Part 7: Historic Environment Research Framework

The collation of information on the development and character of Beaminster has highlighted a number of areas where our understanding of the town is deficient. This has led to the formulation of the research questions set out below, which summarise potential future directions of research on the town. This list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive, but suggests a framework within which further research could take place and this is linked to the South West Regional Archaeological Research Framework (Webster 2008), where relevant.

7.1 Pre-urban Activity

The pre-urban context of Beaminster is poorly understood. There have been a number of discoveries of prehistoric flintwork and Late Iron Age and Roman finds from the surrounding area, but little detail is recorded and very few finds have been made from within the town itself. Thus, the questions on pre-urban activity are very general.

1. What is the nature of the prehistoric activity in the area?
2. Does the apparent concentration of Roman finds on Prout Hill reflect an actual focus of Roman activity and what is the nature of this activity?

7.2 Origins of the Town

The origins of Beaminster and its early development are poorly understood. The form of settlement in the late Saxon period, when Beaminster is an ecclesiastical centre is not known, nor how it developed up to the time of the granting of its market charter. Research into this period of Beaminster's history and archaeology has potential to provide information to inform on the wider Research Aims for the South West Region investigate and identify the locations of Early Medieval religious buildings, monuments and landscapes (SWARF Research Aim 32) and to develop our understanding of Early Medieval urban settlement (SWARF Research Aim 35).

3. Is the Saxon minster church on the same site as the present church?
4. Where was the Bishop's residence?
5. Did the minster and bishop's residence act as a focus for settlement — if so, where was it and what form did it take?
6. Was the market charter granted to stimulate the growth of the town or was it a reflection of the existence of an established trading centre?

7.3 Medieval town

No medieval archaeological evidence has been recovered from the town. Any archaeological evidence from within the historic core would enable a fuller picture of the development of the town and complement the historical evidence. It would feed into the wider Research Aims for the South West Region to improve our understanding of Medieval and later urbanism (SWARF Research Aim 36) and assessment of the archaeological potential for studying medieval economy, trade, technology and production (SWARF Research Aim 47).

7. How did the town develop and how much does the present historic plot pattern reflect the medieval boundaries?
8. What was the date of the East Street suburb?
9. What evidence is there for the medieval economy?
10. What evidence is there for medieval industry and how was it organised?
11. What were the different zones of social differentiation, industrial activity, etc during this period and how did they change?
12. Where are the medieval buildings, what is their date and function, and are there any traces of medieval buildings hidden within later buildings?
13. What evidence is there for the development of religious and secular institutions in the town and are there any surviving archaeological remains?

7.4 Post-medieval and Modern town

Any archaeological evidence from the town at this period enable a fuller picture of the development of the town and complement the historical evidence. It would feed into the wider Research Aims for the South West Region to improve our understanding of Medieval and later urbanism (SWARF Research Aim 36) and to broaden our understanding of post-medieval to modern technology and production (SWARF Research Aim 45).

14. How did the post-medieval town develop from the medieval town, and what were the changes in property boundaries, zones of activity and social differentiation?
15. How much of the pre-fire buildings still survive incorporated within later buildings?
16. How was the industrial activity of the town organised and how did it develop?

17. What physical traces of industrial activity in the town still survive?

18. What evidence can the standing buildings provide for their function and date?

Appendices

Appendix 1: References

Abbreviations

AONB = Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DCC = Dorset County Council

DCMS = Department of Culture Media and Sport

DHC = Dorset History Centre

RCHME = Royal Commission on Historic Monuments of England

SWARF = South West Regional Archaeological Framework

WDDC = West Dorset District Council

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Appendix 2: Chronology

For the purposes of this project, the following period names, sub-divisions and dates have been used. These are based on those used by the Dorset County Council Historic Environment Record.

