

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

DESBOROUGH

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Funded by English Heritage

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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

This report is based on a survey conducted between June 1998 and December 1999. It is one of a series of reports compiled by Northamptonshire Heritage, as part of the Industrial period element, 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 that 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 or 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. The Desborough report is presented in a single part covering the industrial period, from 1750 to the 1930s, by Jennifer Ballinger. The report has benefited from the specialist advice of Dr Barrie Trinder on the industrial period. 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, Phil Markham and especially Tracey Britnell and Abi Kennedy.

The vast quantity of documentation for the industrial period has meant that a comprehensive documentary assessment of each of the towns within the survey has been impossible, within the time period. A standard approach has been adopted with attention focussed on those sources that 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. Trade directories of 1849, 1894, 1924 (and 1830 when in existence) have been assessed and all early maps (including Ordnance Survey maps of 1880s, 1900s and 1920s) were utilised. An index has been compiled of all records for the period in Northamptonshire Record Office and Northamptonshire Local Studies Library. Key secondary sources including books, journals and local pamphlets have been consulted and in a minority of cases original records have been used. The survey has relied heavily on a field visit to assess the physical growth and development of the settlement and the survival of monuments within the town. The reports have been produced in a standardised format to allow direct comparison between towns in the county.

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SUMMARY

This report focuses on the archaeological development of Desborough in the period following 1750. There has been no attempt made to discuss any earlier archaeology in the context of this report, but this does not mean that there are no significant archaeological remains in the area.

The settlement of Desborough developed into an industrialised village during the 18th and 19th centuries. The initial industry in the settlement was the textile trade with particular emphasis on weaving in the 18th century and silk mixture fabrics and lace in the early 19th century. There was a small boot and shoe industry in the mid-19th century, which developed considerably in the last two decades of the century. There was also a substantial ironstone quarrying industry in the parish.

The Co-operative movement had a major impact on the settlement in the 19th century. The Desborough Industrial and Provident Society developed major interests in all the key elements of the town including agriculture, industry, retail and housing and were major landowners in the parish.

I DESCRIPTION

1.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The settlement of Desborough is mentioned in the Domesday survey and the settlement clearly operates as a village from this period onwards. By the mid-18th century it was a large village with a considerable non-agricultural focus. The militia lists of 1777 indicate that of the 96 men between the ages of 18 and 45 who were liable to serve in the militia there were 11 farmers, 7 servants, 2 millers and a constable and the remaining 75 were described as tradesmen. Unfortunately the militia list for Desborough does not detail what these trades were. It would appear likely that the textile industry in general and weaving in particular would have provided a focus for employment in the settlement. The weaving industry was dominant in the Rothwell Hundred and comparative analysis of the militia lists indicates that Desborough was the second largest settlement. J.R. Moore writing in 1910 claimed that although the woollen industry had been important in the town in the 17th and 18th centuries the industry ceased in the mid- 19th century when the looms were taken to Banbury.¹ Other branches of the textile industry became important with particular emphasis on manufacturing of silk mixture fabrics and pillow lace production. The silk trade was introduced to Desborough from both London and Coventry, it was first conducted in workers homes, but factories soon began to open up. This industry continued to be of importance through to the mid 19th century; there was one silk plush manufacturer operating in the town in 1849² and two in 1854 when it was claimed that Athe manufacture of lace and velvet gives employment to a great many hands.³

The London, Midland and Scottish Railway line was opened through Desborough in 1857⁴. Ironstone quarrying began in the town just two years later. Initial works centred around the railway line itself and gradually developed across much of the surrounding parish. Operators involved in ironstone quarrying at Desborough included Desborough Iron Ore Company, Stanton Ironworks Company Ltd, Glendon Iron Company, Desborough Co-operative Society Ltd in addition to numerous small operators.⁵ Quarrying continued in the area until the 1960's and was a major employer of labour from the town.

