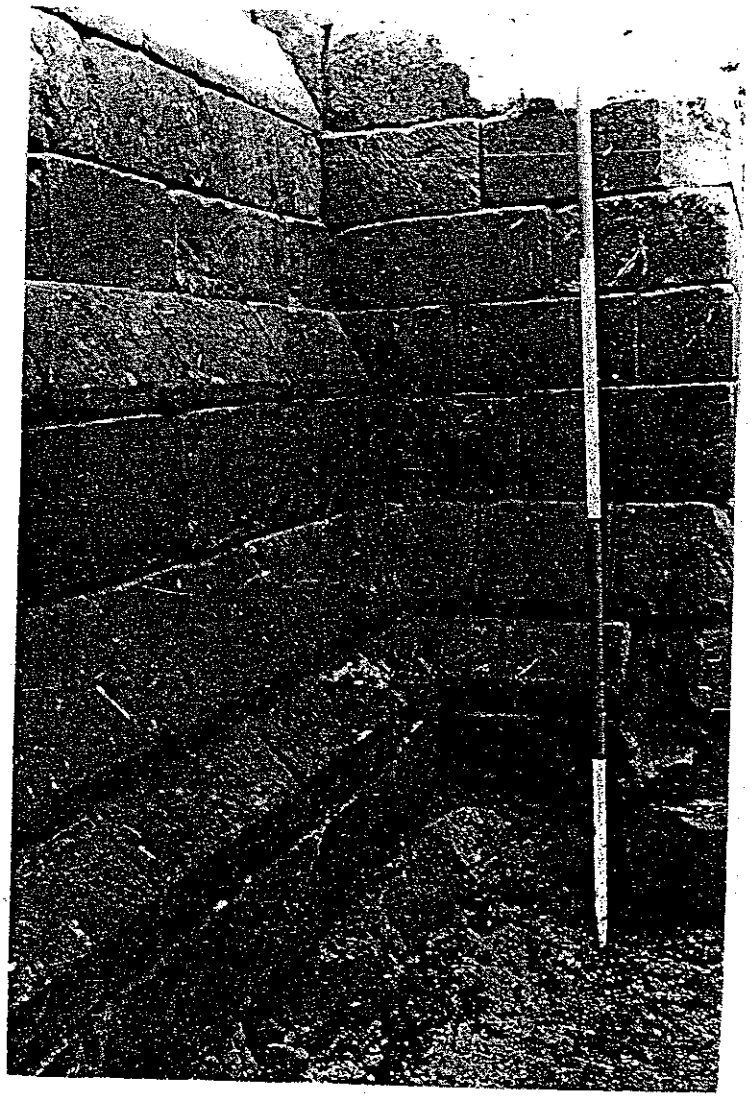
Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

Report No. 337

April 1995

An Archaeological Assessment of the Digbeth Economic Regeneration Area and Cheapside Industrial Area Birmingham



Birmingham Moat: Structure 1 (Watts 1980)

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Preface

If we were to begin a sequence of time-lapse photography over Digbeth and Deritend between 700 and 800 years ago we might see Digbeth start to grow around the principal south-easterly route from the medieval focus of Birmingham - the Church of Saint Martin's, the Bull Ring market, and the adjacent moated-manor house of the lords of Birmingham - down to the River Rea. Across the river, and at about the same time, the medieval suburb of Deritend in the ancient parish of Aston might also begin to grow along the sinuous roadway twisting between fields and meadows. While towards the top of what we now call Camp Hill, and adjacent to Deritend, lay the rural hamlet of Bordesley.

The street is a hive of activity as more and more people, animals, and wagons loaded with finished produce, raw materials and foodstuffs, regularly come and go from market. Along the road frontage the timber-framed homes and premises of traders and merchants near the market become more substantial and solid, whilst nearer the valley-bottom smaller buildings, some housing open-fronted forges and similar small-scale craft-works, cluster. The river, which regularly floods, particularly on the south side of the road, is increasingly dammed and channelled to power mills processing corn and iron, and to serve tanneries.

Roughly halfway through the film the army of Prince Rupert sacks this part of the town, as he claims these workshops have produced arms used by the Parliamentary Army against him.

The older timber buildings along the main road are gradually replaced in brick or roughly subdivided, and their back-plots built upon to house and provide small workshops for the increasing numbers of people who come to live in the town. By Georgian times surveyors with theodolites, possibly made from Brumaggem brass, begin to map the fields and meadows surrounding the main road, and regular streets and brick-built houses spring up shortly after. Canals, and later railways, snake their way into the area and carry Birmingham products to destinations across the globe. The population pressure becomes such that richer people leave the houses built a short while ago on the new and regular roads, and move further into the countryside. The remaining houses are adapted into works, and slum-housing clustered in the dank and airless courts behind the larger buildings on the road frontages leads to increasing problems of health and sanitation for the poorer people who live there. Greater and greater swathes of countryside disappear under brick and mortar as working class people who can afford to, move to the suburbs. Suddenly we find ourselves sharing the view of a bomb-aimer in the cockpit of a Heinkel bomber; the city below looks ominous, enveloped by choking smoke lit by the vivid patches of incendiary flares and raging fires.

As the smoke clears for a second time, new buildings gradually replace bombed out shells and whole blocks of land are cleared for redevelopment. Hardly anyone lives in this part of the city now, although here and there buildings survive as evidence of an earlier way of life. Nevertheless, streams of people, now in cars and buses, still ebb and flow along the road going to offices, work, or shops. The camera clicks, and the film is over.

Our city is a product of centuries of endeavour and is literally built upon its own history. Just as our memories shape our personalities so a city has a memory, a collective memory, in stones and mortar and buried remains of past activities, waiting to be explored. This memory is something of value, as it can inform the present and shape the future, but it is also a finite, irreplaceable and increasingly vulnerable resource.

The Survey Area: 1750, 1890, 1994

An Archaeological Desk-top Assessment of the Digbeth Economic Regeneration Area and Cheapside Industrial Area

Summary

This document introduces an archaeological assessment of parts of two planning zones in central Birmingham, designated the Digbeth Economic Regeneration Area (ERA) and the Cheapside Industrial Area (IA), which together comprise almost one third of the medieval town. The report, which is the first of its kind commissioned for the city centre, introduces the overall aims and objectives of the assessment, discussing the methodologies and types of sources utilised in relation to the results obtained from desk-top and fieldwork study.

The overall survey area includes several important archaeological sites including: two moats - the Birmingham Moat, partially recorded during redevelopment in 1975, and the Parsonage Moat, known from early maps; the site of Saint John's Chapel in Deritend; and the nationally important Grade II* listed timber-framed Old Crown Inn, perhaps the most tangible connection between historic and modern Birmingham. There are also two watermill sites within the survey area, and several important 19th and early 20th century buildings which chronicle aspects of the later industrial and social development of the area.

"If there is one archaeological topic in which England can claim to have international preeminence, it is in the industrial archaeology of the post-medieval period...the world heartland of the Industrial Revolution lies in midland and northern England...There is widespread popular recognition of these facts and much demand for the preservation and exposition of the remains of industrial archaeological sites..."

(English Heritage, Exploring Our Past, 1991)

Each town has its individual archaeological character and significance which should determine the approach taken to archaeological survey. Historical evidence together with a limited amount of previous archaeological work indicates Digbeth and Deritend were probably the districts most associated with early industrial development within the historic town, and, from a broader perspective, the role of Birmingham in the origins and development of industry is of key significance. By the time the antiquarian and travel writer John Leland described a pretty street called "Dyrtey...in which dwelle smithes and cuttelers" over 450 years ago, that process was already in action. Archaeological evidence could tell us a great deal about the lives and work of ordinary people who seldom appear in written historical records, but whose labours transformed Birmingham from a local market town into the workshop of the world.

However, before the present survey this archaeological resource was largely unquantified. The principle aim of this project was to begin to redress this situation, and provide a framework within which the archaeological heritage of the overall survey area may be defined, understood, sensibly managed, and handed onto future generations.

Results have indicated the high archaeological potential of a number of crucial zones within the overall survey area to address significant, but outstanding, questions of historical development from the town's origins to its industrial zenith in the Victorian period; these include areas near Smithfield Passage behind Edgbaston Street, the north side of upper Digbeth, most of lower Digbeth, and the north sides of Deritend, and Bordesley. Probable zones of archaeological destruction were also far fewer than anticipated throughout the survey area.

Introduction

In January 1995 Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) were commissioned by Birmingham City Council to undertake an archaeological desk-top assessment of the Digbeth ERA and Cheapside IA, Birmingham. This archaeological assessment forms part of overall development planning assessments carried out by the City Council, and follows briefs prepared by Dr Mike Hodder, Planning Archaeologist for the City Council (Hodder 1994 a; 1994 b).

The Survey Area (Fig.1)

The overall survey area is shown on Fig.1. The limits of the survey broadly correspond to the urban areas depicted on the earliest 18th century maps of Birmingham to the south and east of a line drawn along Edgbaston Street, through Saint Martin's Lane, to the back-plot line of the properties fronting Digbeth, along Park Street (Fig.2). None of the 18th century maps of Birmingham extend far enough eastwards to include Bordesley, which is first depicted on the Tomlinson map of Bordesley manor in 1760. For clarity, the results of the survey are ordered by modern street block, the numbering of each area is the same as the Geotechnical Assessment produced by Birmingham City Laboratories for the Digbeth ERA (BCL 1995).

Geology and Topography

Central Birmingham is situated on a narrow Keuper Sandstone ridge less than 0.5 km wide, which extends from the Lickey Hills in the southwest to Sutton Coldfield in the northeast (OS Solid Geology sheet 168). To the south-east of the ridge, which is located towards the northern end of the study area, is an area of red Mercia Mudstone. The edge of the Rea valley slopes down from the Bull Ring to the river, a tributary of the Tame, which at the bottom of Digbeth flows across a fault where water draining from the sandstone accumulates and issues as springs in the valley (VCH Warwicks, vii, 4-5). The drift geology mainly consists of scattered patches of sand and gravel, while deposits of alluvium have built up on the Rea valley floor (OS Drift Geology sheet 168).

Aims and Objectives

The main aims of the archaeological assessment may be summarised as follows:

1. Assessment of the available evidence
2. Development of an explicit research framework
3. Development and implementation of a management framework
4. Identification of research and management priorities

Birmingham City Council wishes to encourage new economic development within the Digbeth ERA and Cheapside IA, but in accordance with policy 8.36 of the Unitary Development Plan it will require developers to take account of the archaeological implications of redevelopment. The main aim of this assessment is to provide information concerning the survival of below-ground archaeological features and deposits and existing buildings and to evaluate their significance. This information can then be used to inform prospective developers as to the likely requirement for further archaeological work on a particular site. This requirement is likely to follow a sliding scale from sites with a high predictable potential for archaeological survival and importance, to those which have either been extensively disturbed or modified by later development, or are deemed to have a low archaeological potential because of limited historical development.

The majority of sites will lie somewhere between these two extremes, although in some cases more detailed work may be required to adequately determine the archaeological potential of an area. Recommendations for further work are likely to include a flexible combination of one or more archaeological responses such as: further detailed historic research targeted towards the specific development area, limited excavation to evaluate the potential of the below-ground archaeological deposits, or photographic or drawn records of existing standing structures. The results of this work can then be used to formulate policies to mitigate the impact of proposed new development upon the above and below-ground archaeological resource.

Survey Methodology

The potential survival and significance of archaeological features and deposits and standing buildings was assessed by a combination of site visit and inspection of written sources. The aim was to survey an extensive range of data sources for a qualitative assessment of the archaeological potential, rather than a detailed study of the history of each individual site, which it is envisaged should be undertaken within the context of specific site evaluation.

A visual inspection was made of the entire survey area as far as access was practical. In general, access around the area was good, and tall buildings such as the multi-storey car-parks on Park Street and Smithfield Street and the Custard Factory allow panoramic views over the entire survey area. A photographic record was maintained on colour print film throughout, which forms part of the project archive. Survey records were made in the form of written notes, and annotation of 1:2000 modern OS base plans.

Data sources used by the project comprise: cartographic evidence, primary and secondary documents, aerial photographs, historic buildings lists and surveys, archaeological sites and monuments records (SMR), archaeological reports, artefact collections, geotechnical information, development plans and other planning documents (listed in the appropriate appendices below). The majority of historic sources were consulted in the Local History and Archive divisions of the Birmingham Central Library (BRL), together with University of Birmingham Library (BUL) for secondary sources. The Site Files of the Social History Department in the Science Museum (BSM) - which are being systematically summarised and referenced as part of an on-going project to enhance the Birmingham Sites and Monuments Record - and the listings and records of the Conservation Group in the Department of Planning and Architecture were consulted for information on historic buildings. Archaeological information held by the Birmingham Sites and Monuments Record in the Department of Planning and Architecture (BSMR) was also consulted, and reference made to the geotechnical reports commissioned as part of the general planning assessment.

Map Evidence (Appendix 2)

An extensive range of historical maps was examined, principally from the collections of the Archives and Local History Divisions of Birmingham Central Library. Map evidence was used in two main ways; firstly, to provide a bird's eye view of the general historic development of the survey area providing dates for the laying out of various streets or the diversion and culverting of the River Rea; and secondly, to focus in more detail on the changing morphology of individual street blocks and properties within them.

Dr Nigel Baker, a specialist in town-plan analysis was specially commissioned to undertake a preliminary town-plan analysis of the morphological development of the survey area (p.10-14, below).

The Westley map and prospects of Birmingham of 1731 and 1732 are the earliest direct cartographic evidence available; there are also prospects by Buck drawn in 1731 and 1753. Other maps compiled later in the 18th and 19th centuries chronicle the expansion of the town as new suburbs and roads were built. Dr Baker has shown that the Bradford map of 1750/1, in particular, was a generally accurate survey by the standards of its time.

Detailed map study becomes possible with a series of large scale 1:528 plans produced by the borough surveyor Pigott Smith between 1850 and 1861. These maps depict individual properties and building plans in detail, and formed the basis of a series of rating maps compiled between 1869 and c.1890, although several sections of these later maps are not currently available. The Pigott Smith and 1889 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:500 form the benchmark cartography for the present survey. Not only is this mapping of sufficient detail and accuracy to be directly related to the modern OS editions, which will enable CAD-based computerised manipulation and exposition of the data produced; they also capture a key moment in time, prior to large scale erosion of the historic town plan. Later Ordnance Survey editions complement the historic mapping, and illustrate the subsequent development of the area up to the present day (these are reproduced in the BCL Site Assessment Report 1995).

Illustrative Material (project archive)

Numerous illustrations and photographs held in the Local History Division of the Central Library were consulted, and provide a rich and important source of detailed topographical and building information, often of street scenes and buildings which have since been swept away by redevelopment. Five boxes of illustrations and photographs refer to the survey area, many taken as part of the Warwickshire Photographic Survey. Another important source - particularly for houses of the Georgian period swept away by post-war development - was a compilation of architectural drawings made by the Birmingham Architectural Association in the early 1930s. Another collection of photographic and illustrative evidence is in the Sites Files of the City Science Museum (BSM), which were compiled by Stephen Price. Unfortunately, several photographs could not be copied due to copyright restrictions.

Documentary Evidence (project archive)

The scope and extent of the documentary analysis was defined by parameters dictated by both the aims and time constraints of the archaeological survey. Secondary sources were used extensively to provide a broader research context against which archaeological questions may be framed. Dr Richard Holt, a prominent urban historian and an authority on early Birmingham history, was specially commissioned to review the early history up to c.1700. He highlights several themes with potential for archaeological examination, whilst elucidating several important gaps in the primary documentary record concerning the early development of the survey area which archaeological evidence may be able to fill.

By the 18th, and particularly the 19th centuries, documentary sources become prolific, such that the researcher has to confront the opposite problem, and try to take a representative sample. In general, primary sources were evaluated in order to gain a qualitative impression of the later development of the area, and to provide a listing of readily available sources which could then be used in subsequent more detailed stages of work.

There follows a discussion of some relevant sources for the 18th and 19th centuries. This is not intended to be a thorough review, but a pointer towards fruitful lines for further, more detailed, enquiry.

Trades and Post Office Directories from the late 18th century to the early 1970s provide information about the use of buildings and the occupations of their inhabitants, but most trade directories earlier than the mid-19th century are arranged alphabetically by name and trade rather than by street, and it takes more time to retrieve relevant information specific to a particular building. However, it can be seen that they have a great potential for detailed study of an individual building or examination of the broader pattern of trades within a district.

A large number of property deeds are held by the Archives Division of the BRL, and in addition property deeds could be acquired in the course of a development application. Property deeds are a difficult source to evaluate; sometimes they can provide a gold-mine of information tracing the line of ownership or occupation back over many years. While undoubtedly useful, their detailed study is perhaps most appropriate within the context of a survey of a specific structure.

Levy Books begin around 1736 and detail the amounts levied on owners and occupiers of individual premises. Rate books dating from 1825-1915 also give similar details and describe the premises. Census returns are another very detailed source in studying the population profile of a particular building or area; these are held on microfilm in the Local History Division of the BRL, but were not consulted in detail in the course of this project.

Registers of building plans held in the Archives Division of the BRL cover the period 1876 to 1960. While several of the plans are lost or in poor condition, they contain the plan and elevation of several buildings in the survey area; only a sample were looked at as the examination of all the records would have been unfeasible within the scope of the survey.

Other detailed sources such as leases, tax returns, correspondence, receipts and articles of agreement held in collections of the Archives Division of the BRL were scanned and any particularly informative documents consulted. Further study of such sources may enable a more human dimension of the residents of particular buildings to emerge. Documents such as School Board Reports, Voters Registers and Poll Books were not consulted during the study, but would repay further more detailed research.

A great deal of detailed topographic information is contained within various 18th and 19th histories of the town and articles from local newspapers. While this source of evidence needs to be treated with some caution, sometimes it can provide vital snippets of information based upon first hand observation of the town 100, or even 200, years ago.

The sampling strategy employed for the initial archaeological assessment had to be flexible in order to accommodate several different types of source. Some types of evidence such as trade and Post Office directories which changed annually were inspected by year coincidental with important map editions; other types of evidence such as Rate and Levy Books, property deeds, building records, or census returns were evaluated independently to gauge their potential. It should be noted that detailed collective study of various types of source would allow cross referencing, and consequently a far more detailed picture to emerge. This approach was beyond the time scale of the project, but should be actively considered for later stages of more specific research, either as a further stage of general research into the 18th and 19th history of the area, or within the context of individual development applications.

It should be stressed that despite the greater quantities of documentary evidence available in the 18th and 19th centuries, archaeology can provide an important complementary and contrasting source to the traditional documentary record - both

in terms of the evidence of standing buildings, and in terms of the buried unwitting testimony about the lives and housing of the urban poor. Each source - documentary and archaeological - records aspects of the past with which the other does not deal, and each gains much from the existence of the other. Archaeological evidence becomes progressively more important the further back in time we go, particularly in Birmingham where relatively few medieval documents have survived for the town.

Previous Archaeological Work

Until recently, the profile of archaeology in Birmingham has not been very high. In part this is a reflection of the association of the city with a particular phase of post-war redevelopment, but equally archaeologists have not appreciated the types of archaeological and historical evidence the city has in abundance, of which Victorian local historians and archaeologists were, perhaps, more keenly aware.

In no small measure the problem is actually more one of perception than reality. The results of this survey have shown that, on the one hand, the destruction of archaeological deposits by modern development is more limited than first thought; and, on the other hand, that there have been several significant archaeological interventions carried out within the survey area, albeit often as a piecemeal and uncoordinated response to imminent destruction.

Salvage recording during the setting of foundation piles of the wholesale markets on the site of the Birmingham Moat in the 1970s - which was often carried out in front of bulldozers by Lorna Watts during construction - is probably the most important archaeological intervention within the city centre to date. Not only did the results of the limited archaeological excavation demonstrate the survival of substantial ashlar-masonry walls, probably part of a 13th century hall within the manorial complex, and the potential of water-logged deposits for environmental analysis, but the work was also accompanied by detailed documentary and cartographic research, which highlighted the potential of a multi-disciplinary approach for the holistic study of the town's past (Watts 1980).

