

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

STAPLEFORD

Prepared for



Extensive Urban Survey Programme

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Assessment

This assessment has been produced through the Extensive Urban Survey Programme, an English Heritage funded initiative to assist local planning authorities with the conservation of their urban archaeological resource. Stapleford is one of 18 small towns in Nottinghamshire selected for such assessment.

The assessment is a desk-based survey, the scope of which includes both above and below ground archaeological remains of all periods, using information from the County Sites and Monuments Record, local histories, early maps and plan form analysis, with the results presented as a series of maps generated by GIS. It provides a foundation for the development of an archaeological management strategy that could be adopted by the local planning authority as supplementary planning guidance.

1.2 Overview of the town

Stapleford lies on the Nottinghamshire side of the county's border with Derbyshire, some six miles west of Nottingham and ten miles east of Derby, the county boundary here being formed by the River Erewash. The early settlement was associated with a fording point across the river on what would have been an important route linking two of the five Danish boroughs. However, it remained no more than an agricultural village until the 18th century, when the framework knitting industry became established in the area. Its major period of expansion and population growth came towards the end of the 19th century and into the early 20th century, by which time the town supported a relatively large textile industry as well as a famous pencil works.

2. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Stapleford is located on the southern edge of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire exposed coalfield. The local geology is said to be very complex, due to the large degree of faulting in the area (Shipman 1891). Alluvium borders the Erewash Valley, with the historic core of the town lying just above the floodplain on rising ground of Keuper sandstone with bands of marl (OS Geol. Sheet no. 125, 1963).

The church, at c. 42m AOD, is some 6m above the level of the river. The ground continues to rise to the east and south-east, the southern end of Church Street at The Roach being 45m AOD and the eastern end of Church Walk approximately 50m AOD. Properties on the eastern side of Nottingham Road in this area have been cut back into the hillside, while further east along Nottingham Road the quarrying of sand to the rear of properties along the southern side of the road has resulted in the formation of a cliff-face. From The Roach, Derby Road begins to descend gently towards the south-west, while Toton Lane climbs steeply to the south-east, the road forming a hollow way at its northern end.

For some reason, the story developed that copper was to be found at Stapleford Hill (SMR 5169). In 1856, for example, Fyfe's *Rambles* refers to 'an imaginary copper mine' there into which 'large sums of money are said to have been sunk and lost'.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

At the time of the Domesday Survey, Stapleford lay in Broxtowe wapentake. It was in the Shardlow Union in the 1880s, a situation which was felt to be unsatisfactory, with the result that attempts were being made at that time to form a Local Board to administer the affairs of the parish (Anon 1880s).

The Local Government Act of 1894 united the civil parishes of Stapleford, Chilwell, Toton and Bramcote into the Stapleford Rural District. Stapleford Parish Council, together with the Rural Council, were abolished in 1935 when the District was merged with Beeston to form the Beeston and Stapleford Urban District. Under Local Government reorganisation in 1973 this Urban District was merged with Eastwood and with six further parishes to form the Borough of Broxtowe (Miller 1994).

4. SOURCES

4.1 Primary sources

Nottinghamshire Archives holds a variety of primary documentation relating to Stapleford, including the church registers from 1656 onwards and the records of several non-conformist chapels. Other documents include deeds from the 16th century onwards, land tax assessments and diocesan terriers. In addition, there are also archives relating to the Warren family of Stapleford, which include some estate papers, mostly dating to the 19th century. Further relevant documents may also be in the Vernon and Warren collection at Cheshire Record Office. None of these primary sources were consulted for this report.

4.2 Secondary sources

Very little has been published on Stapleford's history, and what there is tends to be poorly referenced.

4.3 Cartographic evidence

The earliest available map of Stapleford is the Parliamentary Enclosure map of 1771 which is held in the Nottinghamshire Archives office, as is a plan of 1788 which shows Stapleford Hall and the demesne lands at that time. A later plan of the same area shows the Hall and demesne in 1856, at the time of its sale. Although there is a tithe award for Stapleford, there does not appear to be a map. Consequently the only other pre-Ordnance Survey map to show the buildings and plot boundaries of the whole settlement is Sanderson's map of 20 Miles around Mansfield, 1835.

4.4 Archaeological evidence

There are 17 sites recorded on the Nottinghamshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) within the built-up area of Stapleford, the majority of which relate to post-medieval buildings, either standing or demolished. Records on the SMR for the surrounding area are derived from stray finds and from aerial photographs. No archaeological work is known to have taken place in the town.

5. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

5.1 Prehistoric

There is no evidence of prehistoric activity from the built-up area of Stapleford. However, a few artefacts of prehistoric date have been found in the vicinity, as shown on Figure 1.

To the north-east, Bronze Age flints were found in 1950 on Stapleford Hill, together with a beehive quern of either Iron Age or Roman date (SMR 5169a, b). To the east a small flint scraper was found on the surface of a ploughed field prior to 1961 (SMR 477), while on the margins of Bramcote a truncated

beehive quern and two possible Bronze Age flints were found some time before 1980 (SMR 474). A barbed and tanged arrowhead found in a garden on Moor Lane may have been brought in with topsoil from Bramcote Hills (SMR 5218).

To the south of Stapleford, aerial photographs revealed a cropmark representing a double-ditched enclosure with a second enclosure nearby (SMR 382).

In addition to these finds, but not shown on Figure 1, an Iron Age beehive quern was found in Sandiacre churchyard, on the Derbyshire side of the Erewash, sometime prior to 1966 (Derbyshire SMR 25108).

5.2 Roman

Although traditionally the Romans are said to have had a station at Stapleford (Palmer n.d.), there is no evidence of this at present, nor indeed any evidence of Roman activity at Stapleford itself. The only Roman artefacts recovered from this area so far, apart from the possible Roman quern mentioned above, are three coins (see Figure 1). One, of the late 3rd to 4th century AD, was found on Stapleford Hill in 1968 (SMR 5173). A second, a coin of Valens, was found in a garden in Chilwell in 1970 (SMR 545), while the third, a follis of Maximianus, was found not far from the second, in or before 1982 (SMR 5915)

On the western side of the Erewash, not shown on Figure 1, excavations at Cloud House, Sandiacre, in the 1960s produced a sherd of Romano-British Derbyshire ware (Derbyshire SMR 25109).

