

BUILDING RECORDING IN 2015

SOMERSET VERNACULAR BUILDING RESEARCH GROUP

SVBRG has had another busy year. The surveys associated with the settlement of Trent are now published in our "Village Studies" series and available through our website. With the Trent book in progress, there has been no further settlement study during 2015; however we have looked at several properties in Rodney Stoke and built on our earlier work in South Petherton. Additionally individual houses in other parts of the county have been surveyed.

As always the Group is indebted to the owners and occupiers of the various properties for their generosity in allowing access. Copies of the full SVBRG reports and survey drawings have been deposited at the Somerset Heritage Centre. They are also available through the continuously evolving SVBRG website, www.svbrg.org.uk where the summaries listed here can also be viewed.

All photographs by John Rickard

1. Chilton Trinity, Church View, 3. Braddock's Cottage. ST 2971 3912

This listed property, now subject to major renovation, is a one and a half-storey house built of cob, and including a complete cob fireplace and stack. The walls are 98cm thick at floor level and are clad with painted render. It comprises three rooms in line and cross passage. Brick built extensions on the north wall include a single-storey lean-to at the west end, a small two-storey wing at the north-end, connected by a light structure, and a single-storey lean-to on the east gable.

Uncertainty surrounds the plan of this mid 17th-century build; was it a 3-unit with crossway property or did it originally have a central service room and was later adapted? Certainly it was thatched with a gable fireplace and oven at the west end. In the early 18th century a timber-framed partition, in-filled with brick was inserted to create a cross passage. An additional, cloam, oven was inserted in the west gable fireplace. In the late 18th or early 19th century a brick stack, with fireplaces on both floors, was built at the east gable.



Fig. 1 Chilton Trinity, Braddocks Cottage. The enormous cob chimney as seen on the first floor

In the late 19th or early 20th century a brick stack backing onto the cross passage was built, perhaps replacing an earlier cob hearth and stack. The wall surrounding the present stairs was constructed of the same brick. The lean-to on the east gable may also stem from this phase. In the mid 20th century the extensions to the north side of the house were constructed.

At the time of the tithe survey the house, only

200m from the church, was not tithed in its home parish but divided between two adjacent parishes.

2. Curry Rivel. High St. Tudor Cottage. ST 3901 2517

This property is a one and a half storey house of local lias stone construction now comprising two front and two rear rooms and at the rear a connected and shared wing with the adjoining house. To the left of the entry door is a Hamstone, three light, hollow chamfered mullion window. The pitched roof is clad with double Roman clay tiles.



Fig. 2 Curry Rivel, Tudor Cottage:
remnant wattle panel

The house abuts a building on the east side; although no stylistic features remain we believe that it contained the service room and passage, the low end, of a three-room cross-passage house of which Tudor Cottage is a remnant, comprising hall and inner room. The oldest integral features are timber frames, with wattle and daub infilling, rising to a jointed-cruck, cambered-collar roof construction. These, together with wall thickness, 66-75cm, and smoke blackening in the roof indicate an open hall house of the 16th century. A slightly hollow deep chamfered beam, 15cm, with a step and run-out stop plus a peak-headed doorway support this date. A closed truss implies a chamber over the unheated inner room probably reached by a ladder or former stair from within it.

Upgrading occurred in the early 17th century: the hall was ceiled, a fireplace, now containing a small summer oven, was inserted that had chamfered stone jambs ending in a straight run-out about 55cm above floor level and a plain elm lintel with

a 10cm chamfer. A plaster frieze above the lintel was decorated with several motifs including a lion and unicorn either side of a union rose. Above is a wooden cornice. Stairs, with a candle niche, were also inserted. The stone-mullioned window was built into the front wall of the inner room.

About 1800 a single storey lean-to was added at the rear and a fireplace inserted in the inner room/ parlour.



Fig. 3 Curry Rivel, Tudor Cottage:
Lion and Unicorn

In the early 19th century a north wing, some 8m wide, was constructed housing a large fireplace on the north gable, presumably to serve a trade. Part of this build is now integral to the property. The fireplace has a wide and unusually deep recess with rounded rear corners; it does not have a conventional hearth and was part of a much bigger entity. A small window within it may have been a vent. Above this is a room with an external staircase.

The eastern end of the house, the 'low' end may have been lost in a fire in the 1870s giving an opportunity to create a separate, two-storey dwelling alongside. Recently, c. 2005, some masonry has been re-fronted on the roadside elevation, a dormer extension incorporated at the rear and the roof rebuilt over the original timbers.

