



**Cog 7 Centre,
Crewe Road,
Nantwich
Cheshire**

**Archaeological Desk-
based Assessment**



Oxford Archaeology North

November 2012

Stewart Milne Homes

Issue No: 2012-13/1336

OA North Job No: L10539

NGR: 366245 352125

Document Title: COG 7 CENTRE, CREWE ROAD, NANTWICH, CHESHIRE

Document Type: Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Client: Stewary Milne Homes

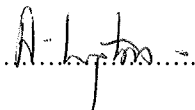
Issue Number: 2012-13/1336
OA Job Number: L10539
National Grid Reference: 366245 352125

Checked by: Alastair Vannan
Position: Project Officer
Date: November 2012

Checked by: Ian Miller
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: November 2012

Signed... 

Approved by: Alan Lupton
Position: Operations Manager
Date: November 2012

Signed.... 

Oxford Archaeology North

Mill 3
Moor Lane Mills
Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 1GF
t: (0044) 01524 541000
f: (0044) 01524 848606

Oxford Archaeology Ltd (2012)

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0EA
t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496

w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

Disclaimer:

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology Ltd being obtained. Oxford Archaeology Ltd accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology Ltd or all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology Ltd accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Circumstances of Project.....	4
1.2 Location, Topography and Geology.....	4
2. METHODOLOGY	6
2.1 Desk-Based Assessment.....	6
2.2 Assessment Methodology	6
2.3 Planning Background and Legislative Framework	9
3. BACKGROUND	12
3.1 Historical Background	12
3.2 Map Regression Analysis.....	15
3.3 Archaeological Background.....	18
3.4 Site Visit.....	19
4. GAZETTEER OF SITES	22
5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REMAINS.....	24
5.1 Introduction	24
5.2 Criteria.....	24
5.3 Significance.....	25
6. LIKELY IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT	26
6.1 Introduction	26
6.2 Impact.....	26
6.3 Impact Assessment.....	26
7. RECOMMENDATIONS	28
7.1 Recommendations	28
BIBLIOGRAPHY	29
Cartographic Sources	29
Secondary Sources	29
ILLUSTRATIONS	31
Figures.....	31

SUMMARY

In October 2012, Stewart Milne Homes commissioned Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of land situated on the south-eastern fringe of Nantwich, Cheshire (centred at NGR 366245, 352125). The assessment was required to inform the planning process for a proposed redevelopment of the site, in accordance with current government policy. The assessment was intended to provide an informed basis regarding the significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the site, and the impact of the proposed development upon their significance.

Three heritage assets of archaeological interest have been identified from documentary sources. The Scheme Area was agricultural land and seemingly undeveloped until the mid-nineteenth century, when Laurel Grove farm (Site **01**) was erected. However, the only identified structure associated with the farm that lay within the boundary of the Scheme Area was the site of a greenhouse, and is of negligible importance. The sites of two demolished nineteenth-century field barns (Sites **03** and **04**) were also identified within the proposed Scheme Area, and are also of negligible importance. The Regent's Theological College complex (Site **02**), which is still standing, is a locally listed building and lies immediately beyond the boundary of the Scheme Area.

None of the identified heritage assets in the proposed Scheme Area have any legal designation, or merit preservation *in-situ*. Several buildings were erected in the Scheme Area during the later twentieth century. None of these buildings are of historical or archaeological interest.

As no buried archaeological sites have been identified within the Scheme Area that may be considered as being of national importance, and therefore merit preservation *in-situ*, or of Regional/County or Local/Borough importance, which would merit preservation by record, no further archaeological investigations or mitigative works are recommended.

In terms of the built heritage, design proposals for development in the study area may need to be informed by the architectural character and urban form of the Willaston School complex (Site **02**). The design of any new structures may be required to minimise the alteration to the setting of these adjacent buildings. It is, therefore, recommended that design proposals should be discussed with a Conservation Officer or Planning Officer before any application is made.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Steve Daniel, acting on behalf of Stewart Milne Homes, for commissioning and supporting the project. Thanks are also due to Mark Leah, the Development Control Archaeologist with Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service, for his support and assistance. In addition the author would like to thank Moya Watson at the Cheshire Historic Environment Record, and all the staff of the County Record Office in Chester for their assistance with this project.

The desk-based assessment was undertaken by Alastair Vannan and Ian Miller, and the illustrations were produced by Mark Tidmarsh. The report was edited by Ian Miller, who was also responsible for project management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In October 2012, Stewart Milne Homes commissioned Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of a site on the fringe of Nantwich in Cheshire (Fig 1). The principle aim of the assessment was to identify, as far as possible, the nature and significance of the sub-surface archaeological resource within the study area, and to establish the impact of development upon this resource.
- 1.1.2 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER), the Cheshire County Record Office in Chester, and the archives and library held at OA North. In addition, a rapid site inspection was carried out on the site of the proposed development, in order to relate the landscape and surroundings to the results of the assessment.
- 1.1.3 This report sets out the results of the desk-based assessment, together with a gazetteer of known heritage assets. The report also includes a statement of the archaeological potential and significance, in which an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the historic environment is taken into account.

1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The study area is located on the south-eastern fringe of the historic market town of Nantwich in Cheshire (Fig 1), situated some 30km south-east of Chester and 6km south-west of Crewe (centred at NGR 366245, 352125). The site lies between Crewe Road and London Road, and is bounded by modern residential properties on Regent's Gate to the south and the Regent's Theological College immediately to the east (Plate 1).
- 1.2.2 Nantwich lies on an extensive low-lying tract of boulder clay, known as the Cheshire Plain, which separates the hills of North Wales and the Peak District of Derbyshire. The solid geology of the area comprises the Keuper marl, which is overlain by boulder clay and glacial deposits of sand and gravels (Countryside Commission 1998, 148-9). The Keuper marl contains the salt beds from which natural brine was derived (Hains and Horton 1969, 69-72). This mineral attribute was a key factor in the early development of Nantwich, with salt production from the natural brine springs providing the foundation for its economy from the Roman period through to the nineteenth century (McNeil 1983, 40-42, Connelly and Power, 2005, 34).



Plate 1: Aerial view of the Scheme Area

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

2.1.1 The archaeological assessment has focused on the application site, referred to hereafter as the Scheme Area, although information for a wider study area has been considered in order to provide an essential contextual background. The assessment was carried out in accordance with the relevant IfA and English Heritage guidelines (IfA 2011, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments*; IfA 2010 *Code of Conduct*; English Heritage 2006, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE)). The principal sources of information consulted were historical and modern maps, although published and unpublished secondary sources were also reviewed. The following repositories were consulted during the data-gathering process:

- **Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER):** the Cheshire HER holds data on the historic environment for the entire county, including Listed Buildings, all known archaeological sites, along with the location and results of previous archaeological interventions in a linked GIS and database format. The HER was consulted to establish the extent of sites of archaeological and historic interest within the study area;
- **Cheshire Record Office (CRO), Chester:** holds an extensive series of mapping for the Nantwich area as well as a collection of secondary sources about the town;
- **Oxford Archaeology North:** OA North has a large archive of secondary sources relevant to the study area, incorporating both published work and unpublished client reports.

2.1.2 All sites of archaeological interest (heritage assets) in the Scheme Area and within a radius of 100m have been included in the Site Gazetteer (*Section 4*; Fig 7).

2.2 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.2.1 The results of the assessment have identified the significance of the archaeological resource of the Scheme Area. In order to assess the potential impact of any future development, consideration has been afforded to:

- assessing in detail any impact and the significance of the effects arising from any future development of the Scheme Area;
- reviewing the evidence for past impacts that may have affected the archaeological sites of interest identified during the desk-based assessment;
- outlining suitable mitigation measures, where possible at this stage, to avoid, reduce, or remedy adverse impacts.

