



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**
Environment

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

WEST STOCKWITH

**Prepared
for**



ENGLISH HERITAGE
Extensive Urban Survey Programme

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WEST STOCKWITH

GILL STROUD, 2001

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. West Stockwith 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

West Stockwith lies at the very north-eastern edge of Nottinghamshire on the River Trent, and has been described as 'Notts at its most Lincolnshire, that is a riverside village all of brick, almost as if it were in Holland' (Pevsner 1979, 377).

Although it cannot be said ever to have been more than a large village, the historical and archaeological importance of West Stockwith lies in the fact that it was a successful and flourishing river port from at least as early as the 14th century, if not before. This was the result of its situation where the Bycarrs Dyke, containing some of the waters of the River Idle, flows into the Trent. Goods from Derbyshire and South Yorkshire were sent overland to the inland port of Bawtry, on the Idle, and then shipped to West Stockwith before being taken to Hull and beyond. A wide range of goods returned by the same route. As a result, West Stockwith enjoyed a certain amount of prosperity, with warehouses, boat-building yards, ropewalks and other associated trades.

As an already established port, West Stockwith then became the eastern terminus of the Chesterfield Canal, with a basin beside the Trent where materials could be transhipped. As a result, the focus of the settlement shifted away from the Idle, but its prosperity continued. With the success of the railways however, traffic on the Chesterfield Canal and on the Trent declined, and West Stockwith along with it, leaving a quiet but attractive village on the banks of the Trent.

2. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

West Stockwith lies in the Trent floodplain at a height of between 5 and 6m AOD. The surface geology consists mostly of alluvium with evidence in some areas for artificial warping. The solid geology is Mercia Mudstone, on which Misterton lies, a couple of miles south-west of Stockwith.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

West Stockwith would have been in Oswalbeck wapentake at the time of Domesday Book, assuming the settlement to have been in existence by that time. Oswalbeck was later united to Bassetlaw wapentake, of which it formed the North Clay division. West Stockwith now lies within Bassetlaw District.

Ecclesiastically West Stockwith formed part of Misterton parish until 1892 when it became a separate parish. However the two were rejoined in 1957 (Townesley 1971).

4. SOURCES

4.1 Primary sources

There does not appear to be a large amount of primary documentation available, particularly of an early date, probably at least in part because land ownership was divided among a relatively large number of freeholders rather than being in the hands of a single lord. Material in Nottinghamshire Archives includes the Huntington deeds and legal papers 1594-1830, a collection which, according to the catalogue, 'illustrates the assembly of property by the Huntington family in the vicinity of West Stockwith during the 17th century and reflects the activities of a community closely interested in ships and shipping'. Nottinghamshire Archives also hold a few general deeds, mainly 18th century, land tax assessments 1781-1832, wharfingers' and coal dealers' accounts, and the Vestry minute book 1896-1969. Misterton parish registers survive from 1549, West Stockwith having been in Misterton parish for much of its history. No primary material was consulted for this assessment, although the Archives' catalogues, containing summaries of some of the documents, were consulted.

A brief search of the Public Record Office on-line catalogue under 'Stockwith' brought 111 documents to light, although some of these will relate to East Stockwith. One document was listed as a survey of Walkeringham, Misterton and Stockwith during the reign of James I. The State Papers included documents relating to the transport of timber in particular to and from West Stockwith. Records of the Commission of Sewers, set up from the 13th century onwards, dealt with the main watercourses, including the Idle and the Bycarrs Dyke (Dinnin 1997) and could well be of relevance to a study of West Stockwith. In the same vein, Nottingham University Manuscripts section holds a collection of documents and maps relating to the drainage of Hatfield Chase.

4.2 Secondary sources

No thorough history of West Stockwith appears to have been published, although a couple of articles deal in general terms with its history as a port. The Doubleday Catalogue at Nottinghamshire Local Studies Library provided several useful references regarding the medieval settlement. A considerable amount of material has been published on the Chesterfield Canal; some of these publications include photographs of West Stockwith Basin, ship-building yards, the loading of boats and so on (for example, Roffey 1989).

4.3 Cartographic evidence

The earliest surviving map to show Stockwith was made in 1596 in relation to disputes over land to the south of the Isle of Axholme; although schematic in its depiction of the settlement, it nevertheless shows some important features. Plans of 1639 and 1766 drawn to show the drainage of Hatfield Chase show West Stockwith very schematically by just a couple of buildings. A map of 1773 shows a small part of the area to the south of the Bycarrs Dyke. Despite Parliamentary enclosure of Misterton and West Stockwith in 1775, no map has survived. Similarly there is no tithe map, as tithes were commuted at enclosure. Consequently the earliest fully detailed maps are the Ordnance Survey maps of the 1880s.

4.4 Archaeological evidence

There are six entries in the County Sites and Monuments Record for the area under consideration in this assessment, five of which are associated with West Stockwith Basin. No archaeological excavations are known to have been undertaken, although several site inspections have taken place during the course of recent redevelopment (U Spence pers. comm.).

5. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

5.1 Prehistoric

Evidence from some parts of the lower Trent valley have indicated that the river was of some importance during the prehistoric period. However, much information from the Stockwith area is thought to have been obscured as a consequence of later alluvial sedimentation and post-medieval warping. At present, evidence is restricted to several pieces of worked flint recovered during fieldwalking to the north and west of West Stockwith and assumed to date from the prehistoric period. These finds are marked on Figure 1 as site A, B, C, D, E and F. Twelve unworked pieces of flint were also found at the latter location (Fenwick *et al* 1998). There is currently no evidence datable to the prehistoric period from the eastern side of the Trent at Stockwith (information from Lincs. SMR).

Such cropmarks as are visible around West Stockwith are generally related to features associated with post-medieval warping (Fenwick *et al* 1998). However, an area of cropmarks has been identified near North Carr Cottages which may be unrelated to warping (shown as site X on Figure 1). A linear feature follows the southern edge of North Carr Road between North Carr Farm and North Carr Cottages with a slight break in the eastern end. At the eastern end, cutting through this break, are other cropmarks which form a sub-rectangular feature, from which two linear ditches extend, one westwards from its southwestern corner, the other to the east of its southeastern corner. Internally there is a short double-ditched feature. Surrounding this are a number of other features which appear to represent a focus for the complex. However, there is nothing diagnostic to suggest either date or function (Fenwick *et al* 1998) and its inclusion in this section is not meant to imply a prehistoric date for these cropmarks.

A second feature has been noted to the north of West Stockwith, centred on the area shown as site XX on Figure 1. This is rectilinear, aligned east-west and measures approximately 50m x 40m. Internally there are a number of pits, with further pits externally to the east and south. As with site X above, the function and date of this feature are not clear on the basis of morphology and there are no apparent associations which might assist in its interpretation (Fenwick *et al* 1998).

5.2 Roman

There is unequivocal evidence of Roman activity to the south-west of West Stockwith (see Figure 1), where an extensive scatter of Roman pottery sherds, probably of mid 3rd to late 4th century date, was collected in or before 1955 (SMR 5112). Further west an extensive scatter of Roman pottery of the 3rd and 4th centuries, together with an amount of iron slag, was found in a field on the southern side of the Chesterfield Canal in or before 1964 (SMR 5111). From a nearby area some sherds of grey ware, a fragment of mortarium and a few pieces of tile were found in *c.* 1974.

There is a long tradition that the Bycarrs Dyke is of Roman origin (eg Stevenson 1893) not least because Domesday Book indicates its existence by 1086 and an Anglo-Saxon origin has been thought to be unlikely. Fieldwork in the area around an excavated Romano-British settlement at Sandtoft, Lincs. indicated that much of the region had been extensively farmed during the Roman period. This was taken to suggest not only that some of the Roman Army's food was produced in this area, implying reasonably efficient land drainage, but also that the lack of roads suitable for wheeled transport implied the use of water transport. In addition, the excavations revealed a marked change in the pattern of alluviation in the bed of the North Idle which could be dated either to the late Roman period or immediately after. Jones

(1995) considered that this change could only have been due to sustained diminution in the river's volume such as could have been caused by the diversion of part of it into the Trent via the Bycarrs Dyke. Since a late Roman or immediately post-Roman date for the Bycarrs Dyke was considered to be 'very remote', Jones concluded that the Bycarrs Dyke was:

'more likely to have been cut much earlier and retained at its natural level by means of a sluice gate near the Trent, which decayed with age and collapsed due to lack of maintenance' (Jones 1995, 525).

It had previously been proposed that the Turnbridgedike in Yorkshire was almost certainly built for navigation in the Roman period and that flooding of the Romano-British settlement at Sandtoft could have been caused by neglect of its sluices. Jones (1995) considered that it would be reasonable to conclude that the Bycarrs Dyke and the Turnbridgedike were built to serve a common purpose which ceased to exist after the departure of the Romans. Making the assumption that the Fossdike was a Roman creation, Jones suggested that the Turnbridgedike, the Bycarrs Dyke and the Fossdike all served as links in a unitary system, a system that would have greatly improved inter-communication between the Legionary bases of Lincoln and York as well as opening up land for agricultural development to supply the army's requirements. While admitting that there was no direct evidence, Jones (1995) concluded that the dykes were cut to improve the 9th Legion's supply route, probably soon after 71 AD.

5.3 Early Medieval

There is currently no archaeological evidence dating to the early medieval period either from West Stockwith or from the immediately surrounding area, although place name evidence and Domesday Book indicate that Misterton, a couple of miles to the south east, was in existence before the conquest.

5.4 Medieval

5.4.1 Domesday Book

Stockwith is not mentioned by name in Domesday Book. Possibly it was not in existence at that time, although place-name evidence might suggest otherwise (see below). Bycarrs Dyke, which runs into the Trent at Stockwith, is referred to in Domesday Book, however, where it follows an entry for Little Gringley, soc of Mansfield.:

In Saundby a villager holds 1 garden; he pays salt, in Bycarr's Dike, for the King's fish.
(Domesday Book, Phillimore edition).

It is possible that settlement at Stockwith was included under the Domesday entries for nearby Misterton, where there was sokeland of the manors of Gringley-on-the-Hill and Mansfield, and where five thanes had held five manors prior to the conquest, their estates being awarded to Roger de Busli:

5M. In MISTERTON 5 thanes had 13½ b. of land taxable. Land for 2½ ploughs. Roger has 8 villagers and 5 smallholders who have 2½ ploughs. A church; meadow 3 furlongs long and 1½ furlongs wide; woodland pasture 12½ furlongs long and 2 furlongs wide. Value before 1066, 20s; now 2s more (Domesday Book, Phillimore edition).