The Boot and Shoe industry was the other major source of employment Kelly's Trade Directory of 1894 that "The manufacture of boots, shoes, stays and the raising of iron ore gives employment to a great many hands". The boot and shoe industry was a late 19th century development. In 1854 there was just one "boot and shoe maker" by 1894 there were 8 Boot and Shoe Manufacturers and 2 Boot and Shoemakers operating in the town. In 1924 there were 17 entries relating to the Boot and Shoe trade (including 10 manufacturers, 3 boot and shoemakers, 2 boot repairers and the National Union for Boot and Shoe operatives).⁶

¹ J. R. Moore, The History of Desborough, 1910

² Whellan's Trade Directory 1849

³ Kelly's Trade Directory, 1854

⁴ J.R. Moore, The History of Desborough, 1910

⁵ Detail of the ironstone operations in the parish is included in AThe Ironstone Quarries of the Midlands History, Operation and Railways. Part 6 - The Corby Area, E Tonks, 1992

⁶ Kelly's Trade Directories 1854, 1894 and 1924.

The population of Desborough underwent a considerable expansion in the latter part of the 19th century. The population increased two and a half fold from 1350 in 1851 to 3573 in 1901. The last two decades of the 19th century saw a particularly dramatic rise in numbers. The development of the settlement would appear to be strongly linked to the boot and shoe and ironstone quarrying industries in the town.

The development of the commercial centre of Desborough in the latter part of the 19th century can be demonstrated by a comparison of trade directories for 1854 and 1894. The former lists a total of 20 retailing outlets including bakers, butchers, grocers, innkeepers and a beer retailer; the only non-food retailing outlets are two tailors and two drapers. In comparison 59 retailers were listed in 1894 and the additional facilities of a wine merchant, ironmonger, tobacconist, stationers, coal merchant, florist, hairdressers, tobacconists, dressmakers and milliner were provided. The commercial centre of the town was focussed on High Street - the Ordnance Survey map of 1887 indicates that the inns and post office are located on this road and analysis of the census returns for 1891 indicates that the majority of commercial premises were in this area.⁷ By this date Station Road has become a secondary centre with a range of shops including a general store, a milliner, a grocer, a drapers and a butchers. Individual shops are also located within areas of 19th century housing development - these tend to be indicated by distinctive corner plots on the end of terraced rows.

The establishment of the Co-operative Society had a major impact on the development of Desborough in the nineteenth century. The Co-operative Society was formed in Desborough in 1863 with a membership of 28. The society became very active in both a national and a local context. The Desborough Industrial and Provident Society developed major interests in all the key elements of the town including agriculture, industry, retail and housing. Farming was another activity in which the society had a major involvement, becoming the principal landowners in the parish. In 1898 the society brought the manor of Desborough. The Society's industrial activities included brick and tile manufacture, iron ore quarrying, coal distribution, boot and shoe manufacture and corset making. The retailing activities of the society expanded into grocery, drapery, clothing, millinery, hardware, furniture, confectionery, bakery and butchery. The only Co-operative Society fish and chip shop in the country was located in Desborough.⁸ The Co-operative Society also took an interest in the domestic and social circumstances of the inhabitants of Desborough. It provided housing and allotments or smallholdings for rent and a savings scheme in the form of a Penny Bank and by the early 20th century was in discussions with the Urban District Council for the provision of a library, recreation ground and sewerage plant for the town.⁹

2.0 TOPOGRAPHICAL DEVELOPMENT

The earliest surviving map of Desborough is dated prior to the enclosure award of 1777 sometime between 1741 and 1776. The map indicates that occupied tenements are centred around the roads known today as High Street, Lower Street, Paddock Lane, Gold Street, the southern part of Harborough Road and the road showing on early Ordnance Survey maps as Buckwell Street. A comparison of this map with the first Ordnance Survey map of 1887 indicates that the settlement expanded little during the late 18th and early 19th century. There was some infilling during this period,

⁷ Important to note that census indicates residence of individuals not business address.

⁸ Barrie Trinder pers comms

⁹ NRO, ROP 1423

as there are at least two buildings in the Lower Street area from this period¹⁰. It is difficult to assess, from standing buildings, to what extent the core settlement expanded as the area has been substantially re-developed in modern times.

