

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at**

**Iminster, Canal Way  
ICW15**



The Chard canal in Iminster, next to the new clubhouse.

**Carried out for: Iminster Town Council**

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**Report Number 508**

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# An Archaeological Watching Brief at Ilminster, Canal Way ICW15

## Summary

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken where Ilminster Town Council were building new town sporting facilities on a greenfield site south of the town, next to a surviving stretch of the Chard canal. Apart from three struck flints, all of the finds recovered were 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery and building material. Foundation trenches revealed a soil profile encapsulating a history of the local landscape – beginning as a marshy valley crossed by several small streams, these were buried by a thick layer of colluvium conveyed by hillwash from nearby higher ground. Drainage was probably facilitated by the construction of the Chard canal.*

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Ilminster Town Council applied for planning permission from South Somerset District Council for 'the erection of a clubhouse/changing rooms, provision of a football pitch, floodlighting and formation of a new vehicular access' on land adjacent to Canal Way, Ilminster. (see Figure 1).

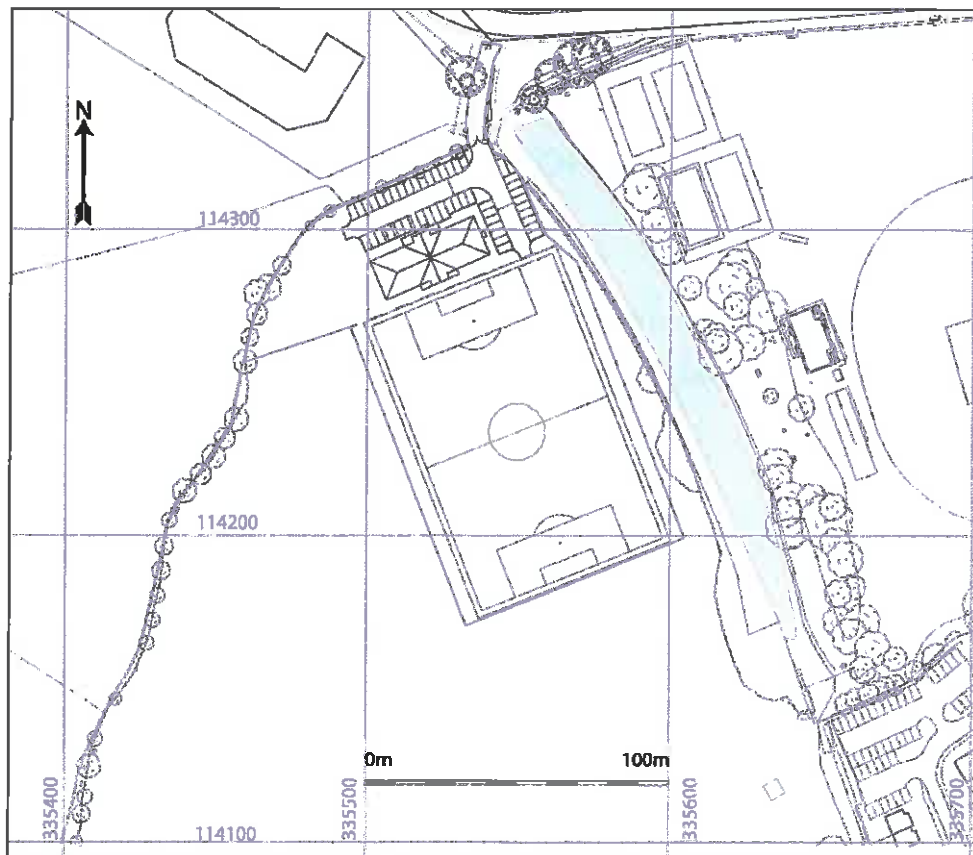


Figure 1. The new football pitch and club house are outlined in red. The blue shows an intact length of the Chard to Taunton Canal. Plan courtesy of Paul Rowe Architectural Services.

1.2 Permission (number 14/04748/FUL) was granted with the following condition:

*11. No development hereby approved shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority.*

This condition was in response to the observation by the South West Heritage Trust (SWHT), who act as archaeological advisors for South Somerset District Council:

*recent investigation in the immediate vicinity have identified extensive evidence for previously unknown, prehistoric (Bronze Age) and Roman occupation activity.<sup>1</sup>*

Mr. Membery gave further advice in an email of the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2015 that a flexible archaeological watching brief during groundworks would constitute an appropriate level of investigation for this site. He further advised that *if after initial observations it becomes clear that there is very limited, or no archaeology impacted then the watching brief can be adapted to only take place intermittently.*

1.3 Iminster Town Clerk, Ms Joy Norris, commissioned consultant archaeologists Hollinrake Archaeology Co-Operative to prepare the written scheme of investigation (WSI). This scheme of works was accepted by Mr. Steve Membery, Historic Environment Officer for the South West Heritage Trust (SWHT). This report is written in compliance with the accepted WSI.

1.4 The works were carried out by Arthur Hollinrake and Matthew Law at various times as construction works progressed, between Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October and Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> Tanya James, letter of 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