(As sokeland of Gringley-on-the-Hill)

S. In MISTERTON 7½ b. of land taxable. Land for 12 oxen. 5 Freeman, 1 villager and 5 smallholders have 1½ ploughs. Meadow 4 furlongs long and ½ wide; woodland pasture 4 furlongs long and 1½ furlongs wide (Domesday Book, Phillimore edition).

(As sokeland of Mansfield)

S. In MISTERTON 5b. and the fourth part of 1b. of land taxable. Land for 1 plough. 5 Freeman, 6 villagers and 1 smallholder have 1 plough. Meadow 1 furlong long and ½ wide. Value 7s.

5.4.2 *The manor*

It has been suggested that the Roger who held Misterton and several other of de Busli's manors was Roger de Lovetot. The manor would have come to the king upon the forfeiture of the honour of Tickhill in 1102 (Timson 1973). It appears that some time in the second half of the 12th century Henry II gave Newstead Abbey at least a third of the manor of Misterton, with Stockwith and Walkerith; in a lawsuit of 1289 the chief lords of Misterton are named as the prior of Newstead and Constantia de Byerne. In 1315 the king, the prior of Newstead and Thomas de Hayton were lords of the manor (Thoroton 1677).

5.4.3 *The settlement and its environs*

The earliest known reference to the settlement comes from a document of 1226, when the king ordered the Sheriff of Nottinghamshire to prevent the men of Bawtry from levying tolls at Stockwith upon the men of Torksey (Oxoniensis 1903). At that time the place-name was written as *Stochith*, probably a compound of OE **stocc** and **hyð**, possibly referring either to a landing-place where boats could be secured by a stump or post, or to one where the bank was made secure with a row of timbers. The earliest reference to West Stockwith, as opposed to East Stockwith, comes from 1348 (Gover *et al* 1940).

There appears to be little published information relating to medieval Stockwith; such as there is generally relates to its function as a small inland port. In March 1342, as the result of concerns and rumours about spies, the king directed the bailiffs of all maritime ports, including Stockwith, to scrutinise all those requiring passage and to send any suspicious documents to the Chancery as quickly as possible, while detaining those who carried them (*Calendar of Close Rolls 1341-1343*, 485). There is a slightly later record of a vessel from Stockwith, with a crew of ten men, joining the North Fleet of King Edward III in prosecuting the siege of Calais between 1344 and 1347 (information from Doubleday Catalogue, Local Studies Library, Nottingham).

In the lay subsidy of 1334 West Stockwith was taxed together with Misterton (*Misterton' cum Stokheth*) at £6.18.9 (Glasscock 1975). Only one settlement, Worksop, from a total of 79 settlements listed in Bassetlaw wapentake, had a higher tax quota. Assuming that Stockwith's tax quota was half of the total, it would have ranked 21st.

5.4.4 *The chapel of St Mary the Blessed Virgin*

As mentioned above, any early settlement at Stockwith may have been included under records of nearby Misterton. The first element of this place name is OE **mynster** (the settlement being written as *Ministretone* in Domesday Book) and the minster there would have served Stockwith also. However, in 1334 the Archbishop of York granted the inhabitants of *Stokyth* leave to celebrate Mass in the newly built chapel of St Mary the Blessed Virgin owing to the distance and bad roads between the village and Misterton Church, although they were still required to visit the parish church on all major festivals and to pay their dues there (Towneley 1971).

5.4.5 *Markets and fairs*

There are two 14th century references in the Close Rolls to a market and fair at Stockwith, presumably meaning West Stockwith. The first of these comes on February 13 1333 when the Sheriff of Nottinghamshire was ordered to 'proclaim a weekly market on Mondays at the manor of *Stokheth*, because the King wishes Queen Philippa to have that market for life' (*Calendar of Close Rolls 1333-1337*, 10). A few years later, on April 28 1338, the king directed the Sheriff of Nottingham to cause a weekly market on a Thursday and a yearly fair for three days, the eve, day and morrow of St Bartholomew, to be proclaimed and held at the town of *Stoketh*, which Queen Philippa held for life by the king's grant (*Calendar of Close Rolls 1337-1339*, 358).

5.4.6 Trade and industry

There is good evidence for considerable traffic on the Trent during the medieval period, with Hull being important by at least as early as the 13th century (Wood 1950). Stockwith was functioning as a port by the 14th century, if not before, with the Bycarrs Dyke providing a potentially navigable link with Bawtry on the Great North Road, although its navigability may only have been seasonal. Commodities being shipped probably included wool, grain and lead, as well as a range of other goods. In 1375, for example, Robert de Gamston of Retford was licensed to load five lasts of raw hides at Newcastle and convey them 'by sea and the arms of the sea' to Stockwith and Bawtry to 'make his profit' (*Calendar of Patent Rolls 1374-1377*, 104).

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

5.5.1 Communications

Roads

The state of the roads continued to be problematic, at least at certain times of the year. In the early 16th century lead was sometimes carried to Stockwith by road in carts and wains, since it appears that Bawtry was seldom used for the transshipment of lead until improvements were made to the town in the 1570s (Kiernan 1985). However, it was reported that:

'... it was very inconvenient to Carry the said lead ... by land to Stockwith by reason of the Fowleness of the way which was often times over flowen with water ...' (quoted in Kiernan 1985, 170)

Despite this, a considerable number of goods were carried to and from the port by road. In 1562, for example, wagons and men were sent to Stockwith to collect various items, including foodstuffs and 2 hogsheads of white wine, which were to be shipped from Hull to West Stockwith and then taken by wagon to Mansfield. A century later, surviving navy correspondence from 1663 and 1664 indicates that cartloads of timber were being taken by land to Stockwith in preference to the Bawtry/Idle route as 'the watermen are worse than the carters' (Doubleday Catalogue, Notts. Local Studies Library).

There is further evidence for the state of the roads in the 18th century. As in the medieval period, a chapel was constructed at West Stockwith on the grounds that the poor roads and frequent floods made it difficult for the inhabitants to attend the parish church at Misterton (Townesley 1971). The minister of this chapel reported in 1743 that the roads were almost impassable in winter (Ollard & Walker 1930), while Throsby (1790), when speaking of nearby Misterton, noted that those travelling there from the neighbouring villages had to pass along roads which were 'intolerably bad'. It does not appear that any of the roads to Misterton and West Stockwith were ever turnpiked.

There are several references to bridges being in poor repair. A commission was appointed in 1537 to hear a complaint from the inhabitants of Misterton that they could not reach Stockwith Carr, which formed part of their parish, owing to the ruinous condition of the bridge over the Bycarrs Dyke (Korthals-Altes 1925). In 1634 a warrant was issued against the inhabitants of West Stockwith and Misterton 'who refused contributions of divers sums on them imposed for repaire of Stockwith Bridge and other Bridges there ruinous' (Copnall 1915, 81) while in 1728 the inhabitants of Misterton petitioned for financial help to rebuild Stockwith Bridge which was 'in great decay' (Meaby n.d.).

Rivers

The River Idle/Bycarrs Dyke channel from Bawtry to Stockwith became increasingly important during the post-medieval period. Bawtry acted as the chief centre of exportation for the Derbyshire and Sheffield region, with transportation to Hull and beyond, while functioning also as the distribution centre for goods coming in via Hull and Stockwith. In the 1620s the waters of the River Idle were diverted into the Bycarrs

Dyke as part of a larger scheme to drain the Hatfield Chase area (see below), at which time the dyke may have been straightened, deepened and further embanked (Dinnin 1997). Daniel Defoe, writing from Bawtry in the early 18th century, described

‘the little but pleasant River Idle ... [which] is a full and quick, though not rapid and unsafe stream, with a deep channel, which carries hoys, lighters, barges, or flat-bottom’d vessels, out of its channel into the Trent ... to a place called Stockwith and from thence ... in fair weather, quite to Hull; but if not, ‘tis sufficient to go to Stockwith, where vessels of 200 ton burthen may come up to the town loaden as well as empty’ (quoted in Hey 1980, 112).

Navigation on the Bycarrs Dyke/River Idle continued to be relatively unreliable, however, with delays to shipping through floods or drought being commonplace. There were occasionally other problems also. In 1596, for example, it was claimed that a Misterton man had made a ford in the Bycarrs Dyke, so hindering navigation (Korthals-Altes 1925). In 1629 a commission of sewers ordered the erection of a sluice at Misterton to improve drainage. Navigation to Bawtry was probably improved by the building of a lock in 1670 (Dinnin 1997).

Trade along the Bycarrs Dyke/River Idle is thought to have been considerable during this period (see 5.5.7 below). Goods exported included iron and tools produced at Sheffield as well as Derbyshire millstones and lead, while imported goods included iron ore, copper, tin and timber (Roffey 1989).

Ferry between West and East Stockwith

A survey of Stockwith made in the early 17th century apparently mentions a ferry over the Trent, worth 10s per annum, in the hands of the Prince of Wales (Oxoniensis 1903). The ferry between West and East Stockwith is marked on a map of Hatfield Chase of 1766 and on Chapman’s map of Nottinghamshire dated 1774.

The Chesterfield Canal

The Chesterfield Canal was promoted by Derbyshire lead interests, the Cavendish iron and coal masters at Staveley and other land owners who wished to exploit their coal reserves. Two possible routes were surveyed in 1769, both following the same line from Chesterfield to Retford, one then continuing to the Trent at West Stockwith, the other to join the Trent at Gainsborough. Roffey (1989) suggests that while the surveyor seems to have preferred the Gainsborough route, the London Lead Company, one of the main promoters, would have already been transshipping at West Stockwith for a considerable length of time.

In 1771 the Bill passed the Commons and construction commenced at Norwood Hill, with the first boats reaching West Retford in 1774. In 1775 it was resolved that money be paid by Retford Corporation to the Chesterfield Canal Company to build the canal to a wide-beam standard between Retford and West Stockwith, so that it could be navigated by river barges. As a consequence, locks were built double the width of those between Chesterfield and Retford although in fact there is no record of any wide-beamed boats using the canal (Roffey 1991).