The major development of Desborough took place in the late 19th century. The Ordnance Survey map of 1887 shows a new area of settlement to the north-east of the town (Station Road, New Street, Gas Street and Factory Street). The street pattern for the roads that were to become Union Street, Regent Street, Queen Street and King Street had also already been laid out. By 1900 these streets were beginning to be developed, in addition to three new streets Victoria Street, Havelock Street and Gladstone Street. This development was located on the site of former ironstone quarrying. The Desborough Freehold Land and Building Society, who were established in 1889, constructed the late 19th century streets.¹¹ The 19th century block was a mixed zone with factories, small-scale industrial works, and rows of uniform small terraced cottages with associated garden workshops in the same streets as social clubs, chapels and corner shops. The commercial centre of the town was also re-developed. The Co-operative Society, in particular, erected a number of new shops along High Street, but a school and a number of chapels were also built in the area creating another mixed zone of activity.

This mixed form of development continued into the early 20th century. The Co-operative Society erected the Corset Factory along St Anthonys Hill / Rothwell Road and Pioneer Avenue, Federation Avenue and Unity Street were laid out at approximately the same time. The houses fronting facing the factory on Federation Avenue are clearly of one building phase in three or four different styles and were possibly built by the Co-operative Society. It is interesting to note that there are no social, religious or commercial facilities erected as part of this phase of development. As the 20th century progresses new developments become purely residential as the areas around Dunkirk Avenue and Braybrooke Road / Harrington Road testify. There was also a development in the provision of public health facilities in the early 20th century - sewerage and water works expand and develop at this time and the town cemetery was also laid out at this time.

3.0 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

3.1 INDUSTRY

3.1.1 Textile industry

The textile industry was a major factor in the economy of the town in the early industrial period, however the industry tended to be organised on an outworking basis and few remains for the industry are likely to survive in the county.¹² In the case of Desborough three locations for the production of silk mixture fabrics have been identified by secondary sources. J.R.Moore claimed that the first silk factory was located in Paddock Lane in 1832 where three cottages were used as a factory. 1836 had converted the cottages into one property.¹³ A complex of three stone cottages bearing the date stone 1836 remains extant in Paddock Lane. Alternatively a stone building on the opposite side of the road

¹⁰ Old National School, 1841. Listed building 3/27.

¹¹ The history of Desborough, J.R.Moore, 1910.

¹² Industrial Archaeology in Northamptonshire: A report for Northamptonshire Heritage (Draft), Barrie Trinder.

¹³ The History of Desborough, J.R. Moore, 1910.

has an unusual appearance with a set of windows located at some distance above the ground. The Jubilee Souvenir for the Desborough Co-operative Society indicated that waistcoat weaving was carried out at 53-57 High Street and that the last weaver to carry out his trade in Desborough lived and worked at 37, Gold Street. The latter was no longer in existence in 1910 and the former would appear to have demolished subsequently. The potential of a surviving structure for the silk industry is a significant discovery for both the town and the county.

3.1.2 Ironstone quarrying

The ironstone quarrying industry was established after the construction of the railway line in 1857 and provided employment for a large number of individuals in the town in the late 19th century. A number of companies operated in the area, including the Co-operative Society. The quarries had a significant impact on the surrounding topography of the town. A number of quarries and associated tramways and transport networks are indicated on early Ordnance Survey maps. The industry has been extensively studied by Eric Tonks and a full history of its development in Desborough is detailed in his study *The Ironstone Quarries of the Midlands*.

3.1.3 Brickworks

Bricks made of blue clay were manufactured in the area in the 19th century. A brickworks site is shown to the west of the town on Ordnance survey maps of 1887 and 1900. A small quarry was shown in connection to these works. J.R. Moore writing in 1910 claimed that as an industry brick making seems now to be at a standstill and the works were not shown on Ordnance Survey maps. The site of the brickworks is now built over by modern housing, but the quarry remains as open land.