2.2.2 Such impacts on the identified archaeological sites may be:

- positive or negative;
- short, medium or long term;
- direct or indirect;
- reversible or irreversible.

2.2.3 Key impacts have been identified as those that would potentially lead to a change to the archaeological site. Each potential impact has been determined as the predicted deviation from the baseline conditions, in accordance with current knowledge of the site and the proposed development.

2.2.4 Table 1 shows the sensitivity of the site scaled in accordance with its relative importance using the following terms for the cultural heritage and archaeology issues, with guideline recommendations for a mitigation strategy.

Importance	Examples of Site Type	Mitigation
National	Scheduled Monuments (SMs), Grade I and II* Listed Buildings	To be avoided
Regional/County	Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens (Statutory Designated Sites), Grade II Listed Buildings Sites and Monuments Record/Historic Environment Record	Avoidance recommended
Local/Borough	Sites with a local or borough archaeological value or interest Sites that are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade	Avoidance not envisaged
Low Local	Sites with a low local archaeological value Sites that are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade	Avoidance not envisaged
Negligible	Sites or features with no significant archaeological value or interest	Avoidance unnecessary

Table 1: Criteria used to determine Importance of Sites

2.2.5 The impact is assessed in terms of the sensitivity or importance of the site to the magnitude of change or potential scale of impact during any future redevelopment scheme. The magnitude, or scale of an impact is often difficult to define, but will be termed as substantial, moderate, slight, or negligible, as shown in Table 2.

Scale of Impact	Description
Substantial	Significant change in environmental factors; Complete destruction of the site or feature; Change to the site or feature resulting in a fundamental change in ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Moderate	Significant change in environmental factors; Change to the site or feature resulting in an appreciable change in ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Slight	Change to the site or feature resulting in a small change in our ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Negligible	Negligible change or no material changes to the site or feature. No real change in our ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.

Table 2: Criteria used to determine Scale of Impact

2.2.6 The interaction of the scale of impact (Table 2) and the importance of the archaeological site (Table 1) produce the impact significance. This may be calculated by using the matrix shown in Table 3:

Resource Value (Importance)	Scale of Impact Upon Archaeological Site			
	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
National	Major	Major	Intermediate/Minor	Neutral
Regional/County	Major	Major/Intermediate	Minor	Neutral
Local/Borough	Intermediate	Intermediate	Minor	Neutral
Local (low)	Intermediate/Minor	Minor	Minor/Neutral	Neutral
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Table 3: Impact Significance Matrix

2.2.7 The impact significance category for each identified archaeological site of interest will also be qualified, and recommended mitigation measures will be provided, where possible at this stage, to impacts that are of moderate significance or above; any measures to reduce any impact will be promoted in the report. It is also normal practice to state that impacts above moderate significance are regarded as significant impacts. It is important that the residual impact assessment takes into consideration the ability of the mitigation to reduce the impact, and its likely success.

- 2.2.8 It is also considered important to attribute a level of confidence by which the predicted impact has been assessed. For the purpose of this assessment, the criteria for these definitions are set out in the table below.

Confidence in Predictions	
Confidence Level	Description
High/Certain	The predicted impact is either certain, <i>ie</i> a direct impact, or believed to be very likely to occur, based on reliable information or previous experience, and may be estimated at 95% chance or higher.
Medium/Probable	The probability can be estimated to be above 50%, but below 95%.
Low/Unlikely	The predicted impact and its levels are best estimates, generally derived from the experience of the assessor. More information may be needed to improve the level of confidence, which can be estimated using the present information at above 5% but less than 50%.
Extremely Unlikely	The probability can be estimated at less than 5%.

Table 4: Impact Prediction Confidence

2.3 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 2.3.1 **National Policy Framework:** in considering any planning application for development, local planning authorities are bound by the policy framework set by government guidance. This guidance provides a material consideration that must be taken into account in development management decisions, where relevant. In accordance with central and local government policy, this assessment has been prepared in order to clarify the study site's archaeological potential and to assess the need for any further measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.
- 2.3.2 National planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment are set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was published by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in 2012. Sites of archaeological or cultural heritage significance that are valued components of the historic environment and merit consideration in planning decisions are grouped as 'heritage assets'; 'heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource', the conservation of which can bring 'wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits...' (DCLG 2012; Section 12.126). The policy framework states that the 'significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting' should be understood in order to assess the potential impact (DCLG 2012; Section 12.128). In addition to standing remains, heritage assets of archaeological interest can comprise sub-surface remains and, therefore, assessments should be undertaken for a site that 'includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest' (DCLG 2012; Section 12.128).

- 2.3.3 NPPF draws a distinction between designated heritage assets and other remains considered to be of lesser significance; ‘great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be...substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional’ (DCLG 2012; Section 12.132). Therefore, preservation in situ is the preferred course in relation to such sites unless exception circumstances exist.
- 2.3.4 It is normally accepted that non-designated sites will be preserved by record, in accordance with their significance and the magnitude of the harm to or loss of the site as a result of the proposals, to ‘avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposals’ (DCLG 2012; Section 12.129). Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest will also be subject to the policies reserved for designated heritage assets if they are of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments (DCLG 2012; Section 12.132).
- 2.3.5 **Regional Policy Framework:** the approved Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West (The North West Plan) was adopted in September 2008. The RSS replaces the Regional Planning Guidance 13 for the North West (RPG 13), together with the relevant County Structure Plans. Policy EM1 (C) embedded within the RSS contains policies relating to the historic environment, and specifies that plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment supporting conservation-led regeneration in areas rich in historic interest and, in particular, exploiting the regeneration potential of:
- the maritime heritage of the North West coast, including docks and water spaces, and coastal resorts and piers;
 - the Pennine textile mill-town heritage that exists in East Lancashire and Greater Manchester; and the textile mill-town heritage of East Cheshire;
 - Victorian and Edwardian commercial developments in Liverpool and Manchester city centres;
 - the traditional architecture of rural villages and market towns of Cumbria, Cheshire and Lancashire;
 - the historic Cities of Carlisle, Chester and Lancaster; and the Lake District Cultural Landscape.
- 2.3.6 **Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011:** although the replacement local plan was to be valid until 2011, saved policies remain current in planning considerations whilst the Cheshire East Local Plan (Local Development Framework) is being compiled. This will then form the statutory development plan in Cheshire East until 2030.

- 2.3.7 Policy BE.16 (Development and Archaeology) states that development proposals affecting sites of known or presumed archaeological potential will only be permitted where the proposal is supported by an archaeological assessment of the extent, character, and condition of the archaeological resource. Such proposals should demonstrate that there would be no damage to the archaeological resource and that any such sites would be preserved *in situ*, or by recording, as appropriate.
- 2.3.8 Policy BE.13 (Buildings of Local Interest) stated that locally listed buildings or structures will be protected from inappropriate development proposals affecting the reason for their inclusion in the local listing, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the reasons for the development outweigh the need to safeguard the building. This saved policy has been supplemented by the Local List of Historic Buildings Supplementary Planning Document (Cheshire east Council 2010), which also states that planning permission will not normally be granted for development that adversely affects the setting of a locally listed building. The document advises applicant to discuss proposals affecting locally listed buildings or its setting with a Conservation Officer or Planning Officer before any application is made.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1 The following section provides an historical context to the present study, and is considered by period as detailed in Table 5 below. Key sites are summarised in the Gazetteer of Sites, with numbers given in brackets (*Section 4*). Although the Scheme Area lies within the historic township of Willaston, it is considerably closer to the town Nantwich, and thus much of the historical background of the Nantwich area provides a relevant context.

