

## Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 10 Priory & Rossiter's Quays

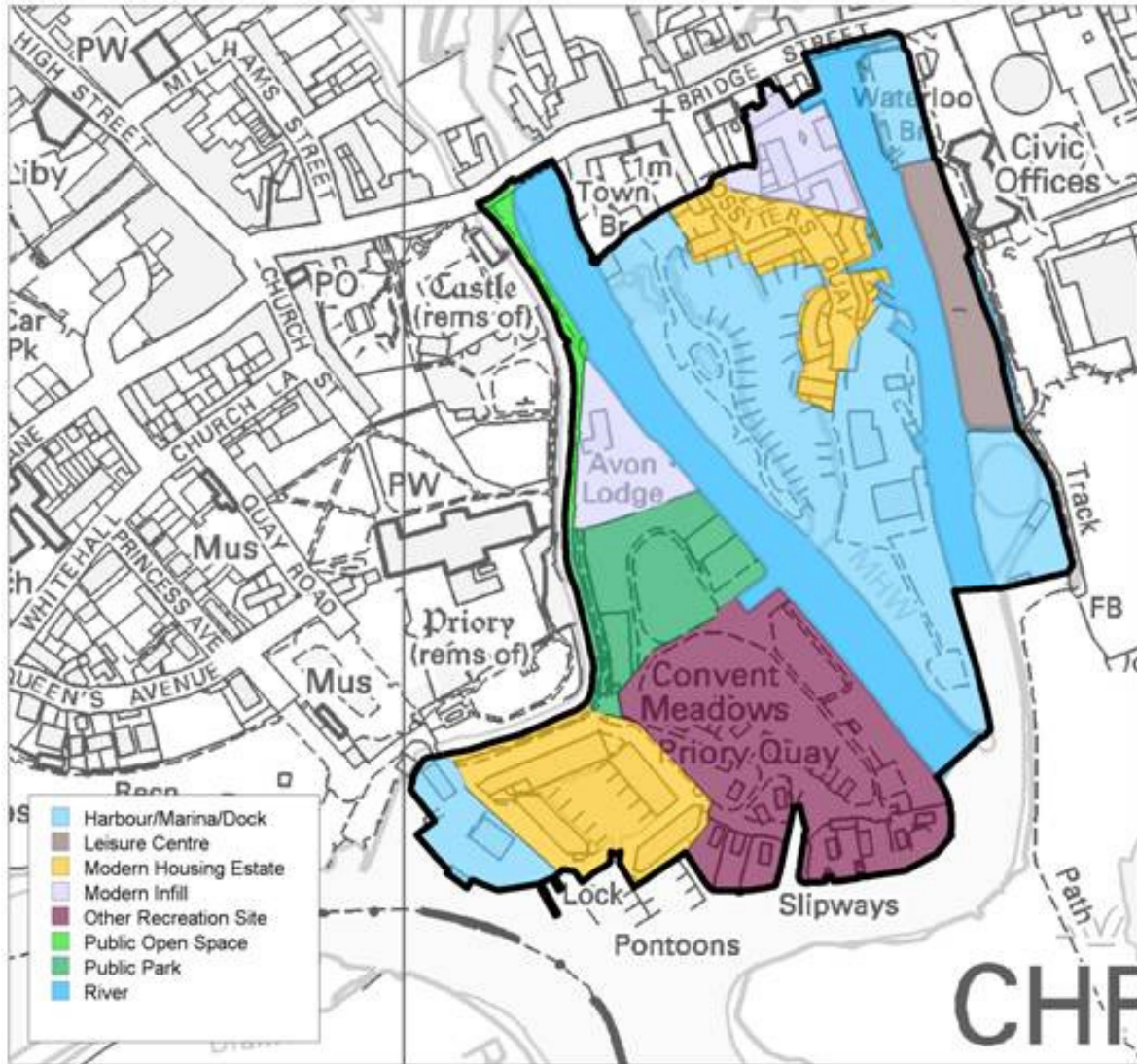


Figure 103: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 10, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 104: Priory Quay



Figure 105: Rossiter's Quay

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 10**  
**Structure of Character Area**

**Overview**

This area represents low lying land at the point where the River Avon flows into Christchurch Harbour. Prone to flooding, it was used as meadow in the past, and is now dominated by recreational use.

