NOTTINGHAMSHIRE EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

BINGHAM

Prepared for
ENGLISH HERITAGE
Extensive Urban Survey Programme
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Assessment

This assessment has been produced through the Extensive Urban Survey Programme, an English Heritage funded initiative to assist local planning authorities with the conservation of their urban archaeological resource. Bingham is one of 18 small towns in Nottinghamshire selected for such assessment.

The assessment is a desk-based survey, the scope of which includes both above and below ground archaeological remains of all periods, using information from the County Sites and Monuments Record, local histories, early maps and plan form analysis, with the results presented as a series of maps generated by GIS. It provides a foundation for the development of an archaeological management strategy that could be adopted by the local planning authority as supplementary planning guidance.

1.2 Overview of the town

Archaeological evidence suggests that the origins of Bingham are to be found in the late prehistoric and Roman settlement pattern of its area. Arguably the descendant of the Roman town of Margidunum, by late Saxon times at least, Bingham was the focal point of the district. It gave its name to the wapentake and was part of, indeed was probably the commercial and administrative centre for, an extensive royal estate based on Orston.

Domesday Book records the existence of more than one manor at Bingham. One of these may have been located in the later ‘deserted’ settlement of Crow Close on the east of the modern town, and another in the Kirkhill area on the west. The medieval settlement grew up between these, either side of a main street which is now Long Acre. The rectilinear, regulated layout of properties which is visible in this area suggests formal planning. There were also two other important areas, the church and the manor house, as well as a market place which was established by at least the beginning of the 14th century.

There seems to have been little if any expansion of the settlement during post-medieval times; indeed during this period the village either shrank or shifted its focus to the west. Bingham continued as a market town, its only industrial activity being some participation in the framework knitting industry at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. Despite the arrival of the railway, and perhaps in part due to it, the second half of the 19th century saw a dramatic decline in the town’s status. The market had all but died out by around 1900, and the population had dropped by a quarter. It only really started to develop again in the second half of the 20th century, firstly in response to the development of nearby RAF Newton and secondly as a commuter town for Nottingham. The market recommenced in 1975, and housing estates are now spreading beyond the railway lines which for over a century had formed the limits of the town.

Despite the 20th century development and infilling within Bingham’s historic core, elements of the medieval rectilinear properties still survive in some areas, as does the concentration of building and smaller plots around the west and south sides of the market place and along market street. The sense of closure to the east end of the market place and Church Street, created by the extension of the churchyard into the latter, symbolises the distinction between this area and the settlement to the east, around Crow Close.
These elements, together with the range of buildings of different periods and styles, contribute to the character of Bingham today.

2. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Bingham is situated at the edge of the Vale of Belvoir at around 20-30m OD in an area dominated by Mercia Mudstone. However, immediately to the north and west of the town the mudstone is overlain by alluvium, originally ill-drained and marshy. Bingham lies between two Mercia Mudstone ridges: to the north, the low ridge of Parson’s Hill and The Holme, which in the past would virtually have been an island surrounded by marshland; and to the south, the east-west ridge of Toot Hill, with the settlement running along the foot of its north-facing scarp slope. Beyond Toot Hill the land runs down to the River Smite, which lies approximately 3 km to the south-east.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

Bingham lay in the wapentake of the same name in Domesday Book. It now lies within the administrative area of Rushcliffe Borough Council.

4. SOURCES

4.1 Primary sources

Much of the primary documentation which is available for Bingham relates to the post-medieval period; there seems to be very little concerning the earlier period. This is the result of the loss of the majority of papers relating to the Earl of Chesterfield’s estates. These estates passed to the Crown in the early 20th century, but only a few documents, mainly 19th century in date, are in the Public Record Office (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.). Much of what survives in the Nottinghamshire Archives relates to church documents, and so includes glebe terriers of various dates, churchwardens’ accounts and other parish records. One important survival is a survey of 1586, written in Latin, which provides descriptions of all the plots in the town, together with adjacent plot owners, so allowing some limited reconstruction. There is also a survey of the Earl of Chesterfield’s estate in 1776. This is recorded according to individual tenants’ holdings, each with a plan on a separate page of the survey book. Yet another survey was carried out in 1826, naming all the plots and fields in the parish, but no accompanying map has survived.

4.2 Secondary sources

In addition to Bingham’s entry in various historical accounts of Nottinghamshire, such as Thoroton’s Antiquities of Nottinghamshire (1677), there are two main secondary accounts of the history of the town, the first written by Esdaile in 1851 and the second by Wortley in 1954. The latter appears to have derived much of her information from Esdaile and other earlier printed sources, none of which are referenced. The work carried out by a WEA class in Bingham has been collected together as Victorian Bingham, edited by V Henstock in 1986, and this provides a useful summary of 19th century information.

4.3 Cartographic evidence

Bingham is not particularly well served cartographically prior to the advent of Ordnance Survey maps, with the earliest map to show any detail of plot boundaries and individual buildings being Sanderson’s map of 1835, and this is at a small scale. The Tithe Map of 1842, on the other hand, is at a larger scale and, together with the Award, provides useful detailed information about the town and parish at that time.

4.4 Archaeological evidence
There are 28 entries on the county Sites and Monuments Record for the area of Bingham under consideration in this assessment. Archaeological information about Bingham comes from various sources including stray finds and limited excavation within the town. Aerial photography has proved useful for identifying cropmarks and soilmarks on the high ground to the north of the town, and in providing a view of the earthworks at the eastern end of Bingham. Fieldwalking in the surrounding fields has also provided evidence, particularly of prehistoric activity in the area.

5. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

5.1 Prehistoric

The only prehistoric item to come from within the town of Bingham itself is a Neolithic stone axehead which was found at no. 2 Kirkhill in 1967 (SMR 1730). However, aerial photographs and field-walking have revealed numerous indications of prehistoric activity in the surrounding area (see Figure 1).

A short distance to the north of the town is the site of a henge monument (SMR 1465). In 1972, prior to industrial development of the area, the site was buried under a deposit of clay approximately one metre thick, in order to seal and protect it. It was subsequently scheduled in 1974 (SM 29902). Slightly further north, the low ridge of Mercia Mudstone which extends from Parson’s Hill to beyond Holme Farm has provided evidence for a number of sites of early and later prehistoric date.

These should be seen in the wider context of a considerable amount of evidence for prehistoric settlement and activity in the whole area around Bingham, as shown on Figure 1, which demonstrates a long human history that may be regarded as ancestral to the town of today.

5.2 Roman

As with the prehistoric period, the area around Bingham is one of attested Roman activity (see Figure 1). The centre of the modern town of Bingham lies approximately 1.5 km to the east of the Fosse Way (SMR 6000), a major strategic road constructed in the 2nd half of the 1st century AD by the Roman Army, and about the same distance south from the Roman settlement of Margidunum (SMR 1741) which lies on the Fosse Way about 3km from the Trent crossing at East Bridgford. The Margidunum site probably has late prehistoric origins, but in its Roman manifestation it began as a fort in c. AD 50-55. This military function appears to largely ceased by about AD 75 at the latest, and was followed by the development of the civilian settlement which was initially fortified by a rampart and ditch and later by a rampart, stone wall and ditch, or ditches (Todd 1969). Margidunum can be reasonably regarded as the focus for Roman settlement over much of the surrounding area, with a villa at Car Colston and a possible Romano-British settlement on the bank of the Car Dyke, both to the north-east of Margidunum and, closer to Bingham, a probable villa on Newton Lane, at SK 694413, where an extensive surface scatter of Romano-British pottery and structural debris has been recorded (SMR 1827). These were not alone, as Figure 1 shows, and the whole Bingham area can be categorised as well settled during the Roman period.

Given this degree of Roman activity in the area, it is not surprising that two records relating to the Roman period are found within the extent of the modern town of Bingham. One is only a find spot, of a sestertius of Hadrian found during the laying of a gas main at the junction of Church Street and Cherry Street, at a depth of about 1 metre (SMR 5599).

The other record however, is of a Roman settlement. This was discovered in 1968 at the eastern end of the town (SMR 1213), when a skeleton and large quantities of Roman pottery were encountered during pipe-laying operations prior to the building of Carnarvon School, immediately east of the medieval earthworks in Crow Close (see below). Further discoveries of Roman building remains, pottery and animal bone have been made on a number of subsequent occasions in the course of building and other works. The extent of this settlement is uncertain at present. On the east it appears that it was bounded by an extensive area of marshland and it might be expected therefore that the settlement would extend westwards into the area of
the mediaeval earthworks in Crow Close (Gregory 1969). However, no Roman pottery has come from the various works that have taken place around the margins of Crow Close. These works may be a poor basis for assessment though, given their scale, and the possibility that Roman remains underlie the mediaeval earthworks can not be ruled out.

5.3 Early Medieval

5.3.1 Place-name evidence

Although the earliest known written record of the place-name ‘Bingham’ is Domesday Book, where it appears both for the settlement (Binghehã) and for the wapentake (Bingameshou Wapentac), the -ingaham-elements of the name indicate an early origin. These elements have been suggested to represent some of the first Anglo-Saxon colonisation settlements, being made near convenient communication and access routes, and especially near Roman roads (Kuurman 1974-5). There appears to be some uncertainty as to the derivation of all Bing- placenames, with Bing being either a significant word in its own right, possibly topographical, or a shortened form of a personal name, such as Byninga from Bynna. If topographical in origin, it could derive from either a hill or a hollow (Gover et al 1940). Consequently there are two possible interpretations, either ‘homestead of the dwellers in a hollow’ or ‘homestead of Bynna’s people’ (Copley 1988).

5.3.2 The wapentake

As noted above, Bingham gave its name to the wapentake, which suggests a settlement of some importance. A wapentake was a major division of a shire in those parts of England under Scandinavian influence, performing the same function as the hundreds in the rest of England. The term has its origins in an Old Norse word ‘vapnatak’, meaning the brandishing of weapons at the end of an assembly to signify assent. Wapentakes were probably introduced to coordinate the king’s dues in the second half of the 10th century, and the wapentake court met about once a month to conduct its public business (Black & Roffe 1986). According to Thoroton (1677) the site of the meeting-place for the Bingham wapentake was at Moot-House Pit by the side of the Fosse Way, actually just in Cropwell Butler parish. Esdaile noted in 1851 that it was a few acres in size and that despite having been ploughed up that year, it was ‘quite to be seen what it was’. Even today the site is marked by a substantial depression (SMR 809).

5.3.3 The manor

Domesday Book (see section 5.4.1 below) makes it clear that there had been three separate manors at Bingham before the conquest, two of which were considerably smaller than the third. Bishop (1981) suggests that the largest of these may have been part of an allocation made to Tosti in connection with his duties as Earl, and that the manor itself may previously have been linked to a royal estate at Orston.