Soon after the canal opened, one carrier advertised boats twice a week from Chesterfield to Stockwith and back, and twice a week from Stockwith to Hull and back. Presumably other carriers offered similar services. The Canal Company also organised sailings from a wharf in London to Stockwith and return every eight days. While coal was intended as the main cargo, lists of wharf charges indicate that a wide range of materials was being carried; examples included liquor, hemp, wool, cheese, flax, timber, iron, clay, lead, plaster, pots, ‘rotten stone’, currants, glass, malt, paper, old ropes, millstones, deer skins, gunpowder, and oxhorns, bones and hooves (Roffey 1989).

5.5.2 *The settlement and its environs*

The agricultural landscape around West Stockwith prior to drainage was predominantly one of pasture and meadow with common rights of grazing and turbarry on the wastes. Some of the areas of waste would probably be flooded during the winter months and would have formed an important additional resource. There are 17th century references to meadows in the Ings, which lay to the west of the common. There is also a reference in 1609 to one selion of arable and 'a hempland' containing a quarter of an acre in the field (*campo*) of West Stockwith (catalogue of Huntington deeds, Notts. Archives). A map of 1596 has the land to the north-east of Stockwith, along the Trent as far as the Heckdyke, marked as 'Stockwith Inclosures', with a further enclosed area along the north-eastern side of the Bycarrs Dyke. To the north-west of Stockwith lay the North Carr, with Misterton Marsh on the south-eastern side of the Bycarrs Dyke. Misterton itself had fairly extensive open arable fields to both north and south.

There were several disputes in the 16th century between Misterton and Stockwith on the one hand and the Isle of Axholme on the other, mainly concerning the land lying between the Heckdyke and the Bycarrs Dyke. In 1537, for example, the inhabitants of Misterton were advised to build a gate and gatehouse at the bridge over the Bycarrs Dyke to prevent the stealing of cattle (Korthals-Altes 1925).

An indenture survives relating to the purchase in 1577 by Brian Bailles of Fenton from Edmond Stockwith of West Stockwith and his son of 'all their swanmark in the waters of Bickersdyke within the lordship of Kirton in Lindsey and West Stockwith or in and upon the river Trent and several carrs there adjoining and also the swans thereupon, being in number sixty pairs ...' (Doubleday Catalogue, Notts. Local Studies Library).

In 1626 Charles I entered into a contract with Cornelius Vermuyden in 1626 to drain Hatfield Chase and the area around the Isle of Axholme. The River Idle was one of the main causes of surplus water in the Chase, so Vermuyden arrested the water by making a dam at Idle Stop and directed the flow into the Bycarrs Dyke. Deliberate destruction of dams and drainage works occurred during the Civil War; large areas of land were flooded by the Royalists round Misterton, with considerable damage (Bramley 1931). This was followed by a series of major floods between 1656 and 1701. In 1763 the Idle burst its banks near Idle Stop, flooding thousands of hectares. As a result, action was taken which included improvements to Misterton Sluice and the cutting of the Mother Drain (1769-1803) on the southern side of the Bycarrs Dyke to receive water from Everton, Gringley and Misterton Carrs (Dinnin 1997).

In 1771 an Act of Parliament was passed for the enclosure of open arable fields at Misterton and of waste grounds at Misterton and West Stockwith, with the award being made in 1775. A good deal of land had already been enclosed at West Stockwith, as some 366a of old enclosures are recorded, with a further 658a still open. The award partitioned two commons called the Rates and North Carr between Misterton and West Stockwith, allotting the whole of the Rates to West Stockwith and directing that North Carr should be intercommonable to Misterton and West Stockwith in the proportions 3:1 (Tate 1935).

There appears to be relatively little information surviving relating to the settlement in the 16th and 17th centuries. The chapel was still recorded as standing in 1559 but had not been served for the past year (Townesley 1971). It probably went completely out of use after this time.

In 1631 Stockwith was one of the townships listed as being infected with plague (Copnall 1915).

West Stockwith were responsible for their own poor. However, in 1658 they presented a petition to the authorities maintaining that they had

'many ould widdows in their said parish and not able to maintain themselves and their children whose husbands are in the States service. It is desired that Misterton being little charged with poore and Stockwith being but a small member of the parish that the Inhabitants of Misterton may take care of part of the children' (Copnall 1915, 121).

Some idea of the size and status of the settlement in the 17th century can be gained from the Hearth Tax returns of 1674. Thirty-seven householders were required to pay the tax. Of these, eighteen paid for one hearth, ten for two hearths, six for three hearths, two for four and a single individual for five hearths. A further thirteen individuals, all with only one hearth, were discharged by certificate (Webster 1988). This presents a picture of generally modest buildings, with only a few more substantial dwellings and no large halls or mansions.

A record of 1720 indicates how the simple layout of the town was used to select men to serve as local officials, since it states that:

‘Tho. Taylor of Stockwith [was] discharged from being Constable for this year being imployed on the seas in His Majesty’s Service but this to be no prejudice to the Custom of the sd town he being to serve that office on his return from the Baltick. And John Youle Innholder there is ordered to execute the office of Constable for the year Ensuing he being the next in House Row in the said town and It being the custom of that Town to Elect Constables by House Row’ (Meaby n.d., 28)

5.5.3 *Markets and fairs*

There is no mention of markets being held at West Stockwith during this period. However fairs were held during at least some of the post-medieval period. A document of 1669 in the Nottinghamshire Archives refers to meadow in Stockwith Ings ‘at the Horse Fair’ while another of 1776 mentions the ground on which beast fairs were held.

5.5.4 *Chapel of St Mary the Virgin and adjoining almshouses*

William Huntington, who died in 1714, bequeathed money for a Chapel of Ease to be built on his shipyard following the death of his mother and the death or remarriage of his wife. Licence was granted for its construction in 1719 and the chapel was completed in 1722 (Townsley 1971). He had been buried at Misterton, but once the land at West Stockwith had been consecrated, his body was recovered and brought to the new chapel. In addition, he provided for a minister and gave money to build ten small houses in the shipyard for the use of widows of shipwrights and seamen and otherwise to rent them for the use of the poor and for the repair of the houses.

In 1743 the minister responded to Archbishop Herring’s visitation stating, in response to the question regarding the number of families in the parish, that ‘To the Chappell at Stockwith there belongeth no Cure of Souls it being chiefly intended by the Donor for the Benefit of the Hospital thereto adjoining’. He attached a letter noting that although the chapel and almshouses were built in 1722 ‘no Widows were then put into the Alms Houses’ and although two or three did go in later, they never received any part of the endowment from the trustees. They had gone to court with their own money, but the trustees were using the charity money to defray their expenses in the hope that the others would give up. He also noted that following the consecration of the chapel, the inhabitants of West Stockwith generally took their children to be baptised there, but that his register of these births was not being admitted into the parish register (Ollard & Walker 1930).

5.5.5 *Education*

William Huntington, who endowed the chapel and almshouses, also left money for a schoolmaster to teach ten children of the widows in the almshouses or, if there were not enough almshouse children, to teach poor children of West Stockwith generally.

5.5.6 *Population*

Some estimate of population in the 17th century can be calculated using the returns to visitations, which required the number of recusants and communicants in each parish to be provided. Such a visitation took

place in 1603; however, no figure for West Stockwith, nor even for Misterton, is provided (Wood 1942). Similarly both places appear to be absent from returns of 1676 (Guilford 1924).

There were 51 names on the subsidy roll of 1689 for West Stockwith, which may represent the total number of householders (information from the Doubleday Catalogue, Local Studies Library, Nottingham), as the figure ties in well with the Hearth Tax returns, which recorded 50 households in 1674 (Webster 1988). However, both figures are likely to under-represent the number of families through the absence of the poor.

Further returns were made following Archbishop Herring's visitation of 1743. These provide a figure of 240 families in Misterton parish, with presumably includes West Stockwith also, since although it had a church by this time, it was not a separate parish (Ollard & Walker 1930). In 1798 Lowe recorded 1051 inhabitants at Misterton and Stockwith.

5.5.7 Trade and industry

While it seems certain that Stockwith had already functioned as a river port during the medieval period, it probably became increasingly busy during the post-medieval period, with the growth of industry, improvements to the River Idle navigation and, towards the end of the 18th century, the arrival of the Chesterfield Canal. The wide range of goods being transported has already been mentioned above, with the transport of some materials, such as lead, continuing through from the medieval period. There is documentary evidence for transshipment of lead to Hull from three inland ports between 1540 and 1570, of which Stockwith was the most important; in some instances it appears that the lead was shipped directly to London from Stockwith, bypassing Hull. Millstones were also an important export from at least the 16th century. Navigation along the Idle was improved by Vermuyden's drainage scheme, and the volume of trade increased accordingly. In 1640, for example, two Sheffield merchants shipped 1969 pigs of lead from Bawtry to Stockwith; the following year 2416 pigs (Hey 1980).

Other materials became important in the 17th century, one of which was oaks felled in Sherwood Forest for naval use. These were despatched from Stockwith to Woolwich and Deptford. Correspondence of the 1660s includes repeated requests for more ships, as the wharves at Stockwith were full and the timber was becoming damaged (Doubleday Catalogue, Notts. Local Studies Library). The transport of iron goods from Derbyshire's furnaces also became important at this time. Some larger boats travelled directly between Bawtry and Hull, while others did not. Sitwell wrote, regarding the transport of his iron goods:

'I ... know not how longe it may be before a vessell come thither wch goes through to Hull, for usually they are smaller vessels, and unlade at Stockwith into greater ...' (Sitwell 1888, 43).

Most of the goods being transported were not destined for West Stockwith itself and it is not known whether the local inhabitants would have had access to a wider and more exotic range of products than those of any other large village/small town of the period. Kiernan (1985) suggested a few lead carriers in the 16th century may have purchased small amounts of lead from minor brenners for resale at Stockwith or other inland ports, but there is no evidence for organised markets at this time.

The settlement would have supported the usual craftsmen and tradesmen found in any community of reasonable size; for example, there are references to a butcher in 1621 and to a tailor in 1710. Agriculture in some form is also likely to have been relatively important, although the only reference to the latter comes indirectly from the fact that flax bounties were allowed at West Stockwith during the 1780s and early 1790s. This follows the passing of three Acts of Parliament whereby bounties were paid per stone for hemp and flax when broken and properly prepared for market (Meaby n.d.). The reference to a 'hempland' in 1609 has already been noted above.

