

## **Archaeological assessment of Stourport, Hereford and Worcester**

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with contributions by Derek Hurst, Richard Morriss, Elizabeth Pearson and Paul Stamper

### *Summary*

*The historic town of Stourport was surveyed during the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, a desk-based study of the 64 smaller historic towns in Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Archaeological and documentary evidence relating to the historic core of Stourport was carefully analysed, comprising topographic data, published and unpublished archaeological reports, museum collections, primary and secondary historical sources, historical maps, and field data recorded by the project team.*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 post-medieval 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 development. 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 Stourport, which will inform future archaeological investigations as well as management decisions.*

*It is very probable that the historic core of Stourport contains buried archaeological deposits, and these are judged to have high potential. In addition there is high potential for the recovery of artefact assemblages, and moderate potential for the recovery of ecofactual assemblages. The historic buildings constitute a complementary body of evidence, and are judged to have high potential for detailed study and recording. The surviving documentary sources are extensive and consequently the potential for further study is high.*

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Location and landuse**

The urban area of Stourport is located at NGR SO 811 713 in Wyre Forest District. The modern settlement of Stourport comprises a large area of 20th century housing and industrial development around the late 18th and 19th century core.

### **1.2 Topography, geology and soils**

Stourport lies at a height of between 20m and 30m OD on a spur at the confluence of the Severn and the Stour. The soils over the majority of the area are deep well drained, typical brown sands of the Newport 4 association. However, along the rivers Severn and Stour, the soils are typical brown alluvial soils of the Wharfe and Alun associations (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Ragg *et al* 1984). The underlying geology consists of Triassic

Bunter Sandstone overlain by alluvium and the first gravel terrace of the River Severn.

### **1.3 Chronological outline**

The town of Stourport came into being around the canal basins at the Severn terminus of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal, which was completed in 1768. On the completion of the junction between the Staffordshire and Worcestershire and the Birmingham Canal in 1772, Stourport became one of the principal distributing centres for goods to and from the west Midlands. Warehouses, boat yards and a foundry were established and a new bridge was erected over the Severn (HWCM 19637). The Severn still acted as an important artery of trade but as early as 1796 Telford noted that barges with a paying load could only be navigated on the Severn for two months of the year. Attempts were made to improve the navigability of the Severn but these were often hampered by the conflicting interests of those involved (Hadfield 1950, 175, 216-7, Trinder 1987, 133). The need to tranship goods from the canal to the river was reduced by the construction of horse towing paths which enabled narrow boats to use the Severn as far south as Gloucester and later Sharpness (Porteous 1977, 52).

Apart from the dockland structures the canal company built little in the town, and housing for employees was still under consideration in 1774. Provision had to be made for visitors and the higher grades of employees, however, and the enormous Tontine Hotel was constructed (HWCM 12797) and occupied by 1773. From an early date the port attracted independent entrepreneurs who rented quayage from the canal company and constructed private dwellings in the town.

Stourport developed rapidly around the docks and with its fine Georgian houses and attractive setting became, for a short time, a resort town. In 1775 the following description of the town was published in the county newspaper -

"This place is become the Resort of People of Fashion from Worcestershire and the adjacent counties. The beauty of the Country about it, the fine navigable Canal now completely finished, the spacious basin for the Vessels, the River Severn and the New Bridge over it, form altogether a very pleasing scene. The large Public House there is capable of accommodating great numbers of people. Scarcely a day passes but several Parties of Ladies and Gentlemen come here in their Carriages. Regattas (a fashionable term for Water Parties) are not unusual." (Trinder 1987, 60)

The population of Stourport had risen from c 12 in the 1760s to 1300 in 1795 (Porteous 1977). In 1771 John Wesley had dismissed Stourport as a "well built village" but by 1788 he noted that "where twenty years ago there was but one house; now there are two or three streets, and as trade increases it will probably grow into a considerable town". In 1790 he found the town "twice as large as two years ago".

