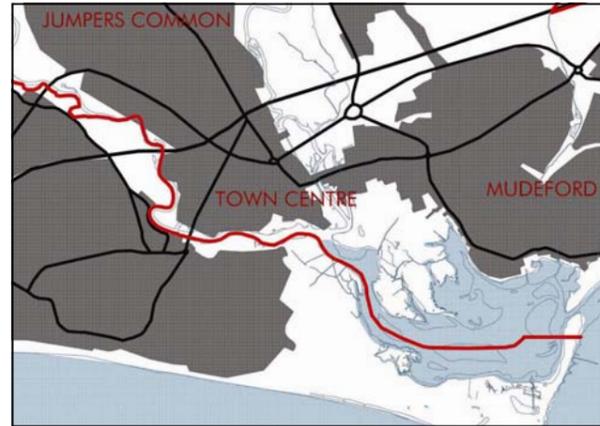




**Appendix 3 - Town Centre  
Character Study**

PLEASE NOTE: This appendix is an extract from the adopted Borough-wide Character Assessment

**5.10 TC Area 2 : Christchurch Town Centre**



**5.10.1** The main Town Centre forms a distinct neighbourhood with the historic Saxon ‘burh’ at its core. The outer boundaries of the neighbourhood are formed by the mainline railway and River Stour to the north and west, and the River Avon to the east. The central historic core is enclosed by smaller local neighbourhoods set around the focus of the main town. Areas of the older townscape have been lost to road schemes and modern development. It is possible to identify internal divisions within the neighbourhood between the old and new areas of townscape. These help define character areas within the neighbourhood for this assessment.



**5.10.2** The strategic position of the town gives rise to a range of important views into the historic core. Several foreground areas such as the Avon Flood Plain and open harbour provide distinctive settings to the town. This is an overlap between sections of this study in that the significance of these settings is also identified within the consideration of the wider environment around the town. (See Section 4.0)

**5.10.3** The combination of historic settlement, strong landscape and dynamic maritime settings give the town interest. The quality of the key areas and the continuity of some well preserved areas within the historic core help provide a sense of place within the town. The settings of water meadows (described in Section 4.0) and natural harbour (Section 6.0) creates a unique package of the town contained within the environment that determined and shaped its current form.

**Geographic Features**



**5.10.4** The physical features that determined the strategic advantage of the original settlement still remain as key features of the modern townscape. The rivers Avon and Stour provide the division between the adjoining townscape and the neighbouring Borough of Bournemouth. The Priory occupies a commanding position in the town on a knoll on the ridgeline axis through the town. These natural elements are an essential ingredient in the overall structure of the town. (Figure 5.8 illustrates the physical boundaries of the town).

**5.10.5** The castle motte stands out as a steep sided man-made landmark alongside the Priory Knoll. Next to this is the smaller scale feature of the Mill Stream. The stream flows along the eastern boundary of the built up area. As a small scale water course the stream is not a prominent element, but it is all the same a key part of the existing townscape.

**Historic Development**

**5.10.6** The settlement has gradually expanded from the nucleus of the Norman Priory Church and Twynham Castle. The main expansion spreads out along the local ridge towards St. Catherine’s Hill. Bridge crossings of the Avon provided a strategic route east to create the line of Bridge Street leading out to the medieval suburb of Purewell.

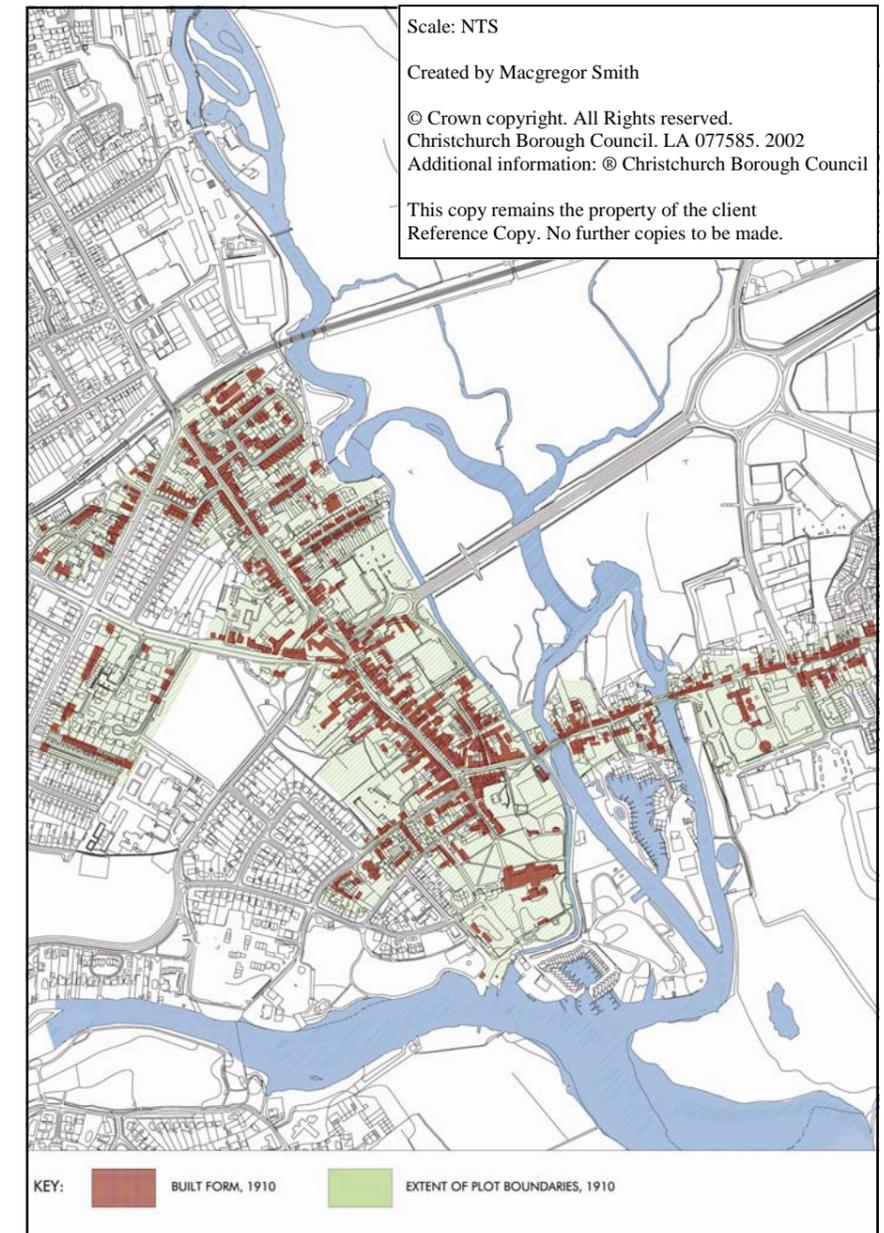


Figure 5.7 - Historic and modern mapping overlay



**5.10.7** The medieval extent of the settlement extended up into the Bargates area. This modest footprint can be seen on the Christchurch tithe map of 1841. The arrival of the railways from Ringwood in 1862 and Bournemouth in 1864 unleashed the rapid expansion that led to the modern townscape. The open areas between the Town Centre and railway have been progressively filled with Victorian, inter-war and post-war developments. New building work is currently underway along the river frontage of the Stour.

#### Existing Townscape

**5.10.8** Although the Town Centre is clearly defined as a geographic neighbourhood area by the railway and river boundaries, the area logically sub-divides into smaller 'sub neighbourhood' areas. A central spine of shopping/High Street frontage extends from the Priory out to the northern end of Bargates. This is split in two by the A35 Christchurch Bypass (Fountains Way); the southern half forming the main High Street, the northern end a more local neighbourhood shopping street (Bargate).



**5.10.9** The historic core area is located to the south of the A35 and separated from the adjacent suburban development by the line of the Creedy (a tree-lined walkway on the southern side of the High Street). This area is designated as the Christchurch Central Conservation Area, the largest Conservation Area in the Borough. The complete areas of historic townscape are contained within the southern part of the designated area. The northern outer edge of the designated area contains significant areas where the historic buildings have been replaced by more modern development. The water meadows and part of the harbour are within the designated area. These provide key parts of the setting to important buildings, but should also be seen as part of the overall historic landscape of the town. The internal structure of these individual neighbourhoods is described in the character areas section of this chapter.



**5.10.10** The broader structure of the overall neighbourhood is divided by main road routes passing generally east/west through the built up area. Smaller side roads sub-divide the general grain of the residential areas into a grid of medium-sized estate blocks. The historic core area has a more intimate scale and grain of side streets and pedestrian routes that link between the High Street and terraced streets off the main thoroughfare. There is a clear contrast in the basic development patterns of the suburban housing areas and terraced streets in the historic core (although both share similar scale).

**5.10.11** The Town Centre is a distinctive part of the Borough in terms of the diversity of land uses and activity within the core area. The commercial High Street, historic open spaces, boat storage, formal park, and school grounds all help to create a more vibrant townscape than the surrounding suburbia. The densities and scales of buildings within the centre area again contrast with many surrounding areas.

**5.10.12** The townscape is affected by the presence of the major through routes which spur off the A35. Bargate (A3073), Barrack Road (A35) and Stour Road are part of the limited network of routes linking the Borough with Bournemouth. These routes all connect with the intrusive junction arrangement set between the Town Centre and Bargates.

**5.10.13** The historic Bridge Street approach to the Town Centre has been restricted in an attempt to limit the circulation of through traffic entering the historic core area of the town. There is, however, a significant flow of traffic into the centre, partly due to the location of visitor parking areas and poor signage. The Town Centre traffic also includes frequent bus movements along the main High Street.

**5.10.14** The relatively small scale grain of the suburban development around the main Town Centre provides a reasonable degree of pedestrian access. Although, in common with other parts of the Borough, few links between cul-de-sac infill areas have been provided to enhance this circulation.

**5.10.15** Within the historic core area the traditional pattern of small scale streets is complemented by alleyways and short cuts. However, a fundamental issue frustrating the appreciation of the core is connected to the exclusion of pedestrian access to key sections of the water frontage and boating facilities around the perimeter of the core area.

#### Landscape Setting, Spaces and Structure

**5.10.16** With the natural limitation on building within the Flood Plain, the open landscape of water meadows extends right into the historic core of the Town Centre. The eastern boundary of development follows the line of the Mill Stream. Although cut in two by the A35, the water meadows clearly form an important open setting to the east of the town. (See Section 4.3).

**5.10.17** The natural sheltered harbour created by the combined river estuary is a distinctive coastal environment in its own right. With low lying inter-tidal areas and marshlands, this area provides an open maritime setting to the town.