3. Dowlish Wake. Mill Lane, Mount Cottage. ST 3762 1291

Shown on the 1885 Ordnance map as three dwellings the house has since been restored to a single dwelling. The main range is thatched one and a half storeys comprising five rooms and the remnant of a cross passage. The walls were originally cob and are now of variable thickness reflecting subsequent repairs and alterations. A single smoke-blackened truss with a vertical joint to the principals and clean on one face leads to the deduction it was built as a two-unit open hall house with an inner room and a solar above perhaps in the



Fig. 4 Dowlish Wake, Mount Cottage,
front elevation



Fig. 5 Dowlish Wake, Mount Cottage:
supposed wind-eye

late 15th century. What is thought to be the remnant of a wind eye remains at eaves level of the hall. The hall today has a good plank and post partition at the east end separating it from the inner room and at the west end a timber-framed smoke hood. Behind this fireplace is the cross passage marked by a head beam with mortices for a former partition. Two roof trusses with framing define the gables of the three-room and cross-passage house and in addition to the blackened truss there is another of jointed-cruck construction at the back of the smoke hood. Carpentry details suggest that the original hall house was enlarged in the late 16th century and

this is confirmed by the dendrochronology dates supplied by the owner showing various timbers with felling dates mainly in the period from 1580 to 1590. The floor of the solar was replaced in the 17th century, the new joists being supported on an axial beam with keel stops dating to 1676. In the 19th century a new brick-built inglenook fireplace, complete with an oven, was inserted in the inner room and the stack was built free-standing to the east of the original gable framing. The house was extended to encompass the stack. At the west end too the house was extended and small fireplaces incorporated in the gable wall.



Fig. 6 Martock, 98 Bower Hinton, front elevation

4. Martock. Bower Hinton, 98. ST 4566 1785

This Listed property, a shop in the mid 19th century, is now part of a terrace of continuous houses but originated as a large element of a two-unit cross-passage dwelling. The front and rear ground floor walls are 80cm. thick; the front wall is based on good quality ashlar. The walls and former thatched roof have been raised. The two numbered (II and III) jointed crucks and surviving purlins, wind brace and lower rafters are all of elm and smoke-blackened.

The above details plus the internal span (6.3m) and the bay width (4m) suggest a late 14th/early 15th-century date of build when the property was an open hall house. During the 16th century a smoke bay may have been inserted, perhaps quickly

replaced by a smoke hood (remnants of this remain on the east gable) when the second floor, supported by a new beam, 12.5cm chamfer with cyma stops, was inserted.

Late in the 18th or early 19th century a stone partition split the house lengthways creating smaller rooms at the rear. In the late 19th or early 20th century sash windows were inserted and a barn built behind the house. An entrance to the barn is through a depressed four-centred doorframe with ogee moulding, the accompanying door, double planked with diagonal planking on the back, may have come from the rear of the cross-passage and would date from 1600.



Fig. 7 Martock, front elevation of No 6, Hurst Lodge

5. Martock, Hurst, 4 (Osborne Cottage) and 6 (Hurst Lodge). ST 4580 1883

The survey primarily covers Hurst Lodge and mentions the adjoining former barn (Osborne Cottage). The house is three rooms in-line with cross passage and two rear outshots/lean-tos.

The wall thicknesses (60cm), irregular wall corner angles and the small size of the parlour suggest that the present house stands on an earlier footprint, also that some of the extant features (the fine mouldings on the framed ceiling and the front entrance door) are reused from this property.

The first-floor symmetry of the present, two-storey building, the hollow chamfer mullioned windows, a continuous drip mould and a diagonally chamfered front wall plinth suggests construction *c.* 1700 using quality ashlar Hamstone. The formerly thatched roof is supported on three, unequally spaced, tie beam trusses and two rows of trenched purlins fixed with square pegs. F3 in the Service

Room is a large inglenook with two niches in the rear wall for salt/spices and a curing chamber, now gone, to the side.

