

**EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY
FOR
BEDFORDSHIRE**

TODDINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Background to the Project*

English Heritage has initiated a national series of Extensive Urban Surveys. This report is an archaeological assessment of Toddington and forms part of the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) for Bedfordshire. The survey of the 12 historic towns of Bedfordshire is funded by English Heritage (EH) and managed by the County Archaeological Officer (CAO) of Bedfordshire County Council (BCC). The survey is being jointly undertaken by staff of Albion Archaeology and the Heritage and Environment Group of BCC.

The EUS comprises three stages, Data Compilation, Assessment and Strategy. The first stage, Data Compilation, draws together the accessible history of the town, known archaeological sites and historic buildings data. The Assessment presents this evidence in the form of a report which provides a history of the town, an account of its buried and standing archaeology, together with an assessment of archaeological potential. The Strategy stage will draw on the Assessment to develop a strategic framework for the management of the archaeological resource for each town.

The chronological framework used in the Assessment reports to describe each town's development (normally section 5) reflects the periodisation used in the Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Any broad dating system of this kind has limitations in the face of the mass of detailed evidence that exists for each town. It has, therefore, occasionally (*e.g.* Bedford in the Saxon and Saxo-Norman periods, or Luton in the early industrial period) been necessary to use slightly different chronological divisions. In addition, the town of Sandy is exceptional in its own right because only the Roman town has been included in the Bedfordshire EUS.

1.2 *Structure of this Document*

This report has been compiled using a number of sources including the Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service (BLARS) and the Albion Archaeology (formerly BCAS) Project Database.

The location and topography of Toddington is described in Section 2. The nature of the evidence is discussed in Section 3 and a historical summary of the town is presented in Section 4. The archaeological and historical development of the town is described by chronological period in Section 5. Section 6 comprises an assessment of Toddington's character, importance and potential. The historical development of the town and areas of archaeological potential are presented in plan form at the end of this report.



2. LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

The small town of Toddington is situated 7 miles north-west of Luton and 6 miles north-east of Leighton Buzzard in the south of Bedfordshire, centred roughly on TL 010 290. It stands on a hill at a point where five roads converge on the triangular shaped green known as the Square, with three of the roads going to major towns (Fig 1). There is considerable ribbon and modern estate development along the roads, especially along the course of the High Street or Dunstable Road to the south. In the centre of town most of the buildings are grouped around the green, which is dominated by St George's Church on its north-eastern side. The ground slopes gently southwards from the church. To the east of the church is the large mound of the former motte-and-bailey castle known as Conger Hill.

For the main streets of Toddington, see Fig 9.

Toddington is built on a capping of glacial gravel overlying boulder clay and gault and forms part of the watershed between the River Ivel and River Ouzel. The land around Toddington is classified as Grade 3 on the Agricultural Land Classification Map of England and Wales, Sheet 147.



3. THE NATURE OF THE EVIDENCE

3.1 *Previous Archaeological Investigations*

There have been few archaeological excavations within the historic core of Toddington (see Fig 2). BCAS project **WB 159** (1991) consisted of a watching brief on the construction of a chapter house at St George's Church in the centre of the town. Considerable amounts of charnel from the graveyard were exposed and later reburied. Some brick vaults were uncovered. These were left *in situ* and concreted over without being fully explored. Some work was also carried out at the nearby Griffin Public House as part of the same watching brief, revealing a post-medieval well. It was constructed out of brick, sandstone and some clunch. Measuring 1.5m in diameter at the top, it was at least 3-4m deep down to water level. There were also some loose human bones in the area of the car park.

Extensive repairs to the church tower necessitated a programme of archaeological recording, which is presently being carried out by Network Archaeology Ltd of Lincoln. Elevations of each of the four faces of the tower were drawn, alongside comprehensive fabric analysis, mortar analysis and brick and tile study. By cross-referencing these results a phasing of major historic repairs to the tower was achieved. A detailed photographic study was also undertaken. Archaeological monitoring of the repair work is ongoing at the time of writing. Results will be presented in a report with copies of the drawings, due to be completed in 2003 (information from Nicola Smith, Network Archaeology Ltd).

BCAS project **479** (1997-98) was a watching brief on redevelopment of the former gas works site in Conger Lane, on the eastern outskirts of Toddington. The base of the gasometer was photographed. The ground had been heavily contaminated with coal tars. No archaeological evidence was recorded.

Note that BCAS changed its name to Albion Archaeology in 2001. Albion retains the database and many of the records and finds of BCAS excavations, although some have been archived in Bedford Museum.

In addition to archaeological work carried out by professional archaeology units, some useful work was done by Victorian antiquaries. Major C Cooper of Toddington Manor published several reports of finds from the Toddington district. In the late 19th century Worthington George Smith also worked in the area.

In the early 20th century Frederick Gurney carried out much field-walking and identification of landscape features. His field notes are the source of many of the entries in the HER.

3.2 *Historical Evidence*

Volume III of the Victoria County History, published in 1912, gives a history of the Manshead Hundred, which includes Toddington (Page 1912, 438-447). The



seminal work on the town, however, was *Toddington: its Annals and People* by Joseph Blundell (1925). As well as giving a general history of the parish, it lists many deeds and other documents which may be useful for a particular area of research. More recent works include a useful chapter on Toddington in *History on the Ground* by Beresford (1971, 179-183). Of practical use as a handy guide to the surviving evidence is *A Stroll through Old Toddington* by Viner (1997). A good general background is provided in *History of Bedfordshire* by Joyce Godber (1984).

Annette Edwards produced an unfinished Toddington Parish Survey for Bedfordshire County Council in 1974. Melanie Birchmore wrote a Dip. Geography thesis on Toddington in relation to conservation issues. Copies of both these works, along with numerous maps and other kinds of research material, can be studied in the HER office at BCC.

The Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by Bedfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Section lists historic buildings in Toddington ranging in date from the 12th century church of St George to the K6 telephone kiosk designed in the 1930s. These are marked, together with archaeological sites and findspots, on a map (referred to in this document as the HER map). Elsewhere in the same building, the Bedfordshire and Luton Archive and Record Service (BLARS) holds large amounts of material about Toddington, including deeds, wills and maps. There is an extensive series of Parish Registers dating from 1540 on. Census Returns from 1801-1991 are also held here. The Local History Section of Bedford Library, too, is an important source of information on the history of the county.

The early map evidence for Toddington is exceptional, owing to the work of Radulph Agas in 1581 (BLARS X1/102) – see Fig 4. Agas was a noted surveyor of his day, and may have used an early version of the theodolite to accomplish the map. The original covered an area of over 80 square feet, and was kept on a fire screen at the Manor House. At some point it was cut into 20 sections for convenience of handling. It was sold to the British Museum in 1910 and remains there today, though a copy can be seen in BLARS. The map depicts the whole of the parish - with fields, rabbit warrens, buildings, etc., all marked – as well as a detailed view of the town. Apart from sundry estate maps, the next detailed map of the town is Cole's Enclosure Award map of 1797 (BLARS X1/45). Another useful map was surveyed in 1807 (BLARS X21/580). The first edition of the 25" OS map series was produced in 1886. Subsequent editions appeared in 1904 and 1925.

Artefacts from the Toddington area are held in the Bedford and Luton Museums (Pollard 1991 a, b). Northampton Museum holds at least two Anglo-Saxon brooches from the Toddington area.