## 2.0 Topography and Geology

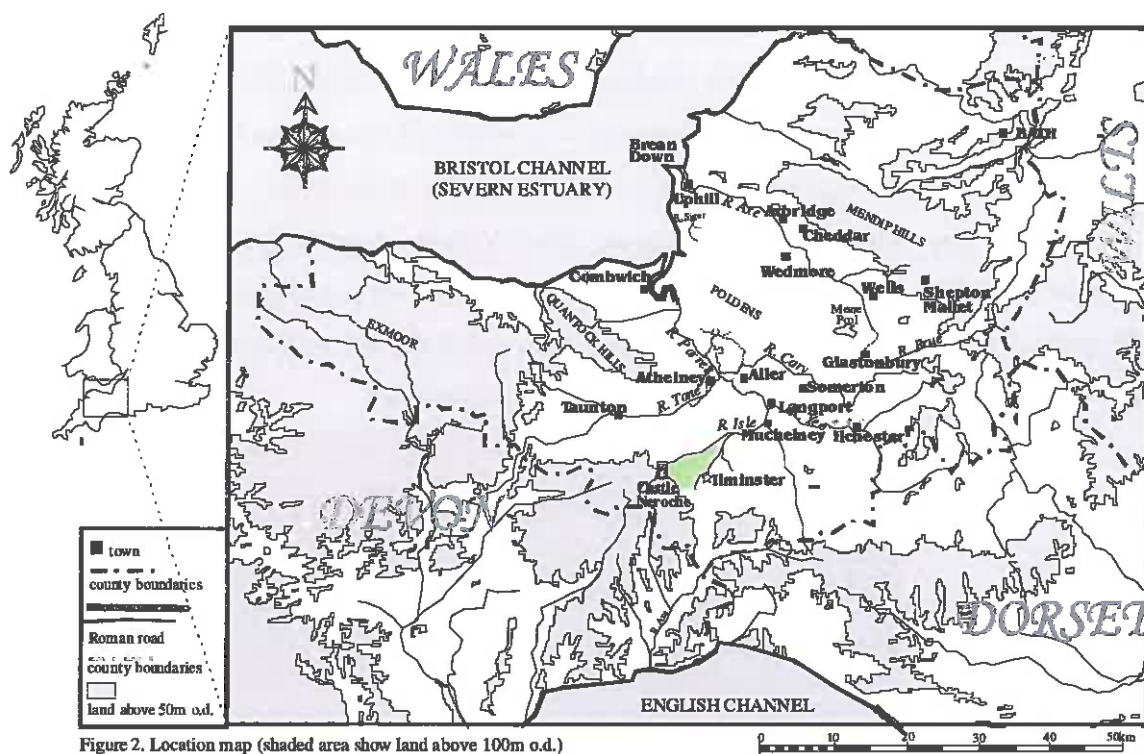


Figure 2. Location map (shaded area show land above 100m o.d.)

Ilminster is marked with a red star and the green area marks the Forest of Neroche.

**2.1** Ilminster, the minster on the River Isle, is situated near the south-west border of the county of Somerset (see Figure 2). The River Isle rises from several sources on the Blackdown Hills and flows into the River Parrett at Langport. The Isle was navigable, using the traditional flat-bottomed shallow draft barges, for some way upstream of Ilminster, giving access to the water roads of Somerset south of the Poldens<sup>2</sup> and the seaways of the Bristol Channel. Ilminster also lies on an old turnpike road from Somerton to Chard and from Taunton to Crewkerne.<sup>3</sup> The London to Exeter turnpike ran through the town.<sup>4</sup>

This comprehensive communications network by land and water would no doubt be of great value to the near-by Castle Neroche<sup>5</sup> and it is not surprising to find Ilminster immediately outside of the Forest of Neroche, marked in green on Figure 2.

**2.2** The new sporting facilities lie in a narrow north-west to south-east valley to the south of the town of Ilminster (see Figure 5.). Herne Hill rises to the south of the site. A well-preserved section of the Chard canal (HER 53321) runs through this valley immediately east

<sup>2</sup> Hollinrake, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Collinson, 1791, vol. i. p. 2.

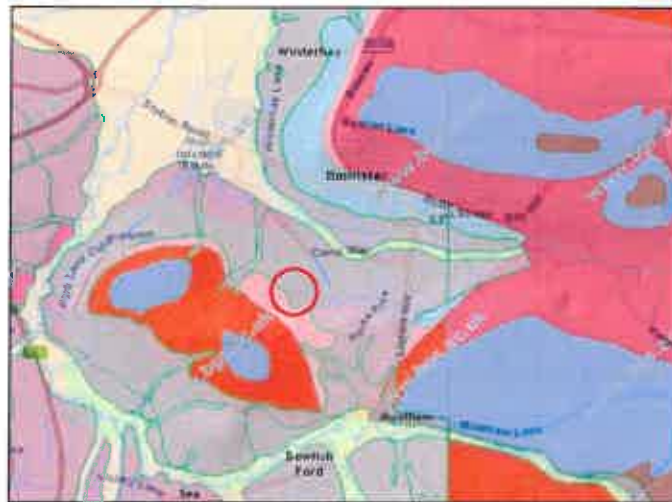
<sup>4</sup> Gathercole, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> HER 43844 describes it as 'a prehistoric earthwork later formed into a medieval castle.'

of the site. The soils are slightly acid, loams and clays with impeded drainage suitable, when drained, for arable and grassland<sup>6</sup>.

**2.3** The grid reference for the watching brief site centred on ST 335530 114300 (see Location Map, Figure 11 ). Before construction commenced, the site lay between 37.87 at the south-west corner and 36.57m OD at the eastern side, close to the canal.

**2.4** The site stands on the Belemnite Marl Member calcitic mudstone deposited in shallow lime-mud seas 183 to 190 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. A thin outcrop of Charmouth Mudstone Formation runs just to the north of the site and, to the south of the site, the Green Ammonite Formation, both dominated by mudstones.



**Figure 3.** Map of the geology of the Iminster area. The site is marked by a red circle. Contains Ordnance Survey data and database rights 2016.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 4.** A LIDAR map of the area around the new sports facilities<sup>8</sup>, with the site outlined in red. The deer park paling is visible following the north-south hedge to the left of the site.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeoIndex/home>

<sup>8</sup> <https://houseprices.io/lab/lidar/map>



3.0 Archaeological Background

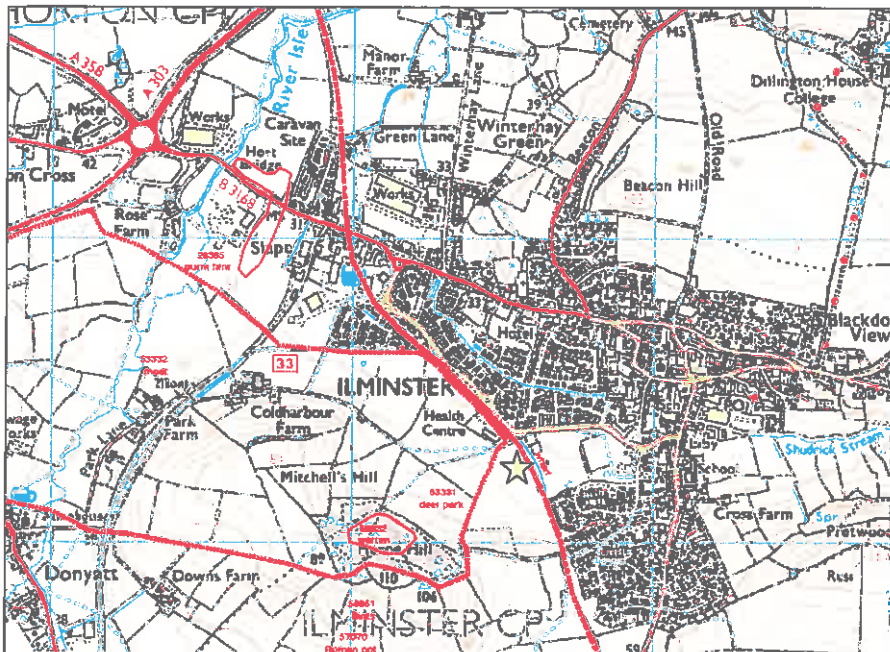


Figure 5. Map of Ilchester<sup>9</sup> with nearby HER entries. The deer park boundaries are marked with a dotted red line. The course of the Chard canal is shown as a dashed red line. The site of the new sporting facilities is marked with a star.

