

Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 3 Bargates

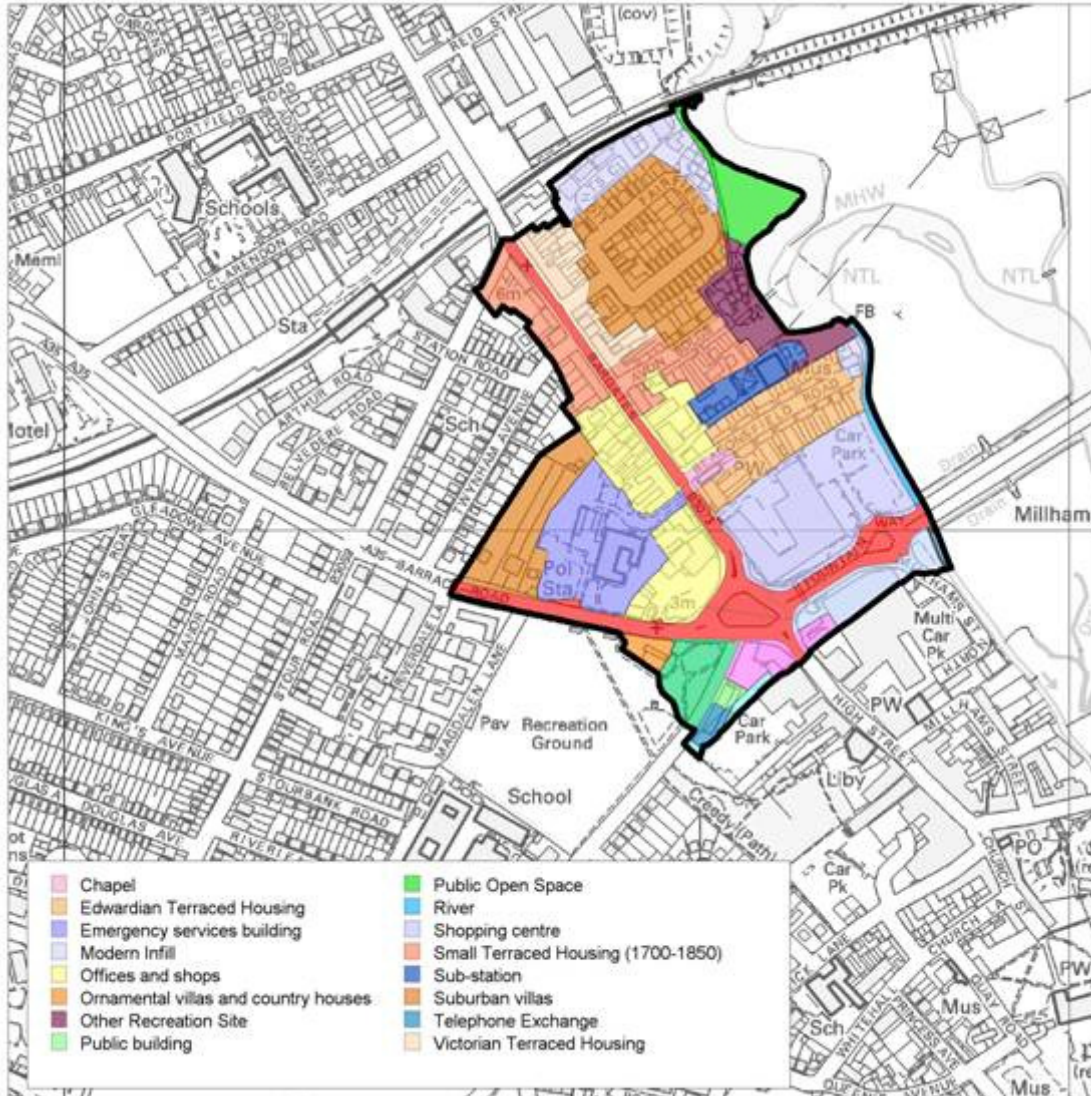


Figure 70: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 3, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 71: Bargates



Figure 72: Avon Buildings and Royalty Fishery House

Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 3
Structure of Character Area

Overview

Bargates lies immediately to the north of the Late Saxon burh at Christchurch, and represents a suburb medieval or earlier in origin. The place name seems to derive from its location outside the burh wall. Documentary evidence suggests that there was settlement here from at least the 13th century (Jarvis, 1983, 12-13), although the possibility of late Saxon settlement in the area cannot be discounted.

curvature in these plot boundaries is still visible in the plan of Beaconsfield Road, although the boundaries south of this point were lost due to development of the Saxon Centre in the 1970s.

