

Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment of
Land on Corner of Sewell Street
and Kemble Street, Prescott, Knowsley

Prepared for Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

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May 2020
Revised April 2021

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Summary

This report is an archaeological desk-based assessment for land on the corner of Kemble Street and Sewell Street, in Prescott, centred at NGR 346630 392590 (Figure 1).

Following national government policy (National Planning Policy Framework 2019, para. 189) this assessment draws together the key topographical, archaeological historical, cartographical and other sources to determine the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the site.

The study area along Sewell Street is largely open ground after the demolition of buildings as part of a programme of 'slum clearance' from the 1960s onwards, while the subsequent redevelopment of a garage on Sewell Street visible in photographs and maps of the 1970s and 1980s was subsequently demolished. Since then, no significant building work has taken place over much of the study area so it is likely to contain extensive remains of structures relating to the late 18th- and 19th-century housing that are recorded in photographs, documents, and maps and through archaeological work.

Study of historical sources, maps, photographs and archaeological investigation elsewhere in the town, indicates that some parts of the site may have been affected by 18th/19th-century cellaring, removing earlier archaeological deposits. However, there is no certainty that all the buildings within the site boundary were cellared. Current regional research priorities have identified cellars of late 18th-19th century date as having archaeological value.

Current archaeological research priorities for North West England emphasise the importance of investigating these once commonplace types of dwelling which have now been almost completely swept away in urban regeneration.

The impact of demolition of late 18th/19th century buildings and subsequent levelling on archaeological deposits is difficult to predict.

In addition, within the 19th century townscape, as shown on mid 19th-century plans, there are significant areas of open space where cellaring is unlikely. In these areas archaeological deposits associated with former burgage plots may survive. This may include 16th-century and earlier structures first recorded in the King's College Cambridge survey of the site in 1592.

In view of its well documented history, the site retains potential for the existence of the remains of medieval, post-medieval and later structures and occupation deposits within the site curtilage.

However, the extent, survival, character and quality of the archaeological remains on the site cannot be determined without further investigation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background: Scope of the study

The current study was commissioned by Owen Barton of Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council to inform the future use of the study area, a large plot on the corner of Kemble Street and Sewell Street. It consists of within Prescott town centre. The site is proposed to be masterplanned as part of the Prescott high Street Heritage Action Zone. The HSHAZ is joint funded by Knowsley Council and Historic England. This an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) of the study area forms part of a wider suite of studies and surveys of the site that will inform the masterplanning exercise.

1.2 Prescott High Street Heritage Action Zone

The Prescott High Street Heritage Action Zone has been awarded a grant for a four-year (2020-2024) heritage led regeneration programme to repair, restore and reuse old buildings within the Prescott town centre has built on the momentum generated by the Shakespeare North Playhouse development and Knowsley's forthcoming role as Liverpool's Borough of Culture status for 2022. The programme aims to bring back historic buildings in Prescott into use for leisure, retail and cultural activities (<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/prescot/>)

The Action Zone focuses on Market Place but extends north to the east end of Derby Street.

The Action Zone follows on from the successful Prescott Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI), a five-year project, 'to repair, restore and re-use historic buildings and spaces in Prescott town centre'.

1.3 Sewell Street/Kemble Street

The site is an extensive area of land at the corner of Kemble Street and Sewell Street, and includes a block of land extending as far to the south as the Cables Retail Park on Sewell Street and the Prescott Community Church on Kemble Street. It extends as far as the rear of Williams Street to the east. The study area is centred at approx NGR 346630 392590.

2. Methodology

2.1 Standards and Aims

The report was prepared in line with the *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (Dec 2014), issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a; revised 2017).

The DBA also follows the current Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service Guidance on Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments.

The aims of the assessment report follow those of the Standard and Guidance. The following considerations were relevant to the present case:

1. An assessment of the potential for heritage assets to survive within the areas of study
2. An assessment of the significance of the known or predicted heritage assets considering, in England, their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests
3. Strategies for further evaluation whether or not intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the resource is not sufficiently well defined
4. Proposals for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research, whether undertaken in response to a threat or not (CIfA 2014a; 2017).

2.2 Sources

Sources studied include:

place-name evidence,
findspots of artefacts (the Portable Antiquities Scheme),
Merseyside Historic Environment Record,
Museum records,
published sources (see bibliography),
map evidence,
historic photographs,
historical accounts of the area in which the site is located,
oral evidence,
unpublished archaeological evidence in the possession of the writer, and observations made on a site visit.

Registers of local authority designations such as Conservation Areas (Prescot Town Centre Conservation Area), and Listed Buildings Register were consulted. Archaeological and historic environment databases were also searched for relevant material, notably the Portable Antiquities Scheme database (www.finds.org.uk) and Merseyside Historic Environment Record for information on the site and its wider setting. Aerial photographs were consulted, notably the set taken for the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) now part of Historic England, as part of the regional flyers' programme by the writer between 1987 and 2003.

Selected documents were examined in Lancashire Archives, Bow Lane, Preston and the catalogues searched for relevant material.

The catalogue of the Archive Resource for Knowsley (ARK) was consulted online but visits in person were not possible during the period of study due to the Covid-19 pandemic measures.

3. Planning background

3.1 Introduction

The present study was undertaken with a view to determining the likely archaeological potential of the study area, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The relevant paragraphs (paras. 187, 189) are cited in Appendix 1 (see below).

3.2 The current planning situation

The current desk-based assessment was not undertaken against a brief with specific development proposals in mind. It is understood that it is intended to inform potential future use and development of the sites. As such, the following discussion does not take into account particular planning scenarios.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed buildings

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Knowsley Borough. Within the Prescot Town Centre Conservation Area there are 21 Listed Buildings, all of Grade 2, except the Grade 1 St Mary's church. Listed buildings include the building now known as Cockpit House, the former museum, at 34 Church Street.

Conservation Area

Prescot Town Centre Conservation Area contains four areas considered as 'Character Areas', according to the Prescot Town Centre Character Appraisal undertaken in 2012.

Both the western end of Kemble Street and the northern part of Sewell Street lie within the Prescot Town Centre Conservation Area; however, much of the southern part of the study area, including most of Sewell Street from Wood Street southward, is excluded.

For the Sewell Street 'Character Area', the following were identified:

'Key positive features:

- Two small groups of positive late 19th Century terraced cottages Nos. 30-38 and 56/58
- Good views from Garden Walk into the adjoining churchyard

Key negative features:

- Busy traffic along Sewell Street
- Close proximity of the modern commercial development including the large Tesco's Supermarket
- Greenall Court and the adjoining block - both 1960s buildings of no merit
- Untidy car parking
- Post WWI buildings along Manchester Road and into Garden Walk, of no special interest
- The northern end of Garden Street has incoherent streetscape with a variety of buildings and untidy plots'

The eastern side of Sewell Street is not specifically mentioned and the open areas of wasteland where former buildings now demolished once stood has no characteristics worthy of mention, apart perhaps from 'Untidy car parking'.

4. Site Descriptions and Summary of Evidence

4.1 Previous work

Prescot received considerable attention from archaeologists and historians from the late 1970s to mid 1990s due to its importance as one of only three medieval urban settlements in Merseyside (with Newton-le-Willows and Liverpool). The importance of the town has been stated as follows: 'the topography of 16th century Prescot can claim to be the best known of any similar town in northern England' (Davey 1978, 3). A second wave of interest has been generated in the last five years in part stimulated by the development of the Shakespeare North Playhouse as well as the improvements to the townscape and buildings brought about by the Prescot Townscape Heritage Initiative, which was 'a five year project to repair, restore and re-use historic buildings and spaces in Prescot town centre' (<http://prescotthi.org.uk/>).

A number of archaeological interventions have taken place in Prescot since 1978. They include full-scale excavations south of Eccleston Street (McNeil 1983), smaller excavations at five locations in 1980-81 (Holgate 1983), and a test-pitting exercise in 1983-84 at 26 locations to characterise the below-ground archaeological deposits across the town (Philpott and Davey 1984). Further work has been undertaken in the Vicarage garden by National Museums Liverpool in 1993 and again in 1997, directed by the writer but unpublished (site archives in National Museums Liverpool regional archaeology collection). Excavations to the rear of the north side of Eccleston Street were undertaken by Ron Cowell and Gill Chitty in 1982 (Cowell and Chitty 1983) and at Hill Street, in 1995 by the University of Manchester (University of Manchester 1995). Other observations and watching briefs have been undertaken (see Merseyside Historic Environment Record (MHER) list of sites in Appendix A5). Most of the early interventions were published in the *Journal of Merseyside Archaeological Society*, volume 5 (for 1982-3), which is dedicated to the archaeological work in Prescot to 1986.

The Shakespeare North Playhouse development on the adjacent site to Cockpit House, saw an archaeological evaluation by the writer in 2017 (Philpott 2017a) followed by a large-scale excavation by Salford University in 2018 (Miller *et al.* 2018).

The Prescott Townscape Heritage Initiative has also commissioned archaeological work at the Market Place, in advance of redevelopment, which also incorporated a successful public community archaeology project (Philpott 2017) and a commercial watching brief by the writer for the university of Liverpool (Philpott 2020). The recent work of resurfacing the street for the Prescott Eccleston Street Connectivity Works has been monitored for archaeological purposes by the writer, with the assistance of the archaeologist Carolanne King, for the University of Liverpool. This has produced a number of observations of archaeological deposits, including cellars of former properties on the south side of Eccleston Street, as well as sandstone and other drains, deposits of pottery manufacturing waste used as hardcore and the evidence of pits and gullies in the area of the street. Some deposits and structures appear to be 17th century in date, although most relate to 19th-century drainage works along this main street. One valuable observation has been the interior of the Flat Iron Building and its adjacent property at nos 72-74 Eccleston Street where a mid 19th-century rubbish dump was built over by cottage wall, preserving a large dump of ceramics. Observation of the interior structural walls when the plaster was removed has shown the sequence of building of the two adjacent properties. Finally, Prescott Vicarage garden was investigated by test-pitting in October 2020 as part of the University of Liverpool's field school.

Previous excavation

There is no record in the Merseyside Historic Environment Record of archaeological excavation within the study area.

4.2 Archaeological studies

Prescot has the distinction of being one of only three medieval urban settlements in Merseyside and is the best documented town for the 16th century (Davey 1978).

A key historical study is the publication of the Prescott Court Leet and other records by F. A. Bailey in 1937 which transcribed and made accessible an important series of town documents, notably the highly detailed survey of the whole town carried out in 1592 by King's College Cambridge, who were lords of the manor. The survey identifies by name the tenants of King's College, the size of the holding and the abutments, together with a record of any buildings including size in bays, and the presence of any outbuildings such as barns or kilns. Bailey correlated this survey with later surveys, including one of 1721, enabling the position of plots to be located with considerable accuracy on modern maps (Bailey 1937, opp. p. 48).

The Davey report, 1978

Subsequently the significance and strong archaeological potential of Bailey's work were recognised by Peter Davey. In 1978 Davey produced a report which sought to 'describe the heritage which survives above ground and that which may be present underground, so that evidence from the past can be used to shape the future of the towns (Davey 1978, 3). The report drew extensively on Bailey's work for the physical layout, correlating sites referred to in the 1592 survey with sites on the modern townscape of Prescott. In addition, Davey used the detailed Court Leet records published by Bailey (1937, 73-276) for the period 1510-1600 to identify further features of potential archaeological significance and to link these to specific plots recorded in the 1592 survey. Thus, the approximate location of pottery kilns, for instance, not mentioned in the survey can be identified through references to potters in the Court Leet.

Davey's work is of value in providing an assessment of the archaeological potential of the town centre. Inevitably modern development since 1978 has overtaken some of his land availability maps,

and other changes have resulted in the loss of buildings or potential archaeological sites. However, his conclusions remain of key importance for the current study, as for any archaeological work within the town.

Davey divided the town into four zones to examine the below-ground archaeological potential as well as the survival of significant historic buildings, early stone walls and other features, which would now be termed heritage assets. Davey's Zone Four (Davey 1978, 12-13) embraces the area between Kemble Street in the south and High Street in the north, and from Church Street in the west as far as Chapel Street and Cyprus Street in the east. He notes that as this area 'is the only part of the town to survive in anything like a complete form, its future is central to conservation and development policies for the town' (Davey 1978, 13). He recommended enlargement of the Conservation area to include this zone, listing a number of Georgian and Victorian buildings, detailed structural survey of early buildings, listing the best preserved sandstone walls and preserving the cobbled alleys and lanes as one of the best visual features within the town (Davey 1978, 13). He also observes that the plot boundaries in this part of the town preserve a very early settlement pattern, and 'demonstrate a remarkable degree of continuity', noting that there are the same number of plots between nos 23 and 43 Eccleston Street in 1978 as in 1592 (Davey 1978, 13).

4.3 Map Regression and Archaeological Study

Documentary and Map Sequence

The 1592 survey

The foundational historical study for the town is the publication of the Prescott Court Leet and other records by F. A. Bailey in 1937 which transcribed and made accessible an important series of town documents, notably the highly detailed survey of the whole town carried out in 1592 by the lord of the manor, King's College Cambridge, as discussed above (Bailey 1937, opp. p. 48; Davey 1978, 51-55).

