 9th – 10th century charter indicates that the salt was transported by waggon or pack load throughout the region.⁴¹ It seems reasonable to suggest that, where these roads met traffic from other routes and where movement could be controlled, these places would have developed as nodal points (see below for further discussion of the early medieval salt industry). It is within this context of travel, complex networks of goods transfer, and heightened opportunities for control, display, and communication that we should situate the cemeteries of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon.

5.2.2 ‘Road-blocks’

The creation of ‘road-blocks’ could also be viewed as part of a system of elite control of routeways in the Avon Valley, fashioning man-made nodal points on the network of Roman roads. The term ‘road-block’ is used to refer to early medieval activity cut into or built upon the surface of Roman roads which would impede travel along these routes. In the Avon Valley, this process included the cutting of burials into the road surface, the erection of tumuli, and the positioning of structures in the road. Such obstacles could serve the same function as fording points, forcing travel onto narrow paths for reasons of control and communicating visual statements of authority to people moving through the landscape.

⁴⁰ A lost and, therefore, unverified, charter observed by Dugdale in a 12th-century manuscript recorded a gift made by Aethelred to the Bishop of Worcester at the end of the 7th century. This gift included: *in Wic unum casulum cum duobus caminis de magno puteo*, ‘a shed and two furnaces of the larger brine-pit at Droitwich’ (Hooke, 1981, p. 135). (<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/102.html>). (<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/1824.html>).

⁴¹ S. 223 of AD 884 x 901 referenced tolls extracted at Droitwich by *wægn scilling* or *seam pending*, translated by Hooke as ‘wagon shilling’ and ‘pack-load penny’ (Hooke, 2009, p. 123)(<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/223.html>).

Burials have been excavated both within and beside Watling Street in the parishes of Kilsby and Churchover (Brown and Hannan, 1978, pp. 88–91; Meaney, 1964, p. 259). In addition, less certain reports recorded concentrations of burials south of Kilsby (Brown and Hannan, 1978, p. 91) and north of the Churchover burials, near Gibbet Hill (Meaney, 1964, p. 259). These burials formed a string of inhumations (and a single cremation) along the course of Watling Street. Their description as within, beside, and extending for lengths of the road (Meaney, 1964, p. 259), does not seem to imply that they completely obstructed the road and instead suggests a linear layout. Even if these burials were unmarked, the effect of digging through the road agger would have reduced the quality of the road surface and hindered passage. Furthermore, on the same stretch of the road as the Churchover burials, Dugdale described a “great tumulus which is of the magnitude that it puts passengers beside the usual road” (in Meaney, 1964, p. 259). This excerpt from the 17th century implies that at least some of these burials may have been accompanied by barrows. Not only would these structures have affected transport but they would also have been a strong visual statement to passers-by. Watling Street may represent a concentration of this practice, but evidence from Ryknield Street at Ipsley could, tentatively, be interpreted in a similar manner. For here, running down the centre of the Roman road were cut a series of stake holes. Associated with a francisca found lying on an adjacent cobbled surface, this partitioning of the road has been assigned a date between the 4th and 6th centuries (Fasham, 1988). Although quite different in character to the Watling Street burials, these stake holes and associated roadside activity, as attested by the cobbled surface, may also have been part of a system of control implemented along the routes of the Roman roads in the early medieval period.⁴²

If control was being exerted at these road-blocks we would expect there to be evidence of their prominence relative to other sites. The francisca found at Ipsley, unique in the Avon Valley assemblage, may indicate the presence of individuals with access to materials which were rare and exotic in the

⁴² Interestingly, a similar set of post holes have been identified cut into the road surface in the Roman small town of Dorchester on Thames. During recent and ongoing excavations it was revealed that this road surface post-dated the last decades of the 4th century or the first decades of the 5th century (see Chapter 2.3.5 and <http://discoveringdorchester.blogspot.co.uk/>). Consequently, as at Ipsley, these post holes, which run in a line along the course of the road, may belong to an early medieval phase of activity.

region (Fasham, 1988). Similarly, two other rare finds in the context of the valley were found with the Watling Street burials – swords. At Churchover a 35 inch long sword was found beside a cremation urn and a second sword was found with the burials reportedly to the north of Gibbet Hill (Meaney, 1964, p. 259). Interestingly, such unusual and high status weapons have not been found at either Alveston Manor or Bidford-on-Avon. The practices and expressions of authority at fords and at created road-blocks were, therefore, quite different. Although dating evidence for the latter is confined to Churchover, re-dated in Chapter 2.3.4 to no earlier than the start of the 6th century, and Ipsley, dated by a single object, the francisca, to the 4th – 6th centuries (Fasham, 1988), it is likely that these practices were broadly contemporary. The differences observed may, therefore, have been due to their locations within the valley.

Upon current evidence, it would appear that the construction of road-blocks in the form of burials within the course of a Roman road was unique to Watling Street, and therefore the eastern part of the Avon Valley. This practice fits within the framework of the already observed focus of early medieval activity on this road (see Chapter 4.4.2.1). Conversely, the development of major sites at fording points appears to have been characteristic of the central part of the valley. This is despite the presence of fords in the east which might have become foci. The distinctive use of fords in the central part of the Avon may be due to the greater size of the rivers, the importance of the salt road network, the presence of a frontier zone, or a combination of all of these factors. In fact, the presence of these fords, which were possibly major nodal points on an inter-regional salt distribution network, may have influenced the development of a frontier zone in this part of the valley. Frontiers are, after all, now believed to have been places for the exchange of goods, ideas, and knowledge (Hall, 2009; Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995; Naum, 2010; Parker, 2006, p. 86; Reilly, 1988, p. 161; Ylimaunu et al., 2014) and a nodal point, or perhaps an 'entrepôt', such as Bidford-on-Avon would have provided the perfect environment for these interactions (see below for further discussion of Bidford-on-Avon and the salt network).

5.2.3 The Late Romano-British period

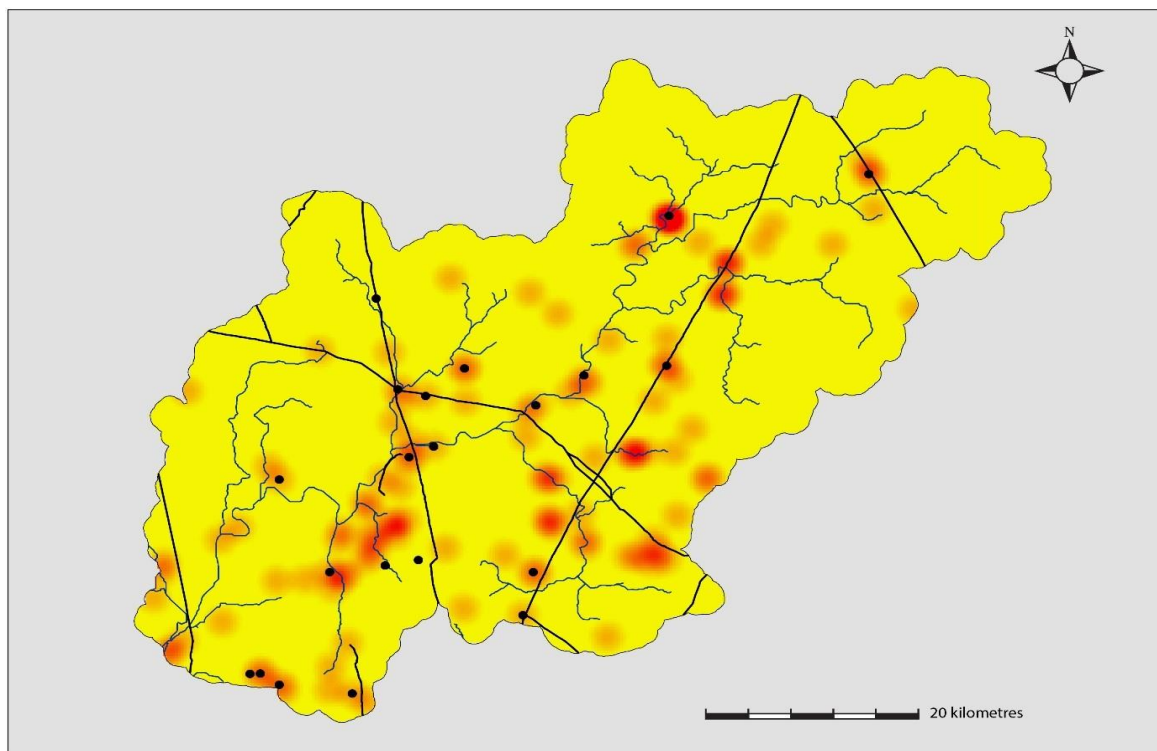


Figure 5. 1 Kernel Density Estimate map showing Romano-British activity in the Avon Valley with sites with late 4th-century activity marked as points

To conclude this section there is evidence to suggest that the processes described above in the 5th and 6th centuries had their roots in the late 4th century. The implications of this are that we must be open to the possibility that the centrality of routeways to early medieval society in the Avon Valley was not wholly an import which arrived with Germanic communities, but may have been influenced by existing practices. The late Romano-British period in the Avon Valley was characterised by a contraction in the use of the landscape with activity shrinking to focus on the road and river networks (Figure 5.1).⁴³ This concentration continued into the post Romano-British period with some of the late 4th-century sites demonstrating use into the 5th century. In fact, with the exception of Alveston Manor,⁴⁴ evidence of activity in the early and mid-5th-century Avon Valley came entirely from these late Romano-British sites: Wasperton, the Lunt and Baginton Plateau, Stretton-on-Fosse, Ipsley, Marlcliff, and possibly

⁴³ Sites with evidence of late 4th-century activity are listed in Catalogue 3.

⁴⁴ Alveston Manor cemetery was preceded by settlement features, but these were part of the 2nd-century Romano-British settlement at Tiddington and not the late 4th-century enclosed settlement which had shifted east and away from the ford during the Romano-British period (Burnham and Wachter, 1990, pp. 310–314; Palmer, 1981, pp. 19–21).

Chesterton (Carver et al., 2009; Hobley, 1975, p. 5; Ford, 2003, pp. 21–30; Fasham, 1988; Hingley et al., 1987; Taylor, 1967). The patterns we see in the later 5th century, which also focussed on the Roman roads and the main rivers, might usefully be seen as a form of continuity of practice. This and other aspects of continuity from the Romano-British into the early medieval period are the focus of the next section, with the development of existing communities brought to the fore.

5.3 The Development of Existing Communities

Two case studies were chosen whose sequences allowed the examination of the development of socio-political units in the Avon Valley: 4th to 7th-century Wasperton and Roman Alcester and early medieval Bidford-on-Avon. At Wasperton, continuity of practices and of population may imply the endurance of an existing socio-political system, or elements of one. In contrast, the potential imposition of a new economic system and the new focus of activity on major fording points, evidenced by the decline of Alcester and the rise of Bidford-on-Avon, may suggest that an emergent socio-political system did develop in the 5th and 6th centuries.

5.3.1 Assessing the case for small-scale continuity at Wasperton

The cemetery at Wasperton lies south of the River Avon in a complex landscape of extant sites (Carver et al., 2009, p. 19). The early medieval cemetery here is one of the few sites in England where continuity of use from the late Romano-British period to the 7th century can be argued (Carver et al., 2009, p. 19). The evolving mortuary rites represented and their implications for socio-political changes in the area were, therefore, essential to any study of the Avon Valley.

To understand these implications the development of this unusual cemetery must be outlined. The Romano-British agricultural settlement which developed in the 2nd century, probably employed in livestock management, drastically changed its function in the later Romano-British period. Two corn driers, numerous querns, two wells, and ten ‘bread’ ovens indicate that the settlement became intensively involved in the processing of grain (Carver et al., 2009, p. 19). At some time during the 4th century an agricultural enclosure was appropriated for use as a burial ground (Carver et al., 2009, p.

114). Burials were apparently arranged into distinct plots (referred to in the report as Spatial Groups or SG) which, given their persistence into subsequent periods, were probably delineated by visible features such as paths (Carver et al., 2009, p. 114). The excavators argued that, during the 5th century, the use of plank and plank/stone linings, a characteristic thought to belong to a post-Roman tradition (Carver et al., 2009, p. 132), and the positioning of graves apparently in respect of earlier graves, may represent continuity of burial in the cemetery (Carver et al., 2009, p. 115). Two sunken feature buildings were observed during excavation, one within the burial enclosure and one without (Carver et al., 2009, p. 28). It was not possible to relate these structures and the burial sequence, so, with no artefacts retrieved, no date was offered by the excavators. The existence of structures, including a sunken feature building, beneath the cemeteries at Stretton-on-Fosse and Alveston Manor (Ford, 2003, p. 23, unpub., pp. 79–80), however, may suggest that the Wasperton examples belonged to this 5th-century phase. This was followed by the appearance of Anglo-Saxon material in the late 5th century, but continuity was again suggested by the lack of inter-cutting of earlier graves and the avoidance of plot SG3, used extensively in the 5th century and perhaps continuing in use into the 6th century (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 116–117). It was at this time that SG7A, a concentration of cremations, was superimposed on to the existing system of plots (Carver et al., 2009, p. 118). The 6th century was then characterised by the expansion of inhumations with Anglo-Saxon grave goods and the first groups of burials outside the enclosure since the 4th century (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 119–120). In the later years of this century, it was proposed that three groups of inhumations focussed on existing or newly built barrows to the immediate north of the enclosure. These barrows were assumed by the layout of isolated groups of burials which appeared to form circles and, in the case of SG9, may have had a central burial at its core (Carver et al., 2009, p. 120). The final phase of the cemetery was represented by three male and three female individuals buried in such a way as to suggest status: Inh. 142, a burial possibly within a timber-lined chamber, and Inh. 198, a female with an elaborate composite disc brooch and silver beads, were both isolated which has led investigators to suppose that they were also under mounds (Carver et al., 2009, p. 120).

Given the continuity which they believed was evidenced, the excavators concluded that a change in population was not necessary to explain the changes seen in the burial practices. They argued that these practices may have changed due to evolving interactions with neighbours whose number and influence would have developed over the period of the cemetery's use (Carver et al., 2009, p. 136). The interpretation of this site is, therefore, not just one of Romano-British population continuity but also of significant changes in socio-political influences between the 4th and 7th centuries. It was this combination of continuity and change or, as Yoffee put it, the purposeful promotion of some aspects of the past and the simultaneous and deliberate forgetting of other aspects (2007, p. 6), that was the focus of this case study.⁴⁵

Firstly, let us consider those practices which might indicate continuity of population between the Romano-British and early medieval periods. The reuse of barrows or the building of new ones was argued to be a feature of the late 6th to early 7th century at Wasperton (Carver et al., 2009, p. 120). This is in keeping with evidence from across the Avon Valley, where both primary and secondary burial in barrows can be dated to the early medieval period at sites such as Beckford A & B (Evison and Hill, 1996) and in the course of Watling Street, near Churchover (Meaney, 1964, p. 259). The Avon Valley is not unique in this respect and Semple has observed throughout England that the round barrow was the monument of choice for early medieval reuse (2013, p. 13). At Wasperton, however, two inhumations suggest that this practice was not wholly imported into the valley by Germanic migrants. These two burials, Inh. 199 and Inh. 200 belong to the 4th century and the excavators have argued that, given their isolation and their position outside the enclosure, a feature uncommon for this phase of the site, it was possible that they lay under a mound (Carver et al., 2009, p. 114). The fact that a mid-later 6th-century burial, Inh. 2, was positioned close to these burials (Carver et al., 2009, p. 120), in an area otherwise unused for burial, strengthens the argument that these Romano-British burials were marked in some way. Furthermore, the use of a nailed coffin in Inh. 2, a structure most commonly

⁴⁵ Yoffee's edited volume, *Negotiating the past in the past*, presented a range of papers on the interplay between identity, memory, and the use of the landscape (2007).

found in 5th-century burials in the cemetery (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 96–101), but also found in Inh. 199, provides an additional link to the practices of the previous centuries. It is possible, therefore, that activity at barrows was influenced by knowledge of pre-existing burial rites.

Similarly, whilst most cremations at Wasperton cluster as a distinct group which appeared in the late 5th – early 6th centuries, three cremations have been dated to the Romano-British period: Cremation 23 (Cr. 23), based on the presence of hobnails, and Cr. 20 and Cr. 26, by radiocarbon dating (Carver et al., 2009, p. 118). These few burials suggest that cremation may have been a familiar rite to the post Romano-British community at Wasperton and their appearance in the later 5th century may have been a *reappearance*. Decapitation was another rite which may indicate a level of continuity. Three inhumations and two possible inhumations with this rite have been dated to the Romano-British period, whilst two possible 5th-century inhumations with this rite, two 6th century inhumations with this rite, and one possible 6th century inhumation with this rite demonstrate that this practice spanned the full chronology of the cemetery (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 96–101). Perhaps the best evidence, however, for Romano-British continuity came not from burial rites but from textiles preserved in the graves. The 2/1 twill weave found at Wasperton was far more likely to have been woven on a two-beam vertical loom, apparatus common in the Romano-British but not the early medieval period. This weave is often found alongside tubular selvedge and soft-finishing of wool, both of which were also common Romano-British techniques. In the Avon Valley, these three techniques were found at Alveston Manor, Stretton-on-Fosse, Bidford-on-Avon, and Wasperton and are likely to represent the survival of Romano-British skills and technology (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 83–85). The late date of one of the examples at Wasperton, Inh. 77, which belonged to the late 6th to early 7th-century phase (Carver et al., 2009, p. 101), implies that this knowledge persisted throughout the life of the cemetery.

Within this context of continued knowledge it was possible to observe the introduction of new material and ideas. In the 5th century, the appearance of stone and timber lined inhumations (Carver et al., 2009, p. 115) may indicate influences from western Britain, where the cist tradition is known from the

Iron Age (Carver et al., 2009, p. 132). This seems to be supported by analysis of Oxygen and Strontium isotopes, where signatures suggested that four individuals from the 4th – 5th centuries were likely to have come from this part of Britain (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 48–49). Oxygen isotope data also indicated the presence of individuals who likely grew up in a climate similar to that of the Mediterranean. Perhaps surprisingly, not all of these individuals were confined to the Romano-British period: the 7th-century Inh. 174, an unfurnished adult male burial in a wooden coffin within a stone-lined grave, had Oxygen isotope signatures which also suggested a possible Mediterranean origin (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 48–49 & 317). This evidence would indicate a level of mobility and the arrival of new-comers into the Wasperton population at various times. The most significant evidence of external influences, however, whilst not necessarily indicating new people, was the appearance of ‘Anglo-Saxon’ material in the late 5th century (Carver et al., 2009, p. 116).

The earliest material, from late 5th to early 6th-century contexts, showed contact with individuals from or access to networks linked to both the East Anglian and Upper Thames regions (Figure 5.2): the Anglian Type B3 cruciform brooch from Inh. 111 and the Upper Thames Type 5 shield boss from Inh. 115 (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 57 & 69) are good examples. The latter half of the 6th century saw stronger links with the Upper Thames region with objects such as the two cast saucer brooches from Inh. 24 becoming more common (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 57 & 119). In the late 6th and early 7th century, influences switched again and material from the east and from Kent entered the burial record more frequently. The composite disc brooch with applied gold foil from Inh. 198, for example, one of the latest burials in the cemetery, shows links to Kent and the north of the Thames (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 58 & 334). This pattern is reflected elsewhere in the Avon Valley (see Chapter 3.2.5) and implies successive phases of influence, with links to the east and the south of the Avon Valley ebbing and flowing throughout the early medieval period. Thus, this material at Wasperton not only demonstrates contacts between the cemetery’s population and its neighbours, but also the evolving socio-political networks which held sway in the Avon Valley.

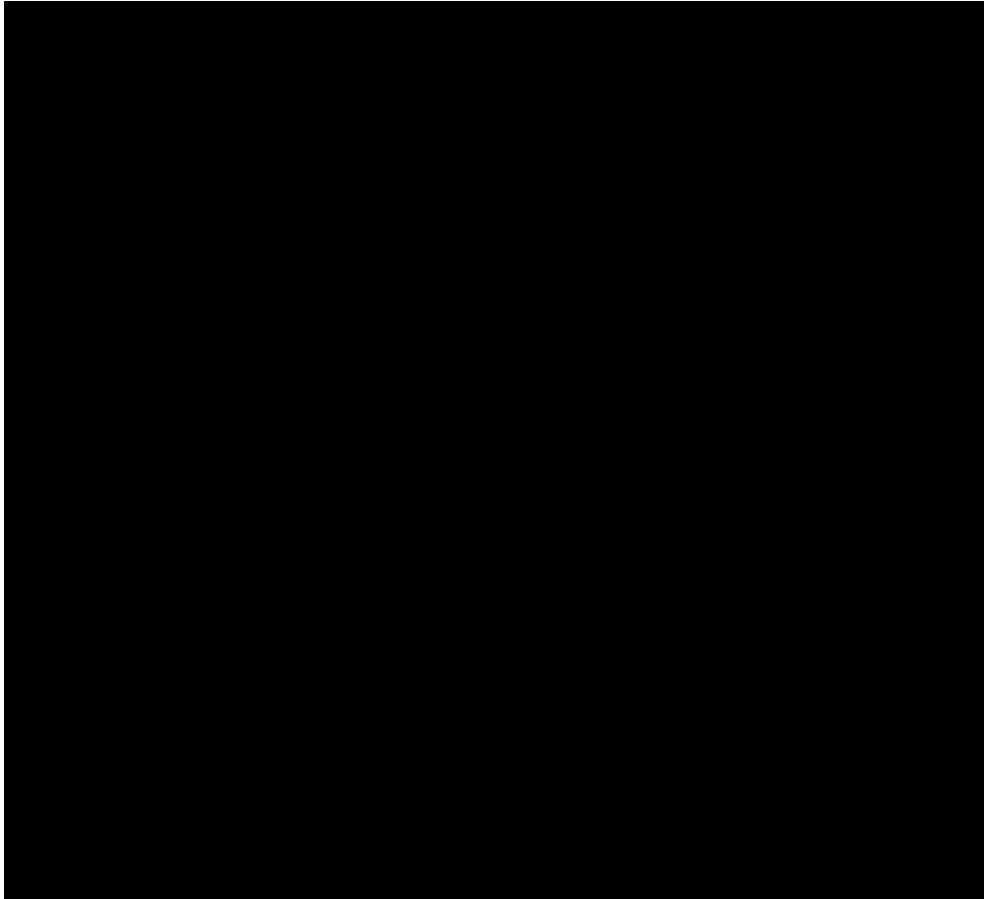


Figure 5. 2. Example gravegoods from Wasperton: A) Anglian cruciform brooch, Inh. 111; B) Upper Thames Valley shield boss, Inh. 115; C) Upper Thames Valley saucer brooch pair, Inh. 24; D) Kentish composite disc brooch, Inh. 198 (not to scale and after Carver et al. 2009)

The Wasperton case study thus demonstrates both continuity and change and, importantly, implies interaction between distinct communities in the valley. It shows how influences external to the region – burial rites from western Britain and grave goods from Anglian and Saxon regions – were incorporated within an existing and dynamic funerary tradition. This implies active engagement, reaction, and adaptation on the part of the Romano-British, but also attests to the growing presence of new socio-political groups within the valley. Regardless of whether Germanic people or just their ideas and goods migrated into the Avon Valley, the changes wrought on local communities between the 4th and 7th centuries were significant. The population at Wasperton might have continued but it was irreversibly changed and by the 7th century the cemetery lay within a new network and socio-political sphere. Elements of continuity at this site suggest two-way interaction in the formation of this

emergent system, but it was undeniably a new system. Wasperton was able to find a place within this early medieval world but another Romano-British centre, namely Alcester, was to decline.

5.3.2 Continuity and Change at Roman Alcester and Early Medieval Bidford-on-Avon.

Towards the western part of the central Avon Valley, and at a distance of only 5.5 kilometres from each other, lay Roman Alcester and early medieval Bidford-on-Avon, perhaps the most important sites in the region during their respective periods (Figure 5.3). It is argued here that the trajectories of these two sites are connected; to understand one you must understand the other and to understand the development of a new system of socio-political control in the 5th and 6th centuries you must investigate both. For, at these sites, it is argued that both continuity and change of networks and landscape use is evidenced.

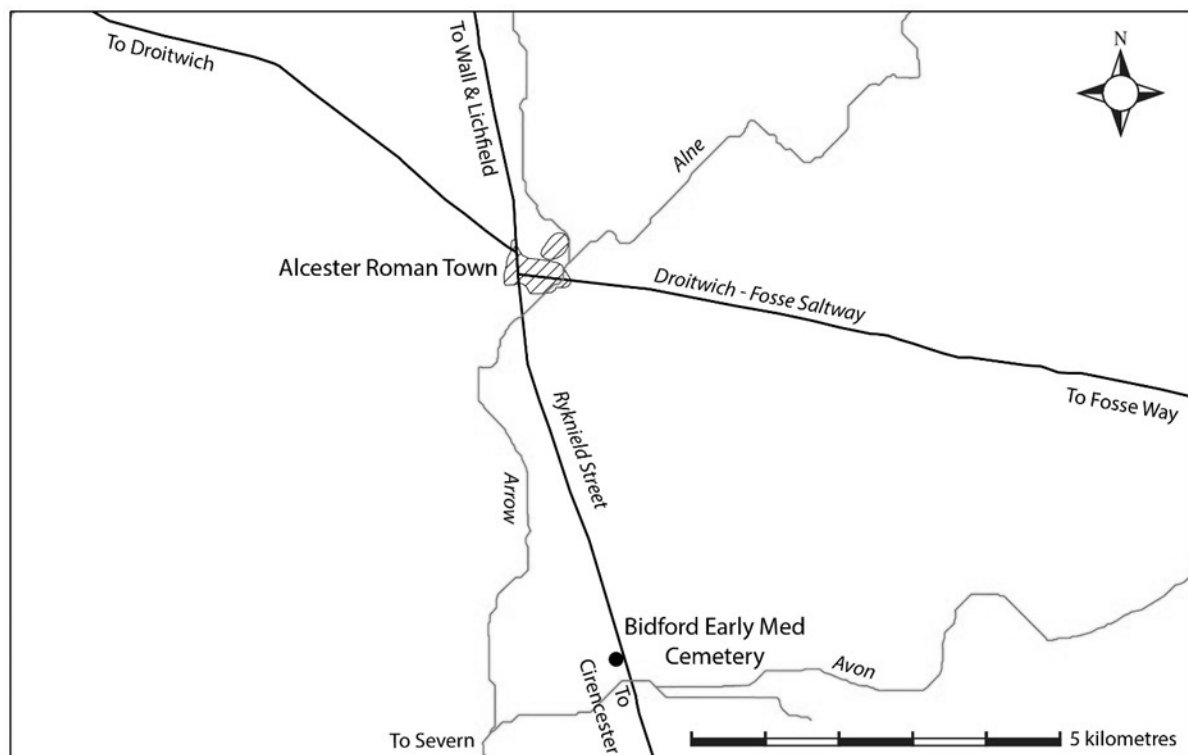


Figure 5. 3. The river and Roman road networks at Alcester and Bidford-on-Avon

The Romano-British small town of Alcester lay at the confluence of the rivers Alne and Arrow and 6 kilometres north of the latter's confluence with the Avon. The site lay on an island of the first and second gravel terraces, cut off to the northwest by an area of open marshland (Booth, 1994, p. 1). The position of the town appears to have been dictated not only by the confluence of these rivers, but also the Roman road, Ryknield Street, which forded the Arrow here, and the Droitwich – Fosse Salt Way which intersected Ryknield Street to the west of the town before running through its core (Cracknell, 1989, p. 57). The Iron Age origins of the town, although hypothesised are, as yet, undiscovered and the earliest evidence is from a Conquest period fort 400 metres south of the River Arrow (Booth and Evans, 2002, p. 301; Cracknell, 1989, p. 57; Cracknell et al., 1994, p. 257). This fort was likely to have been occupied for only a short period and was succeeded in the AD 60s by a second fort located in the area of Bleachfield Street and Birch Abbey. The defences of this second fort have not been found and its existence has been inferred from a range of aligned buildings and the presence of a high number of military finds (Booth and Evans, 2002, p. 301). From this military core the town expanded and at its height covered an area of approximately 30 hectares (Cracknell et al., 1994, p. 249). In its final phase, extensive and late 4th-century activity is suggested by the building of a defensive stone wall which enclosed an area of 9.3 hectares, dated by a coin of AD 364-367 found in the demolition layers of a building removed to make way for its construction (Cracknell, 1996, p. 133).

Whilst the town developed from initial military occupation, the demolition of the second fort in the early 2nd century implies that the flourishing of the town lay at the hands of its civic rather than its military population (Booth and Evans, 2002, p. 303). Various economic functions have been suggested to explain the town's development: grain collection and storage, implied by the presence of a massive stone store building (Cracknell, 1996, p. 134); a central market, indicated by the large extra-mural market area which saw activity from the late 1st until at least the late 4th century (Cracknell, 1989, pp. 58–59); and a role within the Droitwich salt distribution network (Cracknell et al., 1994, pp. 257–258). Analysis of metalwork and pottery indicated that, economically, Alcester was most strongly linked to the Severn Valley (Cracknell et al., 1994, p. 258). Thus, it appears that Alcester lay within a complex

economic network with a westerly focus, probably utilising Ryknield Street to access Cirencester and the south west and possibly the River Avon, six kilometres to the south, which gave direct access to the Severn, Gloucester, and beyond.

The westerly facing Alcester and the possibility that the River Avon acted as a link to Severn-based markets in the Romano-British period leads us to consider Bidford-on-Avon. Located as it is, Bidford-on-Avon possesses two links to Alcester: Ryknield Street, which runs south from Alcester to cross the Avon at Bidford before continuing to join the Fosse Way just north of Cirencester (Margary, 1967, p. 499), and the River Arrow, whose confluence with the Avon is less than two kilometres to the west of Bidford.⁴⁶ To understand Bidford-on-Avon it is essential to appreciate this location.

Whilst substantially less is known about Roman Bidford-on-Avon than Alcester, there is evidence to suggest that the site was a “small roadside settlement on Ryknield Street, [which was] perhaps additionally important since it was located at a major river crossing” (Booth, 1996, p. 39). Excavations in the Arrow Valley to the immediate west and north and at Welford-on-Avon to the east, indicated that this settlement did not lie in isolation and was part of a wider agricultural landscape (Booth, 1986; Palmer, 2000). The Arrow Valley was subject to intensive farming from the 1st century AD, culminating in what is described as a “dispersed villa complex” in the 3rd and 4th centuries (Palmer, 2000, pp. 185–195). A second villa has been suggested at Welford where pottery and building material scatters, aerial photographs, and extensive metal detector finds have been investigated (Booth, 1986). The 643 Roman coins uncovered indicate a broadly contemporary peak to that of the Arrow villa in the mid – 3rd to mid – 4th centuries, but also demonstrate that activity continued until at least the end of the Roman-British period (Booth, 1986). To the south of the Avon crossing at Marlcliff over 300 Roman coins and 100 metal objects have been found along with a minimum of five stone buildings (Hingley et al., 1987). To the west of this cluster, in the area of Cleeve Prior, a hoard of 100 gold and c. 3,000 silver Roman coins was found in 1811. Contained in two red earthenware pots, the gold coins included issues

⁴⁶ See Plates 12 & 13 which show the post-medieval bridge at Bidford-on-Avon and the confluence of the Rivers Avon and Arrow

of the 4th-century emperors Valentinian I, Gratian, Theodosius, and Valentinian III, emperor from 425-455 AD (Humphries et al., 1922, p. 90). Combined, this evidence suggests that the Avon crossing was a focus of Romano-British activity which extended into the late 4th, if not the 5th, century (Figure 5.4). This focus should not be explained by the ford alone, but should be viewed in relation to the centre at Alcester.

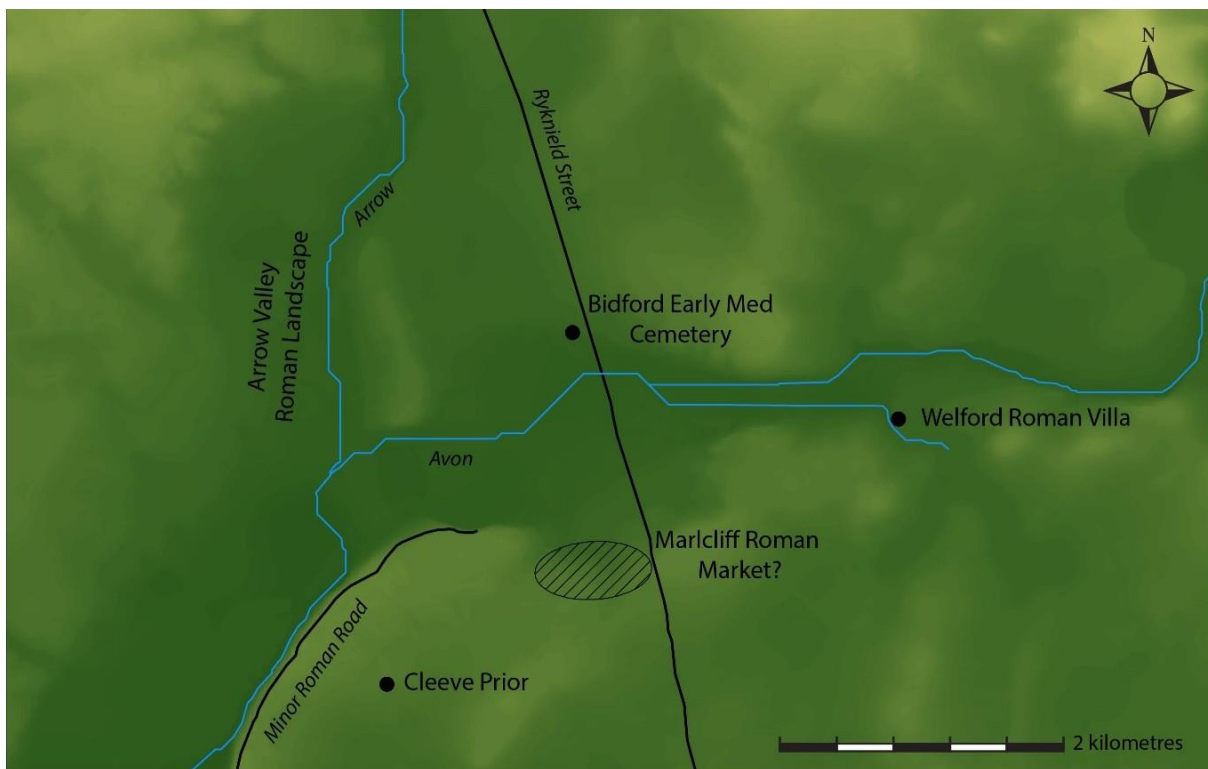


Figure 5. 4. The Roman landscape surrounding Bidford-on-Avon

It has already been argued, using accounts from the medieval abbey at Pershore, that the River Avon may have been navigable as far upstream as Bidford-on-Avon (see above and Chapter 4.4.2.2). In contrast, it seems highly unlikely that the much smaller River Arrow, on which Alcester lies, would have been able to support riverine traffic. This fact combined with the road-based link between Bidford-on-Avon and Alcester, Ryknield Street, may hint at the function of the former as a 'landing stage' for the Romano-British small town. Goods exchanged with the Severn Valley may have been transported via the River Avon, brought ashore at Bidford-on-Avon and transferred to carts to be taken to Alcester –

a distance of c. five kilometres – along with the overland trade carried up Ryknield Street from Cirencester. It is difficult to identify what was traded, but the pottery and quern stones from Alcester indicate exchange with the Severn and the Forest of Dean regions (Booth, 1996, p. 51; Cracknell et al., 1994, p. 258) and a route through Bidford-on-Avon would seem logical. We should also not overlook the possibility that salt was also traded through this landscape. The Droitwich salt industry was active throughout the Romano-British period with an early fort constructed above the River Salwarpe and a large villa built beside the brine pits in the 3rd century, both attesting to the importance of this industry (Hooke, 1981, p. 142). Lying on one of the roads radiating out from Droitwich, a role in the redistribution of salt has been posited at Alcester (Cracknell et al., 1994, pp. 257–258) and it seems highly likely that Bidford-on-Avon too, connected both to Alcester and to a second salt way (see discussion above in Chapter 5.2.1), was part of this network.

Support for such a model might be found in the fields between the confluence of the Avon and Arrow and the Ryknield Street ford where 172 Roman objects, 149 of which are coins, have been recorded by metal detectorists on the PAS (Figure 5.5). It is possible that the high level of coin loss in these fields is evidence of the transferral of goods at this point along the River Avon. Interestingly 32% of these coins post-date AD 350, this is compared to 21% of coins across the whole parish. This would not only suggest that Bidford-on-Avon experienced a peak of activity in the late 4th century, mirroring building work at Alcester, but that this was most acute on the area of land between the confluence and the ford. Similarly, the development of the market place at Marlcliff on the Roman road to the south of the river crossing (Hingley et al., 1987), might be viewed as part of the same trade nexus and the prosperity seen at the 3rd to 4th-century villa complex in the Arrow Valley (Palmer, 2000, p. 195) may also be explained by proximity to an inter-regional market. If such a market persisted into the very latest datable phases of the Romano-British period then it would be reasonable to expect that it continued in use or exerted influence into the earliest post Romano-British period. It is in this context that we should explore the significance of this particular location as the site of the largest cemetery in the Avon Valley during the early medieval period.

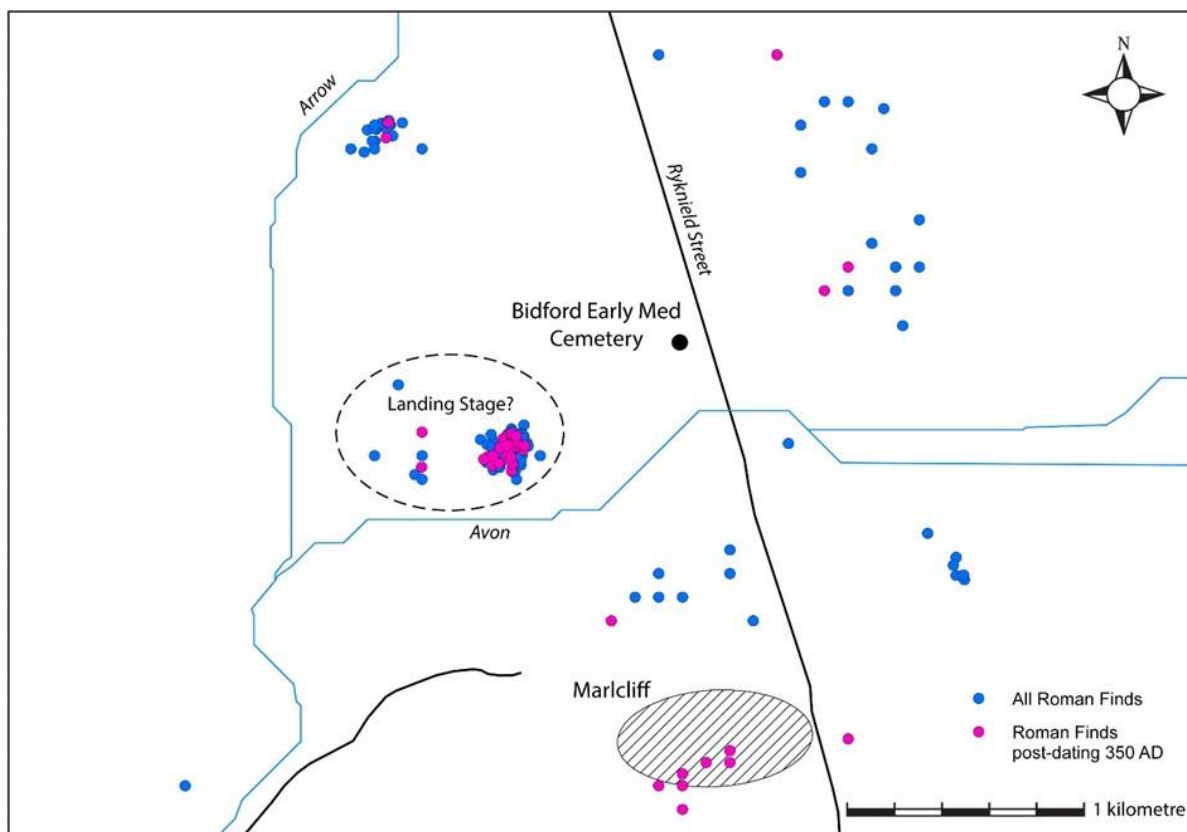


Figure 5. 5. Roman finds recorded on the PAS in the parish of Bidford-on-Avon (May 2015)

The earlier 5th century at Bidford-on-Avon is elusive, perhaps represented solely by the investigations of Hingley et al. at Marcliff (1987). At the site of the Romano-British market, where coins attested to continued use until at least the end of the 4th century, a number of metal objects, normally associated with burials – a saucer brooch, a sword pyramid and mount, and a belt plate – have been identified which dated broadly to the 5th and 6th centuries (Hingley et al., 1987). With little information on the finds a precise date could not be achieved, but the association with the late Romano-British market might support an early date. Thus, we move from obscurity in the first half of the 5th century to an explosion of activity in the latter part of this century with the establishment of the cemetery north of the ford that was to persist and thrive into the 7th century (Humphries et al., 1923, 1922). It might be tempting to attribute this burgeoning of activity to the arrival of Germanic migrants, but that would neglect the significance of the site in the Romano-British period.

To assess whether there was a dramatic change in the later 5th century which positioned Bidford-on-Avon within a new system of landscape organisation we must consider its context within a wider chronological span. The importance of Bidford-on-Avon in an inter-regional economic network has been proposed for the Romano-British period and it is highly likely that its influence extended beyond the 4th century. This network linked Alcester and Bidford-on-Avon and we must consider the evidence of early medieval activity at the former in order to understand the nature of the activity at the latter.

Alcester, unlike Bidford-on-Avon, had little evidence of activity in the early medieval period. A beam slot cut into an early to mid-4th-century infant cemetery and associated with a rim-sherd of Anglo-Saxon date (Booth and Evans, 2002, pp. 114–115); post holes cut into a late 4th-century demolition layer (Booth, 1989); an early 19th-century report of two cremation urns and an inhumation with a sword (Meaney, 1964, p. 257); two Anglo-Saxon metal detector finds from outside the town (Stokes and Brownsword, 1984); and a worn coin of Honorius (Hughes, 1961) represent the corpus of early medieval evidence known from this major Romano-British site. It appears, therefore, that the rise of early medieval Bidford-on-Avon coincided with the fall of Roman Alcester and hints at a reorganisation of the landscape during the 5th century.

The similarity of the commercial network proposed at Bidford-on-Avon in the Romano-British and mid-Saxon periods, however, may imply that the rise of this site did not represent discontinuity or a complete reorganisation, merely change and the adaptation of an existing network to suit the needs of a newly emergent socio-political group. A mid-Saxon market was suggested to the east of the cemetery in an area described as a mid-7th to mid-9th century 'productive site' (Maddicott, 2005; Metcalf, 2003; Naylor and Richards, 2010). Ulmschneider used her survey of Lincolnshire to define the inland type of these sites as: being found on major communication routes; having a high number of 8th and 9th-century coins and non-ferrous objects, such as pins, hooked tags, and strap-ends; and having some evidence of production (2000). With 19 coins and 28 artefacts dating to between 650 and 900 AD identified as of 2010 (Naylor and Richards, 2010, p. 194), Bidford-on-Avon represents one of only

two examples outside the south and east of England (Maddicott, 2005, p. 46).⁴⁷ The combined date ranges of the coins and artefacts suggests that activity on the site experienced two peaks: first from 650 to c. 700 AD and second from 790 – 810 AD (Naylor and Richards, 2010, p. 196); the earlier peak being immediately subsequent or coincident with the final phase of the cemetery. The trade plied through this site in the mid-Saxon period is again subject to interpretation. Metcalf has noted that as many as 47% of the sceattas at the site are Frisian, a high percentage given the average of 20.6% across the rest of England (Metcalf, 2003, p. 43). With this in mind, he argued for the presence of Continental traders attracted to the region by its wool production (Metcalf, 2003, p. 43). In contrast, and returning to the Romano-British situation, Maddicott (2005) and Naylor and Richards (2010), drew upon Bidford-on-Avon's link to Droitwich, whose industry has been confirmed in this period by the series of early 8th-century charters and the contemporary place-name of Saltford Major (Gover et al., 1936, p. 220; Hooke, 1981, p. 135). Thus, a case may be made that Bidford-on-Avon was functioning, once again, within an inter-regional distribution network, linking into the Avon and Severn River systems along with the Roman road system to the south. Whilst evidence for settlement is lacking for the 5th and 6th centuries, the similarities seen at Romano-British and mid-Saxon Bidford-on-Avon allow for the possibility that an economic network, centred on the Droitwich salt industry, continued throughout this period. This argument is supported by the presence of the major cemetery, spanning from the second half of the 5th century through to the 7th, with its strong evidence of connections extending beyond the valley.

To conclude this case study, it is necessary to offer some thoughts on why Bidford-on-Avon may have continued whilst Alcester declined and what the implications of this are for the development of new polities in the 5th and 6th centuries. It has been argued elsewhere in this thesis that Roman roads did not go out of use in the 5th century (see Chapters 4.4.2.1 and 5.2) and we should not, therefore, expect Alcester's position on this road network, rather than on the river, to explain its decline. Instead we

⁴⁷ Meols on the Wirral is the second example (Maddicott, 2005).

should perhaps see this switch in focus as further evidence of the more general contraction which occurred in the early medieval period. Starting in the late Romano-British period, those sites distant from either main rivers or major roads appear to have gone out of use (see Chapter 5.2.3 above). This escalated in the 5th and 6th centuries with the River Avon becoming the main focus. Additionally, the development of early medieval polities focussed on major rivers has been observed across England (c.f. Draper, 2006, p. 69; Hamerow et al., 2013; Semple, 2008) and it may be that Bidford's position on the Avon was better suited for this new pattern of landscape use.

Whilst we cannot be certain which, if either, of these explanations is correct we can explore the implications of this change. Firstly, the weight of evidence supports a case for the continuity of an economic network, within which Bidford-on-Avon had a role in the Romano-British and mid-Saxon periods. By inference and by extension we can also suggest that the site performed a similar role in the intervening 5th and 6th centuries. Secondly, as with the burial practices in the Wasperton case study, the continued use of this network was significantly altered to fit within a new socio-political system. Thus, the elites of the 5th and 6th centuries were able to draw upon an established practice and manipulated it to meet their own requirements. Such an interpretation need not populate the Bidford-on-Avon cemetery with Germanic migrants, but instead allows for the agency of the Romano-British within a familiar network.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter looked at evidence from the 5th and 6th centuries at two scales: the valley-wide and the individual site. Analysis of the valley demonstrated that fords were foci of activity and that those on major rivers were of particular importance. From the evidence at the major cemeteries of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon, it can further be argued that fords on the River Avon and the salt distribution network were critical, developing preferentially due to their position. Away from the rivers, road-blocks may also have acted as nodal points and prestige items, such as the swords at Churchover (Meaney, 1964, p. 259) and the francisca at Ipsley (Fasham, 1988), might indicate the

presence of elites at these important locations. With regards to a frontier in the Avon Valley, the distinct distribution of road-blocks may imply the presence of a different socio-political group in the east. In the Central Zone, evidence of the prominence of fording points linked to the salt distribution network from Droitwich, which brought people together and stimulated interaction and exchange, might usefully be viewed as a contributing factor in the development of this area as a possible frontier zone. This survey also highlighted how the emphasis placed on routeways was not a phenomenon unique to the early medieval period and that contraction was a process continued from the late Romano-British period.

In both the case studies, Wasperton and Bidford-on-Avon and Alcester, it was shown that continuity existed alongside change. At Wasperton there was evidence that Romano-British practices persisted alongside growing influences from non-local groups, promoting change through interaction and adaptation and through what Ambridge (2007) and Meskell (2007, p. 223) described as 'cultural reconciliation', the negotiation of memories and traditions within the framework of a new socio-political identity. Argued to be part of the same economic system in the Romano-British period, the rise of Bidford-on-Avon was reasoned to coincide with the fall of Alcester as the continued use of the existing trade and exchange network was brought into a new system of control. At both scales, therefore, there is evidence to suggest that late Romano-British practices (and populations) persisted. These were harnessed by the 5th and 6th-century elite, but, as external influences increased and engagement with these developed, these traditions quickly found themselves used within a new socio-political landscape. At the heart of this landscape was the control of movement.

Moving forward into the 7th century, this tenet was adapted once again with elites using practices new to the valley alongside established systems to negotiate their authority (see Chapter 8). Thus, the centrality of major inter-regional routeways persisted, linking not only polities to one and other, but the present to the past, and the elite to their people.

Chapter 6. Characterising the Avon Valley in the 5th to mid-7th Centuries: Place-Name Evidence.

6.1 Introduction

As an independent source of information, a toponymic study of the Avon Valley provided an excellent comparison to the archaeological dataset. As a comparative set of data it was included to see whether there was any supporting or contradicting evidence for the patterns seen in the preceding analyses of the archaeological data. It is important to stress that this was a brief assessment and anyone wishing to see a comprehensive study of the place-names of the Avon Valley should consult Hooke (2009), Coates et al. (2000), and Gelling (1978).

Using these sources along with additional information from the works of Kenneth Jackson (1994) and the English Place-Name Society (Gover et al., 1936; Mawer and Stenton, 1927), three subjects have been identified for which place-names could advance understanding of the archaeological data in the Avon Valley. These are: early settlement patterns; the existence of an east-west divide in the distribution of place-names indicative of a Brittonic presence; and the presence of a dialectic boundary between Anglian and Saxon speakers.

6.2 Early Settlement Patterns

It has been generally accepted by place-name scholars that settlement names with a topographical main element tend to be of an earlier date than those with an habitative main element (see discussions in Baker, 2006; Gelling, 1988). Whilst it is no longer the case that scholars are happy to say that one particular element is indicative of early English settlement, it is possible to state more judiciously that a name with a topographical element - such as *burna*, a 'stream'; *dūn*, a 'hill'; *feld*, 'open country'; *ēg*, 'land partly surrounded by water'; and *hamm*, 'land in a river bend' – tends to be more productive of

a pre-c.730 date (Baker, 2006, p. 50; Gelling, 1988, p. 71; Hooke, 2009, p. 35).⁴⁸ That is not to say that they cannot be later and Baker's work in the Chiltern Hills has shown the longevity of use of some of these naming elements (Baker, 2006, pp. 60–61). Hooke's distribution of these terms across the Avon Valley showed a clear concentration closest to the River Avon, implying that this may have been one of the earliest areas of settlement by English speakers (2009, p. 35). The archaeological evidence presented in Chapters 4 and 5 would seem to corroborate this, suggesting the importance of riverine locations at sites like Bidford-on-Avon, Alveston Manor, and Wasperton, the biggest cemeteries in the valley. However, two further observations made of the distribution of these place-names were less supportive of the archaeology and brought into question the date of these estate names. Firstly, estate names which included the topographical element *lēah* are found across the Forest of Arden (Hooke, 2009, p. 35), the northerly part of the Avon Valley where no sites of the 5th to mid-7th century have yet been identified.⁴⁹ Secondly, despite the importance of Roman roads, which was so clearly apparent in the archaeological data, there was no corresponding concentration of topographical estate names along these routes. One possible explanation for these discrepancies might be that some of the topographical estate names in the Avon Valley belonged to a later period, perhaps the 8th century; thus, contradictions between the two datasets would be more comprehensible.

Despite the possibility that the estate names and the archaeology were not contemporary, the spatial coincidence of these datasets testifies to the significance of the River Avon, which was apparently an enduring focus of activity throughout the early medieval period. In addition, the divergence of the datasets may also be instructive, implying that expansion into the wooded areas of the north was a feature of the early mid-Saxon period.

⁴⁸ The c.730 date comes from Cox's survey of names which occur in early English sources pre-dating c.730. It was this survey which identified a greater frequency of names with topographical elements than those with habitative elements pre c.730. It also identified that topographical names occurred more frequently before this date than they ever did afterwards (Cox, 1976).

⁴⁹ Gelling observed that *tūn* and *lēah* names, with rare exception, form mutually exclusive zones in the area around the Birmingham Plateau, with the former coinciding with open land (1974, pp. 65–69). She argued that, given no obstacle to *tūns* developing in wooded areas, the *lēahs* of this region may indicate outlying woodland pasture appendant to *tūn* estates or settlements in the open land to the south. This would logically mean that the *lēah* names are subsequent to the *tūn* names. Alternatively, given the success of a number of *lēah* settlements – 25 became more modern parishes – Gelling suggested that this economic system may reflect existing Romano-British patterns of settlement which were renamed by English speakers during their settlement of the area and that *lēah* might thus have been used to indicate a settlement in a woodland setting with all the different characteristics this would necessitate.

6.3 The East-West Divide

Perhaps the most significant contribution place-names can make to the study of the Avon Valley is their apparent division of the landscape into an area where names indicative of Brittonic peoples are common and an area where they are not. Such a division is reminiscent of the patterns observed in the archaeology and it was, therefore, important to explore the distribution and interpretation of these names.

Place-names which indicate the presence of Brittonic peoples fall into two categories: Old English names which refer to Brittonic communities or institutions and wholly or partly Brittonic names. In the former category are place-names which incorporate *cumbre*, *ecles*, and, possibly, *walh* compounds (Figure 6.1). These names are often found in clusters and, via the labelling of Brittonic speakers by English speakers, appear to imply a landscape of division and segregation (Gelling, 1978, p. 90).

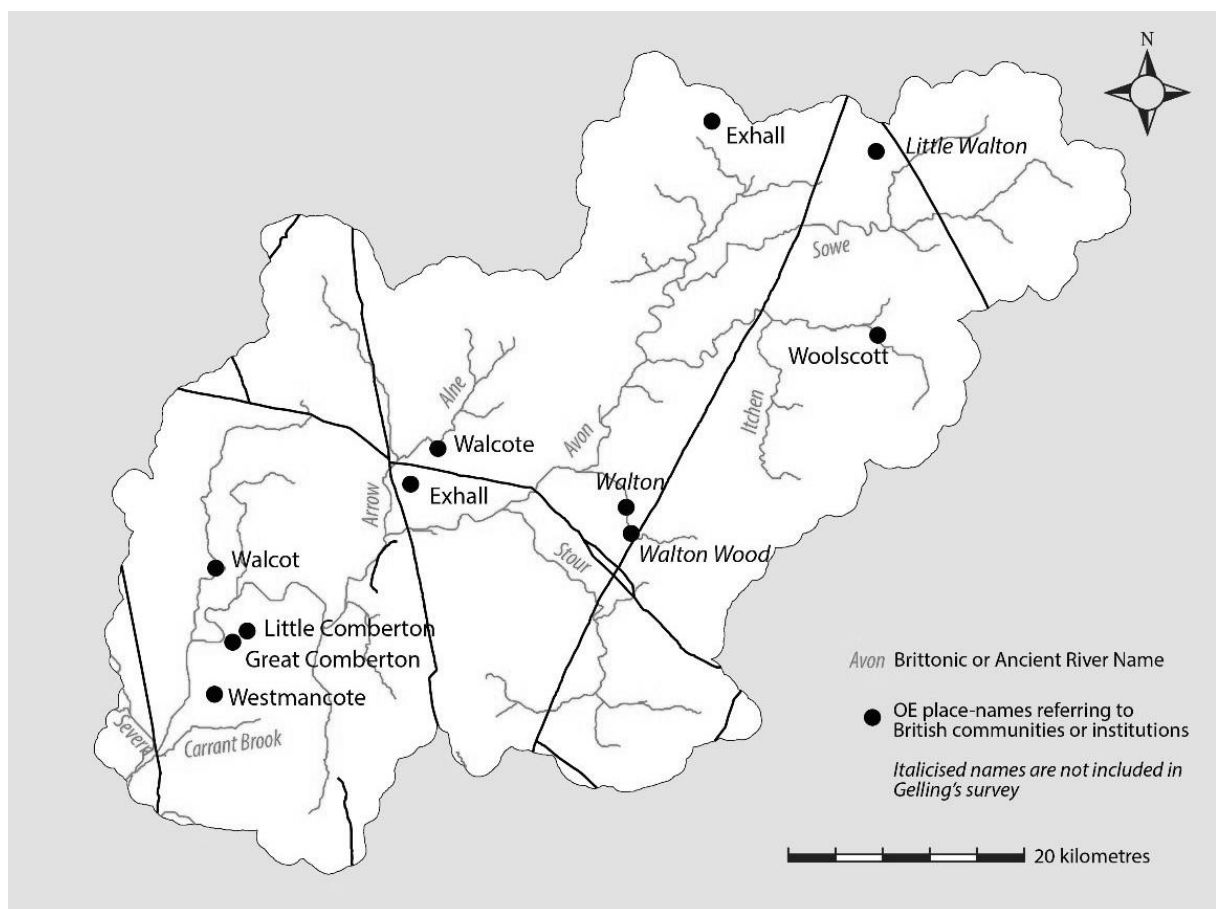


Figure 6. 1. The distribution of Old English place-names which refer to British communities or institutions.

The term *cumbre/cumbra*, as in 'Cumberland', is believed to have been used by English speakers to indicate a Welshman or Briton and two examples have been identified in the Avon Valley: Great and Little Comberton (Gelling, 1978, p. 95; Hooke, 2009, p. 39).⁵⁰ *Ecles* is thought to derive from the Primitive Welsh for 'church' (see synopsis of etymology in Cameron, 1968, pp. 87–88) and is believed to indicate the existence of a British Christian community (Cameron, 1968; Gelling, 1978, p. 96; Hooke, 2009, p. 39; Jackson, 1994, p. 227). Again, two examples are found in the study area: Exhall near Alcester and Exhall near Coventry. The proximity of both these names to later important ecclesiastical centres has led Hooke to suggest that they may indicate estates appendant to a British church (Hooke, 2009, p. 39). This seems to be supported by Gelling's interpretation of the element *-halh* which is normally translated as a 'sheltered place' or 'nook' but which seems inappropriate here. Instead, Gelling suggested that a later interpretation of the word, 'land in an angle of a parish', might be better suited to the position of these sites. In the pre-parish landscape, Exhall might be understood as 'a British church on land not included in general administrative arrangements of an area' (Gelling, 1978, p. 97).

The association of the term *walh* and Brittonic communities is more difficult. Traditionally interpreted both as 'Welshman'/'Briton' and 'serf' (Gelling, 1978, p. 93; Hooke, 2009, p. 39; Jackson, 1994, p. 227),⁵¹ recent research on place-name clustering has suggested that these names belong to a group of functional names surrounding estate centres (Zanella, 2015). This observation seems to imply that *walh* compounded with the element *tūn* indicates the settlements of serfs or slaves. That is not to say that these could not be the settlements of Britons, but it would be a mistake to directly equate *walh* with Briton. The interpretation of *walh* is further compounded by the possibility that these names might be derived from different words all together: *weald* for 'forest'; *weall* for 'wall'; or even the word for 'spring' in the Mercian dialect (Gelling, 1978, p. 94; Jackson, 1994, p. 228)⁵². In light of these

⁵⁰ The proximity of these names suggests that these are likely to represent one original settlement

⁵¹ See a thorough discussion on the meaning of *walh* upto 1980 in Cameron (1980, pp. 1–7).

⁵² It appears that Gelling(1978) has followed the suggestions of Gover et al. (1936, pp. 114–115 & 287) and accepted a translation of *weall* for Walton, near Wellesbourne, and Little Walton. Their explanation that these names refer to the remains of walls appears to rely on their

problems, those *walh* names identified in the Avon Valley were recorded and mapped but no interpretations which solely relied on their evidence have been made.

The second category of place-names which are believed to indicate Brittonic peoples are those words which use Brittonic vocabulary, Latin loan words, or are tautological compounds of Brittonic and Old English (Figure 6.2). Unlike the first category of place-names, these names may imply a greater level of interaction between English speakers and their Brittonic neighbours (Jackson 1994:231-232; Hooke 2009:38). Brittonic survivals and words loaned from Latin are even considered to be evidence of bilingualism as it is thought that these words may have entered the Old English through the engagement of Britons with the new language (Jackson 1994:231-246). Tautological compounds, on the other hand, which include both Brittonic and Old English elements but with repetition of meaning might indicate English speakers misunderstanding Brittonic names and, therefore, more limited contact between the populations (Jackson 1994:245-246). A classic example of a tautological compound is found in the name Bredon Hill in the centre of the Avon Valley which is made up of the Brittonic for 'hill' – *bre*, the Old English for 'hill' – *dūn*, and the Modern English for 'hill' – *hill* (Hooke, 2009, pp. 35–36). Gelling describing this name stated that: "it looks as if the local British spoke of 'the hill', and the English, not realising that *bre* was a common noun, took it for the name of the hill" (1978, p. 92).

proximity to major Roman roads from which it is inferred that these place-names lie close to a Roman site. However, this argument is substantially weakened by a lack of recognised late Roman structures in the immediate vicinity of these two place-names.

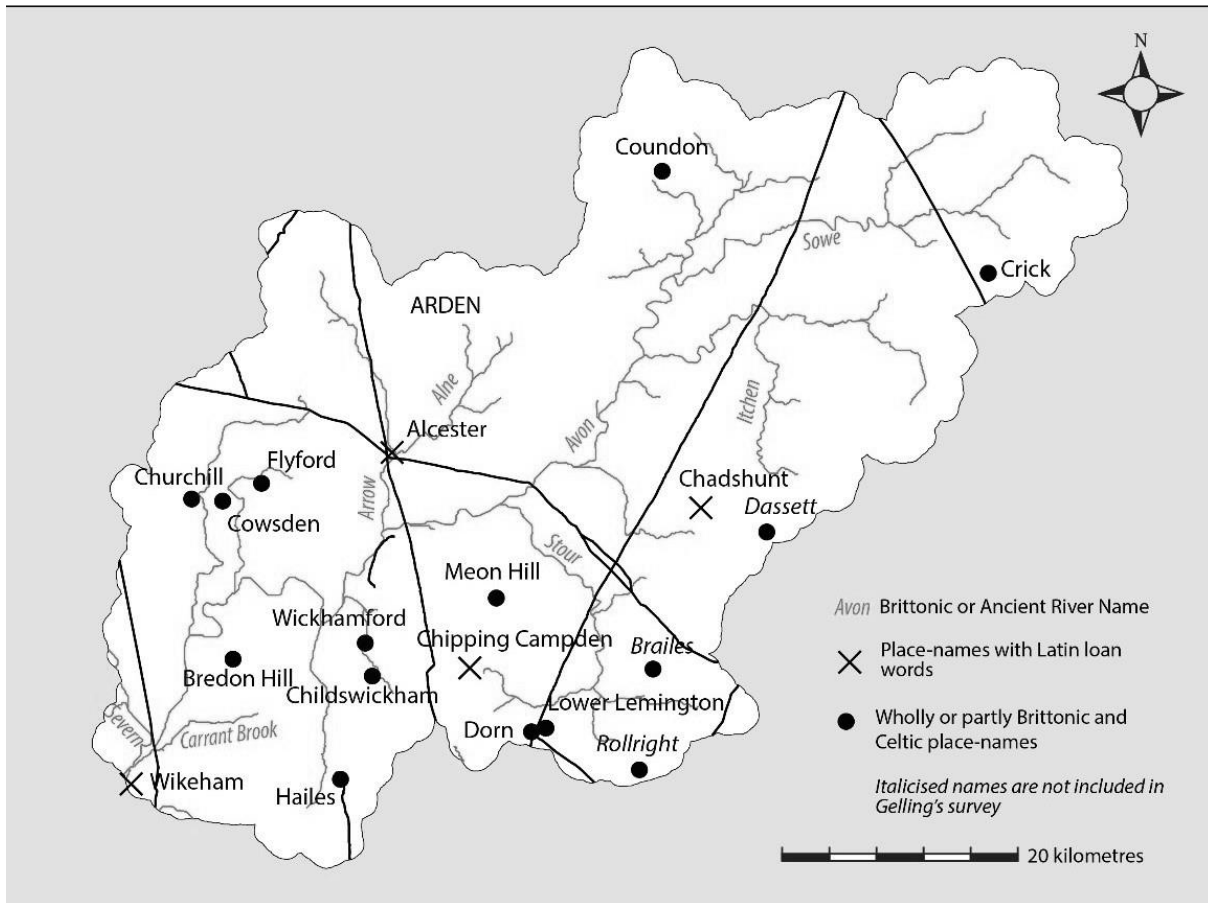


Figure 6. 2. The distribution of wholly or partly Brittonic place-names and place-names with Latin loan words

Various words of wholly or partly Brittonic origin have been identified in the Avon Valley along with three Latin loan words (Figure 6.2): *wīc* from Latin *vicus*;⁵³ *funta* from the Latin for ‘spring’; and *campus* from the Latin for ‘field’ or ‘open space’ (Hooke, 2009, p. 39). As Hooke recommended, *porta/us* and *stræt* were not used due to the use of the former as a second element in major place-names throughout the Anglo-Saxon period and the possibility that the Latin *strata* had been borrowed by other Germanic languages making it difficult to assign either of these an early date (Hooke, 2009, p. 39). A further consideration when working with these place-names was the uncertain nature of some of the Brittonic elements. For example, within the Avon Valley, Coates et al. included Brailes and Dasset in their survey of names with Brittonic, Celtic, or Ancient elements (2000, p. 337). These two

⁵³ Gelling has argued that *wīc* may have been used by English speaking communities to refer to a Romano-British settlement or administrative unit, especially when found suffixed by the Old English *hām* – ‘village, estate’. Thus *wīc* + *hām* compounds could be interpreted as ‘village near (or on) a Roman vicus’ (Gelling, 1967).

place-names, however, were not included by Gelling (1978, p. 92). Another example is Bretford which was included by Gover et al. (1936, p. xx) as possibly indicating a British community, but omitted by Jackson who stated that this interpretation is only secure in areas further north (1994, p. 228). Consequently, those words whose identification or interpretation is ambiguous were italicised in Figure 6.2 and, as with the distribution of *walh* names, treated with caution.

Even a cursory glance at Figures 6.1 and 6.2 demonstrates that a toponymical east – west divide existed in the Avon Valley. In the southwest of the valley there is a concentration of Brittonic and Latin place-names and a number of Old English place-names which refer to Brittonic communities. In the northeast there are few examples of either. This distinction became even more pronounced when *walh* place-names were discounted. The observation of this linguistic division, however, is not new; as far back as 1936 it was recognised that fewer names suggestive of a British population survive in Warwickshire than in Worcestershire (Gover et al., 1936, p. xx). Whilst Jackson placed the majority of the valley in his Area 2, where large rivers and streams, some villages, and some natural features bear Brittonic names, the source of the Avon lay in his Area 1 and the mouth in Area 3 (1994). Jackson's Area 1 contained relatively few Brittonic names, with only the largest rivers recognised and very few village names or examples of *walh* place-names (1994, p. 235). In contrast, Area 3 contained Brittonic names for most rivers, many streams, villages, hills, and forests, even more so than Area 2 (Jackson, 1994, pp. 238–241). Thus, the Avon Valley spanned distinct toponymic zones which led Hooke to describe the region generally as lying "in a transition zone between eastern England, where the survival of British names is lowest, and western Britain, where British names have remained dominant to the present day" (2009, p. 31). Nevertheless, the reason for reproducing the distribution of place-names here is new. For, it seems that there is a degree of agreement between their distribution and the distribution of archaeological practices.

Using archaeological evidence of burial practices, material culture, and landscape organisation it is suggested that a distinction existed between the east and west of the valley (see Chapters 3 & 4). This

divided the valley in a way which is startlingly similar to the pattern observed in the place-names. When corroborated by an independent source of evidence, the identification of distinct zones in the archaeological evidence is all the more confident. Furthermore, the observation of a similar division in the place-names might be able to offer an explanation for the archaeological differences identified.

Jackson suggested that the differential survival of Brittonic names was due to the variable nature of Anglo-Saxon incursions into these regions. In Area 1, he envisaged a “comparatively high degree of overthrow of the Romano-British peasant economy” causing a rapid loss of British identity (1994, p. 235). In Areas 2 and 3, Anglo-Saxon movement into these regions was more likely to have been on a smaller pioneering scale which put less pressure on the existing Romano-British population and ensured their survival, at least for a period of time (Jackson, 1994, pp. 237–241). The Anglo-Saxon movement into Areas 2 and 3 was not chronologically dissimilar and it seems likely that the greater survival of Brittonic names in the latter, therefore, was due to a higher ratio of Brittonic speakers to English speakers (Jackson, 1994, pp. 237–241). From this model, the differences seen in the Avon Valley, both archaeological and toponymical, might be understood as evidence of greater British survival and lesser Anglo-Saxon influence in the west than in the east. With different demographic profiles and subject to different levels of Germanic influence it is highly probable that different polities would have developed. These would have created and been maintained by distinct practices which were preserved in the archaeological record.

6.4 The Anglian and Saxon Dialect Boundary

Finally, place-names not only suggest that the Avon Valley was made up of a mix of Brittonic and English speakers, they also imply that the English speakers were not one homogenous group. This is directly relevant to the archaeological dataset in the valley, where material culture has been seen to be influenced by both Saxon and Anglian contact. The evidence from place-names may, therefore, permit a better understanding of how these contacts evolved and changed throughout the early medieval period.

Whilst studying Saxon place-names in Oxfordshire, Gelling noted a dialect boundary near the western border of the county and suggested that there may have been a strong Anglian influence in the dialect of the Hwicce (1953, p. xix). Similarly, in the Vale of Berkeley, Gloucestershire and in the western Cotswold Hills, Mills observed a second dialect boundary, one where West Saxon and Anglian elements intermingled (1960). Indeed, across the large area encompassed by Warwickshire and Worcestershire place-name surveys, distinct Anglian and Saxon elements have been identified (Gover et al., 1936, p. xvii; Mawer and Stenton, 1927, pp. xvi & xxii). More recently, Kitson, in his analysis of the distribution of Old English dialects, observed a dialectic transition zone in the area which he ascribed to the territory of the Hwicce (1995, p. 54). Whilst this transition may have been caused by an original mix of peoples it may equally have resulted from linguistic change over time. Observing a pattern in the dates of names in south-west Worcestershire using the West Saxon versus the Anglian declination of the word for 'grove', *bearu*, Kitson suggested that the latter interpretation may be more accurate and that there was a chronological element to the creation of a dialectic transition zone in this area.

