

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

BRIGSTOCK

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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

This is one of a series of reports compiled by Northamptonshire Heritage as part of the English Heritage funded Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) of Northamptonshire, which is intended to provide an effective information base and research framework to guide the management of the county's urban archaeological resource. The survey encompasses all urban settlements and others which may have had some urban attributes, from the Roman period to the 1930s. The only exception is Northampton, which is the subject of an Intensive Urban Survey in its own right.

Each report comprises three distinct sections: a detailed description of the town in each major period; an assessment of potential and definition of a research agenda; and a strategy for future management. A consistent approach has been taken in the presentation of the description in each report with detail being presented under each standard category even where this has no direct obvious relevance to the urban aspects. This section has however been presented in the form of a gazetteer with standard headings so enabling the reader to identify those sections of particular interest. This report on the medieval and post medieval town of Brigstock has been prepared by Glenn Foard. The report draws upon research previously conducted by Glenn Foard on the medieval and post medieval towns of the county. Other contributions to the EUS on digital mapping, database input and related work have been made by various individuals including Christine Addison, Chris Jones, Paul Thompson, Rob Atkins and Phil Markham. Acknowledgement must also be made to Judith Bennet for a number of references related to the medieval settlement.

The first objective of the report is to determine layout, character and chronology of development of Brigstock from its rural Saxon origins through the medieval and post medieval periods. An attempt has been made to identify the various components of the town which are likely to have left identifiable archaeological remains and, as far as practicable, to define the exact location and extent of these buried or upstanding 'monuments'. They have also all been assessed for likely current survival and their potential to contribute to research objectives. The relationship of the town to its hinterland has also been considered and the potential for study of that interaction has been assessed. In this way the report aims to provide a well founded research framework, establishing the current state of knowledge of Brigstock's history and defining a research agenda which can guide future archaeological investigation within the town. Conservation objectives have also been defined. This report should be viewed as a starting point rather than a definitive study, which it certainly is not. If this report serves its purpose then it will need to be regularly reviewed and substantially revised in future years as archaeological investigations, and hopefully also further documentary research, is undertaken.

Given the limitations of time that inevitably must guide the conduct of a countywide project it has been necessary to limit the depth of investigation. No original archaeological earthwork or other such field survey has been conducted, but all available existing archaeological data has been consulted. Mapping from aerial photographic sources in the Northamptonshire SMR, CUCAP and the NMR has been completed. Although each town has been visited to examine the topography of the town and an assessment attempted as to the general state of archaeological survival, no attempt has been made to conduct cellar survey comparable to that undertaken for Northampton as part of the Intensive Urban Survey of that town. This is due to the absence of detailed mapped evidence comparable to

that which exists for Northampton and the very poor results achieved in 1979 when a cellar survey was attempted in Thrapston and Towcester. Nor has it been possible to examine all documentary sources, even for the medieval period. However, an attempt has been made to assess the overall potential of this crucial part of the record of the urban past and to examine in detail the most documentary important sources. An index has been compiled from various list and indexes in the Public Record Office, Northamptonshire Record Office, National Register of Archives and British Library. Given the vast quantity of documentation, particularly for the last 200 years the limitations in the documentary assessment, especially regarding the industrial period must be acknowledged. Attention has focussed on those sources which might contribute significantly to the reconstruction of the historical topography of the town and to the broader characterisation of the various 'monuments' within the town.

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SUMMARY

This report focuses on the archaeological development of Brigstock in the pre-industrial period. The post 1750 period has not been assessed in the context of this report, but this does not mean that there are no significant archaeological remains in the area.

Brigstock lies in the centre of the former Rockingham Forest in the north east of Northamptonshire. In origin it was the centre of a major Saxon royal estate with an associated old minster church. It grew into a substantial agricultural village but did not acquire a market until the mid 15th century, apparently replacing the failed market at the adjacent royal village of Geddington. Though it would appear that Brigstock achieved some success as a market centre, it never managed to build up a secure urban commercial base and never acquired other significant urban attributes. By the early 17th century its market was in decline though it struggled on into the 18th century. It simply could not compete effectively with the well established market towns of Kettering, Oundle, Thrapston and perhaps to a lesser extent Rockingham, which lay within a seven mile radius of Brigstock, each positioned securely in the agriculturally productive valleys of the Ise, Welland and Nene. However, despite this decline, the village retained three annual fairs and in 1849 Brigstock could still be described by Whellan as *'large and important'*.¹

The village has a very high documentary potential, high historic building potential and, in specific areas, good archaeological potential. Though by far the highest importance of the settlement rests in its Saxon royal manor and church, it is a good example of a market village from the late and post medieval periods and, on the basis especially of its documentary and historic building potential warrants investigation as such.

¹ Whellan, 1849, 791.

I DESCRIPTION

TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY

Brigstock village lies along the Harper's Brook, a small tributary of the Nene. The brook has exposed a range of geological strata where the valley is cut through the boulder clay covered plateau. The village lies on either side of the brook, extending to the edge of the very narrow alluvial flood plain, while the township extends up onto the watershed on either side encompassing a wide area of boulder clay plateau.

A PRE MEDIEVAL

1.0 EARLY HISTORY

1.1 Prehistoric and Roman

Though Brigstock lies within an extensive area of boulder clay, at the heart of the medieval Rockingham Forest, the permeable geologies of the narrow valley of the Harper's Brook were occupied and exploited from at least the Neolithic and Bronze Age onwards. Late Neolithic and Bronze Age burials have been found to the north west of the village. Extensive colonisation of the surrounding boulder clays occurred in the Iron Age and Roman periods. Settlements of this date also lie in close proximity to the village and two sites producing Iron Age and Roman material lie beneath Brigstock itself. The site beneath the manor and the market place may represent a location with continuity of occupation from the Iron Age through to the present. The major Roman road from Godmanchester to Leicester, which passed via the small towns at Titchmarsh and Medbourne, ran along the valley of the Harper's Brook and appears to have run through Brigstock village. Its alignment is possibly marked by the back lane at the north eastern edge of the village, although the road's exact alignment is not confirmed.²

1.2 Saxon settlement and Medieval village

The typical Northamptonshire pattern of dispersed early-middle Saxon settlement is seen at Brigstock with several separate foci of occupation identified on the permeable geology within the parish. In each case the sites are represented by surface scatters or residual material recovered during watching briefs and excavations. The origins of the village itself are likely to be represented by the residual early-middle Saxon sherds from excavation in the manor grounds, though no features have yet been located there and by several features and sheds recovered from evaluation in Latham Street.

The small quantities of early-middle Saxon sherds recovered from fieldwalking on the Boulder Clay within the medieval deer parks to the south west of the village are unlikely to represent settlements and may be related to some form of industrial or other exploitation of woodland or pasture on the clay land. However fieldwalking evidence does indicate a substantial Saxon settlement on permeable geology on the small tributary stream to the Harper's Brook to the south of the village, which continued to be occupied into the late

² The RCHME record the road as running across Brigstock Great Park and Geddington Chase but the cropmark and soilmark evidence, as for example with the soilmark of the Kettering to Gt. Casterton road, is clear that this cannot be the case.

Saxon period but it too was deserted before the medieval period. The small extension of the parish on the south side which extends south to abut Slipton may represent the land unit originally associated with this settlement.

Bridges mistakenly reported the presence of a medieval hamlet of Hale in Brigstock, but this can be seen to be a confusion with the hamlet of Hale in Apethorpe, resulting perhaps from the presence of the Paulyn fee in Brigstock, the family being known as Paulyn of Hale (see below). There was therefore no dispersed settlement within Brigstock to compare with that seen in the Lyveden valley to the east, but there were a number of keepers' lodges within both the Great and Little Park in Brigstock during the medieval and post medieval periods. In the post medieval period a large house was also constructed within Farming Woods, now known as Farming Woods Hall, with parkland being laid out around it from the former woodland.³

B MEDIEVAL & POST MEDIEVAL

1.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

In origin Brigstock appears to have been the centre of a major Saxon royal estate with an associated old minster church, possibly associated with a defended residence to the south at Sudborough. It grew into a substantial agricultural village which, in common with other Northamptonshire villages, is likely to have been replanned in the late Saxon period. The village may not have expanded as much during the medieval period as some other forest villages because so much of the surrounding boulder clay landscape was retained as woodland and royal hunting preserves enabling only a very limited area of the boulder clay upland to be cleared for agriculture. The royal manor declined in importance with the establishment of a major royal hunting lodge at Geddington and the manor decayed and had been abandoned by the mid 15th century. The village itself also shrank substantially during the recession of the later 14th and earlier 15th century.

Lying in the heart of the forest and peripheral to the major agricultural areas of the Nene, Ise and Welland valleys, this area of the county acquired a number of minor market villages in the medieval period, at Corby, Bulwick and Geddington, which were lost in the late 14th century recession. These were replaced in the 15th century by new nearby markets in other villages. It was at this time that Brigstock gained its market charter, being effectively a replacement for the Geddington market, granted to the tenants of the village. Whereas Geddington and Bulwick, and the later market at Weldon, lay on the major Northampton to Stamford road, Brigstock lay off the major road network, lying on a lesser road crossing the forest along the valley of the Harper's Brook from Thrapston. Brigstock achieved some success as a market centre, but its peripheral location meant that it never managed to build up a secure urban commercial base and never acquired other significant urban attributes. It is likely that its market only ever served a secondary function in relation to the major markets in nearby towns. Similarly there is likely to have been very limited industrial production, although in the post medieval period the village had a dyeworks and tannery which may indicate the presence of limited cloth and leather industries. Other minor industrial production may also be expected related to the forest

³ Bridges, II, 285.

location of the settlement. Brigstock market seems to have survived longer and been more successful than most of the small number of other late medieval and early post medieval markets founded or re-founded in the county, though the market went into decline by the early 17th century. Although it struggled on into the 18th century it simply could not compete effectively with the well established market towns of Kettering, Oundle, Thrapston and perhaps to a lesser extent Rockingham, which lay within a seven mile radius of Brigstock, each positioned securely in the agriculturally productive valleys of the Ise, Welland and Nene. However, despite this decline, the village retained three annual fairs and in 1849 Brigstock could still be described by Whellan as '*large and important*'.⁴

2.0 TOPOGRAPHICAL DEVELOPMENT

The core of the settlement is likely to have been around the Saxon church and the adjacent royal manor site, although the small-scale archaeological investigation so far undertaken failed as yet to identify significant Saxon activity. The settlement appears, on topographical grounds, to have developed as two distinct parts, one on either side of the stream, though it is unclear whether this reflects a polyfocal Saxon origin or substantial medieval expansion from a core on the north-east side of the stream. The village appears to have been treated administratively as two parts as early as 1440, for apparently the election of freeboroughs and ale-tasters involved two of each being drawn one from either side of the stream.⁵ However the most distinct variation in plan form seems to ignore this division. The south eastern part of the village on both sides of the stream has a very curvilinear form to the road and tenement row pattern, with the church and vicarage at its heart in what appears to be a large oval enclosure bounded mainly by roads. This has similarities to the oval enclosures seen in the Old Town adjacent to the old minster church at Brackley, also containing a stream, and around the church at Daventry which may prove to have early-middle Saxon origins, as with the large oval enclosure excavated at the north end of Higham Ferrers. Alternatively, similar irregular forms are seen in some other woodland villages and might be indicative of the early focus of occupation, while the regular rows may indicate planned expansion during the medieval period.⁶ Such rectilinear forms are seen in the northern and western parts of the settlement. The northern part comprises a series of tenement rows fronting either side of the High Street, the main road along the valley of the Harper's Brook, which ran up through the market place. The western part of the settlement may represent a quite late expansion over open field land, with the Park and some of the closes at the south west side of the street being laid over ridge and furrow. It is unclear when this expansion occurred, but the earthworks in the Park, which could represent boundaries of tenements fronting onto Park Walk, may indicate that this was a medieval expansion. Bridge Street, which crosses the stream at the mill pond could also be a late insertion into the village plan. The surviving bridge on this road is only of 18th century date.⁷ Minor late expansion over the fields may have continued

⁴ Whellan, 1849, 791.