The early to mid 19th-century upgrading saw the ground floor flagged with blue lias flagstones, newel stairs removed and the cross passage enlarged to create a stair-hall to accommodate new stairs. This improvement will have necessitated the reduction of the wall thickness and inglenook at F2 and the insertion of the present smaller recycled, 17th-century fireplace. The building of the first phase of the barn probably also began at this time. The outshot to S2 (wall thickness 60cm) was built *c.* 1870, closely followed by S3 (wall thickness 52cms). The rear wall was removed and heavy braces added to the roof trusses to cover these two-storey extensions with a shallower roof pitch. The front wall was raised by 45cm and the thatch, roof pitch of 51 degrees, was replaced with tiles; slate at the front and clay at the rear. Plate glass was inserted in all front windows and two new fireplaces installed. The barn may have been extended, perhaps to create a slaughterhouse (1880 Bower Hinton Sewer Map) at this time.

During the 20th century the outshots and barn were converted for domestic use and many window openings were enlarged or introduced. The internal walls of D1 and W1 were rebuilt with relieving arches. Conforming to fashion non-structural beams were introduced to the cross passage, S2 and the parlour. The recycled oak partition may have been inserted in the house at this time. The property was split into two dwellings in the late 20th century.

6. Martock. Hurst, 9 and 11. ST 45767 18791

Currently two properties, the original build was once the hall and cross-passage (No. 9) and Parlour (No. 11) of a thatched, three room cross-passage house, now with a rear 19th-century outshot. It is constructed in Hamstone, some of which is dressed and of high quality. The front wall has been raised since the original jointed cruck construction and that of No. 11 re-raised in the 19th century. Many extant features combine to suggest an early 17th-century date of build: clean jointed-cruck trusses; the front wall thickness (62cm.); front elevation windows with hollow chamfered mullions and hood moulds, those at the rear are of timber and quite recent. A gabled bay window (design peculiar to an area around the quarries of Ham Hill and Ketton, Northamptonshire in the early 17th century); fireplaces F3 and F4, both of Hamstone with



Fig. 8 Martock, 9 and 11 Hurst, the two-storey bay with corbelled gable

depressed four-centred arch heads, plain spandrels, hollow-step-ogee mouldings, and a double tier of bar stops on the jamb some 37cm. above floor level; door D3 and the 6 panelled, 12cm. deep, richly moulded framed ceiling.



Fig. 9 Martock, 9 and 11 Hurst, moulded beams in framed ceiling

In the late 18th or early 19th century a corridor was inserted in the hall to access the parlour and a new staircase inserted beside the cross-passage. In the late 19th century the outshot was added, the front wall raised and the house re-roofed. A smithy is shown in the rear garden (1887 OS Map). In c. 1900 the house was divided into three dwellings and stairs inserted behind the former parlour. In the 20th century the original newel stairs in the hall were replaced in the same location.

Apotropaic (witch) marks in the form of hexafoils are to be found, on the back of F3, in the cross-passage.



Fig. 10 Penselwood, The Old Rectory, front elevation

7. Penselwood. The Old Rectory. ST 7561 3146

This Listed property is built of local Shaftesbury sandstone rubble, part rendered, under pitched roofs of plain or fish-scale clay tiles. Decorated bargeboards embellish the west and south gables. Surveyed were the two storied north and south ranges, the latter with attic, and an eastern single-storey range.

The VCH notes "a Parsonage house here in 1606. In 1815 it was described as unfit and small, in 1840 it was uninhabited but under repair". The south range contains remnants of a 17th-century, one and a half-storey building comprising two rooms with a central passage, wall thickness c. 60cm, an inglenook with large orthostatic jambs with a 10cm chamfer and 'ball' stop, and a summer oven at the rear. The adze-dressed oak lintel, mitred to the jambs, is slightly peaked with a 10cm chamfer. Taper burns and scratches on it may have been deliberately made as apotropaic marks.

In the first half of the 18th century this house was raised to two and a half storeys; a wide central



*Fig. 11 Penselwood, The Old Rectory,
main fireplace*

stair was installed and regularly placed, timber-framed, mullioned and transomed windows were fitted to the west elevation. These had leaded lights supported on saddle bars, the opening casement hung on pintles and secured with turn catches possibly reflecting the style of earlier windows.

In the late 18th century the first floor rooms were heated and a lean-to was built on the east side of the house. A new north range was built c. 1880 with walls 48cm thick, and the whole property reroofed, the lean-to adapted and other, non-surveyed, additions added. The Rectory was sold out of the Church estates in 1980.