<sup>9</sup> <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/home.htm>

The information on sites included in this section was obtained from the Somerset County Council Heritage Environment Records (HER). See Figure 5 for locations.

### 3.1 Prehistoric

#### **HER: 56951 Flint Scatter, Herne Hill, Iminster ST 351 138**

A scatter of 10 black flint flakes found in March 1998

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### 3.2 Bronze Age

#### **HER 28385 Late Bronze Age occupation, Hort Bridge ST 34685 15058**

An archaeological evaluation located a number of features indicative of late Bronze Age occupation, including spreads of burnt flint deposits, perhaps indicative of activities associated with 'burnt mounds'. Compacted deposits of heat-affected flint recorded as spreads of material that both sealed and filled underlying archaeological and natural features such as pits and possible ditches.

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### 3.3 Roman

#### **HER 57070 Roman pottery finds ST 350 136**

Fieldwalking across a field to the south of Herne Hill produced Roman pottery. Much of it is grey ware and black-burnished ware but there was one piece of colour-coated beaker. The material appears to be fairly fresh and suggests a settlement in the immediate area.

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### 3.4 Medieval

#### **HER 53332 Moat and possible fishpond, Park Farm, Donyatt ST 34320 14450**

The remains of a dry moat can be traced on three sides and it is said that the fourth arm was apparent until the present farm buildings were constructed c1900. Original C14th house mostly demolished. A license to crenellate the house was granted in 1329.

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#### **HER 53331 Deerpark ST 343 144**

A park is mentioned in Domesday Book and in 1330 William de Montacute emparked lands within the parish without a license. No trace of a pale found. The incidence of the names 'Park Farm' and 'Park Lane' suggest that the River Isle might have formed the western boundary of the park.

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#### **Her 56952 Rabbit warren, Herne Hill, Iminster ST 351 140**

There was a C19th rabbit warren on Herne Hill. The construction of the warren caused the boundaries of the deer park to be altered.

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### 3.5 Chard Canal

#### **HER: 53321 Chard Canal, Iminster ST 3600 1334**

Canal, starting in Chard and joining the Bridgewater-Taunton canal which operated between 1842 and 1867

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#### **HER: 53329 Canal Wharf, Iminster ST 35550 14350**

Site of a possible wharf which served the town of Iminster, based on 'Wharf Lane' on OSAD 6 map. No sign of such a wharf exists now.

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## 4.0 Historical Background

4.1 *The earliest certain reference to Ilminster is King Ethelred's Confirmation of 995, which returned the estates to the Benedictine Muchelney Abbey after a time of disturbance.*<sup>10</sup>

The validity of other, purportedly earlier, charters is in doubt, but the wording of the 995 charter is enough to demonstrate that the 'minster' on the River Isle was founded in the pre-Conquest period. There is little evidence of Roman or prehistoric activity in the town, but this is more likely to be a reflection on the small amount of archaeological work undertaken in the town than being a picture of the genuine state of affairs.

4.2 At Domesday, Ilminster is listed under the land of Muchelney Church as entry 9;3.

*ILEMINSTRE. Abbot Leofward held it before 1066; it paid tax for 20 hides. Land for 20 plouths, of which 9 hides and 1 ½ virgates are in lordship; 3 ploughs there; 10 slaves; 25 villains and 22 bordars with 20 ploughs & 10 ½ hides and ½ virgate 3 mills which pay 22s 6d; meadow, 80 acres; woodland 3 leagues long and 1 ½ leagues wide.*

*A market which pays 20s.*

*2 cobs; 27 cattle; 33 pigs; 40 sheep.*

*Two thanes held 1 ½ hides of this land; they could not be separated from the church.*

*Value of the whole £20; value when the Abbot died £26.*

At 20 hides<sup>11</sup>, Ilminster was a very large estate. Half of the estate was held directly by the lord of the manor with the rest being held by the semi-free villains and the free smallholders (bordars). The settlement was already sufficiently developed to have a market. Three mills were most likely driven by the water of the River Isle and the Shuldrick Stream. Although the estate had lost some value in the recent past, £20 return still made it a valuable estate.

4.3 A major fire in 1491 destroyed much of the town; Collinson was of the opinion that it was not completely rebuilt afterwards<sup>12</sup>. This fire might also have destroyed many documents, since very few written sources for the history of medieval Ilminster now survive. There was another significant fire in 1661<sup>13</sup>

4.4 The church was a royal peculiar until the Dissolution of the Abbeys in 1538<sup>14</sup>, meaning that the sovereign directly chose the priest serving there rather than the usual pattern

<sup>10</sup> Gathercole, p.4.

<sup>11</sup> hide – a measurement of land sufficient to support an extended family, usually about 120 acres.

<sup>12</sup> Collinson, 1791, vol. i, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Gathercole, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Collinson, p. 7.

of churches under the administration of the diocese. This suggests a close connection between the monarch and the estate of Iminster, especially in the pre-Conquest period.

4.5 The town enjoyed continuing prosperity in the post-medieval period thanks to the market and the manufacture of cloth and gloves and rope-making.<sup>15</sup> From 1842 to 1867 the Chard canal was active (HER 53321) before being bought by the Bristol and Exeter Railway and closed down.<sup>16</sup> Gathercole reports that '*this was the last of the great canals and technically advanced*'. The railway line closely followed the line of the canal. Place name evidence locates a wharf on the canal close to the site of the new sports facilities.

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<sup>15</sup> Gathercole, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Gathercole, p. 16.

5.0 Historic Maps

5.1 1583 map of Somerset



Figure 6. The 1583 map of Somerset from the Saxton atlas of England and Wales<sup>17</sup> shows Neroche Forest and the Donyatt deer park (HER 53331).

<sup>17</sup> British Library Online Gallery  
<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/unvbrit/s/001map00000c7c1u00009000.html>

