

CHESHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

Sandbach

Archaeological Strategy



2003

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Sandbach: 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 two 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 Early Medieval Zone (Archaeological Character Zone 1), the defining characteristics include the site of an important early medieval church, potentially of Minster status, as well as the pre-Viking crosses in the Market Place and other examples of sculpture from the same period in St Mary's churchyard.
- 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 the site of the medieval church of St Mary's and an area of post medieval settlement, which 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 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 - Sandbach Anglo-Saxon crosses (SAM 23637), Early medieval sculptural fragments in St Mary's churchyard (SAM 30396), Standing medieval cross 10m south of the nave of St Mary's Church (SAM 30395)
Listed Buildings	Grade I - The Sandbach Crosses and the Old Hall. Grade II* - The Black Bear Inn. Grade II – 67.
Conservation Areas	Sandbach Market Place and High Town comprise a designated Conservation Area.
Registered Parks and Gardens	None

3. The Archaeological Character Zones (Figure 2)

Zone 1: Early Medieval Zone

Primary Characteristics	
Site of the Early Medieval Church	Evidence suggests that there was an important early medieval Minster at Sandbach. Such an institution would have been the centre of a great deal of activity and settlement may have developed in the nearby vicinity.
The Sandbach Crosses	The elaborate stone carved crosses in the market place, and the cross and two grave slabs in St Mary's churchyard, suggest that an important sculpture workshop was centred on Sandbach in the 9th century.
Market Place	It is not known when the market place first came into use. Situated close to the church, it had a prime location and may have been important from the early medieval period onwards.

Secondary Characteristics	
Site of Medieval Church	A church is recorded at Domesday and again in 1434-5. It is not known to what extent there was continuity between the early medieval and medieval churches. St Mary's church has undergone numerous phases of rebuilding, the last time in the mid-19th century.
Post Medieval Settlement	A number of post medieval buildings survive in this Zone, a large proportion of which are Listed Grade II.

Zone 2: Medieval Settlement

Primary Characteristics	
Medieval Settlement	Property boundaries, which appear to respect narrow, medieval tenements have been identified to the west of High Street. To the rear of this block of tenements is a 'back lane', a characteristic of medieval settlement, which partially survives in the form of Hope Street. Archaeological work has also identified evidence of medieval occupation in this Zone.

Secondary Characteristics	
Scotch Common	References to Scotch Common date back to the late 16th century. It was the site of a post medieval fair and may have origins in the medieval period.
Post Medieval Settlement	A number of buildings survive from this period, including 17th-century Grade II listed buildings.
Industrial Development	A number of industrial sites are located in this Zone.