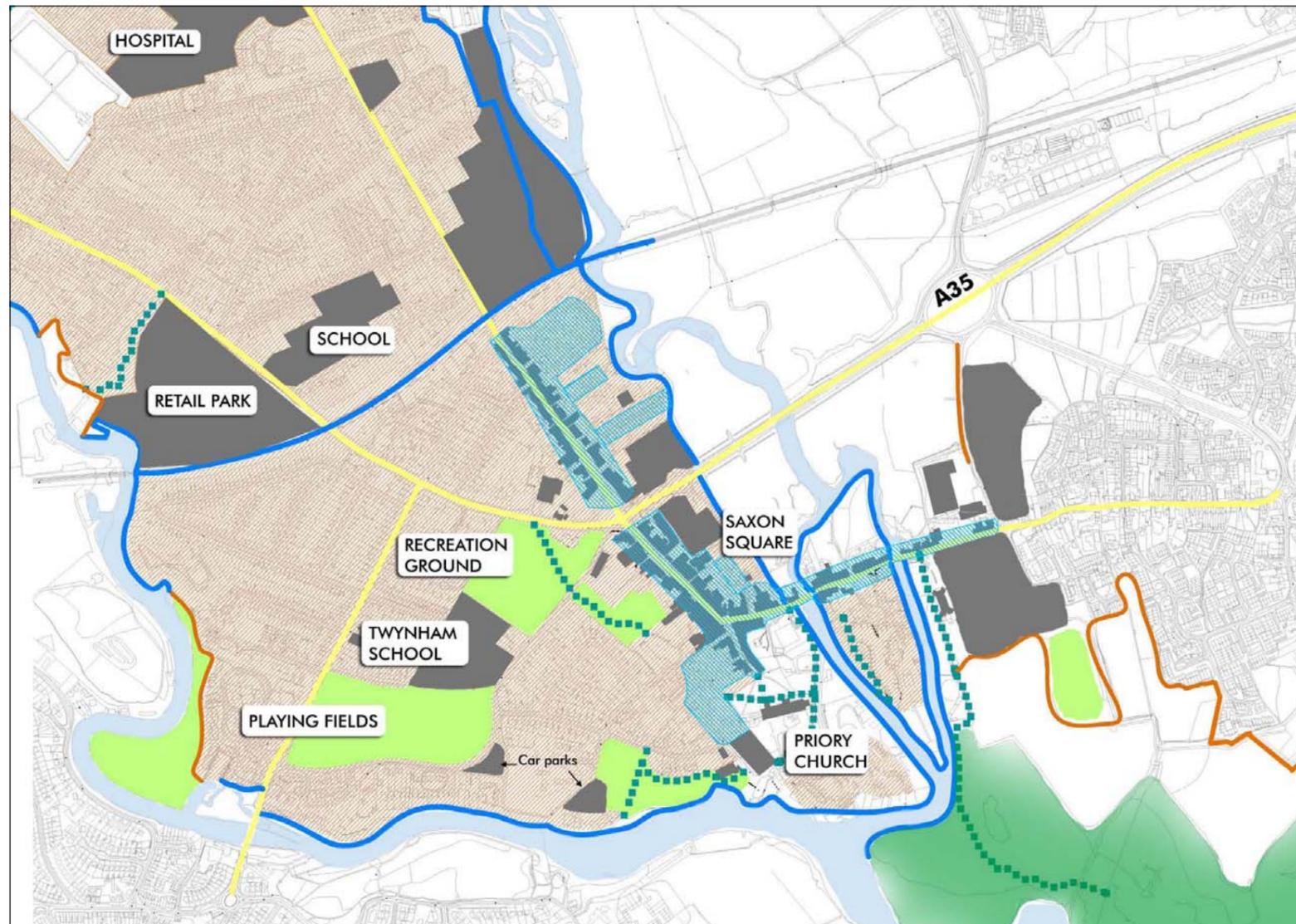
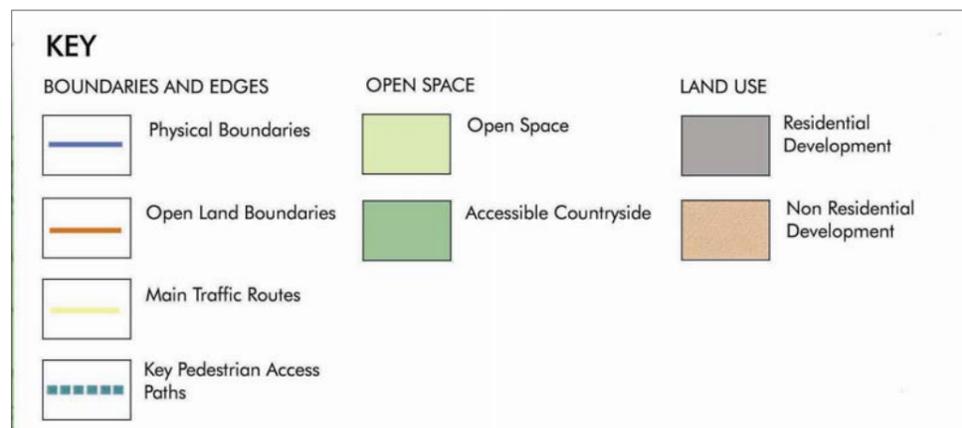


Figure 5.8 - Town Centre Physical Townscape



**5.10.18** The Town Centre is one of the few areas that provide public civic spaces and open parklands. These are concentrated around the historic core area and serve both local residents and visitors to the Borough. There is a degree of inter-connection between areas, but often the links are not easily found or highlighted to the visitor. The small scale intimacy of the historic street pattern is part of the character of the town. The narrow streets often create glimpsed or framed views of the key buildings and landmarks.

**5.10.19** The public open spaces also provide a loose framework of tree cover around the historic core. This extends around the Priory Quarter, along the Mill Stream and along the eastern boundary of the built up area. Other dominant tree cover is found within Barrack Road Recreation Ground and DrUITT Gardens down to the Quomps open space next to the Stour. Much of this tree cover provides a backdrop to historic buildings and enclosure to the town.

**5.10.20** Other more localised tree groups are found alongside the railway and interspersed within the suburban housing areas. This framework of tree cover is an important part of the general perception of Christchurch as having a well vegetated urban area.

**Landmarks and Legibility**

**5.10.21** Christchurch contains a fine selection of historic buildings and ancient monuments. These are of interest to visitors as features, but also reinforce the sense of place when seen as part of the wider townscape. The Priory and Millhams Street Church stand out as key buildings visible from outside the historic core. Glimpsed views of these from the A35 highlight the proximity of the through route to the core area. Other views to these landmarks from around and within the Town Centre help people understand the broad layout of the town. This helps create a legible and permeable townscape that is more friendly to pedestrians, visitors and residents. At a lower level other distinctive features within the streets and open spaces provide way markers and features of interest. The main historic core area is well provided with a range of features. These include historic paving, timber framing, thatch, street furniture, and the groups of more traditional shop fronts and other buildings. The wider suburban backdrop to the town is less legible and thereby less inviting to the visitor.

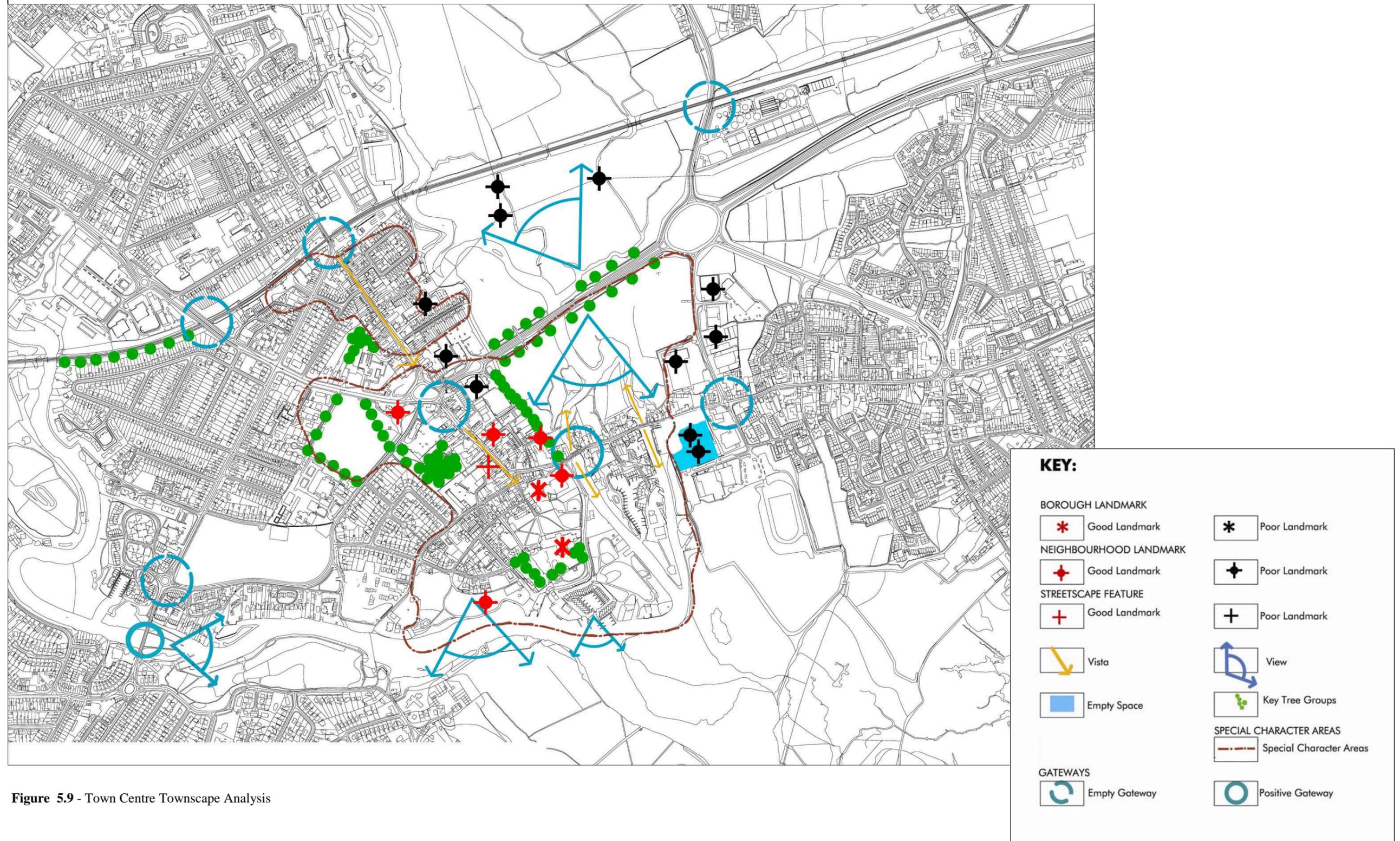


Figure 5.9 - Town Centre Townscape Analysis

Figure 5.9

### Town Centre Character Areas

- a) The Priory Quarter and Twynham Castle
- b) The High Street, Church Street and Castle Street
- c) Millhams Street and Ducking Stool Lane
- d) Whitehall, Church Lane and Quay Road
- e) The Quomps, Priory Quay and Convent Meadows
- f) Saxon Square and Fountain Way
- g) Druitt Gardens, The Creedy and Barrack Road Gardens
- h) Bridge Street and Rossiters Quay
- i) Bridge Street - Stony Lane
- j) Bargates and Avon Buildings
- k) Wickfield Avenue and Stour Road
- l) The River Stour Frontage

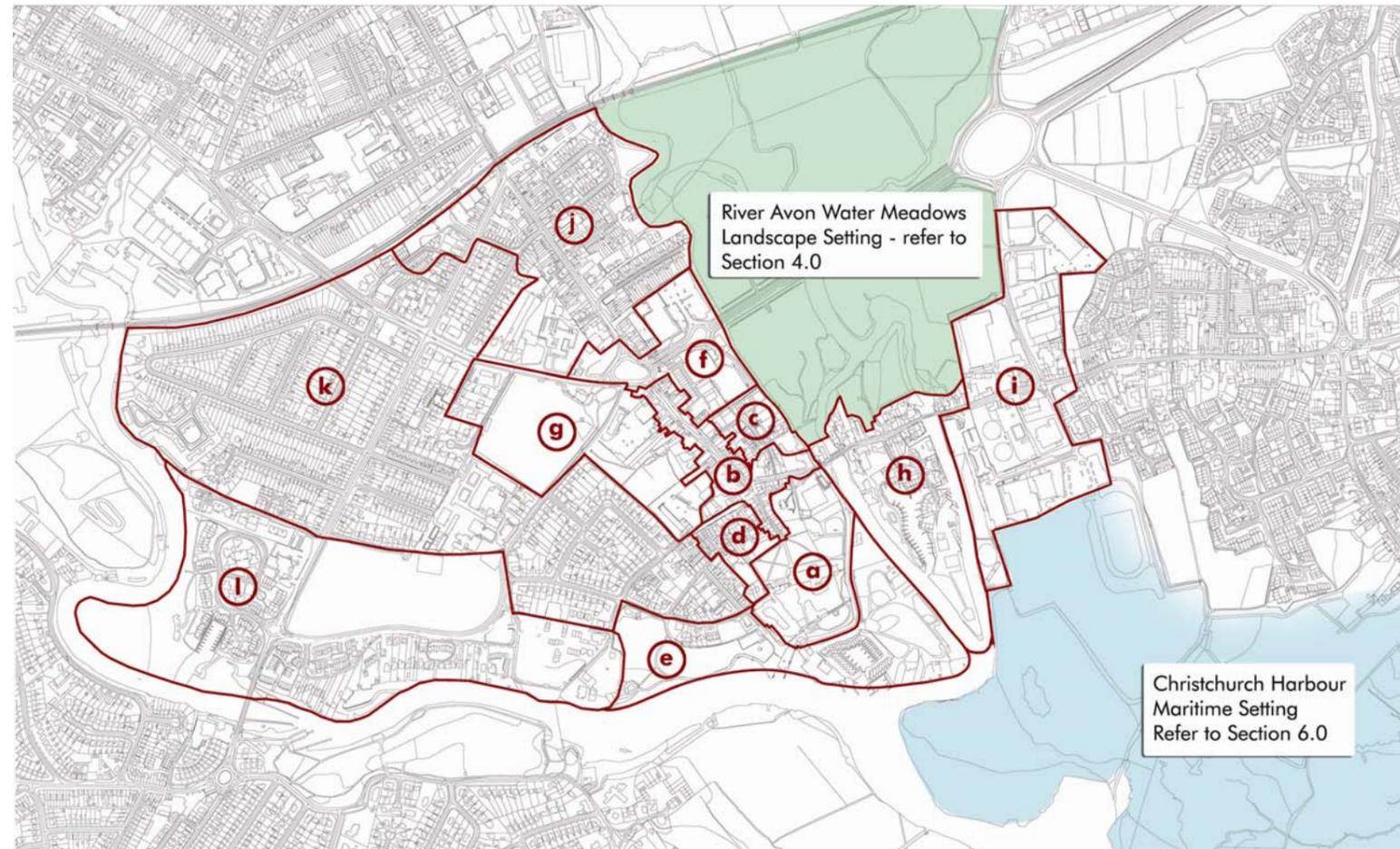
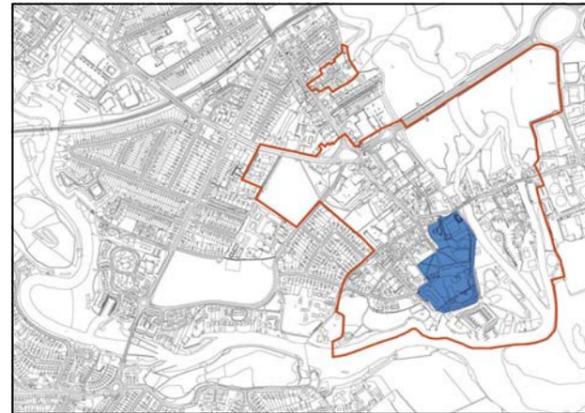


Figure 5.10 - Town Centre Character Areas



Aerial photograph of  
Town Centre





— Conservation Areas



### 5.11 NC Area 2a : The Priory Quarter and Twynham Castle

**5.11.1** This character area is comprised of two inter-related historical spaces. The Priory Church occupies the highest point of a knoll, the surrounding church grounds and monastery gardens form an open green space setting to the church. Adjoining this, the Motte and Bailey Castle sit with the 12<sup>th</sup> century Constable's House in their own green spaces separated by a Bowling Green. While these elements reflect different aspects of the town's history, they complement each other as clearly historic structures contained in semi-formal landscape settings.