The majority of West Stockwith inhabitants are likely to have had employment in some aspect of the shipping trade. Several men are referred to in the 17th century as being in the 'States service', although possibly not all willingly, as watermen on the Idle are recorded at that time as requiring reassurance that

they were safe from pressing (Doubleday Catalogue, Notts. Local Studies Library). 18th century inhabitants included William Huntington, mariner and ship carpenter, who endowed the chapel, and Thomas Finningley, mariner, who in 1760 was given licence by the Admiralty to 'set forth in Warlike manner' his ship and to 'Attack, Surprize, Seize and take any Place or Fortress upon the Land or any Ship or Vessel, Goods {etc] possessed by any of His Majesties Enemies ...' (Hodson *et al* 1962).

The best picture of trade and industry at West Stockwith at the end of the 18th century comes from a schedule created when a good part of West Stockwith and Misterton was sold in lots in August 1801. The schedule described West Stockwith as

'... a village of considerable trade on the banks of the river Trent ... It is a very convenient situation for rope-makers, builders of ships and other vessels, as a navigable river from Bawtry and the Chesterfield Canal form a junction with the river Trent near the town. Ships of six or seven hundred tons burthen are built there, and several of the foregoing lots are well-calculated for ship-yards'.

Lots in the part of the village that was for sale included three shipyards, five roperies, two smithies, one woodyard, one brick kiln and one limehouse (Neale 1939).

5.6 19th century

5.6.1 Communications

The Chesterfield Canal

The Chesterfield Canal was incorporated with the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincoln railway (later the Great Central) in 1846, with a legal requirement on the railway to keep the canal open and in good repair (Wood 1950). It appears that at least initially the intention was to make the canal a viable investment and a great deal was done to improve it. However increasingly the railway took over as the main carrier of goods, particularly perishable items, and from the 1860s the canal began to decline, both in condition and in importance.

The River Trent

The Gainsborough United Steam Passenger Packet Company ran a service from Gainsborough to Hull almost daily which called at West Stockwith to pick up passengers. The journey was both quicker and cheaper than by rail and the service continued into the early 20th century (Neale 1939). The ferry between West and East Stockwith continued to operate throughout the 19th century.

Railways

The closest railway station to West Stockwith was one mile to the west, where Misterton had a station on the Lincoln, Gainsborough and Doncaster line of the Great Northern Railway.

5.6.2 The settlement and its environs

In the early part of the century the village could still be described as a 'flourishing river port' with a Principal Coast Officer based there. In 1831 the number of vessels with cargoes handled there was 112 inward and 70 outward (White's Directory 1832).

5.6.3 Markets and fairs

A fair for horses and cattle continued to be held annually, on September 4, throughout the 19th century.

5.6.4 Population

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

Year	Population
1801	530
1811	569
1821	618
1831	635
1841	651
1851	654
1861	538
1871	608
1881	662
1891	723
1901	667

5.6.5 Religious buildings

A small Methodist chapel was built in 1803 (White's Directory 1832) and a Primitive Methodist Chapel was erected in 1891 (White's Directory 1894).

5.6.6 Education

A School Board was formed in 1874 followed by the construction in 1876 of a school with a detached residence for the master. The school could accommodate 60 infants and 90 children (Whites Directory, 1894).

5.6.7 Trade and industry

The range of tradesmen present in the village in the early 19th century represents those found in the average village and small town at that time, such as blacksmiths, bricklayers, butchers, tailors, a millwright and a joiner, as well as the more specialised crafts such as a mast and block maker, ropemakers, several boat owners and shipping agents (White's Directory 1832). In addition there were several farmers, an occupation which became increasingly important as the canal and river trade declined over the course of the century. In 1864 it was recorded that the inhabitants were chiefly employed in agriculture, principally in growing potatoes (White's Directory 1864).

According to Roffey (1989), boats were taken on to the Trent to collect the silt that had been deposited by the tide. This was brought into West Stockwith to a factory that dried, ground and sifted it to a fine powder that had the soft texture of talcum powder. It was then sold as a buffing powder and was in great demand by the cutlery and other metal works at Sheffield and Birmingham. However, when the Walkeringham brickworks began to decline in the early 1900s it was decided to use part of them as a powder works and to close the factory at Stockwith.

A flax mill was located on the northern side of the Bycarrs Dyke although there appears to be little published information relating to this. A further industry was commenced in 1889, this being Morris's Chemical Works which built a trade which included fertilizers, acid and sheep dips (Booth 1961).

5.7 20th century

This period saw further decline of the Chesterfield Canal; in the early decades of the 20th century there was little traffic beyond two warp boats running to Walkeringham, occasional cargoes of barley for the

maltings at Retford and the use of the warehouse to store canned goods brought by river barge and collected by lorries (Roffey 1989). Commercial traffic had generally ceased on the canal by the 1950s.

By that time the Idle was closed to navigation owing to neglect. Roperies had been closed and the chemical works had been dismantled. As a result, most of the villagers got their living as smallholders or small farmers and fruit-growers. Some employment was also available at Nowell's engineering works at Misterton. Housing was something of a problem, as many houses in the village had been condemned and demolished but only eight had been built in their place (Neale 1939). This situation altered to some extent in the second half of the 20th century when the village became increasingly desirable, partly because it had experienced relatively little change and therefore had some handsome Georgian properties surviving and partly as a result of the re-use of the canal and canal basin. The latter led to the establishment of the West Stockwith Yacht Club accompanied by a return to some boat building and repairing.

6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF WEST STOCKWITH

The town has been divided into plan elements, or components, based on map evidence and documentary sources. These plan elements have been subdivided below according to the earliest date of their assumed occurrence in that form, although some of the area of medieval settlement may already have been occupied in the early medieval period. At present, however, no early medieval components can be defined. All subdivisions 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 Medieval components

Six components have been tentatively identified as belonging to the medieval period and are shown on figure 2.

Component 1 *Bycarrs Dyke and Idle Bridge*

The date of the Bycarrs Dyke is uncertain, but is thought to be early, since it is referred to in Domesday Book and has even been suggested to have Roman origins (see section 5.2). However, the extent to which the current course follows that of earlier cuts is not known. It is often referred to as the River Idle, since water from that river was diverted into it in the early 17th century, if not well before. A sketch of the dyke published in the Notts. Guardian of 1939 shows a relatively small stream with gently sloping banks. Presumably it would have been crossed by some sort of a bridge at its easternmost end from an early period. The current bridge dates from the early 19th century. Just upstream from the bridge, the Idle is protected from the tide by two large sluices, one of which is also a pumping station - these regulate the water level in the Idle so that surrounding areas can be drained. The sluices date from the 1930s, having replaced an earlier lock.

Component 2 *Settlement block bounded by Main Street, North Carr Road and the Bycarrs Dyke*

Buildings in this area may originally have only fronted the main street. However, by the 19th century limited development had also taken place along North Carr Road, where a building was in use as a Sunday School in 1899. A flaxmill stood on the bank of the Bycarrs Dyke; an undated sketch published in the Notts. Guardian of 1939 shows a complex of buildings, including a chimney. The old flaxmill has since been demolished and the land is currently undeveloped.

Component 3 *Settlement block bounded by Main Street to the south-east and North Carr Road to the south-west*

An area of properties fronting Main Street and bounded at its north-eastern end by a footpath in the 19th century. The plots of some of the properties run back to a common rear boundary formed by a drain; it is possible that all the plots once extended back to this boundary, to form long narrow crofts to the rear of the

buildings. A couple of the long boundaries shown on 19th century maps have survived. The length of the plots would have facilitated their use as ropewalks in some cases. By the end of the 19th century a school had been constructed to the rear of one of the properties - this building is still present, but no longer in use as a school. The southernmost end of the component was destroyed in the 20th century by the widening of North Carr Road.

Component 4 *Settlement block bounded by Main Street, North Carr Road, Bycarrs Dyke and the Trent*

There were probably few or no dwellings in this area during the medieval period and possibly for much of the post-medieval period also, being an area where boats could be beached or tied up, goods loaded and unloaded, boat building and repairs carried out and so on. The area was densely occupied by the end of the 19th century, although many of the buildings have been demolished. Surviving buildings include St Mary's Church, built on a shipyard in 1722 by the executors of William Huntington, a 'ship carpenter'. It is a grade II* listed building, of brick with a pantiled roof and ashlar dressings, and has a small burial ground on its northern side. Almshouses were originally attached to the south-western wall of the church, but have been demolished. They consisted of five rooms on the ground floor and five on the first floor. Just to the west, a 19th century Wesleyan chapel has been converted into a store.

Component 5 *Settlement block between Main Street and the Trent*

As with the above component, this area was probably originally used for the loading and unloading of vessels, for boat building and repairs and possibly for warehousing, before being developed later for other purposes including housing. By the end of the 19th century it included a large malthouse, a smithy and a Primitive Methodist Chapel. The site of the malthouse is now an open space which includes a playground, while the chapel site has been redeveloped for housing.

Component 6 *Settlement on the western side of the Bycarrs Dyke*

A building is shown schematically in this area on the earliest surviving map of 1596 and it has been assumed here that some settlement may have been present during the medieval period also.

6.2 Post-medieval components

Eight components have been tentatively as belonging to the post-medieval period and are shown on figure 3.

Component 7 *Settlement along the north-eastern end of Main Street, western frontage*

Block of properties fronting Main Street with a straight common back boundary which contrasts with the curving back boundary of component 3. Although included here with the post-medieval components, it is possible that medieval settlement may have extended into this area. An orchard shown on late 19th century maps at the north-eastern end of this component was developed for housing in the 20th century.

Component 8 *Settlement along the north-eastern end of Main Street, eastern frontage*

A block of properties set in small plots between the road and the river. It is possible that medieval activity extended along the river bank into this area.

Component 9 *Settlement on North Carr Road*

Chapman's map of 1774 shows a building in this approximate area. By the end of the 19th century the OS map indicates that there was a terrace of four cottages here, together with some outbuildings. The four cottages appear from the outside to have been altered to form two dwellings.

Component 10 *Site of ferry*

The ferry between West and East Stockwith is assumed to have run from the same site in the post-medieval as in the 19th century, when this area included piers, a ferry landing stage and a couple of buildings. These have all disappeared.

Component 11 *Settlement along the north side of Canal Lane*

It is likely that development along Canal Lane began in the late 18th century in response to the arrival of the Chesterfield Canal, and the opportunities it would have offered for facilities such as a public house. The Crown Hotel shown on late 19th century maps is now the Waterside Inn. Virtually all the housing shown in this area on late 19th century maps has been demolished and replaced by modern dwellings.

Component 12 *Mother Drain*

The Mother Drain was cut between 1769 and 1803 on the southern side of the Bycarrs Dyke. It runs beneath Canal Lane and was originally open between the lane and its outfall into the Trent, with a sluice, and crossed by a footbridge. It is not visible now, however, and is presumably culverted.

