

Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 2 The Medieval and Post-medieval Town

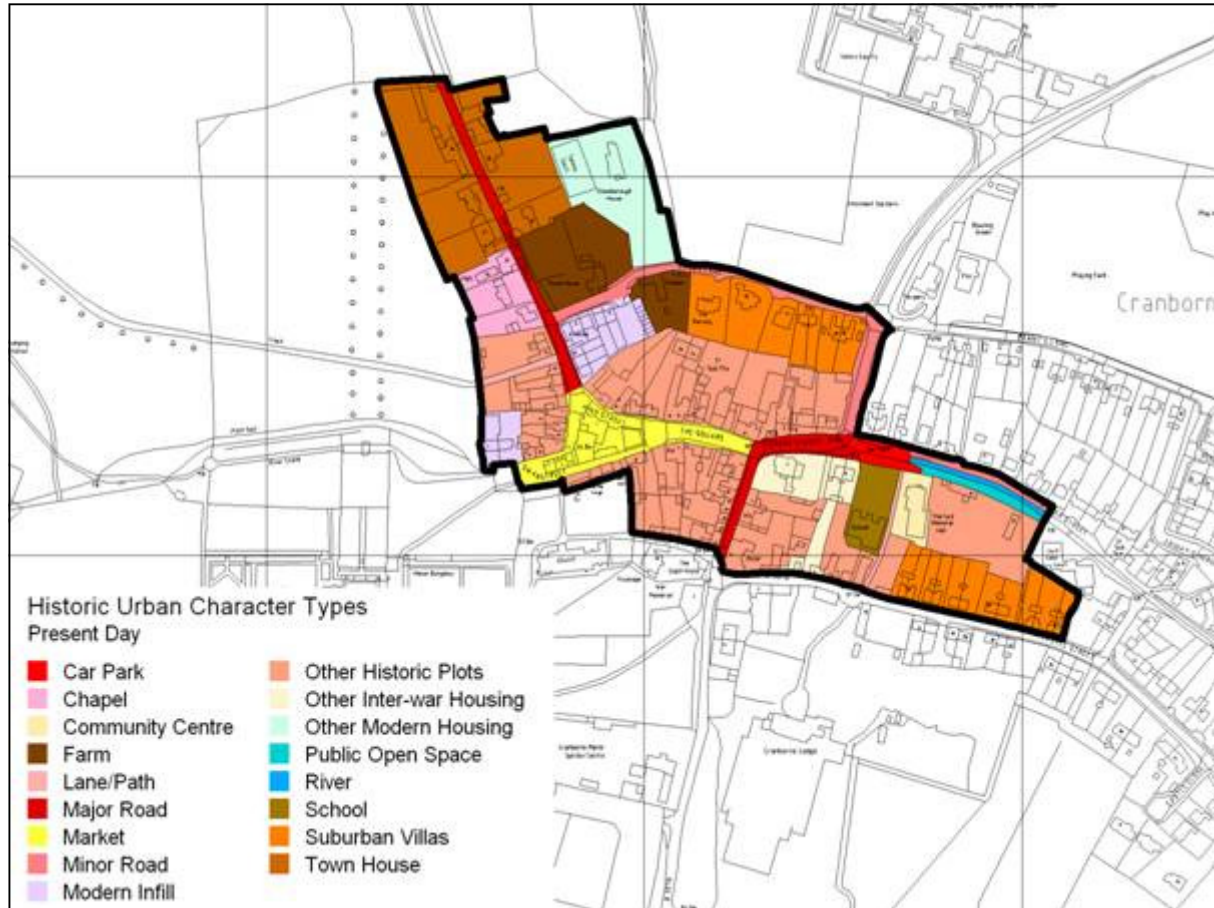


Figure 40: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 2, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 41: View south along Salisbury Street .



Figure 42: View north along Wimborne Street .

Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 2 Structure of Character Area

Overview

This area represents the commercial and domestic heart of the town from the medieval period onwards. It includes the High Street, market place, late medieval buildings and the majority of the 17th-19th century buildings.

Topography and Geology

The character area straddles the River Crane, which flows through the centre of the town along the length of the main street. It is culverted for a short section beneath the Market Place and High Street, reappearing in Water Street. The lower part of the town lies on river gravels and alluvium, whilst the upper parts lie on chalk. The topography is generally flat in the lower part of the river valley, and rises gently towards the west. This slight gradient becomes steeper along Salisbury Street where the town departs from the course of the stream and rises up the valley side to the northwest.

Urban Structure

This area comprises one major axis running along the river Crane, formed by High, Crane and Water Streets, which widens at its west end to form the market place. To north and south are two broadly parallel streets, Castle Street/Church Street and Grugs Lane, representing back lanes, connected by perpendicular lanes, paths and streets. Wimborne and Salisbury Streets represent the main N-S through street crossing the axial High Street. The Square and the market place lie at this junction.