5.2 1885 1<sup>ST</sup> ed. OS map

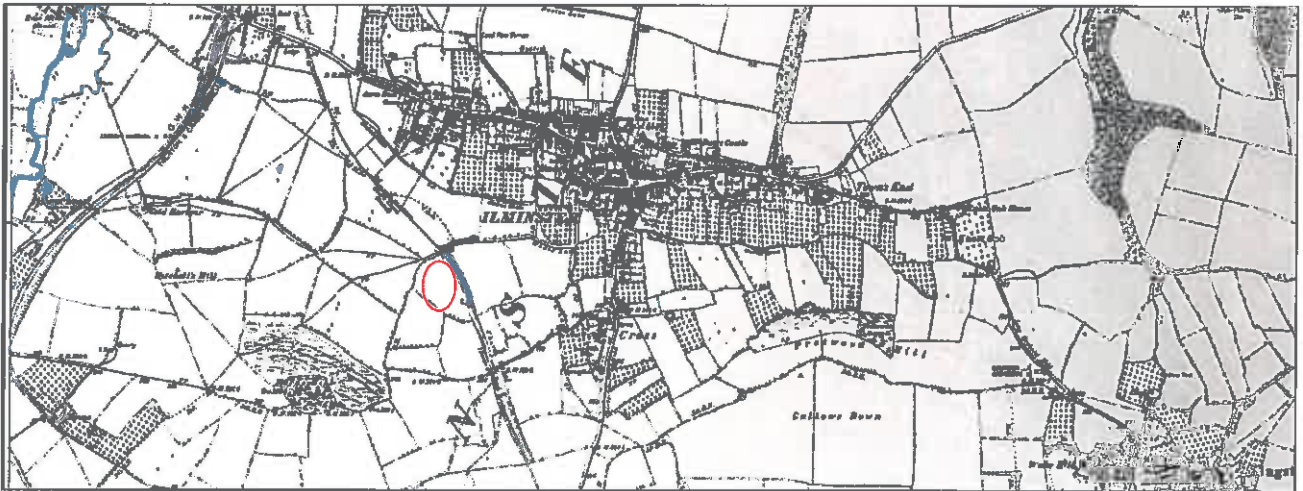
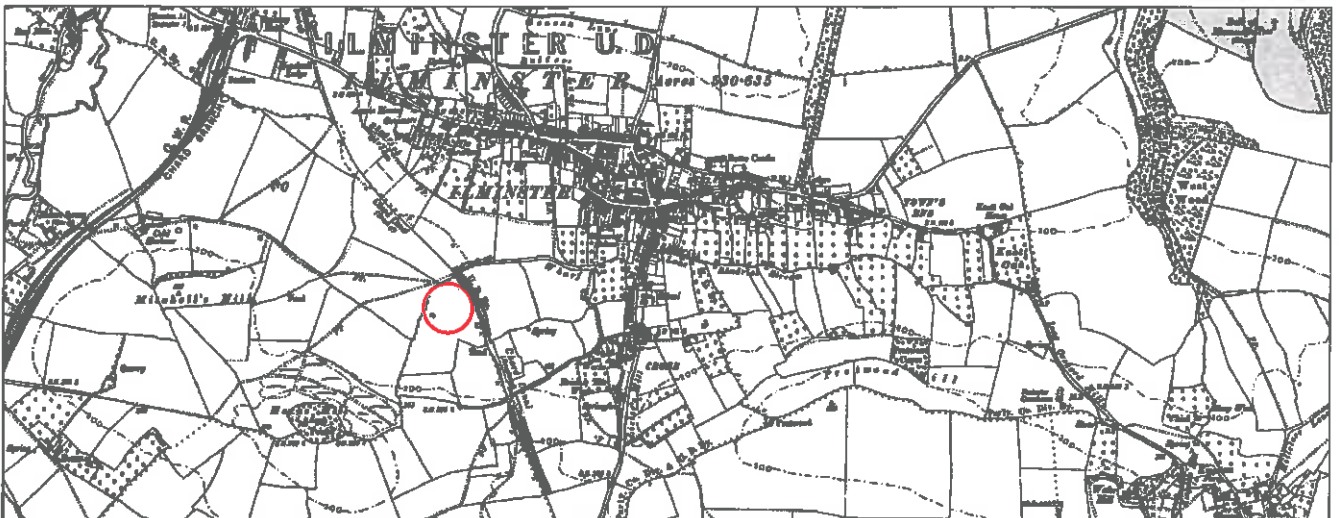


Figure 7. By 1885 the Chard canal had already been superseded by the railway line. The site in this and the following maps is indicated by a red oval.

5.3 1904 2<sup>nd</sup> ed OS map



**Figure 8.** This map shows that the railway line followed the eastern bank of the Chard canal. A broad flat strip showing in this location on the LIDAR plan (Figure 4) probably represents this railway line. It is likely that the wharf (HER 53329) lies below the ballast of the railway line.



5.4 1928 OS map

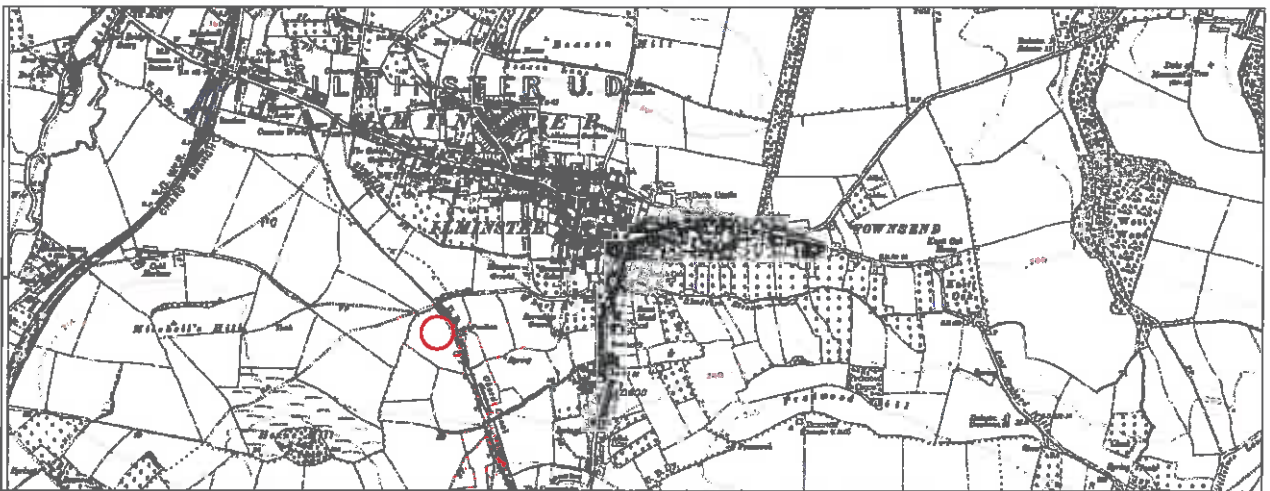


Figure 9.



## 5.5 Discussion

The topography and geology indicate that the site lies in an area of fertile but poorly drained ground (see 2.2 above). This could be part of the 80 acres of meadow land recorded in Domesday (4.2 above) and since meadow formed an important resource, producing the hay to fodder livestock over the winter, there might have been little incentive to devote this ground to other uses. Much of this area was taken up with the Donyatt deer park, which would be a suitable use for these conditions.

Map studies has been able to flesh out some of the details of the Donyatt deerpark (HER 53331), which shares a boundary with the field containing the new sporting facilities. The eastern boundary paling shows up clearly in the LIDAR map (Figure 4) and the 16<sup>th</sup> century map shows that the park extends to the west beyond the River Isle (Figure 6). The park was probably administered from the moated site now called Park Farm (HER 53332). The Donyatt/ Ilminster parish boundary follows the park pale east of the River Isle.