Period	Date Range
Palaeolithic	30,000 – 10,000 BC
Mesolithic	10,000 – 3,500 BC
Neolithic	3,500 – 2,200 BC
Bronze Age	2,200 – 700 BC
Iron Age	700 BC – AD 43
Romano-British	AD 43 – AD 410
Early Medieval	AD 410 – AD 1066
Late Medieval	AD 1066 – AD 1540
Post-medieval	AD 1540 – c1750
Industrial Period	cAD1750 – 1901
Modern	Post-1901

Table 5: Summary of British archaeological periods and date ranges

3.1.2 **Prehistoric Period:** there is no known evidence for activity in Nantwich during the prehistoric period (Cheshire County Council 2003a, 3), although there is some indication for activity in the wider area. In particular, ceramic salt containers discovered at Beeston Castle, and other sites of late prehistoric date in North Wales, are believed to have originated in this part of Cheshire (*ibid*).

3.1.3 Whilst salt would presumably have been an important commodity for prehistoric communities, no evidence has yet been discovered that points to the exploitation of Nantwich's salt springs in the pre-Roman period. In particular, excavations at Kingsley Fields in 2001-2, and in Snow Hill car park in 2004, did not produce any firm evidence for pre-Roman activity in two key salt manufacturing areas of the town.

3.1.4 **Roman:** the Roman period in Cheshire is relatively well documented, notably from archaeological investigations at Chester, Middlewich, and Northwich, although, as with much of the North West region, the thrust of research has been generally towards the military aspects of the period (Philpott 2006, 59). However, as Philpott highlights, the presence of the Roman military is evident not only by the remains of the forts themselves, but by the network of roads, supply chains, non-military settlement, and industrial activity (*op cit*, 71).

- 3.1.5 Amongst several antiquarian coin and artefact finds, and the identification of the Nantwich to Middlewich Roman road surviving as an earthwork (Margary 1957, 304-5), early indications of the industrial nature of Roman activity in Nantwich were provided by the discovery of two lead salt pans near Kingsley Field Farm in the 1880s. Excavations during the 1970s at the Crown Hotel in the town centre produced a large number of Roman pottery fragments (Williams 1975; McNeil 1981), indicating significant activity on the east bank of the river Weaver (Connelly and Power 2005, 33). Further evidence for Roman activity was provided in 1985 by the discovery of a timber-lined pit, perhaps intended for holding brine, in St Annes Lane (Fig 3; McNeil and Roberts 1987, 287-8), and excavations in the mid-1990s revealed a second-century ditch to the south of Welsh Row (Earthworks 1997; 1998).
- 3.1.6 The most extensive evidence for Roman activity in Nantwich, however, was obtained from archaeological excavations carried out in 2001-2 at Kingsley Fields (Connelly and Power 2005), which delimited the northern and western extents of the Roman industrial area to the west of the river Weaver, although the full extent of the Roman settlement remains unknown (Connelly and Power 2005, 40). However, the Scheme Area almost certainly lay some distance from the Roman settlement, and there are no known Roman remains in the study area.
- 3.1.7 **Early Medieval:** interpreting the Early Medieval period in the North West region as a whole is challenging, with the combined problems of limited archaeological evidence and investigation, with a period that typically lacks the abundant material culture and 'diagnostic artefactual evidence' when compared with the Roman or Medieval periods (Higham 1986, 242-3).
- 3.1.8 The physical evidence for activity in Nantwich during this period is scarce, although one artefact, an eighth-century horsemount, is recorded as having been discovered in fields near the town by the HER (CHER181). Higham has suggested that the royal estate at Acton, of which Nantwich was historically a part, may have been created in the post-Roman period specifically to control the saltworkings (1993, 143-5), although firm evidence for Early Medieval settlement at Nantwich remains elusive (Cheshire County Council 2003a, 4).
- 3.1.9 **Late Medieval:** the emergence of Nantwich as an urban centre during the period is closely linked with its dominance as a centre for salt production, leading to the development of a densely occupied commercial core around the market centres and High Street, incorporating Pepper Street, Beam Street, Hospital Street and Pillory Street, and a network of salt-trading routes to other towns (Cheshire County Council 2003a, 4). Evidence for the salt industry itself is clear by the time of the Domesday survey of 1087, which recorded eight salt houses in Nantwich (Morris 1978, 268), despite the town having been laid waste by the anti-Norman rebellion of 1069-70 (Cheshire County Council 2003a, 4). Some indication of the wealth of the town is given by the foundation of St Nicholas' Hospital in 1285 and a second children's hospital in 1354 (Gifford 1995). The economy of the town at this time was still largely dependent upon a thriving salt industry; 65 salt houses are recorded as being destroyed by fire in 1306 (Whatley 2004).

- 3.1.10 **Post-medieval:** in 1583, Nantwich was destroyed by a fire which began in a *wich* house off Water Load with 150 buildings razed including 30 shops and two barns according to the Wilbraham family diary (Cheshire County Council 2003a, 6). Although the threat of invasion from the Welsh had long since subsided, Nantwich was subject to conflict during the post-medieval period. During the English Civil War, Nantwich was the only town in Cheshire to declare for Parliament, and consequently it was besieged several times by Royalist forces. Soon after October 1642, Nantwich was fortified for the Parliamentarians by Sir William Brereton with a four feet wide ditch that had timber-revetted mud walls at each side (CHER 179/10). The final, six-week long, siege was lifted following the victory of the Parliamentary forces in the Battle of Nantwich on January 26, 1644 (Whatley 2004). The fortifications appear to have been removed following the Civil War and no traces survive (HER 179/10).
- 3.1.11 The Scheme Area lay within the township of Willaston during this period, part of which was included in the parish of Wybunbury (Lewis 1848, 698-703). In 1848 the parish was described as mainly comprising grazing land for dairy farms, with a relatively small portion being used for arable farming (*ibid*). The study area lay beyond and between the urban extents of Nantwich, Willaston, and Wybunbury and, in 1846, consisted of dispersed farms along the main communication routes of the Crewe and London Roads (EDT 431/2; Fig 2). The fields were primarily pastoral, with some arable use (*ibid*).
- 3.1.12 The only buildings in the immediate vicinity of the Scheme Area during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were those of Laurel Grove (Site **01**), which went through several changes of use. In 1846, it was a farm owned by Thomas Barker, and referred to in the tithe apportionment of 1846 as Sneyd's Croft (EDT 431/2; Fig 2). The Ordnance Survey map of 1877 annotates the buildings as Laurel Grove (Fig 3), and by 1900 had been transformed into Willaston School (Site **02**) by Phillip Barker, who owned the land at that time (Brough 2012). This public boys' school closed in 1937 due to financial difficulties and was purchased subsequently by St Joseph's Industrial School of Manchester. This Roman Catholic foundation ran the site as a rehabilitation school for underprivileged boys from south Lancashire and northern Cheshire (*ibid*). The buildings were purchased by the Elim Pentecostal Church in 1987, and it was used as their national theological college (*ibid*). The complex is now known as Regent Theological College, and has been acquired by Church of God (Seventh Day) (*ibid*).
- 3.1.13 The land to the east of the theological college, within which the Scheme Area is situated, remained largely as agricultural land or open fields into the mid-twentieth century (OS 1963). By the early 1970s, several buildings had been built within the study area as additions to St Joseph's School, which were subsequently used by the Cog 7 Training and Conference Centre.

