

# Whitchurch

## Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Assessment Report



Aerial view of Whitchurch with Bolebec Castle in the centre



The Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Project was carried out between 2008 and 2012 by Buckinghamshire County Council with the sponsorship of English Heritage and the support of Aylesbury Vale District Council

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## Summary

This report written as part of the Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Project is intended to summarise the archaeological, topographical, historical and architectural evidence relating to the development of Whitchurch in order to provide an informed basis for conservation, research and the management of change within the urban environment. Emphasis is placed on identifying a research agenda for the town using a formalised method for classifying local townscape character. The Historic Towns methodology complements the well-established process of conservation area appraisal by its complete coverage, greater consideration of time-depth and emphasis on research potential. Each Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Project report includes a summary of information for the town including key dates and facts (Table 1). The project forms part of an extensive historic and natural environment characterisation programme by Buckinghamshire County Council.

Whitchurch is first mentioned in the Domesday Book, although its origins as a permanent settlement date back to at least the Anglo-Saxon period. The Domesday Book showed that the manor was held by the Bolebec family and in the 12<sup>th</sup> century they built a castle just west of that main road. The Bolebecs had sizeable landholdings in the county and Whitchurch became a place of prestige as head of the Barony. The parish church was rebuilt in the 13<sup>th</sup> century but to this day remains a defining landmark in the rural landscape. By 1245 the manor had come into the hands of the Earl of Oxford. He obtained a charter granting the right to hold a weekly market and annual fair and created a market place on Market Hill, which was then the road to Oving and Quainton. By this time Whitchurch had become a borough, but the market seems to have lasted less than a century and Whitchurch was to revert to village status.

A few late-medieval buildings, or parts of buildings, survive in Whitchurch but many of its listed buildings date to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, said to be the period of the “Great Rebuilding” in England. Several of these buildings have jetties, a feature which usually denotes a fair degree of status and prosperity. Whitchurch is unusual in having so many different building materials on show. The underlying geology of the parish provides stone for building as well as clay for brick-making. The predominant building type of this period is a vernacular, timber-framed house with walls of stone, render or brick or sometimes a combination of all three.

The condition of the main road would have been much improved when it was turnpiked around 1745 by the Wendover to Buckingham Turnpike Trust. The parish fields were enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1771 and the building of some substantial brick houses soon followed.

The early 19<sup>th</sup> Whitchurch was a prosperous village, a community of farmers, tradesmen and labourers. Women and children relied on small earnings from cottage industries – pillow-lace making and straw-plaiting – but these were already being hit by cheaper machine-made products. There was a strong Methodist tradition and two chapels – Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist – were built in High Street, and the former still flourishes. That 1841 population peak has never been fully regained since a decline set in after the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably owing to the general agricultural depression. Silk-making, introduced to Whitchurch in the 1830s, provided employment for some women in a factory built in Little London but the venture did not last long. An apparently determined, but surely ill-judged, attempt to mine coal in the 1820s ended in failure. Apart from a watermill at the foot of Weir Lane and a windmill in Oving Road, the

only other industry in Whitchurch was a brick and tile making yard off Bushmead Road, which closed in the 1920s.

During the Second World War, the high street residence known as The Firs, was the home of Ministry of Defence 1 - dubbed “Winston Churchill’s Toyshop” the department was given the task of devising and testing secret weapons. After the Second World War the village saw modest growth, with housing built to the east along Bushmead Road, and to the west with council and private housing on Oving Road and North Marston Lane. The historic core of Whitchurch has been well-preserved. Most of it comes within the Whitchurch Conservation Area designated in 1971 and there are 47 listed buildings in the village. This built heritage is a valuable resource for learning more about the history of Whitchurch.

Despite Whitchurch being on the busy A413, the village has managed to retain its historic character and picturesque appeal. In 1970 John Betjeman wrote about north Buckinghamshire in *Bucks Life* thus: “Whitchurch is singularly unspoiled, despite the fact that a main road runs through it. Its church is medieval, stately and enormous. The village is full of old cottages and what looks like large farms or small manor houses; it has winding streets and trees and garden walls. In fact, I am not sure that it isn’t the best village of the lot.” His verdict would probably be little different some 40 years on.

The findings of this study are summarised in historic urban character zones that reflect different phases and forms of the development of Whitchurch (Figure 1). Each zone is accompanied by a brief description of townscape character and archaeological potential.

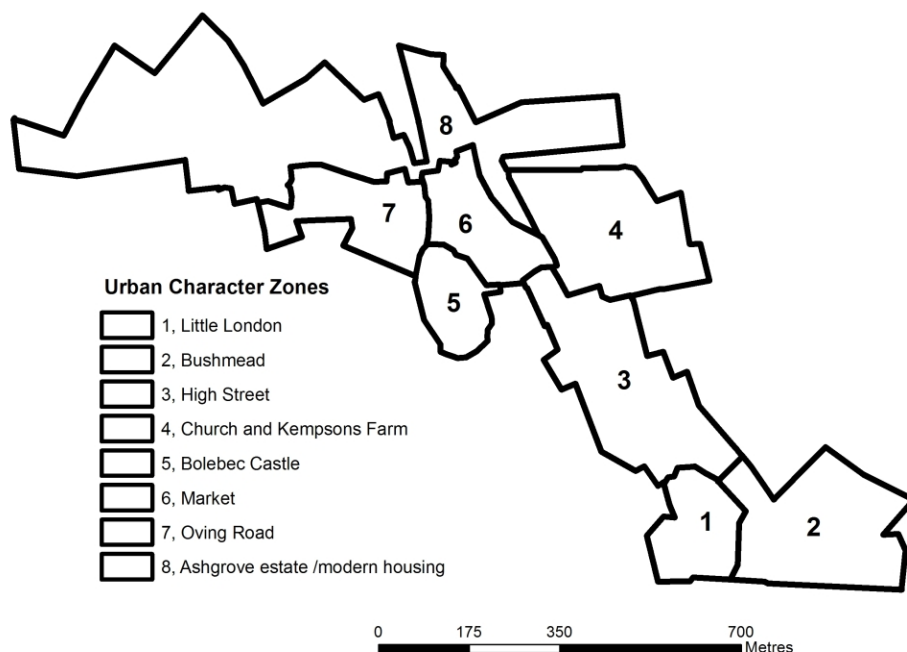


Figure 1: Urban Character Zones for Whitchurch

Period	Whitchurch	
Saxon (410-1066)	Mint	No
	Minster	No
	Royal Manor	No
	Burh status	No
	Saxon Reference	No
Domesday (1086)	Domesday Reference	Yes as <i>Wicherce</i>
	Number of Manors	2
	Watermills	No
	Domesday population (recorded households)	14 villagers; 2 smallholder; 8 slaves
	Settlement type	Village
Medieval (1066-1536)	Borough status	Pre 1263
	Burgage plots	Possibly
	Guild house/fraternity	No
	Castle	Yes
	Civic structures	No
	1 <sup>st</sup> reference to place	Domesday
	Fair Charter	1245 (Charter) Hugh de Vere, Earl of Oxford
	Church	13 <sup>th</sup> century Church of St John the Evangelist
	Market Charter	1245 (Charter) Hugh de Vere
	Market House	No
	Monastic presence	Woburn Abbey became Rector 1398
	Manorial records	Some: under one manor
	Routeway connections	Road from Aylesbury to Buckingham
Inns/taverns (presence of)	No reference	
Windmills/watermills	1263 1 watermill; 1 windmill 1331 2 windmills	
Settlement type	Borough	
Post Medieval (1536-1800)	Industry	No
	1577 Return of Vintners	2 inn holders; 2 alehouse keepers
	Market Charter	No
	Market house	No
	Fair Charter	No
	Inns	Probably 2
	Watermills	1 watermill (Dunn Mill); 1 windmill
	Enclosure date	1771/2
	Proximity to turnpike	1721 Wendover to Buckingham Trust
	Population (1801)	646
Settlement type	Large village	
Modern (Post 1800)	Railway station	No
	Modern development	Yes
	Canal Wharf	No
	Significant local industries	19 <sup>th</sup> century Silk factory, brick and tile making
	Population (2001)	857
	Settlement type	Large village
	HER No.	0938800000

Table 1: Summary table for Whitchurch

# **I DESCRIPTION**

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Project Background and Purpose**

The Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Project forms part of a national programme of projects funded by English Heritage (EH) based on the archaeology, topography and historic buildings of England's historic towns and cities.

This Historic Settlement Assessment Report for Whitchurch has been prepared by the Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service as part of the Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Project to inform and advise the planning process. This report has been compiled using a number of sources, including the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER), the List of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Interest and selected historical cartographic and documentary records. Site visits were also made to classify the character of the built environment. The preparation of this report has involved the addition of information to the database and the digitising of spatial data onto a Geographic Information System (GIS). In addition, this report presents proposals for the management of the historic settlement archaeological resource.

### **1.2 Aims**

The overall aim of the project is to inform management of the historic environment within Buckinghamshire's urban areas. Specifically, it will:

- Improve the quality and environmental sensitivity of development by enhancing the consistency, efficiency and effectiveness of the application of national planning policy covering the historic environment and archaeology respectively.
- Inform the preparation and review of conservation area appraisals.
- Where appropriate, assist with the development of Town Schemes and urban regeneration projects.
- Inform Local Development Frameworks, especially in the recognition of historic townscape character.
- Act as a vehicle for engaging local communities by promoting civic pride and participation in local research and conservation projects.
- Build upon the original Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) for Buckinghamshire (completed in 2005) through the addition of more detailed characterisation of the urban environment.
- Address an agenda recognised in the Solent Thames Research Frameworks for Buckinghamshire (2006) regarding a lack of knowledge of the built environment and in particular the need for research into land-use continuity and internal planning within Buckinghamshire's early towns.

## 2 Setting

### 2.1 Location, Topography & Geology

Whitchurch is located in the Aylesbury Vale District of the county of Buckinghamshire, some five miles north of Aylesbury and 12 miles south of Buckingham. Winslow is five miles to the north on the Buckingham road (A413). The southern end of the village is located at approximately 130m Ordnance Datum (OD) rising to 155m OD in the north near the castle. The land slopes away more steeply to the west of the village down to the stream fed from springs at the castle (the “Fair Alice Spring”) and the “Whittle Hole” which are said never to dry-up or freeze.

**Figure 2** illustrates the location and topography of Whitchurch.

The principal bedrock geology is comprised of Portland Sand and Stone formation with some Purbeck limestone around Market Hill and with Whitchurch sand formation in the north around the castle. There are some areas of Till (undifferentiated glacial formation) to the north and south of the village. The Soil Survey Layer (Cranfield University, 2007) surveyed at a county level, classifies the soil around Whitchurch as non-alluvial loam over limestone (Soil Series 5.11 Typical brown calcareous earths). **Figure 3** illustrates the varied geology which is reflected in the vernacular buildings. The availability of local building stone as well as clay for brick-making resulted in a mixture of materials, often seen in combination on the same building.

### 2.2 Wider Landscape

#### *Transport and Communications*

Whitchurch is a nucleated, linear settlement formed mainly along the Aylesbury to Buckingham Road, part of the historic greater link between London and Birmingham. This road was turnpiked by the Wendover to Buckingham Trust, formed in 1721 and which continued to operate until 1878. The Trust favoured this route over the earlier principal route which left Aylesbury via Quarrendon and a Roman Road. The former turnpike road is now the A413, which has been widened and moved to the east at the northern exit from the village. That part of the disused turnpike road is now a footpath east of Rickyard Close. The core of the settlement is, in effect, on a staggered crossroads, since the minor roads going east to Cublington and Wing and west to Quainton, are part of the historic route from Leighton Buzzard to Long Crendon. That route to Quainton has also been moved, from Market Hill to Oving Road.

#### *Rural Landscape*

The surrounding landscape is rural, as can be seen from the aerial photographs on the front cover and in **Figure 10**.

The hilly topography means that Whitchurch is in a commanding position, the church being a significant landmark. There are fine distant views of the Chiltern Hills southwards over the lower-lying Aylesbury Vale and eastwards over undulating pasture-lands.

The open-fields of Whitchurch were enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1771-2. The medieval system of strip farming has been fossilised in some fields where ridge and furrow is evidence that ploughlands were changed to pasture as a result of pre-Parliamentary, piecemeal enclosure. This was common in Buckinghamshire and dates from the medieval period or the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The larger, regular fields created by Parliamentary enclosure are particularly evident to the north east of the village. Some of the enclosure field boundaries have been lost to create “prairie” fields to the north of Whitchurch. There is some sheep and cattle grazing but much of the pasture to the west of the village has been given over to horse-paddocks.

The landscape is sparsely wooded. There are small areas of woodland, mainly to the west of the village and fields are divided by hedges, many of which will have first been planted on enclosure.

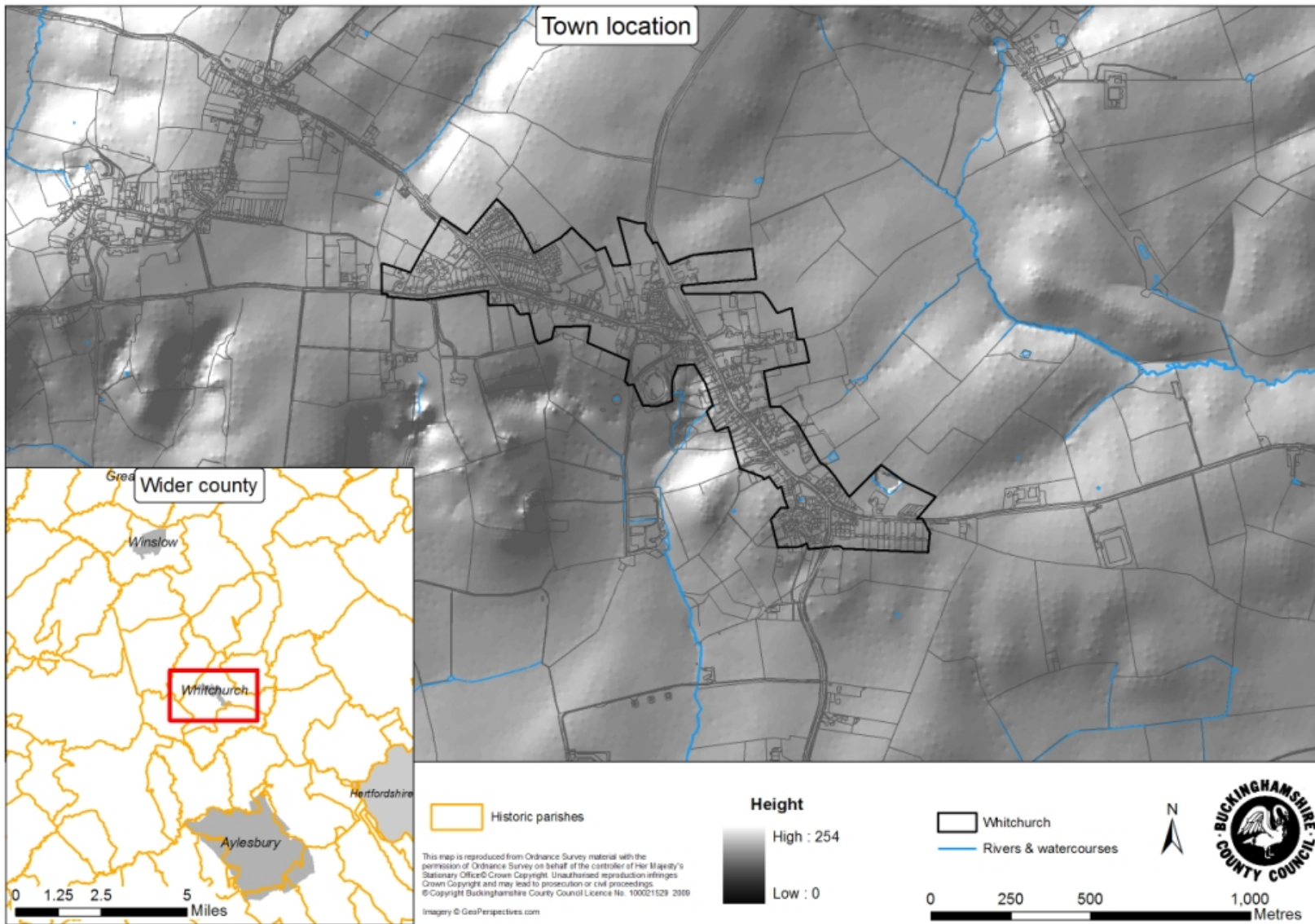


Figure 2: Whitchurch's location and topographical setting

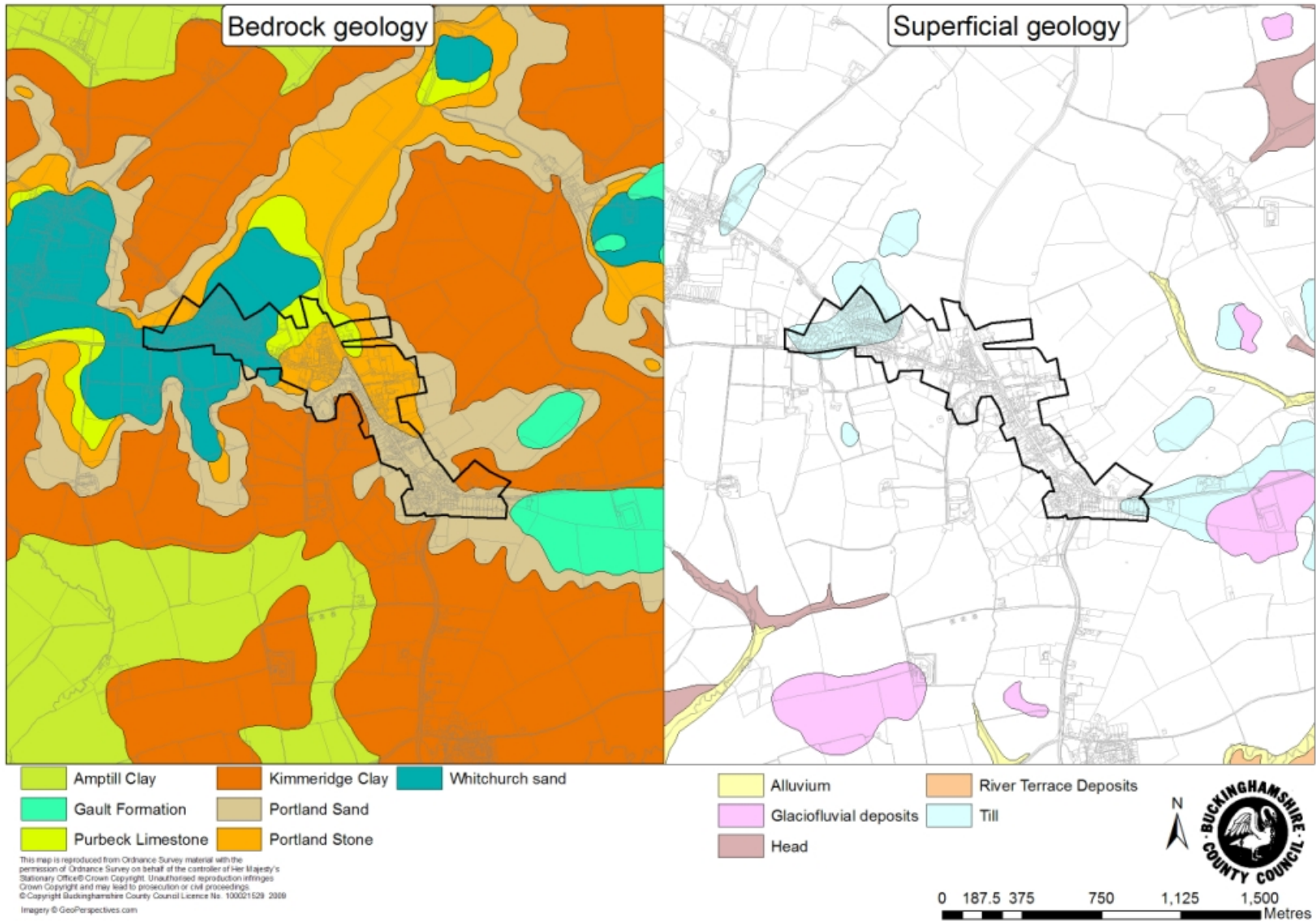


Figure 3: Geology (Whitchurch outlined in black) (BGS)



