

# **Core Strategy Area Profile**

Options for Consideration  
Consultation  
4th October – 24th December 2010

## **Mundeford and West Highcliffe**



Prepared by Christchurch Borough Council and  
East Dorset District Council as part of the Local Development  
Framework

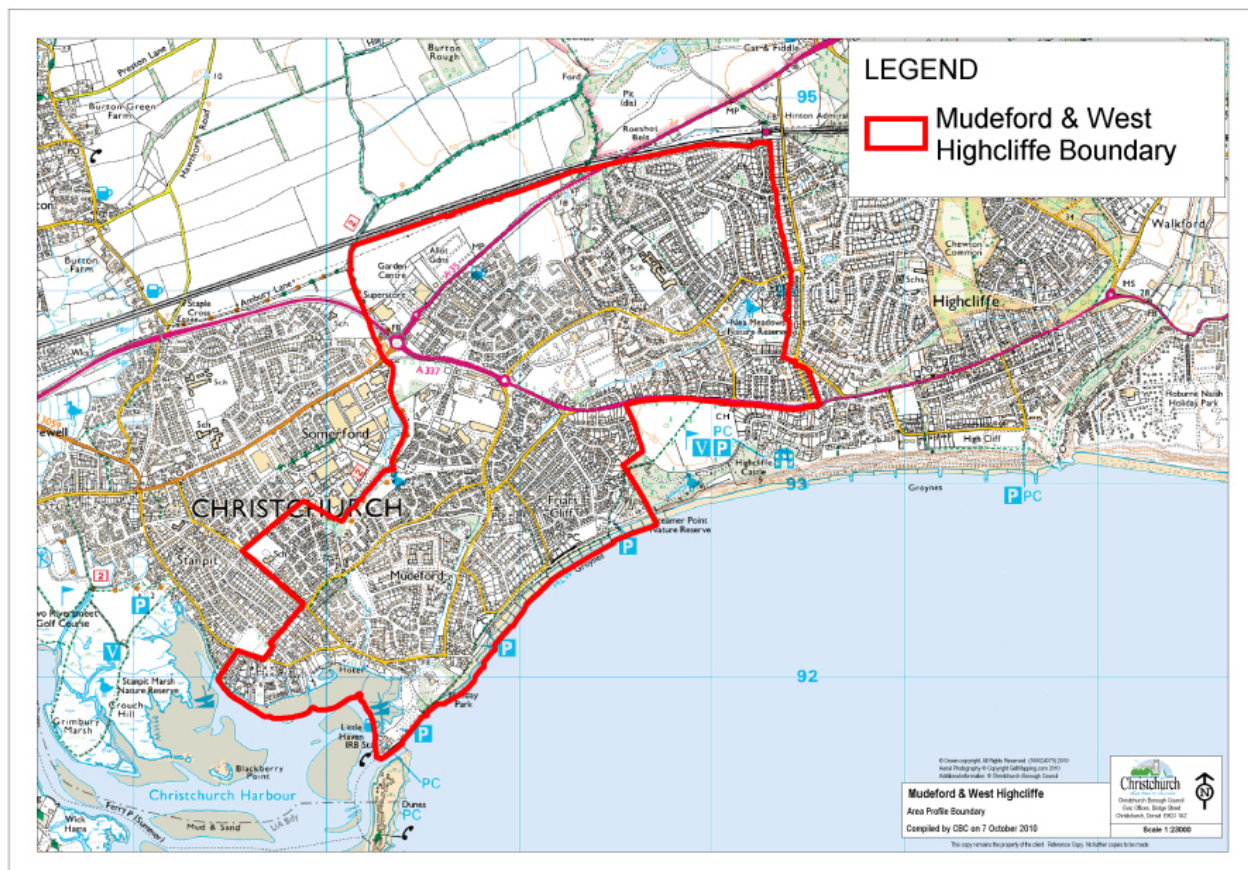
October 2010



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## 1 Area Overview

**1.1** The Mudford and West Highcliffe profile area is contained by the Railway to the north and Hinton Wood Avenue to the east. It is comprised of two administrative wards: Mudford and Friars Cliff and West Highcliffe. The busy A35 and A337 intersect the area, providing good links to Bournemouth and Southampton.



**Picture 1.1 Mudford and West Highcliffe Area Profile Boundary**

**1.2** Mudford is recognised for its tranquil and diverse landscape, with Christchurch Harbour (a designated SSSI) and Mudford Quay providing a distinctive setting. The attractive waterfront location and quirky architectural built environment of the Quay makes it a popular tourist destination.

**1.3** The north western part of the profile area, adjacent to the Somerford Roundabout, is more industrial in character and accommodates a business park and Sainsbury's supermarket.

### Baseline data

	Town Centre ward	Christchurch Borough
Area of the ward	474 ha	5,043 ha
Ward Population estimated mid 2008	10,200	45,824
<b>Population Age Structure (2008 mid-year estimates)</b>		
0 – 15 years	1,260 (12%)	7,223 (16%)

16 –59 (F) / 16 – 64 (M)	4,560 (45%)	22,969 (50%)
60 (F) 65 (M) +	4,380 (43%)	15,632 (34%)
<b>Deprivation Data</b>		
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007)	There are 30 Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Christchurch Borough and the Mudford and West Highcliffe profile area has 7 SOAs within its boundary- Mudford North (19), Mudford Quay (20), Friars Cliff (21), Hobourne North (23), Hobourne South/Runway (24), Highcliffe West (25), Wingfield (26). Friars Cliff, Hobourne South, Mudford Quay, Wingfield and Hobourne North are in the 10 of the least deprived of the 30 SOA's in the Borough. Mudford North has a comparatively high deprivation score and is ranked 8.	Christchurch Borough is classified at 220 out of 354 UA/districts nationwide.