The study area at the corner of Sewell Street and Kemble Street can be seen in 1592 to have been occupied by three large plots, no 35 (containing 36), no 37 and no 38 (Figure 2).

Plot No 35 with the barn no 36 on it is described as a messuage and cottage owned by John Gouldiker, with a barn, first mentioned in 1592. This occupied the area at the corner of Market Place and Sewell Street (Davey 1978, 52).

Plot No 37 was a burgage in the possession of Henry Egleston, tenanted by Thomas Orrell and consisting of ½ rood of land, described as 'late Burtonwood's' land. There is no direct reference to a building but a house would normally be expected on a burgage plot. According to Davey's analysis, this plot occupied the area now consisting of 48-50 Market Place, with vacant plot to the west, and nos 2-6 Kemble Street (Davey 1978, 52).

Plot No 38 was a burgage owned by John Birchall and consisted of ½ a rood of land, on the site of nos 8-14 Kemble Street (Davey 1978, 52). As with plot 37, the burgage contained a house.

The remainder of the site to the south of these two plots was occupied by a large area of open ground, Hall Meadow, which formed part of the demesne land of the hall.

The 18th century

As mentioned earlier, the earliest map known of Prescott is that by Richard Edge map of 1743 (Figure 3). The depiction of the town seems schematic, as its focus was on the hall estate. It does not show plot boundaries within the town making it of limited value in reconstructing the town at that date. However, it there is clearly some attempt at realism in that certain buildings are depicted with some distinctive, individual characteristics. Whilst it might be difficult in general to assign Edge's structures to individual buildings along the main rows of buildings, he shows that both the south side of Kemble

Street, at the western end of the street, and the north part of Sewell Street on the eastern side, were lined with a continuous row of houses. South of the houses on Sewell Street is a hedged enclosure (labelled N); this remained part of the Hall estate when it was surveyed by Thomas Higginson in 1750 (Davey 1978, 58). It appears to have been carved out of the larger Hall Meadow.

The early 19th century

The Piercy plan of 1809 (Figure 4) shows for the first time the east-west road, now Wood Street but formerly known as The Orchard (1848) and later Johnson's Court. There is no detail of individual buildings in this area so it is not possible to see how built up the plots had become by this date. The creation of this short street, however, implies the need for access to houses along its frontages.

A number of leases for Prescott indicate that there had been a major period of building on former fields and crofts on Hillock Street (now Kemble Street) before the 1820s. While the 1847 Tithe Award and the OS plan of 1848 show that the two fields on the south side remained open ground (Tithe Award plots 34 and 35 both named 'Cow Meadows'), the process of intensification of the buildings both to the west and east of the fields was well under way.

Thus a document dated 2 August 1822 (Inquisition and admittance) records 'William Ackers of Prescott, beer brewer, son and heir of Thomas Ackers of Prescott, beer brewer - two messuages on the south side of Hillock Street with garden, workshop and cottage at the back, two messuages adjoining the workshop, all in Prescott - devised to his father Thomas Ackers by will, the will of Ann Leather of Prescott, widow' (LA DDCS/26/72).

Two years later in 1824 a surrender document records a transaction between Richard Weston of Halewood and Eleanora Atherton of Holborn to sell 'one moiety of messuage on the south side of Hillock Street, parcel of land formerly part of close called the Cow Hey ($\frac{1}{2}$ acre), parcel of land formerly part of a close called Bond's acre (5 yards 3 inches east to west, 11 yards 1 foot 9 inches north to south on the east end, 14 yards 3 inches north to south on west end), with buildings and several dwelling houses built thereon' (LA DDCS/26/86). The two plots, Bond's Acre and Cow Hey, lay further east on Hillock Street (i.e. Kemble Street) than the current site, but they illustrate the pressure to build on former agricultural land, and the profits to be made from doing so.

The Bowran map of 1834 (Figure 5) shows a little more detail than Piercy for Fall Lane (i.e. Sewell Street). This illustrates Orchard Street/Wood Street, although there unnamed, and delineates the major plot boundaries but with no detail. Only one small square building is shown on the east side of Sewell Street, along with two on the south side of Kemble street.

Maps of 1847-50

There are three maps for this period. The first, the Tithe Award map of 1847, records agriculturally productive land that was subject to ecclesiastical tithes (LA DRL/1/65) and shows two Tithe plots 32 and 33 (NB: not the same as the Bailey plan numbering system) as Hall Meadows, encroached on by a series of building plots on the eastern side of Sewell Street. These were pasture fields in the possession of Thomas Gaskell, a lessee under the Provost and Scholars [*sic*] of King's College Cambridge (Davey 1978, 64-65). The tithe award map does not show in detail built-up land, but it does record the plot subdivisions within the former close shown on the 1743 Edge map.

The large-scale Ordnance Survey map (60 inch to the mile) of 1848 (Figure 6) charts the town in precise and fine detail and for the first time the location of all buildings and plot boundaries can be identified. This also shows how far the intensification of settlement in the town had proceeded. The density of infilling behind the street frontages, which was particularly evident in the block between Eccleston Street and High Street, can now be seen to have affected the current plot too. The development of high-density court housing with the construction of several courts in the town marks the impact of population increase and the density of housing in what is a very constrained small township with little scope for expansion. However, the dense housing is reserved for the former burgages, while the former close (labelled 'N' on Edge's map of 1743) is occupied by gardens.

In 1848 the frontage was built up continuously between nos 2-10 Kemble Street and 42-50 Market Place, but a gap on the frontage at what is no 14 Kemble Street represents the site later occupied by the Community Church. Instead of a frontage building, there is a structure set back creating an open area on the front, though it is not possible to determine from the map if this was a garden or yard.

The division between nos 6 and 8 Kemble Street appears to be a long-lived boundary between burgage plots, evident in 1592, and very likely to be of medieval origin.

Sewell Street has a terraced row of buildings, probably cottages or houses, between no 1 at the northern end, to no 13, then a gap for The Orchard, followed by four buildings to the south nos 15-21; then two small almshouses on the Sewell Street frontage; further south the ground is still undeveloped, and occupied by gardens.

The 1848 map also shows the almshouses east of Sewell Street, aligned east-west. The Victoria County History records that 'The Rev. Samuel Sewell, vicar of Prescott, gave in 1815 £200 to the grammar school, £800 to the Sunday school, £700 for almshouses, and £400 towards establishing a fever ward. The fever ward not being practicable it was purposed to apply the money to the almshouses. The endowment for these was void in law, but Sir John Sewell, a residuary legatee, undertook to give £700. This was carried out, and in all six almshouses were built in 1830 and 1850. The occupants are women, and each receives 3s. 6d. a week.' (Farrer and Brownbill 1907, 353-4).

At a meeting of the local authority, Prescott Local Board, in February 1871 many street names were changed in the town, so Snig Lane became Sewell Street and Hillock Street became Kemble Street. Orchard Street also became Wood Street at the same time. Sewell Street was named in 1871 in honour of the vicar of Prescott Dr Samuel Sewell (1776-1815), who was considered a great benefactor to the town and opened the Sunday School (Roberts 1990, 22).

Conditions in the town in the later 19th century were frequently insanitary. A glimpse of the prevailing conditions appears in *The Prescott Reporter and St Helens General Advertiser* for 6 February 1875 which reports from Prescott Local Board that 'the chairman asked what measures had been taken with respect to the medical officer's report condemning as unfit for habitation the hut at the bottom of Sewell-street, and directing the removal of cess-pools at the back of some houses in that street'. Mr Darlington the surveyor noted that the 'cess-pool had been attended to'.

1893 OS Map

By 1893 the OS map (Figure 7) shows that two streets had been built on the south side of Hillock Street (now Kemble Street), Chester Street to the east and Williams Street to the west. The access road west of the rear boundary of the properties on the western side of Williams Street forms one part of the limit of the current study area.

Sewell Street: the north end has eight houses between the corner of Kemble Street and The Orchard (Wood Street) – numbered 1-13 in the 1950s, and another six further south, including one large building on the southwest corner of The Orchard. The gardens are still present south of what is later no 21 Sewell Street. This area is visible in two historic photographs – the aerial photograph of c. 1920.

1927 and 1936 OS maps

At this time Kemble Street has a continuous row of ten houses or shops on the road between the corner of Market Place and the Community church (no 42-50 Market Place and nos 2-14 Kemble Street; Figure 9-10, 28-31). The Cinema at nos 12/14 Kemble Street is shown as a single block.

A description of Kemble Street and Sewell Street by the local writer Arthur Roberts, who wrote in 1990 of his childhood and early years in Prescott, records that on Kemble Street 'a number of courts were located on its southern side, and, in living memory, these were centres of accommodation' (1990, 29). He also records how the development of the B.I.C.C. factory at the south end of Sewell Street and south of Kemble Street had an impact on the townscape. The entrance gate to the factory

replaced Young's tobacconist's shop and three houses at the corner of Pottery Place on the south side of the street. The boundary of the huge B.I.C.C. complex encroached upon the southern side of the study area.

1950s-1970s

The maps through the 1950s-70s show that the loss of many buildings within the Sewell Street frontage occurred within these decades (Figures 11, 12, 13).

The Ordnance Survey map of 1955 shows the buildings on the frontage largely intact but the process of decay and demolition of the existing building stock of houses and cottages had begun. At that time, the frontage of Sewell Street has nos 1-7 (four small cottages) with the former no 9 described as a 'ruin'. Nearby, nos 11-13 immediately north of Wood Street had been demolished. The frontages of nos 15-19, to the south of Wood Street, remained intact.

At that time, the street frontage along Kembles Street and Market Place was still intact. From west to east, a sequence of five adjacent buildings, nos 42-50 Market Place, was present. The division between no 50 Market Place and no 2 Kembles Street was marked by a covered alley. The Kembles Street frontage also had nos 2-10 intact (cf. Figures 27-31), adjacent to the Palace Cinema (nos 12/14).

The Almshouses, nos 1-6 were also present, but Sewell Street south of the almshouses had a row of three ruinous houses.

The 1966 OS map demonstrates a substantial transformation in the built environment of Sewell Street. The frontage from the Market Street corner at the north end has been cleared of buildings, resulting in the loss of nos 42-46 Market Place, and nos 1-7 Sewell Street, as well as all the almshouses.

The Merseyside HER entry for no 42 Market Place states that it was on the Scheduling record: Ministry of Town and County Planning. 1949. Prescott Urban District Provisional List, as listed grade III. However, building had been demolished by 1964.

No 42 Market Place was described in the Scheduling Record as follows:

'Corner of Sewell Street. Small house with gable end to street, later alterations, new Butcher's shop. Red brick, 3.s., gable end, stone coping, slate roof. Ground floor modern stucco with late c.18 or early c.19 shop front with later alterations to window. Venetian window 1st and 2nd floors, with g.b. and semi-circular-headed reveals. Ground floor originally had similar windows, traces of original semi-circular brick head being viable above shopfront. Entrance with double doors, plain pilasters and entablature, dentil cornice, entablature carried full length over shop window. Side elevation to Sewell St. of no special merit. Frontage about 5 yds.'

To the south of Wood Street by 1966 a rectangular garage had been constructed which was enlarged by the 1970s when it appeared on the Davey map (1978, 10).

The late 20th century - Davey's Zone Three (1978, 10-11)

By the time of Davey's report, Sewell Street retained few structures of any age. The map (Davey 1978, 10) shows the plot at the north end of Sewell Street/Market Place as devoid of buildings as far south as Wood Street. The buildings shown on the maps from 1848 to 1936 have been cleared completely. South of Wood Street the map shows a garage; behind this to the east a large flat-roofed structure (perhaps a garage or workshop) is visible on the 1988 aerial photograph (Figure 14, 32, 33). South of this and extending as far back as Williams Street is a large open area, which borders the former B.I.C.C. Factory complex.

Davey's 1978 report identified several buildings on Kemble Street, nos 2-6 as 'structures requiring detailed examination and archaeological recording' (1978, 27). They were considered to 'merit further investigation on archaeological and historical rather than architectural grounds'. They were all on known early sites' and 'at face value pre-date at least the early 19th century' but were already at that time 'mostly derelict' (1978, 11). They were still extant in 1988 but were subsequently demolished. The Merseyside HER entry notes:

'Nos. 2 and 6 were included in an architectural condition survey in 1980 (Unpublished document: T.A.C.P. Architects and Town Planners. 1980. Prescott Town Centre, Building Assessment), No. 4 had been demolished at that time. No. 2 was described as: 'part of row of three storey Georgian town houses with graduated sash windows. Blue slate roof with sandstone copings to gables. Stone cornice with secret lead-lined gutter. Stone cills / lintels and steps. Brick construction.' No. 6 was described broadly in the same terms as No. 2, and it was noted that it was tied to the later with flying shores. At the time both buildings were described as derelict. At some time between when that description was made, and when Google imagery (air photos) dating to 2000 were taken, the building was demolished. (MHER No MME6406).

Davey makes the important point that while they may not have been outstanding examples of the architecture of their period, most (including the Kemble Street examples) 'form parts of groups of some visual and environmental importance, the loss of which would seriously jeopardize the historic 'atmosphere' of the town' (Davey 1978, 27).