4. HISTORICAL SUMMARY

“Tudincgatun” is first mentioned in a Saxon charter of 926. It is called “Dodintone” or “Totingedone” in Domesday Book of 1086. The name is usually taken as Old English for ‘Hill of Tuda’s people’. Tuda is a personal name authenticated by its use in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A field in the parish formerly known as “Tuddeworth” is thought to refer to the same man (Mawer and Stenton 1926).

The settlement was situated very close to the boundary between Wessex and the Danelaw negotiated by Alfred and Guthrum in the Peace of Wedmore in 886. However, it appears it was subsumed within Danish territory for a short period. In the 926 charter mentioned above, King Athelstan gave land in Chalgrave and Tebworth which he had bought from a Dane. Dodintone was situated in the Hundred of Manshead within the Shire of Bedford.

The entry in the Domesday Book reads (in summary form):

“Ernulf de Hesding. The manor rated as 15½ hides. Arable, 30 carucates of land, 10 of which are in demesne. There are 42 villeins, 19 bordars and 19 serfs. Meadow, 30 carucates. Wood for 300 swine. Total value £25. The manor was formerly held by Wulward Levet”.

Shortly after Domesday, Toddington was granted to William Spec, who exchanged lands with Ernulf of Hesding. Matilda, one of Ernulf’s daughters, made a grant of the church at Toddington to the Abbey of La Couture in the early 12th century. From then up to the mid-13th century there was a succession of holders of the manor of Toddington. These included William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, to whom the right to hold a market and annual fair was granted in 1218. At some time before 1250, the manor passed to Paulinus Pever (Page 1912, 439).

Pever built a large mansion reputedly like a palace, although the exact location of the house is a matter of dispute. According to Boutwood (1953) it was situated to the north-east of town at Wadelowes in an area still called Old Park. Blundell (1925, 8) locates it more precisely, close to the present Redhills Farm. Others (e.g. Page 1912) have tried to place it on Conger Hill, but descriptions of the mansion do not really fit this site. The Pevers were lords of the manor up to 1429, when John Broughton succeeded to the estate.

The Hospital of St John the Baptist was founded by John Broughton in 1433. It was probably located on a site adjacent to the church in the centre of Toddington. The lands were taken over by the owners of Toddington Manor after the Dissolution and the buildings were demolished in the late 16th century. The stone from the hospital reputedly went towards the building of the market house (Blundell 1927, 179).

In 1530 the entire manor estates passed by marriage to Sir Thomas Cheney. His son Henry moved the site of the mansion to its present position 1 km to the



north-west of the town, where it was surrounded by a large park. The new manor house, built around 1560, was one of the great houses of England at that time. Built around a court, it had turrets on each side 4 stories high and a total of 45 hearths. Something of its splendour is shown on the Radulph Agas map of 1581. In 1614 the house passed to the staunchly Royalist Wentworth family, who played a significant part in the Civil War. The most famous of the Wentworths was Baroness Henrietta Maria Wentworth. She was the mistress of the Duke of Monmouth, the illegitimate son of Charles II who was executed in 1685. On her death, shortly afterwards, the house stood empty and was eventually demolished. The manor estate passed to a distant branch of the Wentworths, and from that time on the town ceased to have a resident noble family. Only the former kitchen block survives within the present manor house buildings.

Although the manor went into decline, the 17th century was perhaps the time of Toddington's greatest prosperity. In 1681 there were said to be 16 butchers renting stalls in the market (Lysons 1806). A school is known to have existed in Toddington in 1672. There is some evidence of a straw plaiting industry, serving the hat manufacturers of Luton and Dunstable. However, the town was not on any major road and its market began to suffer by comparison to those in larger towns nearby. There was a bad epidemic of smallpox in 1740. The workhouse was often full and roundsmen were introduced in 1758 to oversee the sending of unemployed people 'on the rounds'. The church became derelict. The school ceased to function and the market house was pulled down in 1799 (Godber 1984, 269). Between 1671 and the first census of 1801, the population had increased only from 781 to 1,143, whereas that of most villages and small towns at least doubled in this period.

The main coaching route from London to Bedford passed through here and the Bell Inn continued to be a coaching inn and staging point. But this mode of transport ceased with the coming of the railways, which bypassed the town completely. Toddington became essentially an agricultural village. The common water shown on Agas's map became an ornamental pond, and the market place a village green. The population of about 2,500 in 1850 declined to about 2,000 in 1911, though it has since risen to over 4,000. In 1911 the chief occupations were "the plaiting of straw and the breeding of poultry", with many young people going to work in the manufacturing industries in Luton or Dunstable. Like many settlements in the south of the county, however, Toddington was absorbed into the commuter belt around London. The construction of the M1 motorway in the 1960s at last connected it to a major transport system. The village is now a popular residential area and there has been much new development all around the historic core except on the eastern side.



5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 *The Prehistoric Period (c10,000BC - AD43)*

The major prehistoric trackway known as the Icknield Way (HER 353) runs south-west to north-east about 7 km to the south of Toddington. A trackway branching off from the Icknield way in the north of Luton and heading west through Chalton and the south of Toddington parish towards Leighton Buzzard was called the Thiodweg in a Saxon charter, but is likely to be of earlier origin. Parts of such a trackway are shown on the Agas map of 1581, and the stretch near Chalton was until recently known as the Old Salt Way.

There have been several finds of prehistoric flints in or near Toddington (HER 3291, 15845, 15846, 15860). These include flakes, blades and cores of Mesolithic, Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

Two nearly complete middle Bronze Age urns were found off Leighton Road to the south-west of Toddington in 1881 (HER 1426, Pollard 1991a). Bronze Age metalworker's hoards were found at Park Close 2km to the north-west (HER 1512), and Fancott (HER 1513). Bronze Age axes have been discovered at Chalton (HER 1511), and a socketed axe with two copper spearheads at Cowbridge, 2km to the east (HER 94). Although most were found well outside the town, they are mentioned here to illustrate that Toddington is near the centre of a high concentration of Bronze Age finds, many of which may represent intentional deposits. Such a concentration is unmatched elsewhere in the county and is remarked upon by several authors (see Pollard 1991a for a more detailed discussion).

A possible Bronze Age burial mound was noted in a field to the north of town, though its exact location is uncertain and references to it are vague (HER 3635, Page 1912, 439). Frederick Gurney identified a possible barrow on the highest point of Toddington, a little to the west of town in 'Home Field'. In the west corner of the field was a gently rising mound that might have been a plough-worn barrow (HER 11774, field-notes of Frederick Gurney, 1922), or alternatively the mound for a windmill. This area is now under modern development.

An Iron Age coin of Cunobelin was found in Toddington in the 19th century, though its location is unrecorded (HER 14736). Toddington would have been in the territory of the Catevellauni in later Iron Age times.

5.2 *The Roman Period (AD43 - AD410)*

The best summary of sites of the Roman period around Toddington - including possible pottery kilns, villa and farmstead sites - is provided by Simco (1984, 120, Map F). Most of the sites she describes, however, are located over 1km from the town.



The present-day Toddington is situated about 4km away from Watling Street and was essentially bypassed by the Roman road system, though it is likely that a number of tracks passed through the area.

There is no evidence of urban settlement in Toddington in the Roman period. However, Roman pottery was found in the early part of the last century near a footpath running from Cowbridge to Toddington (HER 10983). Roman cremation urns and spearheads were found in the Rectory Glebe land immediately to the north of Toddington (HER 11255). A possible villa site exists at Town Close just to the north-west of town. During excavation for gravel in 1894 many red tile fragments, cemented together, apparently formed part of a solid block about 2ft long, and this has been interpreted as the remains of a possible Roman hypercaust (HER 11955).