This was not the first archaeological intervention within the survey area. In the 1950s Sherlock, a Keeper at the City Museum, carried out another salvage recording exercise during the widening of Deritend High Street near Saint John's Chapel (Sherlock 1955). He observed what were probably the sandstone foundations of the medieval chapel (which was rebuilt in brick in the 18th century) and found evidence suggesting pottery production in Deritend in the 13th and 14th centuries. However, the validity of some his conclusions was justifiably questioned by some pottery specialists because of the limited context of the excavations; happily, this situation was recently resolved, when supporting evidence for medieval pottery production in Deritend was discovered during archaeological excavation of the back-plot of the Old Crown (Litherland et al 1994). Two further salvage recording exercises were carried out in the 1980s on the site of the Bull Ring Trading Estate by BUFAU and the City Museum. These indicated extensive post-medieval levelling had occurred towards the rear of the site, while 18th century features and two possible medieval features were found near the frontage.

The excavation at the Old Crown was the first example of an archaeological evaluation commissioned as part of a co-ordinated response to development proposals in line with recent government planning guidance, under the overall direction of Dr Mike Hodder, the City Council Planning Archaeologist, appointed in April 1994. Excavation by the Hereford and Worcester Archaeology Service of 137 to 145, High Street, Bordesley, was also carried out in early 1995 within this planning context, and discovered evidence of 17th century industrial activity.

The Historical Background *by Dr Richard Holt*

The loss of whatever documentation was produced by the medieval administration of Birmingham has been largely responsible for a long-standing popular misconception that the town was of little importance. Earlier urban historians, and particularly Conrad Gill, the author of the first volume of the official History of Birmingham published in 1952, were obsessed with the formalities of borough status as conferred by charters of liberties; as Birmingham never received such a charter from its medieval lords, this school of historians could not accept it as a proper town despite all the evidence that it was. Its market was legalised in 1166 by a charter from the crown, and subsequent events in the town are known from a small number of references in the state records. Occasional notices of criminal and civil cases are to be found in the records of the various royal courts, and provide incidental evidence of the local economy; property tax assessments from 1327, 1332 and 1524 list the wealthier householders and enable population estimates to be made. A small but useful number of local property deeds are held in the Birmingham Reference Library, and provide both economic and topographical references. (It was from this miscellany of evidence that the excellent and copiously referenced profile of the medieval town was compiled for the Victoria County History of Warwickshire: vii, 73-9). From the 16th century onwards, documentation is more plentiful, including parish registers and records of the new Grammar School; a useful source, beginning in the 1540s and held in the Lichfield Joint Record Office, is the wills of Birmingham people, to which are attached probate inventories or lists and valuations of their property at death.

Within the Digbeth Economic Regeneration Area and Cheapside Industrial Area a complex of districts has evolved as Birmingham has developed from a market town to a great industrial city. The potential value of archaeological deposits from any part of this area is made greater by the inadequacy of surviving historical records, and a consequent lack of understanding of many facets of that process of growth. Now a relatively undifferentiated central area of the city, these separate districts were for centuries distinguished from each other by a range of commercial and residential characteristics. Bordesley, at its south-eastern end, remained on the fringes of Birmingham until the early 19th century, whilst by contrast the north-western streets lay firmly within the central part of the town from its origins or soon after. Between these contrasting districts lie Digbeth and Deritend, neither of them central to medieval or early modern Birmingham, but prominent as industrial suburbs for nearly 800 years.

Edgbaston Street and the southern side of the great triangular market place around St Martin's church probably date from the first phase of the medieval town, and were the setting for the houses of prosperous merchants and craftsmen; immediately to the south were two moated sites, the manor house of the de Birmingham family and the rectory belonging to the church. Both, perhaps, pre-dated the foundation of the town. The springs or wells of this district were a natural feature which may have been exploited at an early date: the Lady Well and Cold Bath of later centuries were presumably in use during the Middle Ages.

Following the grant of its market charter in 1166, Birmingham emerged as the principal market town of its immediate region (Holt 1985). A factor associated with its early growth was the pattern of local routes: at Deritend a convenient crossing could be made of the Rea valley, and ancient major roads from Coventry, Warwick, Stratford, Alcester, Worcester, Halesowen and the west, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Lichfield came together at Birmingham. Throughout Birmingham's history the short stretch of road between Bordesley and St Martin's church has been a convenient link for both local and long-distance traffic, a situation providing a range of commercial opportunities. With the expansion of

medieval Birmingham, there was a clear demand for the lords of the town to make house-plots available along Digbeth.

Deritend also owed its early development to the importance of this road. It is possible that initial settlement there came about simply as the furthest and latest extension from the central area of medieval Birmingham; alternatively - and more probably - Deritend's urban development preceded that along Digbeth. With the exception of the Deritend area, the lordship of Birmingham was identical with Birmingham's ancient parish; the boundary with the neighbouring parish of Aston was the Rea, the dividing line between Digbeth and Deritend. Thus Deritend had an ambiguous status, coming under the lordship of Birmingham but lying within the vast parish of Aston with its numerous small lordships (Smith 1870, 258). That alone suggests that Deritend had not always been part of the lordship of Birmingham; furthermore, it was described in the 14th century as if it was a lordship or manor in its own right, which the lords of Birmingham happened to own (Smith 1864, 57). Finally, its discrete, coherent plan is not what would be expected of a settlement that was no more than the last phase of ribbon development straggling down the hill from the town's commercial centre. It has been shown that sometimes medieval landowners took advantage of nearby, successful new towns by encouraging rival towns and markets on their own land to divert some of their neighbours' profits; certainly Deritend gives the appearance of having been a market street launched by its lord - perhaps around 1200 - deliberately to capture some of Birmingham's trade. If that was the case, Deritend was subsequently - and by the 1270s at the latest - acquired by the de Birmingham family, who then in effect incorporated Deritend into their borough of Birmingham and began to impose their own market tolls there (Skipp 1980, 27).

By 1300 Birmingham had a population of as much as 1500 (Holt 1985, 8-9), but it probably shrank in size thereafter. National population decline and economic change in the 14th and 15th centuries brought about a reduction in most urban populations, and towns generally experienced a phase of severe contraction between 1300 and 1500. Suburban and fringe areas were worst affected, in some extreme cases being entirely depopulated and abandoned for housing. Digbeth and Deritend, given their marginality to the main Birmingham streets, are likely to have experienced contraction of population and settlement rather than growth during that period. But historical evidence for Digbeth during the later Middle Ages is too slight to confirm that conclusion; nor is it possible to assess the situation in Deritend - although its inhabitants were evidently prosperous craftsmen, and may have withstood the worst effects of the long crisis. The requirement on them and on the people of the adjoining hamlet of Bordesley to attend Aston parish church rather than nearby St Martin's must always have been irksome, but only in 1381 did they obtain permission to build a chapel of ease in Deritend (Smith 1864, 57). This was not accomplished without considerable expense on their part; to pay for the building and to support priests to serve the chapel they established and endowed the gild or fraternity of St John. At its dissolution in 1547, the gild owned considerable property and was wealthy enough to employ two priests - one teaching a grammar school (Smith 1870, 258-61). The existence of a building as fine as the 15th-century Old Crown is a further indication of the wealth to be found in this community. John Leland, passing through in about 1538, remarked upon the pretty street he rode along before crossing the bridge over the River Rea to enter the 'good market town' of Birmingham with its specialism in the metal trades (Smith 1896, ii, 96-7). He reported that smiths and cutlers dwelt in this hamlet of Deritend, and he observed that the place had its own chapel and a 'mansion house of timber' - traditionally though perhaps incorrectly identified with the Old Crown, and perhaps the hall of the gild of St.John.

Unlike Deritend, Bordesley lay outside both the borough and the parish of Birmingham. There is 16th-century evidence that many of its inhabitants worked in the metal trades, a fact that - together with the close religious and social link with

Deritend through the chapel and gild - suggests that by the end of the Middle Ages, if not before, Bordesley had become in effect a part of Deritend and thus of Birmingham.

Leland's description is tantalising, but it adds little to our knowledge of Deritend or to the extent of settlement in the area. The survey of the lordship of Birmingham made in 1553 (Bickley and Hill 1890) details all tenancies, and so in theory describes the town; seldom, though, does it provide an indication of the size or position of a property, beyond its location within a named street. Nor does the survey concern itself with how far these ancient free tenancies, most of them centuries old, had been sub-divided or developed for multiple occupation. Descriptions of composite landholdings of individuals or of the former gilds - still in 1553 not disposed of by the crown - are particularly vague. The survey shows around 35 holdings in Deritend (see also details of the gild lands in Smith 1864, 95), implying a minimum of 35 houses and a population of at least 100; probably the actual figures were much greater, and indeed the imperfect entries for Deritend in the first of the Aston parish registers go some way towards supporting that conclusion (Carter 1900). The 1553 survey recorded 12 properties in Digbeth, again a figure not to be taken as the number of houses, but nevertheless suggesting a smaller population than Deritend's. There is no clear indication of the location of these Digbeth properties, but it is implied that they were all on the north side of the street. The course of the River Rea and a series of springs and streams on the south side of Digbeth must have discouraged housing development; instead, the 1553 survey records a series of meadows, deerpark, cornmills, pools and watercourses belonging to the manor house which still occupied its large site to the south of St Martin's church. Tanners' Row, the series of tanneries which was clearly far more important than the single reference in the survey would suggest, must have been on this side of Digbeth, taking advantage of the copious water supply; otherwise, there is no indication at this time of housing or industry to the south of the street.

Both Digbeth and Deritend lay partly in the bottom of the valley of the River Rea, and William Camden observed around 1580 that this lower part of Birmingham was very wet (VCH Warwicks, vii, 6). Despite work on the channel of the Rea during the 18th century and perhaps before, serious floods still affected the streets on the south side of Digbeth in 1839 and 1852, a situation only solved with the culverting of the river (Langford 1868, ii, 68-9, 583; *Birmingham Journal,* 12/11/1852). Both the general wetness of the area and the recurrent threat of floods influenced the way that this district developed, with much of the south side of Digbeth as far as the Rea being amongst the last parts of this redevelopment area to be considered suitable for residential and general commercial use (Langford 1868, i, 301; ii, 7-8, 13, 199, 313, 316, 318).

Detailed information on the economic activities of Birmingham people is to be found in their wills which survive in some numbers from the 1540s onwards and in the probate inventories compiled by their executors. Some of the Deritend smiths had introduced mechanization to the manufacturing process, although as use of Birmingham's water-resources was restricted to cornmilling they had to go outside the town to find suitable mill-sites. Both Ralph Forrest (died 1548) and Thomas Bache (died 1590) manufactured scythes in Deritend but sharpened them at their own grinding mills, probably in Aston or Handsworth. Nevertheless, production still centred on the domestic workshop: Bache was a wealthy man making scythes in large numbers, but his workshop was equipped for only 3 men. By the 1650s Birmingham wholesalers, selling the manufactures of Birmingham and the surrounding industrial villages, had come to dominate the London market in iron goods (Rowlands 1975,12). Waterpower had been making an increasing contribution, and an aspect of Birmingham's phenomenal success during the early 17th century was the conversion of the town's cornmills to industrial use: it was either the Moat Mill or the Town Mill, both in Digbeth, which had been converted into a blademill by the time Robert Porter was its tenant during the 17th century. In

the belief that its swords had gone exclusively to supply the Parliamentary forces, Porter's blademill was ordered to be dismantled by Prince Rupert when his troops occupied and sacked Birmingham in 1643 (VCH Warwicks, vii, 262-3). A more substantial aspect of Birmingham's rise to prominence was the growth in its industrial workforce and productive capacity. The hearth tax of 1683 was unique in taxing smiths' hearths, of which there were 178 in the whole of Birmingham. The greatest concentration - 68, or 38 per cent of the total - was in Digbeth, which clearly had now overtaken Deritend in the volume of its industrial output (Pelham 1950, 156-7; Gill 1952, 57; VCH Warwicks, vii, 85).

Eighteenth-century maps show dense occupation along both sides of Digbeth, a situation which was evidently a development since 1553. That was to remain the pattern for some time, with the house-plots on the bustling main street continuing to have meadows and gardens at their rear. Only in the early years of the 19th century was land away from Digbeth and Deritend High Streets seriously developed for industry and housing (Langford 1868, ii, 198, 201-2, 316).

It needs to be stressed, therefore, that during the medieval and early modern period what is now the Digbeth Economic Regeneration Area and Cheapside Industrial Area did not constitute a unitary district; knowledge of developments in one part cannot simply be extrapolated to others. Until the late 17th century it was in effect four separate districts, each with its own history and character. The northern part was settled as a primary district of the town, and in the two moated sites contains features perhaps predating the charter of 1166. Deritend originated around 1200 as Birmingham's satellite, and retained much of its separate identity into the modern period. The first settlement along the north side of Digbeth took place probably during the 13th century, but population was sparser than in Deritend and the street's 17th-century prominence in ironworking was not yet apparent in 1553. The wetter south side of Digbeth retained a rural aspect into the early modern period, and was an area suited to milling and tanning. Historical evidence for the exact location of housing during all this period is slight, although we would expect it to have been concentrated on to the street frontages of each plot, with domestic and industrial outbuildings at the rear. Evidence in probate inventories that many of these smiths grazed cattle and sheep indicates that they also accommodated livestock in their yards and outbuildings.

A town-plan analysis of the Digbeth ERA and Cheapside IA *by Dr N.J.Baker*

Introduction

The range of historic maps already described in this report may be used to follow the detailed physical development of the study areas from the 1730s to the present day, but they may also have information to offer on the circumstances in which those areas were developed and built up for the first time, in the period c.1160 to 1600. The physical character of the Edgbaston Street, Digbeth, Deritend, and Bordesley areas can be seen to have been changing with ever-increasing rapidity from the early 18th century to the present day, but examples from a wide range of comparable towns suggest that the principal features of the town plan (streets, street-frontage lines, sites of public buildings, property boundaries shared by several properties) surveyed in the 1730s or 1750s would be unlikely to have shifted substantially since the area concerned was first laid out for settlement and permanent buildings and property interests established. By using the earliest of the available maps that can be shown by comparison with other sources to contain accurately-drawn detail, some very basic conclusions may be drawn as to the different developmental processes behind the initial growth of settlement in the study areas. Of the earliest maps, Samuel Bradford's map of Birmingham in 1750 appears (after a preliminary survey), by the standards of its time, to be metrically accurate and reliable in a proportion of its detail, of which the most important in

this context is the depiction of major property boundaries, lanes, alleys and paths; minor boundaries shown in areas that were probably not easily accessible (e.g. boundaries of cottages, and closes within plots) were more schematically rendered but still seem to have some basis in reality where they can be tested against Ordnance Survey plans. This study must be considered a preliminary account as it is based primarily on a single source (Bradford's plan of 1750), rather than a comprehensive review and analysis of the whole range of cartographic and other sources that are available.

The study-areas and medieval and early modern Birmingham. (Fig.3)

The importance of the study area as a sample of pre-Industrial Birmingham should not be underestimated. Fig.3 shows the area in relation to the town in 1750 (shown in the form of streets and property boundaries extracted from Bradford's plan); from sources such as Hill and Bickley's work it may be estimated that the study area represents somewhere around a quarter to a third of the entire built-up area at the end of the Middle Ages.

The plan of Birmingham revealed by the early cartography is that of a simple rural road pattern transformed by a succession of town-planning exercises, the earliest, probably dating from around the time of the market charter of 1166, the first known initiative to develop trading functions on the site. The pre-urban framework for the growth of the town was provided, first, by the natural and agricultural topography: the river Rea, its floodplain and subsidiary channels, and the high ground either side; and secondly, by the local and long-distance roads converging on the high ground to cross the Rea floodplain via a single corridor, the Digbeth, Deritend, Bordesley route. The growth of the town took place by the successive development of land parcels along the old roads, some of which were undoubtedly specially provided with facilities to attract traders and artisans, and the provision of new roads, with new plots, laid out across the interstices of the old road network. This much is apparent from the cartography; further analysis and other sources would provide definition, chronology, and perhaps responsibility for the sequence of town-planning events thus glimpsed.

A preliminary analysis of the early morphology of the study areas is offered here; its purpose is to distinguish where the physical evidence suggests that the development of a particular area was in some way different to that of its neighbours. Interpretations can sometimes but by no means always be offered to account for such differences, and some dates can be tentatively suggested for the initial development and urbanisation of particular areas; more detailed analysis (e.g. with the systematic incorporation of documentary sources) could doubtless refine the picture but archaeology alone has the potential to offer a truly comprehensive history of this part of Birmingham, much of which was developed before c.1400.

A plan analysis of the study areas (Fig.4)

The study areas, as Dr Holt notes, were never a uniform zone characterised by a homogeneous developmental sequence. The separate historical identities of different sub-areas (e.g. Deritend) are well established. The early modern geography (which is in part the medieval geography) reveal localised changes in character that can only have come about through differential developmental processes. Ten such areas can be distinguished:

(1) Edgbaston Street (south).

As Dr Holt suggests elsewhere, this part of the Cheapside I.A. may have seen some of the earliest urban activity on the Birmingham site. Edgbaston Street forms the base of the triangle of the Bull Ring market place, and carried mainly local traffic

from the south-west to and from the main axial route represented by High Town and Digbeth. The south side of the street was occupied by a series of plots with very distinctive characteristics. First, the plots lay sandwiched between the Parsonage Moat at the west end, and the de Birmingham's manorial moated site at the east end. The origins of these moats and their original relationship to each other is not at all clear, but they are likely to have been important foci of the rural settlement; one suggestion is that they originally represented the manorial site and its 'home farm'. Westley's 1731 Plan of Birmingham shows that the two moats were originally linked by a watercourse (gone by 1750, but restored on fig.4) probably fed by springwater via the Parsonage moat and joined by a second watercourse a few yards west of the manorial site. The channel linking the two moats formed the back boundary to the series of plots running up the slope to Edgbaston Street. The provision of watered plots is a recurrent feature of nascent urban settlements and, in particular, early markets. Livestock could be contained, grazed, and watered close to the market and in large early medieval centres such as Winchester, for example, there would be a strong demand for such land from the town butchers. In time, a watercourse in such a position might also attract industrial use. There is no doubt that in some circumstances watercourses were deliberately diverted to service series of new plots hoping to attract new tenants. Whether or not this was so here is unknown; it is possible, though perhaps more likely that the watercourse was an earlier feature, part of the evolving pattern of floodplain watercourses for milling, drainage, water meadows, and (?latterly) supplying the moats. Nevertheless, the Edgbaston Street plot series represents what was in 12th-century terms a prime site for development and the generation of new rents for the de Birminghams, with a principal trading and market frontage and access to supplies of fresh water at the rear. If archaeological deposits were found to survive in this area it would be surprising if they did not reveal a sequence of intensifying development commencing well before c.1200.

(2) Digbeth/Moat Lane

Moat Lane is most simply seen as access from the market place to the de Birmingham's moated site behind the main street frontages, but it is also true that the lane acted as a service lane for the two blocks of properties on the south side of the upper part of Digbeth. The provision of back service lanes to series of plots is one of the most basic and widely-found of medieval town-planning practices at every level of the urban hierarchy, in all urbanising periods. The lane may therefore have been diverted, inserted or improved as part of another early (?12th century) seigneurial improvement scheme for the properties around the main market place. By the time the first maps become available the lane was itself occupied by housing.