By c 1800 the dock estate was about 17 acres. Iron clay and grain warehouses had been built but the open wharfage and stacking grounds were almost wholly given over to coal yards (Porteous 1977) and the focus of activity was the Tontine Inn with its adjacent counting houses. The zenith of Stourport's prosperity was in the early 19th century and the town expanded rapidly from its origins around the canal basins.

With the completion of the Worcester and Birmingham canal, opened in 1816, the revenue of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal plunged sharply and in the decade 1812-21 the population of Stourport scarcely rose and many male workers left the town (Porteous 1977, 100). The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company struggled as it faced increasing competition from other canal systems but the coming of the railway was to be Stourport's deathblow. The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal had never been improved and this, combined with the unsuitability of the Severn for the increasingly large vessels needed, meant that it was largely superseded by the opening of the Birmingham to

Gloucester railway in 1840. The Severn Valley Railway opened in 1852 (HWCM 12004) but brought no real advantage to Stourport as it was unsuitable for the transportation of heavy goods (Porteous 1977, 165).

By the 1880s the docks were in serious decline. An increase in industrial employment, however, partially compensated for the decline in carrying trade and house building by the industrialists was the prime cause of Stourport's continued growth in this period. Tanning, founding, carpet making and vinegar production formed Stourport's staple industries into the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 20th century the main employers in the town were the power stations and wire and chain manufacture although in the later 20th century there has been growth in light industry and tourism (Porteous 1977, 199).

Commercial traffic on the canal did not completely cease until the middle of the 20th century. Coal to Stourport Power Station (HWCM 12788) was carried by barge until 1949. In 1968 the Transport Act designated the canal a "Cruiseway" for pleasure purposes.

#### **1.4 Placename studies**

The canal terminus was built on meadowland to the south west of the hamlet of Lower Mitton. The terminus was first called *Stourmouth* and then *Newport*. The final name of *Stourport* was fixed on by 1771 (Porteous 1977, 91).

#### **1.5 Syntheses of documentary and archaeological data**

Stourport is mentioned in many published works on the Industrial Revolution but the most complete documentary and historical synthesis is by Porteous (1977). An index of archaeological sites was undertaken for Wyre Forest District Council (Brown 1992) but no previous synthesis of the archaeological evidence from the town has been produced. 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 1835 (HWRO BA 1569/2 s261.94) and the Ordnance Survey first and second edition 1:2500 maps (*Worcestershire sheet XIV.10 (1884)* and *sheet XIV.14 (1903)*) were consulted. Of particular importance in the identification of remains and the definition of components, however were the map of Lower Mitton (Anon 1765) and the 1802 map of Stourport and Lower Mitton (Sheriff 1802).

#### **1.7 Archaeological excavations and surveys**

There have been no recorded archaeological excavations or observations of deposits within the bounds of the 18th century town of Stourport. However excavations at St Michael's and All Saints Vicarage (HWCM 19638), just outside the 18th century town, produce sherds of medieval pottery (Walker 1967). 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 undertaken by Victoria Buteux and Nigel Topping. Additional information was provided by Duncan Brown and Mrs Francesca Llewellyn, to whom thanks are due. Analysis and report writing were carried out by Victoria Buteux and the report was edited by Hal Dalwood.

## **2 Pre-urban evidence**

There is evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity in the vicinity of Stourport. The hamlet of Upper Mitton (HWCM 7199), later incorporated into Stourport, is of Anglo-Saxon origin and is mentioned in the Domesday Survey (Thorn and Thorn 1982). Medieval pottery was found during an excavation at the site of St Michael's vicarage (HWCM 19638; Walker 1967). In the post-medieval period Lower Mitton had its own mill, inn and church and a turnpike road led through the village to the river and Ferry House (HWCM 19716) from which point passengers crossed to the south bank of the Severn. With the exception of Ferry House and the nearby Angel Inn (HWCM 17478) the site of Stourport was meadowland before 1768.