⁵ NRO, ML 138, p.72.

⁶ Various unlocated topographical references have been identified: cottage on north side of '*hay brigge*', court rolls 1461–1483, NRO, old box 14/8 (BQ/CR/6); '*Herdhedeslane*?', Court Roll 1462-3, NRO, X367; common lane leading to the well called Houndwell, court roll, 1462-3, NRO X367; cottage with appurtenances in the place called the Sykes, Court Roll, 1594-5, NRO, X367; orchard next to Goosebrigg, 1596, NRO, ML 141; Cottage adjacent to '*le churche bridge*', 1597-8; a cottage called '*le gate house*', Court Roll, 1621, NRO, X368.

⁷ Listed Buildings list.

in the post medieval period., for in 1708 there were 3 tenements in a place called Causin, which appear to be either or both the tenements set alongside the lane to Oundle or at the end of Causin lane on Causin Leys, the two small isolated blocks of settlement on the north east side of the village.

The area to the north east side of the stream contains the manor, church, rectory, vicarage and market place. Though hardly more extensive in area than the western side of the settlement, it is by far the most complex settlement area with a number of separate streets and various tenement rows. However it may be that not all the lesser streets had medieval frontages, a single evaluation in Latham Street having failed to find such evidence. The decline of the settlement on the west of the west of the stream may have been a result of the recession from the mid 14th century while the recovery may have seen settlement expansion concentrated within the eastern part of the settlement, attracted by the location there of the market.

The most difficult problem is the question of how the market place was inserted into the village plan in the 15th century. It is most likely that a pre-existing green was utilised for this purpose, but if not then a degree of re-planning will have been necessary to enable the insertion in such close proximity to the core of the settlement.

3.0 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

3.1 MANORIAL

3.1.1 Manors

3.1.1.1 Royal Manor

In 1086 Brigstock was a royal manor comprising 3.5 hides. There was land for 9 ploughs with three in demesne together with 6 slaves, implying a substantial demesne farm. The manor was also a royal estate centre for Domesday Book records dependencies in Islip, Geddington and Stanion (fig.3).⁸ It is unclear whether Brigstock was a primary Saxon administrative centre or if it may be one of a number of such centres which appear to represent a transfer of estate centre to a woodland context at some time in the middle or late Saxon period. Such transfers might be associated with residences established in connection with hunting, something that certainly occurred in the medieval period. However if the interpretation of Sudborough as a middle Saxon residence to the south of Brigstock, which can be suggested from the place-name the 'south burh', is correct then any transfer would have had to have been at an early date.⁹ The importance of Brigstock by the late 10th century is confirmed by the impressive surviving church which must represent an old minster serving the royal estate (see below). Focussed in the valley of the Harper's Brook, the extent of the estate thus defined would have stretch from the bounds of the royal estate of Rothwell on the west towards the estate of Oundle on the east, extending into the valley of the Nene and the upper reaches of the Ise.

During the 12th to 14th centuries Brigstock was the site of a royal hunting lodge, sharing a custodian with Kings Cliffe. However at an early date the focus of royal attention seems to have shifted to Geddington, which lay on the major road from Northampton to Stamford. Though the Brigstock property was maintained, it was nearby Geddington manor which saw the development of a substantial residence as a hunting lodge in the earlier 12th century and Henry II and Richard I were frequent visitors, and it was Geddington where when Edward I stayed for one night when taking the body of his queen, Eleanor, back to London.¹⁰ From 1319 the Brigstock manor was rented out to a tenant. In 1449 it was leased to Montagu family and in 1516 sub let to Sir William Parr.

3.1.1.2 Rectory or Sike manor

The rectory will have been established out of the royal manor for the support of the church and its priest in Brigstock. It was presumably in existence by the mid 11th century because the rectory was granted by the king in the earlier 12th century was said to have been previously held by Regenbald the priest, a major minister of Edward the Confessor. The church at Brigstock, with the chapel of Stanion, was granted by Henry I as part of the foundation grant of Cirencester Abbey in 1132-3.¹¹ The vicarage was ordained in 1225. In 1254 the profits of the rectory were 16 marks and the vicarage 6 2 marks. After the dissolution, in 1585-6, the manor and rectory was granted to Sir Edward and Sir Walter

⁸ Domesday Book, 219d.

⁹ Foard, 1985.

¹⁰ Colvin, 1963, 902.

¹¹ Flesher, 1813, 105.

Montague for their lives.¹² The rectory fee was that held in the medieval period by the Abbot of Cirencester and their is specific reference to the villeins of the Lord Abbot.¹³ The rectory fee comprised the site of the rectory itself, leased out at the time of the dissolution, 3 tenements, 3 messuages and 3 cottages. At least 2 if not all of these tenements lay in the Abbots Row.¹⁴ In the 17th century the Earl of Salisbury held property in Brigstock. This appears to have been the rectory manor, which was purchased from him by Lord Torrington, Lady Torrington holding the manor in 1720 and 1725.¹⁵ The property held in 1725 by Lady Torrington is described as the Sike Manor and lay in a single row on the eastern edge of the settlement on the east side of the street known as The Syke.¹⁶ In 1597-8 there is reference to both a cottage and a messuage in 'Abbot's Rowe' and in 1599 to other property in 'abbots roe'.¹⁷ It would appear that the Abbot's Row and the tenement row fronting onto the Sike are one and the same. In 1720 the manor court was held in the Rectory House,¹⁸ and although the location of this capital messuage has not been established it is perhaps most likely to have lain in the Abbot's Row as no other Torrington property is identified in Brigstock in 1725.

3.1.1.3 Paulyn fee

During the medieval period another minor fee existed in the village, including a number of villein tenants, belonging to Pawlyn or Paulyn of Hale or Hall.¹⁹ In origin this was a grant of 1 messuage and one virgate belonging to the custody of the king's wood of Gottesle, Acwell and Sike, granted in the early 13th century to Alan Hangepot, held by the sergeanty of keeping the wood.²⁰ This property has not been located.

3.1.1.4 Mordaunt property

In the 15th & 16th centuries there was some property in Brigstock, mainly if not wholly field land, held by the Mordaunt family with their adjacent manor of Sudborough.²¹ This property might even have its origins through an original dependency of Sudborough upon the royal manor of Brigstock. This property has not been located.

3.1.2 Manorial Appurtenances

3.1.2.1 Manor house

The site of the capital messuage at Brigstock lay immediately to the north west of the church. The area between the church and the manor house appears to have been cultivated in the late Roman and early-middle Saxon period, though residual sherds indicate occupation in the vicinity. A post in trench feature, either a building or more likely a boundary, and associated metalled surfaces were constructed in the late Saxon period. A

¹² Flesher, 1813, 105.

¹³ NRO, ML 138, p.80. Customs of Brigstock, NRO, ML141, p.96; Account roll of Cirencester Abbey possessions at the dissolution, PRO SC6/Henry VIII/1240, m.71.

¹⁴ PRO SC6/Henry VIII/1240, m.71.

¹⁵ Bridges II, 285.

¹⁶ A Syke was a small stream or gully in marshy ground or meadow; Mawer, 1924, 53. This can perhaps be equated with the small stream running down the small slade in which the road The Syke runs.

¹⁷ Court Rolls, 1597-8 & 1599, NRO, X368.

¹⁸ Bridges, II, 286.

¹⁹ Recorded in the 17th century, NRO, Clayton 32; Bridges; Customs of Brigstock, NRO, ML141, p.96.

²⁰ Bridges, II, 286.

²¹ NRO, Stopford-Sackville collection.

major east-west stone wall appears to represent the north boundary of the medieval manor and its association with a butt-ending late Saxon ditch implies it may have replaced a late Saxon boundary.²²

There is no certainty as to where within the manorial area the early medieval capital messuage lay. A late Saxon hall is to be expected as well as various rebuilding in the medieval period. Various repairs are recorded in the mid 12th to mid 13th centuries in connection with the hunting lodge at Brigstock. This building is likely to be the manor within the village, though there were various lodges within the Great Park itself. Various kings from William I onwards resided at some point in Brigstock but nowhere near as frequently in the 12th and 13th century as at Geddington. The buildings at Brigstock were of timber and included a hall, chamber and a mews. Brigstock was still in good repair when assigned by Edward I to his mother Queen Eleanor in the late 13th century and it remained part of the dower of successive queens. By the end of the 14th century the buildings had however fallen into disrepair and been demolished as the only references are to the repairs of park pale and keepers' lodges. The royal hunting lodge at Geddington saw a similar demise over the same period.²³ The capital messuage in Brigstock was by 1440 described as totally devastated, a vacant site which had been broken up into three separate plots. An undated document, from well after 1466 explains that '*the scyte of the manor is cleyne downe and liythe waste and conteyneth a rode at yerely value 4d.*'²⁴ In 1596 it was stated very clearly that this ground adjacent to the churchyard was '*without doubt where anciently the Capital Messuage was situated*'.²⁵ At this time the size of the plots of the manor were 42ft by 21ft, and adjacent to that 84ft by 42 ft, while the dimensions of the plot between the latter and the cemetery was not specified. The demesne too had been let out to farm amongst the tenants. It is easy in this context to understand why it was that the royal manor was held at farm by the tenants by the late medieval period, the tenants electing the bailiffs annually and with the profits of the court falling to the use of the whole of the inhabitants of the place.²⁶

The rectangular moat enclosing the manor house, depicted on three sides on the 1725 map, has since been converted to sunken garden. This may have its origins in a moated enclosure for the medieval royal manor and hunting lodge. Alternatively it might represent an enclosure constructed when a new house was built, probably by the Montagu family when they leased the manor from the crown in 1449. This would accord well with the evidence from the standing building which is of the late 15th and mid 16th century, the latter probably relating to the sub letting of the manor to the Parr family. The house was further altered in 17th or 18th centuries restored mid 19th century and extended c. 1887 by Gotch and Saunders.²⁷

The excavated boundary wall aligns with the northern boundary of the churchyard and a step in the lane to the west of the manor site, implying that manor and church were laid out

²² Steadman, 1993.

