CASTLERING ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO.420

PROPOSED CANALSIDE TOURIST AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

ELLESMERE

SHROPSHIRE

centred SJ 395 341

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

AUGUST 2013

SYNOPSIS

This archaeological assessment has been prepared to accompany outline planning proposals for mixed use development on 30.748 hectares of agricultural land bordering the north side of the Shropshire Union Canal, southwest of the town centre at Ellesmere. The assessment comprises a desk-based study and site inspection of the proposed site and its immediate environs. The objective of the assessment is to evaluate the potential impact of the proposals on the archaeological resource in order to eliminate and / or minimise any adverse repercussions of the proposed development thereon.

The present town is the result of expansion primarily as a result of the advent of the canal in the 1790s period. The founders of the Canal Company were landowners mainly interested in bettering the communications for their estates, including the Duke of Bridgewater, the most important land-owner in the Parish of Ellesmere since the early 17th century. The proposed development site remained part of the Bridgewater Estate until the 1950s. Mid-19th century cartography records the site comprising a pattern of small fields of meadow and pastureland that has continued until the present day.

The heritage interest in the site is clearly in its close proximity to the Ellesmere Canal and the surviving canalside buildings and structures, several of which have warranted Grade II* Listing. While it is not within the remit of this assessment to discuss the impact of the proposed development on the built heritage, the importance of the canal and the Listed buildings is acknowledged from an archaeological prospective.

From an archaeological perspective, the key interest in the site is a number of above ground features which relate to the diversion and culverting of the Tetchill Brook across the site together with four individual well sites, which may also be linked to the culver system. The culvert is clearly a feature of significant historic and archaeological interest, one of the necessary changes in the natural landscape that have taken place as a result of the construction of the canal and the growth of the town. A detailed programme of archaeological mitigation will be required to enable recording of these water management features, as a pre-requisite of the proposed development.

The agricultural history of the site is the one best recorded to date and while the present land-use gives little indication of previous ground disturbance on the site, the presence of the substantial sub-surface culvert crossing the site is an example of how easily evidence buried features can be lost.

The archaeological potential of the site in general can only be based on the present landscape together with documentary and cartographic evidence and professional judgement. Although it can be stated that, other than the water management features, no above ground structures or earthworks of archaeological interest are visible on the site. However, at this stage it is not possible to assess the impact on unidentified buried archaeological remains. Nor is it possible to determine the nature or value of buried remains.

The size of the proposed development suggests any archaeological features, if present, would be destroyed during construction and landscaping works on the site. The impact of construction works on any potential archaeology that may exist below ground would be considered to be substantial. A general archaeological mitigation strategy is therefore recommended to allow for a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken as a condition of planning approval, in order to negate or lessen the potential impact on the unknown archaeological resource.

The course of mitigation may depend on further information, such as geological surveys and more detailed plans, becoming available as the application proceeds and details will be better advised in consultation with the Principal Archaeologist, Shropshire Council.

This assessment concludes that, allowing for mitigation, the proposed development will have limited adverse impact on the archaeology of the site.

CONTRACTED BY BURBURY INVESTMENTS

Every effort has been made to provide accurate information within this report. However Castlering Archaeology cannot be held responsible for any errors and inaccuracies contained therein.

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CONTENTS

1. Introduction: Fig. 1

2. Project Methodology

3. Previously Recorded Sites of Archaeological Interest

4. Geology / Topography of the Site: Fig. 2

5. Background History of the Site and its Immediate Environs: Figs 3-13 & Plates 1-8

6. The Existing Site: Fig. 14 & Plates 9-35

7. Archaeological Interest in the Area of proposed Development

8. Mitigation

9. Acknowledgements

10. Sources

APPENDIX 1 Heritage Asset Information (EH & HER)

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Anno Domini
BGS	British Geological Survey
CRT	Canal and River Trust
c.	circa
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
Inland Waterways Association (IWA)	
M	metres
mAOD	metres above Ordnance Datum
m*bgl*	metres below present ground level
nd	no date (undated)
NGR	National Grid Reference
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OS	Ordnance Survey
para	paragraph
SA	Shropshire Archives
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This archaeological assessment has been prepared by Castlering Archaeology to accompany an outline planning application for mixed use development on approximately 30.748 hectares (75.98 acres) of agricultural land that borders the north side of the Shropshire Union Canal, southwest of the town centre at Ellesmere, Shropshire.

THE CANALSIDE TOWN

1.2 The present town is the result of expansion primarily as a result of the advent of the canal in the 1790s period. As the canal became inadequate for modern commerce, the town became something of a 'backwater' until more recent times. The formation of the Inland Waterways Association in 1946 to campaign for the conservation, use, maintenance, restoration and sensitive development of canals; followed by the increasing interest in Industrial Archaeology since the 1950s and the gradual re-opening of canals for leisure pursuits since the 1960s, has led to an appreciation of the canal and the town's heritage. Exploring canals by boat, boot and bike has become increasingly popular and this, together with the Mere, draws an increasing number of visitors to the town.

PROPOSALS

1.3 In order to meet the needs of the increasing volume of visitors to the town, current proposals comprise the creation of a multi use leisure site to include a hotel, a 188 berth marina, a leisure complex, pub / restaurant, cabins and touring caravan facilities and 250 residential dwellings. A new access road to the west side of the site will be constructed leaving the A495 Ellesmere to Whittington Road, southwest of the new business park on the southwest side of the town. The southern and short north-eastern boundary of the proposed development site is formed by the canal; agricultural land extends west and forms the northern boundary of the west side of the site. Further east, the site has a northern boundary with the Sewage Works and modern residential development, currently in progress. The proposed highways link into the east side of the site will be from the newly constructed public road that extends south from the A495, connecting the modern residential development and the Tesco stores opened in July 2009. A public footpath cuts across the west side of the site in a southwest to northeast direction and the canal towpath parallels the southern boundary of the site (Fig. 1 *overleaf*).

THE ASSESSMENT

1.4 The assessment comprises a desk-based study and site inspection of the proposed development site and its immediate environs. The objective of the assessment is to evaluate the potential impact of the proposals on the archaeological resource in order to eliminate and / or minimise any adverse repercussions of the proposed development thereon.

1.5 The assessment discusses the baseline conditions in respect of the archaeological resource, their nature, extent and significance, and assesses the likely impact of the proposals thereon. In addition the assessment outlines an appropriate mitigation strategy in order to protect the archaeological resource of the proposed development site.

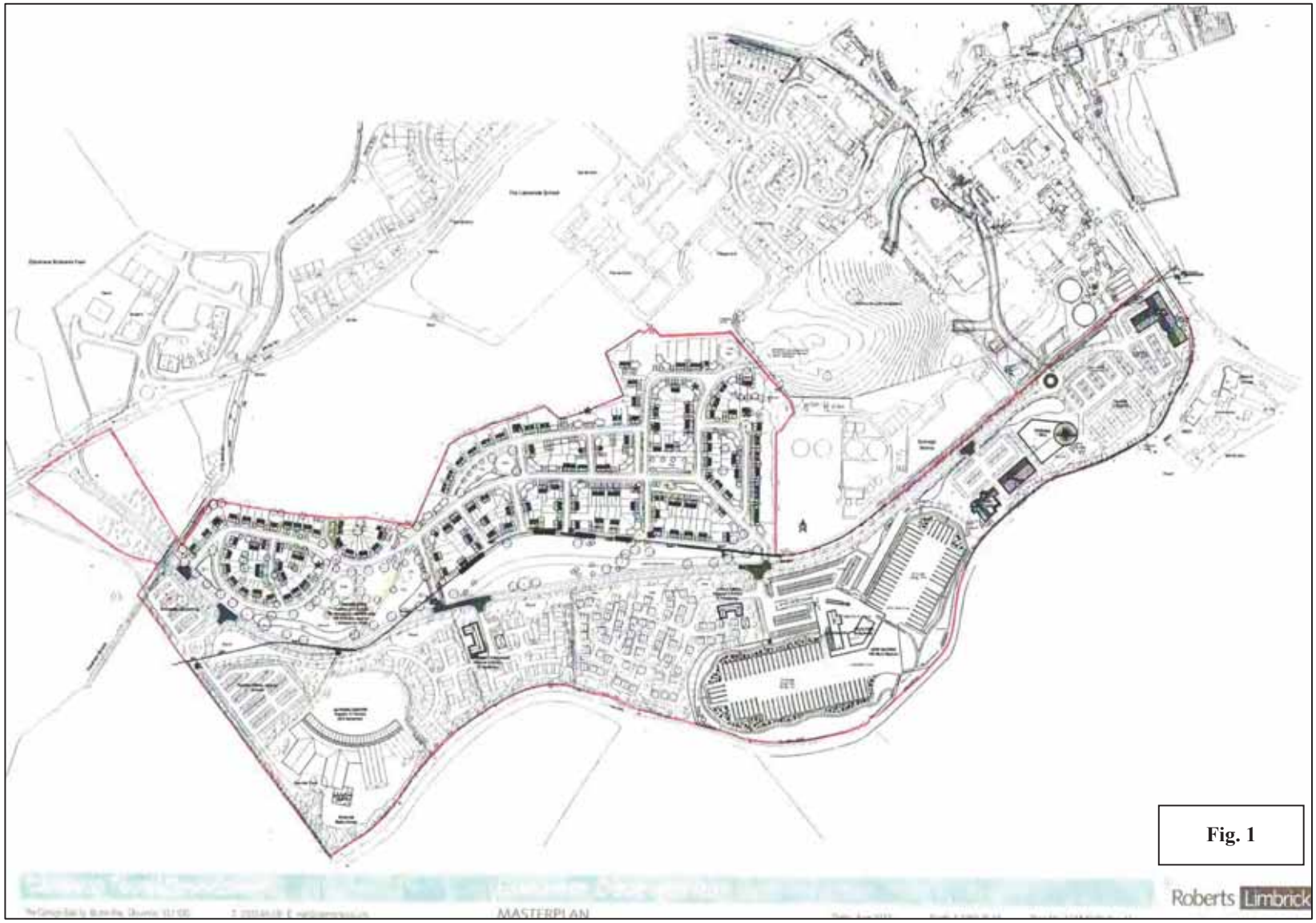

Fig. 1

2. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

2.1 The assessment has been undertaken using proven archaeological techniques, which comply with Guidelines and Codes of Conduct set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA, 2009); in particular the *Standard & Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* (IfA, 2008).

2.2 The assessment follows the guidance of the Department for Communities and Local Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF March 2012), in particular Paragraphs 128 and 129, which require the preparation of a document identifying the potential impact that proposals may have on the historic environment.

Paragraph 128 states that:

> the level of the document should be proportionate to the (Heritage) asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Paragraph 129 calls for local planning authorities to:

> identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by the proposals (including development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking into account the available evidence and necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

2.3 In order to achieve the above, the desk-based study has consulted relevant readily available records held at the following repositories:

- English Heritage (EH)
- Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER)
- Shropshire Archives (SA)
- Ellesmere and Oswestry Library Local Studies

2.4 The assessment comprises a review of secondary sources of information (printed material and cartographic evidence) and a non-intrusive site walk-over, in order to produce this written and illustrated report on the archaeological significance of the site.

SITE VISIT

2.5 Site visits were undertaken on several occasions between June and August 2013 in order to assess the current land-use and topography, structures and earthworks and the potential for buried archaeological deposits within the area of proposed improvement. The site visits also considered the impact the proposed works may have on the built heritage and the present landscape.

3. PREVIOUSLY RECORDED SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

3.1 In order to gain a general insight into the archaeological resource of the site and its immediate environs, interrogation of the online database held by English Heritage (EH) and Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER) was undertaken to identify previously recorded sites of cultural heritage interest within a 750m buffer zone of the site, centred at approximately at SJ 395 341.

3.2 While the 750km buffer zone has provided a holistic background to the past history and built environment of the area of proposed development,

- none of the previously recorded sites of cultural heritage interest lie within the site itself and
- only 7 of the sites are located within sight of the site or within sight of any ancillary works that might be associated with the proposed development as a whole.

Of these, EH and Shropshire HER and record comprises:

- 4 Grade II* Listed Buildings (EH 1055924 / HER 19576; EH 1176422 / HER 19575; EH 1176445/ HER 15120 & EH 1366122 / HER 15121)
- 2 Grade II Listed Buildings (EH 1366545 / HER 19577 & EH 1176940 / HER 19615)
- 1 undesignated site of cultural heritage interest namely the Ellesmere Canal HER No. 03414

3.3 The proposed development site is adjacent to Ellesmere Conservation Area which extends from the Canal Wharf in the town to include the Canal and River Trust Yard and five of the Listed buildings above. Only the Grade II Listed Stanks Bridge (EH 1176940 / HER 19615) lies outside Ellesmere Conservation Area.

3.4 While general references are made to previously recorded sites within the text, in view of the proximity of the site to the town of Ellesmere and the modern development that now separates and obscures the site from the town, only sites likely to be impacted on during the proposed works are assessed in Section 7 *following*. The previously recorded sites are listed in Appendix 1 of this report by their EH / HER number and similarly referenced within the text.

4. GEOLOGY / TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SITE

4.1 Successive periods of glaciation have formed the natural landscape of the town of Ellesmere and its environs. The underlying solid geology of the site comprises glacial drift deposits of sands and gravels left by the retreating glaciers during the Devensian period Ice Age, approximately 13,000 years ago. The undulating landscape and meres that surround the town are clear evidence of the natural deep depressions in the glacial drift left by the ice sheets. The town Mere is the largest of a group of seven meres of glacial origin that surround the town, set amongst the tummocky hills that characterise the distinctive landscape known locally as 'Shropshire Lakeland'.

4.2 The solid Triassic period geology is overlain by the well-drained sandy loamy reddish-brown soils (Ragg et al 1986). The worn rounded grassy mounds on the west side of the side have exposed the red sands that lie beneath the surface (Plate 33 *following*). The mounds rise to a height of approximately 97.2mAOD and land falls to the south and east to the level of the canal towpath at approximately 90.5mAOD.