Six Roman coins were found in Toddington at an unspecified location near the church (HER 6573). A Roman coin of Claudius was found in the Puzzle Garden, 200m north of the church (HER 6816).

5.3 The Anglo-Saxon Period (AD410 - AD1066)

Early Saxon cemeteries have been found at Chalton (HER 99) to the south and Sheepwalk Hill (HER 101) to north-east. Both are several kilometres away from the town. There is a general concentration of early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries across South Bedfordshire roughly along the route of the Icknield Way (see Morris 1962).

There are two likely sites of pagan Saxon cemeteries on the outskirts of Toddington itself. Inhumations and cremations of 5th - 6th century date were found in 1819 during gravel extraction in fields about 1km south-west of the church (HER 2857). This area is sometimes known as Warmark. The relevant field belonged to a Mr Hicks, and was on the west side of a track called Frenchman's Highway. Human bones were found all along the narrow strip, which was about 12m wide and a furlong in length. Also found were spears, daggers, swords, buckles, rings, urns, beads, coins, etc. An object thought to be a helmet at the time was probably a shield boss. Many of the swords were apparently melted down and the metal re-used by local smiths (Blundell 1925, 4; Wingfield 1995, 32) argues that this cemetery may be 5th century in date and therefore ranks alongside Kempston as one of the earliest Saxon cemeteries in Bedfordshire.

Similar finds of large quantities of human bones and urns were found in 1829-30 during gravel extraction on William Harbett's estate, immediately outside Toddington on the north-east side. Spearheads, swords, beads, etc were reputedly found (HER 11954).

These two cemetery sites, one on the south-west and one on the north-east side, may have important implications for the study of the origins of Toddington. Settlements must have existed nearby and it is possible that these were situated within the present town boundaries. The cemeteries may not have been completely destroyed by gravel digging. Surviving burial (and settlement) evidence may therefore be at risk from future building development.



There is a strong local tradition of a battle having taken place, all the way from Chalton to Warmark, and general unprovenanced Saxon finds from this area are recorded as HER 795. The placename Warmark is itself taken as indicative of a battle. Blundell (1925, 5) suggests the various battles between the Britons and the Saxons led by Cuthwulf, documented by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in the entry for 571. However, it seems likely that stories of battles in the area are based on finds from the Saxon cemeteries mentioned above, mistaken for battleground remains.

Two early Anglo-Saxon brooches, believed found in the 19th century by Major Cooper in Toddington parish (exact provenance unknown), are in the collections of Northampton Museum. One of these, a large cruciform brooch, is the subject of a detailed analysis by Kennet (1969).

A Saxon charter of 926 mentions land bought back from the Danes at Chalgrave and Tebworth, indicating that much of this area – including Toddington itself – was subsumed into the Danelaw at some time during the preceding 40 years (Gurney 1920). A holy well dedicated to St Cyneburh is referred to. This is almost certainly the Kimberwell (HER 6986), a natural spring situated on the parish boundary 2km to the south-west of the town. The charter also refers to the Thiodweg, the trackway running roughly from east to west through the south of Toddington parish.

The basic layout of the settlement at Toddington could well have originated in the middle-late Saxon period. The fact that no building of this date survives or that no evidence from this period has yet been discovered does not mean it is not there. There is great potential for finding Saxon remains anywhere within the medieval/post-medieval township.

5.4 The Medieval Period (AD1066 - AD1550)

5.4.1 The Medieval Town (HER 16981)

The basic medieval pattern of streets, church and market square is surprisingly well-preserved. A glimpse of a small but prospering market town at the end of the medieval period is provided by the Agas map of 1581 (see Fig 4). This remarkable map covers the whole of the parish, showing the town in its context of surrounding fields. It gives a vivid illustration of the embeddedness of the town in the countryside, and the importance of the agricultural base for its economic viability. Buildings are shown in partial perspective. Aspects of the town are described in more detail below.

5.4.2 Streets

The street pattern depicted on the Agas map of 1581 is much the same as that which survives today. The widening out of the Dunstable Road as it approaches the market square indicates that as well as being a thoroughfare this too was part of the public space, and that the market and fairs probably extended into this area. An attempt at town planning may have been made when the market was granted and the church rebuilt in the early 13th century. It is likely that some land



was cleared and possibly some slight re-alignment of roads was made at this time in order to accommodate the market.

The road running north-south from Bedford towards Dunstable was perhaps always the most important road, giving the settlement its main axis. Note that the pattern of roads converging in the centre of town has given the two parts of the bisected green a characteristic triangular shape.

5.4.3 Castle Earthworks (HER 89)

The large artificial mound called Conger Hill (or sometimes Gayer's Hill – see Page 1912, 439) can be identified as the motte of a Norman castle. The mound is situated in a field roughly 100m to the east of the church. It is about 40m in diameter at the base, steep-sided and conical in shape with a flattened top. The top of the mound measures about 20m across. Surrounding the mound is a ditch, measuring 8-12m in width and 2-5m deep. The height of the mound from the base of the ditch is about 5m. An outer bank and ditch exists on the eastern side, with vestiges perhaps surviving to the south and west. The area enclosed by the rampart is considered to have potential for preservation of building foundations associated with the bailey.

The monument is scheduled as SAM 20439 (see Fig 8). Scheduling documents identify the site as the stronghold of Paulinus Pever in the 13th century. However, it is perhaps more likely that it is one of the very early motte-and-bailey castles, dating to the late 11th and early 12th centuries and perhaps quickly going out of use. Pever's fortified manor house is more easily identified with the Old Park site to the north-east of Toddington (Boutwood 1953), or possibly even the site of the present Manor Lodge on Park Road.

Sixteenth century forms of Conger Hill are *Cungar* and *Cunnigar* and are thought to derive from the middle English *conynger* or 'rabbit warren'. This implies that the hill was used as a warren during part of the medieval period.

Two medieval potsherds were found just to the east of Conger Hill (HER 9822). According to Viner (1993), potsherds of the 13th-15th centuries have also been found on the mound itself. He suggests that the mound may have been used as a rubbish dump during medieval times.

Following Viner, it is worth noting that the mound does not occupy the highest point within Toddington, which is taken by the church itself.

A local Shrove Tuesday custom was focused on Conger Hill. The ringing of a bell would signal all the village children to run to the mound, lay down on the top or side of it and put their ears to the ground to hear the sizzle of a witch cooking her pancakes inside it. The custom was recently discontinued (Viner 1997, 5).

5.4.4 St George's Church (HER 962)

The church is situated just to the north of the market square and to the east of Conger Hill. It occupies the highest ground within the town. It is likely that there were earlier church structures on the same site; these may survive within



the footprint of the present building. The cruciform plan probably dates from the time of Paulinus Pever in the early 13th century. The dedication to St George is known to have taken place in 1222, the year when St George's Day was declared a public holiday. Any previous dedication is unknown. Medieval wall paintings survive inside the church. The nave arcades belong to the early 14th century. The chancel, vestry, north transept and north aisle were rebuilt in the 15th century. The parvise attached to the church is an unusual feature. Originally used as a chapel and living quarters for the priest, it dates from the 15th century. The carvings of animals and mythical creatures (sow, griffin, mermaid, etc) under the cornice on the north side are spectacular but badly worn. They can be dated to the 16th century on the basis of the period costume of one of the figures.

