

# **The Archaeology of Wiltshire's Towns**

*An Extensive Urban Survey*

## **DEVIZES**

**Prepared**

**By:**

Wiltshire County Archaeology Service  
Libraries and Heritage  
Wiltshire County Council  
Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge  
Wiltshire  
BA14 8BS.

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## The Archaeology and History of Devizes

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Towns are an important component of the historic environment which have developed over many hundreds of years and are under constant development pressures. The archaeological resource within our historic towns is an invaluable and irreplaceable source of data about past societies and the evolution of our culture. Despite these factors the archaeology of many towns, especially the smaller market towns, is poorly understood.
- 1.2. In 1976 the Department of the Environment (DoE) sponsored a study of the archaeology of Wiltshire's historic towns, aiming to assess the relative importance of the towns at different points in time as a basis for future archaeological research. This resulted in the publication of "*Wiltshire Towns: the archaeological potential*" (Haslam 1976). Since then, the book has been one of the key references for archaeologists monitoring urban development and its impact in the county.
- 1.3. An increase in the amount of archaeological and historical data available and changes in legislation, such as the introduction of Planning Policy Guidance note No16, have meant that a reappraisal of the situation is now due. The Extensive Urban Survey of Wiltshire has been commissioned by English Heritage, as part of a National programme, to address the need for a new assessment of urban archaeology in the county. The current structure of the historic county of Wiltshire is two-tier, with the County Council working in conjunction with the four District Councils (Kennet, North Wiltshire, Salisbury and West Wiltshire) and the new unitary authority of Swindon – historically part of the county. The survey aims to map the development of all of Wiltshire's and Swindon's historic towns and to assess the extent of the surviving archaeology and built heritage. It is also proposed that the threat of development on the historic environment within the county's towns will be examined.
- 1.4. The origins of urban centres in England reach back to the Iron Age. During the Roman occupation new urban centres were linked by an efficient road system. In the Saxon period, defended towns and royal boroughs were developed and later medieval towns grew around markets as economic conditions improved or were 'planted' as planned new centres.
- 1.5. As far as is known the first towns in Wiltshire appeared during the Romano-British period but all the known examples are now greenfield sites, although some may have given rise to nearby settlements. Most modern towns in the county have their roots as Saxon villages or defended settlements such as Cricklade and Wilton. Many of the villages grew into small towns after the Norman invasion, often focussed around a castle or market and in the early thirteenth century 'planted boroughs', in which individual plots of land were sold by the major landowner.
- 1.6. The definition of a town for inclusion in the survey follows the criteria laid out in Heighway (1972), by which the settlement must possess certain characteristics such as defences, a mint, a market, a street plan, or a judicial centre, and demonstrate such urban attributes such as high population, a diversified economic base or a central or key location. For the purposes of the survey,

however, the towns should meet these criteria historically, even if they no longer do so. This allows, for example, the inclusion of the five Roman towns in the county, and settlements such as the village of Heytesbury, which was developed as a planned town in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but which did not succeed as an urban centre. The full list of 34 towns included in the survey and the criteria for inclusion are included as Appendix 1 and 2 and are shown on Fig. 1. Devizes satisfies at least seven of the criteria: it has urban defences (*criterion i*); it has evidence of a planned street layout (*criterion ii*); it has medieval market (*criterion iii*); it had a borough charter (*criterion v*); it occupied a central position in the county (*criterion vi*); it has sustained a substantial population (*criterion vii*); it had clear burgage plots in the medieval period (*criterion ix*) and it had three parish churches and a small monastic institution (*criterion xi*).

- 1.7. The area of study in each town is defined by the size of the town as it stood in 1945, encompassing both the historic core of the town and the older industrial and suburban development. There is an emphasis on the earlier material, and the later Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century development are covered here only briefly. Although more detailed than Haslam's report, in most cases each study remains a brief summary of the data and a guide to the location of more detail for other researchers. The extent of the study area for Devizes is depicted in Fig. 2.
- 1.8. The research into each town will be encapsulated into two reports: a summary and assessment of the data gathered and an outline strategy for future management of specified sections of the urban area. This first report is intended to provide a clear and up-to-date synthesis of the available archaeological and historical data for Devizes, with an assessment of the main areas of historic settlement in the town and of the potential and sensitivity of the archaeologically important areas. The assessment reports are compiled from four main data streams: geographical and geological sources for the location and topographical summary; secondary historical sources for the historical outline; recorded archaeological data for the sites and finds information; the archive of the Wiltshire Building Record (WBR) for architectural data. The architectural summary is not subject to the same level of research as the other three data streams, and the information presented in the reports is based upon evidence compiled from the existing WBR archive, updated in places by field visits to note non-listed buildings of historic interest, combined with the DoE schedule of listed buildings.
- 1.9. This Assessment was prepared originally in 2002, with amendments from consultations added in 2004. Table1 (archaeological investigations) has been updated, but the results of these more recent events have not been assimilated. Comments supplied by Dr Paul Robinson, Wiltshire Heritage Museum, and Ian Lund, Kennet District Council, are gratefully acknowledged.

## **2. LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 2.1. Lying on the north-western edge of the watershed between the Avon Valley and the Vale of Pewsey, Devizes stands on a shelf of Upper Greensand. The town's name, derived from the Old French "*devises*" or "boundaries" is indicative of its

location at the border between the medieval manors of Potterne and Bishop's Cannings (Gover *et al* 1939). It is likely that it was the particular combination of these factors that led to the construction of the castle and has affected the subsequent growth of the town beside it.

- 2.2. Several researchers have noted the absence of running water in this location, although there may once have been local springs (Barron 1976). Most of the town's water originally appears to have come from wells, dug through the Greensand to the Gault clay beneath.
- 2.3. The castle itself was built on a small outlier of the spur, a naturally defensible position, with the outer bailey and town on a flat shelf of land on its eastern side. The shape of the town defences defined the layout of the town, with its concentric arcs of streets with radial roads at the cardinal points marking the old town gates. Because the railway tunnelled through the spur, the disruption it has caused to the pattern of medieval streets has been minimal, and indeed the 18<sup>th</sup> century turnpikes (Pugh 1975) and the canal had a greater effect on the layout of the modern town plan. The industrial core certainly remains on the northern side of the town, still centred on the long defunct canal.
- 2.4. In recent years, the town has expanded west along the spur and the main road, and south and east to link up with the hamlets of Wick and Southbroom, although much of this growth has been purely residential.

### **3. PAST WORK AND THE NATURE OF THE EVIDENCE**

#### ***3.1. Historic Sources***

- 3.1.1. This is a desk-based study, using material available within the County Council research facilities in Trowbridge: the Sites and Monuments Register; The Wiltshire Reference Library; the Wiltshire Record Office; and the Wiltshire Buildings Record. Historical data are generally drawn from secondary sources, normally the Victoria County History and histories of the individual towns, based on recommendations or specific requirements. Data on archaeological events and their results are drawn directly from the original reports or publications wherever these are available, but for some more obscure interventions we have had to rely on passing references or the existing entries in the county SMR.
- 3.1.2. The use of primary sources in the Record Office is restricted to maps and sometimes other pictorial material, which are consulted to accurately locate individual entities and to trace the growth of the settlement.
- 3.1.3. There are several good general and specialist histories of Devizes: for this project a recent study, Haycock 1993, was used as a basic reference. Stone's seminal work on the castle provided detail and colour, although much of the archaeological reconstruction he used is no longer acceptable. For the early research, Devizes was well represented in the Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine, and this source was used extensively.

3.1.4. Of the available maps,, Edward Dore’s map of 1759 and Rennie’s 1793 map of the canal route proved invaluable, alongside the standards of Andrews and Dury, the Tithe Survey, and the early Ordnance Survey editions.

### 3.2. Archaeological Work In The Town

3.2.1. The following is a list of known archaeological events based on the County Sites and Monuments Record, Excavations Record (SMR), and the fieldwork reports kept in the County Archaeology Section in Trowbridge. Others have been added as a result of incidental mention in one of the above sources, and where there is enough information to get at least a general idea of the location of the event. The numbers in Table 1 refer to the map included in this report (Fig. 3).

3.2.2. Until quite recently, excavations carried out in and around Devizes were on the whole restricted to the castle and the prehistoric sites adjacent to the town. Most of the finds from the town itself were the result of accidental exposures during work over several centuries. Over the last decade, small scale redevelopment in the centre of town has led to a string of excavations and watching briefs carried out by professional units under strict controls. These have generated considerable new data about the town defences and to a lesser extent about the medieval town itself.