**5.11.2** The controlled open spaces within this area contrast with the tight pattern of medieval streetscape that encloses the space on the town side. This contrast is clearly important in helping to define the tranquil setting to the Priory. This tranquil setting extends beyond the immediate curtilage of the Priory grounds and includes the whole of the character area defined here, together with parts of the adjacent historic streets and open land of the adjoining character areas.

**5.11.3** The Castle, the Constable House and the nearby Town Bridge are protected as ancient monuments. As a group these features are historically important, but they also help define the historic sense of place. The Priory is the longest parish church in England, the church standing out as a cathedral scale building against the nearby small scale streets. The dominating side of the building is evident from the Town Bridge/Bridge Street approach.

**5.11.4** The area is enclosed by the route of the Mill Stream and adjacent path that encircles the eastern and southern boundaries of the open spaces. The spaces provide an open area accessible to visitors and form part of a wider trail around the town.

**5.11.5** The interest of the historic structures, Mill Stream and views to other surrounding elements of the location, make these areas an inspiring place to discover and explore. The sheltered setting provided by the tree cover along the Mill Stream also provide a comfortable pleasant enclosure and protection to the open spaces.

**5.11.6** As the point of communal focus within the town, the Priory is a fundamental part of the Borough-wide identity. The Priory also draws many visitors to Christchurch for both the spiritual experience and architectural interest. The combination of church, castle,

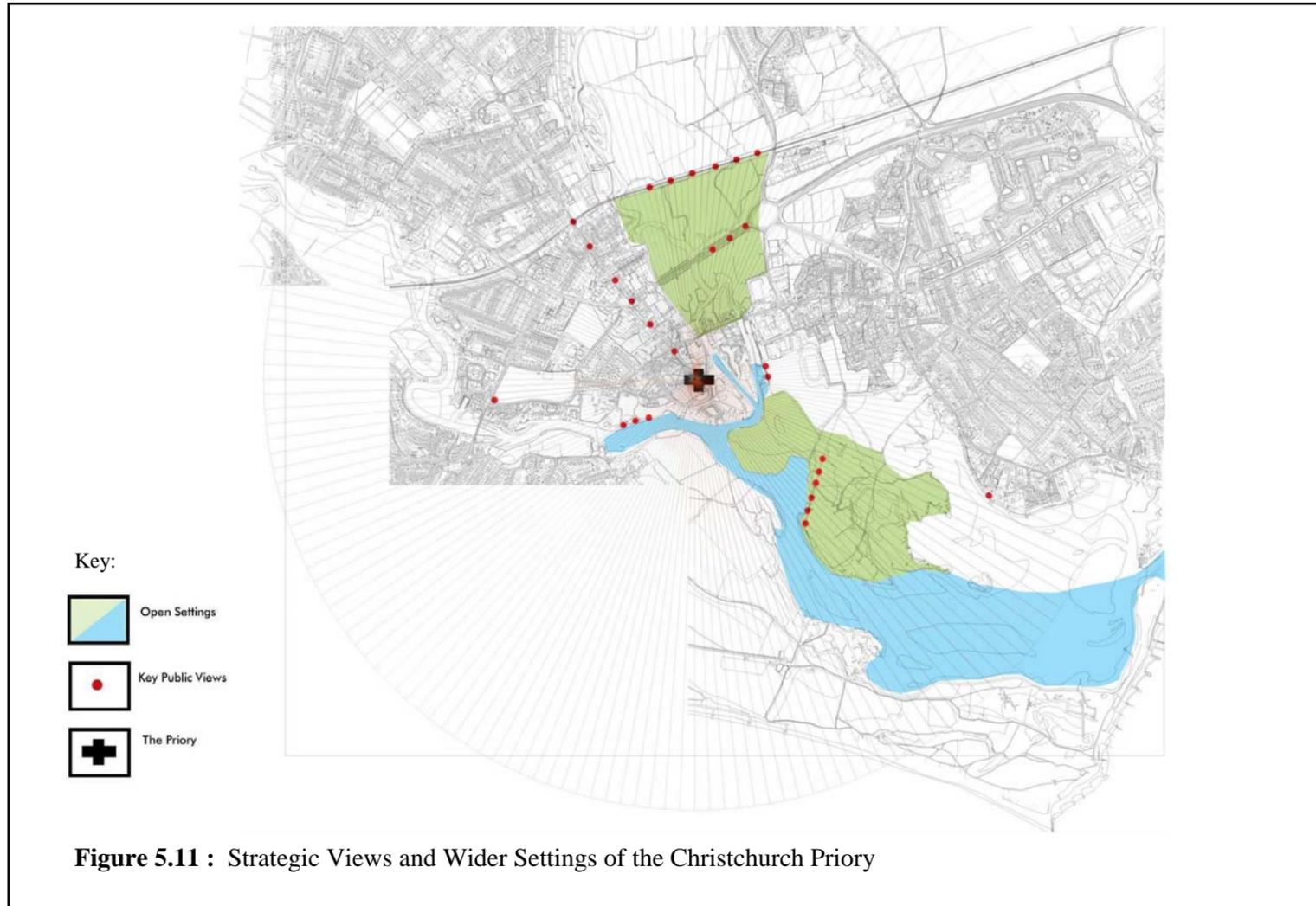
Constable's House and Mill Stream provide a very high quality historic environment that forms an area with a strong sense of place and obvious visitor interest within the heart of the Town Centre.

**5.11.7** The Priory Quarter is the immediate 'internal' setting to the church. The adjacent areas of Church Street, Wick Lane, the Quomps and Convent Meadows provide areas of historic townscape and open space that also contribute to the setting and context of the church and wider Conservation Area. The church building sits above all other elements of the historic core as a landmark of Borough-wide significance.

**5.11.8** The appreciation of the church as such a landmark is assisted and to some extent, dependent upon, the nature of a number of areas that provide a wider setting or foreground to a range of important views. The wide range of views into the Priory are illustrated by **Figure 5.11**. Areas such as the water meadows on the north east side of the town, the open landscape of Stanpit Marsh and the treescape around the Priory Knoll enhance these strategic views. The contribution and conditions of these wider settings to the church are described under the respective character area assessments.

#### 5.11.9 Main Characteristics

- Pronounced topography of knoll and castle motte.
- Centre of historic core containing numerous listed buildings and ancient monuments with landscape setting.
- Dressed and rubble stone walling of the preserved ruins set within managed lawns or amenity grass.
- Cathedral scale church building and cluster of Priory buildings.
- Strong setting of trees encircle southern sides of character area, and provide settings to historic buildings.
- Semi formal gardens and green spaces.
- High levels of public accessibility around Priory Quarter and up into castle ruins.
- Enclosure and boundaries between spaces defined by a range of features including historic railings and the moat effect of the Mill Stream.
- High sense of enclosure and tranquil setting.



occur through works beyond the control of Conservation Area legislation. The area should be seen as highly sensitive to such change.

**5.11.11** The significance of this part of Christchurch is further explored within the Town Centre strategy. The future management of this sensitive area may be best addressed by the development of a Conservation Plan along the lines of the English Heritage recommendations.

**5.11.12** The value of this area is also encompassed within its role as the immediate tranquil setting to the Priory, and as the focal point to the wider views in towards the town. Both these spiritual and visual interests are highly sensitive to change well beyond the immediate location of the character area described here.

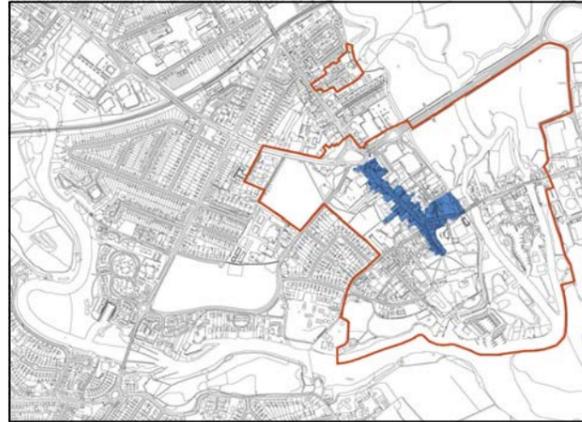
**Sensitivity to Change**



**5.11.10** As a well preserved historic townscape, this area is protected from development pressure or change by the high level of Conservation Area status. New development is strictly controlled within the Conservation Area. Any new proposals should be considered in the context of the historic setting. The relationship of new buildings to their surroundings examined in great detail through an informed character appraisal of the context. In this area the continuity of historic buildings and the importance of the open space areas, suggest there is little scope for new built development and only carefully controlled change to the open spaces. More incremental changes to surfaces, enclosure, furniture and lighting can

### The Town Centre Street Frontages

#### 5.12 NC Area 2b : The High Street, Church Street, and Castle Street



**5.12.1** This area is comprised of three subtly different sections of the Town Centre streetscapes. These areas do vary in terms of the fine detail of building arrangements, streetscape, modern building uses and the condition of individual premises. However, in considering the wider perception of the overall sense of place they are all inter-related.

**5.12.2** The street frontage areas represent a rare commodity within the built-up area of the Borough as a whole. The main town streets are the most significant area of streetscape within the Borough.

**5.12.3** In plan, the streets have maintained most of their pre-20<sup>th</sup> century form. The building lines of shop fronts and houses appear much unchanged from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As with most of the historic Town Centre area many individual buildings are listed. Unfortunately, only a few historic shop fronts remain. The original plot sizes of buildings remain intact with few buildings being amalgamated to create larger ground floor sales areas. In recent years a number of the shops have been restored to provide the setting for some specialist high quality shops/restaurants. In these, curved bay windows and tiles give a more interesting and attractive character to the street frontage. These premises are generally located within the more tightly packed southern end of the Church Street on the approach to the Priory.

**5.12.4** The streets provide a range of activity and interest. The main High Street leads up to the Saxon Square shopping precinct. This is the widest section of roadway and provides the main range of typical high street shopping, library, Tourist Information and banking. The old Town Hall is a landmark building on the east side of the street. The Midland Bank forms one of the most striking buildings with a façade of dressed stone. No. 11, the High Street, is another important building with twin bays and Mathematical tiles which are rare in Christchurch. While the street contains a number of interesting buildings the historic character is diluted by a mix of modern shop fronts, standard paving materials, traffic and street furniture. Despite this, the area maintains a positive busy high street character.

**5.12.5** The narrower Church Street section contains more of the tourist and specialist shops. Part of the street is paved with

pedestrian type surfacing and the road section is less heavily trafficked. This area provides the approach to the Priory and contains a more obvious range of historic buildings, including some fine houses. The street has a strong historic character and creates an effective link between the quiet formal setting of the church grounds and the more active main High Street. The transition between areas is reinforced by wrought iron railings at the end of the street.

**5.12.6** Castle Street leads out to the Constable's House, the Castle and Town Bridge. There are fewer shops and more houses on this frontage. The car park to a small hotel breaks the street frontage and allows views into the back land space behind the building. The street leads out over the Rossiters Quay island. The general street character continues but the frontages become more residential further from the Town Centre.