4.3 Two watercourses cross within the application site boundary. The Newnes Brook crosses the northwest corner of the site as indicated in Fig. 2 *below* and the brook has been culverted to allow for vehicular access from the main road to the north.

4.4 More interestingly from an archaeological perspective, the Tetchill Brook forms an open and culverted watercourse across the site. The culvert enters the site from the canal on the east side of the proposed development, where it has been culverted across the canal arm that leads to the town basin. The open and culverted brook follows the line of the site's northern boundary at approximately 85.5mAOD and continues westwards as a culvert beyond the eastern boundary as indicated on 2 *below*. The culverted brook is discussed in Sections 5-8 *following*.

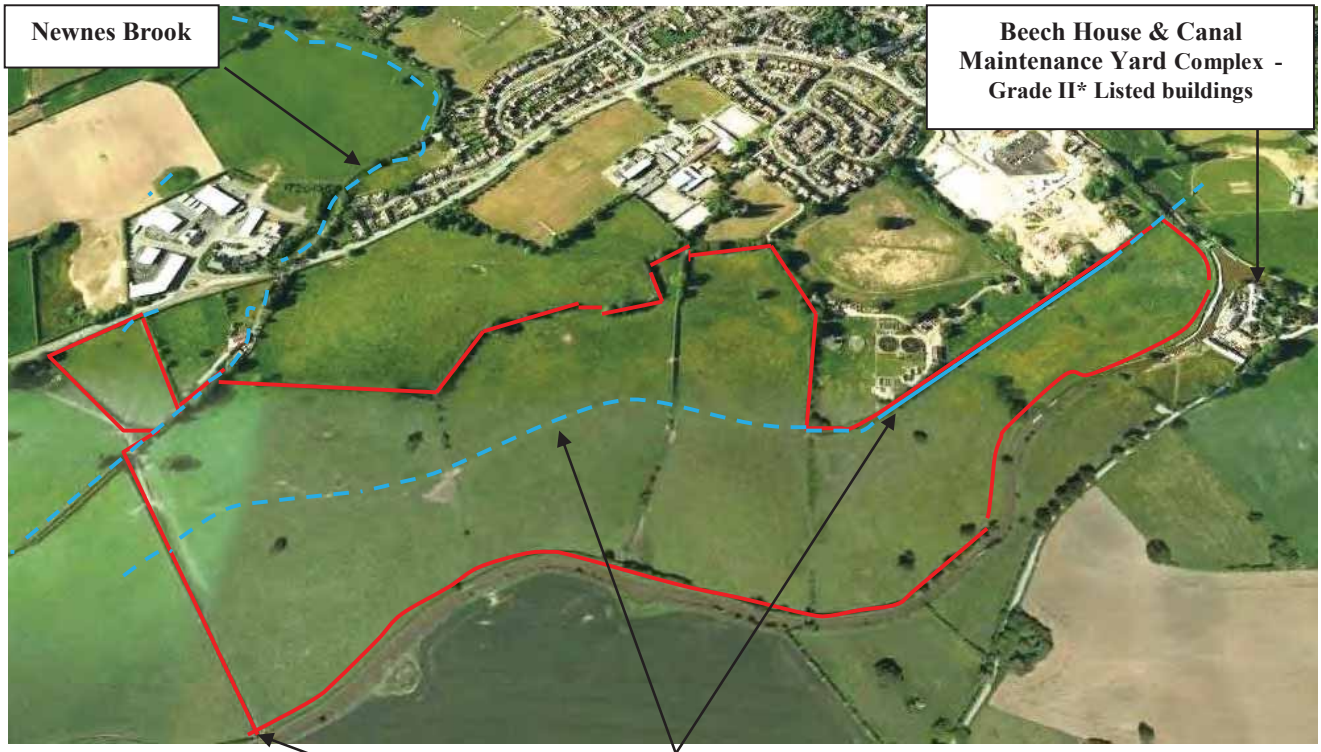

Fig. 2 AP *c.*2013

(http//www.google.com)

5. BACKGROUND HISTORY OF THE SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS

PREHISTORY (up to *c*.600 BC)

5.1 The earliest evidence of human occupation follows the last period of glaciation, when human occupation is in general considered to be by seasonal / nomadic hunter-gatherers. The meres and mosses of North Shropshire may have been a great source of food. Some of the earliest finds recovered in Shropshire are the flint tools and stone axes of the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers (*c*.10,000-4,000BC). The Neolithic period (*c*.4,000-2,300 BC) is generally associated with the beginning of agriculture and settled communities. However, the earliest recorded finds from the area around the town date to the Bronze Age period (*c*.2,300 to *c*.600 BC). A sword of Bronze Age date was found by workmen in the late 19th century on Val Hill (HER 00875; Kenyon 1892 & Chitty 1930). The NGR record places the find approximately 200m southeast of the site alongside the road to Tetchill. In addition, a Bronze Age socketed axe was found *c.* 1890 at No 3 Swan Hill on the northeast side of the town Ellesmere (HER 1570). In recent times a bronze socketed axe was found in peaty ground 10-12ins below ground surface at Tetchill Moor in October 1982, approximately 3km south of the site (HER 03600).

THE IRON AGE (*c*.600 BC – 43 AD)

5.2 The site and its environs are located within the territory believed to have been occupied by the Cornovii tribe, prior to the Roman conquest in the 5th century AD (Webster 1975 & 1991). Evidence of occupation during this period is identified principally by the hillforts sited on the natural higher ground around the county, while archaeological evidence of lowland settlement in the county has been recovered only in more recent years, principally from cropmark evidence revealed during aerial photographic reconnaissance.

ROMANO-BRITISH PERIOD (43 AD to 410 AD)

5.3 In general, excavations on Iron Age farmstead sites can also provide Roman evidence, indicating a smoother transition between the Iron Age and Roman period than is perhaps recorded in written history. It is generally considered that as Britain became part of the Roman Empire, outside the legionary fortress towns such as *Viroconium Cornoviorum* (Wroxeter) and *Mediolanum* (Whitchurch), Iron Age farming communities continued to thrive. Evidence of occupation in the county in general during the Roman period has been well documented and the archaeological record for this period is constantly added to, particularly by aerial reconnaissance. A double-ditched cropmark enclosure, possibly a settlement enclosure or a corral for livestock, of late prehistoric or possibly Romano-British date was recorded by aerial photography in 1986 *c*.400m northeast of Newnes Farm, approximately 400m north of the proposed site entrance off the A495 (HER 04220; CPAT AP). In addition an elongated circular single ditched cropmark enclosure also of unknown date has been recorded *c*.450m northeast of Tetchill, approximately 900m south of the site (HER 04221; CPAT AP). Within the town of Ellesmere, a Roman coin of Claudius was found *c*.1928 in a garden south of Sandy Lane (HER 00879; Chitty 1930), approximately 450m northeast of the site. However, to date there has been no evidence to suggest Roman settlement in or around the town.

POST-ROMAN PERIOD (410-1066AD)

5.4 Official Roman administration ended in the 5th century, but the Roman way of life may have continued for several centuries thereafter. In rural areas the transition may have been less noticeable. In AD 613, Æthelfrith, King of Northumbria, established his rule over what we now know as England. Later, in AD 642, King Penda of Mercia led a combined Mercian and Welsh force against Oswald, then King of Northumbria, at a Battle near present-day

Oswestry. Oswald was killed and the Mercians become dominant in what was then Midland Britain. Thus from the mid-7th century the future county of Shropshire had become part of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Mercia.

ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

5.5 Roman period Christianity was adopted as the official religion of the Roman Empire in the later Roman period and the influence of the 'Celtic' church had spread from the west in the 6th and 7th centuries. Although corroborative archaeological evidence is sparse, the history of the town is thought to date to Saxon times when an earlier church may have formed the focus of the settlement on the site of the existing Church of St. Mary (Eyton in Buteux et al 1996). Although no below-ground archaeological for this period has been recorded within the town, a fragment of a Saxon cross of *c*.750-850 date once stood in the Vicarage Garden (HER 03726) *c*.450m northeast of the site.

POST-1066 / THE MEDIEVAL TOWN

5.6 The focus of the town in the post-conquest period is thought to have been in the area of the present Church of St. Mary, approximately 510m northeast of the site boundary. The Church (HER 00880) is of Norman origin but the present structure is mainly the result of rebuilding work in 1849 to the design of Sir Gilbert Scott. After the Norman Conquest the manor of Ellesmere was granted to Roger de Montgomerie, the first Earl of Shrewsbury. The motte and bailey, constructed on a natural glacial mound approximately 400m northeast of the site boundary, is thought to have been built by de Montgomerie shortly after 1086. The strategic importance of the castle (EH 1019303 / HER 10040) is reflected in its size and position overlooking the Mere. The Mere would have been an important fishery in medieval times.

5.7 By 1138 the castle was in royal hands, eventually passing to the Le Strange family in the 1240s. The medieval town was recorded as *Ellesmeles* in the Domesday Survey of 1086; *Ellesmera* in 1172 and, by 1200, *Ellesmere,* meaning Eli's lake (Gelling 1990, 123 in Buteux 1996). Eyton, the 19th century historian, recorded that in 1258 Peter de Montfort was empowered to levy customs for five years to enable him to wall the town of Ellesmere. It has been suggested that the town stood within an outer bailey to the west of the Church, however it is not known where the defences were situated or even if they were ever built (Buteux 1996).

5.8 The castle subsequently fell out of use and passed through several ownerships until, in the early 17th century, it was inherited by Thomas Egerton, the founder of the Bridgewater Estates, which came to own a substantial amount of property in the town and the surrounding parish.

5.9 Thomas Egerton (1540-1617) was a distinguished lawyer who rose to be Attorney General from 1592 to 1594, was granted the Mastership of the Rolls and in 1596 became the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. In 1603, on the accession of James I, he was appointed Lord Chancellor. He was knighted in 1596, granted a peerage in 1602, as Baron Ellesmere, and in 1616 he was created Viscount Brackley. Sir Thomas Egerton died in 1617 and his son John inherited the estates. John was subsequently created Earl of Bridgewater; after Bridgewater in Somerset, where he also owned land. The Egertons proved to be a family with continuous skills in business matters, particularly in respect of the mineral wealth of their vast estates. Francis Egerton (1736-1803), known as 'The Canal Duke', immortalised the family's connections with canal building, by carrying out his father's (Scroop Egerton 1681 –1744) plans by developing their estates and coal mining interests at Worsley, near Manchester and constructing the Bridgewater Canal first authorised by the Act of 1760.

5.10 In 1996, the town of Ellesmere was reviewed in respect of its known and potential archaeological and historical interest as part of the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey (Buteux 1996). The survey postulated the extent of both the medieval and post-medieval town based on existing maps and information. The proposed development site lies outside both these parameters, sited on the boundary of modern developments on the southwest side of the town. The built heritage within the present town suggests that in the post-medieval period the focus of settlement moved from the higher ground around the church and the castle to lower ground around Market Street and Cross Street. This junction may have also been the site of the medieval market granted in the 13th century.

POST-MEDIEVAL TOWN

5.11 The undated Bridgewater Estate pictorial map (Fig. 3 *below*) depicts Ellesmere as a major but fairly compact settlement lying west of the church and the castle on land above the Mere. The main road into the town from the south had been via Sandy Lane, past the Castle and down the narrow St John's Hill, until a new toll road was constructed alongside the Mere *c*.1815, allowing for the passage of larger coaches and wagons. The site of Blackwater turnpike gate (HER 05241) formerly at the south end of Birch Road as recorded in 1835, is located approximately 300m northeast of the proposed development site.

5.12 The map also records a watercourse leaving the Mere and running through the town and down the valley to the west of the castle, as highlighted in the dashed blue line *below*. The watercourse (HER 05237) which ran as an open stream down the High Street was diverted and culverted within the town by the early 19th century at least (Buteux 1996, 5 & Woods map of 1835).

Fig. 3: undated Bridgewater Estate map

POST-MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPE

5.13 The major change to the landscape from the medieval to post-medieval period would have been the enclosure of the large open field system into smaller units, the introduction of turnpike roads and the advent of the canals. Much of Shropshire was enclosed gradually by private agreement before the main period of Parliamentary enclosures following early 19th century Acts. Between 1662 and 1827, many of the meres and mosses that surrounded the town were drained and many wastes and commons were brought into cultivation. No enclosure maps were located for the site and it is therefore assumed that the fields were enclosed by private treaty.

5.14 Small-scale county maps provide little detail of agriculture, primarily only recording the existence of towns, villages, major roads and / or large country estates. Baugh's map of 1808 *below* provides the first cartographic record of the canal cutting through the countryside. Baugh's map also records the stream which starts as an outflow from the Mere (5.12 *previous*), flowing north-south through the town and taking a south-westerly direction to meet the Newnes Brook. The small scale of the map makes it difficult to confirm the course of the Tetchill Brook accurately, but in 1808 it appears to have flowed north of the proposed development site.