Present Character

Figure 40 shows the present day historic urban character types. The core of the area consists of historic plots around the market place and the major streets. Further out from the centre are suburban villas and inter-war housing. There are also some small areas of modern infill. The school and community centre front on to Crane

Street. Salisbury Street lies to the NW of the centre and comprises a mixture of former public buildings such as the Methodist chapel and police station and detached town houses. Sinodun on Grugs Lane originated as a farmhouse and retains the yard to the rear.

Time Depth

This area represents that of the medieval town, as well as post-medieval expansion. The road layout probably dates to the medieval period, though some routes may be earlier. The market place may represent the original crossing point of an early N-S route between Salisbury and Poole Harbour over the River Crane, originating in the prehistoric period. The historic plots in the centre may broadly reflect medieval property boundaries with some later alteration. The areas beyond were developed from the 18th century onwards.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

This area comprises, at its centre, a closely packed group of historic buildings clustered around the medieval market place and the High Street. It continues to the south along Wimborne Street where 19th century houses front directly on to the street (Figure 42). Towards the east, the High Street continues as Crane Street and then becomes Water Street at the point where the River Crane re-emerges from its culvert. Here the stream is flanked by grass verges and a more open informal structure to the streetscape. Similarly, Salisbury Street has an open structure comprising detached 18th and 19th century houses set back from the street frontage behind front gardens. The south side of Grugs Lane and the north side of Castle Street both contain late 19th-early 20th century semi-detached and detached estate cottages set back from the road. The north side of Grugs Lane has a hedge bank and retains a semi-rural character.



Figure 43: View east along Swan Street, with 3 Swan Street to left.



Figure 44: View east along The Square, with 14 The Square to the right.

Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 2 Built Character

Building types

This character area is typified by brick-built domestic buildings of two storeys dating from the 18th-19th centuries. These form the majority of buildings in the town centre and provide homogeneity to the built character. Additionally a number of older timber-framed buildings survive on the fringes of the town, survivors of at least one destructive fire in the town centre during the 18th century. Suburban and estate houses of the 18th and 19th centuries dominate to the north-west and east of the town centre.

The 18th and 19th century houses include some large houses such as the 18th century 14 The Square and many smaller houses and urban cottages, some with interesting architectural details including ornate door and window heads, for example 3 Swan Street (Figure 43). Salisbury Street contains a number of large individual 18th and early 19th century two storey brick and tile houses. Red Lion House at the northern end of the street is the earliest, built c. 1770.

The older buildings date from the 15th-17th century. 1-2 Church Street is a 15th century thatched house with 17th -18th century alterations, now two cottages (RCHME 1975, 13) (Figure 46). The Fleur-de-Lys is 16th century but much altered. Sinodun, Grugs Lane is 17th century or earlier with some surviving timber-framing. No 5 Crane Street is an 18th century thatched house possibly with an earlier core.

There are a small number of surviving industrial buildings, which include a former bakery, a granary (Figure 47), smithy and some barns. There are also a small number of surviving historic shopfronts.

Garden walls, particularly along Salisbury Street and to the rear of the plots backing on to The Close, are a significant element.

Building Materials

Buildings in this character area are almost entirely constructed in a mellow orange-red local brick and tile. Burnt headers are used as decorative elements in some buildings and occasionally yellow brick is also used. Some are in painted brick, some have Welsh slate roofs and only a few retain thatched roofs. Thatch is the traditional roofing material in the East Dorset district, but it is likely that many have been lost in Cranborne due to fires and replaced with tile and slate in the 18th and 19th centuries. Sinodun, Grugs Lane is partly of heathstone rubble and flint. A small number of buildings have some surviving timber-framing. Brick and cob are used in garden walls.

Key Buildings

Public Buildings: Primitive Methodist Chapel, former Police Station, Cranborne First School.

Commercial and industrial buildings: Fleur-de-Lys Inn; Sheaf of Arrows Pub; Cranborne Stores (former bakery); The Old Granary, Swan Street.

15th -17th century houses: 1-2 Church Street; Sinodun, Grugs Lane.

18th-19th century houses: 2-4 Salisbury Street; Red Lion House, Manor View (both on Salisbury Street); 14 The Square; 5 Crane Street; 13 Water Street.



Figure 45: View along Crane Street with 5 Crane Street in background.



Figure 46: Nos 1 and 2 Church Street.



Figure 47: Old Granary, Swan Street.