**5.12.7** As the junction of the streets come together the roadways widen to form the old Market Place. Alleyway links through to Millhams Street lead down into the quiet back streets to the north. Wick Lane leads off the space to the south. This is a busy hub of activity and acts as a key point for visitors wandering between the different sections of the Town Centre.

**5.12.8** A 1950s precinct building fronts onto the old Market Place with significant impact on the more historic character of the setting. While an interesting example of 1950's architecture, the building has a brutal relationship with its setting. The main town Post Office is located in the rear half of the building, with the Sorting Office and service yard fronting onto the adjacent Wick Lane.

**5.12.9** Other landmarks and features of interest are visible from within the three streets. The Priory, Castle, Millhams Street church and Town Hall all act as landmarks within these streets. Other distinctive buildings, such as Church House, the New Forest Perfumery, the Constable's House and the restored shop fronts act as attractive points of interest in the streetscapes.

**5.12.10** Some improvement works have been undertaken to pedestrian surfaces within the area. These have provided a good quality material and finish to the areas. However, the materials used do not quite fit with the historical/local vernacular.

**5.12.11** The three streets are generally a reasonably vibrant and active centre of the Borough. There appears to be a year round basic level of visitor activity drawn into at least the southern end of the streets. The regular Monday street market can fill the High Street



### 5.12 NC Area 2b : The High Street, Church Street, and Castle Street cont ..



Square and generally increases the number of pedestrians within the core area.

**5.12.12** In terms of a pleasant shopping/visitor destination these streets provide a high quality, attractive and interesting environment. In terms of the preservation of historic character, this has been well maintained around the southern end of the areas (Church Street and Castle Street), but has been diminished to some extent by commercial pressures along the High Street.

**5.12.13** While there is less of a 'pure' historic feel to the Upper High Street area, this whole character area should be seen as part of the overall context of the 'Old Town' area. The contrast these areas provide with the wider suburbs of the Borough give the whole area a critical role in the overall identity of the Borough.

#### 5.12.14 Main Characteristics

- Street frontage development with clear front building lines, historic plot widths, consistent scale and unbroken roof-lines.
- Minor side roads and alleyways provide links to other areas.
- Traditional shops fronts still retained or restored in key sections of the street.
- Variations in shops types and activity between different sections of character area - adds interest to town centre.
- Landmark features of Priory, Millhams Street church and Town Hall.
- Some distinctive buildings and coherent building groups of particularly high quality.
- Hard built environment with views into green areas of adjoining Priory Quarter provide contrast.
- Traffic calmed but still part of the activity of the centre. Bus traffic brings significant flow through centre.
- Modern street furniture, and paving conflicts with historic character.



Additional detail on the physical condition of the three streets is illustrated in the boxes set out on the next page.

#### Sensitivity to Change

**5.12.16** The Town Centre has already been affected by a degree of post-war modernisation, the introduction of some standard poor quality shop fronts, and shopping developments.

**5.12.17** In many places historic building fabric may remain behind the modern frontages. The character of the Town Centre as a traditional High Street would be sensitive to further modernisation. Streetscape improvements should reflect and be sensitive to the remaining historic character.

**5.12.18** The historic character of the area is protected by the Conservation Area status. This applies to areas that have already been modernised and some that may need to be redeveloped in the future. The designation identifies how changes to these areas need to be considered in terms of the wider character of the whole Town Centre.

**5.12.19** With the exception of the Post Office precinct, the buildings within Castle Street and the southern end of the High Street are predominantly 19<sup>th</sup> century. The restoration of some of the existing shop frontages and the listed status of the other buildings within the street frontage areas, has ensured the area currently has a strong historic character. Further renovation or alteration of premises within this section of the Conservation Area will need to be to a high standard, if such work is to preserve or enhance this historic character.

**5.12.20** Within the main High Street area the loss of historic shop fronts and individual buildings has left an area in which the historic buildings are interspersed by more recent buildings or frontages. Alterations to the remaining historic buildings needs to respect the importance of protecting the historic fabric and character of such buildings. With the range of more modern buildings within this area there is also considerable scope for alternations to be designed to enhance the character of the Conservation Area. To achieve this, such alterations need to respect the generally consistent scale, style, materials and building lines of the older development. Enhancement of character within the context of the existing post war development within the High Street, need not depend purely on a replica approach, but could include sensitive contemporary design.

5.12.21 Street Frontage Characteristics

High Street

**Building Line/Layout**

Main High Street has a strong but varied building line - occasional spaces created by buildings being set back - eg. Regents Art Centre. Historic plot widths. Saxons Square forms forum space off main axis.

**Scale**

Buildings on both sides of consistent scale and height, generally 2-2½ storey on east side with 2½ on west. West side has a few more civic buildings of slightly larger scale.

**Elevations and Rooflines**

Vast majority of shop fronts- standard post-war with unco-ordinated/corporate signage. Range of more interesting period detailing over shop front topped by irregular roofline. Roofs generally slope to a consistent eaves line and are unbroken by dormers and rooflights. General appearance above shop front level - interesting hints of historic character.

**Materials**

Mostly brick, painted white/cream, civic buildings with incised Ashlar rendering. Majority tiled, some slate (probably formally tiled).

**Paving, Street Furniture and Landscape**

Concrete block pavements and planters with typical 'townscape' type street furniture. Planting includes Cordyline palms and tulip trees Liriodendron, large Robina next to Library.



Castle Street

**Building Line/Layout**

Majority of buildings set to a common building line. Number of large buildings with long elevations so frontage not broken up as much as other street frontage. Key space next to High Street where frontage pulls back to provide gathering/spill out space by roundabout. Line breaks close to river with hotel car parks and bowling green lay-by. Street has a gentle curve which helps accentuate the views into the adjacent castle.

**Scale**

Buildings start as 2-2½ storey by High Street and grow to 3 storey as road drops towards river.

**Elevations and Rooflines**

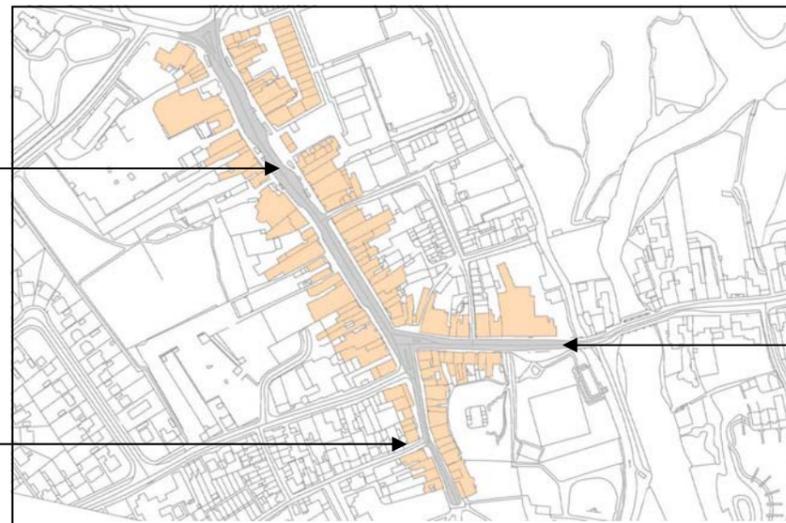
Mixed elevations, long hotel frontage in buff brick. Other buildings include half timbered medieval building, brick and incised Ashlar render. Interesting raised roofline but flat topped modern dormers next to Market Place stand out as obviously 60's/70's design style. Signage controlled and generally consistent with historic setting. Gable of the perfumery: distinctive within the street with decorative barge boards.

**Materials**

Brick, incised Ashlar render, and half timbered.

**Paving, Street Furniture and Landscape**

Hard landscape paved with Blanc-de-Bierge.



Church Street/Market Place

**Building Line/Layout**

Street wider, former Market Place area with traffic islands and constant traffic! Street narrows in cul-de-sac section to intimate 'pedestrian' space.

**Scale**

Buildings frontage onto Market Place 2½-3 storey including buildings with relatively wide frontages. Reduces in Church approach to 2 storey and overall smaller scale tighter streetscape.

**Elevations and Rooflines**

Market Place dominated by 1950's Post Office precinct. Other buildings have large windowed, more traditional shop fronts. Refurbished shops/restaurant in Church Street have faithfully restored tiled shop fronts. Signage generally sympathetic. 2nd storey generally of historic character—modern 80's building slightly out of place. Inverted dormer details on newer frontages. Street includes residential cottages and large townhouse. Roof lines slope to consistent eaves line.

**Materials**

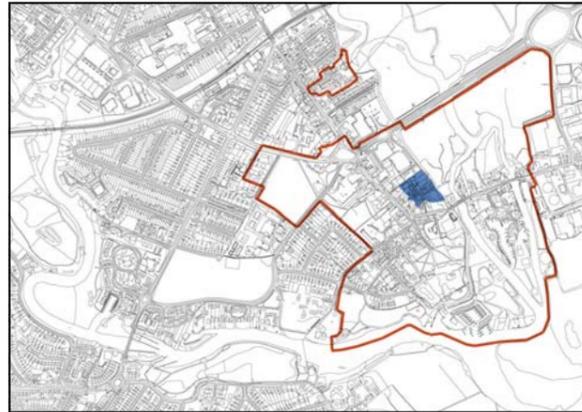
Original building in soft red or painted brick, or with 'rough cast' render. Timber windows and doors. Modern buildings with tile hanging and concrete panel. Terraced cottages with combined use of natural stone and clay tiles. Brick walls and wrought iron work.

**Paving, Street Furniture and Landscape**

Hard paved throughout—busy section of roadways, tarmac pavement and cul-de-sac section. Limestone kerbs, Blanc-de-Bierge—expensive beige coloured block paving—not quite in keeping with traditional street materials.



**5.13 NC Area 2c : Millhams Street and Ducking Stool Lane**



**5.13.1** Millhams Street is a narrow residential side street set between the main High Street and the Mill Stream. With terraces of historic brick cottages fronting onto a quiet backwater lane the area has a very strong sense of place. The street provides a local short cut between a small parking area off Bridge Street and the main High Street. Narrow alley ways through and between buildings join in a tiny open space at the head of Ducking Stool Lane. Views between buildings include the rear elevations and yards of the back of the High Street. This is a very small scale intimate section of townscape that contrasts with the larger scale more public High Street.



**5.13.2** The two storey terrace cottages are predominantly brick, some painted. The church, and modern buildings are also built in brick. The narrow roadways allow only glimpsed views through the alleyways and along the street. At the northern end the street widens out with little spaces forming the frontage to a modern housing court, a church, the church burial ground and a well preserved small group of Georgian houses. The burial ground provides space for some trees in the street.

**5.13.3** Ducking Stool Lane and an alleyway connection off Millhams Street provide access to the side of the Mill Stream. Dense bankside vegetation prevents views out into the adjacent water meadows. A new ducking stool appears unused at the end of the lane.



**5.13.4** This area forms an integral part of the wider Town Centre Conservation Area. There are a small number of new houses set within the street with some contrasts in architectural scale and style. However, the area still retains a distinctive and historic character. As a residential area it is very attractive; as part of the inviting and accessible townscape within the historic core, it is an important part of the wider unique identity of the town.

**5.13.5 Main Characteristics**

- Small scale residential backstreets.
- Terraced Victorian cottages front directly onto pavement.
- Area set down from level of main High Street.

- Mill Stream defines eastern edge of town, but only accessible or even visible at two limited viewpoint

**5.13.6 Residential Development Characteristics**

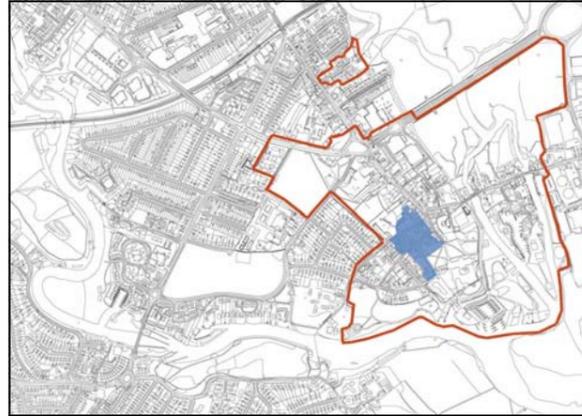
Form/Scale	Victorian terraced street with more examples of both Georgian and Victorian architecture and recent infill developments.
Materials	Mix of exposed and painted brick with slate and some tiles. Historic stone paving.
Roofscape	Terrace roofline, and chimney and chimney pots well preserved.
Plot Size/Density	Varied - cottage plots
Frontage	Pavement frontage - modern development has communal garden space.
Boundaries	Railings and brick walls.
Trees	Churchyard - Yews, Limes and Thuja

**Sensitivity to Change**

**5.13.7** As a high quality historic area in generally good condition this area should be seen as highly sensitive to change. The tight pattern of existing historic buildings would preclude any additional new development within the two streets. The adjoining hotel car park is an area that detracts from the narrow streetscape. The car park also creates a gap in the Castle Street frontage without improving the visibility of the Mill Stream or the general setting of the buildings.