5.3 Early Medieval

Although the earliest written reference to Stapleford comes from Domesday Book, its origins are certainly earlier. The place-name, which in 1086 took the same form as the modern name, has the meaning 'ford marked by a post or staple', from **stapol** and **ford** (Gover *et al* 1940). This indicates an early route in the area, crossing the Erewash, and linking two of the five Danish boroughs, Derby and Nottingham.

At the time of the Norman Conquest there were four land-holders at Stapleford, namely Staplewin, Godwin, Gladwin and 'young Wufsi', their estates possibly resulting from the division at some point of a single manor. There was probably also a pre-Conquest church, as both a church and a priest were present in 1086, as recorded in Domesday Book (see 5.4.1 below).

5.3.1 Stapleford Cross (SMR 380, SAM 23366)

The only evidence of the early medieval period at Stapleford is an Anglo-Scandinavian cross shaft. It is said to have been found lying in the churchyard and was set up in the road to the south-east of the church in 1760. At that time it apparently had five or six steps up to it, and was topped with a large stone upon which was a weather-vane and some 'curious' carving (Anon 1880s). Stretton, in his notes on Stapleford, made some time before 1828, suggests an earlier date for the removal of the cross, and also implies that it may have been *in situ*:

'There was formerly standing in the usual place in this churchyard a lofty Runic or Danish cross, which was taken down by some *wise* churchwarden in the beginning of the last century and placed upon a flight of steps in the town street ... It is much to be hoped that some *more wise* churchwarden may one day or other restore it to its original site in the churchyard ...' (Stretton n.d., 55)

A number of changes were made to the cross in c. 1820, including 'turning up' the steps to form a different base, and the replacement of the weather vane and the top stone by a square cap surmounted by a ball (Anon 1880s). The vane and carved top stone were kept in a stockinger's shop for a number of years, but were later lost (Stapleton 1903), while the ball which had replaced them blew off early this century. The cross remained in the road until 1928 when, having become an obstruction to traffic, it was moved to its present setting in the churchyard.

The shaft has three bands of surface sculpture divided by horizontal lines. Most of the decoration consists of various forms of interlace, but on one side is the carving of a winged figure. Traditionally this figure is said to be St Luke, although since it seems to be armed it may represent one of the four archangels (Scheduled Monument description 1995). A range of dates have been proposed for the cross, from AD 680-780 (Ottewell 1997) to 'as late as c. 1050' (Pevsner 1979). However, a recent study analysing early medieval stone sculpture in the north Midlands argued that the stone crosses of the region were probably erected between c. 920 and 950 in response to the reconquest of the north, and that their rationale was therefore essentially political. Their differing design elements, rather than indicating a chronological sequence, represent regional variation. The style groupings which this produces relates to secular divisions that existed largely before, and certainly after, the Viking settlement. The Stapleford Cross was identified as one of a number attributable to the Mercian Vikings, as distinct from groups of the Peak, Lincoln and Elmet (Sidebottom 1999).

5.4 Medieval

5.4.1 Domesday Book, 1086

Land of William Peverel

M. In STAPLEFORD Young Wulfsi, Staplewin, Godwin and Gladwin had 2 c. of land and 6 b. taxable. Land for 3 ploughs. William has in lordship, and Robert holds from him, 3 ploughs and 6 villagers with 6 ploughs; 2 slaves. A priest and a church; meadow, 58 acres. Value before 1066, 60s; now 40[s]. (Domesday Book, Phillimore edition)

5.4.2 The manor

In 1086 Stapleford formed part of William Peverel's estates, although it was held by a sub-tenant, referred to only as Robert. By the early 12th century, the manor was held by Gaufridus de Heriz. The de Heriz family are said to have changed their name to 'Stapleford' in the 13th century, and certainly there is a reference in an inquisition post-mortem of 1248 to 'Geoffrey de Heriz alias de Stapelford'. However, 14th century inquisitions refer both to individuals named 'de Heriz' and 'de Stapelford', and it may be that only one branch of the family took the new name.

An indication of some fragmentation of the Stapleford estate comes from a record of 1337, when three parts of the manor came to Richard de Bughton, his sister having married Richard de Heriz in 1309. By 1428 it appears that the knights fee which Richard de Heriz formerly held in Stapleford was then in five parts, Newstead Priory having one, and the others being held by Thomas Columbell, Nicholas Stapleford, Robert Matley and William Johnson (Thoroton 1677).

5.4.3 Communications

As mentioned previously, Stapleford is believed to have been on the main road running between Nottingham and Derby, known as *Derbigate* in the medieval period.

5.4.4 The settlement and its environs

The medieval village of Stapleford was probably surrounded on three sides by open arable fields and on the west by meadow land and pasture in the flood plain of the Erewash. Moorland lay further north, as indicated by 'Moor Bridge' to the north-east and Bramcote Moor to the north-west. There may also have been moorland to the south, as *le Southmor* is referred to in 1317 (Gover *et al* 1940). Of the open arable fields, one was called Hill Field, at least by the 18th century, and lay to the north-east of the village. Another, in the Cliff Hill area, may have been called Windmill Field (Taylor 1983).

Miller (1994) suggests that Stapleford may at one time have been in Sherwood Forest, quoting in support of this suggestion a record which states that Richard de Heriz of Stapleford was fined in 1175 for forest trespass in the village. This may well have been the case since, according to Crook (1979, 35)

'It seems now to be generally accepted that prior to the reign of Henry III the whole of Nottinghamshire north of the Trent was afforested'

However, the area would appear to have been excluded from the forest by the late 1220s, perambulations of that time indicating that its western boundary followed the Leen northwards (Boulton 1965).

A post-mortem inquisition of 1297 recorded the demesne as being a messuage with curtilage and dovecote, eleven oxgangs of land, 'certain several pasture' and a moiety of a water mill with a pond. Three free tenants were named, and there were 4 bondsmen and 1 cottager (Standish 1914). By 1453 there were several co-owners of the water mill, since a jury at that time found that Robert Matley's widow had in dower the third part of half the mill, although by the 17th century it had reverted to a single owner, Thoroton's cousin (Thoroton 1677).

In 1288 the Prior of Newstead is said to have had a house and land in Stapleford described after the dissolution as 'the mansion of the rectory of Stapulforth'. This will have been related to Newstead's appropriation of the church (see below).

