

Part 7: Historic Environment Research Framework



The collation of the information on the development and character of the town has highlighted a number of areas where our understanding of the town is deficient. This has led to the formulation of the research questions set out below, which summarise potential future directions of research on the town. This list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive, but suggests a framework within which further research could take place and this is linked to the South West Regional Archaeological Research Framework (Webster 2008), where relevant.

7.1 Pre-urban Activity

The wider pre-urban context of Cerne Abbas is relatively well understood. A series of chalk promontories overlook the vale in which the later town is set. What is not so well understood is the finer detail and chronology of this basic assessment; when were these sites occupied? Were they permanently occupied or episodic in nature? Was there any settlement on the spring line at this time?

1. What is the nature of the prehistoric activity specifically in the urban area of Cerne Abbas?
2. Where are the late prehistoric and Roman dispersed settlements?
3. Is there any further evidence for Iron Age ditches aligned with a grid of pre-urban tracks in the Cerne Abbas area?
4. What was the nature of the palaeo-environment in the prehistoric and Roman period?
5. Evidence for Iron Age and Roman activity and burial has been found close to the Abbey site in Cerne Abbas, but what was the nature, scale, duration and extent of the settlement here?

7.2 Origins of the Town

The question of the origins of Cerne Abbas is crucial to our understanding of the town and its early development. Also Cerne Abbas has real potential to inform on the wider Research Aims for the South West Region to investigate and identify the locations of Early Medieval religious buildings, monuments and landscapes, and to develop our understanding of Early Medieval urban settlement (SWARF Research Aims 32 and 35).

6. It has been suggested that the original monastic precinct was aligned on a pre-existing track, the continuation of Piddle Lane. Is there any archaeological evidence to support this assertion? Furthermore, is there any

evidence for the layout of the Late Saxon Abbey church or other late Saxon monastic buildings?

7. Is there any evidence for the late Saxon secular settlement of Cerne as recorded in Domesday; either under the site of the Abbey Farm buildings, or to the west of Simsay Field where Late Saxon pottery has been recovered?
8. Evidence for Roman, Late Saxon and medieval activity has been found close to the spring line on the eastern side of the River Cerne, but was there a dual settlement with further activity close to the spring line on the western side of the River Cerne at this time?
9. What was the nature of the palaeo-environment in the Saxon period?

7.3 Medieval town

Any archaeological evidence from the town at this period enables a fuller picture of the development of the town and complements the historical evidence. It would feed into the wider Research Aims for the South West Region to improve our understanding of Medieval and later urbanism (SWARF Research Aim 36) and assessment of the archaeological potential for studying medieval economy, trade, technology and production (SWARF Research Aim 47).

10. How did the town develop? Were the parish church and market place medieval adjuncts on the west side of the Late Saxon settlement?
11. When were the burgage plots on Long Street and Abbey Street developed? Was Abbey Street a late medieval planned street on a different alignment from the earlier settlement pattern or do the plots here merely represent the planning of burgages on a pre-existing route connecting the Abbey entrance and the market place?
12. When were the shrunken settlement earthwork sites to the north of the Abbey and south of the Tithe Barn occupied? Do these represent failed suburbs planned by the Abbey?
13. Was there any secular settlement associated with the Tithe Barn?
14. What evidence is there for the medieval economy?
15. What evidence is there for medieval industry and how was it organised?
16. To what extent was the town's economy controlled by the Abbey during this period and did the monks patronise local craftsmen?
17. Are there any traces of medieval buildings

hidden within later buildings?

7.4 Post-medieval and Modern town

Any archaeological evidence from the town at this period enables a fuller picture of its development and complements the historical evidence. It would feed into the wider Research Aims for the South West Region to improve our understanding of Medieval and later urbanism (SWARF Research Aim 36) and to broaden our understanding of post-medieval to modern technology and production.