**5.14 NC Area 2d : Whitehall, Church Lane and Quay Road**



**5.14.1** These narrow side streets form a second area of residential backstreets. Small terraces and individual cottages located just off the High Street close to the Priory. Here the side roads link the main High Street with small visitor and shoppers’ car parks. There is also a small amount of street parking. The scale of the streets is of tightly contained intimate spaces defined by the houses fronting directly on to the road or with postage stamp gardens. While these streets maintain a historic character, there is a greater flow of traffic and pedestrian movement.

**5.14.2** The area includes a variety of cottages and small terraces and the historic Red House Museum (a former workhouse). The narrow streets and quiet residential character provides a pleasant contrast with the nearby High Street. The houses are predominantly two storey brick with characteristic Purbeck slips at the eaves to some tiled roofs.

**5.14.3** The Red House is also brick with a long brick walled garden bordering the street. A low stone wall forms the church boundary. Open views into the churchyard up to the Priory are gained from Quay Road. Aside from this view, the streetscape is enclosed small scale spaces with only glimpsed views funnelled down the roadways.

**5.14.4** The area is again an attractive residential backstreet that provides a pleasant contrast with the busy High Street areas. This area forms part of the pedestrian circulation of the town and is an important part of the potential interest for visitors to the area. The character area is also part of the wider unique ‘place’ contained within the Town Centre.

**5.14.5 Main Characteristics**

- Small scale residential back streets.
- Terraced and occasional detached properties.
- Area merges with 20th century development of similar scale.
- Traffic and on-street parking impact on side street character.
- Area provides link between main High Streets and public access to the Stour Riverside.



**5.14.6 Residential Development Characteristics**

Form/Scale	Mix of Victorian terraces and semi-detached cottages.
Era	Victorian (with earlier and later elements).
Style	Plain fronted terraces and cottages with occasional bay-fronted properties.
Materials	Exposed and painted brick, some banded.
Roofscape	Well preserved slate roofscape - largely unbroken roof planes and eave lines.
Plot Size/Density	Cottage plots
Gaps	Occasional minor gaps between groups.
Frontage	Mix of pavement frontage and postage stamp gardens.
Boundaries	Limited low brick walls, railings, picket fences.
Trees	No significant tree groups

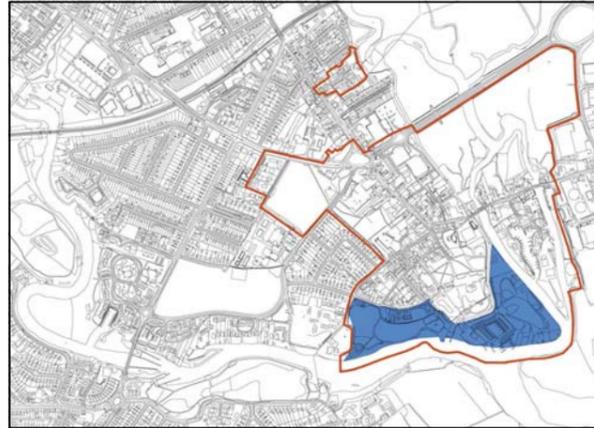
**Sensitivity to Change**

**5.14.7** As a high quality historic area in good condition, this area is of intrinsic value and is important as part of the surrounding built fabric to the Priory setting. The area should be seen as highly sensitive to change. The small scale pattern of historic buildings would preclude any new development in this area.

**5.14.8** Any alterations to individual buildings in the Conservation Area would need to conserve or enhance the historic character of the area. Generally the buildings within this area are well preserved and there is little scope to promote alterations as enhancement of the existing fabric or character of the area.



### 5.15 NC Area 2e : The Quomps Priory Quay and the Convent Meadows



**5.15.1** These individual areas, while all different, all form a foreground setting to the Priory. The Quomps is an open space alongside the River Stour. Priory Quay is a modern marina and residential development. The Convent Meadows are covered by a mobile home park and boat storage area. A single bungalow development on a large plot is also included within this area.

**5.15.2** The general setting these areas provide is a treescape around the base of the Priory 'knoll' punctuated by the quiet dominant white architecture of the modern quay. The development has changed the historic setting of the church. Prior to its introduction the views across the harbour would have been a peaceful setting dominated by the tree cover. The presence of the newer buildings presents a more active busy element in this view. While the development has not protected the historic setting, the marina provides a dynamic point of interest for visitors exploring the outer edges of the Town Centre.

**5.15.3** The Quomps is also an extension of the Town Centre experience in that the side streets, paths through the Priory and the Mill Stream all lead through to the open space by the river. A café with spill out areas, listed bandstand, and the historic Place Mill (Grade II listed) provide focal points and activity. These are all set close to the point where the various routes emerge into the more open setting of the park. A riverside walk allows visitor access to follow the river up stream to the west, but the space becomes more open and less interesting as one moves away from the quay. There is a distinct feeling that the route leads away from the main interest of the Town Centre and into the more suburban surroundings.

**5.15.4** Public access into the Priory Quay development is possible. However, signage and the general feeling the area is a 'defensible space' does not welcome public access. The confluence of the rivers Avon and Stour can be seen from within the development and views out across the harbour to Hengistbury Head provide a rare connection with the open harbour.

**5.15.5** The adjoining Convent Meadows is a more private area. Views into the space from the Mill Stream walk are screened by fencing and planting. This area precludes any access or visibility of the waterfront. The waterside access continues to be precluded by private property until the Mill Stream walk joins the Avon. While the visitor on the landward side of the water frontage is excluded from the water's edge, the view from the river is more open. Views into the Convent Meadows are available to those approaching the

town by boat up the Avon. The existing mobile homes development on the site does not enhance the setting of the town.

**5.15.6** This area makes a significant contribution to the interest of the Town Centre area. The modern development within this area has compromised some of the historic character of the area. However, the dynamic setting of trees, waterside, the boating interest and activity around the eastern end of the park still make this a memorable space. The external views into the Priory also benefit from the remaining treescape setting.

#### 5.15.7 Main Characteristics

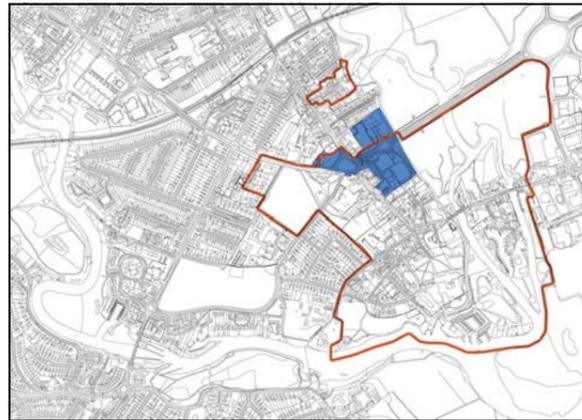
- Area dominated by open expanse of amenity grassland. Contrast with built up area of Town Centre.
- Riverside views and boating activity add visual interest to water frontage.
- Views to Priory provide historic aspect to character.
- Vibrant café and activity of water front make this a lively part of the Town Centre.
- Backdrop of other more standard post-war development encloses area on the northern side.
- Marina development contrasts with historic setting of adjacent Priory Quarter, but introduces a strong maritime connection to the water front.
- Convent Meadows precludes visitor access and reinforces exclusivity of water frontage.

#### Sensitivity to Change

**5.15.8** Existing development in this area has already compromised some of the historic character. The location within the Conservation Area means any new development or alteration to existing buildings needs to be considered in terms of the potential to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. In this location the character is to some extent less sensitive due to the presence of the existing elements of modern development around the Priory Quay and on the edge of the Quomps. However, the area remains highly sensitive in terms of any further change that would reduce the presence or effect of the treescape setting to the Priory, or have a wider influence on the tranquil historic character of the Priory Quarter.



### 5.16 NC Area 2f: Saxon Square and Fountains Way



**5.16.1** These areas encompass the modern retail precinct and A35 junctions located at the northern end of the High Street, together with the supermarket site on the northern side of the A35. These are large scale developments in the context of the rest of the High Street and Bargates areas adjoining. Saxon Square has an internal streetscape of small and medium sized shop units. These are set within a large 'market square' and partially covered arcade. Externally the scale and uniformity of these units is evident to the views from the car park, A35 and entrance roadway.

**5.16.2** The market square area, although a little dated, appears to be a well used civic space. Large species trees, including Liriodendron, link with others in the main High Street. The Holm Oak is a dominant element set against the historic town hall building.

**5.16.3** The A35 passes through the area, with heavy traffic negotiating a pair of large roundabouts. The scale and form of the junction is again in direct contrast with the pedestrian spaces within the traditional High Street nearby. The roadway has a significant physical and visual impact on the location and effectively truncates the top end of the High Street.

**5.16.4** The scale and design of these developments and roadways are not unusual in terms of many urban areas. However, in this location the elements combine on the edge of an otherwise well-preserved historic centre. As the main through route within the Borough, the Fountains Way junction impacts heavily on the core area. Conversely, the roadway at this point is also a gateway location as it enters the built up area.

**5.16.5** The generally unremarkable road frontages in this location fail to reinforce any positive statement of the Borough character or identity at this key location.

#### 5.16.6 Main Characteristics

- Modern shopping precinct and roadscape set alongside traditional High Street.
- While clearly a modern development, the precinct maintains the modest scale of the surrounding townscape.
- Roadway introduces major severance between sections of streetscape.

- Open space within precinct provides a civic space around historic town hall.
- 'Forum' market space defined by assorted mix of trees. Single Holm oak dominates.

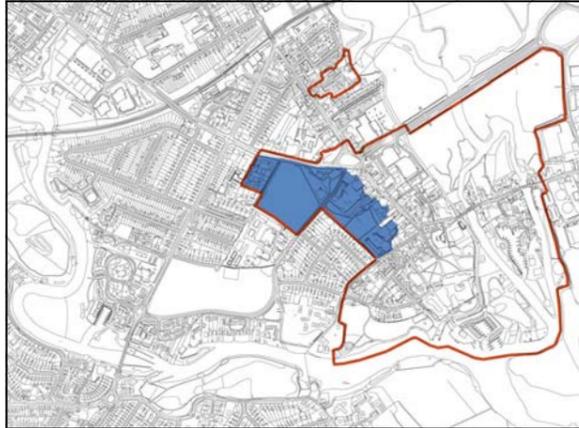
#### Sensitivity to Change

**5.16.7** There is a policy requirement to ensure proposals preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. Within the context of a modern development that currently contrasts and conflicts with the wider historic setting of the Conservation Area, these areas are not inherently sensitive to change. However, their setting within the Conservation Area, and in particular their direct inter-relationship with the main High Street, underlines their relationship with the wider setting of the historic centre. Where redevelopment or other proposed alterations come forward these should respect the general scale of the surrounding townscape, encompass design styles and detailing sympathetic to the location, and avoid competition with the historic landmark buildings within the Conservation Area.

**5.16.8** This area also forms a key gateway location where the A35 meets the Town Centre. There is considerable scope and potential benefits for this area to be enhanced as a gateway to the town and Borough.



### 5.17 NC Area 2g : Druitt Gardens, The Creedy and Barrack Road Recreation Ground



**5.17.1** These combined areas form a mix of public open space, dead space and car parks in the backland areas to the south of the main High Street. The areas are predominantly open but do include a number of assorted buildings. The area also includes an extensive area of tree cover that loosely links parts of the area together. This area falls within the Conservation Area, in part because of the historic burh boundary and consequent archaeological interest.

**5.17.2** The Barrack Road Recreation Ground is split into a large open area of amenity grassland and the more intimate New Zealand Gardens. The latter area provides a strong framework of trees close to the A35 Fountain Way Junction.

**5.17.3** A large surface level car park is enclosed within the northern end of the space behind the High Street. A second similar car park is located at the southern end of the space. The area of Druitt Gardens is sandwiched between the car parks as an area of mature evergreen (Holm) oak woodland. The tree cover within the recreation ground links with trees along 'The Creedy', a footpath route along the south western side of the space. This feature forms the boundary between the main Town Centre and the outer more suburban development of the wider neighbourhood.

**5.17.4** In the context of some wider views the tree cover is visible as a backdrop and boundary feature. From within Druitt Gardens the trees form a dense under-managed 'forest' within which rough paths and 'desire lines' provide a confusing network of uninviting routes.