Davey identifies one stretch of early wall within the site (Davey 1978, 10-11). This, designated as wall no 69, was located at the rear of the now demolished garage SE of Wood Street and S of the Community Church. In 1978 it measured 14m in length and consisted of red sandstone 0.9m in height and 'coursed and mortared, disappears underground at east. Ground level changes and is lower to the south' (Davey 1978, 23), but it was not considered of particular significance and no action was recommended with regard to preservation or listing.

The southernmost part of the study area lies within the massive B.I.C.C. complex, which was constructed in this part of its site by the 1920s.

The Prescott Community Church

The western end of Kemble Street as far as, and including, the Community Church (Figure 21) is within the Prescott Town Centre Conservation Area. The Community Church is identified as a 'focal building', although it remains unlisted.

In 1848 the eastern part of the Community Church building (i.e. no 14 Kemble Street) was an empty space, with a building set back from the frontage. Two buildings (later nos 10 and 12) are shown. The 1891 plan of Prescott shows two buildings in place; that to the west is probably no 10, a small structure now incorporated into the Community Church complex. It is unclear from map evidence alone whether nos 10 and 12 were subsumed intact into the later Community Church building or whether no 12 was rebuilt along with the main building opened as a cinema in 1912. Examination of structural fabric and details such as the roof construction may illuminate that question. Owen Barton (pers. comm.) notes that 'the auditorium is a 'new' (1912) construction, but the street frontage appears to be earlier buildings of unknown date (likely early-mid nineteenth century) that were refaced as part of the construction of the cinema'.

The Community Church began life as a cinema, and was known as Prescott Picture Palace and Theatre of Varieties, which opened in 1912. By 1927 it had been re-named Palace Cinema. Around 1929 it was equipped with a British Talking Pictures (BTP) sound system enabling it to show 'talking pictures' and newscasts. In 1932 and 1933 it was operated by the J.F. Emery Circuit.

The Palace Cinema closed by 1958. In the 1970s, the Picture Palace was sold to Tudor Bingo and later became Coral Bingo and finally Gala Bingo by the early 1990s. To convert it to a bingo hall and social

club, Coral Bingo removed the wings of the balcony in the auditorium. Gala Bingo sold the building to Prescott Community Church in about 1995.

([www. http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/51658](http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/51658);

<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/intriguing-history-one-merseyside-towns-18026532>

Photographs and Illustrations

There are relatively few illustrations of Kemble Street and even fewer of Sewell Street, compared with the visually more attractive Eccleston Street or Market Place, which were dominated by the impressive architectural edifice of the parish church of St Mary. One of the earliest depictions of a building is that on the corner at the top of Sewell Street and Market Place/Kemble Street, which appears on the edge of the 1809 view of Market Place (Figure 17). The gable end of this three-storey building is on the north side of the street. The windows are arched, and form a single vertical line in the centre of the gable. The site of this structure now lies under the widened Sewell Street.

A few historic photographs exist of Kemble Street. Arthur Roberts illustrates Wood Street which shows part of this densely built-up area, before the extensive clearance of the 1960s (1990, 30). A photograph of Wood Street dated c. 1926 published by Roberts (1990, 30) shows this short road cobbled with stone setts and a shallow central gutter (Figure 18). To the left (north) the brick wall of a building with a single window is visible; beyond is an entrance gate through a high wall, then the indistinct outline of a two-storey building, probably a house, beyond that. On the other side of the street, at the western end is a cottage or house fronting the street, with an outshut and gate to brick-walled yard.

Sewell Street: the north end has eight houses between the corner of Kemble Street and The Orchard (Wood Street), and there are another six further south on the same frontage, including one large building on the south-west corner of The Orchard (Wood Street). This area is visible in two historic photographs – the aerial photograph of c. 1920 (Figure 15) and the view published by Roberts (1990, 30), which is discussed later.

Kemble Street has ten houses/shops on the road between corner of Market Place and the Community Church – the eastern part of this plot is empty in 1848, indicating that the main community church building was built after that date.

Just as the 1809 map lacks detail of individual buildings, the same is true of the next map in the sequence. Bowran's 'Map of the Township of Prescott 1834' (Figure 4) records the town but adds little detail although Wood Street is visible.

The Tithe Award map of 1847, reproduced by Davey (1978, 64), does not show individual buildings and their plot boundaries within the built-up part of the town, although the agricultural fields are rendered in detail with acreages, field-names, occupants and owners.

It is only with the Ordnance Survey map of 1848 (Figure 5) that the town begins to be mapped in detail. Fortunately for historical research into Prescott, the town was one of the first to be selected by the Ordnance Survey for large-scale urban mapping.

Subsequent Ordnance Survey maps from 1869 to 1939 (Figures 7-10) show very little alteration in the configuration of buildings. The 1869 and 1893 Ordnance Survey maps for example are virtually identical. These urban plots are built up virtually to their capacity and scope for change within the existing configurations is limited.

The late 20th century

The late 20th-century Ordnance Survey maps overlaid on late 19th-century plans demonstrate a considerable change in the eastern street frontage of Sewell Street. The street has been widened,

leaving the 19th-century (and earlier) building line buried under the modern street. This has the effect of burying potential archaeological deposits under Sewell Street. The same effect was visible in the Prescott Connectivity Works where changes in the position of the building frontage along Eccleston Street left the foundations of facades and cellar walls sealed under the road surface, to be revealed by groundworks along the street.

Conclusions from documentary and cartographic sources

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the combined evidence of documents, maps and historic photographs about the historical development of the current site:

1. The site lies close to the historic core of the medieval town, between streets that are largely of medieval or early post-medieval origin.
2. The 1592 survey demonstrates that the northern part of the site was divided into tenements, often referred to in early documents as burgages, suggesting a medieval origin for the basic plot structure.
3. Occupation of the plots in the late 16th century was most intense along the main streets of Eccleston Street, Church Street and High Street. Kemble Street was less intensively occupied at that time and Sewell Street south of the corner plot (1592 survey plot 35) was open meadow land. Assuming that most buildings were set close to the street frontage, it is likely the back of plots contained the ancillary buildings, such as kilns, and were used for horticultural as well as craft or low-level industrial processes. Plot 35 contained a barn, demonstrating the importance in the early post-medieval period of the dual economy of agricultural production from a town setting.
4. Kemble Street is the earliest street with any significant occupation within the current site, although the frontages of east side of Sewell Street and the southern side of Kemble Street were shown as largely developed by 1743.
5. Orchard Street/Wood Street and the buildings either side of it appear to be developments of the late 18th or early 19th century. By the earliest detailed map of 1848 these streets are intensively built up along much of the available land.
6. Some buildings on Kemble Street and Sewell Street may be cellared. For many other buildings there is no evidence either way as to cellaring.
7. Demolition of the buildings on the site in the mid 20th century may have resulted in infilling cellars with rubble (as noted by Holgate on Mill Street in 1980/81, and observations in the Market Place in 2018 and Eccleston Street in 2019/20).
8. Construction of a garage on Sewell Street south of Wood Street followed by its subsequent demolition may have caused localised disturbance through services and other installations.
9. After demolition of the buildings on Sewell Street and Kemble Street, removal of rubble may have had an impact on the surviving archaeological deposits, through the truncation or raising of the ground level. This is impossible to quantify or assess without archaeological investigation.
10. The 'Community Church' auditorium appears to be a new construction in the early 20th century, while apparently incorporating existing structures on the frontage.

4.4 Summary of Evidence

Merseyside Historic Environment Record

The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (MHER) was consulted for the present study. A search of the MHER was undertaken by Dr Ben Croxford, the Historic Environment Record Officer for Merseyside, based at Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (1st Floor Merton House, Bootle L20 3DL), in May 2020. Dr Croxford provided a record of all MHER sites falling within a radius of 150m of a mid point between the two sites, centred at 346560E 392700N, together with map data were supplied as Mapinfo files to the writer.

Portable Antiquities Scheme

There are no finds recorded within the centre of the town of Prescott on the Portable Antiquities Scheme website. This is unsurprising as the PAS website overwhelmingly records metal-detector finds, which are almost wholly derived from open land. The nearest find is a late 14th or very early 15th-century lead bulla of Pope Boniface IX from Whiston (PAS reference PUBLIC-CE1262).

Designated heritage assets

For completeness, the MHER search also identified the following negative statements regarding national or local heritage designations:

Areas of Archaeological Importance

Areas of Archaeological Importance, defined by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) are areas within which prospective developers must serve notice allowing time and access for archaeological investigation to take place before development begins. There are no Areas of Archaeological Importance within Merseyside.

--*The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)*, Chapter 46.

Registered Battlefields

Registered battlefields are known sites of pitched battles. There are no Registered Battlefields in Merseyside.

Locally Listed Heritage Assets

Local listing is a form of designation though of heritage assets identified as of local significance, not national. It is typically carried out by local government officers and adopted by the relevant council. There are no local lists in Merseyside.

Aerial Photography

Aerial photographs taken by the writer under the English Heritage regional flying programme between 1987 and 2003, for National Museums Liverpool (NML), have been searched. The views are useful for showing the extent of redevelopment within the town since the 1930s. Figures 14, 32 and 33 illustrate the site clearance for the development of the Town Centre Shopping Precinct on 6 July 1988, with Kembles Street retaining buildings subsequently demolished. A number of historic aerial photographs collected by the Prescott Heritage Hub are in the form of post-cards labelled 'Prescot from the Air' (Figure 15). They are not dated but internal evidence suggests they were taken in the 1920s or 1930s, and show the current site with varying degrees of detail.

Borehole Data

The British Geological Survey holds some borehole data for the Prescott area. Two boreholes lie within the study area (BGS ID: 165754 : BGS Reference: SJ49SE125

British National Grid (27700) : 346624,392533); and BGS ID: 165738 : BGS Reference: SJ49SE109

British National Grid (27700) : 346662,392549.

BGS ID: 165754

Depth	
0.00-0.10	Tarmac [top at 62.91m AOD]
0.10-1.00	Made ground: Grey brown, slightly clayey boundary COBBLES with concrete, masonry, sandstone, tarmac and boulders of concrete
1.00-1.70	MADE GROUND: Light brown, medium-grained, slightly gravelly, slightly cobbly SAND with fine to coarse gravel of sandstone, brick/concrete, clay fragments. At 1.30m, light brown, medium grained SAND with very occasional medium gravel of sandstone
1.70-2.70	Brown, fine grained SAND with occasional coarse sand patches and fragments of carbonaceous shale (2mm)

BGS ID: 165738

Depth	Description
0.00-0.10	Tarmac and concrete [top at 62.83m AOD]
0.10-0.25	MADE GROUND: brown grey sandy fine to coarse GRAVEL with brick, ash, concrete fragments
0.25-0.45	MADE GROUND: Soft, dark brown/grey mottled light brown, orange and grey very sandy CLAY with occasional fragments of sandstone (c. 10mm)
0.45-0.90	Light brown, slightly mottled orange medium grained SAND

Nearby is a borehole at the TSB, Eccleston Street (SJ49SE227, SJ49SE228), accessible online at <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>.

The bedrock is fine grained pale grey sandstone of the Westphalian lower coal measures series.

4.5 Site visit: Sewell Street/Kemble Street, Prescott

The site visit was made on 28 May 2020 (Figures 21-26). The numbered plan (Figure 20) refers to the sequence below:

1. Building now known as 'Prescot Community Church' but former cinema. A stuccoed and rendered three-storey building;
2. Prescot Community Church: 2 to rear is a large extension, brick-built with a series of engaged piers against the eastern façade, for original cinema building. the rear of building consists of a large early 20th-century brick extension formerly used as a cinema; it has a grey Welsh slate roof with a red sandstone cornice to the roof; to the rear (south) is a concrete yard (no 15)
3. Abutting no 2 (Community Church) on the west is a three-storey building, originally probably a house, in brownish orange brick; vertical sliding sash windows, former front door probably in centre between two ground floor (blocked off) windows. Owen Barton (pers. comm.) has provided the following observation: 'This ground floor arrangement was probably right, but by the early 20th century, photos of Kemble Street indicate a full width timber shopfront with central recessed doorway'.
4. Extensions with large glass windows at first floor level, possibly a former shop? Owen Barton kindly provided the following additional information 'No 8: circa 1907 building with two storey shop front. Earliest known use (possibly its original use) was a bicycle shop.' (O. Barton pers. comm.) Abuts no 3 to the west.
5. Open ground, previously occupied by three houses/shops, nos 2-6 Kemble Street. Now overgrown with brambles and other vegetation.
6. Narrow concreted alley leading to rear of no 50 Market Place and giving access to outshut at rear of no 48, down a steep drop.
7. No 50 Market Place – now Hamlet's cafe; probably 19th century but re-faced in modern brick so almost all structural details are obscured. The sandstone sills match those of the adjoining no 48.

7a. No 48 Market Place; also part of Hamlet's café; probably a 19th-century building but the north façade of the lower two floors is obscured by a shallow extension. The second floor has probably later 19th-century pressed brick and brick dentils at eaves level.

8. Empty plot with two mature cherry trees and other smaller trees; this formerly extended further to the west (before the widening of Sewell Street) when it contained three conjoined buildings. The now reduced plot retains two small fragments of the demolished building (no 46 Market Place) which once stood here. The façade on Market Place has a large horizontal beam which has been sawn off. The front wall can be seen to have been constructed two bricks thick, and the bonding suggests the timber beam was the lintel for a shop window at the front of the building. The plot survives from road widening which saw the removal of several buildings on Market Place to enlarge Sewell Street at its northern end.