3.1.4 Boot and Shoe industry

The Boot and Shoe industry was clearly an important development in Desborough in the late 19th century. Eight factories have been positively identified from mapping and the fields visit. Of these two have been demolished and six survive as buildings in some form. Three appear to survive in their original condition (one is still in use as a Shoe Factory, one is utilised as handbag manufacturers and the other, which may have been substantially re-fenestrated, is not in use and advertised for re-development). The building on Factory Street was originally built as stay manufacturers, but was used by Bosworth Brothers as a shoe factory between 1910 and 1934¹⁴, it has since been re-faced and is no in use by the Co-operative Society. One of the other surviving factories is currently in use by a number of small-scale industrial works and another has its early 20th century extension surviving, but the original structures have been demolished. The remaining Boot and Shoe factories date to the early 20th century and would provide a useful analysis for the late development of the industry in the town. There are a number of small-scale industrial works located throughout the town, which were probably associated with the boot and shoe trade. Approximately 150 houses built in the late 19th century had associated garden workshops, however the layout of the streets in this area made it difficult to check the survival of these in the field.

3.1.5 Stay manufacturing industry

There were at least three corset factories in Desborough in the 19th century. The Symington Works on Factory Street was in operation between 1879 and 1906 before being converted to use as a boot and

¹⁴ Pers comms Stuart Irons, Desborough Civic Society

shoe factory.¹⁵ There are two other surviving corset factories; one run by a private enterprise and the other owned by the Co-operative Wholesale Society. The latter may be important in a national context.

3.1.6 Other industries

The remaining industrial features in the town are ad-hoc constructions and are unlikely to significantly add anything to the understanding of the development of the town in the period leading up to the second world war. The building housing Elite Upholstery Manufactures may be an important structure in its own right. The building was constructed in 1934¹⁶ - the structure appears to be intact in its original condition with a chimney surviving to the rear of the building.

There are a number of important industries established in the post 1939 period including the development of World War 2 airfields in the area and the re-use of iron ore extraction sites, but these are beyond the boundaries of this project.

3.2 HOUSING

There are very few houses relating to the early core of the town due to substantial re-development in the late 20th century. Isolated buildings survive including stone cottages on Paddock Lane, cottages and a high status house on Lower Street and a substantial sized structure off Gold Street dated 1711.

The earliest phase of 19th century housing developments was based to the east of the town and was primarily for the working classes. New Street, Gas Street and Factory Street represent the earliest phases of terraced house construction in the town, these houses are small and plain with little architectural embellishment and no gardens to the front of the structures. Housing development continued in the late 19th century along similar lines with large blocks of terraced housing being located on King Street, Queen Street, Regent Street, Union Street, and Victoria Street. These houses are still primarily functional with little architectural embellishment, but there is a more mixed nature to the streets and 3-bay villa style houses are located alongside terraced rows.

In the early 20th century housing became much more varied. The development of Federation Avenue and Pioneer Avenue in the early 20th century is particularly interesting. Housing on Federation Avenue opposite the Co-operative Corset Factory is clearly all of one build with substantially sized semi-detached villas with considerable attention to the design and appearance of the buildings. In comparison houses on Pioneer Avenue are of mixed construction including terraced rows and higher status housing and would appear to have been built on an individual basis over a considerable period of time. There are a number of very large houses fronting on St Anthony's Hill as part of this development. Early 20th century housing to the north west of the town is mixed with a combination of council houses, terraced rows and larger private houses - again these developments would appear to have occurred over a substantial period of time.

There are very few high status houses of late 19th century date in the town, this may be due to the influence of the Co-operative Society which dominated the economy of the town and may have meant that there were fewer private entrepreneurs. The larger 3-bay construction houses are clearly located alongside terraced rows indicating that there was little social division in the town. Higher status

¹⁵ This is the building that became the shoe factory for the Bosworth Brothers; pers comms Stuart Irons.

¹⁶ Pers comms Stuart Irons.

houses of early 20th century date are located either within housing developments or on the artillery routes out of town.

3.3 COMMERCE

The central business district for the town has been largely lost due to modern re-development and there are very few surviving structures relating to retail for the pre-1945 period.

3.3.1 Co-operative Society shops

Of the numerous retailing establishments owned by the Desborough Co-operative Society in late 19th and early 20th centuries only three remain. These buildings would all appear to have a high potential for surviving in their original condition. All three are potentially vulnerable to re-development - the dairy building most immediately so, but the clothing and hardware stores would not appear to be commercially viable in the long term.