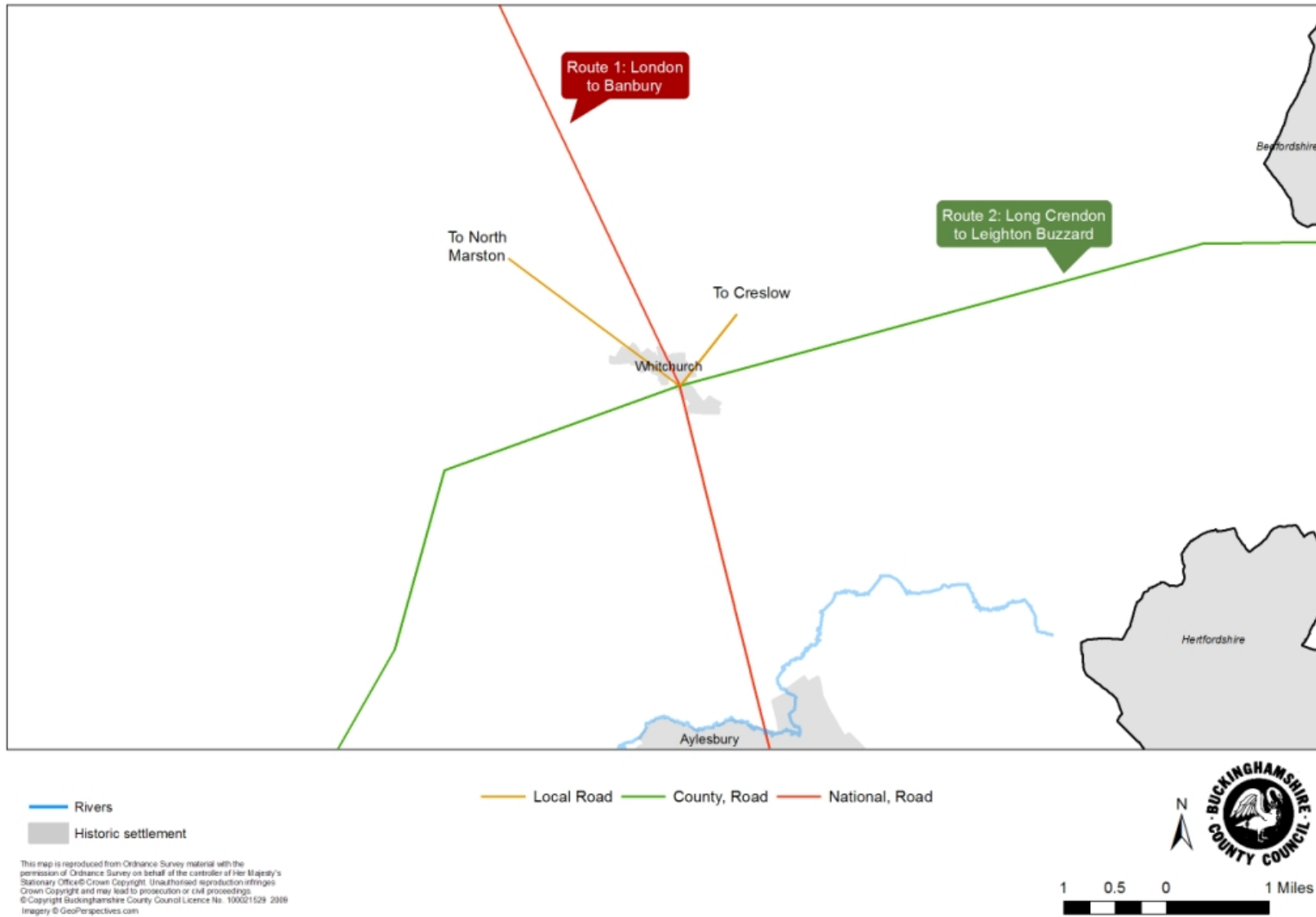


Figure 4: Diagram of Connections from Whitchurch (representational only)



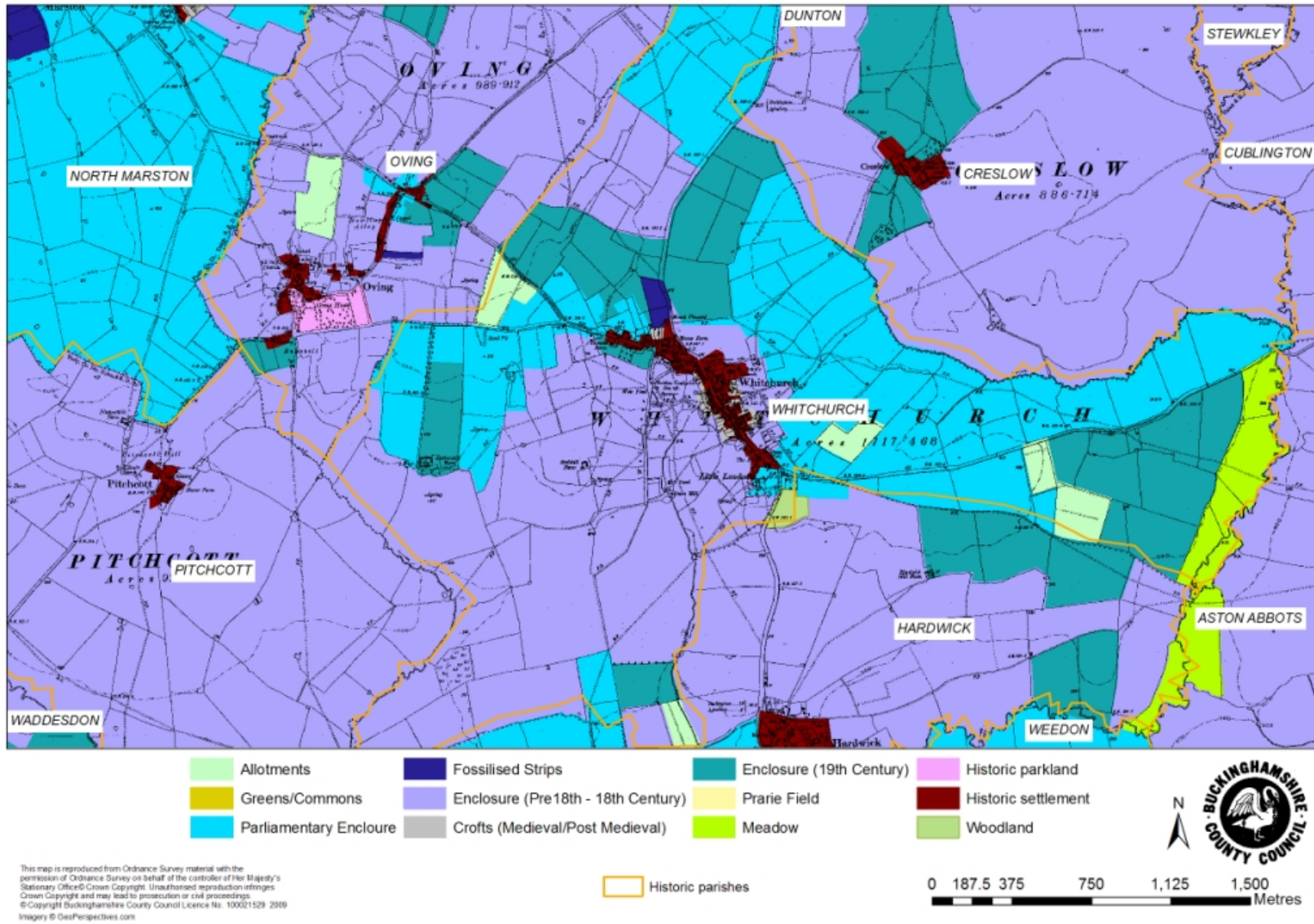
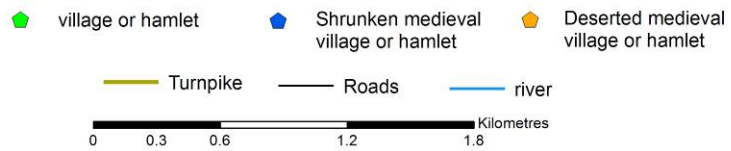
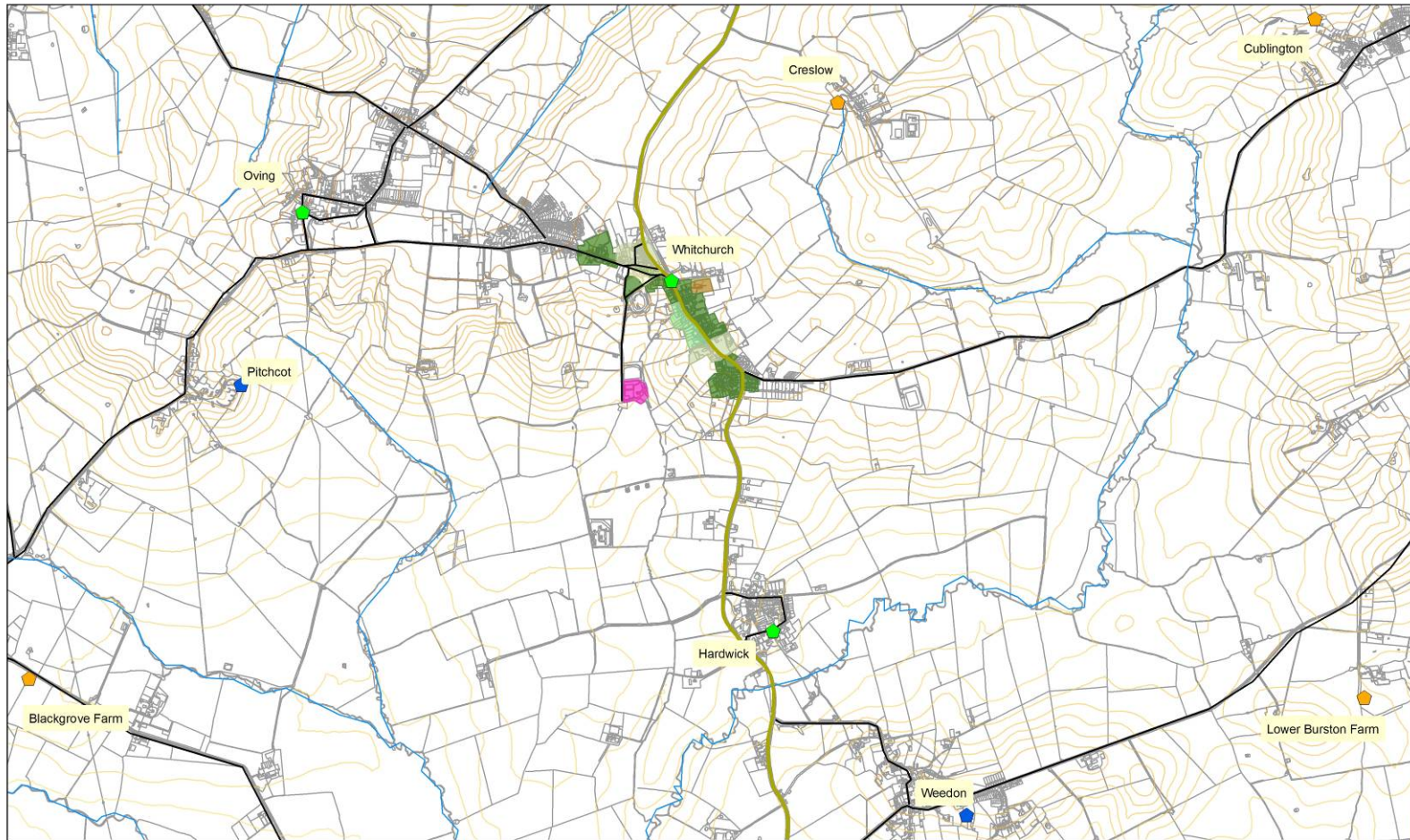


Figure 5: Whitchurch in the wider historic landscape using routes and Bucks HLC



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Figure 6: Historic settlement pattern around Whitchurch





*Figure 7: Looking north towards Bolebec Castle over fields to the west of High Street*



*Figure 8: Ridge and furrow north of Bushmead Road*



*Figure 9: Water from the Fair Alice Spring at Bolebec castle*





Whitchurch: 2006 vertical aerial photograph

Scale: 1:4,817 at A3



Imagery © GeoPerspectives.com

Produced by County Archaeological Service, December 2011



Figure 10: Aerial view of Whitchurch in the enclosure landscape

### 3 Evidence

#### 3.1 Historic Maps

Characterisation for this project was primarily undertaken using the Ordnance Survey series of maps from the OS 2-inch Surveyors drawing of the 1820s to the current Mastermap data. Also used were the county maps of Jefferys (surveyed 1766-68) and Bryant (surveyed 1824), and the 1910 Valuation Survey map. The only pre-Ordnance Survey map of Whitchurch to depict the village in any detail is the 1771 enclosure map. The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS) does not hold the Enclosure Award but does have a copy of a 1771 parish map (ref. IR144) assumed to be a copy of the enclosure map. Extracts from some of these maps are reproduced in **Figures 12 to 16**.

#### 3.2 Documentary Evidence

The Historical Consultancy Report, compiled by Matt Tompkins of the University of Leicester, is in **Appendix 4**. There are no academically referenced published histories devoted to the village. The Holloway and Wilson works now published online are helpful but need to be regarded with caution since much of the information is anecdotal. There are accounts of Whitchurch in the Victoria County History as well as the county histories of Lipscomb and Sheahan. Indeed Lipscomb actually lived in Whitchurch whilst working on his book which was published in 1847. Of course these books are not up to date and tend to focus on manorial and church history, rather than the topographical development of a place. Directories are useful for showing the commercial make-up of the place and volumes published by the Buckinghamshire Record Society are a convenient way of accessing original sources on social and economic history, such as the 1522 Certificates of Muster, 1798 Posse Comitatus and the Religious Census of 1851. No original census records have been studied for this report but the Buckinghamshire Family History Society's CD of the 1851 census makes that census easily accessible and contains valuable analysis by Dr David Thorpe.

Old photographs on the County Council's website and especially in Beckett and Adams' book are useful in showing the evolution of the village-buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and there may well be more photographs in private collections. Aerial photographs also help to chart changes in the landscape and built heritage.

Despite the lack of medieval manorial records, the surviving evidenced outlined by Tompkins would provide enough material for a detailed study of the development of Whitchurch.