9. A small tarmac area of carpark, divided from no 8 by metal fence, and from Sewell Street by a low modern brick wall and fence above.

10. Tarmac carpark area; southern boundary is a modern grey brick wall on the north side of Wood Street, marking distinct change in level; higher to the north.

11. Wood Street, unmade road with gravel and hardcore surface; the north side is marked by modern grey brick retaining wall; abuts wall 13.

12. A grassed and overgrown area, now mounded up as demolition rubble, with concrete and brick visible in exposed patches on the surface. This is the location of a large modern garage visible on aerial photographs and maps of the 1970s. On the south side there is a modern brick retaining wall.

13. A short section of brick wall with a newer building behind is a former section of garden or yard wall; the eastern end has a short section of probable 19th-century brick wall in English garden wall bond, is probably the boundary wall shown on the 1848 plan. There are no openings such as entrances or windows which might have denoted a house or workshop.

14/16. In 2020 this served as the Huyton Civils works compound; it is a former carpark with tarmac surfaces and pavements, modern brick retaining wall to the north adjoining no 12; and metal fencing at the eastern end of the north boundary with MOT Type 2 limestone aggregate on the surface in 17. The southern boundary to areas 14 and 16 is a modern brick wall.

15. Concrete-surfaced yard to the rear of no 2 Kemble Street; brick wall to east, to north is rear of cinema building.

17. Area of open ground north of metal fence in 16, with surface covered in MOT Type 2 limestone aggregate.

18. Stone setts survive in the lane giving access to rear of plots on Kemble Street, immediately to east of Prescott Community Church; this lies just outside the site curtilage.

Summary

Apart from the buildings along the south side of Kemble Street, there are no significant early structures surviving above ground in the study area. Most of the buildings present in the mid 19th century and later have been demolished leaving open ground, some used as car parking, others as open waste ground.

5. Summary of wider archaeological context

5.1 Prehistoric Period

Despite numerous archaeological interventions in the town of Prescott since the late 1970s, there appear to be no recorded finds of prehistoric material, whether lithic, ceramic or other, from the town. The area is inaccessible to fieldwalking or conventional aerial reconnaissance for sites which show up as cropmarks, reducing the opportunities to recover prehistoric artefactual material or sites.

Traces of a Bronze Age settlement has been excavated close to St Chad's Kirkby (NML unpublished archive, site 44), and another at Brunt Boggart, Tarbock (Cowell and Philpott 2000).

Iron Age evidence is sparse in Knowsley Borough. A double-ditched enclosure at Brook House Farm, Halewood was partly excavated prior to the construction of the A5300 (Cowell and Philpott 2000).

5.2 Romano-British Period

Within Knowsley Borough, a cluster of Romano-British sites is known south of Prescott. Archaeological work in advance of the construction of the 4km stretch of the A5300 between Speke Boulevard and the M62 produced no fewer than three sites occupied in the Roman period (Cowell and Philpott 2000), suggesting a relatively high density of occupation during that period with now a total of nine sites located in Tarbock/Halewood area over 24 km sq.

The three A5300 sites comprised a probable rural settlement (probably a farmstead) at Brunt Boggart, Tarbock, an enclosed settlement at Ochre Brook, Tarbock, probably a farmstead, with copious evidence in the vicinity, and from the enclosure itself, of tile manufacture in the near vicinity (Swan and Philpott 2000), and an Iron Age enclosure beside the Ditton Brook at Brook House Farm Halewood which saw occupation in the Roman period, and early medieval activity. Another site, a small nucleated rural settlement, was identified at Court Farm, Halewood. Here an unenclosed settlement was located when five sherds were found in fieldwalking. Subsequent excavation indicated a settlement which extended over a 1.5 ha, contained nearly 20 buildings, field ditches, plough furrows in the settlement area, and an unusual oval form of building of a type which had been found previously at Wilderspool. The pottery assemblage here suggested occupation lasted from 2nd to 4th century (Philpott 2008a).

In view of the recorded density of sites in the area south of Prescott during the Roman period, and in the light of the indifferent quality of the land for some of these settlements (e.g. Brook House Farm and Court Farm, both lie on flattish boulder clay topography, so are not well drained), the south-facing well-drained sandstone ridge on which the town of Prescott stands might reasonably be predicted to have been occupied in the Roman period, at least for agricultural settlements. However, only a single Romano-British pottery sherd is recorded from the town, which was found in the vicarage garden (Philpott 2008, 71).

The possibility of Roman exploitation of the mineral coal deposits should also be considered, since both the army and the rural population were acutely aware of coal outcrops which were extensively utilised across England in the Roman period (Dearne and Branigan 1995).

5.3 Early Medieval Period (AD 410-1066)

The north west in the 5th and 6th century was remote from Anglian and Saxon colonisation and probably remained in native possession under the large western British kingdoms (Chitty 1981, 15). Artefacts are extremely rare from this period and evidence of settlement is almost entirely derived from place-names. Place-names are one of the most compelling types of evidence for pre-conquest settlement in historic south-west Lancashire. These indicate that a substantial British population survived in the area in the post-Roman period. Place-names such as Brettargh and Walton point to a residual British population and a period of contact between the British population and the Anglian

settlers (Wainwright 1942). North of the Mersey St Helens district has a concentration of British names such as Bryn, Ince, Makerfield, Wigan, Kenyon, and Penketh.

Eccleston near Prescott is an example of a class of place-names which combine Welsh *ecles* with Anglo-Saxon *-tun* and indicates the presence of a Celtic Christian community during the early Anglo-Saxon settlement of the area probably in the late 6th century (Thomas 1981, 264).

Place-names of Anglo-Saxon origin, dating to the 7th century onwards, are common in the region but archaeological evidence of settlements and finds of the early medieval period are sparse, and none is recorded within the immediate vicinity of the town. In historic south-west Lancashire individual finds are known from Hale (Philpott 1999), and an early 10th-century coin hoard at Little Crosby. Excavated evidence is rare but the Romano-British rural site at Court Farm, Halewood 4 miles south of Prescott saw later occupation during the Anglo-Saxon period. A ditch containing discarded wood stakes, one of which yielded a radiocarbon date of AD 855 cal, had cut through a substantial Romano-British rural settlement. A scatter of medieval pottery around Court Farm itself suggests that its first record in the post-medieval period masks an earlier foundation.

Stone sculpture is almost completely absent before the Viking age, and most early medieval stone sculpture which is invariably associated with churches is Anglo-Scandinavian in type. Stone sculpture appears at early parish churches such as Childwall and Walton on the Hill within Merseyside (Bailey 2010) but none has been recovered from Prescott. Early medieval log boats are recorded in south-west Lancashire at Martin Mere, and the river Mersey at Warrington (Hale and Coney 2005; McGrail and Switsur 1979).

The establishment of the parish system, and determination of parish boundaries, was taking place in Lancashire in the late Anglo-Saxon period (Crosby 1998, 30-31). Few churches are named in the Domesday Survey of 1086, but this is a consequence of the sparse detail in the compilation of the Lancashire area, rather than representing the true situation at the time. Some sites known as parish centres in the pre-conquest period from sculpture are not mentioned in Domesday.

5.4 Medieval Period

Prescot is an early important settlement in the south-west Lancashire area. The church acted as a focal point of the developing medieval town, and there is strong circumstantial evidence for a pre-conquest foundation for the church.

The earliest documentary reference to Prescott occurs in 1178 as *Prestecota*, and in c. 1190 as *Prestecote*. Ekwall (1960, 373) interprets the name as 'Priests' cottage, parsonage' but notes that 'it is impossible always to decide whether the meaning of such names [i.e. with the OE *prēost* element] is 'village with a priest', 'parsonage' or 'place belonging to a priest or college of priests'. Another place-name Churchley occurs in the 13th century and remains in use as a fieldname until the 19th century (Davey 1978, 3). Davey attributes the origin of the settlement to a 'norman or pre-norman religious centre around which the later town grew up' (1978, 3). The market was in existence by 1322 and charters for a market survive from 1333 and 1458.

The church lies at the centre of a very large parish, extending over 36500 statute acres and containing 15 townships (Baines 1870, 241) and even though the place-name Prescott is first recorded as late as 1178, the name itself meaning 'manor or cottage of the rectory' (Ekwall 1922, 108) indicates an existing church at that date. In addition, the presence of a circular church-yard shown on early maps, the hilltop situation, presence of a holy well, and the neighbouring township name Eccleston (an early British place-name referring to a Christian community by the early 7th century AD; Ekwall 1960) all point to pre-conquest foundation for the site.

No borough charter survives, but the use in 16th-century documents of the term *burgage* for some town plots by 1537 argues for a borough charter, granting the preferential *burghal* status, and one

granted by the lord of the manor rather than by the king (Bailey 1937, 317; Philpott 1988, 22-24). Documents record about 45 plots referred to as burgages in the 16th century. They are concentrated in the principal medieval streets, Kemble Street, High Street, Eccleston Street and Market Place (Philpott 1988, 22-24). A hint of a growing population comes in a letter of 1513 by the Provost of King's College Cambridge to Lord Derby, who complains of the 'abuse' of subdivision of holdings (Bailey 1937, 283).

Prescot was one of the most important towns in south Lancashire during the medieval and early post-medieval period. Furthermore, the town has seen a considerable amount of archaeological attention through excavation and evaluation (Davey 1978; see various papers in *Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society* volume 5 (for 1982-3)). Medieval pottery, including wasters, had been found during David Freke's excavations in the town on Derby Street in 1980-1 (Holgate 1983, 11-16). During the late 1980s a watching brief during construction of the large shopping centre in the town at Prescott had also produced some medieval pottery though it was not securely stratified. Some rescue work was undertaken by Liverpool Museum and an early post-medieval wall foundation with a deep foundation trench, was located on Kemble Street; the fill contained 16th-century pottery. More recently, work in the garden of Prescott Vicarage close to the early focal church site produced no medieval structural remains although the general soil layers did produce a small assemblage of late medieval pottery, along with a continuous run of later material. Given the foundation of the vicarage on a new site, probably open ground adjacent to the existing church, in the mid 15th century the earliest element of the finds assemblage should probably belong to this period (Philpott 2008b, 74).

5.5 Post-Medieval Period (1500-1750)

Davey asserts that the 1592 survey and other historic documentation mean that 'the topography of 16th century Prescott can claim to be the best known of any similar town in northern England' (1978, 3), with the proviso that, while most of the plot boundaries from 1592 can be located with some confidence on the modern landscape, the position of buildings and other features within the plot is not recorded.

A common theme in urban studies in the post-medieval period is the intensification of the use of space, whereby buildings are subdivided, extended and back plots are infilled. This process began in some towns in the North West region by the early 17th century but was well established in most English towns by the later 17th-18th century (McNeil 2007, 153). As elsewhere, in Prescott the infilling involved construction of small alleys and streets over the backplots of former burgages, with dense urban housing mixed with small scale industrial workshops (McNeil 2007, 154).

A programme of test-pitting in Prescott in 1983-4 produced evidence of landuse across the town, but no test pits were located within the present site (Davey and Philpott 1983).

One of the most prolific finds in Prescott, recorded from almost all archaeological interventions, is earthenware. Potters are documented in Prescott in the later 16th century and frequent references to clay pits in the Court Leet in the mid 16th century may be further evidence of pottery production, although digging clay for daub is also a possible use. Wasters from late medieval pottery production, possibly of 15th century date, were found at Nos 7-9 Derby Street, Prescott in 1980-81 (Holgate 1989, 11-16, fig.4.7, nos 37-53; Davey 1985, 104).

Structural evidence of the post-medieval period is present both as standing buildings, such as nos 21-23 Eccleston Street, (Cowell and Chitty 1983), or extant in the main streets such as timber-framed structure at no 30 Eccleston Street, with a date of 1614 (Davey 1978, 43; Listed Buildings register entry no 1075503).

Below-ground evidence comes from observations and minor excavations. Even small interventions have proved informative. Excavation of a small test pit by the writer under the floor of the late

medieval vestry of St Mary's church produced a considerable depth of stratigraphy and medieval pottery in the sequence.

During road widening on the north side of Kemble Street in 1987 a small trench identified the stone footings of a house, upon which later brick footings had been set. Examination of the rock-cut foundation trench revealed pottery of the 16th century (including southern English Border Ware, and imported Saintonge ware), suggesting the structure was that recorded as surrendered in 1574 by Ralph Brookfield to John Webster and his son, on condition that the house was rebuilt (Bailey 1937, 185-6).

The town appears to experience a shift away from timber-framed construction in the 17th century, towards more durable stone. This was part of a nationwide shift away from timber-framed construction as the shortage of good quality building timber became evident. The contrast perhaps evident in the surviving structures along Eccleston Street, where there are timber-framed buildings of 16th- or early 17th-century date such as nos 21 and 23 Eccleston Street and the timber-framed house with gable end to the street at no 30, dated 1614 (although the Listed Building Register entry suggests this may have been inscribed in the 1920s¹), which might be contrasted with a low cottage in local unfaced Carboniferous sandstone at the rear of no 33 Eccleston Street, probably of 17th century date (Davey 1978, 41), but not currently on the Register of Listed Buildings.

