

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

WELLINGBOROUGH

Glenn Foard & Jenny Ballinger

Funded by English Heritage

©Northamptonshire County Council
2000

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	3
BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT	4
SUMMARY	6
I DESCRIPTION	8
Topography& Geology	8
A PRE MEDIEVAL	8
B MEDIEVAL & POST MEDIEVAL	11
1.0 Historical Development	11
2.0 Topographical Development	12
3.0 Thematic Analysis	15
C INDUSTRIAL	32
1.0 Historical Development	32
2.0 Topographical Development	34
3.0 Thematic Analysis	35
II ASSESSMENT	45
A Pre Medieval	45
B Medieval & Post Medieval	45
C Industrial	52
III RESEARCH AGENDA	55
1.0 Medieval & Post Medieval	55
2.0 Industrial	55
IV STRATEGY	57
1.0 Existing Designations	57
2.0 Management Priorities	58
Bibliography	61

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Figure 1: Location of Wellingborough (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 2: Wellingborough Topography & Geology (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 3: Wellingborough Plan Components (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 4: Wellingborough in 1771 (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 5: Population & Wealth Graph of Wellingborough (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 6: Wellingborough Hinterland (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 7: Location of Wellingborough (Industrial)
- Figure 8: Population Growth of Wellingborough in the Industrial Period
- Figure 9: 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map of Wellingborough (Industrial)
- Figure 10: Growth of Wellingborough in the Industrial Period
- Figure 11: Historic Transportation & Communications Routes (Industrial)
- Figure 12: Wellingborough Survival (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 13: Wellingborough Hinterland Survival (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure 14: Existing Designations in Wellingborough
- Figure 15: Wellingborough Strategy (Medieval & Post Medieval)
- Figure16: Wellingborough Strategy (Industrial)

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

This is one of a series of reports compiled by Northamptonshire Heritage as part of the English Heritage funded Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) of Northamptonshire, which is intended to provide an effective information base and research framework to guide the management of the county's urban archaeological resource. The survey encompasses all urban settlements and others which may have had some urban attributes, from the Roman period to the 1930s. The only exception is Northampton, which is the subject of an Intensive Urban Survey in its own right.

Each report comprises three distinct sections: a detailed description of the town in each major period; an assessment of potential and definition of a research agenda; and a strategy for future management. A consistent approach has been taken in the presentation of the description in each report with detail being presented under each standard category even where this has no direct obvious relevance to the urban aspects. This section has however been presented in the form of a gazetteer with standard headings so enabling the reader to identify those sections of particular interest. Each section of the Wellingborough report is presented in two parts: the first covering the medieval and post medieval town of Wellingborough prepared by Glenn Foard; the second covering Wellingborough during the industrial period, from 1750 to the 1930s by Jennifer Ballinger. The report draws upon research previously conducted by Glenn Foard on the medieval and post medieval towns of the county; from the survey of historic buildings and land use in selected towns conducted by the Archaeology Unit in the late 1970s, and has benefited from the specialist advice of Dr Barrie Trinder on industrial period. Other contributions to the EUS on digital mapping, database input and related work have been made by various individuals including Christine Addison, Chris Jones, Paul Thompson, Rob Atkins and Phil Markham.

The first objective of the report is to determine layout, character and chronology of development of Wellingborough from its rural Saxon origins up to the 1930s. An attempt has been made to identify the various components of the town which are likely to have left identifiable archaeological remains and, as far as practicable, to define the exact location and extent of these buried or upstanding 'monuments'. They have also all been assessed for likely current survival and their potential to contribute to research objectives. The relationship of the town to its hinterland has also been considered and the potential for study of that interaction has been assessed. In this way the report aims to provide a well founded research framework, establishing the current state of knowledge of Wellingborough's history and defining a research agenda which can guide future archaeological investigation within the town. Conservation objectives have also been defined. This report should be viewed as a starting point rather than a definitive study, which it certainly is not. If this report serves its purpose then it will need to be regularly reviewed and substantially revised in future years as archaeological investigations, and hopefully also further documentary research, is undertaken.

Given the limitations of time which inevitably must guide the conduct of a countywide project it has been necessary to limit the depth of investigation. No original archaeological earthwork or other such field survey has been conducted, but all available existing archaeological data has been consulted. Mapping from aerial photographic sources in the Northamptonshire SMR, CUCAP and the NMR has been completed. Although each town has been visited to examine the topography of the town and an assessment attempted as to the general state of archaeological survival, no attempt has been made to

conduct cellar survey comparable to that undertaken for Northampton as party of the Intensive Urban Survey of that town. This is due to the absence of detailed mapped evidence comparable to that which exists for Northampton and the very poor results achieved in 1979 when a cellar survey was attempted in Thrapston and Towcester. Nor has it been possible to examine all documentary sources, even for the medieval period. However, an attempt has been made to assess the overall potential of this crucial part of the record of the urban past and to examine in detail the most documentary important sources. An index has been compiled from various list and indexes in the Public Record Office, Northamptonshire Record Office, National Register of Archives and British Library. Given the vast quantity of documentation, particularly for the last 200 years the limitations in the documentary assessment, especially regarding the industrial period must be acknowledged. Attention has focussed on those sources which might contribute significantly to the reconstruction of the historical topography of the town and to the broader characterisation of the various 'monuments' within the town.

The maps in this report are reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

The archaeological and historical data on the maps is copyright Northamptonshire County Council.

SUMMARY

Wellingborough was an exceptionally large medieval township with a fragmented manorial organisation and complex settlement plan. However it was dominated from before the conquest by the Crowland Abbey manor which was by far the largest of the manors and it was the Abbot of Crowland who was responsible for the foundation of the market and promotion of the settlement as a town in 1201. The location on a major north-south route, from London to Oakham and the north together with the close proximity of the east –west route from Cambridge to Coventry is likely to have had a major influence on its prosperity in the medieval period. The settlement grew during the 13th and earlier 14th centuries, possibly in part by the promotion of the woollen cloth industry, perhaps drawing that production away from the boroughs where there were restrictive practices. However Wellingborough remained less important than the nearby town of Higham Ferrers whose market had been established before 1086 while to the west it was in competition with the county town.

Wellingborough recovered from the recession of the later 14th and 15th centuries as a significant urban centre. Leland, writing in the mid 16th century described Wellingborough as *'a good quik market tounne buildid of stone as almost al the tounes be of Northamptonshire.'*¹ It was described by Bridges as *'a large populous town'* and according to Morton, writing in 1712 *'may fitly be accounted the second Town in Northamptonshire.'*² Tillemans' depiction of the town in 1719 shows a large and intensively built up settlement but with the open fields extending to the very edge of the built up area, the town having expanded at least on the south and east sides to the very edge of the enclosed area.

In the post medieval period the influence of the major road network led to a significant passing trade, reflected in the number of inns and alehouses in the 17th to early 19th centuries, in addition to basic commercial functions serving its immediate hinterland. However the main influence on the town's growth seems to have been industrially based. The woollen industry was still active in the town in the late 18th century and may well represent the continuation of a medieval industry. However by that date boot and shoe production, together with associated leather preparation, had become by far the most important occupation in the town and Wellingborough was at that time second only in the county to Northampton in terms of the number of persons employed in the industry.

Wellingborough remained the second largest town in the county, after Northampton, until it was eclipsed by the rapid growth of Kettering in the last two decades of the 19th century. The main industrial basis of the town in the industrial period was the boot and shoe industry which continued throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, with a particular specialization in the production of uppers. Other industries also thrived in the town and Wellingborough was of importance in relation to the railway network with a large depot located near Wellingborough station. The town had a substantial market and was a thriving commercial centre.

Wellingborough is of greatest significance for the early development of the boot and shoe

¹ Leland, 1907-10 part 1 f.7.

² Bridges, 1791, p.149. Morton, 1712.

industry in the town. The topography of the town is also of interest as the settlement is divided into distinct functional zones to a far greater extent than any of the other towns studied during the Extensive Urban Survey.

I DESCRIPTION

TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY

Wellingborough lies at the junction of the Nene with its main tributary the Ise, which also provided an important focus for the Roman settlement pattern, with the walled town at Chester by the Water (Irchester) lying on the opposite bank of the river less than 3 km to the south east of the medieval town. The medieval township of Wellingborough was large, laying astride a large ridge between minor tributaries of the Ise, but on the south east it extending across a second ridge as far as the Nene. Bounded on the east by the Ise, on the west no such topographical features existed and here the boundaries are more arbitrary.

There are extensive areas of ironstone, especially to the north and east of the medieval town. The valleys have also exposed lesser areas of limestone interspersed with clays. There is only a small gravel terrace, adjacent to the Nene, but larger areas of alluvium on the valley floors of both the Nene and the Ise. The west of the township is however largely covered with Boulder Clay, representing some 40% of the total area. Hence the medieval township had extensive areas of permeable geology providing good agricultural land, substantial areas of high quality river side meadows but also an extensive lay land plateau with far lower agricultural potential.

A PRE MEDIEVAL

1.0 EARLY HISTORY

1.1 Prehistoric and Roman

Almost all the settlements so far identified of all periods are found on or close to the areas of ironstone and limestone which outcrop along the sides of the various large and small streams. In contrast the boulder clay area has produced very little evidence of settlement. This conforms to a countywide preference of past human activity for the permeable geologies but is somewhat overemphasised by the poor responsiveness of the clays to aerial survey. However there was intensive observation of development sites in the 1970s, by Wellingborough Archaeological Society which did recover a few sites on the boulder clay. The pattern is typical of the more general Northamptonshire pattern of Iron Age expansion of settlement onto the clays followed by further expansion or intensification in the Roman period. However extensive areas of urban development and mineral extraction both since the 1970s, which included much of the clay land area, and before the 1970s was not subject to archaeological investigation and hence the picture is very biased, representing only a small part of the full prehistoric and Roman settlement pattern. Moreover the areas of clay land which remain undeveloped have not been subject to intensive fieldwalking survey.

1.2 Saxon origins

A retraction from the clay land in the late Roman or early Saxon period is likely to have occurred in Wellingborough as elsewhere in the county. Three early-middle Saxon sites have been located in Wellingborough township, all on permeable geology. Two lie on the northern edge of the valley of the Swanspool brook in the west of the township and both appear to represent continuity from the Roman period. One of these may have continued in occupation into the medieval period as a separate hamlet

(see below). A third, known from fieldwalking, lies on the township boundary at the southern edge of the township close to the Nene and may be an early Saxon cemetery, having produced several decorated sherds.

The townships along the north and west banks of the rivers Nene and Ise respectively between Northampton and Kettering, with Wellingborough lying at their centre, form a very distinctive group in the county. They present a clear topographical pattern which provides the basis for a model for township and settlement development in the Saxon period. The townships, often in pairs, stretch from the river up onto the boulder clay and usually to the watershed. The pairs generally comprise a 'ton' or 'ing' place-name township against the river and a subsidiary place-name, such as 'wic', 'by', towards the watershed. The latter generally have large areas of boulder clay and may be expected to have contained substantial areas of woodland in the Saxon period. Although the woodland documented in 1086 is clearly an under representation of the actual woodland survival, as has been documented for example at Rothwell in the upper reaches of the Ise valley, it is likely that there was little remaining woodland at that time compared to some other parts of the county. The township boundaries follow stream courses in many cases, which will have to a degree determined the patterning, but the implication is that larger land units were subdivided, possibly in the late Saxon period to create units more appropriate in size for the mixed farming open field systems which were probably introduced across much of the county at that time. Wellingborough has the largest of all the townships, in part perhaps because it lay at the junction of the Nene and Ise, but possibly also because it was not subdivided in the same way as its neighbours to the west. However topographically it has a clear association with Hardwick, the township to the north west, although this may have been linked to Harrowden, to which in turn a holding in Wellingborough was dependent in 1086.³

1.2.1 A Saxon defended site?

The late Saxon estate pattern is less clear but also significant. Earls Barton was the centre of a Saxon estate in 1086 and presumably the ecclesiastical centre, encompassing Great Doddington, Mears Ashby and Wilby but also perhaps at an earlier date having a wider authority. The place-name evidence indicates that Wellingborough, which contained a dependent holding of Great Doddington, may have been the middle Saxon 'burh' to this estate - a defended residence.⁴ Any such defended site may have been in origin an Iron Age hillfort reused in the Saxon period, as is seen at Irthlingborough, while at Guilsborough the place-name relates to an Iron Age hillfort though there is as yet no evidence of re-use in the Saxon period. There is no very obvious topographical location for such a site at Wellingborough, although the irregular, roughly oval plan component at the centre of the town, encompassing the church, vicarage and market place, from which the ground falls away to south and east, presents a possible location. Its area would be of a similar order to that of the northern fort at Borough Hill and to Rainsborough hillfort. Perhaps less likely, and certainly in a poorer topographical location there are the field names Castle Dyke, Berry Moor and Wedgebury towards the south western boundary of the township.

1.2.2 Unnamed hamlet

Apart from the town of Wellingborough itself, at least one isolated medieval hamlet appears to have existed in the township, for during housing development to the north west of the town in the 1970s

³ Foard, 1985, 216.

⁴ Gover et al, 1975, 140.

quantities of medieval pottery were recovered from two adjacent locations. On one of these early/middle Saxon pottery was also recovered from nearby gullies, and a second isolated site of the same period has been recovered further to the east. Although this medieval site was first identified with Wilby Thorpe, that small hamlet in fact appears to lie within the north west corner of the adjacent parish of Wilby or possibly immediately south of Wilby adjacent to Doddington Thorpe. A far better candidate for the Wellingborough site may be the small manor called the Westhall fee (see below).

It is possible that the reference in the 1711 terrier to a furlong at 'Westby Brook' which lay in the west side of the parish to the south of the road to Wilby could also relate to this deserted hamlet.⁵ The existence of a hamlet in this area would help to explain the large size of Wellingborough township, a separate township never being created for it comparable to that seen at Wilby and Ashby. There are problems with this interpretation because the Inclosure Award does not apparently recognise the presence of any old inclosures in this area, which would normally be expected if there was a deserted medieval hamlet. However in the absence of an inclosure map or of the comprehensive reconstruction of a map from the inclosure award, this cannot be stated with certainty. It is possible that land was re-incorporated into the open fields after desertion but this would be very unusual.

1.2.3 Appleby?

Consideration must also be given to the 13th century references to Galfridus de Apelby (1241), and Henry de Appelby (1292), who it has previously been suggested came from Appleby in Leicestershire, the nearest village of that name⁶. It is however just possible that the Appleby Gate and Appleby Close field names, recorded in 1838, indicate the general location of a deserted medieval hamlet.⁷ The names fall within an extensive area of land in the north western extremity of the parish which at inclosure was ley ground called 'Bareshanks'. This is the topographical location where a hamlet might be expected, comparable to Badsaddle and Wythmail in Orlingbury. However the apparent lack of old inclosures in 1767 is problematic.

If there were no subsidiary hamlets in Wellingborough then one must seek an alternative interpretation of the township patterning. Whichever is the case, the extent and shape of the parish has close parallels in the Saxon and medieval development of Oundle, where there is good documentary evidence for an extensive forest area in the north western part of that parish, situated on boulder clay, over which there was a major phase of woodland clearance in the 12th and 13th centuries.

1.3 Saxon and medieval village of Wellingborough

The apparent complex plan form of Wellingborough is also potentially significant, mirrored to a degree by the pattern seen at Earls Barton, with several distinct foci, several apparently associated with greens forming the nodes within the road system. Despite the likely poor survival of archaeological evidence within the settlement and the fact that research questions regarding such complex settlement patterns may be best addressed in other less heavily developed settlements, the very unusual nature of the plan form for a township in the heart of the Nene valley may justify very limited investigation to establish the date of origin of the various foci, to establish their date of origin.

⁵ NRO, Box X713, HF 39.

⁶ Gover et al., 1932, 140.

⁷ Palmer and Palmer, 1973.

B MEDIEVAL & POST MEDIEVAL

1.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Saxon origins of Wellingborough are wholly unknown, but in the late Saxon and medieval period it was dominated by the Crowland Abbey manor, which was by far the largest of the manors. The township was exceptionally large in comparison to most other medieval settlements and the extent of the agricultural land in part explains the large size of the medieval settlement. The complex plan form of the settlement may relate to the presence of several small manors in 1086 in addition to the Crowland manor.

It was the Abbot of Crowland who was responsible for the foundation of the market and promotion of the settlement as a town, which probably began with the granting of a market charter in 1201. The location of the settlement on an important north-south route, from London to Oakham and the north together with the close proximity of the east-west route from Cambridge to Coventry is likely to have had a major influence on its prosperity in the medieval period. The settlement grew during the 13th and earlier 14th centuries, possibly underpinned in part by the woollen cloth industry in addition to the commercial marketing functions serving a local hinterland. It is likely that the woollen industry grew at the expense of the longer established boroughs but, as with Kettering the town never gained any special freedoms. Indeed it seems likely that the success of the town was in part due to the lack of restrictive practices imposed in the boroughs by the guilds and it may be the expansion of the industry in settlements like Wellingborough that led to the later 13th century decline of the industry in Northampton, Stamford and other major boroughs. However Wellingborough remained less important than the nearby town of Higham Ferrers whose market had been established before 1086 while to the west it was always overshadowed by the county town. Neither did it gain the full range of urban attributes seen in some other urban settlements. Not only did it never gain burgh status, neither did it acquire a monastic house or hospital, nor did it ever acquire a second church or chapel despite the size of the settlement. In this it was like Oundle and Kettering, both also owned by major religious houses, who siphoned off such wealth to the mother house. However in the later medieval period there were a number of wealthy persons in the town who founded and endowed chantries in the church.