Figure 11: Jefferys' map 1760s (left) and Bryant's map 1820s



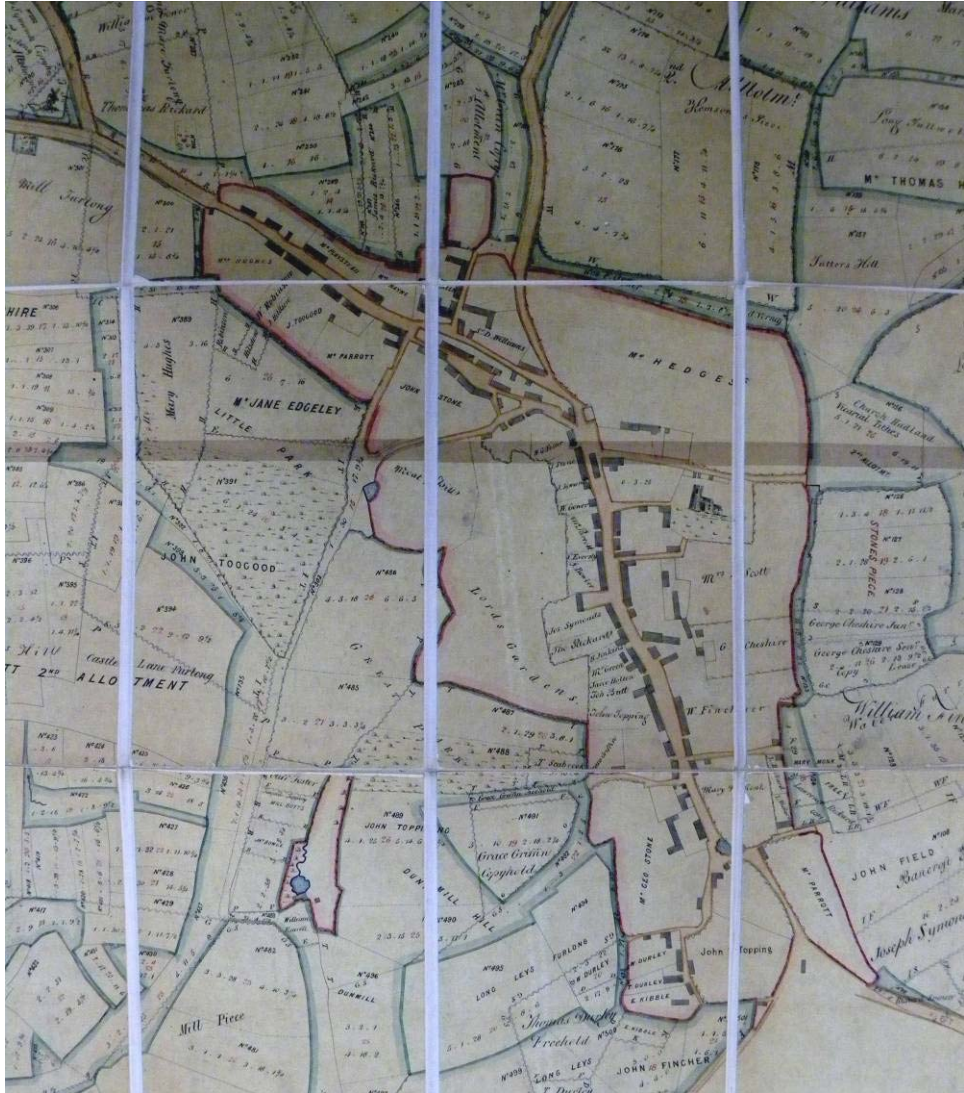


Figure 12: OS Surveyor's drawing 1820s

Figure 13: 1771 Parish map

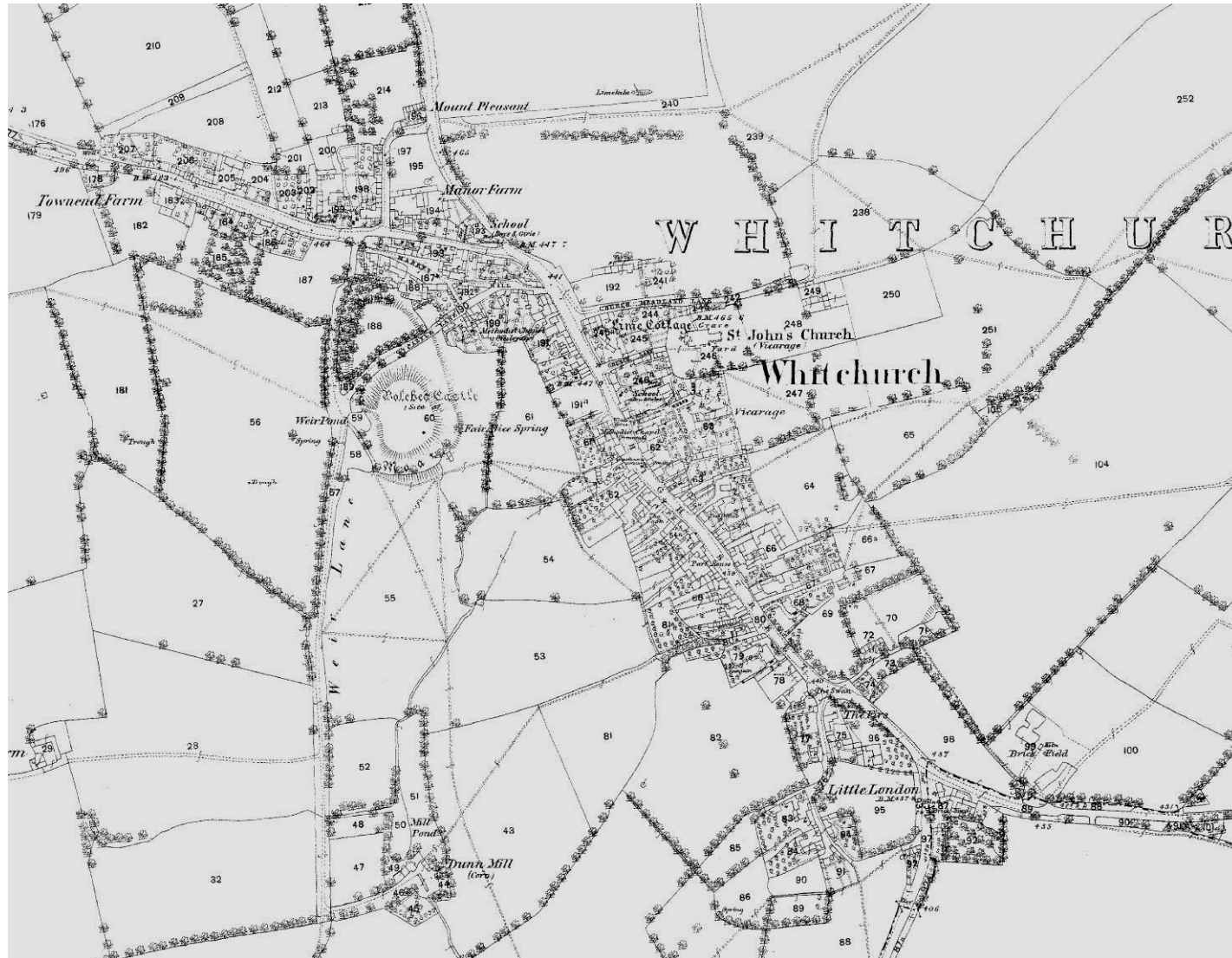


Figure 14: First edition OS map 1880





Figure 15: 1955 OS maps

### 3.3 Built Heritage

There are 47 listed buildings in Whitchurch, all listed at Grade II apart from three Grade II\* buildings: the parish church of St. John, the Old Court House (listed as The Priory Hotel) and the Old House in Church Headland Lane. The earliest surviving building in Whitchurch is St John's Parish Church, dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century while the majority of the buildings (31), according to the list descriptions, date to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. However most of these listings will not have been based on any detailed inspection and it is likely that further research will reveal that some buildings have earlier origins. **Figure 11** shows the preponderance of 17<sup>th</sup> century listed buildings, a period generally associated with the "Great Rebuilding".

There are four buildings in Whitchurch that have been recorded as having a cruck frame.

Address	Cruck type	Source
30 High St	True cruck	R W Evans (BCC)
56-58 High St	True cruck	C Lewis (BCC)
Old Barns, High St	True cruck	C Lewis (BCC)
15 Market Hill	True cruck	C Lewis (BCC)

Table 2: Cruck buildings in Whitchurch - Source: Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG)

Again this may not be the full picture since evidence of cruck frames may be concealed, e.g. by render or other building materials.

No Whitchurch buildings appear in the VAG's online Dendrochronology Database. The historic building stock of the village is an invaluable source of evidence and measured surveys of historic buildings, ideally supported by dendrochronological dating, would be welcome. It is hoped that more will become publicly available through the HER, either following projects by groups such as BAS, or as part of the process for planning or listed building consent applications.

Given the large number of buildings said to date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a study of Whitchurch buildings would help inform the debate over the "Great Rebuilding" at national level, first about how far earlier material was retained but also to what extent the apparent explosion in new building and alterations in the 17<sup>th</sup> century is the result of fortuitous building-survival. As elsewhere many historic buildings in Whitchurch will have been lost. Fire was a common cause of loss in an era of thatch, timber-framing, open fires and naked flames for lighting. Wilson's *Chronicles* mention the loss of two cottages in Keinches Lane through fire in 1845. More will have disappeared through decay or the usual processes of redevelopment. Listing of buildings has made complete loss of historic buildings less common but has not prevented their updating and alteration which is evident in the built heritage of Whitchurch. The village also has a considerable stock of significant non-listed historic buildings, which are "heritage assets" within national and local planning policy. Conservation area status will have helped to prevent some loss of non-listed buildings but, without Article 4 Directions, permitted development has seen some erosion of historic character through incremental minor building alterations.

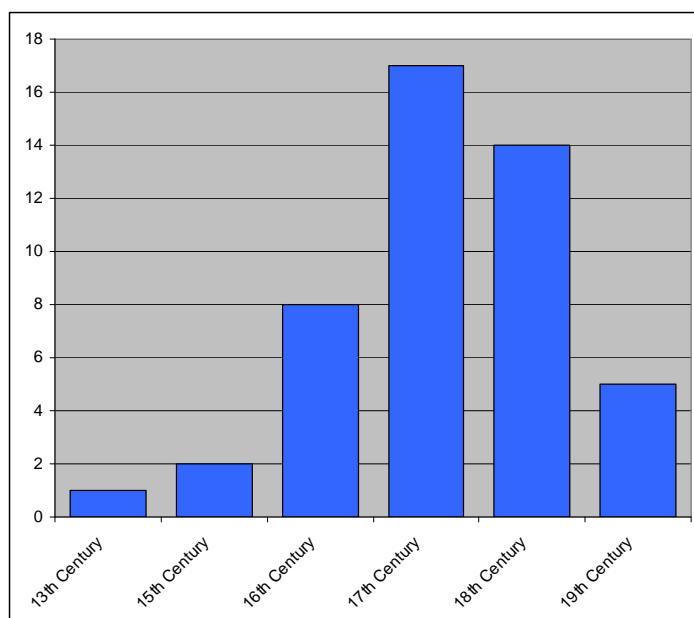


Figure 16: Listed Buildings by century

### 3.4 Archaeological Evidence

To date there have been seven formal archaeological investigations within the village Whitchurch; of these, two have yielded notable archaeology: investigations to the rear of the White Horse public house (WH5) and evaluation at the Vicarage (WH7) which revealed archaeological evidence dating from the medieval to post medieval periods. Three investigations were carried out in connection with alterations to listed buildings and did not find any significant archaeological features, most likely due to either the extent of modern redevelopment in the area or to the limited nature of the archaeological activity.

WH3: Quaker Barn, 1 Oving Road, Whitchurch (Semmelmann K, 2009) NGR SP 8002 2095		
Standing Buildings		
17 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> century barn with later alterations Some evidence of late medieval to post medieval fabric in the south elevation.	Brick built and timber-framed with some stone and sandstone foundations, rear (east) elevation in wood.	
Circumstances of investigation	Conclusion	
Source: Unpublished archaeological document Archive: Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd	No connection with Quakers found, although nearby Dove House used by Methodists from 19 <sup>th</sup> century onwards. Barn has been known as Quaker Barn and house as Quaker Farmhouse for some time.	
WH4: Land off North Marston Lane, Whitchurch ( Fell, D. 2010) NGR SP 79376 21300   CAS 9972		
Finds	Negative features (cut only)	Environmental evidence
No notable finds only diagnostic pottery.	None	None
		Above Ground Structures
		None
		Positive features (above natural)
		None
Circumstances of investigation	Conclusion	
Archaeological evaluation Source: Unpublished archaeological document Archive: Archaeological Services and Consultancy	Evidence of a 19 <sup>th</sup> century Sandstone quarry pit found during trial trenching.	
WH5: Land to the rear of the White Horse Public House, Whitchurch (Williams, G. 2010) SP 80239 20773		
Finds	Negative Features	Environmental Evidence
<b>Medieval</b> - MS2 Medieval Sandy Ware (C12 <sup>th</sup> - C14 <sup>th</sup> ) x 1 sherd - MS9 Brill/Boarstall Ware 1200-1600 x13 sherds - tile <b>Post medieval</b> - PM2 Staffordshire Buff Slip- Trailed ware (C17 <sup>th</sup> -C18 <sup>th</sup> ) - PM8 Red Earthenware (16 <sup>th</sup> 19 <sup>th</sup> ) x 4 sherds - PM25 White Earthenware (late C18 <sup>th</sup> - C20 <sup>th</sup> ) x 57 sherds - PM28 English Stoneware (late C17 <sup>th</sup> ) x1 sherd.	Pit/quarry (medieval) Pits x2 (late medieval) Posthole (undated)	No environmental samples taken - Animal bone - Oyster shell
		Above ground remains
		none
		Positive features (above natural)
		Building foundations (19 <sup>th</sup> century)
Circumstances of investigation	Conclusion	
Evaluation Source: Unpublished archaeological document Archive: John Moore Heritage Services	Two trenches were excavated. Trench 1 was located adjacent to the standing building and revealed a quarry pit, yielding some burnt brick, stone and tile with pottery indicating a late 15th-century date. A further two pits with late 15th-century pottery were also investigated.	
	Trench 2 was located east of the White Horse, in the former pub car park. Post-medieval quarrying, in addition to an undated, pre-19th century posthole, were revealed. Remains of a 19 <sup>th</sup> century stone building, as well as a later brick lean-to, were also revealed.	

WH6: Kempston's Cottage, 3 Church Headland Lane (Williams, G. 2011) NGR SP 80373 20961		CAS 7116	
Finds	Negative features (cut only)	Environmental evidence	
	2 pits	None	
		Above ground structures	
		None	
		Positive features (above ground)	
		None	
Circumstances of investigation		Conclusion	
Trial Trenching Source: Unpublished archaeological document Archive: John Moore Heritage Services		Two 18 <sup>th</sup> or 19 <sup>th</sup> century quarry pits found during trial trenching.	
WH7: The Vicarage, White Horse Lane, Whitchurch (Anker, K. 2012) NGR SP			
Finds	Negative Features	Environmental Evidence	
<b>Anglo Saxon</b> 3x sherds organic tempered pottery c. AD 400 - 800 (residual)	Ditch Posthole	Charred plant remains: Wheat Oats Legumes Flax seeds Animal bone (moderately preserved) samples included horse & signs of butchery.	
<b>Medieval</b> - fine grey sandy wares (C13 <sup>th</sup> C14 <sup>th</sup> ) - Late medieval reduced ware (1350-1500) - Penn Floor tiles, used as hearth tile (14 <sup>th</sup> 16 <sup>th</sup> century (edging))		Above ground remains	
<b>Post medieval</b> - C17 <sup>th</sup> /18 <sup>th</sup> glazed earthenwares - C17 <sup>th</sup> 18 <sup>th</sup> century pottery - Tobacco pipe (19 <sup>th</sup> century)		None	
<b>Modern</b> - Victorian blue transfer printed dish - Modern window glass (19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> century)		Positive features (above natural)	
		Stone hearth	
Circumstances of investigation		Conclusion	
Evaluation Source: Unpublished archaeological document Archive: Oxford Archaeology		Archaeological evaluation in advance of development revealed a hearth, probably late medieval, with medieval pottery and tiles, and a medieval re-cut ditch were discovered in the garden of the Vicarage, as well as a small amount of residual Anglo Saxon pottery.	

Code	Activity type	Address	NGR	Date	Summary
WH1	Evaluation	Manor Farm, 4 Oving Road	SP 7998 2103	August 2001	Negative – no archaeological evidence (Network)
WH2	Watching brief	The Mullions, 11 Market Hill	SP 7999 2091	2009	Negative – no archaeological evidence (TVAS)

### 3.5 Environmental Evidence

In assessing the potential for environmental remains, it should be remembered that an urban environment can provide extremes in preservation. On the one hand proximity to the groundwater table within a historic core may lead to anoxic conditions and therefore good preservation potential for organic materials whereas on the other hand frequent below ground disturbance as a result of redevelopment and construction combined with modern industrial pollution can also lead to extremely poor preservation of organic materials (French, 2003).

The only environmental sampling to date in Whitchurch was in connection with excavations carried out in the garden of the Vicarage (WH7). The report by Oxford Archaeology of a single sample records that a fairly diverse and well-preserved assemblage of charred plant remains was found and that other significant assemblages of charred plant material could be expected in the event of further excavation. This was evidence of agricultural activity in the vicinity with the wheat type implying a Saxon or later date. The presence of a charred flax seed also implied the

cultivation or processing of flax. This could have been for linseed oil production or, possibly, linen-making.

This sampling was undertaken in a relatively high, better drained part of Whitchurch lying on top of Portland Stone, where the soil is likely to be more alkaline with greater potential for surviving charred plant remains. The wetter conditions in the clay soils of the valley to the west have the potential for survival of a greater range of environmental remains.

In addition to environmental evidence, animal bone was also found to survive in sealed contexts; the archaeological evaluation at The Vicarage (WH7) revealed a small assemblage of butchered bone while animal bone dating to the medieval and post medieval period survived in archaeological deposits to the rear of the White Horse public house (WH5). This gives an indication that the soils in Whitchurch are conducive for preservation of animal bone and highlights the potential for survival in other parts of the village.

