

# Rugeley

## Historic Character Assessment



## Rugeley

### Controlled Document

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# Executive Summary

## The Project

The main aim of the Staffordshire EUS is to understand the development and current historic character of the medieval towns within the county.

The project reports for the towns are divided into two sections. Section one covers the location and historical development of the towns. The history covers the earliest evidence for human activity through to the establishment of the town in the medieval period and through to the present day. Section two covers the characterisation of the towns through the creation of Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs). The historical significance and the archaeological potential of each HUCA is assessed and recommendations are put forward.

Twenty one Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) have been identified in the Rugeley project.

## The Historical Development of Rugeley

There is currently no evidence for human activity within the project area dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods. However, there is considerable prehistoric activity recorded in the wider area particularly within the Trent Valley to the north and on Cannock Chase to the south.

The earliest settlement is conjectured to lie in the area around the Grade II Listed remains of the medieval St Augustine's church by the time of Domesday Book (1086). The church retains late 12th century fabric, but was replaced by an entirely new building, also St Augustine's in the early 19th century on the opposite side of Station Road.

The medieval church lies approximately 400m to the north of the core of the medieval town.

The town was established on a north-south alignment and may have been established during the 13th century by the Bishop of Lichfield who was then the lord of the manor. Medieval burgage plots are identifiable to the west of Market Street, but on the whole the townscape appears to have evolved piecemeal. The medieval street pattern within the town centre largely survives. The designation of the Rugeley Town Conservation Area acknowledges the historic importance of this townscape.

A market charter was granted in 1259 and two market places were established, Market Square on the north-south axis and Horsefair on an east-west axis. The latter may have originated as the site of the fair from at least the mid 13th century, but it is clear from surviving burgage plots that this area had become formalised within the townscape during the medieval period. Sheepfair to the south west of the town probably had its origins in the medieval period possibly as an area for recreation or animal grazing. At some point it appears that it became the site of a market or fair, although a sheep fair is not specifically recorded in documentary sources. The final open area, Brook Square, is also legible within the historic townscape. The Square was probably created in the post medieval period, but the open aspect of this area is due to the fact that Rising Brook crossed the street here until the mid to late 19th century when it was culverted.

Several watermills are recorded within the manor in medieval documents, although some of these are known to have been located beyond the project area. The town had three watermills and it is possible that they all have medieval origins. The mill lying to the east of the town centre was operating as an iron foundry by the 19th century; an important industry within the economy of the town during that period.

What is presumed to be a medieval moated site associated with the medieval estate of Hagley survives within Elmore Park. By the 17th century Hagley Hall was re-located to the north of the moated site, but the property has since been demolished and the site was re-developed in the 1980s. The surviving 18th century stable range was converted to domestic dwellings in the late 20th century.

Suburban growth during the 19th century was constructed upon the former medieval arable fields to the north and south of the town and the importance of them to Rugeley's townscape has been acknowledged in the designation of two Conservation Areas.

The greatest period of suburban expansion occurred in the mid and late 20th century, although historic buildings also survive within these housing developments.

## Characterisation and Assessment

- ◆ The HUCAs which exhibit the greatest heritage significance are **HUCA 1, HUCA 3, HUCA 4, HUCA 6, HUCA 8, HUCA 9, HUCA 10, HUCA 12** and **HUCA 13**.
- ◆ **HUCA 1** and **HUCA 6** represent part of the historic core of the town and incorporate the main north-south route, Market Square and Horsefair; they both lie within the Rugeley Town Conservation Area. These HUCAs probably represent the new town founded by the bishop. **HUCA 4** is the location of the medieval church and potentially the site of the early medieval settlement, which lies away from the commercial heart of the medieval town. **HUCA 2** and **HUCA 7** also form part of the historic core of Rugeley, although have been subject to greater 20th century change. These (and **HUCA 2** in particular) have great potential for the enhancement of the surviving historic buildings to contribute to sense of place. **HUCA 8** includes a moated site which is believed to represent the site of the medieval Hagley manor house. The remainder of this character area comprises the remains of the landscape park associated with the later Hagley Hall.
- ◆ The origins of **HUCA 3** and **HUCA 9** are less clear and may have either medieval or post medieval origins; surviving buildings of 16th or 17th century date have been identified in both areas, as well as 18th and 19th century properties. **HUCA 9** is largely contiguous with the Sheepfair Conservation Area.
- ◆ The character of the earliest suburban expansion during the 19th and early 20th centuries survives in **HUCA 10, HUCA 12,** and **HUCA 13**. All three either form Conservation Areas or lie adjacent. Conservation Areas Appraisals have been produced by Cannock Chase District Council to guide change within these designated areas. The conservation and enhancement of the historic character is recommended to allow the community and future generations to experience and appreciate the history of their town.
- ◆ Whilst the remaining HUCAs (**HUCA 16, HUCA 17, HUCA 18, HUCA 19, HUCA 20** and **HUCA 21**) largely represent the mid 20th century to early 21st century suburban expansion or re-development heritage interests do survive and contribute to the locally distinctive character of the wider Rugeley townscape.

<sup>1</sup> Hunt nd.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Burgage plot: A plot of land longer than it is wide, can include any structures on it. Typical of medieval towns. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage)

## Introduction

The Staffordshire EUS Project forms part of the national programme of Extensive Urban Surveys initiated and supported by English Heritage. This Historic Character Assessment report for Rugeley forms one of twenty-three such reports which make up the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) for the towns of Staffordshire. The EUS project as a whole intends to increase and synthesise the knowledge and understanding of the heritage assets that contribute to the development and character of the towns in the county.

The term 'town' in the context of the EUS relates specifically to those settlements which were clearly established as towns during the medieval period. An assessment of documentary sources and previous assessments by historians was undertaken to establish which settlements within Staffordshire qualified as medieval towns<sup>1</sup>. Some of the medieval towns are still clearly important economic centres in the modern landscape, including Stafford, Tamworth, Newcastle and Lichfield. Others, however, have reverted to villages some of which, like Church Eaton, merely comprise a handful of houses with no services such as shops or public houses. Of the nine criteria established for identifying the county's medieval towns Rugeley qualified on three counts in that it was identified as a town or borough by two eminent historians and was considered a 'market town' in circa 1600<sup>2</sup>.

The project constitutes a progression of the Historic Landscape Character (HLC) project which was completed for Staffordshire in 2006. The HLC was undertaken principally using maps of 1:10,000 scale and the results reaffirmed Staffordshire as a predominantly rural county. However, the scale at which the HLC was produced has meant that the more urban areas, where greater levels of change

have tended to occur on a smaller scale, were not analysed in any great depth. In the HLC the central areas of the towns were described as 'Historic Core' or 'Pre 1880s Settlement' and the phases of development and their current character were not considered beyond that broad terminology. The EUS therefore aims to rectify these issues through a consideration of all the sources available on each of Staffordshire's historic towns to deepen the understanding of and apply values to the present day historic character of these townscapes.

The information gained from the study can be used to support and inform a variety of planning policies from national objectives down to local policies and allocations which form the Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) as well as development management decisions.

Each of the Historic Character Assessment reports are statements of current knowledge and are not intended to be original research documents. Each report addresses the research questions laid out in the West Midlands Research Framework, by synthesising the data gathered on each of the towns. The EUS thereby also provides a basis for future research into the towns.

## Background

A pilot study for Newcastle-under-Lyme was carried out in January 2007. Following this an assessment was undertaken to determine which towns in Staffordshire would be eligible for an Extensive Urban Survey. As a result twenty-three towns were identified for study. The selection criteria were based upon three studies of Staffordshire towns by historians and historical geographers who identified the medieval or early post medieval characteristics determining how towns differ from rural settlements. Such criteria included the form of the settlement; the presence of burgage plots<sup>3</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Hunt nd.

<sup>5</sup> Communities and Local Government 2010: Annex 2 - terminology

<sup>6</sup> Archaeology Data Service website: <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/>



and formal market places whether physically surviving, referenced in historical documents or identifiable on historic mapping. It also took into account the references to medieval organisations such as guilds and to the construction of civic buildings such as town or market halls. The diversity and nature of the occupations of the inhabitants were also included; the greater the range and the less agricultural focussed the more likely to represent an urban settlement<sup>4</sup>.

### **Aim**

The main aim of the Staffordshire EUS is to understand the development and the current historic character of the towns. The towns are evaluated to identify the nature and extent of surviving heritage assets, which encompasses buildings, monuments (above and below ground archaeology), place, areas, landscapes and townscapes<sup>5</sup>.

### **Outputs**

The results are to be held as part of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) in a database and spatially in GIS.

The principal outputs are the Historic Character Assessment reports for each town. These are available in hard copy at the William Salt Library, but are also accessible through the Staffordshire County Council website and the ADS website (where the national programme is currently held)<sup>6</sup>.



# Part One: Background And Setting

## Section Summary

- ◆ There is evidence for human activity from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age from a wide area around the Rugeley EUS project within both the Trent Valley and from Cannock Chase. However, there is currently very little evidence for human activity in the Prehistoric and Roman periods from the project area itself, with the exception of a stray find of Bronze Age date.
- ◆ Rugeley is recorded in Domesday Book when it was held by the King. The location of the earliest settlement is currently unknown, but it may have concentrated around the old St Augustine's church which survives as a Grade II Listed ruin in the modern townscape. The earliest surviving fabric within the church dates to the late 12th century.
- ◆ The manor was held by the Bishops of Lichfield from 1189 until the mid 16th century. The Bishops themselves do not appear to have established a manor house within the settlement.
- ◆ At least three estates were established within the Bishop's manor during the medieval period. However, the location of only two of these has been identified within the EUS project area. The Dean & Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral held an estate and a property near the modern junction of Wolseley Road/Market Street with Anson Street; this site appears to have been divided into three separate plots in the late 18th century. The de Puy family were granted what appears to have become Hagley manor by at least the late 12th century. The de Puy's manor house is believed to have been sited at the extant moat located within Hagley Park. The main seat of the manor had re-located to the site of Hagley Hall by at least the mid 17th century. The hall was demolished in two sections the first in 1932 and the remainder in the 1980s although the stable block survives and has been converted to domestic use.
- ◆ The historic core of Rugeley, including the location of the medieval market place (Market Square), lies along a main north-south route and away from the location of the church and the speculated area of the earliest settlement. It is possible that the town was deliberately planned upon the north-south alignment by the Bishop around the time that he was granted a licence to establish a market in 1259. There is little evidence for the deliberate planning of burgage plots with the exception of two areas; one to the west of Market Street and the other to the north of Horsefair (cf. map 4). It is possible that the irregular pattern of development within the town was the result of re-planning during the post medieval period, possibly as the result of fires. At least eight properties of 16th/17th century origin survive within the historic core of the town; six of which are Grade II Listed. The majority of the historic buildings appear to date to the 18th and 19th centuries. There has been piecemeal re-development within the historic core during the late 20th century.
- ◆ Three probable market places are apparent in the modern townscape (cf. plate 1). The market place on the main north-south axis was probably part of the medieval town plan and Horsefair may similarly have medieval origins. The origins of Sheep Fair are obscure although sheep farming and the wool industry would have been important to the local economy of the wider Cannock Chase area during the post medieval period. The market continued to be an important part of the economy of the town in the 18th century; in contrast to the market at Cannock whose market place

had largely been converted to a bowling green. A fourth area, Brook Square, is situated at the point where the Rising Brook crosses the main north-south axis. It was culverted in the mid to late 19th century, but the open area apparently pre-dates this and it is currently unknown at what date the name Brook Square came into use. However, the presence of the brook until the 19th century precludes this area as an early market place.

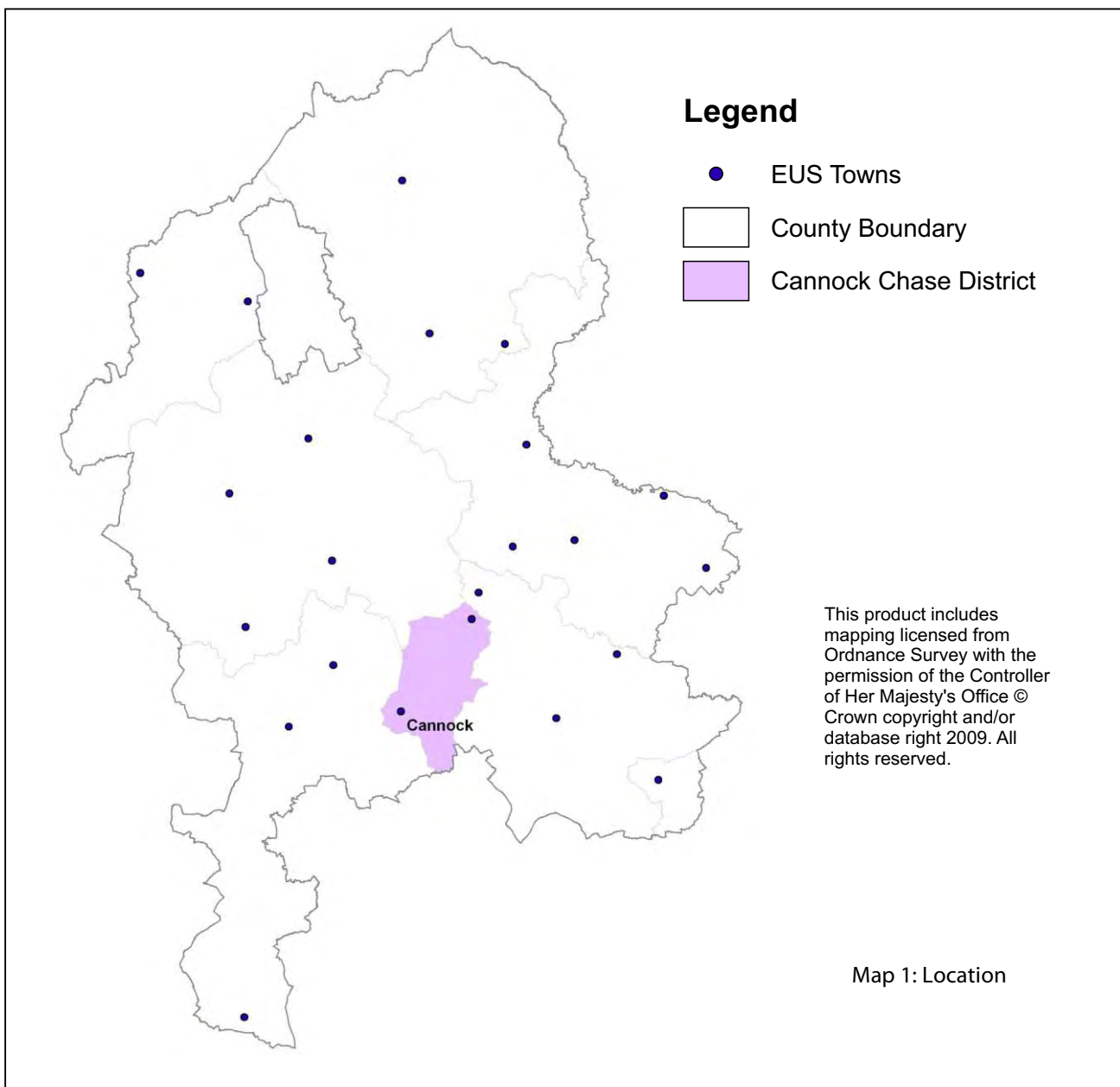
- ◆ The economy of the settlement was based upon arable agriculture and woodland management as recorded in the Domesday Book. The area of arable agriculture increased in the period up to at least 1298 as farmland was created out of the forest area. This confirms its continued importance to the economy of the town throughout the medieval period.
- ◆ There were at least two mill sites, located on the Rising Brook, within the EUS project area by the post medieval period, both of which may have had medieval origins. Whilst one or both of them probably operated as a corn mill during their history, by the 17th century the mill site to the east of the historic core was a paper mill. Iron working was an important industry in the town from at least the medieval period and was of increasing economic importance throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. The 17th century paper mill was probably being operated as forge by the early 19th century. Two further watermills existed within the EUS project area by the early 19th century, Hagley Mill on Sheep Fair and Leather Mill which had stood to the north of Leathermill Lane near the Power Station Road Industrial Estate. None of these mills survive in the modern townscape. The exception is Hagley Mill where some historic fabric survives as part of a house largely dating to the 1980s. There is also a former mid 19th century steam corn mill which survives on Mill Street.
- ◆ The earliest suburban developments lie to the north west and south east of the historic core and date to the early to mid 19th century. The importance of these two areas to the historic development of Rugeley has been recognised in the designation of two Conservation Areas (Church Street (124) and Talbot Street/Lichfield Street (155)). The town continued to develop in the early 20th century with houses being constructed to the south and west of the historic core as well as around Etchinghill. The mid 20th century suburban development concentrated in the north west of the EUS project area, but the greatest period occurred during the late 20th century (cf. maps in Appendix 1).
- ◆ There have been few archaeological interventions within the town and much of what is known about its development has been garnered from documentary research. However, there remains the potential for archaeological deposits to survive which could contribute significantly to the current understanding of the development of the town.

# 1. Setting

## 1.1 Location

The town is located towards the centre of the county within the Trent Valley and on the edge of the former extent of Cannock Chase (cf. 2.4.1 and map 2). Whilst Cannock Chase has historically been an area of low population there is archaeological evidence that people have been utilising the Trent Valley since at least the Neolithic period (cf. 2.1).

The River Trent lies approximately 1km to the north of Rugeley town centre, however, it is the Rising Brook upon which the town has focused (map 2). This brook provided a source of water for domestic and industrial activities from the medieval period onwards.

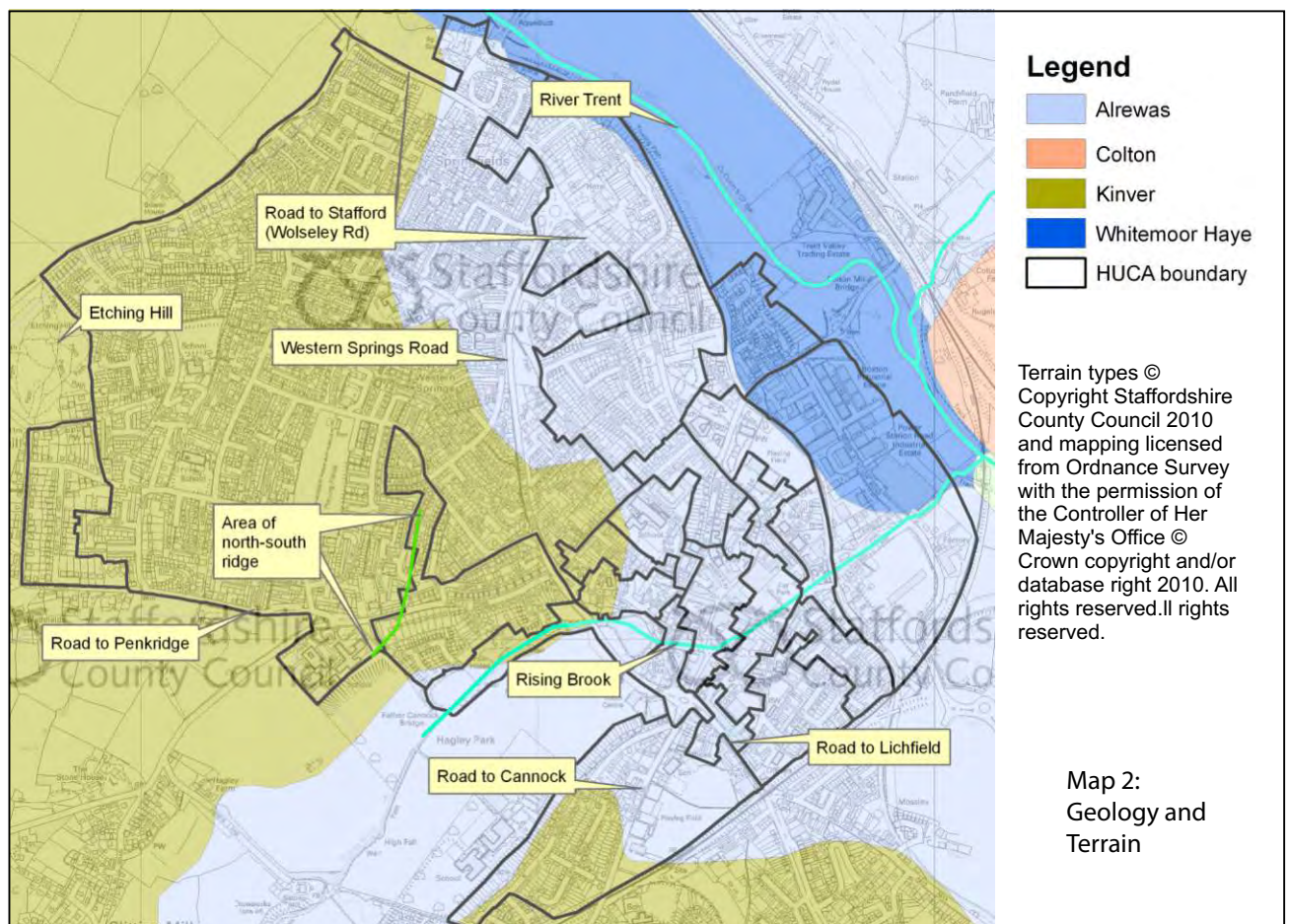


Map 2 shows Rugeley within a network of roads which have connected the town to four of the other medieval towns within the historic county of Staffordshire; Stafford, Lichfield, Cannock and Penkridge. Western Springs Road, shown on map 2, was constructed in 1957/8 as a by-pass to the town centre<sup>8</sup>.