5.6 Industrial and Modern Periods (1750-1900)

The process of transformation of market towns into industrial centres was a gradual one, characterised by 'legacies from the past and continuing functions in the industrial period that distinguished them from the largest villages in their hinterlands' (McNeil and Newman 2007b, 171). They are marked by such features as market and borough charters, displayed in market places and trading, and the continuation of small-scale craft industries.

The rapid rise in population during the 19th century, through industrialisation and immigration, was reflected in the physical growth of towns and creation of new housing and infrastructure to accommodate the growth in population (McNeil and Newman 2007b, 172). Archaeological investigation combined with topographical studies of 18th-to 20th-century workers' housing in Chester, Hungate in York, and in Manchester, have resulted in new insights into the material culture of urban environments during the transformative period of industrialisation and urbanisation (McNeil and Newman 2007b, 170-1).

The Merseyside Historic Characterisation Project completed in 2011 identified the central part of Prescott as the only 'commercial core' area in Knowsley Borough (MHCP 2011). This was defined as an area which 'comprises commercial establishments at the heart of the social landscape, forming the commercial core of urban centres (in this instance Prescott), and are often synonymous with historic settlement cores.' The commercial core extended over the whole of the current site. The attribution in the case of Prescott was in part the integrity of its medieval layout: 'It was felt that Prescott, being an old market town, comprised elements worthy of being labelled a commercial core. Furthermore, the layout of Prescott's commercial area was established during the medieval period, much of the plot layout and street pattern of medieval Prescott survives virtually intact.' (MHCP 2011, 179).

Three important industries in Prescott in the industrial period were coal mining, pottery manufacture and watch-making. Coal mining developed from the 16th century onwards and Prescott provided Liverpool with much of its coal until the construction of the Sankey Canal in the 1750s made more distant sources in the eastern part of the St Helens coalfield increasingly accessible and economical to transport (Barker and Harris 1959, 13-15). Bailey (1947) has discussed the origins of coal mining in the

¹ This is incorrect; the date had already been observed by and recorded in volume 3 of the Victoria County History, published in 1907: 'The town contains a good number of eighteenth-century houses; and in Eccleston Street is a small timber house dated 1614, a pretty little building' (Farrer and Brownbill).

town, and although the earliest explicit reference to mining in the town occurs in a lease of the Hall estate in 1562 (Bailey 1937, 17), here, as elsewhere in the St Helens coalfield. Earlier exploitation may well have taken place. The Delves, an area west of the church, is a strong candidate for early coal digging, as the name suggests (Bailey 1947, 6). The exceptionally favourable terms under which copyholders held mineral rights to their land led to widespread digging for coal in the post-medieval period and some of the townspeople appear to have been dependent on coal for their livelihood. A letter from the vicar of Prescott in 1640 states that the people were very poor, many living by digging for coal in summer and begging in winter (Bailey 1947, 17).

Pottery manufacture is recorded in Prescott as early as the late 16th century, and while the industry appears to have declined in the 17th century, it was reinvigorated in the 18th century, with the development of increasingly efficient industrial methods. Baines records six potteries in the early 18th century, and by the mid 19th century Prescott still had three substantial pottery factories, which appear on the 1848 map (Davey 1983). One factory for whiteware is recorded in the 18th century (Davey 1983). Another was located in the backplot south of no 40 Eccleston Street and west of Aspinall Street by Robina McNeil, who discovered extensive evidence of a pottery factory, with clay bins, a sunning floor and large quantities of later 18th-century ceramics (McNeil 1983). Further evidence of the pottery works, including truncated remains of three pottery kilns of mid-late 18th century date, were discovered by the writer during the reduction of the ground level behind Eccleston Street for the construction of the Civic Centre and Town Centre Shopping Precinct (unpublished fieldwork, NML archive).

The use of hardcore derived from pottery manufacturing waste as a building material is attested in the 18th and 19th centuries. A row of four terraced cottages, constructed in 1830, at nos 44-50 Derby Street had foundations packed with pottery waste (Hollis 1983). Pottery waste of the 18th century was used for road construction in the High Street, Prescott, as hardcore for a yard surface north of High Street (Philpott 1983, 95), and in the Vicarage garden for a path (NMGM excavations 1997, Site 51). Pottery waste, including fragments of sugar mould at least one of which was stamped 'Ashcroft Prescott', were also used at Eccleston Hall, St Helens as hardcore in the 19th century. The recent monitoring of Eccleston Street for the Connectivity Works has revealed small deposits of 18th- and 19th-century pottery, and often accompanied by pottery waste, which indicate manufacture in the town. Such secondary use of pottery waste can provide important insights into the material demonstrably produced in the town when the original site of the manufactory is destroyed or inaccessible to archaeology.

Watch-making was an important industry in Prescott in the 18th and 19th centuries. At first watchmaking developed through the established craft industry of metalworking, notably production of high-quality tools and in particular files. In the 18th century watchmaking was a craft or cottage industry, with watchmakers putting out work to craftsmen who worked in their own home workshops. A distinctive type of architecture developed to accommodate the industry, based in outriggers attached to the rear of dwellings, in which heavy metalworking was carried out on the ground floor and finer work in upper workshops lit by gallery windows. The industry declined rapidly through competition from overseas in the late 19th century and finally ended in 1952 with the closure of the last workshops. The legacy of watchmaking has now almost disappeared from the townscape with only a few remnants of much-altered workshops surviving in the town (MHCP 2011, 136).

Cellars in Prescott

A characteristic of some of the buildings along the frontage of main streets in Prescott is presence of cellars. Probably the earliest reference to a cellar in the Court Leet appears in 1641 when Edward Davyes, 'of London', surrendered a 'messuage or dwelling house' near the church gate, 'with one shop and cellar under the same' (King 2008, 29-30). The market place was a particularly densely occupied area of the town (see Davey 1978, 2) and the fact that the lessee of the building was from London suggests that the concept of the cellar was an introduction from London, where by this time this was a common response to the pressure on space.

In Prescott cellars became a standard feature of the buildings along the main streets. A number have been identified and recorded in Eccleston Street. In 1988 a stone-walled cellar of no 28 Eccleston Street was observed in building work for the Town Centre Shopping Precinct. A pottery sherd from the cellar wall suggested a 16th- or 17th-century date, and the stone wall had been used as the foundation for a later brick wall. A number of former cellars were noted in the Eccleston Street Connectivity Works Prescott in 2019/20. At the western end of Eccleston Street, where the street frontage had been realigned further to the south to widen the street in the later 20th century, a series of cellar walls was found, forming the foundation walls of the building facades. Thus nos 16 and 18 Eccleston Street had brick-built front walls, and a brick partition wall within the cellar, while nos 30 and 32 had cellar walls constructed of small yellow Carboniferous sandstone blocks, unmortared, and probably of 17th-century date. On the north side of the same street, a number of foundation walls were exposed, so nos 29 and 25 were yellow Carboniferous sandstone while the intermediate building at 27 was in brick. Such buildings include a short section of sandstone wall, probably of 17th century date, visible in front of no 20 Eccleston Street, along with brick front walls.

In the archaeological investigations in the Market Place in 2018, parts of the upper fills and walls of two adjacent cellars were recorded. These had been infilled, as with the Eccleston Street examples, with the demolition rubble of the overlying building.

Two adjacent cellars were encountered in Trench A of the archaeological excavation at Highfield Place by Holgate. Holgate summarised his five excavations across the town as follows: 'Three sites examined the back of later medieval burghage plots; two, the front. Post-medieval cellar construction had destroyed all street front structures, but garden deposits containing medieval pottery (including wasters and daub at Site D) were recovered, as were quantities of post-medieval pottery produced in the town's 18th and 19th century potteries' (Holgate 1983, 11). Finds from Holgate's Site A contained only 18th- and 19th-century pottery, with two clay tobacco pipe fragments of 17th-century date, and the remainder largely 19th century (Holgate 1983, 20).

5.7 Late 18th to 19th-Century Industrial Housing

The archaeological potential of industrial / modern period cellared buildings and has not been fully realised in past decades. In the English Heritage-sponsored regional archaeological research framework for North West England, Newman and McNeil make a strong case for the investigation of cellars as a resource for 'revealing the history and lifestyles of the silent majority':

'There are many aspects of 19th and early 20th century urban life especially, which are insufficiently covered by the documentary record and are no longer recoverable through oral testimony. The documentary record of domestic life in particular is dominated by middle class, male – and often patriarchal – view-points. The views presented of the lives of the poor, women, children and servants are biased and often highly politicised. Archaeological research is needed to shed light on children, servants, domestic-based workers, and the urban working class in general. Cellars are particularly fertile areas for investigation. In middle-class homes they were the engine room that powered the house. Servants operated out of them, undertaking food preparation and storage there and usually doing the laundry. Cellars sometimes housed the water supply and were the storage areas for fuel. They allowed access to the house for staff without entry through the front door. For artisans, cellars could be workshops, especially being used for weaving in east Lancashire, and for the poorest they formed domestic accommodation, though only in Manchester have such dwellings been archaeologically investigated. The archaeology of 'below stairs' would have much to offer as a contrast in lifestyles to the picture given in the documentary record of middle-class domestic life presented in histories of the 19th century domesticity, houses and households' (Newman and McNeil 2007, 144).

Newman and McNeil observe that the late 18th and 19th centuries saw much new urban house building for the working classes. During this period new house types developed within industrial towns and they became the classic conceptions of labouring class housing, including back-to-back and

court housing. Newman and McNeil observe that ‘very little of this type of housing now survives, as from the end of the 19th century and through to the 1960s it was swept away in so-called slum clearances’. Challenges to the concept of the dismissive term ‘slum’ have sought to reassert the distinctive character and historical importance of these once common forms of housing. They conclude that

‘To challenge historical concepts of slums in the North West requires not only topographical analysis of the surviving fragments of pre-1840 working class urban development, but also the excavation of former areas of slum clearances. Most of these have been extensively redeveloped and the opportunity for meaningful archaeological results through excavation may have been lost, but there are a few examples where cleared areas have not been redeveloped, as for example in Padiham (L). The archaeological examination of these areas must be a priority for Industrial Age urban archaeological research (Newman and McNeil 2007, 145).

The study area represents a strong candidate for one of those areas which are a high priority for North West England’s regional archaeological research agenda.

6. Potential Impacts

6.1 Implications of Development

Archaeological Potential

The study area has been occupied and utilised as a core area within the medieval settlement of Prescott since at least the late medieval period. It is possible that earlier, pre-conquest activity also occurred in the area, given its proximity to the parish church, which is likely to have early origins, in the post-Roman period. The location on the slope of a south-facing ridge may have made the site attractive for settlement in the early medieval period.

Davey recognised the importance of this core area (part of his Zone Three; Davey 1978, 11; figure, p. 10) for understanding the origins and development of the town in the medieval and later periods.

The 1987 excavation on the north side of Kemble Street revealed evidence for a late 16th-century structure, predating but on the same building line as the later 18th/19th century houses. This showed the potential for the survival of high-quality structural information from the early post-medieval period, even in areas where later building had taken place.

The Prescott Sampling Project revealed surviving medieval and post-medieval stratigraphy in a number of locations in the town (Philpott and Davey 1983; Fig. 11). The existence of relatively undisturbed soil deposits, probably derived from horticulture and small-scale industrial activity, was widespread and consistent in the development of clay soils over the sandstone bedrock. Such soil deposits were typically identified and broadly dated from the presence of late medieval and post-medieval pottery. These may be typical of the undeveloped backplots within the main area of the town, including ‘islands’ or pockets of less disturbed ground within the current site.

There are two significant impacts on the archaeological resource in the area of the current site. Cellaring has clearly been a widespread though not universal phenomenon by the 19th century in the densely occupied and intensively used core of the town. This has removed the medieval and earlier post-medieval deposits. Other houses may lack cellars, but in the current state of knowledge this is uncertain.

While the cellars may have removed earlier medieval and post-medieval archaeological deposits, as discussed above, they are increasingly being recognised as a valuable part of the archaeological resource in their own right (Newman and McNeil 2007).

The site, including the frontage of Sewell Street, Wood Street and the vacant plots on Kemble Street, is likely to contain extensive remains of structures relating to late 18th- and 19th-century workers' housing recorded in documents, maps and archaeological work. Current archaeological research priorities for North West England emphasise the importance of investigating these once commonplace types of dwelling which have now been almost completely swept away in urban regeneration (Newman and McNeil 2007, 144-145).

Islands of intact or less disturbed post-medieval or earlier stratigraphy may survive in backplots, under yards or road surfaces, and beneath houses with relatively shallow foundations. Recent excavations by Salford University in the area which constituted Highfield Place (formerly Parr's Square) and Gore's Yard have revealed the truncated remains of stone and brick buildings, a well and other features. When these areas were laid out, probably largely in the late 18th century, the laying of the cobbled surface may have protected earlier archaeological deposits, largely preserving them from subsequent disturbance except by provision of services such as piped water or drainage. It is uncertain whether the surface would have been lowered to lay cobbles, or whether they were set on the ground surface over former burgrave/garden deposits. This requires further investigation to determine the processes of construction and thus the extent of survival of archaeological deposits. For comparison, a recent archaeological evaluation (February 2021) by the writer at the Stiles in Ormskirk, a small south-west Lancashire town and former medieval borough which is in many ways closely comparable to Prescott in size and development, has shown the extensive survival of garden soils in former burgrave plots, which has sealed and preserved medieval and early post-medieval features. This demonstrates that even intensively built-up areas to the rear of street frontages may retain considerable archaeological potential if buildings were set over, rather excavated into, the contemporary ground surface.