Interestingly, however, as with the topographical estate names, there is a conflict between the distribution of place-names and the archaeological evidence: the survey of dress accessory types showed there to be strong contacts between the Upper Thames Valley and the lower reaches of the Avon, yet the place-names of Worcestershire imply that there was a strong Anglian influence in the region. Again, instead of being a contradiction in the datasets, it is suggested that this discrepancy is the result of date. The archaeological evidence focused on the 5th to mid-7th century whilst the place-names, although thought to tend to date to earlier than the 8th century, cannot with certainty be assigned to these earlier centuries (and the discrepancy here suggests they should not be). The archaeology, therefore, demonstrated strong West Saxon influences in the lower Avon Valley into the 6th century, and the earliest place-names from Worcestershire seemed to support this (Mawer and Stenton, 1927, p. xvi), but the greater body of place-name evidence suggested that by the 8th century

Anglian influences had become more dominant (Mawer and Stenton, 1927, p. xvi).⁵⁴ It seems, however, that these Anglian linguistic influences were not immune to the effects of the existing Saxon dialects in use in the region; Hooke observed that the dialect of the Hwicce, whilst sharing elements with other Mercian dialects, remained distinct from the language spoken in the neighbouring Anglian area of modern Staffordshire (2009, pp. 8–9). It also seems reasonable to suggest that this Anglian dialect was subject not only to a Saxon inheritance, but, given the evidence discussed above, also a Brittonic one. In the west of the Avon Valley, therefore, it appears that a unique form of Anglian Old English developed in the early mid-Saxon period, evolving from increased Mercian engagement with the region and the adaptation and mutation of Brittonic and Saxon dialects already in use.

6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this brief study of the place-names of the Avon Valley has provided a useful comparison to the archaeological data. It has shown that, whilst some patterns observed in the distribution of archaeological practices were supported by the toponymic evidence, others, as we should expect from an independent source of data, were not.

One such difference was the presence of topographical estate names in an area not marked by early medieval sites, the Forest of Arden, and a second was the strong Anglian influence on place-names in parts of the valley where Saxon dress accessories dominate. It has, however, been argued that this contradictory evidence need not undermine either of the datasets as their differences might be explained by their date. The archaeological material studied dates to the 5th to mid-7th centuries, but the topographical place-names only tend to date to pre-c.730 and may have continued to be used as naming elements into subsequent centuries (Baker, 2006; Gelling, 1988; Hooke, 2009, p. 35). It is possible, therefore, that the differences observed between the datasets is due to chronology.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ An exception to this can be found in Kitson's analysis of *bearu* in south-western Worcestershire. Here Kitson showed that there was a movement towards the West Saxon dialect at the expense of the Anglian (1995, p. 54). This would imply local variability and highlights the difficulties of taking a regional approach.

⁵⁵ Baker observed a similar pattern in his study of the Chilterns and Essex regions; whilst he agreed date might be a factor he also proposed that material culture and linguistic change could, under certain circumstances, be independent of each other. Thus, Old English speakers may have given names to areas which they did not at that time inhabit; the Romano-British may have adopted the English language, but have chosen to maintain their traditional material culture; and Germanic material culture may have spread into areas where there were no

Whether or not this proves to be the case, the combination of the datasets has emphasised significant aspects of society in the Avon Valley: the focus of settlement on the River Avon itself; the possibility of a subsequent expansion of settled areas into the Forest of Arden; and the presence of both Saxon and Anglian influences which ebbed and flowed over time.

Most significant for this research, however, is the subject upon which the toponymic and archaeological datasets appear to coincide: the east-west divide. The place-names which indicate the presence of Brittonic speaking peoples – wholly or partly Brittonic words, Latin loan words, and Old English words which refer to British communities – concentrate almost exclusively in the southwestern half of the Avon Valley, broadly along and to the west of the Droitwich – Fosse Way Saltway. It seems probable that the distinct focus of these names on one part of the Avon Valley reflects a demographic division in the landscape. In the west it seems that a higher percentage of the population was Brittonic-speaking than in the east. If the eastern and the western part of the Avon Valley were made up of different peoples, then we would expect there to be observable distinctions between their socio-political practices, for example in their burial traditions, their organisation of the landscape, and their material culture. Looking at the archaeological evidence, it appears that this is what the distribution of practices does suggest: the archaeology in the western Avon Valley certainly does show distinctions from the archaeology in the eastern Avon Valley.

English speakers (Baker, 2006, pp. 60–61). As such, there should be no expectation for material culture and linguistic evidence to always coincide.

Chapter 7. A Comparative Study in the western Severn Valley and the Malvern Hills

7.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapters archaeological and toponymical data was used to characterise and to assess the distribution of practices in the Avon Valley. This analysis suggested the presence of distinct zones within the valley, where different ‘packages’ or suites of practices existed. This may indicate the presence of distinct groups of people within the Avon Valley in the early medieval period. To assess the strength of this interpretation and to expand analysis beyond the limits of a small valley, a comparison was carried out with the Severn Valley and Malvern Hills. This second study area was selected due to the argument made using historical sources that the Avon and Severn Valleys broadly represented the eastern and western extents of the Diocese of Worcester, the diocese believed to have been established to serve the kingdom of the Hwicce (Stenton, 1971, p. 134 and see Chapter 2.2.3.1 for further information about the Severn Valley and Malvern Hills case study). We might, therefore, expect to observe some similarities between the two datasets. Any differences may challenge interpretations made in the Avon Valley or, alternatively, require a reassessment of the historical narrative.

The fact that no archaeological study of this presumed frontier zone has been conducted, whilst not surprising, was a hindrance to this comparison. A preliminary survey was, therefore, made by the author. It is accepted that this survey is not definitive and it is anticipated that a number of smaller or unpublished sites will have been neglected. Nevertheless, it is believed that the sites included provide sufficient information for general, if not detailed, comparison.

7.2 Survey area and dataset

The survey area was defined by mapping in ArcMap 10.1 the eastern border of the Diocese of Hereford as it was described in an 11th century-Gospel Book (*Heref*; and see description in Finberg, 1972, pp. 225–227).⁵⁶ The neighbouring dioceses of Hereford and Worcester had been created from the large Mercian see in the mid-7th century, with the former founded to serve the Magonsætan and the latter the Hwicce (Stenton, 1971, p. 134). This immediately introduced three limitations to the survey: first we must assume that the 11th century-account was accurate, secondly that the border had not changed since the 7th century, and thirdly that the diocese boundaries followed the kingdom boundaries.

Once the western border of the Diocese of Worcester had been mapped, a buffer was created to identify those modern parishes which lay wholly or partly within 20 kilometres of the border. These modern parishes allowed a search of the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) for the English counties and the National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW) for the Welsh counties. Both of these national inventories are available online, with the English and Welsh records accessible through PastScape (<http://pastscape.org.uk/default.aspx>) and Coflein (www.coflein.gov.uk), respectively. These data sources provided sufficient detail to allow comparison with the Avon Valley at a general, if not at a detailed, level. With the relevant parishes identified, the NRHE and NMRW were searched for all monument types dating between 411 and 700 AD. This resulted in the recognition of 47 records: three battlefields; 15 burial sites; 16 churches; a coin hoard; a stone with runic inscriptions; two settlements; two Roman towns and six villas which continued to be used during the early medieval period; and a pit alignment which might represent a boundary feature (Figure 7.1). These sites lay on both sides of the proposed Diocesan boundary, but their distribution appeared to show the presence of different practices on either side.

⁵⁶ Only the eastern boundary has been mapped and its surrounding landscape analysed; the northern boundary of the Diocese of Hereford is not shown in Figure 7.1, but diverts from the most northerly point of the marked eastern boundary.

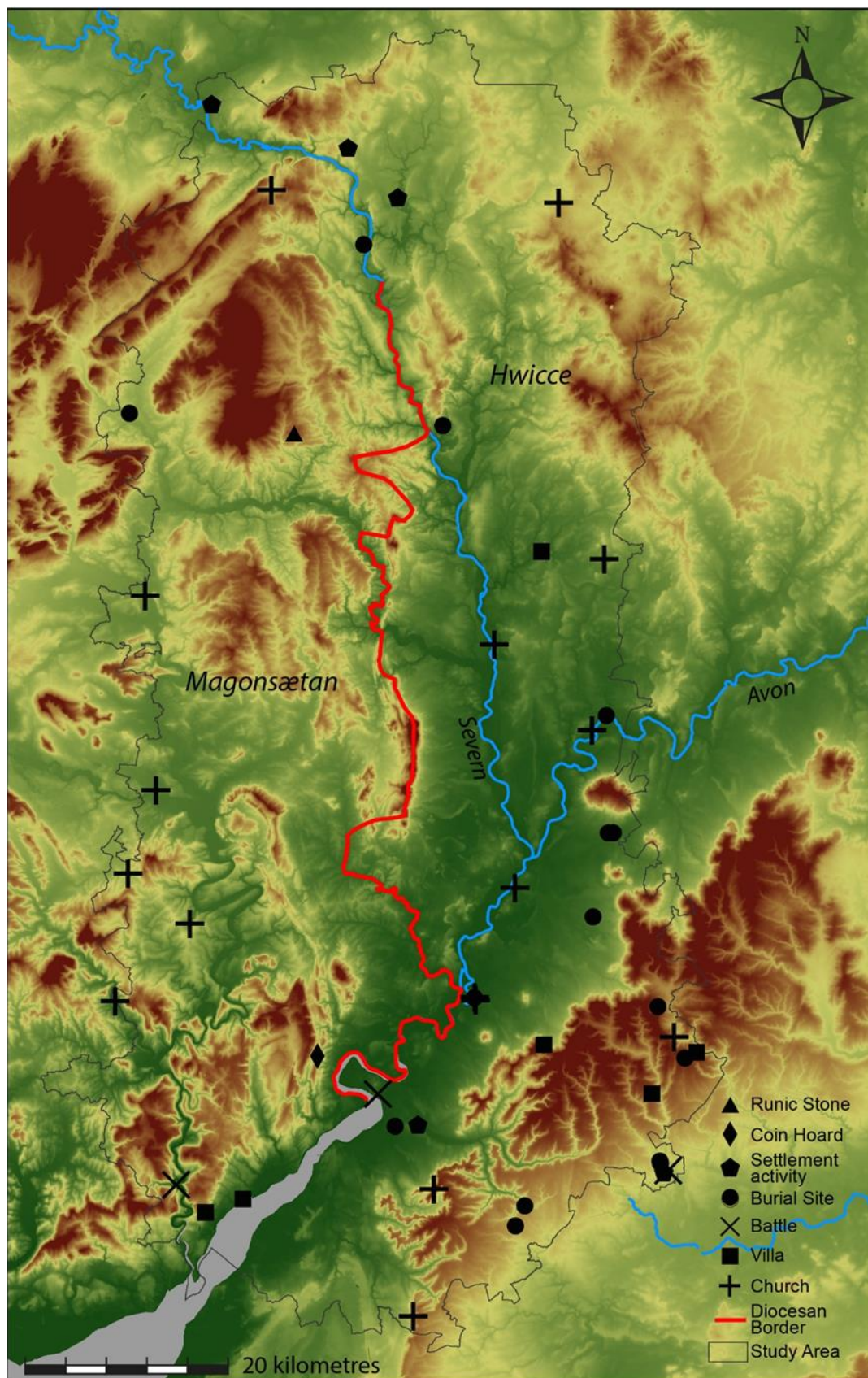


Figure 7. 1. The distribution of sites 20 kilometres either side of the boundary between the dioceses of Worcester and Hereford which date to between 411 and 700 AD.

7.3 Similarities between the Avon and western Severn study areas

To turn firstly to the similarities, the distribution of site types either side of the diocesan boundary in the Severn is reminiscent of the zones observed in the Avon Valley; there it was demonstrated that practices formed distinct distributions which combined to suggest the likely presence of different socio-political units. In this comparative study, the first observation is that there were more than twice as many early 5th to late 7th century-sites identified to the east of the boundary than to the west – 32 compared to 15. This distinction remained if just the 5th and 6th-century sites were used, with 16 in the east and seven in the west. Of course, these differences may be due to problems of identification, with early medieval sites being particularly challenging to locate in the west of Britain, but it is also possible that these distinctions represent a real division in the 5th and 6th-century landscape. To explore this, analysis focused on the distribution of distinct site types rather than the presence or absence of sites.

Only one possible early medieval burial has been identified to the west of the diocesan boundary and the dating of this is both very insecure and late. The isolated grave found near Astley Abbots, Shropshire, was cut into the bedrock and oriented east-west (Watkins-Pitchford, 1934, pp. 33–40). At the western end of the grave, a ledge or ‘pillow’ was cut into the rock. A faceted gem, possibly a garnet, was recorded from the grave but its poor condition and the style of cutting apparent on the faces have led Watkins-Pitchford to the conclusion that it and the burial are not contemporary and that it is likely to have fallen into the burial during excavation. With the gem discounted from the burial, dating rests solely on the form of the grave, which was placed in the mid-7th century – too late to feature with any prominence in this analysis. In contrast, 12 burial sites dating to the 5th – 6th centuries have been found in the study area to the east of the diocesan boundary. Not only are these burials more common and of an earlier date, their character is also quite different. Found mostly in the Avon Valley and on the Cotswold Plateau, these burial sites consisted of: cemeteries (e.g. Beckford B (Evison and Hill, 1996) and Cirencester (McWhirr, 1976, pp. 31–33)); secondary inhumations in barrows (eg. Chedworth (O’Neil and Grinsell, 1960, p. 160)); two crouched burials at Withington (Meaney, 1964, p. 91); and a possible mausoleum (Bryant and Heighway, 2003, pp. 112–122). There are currently no known rock-

cut burials. The possible mausoleum was found at the Church of St Mary de Lode, Gloucester and comprised several inhumations cut into the levelled rubble of a substantial late Roman building thought to have been demolished in the early medieval period. These burials were associated with a timber-framed building and may actually lie within the structure, although this stratigraphic relationship was uncertain, hence the interpretation of a mausoleum (Bryant and Heighway, 2003, pp. 112–122). At Frampton on Severn an unrecorded number of burials were found within the confines of two large ring ditches along with various pieces of corroded iron, a spearhead, and a sword. A rectangular posthole building was also described (Baddeley, 1928). These two sites sat in stark contrast to the burial evidence to the west and suggested quite different burial traditions either side of a line which was to become the diocesan boundary. Frampton on Severn, in particular, seemed reminiscent of the Beckford cemeteries approximately 35 kilometres to the northeast, themselves amongst the most westerly examples of the Anglo-Saxon style of furnished burials in cemeteries (Evison and Hill, 1996). Thus, it seems that the type of inhumation, for cremations were entirely absent, common in the east of England and in the Avon Valley dwindled and stopped in the area of the Severn Valley, presumably to be replaced by a burial custom which either does not survive in the archaeological record or which is indistinguishable from the burials of the preceding and subsequent periods.

A similar distinction between the east and west of the Severn Valley study area may also be drawn from the distribution of early medieval churches. In the west, three of the six identified churches are believed to date to before the 7th century: in the parishes of Llanrothal (Bradney, 1991, p. 26), Hentland (Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, p. 474), and Much Dewchurch (Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, p. 478). In contrast, to the east only one of the ten churches recognised certainly pre-dates the 7th century: Uley, Gloucestershire. Uley is an unusual site which developed from an Iron Age shrine and Romano-British temple complex. In the early 5th century the temple was completely destroyed and votive objects were spread around the site before a wooden church was constructed in the 6th century (Woodward and Leach, 1993, pp. 10–11 & 316–320). This isolated example of an early, perhaps Brittonic, church, is unique in the region and, although *ecles* place-names may also indicate the existence of Brittonic

Christian communities in the Avon Valley (Hooke, 2009, p. 43), there does seem to be an earlier emphasis on church construction to the west of the Severn Valley than to the east. The rash of 7th-century foundations may have coincided with the conversion of the Mercian kings and the establishment of the Dioceses of Worcester and Hereford, with churches being established across the study area. Interestingly, when evidence from the Avon Valley was considered, the distribution of 7th-century churches appeared to focus on this boundary between the two newly created dioceses. This is discussed further below.

Whilst only a brief examination has been possible, there is some evidence to suggest that different practices were present either side of the diocesan boundary in the west of the Severn Valley during the early medieval period. As in the Avon Valley, it might, therefore, be possible that the diocesan boundaries, established in the later 7th century, followed the line of an existing socio-political divide, fossilizing a 5th to 6th-century cultural boundary in a late 7th, or even an 11th-century, ecclesiastical division.

7.4 Differences between the Avon and western Severn study areas

Moving on to the differences between the Avon and the Severn Valleys, the biggest contrasts were the complete lack of large cemeteries and the absence of diagnostically Anglo-Saxon material from the latter: at Frampton on Severn, the largest cemetery in this area, only a single spear head and a sword were recorded. There were no brooches, no beads, no pottery, and no coins (Baddeley, 1928). Furthermore, only two 5th to 6th-century settlement sites have been tentatively identified – one from a pottery scatter (Heighway, 1984, pp. 241–243) and one from an early 8th-century charter (Clark, 1993, p. 15).⁵⁷ With a few small and scattered cemeteries and a lack of certain settlements, the Severn study area was instead populated by churches. This directly contrasts the Avon Valley where no pre-7th-century churches have been found and only two are known from the 7th century, Pershore Abbey

⁵⁷ S 1802 describes the grant of land at Madeley to Mildburga, abbess at Much Wenlock, in c.727. <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/1802.html>. It appears that Clark uses this early 8th century date to assume the presence of a settlement in the preceding 7th century.

(Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, p. 73) and St Mary's, Deerhurst (Gilbert, 1972, 1964; Rahtz, 1971), both of which lie close to the western end of the Avon Valley and close to the Severn.

Another interesting distinction between these two study areas was the presence of three battlefields recorded in the Severn study area, compared to none in the Avon. The 6th-century Battle of Tintern Ford is recorded to the west of the River Severn, although the source of this information is unclear (NMRW 405013). Challenging to locate with any certainty, but likely to also fall in the western part of England is the Battle of Fethanleag in 548 AD in which Ceawlin of Wessex defeated the Britons.⁵⁸ The third battle was the easiest to locate being the Battle of Cirencester, fought in 628 AD between the West Saxons and Penda (Whitelock et al., 1961, pp. 14 & 17). These battles seem to imply that the Severn Valley region was more contested than the Avon Valley, but perhaps this is to be expected as it is in this region, more so than in the Avon Valley, that Anglo-Saxon culture collided with the British West. Such a collision would have created tension, but also opportunities, with access to new resources and networks.

That there existed a greater Brittonic population in the Severn Valley study area than in the Avon Valley is supported by the place-name evidence and by the historical sources. Gover et al. observed that there was a significant difference between the place-names of Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, and Warwickshire (1936, p. xx) and Coates et al. were able to demonstrate stark differences between the distribution of partly or wholly Brittonic names in these same counties (2000, pp. 298, 337, & 341). This fits Jackson's framework which placed the Avon Valley in his Area 2 and the Severn Valley in Area 3 (1994, pp. 238–241). Combined, these sources show that there was far greater survival of words of Brittonic origin in the area of the Severn compared to the Avon. This concentration of Brittonic names along the Severn has been remarked upon by Gelling, whose research has suggested significant British activity in the area (1978, p. 91). Using the historical sources, it might be suggested that Britons were present in the highest levels of society in this region, not just amongst the lower classes. The first king

⁵⁸ The location of this battle on the Severn is debated, with some identifying Stoke Lyne, Oxfordshire instead (Leeds, 1954, pp. 57–58).

of the Magonsætan was known as Merwahl, which Gelling translated as ‘famous Welshman’, and the first documented Bishop of Hereford is Wealhstōd, which translates as ‘interpreter’, thought to indicate a name acquired in adult life by a man who could speak both Welsh and English (1978, p. 95). These high status individuals and the concentration of these place-names combine to suggest that Britons formed an integral and important part of society in this most westerly part of England. In this context, the presence of battlefields and the foundation of 7th century-churches, products of the Augustinian mission rather than the Brittonic church, take on new significance; the Severn study area might be best viewed as a political and religious conflict zone. Sheltered to the east of this, the Avon Valley exhibited quite different characteristics and enjoyed quite different circumstances.

7.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the historical sources would have us believe that the two study areas compared here lay on the frontiers of one kingdom during the later 7th century, the kingdom of the Hwicce; yet the archaeological evidence from the 5th and 6th century paints a different picture.

The distribution of archaeological practices implies that a division existed between the eastern and western Avon Valley prior to the mid-7th century. The historical extent of the Diocese of Worcester broadly coincided with this division and it seems reasonable, therefore, to argue that the ecclesiastical boundary followed the line of an existing socio-political frontier. Whilst a less thorough survey was made in the Severn study area, it seems that this was also the case here. The evidence, therefore, appears to support the historical narrative that these two regions did lie on the edges of territorial units. However, the archaeological evidence suggests that these territorial units were not the same. Distinctions exist between the archaeological practices observed in the two study areas which seem to imply that they belonged to different socio-political groups prior to the mid-7th century. If the Avon and the Severn were part of the same kingdom in the later 7th century it appears they were not in the preceding centuries.

On the other hand, the distinctions between the two study areas might be reconciled with belonging to the same socio-political group if frontier zones are afforded greater agency. If we do not expect the frontier zone of a single territory to be homogenous then the different archaeological characteristics of the Avon and the Severn need not contradict the historical sources. Such an interpretation would see frontier zones reacting to their own unique circumstances, their different neighbours, their different resources, and their different opportunities. In short, such an interpretation would challenge the core-periphery model and it would no longer be tenable to think of frontier zones as passive recipients of internal developments at the territorial core. The problem with this interpretation, however, is that it requires the extent of the 5th to mid-7th-century socio-political unit, from the Severn to the Avon, to be coincident with the later 7th-century historical diocese. This would imply not only that an extensive polity existed in the 5th and 6th centuries, but that it did not evolve over the course of two hundred years. Such a scenario along with an alternative are considered in Chapter 10.

With this in mind, analysis now moves away from the 5th-6th centuries to focus on changes wrought in the 7th century and the development of an elite. The results of these lines of enquiry permit the return to the observed distinctions between the two valleys and, ultimately, the question of the origins of the Hwicce.

Chapter 8. The Avon Valley in the early to mid-7th century: the rise of elites

8.1 Introduction

Having considered what evidence from place-names and a comparative case study can contribute to our understanding, this chapter returns to the main subject of this thesis – the archaeology of the Avon Valley. Chapters 4 and 5 argued that the physical control of routeways, the adaptation of established distribution networks, and the presence of existing communities played a significant role in the development of both the layout of the landscape and the evolution of power during the 5th and 6th centuries. This chapter moves the discussion forward in time to examine the changes wrought in the archaeology of the 7th century – chiefly the rise of nascent elites who expressed their authority in new ways. To this end, the focus of this chapter is on answering the following questions: “How did 7th-century elites express their authority?” “How did this differ from the preceding centuries and what might that say about changing social structures?” “Does evidence of elite sites support or contradict evidence of a frontier zone in the Avon Valley?” These questions were investigated through two themes. The first considered the way in which monuments were reused in the 7th century compared with the 5th and 6th centuries. The second considered the two great hall complexes of Hatton Rock and Long Itchington.

8.2 Elite 7th-Century Sites

It has been argued that the reuse of existing monuments was a feature of the 5th and 6th century cemeteries in the Avon Valley (see Chapter 4.3), but it was also a characteristic of the late 6th and 7th centuries in the valley. The aim of this section, therefore, is to assess whether or not this practice was transformed by the emergent aristocratic families of this later period.

Howard Williams contended that the 7th century saw the continued use of existing monuments as foci for communal cemeteries but, at the same time, the creation of a new practice: the use of monuments for the burial of single elite individuals (1998, p. 103). This, he argued, was part of a renovation of

socio-political structures which saw access to the ancestors move from communal to elite privilege (Williams, 1998, p. 103). Chapter 5.2 argued that sites with regional functions – Bidford-on-Avon and Alveston Manor – derived significance from their proximity to fording points on major routeways. Similarly, and in contradiction to Williams’ theory, data from the Avon Valley suggests that elite 7th century activity also focused on routeways, with only a few sites found to reuse monuments. It appears that in this valley, exclusive access to the ancestors was not a principal motivation of the emergent elite.

In order to analyse how the 7th century elite used existing monuments, a definition must be given for the categorisation of a site as ‘elite’. At the apex of the, albeit limited, settlement hierarchy in the valley and as members of the select group of great hall complexes, Hatton Rock and Long Itchington were considered elite sites. The burial evidence was less straightforward and its inclusion was only made possible through a survey of all burial sites within the valley. Such a survey allowed the identification of burials which contained grave goods that were rare in the Avon Valley; these were used as indicators of elite status and the presence of aristocratic families. These burials contrast with the more numerous well-furnished graves found in 6th-century cemeteries, being less common and containing greater amounts of precious metals and other imported materials (Geake, 1992; Hamerow et al., 2015). Using this method, graves which contained swords, gold and garnet jewellery, silver jewellery or fittings, bracteates, and gilt or complex great square-headed brooches and cruciform brooches were defined as elite. Just three, or maybe four, sites containing such burials were associated with existing monuments; eight were found beside routeways.⁵⁹

These sites were spread across the Avon Valley, from Napton in the east to Upton Snodsbury in the west (Figure 8.1). The majority lie within the valley bottoms, but three – Meon Hill, Rollright, and

⁵⁹ The elite female burial close to the Rollright Stone was associated with existing monuments *and* lay close to a prehistoric routeway (Lambrick and Ambers, 1988).

Napton – lie on upland associated with the Cotswold Plateau. The only concentration observed is the two adjacent sites of Long Itchington hall complex and the burial site of Marton.

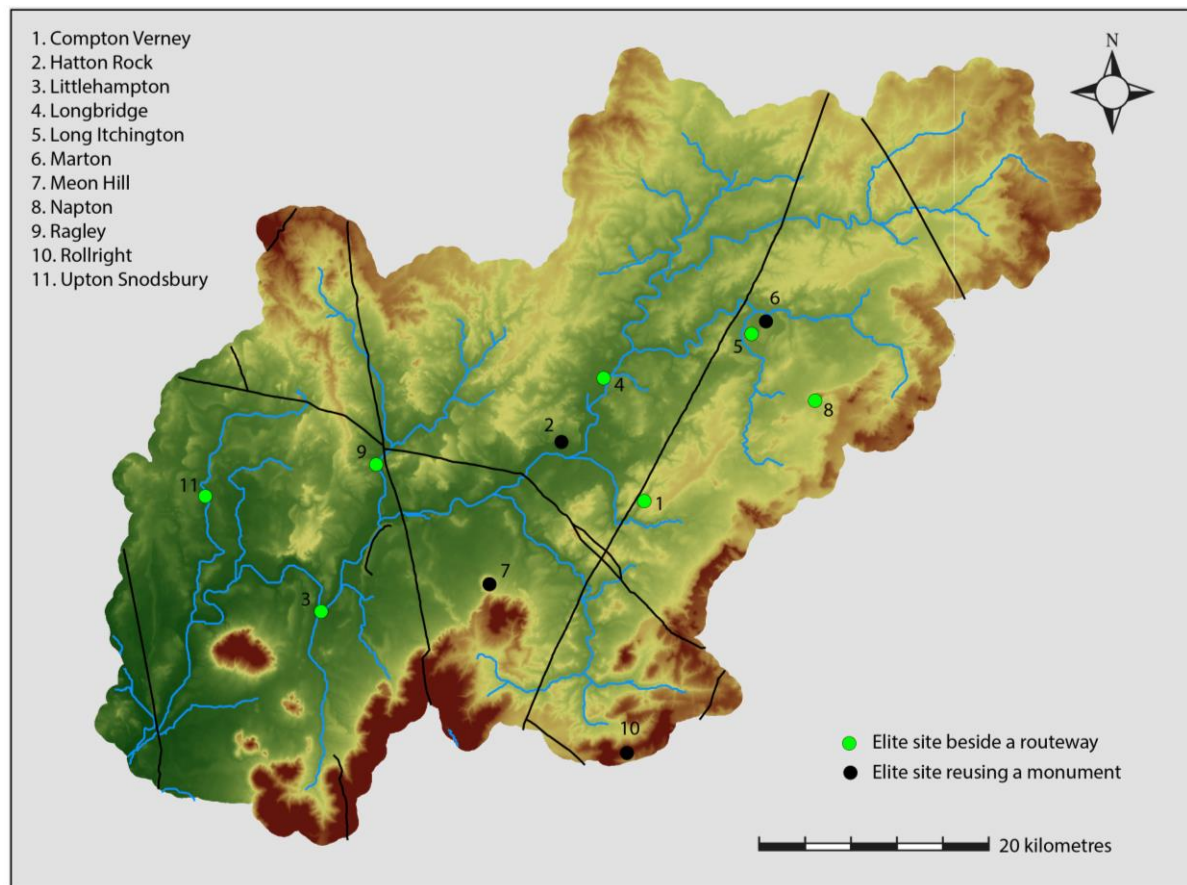


Figure 8. 1. The distribution of late 6th and 7th century elite sites in the Avon Valley

8.2.1 Activity at Existing Monuments

Those few elite sites which did reuse monuments were Hatton Rock, Meon Hill, Rollright, and possibly Marton. Hatton Rock will be discussed in detail below and will not be visited here. Marton's identification was uncertain due to the lack of dating evidence for the barrow in which the burials were discovered and the distinct possibility that it was early medieval rather than a reused prehistoric tumulus (see Chapter 4.3). The remaining two sites, however, did display the characteristics described by Williams: elite artefacts, solitary burials, and association with prehistoric monuments (1998, p. 103). Unlike at Marton, the identification of the monuments at these burial sites as prehistoric was more certain. The late 6th-century male buried with a suite of weapons at Meon Hill was inserted into the

ramparts of an Iron Age hill fort (Marshall, 1978, pp. 9–12; Meaney, 1964, p. 261)⁶⁰ and at Rollright, a 7th-century female burial accompanied by a wooden box and a *patera*, both with silver fittings, amongst other objects was interred near to the King's Stone (Anni Byard pers. comm. May 2015), a single standing stone interpreted as a potential Bronze Age cemetery marker (Lambrick and Ambers, 1988) and part of the Rollright Stones megalithic complex.⁶¹ The Meon Hill burial was the only known early medieval burial in the area, but the female at Rollright lay close to an early 5th to 6th-century cemetery, the exact location and extent of which is still uncertain (Meaney, 1964, p. 260; Salzman, 1939, p. 358). A further feature common to both of these sites was their elevated position: the male burial lies on the slopes of the eponymous Meon Hill, a spur of the Cotswold Plateau which projects into the Avon Valley, and the female burial lies on the crest of a steep escarpment of the same formation. A focus of elite activity on higher ground with good visual links to the rest of the valley was a characteristic noted at the high status site of Hatton Rock, a site which also reused a prehistoric monument (see below). Finally, it is interesting to note that all three of these sites lay in the central part of the Avon Valley and this will be returned to in Chapter 10.

8.2.2 Activity at Routeways

In contrast, the remaining seven elite sites dating to the late 6th or 7th century did not show evidence for the reuse of monuments and they were not commonly found on high ground. Instead, they were found next to routeways. The burials at Ragley, Longbridge, and Littlehampton all lie beside major rivers, the Arrow at the former and the Avon at the two latter. At Ragley an individual female burial was discovered in the early 19th century accompanied by a large gilt square-headed brooch, two small radiate brooches, an iron knife and buckle, and amber and jet beads (Meaney, 1964, p. 262). Initially interpreted as 7th century in date (Meaney, 1964, p. 262), reanalysis using Hines' typology might indicate that a late 6th century date is more appropriate (see Chapter 2.3.4 and Hines, 1997, pp. 94–100). Departing from isolated elite burials, Longbridge and Littlehampton were cemeteries which

⁶⁰ See Plate 17 showing Meon Hill hillfort.

⁶¹ See Plates 14 – 16 which show part of the Rollright Stones complex and their landscape.

contained evidence of elite late 6th or 7th-century inhumations. At Longbridge, two burials, one male and the other female, stood out. The male was buried with one of the rare examples of a sword found in the valley and the female contained what amounts to, arguably, the most elaborate assemblage in the region: a Scandinavian-style gold bracteate, a silver bracteate, a florid cruciform brooch with silver plates, a silver double spiral bracelet, and a string of amber beads (Figure 8.2) (Meaney, 1964, p. 261). The style of the bracteates and the cruciform brooch suggest that this burial dates to the late 6th century (Vierck, 1970).



Figure 8. 2. Finds from Longbridge cemetery (© Trustees of the British Museum)

Amongst the unspecified number of inhumations discovered at Littlehampton was another sword and a unique pin suite with a central gold disk set with a convex garnet surrounded by beaded wire (Åberg, 1926, p. 219; Meaney, 1964, p. 281; Ross, 1992, pp. 249–251) (Figure 8.3).



Figure 8. 3. Necklace from Littlehampton with Kentish style pendant (© Trustees of the British Museum)

The pin suite is mid-7th century in style and belongs to a group rarely found outside of Kent (Åberg, 1926, pp. 135–137; Ross, 1992, p. 368), suggesting both the date of one of the burials and its status. A further similarity observed at these two cemeteries is that they not only lie on the River Avon, they also lie on parts of the river marked by confluences – Fisher’s Brook at Longbridge and the Isbourne River at Littlehampton. The halls at Long Itchington and Hatton Rock and the burials at Marton and Ragley also lay close to confluences; it appears likely, therefore, that this was a landscape feature which was important for the elite to mark.

Whilst the four remaining sites – Upton Snodsbury, Compton Verney, Napton Hill, and the hall complex at Long Itchington – do not lie on a major river, they are all located beside smaller watercourses and, with the exception of Napton Hill, a case might be made for the presence of a ford in their vicinity. The

presence of fords at Long Itchington and Hatton Rock will be discussed in detail below. The burials at Upton Snodsbury, which included a sword and gilt saucer brooches (Meaney, 1964, p. 281; Ponting, 1866, p. 342), were located close to a ford on the Bow Brook marked on the 1st Edition OS County Edition 1:2500 map. The three inhumations found at Compton Verney with a gold bracteate and gold and garnet pendants lie above a stream midway between the Fosse Way and the early medieval royal centre at Kineton (Hooke, 1999, p. 67). This positioning and a 10th-century charter for Kineton which recorded a road running to the Fosse past a place called the 'Dedlow' (Hooke, 1999, pp. 64–67; S. 773) may indicate that a ford existed in the area of these burials.

Lying beside watercourses, with a particular emphasis on confluences and fords, these seven sites appear to indicate the common practice of associating elite activity with routeways in the 7th century. Hall complexes and burial sites along with their associated activities were likely positioned to create a dialogue with those navigating along these routes. This is reminiscent of the regional cemeteries of the preceding centuries, which also favoured locations next to fords. If the regional cemeteries of Bidford-on-Avon and Alveston Manor were, by virtue of their size and diversity of practices, sites with supra-local authority, then elite expression at routeways in the 7th century could have evolved out of an existing tradition. There does, however, appear to have been a subtle translation of the practice, with rivers becoming main the focus and the Roman roads, so important in the preceding centuries, reducing in significance.

Conversely, the reuse of monuments at the elite sites of Hatton Rock, Meon Hill, and Rollright seems to have represented a departure from earlier traditions. As has been stated, the reuse of monuments in the 5th and 6th centuries was observed at sites argued to serve a local community, as opposed to the higher status regional sites. The translation of this practice into the 7th century at these three elite sites reflects Williams' model (1998, p. 103), but not the Avon Valley more generally. Being less common than the practice of associating elite sites and routeways, it is possible that the reuse of monuments by elites was an import into the valley or that it signalled special status within the category of elite

sites. Currently it is not possible to ascertain which, if either, of these interpretations may be correct, but a case can certainly be made for the special status of Hatton Rock.

8.3 The Great Hall Complexes of Hatton Rock and Long Itchington

Great hall complexes are thought to represent the upper echelons of society in the early medieval period, being centres for economic, administrative, judicial, and social transactions (see Chapter 2.2.2.4 and Brookes, 2010, pp. 65–67; Hamerow, 2012, p. 103; Hodges, 1982, p. 49; Marshall and Marshall, 1993, p. 400; Millett, 1984, p. 249; Rahtz, 2014; Ware, 2005, p. 154; Welch, 1992, pp. 47–51; Wilson, 2014). The appearance of two possible hall sites – Hatton Rock and Long Itchington – in the Avon Valley is, therefore, suggestive of an emergent elite. This section considers what the evidence from these two sites and their landscapes can tell us about these elites and their connections to the preceding centuries in the valley.

This analysis was significantly limited by the lack of a comprehensive investigation at either Hatton Rock or Long Itchington. Despite attempts by the author and others, the character of both sites is still primarily derived from aerial photographs (Figures 8.4 and 8.5). Here Hatton Rock has an advantage over Long Itchington as a small investigation was conducted over the course of three days during the excavation of a 30cm wide pipe trench across the site (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973). The size and scale of this excavation along with the position of the trench, which only skimmed the corner of one building, however, provided little direct information about the halls themselves (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973). Excavations have been conducted in the immediate vicinity of the Long Itchington complex but, whilst these did provide evidence of early medieval activity in the area (Palmer, 2009a, pp. 161–163), they added little to our knowledge of the high-status site.



Figure 8. 4. Aerial Photographs of the hall complexes at Hatton Rock (top) and Long Itchington (bottom). After Caroline Rann & Bryn Gethin pers. comm. Oct 2015

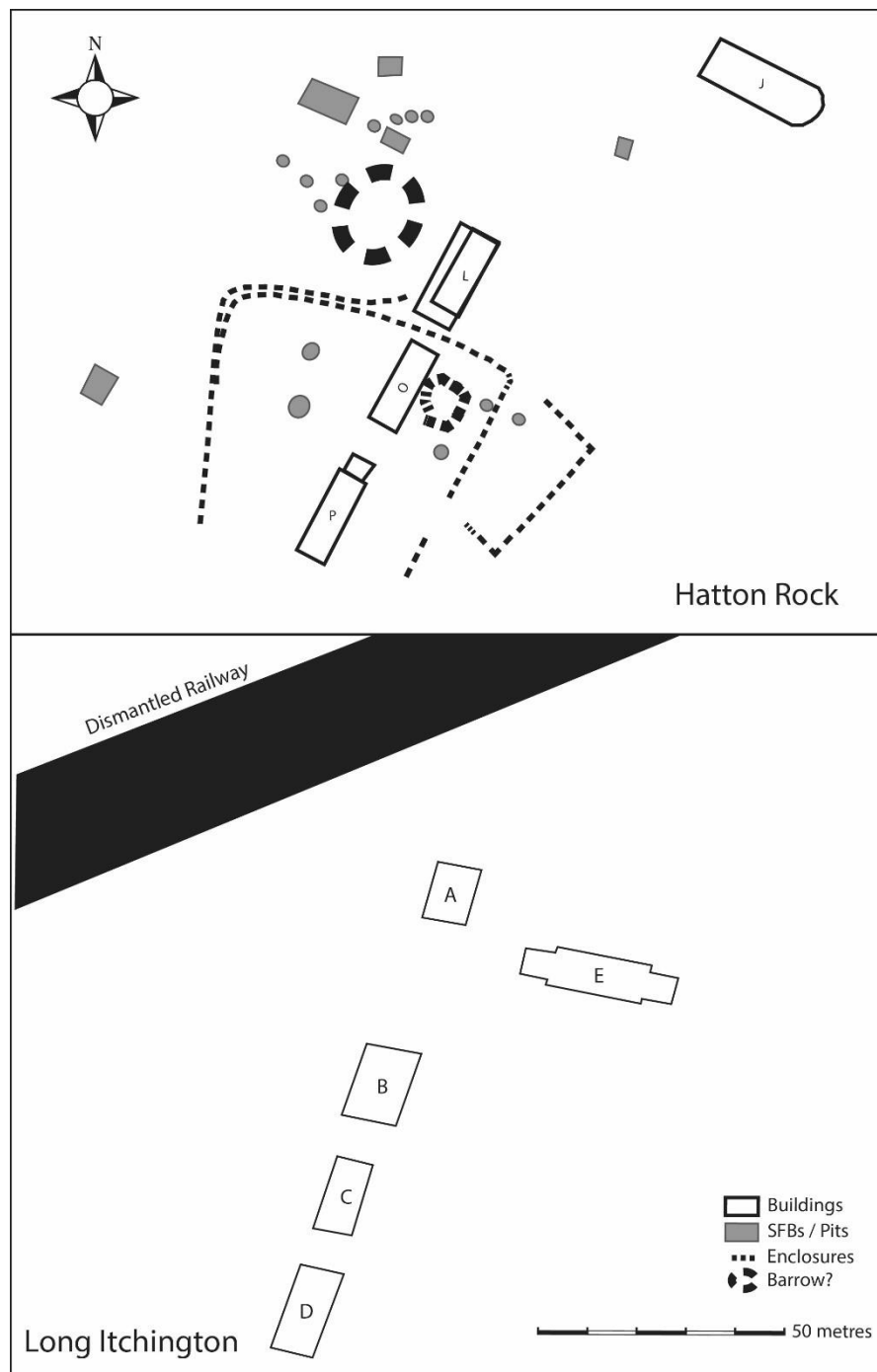


Figure 8. 5. Site Plans of the hall complexes at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington. After Caroline Rann & Bryn Gethin pers. comm. Oct 2015

A consequence of the scale or lack of excavation at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington is the paucity of dating material for either site. The excavation at Hatton Rock did produce a small pottery assemblage of grass-tempered ware, but the lack of a West Midlands typology for this period meant that it could not be dated more closely than to the 6th – 11th century (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 169). A radiocarbon

date was also obtained, but, arguably, its reliability is so poor as to be unusable. The date returned by the original report was 787 – 963 AD (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 177); this has been recalibrated using the OxCal program to a date between 772 and 1183 AD (Adam McBride pers. comm. Nov 2015). Such a late date would, however, be inconsistent with what is known of the chronology of such sites. In addition to this there are other problems associated with this particular dating sample. Firstly, the ability to date a whole site from a single radiocarbon date should be questioned. Secondly, with such limited excavation and no way of positioning the context of the sample within the sequence of the site there is no way of knowing whether the context was contemporary with the use of the halls. This is compounded by the nature of the context from which the charcoal sample was taken, namely the secondary fill of a feature interpreted as a sunken feature building (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 164). As both Tipper (2004, p. 185) and Maslin (2015, p. 204) have argued, the fills of these pits were not necessarily contemporary with their primary use; Tipper has demonstrated that the hollows of these buildings attracted material as late as the 12th century, despite their construction being a feature of the early Anglo-Saxon period (2004, pp. 10–11). That this context overlay a layer interpreted as silting (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 164) would imply that some time had passed before the secondary material was deposited in the pit. This single date, therefore, should not only be seen as unrepresentative of the site as a whole, but out of context within the site's sequence and the date of the halls may still reasonably belong to the period before that suggested by the radiocarbon date. This would be more in keeping with comparable great hall complexes elsewhere in England which appear to belong to the late 6th and 7th centuries (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015; Thomas, 2013). It should also be restated that an earlier date would be supported by the pottery assemblage at Hatton Rock. Finally, the desire to accept a later date for this hall complex appears to have been influenced by two charters which suggested the establishment of a religious community at a place identified as nearby Hampton Lucy in the late 8th century (S. 120 & 1257). Recent excavations at Lyminge, however, showed that a secular elite site preceded the foundation of an important monastic site (Thomas, 2013) and the same might

be true at Hatton Rock. Consequently, it is not necessary to conflate the archaeological evidence of a typologically late 6th or 7th-century complex with a late 8th-century historical account.

A further effect of our dependence upon aerial photographs is a lack of material culture with which to explore the function of the site. This limitation was partially mitigated by the fact that, with the exception of Lyminge (Thomas, 2013, p. 128),⁶² these high-status sites are characterised by their 'clean' nature with relatively few artefacts found (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 343). At Sutton Courtenay, the excavators were able to propose various interpretations about the site's function, drawing upon its landscape position, architecture, and historical sources and were not constrained by a lack of material culture (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015). Whilst excavated evidence was far more limited in this study, it was hoped that the approach used at Sutton Courtenay might also be constructively used here to explore the significance of these halls and their role within the Avon Valley. Indeed the data available afforded the investigation of the form of the settlement and its structures, its layout, and landscape position. This final characteristic was expanded to incorporate the position of the sites in relation to natural topographical features, routeways, existing monuments, and other early medieval sites. Thus, the analysis of the Avon Valley halls was divided into two themes: the expression of power through the character of the buildings and through the position of these elite sites within the landscape.

8.3.1 The Characteristics of the Hall Complexes

8.3.1.1 Hall Structures and Layout

An obvious starting point is the exceptional size of these buildings which were markedly different to their predecessors and counterparts on lower-status sites (Hamerow, 2011, p. 142; Welch, 1992, pp. 21 & 30). At Yeavinger, buildings A4 and A2 measured approximately 26 metres x 12 metres and 25 metres x 11 metres, respectively (Hope-Taylor, 1977, p. 130). At Cowdery's Down, building C12 was of

⁶² Rendlesham may also prove to be an exception, but, until the great halls are identified themselves, this remains only a possibility (Scull et al., 2014).

comparable size measuring 22.1 metres x 8.8 metres (Millett, 1984, p. 215). The recent excavations at Lyminge uncovered a sequence of halls, one of which stood 21 metres x 8.5 metres (Thomas, 2013, p. 126). Whilst these halls were exceptionally large, they were all eclipsed by the discovery of Building 500 at Sutton Courtenay, the largest hall discovered to date and measuring 30.9 metres x 10.8 metres (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 333). The size of these buildings necessitated the manipulation of significant amounts of labour and resources (Ware, 2005, p. 105; Welch, 1992, p. 52); it was not just the physicality of these buildings which signalled status, it was also the means and assets which they implied. Furthermore, construction on such a scale would have brought people together from the surrounding area demonstrating control, but also alliance and indebtedness to a central authority (Ware, 2005, p. 155).

	Building	Rahtz 1970		Rann & Gethin pers. comm.		Average		
		Length	Width	Length	Width	Length	Width	Floor Area of Central Room
Hatton Rock	L(a)	18	9	17	8	17.5	8.5	148.75
	L (b)	22	12	21	10	21.5	11	236.5
	O	20	9	18	8	19	8.5	161.5
	P	20	9	19 + 5	8	19.5 + 5	8.5	165.75
	J	30	8	25 + 5	10	25 + 5	9	243
Long Itchington	A	-	-	12	8	12	8	96
	B	-	-	18	11	18	11	198
	C	-	-	17	8	17	8	136
	D	-	-	20	9	20	9	180
	E	-	-	5.5 + 20 + 5.5	9	5.5 + 20 + 5.5	9	180

Table 8. 1 The Dimensions of the halls at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington (from aerial photographs)

The halls at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington were of various sizes (Table 8.1), but, with the exception of the northernmost at Long Itchington, all fell into the category of a great hall with a floor area greater than 100m² (Hamerow, 2011, p. 131). They were, therefore, significantly larger than the, albeit limited, evidence of post-built structures elsewhere in the valley: the 6th-century Building n at Broom was c.8.5 x 4 metres and the late 5th-century building F28 at Stretton-on-Fosse and the building defined by postholes F6. et al. at Alveston Manor were 8.2 x 5.35 metres and 7.1 x 5.8 metres, respectively (Ford, 2003, pp. 23–30, unpub., p. 186; Palmer, 2000, pp. 199–209). The great halls at Hatton Rock and Long

Itchington represent a departure from these earlier buildings, belonging instead to the same category of complexes discussed above.

Furthermore, in layout the two sites appeared to share a template: a line of three or four buildings with a further building perpendicular to the rest which lay to the east of the main range and, in both instances, was the largest building on site, measuring between 30 – 31 metres x 9 metres. The similarities continued with one hall of 17 – 18 metres x 8 – 9 metres and two halls of 19 – 20 metres x 8 – 9 metres at each site.⁶³ Moreover, it was the latter halls which attracted annexes: Building P at Hatton Rock had the addition of one annex and Building E at Long Itchington was aggrandised by the presence of two. These were the only halls with annexes and it appears that these were not a common feature in the Avon Valley's translation of this building tradition. This is in contrast to the geographically closest comparable site, Atcham, Shropshire (St Joseph, 1975). Here it appeared that the line of just two halls, identified by aerial photography, both had opposing annexes. The perpendicular hall was also absent and the dimensions of the central structures, without annexes, was considerably smaller than those with annexes in the Avon Valley (St Joseph, 1975).⁶⁴ Upon this evidence, therefore, it seems that Hatton Rock and Long Itchington belonged to a localised tradition within a wider practice of hall complexes, one which has implications for our understanding of elite authority in the valley. The significance of these buildings within the wider great hall tradition is suggested by the size of one of them, Building E at Long Itchington. Measuring 31 metres x 9 metres, this hall rivalled Building 500 at Sutton Courtenay (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 333), the largest of the halls identified in the UK and demonstrates the importance of these sites.

⁶³ The building dimensions for both sites were derived from aerial photographs and must, therefore, be used cautiously. The Hatton Rock buildings were assessed by Rahtz (1970) and by Caroline Rann and Bryn Gethin (pers. comm. Oct 2015) and the average of their observations was used.

⁶⁴ With their annexes included, the Atcham halls measure 21 x 8 metres and 24 x 8 metres and, without the annexes, St Joseph gives the length of the central structure of the first hall as 14 metres (St Joseph, 1975). This is significantly shorter than the 'annexed' halls in Warwickshire whose central structures measure c.20 metres (see Table 8.1).

8.3.1.2 Timber Resources

To construct the halls identified at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington would have required significant resources of timber. In the Avon Valley it is probable that these would have been provided by the Forest of Arden. The extent of this woodland in the early medieval period can be inferred from the distribution of middle-Saxon place-names which made reference to woodland, clearings in woods, or woodland-based activities, such as the keeping of swine herds and hunting (Ford, 1976, pp. 282–284; Hooke, 2009, pp. 44–48). This evidence indicated that the southern fringes of the Arden swept along the high ground to the north of the River Avon to meet the river in the area of Warwick (Hooke, 2009, pp. 44–48). A further tract of woodland traced the high ground of the Cotswold Plateau in the southern part of the valley, protruding north to encompass the heights of Meon Hill (Ford, 1976, pp. 282–284). Between these forests lay the Avon and its southerly tributaries, marked by an absence of place-names indicative of woods and instead populated with names indicating fields and heath (Ford, 1976, pp. 282–284).

Hatton Rock lay above the northern bank of the River Avon, on a narrow piece of heath and marsh-land between the Forest of Arden and the river, ideally situated to exploit the resources of this great wood. In contrast, Long Itchington lay on a southern tributary of the Avon, at some distance from both the woodlands of the north and the south. The place-names here indicated some small wooded areas, but there appeared to be no large woodland tracts in the vicinity (Ford, 1976, pp. 282–284). Later evidence for a linked estate at Arley, deep in the Forest of Arden, supports the suggestion that the community at Long Itchington was forced to go quite some distance to access timber resources (Ford, 1976, p. 279). Thus, from the place-name evidence, it appears that Hatton Rock was sited in a more advantageous location to exploit woodland resources. The Arden would not only have provided timber for building and for fuel at Hatton Rock, but would also have supported the social activities required of a lord, for example swine-rearing for feasting and prey for hunting (Rollason, 2012). The apparent detachment of Long Itchington from these resources and social obligations is, therefore, of interest and might be best explained if these two sites were operating within one system. In such a system we

might imagine different hall complexes performing different functions and their different topographies being complimentary.

8.3.1.3 Places of Assembly and Ritualised Activity

The presence of buildings which facilitated public gatherings, such as Building E at Yeavinger (Barnwell, 2005, pp. 175–182); ritualised activities, such as enclosures which may have screened-off events from the wider community; and the distinct alignments of buildings, interpreted as restricting space and permitting processions (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, pp. 345–346; Hamerow, 2012, p. 106, 2002, pp. 97–98; Millett, 1984, p. 194; Welch, 1992, pp. 17–22), have been considered evidence of central authority at hall complexes. It could be suggested that two such structures existed at Hatton Rock – an enclosure and the ‘church’ – but the interpretation of both of these is fraught with difficulties and, on balance, may be stretching the evidence too far.

Identified on aerial photographs, the enclosure divided the line of three halls at Hatton Rock lying between the two phase Building L and the middle Building O and partially surrounding both Building O and Building P. The southern end of this enclosure has not been identified, but may have lain beneath the quarrying evident in this part of the site.⁶⁵ As with the rest of the site, the identification of such a feature by cropmarks alone means that no stratigraphic relationship between this and the halls can be established. Combined with the fact that the halls were not placed centrally or axially within the space enclosed and that prehistoric and Romano-British rectilinear field enclosures have been identified in the area (see Warwickshire Monument records MWA954, MWA7894, and MWA956), it is possible that this enclosure and the hall complex were not contemporary. Furthermore, as studies of hall complexes progress it is becoming apparent that the direct association of enclosures and halls in this way was a feature of the Northumbrian tradition and we should not necessarily expect to find this practice in this region (John Blair pers. comm. Mar 2015). The lack of enclosures observed at either Long Itchington or Atcham (St Joseph, 1975) seems to support this interpretation. It is probable, therefore, that this

⁶⁵ The interpretation that this part of the site has been subject to quarrying is made by Caroline Rann and Bryn Gethin (pers. comm. Oct 2015) and is discussed further below.

enclosure has been misinterpreted, but this does not preclude the occurrence of ritualised activities at Hatton Rock.

Despite its potential significance, the 'church' at Hatton Rock has received little scrutiny, its existence seemingly accepted due to the presence of what appears to be an apsidal end to Building J in aerial photographs (Rahtz, 1970, p. 142). This acceptance is all the more surprising given Rahtz' own admission that the eastern end of Building J was unclear in the photographs (Rahtz, 1970, p. 142). In their report on the subsequent excavation of the site, Hirst and Rahtz, substantiated their interpretation of this building through the identification of building material: a tile and building stone purportedly found in association with the structure, the only examples on the site (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 167). In reality, however, this material was found on the spoil heap and the 'building stone' was only defined as such due to its proximity to the tile (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 167). The size of the assemblage should also raise concerns; can a single fragment of tile and a lump of stone support the assignation of 'church' to Building J? It cannot. Is there any further evidence, therefore, which can be drawn into this argument to aid in the interpretation of this building?

Whilst there are no known church buildings dating to before the 7th century in the Avon Valley, and only two 7th-century examples – Pershore Abbey and St Mary's Deerhurst (Gilbert, 1972; Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, p. 73, see Chapter 9.4), both of which lie far to the south of Hatton Rock – two *ecles* place-names might indicate the presence of British Christianity in this part of the valley (Hooke, 2009, p. 39). It was not possible to associate the building materials with Building J with any certainty, but the nature of their fabrics and their presence on this site might indicate its ritual significance more generally. The fragment of tile was thought to be re-used Roman material (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 167) and its description was reminiscent of pink grog-tempered ware (Booth and Green, 1989; Taylor, 2004). This fabric has been used to make ceramic vessels found at Tiddington, Alcester, Chesterton and at other Romano-British sites across the north of Warwickshire (Booth and Green, 1989). Examples of tile, however, have been identified far less frequently in the west Midlands region with Mills citing

examples known from Alcester and Worcester (Mills, 2013, p. 451). Whilst the known distribution of pink grog tiles certainly suffers from a lack of reporting (Edward Peveler pers. comm. Oct 2015), it is still interesting to note that one of the two *ecles* place-names lay outside Alcester, Exhall (Hooke, 2009, p. 39), but, without further data, little can be said about the significance of this.



Figure 8. 6 Map of Millstone Grit and Coal Measure outcrops Geological Map Data BGS © NERC 2016

The stone, a material which was reserved for churches of this period (Shapland, 2013), is also interesting as carboniferous limestone was unlikely to have been quarried locally. Probably sourced from the Millstone Grit or Productive Coal Measures, which are most common in the Pennines, the Peak District, and in south and north Wales, these geologies only occur as infrequent small outcrops in the Midlands (Figure 8.6) and none are known from the immediate area of Hatton Rock (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 175). Consequently, it is possible that this stone was brought to the site, potentially

from a distant source which lay beyond the traditional sphere of Anglo-Saxon influence. With this in mind, the *ecles* place-names might take on new significance. On balance, the physical evidence for religious activities at Hatton Rock is scant and of questionable quality. There is wider evidence which could, theoretically, have supported the identification of a church at this site, but this could not be corroborated by the archaeology. As a result, any interpretation of Building J as a church is still highly speculative.

8.3.1.4 Hunting and Feasting

Moving on to another set of elite activities, hunting and feasting, both of which are thought to have been associated with great hall complexes (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 348; Rahtz, 2014, p. 412; Rollason, 2012, pp. 437–442; Thomas, 2013, p. 125), we are again challenged by the lack of excavated material at the Avon Valley sites. The only evidence which could be assessed was the 20 kilogram faunal assemblage retrieved from what was described as a sunken feature building at Hatton Rock (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, pp. 164 & 175). Recovered from a trench just 30 centimetres wide, this sample is highly unrepresentative and should be treated accordingly. It may be instructive, however, that only one bone from a wild animal, a wild duck, was identified (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, pp. 175 & 177). Secondly, the majority of pigs identified were mature (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 176) which would suggest that they were not kept solely for meat. Charter evidence from the early medieval period indicated the keeping of sizeable herds of swine in the Forest of Arden and its fringes (Hooke, 2009, pp. 155–157) and we might reasonably suggest that the keeping of stock animals was a part of elite socio-economic activity. So, whilst there was no direct evidence of either hunting or feasting at Hatton Rock, we might tentatively be able to suggest that there was evidence for the exploitation of woodland resources and wider systems of stock management in the landscape.

8.3.1.5 Production and Storage

Whilst identifying and interpreting some of the structures and activities at Hatton Rock is difficult, the presence of sunken feature buildings is more certain due to the combination of excavated evidence and aerial photography (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973; Caroline Rann & Bryn Gethin pers. comm. Oct 2015).

The importance of these structures as part of an elite agenda is obscured firstly by the fact that they may predate the building of the great hall complex, as suggested at Sutton Courtenay (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, pp. 331–333)⁶⁶ and, secondly, by the fact that the material found in them was secondary and did not necessarily have any connection to the original function of the building (Tipper, 2004, p. 185). This is further compounded by evidence that these structures had multiple and various functions, probably related to production and storage activities, which may have changed over time (Tipper, 2004, p. 185). With little information regarding their use it was still possible to assess whether there were any differences between examples on elite sites versus ‘normal’ sites.

Sunken feature buildings have been found at Baginton, Wasperton, Broom, and Stretton-on-Fosse,⁶⁷ with three identified at Broom and two at Stretton (Wilkins, 1975, p. 122; Carver et al., 2009, p. 28; Palmer, 2000, p. 209; Ford, 2003, p. 23). Caroline Rann and Bryn Gethin’s reinterpretation of the Hatton Rock aerial photographs located many more examples (pers. comm. Oct 2015) and it is possible that this reflects greater levels of production/storage at this site compared to the others. In addition, with the exception of the unexcavated structure at Broom, the single excavated sunken feature building at Hatton Rock was larger than its counterparts at the ‘ordinary’ sites – at Broom and Stretton-on-Fosse the long axis measured between 4.5 – 5.1 metres compared to 6 metres measured in Feature 1 at Hatton Rock (Palmer, 2000, p. 209; Ford, 2003, p. 23; Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 164)⁶⁸ – which may also imply that the example from Hatton Rock was later in date than those found elsewhere in the Avon Valley. Thus, whilst a specific function could not be attributed to these structures, there is some evidence to suggest differences between these structures on ‘ordinary’ and on elite sites. On current evidence, however, this distinction could only be made at Hatton Rock as no sunken feature buildings have been identified at Long Itchington (Palmer, 2009a, pp. 161–163).

⁶⁶ Whilst this seemed to be the case at Sutton Courtenay, the larger size of the excavated sunken feature building at Hatton Rock, which purportedly exceeded five metres in length, may indicate a 7th-century date for this structure (Hamerow, 2012, p. 52)

⁶⁷ A sunken feature building has also now been identified at Shotton (Stuart Foreman pers. comm. Sept 2015)

⁶⁸ No information on size was given for the examples at Baginton or Wasperton (Wilkins, 1975, p. 122; Carver et al., 2009, p. 28).

8.3.1.6 Chronological Development

Before moving on to the position of hall complexes in the landscape we should consider their development over time. Shapland (2013, p. 36) and Hamerow (2011, pp. 136–137) have both observed that the majority of early medieval timber buildings were rarely repaired or replaced and were instead abandoned or dismantled. This phenomenon they linked to the life-cycle of these buildings and their immutable relationships with individual generations (Hamerow, 2011, pp. 136–137; Shapland, 2013, p. 36). In contrast, at high-status sites successive sequences of and/or modifications to great halls have been observed (Hamerow, 2011, p. 136; Thomas and Knox, 2014). Hamerow has highlighted that this represents a significant shift in practice, with these halls now spanning generations and perhaps reflecting increased concerns of inheritance and landholding (2011, p. 137). Additionally, by rebuilding halls in the same place, these settlements did not shift, creating a sense of permanence and stability not seen elsewhere in the settlements of the period.

Examination of this phenomenon was hampered by our reliance at these sites on aerial photographs, preventing the establishment of stratigraphic relationships. The ‘structures’ to the south of the complex at Hatton Rock observed by Rahtz, which were originally thought to represent a second phase of occupation (1970, p. 140), have since been argued to be the result of quarrying (Caroline Rann & Bryn Gethin pers. comm. Oct 2015) and no overlapping structures were observed at Long Itchington. The only evidence for more than a single phase of construction, therefore, came from Building L at Hatton Rock. In aerial photographs it appears that two separate buildings were constructed in the same place and on the same alignment (Rahtz, 1970, p. 142). This would imply that the earlier hall was dismantled to allow for the construction of a second, later hall. This multiphase development at the site, something which has not been identified elsewhere in the valley, makes this building, and Hatton Rock, stand out.

8.3.2 The Landscape of the Hall Complexes

With the evidence from Hatton Rock and Long Itchington considered very little could be said about the sites themselves, but this should not be surprising given the nature of the data available. What can be

said is that these sites stood out from sites with earlier settlement activity in the valley and that the presence of elites might be inferred from the apparent utilisation of significant resources and knowledge of a wider narrative of elite architectural expression. Tentatively, a localised tradition within the practice of hall complex construction might also be identified through the repetition of hall dimensions and layout at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington, but little more can be said without drawing upon evidence from the surrounding landscape. These great halls were built in a landscape which already lay within a complex system of social, political, and economic networks. The relationship between these elite sites, earlier settlements and cemeteries, extant sites, major routeways, and the proposed frontier zone is instructive of the role of these halls and the new political agendas which they represented.

Often neglected in favour of research centred on the sites themselves, recent studies have shown the value of such an approach to the landscape of great halls, for example: the Origins of Wessex project (Hamerow et al., 2013); Rollason's study of early medieval kingship (2012); Blair's discussion of halls and frontiers (2013); Crewe's survey of the reuse of monuments at elite settlements (2012); and Thomas' fieldwork at Lyminge (2013). Crewe has argued, quite convincingly, that the reuse of monuments on elite sites was a deliberate process of appropriation in the 7th century which removed the practice from the communal realm and transferred it to the exclusive domain of high-status sites (2012, pp. 208–209). Thus, the appearance of ring ditches at these sites, for example at Sutton Courtenay (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 330), can be interpreted as a dialogue, or a 'reconciliation',⁶⁹ between the elite and the contemporary local population over which they sought to claim authority. Thomas' paper updating us on the ongoing excavations at the great hall complex at Lyminge included valuable discussion of the site's position relative to high-status burials in the cemeteries of Lyminge I and II (2013, pp. 118–120). Thus, the choice of site, its reinvention, and the

⁶⁹ The concept of 'cultural reconciliation' was proposed by Ambridge in her study of the Napatan kings of Egypt in the 8th century BC. She argued that the incoming elite combined various aspects of their own pasts and the pasts of the indigenous peoples with the landscape they encountered to strengthen their new political agendas. In this way, the kings negotiated tradition and memory within a new framework of socio-political control (Ambridge, 2007).

appropriation of the landscape all acted to create and maintain a dialogue between elites and their intended subjects; a dialogue which asserted authority and claimed ownership and which expected certain services and social obligations in return. By investigating the position of these sites, we can explore the relationship between the elite and the landscape – both natural and human – and the nature of their authority.

In order to conduct this analysis the ‘great hall’ complexes and their surroundings were modelled in a GIS; this process is described in Chapter 3.5. Visibility analysis was conducted using the Viewshed tool in ArcMap 10.1. Visibility was assessed both to and from the hall complexes. For example, areas which were visible from the hall complexes and areas which had views of the hall complexes were mapped. The parameters for these analyses were: views to the sites, Offset A was four, seven, or nine metres (as defined by the reconstructed height of the halls described in Chapter 2.3.3), Offset B was 1.6 metres (the eye height designated for a viewer); views from the sites, Offset A was 1.6 metres (eye height), Offset B was zero metres (ground level); cell size was 10 x 10 (set by the DTM); extent was limited to the Avon Study Area. For ease of presentation the results of these analyses used the binary categories of ‘Visible’ and ‘Not Visible’. By converting the parts of the landscape which could see the halls into polygons it was possible to identify sections of the Roman roads and main rivers which intersected with these and which would have permitted travellers views of the hall complexes. Similarly it was possible to assess whether any extant sites or 5th to 6th-century sites shared a visual relationship with the halls.

8.3.2.1 Routeways

Through this examination of the wider landscape, similarities in the situation of the hall complexes became apparent and seem to indicate that, as proposed above, the two halls did operate within one system of landscape organisation. Firstly, it appears that both halls were positioned in relation to fords which carried minor roads from one of the major Roman roads. Secondly, both halls were placed in parts of the landscape which had strong visual links to the Roman roads network and the major rivers.

Turning first to the fords, the halls at Hatton Rock were positioned on the southern tip of a spur of high ground, directly above a sunken lane marked on the 1st Edition OS Map which led down to the northern banks of the River Avon.⁷⁰ Close to this location, a 10th-century charter boundary clause referred to a crossing, ‘Dodda’s Ford’ (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, p. 139; S. 1350),⁷¹ (Figure 8.7). This ford would have carried a track which, in all likelihood, linked to the minor road observed during excavations of the Roman settlement at Tiddington. This road acted as a focus of domestic and industrial activity during the Roman period and probably joined the major Roman road, the Salt Way, immediately to the south of its crossing on the Avon, a crossing marked by the position of the cemetery at Alveston Manor (Burnham and Wachter, 1990, p. 310; Palmer, 2009b).

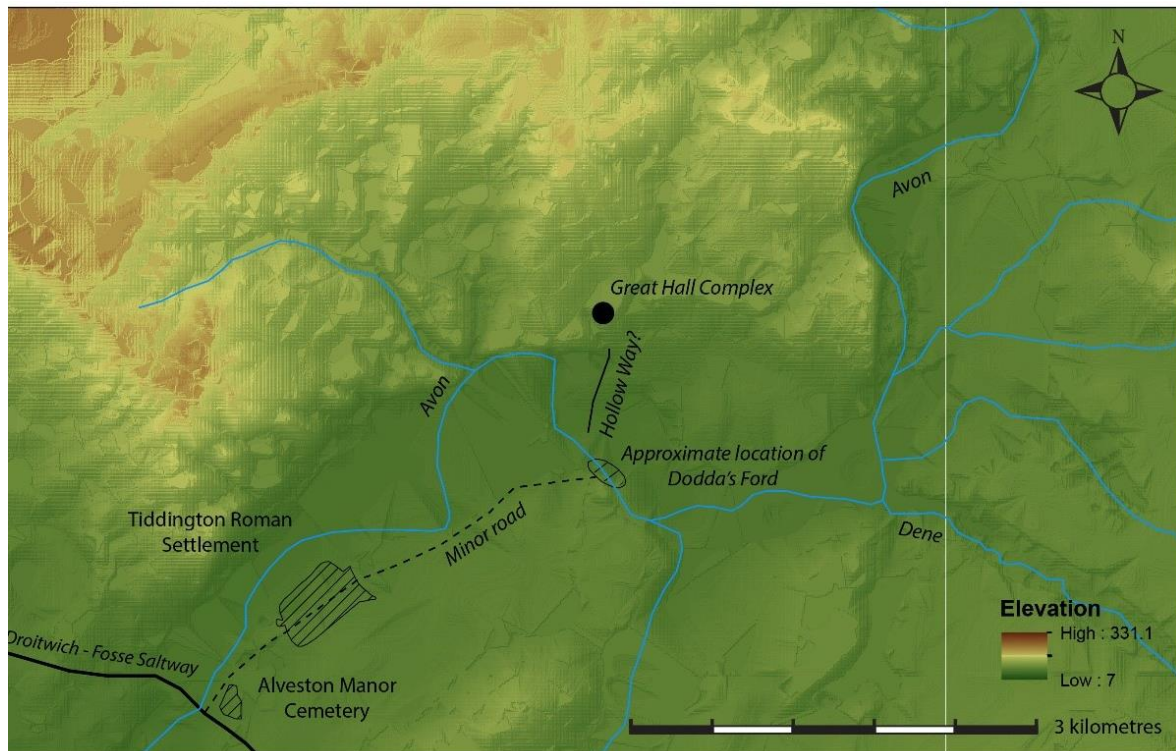


Figure 8. 7. The landscape of Hatton Rock: fords and routeways

⁷⁰ See Plates 18 – 21 for images of the landscape in which Hatton Rock lay and the sunken lane

⁷¹ <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/1350.html#> “ðis synd ʿa landgemæru into Eanulfestune, and into Tidantune, ʿonne fehð hit ærest on Dondanforda. Of Doddanforda on cyngces broc. Andlang broces on ʿa dic. Of ʿære dic on ʿone hlau. Of ʿæm hlauwe on ʿone weg. Of ʿæm wege on locsetena gemære. Of ʿæm gemærum on ʿone hrygcweg. Of ʿæm hrygcwege innan westbroc. Of ʿæm broce on saltmære. Of saltmere on clægbroc. Andlang broces on ʿa stræt. Ondlang stræte on Strætford. Up andlang streames ʿæt hit cymð eft on Doddanford. ʿonne is ʿæs landes fif hida ʿe Oswald arcebiscop bocað Eadrice his ʿegne, ge neor tune ge fir swa swa he hit ær hæfde to lanlande, mid ʿæs heorodes gewitnesse on Wiogornaceastre. Her is seo handsetene.” Translated: “These are the land boundaries of Alveston and Tiddington: Then it begins first at Dodda’s ford, from Dodda’s ford to (the) king’s brook, along (the) brook to the dyke, from the dyke to the low, from the low to the way, from the way to/by the boundary of Loxley, from the boundary to the ridgeway, from the ridgeway into West Brook, from the brook to salt mere, from salt mere to clay brook, along (the) brook to the road, along (the) road to street ford, up along the stream so that it comes again to Dodda’s ford.” (Hooke, 1999, pp. 94–97).