8. Rimpton. Middle Street, Brambly Cottage. ST 6067 2192

This Listed dwelling (previously The Nook) is three rooms in-line and cross passage rising to one-and-a-half storeys under a thatched roof. A single-storey lean-to is at the rear, north, of the property. The house is constructed of local lias stone with some cob, largely rendered and painted, with timber box-framing at first floor level. Wall thicknesses range from 60 to 81cm. Timber-framed windows sit under timber lintels. Lias flagstones are to be found throughout. The present roof over-sails the original which had a 51 degree pitch and was supported on four collar and tie beam trusses; that at T2 was formerly closed.

In the early 17th century this three-unit cross-passage yeoman's cottage was constructed from cob with timber framing above the wall plate.



Fig. 12 Rimpton, Brambly Cottage

Winder stairs, lit by a candle, rose to the first floor alongside a smoke hood in the kitchen. Ovolo moulding is evident on windows, bressummer and partition, with apotropaic marks (hexafoils). Spice cupboards and window seats also testify to that period.

Later a further service room for cider or dairy production was built on the north side. A fireplace and stack may also have been inserted to heat the hall and a bake oven built in the kitchen, projecting beyond the west gable (OS Map 1884).

In the accommodation hungry 19th century the house was divided into two dwellings and further lean-tos were built at the rear. (Tithe and 1884 OS Maps), a second stair gave access to the eastern upper floor and the second fireplace was adapted to provide heat/cooking facilities in the original inner room.

By the 20th century the property was in a sad state: the thatched had been removed/covered by corrugated iron and the original kitchen was being used as a garage. In the late 20th and early 21st century the property was re-thatched and renovated bringing all elements into a single dwelling.

9. Rodney Stoke. Stoke St. Holly Farm. ST 4863 5011

A two-room, central-entry, one and a half-storey main range with a rear wing and a west gable single-storey extension. All built of local random rubble stone, 50cm thick, with a painted finish. The core was built around 1800 and the original, elm roof is over-sailed by the present one. The former was supported on two collar trusses with the collar half-dovetailed into the principals. The common rafters are all of coppiced poles, perhaps of ash.



Fig. 13 Rodney Stoke, Holly Farm. Pole rafters of un-squared timber

The west gable in the roof space is plastered and whitewashed suggesting former occupation.

The western extension was built with a lowered floor level creating a cooler cellar for cider storage. This and the adjoining barn were probably built slightly later and reroofed perhaps a decade after the north wing was added in the 1860's.

10. Rodney Stoke. Hollybrook Farmhouse. ST 4859 5010

The house is stone built under a pitched, thatched roof now over-sailed with double roman clay tiles. It comprises a main range of two storeys and attic with stair turret, an in-line one and a half-storey wing, a rear extension with separate oven opening into a recent, mono-pitched roof addition.

On an 'ancient tenement plot' (Duke of Buckingham's Estate Records) it is possible that part of the stair turret and a rear wall, 69cm thick, of the present earliest range, might be a remnant of a former dwelling. If so the walls, 56cm thick, of this range were built to incorporate them in the early 17th century defining a kitchen/living room and a parlour separated by an unheated service room. The 'kitchen' contained a large inglenook with a baking oven at the rear and a curved seating ledge to one side. Beams are hollow chamfered; on the first floor they have deep step and run-out stops. The elm roof is supported on five collar and tie trusses, the collars were housed into the principals with curved lap dovetail joints, the rafters are pegged to the diagonally set ridge piece.

Upgrading occurred in the late 18th or early 19th century with the addition of the rear, parallel unit



Fig. 14 Rodney Stoke, Hollybrook Farmhouse, housing for an added oven

to serve as a kitchen, walls 51cm thick. A baking oven in the inglenook is housed in a purpose-built projection. To simplify access to the upper floor the stair was turned. In the attic the roof slope was plastered onto the thatch and a ceiling inserted, requiring the cranked collars to be raised.

In the mid 19th century a one and a half-storey unit was added to the north end of the front-range to provide separate living accommodation. In the late 20th century a former farm building was remodelled and became part of the domestic accommodation.

11. Rodney Stoke. Stoke St. Myrtle Cottage. ST 4847 4992

The house comprises a two-room, one and a half-storey range to the north of a two-storey single unit; behind this latter is a one and a half-storey unit, under a cat-slide roof, and a single-storey room. All are built of local random rubble stone with segmental window heads in brick and additional facings on the two storey section.

Originally non-domestic, this 18th-century building, possibly a barn or cart shed, was repaired



Fig. 15 Rodney Stoke, Myrtle Cottage, front elevation

and brought into use as a dwelling in the early 19th century. A larger building was erected beside this in the mid 19th century. In the 20th century the two parts were integrated and up-graded with later additions.



