

## Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 3 North East Cranborne

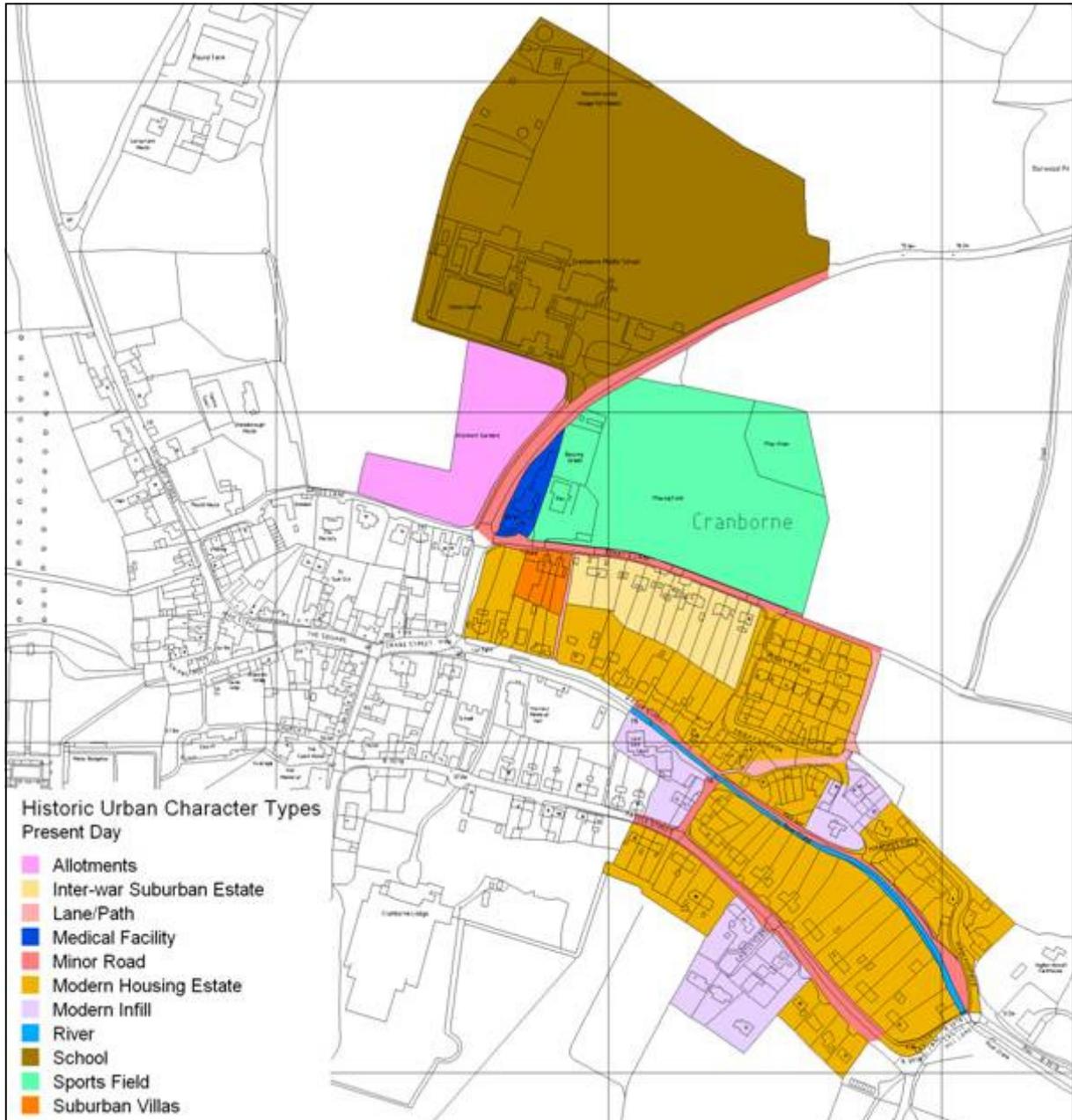


Figure 52: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 3, showing current historic urban character type.

### Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 3 Structure of Character Area

#### Overview

This area lies to the north and east of the medieval town and represents 20<sup>th</sup> century expansion. The only historic settlement within the area is the site of Penny's Farm, which is now a late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estate.

#### Topography and Geology

This area stretches from the valley floor of the River Crane and up its northern bank as far as the 75m contour at Cranborne Middle School. This northern extension to the town lies within a small rounded coombe. River gravels and alluvium occupy the valley floor, although Castle Street lies on chalk to the south, as does much of the northern part of the area.

#### Urban Structure

The river Crane forms the axis upon which the area is laid out. Water Street and the path that continues it to the southeast runs along the side of the river and Penny's Lane and Castle Street run roughly parallel to north and south. The majority of plots front onto the roads, except for the eastern end where there are a number of short culs-de-sac which give access into small housing estates. To the north is more extensive open development, partially fitted into pre-existing fields.

#### Present Character

Figure 52 shows the present day historic urban character types. The eastern part of the area is dominated by modern suburban housing estates and modern infill. The northern section of the area comprises the school, its playing fields, a recreation ground, allotments and a doctor's surgery. The central part of the area has a small group of late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban villas fronting on to Penny's Lane. An inter-war suburban estate was built adjacent to the east (Figure 53).



Figure 53: Inter-war suburban housing, Penny's Lane.

#### Time Depth

Penny's Farm probably represents the site of a medieval dispersed farmstead and archaeological excavations adjacent to the site during the 1980s and 1990s, recovered evidence of Neolithic, Saxon and medieval activity here. The remainder of the character area comprised fields until the turn of the century when a few estate cottages were built on the south side of Penny's Lane and some houses along Water Street. This was extended to the east during the inter-war period. During the post-war period suburban semi-detached houses were built along both sides of Castle Street, along with an egg packing factory, subsequently replaced by modern infill housing at Castle Close. The Penny's Mead (Figure 58), Friday's Heron (Figure 25) and Hibberd's Field housing estates (Figure 59) were developed during the 1980s and 1990s. Cranborne Middle School, the recreation ground and doctor's surgery were all developed during the 1960s. Grugs Lane allotments date from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern comprises a mix of early-middle 20<sup>th</sup> century semi-detached houses set back from the road frontage in regular narrow rectangular plots, and modern housing estates comprising detached houses set in small plots and arranged within culs-de-sac. These housing developments are set within a pre-existing pattern of roads running along and parallel to the course of the River Crane to the east of the medieval town. These pre-existing streets are rural in nature with grass verges rather than formal pavements. Castle Close estate is hidden behind a series of high hedges.



Figure 54: Post-war housing along Castle Street.

### Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 3 Built Character

#### **Building types**

The area is characterised by modern semi-detached and detached houses. These are typical of their period and show little local distinctiveness. The Hibberd's Field estate is in neo-vernacular style.

Water Street has a number of semi-detached Edwardian suburban villas. There are also some 1930s semi-detached suburban houses along Penny's Lane (Figure 53). Penny's Farm is an early 20th century farmhouse on an earlier site, and 5 Water Street is a small 19th century vernacular cottage with its gable end fronting on the street (Figure 55). There is also a 19th century stable block behind 45 Castle Street.

Large modern buildings include the Cecil Court apartments and Cranborne Surgery. Cranborne Middle School is a large complex comprising a variety of flat roofed buildings and prefabricated huts as well as reconstructions of prehistoric roundhouses within the grounds.

#### **Building Materials**

The majority of houses are built in brick with tile roofs and tile hanging on some of the post-war houses along Castle Street. Some houses in Hibberd's Field estate are rendered and with thatched roofs, others have some timber cladding. Cranborne Middle School and the Cricket Pavilion have some timber-clad elements, as well as brick and concrete sections. 5 Water Street is roughcast rendered, and the stable block behind 45 Castle Street has decorative brick and vitrified brick.

