Staffordshire County Council

Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey

Final Report

ENGLISH HERITAGE

Controlled Document

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Contents

The Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) forms part of a national programme of such surveys, which were initiated and supported by English Heritage.

The main aim of the Staffordshire EUS is to understand the development and the current historic character of the medieval towns within the county, as well as understanding their archaeological potential. The project identified 23 towns within Staffordshire which clearly had medieval origins. Each town has its own report which is divided into two parts. The first part covers their historical development in the form of a synthesis of existing historical and archaeological research. Part two identified the historic character of each town through their sub-division into 'Historic Urban Character Areas' (HUCAs) whose significance was assessed and evaluated. The significance and values of each HUCA informed a series of recommendations (linked into the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)) to assist both policy planning and development management in understanding the key historic environment matters.

This document identifies the key criteria for identifying medieval towns and provides a review of the methodology used to identify Staffordshire's medieval towns. The main body of the report provides an overview of the findings of the EUS and compares and contrasts what is currently known about the towns. This informs the Research Framework where key questions have been identified to be considered when a requirement for archaeological work has been noted in the planning system. The results of any such archaeological work will, in time, feed into the Historic Environment Record (HER), which will forward our understanding of the history and development of the towns.

The final section of the document sets out the ways in which the EUS can inform the planning process, both policy and development management, in fulfilment of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Market Square, Stafford

1. Introduction and background

Introduction

The Staffordshire EUS project commenced in 2008 and forms part of a national programme of Extensive Urban Surveys (EUS) initiated and supported by English Heritage. The project was launched in 1992 to enable local government bodies to produce archaeological strategies for medieval towns following the introduction of 'Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 16: Archaeology in Planning' in 1990 (see below). The earliest projects were principally concerned with the below ground archaeological potential, but following the publication of the English Heritage document 'Power of Place' in 2000 the emphasis expanded to consider the whole of the historic environment. Within subsequent EUS projects greater significance was placed upon understanding and communicating the historic character of these towns.

The project design (February 2009) produced for Staffordshire stated that it would follow the methodology devised for the Sussex EUS. The Staffordshire EUS, whilst broadly following this methodology, evolved throughout the life of the project (cf. 1.2).

A pilot project, carried out in January 2007 on Newcastle-under-Lyme, highlighted the areas where a refinement of the methodology was required to enhance the characterisation aspect of the project. Following these amendments to the methodology a second (unofficial) pilot was undertaken on Kinver in 2009 to test its veracity. The remainder of the EUS project was thus carried out following the Kinver model. Further amendments were necessitated following the publication of English Heritage's guidance document 'Conservation principles, policies and guidance' (2008)[1] resulting in a revision of the assessment methodology for the heritage values (cf. 1.2.1 and Appendix 2) Minor amendments were also made to the

recommendations following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012[2].

An assessment to determine which towns in Staffordshire would be eligible for the EUS was carried out by Dr. John Hunt in 2007 based upon an assessment of the original pilot project. It was decided at an early stage to only include those towns which lie within the current administrative boundary of Staffordshire. Consequently Wolverhampton and Walsall, as Unitary Authorities, have not been included within this project. Similarly Stoke-on-Trent was excluded as an Unitary Authority and also because the five medieval settlements which comprise the conurbation, taken individually, did not meet the criteria of a 'medieval town' as laid out in the SCC pilot study. Dr. Hunt's assessment resulted in twenty-three towns being identified for study (cf. 3.1 and plate 3).

The results of the characterisation process for each town are embedded within the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) supported by Geographic Information System (GIS) polygons. The key output for each town is a report detailing its historical development and assessment (cf. 1.2).

1.1 Characterisation

From 1996 English Heritage promoted Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) as a way of understanding and managing change in the landscape. The HLC process also aimed to provide a context for the sites and monuments data traditionally held by HERs. HLC was carried out at a county level using maps of 1:10,000 scale, which meant that the detail and complexity of the historic character and the rate of change within urban areas was not reflected. Consequently, the Staffordshire EUS project can be seen, in part, as a deepening of the broader HLC to understand character and

change within the historic towns. As a result a new set of terms was employed to assist the characterisation process with the results being input directly into the HER database and GIS system (cf. Appendix 1). Plate 1 compares the scale of the HLC against that of the EUS.

HLC Types

HCTs from EUS project

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Legend

HLCType

Industrial Complex	Educational Facility	Other Non-Residential Development
Other Parkland	High Status Site	Other Parkland
Post-1880s Settlement	Industrial	Sports Fields
Pre-1880s Settlement	Irregular Historic Plots	Squatter Enclosure
Redeveloped Pre-1880s Settlement	Large-Scale Commerical or Industrial Sites	Suburb

HCTs (EUS)

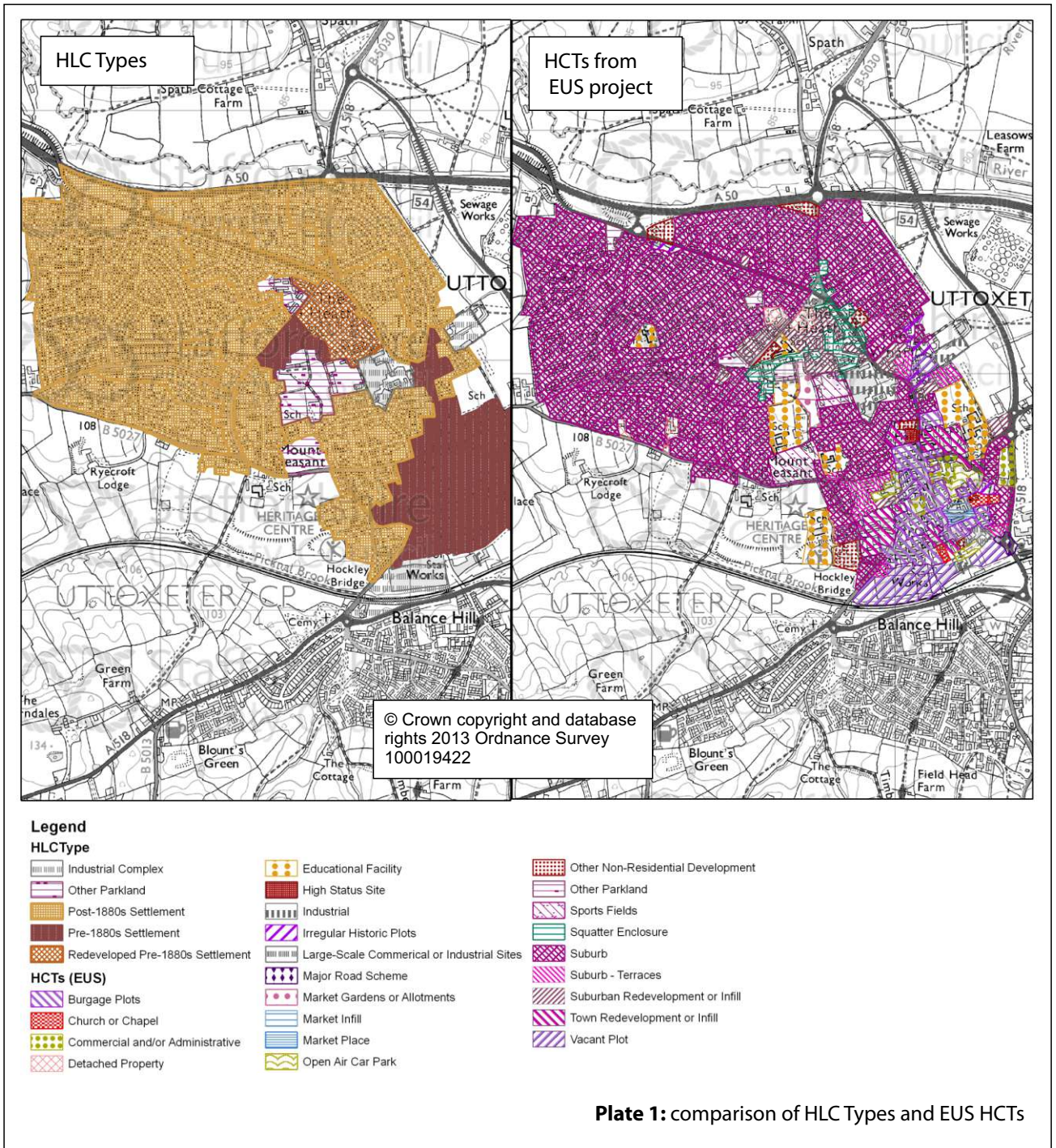|		
Burgage Plots	Major Road Scheme	Suburb - Terraces
Church or Chapel	Market Gardens or Allotments	Suburban Redevelopment or Infill
Commercial and/or Administrative	Market Infill	Town Redevelopment or Infill
Detached Property	Market Place	Vacant Plot
	Open Air Car Park	

Plate 1: comparison of HLC Types and EUS HCTs

1.2 Methodology

The aim of the EUS project was to understand the development of and current historic character of each town in the study group. It is important to emphasise what is meant by character as opposed to land-use in the context of the Staffordshire EUS project. For example where a 19th century purpose-built school survives, but is no longer used for educational purposes it is still recorded in the EUS as "Educational Facility" to identify its continued contribution to the character of the town, rather than reflecting its current function. The EUS does not, as a principally desk-based exercise, take account of the quality of the historic character of each town. Such assessments may be required as part of specific development proposals or enhancement projects or are part of District/Borough councils Area Action Plans (AAPs) and Conservation Area Appraisals and thus would represent a deepening of the detail contained within the EUS project (cf. 5.4).

The EUS project looked at the modern extent of all the towns considering their character and heritage assets. There are two key outcomes of the project:

1) A dataset which is embedded within the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) supported by Geographical Information System (GIS) polygons.

2) Each town has its own report, subdivided into two parts, which details its historical development (Part One) and an assessment of its historic character, archaeological potential and significance (Part Two).

Part One, entitled 'Background and Setting', addresses the understanding of the development of the town through an analysis of a variety of sources. These included historic mapping and particularly the 25" first to fourth edition Ordnance Survey Maps and tithe maps (where available); information contained within the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) (comprising historic buildings, findspots and archaeological sites); the results of archaeological fieldwork; aerial photography and in particular secondary documentary evidence. The latter included local histories, the Victoria County Histories, historical directories[3] and journals where they were available and contributed to our understanding of the history of each town.

Part Two, entitled 'Characterisation and Assessment', began with an analysis of the historic character of each town using aerial photography, historic and modern maps and with reference to the history of the town as laid out in Part One. The characterisation process involved the creation of data directly into the 'Historic Landscape Character' module of the Staffordshire HER which included an integrated GIS layer, which can be interrogated in a number of ways. Historic Character Types (HCTs) were allocated to parcels of land and/or buildings which were deemed to express a particular character within the town (cf. Appendix 1 for the list of HCTs used within the project). Following this initial characterisation process each town was then sub-divided into Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) which were based upon their current historic character as expressed by the HCTs (for methodology cf. Appendix 2). Within the town report a statement of significance was produced for each HUCA as well as an assessment of heritage value (cf. 1.2.1) and was followed by a list of recommendations (cf. 1.2.2).

1.2.1 Heritage Value

The assessment of heritage value within the town reports was based upon English Heritage's guidance document 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (2008)[4]. The

document recommends looking at the significance of different aspects of heritage assets: the Evidential Value, the Historical Value, the Aesthetic Value and the Communal Value (cf. Appendix 2). Within the Staffordshire EUS the recommendations made by the guidance document were interpreted to fit the project and consequently each town report also provides a methodology for understanding how the values were assessed (cf. Appendix 2). The values are expressed as 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low' alongside supporting text as justification.

1.2.2 Recommendations

The final aspect of this section was a list of recommendations for each HUCA based upon the Statement of Significance and Heritage Values. The recommendations are largely generic and are written to assist planners and developers by referencing them to national planning guidance. At the beginning of the programme this was in response to Planning Policy Statement No. 5 (PPS5): Planning for the Historic Environment which was adopted in March 2010. However, this was replaced in March 2012 by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In order to ensure the relevancy of the recommendations they were re-written to reflect the NPPF policies.

The recommendations do not obviate the need for detailed advice from historic environment specialists.

1.3 Definition of a town

What is meant by 'town' is not easily defined, but at a simple level it is an attempt to identify those settlements which operate as central places for their surrounding landscape providing opportunities for trade and engagement in cultural, social, legal and spiritual activities[5]. Identifying such places has not been straightforward as there are always settlements which defy categorisation by accepted criteria. To complicate matters the term 'town' is in itself not straightforward to define due to changes in meaning over time and because it was not a term used during the medieval period[6]. Consequently there have been many debates among scholars in an attempt to define the difference between rural and urban settlements in the medieval period. Even identifying what constitutes a 'town' in the early 21st century does not appear to be straightforward (cf. 2.2).