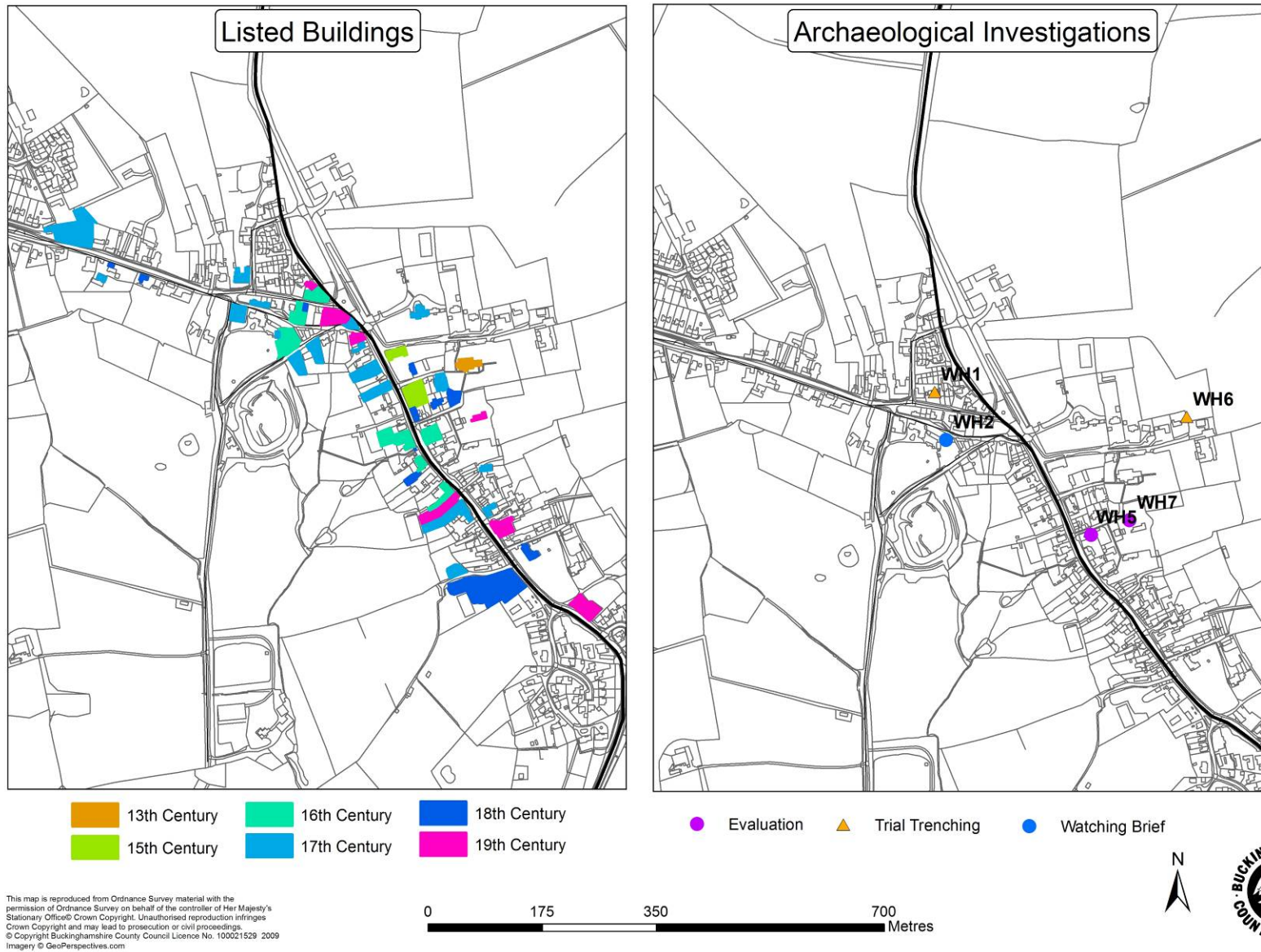


Figure 17: Image of Listed Buildings by century and archaeological investigations in Whitchurch.

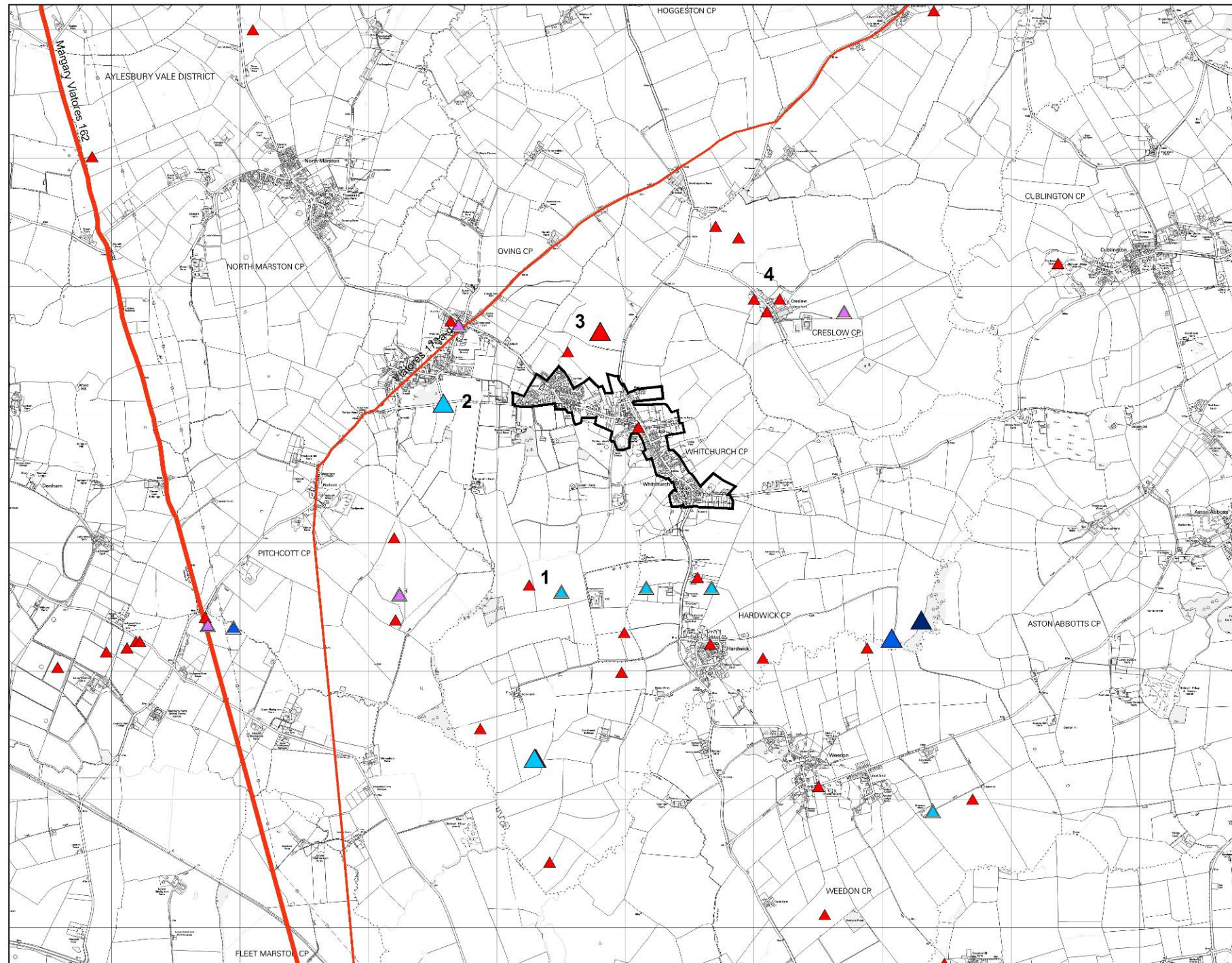
## 4 Archaeological & Historical Development

### 4.1 Prehistoric to Roman period (c. 10,000 BC – AD 410)

There is a paucity of evidence for the prehistoric period in and around Whitchurch. What has been found tends to take the form of isolated finds and flint scatters. One of the earliest finds is a Palaeolithic hand axe, found 1km west of St Marys church (HER 0228300000) although the majority of finds date to from the Neolithic to Bronze Age periods, examples include flint tools found south of the village during a watching brief near Folly Farm (HER 0255900000) and Neolithic and Bronze Age flints near Oving House (HER 0235400000). Otherwise no prehistoric monuments of significance are known. In the past there has been some local speculation that the Bolebec Castle was once a prehistoric hillfort; however this assertion is somewhat fanciful, as the site is rather small to be such a monument and there has been no archaeological evidence to substantiate this claim.

Roman pottery and Roman ditches have been found at Folly Farm (HER 0239200001). Roman pottery sherds were also found near Hardwick Church, to the south of Whitchurch village (HER 2293000000). A number of Roman finds in and around Creslow manor, including metalwork and pottery on the ground surface, (HER 005100200), indicates that there is a potential Roman settlement in this area. In Whitchurch village itself there have been chance finds of a Roman coin (HER 0414100000), pottery and metalwork (HER 041410100) but mainly during a metal-detecting survey (HER 0509200000), some of them at Bolebec Castle (HER 0246301000 & 0246302000). It has been suggested that a route of a Roman road passes through the parish (Viatores Route 173A-D), running some 65 miles from Dorchester-on-Thames in Oxfordshire to Alconbury House in Huntingdonshire (HER 0203500000). There is a local tradition of a Saxo-Roman burial ground supposedly in the Chattle (or Chatwell) Stream to the west of the village.





**Monuments & Finds**

- ▲ Palaeolithic findspots
- ▲ Palaeolithic multiple finds
- ▲ Mesolithic findspots
- ▲ Mesolithic multiple finds
- ▲ Neolithic findspots
- ▲ Neolithic multiple finds
- ▲ Bronze Age findspots
- ▲ Bronze Age multiple finds
- ▲ Iron Age findspots
- ▲ Iron Age multiple finds
- ▲ Roman findspots
- ▲ Roman multiple finds

**Roman Roads**

- Roman primary
- Roman primary?
- Roman secondary

**Sites mentioned**

1. Folly Farm
2. Oving House
3. Roman metalwork - metal detecting
4. Creslow Roman finds



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Figure 18: Prehistoric and Roman monuments /finds in Whitchurch and its environs



## 4.2 Saxon Period (AD 410 – 1066)

### *Archaeological evidence*

The earliest evidence we have for the Anglo Saxon period in Whitchurch comes from an archaeological evaluation at the Vicarage, White Horse Lane (WH4). This investigation uncovered four small Anglo Saxon sherds of organic tempered ware pottery (AD 400-800). The sherds represent three vessels including a jar rim and body sherds from two other vessels. Despite the pottery being residual, (found in later medieval contexts), it still represents a significant find as survival of Anglo Saxon pottery is rare, and even more so given the early date of the sherds (Anker 2012). It would be too much to infer from a handful of pottery fragments that a settlement existed in Whitchurch around this date, although it provides a tantalising prospect that some sort of settlement was well established prior to Domesday, whether it was in presence from the 5<sup>th</sup> century at present it is hard to say.

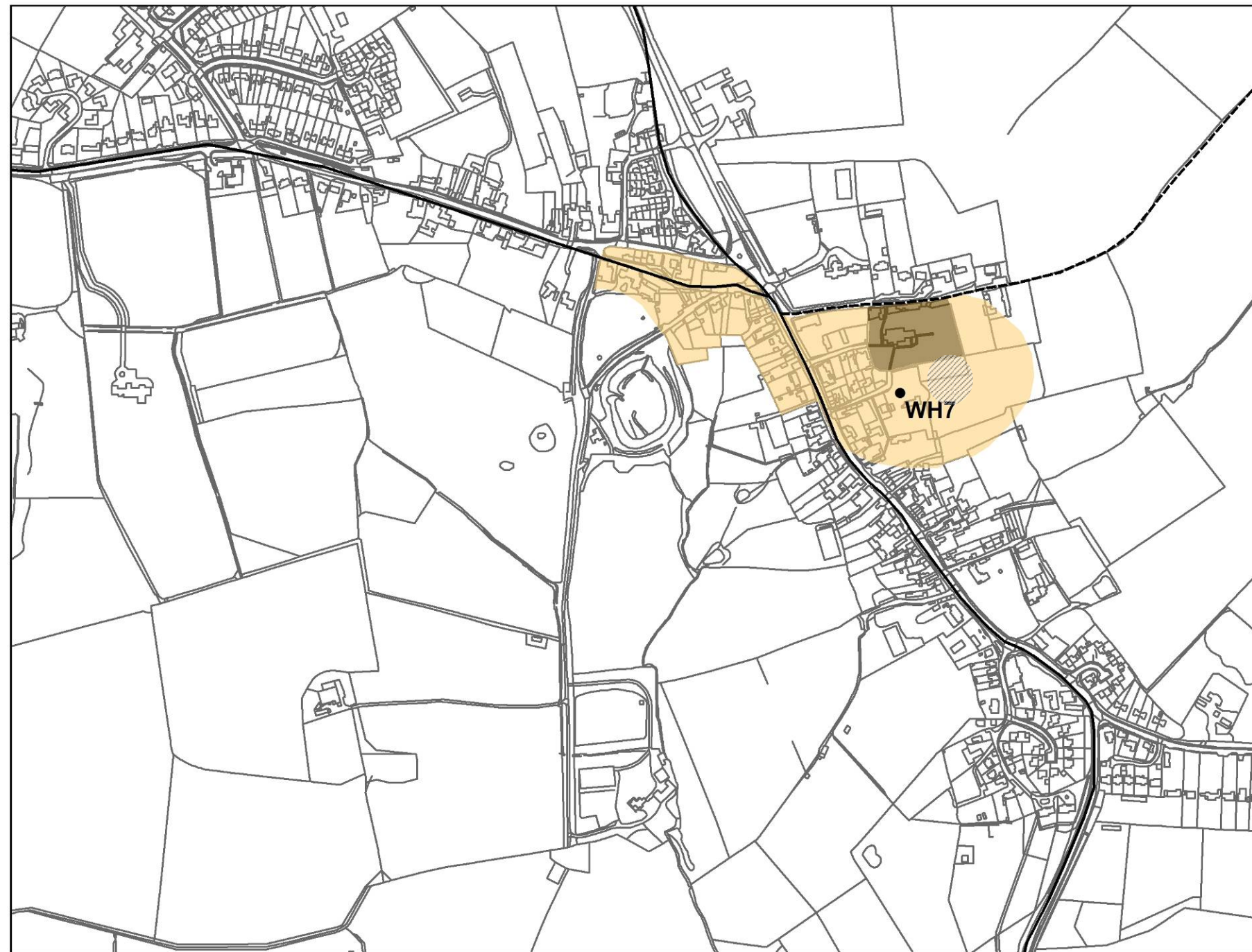
### *Place name evidence*

The first reference to Whitchurch comes from the Domesday Book of 1086, where it is referred to as *Wichere*. It is thought that the name refers to a stone church rather than a specifically white church (Mawer & Stenton and Mills). Reed has compared the name with that of Weedon, only two miles away, which implies a place where paganism was practised. He speculates that the church might have been built “deliberately as a counterpoise to an isolated outpost of paganism” (Reed p.64). It follows that the stone church was built during the Anglo-Saxon period, though when is not known. The village histories suggest a date of around AD 900 but cite no authority. It is presumed that there must have been an Anglo-Saxon settlement, since the church is unlikely to have existed in isolation, and this was probably round the church. The church is now on the eastern edge of the village, suggesting that the settlement core moved to the west.

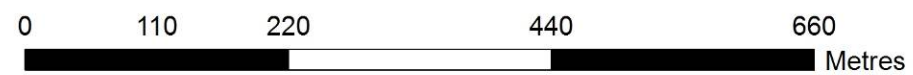
The theory about the shift in village focus could be supported by the presence of earthworks, possibly house platforms, in an adjacent field to the south west of the church. This might have been the early centre of the settlement in this period, alternative the earthworks may date to a later time. Further research is needed to ascertain their provenance.

### *Domesday*

The Domesday entry for Whitchurch combines two former Saxon manors into one. They were held by Hugh de Bolebec (who later inherited the manor) from Walter Giffard. In the early 11<sup>th</sup> century Whitchurch had been divided into two manors and held by two brothers, thanes of King Edward. Assessed at eight hides (c.960 acres) the manor had land for twelve ploughs, three of which were held in lordship indicating at least part of the manor was directly governed by Hugh de Bolebec. The rest of the entry reads; “14 villagers with 2 smallholders have 7 ploughs. 8 slaves; meadow for 6 ploughs. In total, the value is and was £8; before 1066 £10.” The lack of any reference to pigs probably means there was very little woodland.



- Archaeological Event
- Saxon Settlement**
  - church
  - possible saxon
- Routeways**
  - Turnpike
  - road
  - - - road conj
  - ⊘ earthworks - house platforms?



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Figure 19: Conjectural extent of Whitchurch in the late Saxon period

### 4.3 Medieval period (1066-1536)

#### *Manors*

The manorial history of settlements in the medieval period is important in our understanding of how the lords and shaped Whitchurch as a place. The manorial records provide an insight into its ownership and management. The following summaries are taken primarily from the Victoria County History and are limited in the data they provide. The history of the manor(s) is complex and a more detailed study would be required to fully understand it. However, as stated in the Historic Consultancy Report in Appendix 4, few of the medieval manorial records have survived. A complete catalogue of the available documentary evidence relating to medieval manors is now available online via the National Archives Manorial Documents Registry produced in 2008 by the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and the National Archives.

#### Whitchurch Manor

The overlordship of the manor remained with the powerful Giffard family until 1164 when it passed by inheritance to William Marshall Earl of Pembroke. By 1317 the overlordship had passed to Hugh Lord Audley with whom it remained. The last mention of this overlordship is in 1620 (Page 1925). However Whitchurch Manor was sub-infeudated by Walter Giffard to Hugh de Bolebec in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This essentially gave Bolebec the rights and privileges of the lord of the manor. Whitchurch then formed the head of the barony of Bolebec. In 1185 the manor was inherited by Aubrey de Vere, the Earl of Oxford and remained with that family until the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Page 1925). It is believed that Bolebec Castle was the location of the manor for much of the medieval period. However it is thought that the manorial residence moved sometime in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Powers Manor (reputed)

There is a mention of an estate which might or might not have been a medieval manor. This estate first appears relatively late (1520) as the property of John Vernon, the name originating from the Powers, a yeoman family living in Whitchurch in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1497, John Power, a citizen of London, was buried in the parish church and left a bequest for repairs to the church and a new rood loft. In 1526 the estate was conveyed to Sir John Aleyne (Page 1925).