#### **Key Buildings**

*19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings:* Penny's Farm House; 1-4 Penny's Lane; 5 Water Street.

*Modern public buildings:* Cranborne Middle School, Cranborne Surgery.

*Mid 20<sup>th</sup> century semi-detached houses:* 5-16 Penny's Lane.



Figure 55: No 5 Water Street.



Figure 56: Old stable block behind 45 Castle Street.



Figure 57: Cecil Court.



Figure 58: Penny's Mead, a 1980s housing estate.



Figure 59: Modern thatched house, Hibberd's Field.

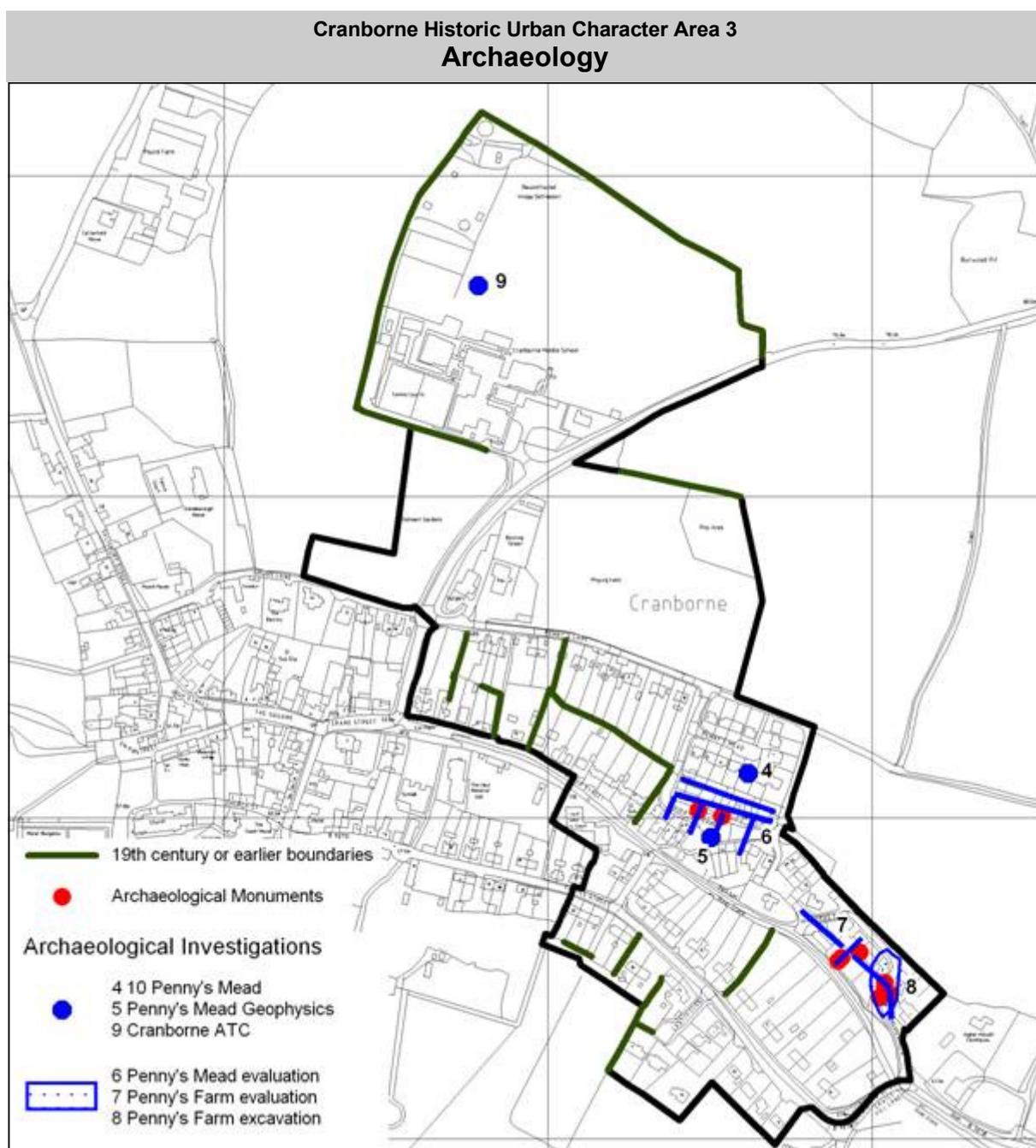


Figure 60: Archaeological investigations and features in Historic Character Area 3.