Event	Year	Site Name/Location	Event Type	Excavator	Reference
001	1858	Castle	Evaluation/ excavation?	Edward Kite	Stone 1920
002	1940s	Gasworks	Watching brief	B.H.Cunnington	Cunnington 1945
003	1976	South of Hare and Hounds Street	Excavation	Wiltshire Archaeology Soc.	Haslam 1980
004	1986	Sheep Street	Watching brief	Wilts. Rescue Archaeology	Wilts. Rescue Archaeology 1986
005	1990	New Park Street	Evaluation	UCL Field Archaeology Unit	Bennell 1990
006	1991	Estcourt Hill	Evaluation	UCL Field Archaeology Unit	Russell 1991
007	1994	Vales Lane	Watching brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1994c
008	1994	Corn Exchange	Watching brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1994b
009	1994	Market Place	Watching brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1994a
010	1995	Castle Lane	Evaluation	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1995a
011	1995	West Central car Park	Watching brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1995b
012	1997	Willis Court	Evaluation	Archaeological Site Investigations	A.S.I. 1997
013	1998	Devizes Motor Company	Watching brief	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1998
014	1999	Vales Lane	Excavation	Wessex Archaeology	Andrews and Mephram 1999
015	1999	Cromwell House & 33 Market Place	Evaluation	Thames Valley Archaeological Services	Saunders 1999
016	1999	Town Centre Development	Desk-top assessment	Wessex Archaeology	Wessex Archaeology 1999
017	2000	Rear of The Brittox	Evaluation	Cotswold	Cotswold

*018	2003	8, Sidmouth Street	Watching Brief	AC Archaeology	Archaeological Trust Archaeological Trust 2001 AC Archaeology 2003
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**Table 1:** Archaeological Events and Interventions in Devizes (Fig 3). Reports flagged thus \* were received after the preparation of this Assessment, which was compiled in 2002.

#### **4. HISTORICAL OUTLINE**

- 4.1. This report is not intended to provide a major historical review of the history of Devizes, and the material included here relates mainly to events which might have had some impact on the archaeology of the town, or its survival.
- 4.2. With no mention in either the Anglo-Saxon sources or in Domesday, the town is generally thought to have developed as a result of the building of the castle in c.1080 by Bishop Osmund. The castle and bailey defences overlooked and controlled the adjacent main road at the junction with the road to Potterne; from this position it would have exercised considerable control over the western end of the Vale of Pewsey.
- 4.3. At the beginning of the Anarchy Bishop Roger of Salisbury was arrested and his mistress, Matilda of Ramsbury, held the castle. Stephen threatened to hang her son before the gates and she surrendered the castle to him. For a while it was taken by a Flemish adventurer, Robert Fitzhubert, who was hung during a siege by Robert of Gloucester for the Empress. Eventually Stephen won it back by negotiation, only to lose both town and castle in 1141 to a local militia loyal to the Empress Maud. That same year she granted borough status upon the town as a reward. Her son Henry II still held the castle at his accession to the throne in 1154, and in 1157 the castle and parks were formally ceded to the crown (Bradby 1985).
- 4.4. The earliest record for a market in the town dates to 1228, this probably lay near St Mary's in the old town (see below 7.2.5). Despite the movement of the economic focus to the New port (see below 7.3.1) the earlier market officially revived as a second market in 1567.
- 4.5. In the new Market Place there was also major restructuring in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The 16<sup>th</sup> century butchers' shambles was rebuilt in c.1600 (Haycock 1993) but the medieval shambles may have been where the market cross now stands. In 1575 the yarn cross was replaced by a Yarn Hall; this became the Wool Hall in 1615 and stood on the site of the present Town Hall (ibid.). By 1630 the cloth trade was in decline, and local trade was turning to felt, serge and silk manufacture.
- 4.6. At the outset of the Civil War the parliamentary side held the town. However in February 1643 it surrendered to a Royalist force and in July 1643 the Royalists defeated Waller's army at Roundaway Down, a victory which relieved pressure on the town for over two years. In 1645 the castle defences were substantially refurbished to defend against Cromwell's advance. Despite this, the town

surrendered after a short siege, and the defences were slighted in 1648, from which time forward they were extensively robbed for building stone (Haycock 1993).

- 4.7. By the early 18<sup>th</sup> century the castle had all but disappeared. Stukeley's drawing of the town in 1723 (Fig. 4) shows that whilst the motte and ramparts appear to be still largely extant, the only buildings on the mound were a pair of windmills, which remained there until 1840, when they were demolished to make way for the present house. The first of these appeared soon after the slighting of the castle and is shown on the 1654 map of the Old Park. It is said that the tower of the "new" house stands on the foundations of this windmill, which was itself built on the base of a medieval tower.

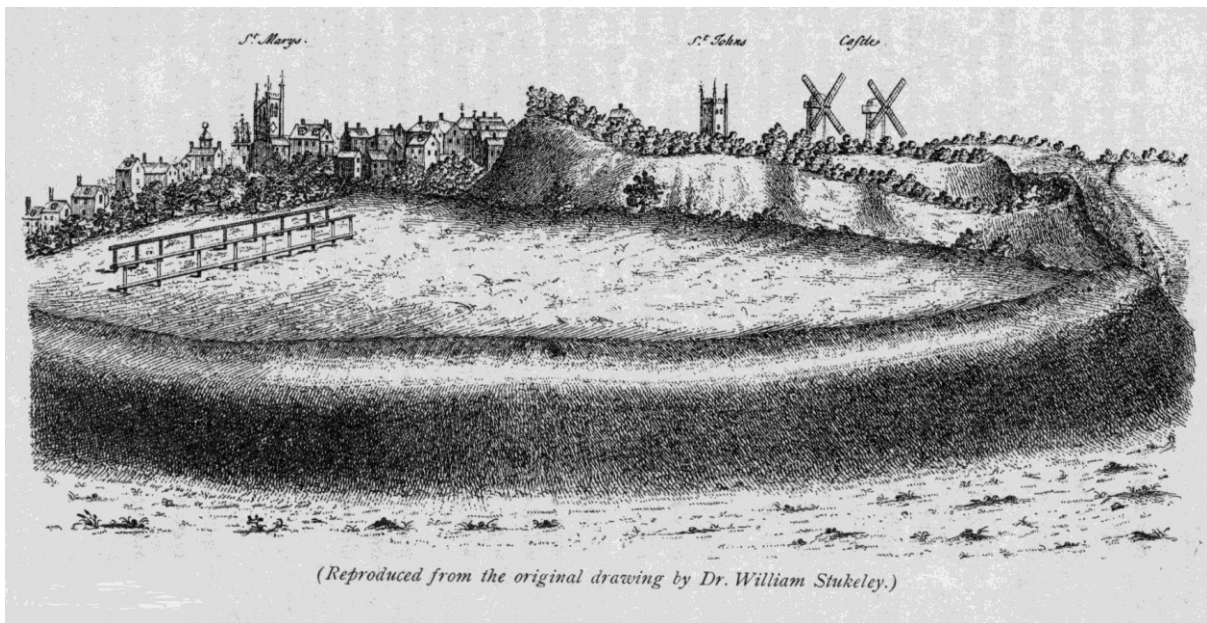


Fig 4. View of Devizes from Northgate, drawn 17<sup>th</sup> July 1723 (Stukeley 1776)

- 4.8. There was only minimal expansion before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, except around the Green, where houses soon spread along the sides with a second cluster around St James's church at the east end. In the middle of the Green was an isolated patch of early development called "the Island"; already evident in 1738, by 1792 it included a theatre and several dwellings.
- 4.9. Cloth manufacture was the major industry of the town in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however the lack of a good supply of running water hampered the development of the industry and by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century it had all but disappeared. A wide range of other industries are recorded, from brewing to bell founding, accompanied by a variety of trades (Pugh 1975). By early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a clear move in the economic base of the town towards commercial rather than manufacturing activities. Even so, the construction of the canal in 1810 (see below 7.5.2) brought in some light industrial development along the waterfront,
- 4.10. Further changes occurred as a result of the development of turnpike roads in about 1850 and the coming of the railways to Devizes between 1857 and 1862



(see below 7.5.3). The former altered the position of the approaches to the town: the latter was to break up the traditional boundaries of the castle and the Old Deer Park, as the line came up the valley and sliced across the west front of the inner bailey defences. In doing so it altered the topography of the upper end of the valleys, and opened up new areas for expansion. Even so, this expansion was slow to occur and only really got under way in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **5. ARCHAEOLOGY: SITES AND EVIDENCE**

### ***5.1. Introduction***

5.1.1. The following is a resume of the archaeological record of the town, drawn from the county SMR and the various excavation reports. Data on surviving buildings come from the Wiltshire Buildings Record unless otherwise stated. The bold print numbers in this section refer to entries in the Urban Survey database, and appear on the entity location maps in Figs. 4 - 9, which were created from the database and the SMR.

