

Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 8 Stour Meadows

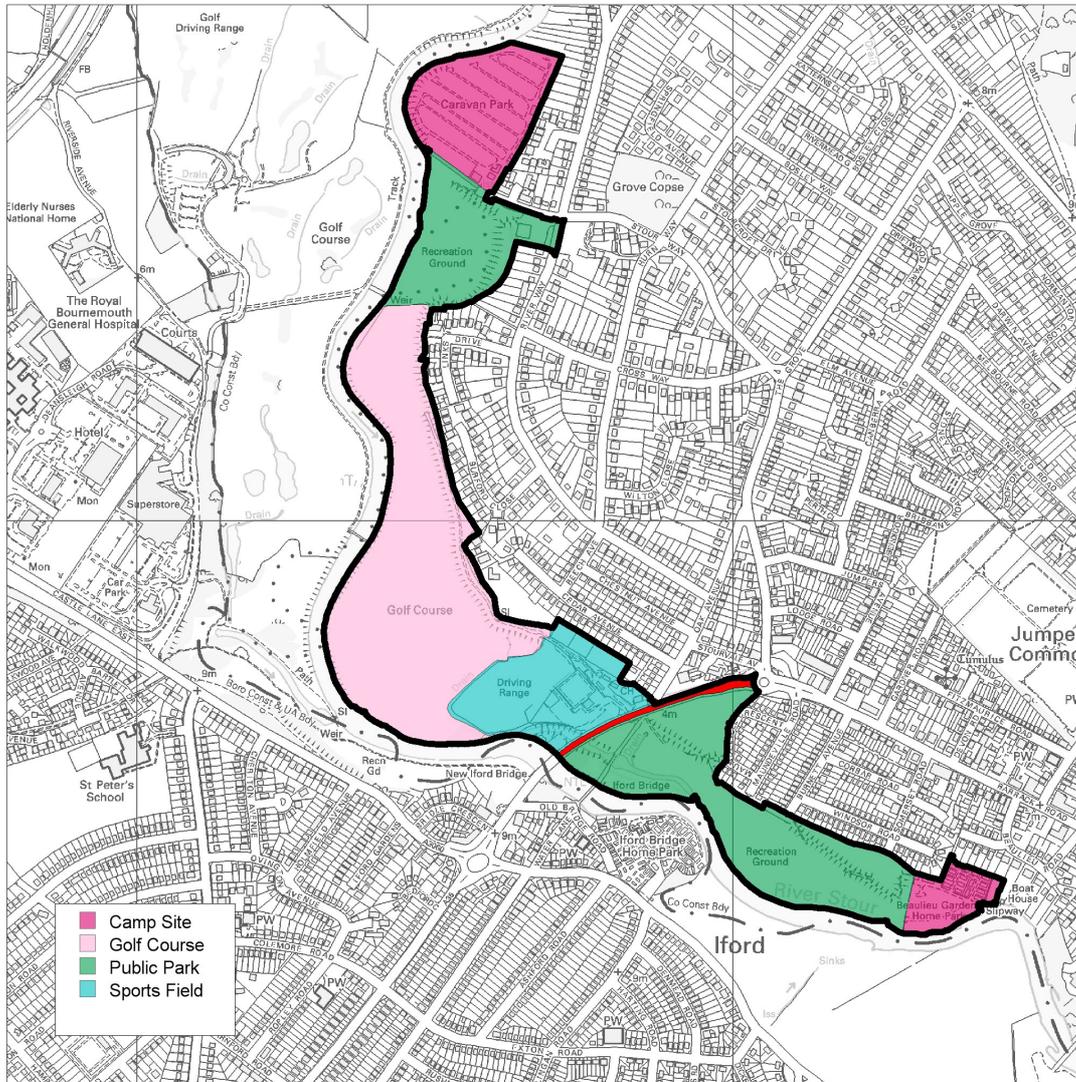


Figure 94: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 8, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 95: Iford Causeway



Figure 96: Iford Golf Course

Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 8
Structure of Character Area

Overview

This long strip of land along the east bank of the River Stour from Grove Farm in the north to The Barracks in the south has historically been given over as floodable land and probably used as common summer pasture.

There is no settlement in this character area, which is essentially the open flood plain of the River Stour.

Topography and Geology

A strip of low lying land on the floodplain of the River Stour. The geology of the area consists of alluvium.

Urban Structure

This character area has little urban structure. It is crossed by the main road leading to the bridge and causeway at Iford. The bridge is now used by pedestrians only following the construction of a larger carriageway slightly to the north.

Present Character

Figure 94 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area is used largely for recreation. The area includes gardens, recreation grounds, a golf course and a caravan park.

Time Depth

The place-name element *Iford* suggests a pre-existing ford on this site at least of medieval date. The area is likely to have been used as common summer pasture in the medieval and post-medieval periods. In modern times it has been given over largely to recreational use.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 8
Built Character

Building types

The only historic structure in this character area is Iford Bridge and causeway. The causeway dates from circa 1800 and is located to the east of the bridge in order to carry the road from Christchurch over the floodable land.

Building Materials

The central section of the bridge is constructed from mixed ironstone and Purbeck stone. It has 4 arches with triangular cutwaters and dates from the mid 17th century. The main western section is in Bournemouth but has 4 low round-

headed arches and dates from the late 18th century. The causeway runs between brick walls with stone coping.