3.2 MAP REGRESSION ANALYSIS

- 3.2.1 **Early mapping:** the earliest accurate map of Cheshire is that surveyed by Peter Burdett in 1772-4, and published in 1777. Burdett had previously surveyed the county of Derbyshire, which he had started in response to the Royal Society's appeal in 1759 for accurate county surveys. His map showed turnpike roads and lesser thoroughfares, canals, industry and heaths and commons, together with basic topographic detail. However, Burdett's map was produced at a scale of 1": 1 mile, and provides little evidence for the study area, which lies in a blank part of the map between what is now Crewe Road and London Road (Plate 2).



Plate 2: An extract from Burdett's map of 1777, with red arrow marking the approximate centre of the study area

- 3.2.2 The next available map for Cheshire is that produced by Christopher Greenwood in 1819. Greenwood's map was noted for the quality of its design and engraving, and provides more detail than Burdett's. Nevertheless, the map was similarly produced at a scale of 1": 1 mile, and also shows the study area as undeveloped land situated between Crewe Road and London Road (Plate 3).



Plate 3: An extract from Greenwood's map of 1819, with red arrow marking the approximate centre of the study area

3.2.3 The next available survey of the area is provided by Bryant's map of 1831. This is very similar in content to Greenwood's map, although shows more detail as it was produced at a slightly larger scale of $1\frac{1}{4}$ " to 1 mile. Bryant's map shows the study area to have remained largely undeveloped, although two small buildings (Sites **03** and **04**) are shown in the northern part of the Scheme Area (Plate 4).

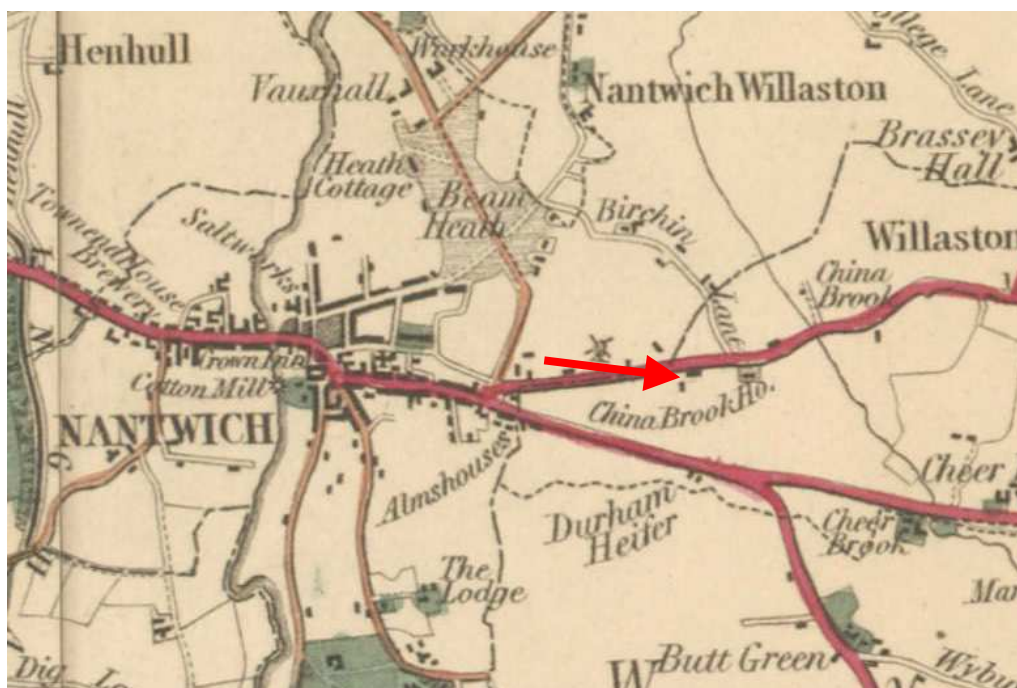


Plate 4: An extract from Bryant's map of 1831, with red arrow marking the small buildings in the northern part of the Scheme Area

- 3.2.4 ***Willaston Tithe Map, 1846 (EDT 431/2)***: detailed mapping of the Scheme Area covers a period of 166 years, with the Willaston tithe map having been compiled in 1846. The tithe map (Fig 2) shows the Scheme Area to have comprised a series of irregularly shaped fields of variable sizes, which were formed by the sub-division of several larger enclosed fields. The most notable feature within the area is a group of buildings and narrow plots (170) arranged around the perimeter of field 171. The accompanying apportionment shows that these represented a farmyard that was known as Sneyd's Croft (Site **01**), which consisted of a house, out offices, yards, and gardens, as well as the central field. Just beyond the western extent of the Scheme Area, a small structure is depicted within field 188, which is recorded as gardens. None of the depicted buildings associated with Sneyd's Croft, which was later to become Laurel Grove (Site **01**), lay within the Scheme Area. The two buildings in the northern part of the Scheme Area (Sites **03** and **04**), first shown on Bryant's map of 1831, appear to be field barns.
- 3.2.5 The fields in the study area had diverse ownership; although only seven plots formed part of the Scheme Area, they were owned by five different individuals. These were Thomas Barker (plots 170 and 171), Elizabeth Latham (fields 172 and 173), The Rector of Nantwich (field 168), Ralph Sneyd (field 162), and the executors of the late Anne Bebbington (field 169). This might suggest that the plots formerly constituted part of a larger land holding, which was gradually sold off as small plots as a result of enclosure.
- 3.2.6 ***Ordnance Survey first Edition at 25" to 1 mile, 1877***: the next available map of Nantwich, surveyed in 1877, provides a similar depiction of the study area, but with a greater degree of detail (Fig 3). Sneyd's Croft is labelled as Laurel Grove (Site **01**), and consisted of a large square house (Grove House), a rectangular building that may have been a barn, an L-shaped greenhouse, and three or four small sheds or outbuildings in a probable orchard to the north-eastern side of the farmyard. Access tracks to Laurel Grove are also depicted running from Crewe Road and London Road.
- 3.2.7 A small building, likely to have been a field barn, is shown in the field to the north of Laurel Grove. Two further probable field barns (Sites **03** and **04**) are depicted at the northern extent of the Scheme Area, adjacent to Crewe Road. The railway line is depicted to the south-east of the Scheme Area, and ribbon development of housing was evident along London Road, to the west of the Scheme Area. The study area remained largely rural at this date.
- 3.2.8 ***Ordnance Survey first Edition at 6" to 1 mile, 1882***: this map shows an identical view of the study area as the 1877 map, but with a lesser detail.
- 3.2.9 ***Ordnance Survey second Edition, 25":1 mile, 1898***: by the time of the publication of the map of 1898 (Fig 4), the Scheme Area had changed very little. Laurel Grove (Site **01**) is labelled as The Grove, but the layout of buildings and fields remains consistent with the depictions from the earlier maps. Further development is evident along London Road and Crewe Road, to the west of the study area, and Willaston College had been built to the north-east of the study area, adjacent to Crewe Road.

- 3.2.10 **Ordnance Survey third Edition, 25":1 mile, 1910:** the map of 1910 shows that the farmhouse of Laurel Grove (Site **01**) had been absorbed into a larger building that is annotated as Willaston School (Site **02**), and some minor modifications to the smaller outbuildings of Laurel Grover are also shown (Fig 5). A football ground is depicted to the south-east of the study area, but the Scheme Area remained essentially unchanged from the earlier mapping.
- 3.2.11 **Ordnance Survey, 25":1 mile, 1963:** the map of 1963 (Fig 6) shows some slight changes to the layout of fields within the Scheme Area, but the most conspicuous changes are within the wider study area. Residential development is shown lining Crewe Road to the north, and Willaston School (Site **02**) has been extended and renamed St Joseph's School. A chapel had also been added to the southern end of the school. A field at the north-eastern side of the Scheme Area appears to have been subject to formal planting as an orchard or nursery. Although the Scheme Area consisted primarily of open ground, the surrounding area appears to have become suburbanised.

