

Archaeological assessment of Bewdley (and Wribbenhall), Hereford and Worcester

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Summary

The historic town of Bewdley (and its suburb of Wribbenhall) was surveyed during the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, a desk-based study of 64 smaller historic towns in Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Archaeological and documentary evidence relating to the historic core of Bewdley was carefully analysed, comprising topographic data, published and unpublished archaeological reports, museum collections, primary and secondary historical sources, historical maps, and field data recorded by the project team.

Detailed evidence is provided on the character and layout of the settlement in the medieval and post-medieval periods. For each period the available information is analysed and mapped in detail, and a model of the development of the town is proposed. In addition, the evidence for pre-urban occupation is considered, together with evidence of 19th century occupation. All archaeologically-relevant information has been recorded as part of the county Sites and Monuments Record. Specialist assessments of artefacts, ecofacts, standing buildings and documentary sources are included. A detailed archaeological research framework has been developed for Bewdley, which will inform future archaeological investigations as well as management decisions.

The historic core of Bewdley and Wribbenhall contains buried archaeological deposits, and these are judged to have high potential. In addition there is high potential for the recovery of artefact and ecofact assemblages. Waterlogged deposits have been recorded, which is rare in the region. The historic buildings constitute a complementary body of evidence, and are judged to have high potential for detailed study and recording. There are few surviving documentary sources for the medieval period, and an average quantity for the post-medieval period; consequently there is moderate potential for further study.

1 Introduction

1.1 Location and landuse

The urban area of Bewdley is located at NGR SO 785 752 in Wyre Forest District. The modern settlement of Bewdley comprises a medium sized market town on the west bank of the river Severn with the suburb of Wribbenhall on the east bank.

1.2 Topography, geology and soils

Bewdley lies at a height of between 20m and 90m OD. The centre of the modern town of Bewdley and the suburb of Wribbenhall lie on land which slopes gently down on either side of the River Severn. The land rises steeply to the west of the High Street, however, with Tickenhill and Wyre Hill on a spur between two streams running into the Severn.

The local soils are loamy brown earths and brown podzolic soils of the Rivington 2 association to the west (Bewdley) and well drained reddish sandy and coarse loamy soils of the Bridgnorth Association to the east (Wribbenhall). Along the river, the soils are loamy brown soils of the Alun association developed in alluvium (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Ragg *et al* 1984). The underlying geology consists of Mercian Mudstone (British Geological Survey 1:250,000; sheet 52°N-0.4°W).

1.3 Chronological outline

Bewdley is not mentioned by name in the Domesday Survey but Wribbenhall appears as a bailiwick, or outlying estate, of the manor of Kidderminster. The manor later called Beaulieu was possibly part of Wribbenhall in 1086 (Burton 1883, 3). The manor of Wribbenhall belonged to the monks of Worcester after the conquest but by the 14th century land on both sides of the river was in the possession of the Mortimers. This land became the property of the crown in the 15th century and remained so until the 19th century (Burton 1883, 5).

The name Bewdley, or *Beaulieu*, is not recorded until 1304, and is associated with a manor on the western side of the river (Burton 1883). A ferry at Beaulieu is mentioned in 1336. The first record of a burgage is in 1367 (Beresford and Finberg 1973), and in 1376 Edward II granted a market and fair to Philippa, Countess of March. The market place at this time was on Wyre Hill (see section 3.2). The market place in Load Street was probably not established until some time in the mid-15th century.

Throughout the late 14th and 15th centuries documents show a steady increase in the profits from the ferry and in the number of free tenants in Bewdley (VCH 1924). The first bridge was built in 1447. By this time Bewdley appears to have changed from a linear settlement, along Wyre Hill and the road to the ford, into a planned town focused on the river. The chapel in the centre of Load Street was built *c* 1450 and the main streets and town gates may also have been laid out around this time. This development is traditionally credited to the influence of Richard Duke of York, and culminated with the granting of a charter of incorporation by Edward IV in 1472.

During the medieval period it was unclear as to whether Bewdley was in Shropshire or Worcestershire (Chandler 1993, 509). Because of this it became a sanctuary town and attracted miscreants from some distance. This caused great concern amongst the more respectable inhabitants, and the situation was finally rectified in 1544 when the town became part of Worcestershire (VCH 1924).

The town suffered during the Wars of the Roses and the stone bridge was destroyed. This was rebuilt in timber in 1460, but in 1483 a new stone bridge was built and this bridge survived until the end of the 18th century (Neal 1985). During the later middle ages Bewdley increased in prosperity and importance and by the 16th and 17th centuries had become an important inland port and a focus for trade between the Upper Severn Valley, the Black Country and Bristol (Bond *nd*). The status of the town was enhanced by the presence of a royal palace built by Henry VII for his son Arthur, Prince of Wales. The Court of the Marches usually spent the summer in Bewdley (VCH 1924).

Leland visited the town in 1539 and noted that "it is built on a hillside, so skilfully that no one could wish for a better site.....At sunrise when the town is lit from the east, it glitters as if it were gold, for all its buildings are new" (Chandler 1993, 509). In 1606 the borough received a new charter and the right to return a member to Parliament. It has been asserted that the town sent MPs to Parliament before this but no early returns of members for Bewdley have been found (VCH 1924, 302).

The town and the bridge were damaged during the Civil Wars but despite such set-backs Bewdley continued to flourish. As well as a trading centre Bewdley supported a variety of crafts and industries including cloth and leather production. The presence of a navigable

river and the proximity of the Wyre Forest with its natural resources meant Bewdley could attract trade from areas normally outside the hinterland of a town its size.

By the mid-18th century Bewdley had become one of the most important inland ports in the country. Because of its strategic location it became a port of trans-shipment and served as a collection centre for much of the bar-iron and other goods from Wales and the west, which were then sent overland to the emergent industries of Birmingham or downstream to the port of Bristol (Bond nd). The prosperity of the town is reflected in its buildings and many earlier houses received elegant facades at this time.

Bewdley's importance declined with the coming of the canals at the end of the 18th century, and particularly with the development of Stourport from the 1770s. Bewdley still functioned as a market town, but because of its economic decline it was spared a Victorian rebuilding (Bond nd).

1.4 Placename studies

The earliest recorded form of the placename Bewdley is *Beaulieu* (beautiful place) in the Close Roll of Edward I (1304). In the charter of Edward IV (1472) it is spelt *Beaudeley* and Leland refers to the town as *Beaudley* c 1539 (Burton 1883). Wribbenhall is mentioned in the Domesday Survey as *Gurbehale* (Thorn and Thorn 1983). This is presumably the Norman spelling of *Wrbehale* which is how the name is spelt in 1215. By 1240 it was spelt *Wrubenhale* (Burton 1883).