## 1.2 Geology and topography

The highest point lies at Etching Hill (approximately 137m AOD), which lies just to the west of the EUS project area. The landscape slopes gently down from Etching Hill towards the River Trent, although there is one ridge of higher land running approximately north-south at around 100m AOD (see map 2).

Rugeley lies within the River Trent Valley, whose first terrace comprises deep loams and clays (Terrain type: Whitemoor Hays on map 2) and a second terrace of glaciofluvial gravels (Terrain type: Alrewas on map 2) on which the historic core of the town was founded<sup>9</sup>.



The remainder of the EUS area comprises an underlying geology of soft Triassic sandstone, light soils and impoverished sandy loams (Terrain type: Kinver on map 2<sup>10</sup>). Much of this terrain type had probably formed part of Cannock Chase during the medieval period (cf. 2.4.1).

## 1.3 Sources

### 1.3.1 Historical

There are few published secondary sources concerning the history of Rugeley. The most comprehensive of what is available is the Victoria County History published in 1959<sup>11</sup>. Three Conservation Area Appraisals have also been consulted for their understanding of the historic built environment<sup>12</sup>.

### 1.3.2 Cartographic

The earliest map showing the road layout of Rugeley is Yates' map of Staffordshire (1775). It provides an insight into the general extent of settlement along the roads, but provides no greater detail. The earliest map concentrating upon the core of the town was drawn in black pen and dates to 1778 with annotations in red pen dating to 1829. There is a further map also dating to circa 1829; but the first of the detailed mapping is the tithe map of circa 1840.

The series of Ordnance Survey maps both 6" and 25" which were published four times between 1880 and 1938 were also extensively consulted.

### 1.3.3 Archaeological

Few archaeological interventions have been carried out within the EUS project area with the exception of an archaeological evaluation within the medieval historic core (16-18 Lower Brook Street). Two desk based assessments have also been carried out focused upon the sites of Rugeley Grammar School and Hagley Mill.



## 2. Context and Historical Development

### 2.1 Prehistoric

Even though Rugeley falls under Cannock Chase District the project area largely lies within the River Trent Valley to the north (map 2). The greatest numbers of known Prehistoric sites within the county lie with this valley; this is partly due to the intensive investigation of the archaeological resource which has been carried out over several decades. Several sites of Prehistoric origin survive upon Cannock Chase due in part to the lack of development and change which has occurred within this landscape over the millennia.

The earliest evidence for human activity in the area around Rugeley are three sites dating to the Mesolithic period. Archaeological excavations revealed a hearth and associated late Mesolithic flint assemblage, interpreted as the site of a temporary hunting camp, approximately 2km north east of the town centre<sup>13</sup>. A Mesolithic/Neolithic flint scatter was discovered at Court Banks Covert, near Cannock Wood, between 1910 and 1917<sup>14</sup>. The site included at least 28 recognizable implements and has been interpreted as a flint knapping floor. Mesolithic and Neolithic flint implements were recovered during field walking 3.5km to the north east of the town centre<sup>15</sup>. These sites suggest at least sporadic occupation of the landscape in the wider area around Rugeley during the Prehistoric period.

Within the Trent Valley archaeological sites are largely identifiable as cropmarks on aerial photographs and few have been closely dated; these include pit alignments, enclosures and linear features. However, their form can be compared to excavated examples across the country. Consequently a probable Neolithic causewayed enclosure has been identified near Mavesyn Ridware which suggests that the river valley had begun to be settled by this period<sup>16</sup>.

The most numerous of the cropmark features within the river valley are the 23 ring ditches, which are likely to represent the remains of late Neolithic/Bronze Age burial mounds or possibly round houses. On Cannock Chase the archaeological evidence for Prehistoric activity includes a series of probable Bronze Age burnt mounds, four of which were discovered to the west and south west of Rugeley town centre<sup>17</sup>. A further seven burnt mounds have been found further south within Cannock Chase District<sup>18</sup>. This evidence suggests that the landscapes within the river valley and to a lesser extent on Cannock Chase were being exploited during the Bronze Age. The increase in activity during this period fits with the national picture provided by environmental data, which identifies a decrease in tree pollen suggesting an opening up of the landscape for small scale agricultural use.

Burntwood and east towards Lichfield<sup>19</sup>. Whilst it is likely to date to at least the Iron Age, other hill forts in the West Midlands region have been proven to have their origins in the Neolithic period. However, no substantive archaeological work has been carried out at Castle Ring to confirm whether there is evidence of earlier occupation here. A geophysical survey carried out in the 1980s identified the probable location of roundhouses within its interior<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 04055

<sup>14</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 01007

<sup>15</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 05064

<sup>16</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 01562; Causewayed enclosure: A Neolithic monument comprising an irregularly circular enclosing ditch, interrupted by frequent causeways, and often accompanied by an internal bank, also causewayed. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage).

<sup>17</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 00998, PRN 04042; PRN 04052; PRN 04172. Burnt mound: A mound of fire-cracked stones, normally accompanied by a trough or pit which may have been lined with wood, stone or clay. Assumed to be locations where heated stones were used to boil water primarily for cooking purposes. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage).

<sup>18</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRNs 01001, 01002, 04051, 04053, 04181, 04182 & 04183

<sup>19</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 00025; English Heritage: SM 21635

<sup>20</sup> English Heritage: Scheduling information (SM no. 21635); RCHME 1996

The extent of the impact of the hill fort on the surrounding landscape is currently unknown, partly because the adjacent landscape is largely under plantation woodland. It is likely that the hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus serving a hinterland of dispersed settlement, although it is unknown whether Rugeley would have been included within its sphere of influence.

The only Prehistoric evidence from within the project area is a Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead which was discovered in the western suburbs of the town in 1970<sup>21</sup>. Unfortunately this find does not significantly add to an understanding of how the landscape of the later town was being exploited during this period and is likely to be the result of casual loss.

## 2.2 Roman (49AD to 409AD)

There is little evidence for activity during the Roman period in the area around Rugeley, although a brooch dating to the first century AD was discovered to the south west of the town<sup>22</sup>.

The line of the Roman road of Watling Street crosses through the southern portion of Cannock Chase District approximately 11km to the south of Rugeley<sup>23</sup>. Within Staffordshire the road links the two Roman forts/settlements of Letocetum (Wall) in Lichfield District and Pennocrucium (south of Penkridge) in South Staffordshire District. Other unstratified finds have been reported within the District, but these mostly lie near Watling Street.

It is likely that there was a degree of continuity of activity from the Prehistoric to the Roman period, but the nature and extent for either period is currently poorly understood.

## 2.3 Early Medieval (410 to 1065)

### 2.3.1 Placename

Two placenames lie within the EUS project area which end in -ley; Rugeley itself and Hagley, lying to the south west of the town centre, where a separate estate was established in the medieval period. This element is generally taken to refer to woodland landscapes and may mean woodland or clearing in woodland<sup>24</sup>. The interpretation has more recently been interpreted as referring to wood pasture or secondary woodland<sup>25</sup>. Rugeley, which is first recorded in Domesday Book (1086), would therefore mean 'woodland clearing/wood pasture on a ridge'. However, Horowitz argues that there is no convincing ridge at the site of the town although Cannock Chase rises above it<sup>26</sup>. Hagley means the clearing of the haw, presumably an area of hawthorn<sup>27</sup>.

### 2.3.2 Settlement

Rugeley is one of eight settlements recorded in Domesday Book (1086) situated along the approximately 14km stretch of the Trent Valley lying between the confluences of the Sow and the Blithe. Saxon pottery was recovered during an archaeological watching brief approximately 2km north east of Rugeley, within the parish of Colton; the latter was also recorded in Domesday Book<sup>28</sup>.

The Domesday Book entry for Rugeley reads:

(1, 22) The King holds Rugeley. Earl Algar held it. The fifth part of one hide. Land for 5 ploughs. Nine villagers with three ploughs. A mill at 30d; meadow, three acres; woodland three leagues long and two wide. Value before 1066, 20s; now 30s.

This record is the only known evidence for occupation in the pre-Conquest (1066) period. It suggests that a settlement based partly upon an arable economy was present during the Early Medieval period. It is possible that the earliest settlement may have been concentrated in the area around the old church (map 37 in Appendix 1).

## 2.4 Medieval (1066 to 1499)

### 2.4.1 Cannock Forest and Cannock Chase

The settlement of Rugeley was located on the northern edge of the Royal Forest of Cannock. The forest existed by the later 11th century, although its earlier history is obscure<sup>29</sup>.

Forest in the medieval period was not a term which described land use, but was an area of land which was designated by royal decree where Forest Law applied. This law was introduced by King William I following the Norman Conquest (1066) and was a means of restricting rights of hunting game, particularly deer, to the Crown. The Crown also reserved the right to timber and minerals within these areas<sup>30</sup>. During the 12th and 13th century Forests had become an important means of revenue for the Crown mostly through the imposition of fines. A significant proportion of these fines related specifically to assarting, the enclosure of forest for agriculture, which was carried out illegally. The Bishop of Lichfield in particular was a regular offender as it is recorded that he had assarted 1,500 acres of land around Lichfield and within the forest by 1135<sup>31</sup>. His activities were legitimised by King Richard I in the late 11th century in return for a fine, which the King required to help fund a Crusade. The King also granted the manors of Rugeley and Cannock to the Bishop at this time. However, the King retained the rights to take deer from this area of the Forest. From the beginning of the 13th century until 1290 the Bishops claimed the rights to take deer

and entered into conflicts with the Royal forestry officials until the situation was resolved with the creation of Cannock Chase, granted to the Bishop in 1290<sup>32</sup>.

It is not known where in the Forest the Bishop was creating assarts during the 12th century, but it is likely to have mostly occurred to the east within the area now covered by Lichfield District. Documentary records suggest that the Bishop continued to assart within Cannock Chase throughout the medieval period, which may in part account for the extensive areas of arable open fields associated with Cannock and Rugeley.

### 2.4.2 Manor

At the time of Domesday Rugeley belonged to the king, (cf. 2.3.2 above)<sup>33</sup>. In 1189 the manor, along with Cannock, was granted to the Bishop of Lichfield although the Bishopric had gained rights within the settlement by at least 1152<sup>34</sup>. The Bishop who held the manor between 1258 and 1295 was Roger de Meuland or Longspee who is believed to have been related to King Henry III. It is Roger who consolidated Episcopal rights within the manor and was granted the right to hold a market in 1259<sup>35</sup>. The Bishop does not appear to have held a capital messuage in Rugeley<sup>36</sup>. The church of the manor was granted to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield along with a property known in 1276 as the "principal manse of the church" which appears to have stood opposite the old church in the area of the extant Anson Street (map 4)<sup>37</sup>. The Dean and Chapter had leased the estate out by the mid 14th century to Henry de Puys<sup>38</sup>.

Until the creation of Cannock Chase in 1290 the king retained the right to hunt within the two manors of Cannock and Rugeley (cf. 2.4.1). The king's foresters for the Rugeley portion were the de Puys (or Puteo) family from circa 1166 onwards<sup>39</sup>. In return for holding this post the family held 30 acres of land in Rugeley



<sup>40</sup> Greenslade 1959: 155  
<sup>41</sup> Staffordshire Lay Subsidy 1327:Cuttleston Hundred; Staffordshire Lay Subsidy 1332-3: Cuttleston Hundred  
<sup>42</sup> Greenslade 1959: 155-6; Horowitz 2005: 290; Bailiwick: an area of jurisdiction overseen by a bailiff.  
<sup>43</sup> Ibid: 155  
<sup>44</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 01807  
<sup>45</sup> Staffordshire Lay Subsidy 1327:Cuttleston Hundred; Staffordshire Lay Subsidy 1332-3: Cuttleston Hundred  
<sup>46</sup> Greenslade 1959: 157

<sup>49</sup> Staffordshire Lay Subsidy 1327:Cuttleston Hundred; Staffordshire Fines: 1-10 Edward III  
<sup>50</sup> Birrell 1979: 26 ("At Rugeley there was one substantial free tenant, 22 sokemen, mostly holding nooks, 60 tenants of 'new lands', mostly holding a few acres, and 15 cottars").  
<sup>51</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160  
<sup>52</sup> Ibid  
<sup>53</sup> Slater 2007: 35  
<sup>54</sup> D(W) 1734/2/3/38; Staffordshire County Council nd. Plan of Rugeley circa 1570 (SST 241).  
<sup>55</sup> D(W) 1734/2/3/38; Currie 1979a: 92

from the king. By 1236 this estate appears to have expanded to a carucate (nominally 120 acres) and in 1288 a small house and barn had been built<sup>40</sup>. This estate passed into the de Thomenhorn family through the marriage of Agnes de Puys and William de Thomenhorn by 1301. In two 14th century tax lists William de Thomenhorn was recorded making the highest payments<sup>41</sup>. The office of keeper of the bailiwick of Rugeley descended with this estate in the 14th century and its subsequent history suggests that it was based upon the land known as Hagley manor by at least the 16th century, although there are references to Hagley in 12th century documents<sup>42</sup>. By 1392 a new house, comprising a hall, four chambers, a chapel, two barns and a gatehouse with a drawbridge had been constructed<sup>43</sup>. The location of this property is believed to survive as an island surrounded by a moat to the south of the town (map 4)<sup>44</sup>. The island now forms a horseshoe shape, suggesting re-landscaping in the past, probably when it formed part of Hagley Park (cf. 2.6.1.2).

Further estates include that held by the de Rugeley family from the king which existed by at least 1224. Two members of the de Rugeley family, along with William de Thomenhorn, were the heaviest taxed inhabitants of the town in the 14th century<sup>45</sup>. Simon de Rugeley reached prominence in the 14th century as the sheriff of Staffordshire<sup>46</sup>. In 1349 this estate included a messuage with a carucate of land, meadow and pasture, but its precise location within the manor is not known<sup>47</sup>.

The number of estates held within Rugeley during the medieval period suggests that the Bishops were more concerned with receiving money rents than closely controlling the nature of development, although these estates, notably Hagley, may have grown out of assarts on the edge of the medieval town<sup>48</sup>. Documentary evidence suggests that the 'Hagley' estate and the de Rugeley estate held

various messuages' with the town, which they leased out<sup>49</sup>. The Bishop carried out a survey in 1298 which perhaps underlines this situation within the manor. It notes one substantial free tenant, possibly the de Puys family, and 22 other free tenants. There were also 60 small hold tenants who were paying for land that had probably been cleared from Cannock Forest as assarts<sup>50</sup>.

## 2.4.3 Economy

### 2.4.3.1 Markets & fairs

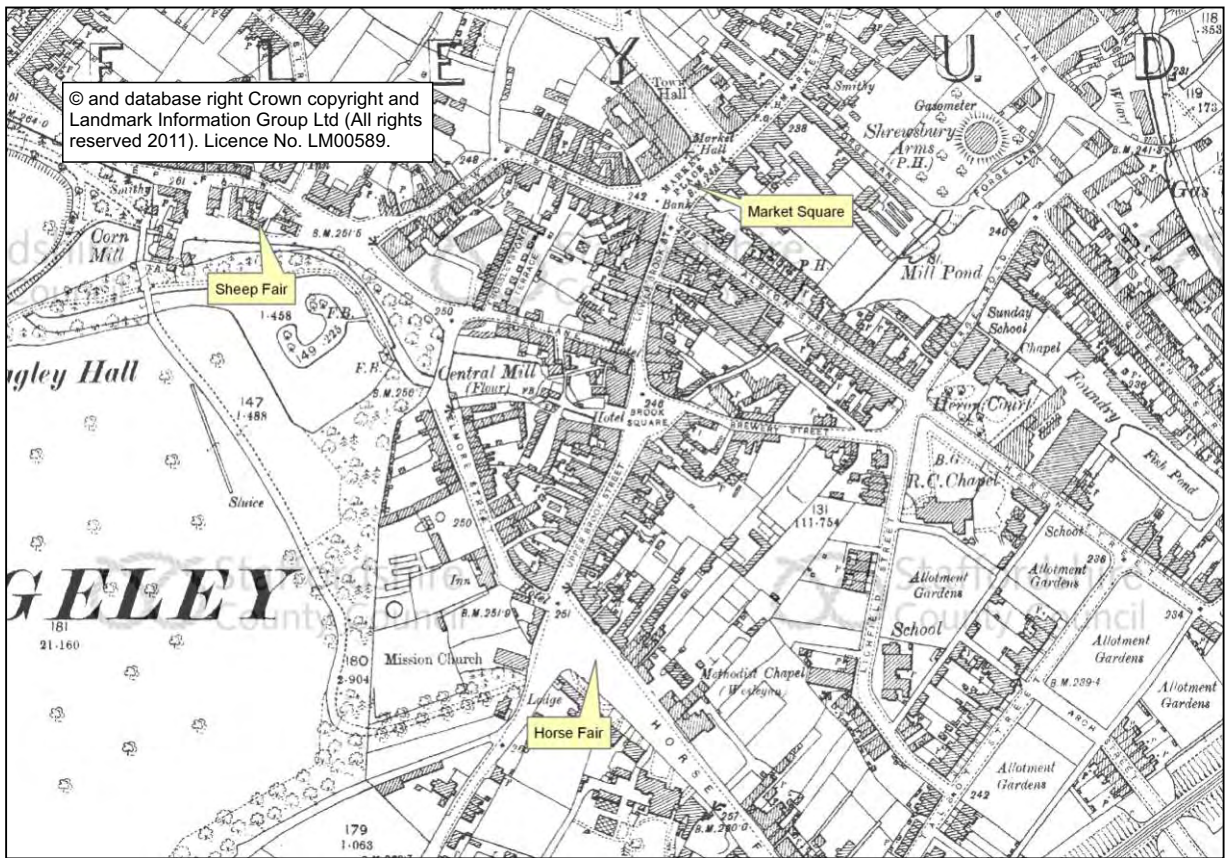
The right to hold a market and fair was granted to the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1259<sup>51</sup>. The market was held on a Thursday and the fair was held annually between 25th and 27th May<sup>52</sup>. There are at least three market places/fair sites legible within the townscape on historic maps; although only two of them are likely to have medieval origins (cf. 2.5.2.1 and plate 1)<sup>53</sup>. The extant Market Square is probably the site of the medieval market, as it was by the late 16th century (HUCA 1)<sup>54</sup>.

It is possible therefore that Horsefair represents the site of the medieval annual fair. Probable burgage plots along the northern side of Horsefair (map 4 and 2.4.6 below) suggest that this area was occupied during the medieval period and may represent a formalisation of trade activities which had become focused in this area because of the presence of the fair here (cf. HUCA 6). However, a survey of the town in 1570 suggests that this street was then known as 'Newbold End' (cf. 2.4.6). Furthermore Rugeley was famous for its horse fair until at least the early 19th century<sup>55</sup>.

The origins of Sheep Fair are currently unclear (cf. 2.4.6).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid: 157; Carucate: approximately 120 acres; Messuage: A dwelling-house with outbuildings and land assigned to its use (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage).

<sup>48</sup> Assart: A piece of forest land converted into arable (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage).



**Plate 1:** Second edition 25" OS map circa 1900

### 2.4.3.2 Agriculture

By the mid 14th century the town had three open fields; Upfield to the north west of town, Churchfield to the north and north west; Hodgley to the south east (map 3). It was stated in 1277 that the Bishop was renting out all of the land in the manor to tenants<sup>56</sup>.

The area of farmland being created in Rugeley manor had increased by 1298 through the creation of assarts. Newly created farmland was held by over half of the Bishop's tenants<sup>57</sup>.

It is likely that the inhabitants also had pasturing rights on Cannock Chase during the medieval period. Sheep were being pastured within the manors of Cannock and Rugeley by at least 1355 and shepherds are recorded in the mid 14th century tax lists<sup>58</sup>.

### 2.4.3.3 Watermills

The earliest reference to a watermill within the manor is in Domesday Book (1086) (cf. 2.3.2)<sup>59</sup>. The precise location of this mill is unknown, but it is likely to have been located along Rising Brook which passes through the town (cf. Map 2). The medieval manorial mill, which belonged to the Bishop, was mentioned several times in the late 13th century and in 1298 it was described as newly built<sup>60</sup>. There are at least two candidates for the site of the bishop's mill, both located on Rising Brook (map 4). One is the watermill which once stood to the south of Bees Lane and west of Brook Square (in HUCA 7)<sup>61</sup>. The alternative site is that of Hagley Mill which lay to the south of Sheepfair (in HUCA 9)<sup>62</sup>. The mill shown on Yates' map of Staffordshire (1775) corresponds with the former site, but one interpretation of the 1570 survey argues that Hagley Mill is the most likely candidate as no

<sup>63</sup> Brown 1999: c12 and c19  
<sup>64</sup> Staffordshire Lay Subsidy 1332-3: Cuttlestone Hundred; Greenslade 1959: 160  
<sup>65</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53620 and PRN 53618; Access to Archives website  
<sup>66</sup> Access2Archives website  
<sup>67</sup> Greenslade 1959: 159  
<sup>68</sup> Greenslade 1959: 159  
<sup>69</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53679; Cannock Chase District 2000; Brown 1999: c3

<sup>70</sup> Dyer 2002: 19 fig. 4; Birrell 1979: 48; Cannock Chase District 2000.  
<sup>71</sup> Greenslade 1959: 158  
<sup>72</sup> Dyer 2000: 11  
<sup>73</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 04300 and PRN 20746; Welch 1998: 28 and 32  
<sup>74</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 20749; Welch 1998: 30-1  
<sup>75</sup> Welch 1998: 36; Dyer 2000: 20  
<sup>76</sup> Jenkins 1967: 224

mill is mentioned to the west of Brook Square<sup>63</sup>. However, neither the omission on the map nor in the survey can be said to constitute proof that a watermill did not stand at either site during the medieval period, particularly given the number of watermills that were recorded within the manor during this period. Two millers are recorded in a tax record (1332) and Thomas de Thomenhorn of Hagley is recorded as holding a mill in 1347<sup>64</sup>.