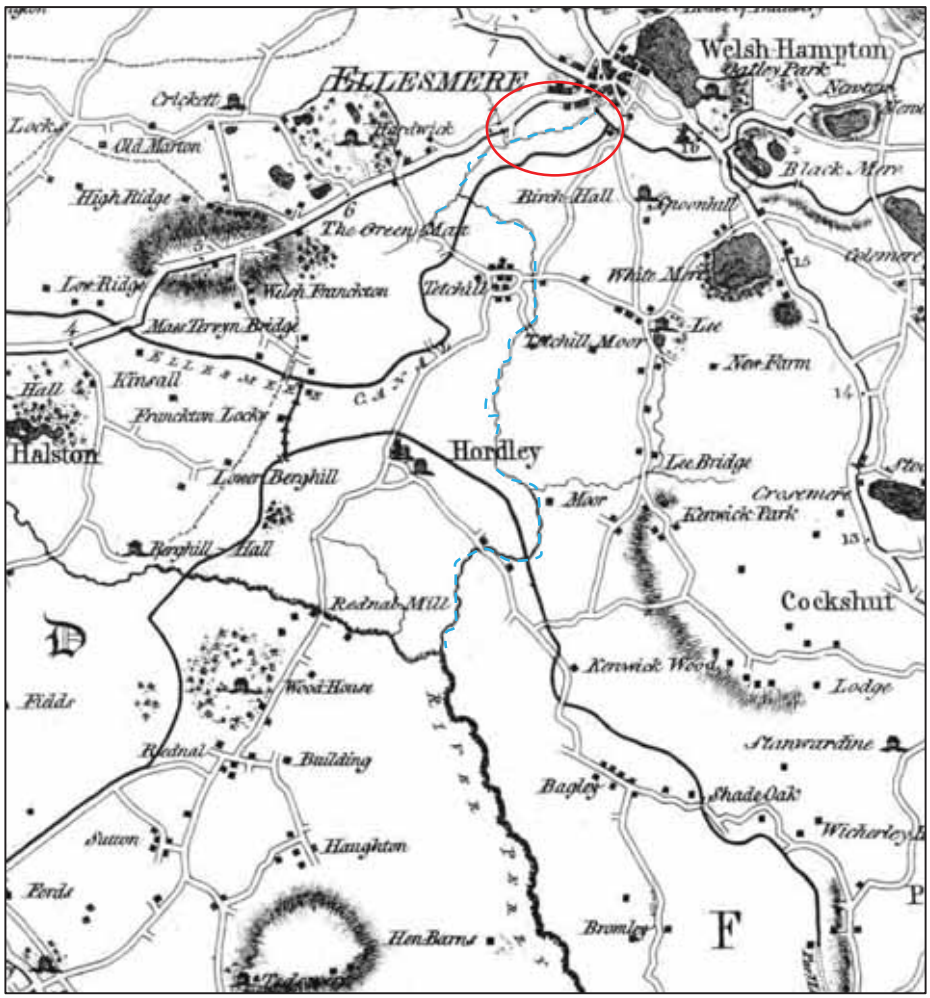

Fig. 4 Baugh's county map, 1808

THE ADVENT OF THE CANAL

5.15 The construction of the Ellesmere Canal, now part of the Shropshire Union Canal system, began with the inaugural meeting on 31st August 1791 held in Ellesmere and consequently giving the branch its name. An Act of Parliament was passed in 1793 and William Jessop (1745 –1814) was appointed as the civil engineer with Thomas Telford (1757–1834) as General Agent. The initial proposal to join the River Severn at Shrewsbury to the River Dee at Chester and continue to the Mersey Estuary was never achieved. The founders of the Canal Company were landowners mainly interested in bettering the communications for their estates, including the Duke of Bridgewater and several industrialists, and transporting coal, ore, iron, limestone and sand from source to the markets.

5.16 The branch of the canal that passes south of the town and the proposed development site and the short arm to the town basin was completed *c*.1804, linking sections already built. In 1805, the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, the largest land-owner and successor to the estates of the childless 'Canal Duke' in 1803, exerted pressure for the Canal Company Offices to be built at Ellesmere, namely Beech House (Plates 1 & 2 *overleaf*). The Duke was the Chairman of the Canal Company meetings, held in the town's Royal Oak (now the Ellesmere Hotel), until the construction of Beech House. During the initial stages of construction of the canal, Thomas Telford was the overseer and his office was at Beech House built alongside the canal in *c*.1806. The house, which is now sub-divided, is a Grade II* Listed building (EH 1176445 / HER 15120). The splayed to semi-circular projection fronting the canal is similar to Telford designed canalside offices seen elsewhere by the author. No. 1 Beech House is an adjoining Grade II Listed Cottage also of *c*.1806 date (EH 1366545 / HER 19577).

5.17 The extent to which Telford actually lived at Beech House is unknown. Telford employed Thomas Stanton (1782-1846), a canal engineer and deputy County Surveyor for Shropshire, to oversee the project in his absence and to manage the accounts of the Ellesmere Canal Company. When the company was re-organised towards the end of 1805, Stanton appears to have become the Canal Agent, based at the canal office in Ellesmere. Although Telford retained the title of County Surveyor, much of his duty in the county was delegated to Stanton, who continued as General Agent to what had then become the Chester & Ellesmere Canal after Telford's death in 1834, and until his own retirement in 1845 (Skempton, 2002).

5.18 Beech House is located on the northeast corner of the complex of Telford and Jessop's canalside buildings which now form part of the Canal and River Trust (CRT) Maintenance Yard. The complex is considered to be the best-preserved canal workshop site in the country. The Yard includes the

- Grade II* Listed Canal Timber Store (EH 1055924 / HER 19576), an important functional part of the workshop site for storage of timbers for maintenance work (Plates 3, 4 & 6 *following*)

- Grade II* Listed Blacksmith's and Joiner's Shop (EH 1176422 / HER 19575), an exceptionally well-preserved sandstone-built workshop which retains internal belt-driven machinery powered by the engine house attached to the Timber Store (Plates 3, 4 & 6 *following*)

- Grade II * Listed Stables, Stores and Dry Dock (EH 1366122 / HER 15121), a former sandstone-built stables and stores with minor later additions and alterations, having direct access to the canal, now used as the CRT Offices. The Dry Dock opens onto the canal and a stone sett floor with mooring rings surrounds the dock where boats were built and repaired (Plates 3-5 *following*).

5.19 Approximately 200m north of the proposed development site boundary, the three-storey red brick former Canal Warehouse with a loading canopy on south gabled end is a designated Grade II Listed building (EH 1055499 / HER 16679), fronting the town wharf (HER 05228), where a canalside crane is the focus of the recently laid out pedestrian area. The 7th Earl of Bridgewater, John William Egerton (1753-1823), who inherited the estates from a

distant cousin in 1803, saw the advantages of the canal to his estate and funded the completion of the Town Wharf in 1806 as a temporary loan to the canal company. He invested in developing the town and the area around the wharf.

5.20 Two of the canal bridges are located on the boundary of the site. Footbridge No 59 (Plate 7 *following*) crosses the canal on its entry to the wharf in the position of the former Boat House and north of Beech House.

5.21 Canal Bridge No. 60, Stanks Bridge (EH 1176940 / HER 19615), is the Grade II Listed accommodation bridge on the southwest corner of the proposed development site, which provides access to agricultural land on both sides of the canal (Plate 8 *following*). The bridge is of *c*.1797 to 1801 date, since this section of the canal was completed *c*.1801. The Bridge predates the Wharf and the Beech House / Maintenance Yard complex.

SURVIVING CANALSIDE BUILDINGS / STRUCTURES, ADJACENT TO THE SITE BOUNDARY

Plate 1:

Grade II* Listed Beech House, viewed across the canal (EH 1176445 / HER 15120)

with the Grade II Listed No. 1 Beech House to the rear (EH 1366545 / HER 19577)

View from the north

Plate 2:

Beech House *c*.1900s

(Ellesmere Library Photographic collection PH/E/8/6 – 1/24)

Plate 3:

Grade II* Listed building complex, viewed across the canal from Bridge No. 59

View from the north

Plate 4:

Grade II* Listed Dry dock (EH 1366122 / HER 15121)

Canal Timber store to the rear (EH 1055924 / HER 19576) and the Blacksmith's and Joiner's Shop (EH 1176422 / HER 19575) in the background

Plate 5:

Grade II* Listed Dry dock (EH 1366122 / HER 15121)

View from the southwest

Plate 6:

Grade II* Listed Canal Timber store to the rear (EH 1055924 / HER 19576) and the Blacksmith's and Joiner's Shop (EH 1176422 / HER 19575)

View from the north

Plate 7:

Footbridge No 59

View from the southeast

Plate 8:

Grade II Listed Accommodation Bridge No 60, Stanks Bridge (EH 19615 / HER 19615)

View from the northeast

THE CULVERTED TETCHILL BROOK

5.22 The Tetchill Brook has its origins in the town mere and from the late 17th century, the Brook which eventually joins the River Perry to the south was used to drain the extensive bog of Tetchill Moor. The brook Surveys undertaken as part of the current planning application (BWB Consulting Ltd) and information provided by the present land tenant show that the Tetchill Brook is culverted across the site in an approximate east-west direction as indicated on the masterplan Fig 1 *previous* and Fig. 14 *following*.

5.23 Baugh's map of 1808 (Fig. 4 *previous*) suggests the brook was flowing as an open watercourse at this date, even though the canal has been constructed. Baugh's map suggests the culvert was not of the canal construction works in the *c*.1804 period. In 1813, The Ellesmere Canal Company amalgamated with the Chester Canal Company and by 1846 they became part of the Shropshire Union Canal Company.

5.24 Greenwood's county map of 1827 *below* records the canal and the town branch arm. The 1827 map depicts the brook flowing as an open watercourse south-westwards from the town basin. Despite the small-scale of the 1808 and 1827 county maps, they both indicate that the brook flows north of the proposed development site and as an open watercourse.

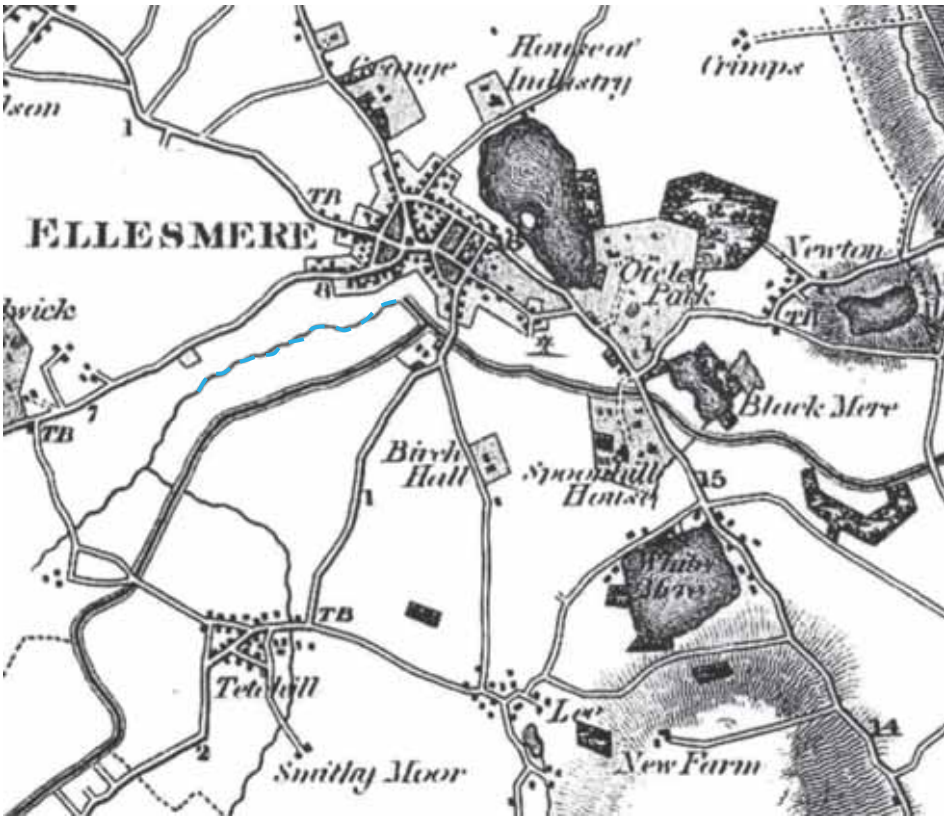

Fig. 5 Greenwood's county map, 1827

WOOD'S 1835 PLAN

5.25 Wood's detailed plan of the town in 1835 provides he first detailed record of the canal as it enters the town (Fig. 6 *below*). The plan extends as far south as Beech House and includes only a small portion of the proposed development site (outlined in red *below*). The plan records the Wood Yard at the head of the Canal Wharf, the Warehouse, Gas Works and Boat Building Yard together with Canal Bridge 59 and Beech House in the extreme southeast corner. The plan makes no record the Tetchill Brook crossing the site either as a stream or an open watercourse. However the plan does record a stream running across The Meadow, continuing south to cross the canal at its broadest point on the bend near Beech House.