#### *Bolebec Castle*

The earthwork remains of Bolebec Castle are a significant element in the landscape of Whitchurch, covering six acres (Matthews). The origins and development of the castle are not clear. It has generally been interpreted as a motte and bailey castle with the motte south of Castle Lane and the bailey north of it. This northern part is in a private garden. The village histories say that Castle Lane is a modern creation and by digging out the road the slope to the north was made steeper. The arrangement is unusual in that the bailey end is on higher ground but this slope may now be exaggerated because of the works to Castle Lane. This rather odd arrangement has led Farley to suggest a reinterpretation of the higher northern end as the motte or ringwork, with the bailey to the south. Matthews' study has the southern earthworks as a former scarp ringwork, possibly divided into an inner and middle ward by a cross wall. He thought the Earls House mentioned in 1263 was in the inner ward and there were two gates, the main gate at the north-east corner and a west gate. His suggested plan also shows a postern in the south-west corner, a south-east tower and a moat with two fish ponds. A pond called Weir Pond survived into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The moat was fed by the Fair Alice spring which can still be seen issuing from underneath a tree at the south-east corner of the castle (see **Figure 9**).



*Figure 20: Earthwork remains of Bolebec Castle*

The date of the building is not known but there was a reference in 1147 by Pope Eugenius III to “illegal castle works” executed by Hugh de Bolebec (ref) . Matthews says this could be a reference to either Whitchurch or Medmenham, another of Hugh’s estates. Since this was during the “anarchy” of King Stephen’s reign it seems reasonable to assume the castle was erected around that time. Whitchurch became the head or “Caput” of the Barony of Bolebec in Buckinghamshire. The barony comprised the lands of Hugh de Bolebec including Missenden, Amersham, Chesham, Medmenham, Cheddington, Whaddon, Calverton, Great Linford, Hardmead & Wavendon as well as those lands he held of Walter Giffard including Hartwell, Great Kimble, Addingrove & Whitchurch (Page 1925). Following the inheritance of the Bolebec estate by the Earls of Oxford in 1185 Whitchurch lost its status as the head of the barony (Page 1925).

There is a written record of the castle in 1263 when Hugh de Vere, Earl of Oxford died, (ref). By this time, or very soon thereafter, Matthews maintains that the fortifications on the ringwork had been rebuilt – although the work may never have been completed – and the outer ward was added as an extra defensive measure during the troubles between Henry III and Simon de Montfort. As he points out, had the whole castle been built at outset it would surely have been more sensible to have the ringwork on the higher ground to the north and the bailey, or outer ward, to the south. However this is subject to the consideration mentioned above, that the digging of Castle Lane has exaggerated the height of the northern part.

The town seems to have been in decline by the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century but it is not clear when the castle was abandoned. Local tradition has it that the castle was destroyed during the 17<sup>th</sup> century Civil War, but Matthews thinks it had probably been long abandoned by 1579 when the castle was alienated from the manor and sold to Sir Thomas Duncombe. There seems to be no evidence either way but it is clear that the castle became a quarry and its stones probably survive today in some of the village buildings. Building surveys are needed to show if this is the case.

However there are practicalities why the fortifications would be on the southern side. The slope is much more precipitous at the southern end, the gradient drops away at steeper angle making it a better side for defence. This area provides a better view and outlook on the landscape to the south and has a dominate view of the village and routes to the south. The southern gradient

would have made it rather impractical to accommodate the bailey which normally was the location of ancillary buildings for the castle.



### *Markets and Fairs*

In 1245 King Henry III granted the right to hold a weekly market on Mondays to Hugh de Vere, Earl of Oxford. He also obtained the right to hold a fair each year on the vigil, feast and morrow of St. John the Evangelist (7-9<sup>th</sup> May). The market was mentioned again in 1331 but no further reference to the market has been found and it is assumed that the market died out soon thereafter. There are anecdotal references to a post-medieval May fair in the village histories, and the “May Feast” has recently been revived. The market place was north of the castle and its location is commemorated in the name Market Hill, which was formerly the main road to Oving. The buildings now on the north side of Market Hill are post-medieval encroachments on the market place.



*Figure 21: Market Hill looking east*

### *Borough*

Whitchurch was a borough, at least for a while, although it never received a charter of incorporation. The borough was mentioned in an Inquisition Post Mortem of 1263 when the combined rent of the burgesses was estimated at 40 shillings and the perquisites of the borough and market at half a mark. Reed estimates that there were perhaps only 20 burgesses (*The Buckinghamshire Landscape*, p.110). By 1331, although the market remained, it is thought that the borough had been essentially merged with the manor (Page).

### *Discussion – Settlement layout*

It is likely that Hugh de Vere created the market place at the gates of the castle around 1245 when he gained the market charter. Placed at the fork of the roads to the north and west, according to Page it is thought that the burgage plots were located around the market place. The market place would have extended as far as the northern side of the present Oving Road, the present buildings on the north side of Market Hill being later encroachments on the redundant market place. There is no sign of regularly laid-out burgage plots next to that market place, but plots on the western side of High Street do appear more regular. Assuming that the earlier, Anglo-Saxon, settlement had been closer to the church on the east of High Street, perhaps the only opportunity for planned new development close to the market was on the west side of High Street.

The creation of the market as a commercial focus began a move away from the area around the church, which is now on the eastern edge of the village. *The Chronicles of Whitchurch* refers to a pre-enclosure road from Mount Pleasant, through the church headland and then along a route which would have been roughly parallel with High Street, then turning west down Hawleys Lane to join High Street. This road is shown on Jefferys' map. This would presumably have followed

the field boundary shown on the 1771 Enclosure Map and such a route supports a theory of early settlement close to the church. The A413 bends westwards to go through Whitchurch. Might the earlier route have been straighter, and to the east of it and the new road laid out along High Street as part of a town-planning scheme when the market was created?

As to the east-west route, the road from Cublington also veers to the south, but a straighter route would lead to the parish church at Whitchurch. Might the original road have taken a more northerly course (say along Church Headland Lane) resulting in a cross roads at the churchyard, whose diversion was part of the planning of the new medieval borough at Whitchurch? There are now footpaths following such a route.



*Figure 22; Church Headland Lane looking east*

The 1263 record showed the extent of the castle was six acres, including a garden, and in 1330 there was a grant of a right of free warren. There are many documentary references to "The Parks", "Little Park" and "Great Park" and field names on enclosure containing the name "Park". The Enclosure Map shows "Lords Gardens" south-east of the castle and "Great Park" to the south-west. This is sloping ground well-watered by springs and the streams which eventually meet up at the mill at the foot of Weir Lane. This area is shown in the photograph in **Figure 7**.

It is not clear how far medieval settlement extended away from the core to the west up Oving Road or to the south-east around the junction of the main street with the road to Cublington. There is no surviving medieval fabric in either area but there seems a greater likelihood of medieval settlement at the junction of the current A413 and Bushmead Road, especially if Bushmead Road had recently been created, or upgraded, as suggested above.

### *Church of St John the Evangelist*

There is no evidence for the survival of part of the Anglo-Saxon white or stone church in the present parish church of St. John the Evangelist. It is presumed to be on the same site as the earlier church, since it would be unusual to move a church to a different site, and the church here has such a commanding, and highly visible, location. The church is built of coursed limestone rubble and the earliest fabric is the early 13<sup>th</sup> century door (set in the later west tower) and, presumably, evidence of work instigated by the Earl of Oxford as part of his town improvements. The chancel was built around 1300 (restored by G.E. Street in 1853) and the tower and aisles are 14<sup>th</sup> century. The clerestory was added in Perpendicular style in the 15<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Despite Pevsner's view that the church "looks happily unscraped" there have been various restoration programmes, the most extensive being in 1911.

The church is set in a large churchyard and is accessible via three lanes leading north from High Street; Church Lane, Church Headland Lane and White Horse Lane. A footpath between the churchyard and vicarage leads out into the fields. Church Headland Lane is now a dead-end but probably once extended further, and might have been part of an earlier road to Creslow and Cublington. There are distant views over countryside to the east and towards Creslow. When the church at Creslow became disused in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the residents used the church here at Whitchurch.



*Figure 23: Church of St John the Evangelist*

The lord of the manor also held the rectorship until 1398 when the rectory was appropriated to the Abbey of Woburn, a foundation of the Bolebec family. The Abbey appointed the first vicar in 1400. On the dissolution of the monasteries Henry VIII confiscated the Rectory and it has passed through many hands since that time. It seems likely that there would have been a house for a resident vicar from 1400; the Certificates of Muster show a resident vicar in 1522. Later documents indicate the current 1845 vicarage is on the site of an earlier vicarage. Recent limited archaeological excavations at The Vicarage revealed the remains of hearth but no trace of an earlier vicarage. The Old House in Church Headland Lane is said to have been built by Woburn Abbey in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and further research might shed light on their use of that building. It was later divided into several tenements called Lime Cottages, but is now, following much alteration, a single residence.

#### *Trade, mills and industry*

There is no reference to a mill in Domesday Book but a watermill is mentioned in 1263 and it seems likely this was in the same location as the later Dun Mill, at the foot of Weir Lane (HER 0285100000). The same record also records a windmill, and in 1331 there is a reference to two windmills in poor repair (Page 1925).

#### *Hospitals & Schools*

There are no records of any medieval hospitals or schools in Whitchurch.

#### *Inns and Taverns*

Despite the lack of any documentary evidence it seems unlikely that there were no inns or taverns in Whitchurch bearing in mind its location. A possible medieval inn is Winster Paddocks



(formerly The Cock Inn), a 16<sup>th</sup> century building recorded as a coaching inn in the post-medieval period.



Figure 24: Winster Paddocks, the former Cock Inn

### *Secular Buildings*

Several houses in Whitchurch contain late-medieval fabric and further survey work might reveal more such buildings. The Old House has already been mentioned and is probably the oldest building in Whitchurch apart from the parish church. Its original use is not known but was probably not secular because of the link with Woburn Abbey. Its alignment is interesting since it faces Church Headland Lane, not High Street. The ground between the main road and the house rises steeply and there was once a row of cottages, called Rotten Row, in High Street in front of the Old House. These buildings are shown on the 1771 Enclosure Map and must have been an obstruction to traffic. They are said to have been demolished in 1786 (Beckett & Adams) but their odd location begs questions as to their original purpose.



Figure 25: The Old House viewed from High Street

Cruck construction usually betokens an early date and three of the four known cruck buildings (see **Table 2**) are listed as retaining some late-medieval fabric. One of them, The Old Barns, is now a house, part of which was formerly a small barn. The list description of the fourth, 15 Market Hill, does not mention the cruck but does record a 17<sup>th</sup> century house with traces of earlier building.

The Old Court House (now a single residence) was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century with an open hall, later altered and renovated in 1912 when it became the Priory Hotel. Any possible connection with Woburn Abbey has not been investigated, nor whether it was the manorial court house.



*Figure 26: The Old Court House*



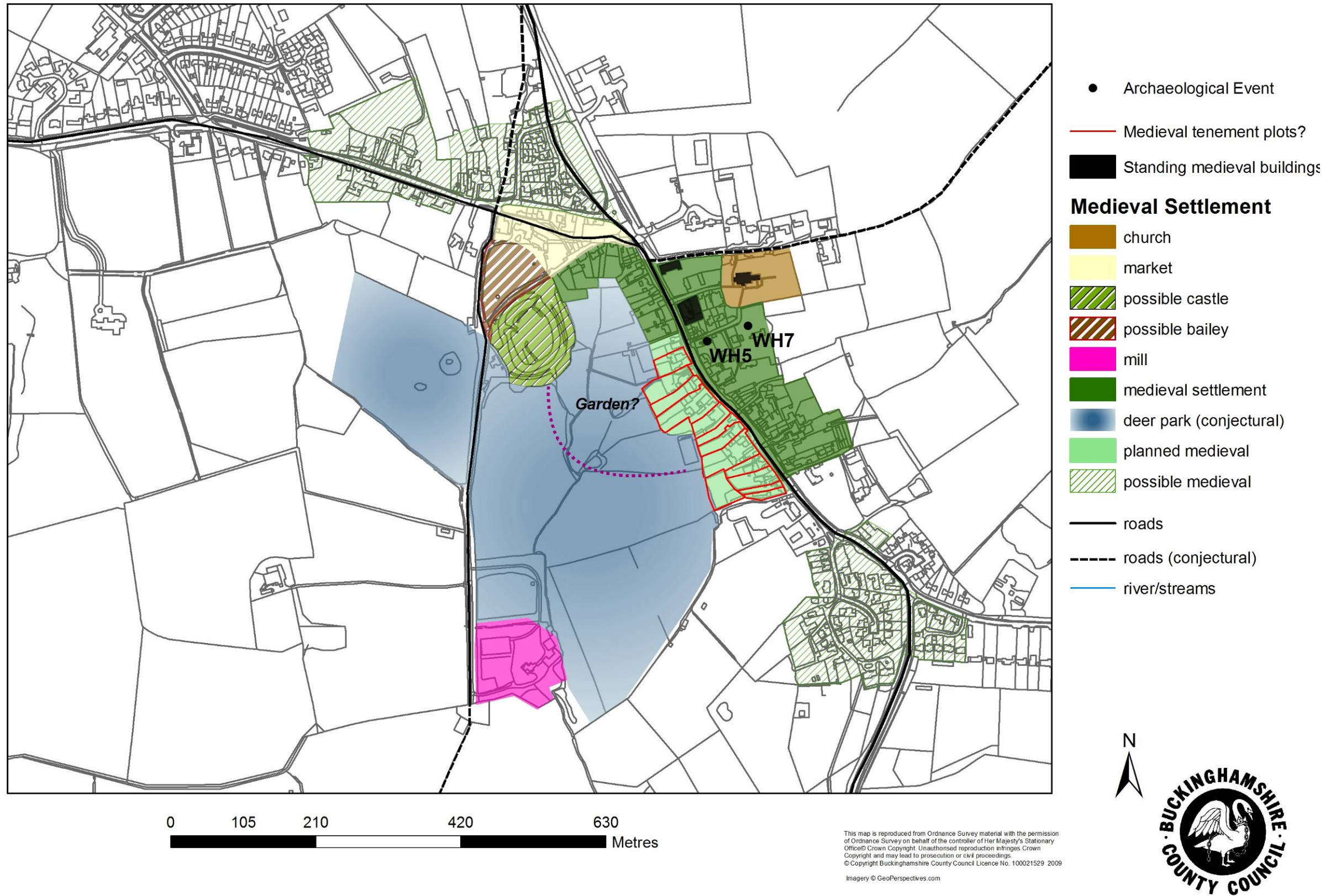


Figure 27: Conjectural extent of the medieval town

#### 4.4 Post medieval period (1536-1800)

##### *Manors*

###### Whitchurch Manor

The manor was sold several times during this period. It passed out of the hands of the Earls of Oxford in 1581 when the seventh earl sold the manor to John Waterhouse in 1581. Subsequent sales are outlined in the Victoria County History. One notable owner was Sir Edward Smith, Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, who became lord of the manor in 1667. He lived at Kempsons, a 17<sup>th</sup> century stone built house at the far end of the High Street, next to Church Headland Lane. This house appears to have become Whitchurch's manor house, though at what date is not known.

###### Powers Manor (reputed)

This estate passed by inheritance to John Newdigate in 1592 with no further mention of the land as a manor from this point onwards (Page 1925).

Page says that the Waterhouses' capital messuage was built by John Waterhouse before 1583 on land acquired from John Newdigate so this would not have been Kempsons, assuming the listing date of late 17<sup>th</sup> century is correct.

##### *Settlement layout*

The preponderance of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century dates in the listed building descriptions points to a considerable building boom in the early-modern period. Some of this was no doubt owing to redevelopment of existing sites but it seems likely that the size of the settlement grew with infill, and extensions westward along Oving Road and to the south in the area of the White Swan and Little London.

Much of the former market place was lost to encroachment, and the houses on the north side had a back lane, which was later widened to form the southern stretch of the present Oving Road. The village histories say that the Lords Gardens and parkland had been enclosed and residents were paying rent to graze their cattle on the pastureland there.

##### *Trade, mills and industry*

The overshot watermill called Dunn Mill was recorded in 1667. This was at the southern end of Weir Lane, outside the study area. Freese mentions a smock mill adjoining the watermill which was removed to Wingrave more than a century before (he was writing in the 1930s.) A post mill stood in the triangle of land at the junction of Oving Road and North Marston Lane and is shown on the Enclosure Map of 1771. This hilltop site has now been built on but was no doubt a more suitable location than the low-lying ground at Dun Mill.

##### Quarries – brick making

Whitchurch appears to have a number of stone quarries located in parts of the village. Archaeological investigations at North Marston Lane (WH3) and White Horse Lane (WH5) have are two such sites. The quarry pit at White Horse Lane appears to have been also associated with the making of tile and brick, which may have been used for the medieval/post medieval buildings along the High Street or elsewhere in the village (Williams 2010).

The Posse Comitatus reflects a farming community, with 14 farmers and the usual tradesmen associated with a village. Cottage industries of straw-plaiting and pillow lace-making provided employment, chiefly for women.

##### *Roads & Turnpikes*

Before the turnpike era roads were generally in an appalling condition so the turnpiking of the road around 1745 must have resulted in a great improvement in the quality of the main road through the village. There were no gates or toll houses in Whitchurch itself, but a milestone remains in the High Street.

##### *Non Conformity*

There is some evidence for non-conformity in Whitchurch in the Visitations of 1669 with one family of unrecorded denomination. The Visitations of 1706 and 1709 each record one family of



Baptists (Broad). Methodism was established in Whitchurch by 1787 with meetings being held in a cottage in Castle Lane (since demolished) (Beckett & Adams).

### *Hospitals & Schools*

It seems unlikely that the 16<sup>th</sup> century building in Oving Road called the Old School House was itself a school but that it was the schoolmaster's house for the neighbouring 19<sup>th</sup> century school.

### *Inns and taverns*

There were (at least) three inns during this period: The Cock Inn, The White Horse and The Swan. Only the last remains an inn today, under the name The White Swan. Its name was changed from The Queen's Head in 1785 (Beckett & Adams). A photograph from the 1940s shows the White Swan with a thatched roof. The main building is 19<sup>th</sup> century, built of chequered brick whilst the two-bays to the left are of stone and probably part of the earlier building. The pond near the White Swan shown on the Enclosure Map (called The Duck Pond) was filled in when the turnpike road was widened around the time of the name change in 1785. (Beckett & Adams). The Cock Inn (Figure 24) is now a house (Winster Paddocks) and The White Horse is currently being divided to form two houses (January 2012).