3.3.2 Inns

Of the seven inns identified on historic maps only two survive as standing structures. Both of these remain in use as public houses and have both retained their original names. The buildings are of sandstone construction and contribute significantly to the visual appearance of the street - providing some indication of the history and development of the settlement. However their continued use as public houses would suggest that substantial re-development of the structures is likely to have occurred.

3.4 TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

The old A6 road ran between the church and the vicarage until it was turnpiked by two Acts of Parliament in 1752 and 1754. The earthworks for the road survive in the field to the south of the church and graveyard. The old packhorse bridge crossing the river is in a ruinous state with the majority of the brick / stone in the water, it has now been replaced by a simple wooden bridge. J.R. Moore notes that AA tollgate with collectors' house was situated about 20 yards north of the cross. In November 1877 the tolls were abolished and the tollgates removed \cong . It was not possible to locate these structures as part of the mapping or field visit. The alignment of the Market Harborough to Kettering turnpike road, which was established in 1751, remains intact.

The opening of a station at Desborough on the London, Midland and Scottish Railway in the mid-19th century was clearly an important development for the town. The station building to the south of the line remains in existence, but has been converted to a domestic residence. Other buildings relating to the railway including cattle pens and goods sheds have recently been demolished to make way for a supermarket.

Although isolated features from the communications network supporting Desborough survive (including a listed milestone, the railway station and earthworks of the pre-turnpike road); they are unlikely to contribute significantly to understanding the development of the settlement into a town.

3.5 UTILITIES

The late-19th century saw the clear expansion of the provision of public health facilities in the town. A sewerage works was established in 1872, gas works were erected in 1876 and a waterworks was established in 1895. Of the 19th and 20th century utilities established in the town only the waterworks

and associated reservoir have survived. These appear to have been re-modelled in the late 20th century and have little potential for contributing to understanding of the development of the town or the early water industry. A fire station was also provided for the settlement, but the original building has since been demolished.

3.6 RELIGION

St Giles Church was extensively restored during the period 1878-82. Non-conformist churches of Baptist, Independent and Wesley denominations were established in the town in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, but these early buildings have all been demolished. The late 19th and early 20th century replacements for these structures (and their associated Sunday Schools) all survive and remain in use as religious establishments. Two meeting houses were also established on Station Road by 1900, both are still in existence as buildings, but have been adapted for re-use in modern times.

3.7 EDUCATION

In the early 19th century there were two schools established in Desborough. The British School of the children of Dissenters was established in 1848, but closed down a few years later and the National School was established in 1841 with a new building being provided in 1885. It has not been possible to locate the former and the latter was demolished and has been replaced by a community centre. In 1878 the Board School was established; this building and the subsequent infants school both remain in existence as schools. The primary school was demolished and rebuilt using the same stone in 1939.¹⁷ There is clearly little potential for the study of the development of educational provision in the town, but the remaining schools contribute to the late 19th topography of the town.

3.8 RECREATION

A number of social clubs were established in the 19th century expansion of the town. These included a Reading Room and Temperance Institute, a Working Men's Club, Conservative Club and Oddfellows Hall. The buildings survive for some of these institutions. The Oddfellows Hall has been altered a number of times over the course of its existence as it was used variously as a roller skating rink, cinema and theatre. The Conservative Club has also been substantially re-modelled, but the Working Men's Club and Institute appears to have been little altered. These buildings contribute to the surviving late 19th century topography and may provide useful information about the social development of the town. The 20th century sporting facilities remain in existence, but are unlikely to contribute significantly to the understanding of the development of the town.

¹⁷ Pers comms Stuart Irons.

II ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE AND SURVIVAL

The development of Desborough was influenced to a considerable extent by the Co-operative Society. Many settlements in the county had active Co-operative Societies, but none as large or influential as Desborough Industrial and Provident Society. The town needs to be assessed against other settlements with a strong co-operative movement in a national context.

A large number of co-operative buildings have been demolished or converted for other uses, but some structures remain. There is good surviving documentation relating to the co-operative society in the settlement; the map indicating co-operative society holdings is of particular importance as it provides a good indication of the land and buildings owned by the society.

