

trenches as shown on Figure 4 of the report are not entirely accurate. The apparent errors in the recording and analysis of areas A, B and C in 1992 (see **1992** above) were only partly responsible for the incorrect positioning of these areas in Figure 4 of the report. They were not transferred accurately from the 1992 report, and do not appear to have been corrected in plan outline either.

The outline of the Test pit and Trench 1 from 1994 also did not correspond with that from the original 1994 drawings. Establishing the actual orientation of Figure 4 relative to the OS National Grid was therefore something of a compromise. Figure 2.30 (above) represents the amended Figure 4.

In addition it seems that there may have been a change in the allocation of context numbers between making the drawings and writing the report. When one reads the report the positions of some contexts are quite clearly described, but in some cases numbers on the plan do not appear to correspond with those in the text. They are not cited individually in this summary.

The report states (4.2, p.6), “The archaeological programme concentrated on excavating and recording the remains of the “Old House” cone structure which were preserved within Area B. Archaeological remains preserved elsewhere on the site were excavated more selectively, with the aim of gaining a basic understanding of their character and stratigraphic position.”

Considering the descriptions of the buildings as found, Building I is described as being part of the range of buildings fronting on to Nailsea High Street. The only other plans/maps known are all small scale, but it would appear from them that the buildings would be better aligned on the ground than in fact they appear in Figure 4 of the report. The frontage appears to be straight, but if it is represented by the north wall of the (then) extant 'storage (former glassworks offices)' building, then Building I has been rotated slightly in an anti-clockwise direction. The wall going north-eastwards into the hedge should align with the shortest wall of the storage building, and it clearly does not. The major part of this building was a smith's shop {3} in 1870, with the smaller northeastern part being only a fraction of a larger building containing two French kilns {2}. Because of the limits placed on the excavation insufficient was revealed to tell us anything useful about these.

Building II appears to be the foundations of 31 High Street, built on the site after the demolition of the glassworks. It was demolished in turn and the service trench that cuts it was probably for the “Portakabin”-style council offices shown on some of the O.S. maps and photographs from the 1980s.

Building III appears to have been part of an extension of the southeast-facing wall of the cullet shop over the small square structure to the southwest of the cullet shop on the 1830s plan. The orientation of the apparently free-standing wall between it and Building IV and its proximity to Building III suggested that the two were contemporary. However further excavation seemed to indicate that this wall was in fact contemporary with Building IV.

According to the 1870 schedule Building IV contained the “Old office” {17} in the southern portion and a “Crucible furnace” {18} in the northern part. How the building was divided is not known from the plans. It does not appear on the 1830s plan, but both copies of the tithe map, one of 1840 and the other from 1844, show it as an open rectangle on the western side of a wall that runs from the eastern corner of the cullet shop (referred to in the preceding paragraph) almost to the building identified as {15} and {16} – “Pot arches” - on the 1870 plan. This wall has not been identified on any other plan, so it does not seem to have been an existing boundary for example, but it clearly appears in the excavation. At its presumed southern end, based on its alignment, it terminates in a posthole (5.2.1, p.11, under Area B). This might

indicate that a gate had been installed to control access to the newer part of the works from the older. A wall on the same line was leading out of the excavated area at the northern edge of Area A. One can therefore speculate that there might be some new process being developed in the New House Cone around this time, causing security to be improved by segregating the new from the old, but it is not recorded in 1870. The demolition had resulted in there being virtually no material evidence being left to help determine the details of the use, or dating, of this building, or indeed any others, although all the reports refer to fills of broken glass (generally 'window'), demolition rubble, ash and lime mortar in various combinations, and condition. Survival in Area A of the glassworks structures was to around 32m AOD.

Moving to Area B, Building V "represented a flimsily constructed brick and sandstone structure" identified as the Old Watch House, {22} & {23} on the 1870 plan. It appears to have been predated by a possible cellar that had been back-filled with rubble and then surfaced over. No plan has been found that locates any other building in this area. The function of the Old Watch House is not known. On the basis of the name and the long wall curving approximately northwards and then east-north-east to join up with the buildings attached to the north of the Old House Cone, one wonders if this too was some form of site security office, in modern terms.

An "L-shaped sandstone rubble and lime mortar wall, which extended westwards beyond the excavation area, marked the location of the north-eastern end of a pot arch building (Building VI)." This had only recently been demolished in 1995 and the "demolition exposed the heavily truncated remains of one, or possibly two, earlier walls... representing structural activity not previously recorded." Strictly, from its position it appears that this should be identified as the north-eastern wall [6/7] of the lean-to building (Room 3 of the 1994 photographic survey - Hume 2003) that sits to the north-east of the pot arch building {15} and {16} on the 1870 plan. It shows as a stub wall on that plan, on the western side of the southern entrance to the glassworks.

Part of Building VII was exposed during the 1992 evaluation²³, and the area examined was extended during this 1995 excavation. It was identified in 1992 as part of the boiler-house {24} built against the southern boundary wall of the glassworks. A detailed record of what remained then is in the earlier report (5.2.3, p.11). It appeared to be connected to the Old House Cone by a narrow (20 cm) duct of single-brick construction. Its function is not known from the archaeology. It is suggested (5.3.6.1) that it conducted hot air [presumably as a forced draught] from the boiler house to the cone furnace. An alternative suggestion might be conducting hot air in the opposite direction. In either case its cross-section would appear rather slight for this purpose. If it was for drainage, its direction of fall does not seem to have been recorded. There must have been a reason for siting the boiler house at the perimeter of the site, but what it was has not yet been determined. The 1995 excavation revealed that this building, certainly at its eastern end, had been built over an earlier brick structure of unknown function. [It may be of interest to note that on the 1830s plan there is an "Engine House" similarly isolated to the north of the Old House Cone. Maybe boiler explosions were not unknown. Alternatively that Engine House may have been associated with the pit that seems to have predated the glassworks just to the north of the Old House Cone.]

The major structure in Area B was a sector of the Old House Cone. It accounted for about one-fifth of the total area, and reached almost to the centre of the cone. Fortuitously it included a primary airway, running approximately south-west to north-east, and a secondary airway was

²³ Mumford, 1992

Figure 2.31: Old House Cone airway (1995 Report - Figure 6)



FIGURE 7

PLAN OF OLD HOUSE
GLASS CONE: SUGGESTED
STRUCTURAL PHASING

Added to original: AFS 2004
1830s plan outline (best fit)
1830s plan outline (actual)
1870 plan outline
1994 Trench 1 & Test Pit (corrected)

i
ii
iii
iv
v
vi
Unphased

AVON SMR 10509

0 5m

2-44



Figure 2.33: General view of 1995 excavation: Old House Cone area.

The first phase was the foundations of the wall of the Old House Cone itself. These are described as appearing “to have been laid within a trench and also revetted against the natural substrata” and to have been “constructed from roughly coursed sandstone rubble and pinkish-brown lime mortar. The broad footings of the wall were partially exposed during the excavation, but the depth to which these were preserved was not established....” [Para 5.3.1, p.12].

Context 363, the white rectangle surrounded by blue at the inner end of the main airway in Figure 2.32, is a “deep square chamber ... originally capped by a brick arch...”.



Figure 2.34: Possible furnace feeder chamber (1995 Report - Photograph 10 Context 363).

Its function “was not firmly established as it could not be fully examined for health and safety reasons.” The faced sandstone blocks and slabs forming three sides of the chamber were bonded with a different lime mortar to that bonding the stonework of contexts 307 and 308.”