## **3 Post-medieval archaeological evidence**

### **3.1 Post-medieval remains and buildings**

Due to a lack of recorded archaeological work within Stourport no information is available on the nature of buried archaeological deposits within the town. Its low lying situation indicates, however, that the potential for waterlogged deposits is high. With one exception (HWCM 12834) the buildings within the area of the town date from the later 18th century. A detailed survey and interpretation of the domestic buildings of Stourport has been undertaken (Cooper 1966).

### **3.2 Post-medieval urban components**

Analysis of the evidence summarised above and of cartographic and documentary sources indicated the existence of 28 urban components. The characteristics of these urban components are summarised below.

**Canal terminus** (HWCM 19719 and HWCM 19720). The canal terminus at Stourport was constructed so that goods could be transferred between the narrow boats on the canal and the broad-beamed barges on the Severn. In 1771 a single basin (HWCM 19651) was completed. Quays were levelled around the dock perimeter and two small graving docks were constructed for the use of the Severn trows locking up into the basin. Within five years of the canal's completion cranes and other dock furniture had been installed. The Tontine Hotel (HWCM 12797) was occupied by 1773 and dominated the whole town. As the amount of traffic increased the company was obliged to excavate another basin (HWCM 19652) and a second pair of river docks. At least nine warehouses had been built on the docks by 1795 (Porteous 1977). The 1802 map of the town (Sheriff 1802) shows land owed by the canal company stretching north on either side of the canal. This area was taken up with timber yards and wharfs and possibly a boatyard (HWCM 19720)

**Wharves and industrial areas** (HWCM 19656, HWCM 19658, HWCM 19739, HWCM 19740) It is known that private entrepreneurs rented quayage from the canal company, but Sheriff's map of 1802 also shows privately-owned wharves and buildings. Component HWCM 19739, immediately to the east of the main terminus, is one such area. Some of the buildings shown on the map are probably warehouses but also included in this component is the Angel Inn (HWCM 17478) which predates the construction of the town. To the east of this wharf is another quayside (HWCM 19740) occupied by, amongst other buildings, a vinegar brewery (HWCM 19715). Further to the north alongside the canal two timberyards (HWCM 19656 and HWCM 19658), apparently privately owned, are indicated on the 1802 map. In 1789 one Thomas Banks established an iron foundry (VCH 1906, 269) although the location of this is not known.

**Churchyard** (HWCM 19635). The area of the post-medieval churchyard at Lower Mitton has been defined using the 1884 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map. This area was probably the site of a medieval chapel (HWCM 2364). In 1782, presumably in response to the growth of Stourport and the increase in population, a new church was built (HWCM 2363). This church is now demolished but is described by Naoke (1851). The 19th century church of St Michael and All Angels was built to the north of the 18th century church. This is now a shell containing the 20th century church.

**Chapel** (HWCM 19724). A methodist Society was formed in Stourport in 1781 and the chapel at the back of the High Street was registered in 1788. The present building on the site (HWCM 19724) is largely late 19th century but contains some parts of the earlier building (RCHME 1986).

**Street system** (HWCM 19742). The 1765 map of Lower Mitton (Anon 1765) and the map by Sheriff (1802) have been used to define this component. From these two maps it can be seen that Bridge Street, High Street, New Road and York Street are late 18th century roads the rest being already present in 1765 before the canal terminus was constructed.

**Bridging point** (HWCM 19644). An Act of Parliament enabling the construction of a bridge over the Severn at Stourport, to supersede the "dangerous and uncertain ferry" (HWCM 19718; Porteous 1977, 94), was obtained in 1773. Work started on a stone and brick bridge across the whole of the basin in 1774 and was completed in 1775 (HWCM 19637). In severe floods during the autumn of 1794 this bridge was washed away but was not replaced until 1806 when an iron construction, not unlike that at Ironbridge, was erected (HWCM 19645). By 1869 the bridge ironwork had deteriorated and the present bridge, a single span cast iron structure (HWCM 12798), was built (Neal 1987, 20-21).