## 6.0 The Archaeological Watching Brief: Introduction and Methods

**6.1 Introduction** The Watching Brief involved monitoring the removal of the turf and topsoil<sup>18</sup> and a slight reduction in the ground level in the area of the new club house and car parking. This was called 'Area 1' on the understanding that further areas would be monitored as the project proceeded. In the event, monitoring of the excavation of test pits, foundations and service trenches recorded so little of archaeological importance in Area 1 that, following the advice of the archaeological monitor, Steve Membery (see 1.2 above) we took the decision that no further monitoring was required.

**6.2 Context numbers** for the various deposits and features were allocated in sequence of identification and written descriptions were recorded on *pro-forma* context sheets. The context numbers assigned ran from [101] through to [114]. The site code was **ICW15**

**6.3 Archaeological features** were half sectioned and drawn at a scale of 1:10 for sections and 1:20 for plans. The trench(es)/area(s) were also planned at a scale of 1:20.

**6.4 Locations** of the trench, features, artefacts and topography were planned using a Garmin eTrex H Handheld GPS Navigator, which is accurate to within 3m.

**Global Positioning Survey data** (GPS) has been used throughout this report. The data has been processed using **QGIS** (Quantum Geographic Information System) open source software.

The QGIS software requires numerical data only. The Ordnance Survey grid letters are supplemented by numbers for this system. The numerical value of the National Grid Reference letters 'ST' are 3 (eastings) / 1 (northings).

The site grid reference ST 355 143 can also be expressed numerically as 3355 1143.

This 8 figure format locates its subject within a 100m square.

A **12 figure format** has been used to input the Ordnance Survey grid data in meters of eastings and northings, eg. 335530 114300

The 12 figure format locates its subject within a 1m square.

**6.5 Levels** above Ordnance Datum were taken throughout. The Ordnance Survey benchmark used was situated on the south-west corner of Greenfylde school and had a value

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<sup>18</sup> using a Case CX 130B with 1.8m wide grating bucket

of 40.77m above mean Ordnance Datum (AOD). All levels have been listed on *pro-forma* level sheets A day book was kept listing daily events, visitors, observations and etc.

**6.6 Levelled Section Positions (LSP)** are used to record the stratigraphic sequence. The LSP is numbered, LSP 1 etc. and its position recorded using Ordnance Survey co-ordinates and/or site grid references if one has been implemented. The depths of the stratigraphic deposits are then recorded using levels above ordnance datum (AOD). Details regarding the boundaries between the deposits might also be detailed upon the *pro-forma* level sheets. This system is a quick and effective way to record the deposits and finds across the site.

**6.7 Finds** and artefacts recovered during the watching brief were bagged by context or as un-stratified. After the fieldwork had been completed, the finds were washed, dried, sorted and listed. Modern material, including factory-made pottery and modern building rubble were discarded after being listed. In many of the watching brief contexts, modern material, including brick and tile fragments, modern pottery and plastics were noted but were not collected.

## 6.8 Glossary of Abbreviations & Conventions

Key to Symbols			
Subject	Abbreviation or Convention	Example	Notes
Bench Mark	$\nabla$		Number value @ mAOD (meters above ordnance datum)
uniform context number across many areas	#	#10	eg. generic number for bedrock, written as (801) etc.
Sample numbers	<>	<1>	consecutive numbering system
Deposit or fill context number	(###)	(801)	consecutive numbering system for context numbers, by area, prefixed by the area number
cut numbers	[###]	[899]	consecutive numbering system - prefixed by the area number
Lias island contour numbers	{###}	{8003}	consecutive numbering within context numbers
Grid Co-ordinates	### / ###	100E/ 100N or 100/ 100	eastings/ northings (optional use of compass point)
Numbered Baulks	organic layer number @ co-ordinate	908N @ 230 / 230	no consecutive numbering
Dashed line	- - -		Used to record diffuse borders between contexts on section drawings
Dot-Dashed line	.-.-.		Edge of excavation on drawings

<b>Glossary</b>			
Areas of Excavation	A#	A8	consecutive numbering system
Associated Bone Group	ABG Context Number	ABG 856	addition to context numbers
Above Ordnance Datum	AOD	1.00m AOD	one meter above ordnance datum (occasionally abbreviated to mOD)
Borehole	Bh	Bh17	
Ditches	D#	D1	applies to the five main, large ditch alignments
Drawings	Dwg.	Dwg.1	consecutive numbering system
Equated to ...	EQ	(917) EQ (902) ...	short hand used for context concordance - fill (917) is the same as deposit (902)
Finds	F-#	F-1	F-numbers for finds
Field System Postion	FSP #	FSP 1	field system position of recording
Limit of Excavation	LOE	LOE	
Levelled Section Positions	LSP#	LSP1	consecutive numbering system
Machining	Mach.	(908) mach.	short hand used on finds labels
Organic Layer	OL	OL 1866	consecutive within context numbers
Animal Hoof Prints	P#	P1	consecutive numbering system
Quadrants	Q#	Q1	excavation method subdividing an allocated area into four quarters
Sondage numbers	So.#	So.1	consecutive numbering system - S# used for structures
Trench	Tr.	Tr.10A	consecutive with area numbers
Temporary Bench Mark	TBM	TBM1	consecutive numbering system
Un-stratified	U/S	Area 8 U/S	short hand used on finds labels
Numbered Wood	W#	W1	consecutive numbering system
Organic Layer Zones	Z#	Z1	1 – Zones 1 (lowest) to 11 (highest)

## 7.0 The Archaeological Watching Brief: Results

### 7.1 Stratigraphy

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation	Suggested Date
Contents Abbreviations		(A) abundant, (F) frequent, (M) moderate, (O) occasional, (R) rare, (I) isolated (S) super (Q) quite, (V) very, (CBM) ceramic building material		
101	Deposit	Soft, crumbly, friable, mid to dark brown, humic (c.40%) sandy clay. (F) fine roots. From c.0.02m - up to c.0.17m thick. Extended throughout. Above 102.	Turf and topsoil. Continuous with the football and cricket pitches - upslope & to the SE. Managed lawn. Low humic content. Fairly abrupt lower border with 102.	19-20th
102	Deposit	Fine, well sorted, light-buff sandy clay. (M) fine & medium sized roots, (O) 18-20th pottery & C19-20th CBM in the upper 0.10m, sub-rounded natural chert & flint gravels - up to c.10cm, (R) coal, Fe objects, pre-historic flint flakes, vessel glass, 1 x coin dated ca.1864. c.0.25m thick. Extended throughout. Below 101. Cut by 112. Overlay 104 upper, 106, 108, 111.	Subsoil. Clean. No datable material recovered from within the deposit. Overlay upper geological clay 104 upper with a diffuse border & palaeo-channels 106, 108, 111 with a fairly hard border.	Up to 19-20th
104 upper	Geological Deposit	Moderate to loose, mid-orange-yellow sandy clay. (O) manganese flecks. From c.0.23m - up to c.0.47m thick. Extended throughout. Below 102. Above 104 lower	Upper horizon of geological clay. ?Sub-aerial weathering of head material.	geology
104 lower	Geological Deposit	Firm, well compacted, mid-yellow-brown sandy clay with gleyed mid-blue-grey along root channels and pores. (O) sub-rounded chert lumps. From c.0.40m - up to c.0.60m thick - not bottomed. Extended throughout. Below 104 upper	Lower geological material. Head material. ?Periglacial.	geology