(3) (4) Upper Digbeth: north side

The series of properties in this block, from Park Street on the west to approximately Oxford Street on the east, was for most of its length bounded at the rear by a continuous common property boundary parallel to the street, suggestive of a substantial block of land along the axial street laid out for, or appropriated for, urban settlement at a single point in time. However, in the area around the junction with Park Street, Bradford's plan shows a common rear boundary to the Digbeth plots, though it is not certainly a continuation of that evident further east; it does, however, seem to continue for a short distance west of Park Street and pick up the line of the rear boundary to the shorter plots facing the market place further north. Park Street, and Moor Street to its west, arguably represent another town-planning episode taking place before the end of the Middle Ages, not unlike the development of the two Park Streets in Coventry. Such a development in Birmingham is likely to have been secondary to the growth of housing on the main frontages of the market place and the axial street; Park Street, it may be suggested, was cut through earlier plots developed along that part of Digbeth. In summary, there seem to be

some indications of a difference between the plots at the top end of Digbeth, closest to the church (3), and the main series stretching eastwards down the slope to the river (4). Those at the top may have been a continuation of the main series on the east side of the triangular market place, cut through at two points by the insertion of Moor Street and Park Street. The longer plots with their common rear boundary that make up the majority of the Digbeth plots may have been a separate, probably subsequent, large-scale development. An element of uncertainty surrounds the precise junction of these plot series; the boundaries shown in this area by the 1st edition Ordnance Survey differ substantially from those shown by Bradford (and supported in general by Westley's plan), and the effect of the 19th century insertion of Allison Street here needs further investigation. The evidence for any sort of fixed chronology for such events is, without closely-dated archaeological or historical evidence, completely inadequate; such events could be separated by a century, a decade, or even a week, the velocity of most of Birmingham's physical development in the Middle Ages is simply that obscure.

(5) Lower Digbeth: north side

The end of the run of properties bounded to the rear by a single common boundary coincides with the bottom of the slope observed in the modern landscape, about 140 metres west of the main channel of the Rea. The bottom section of the north side of Digbeth was occupied by plots with no common rear boundary and without the same degree of ordered, strip-like uniformity apparent in the plots on the slope. It is probable that plots in the floodplain will have undergone different developmental processes to those on the higher ground, probably subject to reclamation in stages away from the frontage on a primary causeway carrying the road up to the bridge site. Individual property boundaries are likely to have been influenced by earlier drainage patterns and minor watercourses. Settlement of this area may have been a relatively late (i.e. post medieval) development.

(6) (7) Deritend

Deritend was a district with a distinct historico-legal identity in the Middle Ages, lying on the east side of the Rea and therefore within the parish of Aston. It was still described in the 14th century as if it were, or had been, a manor that was separate to Birmingham, though the lords of Birmingham certainly owned it too by 1270 at the latest (see p.8). Holt suggests that it was separately developed as an independent market street and only physically joined to the Birmingham built-up area as ribbon-development along Digbeth filled the gap. The morphological evidence supports this contention, the street in this section of the route being several times the width of that west of the Rea. But even within this well-defined area, two distinct settlement components seem to be apparent, either side of a diagonal plan-seam or boundary that passes across the area on the line now represented by Heath Mill Lane. To the west, the north side plots (6) were short and ended irregularly, with some skewed at the rear to provide access to the watercourse; to the east the plots (7) were much longer, ending on a common straight boundary that continued to the east (see p.35,36). On the south side the plots were more homogenous, ending on a lane or path, though the frontage line was significantly staggered opposite the Old Crown, just east of the Heath Mill Lane junction. The seam that this lane appears to mark is shown by Bradford's plan continued as a field boundary south of the built up frontages. Its significance and the implications of its apparent influence on the development of the urban landscape here are not known. Possibly it represents a slight terrace or a former eastern edge to floodable ground, and as such may be found to be relevant to a deposit-modelling exercise in this area. St John's Chapel, founded as a chapel of ease in 1381, occupied an open space at the front of one of the westernmost Deritend plots, close to the bridge. The chapel projected somewhat into the street, its correct liturgical orientation at odds with the grain of the surrounding properties; it was presumably built within a pre-existing domestic plot.

(8) Bordesley

Bordesley was outside both the parish and the lordship of Birmingham, and represents another discrete phase in the exploitation of the route crossing the Rea. The southward curve in the road at the Deritend/Bordesley junction presumably follows an ancient line, but it also marks the beginning of another clearly recognisable promoted market street development. The plots to the north and south appear to have been of roughly equal depth, bounded by common rear boundaries laid out parallel to the widened street, which extended as far as the junction of the Warwick and Coventry roads; the precise eastward extent of the associated plot series is not certain. As a town-planning exercise it was at least the equal of Digbeth and Deritend, though at present no evidence is available to help date it. Bordesley extends beyond the area covered by the 1750 Bradford map, though its principal features, the great street space and the continuous parallel rear plot boundaries, survived to be mapped by the Ordnance Survey.

(9) (10) Digbeth south

Historical evidence suggests that the south side of Digbeth was, for most of the medieval and early modern periods, largely occupied by watercourses and relatively lightly developed by buildings. Two small component areas may be distinguished from the map evidence: (9) irregular occupation of houses and closes between Mill Lane and the Rea; and (10) more regular short strip type plots between Moat Lane and Mill Lane backing onto the watercourse draining the manorial moat into the mill pond. Possibly this was the Tanners' Row of the 1553 survey, though this has also been identified with Mill Lane. The mill site itself (the malt mill of the 1553 survey) is part of the area's medieval and rural background, though nothing is known of its early development or that of its water management system.

Summary conclusions

A preliminary analysis of the settlement pattern apparent in the sequence of historic maps suggests that the development of the built-up area in Edgbaston Street, Digbeth, Deritend, and Bordesley, was anything but a uniform process. Several discrete planning episodes may be proposed, though their dating (relative, as well as absolute) is rarely clear. Six probable principal schemes in the extension of the medieval town within the area in question have been defined. The earliest are likely to be those adjoining the triangular market place: the provision of or settlement of a series of watered plots on Edgbaston Street; the provision of rear service access to the group of plots at the top of the south side of Digbeth; the laying out of the hypothesized early plot series on the east side of the market/top of Digbeth. A second broad phase of activity may be proposed to have been represented by the independent satellite developments of Bordesley and Deritend. Still more speculatively, a third general phase characterised by infilling may be proposed, encompassing the development of the main run of plots down the north side of Digbeth and perhaps (though largely outside the study area) the insertion of Moor Street and Park Street through the built up frontages to the north to give a lateral extension of settlement off the main axial route. A tertiary phase of development saw the beginning of intensive settlement in and adjacent to the Rea floodplain on the south side of Digbeth.

The tentative nature of such conclusions must again be emphasised. The present shape of central Birmingham undoubtedly owes much to an eight hundred year history of town planning and civil engineering achievements. To know that such activities took place is but a first step; to write the history needs solid archaeological evidence.

Results

The evidence will be discussed and evaluated for each modern street block in turn within the overall survey area under the following sub-headings: Present Character; Historical and Archaeological Profile; Below-Ground Information; Archaeological Potential; and Recommendations for an archaeological response. For the Digbeth ERA blocks the numbering system utilised in the Geotechnical Report submitted by Birmingham City Laboratories is followed for clarity (BCL 1995).

Present Character includes a description of the built environment together with field observation on land use where applicable. The **Historical and Archaeological Profile** outlines historical development and provides details of previous archaeological work. **Below-Ground Information** covers information from site inspection and anticipated building and service disruption. It was originally intended to provide an archaeological interpretation of the results of bore-hole and other geotechnical surveys within this section. However, the report commissioned for the overall planning assessment from Birmingham City Laboratories revealed little geotechnical work has been carried out within the Digbeth ERA, and the Cheapside IA report was on a block outside the archaeological survey area. Therefore, it is recommended that further geotechnical studies be included within later stages of archaeological work where these are available. Geotechnical information is likely to be more widely available for the rest of the Cheapside IA which has been subject to more post-war redevelopment than the Digbeth ERA. For example, Watts notes a series of bore-holes sunk in preparation for the rebuilding of the markets area (Watts 1980, 17, note 137). The Geotechnical Reports also contain useful information on known services within the survey area which should be incorporated into detailed archaeological site assessments. Grateful acknowledgement is also made to the recommendations of the BCL Geotechnical Report that provision for archaeological monitoring be included within further geotechnical site assessment. (This is discussed in more detail within Appendix 1, below). The section on **Archaeological Potential** summaries the potential of a specific area for further archaeological research in the light of evidence gleaned by the archaeological assessment to date, and is designed to give an indication of the potential importance of surviving archaeological deposits. This section should be read in conjunction with the following **Recommendations** section of the area assessment which provides recommendations for an archaeological response to redevelopment.

It is worth explaining the layout of the recommendations section in detail, in order to understand the level of archaeological response proposed for each street block to increase the level of archaeological information in advance of any development proposal, or as part of further archaeological research.

This desk-top assessment has been commissioned by the City Council as the first stage of an archaeological response to anticipated further redevelopment within the overall survey area. Further detailed desk-top assessment and/or field evaluation may then be required in advance of specific development proposals in order to accurately define the threat to the archaeological resource. If significant archaeological features were found to survive, the City Council would then require these to be preserved intact through appropriate foundation design or site layout, but if this were not feasible, conditions would be applied to ensure adequate recording of archaeological features damaged or destroyed by the development.

The overall survey area contains a varied pattern of previous development. In this situation detailed archaeological responses which take account of the proposed impact of specific planning applications in the light of the probable archaeological potential of a particular area are the most appropriate course of action.

Therefore, the recommendations for below-ground field evaluation are ordered in three Levels, which range from Level I to Level III. Level III is a standard trial trenching exercise which would usually involve sampling between 3% and 5% of the proposed development area, (model costings for various sizes of response are given in Appendix 1, below). Above Level III, Level II includes a 10% contingency for potentially deep or difficult excavation, while Level I includes a contingency of 25% to cover environmental analysis and potentially complex excavation.

Consideration may also be given to an assessment of the various techniques of archaeological evaluation including trial trenching, below-ground radar scanning, and borehole sampling for example, in order to determine the most appropriate methods for maximising the recoverable archaeological information from any given site which might then be used as a model for any further evaluation exercises within the survey area.

While emphasis has been placed upon below-ground techniques of archaeological evaluation, recoverable evidence from building survey and documentary research must also be considered within any proposed development application.

Various approaches to the documentary research of a specific site, which require a fairly uniform level of response for each block, are given in the discussion of documentary evidence and sources referred to above (p.4-5), while those for building recording follow below.

Recommendations for the level of record appropriate to various types of structure are made with reference to the guidelines of the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments England (RCHME 1990). Precise specifications are dependent on a number of factors, including the importance of the building and the level of alteration proposed. However, in general a building of Statutory List quality would require survey equivalent to at least Level 3 of RCHME guidelines, and some Grade A Local List buildings would also require a similar level of response. Level 3 is essentially an analytical record, and would usually consist of at least detailed photographic survey, together with the compilation of ground plans, and possibly elevations and sections through the building, accompanied by a written text describing the probable development of the building and placing it within a national or regional context, with supporting documentary research.

Other buildings would require a level of record ranging between Level 1, essentially a visual record of a building, which is the briefest survey concentrating on a photographic record and the notes, to Level 2 which is essentially a descriptive record, primarily photographically based, but including the compilation of floor plans and other details where appropriate, together with a discussion of the probable development and context of the structure.

The following sections of the report should be read in conjunction with the acetate figures which are provided in a separate folder appended to the written report, and reference may be made to the historic illustrations and photographs arranged by survey area in the back of this report.

THE DIGBETH AREA

The Digbeth area is identified with the Digbeth ERA and ranges along the north side of Digbeth, High Street, Deritend and High Street, Bordesley, from Park Street in the west to the Coventry Road in the east. Therefore, strictly speaking, the Digbeth ERA includes Digbeth, Deritend and Bordesley. In general the preservation of both the above and below-ground archaeological resource is higher within the Digbeth ERA, compared to the Cheapside and Markets Areas discussed below, and contains several Statutory Listed and important Local List buildings, including the nationally important Old Crown. Above and below-ground archaeological survival here is largely due to the fact that successive phases of widening of the main road have not impinged upon the north side of Digbeth, Deritend and Bordesley, and because in general post-war redevelopment has not been as widespread here as other parts of the survey area.

AREA 1 DIGBETH: Park Street To Allison Street including Well Lane and Orwell Passage.

Present Character

This rectangular block, situated at the top end of Digbeth to the north east of Saint Martin's Church, measures c.140m in length along Digbeth and c.80m in depth to a line drawn down Well Lane from the junction with Allison Street to intersect with Park Street. There is a pronounced west-east slope down Digbeth, from the former Royal George Public House to Allison Street. Today, the front half of the block is mostly built up and in commercial, office, or retail use, but the rear half has been largely cleared of buildings, with car-parks and rough-land, awaiting redevelopment.

While there are no structures deemed to be of national importance in this block, several buildings are of sufficient character and local interest to merit inclusion in the City Council Local List. These are from west to east: the former Avery Building, 137/138 Digbeth, a squat four-storey office block, and one of a few good examples of 1930s architecture in the city centre (Grade B); 137 Digbeth, a narrow, three-storey, early 19th century brick building of one bay, with turnerised slate roof (Grade B); 135/6 Digbeth, an eclectic mix of brick, terracotta and coloured tiles with a large semi-circular 1st floor window, built in 1913 for George Makepeace, a dealer in second hand clothes (Grade A); and, finally, 123-134 Digbeth, the warehouse complex of Digbeth Cold Stores, built in 1900 by Cossins, Peacock, and Bewlay for the Linde British Refrigeration Company. The Digbeth frontage of this building is divided by a series of arches and pilasters into 10 arcaded bays, the side elevation to the yard has open ground-floor loading bays, defined by massive, cast-iron, pillars. The smaller building, to the east of the yard, probably housed the company offices, and has a brass letterbox bearing the legend of the Lightfoot Refrigeration Company, who owned the warehouse between 1920 and 1948.

Other buildings not included on the Local List but fronting onto Digbeth comprise: the former Royal George Public House, on the corner of Digbeth and Park Street, rebuilt back from the Digbeth street frontage in the 1960s on the site of an earlier pub; 140 Digbeth, a plain, three-storey, parapetted structure, of late Victorian date, now an Indian Restaurant; and the former Midland Red Social Club, on the corner of Digbeth and Allison Street, built this century in red-brick with a modern extension to Allison Street.

An architects sketch from 1947 (BRL 743) shows the lavish Victorian facade of the earlier Royal George, and numbers 141 and 142 Digbeth, which are of a similar, narrow size to the surviving 137 Digbeth, with early 19th century-style facades. Demolition of the Royal George in the late 1940s apparently revealed timber-framing in the party wall with 142 Digbeth, although there was no visible framing elsewhere.

Behind the Royal George on Park Street stands a former music hall known variously as the London Museum, The Pavilion, and The Canterbury. Built in 1863 at a cost of £7000, it has had a long and varied history of use, including a brief spell as a cinema between 1912 and 1929. Given the designation of Park Street as a media zone in the Unitary Development Plan (B.C.C. 1993, 15.61) consideration may be given to adding this structure to the Local List.

On the corner of Allison Street and Orwell Passage, (a cobbled street, probably contemporary with the building of Digbeth Cold Stores), stands the offices of R. Etchells and Company, a smart, two-storey brick structure, early 20th century in date. Adjacent, on Orwell Passage are two single-storey garage/store buildings, each with a sky-lit roof. In the west-side elevation of the second building the stub of an earlier pre-machine brick structure has survived, with the remains of a large

fireplace opening, possibly part of a brew-house or wash-house of one of the court buildings demolished when the Digbeth Cold Stores was built. On Allison Street are two warehouses; Apex Doors includes the mutilated facade of a late-19th century industrial structure, while the second warehouse appears to be a rump of a larger concrete framed-structure.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

The first documentary reference to Park Street is in the 16th century, but given its sinuous path, and proximity to the triangular market place and Saint Martin's Church, Park Street was probably laid out long before. Land to the east of Park Street, called Little Park, was formerly part of the manorial lord's demesne. Medieval evidence for Birmingham is sparse, but it is possible Park Street may have followed one of the boundaries of the Little Park - if this were enclosed, then boundary features, possibly a ditch and bank or pale, may be archaeologically recoverable. It is highly probable that the Digbeth frontage near Saint Martin's was developed during the early stages of the towns medieval growth in the 12th century, as Dr Baker has indicated above. However, given the patchy nature of the documentary record, only archaeological excavation may be able to verify a date-range for this development, and shed more light on the subsequent history of the area up to the 18th century.

Eighteenth century mapping indicates that most of the back-plots of properties fronting onto the higher end of Digbeth had been extensively built on. Neither Allison Street, nor Well Lane, figure on town maps prior to the early 19th century - and like Meriden Street and Oxford Street further east - probably reflect the need to link the late-18th century canal-centred development of north east Digbeth into the town and market centre. Therefore, despite its tempting appearance it is unlikely Well Lane is a remnant of a medieval back-lane - instead, it can be seen that the plot-length of the properties fronting Digbeth tends to shorten between Park Street and Allison Street. This shortening may have been caused by a pre-existing landscape feature, possibly a pool fed by Hersum's or Hessums Ditch indicated on a composite sketch plan of watercourses given by Watts which appears to have been based on 16th century surveys and 18th century map evidence (Watts 1980,29; although Dr Baker notes further work is required to clarify this picture).

The exploitation of the natural water-supply was an important feature of Birmingham's growth from the Middle Ages onwards. While Digbeth hardly springs to mind as a production centre for mineral water today, in 1850 the premises of Goffe and Company, mineral water manufacturers, were situated on the south side of Well Lane in a three-storey brick building originally built as a school. Adjoining these premises a cistern is depicted on an 1860s Rating map, at the same location as a spring shown on the Inge Map of 1808. This was the site of Digbeth Mineral Springs. An article in *Birmingham Faces and Places* from the 1st of March 1889 describes workmen coming across a large tank while lowering a yard. The cistern measured 6 feet x 12 feet, and, according to an inscription on the tank, was cut in 1854, and fed by a 400 feet-deep artesian bore. This bore was connected via culverts to a series of wells, which in turn were connected to an underground reservoir 40 feet long. The workmen reported that the pattern of bricks used in its construction indicated this reservoir was already quite old.

Apparently, these wells were amongst many once visible on the Park Street side of upper Digbeth, which was called Well Street in the 18th century, including wells in the yard of the White Hart and the George Inn, and many of the cellars of premises fronting Digbeth. The wells would have provided an extensive water supply, before water was systematically piped into houses in the later-19th century.

A Trade Directory from 1777 indicates the upper part of Digbeth was occupied by shopkeepers and businesses practicing a wide variety of trades including shoemakers, cutlers, and cabinet makers. Many of these premises may have been quite small, as several historical illustrations of Digbeth suggest that narrow fronted buildings, like the surviving 137 Digbeth, were a common building-type in upper Digbeth. The narrowness of the plot-heads was the result of progressive plot subdivision in order to maximise the numbers of buildings on a commercially important street, a process which probably began in Digbeth in the medieval period.

Inns were far more numerous in towns in the 18th and 19th centuries compared to today, and feature prominently in the historical record. Further study may be able to differentiate between various types of inn within the survey area, ranging from large businesses catering for the coaching and commercial trade around the markets, to the small bars catering for the denizens of the courts. The changing character of its drinking dens may provide a useful barometer with which to gauge social change in the 18th and 19th centuries within Digbeth and Deritend. In the late 18th century innkeepers occupied No.141-2 near the corner of Park Street. Innkeepers also occupied 137 Digbeth, a premises later known as the White Hart. The King's Head, 127 Digbeth, appears to have been built in the early 19th century, and been in use until it was demolished prior to the construction of the Digbeth Cold Stores c.1900. The Horse and Jockey, on the corner of Digbeth and Allison Street, also appears to have been built in the early 19th century and demolished at the same time.

In the 19th century the detailed Pigott Smith map series of c.1850, the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889, and the Post Office Directories, indicate the Digbeth frontage still occupied by shops with court dwellings stretching back from the Digbeth frontage, where trades such as coach-spring making, dyers and walking-stick making, were practiced, and people also lived. This mixture of residential and industrial buildings was a pattern repeated in many parts of Digbeth and Deritend in the 19th century, although it is a feature which has entirely disappeared today.