**Table 1.1**

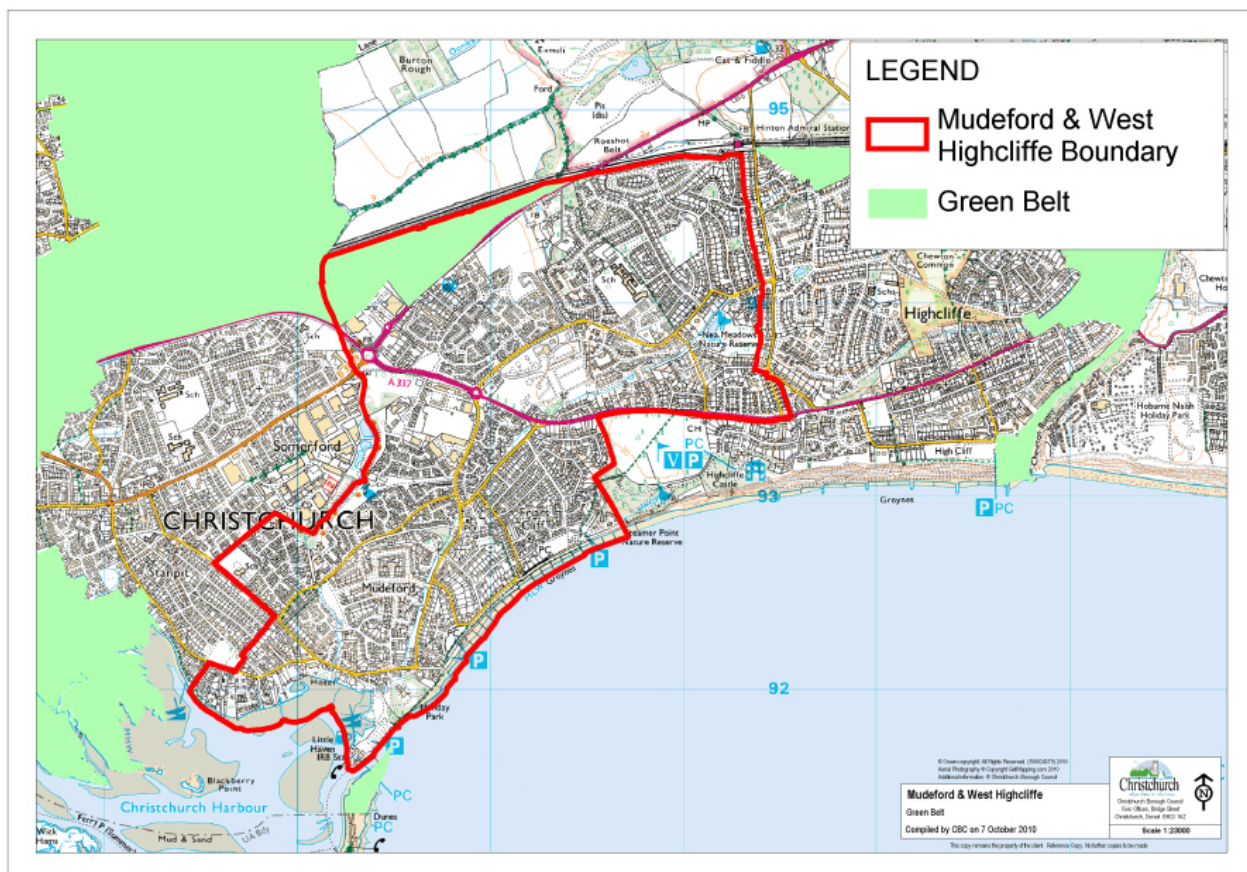
## Strategic Issues

**1.4** The ward has a considerably high percentage of elderly residents, which mirrors the demographic trend in the Borough. The elderly population is likely to continue to grow, which will have implications for the provision of services for the elderly and their longer term care. The impact of this demographic will be a continuing low birth rate, causing a decline in the need for schools and youth related provision, but a possible higher demand for facilities for the elderly and local facilities such as shops and medical services. This however may be counter balanced by the considerable housing growth planned for the area (including the urban extension) and better employment opportunities, which in turn may lead to an increase in demand on schools.

## 2 Planning Policy Context

### Green Belt

**2.1** Land north of the A35 and south of the railway line at Roeshot Hill has been identified for an urban extension.



**Picture 2.1 Mudford and West Highcliffe Green Belt**

## Coastal Area

**2.2** Mudford Quay and Friars Cliff are located within the designated Coastal Area. Local Plan Policy ENV9 protects the coastal strip against inappropriate development that could erode the continuity of the housing stock, especially in areas of lower density and non-residential development in Mudford.