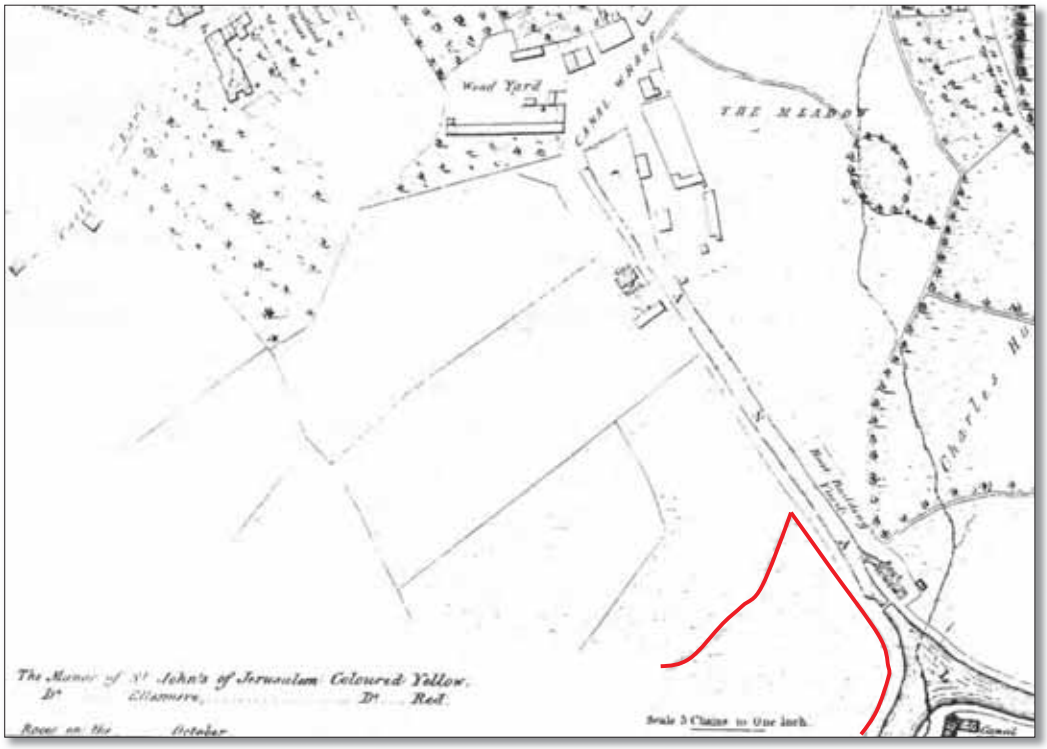

Fig. 6 John Wood's Plan of Ellesmere, 1835

1839 TITHE RECORD

5.26 The site lies within three of the townships that formed part of the Parish of Ellesmere in the post-medieval period. The land site was part of Bridgewater Estate, which amounted to 11, 500 acres, almost half-the entire Parish at this time. The inheritance of the Ellesmere estates is complex. The Dukedom passes to the nearest male relative who, under the terms of the first Duke's will, received an income from the estates, which were managed by the Bridgewater Trust. The tithe apportionments and the mid-19th century estate surveys confirm these figures. The Tithe maps dated 1839 provide the first accurate record of the land use of the proposed development site and the surrounding landscape (Fig. 7 *following*).

5.27 Fig. 7 reproduces Foxall's interpretation of the three tithe maps and the Tithe Apportionments recording the field names, land-use and the lessees are recorded in Tables 1-3 *below*. The 1842 estate map of 'The Lordship of Ellesmere belonging to His Grace the Duke of Bridgewater' (Fig. 8 *following*) records the same field system as the tithe and no change within the two year period.

5.28 The mid-19th century maps show the pattern of small fields of meadow and pastureland that has continued until the present day. Butter and cheese production were two of the principle trades of the town at this time and the natural geology of the surrounding land, clearly more suited to permanent pasture than to arable farming, was advantageous. Birch and Clover indicate some of the features of the fields and the word 'Stanks' often indicates the site of former long strip fields.

Tithe Table 1 – Birch & Lyth Township, 1839

Apportionment	Lessee	Fieldname
123	George McDonnel	Birch Croft
124	George McDonnel	Long Birch Croft
125	George McDonnel	Square Birch Croft
126	George McDonnel	Far Birch Croft
127	George McDonnel	Grindley's Meadow
128	Thomas Pearce	Big Meadow
131	Thomas Pearce	Middle Meadow
132	Thomas Pearce	Little Meadow
135	Samuel Lowe	Stanks Meadow
136	John Lea	Far Stanks Field
137	John Lea	Near Stanks Field
138	John Lea	Clover Field
139	John Dodsworth	Little Stanks Field

Tithe Table 2 – Ellesmere Township, 1839

Apportionment	Lessee	Fieldname
129	George McDonnel	Chidley's Meadow
130	Charles Pearce	Langford's Meadow
133	Thomas Pearce	Banky Meadow
134	Samuel Lowe	The Meadow
144	Edward Lloyd	Nursery Meadow
990	John Lea	Banky Field
991	John Lea	Long Field

Tithe Table 3 – Newnes Township

Apportionment	Lessee	Fieldname
34	John Edwards	Nursery Meadow

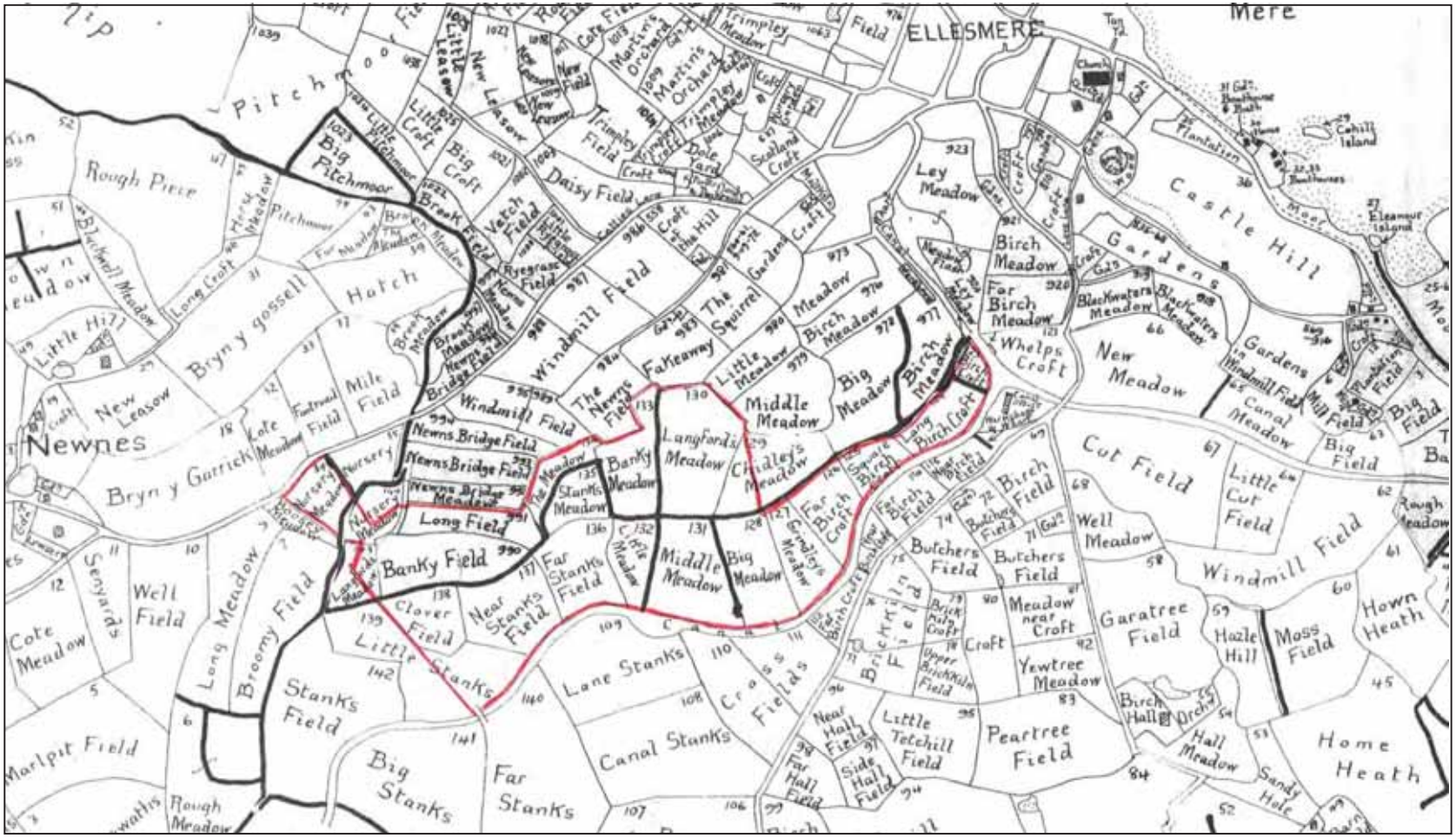

Fig. 7

Foxall's interpretation of the 1839 Tithe maps

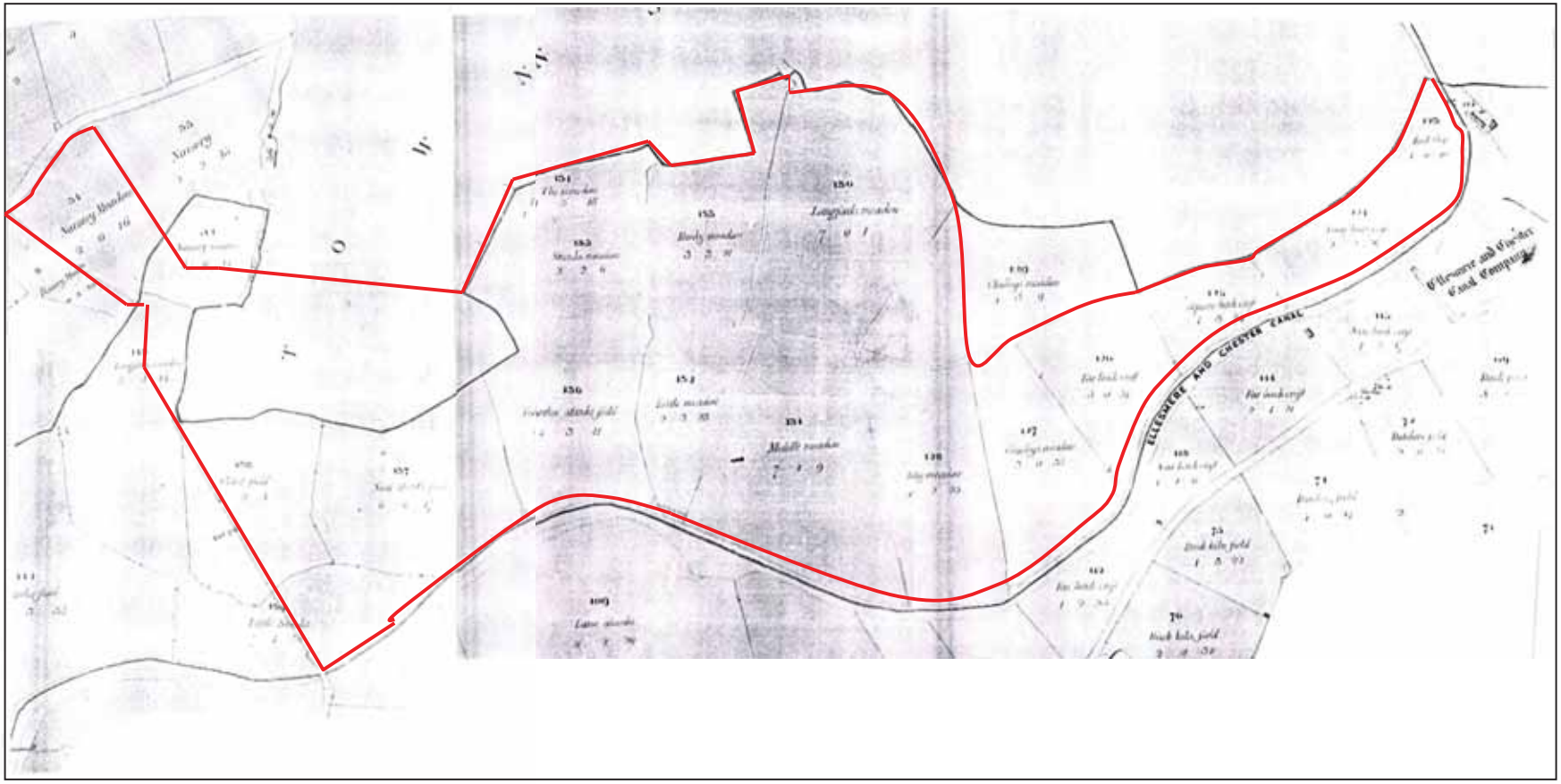

Fig. 8

Bridgewater Estate map. 1842

5.29 The 7th Earl married Charlotte Catherine Anne, daughter of Samuel Haynes, in 1783. The marriage was childless. He died in October 1823, aged 70, and was succeeded in the earldom by his younger brother Francis, the 8th Duke of Bridgewater. When Francis died in 1857 his eldest son George Egerton, 2nd Earl of Ellesmere (1823-1862) inherited. The 1859 Bridgewater Estate map (Fig. 9 *below*) records some of the 'Accommodation Land' then belonging to the Countess of Bridgewater, although several sources including Ruscoe 2007 (Volume 7) record the Ellesmere Estate inherited by a distant relative John, the 2nd Lord Brownlow, whose family name was Cust, after a lengthy lawsuit in 1853. He assumed the surname of Egerton in lieu of Cust in order to comply with the will of John Egerton, the 7th Earl of Bridgewater. Later in 1863 he resumed the surname of Cust in addition to that Egerton.