There is no evidence that Stapleford ever held a market or fair. Geographically the nearest medieval market and fair, at least for a time, would have been at Sandiacre, which received the grant of a market and an 8-day fair in 1268, although they lapsed after 1330. However, Unwin (1981) has suggested that the administrative county boundary of Nottinghamshire acted as an economic boundary, in which case the inhabitants of Stapleford would have traveled to Nottingham market, with Lenton as the closest fair.

5.4.5 The parish church of St Helen (SMR 381)

A church and a priest were present at Stapleford by 1086. However, no trace of this church survives above ground, the earliest fabric in the present church being 13th century. The church is dedicated to St Helen, although it has been suggested that it was originally dedicated to St Luke, on the grounds that the annual feast was held on the nearest Sunday to St Luke's Day and, less convincingly, on the identification of the figure on the Stapleford Cross as St Luke.

On the foundation of Lenton Priory by William Peverel, two parts of the tithe of Stapleford demesne were given to the monastery. The church itself was appropriated to Newstead Priory in 1229. In 1259 the prior and convent of Lenton passed both the great and small tithes in Stapleford to Newstead Priory for 5 marks rent, on condition that if Newstead should lose the church, the agreement would be void (Thoroton 1677)

Richard de Stapleford successfully claimed the advowson, but passed it back to the priory in 1279 by fine. As a result, the church would have been served by one of the canons of Newstead. Following the dissolution, Stapleford was declared a perpetual curacy; no vicarage was ordained, but a perpetual curate was appointed.

5.5 Post-medieval (16th - 18th century)

5.5.1 The manor

The lordship of the manor appears to have passed through marriage from the Staplefords to the Teverys of Long Eaton. Gervase Tevery, who died in 1639, was the last of the line. The estates were then inherited by three of his grandsons in succession, the third of whom sold the demesne to Arthur Warren of Toton. Sir John Borlace Warren was lord of the manor in the second half of the 17th century (Thoroton 1677).

5.5.2 Communications

Roads and bridges

There are several references to bridges across the Erewash in this period. In 1687 the treasurers of the county were ordered to pay 20s for 'leading gravell to Sandiacre Bridge'; the following year the bridge was said to be 'much out of repair'. Various records make it clear that watercourses or ditches running down roads leading to the bridge caused damage to it. For example, in October 1688 it was ordered that

'ye watercourse channel or ditch running out of Stapleford Lane by Sandiacre Bridge shall be turned some other way for ye benefit of ye said Causeway and Bridge' (Copnall 1915, 83).

In 1702 Francis Bamford of Stapleford was paid 16s for the scouring of a ditch going through his land

'... for the more commodious carrying away of the water that descends down the lane called Marsh Lane belonging to Stapleford aforesaid'

with another payment being made to him five years later for 'preventing damage to ye County Bridge' near Stapleford (Meaby n.d.). Marsh Lane is said to have been the name of that section of the Derby road between The Roach and the bridge. Several more 18th century records refer to the repair of Sandiacre bridge, for example in 1755, 1786 and 1794; in the latter year it was recorded that the south-east part of the bridge in Stapleford, 17 yards long and 4 yards wide, was very narrow, insufficient and in great decay (Meaby n.d.). By this time the road across the bridge had been turnpiked, the Act for the Nottingham to Derby road having been passed in 1758 (Cossons 1934).

Moorbridge, to the north-west of Stapleford, was in existence by 1620, when it was referred to as 'Moore Bridge' (Glover *et al* 1940). It was mentioned again in 1736, when land forming part of the endowment of a school at Woodborough lay 'near a place called the Moor Bridge' (*Charities in the County of Nottingham* 1839).

Canal

The Erewash Canal, running to the west of Stapleford on the Derbyshire side of the River Erewash, was completed in 1779, with a wharf near the Stapleford-Sandiacre bridge.

5.5.3 The settlement and its environs

In 1771 an Act of Parliament was passed to enclose Stapleford's open fields, meadows, commons and common pastures, although it is clear from the map which accompanied the award in January 1772 that some piecemeal enclosure had already taken place within the open fields.

There are few published references to the settlement during the post-medieval period. There were two licensed victuallers in Stapleford in 1675 and in 1696 the inhabitants were indicted for not scouring the River Erewash (Copnall 1915). The village stocks must originally have been near the church, since they were moved to a new site near the pinfold when the cross was restored in 1760; at the same time the village maypole, which was 'not far off', was taken down. The stocks fell to pieces in the 1870s (Anon 1880s).

By the end of the century, the village was described as 'very populous' (Throsby 1790).

Population

A visitation of 1603 required the number of recusants and communicants in each parish to be reported. In response, the incumbent of Stapleford returned a figure of 150 communicants and no recusants. He did not provide a number for non-communicants (ie those under the age of 16). Wood (1942) assumed that they would have made up some 60% of the total population, and consequently estimated that there were 240 inhabitants of the parish at that date.

In 1676 the figures returned were 110 communicants, with no Roman Catholics or dissenters (Guildford 1924). Increasing this by 60% to take account of non-communicants gives a figure of 176, considerably lower than the estimate for 1603. This was not unusual, since out of 138 parishes where a straight comparison of the two sets of figures was possible, only 38 returned a larger number of communicants in 1676 than they had in 1603 (Wood 1942).

In the returns to Archbishop Herring's visitation in 1743, there were said to be about 50 families in the parish and no dissenters of any sort. The incumbent was at that time resident at Risley in Derbyshire, and complained about the poor benefice (Ollard & Walker 1930).

The accuracy of the above returns is not known and all the figures for Stapleford are suspiciously 'round'; in addition, a document of 1613 records three inhabitants of Stapleford as recusants (Hodgkinson 1926), although of course they may not have been present at the time of the returns. However, the trend implied by the figures may still be correct since work using baptismal and burial records suggests that many places in Nottinghamshire appear to have experienced population stagnation or decrease during the later 17th century and into the 18th century (Wood 1937).

Religious buildings

In 1774 John Wesley preached at Stapleford 'in a meadow because no house could contain the congregation'. By 1780 a Tin Tabernacle had been erected, possibly on the same meadow, with Wesley noting in 1780 that as he passed through Stapleford he was persuaded to 'look into their new preaching house'. This temporary building was replaced in 1782 by the Wesley Place Church which still stands today, although it is no longer used as a Methodist chapel, having been restored in 1848 and again in 1884 (Miller 1994).