18. How did the dissolution of Cerne Abbey affect the economic development of the post-medieval town?
19. When did the ribbon settlements on Duck Street and Acreman Street develop?
20. How was the industrial activity of the town organised and how did it develop?
21. What physical traces of the industrial activity of the town still survive? Are there any remains of former silk works, glove works, breweries and their ancillary buildings and structures?
23. Why did Cerne Abbas ultimately fail as an urban economic centre and enter steep decline from the mid 19th century onwards?
24. What evidence can the standing secular buildings provide for their function and date?

Appendices



Appendix 1: References

Abbreviations

DHC = Dorset History Centre

OPC = Online Parish Clerk

RCHME = Royal Commission on Historic Monuments of England

SWARF = South West Regional Archaeological Framework

WDDC = West Dorset District Council

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Appendix 2: Chronology

For the purposes of this project, the following period names, sub-divisions and dates have been used. These are based on those used by the Dorset County Council Historic Environment Record.

| Period | Period Sub-divisions | Date Range |
|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Prehistoric | Palaeolithic | 500000-10001BC |
| | Mesolithic | 10000-4001BC |
| | Neolithic | 4000-2351BC |
| | Bronze Age | 2350-701BC |
| | Iron Age | 800BC-AD42 |
| Roman | Roman | AD43-409 |
| Saxon | Early Saxon | AD410-899 |
| | Late Saxon | AD900-1065 |
| Medieval | Norman | AD1066-1149 |
| | Earlier Medieval | AD1150-1349 |
| | Later Medieval | AD1350-1539 |
| Post-medieval | Early post-medieval | AD1540-1599 |
| | 17 th Century | AD1600-1699 |
| | 18 th century | AD1700-1799 |
| | Earlier 19 th century | AD1800-1850 |
| | Later 19 th century | AD1851-1900 |
| Modern | Edwardian | AD1901-1913 |
| | Inter-war | AD1914-1945 |
| | Post-war | AD1946-1969 |
| | Modern | AD1970-2010 |

Appendix 3: Archaeological Investigations in Cerne Abbas

| No. | Site Name | Investigation type | Date | Reference | HER Event No. |
|-----|--|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | New Village Hall | Desk-based assessment and survey | 1998 | Valentin, 1998 | EDO5304 |
| 2 | Cerne Abbey, Abbatial effigies | Casual observation | 1810 | Drury, 1931, 257-8 | EDO5300 |
| 3 | Cerne Abbey, discovery of sepulchral chapel | Casual observation | c.1850 | Hutchins 1874, 27 | EDO5308 |
| 4 | Cerne Abbey, discovery of tiled floor in NE corner of churchyard | Casual observation | Before 1874 | Hutchins 1874, 27 | EDO5309 |
| 5 | 31 Long Street | Watching Brief | 1995 | Wallis, 1995 | EDO5303 |
| 6 | The Pitchmarket | Watching Brief | 1995 | Butterworth, 1995, 141 | EDO5299 |
| 7 | Alton Lane (Simsay Field) | evaluation | 1998 | Freeman, 1998 | EDO351 |
| 8 | The Old Forge | Watching Brief | 2002 | Oakey, 2002 | EDO5305 |
| 9 | Land Behind Abbey Street | evaluation | 2004 | Bellamy & Montague, 2004 | EDO5306 |
| 10 | Cerne Abbey Barn | building recording | 1888 | Moule, 1889 | EDO5302 |
| 11 | Duck Street | evaluation | 2004 | Barton, 2004 | EDO5307 |