1.4 Identifying medieval towns

There are a number of criteria that scholars have used to attempt to identify medieval towns and the main ones include:

◆ a high proportion of the population being involved in non-agricultural occupations (trades and crafts),
◆ a planned layout incorporating a market place and burgage plots as well as evidence of intensive settlement (built up street-frontages),
◆ a variety of institutions (guildhalls/hospitals/schools) and a number of religious buildings (one or more churches/friaries/monastic houses)[7].

Burgage plots in particular are seen as markers of medieval towns. These were building plots, generally longer than they were wide, which were planned based upon standard measurements (cf. plate 2)[8]. Burgage plots were laid out in blocks rather than individually and were also rented out by the lord of the manor for a payment rather than for a service (by which other tenancies operated particularly in rural settlements). Burgage tenure generally came with other freedoms such as hereditary rights (that heirs did not have to pay to take control of the property) or rights to sell at will (without explicit permission from the lord of the manor).

Plate 2: Burgage plots evident at Eccleshall on 2nd OS mapping (1890s) and on 2006 aerial photography

Whilst the above criteria affirms the status of the larger towns the identification of the smallest or 'failed' towns remains less than straightforward. Many of the latter defy easy classification because they may only evidence one or two features defined by the criteria. This could include being recorded as a Borough in medieval records even though there is no evidence for town planning or that the only evidence is physical where burgages and/or a market place are present. Even where towns are not known to have received a borough charter, they were usually granted at least one market charter during the medieval period.   For a market to function it was expected that the lord of the manor should apply to the Crown to be granted a charter. In Cheshire, however, it was noted that the older settlements did not receive market charters until very late if at all. This was interpreted as evidence that the markets, whilst already sufficiently well established by the 12th and 13th centuries, were seeking to avoid having their rights challenged[9]. Examples of towns in Staffordshire without market charters, and which would therefore fit this pattern, include Tutbury, Newborough and Alton where there are references to markets in documentary sources (Tutbury's occurring in Domesday Book for example) as well as three of the largest medieval towns Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stafford and Tamworth[10]. This may also apply to other suggested early medieval minster settlements whose market charters date to later in the medieval period (cf. 2.4).

[11] Palliser & Pinnock 1971: table I (p.50-1)
[12] Ibid.
[13] Dyer & Lilley 2012: 88-89; Slater 2007: 27

During the medieval period towns were not the only settlements to gain marketing functions. Eighteen villages were granted markets in Staffordshire between the early 13th century and the late 14th century, without apparently being defined as a 'borough'[11]. These 'market' villages remained rural settlements which in general did not acquire other signifiers of town status. These settlements appear to have lost their marketing function by circa 1500[12]. Scholars have, however, begun to identify that some of the smaller towns/market villages could be considered to be 'hybrid settlements' which defy easy classification as being neither wholly rural nor wholly urban[13].

Population is not generally used as an indicator of town status during the medieval period, although it has been used for later periods. This is partly because identifying population for the medieval period is notoriously difficult and partly because places which remained very small can still evidence town attributes.

2. Staffordshire's Towns

2.1 Identifying Staffordshire's Medieval Towns

The historic landscape character of England has been defined into three broad areas based upon land use and settlement pattern; the 'south-eastern provinces', the 'central province' and the 'north and western province'[14]. A landscape character of late planned enclosure and large nucleated settlements dominates the central province while ancient enclosures and woodland landscapes with a generally dispersed settlement pattern dominate the north and western province[15]. Only a small portion of the south east of Staffordshire falls within the central province, the majority of the county lies within the north and western province. The latter province has also been recognised by scholars of medieval settlement as being a landscape where small towns proliferated during the medieval period[16]. This is in contrast to the east Midlands counties where towns tended to be fewer, but generally larger. The large number of towns founded across Staffordshire can, therefore, be seen as characteristic of many of England's northern and western counties.

This proliferation of towns in Staffordshire has long been recognised and initially 28 settlements were considered for inclusion within the EUS project; the majority of which remain small places with little evidence for urbanisation in the modern landscape[17]. Dr John Hunt was asked to assess these 28 places to establish their credentials as medieval towns. To facilitate this process he identified nine criteria (fig. 1).

[14] Roberts and Wrathmell 2002
[15] Ibid.
[16] Slater 2007: 23; Dyer 2002: 3
[17] Hunt nd.

Number	Town	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	**Leek**	●	●	●	●	●			●	
2.	**Betley**	●	●	●		●			●	
3.	**Newcastle-under-Lyme**	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	
4.	**Cheadle**	●	●			●		●	●	
5.	**Alton**	●	●	●		●			●	
6.	**Stone**	●	●	●		●			●	
7.	**Uttoxeter**	●	●	●	●				●	
8.	**Eccleshall**	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	
9.	**Tutbury**	●	●	●	●			●	●	
10.	**Newborough**	●	●	●	●	●				
11.	**Abbot's Bromley**	●	●	●	●	●			●	
12.	**Stafford**	●	●	●	●	●			●	
13.	**Burton-upon-Trent**	●	●	●	●	●			●	
14.	**Colton**	●	●	●		●				
15.	**Church Eaton**	●	●	●	●					
16.	**Rugeley**	●	●						●	
17.	**Penkridge**	●	●	●		●			●	
18.	**Alrewas.**	●	●	●						
19.	**Lichfield**	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	
20.	**Brewood**	●	●	●		●			●	
21.	**Tamworth**	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	
22.	**Kinver**	●	●	●		●				
23.	Wolverhampton*	●	●	●		●			●	
24.	Walsall*	●	●	●	●				●	
25.	*Cannock#*		●						●	
26.	Rocester		●							
27.	Tean									●
28.	Stoke-on-Trent Potteries towns*									●

Fig. 1: Staffordshire's Towns taken from J. Hunt nd.

Key:
1. Described as a town or borough in medieval Staffordshire in Dyer 2002.
2. Recorded as a part of Staffordshire's urban hierarchy in Slater 1985.
3. Listed as a Staffordshire borough in Palliser 1972
4. Has a borough charter, or was described as a borough; Beresford and Finberg
5. References to burgesses or burgages; Beresford and Finberg
6. Taxed as a borough; Beresford and Finberg
7. Jury representation as a borough; Beresford and Finberg
8. Considered a 'market town' in c.1600; Everitt's list
9. Other (uncertain references and towns of the Industrial Revolution and later)
* Towns lying outside Staffordshire's modern administrative boundary
# Not recognised as a town in early studies

[18] Palliser 1972: 63-69
[19] Dyer 2002: 7 fig. 1
[20] Ibid: 13 fig.2
[21] Slater 2007; Palliser 1971: Table 1 (p.50-1)

[22] Ibid: 35 and 2.4
[23] Ibid: 31

The methodology of the assessment suggested that to be considered a medieval town each settlement should meet at least two of the nine criteria. A number of towns were excluded from the project as falling outside of Staffordshire's modern administrative boundary (cf. fig 1). Consequently 23 towns (shown highlighted) were identified as forming the basis of the project (cf. plate 3). Rocester and Tean were excluded for failing to meet the necessary criteria.

Hunt was not the first to attempt to identify Staffordshire's medieval towns. The earliest attempt was undertaken by Professor David Palliser in 1972 through an analysis of the documentary evidence. As a result he identified 20 medieval towns lying within the modern administrative county of Stafford with the qualification that others may be discovered through further documentary work[18]. In 2002 Chris Dyer analysed the evidence for urbanisation within Staffordshire's medieval settlements resulting in the identification of 22 boroughs and towns, within the modern county, which differed from the EUS selection in excluding Cannock[19]. Dyer included a settlement hierarchy for Staffordshire's towns at circa 1500 based upon very approximate population estimates resulting in roughly four orders of settlement, with a fifth defined as "not urban" or at least no longer urban by this date[20].

A more detailed assessment of the hierarchy of Staffordshire's medieval towns was undertaken by Dr Terry Slater in 2007. This assessment of urbanism was aimed at identifying whether there were physical, as well as legal, differences between urban and rural market settlements. Slater identified 25 potential urban settlements (within the modern county boundary) along with the 18 known 'market' villages[21]. The two additional towns identified by Slater, but not considered within the EUS selection process, were Rocester and Longnor. They had been identified by Slater due to evidence retained within their plan forms. Rocester reveals evidence for both a market place and burgage plots, whilst Longnor retains a large market place[22]. Slater particularly argued the case for Rocester as a previously unidentified town stating that small monastic houses, to which Rocester belonged, were notorious for not granting privileges to their tenants[23]. Slater's hierarchy only partly attempts to address the status of the towns in later periods by suggesting whether they were successful or not beyond the 17th century. Any analysis of hierarchy in the post medieval period is limited by the currently poor understanding of the social and economic history and archaeology for the majority of the towns as was revealed during the EUS project.

Leek

Betley

Newcastle-under-Lyme

Cheadle

Alton

Stone

Uttoxeter

Tutbury

Eccleshall

Newborough

Abbots Bromley

Burton-upon-Trent

Stafford

Colton

Church Eaton

Rugeley

Alrewas

Penkridge

Brewood

Cannock

Lichfield

Tamworth

Plate 3: The 23 EUS towns

Kilometers

0   4.5   9   18

Kinver

2.2 Towns in the 21st century

In the early 21st century there still appears to be no consensus on what may constitute a town. The county's eight planning authorities[24] have generally used settlement hierarchy to identify suitability for sustainable growth. This has entailed an assessment of access to commerce and services for the community of a place and its surrounding area. Even in the early 21st century there is still an understanding that what makes a town is not based solely upon population size. South Staffordshire Council, for example, avoids using the term 'town' in its settlement hierarchy despite some of its larger settlements having populations of greater than 10,000.

The settlement hierarchies produced by the county's eight planning authorities generally reflect their differing circumstances and attitudes to 'urban' settlement and the concept of 'the town'. In general they all identified three or four categories which can be roughly identified as Major Strategic Centres, Main Service Centres, Local Service Centres and other rural settlements; the first three being of most relevance to this study. The EUS towns roughly fall into the following modern categories:

Main Service Centres	Intermediate Service Centres	Local Service Centre
Burton-upon-Trent	Alrewas	Abbot's Bromley
Cannock	Alton	Betley
Cheadle	Brewood	
Leek	Eccleshall	
Lichfield	Kinver	
Newcastle-under-Lyme	Penkridge	
Rugeley	Tutbury	
Stafford		
Stone		
Tamworth		
Uttoxeter		

Fig. 2: Settlement hierarchy based on service centre functions in early 21st century

The remaining three (Church Eaton, Colton and Newborough) fall into the 'other rural settlement' category. Overall, this analysis of the role of these settlements within their hinterlands in the early 21st century suggests that the majority of Staffordshire's medieval towns still operate as service centres to greater or lesser degrees. In the 19th century even Newborough could claim to retain some sense of being a service centre in the local area having five shopkeepers compared with the nearby settlements of Hanbury (3) and Marchington (0)[25].

Changes in the social and economic situation in Staffordshire are apparent from the work carried out by the Borough and District Councils. This work has identified the growth of other settlements as service centres notably Biddulph, Burntwood, Fazeley, Gnosall, Hednesford, Kidsgrove, Rocester and Wombourne amongst many others. Some of these settlements appear

to have been emerging as service centres in the 19th century or earlier. Others have expanded during the 20th century as overspill for larger urban areas within and beyond Staffordshire's administrative boundary.

2.3 Prehistoric evidence

Overall little is currently known about prehistoric activity within the towns although what is known suggests there is the potential for continuity of activity in these landscapes over the longer term. Kinver, Eccleshall, Alton and Stone all lie near Iron Age hillforts, and Alrewas, Colton and Rugeley all lie within the Trent Valley where there is abundant evidence for prehistoric and later activity.

In Lichfield and Stafford, where large archaeological excavations have taken place from the 1960s onwards, a greater degree of prehistoric evidence has been found within the historic cores. At Lichfield evidence for Mesolithic activity has been identified at St Michael's church, to the south east of the town centre. Evidence for possible Neolithic settlement was recovered from just to the south of the Cathedral. In Stafford ephemeral Iron Age evidence has been indicated near St Mary's church and at Tipping Street. A causeway leading eastwards out of the town has also been suggested as being of late prehistoric date.

2.4 Roman 'towns' and other activity

The county is crossed by a number of known Roman roads, with others being postulated. Five 'towns' developed within Staffordshire, associated with this road system, during the Roman period. All of these originated as a series of marching camps and/or forts where civilian settlement (vici) also grew either contemporaneously or at a later date. The majority lie in southern Staffordshire and

comprise Greensforge (approximately 3km to the west of Kingswinford), Pennocrucium lying on Watling Street (whose line is now followed by the A5) and equidistant from Penkridge (to the north east) and Brewood (to the south west) and Letocetum (where the village of Wall now stands) also on Watling Street. In the north west of the county a fort was established at Chesterton and a settlement developed (approximately 1km to the south east) at Holditch. In the north east a series of forts and a settlement developed at Rocester. It is only at Wall and Rocester where there is any direct evidence for continuity of settlement upon the site of the Roman 'town', although the nature of this continuity has not been tested. At Rocester there is some tantalising evidence, from one or two fragments of pottery, for settlement in the early medieval period.