²³ Colvin, 1963, 902.

²⁴ NRO, ML 138.

²⁵ Survey of Brigstock 1596, NRO, ML 141.

²⁶ NRO, ML141, p.89.

²⁷ Woodfield, 1981,166-7. The suggestion of a few minor architectural features of the 12th century would seem to be contradicted by the documentary reference to the manor being 'cleyne downe', unless certain ruins survived which were built into the 15th century house. An article in AASR p.237-146 on the church includes elevation drawings and documentary evidence on the manor house.

together and that the land to the north was not part of the manor. This wall may relate to the late 15th or 16th century manorial construction rather than the earlier, medieval manor house. This land to the north of the medieval boundary wall, within the manorial boundary in 1725, contained a medieval hearth, discovered in the 1980s excavation. It is possible that this area was a row of tenements, possibly representing infilling, fronting north east onto Mill Lane.

3.1.2.2 Fishponds

A fishpond associated with the royal hunting lodge at Brigstock was repaired in the 12th century.²⁸ Other repairs took place in the 13th century and the pond supplied fish to the table at Westminster. When surveyed in the later 13th century they were in good repair.²⁹ This may be in the origin of the pond upstream from the manor which in 1725 drove the watermill, for the meadow to the west of the mill pond was then known as 'Fishdam'. However it is possible that the hunting lodge referred to is one within the Great Park and not the manor house in the village (see above). Certainly the Old Lodge, a small moated hunting lodge in the Great Park which survives as an earthwork has an associated fishpond in the valley immediately to the north.

3.1.2.3 Watermills

A water mill worth 5/- had been present in the manor in 1086.³⁰ By 1440 it was let out to farm.³¹ In 1596 Richard Barton held the watermill and other land next to the mill dam, together with nine other tenements and three shops.³² In 1607 Simon Montagu held the watermill³³ and by 1650 it is described as two corn mills under one roof with holmes and mill banks held at an annual rent of £20.³⁴ In 1725 the Montagu family still held the mill though now as owners of the manor. The mill appears to have been rebuilt on a new site at some time between 1805 and the 1880s, with a new leet being dug across a former close on the south side of Mill Lane.³⁵ This accords with the description of the present building as being of 18th or 19th century date.³⁶

A fulling mill is recorded in the manorial court rolls in the early 14th century, but it seems likely that this mill lay in the dependent Brigstock holding in Stanion, as reference is made to it lying in the South Field. Without further detailed documentary research it cannot however be proved for certain that it did not lay in Brigstock.³⁷

²⁸ Colvin, 1963, 902.

²⁹ Steane, 1970, 306.

³⁰ Domesday Book, 219d.

³¹ Farmed out in 1440 for 106/8d, NRO, ML 138.

³² Survey of 1596, NRO, ML141.

³³ Survey, Brigstock April 1607, PRO : LR2/221,

³⁴ Brigstock Manor, 1650(9?), PRO : E317 NORTHANTS 17.

³⁵ OS 1st Edition 1:2500; Inclosure Map, NRO.

³⁶ Listed Buildings list.

³⁷ Stanion which had a south field in the early 14th century (Hall, 1995, 214). In 1322 Radulph de la Breche gave to Cecilia Pennifader meadow between the east mill and 'le Walkmilne'. Brigstock Court Roll, 26/8/1322 roll 33. In 1328 Richard Everard gave to Celia a rod of land at the gable of the 'Walkmilne' in the south field. Brigstock Court Roll, 9/6/1328 roll 36. In 1335 Ralph Nelo de Stanion gave 2 half rods of land between the Walkmilne and le Neuedyke. Brigstock Court Roll 23/6/1335 roll 42. Brigstock court rolls in NRO.

In 1725 there was a north mill holme immediately to the south of the vicarage and church. This is a considerable distance from the then surviving water mill and so it may denote the presence nearby of an earlier mill.

3.1.2.4 Bakehouse

The common bakehouse, like the rest of the manor, was already farmed out in 1480-1.³⁸ There is no reference to it in any later survey or rental and hence it may have gone out of use in late medieval period. However its absence from the 1440 survey is surprising. It might be expected to have lain on Hall Hill, as in many other towns it lies in the market place but this is not always true, especially perhaps where the market is a late addition to an agricultural village.

3.1.2.5 The Pound

In 1725 the pound lay together with town houses on a small plot of land immediately north of the churchyard. This ground is now incorporated into the churchyard and may have been a part of the original Saxon churchyard, encroached upon in the medieval period.

3.1.2.6 Deer Parks

Two major royal deer parks with numerous keepers' lodges (and possibly a royal hunting lodge if this was not actually the manor site itself) existed to the south west of the village. Both were stripped of woodland in the early 17th century when acquired disafforested and acquired by Sir Robert Cecil.³⁹ The extent and bounds of the park are described by RCHME.⁴⁰

3.1.2.7 Landscape Park

Immediately adjacent to the manor house in 1725 there was a large enclosure called The Park. This is most likely to have been established as a landscape park in the early 18th or 17th centuries as an adjunct to the adjacent manor house, rather than having any earlier origins. The area contains earthwork evidence of ridge and furrow and close boundaries. It is unclear whether a tenement row existed here in the medieval period along the street to the south of the park but if so then its desertion may have been largely complete as a result of the decline of the settlement in the later 14th and 15th centuries rather than a case of large scale enforced depopulation for imparking in the postmedieval period.

3.1.2.8 Country House

Fermyn Woods Hall was constructed in an area of former woodland on the north side of the township in the early to mid 17th century and substantially developed in the 18th and 19th centuries. It may have its origins in a hunting lodge within the forest. An extensive landscape park was developed around the Hall from the former woodland.

3.2 CHURCH

³⁸ Farm of the bakehouse in 1480-1, court roll, NRO, bq/cr/11.

³⁹ Pettit, 1968, 171.

⁴⁰ RCHME, 1976, 21-23.

3.2.1 Church of St. Andrew

In 1086 there was a priest at Brigstock. In about 1200 there were three dependent chapels, at Slipton, Stanion and Little Oakley, attached to the church at Brigstock. These may have been remnants of a much more extensive parochia encompassing the whole of the royal estate attached to Brigstock in the middle or late Saxon period. The other possible dependencies may have been detached at a fairly early date, especially given the presence of a substantial Saxon church in Geddington which had its own dependent chapelries.

The surviving building at Brigstock reflects the high importance of the church in the late Saxon period and its survival presumably reflects to some degree the relative decline in importance of both church and manor from the early medieval period onwards. St. Andrews is one of the best preserved of Northamptonshire's late Saxon churches. The architectural evidence would suggest that the nave, tower and stair turret are largely of late 10th or early 11th century date and probably had flanking porticus at the east end of the nave. The church was expanded in the late 12th century with a new south aisle in c.1200 and 13th century expansion of the chancel and addition of a north chapel. This was reconstructed in the 15th century and a south chapel added in the 16th century.⁴¹ The church was restored in 1876-7.

3.2.2 Chapels

There were no dependent chapels within Brigstock itself. Whereas the dependent chapels of Slipton and Little Oakley (see above) gained parochial status in their own right in the medieval period Stanion remained a chapelry of Brigstock, just as the Nether Hall remained a member of Brigstock manor, during the medieval period.

3.2.3 Vicarage

The vicarage was ordained in 1225 when the Rectory was impropriated by the Abbot of Cirencester. The vicarage and associated glebe was presumably taken out of the Rectory fee at this time.⁴² It lay immediately to the south east of the churchyard in 1725 as today. In 1725 at the south side of the vicarage plot adjacent to the stream is what appears to be a square orchard encompassed by water on three sides, which may represent some form of moated enclosure. The present building is of 19th century date.

3.3 MONASTIC AND OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS

There were no monastic establishments or almshouses in Brigstock.

3.3.1 School

There was a school in Brigstock by the later 16th century but its origin remains obscure. The absence of the school from the earlier surveys and rentals does not prove that it did not exist at that time, for it is not mentioned in the 1596 rental. Its omission at that time may be explained from the reference in 1598 that it had fallen into ruin.⁴³ In 1607 the inhabitants of Brigstock still held one house there, at a rent of 4d, called '*le Schoole howse*' being a building of three bays. The school was re-endowed in 1620 by Rev. Latham of Barnwell, who had previously established both a school and an almshouse in

⁴¹ RCHME churches survey notes in SMR. Carpenter, 'St. Andrews Church & Manor House at Brigstock', *AASR*, p.237-248. 'Notes on the Architecture of the Churches of Brigstock and Stanion, Northants', *JBAA*, 1920.

⁴² Bridges, II, 286.

⁴³ NRO, Montagu, old box 13/1-10.

Barnwell.⁴⁴ The Latham family had lived in Brigstock since at least the late 16th century, Thomas Latham junior and senior holding tenements there in 1598 and in 1607. In 1725 the school, perhaps the same building as in 1607, lay on the market place, though it is conceivable that this was a new building endowed by Latham and replaced shops which are believed to have become disused by the early 17th century. The school continued in existence throughout the 18th century for in 1793 there was still a schoolmaster in Brigstock.⁴⁵ By 1900 the school has been rebuilt in what is now Latham Street.⁴⁶

By the early 17th century the presence of a school was however no longer an attribute related to urban status and commercial activity, for they are found in various purely agricultural villages countywide.

3.3.2 Town Houses

The town houses, properties belonging to the parish, are first mentioned in 1607 and again in 1725, when they lay together with the pound, immediately to the north of the churchyard. This land may originally have been part of the Saxon churchyard and have been encroached upon in the medieval period. There is certainly reference in the medieval court rolls to a certain family '*in the churchyard*' implying perhaps that buildings have encroached upon it by that time.⁴⁷

3.4 TENEMENTS

3.4.1 Population and Wealth

Brigstock was a relatively large village with a substantial population in the medieval and post medieval periods. This may in part be explained by the relatively large size of the township, although a large proportion of the territory was actually crown woodland and deer parks, the open fields covering a more modest area. However the woodland will have provided a significant resource which was exploited both for industrial as well as pastoral purposes and hence, as Pettit notes for many woodland villages in the post medieval period, it will have supported a more than average range of tenants involved in woodland related production.