The location of de Thomenhorn's mill is currently unknown, but the site of Hagley Mill is an obvious contender lying as it does adjacent to the Hagley moated site. However, by the late 18th/early 19th century the Hagley estate held a watermill located to the east of the town in HUCA 2, in an area of Paper Mill Green (cf. 2.5.2.3, 2.5.2.4 and 2.6.3.4 for its later history)<sup>65</sup>. A document held by Staffordshire Record Office, of the late 18th/early 19th century, suggests that the watermill at Paper Mill Green belonged to Hagley manor<sup>66</sup>.

A document of 1469 suggests that there was a third mill; the miller being named as Thomas Coton who is described as a tenant of Nicholas Brokholes<sup>67</sup>.

A fulling mill existed within the manor by 1423 which was also owned by the Bishop<sup>68</sup>. It has been suggested that this mill lay approximately 1.5km to the south west of the town near the hamlet of Slitting Mill, where a tenter meadow has also been recorded<sup>69</sup> (see 2.4.3.4 for further detail).

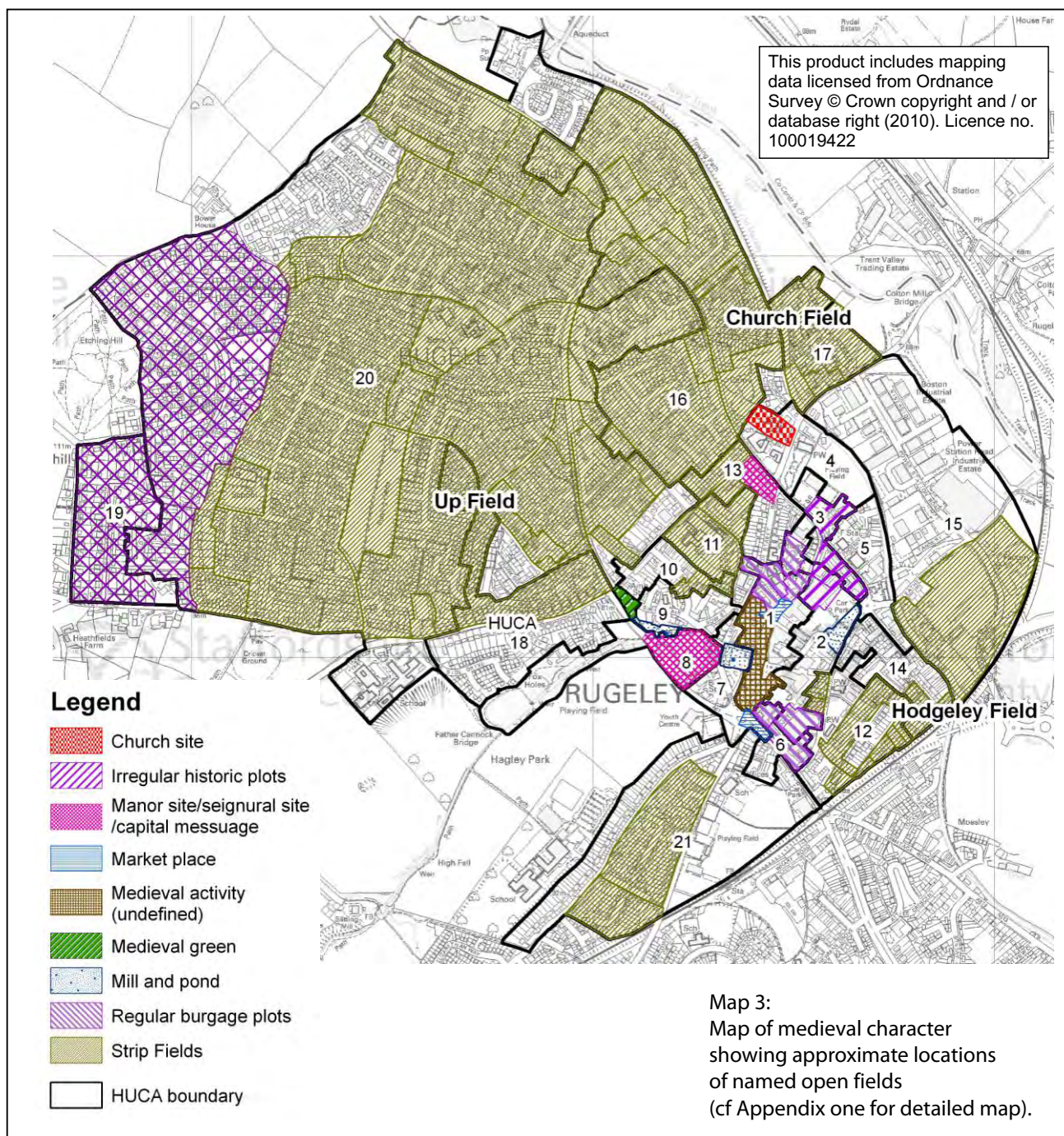
#### **2.4.3.4 Industry**

The evidence for medieval industry in Rugeley comes from documentary evidence; there has been little archaeological work carried out in the town to supplement this information.

Fourteenth and fifteenth century records suggest that Rugeley was a typical market town whose agricultural interests were supplemented by other occupations whose

wares could be sold within the market. These occupations included miller, tailor, fisher and cutler, as well as carpenter, cooper, bowyer, fletcher, a grinder and a barker. The latter suggests tanning was occurring, which had been first recorded in the 12th century within the manor<sup>70</sup>. This industry requires a good source of water and it is likely that it was carried out along the banks of the Rising Brook. The presence of fishers implies a local source of fish probably from the River Trent and the Bishop leased out a fishery on the river in 1339<sup>71</sup>. There were also numerous references to ale and food sellers in the town during the 15th century<sup>72</sup>.

Glass making was occurring on several sites around Rugeley, the earliest having been dated to approximately the 13th to 14th centuries in Colton manor, which lay to the north of the River Trent, and on the Wolseley estate, which lay immediately to the west of Rugeley manor<sup>73</sup>. The earliest documentary reference to a glass maker at Wolseley occurs in 1377 and there are further references to glass works there during the 15th century. An archaeological investigation at Cattail Pool, in Wolseley (approximately 2.6km north west of Rugeley) suggested the presence of a 15th century glassworks on this site<sup>74</sup>. Rugeley probably acted as the local market for the dissemination of finished products. However, while by the 15th century there are references to glass makers in Rugeley there is currently little evidence, either documentary or archaeologically, for the manufacture of glass being carried out in the manor<sup>75</sup>. The importance of Rugeley as an economic centre may be highlighted by the activities of John Glasman of Rugeley who sold glass to York Minster in the early 15th century<sup>76</sup>.



One of the earliest recorded industries within Rugeley manor is iron working. A document of 1298 records the presence of an iron mine and a forge, whilst by 1380 17 iron workers are recorded<sup>77</sup>. The location of the iron mine and the forge is currently unknown, although there are several post medieval metal working sites located within the bounds of the manor, one or several of which could have had earlier origins (cf. 2.5.2.3). It is also possible that iron workers recorded in the documents were carrying out their trade on a domestic scale.

<sup>78</sup> Greenslade 1959: 159

<sup>79</sup> Welch 1998: 30

<sup>80</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09371

<sup>81</sup> Greenslade 1959: 163

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*: 162

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*: 163 and 164

<sup>84</sup> William Salt Archaeological Society 1924: 43 and 340

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>87</sup> Greenslade 1959: 151

<sup>88</sup> Welch 1998: 31; The Landor Society pers. comm. (ref. to "Some account of

Colton and the de Wasteneys" by Rev. F. Parker (1897) p. 76 and p.303)

<sup>89</sup> Dyer 2002: 11; Slater 2007: 31. Burgage plot: A plot of land longer than it is wide, can include any structures on it. Typical of medieval towns. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage).

As mentioned in 2.4.3.3 a fulling mill existed within the manor by the early 15th century, suggesting that cloth making was being carried out<sup>78</sup>. Evidence for cloth making during the medieval period may be supported by the reference in 1483 to a dye house in the town<sup>79</sup>.

#### 2.4.4 Religion

The Grade II Listed remains of the medieval St Augustine's church survive to the west of the church which was built in the early 19th century (map 4)<sup>80</sup>. The earliest surviving fabric within the structure has been dated to the late 12th century<sup>81</sup>. Documentary sources confirm that a church existed within the manor in 1189; in 1192 the Bishop, as lord of the manor, gave the church to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral<sup>82</sup>.

A north chapel was added to the chancel in the later 13th century and the tower was constructed in the 14th century<sup>83</sup>. The expenditure required to make improvements to the church may suggest that the building works coincided with periods of economic prosperity being enjoyed by the inhabitants of the town.

The Dean and Chapter appear to have held an estate across from the church on the southern side in the area of the present Anson Street by at least the late 13th century (HUCA 13)<sup>84</sup>. A vicarage was established by the Dean and Chapter in 1276 the grant included a house and meadow land. At a later date a number of messuages were also granted to the vicarage<sup>85</sup>. The precise location of the medieval vicarage is unknown but the 1276 grant suggests it was located opposite the Dean and Chapters estate near the church<sup>86</sup>. It may therefore have been located in the area of the new St Augustine's church or the later vicarage on the north side of Market Street (in either HUCA 3 or HUCA 4).

#### 2.4.5 Communications

The earliest reference to transport in the documentary sources dates to 1357 when a bridge called 'Elemetebrugge' is recorded<sup>87</sup>. It is possible that this refers to a bridge over the Rising Brook in Elmore Lane. The crossing over the River Trent via Colton Mill Bridge (which lies to the north of St Augustine's Church) may not have been built until sometime after 1570, although a ford may have existed near Colton Mill in the medieval period<sup>88</sup>.

Rugeley lies on the main Stafford to Lichfield road and was therefore connected to two of the most important towns in Staffordshire during the medieval period. This is particularly relevant as Lichfield was the seat of the Bishop, who was the lord of the manor until the mid 16th century. It is likely that the routes to Penkridge, to the west, and Cannock to the south, also existed by the medieval period (cf. Map 2).

#### 2.4.6 Town plan

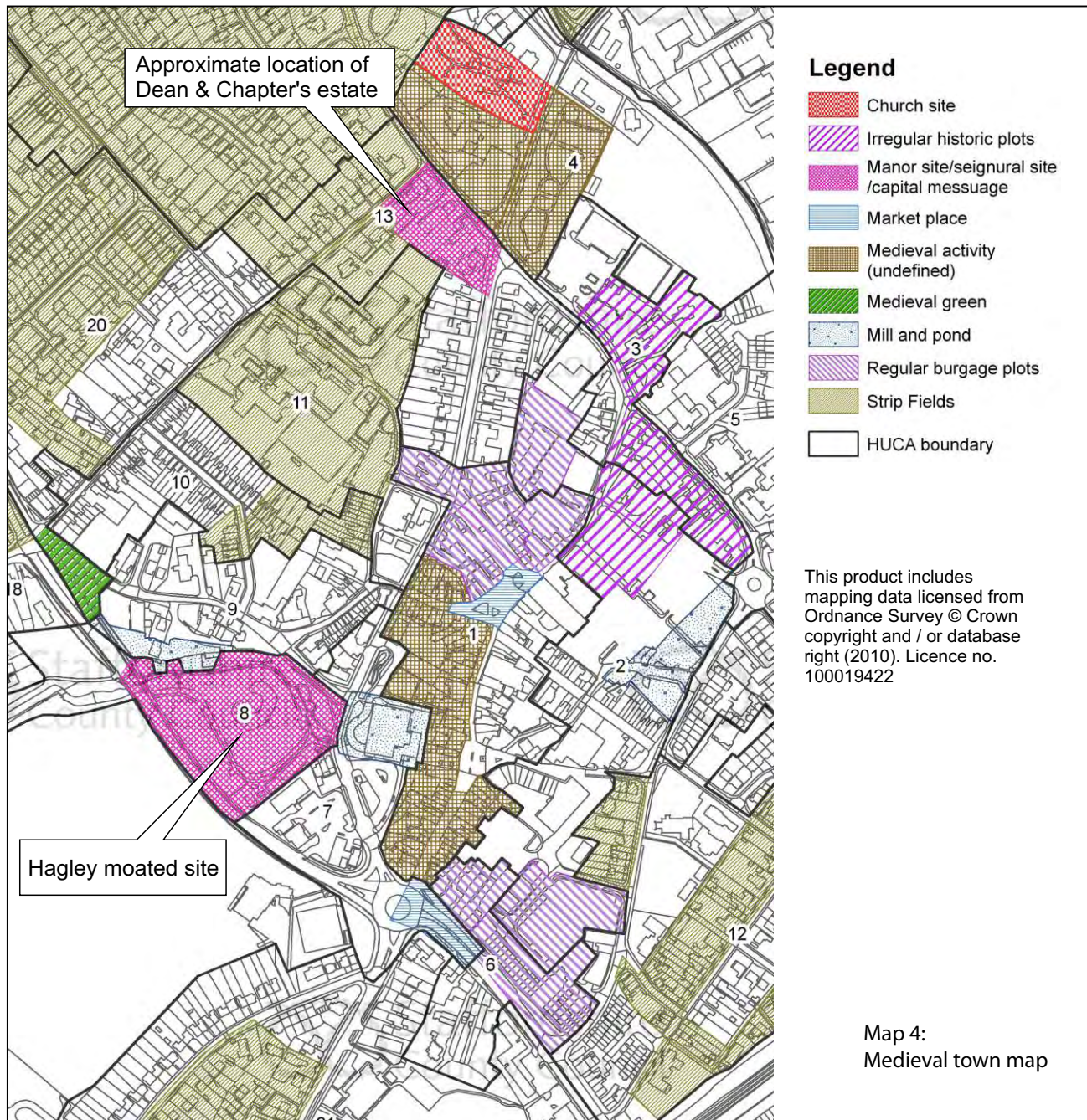
The historic commercial core of Rugeley lies along the north-south main street (comprised of Market Street/Lower Brook Street/Upper Brook Street), whilst its church is isolated from this focus to the north (map 4). It is possible that the earliest settlement was located in the vicinity of the church suggesting the town was established on a new site in the 13th century. However, to date little archaeological work has been carried out across the town and it has not yet been possible to test these theories.

Analyses of the town plan has suggested that Rugeley developed piecemeal i.e. with little of the planning which during the medieval period is typified by burgage plots<sup>89</sup>. However, possible burgage plots have been identified within two areas of the town, to the north of Horsefair and to the west of Market Street, just to the north of Market Square (map 4). Burgage plots were planned by the lords of the

manor as a means of raising revenue (from rent) and it seems likely that the Bishop, as lord of Rugeley, would have created burgages for this purpose within the town as he did in Cannock<sup>90</sup>. At least two fires occurred in Rugeley during the post medieval period (cf. 2.5.1 and 2.6.1.1) and others may have occurred in earlier periods, which may have resulted in the destruction of earlier evidence of burgage plots and subsequent piecemeal re-development.

The burgage plots to the west of Market Street and the location of the market place (Market Square) may have been associated with the granting of the market charter in 1259 (cf. 2.4.3.1) perhaps re-affirming a new site as suggested above. The 16th century name for Horsefair was 'Newbold End', which suggests that this part of the townscape was created at a later date than the main north-south street, possibly in the 14th or 15th century. This development was perhaps the result of an increase in industrial activity within Cannock Chase for which Rugeley was the commercial focal point (cf. 2.4.3.4).

The origins of that part of the main north-south route focused upon Upper and Lower Brook Street during the medieval period is not clear, although development had occurred along here by the late 16th century at least (cf. 2.5.1.1 & map 39 in Appendix 1). An archaeological evaluation was undertaken to the rear of Lower Brook Street and although it did not locate any features of medieval date, a sherd of unstratified medieval pottery was recovered. The investigation concluded that there remained the potential for medieval features to survive below the modern development<sup>91</sup>. The Rising Brook crossed the area of what is now Brook Square throughout the medieval and post medieval periods and the area may have therefore been a focus for industrial activity.



Sheep Fair may have medieval origins, but this would need to be tested by archaeological investigation (cf. 2.5.1.1).

## 2.5 Post Medieval (1500 to 1699)

### 2.5.1 Settlement

#### 2.5.1.1 Rugeley manor

Rugeley manor was granted by King Henry VIII to William Paget (the Marquis of Anglesey) in 1546 following the Dissolution<sup>92</sup>. The hearth tax of 1666 recorded 219 households in Rugeley<sup>93</sup>.

<sup>94</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRNs 09384, 09387, 09388, 09381, 09376 and 09379

<sup>95</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09384; Cannock Chase Council 2000.

<sup>96</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53501

<sup>97</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09387

<sup>98</sup> Staffordshire HER; PRN 09386; Greenslade 1959: 153; Cannock Chase Council 2000

<sup>99</sup> Staffordshire County Council nd.; D(W) 1734/2/3/38

<sup>100</sup> D(W) 1734/2/3/38; Marches Archaeology 2000

<sup>101</sup> D(W) 1734/2/3/38; Staffordshire County Council nd. Croft: An enclosed piece of land attached to a house. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage).

<sup>102</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09376 and 09379

<sup>103</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53631

<sup>104</sup> The Landor Society pers. comm...

<sup>105</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53630

The survey of 1570 presents an opportunity to understand the town plan by this period. The main north-south axis which existed in the medieval period is recorded, as is a courthouse presumably located within the market place (Market Square). Properties are also recorded along the section now comprising Upper and Lower Brook Streets. Within the modern townscape approximately eight buildings with known 16th/17th century origins survive, six of which are Grade II Listed<sup>94</sup>. Five of these are located along the main north/south axis and lie within the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area (HUCA 1). The largest of these properties is 31 and 33 Market Square, which was probably constructed circa 1649 by Erasmus Landor. It has an 18th century appearance, but retains a 17th century core<sup>95</sup>. The Landors were an important local mercantile family throughout the post medieval period. A number of the properties along the main north-south axis are believed to have had 16th century origins although all of them have since been considerably altered. This includes 3 to 5 Market Street which was the home of William Palmer in the 19th century (cf. 2.6.1.1)<sup>96</sup>. The Grade II Listed Red Lion Inn has visible external timber framing and dates to circa 1600<sup>97</sup>. The Shrewsbury Arms Hotel, also on Market Street, has been dated to circa 1810, but elements of it are believed to have early 18th century origins<sup>98</sup>. However, the property was known as The Crown until 1810 and it is therefore possible that it stands on the site of an earlier inn of the same name which was recorded in the 1570 survey<sup>99</sup>.

The north/south axis was divided, at the point of the present Brook Square, by the course of the Rising Brook and the mill leat from the watermill which stood on the south side of Bees Lane (map 39 in Appendix 1)<sup>100</sup>.

The survey of 1570 also identified development in the areas beyond the main north-south axis including along Mill Lane,

Elmore Bridge Lane and Newbold End. A few crofts are also recorded in Bryans Lake Lane (map 39 in Appendix 1)<sup>101</sup>. Some of the earliest known properties to survive in Rugeley lie in these areas. Two Grade II Listed buildings survive on the south side of Horsefair (HUCA 6), which in 1570 was called 'Newbold End'. They have been dated to the early 16th century and so would have been standing at the time of the survey; they retain exposed timber framing (plate 14)<sup>102</sup>. A timber framed building also survived, within HUCA 6, into the mid 20th century on the northern side of Horsefair<sup>103</sup>. To the north of the town (HUCA 3), on the corner of Market Street and Bryans Lane (Bryans Lake Lane in the survey) a further timber framed property survives which has been dated to the late 16th/early 17th century (plate 2). A Victorian postcard shows another row of timber framed cottages standing adjacent, possibly of a similar date, which were demolished in 1897<sup>104</sup>. A group of timber framed cottages also stood within HUCA 7, on the corner of Elmore Lane (Elmore Bridge Lane in the survey) and Sandy Lane until circa 1914<sup>105</sup>. They were not closely dated but could have dated to at least the post medieval period. It is currently not clear to what extent these outlying areas had formed part of the medieval town or whether they represent growth during the post medieval period (cf. 2.5.2.3).