Wellingborough recovered from the recession of the later 14th and 15th centuries as a significant urban centre. Leland, writing in the mid 16th century described Wellingborough as *'a good quik market toune buildid of stone as almost al the tounes be of Northamptonshire.'*⁸ It clearly benefited greatly from the changed economic environment of the 16th and 17th centuries. Thus we find it described by Bridges as 'a large populous town' and according to Morton, writing in 1712 *'may fitly be accounted the second Town in Northamptonshire.'*⁹ Tillemans' depiction of the town in 1719 shows a large and intensively built up settlement but with the open fields extending to the very edge of the built up area, the town having expanded at least on the south and east sides to the very edge of the enclosed area.

In the post medieval period the influence of the major road network led to a significant passing trade,

⁸ Leland, 1907-10 part 1 f.7.

⁹ Bridges, 1791, p.149. Morton, 1712.

reflected in the number of inns and alehouses in the 17th to early 19th centuries, in addition to basic commercial functions serving its immediate hinterland. However the main influence on the towns growth seems to have been industrially based. The woollen industry was still active in the town in the late 18th century and may well represent the continuation of a medieval industry. However by that date boot and shoe production, together with associated leather preparation, had become by far the most important occupation in the town and Wellingborough was at that time second only in the county to Northampton in terms of the number of persons employed in the industry.

2.0 TOPOGRAPHICAL DEVELOPMENT

Wellingborough has a complex plan form with a large number of streets and lanes and various distinct ends. Although this complexity almost certainly reflects the fragmented nature of the manorial organisation of the township in the 11th century, the evidence currently available only allows the most cursory analysis of this pattern. Hence it has not been possible to establish the location of most of the lesser manors in the medieval period. The late date of the earliest map, given the substantial expansion of population in the town in the post medieval period, makes analysis of the plan form particularly difficult as some of the tenement rows may represent late tenement layout along existing lanes or even in some cases new closes taken from the open field.

It would appear valid to use the plan form seen in the late 18th century as a basis for the analysis of growth, as the layout of the town seen in 1771 is likely to broadly reflect the extent of the late medieval town. Though some limited enclosure and expansion of occupation into these may be expected to have occurred in the post medieval period, especially given the growth of the town from the 17th century onwards, there are late medieval references to tenements in most of the streets and ends seen in 1771: le Gold Strete, le Westend, Buckwell End, the lane leading to Buckwell End, le Broadstrete, St John St., le Estend, Skitreden Croft, the market place and le Brookend.¹⁰ In contrast the antiquity of the division of the town into four 'Quarters' has not been determined. They can be mapped from the 1777 survey and are first recorded in 1544-5 when the east, west and nether end quarters are mentioned.¹¹

The core of the town lies on a gently sloping area of Northampton Sand and Ironstone. To the north west Broad Green, Buckwell End and Gold Street lay on Boulder Clay. To the south east on the slopes of the valley of the Swanspool Brook the settlement is on Upper Lias Clay. In the core area the Crowland manor and two rows of tenements fronting either side of the Market Hill running east from the manor may have been the primary component of the Crowland manor. The market place (see above) may have been laid out over a number of original tenements on the north side of the road. However encroachment, probably in the medieval period, has isolated the manor behind a tenement row fronting onto Silver Street and Sheep Street. The positioning of the church and vicarage in relation to the main manor is difficult to explain.

The probable development of the Sheep Street, Silver Street, High Street alignment as a nationally important road in the medieval period (see above) seems to have significantly influenced the

¹⁰ Court Rolls, WRO, CR 1886/688-713.

¹¹ VCH Notes: PRO, SC2 pt.1, 195, no.94.

development of the town whereas the roads running east to Thrapston and west to Northampton had a lesser influence, drawing significant but less extensive areas of settlement.

Sheep Street appears to represent an expansion of the town along the London road. The tenements fronting west onto Sheep Street at its north east side were clearly created through the subdivision of a pre-existing tenement which had fronted north onto Market. On the west side of the street the tenements have been inserted between the road and the Crowland manor, though it is unclear whether they represent medieval encroachment onto a much wider road or, perhaps more likely, land taken out of the manor site. St Marys End, probably '*le Brookend*' in the 15th century, seems to represent a further expansion across the Swanspool brook. It is unlikely that it was a separate early settlement connected by the expansion along Sheep Street, for it has the character of ribbon development along a major road, lying as it does in an otherwise poor location on clay geology. Settlement may have reached this area by the mid 13th century when a certain Philip Attebrok is recorded.¹²

Two other areas of tenement development, in the West End and East End, was along the roads leading to Northampton and Thrapston respectively. Other tenement expansion seems to have taken place, presumably over open field land in Gold Street which contained tenements in the 15th century.¹³

In the northern part of the settlement the dominant feature is the High Street, probably '*le brodestrete*' in the 15th century,¹⁴ which ran north to Broad Green, probably '*le brodeland*' in 1590.¹⁵ North from Freemans Lane, the tenements primarily front onto the High Street. Running at right angles to the main street are a series of subsidiary lanes, five on the east side and one on the west, which run back to narrow, irregular lanes which lie parallel to the High Street. The lanes joining High Street appear to be secondary for it is only along St John Street, '*Rakelers lane*' in 1467-8,¹⁶ that there is clear evidence of rows of medieval tenements lining both sides of the road. It is however likely that this represents a secondary expansion for at its western end the tenements fronting the High Street appear to take precedence. It is possible that population decline in the later medieval period could have been responsible for the desertion of tenements in some of the lanes. On the western side of the High Street another secondary development would seem to be the properties fronting onto Jacksons Lane, which may be the '*lane extending towards Bucknell Ende*' in the 15th century, in which at least 1 tenement is mentioned.¹⁷

On the east side of High Street there is a distinct break in alignments of tenement and road alignments towards the eastern end of the lanes, paralleled to some extent by the distribution of tenements and the alignment of croft boundaries, which would suggest that Little Silver Street may have been a separate medieval street with its own tenements. There is far less evidence to suggest that the lane on the west side of the town was fronted by tenements.

There are two greens which formed the focus of road patterns in the north west part of the town,

¹² Gover et al 1932.

¹³ Eg: Court Roll for 2 Aug 1463-4, WRO, CR 1886/688-713.

¹⁴ Court Roll, 1 Apr. 1466-7, WRO, CR 1886/688-713.

¹⁵ NN&Q, VI.

¹⁶ Court Roll, 3 Nov. 1467-8, WRO, CR 1886/688-713.

¹⁷ Court Roll, 3 Nov. 1467-8, WRO, CR 1886/688-713.

Broad Green and Buckwell Green, both perhaps significantly lying on Boulder Clay. Although the majority of tenements in the Upper Town front onto Broad Street and Broad Green, the other small greens may represent lesser foci of settlement, despite the fact that only property together with a single croft called a spinney is recorded in Buckwell End in the 15th century, for this may merely reflect the fact that very few properties belonging to the Crowland manor lay in that area.¹⁸ At two other locations where roads converge there is topographical evidence which might indicate the former presence of greens: the '*Middle Row*' in West End, an island of development where two roads join; and around '*Skiterdene*', which lay on clay in a north-south slade, where there were numerous small and irregular shaped tenements at the junction of three and possibly originally four roads or lanes.

This north western area of the town, around Buckwell End and Broad Green, may represent the second main focus of the settlement based on the Leicester manor. From the 1770 rental the approximate location of many tenements in the Irthlingborough manor (Leicester fee) and former Crowland manor can also be established. None of the Irthlingborough manor tenements lie in the Market Quarter of the town, while the majority (16) lie in the Upper End Quarter, with another smaller group in the East End Quarter in Skitterdine and Hog Hill. None of the Earl of Warwick's Crowland manor tenements lie in the Upper End Quarter, while in the Hatton manor, which represents primarily the remainder of the Crowland manor, few tenements lie in the Upper End Quarter and almost none in the Buckwell End and Broad Green areas. Hence Buckwell End and Broad Green would appear to be the focus of the manor held by the Earl of Leicester in the 12th century. Such locations on clayland would however be unusual locations for early settlement and so may have originated as greens serving grazing function around which settlement later gravitated in the late Saxon or medieval period.

¹⁸ Court Roll, 21 Oct.1467-8, WRO, CR 1886/688-713

3.0 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

3.1 MANORIAL

The manorial organisation is extremely complex and has not been fully resolved either in terms of the descent of the manors from 1086, or in the location of the manor properties and their capital messuages within the township. The picture is complicated further by the inter-relationship between several of the holding and the adjacent parishes of Wilby, Hardwick and Great Doddington. The picture presented here is based on the VCH discussion with a limited amount of additional information from other sources, but it must remain to some degree conjectural. With so many complex interchanges of property over the centuries it may never be possible to effectively reconstruct the distribution through the town of the medieval tenements belonging to the various manors. The Crowland manor was always by far the largest but there were in the later 11th century at least three other manorial holdings in Wellingborough. The relationship of these manors to the various 'ends' of the settlement may provide a vital key to the understanding of the evolution of the town and in particular its complex plan form.

3.1.1 Manors

3.1.1.1 Crowland manor

The main manor is said to have been granted to Crowland Abbey as part of the foundation endowment c.948 AD by Turketelus son of Earl David, a clerk and intimate of leading churchmen of the period, and the benefactor who refounded the Abbey in the mid 10th century.¹⁹ In 1086 the Abbey held 5.5 hides in Wellingborough and this remained with the Abbey until the dissolution. During the medieval period several properties were added to this manor: half a virgate granted by Hugh son of Norigot in 1199, which may as we have said be identified with the 'Westhall fee' (see below), and in 1236 two virgates built up by purchase on the monks' behalf by William de Pounteyse.²⁰ In addition to this, the Abbey's account rolls for Wellingborough include reference to land in Hardwick, and in this context it may be significant that in 1086 Hardwick was split between the Hamfordshoe hundred in which Wellingborough lay, and the Orthingbury hundred, within which Hardwick was later located.

The Abbey manor passed to the Crown at the dissolution and was given to princess Elizabeth. In 1573-4 part was acquired by Sir Christopher Hatton. It was in 1616 divided between Hatton and Robert, Earl of Leicester. Hatton also acquired the tenement and virgate which St Andrews priory had held in Wellingborough, and the Irthingborough College manor. The property remained divided thus until the 19th century.

3.1.1.2 Countess Judith's lands

In 1086 Hugh held half a hide in Wellingborough from Countess Judith. He also held another half hide in 'Waletone' in Hamfordshoe Hundred which might have been in Wellingborough. Gilbert also held half a virgate from Judith, but this land was assessed with the adjacent vill of Gt. Doddington. This land held of Countess Judith is the 3 great virgates recorded in the later 12th century held by Nicholas de Cogenhoe of the fee of David, King of the Scots. Of this 1 tenement with 1 virgate was granted to St Andrew Priory while the rest descended to William de Raunds who in 1329-30 held a

¹⁹ Sawyer, P.H., 1968, *Anglo Saxon Charters*, 538 & 481. Both considered spurious. *Wrest Park Cartulary*, fol.232(5). Raban, 1977.

²⁰ Raban, 1977.

manor and liberties in Wellingborough.²¹ The de Raunds property in Raunds and presumably also in Wellingborough passed to the Gage family in the 15th century, for at that time the Gages held a manor in Wellingborough. This was combined with the Hatton manor in 1655. At that time the Gages manor comprised no more than 1 messuage, 7 cottages, 1 toft together with 2 gardens, an orchard, 20 acres of field land, 10 acres of meadow and 21 acres of pasture, together with 30/- rent.²²

3.1.1.3 Earl of Leicester's fee

The single hide held by the Earl of Leicester in the later 12th century appears not to have been recorded in 1086, but in 1285 it is said to have comprised 1/6th of the township.²³ Part of the holding appears to have passed to Henry Huddlestone in 1487-8 and thence to Elizabeth Cheyne, who held the property of the manor of Leicester as a parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster. Cheyne's fee held in 1720 by George Wentworth and previously by Thomas Roane. In 1837 both the Warwick and the Hatton portion were reunited in the Vivian family.²⁴

In 1382 John Piel held property from the Earl of Leicester's manor and granted part of this to the College at Irthlingborough. In 1350 Piel's property in Wellingborough included a water mill, rents and various free and bond tenants.²⁵ At the dissolution the Irthlingborough manor paid 3/4d rent to *'the Duchy'*, for by then the Leicester property was held by the Duchy of Lancaster. This Irthlingborough College manor passed at the dissolution to Hatton to be joined later with his part of the Crowland manor. The *'Irthlingborough manor'* otherwise called the *'Dutchie Mannor'* appears however to have maintained its independence into the 18th century,²⁶ and its properties can be partially located with the town on the evidence of the 1770 rental, which gives details on each holding from the court rolls of the previous 50 years. In 1664 there were 55 tenants in the Duchy manor and 106 in the Warwick portion of the Crowland manor, although many of the same names appear in both lists. In the 1770 Rental, of 58 tenements recorded 39 are assigned to one or other manor, that is 25 to the Irthlingborough manor, and 14 to the Warwick Crowland manor.

3.1.1.4 Westhall fee

In 1086 Norigot held 1 virgate in Wellingborough from the Bishop of Coutances, the jurisdiction of which belonged to the Bishop's manor in Harrowden. Norigot also held a manor in Harrowden.²⁷ Half a virgate was granted to the Abbey in 1199 by Hugh son of Norigot.²⁸

Norigot's holding has been identified with the Westhall fee, a small manor held by Crowland Abbey at the dissolution and in 1539-40 let out to farm to John Peke. However in 1580 the Westhall lands were far more extensive, comprising 5 yardlands.²⁹ The property held by Christopher Hatton in 1589-90 included *'all that the farme and all and singular the lands and tenements and hereditaments*

²¹ VCH notes: Cal. Charter Rolls, vol.4, 1327, 41.

²² VCH notes: Feet of Fines, CP25(2) bundle 582.

²³ Feudal Aids, IV, p.16.

²⁴ Cole, 1837.

²⁵ O=Connor, no.93-99 & 247.

²⁶ WRO, CR1886/7353.

²⁷ Domesday Book, f.220d.

²⁸ Salzman, 1937, 139.

²⁹ VCH notes: PRO, E134, 22 Eliz no.7.

called *Wastell fee*’ with appurtenances and rent of the tenants of that fee.³⁰ The Westhall fee descended with the Hatton portion of the Crowland manor for in the 17th century rental of the Hatton manor there is rent of £14 from the two halves of ‘the Westhall Land’.³¹ Although it is possible that by the later 18th century this land was no longer considered a separate part of the estate, it may be significant that no reference is made to the Westhall Land in the 1771 survey of the Hatton portion of the town, perhaps suggesting this land was outside the main settlement.

3.1.1.5 Guild lands

The ‘town lands’ administered by the Feoffees in the 18th century and which were the endowment of the school, can be identified with the medieval Guild lands, and can be tentatively assigned to the Crowland manor, for in the 1392 foundation charter the Abbot of Crowland gave licence for four of his tenants to ‘*draw revenue from certain dwellings and lands in Wendlyingburgh, appertaining to the (monastery)*’ for the foundation of the Guild.³² In 1600 the property comprised 7 tenements and 2.5 yardlands. They are located by the 18th century surveys and can be seen to have been scattered in various parts of the town.

3.1.1.6 Wilby manor holding

In 1720 there was also property in Wellingborough belonging to the manor of Wilby for which no medieval antecedent has yet been found.

3.1.1.7 Rectory manor

The advowson of Wellingborough had probably lain with the Crowland manor since before the conquest and in the medieval period they appropriated the rectory. In 1539-40, following the dissolution, the rectory was let out to farm together with the rest of the manor to John Peke. At that time, in addition to the Great Tithes, it included the ‘*Tithe Barn and Granary near the gates of the manor*’, presumably represents the surviving tithe barn, together with ‘*another tithe barn situate in the street of Wendlyingburghe*’. The latter is probably the tithe barn which survived until the 20th century behind buildings on the south side of the junction of Market Street and Cambridge Street.³³ The reason for a tithe barn in the latter position is unclear.

3.1.2 Manorial Appurtenances

3.1.2.1 Manor house

3.1.2.2 Crowland Grange

The only medieval manor site to be securely located is the Crowland Grange. In about 1720 Bridges records that Wellingborough comprised 89.5 yardlands. According to the 1320 survey of Crowland manor 50 virgates in the manor were held by tenants, while about 480 acres was in demesne, which accords well with Bridges’ comment that in ‘Belchier’s time’ that 15 yardlands lay in demesne.³⁴ The

³⁰ NN&Q, IV, 145-9.

³¹ NRO, FH296.

³² Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1392, 75.

³³ NN&Q, VI, 156-164; Salzman, 1937, 136.

³⁴ Bridges, 1791, 2, p.149.