5.3.4 The settlement and its environs

By the time of the Domesday survey, Bingham lay at the heart of the most densely settled and cultivated areas of Nottinghamshire. Yet despite this, nothing is known about the character of the settlement during this period, let alone its extent, and no remains of the Early Medieval period have been found within the town. This lack of early evidence is by no means unique to Bingham. Domesday Book and place-name analysis show that all the surrounding settlements were also already in existence, yet there have been few tangible remains. Some Anglo-Saxon material has been found at Margidunum. A brooch was found on the modern surface in the 19th century (SMR 1742) and a pendant was found unstratified during early 20th century excavations at the site (Todd 1969). Anglo-Saxon pottery was recovered from three different sites at Margidunum during excavations between 1966 and 1968, although the sherds were unstratified and unassociated with other remains. Todd (1969, 78) argued that their occurrence over so large an area suggested that ‘they are not merely the relics of occasional visits to the site by squatters’. More recently, at least three probable Anglo-Saxon pottery sherds were found scattered around the Romano-British occupied area (Knight 1994). These were identified from a total of 98 sherds of plain handmade pot which were
found, of which 14 were probably Iron Age. The remainder could not be securely differentiated, but it is obviously possible that more than just the three identified sherds are of Anglo-Saxon date. At Saxondale, to the west of Bingham, possible early medieval pottery and stone coffins were reported as being found in the 1930’s (SMR 5474).

Early Medieval burials have been found on the higher ground both to the north and the south of the Bingham. To the north, a single burial was found on Parson’s Hill in c. 1863 (SMR 1463). The skeleton was reportedly found with a spear and a shield-boss (Todd 1969). To the south there is evidence that a pagan Anglo-Saxon cemetery once existed on the higher ground c. 1.5 km south-east of Bingham (SMR 1252). Pottery was first found during field-walking in 1972, with further field-walking producing a total of 281 sherds, many identifiable as urn fragments. The ground surface was seen to have scattered patches of ash and cremated bone, and was interpreted as being a ploughed-out Anglo-Saxon cremation cemetery. Subsequent field-walking found no further traces, and the cemetery may now have almost completely disappeared (Alvey 1980).

A further possible Early Medieval burial in the area is indicated by an engraving in Stukeley’s *Itinerarium Curiosum* of 1724, entitled ‘A Prospect of Ad Pontem [actually Margidunum] upon the Eminence A Mile South on the Foss, Sep. 7. 1722’, which shows what appears to be a tumulus in the centre of the Fosse Way (SMR 894). This fact, together with the presence further south of Anglo-Saxon burials cutting into the surface of the road near Cotgrave, could be taken to indicate that the Fosse was relatively little used at this time, although the laws of Edward the Confessor indicate that by at least the early 11th century it enjoyed the protection of the King’s Peace (Knight 1994). However, in later periods the stretch of the road to the south of Bingham was considered of much less importance than that to the north, and that may have been the case in the Early Medieval period also. Its continued visibility in the area is highlighted by the fact that Bingham, together with many other parishes to the south, used the road as part of the parish boundary.

5.4 Medieval

5.4.1 Domesday Book, 1086

Bingham is listed in Domesday Book under the estates of Roger de Busli as follows:

*M. In Bingham Tosti had 3 carucates of land and 2½ bovates taxable. Land for 5 ploughs. Roger has in lordship 4 ploughs and 26 villagers, 5 smallholders and 14 Freemen who have 12½ ploughs. Woodland pasture 1 league long and 8 furlongs wide. Value before 1066 and now £10. In Newton 3 bovates taxable.*

*2M. There also Hoga and Helgi had 5 bovates of land and two parts of 1 bovate taxable. Land for 1 plough. 1 Freeman, 8 villagers and 1 smallholder who have 1 plough. Meadow 24 acres. Value before 1066, 20s; now 13s.* (Domesday Book, Phillimore edition)

5.4.2 The Manor

After the Conquest Bingham formed part of the extensive northern possessions of Roger de Busli. He also founded and endowed the Priory of Blyth in the north of the county, and in 1088 he provided it with two parts of the tithes of the Bingham demesne. He was succeeded in ownership of the manor by William Pagnell. By the end of the 12th century it had come into the possession of the Crown. In 1234 the manor was granted to William de Ferrars and then in 1265 Henry III gave it to Ralph Bugge, son of a Nottingham merchant of the same name. His son, Sir Richard de Bingham, had certainly succeeded to the manor by 1284, when there was a dispute with Blyth Priory over tithes. He appears to have been resident at Bingham for all or most of the time (Thoroton 1677) and from at least 1296 until his death in or around 1310 was one of the most important men in the county. He served on the commission of peace, was a commissioner for the collection of lay subsidies and a commissioner of array as well as being appointed, in 1310, to take a survey of Nottingham Castle (Lawrance & Routh 1924). The manor was inherited by
several generations of de Bingshams, but the family died out and at the very end of the 14th century it was
granted to Sir Thomas Rempstone. On his death in c. 1458 it passed to Sir Brian Stapleton, who was
married to one of Rempstone’s daughters.

5.4.3 Communications

Although the status of the Fosse Way is uncertain during the Medieval period, it almost certainly would
have continued to be used to provide Bingham with direct access to Newark to the north. Excavations at
Margidunum provided some evidence for the existence of a link between the Fosse Way and Bingham
further to the north than the present day Chapel Lane. This possibility was already implied by an early
17th century estate map of the parish of East Bridgford (reproduced in Du Boulay Hill 1932). This map,
dated 1612, marks the road which runs from the Trent crossing to the site of Margidunum, presumably
originally a Roman road, as ‘The Highway leading between Gunthorpe Ferry and Bingham which way is
called the Street Way’. This could be taken to indicate that the Bingham road continued eastwards from
the Fosse Way at a cross-roads. Excavations between 1966 and 1968 produced evidence of a gravel track
at least 15 feet wide which was found to overlie part of a robber trench on the south-east defences of
Margidunum, and the excavator concluded that it must be post-Roman and that it was ‘tempting to identify
it as the road leading to Bingham from the Fosse Way (Todd 1969). It is possible that this road originally
entered the town via Moor Lane rather than Chapel Lane, but the earliest maps show Moor Lane extending
for little more than a third of the way to the Margidunum site, being continued after that by a footpath only.

The east-west alignment of the town, in addition to being influenced by the local topography, also suggests
the importance of its siting on an east-west route across the Vale of Belvoir, still the most direct route
across from east to west today. The road running east from Bingham to Whatton is referred to in 1375
when a court case was brought to determine who was responsible for repairing a certain small section of
the road which had been diverted and straightened. Nottingham Gate is mentioned in the survey of
Bingham made in 1586, but can be assumed to have been in existence prior to that. Werton Gate, recorded
at the same time, led south from Bingham towards the now deserted medieval village of Wiverton.
Chapman’s 1774 map of the county shows the road to Wiverton and Langar running south from Fisher
Lane, rather than from further west as it does today, and that may have been its medieval course also.

5.4.4 The settlement and its environs

Information about the landscape surrounding Bingham which would have existed in the medieval period
comes from a later manorial survey carried out in 1586. This is a detailed document, in Latin, which gives
information on strip holdings in the fields, tenants, acreage and type of agriculture. There appear to have
been four open fields, East Field alias Sternhill Field to the south-east, West Field alias Brackendale Field
to the south-west, North Field alias Chappell Field to the north-west, and South Field presumably lying
between Sternhill and Brackendale Fields. Pasture and meadowland lay in the remainder of the parish to
the north and east, which was wetter and poorly drained (Coleman, unpubl.).

A Glebe Terrier of 1400, translated into English in 1622, mentions 3 butts near the town, although the
translation indicates that they had disappeared by that time. The name ‘Buttclose’ continued until at least
1770, although the Tithe Award of 1842 indicates it had gone out of use by then; however, a comparison of
neighbouring field names led Coleman (unpubl.) to suggest that it probably lay just to the north of the
town, on the edge of the moorland and pasture, possibly even on Parson’s Hill.

As far as the town itself is concerned, there is archaeological evidence of medieval settlement extending
from Crow Close in the east to Chapel Lane in the west, covering a very considerable area; consequently
there is the possibility that not all of this settlement was contemporary. It has been suggested that a
deliberate attempt was made by Sir Richard de Bingham to enlarge the village into a market town in order
to increase his income from tolls and rents (Henstock 1994), although at present neither medieval
documentation nor archaeological evidence can support or disprove this.

5.4.5 Markets and Fairs
A market charter was first granted to Bingham in 1314 by Edward II, although there is evidence that a market was already being held prior to that date. For example, one of the places where Cecily, the lady of Staunton, was ordered to be whipped following her adultery in 1299 was the market of Bingham (Henstock 1975). It has been suggested that the current market place was not the original one, but was deliberately laid out, possibly together with a regulated street pattern, at the end of the 13th or the beginning of the 14th century. At the same time as it received its market charter, the town also acquired the right to hold an annual 6-day fair in October (Henstock 1975).

5.4.6 Religious Buildings

Church of All Saints (SMR 1228)

There is no mention of a church at Bingham in Domesday, although this does not necessarily prove its non-existence at that time. The earliest indication of its presence comes in 1226 when there is a reference to a rector. Building of the church may have begun in the early years of the 13th century, and it has been suggested that it was on the site of an earlier, smaller church (Henstock 1994). A valuation was completed of the church in 1291, when it was found to be worth £53 6s 8d (Godfrey 1907).

Chapel of St Helen (SMR 5597)

In 1300 Richard de Bingham had royal licence to grant five marks rent in Nottingham to a chaplain celebrating daily in the Chapel of St Helen, although the building may have been in existence prior to that, possibly being taken over by the de Bingham’s as a private chapel. This rent was added to in 1307 by a messuage and an acre of land in Bingham. The Chantry Court Rolls of the mid 16th century make it clear that the chapel was an independent structure, stating that ‘The saide Chapell is no parissehe Churche, butt standithe within the parissehe of bingham, and is distaunte from the parissehe Churche there ij thousands fote’, ie approximately 640m. The chapel is said to have been at the western end of the present town in what was called Chapel Close, presumably having been placed near to the medieval manor house of the de Binghamhs (Esdaile 1851). A stone coffin found in 1790 on the western side of Bingham and a number of burials found in 1983 beneath Kirkhill House may be from St Helen’s.

Chapel of St James

The only documentary evidence of the existence of this chapel comes from a grant made in 1574 of the close in Bingham ‘wherein stood the Chappell of St James’ (Thoroton 1677). Esdaile placed it in Crow Close in a large square area which he thought slightly higher than the rest. He notes that Crow Close formed part of a different estate to that owned first by Roger de Busli and later the de Binghams, and thought it about three quarters of a mile away from St Helen’s. Wortley (1954) says that stones from St James’ Chapel were used to build the tower of the parish church and that the Norman font originates from there also; however, her only source for this appears to be the comment by an ‘eminent architect’ that there were ‘old stones’ in the base of the tower. Godfrey (1907), on the other hand, considers the documentary reference to be an error, and that St Helen was meant instead of St James. In view of the current lack of any other supporting evidence of the existence of the chapel, this seems the most likely explanation.

St Mary’s Guild-Hall

Sir Thomas Rempstone is believed to have been responsible for the founding of the Guild of St Mary in Bingham, probably in 1400, when a licence was granted by the Henry IV for the acquisition of lands worth 100s yearly to find a chaplain to celebrate at the altar in the parish church (Thompson 1913). In addition to the altar, which may have been located in the south transept, the Guild also possessed a Guild-Hall. The Guild of St Mary was recorded in the Chantry Certificate Rolls and still had a chaplain at that time, but was then suppressed, and the Guild-Hall and its lands were given in grant. Some authors believed that the hall occupied the site of the 18th century rectory house, the kitchen of which was believed
to have been much older than the rectory itself. However, the manorial survey of 1586 appears to suggest that the Guild-Hall was actually a free-standing building, probably timber-framed, sited in the market place (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.).