**Plate 2:** 32 and 34 Market Street in HUCA 3

Sheepfair certainly formed part of the settlement by the post medieval period, when it was known as 'woode end lane' and several historic buildings are known to have stood in this street (HUCA 9)<sup>106</sup>. These include the White Lion Inn a large timber framed property of probable late 16th/early 17th century date, which was demolished after the late 1950s<sup>107</sup>. Its presence on this street perhaps confirms the importance of the sheep fair by at least this period, which in turn encouraged development (cf. 2.5.2.4). Further timber framed properties had stood in Sheep Fair, some of which survived in the late 1950s, but their current location is not clear<sup>108</sup>. The extant Vine Inn retains timber framing internally which suggests that it has at least Post Medieval origins<sup>109</sup>.

These historic buildings survived into at least the mid 20th century despite the fire of 1629 which resulted in the loss of 29 houses as well as the tithe barn. The latter was believed to have been located on the western side of the town in the vicinity of Bow Street<sup>110</sup>. This and later fires may be responsible for the piecemeal nature of the development of the town which is apparent on historic mapping

and the reason why burgage plots are not consistently apparent across large parts of the town (cf. 2.4.6).

### 2.5.1.2 Hagley manor

The estate known as Hagley, which lay to the south west of the town, was recorded in documents as a manor in 1513 and 1527<sup>111</sup>. By the early 16th century it was held by the Mutton/Mitton family when it consisted of 6 messuages, pasture, meadow and four mills in Hagley and Rugeley. In 1571 it passed to the Weston family<sup>112</sup>. The site of Hagley Hall lies in HUCA 18 and is said to have been first constructed in the 17th century, being recorded for 15 hearths in the Hearth Tax (1666)<sup>113</sup>.

### 2.5.1.3 Old Hall/Lower Hall

The property which had belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield, appears to have been located south of the church in the area of the extant Anson Street (HUCA 13). It belonged to the Chetwynd family by the early 17th century<sup>114</sup>.

## 2.5.2 Economy

### 2.5.2.1 Market

A courthouse and high cross appear to have stood within the main market place (Market Square) by the late 16th century<sup>115</sup>.

Slater suggests that Brook Square was created as a market place in the post medieval period<sup>116</sup>. However, the 1570 survey suggests that the Rising Brook still flowed through this area at the end of the 16th century and was not culverted until the mid to late 19th century<sup>117</sup>. Consequently, it is unlikely that this area had been established as a market place<sup>118</sup>. The open aspect of this portion of the townscape from an early date is probably purely due to the Rising Brook and its associated flood risk.

<sup>119</sup> Piecemeal Enclosure: enclosure carried out by means of informal, verbal agreements between farmers who wished to consolidate their holdings (the individual strips spread across the open field system).

<sup>120</sup> Greenslade 1959: 159

<sup>121</sup> Ibid: 156

<sup>122</sup> Ibid: 160

<sup>123</sup> Cannock Chase District 2000

<sup>124</sup> Greenslade 1959: 161

<sup>125</sup> Johnson 1967: 109

<sup>126</sup> Cannock Chase 2000; Staffordshire HER: PRNs 53618 and 53620 (see map 9)

<sup>127</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160

<sup>128</sup> The Landor Society pers. comm..

<sup>129</sup> Greenslade 1959: 151

The origins of the name Sheep Fair are obscure and in the late 16th century it does not appear to have been applied to this area. There are no records of an official sheep fair taking place in either the post medieval period nor later, although it seems likely that the buying and selling of sheep and their products would have been an important part of the economy during this period when cloth making appears to have been an important local industry (cf. 2.5.2.4).

### 2.5.2.2 Agriculture

The open field system which dominated the immediate landscape around the town during the medieval period appears to have begun to be enclosed during the post medieval period as piecemeal enclosure<sup>119</sup> (map 38 in Appendix 1). However, a further three small open fields were recorded by the 16th century; Redbrook Field, Ravenhill Field and Newland Field (all of which probably lay beyond the boundary of this study)<sup>120</sup>.

### 2.5.2.3 Mills

As noted in 2.5.1.2 the Hagley estate included four watermills laying both within Hagley itself, but also in Rugeley<sup>121</sup>. However, it is not clear whether all of these watermills would have lain within the town itself, although it is likely that the two mill sites lying to the west of the town (maps 40 and 41 in Appendix 1) were both in use by this period (cf. 2.4.3.3). One of the watermills held by the Hagley estate lay to the east of the town (in HUCA 2) and was operating as a paper mill between 1671 and 1685; this area was still known as Paper Mill Green in the late 18th century<sup>122</sup>.

The 1570 survey suggests that a windmill existed on the eastern side of the town<sup>123</sup>.

### 2.5.2.4 Industry

Iron working continued to play an important

role in Rugeley's economy during the post medieval period. There are several references to forges in documentary sources including 'le forgeplace' in 1533 and a forge which was being leased in 1555 by the lord of neighbouring Brereton manor from the Marquis of Anglesey<sup>124</sup>. It is not clear whether either of these forges lay within the town itself or whether they lay further south along the Rising Brook. However, in the 1560s a 'blome harthe and a burne harthe yren myll' (iron mill) were recorded in Rugeley as being leased from the lord of Hagley<sup>125</sup>. The watermill to the east of the town centre (in HUCA 2 and cf. 2.5.2.3) was owned by the lord of Hagley and the 1570 survey suggests that two forges were located to the east of the town, and one at least may therefore have been located upon the site of a later forge (cf. 2.6.3.4 for later history)<sup>126</sup>. It appears that by the late 17th century this watermill was operating as a paper mill (cf. 2.5.2.3).

Cloth making also appears to have continued to be an important industry within the town during the post medieval period with two fulling mill recorded within the manor in 1578<sup>127</sup>. Presumably the resulting cloth was sold within the market place (Market Square). The presence of the fulling mills is also testimony to the importance of sheep farming; the animals probably being pastured on Cannock Chase and the wool and sheep being sold in Sheep Fair. Hat making had become a prominent industry in the town by the 19th century; however it probably had its origins in the post medieval period. James Hollinghurst was recorded as a hatter in the Hearth Tax (1666)<sup>128</sup>.

In 1598 it was claimed that the inhabitants of Rugeley could not support the poor of the manor and the surrounding settlements were requested to meet the demand<sup>129</sup>. This perhaps suggests a period of economic downturn within the town during the late 16th century.

<sup>130</sup> Currie 1979b: 162

<sup>131</sup> Chantry chapel: A chapel attached to, or inside, a church, endowed for the celebration of Masses for the soul of the founder. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage. © 2010 English Heritage).

<sup>132</sup> Greenslade 1959: 151

<sup>133</sup> Ibid: 152

<sup>134</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09384 (see map 8; plate 9)

<sup>135</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09386; Greenslade 1959: 153

<sup>136</sup> Greenslade 1959: 153; The Landor Society pers. comm...

<sup>137</sup> The Landor Society pers. comm.. (land sold 7 July 1826 the sales catalogue reads "staked or marked out and intended to form a new street to be called Albion Street")

<sup>138</sup> Greenslade 1959: 149

<sup>139</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53610; Marches Archaeology 2000

## 2.5.3 Public Services

### 2.5.3.1 Education

A grammar school appears to have been established in the town by the late 16th century, although until the early 18th century it was held within the church<sup>130</sup>.

### 2.5.4 Religion

The chantry chapel of Our Lady in the church was endowed by 1553 with 8 cottages and lands<sup>131</sup>.

### 2.5.5 Communications

The bridge over the River Trent linking Rugeley to Colton (to the north east of St Augustine's church) had been constructed by the mid 17th century<sup>132</sup>.

## 2.6 18th & 19th century (1700 to 1899)

### 2.6.1 Settlement

#### 2.6.1.1 Town

Another fire occurred within the town in 1709 which apparently began on the western side of the town and carried north-eastwards destroying many properties<sup>133</sup>. As stated in 2.5.1.1 these fires may account for the piecemeal nature of development across much of the town. A number of properties within HUCA 1 appear to date to the 18th century, although some of these are the result of extensive alterations to earlier buildings such as 31 and 33 Market Square (which despite appearances has a 17th century core)<sup>134</sup>. The Shrewsbury Arms has been discussed above (2.5.1.1), but was also extensively remodelled in the early 19th century. The inn was infamous in the mid 19th century<sup>135</sup> for being the location of the murder of the last victim of the notorious Dr. William Palmer (the 'Rugeley poisoner')<sup>136</sup>.



**Plate 3:** Heron's Nest (fronting onto Lichfield Street)

Many other properties within the town (HUCA 1 cf. map 8) appear to date from the early 19th century, although it is possible that some of these buildings may retain earlier architectural elements within their cores as has been noted at 31 and 33 Market Street. The 19th century buildings within the historic core and the two new 19th century streets off Market Square (Albion Street and Anson Street) are probably linked to industrial growth particularly in metal working and coal mining (cf. 2.6.3.4). Albion Street had been laid out as an intended street by 1826<sup>137</sup> and buildings of this period survive along it (see HUCA 2). These buildings include Heron's Nest and 44 Albion Street which were constructed in 1850 and are historically associated with St Etheldreda and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church (cf. 2.6.5.2 and plate 3). Anson Street dates to circa 1878 and links the town centre to the Wolseley Road/Market Street (see HUCA 1 and 13)<sup>138</sup>.

There is archaeological evidence for activity during the 18th century to the rear of a property in Lower Brook Street, which included a brick-lined well. The features are believed to have been associated with the buildings which were still marked on the 1840 map of Rugeley, but which had been rebuilt by the late 19th century<sup>139</sup>.

<sup>140</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09375  
<sup>141</sup> Greenslade 1959: 156; Staffordshire HER: PRN 01881  
<sup>142</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53370  
<sup>143</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRNs 04196 and 01807  
<sup>144</sup> Staffordshire Record Office: D6/5/D/81  
<sup>145</sup> Greenslade 1959:158 (Earls of Lichfield of Shugborough).  
<sup>146</sup> D6/5/D/84; these records form part of the Anson family collection at SRO.

<sup>147</sup> Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Rugeley (155) to the south east and Church Street, Rugeley (124) to the north east  
<sup>148</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09392

An 18th century house which is protected as a Grade II Listed building survives on the corner of Bow Street and Crossley Stone<sup>140</sup>.

### 2.6.1.2 Hagley Hall

The Hagley estate, including the hall and parkland, were remodelled by Assheton Curzon, the lord of the manor in the late 18th century<sup>141</sup>. The hall was demolished in the 1980s, but the core of the 18th century stable range survives having been converted into domestic dwellings in the late 20th century<sup>142</sup> (HUCA 8). Other features survive which had formed part of the landscape park including a Grade II Listed late 18th century underground grotto and two lakes, one of which is believed to have been the site of the hall's medieval predecessor (cf. 2.4.2)<sup>143</sup>.

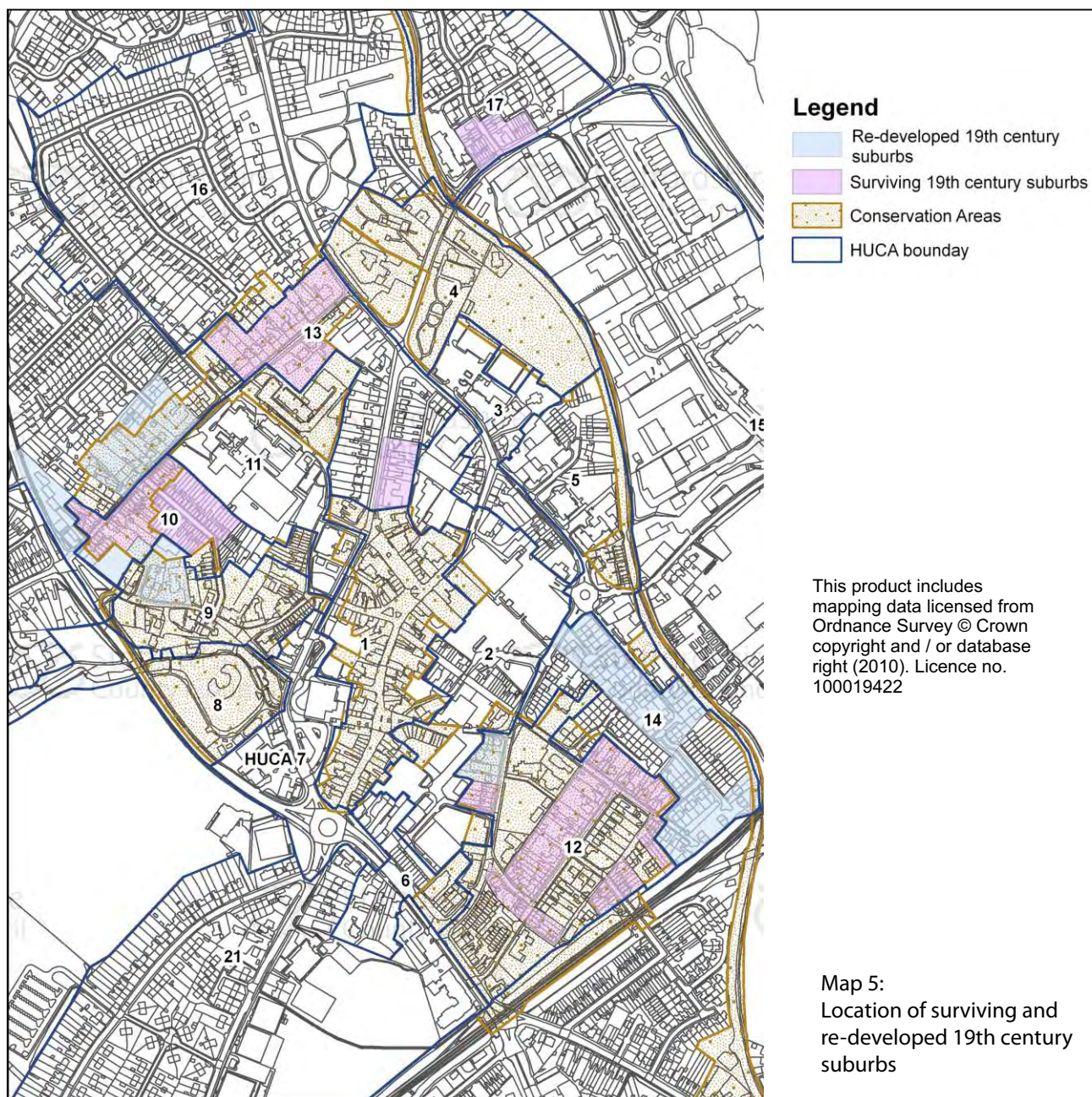
### 2.6.1.3 Old Hall/Lower Hall

In the 18th century the estate, which had passed to the Chetwynd family in the 17th century, was being described tentatively as 'Rugeley manor'. The property was called 'Rugeley Hall' in a document dated 1751. Earlier it had been described as being the 'chief mansion' and included a dovehouse, barns and other buildings as well as orchards and gardens<sup>144</sup>. The Chetwynd's sold the estate to the Anson family in 1768<sup>145</sup>. The estate appears to have been split into three messuages by the end of the 18th century when the land was being held by a 'Mr Bickley' and an inn called the 'Talbot Inn' had also been constructed on the site<sup>146</sup>.

### 2.6.1.4 Suburbs

The earliest suburbs are shown on map 5 as lying to the south east (falling within HUCA 12) and north west (within HUCAs 10 and 13) of the historic core (HUCA 1 on map 5). The importance of these two areas to the development of Rugeley during this period has largely been acknowledged through the

designation of two Conservation Areas<sup>147</sup>. Within the three HUCAs there are five Grade II Listed Buildings including one on the Wolseley Road (HUCA 13) which dates to the late 18th century<sup>148</sup>. The majority of these properties, however, were constructed in the early and mid 19th century.



## 2.6.2 Public Services

### 2.6.2.1 Education

The Rugeley Grammar School, which had been founded in the 17th century (cf. 2.5.3.1) gained its own buildings in the early 18th century to the south of the old St Augustine's Church (in HUCA 4). However, these school buildings were largely rebuilt circa 1820s by the Reverend John Collins<sup>149</sup>.

During the 19th century other schools were established including a boys' school in Lichfield Street (1845) and an infants' school on Talbot Street (1892); the buildings of the latter are the only ones to survive from this period (both in HUCA 12)<sup>150</sup>. The schools were built to serve the new community which had developed during this period (cf. 2.6.1.4). The suburbs to the north west

<sup>151</sup> Ibid: 168-9

<sup>152</sup> Ibid

<sup>153</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09394; Greenslade 1959: 151

<sup>154</sup> Greenslade 1959: 151

<sup>155</sup> The Lander Society pers. comm..

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Greenslade 1959: 151 Ibid; Staffordshire HER: PRNs 05564 and 05549

<sup>158</sup> The Lander Society pers. comm..

<sup>159</sup> Greenslade 1959: 172; The Lander Society pers. comm..

<sup>160</sup> Ibid: 151

<sup>161</sup> Ibid: 160

<sup>162</sup> Ibid: 153; Staffordshire HER: PRN 03155 and PRN 03156

(cf. 2.6.1.4 and map 5 below) were also served by a school which was constructed in 1826, which was enlarged several times during the late 19th century (HUCA 11)<sup>151</sup>.

A Roman Catholic school was built in 1847 at a similar period to the construction of St Etheldreda and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church. The school stood to the north east of the presbytery and by 1892 included a school house for the teacher. The school was re-built in the early 20th century and was located to the south east of the church<sup>152</sup>.

### 2.6.2.2 Welfare

Prior to the mid 19th century the parish workhouse was located at Chaseley, a Grade II Listed property in Etchingill (HUCA 19)<sup>153</sup>. Chaseley is now a domestic property and was constructed circa 1780. However, in 1841 the poor law was amended and the poor of the parish were moved to a Union Workhouse located in Lichfield<sup>154</sup>.

Two hospitals were established to serve the town during the 19th century. The first was a cottage hospital in Church Street which was opened in 1862 and was conveyed to a Trust to establish a charity for poor sick persons (HUCA 11)<sup>155</sup>. The cottage hospital survived in Church Street until 1871 from which point it became a convalescent home for girls and young women<sup>156</sup>. The Rugeley District Hospital which had stood on the Brereton Road (beyond the EUS project area) opened in 1871<sup>157</sup>.

Several almshouses were constructed on the western side of the town. The earliest example was constructed in 1826 on Church Street (HUCA 20), although they were replaced in circa 1938 by the extant almshouses (cf. 2.7.3.2)<sup>158</sup>. The Sneyd family built three rows of almshouses from the 1870s onwards within one plot on the corner of Fortescue Lane and Church Street. These almshouses were demolished and replaced in 1984 by the

extant houses in Bryan's Lane known as 'Sneydlands', which are owned by the Hopkins Sneyd Combined Charities<sup>159</sup>. The only surviving almshouses in the town are the row of six which were built by W. T. Walter in 1890 on Taylor's Lane (see plate 4).



Plate 4: Walter's Almshouses, Taylor's Lane

### 2.6.2.3 Utilities

A gas works was opened in 1849 to the east of Market Street and west of Forge Road (HUCA 2)<sup>160</sup>.

### 2.6.3 Economy

#### 2.6.3.1 Markets & fairs

Rugeley's market was still thriving in the 18th and 19th century and by 1868 there was also a Saturday market<sup>161</sup>. The importance of the market in the 18th century may be confirmed by the construction of a town hall within the market place (Market Square) in 1790 which had an open arcade. The increase in the number of market days in the later 19th century may have led to the decision to demolish the 18th century town hall and replace it with a new town hall and market hall on the north side of Market Square/east of Anson Street in 1878 (HUCA 1)<sup>162</sup>. Only the Market Street façade and the tower survive of

<sup>163</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 03155 and PRN 03156  
<sup>164</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160; The Landor Society pers. comm..  
<sup>165</sup> Ibid  
<sup>166</sup> Brown 1999: c9  
<sup>167</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160; Staffordshire HER: PRN 03151  
<sup>168</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160  
<sup>169</sup> Greenslade 1959: 159  
<sup>170</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53624 and PRN 53622  
<sup>171</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 03725

<sup>174</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160  
<sup>175</sup> The Landor Society pers. comm..  
<sup>176</sup> Greenslade 1959: 162  
<sup>177</sup> Ibid.; White 1851: 471  
<sup>178</sup> Minchinton 1967: 173  
<sup>179</sup> Greenslade 1959: 162  
<sup>180</sup> White 1851: 471  
<sup>181</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 03152; Kelly's 1896: 296  
<sup>182</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 03152

the town hall/market hall complex, the remainder having been demolished in 1977<sup>163</sup>.

There were two fairs being held in Rugeley by the mid 18th century, a horse fair and a cattle fair. By 1834 the town was holding four cattle fairs annually and by 1872 there were four annual fairs<sup>164</sup>. It is likely that the horse fair at least was being held within the street of that name (HUCA 6 and 7) and it is possible that the name dates from this period.

### 2.6.3.2 Mills

Several watermills are mentioned in the documentary records from the 18th and 19th centuries, including one belonging to John Hearn which was said to have been damaged by floods in 1708<sup>165</sup>. This may have been the site of the paper mill which belonged to the Hearn family in the 17th and 18th centuries (cf. also 2.6.3.4 below)<sup>166</sup>. Other watermills recorded in the 18th and 19th centuries include those described in 1762 as "corn mills" belonging to the Hagley estate. Hagley Mill on the south side of Sheepfair (HUCA 9) was recorded in 1842<sup>167</sup>. That portion of the Anson estate which had formerly belonged to the Chetwynds' (cf. 2.6.1.3) was said to include three watermills by 1829, although these probably lay within the wider parish, rather than in the town<sup>168</sup>. However, Leather Mill, which stood in HUCA 15 until the late 19th century, was mentioned in documentary sources in 1803 as belonging to the Anson family<sup>169</sup>. This mill existed by the late 18th century when it was recorded on Yates' map of Staffordshire (1775)<sup>170</sup>.