### *Secular Buildings*

The vernacular buildings of Whitchurch are notable for their variety of materials. Some have a mixture of stone, brick, timber framing and render on their walls, for example The Old Court House in **Figure**. The use of stone in humble buildings is probably thanks to the use of the ruins of Bolebec castle as a quarry, which may or may not have begun before the Civil War.

Several buildings with jetties were evidently of high status. They are The Old House, The Old Court House, Winster Paddocks, Deerstalkers (28 High Street), The Old School House, 56/58 High Street, Tudor House, and Quaker Farmhouse. Most, but not all, are in High Street.

The buildings were box framed, and only two have some close-studding; Winster Paddocks and Melbury Cottage, 53 High Street. Since close-studding required more timber it was expensive and generally indicated a house of higher status.

*Figure 28: Close-studding at 53 High Street*



By the time of the Enclosure in 1771 the map shows a more-or-less continuously built-up High Street. Some of the buildings were farmsteads with a house fronting and close to the road and farm buildings ranged around a yard to the rear. The east side of the road was less densely developed. Buildings at the northern end of Oving Road, and in Little London were also less regularly spaced.

By the later 18<sup>th</sup> century red brick was being used – in Flemish bond – probably from the local brick kiln at Bushmead. These later houses would have been all brick, but brick was also increasingly used as nogging for timber-framed buildings. It is interesting to note the lack of brick re-fronting of early houses which became fashionable in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, especially in

coaching towns such as Beaconsfield. Perhaps this indicates how far Whitchurch had completely abandoned any urban pretensions and was content with its village status.



*Figure 29: Brick nogging and jetty at 28 High Street*

Nonetheless there were clearly some residents who could afford to build the large red brick houses which appeared towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: Mary Monks House, Quenington House, and Beechmoor. These were all towards the southern end of High Street. It was probably no coincidence that this period of apparent prosperity came shortly after the Enclosure.



*Figure 30: Beechmoor, 26 High Street*



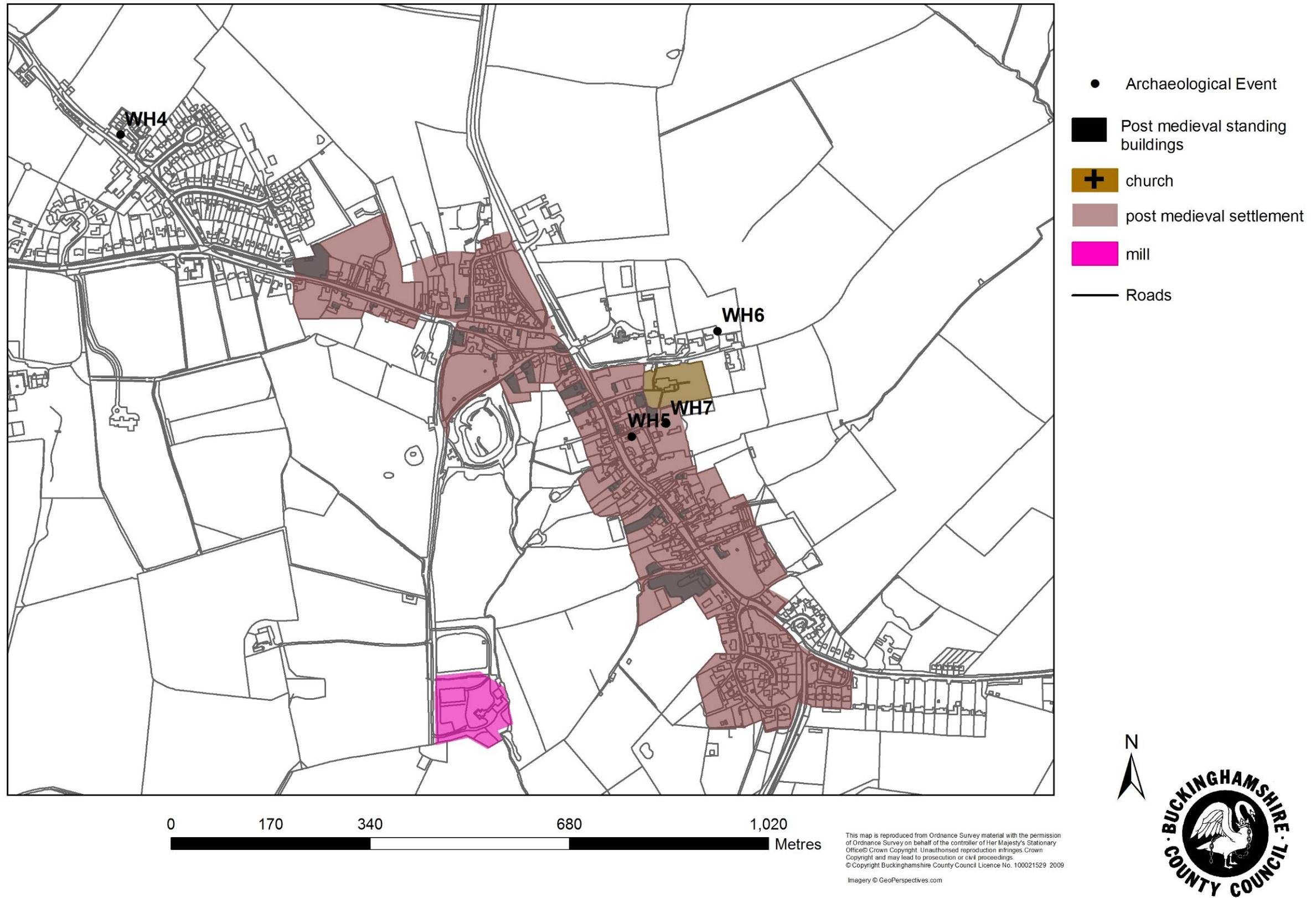


Figure 31: Possible extent of the town in the post medieval period (18<sup>th</sup> century)

#### 4.5 Modern period (1800 - Present)

##### *Manors & Estates*

Whitchurch manor was sold in 1857 to John Guy of Chearsley and again in 1867 to Joseph Parrott, a solicitor in Aylesbury. His nephew, Francis Hayward Parrott, owned the manor when the VCH was written in 1925. The last document in the Manorial Documents Register is a fee book which ends in 1927.

##### *Industry in the 19th Century*

	1830	1844	1853	1864	1877	1883	1895	1903	1911	1920	1935
Artisans/trades	3	5	6	4	0	5	5	2	2	0	1
Merchant/dealer	6	11	4	15	0	12	10	6	9	0	4
Agric/General	0	0	8	10	0	8	9	10	8	0	8
Professional	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	0	2
Service/Provision	19	24	21	25	0	25	18	21	19	0	14

Table 3: Summary of trade in Whitchurch 1830-1935 (method adapted from Broad, 1992)

**See also Appendix 3.** The statistics in the above table are drawn from directories which were self-selecting and so not comprehensive. They also do not reveal the extent of cottages industries, such as pillow-lace making and straw plaiting which would have been an important part of the local economy in a village such as Whitchurch.

By the 1830s hand lacemaking was being hit by machine lace and farm labourers were losing work owing to increasing mechanisation. So the introduction of silk-making to Whitchurch in 1838 must have come as a welcome boost to the local economy. The first silk mill established in the area was at Tring in 1824. The next was at Aylesbury, started by Richard Moscrop and Robert Nixon who had connections with silk-making in Manchester. They introduced silk-weaving to Whitchurch in 1838 by placing a few looms in cottages. Later a factory was built in Little London which employed about 40 people, but this did not last long beyond Moscrop's death in the 1860s (Parrott).

The water mill, Dun Mill, is described in some detail in Stanley Freese's 1930s account, when the mill had already been dismantled.

##### *Brick Works (HER 0430800000)*

The only other industry was brick and tile-making at Bushmead Road. There was also a lime-kiln. Clay was dug on site and one pit is still evident. Sand and limestone were quarried from pits to the north of the village on Oving Road. The Whitchurch brick was of high-quality (a facing brick) but output was small – about 50,000 bricks per year. The brick works was closed in the 1930s. A shed can still be seen, together with the foundation of the lime kiln (Pike).

##### *Wartime and Defence – The Firs (HER*

The Firs is a large house built in 1897 in the English revival style. It is secluded by virtue of the high brick wall which was built around it in 1928. At the outbreak of World War II the house was owned by a Major Abrahams. The Ministry of Defence had set up a department to develop secret weapons, known as Ministry of Defence I (MD1). This was originally based at 35 Portland Place, London which was bombed. The Ministry of Defence sought to find a new base for its operations, away from the capital and out of the range of German bombers. The Firs was selected as the new home of MD1, it was requisitioned from the owners and became fully operational by the end of January 1941. Although much of activity and work at the Firs was of a secretive nature, a written account of its contribution to the war effort was published by the officer who was the second in command, Colonel R. Stuart Macrae (Macrae 1971). The Firs was responsible for the development and testing of new weapons and equipment; amongst the most notable military hardware to be developed at Whitchurch was the creation of the sticky bomb, the early trials of the PIAT rifle and the limpet mine. The officers from MD1 gave live demonstrations of their innovations to Winston Churchill at the Chequers; Churchill was recorded as being enthused and impressed with their work. The activities of the 'boffins' and



endorsement from the Prime Minister earned the Firs the sobriquet 'Winston Churchill's Toyshop'. The house was used as offices and sleeping accommodation and the stables were turned into workshops. The neighbouring fields were used as firing ranges and for the trials of large equipment such as the (Macrae 1971).

The Firs was active for the duration of the war, although once the conflict ended the declining relations with the Soviet Union and the start of the Cold War there were persuasive arguments made by the military to retain the services of MD1. However the decision was made by the Labour Government to disband it and in October 1946 operations ceased at The Firs. The site was sold to the Shell petroleum company. From December 1956 until February 1965 it was the Central Research Laboratories for the steel making company Richard Thomas & Baldwins.

In terms of wartime infrastructure some of the huts used for research and development can still be seen although much of the garden has been sold-off and developed as Firs Close, a small estate of detached houses.



Figure 32: Huts at The Firs- "Winston Churchill's Toyshop" ,

There is anecdotal evidence of incendiary bombs being dropped on the garden of Kempsons and in a field near the Firs in 1941.

There was an underground Royal Observer Corps monitoring post from 1957 to 1991 near the junction of Oving Road with North Marston Lane. The Subterranea Britannica website recorded surviving features still visible above ground in 1998.

#### *Civic and modern religious structures*

The Wesleyan Chapel, the current Whitchurch Methodist Church, was built on the west side of High Street in 1844 on the site of some cottages. It has since been re-fronted in stone in a Tudor style, with windows remodelled and the addition of a porch in 1928. The church celebrated its centenary by installing an organ made for the Duke of Wellington's Apsley House in Piccadilly (church website). The present building replaced a chapel in Oving Road which had opened in 1808, and been converted from a dovecote. The manse next door (61 High Street) was built in 1867 but was only used by the minister for a few years (Beckett & Adams).



Figure 33: Methodist church and former manse

Whitchurch was a stronghold of Methodism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A Primitive Methodist Chapel was built in 1841, replaced by a new chapel in 1889 which was later converted into a fire station.

*Medical and Schools*

A Wesleyan schoolroom was opened in a room under the chapel in 1846. Following a gift of land in White Horse Lane a purpose built Wesleyan Day School was erected in 1849. This was taken over by the County Council in 1929, and closed in 1974, when it was replaced by Whitchurch Combined School in North Marston Lane (Beckett & Adams).

A National School (promoted by the Church of England) was built in Oving Road in 1863. The architect was George Devey, who is also thought to have restored the adjacent Old School House, now a private house, in picturesque style. The former school is now the Legion Hall.

It seems there was a doctor resident in the village, at least in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at a house called The Sycamores. The antiquarian, George Lipscomb was the village doctor from 1819 to 1832. The photograph said to be of The Sycamores in Beckett and Adams "Whitchurch In Camera" (page 110) shows the house now called Quenington House. There is a note to the republished version of Holloway's History by Mr Elmore that The Sycamores was the former name of Mary Monks House in Hawley Lane, and not Quenington House.

*Population*

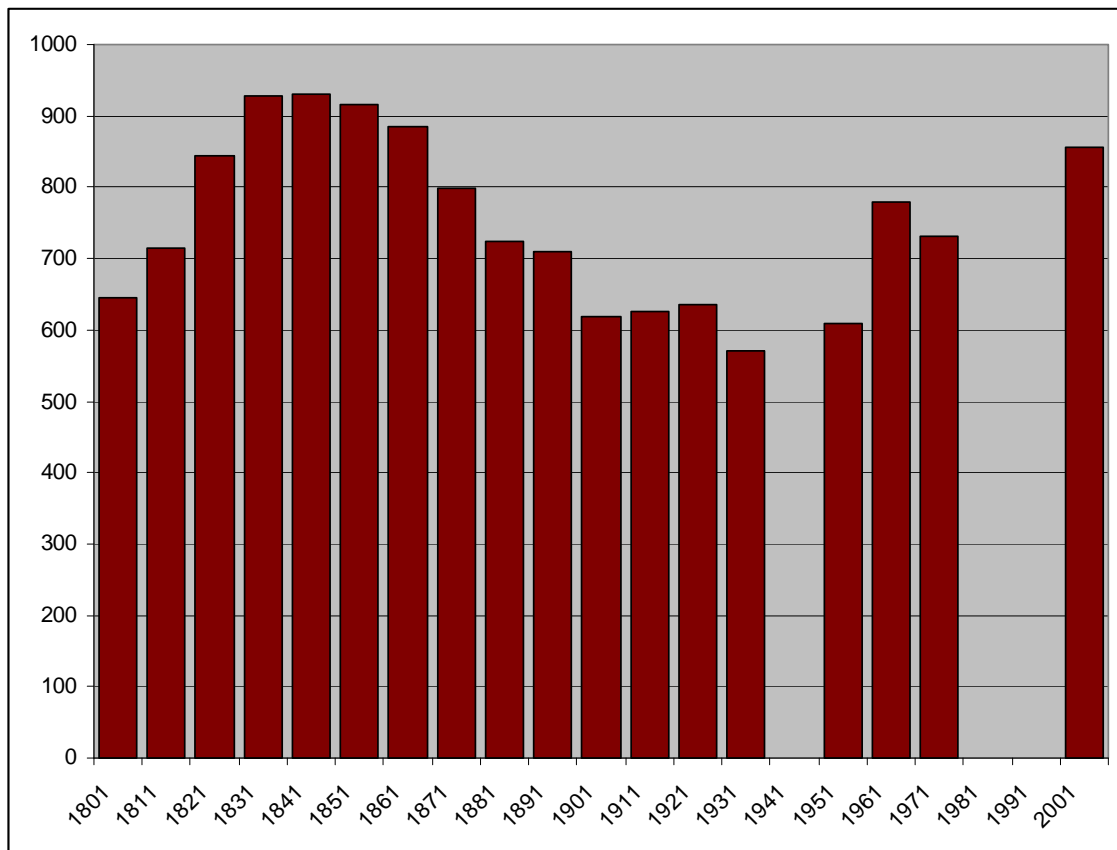


Figure 34: Graph showing population changes in Whitchurch (excluding 1941, 1981 & 1991)

**See also Appendix 3.** These figures are based on the census covering the whole parish of Whitchurch but there is no other significant settlement in the parish apart from the village. The graph shows how the population peaked in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to a level which has not been achieved since. The decline is not unexpected given the agricultural depression of the late 1800s and the decline in cottage industries which provided an income for many women, and children. The jump in population between 1951 and 1961 must be accounted for by the

building of council housing at Ashgrove Gardens. There has since been further expansion of the village's boundaries with private housing, as well as infill and conversions of farm buildings.

### *Roads and layout*

Back Lane was widened in 1851 to form the southern end of Oving Road. The A413 is a busy road cutting through the heart of the village. The road was widened and moved eastwards north of the Oving Road junction in the 1960s and there is now a roundabout at this junction. The volume of traffic clearly affects the tranquillity of the village, and road-calming measures such as traffic islands and the roundabout detract from its historic character but Whitchurch has largely retained its aesthetic value because of the picturesque qualities of its historic buildings and rural setting.

The historic plan-form has persisted but new roads have been laid out to serve 20<sup>th</sup> century housing developments. The essential linear form means that there is no visual focus for the settlement.

### *Secular buildings*

The map evidence shows that the area covered by the village has expanded considerably during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, yet the population has decreased from its peak in 1841. The obvious inference is that housing density must have been much higher in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Inspection of the maps and buildings confirms this, since it is evident that many houses once in multi-occupation are now single residences. It was common for early houses to be subdivided in periods of austerity and then consolidated in more affluent times. For example The Old House consisted of five tenements when it was known as Lime Cottages and 3 Church Lane was five cottages at the time of the RCHME survey in 1912. Inns which would have had boarders have now closed and of course families were generally much larger in the Victorian period, and several generations were often living in the same house.

Some all-brick houses from the late 1700s have already been mentioned. Other houses built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century include 67 High Street which has a brick dated "TF 1803" in the chimney stack facing Market Hill and 4 Market Hill dated 1832 ½ (sic), set unusually far back from the road. These are both listed as is 31 High Street, a 3 bay house with unusually large 4x4 sash windows.



*Figure 35: Fielding House, 31 High Street*

There are several 19<sup>th</sup> century unlisted houses, mainly on the east side of High Street towards the southern end, all of two storeys, apart from the pair at numbers 40/42 which, with three storeys plus basement has a rather dominating height on the eastern side of High Street. Their brickwork, red with yellow brick dressings, also draws the eye.

A few cottages, probably 18<sup>th</sup> century, have survived in Little London said to have got its name from the people who fled here from the plague in London but this part of the village, once dominated by the house and garden at the Firs, is now a mixture of dates, styles and types of house ranging from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has no consistent character; this and its location at the end of the village make it feel set apart. Some of the trees from the garden of the Firs remain.