### ***5.2. Prehistory (Fig 5)***

5.2.1. The evidence for prehistoric settlement in the study area is not substantial. Stone (1920) postulated a prehistoric fort on the castle site, but the ditch he saw is now believed to have been part of the medieval defences. A few Neolithic flints have turned up to the south in Wick and Southbroom, and a single occurrence is known from the environs of the Medieval settlement (**DE029**). Over a slightly wider area, there is a more significant collection of Neolithic flint (information from Dr Paul Robinson, Wiltshire Heritage Museum).

5.2.2. Bronze Age barrows are known from Roundaway Down, where W. Cunnington jnr. opened several in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Three ring ditches, probably representing the sites of barrows, have been recorded south-east of the town, a Bronze Age settlement is recorded at Oliver's Camp, and a substantial Late Bronze Age midden has come to light in Potterne. The only Bronze Age material from the town itself was a barbed and tanged arrowhead found in Pan's Lane (**DE030**). No associated Neolithic or Bronze Age settlement site is known from the vicinity.

5.2.3. Oliver's Castle on Roundaway Down is a substantial Iron Age hillfort, although surprisingly few relevant artefacts have been recovered from the various investigations there. The excavations at Nursteed Farm did, however, reveal evidence of settlement in the form of a gully and several associated pits and midden layers containing Iron Age pottery, loom-weights, and animal bones.

### ***5.3. Roman (Fig 5)***

5.3.1. In contrast, evidence for Romano-British settlement is widespread. There was a villa at the base of Roundaway Down (Haycock 1993) and Roman pottery and coins have been found all across the area south and east of the medieval town. Within the study area these include a single rim sherd on the Green

(**DE035**) and coins near St. John's church (**DE034**) and Hillworth Rd. (**DE031**, **DE032**). Among the most spectacular of these stray finds were a large hoard of Roman coins, mostly copper, unearthed at Wick Green in 1699, and some 21 statuettes dug up on The Green east of the town in 1714 (**DE033**).

5.3.2. In addition, a number of Romano-British burials have been found in Southbroom and at Pan's Lane, in association with New Forest pottery and iron tools. A cemetery at Southbroom Junior School, also dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries (Grinsell 1957), comprised at least four burials, including one in a lead coffin and another in a stone sarcophagus. The excavations at Wayside Farm located a buried soil horizon, cut features, and a stone oven, with dates centring on the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Valentin & Robinson 1999).

5.3.3. In all, the findspots cover an area of well over 2km<sup>2</sup>, but there is a distinct absence of the buildings and metalled surfaces normally associated with Roman settlements of this size. It is probable that the principal focus is still to be found, it is likely that the settlement in common with other villages of the period drifted through the landscape.

#### **5.4. Saxon**

5.4.1. There were several Saxon settlements around Devizes, notably those at Potterne, Lavington and Cannings, and a burial excavated on Roundaway Down in 1840 consisted of a female skeleton, oriented east-west, and wearing gold jewellery (Haycock 1993). There is no evidence for Saxon settlement in the town.

#### **5.5. Medieval (Fig 6)**

5.5.1. The castle (**DE01**), would initially have been a wooden construction, but this burnt down in 1113 and was rebuilt in stone between then and 1121 by Osmund's successor to the bishopric of Salisbury, Bishop Roger (Haslam 1976). The new castle was evidently an impressive affair, and earned praise from several chroniclers of the time. According to Norden in 1610, it had five towers, two chapels, and a large hall and keep on a lofty motte, although by then it was largely in ruins (Haycock 1993). The keep and hall were surrounded by a curtain wall on top of the motte, which had its own ditch. Around this were arranged the buildings of the inner bailey, which occupied the remainder of the outlier described above. The bailey wall was augmented on three sides by the natural slope of the hillside, whilst the eastern side of the inner bailey was defended by a bank and a wide ditch (Pugh 1975).

5.5.2. Nothing remains of the first castle, although the early ditch found in excavations at the Corn Exchange in 1994 (Wessex Arch. 1994b) was probably part of the defences. Kite described the remains of Bishop Roger's castle in 1858 when the foundations of the keep and hall were exposed on the motte. Stone (1920) used various sources including Kite to draw up plans of the castle, showing the buildings, the wall and towers of the inner bailey, and the deep ditch which crossed the neck between the knoll and the main plateau on which the town stands. In the 1994 excavations this ditch was seen to cut the

first-phase ditch mentioned above (Wessex Arch. 1994b). The V.C.H. refers to an 1857 observation of a double ditch in the foundations of the Corn Exchange, somewhere close to the 1994 excavations (Pugh 1975). It may be assumed that what was seen then were the two phases of ditch at a point where they ran side by side for a short distance. Test pits dug at Castle Lane the following year revealed at least 3.7m of early landfill just west of this ditch (Wessex Arch. 1995b), some or all of it quite probably derived from the levelling of the rampart though at what date this occurred is not certain.

- 5.5.3. The Outer Bailey defences (**DE002**) have been examined in several places and are rather better known. The line of the ditch has been observed in three separate locations, twice during field evaluations (Estcourt Hill and Rear of 33 Market Place) and once during a watching brief (Vales Lane) and it can be shown that the line is fossilised in many modern property boundaries. The ditch is roughly 8m wide and 4 - 5m deep and the remains of an internal bank 8m across were seen in the Estcourt Hill excavations. It should be noted that whilst no continuous section across the ditch was available at Estcourt Hill, the archaeologists estimated the width to be in excess of 12m. If this was so, it may indicate a broadening of the ditch at this point where it opened into the valley or met the castle ditch. No trace has been found yet of the wall or stockade that presumably stood on the bank at any of the sites; nor is there any evidence for the gates into the bailey from the town.
- 5.5.4. The ditch is usually assumed to have curved back at each end to meet the inner bailey ditch, but there is no evidence that this was the case at either the northern or the southern extremities of the bailey. The evidence relating to the date at which the rampart and ditch were levelled is at best ambivalent: pottery from the ditch at Estcourt Hill and 33, Market Place and from the Castle Lane landfill dated between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, but at Vales Lane the upper fills of the ditch contained 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century sherds. Since it is clear from the historic record that the levelling took place between these periods, all this indicates is that in some places at least, the infill must have subsided by the 19<sup>th</sup> century and required further levelling.
- 5.5.5. Several sources have commented on the location of the street “the Brittox”, meaning a bretache or barbican, in the outer bailey. The Victoria County History notes that the road through the outer bailey crossed two bridges “between which in 1380 was a barbican” (Pugh 1975:243). This reference, with the association of the street name, is usually interpreted as evidence for a bretache by the gate to either the inner or the outer bailey, although it is not known which. It could, however, equally well apply to the whole outer bailey in its effective role as an outwork or barbican to the castle.
- 5.5.6. In the early 14<sup>th</sup> century the town expanded into the area of the outer bailey when the latter ceased to have a military function. Long burgage plots laid out on either side of the main north-south road: it is possible that the road itself was laid out at this time. It is likely that the bailey defences were downgraded or even levelled as part of this process, with the rampart used as fill for the ditch (Haslam 1980).

- 5.5.7. The two churches, St John's (**DE004**) in the bailey and St Mary's (**DE005**) in the town, are both essentially medieval buildings, constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century to serve the garrison and townsfolk respectively. There is some argument as to which was established first: Haycock suggests that St John's was built about a decade after St. Mary's, to replace an earlier garrison chapel in the castle, but most architectural historians favour the stylistic evidence which indicates the primacy of St. John's. When the town expanded into the outer bailey a new parish was formed with St John's taking over the role of parish church.
- 5.5.8. There was also in the town a chapel (**DE075**) belonging to a Priory of the Knights Hospitaller, situated at the corner of Monday Market Street and Sidmouth Street (Bradby 1985). The priory is attested between the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the Dissolution in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but little evidence was found of its earlier existence in the town.
- 5.5.9. The relationship of Devizes' third early church, St James's (**DE006**) to the medieval settlement is uncertain and it is not clear whether there was a suburb or hamlet centred on this outlying church across the Green. The church may have been adjacent to a leper hospital that existed in Southbroom through the 13<sup>th</sup> century and into the 14<sup>th</sup>. This was dedicated to St James and St Denis, and its chapel may have been the precursor of the church built there in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Bradby 1985).
- 5.5.10. Two records of sections through the town defences (**DE003**) survive. Cunnington in 1945-7 measured the ditch at the gasworks on the northern side at 25 feet wide by 7 ft deep (7.6m x 2.1m). In 1974 the Wiltshire Archaeological Society recorded an excavated section south of Hare and Hounds Street (Haslam 1980). Here the ditch had a wide V-shaped profile with a rounded base, was at least 3.1m deep and over 7m wide at the top. Only slight traces of the inner rampart remained beneath the gardens inside the ditch. Neither the construction nor the infilling of the ditch is dated, although it had clearly occurred by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and whilst Haslam postulates a 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century date, with a Civil War recut, there is little positive evidence for this.
- 5.5.11. Despite the recent increase in archaeological activity in Devizes, remarkably few structural remains have been found relating to the medieval town. A wall footing and hearth were reported by Wessex Archaeology (Andrews & Mephram 1999) from Vale's Lane, along with several pits of 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century date (**DE048**). Not far away, at Willis Court (Arch. Investigations 1997), three 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century postholes were excavated (**DE047**), and six medieval pits were examined in the New Park Street assessment (**DE053**) (Bennell 1990).