The topography of the central area of Desborough has been almost totally destroyed, but the 19th century block to the side survives in a good state of preservation. There are a number of structures relating to the boot and shoe industry still in existence.

1.0 DOCUMENTARY

1.1 Documents

There are a number of original documents relating to Desborough in the industrial period. Documents relating to the Co-operative Society in Desborough are of particular importance and include minute books, trade reports, wages books, cash books, hire purchase agreements, mortgage applications, share ledgers, savings bank ledger maps, photographs, printed sources (including Jubilee Souvenir book) etc. Together with the map of landholding by the society and the surviving physical remains there would appear to be good potential for the study of Co-operative movement in Desborough.

There are number of documents relating to the Poor Law Union Board for the town - including an order (dated 1836) for the sale of a number of houses in the town (one of which was used as factory) and an order for the sale of a factory in 1856. These documents may well lead to discovery of further early industrial buildings. There are also a number of other documents relating to industrial / commercial structures in the town at different dates including Bunker hills Silk works (Kettering?), butchers shop, cycle dealer, Desborough shoe Company, Glendon Iron Ore Co, Gas company.

1.2 Maps

The earliest surviving map for the settlement of Desborough is dated somewhere between 1741 and 1776 and shows the village prior to enclosure. Unfortunately no map survives for the enclosure award itself (there is no record of one ever having been made), however a later transcription has been made from the enclosure award which indicates land-ownership in the post 1777 period. This may prove to be a useful tool for assessing the later development of the town. An important surviving map for the later period is the 6" Ordnance Survey map with the property of Desborough Co-operative Society marked on; this was reproduced in the Jubilee Souvenir book of 1913. There are a number of other maps showing small areas of Desborough including the proposed development of the railway line - these may be important for assessing individual areas within the town, but do not contribute significantly to the development of the town as a whole.

1.3 Photograph

There are a number of photographs taken in the 1960's - 1970's of Desborough at both the Records Office and the Northamptonshire Local Studies Library. These comprise both ground based photographs showing individual buildings/ landscapes (many of which have now disappeared) and aerial photographs showing the urban topography of the town.

2.0 STANDING BUILDINGS

There are just 6 listed buildings for the town of Desborough. Of these five originate in the industrial period - two are monuments in the churchyard, one is a milestone and the remaining two originated as domestic buildings. This is due to the wide-scale modernisation of the central area of the settlement.

The potential survival of a building relating to the silk mixtures industry is of particular importance and further research should be conducted on the buildings in Paddock Lane. The survival of buildings relating to the social development of the town (including religious, educational and recreational buildings) contributes to the general urban topography, but have limited potential as structures in there own right.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL

There would appear to be little potential for below ground archaeological investigation for the industrial period in Desborough. Buildings and monuments of the industrial period that have been demolished have largely been replaced by modern development. There are also standing examples of most of the monument types in other locations in the county.

4.0 URBAN TOPOGRAPHY

The central area of the settlement has been largely re-developed in the late 20th century. Evidence for the original village settlement of Desborough and the central business district for the expanding town have largely been lost, with only a few isolated buildings remaining. In comparison the 19th and early 20th century urban developments remain largely intact and the mixture of domestic, social, industrial and religious buildings has been retained, although many individual structures have been substantially altered.

III RESEARCH AGENDA

Co-operative Society influence in the town

The key research potential for the town would appear to lie in assessing the relationship between the Co-operative Movement in the settlement and its impact on the development of Desborough and its urban topography. The Co-operative Society had a large influence in the town and had a wide range of interests - as detailed above. The combination of maps showing early Co-operative land holdings, numerous documents and the survival of a number of buildings relating to a range of the activities of the society - housing, industrial, commercial - provide a good opportunity for research and assessment. Investigation of the layout and construction of these structures may provide additional information about many aspects of the workings of the movement. Specific questions could be posed relating to various aspects of the activities of the society. Are workers houses built by the Co-operative Movement of better quality than those constructed by private enterprise? Are particular facilities added for workers / customers at the factories and shops established by the movement? Does the ethos of ACo-operation \cong infiltrate the material culture of the town?