## Natural Environment

**2.3** The central part of the area is protected by international and local nature conservation designations.

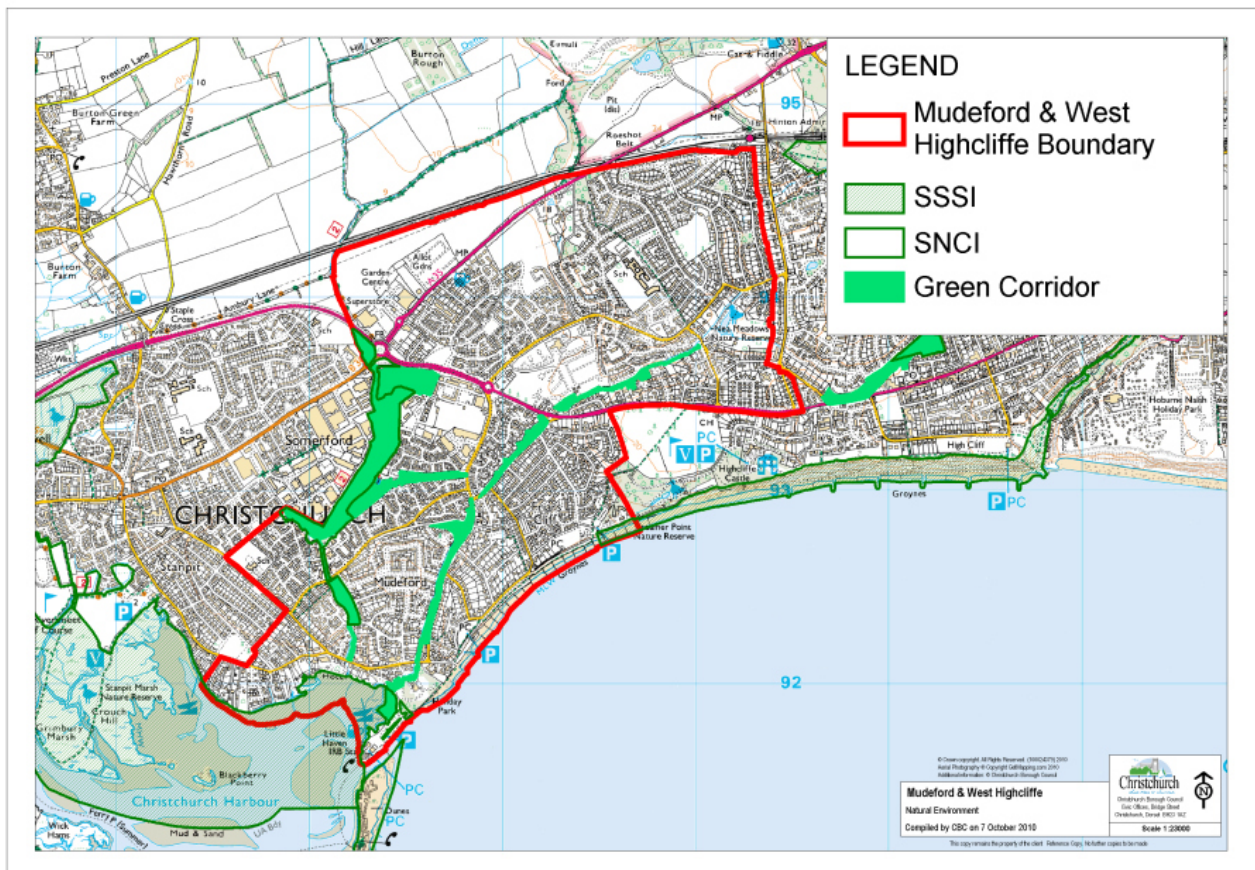
**2.4** Beaches and the harbour are a vital part of the landscape in Mudford and Friars Cliff and give the area its distinctive character. Christchurch Harbour, formed by the rivers Stour and Avon, is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The estuary, which includes a salt marsh and wet meadows, hosts many species of wild birds and is of great ornithological interest.

**2.5** The Mude Valley Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) is a scenic riverbank strip, providing important separation space between the housing and main industrial areas of Somerford.

**2.6** The tree line along Bure Brook / Mudford Lane is designated as a Green Corridor. The area acts a haven for wildlife and contributes to the environmental quality of the area.

**2.7** In West Highcliffe a number of open spaces are included in the northern part of the ward, in the Hobourne Lane area. These include Nea Meadows, the school grounds and smaller communal open spaces.





Picture 2.2 Mudford and West Highcliffe Natural Environment

## Strategic Issue

**2.8** It will be vital to ensure that the increasing demands of public access to the beaches and the Quay do not have a harmful effect on the integrity of the natural environment and character of the area.

## Built Environment

**2.9** The area is predominantly residential; however it does include a number of key employment sites for the Borough. The housing stock in the ward is varied in terms of character and lacks architectural uniformity.

**2.10** The ward can be divided into four distinctive character areas:

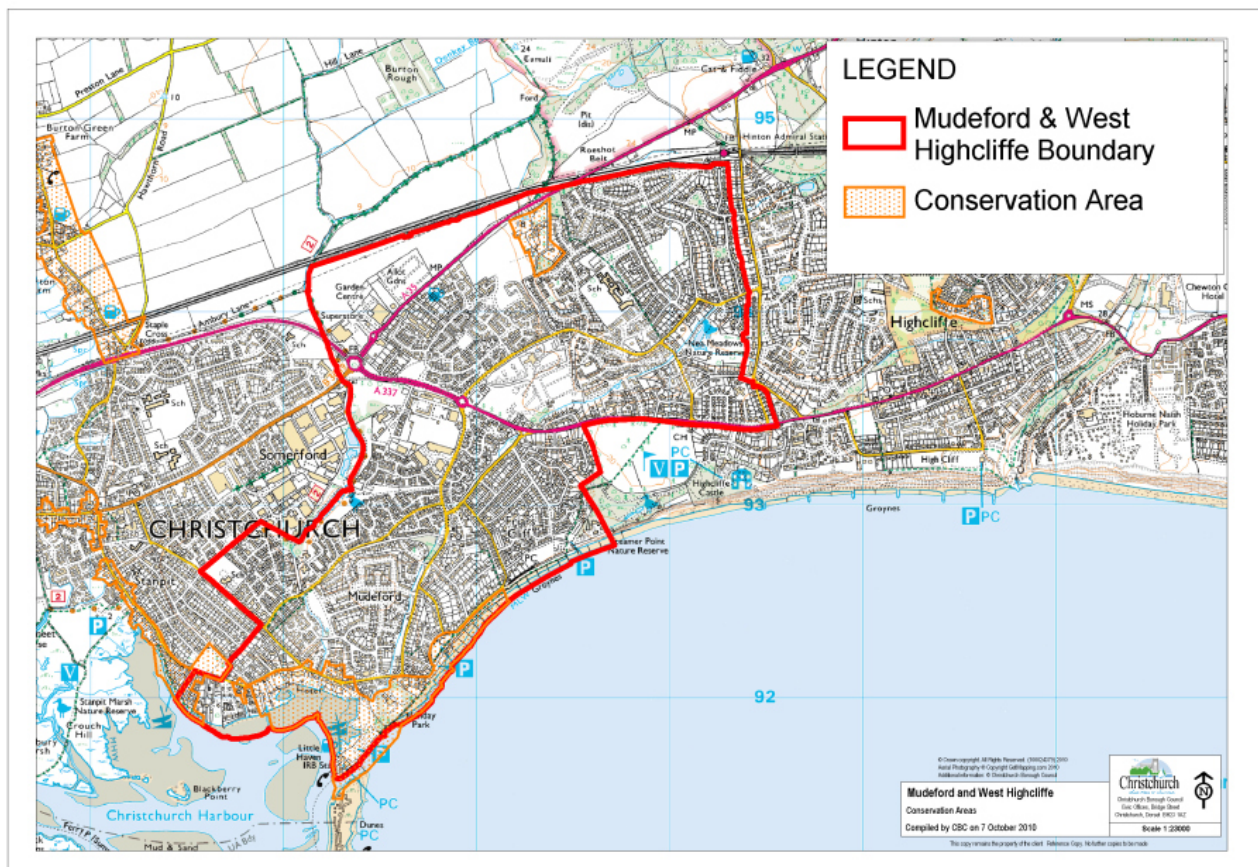
- Mudford
- Friars Cliff
- Bure Lane housing areas
- West Highcliffe

**2.11** *Mudford*

**2.12** Mudford is the most interesting architecturally and historically valuable area in the profile area. The origins date back to the late 19th century, where it developed as a hamlet settlement of small terraces.