A steam corn mill was constructed on Mill Lane (HUCA 5) in 1863. The core of this building survives although it is no longer in use as a mill<sup>171</sup>.

### 2.6.3.3 Agriculture

The remaining medieval open fields around Rugeley were enclosed in 1755. In the early 19th century many of the inhabitants of Rugeley were entitled to graze sheep upon Cannock Chase, however large parts of the Chase were enclosed following an Act of Enclosure (1864).

### 2.6.3.4 Industry

Hat making was considered the principle industry of the town by the early 19th century and was still active by 1851<sup>174</sup>. Trade directories suggest that it was located principally in the Bow Street, Elmore Lane and Sheep Fair area<sup>175</sup>. It is likely to have been carried out in domestic workshops for much of this period.

The iron industry continued to be important within the parish with an iron foundry being located in the town in the early 19th century, probably at Forge Road where a watermill was located (HUCA 2 cf. 2.5.2.4)<sup>176</sup>. By at least 1851 the Forge Road watermill was operating as a sheet iron and tin plate mill owned by Cheshire, Manners & Co.<sup>177</sup>. This company had begun tin plate manufacture in 1800, but the works had ceased operation by 1875<sup>178</sup>. In 1834 and 1851 there were also two other forges and rolling mills<sup>179</sup>. In 1851 there was also a large brass foundry and two large iron foundries in the town (the Albion Foundry and the Trent Foundry)<sup>180</sup>.

The other major industry within the town was a tan yard, known as the Phoenix Tannery, located to the north of Bryan's Lane (HUCA 5), which by 1896 was described as "of considerable trade and dimension"<sup>181</sup>. A tablet on one of the tannery buildings read "WN 1791", which is believed to have referred to William Nixon who was involved in the tanning industry in the town by 1784<sup>182</sup>. The tannery belonged to the Cox family by the

<sup>183</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 03152; map of Staffordshire 1829; Kelly's 1896: 300  
<sup>184</sup> Greenslade 1959: 161; White 1851: 477-78  
<sup>185</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>186</sup> Ibid: 476-79  
<sup>187</sup> Ibid: 479  
<sup>188</sup> Clark 1967: 317  
<sup>189</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 01005; Greenslade 1959: 151  
<sup>190</sup> Greenslade 1959: 149  
<sup>191</sup> Ibid.; 1829 map of Rugeley

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>193</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 05231; conservation area no. 083; Greenslade 1959: 151; Wise 1967: 287  
<sup>194</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 02882; Greenslade 1959: 151  
<sup>195</sup> The Landor Society pers comm..  
<sup>196</sup> Greenslade 1959: 151  
<sup>197</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 09369; Greenslade 1959: 163  
<sup>198</sup> Greenslade 1959: 165

early 19th century and had become Stokes & Co. by 1896 (cf. 2.7.2.4 for later history)<sup>183</sup>.

Other industries within the town included a large brewery at Crossley Stone as well as numerous smaller manufacturers typical of any 19th century town such as blacksmiths, cabinet makers, coopers and boot makers<sup>184</sup>. Trade was also important to the town during the 19th century as is evidenced by the presence of auctioneers, china dealers, butchers and grocers<sup>185</sup>. The town also attracted professionals including seven attorneys and seven surgeons<sup>186</sup>. In 1851 the latter included the infamous Dr. William Palmer who was living in Market Street<sup>187</sup>.

Beyond the limits of the town the most significant industry in the 19th century were the collieries which had developed by 1855<sup>188</sup>. All of these industries had direct or indirect impacts upon the town and contributed to a buoyant economy at this period (cf. 2.6.1.1 for 19th century changes to the fabric of the town centre (HUCA 1)).

## 2.6.4 Communications

### 2.6.4.1 Roads

Colton Mill Bridge was replaced in the late 18th/early 19th century (cf. 2.5.4 above) by the surviving Grade II Listed single arched ashlar bridge spanning the River Trent.<sup>189</sup>

By 1818 Rugeley was one of the stopping places on the coach service between London and Liverpool/Manchester and there were several coaching inns in the town by this period<sup>190</sup>. This included the 'Dog and Partridge' which stood on the corner of Lower Brook Street and Bees Lane (in HUCA 1)<sup>191</sup>. Other inns marked on the 1829 map of Rugeley include the Talbot Arms Inn (now the Grade II listed Shrewsbury Arms), on Market Street and the Shoulder of Mutton standing on the north side of Market Square. There was

also the Star Inn and the White Horse Inn both located in Bow Street. By the 1830s the coach service had expanded to include six trips a week to Birmingham<sup>192</sup>.

### 2.6.4.2 Canals

The Trent & Mersey Canal, constructed by James Brindley, lies to the north of the town and forms its own Conservation Area<sup>193</sup>. The canal was authorised in 1766 and opened to traffic in 1777. To the north of HUCA 20 the canal crosses the River Trent via an aqueduct which was originally built by James Brindley in 1777, although it appears to have been largely rebuilt during the mid 19th century<sup>194</sup>.

### 2.6.4.3 Railways

A mainline railway between London and north west England was opened in 1847. Rugeley Station was opened in Colton parish approximately 1km to the north of the town centre (Market Square)<sup>195</sup>. A branch line from Walsall via Cannock was extended to Rugeley, where it met the mainline, in 1859 and a second, more convenient, station was opened just to the south of Horsefair<sup>196</sup>.

## 2.6.5 Religion

### 2.6.5.1 Anglican Churches

A new Grade II listed parish church, also called St Augustine's, was constructed in 1823 to the east of Station Road and opposite the old church (HUCA 4)<sup>197</sup>. The Vicarage stood to the south east of the church and a house is depicted on this site circa 1800. It may originally have dated to the 17th century or earlier, but was rebuilt in circa 1840<sup>198</sup>.





**Plate 5:** St Augustine's Church

### 2.6.5.2 Other denominations

The Grade II Listed Roman Catholic Church was built between 1849 and 1851 in a 14th century style and was consecrated as St. Joseph and St. Etheldreda<sup>199</sup>.

Only two non-conformist chapels survive within the town; in Lichfield Street and Church Street. A Wesleyan Chapel was built in Lichfield Street (HUCA 12) in 1839 and was altered and enlarged in the late 19th century<sup>200</sup>. The Primitive Methodist chapel in Church Street was constructed in 1870 (HUCA 10) and forms part of the street scene alongside terraced houses of a similar date<sup>201</sup>.

Other chapels had been provided in the town; the earliest was a congregational chapel (Providence Chapel) which opened in Elmore Lane in 1813. By 1874 the building was deemed unsuitable for purpose and the community re-located to a new chapel adjacent to Heron Court, Heron Street (HUCA 14)<sup>202</sup>. Neither of these two chapels survived into the late 20th century; the Elmore Street chapel had been converted into two cottages in 1896, but was demolished to make way for the bus station by 2000<sup>203</sup>. The Heron Street Chapel was demolished in the 1970s<sup>204</sup>.

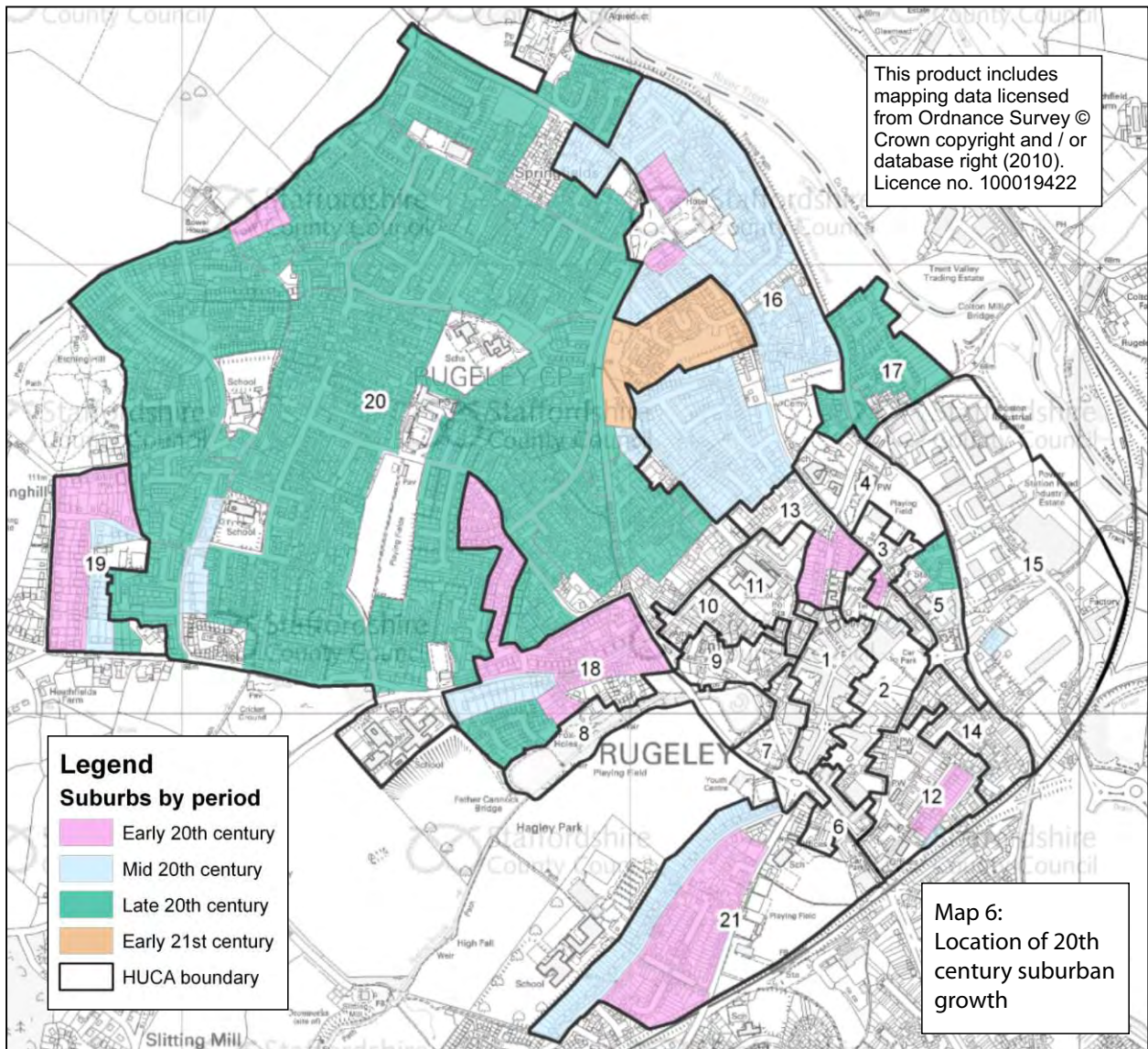
## 2.7 20th & 21st century (1900 to 2009)

### 2.7.1 Settlement

#### 2.7.1.1 Town

The changes within the town centre (focused on HUCAs 1, 2, 6 and 7) have largely been piecemeal in nature and have included the construction of the Police Station and the Post Office on Anson Street which were built between 1907 and 1910 (see plate 6 below and map 47 in Appendix 1)<sup>205</sup>. Penny Bank Court also on Anson Street was constructed in the 1990s upon the site of the late 19th century town hall<sup>206</sup>. Shrewsbury Mall, on the east side of Market Street, was also constructed in the late 20th century upon the site of earlier properties. Other properties have been constructed along the main north/south axis on a piecemeal basis.

Greater changes have occurred in HUCAs 2, 6 and 7 including the re-development of the two watermills and associated mill ponds; that to the east of the town was demolished to make way for the Market Hall (HUCA 7), whilst the former forge site was replaced by a car park (HUCA 2). The junction of Upper Brook Street, Horsefair, Sandy Lane and Elmore Lane was entirely altered in the mid 20th century with the construction of the road roundabout (HUCA 7). This coincided with the construction of Western Springs Road in the late 1950s (cf. 2.7.5.2 and map 46 in Appendix 1)<sup>207</sup>.



### 2.7.1.2 Suburbs

Map 6 shows that the 20th century suburban expansion was concentrated to the west of the town centre (HUCA 1). The early 20th century suburbs are mostly located to the south (HUCA 21) and west (HUCA 18). There are also early 20th century suburbs in the outlying areas including to the south of Etchinghill (HUCA19), which were probably attracted to the area during this period as the heathland here had recently been enclosed. Mid 20th century expansion concentrated to the north west (HUCA 16) along the northern side of Wolseley Road. The greatest expansion, however, occurred in the late 20th century with the infilling between the earlier 20th century suburbs (concentrating in HUCA 20).

### 2.7.1.2 Open land and parks

The growth of the suburbs also led to the creation of sports grounds/playing fields such as that located to the south of Green Lane (HUCA 20) and to the east of Sandy Lane (HUCA 21 & map 46 in Appendix 1).

<sup>208</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 01807  
<sup>209</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160  
<sup>210</sup> Ferris 2005: 6  
<sup>211</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 03152  
<sup>212</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>213</sup> The Lander Society pers. comm..

<sup>214</sup> Greenslade 1959: 160  
<sup>215</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 53525; Greenslade 1959: 151  
<sup>216</sup> Staffordshire HER: PRN 03278  
<sup>217</sup> The Lander Society pers. comm..  
<sup>218</sup> Greenslade 1959: 151; The Lander Society pers. comm..  
<sup>219</sup> Wiki Rugeley Power Station  
<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

Much of Hagley Hall's landscape park lying within the project area was lost to housing development during the 20th century, but a small part of it survives as HUCA 8 through which the Rising Brook runs. The brook feeds the lake in Elmore Park, where the supposed medieval moat survives<sup>208</sup>.

## 2.7.2 Economy

### 2.7.2.1 Markets & Fairs

The old market hall in Market Square (HUCA 1) was demolished for housing and shopping units in the late 20th century, but this was replaced by a larger indoor market to the south of Bees Lane, in HUCA 7. A street market still survives into the 21st century in the Market Square.

A cattle market was still being held in the 1950s<sup>209</sup>.

### 2.7.2.3 Mills

Two of the watermills in Rugeley, that to the south of Bees Lane (HUCA 7) and the old forge (HUCA 2) were demolished and the mill ponds backfilled during the late 20th century to facilitate development or for the creation of car parking. Hagley Mill at Sheepfair (HUCA 9) survived, although ruined, into the 1980s when it appears to have been largely rebuilt as a domestic dwelling. Some historic fabric survives<sup>210</sup>.

### 2.7.2.4 Industry

The Phoenix Tannery, to the north of Bryans Lane (HUCA 5) was still being operated by Stokes & Co. in 1924<sup>211</sup>. By the 1960s tanning had ceased and the works had been converted to a laundry<sup>212</sup>. The site was cleared of buildings in the late 20th century and replaced by domestic dwellings and a magistrates' court, although this no longer functions as a court<sup>213</sup>. The tannery is remembered in the road name 'Phoenix Close' to the west of the former magistrate's court building.

Other industries in the town by 1955 included engineering, the making of clothes, shoes and electrical apparatus<sup>214</sup>. Industry, during the late 20th century, has become focused to the north east of the town along Power Station Road (HUCA 15).



**Plate 6:** Police Station, Anson Street

## 2.7.3 Public Services

### 2.7.3.1 Public Services

The police station opened in Anson Street in 1907 (see plate 6)<sup>215</sup>.

On the north western edge of the project area stands the Grade II\* former pumping station. It was built between 1902 and 1907 by the South Staffordshire Water Company. It was powered by steam until 1968 when it was converted to an electric pumping mechanism<sup>217</sup>.

A fire station was constructed in Taylors Lane in 1936, but was closed in 1973 when a new fire station was built in Bryan's Lane<sup>218</sup>.

Rugeley B power station, located just over 1km to the east of the town, was opened in 1972<sup>219</sup>. Despite being located outside of the EUS project area the power station dominates the skyline from several parts of the town (see plate 7). Rugeley A power station had been opened in 1963, but was de-commissioned and demolished in the mid 1990s<sup>220</sup>.



**Plate 7:** View of power station from Elmore Park (HUCA 8) across the town centre (the steeple of St Joseph's & St Etheldreda also dominates the skyline (HUCA 12).

### 2.7.3.2 Welfare

The almshouses funded by Sarah Hopkins in Church Street were demolished circa 1938. These were replaced by new almshouses consisting of four single-storey dwellings further to the south west along Church Street (HUCA 20). One of the properties bears the original tablet from the 19th century almshouses<sup>221</sup>.

### 2.7.3.3 Education

Eight schools have been established within the EUS project area during the 20th century in order to serve the rapidly growing community.

## 2.7.4 Religion

### 2.7.4.1 Anglican Churches

A chancel was added to the new St Augustine's Church in 1904<sup>222</sup>.

### 2.7.4.2 Other denominations

The 20th century has seen either the demolition or conversion of the 19th century non conformist chapels. Two chapels survive; the former Wesleyan Methodist chapel on Lichfield Street and the former Primitive Methodist chapel on Church Street (cf. 2.6.5.2)<sup>223</sup>. Providence Chapel, which had been converted to houses by the end of the 19th century, was demolished in the late 1970s and the Congregational Chapel on Heron Street was demolished in the late 20th century (cf. 2.6.5.2).

St Paul's Church, Lichfield Street, was built in the 1970s and is a combined chapel for the Methodist and United Reform churches<sup>224</sup>.

A convent was established at Heron's Nest, Albion Street (HUCA 2) in 1901 as St Anthony's Convent. By 1904 it had moved across the road to Heron Court, Heron Street (HUCA 12) where it remained into the late 20th century<sup>225</sup>.

## 2.7.5 Communications

### 2.7.5.1 Roads

The western by-pass, Western Springs Road, was opened in 1957 by the President of Western Spring, Illinois<sup>226</sup>. The road connects the main road from Stafford (the Wolseley Road) directly to the road from Lichfield (via Horsefair). This new road network resulted in the construction of the road roundabout at Horsefair/Upper Brook Street/Elmore Road and Sandy Lane; as well as the creation of the junction with Sheepfair/Hagley Road (HUCA 20 and map 46 in Appendix 1). This route avoided taking traffic through the narrow streets of the town centre and could therefore be said to have saved the historic core from large-scale changes that would have become necessary to facilitate ever increasing traffic. A road roundabout was also constructed at the junction of Bryans Lane, Forge Road and Mill Lane (HUCA 5) in the late 20th century to ease

traffic flow.

In 1976 the main north-south route through the town (Market Street/Market Square/Lower Brook Street/Brook Square and Upper Brook Street – HUCA 1) was pedestrianised, thus entirely eliminating traffic from the historic core<sup>227</sup>.

The Rugeley bypass was opened in September 2007 and runs to the east of the town. Although it lies beyond the EUS project area it aims to decrease the volume of traffic through the town<sup>228</sup>.



# Part Two: Characterisation and Assessment

## Section Summary

- ◆ The historic core of Rugeley which dates to the medieval period is comprised of **HUCA 1**, **HUCA 2**, **HUCA 6** and **HUCA 7**. **HUCA 1** and **HUCA 6** retain the greatest heritage interests with the former containing the majority of the Listed buildings within the project area. **HUCA 6** includes three Listed buildings and structures and there is evidence that it had formed part of the medieval town and may represent the site of the medieval fair. These two HUCAs also largely form the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area and reference to the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal is recommended when considering change within these two HUCAs. Part of the southern side of the medieval or post medieval Horsefair lies within **HUCA 20**, although it is represented by 20th century re-development.
- ◆ All of these HUCAs retain the potential for surviving below ground archaeological deposits relating to activity from the medieval period onwards; where ground works may disturb these site archaeological evaluation and mitigation may be required to fulfil para. 128 of NPPF.
- ◆ **HUCA 2** and **HUCA 7** have seen greater change although there is great potential for heritage led regeneration within the former to strengthen the historic identify of the wider historic core and enhance the setting of two Conservation Areas.
- ◆ Beyond the medieval core there are other areas of considerable historic interest. The most significant of these is **HUCA 4** where the remains of the Grade II Listed medieval church survive and this may also be the location of the earliest settlement which potentially had at least early medieval origins. The interests of the lord of the manor (the Bishop) also concentrated within this HUCA during the medieval period with the site of the vicarage likely to have been located here. The current church dates to the early 19th century and is also Grade II Listed. The HUCA lies within the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area. Where ground works may disturb the potential archaeological sites evaluation and mitigation may be required to fulfil para. 128 of NPPF.
- ◆ The other historic areas include **HUCA 3**, **HUCA 5**, **HUCA 9**, **HUCA 11** and **HUCA 14** which retain varying degrees of heritage interest. The most significant of these are **HUCA 3** and **HUCA 9**; the latter largely forming the Sheepfair Conservation Area. The origins of both may lie in the post medieval period although archaeological work could potentially clarify this. Certainly buildings of at least 16th and 17th century date survive or are known to have existed within both HUCAs. Other later historic buildings also survive within both HUCAs contributing to the historic character of each area.
- ◆ **HUCA 5** appears to have originated as an area of industrial activity and the surviving late 19th century steam mill is testimony to this. However, settlement activity within the HUCA is known to date from at least the late 16th century. **HUCA 11** may include the limits of the medieval town along Bow Street although the majority had formed part of a field system. The surviving historic buildings date to the early 20th century. **HUCA 14** represents the entire re-development of an area of mid 19th century housing in the late 20th century. The only legible historic elements to survive is the mid 19th century street pattern.
- ◆ The earliest known suburban expansion of Rugeley dates to the 19th century and survives within **HUCA 10**, **HUCA 12** and

**HUCA 13.** All three of these HUCAs retain considerable heritage interest relating to the built environment and the surviving street pattern. **HUCA 12** relates to late 19th and early 20th century large detached and semi-detached houses and is largely contiguous with the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area. **HUCA 10** largely represents properties of a similar date but is mostly comprised of terraced houses. Only part of this HUCA currently lies within the Church Street and Sheepfair Conservation Areas, although there may be the potential for extending one or the other to include the terraces along Lion Street. The earliest property lying within **HUCA 13** is 9 Wolseley Road, a Grade II Listed 18th century house; the majority of the suburban activity dates to the early and late 19th century and the early 20th century and comprises mostly detached and semi-detached houses. The potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive also exist within this HUCA relating to a medieval and post medieval manor site originally associated with the Dean & Chapter at Lichfield Cathedral.