Crowland manor therefore probably represented about 75% of all the arable land in the parish, while the demesne represented about 20% of the total of this. In contrast in 1086 only 1 plough of the total of 12 lay in demesne, that is only some 8%. This might indicate that the development of the Grange as a large demesne farm occurred in the 12th centuries, parallelling the developments on the Peterborough estates, and occurring in response to national economic trends. It would also appear from the various 13th - 14th century documents that the Wellingborough manor had been developed, because of its location, as an important collection and trans-shipment centre in the network of Crowlands estates in the central Midlands.³⁵

Croyland Hall, as the grange was known in the post medieval period, is said to have been built in 1281 by Abbot Richard. At that time it was stated of the manor that *'the gate and one or two windows appear to be antique. And on the left hand of the entrance was an antient granary, lately taken down. The gardens lie on a southern descent to a rivulet called Swanspool. In Meere's close are certain hollows, supposed to have been ponds fed with the springs which the rising ground abounds with.'*³⁶

In 1319 the site of the manor, enclosed with walls and ditches, contained 7 acres 3 roods 6 perches. This accords reasonably well with the extent of the manor as defined in the 1770 rental and 1803 map, though then it was 10.5 acres perhaps implying that a small area had been enclosed from the furlong to the south west in the intervening period. Within the court lay a hall, chamber, kitchen, barn, stable, oxhouse and granary. In addition there were two dovecotes worth 10/- per annum, and a garden of which the fruit and herbage was worth 2/- per annum. Reference is also made to the upkeep of the dairy, the chapel, the bakehouse, the malt kiln, to the thatching of the chancery (*'cancelli'*) and other buildings in the court. The granary appears to have been surrounded by a ditch, on which work was recorded in 1258. The goose house and the sheepecote probably lay outside the court. The main gate appears to have lain next to the barn, for in 1280 reference is made to the mending of the gate next to the barn. This gate presumably lay at the west end of Manor Lane, which is recorded as *'le maner lane'* in 1466-7,³⁷ for in c.1720 it was recorded that there had been *'an ancient grange, lately taken down'* which stood on the left hand side of the entrance to the manor. It has been suggested that the crenellated gatehouse shown in an engraving which purports to be Wellingborough Castle in 1657 in fact represents the gate to the grange, for Cole states of the Croyland Hall that *'that distinguishing characteristic of a castellated edifice - the gateway, referred to by Bridges, has been swept away'*.³⁸ This was certainly a large structure, for the medieval accounts include payments to a tiler for work on *'the great gates'*.

The various references imply the buildings stood around a single courtyard, and two of these buildings survive: the tithe barn, an imposing 15th century structure, and two and a half bays of the Hall itself.³⁹ The majority of the main range appears to have survived into the 19th century for in 1839 Cole states that considerable parts of the halls were only taken down *'of late years'*. Various buildings are shown on the map of 1803, set around two courtyards, with the main range of the manor lying to the south. The surviving Tithe Barn and main range may define the western and southern limits of the

³⁵ Everson 1974

³⁶ Bridges, 2, p.149.

³⁷ Court Rolls, WRO, CR1886/688-713.

³⁸ Palmer & Palmer, 1973. Cole, 1837.

³⁹ Pevsner, 1973, 456.

main court. On the north and east the tenements of the town gives the boundary. The gently sloping valley side to the south is likely to be the site of the medieval garden, for in c.1720 the gardens of the Hall stood here.⁴⁰ A long rectangular pond which survived here in 1803 may represent the southern extent of the court, for Cole claims that a moat surrounded the grange. However the pond may simply represent one of the manorial fishponds.

Mrs Brown observed what she interpreted as the chapel during development in the early 1970's and graves have been discovered outside the hall to the south.⁴¹ The large medieval stone coffin which lies in the modern garden may have been associated with these finds. Unfortunately the evidence has not been published.

After the dissolution the grange was rented out by the Crown to John Peke, and when Christopher Hatton, who had acquired the manor together with the '*scite and capital messuage of the manor*' from the crown, divided the property into two halves in 1616 the grange formed part of the portion which passed to the Earl of Warwick.⁴² In the 19th century the grounds of the Hall were landscaped and terraced laws laid out to the south of the main house.

3.1.2.3 Hatton Hall

At some time following the division of the manor in 1616 a new manor house was constructed on the north west side of Broad Green. Construction may have been soon after 1616 for the listed building is described as probably of the early 17th century, remodelled in the late 17th century. It is a modest house and it has been suggested that it was probably built as a steward's house for the Hatton estate. It is unclear whether the manor house was built on a new site, from land previously peasant tenements or whether it had been the site of one of the lesser manors which had come into Hatton ownership in the late 16th century. A large Hall was built adjacent in 1783, now known as Hatton Hall.⁴³ By 1838 a small landscape park with several plantations had been laid out behind Hatton Hall.⁴⁴

3.1.2.4 Castle

In St Marys End in 1803 there was an area called the Horn Castle with a lane running to it called Castle Lane. The earliest reference so far located is in 1771.⁴⁵ It has been claimed that a castle stood in this area in the medieval period, or in the Castle Fields to the east of this where masonry is said to have been ploughed up in the 1940s.⁴⁶ This is extremely unlikely as it was not an area of old inclosures, and is covered by ridge and furrow showing it was part of the open fields. No medieval reference to a castle has been identified and, as the main manor within the town was held by a monastic house from the 10th century, the claim of a medieval castle must be treated with care, though it could have lain within one of the lesser manors.

⁴⁰ Bridges, 2, 149.

⁴¹ Everson 1974; Palmer & Palmer, 1973.

⁴² NN&Q, VI, 245-9.

⁴³ Listed Buildings list.

⁴⁴ Palmer & Palmer, 1975; NRO map 4204.

⁴⁵ NRO, ML162.

⁴⁶ Cole, 1837; Palmer & Palmer 1973.

3.1.2.5 Fishponds

The fishponds of the grange stood in Meeres Close, which is presumed to be the ears to the south and south-west of the Hall.⁴⁷ A single long pond remained in this area in 1803, while at least one large timber pipe was found in this area in the 1970s during development work, which might relate to the functioning of the ponds in the medieval period.

3.1.2.6 Watermill

3.1.2.7 Corn mills

In 1086 the Crowland manor included two water mills. The two still existed in 1320 when they were worth 11/13/4d per annum. These may perhaps be identified with the two mills called Stapell Mills and East Mill which belonged to the manor in 1539-40 and which continued in use in the 19th century.⁴⁸

In 1350 there was also a water mill belonging to the property in the Leicester fee held by John Pyel.⁴⁹ It is unclear whether this was a different mill to that recorded in the early 16th century on the Cheyney manor, later called 'Little Mills' when held by the Vaux family in 1600.

The Tithe Map of 1847 shows three watermills, Wallis's on the Nene, and Kilborn's and Little Mill both on the Ise⁵⁰.

3.1.2.8 Fulling mill

On the Crowland manor in 1320 there was, in addition to the two corn mills, a fulling mill worth 16/- per annum. Although it is possible that this was one of the three mills later recorded as corn mills, it may have lain elsewhere, perhaps even on the Swanspool Brook, close to the edge of the town and the later dyeworks.

3.1.2.9 Windmill

The first reference to a windmill is in 1583-4.⁵¹ In a dispute of 1674 it was stated that the windmill had been constructed because the lord's mill was not sufficient.⁵² The inadequacy of the three water mills to serve the needs of the town is undoubtedly a reflection of the post medieval growth of the town. In the 17th or early 18th century a further two windmills seem to have been constructed, presumably meeting the growing of a continually expanding town. In 1719 Tillemans depicted two windmills to the east of the north east of the town.⁵³ One of these two mills is depicted on Eayre's map and can be identified with the area north east of the town recorded in 1803 as the site of a windmill, but the other had gone by the time the map was surveyed. In 1838 there was also an area known as Windmill furlong and Windmill Piece to the south west of the town,⁵⁴ where a windmill

⁴⁷ Bridges, 1791, vol.2.

⁴⁸ NN&Q IV 156-164.

⁴⁹ S J O=Connor, 1993, no.93-99 & 247.

⁵⁰ NRO, Tithe Map, 1847.

⁵¹ PRO Sc/2/pt.1, 195, no.97.

⁵² VCH Notes: PRO, E134, Chas II, no.1.

⁵³ Bailey, 1994, p.212.

⁵⁴ NRO, Map 4204.

was depicted on Eayre's map of 1791. Both had gone by 1827 and a new windmill, Rodwell Mill, constructed to the north west of the town.⁵⁵

3.1.2.10 Horsemill

In 1539-40 a horse mill is also mentioned within the town.

3.1.2.11 Bakehouse

A common bakehouse is recorded, comprising four ovens. In 1674 it is stated that the whole town consisted of about 500 families served by 10 common bakehouses.⁵⁶

3.1.2.12 Park & Warren

There is no reference to a deer park in the township in the medieval period,. The presence of a Park Farm in the west of the township in the 19th century may be of relatively recent origin and not relate to a medieval deer park. Had one existed then it would undoubtedly have been recorded in the 13th and earlier 14th century records of the Crowland manor.

3.2 CHURCH

3.2.1 Church of All Hallows

A priest is recorded in 1086 on the Crowland manor indicating the presence of a church in the late Saxon period, but there is no evidence for a parochia. The earliest known fabric is of the late 12th century and the present length of the nave was probably established in that century. In the mid 13th century the tower and probably also the two aisles were added. There were at least three chantry chapels established by the mid 14th century. Major rebuilding in the 13th century and addition of the chantry chapels probably mirrors the towns period of greatest prosperity in the medieval period. There were additions of clearstorey, porch in the 15th century, all reflecting the wealth of the inhabitants of the town in the post medieval period.⁵⁷

3.2.2 Guild of the Virgin Mary

In 1392-3 a guild was founded by several of the tenants of the Crowland manor with an endowment of property in Wellingborough,⁵⁸ although a Chapel of St. Mary already existed in the church by 1329.⁵⁹ In the 1392 foundation charter the Abbot of Crowland gave licence for four of his tenants to '*draw revenue from certain dwellings and lands in Wendlyingburgh, appertaining to the (monastery)*' for the foundation of the Guild.⁶⁰ After the dissolution the property of the Guild went to the support of the school (see below).

3.2.3 Chapels

The only separate chapel recorded in the township is that which existed within the Crowland grange

⁵⁵ Bryant=s Map of Northamptonshire, 1827.

⁵⁶ VCH Notes: PRO, E134, 26 Chas II, no.1.

⁵⁷ Pevsner, 1973, 451. Unpublished RCHME Churches Survey report in SMR.

⁵⁸ Bridges, 1791, 2, p.152.

⁵⁹ NRO Notes: Patent Rolls, 2, ed.III, pt.ii.

⁶⁰ Cal. Patent Rolls, 1392, 75.

(see above).

3.2.4 Vicarage

The Abbots of Crowland held the advowson of the church from the 10th century. The rectory was appropriated in the 13th century and a vicarage instituted. The tenement called the vicarage in the court roll of 1545-6 is not located.⁶¹ The vicarage now lies immediately north east of the church, and although it could represent the site of the medieval vicarage, in the 1771 survey it is described merely as a freehold property. However Cole states that the vicarage House built in 1813, that which survives today, was built '*on the site of an ancient edifice, said to have been an antique thatched building, with dismal low rooms and cells*', implying but not confirming that it too had been the vicarage.⁶²

3.3 MONASTIC & OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS

Because the major manor belonged to a monastic house it is not surprising that no monastic properties were established in Wellingborough in the medieval period, the profits of the manor being diverted to the support of the mother house at Crowland.

3.3.1 Hospital

It has been suggested on very flimsy evidence that a medieval hospital existed in Wellingborough during the medieval period. Firstly, the name St John Street has been pointed out, and was backed up with the discovery in the town of a seal which supposedly belonged to a Hospital of St John.⁶³ The identification of the seal was incorrect, and in fact it merely bore the name of a certain Joan Ball.⁶⁴ Secondly the reference in the 17th century to '*two tenements in St John Street with a cross*' belonging to the Town Feoffees was also given as supporting evidence, and used to identify the location of the supposed hospital, as a stone cross is still set in the wall of a house in the street today.⁶⁵ Unfortunately, this particular property was not the one which belonged to the Town feoffees.⁶⁶ There is no evidence in the Valor Ecclesiasticus that a Hospital ever existed in Wellingborough, and although the street name was in use as early as the 15th century and cannot be explained, in the absence of other substantial evidence this is not sufficient to suggest the presence of a hospital in the town.

3.3.2 Free School

At the dissolution of the chantries a free school was founded and endowed by the townsmen, some or all of the property of the former Guild being granted to support the school. Two schoolmasters and an usher were appointed to run the school and the feoffees were responsible for the endowed lands of the school and for the town lands. The school house dated 1617 lies within the north west corner of the churchyard.

3.3.3 Charity School

A second school was established in the town in 1711 when John Freeman gave a copyhold house in

⁶¹ VCH Notes: SC2 pt.195, no.911.

⁶² Cole, 1837.

⁶³ NN&Q, I,151.

⁶⁴ NN&Q, I, 187.

⁶⁵ NRO, ML.792-4.

⁶⁶ NRO, ML,162.

Oxford Street for a charity school for the poor of the parish.⁶⁷

3.4 TENEMENTS

The development of the market appears to be paralleled by growth within the town itself, although in contrast to Kettering the evidence is limited, and must be treated with care. The main evidence lies in the increase in the assize rent between 1267 and 1322. It is clear from the 1322 Crowland manor account roll that the figures relate solely to the rents of tenants and the rents increase steadily from 30/3/3.75d in 1267 to 38/17/7.75d in 1322. In the few cases where figures are available from consecutive years the increase can be seen to relate to the *'increment of rent'* recorded in the previous year, and these increments are generally of standard sums and suggest a steady increase in the number of tenants. Most are of 4/- and may perhaps be equated with Fiveacremen, while a 3/- increase may relate to a cottage. It must however be noted that the toft sokemen, the main group of tenants without land and hence those who might represent the main group of non agricultural tenants, do not appear in this sequence as the 1320 survey indicates they paid no money rent but owed only labour services. Although one might have expected that the requirement for labour services would not have typically accompanied new urban tenancies, in fact the toft sokemen may have been the main group of artisans in the town, for of the 90 names of tenants recorded in the 1320 survey although only 4 trades are recorded in the name, three of these were Toft Sokemen.

As with rental valuation, so with other statistics on land and tenants, Wellingborough is relatively poorly served. In 1086 the Crowland manor comprised 21 villeins, a priest, 7 bordars and 11 freemen. The other lands in the vill together only comprised 2 (possibly five) freemen, 2 villeins and 2 bordars. This gives a large population by comparison with other Domesday townships but this can be accounted for by the large size of the township.

For the lesser manors no later statistics on the number and types of tenancies have yet been recovered but for the Crowland manor there is the 1320 extent. This records 144 customary tenancies and 4 free tenants with messuages, but this only gives a minimum number of tenants for some had been subdivided by 1320. The tenancies comprised: 7 free tenants (four with messuages) with 2 half virgates, 12 full socmen with 12 virgates, 35 toft socmen each with a toft, 36 villeins and 35 molmen each with half virgates⁶⁸, 9 fiveacremen each with 5 acres, and 17 cottars. A small part of the increase can be accounted for by the acquisition of at least 2.5 virgates from the other manors in the 12th and 13th centuries. There is clearly a significant increase in tenants between 1086 and 1320 in the main manor but in the absence of any intermediate extent or survey, and with the difficulty of relating the various classes of tenants between 1086 and 1320, very little can be deduced from these figures. If the 1086 figures do indeed represent the full range of tenancies, and if the full socmen of 1320 can be equated with the freemen of 1086, and the villeins and bordars with the villeins and cottars, then the main development apart from the increase in the number and range of these agricultural tenants, is the appearance of the toft socmen who, as they held no land, are likely to represent the main urban component of the population.

TENANTS IN WELLINGBOROUGH

⁶⁷ Bridges, 1791, 2, p.153.

⁶⁸ Tenants paying a money rent.

TYPE	1086	1320 ⁶⁹	mid C16th
Free	11 (2 or 5)	7 but only 4 tenements and 6.5v	
Fiveacre		9 with 5a each	fiveacres
Sokemen (Sokna)		12 with 12v	
Toft Sokemen		35	soker cottages?
Bordars	7 (2)	17 (cotsetts)	cottages?
Villeins (Nativi orarii)	21(2)	36 each with half v	warkplacis and warklands?
Molmen		35 each with half v	molands

The tenures of the 1320 survey were still recognised in the mid 16th century when rents for Fiveacre lands, Soker cottages, Molands, free tenants and tenements called Warkplacis and lands called Warcklands.⁷⁰ The Warklands in 1545-6 were at least in part virgate holdings, for reference is made to a tenement called a Workplace and half a virgate of land called Warkeland.⁷¹ The description presumably relates to the labour services due from these virgate tenancies. The limited information available from the 15th century court rolls suggest that the various tenancies were scattered throughout the town.

The 17th century rental of the Hatton manor contains 113 copyhold and customary tenants, 1 freeholder and 6 shops, but these totals presumably conceal a larger number of tenements for the rental values vary from figures of up to 13/- to as little as 2d, suggesting that certain tenants may hold a number of properties.⁷² This is confirmed by a statement in the 1674 dispute that the Hatton manor comprised more than 140 tenants.⁷³ In the same dispute it is stated that the whole town consisted of about 500 families served by 10 common bakehouses. In the 1771 survey the Hatton manor comprised 373 tenements and messuages.

3.4.1 Population and Wealth

In the absence of statistics for Wellingborough for 1301 and 1377 it is not possible to determine the degree or speed of urban growth as defined by population growth in the medieval period. The wealth statistics for 1334 and 1524 suggest a dramatic relative growth in the town in the early post medieval,

⁶⁹ BL, Add.5845, f.18-108.

⁷⁰ 1539-40 account roll, NN&Q, VI,156-164.

⁷¹ VCH Notes: Court Roll, PRO, SP2, pt.1, 195, no.94.

⁷² NRO, FH 296.

⁷³ VCH Notes, PRO, E134, 26 Chas II, no.1.

compared to all other settlements in the county. Population statistics indicate this trend is continued in the 16th and 17th century, the period when Wellingborough became the second town in the county. In 1720 there were above 700 families in the town.⁷⁴ Thereafter the rate of growth tailed off slightly in the 18th century.