1.5 Syntheses of documentary and archaeological data

The documentary evidence relating to Bewdley has been studied by Nash (1799), Burton (1883), and the Victoria County History (VCH 1924). Historical and topographical studies have been undertaken (Bewdley Historical Research Group 1991; Price 1973; Slater 1991). An index of archaeological sites was produced for Wyre Forest District Council (Brown 1992) but no synthesis of the archaeological evidence has been carried out. The present assessment was carried out by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey in 1993. The text was revised in March 1995 to incorporate the results of fieldwork undertaken by the Survey (see section 1.7). No information published after December 1994 has been incorporated into this assessment.

1.6 Cartographic sources

Nineteenth century maps including the Tithe Map of 1840 and the Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2500 maps (*Worcestershire sheet XIV.1 (1884); Shropshire sheet LXXXI.2 and 3 (1884)*) were used to aid in the identification of remains and the definition of components.

1.7 Archaeological excavations and surveys

There have been no archaeological excavations in Bewdley, but some salvage recording has been undertaken by Hereford and Worcester County Council. This located part of the earliest medieval bridge and timbers associated with medieval structures alongside it (HWCM 11173, HWCM 11174), and recorded five early 19th century coffins in a vault of the Baptist Church in High Street (HWCM 10786). In 1973 the British Sub-aqua Club located the central piers of the stone bridge built in 1483 (HWCM 8061; Price 1973). Other buried remains have been uncovered during construction work in the town, but none of these were recorded archaeologically. Timbers and artefacts were recovered from the site of the Dog Lane Gate (HWCM 10854), a medieval shoe was found at Welch Lane Gate (HWCM 17763), and the remains of tanning pits were recorded on the south side of Lax Lane (HWCM 17761; Babb and Davies 1975).

Fieldwork was undertaken by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey in October 1994. This identified remains, investigated and revised the extent of components, and

recorded 18th and 19th century cellarage and modern developments in the urban area.

1.8 Acknowledgments and personnel

Survey fieldwork was carried out by Victoria Buteux and Nigel Topping. Analysis and report writing were carried out by Victoria Buteux, and editing was carried out by Hal Dalwood.

2 Pre-urban evidence

The ford over the Severn at Bewdley had probably been a focus for travellers from an early period, and prehistoric and Roman finds are quite common in the area. There is evidence of prehistoric burials at Dowles Brickworks (HWCM 1174), and possibly at Kateshill House (Bond nd) and Tickenhill Manor (HWCM 10855). Roman pottery, tiles and glass were found outside the study area, northwest of Wribbenhall, and may indicate the presence of a farm or small settlement, as may the hoard of Roman coins dug up in the grounds of Tickenhill Manor in 1928 (HWCM 3723). An Anglo-Saxon burial was uncovered to the east of the Severn during the construction of a water main (HWCM 15302) but no evidence of sub-Roman or Anglo-Saxon activity has been found within the study area.

3 Medieval archaeological evidence

3.1 Medieval remains and buildings

Archaeological observation and reported finds from the town have demonstrated the survival of substantial below ground archaeology. This includes the foundations of the 1447 and 1483 stone bridges (HWCM 17765; HWCM 8161), timbers from a 15th century structure on the quay side (HWCM 11173) and large medieval timbers and other finds at Dog Lane Gate and Welch Gate (HWCM 10854; HWCM 17763).

Ten medieval buildings survive in the modern town. These are the timber-framed 15th century houses and possible market building on Wyre Hill (HWCM 10803, HWCM 10804, HWCM 19323); 15th century timber-framed houses on Winbrook (HWCM 17635), Welch Gate (HWCM 110843, HWCM 7636), High Street (HWCM 10785, HWCM 17563) and Lax Lane (HWCM 15139), and the 14th century timber-framed hall with cross-wing (HWCM 12760-2) on the Stourport Road. The latter is the earliest building so far discovered in the town, although it is likely that more medieval structures may survive behind the facades of later buildings

Four 15th century framed bays belonging to the medieval palace survive within the 18th century Tickenhill Manor (HWCM 3913) and a medieval cross, partially reconstructed, stands on the site of the chapel built in 1719 in Wribbenhall (HWCM 5011)

3.2 Medieval urban components

Analysis of the evidence summarised above and of other documentary sources indicated the existence of 24 urban components. The characteristics of these urban components are summarised below.

Chapels (HWCM 19326, HWCM 8160). Bewdley was extra-parochial until a private Act of Parliament during the reign of Henry VI made it part of the parish of Ribbesford (Nash 1799). A chapel of ease dedicated to St Andrew (HWCM 19326) was built *c* 1450, probably on the site of the present St Anne's. Leland refers to it as "a timber building in the town centre" (Chandler 1993, 509). The chapel was used in the 16th century as a venue for strolling players attracted to the town by the presence of

the royal household and the Council of the Marches. It is clear from documentary evidence that the chapel was surrounded by timber buildings which had encroached onto the market place. There is no known illustration of it, although the painted glass has been described (Burton 1883).

The second chapel within the town was dedicated to St Anne (HWCM 8160). This was a small timber-framed structure, part of a range of buildings which ran northwest from the later medieval stone bridge (HWCM 8161) to Load Street. The chapel was situated at the foot of the bridge, and is reputed to be identifiable as a small building shown on several 18th century illustrations of the bridge and its surroundings (Burton 1883). It is likely that the chapel and adjacent buildings were built at the same time, or soon after, the construction of the bridge in 1483, and the form of the timber framing drawn in the 18th century is consistent with this (Duncan L Brown pers comm). The chapel was demolished in 1798 during the construction of Telford's Bridge although at this time it was no longer functioning as a chapel (Burton 1883).

Street system (HWCM 19331). It has been suggested (Slater 1991, 65) that the original road to the river from the west was in the valley of the Winbrook and that Wyre Hill (known as High Street in the medieval period) was created when the settlement became a town. Wyre Hill and Lax Lane, however, are likely to have been the focus for settlement until the building of the first bridge in 1447. In 1472 there are documentary references to Dog Lane, High Street (now Wyre Hill), Over Street (now High Street) and Lax Lane. Bridge Gate, Welsh Gate and Welsh Pool Gate (possibly Dog Lane Gate) are also mentioned and it is likely that Tinkers Gate/Lax Gate was also built at this time (VCH 1924). The development of the street system must have occurred, therefore, around the middle of the 15th century and was connected to the rapid development of the town and a shift of focus from the ford and Lax Lane to the quays and the bridge. Severnside and Load Street were probably included in this development although there are no documentary references to these streets until the 1530s (VCH 1924).

