

CHESHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

Nantwich

Archaeological Strategy



2003

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Nantwich: Area of Archaeological Potential

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP) has been identified in Nantwich, comprising five Archaeological Character Zones (ACZs). Each Zone is identified by its defining archaeological or historical characteristics, or *Primary Characteristics*. For example, in the Core Medieval Settlement Zone (Archaeological Character Zone 2), the defining characteristics include the site of the medieval castle and St Mary's Church.
- 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 2 potentially contains the archaeological remains of the settlement of Roman Nantwich, and this has therefore been identified as a Secondary Characteristic.
- 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 AAPs 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	Three - to the north is Reaseheath moated site (SAM 13493), to the west is Monks Lane Moated site, Acton (SAM 13437), and to the south is Edleston moated site and fishpond (SAM 13518).
Listed Buildings	Grade I – Three Grade II* – Four Grade II – 112
Conservation Areas	Three - the historic core of Nantwich, Reaseheath The Green to the north of Nantwich, and the village of Acton which lies 1km to the west.
Registered Parks and Gardens	One - Dorfold Hall, 1km west of Nantwich (Number 1632, Grade II)
Registered Battlefield	One - the battlefield of the Battle of Nantwich (1644) lies immediately north-west of the town.

3. Archaeological Character Zones (Figure 2)

Zone 1: Area of Roman Activity

Primary Characteristics:	
Roman Settlement Remains	The broad spread of finds in this Zone indicates that there was Roman settlement at Nantwich, the nature and extent of which remains to be understood.
Roman Cemetery Remains	Archaeological remains of a Romano-British cremation have been identified at Davelyn House, which may be part of a wider cemetery.
Roman Saltworking Remains	Archaeological remains of saltworking have been found in the St Anne's Lane area and lead brine pans have been discovered to the north of Nantwich. These sites may exist in isolation or they may be part of wider areas of saltworking.

Zone 2: Core Medieval Settlement

Primary Characteristics:	
Nantwich Castle	Archaeological work has confirmed the location of the castle site, east of the River Weaver, in the area of Castle Street, and the potential for remains. Nothing of the castle survives above ground. Other medieval archaeological deposits discovered in this area include evidence of a pottery kiln, tanning and saltworking.
Medieval Settlement	The core of the medieval town is centred around High Street, Pepper Street, Beam Street and Hospital Street. There are a number of long, narrow property boundaries that run at right angles to the street frontages, which appear to follow the boundaries of medieval property or 'burgage' plots.

Hospital of St Nicholas	This is thought to have been founded at the end of the 11th Century and would have marked the eastern limits of the town at this time. Traditionally said to be sited at 140 Hospital Street
Market Areas	There were a number of market places in Nantwich, concentrated in the area of High Street and Beam Street.

Secondary Characteristics:	
Post Medieval Settlement	A number of post medieval buildings survive in this Zone, the majority of which are Listed Grade II.
Roman Settlement	The available archaeological information suggests that there may be remains of Roman settlement in this zone. The location and extent of this remains to be understood.

Zone 3: Welsh Row Medieval Settlement

Primary Characteristic:	
Medieval Settlement	This Zone contains long narrow property boundaries that run at right angles to the street frontage, a number of which appear to follow the boundaries of medieval property or 'burgage' plots.

Secondary Characteristics:	
Post Medieval Settlement	A number of post medieval buildings survive in this area, a significant number of which are Listed Grade II.
Roman Activity	Find spots and evidence from the surrounding area suggests that this zone may contain evidence of Roman activity.

Zone 4: Medieval and Post Medieval Industry

Primary Characteristics:	
Medieval and Post Medieval Saltworking	Snow Hill and Wood Street were the focus of medieval and post medieval saltworking. For example, archaeological excavation has revealed the remains of two well preserved 12th-century salt houses in the Wood Street area.
Medieval and Post Medieval Water Mill Sites	This area includes the probable site of the medieval mill, as well as the site of the post medieval corn mill that was converted to cotton production in 1789.

Secondary Characteristics:	
Almshouses	Built in 1676, a terrace of three timber framed cottages were converted into six almshouses for widows by Roger Wilbraham.
Town Bridge	The present bridge dates to the early 19th century but it marks the site of a much earlier medieval structure.
Roman Saltworking	Snow Hill has been identified as a potential area of Roman saltworking.

Zone 5: Post Medieval Settlement

Primary Characteristic:	
Post Medieval Settlement	There are a number of small scale post medieval developments on the outskirts of the medieval settlement as well as notable encroachments into formerly open land.