A chapel of St Mary the Virgin was first mentioned in 1298 and last mentioned in 1562. It is not clear whether this was a chapel within St George's or a separate establishment associated with the church but situated elsewhere in the town or wider parish. A private chapel is known to have existed on the Pever estate in the 13th century. Another chapel frequently mentioned in connection with the church is that of St John. Part of the lower portion of the churchyard wall (HER 15550) on the eastern side was probably the west wall of this chapel, also known as St John's Hospital (see below). The north transept of the church is known as the Wentworth Chapel and the south transept as St James' Chapel.

The church was granted to the Benedictine abbey of La Couture, Le Mans, between 1100 and 1122. This was confirmed in 1167, 1180-86 and 1190-1202. The advowson (the right of the abbey to present a clergyman here) seems to have been lost in the 13th century. The rights passed to the lords of Toddington Manor, who held them for the rest of the medieval period.

The likelihood that the graveyard was at one time much larger than at present and extended further to the north-east is supported by the reported find of 28 skeletons in the car park of the Griffin Public House (HER 15458). These were not dated but were probably of medieval date. Some of the graveyard on the north-western side has been lost, according to a plaque in the churchyard wall, as a result of road widening.

5.4.5 Hospital of St John (HER 7921)

The Hospital of St John was founded by John Boughton in 1433 'for a Chaplain and warden and three poor men'. It stood immediately to the east of St George's churchyard on land now owned by the Griffin Farm, and probably owned the meadow in which Conger Hill stands. As already mentioned, some of the lower portion of the churchyard wall on the eastern side is thought to be the remnant of the west wall of the hospital building (HER 15550). A lane leading from the market square past Conger House to the area was known as Spital Lane. The hospital was probably used mainly for casual shelter and the treatment of sickness.

St John's Hospital was dissolved in the 1540s and demolished in the late 16th century. The latest reference to it is a Patent Roll of 1572, which mentions a Hospital tenement called Brotherhood House. According to Lysons, stones from the hospital were used to construct the market house on the square. Blundell



(1925, 121) records that medieval wall foundations associated with the hospital were found during building work in the Griffin farmyard in the early 19th century.

It is probable that the remains of the outer bailey of the Norman castle extend underneath the remains of the hospital, making this, potentially at least, the richest site in Toddington for the preservation of medieval archaeological evidence.

5.4.6 Manors

The manorial hall in early Norman times may have been on the site of the supposed motte-and-bailey castle at Conger Hill. In the mid-13th century the manor passed to Paulinus Pever. He built a large mansion at Toddington, although its location is unclear. The site of Wadelow Manor (HER 788) still known as ‘Old Park’ on the north-east side of the parish is favoured by some authors (Blundell 1925, Boutwood 1953), while VCH suggests either Conger Hill or the site of the gatehouse of the later manor (Page 1912, 439). Another possible site is that of the present Manor Lodge on the Park Road. The Agas map of 1581 shows seven mounds and a small lake here – all that remained, it could be argued, of buildings demolished only a few decades earlier. A new manor house was built on its current site in the mid-16th century.

5.4.7 Market Square

The right to hold a market and fair was granted in 1218 by Henry III to William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke (lord of the manor at that time). The market was held on a Thursday, though it was later changed to Saturday by charter of Edward II in 1315. The fair was held on the 22nd-24th of April, the “vigil, feast and morrow” of St George. The market was still prospering in the 16th century, when it is shown on the 1581 map by Radulph Agas to have a market house and shambles/slaughterhouse. Both may have been built from the stone of St John’s Hospital, demolished in the mid-15th century (Page 1912, 444).

The Town Hall (HER 2435) was also constructed in Tudor times. It was sometimes referred to as the Tollbooth, and was used for the collection of tolls and duties, as well as a prison. It used to have a staircase leading up to a sort of balcony at the rear. A large Tudor fireplace was apparently removed from the upper room (Blundell 1925, 181).

Another building marked on the Agas map is the ‘Town Kitchens’ or ‘Town Ovens’ (HER 10128) in front of Conger House. This contained 5 – 7 ovens on the ground floor and is said to have housed up to 10 families (Viner 1993, 4).

A substantial market cross was situated roughly on the site of the present war memorial.

Of all these medieval structures on the market square only the Town Hall survives today.



5.4.8 Inns

Clustered round the market square and the church in the late medieval period were numerous inns, within which much of the market business was transacted. These included inns such as the Cock, the Crown and the King's Head that have long since disappeared, as well as the Bell which still survives (although it may have moved from a site next door). The former Red Lion at No 25 Church Square is an ancient building. The Angel by the town pond on the High Street is another old inn marked on the Agas map of 1581. The Sow and Pigs and the Griffin are much more ancient than the buildings in which they are presently housed. Both motifs appear as figures on the 16th century carved frieze on the north side of the church. Whether the inns were named after the figures on the carving, or whether the sculptors drew inspiration from the names of local taverns, is an interesting question.

5.4.9 Town Water

The Agas map shows the 'Towne Water' - a large rectangular pond - to have been much larger in the 16th century than it is today, originally reaching right up to the road. It is likely that the pond is a very ancient feature of the town, probably dating back to the beginning of the medieval period and perhaps beyond. Fed by a spring, the pond may have been a focus of the original settlement or it could have been constructed since that date. It probably afforded a source of water for all kinds of light industrial activities as well as providing drinking water for horses and other animals. A detail on the Agas map shows two people carrying from the pond a large bucket of water on a stick resting on their shoulders.

Many houses would also have had their own wells, and there was probably a town well on the square, perhaps roughly where the village pump is now.

5.4.10 Pound (HER 12113)

A small rectangular fenced enclosure thought to be a pound is marked on the Agas map on the western side of the High Street at the south end of the town.

The map also shows some enclosures on the roadside next to the town pond. These may be sheep pens.

5.4.11 Mills

There were no watermills in Toddington itself owing to the lack of any fast flowing stream. The nearest mill was probably at Cowbridge to the east of the town. A Windmill Close is marked on the Agas map on the high ground just to the west of the town and within the present town boundary (HER 3145). A possible windmill mound is HER 11774.

5.4.12 Surviving Buildings

The 13th century church of St George has already been described. Surviving secular buildings known to be of medieval date in the town are shown in Table 1. Many buildings described in further tables as being later in date are also likely to contain timber frames and other work of medieval date behind their 17th, 18th and even 19th century fronts. A good example would be Sundial House (HER 5307),



suspected to have an ancient medieval structure hidden behind its Georgian façade. Classification here, however, sticks fairly closely to dates given in HER, with the need for a detailed building survey highlighted.

HER	Address	Comments
2435	Town Hall	Shown on Agas map of 1581. Early timber frame visible. Much alteration.
6465	34 and 36 Market Square	Extensively altered

Table 1. 15th-16th century buildings (from HER)

The old Town Hall (HER 2435), now in private hands, is the only surviving building to have been situated on the square in Tudor times. This has already been described. Numbers 34 and 36 High Street are the only buildings on the south side to be identified as 16th century, but other houses in the row are also likely to contain late Tudor work and would repay further investigation. It is also worth noting that the boundaries of such properties are probably original early medieval burgage plots. Certainly they have changed little since 1581, as a glance at the Agas map will show.

The Angel Inn on the High Street, near the junction with Luton Road, seems to be the same building as that marked on the Agas map of 1581. It is, however, much enlarged, with the former stables now incorporated as part of the main building.

Marked on the Agas map but now demolished are buildings in Park Road, the sites of which are recorded as HER 12123 and 12124.

Historic buildings of Toddington are shown in Fig 3.