## **5.6. Post Medieval (Fig 7)**

- 5.6.1. Archaeological evidence for the following centuries to c.1750 is fragmentary. There was the levelling of the castle rampart in the Castle Lane excavations, noted above (Wessex Archaeology 1995b). This probably took place after the civil war or even after 1723, at which time Aubrey's drawing of the town (Fig.1.) shows a substantial rampart still apparently standing in the area of the lane.

5.6.2. Many of the older buildings in the centre of Devizes are listed as 18<sup>th</sup> century and Long Street is noted by the schedule as 'almost entirely of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a consistently high quality of design and character'. However, where further investigation has taken place, these are often found to be new fronts attached to older 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings: of 39 buildings in Long Street listed as either 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century, 8 are suspected of or have been found to contain builds as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century. In one case though, no.9 Long Street, thought to be 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century was found to date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the WBR.

5.6.3. At the Old Joinery Works site in Vale's Lane late 17<sup>th</sup> century postholes were excavated (**DE043**), possibly the remains of a timber building (Andrews & Mephram 1999), and an undated but probably post-medieval wall foundation was exposed cutting the inner bailey ditch inside the Corn Exchange (**DE044**) (Wessex Archaeol. 1994b). Excavations by Wessex Archaeology (1994a) in the Market Place revealed two deep brick-lined shafts, one of which was probably a well, and the other of which may have been an ice house or ice-well (**DE051**). They were evidently post-medieval but were otherwise undated. Another well (**DE050**) and two further ice-houses of probable mid 17<sup>th</sup> century date were reported from New Park Street (**DE054**), one within the excavation and the other previously reported some 15m to the north-west (Bennell 1990, Russell 1993). Haslam (1980), also reported an 18<sup>th</sup> century well from Hare and Hounds Street and 17<sup>th</sup> century pottery was excavated from a pit (**DE045**) which cut the fill of the Outer Bailey ditch at the rear of Cromwell House (Saunders 1993).

5.6.4. The Town gaol (**DE022**) in Bridewell Street was built between 1810 and 1823, and demolished in 1927. William Stukeley's drawing of Devizes from the Northgate (1723) shows two windmills built in the medieval castle, one of which was built on the foundations of a medieval tower (**DE025**). A small number of metal finds of Post-Medieval date are recorded from various locations (**DE041-042, DE046**).

### **5.7. Industrial and Recent (Fig 8)**

5.7.1. The Kennet and Avon canal (**DE027**) is one of the most significant alterations of the industrial age, with a noticeable impact on both the road network and the development of an industrial area of the town. The canal was built across the northern side of the town, just outside the historic core. A wharf (**DE078**) was built to the north of New Park Street, which attracted a certain amount of industrial activity to this sector of the town.

5.7.2. The railway (**DE026**) came to Devizes in two phases. A branch line to the town was opened in 1857, which approached from the west. A Station was built on a low lying site north-west of the castle on what is now Station Road. This line was extended to the east in 1862 to create a link to London. This extension involved the digging of a tunnel under the castle and a cutting to its south-east through a small part of the outer bailey and towns defensive circuit. The main reason for the alignment of the railway was the difficult gradient on Caen Hill that would not allow it to pass on the northern side of the town.

- 5.7.3. The most significant Industrial buildings which survive in the town are Anstie's Mill (**DE076**) on the corner of Snuff Street and New Park Street which was built in 1785 and is one of the earliest purpose built factory buildings in the west of England, and the Wadworths Brewery (**DE077**) on the corner of North Gate Street and New Park Street which was built in 1885.
- 5.7.4. A workhouse (**DE073**) was built in 1836 on a site east of the historic core of the town. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century this building was converted into a small hospital before being demolished in 1992. The North Wiltshire Foundry (**DE074**) was a large foundry site and engineering works, demolished to make way for new supermarket.
- 5.7.5. A gasworks (**DE023**) was built on a site adjacent to the wharf in 1827 and rapidly expanded across the line of the towns' defences. Although closed in 1955 the gasholders survived on the site into the 1990's.
- 5.7.6. In Devizes, numerous features have been recorded from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, for example on the North Gate Street site, where several 19<sup>th</sup> century wells, cisterns and cellars were observed (**DE050**). One well on the site may be earlier than the others but like so many of the recent structures it has not been closely dated. The same can be said of a stone-capped cellar at West end of the site of the new West Central Car Park (**DE071**) (both are probably 18<sup>th</sup> century but could be later (Wessex Archaeol. 1995a, 1998). The watching brief carried out in Sheep Street (**DE072**) (Wilts. Rescue Archaeol. 1986) also revealed a brick cellar dated to the late 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It should also be noted that the uppermost fills of the medieval ditches on some sites have contained 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century dating evidence (e.g. the Old Joinery Works, Andrews & Mephram 1999).
- 5.7.7. Among the more significant public buildings of this period are the Old and 'new' Town Halls in Wine St. (**DE058**) and St John's St. (**DE021**) respectively, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Law Courts (**DE057**), and the Corn Exchange (**DE020**).

## **5.8. Built Heritage**

- 5.8.1. This section of the report is intended to provide an introduction to the surviving built heritage of Devizes, and as such is not designed to be a comprehensive account of the town's notable structures, but is a selection of the salient architectural features and buildings within the Study Area, including, if present, significant unlisted structures. This data has been compiled by Wiltshire Buildings Record.
- 5.8.2. Detailed lists of historic buildings and architectural detail are included as Appendices 3, 4 & 5. Although individual Grade II listed buildings may be (where relevant) discussed in this section, they are not included as a comprehensive list in the Appendices, due to the very large quantities of additional data this would involve. Researchers seeking information on Grade II structures are directed to the appropriate Department of Environment or Department of National Heritage schedule lists.

### 5.8.3. Twelfth Century

5.8.3.1. The earliest settlement of the town occurred at the castle site in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The remains there are listed and scheduled as an ancient monument. The church of John the Baptist nearby to the south-west appears to have a similar start date and is associated with this first development.

5.8.3.2. The market place for the new town was in the area bounded by Monday Market Street to the north-east, and Maryport Street to the south-west, in the irregular space to the south of St Mary's church, which is also Norman in origin.

### 5.8.4. Fifteenth Century

5.8.4.1. The earliest domestic buildings recorded are within the Maryport Street Area. These are Great Porch House in Monday Market Street, a 15<sup>th</sup> century good-quality timber framed hall and crosswing house, also 39 & 39A New Park Street, 46 to 49 Northgate Street, 4 St John's Court, 6-9, The Lamb Inn, and 25 and 26 St John's Street, all also of 15<sup>th</sup> century date.

5.8.4.2. The church of St James, standing at the end of Estcourt Street is of 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century date and was originally a chapel within the parish of Bishop's Cannings and under the jurisdiction of Salisbury chapter until 1835.

5.8.4.3. Infilling at the south-east end of the Market Place in the 15<sup>th</sup> century or earlier produced St John's Street and the short narrow Wine Street which aligned with The Brittox to the east.

5.8.4.4. No.8 St John's Street has been found to be 15<sup>th</sup> century and no.20 the 15<sup>th</sup> century Lamb Inn (WBR fieldwork) hides behind a 17<sup>th</sup> century listed building description. Nos 25 & 26 have an 18<sup>th</sup> century façade to a 15<sup>th</sup> century interior.

### 5.8.5. Sixteenth Century

5.8.5.1. Part of the Bear Hotel survives from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and no.34 Maryport Street is the White Bear Inn, Monday Market Street, a 16<sup>th</sup> century inn.