Trade and industry

There is little published information available regarding trade and industry in post-medieval Stapleford, although it is likely that for much of this period the local economy was based on agriculture. However, at some point, probably in the 18th century, the textile industry became established there, both in the form of framework knitting and lace manufacture.

In addition, it is clear that interest was being taken in the possibilities offered by the coal industry, as the Warren estate papers at Nottinghamshire Archives include a couple of geological reports on coal borings carried out at Stapleford between 1781 and 1818. These were not consulted for this survey, but it seems likely that Stapleford's coal, such as it was, was not exploited until the 19th century.

5.6 19th century

Communications

Railways

In the early 1830s Stapleford was on the route of a projected railway to take Erewash Valley coal to Leicester. However, the project came to nothing at that time. In 1847 the Midland Railway constructed the Erewash Valley line, with a station in the valley near the road bridge across the Erewash. In this location it was able to serve two communities, Stapleford and Sandiacre.

The settlement and its environs

In 1844 Stapleford was described as being 'a large, pleasant village' on the Erewash (White's Directory) It acquired an Artisans' Library in 1837, and was lit by gas in 1882, the gas being supplied from the Nottingham Corporation.

Population

The 10-yearly census, which commenced in 1801, provides the following figures for Stapleford:

Year	Population
1801	748
1811	954
1821	1104
1831	1533
1841	1837
1851	1968
1861	1729
1871	1967
1881	3196
1891	4255
1901	5766

These figures illustrate the substantial rise in population which took place in the final decades of the 19th century.

Religious buildings

With the influx of population to Stapleford during the 19th century came the requirement for new and/or larger places of worship, particularly non-conformist chapels. A number of religious congregations became established, often meeting in members' houses before acquiring purpose-built chapels.

Methodists

The Wesleyan Methodists had already become established in Stapleford in the 18th century, as mentioned above. Over the course of the 19th century other Methodist congregations were set up. A Methodist New Connexion chapel, later known as St Paul's, was built in 1830 on Nottingham Road, with a former chapel, built in 1806, being used as a schoolroom (White's Directory 1885-6). The chapel was rebuilt on the same site in 1884, but closed when a section of the roof collapsed and badly damaged the inside of the premises in 1954 (Miller 1994).

A Primitive Methodist chapel was built in 1839 and enlarged in 1850. In 1899 the foundation stone was laid for a new Primitive Methodist Chapel at the Roach, which opened the following year. In the meantime, the original Wesleyan Methodist chapel had become the property of the Wesleyan Reformers in 1851. A new Wesleyan Chapel was erected in 1859 on Church Street, and replaced by a new chapel with adjoining vestries and Sunday School in 1886, later known as the 'Central'. Following the development of new housing in the area to the south of Stapleford, a Methodist Mission or Church was opened at Brookhill in the 1880s.

Baptists

The Baptists were meeting in Stapleford by 1852, when their church was situated in a building in Bostock's Yard off Pinfold Lane. This was described as 'most inconvenient and uninviting, being a low-

roofed, damp and miserable room'. A new church was opened in 1877 in Albert Street, with an adjoining Sunday School being added in 1884 (Miller 1994).

Education

In 1836 a large National school was built on Nottingham Road and endowed by Lady Caroline Warren with provision for 230 children. Two cottages for staff were built on either side of the double entrance to the school. It was described in 1844 as being 'situated on a commanding eminence near the east end of the village' (White's Directory).

A school board was formed in 1877 and a Board School and headteacher's residence erected and opened on Church Street in 1880, a room for infants being added later. It accommodated 320 boys and girls and 221 infants (Miller 1994).

Trade and industry

Textiles

The textile industry, which was established in the village during the 18th century, became an increasingly important source of employment in the 19th century. Both framework knitting and lace manufacture were carried out. In 1844 a study of the former trade and the condition of the knitters found that there was a total of 33 stocking frames in employment at Stapleford, all using cotton (Felkin 1845). In 1832 there were more than 100 lace machines in operation (White's Directory), a figure which had increased to 270 machines by 1844, principally making tattings and warp lace (White's Directory).

Over the course of the 19th century the textile industry in Stapleford changed from being carried out in individual houses or in small shops to factories, with the emphasis also changing from hosiery to lace. In the 1880s the principal manufacture was warp lace, with three factories in production, although at that time many machines were said to be standing idle. In addition, Watson & Son, silk throwsters of Beeston, had a branch factory at Stapleford. There was also a factory manufacturing lace machines (Anon 1880s).

Other

There was a tanner at 'Brockhill' in 1832 (White's Directory) - presumably in the area of the bridge, since there is a Brookhill Street near the station in the 1880s. There were two corn millers listed at that time also, one of whom was presumably at the corn mill on the Erewash. It is possible that the other may have been at a windmill. Windmill Hill is marked on later 19th century maps to the south-east of Stapleford centre, although there is no windmill depicted in the area on Sanderson's map of 1835.

White's Directory for 1832 also records the presence of two brick-makers, probably working at the two brick kilns marked on Sanderson's map of 1835, one being to the east, along Nottingham Road, the other about a mile to the north-east, at New Stapleford.

As mentioned previously, searches for coal had been carried out at the end of the 18th century and at some point during the 19th century coal was worked to the north of the village, as a disused colliery is marked on the 1880s OS map.

Additional employment for Stapleford inhabitants at the end of the 19th century was to be found in neighbouring parishes, namely at Trowell Moor Colliery, at Stanton Ironworks and at Toton Sidings on the Midland Railway (Anon 1880s).

5.7 20th century

The rapid rise in population which had occurred over the course of the 19th century continued into the 20th century. This resulted in an equally rapid building programme of roads and houses, together with retail and leisure facilities. Some employment continued in the textile industry, while new sources of employment were offered by Chambers' Garden Pencil Works and the adjacent Kenya Works, producing quality pencils, crayons and chalk, and by the Carr Fastener Company. These are no longer in production, however. More recently an industrial estate has been developed at Bessell Lane to the south of Stapleford.

As a result of increasing traffic along the Nottingham to Derby road, both Stapleford and Sandiacre were by-passed in 1964, with a new bridge across the Erewash being constructed to the south of the original bridge.