**2.13** The harbour is covered by the Mudford Quay Conservation Area. The harbour setting is an important part of the character of the buildings many of which are statutory or locally listed. The surviving Regency style buildings are surrounded by clusters of smaller, mainly 19<sup>th</sup> century terraces on the working quay. The open character of the harbour and strong presence of mature trees give the conservation area its distinctive character.

**2.14** The western strip of the harbour is covered by the Stanpit and Fisherman's Bank Conservation Area, which is characterised by small grain cottages from early 19<sup>th</sup> century and good quality Victorian housing located along the harbour edge.



**Picture 2.3 Mudford and West Highcliffe Conservation Areas**

**2.15** *Friars Cliff*

**2.16** The area was one of the earliest estate type developments in the Borough. There is a variety of design styles ranging from standard terraced housing to individually designed properties. The houses date back to 1930s with a small 1970s/80s infill.

**2.17** *Bure Lane housing estates*

**2.18** This is an extensive area of mixed housing estates, built in the 1980's/1990s on the Aerodrome site. The area consists of cul de sacs and dense housing courts served by De Havilland Way. The general quality of the housing stock is good, however the area, as opposed to Mudford and Friars Cliff does not have a strong sense of place.

**2.19** West Highcliffe

**2.20** This area encompasses a range of suburban housing on the eastern side of Hinton Wood Avenue. The general grain of development is of mature detached housing and bungalows with occasional cul de sacs hosting smaller properties.



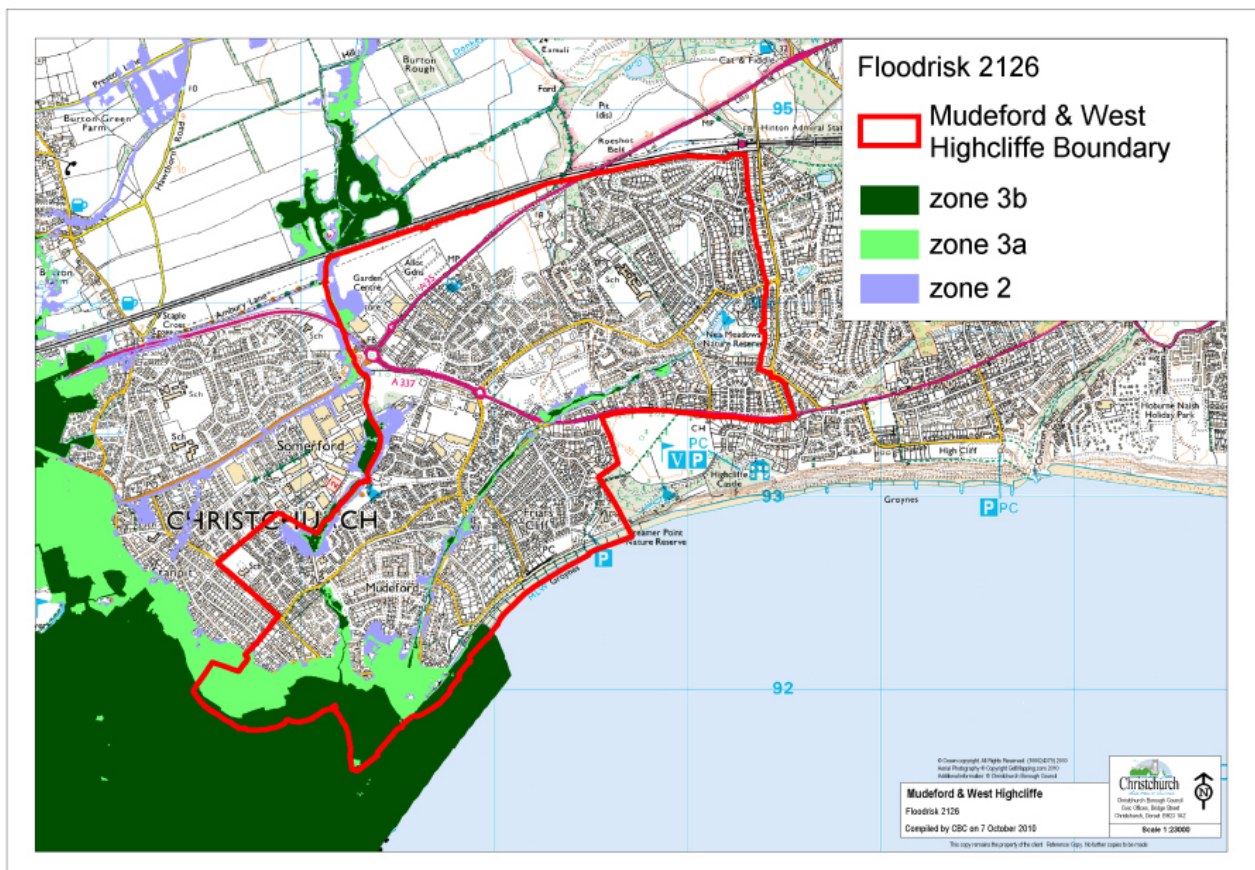
## Strategic Issues

**2.21** Both Mudford and Friars Cliff have limited opportunity to accommodate further development, without significant impact on the area. There is also limited development potential in the central and northern part of the ward, where infill development and additions could erode the consistency of housing estates. Consequently, the design and density of new development schemes needs to be carefully considered, to preserve the consistency of house types.

**2.22** It is also vital to ensure that the increasing demands for public access to the cliffs do not have a harmful effect on the integrity of the area.