Period	Period Sub-divisions	Date Range
Prehistoric	Palaeolithic	500000-10001BC
	Mesolithic	10000-4001BC
	Neolithic	4000-2351BC
	Bronze Age	2350-701BC
	Iron Age	800BC-AD42
Roman	Roman	AD43-409
Saxon	Early Saxon	AD410-899
	Late Saxon	AD900-1065
Medieval	Norman	AD1066-1149
	Earlier Medieval	AD1150-1349
	Later Medieval	AD1350-1539
Post-medieval	Early post-medieval	AD1540-1599
	17th Century	AD1600-1699
	18th century	AD1700-1799
	Earlier 19th century	AD1800-1850
	Later 19th century	AD1851-1900
Modern	Edwardian	AD1901-1913
	Inter-war	AD1914-1945
	Post-war	AD1946-1969
	Modern	AD1970-2010

Appendix 3: Archaeological Investigations in Beaminster

Site Name	intervention	Date	Reference	HER Event No.
Glebe Land, Barnes Lane	Watching Brief	1995-6	Adkins 1996	EDO5259
Beaminster School	Observation	2000	Wallis 2000	EDO5263
St Mary's Church	Building Recording	2001-2	Graham 2005	EDO5261
12 The Square	Building Recording	2006	Rodwell 2006	EDO5262
6 Prout Hill	watching brief	2007	Clarke 2007	EDO5260

Appendix 4: Historic Urban Character Types

Broad Type	Character Type	Scope Note
Commercial	Hotel	Large hotels in grounds with car parks.
	Market	Both indoor and outdoor market areas. Also used for historic market places.
	Office	Large office complexes that are identifiable as not being within a mixed use area.
	Offices and shops	Areas of mixed commercial use.
	Plant Nursery/ Garden Centre	Plant nurseries or garden centres covering large areas.
	Public house	Large public houses with car parks. Smaller public houses will be included under a more character dominant type.
	Retail park	Areas of large warehouse-type shops selling products such as furniture, white goods, etc, together with their car parks.
	Shopping centre	Shopping centres mainly out of town and with many small units, usually selling clothing, gifts etc.
	Superstore	Large single stores such as supermarkets and their car parks.
	Other commercial site	For commercial buildings of unknown use or not included in the categories above.
Communication	Airfield	An enclosed area used for the taking off, landing and maintenance of commercial and general aviation aircraft.
	Major road	Main roads, through routes, by-passes, etc
	Minor road	Minor roads linking the main roads.
	Lane/ Path	Smaller access ways, primarily used for historic routes.
	Car Park	Large car parks, including multi-storey, where not associated with a particular establishment.
	Bus Station	Large bus and coach stations.
	Railway	Current railway lines
	Railway (disused)	Lines of former railways, where these are still evident in the landscape.
	Railway Station	Railway stations which have a large impact on the landscape.
	Railway Yard	Rail yards which have a large impact on the landscape.
Industrial	Brewery	Large industrial brewery sites. It can also be used for former brewery sites converted to other uses, where the former brewery buildings remain dominant.
	Brickworks	Includes both brick and tile works.
	Engineering works	All engineering works including light and electrical engineering sites.
	Industrial Estate	Sites comprising small units of light industry, including sites described as 'Business Park' and 'Trading Estate' and primarily used for purpose-built industrial estates. Where industrial estates have been created by conversion of former industrial buildings, they have been characterised under the character type which reflects their original function, if this is still dominant.

Broad Type	Character Type	Scope Note
Industrial (cont)	Maltings	Malthouses and small brewing sites.
	Metal works	All sites working and/or producing metal.
	Mill	All types of water mill.
	Pottery	Industrial site used for the production of industrial and domestic ceramic products.
	Quarry	Includes all extractive industries (stone, sand and gravel, clay, etc.)
	Quay/wharf/ shipyard	Commercial shipping areas, including boatyards.
	Ropery	All rope and twine making sites, including rope walks, etc
	Textile works	Factories where textiles are manufactured.
	Timber Yard/ Saw mill	Large timber yards and/or sawmills.
	Workshops	An area of small industrial sites where the industry is un-known.
	Warehouse	Large storage buildings, including both historic ware-houses (which may have now been converted to other uses) and modern warehouse sites.
	Other Industry	An area of industry which does not fit into any of the above.
Landscape	Beach	A sand or pebble area of the shore.
	Enclosed Fields	Enclosed fields which largely retain their original bounda-ries within an urban area.
	Fish Pond	Large areas of fish pond only.
	Pond	Smaller natural or artificial areas of water, including mill ponds.
	Paddocks and closes	Small regular or amorphous fields and plots close to set-tlement edge. It also includes areas of historic detached gardens within the urban landscape.
	Remnant Fields	Areas of former fields now enclosed by urban develop-ment, often no longer retaining their original shape or size.
	Scrub	Patchy areas of trees and shrubs.
	Unenclosed land	Unenclosed areas including small plots of land within set-tlement/industrial areas that are not defined as anything else.
	Wood	For all types and areas of woodland within the urban ar-eas.
Military	Military Airfield	Enclosed area used for the taking off, landing and mainte-nance of military aircraft.
	Barracks	A building or building complex used to house soldiers.
	Depot	An enclosed area with numerous buildings used as the headquarters of a regiment. It can also be a dedicated stores facility.
	Town defences	Town walls, towers, bastions, and defensive earthworks associated with a town
	Territorial Army Centre	Sites of Territorial Army activity.
	Castle	A large fortified building or complex of buildings, built es-pecially during the medieval period
	Other Military	An area of military activity which does not fit into the above.