3.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the Scheme Area, or its immediate environs.

3.4 SITE VISIT

- 3.4.1 The study area was subject of a site visit to assess the information pertaining to the baseline conditions, and to relate the past landscape and surroundings to that of the present. Additional information on the sites of significance and an understanding of the potential environmental effects has been added to the Site Gazetteer (*Section 4, below*), where appropriate.
- 3.4.2 The site is accessed via a single-lane drive from Crewe Road. The drive has modern tarmac surfacing, and a pavement on its eastern side (Plate 5). The drive is lined by a hedge on the west and various species of trees on the east, and leads to the landscaped garden that occupies the central part of the Scheme Area. The garden supports a variety of mature trees and shrubs, and is dissected by several modern paths (Plate 6).
- 3.4.3 A staggered range of three buildings forms the eastern boundary of the Scheme Area (Plate 7). These two-storey buildings are of brick construction, and were erected post-1963 as dormitory blocks. A further block of two-storey buildings of a contemporary date is aligned east/west across the northern part of the site (Plate 8). None of these buildings are of any historical or architectural interest.
- 3.4.4 The north-western part of the Scheme Area is occupied by a car park and a tall single-storey building of a late twentieth-century date (Plate 9). A lawn enclosed by trees forms the north-western corner of the site.



Plate 5: View along the access drive looking north towards Crewe Road



Plate 6: View looking west across the northern part of the landscaped garden



Plate 7: One of the dormitory blocks along the eastern boundary of the Scheme Area



Plate 8: View of the two-storey range across the northern part of the site



Plate 9: View looking west across the car park and modern building in the north-western part of the site

4. GAZETTEER OF SITES

Site Number	01
Site Name	Laurel Grove
HER Number	-
Site Type	Farmstead
Period	Industrial (pre-1846)
NGR	SJ 66137 52113
Source	Willaston tithe map of 1846 (EDT 431/2); OS map of 1877; OS map of 1910; Brough 2012
Description	Laurel Grove went through several changes of use in the nineteenth century. In 1846 it was a farm owned by Thomas Barker, and was known as Sneyd's Croft. By 1877 (OS 1877) it was known as Laurel Grove, and by 1899 (Brough 2012) had been transformed into Willaston School (Site 02). The buildings shown on the tithe map lay outside the Scheme Area although, by 1877, a greenhouse was shown within the area, and two small outbuildings were depicted by the mapping of 1910. The farmhouse, Grove House, now forms part of the locally listed Regent's Theological College (Site 02).
Assessment	The principal farm buildings lie beyond the Scheme Area and will not be affected by the development. The remains of the greenhouse are likely to be affected.

Site Number	02
Site Name	Regent's Theological College
HER Number	5463
Site Type	College
Period	Industrial (1899)
NGR	SJ 66111 52094
Status	Locally listed building (assigned 14/10/2010)
Source	HER; OS 1910; Brough 2012
Description	Laurel Grove (Site 01) was absorbed by Willaston School, which was established in 1899 by Phillip Barker, who owned the land at that time (OS 1910; Brough 2012). This public boys' school closed in 1937 due to financial difficulties, and was purchased subsequently by St Joseph's Industrial School of Manchester. The Elim Pentecostal Church bought the buildings in 1987, and it was used as their national theological college (<i>ibid</i>). The complex is now known as Regent's Theological College and has been acquired by Church of God (Seventh Day) (<i>ibid</i>). The Theological College is a substantial three-storey brick building in the Arts and Crafts style, attached to which is a chapel dating to 1924. Grove House (to the rear) is a three-storey brick built Georgian building. All three buildings contribute to the Arts and Crafts movement and are of high architectural and historic interest, which is reflected in their inclusion on a list of locally important historic buildings.
Assessment	The buildings lie beyond the development area and will not be directly affected by the development.

Site Number	03
Site Name	Field barn (site of)
HER Number	-
Site Type	Barn
Period	Industrial (pre-1846)
NGR	SJ 66216 52298
Source	Willaston tithe map of 1846 (EDT 431/2); OS map of 1910, OS map of 1963
Description	An apparent field barn is shown parallel to Crewe Road on the Willaston tithe map of 1846. It is shown on the OS map of 1910, but is absent from the map edition published in 1963. The site of the barn lies under the access road to the site from Crewe Road.
Assessment	The site lies within the Scheme Area, although any buried remains are likely to have been destroyed during the construction of the access road. Development of the Scheme Area is likely to have a negligible impact.

Site Number	04
Site Name	Field barn (site of)
HER Number	-
Site Type	Barn
Period	Industrial (pre-1846)
NGR	SJ 66209 52290
Source	Willaston tithe map of 1846 (EDT 431/2); OS map of 1877
Description	An apparent field barn is shown approximately perpendicular to Crewe Road on the Willaston tithe map of 1846. It is absent from the Ordnance Survey map of 1877.
Assessment	The site lies within the Scheme Area, although any buried remains are likely to have been destroyed during the construction of the access road to the site from Crewe Road. Development of the Scheme Area is likely to have a negligible impact.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REMAINS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 In total, only three sites of archaeological interest (Sites **01**, **03**, and **04**) have been identified within the proposed Scheme Area, and one additional known site (Site **02**) lies in the immediate environs (Fig 7). None of the archaeological sites within the proposed Scheme Area have any legal designation. The area encompasses one locally listed building, which is the complex of buildings forming Regent's Theological College (Site **02**).

Period	No of sites	Sites
Prehistoric	0	-
Roman	0	-
Medieval	0	-
Post-medieval	0	-
Industrial	4	Laurel Grove (Site 01), Regent's Theological College (Site 02), field barn (Site 03), field barn (Site 04)
Unknown	0	-

Table 6: Number of sites by period

5.2 CRITERIA

5.2.1 Where sites do not possess a statutory designation their value as a heritage asset has been determined with reference to the Secretary of State's criteria for assessing the national importance of monuments, as contained in Annexe 1 of the policy statement on scheduled monuments produced by the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (2010). These criteria relate to period, rarity, documentation, group value, survival/condition, fragility/vulnerability, diversity, and potential. The sites within the Scheme Area (Sites **01**, **03**, and **04**) have been considered using the criteria, with the results below. Although Site **01** relates the Laurel Grove farm complex, only a single greenhouse, which has now been demolished, lay within the Scheme Area.

5.2.2 **Period:** it is considered likely that any buried archaeological remains that survive across the Scheme Area will pertain to the Industrial period. Although remains of this period can be of considerable archaeological interest, most of the identified heritage assets within the Scheme Area (Sites **01**, **03**, and **04**) comprise peripheral agricultural structures and are not particularly significant. Although Laurel Grove (Site **01**) comprises a farmstead complex that includes some buildings of interest, only a greenhouse has been discerned within the Scheme Area from historic mapping.

5.2.3 **Rarity:** standing agricultural structures of similar date to the identified heritage assets (Sites **01**, **03**, and **04**) are common in Cheshire. As the structures within the Scheme Area have been demolished, they are not significant in terms of rarity, as numerous similar demolished sites will exist in the local area.