Below-ground Information

Given the slope of Digbeth from Saint Martin's down to Allison Street it is likely that some degree of terracing may have occurred along the frontage of this block in particular. While terracing can be destructive to deposits scoured out to create a level surface, it can also protect those deposits upon which spoil is dumped in order to raise the ground level. Therefore, while archaeological deposits are likely to have been extensively disturbed along the frontage by cellaring, it is possible archaeological deposits may survive as islands between these later disturbances.

Behind the Digbeth frontage is a large area of cleared ground suitable for redevelopment. In the area of the NCP Park Street carpark, to the rear of the former Royal George, the yard surfaces of the former Phoenix Hotel and the Corporation Stables are still visible, therefore disturbance to archaeological deposits may be minimal in this area. There is also a northward fall in the ground level behind the back-lines of the Royal George (140 Digbeth) and the former Avery Building, which seems to begin from the probable back-line of earlier tenements fronting Digbeth. This back-wall line may, therefore, have acted as a retaining wall, allowing deposits within the properties fronting onto Digbeth to build up, and protect earlier archaeological deposits.

The cleared land in the plot at the corner of Allison Street and Well Lane also falls away appreciably downslope towards the Rea. However, recent disturbance is likely to have been far greater in this area. Debris still lying on the surface of the plot indicates that the structure demolished to create this open space may have had a

reinforced concrete frame, therefore the foundation piles of the structure are likely to have penetrated archeological deposits. However, it is possible that archeological deposits may have survived between the piled areas. This is the location of the Digbeth Mineral Springs, some of which may not have been destroyed by later development. The survival of a stub of walling probably dating back to the court-type housing cleared to build the Digbeth Cold Stores may also indicate that earlier archaeological deposits may survive relatively undisturbed around the top end of Orwell Passage.

Archaeological Potential

While the density of occupation together with disturbance by cellaring mean any earlier archaeological deposits and features may have been severely truncated, it is possible that islands of archaeology may be preserved in areas that have escaped the effects of later disturbance. There is also good potential for preservation of organic archaeological remains in the numerous wells and springs in this area, as demonstrated by studies of material from the Birmingham Moat (Watts 1980).

Surviving archaeological deposits within this block may be considered to have a high potential. Their importance is considerably enhanced by a number of factors, these include: the relative paucity of documentary data for the medieval and early post-modern periods in particular; the capacity for new archaeological data to be compared with the results of the excavation of the Birmingham Moat and the detailed documentary research undertaken simultaneously by Watts in the 1970s, and the as yet unevaluated disturbance by the Bull Ring development to archaeological deposits to the north and east of Saint Martin's. Surviving archaeological deposits within this part of upper Digbeth, which has not been as subjected to modern, more archaeologically destructive development, may be able to tell us about the growth of the market around Saint Martin's, and even the pre-urban topography of the area, in addition to the later industrial, commercial and residential development of this block.

Recommendations (as defined on p.15-16, above)

Below-Ground Archaeology: Given the potential of surviving archaeological deposits within this area to throw much needed light on the early development of Birmingham in particular, priority should be given to establishing where these deposits may survive. Clearly, archaeological evaluation should precede any development in this area with below-ground implications. There are strong grounds for arguing that archaeological evaluation should be as thorough as is reasonably acceptable given the context of any proposed development. Therefore, given the additional potential for the recovery of environmental data a Level I archaeological response is recommended for this area.

The Locally Listed buildings within Area 1 would probably require a level of record between RCHME Level 2 and 3, dependant on the extent and form of any proposed alteration, and should include the former London Museum Music Hall. Other buildings probably require rapid survey at Level 1 or 2.

Documentary Research: Detailed documentary research into the specific history of the properties in this area should be considered, which might complement the results of either standing building survey or archaeological evaluation.

AREA 2 DIGBETH: Allison Street to Meriden Street.

Present Description

This small block, which measures c.50m along Digbeth, and c.80m in depth, is entirely built over. On the corner of Digbeth and Allison Street stands the Digbeth Police Station (115 Digbeth) an imposing three-storey Baroque structure built in 1911/12 with a stone facade to Digbeth. Adjacent, 111 Digbeth is an unremarkable example of late-19th century commercial development, 110 Digbeth is a squat two-storey structure with side cart-entrance which might repay further internal inspection. Number 109 Digbeth, on the corner of Digbeth and Meriden Street, used to be the Castle and Falcon Inn. The building is in good condition, with elaborate late Victorian detailing, particularly around the windows fronting Digbeth, and was probably built together with 108 Digbeth, on the opposite side of Meriden Street, to form an attractive street head. A 20th century factory covers most of the rear of the block, fronting onto Allison Street behind the Police Station.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Allison Street was cut through properties fronting Digbeth in the late 18th/early 19th century to provide access to the canal development further north. Therefore, the historical development of this block probably followed a broadly similar pattern to that of Area 1 outlined above, and discussed by Dr Baker (p.12-13, above).

By the time the Pigott Smith Map was surveyed around 1850, the area behind the frontages was occupied by court dwellings, and small workshops occupied by metalworkers. Three pubs, 'The Rose' and 'The Beehive Tavern' between Allison Street and Meriden Street, and the 'Lamp Tavern' on the east side of Allison Street, were demolished when Digbeth Police Station was built.

Below-Ground Information

No specific below-ground information was available for this block, and site inspection was limited to external inspection of the structures only. However, it is likely that archaeological deposits have been extensively disturbed by the construction of the Police Station and the former Castle and Falcon Inn which are both cellared, although deposits may survive beneath the factory to the rear, and possibly within the back-plot areas of 110/111 Digbeth.

Archaeological Potential

The below-ground archaeological potential of this block is limited by the ground disturbance highlighted above, and the existing building cover. The evidence of the standing buildings is mainly confined to the late-19th/early 20th century.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: Small-scale Level III trial trenching may be required in the rear of 110/111 Digbeth and the factory unit off Allison Street if these structures were to be demolished.

Standing Buildings: A Level 2/3 response is recommended for the Police Station, while the other structures probably require rapid survey between Level 1 and 2.

Documentary Research: Further documentary and map research on the detailed history of the site should be considered.

AREA 3 DIGBETH: Meriden Street to Oxford Street

Present Character

This block is situated on relatively level ground on the floor of the Rea Valley. The west half is largely occupied by garage and warehouse buildings, while the east half is an open used-car lot. There are no Statutory Listed Buildings and none of the buildings has been included on the Birmingham City Council Local List of buildings of interest to date. However, some of the structures within the present Hartwell - formerly Smithfield - Garage contribute evidence for the historical development of this block. The garage has gradually spread over the street block this century, developing in a piecemeal fashion as opportunities have arisen, and this process can be followed in the Ordnance Survey mapping of the area from 1918 onwards.

Three buildings stand out within the garage, these are the former King Edward's School, a tall two-storey red-brick structure, which, though much altered and defaced, still retains an institutional feel with high stone-dressed windows, and good quality fine-jointed Flemish-bond brickwork. The parapet is clearly a later addition. The distinctive ground-plan of the building is clearly recognisable on the 1:528 Pigott Smith Map of c.1850, although stylistically it is unlikely that the building is very much earlier.

In addition, there are two purpose-built early Art Deco-style garage structures in the garage complex, built in the 1920s. The smaller of the two on Meriden Street has a plaque bearing the date 1923; the larger building fronts onto Digbeth. Despite the elaborate frontages, behind each facade is a functional, open-plan, cantilevered steel-frame.

The other buildings in the garage complex are unremarkable, and comprise repair shops, offices and showrooms, sometimes converted from pre-existing structures as in the case of the building on the corner of Meriden Street, or, in some cases, purpose built, like 107 Digbeth, a three-storey red-brick structure with muted Art Deco details, whose overall appearance has been blighted by unsympathetic replacement of the first and second storey windows. The structure, built in 1926, with the logo Smithfield Garage Limited in the smaller staircase-bay, probably housed the offices of the garage.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Situated in the lower reaches of Digbeth this block may have been subject to flooding prior to the culverting of the Rea. The place-name Digbeth may refer to the Old English name for a pool beside a causeway on the outskirts of a settlement (Gelling 1984,13), and, if such a causeway existed, it probably began in this lower part of Digbeth. Certainly, the proximity of water-power on the other side of the street was probably an important factor in the development of this street block - particularly after the 16th century. South of Digbeth were good water supplies including a large mill-pond, and several channels of the River Rea attracted several water-thirsty industries, including tanneries and forges. Therefore, we might expect trades making marketable goods from iron and leather to be situated near to these primary-production sites, although we cannot be sure from the documentary sources if this activity was taking place prior to the 16th century. Indeed, only archaeological evidence may be able to answer this type of question.

By 1683 this, and the rest of Digbeth, was characterised by the large number of resident ironworkers, probably engaged in blade-making. In 1731, the date of the earliest detailed Westley Map of Birmingham, neither Meriden Street, Oxford Street, nor Coventry Street existed. The properties on the north side of Digbeth, opposite Lower Mill Lane, are depicted largely built-up along the street frontage,

with some buildings and gardens to the rear, which immediately backed onto open fields and meadows. This situation did not change dramatically - apart from a slight increase in the density of buildings in the back-plots - between 1731, 1750 and 1778. A Trade Directory from 1777 indicates that metal-workers continued to practice in the area, together with ivory comb makers, coopers, and various retailers.

Around the beginning of the 19th century the fields behind the frontage on the north side of Digbeth were developed in response to the arrival of the Digbeth Branch of the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal in 1790, and the Warwick and Birmingham Canal in 1799. Coventry Street and Oxford Street are depicted on the Kempson Map of 1808, while Meriden Street is shown crossing Coventry Street, but not yet connecting with Digbeth. The Beilby Map of 1828 shows Meriden Street still not fully connected to Digbeth, although further development is shown on the south side of Coventry Street.

A great deal of change can be seen by the time of the Pigott Smith 1:528 Map of c.1850 in comparison to the earlier mapping. There is a dramatic increase in the density of housing in the courts to the rear of the Digbeth frontage, and in the centre of the main block two gasometers, belonging to a private gas company, are depicted. The entrance to this works was from Oxford Street. Town gas production was a very dirty process, which must have had an extremely unpleasant effect on the lives of people living in the neighbourhood. A large property on the corner of Digbeth and Oxford Street was occupied by a grocer and victualler in the 1850s. Other properties fronting Digbeth included two pubs, 'The Board' and 'The White Lion' - passages through these, and most of the other buildings fronting Digbeth, gave access into the courts of housing, and small scale industrial works behind. Both 'The White Lion' and 'The Board' were subsequently demolished to make way for the gradual expansion of the Smithfield Garage this century. An illustration of a 'White Lion' inn made in 1835 (BRL D1/150) shows a building possibly of 17th century date, with stabling to the rear, but cannot be positively identified with the former 'White Lion' in this block.

The main change between the Pigott Smith map of c.1850 and the First Editions of the large-scale Ordnance Survey mapping c.1889 was the demise of the gas works - as a result of the monopolisation of the gas industry by the City Council under the direction of Joseph Chamberlain. The gas works was replaced by the Phoenix Iron Works, a large-scale iron-working factory. Demolition of the buildings fronting Digbeth occupying the site of the what was to become the Smithfield Garage had also occurred by 1918, together with the demolition of several of the courts behind Digbeth. From 1937 onwards the block plan becomes simpler, as housing and small manufacturing works were progressively cleared and the Smithfield Garage expanded; a petrol forecourt was built on the site of the former 'White Lion' on Digbeth.

Below-Ground Information

Given the intensive development of the proposed development area in the 19th century, damage to archaeological deposits by cellarage may be anticipated, particularly along the street frontages, although there does not appear to have been any extensively scouring or levelling across the area. Excavation of the petrol tanks of the former Smithfield Garage forecourt are likely to have severely disturbed archaeological deposits, although survival in other parts of the back-plots fronting Digbeth may be good.

Archaeological Potential

Archaeological deposits, if they survive, have great potential to shed much-needed light on the chronology and form of medieval industrial and commercial development of Digbeth, and to explore the possibility that the lower parts of Digbeth developed around a causeway (p.23, above). The potential of the site continues to be high through into the early post-medieval period, and the 19th century industrial archaeology of the gas works and contemporary court and back-to-back housing.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: A Level I response is recommended for trial trench evaluation in this area, given the potential of the archaeology, the possibility of environmental survival, and the possible necessity for deep excavation to find the putative causeway.

Standing Buildings: A fairly rapid survey based on detailed photographic records and the drawing of floor-plans, together with the compilation of a brief text explaining the development and context of the structure is recommended for buildings highlighted above.

Documentary Research: Further documentary research into the specific history and development of the area is suggested to accompany any above or below-ground archaeological intervention.

AREA 4 DIGBETH: Oxford Street to Milk Street

Present Character

The Digbeth frontage of this block has character, and includes some good examples of late 19th/early 20th century building, particularly the entrance to Bonser's Warehouse, and the Digbeth Institute. On the corner of Digbeth and Oxford Street, 90/91 Digbeth, are two late-19th century, three-story, three-bayed, commercial premises. Sharkey's Irish Shop, 88/89 Digbeth, appears to be a small late-19th century industrial structure, with a curving, probably steel-framed, and felted roof - although the two first-storey windows have been blocked, and a modern shop-front inserted. Number 86/87 Digbeth is included in the Council Local List of buildings (Grade B). A three-storey brick office building with ground floor shop built c.1865, it has group value with the Grade II Statutory Listed Building of Bonser's Warehouse gateway next door at 85 Digbeth, (the latter designed by J.R.Botham, a locally important architect, was built in the 1850s). The entrance has an elaborate fanlight, above which a stone band carries the name of the building. There is a two-light, shouldered, flat-head first-floor window to the street, divided by a colonette; above, a second stone frieze and bracketed eaves cornice are surmounted by a pyramidal slate roof, with iron-cresting. The large warehouse behind, which has since been demolished, dealt in iron and steel goods, presumably manufactured locally. Next to 85 Digbeth is a modern tyre sales garage.

The Roscommon Bar, 80/81 Digbeth used to be called the 'Old Bull's Head', built c.1875 (Grade B, Local List). Digbeth Civic Hall, including 78/78A/79 Digbeth, is also a Grade B Local List building. Built c.1913 by the Carrs Lane Fellowship to raise the moral standing of the area, today it is converted into a nightclub and music venue. A row of three-storey late-19th century buildings complete the Digbeth frontage to Milk Street. The Bull's Head public house, situated at the corner of Milk Street, is the end building of this row comprising 75-77 Digbeth. Dent reported in 1888 the presence of a massive ancient wall with a catch-water well of considerable antiquity in the cellar of the Bull's Head (*Birmingham Faces and Places* 1.11.1888). Behind the Bull's Head on Milk Street is a three-storey range which was probably an accommodation wing of the pub. Between the Bull's Head and an early 20th century steel-framed works, is an area of car-parking, which backs onto the Digbeth Institute. The rest of the back-plot of this block comprises the Oxford Trading Estate, a modern set of workshops and warehouses fronting onto Oxford Road.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

The valley floor was an area prone to flooding until the mid-19th century when the Rea was culverted, and 16th century surveys of Birmingham imply there was a long bridge across the Rea which acted as a causeway. Dr Baker has noted that the plot pattern in this area is more regular than the area east of Milk Street; therefore it is possible that the limit of the pre-16th century town was located somewhere within this block, perhaps coinciding with a former leat channel of the River Rea which ran approximately where Milk Street (which was cut in the later half of the 19th century) is today.

By 1683 this, and the rest of Digbeth, was characterised by large numbers of resident ironworkers, probably engaged in blade-making. Indeed, by this time Digbeth had overtaken Deritend in terms of industrial output. The later development of the area follows a broadly similar pattern to the other areas on the north side of Digbeth outlined above, with a mixture of court-housing and small industrial workshops. By 1890 a large area of court housing was cleared for the Birmingham Battery and Metal Works, which occupied the area subsequently developed as the Digbeth Institute. Milk Street was also part of a Victorian improvement scheme.

Below-Ground Information

Most of this block is built over, therefore it is difficult to assess below-ground conditions. However, the area of the Oxford Trading Estate has not been significantly lowered, neither has the carpark behind the Bull's Head off Milk Street. Both the Digbeth Institute, and the Battery and Metal Works which it replaced, may be anticipated to have caused extensive disturbance to any below-ground archaeological deposits, and it is likely that the majority of structures fronting Digbeth are/were cellared.

Archaeological Potential

Archaeological deposits in this area have a high potential to answer important questions concerning the commercial, industrial, and domestic development of Digbeth from the medieval period up to and including the 19th century. The possible development of the property pattern around the causeway-road is particularly important. There may also be important evidence concerning the expansion and contraction of the limits of medieval and early post-medieval Digbeth. The existing buildings contain a great deal of evidence concerning the later Victorian development of this part of Digbeth, and have helped to preserve the plot-pattern of this block. This is one of the few areas within the overall survey area where the plot-pattern is anywhere near intact, and this should be considered as a part of the archaeological/historical resource.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: It is recommended that any development with below-ground implications in this area be preceded by archaeological evaluation; a Level II response is probably most appropriate given the importance of the area.

Standing Buildings: Specialist advice should be sought regarding the recording of the Statutory Listed Buildings in this area. The other structures should be recorded between Levels 2 and 3, dependent on their status.

Documentary Research: Further documentary research into the specific history of the area should also be considered.

AREA 5 DIGBETH: Milk Street to Floodgate Street

Present Description

This small block measures c.50m along the High Street frontage, and c.70m in depth to Moore's Row. On the corner of the High Street and Milk Street stands the Grade II Statutory Listed building 224/225 Digbeth, a striking polychromatic brick warehouse of five-storeys, built around 1860. No.224 was occupied by a branch of the Birmingham Coffee House Company between 1890 and 1900, while No.225 housed a mill furnisher in 1910, and a corn and forage merchant's by 1925. On the Milk Street side of the building is a smaller warehouse, with a set of access-doors placed above each other in a line to each of its four-storeys. The street frontage has painted advertising over the brick-work, which has air-holes punched through in places to ensure a good air-supply. Indeed, between 1894 and 1900 this premises was occupied by a corn merchant. Abutting the warehouse is a three-storey accommodation block, probably built at around the same time as another Grade II Statutory Listed building situated on Moore's Row, the Hall Green Technical College Annexe, which is a former board school designed by the Birmingham architects Martin and Chamberlain, which opened in 1891. There is a tarmac play-ground behind the school. 221/223 Digbeth occupies the site of the former 'Old Leathern Bottle', discussed in more detail below. Currently in use as a car showroom, the structure appears to incorporate elements of earlier buildings within its fabric, particularly towards the rear. The corner plot between the High Street and Floodgate Street was recently cleared of buildings. The final building within the block is a modern warehouse and motor factors just off Floodgate Street.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

This part of Digbeth, hard on the bank of the Rea, must have been particularly susceptible to flooding, and was probably developed in piecemeal fashion, possibly in the post-medieval period. The present Milk Street was an old course of the River Rea, and the High Street was built up above flood level into a causeway to cross the island formed by the two channels of the river observed by John Leland, who noted that there was only one bridge (Toulmin Smith 1964,96). The older course of the River appears almost fully silted up by the time the Westley map was drawn in 1731, a narrow channel at the side of buildings on the north side of Digbeth being all that remained of the old course.

Situated on the 'island' were two Inns, the 'Old Leathern Bottle' and the 'Old Three Crowns', both of which appear to have been constructed in the early 17th century, and were demolished between 1905 and 1918. Photographs of the two pubs show the street level was substantially higher than both buildings, which were entered down a flight of steps from the street (BSM Site Files:Aston 50), indicating that the process of land reclamation continued after both structures were built.