Component 13 *Chesterfield Canal*

The Chesterfield Canal was fully opened to West Stockwith in 1777, canal traffic being horse-drawn. Despite increasing decline from the mid 19th century, it continued to function well into the 20th century. The last commercial traffic to use a major length of the canal was in 1955. Even at this date, boat traffic was horse-drawn and as a result, the towpath survived in good condition. Following a campaign in the 1960s, the section of the canal between West Stockwith and Worksop is now navigable again. It leaves the canal basin (see below) under a new concrete bridge, the earlier brick bridge having been demolished, and then follows a straight line for just over a mile to the locks at Misterton (Roffey 1989).

Component 14 *West Stockwith basin* (SMR 5129, 5129a-d)

The transfer of goods from canal barges to river and coastal craft required a large tide-free area at the end of the canal, accessible from the Trent; as a result, West Stockwith basin was constructed. The basin is protected from Trent floods by an extra set of higher gates on the river lock and the ability to dam every opening around the lock so that even if the river went over the gates and into the lock, the basin would still be protected. Buildings include the lock-keeper's cottage and, on the opposite side of the lock, an old warehouse, constructed in 1789. It originally had three floors but the upper floor was removed when it became unsafe. Goods could be craned direct into the warehouse. River craft moored to the left of the lock, canal boats to the right of the lock, where there was also a warehouse, now demolished. Canal boats were built in the basin on the side near the road. A winch on the river bank in front of the lock-keeper's house used to pull boats on the river towards the lock entrance. To the side of the warehouse was the stables for the canal horses (derelict in 1985), with a further building by the road being the blacksmith's workshop (Richardson & Bird 1985).

6.3 19th century components

Four components have been identified for the 19th century and are shown on figure 4.

Component 15 *Building at the northern end of West Stockwith*

There was a building on this site by the 1880s, presumably that which is still present.

Component 16 *Settlement along Canal Lane between the Mother Drain and the Bycarrs Dyke*

It is possible that some development had already taken place in this area by the end of the 18th century, given the success of the Chesterfield Canal. Certainly by the end of the 19th century buildings had been constructed along this length of Canal Lane; the majority of these have been demolished and replaced by newer houses.

Component 17 *Buildings along Stockwith Road south of the canal bridge and basin*

By the end of the 19th century several buildings had been constructed along this road at a little distance from each other. Some still survive, including Bridge House immediately to the south of the canal bridge, and Milton Lodge, which has a datestone of 1889 and was originally the offices of the chemical works across the road (see component 18). One building to the west of the canal basin has disappeared, while another to the south of Bridge House appears to have been demolished and a new house built on its site.

Component 18 *Site of chemical works*

Chapman's county map of 1774 and Ellis's of 1824-5 both show two windmills in this area; however, both had disappeared by the 1880s. By that time a chemical works had been established on the site, served by Stockwith siding which linked the works with the railway to the west. The works included chemical manure manufacture, sheep dip manufacture and copper extraction (Kelly's Directory, 1922). Buildings to the south of Stockwith siding in the early 20th century included a chimney, kilns and a crane by the river. The works closed down in c. 1928. Many timbers from there were supposedly used in the construction of air raid shelters in local gardens. A new fertiliser works was built in 1958 and ceased production in 1968 (Townsend 1971). A large percentage of the site, which currently includes a warehouse, has been identified in the Bassetlaw Local Plan as suitable for employment-creating development (excluding retailing) (Bassetlaw Local Plan Deposit Draft April 1995).

6.4 20th century development

Twentieth century development is represented by a single un-numbered component and is shown on Figure 5.

6.5 Discussion

The finding of material of prehistoric and Romano-British date in the West Stockwith area, together with the suggested origins of the Bycarrs Dyke as a Roman canal, indicate the early importance of the Trent. The Romano-British material in particular suggests settlement in the area but this is more likely to be on the slightly higher ground closer to Misterton than on the site that developed into West Stockwith.

Van de Noort *et al* (1998) note that on the eastern side of the lower Trent valley and in the Ancholme valley, riverside townships were sometimes carved out of the territory of a mother settlement on higher land, and this may represent the original relationship between West Stockwith and nearby Misterton also, the latter the probable site of an early minster church. Place-name evidence suggests West Stockwith may have its origins in settlement at a landing place on the bank of the Trent. Although it is not mentioned by name in Domesday Book, this does not necessarily mean the village was not in existence at that time, since it is quite possible that it made up one of the manors held by one of the five thanes recorded in the Domesday Book entry for Misterton (see section 5.4.1).

West Stockwith is typical of a number of villages in the Trent Valley, where linear settlement along the banks of the Trent is mirrored on either side of the river, the pairs having once been connected by now defunct ferries. Its original plan form was almost certainly that of a single row village, with all the properties along the landward side of a road running along the river bank (components 2 and 3). With time, a second row developed along the narrower strip between the road and the river (components 4 and 5) which had probably originally been used for loading and unloading goods, transshipping, warehousing

and boat building and repairing. If the map of the area in 1596 can be taken at face value, it suggests that the development of this second row had not yet taken place, since it clearly depicts West Stockwith with a single row of houses, unlike Gunthorpe further north, which is shown with a double row. Although on the face of it the properties that developed on the riverside were much smaller than those on the landward side, it is interesting to note that a 17th century deed in Nottinghamshire Archives refers to a toft in Stockwith extending from 'Kings Street' (presumably now Main Street) on the west to the midstream of the Trent. This presumably would have given the toft-holders usage of the river bank and shore.

Van de Noort *et al* (1998) also suggest that in the Lower Trent-Marshland area concerted attempts were made by lords and monastic houses to foster commercial development on the riversides. These marketing centres did not succeed, however, at least in the long term, being superseded by 'inland' centres. Perhaps the references to the market and fair at Stockwith in the 1330s were part of a similar attempt to develop the small port into something much more important; it is interesting that at the same time the inhabitants appear to have acquired their own chapel, described in 1334 as 'newly built'. Bawtry, at the other end of the Idle/Bycarrs Dyke link, was certainly a thriving inland trading centre well before this, as there are references to the 'free burgesses of Balthre' in the early 13th century. The nearest market to West Stockwith in the 13th century would have been at Gringley, which received a grant in 1252. However, there is no mention of any market there in the *Placito de Quo Warranto* of 1329, so possibly the West Stockwith grant of 1333 was an attempt to 'fill the gap' in this part of Nottinghamshire. The absence of a market place in the settlement plan form suggests that there was no replanning of the layout and trading may have simply taken place on the riverbank. Indeed, the market may not have survived for long, although the fair was more enduring.

Regardless of the presence or absence of a market, it is clear that West Stockwith continued to thrive as a port throughout the post-medieval period. During this period, it is suggested that the settlement grew northwards, still following the line of the Trent (components 7 & 8) - such expansion could be indicated by a reference of 1704 to a messuage on the north side of the town as being 'late new built' (although of course this does not preclude it being the rebuilding of an earlier dwelling). Some development of the land between the road and the river also took place, as noted above and as is shown not only by the 17th century deed already referred to, but also by the construction of the chapel in 1722 on an earlier shipyard. With the arrival of the Chesterfield Canal in the late 18th century, the focus of activity at West Stockwith would have increasingly shifted further west, however, towards the area around the canal basin (components 11 and 14). This in turn may have led to a degree of decline in the older part of the village.

West Stockwith continued to enjoy some population growth in the first four decades of the 19th century, some of which would have been along Canal Lane (component 15) and some of which would have been infill within the existing bounds of the village. However, over the course of the rest of the 19th century the importance of the Chesterfield Canal declined as the transport of goods was increasingly taken over by the railways, and the village experienced little change from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century. This situation began to alter in the second half of the 20th century, partly through an appreciation of the attractiveness of the village and its surviving stock of 18th century houses, and partly as a result of the development of the Chesterfield Canal as a leisure resource.

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ISSUES

7.1 Research questions

Although the origins of West Stockwith may not lie in either the prehistoric or the Roman periods, greater knowledge and understanding of early activity in the area is necessary in order to place the later settlement in context. For example, to what extent and in what way did Roman drainage of the area create land that could be settled and farmed? Firm establishment of the date of construction of the Bycarrs Dyke is especially important, since there is a close relationship between this waterway and the village which developed at its junction with the Trent. Stevenson's (1906) assertion that the 'Roman' Bycarrs Dyke was

actually that known today as the Heckdyke also needs to be investigated, particularly since it is the Heckdyke that forms part of the county boundary rather than the Bycarrs Dyke.

When did the earliest settlement at West Stockwith take place? Can it be identified with the estates of one of the pre-conquest thanes recorded at Misterton? Nothing is currently known about the settlement in the medieval period, let alone earlier. Questions include its full extent, the location of the chapel and the duration of the market. The original settlement is believed to have consisted of a single row along a road running parallel to the Trent - when did permanent settlement begin between the road and the river?

In order to fully understand the development of West Stockwith it needs to be considered in relation to other ports in the area, in particular Bawtry and Gainsborough. At the former, a Roman fort guarded the banks of the Idle and Hey (1980) suggested that Bawtry's history as a river port may go back to that period, in that it may have been the outlet for Roman lead pigs. During the first part of the 16th century there is some evidence of a decline at Bawtry, Leland describing it as 'very bare and poore, a poore market town' (Hey 1980). Did this affect West Stockwith also?

Not only has no archaeological work been carried out, but it appears that little detailed documentary research has been undertaken, or at least published, on the history of West Stockwith at all periods. What there is tends to be rather general, and unreferenced, citing activities such as boat-building, rope-making and so on but without specifying exactly where these activities took place. Prior to the construction of the canal, were there different areas along the river bank for specific activities? When were the flax mill and the maltings, present in the late 19th century, constructed and how much of a contribution did they make to West Stockwith's economy?

The social history of the village as both a port and an agricultural community also requires research. Did the former fact have particular implications for the population, for example the risk of men being pressed at certain periods, higher mortality of young men through death on the river or at sea, greater numbers of poor widows and children? The occasional document hints at such possibilities. What was the social mix within the port and was one end of the village 'better' than the other?

7.2 Archaeological potential

7.2.1 Existing protection

Conservation areas

The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* required all Local Planning Authorities to determine which parts of their areas were of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas, in order to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. It is also their duty to review them from time to time, and to determine whether any further parts of their areas should also be designated as conservation areas.

