

Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 19 Old Brewery and Portville

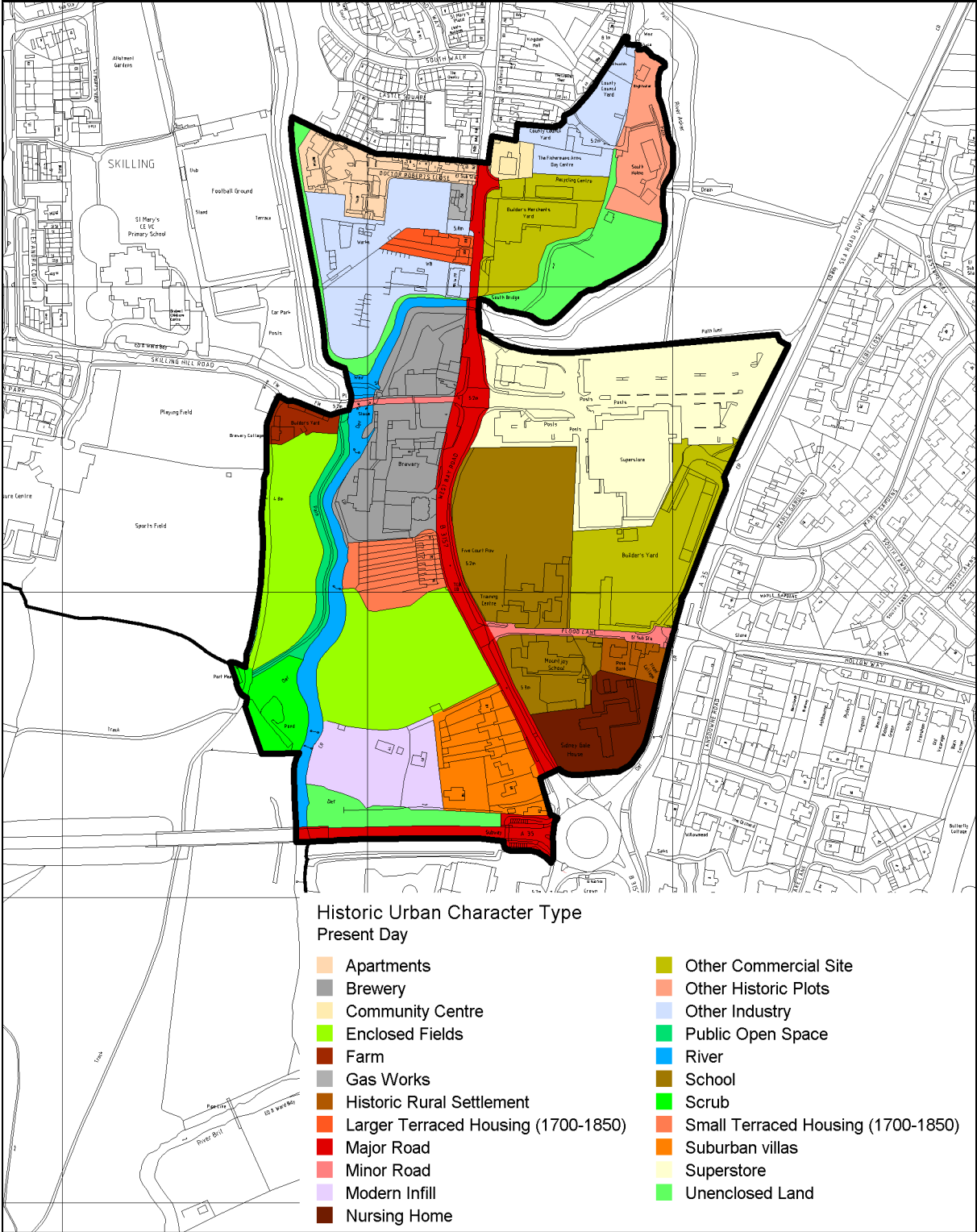


Figure 186: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 19, showing current historic urban character type.

Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 19

Structure of Character Area

Overview

This character area lies to the south of the medieval town in the river Brit floodplain downstream from the confluence with the river Asker. The area is defined by the rivers to the north and west, and by the modern Sea Road South and A35 to the south and east.

Topography and Geology

The area is flat and low-lying comprising the floodplain at the confluence of the Brit and Asker. It lies on interbedded siltstone and limestone of the Eype Clay Member with superficial deposits of Alluvium.

