

The complete entry in the Domesday Book has been translated as follows.

LAND OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY

The Abbot of St Peter's of Westminster holds Wheathampstead. It answers for 10 hides. Land for 10 ploughs. In lordship 5 hides; 3 ploughs there; a further 2 possible. A priest with 15 villagers have 5 ploughs.
12 smallholders; 9 cottagers.
4 mills at 40s; meadow for 4 ploughs; pasture for the livestock; woodland, 400 pigs.
The total value is and was £16; before 1066 £30.
This manor lay and lies in the lordship of St Peter's Church.

Note 1: In its earliest use, the word 'hide' was a measure of land that was enough to support a peasant household so the area varied according to the quality of the soil – the better the soil the smaller the hide. By the time of Domesday, the hide was a measure of value and of assessment for tax rather than a measure of area though these would of course be related.

Note 2: the charter (chirograph) of 1060 by which King Edward the Confessor gifted Wheathampstead to 'his servants in the convent which is called Westminster' also specifies that the 'parcel of land' comprises 10 hides.

Patrick McNeill