

CHESHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

Middlewich

Revised Archaeological Strategy



2013

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Front cover :

J Cowley, 1744 An Improved Map of Cheshire, Containing the Borough and Market Towns, with those adjoining; also its Principal Roads and Rivers
Cheshire Archives and Local Studies, PM 2/20.

MIDDLEWICH ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRATEGY: AREA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

1. Introduction

1.1 An Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP) for Middlewich was first identified in the Congleton Borough Local Plan Deposit Draft (December 1994). This AAP was refined in 2002 and has been amended in the light of additional archaeological discoveries and historical research. This work is summarised in the ***Middlewich Archaeological Assessment***. The Assessment highlights the significance of the archaeological resource and presents the priorities for future archaeological work.

1.2 Four Archaeological Character Zones (ACZs) have been identified within the AAP. Each Zone is identified by its defining archaeological or historical characteristics, or *Primary Characteristics*. For example, in the Salt Working Zone (Archaeological Character Zone 2), the defining characteristics include Roman, medieval and post medieval salt works.

1.3 Each ACZ may also include sites and features which are not defining characteristics, but are nonetheless of archaeological and historical importance. These are identified as *Secondary Characteristics*. For example, ACZ 2 contains the potential site of a medieval corn mill and this has therefore been identified as a Secondary Characteristic.

1.4 The list of characteristics is not exhaustive, and it is possible that other types of important archaeological remains and features exist within each ACZ. The boundaries of the AAPs and the ACZs, 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.

1.5 It is also important to stress that the extent and degree of survival of archaeological remains within each ACZ is known to be extremely variable and will largely depend on the subsequent use of the land. Even in areas that have seen extensive industrial and residential development in recent years, pockets of archaeological stratigraphy could exist, which may contain significant remains. **Therefore, every proposed development that falls within the AAP could affect archaeological remains. Mitigation measures to record and preserve the remains need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.**

2. Existing Designations (Figure 1)

Scheduled Monuments	Three – the Roman fort in Harbutt's Field (SM 12615), Kinderton Hall moated site (SM 13492) and the Brine Pumps at Brooks Lane (SM 34588).
Listed Buildings	Grade II* – 2 Grade II – 38
Conservation Areas	Two – the Trent and Mersey Canal and the historic core of Middlewich.
Registered Parks and Gardens	None

3. The Archaeological Character Zones (Figure 2)

Zone 1: Roman Activity

Primary Characteristics:	
Roman Fort	The fort, located in Harbutt's Field, was occupied c. AD 70–130.
Roman Settlement and Agricultural Land	Next to the fort a civilian settlement was established. To the south and east of the settlement the land was mainly used for agriculture. Occupation may have continued into the 4th century.
Roman Salt Working	Extensive evidence for Roman salt working in this Zone, including brine extraction pits and hearths for the evaporation of brine.
Roman Roads	Roman roads converge on Middlewich, including routeways from the central and west Midlands, and King Street – a major road running northwards.

Secondary Characteristics:	
Iron Age Activity	There is some evidence of probable Iron Age (pre-Roman) activity, possibly involving small-scale salt production.
Kinderton Hall	Medieval and post medieval garden remains associated with the medieval moated manor house of Kinderton Hall.
Post Medieval Industry and Salt Working	Aligned along the River Croco were a number of salt workings and other manufactories.

Zone 2: Salt Working

Primary Characteristics:	
Salt Works	Extensive archaeological evidence of salt working, dating from the Roman period to the 19th century, has been identified in this Zone.

Secondary Characteristics:	
Roman Settlement	Extensive archaeological evidence of Roman settlement has been identified in this Zone, in the area to the east of the River Croco.
Medieval Mill	A mill is documented at Kinderton from 1330. This is thought to be on the site of the post medieval corn mill, which is a Grade II Listed building.
Medieval Bridges	Two bridges are mentioned in the 14th century, both are potentially located in this Zone.
Post Medieval Settlement	This area continued to be settled during the post medieval period.
Post Medieval Industry	Industries other than salt working were located in this area.

Zone 3: Medieval Settlement (Newton)

Primary Characteristic:	
Medieval Settlement	A settlement is known at Newton from the 11th century, when it was recorded at Domesday. It was separate from Middlewich, which at that time was a salt working centre.