**5.17.5** While the external views may benefit from the outer fringe of tree cover, the internal character of car parks and unmanaged woodland do not provide a particularly attractive setting. While woodland cover within an urban setting should be seen as a very positive asset, the condition of the trees, understorey and public access is such that the area fails to enhance the Town Centre in the way that it should.

**5.17.6** Where views are available, the area looks into the clutter of rear elevations of the High Street buildings. Although a conservation Area, the buildings do not present much visual interest or sense of historic character. The newly refurbished Regent Arts Centre has opened up a frontage out into this area. The re-orientation of an access out into the backland space introduces interest and activity in the area. It is understood another redevelopment project, known as

the 'Lanes' may offer new opportunities to re-orientate some public access in towards the gardens area. This again may help to bring interest to the spaces.

#### 5.17.7 Main Characteristics

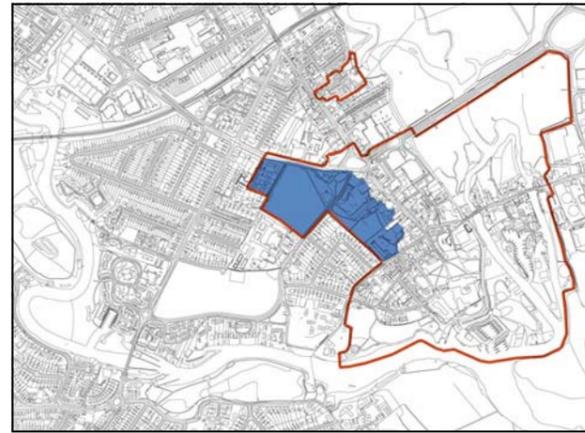
- Series of open undeveloped areas and evidently under-utilised areas in the backland space 'behind' the High Street.
- Low key Victorian parkland adjoining the A35. Area acts as visual landmark to main road, but provides only a local neighbourhood park function.
- Tree cover links between spaces includes an avenue across the Barrack Gardens, through the Creedy and woodland cover of Druitt Gardens.
- Undermanaged open space area with dense stand of over-mature coppiced Holm oak and mixed ground flora and grass. Random mix of surfaced and un-surfaced mud paths/desire lines cut through area. Poor visibility along routes make space unattractive or insecure environment.
- Car park areas formed as blank areas of hard standing making no contribution to wider townscape 'historic' character.
- Rear elevations of High Street buildings present generally dilapidated and untidy boundary to spaces. Refurbished Arts Centre provides new entrance frontage into backland space.
- Druitt Gardens contains the Grade 2 listed remains of an original Saxon Wall.

#### Sensitivity to Change

**5.17.8** As part of the wider Conservation Area this character area provides a potential green setting to the High Street and tree cover back-drop to parts of the town. The area also contains part of the original Saxon boundary, and is therefore extremely sensitive in archaeological terms.

**5.17.9** In general terms the area is sensitive in that it is covered by the general policy requirement for the historic character to be preserved or enhanced. As an area with limited visible historic character and poor environmental conditions, this area presents significant potential for enhancement through improved management of the open spaces. Such management needs to recognise the archaeological interest of this area.





**5.17 NC Area 2g : DrUITT Gardens, The Creedy and Barrack Road Gardens cont ..**

**5.17.10** Beyond this the other open spaces, and car parks, offer significant development potential close to the main Town Centre. The development of more positive uses of the under-utilised areas around the edges of DrUITT Gardens offers the potential to upgrade the back side of the High Street. The provision of new interest, connections, and frontages off the main High Street façade could lead to a more positive character and role for the gardens/woodland area and wider enhancement of the interest of the town.

regard to the role of the trees in buffering the housing area to the west and general views of the Town Centre.

**5.17.11** Development and management of this area should have



### 5.18 NC Area 2h : Bridge Street and Rossiters Quay



**5.18.1** Town Bridge and Waterloo Bridge link this island area with the Town Centre and Purewell neighbourhood. The River Avon splits into two separate channels just to the north of Bridge Street. These rejoin near the confluence of the Avon and Stour. The long thin island area has been developed with historic street frontage along Bridge Street and a modern 'marina' development on the harbour side.

**5.18.2** These areas enjoy distinctive and contrasting natural settings on either side of the Bridge Street axis. To the north the bridges provide glimpsed views out to the Avon water meadows (refer to Section 4.0). The rear elevations of the Bridge Street buildings look out over this landscape, the buildings themselves are part of the setting to the Priory in the strategic view back from the Bypass.

**5.18.3** To the south the river channels meander out of sight of the Bridge, providing a backdrop of riverside trees and glimpsed views over the marshes out to the harbour (refer to Section 6.0)

**5.18.4** Bridge Street continues the streetscape building lines out over Waterloo Bridge to Stony Lane Junction. The line is broken where a 1970's development is set back from the road frontage and where another section of the street is awaiting redevelopment. To the east of Waterloo Bridge, the street frontage is more one-sided. On the south side the line gives way to the Council offices car park and the Gas Works site. Two large gas holders intrude into the townscape around this site.

**5.18.5** The two bridges are scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I, and several buildings on the frontage are listed. The island area falls within the eastern edge of the Town Centre Conservation Area.

**5.18.6** Rossiters Quay is an unusual modern development in that natural materials and mix of traditional scale dwellings and larger 'wharf' scale buildings have been created as a new side street off the main road. Elements of unusually modern detailing have been used to create a series of reasonably sympathetic but individual buildings. The buildings are set alongside a winding 'streetscape' that leads around to a boat yard and yacht moorings. An attractive mooring basin has been created within the centre of the island. The riverside tree cover of the western side of the island has been retained as a setting to moorings and buildings.

**5.18.7** The Rossiters Quay area is open to public access, but

frustratingly does not lead to any point of public interest or linkage to other points of interest. The boatyard at the end of the roadway is private and as the setting to the housing and exclusive water frontage has the feel of a defensible space.

**5.18.8** Bridge Street provides an attractive pedestrian friendly route to Waterloo Bridge. Beyond this, the visual interest of the street frontages starts to thin out. Although this area should be noted as the transition zone between the two Conservation Areas.

**5.18.9** These areas are high quality parts of the Town Centre townscape, the general natural and historic interest of the setting has not been lost on the creation of the new development. These areas have a strong sense of place and a positive part of the Borough-wide collection of historic townscape. The significance of these areas within the Borough could be greatly enhanced if they could be opened up to provide a destination or focus for public/visitor access into the waterside areas.

#### 5.18.10 Main Characteristics

- Dynamic natural setting of island site set between river channels and open water-meadows landscape to the north and maritime setting to the south.
- Streetscape punctuated by the two river crossings reinforcing the physical constraints on development.
- Rivers and bridge help define gateway approach into the main Town Centre.
- Historic streetscape with predominantly residential and office uses fronting on to road.
- Glimpsed views from bridges and between plots illustrates some depth to building groups and garden areas in behind street frontage.
- Views linking town with outer landscape setting of water meadows and the maritime setting of the harbour.
- Development of Rossiters Quay provides modern dynamic interest off the main through route and limited access on to island.



**5.18 NC Area 2h : Bridge Street and Rossiters Quay**

- Generally hard streetscape environment with strong landscape/treescape setting on riverside and in behind main street frontage.

**5.18.11 Residential Development Characteristics**

Form/Scale	Modern exclusive housing developments set off the main street. Mixed scales up to 4 storey.
Era	1970's Avon Court. 1990's Rossitor Quay.
Style	1970's large scale mews court. 90's historic style.
Materials	Brick, tile, tile hanging and dark timber boarding.
Roofscape	70's complex long roofscapes—90's mix of scales.
Plot SizeDensity	Varied/non historic.
Frontage	70's breaks street frontage. 90's creates new internal frontages.
Boundaries	70's NA—whole development gated to road 90's—Brick walls—enclosed private spaces
Trees	No significant tree groups

**Sensitivity to Change**

**5.18.12** As a Conservation Area, proposed development or alterations would need to preserve or enhance the character of the island area. With a collection of listed buildings and good quality street frontage, the proposals in this area would generally need to offer a very sensitive response to the setting to be seen as enhancement. The existing modern development is set back from the main street. On the 1970's mews development, this illustrates how the streetscape can be affected by moving away from the established building line. On the Rossiters Quay development, the new buildings are set back in a way that leaves the street frontage intact but provides potential interest and access off the street.

**5.18.13** While there may be some scope for further high quality infill, or redevelopment on the island, the mix of buildings, boatyards and open spaces should also be seen as part of the interest and character of the location. The accessibility and appearance of the water frontage for visitors on both foot or boat should also be seen as part of the important potential and sensitive asset of this area.



**Bridge Street Frontage Characteristics**

**Building line/layout**

Building line between bridges originally strong but now disrupted in places by Avon Court. Towards Stony Lane frontage breaks down with council office car park, gasworks and builders yard.

**Scale**

Building heights vary with 2 and 3 storey mix.

**Elevations and Rooflines**

Varied elevations with mix of old and new, houses, shops and small office uses. Shop fronts fairly standard but some historic detailing restored/preserved. Over shop elevations include variety of bays, windows and detailing - generally interesting mix. Strong eaves lines, some parapets and characteristic Purbeck slips/pitches to road.

**Materials**

Mix of brick, painted and exposed and render with tiles and occasional roof dormers.

**Paving and Street Furniture**

Mix of Blanc de Bierge and tarmac. No soft landscape or significant street furniture.



### 5.19 NC Area 2i : Bridge Street - Stony Lane



**5.19.1** The eastern end of Bridge Street leads out into the more large scale commercial side of the town. In this area the streetscape breaks down with a mix of commercial premises set in between groups of older street frontage dwellings and shops. The buildings that front directly onto the road form the remnants of Rotten Row. This historic group of houses are 2.5 to 3 storey C18th rendered and painted brick, much altered but retaining the historic scale and form of this former historic street. These help to maintain some sense of a streetscape, particularly on the northern side of the road. The gas works, Council offices and a number of small industrial buildings are set back from the road frontage. The two gas holders form dominant elements in views from the street and other views in towards the Town Centre. These larger buildings, car parks, storage and working areas, and site fencing are generally utilitarian in design and intrusive elements on the edge of the historic centre. The River Avon borders this area, land running alongside the River is used for boat storage with associated moorings, jetties and slipways.

**5.19.2** While Bridge Street has retained some sense of a traditional street the commercial backdrop is more dominant in the Stony Lane axis of the area. Entering the town from the A35 to the north, the character of large scale retail warehousing and commercial buildings dominate the roadscape. The junction of Stony Lane and Bridge Street lacks the sense of a gateway location.

**5.19.3** South of Bridge Street Stony Lane leads down into a series of public car park spaces located around a modern sports centre building set in behind the gas works and Council offices. Although adjoining, the open space areas of the leisure centre and wider harbour, there is little sense of the adjacent landscape or adjacent riverside frontage.

**5.19.4** The large scale warehouse and light industrial buildings also break the continuity of the small scale development pattern. These buildings introduce a disjointed collection of buildings and strongly commercial character to Stony Lane. The scale, bland architecture and alien finishes to the buildings makes them quite intrusive. Their position on the edge of the flood plan setting to the Town Centre also has a major adverse visual impact on this key setting.

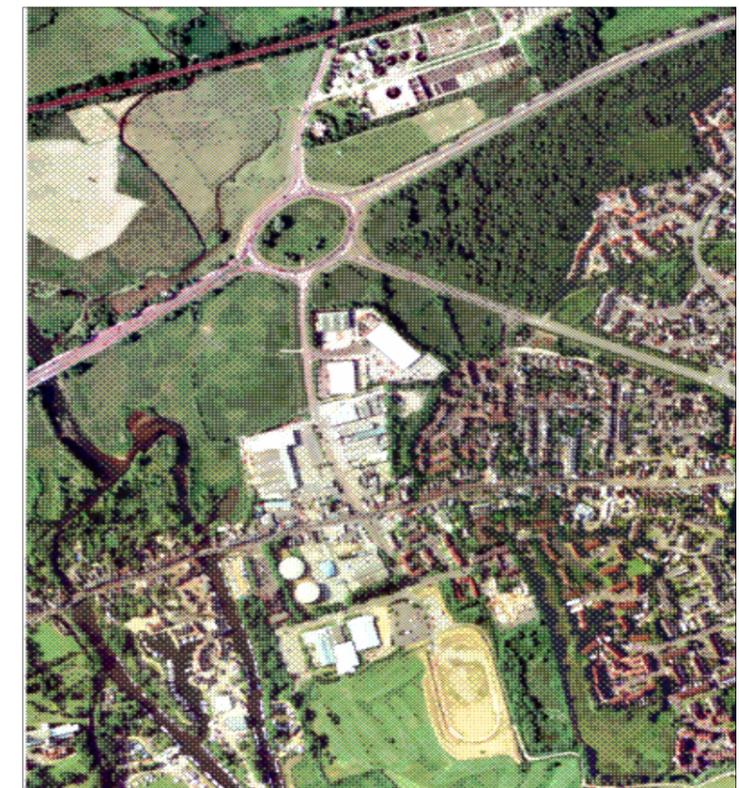
**5.19.5** The Stony Lane approach off the A35 is further diminished by the disrupted frontages around the junction with Bridge Street. The commercial buildings and the truncated end of a building terrace do not identify this as an attractive gateway point on the street.