- ◆ The most significant area of open space within the project area is **HUCA 8** which comprises Hagley and Elmore Parks. Both of these parks retain significant heritage interest; the former represents the remains of a landscape park associated with the Hagley Hall estate where a Grade II Listed grotto survives. A moated site survives within Elmore Park which may have been the medieval focus of this estate.
- ◆ The remaining HUCAs (**HUCA 16, HUCA 17, HUCA 18, HUCA 19, HUCA 20** and **HUCA 21**) largely relate to 20th century suburban expansion and redevelopment. **HUCA 18** includes the site of the post medieval Hagley Hall; late 20th century housing now stands on the site of the hall

and part of the landscape park within this HUCA. The remainder of the HUCA comprises early to late 20th century housing. The earliest housing survives within **HUCA 16, HUCA 17** and **HUCA 19** and dates to the 19th century. Within **HUCA 17** these are represented by a small area of surviving terraces; although the majority of the suburban development dates to the late 20th century. The majority of the development within **HUCA 16** dates to the early to mid 20th century although a number of 19th century properties survive to the north of Wolseley Road. The houses within **HUCA 19** mostly date to the 20th century and comprise detached properties laid out along a distinctive street pattern. These houses were originally constructed in a rural area although they have since been surrounded by later development. Later infilling has also occurred between the early 20th century properties of a similar scale and nature. The earliest property in this HUCA is the 18th century Grade II Listed Chaseley House which was the parish workhouse by at least 1834.

- ◆ **HUCA 21** largely comprises mid 20th century semi-detached properties located to the south of Horsefair, although part of this road is also incorporated within this HUCA (see point above). **HUCA 20**, however represents the greatest suburban growth which mostly occurred during the late 20th century, although some early and mid 20th century properties were constructed along pre-existing roads. One property of at least early 19th century date survives among the 20th century suburbs and the HUCA also incorporates the Grade II\* Listed pumping station.
- ◆ **HUCA 15** relates to 20th century industrial development along Power Station Road and there is little surviving heritage interest within the character area.

# 3. Statement of Historic Urban Character

## 3.1 Definition of Historic Character Types (HCTs)

The HCTs used within the Extensive Urban Survey have been chosen to reflect the townscape character and consequently have differed from those chosen for the broader Historic Landscape Character (HLC). A list of the HCTs used within the EUS forms Appendix 2.

The HCTs were based upon the current character and upon an understanding of the development of the town as identified within the background summarised in Part One.

The HCTs are dated by period of origin and the over arching periods are broken down as follows:

Early Medieval	410 AD to 1065 AD
Medieval	1066 to 1485
Post Medieval	1486 to 1799
Early 19th century	1800 to 1834
Mid 19th century	1835 to 1864
Late 19th century	1865 to 1899
Early 20th century	1900 to 1934
Mid 20th century	1935 to 1964
Late 20th century	1965 to 1999
Early 21st century	2000 to 2009

**Table 1:** Periods

## 3.2 Statement of Historic Urban Character (HUC)

The Historic Urban Character Areas have been defined using the HCT's to identify areas of similar origin, development and character. Twenty-one HUCAs have identified for Rugeley.

Each of the statements of HUC is not static and may need to be enhanced or adapted as new information which alters our understanding and perception of each area becomes available<sup>229</sup>.

This is followed by a table covering the Heritage values (which will have been outlined in the 'Statement of significance' paragraph) and a series of recommendations specific to each HUCA.

### 3.2.1 Heritage values

These values are based upon the guidelines produced by English Heritage in 'Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (2008) and identifies four areas for discussion. It should be noted that within each HUCA it is specifically the historic environment which is under consideration and that this judgement is based upon an interpretation of the available evidence. Other individuals or organisations may choose to ascribe alternate values to the historic environment of an area; key to this process of understanding is the degree of transparency by which these judgements are reached. The scope of this project precludes any analysis of non-heritage values which are equally valid in terms of valuing the character of historic towns.

<sup>229</sup> In line with English Heritage 2008: paragraph 38



<p><b>Evidential value*</b></p>	<p>The extent to which each HUCA can contribute to an understanding of past activities and how that can contribute to the town's wider history. This can be either legible or intangible within the townscape and as such covers the spectrum of heritage assets from historic buildings or structures to the potential for below ground archaeological deposits*. The extent to which the impacts of the removal or replacement of the heritage assets within each character area will be considered in terms of the effects on an ability for future generations to understand and interpret the evidence.</p>
<p><b>Historical value</b></p>	<p>The extent to which the heritage assets are legible within the townscape and how they interact – this can include townscapes/street patterns and individual buildings. Historical associations with events or persons can also add value to the ability of the public and community to engage with the heritage. The extent to which the legibility of the heritage assets has been concealed or altered will also be considered. The opportunities for the use and appropriate management of the heritage assets and their contribution to heritage-led regeneration will also be considered.</p>
<p><b>Aesthetic value</b></p>	<p>Addresses the ability to identify how a place has evolved whether by design or the 'fortuitous outcome of evolution and use'. It assesses the integrity and aesthetics of the place through the historic components of the townscape and their ability to enhance sensory stimulation. The aesthetic value also addresses whether the character areas may be amenable to restoration or enhancement to form part of a heritage-led regeneration of the town.</p>
<p><b>Communal value</b></p>	<p>Communal values can be commemorative/symbolic, social or spiritual. These values are not easily quantifiable within the scope of this project being subjective to groups and individuals. Consequently in the context of this project the value merely seeks to address the potential for the heritage assets to be used to engage the community/public with the heritage, not only of each HUCA, but also of the wider area. The potential for each zone to provide material for future interpretation is also considered.</p>

**Table 2:** Heritage values

### 3.2.2 Assessment of value

The aim of applying values of high, medium, low is to **indicate** the likely sensitivities of the historic environment within each zone. The assigned values reflect the current character of the areas and these will alter in response to change. This could include through the results of research contributing to an enhanced understanding of the historic environment; the conservation and enhancement of the environment through positive development and re-development as a result of heritage-led regeneration.

The definition of heritage assets incorporates buildings, monuments (above and below ground archaeology), place, areas, landscapes and townscapes<sup>230</sup>.

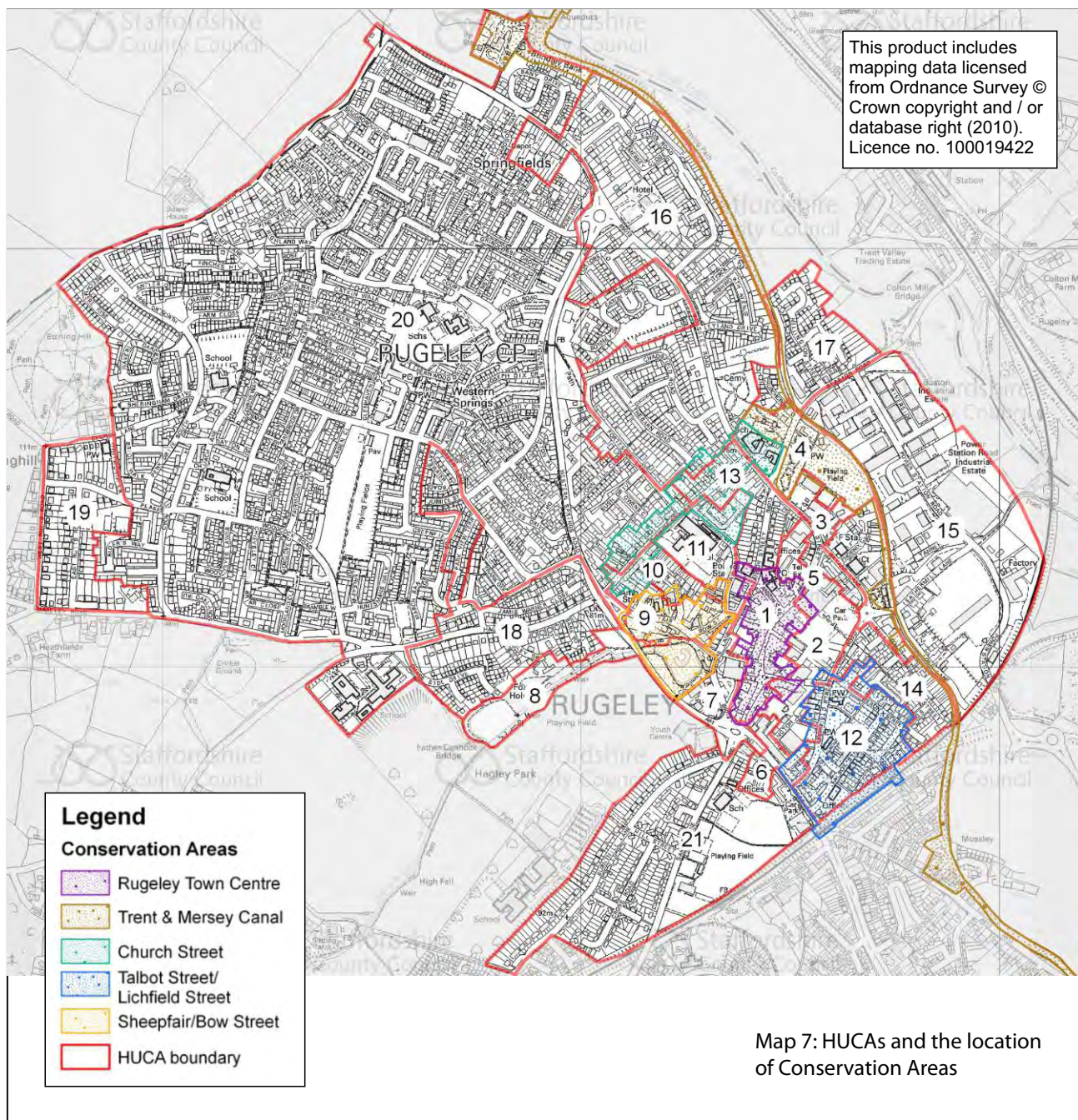
<p><b>Evidential value</b> (see * below for regarding archaeological potential)</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>	<p>There is a high potential for the heritage assets with the HUCA to contribute to an understanding of the history of the town. Archaeological sites are likely to survive (both below ground and above ground fossilised within the townscape) and for new research relating to the nature and origins of the built heritage to enhance the understanding of the development of the town. New insights into the history of the town can contribute to an understanding of the development of towns from the medieval period onwards both within Staffordshire and more widely.</p>
	<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p>There is the potential for heritage assets to contribute to an understanding of the history of the town, but there may be fewer opportunities for new insights to be deduced due to the nature of the heritage assets in question or subsequent changes to the historic character of the HUCA. The potential for archaeological deposits to contribute to an understanding of the development of the town may currently be unclear due to the current level of understanding of the origins of the HUCA. The potential may also be impacted by levels of development.</p>
	<p><b>Low</b></p>	<p>There are no or very few known heritage assets. The understanding for the potential for above and below ground archaeological deposits to survive may be affected by the current lack of research within the wider area. Mitigation may still be required dependent upon an assessment of both the nature of any prospective new development and the potential of the individual sites being developed.</p>

<b>Historical value</b>	<b>High</b>	The legible heritage assets either dominate or significantly contribute to the historic character of each HUCA. There are strong associations between the heritage assets (both tangible and intangible) within the HUCA that are potentially demonstrable and/or the heritage assets make an important contribution to the history of the wider area. There are often designated sites within or lying adjacent to the HUCA and in some cases these may comprise or include portions of Conservation Areas. The high value is not precluded by some degree of 20th/21st century alterations to the historic character.
	<b>Medium</b>	Legible heritage assets are present within the HUCA, but are not necessarily predominant or they have undergone some form of alteration. Their presence, however, may contribute to an understanding of the development of the character area and/or there are potential associations between assets. Further research may clarify these associations and elucidate the contribution of these assets to the history of the wider area. Even in their present form they do enable the public and community to visualise the development of the area over time.
	<b>Low</b>	There are no or very few known legible heritage assets; where they exist their associations are not clearly understood.
<b>Aesthetic value</b>	<b>High</b>	The completeness or integrity of the extant heritage townscape and its contribution to the aesthetics of the zone is significant. There are opportunities to enhance or restore the historic fabric of the HUCA. The HUCAs will often form part of or form the setting to Conservation Areas.
	<b>Medium</b>	The components of the townscape are legible, but there may have been considerable impact by 20th or 21st century re-development of elements of the historic character. It is not possible within this project to discuss whether the modern alterations have positive, neutral or negative impacts upon overall aesthetics.

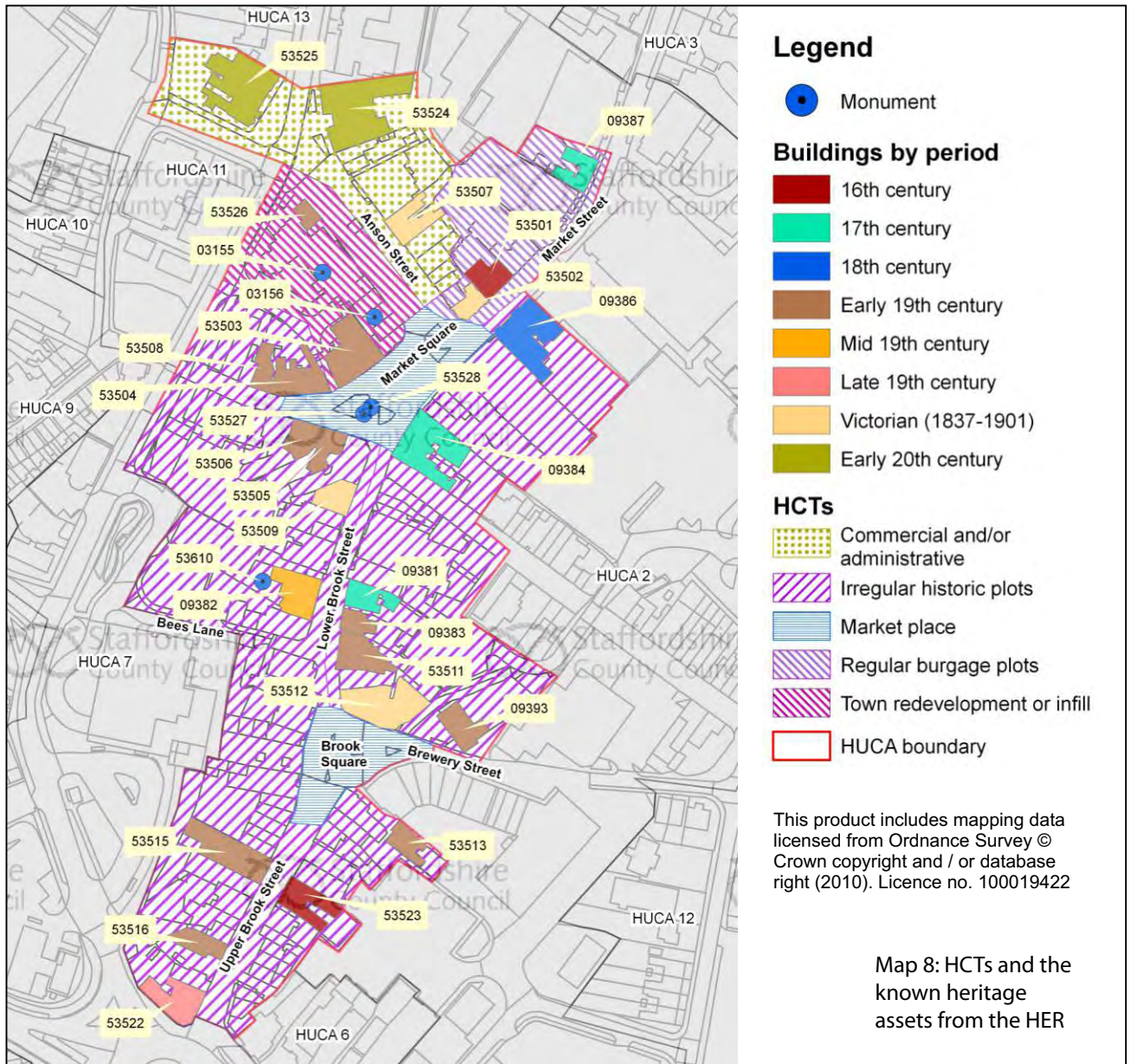
	<b>Low</b>	The aesthetics of the historic character have been significantly impacted by 20th or 21st century development. It is not within the scope of this project to discuss whether their contributions are positive, neutral or negative within the wider townscape.
<b>Communal value</b>	<b>High</b>	Contains numerous heritage assets which could be used to engage the community through interpretation. The heritage assets clearly form part of a wider history of an area which can be drawn into a narrative. There may already have been a degree of interpretation and/or the community/public already has access to at least some of the heritage assets within the zone.
	<b>Medium</b>	The ability for the heritage assets to contribute to the history of the town may be limited by the current understanding, their legibility within the townscape or through limited access.
	<b>Low</b>	There are few known heritage assets which make it difficult to elucidate their history or apply it to a wider interpretation. There is no access or the legibility of the heritage assets is negligible.

\*The potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive will not be comprehensively addressed within the EUS project. Due to the nature of the project and its time constraints it will not be possible to model archaeological deposits based upon probability and impacts of current development therefore this project must be seen as a guide to potential but that ultimately the decision as to whether archaeological mitigation is an appropriate measure will be decided as part of the planning process.

# 4. Assessment of Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCA)



## 4.1 HUCA 1: Market Street to Upper Brook Street



### 4.1.1 Statement of heritage significance

The character area represents both the historic core and the modern commercial heart of the town. As suggested in 2.4.6 the historic core may have its origins in the 13th century, when the Bishop of Lichfield was lord of the manor, and therefore represents a new settlement site away from an original focus around the isolated church to the north (although this has not been tested by archaeological investigation). The north-south axis is the main focus and this street pattern is largely unchanged from the description provided in the 1570 survey, with the Market Square at its heart. If this was a new settlement site then the granting of the market charter in the mid 13th century may have stimulated or be the legitimisation of the creation of the market place (Market Square) within the north-south axis (cf. 2.4.3.1). The streets leading out of this axis: Brewery

Street, Bees Lane (the Mill Street of the 1570 survey and Bow Street are all mentioned in the 1570 survey and are also likely to have medieval origins (cf. 2.5.1.1)<sup>231</sup>. A courthouse appears to have stood in the centre of Market Square in the late 16th century and a town hall stood here by at least the early 19th century<sup>232</sup>.



**Plate 8:** Red Lion, Market Street (PRN 09387)

A number of buildings within the townscape have origins which date to the 16th/17th century and some may therefore have been present at the time of the survey, although they have all been subsequently much altered. The Red Lion, Market Street retains external timber box framing (plate 8). The largest of these properties is the Grade II Listed 31 to 33 Market Square which was constructed by one of the merchant families, the Landors', in 1649 (cf. 2.5.1.1). The exterior of the building presents an 18th century appearance, but internal 17th century timber framing survives (plate 9). This practice is typical within towns where total demolition and rebuilding was not always practicable. Consequently there is the potential for other historic buildings, which may appear to be 18th or 19th century in date, to retain earlier fabric internally.

Such information would add greatly to an understanding of the development of the town during the post medieval period.



**Plate 9:** 31 to 33 Market Square (PRN 09384)

The development of the town can be read within the townscape. The straight streets leading into Market Square (Albion and Anson) are clearly later developments; both were created in the 19th century (cf. 2.6.1.1). Many other buildings appear to date to the 19th century and this probably relates to a period of economic prosperity (cf. 2.6.1.1 and 2.6.3.4). This includes the surviving façade of the late 19th century market hall, with its tower, facing onto Market Square (cf.2.6.3.1).

Development within HUCA 1 has been of a piecemeal nature and there is little surviving evidence for medieval planning, with the exception of the market place (Market Square) and possible burgage plots on the western side of Market Street (map 8 and 2.4.6). However, as much of the HUCA is likely to have had medieval origins there is a great potential for archaeological deposits to survive relating to domestic and economic activities from this period onwards. Archaeological investigations have the potential to elucidate the extent to which various parts of the town were inhabited and from what date. This evidence would contribute to an understanding of the economic and social history of the town from the medieval period onwards.