**Topography and Geology**

This area is flat and low lying, situated between several water courses. The geology of the area consists almost entirely of alluvium.

**Urban Structure**

This character area has little urban structure, as it comprises floodable meadow land that has seen little development until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. This character area lies to the south and east of the Millstream and encompasses both branches of the River Avon, south of the properties on Bridge Street.

**Present Character**

Figure 103 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area is characterised by modern developments of residential apartments integrated with recreational boat quays.

**Time Depth**

The western boundary of the character area is marked by the Millstream, which may have been constructed in the Late Saxon period. Historically this area has been floodable meadow and largely remained so until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For a brief period in the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century light industry edged into parts of the area, notably to the rear of The Chandlery (23 Bridge Street) and a complex of large boat houses and slipways dominated the area south of Place Mill. At this time Convent Meadows had recreational paths and allotment gardens laid out of which only a small recreational space now remains. A certain amount of drainage of the original wet marshes had already occurred by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but moved on apace during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century this process culminated with the construction of modern apartments and the excavation of material from the centre of the islands to form boating marinas.

**Settlement Pattern and Streetscape**

The modern topography and streetscape bears little resemblance to the historical topography of the area. Even the shape of the islands which make up the area has been significantly altered through development and consolidation. The modern streetscape retains a marina atmosphere and the views across Christchurch harbour and Stanpit Marsh add to the maritime ambience. To the north and west the view is dominated by the tower of Christchurch Priory, as it has been for the last millennium, although the skyline is now interrupted by the roofs of the modern apartments .

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**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 10**  
**Built Character**

***Building types***

The historic fabric of the area consists of limited early 20<sup>th</sup> century structures to the south of Place Mill and at the rear of The Chandlery, 23 Bridge Street of which the only structure to survive is *The Old Club House*, a late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century boat house south of Place Mill.

The only other structure of any age is a south east facing polygonal concrete pillbox located at the southern tip of Convent Meadow as part of the Christchurch Anti Tank Island town defences (Hodges, 1982, 37).

***Building Materials***

The majority of modern buildings are built in non-local materials, generally in brick with tiled or slate roofs.