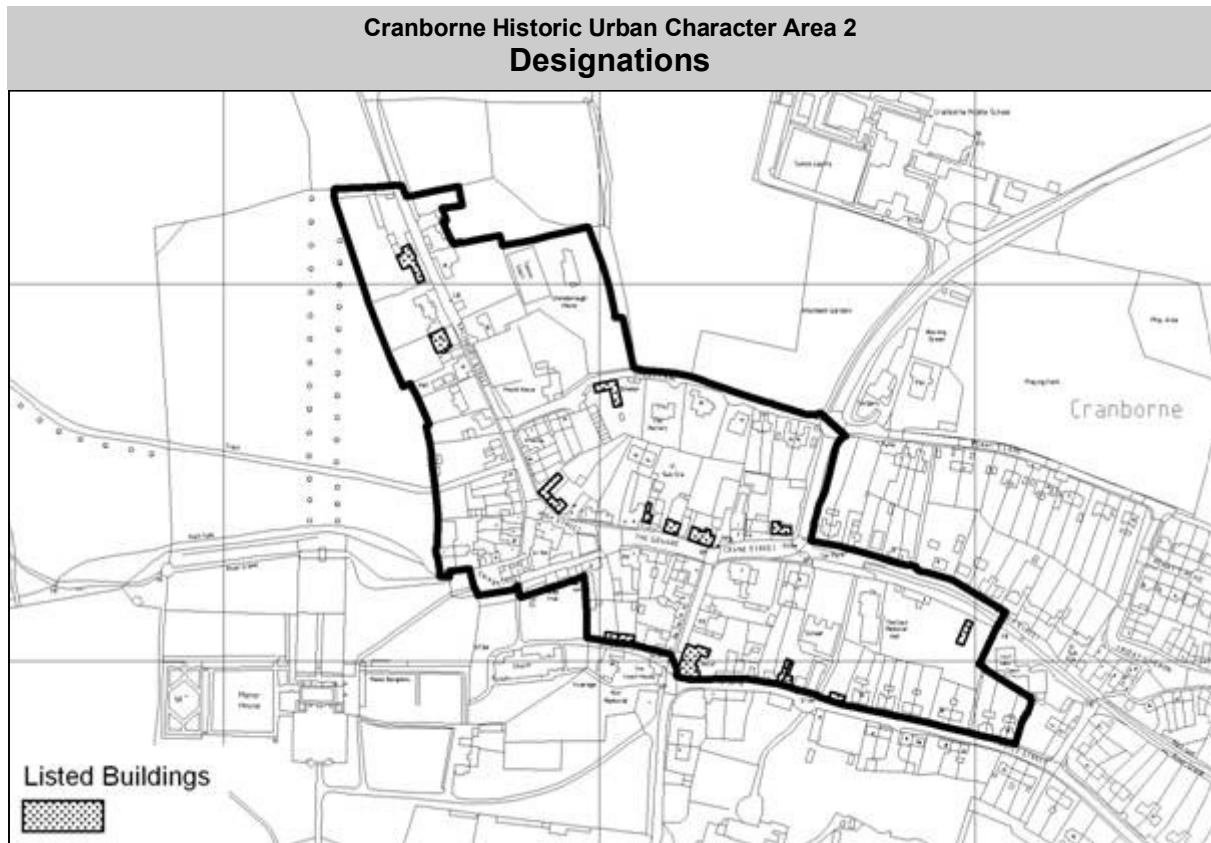


Figure 49: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 2.

Listed Buildings

There are 15 Listed Building designations in the Character Area, all Grade II, including a telephone kiosk at the junction of Crane Street and The Square. (Figure 49).

Conservation Areas

Almost the whole of this Character Area lies within the Cranborne Conservation Area (Figure 29). Only the 20th century Chaseborough House lies outside.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

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

Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the Character Area.



Figure 50: Nos 2 and 4 Salisbury Street .



Figure 51: Red Lion House, Salisbury Street.

Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 2 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **high**. There is a strong contribution from the historic buildings, a very high proportion of which date from the 18th and 19th century, with a few distinctive 17th century houses away from the centre. The few modern buildings have generally been constructed from materials and in a style sympathetic to the character of the area. Surviving plot boundaries of potentially medieval date also add to the strength of historic character. Furthermore, the street layout, including the market place, is essentially medieval or earlier in origin. The course of the River Crane along the main axial route of the town emphasises the last point.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **high** sensitivity to major change. The town is on a small scale and considered more of a village than an urban area today. The current rural character of the place would be seriously compromised by large-scale development.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **high**. Cranborne has been in decline since the late 18th century and has never been subject to intense development pressure within its historic core. This lack of development means that there is a very good chance for survival of significant archaeological deposits, particularly in the back plots of buildings within the area of the medieval town. These deposits may include features associated

with the origins, growth, economy and industry of medieval Cranborne. None of these aspects of the town are particularly well recorded or researched. There may be some surviving medieval architectural components within ostensibly later post-medieval domestic buildings.

There is some potential for recovering archaeological information concerning pre-urban activity, considering the position of the town on the edge of Cranborne Chase. This represents an area of intense prehistoric and Roman settlement, funerary and ritual activity. Furthermore, the transition from the Roman and late prehistoric settlement pattern on Cranborne Chase to the medieval pattern of settlement in the chalk valleys is poorly understood.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1- 4, 6, 10-17 and 19-23 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Site of medieval town
- Medieval market site
- Late medieval and early post-medieval domestic buildings
- 18th-19th century suburban housing
- Medieval and earlier street plan
- Medieval and earlier plot boundaries
- Brick and cob garden walls