Milk Street originally joined Floodgate Street, following what is now known as Moore's Row. On the Bradford Map of 1750 Floodgate Street was called Water Street, and Milk Street was called Rope Walk, possibly after a manufactory situated there. The north part of Floodgate Street, just outside the survey area, was built over the former mill-pool of Heath Mill in the 19th century. In the 1880s Milk Street was extended southwards to join Digbeth by demolishing houses in what was called Meeting House Yard on the Pigott Smith map of c.1850. This name may refer to a Presbyterian Meeting House believed to have been established by Samuel Willis in the later 17th century, which may provide a date for one phase of development in this area.

Below-Ground Information

Given the probable history of land reclamation by raising the ground level survival of archaeological deposits may be high within the open areas of this block. Damage by cellaring may be expected along the frontages. However, in the case of the site of the former 'Old Leathern Bottle', for instance, cellaring may help to date the structure.

Archaeological Potential

This block has the potential to test the hypothesis that development here was later than the rest of the Digbeth frontage. The history of land reclamation and the development of the causeway would be of particular interest. There is also environmental potential in the investigation of the former channel of the Rea under Milk Street.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: It is recommended that development in this area be preceded by archaeological evaluation. Given the potential depth of deposits, and the likelihood of environmental evidence in this area, a Level I response is suggested.

Standing Buildings: Specialist advice should be sought concerning the level of record for the two Listed Buildings should these be threatened; however, a level of response equivalent to at least Level 3 of the RCHME Guidelines is anticipated. A fairly rapid Level 1 or 2 approach utilising photographic survey and the drawing of ground plans should be satisfactory for the other structures.

Documentary Research: Further detailed documentary research is also appropriate in this area.

AREA 6 DIGBETH: Floodgate Street to Gibb Street, including the River Rea

Present Description

The triangular-shaped block between the River Rea, which flows in a deep brick-lined culvert here, and Gibb Street is today almost entirely covered by the group of factories, offices and works which once formed Alfred Bird's Devonshire Custard Factory. The Custard factory which is in the process of conversion into an arts and media centre with student accommodation, mainly consists of late 19th century and 1930s structures. Devonshire House, which fronts onto Deritend High Street, is a Grade II Statutory Listed building, built between 1905 and 1910 in red brick and terracotta - a factory chimney, built in 1907, is also listed. The 1930s buildings are light and airy, in addition, there is a 1930s toilet block built over the River Rea at the junction of Floodgate Street and Deritend High Street which is included on the Local List. The only structure which is not part of the Custard Factory is a post-war steel-framed workshop occupied by a tyre-sales company.

There are four small open spaces within this block. These are: an area of demolished works sandwiched between the River Rea and Floodgate Street; a triangle of demolished buildings hard against the east bank of the Rea which front onto Deritend High Street; tarmac access to the loading bay of the former Bird's factory; and a carpark which extends under the railway viaduct to the rear of the Custard Factory.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

The historical and archaeological profile of this area is closely related to both the low-lying area on the west bank of the Rea (discussed in Area 5 above) and the development from the medieval period onwards of the putative market in Deritend (discussed in the historical sections of Areas 7 and 8 below). The development of the Bird's Custard Factory over much of the site has largely eradicated the original property-pattern of the area, although there may be some correlation between the diagonal alignment of the late-19th century works, near the High Street frontage, and the earlier property pattern, which can be reconstructed from the 1:528 Pigott Smith Map of c.1850. Only further archaeological and historical work could begin to reconstruct the development of this area prior to the arrival of the Custard Factory.

It is unclear when the bridge over this channel of the River Rea was built. John Leland describes two channels but only one bridge, which was probably situated on the Digbeth side of the River. However, a stone bridge crossing the Rea here was recorded as having fallen into disrepair by the 17th century, and was the subject of a long dispute over who should repair it (VCH Warwicks, vii, 31). A new bridge was apparently constructed by 1652. Further new bridges were built in 1750 and 1788. The later bridge was financed by a toll and the approaches to it widened. Deritend Bridge was rebuilt again in the 19th century, and most recently during the 1950s road-widening, by which time the river was contained within a brick-lined culvert.

Below-Ground Information

Only a tiny proportion of this block has not been subject to probable extensive disturbance by the Custard Factory. However, archaeological deposits may survive as 'islands' within the remaining opening spaces. Evidence of the former course of the River Rea prior to its culverting in the late-19th century may survive at a very great depth beneath the present ground surface, as the brick-lined culvert is at least 5m deep here.

Archaeological Potential

Surviving archaeological deposits within the eastern half of this block may help us understand the possible origins and development of Deritend as a market place from the medieval period onwards. For example, archaeological deposits dating from the 14th century onwards were found by trial trenching in the back-plot of the Old Crown. Archaeological excavation of the area adjacent to the River Rea may reveal information concerning the history of land reclamation on the east side of the river, which might complement results from Digbeth. There is also environmental potential in the investigation of the former course of the Rea prior to the construction of the culvert.

Recommendations

It is recommended that development in this area be preceded by archaeological evaluation. Within the existing open space both the triangle of land adjacent to the Rea by the High Street, and the carpark near the railway viaduct, may allow investigation of former courses of the River Rea. These may be deep excavations, therefore a Level I response may be applicable here. The remaining open spaces should be evaluated to Level III.

Standing Buildings: The built-fabric consists almost entirely of the Bird's Custard Factory, which is unlikely to be under threat in the conceivable future, although a survey aimed at establishing the chronology of development of the factory would be particularly interesting.

Documentary Research: Further detailed documentary research is also recommended into the history of the Bird's Custard Factory, and the development which preceded it.

AREA 7 DIGBETH: Gibb Street to Heath Mill Lane

Present Character

This narrow roughly rectangular block, measuring only c.20m in width and c.100m in length, was created in the mid 19th century by the cutting of Gibb Street. Two Local List Grade A buildings occupy the principal frontages of the block. Lloyd's Bank, 193 Deritend High Street, built between 1872 and 1881, is a good example of muted late-19th-century gothic combining quality red-brick, stone, and terracotta. 4/6 Heath Mill Lane, a single-story, twin-gabled building in red brick with lozenged diapering and stone dressings, is a bolder statement of gothic revival. Built in 1866, and designed by J.J.Bateman, the former Deritend Free Library is the oldest surviving branch-public library in the city. It opened the same day as the Central Library, which burnt down in 1879. In recent years it was used as a bakery, but is now empty. Behind these buildings a rough tarmac carpark extends up to the railway viaduct over an area formerly covered by small industrial and domestic structures. A modern workshop unit has been built under, and extends slightly forward from, the viaduct archway.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Dr Holt has indicated that Deritend may have originated as a separate market to divert some of the trade from Birmingham. This putative market may have been located in the irregular - but appreciably wider - part of Deritend High Street immediately west of the junction with Heath Mill Lane, seen on 18th and 19th century maps. A mid-19th century painting by William Blackham is called 'the market Deritend' (BRL 28/64), while a building with a frontage as large as the Old Crown would not be unusual fronting onto a market. None of these observations carry a great deal of weight considered in isolation; perhaps instead we should be thinking in terms of the possibility of a market here as a working hypothesis to be proved or disproved by further archaeological research.

The present day Gibb Street/Heath Mill Lane block would have been situated on the north side of this possible market place. Heath Mill Lane (also called Mill Lane and Coopers Mill Lane on various early maps) is first mentioned in 1589 in a deed locating the Old Crown, although the road may of course be medieval. The jetty of the Old Crown (built c.1450-1500) originally continued round what is now the Heath Mill Lane elevation of the building by means of a dragon beam, which suggests this side of the building was open to view in the late 15th century, at least. Gibb Street appears to have been laid out c.1838/48 and may be coincidental with the monumental construction scheme for the viaduct of the Birmingham and Oxford Junction Railway which opened in 1852. The block plans of buildings preceding the bank and library have been identified by the survey as standing appreciably further back from the main street frontage. Behind these buildings, between c.1850 and 1905, two small workshops were located in what is now the carpark, a lock-works and what is depicted on the 1st edition OS 1:500 as a 'monumental works'. These works were replaced in the early years of this century by two terraces of small structures - possibly houses - fronting onto Gibb Street and Heath Mill Lane, which were recently demolished.

Below-ground Information

Field observation noted major services along each of the frontages, and the remains of yard surfaces of the buildings cleared to create the carpark. If these structures were domestic, further service trenches may be expected within the carpark area; however, below-ground disturbance may be relatively slight given the size and date of the demolished buildings. While there is a drop across the site of about 1m

between Heath Mill Lane and Gibb Street, the ground level does not appear to have been terraced or levelled recently, and this slope may reflect a natural dip towards the River Rea. Lloyd's Bank is probably extensively cellared, but remains of earlier structures fronting the market place may survive under the floor of the former library.

Archaeological Potential

Surviving archaeological deposits within this block may help us understand the possible origins and development of Deritend as a market place from the medieval period onwards. Archaeological deposits dating from the 14th century were found by trial trenching in the nearby back-plot of the Old Crown. These indicated the probable presence nearby of medieval pottery production. Understanding the remains of the buildings cleared to create the carpark would not be a priority, but if deposits survive underneath these there is potential for studying the industrial development of the area in the 18th and 19th centuries and the impact of the railway upon this environment, and earlier into the medieval period.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: It is recommended that archaeological survival be investigated by means of Level III trial trenching in advance of redevelopment in the carpark area. If the former library or bank buildings were to be refurbished limited hand-dug trenching within the former library building should be considered, as should building survey.

Standing Buildings: Building survey incorporating floor plans and photographic coverage backed up with documentary research is suggested, roughly equivalent to Level 2 for the bank, and possibly Level 2/3 for the former Library.

Documentary Research: Further documentary research into the specific history of the block should also be considered.

AREA 8 DIGBETH: Heath Mill Lane to Adderley Street

Present Character

This trapezoid-shaped block measures c.160m in length. Backed by the Birmingham and Oxford Junction Railway viaduct opened in 1852, and the later Great Western Railway viaduct built in 1911, the block is c.80m in depth behind the Old Crown at the west end, and c.40m in depth behind the Rainbow Inn at the east end. Several buildings of character line the High Street frontage including two Statutory Listed Buildings of national importance - the famous Grade II* Old Crown Inn; and the former Saint Edmund's Hostel for Working Boys to the rear of the Esso garage, built in the c.1913 by Arthur Dixon, which is surmounted by a brick Romanesque campanile (Grade II).

Buildings on the local list include: Nos.179/182 High Street Deritend, a three-storey row of red brick and buff terracotta fronted shops with a central waggon entrance, probably built c.1900 - although it is possible the main body of the building may be earlier (Grade C); 164 High Street Bordesley, a four-storey red brick building with shallow parapet and slate roof of c.1800 (Grade B); and the Rainbow public house, a good example of a mid-Victorian two-storey corner entranced pub, built c.1875 (Grade B).

Other structures worthy of note along the High Street frontage include the wrought-iron entrance of William Hawkes Limited Blacksmiths; the workshop is recent, however. No.177 High Street Deritend is a solid late-Victorian three-storey block of two buildings with central access from front to rear, there is a large stone cellar under 177 which may predate the present structure (occupier pers.comm.). While 175 High Street Deritend is dwarfed by its immediate neighbour, despite extensive modern repairs and alterations, the incongruity of the window arrangement suggests the structure may repay closer attention. The large five-bayed, four-storey, building between 164 High Street Bordesley and the Rainbow is probably roughly contemporary with 164. Although the ground floor has been extensively altered (the side waggon-entrance probably inserted while the building was a Post Office between c.1850 and c.1960), the stone window-dressings and five-panelled parapet lend the building an air of restrained dignity. Finally, the terrace incorporating numbers 15-21 Heath Mill Lane is probably the only remnant of working class housing within the survey area, and was built on a former carriage works situated behind the Old Crown. Although the buildings are unremarkable examples of housing stock of a relatively late date (c.1890-1900), their survival, and relatively unaltered state does lend them a certain value.

Access to several of the back-plots of these properties was not possible during the the survey. However, remnants of early-19th century back-plot buildings were discerned, particularly behind the Rainbow/Esso Garage block, and William Hawkes Limited.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

The Old Crown on the corner of Heath Mill Lane is the oldest standing building in central Birmingham, a timber-framed structure, probably dating to the late 15th century. Excavation in the back-plot of the Old Crown in 1994 by BUFAU found evidence for the close proximity of a medieval pottery-production site (Litherland et.al. 1994), and established that islands of archaeological deposits survived between later disturbance, including a truncated medieval pit was filled with 14th century pottery of the type described by Sherlock as 'Deritend ware' in his report on excavations nearby (Sherlock 1955, 109-114). The natural sub-soil was sealed by up to a metre of stratigraphy. Other post-medieval features exposed included a cobbled yard surface and a stone-lined well.

While the history and architectural development of the Old Crown has been discussed several times since the 19th century - most recently in a report prepared for the City Council and English Heritage by Stephen Price in 1993 - several important questions concerning the building remain unanswered.

For example, while the Old Crown has been traditionally associated with the 'mansion house of timber' referred to by John Leland in his account of his entry into Birmingham in about 1538, Price has quite properly questioned this assumption. It is worth reiterating the arguments for and against this association as they shed further light on the historical development of this part of the survey area. Leland's description is as follows:

I cam throughe a praty street or evar I enteryd into Bremischam toune. This strete, as I remember, is caullyd Dyrtey, in it dwelle smithes and cuttelers, and there is a brooke that devydithe this strete from Bremischam...There is at the end of Dyrtey a propre chapel (St. John's Chapel, rebuilt in the 18th century and demolished after wartime damage in 1948) *and a mansion howse of tymbar, hard on the rype, as the brooke cummithe downe, and as I went thrwghe the forde by the bridge, the water ran downe on the ryght hond...*

(Toulmin Smith ed. 1964, Vol 2, 96)

Today, the Old Crown stands about 150m from the Rea culvert. Price argues this can hardly be said to be 'hard on the rype' (i.e. bank) and that early 19th century topographical illustrations depict other substantial timber-framed houses at the water's edge (Price 1993,3). However, against these claims it should be noted that Leland states himself that he was writing from memory and, perhaps more importantly, it should be remembered that the Rea may have been a very different shape in the 16th century.

Prior to the culverting of the river we know that the Rea regularly flooded, and that there was at least one other river channel located in about the position of Milk Street today, which necessitated two separate bridging points of the river until the 19th century. Leland also states that he forded the river rather than used the bridge, so perhaps we should be thinking of the Rea as a shallow set of channels flowing within a broad, meadowy flood-plain, with possibly a long bank from the valley floor into Deritend in the 16th century and before. This would of course locate the Old Crown much nearer 'the rype' of the Rea.

Unfortunately, Price does not refer to the exact topographical illustrations which depict substantial timber-framed buildings close to water's edge. No illustrations have been located by the survey to date which could unequivocally be said to show large timber-framed structures recognisably pre-16th century in date between the Old Crown and the Rea. For example, the former 'Golden Lion' - now situated in Cannon Hill Park, but originally located just to the east of St. John's Chapel on the south side of the road - is neither of the same status as the Old Crown, nor was it was actually built when Leland made his journey. The Old Crown would be a notable building within any middling market town, any rival 'mansion house of timber' would have to be either very substantial or very unusual, although Toulmin Smith noted from early deeds that a mansion called Syer's House may have been located on the east side of the Old Crown (Toulmin Smith 1863,6).

In addition, the plot-pattern west of the Old Crown on the north side of High Street, Deritend, differs markedly from both the patterns to the east of the Old Crown on the north side of the road, and east of St. John's Chapel on the south side of the road. The latter patterns display a regularity of plot depth, and to a lesser extent plot-width, which may be indicative of a phase of deliberate planning in the

medieval period, possibly associated with the putative market whereas the pattern in the High Street, Deritend/Heath Mill Lane/Rea River triangle displays a much freer form with no regular frontage or back-plot line. It is possible this irregular pattern may be the result of later piecemeal reclamation and development of the flood plain. The persistence of regular property boundaries, perpendicular to Heath Mill Lane, and creating small rectangular enclosures running down to the river, was also a notable feature prior to the mid-19th century development of this area. Parallels from other market towns raise the possibility these enclosures may have been used for penning animals for the nearby market. Speculation aside, archaeological excavation has great potential to clarify these and other outstanding questions which the documentary record cannot fully resolve for the medieval and early post-medieval periods.

The historical development of the High Street, Deritend/Heath Mill Lane/Adderley Street block is closely related to the development of Deritend. Early growth was probably concentrated along the main street frontage, and may then have proceeded outwards from the putative market area adjacent to the Old Crown up the hill towards Bordesley. However, the chronology and form of this growth can only be dimly viewed at the moment, particularly because we do not know the precise location, size, or shape of medieval Bordesley. As Dr Holt has stated above, the origins of Deritend were probably around 1200, and Heath Mill Lane is at least 16th century in origin, but Adderley Street is probably late 18th/early 19th century in date.

Although Dr Baker has indicated that the boundary between the plot patterns associated with Deritend and Bordesley (Plan Units 7 and 8, Fig 4) was probably just to the west of Adderley Street, for clarity discussion of the historical development of Bordesley will continue in the historical and archaeological profile of the next modern street block up the hill, Area 9.

The layout of 162/4 High Street Bordesley suggests late-18th/early 19th century development here may have been of quite high status. Late 18th century map evidence suggests development was still focused along the frontage, although some buildings are depicted in the back-plots. Behind the immediate backyard area gardens and fields are shown, on which the railway viaduct was constructed in the mid-19th century. Indeed, the arrival of the railway may have initiated a radical and rapid down-grading of the area. Court-type housing becomes a prominent feature of the area after the railway is built. Many of these 19th-century court dwellings behind the frontages survived until the 1940s in this block.

Below-ground Information

The Old Crown is one of the few sites in Deritend to have undergone modern archaeological evaluation. The results show that features dating to at least the 14th century are preserved in this area despite disturbance by later building.

In the two open areas within this block map evidence shows the Esso Garage plot was cleared of buildings by 1951, probably as a result of bomb damage during the war. Field observation indicated that the site has been subject to limited levelling to create the garage forecourt, and excavation for the fuel tanks will have caused extensive damage to the below-ground archaeology. On a more positive note, in William Hawkes Limited the demolition of several 19th-century lean-to structures to create the present yard are unlikely to have significantly damaged earlier archaeological deposits. Indeed, apart from truncation by cellarage along the street frontage, the other 19th century buildings in this block are unlikely to have caused extensive damage to the below-ground archaeology, especially the back-plot structures which tend to be smaller and cheaper buildings.

Archaeological Potential

Excavations in the back-plot of the Old Crown have demonstrated the potential survival of medieval and later archaeological stratigraphy in this area, which are comparable with results from other excavations in the broader survey area (e.g. Sherlock 1955, 109-114; Watts 1980, 1-79). The natural sub-soil was sealed by up to a metre of stratigraphy. Other post-medieval features exposed included a cobbled yard-surface and a stone-lined well.

The lower part of the block near the Old Crown may have considerable potential to indicate the medieval limits of Deritend and tell us about the kind of activities taking place in its immediate vicinity, including pottery and metal production, and animal penning, in the medieval period. Further up the hill, there is potential for tracing the expansion of Deritend in the post-medieval period, together with the changing character of the urban fringe in the 18th and 19th centuries - particularly the relationship between industrial and residential development and the impact of the railway upon the general character of the area.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: Only two areas of open ground are suitable for trial trenching at present. The yard of William Hawkes including the open area between 25 Heath Mill Lane and the railway viaduct may be considered to have a possibly high - but as yet unevaluated archaeological potential, a Level II archaeological response is recommended; while if the Esso Garage were to be redeveloped Level III trial trenching may be appropriate to test the extent of probable disturbance across the site. Further opportunities for evaluation trenching or archaeological watching briefs would of course arise if redevelopment were to necessitate demolition of any existing structures, or if significant groundworks were required for new services, etc.

Standing Buildings: Every building on the High Street frontage - with the exception of the Esso Garage can be demonstrated to have some local historical interest, albeit in varying degrees. In addition, the evidence of back-plot structures - which may be contemporary with and therefore complementary to, or in some cases even be earlier than, the plot-head structures - may be an important but as yet unevaluated source. Therefore, with the exception of the Grade II* Old Crown, a fairly rapid building survey to at least Level II (i.e. incorporating photographic survey, measured floor plans, and outline structural analysis based on internal and external inspection) is suggested.