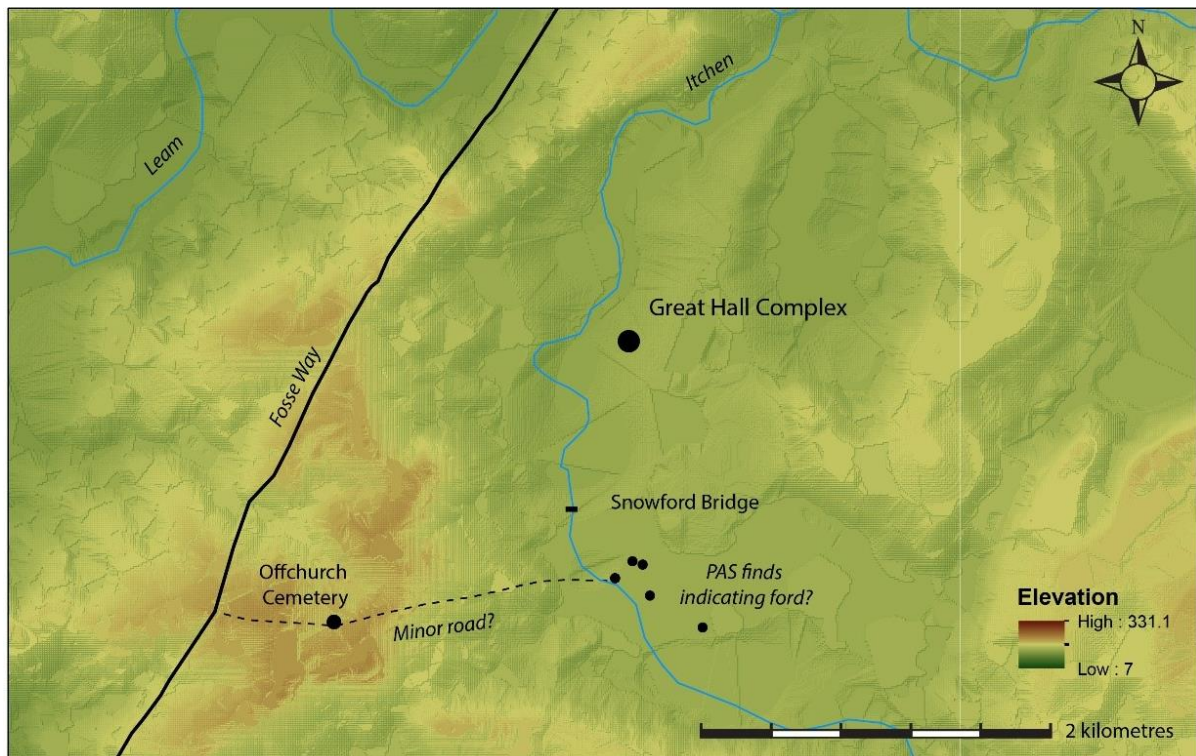


Figure 8. 8 The landscape of Long Itchington: fords and routeways

At Long Itchington, a charter from 1001 AD described land granted by Æthelred and included a reference to the “snaw forda” (S. 898),⁷² whose location has been equated to that of the modern Snowford Bridge (Hooke, 1999, pp. 110–112). This bridge lies approximately 440 metres downstream from a scatter of finds recorded on the PAS – four nummi dating to between 351 – 395 AD, a 5th or 6th-century girdle hanger, and a 6th-century small long brooch – along a short stretch of the Itchen (Figure 8.8). Given that no evidence was cited for the equating of the ford’s location with the bridge’s, it is possible that the location of the ‘snow ford’ was not, as has been suggested, in the same position as the modern bridge, but was, in fact, further upstream near the location of these artefacts. Regardless of which location is correct, this ford may have carried a west-east route, probably from a junction on the Fosse Way, across the Itchen, towards the hall complex located on a slope above the river. Such a route would have passed by the earlier cemetery at Offchurch, which, consisting of a barrow, was likely

⁷² <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/898.html#> “~æm hlawe to ~æm lytlan hlawe ~onan to haran mere of haran mere to orman ho ~onan to snaw forda dune ondlong ea to ~æm ælrenan stobbe”. Translated: “from the low to the little low, and thence to (the) grey mere, from (the) grey mere to Orma’s spur, and thence to snow ford, and down along the stream to the alder stub” (Hooke, 1999, p. 112). The translation of *snaw* as ‘snow’ may indicate the importance of this ford. Field has argued that fords bearing the suffix ‘Winter’ are particularly important in the landscape as few fords are passable in the winter months (1993, p. 223).

to have been a visible marker in the landscape. Thus, not only is it likely that these halls both lay above fords which linked them to the Roman road network, but the point at which both these minor roads branched off from the major roads was marked by the position of an existing cemetery – Alveston Manor for Hatton Rock and Offchurch for Long Itchington.

Secondly, the elevated position of both the hall complexes afforded greater visibility from and to these elite sites. In particular a strong visual relationship was created between the halls and major routeways. Hatton Rock would have been visible from long stretches of the River Avon and Long Itchington would have had a strong visual link to the rivers Itchen and Leam (Figure 8.9). Perhaps significantly, the confluences of the Avon and the rivers Dene and Stour were inter-visible with Hatton Rock and the confluence of the Itchen and the Leam shared intervisibility with Long Itchington. It is not anticipated that these rivers were navigable in the vicinity of the halls (see Chapter 4.4.2.2), but the routes of these rivers were likely to have signposted movement through the landscape and would have directed travellers beneath the imposing halls.

Physically removed from the major road network on their minor roads the halls were still able to exert their presence through their carefully chosen, visually dominant positions. At approximately 4.4 kilometres distant, the ford at Stratford and 2.5 kilometres of the Saltway it carried were likely to have had clear views of Hatton Rock (Figure 8.9). To the south along the Saltway a stretch of 3 kilometres, including a crossroads, and stretches of the Fosse Way between the parishes of Combrook and Chesterton also shared a visual link with Hatton Rock, although the distance of the latter would have affected how discernible the halls were. At Long Itchington, the course of the Fosse Way ran just 1.4 kilometres from the halls permitting clear views of the complex for approximately 850 metres (Figure 8.9). On this evidence it seems probable that intervisibility with major communication routes was significant for the function of these halls complexes. However, a distinction can be made between Hatton Rock and Long Itchington. The former exerted its visual influence over the main River Avon and long stretches of two major roads; the latter confined itself to a minor tributary and a short, but albeit

more distinct, stretch of the Fosse Way. This distinction hints at the different roles these halls might have played within a wider system of landscape organisation in the 7th-century Avon Valley, a theme which will be explored below.

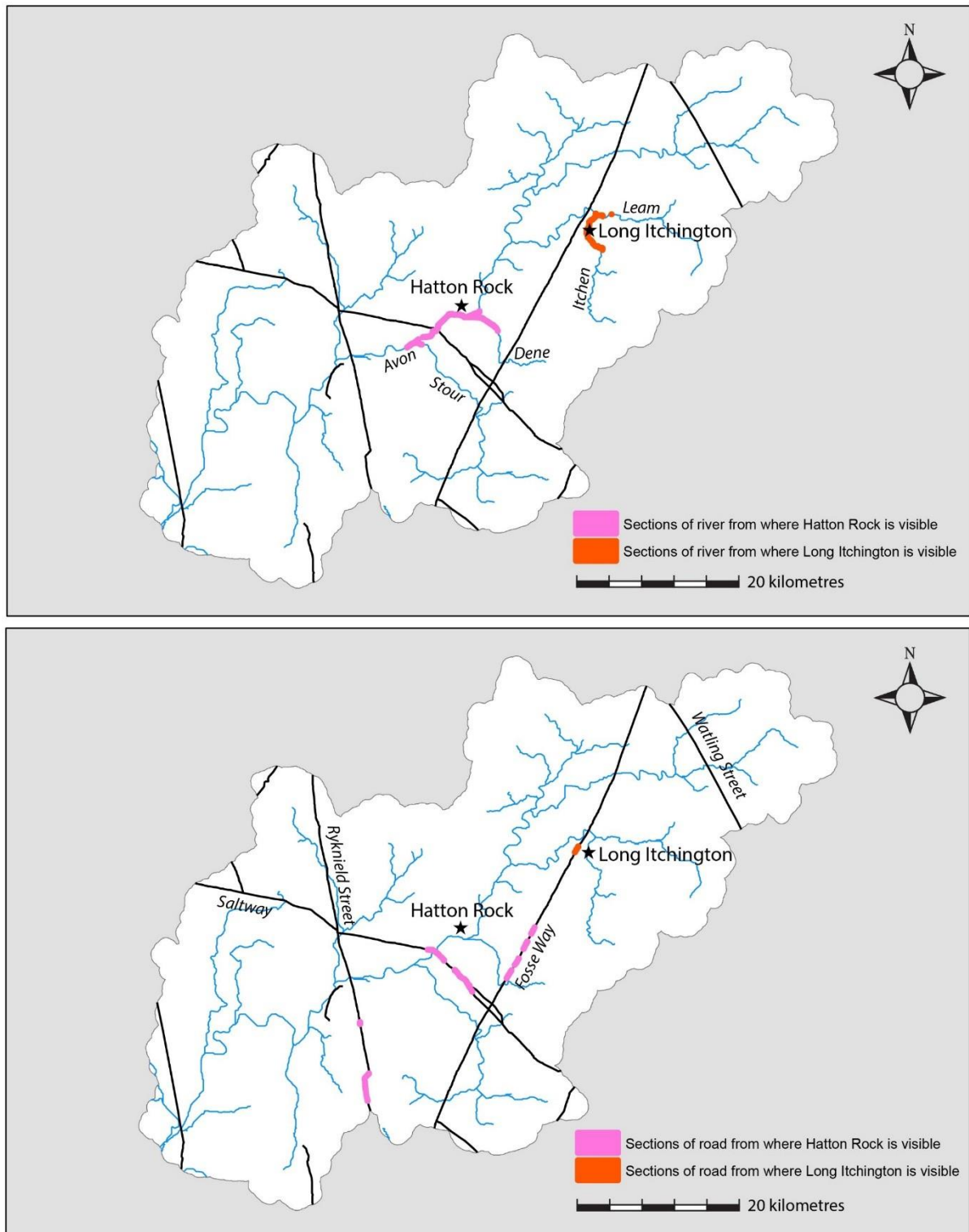


Figure 8. 9 The visibility of the hall complexes from rivers (top) and Roman roads (bottom)

8.3.2.2 *Existing Monuments*

The postulated relationship between the halls and the Roman road network demonstrated the importance of analysing the extant human landscape into which the halls were built. It has frequently been recognised that hall complexes were often associated with existing monuments (Bradley, 1987; Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 329; Crewe, 2012; Hamerow, 2012, pp. 106–107) and that these were part of a complex and carefully constructed dialogue between elites and the local population (Ulmschneider, 2011, p. 161). Crewe has argued that this particular feature of hall complexes evolved out of the earlier tradition of associating ‘ordinary’ cemeteries and settlements with existing monuments (2012, p. 209). The significance of this, Crewe believed, was that the nascent elites were tapping in to a recognised and understood practice of legitimisation; continuing a familiar dialogue but with a clear message that this process was now restricted to elite, not communal, expression (2012, p. 209).

To assess the presence of this practice in the Avon Valley, all sites recorded on the Warwickshire HER within a 3 kilometre radius of Hatton Rock and Long Itchington were identified and mapped. The result of this was the identification of complex, but subtly different, extant landscapes in the vicinity of the hall complexes and the confirmation of only one direct relationship between the halls and earlier monuments – a ring ditch at Hatton Rock.

Two possible ring ditches were identified on aerial photographs of Hatton Rock by Hirst and Rahtz (1973, p. 167). In excavation, feature 7, interpreted as a timber slot, was observed to have cut one of the ring ditches (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973, pp. 166–167). This stratigraphic relationship confirmed that the ditch pre-dated the construction of this hall and the assignation of a prehistoric date was, therefore, possible. Whether these monuments were visible in the 7th century is uncertain, but the alignment of the range of halls between the two ring ditches might suggest that they were. A similar relationship has been observed at Lyminge and Sutton Courtenay (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 330). At the latter, the excavators suggested that, whilst the ring ditch was in-filled in prehistory, the

mound was likely to be extant in the early medieval period and would have required levelling prior to the construction of the hall (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 330). If a similar scenario can be anticipated at Hatton Rock this would imply not only the deliberate association of the hall with the round barrow, but also the investment of labour in order to facilitate this relationship. With level ground on all sides, the decision to locate a hall on the edge of a barrow was clearly significant. In a valley where the reuse of prehistoric barrows in the 5th and 6th centuries has been suggested at both cemeteries (e.g. Beckford A & B, Evison & Hill 1996:33) and settlements (e.g. at the recently discovered site at Shottery (Stuart Foreman pers. comm. Sept 2015) it appears that there exists evidence at Hatton Rock of the dialogue referred to by Crewe (2012, p. 209).

Of course, both hall complexes lay within wider landscapes of extant monuments. Interestingly, the monuments surrounding Hatton Rock, with the exception of the two round barrows at the site itself, were not of a type which were likely to have been upstanding in the early medieval period, e.g. pits and ditches (Figure 8.10). At Long Itchington the situation is quite different, with the hall complex lying beside a Roman villa where building activity appears to have continued into the second half of the 4th century (Palmer, 2009a, pp. 161–163). Further evidence of late Roman activity in the area is suggested by a number of coins dating to the last decades of the 4th century recorded on the HER and the PAS (Figure 8.10). Given the late date and the size of the villa, it is possible that remains of Roman activity were visible in the 7th century and that the hall complex at Long Itchington was located beside these.

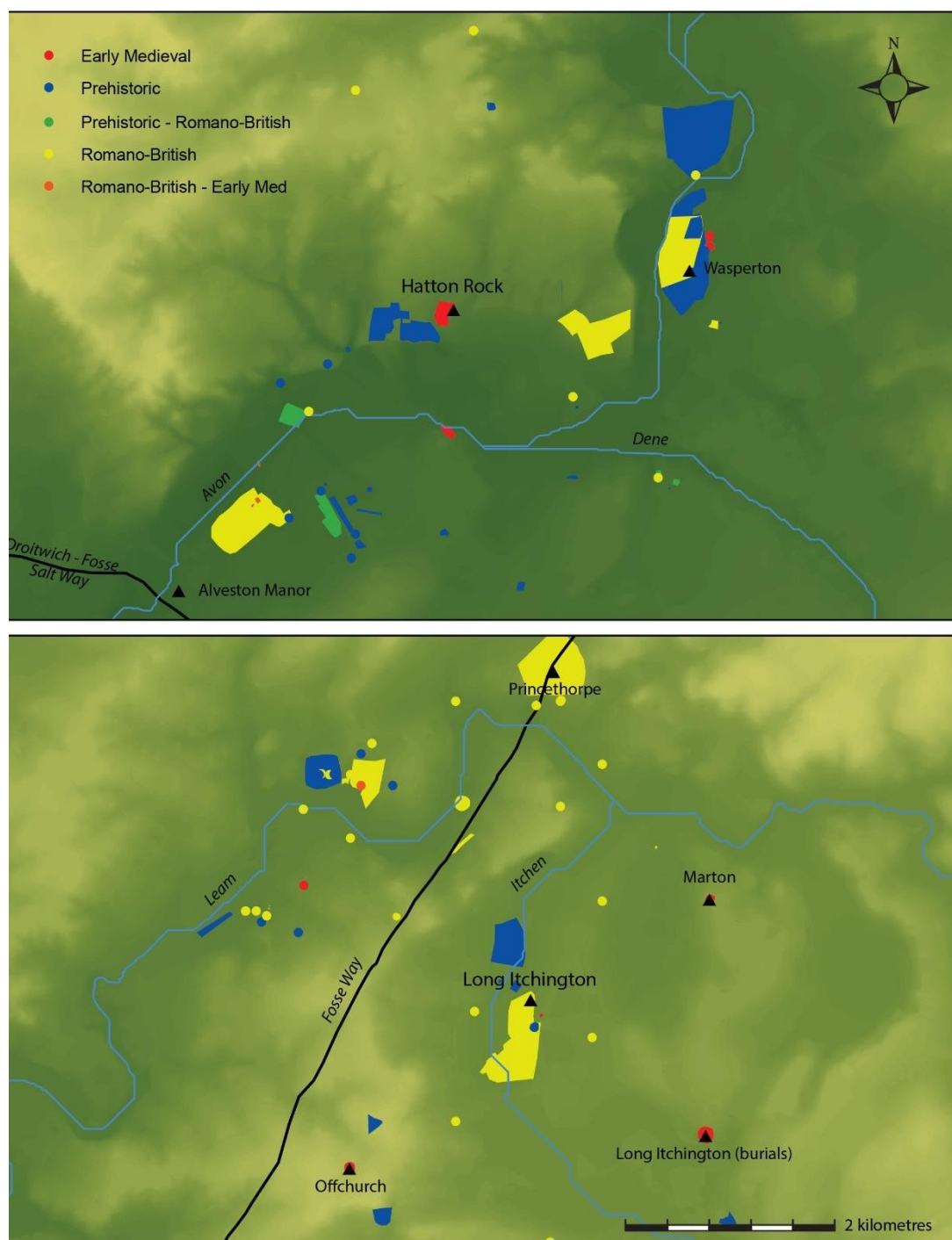


Figure 8. 10 The landscapes of Hatton Rock (top) and Long Itchington (bottom): showing sites from the Prehistoric, the Romano-British, and the 5th – 6th centuries

8.3.2.3 5th and 6th-Century Sites

The extant landscape not only consisted of prehistoric and Roman sites, it was also marked by 5th and 6th-century sites. In Kent, Thomas has observed a relationship between the position of the earlier cemeteries and the 7th-century hall complex at Lyminge (2013, pp. 116–120) and a pattern has already been observed in the Avon Valley whereby the minor roads which led to the halls were marked by earlier cemeteries near the point at which they joined a major Roman road (see Figures 8.7 and 8.8). The apparently limited visual relationship between the hall complexes and earlier cemeteries was, therefore, all the more unexpected. Figure 8.11 demonstrates that Hatton Rock would have been visible from Alveston Manor, but given the fact that burial ceased at the cemetery in the early 7th century and activity post-dating this was agricultural and not closely datable (Ford, unpub., pp. 186–187), we must ask who was meant to be viewing the halls from this location? The fact that the visual link was not two-way – the cemetery was not visible from the hall complex – also implies that this relationship might not have been significant. Of the burial sites which had upstanding remains in the vicinity of the halls and which might, therefore, have been identifiable within the landscape – the barrows at Long Itchington and Marton and the barrows and Roman remains at Wasperton (Bloxam, 1875, p. 37; Meaney, 1964, pp. 217 & 261; Carver et al., 2009, pp. 114 & 120) – only Marton was visible from a hall. The fact that there was no intervisibility between Wasperton and Hatton Rock despite their proximity and the continuation of burials into the 7th century at the former (Carver et al., 2009, p. 120), might also be instructive: a visual link with earlier burial sites was not a concern of the elites who chose to build their halls at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington.

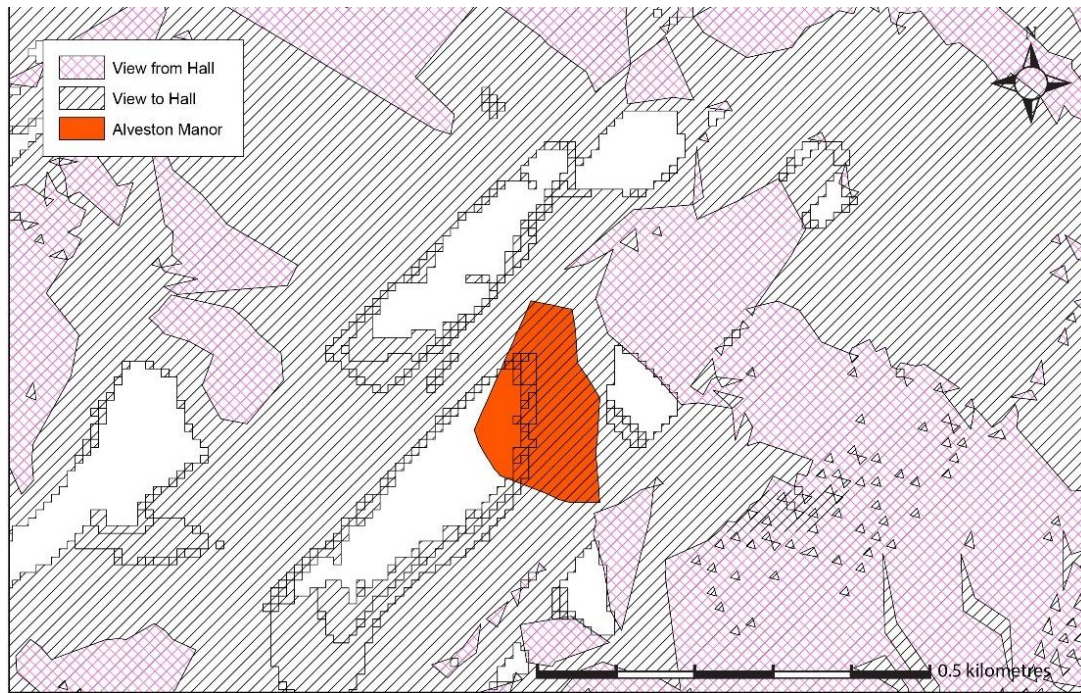


Figure 8. 11 Visibility between the hall complex of Hatton Rock and the early medieval cemetery at Alveston Manor

This dislocation with the cemeteries of the preceding centuries combined with the new practice of positioning important sites on higher ground above fords unmarked by 5th or 6th-century cemeteries or settlements suggests the imposition of a new system of landscape organisation in the 7th century. This systems represented a number of changes from the 5th and 6th centuries. Firstly, there was a move from communal activity at nodal points as the major cemeteries in the valley went out of use. As regionally important sites these were replaced by the hall complexes of individuals or individual families. Secondly, the character of important sites was transferred from the realm of the dead to the realm of the living; power was conveyed through living individuals rather than by allusions to the ancestors. Finally, the new locations used by the hall complexes imply that there was an expansion of core activity in the 7th century. These locations enabled the halls to exert their presence over wide territories and had a particular focus on major routeways, hinting at the supra-local nature of their authority.

8.3.3 The Hall Complexes and the Frontier Zone

Whilst a case can be argued that the similarities between Hatton Rock and Long Itchington represent the operation of these two sites within one socio-political system, differences observed at the two

sites might imply that they performed distinct roles within this system. These differences included: stronger links with the Avon and long stretches of the Saltway at Hatton Rock; a close, but a more limited, visual relationship between the Fosse Way and Long Itchington; proximity to woodland resources at Hatton Rock; reuse of an existing monument and the presence of a number of sunken feature buildings at Hatton Rock. To this can be added the different areas from which the halls were visible (Figure 8.12). Hatton Rock visually dominated the central part of the Avon Valley and commanded views from deep into the heart of what was to become Hwiccan territory. In contrast, Long Itchington's area of visibility was much narrower, focussing on the Fosse Way and the more eastern parts of the valley, the area which was to fall within Mercian territory. These distinctions and the different territories which they apparently emphasised led to the querying of the role of hall complexes within frontier zones.

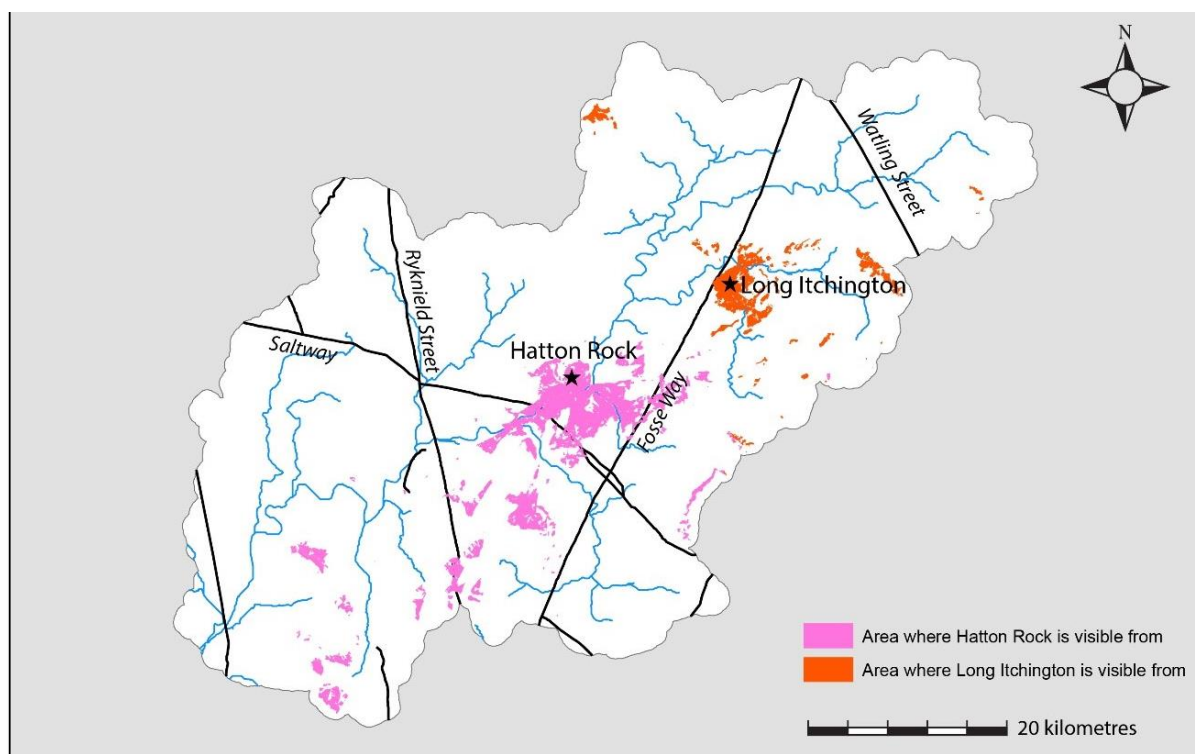


Figure 8. 12. The contrasting areas from where Hatton Rock and Long Itchington are visible from

Observing a pattern in the distribution of hall complexes across England and, in the case of Sprouston, immediately to the north of the Scottish border (Figure 8.13), Blair argued that these enigmatic sites lay on the periphery of a core 'Anglo-Saxon building culture province' (2013). The development of halls in these locations, he suggested, may be in response to the presence of a frontier, where the expression of an overt English identity was more of a necessity in the face of non-English neighbours than in the core regions to the east (Blair, 2013, pp. 11–12). Of course, Blair's argument was made before the discovery of the high status site at Rendlesham which appeared to confirm Bede's account of a royal settlement deep in East Anglia (Scull et al., 2014). However, the first part of this thesis resolved that the weight of archaeological evidence supported that suggested by historical sources – that a frontier zone existed in the Avon Valley – and the construction of two hall complexes in this environment does seem to support Blair's theory.

Lying in the zone between Mercia, an English kingdom, and the Hwicce, a kingdom described as hybrid English and British (Hooke, 2009, p. 3), the Avon Valley frontier could have created the ideal opportunity for the expression of an English identity. In addition, if the more modern concept of a frontier zone is applied, which sees frontiers as places for the assertion of authority and identity and the facilitation of meetings and exchange (c.f. Baker and Brookes, 2013; Reilly, 1988, p. 161; Reynolds, 2009, p. 418; Semple, 2008, p. 409), then Blair's theory can find further support. As, using this definition, activities which occur at frontiers are reminiscent of the functions also proposed for great hall complexes (see above). However, whilst it might be easy to envisage Hatton Rock, with its visual dominance, central position, possible ritual function, direct relationship with a prehistoric monument, and its unusual practice of rebuilding, as having had a role within such a system of frontier, Long Itchington is more difficult to understand. With its emphasis firmly on the Fosse Way and those travelling its course, this road and not a frontier appears to have been the focus of this hall complex.



Figure 8. 13 The distribution of hall complexes (after Matthew Austin, pers. comm. Nov 2015)

Perhaps, given the evidence from Long Itchington and the position of the Rendlesham site, we should not expect there to have been a mono-causal explanation for the development of hall complexes or royal settlements; to expect this would be to undermine the complex and multiple roles these sites played within dynamic landscapes. Hatton Rock may usefully be seen through Blair's lens – an English statement of authority in the face of a neighbouring hybrid kingdom – but Long Itchington reflects the

importance of controlling and influencing movement along major inter-regional routeways, a theme which can also be demonstrated in the 7th century through the positioning of burials.

8.4 Conclusion

To conclude, let us return to the questions set out in the introduction of this chapter: how the 7th-century elite expressed their authority; how this differed from the 5th and 6th centuries; and whether the evidence of the 7th century supported or contradicted the proposition that a frontier zone existed in the Avon Valley. Firstly, the elites of the 7th-century Avon Valley expressed their authority through a complex strategy of new and reused methods. The use of both new and old techniques simultaneously connected these elites to the 5th and 6th centuries and, significantly, also distinguished them from what went before. The creation of the hall complexes at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington represented a new type of settlement and a new approach to elite expression which focused on the living rather than the dead. New parts of the landscape became foci for activity; in particular fords which had little or no 5th or 6th-century evidence were used for both 7th-century burial and settlement. The emphasis on routeways, however, continued, but was adapted to fit within a more regional framework of authority: the hall complexes were positioned on high ground allowing them to command wide-reaching visual relationships with the Roman road network and the main rivers of the region, unlike the major regional cemeteries of the preceding centuries which favoured a direct physical relationship with fording points. The widening sphere of influence conducted by the 7th-century elites was supported by the appearance of high status imports in the burial assemblage, perhaps indicative of gift exchange with powerful individuals beyond the limits of the valley.

Secondly, there was some evidence to support the identification of a frontier zone in the Avon Valley. Hatton Rock might usefully be viewed through such a lens, seemingly representing a statement of Mercian authority. The changes wrought in the 7th century might also be explained by the presence of a frontier zone, with both being a consequence of the increased status of the elites in the Avon Valley and the subsequent increased interest on the part of their neighbours, the Mercians. The evidence

from Long Itchington, however, indicated that it would be a mistake to seek a mono-causal explanation for the appearance of the halls and the same might be said of other 7th century changes. Across England the 7th century marked both an archaeological and historical watershed, with significant changes in burial and settlement patterns and the return of widespread written sources. To look solely at an interpretation linked to the Avon Valley's role as a frontier zone would overlook the internal socio-political dynamism of the period: for example, the increased stratification of society, the widening of elite networks, and the role of Christianity.

The Avon Valley in the 7th century showed increasing links with elite systems established elsewhere in England and, at the same time, internal socio-political developments. This coincided not only with the first historical evidence for the kingdom of the Hwicce, but also with the rise of the Hwicce's powerful neighbour and soon to be overlord, Mercia.

Chapter 9. A Comparative Study in the Middle Trent Valley, the heart of Mercia.

9.1 Introduction

Having explored the characteristics of the Avon Valley in the 5th and 6th centuries and the changes wrought in the 7th century, a second comparative case study was analysed: the Middle Trent Valley. This area is believed to have been the territorial heartland of the kingdom which was to expand its authority over the Avon Valley in the 7th century, the kingdom of Mercia (Brooks, 1989, p. 162; Yorke, 2001, p. 20). The aims of this chapter are two-fold: to contextualise the Avon Valley within its wider geopolitical setting and to expand our knowledge of a particularly elusive period of Mercian history. As well as asking how data from the Middle Trent compares and contrasts with the Avon Valley dataset it, therefore, asks: What, if anything, can the archaeology of the Avon Valley tell us about the development of the kingdom of Mercia? As with all relationships, interaction and influence are two-way processes and a study of polity development in the Avon Valley is equally likely to be informed *by* as inform *upon* the development of Mercia (see Chapter 2.2.3.2 for a synopsis of the historical evidence relating to early Mercia).

9.2 Mercian Expansion into the Avon Valley

Amongst the theories propounded for the methods by which Mercia expanded its authority, there appears to be a division between those who believed Mercia *created* sub-kingdoms and those that believed that Mercia established a system of overlordship over *existing* kingdoms. Stenton's version of events after the Battle of Cirencester, c.628AD, had Penda seizing control of territory which included lands in the Severn and Avon valleys, land which had been held by the West Saxons since the Battle of Dyrham, c.577AD. Under his control the diverse peoples of this region were brought under the rule of one king, a man of Penda's choosing, and thus the kingdom of the Hwicce was created (1971, p. 45). This interpretation of the creation of the Hwicce was vehemently rejected by Bassett who argued for

the organic development of the Hwicce from the aggregation of smaller polities and the *acceptance* of Mercian overlordship in the time of Penda's sons due to their growing military might (2000, p. 116). In considering the Middle Angles, Tyler demonstrated how both methods of expansion might have worked side-by-side. He suggested that Penda positioned his son above the rulers of *existing* polities and in doing so *created* the aggregated kingdom of the Middle Angles.

The argument that distinct groups existed in the Avon Valley before the mid-7th century has formed a central part of this thesis (see Chapters 3 and 4). The distributions of burial practices, material culture, landscape use, and place names were used to suggest that the valley was divided between an Eastern and Western Zone and, potentially, a Southern Zone in the 5th and 6th centuries. This would certainly fit with the proposed model; that there were various distinct socio-political groups in the valley before the Battle of Cirencester.

The second point to consider is whether there is evidence of a transference of overlordship, from Wessex to Mercia, in the mid-7th century. If overlordship, which would have brought with it access to new political spheres, can be inferred by evidence of changing external influences within a region, then the archaeological data from the Avon Valley might be used to assess whether Mercia achieved overlordship in the region in the mid-7th century. Whilst it is true to say that there were changes apparent in the archaeology of the 7th-century Avon Valley, there was also evidence of shifting influences in the preceding centuries. In Chapter 3.2.5, it was shown how material culture from the Upper Thames Valley and Anglian regions ebbed and flowed as a percentage of the Avon Valley burial assemblages. It suggested that the earliest Germanic influences in the valley were indeed from the West Saxons; these influences, however, pre-dated the Saxon victory at Dyrham in 577AD. In fact, during the period after Dyrham, the late 5th to early 6th century, when the West Saxons were meant to have had control of the region, the Avon Valley dataset showed an increase in material from Anglian regions, such as the two pairs of wrist clasps found in Inhumations 53 and 102 at Wasperton (Catalogue 1, Burials 56.53 & 56.102), and it was only in the latter part of the 6th century that Saxon material, i.e.

from the Upper Thames Valley, became more common. Interestingly, Anglian material had a resurgence in the late 6th and early 7th centuries, coinciding with other changes observed in the valley: the development of new burial practices, the use of new parts of the landscape, and the construction of two great hall complexes. From this emerges a complex picture of evolving influences in the Avon Valley. If these influences can be seen as a proxy for changing overlordship of the region, then the model of Mercian expansion is far too simplistic a representation of what was happening in the Avon Valley. The archaeology seems to suggest an almost constantly shifting situation rather than a single phase of Saxon authority superseded by a single phase of Mercian rule. However, such an interpretation should be tempered by the fact that, as Anglian material became more common at the time of the supposed Saxon rule of the Avon, there is a flaw either in inferring overlordship via material culture, in the historical framework, and/or the model proposed, or all of these. The apparent contemporaneity of burial assemblages which contained Saxon and those that contained Anglian grave goods, for example Inhumations 5, 22, and 26 at Alveston Manor (Catalogue 1, Burials 1.5, 1.22, 1.26), and the identification of individual graves which contained material from both regions, for example Inhumations 35, 88, and 103 at Bidford-on-Avon (Catalogue 1, Burials 10.35, 10.88, 10.103), certainly imply that it is far too simplistic to infer overlordship from dress accessories, or at least from dress accessories alone. Additionally, the identification of Mercian overlordship archaeologically post the Battle of Cirencester was further complicated by the fact that the major changes seen in the 7th-century Avon Valley, such as the construction of great halls and the reuse of monuments by elites, were mirrored elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon England where there is no need to explain the phenomenon as resulting from a new rule (Williams, 1998, p. 103).

Thirdly, archaeological evidence can be used to assess whether the Hwicce experienced a period of increased importance in the early to mid-7th century, such as we might expect if the Mercian kings were lending their authority to its kings. Items such as the gold and garnet necklace from Littlehampton (Åberg, 1926, p. 219; Ross, 1992, pp. 249 & 251) and the gold filigree and garnet pendant and gold bracteate from Compton Verney (Meaney, 1964, p. 260), items unparalleled from earlier periods in

the Avon Valley, did imply increased access to prestige goods in the early 7th century. These high status pieces of jewellery were likely to have found their way into the valley through gift exchange, potentially from a powerful overlord with connections to wide networks of exchange. The 7th century also saw the construction of the two hall complexes, Hatton Rock and Long Itchington, whose architecture and scale suggested that they belonged to a pan-regional system of elite expression (c.f. Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 346). In Chapter 8.3.3 it was argued that, following Blair (2013, pp. 11–12), Hatton Rock might usefully be understood as part of a frontier system. It is a possibility, therefore, that the marking of the frontier between the Hwicce and Mercia in such a way reflected the increased interest in the former on the part of the latter. Of course this interest need not have been due to Mercian overlordship of the Hwicce and may alternatively have been due to its independent status. Fourthly, as an indication of its augmented status we might also point to the fact that it was in the early 7th century that the Hwicce were first attested in historical sources (Colgrave and Mynors, 1969, p. 135). However, Yorke's caution that it is possible that, instead of seeing the origins of kingdoms, what we are seeing is "only the limits of living memory projected back from the time when record keeping began in earnest in the seventh century" (2001, p. 19), warned of the dangers of relying on the historical narrative. Thus, whilst there is some evidence that the kingdom of the Hwicce had greater access to prestige materials and attracted greater external interest in the 7th century than in the preceding centuries, it is not possible to say decisively whether this was the result of Mercian overlordship. From the archaeological evidence, it is equally likely that the new status of the Hwicce was achieved through its rise as an independent kingdom on the frontiers of Mercia and the British West.

The scenario proposed for Mercian expansion into the Avon Valley and the Hwicce is, therefore, not wholly supported by the archaeological evidence. To equate Anglo-Saxon burial practices and material culture with Anglo-Saxon political dominance is theoretically difficult to sustain and the archaeological evidence certainly painted a far more complex picture, with influences waxing and waning multiple times within a single century. The historical and archaeological records were also at odds with one and other and it should not be expected, therefore, that a model based on just one of these sources will

be accurate. Unfortunately, whilst the archaeological evidence calls into question the historical model, it does not provide sufficient information to say conclusively what the relationship between the Avon Valley and kingdoms to the east was, up to and including the 7th century. What can be said is that different groups existed in the Avon Valley in the 5th and 6th centuries, during the 6th and early 7th centuries a frontier dividing eastern and western groups appears to have developed, and in the 7th century the region increased in importance. These developments need not have reflected documented events, although, of course, they might.

9.3 Comparing the middle Trent and Avon Valleys

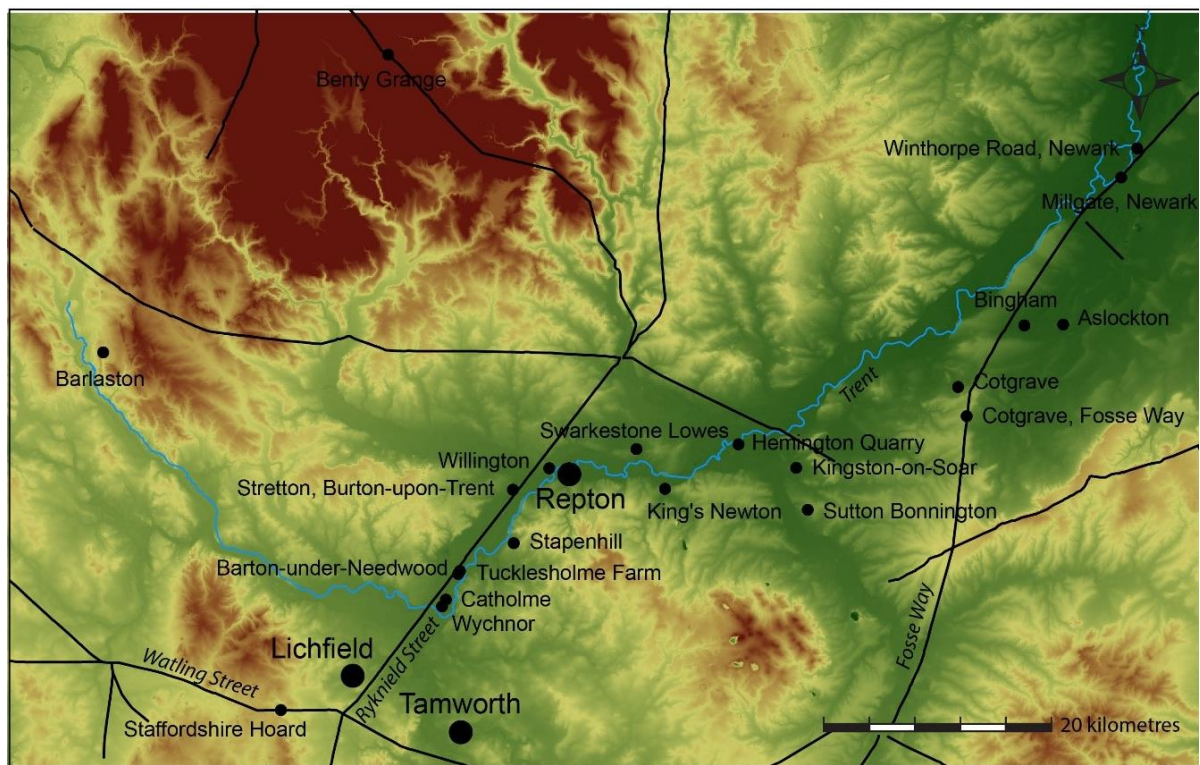


Figure 9. 1 Early Medieval sites in the middle Trent Valley mentioned in the text, with the Roman road network shown

To contextualise the Avon Valley within the wider framework of the kingdom of Mercia and to examine similarities and differences between a valley on the edge of Mercian territory and one at its core, a comparison was made between the Avon and middle Trent valleys. Such a comparison was limited by the lack of a study similar to that conducted in this thesis for the middle Trent Valley; however, some observations could be made through consultation of the various reports pertaining to 5th to 7th-century

sites identified in the region (Figure 9.1). Due to the data available and time constraints imposed on this research, this comparison focused on the following aspects of the archaeological record: burial evidence, material culture, settlements, and the organisation of the landscape through the use of routeways. These were all characteristics which had been explored within the Avon Valley and which could, therefore, be directly compared.

9.3.1 Burial Evidence

In 1971, Stenton observed that burials in the middle Trent Valley which exhibited Anglo-Saxon characteristics – cremations and furnished inhumations – need not have predated the mid-6th century (1971, p. 42). More recent discoveries, such as the cremation cemetery at Millgate, Newark might push this date back into the 5th century (Kinsley, 1989, p. 28), but dating at this site is uncertain and inhumation cemeteries do seem to post-date 500 AD (e.g. Wychnor, Buteux and Chapman, 2009, p. 150).⁷³ This contrasts with cemeteries such as Stretton-on-Fosse, Alveston Manor, and Wasperton in the Avon Valley where inhumations showed evidence of Anglo-Saxon influences in the late 5th century (Carver et al., 2009, pp. 116–117; Ford, 1996, p. 66). Stafford has accredited these dates as evidence of the late arrival of Anglo-Saxons in the middle Trent (1985, p. 96). This necessarily equated Anglo-Saxon burials with the presence rather than the influence of Anglo-Saxons. With this in mind, Bassett set forth an alternative: the lack of Anglo-Saxon style burials (or indeed settlements) represents the strength of local British traditions in the Midland region (2000). The absence of Anglo-Saxon characteristics in the middle Trent Valley in the 5th century does not, therefore, mean that there were no people identifying as Anglo-Saxon. However, the contrast between the two valleys is interesting and suggests that the people of the 5th-century Avon Valley were either subject to greater influences from Anglo-Saxon regions or that they were more open to, temporarily, accepting and incorporating

⁷³ The place-name 'Wychnor' is of particular importance here. Derived from Hwiccenofre, recorded in the 11th century, this name translates as 'the bank or slope of the Hwicce' (Ekwall, 1960, p. 516). Lying beside Ryknield Street and its crossing on the River Trent, a connection with the Avon Valley and its people seems highly likely.

Anglo-Saxon practices into their own. Both of these scenarios imply contrasting socio-political situations in the two valleys in the 5th century.

That the valleys consisted of quite different social groups is supported by the frequency of cremation burial in the middle Trent compared to the Avon Valley. Six cremation cemeteries have been identified in the middle Trent at Kingston-on-Soar, Sutton Bonnington, and Newark in Nottinghamshire (Meaney, 1964, pp. 200–202; Kinsley, 1989), Barton-under-Needwood and Stretton in Staffordshire (Meaney, 1964, pp. 220 & 222), and King's Newton in Derbyshire (Meaney, 1964, p. 76). No cemeteries consisting entirely of cremations have been found in the Avon Valley. All but the Millgate, Newark cemetery were excavated in the 19th century and, accordingly, their reports were of variable quality. However, at least Kingston-on-Soar may have been comparable in size to the Millgate site which contained a minimum of 235 individuals (Kinsley, 1989; Meaney, 1964, pp. 200–201). Whilst these were much smaller than the urn fields of eastern England (Stafford, 1985, p. 93) they did demonstrate the far greater dominance of the cremation rite in the middle Trent compared to the Avon. We can, therefore, say that the people of the middle Trent were more likely to cremate their dead than the people of the Avon. It has been observed that cremations were more common in eastern parts of England than in the south and parallels have been made between their distribution and the areas of Anglian, as opposed to Saxon, influences (Scull, 2013). Thus, the distinction between the two valleys might have been the result of a greater Anglian influence in the Trent than the Avon. It has been argued that the Mercian royal house was of Anglian descent (Stafford, 1985, p. 96; Stenton, 1971, p. 40; Welch, 2001, p. 159; Yorke, 2001, p. 14) and perhaps this evidence is best explained as a perceived or remembered remnant of this ancestry. Consequently, it is possible that the lack of cremation cemeteries in the Avon Valley points to the alternative origins of its elite.

Whilst the evidence from cremations suggests that there were socio-political differences in the two valleys, a number of burial practices demonstrate shared traditions. One such tradition was the late 6th-century burial of women in isolation, with high status grave goods, and in positions closely related

to major routeways. Placed on rising ground above the Fosse Way, with good views all around, an adult female inhumation was discovered two kilometres north of Newark, near Winthorpe Road. The burial included 46 beads, a pair of silver wrist clasps, a gilded circular mount, an ivory purse ring, Roman coins, a yew bucket and a copper alloy rim from a cup or bowl, a decorated urn, and bones of a lamb (Samuels and Russell, 1999). In both its choice of location and its form, this burial was similar to one found at Ragley in the Avon Valley. The Ragley burial was also the inhumation of a woman, it contained elaborate jewellery – in particular, a gilt great square headed brooch. No other burials have been discovered in its vicinity and it was positioned above the course of the River Arrow, a major tributary of the Avon, and close to Rykniel Street (Meaney, 1964, p. 262). Whilst these are just two burials, they do serve to show a similarity of practice between the two valleys. In the late 6th century, the people of the Avon and of the Trent thought it was appropriate to bury high status women outside of the contemporary cemeteries, in the central parts of the valley with links to important, inter-regional routeways. This relationship with routeways is explored further below.

In contrast to the high status female inhumations found in the valleys, exceptional male burials appear, at least in the middle Trent area, to have focused on land beyond the valley cores. The high status male burials found at Benty Grange and Barlaston lie immediately to the north and northwest of the middle Trent Valley. Benty Grange included a hanging bowl and an iron helmet with a boar figure on the crest (Welch, 2001, p. 153) and Barlaston included a bronze bowl with enamel escutcheons and an iron sword buried in a solitary inhumation grave (Meaney, 1964, p. 220). The landscape surrounding the Avon Valley was not a focus of this research, so it cannot be said whether similar sites surrounded this valley, but it is true that no parallel sites have been identified within the Avon Valley and the general lack of swords has been noted elsewhere (see Chapter 3.2.4).⁷⁴ The implications of this cannot easily be assessed, but it seems that high status male identity was more important to stress in the landscape surrounding the middle Trent than within either valley. Perhaps, away from the focus of settlement,

⁷⁴ The isolated weapon burials at Meon Hill and Billesley did reuse extant sites, but their grave goods were far less extravagant than the elite burial surrounding the Trent and were likely to have belonged to an earlier period (Meaney, 1964, p. 261; Palmer, 2003, p. 56).

these areas were more contested or more weakly linked to the socio-political systems in the valley bottoms and thus required more emphatic expressions of authority.

The use and reuse of barrows was another feature common to both valleys, as it was to various parts of Anglo-Saxon England. One of the four Bronze Age barrows which comprised the Swarkestone Lowes, Derbyshire was excavated to reveal remains interpreted as Anglo-Saxon cinerary urns and inhumations inserted into the top of the barrow and cut into its ditch (Posnansky, 1955, pp. 127–128). If the excavators' interpretation of Beckford B is correct then inhumations and cremations were also inserted into a prehistoric barrow in the southwest of the Avon Valley (Evison and Hill, 1996, p. 33). Evidence from Cotgrave, Nottinghamshire and Tucklesholme Farm, Staffordshire suggested that barrow building for primary burial was also practiced in the middle Trent⁷⁵, and such interpretations have similarly been made at Wasperton (Carver et al., 2009, p. 114) and in the course of Watling Street near Churchover (Meaney, 1964, p. 259) in the Avon Valley. Furthermore, there is evidence from both valleys that burial in a barrow was part of elite expression: the only weapon burial at Cotgrave was beneath a barrow (Bishop, 1984); Inhumations 142 and 98 at Wasperton were two of the most high status burials in the cemetery and were thought to have been placed under mounds (Carver et al., 2009, p. 120); and the 'road-block' in Watling Street, near Churchover (Meaney, 1964, p. 259), created by constructing a barrow on the Roman road was a practice argued in Chapter 5.2.2 to be part of elite control. Thus, whilst not a practice unique to these valleys, there were commonalities.

To conclude this section, there were, therefore, both similarities and differences between the burial practices evident in the middle Trent and the Avon Valleys. The most significant difference appears to have been in the deployment of the cremation rite. This may indicate that there was a lower level of Anglian influence in the Avon Valley. Despite this, practices common to both valleys imply a degree of communication either directly between the valleys or with a mutual source of influence. These

⁷⁵ Tucklesholme Farm, is one of the only sites in the middle Trent dating to the 5th century (Buteux and Chapman, 2009, p. 161).

observations could be tested using material culture, settlement evidence, and evidence of landscape organisation.

9.3.2 Material Culture

A major difference between the two valleys is the presence of 'Saxon' material in the Avon Valley and its absence in the middle Trent. In the Avon Valley all the major cemeteries contained both Anglian and Saxon style grave goods. For example, burials at Wasperton included cruciform, small-long, and great square headed brooches, typically from eastern Anglian parts of England, along with saucer and disc brooches, typically from the Upper Thames Valley (Åberg, 1926; Carver et al., 2009; Dickinson, 1993, 1979; Ford, unpub.; Hines, 1997; Leeds, 1945). Whilst it has been argued that the ratio of Anglian and Saxon material did vary across the Avon Valley (see Chapter 3.2.5), Saxon material was found throughout. Reports from the middle Trent cemeteries stood in direct contrast to this. The cremation cemetery at Millgate, Newark included wrist clasps, small-long, cruciform, and great square headed brooches, but no Saxon material (Kinsley, 1989, p. 27). Few brooches were recorded at Stapenhill, Wychnor, and Swarkestone cemeteries, but those that have been identified were also in the Anglian style (Heron, 1889, p. 161; Buteux and Chapman, 2009, p. 150; Posnansky, 1955, p. 128). Furthermore, whilst Meaney's survey was necessarily summary, it may be significant that from the sites she recorded in the region, no saucer or disc brooches were documented (1964).

It would seem, therefore, that the Avon and middle Trent valleys had access to different networks of exchange: the Avon was able to access material from both the Saxon Upper Thames and the Anglian east whilst the middle Trent was linked primarily with the latter. The implications of this might be that the Avon was subject to a greater diversity of socio-political influences than the middle Trent. This may, of course, be due to the position of the Avon, which lies adjacent to the Upper Thames Valley in the region of the Cotswold Plateau or a consequence of earlier Saxon authority in the Severn and Avon valleys, as attested by historical sources (Stenton, 1971, p. 45). These interpretations, however, minimise the agency of the people of the Avon Valley, rendering these grave goods merely objects of external influences. Conversely, if the appearance of Saxon and Anglian material in the Avon's burial

assemblages indicated a deliberate choice on the part of the region's population, it is possible to make additional inferences about the socio-political situation in the valley. Hooke has argued that the kingdom of the Hwicce was made up of various groups of peoples (2009, p. 3) and Tyler (2005) and Bassett (2000) have both advocated that a strong British community existed in the territories which were to make up Mercia. The different appearance of Anglian and Saxon materials in the Avon and Trent valleys, therefore, could represent the existence of socio-political groups in these regions made up of peoples with different identities, ethnic affiliations, and perceived ancestries.

Thus, it is perhaps significant that the late 6th and 7th-century high status jewellery found in the Avon Valley originated from the east of England or from Kent. The 7th-century gold pin-suite and Kentish gold and garnet pendant from Littlehampton, near Evesham, and the late 6th or early 7th-century gold and silver bracteates from Longbridge, probably manufactured in eastern England, are good examples (Åberg, 1926; Ross, 1992, p. 368; Vierck, 1970, and see Figures 8.2 and 8.3). Such items, which are extremely rare in the Avon Valley, would, in all likelihood, have entered the region as gifts. Whilst gifts might have been exchanged multiple times, becoming further removed from their source of manufacture and original benefactor, it is interesting that the Avon Valley examples were of eastern and Kentish derivation. Mercia, under Penda and Peada, had exerted its authority over the Middle Angles in the first half of the 7th century (Tyler, 2005, p. 4) and Wulfhere achieved overlordship of Kent and Lindsey, amongst other kingdoms, in the mid-7th century (Featherstone, 2001, p. 30), the Kentish connection being secured by marriage (Roberts, 2001, p. 84). It might be possible, therefore, that the 7th-century prestige items found in the Avon were gifts from a powerful Mercian lord. Whilst the populations of the Avon and middle Trent valleys appear to have been distinct prior to 600 AD, by the mid-7th century the elites of the Avon Valley were being drawn into the growing Mercian system of exchange and political hegemony.

9.3.3 Settlement Evidence

The Avon Valley is characterised by a lack of 'ordinary' settlement evidence from the 5th – 7th centuries (see further discussion in Chapter 10.2), and no comparable site to that found at Catholme,

Staffordshire, in the heart of the middle Trent, has been identified. Excavations here in the 1970s revealed 65 buildings, trackways, and enclosures which dated to at least the early 7th century, although a date in the 6th century might also be possible, to the late 9th century (Buteux and Chapman, 2009, pp. 150–152; Losco-Bradley and Kinsley, 2002). Despite its size, given its longevity of use it was suggested that the settlement consisted of as few as four households at any one time (Buteux and Chapman, 2009, p. 158).⁷⁶ Even considering a more modest sized contemporary settlement, its scale and length of occupation find no comparison in the Avon dataset. The settlement evidence found at Willington, Derbyshire (Wheeler, 1979) and Hemington Quarry, Leicestershire (Cooper and Ripper, 2000), which consisted of three sunken feature buildings at the former and two rectangular post-built buildings at the latter, are more similar in nature to the examples known from the Avon Valley, for example Broom and Shottery (Palmer, 2000, pp. 197–221; Stuart Foreman pers. comm. Sept 2015, respectively), but the lack of finds from the Avon sites prevents detailed comparison.

A further distinction between the settlement patterns of the two valleys is the reuse of settlement sites as cemeteries – a practice which is found in the Avon Valley but which, as yet, has not been identified in the middle Trent. Buildings have been recorded beneath or within the cemeteries of Stretton-on-Fosse, Alveston Manor, Baginton, and Wasperton (Carver et al., 2009, p. 28; Ford, 2003, p. 23, unpub., pp. 79–80; Wilkins, 1975). No such evidence has been found beneath the cemeteries of the middle Trent. It is possible that, given the antiquity of a number of the excavations at cemeteries in the Trent, settlement features have gone unobserved, but this is tempered by more recent excavations which did not identify such features.⁷⁷

One possible aspect in which the Avon and middle Trent do share a settlement tradition regards the presence of great hall complexes. Whilst the identification of a hall complex at Repton has not been confirmed with any certainty, large timber structures have been excavated beside the early medieval

⁷⁶ Excavations at Catholme did not reveal the whole site and the size of any contemporary settlement is, therefore, uncertain.

⁷⁷ For example at Cotgrave (Bishop 1984) or Millgate, Newark (Kinsley 1989).

minster ((Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1992, p. 36)). The significance of Repton in this period is supported by the establishment of a Mercian royal mausolea (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1992; Yorke, 2001, p. 20) and the presence of an earlier great hall complex would not seem out of place in such a context. However, without further investigation this site and this shared practice between the valleys remains only a possibility.

On current evidence, therefore, what we can say about the settlement evidence is that there were some apparent differences between the two regions. The Avon Valley has, as yet, revealed no large-scale settlement and the limited structural evidence beneath cemeteries consisted only of a few sunken feature buildings and solitary post-built buildings. The reuse of occupation sites for burial, seen in the Avon, is a practice yet to be identified in the Trent. An additional significance of this is that the Avon contains structural evidence which dated to the 5th century – as it pre-dated the cemeteries – whilst there is currently no evidence to suggest such an early date in the middle Trent. The Avon Valley lay at the limits of an area defined by Blair as the ‘Anglo-Saxon building culture province’ (2013, p. 36), but the middle Trent was found to its west, which might account for the differences observed. Regardless of whether Blair’s province represents a real division in England, the fact remains that the Avon and middle Trent do appear to differ in terms of their ‘ordinary’ settlement patterns.

9.3.4 Landscape Organisation: the use of routeways

Interestingly and, as will be argued here, significantly, one aspect in which the two valleys are in accordance was in their treatment of Roman roads. In both the Avon and the middle Trent valleys, these major routeways were the focus of activity (Figure 9.1). A direct comparison can be made between the burials cut into the surface of Watling Street in the Avon Valley (Brown and Hannan, 1978, pp. 88–91; Meaney, 1964, p. 259) and the four burials interred in a quarter-kilometre stretch of the Fosse Way near Cotgrave, Nottinghamshire (Meaney, 1964, p. 200). The Fosse Way was further marked by the positioning of a cremation cemetery at Millgate, Newark beside its course (Kinsley, 1989); the two inhumations with swords at nearby Bingham and Aslockton; and the high-status female burial north of Newark near Winthorpe Road (Meaney, 1964, pp. 200 & 202; Samuels and Russell,

1999). Ryknield Street, whose crossing on the Avon led to the development of the centre at Bidford-on-Avon, was also a focus in the middle Trent, with the primary barrow at Tucklesholme Farm constructed beside its course (Buteux and Chapman, 2009, p. 161). One of the most famous archaeological discoveries of recent years also demonstrated early medieval activity beside a Roman road in the middle Trent Valley: the Staffordshire Hoard. Placed in the ground on a rise close to Watling Street during the mid-7th century (George Speake, pers. comm. Jan 2016), this hoard of precious metalwork taken from weapons and religious objects was collected from east and west Britain and might have been brought together as war booty, a tribute, an offering, or heriot payments to the Mercian kings (Brooks, 2010; Hooke, 2010; Keynes, 2010).⁷⁸ The reasons for collecting together such a hoard of material are uncertain, as is the reason for its deposition. Hooke has observed that, in addition to being beside a major routeway, the hoard also lay between the territories of the Tomsæte and Pencersæte (2010), perhaps in a no-man's land used for assemblies (Barbara Yorke pers. comm. Jan 2016). Such a politically charged location was unlikely to have been a coincidence. However, regardless of whether the hoard was buried here in haste or with intent, the significance of Watling Street remains. Either it was the route via which this exceptional collection was being brought into the kingdom of Mercia or it was a route with a special role which warranted demarcation in such a way. In all likelihood, this importance of Watling Street lay in its unique ability to connect Mercia to the kingdoms to the south and south-east – the Hwicce, the West Saxons in the Upper Thames, the East Saxons, and Kent – areas over which the Mercian kings sought overlordship in the 7th and 8th centuries. A similar scenario might be envisaged for the Fosse Way which gave access to Lindsey in the east. In the middle Trent, as in the Avon Valley, it appears that major routeways were central to socio-political control; facilitating movement between polities and creating opportunities for display.

⁷⁸ A heriot payment is owed to a king upon the death of one of his warriors intestate (Brooks, 2010).

9.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, comparative analysis has identified both differences and similarities in the archaeology of the Avon and middle Trent valleys. The differences can be summarised as: the possible earlier date of Anglo-Saxon style burial in the Avon; the presence of cremation cemeteries of the middle Trent; the appearance of both Anglian and Saxon style material culture in the Avon; and the apparent absence of occupation preceding burial activity at middle Trent cemeteries. Conversely, the similarities are: a tradition of elite female burial; the use of barrows for primary and secondary burial; the focus of activity on routeways; and, possibly, the great hall complex building tradition. Thus, it is possible to observe a pattern in the occurrence of shared and of distinct practices, with differences appearing to have existed amongst the non-elite practices and similarities being found in practices of the elite. For example, it has been argued that in the Avon Valley, concentrations of activity along Roman roads were evidence for elite control of movement and communication with travellers (see Chapter 5.2). Similarly, in the middle Trent valley sites such as the 'road-block' created in the Fosse Way through the positioning of burials within its course near Cotgrave (Meaney, 1964, p. 200); the focus of elite burials at Winthorpe Road, Bingham, and Aslockton (Samuels and Russell, 1999; Meaney, 1964, pp. 200 & 202);⁷⁹ and the Staffordshire Hoard (Hooke, 2010) also attested to the significance of major routeways for elite expression.

An implication of this observation is that the upper echelons of society in the Avon and middle Trent valleys had shared or, at the least, similar methods to express their authority. It has been argued that the great hall complex 'template' was part of an elite narrative transmitted through the close relationships between the ruling dynasties of England (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 345; Hamerow et al., 2013, p. 62). These relationships were not only founded on political and familial alliance, but also, increasingly on religion (Brennan and Hamerow, 2015, p. 346). If one method of elite expression,

⁷⁹ Bingham and Aslockton were additionally believed to be the location of meeting places. Moot-House Pit was recorded as Moteshowe, 'assembly hills or mounds', in circa. 1375 and was likely the location of the Bingham wapentake meeting place. Speller Hill, 'speech ridge or hill', outside Aslockton, also part of the Bingham wapentake, was probably a smaller meeting place of the local community (Field, 1993, p. 237).

the great hall complex, could be transferred via these relationships then it is possible that others were too. Thus, the similarities between the two valleys may represent common access to a pan-regional elite repertoire. On the other hand, if the leading families of the Avon Valley and of the Hwicce were related to the forefathers of the Mercian dynasty or, for reasons of political expedience, merely perceived themselves to be, then the similarities may reflect the emulation of Mercian practices or even direct intervention by Mercian elites in the Avon Valley. Another alternative, however, exists with regards to the use of the Roman roads in these two valleys; one which sees the shared practices within and alongside Roman roads as evidence of a pan-polity identity driven by these major routeways and superimposed upon regional systems of political control.

Returning to the historical framework and the various theories of Mercian expansion, there are clear links between the Avon and middle Trent valleys in the centuries preceding the Battle of Cirencester, c. 628 AD. If Mercian overlordship of the Hwicce was achieved in the 7th century then it was likely to have been facilitated by a long process of contact and communication between the two kingdoms. Penda did not *create* the kingdom of the Hwicce, nor did his interests in the region originate from a victory over the West Saxons at Cirencester. The positioning of Penda as overlord of the various rulers of the Middle Angles (Tyler, 2005, p. 4) is a useful analogy to make here as this feat could only have been achieved through the acceptance of Mercian authority. Such acceptance, if not achieved through force, would only have come about through the perception of mutual benefit (Tyler, 2005) which would require substantial levels of communication and prolonged contact, as the material culture from the region implies.

A study of the Avon Valley, therefore, enables us to challenge the image of Mercia and of Penda the aggressor (c.f. Stafford, 1985, p. 96; Stenton, 1971, p. 39). Instead it substantiates an image of Mercian diplomacy and political expediency which was strengthened by periods of warfare, enacted not for the purpose of conquest, but to extract tribute and plunder and to assert the appearance of Mercian supremacy (Bassett, 2007; Tyler, 2005; Williams, 2001, p. 299). Although just a small valley, the

archaeology of the Avon Valley can thus penetrate the obscurity that surrounds the greatest kingdom of early medieval England, Mercia.

Chapter 10. The Areas In-between: Frontier Zones and the Study of Politics.

10.1. Introduction

Preceding chapters have set out the evidence for patterns of practices across the Avon Valley: they have considered burial evidence; landscape organisation and the relationship between sites and routeways, existing communities, and extant monuments; place-names; and the change in practices which occurred in the late 6th and 7th centuries. Each chapter concluded with a summary of the data and added to the narrative of the development of the Avon Valley in the early medieval period. This chapter brings together that data, synthesising the different strands of evidence and proposing that there may have existed three or possibly four zones within the Avon Valley. In these zones it is possible to see both divergence and coalescence of practices, the distinction and the coming together of ideas and people, and this chapter moves on to consider whether these may indicate the presence of a larger frontier zone in the Avon Valley. Finally, this chapter assesses whether frontier dynamics could have been an impetus for polity formation and sets out two models for the development of the kingdom of the Hwicce.

10.2 Valley-wide Practices

Before setting out the evidence for the existence of distinct zones in the Avon Valley it is important to emphasise that these existed within a wider framework of shared traditions and ideas. This has implications for any interpretations regarding the significance and meaning of the zones observed.

A number of burial practices were found to be common to the whole of the Avon Valley. The first is the absence of any evidence that burial sites were positioned beside contemporary settlements. The Wasperton, Stretton-on-Fosse, and Alveston Manor cemeteries all contained evidence for structures, but these are likely to have pre-dated the main phase of burial activity on these sites (Carver et al., 2009, p. 28; Ford, 2003, p. 23, unpub., pp. 79–80). With regards to internal organisation within burial

sites, there is only one convincing example where rows have been identified – Lower Farm, Bishop’s Cleeve (Holbrook, 2000)⁸⁰. Conversely, there is some evidence that cemeteries were arranged into zones, for example at Wasperton, Beckford A & B, and Alveston Manor (Carver et al., 2009; Evison and Hill, 1996; Ford, unpub.).

Moving on to the graves and the grave assemblages, the details of individual graves have been less frequently recorded in the east of the valley than in the west, but the evidence we do have from the burials beside Watling Street at Kilsby suggests that, as with elsewhere in the valley, furnished and unfurnished burials were found side-by-side (Brown and Hannan, 1978). Amongst the well-recorded cemeteries the percentage of unfurnished burials ranges from just 7% at Beckford A to 40% at Blockley. Both of these cemeteries lie in the far west of the valley and, consequently, may imply that the inclusion of grave goods in burials was governed more by local preference than by regional practices. Staying with grave goods, burials with weapons were also found across the valley and the weapon sets represented were generally consistent. In addition, the discovery of swords in funerary contexts is rare throughout the survey area. In total, 12 swords, or sword parts, have been recorded in the Avon Valley, from Upton Snodsbury in the west to Churchover in the east (Table 10.1). However, due to the majority of these swords having been recorded in the 19th century, the context of only one of these has been recorded – Churchover (Meaney, 1964, p. 259) – and our understanding of these artefacts is limited. The almost total lack of swords from the well-recorded cemeteries, the exception being a single, uncontextual sword from Broadway (Cook, 1958, p. 58), does certainly bring into question the authenticity of some of the earlier identifications of these artefacts in the valley and does suggest that the deposition of swords was a rarity in the Avon Valley compared to other regions. Finally, turning to the graves themselves, the dominant position of the body across the valley is supine and it is rare to find evidence that the body was laid out in any form of container or surrounded by any support.

⁸⁰ See footnote in Chapter 4.4.1 regarding the identification of rows at Stretton-on-Fosse.