Topography and Geology

This area lies on the gravel ridge running ENE-WSW between the rivers Stour and Avon. The ground rises to the north, and drops to the south.

Urban Structure

The triangular core to the settlement formed by Stour Road, Bargates and Barrack Road has been completely demolished to make way for the Fountain Roundabout. This roundabout and the adjoining Christchurch by pass to the east form a definite barrier between the historic core of Christchurch and the Bargates area. That part of modern High Street, to the north of the medieval town wall was also part of the Bargates suburb and has been included within this character area.

Present Character

Bargates today comprises just the main Roads of part of Barrack Road together with Bargates and its side streets of Avon Buildings, Fairfield Road and Beaconsfield Road.

Time Depth

Excavation in advance of construction of the 'Saxon' shopping centre during 1977 revealed evidence for a middle Saxon cemetery just outside the spot where the burh wall would be constructed 300 years later. The relationship of this cemetery to the later Saxon town is by no means obvious and probably does not indicate settlement in the Bargates area at this early date. The excavation also revealed evidence for Late Bronze Age barrows and an early Iron Age settlement on the same site (Jarvis, 1983, 102-140).

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

Christchurch By-Pass has been built over the course of the historic Pound Lane, and divides the historic Bargates. Historically, as far north as the electricity generating station, properties fronting on to the east side of Bargates were contained within burgage plots. The slight

Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 3
Built Character***Building types***

The Bargates area has been extensively redeveloped in the modern era, and modern buildings and structures predominate. The surviving section of Bargates to the north of the roundabout retains significant historic character, with two terraces of early 19th century houses (66-88 and 94-102 Bargates). Other important 19th century buildings include the Railway Hotel, Christchurch Baptist Church and the Old London Brewery. The art deco former Rialto Cinema (now the Royal British Legion) is a prominent early 20th century building. Historically significant buildings such as St Mary Magdalene's leper hospital, Stour Cottage, The Baptist Tabernacle, The Former Watch Clock and Fusee Chain Factory and The Court Chambers were important institutions of the suburb and also of Christchurch town. All of the above buildings survive except for the leper hospital. Today Bargate is also the location of the Police Station and Magistrates Court (former) buildings, and a large town centre shopping complex (The Saxon Centre).

Building Materials

The modern buildings which predominate this character area have been constructed in a mixture of generally non-local materials. The surviving historic buildings are also mixed, with residential buildings tending to be in red brick with slate roofs, and commercial buildings and institutions in a mix of brick, sometimes stuccoed, and stone.

Key Buildings

Public Buildings & Institutional Buildings: Christchurch Baptist Church; The Baptist Tabernacle; the Court Chambers, Police Station, former Magistrates Court

Industrial Buildings: Old London Brewery; the former Watch, Clock and Fusee Chain Factory

Commercial Premises: 21 Bargates; Railway Hotel; the former Rialto Cinema (now the Royal British Legion); Saxon Centre

Terraced Houses: 66-88 and 94-102 Bargates.