***Key Buildings***

Boathouse: *The Old Club House*

Military: pillbox

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 10  
Archaeology**

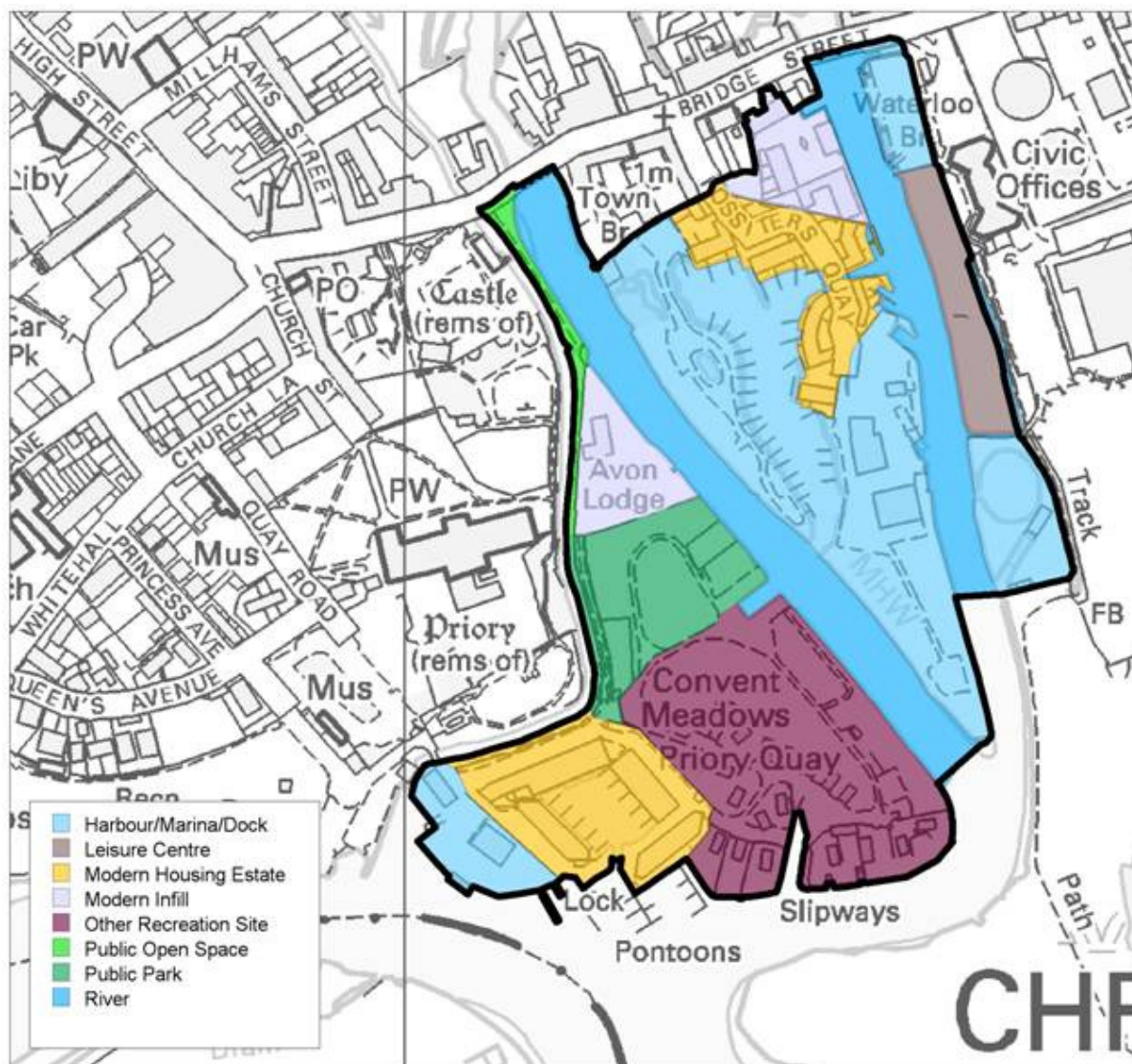


Figure 106: Archaeological features in Historic Urban Character Area 10

### **Archaeological Investigations**

A small amount of archaeological work has been conducted on Bridge Street Island in advance of the construction of new flood defences and the development at Rossiter's Boatyard (Rossiter's Quay). A desktop assessment of the area around Bridge Street Island showed that no specific use of the site itself has been recorded (Whitehead, 1995a).

An archaeological evaluation in advance of construction of a flood bank revealed an undated ditch aligned approximately E-W and may have been an early boundary for the back plots of properties fronting on to Bridge Street. The evaluation also revealed alluvial and peat deposits (Whitehead, 1995b).

An archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the construction of the yachting haven at Rossiter's Quay revealed the geology of the site to be part marine/estuarine alluvium, part made ground, but no archaeological features were recorded (McDermott, 1997).

### **Archaeological Character**

The limited amount of archaeological work that has taken place in this area constrains consideration of its archaeological character. However the meadows were located close to the centre of Christchurch and the Priory precinct, large ditches have been recorded here, and there may have been medieval and post-medieval activity in this area.