It is assumed, however, that the village of Wall was re-founded upon this site at a later date rather than it being a direct successor in the way that Rocester could potentially be. *Letocetum's* successor is rather seen as being Lichfield, which lies approximately 3.5km to the north. Similarly *Pennocrucium's* successor is seen as being Penkridge which lies approximately 3.5km to the north east. In both cases the evidence for succession relies mostly upon the placenames of both the later settlements. The impetus, processes and timeframe for any such relocation of these settlements is, however, not clearly understood. The role of Lichfield in the early medieval period is well attested and there is evidence to suggest that Penkridge could also have been a significant settlement during the later part of the period (cf. 2.5). It is interesting to note, however, that Brewood, identified as another important early settlement (cf. 2.5) is also located approximately 3.5km to the south west of *Pennocrucium*.

Conversely there is currently no suggestion that the settlements at Greensforge or Holditch survived in any form beyond the Roman period.

Evidence from the EUS towns

Archaeological evidence for Roman activity has only been identified within a few of the EUS towns to date. Furthermore, what is known is so fragmentary that at present it does not contribute significantly to our understanding of the status, function or phasing of any such activity. Within Lichfield a number of finds have been recovered dating to the Roman period including building material from three sites: The Cathedral Close, the Friary site and at Cross Keys to the west of the Cathedral. The evidence from The Close was sufficient for it to be suggested that a building (of unknown date or function) stood in this vicinity during the Roman period. At Cross Keys the evidence represented the reuse of Roman masonry in a later building and the excavators argued that the fabric could not have been moved very far from its original site although there was no other evidence for a building at this location. The material did, however, indicate that it had been removed from a high status property.

Further 'Roman type building material' was discovered during archaeological excavations at Tamworth, but to date this remains the only tantalising evidence for the period[26]. At Stafford a whole Roman pot was recovered from beneath a building standing within the market place. Furthermore, Roman pottery fragments and evidence for land reclamation were found in Clarke Street on the edge of the Sow valley suggesting a degree of activity, although its true nature remains elusive. More substantial evidence for activity during the period has been recovered from the wider landscape around both Stafford and Tamworth. A probable Roman farmstead was excavated lying to the north west of Tamworth in the 1980s and environmental samples have revealed evidence for pastoral farming in the Tame valley from the Bronze Age into the Roman period. A Roman villa, with evidence for earlier occupation, has been excavated at Acton Trussell to the south of Stafford, whilst a second possible villa site has been identified lying to the north of Stafford Castle.

It has long been suggested that Tutbury was established on the site of an Iron Age hillfort and whilst evidence for this hypothesis remains elusive archaeological excavations at the castle did reveal evidence for activity during the Mesolithic and Roman periods. The latter comprised a large kiln or oven containing Roman pottery revealed during archaeological excavations. Further archaeological work also recovered large quantities of pottery from elsewhere within the castle. Roman coins have been found at both Alton and Leek.

Roman activity has also been identified within the wider landscape around Eccleshall (to the north and south), Brewood (the latter includes a Roman villa as well as the forts and settlement at *Pennocrucium*) and Burton (an Iron Age/Roman farmstead at Clay Mills).

2.5 Early medieval evidence

Three of Staffordshire's towns played a significant part in England's early medieval history. Lichfield became the ecclesiastical centre of the kingdom of Mercia from the late 7th century under the aegis of St Chad and has remained an episcopal seat ever since (with the exception of a short period immediately following the Norman Conquest). Tamworth is recorded in late 7th century documentary sources and had become one of the principal seats of Mercian royalty by the late 8th century

being particularly associated with King Offa. Tamworth later formed one of Aethelflaed's burh's in the Wessex/Mercian offensive against the Danes of eastern England. Evidence for early medieval activity has been discovered during archaeological excavations on a number of sites throughout both towns. Consequently, it can be argued that the early medieval history both of these towns is of at least national, if not international, importance.

There has been much debate concerning the origins of Stafford; it is first recorded in documentary sources in 913AD when Aethelflaed created a burh here. Archaeologically, Stafford is renowned for its pottery kilns with Stafford type ware being recovered from as far away as Dublin, Chester and Gloucester among other locations including Rocester (plate 4). Other evidence for archaeological activity has also been recovered. The origins of the early medieval settlement at Stafford has been much debated with Professor Martin Carver arguing that the pottery kilns and other features all date to the post-burh period[27]. However, recent archaeological work at Tipping Street within the town has begun to question this hypothesis and suggests activity dates from earlier in the period with radiocarbon dating of oats from one kiln suggesting a mid 9th century date[28].

Plate 4: Two phases of an early medieval pottery kiln, Tipping Street, Stafford

29 Taylor & Shaw 2012: 2.3
30 Hooke 2006: 49 and 51
31 Hooke 2011: 30
32 Ibid.

33 Taylor 2012c: 2.3.2
34 Meeson 1991
35 Tringham 2013: 258
36 Ciaraldi et al 2004

The early origins of other settlements within the county are generally associated with ecclesiastical bodies and are mostly known from historic sources. Some of these sources have to be treated with care; for instance it is likely that the claimed early origins of Stone as the site of a 7th century monastic site is probably a later invention, although it remains a possibility that a monastic presence (possibly a nunnery) had been established here later in the early medieval period[29]. It has similarly been claimed that the abbey at Burton was first established in the 7th century, although there is little supporting evidence for this at present. It is possible, however, that an early minster was established in the 10th century as suggested from later documentary evidence. The abbey itself was certainly in existence in the 11th century being founded by Wulfric Spot circa 1003. In the wider landscape around Burton at least two Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have been identified, at Stretton and Stapenhill which have tentatively been dated from the 5th to 7th centuries.

Historians have suggested several settlements which had minster churches prior to 1066. There appears to have been two phases for the establishment of these churches the earliest phase being from the 7th century onwards and the second phase occurring from the 9th and 10th centuries. Minsters could be established by royalty (e.g. the Mercian kings) or by aristocratic families on their estates. The earliest minsters in Staffordshire probably include Lichfield and Eccleshall, although others may have failed to survive the 9th and 10th centuries[30] and these potentially include a minster at Hanbury believed to have been founded by King Wulfhere of Mercia in the 7th century[31]. Minsters founded from the 10th century have been identified with the later known medieval collegiate churches including Penkridge, St Mary's in Stafford, Tamworth and Gnosall (as well as Wolverhampton and Tettenhall lying beyond the modern county boundary)[32].

Penkridge is first recorded in a land charter dated circa 958[33], by which date it probably formed part of a royal manor. A minster was probably founded at a similar date during the mid 10th century. As previously mentioned Burton may also have been the site of a minster possibly established at a similar date. The proposal of Gnosall as a minster church has received support by a brief analysis of the fabric of the extant St Lawrence's church by Bob Meeson who identified three phases within the crossing tower. The earliest phase probably dated to the early medieval period suggesting a stone-built pre-conquest church[34]. Trentham has also been suggested as the site of a minster church during the early medieval period[35].

The final settlement which has only more recently been proposed as the site of a possible minster church is Brewood[36]. Evidence for this comes from its large parish and the fact that it belonged to the bishop by the mid 11th century. It has been suggested that it may have originated as either an early royal (Mercian) or aristocratic estate.

That many of these sites later developed into economic centres (market towns or villages), with the apparent exception of Gnosall, Hanbury and Trentham, is probably due to markets being established during this period when the scattered community came together for worship.

There is currently little physical evidence for early medieval activity within the EUS towns of Staffordshire outside of Stafford, Tamworth and Lichfield. There are a number of exceptions which include the two early medieval crosses in Leek churchyard and the possible early/mid 11th century fabric in Alton's church. Two sherds of possible 7th century pottery have also been found during archaeological work at Tutbury Castle. The remainder of the evidence comes from documentary sources. A large estate at

Abbots Bromley is first mentioned in 996AD when it was granted by Lady Wulfrun to her son Wulfric Spot. The estate was later granted by Wulfric Spot to the re-founded Burton Abbey (circa 1003). Alrewas was also mentioned in a charter of 942AD, but the authenticity of the charter has been called into question. The town does, however, lie approximately 3km to the south west of an early 7th to 9th century settlement at Catholme.

The majority of the 23 towns have entries in Domesday Book or are referred under other entries (notably Tamworth). Newcastle, Stone and Newborough are not specifically recorded although the site of the latter probably lay within the earlier manor of Agardsley. There is also evidence to suggest that both Newcastle and Stone were incorporated, unnamed, in other entries; Newcastle in Trentham and Stone within neighbouring Walton.

3.1 Analysis from EUS research

A simple analysis of the 23 towns which constitute the EUS project was undertaken to attempt to establish a hierarchy which was not based upon any previous ranking nor upon population, size of town or perceived importance. This involved a simple scoring system which only looked at the presence or absence of particular elements or features within each town including the presence of civic or religious institutes, leisure facilities and any evidence for economic diversity (in the medieval period) and industrialisation (in the 18th/19th century). The analysis ranked the towns across three broad periods: 1) medieval and post medieval 2) 18th/19th century 3) 20th/21st century. The first period is the broadest, partly reflecting the lack of comparable information across the time frame and the generally limited research currently available for the post medieval period. Four categories (A to D) were roughly defined equating to major, medium, small and minor settlements; the latter being read as either failed towns or hybrid settlements (cf. 1.4). The results are shown in fig. 3 and fig. 4.

The average ranking of each town across the three periods is shown in fig. 3 and these have been used to summarise our understanding of the towns in this section and for the Research Framework (cf. 3.2). The indicators for what may indicate urbanity (based solely upon the research in the EUS project) clearly shows that the ranking of some of the towns has changed over time (fig. 4). It should be born in mind that the ranking in the tables may also reflect the levels of research carried out in any one town as well as any inconsistencies that may have arisen as a result of data availability and collection within the EUS project itself.

Group	Town
Group A	Burton; Lichfield; Newcastle; Stafford; Stone; Tamworth
Group B	Brewood; Cannock; Cheadle; Eccleshall; Leek; Penkridge; Rugeley; Tutbury; Uttoxeter
Group C	Alton; Abbots Bromley; Betley; Kinver
Group D	Alrewas; Church Eaton; Colton; Newborough

Fig. 3: The average ranking of the EUS towns across the three periods

Towns	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3
Abbots Bromley	Group C	Group C	Group D
Alrewas	Group D	Group D	Group C
Alton	Group C	Group C	Group C
Betley	Group C	Group C	Group C
Brewood	Group C	Group B	Group B
Burton	Group B	Group A	Group A
Cannock	Group C	Group A	Group A
Cheadle	Group C	Group A	Group A
Church Eaton	Group D	Group D	Group D
Colton	Group D	Group D	Group D
Eccleshall	Group B	Group B	Group B
Kinver	Group C	Group B	Group B
Leek	Group C	Group A	Group A
Lichfield	Group A	Group B	Group A
Newborough	Group D	Group D	Group D
Newcastle	Group A	Group A	Group A
Penkridge	Group C	Group B	Group A
Rugeley	Group C	Group A	Group A
Stafford	Group A	Group A	Group A
Stone	Group B	Group A	Group A
Tamworth	Group A	Group A	Group A
Tutbury	Group B	Group B	Group B
Uttoxeter	Group B	Group A	Group A

Fig. 4: Ranking of the towns across the three broad periods

The average of the towns suggests that the majority of Staffordshire's towns enjoyed success either throughout the period or grew substantially from the 18th/19th century onwards. It is the number of these successful larger towns within the county which has perhaps led to the perception that Staffordshire is more 'industrialised' than some of its neighbours despite the fact that its landscape remains overwhelmingly rural in nature.