Late 18th- and 19th-century housing, in terraces for lower status dwellings, were often provided with minimal foundations. The re-use of stone foundations by buildings constructed on street frontages is attested in Kemble Street, observed during road widening operations. Here 18th- or 19th-century houses have taken advantage of the existence of sound sandstone footings for their own foundations. A similar phenomenon where the earlier stone foundation walls were re-used as the foundation for brick successors was noted at several locations along Eccleston Street (e.g. nos 32, 27 and 29 Eccleston Street: unpublished observations by the writer, 2019-20).

Construction on sloping ground may have been accommodated by terracing into the slope or by building up the ground level by deposition of material. The creation of the modern car park area in Wood Street may have led to modification of the ground level, either through truncation of the anthropogenic deposits by reduction of the surface or building up the level through deliberate dumping or accumulation of material. Determining the extent to which archaeological deposits have been truncated is also important for determining the likely survival of archaeological deposits.

6.2 Statement of Impact

At the time of writing no specific development proposals have been received, so it is not possible to assess the impact of development on the archaeological deposits which might survive within study area.

6.3 Mitigation

A major component of Davey's report in 1978 sought to identify a set of research priorities for the town. These focused on establishing the chronology and mechanisms of the town's origins and growth (1978, 150), and to determine whether it developed through planned or organic growth. Davey states 'archaeological investigation will be the only means of finding out what it was like to live in Prescott during first 4 or 5 hundred years of its occupation, and, in the later period, should provide valuable complementary evidence about the nature of the emerging industrial processes being developed (Davey 1978, 15). Davey's recommendations made over four decades ago remain valid

today. Current regional research priorities (Brennand 2007) accord closely with Davey's research aims and priorities but expand the chronological framework to include the late 18th and 19th century workers' housing, including cellared buildings and so-called 'slum' areas.

Davey proposed a series of recommendations for archaeological work in different areas in the town. In 1978 the study area was already open ground and Davey assessed the two component elements as Grade B; 'some sampling necessary to establish the need for further work' (Davey 1978, 15).

Another study undertaken in 1988, by this writer, identified the same area as a high priority for investigation and recording in the event of development. 'The medieval focus of the town, centred on the Market Place, with burgages lining the major streets, Eccleston Street, Kemble Street and High Street, is of considerable importance in attempts to understand the development and nature of urban life in the region and should have a high priority in the choice of sites for excavation or rescue recording in advance of building development' (Philpott 1988, 33).

Knowsley Borough Council's archaeological advisors may wish to consider some or all of the following techniques and approaches to evaluate and investigate the potential heritage assets identified in the report above and to safeguard the heritage value of the town's archaeological assets through appropriate recording prior to their destruction.

This is in accordance with the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (January 2016) Policy CS20: Managing the Borough's Historic Environment which states:

Para 9.20: 'Knowsley contains a number of important archaeological remains which are important historical assets. New development should take into account the need to preserve or record archaeological remains. Where evidence suggests that development could affect archaeological remains, the developer will be required to arrange investigations to assess their character, condition and extent. In the event, that remains are identified as of specific importance, the developer may be required to design the development to enable preservation in-situ, or if appropriate arrange for the excavation, recording, analysis and reporting of the remains.' (p. 156).

- Evaluation excavations to determine the character, extent and date of any surviving archaeological deposits across the Kemble Street/Sewell Street study area; the evaluations will also enable the determination both vertically and horizontally of any truncation of deposits across the site.
- Identifying the location and depth of cellars and basements, and to devise an agreed strategy for the further investigation through evaluation of a selected sample of cellars following the North West regional research frameworks agenda and strategy (Newman and Brennand 2007). This will focus on identifying such features as cellar dwellings or industrial and craft uses.
- Through further documentary research, to identify the extent and survival of medieval and post-medieval deposits relating to the market town, targeting areas of high potential such as backplots, former open areas and uncellared building plots.
- Investigation of urban housing through evaluation, identifying such physical features as internal layout and construction, intensification of occupation, industrial use, chronology and characterising different house types, and correlating with material culture and census and other historical data to build up a detailed picture of life in a small industrial town in Lancashire in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Recovering cultural material from archaeological contexts associated with the structures and their occupants, with a view to establishing a chronological sequence, identifying such elements as social and economic change, and recovering evidence of the craft and industrial production of the town, in particular durable ceramic material from the town's manufactories.

- Depending on the results of the evaluation, if significant archaeological remains are discovered, there may be a requirement to investigate more extensive open areas through excavation to preserve by record the archaeological deposits.

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Maps

1743 Richard Edge 'A Mapp of Lands in Prescott and Whiston belonging to Mrs Bradshaw' (Prescot Museum)

1750 'A Map of Prescot Hall, surveyed by H? Higginson 1750' (Davey 1978, 58). This shows only the hall estate and does not cover the town.

c. 1780 Plan of land in Prescot the property of J Atherton esq. [Lancashire Archives description states: 'Shows land in the area now known as Eccleston Street and Warrington Road; shows a school, probably Prescot Grammar School, and what may be Prescot House. DDCS 26/24 and 26/26 may be related to this plan.'] (Lancashire Archives DDX 301/9)

1809 Piercy's plan of the townships of Prescot and Whiston, (Lancashire Archives DDCS /acc 11870/Box 6/3)

1834 Bowran's Plan of Prescot, 12 May 1834, (Lancashire Archives DDCS/acc11870/Box6/4)

1847 Tithe Award map, reproduced by Davey (1978, 64), (Lancashire Archives DRL/1 65)

1848 Ordnance Survey Town Plan 1:500

1850 Ordnance Survey Lancashire 107, six inch to mile, surveyed 1845-47

1869 Map produced for 'Prescot Local Board' (Davey 1978, 57)

1893 Ordnance Survey Lancashire CVII.7, 25 inch to mile, surveyed 1890-91

1908 Ordnance Survey Lancashire CVII.7, 25 inch to mile, revised 1906

1927 Ordnance Survey Lancashire CVII.7, 25 inch to mile, revised 1925

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1956 Ordnance Survey SJ49SE – A, surveyed pre-1930-1955

1966 Ordnance Survey SJ49SE

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<http://archives.knowsley.gov.uk/prescot/gallery-of-prescot> Knowsley Archives, Prescot gallery of historical images

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are due to the following:

Dr Ben Croxford for supplying data from the Merseyside Historic Environment Record with admirable despatch (see Appendix A5);

Rosemary Tyler, for her generous advice and freely given documentation and photographs from her extensive research into the town of Prescot compiled over many years; her transcript of the inventory of Henry Ashton of Cockpit House (Appendix A4);

Owen Barton of Knowsley Borough Council for commissioning this work and for drawing my attention to a number of important historical sources

Appendix 1: Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy January 2016

Policy CS20: Managing the Borough's Historic Environment

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Para 9.20: 'Knowsley contains a number of important archaeological remains which are important historical assets. New development should take into account the need to preserve or record archaeological remains. Where evidence suggests that development could affect archaeological remains, the developer will be required to arrange investigations to assess their character, condition and extent. In the event, that remains are identified as of specific importance, the developer may be required to design the development to enable preservation in-situ, or if appropriate arrange for the excavation, recording, analysis and reporting of the remains. '

National Planning Policy Framework (updated 2019, pp. 55-56)

187. Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:

- a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and
- b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

Proposals affecting heritage assets

189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Figures

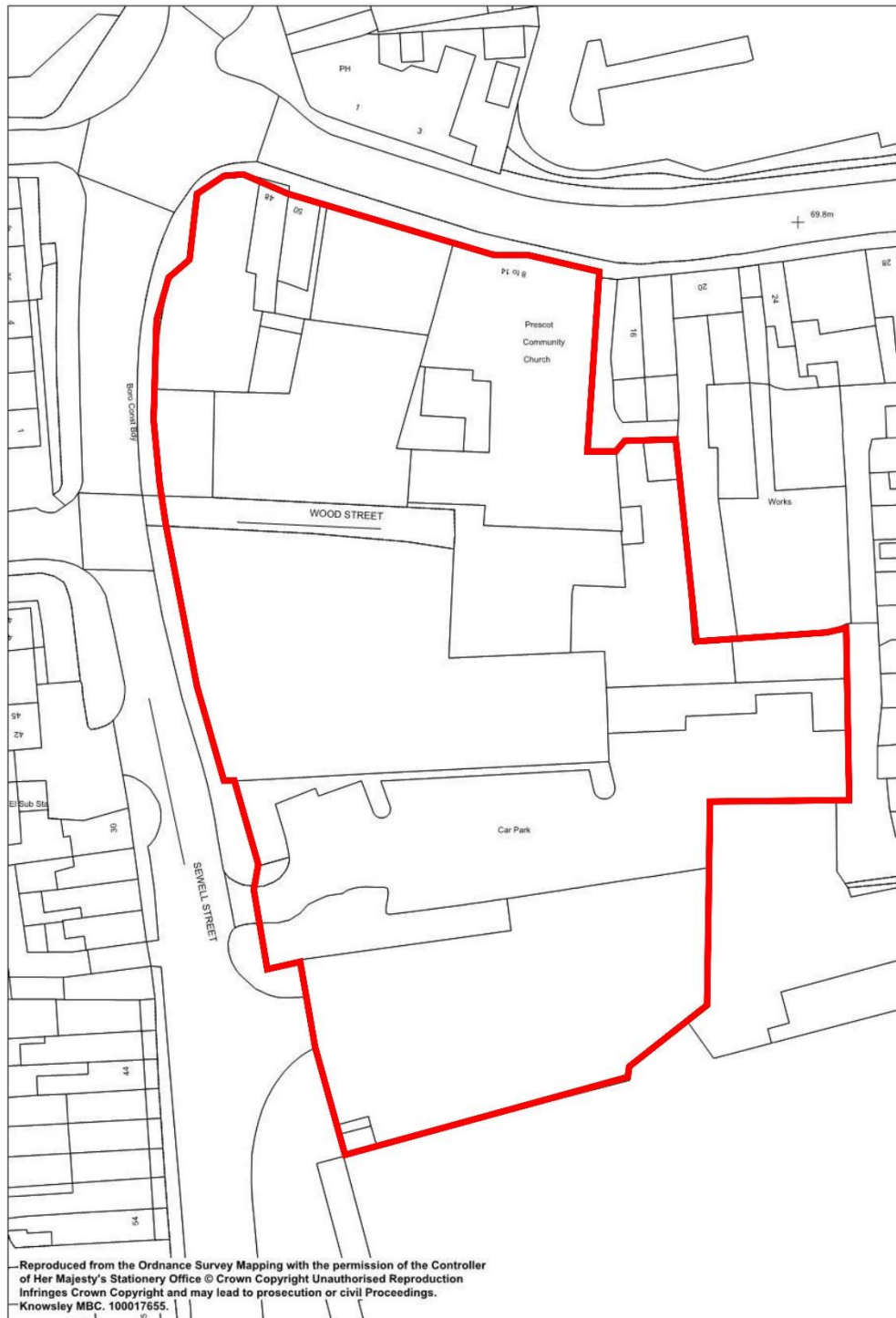


Figure 1: Location of Sewell Street and Kemble Street, study area (map provided by Knowsley BC)