**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 10  
Designations**

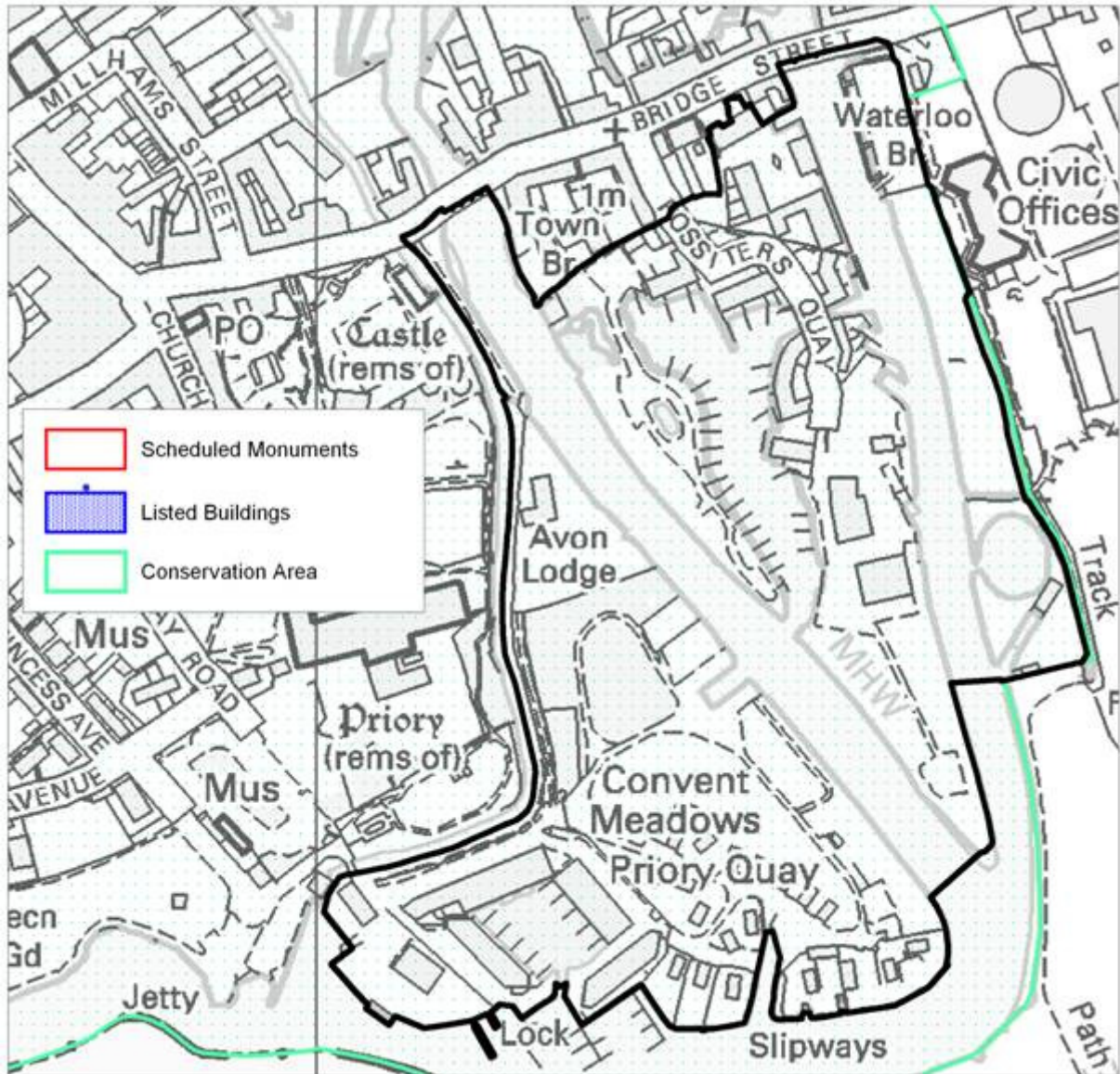


Figure 107: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 10

**Listed Buildings**

There are no Listed Building designations within the Character Area.

**Scheduled Monuments**

There are no Scheduled Monument designations within the Character Area.

**Conservation Areas**

The Character Area lies within the Christchurch Central Conservation Area.

**Registered Historic Parks and Gardens**

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

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 10  
Evaluation**

***Strength of Historic Character***

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **low**. The modern built character is of contemporary apartments blocks enclosing private marinas.

***Sensitivity to Large Scale Development***

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Although 20<sup>th</sup> century developments already characterise this area, it lies immediately outside the historic burh, and there is evidence of survival of waterlogged deposits. Future development needs to be on a scale that does not impact visually on views to and from the historic town.

***Archaeological Potential***

The potential of this area is considered to be **medium**. The area is close to the burh and historic town, and evidence of associated activities may be anticipated. The low lying nature of the site increases the potential of finding important waterlogged remains. Finally, late 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial remains may be encountered to the rear of The Chandlery, Bridge Street and The Old Boat House opposite Place Mill. The potential for significant prehistoric archaeology cannot be overlooked, considering the proximity of Mesolithic and Bronze Age sites on Stanpit Marsh.

**Key Characteristics**

- Modern housing and marinas
- Undated drainage ditches
- World War II defences