3.1.1 Group A towns (Burton, Lichfield, Newcastle, Stafford, Stone and Tamworth)

The analysis of the EUS towns identified Burton, Lichfield, Newcastle, Stafford and Stone as being fairly consistent in their importance across the three broad periods (cf. fig. 3 and 4). However, only Stafford, Newcastle and Tamworth were classified as Group A towns across all three of the periods (fig. 4). Their prominence in the medieval period was also noted by Slater[37]. These three towns are the only royal boroughs within Staffordshire and each are associated with a royal castle. Tamworth Castle, comprising its motte and stone keep, continues to dominate the town (plate 5). Nothing survives of Stafford's royal town castle (the extant Stafford Castle belonged to a neighbouring baronial manor) and Newcastle's motte is largely extant and archaeological work has also attested to surviving below ground remains. Stafford's overall dominance is due to its administrative role as county town, which continues today.
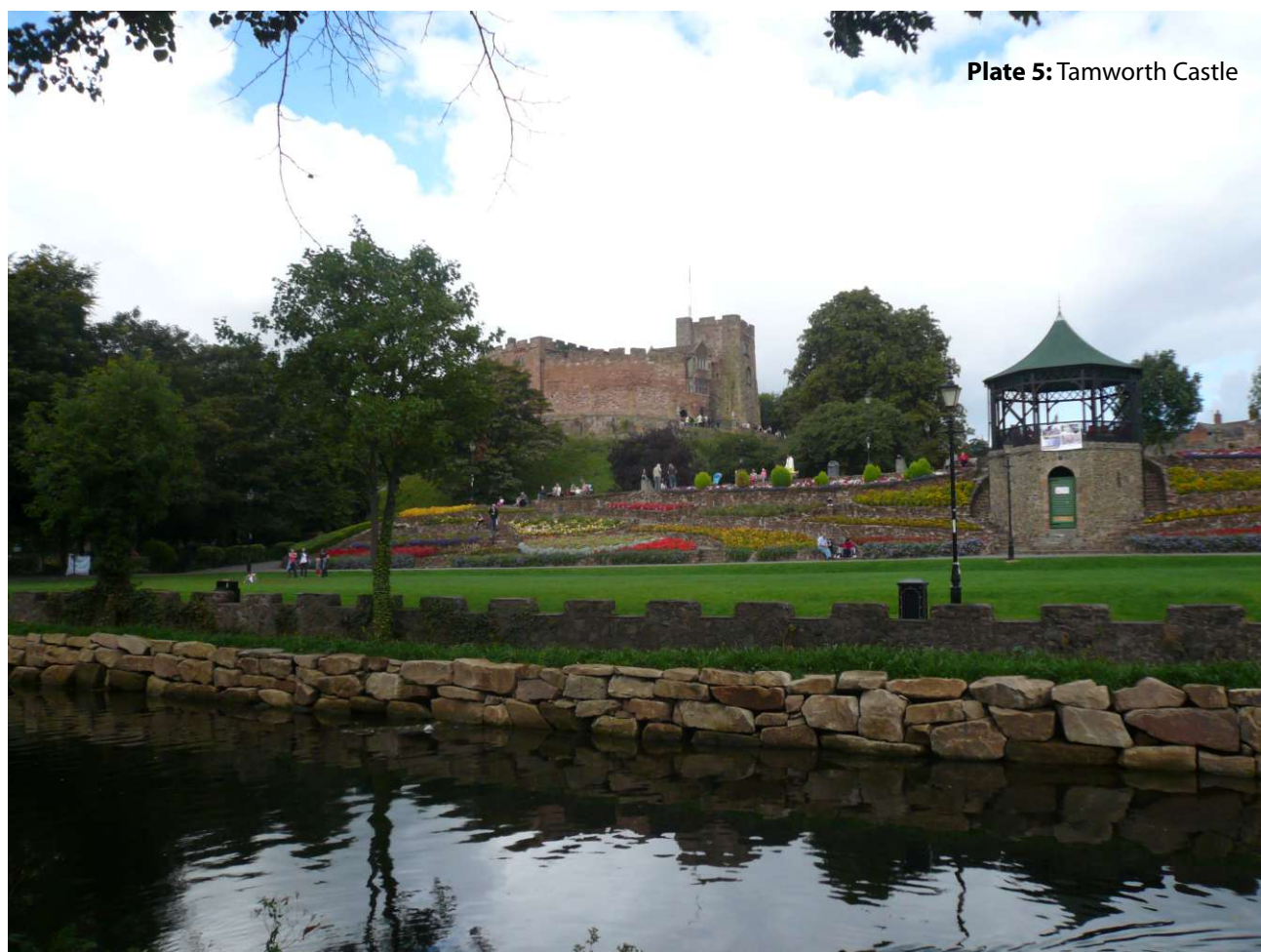

Plate 5: Tamworth Castle

All three towns remained important market centres throughout the periods and all experienced industrial development from the later 18th century onwards. Stafford became an important boot and shoe making centre; Newcastle was a centre of metal working (for which it was noted in the medieval period) as well as other disparate industries. Tamworth was reliant upon textiles initially cotton, but by the 19th century the town was principally a centre for tape manufacture. This economic success influenced the expansion of Stafford and Newcastle in particular during this period and all three towns continued to expand considerably during the 20th century. Tamworth, whose 19th century growth was less considerable, was developed as a Growth Town in the post-War period to take overspill from neighbouring Birmingham.

Lichfield was particularly important during the early medieval and medieval periods being the location of the cathedral and the promotion of its role as a pilgrimage centre based around the cult of St Chad (cf. 2.5). Lichfield remained an important market centre in the 17th century and a number of trades and industries are known from both documentary and archaeological evidence. The Cathedral was devastated during the Civil Wars and whilst this is likely to have had an impact upon the town it does not appear to have prompted a sustained decline. The drop in ranking identified in the EUS project during the 18th/19th century (to a Group B), at a time when both Burton and Stone move up, is probably a reflection of the fact that by comparison Lichfield had generally not attracted large-scale industry, remaining primarily a small market town (as lamented by the local poet Anna Seward in the late 18th century). As a result there was little consequent expansion beyond its medieval core until the 20th century with the majority of the housing post-dating the Second World War. The overall lack of investment in

development and re-development during the 19th century has resulted in Lichfield retaining its historic character, including its street plan and burgage plots, as well as a large number of historic buildings.

Burton remained an important market centre, being promoted in the medieval period by Burton Abbey. By the 16th century its notable industries comprised woollen cloth and alabaster carving. The Dissolution of the Abbey does not appear to have reduced the town's importance and may indeed have created new opportunities for enterprising individuals. Certainly by the early 18th century metal working and hat making had become important industries; this was also the period when the industry for which Burton is famed, brewing, began. The success of the various brewing firms (and families) led to many changes, particularly from the 19th century, funding civic buildings as well as alterations to the plan form of the town and its expansion beyond its historic core. Housing expansion has continued around Burton throughout the 20th century eventually engulfing the smaller settlements of Horninglow and Stretton.

Stone appears to be an anomaly, but its importance in the medieval period (as a Group B town) is also reflected in Dyer's analysis of Staffordshire's towns[38]. Stone was promoted by its priory during the medieval period and its success as a market town during this period is reflected in the economic diversity evidenced from the documentary sources. Slater suggests that Stone was not as successful later, but it did retain its market and fair during the post medieval period, although there is some conflicting evidence in the documentary record concerning its success. Its status was enhanced in the 18th/19th century when it became a centre for industry (particularly brewing and boot and shoe making), boosted

by the presence of the canal and reflected in the investment in civic and welfare buildings. These factors thus explain its promotion to a Group A town. The town continued to expand beyond its historic core during the 20th century.

3.1.2 Group B towns (Brewood, Cannock, Cheadle, Eccleshall, Leek, Penkridge, Rugeley, Tutbury and Uttoxeter)

Group B contains the largest number of towns and some of these reveal the greatest movement within the ranking across the periods. Four of the towns (Cannock, Cheadle, Leek and Rugeley) appear to have had fairly modest beginnings, but were all important industrial towns by the end of the 19th century. The ranking of Cheadle and Leek in the analysis for the medieval period (fig. 4) in part reflects either the lack of documentary sources or of research into their early economic make-up. However, their plan forms reveal evidence for a market place and burgage plots many of which survive within their historic cores. Cheadle concentrated upon textile and tape manufacture while Leek developed a thriving silk industry; the tape and silk industries both survived into the second half of the 20th century in these towns. In Leek the buildings associated with the industry, including the mills and terraced houses, still contribute significantly to the local distinctiveness of the town (plate 6).

Plate 6: Former silk mill, Haywood St, Leek

There is also limited evidence for economic diversity for Cannock during this period, but documentary evidence does suggest that a religious hospital was founded there, although nothing further is known. This foundation suggests that Cannock was deemed important enough by its lord (the Bishop of Lichfield) to warrant investment in a hospital, usually associated with larger successful towns. A large market place dominated Cannock (most of it was converted to an extant bowling green in the late 18th century), but only a few burgage plots have been identified within the plan form by comparison with other towns. At a later date it is clear that Cannock benefitted from its location within the South Staffordshire coal field despite losing its market in 1747. Its role as an important central place was later regained when the market was re-established, which was followed by the construction of a new market hall in 1868.

Rugeley was also held by the bishop of Lichfield during the medieval period and at least two, possibly three, market places have been identified. However, there is even less evidence for burgage plots within Rugeley's plan form despite the fact that it was clearly a successful market town during the medieval and later periods. A variety of industries were important in Rugeley during from the post medieval period onward, particularly iron working, cloth and hat making. All four towns (Cannock, Cheadle, Leek and Rugeley) evidence expansion during the 19th century, in particular, which was sustained during the 20th century.

Uttoxeter, by comparison ranked more highly during the medieval period, although this was partly due to the fact that burgage plots are still legible within the town plan where they are not in Rugeley (as a town of similar standing). The documentary evidence also reveals greater economic diversity than has so far been identified for Cannock, Cheadle or Leek. During the 18th/19th century Uttoxeter remained an important market for dairy products, but only saw modest industrial development (in agricultural equipment) and this occurred very late in the 19th century with its greatest expansion occurring in the early 20th century. As a consequence housing expansion during this period was modest and is mostly of late 19th century date.

Tutbury and Eccleshall both maintain their ranking in Group B throughout the three broad periods. Tutbury was established as a castle-borough probably around 1080; in Domesday Book it is one of only three Staffordshire towns to be recorded as having a market. The plan form includes a market place and burgage plots, but it is also one of the few towns to retain evidence for a formal boundary in the form of a bank and ditch. The extent of the area encompassed by the town ditch when compared to the area of the known medieval settlement may suggest that the lord's original aspirations were not ultimately realised. Tutbury's market had apparently failed by the late 16th century being re-established in 1624 before finally disappearing in the 1790s. Eccleshall was probably established as a minster settlement in the early medieval period (cf. 2.5) and in Domesday Book (1086) it is recorded as the centre of a large estate belonging to the bishops of Lichfield who had Eccleshall Castle built as their principal country seat. The market at Eccleshall functioned from at least the medieval period and its continuing importance was recognised in 1884 when a new market hall was constructed.

Both Brewood and Penkridge rise in rank across the three periods, although only Penkridge reached Group A in the 20th/21st century (cf. fig. 4). Both towns may have originated as minster settlements in the early medieval period; Penkridge being a royal manor (cf. 2.5). If this is the case then it is likely

that both towns may have had early market functions (the later medieval charters confirming or re-establishing these rights) and a settlement to support it. The fortunes of the markets in both towns appear to have fluctuated during the post medieval and later periods. Penkridge was, however, famed nationally for its horse fair throughout the post medieval period. Brewood finally lost its market after 1833, but Penkridge's was re-established in the 1860s and it continues to hold a market in the 21st century. Trade formed an important component of the towns during the 19th century, whether there was a market or not. Savings banks were established in both towns during the mid 19th century; the buildings (since converted to other uses) surviving within their townscapes.

Six of the towns have risen to Group A in the third period (20th/21st century) indicating that they provide key services, such as supermarkets and leisure facilities (e.g. parks) and as well as providing employment and evidencing substantial housing growth. Brewood, Eccleshall and Tutbury continue to rank as Group B settlements providing local service provision, although all three have seen housing growth which reflects their status.

3.1.3 Group C (Abbots Bromley, Alton, Betley and Kinver)

A degree of movement also occurs across the three periods within the Group C category. The only town to move up the scale is Kinver, which starts as a modest town in the medieval period becoming the location of an iron industry from the post medieval period onwards. In the late 19th/early 20th century, following the decline of the iron industry, it was promoted as a tourist destination for the inhabitants of the nearby Black Country. It retains its position as a Group B town into period three (20th/21st century) due to its housing expansion and provision of local services.

Alton and Betley remain in the Group C category throughout the three periods remaining small service centres with some housing expansion during period three. Alton's development as a castle-borough by the de Verdun family from the early 12th century onwards is likely to have been at least partly arrested by the failure of the male line in the early 14th century at which point it ceased to be the focus of the lord's estate. Whilst it appears to have lost its marketing function prior to circa 1500 there is evidence for expansion of the settlement during the post medieval period possibly associated with industrial activity within the wider Churnet Valley. There is some evidence for economic diversity in the 18th/19th century, but it is from the early 19th century when the lord of the manor (the Earls of Shrewsbury) created Alton Towers that investment began to be made within Alton. The opening of Alton Towers to the public probably also provided a boost to Alton's economy during the later 19th and 20th centuries. Betley remained a small market town throughout the three periods, although the success of its market fluctuated before finally being abandoned between the 1830s and 1890s.