Manor Farm is the only working farm in the study area but is modern and has been moved to the east of the A413. The farmhouse and some of the farm buildings on the original Manor Farm site west of the A413 have been converted to housing and a new development of Rickyard Close has been added. Elsewhere in Whitchurch other farm buildings have been converted to residential use in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Some former shops which have been converted to houses have sometimes retained their shop-fronts. The Chandos Arms beerhouse has kept a link with its history by retaining the name Chandos House.

Whitchurch's first municipal housing was built in the 1920s on Bushmead Road but the largest scale expansion was in the 1950s with the completion of a large council house development at Ashgrove Gardens, off North Marston Lane. These are semi-detached houses of Fletton brick set in garden plots which are spacious by modern standards.



*Figure 36: Ashgrove Gardens*

Private housing developments from the 1970s tend to be one-off designs on spacious plots; gardens on the south side of Bushmead are particularly large and these houses on the edge of the village have distant views to the south. Views are also a strong characteristic of the area on the western edge of the village on Oving Road, another area of individually designed houses. Later 20<sup>th</sup> century private housing is in cul-de-sac developments, such as The Meadows, Bushmead Close, Firs Close and Green Acres Close, which are of higher density and standard design.



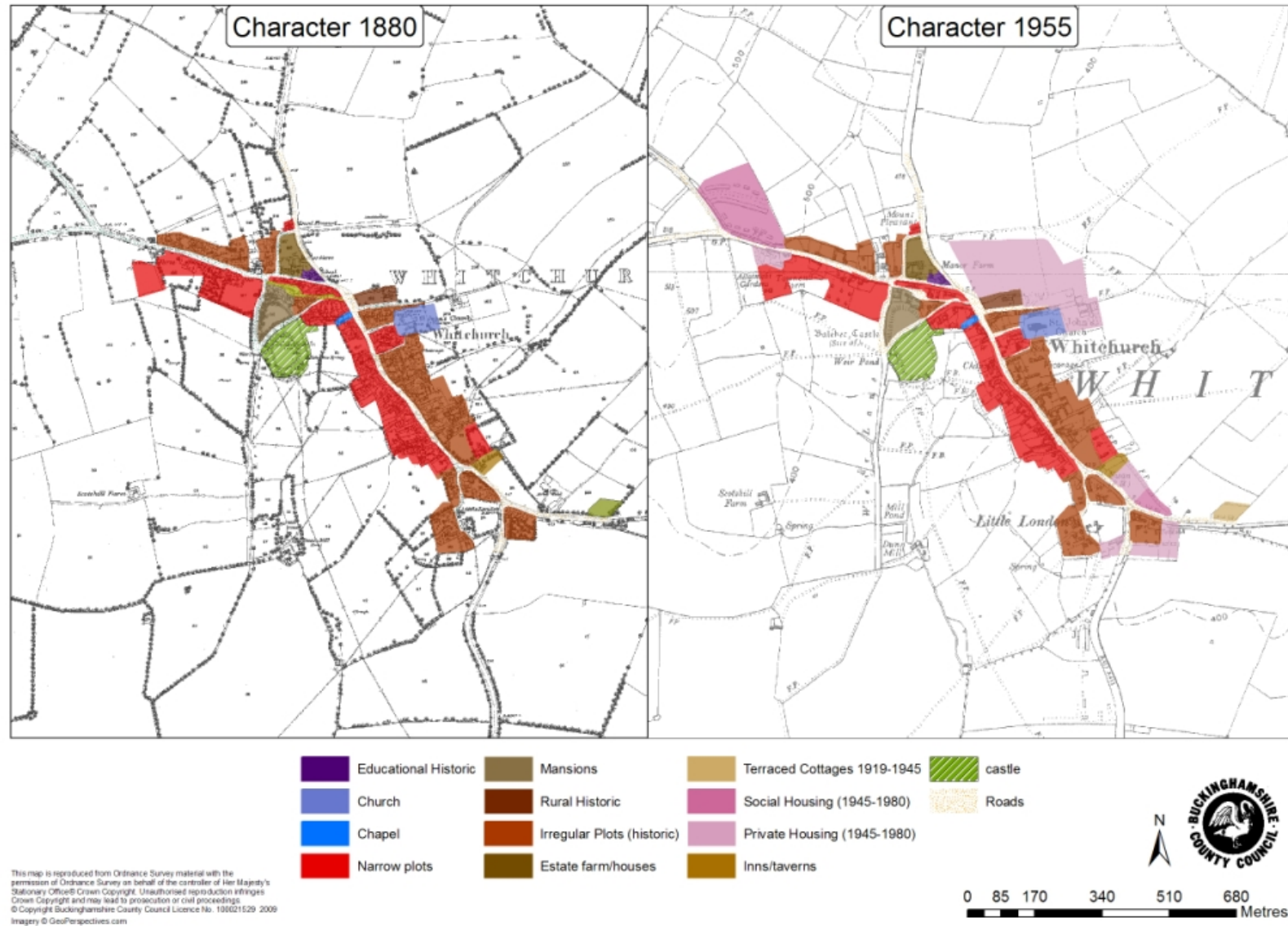


Figure 37: Whitechurch in the 1880s to 1920s

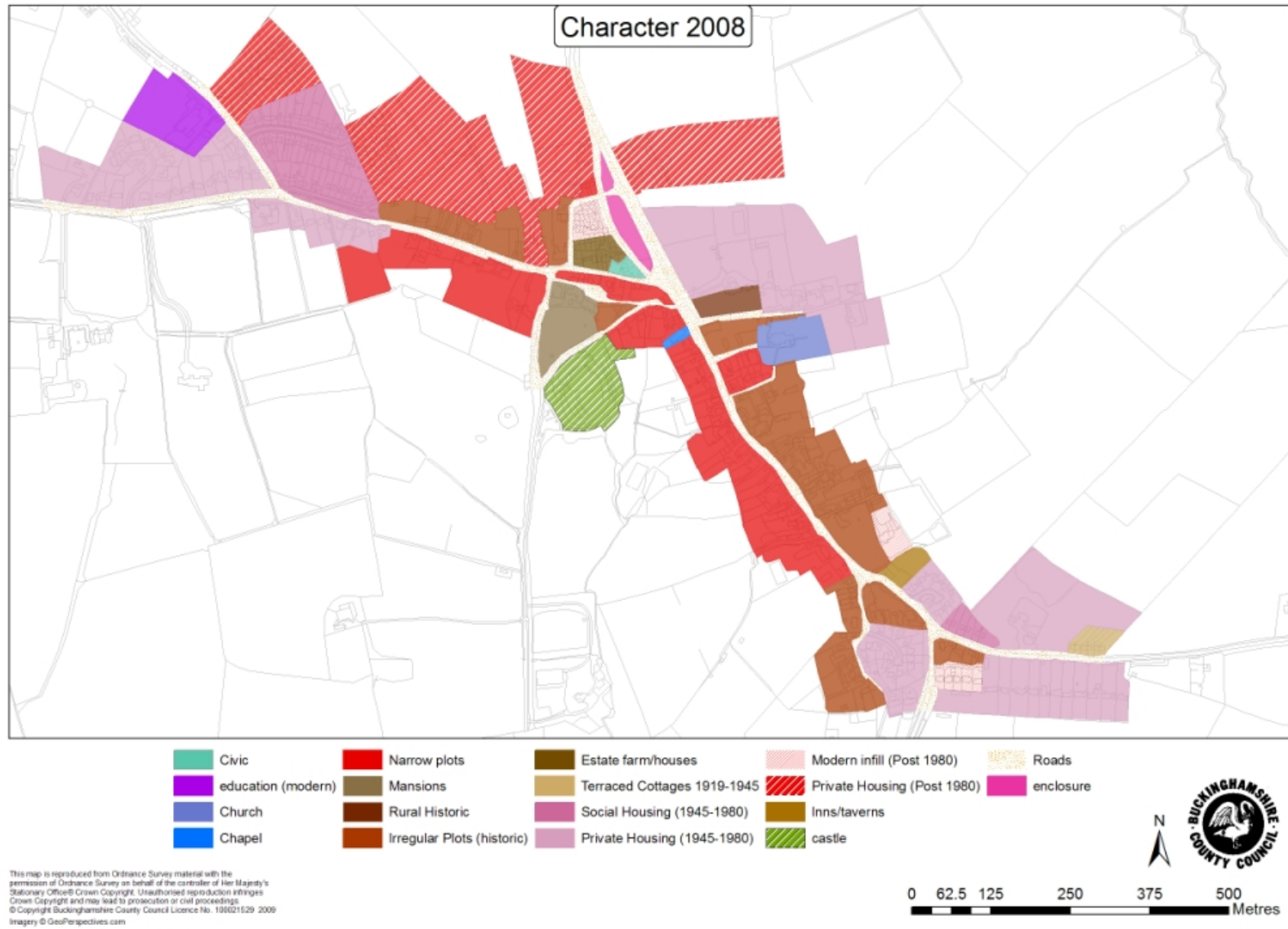


Figure 38: Whitchurch modern character

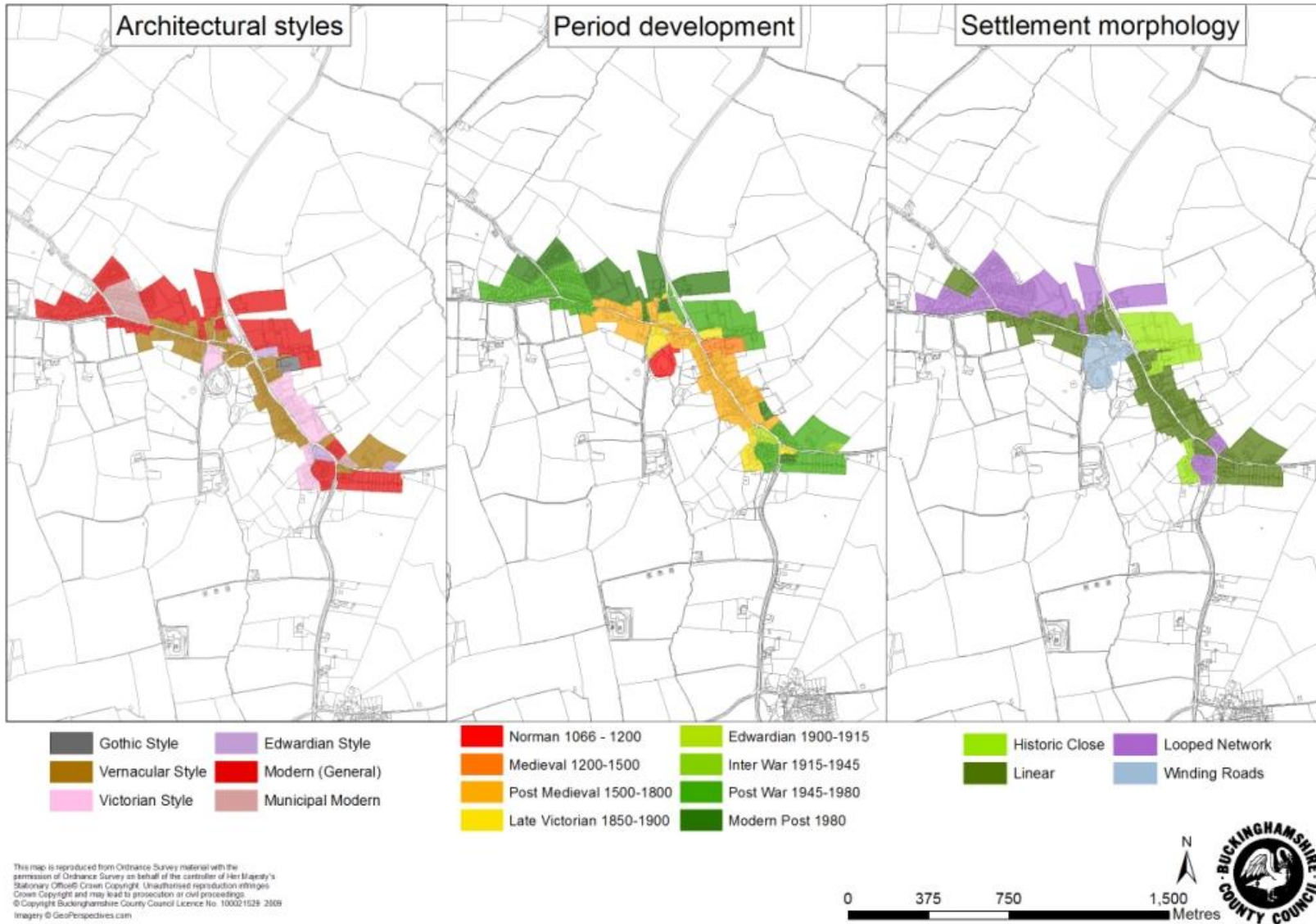


Figure 39: Character of the town

## **II ASSESSMENT**

### **5 Designations**

#### **5.1 Conservation Areas (CA)**

The Whitchurch conservation area was first designated in 1971 and essentially covers the main historic village as well as Bolebec Castle. There is no up to date conservation area character appraisal. A summary dated February 2008 is on the AVDC website.

#### **5.2 Registered Parks and Gardens**

There are no registered parks and gardens in Whitchurch.

#### **5.3 Archaeological Notification Areas**

Although not offering statutory protection, archaeological notification areas are a helpful tool for planning control as they highlight areas that are of known or suspected archaeological potential to planning control officers at a district and county council level. A present an archaeological notification area covers most of the settlement of Whitchurch

#### **5.4 Scheduled Monuments**

There is one scheduled monument in Whitchurch. Bolebec Castle [SAM 19058] was first scheduled in 1938 and includes the main motte area south of Castle Lane as well as the probable bailey site on the north side of Castle Lane.

#### **5.5 Listed Buildings**

There are 47 listed buildings in Whitchurch, all listed at Grade II apart from three Grade II\* buildings: the parish church of St. John, the Old Court House (listed as The Priory Hotel) and the Old House in Church Headland Lane. The earliest surviving building in Whitchurch is St John's Parish Church, dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century while the majority of the buildings (31), according to the list descriptions, date to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.



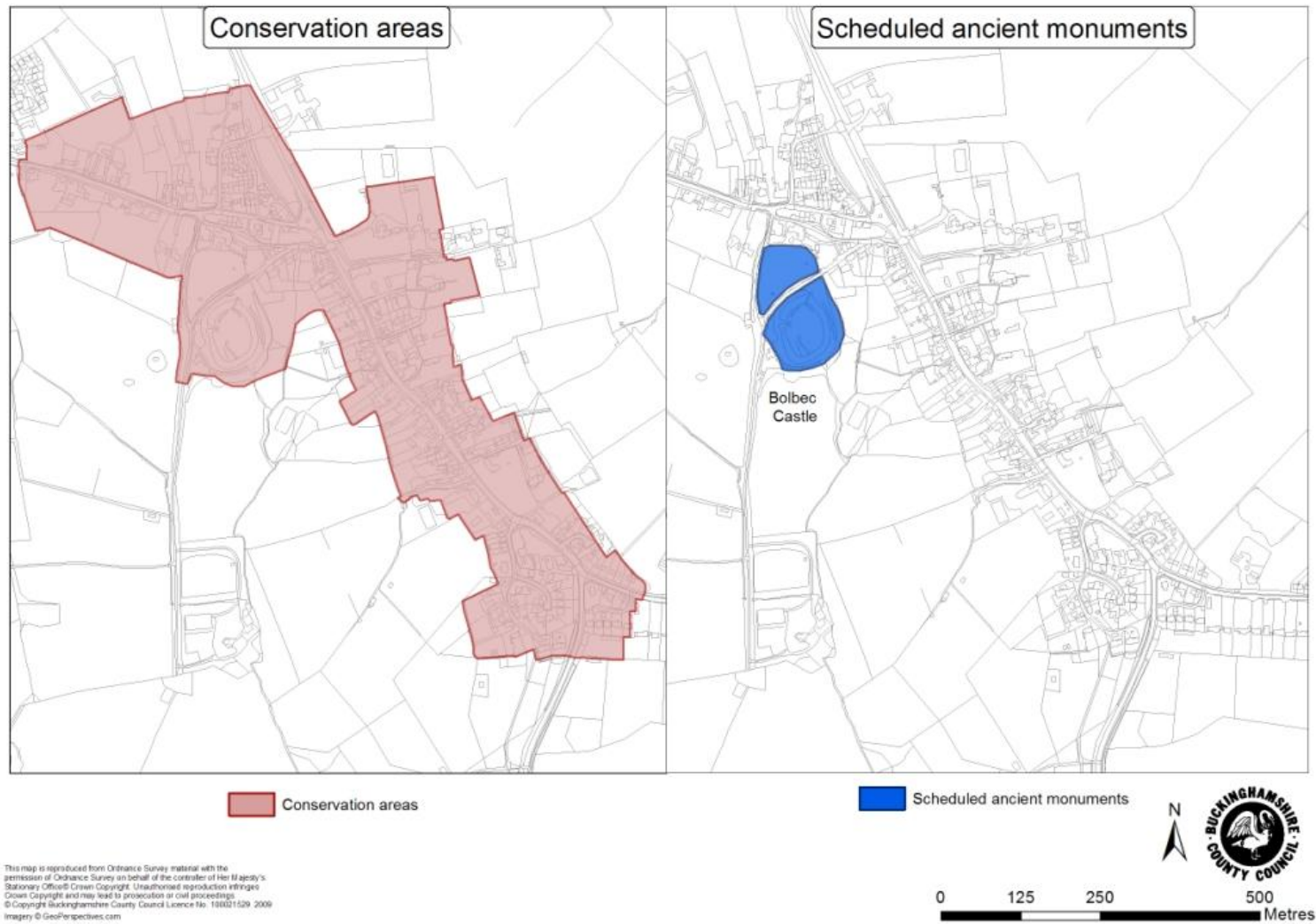


Figure 40: Conservation areas and scheduled monuments in Whitchurch

## 6 Historic Urban Zones

### 6.1 Introduction

The process of characterising and analysing Buckinghamshire towns produces a large quantity of information at a 'fine-grained scale' e.g. the character of particular buildings, town plan forms and location of archaeological data. This multitude of information can be hard to assimilate. In order to distil this information into an understandable form, the project will define larger areas or Historic Urban Zones (HUZs) for each town; these zones provide a framework for summarising information in a spatially and written form (Figure 41). Each zone contains several sections including:

- A summary of the zone including reasons for the demarcation of the zone.
- An assessment of the known and potential archaeological interest for pre 20<sup>th</sup> century areas only.
- An assessment of existing built character.