The national taxation and related assessments from the medieval and post medieval period provides a broad overview of the relative fortunes of the settlement between 1086 and 1801 compared to all other settlements in the county. The village did not show substantial relative population growth between 1086 and 1377. In part this may be a reflection of significant population decline in such the more agriculturally marginal townships following 1349. It is however also probably in part due to the fact that there was not large scale clearance of woodland from the boulder clay watersheds around the village to create arable land during the height of medieval economic growth. This was because of extensive royal control of the woodland which was maintained for hunting, some as forest coppices and much as deer parks. The limited recovery in the relative population level in the village between 1377 and 1524 may relate in part to the growth of the market and associated commercial and industrial activity. There was however relative stability between 1524 and

⁴⁴ Howe, 1991.

⁴⁵ NRO, ZA266.

⁴⁶ OS 1st edition 1:2500 mapping.

⁴⁷ Bennett 1998.

1674, by which time the market was in severe decay. Bridges records in 1720 that there were 160 families in the village.⁴⁸ After 1674 the town shows a relative decline in countywide terms by 1801.

The 1440 survey is by far the most comprehensive view of medieval Brigstock, established in an inquisition taken at Rothwell before three commissioners and a jury of 13, just a few years prior to the leasing out of the manor to the Montagu family.⁴⁹ However the tenements recorded in the survey are just the royal manor tenements, so excluding the Rectory manor, which probably comprised about 10 tenements, judging from the surviving tenements in and length of frontage of Sike Row in 1725 and the fact that there were nine tenements in the manor at the dissolution (see above). Also there is the problem within the royal manor that any sub letting, which was certainly happening at a later date, will not be visible in the rental.

⁴⁸ Bridges, II, 285. No attempt has been made to calculate the total number of tenements from the 1725 survey and map although this should be possible. Brasier's map of 1725 and associated schedule, NRO, X361b.

⁴⁹ Survey of Brigstock in 1440, NRO, ML 138.

BRIGSTOCK RENTALS & SURVEYS 1416 - 1607

	1416-17	1440	1483-4	1521	1596	1607
total tenements	67*	89	65*	80 (90) ⁵⁰	92 (96) ⁵¹	88
message total	39	35		24?	37 ⁵²	25
toft total				10		
virgate ⁵³	3 @ 8/-					
half virgate	28 @ 4/-	31 @ 4/-	33 @ 2/-	31 @ 4/-		
quartern	4 @ 2/-	4 @ 2/-		4 @ 2/- ⁵⁴		
half quartern	4 @ 1/-					
acremenland ⁵⁵	-	5 @ 2/-	5 @ 1/-	5?		
cossicle	28 @ 2/-	27 @ 2/-	27 @ 1/-	25 @ 2/-	25 (27) ⁵⁶	19.5?
cottage	-	22 @ 1d to 16d	-	24 (26) ⁵⁷	32 ⁵⁸	43
shop	-	-	-	-	8	1 (2) ⁵⁹

⁵⁰ 10 of the ninety recorded were described as tofts and so probably not occupied.

⁵¹ 4 of the 96 were described as waste and so not occupied.

⁵² 37 if one includes the 3 half sute & 2 quartern sute tenements.

⁵³ Where two messages are with a single virgate(2 cases) they have been interpreted as 2 half virgates;

⁵⁴ One without a message.

⁵⁵ Equivalent to a quartern.

⁵⁶ Including 2 waste.

⁵⁷ Also a tenement and a toft.

⁵⁸ Including 2 waste and the house from a barn.

⁵⁹ 1 converted to a cottage.

3.4.2 Borough / Burgage

There is no reference to burgage tenure or borough status and none is to be expected given the late date and very modest scale of the market village. However the exceptional freedoms of the tenants of the village, as a result of the origin of the manor as ‘ancient demesne’ of the crown, means that the tenants had a high degree of freedom despite the absence of burgage tenure. Certain of these rights relevant to trading were confirmed to the tenants of Brigstock manor in a charter of 1582-3, their exemption throughout the realm from payment of tollage, passage, pontage, murage, stallage and other impositions.⁶⁰

3.4.3 Virgate

In 1086 there were 16 villeins who together with the priest and 4 bordars had 5 ploughs.⁶¹ In 1416 there were 18.5 virgates, declining to 16.5 in 1440, although in part this may be accounted for by the acremanlands comprising 5 quarterns. The 1416 rental, though apparently not comprehensive, shows that these virgates were divided between 39 messuages. Of these the majority (24) were held with half virgates, at an annual rent of 4/- each. In 1440 there were 21 half virgates, each of 15 acres. Four others were held in 1416 as tenements with two messuages and a virgate of land, probably representing another four half virgate messuages. In 1440 this number had increased to 5, each of 30 acres, apparently by the combination of several half virgates. In 1416 only 3 messuages were held with full virgates of land and by 1440 there were none surviving. In 1416 there were also four tenements held with a quartern of land, being a quarter virgate. In 1440 there were still four quartern tenements, each of 7 acres, but in addition there was record of 5 quarterns called acremanlands, again quarterns and similarly held for 2/- each. The existence of half virgates and of quarterns seems likely to represent sub-division of virgate tenements in the 13th or 14th century to accommodate population expansion.

3.4.4 Cottage

In 1086 there had been 4 bordars in Brigstock. By 1416, in addition to the virgate holdings, there were 28 ‘cossicles’, tenements with no field land.⁶² In 1440 there were 27 cossicles, still held for 2/- each but the survey also reveals the presence of 22 cottages, which must also have existed in 1416 but were not included in the rental, giving in all 49 tenements without land.⁶³ This represents a major increase on the numbers in 1086, if the two can be closely associated. Such a high proportion of tenements without field land is unusual in a purely rural village but it is unclear at this stage the degree to which this number reflects a significant proportion of the population involved in industrial occupations as opposed to working as labourers on others agricultural land or in other woodland related occupations. It does however accord with Pettit’s observation that the forest villages contained an unusually large number of landless tenants in the Tudor period. The later rentals and surveys show a modest increase in the number of cottages to 59 by 1596 and 62 in 1607, but nothing which would imply a substantial change in the nature of employment related to the establishment of the market.

⁶⁰ NRO, ML 138, p.89.

⁶¹ Domesday Book 219d.

⁶² Bridges, II, 285.

⁶³ In 1416-17, NRO, Montagu, old box 13/13.

3.4.5 Decline and Recovery

In the absence of detailed analysis of the earlier medieval sources it has not been possible to calculate a total of tenements prior to the recession of the 14th century. However, the jury in 1440 reported that various premises were in king's hands, *'as well by the frequent pestilence, as by many tenants withdrawing from the town through the hardship they laboured under'*.⁶⁴ It seems likely therefore that the total of 89 tenements in 1440 was a substantial reduction on the total which had existed earlier in the 14th century. Although the number of cottages and overall the number of tenements increased in between 1521 and 1596, falling again slightly by 1607, there is nothing here to suggest a significant impact of the market on the overall population of the village.

However various undertenants were occupying some properties, so requiring a significant increase in the estimated population. In 1553 tenements were sublet, illegally, and this also occurred in the case of the few shops, for in 1553 it was ordered that various tenants should not retain under-tenants: *'and that Thomas Lapyche shall byfore the feaste of Sent Mychell the Evaungellist next comyng after the daie of this courte avoyde his Tennant whyche dwellyth in his shoppe and Mathew Law in lyke maner avoyde all his undertenntes byfore the same feaste of Sent Mychell upon payn of eyther of them 20/-'*⁶⁵

The apparent desertion of parts of the settlement to the south west of the stream, particularly in the area of the Park, where earthworks recorded from aerial survey suggest tenements may have existed, may relate to decline in this period, with the recovery of occupation in the late and post medieval being concentrated in the area north east of the stream, possibly in response to the establishment there of the market in the 15th century.

3.5 COMMERCE

It is clear from the documentary evidence available from a number of different medieval villages in Northamptonshire which did not acquire markets that the presence of a handful of residents involved in commercial or industrial activity is no indication of urban status. Hence for example at Brigstock John Toy, mason, held a messuage with a half virgate in 1440 and William Fermery, mason, held land in Brigstock in 1462-3.⁶⁶ Similarly, although one finds that in the late 15th century there was at least one trader from Brigstock who also had a stall or shop in Oundle, there were also traders from ordinary villages at this time with stalls in Oundle: from Weldon, Stanion, Lowick, Titchmarsh Gidding and Warmington as well as from Stamford.⁶⁷ Although by the mid 18th century the penetration of commercial and industrial activity into the rural context seems even greater, it is possible that this is an impression resulting from the improvement in the quality of documentation.⁶⁸ Only where there were a substantial body of traders in a settlement can it be taken, even in the later medieval period, to represent an indication of urban and commercial functions in the settlement in which they dwell. However in the case of Brigstock there may have been a somewhat wider than normal range of traders in the

⁶⁴ Survey of Brigstock in 1440, NRO, ML 138.

⁶⁵ Court Roll, 1553, NRO, X367.

⁶⁶ Court Roll 1462-3, NRO, X367.

⁶⁷ G. Foard, Extensive Urban Survey report for Oundle.

⁶⁸ Hatley, 1973.

settlement during the 16th and 17th centuries. Perhaps most significantly, in 1553 it was ordered that ‘... no Cotyar except he be eyther a Vyteler or a Craftysman kepe any horse mare or gelding withyn the feldes of Brigstoke ...’⁶⁹ This would imply that a significant number of cottagers in Brigstock were involved in commerce or industrial activities at least in the mid 16th century.

3.5.1 Market

The heart of Rockingham forest was peripheral to the marketing hinterlands of the main small towns, which were all set on the permeable geologies of the Nene, Ise and Welland valleys. From at least the early 13th century through to the late 17th century there were attempts to establish market villages in this peripheral zone of relatively low agricultural productivity (due to extensive clay geology and extensive woodland), but of significant industrial production. Several of the markets seem to have enjoyed modest success though never growing to more than village status. They were also relatively short lived. The acquisition of a market at Brigstock appears to be closely related to the ownership of the manor by the crown and to the demise in the late 14th century of the market at the nearby royal manor of Geddington, which may itself have been a mid 13th century replacement for the market at the royal manor of Corby. In turn the decline of the Brigstock market may have encouraged the establishment in the later 17th century of the market at nearby Great Weldon, though Brigstock market seems to have survived longer than that at Weldon.

Little is yet know as to the range or volume of goods traded at these markets. The primary function may be expected to have been in the trading of basic agricultural products from the immediate hinterland for the more common manufactured goods, more specialist goods likely to be the province of the more important small town markets. However consideration must be given to whether Brigstock and its local precursors had a role in the distribution of specific products of the industries of this woodland zone. As in a number of other market settlements although the market itself fell into decline and was lost completely during the 18th century, Brigstock fairs continued to thrive and were still in existence in the mid 19th century.

In 1466-7 the tenants of Brigstock, who held this royal manor at farm, were granted the right to hold a weekly market on Saturdays and two fairs annually.⁷⁰ The granting of the rights with the profit going to the poor of the parish is similar in character to the conditions on the re-founding of the Kings Cliffe market. By 1720, when the market was in terminal decline, it was being held on a Thursday. There is little evidence as to the relative success of the market, in part due to the fact that the market was held by the inhabitants of the manor rather than the lord of the manor and hence the income does not figure in any surviving records.