**Tenement plots** (HWCM 19721, HWCM 18722, HWCM 19723, HWCM 19725, HWCM 19726, HWCM 19727, HWCM 19728, HWCM 19729, HWCM 19730, HWCM 19731, HWCM 19733, HWCM 19734, HWCM 19735, HWCM 19736, HWCM 19737, HWCM 19738, HWCM 19741, HWCM 21992). The urban area of Stourport can be divided into two parts: the old settlement of Lower Mitton (HWCM 19726, HWCM 19727, HWCM 19728, HWCM 19733, HWCM 19734), and the new settlement focus around the canal and its terminus. In Lower Mitton, even by 1800, the majority of buildings are still those shown on the 1765 map of the hamlet. Although new building had occurred, occupation was spread out with gardens and orchards. In the new town, however, buildings were much more concentrated with domestic buildings and purpose built shops fronting New Street, York Street and High Street.

Much of the early building in the town was probably carried out by Staffordshire and Worcestershire Company workmen as early houses and shops are built in the same style as the canal side buildings (Cooper 1966). Diversity in building style came with the arrival of speculators such as Aaron York in the 1780s and later (Porteous 1977, 96).

York Street facing the docks was the first street to be laid out in the 1780s. It contained the canal carriers' mansions, some of which had brick-vaulted cellars with access to the wharves (Porteous 1977, 98). On its south side it is dominated by York House (HWCM 17481) which, unlike the other buildings, fronts the basin with a gateway straight onto the quayside. New Street and High Street were largely built up by the turn of the century and the town had expanded to the north in the narrow strip between Lombard street and the Canal.

### **3.3 Post-medieval urban form**

**Definition and classification.** The post-medieval urban form (HWCM 15022) has been defined and mapped, based on the extent of the identified urban components and in particular the limits of the canal terminus the roads and tenement plots as shown on the 1802 map Stourport. The available evidence indicates that the post-medieval urban form of Stourport can be classified as an industrial town (English Heritage 1992).

**Survival.** It is not yet possible to demonstrate the survival of buried archaeological deposits, due to lack of archaeological fieldwork. The large numbers of standing 18th and very early 19th century buildings, however, may indicate the presence of associated contemporary buried remains. The low-lying nature of the town and the number of waterways suggests that waterlogged deposits may survive particularly in the area of the canal terminus. Large numbers of late 18th century and very early 19th century buildings survive and the components of the urban form comprising canal terminus, wharves, churchyard, chapel, street system and tenement plots, can be readily identified. The survival of all these components is good.

## **4 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 Stourport in the period from 1800. Further work is required before an assessment of this important part of Stourport's history can be carried out. Major archaeological remains have been identified, however. These include the 19th century development of the canal terminus (HWCM 12856, HWCM 19655); the railway station and railway lines (HWCM 12004, HWCM 15019, HWCM 19633); and 19th century and 20th century industrial sites such as the carpet factories (HWCM 19650, HWCM 19717, HWCM 19634), power station (HWCM 12788), chain works (HWCM 12794), tannery (HWCM 19641) and foundry (HWCM 19640).

## **5 Specialist assessments**

### **5.1 Assessment of artefactual evidence J D Hurst**

The only recorded finds from the study area come from the excavation at St Michael's vicarage and are of medieval date (HWCM 19638). The artefactual assemblage comprised a few sherds of cooking pot, which were dated to the Norman period (Walker 1967, 5) or the 13th century (Hurst 1968, 186).

### **5.2 Assessment of environmental evidence E A Pearson**

No environmental remains have been recovered from Stourport to date.

### **5.3 Assessment of documentary sources P A Stamper**

As would be expected the greater part of the documentation for Stourport is 19th-century and later. Principal groups of the earlier primary sources are listed in section 8. The main secondary source used in this assessment is Porteous (1977).