### 5.8.6. Seventeenth Century

5.8.6.1. Although the buildings infilling the area of the former market place now have a predominantly 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century appearance several in Maryport Street are noted as 18<sup>th</sup> century re-frontings of earlier buildings (no.s 3 & 4 are 17<sup>th</sup> century – WBR fieldwork). Along Bridewell Street the earliest building recorded is 24-26, dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Black Swan Hotel has been found to be 17<sup>th</sup> century (WBR fieldwork).

5.8.6.2. In Long Street, where further investigation has taken place on buildings listed as 18<sup>th</sup> century, these are often found to be re-frontings of older (16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century) buildings.

### 5.8.7. Eighteenth Century

5.8.7.1. Many of the listed buildings in the centre of Devizes are 18<sup>th</sup> century, and are listed as such. Long Street is noted by the schedule as 'almost entirely of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a consistently high quality of design and character. In one

case though, no.9 Long Street, thought to be 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century was found to date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the WBR.

#### **5.8.8. *Nineteenth Century.***

5.8.8.1. After the building of the canal, completed in 1807-10 Devizes was changed further, causing the construction of the stone bridges over the canal, various wharves and buildings associated with them such as Bridge House on the Bath Road, a possible lock-keeper's cottage, and 4 other houses

5.8.8.2. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in the town centre were being 'fast displaced' by 'handsome modern dwellings'. J Needham Tayler was responsible for new shops on the south-east side of the Brittox, new houses on the south side of Wine Street and in Long Street, and Trafalgar Place in 1844 along with Southgate House and Villas.

5.8.8.3. Other areas built up at this time were in Sidmouth Street, Bath Road, Southbroom Road and Morris Lane. There was much infilling in the form of terraces along the Bath Road, and associated with the canal. Employment stimulated by the arrival of the canal meant that small workers' houses were fitted into courts and gardens behind existing houses. These are seen in Snuff Street and on either side of Bridewell Street amongst other areas. Such buildings, by virtue of their construction, are vulnerable.

5.8.8.4. Most of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century residential building took place to the east of the town in the Southbroom area and along the Bath and Chippenham roads. In the town centre many older buildings tended to be replaced, especially in The Brittox, a commercial area at least since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

## **6. PLAN FORM ANALYSIS**

### **6.1. *Introduction***

6.1.1. The town has been divided into components, each representing blocks of activity and sub-divided by period. Devizes has no foundation in the prehistoric period, although unrelated archaeological remains belonging to this period are present within the study area. Evidence for a substantial Romano-British settlement is beginning to emerge on the south-east side of the town, but this would appear to be of rural rather than urban character. No evidence for Saxon settlement activity either in or close to the town and it is clear that Devizes is very much a post-conquest. For the medieval and later periods it is possible to begin to identify the different plan form components which make up the town and these are illustrated in the stated figures.

6.1.2. It should be stressed that for some of these components the evidence is not strong and their identification and mapping is based on parallels from other towns, a broad understanding of the nature of urbanism in southern England and guesswork.



COMPONENT	PERIOD	COMPONENT TYPE	FIGURE No.
COM 1	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Castle, keep and inner defences	9
COM 2	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	The Inner bailey	9
COM 3	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	The Outer bailey	9
COM 4	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Church of St John's	9
COM5	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Market Place	9
COM 6	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Church of St Mary's	9
COM 7	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Early Settlement	9
COM8	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Town Defences	9
COM 9	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Deer Park	9
COM10	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> Century	Leper Hospital	9
COM11	Late medieval	New Planned Market	10
COM12	Late medieval	Planned settlement	10
COM13	Late medieval	Priory Chapel	10
COM14	Late medieval	Northern Settlement growth	10
COM15	Late medieval	Southern Settlement growth	10
COM16	Late medieval	Market infilling (New Port)	10
COM17	Late medieval	Market infilling (Old Port)	10
COM18	Late medieval	Church of St James	10
COM19	Late medieval	The Green	10
COM20	Late medieval	Extra Mural Suburb	10
COM21	Industrial	Anstie's Factory	11
COM 22	Industrial	Kennet and Avon Canal	11
COM23	Industrial	Railway	11
COM24	Industrial	Gasworks	11
COM25	Industrial	Brewery	11
COM26	Industrial	North Wilts Foundry	11
COM27	Industrial	Workhouse	11

**Table 2:** Plan form components. (The period column denotes the period within which that component had its origins.)

## 6.2. Planform - The Early Town (12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century, Fig 9)

6.2.1. **COM1 - Castle Keep and Inner Defences.** The layout of Devizes owes its shape almost entirely to the layout of the Norman castle and its multiple bailey plan. The core of the castle, its keep and inner courtyard was situated on a spur of land surrounded on three sides by steep natural slopes. Although initially built in timber this was quickly rebuilt in stone and according to contemporary historians grew into a substantial and well defended establishment.

6.2.2. **COM2 - The Inner Bailey.** To the east of the inner defences an inner bailey was built. A substantial ditch ran across the neck of the natural spur enclosing an area of approximately 2.5 hectares. Only one section of this ditch has been seen in recent times and that in far from ideal circumstances during development in the basement of the Corn Exchange. No evidence for a bank or the nature of the defences, timber or stone, has been recovered although a significant bank can be assumed. Evidence of two phases of ditch construction was recorded with an initial smaller ditch replaced by a much deeper and wider ditch. Although no dating evidence for this remodelling has been recovered it is perhaps most likely to have occurred following the fire of 1113 when the castle was substantially remodelled. Additionally no evidence has been produced as to the location and form of the gateway into the inner bailey, although it has been suggested that this is more likely to have lain on Castle Lane rather than Castle Road which would appear to be a 19<sup>th</sup> century addition.

- 6.2.3. **COM3 - The Outer Bailey.** The castles outer bailey occupied a large kidney shaped area surrounded by another substantial ditch and bank. As the line of this defensive circuit is reflected in the modern topography delineating the area of the inner bailey has been fairly straightforward. The main gate into the outer bailey probably lay towards the eastern end of the Brittox. It is possible that subsidiary gates lay on Long Street to the south and North Gate to the north. The presence of three gates would have significantly reduced the defensive capabilities of the outer bailey. However, it might have been considered that the multi bailey layout and the strength of the inner defences were enough to allow this strategic risk The exact location of these gate is yet to be established
- 6.2.4. **COM4- Church of St Johns.** Within the outer bailey St Johns church was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The location of this church close by the possible southern gate into the outer bailey would also have given it a strategic function. A significant proportion of its original fabric still survives and the church was probably intended to be used to service the garrison and probably supplemented a chapel which would have existed within the inner core of the castle. The scale and detail found on St Johns is a clear indication of the status of the castle in the 12<sup>th</sup> century as well as a reflection of its ownership by the Bishops of Salisbury.
- 6.2.5. **COM5 - Market Place.** The early market place is identified with Monday Market St. which lies at the eastern end of the Brittox and appears to lend weight to this being the location of the main gate. The market may initially have been held in an open space deliberately maintained by the garrison in front of the gate and the barbican.
- 6.2.6. **COM6 - Church of St Mary's.** St Mary's was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century to provide the growing population with a parish church.
- 6.2.7. **COM7 - Early Settlement.** A civilian settlement grew up outside the main gate into the castle. This phase of settlement growth outside the castle was almost certainly unplanned
- 6.2.8. **COM9 - Town Defences.** The original area of civilian settlement, or Old Port, was at some point given its own defences, a bank and ditch, which enclosed a large area outside the outer bailey defences. It would appear unlikely that the town occupied more than a small part of this area in its initial phase.
- 6.2.9. **COM8 - Deer Park.** In the valley to the west of the castle a large Deer Park was laid out. The park pale for this still survives in long sections in the landscape west of the town. It will be noted that for the purposes of this report the line of the town defences west of the castle follows Haslam's suggested route across the valley floor. This appears to be based on a drawing by Stukely (Fig. 1) which shows the rampart disappearing over the edge of the valley, then apparently reappearing on the same line at the base of the motte and continuing in a long curve to the south. There seems little defensive advantage to this arrangement, and it is tempting to suggest that what Stukely's drawing either shows the Deer Park boundary or is misinterpreted. It seems more likely

that the town rampart continues along the high ground as indicated in Fig. 9. There are no extant earthworks to support either hypothesis.

6.2.10. **COM10- Leper Hospital.** East of the town at Southbroom a leper hospital existed from the 13<sup>th</sup> century into the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The location or character of this institution is not securely understood, the presence of the 15<sup>th</sup> century St James Church (see below 7.3.9), however, may be a strong indication of ecclesiastical activity and land ownership in the area.