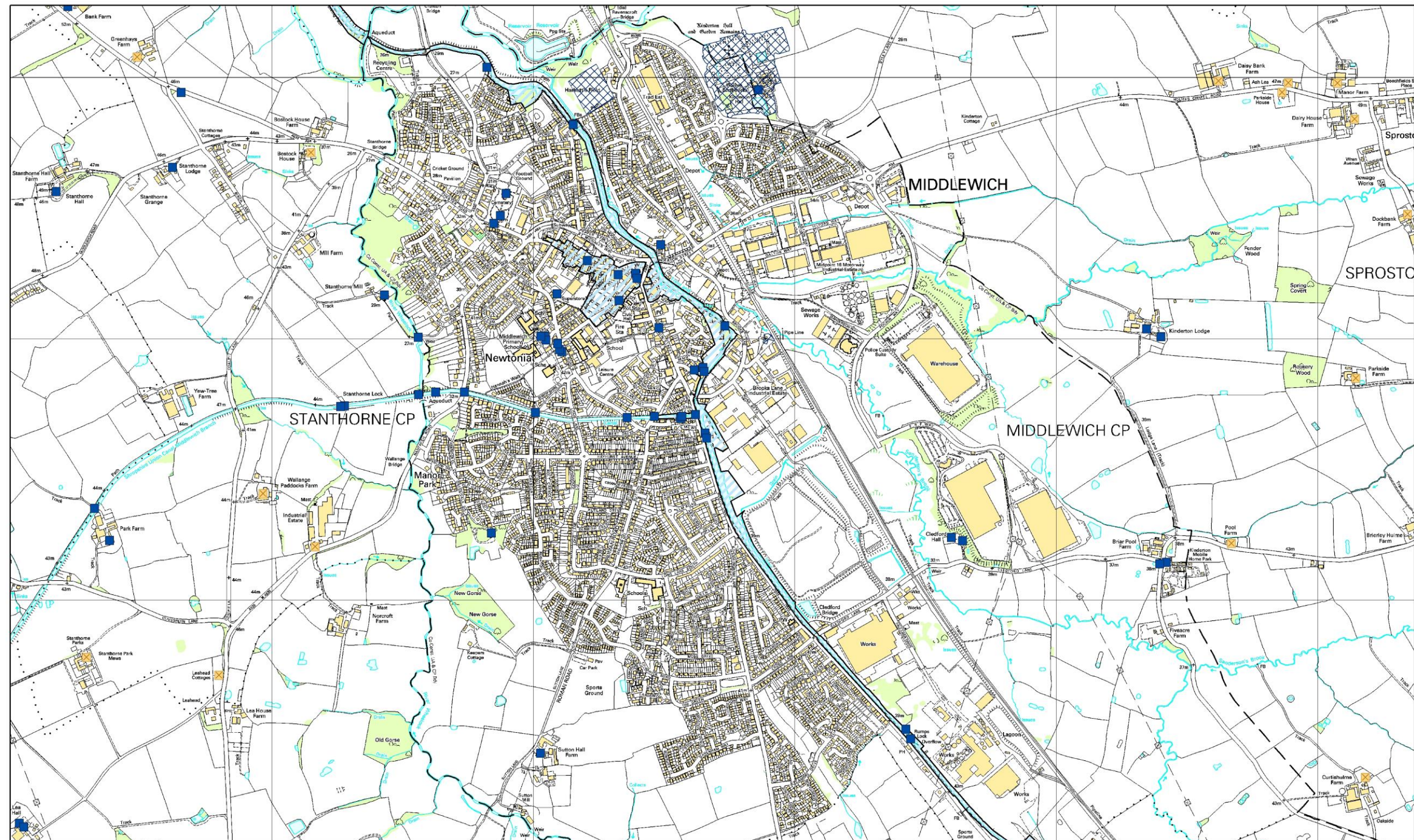
Secondary Characteristic:	
Post Medieval Settlement	This area continued to be settled during the post medieval period.

Zone 4: Planned Medieval Settlement

Primary Characteristics:	
Burgage and Tenement Plots	To the west of the church, on either side of Wheelock Street, the area has been divided into long, narrow plots of land, most probably laid out during the medieval period. To the west of Lewin Street there are more irregular plots, also probably established in the medieval period. These irregular properties are perhaps the areas occupied by people of lower status, eg salt workers and other craftsmen.
St Michael's Church	The church contains medieval fabric dating from the 12th century. The building was substantially rebuilt and enlarged c. 1500.
Market Place	A market charter was granted in 1260. The medieval market place is presumed to share the same site as the post medieval 'mexon' located to the north of the church. Bull and bear baiting continued to be staged here until 1834.

