

Figure 2.42: 2001 investigations superimposed on the 1870 plan.

In summary, the 2001 investigations confirmed that there were “significant archaeological deposits associated with the former Old House glass furnace in the area of the former Avon Motor Centre.” “The archaeological deposits were mostly preserved immediately below the modern concrete surfacing and were noted across the site to a depth between 1m – 1.5m.”

10. 2002

NS SMR Event 46503, in February 2002, was the penultimate intervention in this phase of the archaeology of the Nailsea Glassworks, and consisted of a “programme of Archaeological Observation and Recording undertaken by Avon Archaeological Unit on behalf of Tesco Stores Limited during January and February 2002. The project represented the final stage of archaeological work on a site off The High Street, Nailsea, and was designed to locate and record all significant archaeological remains associated with the important 18th to 19th century Nailsea Glassworks, as revealed during the course of the ground work for the construction of a new Tesco store.” “The archaeological work involved the monitoring of preliminary geotechnical work and the subsequent main earthmoving and store foundation stages. The central aim of the project was to locate and record all buried archaeological remains associated with the Old House Cone...”.

The records show that some sixty-four pits were observed, these being of varying sizes, from 1000mm square by 500mm minimum depth to 2750mm square by 1375mm minimum depth. This obviously took the contractors down to, or very close to, the level of any surviving archaeological remains. These pits were for the mass concrete bases for steel stanchions forming the frame of the building. One quarter of the pits had archaeological material in them to a greater or lesser degree. Because of the small areas involved, and the fact that they are now under mass concrete, only a quick examination has been made to correlate with the 1830s and 1870 plans, with some success principally in the vicinity of the Old House Cone and on a line running approximately north-east from the brick kiln {27} to {71} and {74}. (Figures 2.44 and 2.45 below). Only five could not be related to either plan, (e.g. No 50) which possibly leaves unanswered questions. Details are in the archive, which “will be deposited with North Somerset Museum ... under Accession Number WESTM 2004.14.”³⁰

This begs the question as to how much of the underlying archaeology had actually been destroyed by the construction and subsequent demolition of the garage complex. A typical pit, cutting archaeology, (No. 50), is shown in Figure 2.43, centred at NGR ST 47725 70898.



Figure 2.43: Foundation Pit No 50 from ESE.