Development of settlement into industrialised village

Desborough expanded into an industrialised village or small town over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries. The development was focused around the textile, boot and shoe and ironstone quarrying industries.

The late 19th century townscape survives well with its mixture of industrial, social, religious, educational and domestic buildings. There are particular factors relating to the development of the urban topography of Desborough including the influence of the Freehold Land and Building Society and the physical location of the 19th century block over the top of former ironstone quarries. The importance of these factors and their influence on the nature of the urban topography needs to be assessed. Unfortunately the central area of the town including the commercial area has been almost completely destroyed so there is limited potential for the study of the town as a whole.

Textile industry

The textile industry was of particular importance in Desborough and there is a key research priority in establishing whether there are any physical remains of the industry, with particular reference to large-scale manufacturing. A combination of more detailed documentary research and building survey is required. The potential for the survival of a building relating to the manufacture of silk mixtures in Desborough is of importance in a countywide context.

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.

This approach has not been possible for the industrial period, as further work on the period is needed at a county, regional and national level before a definitive assessment can be made. The town has been divided up into zones and priorities for additional research, recording and conservation measures have been assigned to each individual area.

1.0 EXISTING DESIGNATIONS

1.1 SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS

There are no scheduled monuments in the immediate vicinity of the town of Desborough.

1.2 Listed Buildings

There are six listed buildings in the town of Desborough.

1.3 Conservation Area

There is no conservation area in the settlement of Desborough.

2.0 MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

2.1.1 Co-operative Society zone

The land holding of Desborough Industrial and Provident Co-operative Society is shown on a map in Northamptonshire Record Office¹⁸. The land is located in blocks around the periphery of the core settlement. There are large blocks of land to the south and west of the settlement and smaller areas to the north and east. There are no co-operative society holdings in the centre of core settlement area.

The areas, which are shown on the co-operative society map, should be investigated to determine whether there are any surviving remains of sites or structures that were developed by the co-operative society in Desborough. Any buildings or landscapes that survive in a relatively complete state should be recorded in line with the research priorities laid out above.

2.1.2 Zone 1 - Core area of the town

The boundary of the core area of the town has been taken from the pre-enclosure map, which predates 1777. The core area of the town has been largely re-developed in modern times with only a minority of buildings surviving from 18th, 19th and early 20th century dates. All but one of the listed buildings for Desborough are located in this area.

There are no further recommendations for this area.

2.1.3 Zone 2 - Central business district

The majority of the central business district for Desborough lies within the core area of the town and has therefore been largely re-developed in modern times. The structures along Station Road, including one of the co-operative society stores, survive in a better state of preservation.

The co-operative society store should be recorded if the building is to be subject to demolition or alteration. There are no further recommendations for the other buildings in the area.

2.1.4 Zone 3 - 19th century mixed development

The block of land to the north and east of the core area of the settlement was developed in the late 19th century. There are a mixture of houses, factories, workshops, shops, chapels, social and religious buildings. Immediately to the north lie the railway line and station. The block was developed following ironstone quarrying in the town. There are some co-operative society landholdings in this area.

Further documentary research and associated building recording is required in order to develop an understanding of how this area developed in relation to the co-operative society and the freehold land and building society in the town. The area remains remarkably well intact and should be considered for designation as a conservation area, although the loss of the core area of the town may diminish the importance of this area.

2.1.5 Zone 4 - Co-operative Society factory and housing

The Co-operative Wholesale Society Corset Factory and associated housing were developed on a block of land owned by Desborough Industrial and Provident Co-operative Society.

¹⁸ NRO Map 4483

The factory and housing should be considered for designation as a conservation area. The Co-operative Society factory should be considered for listing, but should be recorded if it is to be subject to demolition or substantial alteration.

2.1.6 Zone 5 - 20th century housing development

Housing zone established during the early 20th century.

Co-operative society housing should be investigated to determine whether it differs from the remaining housing in the area.

2.1.7 Zone 6 - 20th century housing development

Housing zone established during the early 20th century.

Co-operative society housing should be investigated to determine whether it differs from the remaining housing in the area.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NRO – Northamptonshire Record Office

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