Secondary Characteristics:	
Post Medieval Settlement	This area continued to be settled during the post medieval period.

Middlewich: Existing Designations

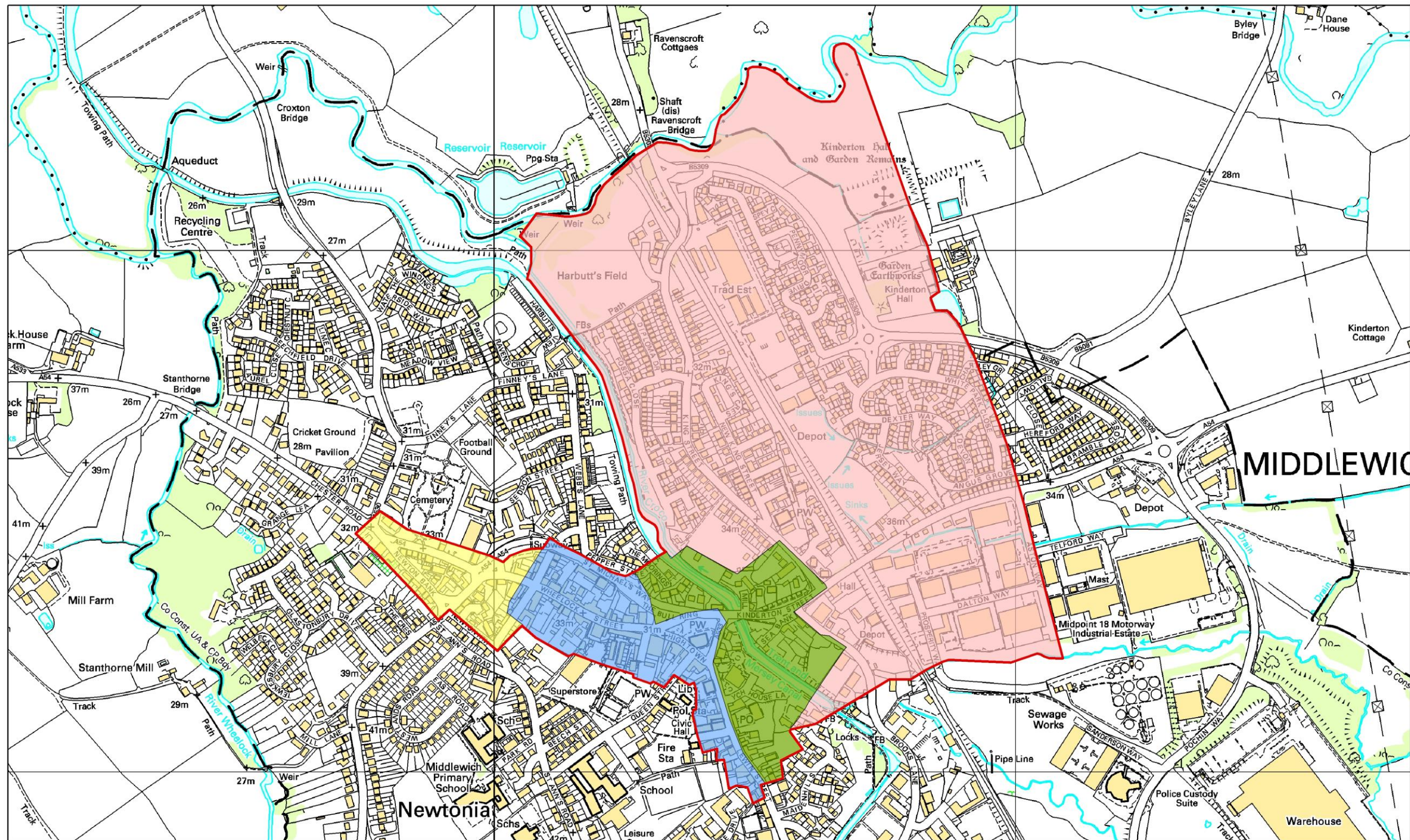


	Scheduled Monuments		Locally Listed Buildings
	Listed Buildings		Conservation Area

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Middlewich: Area of Archaeological Potential & Archaeological Character Zones



 Area Of Archaeological Potential	 ACZ3 Medieval Settlement Newton
 ACZ 1 Roman Zone	 ACZ4 Planned Medieval Settlement
 ACZ2 Salt Working	

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