## Flooding

**2.23** Mudford Quay and surrounding areas to the south of the ward are located in SFRA zone 3b, as is the thin strip of land adjacent to Bure Brook. The area to the east and south of Airfield Way and Wilverley Road Industrial Parks includes areas of zone 2, 3a and 3b. The Council Works Depot and Christchurch Business Centre, identified as a potential development site in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (with potential to accommodate 30 dwellings), lies on the edge of the strip in zone 2.



Picture 2.4 Mudford and West Highcliffe Floodrisk 2126

## Strategic Issues

**2.24** In areas located in high flood risk zones (3b), no net increase in dwellings or commercial floorspace is permitted. Land located in zone 3a could accommodate 'less vulnerable uses' which could include buildings used for: shops; financial, professional and other services; restaurants and cafes; hot food takeaways; offices; general industry; storage and distribution; non-residential institutions not included in 'more vulnerable'; and assembly and leisure.

**2.25** 'More vulnerable uses' suitable for the location which include residential institutions such as residential care homes, children's homes, social services homes; dwelling houses; drinking establishments and hotels; non-residential uses for health services, nurseries and educational establishments could be developed in zone 3a providing they pass the exception test.

**2.26** However, apart from the historic area of Mudford (already limited in its capacity to accommodate new development due to its conservation area status) there are no areas where flood risk would pose a constraint for development.

## 3 Existing Community Facilities

### General Community facilities

- There is a lack of entertainment and cultural facilities in this area. However given the proximity to Christchurch Town Centre and good access to such facilities outside the Borough, particularly in Bournemouth and Poole, no need has been identified.
- There are five public houses in the ward.
- There are 2 post offices; one located in the Saufland Local Shopping Parade and another in the Bure Lane Local Shopping Parade.
- The provision of meeting venues/halls in the ward could be improved upon. At present the Mudford Wood Community Centre is the only place offering access to such facilities.
- There is a petrol station located at Sainsbury's supermarket.

### Health facilities

**3.1** There is one surgery in the area, the Mudford Surgery, located in the Falcon Drive Local Shopping Parade and a pharmacy in the Mudford Local Shopping Parade. Taking into account the ageing population profile and planned housing growth, there may be a need to provide additional health facilities in the future.

### Education facilities

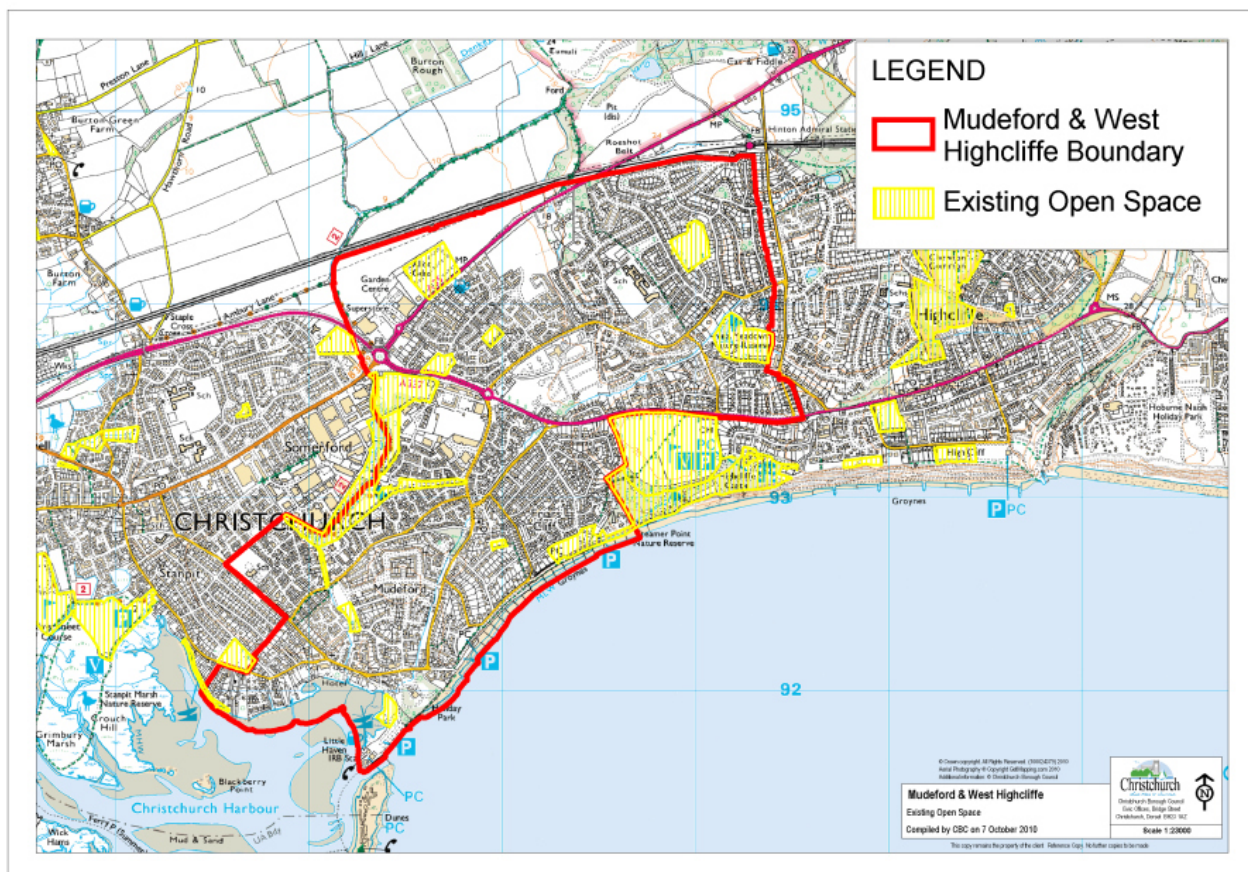
**3.2** There are two primary schools in Mudford (Mudford Community Infants School and Mudford Junior School) and a secondary school located in West Highcliffe (the Highcliffe Comprehensive). The planned housing growth (the 2008 SHLAA estimates that up to 1015 dwellings could be delivered in the 15 year period) may trigger the need to provide additional educational facilities.