Medieval Bewdley had four gates. These were Welch Gate (HWCM 10692), Bridge Gate (HWCM 10693), Tinkers/Lax Gate (HWCM 10694) and Dog Lane Gate (HWCM 10695) (VCH 1924). The gates were large timber constructions with rooms above. Structural remains of the Dog Lane Gate were uncovered in 1959 (HWCM 10854).

It has been suggested that the curved line of Dog Lane may mark the line of a town ditch (Slater 1991, 65-6). The late development of the town and the lack of documentary evidence for defences at Bewdley may indicate that the gates were intended to control traffic and exact tolls rather than form part of a defensive circuit (Jones and Bond 1987, 100).

Richmond Road and Dowles Road are probably medieval in date. The road from Bewdley to Ribbesford and the south now runs through what was part of the park attached to Tickenhill Palace (HWCM 12786). It is unlikely that a public highway would run through a royal park, and the medieval road may have skirted the park and run along the edge of the flood plain of the Severn after it left Tinkers Gate.

There is very little evidence for the date of the roads on the Wribbenhall side of the Severn. A road must have joined the ford at this point and may have linked up with the Kidderminster Road which was a pack horse route (Fisher and Pagett 1972).

Bridging points (HWCM 12782, HWCM 19336). The earliest crossing point was the ford at the end of Lax Lane (HWCM 12782), which may have operated from prehistoric times. The ford was probably never an easy one (Fisher and Pagett 1972, 60), and a ferry (HWCM 12781) was in existence by 1336, although the ford seems to have continued in use.

The first bridge across the Severn was stone and built in 1447 (HWCM 17765) at about the same time as the street grid was being laid out. It has been assumed that the first bridge stood on the same site as the stone bridge constructed in 1483 (HWCM 8161); however salvage recording (HWCM 11174; Taylor 1991) at the base of Telford's bridge indicates that the first bridge was positioned at the end of Load Street and was the focus for the town plan.

During the Wars of the Roses the bridge was destroyed by the Lancastrians, and in the Patent Rolls of 1459 it is noted that stones from Bewdley Bridge were granted to the Bailiffs of Worcester, perhaps to repair the city walls (Neal 1985). In 1460, a new timber bridge was built on the stone abutments and piers of the old bridge (HWCM 19361). A bridge gate (HWCM 17591) is mentioned in 1472, but there is no information as to how this was constructed or exactly where it stood.

The timber bridge was obviously unsatisfactory, perhaps due to the quantity of road traffic. In 1483 Richard III gave 200 marks for the erection of a new stone bridge, and his successor Edward IV gave further grants for the completion of the work (VCH 1924). The new bridge (HWCM 8161) was built slightly down-stream of the old, presumably to avoid disruption to traffic during construction, and included a gatehouse with rooms above. The northern end of the gatehouse was the toll collectors dwelling and the southern end acted as a prison (Barrett 1972). This bridge survived despite mishaps until the end of the 18th century.

Quays (HWCM 17747, HWCM 19354). Boats and trows were loaded and unloaded on both sides of the river. The present quays are 18th century but may contain medieval stonework (DoE 1989). Workmen reported the discovery of timbers during the laying of a sewer pipe along Severnside South in 1991 (HWCM 11173). Some wood retrieved from the sewer trench was dendrochronologically dated to the 15th century (Clare de Rouffignac pers comm). The structure was interpreted as part of a river revetment or quay side (Taylor 1991).

Market places (HWCM 19332, HWCM 19337). Bewdley's first market and fair were granted to Phillipa, Countess of March, in 1376 (Snell 1972). This market was held in the wide street on the top of Wyre Hill, which was at that time known as the High Street (HWCM 19332). The 15th century building now known as the "Old Town Hall" is thought to have been one of the "two newly built shops by the cross in the market place in High Street" mentioned in the 15th century (VCH 1924). A market place was still in the High Street in 1472, but by the time of Leland's visit to Bewdley in *c* 1539 the main market place was in Load Street (HWCM 19539) (Burton 1883). In the centre of the Load Street market place was a long range of 15th century timber buildings open on both sides. These included the barley market, the shambles and the butter cross and they survived until 1783 (Burton 1883).

Tenement plots (HWCM 17537, HWCM 17583, HWCM 17584, HWCM 17585, HWCM 19333, HWCM 19334, HWCM 19342, HWCM 19343, HWCM 19344, HWCM 19350, HWCM 19351, HWCM 21477). The earliest part of the town is traditionally located on Wyre Hill, and in 1472 the majority of the burgages mentioned were in this area (Bewdley Historic Research Group 1991, 5). The tenement plots to the north and south of the road (HWCM 19333, HWCM 19334) still contain 15th century buildings (HWCM 10809, HWCM 17635, HWCM 19323), and include the "Old Town Hall" (HWCM 10803), which may be part of a 15th century market building (Burton 1883). In 1472 the southern limit of HWCM 19333 was the northern edge of the royal park, and the northern limit of burgages in HWCM 19334 was the Winbrook (Bewdley Historical Research Group 1971, 2).

Tenement plots fronting Lax Lane may also be early, as the street was the main route to the ford. A half-burgage was mentioned here as early as 1367 (Bewdley Historical

Research Group 1991, 2; Beresford and Finberg 1973). One 15th century building survives on the tenement plots to the north of Lax Lane (HWCM 19350, see below), but the street was on the periphery of the town by the mid-15th century, and there are no surviving medieval buildings or tenement plot boundaries to the south (HWCM 17585).

The core of the town from the late 15th century was the block of tenement plots fronting Load Street, Severnside South, Lax Lane and Upper (now High) Street (HWCM 19350, HWCM 19351, HWCM 17584). Occupation within these blocks dates from at least the later 15th century, although only five buildings of this date survive (HWCM 10785, HWCM 10843, HWCM 15139, HWCM 17563, HWCM 17636). The plots would have contained warehouses and industrial buildings, such as tanneries, as well as domestic houses. The organisation of the plots within HWCM 19350 suggests that this area may have been built-up in a number of stages. The lack of archaeological evidence, however, means that the date of the development of the various blocks of land remains unclear.

HWCM 19344 comprises a small block of 15th century buildings known from documentary sources, but demolished at the end of the 18th century during the construction of Telford's Bridge (Burton 1883).