Documentary Research: It is probable that detailed documentary research into each specific development area is particularly important within this block, as there may be written evidence concerning the chronology of the 18th and 19th century expansion of the urban fringe.

AREA 9 DIGBETH: Adderley Street to the Coventry Road

Present Description

The final block on the north side of the survey area is sandwiched between the railway viaduct and High Street, Bordesley. The block is roughly 260m in length, and between 20m in depth at the Adderely Street end and only 8m in depth at the far (east) end.

Only one building in this block is included on the Local List (Grade B). This is 123 High Street, Bordesley, the former Barclays Bank - a three-storey, red brick building, with stone-dressing on the ground floor, and a steeply pitched clay tile roof, built c.1910.

Two other structures may merit further investigation. 117/120 High Street, Bordesley, is a squat, three-storeyed structure, with very small windows set in four bays, and a shallow-pitched slate roof. The ground floor houses a modern store/shop, and the building has been rendered and painted recently, effectively preventing further structural inspection. However, the form of the building suggests it is early, rather than late 19th, century in date. The second structure is a small two-storey late 19th century industrial/store building in the back-plot of 131 High Street, Bordesley, although it is possible other buildings of interest are located in the back-plots of other properties in this block which were inaccessible to survey.

The other structures along High Street, Bordesley, are unremarkable post-war buildings, generally in a run-down state of repair, apart from the Saab garage, 149/159 High Street, Bordesley. Remnants of demolished structures can also be seen in the side elevations of several of the standing buildings and against the railway embankment, which include stubs of pre-machine brick walls, presumably survivals of the early 19th century court buildings.

The poor state of several of the buildings along this part of High Street, Bordesley reflects the lack of recent development in this area; this is also reflected in the relatively high proportion of cleared land awaiting redevelopment.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

The first known reference to 'Bordesleie' is in 1226, although the origins of this settlement may have been considerably earlier (Morris-Jones 1978, 27). While the boundary between Digbeth and Deritend is clearly defined by the River Rea, that between Deritend and Bordesley is more difficult to establish precisely, but may originally have been related to the topography of the river valley and may possibly reflect differences in land-use and development.

Early evidence for the location of Bordesley is equivocal, but for the purposes of this study Bordesley is identified with the distinctive short plot-pattern either side of the western end of High Street, Bordesley, which Dr Baker has indicated represents a distinct phase of development. However, at present, the evidence cannot support any conclusions as to when this development occurred. It should be noted that whether or not this actually represents the true location of medieval Bordesley remains unclear. Two of the earliest topographic references to Bordesley are probably William Hutton's description of the limit of building being 130 yards from the junction of the Warwick and Coventry Roads in 1783, which equates with the limits of Bordesley depicted on the Tomlinson Map of 1760. This map shows partial development of the short plot pattern within two narrow fields situated either side of the main road.

However, it cannot be assumed that the Tomlinson Map captures in stasis a process of linear development along the main road occurring in the 18th century. It is also possible to argue the reverse, that the narrow field boundaries on the Tomlinson Map represent fossilisation of an earlier, perhaps medieval, plot-pattern because of the contraction rather than an expansion of settlement. This interpretation has a certain resonance today when one regards the urban decay along the north side of High Street, Bordesley, which is in part a product of its peripheral location. However, perhaps only archaeological evidence may be able to resolve this issue.

By the Beilby map of 1828 development extends up to the junction of the Warwick and Coventry Roads, although it is still concentrated around the street frontage. When the railway was constructed in the mid-19th century it also followed the line of the northern field boundary, depicted on the Tomlinson Map nearly 100 years before, presumably following the line of least resistance. Court-type dwellings were constructed between the viaduct and the High Street from the mid 19th century, including a complex called New England on the Pigott Smith Map of c.1850. Some of these dwellings survived up until the 1950s, although this area suffered from relatively severe bomb damage during the Second World War, presumably because the adjacent railway lines and gas works provided a distinctive landmark from the air.

An archaeological evaluation by Hereford and Worcester Archaeology Service which took place in early 1995 on the site of the garage at 145-147 High Street, Bordesley, revealed evidence of probable 17th century industrial activity (pers comm. M.Cook). A large pit with stepped-sides contained 17th century pottery and was provisionally interpreted as a clay quarrying pit, for pottery, brick or tile production. Remains of the 19th century court-buildings were also exposed, in areas not extensively levelled or disturbed by the modern garage. Redeposited clay encountered near the railway was possibly associated with its construction, and may indicate that archaeological deposits survive underneath the railway line, which is banked here and may therefore have protected and buried earlier archaeological deposits.

Below-Ground Information

The results of the archaeological evaluation by the Hereford and Worcester Archaeology Service indicate that below-ground survival of archaeological deposits may be reasonably good in those areas which have not been recently levelled.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeology of Area 9 may have the potential to further elucidate the fringe development of Birmingham/Bordesley, and finally resolve the outstanding questions concerning the chronology and form of this settlement. There is also likely to be relatively good survival of archaeological deposits associated with the late-18th/early-19th century development of court-housing, while the results of the recent evaluation indicate that there is the potential for earlier post-medieval industrial deposits to survive, recording activities occurring on the very edges of the urban area which were swallowed under later urban development.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: It is recommended that redevelopment within Area 9 be preceded by Level III archaeological evaluation, because there is little environmental potential, and the results of the evaluation by Hereford and Worcester Archaeology Service have indicated that trial trenches are not likely to need to be either shored or stepped to overcome particularly deep excavation.

Documentary Research: Further site documentary research is also proposed, with specific reference to 18th and 19th century development of the area.

Standing Buildings: None of the buildings within Area 9 would appear to merit more than a Level 2 photographic survey, accompanied by floor plans and brief descriptive text.

THE CHEAPSIDE AREA

The Cheapside Area is defined as the survey blocks on the south side of Digbeth, High Street, Deritend, and High Street, Bordesley, from Smithfield Street in the west up to Clyde Street in the east. The south side of the main road has been subject to considerable post-war development which has tended to involve the wholesale redevelopment of complete street blocks. In addition, the impact of land-take to accommodate the widening of the main road both earlier this century, and later, in the 1950s, was almost exclusively confined to this side of the road, which in effect has swallowed the 19th century and earlier street frontage in places by up to 10m or more.

Clearly, this will have had a negative impact on the archaeological potential of this area. In comparison with the north side of the survey area the record of historic standing buildings has been almost completely lost, as has any above ground indication of the earlier plot pattern. However, all has not been lost. The lower part of Digbeth has been described as *'the Tudor equivalent of an industrial park'* (Upton 1993,14), and rightly so, as industries requiring a good water supply were drawn to the banks of a mesmerising collection of watercourses on the south side of Digbeth, feeding into and off the Rea and from the numerous springs and streams of the area, including the moat of the manor-house of the lords of Birmingham.

The surviving below-ground archaeological record of these activities, which in general were practised back from the main road frontage, together with environmental information from water-logged deposits around the River Rea, can make a vitally important contribution to our knowledge of the early industrial development of Digbeth and Deritend, especially when compared and contrasted with data from the north side of the main road. If archaeological evaluation were able to determine good survival and definition of archaeological features in this area, the archeological potential of this area may be considered to be of national importance for the study of early industry.

AREA 10 CHEAPSIDE: Clyde Street to Alcester Street

Present Description

This block measures 290m long and extends 60m back from the High Street frontage, taking in a small parcel of land on the east side of Clyde Street. The land here slopes gently, to the north-east down from Bradford Street to High Street. The majority of the block is occupied by modern garages and forecourts.

The land on the east side of Clyde Street is now a car park, while most of the remainder of the block to the west is occupied by the forecourts and a large steel-framed car showroom and workshops. On the corner of Alcester Street is a forecourt and small steel and glass structure built for second hand car sales.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Little more can be added concerning the early development of the south side of the High Street, Bordesley than has already been given in the discussion of the historical development of Bordesley in relation to Area 9 (p.38, above). Alcester Street is first depicted on the Hanson map of 1778, its development from the lane between the two plot-patterns of Deritend and Bordesley depicted by Bradford in 1750 was clearly related to the laying out of Bradford Street, which the Hanson map captures in progress. The new street pattern associated with the Bradford Street development was largely complete by the Beilby map of 1828, although the larger scale Pigott Smith map of c.1850 indicates that the widening of Alcester Street disrupted the earlier plot pattern near its junction with the High Street. By the mid-19th century a pattern of courts had developed behind the buildings fronting the High Street, although several of these were subsequently cleared towards the east end of Area 10 when the large Midland Bedstead Works was constructed, which can be seen on the Ordnance Survey First Editions of 1889 and 1890. The cutting of Clyde Street was probably connected to this large scale redevelopment, although it may be in roughly the same place as a passage called Mount Street. Birmingham was uniquely placed to become the centre of the bed-fitting industry in the later 19th century, because of the long-standing brass industry in the town.

Below-Ground Information

The north-east sloping land on the east side of Clyde Street has been terraced into, with a difference in level with Clyde Street of as much as 3m. To the west of Clyde Street the forecourt of the Renault garages shows little sign of terracing, although the piles for a canopy structure and the main showroom and workshop may have disturbed some archaeological deposits. Land on the corner of Alcester Street is unlikely to have been disturbed substantially by the present structure.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeology of Area 10 may have potential to further elucidate the fringe development of Birmingham/Bordesley, and finally resolve the outstanding questions concerning the chronology and form of this settlement. Although the impact of street widening on the frontages of plots here will have diminished the potential of the archaeological record in comparison to Area 9 on the north side of the High Street, archaeological deposits associated with the back-plot line may also survive here. Survival of archaeological deposits associated with the back-plots of late-18th/early-19th century development of court-housing should also be considered.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: Given the constraints upon likely survival of archaeological deposits within Area 10, it is recommended that redevelopment here be preceded by Level III archaeological evaluation.

Documentary Research: Further site specific documentary research is also proposed, with specific reference to 18th and 19th century development of the area and the history of the Midland Bedstead Works.

Standing Buildings: No recommendations are offered for the recording of the built environment of Area 10.

AREA 11 CHEAPSIDE: Alcester Street to Stone Yard, including Chapel House Street.

Present Description

This block is 220m in length and includes the buildings on the frontage, extending back between 80m and 50m. The High Street frontage on the corner of Alcester Street is occupied by a steel-framed brick and concrete structure housing a car showroom and workshop built in the 1980s with a forecourt and car park to the west. Adjacent to this is the Bull Ring Trading Estate, a large brick, concrete and steel, warehouse, constructed in the 1980's over part of the site of St.John's Chapel. The Irish Centre, a recent brick structure probably with a steel-frame, occupies the whole of the block between Chapel House Street and Stone Yard.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Reference should be made to the previous discussions of the development of Deritend given above (p.32-36). In the medieval period Deritend was in the parish of Aston and presumably had a large enough, and rich enough, population by the 14th century to merit the building of the new chapel which saved them the irksome need to walk to Aston to go to church. Saint John's Chapel stood near the east bank of the Rea, on what is now the corner of Chapel House Street. Westley's East prospect of 1732 shows a small chapel presumably made from the local sandstone, with a steeply sloping roof and a bell turret over its west end, although we cannot be sure if this structure was medieval. By 1735 the chapel was replaced by a rectangular brick church with a tower at its west end. Some illustrations made in the 19th century (e.g. BRL B1/71) hark back to the pre-industrial age showing the 18th century chapel in an idealised, quaintly rural setting. However, these are misleading as the surrounding area was densely built up by 1828.

Even in the 16th century, and doubtless much earlier, the High Street was probably lined with buildings. By c.1540 John Leland described Deritend as a hamlet separate from Birmingham, being the dwelling place of cutlers and smiths; a small timber-framed smithy in Deritend is depicted on an early 19th century illustration (BRL B1/133), and this type of small-scale craft structure may have been a common-place feature here in the 16th and 17th century. (There is another apparently late-18th century illustration of a small open-fronted forge in Digbeth by W.Hamper which is reproduced in a reprint of Dent's *Old and New Birmingham* 1972, 195).

The timber-framed Golden Lion was built at No.24 High Street in the late 16th century and is depicted on numerous illustrations and photographs (BRL D1/1, 43, 62-6, 127-132; there is also a history of the structure in the Sites Files of the BSM File: Aston 88). Eighteenth century mapping shows the frontage of High Street, Deritend, densely occupied in 1731, but with only a few buildings in the back-plots; subsequent maps in 1750 and 1778 indicate progressive development of the back-plots such that by 1828 the area behind the frontages was occupied by court dwellings and workshops depicted in detail on the Pigott Smith Map of c.1850.

Chapel House Street appears to have originated as an access way around the church to the lane behind the back-plots of the High Street frontages. Stone Yard is roughly equivalent to Brickhill Road in 1731, which was modified during the later-18th century to fit the grid-plan of the Bradford Street development.

Other buildings on the frontage in the 19th century included the Working Boys Home at No.20, and several inns including the Nelson Inn next door to the Golden

Lion, the King's arms at No.28, the Nag's Head at No.29 and the Green Man at No.47. Several of these inns are depicted on 19th century illustrations of either the Old Crown or the Golden Lion as large Georgian and Queen Ann style structures, and may have been built or modified from earlier structures to serve the coaching and market trade.

Several of these buildings between Nos. 21-37 were demolished in 1911 when a new machine shop was constructed for the screw-makers A.J. Stokes Ltd. At this time the Golden Lion was dismantled and re-erected in Cannon Hill Park. The remaining structures to the east appear to have been demolished in the late 1940s, to make way for an engineering works, when the bomb-damaged Saint John's Chapel was demolished. At this time the screw-making works appears to have been rebuilt to include the land, formerly occupied by the chapel and its school, to the west. These premises were all levelled during redevelopment in the 1980s and a garage and the Bull Ring Trading Estate now occupy the whole block.

In 1953 Deritend High Street and Digbeth were widened by demolition of some structures and incorporation of land already vacant on the south side of the street. A series of photographs showing the road widening in progress are in Birmingham Reference Library (BRL D1/181-219).

Archaeological salvage recording and excavation took place during the road widening (Sherlock 1955, 109-114). Medieval pottery was recovered from a strip of land, approximately 15m wide, in front of the Haddon and Stokes works on the High Street frontage between Chapel House Street and Alcester Street. The main concentrations of pottery were east of Chapel House Street near the site of the former St. John's Chapel, and opposite the Old Crown. Most of the pottery recovered appears to have been unstratified, with the exception of 13-14th century pottery recovered from a sealed pit, 1m deep, on the site of the former Working Boys Home at No.20. The pottery evidence indicated that production of a localised product - called for convenience 'Deritend ware' - was being carried out nearby in the 14th century. Subsequent excavation at the rear of the Old Crown (Litherland et al 1994) has confirmed the validity of this hypothesis.

The brick foundations of the 18th century St. John's Chapel were also observed on the corner of Chapel House Street during Sherlock's excavations. Here a Neolithic polished stone axe-head was also recovered by a workman 0.6m below the ground surface, perhaps pointing to very early use of the nearby Rea crossing. Sherlock also observed that 19th century cellaring had badly affected the coherence of the archaeological record here and on other parts of the south side of High Street and Digbeth.

Another archaeological excavation on the site of the former Haddon and Stokes factory in 1984 by the City Museum Archaeology Department (WMA 27, 1984, 56) demonstrated that the site had been extensively levelled down. Two undated features, a single post-hole and a 2m long slot may possibly have been of medieval date. Other features included early 18th century rubbish pits and the brick footings of a 19th century button maker's workshop. A few sherds of redeposited medieval pottery were recovered. Earlier salvage recording on the same site, but slightly further south, by BUFAU (WMA 26, 1983, 89) revealed evidence of post-medieval levelling. The waterlogged natural clay sub-soil was sealed by 1-2m of levelling infill containing 17-18th century pottery. The site is now occupied by the Bull Ring Trading Estate and a garage.

Below-Ground Information

The car showroom and workshop on the corner of Alcester Street have terraced into the present ground surface, with a difference in level below the present street level of up to 4-5m towards the rear of the building. Forecourt and car park areas are less likely to have been disturbed. The Bull Ring Trading Estate may not have caused as much disturbance, because the land it was built on appears to have been raised up before construction.

Archaeological Potential

Archaeological excavation by Sherlock in the 1950s has demonstrated the potential for preservation of medieval deposits in this area. Archaeological recording by BUFAU in the centre of this plot (WMA 26, 89) indicated extensive post-medieval levelling. Excavation by Birmingham Museum Archaeological Department opposite the Old Crown revealed the existence of 18th century features and two possible medieval features (WMA 27, 89). Archaeological features associated with the medieval and 18th century St. John's Chapel may also survive on the corner of Chapel House Street.

Archaeological excavations and recording have demonstrated that there is potential for the survival of archaeological features of medieval and post-medieval date, particularly on the High Street frontage, despite the effects of later levelling and 19th century cellaring. There is also potential for preservation of organic material due to water-logging in this area.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: Despite the probable disruption to archaeological deposits by post-war development in particular, it is suggested that a Level II archaeological response is required in Area 11, given the potential importance of any surviving archaeological deposits, some possibility of environmental data and the extent of post-medieval levelling.

Documentary Research: Again, site specific documentary research should accompany any further work in this area.

Standing Buildings: No recommendations are offered for the recording of the built environment of Area 11.

AREA 12 CHEAPSIDE: Stone Yard Street to Rea Street, including the River Rea.

Present Description

This block is 130m long and 40m wide and includes the River Rea. A petrol station is situated on the corner of Stone Yard. The level of the forecourt appears slightly higher than that of Stone Yard. Between the garage and the River Rea lies a modern steel frame and breeze-block warehouse; its north west corner is built against the remnants of an earlier 20th century brick industrial structure, overlooking the Rea culvert, which used to be pressed steel works in 1937 but had converted to a phosphor bronze foundry by 1950. On the frontage of the High Street, directly over the Rea culvert, is a public toilet. The land between the river and Rea Street is occupied by a car park and a large warehouse fronting onto Rea Street, which used to belong to Fred Purkis Limited. The building appears to be late-19th century in date, and is of five stories with a T-shaped plan. The frontage is constructed of yellow brick broken by heavy bands of red-sandstone or rendered concrete along the window sills and heads. The ground and first floors have had modern windows and doorways inserted; nevertheless this is still a striking building, converted from the 'Model Lodging House' depicted here on the Ordnance Survey 1:500 map of 1889.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Prior to the early 19th century most of this area was covered by a large pool where the River Rea made an abrupt eastward turn before passing under Deritend Bridge. The strange kink in the river here may be a natural feature, but given the extensive modification of the watercourses in the area it may equally be man-made, and associated with the exploitation of the Rea to power mills and feed tanneries. Indeed, most of the buildings depicted on the 18th century mapping of the area were probably associated with industrial production, and it is likely that structures pre-dating these in the 16th and 17th centuries, and possibly even before, were occupied by similar types of activity. Intensive occupation of this area probably had to wait until the problems of drainage and flooding were resolved in the 19th century. Rea Street was cut by 1828 to connect Digbeth with Bradford Street.

Below-Ground Information

While the digging of trenches for petrol tanks in the petrol station forecourt will have disturbed any surviving archaeological deposits, archaeological deposits may be reasonably well preserved over most of Area 12, particularly given the need to extensively raise the ground level in this area to make it safe from flooding.

Archaeological Potential

This area has very high archaeological potential to investigate the industrial archaeology of Digbeth from the medieval period into the 19th century, and to trace the evolution of the watercourses. There is also considerable environmental potential in this area. The potential preservation of such deposits is likely to be high given the extensive levelling necessary to raise the ground level here and the tendency of the area to water-logging.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: A Level I archaeological response is recommended in this area given the potential for extensive environmental preservation, the overall archaeological potential of the area to study early industry in particular, and the expectation that excavations here would have to be deep in order to contact early archaeological deposits.