Site ID	Site Name	Date of Burial Activity	Comment
14	Bredon's Norton	6th - 7th	19th century workmen found fragments of a sword and scabbard along with other weapons but no human remains
15	Broadway	15th - 6th	Uncontextual find within an inhumation cemetery. 34.75 inches long and not patten-welded.
19	Churchover	6th - E7th	Two swords. Found during works on Watling Street in the 19th and 20th century. The first, 35 inches long, found with a cremation. The second with an inhumation, bronze ring, and annular brooch
31	Kineton	5th - 7th	Found with skeletons, a spearhead and Roman pottery in the 19th century.
37	Longbridge Park	M6th - 7th	Several inhumations found in the 19th century along with a 36 inch sword with a decorated bronze scabbard. The tip of a second sword was found embedded in a shield boss.
40	Marlcliff	5th - 6th	Metal detector finds. Bronze pyramid and mount from a sword. 6th Century design.
41	Marton	16th - 7th	Found with cremations along with spearheads, a shield boss, and annular brooches. The finds were made in the 19th century in what is described as a tumulus
43	Milcote Hall	5th - 7th	Four hundred skeletons reported in the 19th century. Only two gravegoods observed - a wooden 'club' and an iron blade, possibly from a sword.
45	Napton Hill	7th	A minimum of one inhumation found during quarrying. An uncontextual 29 inch sword found at the heavily disturbed site.
54	Upton Snodsbury	6th	A number of inhumations were found in the 19th century with jewellery and weapons, including a c. 36 inch long double edged sword.
WMID-916283	Compton Verney parish	E5th-16th	Holmegard/Kragehul type copper alloy sword pommel. [PAS find]

Table 10. 1 Swords and sword fragments reported from within the Avon Valley

Valley-wide patterns continue when evidence of landscape organisation is considered. Perhaps the most obvious characteristic of the valley as a whole is the lack of 'ordinary' settlements. The settlement of Broom (Palmer, 2000, pp. 197–221); the newly discovered site southwest of Shottery (Stuart Foreman, pers. comm. Sept 2015), which is yet to be fully investigated;⁸¹ the sunken feature buildings identified at Aston Mill Farm and Kemerton Sewage Works (Fagan et al., 1994); the structure and associated cobbled 'yard' at Ipsley (Fasham, 1988); and the few structures identified at the cemeteries of Wasperton, Stretton-on-Fosse, Alveston Manor, and Baginton (Carver et al., 2009, p. 28; Ford, 2003, p. 23, unpub., pp. 79–80; Wilkins, 1975) represent the whole archaeological corpus of (non-elite) occupation evidence.⁸² Lying beyond Blair's 'Anglo-Saxon building province', this is not unexpected

⁸¹ Shottery has not been included in analyses as its discovery was too late for this project. However, it has been drawn into discussion.

⁸² As probable high status hall complexes, Hatton Rock and Lon Itchington are not included in this list. For the same reasons, the church at Deerhurst is also omitted. Additionally, due to the lack of structural evidence, the intrusive pits and hearths observed at the Roman sites of The Lunt and Chesterton and the pottery scatter at Sedgeberrow are not included (Hirst and Rahtz, 1973; Palmer, 2009; Gilbert, 1972; Hobley, 1975, p. 5; Taylor, 1967; Price and Watson, 1984).

(Blair, 2013). A second observation is that for both burial and occupation sites, locations close to extant sites were favoured throughout the Avon Valley, but, as has been shown, the type of extant site reused did vary. Similarly, there was a clear preference for locations near to major routeways whether they be Roman roads or main rivers, although again the use of these showed some regional variation. This emphasis on major routeways is supported by analysis of site aspect which showed that the most common orientation of sites was towards these features. There was also a tendency towards locations on slopes above the main rivers (29 of 58 sites), with very few sites (11 in total) placed on hill or ridge tops anywhere in the valley, although a slight concentration might be discerned to the west of Ryknield Street. In terms of agricultural use, the majority of sites are found on pastoral land, but this is likely to merely reflect the dominance of soils that support this type of agriculture within the Avon Valley.

Combined, these similarities suggest a degree of common interests or shared agendas across the whole length of the valley. Given the small size of this valley, compared to say the Thames Valley, this is perhaps unsurprising. However, what this research has also shown is that, despite its size, there is evidence of regional differences. These differences imply that there was a limit to the extent of shared practices and that these co-existed alongside practices which were regionally distinct.

10.3 Regional ‘suites of practices’: The identification of zones in the Avon Valley

The evidence collected by this research project suggests the existence of four regionally distinct ‘suites of practices’ in the Avon Valley. These ‘suites’ are made up of burial practices, patterns of landscape use, and place-names in different combinations which, when considered together, might be used to suggest the presence of distinct zones in the Avon Valley. These zones are: a western zone extending east to the area of Ryknield Street; an eastern zone extending west to the area around Wasperton; a central zone which lies between these and incorporates the cemeteries of Wasperton, Alveston Manor, and Bidford-on-Avon along with the hall complex at Hatton Rock and the settlements at Broom and Shottery; and a southern zone, the Fosse Way Environs (Figure 10.1). A summary of the characteristics of each zone is given in Table 10.2 and described in detail below.

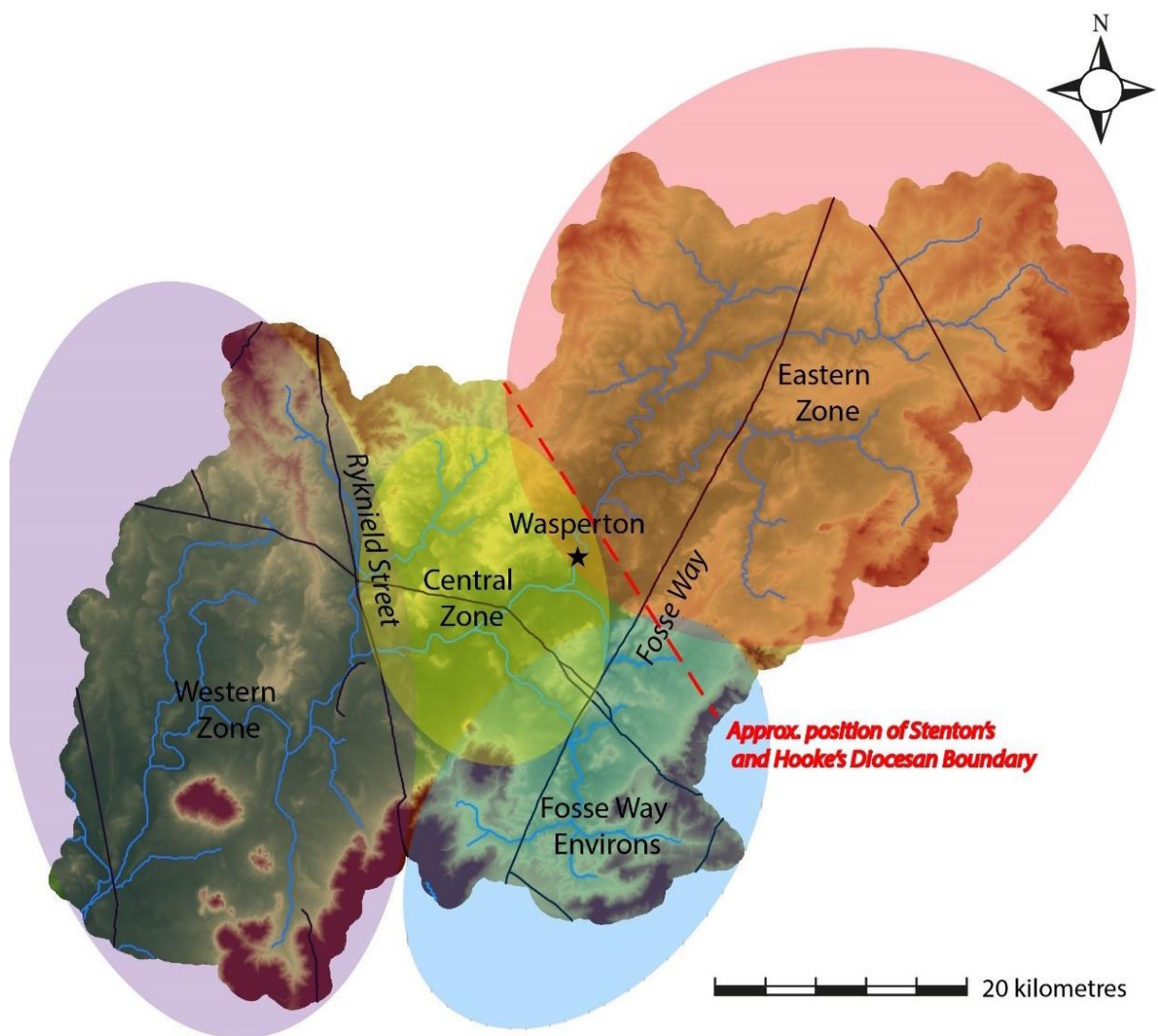


Figure 10. 1. Zones of the Avon Valley

	Zones			
Practices	Western	Central	Eastern	Southern
Inhumations and Cremations	Lack of Cremations	Mixed Inhumation/Cremation	Possible Cremation Only + Mixed	Lack of Cremations
Orientation of Inhumations	Predominantly North-South	Mixed Orientations	Predominantly West-East (limited data)	Predominantly West-East (limited data)
Origin of Dress Accessories	Mostly Upper Thames Valley	Mixed	Mostly E. Midlands / E. Anglia	Mostly Upper Thames Valley
Charcoal-lined Inhumation	Present	Present	Absent	Possible concentration of charcoal-lined inhumations
Weapon Burial Frequency	Variable	Variable	Variable	Possible concentration of weapon burials
Reuse of Monuments	Focus on Prehistoric Monuments	Focus on Prehistoric Monuments + evidence of different treatment by elite	Slight focus on Roman Monuments	Focus on Prehistoric Monuments
Reuse of Roman Occupation Sites	Isolated or few burials focussed on small Roman occupation sites	Cemeteries possibly focussed on small Roman occupation sites	Cemeteries focussed on major Roman occupation sites	Cemeteries possibly focussed on small Roman occupation sites
Use of Main Rivers	Number of sites within 100 metres of main river	Number of sites within 100 metres of main river	One site within 100 metres of main river	One site within 100 metres of main river
Use of Roman Roads	Birmingham - Gloucester Roman road has no evidence of use but some evidence elsewhere in zone	Evidence along Ryknield Street	Greatest concentration of evidence of use along Watling Street	Evidence along Fosse Way
Activity on Roman Roads	Reuse of Roman sites on Roman roads	Reuse of Roman sites on Roman roads	Foundation of new sites on Roman roads	Reuse of Roman sites on Roman roads
Site Aspect	Lack of southeast-northeast aspect of sites	Various aspects	Various aspects	Various aspects
Site Position	Valley bottom and Hill/Ridge top sites, few mid-slope	Slopes common - particularly lower-mid	Mid-slope common	Mid-slope common
Place-Names	Concentration of non-OE names and names referring to Brittonic people or institutions	Fewer non-OE names but some names referring to Brittonic people or institutions	Place-names indicating Brittonic speakers, people, or institutions rare	Concentration of non-OE names

Table 10. 2 The Characteristics of each of the Avon Valley Zones

10.3.1 Western Zone

The Western Zone is typified by a lack of cremations; predominantly north-south oriented inhumations; dress accessories most commonly from the Upper Thames Valley; frequent reuse of prehistoric monuments, at the expense of Roman monuments; some examples of the placing of one or two inhumations within the remains of small agricultural Roman occupation sites; close proximity to the main rivers; some activity beside Roman roads, exclusively at sites which saw activity in the Roman period; and a lack of mid-slope sites which serve to contrast sites located in the valley bottoms and those on hill/ridge tops. The distribution of place-names shows that the greatest concentration of

both non-Old English names and Old English names which refer to Brittonic peoples or institutions is in this part of the valley. This suggests that the population of the Western Zone comprised a greater number of Brittonic-speakers, and that there was a greater degree of interaction between Brittonic and English-speaking populations here than elsewhere in the valley.

10.3.2 Central Zone

The Central Zone could be described as an area of coalescence, where the greatest diversity of practices exists. For example, the cemeteries of this zone comprise both cremations and inhumations and the latter are of various different orientations. There are some similarities with the Western Zone, such as the close proximity to main rivers and the reuse of Roman occupation sites beside Roman roads, but there are also a number of differences. Frequently, these differences observed between the Central and Western Zones can be understood when practices from the Eastern Zone are considered. Whilst, as in the Western Zone, grave goods include material from the Upper Thames Valley, there is also a range of items from East Anglia and the eastern Midlands, items which dominate assemblages from the Eastern Zone. Additionally, a similar focus on prehistoric monuments exists in both the western and central parts of the valley, but in the Central Zone there is a small amount of evidence that there was a second and distinct phase of reuse of prehistoric monuments in the 7th century, one which was dictated by elites (see Chapter 8.2.1). In contrast to the Western Zone, sites in the Central Zone are most commonly found on slopes, which is also the case in the Eastern Zone. With regards to the place-names surveyed, there have been fewer examples identified than in the west and here the emphasis is placed on those names which refer to Brittonic people and institutions rather than on names which incorporate non-Old English words. This might suggest that, whilst there was a distinct Brittonic-speaking population in the Central Zone, it was of a smaller scale and/or that there was less engagement between the English and Brittonic populations than in the Western Zone.

10.3.3 Eastern Zone

Whilst there are similarities between the Eastern and Central Zones, there are also important distinctions. In the Central Zone, cremations have only been identified at large mixed cemeteries, but

in the Eastern Zone there is one site which may have consisted of cremations alone – Long Itchington (Meaney, 1964, p. 217) – and cremations have been found at smaller mixed cemeteries. Whilst cemeteries are found near Roman occupation sites in both the Central Zone and the Eastern Zone, the type of Roman site is quite different. In the Central Zone, small agricultural or industrial sites were reused, yet in the Eastern Zone it was the large Roman settlements which became foci of activity in the early medieval period. Finally, whilst both zones favoured locating sites on slopes, in the east the emphasis was placed more firmly on mid-slopes.

Even greater differences can be found elsewhere in the valley. The data might be too limited for confident conclusions to be drawn, but the current state of knowledge implies that inhumations oriented west-east were more common in the Eastern Zone than in the Western Zone and, unlike the Central Zone, there is no evidence of north-south oriented burials. Whilst East Anglian and eastern Midlands material is common in the central cemeteries it is accompanied by material from the Upper Thames Valley, this is not the case in the eastern sites where material from the Thames is much rarer. There were also markedly different patterns of use of extant sites and major routeways. Unlike in the rest of the valley, there is some evidence for a slight focus on Roman monuments in the eastern zone and no evidence for the reuse of prehistoric monuments. Additionally, greater emphasis was placed on a Roman Road, Watling Street, in this zone compared to the other zones. The use of Watling Street was unusual; this is exemplified by the sheer number of sites placed along its course and the preference for positioning sites on ground not previously used in the Roman period, a pattern not seen elsewhere. Coinciding with this focus on Watling Street is an apparently weaker relationship between the position of sites and the main rivers in this zone. Finally, place-names indicative of Brittonic-speakers are scarcest in this part of the valley, currently represented by four non-Old English names and three Old English names believed to identify Brittonic communities or institutions. However, the identification of one of these non-Old English names, Dasset, as Brittonic is not certain for it was included by Coates et al. (2000, p. 337), but was omitted by Gelling (1978, p. 92). Additionally, two of the Old English names are compounds of *wahl* and perhaps should not be included in this survey

(Zanella, 2015). With this in mind, there may be as few as four names which suggest the presence of Brittonic-speakers in this zone out of a total of 25 in the valley (if the *wahl* names are not included).

10.3.4 Fosse Way Environs

The fourth and final zone, the Southern Zone, or, given its focus on the Fosse Way, the Fosse Way Environs, is the most difficult to define and the least certain. Spanning all three of the other zones in the Avon Valley, the Fosse Way Environs incorporates practices from each of these other zones: for example, the lack of cremations and the dominance of material culture from the Upper Thames Valley, as in the Western Zone; the focus of activity on prehistoric monuments, as in the Central Zone; and the preference for mid-slope positions for sites, as in the Eastern Zone. Significantly, therefore, the Fosse Way Environs suite of practices is distinct from all those in the other zones identified in the valley. It also exhibits some practices which appear to have been more concentrated in this part of the valley than elsewhere, for example a case can be made that the frequency and use of charcoal-lined inhumations in this zone was unusual in the valley (see Chapter 3.2.3).

10.3.5 Different scales and different audiences: Communicating Regionality

In each zone there are regionally distinct practices which would have been visible for only a brief period of time – e.g. grave assemblages – and regionally distinct practices which would have endured in the landscape – e.g. the positioning of sites. It might be possible, therefore, to suppose that these statements of regionalisation were meant to be viewed both by the immediate community and by outsiders or those passing through. For example, regional differences found within the grave were only temporarily displayed whilst the grave was open and would, in all likelihood, only be communicated to those present at the funeral. In contrast, regional differences found in the way a Roman road was used would be particularly apparent to travellers along that route and, therefore, potentially be communicated to a pan-regional audience. Combined, these two levels of communication, one inward facing and the other outward, seem to suggest the presence of different socio-political groups in the Avon Valley during the 5th to mid-7th centuries. These groups constructed their view of the world and

their place within it in different ways and presented themselves to that world by different means. Of course, the existence of valley-wide practices suggests that these groups did not exist in isolation, but were part of a wider and inter-linked system. This system may have been based upon ideas of shared ancestry, ethnicity, politics, or economics, or a combination of all of these.

10.4 Coalescence and Contact: Assessing the presence of frontier zone processes

Recent research on frontier zones has identified three processes – thirding, innovation, and fracturing – which are believed to occur at locations where different groups meet (see Chapter 2.2.4). To assess whether these processes are in evidence and whether they represented *frontier* processes requires a survey of discreet regions to establish what ‘normal’ patterns of practice were. As Liebmann argued, cultural phenomena are by their nature communal and, therefore, diverse (2015). Thus to identify frontier processes it must be demonstrated that different patterns observed in the archaeology were not merely the result of normal cultural diversity, but that they were likely to have come about through inter-cultural contact. The Avon Valley provides such a study. Not only does the survey of this valley permit an understanding of what normal practices were, against which practices characteristic of a frontier situation might be discerned, but the identification of distinct zones in the valley hints at the possibility that a frontier zone may have been in existence.

Two characteristics of a frontier zone, innovation and thirding, were investigated in the Avon Valley: across the whole study area, the use of charcoal-lined inhumations and the weapons burial rite in the valley was investigated as a possible candidate for innovation and, on a more detailed level, the Central Zone, with its coming together of a diverse set of practices and its major cemeteries, was examined through the lens of thirding.

10.4.1 Innovation in the Avon Valley

In Chapter 3.2 the distribution and the frequency of charcoal-lined inhumations and weapon burials within the Avon Valley were considered. The analysis conducted here advances the study of these practices, considering them on a national scale by contextualising and comparing the Avon Valley

dataset to sites across Britain. The aim of this is to assess whether the use of these practices in the Avon Valley adheres to wider norms. Should they prove to be uncommon, these practices will be considered as evidence of innovation. Innovation, which occurs as a result of heightened cultural interaction, is a process that has been suggested as characteristic of frontier zones (see Chapter 2.2.4 for detail). By assessing whether innovation was indeed present in the use of these two burial rites in the Avon Valley, the case for a frontier zone can be further examined.

10.4.1.1 Charcoal-Lined Inhumations

Charcoal-lined inhumations were defined in Chapter 2.2.1.3 as “inhumations where there is evidence for spreads of charcoal either lining the whole grave, underlying the head or pelvis, scattered across the whole grave, or focussed in particular areas around the body”. They have been found at five of the well-recorded cemeteries and are also possibly identifiable in the reports of two further sites in the Avon Valley.

Evidence for charcoal-lined inhumations and similar burials which incorporate fire within the inhumation practice, referred to by Meaney as ‘half-cremations’ (1964, pp. 16–17) and by Rebay-Salisbury as ‘partial cremations’ (2015, p. 20), beyond the Avon Valley was collated using Meaney’s survey of burials in England (1964). Fifty-two years out-of-date and drawing upon sites only from England, it is not expected that this survey is in anyway complete, but within this partial dataset the focus of charcoal-lined inhumations on the Avon Valley remains clear. This concentration endures even when three sites identified by David Petts are considered. These sites from the south and west of Britain all record evidence of charcoal spreads in association with inhumations, but they were all cist burials and were, therefore, quite different in nature from the Avon examples (David Petts pers. comm. Feb 2015, Figure 10.2).⁸³

⁸³ The sites identified by Petts were: Buckland Ripers, Dorset (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, 1970, p. 595); Carnsew Cliff, Cornwall (Thomas, 1994, pp. 191–192); and Port Dafarch, Holyhead (Stanley, 1875, p. 140).

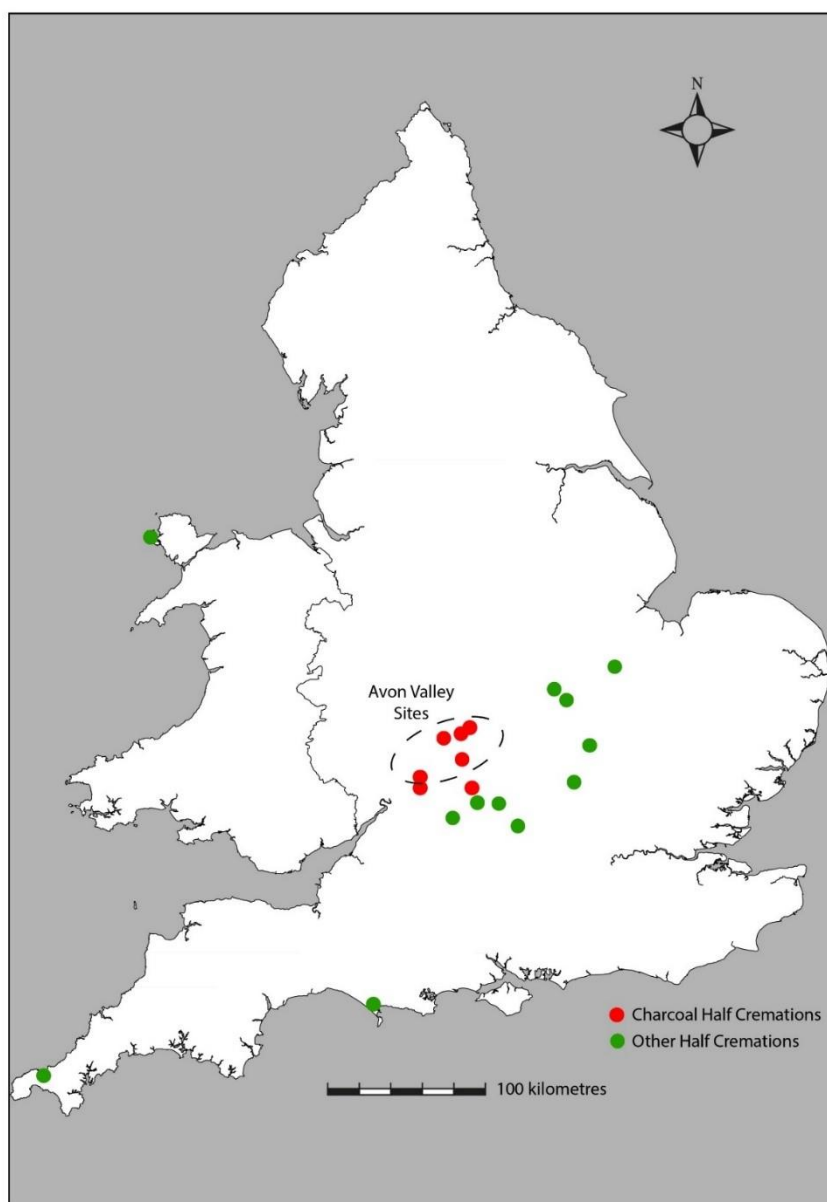


Figure 10. 2. Distribution of half-cremations across the United Kingdom

From their distribution it appears that the practice in the Avon Valley was a sub-set of the wider tradition of half or partial cremations, which itself had a distinct concentration. Rebay-Salisbury has suggested that partial cremation can be caused accidentally and through the poor execution of the cremation rite (2015, p. 20), but the clear focus of this rite in a particular part of England implies that this might not be the case and that partial cremation may have been both deliberate and desirable. This is supported by the results of Squires' examination of the early medieval cremation cemeteries at

Elsham and Cleatham which concluded that there were “no known examples of failed cremations” in this period at these sites (2015, p. 164). It seems likely, therefore, that charcoal-lined inhumations were the result of deliberate funerary practices and that they evolved out of a wider tradition which associated fire with inhumation burial.

The apparent focus of these inhumations on the Avon Valley and its immediate surrounds required further investigation: how might it have occurred, and for what purposes might it have developed? By its nature, the partial cremation rite incorporated aspects of both cremation and inhumation – the sensory and ritualistic experience of fire and the practice of giving a body to the earth – and it is, therefore, perhaps unsurprising that Rebay-Salisbury offered an interpretation which described the practice as “doing a bit of both” (2015, p. 33). Such an explanation might sound simplistic, but it does tie with her observation that these burials occurred at times of transition (Rebay-Salisbury, 2015, p. 33). Rebay-Salisbury focused on the prehistoric, but it seems reasonable that her observations can be applied to this later period, one which was also characterised by change. Further, it should be possible to extend her interpretation of chronological transition to one of geographical transition, i.e. a frontier zone. Ideas do not change merely over time, they also change in space. If partial cremations were the product of combining different practices these could equally have been old and new practices driven by internal developments or they could have been local and foreign practices driven by external cultural contact. The result would have been the same: the development of innovative practices.

The conclusion that partial cremations might have been a feature of a frontier zone does not rely solely on data from the Avon Valley. Returning to the distribution of these burials in general, it can be observed that they were found in the region of the Middle Angles, a complex conglomeration of different socio-political units (Tyler, 2005, p. 4); in the northern parts of the Upper Thames Valley, the northern part of the territory of the Gewisse (Hamerow et al., 2013); and in the Avon Valley. It seems, therefore, that a common factor in the distribution of this burial practice was the presence of socio-political interfaces. It cannot be said with any certainty why the Avon Valley and its surrounds

developed its own unique type of partial cremation, but we can perhaps suppose that it had something to do with the influences of western Britain. It was after all, in this part of the country that Petts identified similar charcoal-lined inhumations.

10.4.1.2 The Weapon Burial Rite

Turning to the weapon burial rite, its use in the Avon Valley can also be compared to burials across England to assess whether there are any differences in the relative frequency of the rite that could be construed as evidence of innovation within the former. To conduct this comparison, data were collected from 5th to 7th-century cemeteries across England that were of a comparable size to the nine well-recorded Avon Valley sites. Most of the data came from Härke's 1992 survey of 54 burial sites, to which were added more recently published cemeteries (Härke, 2010, 1992a; Boyle et al., 2011; Haughton and Powlesland, 1999). In order to compare only sites that were similar to the Avon Valley cemeteries, sites from Härke's survey which dated solely to the 7th or 8th centuries were discounted along with sites consisting of only one or two burials. This created a corpus of 46 sites: nine from the Avon Valley and 37 from the rest of England (Table 10.3).

The statistical significance between the relative frequency of weapon burial in the Avon Valley and weapon burial in the rest of England was then tested using a t-Test with two samples assuming unequal variances. This allowed the testing of the null hypothesis: the relative frequency of weapon burials in the Avon Valley was less than the relative frequency of weapon burials in the rest of early medieval England. The result of this test showed that the null hypothesis could be rejected and, instead, it was demonstrated that, with 84% confidence ($p < \sim 0.15$)⁸⁴, the relative frequency of weapon burials in the Avon valley was higher than the relative frequency observed in the rest of England. Whilst the confidence level is not as strong as might be desired ($p < 0.05$ is a standard minimum), on current evidence it appears that burial with weapons was an unusually common practice in the Avon Valley.

⁸⁴ The large p value is likely to be a result of the large variance in the Avon Valley data: whilst the mean average is 24 the standard deviation is 11. This means that there is a chance that a single high value will affect the result.

Site Name	% of Total Inhumations with Weapons	Site Name	% of Total Inhumations with Weapons
Blockley	40.0	Worlabay	18.2
Beckford A	35.7	Blacknall Field, Pewsey	18.1
Stretton-on-Fosse	32.7	Worthy Park	18.1
Westgarth Gardens	31.8	Wasperton	18.0
Swaffham	31.6	Abingdon I	18.0
Alveston Manor	30.9	Nassington	16.9
Winterbourne Gunner	30.0	Andover	16.9
Mucking I	27.8	Brighthampton	15.9
Alfrsiton	26.3	Bidford-on-Avon	15.7
Long Wittenham I	26.0	Butler's Field, Lechlade	13.9
Beckford B	25.9	Charlton Plantation	13.0
Berinsfield	23.8	Broadway	12.5
Sarre	23.8	West Heslerton	11.9
Empingham II	22.8	Collingbourne Ducis	11.1
Droxford	22.0	Finglesham	10.9
Bergh Apton	21.5	Leighton Buzzard II	10.5
Broadstairs I	21.2	Bekesbourne	10.0
Mucking II	21.0	Lyminge II	9.4
Holywell Row	20.8	Little Eriswell	9.1
Spong Hill	20.7	Harnham Hill	8.9
Orpington	20.3	Sewerby	8.8
Petersfinger	19.7	Lower Farm	7.7
Wakerley I	18.2	Fonaby	5.6

Table 10. 3 The relative frequency of weapon burials in England, with the Avon Valley sites highlighted (after Härke 1992b & 2010; Houghton & Powlesland 1999; Boyle et al. 2011).

In addition to the unusually high relative frequency of weapon burials, it also appeared that the occurrence of this funerary rite in the Avon Valley did not follow the pattern observed generally across England. Härke's study showed that weapon burials appear in the first half of the 5th century, increase in frequency to a peak in the late 5th to mid-6th century, and then experience a steady decline to the point at which they cease in the late 7th to early 8th century (2005, p. 198). When the evidence of weapon burials from two of the most thoroughly investigated sites in the Avon Valley – Alveston Manor and Stretton-on-Fosse – was compared to this chronological framework, a number of differences emerged.

These two cemeteries were excavated by Bill Ford and in both cases he believed that the majority of the burials had been identified (Ford, 2003, p. 77, unpub., p. 95). Using a site-specific probabilistic dating method which postulated a date range for each artefact in each grave and created a combined

date range for every grave in the cemeteries which contained grave goods, Ford was able to offer a joint probability for each burial. This joint probability was then combined with a normal distribution to offer a 'most probable date', which was then tested against a regression analysis which assumed that graves were positioned successively further from a founder grave (Ford, 2003, pp. 77–89). Whilst there are a number of problems associated with this approach (c.f. Bayliss et al., 2013), it was thought that, given Härke's methodology, which was also heavily reliant on artefact typologies (2005), a comparison between these and Härke's sites was still possible and still interesting. Should more burials be discovered or radiocarbon dates become available, it is anticipated that this analysis will need updating. Given these various caveats it is acknowledged that the *sequence* of burials at Alveston Manor and Stretton-on-Fosse can be used with more confidence than any absolute dates.

With this in mind, the pattern of weapon burials proposed by Härke could be assessed at Alveston Manor and Stretton-on-Fosse. Contrary to Härke's model, weapon burials did not appear until the 6th century and there was no steady increase to a peak in the mid-6th century observed at these two sites (Figure 10.3). Instead, the period in which weapon burials were introduced at these sites – the early 6th century – represented the most frequent occurrence of the practice; never again were people buried so often with weapons. This initial peak was then followed by a decrease in weapon burials, punctuated only by two smaller and brief increases before burial at these cemeteries ceased in the late 6th centuries. Such a pattern of weapon burial is at odds with the pattern observed across the rest of England; this may be the result of comparing two sites with a national average or it could be the result of a further innovation in the utilisation of this practice by the people of the Avon Valley.

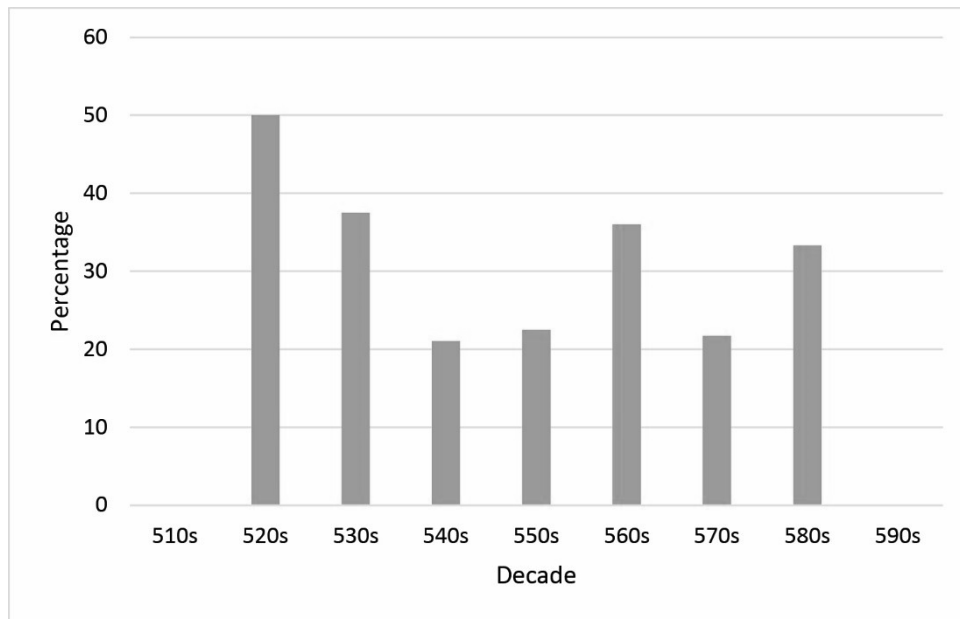


Figure 10. 3. The percentage, per decade, of inhumations at Alveston Manor and Stretton-on-Fosse which contain weapons

Finally, whilst fraught with the difficulties of using absolute dates (see above), it might be significant that there was a resurgence in weapon burials at Alveston Manor and Stretton-on-Fosse in the latter part of the 6th century. Härke has argued that the increase in weapon burials seen across England coincided with periods of peace recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle between 519 and 552 AD (1997, p. 125). Not only has it been shown that there was not a corresponding increase in weapon burials at this time in the Avon Valley, but the two small peaks later in this century broadly coincide with a major military event recorded in the Chronicle in this region – the Battle of Dyrham in 577 AD (ASC). Fought between the Saxon kings Cuthwine and Caelwin and the Britons, this battle purportedly saw the transference of the British cities of Bath, Cirencester, and Gloucester to Saxon control. With Gloucester lying at the mouth of the Avon Valley and Cirencester immediately to the south along the Fosse Way it seems highly unlikely that this Saxon victory had no effect on the people living in this region. Thus, it is possible that at a time of socio-political uncertainty and upheaval the people of the Avon Valley behaved in an unusual manner and began burying their dead with weapons with renewed vigour. Combined with the high relative frequency of weapon burials and the uncommon trajectory of their development over time, a case can be made that the use of weapon burials had undergone innovations unique to the Avon Valley.

10.4.1.3 The Nature of the Innovations

It would appear, therefore, that there is some evidence for innovative practices in the Avon Valley. The charcoal-lined inhumation rite was unique to this region and its immediate surroundings and belonged to a wider practice which was, itself, found concentrated in this central part of England. In addition to this, the practice of interring people with weapons was both more frequent and used in a different way in the Avon Valley than in other parts of the country. The argument that these practices were innovations has been set out above, but their significance can be explored further through a consideration of their precise nature.

The scatters of charcoal in the charcoal-lined inhumations of the Avon Valley showed a distinct distribution within graves, being most frequently located in the area of the head and pelvis (Table 3.3 in Chapter 3.2.3). The recurrence of concentrations of charcoal on two specific parts of the body was likely to have been significant and, therefore, may be instructive of the purpose of the practice. Firstly, in such an early context it is unlikely that the emphasis on the head was to make reference to the soul, as Ford has suggested (2003, p. 103), and an interpretation which sees the head as representing the root of power and authority may be more appropriate (Ross, 1967, pp. 61–126). Certainly, the charcoal rite of the 9th – 12th centuries is thought to have communicated the special status in life of the individuals afforded this type of burial (Hadley, 2002, pp. 218–219; Richards, 2002, p. 164). Elsewhere in the study area there is contemporary evidence to suggest that the head was the focus of attention in the funerary rite: head-rests have been identified at Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve, Stretton-on-Fosse, and Alveston Manor (Holbrook, 2000, p. 89) and two Gotland cauldrons were positioned in relation to the head, one each at Bidford-on-Avon and at Stretton-on-Fosse (Humphries et al., 1923, p. 276; Ford, 2003, p. 103). In the case of the two cauldrons, it can additionally be argued that these two male burials were amongst the highest status at either cemetery and their similarities may even indicate a link between the two individuals (see Chapter 5.2.1).

In contrast, the second focus of this rite, the pelvis, might emphasise the importance of fertility (Ford, 2003, p. 103). The significance of procreation for both men and women, for charcoal scatters were

found in the area of the pelvises of male and female individuals, in the early medieval period is reflected in the early 7th-century law codes of Æthelberht and the 9th-century laws of Alfred. In the first, Æthelberht's 64th law stated that "if anyone destroys the generative organ, he shall pay for it with three times the wergild" (*Æthelberht* 64, p.13). In the second, Alfred's 65th law required that "if a man is so badly wounded in the testicles that he cannot beget children, 80 shillings shall be paid to him as compensation for it" (*Alfred* 65, p.91). The size of this sum is fully appreciated when it is compared with the 30 shillings required as compensation for the piercing of the inner and outer skull (*Alfred* 44, p.87). In a society which had no formal social care the ability to have children to provide labour and support in old age and to ensure the future of the group must have been paramount and it might be reasonable to view the creation of this burial rite as part of this communal concern.

The development of a unique burial rite which was linked to expressions of power and fertility may, of course, have had its origins in a number of socio-political environments, but one of these may have been a frontier zone. In the dynamic atmosphere created by heightened cultural interaction, where personal and social shaping were in flux and where tension and division existed alongside exchange, a desire to express authority and permanency is perhaps to be expected. On the other hand, perhaps just doing something different to your neighbours was sufficient and the charcoal-lined inhumation rite evolved to fulfil a need of the Avon Valley communities to distinguish themselves. This alternative, however, still allows this burial rite to be the result of inter-cultural contact.

Moving on to the second innovation observed, it can be reasoned from Härke's own arguments that a high incidence of weapon burials might indicate social division. Härke claimed that the decrease in the weapon burial rite in the 7th century may reflect the blurring of social boundaries between Germanic and Romano-British populations (2005, p. 206, 1992b, p. 157). It follows, therefore, that the reverse could also be true: where there was an unusually high frequency of weapon burials, it was the result of more strictly defined social boundaries. Such firmly held socio-political divisions were likely to have

existed at a cultural interface, making it possible to use this evidence from weapon burials to substantiate the argument for a frontier zone.

10.4.2 Thirthing in the Cemeteries of the Central Zone

The process of thirthing involves both communal and self-shaping or re-shaping through the mixing of distinct socio-political practices at places of heightened cultural interaction (Naum, 2010; Ylimaunu et al., 2014). It is probable, therefore, that thirthing occurs in frontier zone situations. The cemeteries of the Central Zone provide an opportunity to explore the presence of this process due to the socio-political importance of burial practices and their ability to inform upon communal identities (Devlin, 2007; Hakenbeck, 2007; Härke, 2007; Scull, 2013; Stoodley, 2010).

The diversity of burial practices in the Central Zone is reflected in the mixed nature of the cemeteries, which included both inhumations and cremations; the diverse orientation of inhumations; and the dress accessory assemblages. The distribution of inhumation and cremation burials in the Avon Valley suggests that the latter practice was rare in the Western Zone, but more common in both the Central and Eastern Zones. A further distinction can be made between the occurrence of cremations in these latter two zones: in the Eastern Zone cremations have been found on smaller mixed sites and, in the case of Long Itchington, without inhumations at all, whereas in the Central Zone cremations have been identified on the major mixed cemeteries of Alveston Manor, Bidford-on-Avon, and Wasperton. These large inhumation and cremation cemeteries are, consequently, characteristic of the Central Zone. In England, the cremation burial rite is most commonly found in eastern regions (see Scull, 2013, p. 525; and Squires, 2015, p. 151 for recent discussion) and these large mixed cemeteries in the Avon Valley are amongst the most westerly examples (Figure 10.4). It seems highly likely, therefore, that the Avon Valley lay at an interface between socio-political groups where the practice of cremating individuals was common and others where it was not. The presence of cremations in the largest cemeteries in the region might reasonably be thought to represent the coming together of the inhumation and cremation practicing cultures, causing the mixing of practices and the development of sites distinct from those usually found in either group.

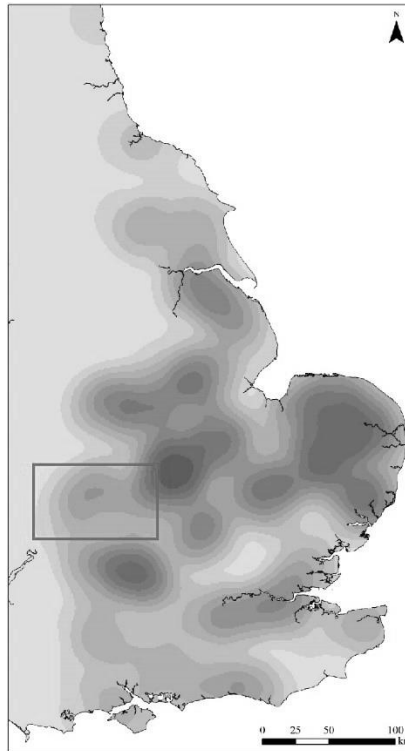


Figure 10. 4. Kernel Density Estimation map of early medieval cremations from certain cemeteries in England. Reproduced courtesy of Matthew Austin, University of Reading. The Avon Valley study area is indicated by a black box.

The diversity exhibited within the Central Zone cemeteries continues with the widest range of orientations recorded for inhumations in the valley being found at Alveston Manor, Bidford-on-Avon, and Wasperton (Table 10.4). Similarly, the greatest variety of dress accessories from different origins was displayed in the 5th and 6th-century graves from these same Central Zone cemeteries (Table 10.5). In contrast to the Eastern and Western Zones which were dominated by material from a particular region, the East Midlands and East Anglian regions and the Upper Thames Valley respectively, burial assemblages from the Central Zone contained more equal ratios of materials from both of these regions. Combined, these strands of evidence suggest that there may have been a higher degree of mixing of social practices and greater levels of communal shaping and re-shaping in this zone than in other parts of the Avon Valley. It is possible that this was the result of heightened interaction between peoples from distinct socio-political groups and thus the consequence of a frontier zone in this part of the valley.

Site ID	Site Name	Date of Burial	Orientation (% of Inhumations)								
			N-S	S-N	NE-SW	SW-NE	E-W	W-E	SE-NW	NW-SE	Unknown
1	Alveston Manor	L5th - 7th	3.7	60.5		30.9		2.5		1.2	
7	Beckford A	5th - 6th	10.7	57.1				17.9			14.3
8	Beckford B	5th - 6th	1.9	98.1							
10	Bidford-on-Avon	L5th - 7th	3.8	36.6		15.6		26.9	1.6	4.3	11.3
15	Broadway	L5th - 6th						62.5			37.5
38	Lower Farm	M6th - 7th	69.2			11.5					19.2
53	Stretton-on-Fosse	L5th - 6th	7.7			13.5		68.6			10.2
56	Wasperton	5th - 7th	19.7	37.5			1.7	28.9	4.2	4.2	3.9

Table 10. 4 The orientation of inhumations as a percentage of all inhumations at each site.

	% E. Anglian and East Midlands	% Upper Thames Valley
Eastern Zone	73	13
Central Zone	34	51
Western Zone	17	69
Southern Zone	10	79

Table 10. 5 The average percentage of dress accessories from the East Anglian/East Midlands region and the Upper Thames Valley in each Avon Valley zone.

A significant challenge to the interpretation that the diversity present in the Central Zone cemeteries was due to their position in a frontier zone is the size of these cemeteries. This is because the greater range of practices evidenced may merely be the result of the greater number of burials. However, when practices present at another large cemetery, Beckford B, in the Western Zone, are considered then it does appear that the Central Zone cemeteries were distinct. Like the Central Zone cemeteries, Beckford B lies beside a major watercourse and stands out in this part of the valley for its size. With 108 inhumations it is comparable to Alveston Manor which contains 81 inhumations, but, interestingly, it only had 4 cremations compared to Alveston's 38 (Evison and Hill, 1996; Ford, unpub.). Consequently, the largest cemetery in the Western Zone cannot be described as 'mixed' and the inclusion of cremations at larger cemeteries remains the reserve of the Central Zone. Furthermore, evidence from two smaller sites in the Central Zone, Longbridge and Emscote, suggests that size alone did not determine the diversity of the burial assemblage. At these two sites, which are, admittedly, poorly recorded, it appears that a similar range of dress accessory types were present when compared

with the major cemeteries of the region (Chatwin, 1926; Meaney, 1964, pp. 260–261; Vierck, 1970). Thus, the size of a cemetery did not dictate the range of grave goods nor did it automatically afford the presence of cremations. In the Central Zone size alone cannot be the only explanation for the greater range of practices and dress accessory types present and it remains possible, therefore, that these characteristics of the Central Zone cemeteries were a feature of their position within a landscape of greater cultural interaction.

The distinctions observed between the burial practices of the Eastern, Western, and Central Zones are all the more significant when patterns of landscape use are considered. This is because there appears to have been considerable overlap between the practices of the various zones, particularly between the Western and Central Zones. These similarities are: the reuse of prehistoric rather than Roman monuments as foci of early medieval activity; activity beside Roman roads most frequently found close to extant Roman sites rather than on virgin land; and a stronger association between early medieval sites and main rivers as opposed to Roman roads. An explanation for the discrepancy between the burial and the landscape evidence might be found if the intended audience is considered. The burying of an individual with a particular costume, for example, was a far more temporary statement than the choice of a particular location for the establishment of a cemetery as it was visible for only a short period of time and only to a small number of people (Halsall, 2010, pp. 252–253). The differences observed between the two datasets may, therefore, be the result of two levels of communication and expression, one short-term, the individual, and one long-term, the communal. Perhaps the burial practices of the Central Zone were meant to communicate diversity at an individual level, a result of the presence or influence of peoples from different socio-political groups, whilst the patterns of landscape use communicated their strong communal ties to the Western Zone. If the Central Zone was a frontier zone then it did not exist in isolation and it seems that there is evidence to suggest that it did belong to a wider system of landscape organisation, one which was focused on the west of the Avon Valley.

10.4.3 Coalescence: Core and Periphery and the Development of Polities

A strong case can be made for the coming together of people and ideas in the Avon Valley. There is evidence to suggest that this coalescence inspired the development of new practices – charcoal-lined inhumations – and the reinvention of established practices – weapons burial. This diversity appears to have been most acute in the Central Zone, where the way people dressed and buried their dead incorporated traditions from both the west and east of the valley. The size of the cemeteries, the largest in the valley; the presence of the great hall complex at Hatton Rock; and elite 7th century activity at prehistoric monuments in this zone all seem to indicate that this area of contact and coalescence was of regional significance. Two possibilities for the status of this zone can be proposed: the Central Zone was a territorial core or the Central Zone was a frontier zone.

The Central Zone lies in the heart of the valley, fixed on the main River Avon, and might easily be compared to one of the many river-centric polities identified in this period (Baker and Brookes, 2013, p. 149; Draper, 2004, p. 117; Hamerow, 2012, p. 3; Hamerow et al., 2013, p. 51; Hooke, 2001, p. 161; Semple, 2013, pp. 19–25, 2008, p. 418). Indeed, the diversity seen within this zone could have been the result of people attracted from elsewhere to this area by the presence of a socio-political and economic hub. The expressions of power interpreted at the great hall complex of Hatton Rock could also fit within this narrative, being a statement of elite authority at the heartland of a political unit. However, I would contend that these characteristics could also indicate a frontier zone. Frontiers can also act as focal points for activity, and I believe the sum of the evidence from the Avon Valley better fits this model than that of a territorial core.

Frontier zones are interfaces between distinct groups where people come together for cultural and economic exchange (Flad, 2013; Hall, 2009; Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995; Reilly, 1988). They are landscapes of contact and coalescence. In these places opportunities for display are heightened, with the chance to communicate aspirations of power to neighbouring groups. The diversity apparent in the burial record and the elite sites in the Central Zone can both be understood as part of this system. Furthermore, the merit of this model over that of the territorial core, is that it can explain the east –

west divide observed in the Avon Valley. Distinctions between suites of practices led to the identification of an Eastern and a Western Zone in the valley, between which lay the Central Zone. Should this central area have functioned as a core, we might have expected there to have been some homogeneity in the practices surrounding this heartland. In contrast, the Avon Valley is quite distinctly split either side of this Central Zone and, I believe, this evidence accords more closely with a frontier zone model.

The significance of such a frontier zone may have gone beyond the Avon Valley and the early 7th century watershed, with its legacy being the development of a much larger regional polity, an early medieval kingdom. The dynamics of this area, frequented by people, ideas, and goods from across the British Isles and facilitated by its excellent river and road networks connected to production centres in the Upper Thames, East Anglia and the East Midlands, and the salt centres to the north-west, no doubt attracted the attention of emergent 7th century elites. This landscape is likely to have provided the perfect environment in which to demonstrate their growing authority, leading to the creation of new high status sites and the reorganisation of the landscape to better suit their designs for their recently realised ambitions of a kingdom, the kingdom of the Hwicce.

10.5 The Development of the Kingdom of the Hwicce

The argument above sets out evidence for the existence of a frontier zone in the Avon Valley in the 5th – 7th centuries. The long term impact of this, it was reasoned, may have affected the development of the kingdom of the Hwicce. Using evidence from this potential frontier zone, the Central Zone, along with evidence from elsewhere in the valley and from the comparative case studies in the Severn and middle-Trent valleys, it was possible to propose two models for the development of this historically attested kingdom.

To recap, historical sources described the creation of the Diocese of Worcester in the late 7th century; in 11th, 13th and 16th-century documents (*Heref*, *Tax Ecc*, *Valor Ecc*), the boundaries of this diocese were defined (Hooke, 2009, pp. 12–13; Stenton, 1971, p. 134). The western boundary was recorded as

bisecting the Avon Valley and has been placed by Hooke and Ford broadly in the centre of the valley through the identification of two place names (Hooke, 2009, p. 13) and the position of 'pre-Saxon camps' (Ford, 1976, pp. 277–278). Of course, two place-names and a general trajectory through a handful of existing monuments did not make it possible to plot the exact line of this boundary as it traversed the valley, and the precise location of the historical Diocese of Worcester remains unknown. However, this research has demonstrated that it was possible to observe discrete zones in the Avon Valley, characterised by different burial practices, patterns of landscape use, and place-names. Two of these zones bisected the valley, creating an Eastern and a Western Zone between which lay a third zone, the Central Zone, which, as its name suggests, lay in the middle of the Avon Valley. The zones identified, therefore, using archaeological and toponymical evidence from the 5th – 7th centuries, divided the valley in a manner akin to the historically attested later 7th-century diocesan boundary, with the Central Zone broadly coinciding with the boundaries drawn by Hooke and Ford.

Whilst it should not be surprising that a new ecclesiastical district followed the extent of an existing territory, what is significant is the implication this has for the origins of the kingdom of the Hwicce, the kingdom which the see at Worcester was ostensibly founded to serve (Stenton, 1971, p. 134). In addition to this apparent coincidence of the archaeology and the history of the region, and of equal importance if we are considering the origins of the Hwicce, is the absence from the historical record of the fourth zone observed in the archaeological data, dubbed here the 'Fosse Way Environs'. These observations permitted the proposition and interrogation of two models which set out possible explanations for the origins of the Hwicce prior to the later 7th century.

The suggestion that the kingdoms recorded in the 7th century did not simply appear c. 600 AD, fully formed, and with established royal dynasties is not a new one (c.f. Bassett, 1989, p. 3; Scull, 1999; Yorke, 2001, p. 13) and has even been suggested with regards to the Hwicce (Hooke, 2009, p. 17). The research conducted here, which focussed on a relatively small region and, as such, afforded a level of detail not possible with larger studies, provides data to substantiate this suggestion.

10.5.1 The 'Proto-Hwicce' and the Multiple Polities Models

Bassett, through a comprehensive study of the evidence from charters, has argued that an area of the south-western Avon Valley, which centred on Winchcombe, was the original heartland of the kingdom of the Hwicce. He believed this was evidenced by the ability of this area to exercise a degree of autonomy from the Mercians in the 7th, 8th, and even the 9th centuries (1989, pp. 7–17). If Bassett's interpretation is correct then it is possible that the Hwicce evolved from an existing polity or series of polities (1989, pp. 18–19). Thus, any discrete socio-political units observed in the Avon Valley prior to the 7th century may not represent the kingdom of the Hwicce, *per se*, but its predecessor or predecessors.

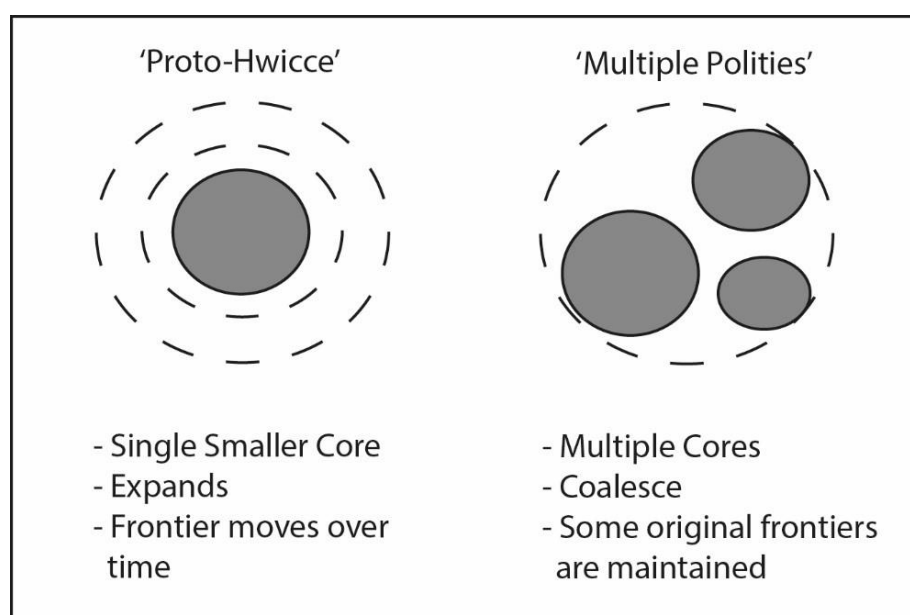


Figure 10. 5 Two possible models for the development of the kingdom of the Hwicce

From such a standpoint, two possible models can be proposed: that an earlier form of the Hwicce, a 'proto-Hwicce', existed in the 5th and 6th centuries and expanded to form the kingdom recognisable in the 7th century, *or* that a series of smaller polities, 'multiple polities', existed and united, for reasons unknown, to form the Hwicce in the 7th century (Figure 10.5). The results of the archaeological survey in the Avon Valley and the Severn study area, the distribution of place-names, and the historical sources were used to assess the strength of these models.

The first model, the 'proto-Hwicce', describes the development of the kingdom of the Hwicce from an existing smaller polity. This single polity expanded from its historic base, perhaps colonising unused land and/or subjugating less powerful neighbouring communities. Such an expansion would likely have been driven by a desire to access greater and new resources, to exact tribute from additional communities, and to increase their status and security (see discussions on Mercian expansion in Bassett, 2007; and Tyler, 2005). Archaeologically, the processes of this expansion might be seen in evidence of a dominant social group, the top of a regional hierarchy, and the successive widening of their influence. It has been argued that the cemeteries of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon were unusual in the Avon dataset: they were amongst the largest cemeteries in the valley, they contained a diversity of practices not seen elsewhere, and they lay beside important river crossings on the Roman road network (see above). Prior to the erection of the great hall complexes at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington (see Chapter 8.3), these two cemeteries appeared to be at the top of the hierarchy of sites and it is possible that they were the burial grounds of a dominant socio-political group in the valley. Perhaps this, the central Avon Valley, was the core of the proto-Hwicce.

Two problems, however, arise from this interpretation. First, the supra-local status of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon has been inferred from their scale and diversity reflecting the presence of heterochthonous people not on the exportation of their burial practices to other sites in the valley, and indeed there was little evidence for this. Instead, it has been argued that Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon *attracted* different people and different practices rather than *exerted* them onto other communities in the valley (see above and Chapter 5.2.1). The second problem is theoretical; the proto-Hwicce model struggles to explain the coincidence of the 5th and 6th-century archaeological 'frontier' and the 7th-century historical boundary. If a 'proto-kingdom' was expanding we should expect its frontiers to have moved.

This leads us to the second model, the 'multiple polities' model (Figure 10.5). This sees the Avon Valley inhabited by various distinct socio-political groups who, over the course of the early medieval period,

through marriage, alliance, and aggression, coalesced to form the kingdom of the Hwicce. This model does not require there to be archaeological evidence of a dominant and influential group and instead allows the coexistence of a number of archaeologically distinct territories. These territories might be reconciled with the eastern and western zones defined above; the distinctions observed between the Avon and Severn study areas in Chapter 7; and are perhaps also reflected in the historically attested peoples known from the Avon Valley, the Arosætna and the Stoppingas (Hooke, 2009, p. 86), and possibly Bassett's 'Winchcombeshire' (Bassett, 1989, pp. 7–17). If there was no chief socio-political group, however, then the cemeteries of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon need to be reconsidered.

Perhaps the size and diversity of these sites developed not due to the greater importance of the territory to which they belonged, but due to the importance of the landscape in which they lay. At significant nodal points and between the eastern and western zones, these sites may have grown to such an extent and exhibited such a range of burial practices and dress accessory types because of the diversity of people present, people who had been brought together by the opportunities of exchange afforded by major communication routes and interaction afforded by a socio-political interface (see Chapter 5.4).

One of the problems presented by the proto-Hwicce model was its difficulty in explaining the coincidence of the archaeological and historical frontiers in the central Avon Valley; the second model, in contrast, is able to offer an explanation for this. If the kingdom of the Hwicce developed from an amalgam of smaller states, each with their own territories and, significantly, its own frontier zones, then the persistence of a divide in the distribution of archaeological practices might be explained by the fossilization of an earlier frontier in the frontiers of the Hwicce (Figure 10.6). In this scenario, the frontier zone proposed in the central Avon Valley may have represented a frontier between two smaller socio-political units in the 5th and 6th centuries, potentially units reflected by the eastern and western zones defined archaeologically, which, in the 7th century, became the frontier between the

Hwicce and Mercia. The increased importance of this frontier, now lying between two kingdoms rather than two small polities, may be reflected through the construction of the hall complex at Hatton Rock.

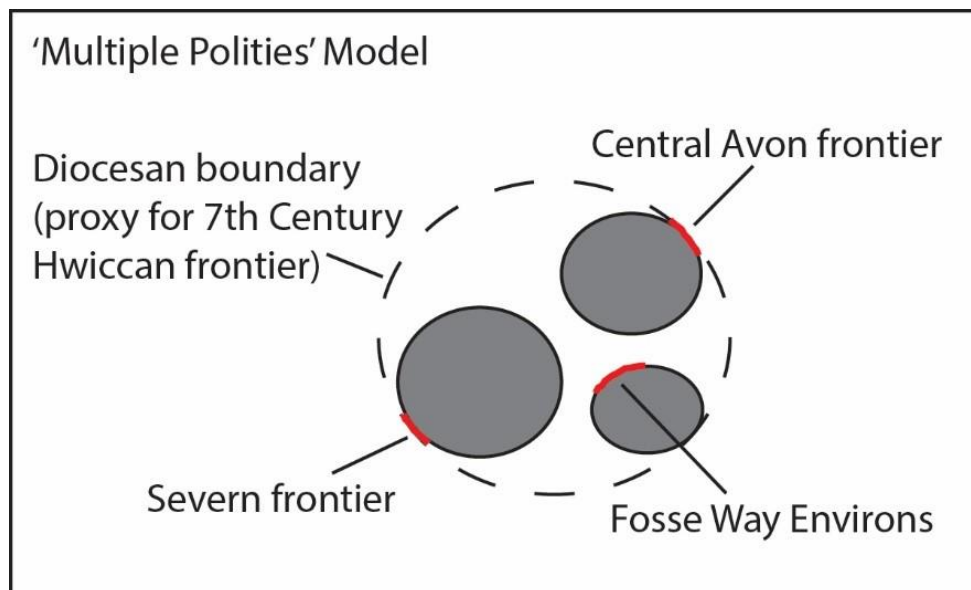


Figure 10. 6. The 'Multiple Polities' model and the possible frontier zones of the Avon and Severn Valleys

A similar scenario might also be envisaged in the Severn Valley study area where the diocesan boundary also seemed to follow the route of an earlier socio-political divide (see Chapter 7). In contrast to the Avon Valley, the monumentalisation of this frontier in the 7th century appeared to centre on the construction of a series of churches. Given that this frontier was with a different kingdom, one where British Christianity is likely to have persisted (Bassett, 2000; Pretty, 1989), the building of churches relating to the Augustinian mission is perhaps unsurprising.

The multiple polities model can also be used to understand how Mercian authority might have expanded into the Avon Valley, and has even been alluded to by Stenton in the aftermath of the Battle of Cirencester in c.628 AD (1971, p. 45 and see Chapter 9.2). In his work investigating the Middle Angles, Tyler suggested that these were collection of disparate socio-political groups, with their own leaders, who were brought together under Peada, Penda's son and middleman in his father's overlordship (Tyler, 2005, p. 4). If a similar scenario is imagined in the Avon Valley, then the various distinct 6th-century polities, one of which may of course have been the predecessor of the Hwicce, may have experienced a change in overlordship in the early 7th century, post the Battle of Cirencester, from

the West Saxons to the Mercians and, under the authority of their new overlords, the kings of the Hwicce rose to dominance as the leaders of various aggregated polities.

In addition, this model can be applied to the possible fourth zone identified in the Avon Valley, the Fosse Way Environs. Unlike the central Avon Valley, this distinct zone did not survive to be recorded in the historical sources. Charter and place-name evidence suggested that the kingdom of the Hwicce extended southward, across the northern reaches of the Upper Thames Valley, potentially incorporating the eponymous Wychwood, the 'wood of the Hwicce', to Augustine's Oak in the area of Down Ampney and Kemble (Eagles, 2003, p. 178; Hooke, 2009, pp. 13–15; Smith, 1965, p. 35). It is possible, therefore, that this pre-7th century group was subsumed by the Hwicce when it expanded southward. With the Hwicce coming under the authority of the Mercians in the later 7th century, the expansion of its territory into lands previously subject to Saxon influence might be expected and might even be seen as part of Mercian aggression towards its southerly rivals, aggression which was to continue until the establishment of the Danelaw.

Finally, both of these models are in agreement when it comes to the increased importance of the Avon Valley by the first half of the 7th century. Whether this augmented status was achieved through the expansion of a dominant socio-political group or the amalgamation of a few, the result is likely to have been the same: the emergence of the Hwicce on the national stage of 7th-century kingdoms.

10.5.2 Conclusion

On balance, whilst both models have merit, the archaeological and historical evidence appears to favour the 'multiple polities' model. In the Avon Valley, this model, which suggests the existence of various 5th and 6th-century polities who unified through diverse processes and over a prolonged period of time, seems to be the best-fit for the evidence presented in this research. Not only does it explain the zones apparent in the distribution of archaeological practices, but it also allows for the existence of both preserved and extinct frontier zones in the valley.

The kingdom of the Hwicce was a minnow in the pond of early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and the Avon Valley was just a small region on its eastern edge; it remains to be seen whether the conclusions drawn here are applicable to the emergence of other kingdoms in the British Isles.

Chapter 11. Conclusion.

11.1 Introduction

The study of how bounded polities develop has been influenced by core - periphery models which prioritise research into territorial heartlands. This research, however, advocates that, for a different perspective and a more nuanced understanding of how polities evolve, studies which focus on frontier zones should be brought to the fore. Frontier zones, far from being peripheral, are hubs of social, political, and economic interaction and exchange. The development of practices in these zones is directly relevant to the evolution of the polity that they define. Thus, this research has focussed on how analysis of a frontier zone could add to our knowledge of the origins, growth, and maintenance of one socio-political unit, the kingdom of the Hwicce. To answer this core aim, this research has also developed a methodology for working in and identifying frontier zones using archaeological data.

The selection of the Avon Valley as the focus of this research was determined by a number of reasons (see Chapter 1.3), chief amongst these being its identification in historical sources as the frontier between the kingdom of the Hwicce and Mercia in the later 7th century. The attestation of this historical frontier provided the perfect environment in which to test the application of a new methodology for the archaeological identification of frontiers.

Once selected as a unit of study, sites from the Avon Valley which dated to the 5th to mid-7th century were identified and formed the basis of this research. It is not claimed that a definitive dataset was created for the region – only sites which have generated a report and which fitted certain selection criteria were included (see Chapter 2.3) – nor were all aspects of the archaeological record analysed. However, each line of enquiry pursued has demonstrated a way in which frontier zones and the origins of polities can be identified. The evidence which has been investigated has undoubtedly broadened our knowledge of the Avon Valley in the early medieval period and, consequently, improved our understanding of the origins of both the kingdom of the Hwicce and its neighbour, Mercia.

This chapter tackles each of the research questions set out in Chapter 1.2 and, in summary, brings together the different strands of evidence used, results of analyses, and interpretations made.

11.2 The Characteristics of the Avon Valley in the 5th to mid-7th Centuries

One of the defining features of the Avon Valley was the lack of evidence for 'ordinary' settlements. Whilst writing this thesis, a new site with settlement features was identified at Shottery, Warwickshire by Oxford Archaeology (Stuart Foreman, pers. comm. Sept 2015). This site, however, which consisted only of a fire-reddened hearth pit, a line of postholes, and a sunken feature building, has been added to what is, undeniably, a small dataset. Consequently, burial evidence dominated the archaeological record in the valley and no adjacent settlements and cemeteries of contemporary date have been identified.

Turning to the burial practices, internal organisation within cemeteries most commonly consisted of the arrangement of burials into distinct zones: at Alveston Manor 'zones' were defined; 'plots' were identified at Beckford A & B; and at Wasperton, excavators identified 'spatial groups' which may have been delineated by paths (Ford, unpub.; Evison and Hill, 1996; Carver et al., 2009, p. 114). Rows are only convincingly present at Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve (Holbrook, 2000). Inhumations predominated with approximately 980 identified compared to 278 cremations. These cremations are usually found with inhumations in mixed-rite cemeteries; there are no urnfields typical of the east of England and possibly only one cremation-only site (Long Itchington, (Meaney, 1964, p. 217)). Additionally, at Wasperton and Alveston Manor it has been shown that the cremations were inserted into the existing cemeteries (Carver et al., 2009, p. 135; Ford, unpub.); they were not amongst the earliest burials at either site and it is not possible to demonstrate the progression from cremation to inhumation observed elsewhere (Scull, 2013). Inhumation burials are mostly supine and containers or body surrounds are rare. They are often oriented on either a North-South or an East-West axis (with heads at either end) and it appears that, at Stretton-on-Fosse and Wasperton (Ford, 2003, p. 101; Carver et al., 2009, p. 135), the choice of orientation was influenced more by local late Roman practices

than by date, i.e. there is no demonstrable progression from one orientation to another between sites of different date. The enigmatic practice of charcoal-lined inhumations (see Chapter 2.2.1.3 for a definition) appears to have been characteristic of the Avon Valley. Seemingly a sub-set of the partial cremation rite of central England, this practice occurred only within the valley and its immediate surrounds. The distribution of this practice and the lack of late Roman antecedents in the region suggests that the interpretation that this burial rite had its roots in Merovingian or Roman traditions is highly unlikely (Ford, 2003, p. 103). Instead, this thesis presented an alternative explanation: charcoal-lined inhumations might best be viewed as evidence of an innovation typical of frontier zone situations. This was considered in Chapter 10.4.1.1 and summarised below.

Unfurnished burials, both cremation and inhumation, are found alongside their furnished counterparts and the decision to bury someone with or without grave goods appears to have been dictated locally, with frequencies varying widely across the valley – for example, 7% of burials at Beckford A were unfurnished compared to 40 % at Blockley. A similar scenario might be suggested for the frequency of weapon burials, which also differed considerably between sites: 40% of the total population at Blockley and 35.7% at Beckford A were buried with weapons compared to just 7.7% at Lower Farm, Bishop's Cleeve. Härke noted the high percentage of weapon burials at Stretton-on-Fosse (Härke, 2011), 32.7% of the total population or 89.5 – 85% of the male population (Chapter 3.2.4), and a comparison with contemporary cemeteries across England did show that, with 84% certainty, weapon burials were more frequent in the Avon Valley (see Chapter 10.4.1.2). In contrast, weapon assemblages showed greater uniformity across the valley and were generally in keeping with Härke's findings from the rest of the country (Härke, 1989). There is a hint that shields figure more largely in the Avon dataset than elsewhere, particularly at Beckford A, but this is slight compared to the complete lack of swords identified at the major cemeteries. Twelve swords or parts of swords have been identified from the valley, mostly in the 19th century, but these are poorly understood. The absence of any swords from large or modern excavations, therefore, draws into question some of the antiquarian reports and, more generally, the deposition of swords in the valley.

Dress accessories appear to show that the Avon Valley lay on the edge of two major production and distribution zones – the Upper Thames Valley and the East Midland/East Anglian region. Closely datable assemblages from Alveston Manor, Stretton-on-Fosse, and Wasperton suggest that material from these two sources ebbed and flowed between the 5th and mid-7th centuries: the earliest material was from the Upper Thames Valley, but in the early 6th-century, material from the east became more common. This was then replaced by material from the Upper Thames later in this century only for material from the east to reassert its dominance in the late 6th and early 7th century. In line with John Blair's assessment of 6th-century assemblages from the Upper Thames Valley (1994, p. 16), perhaps this evidence should best be viewed as indicating evolving contacts between regions or the waxing and waning of external influences within the Avon Valley. The introduction of high-status Kentish material in the 7th century – for example, the Littlehampton pin suite (Ross, 1992, p. 368) – is all the more interesting when viewed from this perspective and may indicate the widening networks and, therefore, the increased status of the Avon Valley's elite at this time.