5.4.7 Archaeological evidence

As noted above, the finding of a stone coffin in Chapel Close at the west end of the town was recorded at the end of the 18th century (Throsby 1790). It apparently contained the bones of an adult and a child, interpreted as being ‘a female of distinction, with an infant child’. Several silver pins were taken to have been used to fasten a winding sheet, and a silver ring was also found. In 1983 a minimum of 12 burials were discovered during property renovations at Kirkhill House (SMR 1725), on what was Chapel Lane (now Kirkhill), and it is possible that the land formed at least part of Chapel Close and that the burials came from St Helen’s. Three burials were found outside the building when trenching around the walls for drainage. A further 8 were discovered within the building lying only 15cm below the floor, and a twelfth burial was found at the northern end of the garden, some 20-25 m from the house. No grave goods were found. Other mentions of human bones in this area may have their source from the time of building of Kirkhill House sometime after 1842 and before 1883, since the foundation trenches clearly cut through burials.

A single inhumation was discovered during the extension of property into the backyard at 2-6 Market Street (SMR 1253). The skeleton was that of a male, aged 30-45, reportedly buried face down. An annular brooch and a buckle of medieval date were found with the body.

A late medieval French jetton was found on a building site in Bingham in the early 1970’s, but no exact location was given (SMR 5938). Wortley (1954) records the finding of what she calls a ‘monastic ring’ in the garden of Beauvale House on the north side of the market place, the probable site of the medieval manor house. Earlier reference to archaeological remains comes from Throsby who, when speculating that Bingham must once have been of more consequence, supports this by citing ‘the foundations of buildings frequently being discovered’ (1790, 277).

5.5 Post-medieval (16th - 18th century)

5.5.1 The manor

The Stapleton family, who towards the end of the 15th century had come into possession of the manor of Bingham by marriage, later sold it to Sir Thomas Stanhope of Shelford Manor. His grandson became the Earl of Chesterfield and the descendants of that family owned the manor until the early 20th century (Henstock 1975).

5.5.2 Communications

Roads

The Fosse Way continued in use during the postmedieval period, as indicated by numerous maps of the county made during this period. One of these, Morden’s map of Nottinghamshire dated 1695, actually shows it dividing into two parallel roads at about the level of Cropwell Butler and joining again to become one road just north-west of Bingham. Whether this has any basis in reality is not clear. Certainly Stukeley’s engraving of this part of the road, made in 1722, does not support it.

Two late 17th century indictments name roads in the Bingham area. The first, of 1678, refers to ‘the Kingsway called the fossway leading from Newark to Bingham’, while the second refers in 1694 to a ‘road near Ludley Cross Corner leading from Bingham to Aslockton and Scarrington’ (Copnall 1915). It is difficult to know exactly which road is referred to here since Ludley Cross Corner cannot be identified, although there were apparently several householders called Ludlow in Bingham between 1646 and 1714 (Foster 1982). Present roads to Aslockton and Scarrington turn off the Grantham road, but more local
routes may well have existed in the past, possibly along the line of modern footpaths. One such local route is indicated in the 1776 survey. This was called Doubleday Lane and it led out from Bingham to the north-west. It is depicted on Sanderson’s map of 1835 as a double dotted line crossing the Fosse Way and continuing north-westwards, apparently along the line of a drain, until suddenly turning north to Newton, this last section being marked B.R., presumably a bridle road. Had it continued north-eastwards it would have led directly to Shelford, although whether it ever did so is not known. It no longer exists, apart from a small section of track just to the north of the railway line at SK 60924020.

The Grantham to Nottingham road was turnpiked in 1758-9, and the Fosse Way from Saxondale to Newark in 1772-3 (Cossons 1934). The Fosse to the south of Bingham appears to have been of little importance, and was not turnpiked. This difference is clear on several maps of the county. Cary’s map of Nottinghamshire (1787), for example, shows the southern section as a dotted line, compared to a solid line running north from the Bingham/Saxondale junction. Throsby (1790, 149) recorded this also:

‘The road from Newark to Bingham is all gravelled; but from Bingham we found it, in many places, very indifferent: in some parts the old pack-horse path is still visible and useful, in others it is covered with grass’.

A tollhouse was present at the northern end of Chapel Lane at its junction with the Fosse Way, and another was on the Grantham Road well to the east of the town. At some point after 1776 and before 1835, as indicated by map evidence, a short stretch of road which had connected The Banks with the Nottingham Road was closed. This may have been in an attempt to encourage traffic through the centre of the town. Despite this, there appear to have been no regular stage coaches by the end of the 18th century, although there was a carrier to Nottingham every Wednesday and Saturday, and the post from Nottingham to Newark passed through the town twice every day (Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture 1791-98).

The Grantham Canal

The expanding manufacturing centres of the region required an increased food supply, and many areas with increasing crop production were unable to easily export this produce and import the necessary fertilisers in bulk due to land carriage problems. As a result, a decision was made to invest in a canal from the Trent to Grantham in 1770. Despite being strenuously opposed by other districts, for example Newark, an Act was passed by Parliament in 1793, with work beginning the same year. The canal was opened to traffic in 1797. It was originally planned that Bingham would be linked to the canal by a collateral cut. Certainly Throsby was aware of these plans when writing his additions to Thoroton’s Antiquities of Nottinghamshire in 1790 and a plan of the intended branch, dated 1792, survives in the Nottinghamshire Archives (ref. XC 4S). The branch is also shown on the 2nd edition of Chapman’s map of Nottinghamshire, which was produced in 1792, clearly anticipating its existence. The Bingham line was to be started as soon as the main line was completed; however in 1798 all materials not needed for essential maintenance were sold, suggesting that there was no intention at that date to complete the Bingham cut (Philpotts 1980).

It seems, however, that the junction for the Bingham branch was constructed, and there is possibly even evidence that some, if not all, of the branch may have been dug, in particular in the existence of two areas of water of canal width at SK 676 367 and SK 687 371 (Cove-Smith 1974). If the Bingham cut did exist, it does not seem to have been shown on any of the 19th century maps. Curiously, though, there are at least two 19th century references to it. Firstly Curtis (1843-4, 25) states that ‘a branch of the Grantham Canal gives it [i.e. Bingham] an advantage of water carriage to Nottingham in one direction and to Grantham in the other’ and secondly White’s Directory of 1844 records Bingham as ‘having a branch from the Nottingham and Grantham Canal’.

5.5.3 The settlement and its environs
Bingham’s open arable fields, as described in 1586, have already been discussed above; in addition there were 652 beastgates on the Common Moor, 180 beastgates on the Ox Pasture and 2400 sheepgates on the common fields, presumably once the crops had been brought in. In addition there was a close called the Warren, probably up on the higher ground to the north of the town, with an old house associated with it, presumably the warrener’s lodge (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.). Two other warrens were also referred to, one in the East Field and one in the North Field (Foster 1982).

By the late 17th century Bingham’s open fields appear to have been enclosed. Throsby (1790) records that the lordship at that time contained about 3,000 acres of land ‘inclosed upwards of 100 years’, and this is supported by a Glebe Terrier of 1687 which provides information on the lands belonging to the Rector, about which it is stated that ‘all these ... being well and distinctly fenced with ditches, pales or hedges and ... with railes’ (DD.T 124/16). Henstock’s research has led him to suggest that the land was enclosed by private agreement around 1680 (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.) possibly on the initiative of the second Earl of Chesterfield and Tate (1935) records Bingham as having been enclosed ‘entirely by agreement of the proprietors without Parliamentary authorisation’ in or before 1684, although he provides no reference for this. However, a much later date is implied by Lowe (1798) who, in his list of open and enclosed townships in the Vale of Belvoir, has Bingham as ‘inclosed within 20 years’. It does seem from other sources as though at least some pasture-land continued as commons into the 18th century, since the survey of the Earl of Chesterfield’s estates in 1776 indicate the survival of some degree of stinting, in that some of the tenants are described as having varying numbers of ‘gates’ in Bull Moor, while a Glebe Terrier of 1770 mentions a watercourse running by ‘a large common pasture called the Great Moor’. It may be that Lowe was referring to the enclosure of these final common pasture lands, and that the open fields had indeed been enclosed since the 17th century.

Although wills and probate inventories of the 17th and 18th centuries indicate some relatively wealthy householders living in Bingham, the Hearth Tax Returns seem to suggest that there were few very large houses, particularly since the lord of the manor, the Earl of Chesterfield, no longer lived in the town. The largest domestic building had six hearths. Several houses had between three and five hearths, but the majority had only one (Foster 1982).

A cottage in Moor Lane, which had been used as a poor house since 1708, was enlarged in 1769 into a parish workhouse with accommodation for 30 paupers (Henstock 1981). It remained in use until the new workhouse was built in 1837.

5.5.4 Population

Estimation of population prior to the 1801 census is notoriously difficult; however, attempts were made by Foster (1982) using three different 17th century sources and parish records. The Protestant Return of 1642 provided a rough estimate of 573 individuals, the 1674 Hearth Tax Returns recorded a figure of 530 and the Compton census of 1676 gave an estimate of 540 people. A detailed examination of birth and death registers indicated that in terms of natural growth the population increased naturally by 212 people over the period between 1600 and 1739; in other words, there was an excess of 1.5 baptisms per annum over burials. However, this general trend masks two distinct periods, in that between 1600 and 1635 there was generally an excess of 4.5 baptisms per annum, whereas after 1635 there were frequent years with excess burials or at best stagnation and only very slow growth.

Smith (1991) also used the 1674 Hearth Tax Returns to give an indication of population for five Nottinghamshire market towns, one of which was Bingham. This was achieved by multiplying the number of householders listed in the returns by 4.25, producing an estimated population of 497. However, whereas the other market towns examined by Smith experienced considerable economic growth during the 18th century, with a corresponding rise in population, Bingham experienced relatively little growth, with its population at the end of the 18th century only just having doubled from its estimated 1674 figure, compared with the four-or five-fold growth experienced by the other towns.
Markets and Fairs

Bingham’s status as a market town in the post-medieval period appears to have been somewhat marginal, for while some towns are consistently recorded in documents as markets, Bingham is not. Speed, who indicated market towns in capitals on his map of 1610, did not consider Bingham worthy of inclusion; however, the Rampton tapestry map of 1632, which indicates market towns with large red crosses, did include it. It is excluded from William Smith’s list in his description of England in 1588, but given as a market town in Cox’s *Magna Britannia* of 1727 (Clayton 1934).

By the end of the 18th century there was a weekly market which took place on a Thursday, and three annual fairs on February 13, the Thursday in Whitsun-week and on November 8 (Throsby 1790). Throsby also records ‘a shew of stallions’ on Easter Thursday and a large statute for hiring servants which generally took place on the last Thursday in October. The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture for 1791-98 adds that the February fair was for black cattle, the Whitsun fair was ‘a town fair’ and that the November fair was chiefly for foals and hogs.

Throsby (1790, 278) describes the market place as ‘formed upon rather a large scale’. Consequently its function could extend beyond the holding of markets; for example, marriage banns were proclaimed there during the period of the Commonwealth, the first of these occurring in 1657 (Godfrey 1907) while John Wesley preached from the steps of the market cross in 1770 (Henstock 1975). Punishments were also meted out there, as indicated by a reference of 1633 to a man ordered to ‘stand in the pillory in the open market at Bingham’ (Henstock 1975).

