

CHESHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

Congleton

Archaeological Strategy



2003

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Congleton: Area of Archaeological Potential

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP) was identified in the Congleton Borough Local Plan Deposit Draft, December 1994. The AAP has now been redefined, and three Archaeological Character Zones (ACZs) have been identified within this. Each Zone is identified by its defining archaeological or historical characteristics, or *Primary Characteristics*. For example, in the Historic Core (Archaeological Character Zone 1), the defining characteristics include blocks of medieval tenements and burgage plots.
- 1.2 Each Archaeological Character Zone may also include sites and features which are not defining characteristics but are nonetheless of archaeological and historical importance, and these are identified as *Secondary Characteristics*. For example, Archaeological Character Zone 1 includes potential prehistoric deposits as well as a number of industrial sites, in particular silk mills, and these have therefore been identified as Secondary Characteristics.
- 1.3 The list of characteristics is not exhaustive, and it is possible that other types of important archaeological remains and features exist within each Archaeological Character Zone. The boundaries of the AAP and the Archaeological Character Zones, and the list of Primary and Secondary Characteristics are intended as a guide for planners and developers. They are based on current knowledge, and are therefore subject to change as new information is revealed.

2. Existing Designations (Figure 1)

Scheduled Ancient Monuments	None
Listed Buildings	Grade I - none Grade II* - the Town Hall and a pair of mid-18th century wrought iron gates at 61 West Street Grade II - 117
Conservation Areas	Three – Moody Street, Lawton Street and Swan Bank.
Registered Parks and Gardens	None

3. The Archaeological Character Zones (Figure 2)

Zone 1: Medieval Core

Primary Characteristics	
Medieval Settlement	Throughout this Zone, property boundaries survive that run at right angles to street frontages, a number of which appear to follow the boundaries of typical long, narrow medieval tenement plots. It is within this Zone that the medieval borough was laid out in the 13th century.
Market Places	Three potential market places have been identified in this Zone.
Town Bridge and Lower Chapel	A bridge is known to have stood on the site of the town bridge since at least the early 15th century. Associated with this was the 'Lower Chapel', the location of which is unknown.
Medieval Corn Mill	The medieval corn mill is likely to have stood on the same site as the 19th-century corn mill on the river Dane.
Street Pattern	Much of the medieval street pattern survives, particularly that of Lawton Street, High Street and Mill Street.

Secondary Characteristics	
Prehistoric Activity	Archaeological deposits have been recorded in the vicinity of the Town Hall, which indicate that there was prehistoric activity in this area. The nature and extent of this activity remains to be defined.
Post Medieval Settlement	A number of post medieval buildings survive in this area, including 17th-century Grade II listed buildings.

Industrial Development	A number of industrial sites are located within this Zone, including a large number of silk mills.
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Zone 2: Later Medieval Settlement

Primary Characteristics	
Later Medieval Settlement	This Zone lies just outside the medieval settlement core, and settlement is likely to post date that of Zone 1.
Higher Chapel/St Peter's Church	St Peter's Church was built in 1740-2 on what is thought to have been the site of the Higher or Upper Chapel, which potentially dates back to the mid-14th century if not earlier.
Grammar School	A Grammar school on a site adjacent to St Peter's Church is documented from 1584, although this may date back to the 15th century.

Secondary Characteristics	
Post Medieval Domestic and Industrial Development	A number of domestic and industrial sites are located within this Zone.

Zone 3: Post Medieval Industrial Expansion

Primary Characteristics	
Industrial Sites	This Zone includes a large number of mills, particularly silk mills that were built in the 18th and 19th centuries. Of these, a large number have been demolished while those that survive have undergone a variety of changes of use.