3.4.2 Borough / Burgage

There is no record of any burgage tenements within the town.

3.5 COMMERCE

Wellingborough was in the medieval period overshadowed by the towns of Higham Ferrers which was a self governing borough and Northampton the county town whose commercial activity was of a quite different, national order of scale. The town probably served a relatively small hinterland in the high medieval. However it survived the late medieval recession and seems to have grown rapidly thereafter, possibly in part because it was not restricted by the same guild and borough restrictions that Higham Ferrers suffered from. New shops were being constructed in the market place in Wellingborough in the late 14th century. It seems likely that it was in the 17th century in particular that the major shift in fortunes took place between the two towns of Higham and Wellingborough. In the 17th century Wellingborough took over from Higham as the important local corn market.⁷⁵ Unlike most other towns in the country Wellingborough market thrived right through to the present.

3.5.1 Market

In 1201 a grant was obtained by the Abbot of Crowland for a Wednesday market.⁷⁶ The market was clearly successful for in 1275-6 Wellingborough was one of seven places within a 12 mile radius of Northampton in which that borough attempted to get the market extinguished due to the competition it posed to Northampton market.⁷⁷ The market rights were confirmed in 1307 and 1329-30.⁷⁸

Wellingborough market became increasingly profitable during the 13th century, if the income from market tolls is any guide. In 1267 this stood at 6/8d for the year, by 1271 it had increased to 9/-, in 1276 to 10/-, while from 1280 until at least 1314 it was let out to farm for 13/6d. In 1320 and 1322 the total income from the market, from tolls, market court and stalls was 20/-.⁷⁹ In 1542-3 the toll of the market was worth £2/6/8d.⁸⁰

In the earlier 16th century Wellingborough is described as a large market of wool and fells (skins). For example there was the purchase of 4000 fells from Grene of Wellingborough.⁸¹ The mid 16th century

⁷⁴ Bridges, 1791, 2, 149.

⁷⁵ Morton, 1712.

⁷⁶ Bridges, 1791, 2, 149

⁷⁷ VCH Notes: Hundred Rolls, Records Commission, II, 2.

⁷⁸ Calendar of Charter Rolls, vol.3, p.102; Bridges, 1791, 2, 149.

⁷⁹ Calendar of Inquisitions Quo Warranto.

⁸⁰ Dugdale, Monasticon, ii, p.126.

⁸¹ VCH Notes: L&P Hen.VIII, XX(I), 684,756

survey of Chantries mentions the market in the town and suggests it is a good one,⁸² while in 1610 Norden wrote that *'The town is distinguished by the name of Wellingborough Forum - of the Market theare'*. The 17th century clearly saw a major increase in the fortunes of the town for Morton in 1712 that its *'well-traded Market'* had *'been mightily improved within the last Seventy years; as the older inhabitants relate; who also add that it arose out of the Ruins of Higham Ferrers; that as that decayed, this arose.'* Despite efforts to revive Higham and bring back its corn market, and in spite of Higham being closer to Bedford, a *'Towns of mighty Traffic for Corn'*, Wellingborough kept the corn market and Higham declined.⁸³ In 1849 the market was *'generally well supplied and attended'*⁸⁴ and it has continued to thrive to the present day but now being held on a Saturday.

3.5.1.1 Market Place

In considering the plan form of the town the most complex area is that between the Church and Market Hill. As with so many other towns the church is by the 18th century set well away from the market place behind an area of tenements, while the Grange, the other main focus of the town, is also set back from the market behind a row of tenements. The 18th century market place is minute and even the modern market place, created first as a cattle market by the demolition of properties in the later 19th century, is larger. Indeed, so small was the market that in the mid 19th century the various animal markets and fairs had to be held elsewhere in the town: the sheep market in Sheep Street, the hog market near Hog Hill, the cattle market at Broad Green, and the horsefair at the junction of High Street, Silver Street and Oxford Street.⁸⁵ This situation persisted from the 18th century if not before judging from the street names Hog Hill and Sheep Street. In the county only one market place appears to have effectively maintained its earlier medieval form, that at Northampton, and if this is more representative of the size of markets as originally established, one might expect that in Wellingborough the market square, *'le Chepyingstede'* in 1330⁸⁶ was laid out over much of the area between the Grange and the church. This would mean that the main northern and western roads, High Street and Oxford Street, would join to enter the market near its north west corner, the eastern road at the south eastern corner, and the main southern road near the south west corner. On the north side would lie the church and possibly adjacent tenements, on the west the Grange and possibly tenements further north, and on the east possibly tenements fronting onto what later became Church Lane. On the south side lies a very clear block of tenements which may originally have extended as far as the Grange gate, for the tenements fronting on the north eastern side of Sheep Street are apparently a subdivision of one such tenement, while another group may have been similarly altered on the north west side of Sheep Street. This would accord reasonably well with the extent of the Market Street Quarter so defined in 1771. However an alternative interpretation of the town plan might suggest that a more modest sized market place was created simply by clearing away several tenements on the north side of the street later known as Market Street

The market place was probably laid out in 1201 when the market grant was obtained.⁸⁷ This must have involved a substantial replanning of the existing settlement. Undoubtedly the Grange and All Hallows

⁸² Bridges, 1791, 2, 149.

⁸³ Morton, 1712.

⁸⁴ Whellan, 1849, 899.

⁸⁵ Archer, 1927.

⁸⁶ Gover et al, 1932.

⁸⁷ VCH Notes: Charter Rolls, 2 John.

Church, which includes some Norman work⁸⁸ already existed in their present locations before the market was laid out and must have provided fixed points around which the replanning took place. The processes of encroachment onto the market place was probably rapid, but there appears to be little information on this process from documentary sources.

3.5.1.2 Market Cross

A market cross existed in 1638 when a well and pump were said to have been made at the cross.⁸⁹ A new market cross was erected in 1719, at the western end of Market Hill, but this was taken down in 1798.⁹⁰

3.5.1.3 Shops & Stalls

In 1276 John Peke paid 6d new rent for one market stall.⁹¹ In 1322 the profit of the market included income from stalls (selds) but there was no reference to shops.

Shops are first mentioned in the late 14th and early 15th century when there are various references to a tenement and shops in *'le Newe Shoppes'*, implying the presence of shops at an earlier date. The insubstantial nature of some of these structures is clear, for one is described as *'a little shope called a lenetoo lying in the market and adjoining to the new shops there'*.⁹² In certain cases the shops seem to have been appended to or constructed within other properties, as in 1545-6 when there is reference to a *'Tenement called le Sygne of the Tabard.... containing a cotsettum and certain shops...'*⁹³ It seems likely that some shops were converted to tenements by the 16th century for in 1539-40 there was 32/4d rent not only for shops and stalls but also for cottages in the market place.⁹⁴ In the 1589-90 sale of the Crowland manor included the income from the toll of fayres and market *'and all and singular the stalles and shoppes standing and the sheepe pennes att or in the place called the Market place'*. In the 17th century in the Hatton manor there were six shops, of which at least one stood in Burystead lane, while in the Warwick manor one shop is recorded.⁹⁵ The isolated block of buildings on the market in 1771 can perhaps be equated with the *'new shops'*, while the row of buildings on the eastern side of the market may have been in origin a medieval row of shops for properties here in 1771 they are described as *'in the Butchers Row'*.

3.5.1.4 Court House

There is no record of a market house, but by 1849 a Town Hall had been erected at the top of Sheep Street.

3.5.2 Fair

Unusually, Wellingborough did not acquire a fair when a market was founded in the early 13th century. The first rights to hold fairs at Wellingborough were granted to the Abbot of Crowland in

⁸⁸ Pevsner, 1973.

⁸⁹ Markham, 1901, 118, quoting Cole, 1837.

⁹⁰ Markam, 1901, 118.

⁹¹ Page, 1936.

⁹² Court Rolls, 1466-7, WRO, CR 1886/688-713.

⁹³ VCH Notes: court roll, PRO, SC2 pt.1, 195, no.94.

⁹⁴ Account Roll, NN&Q, VI, 156-164.

⁹⁵ NRO, FH 296; WRO, CR1886/7353.

1447, on the feast of St Luke (18th October?) for 2 days and on the Wednesday on Easter week. It may be that the acquisition of rights to hold these fairs was a reflection of the relative growth in importance of the town by the mid 15th century. These rights were confirmed in a charter of 1590 to Hatton⁹⁶ By c.1720 there were three fairs, one having been added on the Wednesday in Whitsun week.⁹⁷ In 1849 the fairs were held on Wednesday in Easter for horses and hogs; Whit Wednesday for horned cattle, horses and sheep; and for horned cattle, horses, sheep and for cheese on the 29th October.⁹⁸

3.5.3 Inns & Alehouses

In 1630 Wellingborough had 29 inns and alehouses, third or possibly fourth in the county (there being no figures for Brackley and Higham in 1630 or 1673-4). In 1673-4 it was again fourth or fifth with between 25 and 29 alehouses. By 1755 its fortunes had clearly risen, with 50 alehouses recorded, probably second only in the county to Northampton, as it remained in 1828 with 31.⁹⁹ There would seem to be three distinct reasons for the number of inns and alehouses in the town in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Firstly it lay on one and adjacent to another major national route; secondly the growth in the population of the town would itself have created a substantial demand. It is even possible that the numbers in the 17th century were influenced to a limited degree by the presence of a spa within the town. However the number of alehouses must primarily be a guide to the success of its market, an indicator of the number of visitors it drew to the town.

3.5.4 Spa

A medicinal spring called Red-Well lay at the foot of a hill in the open field about half a mile north west of the town. It is said to have been '*a water of some distinction in 1626*' and was supposedly visited by the king at this time.¹⁰⁰ Though a role as a spa in the 17th century may have had some impact on the growth of the town it is to industrial production and marketing that one must look for the origins of Wellingborough's success in the post medieval period.

3.5.5 Hinterland

The definition of hinterlands for this study has necessarily been conducted in a relatively simplistic fashion. Firstly using Bracton's theoretical measurement of $6\frac{2}{3}$ miles as the distance within which a new market could be considered to provide direct competition to an existing market.¹⁰¹ An alternative has been calculated using Thiessen polygons. The latter have just taken into account the markets towns which were clearly successful and which survived into the post medieval period. The Thiessen polygons are likely to give a closer definition of the area in which the town had the dominant impact but the former should provide a guide as to the widest hinterland from which the town will have derived the most of its trade. These theoretical constructs will of course have been substantially influenced by the road pattern. They will also have been affected by physical topography and land use, though in Northamptonshire, unlike upland counties, these are likely to have been relatively limited in their impact.

⁹⁶ Goodfellow, 1987, 323, quoting Charter Rolls 92 and Wellingborough Charter.

⁹⁷ Bridges, 1791, 2, 149.

⁹⁸ Whellan, 1849.

⁹⁹ NRO, Quarter Sessions Records.

¹⁰⁰ Bridges, 1791, 2, p.149.

¹⁰¹ The issue is discussed briefly in the Northamptonshire context by Goodfellow, 1987, 305.

Wellingborough lies fairly close to the boundary between the hinterlands of the Domesday markets of Higham Ferrers and Northampton. The market day at Wellingborough was undoubtedly chosen to avoid conflict with those at Northampton and Higham, which were held on a Saturday. Within its hinterland also lay the lesser markets of Findon, which may have been in existence before that at Wellingborough, and Wollaston, granted in 1260, though neither of these appear to have survived the 14th century.

The hinterland encompassed an extensive area of permeable geology in the Nene and Ise valleys, providing high quality agricultural land and encompassing large and prosperous medieval villages.

In addition to the urban hinterland account must also be taken of the hinterland in terms of the estates of Crowland Abbey, for as in other major medieval monastic estates, the economy of the Wellingborough grange was intimately bound into the overall agricultural economy of the Crowland estates.

3.6 Industry

An important medieval source is the 1320 survey which lists 90 names of tenants. Only 4 trades are recorded in the personal names: le Barker, le Porter, le Cartere and le Welwryete. This is a very small number and, even if still indicative of the occupation of the tenant, does not indicate any particular focus of commercial or industrial activity in Wellingborough.

3.6.1 Woollen Cloth

Sheep represented an important element of the grange economy in the later 13th and earlier 14th centuries and we have seen that Wellingborough was in the 16th century an important market for sheep and fells. This agricultural and marketing base may have had a role in the growth of a woollen cloth industry in the town in the medieval period and its continuation in the post medieval. The presence of a fulling mill in the vill in the early 14th century (see above) and of at least one fuller in the town in the mid 15th century,¹⁰² certainly implies the presence of a substantial cloth industry in the town in the later medieval period. The development of the industry in places like Wellingborough and Kettering, in the later 13th and 14th centuries may have been a major cause of the decline of the industry in the major towns like Northampton and Stamford in the later 13th century.

In the 18th century there was also a dyeworks on the southern edge of the town, beyond the Swanspool Brook. In 1803 the close with tenements was known as the Dyeworks while the lane to the south was known as dyeworks lane at Inclosure in 1767. In 1777 there was a dyer working in the town. In the later 17th century there had been a substantial expansion in cloth production in Northamptonshire, and it is possible that this dyeworks owes its origins to this. However the industry is more likely to have persisted from the medieval through to the post medieval and so the dyeworks at Wellingborough may prove to have had medieval origins. A good supply of water was essential for any dyeworks as well as somewhere to dump the waste hence the choice of a location close to a stream but within the settlement was therefore important.¹⁰³ Hence if not on the 18th century site then any medieval dyeworks should nearby as the only other suitable sites within the town are just down stream on at the

¹⁰² Court Rolls, WRO CR 1886/688-713, 23 Nov 2 Ed IV.

¹⁰³ Walton, 1991.

southern end of Sheep Street or in the northern part of St Mary's End. However there could be a cloth production industry even without a dyeworks, for the cloth could be sold on in unfinished form.

By the later 18th century the county's cloth industry was in severe decline but in 1777 Wellingborough still had 27 weavers, 3 woolcombers and a dyer. It seems likely that in these figures we are seeing the later stages in the decline of an industry which had been far more important and may have been responsible for a significant part of the urban expansion in Wellingborough in the post medieval period and certainly had later medieval and post medieval origins.

3.6.2 Other industries

In 1712 there had been a large number lace makers in Wellingborough, a trade producing £50 per week.¹⁰⁴ Though this is not recognised in 1777 this may partly be because the industry was dominated by female workers. In addition to those involved in the woollen cloth industry in 1777 there were a few involved in flax working, but there is no evidence as to the antiquity or earlier significance of this industry in the town.

By the later 18th century the leather industry and specifically shoemaking had taken over as the dominant industry in Wellingborough. In 1777 there were 103 persons involved in shoemaking, 10 curriers and a tanner and a few glovers in the town. The focus on leather was very clear for there were in comparisons just 31 persons listed involved in the woollen cloth industry. The origins and growth of this industry have not been recognised from earlier documentary sources, though it may be expected that, as in other towns, there was a leather industry in the town in the medieval and post medieval period, if only on a small scale. As such the town was the second most important settlement for the boot and shoe industry in Northamptonshire, after Northampton.

3.7 COMMUNICATIONS

3.7.1 Major Routes

In 1675 Wellingborough lay on one nationally important road, from London to Oakham and thus northward, and in close proximity to a second, from Cambridge to Coventry. Undoubtedly their importance originated in the medieval period, as the maintenance of the main bridge crossing the Nene at Wellingborough testifies. This bridge was known in the medieval period as Staplesbridge and in the post medieval as Long Bridge. In 1227 relief of 13 days penance was offered to all those who gave alms for the maintenance of this bridge,¹⁰⁵ and in 1302 repair of the bridge involved the payment of 7/7¹/₂d wages.¹⁰⁶ In 1392 the Guild of St. Mary was established and took on responsibility for the maintenance of Staplesbridge. In survey of 1548-9 the guild had possessions worth 5/6/10, used on the bridge repairs.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Morton, 1712.

¹⁰⁵ VCH Notes: Rotuli Hugonis de Welles, II, 225.

¹⁰⁶ VCH Notes: account roll, 1302.

¹⁰⁷ Chantry Certificates, 35, 16.

3.8 LAND USE

3.8.1 Woodland

There is no record of woodland in the township in 1086 and although limited areas of woodland may well have been omitted it is perhaps unlikely that a large tract of woodland would have been omitted. The presence in 1838 of a Wood Furlong field name in the western extremity of the township on boulder clay may relate to medieval woodland clearance, but more extensive woodland may have already been cleared by 1086. Certainly there is no record of woodland on the Crowland manor in the 13th or 14th centuries.

3.8.2 Open Fields & Inclosure

Almost the whole of the township was encompassed by the open fields but with significant areas of meadow on the alluvial floodplains of the Nene and Ise. As with many other Northamptonshire manors, sheep farming provided a significant component of the demesne economy in the 13th century. This was in part however linked to the presence of extensive fenland pastures around the monastery itself, and indeed . the whole of the wool crop between 1296 and 1306 was sent to the chief shepherd of Crowland.

At Inclosure there were four great fields, an area of leys called Bareshanks and The Ham, comprising in all about 4000 acres.

C INDUSTRIAL

1.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The town of Wellingborough was a large industrial and commercial centre in Northamptonshire throughout the post medieval and later periods. John Bridges records that there were approximately 700 families in the town in the 1720s and by 1801 the population was 3,325 this had risen to 20,357 by 1921. Until 1881 Wellingborough was the second largest town in the county (after Northampton itself), but in the latter part of the 19th century it was dramatically overtaken in terms of population and industrial and commercial success by the neighbouring town of Kettering. The town was the centre for the Wellingborough Poor Law Union, which covered 84 square miles and 27 parishes, and the town was recognised as an Urban District Council in the Local Government Act of 1894, it was also head of a petty sessional division and county court district.