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 3
Archaeology**

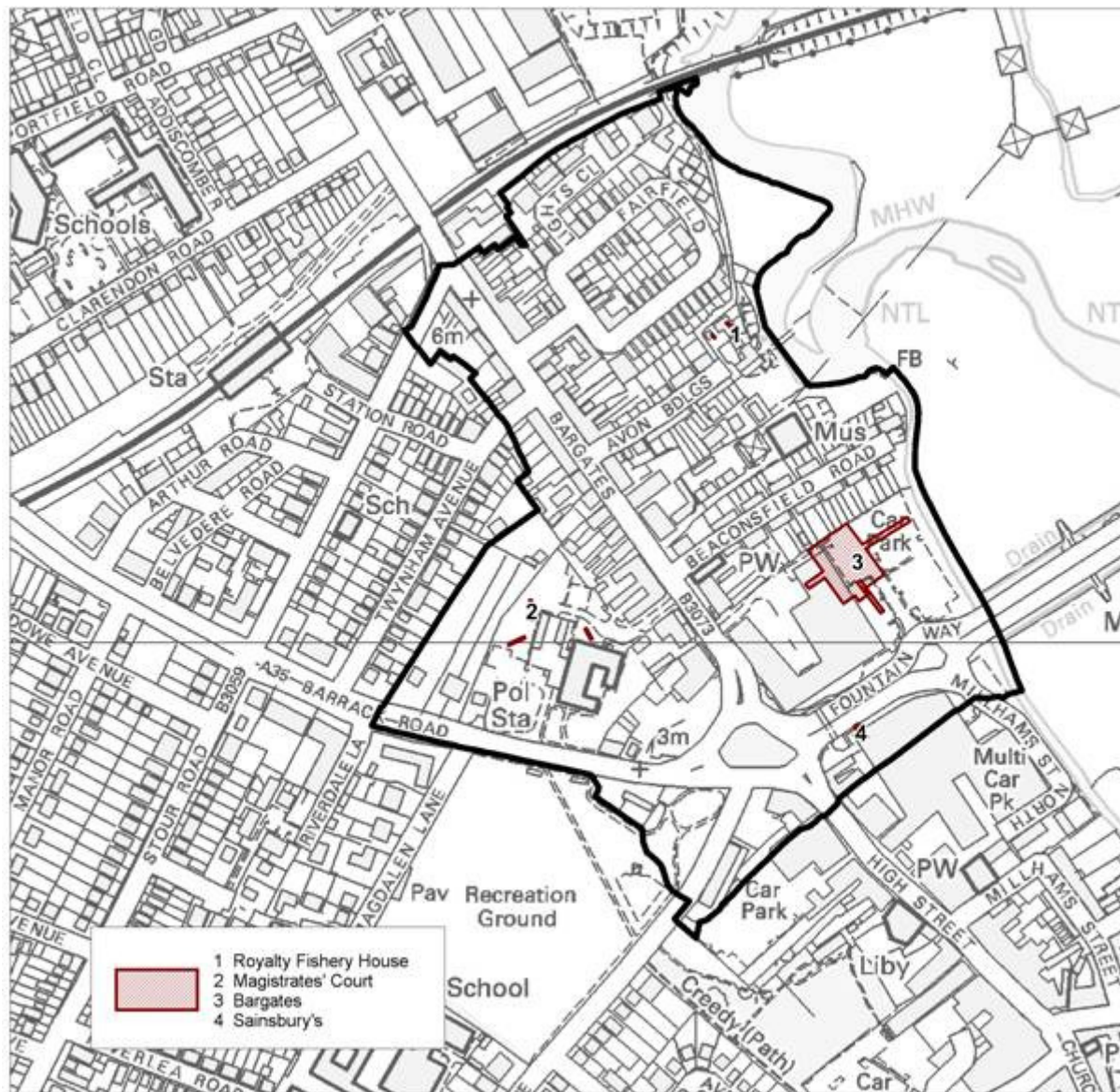


Figure 73: Archaeological features in Historic Urban Character Area 3

Archaeological Investigations

Five archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area (Figure 73, Appendix 3). Archaeological evaluations have been undertaken at Royalty Fishery House in which no deposits earlier than the 19th century were found (Corney, 2002), and at The Police Station car park where possible medieval post-holes were revealed (Ellis, 2005). An excavation to the south of Christchurch by-pass and north of the town defences recovered evidence for medieval quarrying and a possible medieval timber building, as well as a 19th century pit crammed with Verwood pottery (Davies, 1983, 23-25). To the west of the High Street, but also outside the town walls, sherds of Middle Bronze

Age pottery and worked flints were recovered during the construction of the telephone exchange in 1928 (Calkin, Catalogue of the Drutt Collection, 151).

Archaeological Character

The archaeological character of this area is dominated by the medieval suburb of Bargates. Investigations to date have revealed little to inform our understanding of the extent to which evidence of this suburb and previous extra-mural activity survive as below-ground archaeological remains. There is evidence of some prehistoric activity in this area, but its character is unclear.