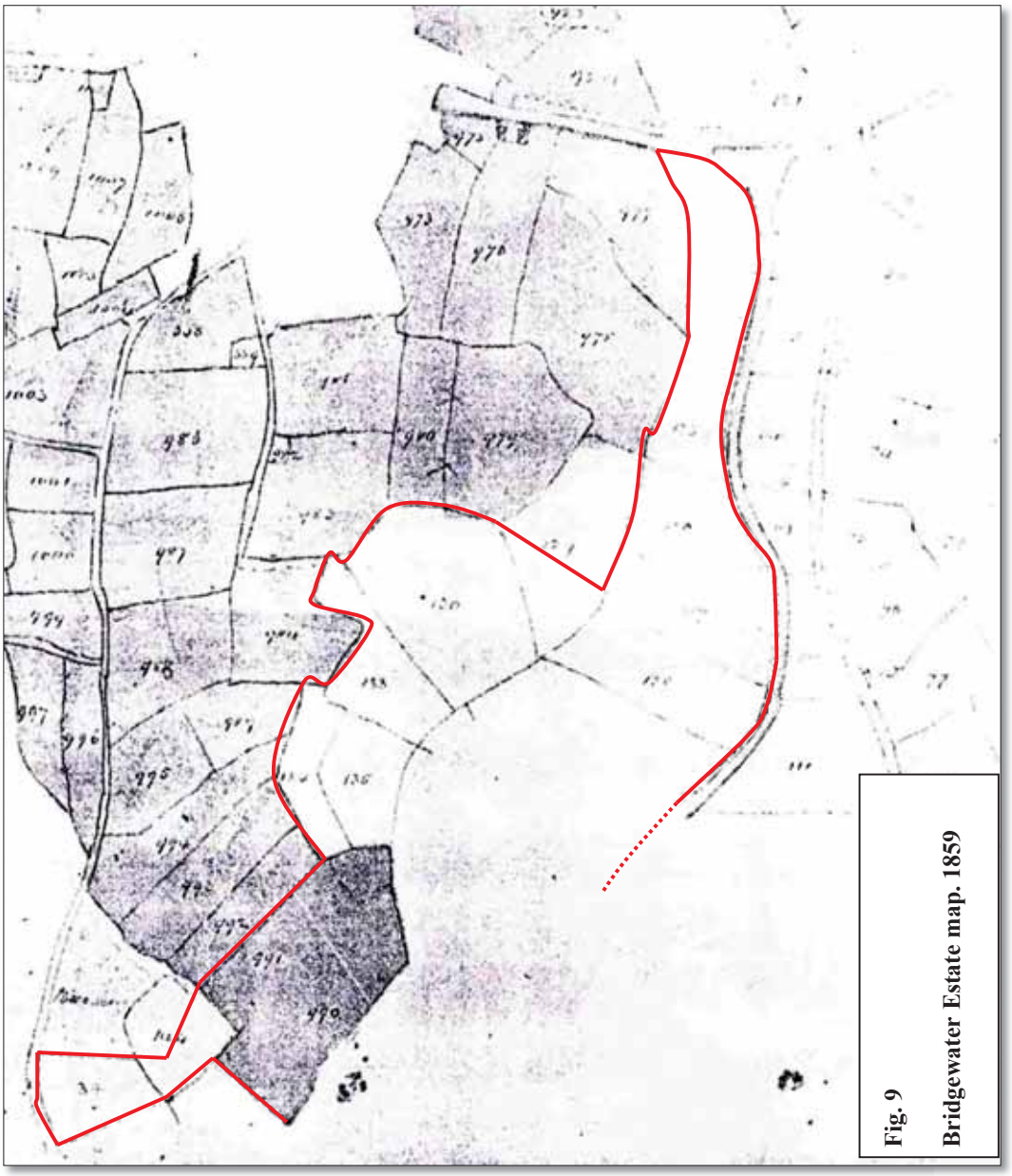

Fig. 9 Bridgewater Estate map. 1859

5.30 The 2nd Lord Brownlow (John William Spencer Brownlow Egerton-Cust) died in 1867 and was succeeded by his younger brother, Adelbert Wellington Brownlow-Cust, 3rd Earl Brownlow, who briefly represented Shropshire North in the House of Commons. On his death in 1921 the earldom became extinct. Over the years the Brownlow's Ellesmere Estate diminished from the 11,500 acres inherited in 1853 to 10, 000 acres in 1910.

5.31 The 1880 to 1950s OS maps (Figs 10-12 *following*) show the development site under Brownlow Estate ownership. The 1880 OS map (Fig. 10) provides the first cartographic record of the section of the Tetchill Brook that flows as an open stream following part of the northern boundary of the site. In addition the OS map makes no record of the course of the brook towards Beech House as recorded by Wood in 1835. In the absence of any further information, cartographic evidence would therefore indicate a construction date of between 1835 and 1880 for the present watercourse. Only the open water section is recorded by the OS. In addition the open ditch that follows the existing hedged boundary and connects to the canal outflow is also recorded by the OS in 1880 (para 6.8 *following*).

5.32 By 1880 several of the boundaries between the small tithe fields have been removed. The 1880 OS map shows how the tithe fields as recorded on Fig. 7 have been amalgamated *as below*:

From the east: Apportionments 123 and 124; 125, 126, 127 and 128; 132, 134, 135 and 136; 137, 138, part of 139 and 991. Apportionments 130, 131 and 34 retain their tithe boundaries. The 1929 and 1954 maps (Figs 11 and 12) record an unchanged landscape.

5.33 Beyond the site boundary, Fig. 10 the 1880 map records the canal basin, the Timber Yard (HER 5231), The Bridgewater Foundry (HER 06555) and the Gas Works (HER 06556) that stood to the west of the Wharf. The Foundry was built *c*.1850s on the site of the earlier timber yard, recorded by Woods in 1835. Operated by William Clay, the Foundry produced iron and brass castings for the canal and agricultural machinery. The Foundry continued to manufacture until the early 20th century. The Gas Works built in 1832 used the canal to bring in coal and export tar; a Coal Wharf operated alongside the canal together with several other small businesses. The Warehouse (EH 1055499 / HER 16679) on the northeast side of the basin and the terrace of workers' housing on Wharf Road (EH 1176393 /HER 16678) built by the Bridgewater Estate on the north side of Wharf Road, as recorded in 1880, survive as Grade II Listed buildings, but the industry surrounding the basin is lost. Other than the terrace of workers' housing, all the buildings related to canalside industry.

5.34 The advent of the railway on the north side of the town in 1863 (HER 05892) marked significant change for the fortunes of the canal and canalside industries. By 1929 (Fig. 11) the Cheese factory / Creamery (HER 06554) had been built on the site of the Foundry. The increasing population of the Lancashire towns in the 19th century had led to the expansion in the production of both milk and cheese in the lowlands of Cheshire and Shropshire. Local cheese fairs were held in the town and the products were exported by rail rather than canal. By the advent of WWII, the canal had entirely fallen out of use and the railway was closed by Beeching in 1963. The Gas Works closed in the 1960s, when the town was connected to the national grid and the Creamery, latterly operated by United Dairies closed in the 1980s. The largely-dairy based economy had, until recent years, preserved the agricultural landscape that surrounded the post-medieval town.

5.35 In 1953 the estate land was sold to the 5th Duke of Westminster, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert George Grosvenor, a British soldier, landowner, businessman and politician estimated to be the richest man the country in the 1970s. In the 1970s the Ellesmere estate, including the development site, was sold to individual investors. The 333acre township of Newnes, which had been entirely within the estate land, was sold to two farms, Newnes and Newnes Farm, in 1972. The remaining estate-owned land within the township of Birch and Lyth was sold off in 1974. The proposed development site is currently owned by Formal Holdings Ltd., who purchased the former Bridgewater / Grosvenor estate from Land Improvements Ltd.