6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF STAPLEFORD

The town has been divided into a number of plan elements, or components, based at present on map evidence and documentary sources, in the absence of any archaeological investigation. These plan elements have been subdivided below according to the earliest date of their assumed occurrence, although in many cases these divisions are tentative only, and need to be confirmed by further work. Subsequent major changes are briefly summarised, together with the degree of survival of early features to the present day.

6.1 Early medieval components

Four components have been tentatively identifed for the early medieval period; their location is shown on Figure 3. Their identification is based mainly on plan form analysis of the enclosure map, a copy of part of which is reproduced as Figure 2.

Component 1 Church and churchyard (SMR 381)

The earliest fabric in the present church is 13th century, the building probably developing to its current size at that time. The steeple is typical of west Nottinghamshire, with its battlemented tower and much thinner spire (Pevsner 1979). The chancel is known to have been repaired in 1612. The church was restored in 1785, when it was re-roofed and box-type pews installed. It was restored again in 1876-7, when the north wall was taken down and rebuilt and the chancel partly taken down and rebuilt. Parapets were added on the nave and the interior was refitted. A visitor to the church in 1877 noted that 'the old windows, with bad taste, have been removed from the north side and erected in the Vicar's garden' (Miller 1994).

The form of the churchyard is that shown on the enclosure map of 1771, before it was extended in the 19th and 20th centuries. The churchyard was closed for interments in 1883, and has been 'tidied up' in the 20th century, with the removal of the gravestones from their original sites, possibly in c. 1946-52, as there are papers in Nottinghamshire Archives relating to 'churchyard improvements'.

Component 2 Area to the north of Church Lane

This area appears to have been enclosed before 1771 and was bounded at its western end by a lane leading to the mill. It contained no buildings at that time, with the exception of a single one at the corner of Church Lane and Church Street, traditionally said to have been associated with the brewing of church ale. It was still virtually undeveloped at the end of the 19th century, much of the area having been taken into the park of Stapleford Hall, although a vicarage had been built at the eastern end and the graveyard had extended northwards. By that time also Church Lane only extended a short distance beyond the church to the west. Virtually the whole area has been developed, mainly for housing, in the 20th century, with the

exception of the south-eastern end, which has been incorporated into the churchyard, and now contains Stapleford Cross.

Component 3 Area to the south of Church Lane

As with component 2, this area appears to have been enclosed before 1771, and was bounded at its western end by a lane leading to Stapleford Hall and to the south-west by a track on the line of Isaac's Lane, although Isaac's Lane itself, connecting this track with Church Street, is not shown. Some buildings are depicted in the eastern third of this area, mainly close to the church. In 1786 there was a pond at the western end. The Church Street and Church Lane frontages became increasingly developed in the 19th century, although the western half of the area was taken into Stapleford Hall's parkland, . To the north of Isaac's Lane the Board Schools were built in the 1880s and are still present, although much of the rest of this area has disappeared under 20th century development.

Component 4 Ford

Although the site of the early ford from which Stapleford takes its name is traditionally said to be in the area of the mill, it is suggested that it may in fact have been in this area, and that Church Lane originally led to it. A building, possibly a barn, was sited here in the 1770s but had apparently gone by 1786, after which the area lay within Stapleford Hall's parkland until the 20th century, when much of it was developed for housing.

6.2 Medieval components

Three medieval components have been tentatively identified, based mainly on plan form analysis of the enclosure map, and are illustrated on Figure 4.

Component 5 Mill

Domesday Book does not mention a mill at Stapleford; however, there was one present by the end of the 13th century, generally assumed to have been on the same site as the corn mill shown on 18th century maps as part of the Stapleford Hall estate. The present mill building, in use grinding flour throughout the 19th century but now used as a club, and the nearby cottage are believed to have been built in the late 18th century. The Erewash has been diverted, and now runs slightly further west.

Component 6 *Manor House* (SMR 5170)

The house belonging to the Prior of Newstead is said to have been on this site in the 13th century. It was demised to Peter Martyll in 1538, later coming to the Broadbents, then to the Jacksons by marriage. The house was rebuilt by George Jackson in 1689 and had become known as the Manor House by the 19th century. It was demolished in the 1970s, despite attempts to save it, and the site developed for new housing.

Component 7 Settlement, east side of Church Street

The enclosure map shows a number of properties fronting Church Street, with fairly irregular property boundaries. The area is divided by Church Walk connecting Church Lane and Nottingham Road. Several new streets were constructed in the 19th century and the area became more densely settled. The southern half of the component included a Methodist Chapel and a Baptist Chapel, with the latter, on Albert Street, still surviving. The building next to it was a silk works in the early 20th century.

6.3 Post-medieval components (c. 1500-1771)

Five post-medieval components have been tentatively identified, based mainly on plan form analysis of the enclosure map, and are illustrated on Figure 5 (with the exception of component 8)

Component 8 *Moor Bridge* (shown on Figure 6)

Moor Bridge was present by the 17th century, as there are documentary references to it at that time. Whether the site of the original bridge was the same as the current one is uncertain, as the course of the river may have been altered, particularly when the railway was constructed. The present bridge appears to be of relatively modern construction.

Component 9 Stapleford Hall (SMR 400)

Secondary sources all state that Stapleford Hall had 13th century origins; however it seems a somewhat surprising choice of site and has not been included here with the medieval components. The manor was put up for sale in the 17th century, and the hall and some of the estate was purchased by Arthur Warren of Toton, the remainder of the estate going to various purchasers. The Hall was rebuilt towards the end of the 18th century, possibly in 1788, by Sir John Borlase Warren. Plantations were laid out and an avenue of lime trees was planted leading up to it. It continued to be owned by the Warrens until 1862. By the early 20th century it had fallen into decay, and was demolished in *c.* 1935 (Miller 1994). A photograph of its demolition appears to show mullioned windows, suggesting it may not have been completely rebuilt in the late 18th century (Taylor 1983). The site has since been redeveloped for housing.

Component 10 Settlement along Derby Road

The Warren Arms is said to have its origins in the 1750s, possibly as a result of the turnpiking of the Nottingham to Derby road. The enclosure map indicates a couple of buildings on the opposite side of the road also. The area has become more densely occupied by housing and shops in the course of the 20th century.