Documentary Research: Site specific documentary research should accompany any archaeological intervention in this area. There is also potential for the documentary study of the development of the watercourses throughout the whole of this part of the survey area, from the medieval period onwards.

Standing Buildings: It is recommended that the former Fred Purkis Warehouse be recorded to at least RCHME Level 2/3, should this structure be threatened.

AREA 13 CHEAPSIDE: Rea Street to Smithfield Street including Mill Lane

Present Description

This block is 200m long and includes the whole of the block west of Mill Lane. Digbeth Coach Station is a modern brick and concrete structure with shops along the frontage and flats above. West of Mill Lane the frontage with Digbeth is taken up by a public house built in the 1960s, and an insubstantial corrugated iron and brick car showroom and forecourt on the corner of Smithfield Street. The rest of the block fronting onto Bradford Street is composed of brick-built depots and warehouses constructed in the 1960s and 1970s.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Watercourses and early industrial exploitation also played an important role in the early development of this area. The large mill-pool called Lloyd's slitting and corn mills on the Westley map of 1731 covered most of the rear of this block, the mill lending its name to Mill Lane, which may have been the Tanners Row mentioned in the 1553 survey (Hill and Bickley 1890, note 98). The mill-pool was filled in and built over by c.1850, possibly reflecting the growing dominance of the Smithfield Market over the economy of the immediate area. Eighteenth century mapping indicates that there was occupation along the Digbeth frontage in this area, unlike Area 12; however, much of this is now lost under the main road. There was little occupation elsewhere within the block before Bradford Street was developed in the late 18th century and the Smithfield Market in 1817. Thereafter, a mixture of court housing, small manufacturies and warehouses sprang up, and later still there was a large Weighing Apparatus Manufactory built by 1889 over part of what is now Digbeth Coach Station.

Below-Ground Information

Although the frontage of Digbeth Coach Station and 'The Dubliner' public house are likely to have severely disturbed archaeological deposits, other modern building in this block may not have damaged the below-ground archaeology very much. Like Area 12 to the east, earlier archaeological deposits may be preserved under post-medieval and 19th century levelling deposits, particularly in the area of the mill-pool.

Archaeological Potential

Like Area 12, Area 13 may also be characterised as having a high archaeological potential for the study of medieval and later industrial archaeology associated with the exploitation of the watercourses. Again there is considerable potential for the study of water-logged environmental deposits.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: A Level I archaeological response is recommended in this area given the potential for extensive environmental preservation, the overall archaeological potential of the area to study early industry in particular, and the probable necessity for deep excavation in potential water-logged conditions.

Documentary Research: Site specific documentary research should accompany any archaeological intervention in this area.

Standing Buildings: No recommendations are offered concerning the recording of the standing buildings in this block.

THE MARKETS AREA

The Markets Area was one of the earliest parts of the overall survey area to be developed, possibly in the 12th century. Within it was the moated manor house of the lords of Birmingham, which was the subject of a rescue excavation/watching brief by Lorna Watts in the early 1970s, when the present 24 acre market was constructed over the site of the moat (Watts 1980). Another moat, called the Parsonage Moat, was located near the present day junction of Pershore Street and Edgbaston Street. Edgbaston Street is also amongst the earliest of Birmingham Streets and must have been developed by c.1200.

AREA 14 THE MARKETS: The Moat Lane Block

Present Description

The long, narrow block 200m x 20m between the upper end of Digbeth and Moat Lane is situated on a slight south-east facing slope. All the buildings contained within this block were constructed in the 1950s or later and typically comprise relatively well-built office and warehouse accommodation.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Dr Baker has indicated above that Moat Lane may have been diverted, inserted, or improved as part of an early (possibly 12th century) improvement scheme providing a service lane for the narrow-fronted properties on the Digbeth frontage. By the 18th century maps indicate that the whole of the Moat Lane block including the rear section fronting Moat Lane was densely built up. Nineteenth century illustrations and photographs (Everitt 1853; BSM Sites Files: Birmingham 94) show several of the properties at the top of Digbeth, which occupied very narrow plots in order to maximise commercial occupation around the market. One of these, No.24 Digbeth, was the much drawn and photographed 'Old Tripe House', a 'fine example of a timber-framed town house of the late Elizabethan period' according to Stephen Price, which was probably demolished around the turn of the century (BSM Site Files: Birmingham 94). The association of the building with tripe was probably a purely 19th century phenomenon. The area suffered from bombing during the war but was largely rebuilt by 1950, although the distinctive plot-pattern was entirely lost.

Below-Ground Information

The foundations of the office and commercial premises in this block are likely to have severely damaged any archaeological deposits in this area. In addition, much of the frontage of the narrow-properties fronting Digbeth are now buried or destroyed by the widened street. However, the two passages between Digbeth and Moat Lane may be worth investigating, although these will probably carry several services.

Archaeological Potential

While archaeological deposits would have the potential for exploring several interesting questions concerning the chronology of the medieval town, the probable survival of such deposits is low, therefore this area is considered to have a low archaeological potential.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: Limited hand-dug trial trenching may be possible in the passages of this block, while consideration may be made for an archaeological watching brief to be kept on below-ground demolition works, if any of the modern buildings here were redeveloped, to check if archaeological deposits may have survived.

Documentary Research: A programme of intensive documentary research is recommended for this block, as it is likely that this may be the only source for the recovery of information concerning its historic development.

Standing Buildings: No response is offered for the recording of the built fabric of this block.

AREA 15 THE MARKETS: The Smithfield Street, Edgbaston Street, Gloucester Street, and Upper Dean Street Block

Present Description

The area bounded by Moat Lane, Edgbaston Street and Gloucester Street was redeveloped in the 1960s and 1970s, including the southern part of the area occupied by the Birmingham Moat until the first Smithfield Market was built here in 1815/17. The land slopes down from Moat Lane towards Digbeth, and down from Edgbaston Street to the south. Today, the southern part of the block is occupied by the wholesale fruit and vegetable market, a multi-storey car park and Council Offices. The method of construction of the wholesale market complex appears to be concrete piling. The northern part of the area is occupied by a tarmaced market area and the concrete and steel-framed St. Martin's Market fronting onto Edgbaston Street. St. Martin's Market has extensive below-ground storage and unloading facilities.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

The history and development of the site of the former Birmingham moat and later Smithfield Market has been extensively studied by Lorna Watts (MA Diss. BUL Heslop Room; Watts 1980), and the reader is referred to her work for details concerning both the excavation and historic development. Information from the medieval period is minimal, the reliability of the reference to a Peter's 'Castle' *'which stood scarce a bow shoot from the Church, south westwards'* in Dugdale's translation of the market charter of 1166 (Dugdale 1656, 655) is unclear, and may be merely formulaic - although it is not a common term. Nevertheless, 12th century activity in this area is implied.

As late as 1731 the limits of the town here were probably much the same as in medieval times. The Birmingham and Parsonage Moats still formed the southern boundary of the town together with a water course connecting the two moats which formed the rear boundary of the plots laid out off Edgbaston Street. Development up to the 18th century was hindered not so much by the physical bulk of the moats, but rather by the restrictive policy of the landowners involved. The only development to the south west of the Birmingham Moat was a group of what appear to be farm buildings in 1731. However, by 1778 the moat had been surrounded by a triangle of houses, Jamaica Row had been built to the south-west, and Moat Row to the south east. In the 17th and 18th century small-scale artisan occupations characterised the area, in common with most of the south side of Digbeth, and by the 18th century the former manor house and structures within the moat itself were given over to the manufacture of wire.

An anonymous 19th century correspondent to the Birmingham Post, stated that Edgbaston Street in the 16th century was pre-eminently the street of tanners and leather dressers, utilising the stream between the moats (BSM Site Files: Birmingham 211). Although no sources were given by the article, as Dr Baker has noted above this type of activity may be expected to have occurred here. By the 18th century several large Queen Ann and Georgian Houses lined Edgbaston Street. Two photographs of such properties have survived (BSM Site Files: Birmingham 211), and an advertisement from 1765 describes one such house:

'Handsome large commodious house, consisting of a large warehouse with a counting house behind it, two good parlours, a hall, two staircases, a china pantry, three large chambers, each having light and dark closet, many of each of them large enough to hold a bed, a spacious dining room, wainscoted, six good upper chambers with closets, a kitchen, pantry, four large cellars in one of which is a

pump, a brew-house with a pump, and an oven to bake bread, a good stable with a loft over it, a coach house and a large garden, with a canal, and other conveniences thereto belonging...'

A sale document dated 1815 includes a detailed inventory and valuation of the property within the moat prior to its destruction. This may be an useful aid in reconstructing the layout of other late-18th century metal-manufacturies within the district if their remains were uncovered by excavation. After the demolition of the moat and island in 1815/17, Moat Lane and Moat Row encroached upon the circuit of the ditch, and the remainder of the island was contained within the market buildings of the later 19th century. The status of Edgbaston Street seems to have declined rapidly in the 19th century, possibly as a result of the growth of the Smithfield Market. The market together with much of Gloucester Street, Smithfield Place, Upper Dean Street, Dean Street and Market Street was replaced in the 1970s.

Below-Ground Information

The impact of the foundation construction of the 1970s market on the medieval deposits known to survive here was mapped by Watts in the 1970s, and it is clear that 'islands' of archaeology survive between the concrete piles. Archaeology surviving under the present market includes the remains of fine ashlar-walls tentatively dated to around the 13th century by Dr L.A.S. Butler (Watts 1980, 40). Watts also noted that the 19th century construction of the market had scoured away important occupation deposits from the moat platform itself. Watts stressed the limited nature of the 1970s excavations, and the corresponding effects on the quality of data recovered. Therefore, further excavation on the moat site should be actively considered if such an opportunity arose.

This general pattern of partial survival may also be applicable under the multi-storey car park and the Council Office block on Moat Lane. The open-market area next to Saint Martin's market may also have good potential for the preservation of archaeological deposits, if demolition debris was dumped on top of archaeological deposits, rather than the site being levelled down. However, archaeological deposits on the site of Saint Martin's market building are likely to have been destroyed by construction of underground storage.

Archaeological Potential

Archaeological deposits relating to the manorial moated complex can be demonstrated to have survived the ravages of both 19th and 20th century development. A properly planned and co-ordinated excavation on this site may therefore have potential to continue the rescue work undertaken by Watts in the 1970s and further clarify outstanding questions concerning the stratigraphic and structural development of the site.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: It is recommended that extensive trial excavation is necessary in this area in order to assess the degree of survival of archaeological deposits and locate areas with potential to answer several of the outstanding questions concerning the development of the moat. Our knowledge of ground conditions in this area indicates that the response should be of the order of Level I excavation, given the likelihood of environmental deposits and the anticipated depth of excavation.

Documentary Research: Further documentary research might continue to build on the important work carried out by Watts in the 1970s concerning the development of the moat and town.

Standing Buildings: No response is offered for the recording of the modern built environment of this block.

AREA 16 THE MARKETS: The Edgbaston Street, Gloucester Street, Upper Dean Street, and Pershore Street Block, including Smithfield Passage

Present Description

The Edgbaston Street frontage is occupied by a 1960s eight-storey office block and a disused 1950s or 1960s warehouse. Behind the frontage is a vacant area of waste ground used as a car park; this land, sloping slightly to the east, is very close to the probable position of the Parsonage Moat, although re-scaling of the Bradford map and comparison with later Ordnance survey editions suggests the moat is probably under Pershore Street. Smithfield Passage is now little more than a path across waste-ground and car-parks. There is a 1950s warehouse and recently constructed restaurant on the corner of Pershore Street.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

The historical development of this part of Edgbaston Street should be read in conjunction with that offered for Area 15 above, as Edgbaston Street continued westwards from Saint Martin's Church, to skirt the north of the Parsonage Moat.

A curious example of the manipulation of the watercourses in this area was given by Hutton in the 18th century, and confirmed by Langford writing in the 19th century. Hutton maintained:

'near the place where the small rivulet discharges itself into the moat, another of the same size was carried over it, and proceeded from the town as this advanced towards it, producing a curiosity seldom met with; one river running south and the other north, for half a mile, yet only a path road of three feet asunder.'

(Hutton 1783,332)

While it is impossible to infer exactly what was happening to the watercourses here, the *'path road'* referred to by Hutton may be the Smithfield Passage, which seems to have developed along the back-plots of the properties fronting Edgbaston Street, and is visible on the 18th century mapping. Pershore Street was a turn-pike road driven into the area in the late 1820s/early 1830s, presumably after the demolition of the Parsonage Moat (see the Beilby Map of 1828 for the proposed line of the road which was later modified). Gloucester Street and Upper Dean Street were built by 1847 (Ackerman's Panoramic View of Birmingham), continuing the early 19th century development in the south of the town spearheaded by the cutting of Bromsgrove Street and Hurst Street.

Below-Ground Information

We know that several of the large 18th century properties fronting Edgbaston Street had large cellars, which together with the foundations of the modern eight-storey office block fronting Edgbaston Street are likely to have severely disturbed any archaeological deposits along the Edgbaston Street frontage. A surviving stub of possibly 18th century brick walling can still be seen in the boundary wall of the carpark next to Gloucester Street. However, the survival of Smithfield Passage, albeit within a wilderness of carpark and disused back-plots, raises the possibility of survival of archaeological deposits around it.

Archaeological Potential

If Smithfield Passage represents the back-lane of the medieval plots fronting Edgbaston Street, then surviving archaeological deposits here may have considerable potential for exploring the medieval development of this area and its association with the provision of the curious water-supply mentioned above.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: A Level II archaeological response for trial trenching is recommended in this area, given the possibility of environmental data to be recovered from water-logged deposits in the area of the Smithfield Passage. Limited trenching may also be appropriate in accessible parts of the Edgbaston Street frontage in order to determine the extent of disturbance by cellaring.

Documentary Research: Further site specific documentary research should accompany any archaeological intervention in this area.

Standing Buildings: No archaeological response is offered for the recording of the built environment of this block.

AREA 17 THE MARKETS: The Smallbrook Queensway, Pershore Street, Hurst Street, and Ladywell Walk Block

Present Description

The west side of Pershore Street is occupied by a petrol station with underground parking facilities and a three-storey office block, all built in the 1960s. Smallbrook Queensway was constructed in the 1960s as part of the Bull Ring redevelopment, and replaced Smallbrook Street. The large block of concrete and glass shop and office accommodation stretching along the Smallbrook Queensway frontage from Pershore Street to Hurst Street has underground loading and parking facilities which have probably destroyed any archaeological deposits in this area. Behind the Smallbrook Queensway frontage is an area of waste ground, while the area between Wrottesley Street and Bath Passage is used as a car park.

The north side of Ladywell Walk is on the fringe of the Chinese Quarter. China Court, a refurbished early 20th century warehouse and two other warehouses, probably of a similar date or slightly later, have been converted into Chinese restaurants. The east side of Hurst Street between Ladywell Walk and Smallbrook Queensway is occupied by 1960s buildings, housing shops on the ground floor and a casino above.

Historical and Archaeological Profile

Near the junction of Pershore Street and Edgbaston Street was situated the Parsonage Moat, which was smaller than the manorial moat and demolished slightly later in 1820 (there is a copy of an illustration of the Old Parsonage House by David Cox in Dent 1972, 338). South of the Parsonage Moat was the Lady Well whose waters were exploited from the Middle Ages; a bathhouse was depicted next to the well on the Westley Map of 1731. Development was concentrated around the Smallbrook Street frontage as late as 1778, and it was not until the cutting of Hurst Street in the early 19th century that intensive urban development occurred here. Much of this early 19th century development was probably a mixture of working class housing and small-scale manufacturies, if the evidence of the surviving 'back-to-back' properties on the corner of Hurst and Inge Streets is typical of the area (these properties were recently surveyed by the City of Hereford Archaeological Unit, Richard Morris pers.comm.). Examination of the Pigott Smith 1:528 map of c.1850 and Ordnance Survey map editions confirms this general picture. Wrottesley Street, Lady Well Passage and Bath Passage were all built as subsequent additions to this early 19th century phase of development.

Below-Ground Information

Intensive post-war redevelopment has severely impacted upon the archaeological potential of this block, particularly under the frontage of Smallbrook Queensway and the garage fronting onto Pershore Street. However, there is potential for limited survival of archaeological deposits in those areas which have not been built upon.

Archaeological Potential

This block is considered to have a low archeological potential. Because of the intensity and character of recent development, survival of archaeological deposits is likely to be confined to those few areas which have escaped redevelopment. In addition, surviving archaeological deposits here will mainly relate to the early-19th century period.

Recommendations

Below-Ground Archaeology: A Level III archaeological response is proposed for this area should opportunities for archaeological investigation become available.

Documentary Research: Detailed documentary research may prove the only way of recovering information on the historical development of this block, given the limited potential of the above- and below-ground archaeological resource.

Standing Buildings: No response is offered concerning the recording of the built environment of this block.

Conclusions

The results of this assessment have shown that there are a number of zones within the overall survey area which have significant archaeological potential to address important questions concerning Birmingham's historical development from its medieval origins to the industrial zenith of the Victorian period.

In particular, Areas 1, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9, within the Digbeth ERA, and Areas 12, 13, 15 and 16 within the Cheapside IA, may be characterised as having significant below-ground archaeological potential, while the record of the existing built environment greatly enhances the character of Areas 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the Digbeth ERA. Areas of low archaeological potential, because of known modern disturbance, were fewer than initially anticipated. **Indeed, the whole of the overall survey area, with the possible exception of the Moat Lane block (Area 14), will require some form of archaeological response to redevelopment proposals.**

The Implications of the Assessment for Further Research

The archaeology of the Digbeth ERA and Cheapside IA has the potential to further study into a number of nationally prioritised archaeological research themes concerning the transition between medieval and post-medieval traditions in towns, the origins of industrialisation, the development of working class/artisan housing, and the study of past environments (English Heritage 1991, 36-7, 41).

Two recent papers outlining the research priorities of the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology (1988) and the Historical Metallurgy Society (1991) are evidence of the increasing awareness within the archaeological profession of the importance of further research into early industry and later archaeological deposits in Britain. The study of medieval industry - the potential for which has already been demonstrated by excavations at the Old Crown, Deritend - was advocated in a report by the Council for British Archaeology in 1981 (Crossley 1981). Many of the recommendations listed in these documents are of direct relevance to the study of the archaeology of the Digbeth ERA and Cheapside IA, and, as such, have been considered within the compilation of this document.

The archaeology of the overall survey area has particular relevance for the study of the industrialising economy of the West Midlands region at the end of the Middle Ages through into the 17th and 18th centuries (again, excavation in High Street, Bordesley has demonstrated the potential of archaeological deposits within the survey area), especially through the examination of ordinary urban and suburban domestic workshop sites, and their organisation, development and scale. In addition, the exploitation of the water-supply - which was a key feature in much of the early industrial development in the survey area - provides another inter-related theme for further research.

The record of the older existing buildings continues the potential for the study of these, and other themes, in to the Victorian period. However, there is another important research theme, associated with the development of working-class and artisan housing, which 18th and 19th century below-ground archaeological deposits have considerable potential to address. The following comments from a recent Royal Commission architectural survey report on the Black Country (RCHME 1991, 24), are equally applicable to Birmingham:

'the slum clearance programmes of the last forty years have effectively removed virtually all representative working-class housing of before c.1880'.

Throughout the overall survey area contact will be made with the remains of working-class and artisan housing. Sufficient information may be recovered for later 19th century housing from non-archaeological sources, including the series of Pigott Smith 1:528 maps and the Ordnance Survey 1:500 series from 1889 onwards, together with other relevant primary documentary evidence. Such sources have been studied for Birmingham by for example Dr Carl Chinn (Chinn 1991). However, it is suggested that where evidence of housing pre-dating 1850 is found within the survey area this be recorded archeologically, for within Birmingham only a few scattered working-class and artisan houses survive from the period before c.1850, and little systematic work on the development of plan-forms has taken place. This subject area has undoubted importance for the social and economic (and popular) history of Birmingham, which has important documentary and photographic evidence in abundance. Further work could greatly contribute to the understanding of the making of the modern landscape, building on work by Chinn and others in Birmingham, a subject which should form a major component of any broader heritage strategy for the Digbeth area.