Broad Type	Character Type	Scope Note
Public Services	Art gallery	Large art galleries and their grounds.
	Community Centre	Includes all kinds of gathering places (Meeting hall, etc).
	Court Building	Crown Courts and Magistrates Courts.
	Emergency services building	Police stations, fire stations, ambulance stations, and coastguard stations, where free-standing and in their own grounds.
	Higher Education facility	For universities & college campuses - also adult education facilities.
	Library	Large libraries.
	Local Government Offices	All local government and central government offices including civic centres.
	Medical facility	All types of medical facility including hospitals, health centres, etc.
	Museum	Large museums
	Prison	For buildings marked 'Prison'
	Public building	Other non-specific public buildings.
	School	Use for schools and any associated playing fields.
	Town hall	Town Halls
Recreation and Ornamental Landscapes	Allotments	Large allotment areas within settlement areas.
	Camping Site	A usually fairly level area used for the pitching of tents or the parking of caravans for holiday use.
	Cinema	Large cinema complexes and their car parks.
	Deer Park	An area enclosed by a park pale for the stocking of deer.
	Golf Course	Landscaped areas used for playing golf, including clubhouses, etc.
	Harbour/marina/dock	Areas for recreational boat use.
	Leisure Centre	Building used for various sports, including area of car park.
	Nature Reserve	An area designated for the protection of flora and fauna, often open to the public.
	Parkland	A landscape designed through judicious planting or clearance of trees in order to create vistas and usually associated with a Country House
	Public Open Space	Publicly accessible open areas not used for any specific activity.
	Public Park	For Public Parks and Gardens, larger areas of land which may include an ornamental lake, flower beds, tennis courts and play areas, etc. Also includes 'Recreation areas'.
	Racecourse	An enclosed area used for racing (horses, dogs, cars, etc.)
	Seafront	Sea side area used for public recreation, includes piers, promenades, etc.
	Sports field	An area of ground used for organised sporting activities.

Broad Type	Character Type	Scope Note
Recreation and Ornamental Landscapes (cont)	Theme Park	An area used for the recreation of the public and may include rides which is organised around a central theme.
	Other Recreation	An area of recreation/ornamental landscape, which does not fit into the above.
Religious	Church	Churches of all denominations (including attached churchyard)
	Chapel	Non-conformist chapels, including attached graveyards.
	Cemetery	Large municipal cemeteries or other detached cemeteries (not attached to church or chapel)
	Religious house	Monasteries, nunneries, etc
Settlement	Burgage plots	Long narrow plots running back from the street frontage, of medieval origin.
	Other historic plots	Areas of historic plots other than burgage plots of pre-19th century date.
	Historic suburban settlement	Areas of settlement dating from before the 19th century, which lay outside the core of the medieval town.
	Historic rural settlement	Former villages, hamlets, etc, which have been incorporated into urban areas, usually medieval in origin.
	Apartments	Housing of not more than three or four storeys, also includes maisonettes.
	Small terraced housing (1700-1850)	An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of late 18th and early 19th century predominate. The houses have an average footprint of approximately 50 square metres or less.
	Larger terraced housing (1700-1850)	An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of late 18th and early 19th century predominate. The houses have an approximate average footprint of greater than 50 square metres.
	Victorian Terraced housing	An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of late 19th century date (1850-1900)predominate.
	Edwardian terraced housing	An area where historic terraced houses (defined as a row of three or more houses) of early 20th century date (1901-1913) predominate.
	Suburban villas	Areas of predominantly detached and semi-detached housing set in their own grounds and often in a planned layout built pre-1914.
	Inter-war suburban estate	Planned areas of mainly detached and semi-detached houses, dating to the period 1914-1945.
	Other Inter-war housing	Other areas of housing dating to 1914-1945 not part of larger suburban estates.
	Modern housing estate	Planned estates of mainly detached and semi-detached houses, often with curvilinear roads and culs-de-sac, dating to post-1945.
	Modern Infill	Planned areas of mainly detached and semi-detached houses, inserted into existing established plots (often in the grounds of larger houses), dating to post-1945.
	Town House	Large single detached urban house
	Ornamental villas and country houses	Ornamental villas are large detached houses in large grounds, usually 19th/early 20th century in date. Country Houses are large houses, sometimes with a landscaped garden, in or once in a rural area, usually dating from the medieval to the 18th century.