- 5.2.4 **Documentation:** the historical development of the study area from the nineteenth century can be traced reasonably well from cartographic sources and the history of Laurel Grove (Site **01**) could be enhanced by further historical research. The former greenhouse associated with Laurel Grove that lies within the Scheme Area was also associated with the later Willaston School (Site **02**) and it is possible that documentation relating to its use in these changing contexts might exist.
- 5.2.5 **Group Value:** the greenhouse within the Scheme Area that was associated with Laurel Grove (Site **01**) was also associated with the later Willaston School (Site **02**).
- 5.2.6 **Survival/Condition:** all of the heritage assets within the Scheme Area have been demolished. The buried foundations of a nineteenth-century greenhouse associated with Laurel Grove (Site **01**) and may survive only as foundation-level deposits.
- 5.2.7 **Fragility/Vulnerability:** any buried remains within the Scheme Area are likely to be fragile and vulnerable to development.
- 5.2.8 **Diversity:** the identified sites within the Scheme Area are not diverse.
- 5.2.9 **Potential:** there is little potential within the Scheme Area for previously unidentified sites. The sub-surface remains of the identified heritage assets within the Scheme Area have little potential to provide further data of archaeological interest.

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.3.1 The archaeological sites identified wholly within the boundary of the Scheme Area (Sites **03** and **04**) are considered to be of negligible importance. Whilst Laurel Grove (Site **01**) as a complex is of Local/Borough importance, the associated site of the demolished greenhouse is the only structural element within the Scheme Area, and is of negligible importance.

6. LIKELY IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 Current planning policy guidance for the historic environment, embodied in NPPF (DCLG 2012), advises that archaeological remains are an irreplaceable resource. It has been the intention of this study to identify the archaeological significance and potential of the study area, and assess the impact of proposed development, thus allowing the policy stated in NPPF (DCLG 2012) to be enacted upon.

6.2 IMPACT

6.2.1 **Buried remains:** the extent of any previous disturbance to buried archaeological levels is an important factor in assessing the potential impact of the proposed scheme of development. The structures within the Scheme Area (Sites **01**, **03**, and **04**) have all been demolished and the areas that they occupied have been landscaped in order to provide access and open park land associated with the buildings that were occupied by the Cog 7 Centre. The footprint of the nineteenth-century greenhouse associated with Laurel Grove (Site **01**), however, does not appear to have been subject to intrusive development associated with construction and, therefore, sub-surface remains of the buildings may potentially survive *in-situ*. However, the significance of any such remains is most likely to be negligible. The potential for buried remains of the former field barns (Sites **03** and **04**) to survive *in-situ* are low, and the impact of development is therefore likely to be low.

6.2.2 **Built Heritage:** the Scheme Area lies immediately adjacent to the standing Regent's Theological College complex (Site **02**), known formerly as Willaston School and St Joseph's, and is a locally listed building. The precise details of the development proposals are currently unknown, but to avoid a negative impact on this built heritage, design proposals may need to consider the overall scale, density, massing, height, access and landscaping of new development to ensure compatibility with surrounding buildings.

6.3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.3.1 Following on from the above considerations, the significance of direct impacts on the sites within the Scheme Area has been determined as neutral, based on an assumption that there will be earth-moving works associated with the development. Indirect impacts on the settings of standing buildings have not been assessed, as detailed design proposals have not yet been produced. The results are summarised in Table 6.

Site Number	Importance	Impact	Significance of Impact
01	Negligible (considering only the associated greenhouse that lay within the Scheme Area)	Moderate	Neutral
03	Negligible	Moderate	Neutral
04	Negligible	Moderate	Neutral

Table 6: Assessment of the impact significance on each site within the Scheme Area during development

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1.1 Current legislation draws a distinction between archaeological remains of national importance and other remains considered to be of lesser significance. Those perceived to be of national importance may require preservation *in-situ*, whilst those of lesser significance may undergo preservation by record, where Regional/County or Local/Borough significance can be demonstrated.
- 7.1.2 No buried archaeological sites have been identified within the Scheme Area that may be considered as being of national importance, and therefore merit preservation *in-situ*, or of Regional/County or Local/Borough importance, which would merit preservation by record. Therefore, no further archaeological investigations or mitigative works are recommended.
- 7.1.3 In terms of the built heritage, design proposals for development in the study area may need to be informed by the architectural character and form of the locally listed Regent's Theological College complex (Site 02). The design of any new structures may be required to minimise the alteration to the setting of these adjacent buildings. As advised in the Local List of Historic Buildings Supplementary Guidance Document (Cheshire East Council 2010), it is recommended that design proposals should be discussed with a Conservation Officer or Planning Officer before any application is made.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Burdett, P, 1777 *Survey of the County Palatine of Chester*

Greenwood, C, 1819 *Map of the County Palatine of Chester*

Bryant, A, 1831 *Map of the County Palatine of Chester*

Ordnance Survey first Edition, 25":1 mile, published 1877

Ordnance Survey first Edition, 6":1 mile, published 1882

Ordnance Survey second Edition, 25":1 mile, published 1898

Ordnance Survey third Edition, 25":1 mile, published 1910

Ordnance Survey, 25":1 mile, published 1963

Ordnance Survey, 25":1 mile, published 1970-1

Willaston Tithe Map of 1846: Cheshire County Record Office EDT 431/2

SECONDARY SOURCES

Brough, J, 2012 *A Dabber's Nantwich, A Personal View of the South Cheshire Floral and Market Town*, www.dabbersnantwich.me.uk, accessed on 5th November 2012

Cheshire County Council, 2003a *Cheshire Historic Towns Survey: Nantwich, Archaeological Assessment*, unpubl rep

Cheshire County Council, 2003b *Cheshire Historic Towns Survey: Nantwich, Archaeological Strategy*, unpubl rep.

Cheshire East Council, 2010 *Local List of Historic Buildings Supplementary Guidance Document*, unpubl rep

Connelly, P, and Power, D, 2005 Salt Making in Roman Nantwich, Recent Discoveries at Kingsley Fields, Welsh Row, in Nevell, M and Fielding, AP (eds), *Brine in Britannia*, CBA North West Volume 7, pp31-40.

Countryside Commission, 1998 *Countryside Character Volume 5: West Midlands*, Cheltenham

Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011, (adopted 2005), <http://crewe-nantwich.leadpartners.co.uk/document.aspx?display=chapter&document=3&chapter=27>, accessed 6th November 2012

- Earthworks Archaeological Services, 1997 *An Archaeological Evaluation on Land Adjacent to the Riverside, Nantwich, Cheshire*, unpubl rep
- Earthworks Archaeological Services, 1998 *An Archaeological Evaluation on Land Adjacent to the Riverside, Nantwich, Cheshire*, unpubl rep
- English Heritage, 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE), Swindon
- Gifford and Partners, 1995 *Land Around Kingsley Farm, A Desk Based Assessment*, unpubl rep
- Hains, BA, and Horton A, 1969 *British Regional Geology: Central England*, 3rd edn
- Higham, NJ, 1993 *The Origins of Cheshire*, Manchester
- Institute for Archaeologists, 2010 *Code of Conduct*, Reading
- Institute for Archaeologists, 2011 *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment*, Reading
- Lewis, S, 1848 *A Topographical Dictionary of England*, London
- Margary, ID, 1957 *Roman Roads in Britain*, London
- McNeil, R, 1981 *Archaeology in Nantwich [Cheshire]: Crown Car Park excavations*, unpubl rep
- McNeil, R, 1983 Two 12th-century Wich houses in Nantwich, Cheshire, *Med Archaeol*, **27**, 40-88
- McNeil, R, and Roberts, AF, 1987 A Plank Tank from Nantwich, *Britannia*, **18**, 287-95
- Morris, J, 1978 *Domesday Book: Cheshire including Lancashire, Cumbria and North Wales. History from the Sources*. Chichester
- Reid, M, Lageard, J, Mould, Q, Wild, F, 2004 Archaeological Observations at Snow Hill Car Park, Nantwich, Cheshire, *Chester Archaeol Soc*, **79**
- Williams, SR, 1975 Notes, *Cheshire Archaeological Bulletin*, 3/52

