

## **Part 6: Historic Urban Character Appraisal**





## **6.1 The historic urban character of Newton**

Unlike the other towns studied in this project, Newton has no surviving settlement, other than a single house, visible on the ground. There is no surviving plan of the town and the documentary and archaeological evidence has yet to produce sufficient evidence for the size and layout of the town. This is unlike Milton Abbas (the other town in this project that is no longer extant), where the street and plot layout is known from historic maps and can be traced in part on the ground. Therefore, there is almost nothing that can be said about the character of the town of Newton. Indeed, its precise location still remains undecided.

The flat low-lying topography of the most likely location of the town, at the head of a shallow bay, Newton Bay, provides little constraint to laying out the planned streets and plots for a town. Therefore, it is assumed that the form of Newton is likely to have been fairly regular, with a grid of streets and burgage plots.

## **6.2 Historic Urban Character Areas of Newton**

A single Historic Urban Character Area has been defined for Newton. This is essentially an arbitrary block of land around Newton Cottage at the foot of the Goathorn peninsula and Newton Bay, encompassing the suggested location of the town of Newton.

# Newton Historic Urban Character Area 1

## Newton

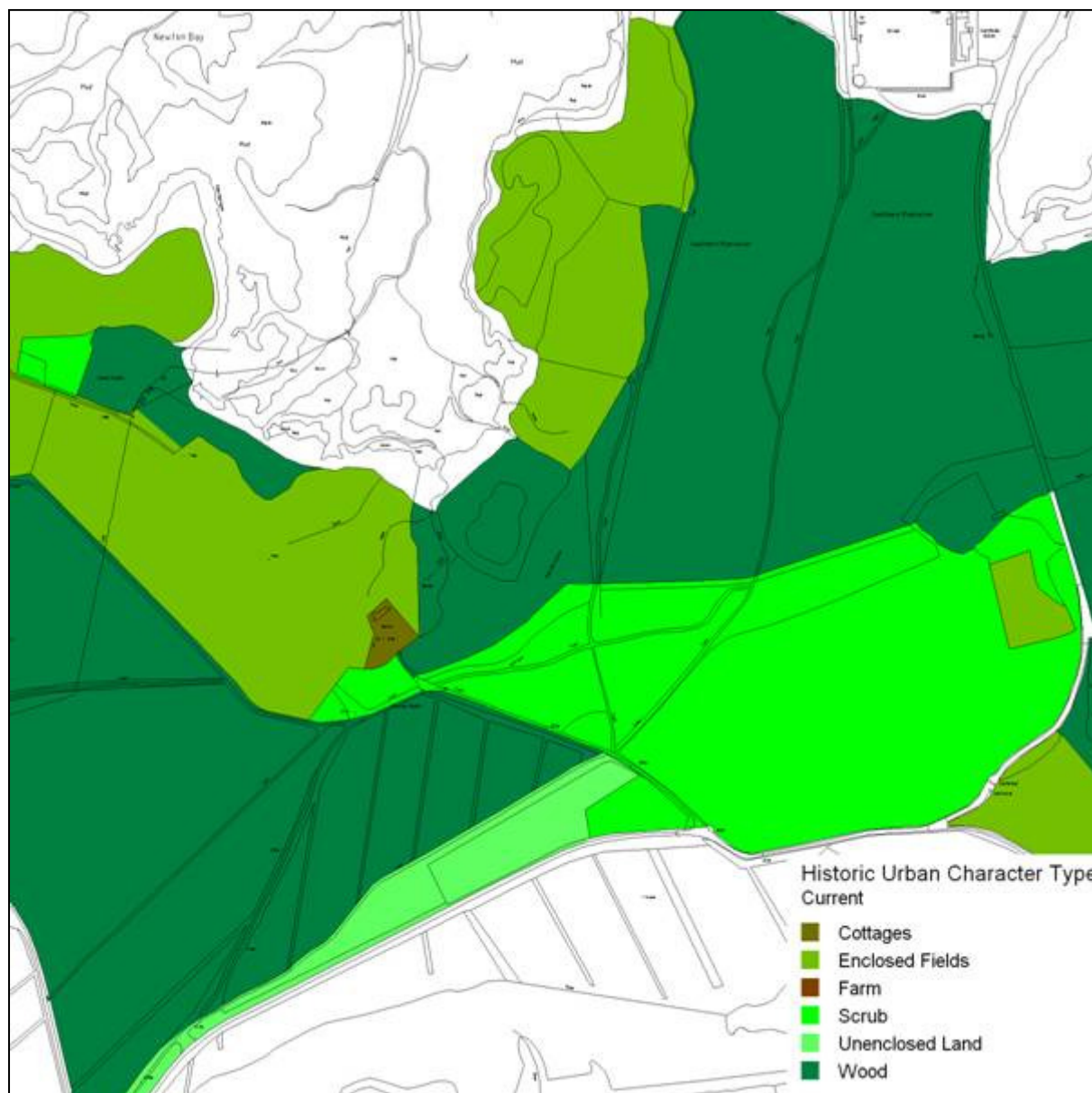


Figure 12: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 1, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 13: View of forestry plantation, Newton Heath.