Trade and Industry

General

Wills and inventories provide some indication of the range of trades being carried out in the town. During the period 1600-1650 the only non-agricultural trades for which there are records are weaving, shoemaking, cooping and blacksmithing. Between 1650 and 1700, there are fewer references to weavers, but more to shoemakers, as well as to tailors, clothiers, plumbers and glaziers, ironmongers, nailers, wheelwrights, carpenters, ropers, blacksmiths, cooperers and apothecaries, although at that time most of the tradesmen were still involved in agriculture to some degree. In addition, there was at least one baker, a butcher and several innkeepers. During the first half of the 18th century the recorded range of service industries and occupations increased still further, indicating that there was enough of a market catchment to support a basic range of processing, retailing, inn-keeping and semi-professional services (Foster 1982).

Corn Mills

Two mills are mentioned in the 1586 manorial survey, one on Westmoor Lane and the other to the south of the town (Foster 1982). The latter may have been on the site of a very pronounced mill mound at what is presently called Mill Hill (SMR 1214). A windmill was certainly present here in 1776, when it was recorded as part of a survey of the Earl of Chesterfield’s estate. It appears to have been demolished in the late 1870’s.

Textiles

The hand-knitted hosiery industry was Bingham’s only manufacturing industry, probably starting as a cottage industry. The town lay on the eastern edge of the hosiery manufacturing district, and stocking frames are mentioned in local wills and probate inventories from 1728 onwards, although weavers are recorded in the town during the first half of the 17th century, as noted above (Foster 1982). By the last decades of the 18th century there were several small master stockingers who, in addition to working frames themselves, also had small workshops and rented frames out to others (Henstock 1981).

Brick-making
From the 17th century, buildings in this area were increasingly being built of brick, rather than the earlier timber, mud and thatch, and many villages and small towns had their own local brickworks. One was clearly present in Bingham by the second half of the 18th century, since there is a documentary reference of 1769 to a ‘riotous assembly at Bingham brick kiln’ (Wortley 1954, 53) and a reference to a bricklayer in 1765 (Foster 1982).

5.5.7 Archaeological evidence

The only post-medieval item known to have been recovered from Bingham is a mid-17th century sword (SMR 5587) found on Church Street, about which no further information is available. However, a skeleton was discovered in 1994 which may be late 18th or 19th century in date. It was found during the digging of a new drainage system as part of the conversion of a dovecote (a Grade II listed building) on Long Acre at SK70733982. The skeleton was of a young woman and was orientated north-south, which would normally indicate a non-Christian burial. However, it was found in the exact centre of the building, which seems to be an unlikely coincidence and suggests that the burial was a highly irregular event which took place once the building had been erected, believed to be after the mid 18th century (Abbott 1994).

5.6 19th century

5.6.1 Communications

Roads

The Fosse Way and the Nottingham to Grantham turnpikes continued to be the main roads serving Bingham during the 19th century. Although the road improvements of the late 18th century do not appear to have led immediately to improved services for Bingham inhabitants, the situation changed in the early 19th century. By 1828 stage coaches were running regularly from Bingham to Lincoln and Nottingham, and by 1831 they were also running to Grantham (Pigot’s Directories). The Chesterfield Arms on Church Street was the coaching house, supposedly once being called at by Queen Victoria, accompanied by the Duke of Wellington and a squadron of Life Guards, who changed horses there on the way from Nottingham to Belvoir Castle (Franks 1992).

Railways

Two railway lines were laid through the parish and the town of Bingham in the mid-19th century, both of them being link lines. The first was built by what became the Great Northern Railway and linked Nottingham with Grantham. Work began on the Bingham section in 1846, and the line was opened in July 1850 (Albrow & Turner 1986). It ran from east to west along the northern margin of the town and indeed until recently very little development had taken place to the north of the line.

The second railway line was built by the London and North Western to connect Nottingham with Melton Mowbray and eventually Market Harborough. The line was opened in 1879 as a joint route with the Great Northern, since it branched off their line just to the west of Bingham, passing to the south of the town. A second station was built for this branch, known as Bingham Road Station (SMR 1069) to distinguish it from Bingham Station on the GNR line.

5.6.2 The settlement and its environs

Pigot’s Directory of 1828 describes the town as being ‘well-paved and remarkably neat and clean’ and in 1831 refers to Bingham as being ‘beautifully situated in the centre of the vale of Belvoir of which it may be considered the metropolis’. Within 12 years different views are being offered, however. Curtis (1943-4, 25) considered that
‘Bingham is rather unfortunately sited and circumstanced; it lies in a rich agricultural district at about an equal distance from the superior markets of Nottingham and Newark with a population too small to command any material consumption and too remote from the Trent or any great road to form a depot for the distant conveyance of its superabundance...’

and it is described in White’s Directory of 1844 as ‘merely a straggling and inconsiderable market town’.

The rector of Bingham in the early 19th century, Robert Lowe, was a firm supporter of the Poor Law, writing to a colleague in Southwell

‘The system of forcing able bodied paupers to provide for themselves through the terror of a well disciplined workhouse was begun at Bingham in 1818’ (Baddiley 1986).

He considered that the workhouse should be so unpleasant that only the desperate would consider it, and under his supervision the Union Workhouse was built in 1837 to the south-west of the town, replacing an earlier one on Moor Lane.

The Bingham Gas, Light and Coke Company was set up in 1853 to manufacture gas for lighting the town and to sell the by-products, namely tar, coke and lime. It was sited on the north side of the railway crossing at Moor Lane and included a house for the gas-maker. A tramway was built to take coal from the main line to the works (Dickinson & Simpson 1986).

5.6.3 Population

Bingham’s population growth had been slow during the postmedieval period, as noted previously, having probably done no more than double between the 17th century and the beginning of the 19th century. It managed to almost double again during the first half of the 19th century, reaching a peak in the 1850’s, coinciding with the arrival of the railway. However, as the figures below illustrate, within 40 years it had dropped by 25%.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>1,574</td>
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<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>1,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>1,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
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<td>1,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1,487</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.6.4 Markets and Fairs

The market in the mid-19th century appears to have dealt mainly in small farm produce. Esdaile (1851) noted that the market was limited, being mainly for butter and eggs for the Nottingham market. He also recorded that there was ‘a little done in pigs and some little done in corn; there was a trial to establish a fortnight market for fat stock in 1844 but from not being supported, it dropped’. By the end of the century the markets were struggling to survive. The last record of a market at Bingham is in a directory of 1894, although they may have continued in some form for a while beyond that date (Henstock 1975).

While the market was described in 1844 as being ‘only of trifling importance’ the fairs, in contrast, were ‘tolerably well supplied’ (White’s Directory 1844). Fairs continued to be held in February and November,
as was the case in the 18th century, with the town’s ‘pleasure fair’ still taking place in Whitsun week (Esdaile 1981).

5.6.5 Religion

Two non-conformist communities became established in Bingham during the 19th century. The first of these was the Wesleyan Methodists who had, in fact, been holding meetings in the town since the 1770s. They acquired a purpose-built chapel some time between 1818 and 1822. The Primitive Methodists also worshipped in the town and built a chapel in 1820 (Henstock 1986).

5.6.6 Education

Land for a National School was given by the Earl of Chesterfield in 1845 and a day and Sunday school was constructed on the site. In 1859 the Wesleyans erected their own school on Kirkhill.

5.6.7 Trade and industry

General

Bingham’s economy remained based on agriculture. In 1841, 42% of all heads of household were directly employed in farming, with many others employed in associated occupations. Esdaile, in 1851, recorded that there were 26 farmers and 21 ‘cottagers who grow corn’, as well as the usual variety of trades and professions to be expected in a small rural town, including 3 millers, 6 bakers, 4 blacksmiths, 3 maltsters and, perhaps somewhat more unusually, one ‘repairer of legs and arms’.

Corn mills

Map evidence indicates that during the 19th century, three further windmills were in operation in or near Bingham in addition to the earlier mill to the south of the town. In addition to the windmills, a steam-powered corn mill was built during the mid-19th century (SMR 1545).

Textiles

The domestic textile industry continued to thrive in the town in the early 19th century. By the time of the 1841 census, 66 framework knitters were recorded at Bingham. However after this date the figures declined, reflecting the downturn in the industry generally. There was a particularly dramatic decrease between 1851 and 1861, from 52 framework knitters to only 16 (Dickinson & Simpson 1986).

Brick-making

Brick-making to supply local needs continued into the 19th century, although it experienced a decline towards the end of the century, probably as the result of the availability of cheaper materials via the railways.

5.7 20th century

At the beginning of the 20th century Bingham was described as

‘merely a large, drowsy, country village, with only its fine church, deserted market place, court house, and great coaching house, to remind one of its past importance’ (Godfrey 1907).

A comparison of OS maps suggest that there was little change to the town until around 1950, when it began to expand rapidly, with the development of new housing extending both to the east and the west of
the older post-medieval core. The market square was resurfaced in 1962 as part of a civic improvement scheme. This was followed by the successful revival of the market in 1975 (Franks 1992) and by the establishment of an industrial estate to the north of the town.

The A52 Nottingham to Grantham road now by-passes the town to the south while to the north, a short stretch of road was built to link Chapel Lane with the roundabout on the Fosse Way at Margidunum.

With the rapid growth in population which has accompanied the expansion of the town, new schools have been erected and the old Victorian schools converted into private houses. The construction of Toothill Comprehensive School commenced in 1966 using CLASP (Pevsner 1979) while around the same time the Robert Miles School was constructed on the site of the rectory and the Carnarvon School was built at the eastern end of the town.

6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF BINGHAM

The town has been divided into plan elements, or components, based on map evidence and documentary sources. These plan elements have been subdivided below according to the earliest date of their assumed occurrence in that form, although some of the area of the medieval settlement was almost certainly occupied in the early medieval period. At present, however, no early medieval components can be defined. All subdivisions are tentative only, and need to be confirmed by further work. Subsequent major changes are briefly summarised, together with the degree of survival of early features to the present day.

6.1 Medieval components

Twenty-one components have been tentatively identified as belonging to the medieval period and are shown on figure 3. Their identification is based mainly on plan form analysis of Sanderson’s map of 1835, a copy of part of which is reproduced as figure 2.

Component 1 Parish church of All Saints (SMR 1228) and churchyard

The first reference to the church is in 1226 and although there is no mention of a church at Bingham in Domesday Book, it has been suggested that the present building was begun in the early 13th century on the site of an earlier, smaller church (Henstock 1994), the existence of which is supported by a Norman font. Dressed stone and skerry for the church’s construction may have been acquired through the robbing of stone from Margidunum (Todd 1969). The earliest surviving work is believed to be the lower part of the tower, with its massive walls, the rest of the tower and the building itself being mainly of later 13th to early 14th century date, with some 15th century windows (Pevsner 1979). The upper part of the nave was considerably lowered in 1584, causing the original pitched roof to be replaced by a flat one. The chancel was repaired and ‘beautified’ in 1773 (Godfrey 1907). The church underwent a considerable amount of restoration during the 19th century. The chancel was re-roofed in 1847, and work was carried out on the interior, removing the box pews, replacing the pulpit and font, and moving the organ. Three sedilia were uncovered in the chancel wall and restored to use (Esdaile 1851). In 1874, further work took place which involved raising the nave roof and inserting a clerestory to admit more light, and rebuilding the south chantry chapel (Henstock 1986). The family of the rector, the Rev. Robert Miles, painted the windows, put frescoes on the walls, and carved the screen and altar, as described by Oscar Wilde when he visited Bingham in 1876 as a friend of the one of the rector’s sons.