Three small blocks of land constrained by the steep topography on the western edge of the town would appear to be part of the medieval town despite the fact that they are outside the Welsh Gate. HWCM 17537, on either side of the Winbrook, contains two medieval buildings (HWCM 17635 and HWCM 17752). HWCM 21477 to the south of Welch Gate also contains two medieval houses (HWCM 17636, HWCM 10843). Plots within HWCM 17583 to the north of Welch Gate contain no surviving medieval buildings but the presence of medieval buildings on the other side of the road and the importance of this routeway out of the town in the medieval period make a medieval date for this component likely. The boundaries of both these components were defined by Slater (1991).

Wribbenhall, whilst legally separate from the borough of Bewdley, functioned as a suburb in the medieval and later periods. Evidence for the extent of medieval occupation on this side of the river is slight but it is likely that medieval houses, warehouses and small-scale industry occupied land close to the quays and along the main route to Kidderminster and the east (HWCM 19542, HWCM 19543). The only surviving medieval building in this area is a 14th century hall standing back from the present route of the Stourport Road (HWCM 12760-2).

Palace (HWCM 19335). The manor of Tickenhill was in the possession of the Mortimers for most of the medieval period. In 1304 the house was described as ruined, but in 1336 it was being repaired (VCH 1924). The house and park (HWCM 12786) came into the possession of the crown in the 15th century. Henry VII enlarged the manor house into a palace for his son Arthur, Prince of Wales, who held court there, as well as at Ludlow. From the 15th century to the Restoration, Tickenhill Palace was used by the Council of the Marches who met there nearly every summer (Bewdley Historical Research Group 1991). It was also a residence for the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth Tudor.

The palace was built largely of timber and had a great court and gardens with a gatehouse, chapel and several outbuildings. A large stable building was situated near Tinkers Gate (HWCM 19327). The park belonging to the palace contained all the grounds of the present Tickenhill, Kateshill and Winterdyne houses (Burton 1883). Leland described it as "a fine manor house...among trees in a good park" (Chandler 1993, 510).

Open spaces (HWCM 17536, HWCM 19340). Two areas of land on either side of

Sandy Bank have been defined as open spaces. Their function is not clearly understood, however. Component HWCM 19340 is an area to the south of the road between the market and burgage plots on Wyre Hill to the west, Tickenhill Palace to the south and the main part of the medieval town to the east. In 1810 the antiquarian Prattinton observed in this area: "uneven ground to all appearance carved by the remains of foundations" (Bond nd; HWCM 19339). He interpreted this as a castle but there is no documentary evidence for the existence of a castle in Bewdley. The remains are more likely to relate to buildings associated with the medieval palace or the royal park.

Component HWCM 17536, to the north of Sandy Bank, is an area of land between two blocks of medieval tenements (HWCM 19334 and HWCM 17537). The land is very steep and it is unclear if it was occupied in the medieval period.

3.3 Medieval urban form

Definition and classification. The medieval urban form (HWCM 15180) has been defined and mapped, based on the extent of the identified urban components and in particular standing medieval buildings and streets and boundaries referred to in medieval documents. The available evidence indicates that the medieval urban form of Bewdley can be classified as a medium medieval market town (English Heritage 1992).

Survival. There is good survival of the medieval urban form to the present day. Chance finds and deposits observed during construction works in the town indicate that buried deposits survive on the quay side and at the site of the Dog Lane and Welch Gates (HWCM 11173, HWCM 11174, HWCM 10854, HWCM 17763). The substantial medieval timbers observed at the river side and on the western edge of the town at Dog Lane Gate suggest that the preservation of organic remains may occur elsewhere in the Lower Town.

The depth of medieval archaeological deposits is not known due to the absence of any controlled excavation in the town. The concentrated and compact nature of medieval occupation could have lead to the development of moderately deep deposits, however, and the absence of substantial 19th century development will have helped in the preservation of medieval deposits directly associated with buildings. Ten medieval buildings survive and substantial parts of the medieval palace are incorporated within Tickenhill Manor.

The components of the urban form comprising streets, quays, tenement plots, markets, chapels and the palace can be readily identified. The survival of all these components is very good.

4 Post-medieval archaeological evidence

4.1 Post-medieval remains and buildings

The tanning pits discovered on Lax Lane during the construction of the medical centre (HWCM 17761) and the early modern burials at the Baptist Chapel on the High Street (HWCM 10786) are the only recorded observations of post-medieval archaeology recorded from the town.

Over 220 16th to 18th century buildings do survive, however. Seven of these date to the 16th century. These early post-medieval buildings are on Welch Gate (HWCM 10830-1), Load Street (HWCM 10746, HWCM 17574), High Street (HWCM 17550, HWCM 17559), Lax Lane (HWCM 17745) and Severnside North (HWCM 10706-7). 17th century buildings survive on all the main streets of the town with the exception of Lax Lane and

include almshouses (HWCM 10807, HWCM 10760, HWCM 10821) and a grammar school (HWCM 10818) as well as domestic houses. The majority of standing historic buildings in the town date to the 18th century, however. The church of St Anne (HWCM 770) has been described (Pevsner 1968), and some investigation and analysis of standing buildings has been undertaken. The majority of the buildings have not been studied in detail.

4.2 Post-medieval urban components

Analysis of the evidence summarised above and of other documentary sources indicated the existence of 36 urban components. The characteristics of these urban components are summarised below.

Chapels (HWCM 770, HWCM 8160, HWCM 17764, HWCM 19326, HWCM 19338, HWCM 21478, HWCM 21479, HWCM 21480). The medieval chapel of ease (HWCM 19326) continued in use until the mid-18th century, and a stone tower was added in 1695-6. This tower was retained when the timber building was demolished in 1745. At some point in its history the dedication changed from St Andrew to St Anne but when is unclear (Burton 1883). The new stone church (HWCM 770) was designed by Thomas Woodward and erected in 1745-48 (Pevsner 1968). The chapel became a parish church in 1853 (VCH 1924, 315).

The medieval bridge chapel of St Anne (HWCM 8160) was only demolished in 1798, although at this time it was used as a "hearse house" (Burton 1883). It is not clear when this chapel ceased to have a religious function.

In 1719 a chapel was built in Wribbenhall on waste ground (Noake 1851). In 1841 the chapel and land around it were consecrated for burials (HWCM 17764). At one end of the cemetery was a plague pit with the stocks standing nearby (Parker 1944). The chapel was demolished in 1880 and a new church, dedicated to All Saints, was built further away from the river on the Kidderminster Road (outside the study area).

Bewdley was a centre for non-conformist sects from the mid-17th century (Burton 1883, 48-50). The meeting houses and burial grounds of these congregations, with the exception of the Society of Friends, were situated in the High Street.