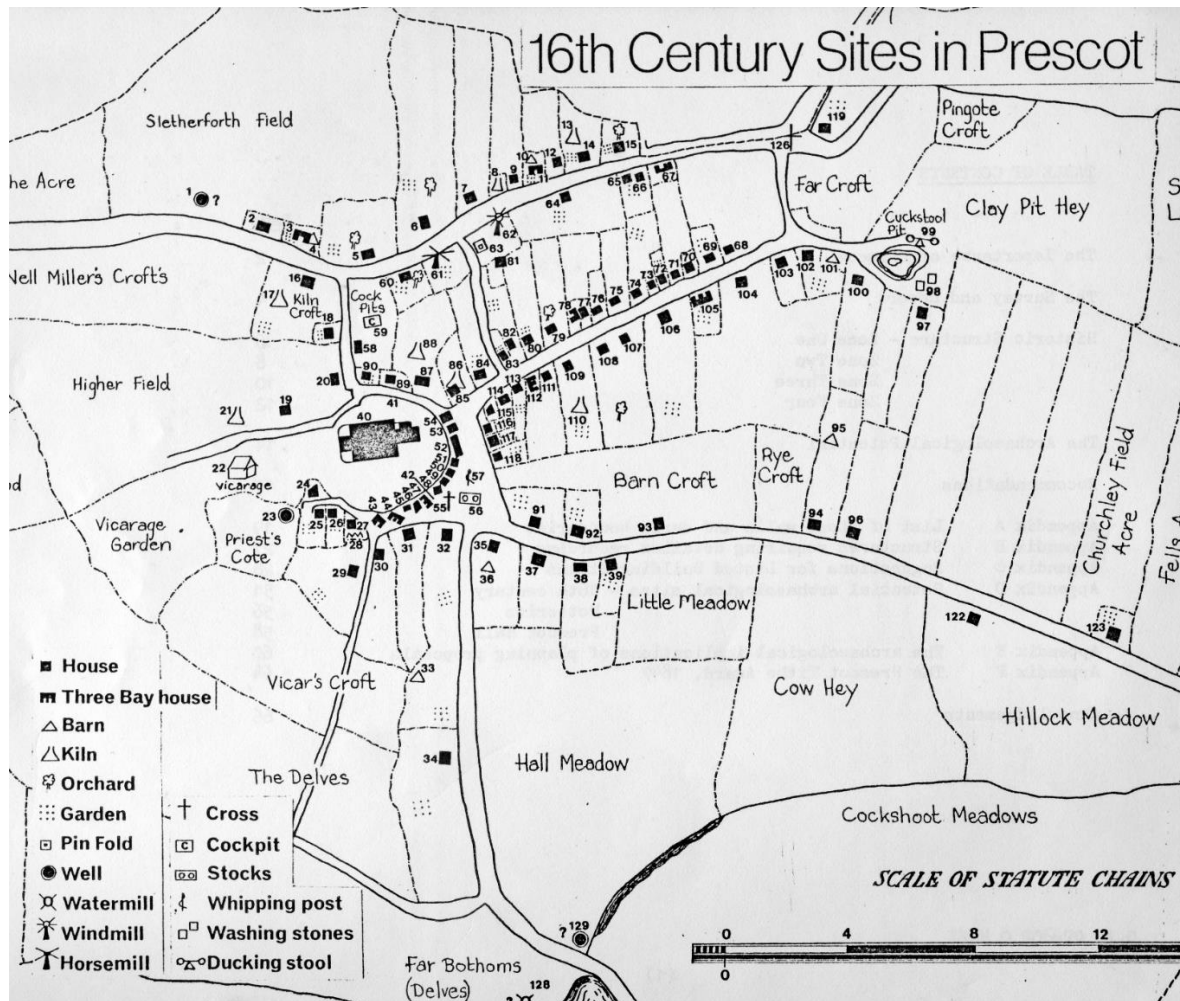


Figure 2: 16th-century sites in Prescott (after Davey 1978, 3; based on Bailey 1937, opp. p 48); The Kemble Street/Sewell Street area is visible as plot nos 35-38 and Hall Meadow





Figure 5: Bowran's 'Map of the Township of Prescott 1834 (detail)' (courtesy of Rosemary Tyler, Prescott Historic Society Archives). Only selected properties are illustrated.

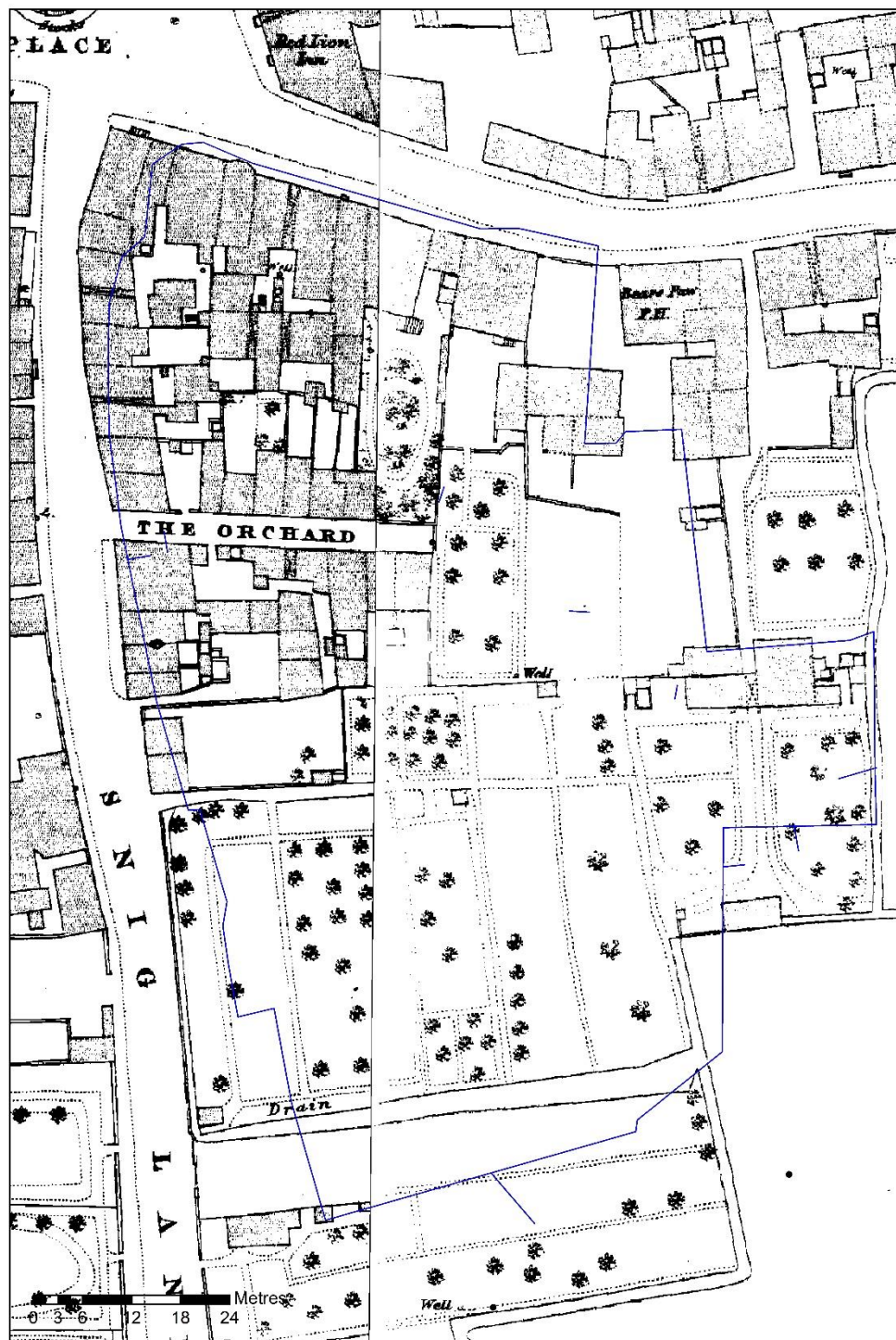


Figure 6: Detail from the 1848 1:500 Ordnance Survey map of Prescott (approx study area outline in blue)



Figure 7: Detail from the 1893 Ordnance Survey map (not to scale) (courtesy of Lancashire Archives)



Figure 8: Detail of 1908 Ordnance Survey map (courtesy of Lancashire Archives)



Figure 9: Ordnance Survey map of 1927 (courtesy of Lancashire Archives)

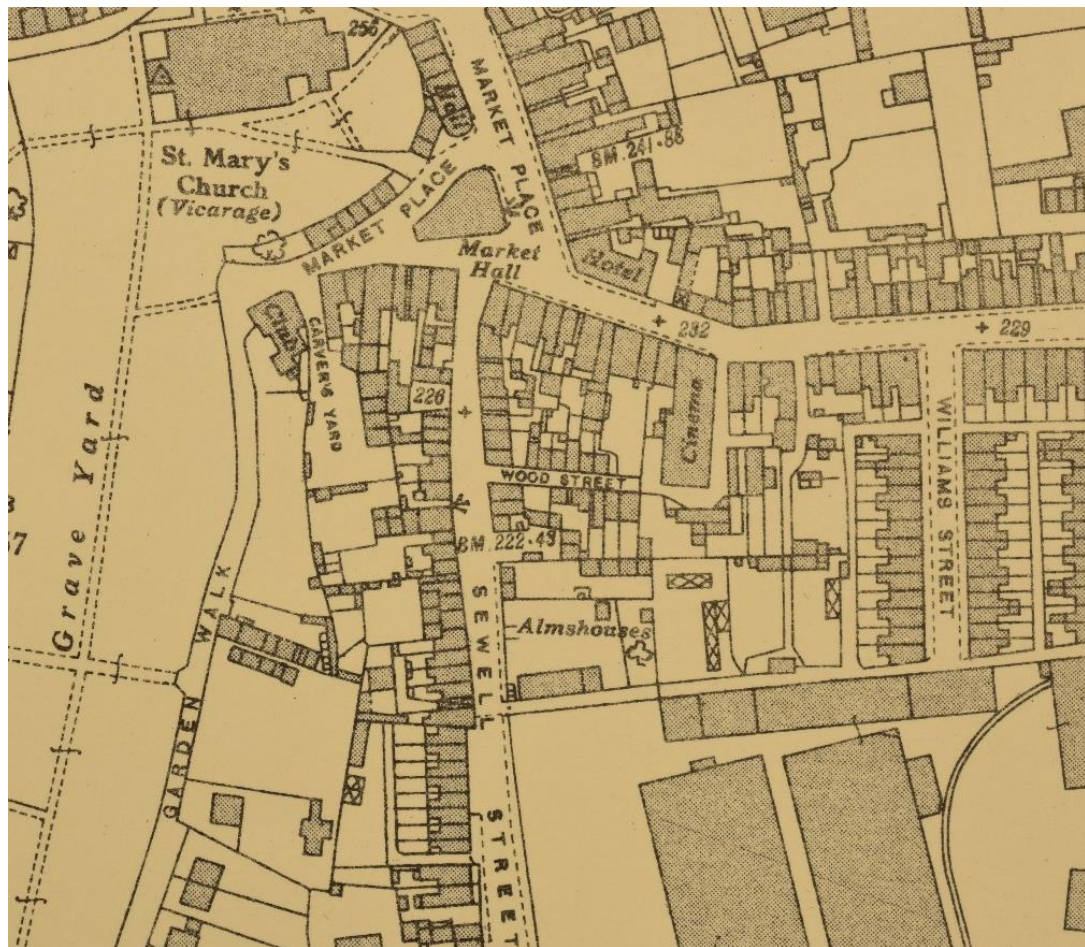


Figure 10: Detail from OS Map 1939 (courtesy of Lancashire Archives)