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 3
Designations**

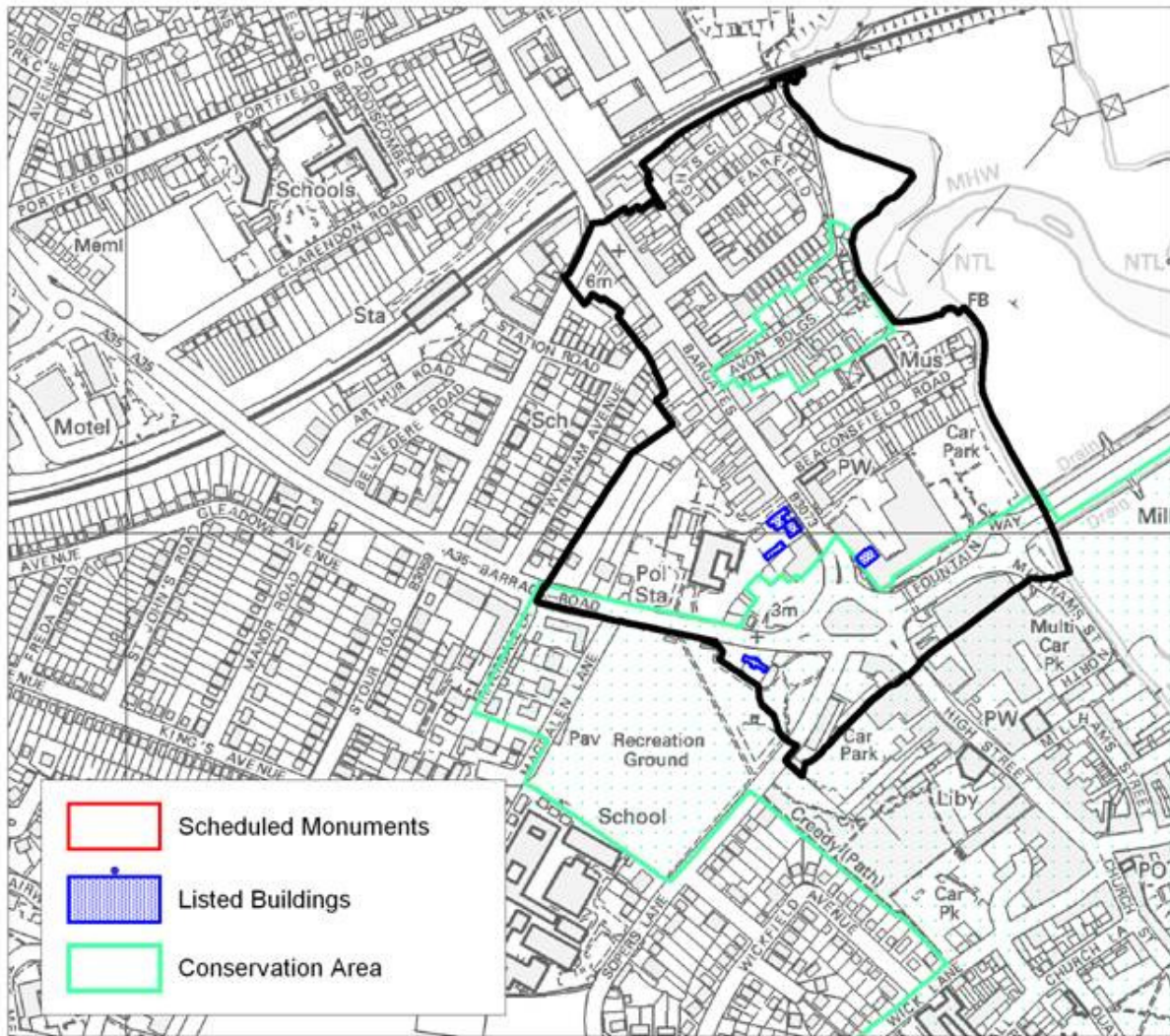


Figure 74: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 3

Listed Buildings

There are 45 Listed Building designations in the Character Area, all Grade II.

Conservation Areas

The Avon Buildings Conservation Area lies within this Character Area. The northern edge of the Christchurch Central Conservation Area falls into this Character Area.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

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

Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monuments within this Character Area.

**Christchurch Historic Urban Character Area 3
Evaluation**

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **medium**. Bargates has been extensively redeveloped in the modern era. New roads have been driven through the centre of the historic settlement and it has retained few listed buildings. However, the surviving section of Bargates to the north of the roundabout retains significant historic character.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Any large scale change that would further disrupt the remaining historic elements of the area would fundamentally alter the character.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **high**. This potential has been demonstrated during excavations in advance of the development. Evidence relating to origins and development of the medieval suburb, and use of this extra-mural area in the Saxon period, is of particular significance. The potential remains for the survival of in situ deposits

relating to occupation of the area from the Bronze Age to the present day.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-4, 8-10, 12-15 and 23-26 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Medieval suburb
- Sub-surface archaeological deposits
- Avon Buildings 18th century terrace