The extent of the cemetery in the medieval period is not known with any certainty and that shown as component 1 is an approximation only, as it has been extended both to the north and to the south (see components 14 and 22). According to Esdaile (1851) the churchyard was formerly not completely enclosed and was ‘open to all nuisances’ until 1838 when the eastern wall was built and a thoroughfare stopped. Presumably the thoroughfare was that which ran around and behind the church to the east and north, as shown on Sanderson’s map of 1835 and which was in existence by 1776. A new lych-gate was erected in
1881. In 1926 the gravestones on the south side of the churchyard were moved into line so that a mower could be used, and standard rose-trees were planted in an attempt to improve the site (Wortley 1954).

Component 2 Market place

The large size of the market place may indicate that it was deliberately created, possibly around the beginning of the 14th century when the market charter was acquired. The northern side of the market place is thought to have originally continued the line of Newgate Street, with later encroachment having resulted in the present form.

The manorial survey of 1586 appears to suggest that the medieval guild-hall stood in the market place, probably free-standing and timber-framed (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.). There is further evidence of buildings on the market place from at least the 18th century. One such was a small temporary prison built to house a man who had started fires in three different places in Bingham one night in 1710. He was supposedly imprisoned here until his death in 1739. Throsby (1790) describes this incident and says

‘A place of two rooms was therefore built for him in the middle of the market-place at Bingham ... The place was shortly afterwards pulled down’.

By the early 19th century two rows of 18 small permanent stalls or shops had been erected on the northern side of the square, some of them being butchers’ ‘shambles’. Laird (1813) commented on the ‘commodious shambles’. White’s Directory of 1832 stated that the market place was ‘disgraced by some mean-looking shops which are seldom occupied’. According to Esdaile (1851) they had been used by country tradesmen such as hucksters, ropemakers and glove-makers, who came to the market every week with their goods. Sanderson’s map of 1835 shows a block of buildings towards the north-western side of the market place, together with a smaller square structure. The former had been demolished by the late 1840s, and much of the northern frontage of the market place was subsequently rebuilt. However, the latter is still shown on the Tithe Map and is thought to represent a market cross or butter cross, presumably that referred to in 1725 when a man was ordered to be whipped at Bingham market cross (Wortley 1954). The present market cross (SMR 5598) is an octagonal structure in Gothic style probably designed by the architect T C Hine and is a Grade II listed building. It was erected in 1861, further east than the earlier cross, in memory of the Earl of Chesterfield’s agent, John Hassall of Shelford Manor.

Component 3 Rectory

A rector is mentioned at Bingham in the early 13th century and a rectory house recorded at the dissolution. The survey of 1586 indicated that the rectory stood within this area, probably on the site of the later rectory. Several dwellings and crofts to the east of the rectory appear to have been present by 1586, probably also having their origins in the medieval period (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.).

A Glebe Terrier of 1687 gives some description of the rectory at that date:

‘Parsonage House with barns, stables and other outhouses about the Court before the House, a Dovecote .... a Malthouse and Dairie commonly called the Kilne...’.

Presumably it was this rectory that was referred to on Bowen’s map of Nottinghamshire, 1767, which provided a piece of information for each of the market towns, the information for Bingham being that it was ‘noted for a parsonage of great value’. In 1770 a new rectory was built by the Rev. John Walter, set well back from Church Street in extensive gardens and grounds which included a small lake. It was described by Throsby in 1790 as follows:

‘It may be classed with the first-rate reverend’s dwellings in the county. A pleasure ground in the front view, adorned with some sprightly trees, shrubs, and evergreens, form a pleasing and cooling shade’.
Antiquarian tradition has St Mary’s guild hall being on the site of the rectory. For example, Esdaile (1851, 8) identified it as such based on the fact that ‘there is an old beam in the kitchen which bespeaks ancient days, also carved, and the remains of a coat of Arms in the beam’. This may do no more than indicate the presence of an earlier building of some sort, possibly the previous rectory, and not necessarily the guild hall. Wortley (1954) also noted that the kitchens were the oldest part of the rectory, one room probably being Elizabethan. According to her, one of the kitchen walls had a scroll design thought to have formed part of the exterior decoration of the old guild hall. The guild hall probably stood in the market place, however.

The 18th century rectory was demolished in the 20th century and the Robert Miles School was built on the site. Some of the rectory gardens are said to be preserved in its grounds. It is possible that archaeological deposits pre-dating the rectory may lie relatively undisturbed along the school’s Church Street frontage.

Several 18th and 19th century buildings survive along the Church Street and market place frontages, although there has been some 20th century development in the north-eastern part of the component.

**Component 4  Manor house**

A manor house stood to the north of the market place in 1586, possibly on or near the site of Beauvale House, and this is assumed have been its medieval location also. Wortley (1954) records the finding of what she calls a ‘monastic ring’ in the garden of Beauvale House. By the time of the 1586 survey, however, the manor house was no longer lived in by the lord of the manor. It had a tenant, believed to be a farmer rather than gentry (Adrian Henstock pers. comm), who probably did not live there either, since the survey described the property as ‘decayed, ruinous and waste’ except for 2 barns and a dovecote (Foster 1982). It may have been demolished soon afterwards. Esdaile (1851) also identified the northern side of the market place as the site of the de Binghams’ manor house and noted that

‘there is the site of a large building; it is also the highest spot in Bingham Town. Also on the field side there is a broad artificial ditch, always full of water and has been from Moor Lane to the Rectors wall; also old trees, many hundred years old - much of this has disappeared this year, by making the Railway’.

Station Street was cut through this area in the mid-19th century to connect Bingham railway station with the market place. Some new buildings were erected along this street, including a steam-powered corn mill, constructed towards the north-eastern end of the street, near the railway (SMR 1545). The record books of the mill date back to 1850 and it was still marked as a flour mill on the OS map of 1950. However by 1968 it was being used by British Rail for storage, and was later demolished, to be replaced by new housing.

**Component 5  Possible site of St Helen’s chapel and cemetery (SMR 5597)**

Chapel Close, known in the 18th and early 19th centuries and described as being at the west end of town, is believed to have been in this area, and to have taken its name from the medieval St Helen’s chapel, thought to have stood somewhere near the de Binghams’ manor house. Throsby (1790) recorded the finding of a stone coffin in Chapel Close. It apparently contained the bones of an adult and a child, interpreted as being ‘a female of distinction, with an infant child’. Several silver pins were taken to have been used to fasten a winding sheet, and a silver ring was also found.

In 1983 a minimum of 12 burials were discovered during property renovations at Kirkhill House (SMR 1725), on what was Chapel Lane (now Kirkhill), and it is possible that the land formed at least part of Chapel Close and that the burials are from St Helen’s. Three burials were found outside the building when trenching around the walls for drainage. A further 8 were discovered within the building lying only 15cm below the floor, and a twelfth burial was found at the northern end of the garden, some 20-25 m from the house. No grave goods were found. Other mentions of human bones in this area may have their source from the time of building of Kirkhill House sometime after 1842 and before 1883, since the foundation trenches clearly cut through burials.
The area was relatively free of buildings in the early 19th century, the main concentration being at the eastern end of the component, along Newgate Street, and along Moor Lane, the latter probably having been the original route towards the Fosse Way. A windmill was present by the 16th century on ‘Westmore Lane’ (later Moor Lane), although its exact location is not known. A cottage in Moor Lane, which had been used as a poor house since 1708, was enlarged in 1769 into a parish workhouse with accommodation for 30 paupers (Henstock 1981). It remained in use until the new workhouse was built in 1837.

In the 19th century a block of land fronting the eastern side of Chapel Lane and the north-western side of Newgate Street was built upon and provided with a road or track running around it to the east and north. One of the buildings included within this block was a Wesleyan School, built in 1859 in an Italianate style, which included a small bell tower. Some 19th century and earlier buildings survive in this component; however, there has been considerable infill, with housing and a new access road.

**Component 6  Fair ground**

This plot of land appears to have been the site of post-medieval fairs, as indicated by the 1586 survey, and it is likely that it served the same function in the medieval period. No property boundaries are shown crossing it on early 19th century maps and it remained undeveloped throughout the 19th century. Such buildings as were constructed were all along the margins, particularly along the northern side, and may have had their origins as encroachments. Development of the land took place in the 20th century.

**Component 7  Settlement bounded by Newgate Street north, component 8 south and the market place east**

An area of probable medieval tenements along the western side of the market place. There has been extensive redevelopment of this area.

**Component 8  Settlement bounded by components 6 and 7 north, Long Acre south, Market Street east and Fairfield Street west**

An area of probable medieval settlement fronting Long Acre and Market Street, bounded to the north by a strong east-west boundary which follows the line of Church Street and the southern edge of the market place. The western end of this component was relatively undeveloped for much of the 19th century. A row of detached and semi-detached houses were built sometime after 1883 and before 1899. These houses still survive. Two streets were constructed at the eastern end of the component, Needham Street and Union Street, lined with early 19th century terraced housing built speculatively to house poor families, often framework knitters. Two chapels were also built, a Wesleyan Chapel on Union Street and a Primitive Methodist Chapel on the corner of Long Acre and Needham Street. The former was built sometime between 1818 and 1822. It still stands, although it has been considerably altered on the exterior. Only one person is known to have been buried there, a schoolboy who was drowned while crossing the River Smite. As he had not been baptised he was refused burial at the Parish Church (Baddiley 1986). The latter was built in 1820, and also still survives today, although no longer in use as a chapel (Henstock 1986).

A single inhumation was discovered during the extension of property into the backyard at 2-6 Market Street (SMR 1253). The skeleton was that of a male, aged 30-45, reportedly buried face down. An annular brooch and a buckle of medieval date were found with the body.

**Component 9  Settlement bounded by the market place and Church Street north, Long Acre south, Cherry Street east and Market Street west**

An area of probable medieval regulated plots which may originally have fronted onto Long Acre, assuming the market place to be a later addition to the town plan. If so, the Market Street, Market Place and Church Street frontages would represent later development, perhaps in the 13th century. The Chesterfield Arms on Church Street served as the coaching inn in the early 19th century, before the arrival of the railways. A
number of other 19th century, and earlier, buildings survive in this area; however, there has been some 20th century infill, as well as development along the Cherry Street frontage.

**Component 10  Settlement block bounded by East Street north, Long Acre south, Fosters Lane east and Cherry Street west**

An area of probable medieval regulated plots. As with component 9, the Long Acre frontage to the south of the component may have been the original one, prior to the construction of the church, although this is by no means certain. Certainly it was the main frontage by the early 19th century, the northern frontage possibly having declined once the churchyard had been extended to block the road. In 1845 land on East Street was given by the Earl of Chesterfield for a Church school. The resulting day and Sunday school was designed in Tudor style by the architects Scott & Moffatt. The building has since been converted into a private house, and is a Grade II listed building.