Figure 11: Detail from Ordnance Survey map 1966

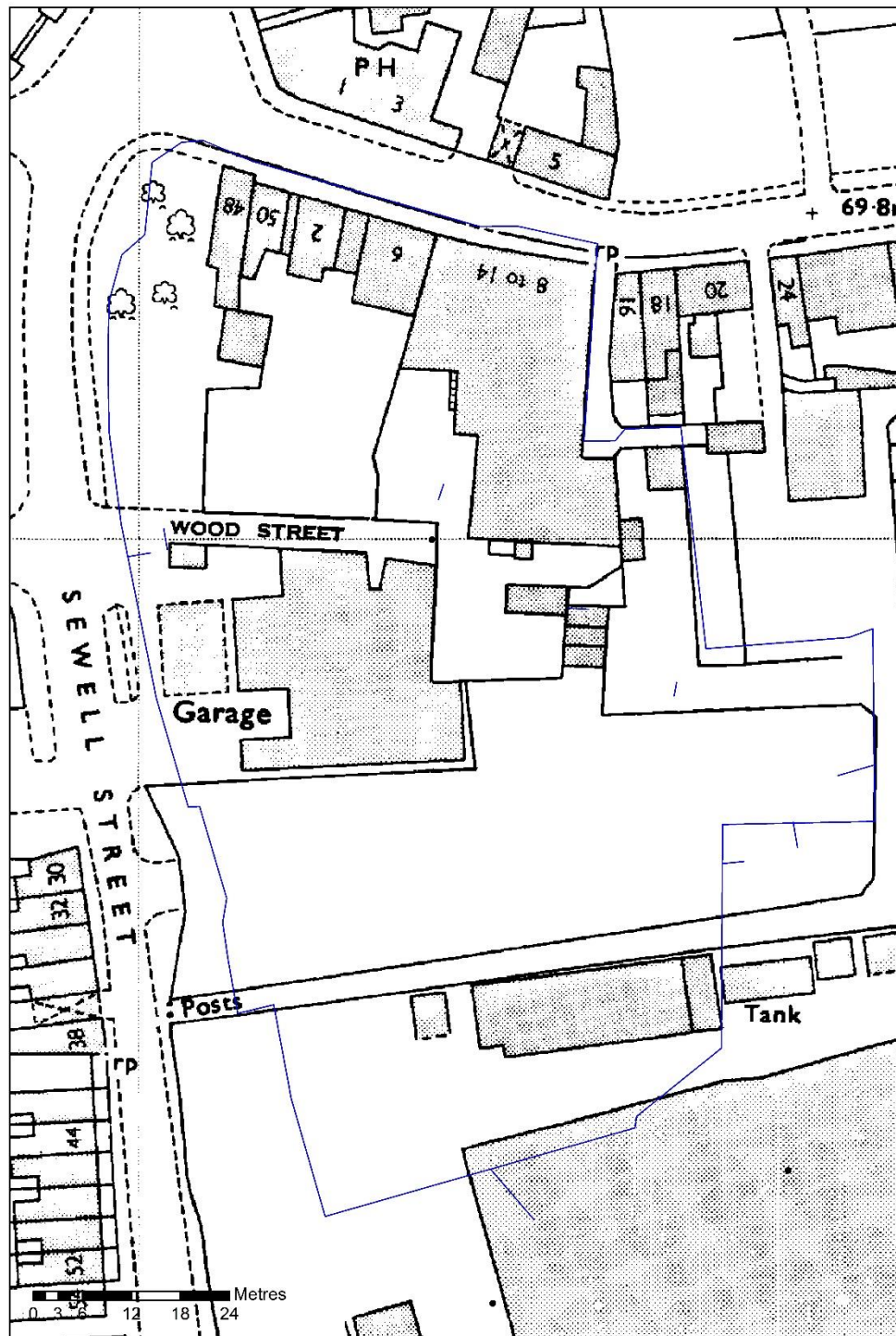


Figure 12: Detail from Ordnance Survey map c. 1977

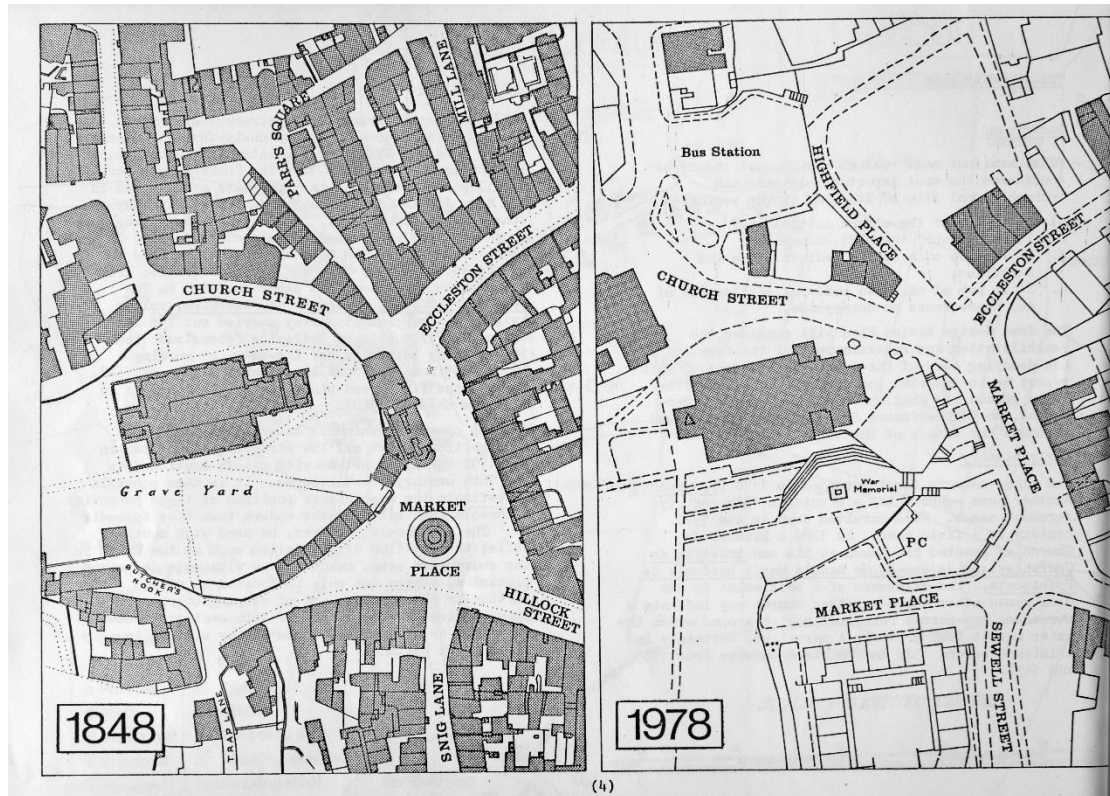


Figure 13: Loss of buildings in Prescot between 1848 and 1978, including the north end of Sewell Street (Davey 1978, 4)



Figure 14: Aerial photograph of Prescot from SW showing redevelopment of shopping centre in 1988; Sewell Street is far left (photograph by R. Philpott)

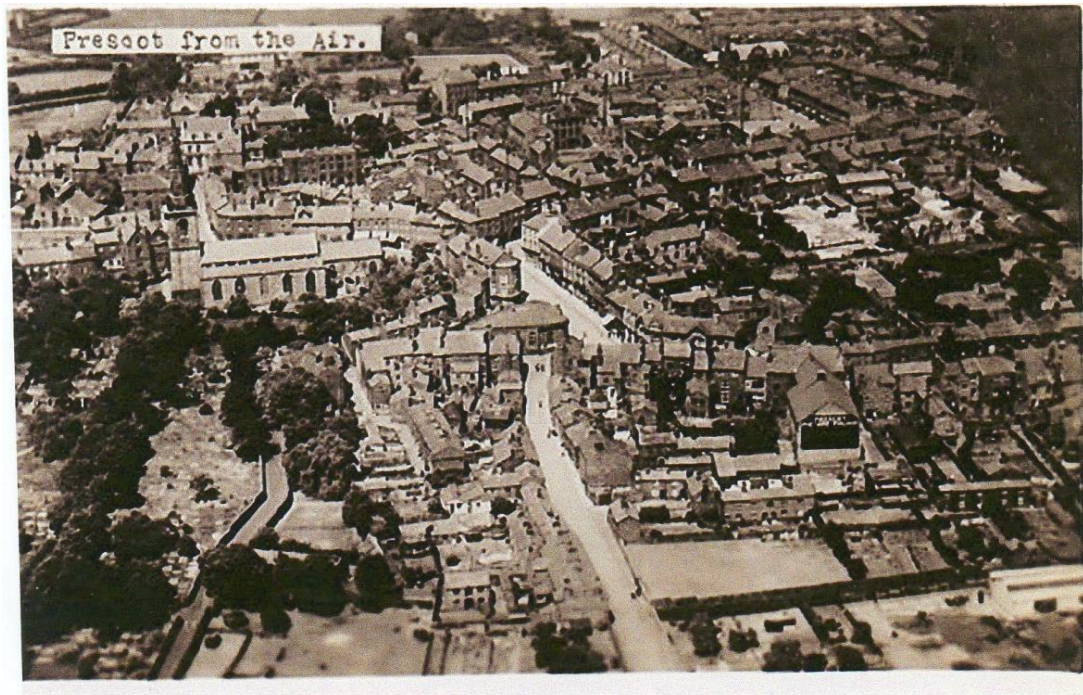


Figure 15: 'Prescot from the Air', looking north, St Mary's church is mid left; Sewell Street is in the foreground (image courtesy of Rosemary Tyler, Prescott Historic Society Archives)



Figure 16: The 'South Prospect of Prescott in Lancashire' by W. Winstanley, dated 1743, shows Snig Lane at the foreground of the town but the view is distant and details of buildings on the east side are obscured. (Winstanley's view of Prescott, From Facebook page Born & Raised in Prescott posted by Jeff Holmes)



Figure 17: 'Photograph of a painting of Market Place, Prescott, in 1809 featuring the roundhouse in the centre and on the right side, the court house/town hall building'. Far left is the building, demolished, on the corner of Market Place and Sewell Street. (Courtesy of Knowsley Archives Ref No: PT92)



Figure 18: Wood Street, in c. 1926, from the west on the east side of Sewell Street, Prescott © Jack Knowles. The same photograph was published by Arthur Roberts (1990, 30). (courtesy of Knowsley Archives Ref No: PT178). NB: Owen Barton observes that the photograph appears to be reversed, so the south side of Wood Street is to the left.



Figure 19: Sewell Street from the south, during demolition of buildings prior to construction of doctors' surgery; east side of Sewell Street shows garage in orange brick still standing (From Facebook page Born & Raised in Prescott, Photo by John Hopkins)

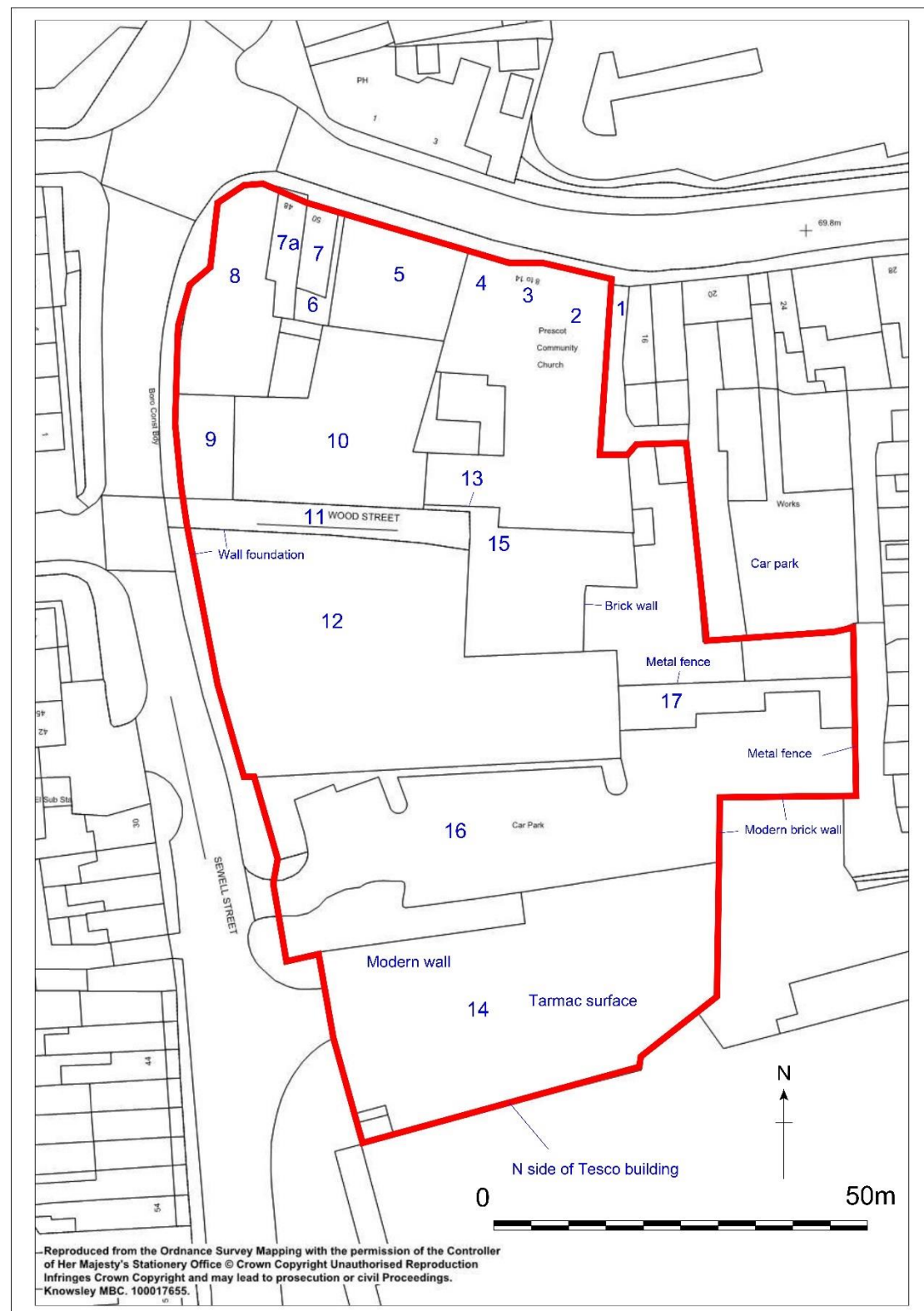


Figure 20: Sewell Street/Kemble Street site location plan, with site visit observations (at 28 May 2020)



Figure 21: Prescott Community Church (nos 8-14 Kemble Street) from NW in 2020 (Photo number DSC_0341)



Figure 22: Prescott, nos 48-50 Market Place, from N; vacant plot nos2-6 Kemble Street to the left (Photo number DSC_0396)



Figure 23: Wood Street (formerly Orchard Street) from W (DSC_0418)



Figure 24: Garden wall on N side of Wood Street (formerly Orchard Street) from SE (DSC_0426)



Figure 25: E side of Sewell Street, showing widened street and waste ground, from SW (DSC_0443)



Figure 26: The brick Community Church (former picture house) and rear of buildings on Kemble St, from Sewell Street to SW (DSC_0446)



Figure 27: View of the rear of Kemble Street buildings (courtesy of Owen Barton, Knowsley Borough Council)



Figure 28: Kemble Street, nos 8 to left and 6, latter demolished; in 1980s (photograph courtesy of Owen Barton, Knowsley Borough Council)



Figure 29: Nos 6 Kemble Street (with blue door) and No 4 occupied by wooden hoardings, both now demolished, 1980s (photograph courtesy of Owen Barton, Knowsley Borough Council)



Figure 30: Kemble Street: Front of nos 6 (part visible to left, with blocked door), no 4 occupied by wooden hoarding, and no 2 (white front with Trading Post sign), all demolished; undated probably 1980s (courtesy of Owen Barton, Knowsley BC)



Figure 31: Rear of nos 48-50 Market Place to left and nos 2-4 Kemble Street, undated probably 1980s (courtesy of Owen Barton, Knowsley BC)



Figure 32: Aerial photograph from SE by R Philpott (1988), showing Sewell Street in the foreground (LM88. 390)



Figure 33: Aerial photograph from SE by R Philpott (1988), showing Sewell Street and Kemble Street in the left foreground (LM88.392)