The market was clearly still functioning in 1586 when a market cross was erected on Hall Hill. The absence of Brigstock from Speed’s list of towns in 1612 merely indicates that it was not of sufficient size to warrant national notice. By 1623 it was said that Brigstock

⁶⁹ Court Roll, 1553, NRO, X367.

⁷⁰ May 9th 6 Ed IV m.13, from VCH Notes.

market was ‘utterly decayed and of no use to the county’,⁷¹ however it seems not to have been completely extinguished for according to Bridges a market was still held Brigstock in 1720. By 1720 the market day had been changed to a Thursday but there is not reason to suggest that the market had ended and that a new grant had been received, for one might have expected such an event within living memory to have been recorded by Bridges.⁷²

Daniel Eaton, land steward on the Earl of Cardigan=s estate at Deene, about five miles north of Brigstock, who corresponded in detail with his absent master between 1725 and 1732 regarding the running of the estate, makes not a single reference in his letters to the market at Brigstock whereas he refers on several occasions to the markets at Oundle and Uppingham, both easily accessible along what was then the main London to Oakham road.⁷³ This would suggest that Brigstock market was already disused by 1725 or, given that Eaton also failure to mention Rockingham market which we know still continued in a very modest way at this time, it was of such little consequence as not to figure significantly in the running of the estate. Certainly by 1830 and 1847 it was reported that the market had long since fallen out of use.⁷⁴

3.5.1.1 Market Place

The market place was established on the slightly higher ground to the north east of church and manor, known as Hall Hill from at least 1482. It is unclear whether the Hall Hill was an existing medieval green which was simply utilised as a market place or if there was a re-planning of the central area of the village to accommodate a new market place. In the latter case perhaps widening an existing street, though conceivably a new road and market place might have been inserted in an area previously occupied by tenements. It might prove possible to resolve this question by historic building study around the market place, if early 15th century buildings survive. Otherwise archaeological investigation will be needed.

It would appear that there were agricultural tenements fronting onto the Hall Hill, not just cottages, for in 1618 reference is made to a ‘sute house’ on Hall Hill⁷⁵ and then in 1624 to a half ‘sute house’ there.⁷⁶ Even in the true market towns such a pattern might be found, particularly where the town had evolved from an agricultural village, for example as seen at Oundle. In contrast to the market towns there is no evidence at least in the early 18th century for a grouping of alehouses or inns around the market place, the few in the village being scattered in several different streets, though not all of the alehouses have been located.

3.5.1.2 Shops & Stalls

In 1482-3 amongst the new rents was one for a parcel of land on Hall Hill, which might indicate the creation of shops or extension onto the waste of properties fronting onto the market place.⁷⁷ In 1483-4 other new rents are recorded, but some encroachments already

⁷¹ PRO C3/332/42, quoted by Pettit, p.164.

⁷² Bridges, II, 285.

⁷³ Wake & Webster, 1971.

⁷⁴ Howe, 1991; Whellan, 1849, 791.

⁷⁵ Court Roll,1618, NRO, X368.

⁷⁶ Court Roll,1624, NRO, X368.

⁷⁷ *Johannes knyvvves de novo apposito pro una parcel terre apud hall hyll 3d*, but there are two other similar entries without reference

existed in 1440.⁷⁸ These new rents in 1440 seem to be the ‘capella’ of 1521-2.⁷⁹ By 1596 they are described as ‘newsets’ and include at least one shop, though others include holmes, a porch with a pale, pieces of waste for dunghills, showing that most had no relation to the market. The use to which shops were put is thrown into some uncertainty for as early as 1553 a tenant was dwelling in a ship, implying a two storey building with a chamber on the first floor. In the later 16th century it was reported that ‘*there are besides these certain others that inhabit shops very dangerous to dwell in because of the casualty of fire.*’⁸⁰

None of the earlier rentals or surveys mention shops but in 1596 eight shops were recorded. In 1597-8 there was also another small dwelling which comprised just one room with a chamber above and it is possible that this may have been another converted shop.⁸¹ The 1596 total of 8 shops compares to 16 shops and 6 stalls in Kettering in the first half of the 16th century and 30 shops and 22 stalls in Oundle in 1565. Though it is possible that Brigstock market was already in decline at this time it does provide some guide as to the relative commercial success of Brigstock compared to its two main rivals. The absence of any reference to stalls in the market place is probably because the market was held at farm by the tenants of the manor who collected any income from stalls and hence they do not appear in any of the manorial records. By 1607 there is reference to only one surviving shop, specifically described as lying on the market place, its measurements being 22 ft by 12ft. The only other shop mentioned had by this time been converted to a house and again the measurements are given: it was of one bay, being 12ft long and 12 ft wide and held for a rent of 12d.⁸² Both the 1596 and 1607 documents are very detailed and give the impression of reasonable completeness as regards the royal manor, hence the decline in numbers of recorded shops would seem to be a genuine reflection of the decline in the fortunes of the market. There were still one or two shops in existence by the early 18th century.⁸³ However, although there was a row of buildings within the market place on the map, the survey makes no reference to any shops at that time but does identify one of the buildings as a school. Again this may represent genuine loss, even though in 1793 there is reference to a butchers shop for by this time the presence of a shop or two is not uncommon in villages.⁸⁴ The row of buildings were still present on the market place in 1805 but had gone by the 1880s. Pipe trench observation in market place immediately to the south of the row of shops suggests that the row was not more extensive at an earlier date.⁸⁵

to location; court roll 1482-3, NRO, BQ/CR/5.

⁷⁸ Court Roll, 1483-4, NRO; NRO, ML 138.

⁷⁹ Rental, NRO, X361a.

⁸⁰ Parish records quoted by Steane, 1974, 216.

⁸¹ Survey, NRO, ML 141.

⁸² Survey of Brigstock, April 1607, PRO LR 2/221.

⁸³ In 1705 there was transfer of a tenement together with a shop with a chamber and buildings above and an outside storage place. In 1712 Jane Stanion released to Thomas Browne the house and shop (*totius illud domum mancional et shopham in Brigstock*) with all the appurtenances belonging thereto including two closes of pasture called Parke Close and Larbrooke, which she occupied. NRO, X369, Old Box 14 / 18, Oct 1712.

⁸⁴ NRO, ZA266.

⁸⁵ Evaluation Report in SMR.

3.5.1.3 Market Cross

In 1586 a market cross of stone was erected on Hall Hill. It lay immediately to the south of the row of shops in 1725. The cross was described by John Bridges in about 1720 as standing on stone steps, with a vane at the top and bearing the arms of Queen Elizabeth.⁸⁶ Though somewhat eroded over the succeeding centuries, it stands almost identical today.⁸⁷

3.5.1.4 Court House

There is a local tradition that the remains of the old market house were been incorporated into the house by the market cross now called Leigholme, a building said to be the oldest on Hall Hill.⁸⁸ This building, named in the list as Market House, is said probably to be of mid 17th century date with 18th and 19th century remodelling. This is a possibility, and if so it would be an extremely important survival. There is however no mention of a market house in any of the rentals or surveys. Given the very modest scale of marketing at Brigstock there may never have been a market house similar to that seen in larger towns.

3.5.2 Fair

The two annual fairs, granted to the tenants of Brigstock in 1466-7, were to be held on the feasts of St. George (23rd April) and of St. Martin (11th November).⁸⁹ In the 1570s the fair still functioned, for the farmers of the fair paid to the Montagu family the sum of £3/13/4d annually.⁹⁰ In 1604-5 the fairs and their tolls, annually worth about £7, were again granted to a group of tenants of the village, the profits to be disposed of for the good of the poor or for the repair of the church, with the money being administered by two representatives of the village.⁹¹ By 1720 three fairs were being held annually, on the feasts of St. Mark, St. Bartholomew and St. Martin. In 1800 fairs were held on 6th May, 5th September and 22nd November.⁹² Three fairs were still being held in 1847, on the 25th April, 4th September and 23rd November, only finally dying out later in the 19th century.⁹³

Daniel Eaton, steward of Deene, makes various references to Brigstock fair. In May 1725 they bought 145 yards of unbleached flaxen cloth there for £7/8/10d; in November 1725 he reports that lean cattle and fat hogs sold very well there and that the price of wool was 14/- to 16/- per tod.⁹⁴ Then in February 1727 he reported that the small pox was rife in Uppingham so they could not send there for cloth and must defer purchase of any until Brigstock fair. In April 1731 Eaton reports buying a cow, for £3/18/6d, and a calf on the 26th April at Brigstock fair but that he could not get the right price for the young bull he took there to sell so had brought it home again - there '*was not one in the Fare so good by forty shillings...*'. The other fairs he frequented from Deene were Grantham, Market Harborough, Rothwell, Uppingham and Stamford. His regular presence at Brigstock fairs

⁸⁶ Bridges, 1791, vol.2, 284 et seq.

⁸⁷ The cross is described by Markham, 1901, 27-9. All the evidence is reviewed by Giggins (unpublished report in SMR).

⁸⁸ Howe, 1991.

⁸⁹ May 9th 6 Ed IV m.13, from VCH Notes.

⁹⁰ Account of legal expenses, NRO, Brigstock Parish records, 48p/69.

⁹¹ Bridges, II, 285.

⁹² Markham, 1901, 29.

⁹³ Whellan, 1849, 791.

⁹⁴ A unit of weight of wool, usu. equal to 28 pounds (approx 12.7 kg).

probably has more to do with the close proximity to Deene rather than its relative importance compared to other fairs in the region.

The main goods traded at Brigstock in 19th century were horses and horned cattle at the fair on St. Mark's, sheep, brass and pewter at St. Bartholomew's and black hats, boots, shoes and pedlary at Martinmass.⁹⁵

3.5.3 Inns & Alehouses

As with other villages the regulation of the alehouses was maintained by the 2 ale tasters elected by the 12 sworn men and the lord.⁹⁶ However Brigstock differed from other villages in its number of alehouses. In 1630 it had 12, which was quite different to the average rural settlement, and this despite the fact it did not lay on a major communication route, the only significant factor leading rural settlements to have more than just two or three alehouses. Indeed Brigstock ranked 7th in the recorded settlements and 11th if all other settlements had surviving records (Northampton, Higham Ferrers, Brackley and Thrapston being the major settlements missing). Even at such a late date when the market has been described as in severe decline, it is well above Rockingham at 6 compares favourably with Rothwell which had 14, though not surprisingly it is significantly less than its major competitors, with 19 in Oundle and 27 in Kettering. The number of alehouses thus clearly picks out Brigstock as a significant centre and suggests that it must still have been functioning as a market centre. The village's ranking falls to 9th (12th in all) in 1673-4 and 1755 with just 7 alehouses and 13th (16th in all) in 1828 which must to a degree reflect the demise of the market.