Moving on to patterns of landscape use and away from burial practices, it was found that early medieval sites were frequently located close to extant sites. Prehistoric sites were the focus of reuse at Meon Hill, Hatton Rock, and the Rollright Stones and an additional eight early medieval sites lay within 500 metres of other prehistoric monuments. Roman villas at Long Itchington and Princethorpe and the fort at the Lunt also became foci for activity. The strongest relationship, however, was between early medieval sites and Roman settlements. Both major sites, such as the nucleated settlement of Tiddington, close to which the early medieval cemetery of Alveston Manor was established (Ford, unpub.), and minor agricultural settlements, like Billesley, where a corn dryer was reused for the burial of a 6th-century male individual with weapons (Palmer, 2003), witnessed activity. Key to this reuse was the proximity of Roman roads.

With the exception of the Birmingham to Gloucester road on the far-west of the valley, the distribution of sites and finds recorded on the PAS implies that all the Roman roads in the Avon Valley were foci of

activity in the early medieval period. The concentration of sites along Watling Street, in particular, stands out and the coincidence of this road with a number of later hundredal boundaries seems to imply its significance within the landscape. Analysis of the aspect of sites also emphasises the importance of these roads, with views towards roads frequently occurring at sites across the valley. It was not just roads, however, which attracted early medieval activity, sites also concentrated along the major rivers. In the west, where the River Avon was likely to have been navigable, there is a particularly strong correlation between the two. Unsurprisingly, the points at which these two routeways coincided, fords, were of huge importance, giving rise to the cemeteries of Bidford-on-Avon and Alveston Manor (see below).

Finally, topographical analysis was severely limited by the nature of the study area (see discussion in Chapter 4.2), but some observations could be made regarding the positioning of sites in relation to landscape features. The majority of sites were found on slopes, with mid-slope positions being the most common. Hill and ridge top sites were the least common and crest-of-slope sites were also rare.

11.3 The Distribution of Characteristics and the Definition of Zones

Having identified the practices characteristic of the Avon Valley it was possible to analyse their distribution. The result of this was the identification of practices common to the whole valley and more localised patterns. These were both described in detail in Chapter 10, but, given their relevance to one of the main research questions, the identification of localised practices will be summarised here.

In total, four zones have been defined in the distribution of burial practices and patterns of landscape use. These are: the Eastern Zone, the Western Zone, the Central Zone, and the Southern Zone or Fosse Way Environs. Each of these zones is characterised by different practices and different combinations of practices. For example, cremations are predominantly found in the Eastern and Central zones and material from the Upper Thames Valley is more common in the Western Zone (see Chapter 10.3 for detail). The contrasting ‘fingerprints’, to use Richards and Naylor’s term (2011), of each zone incorporated practices which would have been visible for a short-period of time and practices which

would have endured as visible features in the landscape. It is argued that this reflects the existence of multiple intended audiences and the communication of differences at both a local and a supra-local level. Rites enacted at a funeral, for example, contrast with the erection of barrows within Watling Street. The significance of the former lay with those in attendance, but the latter spoke to all those that travelled through the region. It seems, therefore, that the communities of these different zones held different world-views, saw their place in the world in different ways, and communicated this by different means. These contrasting identities, however, simultaneously existed alongside shared valley-wide practices, suggesting membership and/or interaction within a wider and inter-linked cultural system.

11.4 The Expression of Authority in the Avon Valley in the 5th and 6th Centuries

Initial results showed that routeways and late Roman sites were foci of activity in the early medieval Avon Valley. This was explored further through a survey of fords and road-blocks and two case studies which looked at both the role of routeways and the contrasting role of existing communities in the 5th and 6th centuries.

The valley-wide survey showed that eleven of seventeen fords had been used between the late Roman and the early medieval period. Of those where no activity was identified, five were fords on small watercourses which would be less of an impediment to travel. This observation alone implies that fords, particularly those on main rivers, were places of importance. To explore this further, the case studies of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon were analysed. Sites at other fords on the River Avon existed, yet they did not develop to the extent of these two sites, which were described as of supra-local importance (see Chapter 5.2.1). If the nature of the river did not dictate the significance of these sites, it is possible that the roads borne by the fords were their defining characteristic. In the example of Bidford-on-Avon and Alveston Manor, this did appear likely as the roads at these fords were salt ways linked to the Droitwich salt industry; control of the movement of this precious commodity is argued to have influenced the growth of the major cemeteries at these fords.

Control of movement was also evidenced in the creation of road-blocks – features cut into the surface of Roman roads which would have impeded travel. The discovery of high status and unusual objects within the Avon Valley dataset at these sites – the francisca associated with roadside activity at Ipsley, and the swords found with burials inserted alongside and within Watling Street – appeared to indicate the presence of elites. Thus, the regional importance of Alveston Manor and Bidford-on-Avon cemeteries and the elite objects at road-blocks seemed to attest to the involvement of elite groups or individuals in the control of movement across the landscape in the 5th and 6th centuries. This focus on routeways, however, need not be seen as new to the region as it can also be demonstrated that a contraction to locations beside routeways had already begun in the late Roman period.

A similar situation was apparent when the trajectories of late Roman communities were analysed. Using the case studies of Wasperton and Alcester and Bidford-on-Avon, it was demonstrated how existing late Roman practices could be adapted into a new socio-political system (Chapter 5.3). At Wasperton, new practices were incorporated into an existing and dynamic burial tradition and in the case study of Alcester and Bidford-on-Avon it was argued that an economic network linked to the Droitwich salt industry persisted from the Roman period through into the mid-Saxon period. In both of these case studies, however, continuity existed alongside change. Burial traditions may have continued at Wasperton, but the 6th-century community lived within a different socio-political system, with different links and subject to different external influences than the late Romano-British. The decline of Alcester and the rise of Bidford-on-Avon, argued to be connected, also showed how an existing practice, in this case an economic network, could be realigned to fit within a new system of landscape use focussed on the River Avon.

Consequently, analysis of the way in which routeways and existing communities were used in the 5th and 6th century demonstrated both links to the late Roman past and simultaneously the development of new patterns of landscape use and new practices. It seems likely, therefore, that late Roman communities and their practices continued into the early medieval period but were irrevocably altered

to fit within a new system of landscape organisation. Central to this was the emphasis placed on routeways – main rivers and the Roman roads. Natural nodal points were utilised and man-made nodal points were constructed. Across the valley these became hubs of activity where, by various means, the presence of elites can be inferred. The 5th and 6th-century Avon Valley appears, therefore, to have been characterised by the control of movement: the movement of goods, the movement of people, and, in all likelihood, the movement of ideas.

11.5 The Evolution of Authority in the 7th-Century Avon Valley and the Development of Society

Data from the late 6th and 7th centuries showed how elites utilised existing traditions alongside innovations to demonstrate their authority. This combination of practices connected and simultaneously distinguished the elite from the past and from the non-elite groups. Two themes were investigated: the creation of the great hall complexes of Hatton Rock and Long Itchington and the reuse of existing monuments at elite sites.

It was argued that Hatton Rock and Long Itchington belonged to a tradition of hall complexes: their near-identical layouts, repetition of similar hall sizes, rarity of annexes, and lack of enclosures all combined to suggest that the two sites were linked. However, differences between the two imply that, whilst they may belong to one system, they appear to have performed different functions. Unfortunately, this interpretation was heavily reliant on aerial photographs due to a lack of excavation but, importantly, did integrate data from the wider landscape. It remains to be seen, therefore, whether this hypothesis will hold up to scrutiny if and when a robust programme of fieldwork is carried out at these sites. The basis for this interpretation is summarised here, but was detailed in Chapter 8.3.

The similarities between the internal arrangements of both sites were highlighted above and this continued when their landscapes were analysed. Both sites likely lay above fords which carried routes from the main Roman road network. Furthermore, the point at which these smaller roads branched

from the main road, in both cases, was possibly marked by an earlier cemetery – Alveston Manor in the case of Hatton Rock and Offchurch in the case of Long Itchington. Additionally, both sites were slightly elevated, allowing them strong visual relationships with the major rivers of the valley and the Roman roads. Significantly, however, these similarities were found alongside subtle differences: Hatton Rock visually dominated long stretches of the River Avon and commanded wide views of the valley whilst Long Itchington's visual relationship was confined to a tributary valley; Hatton Rock was visible, at a distance, from stretches of two Roman roads whilst Long Itchington maintained a link to short distances of the much closer Fosse Way; Hatton Rock reused two of what are likely to be the few visible extant sites in its immediate area whilst Long Itchington reused no existing monuments but was positioned within a landscape busy with Roman remains; Hatton Rock was located close to the major timber resources and likely hunting grounds of the Forest of Arden whilst Long Itchington lay at some distance from any woodland; finally, at Hatton Rock there was evidence of rebuilding whereas no such evidence existed at Long Itchington. It was argued that these differences might reflect the different roles of these two sites, with Hatton Rock and Long Itchington fulfilling contrasting functions within a wider system of elite authority in the valley. Lying within the Central Zone and commanding extensive views deep into the Western Zone, it is tempting to view Hatton Rock as a statement of Mercian authority at this interface with the kingdom of the Hwicce. Long Itchington's function, however, seems to have been more focused on the Fosse Way. The wider system represented by the two hall complexes was argued to be new to the valley as it exhibited evidence of dislocation from past practices. This dislocation was characterised by an almost complete lack of a visual relationship with earlier sites, a move from regionally important sites belonging to communities to those representing individuals at nodal points, a transformation from the dead represented at important sites to the living, and the expansion of activity to new parts of the landscape.

This evidence contrasts with that from analysis of monumental reuse at elite sites and seems to imply that this new method of expressing authority was not wholly disconnected from earlier traditions. Unlike Williams' observations elsewhere in England which saw the 'exclusivisation' of monumental

reuse in the 7th century (Williams, 1998, p. 103), the Avon Valley dataset showed some continuity of practice: it can be shown that regionally important sites of the 5th and 6th century were found to have a much stronger relationship with routeways than with existing monuments and it appears that this was also the case in the later 6th and 7th centuries. Only the burials at Meon Hill, Rollright, and Hatton Rock seem to represent elite reuse of monuments in this later period, but seven other sites where elite activity was identified lay close to routeways. These included the impressive assemblages from Littlehampton, Longbridge, and Compton Verney which show how the networks the Avon Valley elite were able to access widened throughout the period. Thus, it was possible to observe similarities of practice between the 5th – 6th centuries and the early 7th century, with the regionally important sites of both periods being sited to favour close relationships with routeways rather than existing monuments.

In the Avon Valley it seems that communication with living people moving through the landscape was of more importance than communicating links to the ancestors. The persistence of this pattern of landscape use at the great hall complexes might imply that the new system of elite expression seen in the 7th century was not wholly transposed onto the existing valley, but evolved out of, or at the least incorporated, existing concerns for controlling movement.

11.6 Two Models to Explain the Growth of the Kingdom of the Hwicce

One of the main aims of this thesis was to refocus academic attention on frontier zones in order to provide an alternative framework for the study of the origins and development of polities. Using archaeological and toponymical evidence it has been argued that the Avon Valley comprised of various distinct zones in the 5th and 6th centuries. It is possible, therefore, that the roots of the 7th-century kingdom of the Hwicce lay in one/a combination of the distinct socio-political units identified in the centuries preceding its first documentation. Chapter 10 proposed two models to explain how the kingdom of the Hwicce could have evolved and, using the evidence this thesis has brought together,

assessed which might be the most likely. These have been termed the 'proto-Hwicce' model and the 'multiple polities' model.

On balance it was argued that the multiple polities model provided a better fit with the patterns observed in the Avon Valley dataset. Various strands of evidence combined to suggest that different polities existed in the Avon Valley during the 5th and 6th centuries and that these coalesced over time to form the kingdom of the Hwicce. As they coalesced some of their boundaries lost their significance – such as the Fosse Way Environs – whilst others, now the boundaries between larger polities, were reaffirmed and monumentalised – perhaps the churches of the Severn Valley and Hatton Rock in the Avon Valley should be regarded as examples of this – before being formalised in the later 7th century by the boundaries of the Diocese of Worcester.

Throughout this process of coalescence and amalgamation, continuity of practice from the late Roman period and from the 5th and 6th centuries in to the 7th century could be demonstrated. These practices, however, persisted alongside the development of an undeniably new system of landscape organisation and authority. Key to both the traditional and the new practices was the control of movement and it seems reasonable to state that this was the defining characteristic of the region. Perhaps the Hwiccan elite and their predecessors derived their authority from the ability to prevent or permit travel, to extract tolls and to exchange goods, and, above all, to interact with those traversing the valley. Whence this elite came formed part of the Mercian case study in Chapter 9. This case study was conducted in order to investigate whether any links existed between the two valleys, but, whilst it was shown that there may have been at least a perceived shared elite narrative between the two regions, the weight of this research has also shown that the Hwiccan elite may have arisen out of a local milieu.

The relationship with Mercia was evidently a close one; however, Mercian overlordship of the Hwicce was not achieved by conquest after the Battle of Cirencester, but was more likely the result of sustained contact and diplomacy between the two kingdoms. This was seen in the waxing and waning of material from the east in the 5th and 6th centuries; the steady increase of prestige goods in the later

6th and early 7th centuries, perhaps gifts from powerful Mercian neighbours; and potentially in the construction of the great hall complex at Hatton Rock which could be viewed as a strong statement of Mercian authority in the valley. Such favourable relations between the two kingdoms might be supported by the deposition of the Mercian royal archive in Hwiccan territory at Winchcombe in the 9th century (Hooke, 2001, p. 162), the persistence of place-names which ‘remembered’ the Hwicce (Hooke, 2009, p. 13), references in charters as late as the 9th century to the ‘province of the Hwicce’ (Hooke, 2009, p. 20),⁸⁵ and 10th-century sources which called the Bishops of Worcester the ‘bishops of the Hwicce’ (Featherstone, 2001, p. 31) long after the Hwicce had ceded its political power to Mercian overlords.

It might be too fanciful, but it is also tempting to see the rallying of the remnants of the Mercian aristocracy behind the ealdorman Æthelred (Williams, 2001, p. 308) as a sign of the enduring identity of the Hwicce and their place within Mercian leadership. Æthelred’s origins remain uncertain, but one interpretation has his powerbase being the old Hwiccan territory and his roots lying amongst the Hwiccan noble families (Walker, 2000, p. 69). Could this be the last act for what was once an independent and dynamic kingdom on the very edges of Anglo-Saxon England? Æthelred’s ancestry might be obscure, but a continued Hwiccan role in Mercian politics would certainly accord with the method of overlordship proposed here and also aligns well with the apparent existence of a distinct and enduring Hwiccan identity from the 5th century, through into the 7th century, and possibly beyond.

11.7 The Identification of Frontier Zone Processes

Archaeological evidence from the Avon Valley was additionally analysed to see whether frontier zone *processes* could be detected. These processes – thirding, fracturing, and innovation – were defined by drawing on the works of Cronon et al. (1992), Lightfoot & Martinez (1995), Naum (2010), Ylimaunu et al. (2014), and Liebmann (2015) (see Chapter 2.2.4). Thirding involves communal and self-shaping through the mixing of distinct practices at places of heightened cultural interaction; fracturing occurs

⁸⁵ This includes a charter issued in 855 by Burgred of Mercia and recorded by Florence of Worcester (Hooke, 2009, p. 20).

where cultural interactions create tensions between communities leading to the development of distinct practices; and innovation occurs as a result of heightened cultural interaction and leads to the development of unique practices. Two of these were explored in detail: charcoal-lined inhumations and the high frequency of weapon burials, which seemed to speak of innovation, and the unusual diversity of practices apparent in the Central Zone, a candidate for thirding (Chapter 10.4).

Charcoal-lined inhumations were concentrated on the Avon Valley and its immediate surrounds and were seemingly unique to this region. As part of the partial cremation rite, this practice incorporated aspects of both inhumation and cremation to create a new and innovative rite. The unusually high frequency of weapon burials in the Avon Valley has also been remarked upon and it might be added that the pattern of deposition likewise did not follow trends seen elsewhere in England. With reference to the decline in the weapon burial practice, Heinrich Härke has argued that this was likely to be a result of the blurring of boundaries between different populations. This thesis has argued that, if this was the case, then the reverse may also have been true: a high frequency of weapon burials might indicate keenly felt socio-political boundaries. Consequently, the high frequency of weapon burials in the Avon Valley, an innovation which, in itself, would support the identification of a frontier zone, can additionally be argued to reflect perceived distinctions between groups.

The investigation into innovation focussed on the Central Zone and the apparent coalescence of practices, ideas, and people in this part of the valley. It appears that this zone represented the western limit of the cremation rite in the valley. Unlike in the Eastern Zone, cremations here were only found in the large cemeteries and seem to have represented the mixing, or thirding, of the inhumation and cremation traditions. These same cemeteries also accommodated the greatest range of orientations of inhumations and contained a more equal amount of material from the east and the south – in the Central Zone 34% of grave goods were from the East Midlands/ East Anglian regions and 51% were from the Upper Thames Valley, in the Eastern Zone the percentages were 73 to 13 and in the Western Zone they were 17 to 69. It is argued that this evidence supports the conclusion that the Central Zone

was a place of heightened interaction between groups with different burial traditions and with access to different exchange networks. The contrasting evidence from patterns of landscape use, which show strong similarities between the Central and Western Zones, might imply that this area of interaction lay within a wider socio-political system with its focus in the west of the valley; the presence of diverse burial practices may indicate the presence of heterochthonous individuals populating the frontier zone of a socio-political unit found in the west of the Avon Valley.

Equipped with the evidence of distinct zones and the likely presence of frontier zone processes, particularly in the Central Zone, but also common to the valley as a whole, a case can be made for the identification of a frontier zone in the archaeological data from the 5th to mid-7th-century Avon Valley. The Central Zone lay between the contrasting Eastern and Western Zones and incorporated practices from both, suggesting that it was an interface between distinct communities. It also broadly coincided with the historically attested late 7th-century boundary of the Diocese of Worcester (*Heref, Tax Ecc, Valor Ecc*). If the extent of the Diocese did reflect the extent of the kingdom of the Hwicce then the coincident frontier in the Central Zone predating this boundary, potentially by up to two centuries, has implications for the origins of the kingdom of the Hwicce. The Fosse Way Environs to the south, which cut across the other zones and was distinct from both the Avon Valley and the Upper Thames Valley, however, emphasised the permeability of frontier zones. Furthermore, if the interpretation that the Fosse Way Environ's unusual practices were a consequence of its role as an inter-regional routeway prove to be correct, then it appears that communities along such roads were affected by processes external to the region in which they lay. Is it possible that the people, ideas, and goods moving along the Fosse Way facilitated the development of a distinct identity amongst those living in its environs? Perhaps these routeways created their own microcosms and it would be interesting to explore the practices of the peoples along their courses as a single unit of study to see if there are indeed unifying characteristics.

Thus, whilst this study of the Avon Valley has identified the presence of bounded polities it may also have identified a much-wider inter-regional system superimposed onto or incorporated into the landscape of early medieval polities: the Roman Road Environs.

11.8 Principal Contributions of this Research

There are four main areas in which this thesis has contributed to wider archaeological research and debate: it challenges the core-periphery approach to polities; it proposes a new way of investigating polity formation and sets out two models; it introduces a methodology for identifying and working in frontier zones; and, finally, it creates a dataset for an oft overlooked region on the very edge of Anglo-Saxon England.

For too long archaeologists have perpetuated the core-periphery model with their research projects focusing on territorial heartlands. Geographically peripheral areas are now recognised as integral to socio-political development and it is time that our research agendas were updated to reflect this. This research refocused attention away from socio-political cores and emphasised the value of studying areas considered to be frontier zones.

From this novel perspective and using evidence from these zones, this research was able to propose two new models for the development of the early medieval kingdom of the Hwicce. These models not only provide new insights into the Hwicce, a kingdom often neglected in favour of its larger, more powerful neighbours, but also offers a new way of thinking about the origins of those same kingdoms. This small survey can, therefore, suggest an alternative approach to the study of early medieval kingdoms and could also be applied to research conducted into bounded polities more generally.

To identify and work within frontier zones, this research argued that it was essential to consider the distribution of 'suites of practices', the background noise of normal inter-group differences, and the presence of frontier zone processes. In this research, 'suites of practices' included patterns in funerary rites, material culture and costume, landscape organisation, site typologies, and place-names. This methodology was applied to the identification of the frontier of an early medieval kingdom in England,

however, it would be equally applicable to other periods and other geographies. Any bounded polity where the frontier is unknown or uncertain could be investigated. Furthermore, this approach could also be applied to monumentalised frontiers to assess the extent to which the frontier did or did not affect the distribution of socio-political practices.

Finally, this research brought together a dataset which has, heretofore, been largely neglected. It has shown the value of the information from the Avon Valley and how it can expand our knowledge of the early medieval period in Britain. It is hoped that the detailed catalogue created by this research will be used as a starting point for the work of others and will enhance regional syntheses.

11.9 Future Research

A research project such as this inevitably produces as many questions as it answers and the Avon Valley remains a mine of untapped and oft overlooked potential for archaeological researchers. In the early medieval period alone, recent discoveries by commercial archaeological units and by metal detectorists – for example, Oxford Archaeology’s identification of settlement features outside Shotton and the elite 7th-century female burial found beside the Rollright Stones during a metal-detecting rally – highlight just how much material is still to be found and its potential to impact upon our understanding of the region as a whole. At the top of any wish-list for fieldwork in the valley has to be the excavation of the hall complexes of Hatton Rock and Long Itchington which are still only largely known from their crop marks. Amongst only a handful of such sites identified in the country the potential these two sites have to add to our knowledge of the 7th century is significant. A programme of carbon dating would also be desirable as it seems highly unlikely that Wasperton and Stretton-on-Fosse were the only cemeteries belonging to the 5th century in the region. In lieu of this or until this is achieved, a more comprehensive typology of early medieval pottery from the region would dramatically enhance our dating of sites in the region.

Projects such as High Speed Rail 2 (HS2), which will traverse the valley and create a random sample of sites in the valley bottoms, the higher ground, and in the wooded areas, will provide the perfect

opportunity to explore a variety of landscape-based research questions. One of these might be the existence of the Arden versus Feldon divide. On the basis of charters, which have demonstrated numerous estate linkages between the pastures of the Feldon and the woods of the Feldon (c.f. Ford, 1976; Hooke, 2009), early Old English place-names which showed activity in the Arden (Hooke, 2009, pp. 31–50), and a undeniable archaeological recovery bias towards the Feldon, I question the existence of such a divide and, indeed, it has not featured in this research. Others, however, have proposed that this divide not only existed but was influential in the position and development of the major cemeteries of the Avon Valley.⁸⁶ A transect across this region on the scale of HS2 would create a rare opportunity to investigate the distinction between the Arden and Feldon further.

Beyond the Avon Valley, this research has identified additional avenues of research. On top of the limitless comparative studies which could be conducted using this dataset, the methodology for identifying frontier zones and the two proposed models for the development of early medieval kingdoms could profitably be applied to any number of research projects. Obvious candidates would be the relationship between the kingdom of the Hwicce and its southerly neighbour, Wessex, and between the early medieval behemoths of Wessex and Mercia. A survey of the landscape between the two heartlands of these kingdoms – the Upper Thames Valley and the middle Trent Valley – which looked at connectivity, movement, and the creation of distinct identities would hugely influence our image of both of these kingdoms and advance our knowledge of the early medieval period more generally.

Staying with the theme of movement and identity, the Fosse Way Environs has highlighted a potentially novel line of enquiry for the early medieval period: the possibility that the inter-regional road network created a unifying identity amongst the communities living along its course. This identity may have been less influenced by the communities surrounding it and more dependent on its role within a pan-regional system of movement. It thus may have operated in a way and at a scale heretofore un-

⁸⁶ Sayer quoted a paper given by Tania Dickenson at the Sachsensymposium which argued for a boundary running between the Arden and Feldon landscapes (Sayer, 2014).

investigated and untheorized in early medieval research, cutting across socio-political boundaries and obligations. A study which focused on these inter-regional roads and their associated settlements, burial sites and practices, material culture, and place-names would allow the exploration of such themes and could revolutionise how we think about early medieval politics and identity.

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Catalogue 1: Gazetteer of Early Medieval Sites

Key

Gravegoods	
Bds	Beads
Ann	Brooch - Annular
App	Brooch - Applied
AppSa	Brooch - Applied Saucer
Bow	Brooch - Bow
Butt	Brooch - Button
Cr	Brooch - Cruciform
Di	Brooch - Disc
EqArm	Brooch - Equal Armed
GSqHd	Brooch - Great Square Headed
PenAnn	Brooch - Penannular
Sa	Brooch - Saucer
SL	Brooch - Small Long
Bu	Buckle
GHgr	Girdle Hanger
Kn	Knife
Ro Coins	Roman Coins
Sh	Shield
Sp	Spear
WrCl	Wrist Clasp

Age*	
infant	Infant
child	Child
juv	Juvenile
adoles	Adolescent
ya	Young Adult
adult	Adult
mature	Mature

*Age - as defined by individual excavation reports

Sex & Gender	
m	Male
m?	Uncertain Male
f	Female
f?	Uncertain Female

Isotope (Wasperton)	
Local	Local
Med	Mediterranean
Wales	Wales
West	West England

Stature (Beckfords)	
SB	Spina Bifida
L	Leprosy

Superficial Geology	
As defined by the British Geological Survey	

Summary of all sites with Burial Activity

ID #	Site Name	Date Range of Burial Activity (century)	Number of Burials		Dominant Position of Body	Dominant Orientation of Inhum.	Rows	Charcoal Burials		# Decap.	Age		
			Inh.	Crem.				#	% of total pop		Child/Juv.	Adoles.	Adult
1	Alveston Manor	Late 5th - 7th	81	38	Mixed	S-N	0	>6	7.4	0	>8	>3	>19
2	Aston Cantlow	Late 5th - Mid 6th	1	0	Supine	W-E/E-W	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	1
4	Baginton	5th - 6th	58	42	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
6	Bank Farm	Early 5th - 7th	1	0	?	W-E/E-W	0	0	0.0	0	0	1	0
7	Beckford A	5th - 6th	28	0	Mixed	S-N	0	0	0.0	0	5	1	22
8	Beckford B	5th - 6th	108	4	Mixed	S-N	0	0	0.0	0	27	9	72
9	Bennett's Hill	6th - 7th	>4	0	?	?	?	0	0.0	0	0	0	4
10	Bidford-on-Avon	Late 5th - 7th	264	158	Mixed	S-N	?	>13	4.9	0	25	?	?
11	Billesley	6th	1	0	Supine	E-W	0	1?	100.0	0	0	0	1
12	Blacklow Hill	Late 6th - Early 7th	2	0	?	W-E/E-W	0	0	0.0	?	?	?	?
13	Blockley	6th	5	>1	Supine	unknown mixed	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	5
14	Bredon's Norton	6th?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
15	Broadway	Late 5th - 6th	8	0	Supine	W-E	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	8
17	Cave's Inn	6th	>1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
19	Churchover	6th - Early 7th	?	>1	Supine	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
20	Compton Verney	7th	3	0	?	?	?	0	0.0	?	?	?	?
21	Cotesbach	Early 6th	>1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
23	Ebrington	5th? - 7th?	48	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
24	Emscote	6th	>7	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
25	Fairfield Estate	6th - 7th	1	0	?	W-E	0	0	0.0	0	?	?	?
26	Halford	5th - 7th	3	0	Mixed	N-S	0	0	0.0	0	?	?	?
30	Kilsby	5th? - 7th?	7	0	?	?	0	0	0.0	0	?	?	?
31	Kineton	5th? - 7th?	<10	0	Supine?	?	?	10	100.0	0	?	?	?
32	Kinwarton Churchyard	Late 5th - Early 6th	?	0	?	not E-W	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
33	Lighthorne	5th? - 7th?	2	0	?	?	0	2	100.0	0	1	0	1
34	Littlehampton	7th	?	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
35	Long Itchington	5th? - 7th?	0	<2	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	?	?	?

ID #	Weapon Burials			Weapon Types				Jewellery Types		Unfurnished Burials	
	#	% of Total Pop	% of Male Pop if 50% unfurnished included	Spear	Shield	Arrow	Sword	Upper Thames Valley	E Anglia & E Mids	#	% of total pop
1	25	30.9	45.5	31	14	0	0	16Sa, 16Di, 2SLsq	2Cr, 2GSqHd, 2WrCl, 1GHgr	9	11
2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	uncontextual	?	?	25	10	0	0	4Sa, 8Di, 2SLsq	5Cr, 16SL, 2GSqHd, 4WrCl, 5GHgr	?	?
6	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100
7	10	35.7	58.8	11	8	0	0	3Sa, 1Di	5SL, 1Swas	2	7
8	28	25.9	58.9	28	13	0	0	17Sa, 18Di, 3SLsq, 1Butt	3GSqHd, 2Swas, 1SL	24	22
9	min2	?	?	2	1	0	0	8Sa, 1Di	1Cr, 1GHgr	?	?
10	34	15.2	33.5	32	11	1	0	14Sa, 10Di	18Cr, 4GSqHd, 3GHgr, 2Swas, 4WrCl	62	23
11	1	100.0	100.0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	1	50.0	66.7	0	0	0	Seax	0	0	1	50
13	2	40	80.0	2	1	0	0	1SLsq	0	2	40
14	uncontextual	?	?	>1	>1	0	1	0	0	?	?
15	1	12.5	33.3	2	2	0	1	5Sa, 1SLsq	0	3	38
17	uncontextual	?	?	1	0	0	0	0	1Cr, 2WrCl, (?)Swas	?	?
19	uncontextual	?	?	>1	>1	0	2	0	(?) Cr, (?)SL, (?) WrCl	?	?
20	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	Gold + Garnet Pendant	1	33
21	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	2Cr	?	?
23	uncontextual	?	?	1	2	0	0	?	?	?	?
24	uncontextual	?	?	4	1?	0	0	2Sa, 2Di	2SL, 1GSqHd, 1Necklet	?	?
25	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	1Sa	0	0	0
26	1	33.3	50.0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	67
30	1	14.3	25.0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	86
31	uncontextual	?	?	1	0	0	1	0	0	?	?
32	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	?
33	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	50
34	1	?	?	?	?	?	Seax	0	Gold + Garnet Pendant	?	?
35	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	100

ID #	Associated Monuments	Associated Sites
1	Beside Roman road and its ford	
2	Possible Roman road nearby	
4	Roman settlement and fort	One square headed brooch from the same mould as a Bidford-on-Avon example
6	Late Iron Age - Roman field system	
7	Possibly reusing a prehistoric barrow	
8	Possibly reusing a prehistoric barrow	
9		
10	Beside Ryknield Street and its ford	
11	Inside a Roman corn drier, beside Roman road	
12		
13		A square headed brooch similar to 4 from Bidford-on-Avon
14	4th century Roman settlement activity nearby	
15		A square headed brooch with similarities with one from Baginton
17	Either side of Watling Street	
19	Along and within Watling Street. A possible mound erected over site	
20		
21		
23	Adjacent to 2nd century villa	
24		
25		
26	Beside Fosse Way	
30	Cut into Watling Street	
31		
32	In a modern churchyard	
33		
34		
35	Inserted into a barrow	

ID #	Site Name	Date Range of Burial Activity (century)	Number of Burials		Dominant Position of Body	Dominant Orientation of Inhums.	Rows	Charcoal Burials		# Decap.	Age		
			Inh.	Crem.				#	% of total pop		Child/Juv.	Adoles.	Adult
37	Longbridge Park	Mid 6th - 7th	?	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
38	Lower Farm	Mid 6th - Early 7th	26	0	?	S-N	3?	1	3.8	1?	3	8	15
39	Lutterworth	Late 6th - 7th	1	0	?	?	0	0	0.0	0	0	1	0
40	Marlcliff	5th - 6th	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
41	Marton	Late 6th? - 7th?	0	>3	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	?	?	?
42	Meon Hill	5th? - 7th?	1	0	?	?	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	1
43	Milcote Hall	5th? - 7th?	400+	0	Supine	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	?
44	Mount Pleasant	6th? - 8th?	36	0	Supine	W-E	2	0	0.0	0	0	?	?
45	Napton Hill	7th	?	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
46	Newton	6th - 7th	<10	0	?	?	?	0	0.0	0	?	?	?
47	Offchurch	Mid 6th	?	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
48	Princethorpe	Early 6th? - 7th?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
49	Ragley	Late 6th	1	0	?	?	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	1
50	Rollright*	5th - 7th	13	>1	?	unknown mixed	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
52	St Anne's Church	6th? - 7th?	2	0	Sitting	facing NE	0	0	0.0	0	?	?	?
53	Stretton-on-Fosse	Late 5th - 6th	52	0	Mixed	W-E	6	11	21.2	2	11	6	24
54	Upton Snodsbury	6th	?	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
55	Walton Cardiff	Late 6th - Early 7th	2	0	Supine	S-N	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	2
56	Wasperton	5th - 7th	180	27	Mixed	S-N	0	1	0.6	10	2	16	24
57	Welton	6th?	2	>1	?	?	0	0	0.0	0	?	?	?
58	North Street	Mid 6th - 10th	6	0	Supine	W-E	2?	0	0.0	1?	0	?	?

* The recently discovered 7th century elite female burial close to the King's Stone is not included in these numbers but is discussed in the thesis

ID #	Weapon Burials			Weapon Types				Jewellery Types		Unfurnished Burials	
	#	% of Total Pop	% of Male Pop if 50% unfurnished included	Spear	Shield	Arrow	Sword	Upper Thames Valley	E Anglia & E Mids	#	% of total pop
37	uncontextual	?	?	>1	>1	0	1	7Sa	1Cr, 2SL, 2Bracteats, 1Bracelet, 2Gold + Garnet	?	?
38	2	7.7	25.0	2	0	0	0	3Sa	1Cr	8	31
39	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	1GHgr	0	0
40	uncontextual	?	?	0	0	0	1	(?)Sa	0	?	?
41	uncontextual	?	?	2	1	0	1	1Sa	0	?	?
42	1	100.0	100.0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	1	0.3	0.5	0	0	0	1?	0	0	?	?
44	1	2.8	5.4	0	0	0	Seax	0	0	35	97
45	1	?	?	0	1	0	1	0	0	?	?
46	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	Gold + Garnet Pendant	?	?
47	uncontextual	?	?	2	1	0	0	1Sa	2Cr, 1GSqHd, 1Swas	?	?
48	uncontextual	?	?	1	0	0	0	1SLsq	1Cr	?	?
49	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	1GSqHd, 2Radiate	0	0
50	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	2Sa	0	?	?
52	2	100.0	100.0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
53	17	32.7	66.7	15	10	1	0	7Sa, 3Di	4SL	11	21
54	uncontextual	?	?	6	0	0	1	2Sa	3Cr	?	?
55	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	50
56	33	18.3	41.0	14	20	0	0	11Sa, 7Di, 5SLsq	3Cr, 14SL, 4GSqHd	50	28
57	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	2SL	0	0
58	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	100

ID #	Associated Monuments	Associated Sites
37		
38	Burrow's Piece fieldname	Bishop's Cleeve late Roman sites
39	Beside Watling Street	
40	Beside Ryknield Street and its ford. In an area of Roman buildings	
41	Inserted into a barrow	
42	Within ramparts of an Iron Age hill fort	
43		
44		
45		
46		
47		
48	Beside Fosse Way and a Roman station	
49		
50	The Rollright Stones - Prehistoric standing stones	
52	In a modern churchyard	
53	Area of Roman cemteries	Gotland cauldron rite similar to that at Bidford-on-Avon
54		
55	Roman field system	
56	In a Roman agricultural enclosure	
57		
58		

Summary of all sites with Settlement Features and Non-Burial Activity

ID #	Site Name	Date Range of Occupational Activity (century)	Type
1	Alveston Manor	5th?	Settlement Features associated with burial site
3	Aston Mill Farm	6th - 7th	Settlement Features
4	Baginton	5th - 6th	Settlement Features associated with burial site
5	The Lunt	5th?	Non-burial activity
16	Broom	6th	Settlement Features
18	Chesterton	5th?	Non-burial activity
22	Deerhurst	Mid 5th - Medieval	Settlement Features
27	Hatton Rock	Late 6th - Mid 7th	Settlement Features
28	Ipsley, GPO Exchange Site	5th - 6th	Settlement Features
29	Kemerton Sewage Works	5th - 7th	Settlement Features
36	Snowford Bridge, Long Itchington	Late 6th - Mid 7th	Settlement Features
51	Sedgeberrow	7th?	Non-burial activity
53	Stretton-on-Fosse	5th?	Settlement Features associated with burial site
56	Wasperton	5th?	Settlement Features associated with burial site

SITE NAME: Alveston Manor Hotel

ID: 1

Parish & County: Stratford-upon-Avon, Warks.

Coordinates: 420930 254810

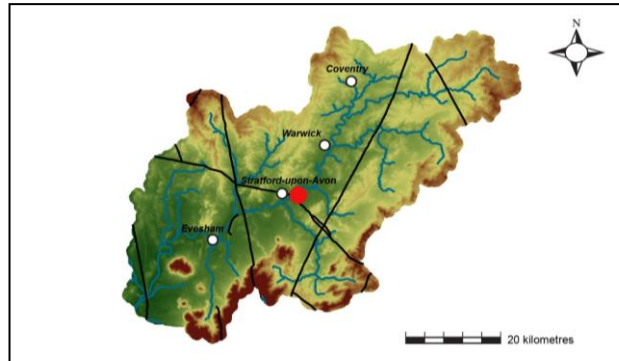
Site Type: Burial Activity & Settlement Features

Date: 5th – 7th Century

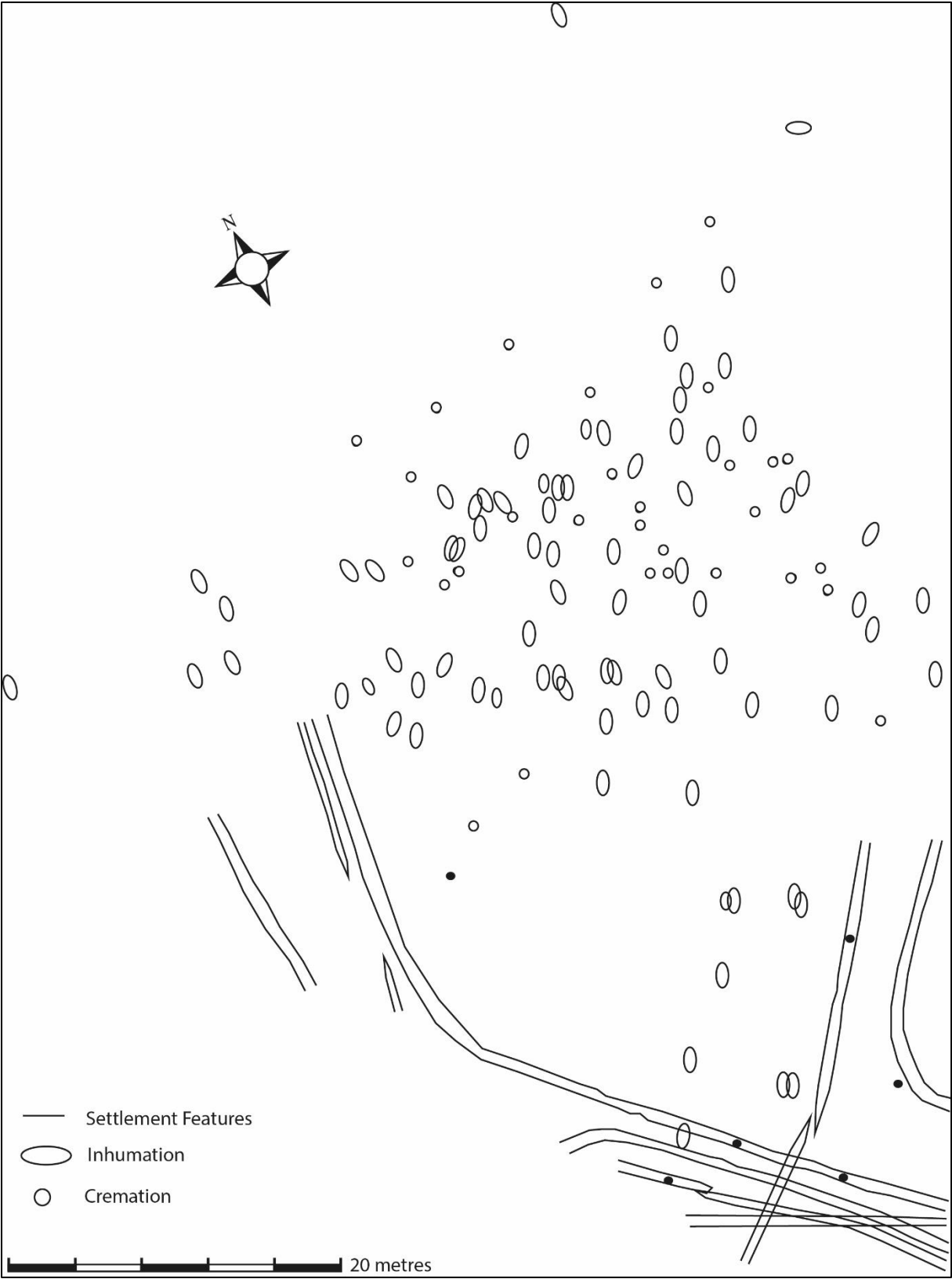
Description: A mixed cemetery where approximately 79 inhumations and 37 cremations were excavated in the 1930s, 1970s, and 2000s. A settlement may have pre-dated the cemetery, with at least one grave cutting a posthole. Wider occupational evidence may be indicated by a palisaded trench and a series of enclosures, although these may date to the period after the abandonment of the cemetery. The cemetery dates to 480 - 620 AD and grave goods show the earliest links are with the Anglian East, with a switch to the South in the mid-6th Century. Most of the burials belong to the Anglian phase, although the richest burials and the burials with the most grave goods belong to the later Saxon phase. In addition, some metal-work shows Merovingian influences. Weapons include: shield bosses, spear heads, and knives and represent approximately 22% of the burials. The earlier burials contain: cruciform, small-long, and annular brooches, and a girdle hanger. Later burials include: saucer and annular brooches. Beads are found in graves from both periods.

Sources: Ford 1970; Ford 1996; Jones 2002; Jones 2010, Ford *unpublished*

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
1.1	589	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
1.2	584	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Grass lined	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
1.3	581	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.4	580	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	iron frags
1.4A	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.5	585	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 1GSqHd, 2 Composite Sa/Butt, 1PenAnn, Rock Crystal, 1 Ring, 40Bds
1.6	581	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	m	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1 Bucket
1.6A	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.7	584	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.7A	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.8	582	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.9	577	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bow
1.10	580	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.11	577	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.12	570	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.13	565	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.14	563	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.15	548	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.16	565	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.17	572	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Bu
1.18	574	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.19	577	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.20	568	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.21	572	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
1.22	585	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 1Di, 20Bds, 1 wood vessel, 1 pot
1.23	582	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.24	581	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	adult	f?	-	-	-	0	1Kn
1.25	579	-	Inhum.	Left Side	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
1.26	585	-	Inhum.	Left Side	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Sa, 2 pin, 47Bds, 1 Ring + 1 Scoop
1.27	613	-	Inhum.	Supine	NW-SE	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.28	593	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2Kn
1.29	588	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.30	582	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Grass lined, Wood cover	-	-	m	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Bu
1.31	578	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	Grass lined	adult	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Bu
1.32	567	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Di, 1WrCl, 8Bds, 1 clothes clasp, purse ring
1.33	576	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 2Di, 24Bds, Cu handle
1.34	570	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Grass lined	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
1.35	558	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Di, 7Bds
1.36	561	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Ann
1.37	553	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f?	-	-	0	2 pin, 14Bds, 1 Pot
1.38	554	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2PenAnn, 1 pin
1.39	554	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	m	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1 Bucket

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
1.40	553	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 1Sa
1.41	574	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	f	-	-	-	0	0
1.42	545	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.43	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.44	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.45	541	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
1.46	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.47	545	-	Inhum.	Right Side	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	2SL, 14Bds
1.48	543	-	Inhum.	Right Side	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 1Sa, 1 unclass brooch, 1 pin, 1 purse ring, 14Bds
1.49	554	-	Inhum.	Right Side	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
1.50	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
1.51	560	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.52	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Cauldron
1.53	562	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	adult	m?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1PenAnn, 1 unclass brooch, 1 pin, 1 ring + strap distributor, Charon's obol of 3rd C Allectus, 22 Bds
1.54	556	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.55	570	-	Inhum.	Right Side	SSW-NNE	-	child	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
1.56	560	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	adoles	-	m	-	-	2Sp	1Kn
1.57	560	-	Inhum.	Right Side	SW-NE	-	-	-	f?	-	-	0	1Bu, 1Strap end, 1 Purse ring, 2Bds
1.58	555	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	Grass lined	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
1.59	555	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
1.60	565	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	adult	f?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1App
1.61	555	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Sa, 1 unclass Br, 1Bd, plus poss toilet items on ring
1.62	558	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.63	560	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	m?	-	-	-	0	0
1.64	565	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.65	557	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Sa, 1 pin, 16Bds, Bone frag
1.66	547	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
1.67	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
1.68	533	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	child	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.69	534	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
1.70	527	-	Inhum.	Right Side	SW-NE	Lined with large pebbles and head raised on sand/clay pillow	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu with plate, 2Cr, wooden bowl, 80Bds, toilet set: ring, 2 picks, scoop
1.71	531	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	Sand/Clay pillow	-	-	f	-	-	0	2AppSa, 1 pin, 2Bds, 1 Amber piece
1.72	533	-	Inhum.	Right Side	SW-NE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 1PenAnn, 1 cosmetic brush, 1GHgr, 1 piece Cu, 4Bds, beaker

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
1.73	537	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	Lined with large pebbles	adult	-	-	-	-	2Sp	1Kn
1.74	538	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Lined with large pebbles	adult	f?	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
1.76	541	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	child	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Di, 1Ann, 1 Pin, 1strap distributor, 50Bds
1.77	545	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Di, 1 Pin, 1 metal ball, 4Bds, 1 Pot
1.78	545	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
1.79	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f?	-	-	0	2Bow, 2 Ro coins, 1 cosmetic brush, 4 metal obj
1.80(i)	553	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu + plate, 1PenAnn, 1 Pin, 6Bds
1.80(ii)	553	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	infant	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.81	555	-	Inhum.	Right Side	SSW-NNE	-	adult	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
1.82	553	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	child	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Bu
1.83	557	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Di, 20Bds 1 key
1.84	560	-	Inhum.	Left Side	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
1.85	561	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Sa, 2 Ring, 1 Ring holding toilet set, 36Bds + 2 Ring on necklace, Purse with 5 Ro coins of 3rd-4thC
1.87	567	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	Head surrounded by pebbles	child	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Bu, poss pot
1.88	570	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	child	-	f	-	-	0	2PenAnn, 1 Pin
1.89	579	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1GSqHd, 2Di, 42Bds
1.90	585	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.91	552	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Di, 31Bds, toilet set: scoop, pick, pin
1.92	563	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
1.93	544	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.94	543	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.95	585	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.96	567	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1SL, 1cosmetic brush, 42Bds
1.97	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bd
1.98	572	-	Inhum.	Right Side	SSW-NNE	-	adult	m?	-	-	-	0	0
1.99	547	-	Inhum.	Left Side	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	frags of cu
1.100	593	-	Inhum.	Left Side	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2 Pins
1.101	615	-	Inhum.	Supine	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.102	592	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	adoles	-	f?	-	-	0	2Kn, 1Ann, 1 Pin, 1 finial, 3Bds

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
1.F1(i)	577	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa, 15Bds
1.F1(ii)	577	-	Inhum.	Right Side	NNE-SSW	Charcoal over skull and pelvis. Wood headrest	adult	-	-	-	-	0	1Bd, 1pot sherd, 1cherrystone
1.F2	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F9(i)	573	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
1.F9(ii)	573	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	Stones over skull	child	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F13	576	-	Inhum.	Left Side, flexed	SSW-NNE	Charcoal flecks throughout	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Ann, 1 Pin, tweezers, 15Bds, 1 Pot
1.F24	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F27 (i)	558	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F27 (ii)	558	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F29	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F31	585	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Wood cover over body	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F46	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
1.F53	580	-	Inhum.	Supine	SSW-NNE	Charcoal flecks throughout	-	-	m	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, belt fittings
1.F57(i)	589	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Charcoal traces	adult	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
1.F57(ii)	589	-	Inhum.	Right Side, flexed	SW-NE	Charcoal layer	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	0

SITE NAME: Aston Cantlow

ID: 2

Parish & County: Aston Cantlow, Warks.

Coordinates: 413410 259590

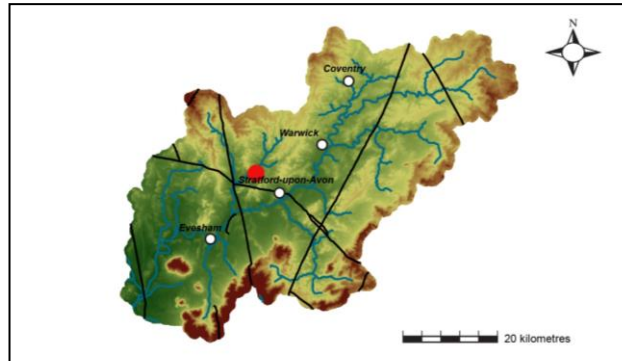
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: Late 5th – Mid-6th Century

Description: A single inhumation thought to be that of a female found on the brow of a hill with 3 saucer brooches - two a pair, and the third with a cruciform pattern - a buckle and a white stone. A paved road surface was found nearby which may have attracted the burial.

Sources: Meaney 1964:257

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet Loam to Clayey over Shale



SITE NAME: Aston Mill Farm

ID: 3

Parish & County: Kemerton, Worcs.

Coordinates: 394600 235330

Site Type: Settlement Features

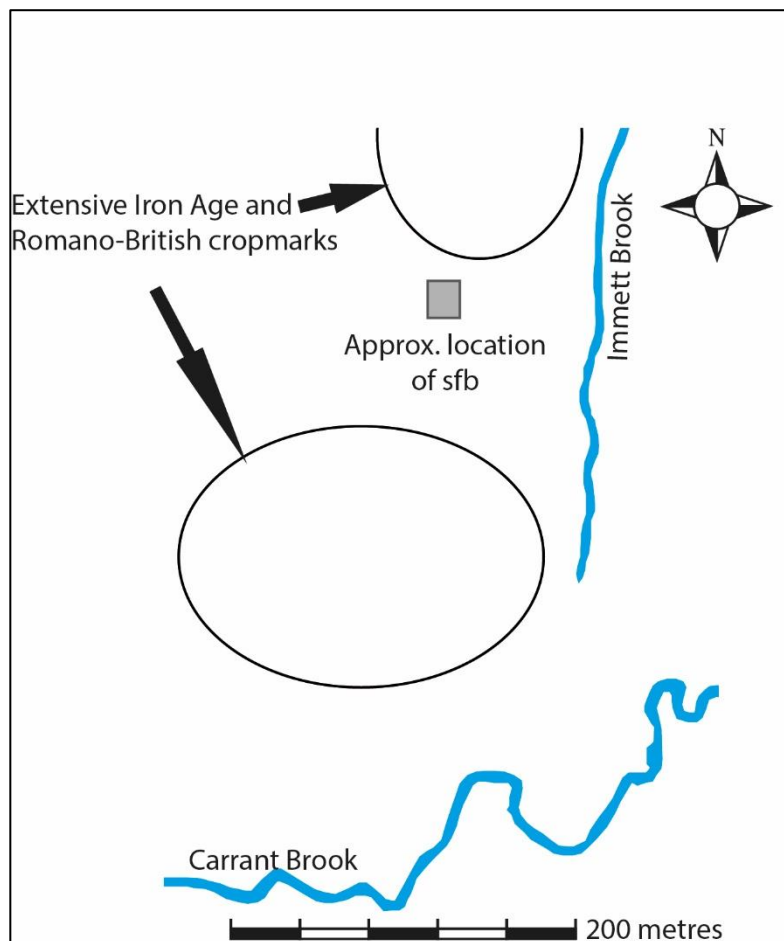
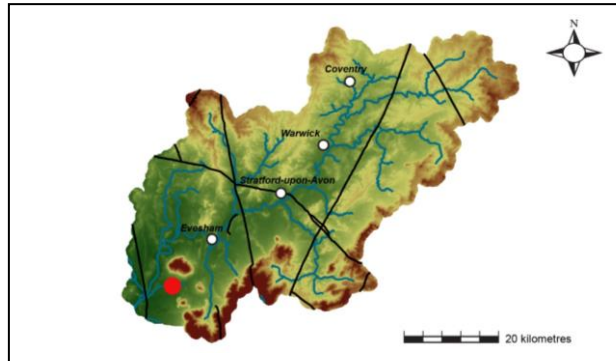
Date: 6th – 7th Century

Description: A sunken feature building, with well stratified 6th - 7th Century material (dated by the excavators using the Droitwich pottery sequence), found within an area of prehistoric and early Roman activity. Two further possible contemporary features comprise a boundary fence and ditch.

Sources: Dinn & Evans 1990

Superficial Geology: Loam over Gravel

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Baginton

ID: 4

Parish & County: Baginton, Warks.

Coordinates: 434800 274850

Site Type: Burial Activity & Settlement Features

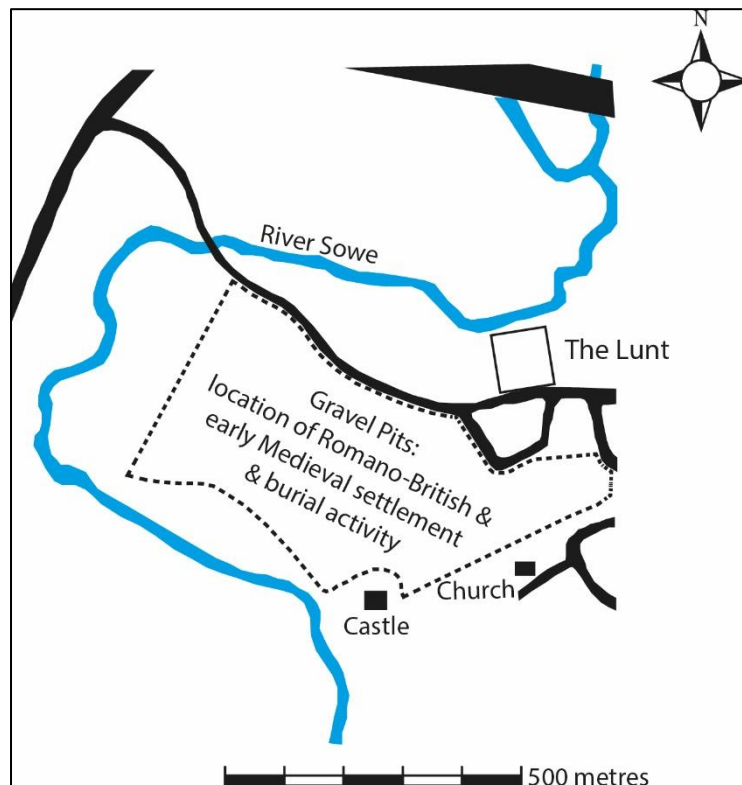
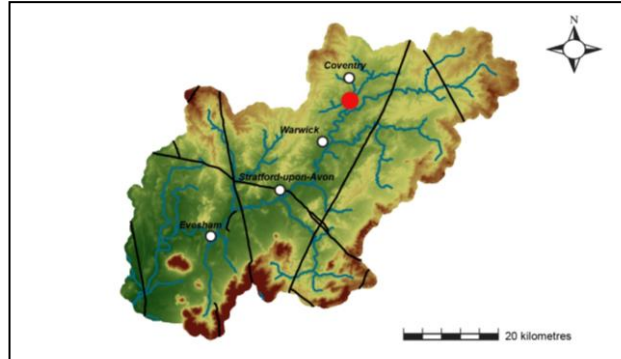
Date: 5th – 6th Century

Description: Roman period settlement activity is indicated by deposits from a number of wells found during the excavation of gravel pits. These show activity from the 1st Century, increasing in the 2nd-4th Centuries. A possible SFB, with associated Saxon pottery, was observed in a gravel pit face. Human remains were recovered from a gravel pit, indicating a mixed cemetery of approximately 100 individuals. 42 fairly complete urns were also recovered. These and the inhumations were buried with early medieval grave goods including: a bronze hanging bowl, 2 bronze bound buckets, brooches: 3 square-headed (one from the same mould as one from Bidford), 5 cruciform, 16 small-long, 8 disc, 8 annular, and 4 penannular; 5 girdle hangers, 3 bead necklaces, 25 spear heads, and 10 shield bosses.

Sources: Chatwin 1929; Ford 1996:70; Meaney 1964:257; Wilkins 1975

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam

Site Plan: (location of sites on Baginton Plateau)



SITE NAME: The Lunt

ID: 5

Parish & County: Baginton, Warks.

Coordinates: 434410 275180

Site Type: Non-Burial Activity

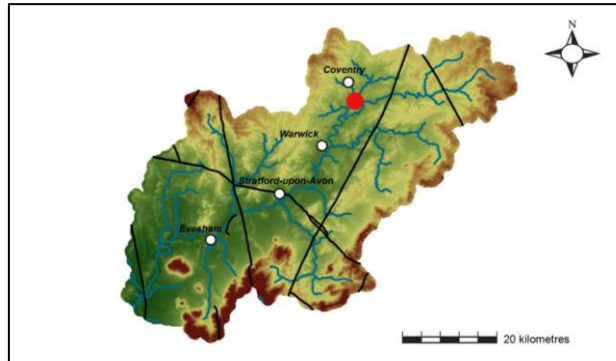
Date: 5th? Century

Description: A Roman Fort in use from c. 60-80 AD and then again from 260 AD - possibly with an equestrian function. Intrusive pits and hearths suggest material robbing and recycling in the post-Roman period.

Sources: Hobley 1969; Hobley 1973; Hobley 1975

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam

Site Plan: (see Baginton)



SITE NAME: Bank Farm

ID: 6

Parish & County: Dumbleton, Glos.

Coordinates: 402720 236580

Site Type: Burial Activity

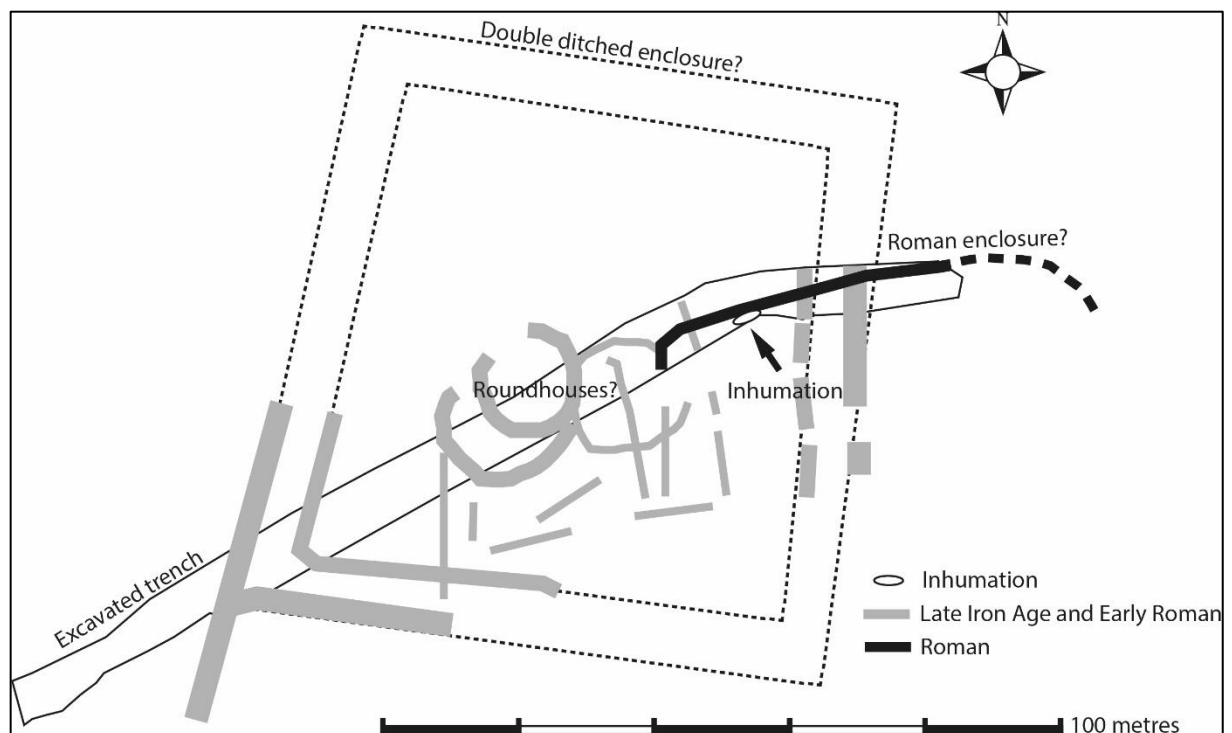
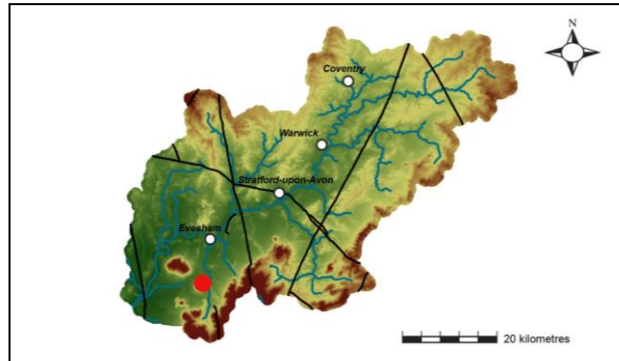
Date: Early 5th – 7th Century

Description: Excavation revealed a late Iron Age to 4th Century agricultural field system with possible occupation evidence. A young adult male inhumation was cut into the secondary fill of a Roman enclosure ditch and was dated using radio carbon dating to the early 5th - 7th Century. Further analysis across the site returned six dates belonging to the early medieval period. It appears that a number of the agricultural features belong to this later period.

Sources: Coleman et al. 2006:4-94

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Beckford A

ID: 7

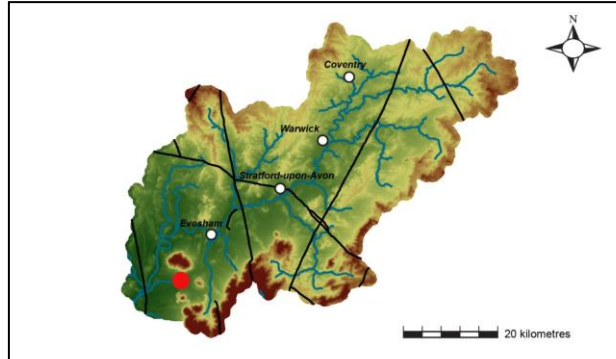
Parish & County: Conderton, Worcs.

Coordinates: 396430 235450

Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th – 6th Century

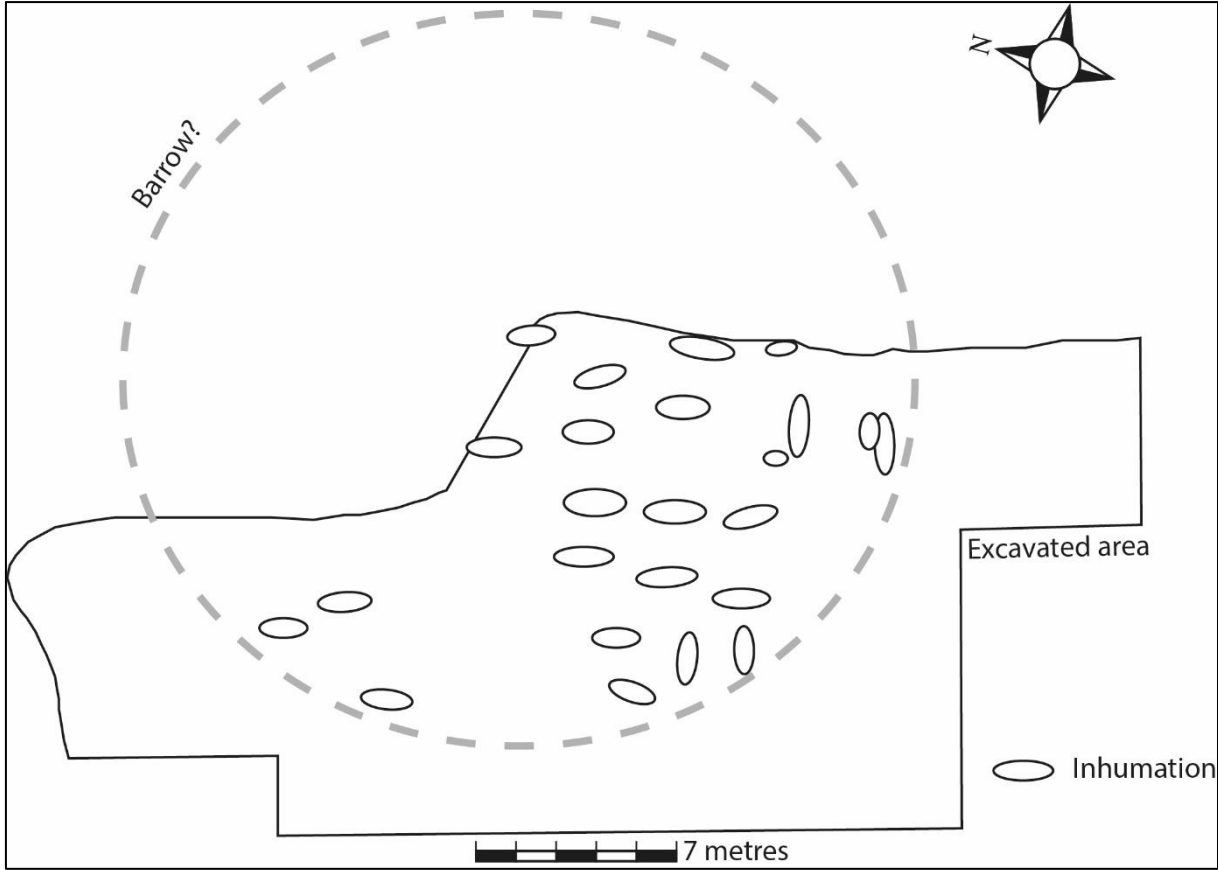
Description: Excavated in 1954 after gravel digging located human remains, 24 inhumations were uncovered. There was a high incidence of spina bifida and leprosy. Inhumations were predominantly orientated South-North, with graves arranged in an oval, perhaps representing the reuse of a barrow. Variability in grave goods was more marked in female graves. A11, a possible leper, stands out with her large square-headed brooch and greater number of goods. Find include: spear heads, shield bosses, knives, Brooches: 1 great square-headed, small-long, saucer, button, and annular; finger rings, buckles, 1 bucket, toiletry implements, and many beads. Grave goods show links predominantly with the upper Thames region. Chronology same as Beckford B: phase 1, 475-500 AD and phase 2, 500-550 AD. One mile from Beckford A is the sfb at Kemerton.



Sources: Evison & Hill 1996

Superficial Geology: Loam over Gravel

Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
7.1	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	30-40	m	-	170.97	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
7.2	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	25-30	f?	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1 Bu
7.3	-	-	Inhum.	Side	N-S	-	7-8	-	f	(SB)	-	0	1 unid'd brooch
7.4	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	18	m	m	-	-	2Sp	1Kn
7.5	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	6-7	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
7.6	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	25-35	m	m	167.89	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
7.7	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	25-40	f	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Ann, 4Bds, 1 Pin, 1 Fe Ring
7.8	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	25-35	m	m	182.61 (SB+L)	-	1Sp	1kn, 1Bucket, 1 scoop, strap end
7.9	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	25-30	f	f	-	-	0	1Di, 1Swas, 1 Pin, 14Bds, 1 Ring, 2 Fe Rings, 1 key, 1 shell
7.10	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	infant	-	-	-	-	0	0
7.11	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	25-30	f?	f	(SB+L)	-	0	2App, 1SqHd, pendant, 44Bds, bronze tube, 1 Iron Ring
7.12	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	25-35	f?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 1Sa, 2 Pins, 72Bds, 2 Rings, 1 ivory Ring, 1 Cu disc, 1 Cu spoon, 1 key
7.13	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	35-45	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 2Bu
7.14	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	28-35	m	m	176.28	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1Bu, bronze bound vessel
7.15	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	8	f?	-	-	-	0	1Kn
7.16	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	19-20	m	f	160.8	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2SL, 1 Pin, 15 Bds, tweezers, Cu spoon, spindle whorl, 2 Iron Rings
7.17	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	11-12	m?	f	-	-	0	12 Bds
7.18	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	25-30	f	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 1SL, 1 Cu needle, 1 Cu tube, 3Bds
7.19	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	16-17	f?	-	(SB)	-	0	0
7.20	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	18-19	f	f	(SB)	-	0	2SL, 1 Pin, 1 animal tooth
7.21	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	35-45	m	-	171.16	-	0	1Kn
7.22	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	40-50	m	m	180.16 (L)	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Bu
7.23	-	-	Inhum.	Side	N-S	-	25-30	f	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 2Sa, 78Bds, 2 Pins, tweezers
7.24	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	25-35	m	-	-	-	0	1kn
7.25	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	-	-	20-30	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
7.26	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	-	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sh	0
7.27	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	-	-	adult	m	-	-	-	0	1Kn
7.28	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	-	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sh	0

SITE NAME: Beckford B

ID: 8

Parish & County: Conderton, Worcs.