Plate 7: Former market place, Abbot's Bromley

Abbots Bromley was developed as a market town by Burton Abbey during the medieval period. The market continued to operate throughout the post medieval period before becoming obsolete in the early 19th century. The market place now partly forms the village green and the extant market cross is the only reminder of its previous status as a market town (plate 7). Its limited local services and housing growth reflects its position as a Group D town in period three (20th/21st century).

3.1.4 Group D (Alrewas, Church Eaton, Colton and Newborough)

Church Eaton, Colton and Newborough have very modest beginnings and have not grown beyond small rural settlements for the most part, which is reflected in their Group D ranking across all three periods.

Colton and Newborough may be considered to be hybrid-places neither fully urban nor fully rural in the medieval period. It is possible that burgage tenure was offered merely as an incentive to encourage settlement, as Slater suggests for Newborough in particular, and this is perhaps reflected in the fact that there is little evidence for town-planning in either settlement[39]. That said, Newborough's market place is still legible within the townscape.

Town planning is more clearly evidenced at both Church Eaton and Alrewas with burgage plots lining the main street of both. Further burgage plots have also been identified along a number of other roads in Alrewas suggesting that there was an initial ambition, by the lord, to found a reasonably sized town. Alrewas' apparent lack of success in the medieval period has been ascribed to its late foundation and location near to the successful town of Burton-upon-Trent.

Markets and fairs are not recorded in any of the settlements after circa 1500. The 19th century trade directories do, however, indicate a degree of economic diversity with shops and other trades being recorded. Of the four towns, Alrewas is the only one to have seen any degree of growth beyond its original historic core during period three (20th/21st century).

4. Research Framework

4.1 Research and archaeological work to date

4.1.1 Group A towns (Burton, Lichfield, Newcastle, Stafford, Stone and Tamworth)

Lichfield and Stafford have been the subject of the most rigorous archaeological and historical work of all the towns in the county. Both have been the subject of published books considering their development from the early medieval period onwards.

A volume of the 'South Staffordshire Archaeological & Historical Society Transactions' was devoted to Lichfield in the early 1980s and several important archaeological interventions have occurred both at the Cathedral and in the town since then which have contributed immensely to our understanding of its history.

Stafford was subject to numerous archaeological investigations prior to and during the early 1980s and further work has been carried out since the publication of PPG 16 in 1990. An overview of the work carried out prior to the early 21st century, entitled 'The growth of a Borough: an archaeological study of Anglo-Saxon Stafford', was published by Professor Martin Carver in 2010[40]. The most significant archaeological discovery was that of a number of pottery kilns of early medieval date found in the Tipping Street area. The most recent large-scale archaeological excavation was carried out in 2009 on Tipping Street, which has enabled the most recent dating techniques to further our understanding of its early medieval history in particular. However, as this work was being carried out during the course of the EUS project its results have not yet been incorporated into the Stafford report.

A number of archaeological interventions were carried out in Tamworth between the 1960s and 1980s which included excavations across sections of the burh and town ditches, the excavation of an early medieval watermill, a medieval hospital and various works within Tamworth Castle. The results of the archaeological work have been published in a number of volumes of the 'South Staffordshire Archaeological & Historical Society Transactions' with the results of the excavations at Tamworth Castle during the early 1970s being the subject of a dedicated volume published in 1987-1988. Around 19 further small-scale archaeological works have been carried out within the town centre since 1990 comprising evaluations and watching briefs.

Archaeological work in Burton-upon-Trent has, to date, concentrated upon the site of the abbey; this has included below ground interventions as well as building recording and dendrochronological surveys (plate 8). One evaluation and five building recordings have taken place within the town itself which have revealed evidence for medieval activity including the remains of 14th century timber framed buildings concealed within later structures on Horninglow Street and High Street.

[40] Carver 2010

Plate 7: Former market place, Abbot's Bromley

Little archaeological work was carried out in either Newcastle-under-Lyme or Stone prior to the publication of PPG 16 in 1990 (cf. section 1). Since then 18 small-scale archaeological works have been carried out within Stone including along the line of the town centre by-pass in the early 1990s, and 25 have taken place in Newcastle.

All of these towns, except Stone, have been covered by one of the Victoria County History for Staffordshire (VCH) volumes. Burton-upon-Trent has been most recently been covered and this provides a detailed history on the development of the town.

4.1.2 Group B towns (Brewood, Cannock, Cheadle, Eccleshall, Leek, Penkridge, Rugeley, Tutbury and Uttoxeter)

The majority of the archaeological interventions within these towns have been small-scale in the period since the publication of PPG 16 in 1990. Four of the towns (Brewood, Cannock, Cheadle and Penkridge) have seen only a small number of interventions to date. Despite its relatively small size a high number of interventions (13) have been undertaken in Eccleshall the earliest, a building recording of Eccleshall Castle, occurring in the late 1970s/early 1980s. The presence of the castle and its origins as a large ecclesiastical manor in the early medieval period is probably responsible for the continued interest in the town (when compared to the four previously mentioned).

A greater number of archaeological works have been carried out in the larger towns of Leek, Tutbury and Uttoxeter some of which occurred prior to 1990. The earliest known excavation in

Leek was of a barrow in the mid 19th century. A high number of building recordings and dendrochronological surveys have also been carried out upon the historic buildings in Leek. In Tutbury and Uttoxeter the work has concentrated upon the below-ground archaeological deposits. Tutbury can claim the greatest number of archaeological interventions (23), the earliest focusing (as with Eccleshall) on the castle in the 1980s. The Tutbury Research Project, instigated in 2002, resulted in the publication by the University of Birmingham of a monograph in 2011 which synthesised all of the archaeological work carried out within Tutbury.

All, with the exception of Eccleshall, have been covered by a VCH volume. The volume on Tutbury is the most recent and provides a detailed account of its history. All of the towns have been the subject of at least one other local history publication.

4.1.3 Group C towns (Abbots Bromley, Alton, Betley and Kinver)

Alton and Abbots Bromley have attracted the most archaeological work. At Abbots Bromley two building recordings were carried out prior to 1990 with a further six small-scale interventions since. In Alton three building recordings were carried out prior to 1990 and five further pieces of work since then. Only one archaeological evaluation has been carried out in Kinver to date, whilst no below ground archaeological work has yet been undertaken in Betley. This lack of work is partly due to there being less development pressure within the historic cores of these towns.

Alton and Betley have been the subject of local history publications and Kinver's history is covered by one of the VCH volumes. An overview of the history of Abbot's Bromley was commissioned by SCC and undertaken by Dr. John Hunt in 2007.

4.1.4 Group D towns (Alrewas, Church Eaton, Colton and Newborough)

Few archaeological interventions have taken place within these towns partly due to the limited development pressure within their historic cores. No below ground archaeological work has been carried out to date in Church Eaton, but two small-scale interventions have been undertaken in Alrewas and three in Newborough. Whilst only one watching brief has been carried out in Colton, the Colton Local History Society in conjunction with Stoke-on-Trent Museum Archaeological Society have carried out two excavations in 2010 and 2011, which have contributed to an understanding of the development of the town in the medieval period.

The history of both Church Eaton and Newborough has been covered by the VCH, the latter being the more detailed of the two accounts. A history of Alrewas has been published and various histories have been completed for Colton including a report undertaken by Dr. John Hunt on behalf of the Colton Local History Society in 2009.

4.2 West Midlands Research Framework

The West Midlands Research Framework was established to identify the current state of research and information as recorded in the HERs; to identify gaps in knowledge; and to formulate a Research Framework to direct future research agendas. The resulting publication 'The Archaeology of the West Midlands: a framework for research' (2011) identified the research priorities on a period-by-period basis.

Three key issues have been drawn out of the West Midlands Research Framework which applies to all periods and sites:

1) The need for greater use of environmental data to understand past uses of sites and for dating.

2) Greater multidisciplinary working to gain the greatest insights and understanding of the past.

3) The acknowledgement and identification of the continuity of activity within the landscape across broad periods

The section covering the medieval period, by Dr. John Hunt, is particularly pertinent to the EUS project. He identified key research priorities for both large and small towns (five for each one) as well as themes which cover town and country. These should also be consulted to identify broader themes and how work in Staffordshire can contribute to an understanding of urban development (across all periods) within the West Midlands and beyond.

4.3 EUS Research Agenda and Priorities

The following research agenda had been divided into two sections. The first looks at general research pertaining to Staffordshire's medieval towns which, for ease, have been set under broad categories, although these should not be considered in isolation but alongside other questions. The second section looks at each of the town groupings (as shown under fig. 3). These more town specific questions should be considered alongside those under section 4.3.1.

4.3.1 General Research Questions

The research questions should be used to guide and/or target archaeological work within the towns. Written Schemes of Investigation (WSI) or Specifications for archaeological investigations should seek to identify how the work to be undertaken, or its results, can address our understanding of the history of the towns.

Prehistoric/Roman

◆ What is the evidence for prehistoric/Roman activity/settlement within Staffordshire's towns? Can a form of environmental determinism be identified; does topography for instance influence early settlement? Is there any evidence of activity/settlement continuation into later periods?

Early medieval

◆ To what extent were Staffordshire's towns a focus for settlement during the early medieval period? What was the nature and status of any such settlement?

◆ What is the evidence for hagas (large urban properties) or aristocratic enclosures within these towns?

◆ What was the role of Staffordshire's minster settlements in the wider landscape?

◆ To what extent were they a focus for social and economic activity beyond their religious role? Did minster churches influence the development of industrial activities during the early medieval period?

◆ To what extent do we see the reuse of Roman material within early medieval urban contexts?

Town planning/built environment

◆ What is the evidence for the origins and phases of development of the towns' plan forms over the centuries? Where evidence is to be found; what are the drivers? Where the evidence suggests there has been no or little change then what are the processes that have impeded change?

◆ What is the evidence from standing buildings and what can these properties tell us about their form, function, phases of construction, adaptation, reuse of building material and importance? What is the evidence, from archaeology, for earlier properties and what is the evidence for how they were utilised? What form do these properties take?

◆ What evidence is there for the use of brick during the medieval period within Staffordshire's towns?

◆ What is the evidence for commercial, domestic and civic architecture reflecting the changing roles and concerns of the urban population across the centuries?

◆ What evidence is there for settlement shrinkage or growth in the medieval and post medieval periods? To what extent can evidence of decline from the mid 14th century onwards be seen as an opportunity for inhabitants? Is there a change in status in amalgamated plots? Is there evidence that the urban plots became less intensively developed with perhaps gardens developing to reflect a change in emphasis among inhabitants towards privacy?

◆ What can be understood about status in the built environment across the towns following 19th century expansion? What can be understood about the social and economic history of this period? How was civic pride expressed and can it be related to rebuilding in the 18th/19th century? How does is this reflected in the modern townscape?

Social and economic

◆ What evidence is there for commercial development by single landowners from the medieval period onwards? Is there any evidence for medieval shops in extant buildings and the below ground archaeological record?

◆ What is the evidence for industrial/commercial specialisation within the towns? What evidence is there for production in the archaeological record which is not reflected in the documentary record and vice versa to gain a wider insight into the diversity of the economy?

◆ How did industrial development change the social and economic make-up of the towns? How did this manifest itself in the built environment?

◆ What contribution can the analysis of material culture and environmental evidence make to our understanding of the development of towns? The former has the potential to reveal evidence concerning living conditions and dietary change for instance[41]. To what extent can material culture be seen to be reflecting past attitudes?[42] Can the poor be identified in particular areas of the town and does this reflect changing status?

◆ What can skeletal remains tell us about the populations of towns; health, injuries and skeletal adaptation (which may reflect specific industrial activities for example).

◆ Further archaeological and historical research is required into the occupational diversity of these settlements from the medieval period onwards. Is there evidence for specialisation at an early date? What are the origins of the industries for which each town was renowned in the 19th century?

◆ How is philanthropy expressed and what is its influence in the towns; to what extent are major families revitalising towns in their own/preferred images.

◆ What evidence is there for civic/public realm works in the towns across the periods?

Lordship/Religion

◆ What are the origins of churches within the towns? Hunt in The West Midlands Research Framework recognises that we are relatively ill-informed about urban parish churches in the west midland region[43]. What is the relationship between the development or refurbishment of churches and the status of lordship/settlement?

◆ How do churches adapt to changing urban circumstances and developing financial imperatives?

◆ What is the evidence for changes in attitude to religion and what is the documentary/physical evidence for non-conformism? How this impacted upon the social and spiritual well-being of the inhabitants?

◆ What evidence is there for manorial complexes within each town and what is their relationship to the town? How did lordship manifest itself?

Over-arching questions

◆ What are the factors that have influenced or hindered the development of towns over the long term?

◆ Are there more appropriate methods for understanding the urban hierarchy through the centuries than those already reviewed/proposed in this report?

◆ What can we understand about the social and economic interactions between all of Staffordshire's towns within and across the settlement hierarchy (including rural settlement and farmsteads)? What are the processes behind the changing status of the towns including those which grow in the 19th century such a Fazeley, Kidsgrove and Burntwood?