### Sport and recreation facilities/ Green Infrastructure

**3.3** The profile area falls into the Central (Mudford & Friars Cliff ward) and East (West Highcliffe ward) Local Need Area. The PPG 17 Open Space Study (2007) indicates that there is under provision of Active Sports Space and Young People's space in the area. The report also identified a qualitative priority to improve natural and semi natural green space in the ward (land at Cornflower Drive, Shelley Copse and wooded areas running east to Nea Meadows).

**3.4** The ward has an adequate provision of Amenity Green Space and Public Gardens and Recreation Grounds. The Mude Valley is an important natural green space and is a designated Green Corridor, as is the tree line along Bure Brook. A series of small open space areas within Friars Cliff, which function as summer parks for the nearby beach, contribute to the provision of informal green space in the ward.

**3.5** In West Highcliffe the principle areas of open space are Nea Meadows and Wingfield Recreation Ground; and Highcliffe Comprehensive School and an area at Cornflower Drive.



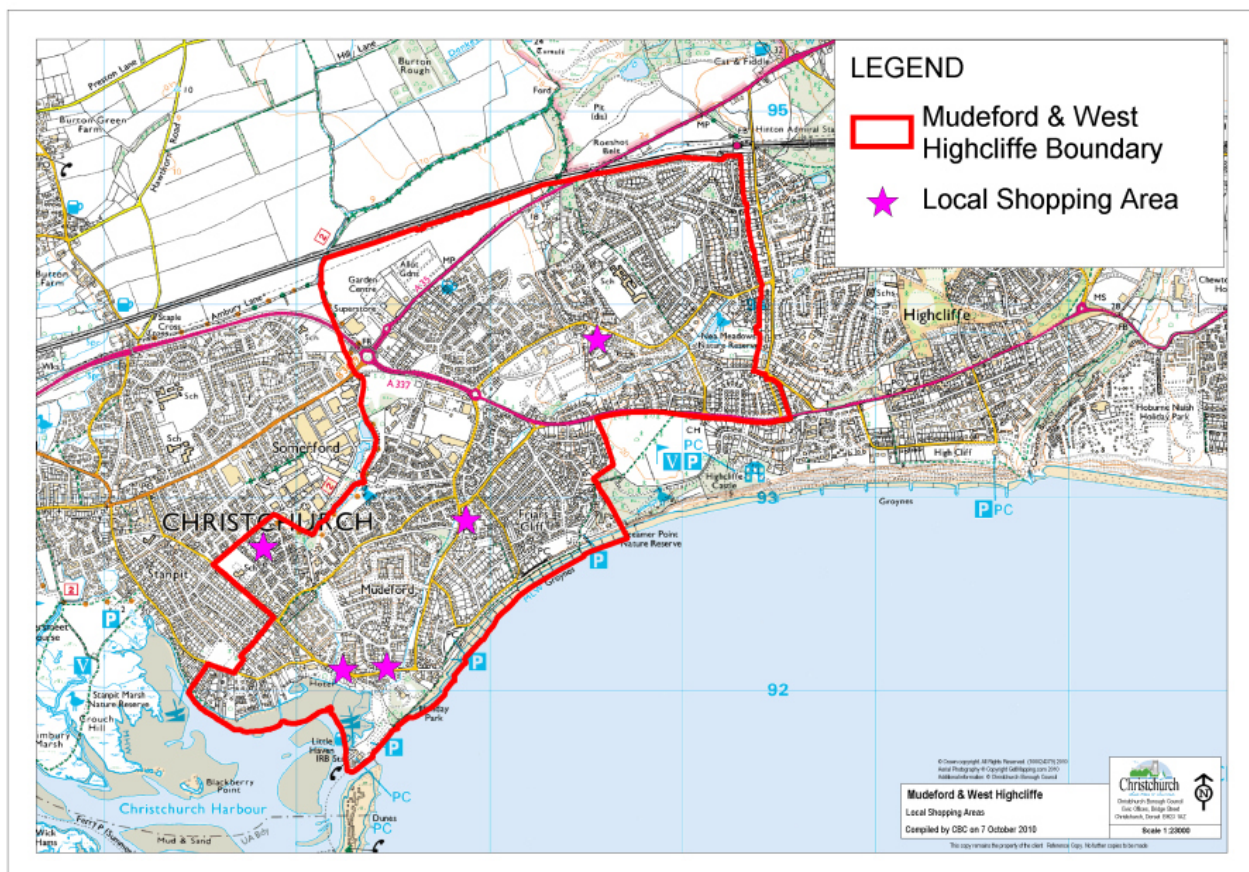
**Picture 3.1 Mudford and West Highcliffe Open Space**

## Retail facilities

**3.6** There are three local shopping parades located in the ward, catering for the basic needs of the resident population.

- The Falcon Drive parade has a hairdressers, estate agent, florist and a GP surgery;
- The Saufland Place parade has got a Spar and a post office;
- The Mudford shopping parade accommodates a hairdresser, newsagent and a pharmacy.





**Picture 3.2 Mudford and West Highcliffe Local Shopping Areas**

**3.7** In general the area is well catered for in terms of convenience facilities and no need for further convenience floorspace has been identified. Sainsbury's supermarket is located within the profile area. In addition, there are three large food stores in the town centre (Waitrose, Marks & Spencer and the Co-operative), located within a 10 minute drive.

**3.8** Christchurch town centre is the nearest centre offering a variety of comparison shops, including a number of national multiples such as Argos, Boots, New Look and WH Smith. Bournemouth remains the main destination for comparison shopping.

## Community Issues

### 3.9 Issues from Place Survey 2008

**3.10** The Christchurch Place Survey 2008 was a postal survey of residents and the analysis was broken down into 7 neighbourhood areas. Main issues relating to Mudford and West Highcliffe are set out below

- Residents identified the top three priorities for improvement in the ward which are: the level of traffic congestion (52%); activities for teenagers (45%) and road and pavement repairs (40%).
- 37% of respondents considered that public transport needs improvement, which is higher than the Borough average.

## 4 Housing

**4.1** The housing stock is varied, with 20th century developments dominating the townscape in Friars Cliff, and older properties found in Mudford and West Highcliffe.



**4.2** The data presented in this section has been taken from the Christchurch Housing Need and Demand Survey Fordham Research 2008. Please note that that for the purposes of this area profile study, the data for the Mudford and Friars Cliff and West Highcliffe wards have been amalgamated to reflect the ward boundary of the profile area.