Coordinates: 396910 235440

Site Type: Burial Activity

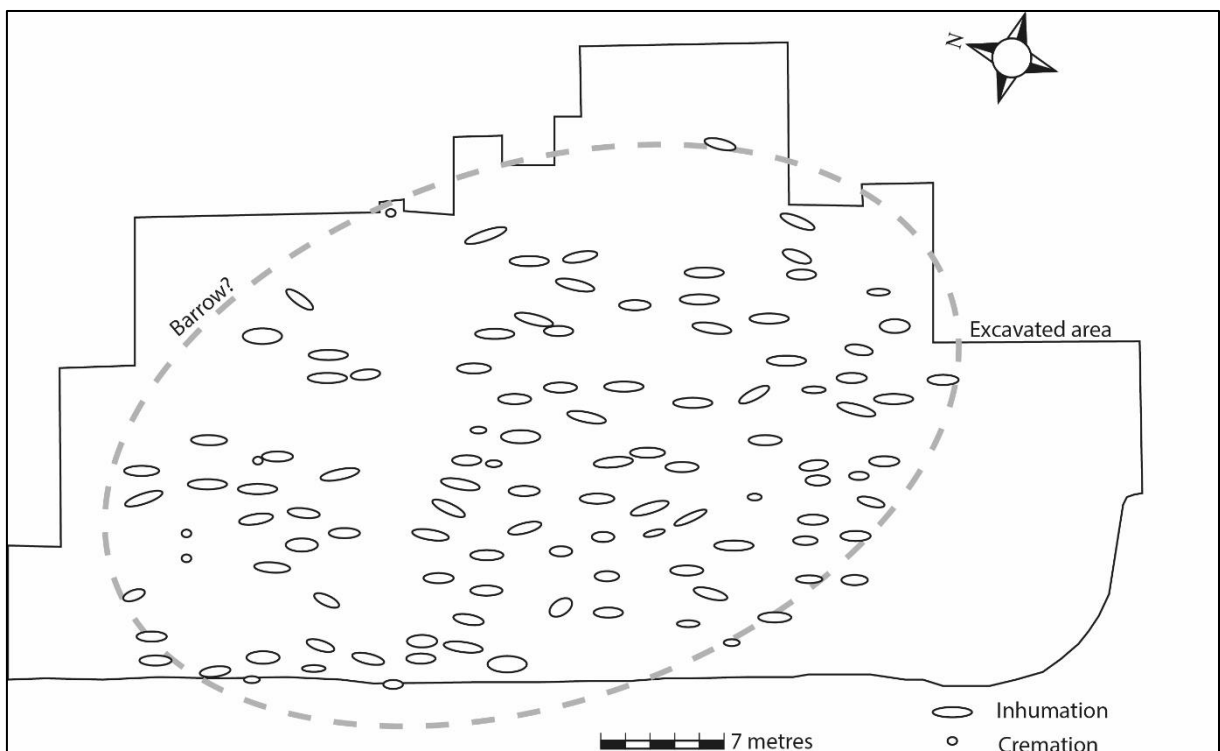
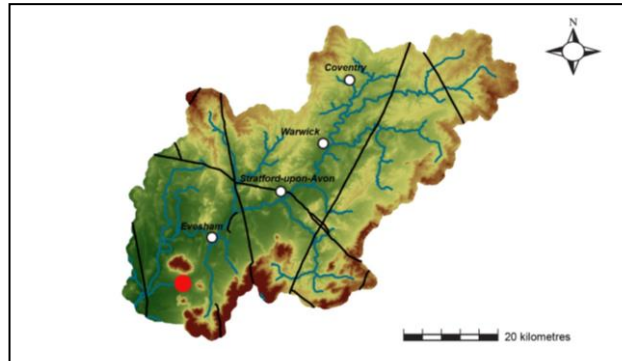
Date: 5th – 6th Century

Description: Gravel digging identified a second cemetery, 600 yards from the first, Beckford A, and excavation began in 1958. This uncovered 106 inhumations and 4 cremations. The oval plan of the cemetery is repeated here also. All, except 2, inhumations were South-North. Burial was within distinct plots, with non-adults, as in A, peripheral to the cemetery. Again, a single female grave was marked out with a large square-headed brooch and a greater number of goods. Find include: spear heads, shield bosses, knives, Brooches: 3 great square-headed, small-long, saucer, disc, button, penannular and annular; finger rings, buckles, 2 buckets, coins, toiletry implements, and many beads.

Sources: Evison & Hill 1996; Hines 1997

Superficial Geology: Loam over Gravel

Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
8.1	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 7Bds
8.2	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m?	-	-	-	0	0
8.3	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 14Bds
8.4	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	11-12	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.5	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	f?	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
8.6	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	f?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Di, 138Bds, 2 bronze rectangular plates, 1 bronze square plete, strapend, 5 RB coins
8.7	-	-	Inhum.	Side	N-S	-	25-35	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
8.8	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	f?	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 2Sa, 1Pin
8.9	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f	-	-	-	0	0
8.10	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	adult	f?	-	-	-	0	1Bu, 1 bronze bound bucket
8.11	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.12A	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	18-20	f?	f	-	-	0	1 bronze mount
8.12B	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	11-12	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.13	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	10-11	-	f	-	-	0	9Bds
8.14	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	8Bds
8.15	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.16	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	adult	f?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2SL, 1 Pin, 33Bds, Bronze square and tube, 1 Iron Ring
8.17	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	adult	f?	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 1Bd
8.18	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m?	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
8.19	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	7-8	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
8.20	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
8.21	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	11-12	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.22	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	8-9	-	f?	-	-	0	1Bd
8.23	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	-	-	-	0	0
8.24	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	ya	f	f	-	-	0	1App, 39Bds
8.25	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	m	-	-	-	0	1Kn
8.26	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1PenAnn, 1App, 2 Cu plates
8.27	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	35-50	m	m	-	-	1Sh	0
8.28	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	ya	f	-	-	-	0	1Kn
8.29	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adoles	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 2App, 1 Silver Ring, 119Bds, complex of iron Rings and copper and iron strips strung together
8.30	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adoles	-	f	-	-	0	6Bds
8.31	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Sa
8.32	-	-	Inhum.	Left side	S-N	-	17	-	m	-	-	1Sh	1Kn
8.33A	-	-	Inhum.	Flexed	S-N	-	5-6	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.33B	-	-	Inhum.	Left side	S-N	-	2	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.34	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 1Di, 53Bds, 1 horse tooth, 1 Nail
8.35	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	Tweezers
8.36	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	25-30	f	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Di, 1 Pin, 39Bds

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
8.37	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.38	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	35-45	f?	f	-	-	0	2Sa, 11Bds
8.39	-	-	Inhum.	Flexed	S-N	-	ya	f	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Sa, 255Bds, 1 Silver Ring, 1 Iron Ring, Cu Retangle, Cu tube, Latchlifter, Perforated Cu Coin
8.40	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	10-11	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.41	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	-	f	-	-	0	2Pi, 1Bd
8.42	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	7-8	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.43	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	f?	-	-	-	0	0
8.44	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	5-6	-	f	-	-	0	Perforated Cu coin
8.45	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f?	f	-	-	0	2Di, 1 Bone needle, 17Bds, 1 Fossil
8.46	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	11-12	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa
8.47	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
8.48	-	-	Inhum.	Prone	S-N	-	25-30	f?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Swas, 1 Ri, 2 Pins, 2Scoop, 1 Cu cone, 1 Cu strap end
8.49	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	10	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.50	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	11-12	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.51	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	25-40	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
8.52	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	2-3	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.53	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Bds
8.54	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	25-35	f?	-	-	-	0	0
8.55	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	adult	m?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 2App, 17Bds
8.56	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	11-12	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.57	-	-	Inhum.	Prone	S-N	-	ya	f?	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 1App, 47Bds, 1 Iron plate
8.58	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	7-8	-	f	-	-	0	1 Iron Ann, 1PenAnn, 1 Pin, 29Bds
8.59	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	8-9	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.60	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.61	-	-	Inhum.	Flexed	S-N	-	adult	f	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Di
8.62	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	ya	f?	f	-	-	0	1Di, 1 Pin, 31Bds
8.63	-	-	Inhum.	Prone	S-N	-	25-30	f	-	-	-	0	0
8.64	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
8.65	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	17	f	f	-	-	0	1Di, 2Bds
8.66	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	25-35	f	f	-	-	0	2Sa, 30Bds, tweezers
8.67	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f	f	-	-	0	2App, 1 Ivory Ring, 7Bds, 3 Keys, 2 poss keys
8.68	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	7-8	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 2Di, 1Bd, 4 Iron Ring, Roman coin
8.69	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	1-2	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu
8.70	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	f	-	-	0	2SqHd
8.71	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1 Ivory Ring, 3 Keys, 2 Iron Rings
8.72	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	-	m	-	-	2Sp	0

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
8.73	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	adult	m?	f	-	-	0	1ButtBr, 9Bds
8.74	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2App, 1SqHd, 3Bds, 1Scoop, 5 Iron Ring, Cu and antler belt mount
8.75	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m?	f	-	-	0	16Bds, 2 perforated coins
8.76	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	16Bds, 2 Iron strips
8.77	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m?	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
8.78	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m?	-	-	-	0	1 Pot
8.79	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adoles	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.80	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Di, 1Bd
8.81	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	2Sp	1Kn, 1Cu bound yew bucket
8.82	-	-	Inhum.	Right side	S-N	-	adoles	-	f	-	-	0	1PenAnn, 1 Iron PenAnn, 1 Cu plate
8.83	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f?	f	-	-	0	2SL, 11Bds, 1 Ring, 2 possible keys
8.84	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m?	-	-	-	0	1Bu
8.85	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	11-12	f?	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
8.86	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f?	-	-	-	0	0
8.87	-	-	Inhum.	Left side	S-N	-	2-3	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.88	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	2-3	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.89	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 2Di, 1 Pin, 7Bds, 1 RB coin
8.90	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.91	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	m	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.92	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	25-35	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
8.93	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	f?	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.94	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Bu
8.95	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
8.96	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp	1 Nail, 1 Iron strap
8.97	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f	f	-	-	0	2Di, 20Bds
8.98	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	adult	f	f	-	-	0	1Sa, 17Bds
8.99	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	10	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
8.100	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	4-5	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.101	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	ya	f	-	-	-	0	1Bu, 1 Ring, 1 Cu plate
8.102	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	f?	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 2App, 23Bds, Iron frag, Decorated bone
8.103	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	5-6	-	-	-	-	0	0
8.104	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m	m	-	-	1Sp	1 Iron frag
8.105	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adult	m?	m	-	-	1Sp	0
8.106	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	adoles	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
8.1c	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.2c	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.3c	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.4c	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

SITE NAME: Bennett's Hill

ID: 9

Parish & County: Offenham, Worcs.

Coordinates: 406820 245970

Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th – 7th Century

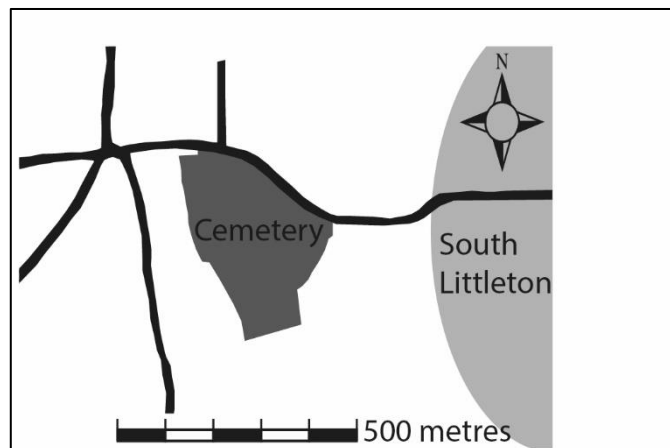
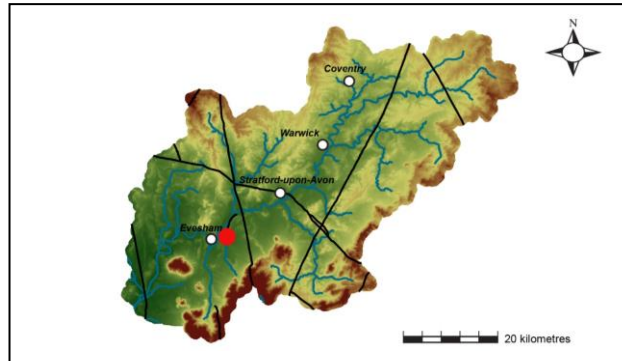
Description: Three inhumations with grave goods and further metal-detector finds suggest the presence of an early medieval inhumation cemetery. Finds

include a long necklace of 371 amber and rock crystal beads, the only example of a Leeds Type V(i) 7th Century large florid cruciform brooch found in the Avon, early 6th Century saucer brooches, a second long necklace of 192 beads, a girdle hanger, a shield boss, and iron knife. The inclusion of 6th Century and 7th Century material in a single grave may suggest the keeping of heirlooms. The cemetery is located on the crest of the hill, itself the southern extremity of Cleeve Hill. A cemetery reported at Cleeve Hill may have been misreported and be part of this same site.

Sources: Dalwood & Ratkai 1998; Winnington Ingram 1884:21-24

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Bidford-on-Avon

ID: 10

Parish & County: Bidford-on-Avon, Warks.

Coordinates: 409889 251880

Site Type: Burial Activity

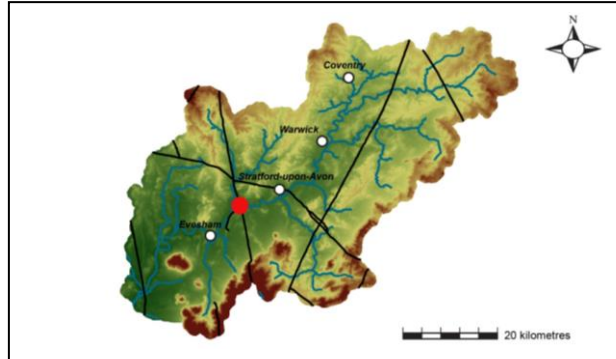
Date: Late 5th – 7th Century

Description: An early medieval cemetery located near to the banks of the River Avon and at least two Roman fords, one of which carried the Roman Ryknield

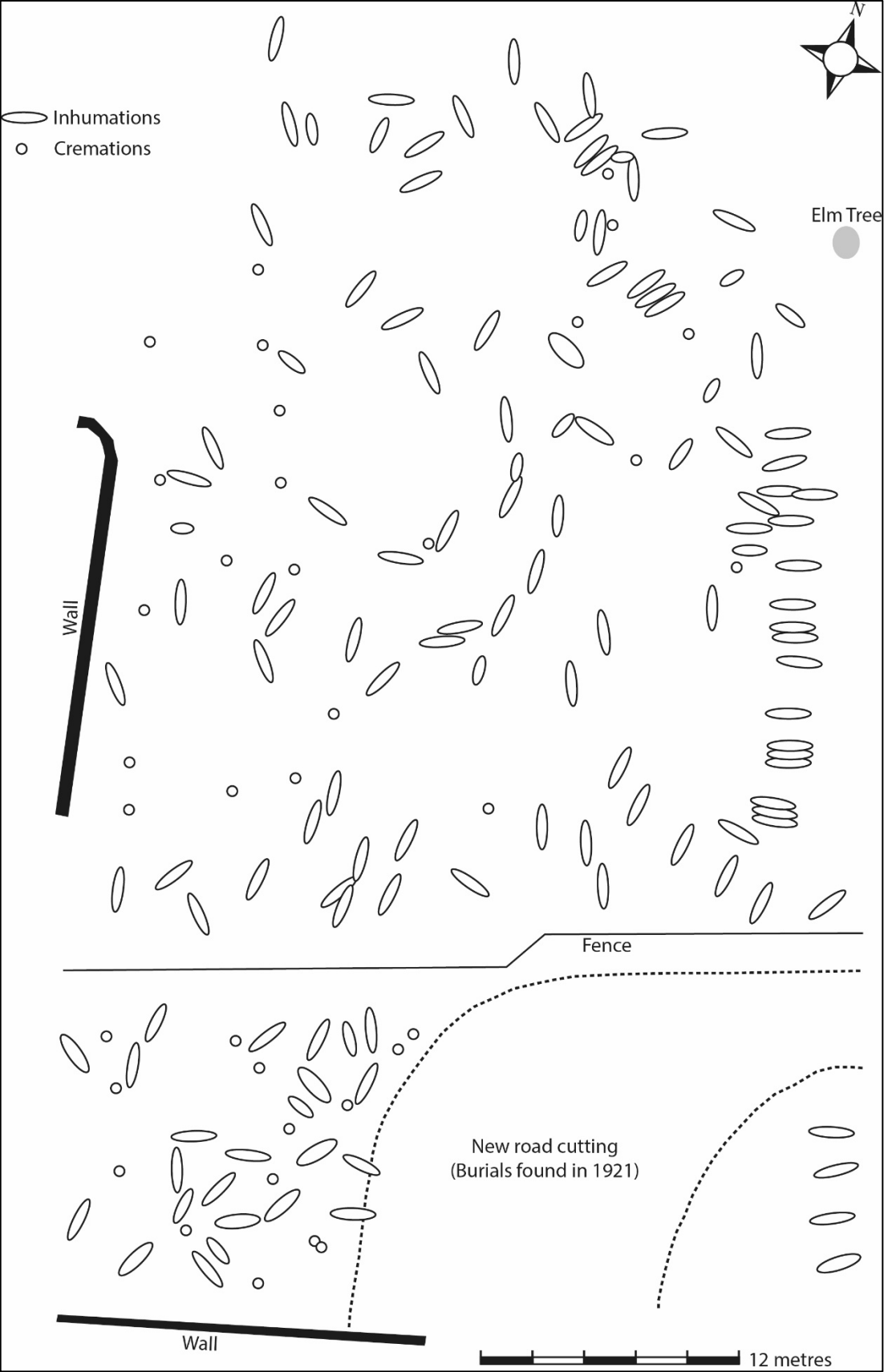
Street. Approximately 240 graves, including inhumations and cremations, were excavated between 1921 - 1923, with extensive weapons and jewellery sets. Some 30 near complete urns were found along with a further 120 suggested from remains. The most common orientation was with feet to between Northwest and Northeast. No trauma from violence was recorded. 13 charcoal burials were recorded along with a possible hearth. Earthen ware vessels were frequently found near the head of females. Additionally, a bronze bowl was placed over the head of a male buried with weapons. Amongst the weapons were: spear heads, shield bosses, and knives. Brooches include: saucer, disc, penannular, ring, square-headed, applied, and a single 2nd Century Roman brooch. Other jewellery included: 11 strings of amber, glass, and paste beads; wrist clasps; and girdle hangers.

Sources: Humphries et al. 1922-3; Humphries et al. 1923-4; Dickinson and Hurst *forthcoming*

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
10.1	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Pot Frag, glass frag
10.1A	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	0
10.2	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	M	-	-	-	0	Frag cu
10.3	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.4	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1SP	0
10.5	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	M?	-	-	-	0	0
10.6	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	Child	-	M	-	-	1Sp	0
10.7	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	Child(?)	-	-	-	-	0	Bronze-bound bucket
10.8	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	Child(?)	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.9	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	Child(?)	-	-	-	-	0	2 Pins
10.10	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Sa
10.11	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.12	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Poss bronze-bound bucket
10.13	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Di, Bds, Ring, needle, Coin?pendant
10.14	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	10	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.15	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	F?	-	-	-	0	0
10.16	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.17	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	0
10.18	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Cu clips
10.19	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	M?	-	-	-	0	0
10.20	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.21	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.22	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Sa, 1Cu bowl
10.23	-	-	Crem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.24	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	M	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.25	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	0	1Kn, bone comb, nail, cu frag
10.26	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	Charcoal over pelvis	-	-	-	-	-	0	Cu frag
10.27	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Cr, Bds
10.28	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Ann, 3 Rings, Bds, tweezer and toilet set, box
10.29	-	-	Inhum.	-	WNW-ESE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.30	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.31	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.32	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.33	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Cu clip
10.34	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Fe obj, pot frags
10.35	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Sa, 96Bds, 1GHgr
10.36	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.37	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.38	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.39	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.40	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Cr, 1Bd, Belt fittings, poss GHgr
10.41	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.42	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
10.43	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2PenAnn, Bds
10.44	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
10.45	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.46	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Charcoal in area of pelvis	-	F	-	-	-	0	Bds
10.47	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Cr, 1 Pin, 2 cu ornaments
10.48	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Bu
10.49	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Di, pot frags
10.50	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	M	-	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Bu
10.51	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	3 Rings one set with a garnet, Iron shears, purse mount(?)
10.52	-	-	Inhum.	-	SE-NE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Cr, Bds, Toilet set
10.53	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sh	0
10.54	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	0
10.55	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.56	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.57	-	-	Inhum.	-	NNW-SSE	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.58	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.59	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	Covered by charcoal layer	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
10.60	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.61	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu
10.62	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	0	Bone comb, cu frags
10.63	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Di, 1 Bd, 1 toilet set
10.64	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	0
10.65	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn, 1Bu, Tweezers
10.66	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn, 1Bu
10.67	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Charcoal near head	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.68	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.69	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
10.70	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn, 1Bu, pot frag
10.71	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Charcoal throughout	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.72	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	0	Bone comb
10.73	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Iron frag
10.74	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Charcoal between legs	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.75	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Charcoal and wood frags	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Cr, Bds
10.76	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Cr, Bds, Toilet set
10.77	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.78	-	-	Inhum.	-	SE-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1 Ring suspending a cu obj

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
10.79	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Charcoal between legs. Arrow and pottery above burial.	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Sa, 24Bds, bronze bound bucket
10.80	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.81	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, Bds, 1 Pin, Cu ornament
10.82	-	-	Inhum.	-	SE-NE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Sa, 1 Pin, 8Bds
10.83	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.83A	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	Charcoal in area	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.84	-	-	Inhum.	-	NNW-SSE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.85	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.86	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	Charcoal to right and above feet	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.87	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1 Cup
10.88	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Bu, 2App, 1Cr, 1Sa, 1 Silver Ring, Bds, bronze bound bucket
10.89	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	Charcoal	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.90	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Sa, Bds, Iron and cu frags
10.91	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Charcoal in area	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.91A	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.92	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	Lots of Charcoal	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	0
10.93	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	5	F	-	-	-	0	1Bu, Bds
10.94	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.95	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1Arr	0
10.96	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	Child	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, silver and garnet Pin set
10.97	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.98	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Roman brooch
10.99	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	5 or 6	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.100	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	8	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, Bds, silver and sapphire Pin ornament, cu box, iron objs
10.101	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.102	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.103	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Di, 1Bd, 2WrcIs
10.104	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.105	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	0
10.106	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Charcoal layer above skeleton	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.107	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn, 1 Key, Iron objs
10.108	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Charcoal layer above body	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
10.109	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2 frags pott
10.110	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.111	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.112	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2Kn
10.113	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu
10.114	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.115	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.116	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	35	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.117	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	12	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.118	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.119	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.120	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.121	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2 cu frags
10.122	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.123	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Brooch and Bds
10.124	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Cr, 46Bds
10.125	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.126	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 106Bds, Cu clip
10.127	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.128	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.129	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	Large amount charcoal in area	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.130	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	Frag charcoal, pott, ox bone in area	Child	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.131	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.132	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.133	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Bone comb, cu plate
10.134	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.135	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Charcoal at left elbow and leg	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2Ann, 1Bd
10.136	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	1Sp(?)	0
10.137	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.138	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Charcoal in area	-	F	-	-	-	0	1 Pin, 1 Ring, 1 Pot
10.139	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.140	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.141	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.142	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, Bone comb
10.143	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu
10.144	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.145	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	0	1Sa
10.146	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.147	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	0
10.148	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	0	Cu ornament
10.149	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.150	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.151	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	Mature	F	-	-	-	0	0
10.152	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Bu, 2Di, 36Bds, 1 Pin, Bone comb, cu ornament, pot
10.153	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	Charcoal between legs	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, Tweezers and Toilet set

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
10.154	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	Charcoal under feet	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2 SqHd, 21Bds
10.155	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1 Pot
10.156	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Cr, 76Bds, 2 perforated cu coins
10.157	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.158	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	5	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.159	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.160	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.161	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	Child	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, poss toilet set
10.162	-	-	Inhum.	-	WNW-ESE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Iron frags
10.163	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn, 1Bu
10.164	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.165	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.166	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.167	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 5Bds + cu rings, poss key
10.168	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	2Swas, 6Bds
10.169	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.170	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.171	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	M	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.172	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.173	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.174	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.175	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.176	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.177	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
10.178	-	-	Inhum.	-	WNW-ESE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Sa, 3Bds
10.179	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	Charcoal evident and two stones over lower half	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.180	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.181	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Cr, Toilet Set
10.182	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Cauldron sat on wood lying over skull	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1 Cauldron
10.183	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	M	-	-	-	2Sp	1Kn, 1 Cauldron
10.184	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu
10.185	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
10.186	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.187	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 2SqHd, poss Cr, 4Bds, 1 Ring, 1WrCl cylindrical cu obj with wood in socket, 1 Pot, 1 Cup (inside pot)
10.188	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
10.189	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.190	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1App, 1 Fe obj
10.191	-	-	Inhum.	-	NW-SE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1 Pin
10.192	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.193	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	4	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.194	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	M	-	-	1Sp	1Kn

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
10.195	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	M	-	-	1Sp	0
10.196	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1 Fe obj
10.197	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.198	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.199	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.200	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	0	1WrCl, 1GHr plate, 1 bronze bound bucket
10.201	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSE-NNW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2Kn
10.202	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	Child	-	-	-	-	0	Iron obj
10.203	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.204	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.205	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
10.206	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.207	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sh	0
10.208	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.209	-	-	Inhum.	-	WNW-ESE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Cu frag
10.210	-	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
10.211	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
10.212	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	M	-	-	-	1Sh	1Kn
10.213	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-	0	Bone comb
10.214	-	-	Inhum.	-	SSW-NNE	-	-	F	-	-	-	0	1 Pot

SITE NAME: Billesley

ID: 11

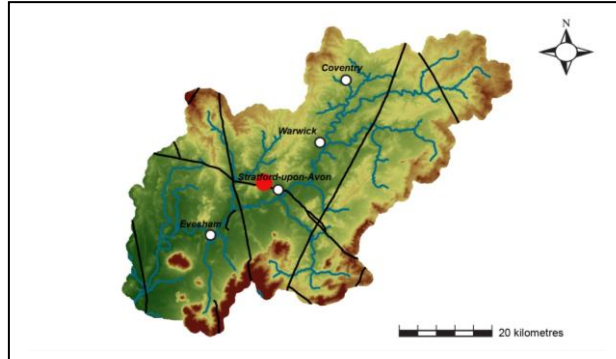
Parish & County: Billesley, Warks.

Coordinates: 415110 259360

Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th Century

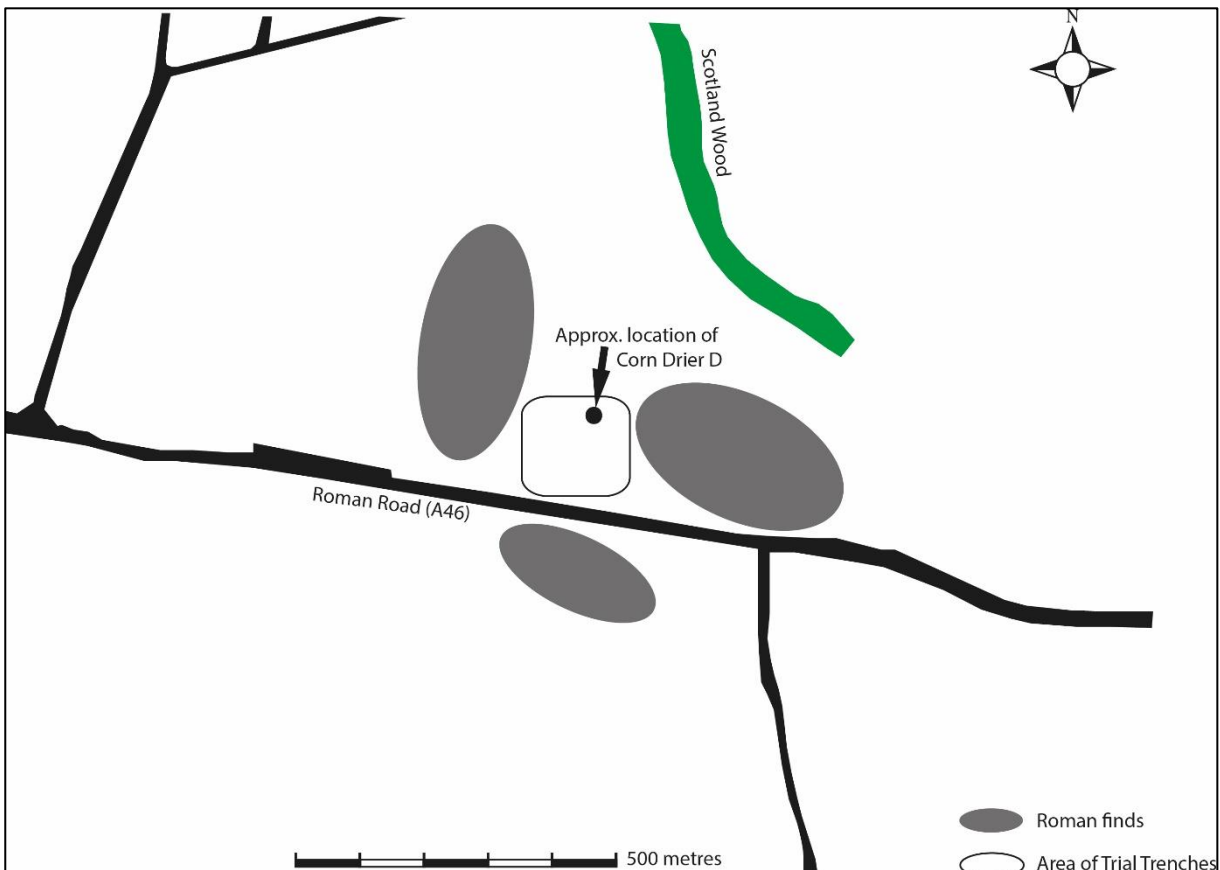
Description: A Roman rural settlement which lies on the road between Alcester and Tiddington. The settlement develops from the 1st Century AD with peaks in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries, including the construction of stone buildings in the latter. The site continues in use until the mid - late 4th Century. A single male inhumation was inserted in to a corn drier (D) along with an iron spear head, a shield boss, and 2 buckles. These objects date the inhumation to the 6th Century. According to evidence from a late 7th or early 8th Century charter, the Roman road formed the boundary between the parishes of Billesley and Stratford.



Sources: Hooke 1999; Palmer 2003

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Blacklow Hill

ID: 12

Parish & County: Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe, Warks.

Coordinates: 429030 267530

Site Type: Burial Activity

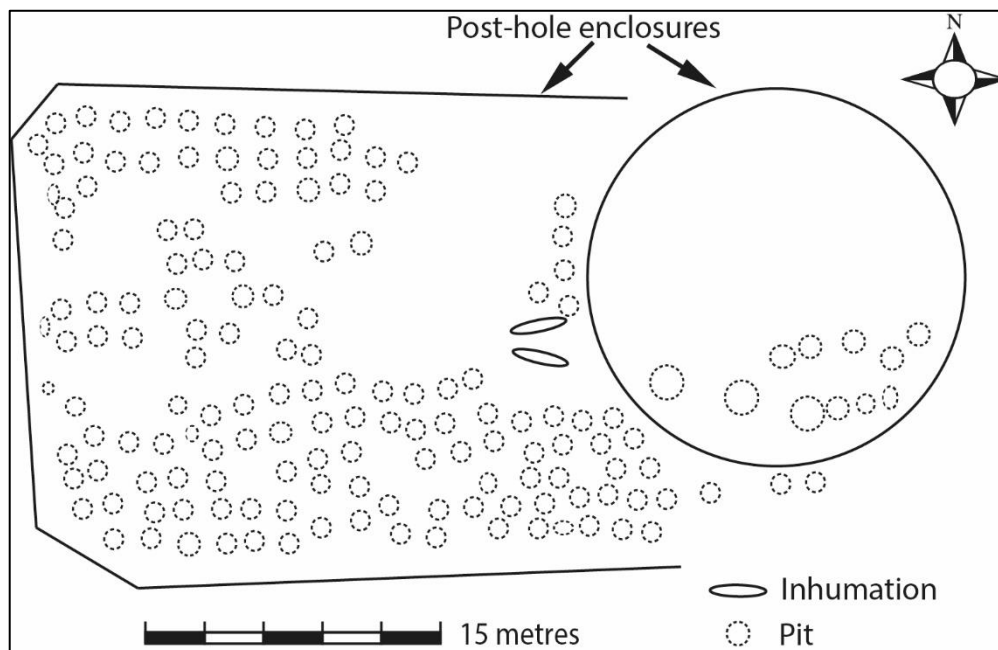
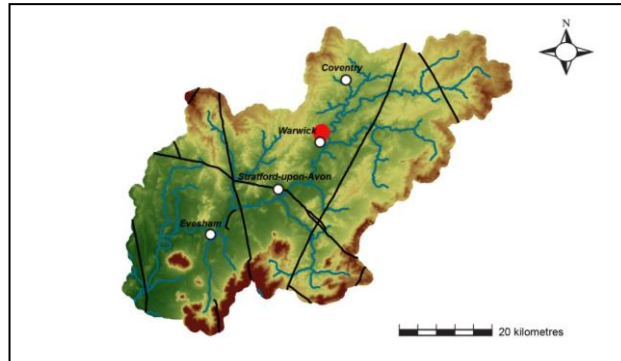
Date: Late 6th – Early 7th Century

Description: A rectangular enclosure surrounding 270 circular pits cut into the bedrock and with two burials at the eastern end - one containing a seax of the late 6th - early 7th Century.

Sources: Ford 1971; Ford 1996:69-70

Superficial Geology: Loam over Sandstone

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Blockley

ID: 13

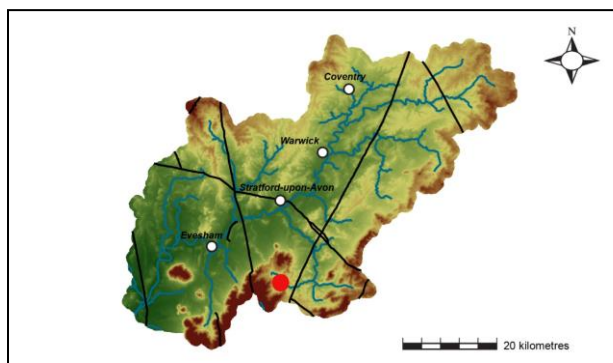
Parish & County: Blockley, Glos.

Coordinates: 418240 236960

Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th Century

Description: A total of five inhumations and a scatter of pottery thought to belong to cinerary urns were found ahead of construction in the 1920s. Two burials with weapons were found, containing two spear heads and a shield boss. A burial with 65 amber, glass, and paste beads was also found. A copper alloy brooch was found nearby and seems to be similar to four examples of square headed brooches found at Bidford. The cemetery has been dated to the 6th Century, but may continue into the 7th Century.



Sources: Barnard 1925

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam to Clay

Site Plan: none available

Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
13.1	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
13.2	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	-	-	-	-	m	1.78-1.83	-	1Sp	0
13.3	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	-	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1SqSL
13.4	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	65 Bds, 2 toilet implements
13.5	-	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0

SITE NAME: Bredon's Norton

ID: 14

Parish & County: Bredon's Norton,
Worcs.

Coordinates: 392540 239130

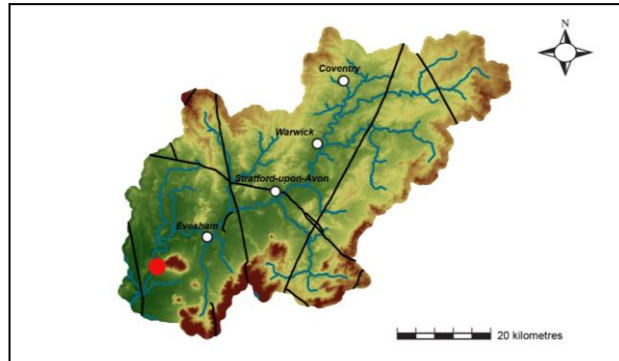
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th? Century

Description: In 1838, workers on a railway line uncovered various finds likely to belong to burials. These included: several shield bosses, spearheads, fragments of a sword with part of the scabbard, and two beads. Work on a water pipeline in 2009, revealed a possible Roman settlement in the vicinity of nearby Brookfield Farm, with activity into the 4th Century.

Sources: Meaney 1964:280; Joyce 2009

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



SITE NAME: Broadway

ID: 15

Parish & County: Broadway, Glos.

Coordinates: 411640 236660

Site Type: Burial Activity

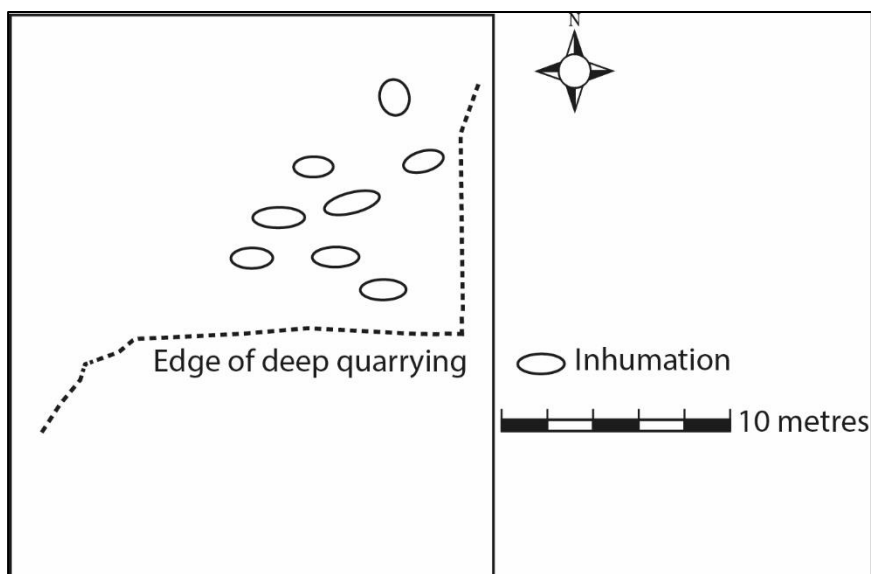
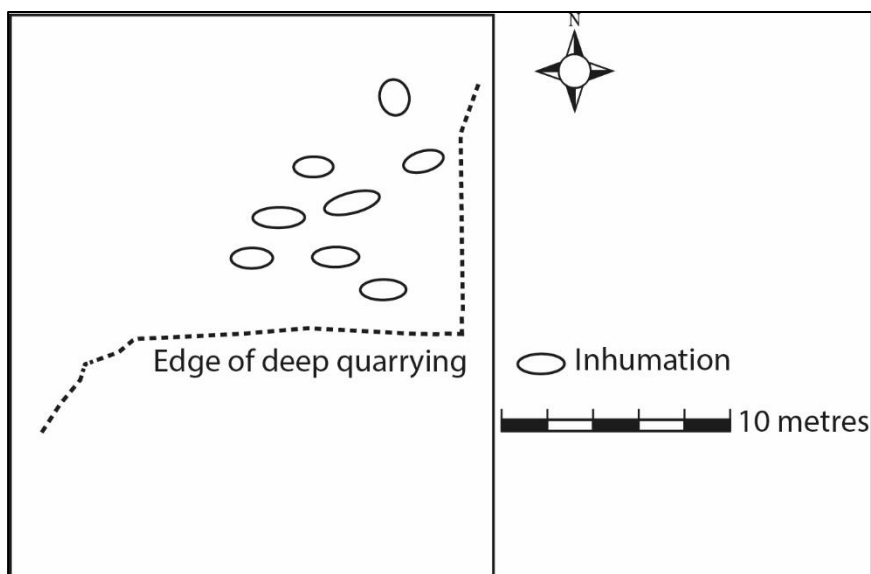
Date: Late 5th – 6th Century

Description: A cemetery of at least eight inhumations and one possible cremation was discovered on a crest of Broadway Hill in 1954. The site had been heavily disturbed by quarrying and appears to have once extended to the East and South-East. The few undisturbed skeletons have a West-East orientation and analysis of the skeletal remains suggested three females and four males, with only one sub-25 years old. Grave 1 contains saucer brooches with Roman motifs and is cast from the same mould as a pair from Broughton Poggs, Oxon. These date to the 5th Century. The accompanying buckle also dates to the late 5th Century. Grave 5 shows some Kentish influences in the rampant beast on the bronze-gilt square-headed brooch (Leed's Kentish type B, which has parallels with the Baginton example) and the belt fittings. The assemblage from this grave dates to the mid-6th century. In addition, an un-contextualised sword, spearhead, shield boss, a bronze rim of a probable bucket, and 53 paste and glass beads were found. The cemetery, from this small sample, seems to date to the late 5th - 6th centuries.

Sources: Cook 1958; Meaney 1964: 280-81

Superficial Geology: Shallow Loam over Limestone

Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
15.1	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2Sa, bronze + silver wire, 19Bds
15.2	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
15.3	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
15.4	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
15.5	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu, 2App, 1SqHd, 3 Cu plates, 2 Silver Ri, 17Bds
15.6	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
15.7	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, 1Ri
15.8	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Bds, strap end

SITE NAME: Broom

ID: 16

Parish & County: Bidford-on-Avon, Warks.

Coordinates: 408410 253790

Site Type: Settlement Features

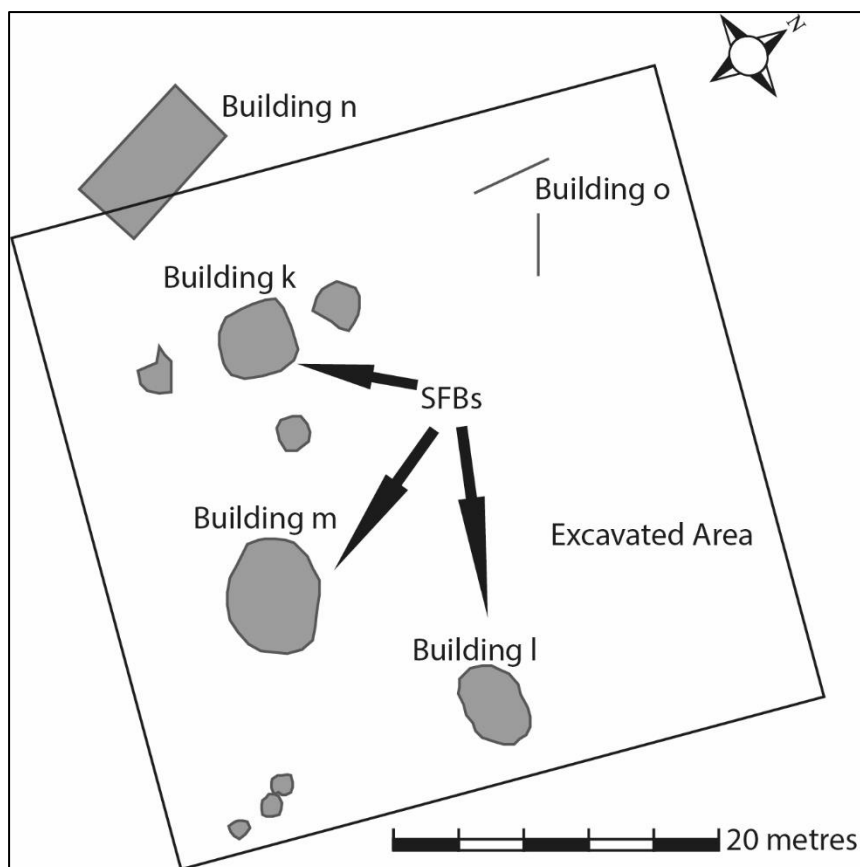
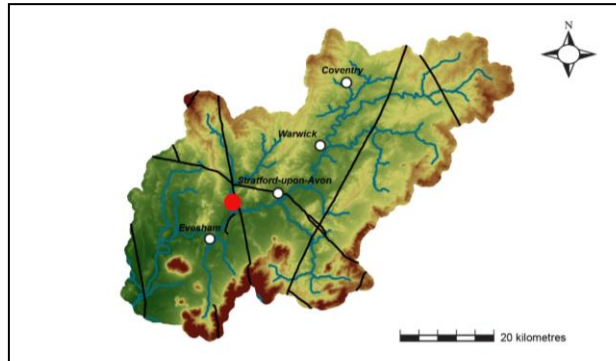
Date: 6th Century

Description: The possible site of a single phase of early medieval occupation, with evidence of a timber 'hall'-like structure and probable SFBs. The site is located within a landscape of rural Roman farmsteads on a hill above the River Arrow. A total of 736 Anglo-Saxon pottery sherds were recovered from the site, with distinct similarities with the assemblages found at Bidford and Alveston Manor.

Sources: Palmer 2000

Superficial Geology: Deep red Loam

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Cave's Inn

ID: 17

Parish & County: Shawell, Leics.

Coordinates: 453600 279500

Site Type: Burial Activity

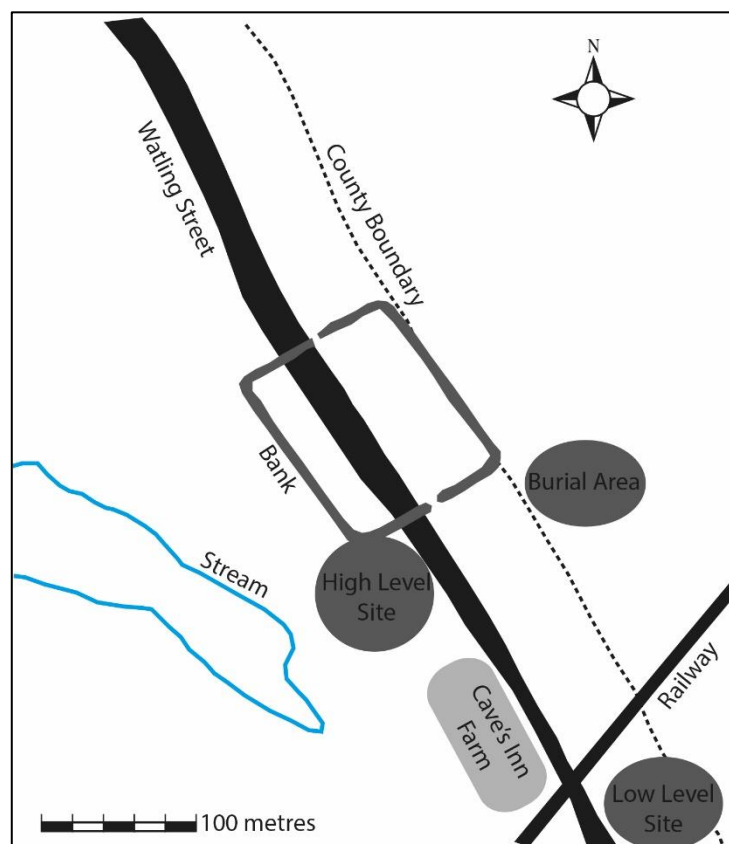
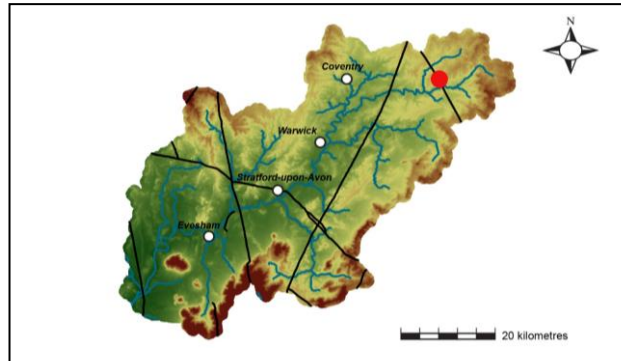
Date: 6th Century

Description: A number of early medieval finds from either side of Watling Street were reported in the mid-20th Century. Additionally, skeletons have been reported in antiquity from this same area. It seems probable that an early medieval cemetery existed here, near the Roman station at Tripontium. Finds include a cruciform brooch of the late 6th Century, two gilt bronze wrist clasps, annular brooches, a swastika brooch, and spear heads.

Sources: Meaney 1964:145

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Loam to Clay

Site Plan: (showing the location of the early medieval cemetery at Cave's Inn Farm in relation to the sites associated with the Roman settlement of Tripontium)



SITE NAME: Chesterton

ID: 18

Parish & County: Chesterton, Warks.

Coordinates: 434200 259640

Site Type: Non-burial Activity

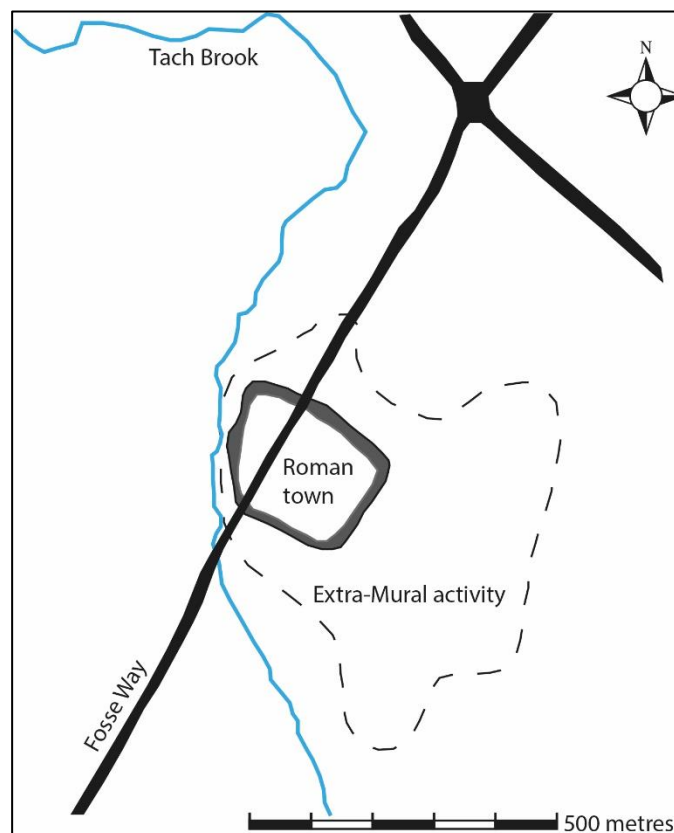
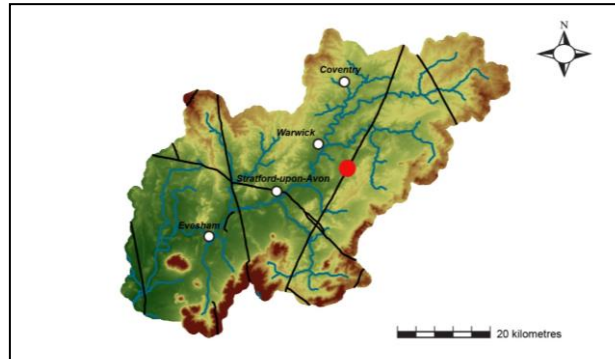
Date: 5th? Century

Description: An enclosed Roman station which straddled the Fosse Way, with evidence of occupation from the 1st - 4th Centuries. The enclosure ditch seems to belong to the 4th Century and building continued in the town at least until the late 4th Century. There was also evidence of Roman burials beyond the town. Robbing of building material within the settlement in the late 4th Century and intrusive fire pits cut into these later levels may be indicative of post-Roman activity.

Sources: Palmer 2009:71; Taylor 1967; Burnham & Wachter 1990:249-52

Superficial Geology: Deep red Loam to Clay

Site Plan: (of Roman site)



SITE NAME: Churchover

ID: 19

Parish & County: Churchover, Warks.

Coordinates: 452340 281570

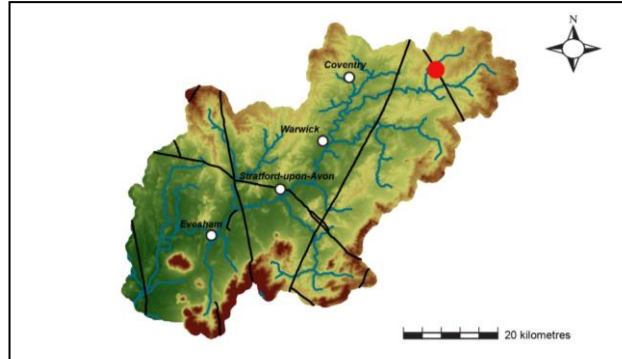
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th – Early 7th Century

Description: In 1824, repairs to Watling Street found burials extending for a half mile along and within the course of the Roman road, between Bransford Bridge and Gibbet Hill, on the boundary between Warwickshire and Leicestershire. In what appears to have been a mixed cemetery, inhumations and a single cremation were accompanied by various weapons and jewellery. The weapons include: shield bosses, spear heads, knives, and a sword. Brooches include: small-long, cruciform, flat, annular, penannular. Other items include: wrist clasps, rings, amber and glass beads, iron buckles, and drinking cups. It is possible that a mound was above the burials. In 1958, alterations to the road found four further skeletons just north of Gibbet Hill, one with a sword.

Sources: Meaney 1964:259

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Compton Verney

ID: 20

Parish & County: Compton Verney, Warks.

Coordinates: 431080 252550

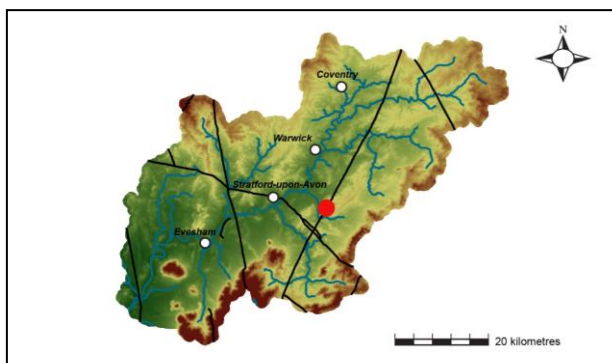
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 7th Century

Description: In 1778, three skulls were found with two gold pendants - one ornamented with garnets and filigree, the other a bracteate of the 7th century

Sources: Meaney 1964:260

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay



SITE NAME: Cotesbach

ID: 21

Parish & County: Cotesbach, Leics.

Coordinates: 453090 282390

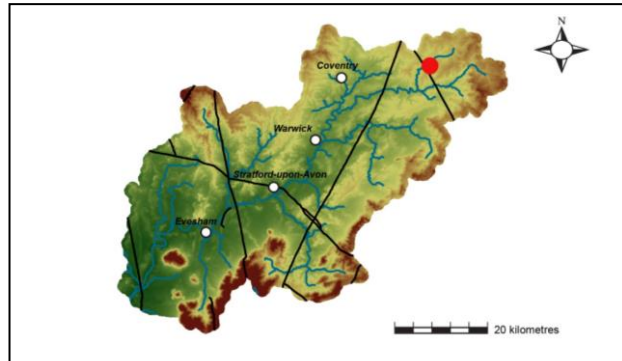
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th Century

Description: Two brooch fragments found in close proximity to each other - one either a cruciform or small-long brooch of the 5th-6th Centuries and the second a cruciform brooch whose construction technique suggests an early to mid-6th Century date. Both brooches are likely to belong to female graves and may, therefore, represent a cemetery site.

Sources: Finds Report Leics 2410 & 2878

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Deerhurst

ID: 22

Parish & County: Deerhurst, Glos.

Coordinates: 387040 229960

Site Type: Settlement Features

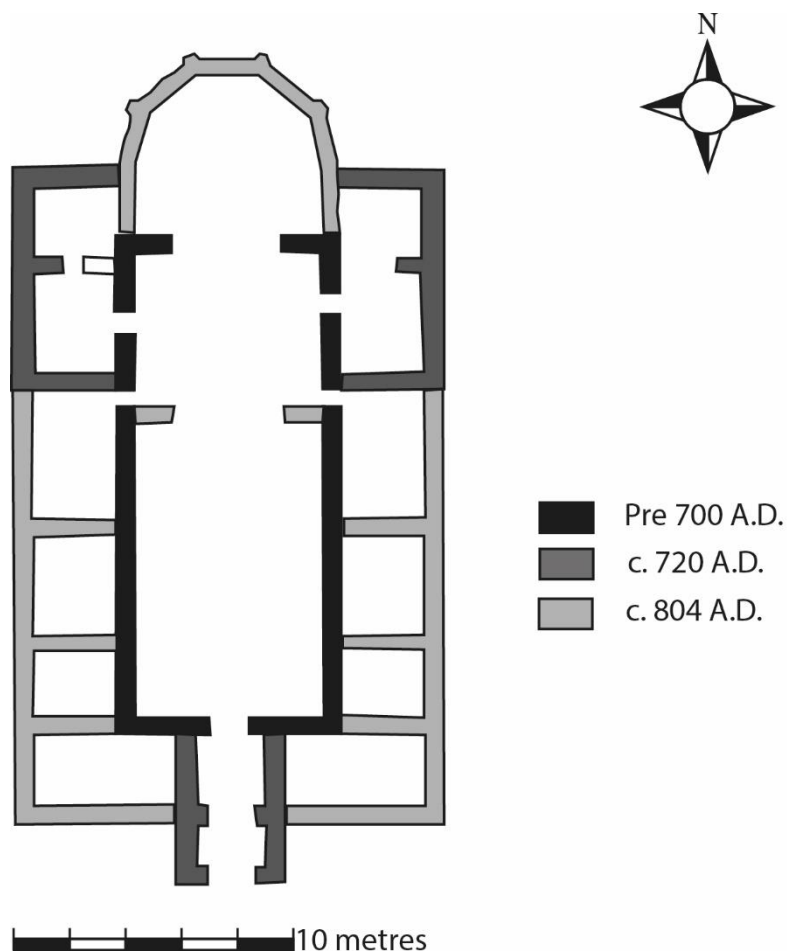
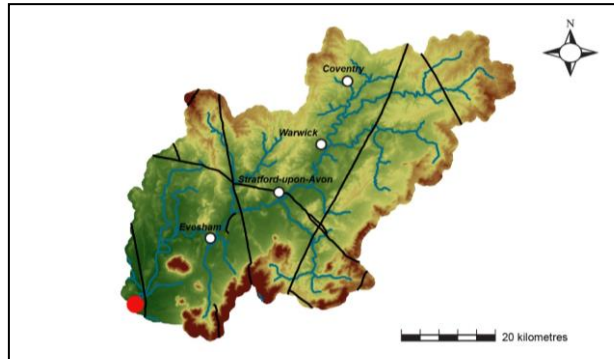
Date: Mid-5th Century - Medieval

Description: The earliest phases of the Priory Church at Deerhurst are likely to belong to the mid-5th Century and may be the work of Germanus and the school of Tours. Rahtz has shown there is likely to have been a Roman villa in the vicinity. The church cuts at least one burial and may have been erected on an existing open cemetery.

Sources: Gilbert 1972; Rahtz 1971

Superficial Geology: Deep red loam to clay

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Ebrington

ID: 23

Parish & County: Ebrington, Glos.

Coordinates: 418298 240006

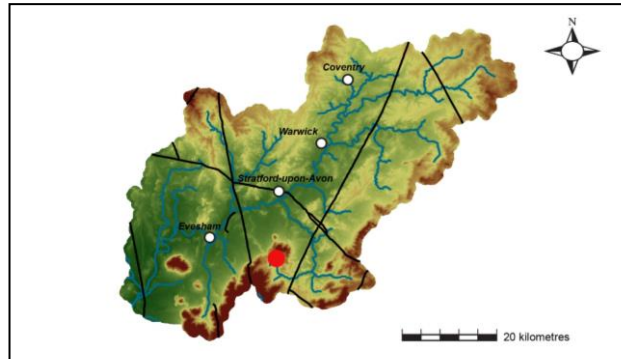
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century

Description: In the mid-1800s, approximately 48 skeletons were found with various pieces of "armour, coins and a sort of gold plate" - including two iron shield bosses, spearheads, a bronze ring, a bronze pin, and an ornamental strip of silver. The British Museum also holds a 6th Century copper alloy disc brooch with a ring and dot motif in the shape of a cruciform recorded from the site. The brooch is very similar to one recorded on the PAS at Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire. The inhumation cemetery lies near to the 2nd Century Grove villa and bath suite.

Sources: Meaney 1964; BM 1856,0701.5175

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Emscote

ID: 24

Parish & County: Warwick, Warks.

Coordinates: 429630 265260

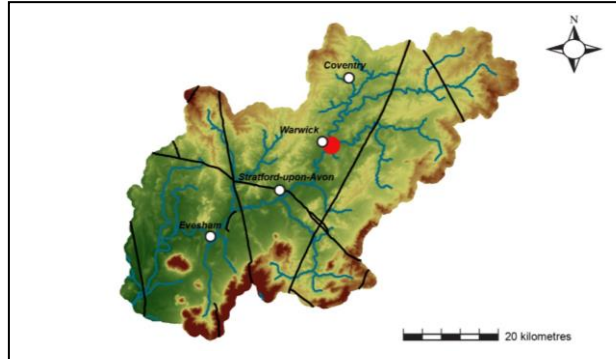
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th Century

Description: Approximately 7+ inhumations found during the excavation of gravel on the bank of the River Avon. These were accompanied by iron spear heads, shield bosses, a buckle, 2 pots, brooches: 2 disc, 2 small-long, 2 saucer, an ornate large square-headed (Hines Group V), and a Roman example; and finally, a silver necklet comparable with examples from Rutland and Ipswich.

Sources: Chatwin 1926; Meaney 1964:260; Hines 1997:58-63; BM 1925,0404.1

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Clay



SITE NAME: Fairfield Estate

ID: 25

Parish & County: Evesham, Worcs.

Coordinates: 403900 242900

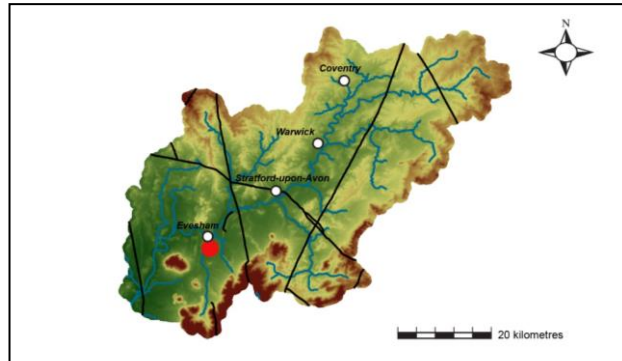
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th – 7th Century

Description: At least one burial is represented, with one skeleton and multiple finds discovered in 1953. The skeleton was on a low ridge, with the head to the west. On the spoil heap were found a pair of annular brooches, a late 6th/7th Century saucer brooch, other dress items, and an iron knife.

Sources: Meaney 1964:281

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay



SITE NAME: Halford

ID: 26

Parish & County: Halford, Warks.

Coordinates: 425900 245300

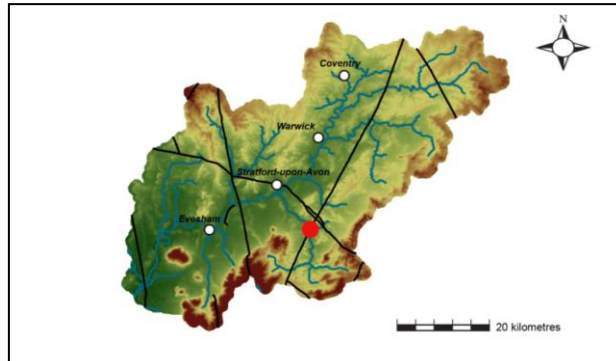
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century

Description: During work near to the Fosse Way in 1790, three inhumations were found laid out along the road. One burial included a javelin, a spear head, and fragments of a possible shield boss.

Sources: Meaney 1964:260

Superficial Geology: Shallow Clay over Limestone



SITE NAME: Hatton Rock

ID: 27

Parish & County: Hampton Lucy, Warks.

Coordinates: 423710 257700

Site Type: Settlement Features

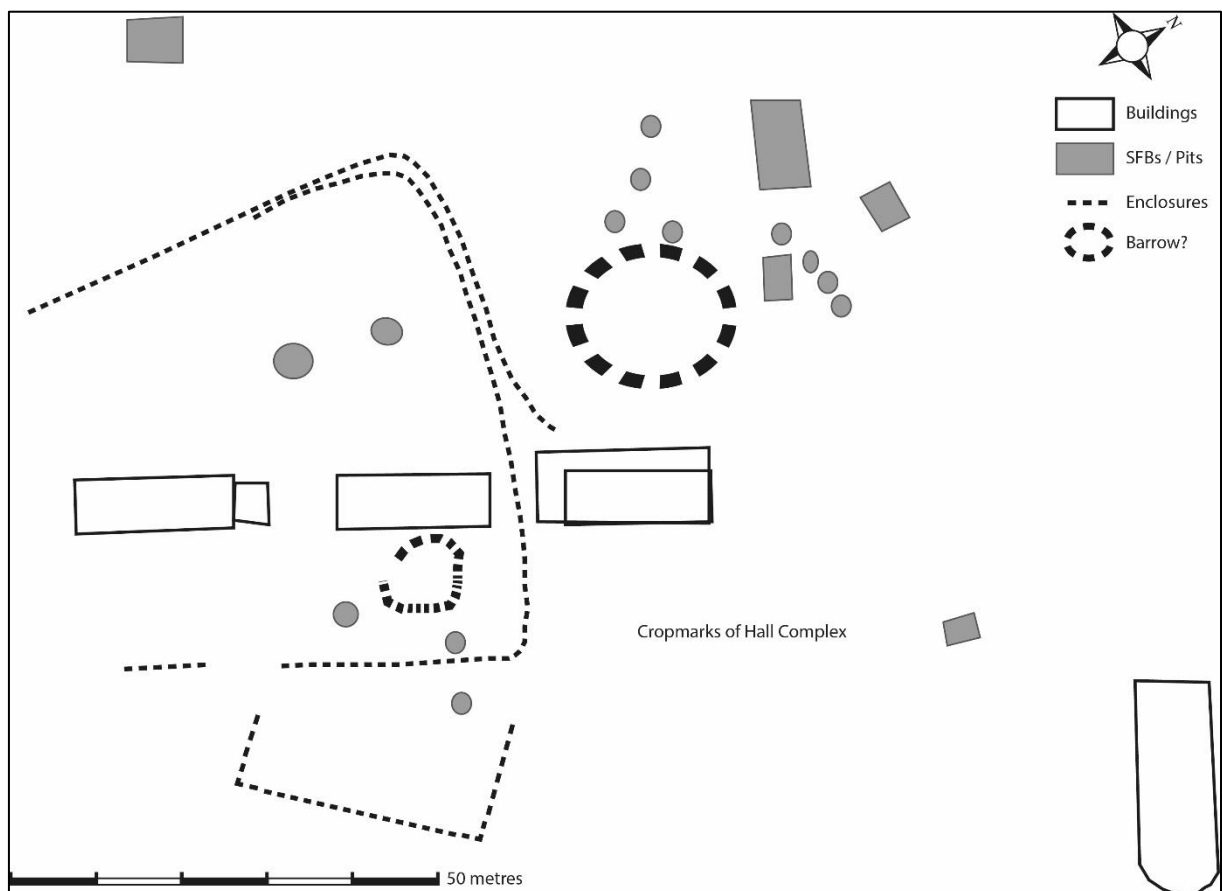
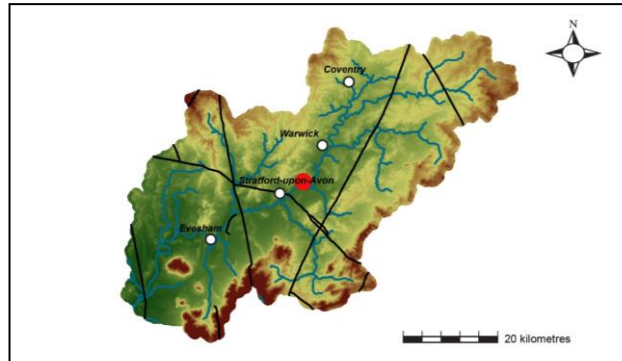
Date: Late 6th – 7th Century

Description: An early medieval hall complex and settlement primarily known from aerial photographs. The site is thought to comprise: 3 'halls', associated enclosures, possible SFBs and other buildings - one tentatively interpreted as a church.

Sources: Rahtz 1970; Hirst & Rahtz 1973

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Ipsley, GPO Exchange Site

ID: 28

Parish & County: Redditch, Worcs.

Coordinates: 406750 266620

Site Type: Settlement Features

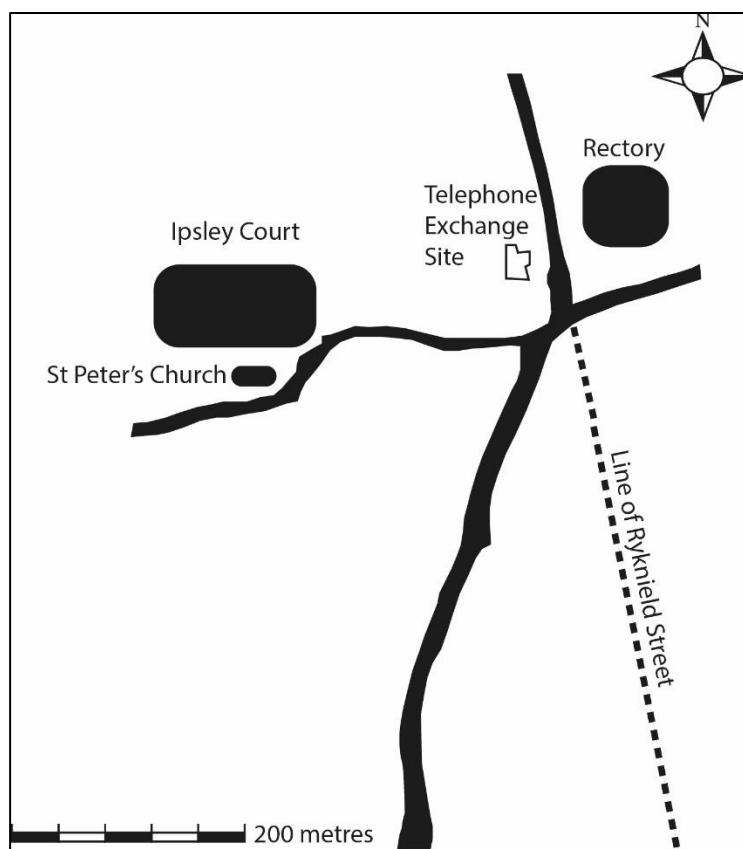
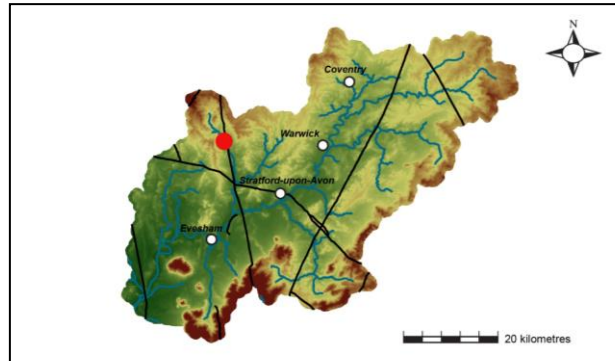
Date: 5th – 6th Century

Description: Evidence of early medieval occupation in the form of a post-built structure measuring 10.7 x 7.6m, with a cobbled exterior yard at an angle to the adjacent Ryknield Street at the GPO Telephone Exchange Site. The Roman road shows post-Roman activity in the form of fencing down its centre. A 5th/6th Century Francisca lying directly on the cobbled surface gives an indication of date.