◆ To what extent could other market villages be considered to be hybrid places e.g. Madeley or Longnor?

◆ To what extent and to what level did Staffordshire's medieval towns continue to operate as service centres in the post medieval and later periods and how does this reflect our understanding of success and failure? There is a clear lack of inter-disciplinary research into the nature of settlement and trade for many of Staffordshire's towns in these periods.

◆ What impact did changes to transportation, particularly from the mid 18th century onwards, have on the development of towns?

4.3.2 Town specific research questions

4.3.2.1 Group A towns (Burton, Lichfield. Newcastle, Stafford, Stone and Tamworth)

Early medieval

◆ Did Tamworth, as a border settlement, benefit or suffer from its location during the Danelaw?

◆ What is the evidence for Mercian investment in urban infrastructure and industrial expansion during the 8th and 9th century at Tamworth and Stafford?

◆ To what extent is Tamworth a Mercian 'planned town'?

◆ Work to identify when the various phases of defensive works took place at Tamworth (from the early medieval period into the medieval).

◆ An analysis of early medieval Stafford type-ware is required in order to better understand its role in Stafford's history and how and to what extent it formed part of a trading network.

◆ How urban was Stafford in the early medieval period and what was its extent/status?

◆ What part did Lichfield and Tamworth play in the circumstances surrounding the deposition of the Staffordshire Hoard (presuming it is of late 7th century date)?

Town planning/built environment

◆ Research in other large towns in the country has identified that evidence of growth in one area of a town could be at the expense of another part of the same town (where there is clear decline). To what extent is this true of Staffordshire's large towns, rather than accepting that one area revealing decline must be evidence of overall decline.

◆ What is the evidence that the peripheries of Lichfield, Stafford and Tamworth were ever inhabited or have they always been areas for gardening/cultivation or folding of animals? Paddocks are identifiable in these areas on later mapping.

◆ What is the evidence for the proposed two phases of development at Newcastle?

◆ Little work has been carried out in the medieval suburbs of towns; although archaeological work has revealed activity at both Stafford and Lichfield. What is the evidence relating to their status; did they grow piecemeal or were they planned and how does this relate to their ownership (e.g. the suburbs at Stafford developed on land owned by separate lordships from that of the town).

◆ To what extent does activity in suburban areas reflect cycles of growth and decline?

◆ Is there evidence that suburbs grew at the expense of central areas?

◆ Is there a difference in activity between plots in the town and the suburbs throughout the periods?

◆ Is there any archaeological evidence for informal marketing positions within suburbs; particularly related to those that were enclosed by town boundaries (Stafford, Lichfield and Tamworth)?

◆ What are the origins of the urban castles in Newcastle, Stafford and Tamworth and what can be discovered of the plan and layout of the castles, and of the material culture associated with the sites? What can we learn about the status of these castles through time and their influence (if any) on the development of the towns they accompanied?

◆ What can be determined of the wider environment within which the castles stood? Is there evidence to suggest the presence, at any point, of a formal or designed landscape associated with any of the castles, but most particularly Newcastle, in relation to the Castle Pool, but also at Tamworth and its relationship to the deer park to the south? To what extent may this also be true of the waterscape associated with Lichfield Cathedral?

◆ Is there any evidence that the presence of these urban castles influenced or indeed impeded immediate development within their urban hinterland?

- A review of the contribution of the castles to their towns development, particularly in the period up to the mid 14th century. This should be contextualised within the history of the associated manors and their wider associations reflected through tenurial links, affinities, social and economic activity and material culture.

- What is the evidence for a castle bailey at Newcastle?

- What form did the town boundaries around Lichfield, Stafford and Tamworth take? What evidence is there for boundary phasing? Several excavations at Tamworth have revealed evidence for a phased development, but there are still discrepancies in understanding all of the phasing. What is the evidence for their upkeep and how is this reflected in the ever changing financial and economic climate? Is there any evidence for a town boundary and/or gates associated with Newcastle?

- The phases of growth are well documented for Burton during the medieval period but to what extent is this supported archaeologically?

Social and economic

- Is there evidence for industrial specialisation within specific areas of the towns?

- In what ways did the towns develop their industries from the 18th century onwards and how is this reflected in the townscape?

- How did Lichfield's role as a cathedral town mark it out as different from Staffordshire's other large towns? How did this affect its demography, development and its place in history as a meeting place for enlightenment thought during the late 18th century?

Religion

- Continue to pursue an understanding of the origins and development of Lichfield Cathedral and its Close. What are the relationships between the town and the Cathedral? What was the impact of pilgrimage on the social and economic history of Lichfield? Why was the episcopal seat located at Lichfield in the 7th century?

- What is the evidence for the establishment of medieval hospitals associated with these towns and what can be discovered of their plan and layout, and of the material culture associated with these sites? What can the location of these sites to tell us about their role? What evidence is there for welfare of the poor following the Dissolution of the hospitals?

- What can be discovered of the plan and layout of the various friaries within Lichfield, Newcastle and Stafford, and of the material culture associated with the sites?

- Continue to pursue an understanding of the origins and development of Burton Abbey. What are the relationships between the town and the Abbey?

4.3.2.2 Group B Towns (Brewood, Cannock, Cheadle, Eccleshall, Leek, Penkridge, Rugeley, Tutbury and Uttoxeter)

Early Medieval

- What evidence is there for the perceived importance of Brewood and Penkridge in the early medieval period as minster settlements and what evidence is there for a trading or marketing function at this period?

Town planning/built environment

- How did timber-framed buildings adapt during the post medieval period and how do these changes manifest themselves? What can they tell us of developments within these towns?

- What can be understood about the survival and adaptation of medieval and post medieval buildings from the 18th century onwards? What can be understood from these structures about the social and economic history of this period?

- Can the use of polite architecture be identified within these towns and how is it employed to display status?

- Tutbury has been identified as a 'castle-borough'; to what extent can the early relationship between the town and borough be seen in the archaeological record? To what extent did Tutbury develop in relation to its town boundary; is their evidence for settlement contraction or had these always been areas given over to gardening/cultivation or folding of animals? Paddocks are identifiable in these areas on later mapping.

- What is the evidence for town planning in Rugeley and do the areas represented by apparently piecemeal development originate in the medieval period?

Social and Economic

- In what ways did the towns develop their industries from the 18th century onwards and how this is reflected in the townscape?

- How did the transport 'revolution' of the 18th and 19th centuries help or hinder these towns?

Lordship/Religion

- What was the relationship and degree of influence between the Bishop's castle and the town at Eccleshall?

- What evidence is there of a medieval formal or designed landscape associated with Eccleshall Castle and how may this have developed in later periods? To what extent were the bishops concerned with status? Was this display intended as a discrete element to be appreciated from the Bishop's Palace or was it designed to dominate the landscape?

- What is the relationship between the bishop, the dean and Rugeley? How extensive and what was the nature of the dean and chapter's estate in Rugeley and where was it located?

- What evidence is there for the bishop's manor house at Brewood and how did this influence the town plan or activities within the town?

- What was the nature of the collegiate complex at Penkridge and to what extent does it conform to the proposed fossilised extent as identified on historic mapping?

4.3.2.3 Group C Towns (Alton, Abbots Bromley, Betley and Kinver)

Town planning/built environment

◆ What can be understood about the rebuilding in brick and the survival of timber framed properties within these towns from the 18th century onwards? What can be understood about the social and economic history of this period?

◆ What, if any, influence does the castle have on the development of Alton; was it established as a 'castle-borough' and what was its extent? Is there evidence for a town boundary as there is for Tutbury?

◆ Is there evidence for the reuse of castle stone at Alton in later properties?

4.3.2.4 Group D Towns (Alrewas, Church Eaton, Colton, Newborough)

Town planning/built environment

◆ What can be understood about the rebuilding in brick and the survival of timber framed properties within these towns from the 18th century onwards? What can be understood about the social and economic history of this period?

Social and economic

◆ What evidence is there for a change in status from urban to rural?

◆ What evidence is there for these places continuing to operate as 'service centres' to the local landscape from the post medieval period onwards? ?

5.1 Planning

It is recognised at a national level by both Government and English Heritage that the historic environment makes an important contribution to the quality of our environment; to sustainable economic regeneration; to health and social well-being; and in contributing to communities' sense of identity[44].

The role of the historic environment was further recognised in the Government's 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF) issued in 2012 which affirms the historic environment as a material consideration within the planning system. NPPF replaced all the previous Policy Planning Statements (PPS) including PPS 5: Planning for the Historic Environment. PPS 5 Guidance is currently being rewritten. The NPPF provides guidance for the formation of local plans which are drawn up and adopted by local planning authorities; in neighbourhood plans; as well as forming a material consideration when planning authorities are making decisions on planning applications[45]. The document highlights the importance of taking account of the differing character within settlements and landscapes areas in its 'Core planning principles'.

The EUS contributes to the planning process by providing a sound evidence base for the identification of the historic character, archaeological potential and the significance of the historic environment within Staffordshire's historic towns.

5.2. Planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

An entire chapter of NPPF, 'Plan making', provides guidance to local planning authorities on the production of Local Plans[46]. It recommends that strategic policies should be produced to guide the delivery of the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment (NPPF para. 156 and para. 157). The evidence for such strategies should be based upon "adequate, up-to-date and relevant" information (para. 158 and para. 169). Furthermore para. 169 states that such information should be used to "assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment". The EUS reports provide the relevant information on the history, development and character of each town with Staffordshire in order to make informed decisions regarding strategic plans and when considering individual applications. An assessment of the significance of the historic environment and its contribution to the townscape is embedded into the EUS through the division of each town into 'Historic Environment Character Areas (HUCA)' (cf.1.2 and appendix 2).   In line with NPPF para. 169 the EUS also assesses the likelihood of encountering currently unidentified heritage assets (particularly archaeological deposits) within the 'Heritage Values' section of each HUCA. The EUS will also inform the development of appropriate research strategies for developments and as such should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the West Midlands Regional Research Framework.

Local Plans

Staffordshire's eight District and Borough Councils have or are in the process of producing Local Plans, in line with NPPF, to guide and inform development. The historic environment is a material consideration when

[44] HM Government 2010 web viewed 12/09/2013 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/229834/Acc_HeritageVision_Part1.pdf; English Heritage 2010 web viewed 12/09/2013 http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-place-intro/understanding-place-intro.pdf; English Heritage et al 2013web viewed 12/09/2013 http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/heritage-works/
[45] Department for Communities & Local Government 2012 web viewed 15/04/2013 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

[46] Communities and Local Government. 2012. National Planning Policy Framework. Communities web: http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf

[47] Lichfield District Council 2012; Heidi Hollins pers. comm.
[48] Cannock Chase District Council 2010 viewed 15/04/2013
http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1354
[49] Angela Grove pers. comm.
[50] Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design 2010 viewed 20/01/2014
http://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Urban%20Design%20Guidance-
Summary%20Document.pdf

[51] Department for Communities & Local Government 2011 viewed 12/09/2013
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/localism-act-2011-overview
[52] Ibid: 15 (para. 58)
[53] English Heritage 2011 web viewed 12/09/2013 http://www.english-
heritage.org.uk/publications/knowing-your-place/knowing-your-place12.pdf
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] English Heritage web page http://www.english-
heritage.org.uk/professional/research/landscapes-and-areas/historic-areas-assessments/

forming local plan policies and they all include a policy which aims to protect and enhance the historic environment. The evidence base upon which the Local Plans and their relevant policies are made include the Extensive Urban Surveys amongst other evidence; this is made explicit in the majority of Staffordshire's Local Plans. Even where this is not made explicit the EUS documents should be considered as part of the "relevant information" as identified in NPPF (cf. above).

A number of the local planning authorities within Staffordshire have explicitly used the EUS to inform their Local Plan as well as referencing it within the Historic Environment policies. For example Lichfield District Council has used the EUS to inform the development of the Lichfield Local Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal which contributed to their decisions on the direction of and capacity for growth within the town[47]. Cannock Chase District Council has used the EUS as part of the evidence base for their Local Plan and their "Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan (Pre-Publication) Development Plan Document" (2010) which aims to retain and enhance local distinctiveness[48]. The Rugeley EUS character assessment underlay some of the policies within the latter document to ensure that Rugeley's local character is reflected in any new development and the conservation and enhancement of existing significant buildings (Policy RTC 3). An overview of the historic urban character areas (HUCAs) for Rugeley also forms Appendix C of the document. It has also been used to inform the Character Area Profiles for their Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (forthcoming)[49]. Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Design Guidance SPD also references the Newcastle EUS as one of the documents which identifies local character and significance[50].

A number of Staffordshire's Districts and Boroughs also plan to complete Historic Environment Spatial Planning Documents which should further clarify the role of the EUS in local planning.