**Component 11  Settlement block bounded by Long Acre north, The Banks south, Fisher Lane east and Tithby Road west**

A block of long relatively narrow plots of probable medieval origin, originally fronting Long Acre and extending back to a common back lane. Some of the plots may have been amalgamated prior to the 19th century. A windmill is shown on Sanderson’s map of 1835 at the corner of Tithby Road and The Banks (SMR 1365). Some development along the western frontage of The Banks had already taken place by 1915, but infill of the component only really got underway in the second half of the 20th century and included two new cul-de-sacs to provide access to new housing. The line of a couple of earlier plot boundaries may survive at the south-eastern end of the component.

**Component 12  Settlement block bounded by Long Acre North, The Banks south, Jebb’s Lane east and Fisher Lane west**

A block of probable medieval regulated plots extending from Long Acre to a back lane. The component is divided from that to the east by a pronounced hollow way, Jebb’s Lane (SMR 1233). Buildings in the 19th century included a Temperance Hall, built in 1843, but rebuilt by the Primitive Methodists in 1882 to suit their purposes (Henstock 1986). There has been a considerable amount of 20th century infill. The line of a couple of earlier plot boundaries survive within this component.

**Component 13  Settlement block bounded by Long Acre north, The Banks south, Grantham Road east and Jebb’s Lane west**

A block of probable medieval regulated plots extending from Long Acre to a back lane. Plots have since been amalgamated into two and the whole area is almost completely open. The component is divided from that to the west by a pronounced hollow way, Jebb’s Lane (SMR 1233). The Tithe Map indicates the site of the pinfold in 1842 to have been at the corner of Long Acre and Grantham Road, now lost as a result of road widening.

A skeleton was discovered in this area 1994 which may be late 18th or 19th century in date. It was found during the digging of a new drainage system as part of the conversion of a dovecote (a Grade II listed building) on Long Acre at SK70733982. The skeleton was of a young woman and was orientated north-south, which would normally indicate a non-Christian burial. However, it was found in the exact centre of the building, which seems to be an unlikely coincidence and suggests that the burial was a highly irregular event which took place once the building had been erected, believed to be after the mid 18th century (Abbott 1994).

**Component 14  Settlement along the northern side of East Street**
A block of probable medieval regulated plots to the north and east of the church, mainly fronting East Street. The siting of the buildings at the north-eastern end of East Street suggest that the street may once have been wider at this point.

Sanderson’s map of 1835 depicts a road or track running around and behind the church to the east and north. This was in existence by 1776 and may be the thoroughfare which was stopped in 1838 (Esdaile 1851). The 1835 map indicates that several buildings lined this road. One may have been the ‘two small tenements formerly all in one contiguous to the churchyard’ referred to in the 1770 Glebe Terrier. The stopping up of the road may have been done in order to permit the extension of the churchyard, to which ‘better than half an acre’ was added in 1840 (Esdaile 1851). It seems from a comparison of maps that this extension was to the north of the church. It continued in use until the 1880s.

The whole component was extensively developed for housing in the second half of the 20th century.

Component 16 Settlement along the south-eastern side of East Street

Sanderson’s map of 1835 suggests that this area was part of the same system of regulated plots as component 14, although there was very little development along East Street at that time. The whole area was extensively developed for housing in the second half of the 20th century.

Components 15 & 17 Settlement along the north-eastern side of Long Acre East

To the west of Crow Close is an area which, despite bearing no convincing trace of medieval regulated plot boundaries on historic maps, might be expected to have contained medieval settlement in view of the existence of the medieval earthworks within Crow Close. When it was first mapped it contained very few buildings, and the field boundaries as shown are rectangular blocks of different sizes, similar to those to the north-east, suggesting that it had undergone a period of abandonment and subsequent reorganisation of plot boundaries. Sanderson’s map of 1835 shows the northern boundary of component 15 as a continuation with that of component 14, an area of apparent regulated plots further east. A medieval road or track may have run between components 15 and 17, linking the hollow way in Crow Close with East Street, part of the line of which is still followed by a track. The whole area was extensively developed for housing in the second half of the 20th century.

Component 18 Settlement along the southern side of Long Acre East

An area of probable medieval regulated plots. Plot boundaries run south towards the Grantham Road, although separated from it by a narrow strip which today, at least, is a ditch, and fronted onto Long Acre East. The area was extensively developed for housing in the second half of the 20th century.

Component 19 Crow Close area (SMR 1187, SM 29905)

This area includes Crow Close, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which contains earthworks which have survived in excellent condition and which represent the remains of part of the medieval settlement. Esdaile (1851) refers to the close as having ‘many lanes and sites of streets and buildings’ and notes that the Overseer of Highways always repaired the road up to the entrance of the close in the same way as the rest of the streets ‘although it may be said to be out of the town’. He also notes ‘there is a remnant of old houses near this Close, and many gone down since I knew it...’ (1851, 7). An early sketch of the earthworks was made in 1907 (Allcroft 1907) showing a pond, hollow way and croft boundaries running parallel to the crofts of the present village. The main street runs from west to east to approximately halfway across the monument before turning northwards, while other sunken roads and toft boundaries run north to south. Several house platforms are recognisable within the scheduled area. In 1974 a playing field was constructed in the north-western corner of the close, and from small holes made in this area for play equipment, as well as from a pipetrench running along the southern side of the Close, sherds of medieval pottery have been recovered. Within the pipe trench, fragments of possible stone footings were also noted (Bishop pers. comm.). The extent to which settlement in this area extended beyond the bounds
of Crow Close is not known. Certainly to the north the ground starts to fall away, and the northern boundary may have been formed by a continuation of the strong slightly undulating field boundary seen further west. Excavations just to the east of the close produced only two medieval sherds of pottery, suggesting that there was no further eastward extension of the medieval settlement.

**Component 20  Probable site of a medieval cross**

Two crosses, most likely medieval in origin, were recorded in 1586. One of these, the Poor Cross, is believed to have stood at the junction of Fisher Lane and Market Street (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.).

**Component 21  Probable site of a medieval cross**

Two crosses, most likely medieval in origin, were recorded in 1586. One of these, Selby Cross, is believed to have stood at the junction of Cherry Street and Jebb’s Lane (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.).

### 6.2 Post-medieval components

Three components have been tentatively as belonging to the post-medieval period and are shown on figure 4. Their identification is based mainly on plan form analysis of early 19th century maps.

**Component 22  Southern extension of churchyard**

At some point the churchyard seems to have been extended to the south, virtually blocking the road. When this occurred is not known, although it had probably taken place by the end of the 17th century, based on the date of surviving gravestones (Henstock 1994). According to Esdaile (1851) a four feet ditch which was on the southern side of the churchyard was made into a proper footway by paving and iron railing it off. Whether the ditch referred to had been dug to mark the southern limit of the churchyard when it had been extended in the post-medieval period, or whether it had an earlier origin, as a ditch along the edge of East Street/Church Street before the churchyard was extended across the road, is not known.

**Component 23  Encroachment on the Banks**

Nine houses and gardens are recorded in the Earl of Chesterfield’s survey of 1776 as being ‘on the waste’ and at least some of these are likely to have been in this area. Some of the land at the eastern end of this area now lies within the cemetery of 1881.

**Component 24  Windmill (SMR 1214)**

A windmill was present in the south field by the 16th century, probably on the same site as that known to have been occupied by a windmill in 1776. The site forms a very pronounced mill mound at what is presently called Mill Hill. It appears to have been demolished in the late 1870’s.

### 6.3 19th century components

Eleven components have been identified for the 19th century and are shown on figure 5. Their identification is based on a comparison of early and late 19th century maps maps.

**Components 25 & 26  Railways**

A link branch of the Great Northern Railway (component 25), connecting Nottingham with Grantham, and running along the northern side of Bingham, was opened in July 1850 (Albrow & Turner 1986). It was closed to goods traffic in 1965 but is still open for passenger services. The component includes the station at the top of Station Street and a goods shed on the west side of Chapel Lane.
The London and North Western (component 26) opened a link between Nottingham with Melton Mowbray and eventually with Market Harborough. The line was opened in 1879. A second station was built for this branch, known as Bingham Road Station (SMR 1069) to distinguish it from Bingham Station on the GNR line. The link with Melton Mowbray was closed in 1951 and the railway line dismantled. It now forms a linear park.

Component 27  Gas Works

The Bingham Gas, Light and Coke Company was set up in 1853 to manufacture gas for lighting the town and to sell the by-products, namely tar, coke and lime. The site included a house for the gas-maker. A tramway was built to take coal from the main line to the works (Dickinson & Simpson 1986). The gasworks were still shown on the 1950 OS map, but are no longer present and none of the associated buildings have survived. The area is now taken up by allotments.

Component 28  Approximate site of windmill

The Tithe Map of 1842 and the OS map of 1836 show a windmill just to the west of the School Lane mill, in what was then the adjacent field and now would probably be somewhere on the east side of Carnarvon Place.

Component 29  Development along the western side of Fairfield Street

Some development was already present along Fairfield Street in 1835, and may have pre-19th century origins. There was also a windmill on the southern side of School Lane (SMR 1364). It was still in use in 1891 but was disused in 1900, as shown on the relevant OS maps.

Components 30 & 31  Development along Nottingham Road

Development along the northern side of the Nottingham road included several terraces of speculative housing constructed in the early 19th century, one of which was the so-called Skinner’s Buildings, known as ‘Skinner’s Hell’ because of the appalling living conditions (Henstock 1986). Much of the land has been redeveloped.

Component 32  Union Workhouse

The Union Workhouse was built in 1837 to the south-west of the town, replacing an earlier one on Moor Lane. It was still in use as a workhouse in 1915 but by 1950 it had become an old people’s home, Stanhope House. It was demolished in 1964 and the site has since been redeveloped.

Component 33  Buildings on Tithby Road

A couple of buildings are shown in this area on Sanderson’s map of 1835, and may have pre-19th century origins.

Component 34  Cemetery

In 1888 a new cemetery was opened on the south-eastern side of town, near the Grantham road (Wortley 1954).

Component 35  Development along the Grantham Road

Some buildings were present on these plots by 1835 and may pre-date the 19th century. By 1900, the more easterly plot had several new dwellings erected, together with a lane running along the eastern side of the plot. Some of these buildings survive.
6.4 20th century development

Twentieth century development is represented by a single un-numbered component.

6.5 Discussion

It appears from the widespread prehistoric activity in the Bingham area and from the presence of Roman settlement of some sort at the eastern end of the modern town, that the origins of settlement at Bingham are to be found in the Iron Age/Romano-British period, if not well before. Whether occupation was continuous up until the conquest is not yet known, but place-name analysis and evidence from the Domesday survey, together with the fact that Bingham gave its name to the wapentake, all suggest a thriving settlement by the mid-11th century.

The layout of streets is often one of the most durable features of a settlement plan. The street pattern as it existed at the beginning of the 19th century consisted of three approximately parallel streets running east-west and connected by shorter north-south streets, giving something of a grid-like appearance. The northernmost of the east-west roads consisted of what is now Newgate Street running into the market place, Church Street and East Street, which almost certainly once continued eastwards along the route of a track which still exists and on into Crow Close along the line of the hollow way still visible there. The hollow way today is a public footpath, and leads ultimately to Aslockton to the east. Whether the track running along the north side of Crow Close was of any significance in the medieval period, for example as a back lane to the main hollow way, is not known. Although its line appears to be continued to the west on Sanderson’s map, the Tithe Map, which is more accurately drawn, is less convincing in suggesting any such continuation.