The descriptions of the deposits are consistent with the geological and soil descriptions as outlined in chapter 2 above. This appears to be an undisturbed soil profile with the exception of the hard lower boundary of the turf and topsoil deposit (101), which might have been formed by ploughing.

## 7.2 Paleochannels

The stratigraphic deposits contained within them several linear features which produced little no cultural material.

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation	Suggested Date
Contents Abbreviations		(A) abundant, (F) frequent, (M) moderate, (O) occasional, (R) rare, (I) isolated	(S) super (Q) quite, (V) very, (CBM) ceramic building material	
105	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) angular chert & quartz pebbles <10cm poorly sorted. Below 102.	Fill of small palaeo-channel 106. Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
106	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Up to c.0.19m thick. >1.70m wide E-W (oblique). Shallow, gentle break of slope - top. Gradual - Concave sides & base. c.0.22m thick. >1.70m wide E-W (oblique). Filled by 105. Cuts 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Filled by 105. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water. Recorded in Test Pit 4.	Geological Feature
107	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) ?small manganese lumps and streaks. Below 102. Filled 108	Fill of small palaeo-channel 108. Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
108	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Up to c.0.19m thick. >1.70m wide E-W (oblique). Shallow, gentle break of slope - top. Gradual - Concave sides & base. Below 102. Filled by 107. Cut 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
110	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) ?small manganese lumps and streaks. Below 102. Filled 111	Fill of small palaeo-channel 111. Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
111	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Up to c.0.23m thick. c.0.45m wide E-W. Sharp break of slope - top. Steep sides. Sharp break of slope - base. Concave base. Below 102. Filled by 110. Cut 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Filled by 110. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
113	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) ?small manganese lumps and streaks. Only seen in plan. c.0.60m wide E-W. Below 102. Filled 114	Fill of small palaeo-channel 114. Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water. Test Pit 2.	Geological Feature
114	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Only seen in plan. c.0.60m wide E-W. c.2m exposed N-S. Sharp break of slope - top. Steep sides. Sharp break of slope - base. Concave base. Underlay 102. Filled by 113. Cut 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Filled by 113. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water. Test Pit 2.	Geological Feature

The silty fill, the gleyed blue-grey clays and the profiles identified these features as relic natural watercourses. These palaeochannels were masked below deposit (102).



When these palaeochannels were located onto a plan of Area 1, it became possible to suggest that one of them, [108], had been recorded in four different locations (see Figure 10). Watercourses were unlikely to have followed such straight lines as are shown on the plan.

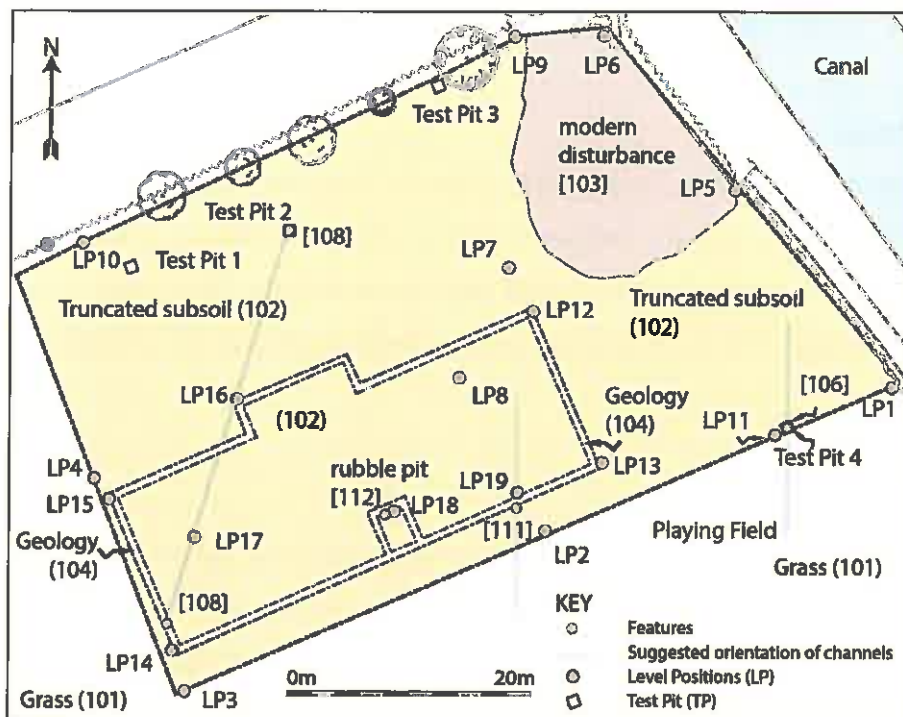


Figure 10. Plan of Area 1 with the locations of the features described in the text.

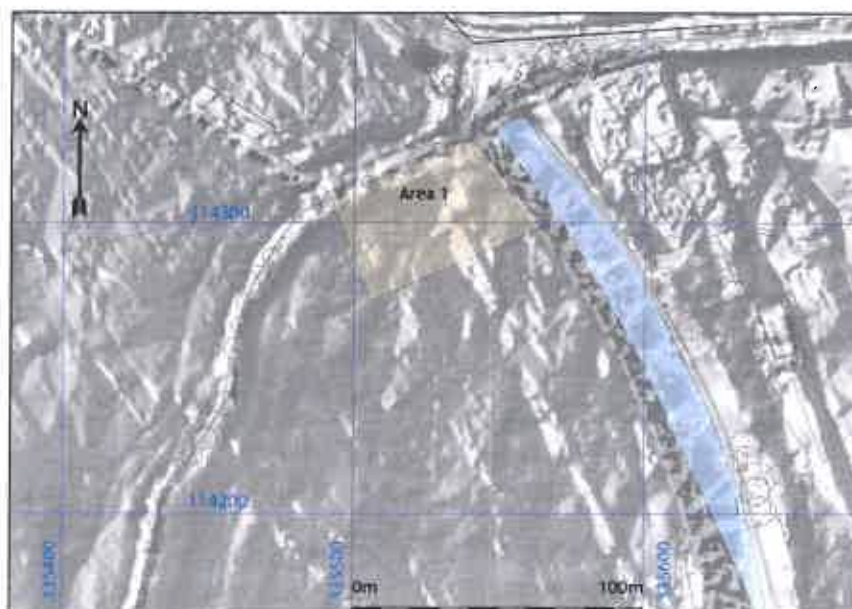


Figure 11. A LIDAR map of the area around the new sports facilities<sup>19</sup>. A prominent ridge to the west of the canal may represent dumping of spoil from the excavation of the canal. It appears to merge with the dump deposit (103).