These inns and alehouses are not easily identifiable from the manorial records and have in most cases not been identified to particular tenements within the town. 1525 court roll ref to an alehouse in Brigstock.⁹⁷ The 1607 survey does not identify one alehouse nor does any earlier rental or survey.⁹⁸ However the 1725 survey does locate four inns of the 7 alehouses which probably existed at that time: The WhiteHart, The 3 Cocks, The Montagu Arms and the Green Dragon.⁹⁹ Though one inn was lost by the early 19th century, a cottage in 1808 being said formerly to have been called The Bell,¹⁰⁰ and in 1849 there were five Inns in the village: the Angel, New Inn, Lord Nelson, Green Dragon, Old Three Cocks.¹⁰¹

3.5.4 Hinterland

The definition of hinterlands for this study has necessarily been conducted in a relatively simplistic fashion. Firstly using Bracton's theoretical measurement of $6\frac{2}{3}$ miles as the distance within which a new market could be considered to provide direct competition to an existing market.¹⁰² An alternative has been calculated using Thiessen polygons. The latter have just taken into account the markets towns which were clearly successful and

⁹⁵ Howe, 1991.

⁹⁶ NRO ML 138.

⁹⁷ Holder of an alehouse 26 years previously, Court Roll, 1551-2, NRO, X367.

⁹⁸ PRO LR 2/221.

⁹⁹ 1725 survey, NRO, X361b.

¹⁰⁰ NRO, ZA287.

¹⁰¹ Whellan, 1849, 792.

¹⁰² The issue is discussed briefly in the Northamptonshire context by Goodfellow, 1987, 305.

which survived into the post-medieval period. The Thiessen polygons are likely to give a closer definition of the area in which the town had the dominant impact but the former should provide a guide as to the widest hinterland from which the town will have derived the most of its trade. These theoretical constructs will of course have been substantially influenced by the road pattern. They will also have been affected by physical topography and land use, though in Northamptonshire, unlike upland counties, these are likely to have been relatively limited in their impact.

Brigstock lay in the heart of Rockingham Forest, one of the most weakly served parts of the county in terms of market towns. This can be understood in terms of the low productivity of much of the soils, leading to a low level of agricultural development with the lowest proportion of land under open field in the medieval period and the lowest density of population. However there does appear to have been a concentration of industrial production in the forest zone which may have added somewhat to the productivity of the hinterland. This led to a relatively unstable marketing provision based on a range of market foundations from the 13th to the 17th centuries. Brigstock was one of the more successful of these foundations, lying at the very edge of the hinterlands of the main market towns.

The hinterland is of particular interest, especially when taken together with that of Geddington, for the range of medieval industrial production (iron, pottery, charcoal, stone, cloth) and the likely range of woodland products. What is currently unclear is the degree to which the minor markets themselves had a role in the trade in these various commodities.

3.6 INDUSTRY

In the absence of and detailed analysis of the trades evidence which may be recorded in the extensive documentary sources there is at present little evidence as to the range of industrial and commercial activity in the village during the life of the market. There are occasional references to trades, as in 1440 when a John Toy mason is mentioned.¹⁰³ The limited evidence of trades in the village from the late 16th century onwards may be comparable with some other rural settlements of this time and need not reflect the presence of a market in the village from the mid 15th to 18th century.

Although an extensive iron industry existed in Rockingham forest in the Saxon and medieval periods there is at present no evidence for iron working, either bloomeries or forges, in Brigstock itself.¹⁰⁴ The medieval charcoal industry which supplied the fuel for the ironworks is however well represented in Brigstock's medieval woodland areas. Several charcoal burners in the 14th century are named in Brigstock. Both industries were however in decline if not completely decayed by the mid 15th century.

A significant woollen cloth industry existed in Northamptonshire in the medieval and post medieval period and it would seem that Brigstock was involved in the industry. The presence of a fulling mill in the manor in the 14th century, whether actually lying in Stanion or in Brigstock itself, has already been noted. In 1620 there was a certain Richard

¹⁰³ NRO ML138.

¹⁰⁴ Foard, 2001.

Stanierne of Brigstock, weaver,¹⁰⁵ while in 1777 there were at least two weavers and a woolcomber in the village.¹⁰⁶ In 1725 the old Dye House plot is recorded as lying on the south side of the stream. The presence of a dye-works would suggest that in the 17th century there may have been more than just one or two weavers working in the village. There is also a reference to an unlocated tenement in the village in 1597-8 called the >Tucke house=, which might possibly represent a fulling mill, though it could simply relate to the family Tucke who held tenements in the village in 1440.¹⁰⁷ Whereas it has been suggested that the woollen cloth industry was reintroduced to central Northamptonshire in the 17th century it is conceivable that the industry actually survived at least in a modest way from the medieval industry.¹⁰⁸

The leather industry, most notably shoe production was to replace woollen cloth as the dominant major industry in Northamptonshire in the 18th century. There was however significant leather production throughout the post medieval and medieval period. In Brigstock in 1596 William Barton held a yard there called a tanyard.¹⁰⁹ In 1607 the tanyard was described as a small yard upon which a small cottage of two bays had been built, implying that it may have been disused.¹¹⁰ However in 1620 a property including the ‘*tanne howses and tanne fatts*’ is mentioned,¹¹¹ described in 1623 as the tan hovel and lime pits.¹¹² Richard Barton, who released a message with a yard called a ‘*Tanne Yarde*’ in 1621¹¹³ had married a rich tanner’s widow from Lancashire.¹¹⁴ The tanyard was still known by that name in 1725 and it seems it may have continued functioning throughout the 18th century for in 1777 there were two tanners in the village and 1781 there is record of the admission of Samuel Mayes of Brigstock, tanner, on the surrender of Solomon Mayes of Brigstock, fellmonger.¹¹⁵

In the 17th century there are occasional references to a smithy and to butchers.¹¹⁶ There are later a range of trades including a cobbler in 1725.¹¹⁷ In 1777 the Militia Lists include 2 maltsters, a jobber, 2 tanners, 4 masons, an innkeeper, a cordwainer, five tailors, a blacksmith, a wheelwright, 4 butchers, 5 carpenters, 2 weavers, a staymaker, a baker, a glover, a miller and a (wool) comber. That is 34 trades out of a total of 83 men between the ages of 18 and 45 years old. In 1805 there were just three trades recorded against owners of tenements in Brigstock : John Bellamy, a butcher; John Bellamy junior, a cordwainer and William Marshall, a glazier(?).¹¹⁸

¹⁰⁵ Court Roll, 1620, NRO, X368.

¹⁰⁶ Hatley, 1973.

¹⁰⁷ Shorter Oxford English Dictionary.

¹⁰⁸ G. Foard, Extensive Urban Survey report for Kettering.

¹⁰⁹ NRO, ML 141.

¹¹⁰ PRO LR 2/221.

¹¹¹ Court Roll, 1620, NRO, X368.

¹¹² Court Roll, 1623, NRO, X368.

¹¹³ Court Roll, 1621, NRO, X368.

¹¹⁴ There is or was a bell in the church given by him. Flesher, 1813, 105.

¹¹⁵ NRO, ZA273.

¹¹⁶ PRO LR 2/221. Court Rolls, April 1643 & 1644, NRO, X370.

¹¹⁷ 1725 survey, NRO, X361b.

¹¹⁸ Inclosure map.

3.7 COMMUNICATIONS

In the Roman period the valley of the Harper's Brook had been the route of the major road from Godmanchester to Leicester. This route may have remained a significant one in the Saxon period, though the demise of the crossing of the Nene will have limited its significance from the 5th century, though whether it was still important in the late Saxon period connecting the Saxon burhs of Huntingdon and Leicester is uncertain. The presence of a major Saxon royal estate centre at Brigstock in the 11th century could relate in part to the presence of the road, but by the medieval period Brigstock lay at some distance from any major road, which may explain in part why Geddington became the dominant settlement within the area of the royal estate.

3.8 LAND USE

3.8.1 Woodland

In 1086 there was a tract of woodland 15 furlongs by 1 league attached to the manor.¹¹⁹ The exact extent and significance of this woodland has not yet been determined but it probably included areas outside Brigstock township. Extensive crown woodland remained within the present parish of Brigstock during the medieval and post medieval period. These lay on boulder clay on either side of the valley of the Harper's Brook. To the south west this woodland was mainly in the Great and Little Parks and was cleared in the 17th century. A part of the woodland to the north east was also cleared in the later 17th or 18th century in connection with the establishment of Fermyn Woods Hall and its parkland, although the majority of this woodland still survives today. This woodland provided a major resource during the medieval and post medieval periods which supported substantial industrial and other production (see above).

In addition in the 16th and 17th centuries the manor also has extensive rights of common over woodland and pasture in adjacent townships. There was right of common in 300 acres called Stoke Wood and Stoke Wood Leys, and also over Benefield Walk, Lords Walk and The Oaks, all in Benefield.¹²⁰ The manor also had rights of common in Deenethorpe Common, Weldon Plain and Sudborough Green.¹²¹ These rights are likely to have originated in woodland which was part of the manor of Brigstock in the late Saxon period but lay within adjacent townships.

3.8.2 Open Fields & Inclosure

The open fields of Brigstock were a relatively small part of the present parish comprising, together with the enclosures of the settlement itself, some 1516 acres. They were focussed along the valley of the Harper's Brook, mainly but not solely on the mixed geologies in the valley. Some enclosure had already taken place by the 1725, mainly on the clay land but also with a few closes adjacent to the village. The majority of the open fields were enclosed by act of parliament in 1805. There was limited area of meadow in the floodplain of the Harper's Brook, but there was extensive pasturing in the various woodland commons.

¹¹⁹ Domesday Book, 219d.

¹²⁰ Bridges, II, 285.

¹²¹ Pettit, 1968.

II ASSESSMENT

1.0 TOWN

1.1 SUMMARY OF IMPORTANCE & SURVIVAL

Brigstock is of high importance as regards its Saxon royal estate centre and old minster church. There is also a high potential for the integrated study of the open fields, parks, woodland and village in the medieval period. Though it may only comprised a significant component of the economy of the village for a two centuries and never raised the settlement to urban status, the commercial and industrial aspects of the late medieval and post medieval market settlement are worthy of study due to the high documentary and historic building potential. In this context Brigstock also has group value with the other minor market settlements of this part of the forest, particularly Geddington, with which it also shares other, earlier links.

The archaeological investigation of the settlement will be limited in scope due to the degree to which the settlement is built up. Specific and very clearly targeted archaeological investigation should however be given a high priority, particularly with regard to the manorial and ecclesiastical origins and the general extent of the settlement as a whole in the Saxon period.