The middle road, Long Acre, is continued eastwards by Long Acre East which is shown on Sanderson’s map running up to Crow Close and then turning sharply northwards; however the line is continued further eastwards by a strong field boundary, and an earlier continuation of the road in that direction, at least for a short distance, could perhaps be suggested. The south of the settlement is partly bounded by the Grantham road and partly by the present day ‘Banks’ which, although having the appearance of a back lane, was directly connected with the Nottingham Road prior to the end of the 18th century.

Much of this street pattern can be projected back at least as far as the 16th century, and probably much further. Several of the streets are indicated as hollow ways on the 1900 OS map, which marks hachures along the western side of Chapel Lane, or Kirkhill as it is now, the western side of the northern end of Tithby Road, the western side of Fisher Lane, the eastern side of Jebb’s Lane, parts of the northern side of The Banks and the eastern side of Cogley Lane. Comparison of the 19th century streets with the survey of 1586 shows that although few names remained the same, the majority of streets were already present and only one has been lost. Two names, Church Lane and Fisher Lane, are assumed to represent the same streets as today. Others have changed only slightly: Church Gate and Westmore Lane are probably Church Street and Moor Lane respectively. The remainder have changed completely, and cannot always be identified with certainty. Husband Street, which had become Husbandman’s Street or Husbandman’s Way by 1826, changed to the present Long Acre by the time of the Tithe Map of 1842, possibly having lost much of its original association with farmers by that time. Other early street names have been tentatively identified as follows (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.):

| Chapel Lane or Chapel Gate | = Kirkhill or Newgate Street |
| Eastmoor Lane | = Cogley Lane |
| Goodwyn Lane | = East Street |
| Spybwy Lane | = Grantham Road |
| Guye Lane | = Dark Lane |
| Selby Lane | = Jebb’s Lane |
| Deadman’s Lane | = unidentified - lost? |

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Deadman’s Lane was possibly not too far from the church, one of the references being to the ‘way from the church to Deadman’s Lane’ (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.). The name could well be significant, for example a lane leading directly to the churchyard. The survey indicates that it was in the eastern half of the town rather than the western half, and Henstock has proposed that it was a continuation of Dark Lane, running north-south between what would at that time have been Husband Street and Goodwyn Lane.

Two crosses, most likely medieval in origin, were recorded in 1586. The Poor Cross is believed to have been at the junction of Fisher Lane and Market Street while Selby Cross probably stood at the junction of Cherry Street and Jebb’s Lane (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.). There does not seem to be any mention of a market cross.

There is no obvious overall interpretation of the various distinctive blocks of land which can be identified from Sanderson’s map of 1835 in terms of their relationships to each other. One apparently coherent block could be formed from components 8-13, consisting of Long Acre with plots running back on either side, and having the present day ‘Banks’ as a back lane to the south and part of East Street and Church Lane as a back lane to the north, its north-western end no longer existing as a back lane but still identifiable in a strong boundary line. This block has the appearance of a regulated village plan similar to many others in Nottinghamshire, with plots running back either side from a central road, with roughly parallel back lanes, a layout which could be at least as early as the 11th century (M. Bishop pers. comm.). Assuming that the two crosses referred to above were indeed present in the medieval period, one could tentatively speculate that an early market, within a widened main road, was held between them. The original route of Long Acre both westwards towards Nottingham and eastwards towards Whatton is not known, although it seems unlikely that its current dog-leg to the Grantham Road is original.

If one accepts that this block could represent an early village plan, then the area to the north (components 2-7) could be seen as a deliberate addition or area of complete reorganisation, laid out in an attempt to transform the village into a market town. It appears to have a distinctive northern margin consisting, at least by the early 19th century, of a ditched boundary over its western two-thirds and a very straight boundary over its eastern third, which contrasts with the undulating northern boundary of the block of land lying further east. It contains several features of possible 13th and early 14th century date, and which could be seen as Sir Richard de Bingham’s influence on the town. These include the market place, the fairground, and the presumed sites of St Helen’s Chapel and the de Bingham’s manor house. The rectory may fit into this category also. Although the earliest record of a rector in Bingham is in 1226, a portion was allotted for a vicarage in c. 1297 which, in 1304, was consolidated with the rectory (Thoroton 1677). Possibly this led to the acquisition of a new site for the rectory within the newly enlarged or reorganised town plan.

Further west, the picture is much harder to interpret. The site of the church (component 1) gives the impression of having been superimposed onto the south-western end of a block of pre-existing regulated plots, although how these relate to the block to the south-west is not clear. The size and depth of the hollow way running through Crow Close (component 19) seems to suggest that this was the main thoroughfare for this part of Bingham, yet it does not continue the line of Long Acre but of East Street. Thus the proposed back lane of the western part of the town becomes the main street of the eastern part, if the two areas are contemporary and the interpretation of Long Acre as an original main road is correct.

The 1586 survey indicates that a freehold estate belonging to the Porter family lay at the eastern end of Bingham. Robert Porter is recorded in 1586 as having ‘1 messuage, 5 bovates and 5 meadows where he lives’ as well as having probably acquired land elsewhere (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.). Thoroton (1677) refers to Richard Porter as ‘the only considerable Freeholder in the lordship’, while Throsby (1790) also refers to the estate and ‘family mansion’, which was tenanted at that time, and which he describes as standing at ‘the end of Bingham’. Wortley (1953) refers to it as Bingham Hall and gives descriptions provided by ‘several old inhabitants’, who stated that it stood at the corner of Crow Close and that it was a large, gabled, three-storeyed building with mullion windows. The description of Porter’s lands as consisting of 5 bovates is exactly that ascribed to Hoga and Helgi’s manors in the Domesday Survey, and raises the possibility that they had remained, perhaps combined, as a separate entity in the Crow Close area.
throughout much of the medieval period. Of course it is uncertain whether the bovate of 1586 actually bears any relationship to the Domesday bovate, which could vary in size and represented a fiscal assessment rather than land measurement (Black & Roffe 1986). Nevertheless, if St Helen’s Chapel was, in fact, either itself an early church or on the site of one, then it could indicate that the focus of the other manor, that of Tosti, may have been towards the western end of the modern town, obscured by the later reorganisation around a new market place.

There is no evidence at present to suggest that the Crow Close earthworks are not contemporary with the western half of the town, and it is therefore tempting to see in Bingham the continuation from the early medieval into the medieval period of at least two of the distinct manors indicated by Domesday Book. If this were the case, the siting of the church in the 13th century approximately halfway between the eastern and western limits of the town could be seen as having the purpose of serving the whole community rather than the individual manors, or even perhaps as a deliberate attempt to create a single focus where two may have existed previously.

Although there was considerable uncertainty in identifying the location of some of the plots recorded in 1586, it appeared that by that time there was very little in the way of settlement at the eastern end of the town. However, the survey does not record freehold land, and given that the Porter estate probably lay in this area, there may have been some tenements that were not recorded (Adrian Henstock pers. comm.). It seems likely that at some time during the post-medieval period, therefore, much of the eastern end of Bingham ceased to be settled, with the subsequent laying out of new enclosure boundaries, for example in components 15 and 17.

The churchyard was probably extended southwards at some point in the post-medieval period (component 22). This could be taken to imply that by that time the road to the east had become of negligible importance, and that any traffic which needed to reach the market place from the eastern end of the town could do so either via Long Acre or by passing behind the church along a road presumably built for that purpose, and shown on the survey of the Earl of Chesterfield’s holdings in 1776.

It is likely that any growth experienced by Bingham in the later post-medieval period could easily be accommodated within the bounds of the existing settlement. However, there is some evidence that squatter settlement had taken place by the mid- to late 18th century. In the 1776 survey of the Earl of Chesterfield’s estate, 9 houses and gardens are recorded as being ‘on the waste’, as are 2 ‘town houses’. The houses on the waste were probably those on the Banks (component 23), while the town houses may have been encroachments along the northern side of the market square or perhaps along the northern side of Fair Close.

Although the population increase at the beginning of the 19th century was not dramatic compared to other Nottinghamshire market towns, a certain amount of new housing was required. Unfortunately no late 18th century maps have survived which would allow the resulting 19th century development to be known with certainty, but a comparison of the 1842 Tithe Map with the 1900 OS map, together with documentary evidence, allows the main areas to be identified. Much of this, although not all, was within the existing area of the town, with some building on previously empty town plots, or with the replacement of older buildings with new ones. The majority of the early 19th century development was terraced housing, built speculatively to house the poorer families, often framework knitters. Some of these terraces were located on two new streets, Needham Street and Union Street, which were built between Market Street and the western end of Long Acre (within component 8). Further terraces were erected on the north side of the Nottingham Road (component 30), including the so-called Skinner’s Buildings which were referred to as ‘Skinner’s Hell’ because of the appalling living conditions (Henstock 1986).

With the arrival of the railways, two stations were built and a further new road, Station Street, was laid out to connect Bingham Station with the market place. Some new buildings were erected along this street, but only towards the southern end. Possibly associated with this the market place was cleared of various small stalls and shops, and several buildings along its northern frontage were rebuilt. In the second half of the 19th century, several additional areas were developed, none particularly large. The tendency for
development to take place on the western side of the town is clear, this being closer to the commercial
centre. However a small amount of development had also taken place along the Grantham road to the east
of the town by the end of the century.

Bingham saw considerable expansion during the second half of the 20th century. Its position just beyond
the Nottingham Green Belt, together with easy access to Nottingham via road and rail, and access to both
the M1 and the A1, led to its increasing importance for the development of new housing. This has taken
place both to the east and the west of the historic core of the town. Although the railway lines acted as
boundaries of this development for much of the period, the expansion has recently gone beyond these
earlier limits, accompanied by the establishment of an industrial park. New development has also taken
place within the historic town, often infilling the rear of earlier town plots with new houses and access
roads, often resulting in the loss of the original plot boundaries. Some redevelopment of street frontages
has also occurred, particularly around the market place.

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ISSUES

7.1 Research questions

1) At present, only a little is known about the character, date and extent of the Roman settlement at the
eastern end of the town and how it related to other Roman sites in the area. This is an obvious and
important objective for further research. The presence, or absence, of other Roman remains with the
historic core of Bingham is very relevant to this.

2) The apparent importance of Bingham by the time of the Domesday Survey, and indeed earlier, contrasts
with the complete lack of archaeological evidence for Early Medieval settlement. The location of such
settlement at Bingham needs to be established, together with its relationship both to the burial on Parson’s
Hill to the north and to the Anglo-Saxon cremation cemetery to the south-east. The spatial relationship to
each other of the manors recorded in Domesday Book also needs to be determined, as does the question of
whether there was indeed an early church at Bingham, despite no mention of it in the Domesday Survey,
and the location of an Early Medieval Christian burial ground.

3) The exact location, date and status of St Helen’s chapel needs to be established, possibly having a
bearing on the previous question, as does the extent of the burial ground at Kirkhill.

4) The proposal that the current market place was part of a later medieval reorganisation of the town,
possibly accompanied by a relocation of the other important buildings of the settlement, in particular the
manor house and the church, needs to be established archaeologically.