Broad Type	Character Type	Scope Note
Settlement (cont)	Farm	Farm buildings and farmhouse, but can include the immediate adjacent farmyard or paddocks.
	Cottages	Small buildings - sometimes singular, sometimes in a row. They are smallish buildings of irregular shape.
	Nursing Home	Residential homes for the elderly.
Utilities	Gas works	Areas of gas works, including gas holders, etc.
	Power station	Power stations - either electric or gas
	Sewage works/ water works	Sewage works, filter beds, water works, pumping stations, etc.
	Sub station	Large electricity sub stations only.
	Telephone Exchange	Large telephone exchanges.

Appendix 5: Archaeological Potential

The measure of urban archaeological potential is based on a consideration of the likely time depth of the potential archaeological remains, the potential survival of these remains, an assessment of the potential diversity of features present and an indication of the likely significance of the information to the history of the town.

These are scored numerically to calculate the final index of urban archaeological potential.

Score	1	2	3
No. of chronological periods of urban development	1-4	5-10	11+
Survival of archaeological deposits	Low	Medium	High
Potential diversity of features present	Low	Medium	High
Significance to town	Low	Medium	High

Overall Archaeological Potential   **Low**   4-6
    Medium   7-9
    High   10-12

Notes:

1. The chronological periods are those used by the Dorset Historic Towns Project.

2. The index of survival of archaeological deposits is a generalised index of the likely quality of survival of archaeological features based on the example of excavated sites, where possible, otherwise an assessment will be made on the basis of topography, geology and amount of development.

   Low survival is where there is likely to be major truncation and/or destruction of deposits and features through modern landscaping and development and/or soil and geological conditions that indicate likely poor survival of archaeological material, particularly organic materials and metals.

   Medium survival is where there is likely to be some truncation and/or destruction of deposits and features through modern landscaping and development and/or soil and geological conditions that indicate likely moderate survival of archaeological material.

   High survival is where modern landscaping and development is unlikely to have caused significant truncation and disturbance of archaeological deposits and features and/or soil and geological conditions that indicate good survival of archaeological material, particularly organic materials and metals.

3. The potential diversity of archaeological features is a generalised index of the likely range of archaeological features, deposits, finds and historic buildings based on the example of excavated sites where possible, otherwise an assessment will be made on the basis of archaeological evidence from similar areas in the town or from similar towns elsewhere in Dorset.

   Low diversity is where there is likely to be a very limited range of archaeological evidence, reflecting either a limited range of activities or marginal areas with overall low level of activity.

   Medium diversity is where there is likely to be a range of different types of archaeological finds, features and deposits, either reflecting areas of limited range of activities or areas on the margins of settlement focus.

   High diversity is where there is likely to be a wide range of different types of archaeological finds, features and deposits, including structural remains, pits, evidence of craft and industrial activity, etc, and also standing historic buildings, reflecting mainly historic town centre locations.

4. The index of significance to the town is a generalised index of the potential of the archaeology to provide significant data to inform

   Low significance is to be used primarily for areas of relatively recent suburban development.

   Medium significance is to be used primarily for areas of historic development outside the historic core of the town.

   High significance is to be used primarily for areas in the historic core of the town.