Appendix 4: Historic Urban Character Types

| Broad Type | Character Type | Scope Note |
|---------------|--|--|
| Commercial | Hotel | Large hotels in grounds with car parks. |
| | Market | Both indoor and outdoor market areas. Also used for historic market places. |
| | Office | Large office complexes that are identifiable as not being within a mixed use area. |
| | Offices and shops | Areas of mixed commercial use. |
| | Plant Nursery/ Garden Centre | Plant nurseries or garden centres covering large areas. |
| | Public house | Large public houses with car parks. Smaller public houses will be included under a more character dominant type. |
| | Retail park | Areas of large warehouse-type shops selling products such as furniture, white goods, etc, together with their car parks. |
| | Shopping centre | Shopping centres mainly out of town and with many small units, usually selling clothing, gifts etc. |
| | Superstore | Large single stores such as supermarkets and their car parks. |
| | Other commercial site | For commercial buildings of unknown use or not included in the categories above. |
| Communication | Airfield | An enclosed area used for the taking off, landing and maintenance of commercial and general aviation aircraft. |
| | Major road | Main roads, through routes, by-passes, etc |
| | Minor road | Minor roads linking the main roads. |
| | Lane/ Path | Smaller access ways, primarily used for historic routes. |
| | Car Park | Large car parks, including multi-storey, where not associated with a particular establishment. |
| | Bus Station | Large bus and coach stations. |
| | Railway | Current railway lines |
| | Railway (disused) | Lines of former railways, where these are still evident in the landscape. |
| | Railway Station | Railway stations which have a large impact on the landscape. |
| Railway Yard | Rail yards which have a large impact on the landscape. | |
| Industrial | Brewery | Large industrial brewery sites. It can also be used for former brewery sites converted to other uses, where the former brewery buildings remain dominant. |
| | Brickworks | Includes both brick and tile works. |
| | Engineering works | All engineering works including light and electrical engineering sites. |
| | Industrial Estate | Sites comprising small units of light industry, including sites described as 'Business Park' and 'Trading Estate' and primarily used for purpose-built industrial estates. Where industrial estates have been created by conversion of former industrial buildings, they have been characterised under the character type which reflects their original function, if this is still dominant. |

| Broad Type | Character Type | Scope Note |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Industrial (cont) | Maltings | Malthouses and small brewing sites. |
| | Metal works | All sites working and/or producing metal. |
| | Mill | All types of water mill. |
| | Pottery | Industrial site used for the production of industrial and domestic ceramic products. |
| | Quarry | Includes all extractive industries (stone, sand and gravel, clay, etc.) |
| | Quay/wharf/shipyard | Commercial shipping areas, including boatyards. |
| | Ropery | All rope and twine making sites, including rope walks, etc |
| | Textile works | Factories where textiles are manufactured. |
| | Timber Yard/ Saw mill | Large timber yards and/or sawmills. |
| | Workshops | An area of small industrial sites where the industry is unknown. |
| | Warehouse | Large storage buildings, including both historic warehouses (which may have now been converted to other uses) and modern warehouse sites. |
| | Other Industry | An area of industry which does not fit into any of the above. |
| Landscape | Beach | A sand or pebble area of the shore. |
| | Enclosed Fields | Enclosed fields which largely retain their original boundaries within an urban area. |
| | Fish Pond | Large areas of fish pond only. |
| | Pond | Smaller natural or artificial areas of water, including mill ponds. |
| | Paddocks and closes | Small regular or amorphous fields and plots close to settlement edge. It also includes areas of historic detached gardens within the urban landscape. |
| | Remnant Fields | Areas of former fields now enclosed by urban development, often no longer retaining their original shape or size. |
| | Scrub | Patchy areas of trees and shrubs. |
| | Unenclosed land | Unenclosed areas including small plots of land within settlement/industrial areas that are not defined as anything else. |
| | Wood | For all types and areas of woodland within the urban areas. |
| Military | Military Airfield | Enclosed area used for the taking off, landing and maintenance of military aircraft. |
| | Barracks | A building or building complex used to house soldiers. |
| | Depot | An enclosed area with numerous buildings used as the headquarters of a regiment. It can also be a dedicated stores facility. |
| | Town defences | Town walls, towers, bastions, and defensive earthworks associated with a town |
| | Territorial Army Centre | Sites of Territorial Army activity. |
| | Castle | A large fortified building or complex of buildings, built especially during the medieval period |
| | Other Military | An area of military activity which does not fit into the above. |

