

Area of Archaeological potential and Archaeological character zones

Roman Activity predominately in Zone 1

Roman Fort	The fort, located in Harbutt's field was constructed c AD 70 –80, no doubt to control the exploitation of salt. It is suggested that previous to this the Romans occupied a 'tented or marching' Fort.
Roman Settlement	A significant amount of, and variety of archaeological finds in the area suggests a well-established and long-term Roman and Civilian settlement. Occupation dates from the late 1st century AD to AD 400.
Roman Salt Working	There is a large quantity of archaeological evidence of Roman salt working in this Zone, including kilns for the evaporation of brine, pits for storage of brine and lead salt pans.
Roman Roads	A number of Roman Roads converge upon Middlewich, including King Street, which runs north to Wilderspool and south to Chesterton, and the road from Whitchurch.
Iron Age Activity	Archaeological evidence of Iron Age activity has been identified, which indicates that salt exploitation began before the arrival of the Romans.
Kinderton Hall	The Scheduled area of Kinderton Hall Gardens is included in this Zone, which includes a prospect mound and fishponds.
Post Medieval Industry and Salt Working	Aligned along the River Croco were a number of salt workings and other manufactories.

Salt Working Activity predominately in Zone 2

Salt Works	The significance of the salt working has been evidenced through archaeological finds dating from the Roman period to the 19th century.
Roman Settlement	Extensive archaeological evidence of Roman settlement.
Medieval Mill	A mill is documented at Kinderton from 1330. This is thought to be located on the site of the post medieval corn mill, which is a Grade II Listed building.
Medieval Bridges	Two bridges are mentioned in the 14th century, both potentially located in this Zone.
Post Medieval Settlement	This area continued to be settled during the post medieval period.
Post Medieval Industry	Industries other than salt working were located in this area (for instance the Gas Works).

Medieval Settlement (Newton) predominately in Zone 3

Medieval Settlement	Settlement is known at Newton from the 11th century, when it was recorded at Domesday. It was separate from Middlewich, which at this time was a salt working centre.
Post Medieval Settlement	This area continued to be settled during the post medieval period.

Planned Medieval Settlement predominately in Zone 4

Burgage Plots and Tenements	To the west of the Church, on either side of Wheelock Street, are long, narrow tenements, which may have been laid out as burgage plots. To the west of Lewin Street are irregular properties which have not been formally laid out and are perhaps the lower status tenements of salt workers and other minor craftsmen.
St Michael's Church	The Church contains 12th century fabric, despite undergoing renovations in the 19th century.



Cheshire Historic Environment Record

Middlewich Archaeological Character Zones and Area of Archaeological Potential

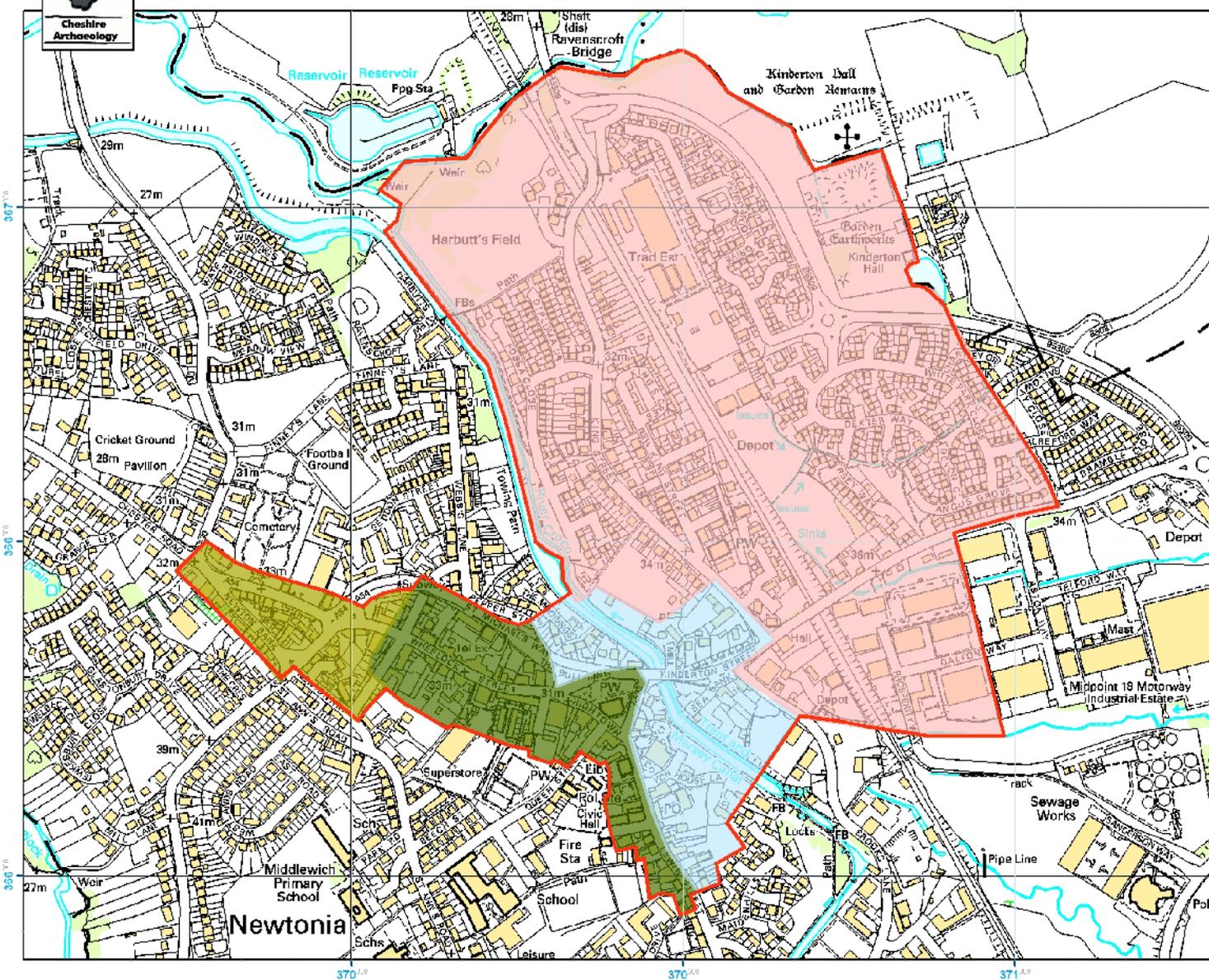
-  Area of Archaeological Potential
-  ACZ1 Roman Activity
-  ACZ2 Salt Working
-  ACZ3 Medieval Settlement Newton
-  ACZ4 Planned Medieval Settlement