A Baptist chapel and burial ground is situated at 61 High Street. The church was formed *c* 1649 and the present chapel (HWCM 10756) was built in 1764. This is set back behind a range of other buildings and concealed by a later Sunday School (RCHME 1986). The Presbyterian congregation in Bewdley originated in the late 17th century. The first permanent meeting house was built *c* 1696. The present building (HWCM 5572) is situated behind the former manse at 62 High Street (RCHME 1986). The Friends' meeting house and burial ground (HWCM 19338) on the edge of the town was acquired in 1691. The present building (HWCM 10808) was constructed on the site in 1706 (RCHME 1986). A Wesleyan chapel on the High Street (HWCM 21480) was opened in 1794.

Market places (HWCM 10697, HWCM 19337). Leland visited Bewdley *c* 1539 but made no mention of the market on Wyre Hill, which would suggest that Load Street market (HWCM 19337) was the main and possibly the only market place by this period (Chandler 1993, 509). The medieval timber market buildings in the centre of Load Street (HWCM 17766) continued in use through the post-medieval period, but were demolished in 1783 (Brown 1972). The fairs and markets continued to thrive in the post-medieval period. In the early 19th century the fairs and markets declined in response to the decline of Bewdley's status as a trading centre. By the early 20th century the majority were no longer held (Brown 1972).

Street system (HWCM 17642). The street system in the post-medieval period is

essentially an extension of the medieval one. Park Lane was first recorded in 1595 although it may have existed earlier. Wyre Hill remained the main route to the west until 1753, when the turnpike road to Cleobury Mortimer was built along the valley of the Winbrook, perhaps improving an earlier route way (Slater 1991, 65). The road south out of Bewdley which passes to the west of Winterdyne Lodge may post-date the breakup of the medieval park, which probably occurred some time in the later 17th century. The development of the roads on the other side of the river is less clear. The Kidderminster Road appears to have remained the main route as the Stourport Road was not built until 1820 (Snell 1972). The development of domestic and industrial building on this side of the river is likely to have resulted in a greater number of service roads, however.

The medieval gates continued in use as toll gates into the post-medieval period and were strengthened during the Civil War. They later functioned as turnpike gates. It is not known when Tinkers Gate was demolished but Bridge Gate survived with the bridge until 1798 (Price 1974) and Welch Gate and Dog Lane Gate were demolished in 1824 and 1808 respectively (Price 1974; Parker 1932, 2).

Tenement plots (HWCM 17537, HWCM 17583, HWCM 17584, HWCM 17585, HWCM 19333, HWCM 19334, HWCM 19342, HWCM 19343, HWCM 19344, HWCM 19348, HWCM 19350, HWCM 19351, HWCM 19358, HWCM 19359, HWCM 19360, HWCM 21477). Post-medieval occupation in Bewdley to a large extent continued within the boundaries laid out in the medieval period, with some small areas of expansion to the north (HWCM 19358) and south (HWCM 19359, HWCM 19360). In Wribbenhall there was some expansion to the north (HWCM 19348) and until this century there were 17th and 18th century houses "with business premises attached to them centred around the church" (Parker 1944; HWCM 19343). In the post-medieval period the number of small industries and crafts increased. These included tanning, weaving and metalworking, and such activities would have taken place in the buildings and back plots of the tenement blocks.

Public buildings (HWCM 10709, HWCM 10760, HWCM 10807, HWCM 10818, HWCM 10821). Almshouses were built in the 17th century on the edge of the town. Sayer's Almshouses (HWCM 10807) were built in 1625 on Lower Park, Cooke's Almshouses (HWCM 10760) were built on the High Street in 1693, and Boulton's Almshouses (HWCM 10821) were founded in 1645 on Park Lane.

The Free Grammar School (HWCM 10818) was founded by the Borough Charter of 1606 but a grammar school, run by the Bridge wardens, was in existence before that time. The earliest reference to this school is in 1577, but the earliest known school building dates from the early 17th century and is situated at the back of the High Street. This was described in 1833 as "school premises, residence for master, with sufficient accommodation for twenty boarders, school room and forecourt, good garden, in the Park, Bewdley". The school closed by order of the Court of Chancery in 1835. Teaching continued but after the order of Chancery ran out in 1855 new premises on the High Street were purchased (HWCM 17548; Hobson 1972).

The Bewdley Workhouse was built in 1737 at 64 High Street (HWCM 10709). The workhouse closed in 1834 when a much larger institution was built in Kidderminster. The building was later used as a house and horn-workers' workshop (Beves 1972).

Bridging points (HWCM 12782, HWCM 19336). The ford at the end of Lax Lane (HWCM 12782) continued in use until changes of water level brought about by the development of the river navigation in the 18th century. The stone bridge, built in 1483 (HWCM 8161), continued in use throughout the post-medieval period. In 1574 the bridge was damaged by ice floes but it was quickly repaired. The bridge was damaged again in the Civil War. It was not until 1795, when large parts of it were washed away, that a decision was made to build a new bridge. The new bridge was

designed by Thomas Telford and was built to one side of the standing medieval bridge (HWCM 8161) close to, or on the line of, the original medieval bridge at the bottom of Load Street (HWCM 10691). This location was presumably chosen for its greater convenience, and so that road traffic could continue to cross the river while the new bridge was constructed. The bridge was finished in 1798 and its medieval predecessor was demolished.

Open spaces (HWCM 17536, HWCM 19340). The open spaces defined for the medieval period (HWCM 17536 and HWCM 19340) are part of the post-medieval as well as the medieval town.

Quays (HWCM 17747, HWCM 19353). Bewdley was at its most prosperous in the 17th and 18th centuries and the number of boats and trows loading and unloading on both sides of the river increased enormously. The present quays are 18th century but may contain parts of earlier constructions (DoE 1989).

Palace (HWCM 19335). Tickenhill Palace suffered during the Civil War and was not habitable by 1645 when, after the Battle of Naseby, Charles I passed through the town and had to sleep at the Angel Inn in Load Street (Burton 1883). A survey undertaken after the execution of Charles I noted that the palace occupied a site of about two acres but was "very much out of repair" (Burton 1883).

Stukeley the antiquarian visited Bewdley in 1712, and at this time part of the palace was still standing (Burton 1883). What remained was the gatehouse, some buildings on either side, and the remains of a hall or the chapel. The remnants of the palace were largely demolished in 1738, but some of the medieval timber structure survives in the 18th century Tickenhill Manor (HWCM 3913). The "King's Stable" situated near Tinkers Gate was used as a shelter for the homeless after the mid-17th century but was burnt down in 1731 (Burton 1883).