5.2.1 Local community planning

The Localism Act (2011) enables local communities to influence the future of the places where they live by providing them with the right to produce 'Neighbourhood Plans'[51]. Para. 58 of NPPF states that both Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans should be based upon 'an understanding and evaluation of the defining characteristics' of a place[52]. English Heritage has produced guidance for communities producing 'Parish Plans' or 'Village Design Statements' which also applies to Neighbourhood Plans. The document 'Knowing your place' (2011) emphasises the importance of the historic environment in understanding the historic character and heritage assets of each settlement[53]. This information will assist in the production of plans which combine the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment with the hopes for the future and to inform sensitive development that responds to its surroundings[54].

The EUS may also provide baseline evidence for planning authorities and those involved in formulating neighbourhood plans to understand the contribution of the historic environment to the local character of Staffordshire's medieval towns and their hinterlands. As an essentially desk-based survey the EUS can also provide a starting point for any further detailed characterisation work and targeted fieldwork which may be required as noted in English Heritage's 'Knowing your place'[55]. Guidance on detailed characterisation has also been produced by English Heritage in a series of documents entitled 'Understanding Place'[56] (cf. 5.4). Oxford City Council, with the support of English Heritage, has produced a 'Character Assessment Toolkit' to enable local

communities to assess the local character of both landscape and the built environment[57]. This work provides a useful framework for making detailed and rapid assessments of local character which can be applied by anyone involved in local community planning.

Where an EUS has not been produced for a settlement the methodology used in this project may serve as a guide to similar assessments in order to understand the historic character and archaeological potential.

5.3 Development Management/control

In order to fulfil our commitments to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment as laid down in both NPPF and in the Local Planning Authorities' Local Plans, it is important that there is early engagement between applicants, planners and heritage professionals (reflected in NPPF para. 188). Each Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA) within Section Two of the individual town reports provides a statement of significance and assesses the heritage value (Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal) which encompasses the archaeological potential and the legibility of the historic character in particular[58]. Recommendations (tied into NPPF policies) provide over-arching guidance which will be pertinent to informing development/change (cf. 5.3.1). In this respect the EUS provides a starting point for fulfilling paras. 128 and 129 of NPPF where the emphasis is placed upon both the LPA and applicants to identify and assess the significance of any heritage assets which may be affected by proposals. It also enables applicants to identify types of heritage assets which may be affected.

The recommendations for each HUCA also identify where proposals should take account of the surrounding local character to inform good design and appropriate change.

5.3.1 Heritage Statements

Paragraph 158 of NPPF requires applicants to provide local planning authorities with an assessment of "the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting" (commonly referred to as a 'Heritage Statement'). This should include where development is deemed to impact upon the historic character of the townscape (both within and beyond Conservation Areas) a Heritage Statement will be required. The EUS provides a valuable dataset in the development of Heritage Statements focusing on the wider historic environment including such things as street plan, areas of built character etc. The EUS then would represent an excellent starting point for understanding the impact of potential development sites upon the local townscape as well as individual heritage assets .

In view of this the EUS advises (within the recommendations section for each HUCA) where a Heritage Statement should be required (particularly within the historic cores). The Heritage Statements should consider the affect of change to the wider historic character (and how this can be reflected through sensitive design), the built environment and the potential for impact upon below ground archaeology.

Heritage Statements may also be required within other HUCAs where proposals have been deemed to affect specific heritage assets.

5.4 Other heritage assessments/Local lists

There may be a requirement for a more detailed assessment of the historic environment where large-scale redevelopment is proposed or in order to inform the regeneration of a townscape. It should be born in mind that in these circumstances, whilst the EUS provides a useful starting point, it does not record the

quality of the historic character. Further Heritage Area Assessments may, therefore, be required which would form a 'deepening' of the EUS assessment. Guidance on detailed characterisation has been produced by English Heritage in a series of documents entitled 'Understanding Place', which identifies three scales of characterisation work[59]. A broad standard and guidance for *'Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (2012) has also been prepared by the Institute for Archaeologists. While focusing on the methodological aspects of the desk study, it does provide a valuable insight into the process and the range of data available.

The EUS can also be used to inform Conservation Area Appraisals to highlight sites and areas of historic interest as well as providing an assessment of heritage value. It can also be used to identify potential new Conservation Areas or the reconfiguration of existing Conservation Areas. Cannock Chase District Council has already begun to use the EUS as one of the initial sources in the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals.

The EUS has, where appropriate, highlighted areas where currently undesignated historic buildings survive which make a contribution to the historic character of the townscape. This information can be used as a starting point to inform the preparation of Local Lists.

The EUS should also inform the development of appropriate strategies for evaluation and mitigation where individual development projects are concerned with medieval towns in Staffordshire. Used in conjunction with the more general research agenda outlined in within '*The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A framework for research'* (2011) this would enable development of targeted and appropriate aims and objectives for fieldwork and indeed desk-based studies.

6. Observations and Recommendations

1. The final report has identified that the original scope of the towns being considered in the Staffordshire EUS was quite narrowly defined. It is recommended that other settlements which may be identifiable as towns (particularly Rocester) should also be considered for future EUS projects.

2. It is recognised that in order to maintain the relevancy of the EUS project to reflect the results of new research, the changing character of the towns and any changes to the planning system should be subject to periodic review which may require the updating of the EUS reports and its core data.

3. A review of the terminology used in the Staffordshire EUS project should also be undertaken particularly as a result of English Heritage's forthcoming 'Historic Characterisation Thesaurus'.

4. One of the key issues arising from the Staffordshire EUS project was the conflict that occurred in trying to spatially define the historic character of a town, particularly in the core where the rate of change is greater, alongside the archaeological potential. The Staffordshire EUS, overall, highlights a shift in emphasis towards characterisation, but has this been at the expense of understanding the archaeological potential? The outcome has been that the archaeological potential has not been expressed spatially and it is recommended that this be reviewed to identify how useful this would be and how/where it may be incorporated directly into the HER.

5. An early issue which arose during the course of the project was how to interpret the 'Heritage Values' as laid out in English Heritage's 'Conservation principles, policies and guidance' (2008)[60]. It was argued that expressing the value in clear terms as either 'High', 'Medium' or 'Low' made an understanding of the significance of a character area explicit for planners and developers. It should be assessed/monitored as to how useful this has been. It should also be considered whether it would have been better to have not included 'Heritage Value' explicitly but considered it as part of the 'Heritage Significance Statement' which would have been in the spirit of the English Heritage document or whether such a process would have made it less useful for planners.

    The project has identified a need for national guidance to examine how such projects can be used to inform strategic planning e.g in Local Plans, Neighbourhood and Parish plans.   There is also the potential to review the benefits of the EUS.

6. It is recommended that the County Council look at whether the EUS projects can be formally adopted.

7. During the course of the project it was recognised that the development/failure of towns in the post medieval and 18th/19th centuries was not clearly understood. This area of urban development should be the focus of a more detailed study and possible characterisation exercise to understand the main drivers and potential impacts of such growth.

8. Research into the economic diversity of the towns in the 18th/19th century was not consistent. The 19th century trade directories were not consistently consulted particularly with those towns completed early in the project e.g. Kinver, Cannock and Rugeley.

[60] English Heritage 2008 viewed on the HELM website 26/03/2013 http://www.helm.org.uk/guidance-library/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/

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HCTs	Scope Note
Ancient Woodland	Woods that have been designated by English Nature as being 'Ancient Semi-Natural'; usually guided by the designation given in the Staffordshire HLC project.
Bishop's Palace	The official residence of a bishop. Identified from historic and modern mapping as well as the Staffordshire HER, documentary references and archaeological interventions.
Brick and Tile Works	This category defines 'brick and tile works' usually on historic mapping.
Broadleaved Woodland	Areas of woodland marked as being broadleaved on historic and/or modern mapping.
Burgage Plots	A plot of land usually longer than it is wide, which can include any structures on it. Typical of medieval towns. Identified from historic and modern mapping as well as (in some cases) from previous survey work, documentary references and archaeological interventions.
Burh	An Anglo-Saxon fortified town or other defended site, not necessarily urban. Identified from Staffordshire HER, previous archaeological intervention or interpretation.
Canal lock/basin	Defines canal lock and basin and wharfs from historic and/or modern mapping.
Castle	A fortress and dwelling, usually medieval in origin, and often consisting of a keep, curtain wall and towers etc. Identified from a variety of sources including the Staffordshire HER as well as historic and/or modern mapping.
Cathedral Close	An enclosed area of ground immediately surrounding (and including) a cathedral. Identified from historic and modern mapping as well as the Staffordshire HER, documentary references and archaeological interventions.
Cemetery	An area of ground, set apart for the burial of the dead (usually away from a church; churchyards usually incorporated into HCT 'Church or Chapel'). Identified from historic and/or modern mapping and in some cases the Staffordshire HER.

Church or Chapel	Relevant buildings which were constructed for the purpose of worship of any denomination. Areas include the associated burial grounds (cemeteries) where applicable. Identified from historic and/or modern mapping and the Staffordshire HER where recorded.
Commercial and/or Administrative	Buildings which were purposely built for commercial (rows of shops, shopping precincts) and/or administrative such as office blocks (cf. also 'Public Buildings'). Any complex larger than these cf. HCT 'Large-scale Commercial or Industrial Sites'). Identified from historic and/or modern mapping.
Detached Property	Domestic buildings which are or traditionally isolated from other settlement either because they are surrounded by their own gardens or parks or function (or originated) as farmsteads
Drained Wetlands	The field patterns in these areas can be small or large, irregular or rectilinear. However, most of their boundaries will be defined by the course of drainage ditches, and some field boundaries may also follow water courses. The drainage of wetlands was underway in Staffordshire by the 16th century. Some drained wetlands were brought into cultivation during the later 18th century and drainage operations and improvements continued into the 19th and 20th century.
Educational Facility	This category defines all educational buildings from schools and colleges to Adult Education centres (where recognised) on historic and/or modern maps including their playing fields. (It does not include medieval colleges cf. Religious House).
Floodplain Marshes	Former areas of poorly, drained marshy ground in floodplain locations. They will either be marked as such on historic maps OR whose existence can be inferred from areas of intensive floodplain drainage.
Gardens or Agriculture	Evidence from archaeological work for cultivated land representing either a garden or evidence for agricultural activities
Green	Large open area usually associated with access points into the towns and probably originated as holding areas for animals coming into the market or as (or developed into) informal marketing areas.
High Status Site	Those sites which do not fit the definition of 'Castle' or 'Bishops Palace', but which were the seat of the lord of the manor or other high official. Includes moated sites for example.

Hospital	This category defines any purpose-built building associated with the care of the sick and/or elderly. It includes small complexes such as almshouses (and their grounds) through to large hospital complexes and their grounds/car parks constructed from the later 19th century through to large late 20th/early 21st century medical facilities. Those hospitals which originated as 'Union Workhouses' will be defined by the latter where those purpose-built buildings clearly survive.
Industrial	This category defines those industrial sites comprising individual works or factories and small industrial estates. Often indicates areas of earlier industry where the character Larger areas given over to this use comprising modern units in particular are defined under 'Large-scale Commercial or Industrial Sites'.
Irregular Historic Plots	Those property plots lying within the historic core or on its edges which are not clearly planned (as defined by 'Burgage Plots'), but whose location, form and buildings suggest that they are early origin (and possibly indicate even pre-medieval town planning). Also apply to those discrete settlement areas lying well away from the town centres which may have originated at any date usually upto the early 20th century.
Large-scale Commercial or Industrial Sites	Defined by large (usually late 20th/early 21st century) developments represented by supermarkets, warehouses, distribution centres or large areas covered by retail parks, industrial units etc.
Major Road Scheme	Defined by major road creation and/or alteration including junctions.
Market Gardens or Allotments	Defined by areas marked on historic mapping, modern mapping or shown on aerial photography to be allotments. Market gardens refer to large areas (indicated usually by orchard trees) as having been used for the commercial growing of fruit and vegetables.
Market Infill	Defined by buildings which have clearly been built upon part of a once much larger market place within the core of the historic towns.