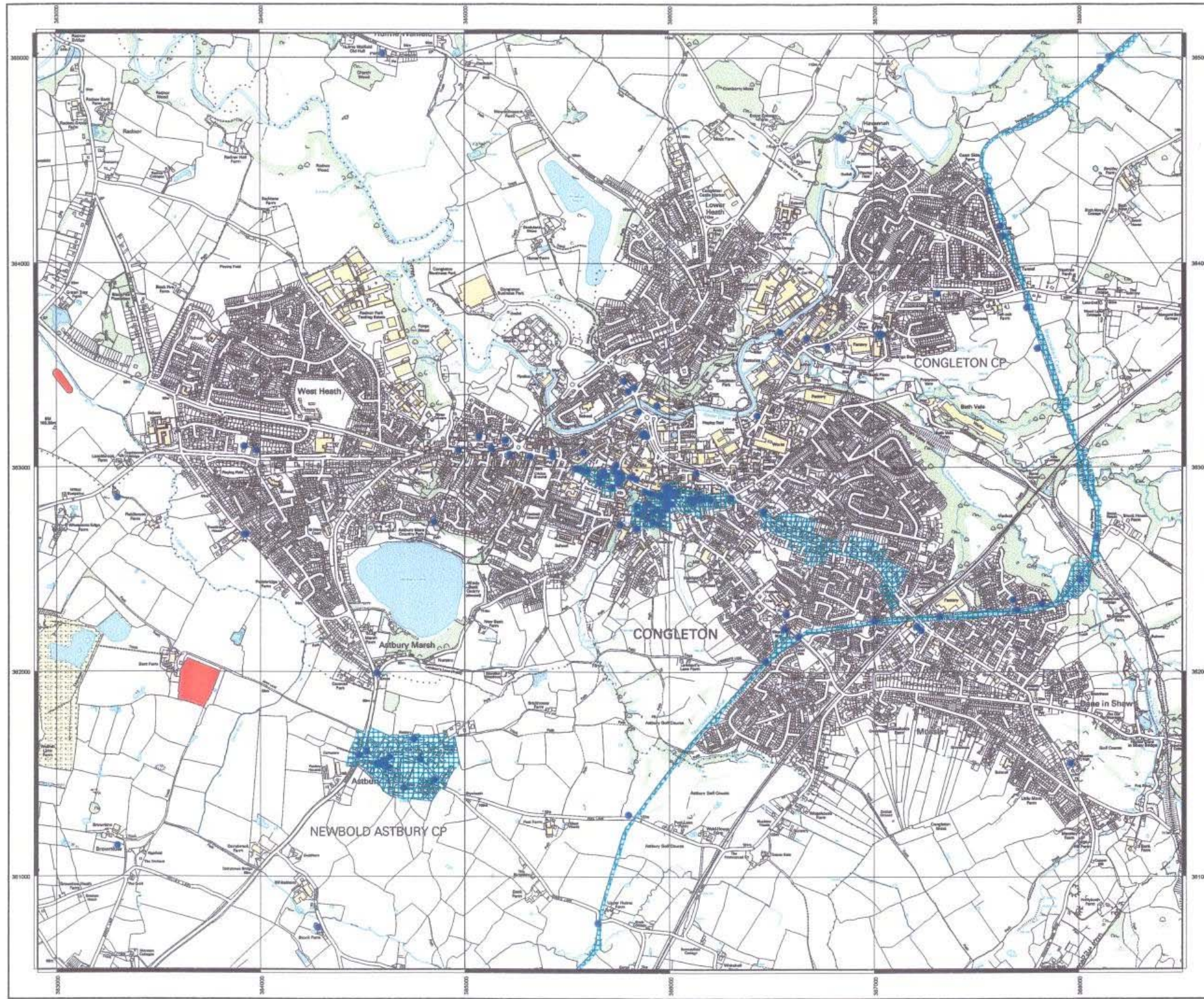


Figure 1: Congleton Existing Designations

- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Listed Building
- Conservation Area