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site Location Map
- Figure 2: Willaston Tithe Map of 1846
- Figure 3: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey first edition 25": 1 mile map, 1877
- Figure 4: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey second edition 25": 1 mile map, 1898
- Figure 5: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey third edition 25": 1 mile map, 1910
- Figure 6: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey 25": 1 mile map, 1963
- Figure 7: Plan of Gazetteer Sites



Figure 2: Willaston Tithe c1846

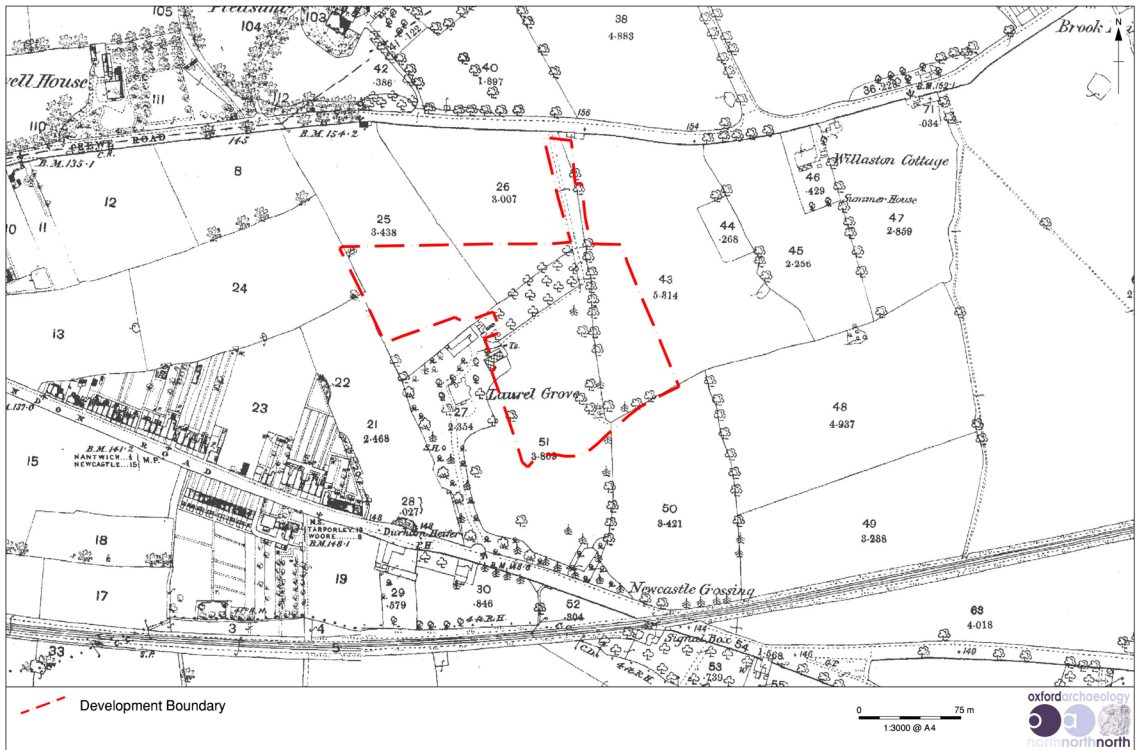


Figure 3: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey first edition 25:1 mile map, 1877

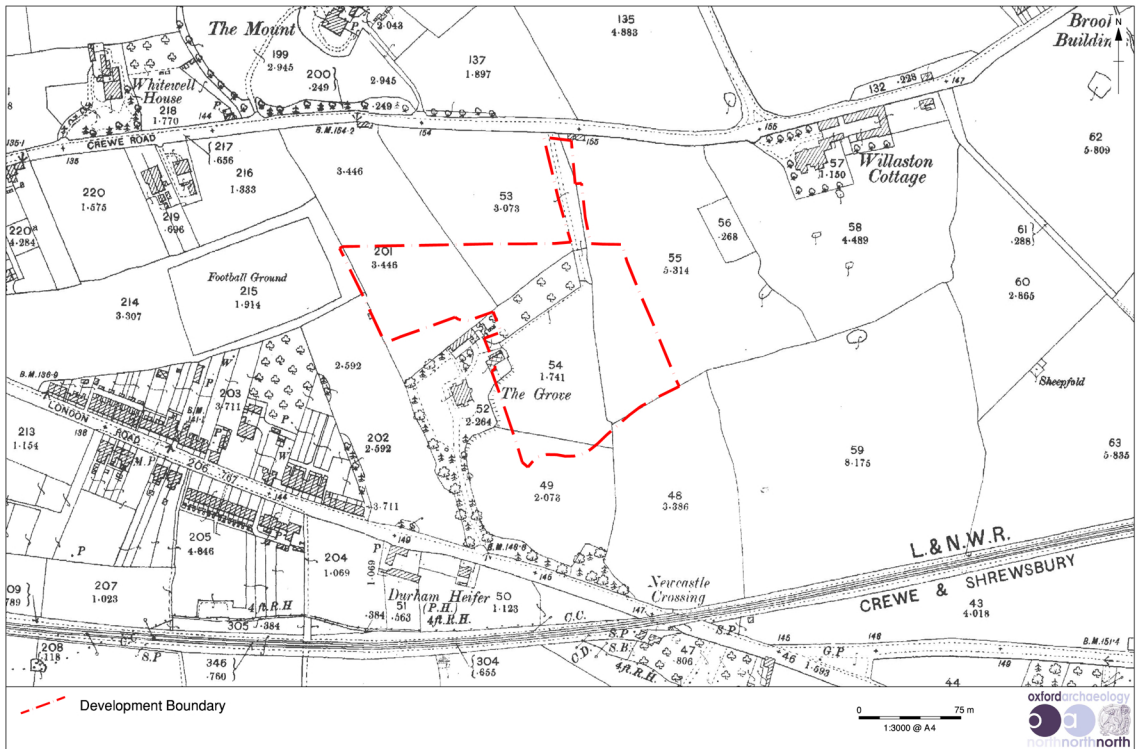


Figure 4: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey second edition 25":1 mile map, 1898