<sup>19</sup> <https://houseprices.io/lab/lidar/map>

### 7.3 Other features

Modern disturbance (103) represents dumping of various materials at the gateway into the field. This probably dates from the creation of the canal or the railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Figure 10). The fill (109) of pit [112] is also modern.

### 7.4 Finds

Finds were found in the subsoil (102) exposed when the topsoil was removed and the dumping (103) at the gateway and not in other contexts. Modern material, including factory-made pottery and modern building rubble were discarded after being listed or were noted but were not collected. The three flints are the only finds which were old enough to be retained.

## 8.0 Discussion

**8.1** The palaeochannels and gleyed clays indicate that the valley in which the site lies has always been a poorly drained, marshy area. This may explain the lack of archaeological finds and features. This supports the theory already presented above that the western half of the valley might have been chosen as the site of a deer park (see 5.5 above) because the land was not much use for any other purpose.

**8.2** These palaeochannels are masked below deposit (102). The description of this deposit suggests it carries a significant element of the mineralized natural clay, and even the topsoil has a lower humic content than might have been expected. This suggests that these deposits have their origins on higher ground, where they have been disturbed and carried by rain water down to their present location in the valley. The most likely source of this disturbed subsoil is near-by Herne Hill and the most likely cause of disturbance of the soil profile are woodland clearance and cultivation.<sup>20</sup>

## 9.0 Archive and Finds

The complete archive, including field notes, field plans, recording and levels forms and correspondence will be deposited in the Somerset County Museum. Finds, i.e. three flints, will also be deposited at the museum.

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<sup>20</sup> Butzer, 1982, p. 123-5.

## 10.0 Acknowledgements

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Digitised plans were drawn by Arthur Hollinrake and the Lists and Tables were prepared by David Sampson. The report was written by Nancy Hollinrake and edited by Charles Hollinrake.

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1<sup>st</sup> June 2016

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British Library Online Gallery

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Context List

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation	Suggested Date
<b>Contents</b>	<b>Abbreviations</b>	(A) abundant, (F) frequent, (M) moderate, (O) occasional, (R) rare, (I) isolated	(S) super (Q) quite, (V) very, (CBM) ceramic building material	
<b>101</b>	Deposit	Soft, crumbly, friable, mid to dark brown, humic (c.40%) sandy clay. (F) fine roots. From c.0.02m - up to c.0.17m thick. Extended throughout. Overlay <b>102, 103</b>	Turf and topsoil. Continuous with the football and cricket pitches - upslope & to the SE. Managed lawn. Low humic content. Fairly abrupt lower border with <b>102</b> .	19-20th
<b>102</b>	Deposit	Fine, well sorted, light-buff sandy clay. (M) fine & medium sized roots, (O) 18-20th pottery & C19-20th CBM in the upper 0.10m, sub-rounded natural chert & flint gravels - up to c.10cm, (R) coal, Fe objects, pre-historic flint flakes, vessel glass, 1 x coin dated ca.1864. c.0.25m thick. Extended throughout. Underlay <b>101, 103</b> . Cut by <b>112</b> . Overlay <b>104 upper, 106, 108, 111</b> .	Subsoil. Clean. No datable material recovered from within the deposit. Truncated by dumped deposits <b>103</b> and <b>109 / 112</b> . Overlay upper geological clay <b>104 upper</b> with a diffuse border & palaeo-channels <b>106, 108, 111</b> with a fairly hard border.	Up to 19-20th
<b>103</b>	Deposit	Soft, sticky, gritty, very dark brown, humic (75%) sandy clay. (A) C19-20th CBM - inc. air bricks, hand made brick, sub-rounded and sub-angular Ham stone & blue Lias rubble, modern scalplings, roots, C19-20th white ware pottery, (O) large Lias flagstones up to c.1m long. c.0.30m thick. Up to c. 17m NW-SE (east side). Up to c. 20m NW-SE (east side). Underlay <b>101</b> . Overlay <b>102</b>	Hard-standing. Dump of material near the NE entrance to the field. Material from building demolition.	19-20th
<b>104 upper</b>	Geological Deposit	Moderate to loose, mid-orange-yellow sandy clay. (O) manganese flecks. From c.0.23m - up to c.0.47m thick. Extended throughout. Underlay <b>102</b> . Cut by <b>106, 108</b> . Overlay <b>104 lower</b>	Upper horizon of geological clay. ?Sub-aerial weathering of head material.	geology
<b>104 lower</b>	Geological Deposit	Firm, well compacted, mid-yellow-brown sandy clay with gleyed mid-blue-grey along root channels and pores. (O) sub-rounded chert lumps. From c.0.40m - up to c.0.60m thick - not bottomed. Extended throughout. Underlay <b>104 upper</b>	Lower geological material. Head material. ?Periglacial.	geology
<b>105</b>	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) angular chert & quartz pebbles <10cm poorly sorted. c.0.22m thick. >1.70m wide E-W (oblique). Underlay <b>102</b> . Filled <b>106</b>	Fill of small palaeo-channel <b>106</b> . Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water. Recorded in Test Pit 4.	Geological Feature