5.4.13 Trades

Names recorded in the parish registers of the 16th century probably reflect part of the range of occupations practised in the preceding centuries. These include Smythe, Fuller, Fysher, Baker, Butler, Porter, Taylor, Cooke, Clerke, Cooper, Wainwright, Shepherd. Most occupations would have been agricultural, and many of the townspeople worked plots in the surrounding fields or kept animals. The Agas map of 1581 shows numerous warrens in the countryside around Toddington, and it is possible that Conger Hill itself served as a rabbit warren at some time, providing work for warreners. The market and fairs were mainly 'for cattle and pedlary', with numerous butchers working in the shambles or slaughterhouse. Innkeeping was a flourishing trade that depended on the success of the market, and many innkeepers must have brewed their own beer.

The Bell Inn may derive its name from the casting of a bell nearby for the church opposite. There were several generations of bell-makers working in Toddington in the 14th-15th centuries (Viner 1993, 9). These include a Thomas Rufford, mentioned in a document of 1390. In 1412 'William Rufford of Tudynton was belmaker' (Woodcock 1963, 48).



Archaeological evidence provides little insight into other crafts practised in the town. However, the placename ‘Tanner’s End’ in the north of Toddington indicates the former existence of a tanyard. Many horns were found in a boggy field at Tanner’s End Farm (Blundell 1925, 203).

5.5 The Post-Medieval Period (AD1550 - AD1850)

5.5.1 Streets

The streets shown in the Agas map of 1581, at the beginning of the post-medieval period, stayed more or less unchanged for the next two and a half centuries. The part of the High Street that crosses the market square was straightened slightly when the market house was pulled down in 1799.

Roads in and out of the town were notoriously bad in the 16th–18th centuries, and this must have contributed to the decline of the market. Luton Road and Harlington Road were susceptible to flooding and often impassable in winter. Tebworth Road (Frenchman’s Way) and Woburn Road were little more than tracks (Blundell 1925, 196-7). These were improved and straightened as a result of the Enclosure Act of 1797, but Toddington did not benefit from major turnpike roads like other towns nearby.

5.5.2 Market

In the 17th and 18th centuries the market was still thriving. There were 16 butchers renting stalls there in 1681 (Page 1912, 441). However, the market fared badly in competition with those of the larger market towns. As Luton, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard grew and prospered, so Toddington market went into decline. In 1799 the market house on the square was pulled down. In 1803 the weekly market was discontinued, although there were still three fairs a year. In the space of about a hundred years, Toddington had changed from a small but prospering market town to little more than an agricultural village. A straw plait market was started in 1820. An attempt was made to revive the main market in 1850 but it never fully recovered. By 1891 it had dwindled to a few stalls in the Church Square area. The market square had effectively become a village green.

5.5.3 Nonconformist Chapels

There were Nonconformist worshippers in the town from the 17th century, but they attended chapels in nearby towns rather than in Toddington itself. In 1812 it is recorded that the entire congregation of St George’s Church turned Baptist (Godber 1984, 453). The first Baptist Church was built in 1816 in Station Road. A new building (HER 14790) was erected on the same site in 1884. The churchyard is recorded as HER 9017.

The first Wesleyan Chapel was built on the west side of the High Street in 1823. The present building (HER 6456) was built in 1846.

A Primitive Methodist Chapel was built at about the same time in Duck Lane/Conger Lane. This later became the Industrial Hall, now the Church Hall (HER 15443).



5.5.4 Schools

A school in Toddington is recorded in 1652 (BLARS Fac 34, p37), but this appears to have closed. There is no mention of a school throughout most of the 18th century (Godber 1984, 334). A number of dame schools and Sunday schools associated with the nonconformist chapels opened in the early 19th century. There were two schools formed in the late 19th century as part of the general educational reform; these are marked on the 1st Edition OS map of 1886. During the Agricultural Depression, school fees were lowered from 2d to 1d for labourer's children in 1865 (*ibid*, 507).

5.5.5 Church

The wooden cross on top of the tower was placed there in the reign of Charles I. Many of the medieval wall paintings were probably whitewashed over in the 17th and 18th centuries. Towards the end of the 18th century the church was allowed to fall into disrepair. The roof became decayed and the windows were without glass. Only extensive repairs later that century saved the church from complete ruin (Blundell 1925, 84-6).

5.5.6 Manor House (HER 5313)

The new manor house was built on its present site by Henry Cheney in about 1560. It is depicted on the Agas map of 1581, which shows a magnificent three-storey building with turrets rising to four stories in height, built round a central court. It also had a Greate Courte to the front and a Backe Courte to the rear, as well as extensive gardens and orchards. In 1719, however, a survey described the building as being in a state of collapse. It was demolished and much of the estate disparked at some time in the 18th century. The Tudor ovens of the kitchen and a few other rooms survived in a remnant of the building that escaped demolition, to serve as a Steward's House. This was incorporated into the present building, constructed by Major Cooper in the 19th century.

The landscaped grounds with lakes and other earthworks are recorded as HER 97, and the watermill and mill pond to the north-west of the manor as HER 5213. The site of the former gateway to the manor, of which no traces remain, is HER 957.

5.5.7 Tanner's End

The Agas map of 1581 shows a focus of settlement at Tanner's End, with several parallel rows of houses situated here on the bend of the road at the top of the village. These had disappeared by the time of the Enclosure Award map of 1797, when this area had become a farm. The 18th century farmhouse survives as HER 5314. The reason for the concentration of houses at the beginning of the post-medieval period is not known. Its demise could be associated with the general decline and disemparking of the manor estate. A former name for Tanner's End was Tatler's Wells (Blundell 1925, 208).

5.5.8 Inns

The inn trade continued to flourish into the post-medieval period but was drastically affected by the decline of the market at the end of the 18th century. Inns and taverns included the Ram (opposite the old forge), the Hare, the



Queen's Head, the Wagon and Horses and the White Horse, the buildings of which mostly survive today as shops or private houses. The Red Lion moved from Church Square to the Market Square in the mid-18th century. Both the Red Lion and the Bell became important coaching inns.

A post-medieval well was found at the Griffin Public House (HER 15457). It was built of unmortared brick and other stone robbed from an earlier wall. It measured 1.5m in diameter, and the water was visible about 3-4m down. The well is thought to have belonged to the former Griffin Inn which was burnt down in 1904. This was perhaps one of the oldest inns in the town, with its situation next to the church and the old Hospital of St John. Petty sessions of the Manshead Hundred were held here in the 18th century (Godber 1984, 375).

5.5.9 Workhouse

A workhouse was situated behind the Sow and Pigs Inn from about 1700. In 1821 a new workhouse was built at the south end of the High Street (Viner 1993, 7). Apparently the workhouse was often full, and in 1758 roundsmen were introduced to oversee the sending of unemployed people 'on the rounds' (Godber 1984, 333).

5.5.10 Mills

A windmill (HER 3146) was situated just outside Toddington on the Harlington Road. It was shown on the Jeffery map of 1765, but was blown down in the 19th century. The field is called Windmill Field.

A millhouse for the production of woad (for dyeing) is recorded in the late 17th century (Godber 1984, 275).

Milling declined in the early 19th century. The last reference to milling activity occurs in 1877, when a windmill on Leighton Road was closed down.