Tannery (HWCM 17761). There were twelve tan yards in Bewdley in the reign of Elizabeth I, and tanning continued to be an important industry in the town into the modern period (Nash 1799; Burton 1883). The only archaeological evidence of tanning so far recorded comes from Lax Lane. During building work in Corporation Yard, seven plank-lined pits in a row were found. Each pit was 2.8m by 1.4m and at least 0.6m deep, and was coated with clay below the timber lining. Bone and horn cores were recovered and it was suggested that the pits dated to the 17th and 18th centuries (Babb and Davies 1975). The site is marked as a tannery on the 1884 first edition Ordnance Survey map.

Foundry (HWCM 10729). A brass foundry was founded in 1697 (Bond nd). The buildings associated with the foundry still survive at the back of a tenement plot fronting Load Street (HWCM 10729).

4.3 Post-medieval urban form

Definition and classification. The post-medieval urban form (HWCM 17598) has been defined and mapped, based on the extent of the identified urban components described above. The available evidence indicates that the post-medieval urban form of Bewdley can be classified as a medium post-medieval market town (English Heritage 1992).

Survival. There is good survival of the post-medieval urban form into the present day. Observations at Lax Lane (HWCM 17761) demonstrated that buried deposits survive and that they can contain waterlogged wood and animal bone. Whilst there is little archaeological evidence due to lack of fieldwork it is likely that deposits dating to this period also survive in other parts of the town. The relatively small amount of development undertaken in the town since 1800 means that the post-medieval deposits

directly associated with buildings are likely to be well preserved. The large numbers of post-medieval buildings still standing in the town may be associated with contemporary buried deposits. Over 220 buildings dating from the 16th to the 18th century survive in Bewdley and there is excellent preservation of post-medieval boundaries and street patterns.

The components of the urban form comprising chapels, streets, tenement plots, market public buildings and industrial areas can be readily identified. The survival of all these components is very good.

5 Post-1800 archaeological evidence

The remit of the present study has not allowed for a detailed survey and assessment of the archaeological evidence relating to Bewdley in the period from 1800. Further work is required before such an assessment can be carried out. Major archaeological remains have been identified, however, including the railway line and station (HWCM 12004, HWCM 12773) and industrial sites (HWCM 008, HWCM 10708). There are 26 listed buildings dated to the 19th and 20th centuries within the urban area as defined by this survey.

6 Specialist assessments

6.1 Assessment of artefactual evidence J D Hurst

Little artefactual evidence is available for the town of Bewdley. The earliest finds are a Bronze Age looped palstave from the River Severn (HWCM 8157; Smith 1957, 19), a prehistoric fish hook (HWCM 12785), and flint implements from Tickenhill (HWCM 12780). The Roman period is represented by a hoard of Roman coins (HWCM 3723), which was found at Tickenhill Manor (HWCM 3723), and a sherd of samian ware (HWCM 21981; findspot unknown).

The only recorded medieval artefact recovered from the town is a shoe sole from Welch Gate (HWCM 17763). The shoe was probably of 14th to 15th century date (Price 1972, 2).

The post-medieval period is better represented and objects associated with the local horn industry have been collected by the Bewdley Museum. A variety of pins and tokens were commented on in a newspaper article in 1959, where some of the tokens were identified as of late 16th century date. Finds of glass and clay pipe of 17th and 18th century date occurred at Lax Lane (HWCM 17761), where structures relating to the tanning industry were recorded in the 1970s (Babb and Davies 1975). Coffins of the early 19th century have been noted in a vault of the Baptist Church ((HWCM 10786).

6.2 Assessment of environmental evidence E A Pearson

Biological remains have been uncovered during construction work in the town. These were not recovered as part of an archaeological excavation, however, and few of them have been studied by a specialist.

Human burials. Urns containing human cremations of possibly Iron Age date were found at Dowles brickworks (HWCM 1174) and are now stored at Kidderminster Museum. Burials may have occurred at the supposed prehistoric barrow sites at Tickenhill Manor (HWCM 10855) and Kateshill House.

Timbers. Medieval timbers have been found at Dog Lane Gate (HWCM 10854), Welch Lane Gate (HWCM 17763), and from a 15th century structure on the quayside (HWCM 11173). They also survive as part of a number of standing medieval buildings in the town. Timbers and bark have been analysed from post-medieval tanning pits at Lax Lane

(HWCM 17761; Babb and Davies 1975).

Animal bone and horn core. Fragments of bones and horn core were found from tanning pits at Lax Lane (HWCM 17761) and although not studied by a specialist, remain at the Bewdley Museum.

6.3 Assessment of documentary sources P A Stamper

From the 17th century Bewdley is quite well documented. The principal groups of primary sources are listed in section 9. The main secondary sources that have been consulted during the archaeological assessment include Bewdley Historical Research Group (1991), Burton (1883), Nash (1799), and Parker (1932). Secondary sources not consulted during the archaeological assessment include Styles (1947) and Victoria County History research notes (WRO BA 527).

6.4 Assessment of buildings R Morriss

Despite its quintessential Georgian appearance, Bewdley has retained a considerable number of buildings of earlier periods. These indicate that the town has enjoyed a fairly uniform degree of prosperity since the medieval period. Most of the earliest buildings were timber-framed, and many timber frames survive behind brick or rendered facades.

The ten buildings with known medieval origins are spread throughout the modern town, from Wyre Hill in the west to the bridge-head suburb of Wribbenhall on the opposite bank of the Severn. The oldest surviving building, dating to the 14th century, is in Wribbenhall (5-9 Stourport Road, HWCM 12760-2). Three medieval buildings survive in Wyre Hill and all were probably built in the 15th century. One, traditionally known as the Old Town Hall (19 Wyre Hill, HWCM 10803) is clearly a domestic building. Three houses, 12-14 Wyre Hill (HWCM 19323), are part of a single medieval hall house, much altered.

Other timber-framed buildings that could date from the second half of the 15th century survive on Sandy Bank (1-2 Sandy Bank, HWCM 17636; 38-9 Sandy Bank, HWCM 17635), Welch Gate (80 Welch Gate, HWCM 10843), the High Street (44-45 High Street, HWCM 17563; 59-60 High Street, HWCM 10785), and on Lax Lane (3-4 Lax Lane, HWCM 15139).