### **5.4 Assessment of buildings R Morrise**

Despite many unsympathetic modern alterations the centre of Stourport is still a largely homogeneous later Georgian town. Excluding the important buildings in and around the basins, the main part of the town lies on a simple cross-roads, the south arm of which leads to the bridge. The acute angle of this crossroads, which does not seem to be associated

with earlier land boundaries, has led to oddly shaped plot boundaries, often respected by the walls of the buildings themselves, eg 10-12 High Street (HWCM 17454).

The town is essentially brick-built under slate roofs and uniform in scale and texture. There appear to be no buildings in the central area that can be dated to earlier than the second half of the 18th century, and most date to later in that century or early in the following one. These older buildings are mostly in terraces and generally of two full and one attic storey. Generally, the houses are three bays wide.

Although built in terraces, the way in which they were built was clearly not uniform. In some cases, for example 5-8 Lichfield Street, a complete short terrace would be built as an individual unit (HWCM 12824). This would suggest that the ownership or leasehold of the whole property was in one set of hands and the building was either constructed by or for the property holder. In other cases, individual houses have been built separately in a uniform terrace, suggesting smaller scale development of individual plots.

The most unusual development occurs in New Street where architectural evidence shows how building began close to the main cross-roads in the centre of the town and continued, on the north side at least, westwards. The uniform design and decorative details, such as the window heads and doorways, indicates the work of one designer. At least four of the houses were built as two pairs, but ones that butted against one already finished house's west gable wall. The new build, instead of being put up separately, simply used the standing gable wall as its own east gable, even to the extent of using the junction as the east jambs for its first and second floor windows, and for a passage doorway on the ground floor. The junction between the two builds in each case is clearly expressed by a vertical full-height construction break. Later finishes have obscured some details, but it can be seen quite clearly in both 9-10 and 11-12 New Street (HWCM 12830). This process would suggest a lack of confidence in the developer, as well as cost cutting.

All the development within the town seems to be of small scale and quite modest with only one or two larger houses, such as the York House, in most prestigious positions. The date range would appear to be from about from the 1780s through to the 1820s. The buildings associated with the canal basins include many of the original workshops, offices and the Tontine Hotel, a very important collection of industrial architecture.

**Survey and analysis.** A historical survey of housing in Stourport has been carried out (Cooper 1966) but there does not seem to have been any architectural study of the whole town.

**Assessment of the listing details.** The list is dated to 1991 and it is both comprehensive and up to the expected standards.

## 6 Archaeological research framework

### 6.1 Model of urban development

A model of the post-medieval town of Stourport 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 4) 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.

## 6.2 Chronological framework

The documentary evidence indicates that urban occupation commenced in the last quarter of the 18th century on a new site. The town has been continuously occupied until the present but suffered an economic decline in the later 20th century. The date of the foundation of the town and its subsequent development is well documented and archaeological data is unlikely to add much to the chronology of the town. The detailed chronology provided by the documentary sources, however, would be extremely important for any artefactual studies and may result in the closer dating of a number of post-medieval pottery types.

## 6.3 Urban landuse

The components identified here (section 3.2) have been mapped and constitute a model of urban landuse for the post-medieval period. This landuse model is partial and provisional and capable of testing through archaeological investigation. None of the urban components of Stourport have been archaeologically investigated, and there is potential for recovering archaeological evidence relating the canal terminus, warehouses and quaysides as well as the domestic material culture of a late 18th century canal port.

## 6.4 Potential for survival of buried remains

No information is available on the depth of archaeological deposits in Stourport. It is probable, however, that significant deposits are located beneath relatively shallow modern deposits and will be easily damaged or destroyed by modern development. 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 moderate 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.