### **6.3. Planform - Late Medieval (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century, Fig 10)**

6.3.1. **COM11 - New Planned Market.** By the early 14<sup>th</sup> century the outer bailey of the castle appears to have ceased having any military function and documentary evidence suggests civilian encroachment was occurring. No direct evidence survives to indicate whether this development was planned or organic, but the presence of a broad long market with regular burgage plots laid out around it would appear to suggest the former. This development, which became known as the New Port, would have been fed with traffic coming from the south, north and west and would have generated significant revenues for the landowners, the Crown. This kind of commercial enterprise is seen elsewhere in Wiltshire, in particular at Marlborough, Warminster and Salisbury. It may well be at this time that castle lane and the Brittox lost their alignment, as part of the general rationalisation of the bailey layout. The old Market place still existed, although almost certainly in a reduced area.

6.3.2. **COM12 - Planned Settlement.** Around the new market a series of regular burgage plots were laid out. These are still evident, especially along its eastern side.

6.3.3. **COM13 - Priory Chapel.** Documentary evidence exists for a Priory Chapel of the knights Hospitallers from at least the 14<sup>th</sup> century through to the dissolution in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century. The evidence suggests that this was located on the corner of Monday Market Street and Sidmouth Street, a strategically important point adjacent to the main entrance into the early town. This might indicate an earlier date for its foundation than the existing records suggest. As this was not apparently a full monastic institution it probably occupied a fairly small area of the town.

6.3.4. **COM14 - Northern Settlement Growth.** The Settlement area outside the former outer bailey also grew during this period. The evidence suggests that the towns' defences, which still existed in some form, confined this. Expansion of the town in the northern sector ran along New Park Street to North Gate. Later Post Medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> century settlement in this area included a substantial amount of cellaring which has destroyed much of the evidence of medieval activity.

6.3.5. **COM15 - Southern Settlement Growth.** Settlement growth to the south was concentrated along Bridewell Street and Long Street.

- 6.3.6. **COM16 - Market Infilling (New Port).** In common with most medieval markets places the development of more permanent commercial properties within the open space seems to have occurred quite rapidly. In the new market significant infilling occurred at its southern end. There is some evidence from the surviving buildings in the area that this may have been occurring by the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- 6.3.7. **COM17 - Market Infilling (Old Port).** The old market place was more substantially infilled, possibly at an earlier date, as the importance of this area would have reduced after the opening of the new market place.
- 6.3.8. St. John's (**COM4**) became a Parish church, with the town split along the outer bailey ditch into two parishes. There is some evidence that the defensive line around both the town and the outer bailey were being levelled by the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The destruction of these substantial earthwork features was probably piecemeal and their existence is reflected even today in the property boundaries in the town.
- 6.3.9. **COM18 - Church of St James.** The Church of St. James was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- 6.3.10. **COM19 - The Green.** It is unclear in which phase of medieval development the Green became a feature of the town, but in the earlier phase it lay outside the town's defensive circuit and was probably therefore only formalised towards the end of the medieval period.
- 6.3.11. **COM20 - Extra Mural Suburb.** There is no archaeological, documentary or cartographic evidence of a settlement served by the new church of St James. However, it seems inconceivable that such a large new church would have been built at this location had not a significant suburb not grown up in this area.

#### **6.4. Post Medieval**

- 6.4.1. The form of the town would have changed little in the post medieval period, aside from the small-scale expansion mentioned above. Maps of the town dating to the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century suggest that the medieval pattern continued to dominate with properties lining the street frontages and gardens or allotments to the rear. Some new streets, such as New Street, now Snuff Street, were laid out.

#### **6.5. Planform - Industrial (Fig 11)**

- 6.5.1. **COM21 - Ansties Factory.** The prosperity of Devizes grew during the 18<sup>th</sup> century on the back of the cloth trade. Although much of the production was based on a cottage industry in 1785 one of the first factories in the west of England was built on New Park Street. This building which still stands was originally built for the manufacture of 'cassimeres', a closely woven fancy fabric. Although this line of trade lasted for only a short period the factory survived and was used as a silk mill in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the tobacco industry in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The building has recently been converted into housing. The cloth trade all but died out in Devizes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

- 6.5.2. **COM22 - Kennet and Avon Canal.** The construction of the Kennet and Avon Canal, and wharf, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century brought a new period of expansion to the town. The canal, which opened in 1810, was cut to the north of the historic core of the town put Devizes onto one of the main transport links between London and the south-west.
- 6.5.3. **COM23 - Railway.** The railway came to the town in 1857, built along the south-western edge of the town, and tunnelled under the castle. Whilst bringing about the rapid decline of the canal the railway helped to open up the town for new development. The concomitant increase in population had, by 1940, doubled the area of settlement and linked the medieval centres of Devizes and Wick. During this period there was again considerable reconstruction in the old town and some concentration of industrial activity near the canal.
- 6.5.4. **COM24 - Brewery.** The Wadworths Brewery was built in 1885 on its current site at North Gate.
- 6.5.5. **COM25 - Gasworks.** The Gasworks were located on a site between the brewery and the wharf in 1826.
- 6.5.6. **COM26 - North Wilts Foundry.** The North Wilts Foundry, located between the town and Southbroom, specialised in the manufacture and repair of agricultural machinery, especially steam engines.
- 6.5.7. **COM27- Workhouse.** A workhouse was built on the north-eastern side of the town in 1836. This was converted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century into a small cottage hospital with many new additions and demolished in 1992.

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

### ***7.1. Summary of Research***

- 7.1.1. The history of the town is well documented and has been extensively studied, with a number of published accounts produced over the last century or so. Devizes appears to post-date the Domesday survey, but documentary and architectural evidence have provided the basis for a clear reconstruction of its development through the medieval period and into the industrial age.
- 7.1.2. Archaeological investigations have recovered some good evidence relating to the castle and the town defences. Unfortunately there has been no modern large-scale interventions on the castle or its defences. There has been even less investigation of the secular infrastructure of the town. To date few traces of medieval houses and domestic structures have been found in the old town area and nothing at all of roads or property boundaries. In places cellars and industrial landscaping have destroyed or badly damaged the archaeology, whilst elsewhere watching briefs may not have penetrated to the surviving early archaeology. Only a small percentage of the town has been studied, and only a small proportion of that fully excavated, and many of the most important locations have yet to be examined.

## **7.2. The Growth of the Town (Fig 12)**

### **7.2.1. Introduction**

7.2.1.1. Modern Devizes is the result of the amalgamation of at least two separate medieval settlements, the town itself, and the hamlet of Wick, just south of the town. Both appear to be post-conquest settlements with no evidence to date of Anglo-Saxon origins. There is archaeological evidence for an area of Romano-British settlement between Wick and Nursteed Road. Both fall just outside the core study area defined for this project, but should still be considered in the development of any development strategy for the town in the future.

### **7.2.2. Late Medieval**

7.2.2.1. In the historic town, there appear to have been five main phases of development. The first, in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, was the construction of the castle and the growth of a settlement nearby. The establishment of a market place and development outside the walls, probably concentrated near the main gates, must have followed soon afterwards, and the settlement was probably already in existence when Roger rebuilt the castle in stone. Bishop Roger's castle was a strong fortress with a keep and two baileys, the outer one being laid out on a grand scale.

7.2.2.2. Phase two, still within the medieval period, was the development of the New Port, the area inside the outer bailey. During this phase, essentially covering the 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, it is likely that the town's outer defences were formalised, and that the area within the bank became more fully developed. There may also have been some suburban development along Estcourt Road opposite the Green.

### **7.2.3. Post Medieval**

7.2.3.1. Occasional replacement of buildings, usually in timber and with thatched roofs, continued into the 17<sup>th</sup> century. There is no evidence for significant expansion in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and phase three can only really be said to begin with the growth of the wool trade in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Dore's map of 1759 shows some encroachment on to the Green across the town ditch, and the establishment of several large houses along the south side of the Green. The Island, a small enclave of development at the north-west apex of the Green, probably came into being during this period. There was also a little expansion along the Bath and Potterne Roads.

### **7.2.4. Industrial and Modern**

7.2.4.1. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the coming of the canal and railway shifted the focus north-westwards, and the town expanded along the ridge, with a concentration of new industrial activity there and between Estcourt Rd. and the canal. The canal and railways, and the change to a commercial economy brought about a steady increase in the population of the town, reflected in a period of rebuilding and subdivision of the old burgage plots within the town occurring alongside a general expansion of the town limits. Much of the rebuilding was as a direct consequence of the Improvement Commission of 1825: the medieval Brittox was widened and the old timber buildings replaced. Workers' houses were built in quantity in the Bridewell and Sheep street

areas, whilst similar developments occurred in Southbroom and the town began to extend southward. The building of a rail halt at Pan's Lane in 1929 provided another focus for development, and accelerated the infilling of the green belt between Wick and the town. This expansion has continued intermittently to the present day, with the urban area by the end of the war stretching well to the east and south of the old town, as well as to the west on either side of the old deer park.