1.2 Documentary

1.2.1 Summary of Previous Investigation

A major study based on the Brigstock court rolls has been conducted by Judith Bennett, but the analysis was focussed around the role of the woman in medieval peasant society of the late 13th and earlier 14th century and hence did not exploit the major resource of material for the reconstruction of historical topography, commerce and industry.¹²² The early medieval manor house has been the subject of limited documentary analysis, based on PRO sources, by Colvin.¹²³ Limited and as yet unpublished documentary research has been conducted by Burl Bellamy on the historical development of the Great and Little Park of Brigstock as part of the Brigstock Survey. The 16th and 17th century history of the royal parks and woodland of Brigstock has also been examined to a limited degree in Pettit=s study of Rockingham Forest.¹²⁴

1.2.2 Research for this report

The indexes and catalogues to the major relevant collections in the Public Record Office, Northamptonshire Record Office and British Library have been searched as have those in the National Register of Archives to identify the range of documentary material available for Brigstock. Little attempt has been made here to explore the exceptionally extensive records of the pre market village.

Rapid assessment focussed on the first half of the 15th century to provide a baseline from which to explore the late medieval development of the market village and then the 16th to

¹²² J. Bennett, PhD thesis; Bennett, 1984, 1987, 1998.

¹²³ Colvin, 1963.

¹²⁴ Pettit, 1968.

early 18th century. A random selection of court rolls and the key rentals and surveys have been examined to determine the range and quality of material available. This work has enabled the identification of the potential for reconstruction of historical topography but the limited time available has not enabled that potential to be realised.

A major limitation with the historic mapping conducted for this report was the lack of availability of large scale copies of the 18th century map and hence accurate transcription and re-scaling was not possible. Nor was sufficient time available to enable comprehensive work of this kind. Therefore all that has been done is to sketch map to a 2nd edition OS 1:2500 base the plan components and main monuments as depicted on the 18th century and Inclosure maps.

1.2.3 Survival

Brigstock is without doubt one of the best documented of all Northamptonshire villages in the medieval and post medieval period. There is a major collection of sources from the 13th to the 19th centuries in the Montagu collection in the NRO supplemented by sources in the PRO, including some court rolls and important surveys. Overall there is excellent survival of court rolls from 1271 through to the 18th century. The court rolls are very extensive and reasonably continuous with the twice-yearly great courts surviving, though some of the earlier 18th century rolls are in very poor condition. The cossicles, cottages and sute houses are all distinguished in the entries together with details of their field land, but rarely are there any references to the actual components of the tenement such as barns, gardens etc. A good sequence of sometimes very detailed rentals and surveys from the early 15th century through to comprehensive map and survey of 1725 and an inclosure map with schedule.¹²⁵ There is however a lack of more than summary account rolls of any date for the village and so the agricultural economy in particular is not well documented. There is also good documentation of its open field system and its woodland and deer parks, the latter including various account rolls in the PRO and important 17th century maps and other material in the collection at Hatfield House.

1.2.4 Potential

Bennett has already demonstrated the considerable detail which can be recovered as to the character of medieval tenements and their change over time. The nature and chronological spread of rentals and court rolls and most importantly the survival of key surveys, one of which can be linked directly to mapped tenements in the earlier 18th century, makes it likely that comprehensive reconstruction of the historical topography of Brigstock by linking the 1725, 1607 and 1589 surveys, perhaps even using court roll data to link back to the 1440 survey. The court rolls in the later 15th century give various bounds to the tenements recorded. In contrast, the entries in the later 16th & 17th century court rolls more rarely have information on bounds, making identification far more difficult and demanding successive tracing of descent of tenements from one ingress to another. If achievable then the distribution of virgate and cottage tenements and rental values should cast important light on the character and evolution of the village. Such a reconstruction would be a complex task, but if successful would open wide possibilities for the

¹²⁵ The Brigstock rentals and surveys indicate very clearly the degree to which it is possible for certain sources to give an impression of completeness whereas they are in reality selective representations of the actual situation. The 1416-17 rental gives just messuages with virgate land and cossicles. The 1440 survey on the other hand records messuages, cossicles and cottages. The 1483 rental again omits the cottages whereas the 1521 includes them. The rentals appear only to be concerned with tenements with field land whereas the surveys provide a more complete picture. However in the case of Brigstock even the surveys are incomplete, until 1725, because they only relate to the main manor, the other two small fees not being included.

integration of archaeological and standing building with documentary data, relevant not only to the issue of the market village but also to earlier history of the village. The very extensive runs of court rolls may also provide an indication as to the trades involved in the town in the later 15th, 16th and earlier 17th century when the market was functioning. This may represent the highest documentary potential within any of the late and post medieval market villages in the county. The one significant limitation would appear to be the relative lack of documentation relating directly to the functioning of the market and fair themselves including associated shops and stalls.

1.3 Historic Buildings

1.3.1 Summary of Previous Investigation

The only significant work has been on the church and manor house. The church has been subject to survey by RCHME in the 1980s. The manor house has been the subject of earlier surveys by Woodfield and by Carpenter.¹²⁶ There would appear to have been almost no work on the lesser vernacular buildings of the village apart from the listing survey, a brief report on one small raised cruck building in Bridge Street, since demolished, and one or two minor observations reported in the SMR.¹²⁷

1.3.2 Research for this Report

Only the listed building entries have been examined. The historic building records of the NMR have not been consulted nor has there been a rapid field and map based assessment of the non listed historic building survival.

1.3.3 Survival

There are 43 listed buildings within the village, including the 18th century watermill and a 19th century factory, the medieval manor house and the Saxon church. Buildings outside the village have been excluded from consideration. Of the 39 domestic vernacular buildings, one is said to be possibly of medieval origin, 3 possibly of the 16th century, 12 of the 17th century, 20 of the 18th century and 5 of the 19th century. There appears to be a significant spread of dates into the earlier periods compared to some other small towns and market villages in the county.

1.3.4 Potential

The combination of apparently good historic building survival and excellent documentary sources means there is a high potential for historic building study. This potential will be vastly enhanced if the detailed reconstruction of historical topography, tenement by tenement, through documentary analysis is realised. It may be possible for the historic buildings to contribute to the understanding of the relative wealth and character of the settlement in the later 15th to 18th centuries and thus to cast light on the nature of the commercial activity in the settlement and its impact on the settlement.

¹²⁶ RCHME, 1976; Woodfield, 1981.

¹²⁷ Seaborne, 1963 & 1970.

1.4 Archaeological

1.4.1 Summary of Previous Investigation

Within the village there has been small scale rescue recording in advance of house building in the manor grounds in the 1980s, which yielded evidence of good survival of archaeological deposits of late Saxon and medieval date as well as evidence for Iron Age, Roman and early-middle Saxon activity on the site or nearby. The only other investigation has been a small evaluation in Latham Street on a potential medieval frontage which yielded slight evidence for early-middle Saxon activity.¹²⁸ The minor earthworks in the Park have been recorded by aerial survey but have not been subject to field survey.

There has been an intensive but as yet largely unpublished multi-period field surveys, including fieldwalking and supported by aerial survey, of the two royal parks. This is a major study of high importance for the understanding of the development of settlement and land use on the clay lands of Rockingham Forest from at least the Iron Age to the Saxon period, with additional value with regard to the development and character of the medieval parks themselves. It has also revealed a major medieval charcoal industry within the parish.¹²⁹

1.4.2 Research for this Report

No original fieldwork has been conducted for this report except for the mapping of available aerial photographic data. Work has been restricted to a comprehensive examination of all sources for the village referred to in the SMR.

1.4.3 Survival

Frontages within tenement rows to the east of the brook are largely built up. Given the shallow nature of archaeological deposits in such settlements there appear to be limited potential for the survival in situations of such continued occupation but this needs to be confirmed by evaluation in a range of locations across the settlement. In contrast a large part of the presumed medieval frontages of the settlement west of the stream is not built up, especially within The Park. There may be potential here for study of tenements within this part of the medieval village but again this will need to be confirmed by evaluation.

Survival of the wider historic landscape of the township is exceptional. There has been no quarrying and only very limited urban development. Significant areas have remained under woodland since at least the medieval period or in some cases where cleared remain as permanent pasture, in both cases containing earthworks of Iron Age and Roman settlements and fields and of the medieval deer park with its lodges. There is also likely to be good survival of charcoal industry remains within the woods. The potential of the park is enhanced by the high potential for the documentary study of the parks and also for the interaction of parks, woodland and village.

¹²⁸ Northamptonshire Archaeology, 1998, Archaeological desk-based study and evaluation at Latham Road, Brigstock, Northamptonshire (unpublished report in Northamptonshire SMR).

¹²⁹ Foard, 2001.

1.4.4 Potential

The highest potential exists for the study of the Saxon royal manor and church. Archaeological investigation is unlikely to enable the detailed understanding of the development of the topography of the village because too extensive areas of the frontage are built up in the eastern half of the settlement. There are however specific questions regarding the general development of the Saxon settlement related to the royal manor which could be addressed by more limited investigation. This should take account of the variation between the curvilinear and rectilinear plan form areas of the settlement. The development of the market place involving the origin of the tenement fronting it and especially the detailed evidence of the shops within it is a clear priority.

The priorities regarding the medieval village should be reviewed if comprehensive reconstruction of the late medieval tenement pattern is achieved as this is likely to open up major new research opportunities due to the exceptional nature of the documentary record for the later medieval village.

Potential exists for waterlogged deposits in the alluvial area along the stream. In particular this may yield important deposits connected with the Saxon royal estate centre and associated settlement. If the manor moat is of early medieval origin then this may also have a high environmental potential for the study of the early medieval manor but it may prove to originate with the late medieval manor house and so be of far less significance. There may also be significant environmental deposits in the former mill pond. These waterlogged conditions may prove important in the recovery of evidence of medieval and post medieval industrial activities.

1.5 Historical Topography

The settlement plan form analysis is based on the 1725 map, from which the plan components are derived, with reference to the later Inclosure map and evidence of archaeology. There are several places on the periphery of the settlement within the old inclosures where the exact extent of pre 18th century settlement is uncertain but in such cases the uncertain areas have been included in the settlement plan.

The presumed medieval plan form of the settlement survives reasonably well, both in terms of the road plan and of tenement layout, though there is significant evidence of loss of tenements through later medieval and post medieval shrinkage in specific areas.

2.0 SPECIFIC MONUMENTS

2.1 The Manor

By far the highest potential exists for the investigation of the origins and development of the Saxon royal manor and its immediate environs. A large part of the area where the early medieval and by implication the Saxon manor may be expected to have lain is garden. Moreover the late medieval manor house may not have been built on exactly the same location within this area as the Saxon and early medieval manor. The historic building potential of the manor seems quite separate, although still significant, for it apparently relates only to the later 15th century and 16th century manor when held by tenants. Archaeological investigation of both the structure itself and of any even minor

ground disturbance within or outside will be important to confirm the origins of the building, establishing if it does lie on a new site or incorporates anything of the early medieval royal manor. Hence there is the potential for very good survival of the Saxon and early medieval manor. Potential also exists for continuity between Roman settlement and the Saxon manor. The archaeological potential of the manor has however to be considered in connection with St Andrew's church.