5.5.11 Surviving Buildings

As already noted, many of the buildings referred to in tables below are likely to contain remains of earlier structures. Some, such as No 25 Church Square (HER 6445), identified as 17th century below, may actually be marked on the Agas map of 1581 and could be much older. Others, such as No 30 Market Square (HER 6464) can be shown to be later on the basis of their absence from the map. This small house has subsequently been squeezed into the space of a former entrance-way between buildings on either side. The old forge (HER 15656, now a garage) and the village pound that was sited next to it, are further examples of structures known to have been built after 1581. In many cases precise dates for buildings are not available. Dates given here are a general guide but should be regarded as provisional only.



HER	Address	Comments
5303	The Oddfellows Arms, Market Square	
5307	Sundial House, Market Square	
5310	Top Trees, 40 and 42 High Street	Timber-frame
5311	Bedford Arms PH, High Street	Timber-frame
5315	32 and 34 Station Road	
6444	Saddler's Cottage, 21 Church Square	Timber-frame
6445	25 Church Square and rear thatched barn	Former Red Lion. T-shaped plan. Barn is probably C18 th .
6446	1 Conger Lane	Timber-frame. Later additions. Thatched.
6453	19 High Street,	
6459	The Bell PH, Market Square	
6460	6 and 8 Market Square	Much altered
6462	17 and 19 Market Square	
6464	30 Market Square	Built in former entranceway between two buildings
6466	38 Market Square	Much altered
6487	1 Station Road and 1 Park Road	Re-framed in C18 th
6490	Rhees Cottage, 13 Station Road	Later alterations
6491	23 and 25 Station Road	
15339	28 High Street	Timber-frame. Axis at right-angle to road. Converted to stable in C19 th .
15395	63 High Street	Timber-frame. C18 th front.

Table 2. 17th century buildings (from HER)

The Georgian facades of houses fronting onto the Market Square, as well as inns such as the Oddfellows Arms and the new Red Lion, are a reminder that Toddington was still a thriving market town when these were built.

Wentworth House, next to the Town Pond, may hide a much earlier structure behind its 18th century façade.



HER	Address	Comments
5304	Conger House and Conger Villa, Market Square	
5305	House immediately S of the Oddfellows Arms, Market Square	Early C18 th
5309	14-16 High Street	Late C18 th
5314	Tanner's End Farmhouse, 61 Station Road	
6448	4, 6 and 8 Conger Lane	
6450	10 High Street	
6451	12 High Street	Re-using parts of earlier structure?
6461	9-15 Market Square	
6463	21-25 Market Square	
6469	Red Lion PH	
6482	33 Park Road	Late C18 th
6484	St James, Park Road	C18 th core but mainly C19 th
6488	11 Station Road	
6492	27-33 Station Road	
15322	Barn at Tanner's End	Threshing barn. Possibly re-using C17 th timbers.

Table 3. 18th century buildings (from HER)

The decline in the fortunes of the market is reflected in the relatively small amount of building undertaken in the early 19th century, compared to other towns. Perhaps the major works were the three nonconformist chapels.

Another interesting building is the row of almshouses known as the Feoffee Cottages (HER 6626) next to the Sow and Pigs. Built in 1829, these represent the last of the endowments of a Town Charity prominent in medieval times.

HER	Address	Comments
5308	14 Market Square	
6447	3 Conger Lane	
6452	15 High Street	
6456	Wesleyan Chapel, High Street	Built 1846
6468	The Old Manse, Market Square	Possibly C18 th
6473	Denbigh House, Park Road	
6628	Feoffee Almshouses. Otherwise known as the Charity Houses	Built 1829, rebuilt 1864
14790	Baptist Church, Station Road	First chapel built 1812. Rebuilt 1884.
15443	Church Hall, former Primitive Methodist chapel.	

Table 4. Early to mid-19th century buildings (from HER)

The present Sow and Pigs was probably built in about 1840-50, replacing a much earlier building.

The location of historic buildings is shown in Fig 3.



5.5.12 Trades

The prosperity of the market continued to stimulate a wide variety of crafts and trades at the beginning of the post-medieval period, but the collapse of the market in the 18th century had a devastating effect on local industry. People resorted mainly to agricultural trades to earn a living. One other trade that may have benefited from the general decline, however, was straw plaiting – serving the hat-making industry of Luton and Dunstable. In 1715 it is recorded that bundles of hatting straw were bought for the poor (Godber 1984, 333). Straw plaiting became the chief employment of inhabitants and one of the mainstays of the economy of the town. The market was re-opened as a straw plait market in the 1820s.

A glance at the directories of the early 19th century shows that only a handful of people worked in the construction industry. There were some small cottage industries such as dress-making, shoe-making, watchmaking and hat-making. Straw dealers and corn dealers plied their trade, but there are few other merchants listed. There were numerous shops such as bakers, butchers, grocers, and drapers. There was also a blacksmith working in the old forge on the green. Local milling came to an end when the last of the local windmills came down in 1877. Coaches passed through the town and stopped at the Red Lion, the Bell, and the Sow and Pigs - providing some work for grooms and ostlers. Innkeeping continued to be an important trade though the number of inns was greatly reduced. There were 8 inns and 11 beer retailers in the mid-19th century. Most innkeepers had to have other income coming in. Craven's Directory of 1853 lists 'William Horley, *the New Inn* (also shoemaker)', William Shaw, *The Sow and Pigs* (also plumber and glazier)'. Daniel Sheppard of the Griffin Inn was not only described as a victualler and farmer, but also as an Inland Revenue Officer (Woodcock 1963). A Post Office was built in the High Street in 1846.

In 1850 there were still four annual fairs running – on April 25, September 4th, November 2nd and December 6th.

5.6 *The Industrial Period (AD1850 – AD1914)*

Toddington was by-passed by the railways and was largely unaffected by industrialisation. It retained its character as an agricultural town/village throughout the industrial period. The population went down from 2,500 in 1850 to about 2,000 in 1911.

The gas works (HER 6806) supplied the town with gas for street lighting and domestic use. It was opened in Conger Lane, henceforth called Gas Lane, in 1863. Redevelopment of the site in 1997-8 allowed a watching brief to take place (BCAS project 479), during which the base of the gasometer was photographed.

The pump on the green was erected in 1855 and was the principal source of water for houses facing onto the green right up to WWII. Mains water was eventually installed in 1944.



The churchyard closed through lack of burial space and the municipal cemetery (HER 8984) was opened to the north-east of the church in 1857.

The town acquired a fire engine in 1832. The Toddington Fire Service was established in 1895, and the station was built in 1933.

5.6.1 Buildings

HER	Address	Comments
6413	28 Market Square	Mid-C19 th
6449	2 and 4 High Street	Mid-C19 th
6454	35 and 37 High Street	
6455	45 and 47 High Street	
6457	80 and 82 High Street	
6467	40 and 42 Market Square	Mid-C19 th
6470	24 and 26 Market Square	Mid-C19 th
6474	Foxon House, Park Road	Mid-C19 th
6483	Wainholm, Park Road	Late C19 th
6485	Glengariff, Park Road	
6486	Lodge, Toddington Manor, Park Road	Late C19 th
6493	47 and 49 Station Road	
6555	23-31 High Street	

Table 5. Mid – late 19th century buildings in Toddington (from HER)

5.6.2 Trades

In 1911, straw plaiting and the keeping of poultry were described as the major crafts. Kelly's Directories from the early 20th century list more agricultural and rural occupations such as farmers, market gardeners, saddlers, etc, and less of specialised tradesmen. By this time there are no hat-makers working in the town.