| Broad Type | Character Type | Scope Note |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Public Services | Art gallery | Large art galleries and their grounds. |
| | Community Centre | Includes all kinds of gathering places (Meeting hall, etc). |
| | Court Building | Crown Courts and Magistrates Courts. |
| | Emergency services building | Police stations, fire stations, ambulance stations, and coastguard stations, where free-standing and in their own grounds. |
| | Higher Education facility | For universities & college campuses - also adult education facilities. |
| | Library | Large libraries. |
| | Local Government Offices | All local government and central government offices including civic centres. |
| | Medical facility | All types of medical facility including hospitals, health centres, etc. |
| | Museum | Large museums |
| | Prison | For buildings marked 'Prison' |
| | Public building | Other non-specific public buildings. |
| | School | Use for schools and any associated playing fields. |
| Town hall | Town Halls | |
| Recreation and Ornamental Landscapes | Allotments | Large allotment areas within settlement areas. |
| | Camping Site | A usually fairly level area used for the pitching of tents or the parking of caravans for holiday use. |
| | Cinema | Large cinema complexes and their car parks. |
| | Deer Park | An area enclosed by a park pale for the stocking of deer. |
| | Golf Course | Landsaped areas used for playing golf, including club-houses, etc. |
| | Harbour/marina/dock | Areas for recreational boat use. |
| | Leisure Centre | Building used for various sports, including area of car park. |
| | Nature Reserve | An area designated for the protection of flora and fauna, often open to the public. |
| | Parkland | A landscape designed through judicious planting or clearance of trees in order to create vistas and usually associated with a Country House |
| | Public Open Space | Publicly accessible open areas not used for any specific activity. |
| | Public Park | For Public Parks and Gardens, larger areas of land which may include an ornamental lake, flower beds, tennis courts and play areas, etc. Also includes 'Recreation areas'. |
| | Racecourse | An enclosed area used for racing (horses, dogs, cars, etc.) |
| | Seafront | Sea side area used for public recreation, includes piers, promenades, etc. |
| Sports field | An area of ground used for organised sporting activities. | |

| Broad Type | Character Type | Scope Note |
|---|---|---|
| Recreation and Ornamental Landscapes (cont) | Theme Park | An area used for the recreation of the public and may include rides which is organised around a central theme. |
| | Other Recreation | An area of recreation/ornamental landscape, which does not fit into the above. |
| Religious | Church | Churches of all denominations (including attached churchyard) |
| | Chapel | Non-conformist chapels, including attached graveyards. |
| | Cemetery | Large municipal cemeteries or other detached cemeteries (not attached to church or chapel) |
| | Religious house | Monasteries, nunneries, etc |
| Settlement | Burgage plots | Long narrow plots running back from the street frontage, of medieval origin. |
| | Other historic plots | Areas of historic plots other than burgage plots of pre-19th century date. |
| | Historic suburban settlement | Areas of settlement dating from before the 19th century, which lay outside the core of the medieval town. |
| | Historic rural settlement | Former villages, hamlets, etc, which have been incorporated into urban areas, usually medieval in origin. |
| | Apartments | Housing of not more than three or four storeys, also includes maisonettes. |
| | Small terraced housing (1700-1850) | An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of late 18th and early 19th century predominate. The houses have an average footprint of approximately 50 square metres or less. |
| | Larger terraced housing (1700-1850) | An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of late 18th and early 19th century predominate. The houses have an approximate average footprint of greater than 50 square metres. |
| | Victorian Terraced housing | An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of late 19th century date (1850-1900) predominate. |
| | Edwardian terraced housing | An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of early 20th century date (1901-1913) predominate. |
| | Suburban villas | Areas of predominantly detached and semi-detached housing set in their own grounds and often in a planned layout built pre-1914. |
| | Inter-war suburban estate | Planned areas of mainly detached and semi-detached houses, dating to the period 1914-1945. |
| | Other Inter-war housing | Other areas of housing dating to 1914-1945 not part of larger suburban estates. |
| | Modern housing estate | Planned estates of mainly detached and semi-detached houses, often with curvilinear roads and culs-de-sac, dating to post-1945. |
| | Modern Infill | Planned areas of mainly detached and semi-detached houses, inserted into existing established plots (often in the grounds of larger houses), dating to post-1945. |
| | Town House | Large single detached urban house |
| Ornamental villas and country houses | Ornamental villas are large detached houses in large grounds, usually 19th/early 20th century in date. Country Houses are large houses, sometimes with a landscaped garden, in or once in a rural area, usually dating from the medieval to the 18th century. | |