In 1738 a dramatic event occurred which was to effect the development of the town in the industrial period - there was a fire in the town which destroyed a large number of buildings in the settlement. *'It is humbly Represented, that on Friday the 28th day of July 1738 about two of the clock in the afternoon, there happened a most dreadful fire to break out in the town of Wellingborough in the County of Northampton which in about the space of 6 hours burnt down and utterly consumed no less than 205 dwelling houses, chiefly in the best and most trading parts of the town with all the warehouses, barns, stables and other outhouses thereunto belonging, the to the number of 806, as also all the barns, stables and outhouses belonging to 19 other dwelling houses left standing, but miserably shattered and damaged by the flames..... The misery and dislocation of this unfortunate town is acknowledged by all who have seen the dreadful ruins to be beyond expression and even imagination'*.¹⁰⁸ The town was not unique in having a fire of this magnitude; approximately 20% of towns had large fires in the 17th-19th centuries¹⁰⁹. There was a fire in Northampton in 1675. The town would have needed considerable re-building after such a large fire and it is clear that the event would have been pivotal in the development of the town. The fire would not, however, appear to have been too detrimental to the economy of the town in the medium term as the Militia Lists of 1777 indicate a substantial commercial and industrial base. The town had clearly recovered by the valuation of 1839, as there were a large number of public houses, inns, shops and industrial premises.¹¹⁰

The re-building of the town was clearly successful. In 1849 the town was described very positively in Whellan's Trade Directory *'It stands on the declivity of a hill contains some well-built houses, good shops and inns, is well lighted with gas, cleansed and purified by every shower and consists of 4 principal streets diverging from the market place in the centre and forming the roads to Thrapston, Higham Ferrers, Northampton and Kettering'*. Later still the town was described in glowing terms *'The town possess exceptional advantages. The streets are well laid out and public improvements generally have been carried out with great judgement and taste. The main approaches to the town and the Railway Stations are wide and afford ample facilities for increased vehicular traffic..... The reputation of the town as a health resort is irreproachable and it has an ample supply of good water. The sanitary arrangements are excellent, and include a sewerage system of the most approved*

¹⁰⁸NRO, ROP783 Historic Notes on Wellingborough

¹⁰⁹Pers comms Barrie Trinder, University College Northampton

¹¹⁰NRO, ZB 287 Valuation of the houses in the parish of Wellingborough 1839

modern description, and a sewage farm well removed from the town'.¹¹¹ Although this was written in a document specifically designed to promote Wellingborough, the town was certainly well provided for. In the early part of the 19th century there were ideas to create a spa resort for Wellingborough due to the proximity of the Redwell spring in the vicinity, which was believed to have healing properties. The 'Health of Towns Act' was applied to the town in 1855 and the town was well supplied with utilities including gas works, an electric lighting company and a number of sewerage works. One notable feature of the town is that there are a large number of wide, spacious tree lined streets that provided a positive, healthy aspect to the town.

The mainstay of the economy of Wellingborough was based on the boot and shoe trade - 111 men were employed in the industry in 1777 (the largest centre in Northamptonshire) and this continued to rise throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1901 there were 2,384 people employed in the production of boots and shoes. The manufacture of *euknemida* or boot uppers also became a speciality in the town the company Messrs Smith and Gibbs receiving a patent for their manufacture. However the manufacture of boots and shoes was not the only industry to be conducted in the town. There was also a supporting leather production industry, a large ironstone quarrying and smelting industry and a number of iron foundries, several engineering works, an active building industry, two large commercial breweries and three factories for the Ideal Clothiers Ltd. There are also a number of miscellaneous industries including a brush factory, a mineral water factory and a pork pie factory.

Wellingborough was also a large and successful commercial centre throughout the industrial period. In addition to the weekly market, cattle market and regular fairs there were a wide range of specialised shops located in the town. In the 18th-century Wellingborough was one of the main commercial centres in the county with 9 bakers, 4 barbers, 1 bookseller, 11 butchers, 5 drapers, 7 grocers, 1 ironmonger, 4 shopkeepers and 10 tailors. Whellan's trade directory of 1849 recorded, among other commercial outlets, a periodical dealer, china and glass dealer, furniture broker, 4 wine and spirit merchants, 2 confectioners, 6 book sellers, 3 tobacconists and a London Salesman. By 1924 there were 9 fried fish dealers, a toy dealer, a piano dealer and a health food stores in addition to large numbers of the more usual shops in the town. The central business district was located in the core area of the original town. Analysis of the 1851 census indicates that the majority of commercial outlets were located in Silver Street, High Street, West Street, Market Place, Market Street and Sheep Street¹¹². West Street and Market Place were no longer functioning in this role by 1891, but the roads leading out of the town - Oxford Street, Cambridge Street and Midland Road - had a commercial element by this date. Church Street, Knox Road, Cannon Street and Broad Green also had shops listed by this time and the same areas were indicated in Kelly's Trade Directory of 1924.

Transport links clearly had an impact on the development of the town. Wellingborough was off the main coaching routes in the 19th century due to its inaccessibility by road, particularly after the creation of two new roads between Kettering and Northampton and Bedford and Northampton in 1837. However the communication links provided by the River Nene, after it was made navigable in the late 18th century, and later the Midland Railway clearly facilitated the development of the town. There was a dramatic increase in the population after the establishment of the railway station for the town in 1860. The railway was clearly a major employer in the town - the Midland Railway Company

¹¹¹ Parker J.T, Wellingborough as an industrial centre

¹¹² It should be noted that the census data refers to place of residence rather than place of business.

created a depot for the conveyance of coal between Erewash Valley and London which employed 400 men. The town was described in *Railway Magazine* as ‘*a great and important railway centre*’. On a less positive note Wellingborough was the location for one of the first railway disasters when on 2nd September 1898 a crash occurred at the station in Wellingborough when an express train hit a porters trolley on the track and killed six people.

2.0 TOPOGRAPHICAL DEVELOPMENT

The study of the urban topography of Wellingborough is facilitated by the map of 1803, which shows the town in a great deal of detail. There are also two documents that could be used to develop an understanding of the development of the town - the survey of the Manor of Wellingborough in 1771 and the valuation of the town in 1839. There are other maps and a large number of deeds etc, which focus on particular areas of the town. There is, however, a problem in that there are no maps pre-dating the fire of 1738.

John Bridges writing in the early 18th century described the layout and location of the town ‘*Wellingborough is a large populous town, reclining on the side of a hill, at the distance of almost a mile to the north from the Nene..... It is chiefly situated on a red-stone rock, of which the houses are generally built*’. The fire was substantial and destroyed a total of 806 buildings. It is likely, that after a period of decline for the settlement, there would have been considerable financial investment in the town with the development of new businesses and properties, a move towards more durable building materials and the possible re-alignment of some of the streets. By 1803 the town had considerably expanded in size as it was no longer situated one-mile from the river and had become a substantial sized settlement. The main streets in the area were High Street, Broad Green, Silver Street, Church Street, Market Street, Market Square, Sheep Street, Cambridge Street and Oxford Street. The map indicates that the majority of frontages were built up.

The main focus for the initial outward expansion of the town, between 1803 and 1880, was around Midland Road to the east of the settlement. This would appear to be due to the existence of both the river and, in particular, the railway in this location. Large numbers of terraced streets were laid out in a grid between the centre of the town and the Midland Railway Line. These streets were mixed zones with houses; chapels, schools and factories all intermixed within each street. There were, however, other developments including an estate of large, villa style houses to the north of Broad Green, the expansion of Oxford Street and the development of a zone to incorporate cemetery, workhouse and public school to the very south of the town. Further developments in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were primarily the creation of new terraced streets around the periphery of the town; again the main focus of this development was to the east of the core settlement. The development in the early 20th century was far more limited than in many other towns in the county; the major block was to the south of the town in close proximity to Swanspool Gardens. The style of housing and the proximity to the park gave the area a garden city feel.

The town of Wellingborough is distinctive in that the development of the urban topography has led to a number of distinctive zones for commercial activity, key services, development associated with the railway and different classes of housing. These zones are more segregated than other settlements in the Extensive Urban Survey.

3.0 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

3.1 INDUSTRY

Wellingborough clearly had a distinct industrial focus from an early period - the militia list of 1777 indicated that there was a large boot and shoe industry and a supporting leather industry - 111 shoemakers, 10 curriers and a tanner between the ages of 18 and 45 were identified in the lists. There was also a smaller, but still significant woollen industry with 29 weavers and 2 wool combers also identified in the lists. At this time industry clearly dominated in the town with a far greater proportion of men employed in industry than in commercial enterprise or agriculture. Boot and shoe clearly remained the dominant industry, however there were a wide range of other industries, which thrived in the town.

3.1.1 Early industry

There was a substantial lace making industry in Wellingborough in the 18th-century. The Corrie family, who had originated in Scotland, and employed a substantial number of people, dominated the industry. Lace merchants were reputed to have provided the money for the building of the Baptist chapels in Cheese Lane and Salem Lane and the Congregational Church in High Street. Lace making was centred in Gold Street and Sheep Street and a lace school was established in Trafalgar House. In the Militia Lists of 1777, 4 lace makers and a lace buyer were listed. Women, who would have formed the majority of the workforce in the lace industry, were not listed in the Militia Lists. The lace industry died out in the late 19th-century due to competition from machine-made lace elsewhere.¹¹³

3.1.2 Boot and Shoe industry

Shoemaking was established in the town of Wellingborough from the late 17th century onwards. By 1777 there were 111 men between the ages of 18 and 45 being listed as ‘cordwainer’ in the militia lists for the settlement.¹¹⁴ Numbers of people employed in the industry rose steadily throughout the late 18th and 19th centuries with 650 people employed in the trade in 1841, 1,605 by 1861 and 2,834 in 1901. Wellingborough was second only to Northampton for boot and shoe production in the early 19th century, but had been overtaken by Kettering and Rushden by the end. Twenty three boot and shoe factories have been positively identified through mapping and the field visit; of these 15 are still standing (only one is still in use as a shoe factory, three are in alternative industrial usage, seven in other uses and four are standing derelict). The remaining eight have been demolished and replaced with modern developments. A variety of late 19th and early 20th century structures, of both functional and more decorative design, remain. Many of these buildings, particularly those which are currently standing derelict, are vulnerable to re-development. Only a very small proportion of the total outlets associated with the boot and shoe trade survive. Kelly’s Leather Trade Directory of 1893 indicates that there were 19 wholesale manufacturers, 22 makers and warehouse / dealers and 11 boot upper manufacturers directly involved with the manufacture and distribution of boots and shoes. By 1920 this had risen to 33 wholesale manufacturers, 33 makers and warehouse dealers, 18 repairers, 9 closers, 3 factors, 17 upper manufacturers and a heel maker. A large number of these could be accounted for by the factories and industrial buildings / workshops which have been identified, but not linked to any trade. A detailed study of the trade directories, where businesses are identified by

¹¹³ Pers comms Eileen Baxter, Wellingborough Civic Society.

¹¹⁴ This compared to 16 for both Irthlingborough and Raunds 15 for Towcester and Daventry and 14 for Kettering.

address, would allow the identification of far more. The results of the English Heritage survey of the boot and shoe industry will highlight this issue. There are a number of garden workshops located throughout the town, however these tend to be concentrated in particular streets - for example a number of workshops are shown behind houses on Bedale Road, but not in other streets erected at approximately the same time. Garden workshops do not form an overriding characteristic of the boot and shoe industry in Wellingborough despite its early development in the settlement and it is assumed that this is an issue about the survival of these structures.

There were also a number of supporting industries to the boot and shoe industry including cardboard box manufacturers, gold blockers and embossers and by 1920 a sewing machine manufacturer to the shoe trade. Legging and gaiter manufacture was also a particular specialism of the town. 4 were listed in 1893 and 14 by 1920, none of these have been positively identified through mapping or the field visit. It is assumed that these were located in some of the many unidentified factories and industrial buildings.

3.1.3 Leather industries

Wellingborough was also a centre for the leather industries with a wide range of trades recorded including carriers, leather agents, leather dressers and manufacturers, leather cutters and sellers, leather dyers and tanners. Of these, four 'leather works' and two tanneries have been identified by mapping and the field visit. Two have been demolished, two are in alternative uses, one is currently out of use and the large leather works to the east of the Midland Railway line on Mill Road is now in use by 'Alma Leather Co.' although the building appears to be in poor condition. Many of the leather works are likely to be accounted for by the numerous factories and small industrial works, which have not been identified, to a particular industry.

3.1.4 Ironstone quarrying

There was a large ironstone quarrying industry in Wellingborough in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A number of companies worked in the town including Butlin Bevan and Co, Wellingborough East End Ironworks and Quarries, the Dean and Chapter of Peterborough Cathedral, Stanton Ironworks Co. Ltd, Midland Brick Co. There were also individuals including John Clark (Ironstone Merchant and Shoe Manufacturer) and TW Ward working in the area from the mid 19th century onwards. The first quarry to be established in the area was at Manor Farm in 1852. An iron smelting works was established in close proximity to the town in 1852. The first ironworks in Northamptonshire was established in Wellingborough in the 1850s, however there was no connection with the main railway line and the works were phased out in 1870s and a new smelting works was established in Irthlingborough. Full details of the development of the industry can be gained from Tonks¹¹⁵, which also records any remaining features associated with the ironworking and quarrying.

3.1.5 Iron Foundries and engineering work

A number of foundries were established in Wellingborough to utilise the iron raised in the local area. Three foundries have been identified from Ordnance Survey maps - one has been demolished and a new building erected on the site and the remaining two are no longer in use as foundries, but have some of their original buildings surviving and in alternative industrial usage. None of the structures (in their present state) would appear to illuminate a great deal about the iron foundry industry. WF

¹¹⁵ Tonks E, The Ironstone Quarries of the Midlands. History, Operation and Railways Part IV The Wellingborough Area, 1990.

Knight Ltd, Ecclesiastical metal workers were based in Grant Road and later Stanley had a number of commissions with architects in London, America and Ireland as well as in the local area. Their premises have not been positively identified, but there are small industrial works on both these streets.

In the early 20th century a substantial engineering industry developed in the town - seven engineering works were identified in Kelly's Trade Directory of 1924, but only four works were positively identified on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1926. Of these, two have recently been demolished, the house which fronted one of these industrial works is still in existence and the other works (which was also a foundry) has been replaced by a Hindu Community Centre and flats. The remaining two engineering works have some of their buildings surviving and are in industrial usage.

3.1.6 Building industry

Wellingborough appeared to have a substantial building industry with a number of builders, carpenters, joiners, stonemasons, builders merchants, brick layers and plasterers being identified from Trade directories in the period. Three individual brickwork sites have been identified - all have subsequently been dismantled and the land used for other purposes. The area of the brickworks on Northampton Road is primarily open ground / playing field, but there do not appear to be any earthworks or other visible traces of the industry. Three separate sawmills are identified on Ordnance Survey maps - one has been demolished, one converted into a social club and the remainder is standing derelict. The joinery works on Alexandra Road / Finedon Road has been demolished and replaced with modern flats. A site of particular interest is the premises of T.H. Higgins Ltd on Midland Road / Castle Street - the premises comprise a large high status house with a small ornate building in classical style to the side and some industrial buildings adjacent and behind this. The small ornate structure is of greatest interest and has a number of elaborate decorative features with distinctive use of stained glass etc. The building was clearly used as offices for 'Higgins Builders Merchants' and was designed as a showpiece for building / stone masonry etc. The offices have clearly been recently vacated and the business has moved to an alternative location. The back entrance to the premises has a small stone and brick structure with 'T.H. Higgins Stonemasons' inscribed in stone.

3.1.7 Brewing industry

Brewing and malting were both major industries in the town. The survey of 1839 indicates a large number of brew houses and maltings located throughout the town and by 1885 there were two commercial breweries located on Sheep Street - these were owned by William Dulley (who used the local spa water to create 'Redwell Stout') and John Woolston. One of the breweries was located behind 'Ye Golden Lion Public house' and the sign above the alley leading to the site still exists. Both breweries have been demolished and replaced with modern developments (a multi-storey car park and office block). A maltings was shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1926 to the west of Midland Railway - this has subsequently been demolished and the land utilised by the Royal Mail depot. It has not been possible to identify the smaller breweries or maltings as part of the survey, although a number of the public houses and inns have industrial buildings located behind them. A detailed comparison of the 1839 survey and later census returns with unidentified industrial structures in the town may provide more information.

3.1.8 Clothing industry

There was a large clothing industry in the town - which primarily consisted of the Ideal Clothiers Ltd

(who subscribed to the Co-operative Co-partnership Principals) were principally based in Wellingborough, although they also had branches in Burton Latimer, Woodford, Finedon, Raunds and Thrapston. There were three main factories - in Mill Road (1900), Victoria Road (1915) and Elsdon Road (1929). The former two have been demolished and the latter has not been identified by Ordnance Survey mapping (as it post dates 1926), but there is no clearly identifiable large factory on Elsdon Road today.