Fig. 16 Rodney Stoke, Scadden's Lane, Scadden's Farm, front elevation

12. Rodney Stoke. Scadden's Lane. Scadden's Farm. ST 4881 4019

A rectangular, two-room building of local random rubble stone, 52cm thick, was erected in the early 19th century utilizing the 62cm thick wall of a former building. A full width rear lean-to of one and a half storeys was added shortly afterwards for service or farming activities. The house was enlarged and up-graded at the end of the 19th century with the lean-to becoming two-storey and the property re-roofed; a single hipped slate roof was erected over the whole building. An additional lean-to at the west gable was probably added at this time and is now incorporated in to the living area.



Fig. 17 Rodney Stoke, Scadden's Lane, Scadden's House, rear elevation

13. Rodney Stoke. Scadden's Lane. Scadden's House. ST 4872 5013

The main, two-room unit has an almost square plan rising to two storeys and attic. The roof was previously thatched, pitch of 50 degrees, and supported on three tie-beam trusses. Additionally there are two single-storey extensions; a lean-to at the east gable and a wing to the west. The general construction is of local random rubble stone, walls 50cm thick, rendered and painted on the front elevation.

Documentary evidence implies an earlier building on site replaced by this late 18th century main unit. Upgrading and the addition of the lean-to was mid 19th century. The western extension dates from the late 20th century.

14. Rodney Stoke. Stoke St. The Anchorage. ST 4848 4998

Rising to one and a half storeys this previously thatched property has a three rooms in-line front range and a central rear wing. Additionally, at the rear, there is a second range and a single-storey, flat-roof unit. The whole building, of random rubble stone, is rendered and painted.

Two rooms of the front-range were probably built about 1700 for non-domestic use perhaps in conjunction with an adjacent mill. The walls have a significant batter being 63cm increasing to 70cm nearer the floor suggesting load bearing and industrial use. Steam power improved the fortunes of the mill in 1781. In the late 18th century, perhaps when it all came into domestic use, the front range was completed with another room, wall thickness 54cm, containing a modest inglenook



Fig. 18 Rodney Stoke, Stoke St, The Anchorage, wall batter

where the chamfered oak lintel bears numerous linked apotropaic circles, and a single-storey rear extension.

A rear wing, a straight stair with room above, was added in the late 19th century and in the late 20th century the rear room was raised to two storeys under a pitched roof.

15. South Petherton. Cole's Lane. Cole's Farm. ST 4357 1636

The plan is a two-storey front range of two rooms and hallway with two additional two-storey ranges behind enlarged by single storey projections and a canopied way. Each range has hipped roofs

The early 19th-century construction in brick (walls 40cm thick) denotes 'status' (Brick Tax, 1784–1850) in a town of Hamstone buildings. The initial Georgian front range comprised dining room, parlour, hallway, study and stairs plus an underground cellar. A suitably-sized kitchen must



Fig. 19 South Petherton, Coles Farm, front elevation

have been located in an outbuilding mentioned in the Tithe Apportionment.

The façade is symmetrical with pilasters at either corner and a central pilaster encompassing the front door and rising to a gable pediment containing a circular medallion. The door surround



Fig. 20 South Petherton, Coles Lane, 1877 Coalbrookdale iron verandah

is of Hamstone surmounted by a stone canopy and a string course. A semi-circular fanlight fills the space above the six-panel door.

A second two-storey range was added in 1829 (chalked date) perhaps creating a permanent link to the outbuilding. Upgrading occurred in the late 19th century: cast-iron verandah, sash windows with reinforced frames, alcoves with three-centred heads around a repositioned fireplace, stables and other outbuildings again with three-centred heads to doorways. In the early 20th century a second floor was added to the postulated detached kitchen; the doorframes and architraves are wider than elsewhere and the four panel doors have lower lock rails.



Fig. 21 South Petherton, 1 West St, east gable with false chimney

**16. South Petherton. West St. No. 1.
The Old House. ST 4319 1684**

This listed property occupies a corner plot and comprises two ranges set at right angles, both of two storeys with attics with a turret in the corner between the ranges. The earlier main range plan (walls 70cm thick) is two rooms with entrance hall, the later single-room wing (walls 65cm thick) is set at a lower level. All gables are raised and coped; the front range has a 51-degree pitch. It is built of roughly-squared local marlstone with Hamstone dressings. The north front windows have rustic voussoir heads; over the ground floor windows they are incorporated into a string-course. The gable to the south range is ashlar faced.