Sources: Fasham 1988

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet Loam to clayey over red Shale

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Kemerton Sewage Works

ID: 29

Parish & County: Kemerton, Worcs.

Coordinates: 394100 236050

Site Type: Settlement Features

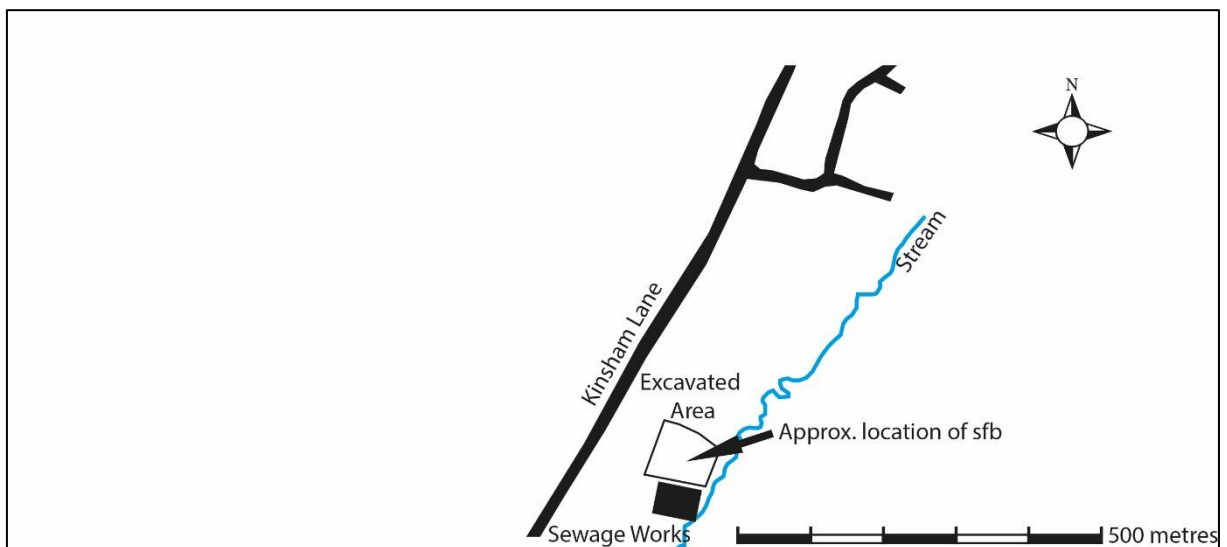
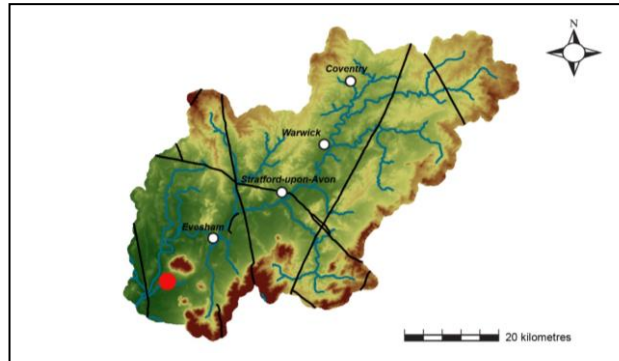
Date: 5th – 7th Century

Description: A series of post and stake holes, construction slots, pits and an sfb in an area not previously utilised. The excavators use pottery to date these features to 5th -7th Centuries, using the Droitwich sequence.

Sources: Fagan et al 1994

Superficial Geology: Loam over Gravel

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Kilsby

ID: 30

Parish & County: Kilsby, Northants.

Coordinates: 456820 273390

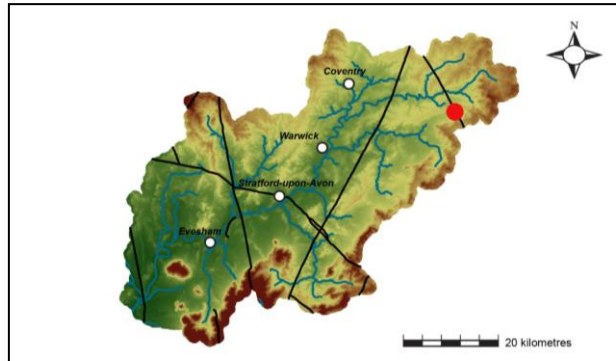
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century

Description: A female skeleton found in 1947, cut into the surface of Watling Street, with an additional skull and remains of a dog. Sir Henry Dryden, in 1845, reported six further skeletons from beside or within the road between here and Welton - one with a spear head.

Sources: Brown & Hannan 1978

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Clay



SITE NAME: Kineton

ID: 31

Parish & County: Kineton, Warks.

Coordinates: 432640 251660

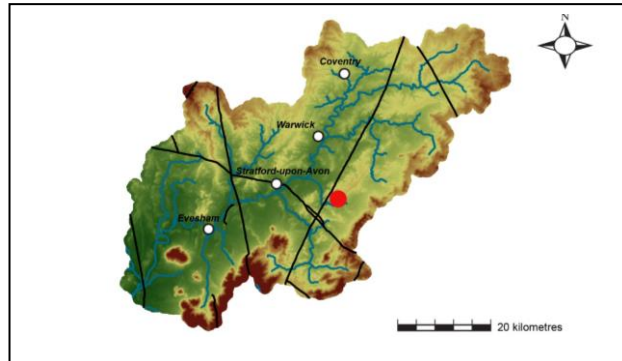
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century

Description: In 1861, up to ten skeletons were found in a stone pit on Pittan Hill, with an iron spear head and a sword, and lying on a black substance. The parish of Kineton is thought to have lain on the boundary between the Hwicce and Mercia.

Sources: Hooke 1999:66; Meaney 1964:217

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay



SITE NAME: Kinwarton Churchyard

ID: 32

Parish & County: Kinwarton, Warks.

Coordinates: 410520 258370

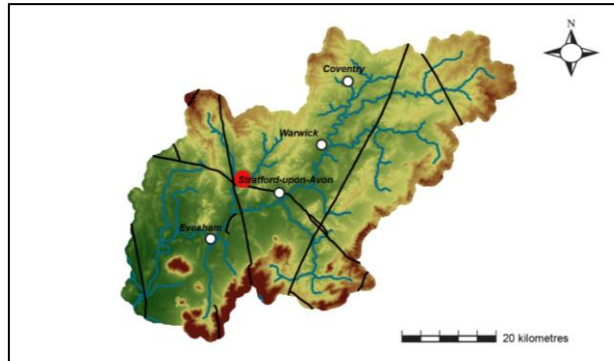
Site Type: Burial Activity?

Date: Late 5th? – Early 6th? Century

Description: Very tentative identification of early medieval burial activity in and around the churchyard: two burials on a non-East-West orientation recorded south of the church; swords recorded in the nearby rectory garden; and a silvered disc brooch with a ring and dot motif found by a metal-detectorist in the village.

Sources: Stoke & Brownsword 1984; Warwickshire HER MWA 1562 & 1563

Superficial Geology: Deep red Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Lighthorne

ID: 33

Parish & County: Lighthorne, Warks.

Coordinates: 433610 256240

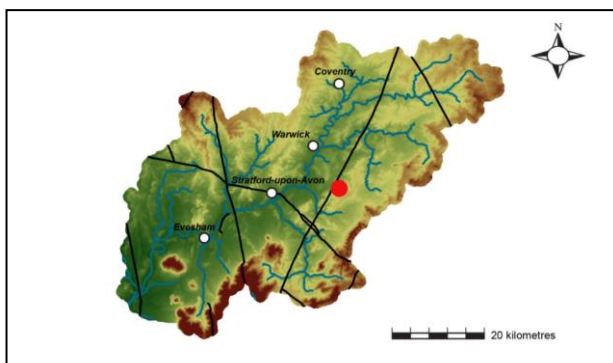
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century

Description: In the 19th Century, two inhumations were found surrounded by a dark substance - possibly charcoal. One skeleton was found with an amber bead necklace. Hanging bowl escutcheons were reported from the same hill, but their association with the burials is unknown.

Sources: Meaney 1964:217

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay



SITE NAME: Littlehampton

ID: 34

Parish & County: Evesham, Worcs.

Coordinates: 403170 243080

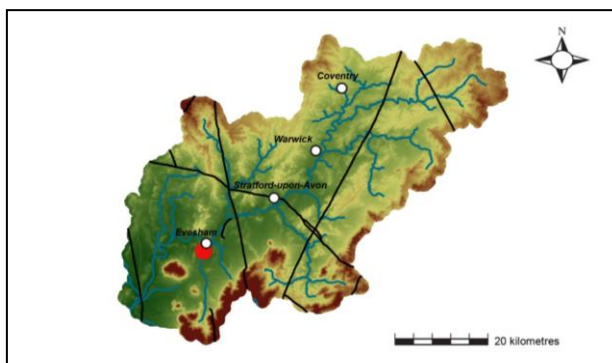
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 7th Century

Description: An unspecified number of skeletons, potentially only one, were discovered in 1862, on the right bank of the River Avon. The burial(s) was accompanied by a scramasax, and a gold pin suite which contained a central ornament of a garnet set in gold filigree - a 7th Century Kentish style, with parallels at Bidford and Desborough, Northants.

Sources: Franks 1864:27; Aberg 1926:135; BM 1864,1220.1

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Clay



SITE NAME: Long Itchington

ID: 35

Parish & County: Long Itchington, Warks.

Coordinates: 441380 265860

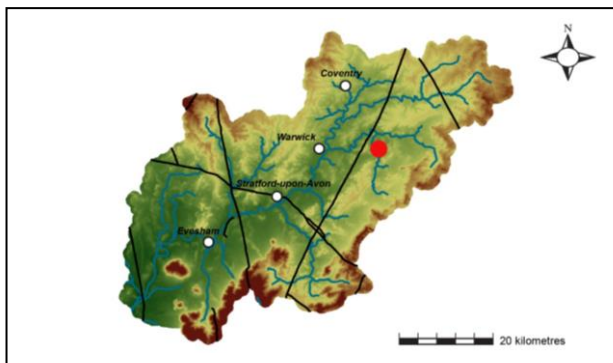
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century?

Description: A secondary burial, possibly two individuals, within a barrow, and accompanied by an Anglian style urn. Likely to be a cremation burial. 'Little low' is recorded in a boundary clause for the Long Itchington charter, and may be the location of the burials. These burials would lie on the Long Itchington and Offchurch parish boundary.

Sources: Meaney 1964:217; Hooke 1999:110-12

Superficial Geology: Deep red Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Snowford Bridge

ID: 36

Parish & County: Long Itchington, Warks.

Coordinates: 439680 267160

Site Type: Settlement Features

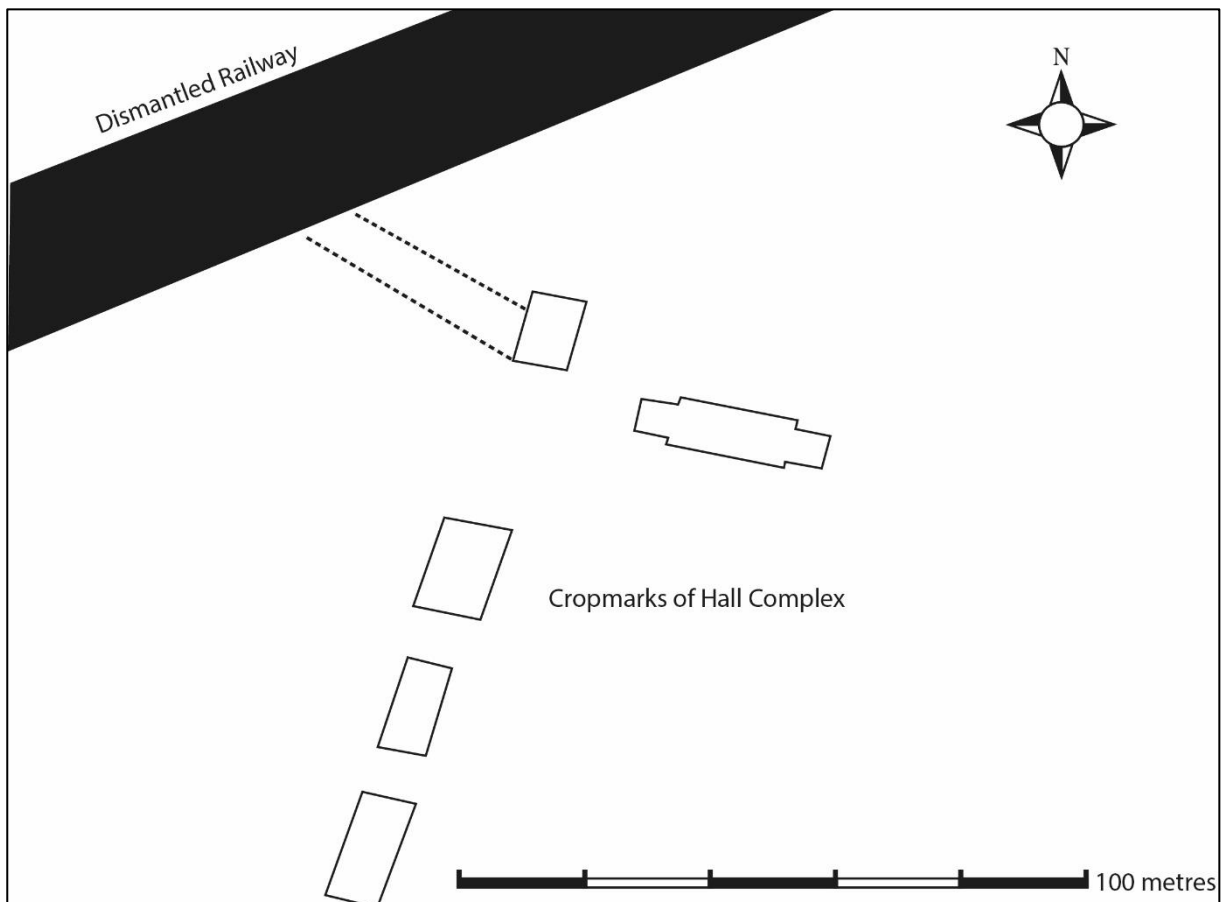
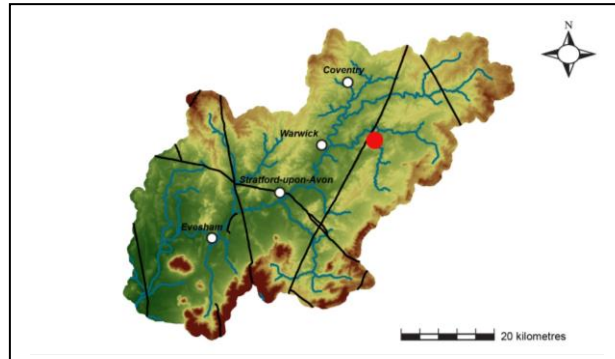
Date: Late 6th – Mid-7th Century

Description: Cropmarks show a potential hall complex similar to Hatton Rock. The complex is in an area of early Roman farmsteads, with a later concentration of occupation evidence into the 4th Century. A pit with 5th - 7th Century pottery was also found near the cropmarks.

Sources: Palmer 2009:69-163

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Longbridge Park

ID: 37

Parish & County: Warwick, Warks.

Coordinates: 427480 263200

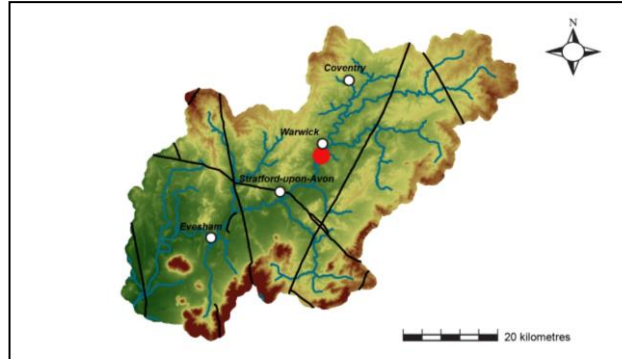
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: Mid-6th – 7th Century

Description: Several inhumations were found in the 19th Century during gravel extraction. The burials included a particularly wealthy female grave with a Scandinavian gold bracteate, a florid cruciform brooch (of Aberg's Group V and belonging to the latter half of the 6th Century), a silver arm-ring, and amber beads. Other finds include: a 3 foot sword and scabbard, spear heads, knives, bosses (one with a sword tip embedded in it), 7 saucer brooches (two are a pair with central garnets), ring and small-long brooches, buckets and a glass drinking vessel. An area of only 50 x 60 feet was excavated and the possibility remains that further burials lie undiscovered.

Sources: Aberg 1926:56; Meaney 1964:261; Vierck 1970; Dickinson 1993:17; BM 1880,0214.1, 1876,0521.1, .2, .3

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



SITE NAME: Lower Farm

ID: 38

Parish & County: Bishop's Cleeve, Glos.

Coordinates: 394850 227080

Site Type: Burial Activity

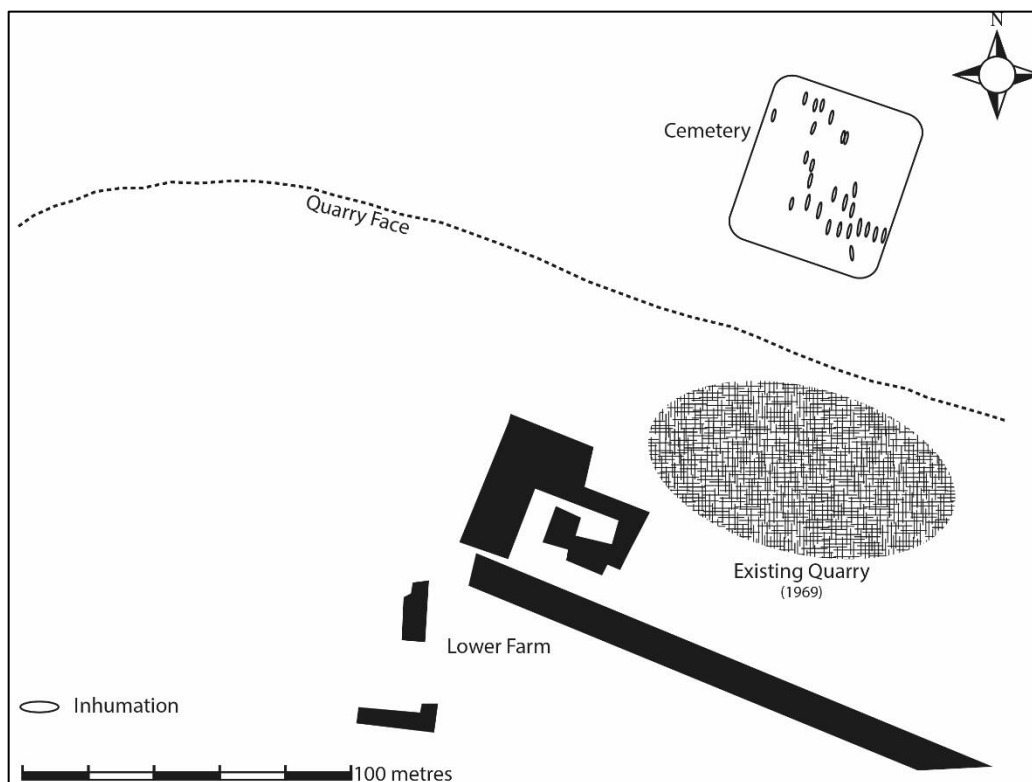
Date: Mid-6th – Early 7th Century

Description: An inhumation cemetery discovered in 1969 during sand quarrying and partly excavated by Cheltenham Museum. Twenty-six inhumations have been recorded, all with orientations of North-South. Sixteen burials were accompanied by grave goods, these included: amber beads, saucer brooches and spearheads. No swords or shield bosses were recovered and only 8% of the graves contained any weapons. Subsequent work suggested that the whole cemetery had been excavated. A few potsherds occurred nearby but no definite settlement remains were noted. The primary grave appears to be a female at the southernmost limit of the cemetery, dated by a saucer brooch to c.525 - 570 AD. The span of the cemetery is broadly mid-6th - early 7th Century, with only 50-75 years of use.

Sources: Holbrook 2000

Superficial Geology: Loam over gravel

Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
38.1	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Sa, 93Bds
38.2	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.3	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn, 1Bu
38.4	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.5	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	45+	f	f	-	-	0	2Sa
38.6	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	Prone	S-N	-	45+	f	-	-	-	0	0
38.7	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	f	-	-	-	0	1Bu, snaffle bit, iron strip
38.8	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
38.9	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.10	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.11	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.12	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	15-25	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.13	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	25-35	-	f	-	-	0	1Cr, Cu disc, Cu pin, 5Bds
38.14	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	adult	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Bu
38.15	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	Side, knees bent	S-N	-	juv	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
38.16	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.17	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	25-35	-	f	-	-	0	7Bds
38.18	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	f	f	-	-	0	Cu suspension loop, iron object attached. Cu plated iron object. 84 Bds
38.19	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.20	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	adult	f	-	-	-	0	0
38.21	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	15-25	f	f	-	-	0	2Bds
38.22	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
38.23	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	Left side	S-N	-	adult	f	f	-	-	0	5Bds
38.24	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	Left side	S-N	-	Younger than 25	-	f	-	-	0	1Bd
38.25	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	Left side	SW-NE	-	Younger than burial 24	-	f?	-	-	0	Bone pendant
38.26	M6th - E7th	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu

SITE NAME: Lutterworth

ID: 39

Parish & County: Lutterworth, Leics.

Coordinates: 451200 283300

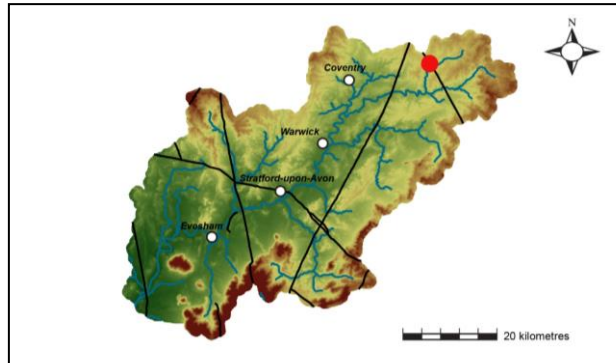
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: Late 6th – 7th Century

Description: A single inhumation was uncovered during a road widening scheme along a stretch of Watling Street, near Lutterworth. Skeletal analysis suggested a 17-25 year old male, although the sexing was not conclusive. The burial was found with a copper alloy ring, a decorated bone disc, and a penannular brooch. The disc and the brooch indicate either a late 6th or 7th Century date.

Sources: Liddle 1986

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Marlcliff

ID: 40

Parish & County: Bidford-on-Avon, Warks.

Coordinates: 409860 250180

Site Type: Burial Activity

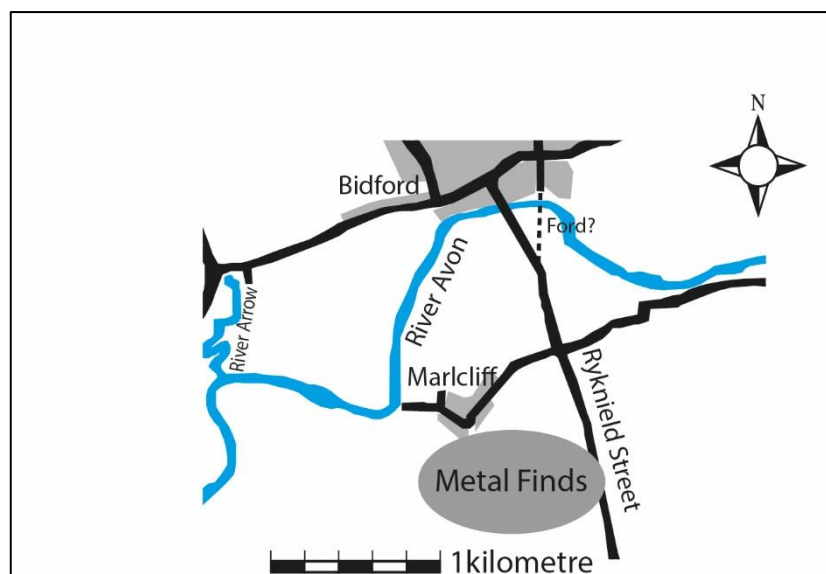
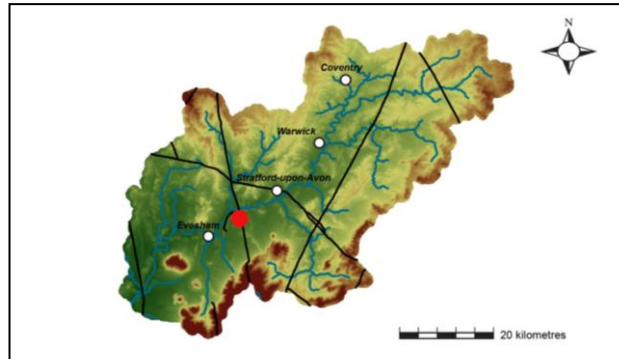
Date: 5th-6th Century

Description: At least five Roman buildings have been identified along with extensive metal finds; these are suggestive of a market function, perhaps in the 3rd and 4th Centuries. A number of 5th and 6th Century metal-detector finds, normally associated with burials, may indicate a cemetery. This may be succeeded by a 7th - 9th Century settlement which has been tentatively identified from evidence of pottery scatters and sceattas.

Sources: Hingley 1986; Hingley et al. 1987; Naylor & Richards 2010

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Marton

ID: 41

Parish & County: Marton, Warks.

Coordinates: 441420 268110

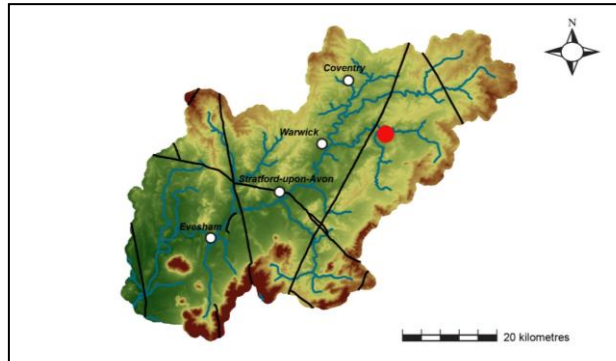
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: Late 6th? – 7th? Century

Description: During the digging of the Rugby - Leamington railway, cremation urns and unburned human remains were found in a tumulus along with an iron sword, spear heads, a shield boss, 3 annular brooches, a saucer brooch, and a bronze pin.

Sources: Bloxam 1875:37; Meaney 1964:261

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



SITE NAME: Meon Hill

ID: 42

Parish & County: Quinton, Warks.

Coordinates: 417430 245350

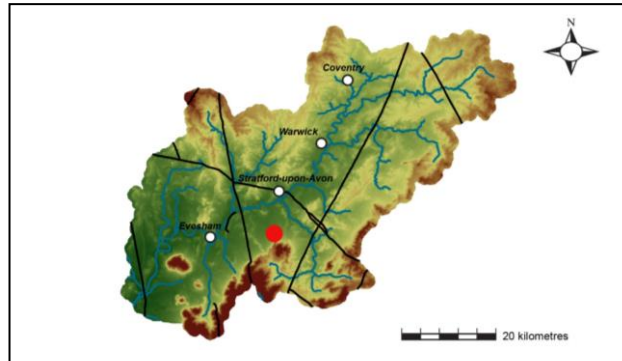
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century

Description: An inhumation was found associated with the Iron Age hillfort ramparts. Found with a shield boss, spear head, and a ferrule.

Sources: Meaney 1964:261

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Milcote Hall

ID: 43

Parish & County: Milcote, Warks.

Coordinates: 419100 252900

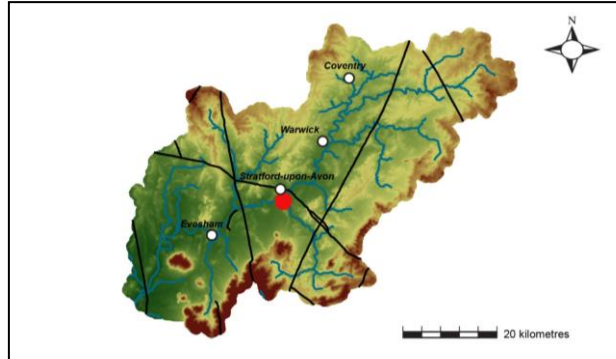
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th? – 7th? Century

Description: A possible substantial inhumation cemetery; recorded in the 19th Century as containing up to 3000 burials. Four hundred male skeletons were purportedly exhumed, with 2 possible grave goods - a wooden club and what might be part of a sword blade. Some 'Saxon' pottery was found in association with these burials. There is documentary evidence of a Saxon and Danish dispute over the manor held at Milcote by the former. It is possible, therefore, that the site is too late for this study. However, a single spindle whorl at the British Museum does suggest 5th-7th Century activity within the Milcote estate.

Sources: Wellstood 1923; BM 1938,0102.1

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



SITE NAME: Mount Pleasant

ID: 44

Parish & County: Burton Dassett, Warks.

Coordinates: 439540 252310

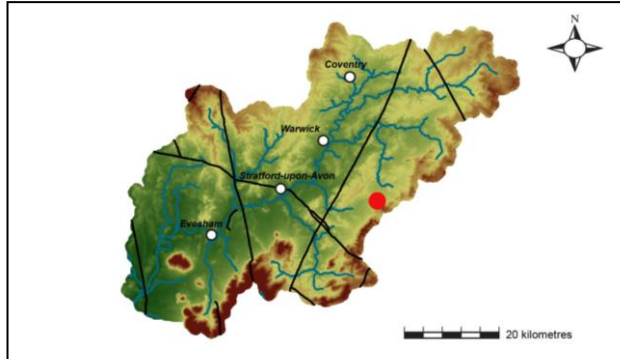
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th? – 8th? Century

Description: In 1908, during quarrying, 35 skeletons were found interred in two trenches and a single inhumation was found to the north. The single grave contained a seax, the only grave good recorded from the cemetery. The site is dated to 6th-8th Centuries by the seax and pottery sherds. Further burials were reported from the surrounding Burton Dassett Hills in the 19th Century.

Sources: Westacott 1924

Superficial Geology: Loam over Sandstone



SITE NAME: Napton Hill

ID: 45

Parish & County: Napton-on-the-Hill, Warks.

Coordinates: 445530 261240

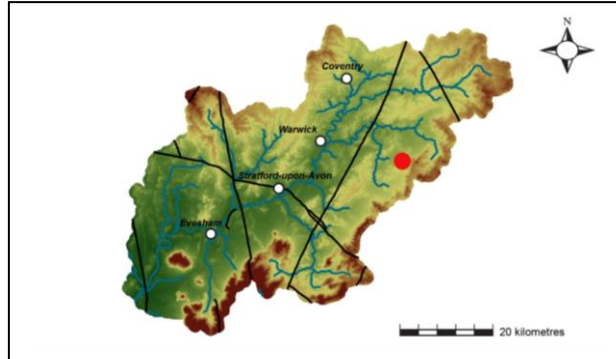
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 7th Century

Description: Several inhumations reported, one with a shield boss and a sword with a minimum length of 2ft 5inches. The site was heavily disturbed by quarrying.

Sources: Chatwin 1927; Meaney 1964:261

Superficial Geology: Lake (created by the quarrying)



SITE NAME: Newton

ID: 46

Parish & County: Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, Warks.

Coordinates: 453450 276610

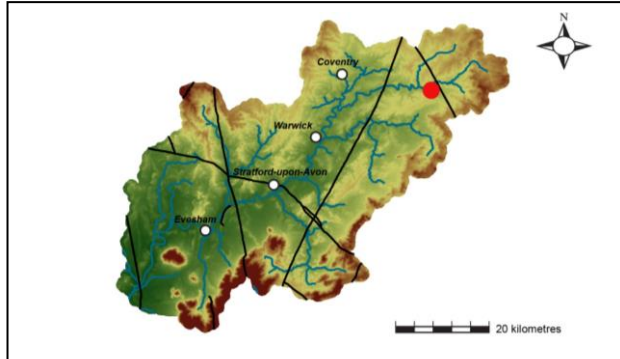
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th – 7th Century

Description: Between 8 and 10 inhumations were found in the 19th Century with elaborate jewellery - various beads, a gold barrel wire bead, an oval garnet set in gold, and a black stone set in a gold circlet with the back plate suspended from a loop.

Sources: Bloxam 1875; Meaney 1964:262

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Offchurch

ID: 47

Parish & County: Offchurch, Warks.

Coordinates: 437990 265550

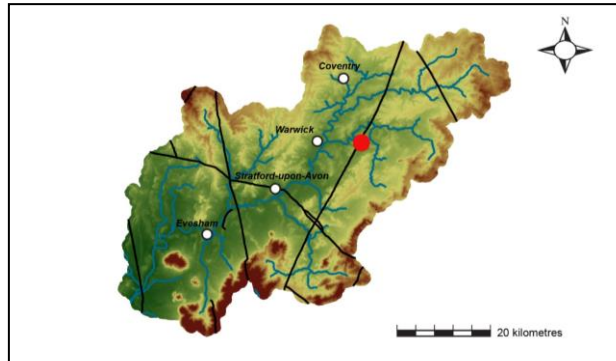
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: Mid- 6th Century

Description: Inhumations found on top of the hill, on the road between Offchurch and Long Itchington. Finds include: 2 spear heads (one reportedly driven through a body), a shield boss, a knife, brooches: a great square-headed (Hines Group VI), 2 possible cruciform, a swastika, and a saucer; a silver buckle, beads, and late Roman coins.

Sources: Meaney 1964:262; Hines 1997:63-67

Superficial Geology: Deep red Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Princethorpe

ID: 48

Parish & County: Princethorpe, Warks.

Coordinates: 439930 270280

Site Type: Burial Activity

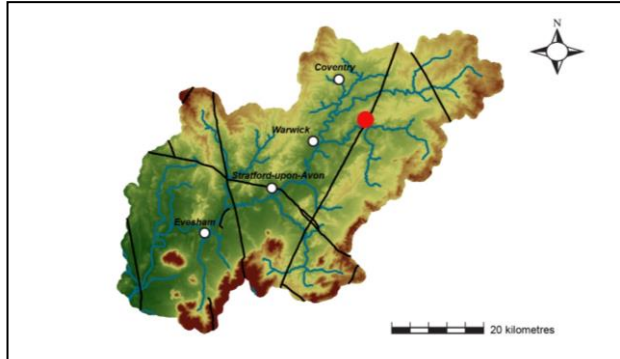
Date: Early 6th? – 7th? Century

Description: Possible cemetery identified from a cruciform brooch, iron spear head, and pottery found in the early 19th Century. In addition, a square-headed

brooch was reported from a similar location a few decades later. These finds are close to the Roman enclosed station on the Fosse Way at SP 3985 7030. The settlement lies on the top of a ridge, half way between Chesterton and High Cross, and shows evidence of occupation into the 4th Century.

Sources: Meaney 1964; Hingley 1985

Superficial Geology: Deep red Loam to Clay



SITE NAME: Ragley

ID: 49

Parish & County: Arrow, Warks.

Coordinates: 407890 255710

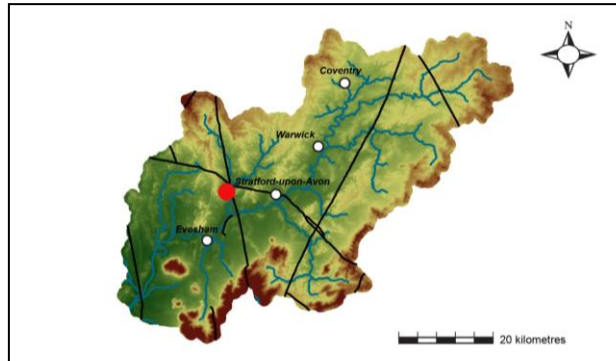
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: Late 6th Century

Description: A single female inhumation accompanied by a gilt large square-headed brooch (Hines Group XI), 2 radiate brooches, an iron knife and buckle, and amber and jet beads.

Sources: Meaney 1964:262; Hines 1997:94-100

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Clay



SITE NAME: Rollright

ID: 50

Parish & County: Rollright, Oxon.

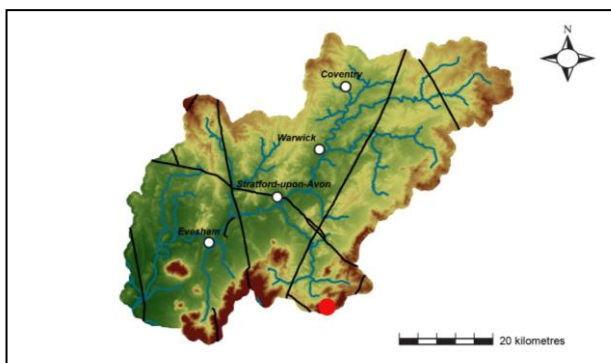
Coordinates: 429500 230900

Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 5th – 7th Century

Description: In the mid-19th Century, a possible mixed cemetery, indicated by the discovery of a cinerary urn and 12 skeletons, was reported. The remains

were situated close to the upstanding Rollright Stones, principally the Kings Stone and the Five/Whispering Knights. The discoveries were made on separate occasions and those near the latter monument are uncertain. An annular brooch, a ring, glass beads, a knife, and two possible saucer brooches were also reported. In 2015, a high status mid-7th century female inhumation was found close to the King's Stone, across the border into Warwickshire. This burial has not been included within analysis but has been drawn into discussion where appropriate. The Rollright stones stand close to not only the border between West Oxfordshire and Cherwell Districts but also between Oxfordshire and Warwickshire, on the possible line of the Cotswold Way.



Sources: Salzman 1939:358; Meaney 1964:260; Byard pers. comm.

Superficial Geology: Shallow Loam over Limestone

SITE NAME: Sedgeberrow

ID: 51

Parish & County: Sedgeberrow, Worcs.

Coordinates: 402350 238250

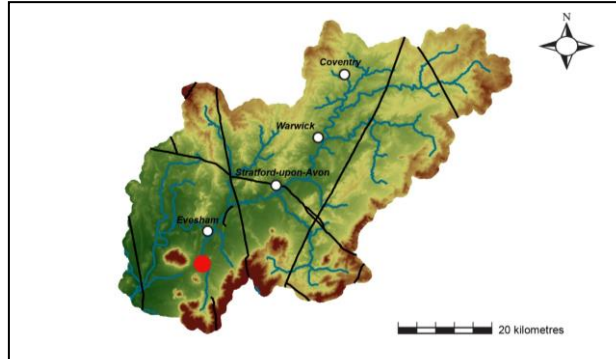
Site Type: Non-Burial Activity

Date: 7th? Century

Description: A possible Roman and early medieval occupation site with activity from the 2nd-Late 4th Century and in the 7th Century. Identified from Romano-British pottery, fibulae and coins of Faustina I to Valens (138-378 AD). Seven sherds of pottery of a type similar to Hatton Rock and an early sceatta have been interpreted as 7th Century evidence.

Sources: Price & Watson 1984

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay



SITE NAME: St Anne's Church

ID: 52

Parish & County: Wyre Piddle, Worcs.

Coordinates: 396180 247280

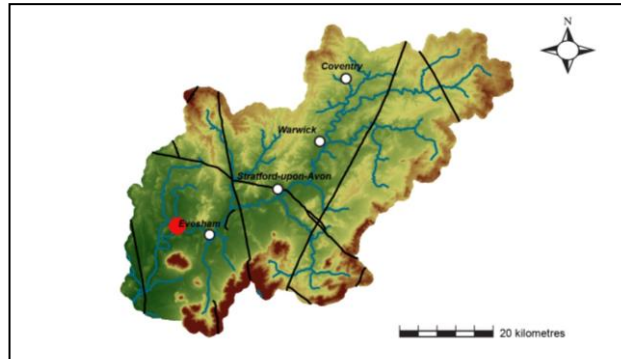
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th? – 7th? Century

Description: During the extension of the church nave, two sitting skeletons were found beneath the depth of the floor line, one in front of the other and facing North-East. Eighteen inches in front of the first skeleton, two shield bosses were found.

Sources: Meaney 1964:281

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



SITE NAME: Stretton-on-Fosse

ID: 53

Parish & County: Stretton-on-Fosse, Warks.

Coordinates: 421590 238260

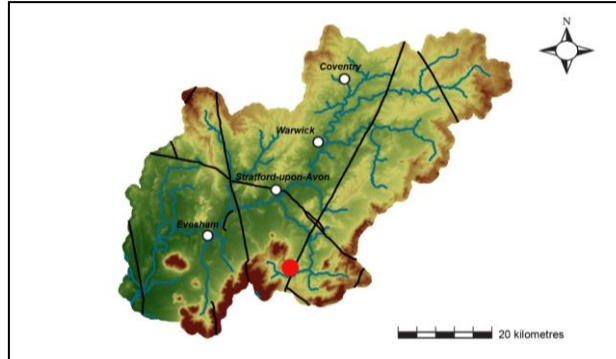
Site Type: Burial Activity & Settlement Features

Date: 5th – 6th Century

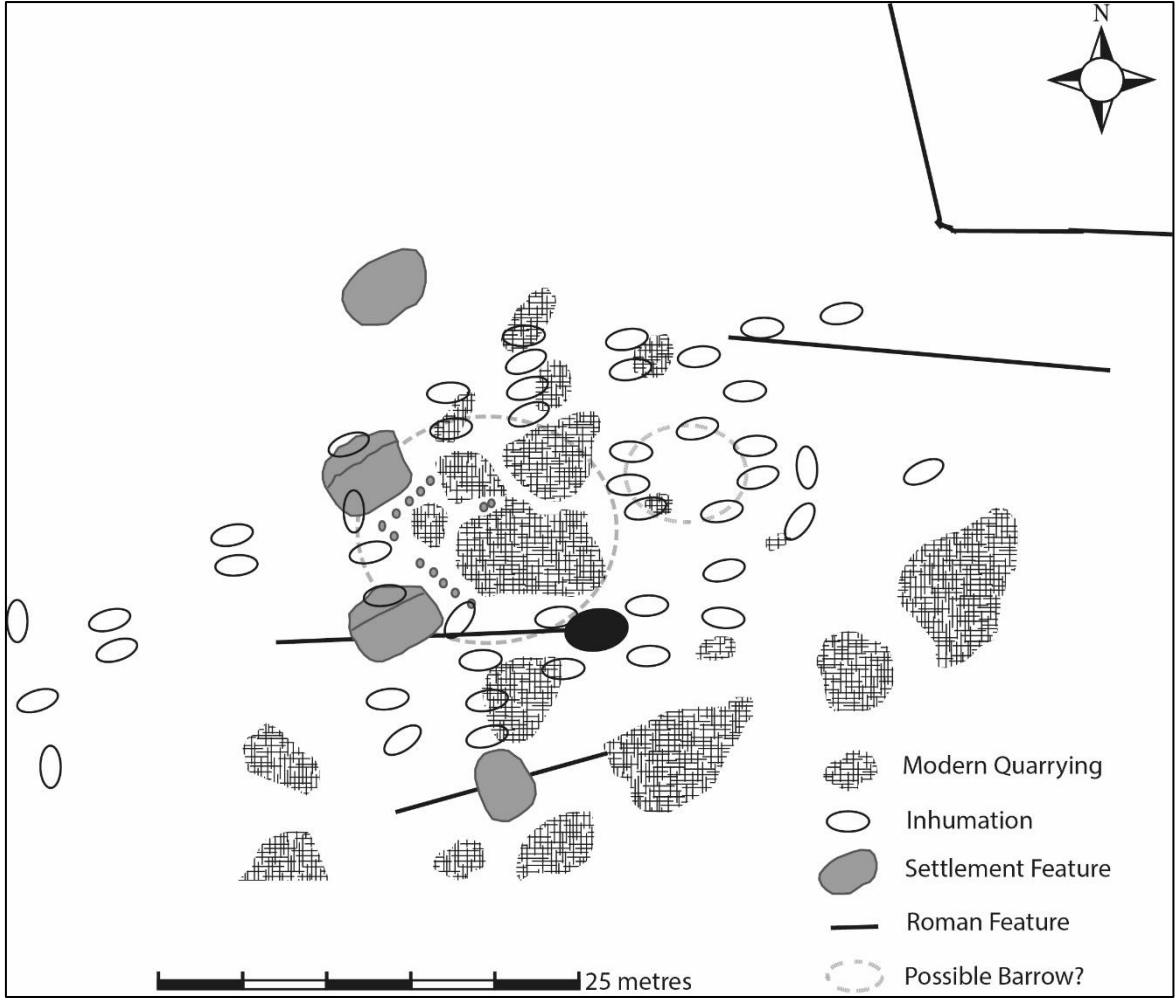
Description: Around the modern village there was extensive activity throughout the Roman and early medieval periods. Roman occupation commenced in the 1st Century, but the burials dated from the 3rd Century and, possibly, into the 5th Century. Two phases may be represented at this late Roman cemetery: 10 of the 14 burials are orientated North-South, whilst the rest are East-West, and hobnails are confined to the former. Early medieval settlement, indicated by 2 SFBs and a post-hole building, immediately pre-dated the late 5th – 6th Century cemetery. This early medieval cemetery lies beneath the crest of a ridge and included 45 inhumations. Four areas of burning have been identified between the graves and charcoal was found in almost all of them - particularly in F88. The majority of the graves were orientated West-East. Two examples of decapitation were observed, one a female where the head was placed between the feet, the other the male in F88. Here the skull was placed on the left femur and the space at the head was taken by an upturned Gotland cauldron. The male individual was also accompanied by an ornate shield boss and was dated to c. 567 AD. As with Alveston Manor, the later burials included more wealth indicators. Finds include: spear heads, shield bosses, knives, arrowheads, Brooches: small-long, disc, and saucer.

Sources: Gardner et al. 1980; Ford 1996; Ford 2003

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Clay



Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
53.1	540	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	35-45	f?	-	-	-	0	1SL
53.2	530	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	25+?	f	-	-	-	0	1Di
53.3	545	-	Inhum.	Prone	N-S	-	20-24	f	-	-	-	0	Cleats
53.4	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2SL
53.5	520	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	20-24	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1 Bu
53.6	515	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	23	f?	-	-	-	0	1SL, 3Bds
53.7A	527	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	5-7	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.7B	527	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	1-2	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.10	520	-	Inhum.	Supine	ENE-WSW	-	45	m	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
53.12	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	8	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
53.37	530	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal over skull	25-30+	f	-	-	-	0	2Di, 1 Scoop, 1 Pin, 1 Ring, 1Kn, Cleats, 1 Rivet, 21Bds, Wooden object
53.50	550	-	Inhum.	On Right	W-E	-	12	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu
53.51	560	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal over skull	28	m	-	-	-	1Sh	1Kn
53.52	548	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	24	f	-	-	-	0	0
53.53	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	35-45	m	-	-	-	1Sp	0
53.54	548	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	25+?	-	m	-	-	1Sh	0
53.55	549	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.57	550	-	Inhum.	Flexed	WSW-ENE	-	8	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.58	543	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.59	551	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.61	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Charcoal over pelvis	22	f	-	-	-	0	1Bu, 1Kn
53.68	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Charcoal over pelvis	28	m	-	-	-	0	1Kn
53.70	545	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.80	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	-	7	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
53.83	552	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	25+?	m	-	-	-	0	0
53.84	550	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	30	m	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	0
53.85	550	-	Inhum.	On Right	WSW-ENE	-	4-5	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
53.86	550	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	35-45	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
53.87	565	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal over skull	35	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
53.88	580	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	Charcoal Lining, Decapitated.	25+	m	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1 Bu, 1 Gotland Cauldron
53.89	580	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	14	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Ar	0
53.90	550	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	25+?	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
53.91	520	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	-	9	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
53.92		-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	5	-	-	-	-	0	0
53.93	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	WNW-ESE	Charcoal over both skull and pelvis	25	f	-	-	-	0	2Sa, 1 Pin, 1Bu, 1Kn, 1Bd
53.94	550	-	Inhum.	Supine	WNW-ESE	Charcoal over skull and pelvis	40+	m	-	-	-	1Sp	0
53.95	555	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	Charcoal over skull and pelvis	20-25	m	-	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
53.96	560	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	-	25	f?	m	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	0
53.97	565	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Charcoal over pelvis	40-45	m	-	-	-	0	1Bu
53.98		-	Inhum.	Flexed	W-E	-	30	f	-	-	-	0	1Sa, 1 Pin, 1Bu, 4Bds
53.99	565	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	-	28-30	m	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
53.100	565	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	25+?	-	m	-	-	1 Sp, 1 Sh	1Kn
53.101	580	-	Inhum.	Supine	WSW-ENE	-	25	m	-	-	-	1Sp	1Kn, 1Bu
53.102	570	-	Inhum.	On Left	WNW-ESE	Charcoal over pelvis, Head cradle	30-50	f?	-	-	-	0	2Sa, 19Bds, 1scoop, 2 Pins, 1 Rock Crystal, 1Kn
53.103	575	-	Inhum.	-	WSW-ENE	-	25	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa, 1Bd, 1 Pin, 1Kn
53.104	566	-	Inhum.	Crouched	W-E	-	4	-	-	-	-	0	0

* the remains of at least 6 other individuals were recovered from disturbed contexts, giving a minimum of 52 individuals from the site

SITE NAME: Upton Snodsbury

ID: 54

Parish & County: Upton Snodsbury,
Worcs.

Coordinates: 393280 253020

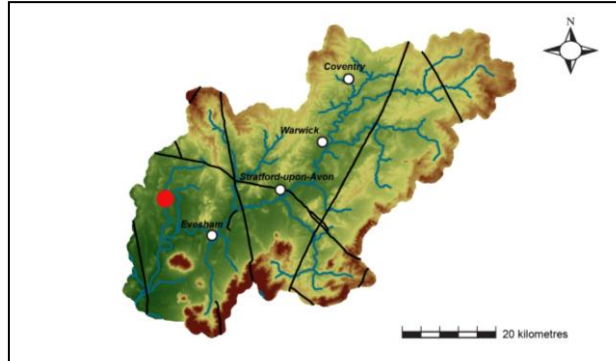
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th Century

Description: Whilst digging for gravel in 1866, workers discovered skeletons in a trench (it is unclear from the report whether the 'trench' was the result of the gravel extraction or funerary activity). From the trench six iron spear heads and a c.3 foot long double edged sword were recorded along with saucer and cruciform brooches (one was an ornate example from Aberg's Group V), 130 amber beads, and 2 crystal spindle whorls.

Sources: Ponting 1866:342; Aberg Group V 1926:56; Meaney 1964:281

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



SITE NAME: Walton Cardiff

ID: 55

Parish & County: Walton Cardiff, Glos.

Coordinates: 392200 233100

Site Type: Burial Activity

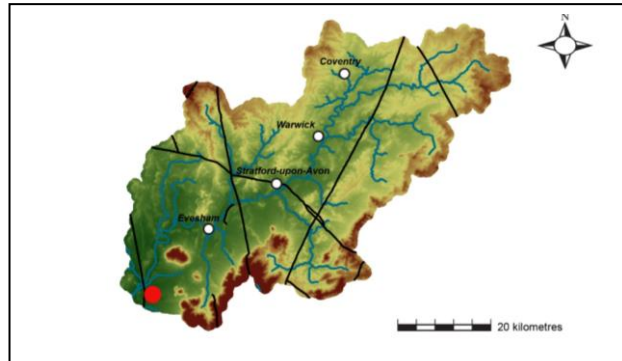
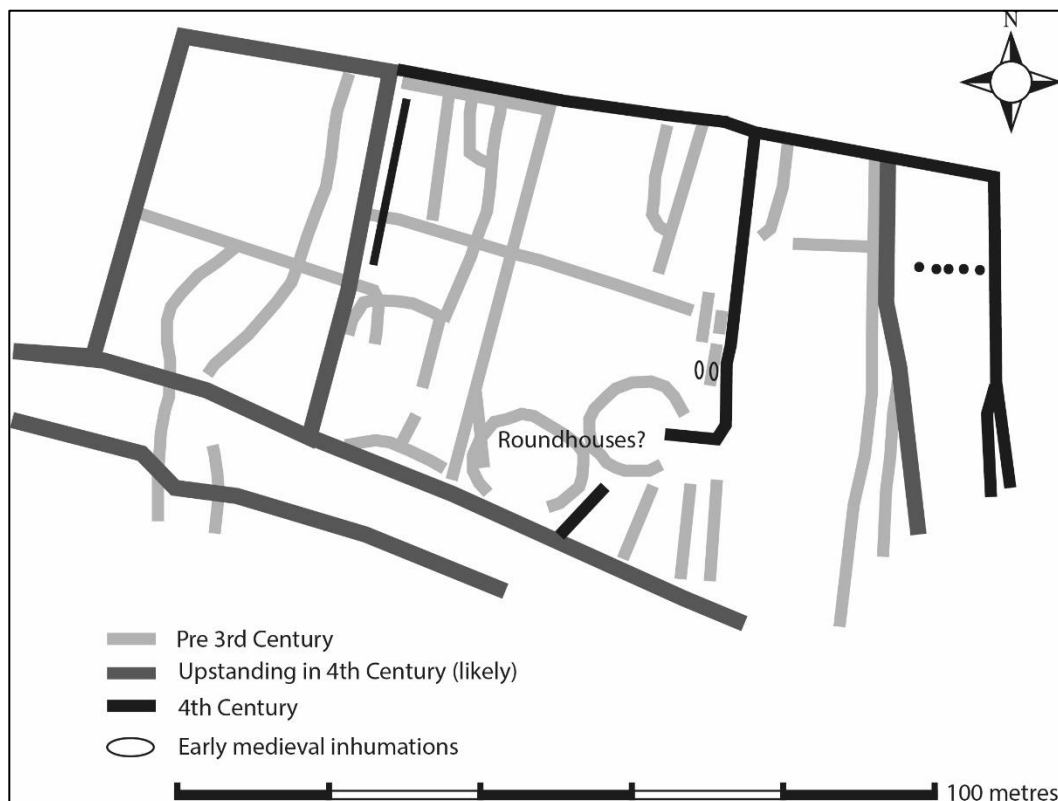
Date: Late 6th – Early 7th Century

Description: A late Iron Age to 4th Century rural settlement site. The 4th Century saw a reduction in activity and the latest coin, found lying above an abandoned drying oven, dated to 330-35 AD. Two late 6th or early 7th Century inhumations, lying side-by-side, with a North-South orientation were buried aligned on a Roman enclosure. One of the inhumations cut into the silt fill of the ditch. This burial included 95 amber beads and 4 glass beads of the 6th - early 7th Century, along with a buckle of a style typical of the upper Thames valley. Skeletal analysis suggested two adults, one male and one female. Iron nails are suggestive of coffins in both graves. Not only are the burials sited within the ruins of an older settlement, they lie near to the pre-Conquest parish boundary of Tewkesbury.

Sources: Hart & McSloy 2008

Superficial Geology: Deep Clay

Site Plan:



SITE NAME: Wasperton

ID: 56

Parish & County: Wasperton, Warks.

Coordinates: 426370 258640

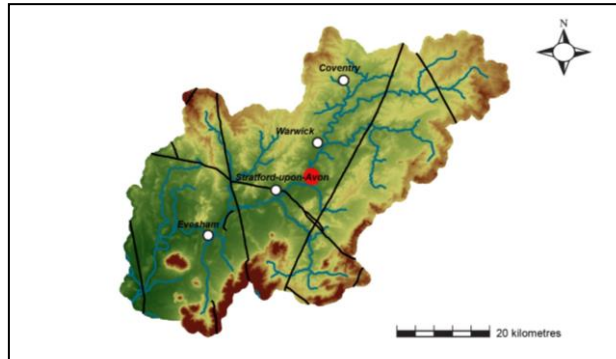
Site Type: Burial Activity & Settlement Features

Date: 5th – 7th Century

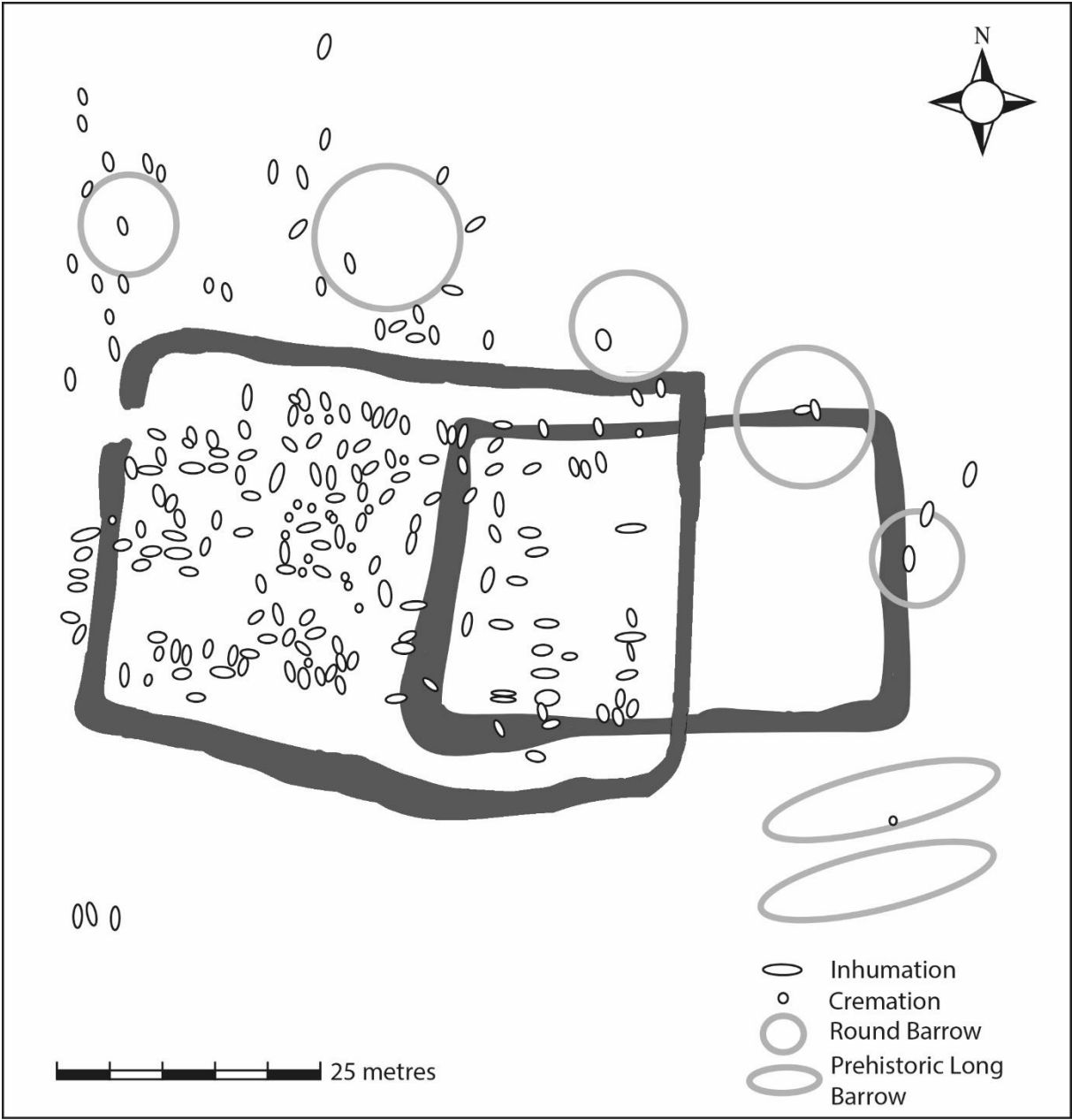
Description: A Romano-British rural settlement, with preceding Iron Age activity and evidence of cereal processing and possible stock enclosures. In the 4th Century, an agricultural enclosure was converted for use as a burial ground. The first 23 burials, which appear to form plots, include cremations and some inhumations with charcoal scatterings. In the 5th Century, 37 unfurnished inhumations, with West-East orientations, show rites reminiscent of the South-West of the UK. The late 5th Century saw a distinct group of cremations and the use of new areas within the enclosure for inhumations. Through the 6th Century there was continued use of plots, but with new orientations, rites and grave goods. The mid-6th - 7th Century saw the expression of status through burials under mounds and burials outside the enclosure. Finds include: spear heads, shield bosses, buckles, 3 buckets, Brooches: 1 equal-armed, 1 late Roman propeller, cruciform, small-long, annular, disc, saucer, great-square headed, and 1 composite; wrist clasps, pendants, bracelets, and a silver finger ring.

Sources: Hines 1997; Carver et al. 2009

Superficial Geology: Deep Loam



Site Plan:



Burial Data:

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
56.1	4th-5th	-	Inhum.	Prone	N-S	-	ya	-	-	1.72	Wales/ West	0	0
56.2	Mid 6th	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Coffin	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa, Bds, 1Bu, 1Kn
56.3	6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	f?	-	-	0	Cu Tube, 1 Pin, 1Kn
56.4	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	f?	-	-	0	2Sa, Bds, Cu Disc, Tweezers, 1 Pin
56.6	6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	ya	-	m	-	Local	1Sp, 1Sh	1 Ring, 1Bu, 1Kn
56.7	6th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Pot
56.8	6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	adol	-	f?	-	Local	0	1Di
56.9	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sh	0
56.10	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	juv	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Bu, 1Kn
56.11	Mid 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa, 1 Ear Scoop, Cu Tube, 1Bu, 1Kn, 2 Pins
56.12	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE?	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Kn
56.13	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1SL, 1Di, 1Kn
56.15	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1 Roman Brooch, 100+Bds, 1 Ring, 1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Pin, 2Keys, 5 Fe Rings, Purse Mount
56.16	4th	-	Inhum.	-	N-S/S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1 Neck ring
56.17	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Cr, 1Kn
56.18	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	W-E	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Sa, Bds, 1 Ring, 1Kn, 1 Pin, Cu Tube
56.19	6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Coffin	-	-	f	-	-	0	1SL, 1Bu, 1Kn, Animal Teeth, Nails
56.21	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
56.22	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Bu, 1Kn
56.23	6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	Purse Mount, 1Bu
56.24	Late 6th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	W-E	-	ya	-	f	-	Local	0	1GSqHd, Bds, 1 Pot
56.26	-	120-330	Inhum.	Decapitated	N-S	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.27	4th	240-430	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	Coffin	-	-	f	-	Local	0	1 Neck ring, 1 Silver Ring, 1 Bracelet, 9 Nails
56.28	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Coffin	adult	-	-	-	Local	0	Nails
56.30	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Coffin	adult	-	-	-	-	0	Nails
56.31	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Coffin	adult	-	-	-	-	0	Hobnails, Nails
56.32	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.33	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	W-E	-	juv	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, Animal Tooth
56.34	-	250-430	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	1 Kn
56.35	-	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	N-S	-	adult	-	-	-	Wales/ West	0	0
56.36	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.37	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.38	-	-	Inhum.	Flexed	SW-NE	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.39	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2SL, Bds, 1 Pot
56.40	-	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	SE-NW	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.41	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	adult	-	-	1.48	-	0	0

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
56.42	4th	-	Inhum.	Prone	S-N	-	adult	-	m	1.52	West	0	Hobnails
56.43	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	Local	0	2SL, 1GSqHd, 1Kn
56.44	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	adult	-	m	-	-	2Sp, 1Sh	0
56.46	4th	230-390	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	juv	-	-	-	Med	0	Hobnails
56.47	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	W-E	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Bu, 1Kn, Bds, Tweezers
56.48	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	adult	-	m	-	Local	1Sh	1Kn
56.49	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
56.50	Mid 6th	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1GSqHd, 1Bd
56.51	6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Stone lined	-	-	f	-	Wales/ West	0	Bds, 1 Pot
56.52	-	-	Inhum.	Left side flexed	N-S	Coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	Nails
56.53	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2WrCl, Bds, 1Kn
56.54	-	-	Inhum.	Left side flexed	W-E	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	1 Kn
56.55	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone lined	adult	-	m	2	Local	1Sp, 1Sh	1Bu, 2Kn, 1 Pot
56.56	6th	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	N-S	Stone lined	-	-	f	-	-	0	Bds, 1 Pot
56.57	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	0	1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Pot, 1 Bucket
56.58	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Bu, 1Kn
56.59	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Di, Bds, 1Bu
56.60	Late 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	2Kn
56.63	Late 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sh	1Bd, 1Kn
56.64	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sh	1Bu, 1Kn
56.65	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Di, 1GSqHd, 100+Bds
56.67	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	Bds
56.68	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N/N-S	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sh	1Kn
56.69	5th - 7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N/N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
56.70	Mid 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1App, 200+Bds, 1Bu, 1 Pin
56.71	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	Charcoal	adult	-	m	1.66	-	1Sp	1Bu, 1Kn
56.72	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1SL, Bds, 1Bu
56.73	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sh	1Kn
56.74	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Di
56.75	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sh	1Kn
56.76	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu, 1Kn
56.77	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa, Bds, 1Bu, 1Kn
56.78	6th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
56.79	6th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	SW-NE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	Bds, 1Kn
56.80	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2PenAnn, Bds, 1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Pin
56.81	6th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
56.82	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2App, Bds
56.83	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
56.85	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2App, 1 Pendant, 100+Bds, 1 Key, Silver Object, Spindle Whorl, 2 Pins
56.86	4th	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Stone marker	-	-	-	1.62	-	0	Hobnails
56.87	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.88	6th	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Di
56.89	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	1.52	-	0	2Di
56.90	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	m	1.62	-	1Sh	1Kn, Tweezers
56.91	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	m	1.56	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
56.92	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
56.93	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.94	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.96	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Ann
56.97	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa, Purse Frame, 2 Pins, 1 Hobnail
56.98	-	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.99A	Mid 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Butt
56.99B	Mid 6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	Bds
56.100	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.101	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Nail
56.102	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2WrCl, 1Bu
56.103	6th	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sh	0
56.104	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn
56.105	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	0
56.107	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	m	1.52	-	1Sp	0
56.108	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	juv	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Kn
56.109	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	2 Nails
56.110	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.111	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Cr, 1SL, Bds, 1Bu, 1Kn
56.112	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.114	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2App, Bds, 1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Pin
56.115	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	m	-	Local	1Sh	1Bu, 1Kn
56.116	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	Coffin	-	-	f	1.46	-	0	2SL, Bds, 1Kn, 1 Nail
56.117	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Nail
56.118	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.119	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	juv	-	f	-	-	0	Bds
56.120	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Bu
56.121	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.122	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	1.44	-	0	0
56.123	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Pot
56.124	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.125	4th	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	W-E	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1 Neck ring
56.126	6th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	S-N	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Bu, 1Kn
56.127	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Nail
56.128	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.129	4th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	W-E	-	-	-	-	1.4	-	0	Hobnails
56.130	6th	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2App
56.131	4th	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Hobnails
56.132	5th - 7th	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	f	1.5	-	0	1Bu, 1Kn
56.134	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	Bds, 1Kn
56.135	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	-	-	-	m	1.6	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Bu
56.136	4th	-	Inhum.	Side	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	1.6	-	0	Hobnails
56.137	-	-	Inhum.	Side	S-N	-	-	-	-	1.48	-	0	0
56.138	-	-	Inhum.	Prone	N-S	-	adult	-	-	1.6	Local	0	0
56.139	-	-	Inhum.	Side	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1Kn
56.140	6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	3Ann, Bds, Purse
56.142	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	Chamber	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Clasp
56.143	-	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	E-W	-	juv	-	-	-	Local	0	0
56.144	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	-	-	-	1.54	-	0	0
56.145	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	1.56	-	0	1SL, 1Kn, 1 Pot

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
56.146	6th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp, 1Sh	1Kn, Tweezers
56.147A	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.147B	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.148	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	-	SW-NE	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1 Pot
56.149	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.151	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.152	-	-	Inhum.	Flexed	E-W	-	-	-	-	1.3	-	0	0
56.153	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone and wood lined	juv	-	-	1.34	Local	0	0
56.154	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Hobnail
56.155	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2App, 100+ Bds, 1 Silver Ring, 1Kn
56.156	4th	-	Inhum.	Side	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Bracelet
56.157	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.158	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.159	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Nail
56.160	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.161	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	adult	-	m	-	-	1Sp	1PenAnn, 1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Bucket
56.162	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Trunk coffin	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.163	5th - 6th	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	2Sa, Bds, 2Bu, 1Kn, 1 Pin, 1 Pot
56.164	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.166	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.167	Early 6th	-	Inhum.	Left side flexed	S-N	-	adult	-	f	-	Local	0	2Cr, Bds, 1 Pin, 1 Pot
56.168	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	Coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	2 Nails
56.169	5th - 6th	410-550	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone and wood lined	adult	-	-	1.62	-	0	1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Strap end
56.170	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.172	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.173	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone and wood lined, marker	adult	f	-	1.54	Local	0	0
56.174	-	540-660	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone and wood lined	mature	m	-	1.4	Med	0	0
56.175	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	S-N	-	-	-	-	1.63	-	0	1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Pot
56.176	4th	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Bracelet
56.177	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
56.178	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone and wood lined	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.179	6th - 8th	-	Inhum.	Supine	SW-NE	-	-	-	-	1.46	-	0	1Kn
56.180	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	juv	-	-	-	Wales/ West	0	0
56.181	4th	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1 Bracelet, Hobnails
56.182	-	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.183	-	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.184	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Wooden plank coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.185	-	-	Inhum.	-	W-E	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.187	-	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	S-N	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.188	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Trunk coffin with stone and wood lining	-	-	-	1.7	-	0	0
56.189	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone and wood lined	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.190	4th	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	adult	-	-	1.58	Med	0	2 Bracelets, Hobnails
56.191	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	N-S	-	adult	-	-	1.52	Med	0	1 Key
56.192	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.193	-	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	Stone and wood lined	adult	-	-	1.72	Local	0	0
56.194	4th	-	Inhum.	Decapitated	NW-SE	-	adult	-	-	-	Local	0	1 Pin, Hobnails
56.195	4th	-	Inhum.	Supine	W-E	-	ya	-	-	1.56	Local	0	Hobnails
56.196	6th - 7th	-	Inhum.	Flexed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Purse Mount, 1Bu, 1Kn, 1 Pin
56.197	-	-	Inhum.	-	-	Possible nailed coffin	-	-	-	-	-	0	Nails
56.198	Early 7th	-	Inhum.	-	S-N	-	-	-	f	-	-	0	1Di, 2 Silver Bds
56.199	4th	-	Inhum.	-	N-S	Coffin	adoles	-	-	-	-	0	Hobnails, Lead scroll
56.200	4th	-	Inhum.	-	E-W	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	Hobnails
56.1cA	5th - 6th	410-580	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.1cB	5th - 6th	410-580	Crem.	-	-	-	ya	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.2c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.3c	5th - 6th	380-550	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	1 Nail
56.4c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	juv	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.5c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	ya	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.6c	5th - 6th	390-550	Crem.	-	-	-	ya	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.7c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.8c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	ya	-	f	-	-	0	1Sa, Bds
56.9c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	16-18	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.10c	5th - 6th	410-570	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	f	-	-	0	1Bd
56.11c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	17+	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.12c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	infant	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.13c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	child	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.14c	5th - 6th	420-590	Crem.	-	-	-	ya	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.15c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.16c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0

Burial ID	Date		Deposition	Position	Orientation	Grave Structure or Lining	Age	Sex	Gender	Stature (m)	Isotope	Weapons	Other Gravegoods
	Gravegood	Radiocarbon											
56.17c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.18c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.19c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	mature	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.20c	4th - 5th	130-430	Crem.	-	-	-	9-10.	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.21c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.22c	5th - 6th	410-570	Crem.	-	-	-	adult	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.23c	4th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Hobnails
56.24c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	ya	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.25c	5th - 6th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
56.26c	4th - 5th	-	Crem.	-	-	-	mature	-	f	-	-	0	1EqArm

SITE NAME: Welton

ID: 57

Parish & County: Welton, Northants.