3.1.9 Other industries

A number of miscellaneous industries have also been noted in trade directories for Wellingborough including agricultural implement maker (1849), boat builder (1894) and coach builder, packing case maker, mineral water manufacturer, brush manufacturer, sewing machine manufacturer and a pork pie makers. Those identified from maps include Melton Works (Pie) factory, an industrial laundry, a coach and motor works on Oxford Street and a brush factory on Alliance Terrace. In addition there are a large number of large and small industrial works and factories located throughout the town, which have not been identified to a particular industry. A more detailed survey comparing census data and trade directory information with mapped sources and surviving buildings would be required in order to determine this information.

3.2 AGRICULTURE

Wellingborough clearly operated as a substantial market (and industrial) town throughout the period following 1750 and agriculture was not a dominant aspect of the economy for the settlement. In 1777 there were just 15 farmers and 2 shepherds recorded in the militia lists for (just over 4% of the total recorded occupations), although it is possible that many of the labourers were employed in agriculture. By the mid-19th century there were just 8 farmers. Trade directories of 1894 and 1924 indicate that there were 7 farmers, 4 dairymen and 2 seedsmen in addition to corn and hay / straw dealers, nurserymen, gardeners etc. There were however a large number of mills recorded in the town in 1777 there were 7 millers, who were presumably utilising the course of the River Nene. In Kelly's Trade Directory of 1894 two watermills and a steam mill were identified. Early Ordnance Survey maps indicate that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries there were four mills around the town of Wellingborough - three of which were disused by 1926, all of these have subsequently been dismantled. The primary mill complex for the town was Victoria Mills owned by the Whitworth brothers, the original building is dated 'JBW 1886' and is still in existence to the forefront of a large industrial mill complex still owned by Whitworths and in the same location.

3.3 HOUSING

There is a wide variety of housing in Wellingborough for the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, in addition to the survival of a small number of 16th and 17th century houses. The original area of the town as defined on the map of the town in 1832 has largely been re-developed, but there are a good number of survivals of domestic housing for the 18th century clustered around Broad Green, Burystead Place, Cambridge Street, High Street, Oxford Street and Sheep Street. Additional 18th century houses are to be found on Doddington Road, Hatton Gardens, London Road, Silver Street and St John Street. The majority of these are of good quality construction - with the predominant style being town houses of two or three storeys with three bays. One or two of the houses are of large cottage design, but there do not appear to be any survivals of lower status houses of 18th century or earlier date. Much of the

original area of the town was re-developed in the 19th century.

The majority of housing in the town for the 19th and early 20th centuries comprises long rows and streets of workers terraced houses. This development is primarily to the north and east of the original town centre. The terraces that remain in existence today are of good quality construction with attention to detail in terms of stylistic design with small gardens associated with the property.

Some of the first streets to be developed were those in the already existing area of the town. Terraces are shown on Jacksons Lane, Rock Street, St Johns Street, Queen Street, Herriotts Lane, Salem Lane etc although many of these have now been demolished. The housing on Rock Street remains and is a good example of an early 19th century streetscape with a mixture of terraced housing, larger houses, industrial works and a school. This street would not, however, appear to be representative of the other streets in the area as Ordnance Survey maps indicate much larger houses in Rock Street.

The workers housing built in the fifty-year period between 1832 and 1885 is based in three main blocks in the town. The block of housing centred around Newcomen Road, Winstanley Road, Knox Road, Palk Road and Ranelagh Road was clearly a planned development. The area had long streets of terraced houses with large plots of land at the ends of the streets being used for other purposes for example higher status houses, schools, churches and chapels etc. The terraces to the west - nearest the town centre - are of mixed style and design of both two and three storey construction whilst the terraces further out of town are of more uniform design. The remaining two housing blocks based around Great Park Street and Park Street to the north and Oxford Street / Northampton Road to the south west are both in areas of mixed development with rows of small terraces, larger terraces, individual houses and industrial, recreational and educational buildings. A number of streets of small terraced dwellings in these areas including Bell Street, Furnace Street, Little Park Street, Well Street, Wood Street and Hill Street have been demolished (presumably in a programme of slum clearance). The remaining buildings in these areas are of good quality construction and mixed design. This form of housing continued into the late 19th century with the construction of Thomas Street, Gordon Street and Stanley Road. The terraces here of good quality, mixed design and interspersed with industrial buildings and factories of the period.

Terraced housing developing around the turn of the century in Alexandra Road, Albert Road, Lister Road, Bedale Road and Ferrestone Road consisted of long rows of identical terraces in areas of purely residential development. Housing developing in the first two centuries of the 20th century was of a very different design and format. The housing around Swanspool Parade, Broadway and The Drive, in particular, comprises well designed, spacious semi-detached houses (possibly Council housing). Their positioning in close proximity to Swanspool Gardens gives an almost 'garden city' feel to the area.

There are also a substantial number of higher status houses located throughout the settlement - the larger of these - Swanspool House, Croyland Abbey, Broad Green manor house and the vicarage are of varying dates and are located throughout the settlement. Town houses of 18th century date and earlier are located in the core area of the town as discussed above. There are also, however, specific developments of higher status housing in the town. The area around Redwell Road, Hatton Park Road and Hatton Street appears to consist exclusively of 19th century high status, villa style houses with large areas of land attached and wide and spacious tree lined streets. Similar, slightly smaller

developments are found to the west of Midland Road and on Castle Street.

There is a good mixture of 18th, 19th and early 20th century housing of both high and lower status located throughout the town, however there are a large number of streets where swathes of terraced houses have been demolished. This suggests that the remaining housing stock may not be entirely representative of all the houses that once existed in the town.

3.4 COMMERCE

There were a number of larger commercial buildings in Wellingborough including the cattle market, town halls on Sheep Street and Silver Street and the Corn Exchange on Market Square. Some of the cattle market buildings survive as part of the Castle Theatre complex, the interiors of which are likely to have been substantially altered. The Corn Exchange on Market Square was by 1926 used as a 'Picture Theatre' and was demolished in 1959. The town hall on Silver Street is now in use as a shop and public house. It has not been possible to identify the building on Sheep Street, but there have been a large number of demolitions in the area.

3.4.1 Banks and post offices

Six banks were identified by 19th and early 20th century trade directories these were Northamptonshire Union Bank, Northamptonshire Banking Company, Savings Bank Town Hall, capital and Counties Bank Ltd, Leicestershire Banking Co Ltd and London City and Midland Bank. None of these survive as banks of the same name today. Of the four banks identified on Market Street from early Ordnance Survey maps two have been demolished and the remaining two buildings are still in use as banks. Both have a very distinctive design, Lloyds Bank on Market Street is of neo-classical design and from external appearances seems to have retains its original structure (it is a grade two listed structure); whilst Midland Bank is an early 20th century elaborated brick building which has had a modern bank frontage inserted into the original building.

There was an active postal service in Wellingborough in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with mail delivery services to London, Thrapston, Higham Ferrers and Rushden. The original post office was located in Church Street; the building is now in use as an ex-service mens club and retains the Post Office crest above the door.¹¹⁶ The Hind Hotel was also used as a post office in the early 19th-century.¹¹⁷ In the early 20th century a new central post office was established in Midland Road - the building displays a distinctive 'post office' style of architecture and is still used by the post office today. On the Ordnance Survey map of 1926 there are two sub-post offices in Oxford Street and High Street - the former is a purpose built structure which is still in use as a post office, but has had a modern frontage inserted whilst the latter was converted from a public house. Other small post offices were located in Alexandra Road, Gordon Road, Milton Road etc - however these appear to have been normal terraced houses which must have been temporarily used for this purpose before returning to ordinary domestic usage.

3.4.2 Shops

There were a large number of shops and commercial buildings in Wellingborough - particularly in the

¹¹⁶ Pers comms Wellingborough Archaeological and Historical Society

¹¹⁷ Pers Comms Wellingborough Civic Society

central business district of the town, as discussed above. Large areas of these streets have been obliterated by modern development, however there are a number of surviving shops and commercial buildings located throughout the town. There are a number of structures on the key streets of Market Street, High Street, Sheep Street and Oxford Street and also corner shops in the 19th century housing developments. However many of these survive in isolation and there are few areas of good survival of the early commercial structure of the town. These areas include the corner of Market Street / Sheep Street / Burystead Place and the area of High Street between Church Street and Oxford Street.

3.4.3 Public houses, Inns and Hotels

There were a large number of public houses, inns and hotels located throughout the town - 33 were listed in the survey of 1839 and 28 in Whellan's Trade Directory of 1849. A total of 30 public houses and inns have been identified through analysis of early ordnance survey maps and an additional 4 pre 1926 buildings are now used as public houses. Of the 34 buildings 25 are still in use as public houses (although some of these have been radically altered), 4 have been converted to other uses and 5 have been demolished. Many of the buildings have a distinctive 'inn' style. In addition there were 6 hotels - 2 have subsequently been demolished, 2 converted to public houses, one is now utilised by a row of shops and only the oldest and most famous 'The Hind Hotel' (a grade II* listed building) is still in use as a hotel and restaurant.

3.5 TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Communication links were clearly of importance to the town of Wellingborough. Four turnpike roads were constructed for Wellingborough in the 18th century - the south, north and east roads in 1753 and the west road in 1796, each had a tollhouse. All of these buildings have subsequently been demolished. The importance of the road network declined, however, after 1837 with the building of two new roads through the county - the Kettering to Northampton road and the Bedford to Northampton road.

The River Nene also provided an important communication link throughout the industrial period. The river was made navigable between Northampton and Peterborough and Kings Lynn in 1760 and after 1815 it was joined to the Grand Junction Canal network. A considerable amount of traffic traversed along the Nene and Sanderson's Wharf and Navigation Wharf were constructed for bringing in coal and timber and a number of mills were constructed along its banks.

The railway lines, which were established in close proximity to the settlement, were equally important developments in the town. The first line to be constructed was the Peterborough branch of the London and North Western Railway which was erected 1 mile to the south of the town in 1845. The railway line and its associated station and goods sheds have been demolished and the A45 now runs over part of its route. In parts the embankment and bridge for the line survive.

The development of a station on the Midland Railway one-mile to the east of the town in 1857 was of far greater significance, although a link road with the town was not created until 1860.

The station is still in existence with many of its original buildings remaining. The large locomotive shed remains in existence, but many of the ancillary buildings along the line have been demolished. The depot at Wellingborough dealt with a large proportion of coal that was carried to London along the line. The railway was of clear importance; the town starts its substantial rise in the period

immediately after the railway is constructed. The population of the town in 1861 was 6382 and this had risen to 13,794 by 1881 and 18,419 by 1901. Two satellite communities developed alongside the railway lines in the town - Little Irchester to the south and Midland Terraces to the north.

3.6 UTILITIES

A large number of utilities have been discovered for Wellingborough and many of the structures are surviving. Some of the buildings associated with both the early 20th century gas works and electricity works are still in existence. The gas works have been converted for use by small businesses and shops and are unlikely to original internal features, but the electricity works are in use by Wellingborough Council and the electricity board and may have some original features. Both sites should be further assessed for potential. Both sewerage pumping stations shown on ordnance survey maps have been dismantled and the land used for other purposes.

3.7 HEALTH AND WELFARE

The main building for the Poor Law Union Workhouse survives to the south of the town and is listed as a grade 2 structure, and has recently been converted into luxury houses and flats. Many of the later / subsidiary buildings are being demolished as part of this process. The associated infirmary to the rear of the workhouse survives and has been incorporated into Isebrook Hospital buildings. The cottage hospital on Doddington Road still survives as premises for 'Shaftesbury Housing Association' although the associated mortuary has been demolished. Hatton Hall for Waifs and Strays on Broad Green has retained its façade, but has been converted for use as flats. The isolation hospital on Finedon Road was however demolished in the 1960s and therefore there is not a complete range of surviving hospitals for the town.

There are two municipal cemeteries for the town - the London Road / Castle Road cemetery was erected in 1857 and the Doddington Road cemetery in 1906. The former was designed by the architect E.F. Law and contains a lodge house and two identical mortuary chapels for Nonconformists and Church of England. All three buildings are listed grade 2 and the cemetery has been included on a list of 50 sites for possible inclusion on the Register of Parks and Gardens for Northamptonshire. The area does, however, appear to be suffering some decay as both chapels are now boarded up.

The town had 19th and early 20th century police stations (Sheep Street and Midland Road) and ambulance and fire stations (Church Street), however all have now been demolished. The petty sessional court house on Midland Road dated 1916 is still standing and in use, with a small modern extension to the side in the same design. The late 19th century library (AD Saint Helliers 1887) on High Street is still extant, but has been converted for use as 'Queen's Hall Day Centre'; the exterior has remained intact, but it would appear likely that the interior has undergone considerable changes.

3.8 RELIGION

There are a large number of religious buildings in Wellingborough; six Church of England churches, a catholic church, six Independent / Congregationalist chapels, four Baptist chapels, four Methodist chapels, six chapels for other denominations and a number of Sunday School buildings and Manses. Of these all but one of churches have been identified and are still being used as churches today and two chapels have either been demolished or were not identified as part of the survey. Only three of the

buildings have undergone a change of use - the remainder are still in use as religious buildings. A total of nine religious buildings are listed in Wellingborough (including the two mortuary chapels in London Road cemetery) and of these all but one (All Hallows Church) were constructed after 1750.¹¹⁸ The remainder would be worthy of study to determine how the differing religious practices of different congregations' affects the layout of the building.

3.9 EDUCATION

There is a wide range of educational buildings in Wellingborough. The oldest establishment is the Free Grammar School in Church Street, which is now the church hall this is a grade II* listed building. The other early school – Freeman's School, Oxford Street was originally constructed in 1711 and then re-built 1812 - has been demolished.¹¹⁹

A large number of board schools and other educational establishments were erected to cater for the large population of Wellingborough. Twelve 'mixed' or infants schools were established in Wellingborough in the 19th and early 20th centuries - of these one has been demolished, two have not been identified, four have changed use (although one of these is now a play school and two are in use by social and community groups) and the remainder are still in use as schools. The best preserved of these school are the Victoria Board Schools on Stanley Road / Mill Road - the complex consists of two schools (one now Wellingborough Professional Development Centre) and a possible masters house, Freeman's school, Westfield Road and Park Street Board School.

The Upper Grammar School was erected in London Road in 1880 as a private school and has changed its name to 'Wellingborough Independent Co-educational day and boarding school'. The building complete with ancillary buildings such as a chapel and Asanatorium remains in use as a school. The County High School was erected in 1906 and is still standing and in use as a school today. Both the upper schools have a very elaborate late 19th / early 20th century design, which does not appear to have been greatly modified in modern times. Wellingborough boasted the first Technical Institute in the county (erected 1898), The original buildings have been demolished, but the Wellingborough campus of Tresham College stands on the site.

3.10 RECREATION

Wellingborough had a large number of recreational sites in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition to the usual social and political clubs of which there are ten (including a Masonic Hall) six theatres and cinemas have been recorded as part of the survey; four of which have been demolished. The Palace Theatre (cinema) on Gloucester Place remains in use as a cinema and appears to retain many of its early 20th century features. The cinema on Silver Street is still in existence. The front part of the building is now in use as two separate cafes, but the large building to the rear (which is standing in derelict condition) is said to contain a number of features relating to the cinema including the projection screen. It was not possible to substantiate this claim.

There are three public recreational grounds of late 19th / early 20th century origin in Wellingborough.

¹¹⁸ Congregational Church, High Street; St Mary the Virgin, Knox Road; Catholic Church, Ranelagh Road; All Saints Church, Midland Road; Friends Meeting House, St John Street; Primitive Methodist Church, West Street.

¹¹⁹ The school was originally Westfield Boys School. Pers comms Wellingborough Archaeological and Historical Society

Bassett's Close Recreation Ground, Castle Fields Recreational Ground and Swanspool Gardens are still in existence with original surviving features - a band stand in the case of the two former examples and bowling greens and tennis courts in addition to walks etc for the latter. Swanspool Gardens are on the list for possible inclusion on the Register of Parks and Gardens for Northamptonshire (as a municipal park). The area around Croyland Abbey and the banks of the River Nene to the east of the town have also been made into public recreation areas. Among the other recreational pursuits recorded for Wellingborough are a bowling club (established 1893), a golf course (opened 1923), a skating rink (shown on map of 1885, but gone by 1900) and a swimming pool. The latter was established by the brewer William Dulley in 1892, the building is still standing with a sign denoting Dulley's Swimming Baths', but the structure has since been used as a boot and shoe factory and is in the process of being converted to a museum for Wellingborough.

II ASSESSMENT

A PRE MEDIEVAL

As a result of the development losses the potential for future investigation of the early settlement pattern and land use in Wellingborough is minimal. The issue of the overall distribution of settlement in relation to geology in the Ise valley and its environs will be best pursued further to the north, where there has been far less destruction by development and mineral extraction. It would however be worthwhile recovering the broad pattern of pre medieval settlement over the remaining undeveloped clay land should further development occur there, particularly in order to place significant Iron Age sites like that at Stanwell Spinney into a wider settlement context

The development of settlement and land use and particularly of estate patterning in the Saxon period is a major subject of research in this area, because of the estate pattern associated with the nationally important ecclesiastical and manorial site at Earls Barton. Despite the very poor archaeological survival in Wellingborough township there are specific research questions with regard to the origins of the 'burh' placename that demand investigation for its potential association with Earls Barton. Detailed documentary study of Wellingborough, particularly with regard to furlong or other locational names recorded in medieval and post medieval documentary sources, may contribute to this research objective by enabling better targeting of investigation. Consideration must also be given to the potential topographical evidence for the location of any hillfort or other defended site.