A building on the corner plot, dating from late

16th century was re-modelled in the mid 18th century, raising the walls and re-fenestrating with fashionable, symmetrically placed windows. It was probably similar to the two-room with central stair hall plan that is evident today. Many first-floor panelled doors are hung on H-L hinges. The south range seems to have been a separate, or part of a separate, dwelling built perhaps in the 17th century having later and thinner walls than the corner house. The windows could come from that time, likewise the beams, but as the beams don't fit the walls/fireplace very well we concluded they were re-used ie not original to the building. Possibly they came from the corner house during the 18th-century re-fit of that property. Many alterations have occurred in the south range all of which confuse the picture.



Fig. 22 South Petherton, 1 West St, shutters with applied beading

The two ranges were probably integrated in the late 18th century when the kitchen was moved to the south range and it was reroofed. In the 19th century additional buildings, now gone, were built connecting to the main house.

17. Winscombe. Sidcot, Bristol Rd. Grove Farm. ST 4311 5771

Built as two cottages it is now a single, two-storey dwelling with an extension at each end. Each unit has a separate roof with different eaves levels; the roof to the west has a raised and coped gable. External walls, some 50cm thick, are rendered and painted.

Early in the 19th century a modest cottage (kitchen/living room and service room) was constructed. Around 1850 a similar cottage was built against the east gable of the original. An auction poster from 1873 refers to the house as "The



Fig. 23 Winscombe, Grove Farm, front elevation

Prince of Orange" an uncommon name. The western extension was probably built as a single storey lean-to acting as a scullery to the first dwelling and the eastern extension was possibly to service a growing beer trade. Integration of the two cottages occurred in the late 20th century.

FINDS REPORTED TO THE PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME IN 2015

LAURA BURNETT AND JULIE SHOEMARK, SOMERSET FINDS LIAISON OFFICERS

INTRODUCTION

In 2015 a total of 2,770 finds from Somerset¹ were recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) in 1,600 records.

- The recorded finds were of all periods from the Palaeolithic to c. AD 1900, with the following breakdown, based on number of records rather than objects²: Palaeolithic: <1%, Mesolithic: 6%, Neolithic: 7%, Bronze Age: 2%, Iron Age: 1%, Roman: 35%, Early-Medieval: 1%, Medieval: 17%, Post-Medieval: 31%, and Modern: <1%. <1% were of unknown period³.
- They were made from a range of materials including metal: 77% (of which copper alloys 74%), pottery: 8%, and worked stone: 15%.
- Most finds were discovered whilst metal detecting (88%), including 11% as 'eyes only' surface finds; others were discovered by people out walking, gardening or as other chance finds.

Many other finds examined by the Somerset Finds Liaison Officers and colleagues were not recorded – generally finds that post-date AD 1700. Those described below are a selection that are significant, either nationally or locally. Complete records of all finds recorded, with colour photographs, can be viewed on the PAS online database: finds.org.uk/database.

PRINCIPAL FINDS

Neolithic polished axehead from Exford (SOM-CE09D9)

A Neolithic flint polished axehead (Fig. 1) dating to the period c. 2750–2350 BC. The axehead is sub-ovate in shape with a thin butt and is lenticular in cross-section. It has been bi-facially worked, with flaking scars covering both faces. The cutting edge has been ground and polished to remove

the majority of flaking scars. The technique of polishing out flake scars is labour intensive, but has been proven to extend the longevity of the object, making it less prone to breakage. Where polishing occurs on the body, it is a purely aesthetic choice and may hint at a more ceremonial function, or purely a more prestigious rank in society. The cutting edge is asymmetric in plan indicating that it has been re-sharpened after use. The blade exhibits a small nick in the tip, the patination of which indicates that this may have also occurred during use.

Although polished axeheads seem to have often had a ritual or ceremonial role, the fact that polishing was restricted to the cutting edge, combined with the evidence for use and re-sharpening suggest that this was a functional tool. The flint is not a local resource and indicates careful sourcing and management of materials.

The axehead measures 132.13mm in length, 68.38mm maximum width, 22.71mm minimum width, 18.57mm maximum thickness, 2.14mm minimum thickness and weighs 203g.



Fig. 1 Axehead from Exford