7.2.4.2. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century growth has been more suburban than commercial, and the bulk of this fifth phase of development was to the south and east, although expansion did continue west along the ridge as well.

### ***7.3. The Archaeological Potential***

7.3.1. One of the principal aims of this phase of the Extensive Urban Survey is to examine the archaeological potential of the town to assist with the development of a management strategy in the later phase of the project. Whilst all of the core town may be considered reasonably important archaeologically, it is necessary to try to highlight those areas of greater interest, either because of the importance of the remains or because better than average preservation is expected there.

7.3.2. The provision of water and drainage for the town has, naturally, had a significant impact on the survival of the archaeology. In 1792 or soon afterwards, James Sutton built a reservoir under the Butchers Shambles and by 1839 there was another in Couch Lane to provide water for street cleansing. Deep sewers were dug beneath the Market Place in 1865, and extended to the rest of the town over the next few years; the sewage works on the north side of the castle were completed in 1886. Archaeological investigations in the town and the provision of modern services have demonstrated very clearly that the soft greensand under the town has encouraged a great deal of excavation in the post medieval and modern periods. Wells, cellars, tunnels and icehouses have been found at various locations throughout the historic core of the town.

7.3.3. Despite the disturbance caused by industrial activity and urban regeneration, the chances remain reasonably high for the discovery of patches of well preserved stratigraphy within the old town. The original layout is still clearly visible in the modern street pattern, and the line of the defences is thus well established.

7.3.4. The plan of the castle and inner bailey still lacks much detail, and even the excavations on the keep itself might benefit from further examination. At a basic level, it would be useful to know the route taken to approach the motte and the location of the various gates to the castle. It would also be valuable to investigate the supposed barbican, if its location can ever be found. Unlike the walls, which appear to have rested on earthen ramparts, the barbican and

gates should have had proper foundations, which may have survived the post-medieval levelling, and landscaping.

- 7.3.5. The castle and town defences have been observed a number of times during development work in the town. However, there has been no modern investigation of either the inner or outer bailey defences. We have little data about the scale of the defences, their date of construction and their abandonment and eventual removal. It is highly likely that the deposits contained within the lower fills of the large defensive ditches will contain a great deal of artefactual and environmental data relating to the origins of the town.
- 7.3.6. Within the town, considerable further evidence is needed relating to medieval buildings and burgage plots. In the new port, it would be especially useful to get any data relating to the outer bailey phase, either structural or in the form of pits and cut features. In the old port, the major question remains as to whether this part of the settlement was the result of planned or purely organic development around the gates to the outer bailey. The key probably lies in the layout of plots around, and the archaeology within, the area of the Monday Market place, but careful excavation would be required to unravel what is likely to be quite ephemeral evidence.
- 7.3.7. The buildings of the town are of considerable interest. It is clear from the limited survey work which the Wiltshire Buildings record have been able to carry out that many of the listings descriptions have missed out some very important detail. It seems likely that more medieval buildings survive in the town than is currently known. It is also clear that several important buildings of the industrial period are not currently listed. A more comprehensive survey of the towns' historic buildings would provide worthwhile improvements in our understanding.
- 7.3.8. The area around the Green is also of considerable interest. The origins of this area of suburban development are unknown. The location and nature of the leper hospital and its influence on subsequent settlement around St James's church would be valuable research goals. Between the Green and the canal is an industrial age landscape, including a foundry, the cottage hospital, the site of the workhouse, and some early suburban development; at present this is a low research priority, but may become more important as archaeological perspectives change.



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## **9. MAPS**

**1654.** Map of Old Park, Devizes. Edward May.

**1737/8.** Devizes: South Ward. John Overton.

**1759.** Devizes with gardens and nurseries. Edward Does.

**1773.** Wiltshire map series, No 11: Devizes. Andrews & Dury.

**1793.** Plan of the proposed canal between the River Kennet and the River Avon. Rennie (Chandler 1998).

**1801.** A New map of the county of Wiltshire. Charles Smith (Chandler 1998).

**1820.** Map of the county of Wiltshire. Greenwood (Chandler 1998).

**1839.** Tithe Map of the parish of St John the Baptist, Devizes.

**1886.** Ordnance Survey, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1:500 series.

**1900.** Ordnance Survey, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1:2500 series.

**1923.** Ordnance Survey, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1:2500 Series.

**1938.** Ordnance Survey, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (with revisions), 1:2500 Series.

## 10. APPENDICES

**Appendix 1:** Towns included in the Extensive Urban Survey of Wiltshire, with reference to urban criteria defined by Heighway (1972).

	<b>Town</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
1	Amesbury	iii, xi
2	Bradford-on-Avon	iii, vi, viii, xi
3	Calne	iii,v
4	Chippenham	iii, viii, x
5	Cricklade	i, ii, v, xii
6	CUNETIO	i, ii, vi
7	Devizes	i, ii, iii, v, vi, vii, ix, xi
8	Downton	ii, iii, v
9	DUROCORNIVM	i, ii vi
10	EASTON GREY	i, vi
11	Great Bedwyn	iii, iv
12	Heytesbury	ii, iii
13	Highworth	ii, iv
14	Hindon	ii, vi, ix
15	Lacock	ii, iii, xi
16	Ludgershall	v
17	Malmesbury	i, iii, iv, xi
18	Market Lavington	ii, iii, v
19	Marlborough	ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, ix, xi
20	Melksham	iii, vi
21	Mere	ii, iii
22	Ramsbury	viii, xi
23	Salisbury	i, ii, iii, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, x, xi,
24	Sherston	ii, iii
25	SORVIODUNUM	i, vi
26	Swindon	iii, vii, viii
27	Tilshead	iii, v
28	Tisbury	vii, xi
29	Trowbridge	ii, iii, viii
30	Warminster	ii, iii, iv, vii
31	Westbury	iii, viii
32	Wilton	i, iv, v, vi, vii,
33	Wootton Bassett	ii, iii, v, viii
34	VERLUCIO	ii, vi

## Appendix 2: Urban Criteria set out in Heighway (1972)

- i) *Urban Defences*: A town, at some time in its history, might have a wall, or bank and ditch with wooden defences.
- ii) *Internal Street plan*: A town may be planned at any moment in its history; part of its street pattern may display evidence of deliberate planning, such as a grid lay-out. A street plan with provision for a market place will also distinguish a town.
- iii) *Market*: Perhaps the only indispensable criterion, although a market alone does not distinguish a town. The date of a market charter is usually taken in this study as indicating the date by which the place had become a town.
- iv) *Mint*: The existence of a mint often denotes a town.
- v) *Legal existence*: This aspect of the town was one of the first to be studied and formed the basis of most of the early studies of towns. It has long been evident that legal history, once a favoured method of study does not provide the only clue to urban origins, in which economic causes play an important part. However, the date of a borough charter or the dates of taxation at borough rates or of the town's parliamentary franchise may provide a date from which the place may be called a town.
- vi) *Position*: A town may have a central position in a network of communications and this can be a clue to its importance. This can be a difficult criterion to assess as it involves knowledge of the age of the road system in relation to the town itself, the past navigability of rivers, and other related problems.
- vii) *Population*: A town will often have or have had a high density and size of population compared with surrounding places.
- viii) *Diversified economic base*: Archaeological or documentary evidence might suggest a diversified economic base, particularly a concentration of various crafts in one area, and evidence of long distance trade. For earlier periods, only archaeological evidence can determine this; it is a reflection on the state of urban archaeology that so little is known of this aspect.
- ix) *House plot and house type*: The town-plan may show long, narrow 'burgage-type' plots; surviving houses will be urban rather than rural in form.
- x) *Social differentiation*: A town should contain a wide range of social classes and especially possess a middle class. House types, demonstrated in the earlier periods by archaeology, again form part of the evidence.
- xi) The presence of a *complex religious organisation* may also denote a town; i.e. the possession of more than one parish church or the existence of other institutions, especially monastic.
- xii) *Judicial centre*: A town may be a centre for courts of national or local status.



33 & 34 St John's Street - 17<sup>th</sup> century  
 35, Barford House St John's Street - 18<sup>th</sup> century  
 39, St John's Street - 18<sup>th</sup> century  
 29 & 30 Handel House, St John's Street - 19<sup>th</sup> century  
 Heathcote House, Southbroom Road - 18<sup>th</sup> century  
 Boundary wall to front, Heathcote Ho.- 18<sup>th</sup> century  
 Boundary wall of Southbroom Ho. Incl. small gateway to Devizes Green - 18<sup>th</sup>  
 century  
 1, Old Town Hall, Wine Street - 18<sup>th</sup> century

#### **Appendix 4: Buildings Survival by Century**

The following is a list of buildings arranged by date order. The information is taken from the schedule of listed building and from the Wiltshire Buildings Records own data.