## Tenure

**4.3** Most of the housing in the ward is owner occupied, with a high number of owner-occupiers without mortgage (63%). The number of affordable housing is below average compared to the other wards in the Borough (3%).

Tenure of Housing	Mudford and West Highcliffe		Christchurch Borough	
	No.	%	No	%
Owner Occupied (no mortgage)	3233	63	10,660	49.6
Owner Occupied (with mortgage)	1404	27.4	6,844	31.8
Social Rented	149	3.0	2,616	12.2
Private Rented	339	6.6	1,380	6.4
Total	5124	100.0	21,500	100.0

**Table 4.1**

## Dwelling Type

**4.4** The area has a high percentage of detached dwellings, which at 21% is higher than the Borough average. There is a high percentage of terraced housing in the Mudford and Friars Cliff ward.

Dwelling type	Mudford and West Highcliffe		Christchurch Borough	
	No.	%	No	%
Detached House	1075	21	4,157	19.3
Semi detached house	671	13.1	3,260	15.2
Terraced house	750	14.5	3,753	17.5
Detached bungalow	1632	32	4,980	23.2
Semi or terraced bungalow	275	15.4	880	4.1
Flat	703	14	4,471	20.8
Total	5124	100.0	21,500	100.0

**Table 4.2**

## Household Type/size

**4.5** The following table provides a breakdown of types of households in the profile area.

Type of Households	Mudford and West Highcliffe		Christchurch Borough	
	No.	%	No	%
Single Pensioners	1036	20.2	4,585	21.3
2 or more pensioners	1251	24.3	4,299	20
Single non-pensioners	616	12	2,352	10.9
2 or more adults - no children	1582	31.1	6,485	30.2
Lone parent	63	1.2	677	3.1
2 adults + 1 child	225	4.4	1,347	6.3
2+ adults and 2+ children	350	6.8	1,755	8.2
Total	3,444	100.0	21,500	100.0

**Table 4.3**

## Household Size

Household size	Mudford and West Highcliffe		Christchurch ward	
	No	%	No	%
One person	1652	32.2	6,937	32.3
Two People	2446	47.7	9,190	42.7
Three people	371	7.3	2,297	10.7
Four people	654	12.8	3,076	14.3
Total	3444	100.0	21,500	100.0

**Table 4.4**

**4.6** Over 65% of households are composed of adults without children, and of these, 45% are of pensionable age.

## Overcrowding / Under-Occupation

**4.7** Whilst overcrowding is relatively uncommon in Christchurch (amounting to merely 0.4%), the incidence of 'under-occupation' is much higher (39.7%), which is higher than the Borough average.

## Households in Unsuitable Housing

**4.8** Housing can be unsuitable because of its size, type, location, condition or cost. Unsuitably housed households in the profile area amount to 3.6% of all households, which is below the Borough average (4.7%).

## Housing Need

**4.9** Housing need is defined as the number of households who lack their own housing or live in unsuitable housing or who cannot afford to meet their needs in the market. 1.1% of households has been identified as being in need, which is slightly below the Borough average.

## House Prices

**4.10** House prices are high relative to income in Christchurch, and with many people of high income retiring or choosing to live in the area, this has raised property prices. It has led to a very high affordability gap for those on lower incomes living in the area. Based on the figures presented below, for a person with an average salary of £25,000, they will need to find 12x their salary to buy a mid range terraced property. For those on lower incomes, the situation is far worse, and the need for affordable housing is therefore acute and growing annually.

**4.11** Land Registry average prices for Christchurch Borough (July-September 2009)

Dwelling type	Average Price
Detached	£318,622
Semi-detached	£224,140
Terraced	£302,078
Flats/Maisonettes	£163,966

Table 4.5

## Special needs and Older Persons Households

**4.12** Households with Special Needs are those where improvements are required to accommodation and services to allow those residents to remain in their own homes.

Special needs households	Mudford and West Highcliffe		Christchurch Borough	
	No.	%	No	%
Special needs	968	18.9	4,983	23.2
Non-special needs	4156	81.1	16,517	76.8
Total	5,124	100.0	21,500	100.0