Urban Structure

It comprises West Bay Road and the properties on either side, with two minor roads, Skilling Hill Road and Flood Lane at right angles. It is typical of a peripheral fringe belt area, with a mix of a large industrial site, an out of town supermarket, and other extensive commercial sites, together with former rural elements and planned suburban housing. The area is a mix of large and small plots, both regular and irregular in shape.

Present Character

Figure 186 shows the present day historic urban character types. The central part of the area is taken up by the Brewery, with large areas of Other Industry, Superstore, Other Commercial Site Nursing Home, and School. There are some areas of Large Terraced Housing, Small Terraced Housing and Suburban Villas along West Bay Road. Also, there are small areas of Gasworks, Modern Infill and Other Historic Plots. More rural character types include Farm, Historic Rural Settlement, Enclosed Fields and Unenclosed Land.

Time Depth

The date of origin of the part of West Bay Road that runs through this area is uncertain, but is likely to be medieval or earlier. It was part of a

turnpike road between Bridport and Bridport Harbour in the 18th-19th century. Flood Lane, the former road to Bothenhampton, is also likely to be medieval. The A35 by-pass dates to the late 1980s. The earliest element, other than the roads, is the 17th century Flood House. Otherwise, all the earlier elements in this character area lie to the west of West Bay Road, adjacent to the river. The dominant element is the brewery, established in 1794, and the first major industrial development outside the historic core. The terraced housing, 'Fives Court Row', to the south was built for brewery workers. Incidentally, in the mid 19th century, the fives court lay behind Portville. Portville was a planned development of late Regency villas, built by Samuel Gundry jun. in 1837. Mountjoy School was built on the opposite side of the road in 1974 and most of the other elements date from the 1980s.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The basic form of settlement pattern of this area is of discontinuous development along the frontage of West Bay Road with larger modern development set back away from the road. The streetscape has a semi-urban feel to the north with sporadic housing and commercial development, without a consistent building line to the street, but with some brick perimeter walls. Further south green edges predominate with grassy verges and hedges and gaps in the built frontage with fields and green spaces between. Very few buildings are directly on the street frontage. The grouping of the Old Brewery and Fives Court Row provide an unexpected historic industrial aspect in the centre of this area.



Figure 187: View of north end of West Bay Road, looking towards Bridport town centre.



Figure 188: West Bay Road, Portville, looking towards Fives Court Row.

Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 19 Built Character

Building types

This area does not have a cohesive built character, but comprises a number of different elements – rural vernacular buildings, workers' terraced housing, Late Regency suburban villas, historic industrial buildings and modern utilitarian structures.

Flood House is a 17th century house of long rectangular plan, with rubble stone walls and thatched roof and represents an example of a former rural building absorbed into an urban setting. The Brewery has a good ensemble of 18th and 19th century industrial buildings, the main brewery buildings are of stone with thatched roofs. The mineral water plant to the north of Skilling Hill Road is also of stone. Adjacent to the plant is a 19th century red brick toll house built for the turnpike road from Bridport to Bridport Harbour. Fives Court Row is a two-storey mixed brick and stone terrace of ten houses, originally with slate roofs, but some now replaced by modern pantiles. The houses of Portville comprise four two-storey stucco-fronted houses linked by one-storey porches, with low-pitched slate roofs and wide eaves, some with cast iron verandas.

The modern buildings are undistinguished, Mountjoy School and the Training Centre are single-storey flat-roofed concrete panelled buildings and Sidney Gale House is a three-storey flat-roofed brick structure.

Building Materials

The historic buildings are mainly stone, with a smaller number of brick buildings. The roofs are mainly slate, with a smaller number thatched.

Key Buildings

The key buildings are Flood House, the Old Brewery, 2 West Bay Road, Fives Court Row, and the houses of Portville.



Figure 190: Bridport Old Brewery.



Figure 191: Old Brewery with Mineral Water Factory and brick Toll House in foreground.



Figure 192: Fives Court Row, West Bay Road.



Figure 189: Flood House, Flood Lane.



Figure 193: Portville, West Bay Road.

Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 19 Archaeology

Archaeological Investigations

There have been no archaeological investigations in this character area.

Archaeological Character

The location of this area in the floodplain of the Brit and Asker suggests a relatively low level of archaeological activity. This is more likely to relate to the use of the river, rather than for settlement. The floodplain is likely to contain evidence of former channels of the Brit and may contain buried evidence in alluvial deposits for prehistoric, Saxon and medieval palaeoenvironments.

Figure 194 shows historic boundaries depicted on maps dating from the 19th century.