2.2 The Church

The church represents one of the most important surviving Saxon buildings in the county, which is an old minster associated with a Saxon royal estate centre. There is no obvious evidence for substantial internal or external disturbance which might have significantly damaged the archaeological deposits but there has been no archaeological investigation in the or around the church to confirm this. There is a high potential for the archaeological investigation of the way in which manor and church were laid out in relation to each other. This is an unusual opportunity to examine how a curvilinear plan form component encompassing an important early church relates both spatially and chronologically to the major royal manor on which it was dependent. The relative chronology and character of the manor and church may enable important aspects of the evolution of Saxon and royal estate centres and old minsters to be explored in depth. Any ground disturbance in the manor grounds, particularly between late medieval manor and churchyard and anything in the churchyard should be the subject of comprehensive excavation.

2.3 The Vicarage

As the vicarage of the early 18th century encompassed the majority of the rest of the putative oval enclosure it too must be the subject of detailed archaeological investigation. Particular attention should be given to the boundary of the oval plan unit. This also means investigation on the south side of the stream. The potential for waterlogged deposits associated with and adjacent to this enclosure may offer an exceptional opportunity to explore the original function of such oval plan components, especially if it proves to have early Saxon origins comparable to that at Higham Ferrers.

2.4 Market Place

The late date of the market creation and the high quality and time depth of documentation means that it may be possible to determine how the market place was established and whether it involved and significant change in the arrangement of tenements in the settlement. The market place has not apparently been subject to large scale disturbance for Iron Age features have been recovered from the southern part of the area. This might indicate that there will be good survival of medieval and post medieval structures within the market place, perhaps including less substantial structures.

2.5 Shops

The site of the shops is in particular is not currently built up but is vulnerable as it lies within the highway boundary and had at least in part been converted to a small public garden. There are specific questions regarding the origins, character, development and demise of the shops within the market place which may be answerable archaeologically. Such investigation may also yield evidence as to the activities being carried out in the shops.

2.6 Market House

The house called Leigholme should ideally be the subject of detailed survey to determine if any structural evidence remains which might confirm that it was one a market house.

2.7 Dye-works

The site of the dye-works lies in front gardens and within highway boundary and is likely to have good survival. Even if only of the 17th and 18th century its accurate location and potential good survival may warrant investigation, but it may prove have earlier origins and could shed light on the chronology, scale and nature of the cloth industry within the post-medieval village.

2.8 Tannery

There is no evidence as to the state of preservation of tannery site, though it is occupied by a number of modern houses. There may be surviving archaeological evidence which could enable the origins and scale of the activity to be determined.

2.9 Inns & Alehouses

A number have been located in 1725 and there is a high potential for documentary based study to enable the identification of the remainder. In such cases historic building study may determine whether any significant characteristics are identifiable in any surviving structures.

2.10 Watermill

As the 19th century mill was rebuilt on a new site it is possible that the post medieval mill and perhaps also its medieval precursor has good archaeological survival. Determine whether this functioned as a fulling mill.

3.0 URBAN HINTERLAND

For the purposes of assessment of the hinterlands of the medieval and post medieval towns in the county a rapid grading of the archaeological potential of the medieval settlements of the county has been conducted on the basis of professional judgement. A documentary assessment has also been completed, based on a systematic but far from complete indexing of the major documentary classes for each township in the county based on a search of various list and indexes in the Public Record Office, Northamptonshire Record Office, National Register of Archives and British Library. Separate scoring has been made for each document class based on the number of documents identified for each settlement in both the medieval and post medieval periods. The severe limitation of such a quantitative assessment and the incompleteness of the initial indexing task mean that this scoring has many shortcomings but countywide it may be expected to give a broad indication of potential. Details of the methodology are defined in the general synthesis report of the Extensive Urban Survey.

The hinterland contains a significant number of well preserved or significant medieval archaeological sites but the late origins of the Brigstock market render them of limited value in the study of the interaction of the market village with its hinterland. Greater importance will thus be placed on documentary potential. There are a number of well documented settlements in the hinterland of Brigstock in the post medieval period, less so in the medieval.

Of greatest significance may be the apparent transfer of marketing function from Geddington to Brigstock which suggests that the two settlements should be viewed as closely intertwined not only in their Saxon and medieval tenurial arrangements but also in their market history. Hence the development of the hinterland of the two settlements from the 13th to the 18th century is what should be considered. Given the increasing evidence for substantial industrial production within various settlements in the hinterland as high priority must be given to the questions of the interaction of the marketing centres with the industrial production. This involves archaeological investigation in the hinterland settlements supported by documentary research, of the iron bloomeries in the villages and/or in the wider woodland landscape; the forges in the villages; charcoal production in the woodland; fulling mills for the cloth industry on the streams and cloth production in the tenements, presumably supported by the presence of dye-works in some settlements. The cloth industry would be expected to be underpinned by local wool production and hence the potential for documentary investigation of the agricultural economy in the medieval and post medieval period would also be of value.

III RESEARCH AGENDA

There are very limited research questions relating to the marketing and industrial functions of Brigstock that can be addressed archaeologically, because the developments were of the late and post medieval period when the evidence from the documentary record often outweighs that recoverable from archaeological investigation, other than historic building studies.

The primary research questions for the settlement are pre-market, relating to the Saxon royal estate origins of the settlement and its old minster church, which require detailed examination of the settlement core. This should include the irregular (oval) plan form component but must focus primarily on the church and the manor sites and their immediate environs. The presence of early- middle Saxon settlement evidence elsewhere in the village would also be significant in the understanding of the origins and development of the village from a Saxon estate centre, and the character of that original centre.

The method of insertion of the market place into the village plan in the 15th century would be a significant research question, but this might be primarily addressed through documentary research. It may however be contributed to through examination of both the historic buildings and the archaeology of tenements fronting the market place and by examination of any disturbance within the market place itself looking for evidence of medieval tenement or other earlier occupation pre-dating the open area of the market place.

The detailed character of the shops on the market place would be a significant research topic, but in the absence of any such investigation anywhere in the county there is no evidence as to what archaeological investigation may add to our understanding of the nature of late and post medieval shops and stalls or associated activities through associated deposits.

Specific archaeological investigation should seek to identify the dyeworks and establish its date of origin, scale and character. Similar investigation of the tannery would also be valuable. The potential for waterlogged deposits related to industrial production may represent a significant research opportunity which certainly needs to be tested. These may contribute to the understanding of the development of any industrial base which may have accompanied the commercial developments. However the possibility should be borne in mind that the woodland context of the settlement may have led to a distinct industrial component to the settlement even prior to the establishment of the market.

Given the late origin and post medieval functioning of the market, and the lack of intensive redevelopment of the settlement in the 19th and 20th century may mean that there is exceptional potential in the historic buildings of the village to contribute to an understanding of the character of a market village of the post medieval period, including the varying character of occupation between the market place and the other streets. Such investigation may be complemented by both detailed documentary research, if this can be tied to a tenement basis and by archaeological investigation listed above with regard to status and industrial and commercial activity.

IV STRATEGY

The assessment of the management and conservation priorities within the Extensive Urban Survey have been based around an assessment of levels of importance previously applied elsewhere in the county for management purposes. The grading falls into six categories:

Scheduled: nationally important remains that have statutory protection.

Unscheduled national importance: in some cases statutory protection is suggested while in others recording action may prove to be the appropriate response to threats.

County importance: Where significant archaeology is known or where it is likely but confirmation is required. Normally recording rather than preservation would be the appropriate mitigation strategy.

Historic buildings: Buildings known or which have the potential to contain significant pre 19th century structural remains.

Local importance: where archaeology may survive but where, on present evidence investigation does not appear appropriate.

Destroyed: where the archaeology has been wholly destroyed.

White Land: Archaeology not assessed for his report.

In addition in some cases recommendations have been made for the designation of new or the extension of existing Conservation Areas and for the listing of specific buildings.

1.0 EXISTING DESIGNATIONS

1.1 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The market cross is a scheduled monument.

1.2 Listed Buildings

There are 35 listed buildings, all but three on the north side of the stream. They include one grade 2*, the manor house, 2 grade 1, the church and a property in Park Road.

1.3 Conservation area

The Conservation Area encompasses church, manor, market and the greater part of the settlement on the east side of the stream.

2.0 MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Any proposed ground disturbance within the area of the manor and church complex and its immediate environs, including the possible oval enclosure and its boundary should be evaluated.

The shops on the market place require detailed investigation but the rest of the market place within the highway boundary may also yield significant information as to the layout of the village in this area prior to the establishment of the market.

Any ground disturbance in proximity of the site of the dye-works and the tannery should be evaluated.

Larger scale developments, usually of a single house or more, should be assessed within the remaining area of the village in order to address the question of Saxon origins and to identify if any significant evidence as to status and industrial or commercial activity can be recovered.

All proposals for significant alteration or demolition of historic buildings, whether listed or not, within the village, should be assessed for their implications. A high priority should be given to the identification of historic buildings of the 17th century or earlier and where under threat then recording should be considered.

An historic buildings survey of the village is required to identify unlisted buildings which may contain significant structural remains which may contribute to the understanding of the settlement in the late medieval and especially the post medieval period when the market was functioning, in order to guide management of the historic building stock in the village and to ensure that threats are identified and thus that relevant evidence is not lost without record.

3.0 CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

The manor site and adjacent areas of churchyard and adjacent vicarage should be considered for scheduling. This is justified by the presumed presence of a Saxon royal manor and estate centre, an old Minster church, the potential for associated Saxon settlement and for continuity with earlier Roman settlement, the associated structures of the standing late medieval manor house and the potential for waterlogged deposits associated with all these.

If there are significant archaeological remains within the Park then extension of the conservation area to encompass this should be considered. On present evidence however scheduling would not seem to be justified for this area.

The open nature of Hall Hill, dominated by the market cross, preserves the open character of the former market place and this aspect should be preserved. Although there has been substantial infilling within the basic medieval pattern of tenement rows, a process already under way by the early 19th century, the street and tenement plan still largely preserves an early plan form. In certain parts of the settlement modern estate roads have been constructed and closes of houses have replaced the medieval plan. Further infilling of single houses within the existing structure of properties would not destroy the character but further disruption of the overall tenement pattern and of distinct frontages of houses by

the insertion of small closes of modern housing should ideally be avoided to ensure that the remaining character of this late medieval and post medieval market village is retained.

ABBREVIATIONS

NRO	Northamptonshire Record Office
PRO	Public Record Office
RCHME	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
VCH	Victoria County History
VCH Notes	Notes compiled by the VCH early 20 th century, now in NRO.

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