West Stockwith Conservation Area was designated on October 1 1988. It includes the buildings along both sides of Main Street, parallel to the Trent, and extends southwestwards to include West Stockwith Basin and the buildings along Canal Lane.

Listed buildings

A listed building is one recognised by the government as being of special architectural or historic interest, as specified by the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. Listing is made at three levels of importance, Grade II, Grade II* and the most important, Grade I, and listed building consent is required, in addition to normal planning consent, before any alterations, extensions or demolitions can be made to a listed structure which might affect its character.

There are only three listed buildings in the built-up area of West Stockwith. Of these, one is Grade II*, namely the church of St Mary the Virgin. The remainder are Grade II, and all can be broken down according to their earliest structural phase as follows:

Earliest structural phase	C16 or earlier	C17	C18	C19	C20
Number of structures			3		

Planning Policy Guidance 15 allows the creation and maintenance of a list of buildings of local historic/architectural interest, although this does not confer a statutory obligation. In West Stockwith there are currently six buildings considered to be of local interest, all of which are believed to be of 18th century date.

7.2.2 *Above ground remains*

As West Stockwith experienced little development from the late 18th/early 19th century until relatively recently, it has still retained its traditional plan form, that of a linear settlement along a road running parallel to the river. However, to some extent the impact of that long linear plan has been lost. Late 19th century maps show that virtually all the buildings along Main Street stood directly on the roadside, with no front yards, the only ones which were set very slightly back being St Mary's Church and the Primitive Methodist Chapel. Where older buildings have been demolished and replaced in the 20th century, however, the new buildings have almost invariably been set back from the road, so destroying the visual impact of the earlier continuous frontage.

In terms of its surviving buildings, however, many of those which related to its function as a port no longer exist. Roffey (1989) visualised it as follows:

'Warehouses, boatyards and merchants' houses lined the village street, with ships' chandlers, inns, rope-walks, blacksmiths' shops and tiny cottages'

Although some of the houses and cottages survive, the main evidence for the existence of earlier industries lies in house names, such as Ropery House near the site of a ropewalk, and Kiln Cottage opposite the site of a large maltings. Similarly, the site of one of the village's non-conformist chapels is commemorated in the name of a house next to it. Another chapel does survive next to the church, although considerably altered and apparently in use for storage at present. All traces of wharves along the river have vanished. However, there does appear to be some survival of outbuildings, agricultural and/or industrial, in some cases running back at right angles to the main road.

Traditionally buildings in this area would have been timber-framed and thatched, this tradition being replaced by one of red brick and pantile roofs, probably in the early 18th century. Although no timber-framed survivals are apparent at West Stockwith, it is possible that remains of earlier structures lie hidden behind the brick facade of later buildings or that historic features survive within buildings apparently altered on the outside. That many of the standing buildings have been considerably altered is indicated by the fact that only three buildings are listed.

7.2.3 *Below ground remains*

In the absence of any archaeological work having been carried out at West Stockwith, it is difficult to assess the degree of survival of any below ground remains. Some boreholes have been sunk in the surrounding area, however. Despite the fact that warping is believed to have been practised, warp-like deposits were encountered in only three of the thirteen boreholes excavated to the north and north-west of West Stockwith, the deposits in general being dominated by fine wind-blown sands. The closest borehole to West Stockwith, which was some 300m north of Misterton Soss to the west of the village, contained rounded fluvial gravels between 1.0 and 1.4m deep over blown sands. Only a couple of boreholes

contained organic deposits, with peat containing pollen in a relatively good state of preservation (Lillie 1998).

As the village experienced relatively little 19th and 20th century development, archaeological potential could be reasonably good in places. The low-lying nature of the land may also have advantages, such as the probable absence of cellars to the buildings and the possibility of waterlogged deposits in certain areas. However, the Trent and the Bycarrs Dyke have presumably been dredged many times. Inspection of a trench dug in the garden of a house immediately to the east of the Bycarrs Dyke revealed badly disturbed deposits (U Spence pers. comm.). Much of West Stockwith's early activity as a port will have taken place along the edge of the Trent, in an area now lying either below housing or below embankments, the construction of which may have caused damage to any archaeological deposits.

Along the main street a couple of plots on the north side of the road have open frontages at present, where earlier buildings have been demolished, and these have considerable archaeological potential for investigating what may be one of the earliest areas of settlement. There is also some potential for archaeological examination of relatively recent industrial activity, in the form of the flax mill site by the Idle, the 19th century maltings (currently an open space and playground), and the late 19th century chemical works.

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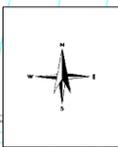
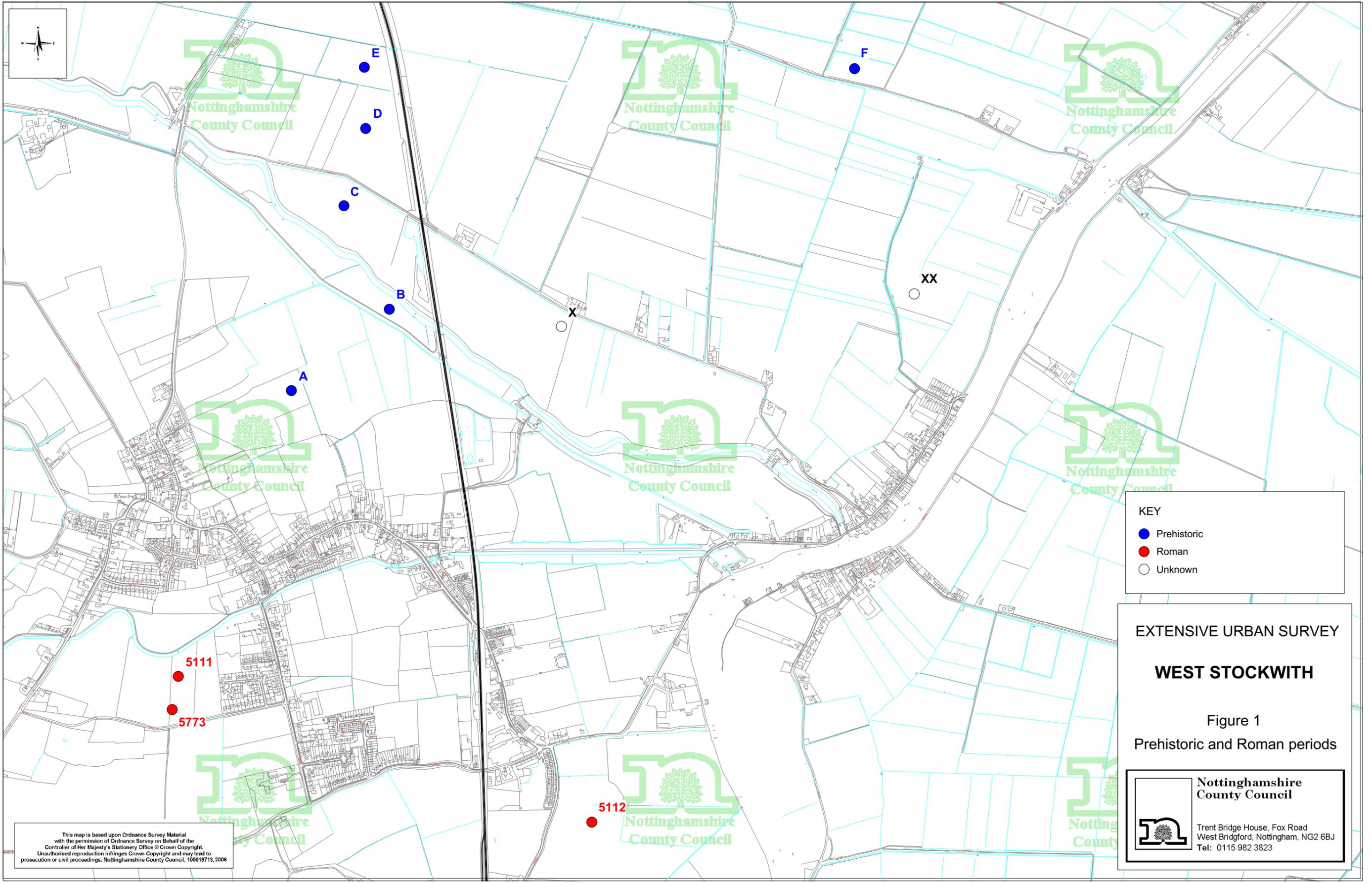
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1948 OS 6", provisional ed., sheet 4 SE