### Archaeological Investigations

Six archaeological investigations have taken place in this character area (Appendix 3, Nos. 4-9; Figure 60). An excavation at 10 Penny's Mead (Figure 60, 4) revealed a pit and occupation debris dating to the Middle Saxon period and is of considerable regional importance (Wilson and Chowne 1987, 2). An archaeological investigation in advance of the construction of the Penny's Mead housing estate included geophysical survey and evaluation excavation (Figure 60, 5-6), which revealed late Neolithic and medieval pits (Wilson and Chowne 1987). Archaeological

investigations in advance of the development of Penny's Farm (Figure 60, 7-8) revealed a cluster of Iron Age pits filled with burnt flint adjacent to the river, a 3<sup>rd</sup> century Roman cremation burial and some 13<sup>th</sup> century pits. Overall the activity on the site appears to represent sporadic peripheral activities close to the river (Bellamy 2000). An archaeological excavation in advance of the construction of a new round house at the Cranborne Ancient Technology Centre revealed a large number of postholes, a series of lynchets and other features probably related to the establishment and maintenance of prehistoric and medieval field systems (Heaton *et al.* 2000).

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**Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 3**  
**Archaeology*****Archaeological Character***

The archaeology of northeast Cranborne is characterised by evidence for land division and rural activity dating from the Neolithic to the medieval period. Remains of this activity seem to be well preserved and widespread. Although no direct settlement remains have been recovered to date, the evidence suggests the presence of rural multi-period settlement or settlements in the near vicinity. The discovery of Middle Saxon pottery is particularly significant.

Boundaries depicted on Figure 60 represent modern property boundaries that fossilise the line of former field boundaries visible on 19<sup>th</sup> century maps. These are likely to be medieval or post-medieval in origin.

**Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 3**  
**Designations*****Listed Buildings***

There are no Listed Buildings in the Character Area.

***Conservation Areas***

Only the western part of Water Street lies within the Cranborne Conservation Area (Figure 29).

***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.

### Cranborne Historic Urban Character Area 3 Evaluation

#### ***Strength of Historic Character***

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **weak**. This is essentially because the area almost entirely comprises modern housing and amenity developments, which have little local distinctiveness. Nevertheless, this statement must be moderated by the fact that the streetscape retains its rural character with grass verges running alongside the chalk stream and detached or semi-detached brick houses set behind hedges.

#### ***Sensitivity to Large Scale Development***

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Whilst the modern housing developments have weak historic character, they are built within the limits of scale set by the small historic town. The amenity sites to the north are set within large green spaces which blend in with the rural surroundings and do not detract from the natural backdrop to the town.

#### ***Archaeological Potential***

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **high**. The proximity to prehistoric ritual and funerary landscape on Cranborne Chase, coupled with the excavated evidence for multi-period land division at Cranborne Ancient Technology Centre play an important part in defining that potential. The discovery of Middle Saxon pottery and occupation debris at 10 Penny's Mead is of great regional significance. Middle Saxon pottery is almost absent from Dorset. Consequently this area has significant potential to provide evidence that will enhance our understanding of pottery throughout the

county and the South West region. Multi-period activity at Penny's Farm, including Romano-British funerary activity, highlights the potential for a well preserved settlement in the area possibly spanning the late Neolithic to the medieval period.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-4, 10-11, 17, 23 (Part 7).

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Medieval dispersed settlement site
- 19th – early 20th century vernacular and estate houses
- 20th century housing estates
- 20th century amenities including public open spaces
- Rural lanes and streetscape
- High archaeological potential