Finally, the 'popular' aspects of the study might be reflected in the dissemination of the results from this, and future, work to the widest possible audience in a way that is both lively and interesting. The principal message of this popularisation should be the unexploited potential of the archaeology of the area, and its relevance to the history of the development of Birmingham and the region. For example, there is potential for schools packages and even a display to tour schools and other venues, together with the writing of a popular and attractively-produced booklet for sale to the general public.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks are due to Dr Nigel Baker and Dr Richard Holt for their specialist contributions to the project. At BUFAU a number of people were involved in the production of this report. Stephen Litherland wrote much of the text, and carried out the documentary analysis and field survey. Laurence Jones carried out the initial documentary search and reported on the findings of this and his contribution to the field survey. Sally Biswell digitised the survey data, and Dr Vince Gaffney and Elizabeth Hooper helped produce the figures based on this data. Further figures were drafted by Mark Breedon.

The help and advice of Dr Mike Hodder, the Planning Archaeologist for Birmingham City Council is gratefully acknowledged, together with other staff within the Planning Department who helped at various stages of the project. Also the support provided by staff of Birmingham Reference Library Departments of Local History, and Archives, and the Birmingham Science Museum should be acknowledged and thanked.

Appendix 1: Model Costings for Further Archaeological Work

The following outline costings are provided to give an indication of the potential costs of further archaeological work. The precise amount would be dependant upon the work actually carried out within each archaeological programme and, as such, would be dependant upon a number of factors which cannot be predicted at present. The costings are presented to cover a variety of scenarios:

i. The daily all-inclusive rate for an archaeological watching brief by a suitably qualified archaeologist of groundworks carried out by another contractor would be in the region of £150 per day. This rate should also cover the compilation of a brief written and illustrated report. This type of provision may be particularly relevant for covering part of a programme of further geotechnical trial pitting for example, although it is suggested that the archaeological component of such an exercise should be considered in detail with the geotechnical contractors in order to maximise the information recovered by both parties and keep costs down. If an archaeological watching brief were to be carried out continuously over a period of more than 5 days there may be a consequent saving in the costs due to economies of scale. As noted in the Digbeth ERA Site Assessment (BCL 1995, 33), monitoring of archaeological trenching by geotechnical teams should also be actively considered.

ii. There will be cases where further detailed desk-top assessment of a proposed development area is required in order to determine the precise level of further archaeological response. The costs of such an exercise might be in the region of £500-800 per site dependant on the size of the proposed development area (it is envisaged that the higher figure given should be sufficient to cover an entire street block).

iii. The costs of archaeological trial trenching should be considered in relation to the Levels of Archaeological Response outlined in the recommendations section of the specific street block assessments. Contingency figures to cover the costs of difficult excavation (Level II; 10%) and environmental potential (Level I: 25%) should be added to the figures given below for straight forward Level III trial trenching where appropriate.

There are significant economies of scale associated with the costs of a larger-scale archaeological evaluation, compared with the minimum fixed-costs of smaller scale-work. These costs basically reflect the fixed overheads and logistical back-up of an archaeological team in the field calculated on a weekly basis. Therefore, the minimum cost of a week of trial evaluation trenching would be in the region of £2500 - £3000, this should cover excavation equivalent to c.100 sq m, (in a 5% sample equivalent to a development area of c.2000 sq m). Excavation of trenching equivalent to c.500sq m would cost in the region of £8000 (in a 5% sample equivalent to a development area of 10 000 sq m; i.e. probably equivalent to an average-sized street block within the overall development area).

iv. It is envisaged that further detailed documentary research into the historic development of a specific development area be carried out in tandem with further programmes of archaeological fieldwork, and might cost in the region of £500-£1000, again dependant on the size and history of the proposed development area.

v. The costs of a programme of building recording are too variable to provide an indication of costs at present.

Appendix 2: Catalogue of Map Sources Consulted: (arranged alphabetically)

Ackerman's Panoramic View of Birmingham, 1847
Beilby map of 1828
Bradford map of 1750/1
Hanson map of 1778
Hill and Bickley, Conjectural Map of 1553, 1890.
Hunt map of 1834
Inge Estate maps of 1809 (BRL: MS177)
Kempson map of 1808
Ordnance Survey maps, various editions 1889-1970
Pigott Smith 1:528 maps of c.1850-1860
Rating maps of Birmingham, c.1869-1890 (updated from the Pigott Smith 1:528 maps)
Snape map of 1779
Tomlinson's map of Bordesley Manor of 1760
Tithe map of the Parish of Bordesley of 1848
Tithe map of the Parish of St.Martin's of 1848
Westley map of 1731
Westley's East Prospect of Birmingham of 1732

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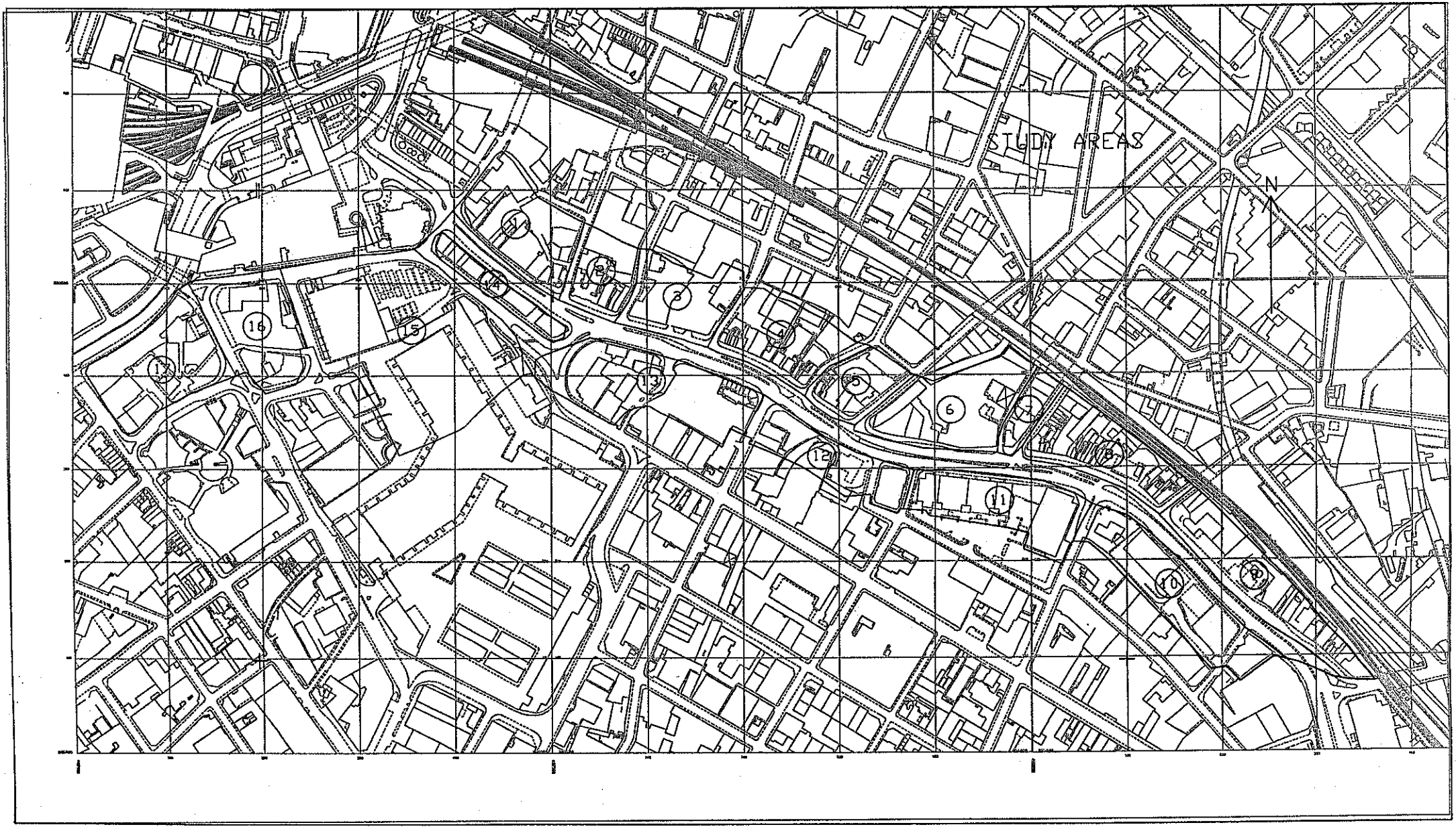

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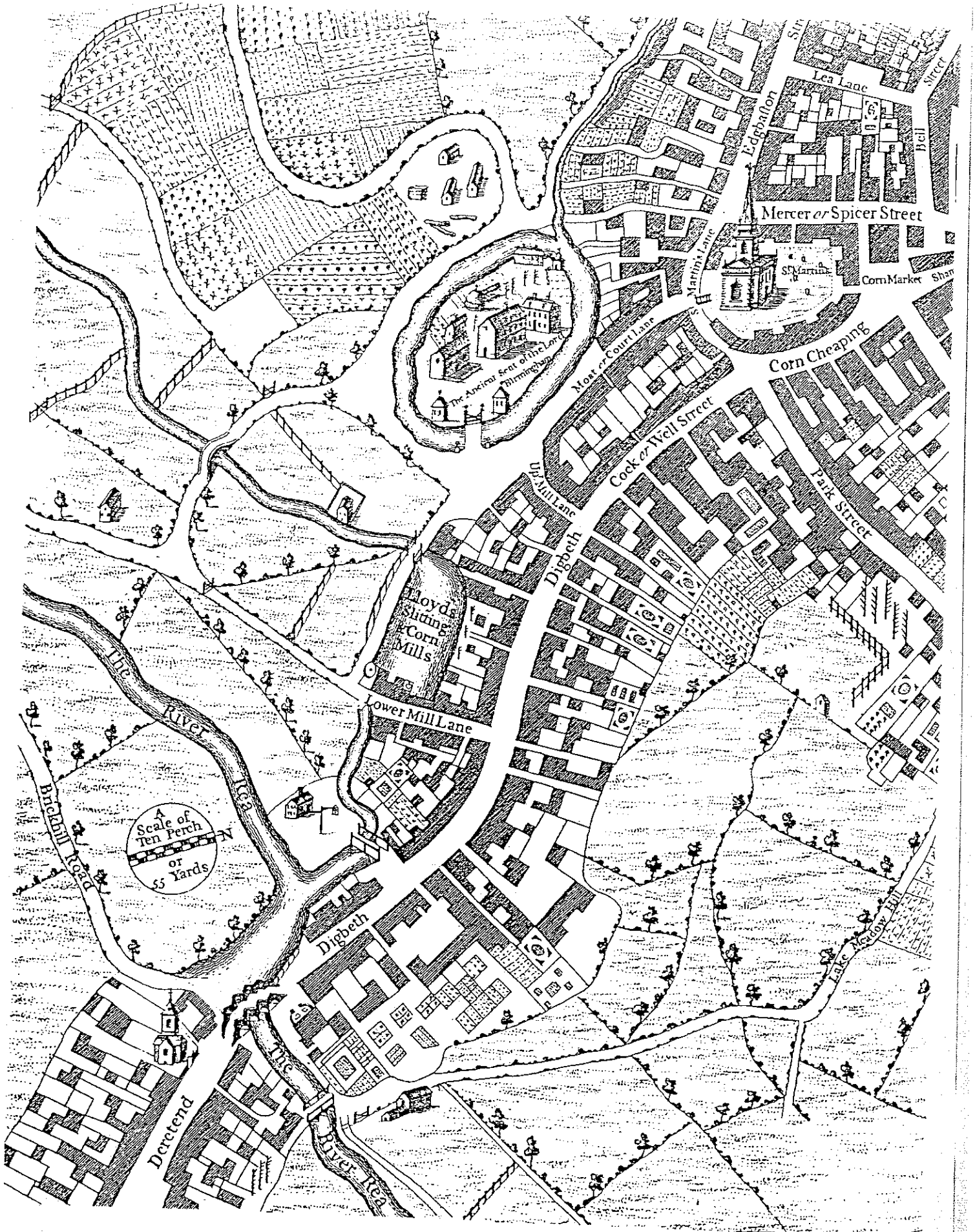

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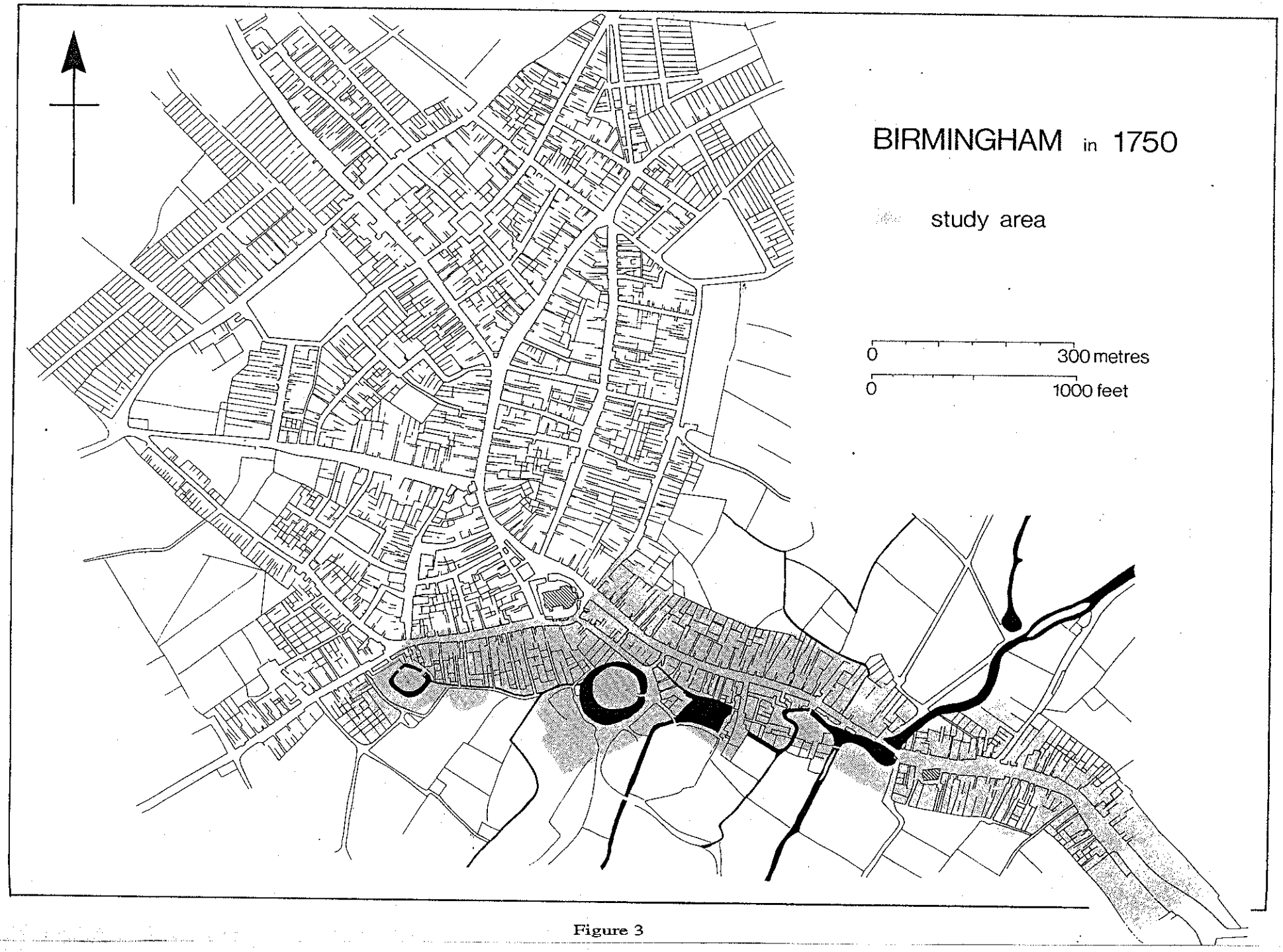

Figure 3

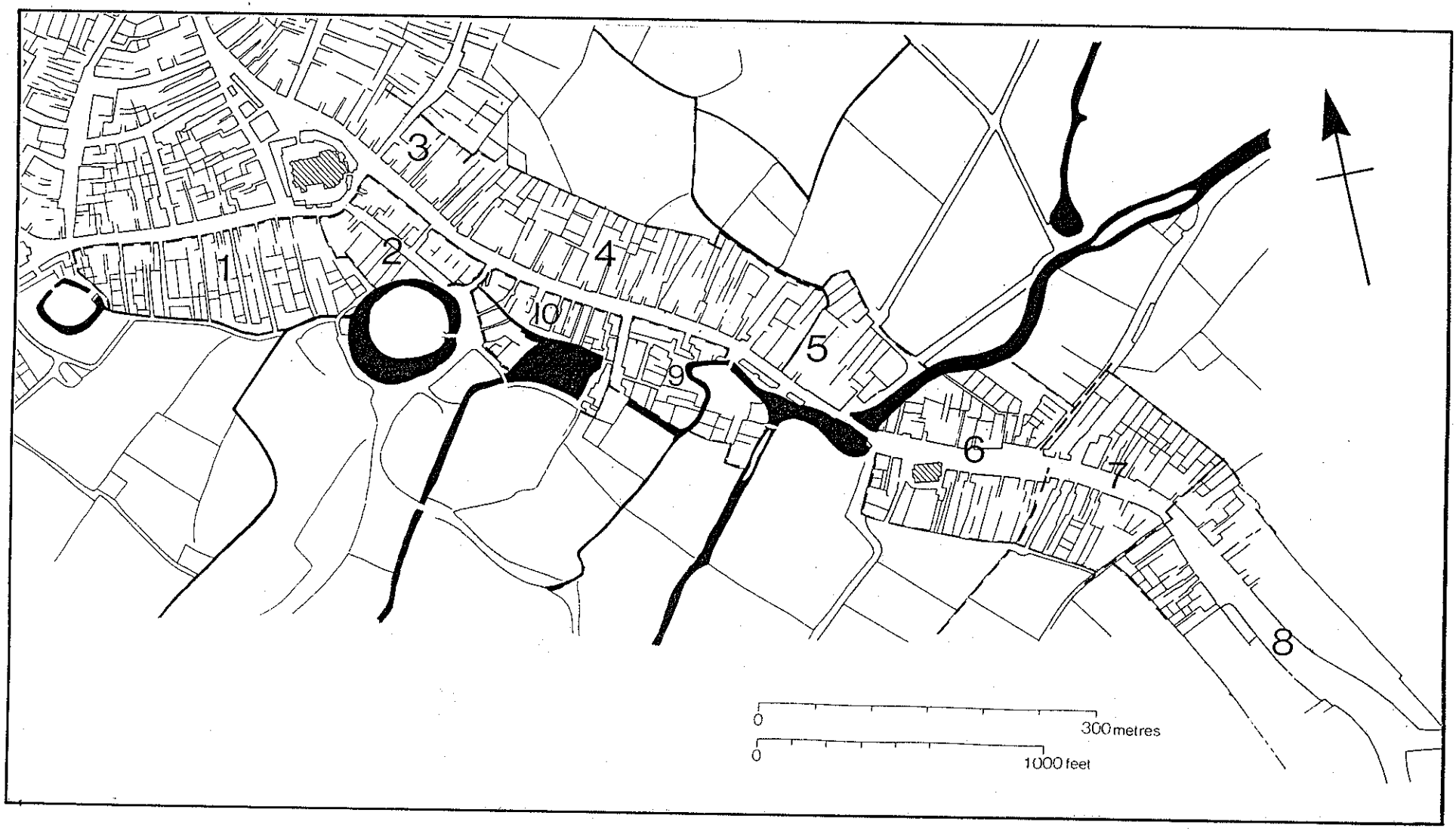

Figure 4