KEY

- Prehistoric
- Roman
- Unknown

EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

WEST STOCKWITH

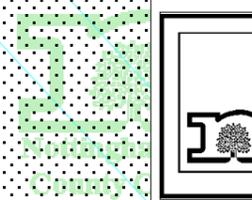
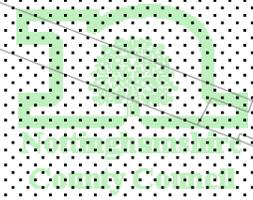
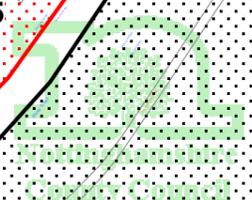
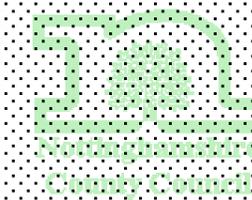
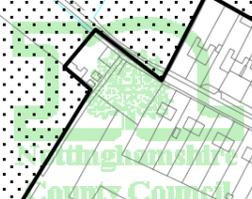
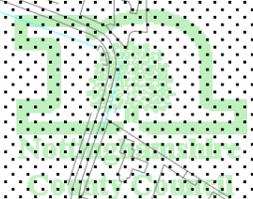
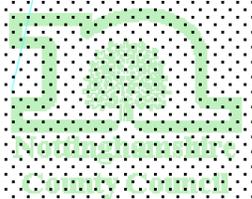
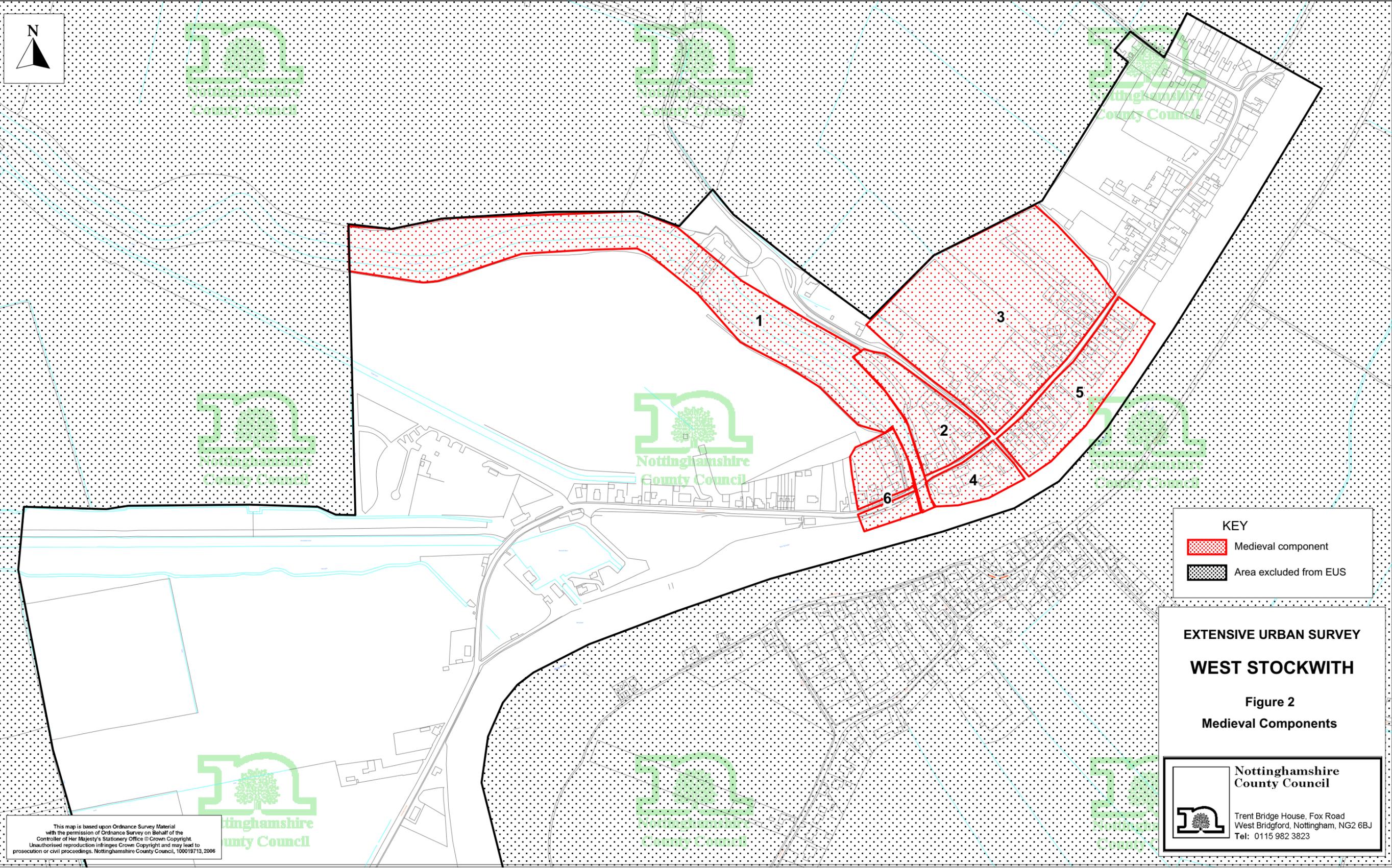
Figure 1
Prehistoric and Roman periods

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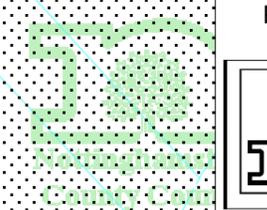
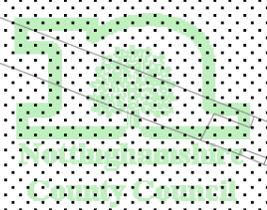
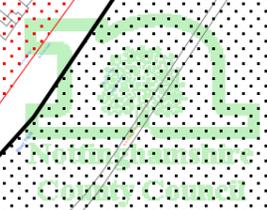
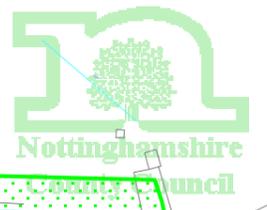
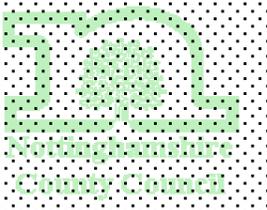
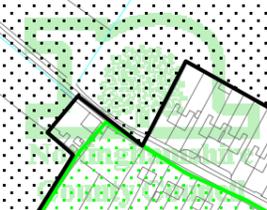
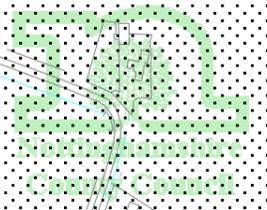
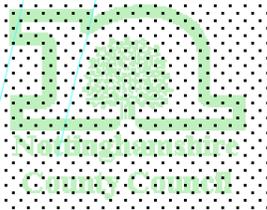
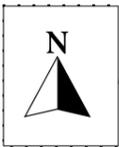
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	Area excluded from EUS

EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY
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 Figure 2
 Medieval Components

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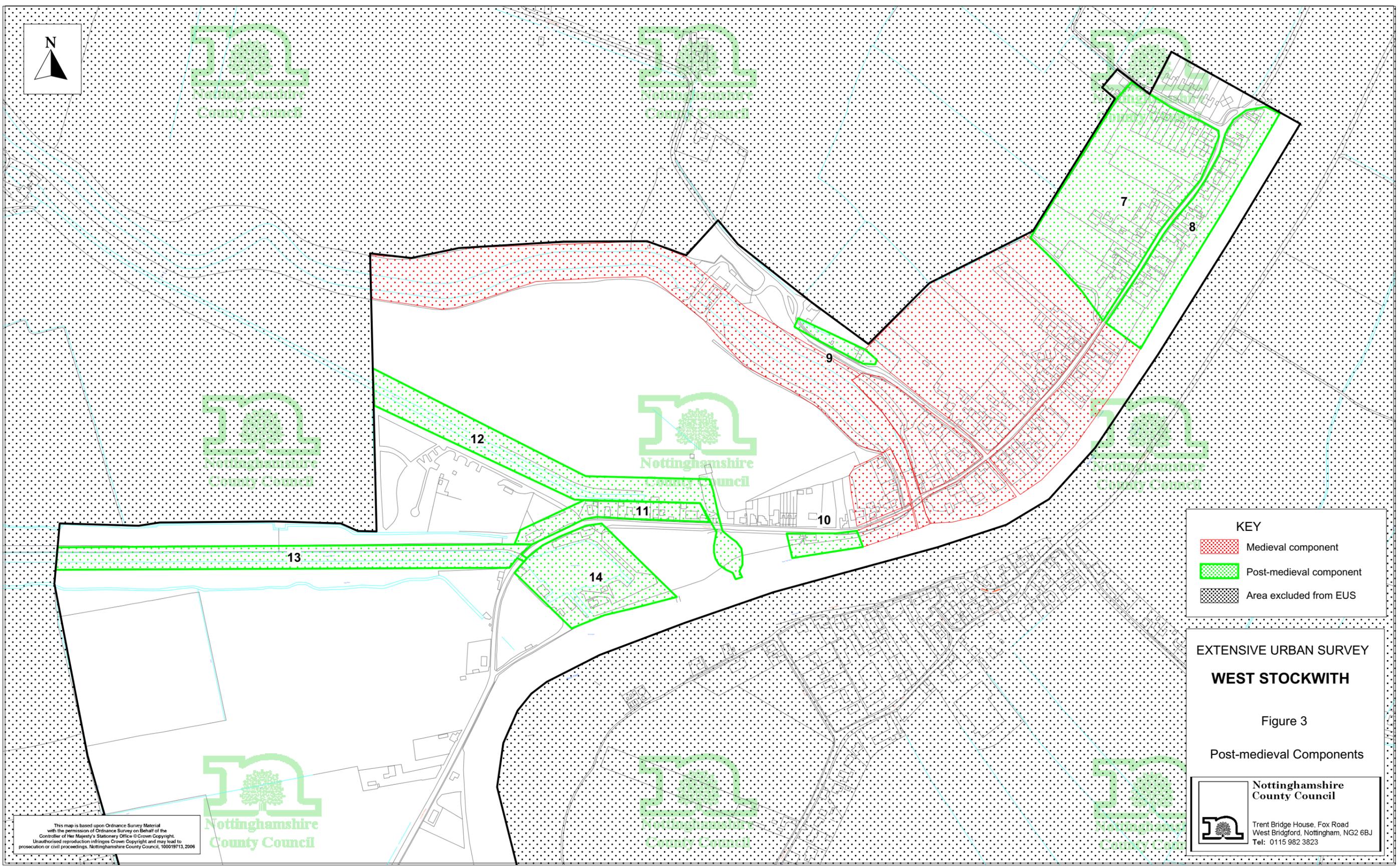
-  Medieval component
-  Post-medieval component
-  Area excluded from EUS

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 Figure 3
 Post-medieval Components