By the 16th century it would seem that the town was of a similar size then as it is now (modern suburbs excluded), and that Wribbenhall was also a thriving suburb. The majority of the 16th and 17th century timber-framed buildings remaining in the town survive around the southern end of Load Street, but were clearly spread much wider. The cluster in Load Street include many buildings that are tall but quite narrow, suggesting great demand on land in this area. Several buildings appear to have been jettied along the narrow side alleys (eg 40 Load Street, HWCM 10742). The small scale of some of the plots may have led to the inability of the owners in later periods to redevelop and rebuild so that they had to make do with refacing in brick.

The framing used in these buildings is generally quite plain, with only a few ornate buildings of this period surviving. One such is 62 Load Street (HWCM 10753), a richly decorated timber-framed building of early 17th century date. It is, however, likely that many of the buildings replaced in the 18th century were also richly decorated. Documentary evidence indicates that Bewdley was at its most prosperous from the end of the 17th century through to the middle of the 18th century and this is confirmed by the evidence of its buildings. The inhabitants of Bewdley were prosperous enough to employ brick extensively as a building material in the later 17th century. This can be seen in at least four large buildings on Severnside South (number 6-7 (HWCM 10711), 10 (HWCM 1854), 11 (HWCM 10713), and 12-13 (HWCM 10714)). Coupled with contemporary brick buildings in Wribbenhall, such as 1-3 Kidderminster Road (HWCM 12774), probably the earliest brick building in the town, and 14 Kidderminster Road (HWCM 12752-3), they

confirms Bewdley's status as a very prosperous inland port at this time.

Many of the 18th century buildings, particularly on the lower (northern) part of Load Street, High Street and Park Street, are quite grand buildings clearly owned by wealthy merchants or the gentry. The less well-off areas seem to have been Wribbenhall, the Lax Lane area, Dowles Road, Sandy Bank, and, ironically, the former heart of the town on Wyre Hill. In all these areas the buildings are generally quite low status, with houses often in terraces. The relative lack of late-Georgian and Victorian development in the town reflects the stagnation in its economic fortunes from the end of the 18th century onwards.

Survey and analysis. Many of Bewdley's buildings have been surveyed and studied in other ways, but there is as yet no synthetic study of the town's architecture.

Assessment of the listing details. The listing dates to 1986 and the information is well up to the expected standards. The descriptions are very well detailed and very comprehensive.

7 Archaeological research framework

7.1 Model of urban development

A model of the medieval and post-medieval town of Bewdley has been produced which is predictive and capable of testing through archaeological investigation. This model has both chronological and spatial (landuse) dimensions (see sections 2 to 5) and is based on an analysis of documentary, cartographic and archaeological sources. The model is derived from the current academic understanding of urban development in Britain, and forms one element of a developing regional research framework. The model is provisional and will be subject to confirmation or revision in the future as new information becomes available, or new studies lead to changing understandings of towns in the region.

7.2 Chronological framework

The documentary evidence indicates that urban occupation commenced in the 14th century but probably developed from the nucleus of a medieval rural settlement. The earliest town was on Wyre Hill and moved to the riverside at some time in the 15th century when the main street pattern was laid out. The chronology of the development of various parts of the town during this period, including the quaysides, is little understood. Bewdley has been continuously occupied until the present but the town declined in the 19th and 20th centuries. The broad outlines of this chronological framework are provisional and require testing through archaeological investigation.

7.3 Urban landuse

The medieval and post-medieval components identified here (sections 3.2 and 4.2) have been mapped and constitute a model of urban landuse for each period. These landuse models are partial and provisional and capable of testing through archaeological investigation.

None of the urban components of Bewdley have been archaeologically tested and little is understood of the nature and density of occupation and how this changed over time. Of particular importance for all periods would be evidence for industries such as tanning, metal working, weaving etc. on which a large part of Bewdley's prosperity was based. Certain questions relating to individual components can only be answered by archaeological investigation, for example, the true nature of the "uneven ground" observed to the north of Tickenhill palace by the antiquarian Prattinton and interpreted by him as "caused by the remains of foundations" (Bond nd).

7.4 Potential for survival of buried remains

Little information is available on the depth of archaeological deposits in Bewdley but observations during construction work in the town have shown that deposits do survive and that they contain datable artefactual and environmental assemblages, including waterlogged organic remains such as leather and structural timbers. The long history of urban activity at Bewdley means that deposits there are likely to be substantial. At the tannery uncovered at Lax Lane (HWCM 17761) post-medieval deposits were more than 0.5m thick. Medieval and post-medieval deposits will have been damaged by later activity in the centre of the modern town particularly where modern development has occurred behind the historic street frontages. The areas which may have the greatest potential for well-preserved deposits are the earlier medieval town centre on Wyre Hill which has remained relatively free from later development and the quaysides on both banks where the present stonework may contain important earlier structures and associated deposits.

Fieldwork was undertaken by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey in October 1994. The extent of 18th and 19th century cellarage was mapped, together with the extent of 20th century development (new buildings and major landscaping work). This showed that there was extensive observable cellarage along the main streets and extensive modern redevelopment within the historic core. It is likely that evidence for more extensive cellarage has been obscured by modern refurbishment of frontages and pavements.

7.5 Potential for artefactual studies J D Hurst

Almost no archaeological work has been undertaken in Bewdley, and the extent of surviving artefactual evidence in buried deposits cannot yet be assessed in any detail. It is known that waterlogging occurs in the vicinity of the river, however, and it is probable that artefact assemblages will be exceptionally well preserved in parts of the town.

Period discussion. Bewdley was a major trans-shipment centre on an important trade route and artefactual evidence from buried deposits may reflect this. The pivotal role of the town in the distribution of goods makes it central to the study of trade in this region. It is likely that a particularly rich and varied range of artefacts will be represented in the archaeological record.

So few finds have so far been discovered in Bewdley that assessment of the range of periods represented and their significance cannot be undertaken. For the medieval and earlier periods finds are very rare. As a result the extent and character of the medieval town, as well as the date of the earliest settlement here, is largely unknown.

For the post-medieval period more artefacts are available for study but these have no archaeological context. The horn industry which was based in the town is well represented in the local museum. During this period trade up and down the Severn is well documented in the Bristol port books, and a detailed account of the trade patterns of goods could be undertaken (M Wanklyn pers comm).

Comparison with secondary documentary evidence. Several industries are documented in late medieval and post-medieval Bewdley and these often have an association with the products of the nearby Wyre Forest. Timber and tanning activities, for example, were probably well established in the medieval period, the latter certainly being documented from the 14th century. The presence of a 'Wood Street' in the town is perhaps evidence in support of crafts based on the forest. Other medieval activities include the leather-working industry from the 15th century, and cap making and cloth making from the 16th century.