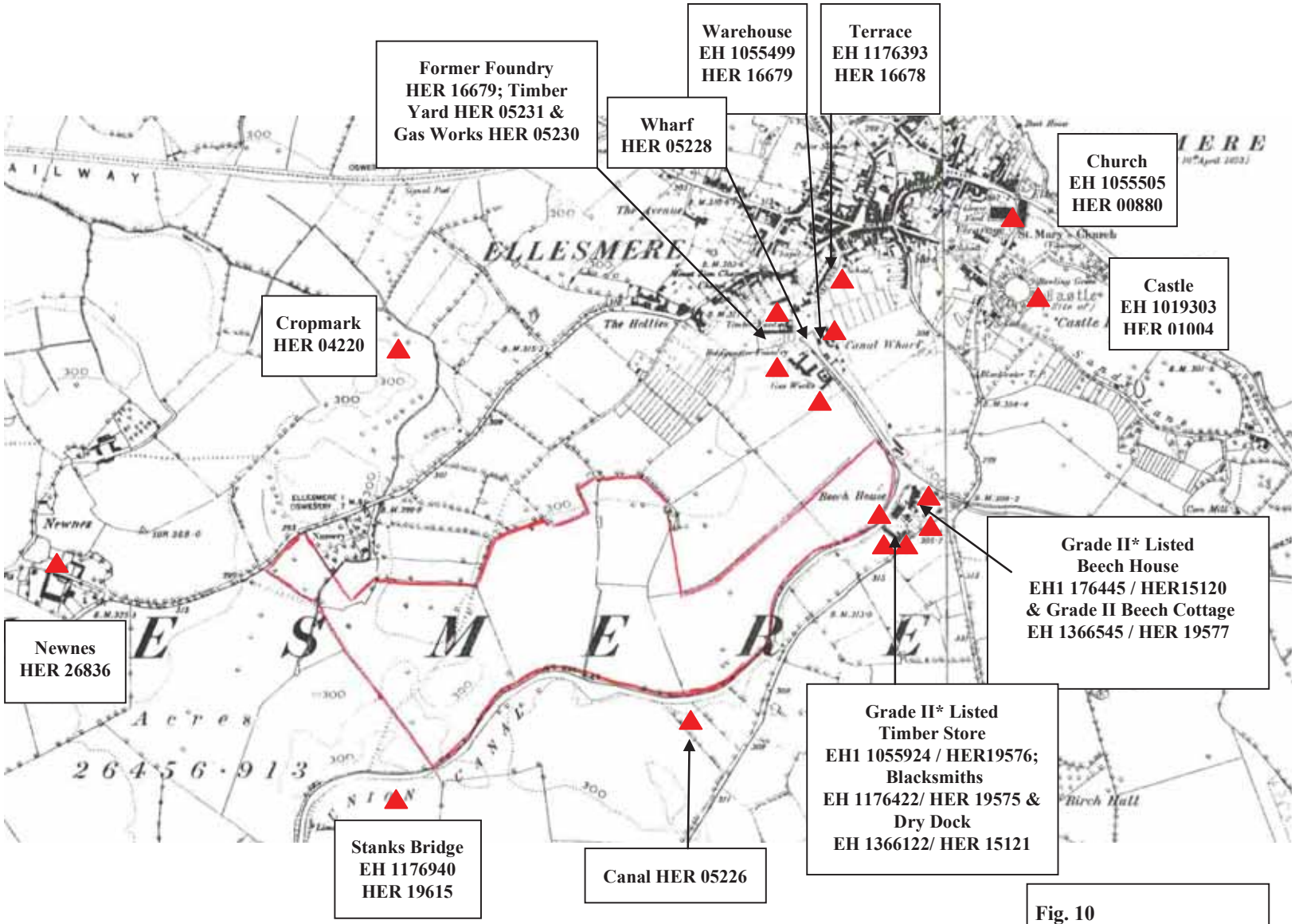

Fig. 10

1880 edition OS 6" map

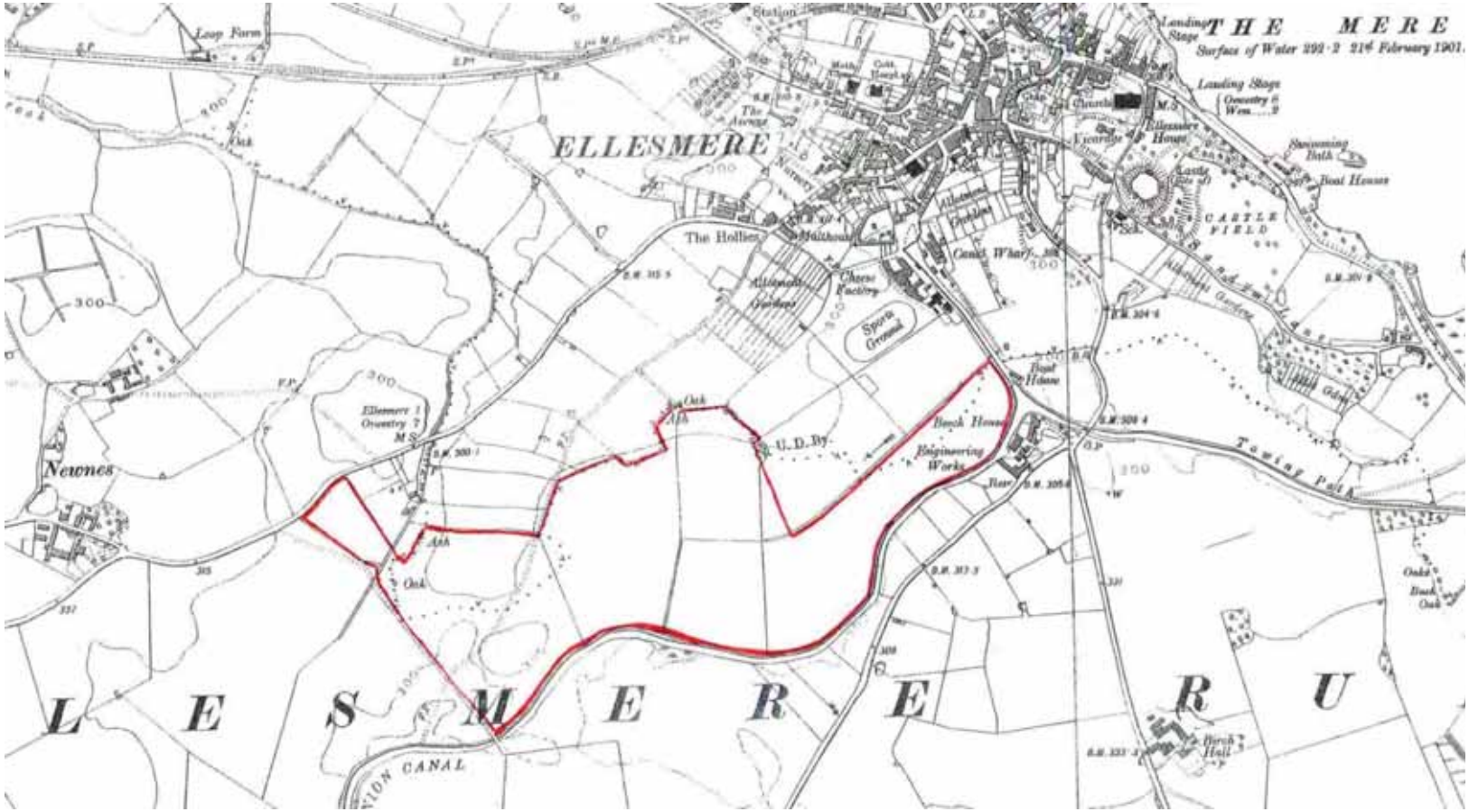

Fig. 11

1929 edition OS 6" map

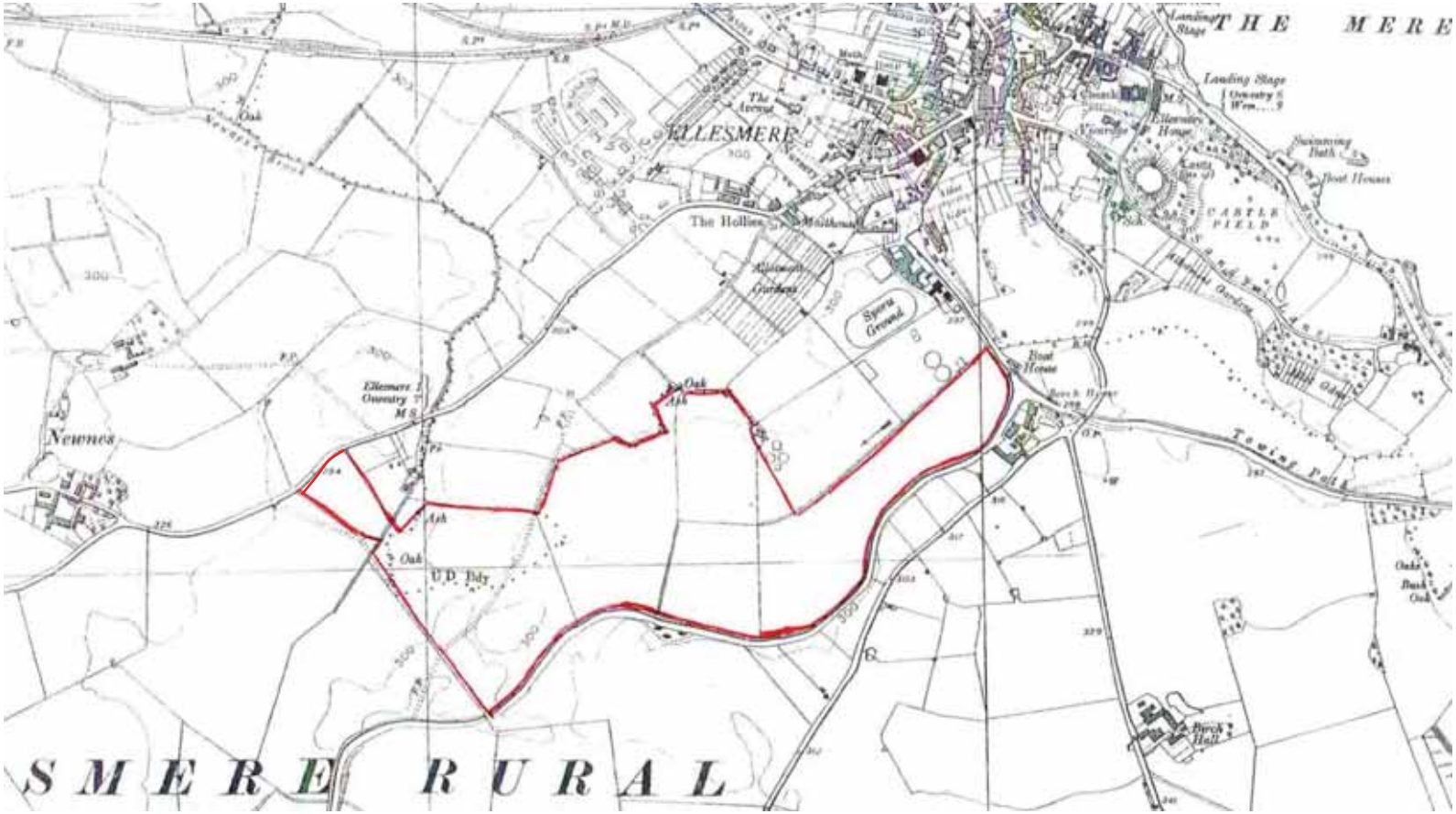

Fig. 12

1954 edition OS 1:10560 map,

PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

5.36 Aerial reconnaissance over the land surrounding the town since the 1980s, while recording significant cropmark features north and south of the proposed development site (HER 04220 & 04221), has not identified any such features on the proposed development site.

5.37 Interrogation of the aerial photographic collection held by Shropshire Historic Environment Record has shown no potential archaeological features on the site. The 1964 *oblique* Aerofilms view of the eastern part of the site (Fig. 13 *overleaf*) records the pastureland that exists today.

5.38 The AP shows some evidence of the postulated alignment of the Tetchill Brook (indicated in blue), although some sections have also become eroded by use as a farm track. Some of the former tithe boundaries are also evident, as dotted in red on Fig. 13.

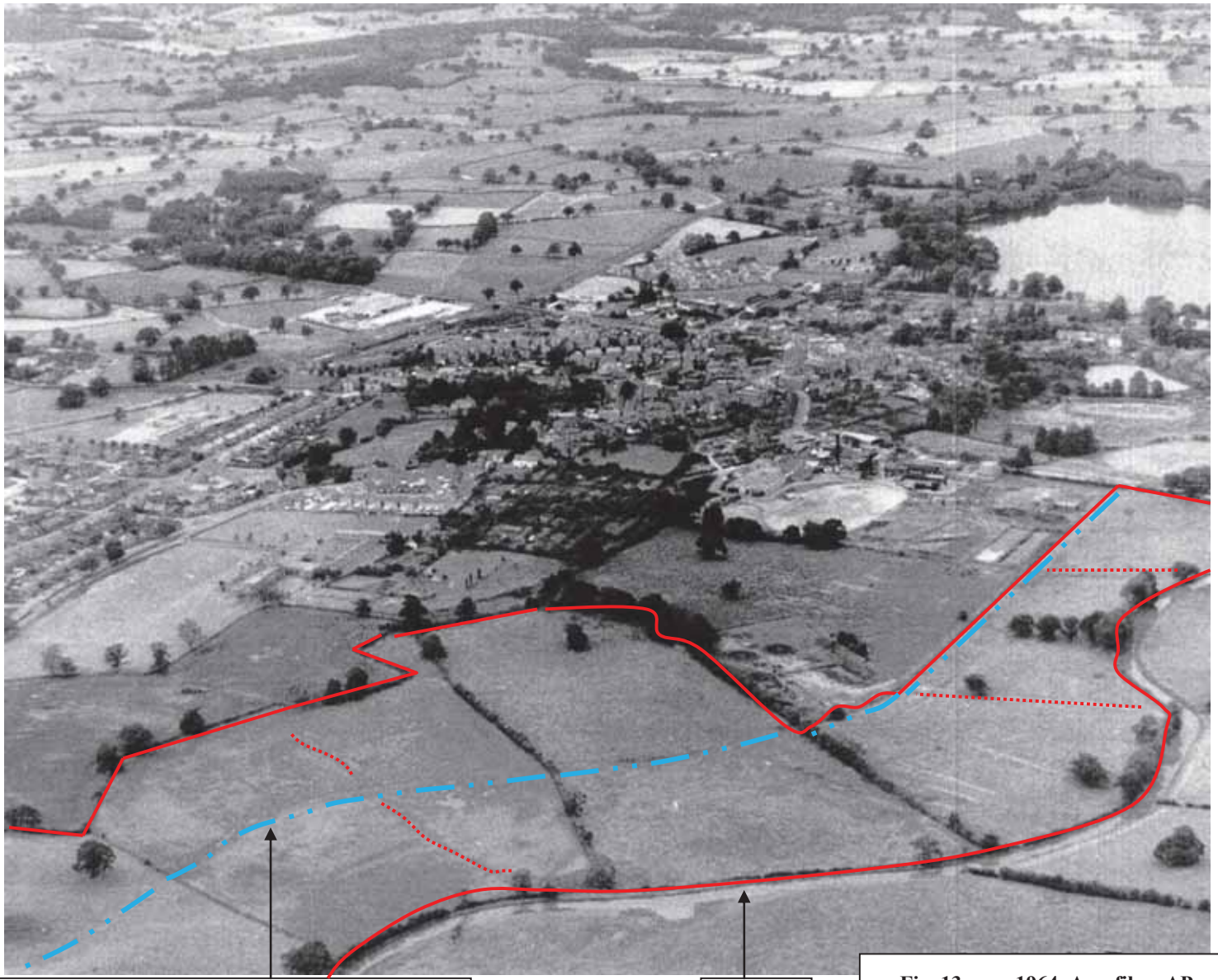

Fig. 13 **1964 Aerofilms AP**

6. THE EXISTING SITE

6.1 The proposed development site comprises pastureland with hedgerows and mixed fencing and scattered oak, ash and sycamore trees. Cartographic evidence shows that the primary land-use was and remains the production of grass for dairy cattle. Fig. 2 *previous*, the google-earth view of the site, provides an accurate record of the current land-use and site layout and the features recorded during the site walk-over are labelled F1-F14 and recorded on Fig. 14 *following*. The following text describes the site as walked-over from the east, illustrated in Plates 9-36 *following*.

EAST SIDE OF THE SITE – PROPOSED RESTAURANT / HOTEL / MARINA SITE

6.2 The east side of the site comprises low-lying land at approximately 300mAOD. The open fields have a hedged boundary to the canal and a northern fenced boundary with modern development and the sewage works (Plates 9-11 *following*). The proposed restaurant / hotel site is located southwest of Canal Bridge 59 and opposite the Grade II* Listed Canal maintenance yard (Plates 3-6 *previous*). The pastureland slopes very gradually north towards the open watercourse and culverted sections of the Tetchill Brook that parallel the northern boundary.

6.3 The head of the open watercourse and the sandstone construction of the downstream portal, as seen in Plate 12, are recorded as 'F1' on Fig. 14. The structure is overgrown but appears to measure *c*.5m in width across the watercourse with a *c*.0.9m (3ft) wide portal below. The bridge over the portal provides disused pedestrian access to land to the north. The water levels were low during the summer months, when overgrown watercourse (F2) flowed through a concrete channel visible on the north side for much of its course, with a vegetated bank to the fields to the south (Plate 13). The channel is separated from the pastureland by a post and wire fence.

6.4 Further west, a concrete vehicular, which appears to be blocked, provides access from the application site to the sewage works over the watercourse (Plate 15). The upstream portal (F3), of similar stone construction to F1, is located outside the southwest fenced boundary of the sewage works (Plate 14).

6.5 Within the pastureland south of the watercourse, two wells were located, recorded as F4 and F5 on Fig. 14. F4 is sealed by two concrete slabs (1m square) with ring pulls (Plate 16). F5 comprises a *c*.0.9m (3ft) diameter brick lined well with a stone edge enclosed by a crude fence (Plate 17). The features are presumably for agricultural use, but may be connected to the brook. The brickwork, as observed on the upper courses of F5 suggests a mid-19th century construction date.

6.6 In addition, a Sewage Works Pipeline crosses the site before forming an overhead line supported by two brick piers over the canal (F6; Plates 18 & 19).

FIELD WEST OF SEWAGE WORKS

6.7 Southwest of the sewage works and west of the downstream portal, where the application site area widens, the remains of a relict field boundary (F7) also indicates the alignment of the culverted stream (Plates 20-21). The bank terminates in an inspection chamber (F8) sited east of a north-south hedged and fenced boundary (Plates 21-22). F8 is constructed in concrete and measures approximately 1.5m diameter with a central inspection hatch.

6.8 South of the inspection chamber, the ditch (F9; Plate 28) that runs along the east side of the hedged boundary connects to the overflow from the canal (F10) as seen in Plates 29 and 30. The ditch presumably takes the overflow into the culverted brook below chamber F8.

6.9 Two wells with concrete covers similar to F4 are located to the south side of the relict field boundary, as seen in Plates 23-24 *following*. F11 is sited on the low land immediately south of the relict boundary and the postulated alignment of the culverted brook (Plate 23). F12 is located mid-way across the field, where the low-lying

ground gives way to gently undulating sandy ridges (Plate 24). Both features have modern brickwork exposed below the concrete capstones.

6.10 Although there is no surface evidence, the wells F4, 5, 11 and 12 may connect to the culverted brook.

WEST SIDE OF THE SITE – PROPOSED TOURING CARAVANS, GARDEN CENTRE ETC

6.11 Two culvert inspection chambers are located on the western part of the application site, as indicated on Fig. 14. F13 is located on low ground, on the west side of a hedged boundary and F14 is located to the east of the agricultural track that leads to Stanks Bridge. Both chamber covers are manufactured in cast iron, measuring approximately 0.9m (3ft) diameter with a central circular inspection hatch, measuring approximately 0.4m diameter. The covers bear a central lion motif and the manufacturer's nameplate of W. Clay (Plates 25-27). Other than the two inspection cambers, there is no surface evidence of the culvert in the western part of the site.

6.12 The southwest boundary of the application site is formed by the Grade II Listed Stanks Bridge, perpetrating the 1839 tithe field names. The bridge (Plate 34) provides agricultural access across the canal via the rough north-south track which forms the western boundary of the site (Plates 31 & 35). This track continues north towards the A485.

6.13 The large western field comprises two sandy ridges sloping down to a natural gulley through which the worn farm track and presumably the underground culvert cross the site, following some of the 1839 tithe boundaries. Within the large western field, the rich red sands are exposed in the worn sides of the ridges. The worn ridge seen in Plate 33 was not surprisingly part of the tithe 'Banky Field'.

6.14 A public footpath enters the western boundary of the site and continues in a roughly north-westerly direction before exiting through a small cluster of trees on the north boundary.

SUMMARY

6.15 While relict field boundaries are evident as earth banks and isolated trees, clearly the dominant features of cultural heritage interest on the site are those relating to water management, in particular the culverted Tetchill Brook. The above ground inspection chambers, connected to the culverted brook, give little indication of the construction of the feature, other than that it is substantial. The feature is being investigated by BWB Consulting Ltd as part of the current application. Similarly the four wells located within the pastureland are of unknown depth and further investigations will doubtless be undertaken as part of the current application.