Secondary Characteristic:	
St Leonard's Hospital	The probable site of the medieval chapel and leper hospital of St Leonard west of Welsh Row which

	had become a leper hospital by the mid-14th century.
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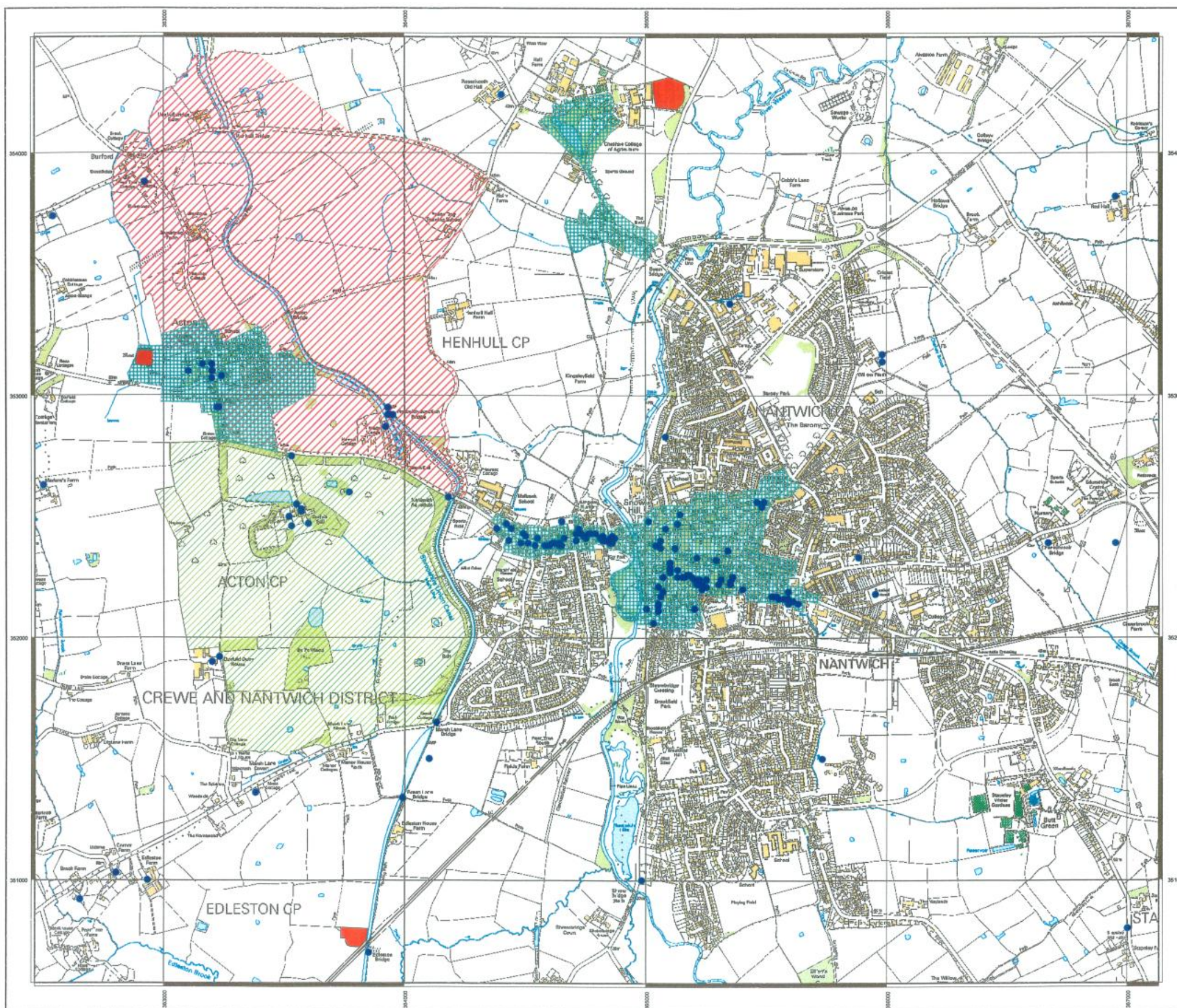


Figure 1: Nantwich
Existing Designations








- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Listed Building
- ▨ Conservation Area
- ▨ Registered Park
- ▨ Registered Battlefield

1:15000

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

-  Area of Archaeological Potential
-  ACZ 1: Area of Roman Activity
-  ACZ 2: Core Medieval Settlement
-  ACZ 3: Welsh Row Medieval Settlement
-  ACZ 4: Medieval and Post Medieval Industry
-  ACZ 5: Post Medieval Settlement
-  Area Outside the Historic Core

1:8000

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