In the 17th century, gunpowder making was undertaken and other chemical industries such as the production of dyes were established. Several metalworking concerns were also set up in this period. Pewterers and brass makers operated from the early post-medieval period and Bewdley contained one of the earliest brass foundries in England. Another industry

prominent in the town, from the post-medieval period if not before, was based on horn.

With the exception of the post-medieval tanning industry, none of the industries which flourished in Bewdley from the medieval period have been archaeologically recorded. These industries made an important contribution to the industrialisation of the West Midlands in the period immediately preceding the Industrial Revolution and archaeological evidence of their location, structure and products would make a significant contribution to our understanding of this period.

7.6 Potential for environmental remains E A Pearson

Observations during construction work have demonstrated survival of bone and waterlogged organic material. However, as these remains have been little studied by specialists, the potential of such material to contribute to archaeological research cannot be assessed.

The well-drained soils are not likely to provide good conditions for the preservation of organic remains over most of the area. Nevertheless, previous finds of timber from revetments on the quayside indicate that organic remains (including plant macrofossils, pollen and insects) may be well preserved in the river alluvium, and therefore this area should be considered as high priority for environmental studies. Large dumps of occupational debris have been found at the waterfronts of other towns and cities (for example, London and Newcastle) which have provided valuable information on diet and waste disposal.

Although animal bone and molluscs would not be expected to be well preserved in the acidic local soils, it appears from previous finds from the tanning pits at Lax lane that animal bone and horn core does survive. Animal bone can often confirm whether a pit was associated with the tanning industry and which species of animal were used.

Alluvial deposits are of particular interest as they frequently seal early archaeological landscapes with a high potential for environmental studies (Robinson 1992). Much information can be gained on the changing landscape, often heavily influenced by man's activities, not only by the wide range of biological remains frequently preserved, but also by the sediments themselves. Such studies can highlight periods of alluviation which, in many cases, appear to reflect changes in landscape use (particularly clearance and agricultural activity).

As few environmental remains have been recovered in Bewdley, any environmental material would be of interest. Such evidence could provide information on past environment, diet, living conditions and agricultural or industrial economy. Future excavation should include a policy of sampling and wet-sieving deposits in order to recover plant, insect, molluscs and small animal remains in conjunction with hand-collection of larger items. Where appropriate, specialist sampling for soil and pollen analysis may be required.

7.7 Potential for the study of standing buildings R Morriss

Bewdley has a very fine collection of buildings of all periods and is a prime candidate for an extensive survey. This should identify buildings worthy of detailed survey. Of particular use would be detailed analysis, and dendro sampling, of the late-15th century buildings to try and refine their suggested dates. This would enable a better understanding of the late 15th century development of the town as a whole.

7.8 Summary of research potential

The historic core of Bewdley and Wribbenhall contains buried archaeological deposits, and these are judged to have high potential. In addition there is high potential for the

recovery of artefact and ecofact assemblages. Waterlogged deposits have been recorded, which is rare in the region. The historic buildings constitute a complementary body of evidence, and are judged to have high potential for detailed study and recording. There are few surviving documentary sources for the medieval period, and an average quantity for the post-medieval period; consequently there is moderate potential for further study.

8 Management framework

8.1 Urban archaeological area

The mapped extent of the medieval and post-medieval urban forms defined above indicated the extent of the urban area (Bewdley Urban Archaeological Area). The significance of the urban archaeological area is assessed below.

8.2 Existing protection measures

The different parts of the urban area are afforded different measures of protection through legislation and the planning process. Directly relevant measures are outlined below.

Scheduled ancient monuments. There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the area of archaeological interest. It is possible, however, that following the current Monuments Protection Programme, English Heritage may add monuments in Bewdley to the schedule.

Listed buildings. There are a total of 303 buildings listed as of historical or architectural importance within the urban area. Listing does not directly protect archaeological remains but at least introduces a partial presumption that the building and the ground beneath and immediately around it is likely to be preserved from development. Buildings of special architectural or historic interest should receive very special attention. Such buildings are limited in their number and there is a need to protect and preserve them. The presumption when considering applications to demolish or alter is in favour of preservation. This presumption is also likely to preserve archaeological remains beneath and immediately around such buildings from development. It is important that the architectural and archaeological interests are considered together.

The alteration of listed buildings requires the greatest skill and care to avoid damage to historic structures. Specialist architectural advice is given by the County Conservation Architect or through the District's own conservation officer where that District Council has their own specialist staff.

Conservation area. A Conservation Area has been defined which partially encompasses the archaeological area (Wyre Forest District Local Plan. Written statement and proposals map: deposit plan (1993)).

8.3 Management approach

The archaeological urban area of Bewdley contains earthworks and buried remains relating to medieval and post-medieval occupation, associated with contemporary buildings. The buried remains vary in complexity and depth, and demonstrably contain significant archaeological information. It is desirable that any proposed development within the urban area that has a potential impact on earthworks or buried remains should be assessed by the appropriate archaeological body.

The course of action recommended will depend upon the nature of the development and current planning legislation and frameworks. The archaeological response will be based on both the archaeological information summarised in this document and any subsequent

archaeological information recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record.

9 Principal groups of primary sources compiled by P A Stamper

(WRO: *St Helen's Record Office, Worcester*)

- WRO BA 8681 Survey of manor 1650
- WRO BA 8782 Boundaries, and customs of manor 1612
- WRO BA 5446 Large numbers of papers regarding the bridge and including chapelwardens' accounts, 1569-1664
- WRO BA 8681 Bewdley borough: court papers 17th to 19th centuries
- WRO BA 5495 Rentals, deeds, memoranda, accounts etc 1524-1872. Stewards' accounts 1708-84 and 1798-1808
- WRO BA 5446 Orders, minutes, memoranda regarding the burgesses, 1649-1708
- WRO BA 4827 Deeds, Bewdley Corporation, 1712-1903
- WRO BA 5537 Baptist records, 1649 onwards
- WRO BA 4600 Plan of manor 1785
- WRO BA 965 Plan, c 1830
- WRO BA 5662 Plan of borough, 1837
- WRO BA 5351 Tithe map (1845) and award (1843)
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11 Mapping

The illustrations for this report comprise CAD plots of the urban components for each period and a location plot of archaeological remains combined with OS digital map data (1995) at 1:5000. These plots are current at the date of the completion of this report (March 1995). After this date new information will be held by the Hereford and Worcester County Council Sites and Monuments Record.

- * Historic buildings (listed and other recorded buildings) and urban area
- * Archaeological remains and urban area
- * Medieval urban form and components
- * Post-medieval urban form and components
- * Observed cellaring and 20th century development
- * Urban area and scheduled ancient monuments