| Broad Type | Character Type | Scope Note |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Settlement (cont) | Farm | Farm buildings and farmhouse, but can include the immediate adjacent farmyard or paddocks. |
| | Cottages | Small buildings - sometimes singular, sometimes in a row. They are smallish buildings of irregular shape. |
| | Nursing Home | Residential homes for the elderly. |
| Utilities | Gas works | Areas of gas works, including gas holders, etc. |
| | Power station | Power stations - either electric or gas |
| | Sewage works/ water works | Sewage works, filter beds, water works, pumping stations, etc. |
| | Sub station | Large electricity sub stations only. |
| | Telephone Ex- change | Large telephone exchanges. |

Appendix 5: Archaeological Potential

The measure of urban archaeological potential is based on a consideration of the likely time depth of the potential archaeological remains, the potential survival of these remains, an assessment of the potential diversity of features present and an indication of the likely significance of the information to the history of the town.

These are scored numerically to calculate the final index of urban archaeological potential.

| Score | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|-----|--------|------|
| No. of chronological periods of urban development | 1-4 | 5-10 | 11+ |
| Survival of archaeological deposits | Low | Medium | High |
| Potential diversity of features present | Low | Medium | High |
| Significance to town | Low | Medium | High |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| Overall Archaeological Potential | Low | 4-6 |
| | Medium | 7-9 |
| | High | 10-12 |

Notes:

- The chronological periods are those used by the Dorset Historic Towns Project.
- The index of survival of archaeological deposits is a generalised index of the likely quality of survival of archaeological features based on the example of excavated sites, where possible, otherwise an assessment will be made on the basis of topography, geology and amount of development.

Low survival is where there is likely to be major truncation and/or destruction of deposits and features through modern landscaping and development and/or soil and geological conditions that indicate likely poor survival of archaeological material, particularly organic materials and metals.

Medium survival is where there is likely to be some truncation and/or destruction of deposits and features through modern landscaping and development and/or soil and geological conditions that indicate likely moderate survival of archaeological material.

High survival is where modern landscaping and development is unlikely to have caused significant truncation and disturbance of archaeological deposits and features and/or soil and geological conditions that indicate good survival of archaeological material, particularly organic materials and metals.

- The potential diversity of archaeological features is a generalised index of the likely range of archaeological features, deposits, finds and historic buildings based on the example of excavated sites where possible, otherwise an assessment will be made on the basis of archaeological evidence from similar areas in the town or from similar towns elsewhere in Dorset.

Low diversity is where there is likely to be a very limited range of archaeological evidence, reflecting either a limited range of activities or marginal areas with overall low level of activity.

Medium diversity is where there is likely to be a range of different types of archaeological finds, features and deposits, either reflecting areas of limited range of activities or areas on the margins of settlement focus.

High diversity is where there is likely to be a wide range of different types of archaeological finds, features and deposits, including structural remains, pits, evidence of craft and industrial activity, etc, and also standing historic buildings, reflecting mainly historic town centre locations.

- The index of significance to the town is a generalised index of the potential of the archaeology to provide significant data to inform

Low significance is to be used primarily for areas of relatively recent suburban development.

Medium significance is to be used primarily for areas of historic development outside the historic core of the town.

High significance is to be used primarily for areas in the historic core of the town.