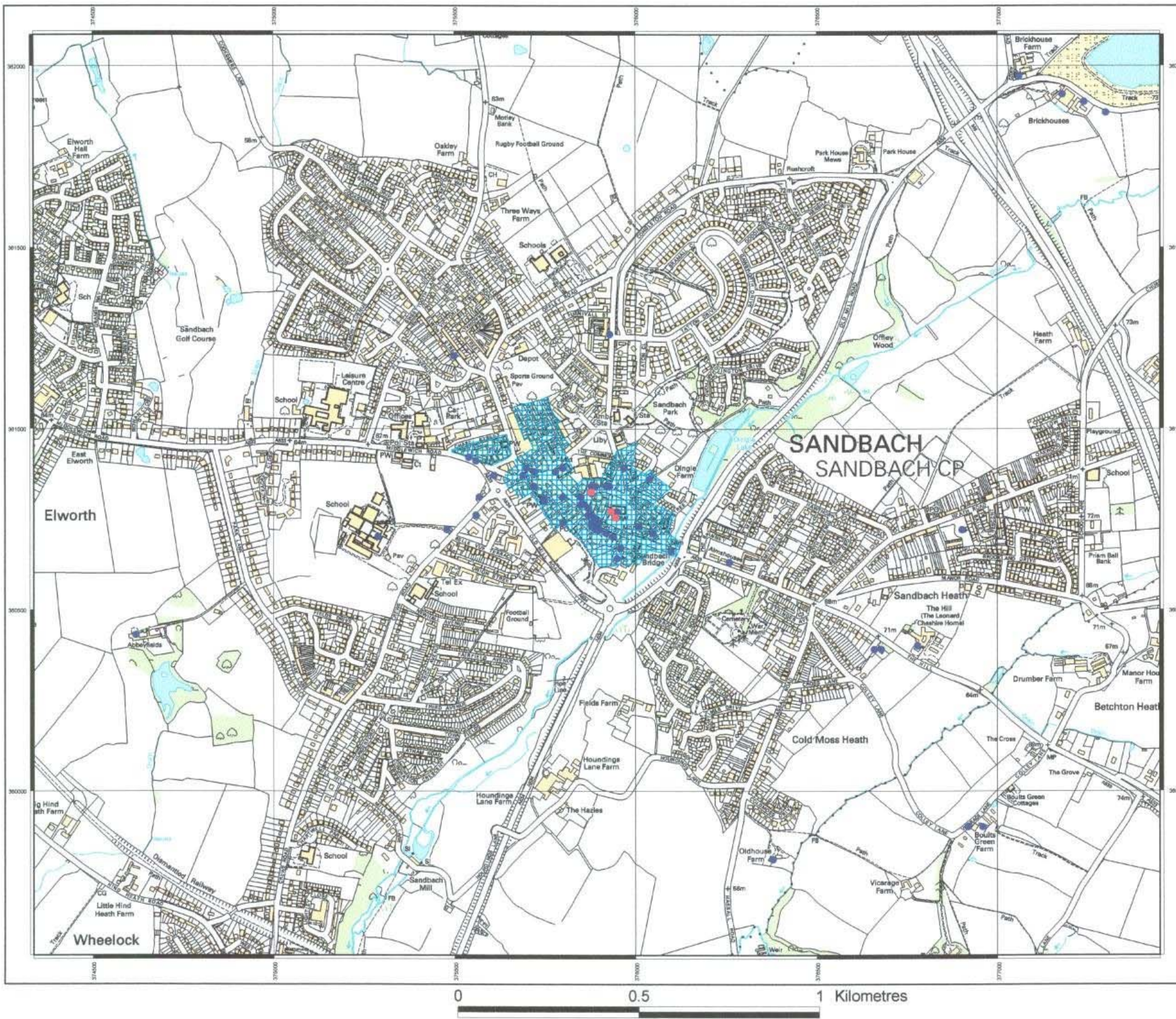


Figure 1: Sandbach Existing Designations

-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  Listed Building
-  Conservation Area

1:10000

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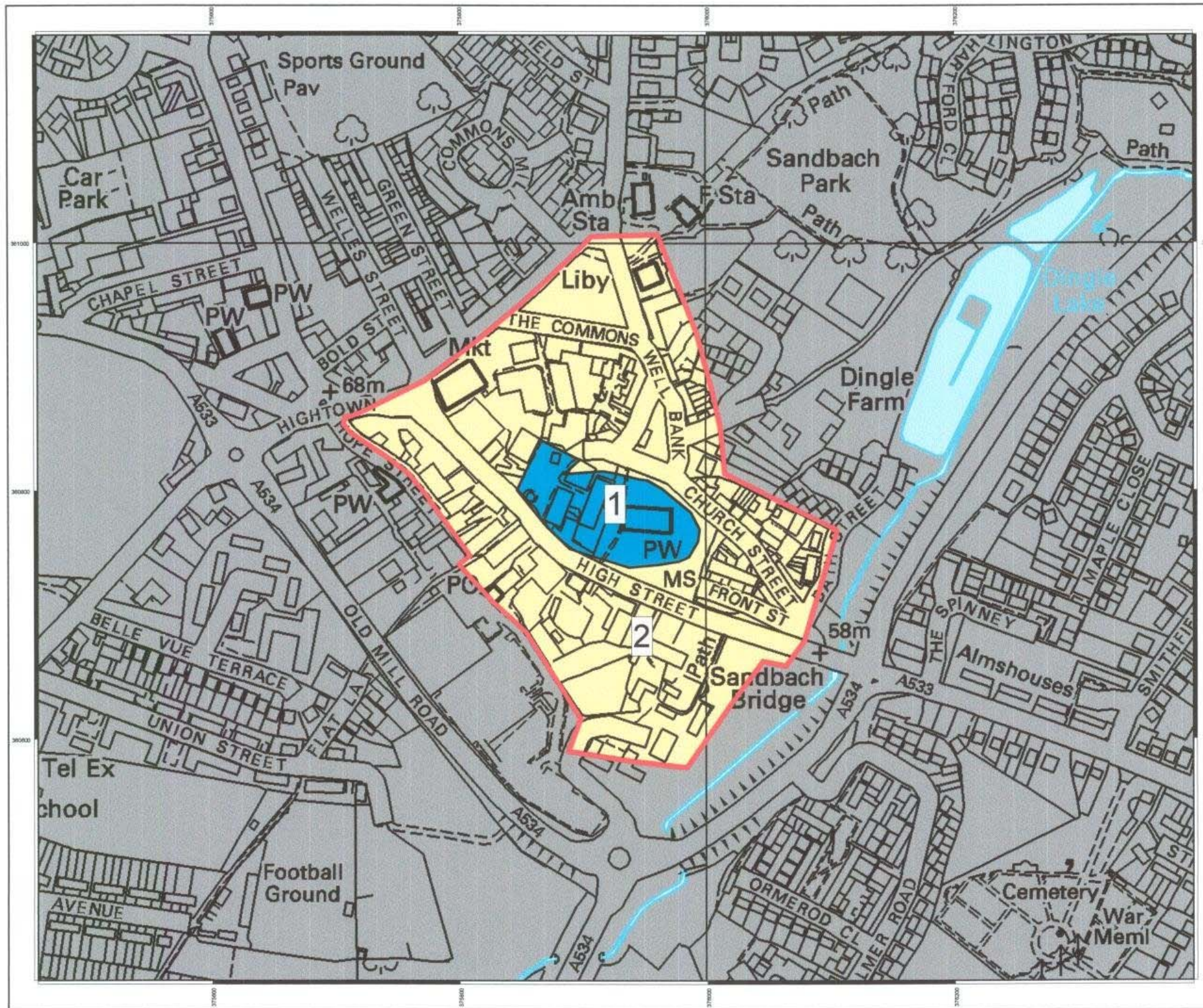


Figure 2: Sandbach
An Area of Archaeological Potential

Area of Archaeological Potential
 ACZ 1: Early Medieval Zone
 ACZ 2: Medieval Zone
 Area Outside of The Historic Core

1:3000

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