## 6.5 Potential for artefactual studies J D Hurst

Almost no archaeological work has been undertaken in Stourport-on-Severn, and so the extent of surviving artefactual evidence in buried deposits cannot yet be assessed in any detail. The potential of any surviving finds assemblages is great, however. The reason for this is that the town was laid out on a new site and its development is very well documented. These two factors mean that artefact assemblages from the town could be used to closely date certain post-medieval pottery types, for example, and provide important information on 18th and 19th century material culture. Any waterlogged deposits would be particularly important.

**Comparison with documentary evidence.** Documentary evidence suggests that some industries were present in the town from the 18th century onwards. These include a foundry a tannery, carpet works, and tinworks. Several of these industries may be expected to leave a great deal of artefactual evidence in the archaeological record.

## 6.6 Potential for environmental studies

As there has been no archaeological fieldwork carried out within the pre-1800 town, no biological remains have been recovered. The potential for the recovery of environmental remains and for research is largely unknown. As the soils are well-drained, good preservation of organic remains by waterlogging cannot be expected over most of the area. However, along the canal and the River Severn and Stour, organic remains may survive in deep pits and ditches associated with tenement plots. This material may provide information relating to the occupation of the town, particularly food waste or waste from industries using plant or animal products, such as dying or tanning respectively. Waterlogged timbers from the canal terminus (HWCM 19719, HWCM 19720) and

wharves may also survive, providing information on the species of tree used in their construction and possibly woodland management practices. As the soils are generally acidic, preservation of faunal remains such as animal bone and molluscs can be expected to be poor to moderate.

Alluvial deposits frequently seal rich archaeological landscapes with a high potential for environmental studies (Robinson 1992). As Stourport is situated in an area of extensive alluvial deposits, archaeological fieldwork may reveal much about the pre-urban landscape. Information can be gained not only from the study of the wide range of biological remains frequently preserved, but also from the sediments themselves. These studies can highlight periods of alluviation which, in many cases, appear to reflect changes in landscape use (particularly clearance and agricultural activity).

Stourport was one of the most successful towns of the region in the late post-medieval period and therefore would perhaps have had more direct access to imported luxury goods. Of particular interest would be any evidence of exotic species of food plants and breeds of domestic animal brought in to the country as a result of the established trade routes with the New World and easier access to eastern countries.

As no environmental remains have been recovered in Stourport, any environmental material would be of interest. This 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.

#### **6.7 Potential for the study of standing buildings R Morris**

Stourport is a good example of a late 18th century "new town" and a close study of all of its earlier buildings could enable a better understanding of the building methods used and the developers involved. An extensive survey of the buildings, both domestic and industrial, of the late 18th century period would be the obvious way in which to achieve this.

#### **6.8 Summary of research potential**

It is very probable that the historic core of Stourport contains buried archaeological deposits, and these are judged to have high potential. In addition there is high potential for the recovery of artefact assemblages, and moderate potential for the recovery of ecofactual assemblages. The historic buildings constitute a complementary body of evidence, and are judged to have high potential for detailed study and recording. The surviving documentary sources are extensive and consequently the potential for further study is high.

### **7 Management framework**

#### **7.1 Urban archaeological area**

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

#### **7.2 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 monument.** There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Stourport. It is possible, however, that following the current Monument Protection programme English Heritage may add monuments in Stourport to the schedule.

**Listed buildings.** There are a total of 71 buildings or structures listed as of historical or architectural importance within the urban area. 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)).

### 7.3 Management approach

The archaeological urban area of Stourport very probably contains buried remains relating to post-medieval occupation, associated with contemporary buildings. The buried remains may vary in complexity and depth, and will 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.

## 8 Principal groups of primary sources compiled by P A Stamper

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

- WRO BA 5085 Court rolls 1753-78 for Aveley
- WRO BA 8432 Parish records. Registers from 1693; churchwardens' accounts from 1781
- WRO BA 1572 Tithe maps and apportionments for Aveley Kings and Lower Mitton

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## **10 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
- \* Post-medieval urban form and components
- \* Urban area and scheduled ancient monuments