Coordinates: 457000 266400

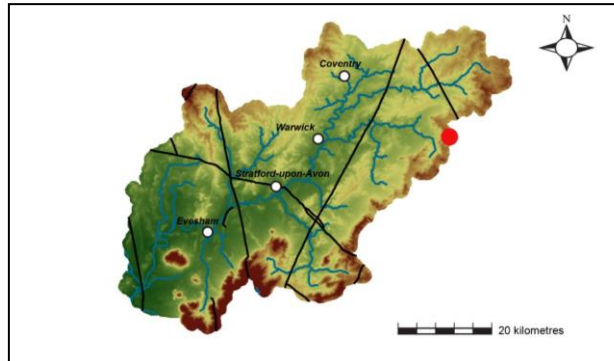
Site Type: Burial Activity

Date: 6th? Century

Description: During plantation work at Stone Pit Close in 1778, two skeletons were found with 2 small-long brooches, 23 jet, glass and amber beads, an urn and Romano-British coins of Constantine and Flavia. In 1822, 45 more beads were found. An urn in the Netherhall collection is thought to belong to the Welton assemblage and is dated to the second half of the 6th Century.

Sources: Meaney 1964:196; Hodgson 1956

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet Silty to Clayey over Shale



SITE NAME: Winchcombe, North Street

ID: 58

Parish & County: Winchcombe, Glos.

Coordinates: 402500 228400

Site Type: Burial Activity

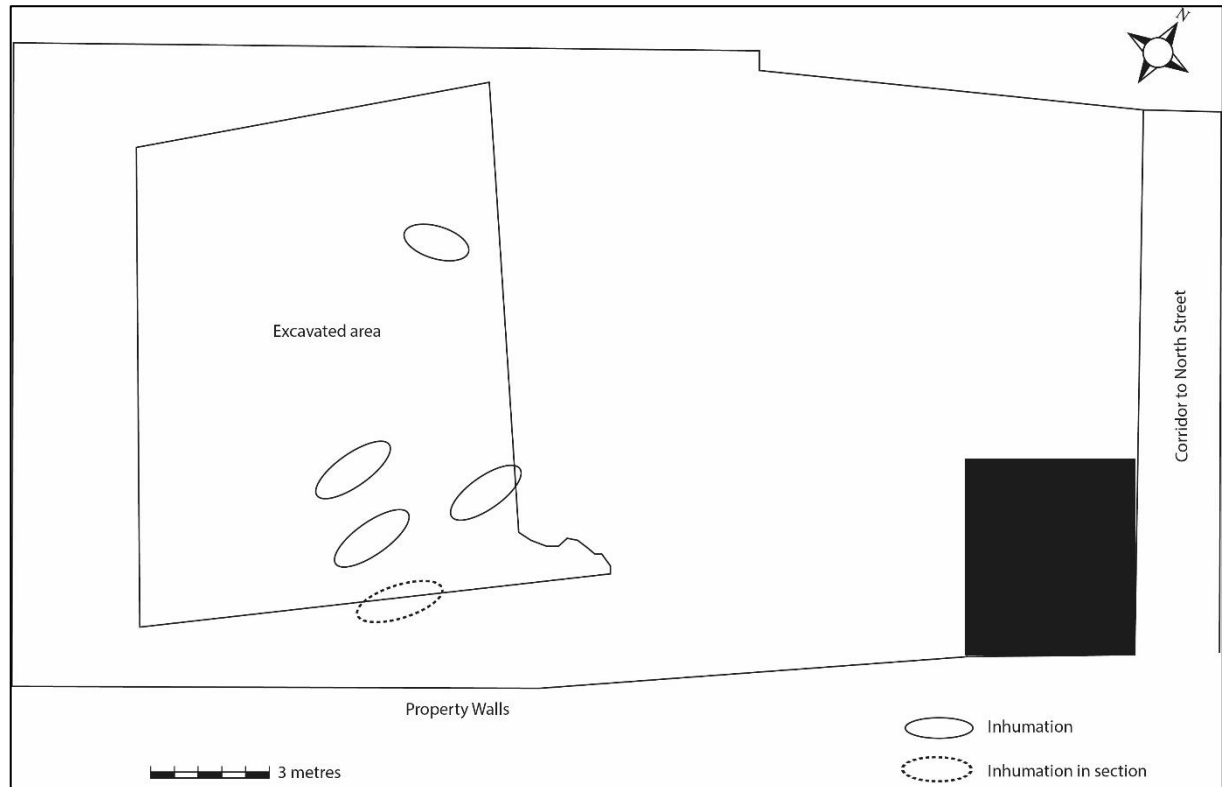
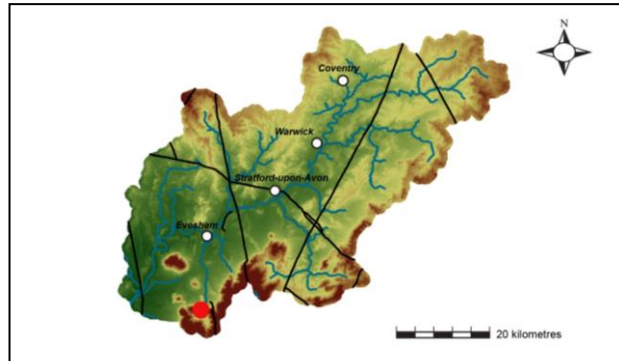
Date: Mid-6th – 10th Century

Description: Six inhumations, plus an un-localized skull, with no grave goods or furniture and orientated in a broadly West-East direction, were found off North Street. Radiocarbon dating of two of the graves returned dates of the mid-6th - mid-7th Century and the late 8th - late 10th Century. Extensive pottery scatters across the modern town suggest Roman period activity, although no structural remains have been found for either this period or the subsequent early medieval period.

Sources: Saville 1985; Davison et al. 1986

Superficial Geology: Seasonally wet deep Clay

Site Plan:



Catalogue 2: Extant Sites

ID	HER Name	X	Y	District	Monument Type	Sub-Type	Period	Notes
1	889195	438770	279180	Rugby	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	Uncertain date
2	337576	440260	279540	Rugby	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	Uncertain date
3	Shenlow Hill	435500	242700	Cherwell	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
4	335073	438550	236020	Cherwell	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
5	340172	458000	272000	Daventry	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	Barrow group with intrusive Roman cremations
6	337619	440200	276100	Rugby	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
7	337551	445670	276430	Rugby	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	Contains cremations and inhumations.
8	337739	446000	286000	Rugby	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
9	The Island	450360	274770	Rugby	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
10	337616	442450	275750	Rugby	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
11	330858	418450	258810	Stratford	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
12	330948	414570	256580	Stratford	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
13	335377	438000	252600	Stratford	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
14	330981	417700	254100	Stratford	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
15	331029	419810	250150	Stratford	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
16	1581474	387117	229399	Tewkesbury	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
17	1581473	389227	227989	Tewkesbury	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	Barrow cemetery
18	116054	388000	255000	Worcester	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
19	1372219	408110	238040	Wychavon	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
20	1393863	406910	239610	Wychavon	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	
21	1375053	407180	239530	Wychavon	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	Uncertain origins of a mound marked with a 13th stone cross base. Reportedly contained inhumations and iron arrowhead
22	Lower Farm	394850	227080	Tewkesbury	Barrow	?	Prehistoric	Place name
23	341865	469000	279100	Daventry	Barrow	Bowl	Prehistoric	
24	1060466	456070	283890	Harborough	Barrow	Bowl	Prehistoric	
25	342261	462400	284490	Harborough	Barrow	Bowl	Prehistoric	Four barrows and a Late Bronze Age urn cemetery
26	340108	451450	279290	Rugby	Barrow	Bowl	Prehistoric	Probable secondary inhumations and a sword.
27	333093	426770	256430	Stratford	Barrow	Bowl	Prehistoric	
28	328164	407410	230440	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Bowl	Prehistoric	
29	333205	425090	251630	Stratford	Barrow	Long	Prehistoric	
30	333051	426750	257750	Stratford	Barrow	Long	Prehistoric	
31	1573537	422327	245429	Stratford	Barrow	Long	Prehistoric	
32	Belas Knap	402090	225431	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Long	Prehistoric	
33	1251243	426370	258150	Warwick	Barrow	Long	Prehistoric	
34	117855	397890	239310	Wychavon	Barrow	Long	Prehistoric	
35	Wasperton	426370	258640	Stratford	Barrow	Long	Prehistoric	Outside cemetery enclosure
36	337425	441400	265800	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Possibly Early Medieval
37	1471271	421400	238240	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Possibly Early Medieval due to small size. Six barrows in total
38	335099	434060	239040	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Uncertain date
39	1567295	434611	233685	Cherwell	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
40	1567298	433180	233809	Cherwell	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
41	Round Hill	435150	233900	Cherwell	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Field name
42	335105	434470	239520	Cherwell	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
43	1496194	434110	239530	Cherwell	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
44	340484	453000	283400	Harborough	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
45	964834	456000	283800	Harborough	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
46	964835	456200	283900	Harborough	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
47	335298	439600	256500	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
48	1495442	431960	238040	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
49	1495721	431960	238030	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
50	1495724	431920	238030	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	

ID	HER Name	X	Y	District	Monument Type	Sub-Type	Period	Notes
50	1495724	431920	238030	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
51	1495727	431950	238010	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
52	1573279	434231	239553	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
53	1549156	430170	250360	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
54	1251584	426870	257860	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
55	1251623	426900	258030	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Site of the three burials
56	1549157	432120	253090	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Note in 8th Century Charter Bound of Boken Barrow 'brocnanbyrh'
57	1549154	434520	250380	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
58	332812	429400	231000	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
59	332802	429610	230980	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
60	1572613	440060	263160	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Possibly secondary internments with pottery
61	1076858	417630	245010	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
62	1076827	436380	245320	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
63	333066	426680	255610	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
64	335392	430500	253300	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
65	1547730	426195	255947	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
66	1570937	430766	243757	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
67	918485	407570	236020	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
68	1386693	403230	235780	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
69	1057040	403190	236390	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
70	327871	406090	224010	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
71	328137	408600	234400	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
72	328143	409220	233190	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Two round barrows merged or a long barrow
73	328146	409090	233370	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
74	328149	409250	233350	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
75	328176	409150	233350	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
76	328191	409280	232930	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
77	1410435	408910	233520	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
78	1410441	409140	233420	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
79	117619	398870	227670	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
80	327814	402030	225350	Tewkesbury	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
81	1035108	428100	261900	Warwick	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
82	1572617	437510	266080	Warwick	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
83	1529086	430410	264120	Warwick	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
84	1529087	430340	264070	Warwick	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
85	1529088	430390	264020	Warwick	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
86	1529091	430060	263960	Warwick	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
87	1529092	430000	263800	Warwick	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
88	Rollright Stones	429700	230800	West Oxfordshire	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
89	332828	429670	230610	West Oxfordshire	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	A further barrow may be identified by Berryfield field name
90	1405838	399640	237140	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
91	1057042	403670	237710	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
92	1053207	390970	236710	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
93	117901	392500	235700	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
94	918324	391710	236940	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
95	1053741	394390	241720	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
96	1053747	393940	241620	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
97	1053748	393980	241630	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
98	1057274	402910	245030	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
99	117834	395300	239800	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
100	117898	394900	235700	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	

ID	HER Name	X	Y	District	Monument Type	Sub-Type	Period	Notes
101	1052321	395210	235470	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
102	1052322	395140	235860	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
103	1441704	394560	235910	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
104	1441706	394390	236180	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
105	117849	395490	235620	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
106	1053754	394420	244590	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
107	Hatton Rock	423710	257700	Stratford	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	
108	Beckford A	396430	235450	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Suggested by shape of cemetery
109	Beckford B	396910	235440	Wychavon	Barrow	Round	Prehistoric	Suggested by shape of cemetery
110	1052352	395720	235630	Wychavon	Barrow	Square	Prehistoric	
111	337714	440330	274280	Rugby	Cursus		Prehistoric	Neolithic cursus with Iron Age activity
112	333093	426770	256430	Stratford	Cursus		Prehistoric	With a bowl barrow
113	333196	427800	250400	Stratford	Cursus		Prehistoric	Neolithic cursus overlain by Iron Age double ditched enclosure
114	1077501	400020	231990	Tewkesbury	Cursus		Prehistoric	Possible
115	333608	427060	261760	Warwick	Cursus		Prehistoric	
116	328275	405400	247700	Wychavon	Cursus		Prehistoric	Possible
117	118295	390330	258310	Wychavon	Cursus		Prehistoric	Possible
118	117990	397500	245300	Wychavon	Cursus		Prehistoric	Uncertain
119	117972	396700	246650	Wychavon	Cursus		Prehistoric	Possible
120	341865	469000	279100	Daventry	Henge		Prehistoric	With 2 bowl barrows
121	337571	443630	277280	Rugby	Henge		Prehistoric	Possibly a barrow cemetery
122	1035097	428313	262000	Warwick	Henge		Prehistoric	Bronze Age and Iron Age activity present
123	1035108	428100	261900	Warwick	Henge		Prehistoric	Possible barrow
124	1251162	426460	258410	Warwick	Henge		Prehistoric	
125	1456686	393020	237560	Wychavon	Henge		Prehistoric	Possibly with a barrow
126	Tadmorton Camp	438900	235500	Cherwell	Hillfort		Prehistoric	Roman activity
127	332962	421420	249770	Stratford	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
128	Barnmoor Wood Camp	417660	264640	Stratford	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
129	Meon Hill	417690	245330	Stratford	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
130	Nadbury Camp	438950	248190	Stratford	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
131	Dixton Hill	398580	230650	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	May be Medieval motte
132	Burhill	408450	236270	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
133	Nottingham Hill	398300	228400	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	Complex of Bronze Age barrow cemetery and hoard, and an Iron Age promontory fort with evidence of Roman occupation. Documentary evidence of use in the early medieval period.
134	Cleeve Cloud	398490	225470	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
135	Shenberrow Hillfort	408040	233440	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
136	Roel Camp	404680	224340	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
137	328203	402370	231780	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
138	Towbury Camp	388000	236900	Tewkesbury	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
139	335341	430670	259270	Warwick	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
140	Wappenbury Camp	437720	269310	Warwick	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
141	Danes Camp	397160	238340	Wychavon	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
142	118218	394330	241770	Wychavon	Hillfort		Prehistoric	Possible henge
143	Elmley Castle	397900	240200	Wychavon	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
144	Kemerton	395776	240172	Wychavon	Hillfort		Prehistoric	
145	Castle Hill Camp	393800	255400	Wychavon	Hillfort		Prehistoric	

ID	HER Name	X	Y	District	Monument Type	Sub-Type	Period	Notes
146	Whispering Knights	429930	230840	West Oxfordshire	Standing Stone	Burial chamber	Prehistoric	Part of the Rollright Stones
147	The King's Stone	429600	230960	Stratford	Standing Stone	Single Stone	Prehistoric	Part of the Rollright Stones
148	King's Men	429580	230880	West Oxfordshire	Standing Stone	Stone Circle	Prehistoric	Part of the Rollright Stones
149	117893	394560	238620	Wychavon	Standing Stone		Prehistoric	Two Stones used as focus for Oswaldslow Hundred leets
150	Gibbet Hill	452800	280760	Rugby	Barrow	?	Roman	Uncertain date, also recorded as early medieval on HER
151	The Lunt Roman Fort	434410	275160	Warwick	Fort		Roman	Late 4th Century evidence
152	328833	401400	261200	Redditch	Fort		Roman	
153	Primrose Hill Alcester	409270	256230	Stratford	Fort		Roman	
154	Stratford-upon-Avon	420900	252300	Stratford	Fort		Roman	
155	Grove Park - Budbrooke	423900	265000	Warwick	Fort		Roman	
156	1436499	405962	224712	Tewkesbury	Temple		Roman	A possible Roman temple complex on a hill outside Alcester. Numerous coins date the site to between the 2nd Century and the end of the 4th Century. (Chatwin 1927)
157	117651	398000	226000	Tewkesbury	Temple		Roman	Possible
158	Alcock's Arbour	411430	256510	Stratford	Temple		Roman	Late 4th Century evidence
159	330563	418920	239990	Cotswold	Villa	Bath Suite	Roman	The Grove
160	Wadfield	402330	226040	Tewkesbury	Villa	Courtyard	Roman	
161	Spoonley Wood	404500	225680	Tewkesbury	Villa	Courtyard	Roman	Probable villa. Late 4th Century evidence
162	330685	415000	234500	Cotswold	Villa		Roman	
163	330824	413290	240710	Cotswold	Villa		Roman	
164	961376	457550	265480	Daventry	Villa		Roman	
165	337707	440100	270300	Rugby	Villa		Roman	Possible
166	331111	410000	250000	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Possible
167	335093	430600	239900	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Possible
168	869558	431600	239800	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Possible
169	1548958	430950	250460	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Possible
170	335257	435100	258250	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
171	335425	431000	250600	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
172	335453	430950	250590	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
173	335389	436600	253100	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
174	335410	434900	250700	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
175	335452	432200	250710	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
176	1156377	433000	256000	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Possible
177	1075337	428610	231530	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Possible
178	335483	439640	266850	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
179	1156412	408000	261000	Stratford	Villa		Roman	
180	335883	431050	271880	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Possible
181	115648	387200	229800	Tewkesbury	Villa		Roman	Possible
182	Childswickham	405800	239500	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	Possible villa. Late 4th Century evidence
183	115792	388400	231100	Tewkesbury	Villa		Roman	Possible
184	335502	439180	267050	Warwick	Villa		Roman	
185	335885	431450	272400	Warwick	Villa		Roman	
186	335629	434250	262450	Warwick	Villa		Roman	Possible
187	333510	421300	267200	Warwick	Villa		Roman	An inhumation too
188	328383	406110	244920	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	Multiple inhumations
189	328375	408400	243500	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	Possible
190	328358	408300	242900	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	Possible
191	328371	409520	243600	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	
192	328401	403600	242500	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	

ID	HER Name	X	Y	District	Monument Type	Sub-Type	Period	Notes
193	328264	408980	247130	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	
194	328245	405740	245460	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	
195	328345	406560	242190	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	
196	328346	406400	241400	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	Possible villa in the vicinity
197	328350	406470	240330	Wychavon	Villa		Roman	Possible villa settlement
198	Deerhurst	387040	229960	Tewkesbury	Villa		Roman	Possible temple, unconfirmed
199	Welford Pastures Farm	412190	251270	Stratford	Villa		Roman	Unconfirmed temple. Late 4th Century evidence
200	Bank Farm	402720	236580		Settlement		Roman	An early medieval inhumation in a Roman enclosure ditch
201	Walton Cardiff	392200	233100		Settlement		Roman	Two early medieval inhumations aligned on a Roman enclosure ditch
202	Winchcombe, North Street	402500	228400		Settlement		Roman	Early medieval burials within an extensive scatter of Roman material suggestive of settlement. Late 4th Century evidence
203	Cave's Inn	453600	279500		Settlement		Roman	Early medieval cemetery beside the Roman roadside settlement, Tripontium
204	Bidford-on-Avon	409889	251880		Settlement		Roman	Possible Roman settlement and market
205	Broom	408410	253790		Settlement		Roman	Landscape of Roman farmsteads
206	Marlcliff	409860	250180		Settlement		Roman	Roman market. Late 4th Century evidence
207	Billesley	415110	259360		Settlement		Roman	Early medieval inhumation in a Roman corndrier. Late 4th Century evidence
208	Snowford Bridge	439680	267160		Settlement		Roman	Landscape of Roman farmsteads
209	Princethorpe	439930	270280		Settlement		Roman	Early medieval cemetery next to Princethorpe Roman roadside settlement
210	Alveston Manor Hotel	420930	254810		Settlement		Roman	Early medieval cemetery with evidence of preceding Roman activity
211	Stretton-on-Fosse	421590	238260		Settlement		Roman	Landscape of Roman and prehistoric activity. Late 4th Century evidence
212	Sedgeberrow	402350	238250		Settlement		Roman	Area of Roman settlement activity. Late 4th Century evidence
213	1445850	385720	235570	Malvern	Settlement		Roman	Iron Age and Roman evidence
214	115761	386500	238300	Malvern	Settlement		Roman	Iron Age and Roman evidence
215	115762	386700	239200	Malvern	Settlement		Roman	Iron Age and Roman evidence
216	337710	444200	274200	Rugby	Settlement		Roman	
217	1495772	453800	275820	Rugby	Settlement		Roman	
218	1572626	449890	272170	Rugby	Settlement		Roman	
219	335783	437300	272400	Rugby	Settlement		Roman	
220	1583037	443120	272280	Rugby	Settlement		Roman	
221	332966	423682	247866	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
222	1129454	415200	255900	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
223	1570843	433395	240512	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
224	1573228	432807	239281	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
225	1573299	434091	239538	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
226	1574284	432823	241567	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
227	333051	426750	257750	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
228	335344	434100	259700	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	Town
229	1547084	427420	250107	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
230	1571963	426028	244313	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
231	333108	425100	256800	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
232	1076841	426500	241740	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
233	1571920	426597	240930	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
234	1569846	437937	247794	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
235	1569885	438132	248093	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
236	Tiddington Settlement	421850	255550	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	Possible town. Late 4th Century evidence
237	1076850	422950	243660	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP

ID	HER Name	X	Y	District	Monument Type	Sub-Type	Period	Notes
238	1076851	423200	243700	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
239	1076853	423440	242910	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
240	335215	435200	244100	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	?
241	331230	413800	268700	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
242	332963	422740	247740	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
243	332965	422744	248244	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	AP
244	332763	421900	238100	Stratford	Settlement		Roman	
245	328209	404040	230850	Tewkesbury	Settlement		Roman	Possibly Iron Age activity, also with Roman inhumations
246	872649	395870	227750	Tewkesbury	Settlement		Roman	Dispersed settlement with inhumations
247	335765	434000	275000	Warwick	Settlement		Roman	
248	335893	434600	274700	Warwick	Settlement		Roman	
249	335908	434550	274830	Warwick	Settlement		Roman	
250	335909	434700	274600	Warwick	Settlement		Roman	
251	335918	434400	274790	Warwick	Settlement		Roman	
252	333599	428700	262300	Warwick	Settlement		Roman	
253	1130571	388900	257000	Worcester	Settlement		Roman	?
254	1134277	407400	248000	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	Farmstead
255	328120	403680	237880	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	Late Iron Age to Roman. Courtyard villa reported on 1975 APs but not since seen
256	117821	397400	237330	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	Late Iron Age to Roman.
257	118195	392000	241600	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	Extensive occupation evidence and inhumations
258	328394	403280	241570	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	
259	1397612	396600	249200	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	Substantial settlement with adjacent Bronze Age Barrow Cemetery
260	328091	400130	237500	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	Iron Age to Roman
261	328120	403680	237880	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	
262	328362	408600	242100	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	Plus a cist burial
263	118229	393700	242900	Wychavon	Settlement		Roman	?
264	Cleeve Hill	397600	226600		Settlement		Roman	Late 4th Century evidence
265	Home Farm	395800	227750		Settlement		Roman	Late 4th Century evidence
266	Upper Moor	397590	247860		Settlement		Roman	Late 4th Century evidence
267	330843	415100	259300	Stratford	Stmt/Cem		Roman	
268	333048	426300	258200	Warwick	Stmt/Cem		Roman	
269	Dorn	420600	233800	Cotswold	Town		Roman	Late 4th Century evidence
270	Tripontium	453300	279500	Harborough	Town		Roman	Roman Town on Watling Street. Late 4th Century evidence
271	335777	439830	270200	Rugby	Town		Roman	Princethorpe
272	Alcester	408900	257300	Stratford	Town		Roman	Late 4th Century evidence
273	335344	434100	259700	Stratford	Town		Roman	Walled Settlement on Fosse Way

Catalogue 3: Sites with evidence of Late 4th Century activity

*includes non-monumental sites or settlement sites not included in Catalogue 2: Extant Sites

ID	Site Name	Parish	County	X	Y	Site Type	Date (Century)
1	Cleeve Hill	Bishops Cleeve	Gloucestershire	397600	226600	Settlement	Late 1st - Late 4th
2	Home Farm	Bishops Cleeve	Gloucestershire	395800	227750	Settlement	2nd - Late 4th
3	Stoke Road	Bishops Cleeve	Gloucestershire	394850	227720	Cemetery	3rd - Late 4th
4	Dorn	Moreton-on-Marsh	Gloucestershire	420600	233800	Settlement	2nd - Late 4th
5	Willersey	Willersey	Gloucestershire	410730	239510	Coin Hoard	Late 4th
6	Winchcombe, Spoonley Wood	Winchcombe	Gloucestershire	404500	225680	Villa	3rd - Late 4th
7	Tripontium	Shawell	Leicestershire	453300	279500	Settlement /Cemetery	1st - Late 4th
8	Alcester	Alcester	Warwickshire	408800	257200	Settlement	Mid 1st - Late 4th
9	The Lunt	Baginton	Warwickshire	434410	275180	Fort	1st - 5th?
10	Marlcliff	Bidford-on-Avon	Warwickshire	409860	250180	Settlement /Cemetery	3rd - 9th
11	Billesley	Billesley	Warwickshire	415110	259360	Settlement /Burial	1st - 6th
12	Chesterton	Chesterton	Warwickshire	434200	259640	Settlement /Cemetery	1st - 5th?
13	Alcock's Arbour	Haselor	Warwickshire	411430	256510	Ritual	2nd - Late 4th
14	Stretton-on-Fosse	Stretton-on-Fosse	Warwickshire	421590	238260	Settlement /Cemetery	1st - 6th
15	Tiddington	Tiddington	Warwickshire	421850	255550	Settlement /Cemetery	1st - Late 4th
16	Wasperton	Wasperton	Warwickshire	426370	258640	Settlement /Cemetery	2nd - 7th
17	Welford Pastures Farm	Welford-on-Avon	Warwickshire	412190	251270	Settlement /Burial	1st - Late 4th
18	Childswickam, Perrin's Farm	Childswickham	Worcestershire	407590	238950	Villa	1st - Late 4th
19	Upper Moor	Hill & Moor	Worcestershire	397590	247860	Settlement	Mid - Late 4th
20	Ipsley, GPO Exchange site	Redditch	Worcestershire	406750	266620	Settlement	4th - 6th
21	Sedgeberrow	Sedgeberrow	Worcestershire	402350	238250	Settlement	2nd - 7th

Catalogue 4: Topography at each of the Early Medieval Sites

ID	Site Name	Site Type	Date of Early Medieval Activity (Century)	Elevation Description	Slope Description	Aspect Description	Landscape Description	Position on Slope	Riverside? (<250m from watercourse)	River Feature (within 250m)	Ford? (within 250m)
1	Alveston Manor Hotel	Burial Activity & Settlement Features	5th - 7th	Low	Flat-Gentle	W	Valley Bottom	Lower	Yes	None	Yes
2	Aston Cantlow	Burial Activity	Late 5th - Mid 6th	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	Base	Yes	None	No
3	Aston Mill Farm	Settlement Features	6th - 7th	Low	Flat-Gentle	SE	Valley Bottom	Lower	Stream	None	No
4	Baginton	Burial Activity & Settlement Features	5th - 6th	Low-Medium	Flat-Gentle	Flat	Ridge Top	Crest	Yes	Confluence	No
5	The Lunt	Non-burial Activity	5th?	Low-Medium	Gentle-Medium	NE	Ridge Top	Crest	Yes	None	No
6	Bank Farm	Burial Activity	Early 5th - 7th	Low-Medium	Flat	Flat	Hill Top	NA	No	NA	NA
7	Beckford A	Burial Activity	5th - 6th	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	NA	Yes	Confluence	No
8	Beckford B	Burial Activity	5th - 6th	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	NA	Yes	Confluence	No
9	Bennett's Hill	Burial Activity	6th - 7th	Low	Gentle-Medium	W	Hill Top	NA	No	NA	NA
10	Bidford-on-Avon	Burial Activity	Late 5th - 7th	Low	Gentle	SW	Valley Bottom	Lower	Yes	None	Yes
11	Billesley	Burial Activity	6th	Low-Medium	Gentle-Medium	SE	Ridge Side	Mid	Stream	None	No
12	Blacklow Hill	Burial Activity	Late 6th - Early 7th	Low-Medium	Flat	Flat	Hill Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
13	Blockley	Burial Activity	6th	Medium	Flat-Gentle	NE	Ridge Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
14	Bredon's Norton	Burial Activity	6th?	Low	Flat	NW	Valley Bottom	Base	No	NA	NA
15	Broadway	Burial Activity	Late 5th - 6th	High	Gentle-Medium	N	Ridge Top	Crest	No	NA	NA
16	Broom	Settlement Features	6th	Low	Flat	Flat	Ridge Top	NA	Yes	Confluence	No
17	Cave's Inn	Burial Activity	6th	Medium	Flat-Gentle	SE	Ridge Side	Middle-Lower	Stream	Confluence	Yes
18	Chesterton	Non-burial Activity	5th?	Low-Medium	Gentle-Medium	NE	Hill Top	Crest	Stream	None	No
19	Churchover	Burial Activity	6th - Early 7th	Medium	Medium	N	Ridge Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
20	Compton Verney	Burial Activity	7th	Low-Medium	Medium	N	Ridge Side	Middle-Lower	Stream	Confluence	No
21	Cotesbach	Burial Activity	6th	Medium	Flat-Gentle	W	Ridge Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
22	Deerhurst	Settlement Features	Mid 5th - Medieval	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	NA	Yes	None	No
23	Ebrington	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Medium-High	Flat	S	Hill Side	Top	No	NA	NA
24	Emscote	Burial Activity	6th	Low	Flat	NE	Valley Bottom	Lower	Yes	Confluence	No
25	Fairfield Estate	Burial Activity	6th - 7th	Low	Flat-Gentle	SW	Hill Side	Mid	Stream	None	No
26	Halford	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Low	Flat	SW	Valley Bottom	Lower	Yes	None	Yes
27	Hatton Rock	Settlement Features	Late 6th - 7th	Low	Flat	Flat	Ridge Top	NA	Stream	None	No

ID	Liable to Flood?	Modern Agriculture	Modern Agricultural Regime Type	Further Notes
1	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	
2	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
3	No	Cereals + Stock Rearing/Dairying	Mixed	
4	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	Plateau with site spreading down SW and N slopes
5	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	Edge of plateau and on NE slopes above river
6	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	Plateau on very low hill
7	No	Cereals + Stock Rearing/Dairying	Mixed	
8	No	Cereals + Stock Rearing/Dairying	Mixed	
9	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	Site may extend down slopes of hill, some are very steep.
10	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	
11	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
12	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	Mid-Slope Plateau
13	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
14	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	
15	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	Partially on a plateau above a north slope
16	No	Cereals + Grass	Mixed	On a mid-slope plateau above Arrow
17	No	Grass (temp)	Pastoral	Above a small plateau
18	Maybe	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	Hill beneath a steep ridge
19	No	Grass (temp)	Pastoral	Beneath a plateau
20	No	Grass (perm)	Pastoral	
21	No	Grass (temp)	Pastoral	Above a small plateau
22	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
23	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	Beneath a plateau
24	Yes	Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	
25	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
26	No	Cereals + Stock Rearing/Dairying	Mixed	
27	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	

ID	Site Name	Site Type	Date of Early Medieval Activity (Century)	Elevation Description	Slope Description	Aspect Description	Landscape Description	Position on Slope	Riverside? (<250m from watercourse)	River Feature (within 250m)	Ford? (within 250m)
28	Ipsley, GPO Exchange site	Settlement Features	5th - 6th	Low-Medium	Gentle	E	Hill Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
29	Kemerton Sewage Works	Settlement Features	5th - 7th	Low	Flat-Gentle	SW	Valley Bottom	Lower	Stream	None	No
30	Kilsby	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Medium	Flat	W	Ridge Side	Lower	Stream	Confluence	Yes
31	Kineton	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Medium	Flat-Gentle	SE	Ridge Side	Top	No	NA	NA
32	Kinwarton Churchyard	Burial Activity	Late 5th? - Early 6th?	Low	Gentle-Medium	SE	Hill Side	Middle-Lower	Yes	None	No
33	Lighthorne	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Medium	Flat-Gentle	NW	Ridge Side	Top	No	NA	NA
34	Littlehampton	Burial Activity	7th	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	NA	Yes	Confluence	No
35	Long Itchington	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Low-Medium	Gentle-Medium	S	Hill Side	Middle-Lower	Yes	Mouth	No
36	Snowford Bridge	Settlement Features	Late 6th - 7th	Low-Medium	Flat-Gentle	W	Hill Side	Middle-Lower	Yes	None	No
37	Longbridge Park	Burial Activity	Mid 6th - 7th	Low	Gentle	SE	Valley Bottom	Lower	No	NA	NA
38	Lower Farm	Burial Activity	Mid 6th - Early 7th	Low	Flat	Flat	Ridge Side	Mid	Stream	None	No
39	Lutterworth	Burial Activity	Late 6th - 7th	Medium	Flat-Gentle	NW	Hill Side	Top	Stream	Source	No
40	Marlcliff	Burial Activity	5th - 6th	Low	Gentle-Medium	N	Ridge Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
41	Marton	Burial Activity	Late 6th? - 7th?	Low-Medium	Gentle	Flat	Hill Top	Crest	No	NA	NA
42	Meon Hill	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Medium-High	Very Steep	S	Hill Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
43	Milcote Hall	Burial Activity	5th? - 7th?	Low	Gentle	N	Valley Bottom	Base	Yes	None	No
44	Mount Pleasant	Burial Activity	6th? - 8th?	Medium-High	Gentle	S	Ridge Top	NA	No	NA	NA
45	Napton Hill	Burial Activity	7th	Medium	Gentle	W	Hill Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
46	Newton	Burial Activity	6th - 7th	Medium	Gentle-Medium	E	Hill Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
47	Offchurch	Burial Activity	Mid 6th	Medium	Flat-Gentle	NE	Hill Side	Upper-Middle	No	NA	NA
48	Princethorpe	Burial Activity	Early 6th? - 7th?	Low-Medium	Flat-Gentle	NW	Hill Side	Upper-Middle	No	NA	NA
49	Ragley	Burial Activity	Late 6th	Low	Medium	E	Hill Side	Mid	Yes	Confluence	No
50	Rollright	Burial Activity	5th - 7th	High	Gentle	NW	Ridge Top	Crest	No	NA	NA
51	Sedgeberrow	Settlement Features	7th	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	NA	Stream	None	No
52	St Anne's Church	Burial Activity	6th? - 7th?	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	NA	Yes	None	No

ID	Liable to Flood?	Modern Agriculture	Modern Agricultural Regime Type	Further Notes
28	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
29	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
30	Maybe	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	
31	No	Grass (perm)	Pastoral	
32	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	
33	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
34	Yes	Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	
35	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	
36	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	Site spans a flat valley bottom, with one small hall on the western rise (NNE aspect) and the main hall on the eastern rise (W aspect)
37	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	
38	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	Plateau in a west slope
39	No	Grass (temp)	Pastoral	Beneath a plateau
40	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	Site lies across a small valley bottom, with the site lying on both slopes on either side
41	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	Plateau above west slope
42	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
43	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	
44	No	Cereals + Grass	Mixed	On northern tip of a spur, where it rises to a peak.
45	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
46	No	Grass (temp)	Pastoral	
47	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	Above a small plateau
48	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	
49	Maybe	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (perm)	Pastoral	
50	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	
51	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
52	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	

ID	Site Name	Site Type	Date of Early Medieval Activity (Century)	Elevation Description	Slope Description	Aspect Description	Landscape Description	Position on Slope	Riverside? (<250m from watercourse)	River Feature (within 250m)	Ford? (within 250m)
53	Stretton-on-Fosse	Burial Activity & Settlement Features	5th - 6th	Medium	Gentle	NE	Ridge Side	Top	No	NA	NA
54	Upton Snodsbury	Burial Activity	6th	Low	Steep	W	Ridge Side	Mid	Yes	None	No
55	Walton Cardiff	Burial Activity	Late 6th - Early 7th	Low	Flat	Flat	Valley Bottom	Base	No	NA	NA
56	Wasperton	Burial Activity & Settlement Features	5th - 7th	Low	Flat	W	Valley Bottom	Lower	Stream	None	No
57	Welton	Burial Activity	6th	Medium-High	Flat-Gentle	SW	Hill Side	Mid	No	NA	NA
58	Winchcombe, North Street	Burial Activity	Mid 6th - 10th	Low-Medium	Gentle	N	Valley Bottom	Lower	Yes	Confluence	No

ID	Liable to Flood?	Modern Agriculture	Modern Agricultural Regime Type	Further Notes
53	No	Grass (temp)	Pastoral	
54	No	Cereals + Grass	Mixed	
55	No	Grass + Stock Rearing/Dairying (temp)	Pastoral	
56	No	Cereals + Veg/Fruit	Arable	
57	No	Grass (perm)	Pastoral	
58	No	Grass (temp)	Pastoral	

Catalogue 5: Background signatures for assessing meaningful relationships between sites and landscape features

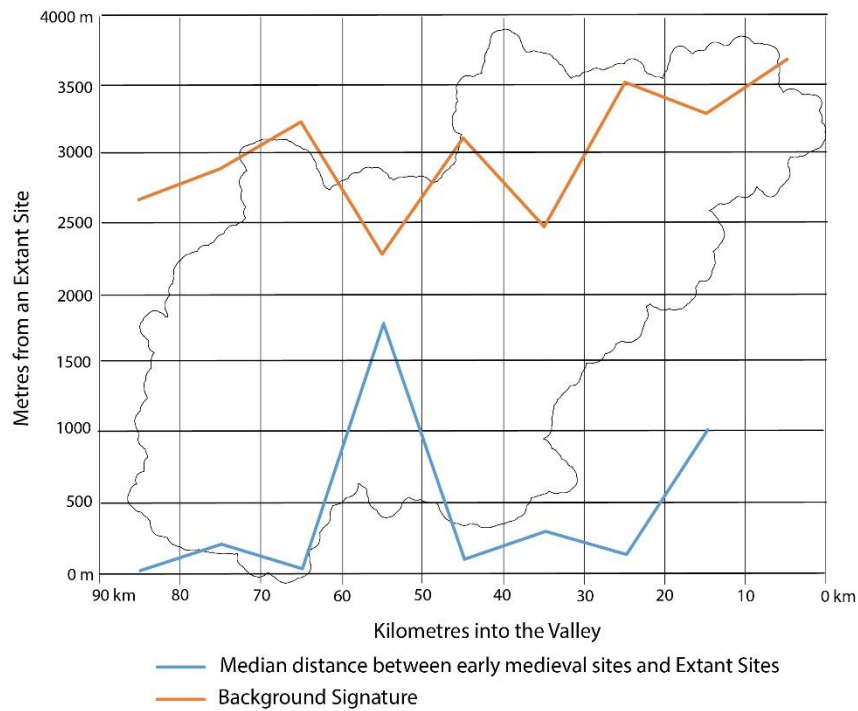


Figure 1 Comparing the relationship between early medieval site position and extant sites (monuments and Roman occupation sites) against the occurrence of extant sites across the Avon Valley.

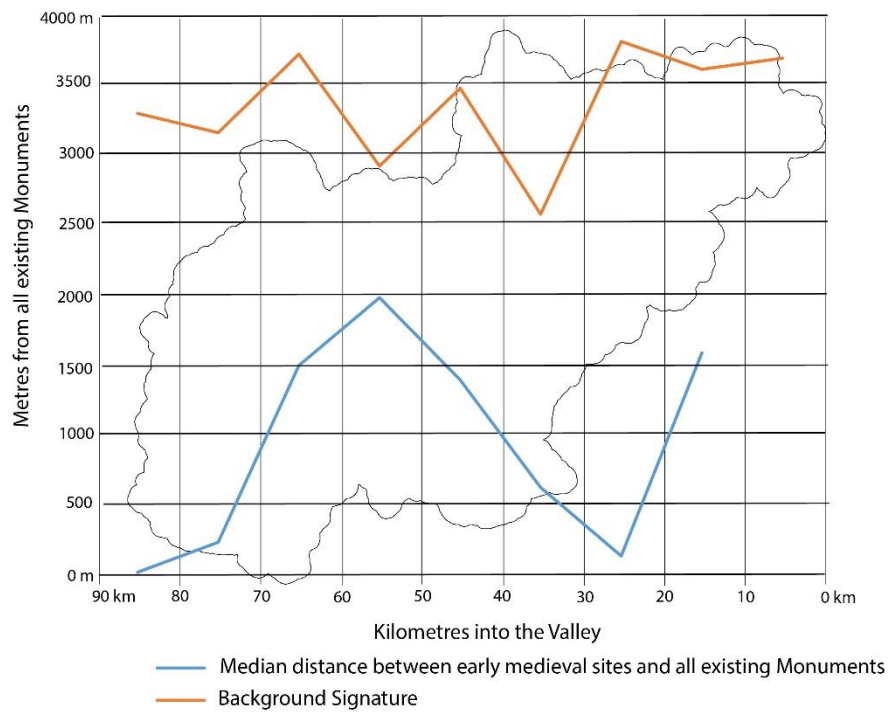


Figure 2 Comparing the relationship between early medieval site position and existing monuments against the occurrence of these monuments across the Avon Valley

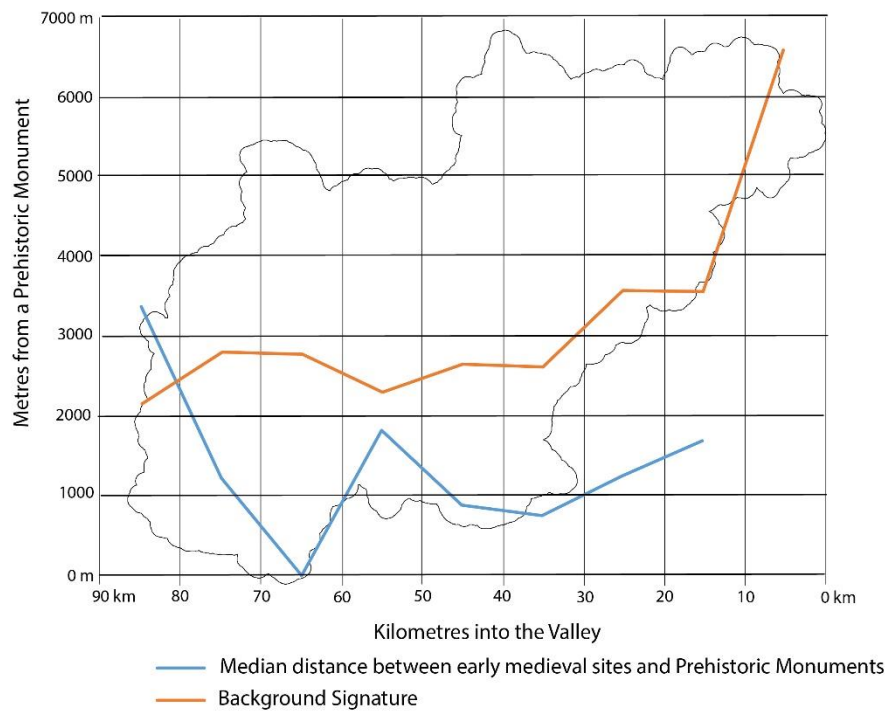


Figure 3 Comparing the relationship between early medieval site position and prehistoric monuments against the occurrence of these monuments across the Avon Valley

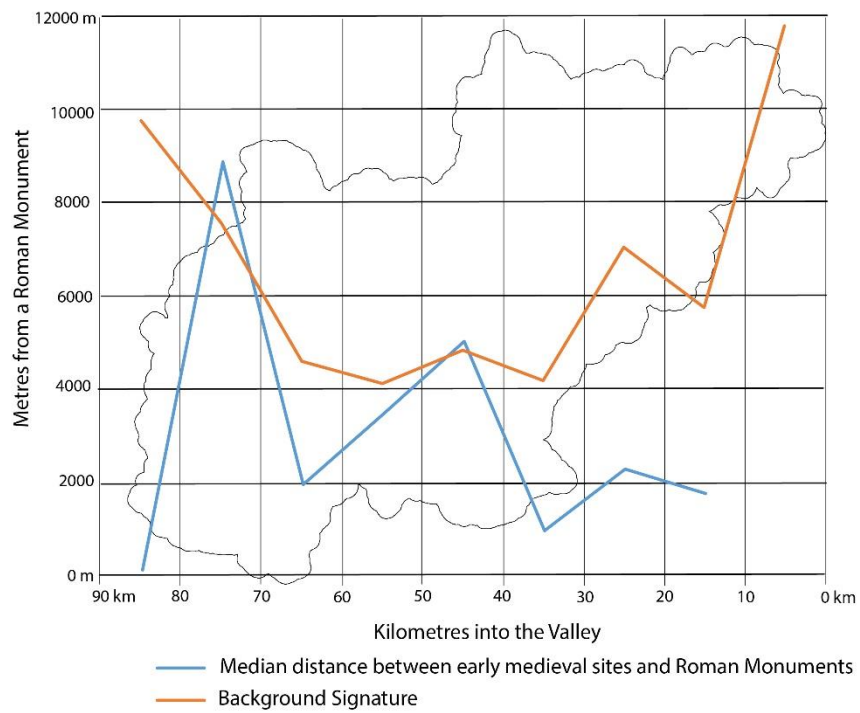


Figure 4 Comparing the relationship between early medieval site position and Roman monuments against the occurrence of these monuments across the Avon Valley

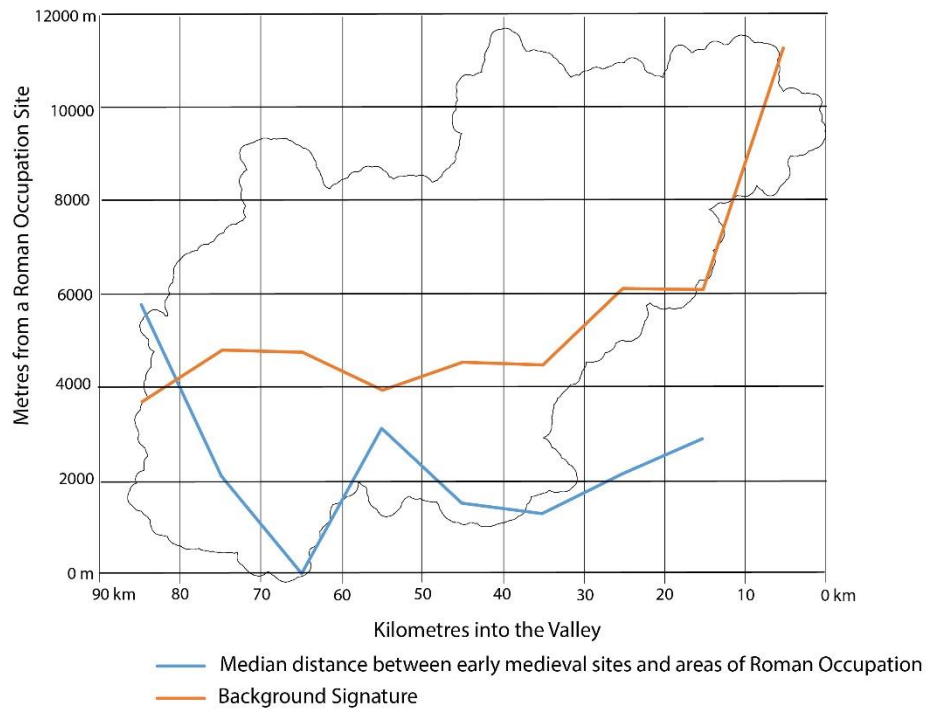


Figure 5 Comparing the relationship between early medieval site position and Roman occupation sites against the occurrence of these Roman sites across the Avon Valley

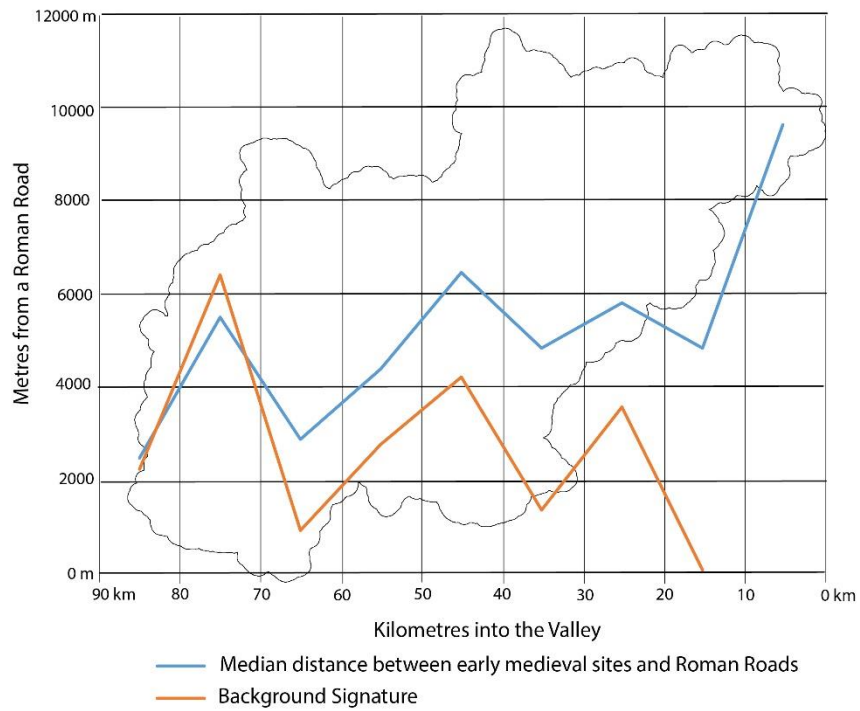


Figure 6 Comparing the relationship between early medieval site position and Roman roads against the occurrence of these roads across the Avon Valley

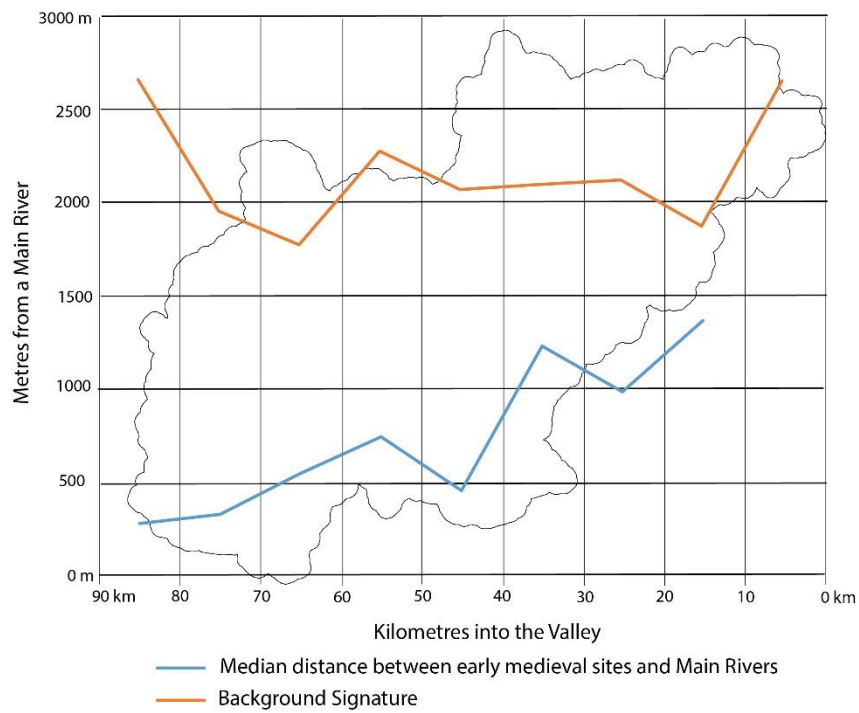


Figure 7 Comparing the relationship between early medieval site position and main rivers against the occurrence of these rivers across the Avon Valley

Catalogue 6: Plates



Plate 1 The River Avon beneath Scarbank, near Hampton Lucy



Plate 2 Hills of the Cotswold escarpment punctuating the Avon Valley: Meon Hill (left) and Dovers Hill (right)

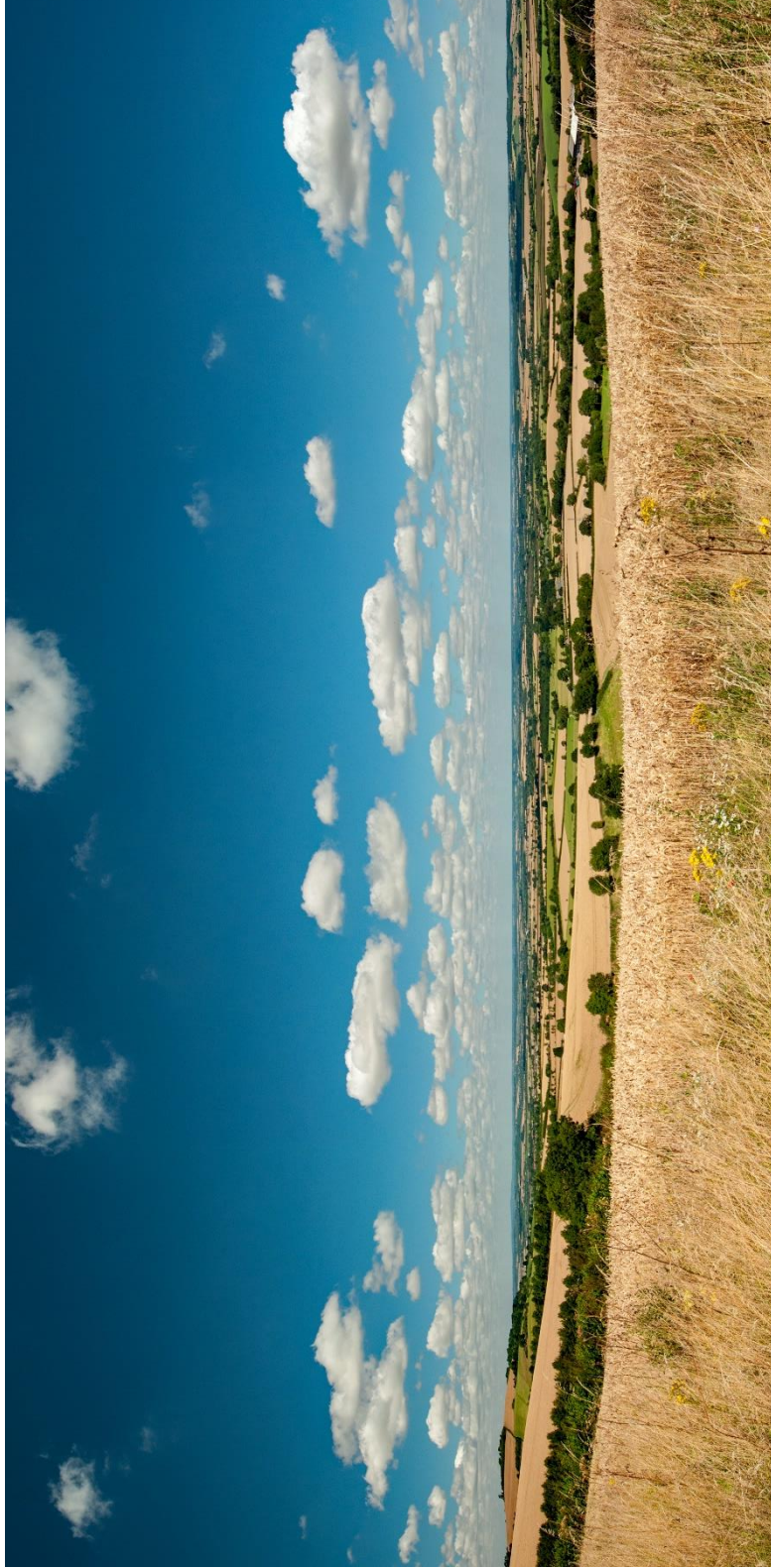


Plate 3 Looking north across the Avon Valley and the open Feldon from near Ilmington

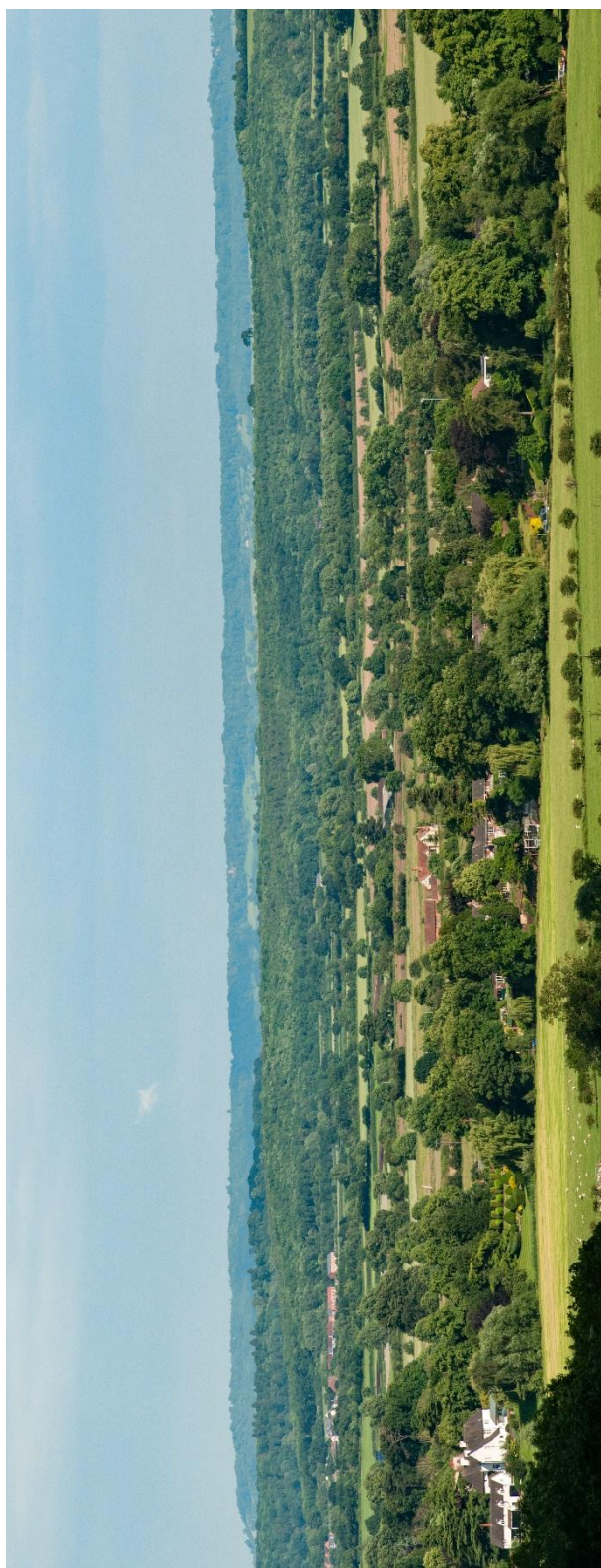


Plate 4 Looking south across the Avon Valley and the Feldon from the Wellcombe Hills



Plate 5 Rural landscapes and villages of the Feldon: Lower Quinton from near Ilmington



Plate 6 Urban centres of the Feldon: Coventry on the horizon and Warwick Castle in the middle-distance



Plate 7 Hills on the valley's fringes: Meon Hill

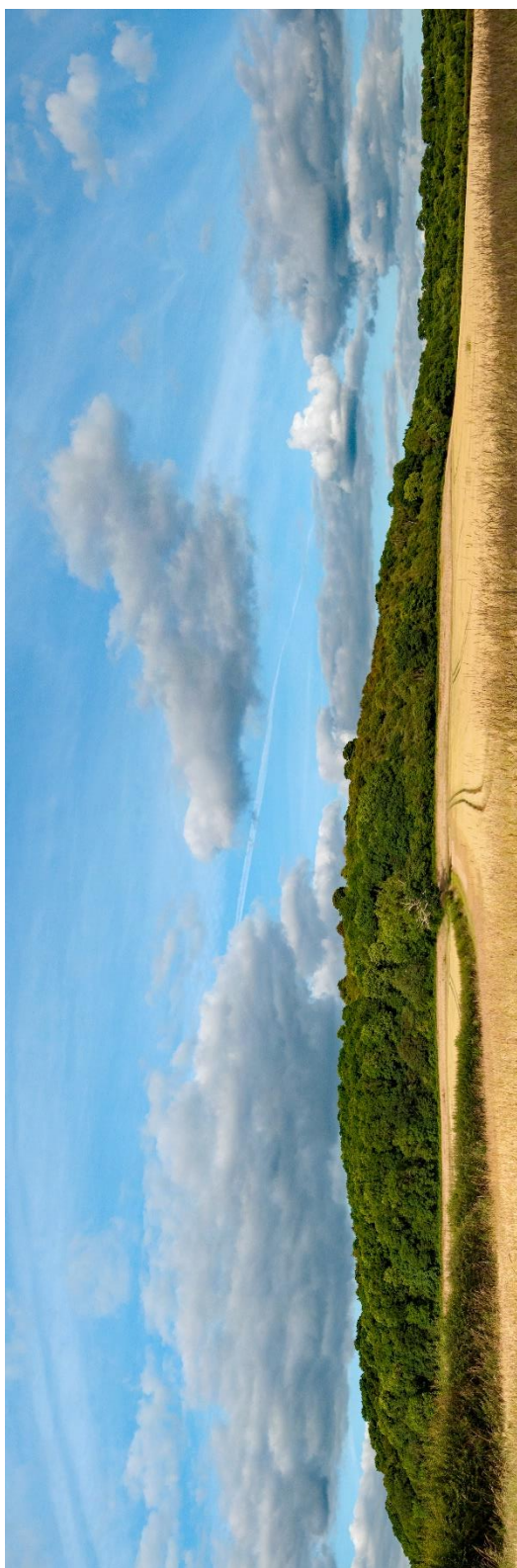


Plate 8 The Forest of Arden: Withycombe Wood, near Billesley

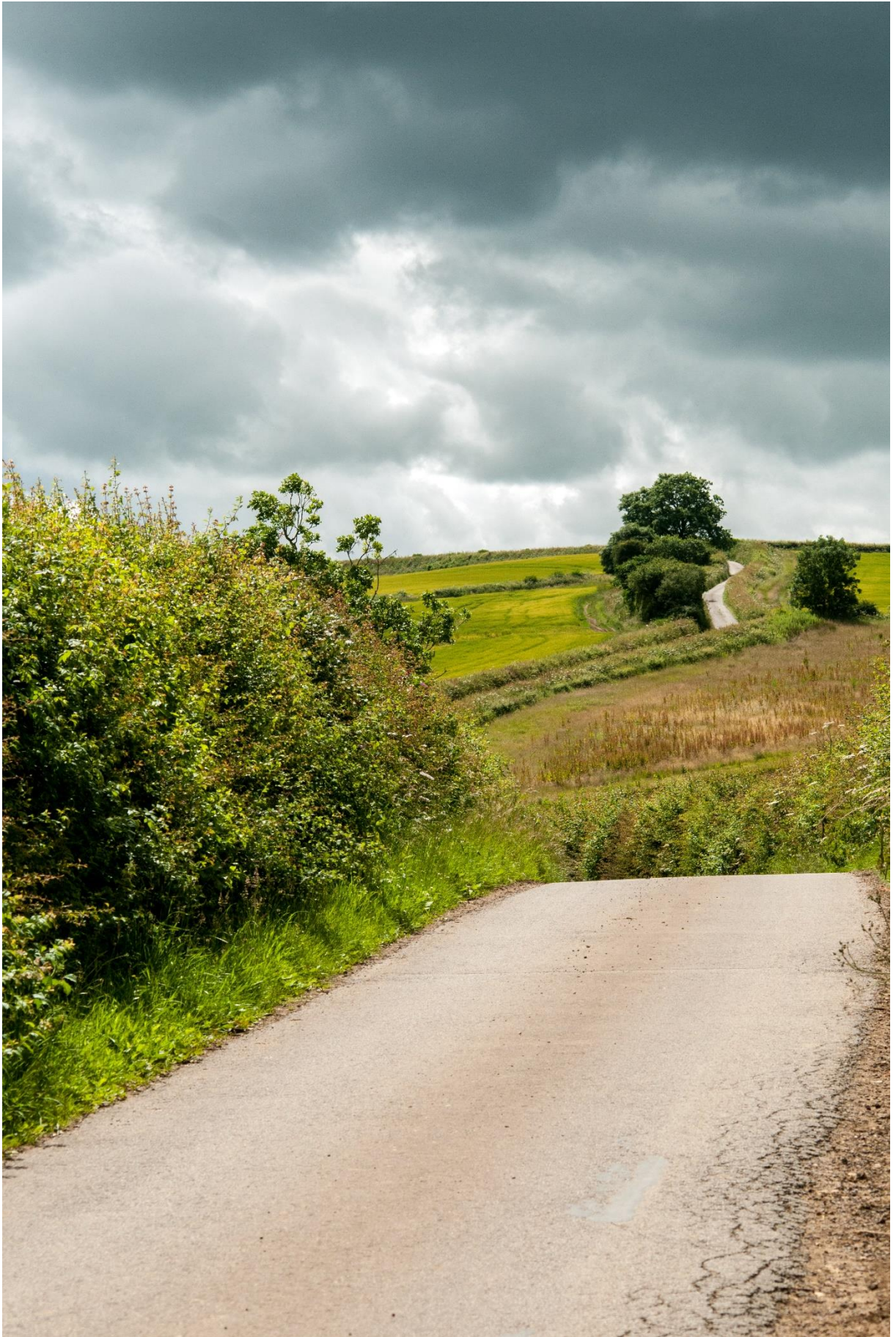


Plate 9 Rolling countryside on the edge of the Cotswold escarpment: a lane near Lark Stoke, Ilmington



Plate 10 The Fosse Way Roman road, north of Halford.



Plate 11 Ryknield Street Roman road, south of Bidford-on-Avon



Plate 12 Bidford-on-Avon Bridge, a major crossing on the River Avon. Close to this lay the Roman ford for Ryknield Street



Plate 13 The confluence of the rivers Avon and Alne: the riverine link between Alcester and Bidford-on-Avon



Plate 14 A megalith of the King's Men stone circle, Rollright. Looking south into the Upper Thames Valley



Plate 15 The view from the Kings Stone monolith, Rollright. Looking north into the Stour and Avon valleys



Plate 16 The Kings Stone, Rollright: standing on the watershed between the Avon and Upper Thames valleys and close to the 2014 discovery of an elite, mid-7th century female burial.



Plate 17 Meon Hill Iron Age hill fort ramparts: the site of a 6th century elite male burial



Plate 18 The view across the hall complex at Hatton Rock. Aerial photographs show a line of possible 'halls' to the left of the trees in the foreground



Plate 19 Beneath the hall complex at Hatton Rock



Plate 20 The sunken lane running from beneath the hall complex at Hatton Rock towards the River Avon



Plate 21 The River Avon beneath the eponymous Hatton 'Rock'