6.16 Other than features related to water management, no above ground archaeological features or deposits have been recorded on the site.

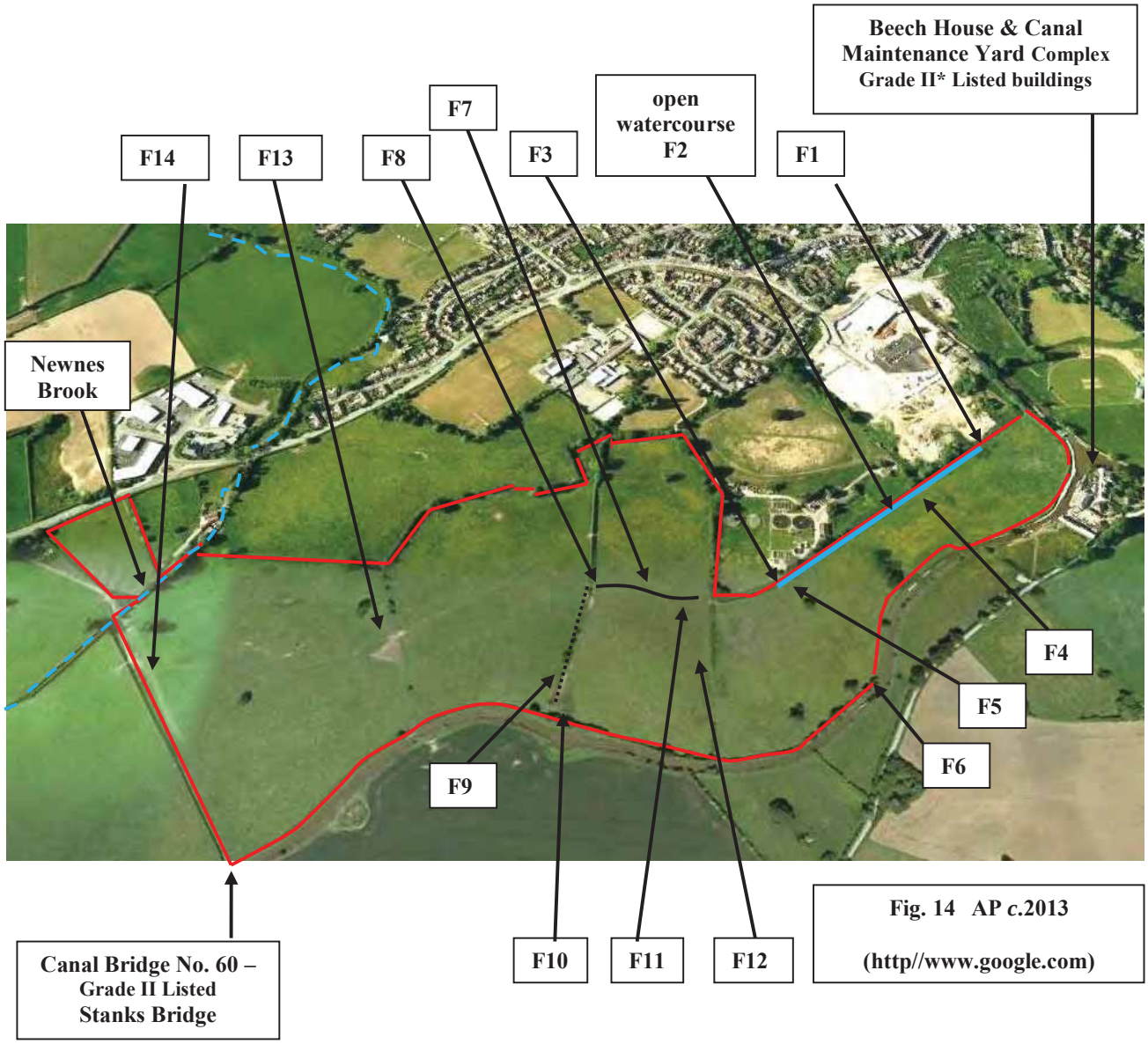

Fig. 14 AP *c.*2013

(http//www.google.com)

Plate 9:

The east side of the site, viewed from Canal Bridge 59, with modern development and the sewage works to the right

Plate 10:

The east side of the site, low-lying pasture sloping gradually north towards the open watercourse and fenced site boundary, view from the east

Plate 11:

The east side of the site, low-lying pasture, view from the west towards Beech House

Plate 12 *above*:
Tetchill Brook downstream portal (F1), view from the southwest

Plate 13 *right*:
Tetchill Brook open watercourse (F2), view from the downstream portal

Plate 14 *below:*
Tetchill Brook upstream portal (F3), view from the east

Plate 15 *above*:

Tetchill Brook choked open watercourse section, south of sewage works

Plate 16: Well cover F4

Plate 17: Well F5

Plate 18 *above*: Sewage Works Pipe Bridge (F6), view from the east

Plate 19 *right*: Pipe Bridge brick pier, viewed from within the site south boundary

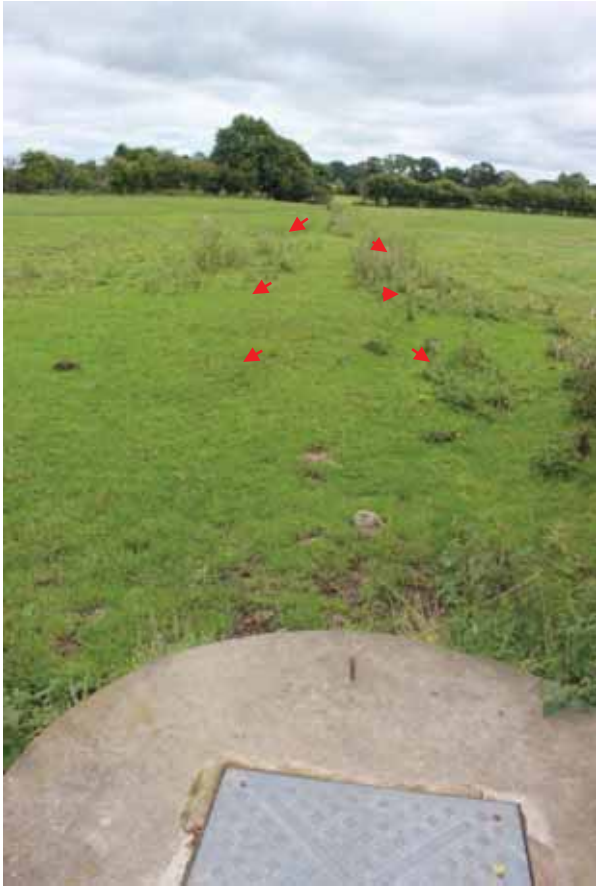

Plate 20 *above*: Relict boundary (F7) with Well F11 to left; view from the east

Plate 21 *left*: View from Inspection chamber F8 east across the relict boundary & postulated alignment of the culverted brook

Plate 22 *left*: Inspection chamber F8, view from the southeast

Plate 23: Well, F11

Plate 24: Well, F12, view from the northeast

Plate 25 – 27:

Inspection chamber F13;

With Lion motif and manufacturers stamped 'W. Clay Maker Ellesmere'

Clay owned The Bridgwater Foundry from the 1850s

Plate 28:

North-south boundary ditch (F9), viewed from the south

Plate 29 *left*:

Outflow (F10) below the canal towpath, viewed from the northeast

Plate 30 *above*:

Canalside outflow mechanism (F10), viewed from the canal towpath

Plate 31:

Gently undulating pasture, view from the south towards the back of Lakelands School

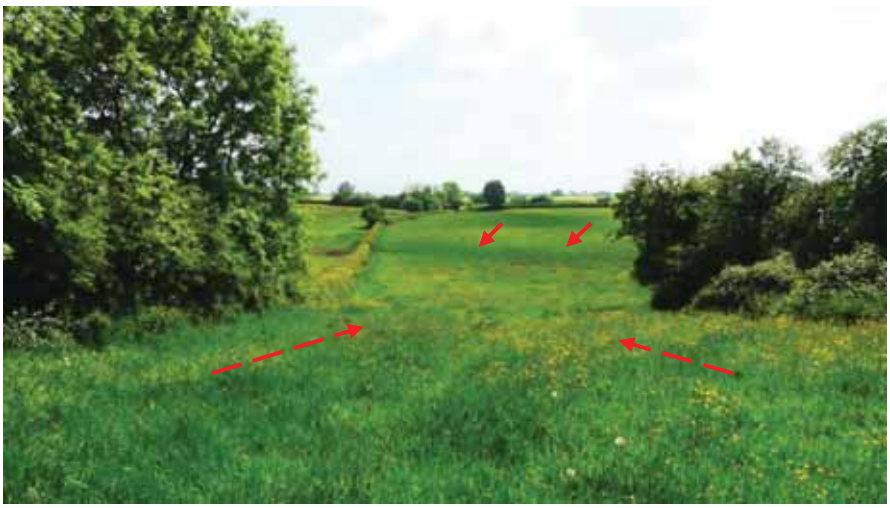

Plate 32:

Field as above, viewed from the north; land slopes downhill towards the worn track before rising again to the canal

Plate 33:

View from the Inspection chamber F14 towards the sandy ridge of 'Banky Field' background *left,*

The worn farm track cuts in a roughly west to east direction across the field

View from the west

Plate 34:

Grade II Listed Accommodation Bridge No 60, Stanks Bridge

(EH 1176940 / HER 19615)

View from the northwest

Plate 35:

Farm track running northwest from Stanks Bridge; forming the western boundary of the site

View from the southeast

Plate 36:

View towards the northwest corner of the site; where the farm track crosses the culverted Newnes Brook

View from the southeast

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST IN THE AREA OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

7.1 The proposed development is clearly focussed in an area of high cultural heritage interest, primarily in view of the close proximity of the Ellesmere Canal and the surviving canalside buildings. The significance of the Canal, now part of the Shropshire Union Canal, is heightened by the World Heritage Site designation, attributed by UNESCO in 2009, to the eleven-mile section of the Shropshire Union from Gledrid Bridge near Rhoswiel through to the Horseshoe Falls, Llangollen. This section includes the Llangollen branch, the Chirk and Pontcysyllte Aqueducts and Chirk and Whitehouses tunnels. The designation ensures that the section of the canal has the maximum degree of protective legislation in the country.

7.2 While the section of canal that passes the town of Ellesmere does not meet the criteria of World Heritage status, it is nevertheless an important cultural landscape with close links to the World Heritage Site. The entire length of the canal was engineered by William Jessop and Thomas Telford from the canal office at Ellesmere. The section of canal that forms the southern boundary of the proposed development is the site of four Grade II* Listed buildings, the former canal office at Beech House and the industrial buildings and Dry Dock that now form part of the Shropshire Union Canal Maintenance Depot. These buildings, probably built to the designs of Jessop and Telford have received statutory protection as important functional parts of what English Heritage state is the best-preserved canal workshop site in Britain.

7.3 While it is not within the remit of this assessment to discuss the impact of the proposed development on the built heritage, the importance of the canal and the Listed buildings is acknowledged from an archaeological prospective. Clearly the final design scheme should seek to enhance the setting and use of the nearby Listed buildings and the Conservation Area. The assessment of the impact of the proposals on the built heritage and the conservation area has been undertaken by Garry Miller, Historic Building Consultancy, as part of the current application.

7.4 The historic interest in the proposed development site itself lies primarily in its association with the former Bridgewater Estate since the early 17th century and its proximity to the canal.

7.5 From an archaeological perspective, there are no historical records to indicate occupation on the proposed development site. The agricultural history of the site is the one best recorded to date. The first detailed evidence of land-use is gained from the 1839 Tithe maps (Fig. 6). The 1839 maps and the recent site walk-over indicate that this former estate land has remained as undeveloped agricultural land for almost 200 years.

7.6 The existing boundaries, the occasional tree-lines and the former boundaries seen on the aerial photographs (Figs 2, 13 & 14 *previous*) have been in existence since 1839 or earlier. While not considered to be archaeological sites, hedgerows are nevertheless considered to form an important aspect of the historic environment, representing former field systems and often indicating the presence of medieval pre-tithe boundaries. Boundaries in general often prove a rich source of archaeological finds and, assuming that the site has not already been systematically metal-detected, it is possible that artefactual evidence may be located at these locations.

7.7 Land surrounding water has been the focus of settlement since prehistoric times and the Bronze Age sword found in the late 19th century approximately 200m southeast of the site (HER 00875) perhaps indicates the potential for recovering similar artefactual evidence from prehistoric times on the site itself.

7.8 While aerial reconnaissance since the 1980s has not identified any features of archaeological significance on the proposed development site, cropmark features recorded north and south of the proposed development site (HER 04220 & 04221) indicate the potential for buried archaeological features to survive within the agricultural landscape surrounding the town.

7.9 While peat deposits are known to underlie the lowest areas of the town, there is to date no evidence that these deposits extend into the development site. Peat deposits were observed during the construction of the Old Town Hall in 1833 (HER 5238; Nankivell 1983) and Buteux (1996, 10) draws attention to the water-logging in the

lower parts of the town around the High Street and the potential for well-preserved artefactual and / or organic evidence therein. Between 2008 and 2011, Foundations Archaeology undertook a watching brief on the site of the former United Dairies Creamery adjacent to the Wharf, where peat deposits had been recorded. However the integrity of the peat deposits had been adversely affected by previous industrial activity and no archaeological features or finds were recorded (King 2011).

7.10 The site walk-over has confirmed the low-lying topography of the site and the worn grassy mounds on the east side of the side show the red sand geological deposits that lie beneath the surface.

THE CULVERTED STREAM

7.11 While the present land-use gives little indication of previous ground disturbance on the site, the presence of the substantial sub-surface culvert crossing the site is an example of how easily evidence buried features can be lost. The culvert is clearly a feature of significant historic and archaeological interest, one of the necessary changes in the natural landscape that have taken place as a result of the construction of the canal and the growth of the town.