B MEDIEVAL & POST MEDIEVAL

1.0 TOWN

1.1 ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE & SURVIVAL

Wellingborough is of particular importance as a town because of the way it grew from relative obscurity in the early 13th century, to be an important urban centre in the post medieval period and ultimately the second largest town in the county. The reason for that rise, of a settlement which never gained borough status and never had any burghage tenements, at the expense of established boroughs, most notably Higham Ferrers, is of considerable interest. It mirrors the growth of Kettering at the expense of nearby Rothwell. In both cases major monastic owners promoted villages which were dominated by their manors to become market towns. The understanding of the economic underpinning of this growth both in the 13th and early 14th century and also the way in which they came to achieve a dominant role in the recovery following the late 14th century recession, should be the focus of research. Wellingborough, like Kettering seem to have taken a significant role in woollen cloth production by the early 14th century, perhaps at the expense of the boroughs in the county, but it will be necessary to see if this was also typical of rural settlements at that time, and this will demand comparison of the scale of the industry in both the towns and rural settlements where it occurs. The relative importance of the cloth industry to the success of the town compared to other industrial and commercial activity would be essential to an effective understanding of this issue.

The origins of the settlement, particularly given its complex plan form, which may be related to its 11th century fragmented manorial structure, would be of interest but is not a realistic objective to explore given the likely very poor survival of archaeological deposits. For the same reason, though it would be useful to understand how the market place was inserted into the town plan this does not seem achievable.

The effective understanding of the origins and development of the town of Wellingborough can only be achieved through detailed documentary research and reconstruction using the very wide range of sources from the 13th century onwards. This will be an extremely complex and time consuming task. The targeting of particular locations within the town on the basis of such a reconstruction would be the most effective way of getting archaeological evidence from what is a very heavily disturbed archaeological monument. However this is unrealistic in the medium term and so archaeological investigation will have to be based on the limited documentary research and topographical analysis achieved as part of the present study.

Given the expected very poor survival of archaeological deposits expected in Wellingborough, as at Kettering, will severely limit what is achievable. However the fact that the two major examples of this type of town both have poor survival may mean that the low potential should not be used to argue for the complete abandonment of archaeological investigation in Wellingborough.

Detailed documentary research offers the greatest potential for advancing our understanding of the development of the town at Wellingborough.

1.2 Documentary

The great limitation is the absence of a comprehensive Post Medieval survey of tenements and tenure which can be directly related to the plan form of the town, and to the classes of tenure recorded in the medieval sources. The 1803 map together with the 1771 survey which was cross referenced to the map in 1811, provides a partial framework but contains no rent values or record of tenurial status. The Warwick manor lacks even this, for none of its rentals or surveys can be directly related to the town plan. It is true that the long series of court rolls might with detailed study allow a partial reconstruction of the tenurial pattern and the land appendant to some tenements, but this can never be sufficiently specific or complete. Without the type of framework provided for Kettering and Oundle, the early documents cannot be fully exploited, and the development of the settlement can only be vaguely guessed at.

Finally there is the absence of a pre-Inclosure field map, or of a complete "field book" or terrier, and in view of the extensive nature of Victorian and modern estate development and ironstone quarrying which preclude the reconstruction of the open field system from the study of ridge and furrow, there is little chance of ever establishing the layout of the medieval field system in Wellingborough. Without the framework provided by the medieval furlongs, which proved so important in the understanding of other villis, it seems even less likely that a detailed understanding of the evolution of Wellingborough can be established.

There is no inclosure maps and so the exact boundary of the old inclosures needs to be reconstructed from the enclosure award. The Tithe Map indicates the location of many old inclosures and enables

partial definition of the extent. Mapping has been based on the latter with interpolation where no clear evidence. Reworking is desirable to define exact extent to determine any further areas which might contain medieval occupation. However the area currently defined is likely to be very close.

1.2.1 Summary of Previous Investigation

The main work on Wellingborough has been the publication of the 1258-1323 account rolls of the Crowland manor in the town. The other main documentary analysis was that conducted by the VCH. The Palmers' popular book contains extensive information on the town, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries, but made very little use of the wide range of primary sources available from before the 19th century.

1.2.2 Research for this Report

The indexes and catalogues to the major relevant collections in the Public Record Office, Northamptonshire Record Office and British Library have been searched as have those in the National Register of Archives. The Warwickshire Record Office indices have been searched for documentary sources relating to Wellingborough.

It has not been possible to examine the wide range of good documentary sources available for the medieval and post medieval town during the research for this report. Moreover, where major sources have been located, most notably with the 18th century rentals and surveys there has not been time to fully exploit the evidence they contain to reconstruct the early topography of the town. A high dependence has thus been placed on the 1803 map of the town, supplemented where possible with evidence from the 1770 survey. Neither has it been possible to examine all the Crowland Abbey documentary sources which might contain significant information about the medieval town, or to examine all the of the large collection of court rolls and other documents from the later medieval and post medieval period which will shed considerable light on the character of the town, but a limited sample of these has been examined to determine their potential and to provide limited topographical and other information on the late medieval and post medieval town.

1.2.3 Survival

There is a very large collection of medieval and post medieval documentary sources for Wellingborough. The key documents fall into several chronological groups. In the later 13th and early 14th centuries there are the account rolls of the Crowland manor and a detailed extent. They provide considerable detail on the grange itself and the agricultural economy of the demesne, but contain little information on the town itself.¹²⁰ From the 15th century there is an important collection of detailed court rolls in the Warwickshire Record Office, though there are later runs of court rolls, particularly from the later 16th century onwards; from the 17th and 18th centuries important rentals and surveys, in the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Record Offices, which provide a direct link to the 1803 map of the town.

1.2.4 Potential

The excellent documentary sources from the 17th and 18th centuries, with the links to the 180-3 map provide the basis for a reconstruction of the town plan and distribution of the various tenancies. It may

¹²⁰ Page, 1936.

be possible to extend this in a piecemeal fashion to an earlier date with the evidence of the court rolls. Such work, by distinguishing the location of the lands of the main late and post medieval manors within the town may assist in the understanding of the character and evolution of the town. The relatively limited nature of the evidence so far identified in connection with the industrial and commercial activities in the town is a major limitation but there may be more that can be achieved by detailed documentary analysis, in particular with regard to the location of shops and stalls and with the identification of particular industries in the town.

1.3 Historic Buildings

1.3.1 Summary of Previous Investigation

Apart from the listing survey there has not been a significant study of the historic buildings in the town, although at least one building, the medieval hall from the monastic grange, has been subject to detailed survey in its own right.

1.3.2 Research for this Report

A rapid external field examination of the buildings then surviving was conducted during the Northamptonshire Archaeology Units unpublished survey of the town in 1979, to determine which might contain early fabric. This, together with an analysis of the mapped evidence and the listing evidence, has been used to determine the likely maximum building stock which may yield evidence as regards the post medieval or even medieval town.

1.3.3 Survival

There has been extensive later 19th and 20th century clearance and redevelopment. This has severely reduced the potential for the study of the town through its historic buildings. It is true that even in the worst affected areas isolated early buildings do survive behind more recent facades, as is demonstrated by the recovery of 2 bays of a 16th century property fronting onto the south west corner of the old market place.¹²¹ Moreover, there are several streets where refacing and renovation have been the norm, and hence where a far greater number of post-medieval properties may survive.

Given the large size of the town in the post medieval period the survival of pre 19th century buildings is disappointing, especially if one takes into account that the majority of these are likely, on the basis of the listing evidence, to be from the 18th century. There are 12 listed buildings of the 17th century or earlier, 42 of the 18th century and 87 of the 19th and 20th century within the old inclosure area of the town. Apart from the church, the 17th century school house and two houses on the west of Broad Green, the majority of the 17th century and earlier listed buildings in the town lie in Sheep Street or the adjacent Manor Lane. Several of the earliest buildings are constructed in part in timber and this may be expected as a construction material in a significant proportion of the buildings of the medieval and early post medieval town. The relatively small number of 17th and earlier buildings in such a large post medieval settlement must in part be explained by the major 1738 fire in the town. It would appear that Sheep Street was the only substantial area of the town to have largely escaped its impact. The presence of 42 buildings of the 18th century must be a reflection of the rebuilding after the fire. However the relatively low number of pre 19th century buildings surviving compared to the number which stood in 1803 is a reflection of the high level of rebuilding in the town as a result of its 19th and

¹²¹ Observation by B Giggins, unpublished report in SMR.

20th century industrial and commercial success, which led to redevelopment of many areas of the town.

1.3.4 Potential

There is extremely low potential for the historic buildings to contribute to the study of the town in the medieval period. It is possible that further tiny fragments of structures may be revealed similar to that recorded near the south west corner of the market place in the 1980s, in the form of a party wall between two properties, but there are relatively few situations where this can occur, given the high level of complete rebuilding of long stretches of tenement rows in the past. Around the market place there has been almost complete redevelopment. However the number of 18th and 19th century buildings is still high, despite substantial redevelopment of certain parts of the town, and so there may be some potential here worth pursuing to cast further light upon the expansion of the town in the period when it had risen to be the second most important town in the county.

1.4 Archaeological

1.4.1 Summary of Previous Investigation

No interventions map has been produced for Wellingborough due to the paucity of archaeological investigation undertaken within the town. There was a short period in the 1970s when observation was conducted on the various redevelopment and expansion schemes in the town, although this only covered a handful of sites within the medieval settlement. Before and since then little has been done despite large scale redevelopment and expansion. The extensive programme of observation and excavation proposed by Everson was never followed up on any of the redevelopment schemes.¹²² The results of the few minor watching briefs maintained within the medieval area by the local archaeological society are of use, but were not pursued with sufficient intensity or on enough sites to yield valuable data.

1.4.2 Research for this Report

No new fieldwork work was conducted in connection with this report.

1.4.3 Survival

Late 19th and 20th century housing, industrial and commercial development and the quarrying in the parish has been extensive. The vast majority of the medieval township has now been covered by urban development. Within the medieval settlement area the degree of development and redevelopment over the last 100 or more years has left no obvious key areas of the town undisturbed and available for investigation, while in the central area of the town cellaring would seem to have been particularly extensive. Remarkably almost 50% of the area of the old inclosed area of Wellingborough, representing the maximum possible area of medieval occupation, is or has been built up since 1880. If one was to assess the areas of likely medieval frontage then the percentage will be vastly increased, with practically the whole of the post medieval and presumed medieval frontages built over. Given the relatively shallow depth that has been generally seen in the few medieval deposits observed within the town, which corresponds with the pattern seen in most other small towns in the county, it is unlikely where there has been intensive development during the 19th and 20th centuries that there will be any significant archaeological survival.

¹²² Everson, 1974.

There is no part of the town where earthworks of earlier features survive. Nor was their survival of earthwork evidence to enable reconstruct the open field furlong pattern immediately adjacent to the town, because the town had expanded so much by the 1940s when the first aerial photography is available which would record surviving ridge and furrow and because by the later 20th century the development had precluded any field survey investigation of the furlong pattern in the later 20th century. As a result there is no evidence on the field system to assist in the analysis of the town plan.

1.4.4 Potential

Despite the considerable work already carried out by amateurs during the development of the late 1960's and earlier 1970's, there is little potential now for the recovery of a sufficiently complete pre-medieval settlement pattern to allow the understanding of the evolution of the medieval town out of the more dispersed Saxon pattern. With regard to earlier periods the same limitations prevail, and in view of the fact that the Roman urban centre for this area lies several miles to the south east in Irchester parish, there is little if anything in the pre-Saxon settlement pattern of the parish which is of relevance to the development of the medieval town.

With regard to the medieval town itself, given the state of survival and in the absence of a good documentary framework to enable targeting of investigations, the information which could be recovered is likely to be of minimal value. The difficulties are compounded by the presence of a number of separate lesser manors, which may have provided secondary foci for the evolution of the settlement, yet which cannot even be located; by the sheer size of the medieval settlement; and by the complex form of the settlement which comprises various ends and major and minor roads, which suggests an evolution far more complex than that seen in most other towns in the county.

1.5 Historical Topography

The analysis of the historical topography of the town is severely limited by the absence of a map before 1803 and by the inability to reconstruct the open field furlong pattern immediately surrounding the town which normally informs any analysis of the topographical character of a settlement. Similarly the large scale infilling and modification of the town plan which must have accompanied the growth of the town before 1803 has made topographical analysis difficult.

1.5.1 Survival

There have been so many major changes in the character and layout of the town in the 19th and 20th century that there is very little, apart from the major road alignments, which preserves the layout of the pre industrial period town.

2.0 SPECIFIC MONUMENTS

2.1 Medieval hamlets

There is the need for a review of the archaeological evidence for the isolated medieval hamlet in the west of the township and for detailed documentary research to reconstruct the field system and settlement pattern, as far as possible, from medieval and post medieval sources in order to resolve this question.

The presence of a hamlet in the north west part of the township is highly conjectural. If a site exists it may be located by observation of development or by prior field survey. However detailed documentary research is the most likely method of resolving the presence of such a site and targeting field investigation. Any substantial development in the north west part of the township should be subject to evaluation, if the hypothesis has not been disproved by further documentary research, to determine if a medieval settlement did exist there.

However neither of these have a high research priority.

2.2 Crowland Manor

The Wellingborough grange was a major component of the Crowland Abbey estate and its investigation would add considerably to the understanding of the estates of this major monastic house. The documentary evidence from the 1320 survey, and especially from the fine series of Account Rolls, detail the buildings which lay in the court also contains an enormous amount of detail on the demesne farm economy. Given this evidence, the survival of two substantial medieval buildings, until the late 1970s this site probably represented the grange site in the county with the very highest potential for historical and archaeological investigation. In the 1970s extensive office blocks were constructed across much of the site and a car park, in part terraced into the hillside, were constructed over the adjacent land. Unfortunately there was a total failure to respond to the major redevelopment of the site which will have resulted in substantial destruction of the archaeological deposits. However, as the medieval buildings probably lay in the northern half of the site it is possible that there is still significant archaeological survival relating to the medieval grange. Any development proposals or other ground disturbance within this area should be subject to evaluation.

3.0 URBAN HINTERLAND

For the purposes of assessment of the hinterlands of the medieval and post medieval towns in the county a rapid grading of the archaeological potential of the medieval settlements of the county has been conducted on the basis of professional judgement. A documentary assessment has also been completed, based on a systematic but far from complete indexing of the major documentary classes for each township in the county based on a search of various list and indexes in the Public Record Office, Northamptonshire Record Office, National Register of Archives and British Library. Separate scoring has been made for each document class based on the number of documents identified for each settlement in both the medieval and post medieval periods. The severe limitation of such a quantitative assessment and the incompleteness of the initial indexing task mean that this scoring has many shortcomings but countywide it may be expected to give a broad indication of potential. Details of the methodology are defined in the general synthesis report of the Extensive Urban Survey.

The hinterland can be divided into two distinct areas in terms of overall historic landscape survival. To the east of the Ise and Nene the historic landscape is largely destroyed. To the west, apart from Wellingborough itself, there is far better survival. The potential thus exist for limited investigation of the Saxon settlement pattern within the important late Saxon Earls Barton estate and it environs, to which Wellingborough may have been linked. The relationship of the manorial and ecclesiastical functions at Wellingborough with those of the estate centre at Earls Barton must be considered, requiring investigation both of the Crowland manor and of the church at Wellingborough. In this

context significance of the 'burhs' placename must be considered, in particular the potential that it represents the location of an early or middle Saxon defended site associated with the Earls Barton estate. The relationship of any such site to that at Irthlingborough must also be considered. However if the 'burh' at Wellingborough did not lie at the centre of the town then there is a major problem in locating the site and such investigation may not be practical.

In terms of urban hinterlands the potentials appear poor. The archaeological potential of the medieval settlements within the hinterland is overall relatively low, being limited mainly to five or six small, deserted hamlets all but one of which are wholly ploughed. Similarly the documentary potential of the settlements in the hinterland in both the medieval and post medieval period is low.

Attention should be concentrated on the development of Wellingborough in relation to the two Domesday market settlements of Higham Ferrers and Northampton, which both have a high documentary potential and Northampton at least a high archaeological potential. The relationship of Wellingborough to the lesser market centres of Finedon and Wollaston offers far less opportunity but comparison with the development of the market town at Kettering does appear to offer potential, if only through documentary research, as both appear to share so many characteristics in both the medieval and post medieval periods.

C INDUSTRIAL

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE AND SURVIVAL

Wellingborough was one of the top three towns in Northamptonshire in the 18th and 19th centuries and has retained this significance to the present day. The town was a major centre for the boot and shoe industry in the 18th century and at this date was only rivalled by Northampton. The town was also of importance in a county context for its early links to the railway network and the degree of town planning in the development of the town.

Wellingborough has a very good survival of documentary records, many of which could be used to provide a detailed reconstruction of the topography of the town. There are no surviving maps for the pre-1738 period and therefore the only potential for a study of the development of the town in this period is archaeological investigation. Archaeological work may provide an understanding of the early development of the boot and shoe trade in the town. The late 18th and 19th century topography survives well in some areas, but has been completely destroyed in others.

1.0 DOCUMENTARY

1.1 Maps

There are a large number of maps indexed for the town of Wellingborough including a map surveyed

by William James in the early 19th century showing the entire town ¹²³ and a map of the public roads showing encroachments in 1852¹²⁴. The remaining maps either post-date the Ordnance Survey maps or are narrowly focused upon particular areas of the town. The survey of the Manor of Wellingborough in April 1771 and the survey of the town of 1839 would also be very good sources for the detailed reconstruction of the topography of the area.