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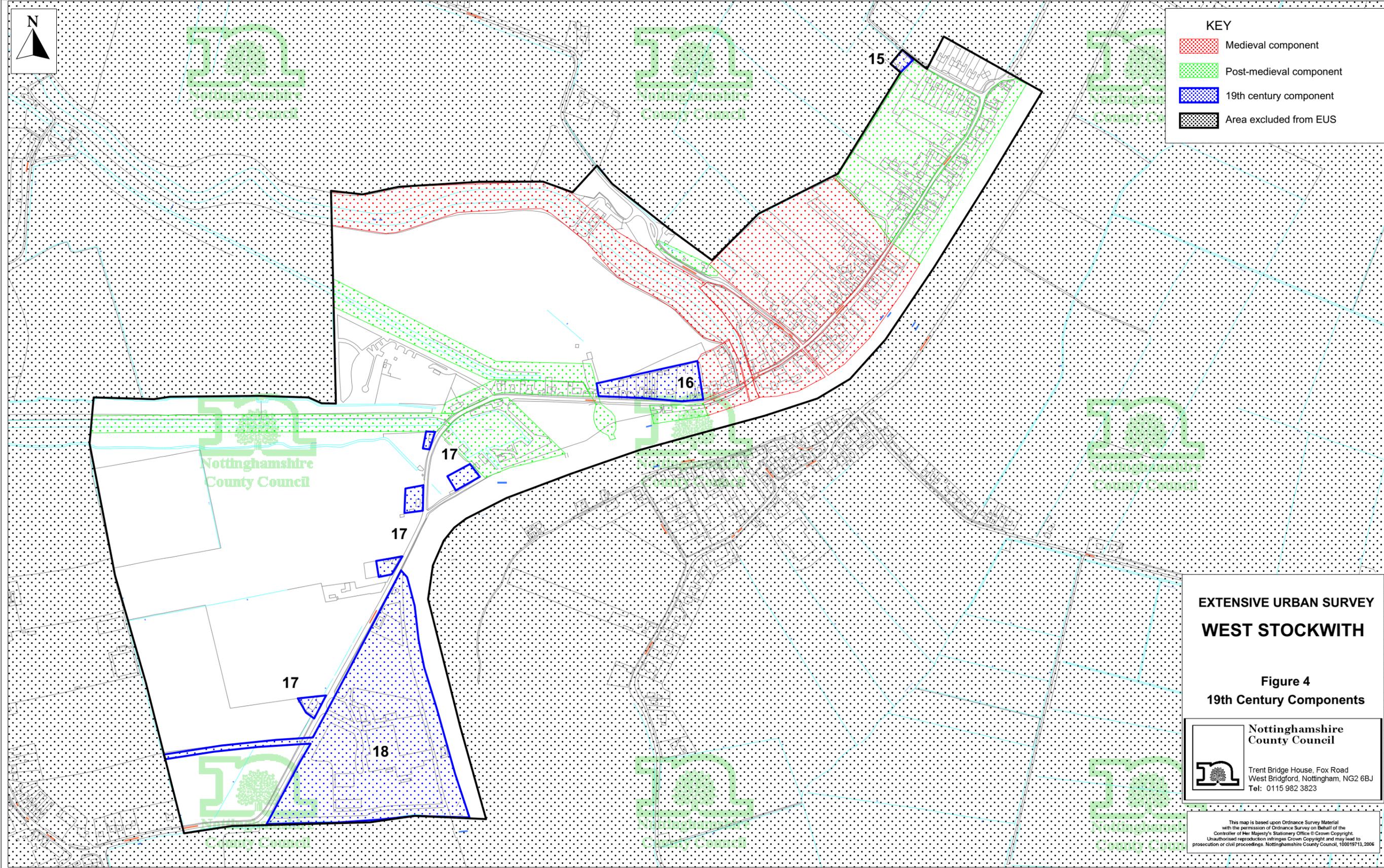
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KEY

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-  Post-medieval component
-  19th century component
-  Area excluded from EUS



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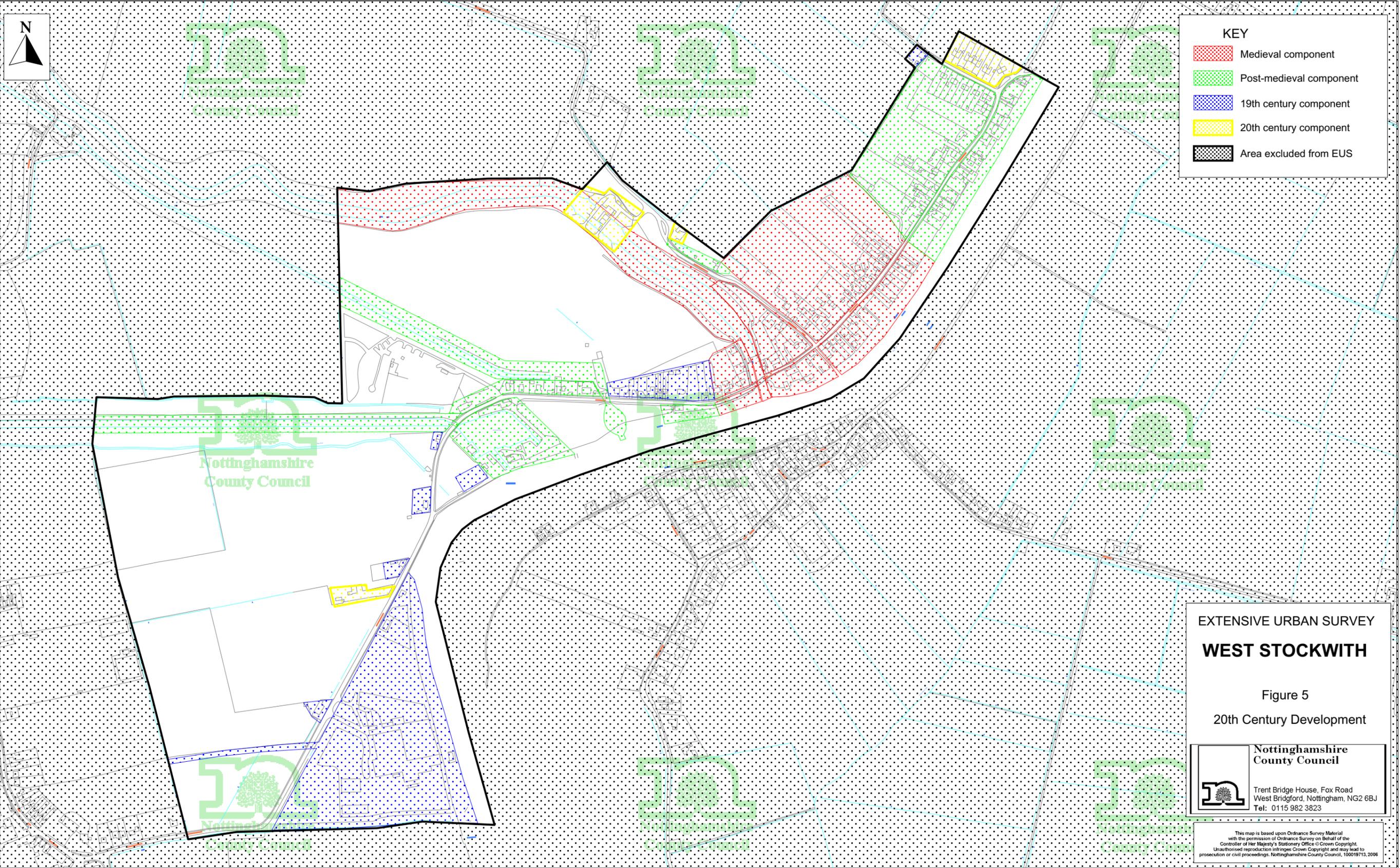
Figure 4
19th Century Components

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KEY

- Medieval component
- Post-medieval component
- 19th century component
- 20th century component
- Area excluded from EUS

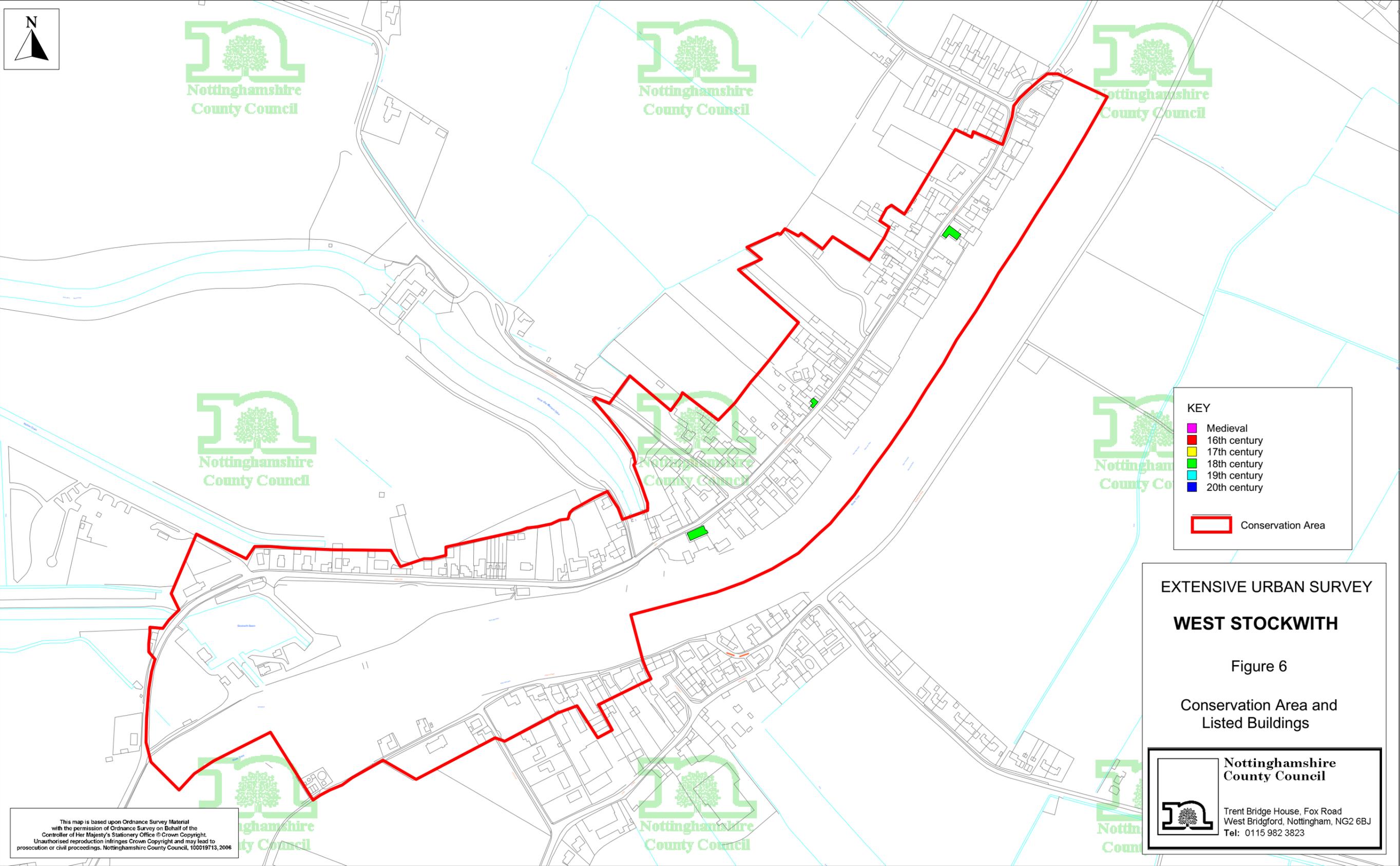
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Figure 5
 20th Century Development

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KEY

- Medieval
- 16th century
- 17th century
- 18th century
- 19th century
- 20th century

Conservation Area

EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

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Figure 6

Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

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