### 5.19.6 Main Characteristics

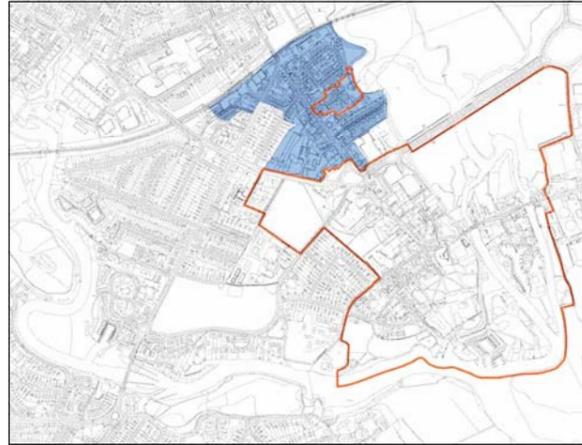
- Mix of remnant streetscape and larger commercial/civic buildings.
- Limited number of historic buildings - some heavily altered.
- Utilitarian buildings making no contribution to sense of place.
- Riverside frontage heavily vegetated - provides a screen/buffer to existing development, but also excludes connection with the river.

### Sensitivity to Change

**5.19.7** Despite much loss of historic buildings in this area and the dominating presence of the gas holders, the elements of remaining historic street frontage buildings, representing the survival of the historic street of Rotten Row and the river frontage and tree cover should be seen as valuable within this area.



## 5.20 NC Area 2j: Bargates and Avon Buildings



**5.20.1** This area forms the continuation of the streetscape and side-street pattern of the historic core area out towards the railway and Fairmile. The area does not possess the same historical interest or quality of the southern High Street/Church Street areas, but still represents a contrast with the wider suburban townscape.

**5.20.2** Bargates was little more than a long straight road leading out towards St. Catherine's Hill until the arrival of the railway from Ringwood in the 1860's. By the 1890s a continuous line of street frontage was established with the terraces and cottages of Avon Buildings and Beaconsfield Road in the adjacent side streets. The layout of small Victorian villas in Fairfield had also been started by this time.

**5.20.3** The Bargates area has suffered from the severance caused by the A35. Physically the area has been cut off from the main High Street with pedestrians directed into an uninviting underpass. Visually the continuity of streetscape is broken by dominant landscape planting on the junction, a car park at the end of the building line, the new roadscape and traffic. The building line and plan form of the Bargates Street is more controlled than the main High Street. At the southern end the pavements are wider and shop fronts set back to similar spacing to the High Street. Further north the buildings close in reducing the scale of pedestrian spaces. This has the effect of reducing the visibility along the building frontage and gives pedestrians less opportunity to see shops that may be of interest. The diminishing width and presence of more residential frontages makes the area of less interest to potential visitors venturing beyond the A35.

**5.20.4** On the approach to the Town Centre the bridge over the railway at the northern end of Bargates provides a view straight down the street and through the centre to the Priory. There is also a change in character on the roadway at this point where the suburban roadscape of Fairmile gives way to the more enclosed streetscape of Bargates.

**5.20.5** The side streets are also hidden assets. The entrances in off the main road are no more than a single building width. The straight building lines conceal the attractive cottages and terraced frontages. The Victorian terraces of Avon Buildings are designated as a Conservation Area and provide the route for the Avon Valley path to reach the river. The narrow streets and tightly packed buildings have an intimate character that contrasts with the general housing stock of

the suburban areas. The overall terrace has a strong historic character, although individual buildings have lost their architectural features.

**5.20.6** The Bargates Street is part of the limited resource of streetscape areas within the Borough. Whilst not of Conservation Area quality, Bargates has a degree of historic character and scale and is a proper street frontage, located on one of the main through routes of the Borough. This area contributes positively to the general identity of the Borough, but could be enhanced for greater effect. The side street areas are attractive residential areas with distinctive 'streetscape' character. The Avon Buildings are on the public footpath route out to the Avon Valley, allowing some public appreciation of the historic character. This area should also be seen as having a potential role in the Borough-wide identity.

### 5.20.7 Main Characteristics

- Busy street frontage providing predominantly local shopping facilities.
- Severance from main High Street area makes this area a separate section of streetscape.
- Building set back at southern end provides generous pedestrian spaces. These diminish as the buildings close in on the roadway to the north.
- Street frontage comprise mix of retail, office and some residential development in range of building types. Consistent scale of two and three storey development.
- Buildings include a selection of listed buildings helping to reinforce some historic character. Unfortunate location of bus shelter within Bargates within setting of the main group of historic buildings.
- Quiet well concealed side roads seen from main street as glimpsed views, include attractive groups of Victorian terraces.



**5.20 NC Area 2j : Bargates and Avon Buildings cont ..**



**5.20.8 Residential Development Characteristics**

Form/Scale	Terraced Victorian cottages. Small scale Victorian villas.
Style	Plain cottages and detached villas.
Materials	Brick and slate.
Roofscape	Generally well preserved
Plot Size/Density	Terraced plots with modest rear gardens 30 - 40 units/ha
Frontage	Terraces - minimal frontage. Villas - small scale front gardens.
Boundaries	Villas - Brick walls.



**Sensitivity to Change**

**5.20.9** As tightly packed street frontages with only small rear garden or plot areas, there is little scope for significant new development. With a significant number of locally listed buildings and groups of terraced development alterations to existing buildings, should aim to respect the historic fabric, setting or at least the consistent scale of the streets within this area. Development, including advertisements and shop front designs within Bargates, should respect the strategic view gained down the street to the Town Centre and Priory. Care should be taken to ensure future changes do not intrude or compete with this view.



**5.20.10** Within the residential side streets some new dwellings have been constructed in amongst the earlier Victorian development. Greater consistency in building style and scale would help unify such buildings with their surroundings. The Avon Buildings Conservation Area designation dictates any development or alteration of buildings within this street should preserve or enhance the existing character. The terraced cottages within this road do not generally provide much scope to be 'improved' upon. Many are also locally listed, and therefore sensitive in terms of alteration or extension.

**5.20.11** The other adjoining side streets, while not in the Conservation Area, comprise distinctive and coherent groups of Victorian buildings. These again should be seen as sensitive to change. Alterations and extensions need to reflect the existing building lines, styles and roofscapes along with common detailing and boundary treatments.



**Bargates Street Frontage Characteristics**

**Building line/layout**

Scale of streetscape onto southern end matches the width and building height of the main High Street to the south. Building line strong overall feature of street. Small irregularities in individual buildings creates visual interest. Street narrows towards the northern end.

**Scale**

Wide streetscape, predominantly with 3 storey development reducing to more 2 storey and residential frontages at north end.

**Elevations and Rooflines**

Range of semi-traditional shop fronts, including modern 'arcade' and ordinarily local shop units. Signage includes standard styles. Varied building frontages over shops with significant historic character.

**Materials**

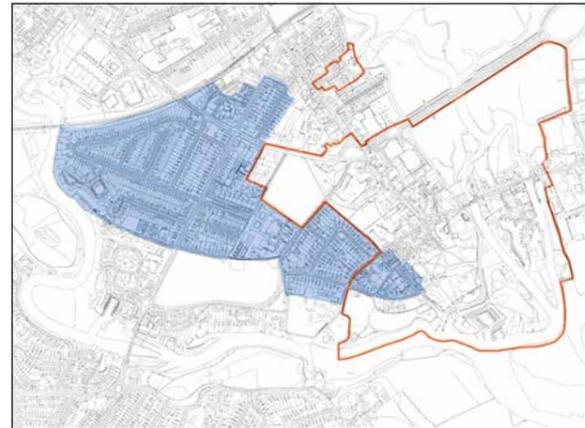
Predominantly exposed brick, slate and tile.

**Paving and Street Furniture**

Pavements paved with small element paving with block edge trim to kerb. Colourful bedding displays in raised metal basket features.



**5.21 Area 21 : Wickfield Avenue – Stour Road**



**5.21.1** This area covers the suburban development located around the southern/eastern sides of the historic Town Centre. The area may be sub-divided into separate local ‘sub’ neighbourhoods by the secondary school adjacent to Sopers Lane, but both areas share similar characteristics.

**5.21.2** The Ordnance Survey of 1910 indicated only limited development between the Bargates and the River Stour. Small groups of terraced houses appear on Stour Road, around the station and close to the Quomps. By 1931, this layout had expanded to a pattern of detached and semi-detached estates off Stour Road up to the railway station, two schools and additional housing close to the Quomps. These areas encompass the bulk of the housing now found within the character area.



**5.21.3** To date, the original housing layouts have remained intact with only relatively minor areas of infill development. The housing is a varied mix of detached and semi-detached houses. Groups such as the 1930s bay fronted properties along Stour Road have a common design style. Aside from the earliest Victorian brick terraces the properties are set back from the roads with small front garden spaces. Most of these have modest rear garden plots.

**5.21.4** The urban area is divided by the busy Stour Road. This links the A35 to the Tuckton Bridge and Bournemouth. Smaller, typically straight estate roads serve the area. There are few dedicated pedestrian access routes leading either through or out to other areas.

**5.21.5** The area is enclosed with few views to the wider townscape. To the north the railway embankment separates the area from Fairmile to the east. The rising ground prevents views out of the area. To the south, medium rise development along the river corridor enclose the area. Trees on the railway embankment, around the Barracks Road Recreation Ground and on the Quomps, further reinforce the containment.



**5.21.6** The area has very little internal landscape structure or open space provision. The recreation grounds to the north and south of the school are simply open sports grounds which provide limited green space function.

**5.21.7** The general condition of these areas is a relatively hard built environment. Individual streets have strong tree cover or more mature

gardens. These areas provide a pleasant residential environment. The remaining areas would benefit from modest improvement.

**5.21.8 Main Characteristics**

- Area laid out following grid of straight roadways with few cul-de-sacs or infill areas.
- Subtle differences between road pattern of development on either side of Sopers Lane school (but general consistency in built development).
- Straight roads, some heavily trafficked, give area relatively hard urban environment. Some streets relieved by more mature gardens and street trees.
- Mixed development pattern of terraced, semi-detached and occasional detached housing with individual properties fronting earlier main roads and estate layouts on side roads.
- Predominance of 2 storey housing over localised groups of bungalows.
- General consistency in scale, plot density and design styles. Occasional groups of unified house styles.

**5.21.9 Residential Development Characteristics**

Form/Scale	Predominantly detached housing with areas of detached bungalows.
Era	1900-1930's
Style	Mix of bay fronted townhouses
Materials	Brick, painted and render-slate and tile
Roofscape	Varied roofscape due to mix of houses and bungalows
Plot Size/Density	Modest plots with 10-20 units/ha
Frontage	Generally modest enclosed front gardens.
Boundaries	Low brick walls and hedges
Trees	Scattered pattern of small street trees and occasional larger specimens including Beech.





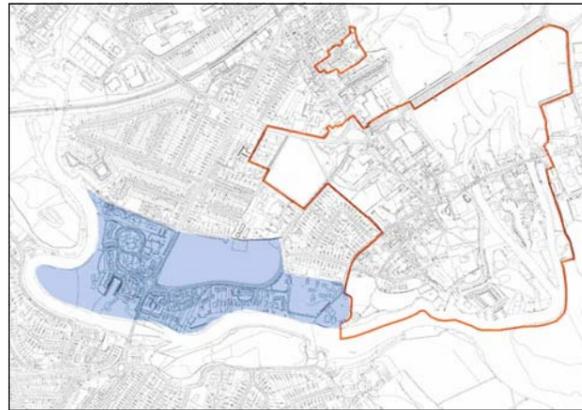
### 5.21 NC Area 21 : Wickfield Avenue – Stour Road cont

#### Sensitivity to Change

**5.21.10** As an area occupied by development with few open spaces and only modest plot sizes, there is minimal capacity for further infill development within this area. As generally 20th century urban housing, the area does not have an overly sensitive or inherently valuable townscape character. There is however a general consistency to the existing development that would be sensitive to inappropriate alterations or infill.

**5.21.11** Considering the proximity of the Town Centre and sustainable development objectives, the general density of this housing is comparatively low. However, ad-hoc redevelopment or infill would contrast with the established character in a way that would lead to the perception of a cramped environment.