Market Place	The commercial heart of the historic town usually defined by the widening of the street or by a triangular or rectilinear open area where temporary markets were (and often still are) erected. Can also define the location of annual fairs where these may be defined by the same criteria as above. Also used for the location of other markets away from the historic core most notably cattle markets (often of 19th century date).
Mill and Pond	Defined by a watermill and the extent of its mill pond (if applicable).
Miscellaneous Floodplain Fields	Fields on river floodplains that do not fall into any of the more diagnostic categories. Fields in these locations will traditionally have been used as meadows and may possibly preserve the remains of water meadows (should be checked against HER).
Mixed Woodland	Areas marked as mixed woodland on both historic and/or modern mapping.
Municipal Park	The category incorporates those parks that were laid out by local bodies (including councils or individuals) for the recreation of the inhabitants. Features of the park will include principally gardens and pathways, but also playgrounds, and sports facilities particularly tennis courts. Structures, such as bandstands and shelters may also feature. The majority will date from the later 19th century onwards.
Open Air Car Park	An area of land which has been laid out as a car park, with parking bays defined. May be permanent features of the townscape.
Other Commons	This category has been incorporated from the HLC project, but as part of the EUS has been used to describe all areas of 'common land' including heathlands and moorlands.
Other Extractive Works	Any extractive industry (exclusive of 'Brick and Tile Works', but including individual clay pits).
Other Non-Residential Development	Defined by any other buildings (often purpose-built), which have not previously been residential such as hotels, health centres, multi-storey car parks, bus stations etc
Other Parkland	Other forms of parkland, recreational or ornamental landscapes that are not 'Sports Fields' or 'Parks and Gardens'. This definition includes golf courses.

Other Settlement	This category, usually applied to 'Previous Types' where earlier settlement is either conjectured or indicated by map or archaeological evidence to have existed in a particular area. Its form and origin are usually unknown.
Other Small Rectilinear Fields	Areas of small rectilinear fields that cannot be assigned to one of the other HCTs (or HLC Types).
Paddocks and Closes	Small irregular fields distinguished from any other small fields (in the HLC and EUS Projects) by their locations associated with settlement. In many cases these probably represent small meadows and paddocks.
Parks and Gardens	This category includes all parks and gardens identified either from the present landscape or from historic mapping. These can include 18th/19th century landscape parks (sometimes incorporating elements of earlier parklands/deer parks) and large gardens/small parks associated with 19th century 'Gentlemen's Residences' (small country houses).
Piecemeal Enclosure	Piecemeal enclosure can be defined as those fields created out of the medieval open field system by means of informal, verbal agreements between landholders who wished to consolidate their holdings. These areas have field patterns comprised of small irregular or rectilinear fields. At least two boundaries have 's-curve' or 'dog-leg' morphology suggesting they follow the line taken by the eight-ox plough team within the open field system.
Planned Enclosure	These areas are characterised by either small or large fields that share very straight boundaries, giving the whole field system a geometric, planned appearance. These systems were laid out by surveyors during the 18th and 19th centuries; sometimes associated with the Enclosure Acts of the period.
Prison	This category defines prisons as marked on historic and/or modern mapping.
Public Buildings	The category covers a wide range of buildings (non-domestic) to which the public have access or where civic bodies are located e.g. libraries, civic centres, town halls, law courts and leisure centres.
Railway Station/Sidings	This category defines railway stations and large sidings as marked on historic and/or modern mapping.

Religious Hospital	Complexes for the care of the sick, aged and infirm established prior to the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the mid 16th century and includes lepers hospitals.
Religious House	The buildings or site of any house which had been built for religious orders (monasteries, priories and friaries).
Reservoir	Artificial bodies of water created specifically for the purposes of water supply for either the canal system or for human consumption.
Small Irregular Fields	Areas of small irregular fields that cannot be assigned to one of the other HCTs (or HLC Types).
Sports Fields	Modern sports fields marked on historic and/or modern maps, but also areas marked as 'Playing Field', 'Football Ground', 'Rugby Ground', 'Cricket Ground' or 'Bowling Green' for example or where aerial photography suggests that sport is the dominant activity of the land (cf. 'Other Parkland'.
Squatter Enclosure	Areas of very small irregular or rectilinear fields that probably result from the enclosure of former common land. They may be associated with small cottages (extant or ruined), networks of lanes and access tracks and areas of former extractive or other industry.
Suburb	Areas of outgrowth from the town which have their own distinct character[1]. Prior to the 19th century this tended to be unplanned with little uniformity, but from this century onwards there is often a uniformity representing a distinctly residential character often associate with their own road networks, although some particularly earlier suburbs are located as 'ribbon development' along pre-existing routes.
Suburb – Terraces	Those suburbs (as defined above) where whose uniformity is represented by terraced houses of 19th and early 20th century date.
Suburban Redevelopment or Infill	The term relates to the redevelopment or infilling with residential properties within areas now generally defined as 'Suburb' or other earlier settlement for instance where a towns suburbs have subsumed earlier independent settlements. They may relate to the redevelopment of suburban areas, but more likely indicate the location of earlier settlement (or sometimes industry) as shown on historic mapping.

Town Redevelopment or Infill	The term relates to any redevelopment or infilling which has occurred within the area defined as the historic town core. These sites indicate an earlier historic character existed within the townscape.
Undefined Activity	Where previous archaeological works have indicated human activity within a particular period (usually relating to early medieval) but where the evidence is too scant to determine the nature of that activity.
Utilities	Buildings and structures which provide services principally 'Telephone Exchanges', 'Pumping Stations' and 'Sewage Works'.
Vacant Plot	Those areas, usually within the larger town centres, where buildings have been demolished, but the land is awaiting redevelopment.
Workers Cottages	Those properties, usually of 19th and early 20th century date, which do not conform to the uniformity of the definition 'Suburb – Terraces' and can either clearly be seen to be associated with a particular industry or can be assumed to be.
Workhouse	The surviving purpose-built complexes constructed either as Parish Workhouses prior to 1837 or as the large Union Workhouse complexes constructed after 1837. (It excludes any property which was converted to a workhouse, but was not purpose-built as such).

Red lettering denotes the term derives from the Staffordshire Historic Landscape Character Project (HLC) as a HLC Type.

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Each town report includes a section which details the methodology for the statements of Historic Urban Character for each of the Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCA) which forms the basis of Part Two and is reproduced below. This includes the methodology for assessing the historic values which were based upon English Heritage's document 'Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (2008).

1. Statement of Historic Urban Character

1.1 Definition of Historic Character Types (HCTs)

The HCTs used within the Extensive Urban Survey have been chosen to reflect the townscape character and consequently have differed from those chosen for the broader Historic Landscape Character (HLC).

The HCTs were based upon the current character and upon an understanding of the development of the town as identified within the background summarised in Part One.

The HCTs are dated by period of origin and the over arching periods are broken down as follows:

Early Medieval	410 AD to 1065 AD
Medieval	1066 to 1485
Post Medieval	1486 to 1799
Early 19th century	1800 to 1834
Mid 19th century	1835 to 1864
Late 19th century	1865 to 1899
Early 20th century	1900 to 1934
Mid 20th century	1935 to 1964
Late 20th century	1965 to 1999
Early 21st century	2000 to 2009

Table 1: Periods

1.2 Statement of Historic Urban Character (HUC)

The Historic Urban Character Areas have been defined using the HCT's to identify areas of similar origin, development and character.

Each of the statements of HUC is not static and may need to be enhanced or adapted as new information which alters our understanding and perception of each area becomes available[1].

This is followed by a table covering the Heritage values (which will have been outlined in the 'Statement of significance' paragraph') and a series of recommendations specific to each HUCA.

1.2.1 Heritage values

These values are based upon the guidelines produced by English Heritage in 'Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (2008) and identifies four areas

[1] In line with English Heritage 2008: paragraph 38

for discussion. It should be noted that within each HUCA it is specifically the historic environment which is under consideration and that this judgement is based upon an interpretation of the available evidence. Other individuals or organisations may choose to ascribe alternate values to the historic environment of an area; key to this process of understanding is the degree of transparency by which these judgements are reached.   The scope of this project precludes any analysis of non-heritage values which are equally valid in terms of valuing the character of historic towns.

Evidential value*	The extent to which each HUCA can contribute to an understanding of past activities and how that can contribute to the town's wider history. This can be either legible or intangible within the townscape and as such covers the spectrum of heritage assets from historic buildings or structures to the potential for below ground archaeological deposits*. The extent to which the impacts of the removal or replacement of the heritage assets within each character area will be considered in terms of the effects on an ability for future generations to understand and interpret the evidence.
Historical value	The extent to which the heritage assets are legible within the townscape and how they interact – this can include townscapes/street patterns and individual buildings. Historical associations with events or persons can also add value to the ability of the public and community to engage with the heritage. The extent to which the legibility of the heritage assets has been concealed or altered will also be considered. The opportunities for the use and appropriate management of the heritage assets and their contribution to heritage-led regeneration will also be considered.
Aesthetic value	Addresses the ability to identify how a place has evolved whether by design or the 'fortuitous outcome of evolution and use'. It assesses the integrity and aesthetics of the place through the historic components of the townscape and their ability to enhance sensory stimulation. The aesthetic value also addresses whether the character areas may be amenable to restoration or enhancement to form part of a heritage-led regeneration of the town.
Communal value	Communal values can be commemorative/symbolic, social or spiritual. These values are not easily quantifiable within the scope of this project being subjective to groups and individuals. Consequently in the context of this project the

| | | value merely seeks to address the potential for the heritage assets to be used to engage the community/public with the heritage, not only of each HUCA, but also of the wider area. The potential for each zone to provide material for future interpretation is also considered. |

Table 2: Heritage values

1.2.2 Assessment of value

The aim of applying values of high, medium, low is to **indicate** the likely sensitivities of the historic environment within each zone. The assigned values reflect the current character of the areas and these will alter in response to change. This could include through the results of research contributing to an enhanced understanding of the historic environment; the conservation and enhancement of the environment through positive development and re-development as a result of heritage-led regeneration.

The definition of heritage assets incorporates buildings, monuments (above and below ground archaeology), place, areas, landscapes and townscapes[2].

Evidential value (see * below for regarding archaeological potential)	**High**	There is a high potential for the heritage assets with the HUCA to contribute to an understanding of the history of the town. Archaeological sites are likely to survive (both below ground and above ground fossilised within the townscape) and for new research relating to the nature and origins of the built heritage to enhance the understanding of the development of the town. New insights into the history of the town can contribute to an understanding of the development of towns from the medieval period onwards both within Staffordshire and more widely.
	Medium	There is the potential for heritage assets to contribute to an understanding of the history of the town, but there may be fewer opportunities for new insights to be deduced due to the nature of the heritage assets in question or subsequent changes to the historic character of the HUCA. The potential for archaeological deposits to contribute to an understanding of the development of the town may currently be unclear due to the current level of understanding of the origins of the HUCA. The potential may also be impacted by levels of development.

	Low	There are no or very few known heritage assets. The understanding for the potential for above and below ground archaeological deposits to survive may be affected by the current lack of research within the wider area. Mitigation may still be required dependent upon an assessment of both the nature of any prospective new development and the potential of the individual sites being developed.
Historical value	**High**	The legible heritage assets either dominate or significantly contribute to the historic character of each HUCA. There are strong associations between the heritage assets (both tangible and intangible) within the HUCA that are potentially demonstrable and/or the heritage assets make an important contribution to the history of the wider area. There are often designated sites within or lying adjacent to the HUCA and in some cases these may comprise or include portions of Conservation Areas. The high value is not precluded by some degree of 20th/21st century alterations to the historic character.
	Medium	Legible heritage assets are present within the HUCA, but are not necessarily predominant or they have undergone some form of alteration. Their presence, however, may contribute to an understanding of the development of the character area and/or there are potential associations between assets. Further research may clarify these associations and elucidate the contribution of these assets to the history of the wider area. Even in their present form they do enable the public and community to visualise the development of the area over time.
	Low	There are no or very few known legible heritage assets; where they exist their associations are not clearly understood.

Aesthetic value	**High**	The completeness or integrity of the extant heritage townscape and its contribution to the aesthetics of the zone is significant. There are opportunities to enhance or restore the historic fabric of the HUCA. The HUCAs will often form part of or form the setting to Conservation Areas.
	Medium	The components of the townscape are legible, but there may have been considerable impact by 20th or 21st century re-development of elements of the historic character. It is not possible within this project to discuss whether the modern alterations have positive, neutral or negative impacts upon overall aesthetics.
	Low	The aesthetics of the historic character have been significantly impacted by 20th or 21st century development. It is not within the scope of this project to discuss whether their contributions are positive, neutral or negative within the wider townscape.
Communal value	**High**	Contains numerous heritage assets which could be used to engage the community through interpretation. The heritage assets clearly form part of a wider history of an area which can be drawn into a narrative. There may already have been a degree of interpretation and/or the community/public already has access to at least some of the heritage assets within the zone.
	Medium	The ability for the heritage assets to contribute to the history of the town may be limited by the current understanding, their legibility within the townscape or through limited access.
	Low	There are few known heritage assets which make it difficult to elucidate their history or apply it to a wider interpretation. There is no access or the legibility of the heritage assets is negligible.

Table 2: Assessment of Heritage values

*The potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive will not be comprehensively addressed within the EUS project. Due to the nature of the project and its time constraints it will not be possible to model archaeological deposits based upon probability and impacts of current development therefore this project must be seen as a guide to potential but that ultimately the decision as to whether archaeological mitigation is an appropriate measure will be decided as part of the planning process.