Warning
 This map only shows data which lies within your area of interest. Additional data held at the CHER may have been excluded from this map.

The location and extent of any designated site or area is shown for illustrative purposes only. Please refer to the appropriate documentation for further details.

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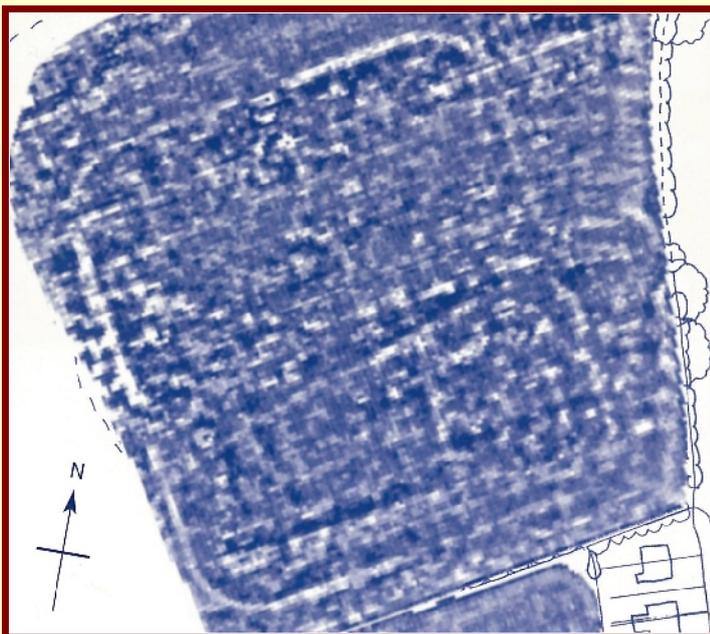
Forty nine documented archaeological works have been carried out in Middlewich, of varying degrees of excavation and assessment. The earliest reference is Watkin, who in **1886** published details from several antiquarian accounts of a Roman settlement at Middlewich, including a description of earthworks of a fort at Harbutt's field, and discoveries made at Middlewich, including an abundance of pottery, brooches, coins, metal and leather objects. Also mentioned are the fragments of pottery, charcoal and hand made bricks that were found during the construction of the gas works in **1854**, which are likely to have been briquetage used in salt production. In the vicinity of the railway a possible burial was discovered when fragments of burnt bones and charcoal were revealed within close proximity of two shafts, which may have been wells or brine shafts.

In **1921** Donald Atkinson carried out excavations in Harbutt's Field, revealing coins, pottery and potential iron working hearths. A major discovery, made in **1939** during house building was a Bronze Military Diploma found to the north of the gas works site and east of King Street.

The **1960s and '70s** witnessed a series of archaeological excavations, starting in 1960 when Dennis Harding and Ian Blake carried out an excavation to the rear of the house where the Diploma had been found. They discovered a clay-lined Roman salt kiln, together with kiln furniture, salt-working briquetage and 1st / 2nd century pottery. This was the only inland salting known at the time.

Between **1964 and 1975** John Bestwick, on behalf of the Middlewich Archaeological Society, directed a series of excavations which revealed for the first time extensive evidence for Roman occupation and salt-working in the town, demonstrating the significance of Middlewich as a salt-working settlement during the 1st to 4th centuries AD. The major sites examined include King Street, which revealed 3rd century domestic buildings overlying timber workshops built around a central courtyard and salt-working features dated to the 2nd century AD.

Since **1992**, over twenty pieces of archaeological work have been carried out in the town by professional archaeologists as part of the planning process. In **1993**, during an evaluation at Harbutt's Field, the defensive ditch of the Roman fort was located by geophysics and confirmed by sample excavation.



A civilian settlement developed in the area to the south of the fort and this has been subjected to a series of evaluations, excavations and watching briefs from 1994 to 2001. This work has demonstrated that the area was intensively occupied and that a wide variety of domestic and industrial activities took place.

Archaeological work has revealed evidence of rectangular and oval-shaped timber buildings, clay floors, and oven bases, as well as finds of Roman brick, tile, pottery and daub. Excavations in 2001 in the area c.200m south of the fort revealed spectacular waterlogged deposits, including a plank-lined well and wicker-lined pits. These included wood and

leather objects and other organic material preserved in the waterlogged conditions.