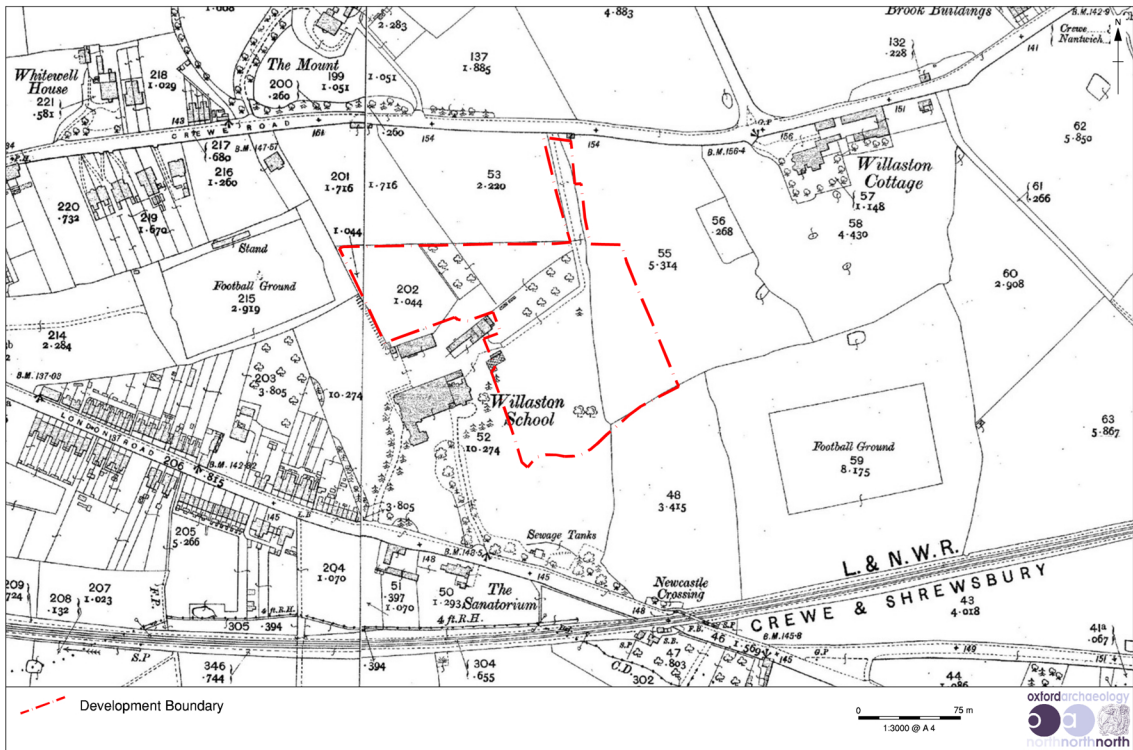


Figure 5: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey third edition 25" :1 mile map, 1910

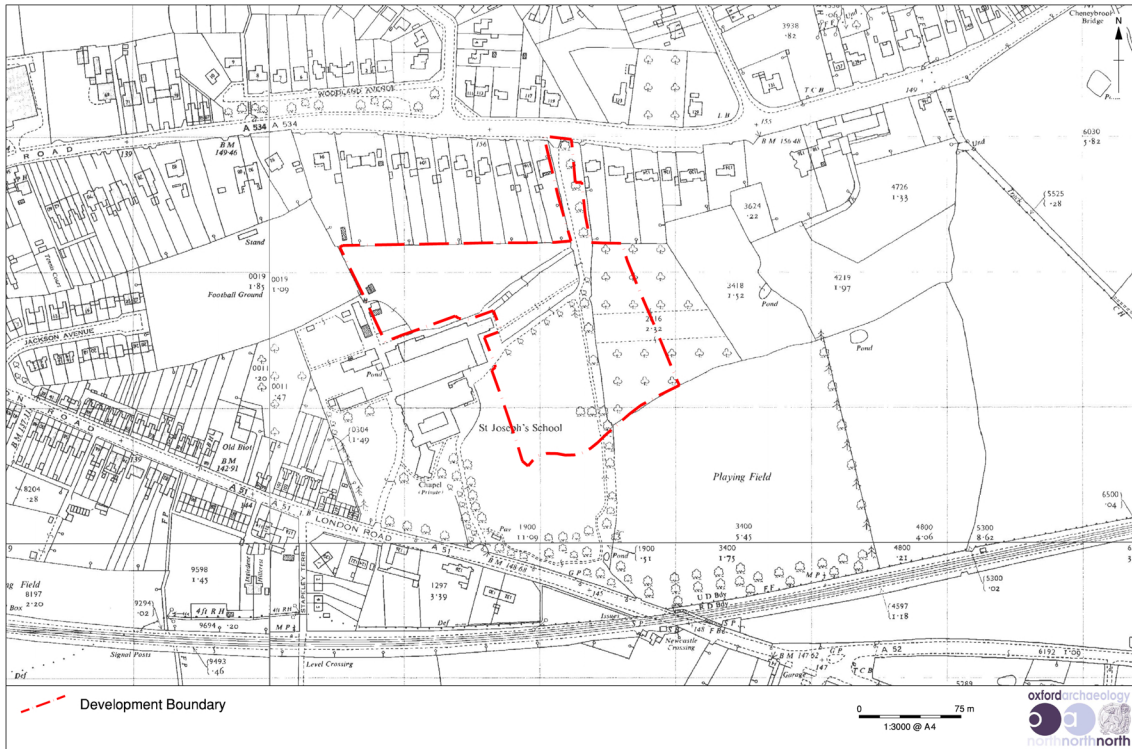


Figure 6: Development boundary superimposed on the Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile map, 1963

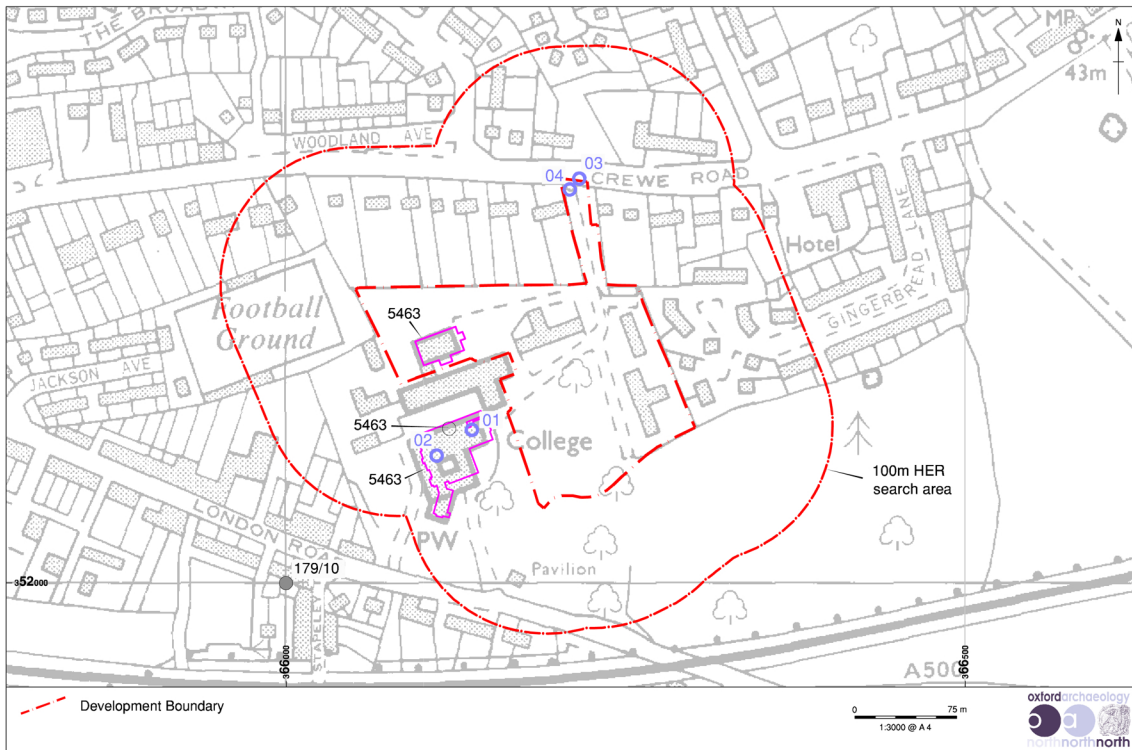


Figure 7: Plan of Gazetteer Sites