5) The large area of apparent medieval settlement raises the question of the relationship of different areas.
If the market place and church can be shown to be part of a reorganisation of the town, the question arises
as to whether they were imposed on an existing settlement, resulting in the destruction of an earlier layout,
appended to an existing settlement, possibly leading to a shift of the focus of that settlement, or put in the
middle of two separate foci, perhaps with the aim of uniting them.

6) The survey of Bingham in 1586 appears to indicate that much of the Crow Close area was no longer
settled by then, although the existence of unsurveyed freehold land in that area makes it difficult to be
certain. The question of the abandonment of Crow Close is therefore still open, and it remains to be
established whether it came about abruptly, perhaps at the instigation of the lord of the manor or a
powerful freeholder wishing to rationalise holdings or even improve the view from the hall, rather than by
the hurricane of antiquarian tradition, or whether it was simply the end result of a gradual process of
piecemeal abandonment and shrinkage.

7) At present it is not clear exactly where the main roads out of Bingham to the north, south, east and west
exited the town, both in the medieval and early post-medieval periods.
8) Although it seems unlikely that a cut from the Grantham Canal to Bingham was ever constructed, despite the mid 19th century references to its existence, the question needs to be resolved as to whether it was at least started and, if so, how far it extended towards Bingham before being abandoned.

7.2 Archaeological potential

7.2.1 Existing protection

Scheduled monuments

Certain nationally important archaeological sites and monuments enjoy special protection as Scheduled Ancient Monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. This protection ensures that the case for preservation is fully considered should there be any proposals for development or other work which might damage the monument. Any such proposals are subject to Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent, administered directly by the Secretary of State. They include not only demolition, damage or removal, but also restorative works. There would normally be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of the monument.

There are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments in or close to Bingham: the Crow Close earthworks at the eastern end of the modern town, within which consent was acquired for a playground in 1974, and a henge monument just to the north of the town, concealed in 1972 by about a metre of clay to protect it from the industrial development which currently covers it.

Conservation areas

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 required all Local Planning Authorities to determine which parts of their areas were of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas, in order to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. It is also their duty to review them from time to time, and to determine whether any further parts of their areas should also be designated as conservation areas.

Bingham’s conservation area was designated in 1970, being among the first in the county. At the time, five particularly important areas were identified:

1) the area around the market place, with several good houses
2) the area around the church, including the churchyard and a group of houses on Church Street
3) the entry to the village from the east, with a view to the ‘Banks’, together with some interesting farm buildings
4) the eastern end of the ‘Banks’, with its rural atmosphere
5) Jebb’s Lane, a sunken footpath leading down to the centre of the town

The Conservation Area boundary was consequently drawn to include them. Its extent is shown on Figure 7.

Listed buildings

A listed building is one recognised by the government as being of special architectural or historic interest, as specified by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Listing is made at three levels of importance, Grade II, Grade II* and the most important, Grade I, and listed building consent is required, in addition to normal planning consent, before any alterations, extensions or demolitions can be made to a listed structure which might affect its character.

There are 27 listed buildings within the Bingham assessment area. The majority are shown on Figure 7, exceptions being structures such as headstones and walls. Of the listed buildings, the parish church is
Grade I and the remainder are Grade II. All can be broken down according to their earliest structural phase as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earliest structural phase</th>
<th>C16 or earlier</th>
<th>C17</th>
<th>C18</th>
<th>C19</th>
<th>C20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of structures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planning Policy Guidance 15 allows the creation and maintenance of a list of buildings of local historic/architectural interest, although this does not confer a statutory obligation. There is currently no local list for Bingham.

### 7.2.2 Above ground remains

The street plan is often the most durable part of the above ground remains of a settlement, and this is true for Bingham, where the historic street pattern is still clearly visible today. Although traces of the long narrow medieval plot boundaries can still be identified within the core of the town, these are relatively rare as a result of extensive 20th century infilling. Beyond the historic core the pattern of earlier field boundaries can occasionally be detected in the lines of the streets and back garden walls of later development. The most recent housing developments are identifiable from their curving, irregular street patterns compared to the grid-like blocks of the 1950’s and 1960’s.

Within the town the majority of buildings are of brick. Traditional materials would probably have consisted of clay or mud, not necessarily fired into bricks, with thatched roofs. Wood was probably a relative scarcity, and would have been used somewhat sparingly. There are still some remnants of mud construction at 7 Church Street (a Grade II listed building). From the early 18th century onwards most houses in this area, including those of agricultural labourers, would have been constructed of locally-made bricks (Todd 1969).

Surviving historic buildings reflect Bingham’s role as a market centre with a rural economy and an absence of industry beyond the domestic context. However, two framework knitters’ cottages are recorded on the SMR (nos. 1251 and 1728), and other examples may survive, albeit considerably altered. Many farms were still located in the centre of Bingham in the mid-19th century and several such farmhouses or their outbuildings still survive, although sometimes converted, such as at 9 Newgate Street and 87 Long Acre; also nos. 19 and 21 Long Acre (a Grade II listed building) and 61 and 63 Long Acre (a Grade II listed building).

The earliest gravestones in the church cemetery date from the post-medieval period. Several monumental masons are known to have worked in Bingham during the second half of the 18th century producing carved slate headstones with fine lettering and occasionally with illustrations (Henstock 1981). Several of these are now Grade II listed structures.

### 7.2.3 Below ground remains

Although the street pattern is believed to have remained relatively unchanged since at least the 16th century, and probably longer, activities such as road surfacing and widening are likely to have caused damage to archaeological deposits relating to earlier street frontages. It is clear from a comparison of maps that, in addition to road widening, many street corners have been cut back to cope with 20th century traffic, possibly destroying underlying deposits. For example, the eastern side of Fairfield Street has been widened and the corners with Newgate Street and Long Acre cut back, the north-eastern end of Newgate Street and the north-eastern end of Market Street have both been cut back and rounded and, most dramatically, the line of the Grantham Road has been altered between its junction with The Banks and Long Acre/Long Acre East, with the sharp-cornered dogleg bend shown on the Tithe Map having become a relatively shallow S-bend.
The changes of level marked on the 1900 OS map between some roads and adjacent plots of land, suggestive of hollow ways, seem to occur where the land had not been built on, and may indicate that subsequent levelling has taken place prior to building, with potential loss of information. The land to the west of Kirkhill, for example, is marked at a higher level than the road in 1900, and the discovery of burials just below the floor level of Kirkhill House probably indicates that it was the ground that was levelled down, at least in part, rather than the road being levelled up.

Within the core of the town there has been considerable building activity during the course of the 20th century. This is illustrated by Map I, showing the buildings, or parts of buildings, and boundaries which have survived since 1842, while Map J shows the main areas of 10th century development within the historic core of the town. To the east and south-east of the church, where there was very little 19th century settlement, new housing developments have spread extensively over all the available land, with the exception of Crow Close which, as a Scheduled Monument, has enjoyed protection from development. Although some early land boundaries can still be traced, many in this area have been lost. However, some of the new houses appear to be set in relatively large gardens, and there is the possibility that archaeological deposits may survive in some places. This may be particularly true in the area of the track running into Cogley Lane which links East Street with the hollow way in Crow Close. Although there is no map evidence for settlement in this area, it is likely to be important for understanding the relationship between the eastern and western ends of the medieval town. There are very few modern buildings lying up against this track, offering the potential for survival within gardens of medieval remains fronting the lane; however, given the size of the earthworks in Crow Close, it is possible that levelling of the ground prior to modern housing construction may have destroyed any deposits. Some plots of land along the southern frontage of Long Acre East also appear relatively unchanged.

To the west and south-west of the church, where most of the post-medieval town was located, and where most 19th century development, such as it was, took place, earlier plot divisions are more likely to have been retained. However, in order to maximise land use within the earlier town plots, modern houses have been built not only along the street frontages but also to the rear, often within cul-de-sacs. As with the eastern half of the town, however, many of the houses have reasonably generous gardens which may preserve archaeological deposits.

Although most of the later 19th century detached and semi-detached ‘villas’ appear to have survived to the present day, nearly all of the early 19th century terraced housing has been demolished. While some of these areas have been subsequently built over, those fronting Needham Street and Union Street are presently car parks, with projected redevelopment for housing. Whether any earlier archaeological deposits could have survived the construction and subsequent demolition of the 19th century terraces is not known, but the potential for unexpected remains in this area was illustrated by the finding of an inhumation to the rear of a property on Market Street (SMR 1253).

The market place would be expected to be one of the most intensively occupied areas of the town. A number of 19th century or earlier properties survive along its south-eastern side and along the south-western side of Market Street and may preserve the remains of earlier buildings beneath or between them, as well as possible outhouses, workshops and rubbish pits in back yards and towards the rear of the plots. On the northern side of the market place, remains of the medieval manor house and associated outbuildings may be preserved beneath Beauvale House or possibly in the grounds of the two nursing homes which have been erected on the eastern side of Moor Lane or those of the buildings along the western side of Station Street.

Open areas still exist within the town which do not appear to have been built on since at least 1835, the date of the earliest map, although some early buildings may have been lost. The largest of these, with the obvious exception of Crow Close, is the block bounded by Jebb’s Lane (a hollow way), The Banks, Grantham Road and Long Acre, although it has been truncated to the north-east by the widening of the Grantham Road, resulting in the probable destruction of the site of a couple of buildings and the town’s pinfold. To the north, the Robert Miles School, which is built on the site of the 18th century rectory, and probably the earlier one also, is said to preserve some of the former’s gardens in its grounds. It is possible
that archaeological deposits pre-dating the rectory may lie relatively undisturbed along the school’s Church Street frontage.

To the west, a potentially important area of apparently undisturbed ground lies to the north of Newgate Street, behind a couple of early 19th century (or earlier) buildings. This area may contain evidence of St Helen’s Chapel and/or its cemetery, while further inhumations may be preserved to the west of Kirkhill, in grounds adjoining those of Kirkhill House. Whether archaeological deposits extend as far west as Bingham County Infants School, to be potentially preserved below its playground, is not known at present. Remains of the two windmills in this area may have been destroyed by later housing; however, the site of a windmill shown only on Sanderson’s map of 1835 and located at the western end of the Banks and its junction with Tithby Road, appears to have remained free of 20th century building. At the very eastern end of the town, further Roman remains may lie preserved within the grounds of the Carnarvon School.

The churchyard also represents an area of relatively undisturbed ground, with burials there presumably having ceased in the late 19th century when the new Banks cemetery was opened. The churchyard preserves not only the early population of Bingham, but also may preserve other remains, in the form of a road to the south that could be medieval in origin, and a road and buildings, of possible post-medieval date, to the north.

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EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

BINGHAM

Figure 1

Prehistoric, Roman and Early Medieval periods

KEY

- Prehistoric
- Roman
- Early medieval
- Scheduled area

Nottinghamshire County Council
Third Bridge House, Tuxford
Tuxford, Newark, Notts
Tel: 0115 980 3923

This map is based on data from the Norfolk
County Council, Historic England, English Heritage and
the Emergency Service. The map is not to scale and
some features may have been omitted. Use at your own
risk. For more information, contact Nottinghamshire
KEY

Mediaeval Components

Area excluded from EUS

EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

BINGHAM

Figure 3

Mediaeval Components