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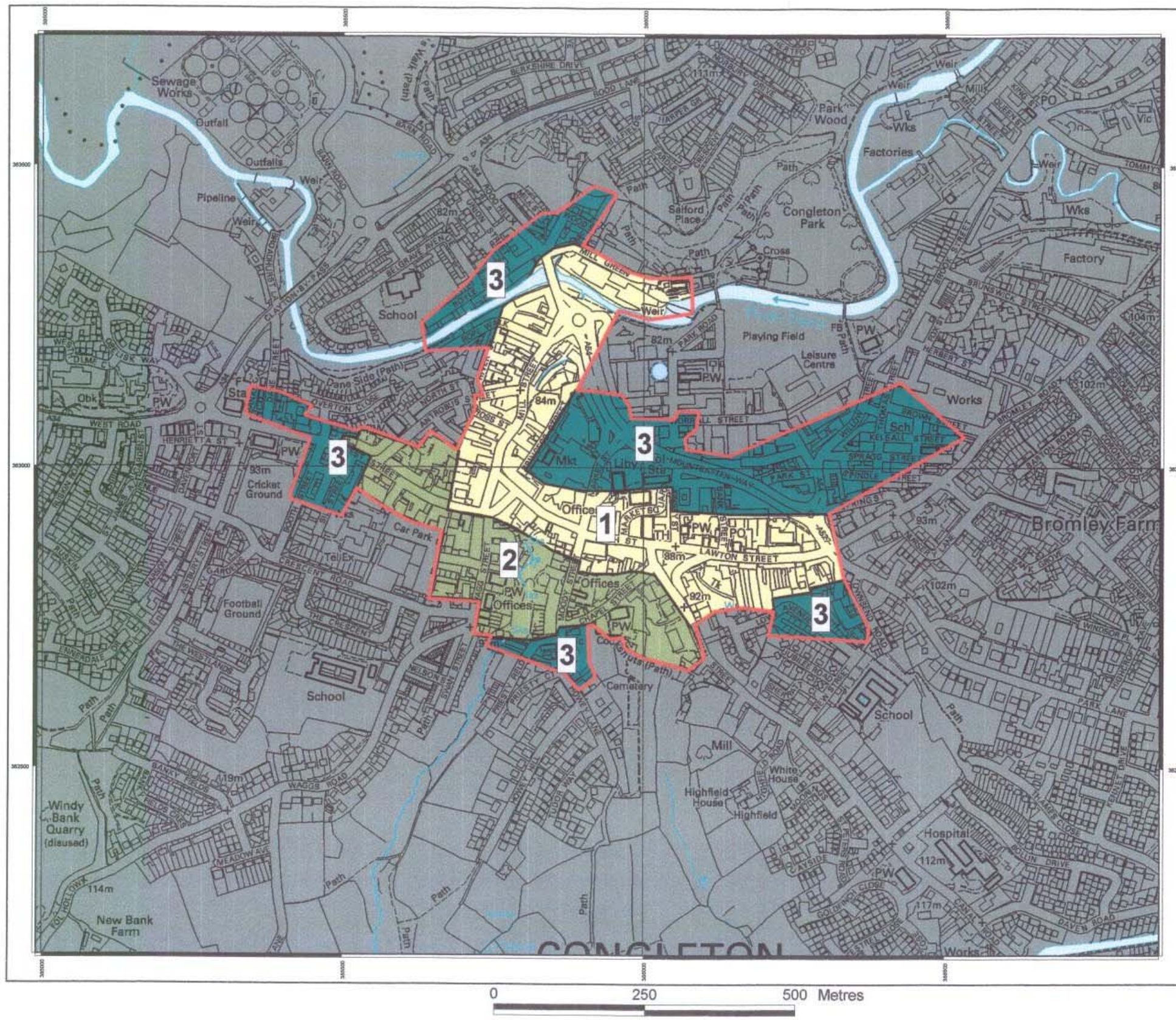


Figure 2: Congleton Area of Archaeological Potential and Archaeological Character Zones

- Area of Archaeological Potential
- ACZ 1: Medieval Core
- ACZ 2: Later Medieval Settlement
- ACZ 3: Post Medieval Industrial Expansion
- Area Outside of the Historic Core

1:6000

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