Norman – St John the Baptist' Church, St John's Churchyard  
 Norman/15<sup>th</sup> century – Church of St Mary, New Park Street

12<sup>th</sup> century – remains associated with the earliest settlement at Devizes Castle

14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century – St James Church, Estcourt Street

15<sup>th</sup> century – 6 & 7, 8 Great Porch House, Monday Market Street  
 39 & 39A New Park Street  
 46 to 49 Northgate Street  
 4 St John's Court  
 6 to 9 St John's Street  
 The Lamb Inn, “  
 25 & 26 “  
 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century – 13 High Street

16<sup>th</sup> century -52 Church Walk  
 52 Long Street  
 part Bear Hotel, Market Place  
 7 to 10 Northgate Street  
 2 & 3 St John's Alley  
 6 & premises to north backing onto 7,8, & 9 St John's Alley

16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century - 20 Long Street  
 25, Three Crowns Inn & no.26 Maryport Street  
 1 & 2 St John's Court

17<sup>th</sup> century – 1 & 2 The Brittox  
 5 The Brittox  
 Hare and Hounds Inn, Hare and Hounds Street  
 6 High Street  
 18 & 19 High Street  
 Black Swan, 20 – 22 High Street

43 & 44 Long Street  
51 Long Street  
The Black Swan Hotel, Market Place  
3 & 4 Maryport Street  
10 to 12 Monday Market Street  
44 & 45 New Park Street  
The Nags Head, New Park Street  
50 to 52, Northgate Street  
54 & 55 Northgate Street  
6 to 10 The Nursery  
4 & 5 St John's Alley  
Sexton's Cottage, St John's Churchyard  
33 & 34 St John's Street  
40 St John's Street  
1 Sidmouth Street  
23 to 27 Southbroom Road

17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century - 11, 11A & 12 Bridewell Street

18<sup>th</sup> century - Castle Grounds House  
2 buildings in Bath Road  
3 buildings in Bridewell Street  
6 buildings in The Brittox  
3 buildings in Dunkirk  
3 buildings in Estcourt Street  
2 & 4 Hare and Hounds Street  
Old Park House, Hartmoor Road  
6 buildings in the High Street  
Garden pavilion at Hillworth House, Hillworth Road  
3 buildings in Little Brittox  
25 buildings in Long Street  
27 buildings in Market Place  
7 buildings in Maryport Street  
3 buildings in Monday Market Street  
1-3 St Mary's Cottages, New Park Road  
11 buildings in New Park Street  
9 buildings in Northgate Street  
2 buildings in St John's Churchyard  
The Liberal Club, St John's Court  
12 buildings in St John's Street  
Tandoori Restaurant in Sheep Street  
4 buildings in Sidmouth Street  
8 buildings in Southbroom Road  
6 buildings in Southgate  
6 buildings in Wine Street  
giving a total of 153 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings

19<sup>th</sup> century - 3 buildings on Devizes Castle site  
17 buildings in Bath Road  
2 buildings in Bellevue Road



Highclere, The Breach  
4 buildings in Bridewell Street  
3 buildings in The Brittox  
Caen Hill House, Caen Hill  
6 Carlton Terrace  
44 Church Walk  
warehouse in Commercial Road  
Wharf Theatre, Couch Lane  
Cyprus Terrace  
6 buildings in Estcourt Street  
1 Estcourt Terrace  
8 Hare & Hounds Street  
2 outbuildings at Old Park House, Hartmoor Road  
1 building in the High Street  
3 buildings in Hillworth Road  
1 & 2 Landsdowne Road  
1 building in Little Brittox  
9 buildings in London Road  
9 buildings in Long Street  
42 Longcroft Road  
14 buildings in Market Place  
10 buildings in Maryport Street  
4 buildings in Monday Market Street  
2 buildings in Morris Lane  
Cottage Hospital, New Park Road  
17 Buildings in New Park Street  
13 buildings in Northgate Street  
5 buildings in The Nursery  
89 Nursteed Road  
2 buildings in Pans Lane  
4 buildings in Potterne Road  
12A St John's Alley  
Gates & overthrow to churchyard from St John's Court  
1 & 2 St John's churchyard  
7 buildings in St John's Street  
2 buildings in St Joseph's Walk  
Church of the Immaculate Conception, St Joseph's Walk  
Parkdale House, St Joseph's Road  
New Baptist Chapel, Sheep Street  
7 buildings in Sidmouth Street  
12 buildings in Southbroom Place  
Southgate Inn, Southgate  
Terrace inc. no.6 Snuff Street  
22 Victoria Road

## **Appendix 5: Architectural Detail by Feature Type**

The VCH notes that the domestic building style of the late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century as evinced by the surviving timber-framed buildings of that date show that each had a uniform street elevation favouring a jettied upper floor, as those on the west side of St John's Alley. By the later 17<sup>th</sup> century gabled dormers were used, such as those at the Elm Tree in Long Street. Stukeley visiting in 1724 found the houses to be 'old' and mostly of timber.

After about 1650 there was a general move towards less combustible material in the construction of new buildings i.e. tiles rather than thatch, and brick chimneys. From the early 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards there was a rapid rise in the use of brick. This is evident in the good quality larger houses such as Parnella House in the Market Place and Greystone House in the High Street, the latter containing a good plaster ceiling.

Thatch continued to be used, however, until at least 1868.

As a corollary many timber framed buildings were given neat plaster fronts and sash windows in order to bring them up to date. As mentioned above, a number have been found in Long Street, Maryport Street, Monday Market Street, and St John's Street dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Those houses on the west side of Long Street, the most fashionable area in town, rebuilt during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, or early 19<sup>th</sup> century tended to be substantial with a central entrance. The VCH has suggested that the area from the Town Hall to the churchyard consists of older properties, altered but not rebuilt. This is borne out by recent fieldwork although older buildings have been found throughout Long Street, and including no.31 & 32, at the junction with Hillworth Road.

Other areas also contained good quality 18<sup>th</sup> century houses, notably, Brownston House in New Park Street, though this street and High Street had somewhat sunk in architectural importance by then.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a proliferation of working-class housing brought about by Canal employment. This consisted of low quality timber framed or brick houses in short terraces such as those in Snuff Street, and those ranges behind Bridewell Street on either side.

### **Vulnerable Buildings**

Vulnerable building types encountered so far by this survey are late 18<sup>th</sup> century and 19<sup>th</sup> century workshops, usually at the rear of buildings in the town centre. At least one slaughterhouse existed to the rear of 58 Northgate Street complete with ropes and pulleys, and flagged floor with drainage before the survey. Also such buildings now retained as outbuildings in residential areas i.e. the barn and Masonic temple to the rear of 31 Long Street must also be at risk from their obsolescence.

In Commercial Road a 19<sup>th</sup> century warehouse still remains but nearby a corn store of similar date has gone illustrating the vulnerability of structures now obsolete. Such

buildings are retained when turned to alternative use, or reused in their original capacity i.e. Wharf Theatre, Couch Lane and the forge at Lower Wharf.

A good number of icehouses, either the remains or whole vaults, have been found in the centre of Devizes. These do not survive as standing buildings in most cases but have been excavated or found during building works. These seem to date mostly from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Those known to be recorded are the remains of 2 brick icehouses (D Grant King) at the rear of 17 Market Place, an icehouse at the rear of 3-5 Monday Market Street (19<sup>th</sup> c – WBR), at the Nags Head, New Park Street, at Southbroom House, Southbroom Road (18<sup>th</sup> c – WBR), at Southgate House, Southgate (18<sup>th</sup> c – WBR) and Storage cellars to 9 Long Street, thought to be 18<sup>th</sup> century (WBR)

Other buildings potentially at risk –  
Granary at 44 & 45 New Park Street  
Buildings in Snuff factory yard, Snuff Street

Smaller buildings are not only at risk. St James' Hospital, formerly the workhouse, was built in 1836 and demolished within the last 20 years. Larger premises such as the North Wilts Foundry & Chivers Engineering and Joinery Works in Estcourt Street have made way for new developments such as Safeway. Other 19<sup>th</sup> century developments such as the Central Wiltshire Bacon Company Factory in Bath Road designed by E Isborn in 1899, and closed in 1960, and the United Dairies building in Pans Lane built in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are becoming increasingly less numerous.

Commercial premises listed are the brewery (Wadworths) and the Tobacco and Snuff Factory.