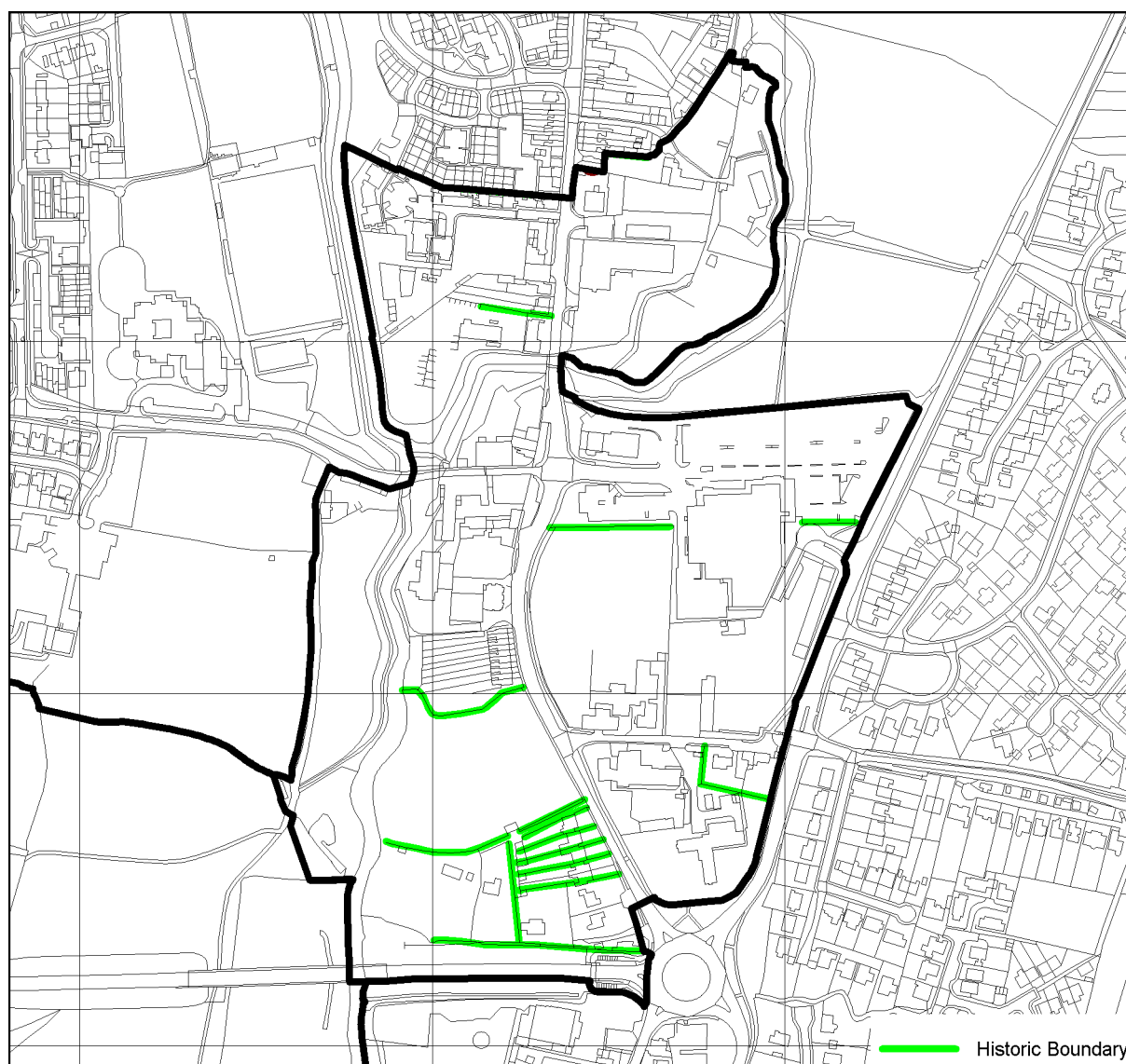


Figure 194: Archaeological features in Historic Urban Character Area 19.