Component 11 Settlement at The Roach

The Roach is believed to take its name from the time of the Napoleonic War, when French prisoners were put to work repairing roads in Stapleford. At this spot they found lots of rocks which they referred to as 'les roches' (Ottewell 1997). Alternatively, they could have been referring to the Hemlock Stone, which probably would have been visible to them, as 'la roche'. Several buildings are shown on the enclosure map in this area, mainly gable end on to the street. Most, if not all, have since been demolished, as the Roach has become a busy road junction. It is not clear from the 1771 map whether the road from Nottingham actually formed a part of this junction at that time, although it certainly did by 1835. A farmhouse stood on the site of the modern police station, while another building which stood 'where the bungalow now stands at the side of Eaton's Road car park' is said to have had a datestone of 1600 over the door (Miller 1994).

Component 12 Settlement to the west of the village

This area may originally have formed an open space at the edge of the village, with squatter settlement taking place in the post-medieval period. The 1771 map shows a number of small buildings in or around what became Nottingham Road. Much of the area became part of Carr's Fastener Works in the early 20th century.

6.4 Late 18th and 19th century components

These components have been identified from a comparison of the enclosure map of 1771 and the Ordnance Survey map of 1900, and are illustrated on Figure 6. The majority are a mixture of industrial and housing elements.

Component 13 Midland Railway

Sandiacre railway station (SMR 397) on the Midland line opened in August 1848, being renamed Stapleford and Sandiacre station in c.1890. The station was closed to goods traffic in October 1964 and to passengers in January 1967.

Component 14 Settlement on Moorbridge Road

A row of terraced houses was constructed here after 1886 and before 1901.

Component 15 Stapleford Colliery, Brick yard and nearby housing

Nothing is shown on this site in 1835; however, on the OS map of 1886 Stapleford Brick Yard and a disused colliery, presumably Stapleford Colliery, are marked. A double line of hachures on the same map suggest the colliery had been linked by rail to the Midland Railway. In 1901 the brick yard is shown as Stapleford Brick Works. A row of terraced houses on the opposite side of the road, present by 1886, were probably built in association with the industrial development.

Component 16 New Stapleford

This area is marked as 'New Stapleford' on Sanderson's map of 1835, with brick kilns shown (SMR 393), possibly associated with the construction of the houses there. In 1844 it was described as a 'small hamlet' of 26 houses, chiefly occupied by stocking makers. By 1885-6, it had become chiefly occupied by colliers (White's Directories). The area appears to have been completely redeveloped in the 20th century.

Components 17 & 18 Settlement along Hickings Lane

Component 17 includes a couple of buildings shown by 1835 at the junction of Hickings Lane and Ilkeston Road, and component 18 a probable post-enclosure farmstead, also present by 1835, which has since disappeared under new housing estates.

Components 19 & 20 Settlement along Pasture Road

A row of terrace housing called Pasture Row, at right angles to Pasture Road, together with nearby houses along the western side of Pasture Road, had been constructed by the end of the 19th century (component 19). Further south, a couple of buildings were erected near the junction with Hickings Lane (component 20). The whole of the former area appears to have been redeveloped, although the latter buildings seem to have survived.

Components 21-24 Settlement along Nottingham Road

The 19th century street pattern in much of component 21 reflected earlier enclosures taken out of the open fields, with several narrow parallel roads running north-south at right-angles to the main road, containing terraces of relatively small houses. The area has been fairly comprehensively redeveloped, although the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel at the corner of Nottingham Road and Pinfold Lane has survived (SMR 394), and is a Grade II listed building.

Brick kilns are marked in the area of component 22 on Sanderson's map of 1835 (SMR 392). At the end of the 19th century there was an assortment of buildings set in irregularly sized plots. The area has been extensively redeveloped in the 20th century.

Component 23, Cloud House, appears to have come into existence after the enclosure of the open fields, although it lay at the edge of an area of land which was already enclosed in 1771. Component 24 comprises a number of buildings along the southern side of Nottingham Road, many of which were present by 1835. They include the National school and a number of purpose-built houses associated with the

textile industry, incorporating workshops on their upper floor (SMR 402-5). These are generally referred to as framework knitters' houses, although according to Palmer & Neaverson (1992), it is impossible to distinguish by visual evidence alone between houses associated with the lace industry and those associated with the hosiery industry, both of which were present in Stapleford. Several of the surviving examples within this component are Grade II listed buildings, as is the school of 1836.

Component 25 Settlement in the Mount Street and Cemetery Road area

This component comprises a number of buildings along Cemetery Road, including a building which was a silk mill in the 1880s but appears to have become a brewery by 1900, although disused in 1914. An area of housing along Mount Street and High Street, together with two chapels, since demolished. Towards the south-western end of this area, 19th century buildings were set back into the slope, having only small and irregularly shaped plots associated with them.

Component 26 Cemetery

Land for a new cemetery was provided in 1880 by a local lace manufacturer, who had the site laid out at his own expense, giving it to the parish when it was completed the following year (Ottewell 1997). It included a pair of mortuary chapels linked by an archway with a steeple over. The chapel on the northern side of the arch was Church of England, the other Nonconformist. The whole structure is now a Grade II listed building.

Component 27 Stapleford Hall Park

This component illustrates the form the park had assumed by the later 19th century, including more formal gardens lying at the southern end below the Hall. It is not clear from the enclosure map to what extent the land lying around the Hall had been developed as gardens by 1770s; however when Throsby visited it in c. 1790, he noted that the Hall was 'at present adorned with no field beauties of attraction; but the young plantations, around, are pleasing indications of what it may be. By 1835 the northern boundary was marked by Mill Road, which was presumably constructed to provide the villagers with access to the mill, following the incorporation of the earlier route into the park, while the western boundary was formed by the Erewash. However, in 1902 the Park was partitioned into building lots and sold off (Miller 1994). The area is now covered by housing.

Component 28 Settlement along the eastern side of Eaton's Road

Some buildings were beginning to extend along this road by the end of the 19th century.