5.7 The Modern Period (AD1914 - present)

The modern period has seen the population rise from about 2,000 in 1911 to about 5,000 today. Construction of the M1 and the absorption of Toddington into the London commuter belt has stimulated considerable development in the form of modern estates, especially on the west, south-west and south sides of the town. Only two 20th century structures are recorded in HER; these are shown in the table below.

HER	Address	Comments
15174	K6 Telephone kiosk	Cast iron. Red. Designed 1935 by Sir Gilbert Scott.
15456	The Griffin PH, Station Road	Built 1902

Table 6. 20th century buildings (from HER)



6. ASSESSMENT OF TODDINGTON'S CHARACTER, IMPORTANCE AND POTENTIAL

6.1 *Character of the Present Town*

The present town has the appearance of a large but thriving village. The main feature of the town is the green, dominated by the church. This large space gives the town a feeling of space unusual in many old towns. On the green are the pump, the forge and the town hall. The buildings facing onto the green are nearly all of two stories and represent an interesting mix of different styles and dates. Many are 18th century or earlier. Shops and inns at the northern end of the High Street leading into the old market square remind us that this was and is the commercial heart of the town, despite the shrinking of the Towne Water into a mere ornamental feature. The medieval 'flavour' of the town is accounted for by the fact that the medieval street plan survives more or less intact, together with some old inns and other buildings, and has not been destroyed by later development. In this respect the decline of the town in the later part of the post-medieval period has actually served to preserve much of its heritage.

Figs 5, 6 and 7 show schematic stages in the development of Toddington (information derived from historic maps).

Toddington town centre was first designated a Conservation Area in 1972. The updated and amended Conservation Area, approved in 1995, is shown in Fig 8. Centred on the square or green, the area covers the entire medieval town and includes all archaeological components defined below apart from the possible site of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery (Component 9).

6.2 *Archaeological Potential*

There have been few archaeological excavations within the historic core of Toddington, and as a result the archaeological potential of the town is relatively untapped.

The basic medieval pattern of streets, church and market square is surprisingly well-preserved. The surviving castle earthworks and elements of the medieval hospital preserve significant upstanding remains, in addition to any sub-surface archaeological deposits. For earlier periods, there is also great potential for finding Saxon remains anywhere within the medieval/post-medieval township.

Damage to buried archaeological evidence by subsequent development is not great, although a rapid cellar survey indicates that many of the buildings around the market square (particularly the inns and former inns) have been cellared.

6.3 *Archaeological Components*

The archaeological components identified below are shown in Fig 10.

- **Component 1** *Medieval town*

The shape of the town shown on the Agas map of 1581 (extended in Fig 10 to include the motte and bailey) can be taken to broadly represent the shape of the



medieval town. As it is likely to have had its origins in the Saxon period, it is important to note that Saxon as well as medieval and post-medieval settlement remains could be found anywhere within it. Component 1 includes all the components listed below apart from the outlying early Anglo-Saxon cemetery (Component 9).

- **Component 2** *Castle earthworks*

The earthworks known as Conger Hill are thought to represent the remains of a Norman motte-and-bailey castle. The area around the mound, enclosed by what may be an outer bailey ditch, has high potential for the preservation of medieval structures associated with the castle. The full extent of the outer bailey has yet to be established. The motte and surrounding area is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 20439).

- **Component 3** *Church and churchyard*

The church of St George is the most important historical building in the town, and is at present the subject of detailed archaeological recording during extensive repairs. The medieval (and possibly Saxon) graveyard seems to have extended into the car park of the Griffin Inn to the north, and may once have extended further south onto what is now the northern part of the market square area. The area around the church and the castle could have been the focus of settlement in the late Saxon and early Norman periods.

- **Component 4** *Medieval hospital*

The site of the medieval hospital lies for the most part under the farmyard buildings of Griffin Farm, though a section of wall survives in the lower courses of the churchyard wall. Stone foundations of further walls of hospital and outbuildings may also survive below ground. In all probability these hospital remains overlie the western part of the outer bailey ditch of the Norman castle. This raises the possibility of a deeply stratified site with at least two major phases of activity represented.

- **Component 5** *Market Square*

The market area was laid out in the 13th century and still provides the main topographical feature of the town. On the square formerly stood the market house, shambles, town kitchens, maypole, market cross, forge, pound and other medieval and post-medieval structures, as well as the Town Hall that survives today. Many craft, agricultural, recreational and commercial activities must have taken place in the open area, which combined the functions of a town square with that of a village green. As well as a weekly market, fairs were held here up to five times a year. Preservation of archaeological remains is likely to be high as there has been little or no subsequent development of the square since the market declined in the 18th century.

Note that the 'square' actually takes the form of two triangles because of the way it is bisected by the road. The northern part of Dunstable Road which has been widened is included as part of the market square.



Buildings and properties facing onto the square preserve in places medieval burgage plots, especially on the south side. Many of the buildings are older than their facades and would definitely repay a detailed building survey, which has not been possible as part of this study.

A bell foundry probably existed on the west side, perhaps on a site close to the present Bell Inn. Other industrial activities such as smithying must also have taken place. A workhouse stood behind the Sow and Pigs in post-medieval times. Many of the buildings around the square are inns or have been inns at some time in the past. A large proportion of these had cellars. Small malting kilns may have been situated to the rear of these buildings.

- **Component 6** *Street pattern*

The basic street pattern has broadly stayed the same since the Agas map of 1581 and is likely to have been in place throughout much of the medieval period. The north-south road from Bedford to Dunstable is clearly the main axis of the town. In medieval times the northern part of the High Street which opens out into the square (the 'Town End') must have been an important part of the market, as well as the commercial heart of the town.

- **Component 7** *Town Water*

The large rectangular town pond has probably been a focus of town life throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods. Light industrial activities may have taken advantage of the valuable water resource. The pond was originally much larger and extended right up to the road.

- **Component 8** *Tanner's End*

The four rows of houses or other buildings at Tanner's End, shown on the Agas map of 1581, represent something of a puzzle. Although the map drawing may be partly schematic, the layout of the buildings has the appearance of being deliberately planned. Was there a semi-industrial process of some kind going on here (tanning, horn-working, etc), taking advantage of the many springs and pools? The buildings were gone by the time of enclosure in the late 18th century, when the Tanner's End farmhouse was built, which means that the site as a whole should perhaps be classed as a shrunken post-medieval settlement. The boggy ground means that preservation of wooden structures and any other organic material is likely to be extremely good.

- **Component 9** *Anglo-Saxon cemetery*

The possible cemetery site on the north-eastern outskirts of Toddington is counted as a component because it is close to the limits of development. The other cemetery at Warmark on the south-western side is too far away to be represented as an archaeological component of the town. But the fact that there are two pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in the vicinity may indicate that, in the 5th–6th centuries, there was at least one settlement and possibly two within (or close to) the area of the present town. Whether these hypothetical settlements endured and coalesced to become the *Totingdone* of Domesday Book is not known.



The two important cemetery sites could have been completely destroyed by gravel extraction in the 19th century, but parts may have survived. Modern development may soon encroach upon the sites, which obviously have a high archaeological potential. There was clearly much pagan Anglo-Saxon activity within the general vicinity of what is now Toddington and nearby trackways to the south. Excavations within the town could possibly uncover settlement and burial evidence from this period.