³⁰ AAU Report, 2003, Summary, p.2

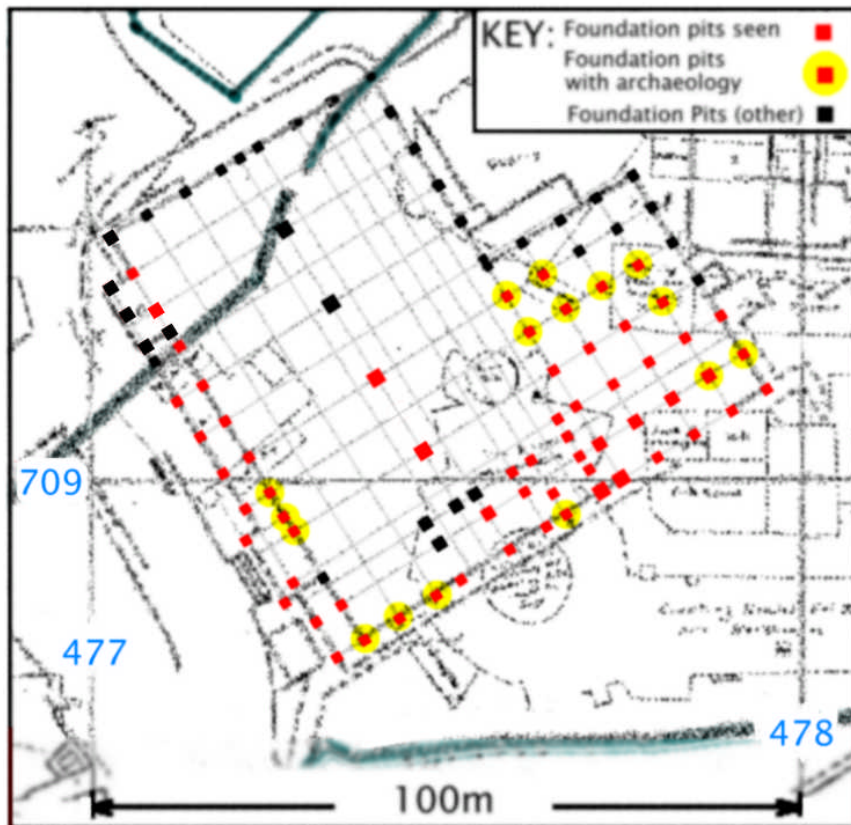


Figure 2.44: Superstore foundation pit plan superimposed on 1830s plan

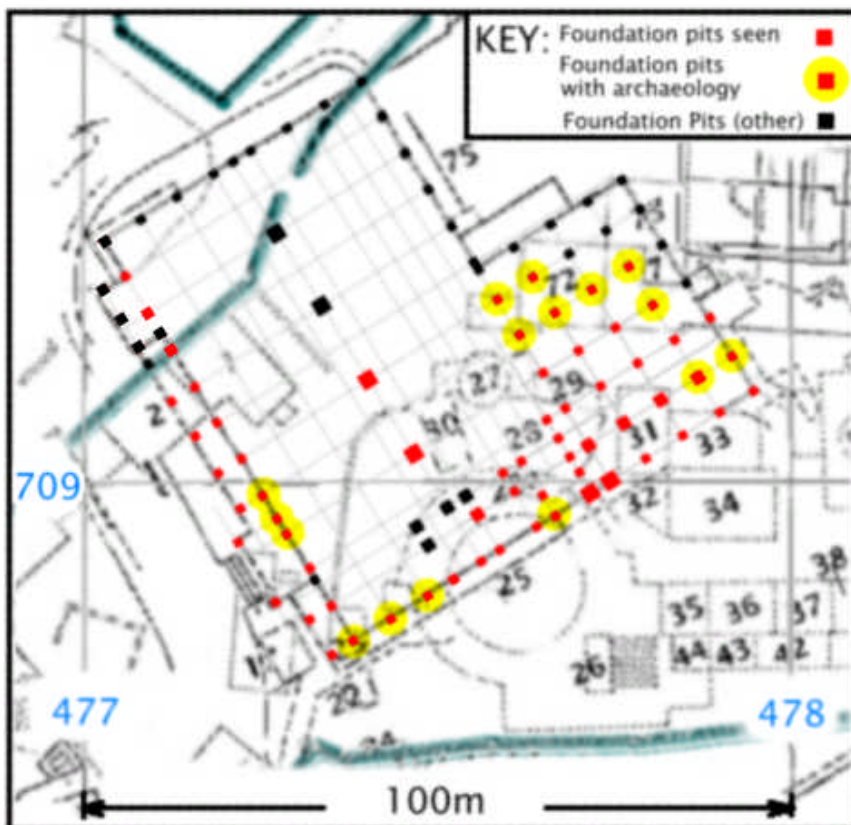


Figure 2.45: Superstore foundation pit plan superimposed on 1870 plan

It is clear from photographs that recording the foundations and such internal arrangements of the Old House Cone as remained was all that was going to be acceptable to the client. While these were being located “the area of the proposed new access and car parking was cleared using mechanical excavators.” Before going to the detail of the cone area, mention should also be made of three features exposed during this clearance. There is no mention of them in the report, but they are noted in the archive, two in writing, and one in the photographs.



Figure 2.46: Northern chamber.

[Right]

Figure 2.47: Southern chamber

The second was on the southern boundary of the main site. It is believed to lie “adjacent to and ? inside the former boundary wall separating the site from the playing fields.” [To the south.] Its dimensions were c. 7m x 2.5m x c. 2m deep, and it was “formed of sandstone rubble, faced and rendered with greenish-grey mortar.” The waterline was about 2.5m below modern ground surface. (See Figure 2.47, view looking approximately east.) The foundations of the boundary wall were not observed, so to that extent the position is conjectural, but its location as

The first was in the vicinity of the northern corner of the former garage building, which would put it in the area centred approximately at NGR ST 4777 7054. It is described as, “A vaulted stone cellar/chamber 3.1m x 3.5m x >1m deep exposed immediately below the foundations at the approx. N corner of the former garage.” With two inlets, “The structure appears to have been wholly intact prior to disturbance by plant and seem to represent a water store/cistern of c. 19th century date. The structure will be filled with inert fill and remain in situ (probably).” (See Figure 2.46, a view looking approximately WNW.) The location would put it in the vicinity of {72} and {73} in 1870 and/or possibly an “Engine House” in the 1830s.



recorded does correspond with an open feature shown on the 1988 OS 1:1250 Sheet 4770NE, centred on NGR ST 47772 70865. In this position it would have lain between the southernmost extension to the Old House Cone and the adjacent boundary, as shown on the 1870 plan.

The third lay to the west of the former garage building, and from the photographs appeared to have more brick used in its construction than the other two, and had a rectangular formed access hole in its vaulted brick roof. Its precise location does not seem to have been recorded.

Considering the remains of the Old House Cone, in 1994 the average level in the area occupied by Trench 1, to the south of the concrete block retaining wall, was recorded as 34m AOD. That of the Test Pit, to the north of the same retaining wall was 33m AOD. The more easterly area for car parking in the area of Trench 2 was, on average, 32m AOD³¹. These relationships can be seen in Figure 2.33, from 1995, where the retaining wall cuts across the bottom right-hand corner of the picture. The Test Pit was immediately beyond the wall in the same general level as the excavated area of the cone, and the area of car parking, at a lower level, is in the right background beyond the white fence. Figure 2.32 gives a close correspondence to the photograph, but in plan form.



Figure 2.48: New House Cone, showing foundation extension - western sector

It appeared from the photographs taken during the 2002 phase that the Old House Cone had been truncated even further since 1995. This was confirmed by the recorded levels. For example, in 1995 the level at the top of the cone wall on the left-hand side of the airway as one looked north-east towards the centre of the cone was 32.95m AOD. This would have been close to the average level for both sides of the airway and related structures. In 2002 the recorded level close to this point was 32.13m AOD, so material in the order of 80cms had been removed from the structures at some time in the intervening period. The net result can be seen in the photographs – there is no clear sign of where the airway crossed the line of the cone wall, at either end. What was left is shown in Figure 2.49, below (Figure 1a from the 2002 report.)

Despite this, and despite the work being undertaken in February, often under poor weather conditions, and as can be seen from the

photographic archive, contractor pressure, some further useful information came from the work. Not all of it is included in the report itself: some has been derived from the archive.

³¹ Parry, 1994, p5.