Components 29-32 Settlement along the northern end of Derby Road

Sanderson's map of 1835 indicates that very little development had taken place in this area in the early decades of the 19th century. However, by the end of the century a variety of buildings had been erected, partly along Derby Road and Eaton's Road, and partly along new roads constructed running off Nottingham Road at right angles. To some extent, the alignment of these streets and the rear boundaries of the buildings along them fossilised the pattern of earlier long narrow enclosures made out of the open fields, and this pattern is still visible today. Some of the housing survives; however, the 19th century lace factory within component 31 is no longer present. It had been destroyed by fire in 1881, and then rebuilt, later becoming a pencil works in the 20th century, with a lace factory to the south and a hosiery factory along its northern side in 1938.

Components 33-34 Settlement along the southern end of Derby Road

This area was developed in the last decade of the 19th century, when a network of new street were laid out on either side of Derby Road as it approached the railway station. Rows of mainly terraced housing were constructed, many of which still survive.

Component 35 Settlement to the west of Bessell Lane

Some buildings were present here by 1889. Some time after this, but before 1901, a saw mill had been erected also (SMR 396). The area now forms part of a larger industrial estate.

Component 36 New Farm

Following enclosure, a farm was established in an area of previously open fields. The farm has since been demolished and the area redeveloped for new housing.

6.5 20th century development

Twentieth century development is represented by a single un-numbered component (see Figure 7). It should be noted that the occasional earlier building, such as an isolated farm which was at a distance from the core of medieval and post-medieval settlement during those periods, may occur within this component.

6.6 Discussion

The plan of Stapleford as it appears on the earliest available map, the enclosure map of 1771, makes it difficult to be certain of the earliest form of the settlement, and the sequence of development as proposed below needs to be tested by documentary research and archaeological excavation.

At present there is no evidence of any settlement at Stapleford prior to the early medieval period, at which time a village probably grew up at or close to a fording point across the Erewash, with Sandiacre developing on the Derbyshire side of the river. The approximately oval shape of the churchyard as depicted on the enclosure map (component 1) indicates an early origin and it is suggested that a preconquest church stood on the same site, accompanied or preceded by a carved stone cross in the 10th century. The settlement at that time might be expected to have clustered around the church, although the church is not particularly near the traditional site of the ford, said to have been in the meadows near the mill (component 5).

Examination of the enclosure map (Figure 2) suggests another possible location for the ford. It shows Church Lane continuing further west than it does today, finishing at a lane or boundary, the shape of which suggests an earlier river meander. The line of Church Lane to the east is followed by Church Walk which connects with Nottingham Road, and it is suggested, therefore, that the original route to the ford (component 4) followed this line, with settlement on either side of Church Lane (components 2 and 3) and around the church (component 1), with Component 3 having a back lane, of which Isaac's Lane is a remnant.

At some point, suggested here to have been in the medieval period, the focus of the village changed, resulting also in a change in orientation, from east/west to north/south aligned on Church Street (Components 6 and 7). This may have involved development in a new area or the replanning of existing settlement within Component 7. The cause of such a change in orientation is unknown, although it could have been associated with changes in the course of the river. The very name of the river, Erewash, can be interpreted as indicating a tendency to meander, with the first element possibly being derived from the Old English *irre* in the sense 'wandering', and the second from Old English *wisce*, meaning 'wet meadow'. There is a reference to *Holdeerwys* in 1330 which most probably refers to an old course of the stream (Gover *et al* 1940). Such alterations in the course of the river may have resulted in the ford becoming unusable, with new crossing points developing elsewhere, for example on the sites of the later bridges to the north, at Moor Bridge or, more particularly, to the south, especially since Sandiacre, on the Derbyshire side of the river, seems to show a similar change in orientation, extending southwards from its earliest core around the church.

It seems unlikely that there was much expansion of the settlement until the mid-18th century, when the Nottingham to Derby road was turnpiked and when the framework knitting industry began to offer a source of employment which could be supplemented by the keeping of a few animals on the commons. This industry tended to become established in 'open' villages, in other words those which were not subject to domination by major landowners and where immigration was freely allowed (Palmer & Neaverson 1992). This may well have been the case at Stapleford, as suggested by development around the fringes of the village (components 10, 11 and 12). The enclosure map indicates that a good deal of this was squatter settlement, showing a number of buildings with no associated gardens or crofts, particularly on the southern side of component 12 and along the margins of Pinfold Lane.

It is suggested that Stapleford Hall (component 9) was built to the south-west of the church in the post-medieval period, perhaps when the manor was purchased by Arthur Warren in the 17th century. Although traditionally the Hall is held to have been built on the same site as the medieval manor house, its location in the floodplain makes this tradition questionable. In the absence of documentary or archaeological evidence of a medieval building on this site, therefore, the early manor house is assumed to have been on higher ground, probably closer to the church.

Once the open fields and commons had been enclosed in 1771, development was able to spread in all directions, although generally avoiding the low-lying land close to the Erewash, much of which, to the immediate west of the village, became a park for the rebuilt Stapleford Hall (component 27). As with the earlier period, the main focus for development was the Nottingham to Derby road, particularly to the southwest of Stapleford (components 33-34), close to the railway station and bridge, with employment opportunities across the river. Some development did occur to the north, however, mainly in association with the coal industry, while in Stapleford itself, new terraces were laid out to house workers in the several mills which were established in the later 19th century. In addition, a couple of new farms were built at some distance from the town centre (Components 18 & 36).

The 20th century has seen a massive expansion of housing in the Stapleford area, together with the development of associated facilities, such as recreational areas and shops. The shopping area has tended to spread down Derby Road, away from the early core of the settlement. Housing development has expanded in all directions, however, constrained originally by the Erewash floodplain to the west and, more recently, by an area of green belt in other directions.

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ISSUES

7.1 Research questions

What was the basis for the tradition that the Romans had a "station" at Stapleford?

Stapleford is known to have been in existence in the early medieval period, its name reflecting its site at a fording point of the Erewash, and consequently on an important early route, presumably between Nottingham and Derby. Its potential importance is hinted at by the survival of a decorated cross shaft of probable 10th century date. However, nothing is known of this early settlement, its status and extent, nor even the actual location of the ford, traditionally said to have been near the mill, although an alternative suggestion is made in this report.

In the same way, the extent of the medieval settlement is not known at present. Where was the medieval manor house - was it indeed where tradition puts it, essentially down on the Erewash flood plain? What was the course of the medieval Nottingham/Derby road through the village? What was the status of the of the 'mansion of the rectory' which belonged to Newstead, and which is said to have been on the site of the building which later was called 'Manor House'?