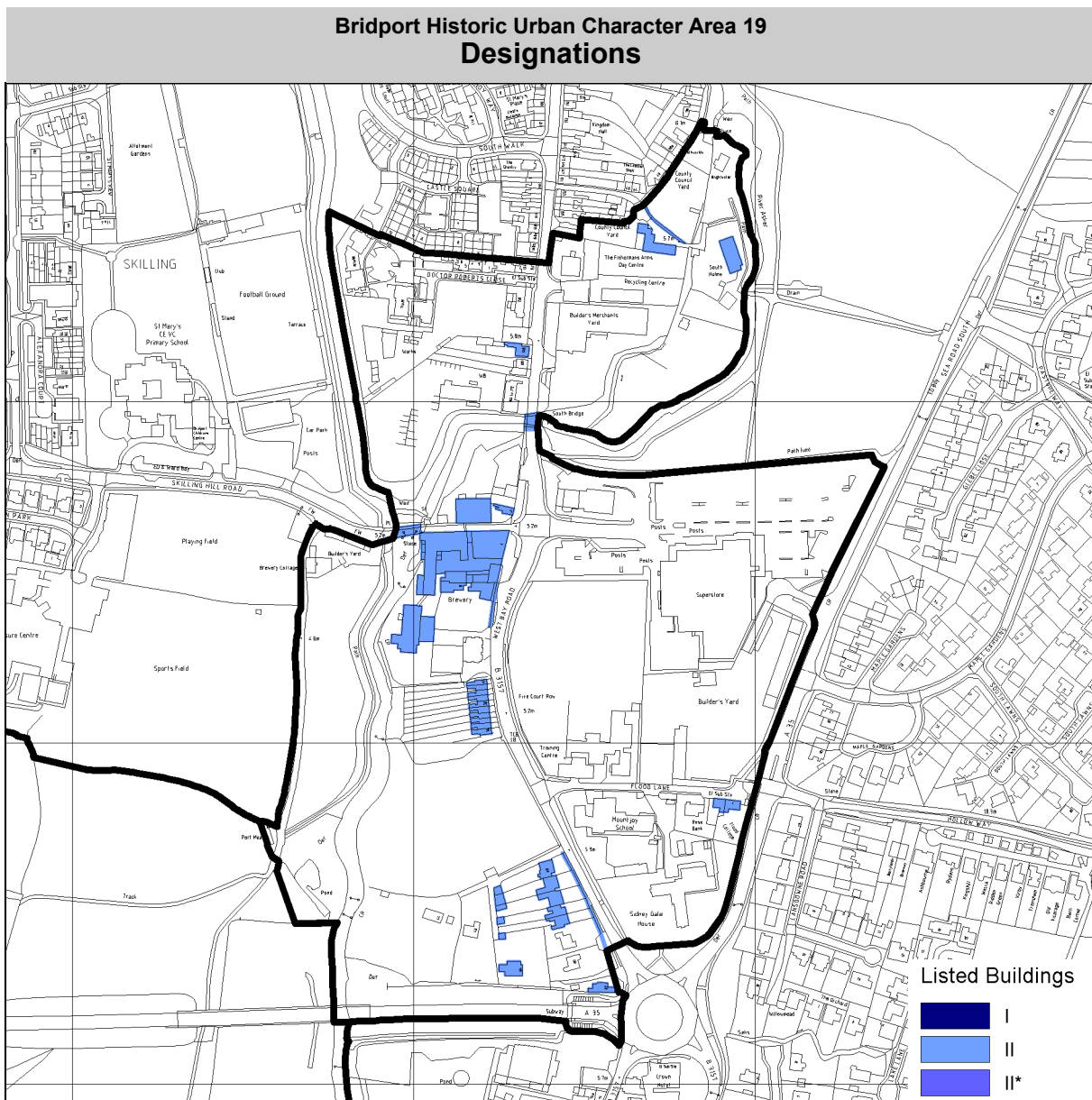


Figure 195: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 19.

Listed Buildings

There are 21 Listed Buildings in the Character Area, all are Grade II.

Conservation Areas

A small part of the edge of the Bridport Conservation Area around South Mill lies in the north east corner of this character area (Figure 41).

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

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

Scheduled Monuments

No Scheduled Monuments lie within this character area.

Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 19 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **Medium**. Although there are good quality historic buildings, notably around the Old Brewery and at Portville, much of the area has been developed in the 20th century with little coherence in its character. It is typical of an urban fringe area.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **Medium** sensitivity to major change. This overall sensitivity score is a combination of areas of high sensitivity, such as Portville and to a slightly lesser extent the Old Brewery, and low sensitivity to large scale development in most of the surrounding parts, since they comprise large scale modern commercial developments of little overall coherence or quality.

Archaeological Potential

This character area has a **Low** archaeological potential, as it lies outside the historic core on

the town on former farmland. The area is low-lying and formerly was prone to flooding, so is unlikely to have been a focus for pre-urban settlement or activity. The Old Brewery is of significant industrial archaeological potential. The survival of potential archaeological deposits and features is assessed to be medium.

This area has the potential to provide information that could contribute to Research Questions 1, 4, and 9 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Old Brewery and brewery worker's housing
- Portville suburban development
- Flood House and Flood Lane
- Modern commercial developments
- Green space next to river