Figure 14: View northeast towards Goathorn Farm.

## Newton Historic Urban Character Area 1

### Structure of Character Area

#### **Overview**

This area is focused on Newton Cottage, the south side of Newton Bay and the base of the Goathorn peninsula. The limits of the area are arbitrary, but are taken as just west of the parish boundary to the west, the northern limit of the enclosures belonging to Newton to the north and the road running to Goathorn Point to the south and east.

#### **Topography and Geology**

The area lies along the base of Goathorn Point and the south and east side of Newton Bay on the south side of Poole Harbour. The land is generally low-lying and flat next to the shore, but rises up into a series of low steep-sided gravel ridges and knolls to the south. The geology is sands, gravels and clays of the Poole Formation.

#### **Urban Structure**

There is no urban structure to this area, which is completely rural. The road running to Goathorn Point is along the line of a former tramway for the clay extraction industry. There are a small number of irregular enclosures to the north and east of Newton Cottage, which mark the remains of the area enclosed from the heath as part of Newton Farm. The remainder of the area is former open heathland enclosed as forestry plantations.

#### **Present Character**

Figure 12 shows the present day historic urban character types. The majority of the area is Wood, with significant areas of Scrub and with Enclosed Fields around Newton Cottage.

#### **Time Depth**

Newton Cottage is probably the oldest element, dating to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, but on the site of earlier buildings, probably late medieval in date. The enclosed fields are first shown on early 19<sup>th</sup> century maps, but are likely to be older, again

possibly late medieval in date. Goathorn Plantation is late 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. The plantation south of Newton Cottage is post-war in date.

#### **Settlement Pattern and Streetscape**

The settlement pattern consists of dispersed farmsteads enclosed from the heathland, possibly of medieval or early post-medieval date and later forestry plantations. Newton Cottage is set on the edge of a series of irregular enclosures with curvilinear boundaries stretching northwards along the east side of Newton Bay. Further irregular enclosures to the west along the south side of the bay have been amalgamated into larger enclosures. On the west side of Goathorn Point are the remnants of other irregular enclosures which probably belong to a 17<sup>th</sup> century settlement here.



Figure 15: View north towards Goathorn Point.



Figure 16: View of enclosed fields on west side of Goathorn Point.

### Newton Historic Urban Character Area 1 Built Character

#### **Building types**

Newton Cottage is late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century in date with a straight range of three rooms, all with fireplaces (RCHME 1970, 282).

#### **Building Materials**

Newton Cottage has walls of carstone rubble, rendered, with a slate roof (RCHME 1970, 282).

#### **Key Buildings**

Newton Cottage.



Figure 17: Newton Cottage.