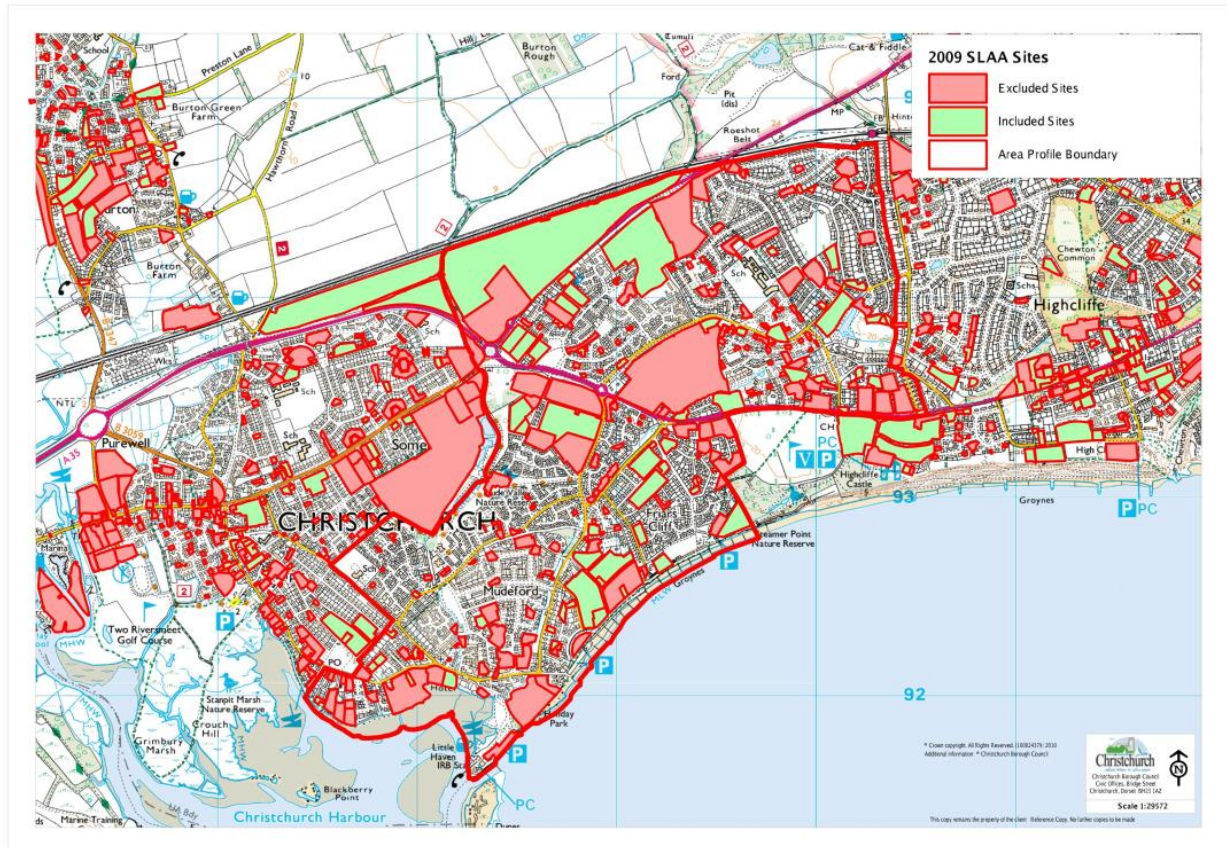
Table 4.6

**4.13** It can be seen from the table above, that there is a significant number of special needs households in the area. With an ageing population, there is and will increasingly be a higher demand for special needs accommodation and retirement flats for the elderly with support services. These will need to be provided by the private and housing association sectors.

## Potential for residential development

**4.14** It is projected that the Mudford and West Highcliffe ward will accommodate 1008 dwellings by 2024, (Christchurch Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009) which equates to an estimate of a third of total units, required to be delivered in the Borough till 2027. The majority of units will be delivered through the urban extension, which may be located on land south of the railway line, to the east of Burton to the Borough boundary at Roeshot Hill. The site is a Green Belt site. The SHLAA

estimate number of units for the site is 940 (assuming the site will be developed at average 45dph for mix of high to medium density flats and houses, excluding 50% of site for open space, flood risk, other infrastructure and uses and separation from railway and pylons). Another 135 dwelling will be delivered through the last phases of the Hobourne Farm development scheme (135 units). The remaining dwellings will be delivered on smaller sites.



Picture 4.1 Mudford and West Highcliffe: 2009 SHLAA Sites

## Strategic Issues

**4.15** The large percentage of under-occupied properties coupled with high property prices may restrict the rate of future household formation in the ward. The priority should therefore be to reduce under-occupation rates and provide a mix of units to include both smaller units, to accommodate the growing number of elderly residents and affordable housing.

## 5 Employment

**5.1** The area contains some of the key employment sites for the Borough including the Priory Industrial Park and the Former BAE site.

**5.2** The Employment Land Review Stage 2 identified a shortage of employment land available in the short to medium term within the Bournemouth travel to work area which encompasses Christchurch. Taking this into account, the industrial parks, located to the north of the A337 will continue to accommodate employment uses.

**5.3** The former BAE site would be suitable for small business units (industrial), warehouses, start up / incubator premises, small purpose built offices (moderate demand).

**5.4** It is worth noting that the profile area has got the lowest employment rate in the Borough, with the largest proportion of retired people (31% of population working; 0.7% unemployed; and 65% retired).



## 6 Transport

**6.1** There are two strategic transport corridors running through the ward, the A35 and the A337.

**6.2** The busy A35 runs to the north, connecting the borough with the Bournemouth/Poole conurbation to the west and Southampton to the east. It carries a high volume of vehicles and can get congested at peak times and throughout the day in peak summer. The A337 'Lymington Road' is a busy route connecting the town centre with Highcliffe.

### Car ownership

**6.3** Car ownership levels in the Mudford and West Highcliffe ward are high with 80.6% of households owning a car ( 48.7% own one car; 29% own two cars; and 3.4% own three or more cars, Christchurch HNDS Fordham Research 2007). This is due to the fact that the suburban pattern of development in the area leads to a higher need to travel.

### Public transport services

**6.4** Public transport provision in the ward is satisfactory but could be improved on. There is a regular bus service run by Wilts and Dorset, the X1/ X2, linking the ward with Bournemouth, Christchurch Rail Station, Christchurch town centre, Highcliffe and New Milton and Lymington. The service is of moderate frequency (every 30 minutes) during day times, but does not provide evening or more than a low frequency service on Sundays.

**6.5** Services 1a and 1b run from Poole through Bournemouth and Christchurch town centres, terminating at Sainsbury's supermarket bus stop, which acts as a busy travel interchange for shoppers.

**6.6** In addition, a local company, Shamrock Buses operate the C2 service via Aston Mead, Christchurch Hospital, Stanpit, Mudford, Bure Road, Somerford and Highcliffe. The service is a low frequency (three services per day in each direction, at approx. 1.5 hour frequency in each direction) but it provides opportunity for local shopping by residents.

**6.7** Hinton Admiral Railway Station is located on the north eastern boundary of the profile area. The station lies on the London-Weymouth line, offering high speed connections to Southampton, London and Bournemouth. The journey time from Christchurch to Bournemouth takes approximately 10 minutes.

## 7 Core Strategic Messages

### Housing

**7.1** House prices are very high relative to income, which results in low rates of new household formation. A high percentage of the housing stock is under-occupied, with one or two person households occupying spacious properties.

**7.2** There is a need to provide a mix of dwellings to first of all accommodate the growing elderly population and secondly to enable first time buyers to settle in the area. Provision of affordable housing should be seen as a priority.

**7.3** New infill housing will need to be of a high design standard respecting local traditions, densities and layouts.

### Transport

**7.4** Car ownership levels in the ward are very high. Frequency of bus services will need to be increased, to reduce dependence on the car.

## Demographics

**7.5** The increasingly ageing population in Highcliffe will mean that social services and service providers will need to plan for the particular needs of this community, whether this be care homes, warden assisted housing or housing association bungalows. There will however be fewer younger people and those of working age to support the residents, local facilities and the local economy in the future.