## 5.22 NC Area 21 : The River Stour Frontage



**5.22.1** Areas of relatively modern (post 60s and 80s) development extend around the river frontage from the Meridians around to the edge of the Quomps. The area closest to the Quomps is currently under construction. These areas are a mix of modern Riverside apartment developments and pockets of earlier detached Riverside houses. A number of the developments include boat moorings. The earlier riverside houses are generally individual, often ‘architectural’, one off properties. Some of these were developed as holiday accommodation, but have since been accepted as residential developments. These are set back close to the river on long thin plots. Some plots have been sub-divided to provide an extra dwelling on the road frontage.

**5.22.2** The estate and apartment developments form blocks of common buildings but each development is quite different from the next.

**5.22.3** The River frontage has provided a distinctive setting to this area. The river corridor at this point is relatively narrow and sections of the banks are well vegetated with riverside trees. The Meridians development is set back from the river channel to leave an informal open space. Historically this area is referred to as Stockers Mead, one of a number of private land holdings used for grazing and storage of livestock. The area can still be defined in terms of its historic boundaries with reference to historic mapping. Remains of the Monks Walk also forms part of this important public amenity space. This provides a semi-natural setting to the new dwellings. Although open to public access with a small car park, the area is not an obvious public facility. It is, however, identified as a site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)

**5.22.4** The other developments along the river frontage generally restrict public access to the river bank, until the newest sites on the edge of the Quomps, where a walkway is being provided. A pedestrian friendly route is also provided by the access lane off Willow Drive.

**5.22.5** The area is located alongside the busy Stour Road route into Bournemouth and the small Willow Way that serves the southern side of the Town Centre. The area is a relatively busy part of the townscape. The general quality of this area for residents appears high as the housing developments provide good accommodation and exclusive settings. The individual houses enjoy generous plots and prime river front locations. For pedestrians and visitors the develop-

ment pattern excludes continuous access to the riverside and pushes the potential pedestrian routes out to the busy roadside environment. Although located against a prime asset the area does not enhance the Borough identity for those exploring the Town Centre.

### 5.22.6 Main Characteristics

- Section of the River Stour enclosed by urban development on both Christchurch and Bournemouth sides.
- Development on Christchurch side comprised of a mix of individual low rise properties and taller three and four story riverside developments.
- Individual housing areas of moderate low density, with well vegetated informal garden plots.
- Riverside developments with much higher density and large scale buildings. Each development being distinctly different from the others.
- While some open space areas have been achieved along the river, there is no sense of a continuous route for visitors to follow the river.
- Sections of the river retain exclusive access for private property and boat moorings.
- The view of the Priory from the key gateway of Wick Bridge is of strategic importance to the Borough and is particularly sensitive to development along the river front.



**5.22 NC Area 2i: The River Stour Frontage cont ..**

**5.22.10** The strong individual design styles of the existing development provides the context for individual alteration or extension to these properties.

**5.22.7 Residential Development Characteristics**



Form/Scale	Mix of medium rise developments and one off housing.
Era	1960's - current
Style	Highly varied.
Materials	Brick, render and tile hanging.
Roofscape	Varies - flat roof and complex pitches.
Plot Size/Density	Varied with individual plots
Frontage	Individual houses set back in long plots. Modern housing courts with shared spaces.
Boundaries	Informal hedgelines and brick walling.
Trees	Willows and oaks.



**Sensitivity to Change**

**5.22.8** As an area outside of the historic core and with limited public access, this is not overly sensitive to change. However, the area historically known as Stockers Mead and largely defined by the remnant survival of the Monks Walk (and the pronounced bend of the river) could benefit from interpretation and signage as to its historic and wildlife significance. The status of the river, as a key asset for the Borough both as a natural feature and as the Borough boundary, should not be overlooked. Development or alterations should respect the benefits of improved public access to the river and the view from the water and Wick Bridge as part of any sensitive design.



**5.22.9** There may be pressure to allow redevelopment of the existing individual properties with further higher density, higher rise development. The existing new developments are already taller than the general development in the rest of the Borough, while the greater height is now part of the existing character of this area. Development that is still taller than the adjacent site would be alien to the locality. With control on height, there is an opportunity for some high quality architectural designs for good modern buildings. Such imaginative development could be used to help pull the various designs within this area together into a more coherent area of townscape.



### 5.23 Town Centre Development Capacity



**5.23.1** The Conservation Area status of the historic core confirms the Town Centre as a sensitive environment. Modern development schemes have been integrated with varying degrees of success. Some have impacted on the historic character but still added to the interest and vibrancy of the town. If the conservation area status is to be retained, future developments need to ensure the historic characteristics are fully 'preserved or enhanced' by proposals. In view of the fact there are elements of 'modern' development within the town along with some areas that are not intrinsically valuable, it is considered there is some scope for development or redevelopment within the Town Centre.

**5.23.2** The existing condition and grain of historic street areas and the well preserved settings to the main buildings would preclude significant change within the southern part of the historic core. It is understood there are potential redevelopment opportunities for the less historic developments around the main High Street (e.g. the Post Office/arcade site) and to the north of Fountains Way (e.g. The Magistrates' Court site).

**5.23.3** Table 5.23.6 provides a summary of the potential character conflicts identified within this area.

**5.23.4** From this it is noted sites for sensitive development are available within the centre of town. Example areas are the car parking areas adjacent to Druitts Gardens. These areas do not have any intrinsic value to the overall character of the Conservation Area. However, Bank Close Car Park contains important archaeological remains that will need to be treated sensitively. They are not public open space, or well vegetated with trees. There are pedestrian access routes around these spaces, but these are not dependent on routes through the parking area. Redevelopment of these areas would not conflict with the physical structure of the historic townscape. The introduction of more positive land uses, well designed developments on these areas could bring greater interest to the backland space behind the High Street.

**5.23.5** If carefully developed there is the scope for new development to add to the vibrancy and interest of the town. These areas would not conflict with the overall sense of place created within the Town Centre.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL		CONFLICTS OR BENEFITS WITH ASSETS					IMPLICATIONS FOR CHARACTER		SIGNIFICANCE	
		BUILT ENVIRONMENT	SPACES & SETTINGS	NATURAL ASSETS	PERMEABILITY & ACCESS	IDENTITY				
		X Conflict √ Benefit = Neutral Effect ? Subject to Detail - Not Relevant								
<b>Potential Key</b> Category with potential without conflict Category with potential but some conflict Category with potential but substantial conflicts	> 1Ha or More < 1Ha or Less N/A Minimal Scope	Urban Grain Street Scapes Coherent Groups Historic Fabric Archaeological Value	Public Open Space Private Spaces Settling Edges and Enclaves	Tree Cover Water Courses Habitats	Permeability Access to Assets Access to Countryside	Borough Sense of Place Christchurch Entity Neighborhood Identity	Potential			
<b>Priory Quarter and Twynham Castle</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside		N/A N/A N/A N/A < N/A N/A N/A	= = = = ?	- - X -	X - -	X X -	X	Highly sensitive location within historic core. Trees within C.P. critical to setting.	Substantial	
<b>The High Street, Church Street and Castle Street</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside		N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A	= √ √ = =	- - - -	- - -	- - -	√ - √	Redevelopment of Post Office precinct could offer significant enhancement of Conservation Area	Potential Benefit	
<b>Millhams Street and Ducking Stool Lane</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside		N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A	√ √ √ = =	- - √ -	- √ -	? √ -	- - √	Redevelopment of hotel C.P. offers range of potential benefits subject to very high standard of design.	Potential Benefit	
		>	- - - X X	- - X X	X X X	? ? ?	X X X	Urban expansion on water meadows highly disruptive to Conservation Area status.	Substantial	
<b>Whitehall, Church Lane &amp; Quay Road</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside		N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A								
<b>Quomps, Priory Quay, Convent Meadows</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside Convent Meadows		N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A	- - - ? ?	- X ? -	? - -	√ √ -	√ - √	Developed Green Belt Site. Potential for redevelopment to improve some key deficiencies of access, but also difficult to develop with highly sensitive setting.	Potential Benefit	

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL		CONFLICTS OR BENEFITS WITH ASSETS					IMPLICATIONS FOR CHARACTER	SIGNIFICANCE	
		BUILT ENVIRONMENT	SPACES & SETTINGS	NATURAL ASSETS	PERMEABILITY & ACCESS	IDENTITY			
		X Conflict √ Benefit = Neutral Effect ? Subject to Detail - Not Relevant							
<b>Potential Key</b> Category with potential without conflict Category with potential but some conflict Category with potential but substantial conflicts	> 1Ha or More < 1Ha or Less N/A Minimal Scope	Urban Grain Street Scapes Coherent Groups Historic Fabric Archaeological Value	Public Open Space Private Spaces Settings Edges and Enclaves	Tree Cover Water Courses Habitats	Permeability Access to Assets Access to Countryside	Borough Sense of Place Christchurch Entity Neighborhood Identity	Potential		
<b>Saxon Square</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses ) Combined sites Development of Car Parks ) Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside	N/A N/A N/A < < < N/A N/A	= √ √ - - = √ √ - - √ √ - - -	? - - - - - - - - - √ -	- - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - -	√ √ √ √ √ √ - - -	Redevelopment of Saxon Square could lead to enhancement of Conservation Area Gateway Site. Well designed scheme has potential to improve the identify/sense of place at key location	Potential Benefit Potential Benefit Potential Benefit	
<b>Druitt Gardens and The Creedy</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside	N/A N/A < < < N/A N/A N/A	- - - X - - - √ - - - - - - ?	- - - - - - - - √ - √ -	- - - - - - ? - -	- - - √ √ - √ √ -	- - - - - - - - √	Local plan allocated residential site Potential improvement to backland areas and access to POS Redevelopment of car parking areas has the potential to enhance site areas and wider character of Conservation Area	Slight Potential Benefit Potential Benefit	
<b>Bridge Street and Rossiters Quay**</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside	N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A >	- - X - -	- X X X	X X X	- - -	X X -	Spaces adjacent to Bridge Street key part of setting to Conservation Area. Areas also designated SSSI	Substantial	
<b>Bridge Street - Stony Lane**</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside	N/A N/A N/A > < < N/A N/A	√ √ √ - - - - - - - √ √ - - -	- - - - - - - - - - √ √	- - - ? - - - - -	√ √ - - - - - ? -	√ - √ - - - - - √	Redevelopment of prominent sites between two Conservation Areas has potential to enhance general approach to town and local neighbourhood Loss of employment uses is an adverse impact to general diversity of town but could be outweighed by enhancement of Conservation Setting and by encouraging a mixed use development.	Potential Benefit Potential Benefit Potential Benefit	
** Character Area dealt with under Purewell									

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL		CONFLICTS OR BENEFITS WITH ASSETS					IMPLICATIONS FOR CHARACTER	SIGNIFICANCE	
		BUILT ENVIRONMENT	SPACES & SETTINGS	NATURAL ASSETS	PERMEABILITY & ACCESS	IDENTITY			
X Conflict √ Benefit = Neutral Effect ? Subject to Detail - Not Relevant									
<b>Potential Key</b> <span style="color: green;">■</span> Category with potential without conflict <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Category with potential but some conflict <span style="color: red;">■</span> Category with potential but substantial conflicts		> 1Ha or More < 1Ha or Less N/A Minimal Scope	Urban Grain Street Scapes Coherent Groups Historic Fabric Archaeological Value	Public Open Space Private Spaces Settings Edges and Enclaves	Tree Cover Water Courses Habitats	Permeability Access to Assets Access to Countryside	Borough Sense of Place Christchurch Entity Neighborhood Identity <i>Potential</i>		
<b>Bargates and Avon Buildings</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses - Large Sites Redevelopment of Other Uses - Small Sites Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside		N/A N/A N/A > < < N/A N/A N/A	   √ √ √ - - - ? ? ? - √ √ √ - ?	   ? - - - - - - - - - - -	   - - - ? - - - - -	   - - √ - - √ - - √	   Prominent site areas with potential to improve Strategic approach to Town Centre	   Potential Benefit Potential Benefit Potential Benefit	
<b>Wickfield Avenue - Stour Road</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside		N/A N/A N/A < N/A N/A < N/A	   - ? - - - - - - - -	   - - - - - X - -	   - - - X - -	   - - - - - -	   Small scale site on main road frontage Small scale site within existing housing area	   No effect No effect	
<b>River Stour Frontage</b> Previously Developed Vacant Land or Buildings Intensification of Existing Housing Stock Redevelopment of Existing Housing Areas Redevelopment of Other Uses Development of Car Parks Conversion of Commercial Buildings Vacant Land Not Previously Developed Outward Expansion into Edges, Enclaves or Countryside		N/A N/A N/A < < N/A N/A N/A	   - - - - - - - - - -	   - - - - - - - -	   ? - - - - -	   - - - - - -	   Small scale site on main road frontage Car park sites - with visitor value	   No effect No effect	