Key Buildings

Iford Bridge and causeway

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 8
Archaeology**

Archaeological Investigations

No formal archaeological investigations have been carried out in this character area. There have been occasional finds and observations (Appendix 3).

A Lower Palaeolithic handaxe was found on the edge of the flood plain at Cedar Avenue in an area of Terrace 2 Gravel geology (Roe, 1968, 93; Wymer, 1992, 138).

A pile, possibly from an ancient wooden bridge, a short oak paddle and a large medieval earthenware jug with draw-off tap hole near the base, were found during alterations to old Iford Bridge (Williams-Freeman, 1936).

Archaeological Character

The above finds indicate that there is the usual background potential for Palaeolithic finds in the character area, with a heightened potential for medieval or earlier deposits in the vicinity of Iford Bridge relating to the use of the Iford crossing.

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 8
Designations**

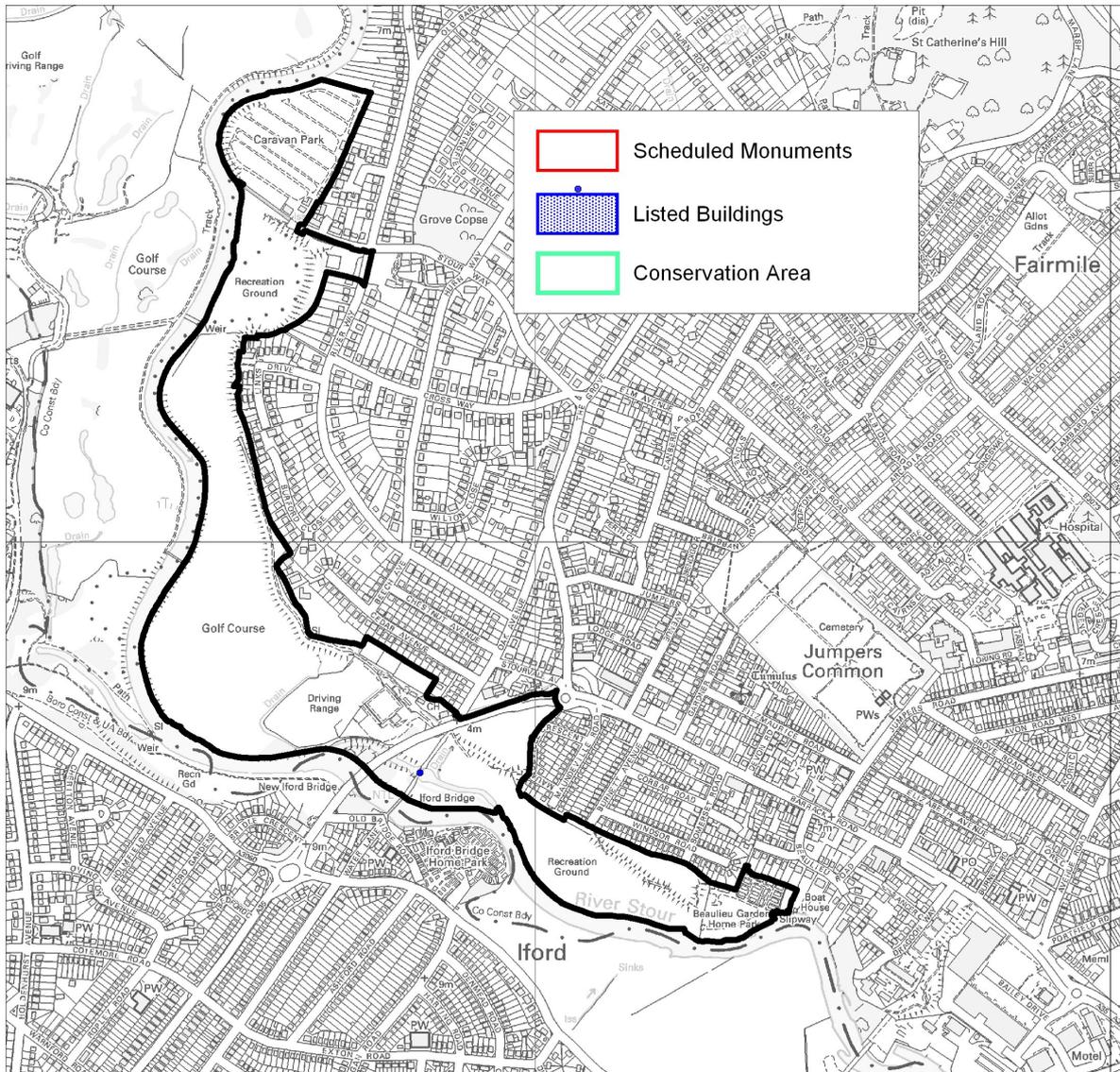


Figure 97: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 8

Listed Buildings

There is one Listed Building designation in the Character Area, the Grade II Iford Bridge.

Conservation Areas

There are no Conservation Area designations within the Character Area.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within the Character Area.

Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monuments designations within the Character Area.

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 8
Evaluation**

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **medium**. It has retained its essential character as a floodplain, but has few historic elements.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-4 (Part 7).

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **high** sensitivity to major change.

Archaeological Potential

The overall archaeological potential of the area as a whole is considered to be **Medium**. It is likely that prehistoric archaeological deposits will be well preserved in the area, although under a substantial accumulation of alluvium.

Key Characteristics

- Floodplain
- Sub-surface archaeological deposits
- Iford bridge and medieval crossing