7.12 Cartographic evidence suggests the diversion of the Tetchill Brook and culverting across the application site has taken place sometime between 1835 and 1880 and not as part of the construction of the canal *c*.1804. The cast iron covers over chambers F13and F14 were manufactured by Clays' Bridgwater Foundry. The Foundry enjoyed a working life from the 1850s to the 1920s. While a construction date just after 1850 would be quite acceptable for diversion of the brook, the covers are not necessarily original.

7.13 The recent survey work undertaken by BWB Consulting Ltd. suggests the culverted section to the east may 1ie at approximately 1.5m*bpgl* while depths of 3 to 4m*bpgl* are anticipated further west. Additional CCTV survey work is planned.

7.14 The planning team believe that this is a significant structure of some date and clearly not capable of coping with the requirements of the proposed development. A new watercourse is proposed to run alongside the main spine road, to create a 'green corridor' and channel the existing watercourse through the site.

7.15 The culvert and the well sites identified are of historic and archaeological interest and a programme of mitigation to enable recording prior to any works on site will be required.

UNKNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

7.16 Other than the features associated with water and waste management, no further sites of cultural heritage interest have been identified. Due to the lack of previous archaeological investigations and recorded finds on the application site, the general archaeological potential can only be based on the present landscape together with documentary and cartographic evidence and professional judgement.

7.17 Although it can be stated that further mitigation will be required in respect of the water management features, at this stage it is not possible to assess the impact on unidentified buried archaeological remains.

7.18 Other than the culverted brook and the wells identified, it is not possible to determine the nature or value of potential buried remains on the site; at best they can be termed low to moderate.

7.19 The size of the proposed development suggests any archaeological features, if present, would be destroyed during construction and landscaping works on the site. The impact of construction works on any potential archaeology that may exist below ground would be considered to be substantial. A general programme of archaeological mitigation is therefore also recommended.

8. MITIGATION

8.1 A mitigation strategy will allow for a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken in order to negate or lessen the impact on the archaeological resource. The details of archaeological mitigation will be better advised in consultation with the Principal Archaeologist, Shropshire Council. The course of mitigation may depend on further information, such as geological surveys and more detailed plans, becoming available as the application proceeds. Based on available evidence the following mitigation is recommended following the results of this assessment.

THE CULVERTED TETCHILL BROOK

8.2 The culverted Tetchill Brook will be directly impacted on by the proposed development. While the depth of the culvert to the west of the site is likely to preclude any detailed recording structure, the section to the east of the open watercourse is believed to be more easily accessible, within the limits of health and safety.

8.3 Mitigation in the form of archaeological excavation and recording a sample of the eastern section of culvert is recommended as a pre-requisite of the development. The excavation of a stepped out trench to enable safe working should be undertaken, as a pre-commencement condition, in order to expose and preserve by record the alignment, character, condition and construction methodology of the culvert. The excavation will allow for the retrieval of possible dating evidence associated with the structure.

8.3 In addition construction works on the site as part of the proposed development should facilitate access to a designated archaeological contractor during all ground disturbing works associated with the removal and / or alterations associated with the culvert in order for further evidence of the structure to be preserved by record.

THE WELL SITES

8.4 Mitigation in the form of a surface photographic record of the structures is recommended as a pre-requisite of the development.

8.5 In addition construction works on the site as part of the proposed development should facilitate access to a designated archaeological contractor during all ground disturbing works associated with the removal and / or alterations to the wells in order for further evidence of the structure and, so far as it is possible, their functional relationship with the culvert to be preserved by record.

THE UNKNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

8.6 Other than the water management features, on the basis of available evidence a general programme of archaeological monitoring would appear to be a suitable response to the application. The site monitoring may lead to an increase in knowledge arising from the opportunity to research, investigate, record and interpret unknown archaeological evidence that may come to light as a result of the proposed works.

CONCLUSION

8.7 This assessment can only be used as a guide to the potential of buried archaeological deposits and their survival, nature, extent and significance will only be established through ground disturbing works.

8.8 The programme of archaeological mitigation should be undertaken by a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists who would operate according to the standard guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IfA). The archaeological contractor should prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation in respect of the proposed works to be agreed writing with the Principal Archaeologist, as a pre-requisite of the development.

8.9 This assessment concludes that, allowing for the above mitigation, the proposed development will have limited adverse impact on the archaeology of the site.

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APPENDIX 1 – HERITAGE ASSET INFORMATION (EH & HER)

TABLE 1 – SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

EH LIST NO. / HER.	SITE NAME	NGR	SHORT DESCRIPTION
EH 1019303 HER 01004	Ellesmere Castle	SJ 40337 34658	Motte and Bailey thought to have been built by Roger de Montgomerie shortly after 1086 Within Ellesmere Conservation Area

TABLE 2 – LISTED BUILDINGS

EH LIST NO. / HER.	**SITE NAME**	**NGR**	**SHORT DESCRIPTION**
EH 1055505 HER 00880	Church of St. Mary	SJ 4028 3483	Grade I Listed church of Norman origins, restored 1849 Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
EH 1055499 HER 16679	Canal Warehouse, Wharf Road	SJ 3934 7/117	Grade II Listed former Canal Warehouse, Wharf Road. Early 19th century 3-storey building in red brick with later alterations. Later 19th century loading canopy on south gabled end. Fronts the Canal Basin Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
EH 1055924 HER 19576	Canal Timber Store adjoining south bank of adjoining William Jessop's and Thomas Telford's Ellesmere Canal	SJ 40066 34181	Grade II* Listed Timber Store of *c*.1806. Sandstone ashlar, with front of weatherboarded timber frame and brick bay to right; hipped asbestos sheet roof. Located: British Waterways Board Canal Maintenance Depot Listed as an important functional part of the best-preserved canal workshop site in Britain. Probably built to the designs of Telford and Jessop, canal engineers being traditionally responsible for a wide range of structures from the trim (lettering and mileposts) to locks and keepers' houses. All canal companies had maintenance yards for work on boats, locks, paddle gearing and other aspects of the working fabric of inland waterways. Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
EH 1176393 HER 16678	No 4 to No 26 Wharf Road	SJ 3992 3470	Grade II Listed *c*.1890 range of workers' dwellings built by the Bridgewater Estate. Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
EH 1176422 HER 19575	Canalside Blacksmith's and Joiner's Shop adjoining south bank of adjoining William	SJ 40066 34180	Grade: II* Blacksmith's and joiner's shop of c.1806. Located: British Waterways Board Canal Maintenance Depot Roughly course sandstone rubble with red brick dressings; the right-hand workshop heightened and rebuilt to front in

	Jessop's and Thomas Telford's Ellesmere Canal		painted timber frame with red brick infill, with to the right a lower weatherboarded range finishing in a 2-storey bay of sandstone rubble with brick first floor; slate and corrugated iron roofs, half-hipped to canal end. Interior: Belt-drive gearing throughout, some boxed in and all powered by the engine house attached to the Timber Store (1055924). The interior is notable for the retention of fixtures and fittings, mostly of later 19th century date. Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
EH 1176445 HER 15120	Beech House (Nos. 2-6) adjoining William Jessop's and Thomas Telford's Ellesmere Canal	SJ 4009 3425	Grade II* former Ellesmere Canal office, now flats. *C*.1806 Located: British Waterways Board Canal Maintenance Depot Red brick with hipped slate roofs, splayed to semi-circular projection at north-west corner; prominent ridge stacks. Listed 25-Apr-1988 as fine example of a canal office is prominent in views of this notable and historically important canal yard, the best-preserved complex of its type in Britain. Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
EH 1176940 HER 19615	Canal Bridge Number 60 / Stanks Bridge	SJ 39107 33734	Grade II Accommodation bridge over canal. Circa 1797 to 1801 with minor later alterations. Red brick with stone-coped parapet terminating in square corner piers. Elliptical arch with projecting key bricks and string course. This section of the Ellesmere Canal was completed *c*.1801. Listed 25-Apr-1988
EH 1366122 HER 15121	Canal Office and Dry Dock adjoining William Jessop's and Thomas Telford's Ellesmere Canal	SJ 40057 34227	Grade II * Listed office and dry dock of c.1806; former stables and stores with minor later additions and alterations. Located: British Waterways Board Canal Maintenance Depot Roughly coursed sandstone rubble with sandstone dressings; hipped slate roof. Long building on canal side of canal depot with dry dock at south-west end. Interior: Dry dock has king-post roof with raking struts from walls to tie beams on canal side. Stone sett floor with mooring rings surrounding dock. In the dock boats were formerly built, repaired and 'indexed'. To empty the dock of water a temporary dam was built across the entrance by dropping 'stop-planks' into iron-shod grooves. The water was then drained out, the boat coming to nest on baulks of timber in the now-dry dock. Listed 25-Apr-1988 as a range, with its attached covered dry dock for the manufacture and repair of canal barges, of great significance in relationship to the canal industry, for it comprises one of the key functional buildings in what is now acknowledged to be the best-preserved canal workshop site in Britain. The dry dock, which has access direct to the canal, comprises an exceptionally early example of such a structure. Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
EH 1366545 HER19577	No. 1 Beech House	SJ 40077 34215	Grade II Listed Canalside Cottage of *c*.1806, adjoining Ellesmere Canal; painted brick with pyramidal slate roof. Square 2-storey plan with single-storey lean-to Within Ellesmere Conservation Area

Table 3 - SHROPSHIRE HER – UNDESIGNATED SITES

HER NO.	SITE NAME	NGR	SHORT DESCRIPTION
00874 & 05223	Roman Coin Find Spot, Beech House	SJ 400 343	A coin of Victorinus (Emperor of Gallic provinces 269-271) found on canal towpath near Beech House 1927 and reported to be in his possession. Ref: Chitty. 1927/ 1928, Article in TSAHS, Ser 4, Vol XI (ie Vol 44)
00875	Find Spot Val Hill, nr Tetchill	SJ 399 341	Ewart Park type leaf-shaped bronze sword of Bronze Age date found by workmen. Ref: Kenyon 1892 Article in Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society, Ser 2, Vol IV (ie Vol 15) & Chitty 1929/ 1930, Article in TSAHS, Ser 4, Vol XII (ie Vol 45
00879	Roman Coin Findspot	SJ 402 346	Roman coin of Claudius (41-54 AD) in a garden south of Sandy Lane which later became a school playground in close proximity to the foot of the castle motte. Coin deposited with Shrewsbury Museums in 1928. Ref: Chitty 1929, TSAHS Ser 4, Vol XII (ie Vol 45)
01570	Find Spot No 3 Swan Hill, Ellesmere	SJ 402 353	A Bronze Age three ribbed looped and socketed axe found *c*.1890; deposited with Shrewsbury Museums in 1928 Ref: Chitty 1929/ 1930. Article TSAHS Ser 4, Vol XII (ie Vol 45)
03600	Find Tetchill Moor	SJ 3903 3131	A socketed bronze axe found in peaty ground 10-12ins below ground surface at Tetchill Moor, October 1982
03726	Fragment of Saxon Cross	SJ 4023 3477	Fragment of a Saxon cross of *c*.750-850 AD which once stood in the Vicarage Garden
04220	Double-ditched cropmark enclosure *c*. 400m NE of Newnes Farm	SJ 3880 3454	Double-ditched cropmark enclosure, possibly a settlement enclosure or a corral for livestock of late prehistoric or possibly Romano-British date; unknown date and function Source: Oblique aerial photograph: Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust,1986
04221	Circular cropmark enclosure *c*.450m NE of Tetchill	SJ 3941 3310	Elongated circular single ditched cropmark enclosure of unknown date Source: Oblique aerial photograph: Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust,1986
05226	Shropshire Union Canal, Ellesmere	SJ 4016 3426	Section of the Canal *c*.1804 within Ellesmere Conservation Area Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
05227	Boat Building Yard	SJ 4002 3441	Boat building yard marked on 1835 map; adjacent to present Canal Bridge No. 59
05228	Canal wharf, Ellesmere	SJ 3995 3451	Recorded by Wood in 1835; focus of Bridegwater Estate industry Within Ellesmere Conservation Area
05230 / 06556	Gas Works	SJ 3992 3448	Recorded by Wood in 1835 & OS in 1880; replaced by a sub-station. Now built over
05231/ 21292	Timber yard	SJ 3982 3463	Recorded by Wood in 1835 & OS in 1880 + Timber yard noted on the tithe map of 1839. Bridgewater Foundry (PRN 06555) later established on this site at some point between 1839 and 1880. Now built over
05237	Old Watercourse	SJ 4012 3486	Line of old stream shown on 1835 map; Buteux 1996 Comment:- Affected boundaries within the town; now runs underground and has been diverted

05238	Old Town Hall Peat Deposits	SJ 3999 3477	Ref to Old Town Hall built 1833 erected on piles driven through many feet of peat (Nankivell 1983).
05241	Blackwater turnpike gate	SJ 4022 3450	Site of the tollgate formerly at the south end of Birch road as recorded by John Wood in 1835
05892	Railway	SJ 5438 4073	Oswestry, Ellesmere & Whitchurch Railway (Cambrian); authorised in 1861 to construct a line linking the lines of mid Wales with the LNWR system at Whitchurch. Work started in 1862, and the line opened from Whitchurch to Ellesmere in 1863. Closed by Beeching in 1963
06554	Cheese Factory	SJ 3980 3446	Creamery built on site of Bridgewater Foundry (PRN 06555) in early 20th century Ref: Deskbased survey report: Fenton-Thomas C. 2008. Site of the Former Creamery, Ellesmere: report on an archaeological desk based assessment. Rep. OSA08DT14
06555	Bridgewater Foundry	SJ 3980 3446	Site of Bridgewater Foundry or Clay's Iron Foundry, established sometime between 1939 and 1874. Site of 1839 timber yard. Foundry produced castings for the canal and for the estate.
26836	Newnes	SJ 3839 3415	Farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010