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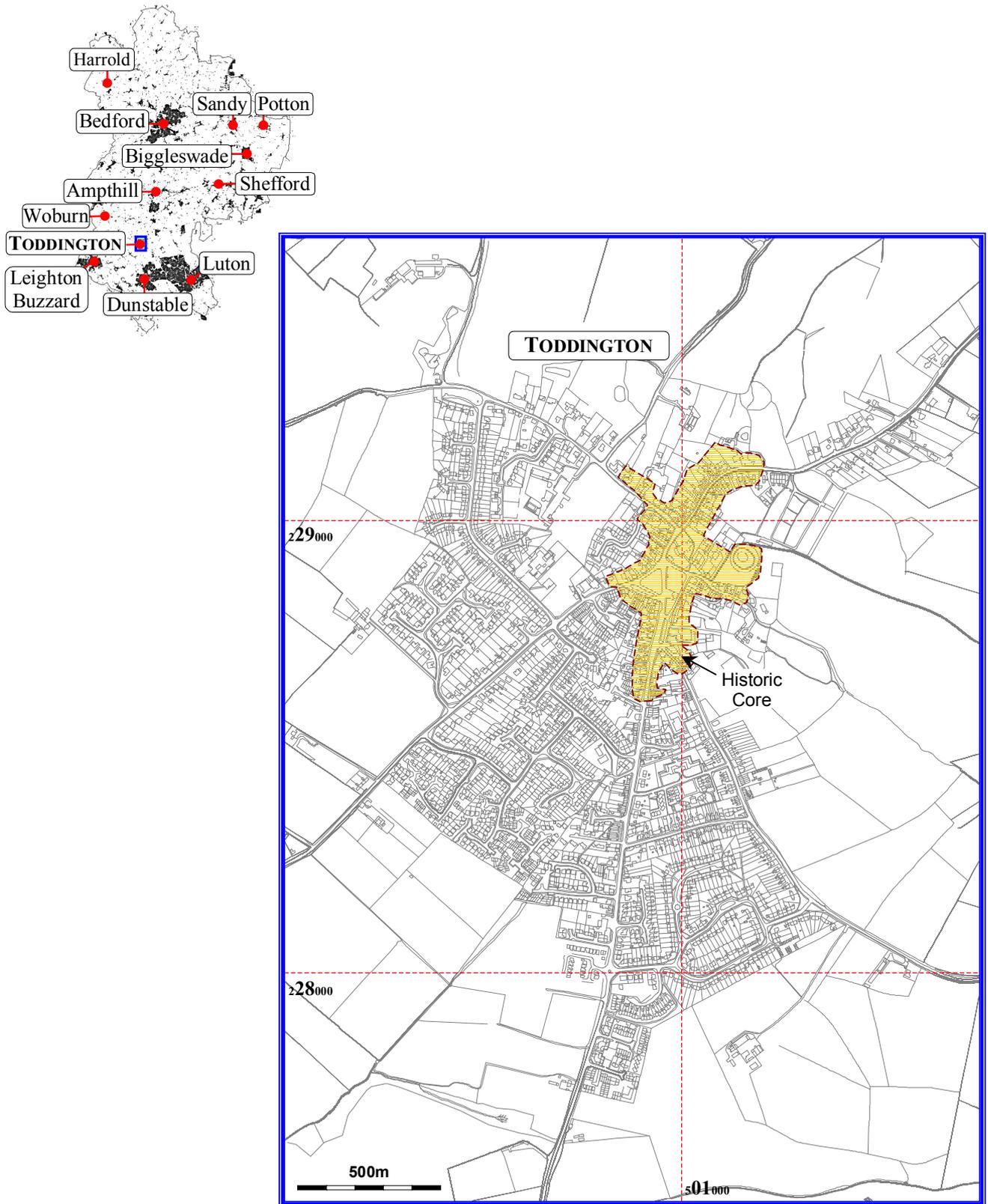


Figure 1: Location map

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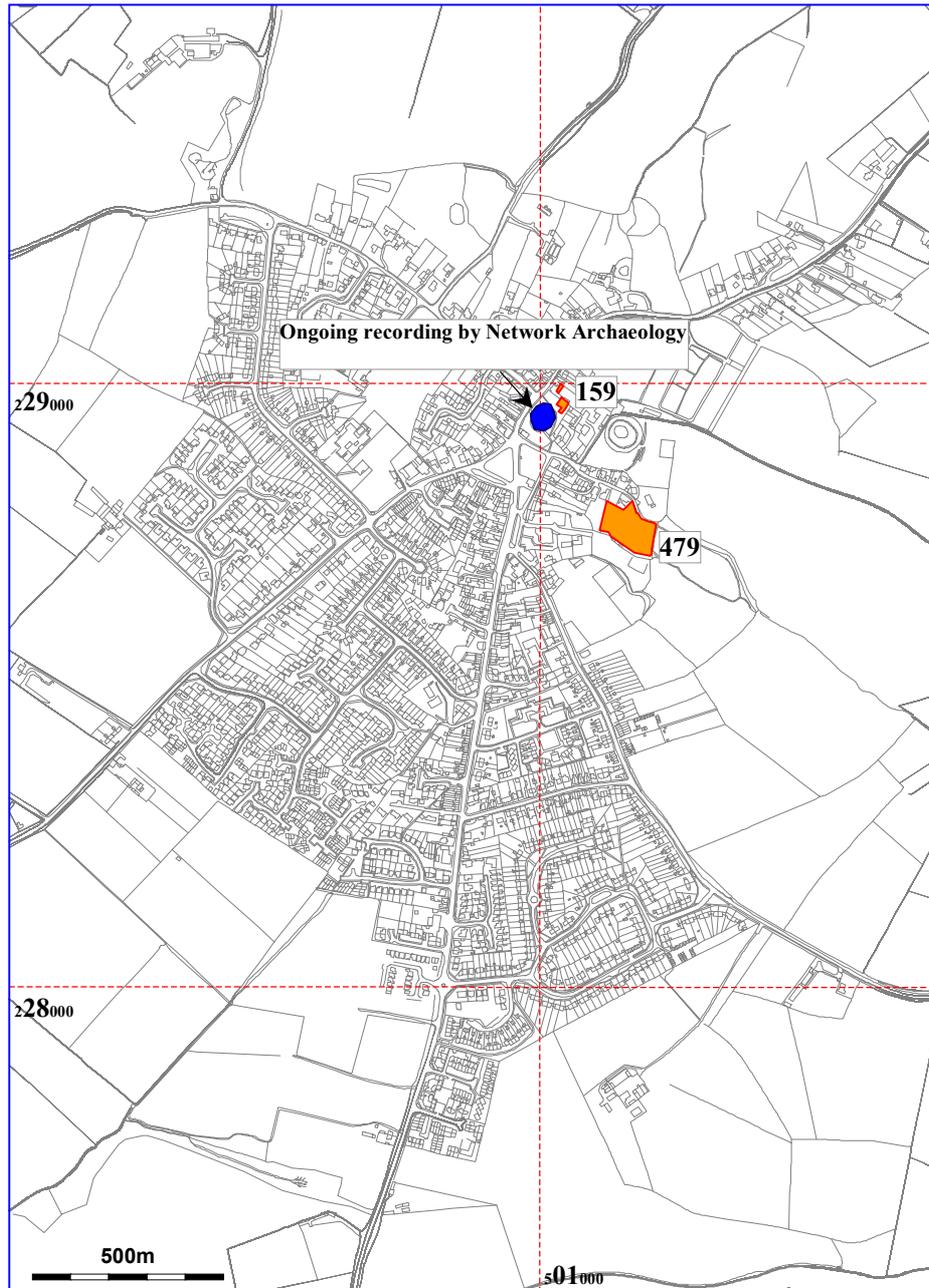


Figure 2: Archaeological excavations