### Newton Historic Urban Character Area 1 Archaeology

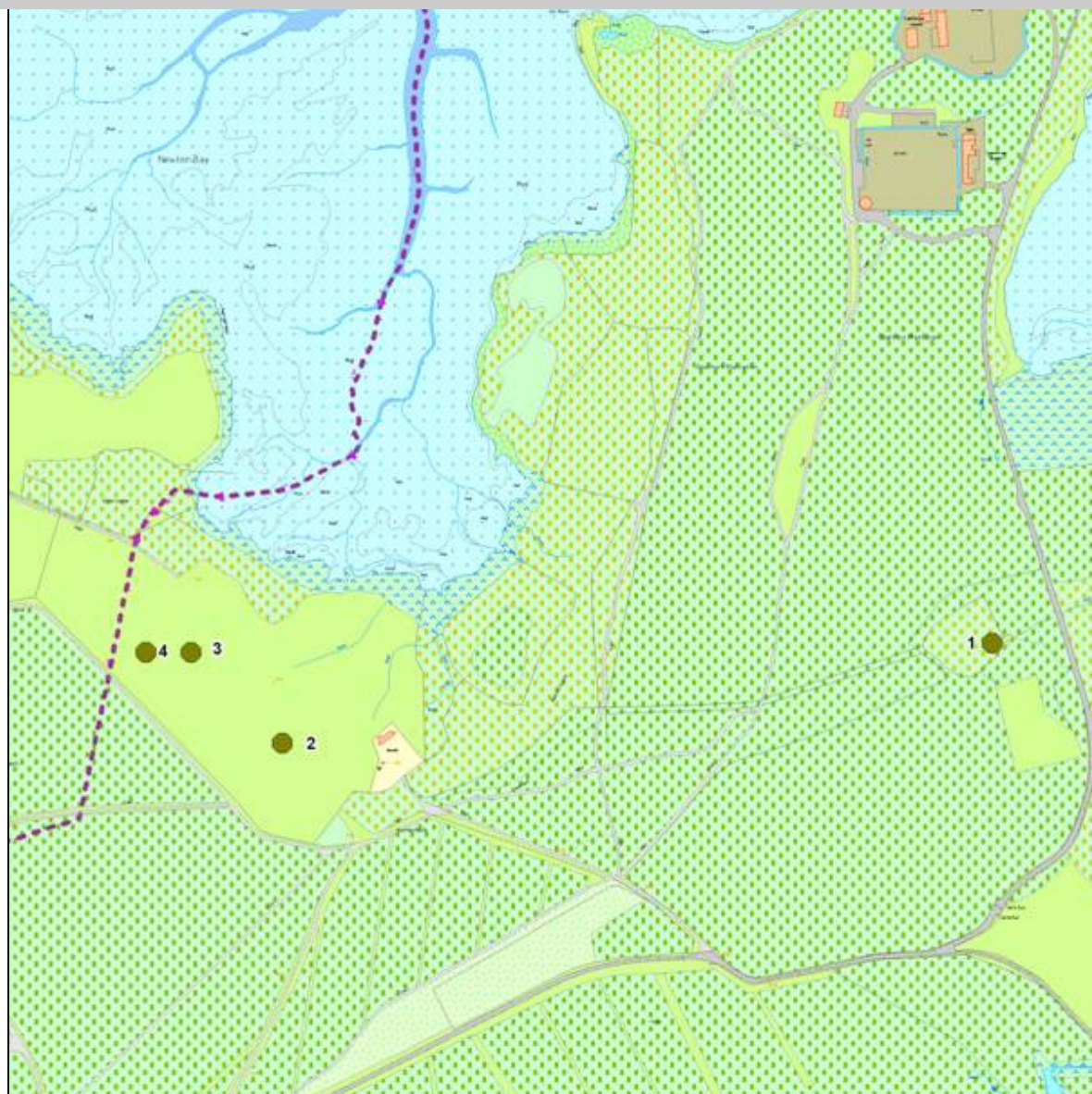


Figure 18: Archaeological Investigations near Newton.

### ***Archaeological Investigations***

Four archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area (Figure 18; Appendix 3, 1-4). On the east side of Goathorn, a series of building remains were investigated in 1964 to determine whether they may be part of the town of Newton, but proved to be part of a 17<sup>th</sup> century farmstead. The other investigations have concentrated on the area to the west of Newton Cottage and are associated with the Wytch Farm oilfield development. These investigations revealed a series of undated oval and subrectangular ditched enclosures and the remains of a possible stone wall.

### ***Archaeological Character***

The overall archaeological character of this area based on the results of the archaeological investigations appears to be one of remains of post-medieval low status buildings and of ditched enclosures, possibly containing some structural remains. Finds from this area have been sparse. If, however, there are surviving remains of the town of Newton in this area, then these may consist of ditched boundaries, remains of buildings and perhaps pits and other features found in historic urban contexts.

## **Newton Historic Urban Character Area 1 Designations**

### ***Listed Buildings***

There are no Listed Buildings in the Character Area.

### ***Conservation Areas***

None of this area lies within a Conservation Area

### ***Registered Historic Parks and Gardens***

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

### ***Scheduled Monuments***

There are no Scheduled Monuments in this area.

## Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 1 Evaluation

### **Strength of Historic Character**

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **low**. This is a reflection of the lack of clarity over the precise location and layout of the town of Newton, which is not visible from surface traces. The legibility of the historic rural character of this area is masked by modern forestry plantations.

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

The area has a **high** sensitivity to major development. This is a reflection of the current isolated rural character of the area and also the potential for any development to seriously disturb any surviving below ground archaeological remains of the town of Newton.

### **Archaeological Potential**

The overall archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **medium**, but it is difficult to assess the true potential of the area without having a clearer idea of the precise location and nature of any remains of the town of Newton. The widespread forestry plantation will have had a detrimental effect on the survival of any archaeological remains.

There is potential for recovering archaeological information on prehistoric and Roman activity and also on medieval and later settlement and exploitation of the heathland.

There is also the potential for palaeoenvironmental and organic deposits, of all periods, to be found in the intertidal and marine deposits in Newton Bay

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

### **Key Characteristics**

- Possible site of failed medieval town of Newton
- Small dispersed agricultural settlements with irregular enclosed fields
- Former heathland, now forested
- Adjacent to Newton Bay on south side of Poole Harbour
- Industrial archaeological remains of former clay works