1.2 Photographs

There are a very large number of photographs and pictorial depictions, from the late 19th century onwards, at Northamptonshire Record Office, Northamptonshire Local Studies Collection and Northamptonshire Heritage. These include depictions of individual buildings - churches, chapels, municipal buildings, factories, shops, banks, industrial structures - and street scenes. The public library in Wellingborough houses the Lawson Pratt collection of photographs of the town.¹²⁵

At Northamptonshire Record Office there are also a large number of architectural plans and drawings for schools, churches, commercial and industrial buildings, municipal buildings and individual houses, streets and housing estates. There would be a good potential for the study of individual buildings / areas in the town through photographic and pictorial evidence.

1.3 Documents

There are a very large number of documents relating to many different aspects of the history and development of the town. These include documents relating to trade and industry, schools and colleges, organisations, politics and the administration of the poor. There are a particularly good range of documents relating to the topography of the town including the valuation of the town of 1839 (which details individual streets, occupiers and proprietors), large numbers of deeds and admissions relating to individual properties and a survey of 1765 (the accounts for which survive, although it was not possible to determine whether the survey itself was still in existence).

2.0 STANDING BUILDINGS

There are a large number of important surviving buildings in Wellingborough. Of the 103 listed buildings in the town, all but 15 are of 18th century date and later and many of the pre-18th century buildings were utilised for their original purpose (e.g. Hind Hotel, Church etc) throughout the industrial period. There are a large number of 18th century houses in the town and there are 10 listed churches and chapels - 8 of which are of 18th, 19th or early 20th century origin. Other listed buildings include an early 20th century bank, the Midland Railway station and goods shed, the mid 19th century workhouse, four public houses, a number of barns, stables and farmhouses, the former free library and a number of miscellaneous monuments and memorials.

There are also a large number of important non-listed buildings including 19th century schools and non-conformist chapels, a large number of public houses and inns, surviving buildings for the gas and electricity works, Victoria Mills (Whitworths) along the River Nene - which is still operating as a mill and a very large number of industrial buildings and factories.

¹²³ NRO, Map 3565

¹²⁴ NRO, Map 3150

¹²⁵ Pers comms Wellingborough Archaeological and Historical Society

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL

There may be potential for below ground archaeological investigation in Wellingborough. The settlement was substantially re-developed following the fire of 1738, but it is possible that there may be some surviving below ground remains. The town was also subject to re-developed in the mid- to late 19th-century with the establishment of a number of terraces in the core area of the settlement. The level of subsequent ground disturbance needs to be assessed in order to determine whether there is likely to be any survival of archaeological remains. There should be a high priority attached to locating any buildings associated with the boot and shoe industry in the town.

4.0 TOPOGRAPHY

The survival of the urban topography of the area is very mixed. There are large areas of the town where there has been substantial re-development, with the demolition of 19th and early 20th century buildings. Much of the commercial business district has been subject to re-development and industrial buildings and workers housing have both been vulnerable to demolition.

There are, however, areas of remarkably good survival of early buildings in the town. These include 18th century and earlier structures around Burystead Place, 19th century housing in the eastern block of Wellingborough, high status 19th and early 20th century housing around Redwell Road and Hatton Park Street and the area to the south of the town complete with 19th century and early 20th century 'garden city' housing, workhouse, hospital, cemetery and Wellingborough school.

III RESEARCH AGENDA

1.0 MEDIEVAL & POST MEDIEVAL

Origins of the market place

The chronology of the establishment of the market and the way in which the market place was inserted into existing village plans is one of the fundamental questions about the development of our small medieval towns to which archaeology alone may provide the answers. If no other archaeological objectives can be pursued in Wellingborough it may be justifiable to carry out limited observation on developments in the market area to establish the date in which occupation began in various parts of the market place. This would be valuable in terms of the countywide phasing of market and town development, though the detailed information on the nature of the developments could only come from towns with far greater historical and archaeological potential.

Saxon origins and relationship to the Earls Barton estate

The origins of the church in relation to that at Earls Barton.

Origins of the 'burh' placename

The origins & character of the monastic grange

Industry and Commerce

The industrial and commercial underpinning of Wellingborough's medieval and post medieval growth. In particular the relative importance of industrial production and especially cloth production.

The woollen cloth industry

The importance of the cloth industry in underpinning the economic expansion in the small towns in the 13th and early 14th century is a significant research question. In particular this should be related to the apparent decline of the industry in Northampton, where it had been of great importance in the 12th and earlier 13th centuries. It is possible that the application of power to the fulling process and the absence of restrictive practices in the small towns was the main reason for the decline of cloth production in Northampton, Stamford, Leicester and the other towns which complained in about the decay of their cloth industries.

The dye works and any locations within the old inclosures along the alluvial area and adjacent where dyeing and other industrial processes might be found. The dyeworks site might be expected, amongst other things, to produce evidence of vats and furnaces.¹²⁶

The fulling mill. Can such mills be distinguished archaeologically from other watermills? Is it to be identified with one of the three post medieval mills or should it be sought on the Swanspool Brook, perhaps close to the later dye works?

2.0 INDUSTRIAL

¹²⁶ Walton, 1991, 337.

Early development of boot and shoe industry

Wellingborough was one of the two key towns for the early development of the boot and shoe industry in the county, the other being Northampton. One of the key research objectives for the town is to determine the nature of the boot and shoe industry prior to the 19th century. The priority is to establish what effect the industry had upon the topography of the town and in particular to determine what buildings were used for the trade. The focus will have to be upon below-ground investigation as the town was subject to a fire in the early 18th century and to significant re-building in the 19th century.

Effect of major fire on the town

The effect of the fire of 1738 on the subsequent development of the town needs to be investigated. The key issues which need to be addressed are; did the fire bring about a renewed growth to the town, were buildings replaced in higher quality materials than those which had been used previously, was there any re-alignment of building plots or streets. These issues will need to be dealt with archaeologically as the fire destroyed large parts of the original settlement and the town was re-built to a great extent in the 19th century.

Division of town into zones

The development of the urban topography of Wellingborough requires more detailed research. There appears to be distinctive divisions within the town with the segregation of different functions (high and lower status housing, commercial activity and utilities) into separate zones in the settlement. A combination of documentary research and more detailed topographical analysis is required to determine whether this division was planned.

Importance of river and railway

The importance of both the River Nene and the Midland Railway Line in the development of Wellingborough need to be investigated. This will require a detailed survey of the development of the town in relation to the key developments of the canalisation of the river in the 1760s and the establishment of the main rail link in 1857. The wharf sites and the railway station and depot would be worthy of further investigation.

IV STRATEGY

The assessment of the management and conservation priorities within the Extensive Urban Survey have been based around an assessment of levels of importance previously applied elsewhere in the county for management purposes. The grading falls into six categories:

Scheduled: nationally important remains that have statutory protection.

Unscheduled national importance: in some cases statutory protection is suggested while in others recording action may prove to be the appropriate response to threats.

County importance: Where significant archaeology is known or where it is likely but confirmation is required. Normally recording rather than preservation would be the appropriate mitigation strategy.

Historic buildings: Buildings known or which have the potential to contain significant pre 19th century structural remains.

Local importance: where archaeology may survive but where, on present evidence investigation does not appear appropriate.

Destroyed: where the archaeology has been wholly destroyed.

White Land: Archaeology not assessed for his report.

In addition in some cases recommendations have been made for the designation of new or the extension of existing Conservation Areas and for the listing of specific buildings.

This approach has not been possible for the industrial period, as further work on the period is needed at a county, regional and national level before a definitive assessment can be made. The town has been divided up into zones and priorities for additional research, recording and conservation measures have been assigned to each individual area.

1.0 EXISTING DESIGNATIONS

1.1 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in close proximity to the town of Wellingborough.

1.2 Listed Buildings

There are 102 listed buildings in Wellingborough

1.3 Conservation Area

There is no designated conservation area for Wellingborough

2.0 MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

2.1 MEDIEVAL & POST MEDIEVAL

2.1.1 Evaluation and Recording Priorities

The majority of the area of the pre-Industrial period town probably has archaeology of no more than local importance, as a result of the impact of 19th and 20th century redevelopment. However, there has been no significant modern archaeological investigation in any part of the town to test this assessment, which is based purely upon the extent of development as defined on late 19th and 20th century Ordnance Survey mapping. Particularly in view of the importance of Wellingborough in the origins and development of the boot and shoe industry, it is therefore recommended that large scale development sites within the town should be subject to archaeological evaluation even where they lie outside the areas identified as potentially of county importance. When a number of these locations have been evaluated then the overall potential for archaeological survival in the town should be reassessed.

2.1.2 Conservation Priorities

In the last 30 years the loss rate has been particularly high, and unfortunately the survey of historic buildings proposed by Everson in 1974 was not carried out. Although the destruction is unlikely to continue as rapidly in future, the relative prosperity of the modern town is bound to lead to further demolition and very damaging renovation. If the historic buildings are to yield any significant information about the post medieval character and development of the town, it is therefore an urgent requirement that both external and where possible internal surveys are carried out in all those buildings identified in fig. as being certainly or potentially of pre-Victorian date to identify those requiring more detailed examination. In addition, a careful watch needs to be kept on any renovation or demolition of these properties, and where early architectural features are recognised detailed recording should be carried out.

2.2 INDUSTRIAL

2.2.1 Zone 1 - Core area of the town.

The core area of the town incorporating the commercial area and the area of the original town. The Broad Green area survives remarkably well intact with a number of 18th century houses etc in the area. The remainder of the core of the area has a mixed survival. There are a number of listed buildings along High Street, Silver Street and Sheep Street and some good areas of survival in Cambridge Street, but there are also large areas of this central location where the original topography has been replaced with modern office blocks, shopping centres, leisure centres and car park.

Isolated areas within the core should be considered for designation as conservation areas. Below ground archaeological analysis should be undertaken to determine whether there are any surviving remains of the early boot and shoe industry, the topography of the town prior to the re-building in the Victorian period and the fire of 1738.

2.2.2 Zone 2 - Industrial and commercial area.

Area to the south of the core area of the town. Major centre for industry in the town with two boot and shoe factories, leather works, two breweries and the cattle market. There were also a number of commercial outlets. The area has been subject to considerable change and all the major industrial facilities have been demolished.

There are no priorities regarding the conservation of the area, but if there are any substantial below ground remains of the breweries in the town these should be investigated archaeologically. This is, however, unlikely due to the level of rebuilding in the area.

2.2.3 Zone 3 - Services zone.

The area to the south east of the core of the town, which contained a number of the services for Wellingborough including the gas, works, isolation hospital, Poor Law Union Workhouse, cemetery and Wellingborough School. The gas works and isolation hospital have gone, but the school and cemetery remain intact and the workhouse building has been converted into flats.

The area should be considered for designation as a conservation area along with zone 10.

2.2.4 Zone 4 - Mixed zone.

Located to the extreme west of the settlement and developed throughout the 19th and early 20th century. The area lies between Oxford Road, Northampton Road and Westfield Road leading out of the town centre, The area comprises a mixture of large and small terraced houses interspersed with industrial, educational, religious and recreational buildings. There have been some losses of small terraced houses and other structures in this area, but on the whole the area survives remarkably well.

Further detailed documentary survey and building work should be undertaken on unidentified industrial buildings to determine their original function(s).

2.2.5 Zone 5 - Mixed zone.

Located to the north of the settlement. The area was developed throughout the 19th century and became a mixed zone with a combination of large and small terraced houses interspersed with industrial, educational, religious and recreational buildings. There have been one or two losses of small terraced houses, but the character and integrity of the area survives intact. Canon Street acts as a thoroughfare through the area.

The area should be considered for designation as a conservation area. Further detailed documentary survey and building work should be undertaken on unidentified industrial buildings to determine their original function(s).

2.2.6 Zone 6 - Mixed zone.

Located to the north of Midland Road (leading to the station). The area was developed throughout the 19th century and is a mixed zone with a mixture of large and small terraced houses interspersed with industrial, educational, religious and recreational buildings. There is a distinctive planned nature to the layout of this part of the settlement with long rows of terraced houses with large plots of land between streets being used for high status houses, schools, chapels etc. A number of individual buildings have been demolished although the area as a whole remains intact.

Further detailed documentary survey and building work should be undertaken on unidentified industrial buildings to determine their original function(s).

2.2.7 Zone 7 - Housing zone.

Area of the town used exclusively for housing with no additional structures or features. This is located to the very north of the town and is attached to the mixed zones 5 and 6. Long rows of identical terraces developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The area survives largely intact.

There are no recommendations for this area.

2.2.8 Zone 8 - Housing zone.

Area to the north west of the town developed specifically for high status house. There are a number of very large, individual villa style houses as well as some smaller, but still prestigious terraces and semi-detached buildings. Wide open, tree-lined streets are a particular feature of this area. There are very few losses of building in this area.

The area should be considered for designation as a conservation area along with elements of Broad Green.

2.2.9 Zone 9 - Housing Zone.

Small area of high status housing to the north of Midland Road. The area remains largely intact.

There are no recommendations for this area.

2.2.10 Zone 10 - Mixed 20th century zone

The area was largely laid out in the early 20th century and comprises a number of detached and semi-detached houses with substantial gardens. Swanspool Gardens, a cemetery and cottage hospital are also located in this area.

The area remains intact and has a great sense of space with an almost garden city feel in terms of character. The area should be considered for designation as a conservation area along with zone 3.

ABBREVIATIONS

BL:	British Library
NN&Q:	Northamptonshire Notes & Queries
NRO:	Northamptonshire Record Office
PRO:	Public Record Office
VCH Notes:	Victoria County History notes in NRO
WRO:	Warwickshire Record Office

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anon, 1894, *Kelly's Directory of Northamptonshire*, Kelly and Co Ltd, London
- Anon, 1924, *Kelly's Directory of Northamptonshire*, Kelly and Co Ltd, London
- Archer, C., 1927, *Recollection of Wellingborough*
- Bailey, Bruce A., 1994, *Croyland Abbey and Croyland Hall, Wellingborough*, unpublished report in SMR.
- Baish P and Partridge N, 1980, *An introduction to Wellingborough*
- Bridges J, 1791, *The history and antiquities of Northamptonshire*, Vol. 2
- Borough of Wellingborough, *The Borough of Wellingborough Official Guide*
- Brooks D.M., 1970, *Wellingborough Technical College, Some of the research notes used in the preparation of a thesis entitled A Technical education and Apprenticeship 1850-1956"*
- Caleb A, 1927, *My Recollections of Wellingborough by Caleb Archer*, Archer and Goodman
- Cole, J., 1837, *History of Wellingborough*
- Domesday Book
- Dugdale, 1817, *Monasticon*
- Everson, P., 1974, *Archaeological Implications of the Central Area Redevelopment*
- Foard, G., 1985, 'The Administrative Organisation of Northamptonshire in the Saxon Period=', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, vol.4, p.185-222.
- Goddard J.L. 1988, *Wellingborough: a brief history of town and district*, Wellingborough Heritage Centre
- Goodfellow, P., 1987, 'Medieval Markets in Northamptonshire', *NP&P*, 7, p.321.
- Gough, R., 1784, 'The History and Antiquities of Croyland Abbey', *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, vol.11 & 22.
- Gover, J E B, Mawer, A and Stenton, F M, 1975, *The Place-names of Northamptonshire*
- Leland, *Itinerary*.
- Lyon N.B. 1988, *Four centuries: The history of Wellingborough School*
- Markham, C.A., 1901, *The Stone Crosses of Northamptonshire*
- Morton, J., 1712, *The Natural History of Northamptonshire*.
- O'Connor (ed.), S J, 1993, *A Calendar of the Cartularies of John Pyel and Adam Fraunceys*, Camden 5th Series, 2.
- Page, F.M., *Econ. Journal* IV, Jan 1929.
- Page, F.M., 1934, *The Estates of Crowland Abbey*
- Page, F.M., (ed.), 1936, *Wellingborough Manorial Accounts, 1258-1323*
- Palmer, J. & Palmer, M., 1973, *A History of Wellingborough*.
- Palmer J and M, 1975, *Wellingborough Album*, Steepleprint Limited.

- Palmer J and M, 1995, *Wellingborough Memories*.
- Parker J.T. 1920's, *Wellingborough as an industrial centre*.
- Pevsner, N., 1973, *The Buildings of England : Northamptonshire*
- Raban, S., 1977, 'The Estates of Thorney and Crowland,' Cambridge Department of Land Economy, Occasional Paper 7.
- Salvation Army, Wellingborough Corps, *The Salvation Army Wellingborough Corps, No 13 A summary of the history of the Wellingborough Citadel Corps of the Salvation Army, 100 years of service 1873-1973*
- Sawyer, P.H., 1968, *Anglo Saxon Charters*
- Stevenson, D.A., 1994, *A Study of Croyland Abbey, Wellingborough*, unpublished report in SMR (submission for Certificate in Architectural History, University of Leicester).
- Stephens T, 1892, *Two hundred and fifty years of Congregationalism in Wellingborough*, Salzman, 1937
- Tonks E, 1990, *The Ironstone Quarries of the Midlands. History, Operation and Railways Part IV The Wellingborough Area*.
- Victoria History of the County of Northampton*, 4.
- Walton, P. 1991, 'Textiles', in J Blair & N Ramsay, *English Medieval Industries*, 318-354.
- Wellingborough Gaslight Company Limited, Inauguration of new works, September 22nd 1904*
- Wellingborough Gaslight Company Limited.
- Whellan, W., 1849, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Northamptonshire*.
- Wretts-Smith, M., 1931, 'Organisation of Farming at Croyland Abbey 1257-1321, *Journal of Economic and Business History*, 4 (1), 168-192.