#### **4.1.2 Built character**

The HUCA comprises historic and late 20th century properties; many of the former have inserted modern shop fronts at street level. As noted above many of the earliest buildings retain timber framing although only within the Red Lion Inn is it visible externally (plate 8). The 18th and 19th



century buildings are generally two or three stories being constructed of red brick and many have rendering to the main facade (plate 9 and maps 31 & 33). Several of these buildings may originally have been constructed as houses, although they have all since been converted to commercial properties. The late 20th century buildings are generally purpose built shops of red brick.

#### 4.1.3 Heritage values:

**Evidential value:** As indicated on map 8 there are many surviving historic buildings which contribute to an understanding of the development of Rugeley. These include surviving timber framed buildings through to the numerous 19th century properties. The latter are testimony to the economic prosperity of the town in the 19th century (cf. 2.6.1). Despite limited archaeological investigation to date (2010) there is great potential for archaeology to survive with the historic core relating to both domestic and industrial activity from the medieval period onwards. The street pattern is also testimony to the development of the town from the medieval period with the surviving Market Square continuing to lie at the heart of the town.

**High**

**Historical value:** Heritage assets are highly legible within the character area and include the Market Square which is of probable medieval origin, as are many of the streets such as Brewery Street and Bow Street (cf. 2.4.6). The historic buildings, both listed and unlisted, also contribute to an understanding of the development of the town and its economic fortunes. Two of the buildings within the character area, The Shrewsbury Arms and 3 to 5 Market Street, are associated with William Palmer, the Rugeley poisoner<sup>233</sup>. The former is the alleged location of one of the murders whilst the latter was where his doctor's surgery was located during the mid 19th century.

**High**

**Aesthetic value:** Overall there is little evidence of planning within the HUCA, although elements of burgage plots may survive on the western side of Market Street (map 8). Throughout its history piecemeal development appears to have dominated within Rugeley and this is apparent at street level where historic buildings are interspersed with buildings of more recent date. Seven of the historic buildings have been identified as being of national significance (Grade II listed). Most of the HUCA lies within the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area (051), which has identified many of the unlisted historic buildings as contributing to the character of the Conservation Area. The historic environment therefore contributes strongly to the aesthetics of the HUCA and this is complemented by the designation of the Conservation Area and the seven Listed buildings which are of national importance. Change within the conservation area should take account of the policies identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal document, but can also contribute to the sustainable regeneration of the town for the benefit of the local community<sup>234</sup>.

**High**

<sup>235</sup> See <http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/site/HeritageTrail/index.html> for further information (viewed 11/02/2010).

<sup>236</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government 2012.

Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

<sup>237</sup> Ibid

<sup>238</sup> Ibid

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Staffordshire County Council. 2011. Web:<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/HistoricEnvironment/BuiltEnvironment/ConservationintheHighwayGuidanceDocument2011.pdf>

**Communal value:** The HUCA is the commercial heart of the modern town and as such enables the community to engage with the heritage assets which are highly visible within the character area. This is further enhanced by the presence of heritage interpretation boards (one being located in Market Street) provided as part of the Cannock Chase Heritage Trail<sup>235</sup>.

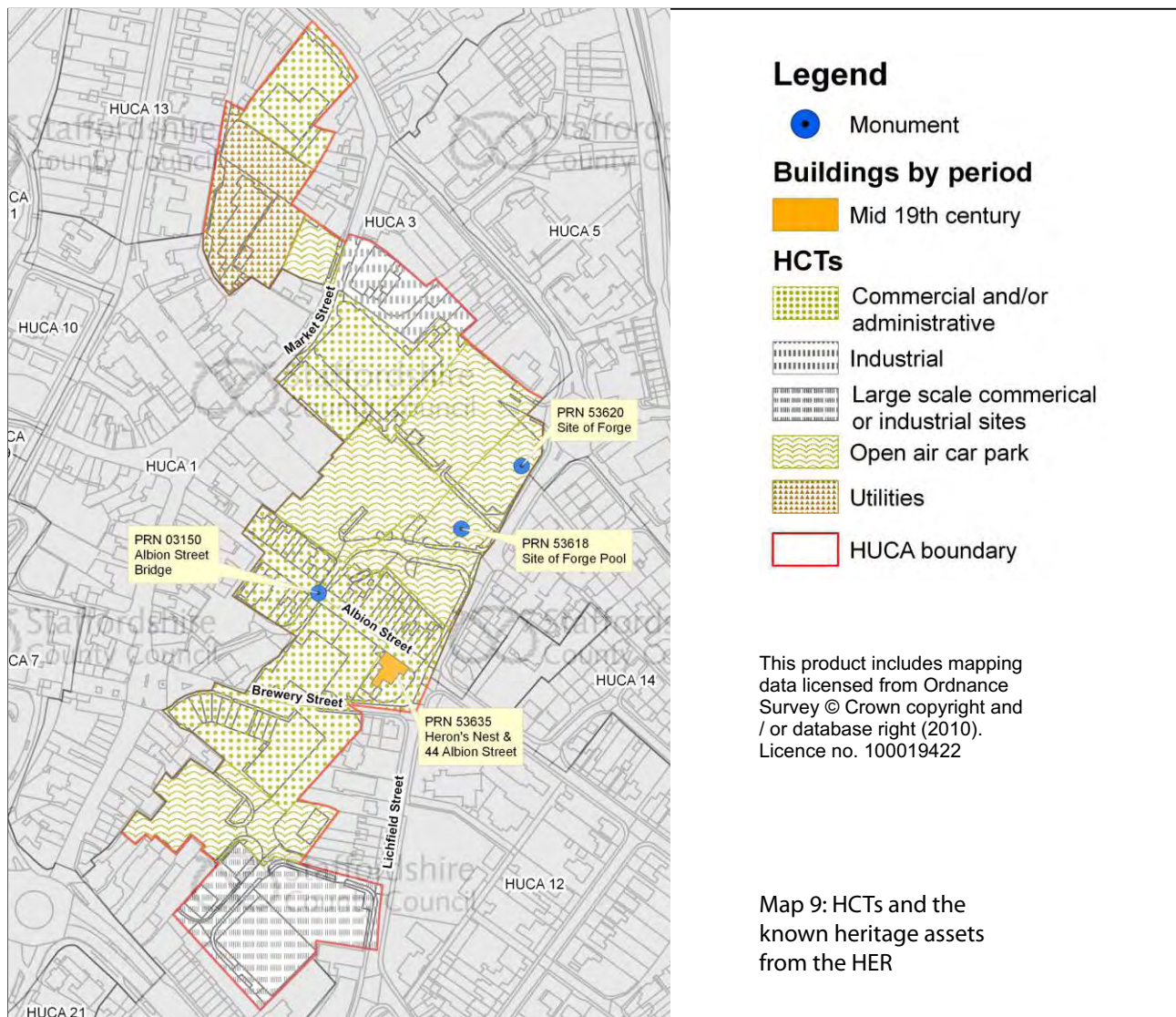
**High**

#### 4.1.4 Recommendations

The HUCA represents the historic core of the medieval town and consequently the assessment of the heritage values reflects its historic importance.

- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)<sup>236</sup>.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and the Conservation Area for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)<sup>237</sup>.
- ◆ The conservation of the historic character of the HUCA would include the retention of the historic street pattern and the legibility of the Market Square.
- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the area of the Conservation Area should consult the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal document and the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF<sup>238</sup>.
- ◆ There is a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF<sup>239</sup>.
- ◆ Any appropriate development within this HUCA should look to improve the historic character and sense of place within the nearby public realm. Where this concerns work within a Conservation Area this may be achieved through consultation with the East Staffordshire Planning Department. Outside of designated Conservation Areas the SCC Historic Environment Team should be consulted. Reference should also be made to the joint English Heritage and Department of Transport volume entitled 'Streets for All: West Midlands' and where appropriate to the SCC 'Conservation in the Highways' document<sup>240</sup>.

## HUCA 2: East of Rugeley town centre



### 4.2.1 Statement of heritage significance

The character area is dominated by HCTs of mostly mid to late 20th century date and includes two areas of car parking to the rear of the historic plots in HUCA 1 (map 9). However, the street pattern remains one of probable medieval origin (Brewery Street and Market Street). Albion Street was inserted into the townscape in the mid 19th century and its construction is probably the result of a period of economic prosperity (cf. 2.6.1.1 and 2.6.3.4). The majority of the buildings along this street are likely to have been built shortly after its construction although many have been unsympathetically altered during the 20th century (plate 10). Further along Albion Street to the east stands Heron Court/44 Albion Street, a pair of mid 19th century domestic properties which were constructed on a grander scale than those in the rest of the street (see plate 3). The property lies within the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area (155) and was identified as a building of particular interest in the Conservation Area Appraisal<sup>241</sup>. It is closely associated with the Roman Catholic Church and Heron Court, which stand opposite in HUCA 12.



**Plate 10:** 19th century properties in Albion Street

There is the potential for archaeological deposits to survive within the character area particularly to the rear of the historic plots that lie within HUCA 1 and also along Brewery Street, which had probably existed as a lane into the open fields from at least the medieval period (cf. 2.5.1.1). The sites of a watermill and mill pond also lie within HUCA 2 with the potential for archaeological deposits to survive. The origins of the watermill are not fully understood, but it is likely to have been the site of a paper mill by the 17th century and possibly the site of a forge prior to that; it was operating as a forge by the late 18th century at least (cf. 2.5.2.3, 2.5.2.4 and 2.6.3.2)<sup>242</sup>.

#### 4.2.2 Built character

The 19th century buildings concentrate along Albion Street and comprise small two storied terraced properties built of red brick, although many have been rendered and had modern shop fronts and windows inserted (plate 10).

The remainder of the HUCA comprises late 20th century purpose built retail units. Some have been constructed on a large scale notably within HCT 'Large-scale industrial or commercial' on map 9. A flat roofed building, Phoenix House, stands on Market Street (HCT 'Industrial' on map 9), but to the rear there are older red brick industrial buildings, some of which may have at least 19th century origins. The telephone exchange is a further large flat-roofed building standing to the rear of Market Street to the north (HCT 'Utilities' on map 9).

### 4.2.3 Heritage values:

<p><b>Evidential value:</b> There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive which may contribute to an understanding of the town from the medieval period onwards. The deposits may be best preserved in those areas that are currently car parks, particularly the site of the watermill. The latter could contribute significantly to an understanding of the economy of the town from the medieval period onwards. There are a number of historic buildings dating to the 19th century which also contribute to an understanding of the development of the town at this period.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Historical value:</b> Heritage assets are legible within the HUCA particularly along Albion Street, but some have been considerably altered. The street pattern is probably little changed from the medieval period, with the exception of Albion Street which was inserted into the townscape in the early 19th century.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>
<p><b>Aesthetic value:</b> The majority of the HUCA results from piecemeal development and alteration in the 20th century, with the exception of Albion Street which is clearly a planned element within the townscape (as indicated by its straightness). The HUCA also contributes to the setting of HUCA 1 and links two Conservation Areas (Rugeley Town Centre (051) and Talbot Street/Lichfield Street (155). Consequently any enhancement and restoration of the surviving 19th century buildings would contribute significantly to the setting of the Conservation Areas and contribute to the sustainable regeneration of this part of the townscape for the benefit of the local community<sup>243</sup>.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Communal value:</b> The HUCA lies on the edge of the commercial heart of the modern town and the heritage assets form part of the commercial activities.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>

### 4.2.4 Recommendations

The assessment has identified heritage interests within the HUCA, which include unlisted historic buildings. These heritage assets contribute to the setting of the two adjacent Conservation Areas.

- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)<sup>244</sup>.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, particularly the 19th century properties along Albion Street, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape as well as the setting of the two Conservation Areas for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)<sup>245</sup>.

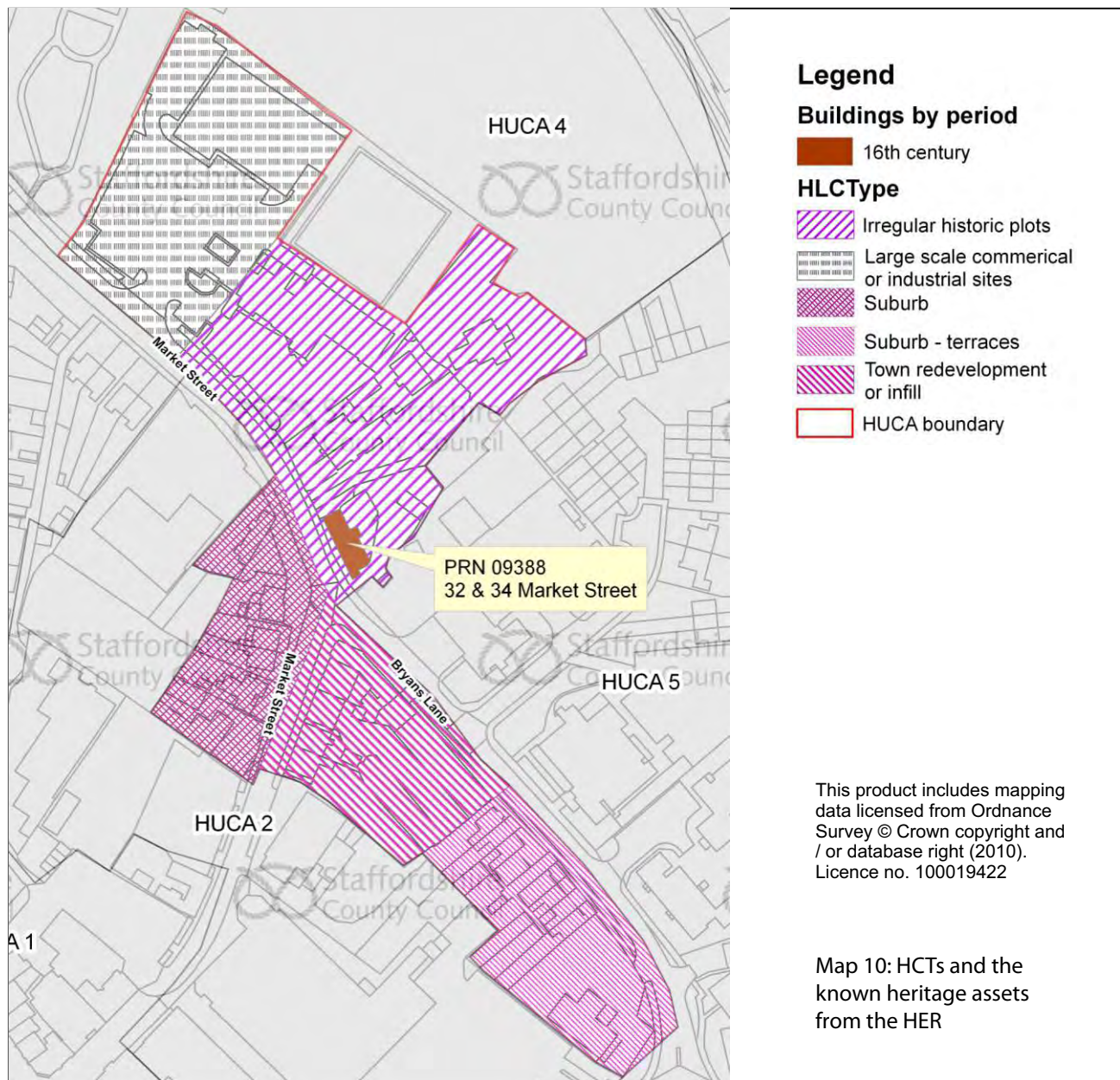
<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Staffordshire County Council. 2011. Web:  
<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/HistoricEnvironment/BuiltEnvironment/ConservationintheHighwayGuidanceDocument2011.pdf>

- ◆ The heritage assets could make a positive contribution to economic regeneration of the town. In particular the promotion of the re-use of historic buildings to contribute to sustainable development is recommended (paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF). High quality design which is sympathetic to the historic built fabric is the key to retaining the local character of the area as identified in Bullet Point 4 of para. 17 (Core planning principles) of NPPF).
- ◆ The conservation of the historic character of the HUCA would include the retention of the historic street pattern.
- ◆ Any planned development or significant change adjacent to the two Conservation Areas should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF<sup>246</sup>.
- ◆ There is a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF<sup>247</sup>.
- ◆ Any appropriate development within this HUCA should look to improve the historic character and sense of place within the nearby public realm. Where this concerns work within a Conservation Area this may be achieved through consultation with the East Staffordshire Planning Department. Outside of designated Conservation Areas the SCC Historic Environment Team should be consulted. Reference should also be made to the joint English Heritage and Department of Transport volume entitled 'Streets for All: West Midlands' and where appropriate to the SCC 'Conservation in the Highways' document<sup>248</sup>.

### 4.3 HUCA 3: North end of Market Street/south of Bryans Lane



#### 4.3.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

The majority of the properties within the HUCA are two storied houses mostly constructed of red brick in the mid 19th and early 20th century. These houses are a mix of terraced and semi-detached buildings, although one large detached red brick house stands on the northern side of Market Street within HCT 'Irregular historic plots' on map 10 (plate 11). Adjacent to this property stand the oldest surviving buildings in the HUCA, the Grade II Listed late 16th/early 17th century property at 32 and 34 Market Street which includes external timber framing (plate 2). A supermarket was constructed within the HUCA during the early 21st century whose car park stands on the street frontage (HCT 'Large scale industrial or commercial sites' on map 10).



**Plate 11:** Market Street

The row of terraced houses facing onto Market Street (within HCT 'Town re-development or infill' on map 10) probably date to the mid 19th century. Plate 12 shows that the terrace incorporates a larger three storied property at the far end, which appears to have been redeveloped between the mid and late 19th century. The historic mapping suggests that it replaced a smaller building. The 1570 survey suggests that at least one property had stood within this area (on Market Street and the south side of Bryans Lane) which may have had their origins in the medieval period. This could now only be proved through archaeological investigation. The land opposite (see 'Suburb' on map 10) formed part of an area of paddocks into the late 19th century. It is currently unclear to what extent settlement may have extended into this area in the medieval and post medieval periods, particularly given the presence of surviving post medieval properties to the north of Market Street and documentary evidence for properties on the west of Market Street/south side Bryans Lane.

The northern boundary of the zone lies adjacent to the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area (083).





**Plate 12:** 19th century properties in Market Street

#### 4.3.2 Heritage values:

<p><b>Evidential value:</b> The surviving historic buildings chart the development of domestic dwellings in Rugeley from the post medieval period onwards. Given the presence of a late 16th/early 17th century property (32 &amp; 34 Market Street) and documentary references to properties present by the late 16th century there is the potential for archaeological deposits to survive which could illuminate the period of origin and the nature of settlement from the medieval period onwards.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Historical value:</b> The legible heritage assets relate to surviving historic buildings, of which one pair of cottages (32 &amp; 34 Market Street) has been designated as a Grade II listed building. The differing styles and periods of origin of the individual buildings within the HUCA enable the piecemeal nature of development to be read within the townscape.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>

<b>Aesthetic value:</b> The surviving historic buildings contribute to the aesthetic qualities of the character area. Piecemeal development dominates and this has its origins in at least the post medieval period; most likely because it represents expansion away from the historic core of the town where there were fewer restrictions on development. Change within the HUCA should be sympathetic to its historic character whether addressing infill development or the restoration of the historic buildings. This is achievable through high quality design and building. The zone lies adjacent to the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area (083).	<b>High</b>
<b>Communal value:</b> The HUCA mostly comprises private domestic dwellings. Interactions between the community and the heritage assets are only achievable from street level.	<b>Low</b>

### 4.3.3 Recommendations

The assessment has identified considerable heritage interest within the HUCA which includes a Grade II Listed building as well as other important undesignated buildings and the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive.

- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)<sup>249</sup>.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)<sup>250</sup>. Any future new build within the HUCA should also seek to reflect the historic character in line with paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF<sup>251</sup>.
- ◆ The heritage assets could make a positive contribution to economic regeneration of the town. In particular the promotion of the re-use of historic buildings to contribute to sustainable development is recommended (paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF). High quality design which is sympathetic to the historic built fabric is the key to retaining the local character of the area as identified in Bullet Point 4 of para. 17 (Core planning principles) of NPPF.
- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the area adjacent to the Conservation Area and which may impact upon its setting should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF<sup>252</sup>.
- ◆ There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may

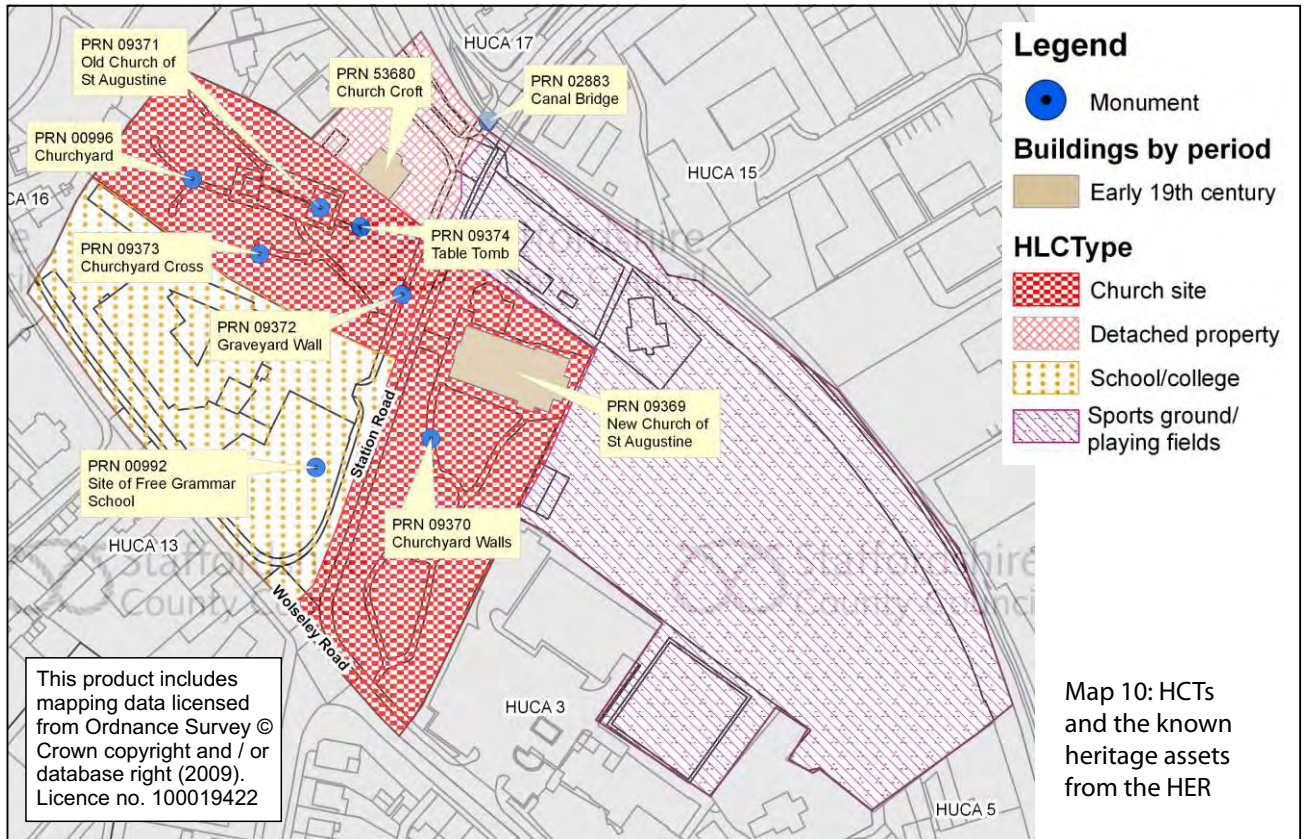
<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Staffordshire County Council. 2011. Web:  
<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/HistoricEnvironment/BuiltEnvironment/ConservationintheHighwayGuidanceDocument2011.pdf>

be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF<sup>253</sup>.

- ◆ Any appropriate development within this HUCA should look to improve the historic character and sense of place within the nearby public realm. Where this concerns work within a Conservation Area this may be achieved through consultation with the East Staffordshire Planning Department. Outside of designated Conservation Areas the SCC Historic Environment Team should be consulted. Reference should also be made to the joint English Heritage and Department of Transport volume entitled 'Streets for All: West Midlands' and where appropriate to the SCC 'Conservation in the Highways' document<sup>254</sup>.

## 4.4 HUCA 4: Churches of St Augustine



### 4.4.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

The character area is dominated by the two stone built Grade II Listed churches of St Augustine on either side of Station Road<sup>255</sup>. Four further Grade II listed structures are located within the churchyards of both churches including the base of a church yard cross and the stone churchyard walls<sup>256</sup>. The designation of these buildings and structures acknowledges their national importance.

The tower and chancel survive at the old church and appear to be of 12th century in origin; this is corroborated by the documentary evidence (cf. 2.4.4 & plate 13). It currently unknown whether an earlier church existed in the area and consequently it is difficult to state with any confidence where the settlement, recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) may have been located. The fact that the church is isolated from the heart of the town (within HUCA 1) may suggest that the earliest settlement was to be located within this character area focused around the church and that the town itself was planned later, perhaps associated with the granting of the market charter in the mid 13th century. This could only be tested through archaeological investigation and consequently this potential should be accounted for in any development proposals.



**Plate 13:** Remains of the old St Augustine's church

The site of the medieval vicarage may have been located within the area of the new St Augustine's (cf. 2.4.4).

The second St Augustine's church was constructed in 1823 on this new site away from its medieval predecessor (2.6.5.1 & plate 5).

A grammar school existed to the south of the old St Augustine's, which had originally been constructed in 1707, although it was rebuilt in 1820 with a master's house (cf. 2.6.2.1 and map 11)<sup>257</sup>. The extant school buildings were constructed of red brick with pitched tiled roofs in 1936 as part of the grammar school. They became an Infants' school in 1967 following the closure of the grammar school<sup>258</sup>. The earlier grammar school buildings had been demolished by the late 1950s, although the Head Master's House survived until the late 20th century<sup>259</sup>.

Church Croft to the north of St Augustine's old church is a large detached red brick house dating to circa 1800 and appears to have been constructed on an area of paddocks or closes<sup>260</sup>. It is believed to have been built by William Palmer's father and he is said to have been born there.

#### 4.4.2 Heritage values:

<p><b>Evidential value:</b> The historic buildings and structures contribute to an understanding of the spiritual life of past inhabitants of the town and their social aspirations. The churches are indicators of periods of economic prosperity. There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive which may answer questions regarding the location of the pre-town settlement at Rugeley; as well as the remains of the Grammar School and activity associated with the medieval church including the site of the vicarage.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Historical value:</b> Heritage assets are highly visible within the character area with six Grade II Listed buildings and structures associated with the two religious sites. Church Croft to the north of St Augustine's old church dates to circa 1800 and is believed to be the birthplace of William Palmer, the Rugeley poisoner.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>

<sup>261</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

<sup>262</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

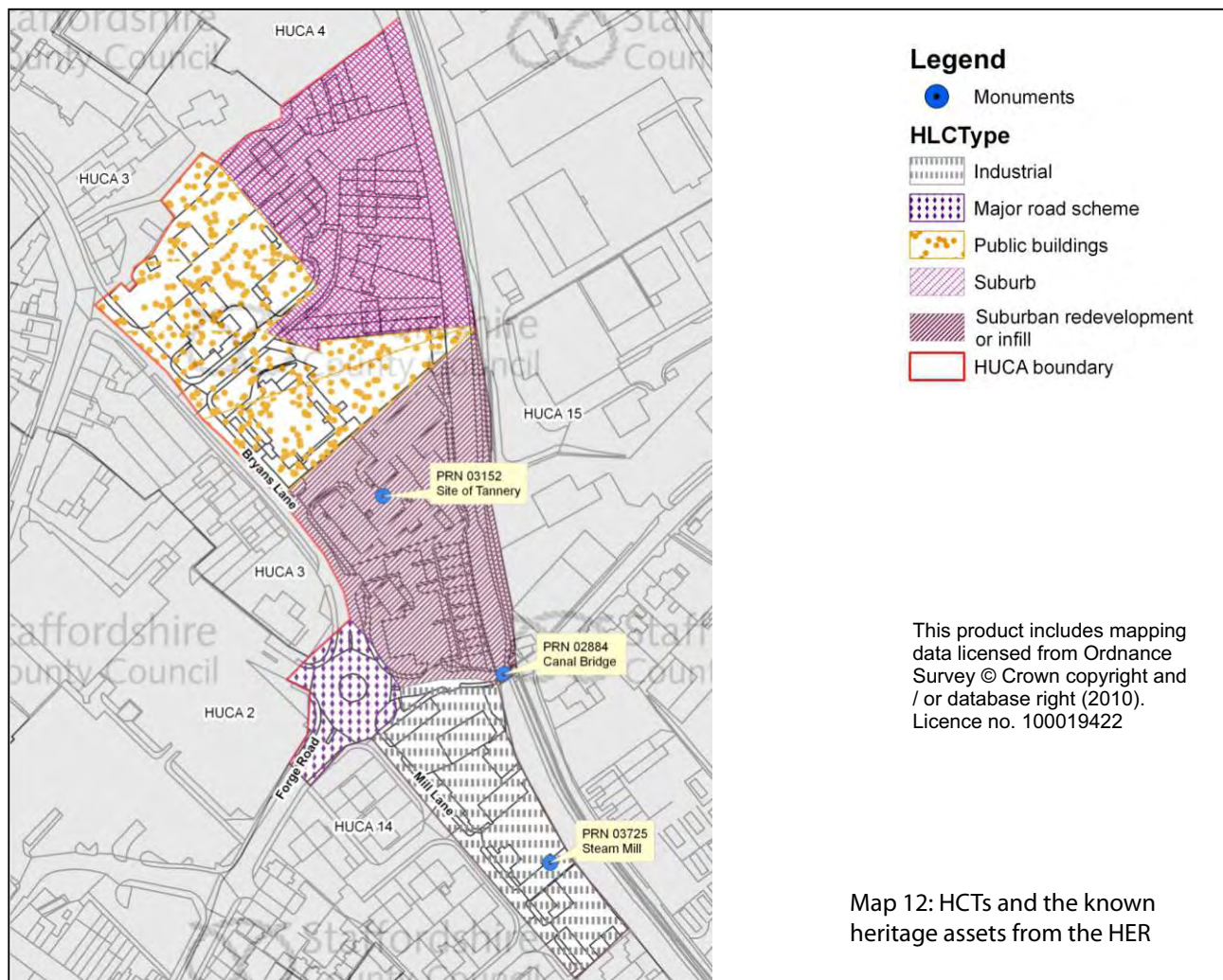
<p><b>Aesthetic value:</b> The aesthetic importance of the character area to the townscape has been acknowledged in the inclusion of this area in the Trent &amp; Mersey Conservation Area (083) including the playing field to the east (see map 11). There are elements of planning in the design and layout of the new St Augustine's Church.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Communal value:</b> There is the potential for a high degree of community interaction with the heritage assets of the character area. The old church forms part of a public area and an interpretation board has been provided by the Cannock Chase Heritage Trail project to enhance the appreciation of the heritage. The new St Augustine's church is a public place of worship and the church yard is also accessible to the public. The site of the grammar school and Church Croft, however, are not accessible to the general public.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>

#### 4.4.3 Recommendations

The assessment of the heritage values has identified considerable heritage interest within the HUCA which includes a six Grade II Listed buildings and structures. The HUCA is also incorporated into the Trent & Mersey Conservation Area. There is also the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive.

- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)<sup>261</sup>.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and the Conservation Area for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)<sup>262</sup>.
- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the area of the Conservation Area should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF<sup>263</sup>.
- ◆ There is a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF.<sup>264</sup>

## 4.5 HUCA 5: Between Bryans Lane/Mill Lane and the Trent & Mersey Canal



### 4.5.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

There are few heritage assets surviving within the character area. The exceptions include the buildings associated with the steam mill on Mill Lane, although these have been significantly altered<sup>265</sup>. The steam mill was constructed circa 1863 to grind corn and now lies within the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area (cf. 2.6.3.2).

The northern boundary of the HUCA follows the Trent & Mersey canal, which was constructed by James Brindley in the late 18th century (cf. 2.6.4.2). A bridge takes Leather Mill Lane over the canal which was constructed circa 1771<sup>266</sup>. The presence of the canal probably encouraged the development of one of the largest of Rugeley's industrial complexes from the late 18th century onwards; the Phoenix Tannery (cf. 2.6.3.4)<sup>267</sup>. Much of the tannery site had been demolished by the early 1970s and 'Public buildings' comprising a magistrates court was constructed on part of the site in the late 20th century (see map 12). The remainder of the site was demolished in the 1990s to make way for housing development (HCT 'Suburban redevelopment and infill' on map 12)<sup>268</sup>.

Beyond the site of the tannery and canal the character area was dominated by fields which survived until they were developed in the late 20th century ('Suburb' on map 12).

Bryan's Lane has at least late 16th century origins; it is recorded as Bryan's Lake Lane in the 1570 survey and settlement is recorded along it; although it is not clear whether this lay to the north or south of the lane<sup>269</sup>. A 'gib croft' is also recorded in the survey in the vicinity of Bryan's Lake Lane, perhaps suggesting the site of a place of execution<sup>270</sup>.

#### 4.5.2 Heritage values:

<p><b>Evidential value:</b> The line of Bryan's Lane is at least late 16th century in origin and by the late 18th century had become the focus of a tanning industry. There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits associated with this industrial activity and possibly with settlement to survive dating to at least the post medieval period, although in both cases this is likely to have been impacted by more recent development. The survival of the steam mill buildings upon the side of the canal contribute to an understanding of the importance of the latter to the development of industry within the wider Rugeley area.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>
<p><b>Historical value:</b> The legible heritage assets of the character area are comprised of the canal with its bridge and the remains of the steam mill on Mill Lane.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>
<p><b>Aesthetic value:</b> The canal is important to the aesthetics of the character area and this is demonstrated by the Conservation Area, parts of which lie within the HUCA. The majority of the character area is dominated by piecemeal late 20th century development and re-development.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>
<p><b>Communal value:</b> The canal is an important public amenity and could be used to interpret the heritage of this character area including the importance of the former industries.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>

#### 4.5.3 Recommendations

Heritage interests have been identified within the HUCA in the form of currently undesignated historic buildings and structures as well as the potential for surviving below ground archaeological deposits. Parts of the HUCA lie within or adjacent to the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area.

- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, notably the mid 19th century steam mill, would strengthen the understanding of the industrial archaeology of the town and the quality of the wider townscape for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)<sup>271</sup>.

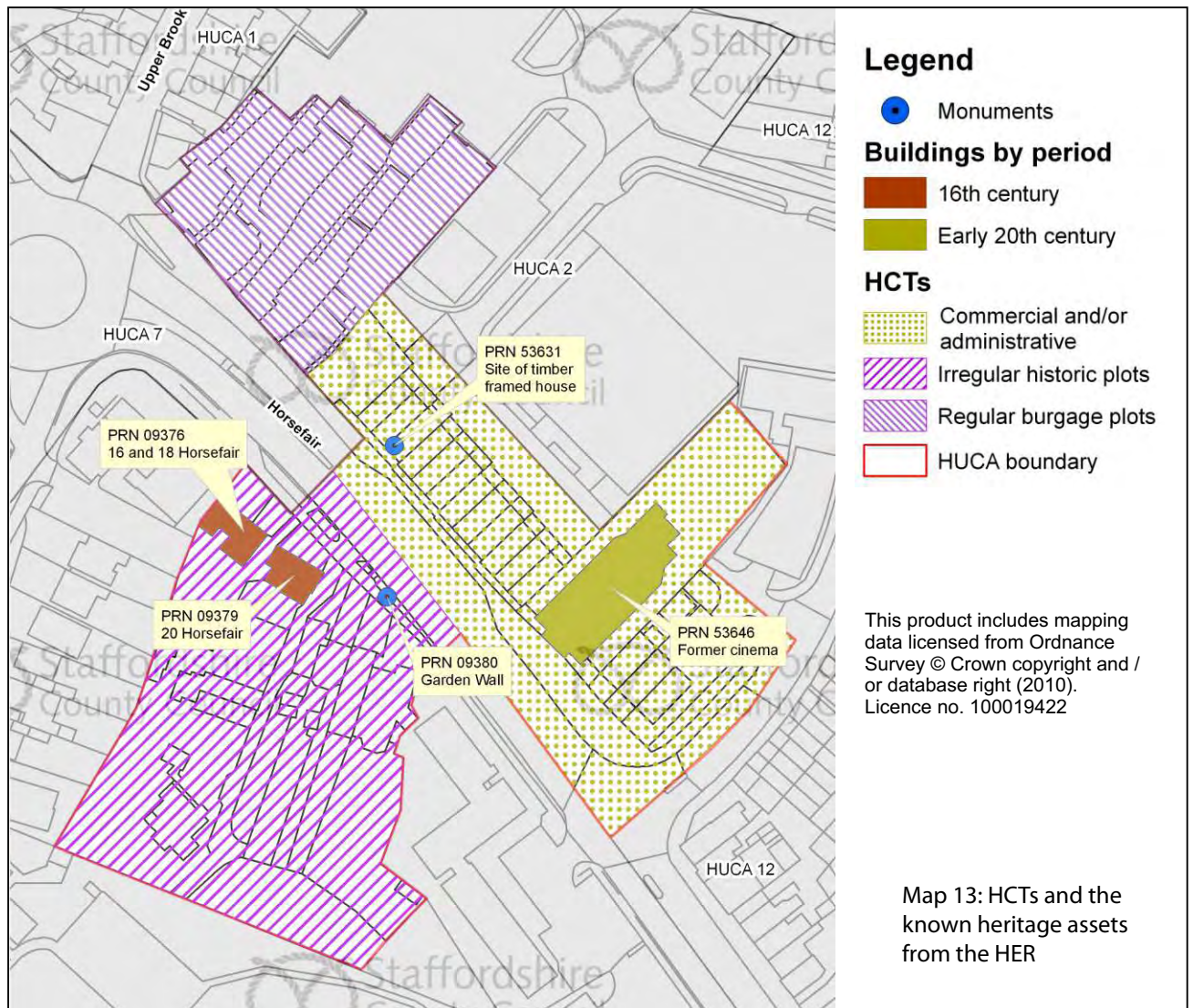


<sup>272</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

<sup>273</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the vicinity of the Conservation Area should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. The designated heritage asset and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF<sup>272</sup>.
- ◆ There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic steam mill to retain architectural elements which would contribute to an understanding of the history of this site. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF<sup>273</sup>.

## 4.6 HUCA 6 – Horsefair



### 4.6.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

Horsefair itself has been integrated into the 20th century western by-pass around Rugeley (cf. HUCA 5 and 7). It has its origins in at least the medieval period and has constituted part of the main route to Lichfield from at least that time. Its longevity within the wider townscape is attested by the presence of two HCTs 'Regular burgage plots' and 'Irregular historic plots' (shown on map 13). The name of the street in the late 16th century was 'Newbold End' which suggests that it forms a later element within the townscape than the north-south axis where the market place is located (cf. HUCA 1; 2.4.6). It is unclear when the name Horsefair first came into usage, but it is possible given the width of the street on historic maps that it originated as the site of the medieval fair (cf. 2.4.3.1). The possible burgage plots lying to the north of the street suggest that the area's economic potential was realised through the planning of burgage plots by the lord of the manor during the medieval period (the Bishop of Lichfield). The current buildings comprising HCT 'Regular burgage plots' are largely three storied brick buildings of probable early to mid 19th

century date. However, there remains the possibility that these properties may retain earlier fabric within their structure. The plots themselves are still visible on modern mapping although they are not obvious in the street scene.

These burgage plots had extended across the whole of the northern section of Horsefair lying within this HUCA until they were re-developed during the late 20th century. Until this period a timber framed building had stood within the HCT 'Commercial &/or administrative', which had provided a legible testimony to the history, on the northern side of the street<sup>274</sup>.



**Plate 14:** 16/18 Horsefair & 20 Horsefair

The eastern part of the HUCA, to the north of the street, forms part of the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area (155). The former cinema, which dates to 1934, was identified within the conservation area appraisal as “an unlisted building of particular interest”<sup>275</sup>.

There is little evidence of formal planning on the southern side of Horsefair (HCT 'Irregular historic plots' on map 13). However, it is clear from the two surviving Grade II timber framed buildings that this area had been developed by at least the early 16th century (plate 14)<sup>276</sup>. Adjacent to these properties stands a row of large houses which had been constructed upon a large plot. A boundary wall encloses the plot on its southern side adjacent to the street and this has been designated as a Grade II listed structure of probable 18th century date.

#### 4.6.2 Heritage values:

<p><b>Evidential value:</b> There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive which would contribute greatly to our understanding of the development of this HUCA within the wider townscape. This could include the origins of the burgage plots to the north of Horsefair as well as of the irregular historic plots to the south. The surviving historic buildings also contribute to an understanding of the economic and social history of the town.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Historical value:</b> There are legible heritage assets within the character area in the form of historic buildings, which vary in date from the early 16th century through to the 1930s cinema. The former have both been identified as being of national importance and are designated as Grade II Listed buildings and the latter as an important building within the Conservation Area.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Aesthetic value:</b> A small section of the HUCA lies within the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area (155) and this incorporates the former cinema. The remainder of the HUCA forms part of the setting to this conservation area and to the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area (051) which lies to the north west. Consequently any enhancement and restoration of the historic buildings, particularly on the north side of Horsefair, would contribute significantly to the setting of the Conservation Areas.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>
<p><b>Communal value:</b> Some of the historic buildings form part of the commercial activities within the HUCA, however, the remainder can only be appreciated from street level.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>

#### 4.6.3 Recommendations

The assessment of the heritage values has identified considerable heritage interest within the HUCA relating to its potential medieval origins. The HUCA is largely incorporated into two Conservation Areas and includes three Grade II Listed buildings and structures. There is also the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive.

- ◆ A statement of significance may be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA depending upon the nature and scale of any proposals (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)<sup>227</sup>.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted (particularly the former cinema), would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and the Conservation Area for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)<sup>228</sup>.

- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the vicinity of the Conservation Areas should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All of the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF<sup>279</sup>. Reference should be made to the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area Appraisal where it falls within the eastern portion of the HUCA.
- ◆ There is a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF<sup>280</sup>.