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation	Suggested Date
106	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Up to c.0.19m thick. >1.70m wide E-W (oblique). Shallow, gentle break of slope - top. Gradual - Concaved sides & base. c.0.22m thick. >1.70m wide E-W (oblique). Underlay 102. Filled by 105. Cut 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Filled by 105. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water. Recorded in Test Pit 4.	Geological Feature
107	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) ?small manganese lumps and streaks. c.0.21m thick. c.0.70m wide E-W (oblique). Underlay 102. Filled 108	Fill of small palaeo-channel 108. Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
108	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Up to c.0.19m thick. >1.70m wide E-W (oblique). Shallow, gentle break of slope - top. Gradual - Concaved sides & base. c.0.21m thick. c.0.70m wide E-W (oblique). Underlay 102. Filled by 107. Cut 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Filled by 107. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
109	Fill	Loose, sub-angular Oolitic limestone rubble up to c.0.30m (c.75%) in a matrix of mid-yellow-brown, sandy clay. No significant finds or inclusions. Voids present between the stones c.0.60m thick. c.0.50m wide E-W. Underlay 101. Filled 112	Rubble fill of small pit 112. Dumped material. No indicators of deliberate masonry construction. ?Possibly backfill	Up to 19-20th
110	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) ?small manganese lumps and streaks. Up to c.0.23m thick. c.0.45m wide E-W. Underlay 102. Filled 111	Fill of small palaeo-channel 111. Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
111	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Up to c.0.23m thick. c.0.45m wide E-W. Sharp break of slope - top. Steep sides. Sharp break of slope - base. Concave base. Underlay 102. Filled by 110. Cut 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Filled by 110. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water.	Geological Feature
112	Cut	Only recorded in section. c.0.60m thick. c.0.50m wide E-W. Sharp break of slope - top. Steep sides. Short, rounded break of slope - base. Small concave base. Underlay 101. Filled by 109. Cut through 102	Cut for a small pit. Filled by Oolitic limestone rubble 109 - ?possible backfilling. Poorly defined cut. ?Possibly infilled natural feature. Not a construction trench. Did not continue through footing trench.	Up to 19-20th
113	Fill	Firm, well compacted, dark blue-grey clay. (O) ?small manganese lumps and streaks. Only seen in plan. c.0.60m wide E-W. Underlay 102. Filled 114	Fill of small palaeo-channel 114. Silts. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water. Test Pit 2.	Geological Feature

Iminster, Canal Way ICW15

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation	Suggested Date
114	Cut	?Linear. Aligned c.N-S. Only seen in plan. c.0.60m wide E-W. c.2m exposed N-S. Sharp break of slope - top. Steep sides. Sharp break of slope - base. Concave base. Underlay 102. Filled by 113. Cut 104 upper	Cut of a small palaeo-channel. Filled by 113. Possibly associated with periglacial melt-water. Test Pit 2.	Geological Feature



Appendix 2 - Finds List

Context No.	East-ings	North-ings	Count	Material	Type	Fabric	Description	Weight grams	Date Range
Surface of 102	all	areas	1	pottery	rim	grey, hard	shiny light green glaze	4	18-19th
			1	pottery	rim	oxidised, hard	orange glaze, white bands	18	18-19th
			1	pottery	rim	white, hard	clear glaze over hand-drawn blue pattern	8	18-19th
			1	pottery	rim	white, hard	white ware	6	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	oxidised	various types, brown & orange glazes	14	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	oxidised	various types, brown & orange glazes	6	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	oxidised	various types, brown & orange glazes	6	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	oxidised	various types, brown & orange glazes	3	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	oxidised	various types, brown & orange glazes	3	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	reduced, hard, fine, sandy	oxidised out, pale green inside	18	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	white, hard	white ware	6	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	stoneware	blue decoration	2	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd	white, hard	blue transfer ware	1	19th
			1	glass	rim		?waster	2	nd
			1	glass	sherd		vessel	3	nd
			1	Fe			fragment	33	nd
			1	Fe	slag		fragment	73	nd
			1	Fe	slag		fragment	9	nd
			1	flint	flake	na		6	nd
			1	flint	flake	na		2	nd
1	flint	chip	na		2	nd			
102	335558	114299	2	pottery	rim		joining, oxidised sandy fabric, some grog temper, inner brown & white glaze	37	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd		oxidised fabric, inner shiny orange glaze	17	18-19th
			1	pottery	sherd		oxidised fabric, traces of brown glaze	17	18-19th
			1	fired clay	na		fragment	8	nd
			1	Fe	slag		fragment	53	nd
			1	coal	na		lump	5	nd
			1	flint	chip		pale grey	1	nd
102	335526	114283	1	pottery	sherd		blue transfer ware	1	19-20th
			1	Fe	nail		fragment, square sides	14	nd

Iminster, Canal Way ICW15

Context No.	East-ings	North-ings	Count	Material	Type	Fabric	Description	Weight grams	Date Range
102	335526	114283	1	silver	coin		Florin	10	ca.1864
			1	Fe	nail		square	14	nd
103	na	na	1	pottery	sherd	white, hard		11	19th
			1	pottery	sherd	white, hard		6	19th
			1	pottery	sherd	white, hard		5	19th

**Appendix 3 - Levelled Sections and Data**

Section Position No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OS Co-ords (E)	335564	335535	335507	335502	335548	335540	335533	335529	335534	335498
OS Co-ords (N)	114301	114286	114272	114284	114317	114329	114308	114299	114324	114310
Grass - Top of Section	36.70	37.25	37.87	37.69	36.57	36.62	36.97	r	36.72	37.57
Base of 101	36.62	37.15	37.69	37.57	36.55	36.61 (top of 103)	36.89 (top of 103)	r	36.55	37.46
Base of trench - Trunc 102	36.50	37.05	37.62	x	np	x	np	39.92	36.33	37.13
Base of 103 / top of 102	x	x	x	x	36.38	x	36.77	x	x	x
Section Position No.	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
OS Co-ords (E)	335556	335534	335541	335506	335502	335510	335506	335523	335533	
OS Co-ords (N)	114295	114303	114292	114277	114290	114298	114280	114288	114290	
Grass - Top of Section	36.94	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	
Base of 101	36.76	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	
trunc 103 - top of section	/	36.87	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
trunc 102 - top of section	/	/	36.91	37.65	37.47	/	/	37.22 (top of 109)	37.09	
Base of 103	/	36.57	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
Base of 102	36.51 (top of 105)	np	36.71	37.46	37.31	37.25 (top of 107)	37.29 (top of 107)	36.99	36.80 (top of 110)	
Base of [106]	36.29	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
Base of [108]	/	/	/	/	/	37.04	37.04	/	/	
Top of 109	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	37.11	/	
Base of 109	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	36.71	na	
Base of [111]	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	36.57	
Base of trench - Trunc 104 upper	36.19	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
Base of 104 upper	x	36.41	36.35	36.99	37.08	36.97	36.97	36.71	36.43	
Base of trench - trunc 104 lower	x	36.01	35.94	36.56	36.53	36.57	36.57	36.15	36.10	
<b>KEY</b>	np	not present	/	not applicable		NB	not bottomed			
	X	not recordable		r	removed	trunc	truncated	All levels are mAOD		

Appendix 4 - Photo Gallery



**Figure 12.** General view of site at far end of field with Iminster town in the background. Looking N



**Figure 13.** Site overview following excavation Looking NE.



**Figure 14.** NE facing section Test pit 1. NW corner of site Looking SW 1m scale



**Figure 15.** SE facing section Test pit 3. Near north entrance Looking NW 1m scale



**Figure 16.** Palaeochannel [108]. 2 metre scales.



**Figure 17.** Palaeochannel [111]. 2 metre scales.



**Figure 18..** Deposit (103).