Documentary sources indicate the presence of a water corn mill at Stapleford by the 13th century. This is assumed to have been on the same site as the 18th century mill, but was this the case? Was it in continual

use from that time until the present century? Did any ponds, leats etc. associated with it have to be modified over time?

What are the earliest dates of the river crossings to the north-west and south-west of Stapleford (Moorbridge and Sandiacre Bridge) and the implications of these, particularly the latter, on the development of Stapleford? It would be interesting also to examine the plan form and growth of Sandiacre, on the western side of the Erewash, as well as documentation relating to it, as such an examination could also shed light on the development of Stapleford.

When did the Erewash acquire the course shown on the enclosure map as it flows to the west of Stapleford, as this is clearly an artifical one?

Did the Erewash Canal have any impact on Stapleford in terms either of industrial development or of the form of the town? Was Stapleford's economy stimulated directly or even indirectly through the development of industry at Sandiacre providing work for Stapleford inhabitants?

7.2 Archaeological potential

7.2.1 Existing protection

Conservation areas

There are two conservation areas in Stapleford, as shown on Figure 8. The first of these, Church Street Conservation Area, is centred around the parish church, in what would have been the heart of the medieval village. The second, Nottingham Road Conservation Area, lies to the north-east in an area which only developed after the enclosure of the open fields towards the end of the 18th century.

Listed buildings

There are 17 listed buildings in Stapleford, nearly all of which are shown on Figure 8. The exceptions are structures such as gates and boundary walls, and a single building which lies further to the east. Of the 17, one is Grade I, namely Stapleford Cross, and one, the Church of St Helen, is Grade II*. The remainder are Grade II.

7.2.2 Above ground remains

Stapleford's main roads are still essentially those shown on the earliest map of the settlement, albeit somewhat swamped by the number of new streets serving the surrounding housing areas. The Roach continues to be an important junction, from which roads radiate out, although no longer peripheral to the settlement. In addition, the commercial focus has shifted from Church Street, once the main street of the village, to Derby Road. The development of the housing estates has tended to destroy the earlier pattern of plot and field boundaries, particularly along the northern side of Nottingham Road. The only area in which there has been some survival, at least visually if not physically, is to the south-west of the Roach, in the triangle of land between Derby Road and Eaton's Road.

Traditionally buildings in this area would have been timber-framed or constructed using mud with thatched roofs. Increasingly over the course of the 18th century rebuilding in brick occurred, using bricks from local kilns, at least for the main dwellings, even if outbuildings remained of simpler construction. This is illustrated by a particularly detailed description of the vicarage at Stapleford in a Glebe Terrier of 1781:

'A parsonage house built with brick and covered with thatch, containing 7 rooms, those below floor'd with Brick, those above with Plaister, except one which is partly floor'd with Boards; the Walls of the lower Rooms drawn with Mortar, the rest bare; the Rooms below ceiled with Lime, those above open to the Thatch. Two Outhouses, one called a kitchen, the other a Coal house, the

first about four yards square, the other about four yards by three, both built with mud and covered with rushes'.

This vicarage was probably demolished in the 19th century, while two of Stapleford's most important early buildings, the Hall and the Manor House, were unfortunately demolished during the 20th century. Indeed, the town appears to have relatively few surviving buildings of the 18th century or before. This impression is confirmed by the dates of listed buildings, all but four of which are of the 19th century. Of course, it is always possible that earlier structures survive behind later facades.

Most of the housing stock which pre-dates the 20th century comes from the last decades of the 19th century and consists mainly of terraces of fairly plain brick-built houses, although in a few areas, such as Park Street, pairs of semi-detached villas were constructed, sometimes with particularly decorative brickwork friezes.

As Pevsner (1979) noted, the most interesting buildings in Stapleford tend to be industrial, in particular the buildings along Nottingham Road which were specially constructed for textile workers, with their distinctive long top windows. These are generally in good condition, lying as they do in a conservation area, although one such building, on the northern side of the road, appears to be deteriorating. However, there are also other industrial buildings which should not be overlooked, including factory buildings in Albert Street, next to the 19th century Baptist Chapel, the old corn mill and nearby cottage down near the Erewash, and surviving buildings of Carr's Fasterner Works, which took over an earlier textile mill, and in the area of which is a distinctive stone wall, unusual amongst all the brick.

Within the churchyard, in addition to the important structures of church and cross, there are also a number of attractive slate gravestones. The removal of these from their original positions to line up at an angle along the side of the path, has undoubtedly made maintenance easier but arguably detracts considerably from the appearance of the churchyard.

Within the floodplain of the Erewash, earthworks and a small brick-built bridge of the 19th century or earlier indicate the course of the river as it flowed from the mill towards Stapleford Hall, although the present channel lies further west.

7.2.3 Below ground remains

With no archaeological work having taken place in Stapleford, it is difficult to assess the extent to which any below ground remains may have survived. However, the flood plain of the Erewash must be seen as an area of high potential. The survival of remains may depend on the degree of damage done by both earlier and recent canalisation of the river, but it is possible that palaeochannels could be identifiable, together with environmental remains and waterlogged deposits. The river may have been used as a dumping area for refuse, and for early industry associated with the use of water, such as tanning, and the flour mill. In addition, and perhaps most importantly in terms of the development of the settlement, remains of the early ford might survive, perhaps as material deliberately deposited to form a causeway across the soft ground of the floodplain and across the watercourse itself.

Equally important is the area of the church and churchyard. In addition to the remains of the past population of Stapleford, there is the potential of survival of earlier phases of the church and possibly even of the original site of the cross. The churchyard has been extended both northwards and eastwards and may also, therefore, contain the remains of earlier buildings along the frontages of Church Lane and Church Street.

The site of Stapleford Hall now lies under an area of dense early 20th century housing and it is highly doubtful as to whether the question of its medieval origins can be answered from the archaeology, although there is always the possibility of survival of remains within back gardens and below the later roads. The same is true of much of the area identified as the possible early medieval core of the town. However, there are some areas of garden on the southern side of Church Lane which appear to have remained relatively

open since the late 18th century, together with some open spaces to the rear of buildings along Church Street, that could contain archaeological deposits. In many other areas, the degree of 19th century factory and house building, as well as street widening, may have caused considerable damage to any underlying deposits, but until some areas have been examined, the extent of such damage cannot be assessed.

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