### 6.2 Historic Urban Zones

The creation of these zones begins with several discrete data sets including historical cartography and documentary sources; known archaeological work; buildings evidence (whether listed or not) and the modern urban character (Figure 41). From this, a picture can be drawn of the changes that have occurred to the built character within a given area over a given period. Discrete areas of the town that then show broad similarities can be grouped as one zone.

After the survey results have been mapped into GIS the resulting data is analysed to discern any larger, distinctive patterns; principally build periods, urban types, styles or other distinctive attributes of buildings. Zone boundaries are defined based around areas of homogenous townscape, although occasionally there may be more diversity as a result of piecemeal change. Other considerations for defining these zones can be made from the other attribute data, including time depth and degree of preservation.

Several different datasets will feed into the creation process for urban zones under two broad headings; historical and topographical modelling and built character.

Historical and topographical modelling covers a variety of sources including;

- Historical maps and documentary research – historical consultancy work, an analysis of historic routes and an analysis of manorial holdings where available
- Archaeological and environmental evidence – data stored in the HER, geological and soils databases provided by the BGS and Cranfield University and an analysis of the distribution of pottery fabrics for the Saxon and medieval periods

The Built Character heading incorporates the following sources;

- Built environment – English Heritage listed buildings and historic map research
- An analysis of the modern urban form – The historic urban character database produced for this project and designations such as Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens

### 6.3 Archaeological Assessment

The second part of the analysis examines the significance and potential of towns from an archaeological perspective, this assessment is undertaken by the analysis of archaeological and historical sources. Unlike the built environment, the focus of investigation is limited to the historic cores of settlements, where most archaeological evidence exists and the likelihood of archaeological discovery is at its greatest. The assessment includes consideration of the archaeological interest of above-ground buildings and structures, which may contain hidden elements, which are earlier than their nominal date based on visible architectural details.

The method for evaluating archaeological significance is an adaptation of English Heritage's Monuments Protection Plan for urban areas (English Heritage 1992). For the character zones within the historic core an evaluation is made of particular attributes, these are: Period; Survival; Potential; Group Value and Diversity.

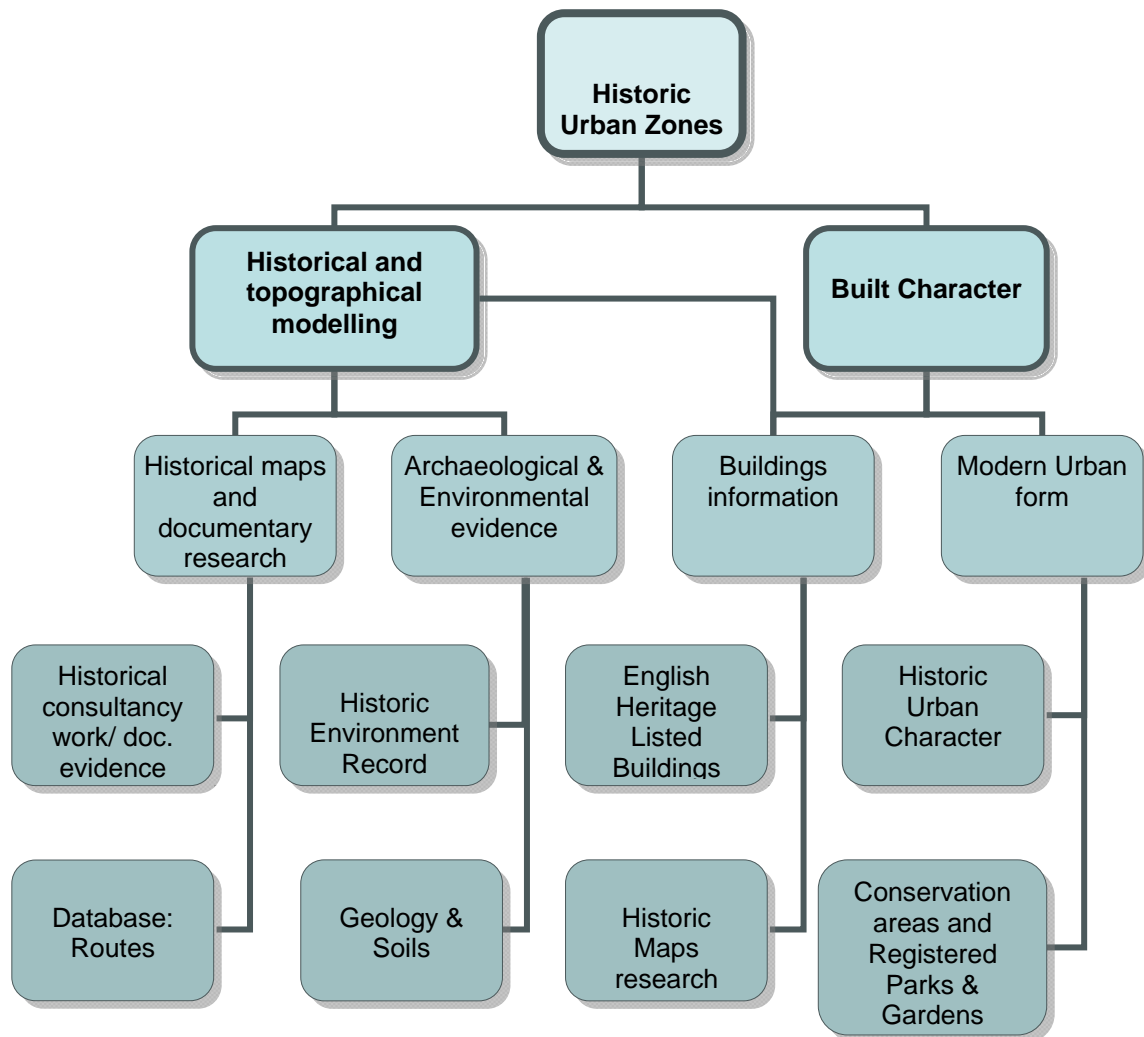


Figure 41: Diagram showing the processes involved in the creation of the urban character zones

### Period

Assessment of the time-depth of archaeological remains likely to be present. As a general rule urban deposits with greater time-depth will tend to be of more archaeological interest.

- Early Medieval foundations 1000 -1100 and/or with possible proto or pre urban antecedents. Potential for remains with a very wide date range of a thousand years or more.
- Medieval Foundations of 1100 -1536 with remains relating to Medieval and Post Medieval establishment and change
- Post 1536 - establishment and change occurring after 1536. Post-medieval remains only



- Post 1800 – modern development

### *Survival*

This section focuses on the visible or documented survival of historical elements. For example buildings will have a bias towards post-medieval although some medieval forms (churches) will exist. In terms of deposits assessment will often be based upon documented investigations and it should be recognised that some parts of towns cannot be assessed until further data becomes available.

- High = Documented survival of extensive significant remains
- Medium = Documented survival of significant remains
- Low = Documented extensive destruction/loss/absence of remains
- Uncertain = Insufficient information for reliable judgment

### *Potential*

This section relates to the likelihood of preservation of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence and will be a summary based in part on known archaeological and environmental evidence and in part on predictive preservation and therefore should be treated with caution. Potential preservation is based upon ground conditions whether wet or dry, the topography and the quality of archaeological evidence. The relationship between subsurface deposits and standing buildings is also of relevance. Evidence for buildings potential lies in determining the preservation of older building structures or fabrics hidden behind later builds and facades. The principal nature of remains predicted will be indicated. This will also refer to the potential for environmental finds, although this can only be a general statement.

- High - Areas predicted to contain stratified or waterlogged buried deposits or early structural elements within standing buildings. High potential for environmental finds such as anoxic environments with pH of over 7. (peats, waterlogged deposits)
- Medium - Areas predicted to contain significant buried deposits and/or potential for hidden structural elements. Potential for environmental finds can be varied, covers a wide range of soil types.
- Low - Areas predicted to have limited survival of archaeological deposits e.g. due to destruction of subsurface deposits by modern development. Low potential for environmental finds such as oxic environments with a neutral pH. (brown earths)
- Uncertain - Areas with insufficient data to make any meaningful prediction

### *Group Value*

The identification of adjacent buildings where concentrations of types occur forming a distinct character. For the majority the group value will be not applicable but can include Commercial clusters, Ecclesiastical clusters or Industrial clusters.

### *Diversity*

This criterion seeks to measure the phases of change to a given area through time. The diversity reflects the range of features, components and monuments that can be recorded within the zone or across a wider range of zones. Equally this could also apply to the diversity of the built environment. This will also examine the survival of buildings within the historic core using English Heritage listed buildings data to assess the range and diversity of dates and architectural style within the zone.

- High – 3 or more phases
- Medium – 2 major phases
- Low – Single phase
- Unknown

#### 6.4 Heritage Values

The assessment has also adopted the methodology outlined in the English Heritage document *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2007)*. This is intended to help ensure consistency when carrying out assessments on the historic environment by proposing an integrated approach to making decisions, based on a common process.

Although acknowledging the importance of existing heritage designations, the Conservation Principles promote an holistic approach to the various inter-related heritage values that might be attached to a place. The high-level values range from evidential, which is dependent on the inherited fabric of the place, through historical and aesthetic, to communal values, which derive from people's identification with the place.

- *Evidential*: The potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity e.g. through study of buried archaeological remains or historic buildings
- *Historical*: Derives from the ways in which past people and events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be either illustrative of particular activities or process or associative with famous people or events.
- *Aesthetic*: Derives the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. It can reflect deliberate design (e.g. architecture) or the fortuitous coming together of features to create a 'patina' of age.
- *Communal Value*: derive from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values can be closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects manifesting as symbolic, commemorative, social or spiritual values.

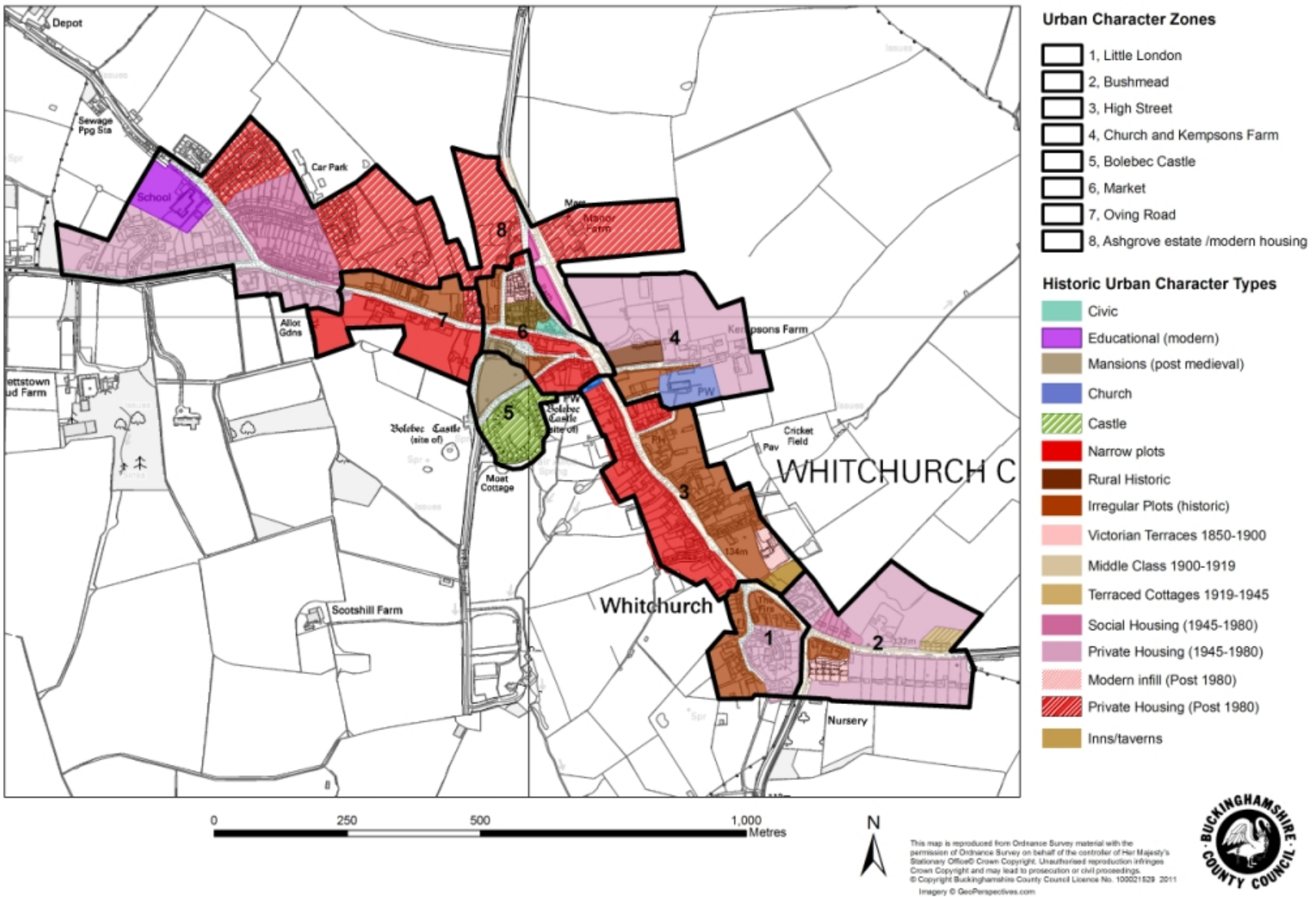


Figure 42: Historic Character Zones for Whitchurch

## 6.5 Historic Settlement

Zone 1: Little London				
<p><b>Summary:</b> The Little London zone comprises Little London, the Firs and Firs Close, and 3 High Street. The zone is dominated by The Firs, a late 19<sup>th</sup> century country house (now an office), much of whose garden has been redeveloped for a small private housing estate. The origins of this zone are not known but Little London was the centre of the short-lived 19<sup>th</sup> century silk making industry and some of the old cottages have survived. The whole of this zone is within the Whitchurch Conservation Area but it has no listed buildings.</p>				
<p><b>Historical:</b> The historical value of this zone is both illustrative and associative. The Firs is of architectural and historic interest as a late Victorian country house and for its connections with the people who lived there and visited it. The staghound meet was often held here. Its significant association with World War II is likely to be of increasing value as more information becomes available about the secret wartime work at "Churchill's Toyshop". This interest extends to the neighbouring fields where weapons experiments were conducted.</p> <p>The remaining cottages in Little London were probably associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> century silk industry and other cottage industries. There were buildings here before the Enclosure of 1771 and there is a local tradition that the name "Little London" was coined because Londoners fleeing the 17<sup>th</sup> century plague settled in this zone. Further research could test the validity of this theory. There are other places in the county called "Little London". The variety in age of buildings in Little London indicates infill and that several historic buildings have been lost.</p>				
<p><b>Evidential:</b> There have been no archaeological investigations here but The Firs and its associated buildings and the historic cottages in Little London have potential for providing more information about past activities in this zone. Large trees are a significant feature, presumably survivals from the gardens of the Firs, and investigation would show how much of the designed landscape remains..</p>				
<p><b>Aesthetic:</b> The Firs is unique in Whitchurch as a country house in the English Revival style. The tall trees here and high boundary wall are significant elements in the townscape. Old cottages in Little London are picturesque. Being on the edge of the village there are fine distant views over the countryside to the west and south. Buildings on southern edge of this zone are in a particularly sensitive location because of views into the hilltop settlement.</p>				
<p><b>Communal:</b> The recent history of Bletchley Park demonstrates that there is increasing public interest in secret wartime activities. It seems likely there will be growing communal value in Whitchurch's contribution to World War II.</p>				
Archaeological Assessment		Built Character (general characteristics)		
<p><b>Period:</b> Modern  <b>Survival:</b> Medium/low (buildings)  <b>Group Value:</b> N/A  <b>Diversity:</b> High  <b>Potential:</b> Medium (buildings)</p>	<b>Morphology:</b>	Looped network Historic lane Linear	<b>Density:</b>	Medium/high
	<b>Character Types:</b>	Irregular plots (post medieval) Residential 1980-current	Middle class housing 1919-1945 Military World War II	
	<b>Architecture</b>	Victorian	Arts and crafts	Modern general Tudor Revival
<b>Heritage Values</b>	<b>Plan Form</b>	Rural cottages 1600-1900	Modern detached Mansion – 19 <sup>th</sup> century	
<p><b>Evidential Value:</b> Medium (buildings)  <b>Historical Value:</b> Medium/High  <b>Aesthetic Value:</b> Medium/High  <b>Communal Value:</b> Medium</p>	<b>Build Materials:</b>	Brick handmade red Brick machined red Brick handmade colour	Brick rendered Stone Timber-frame (mock)	
	<b>Roof Materials:</b>	Tile clay handmade	Tile clay machined Concrete	



**Zone 3: High Street**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the High Street from Little London up to (and including) the Methodist Church, Keinches Lane, Hawleys Lane, Beech Tree Court, Post Office Lane, White Horse Lane and the south side of Church Lane. It lies wholly within the Whitchurch Conservation Area and includes 24 listed buildings.

This is a zone of mainly linear development and most people will have only a fleeting experience of Whitchurch whilst driving along the A413 which cuts through this zone like a spine. The terrain rises very gently northwards with side streets off to the east which would have originally led to the medieval open fields. To the west of this zone the land slopes steeply downhill towards Bolebec Castle and medieval parklands, and there is only one side street, Keinches Lane, which led to the water mill at the bottom of Weir Lane. There is evidence of some medieval town planning in the plots at the northern end closest to Market Hill but most of this zone has developed organically leaving a varied townscape of differing plan-forms and rhythms and a diverse legacy of architectural forms and materials. After the decline of the market this zone became the commercial core of Whitchurch, but is now mainly residential. Despite the urbanising effects of the busy main road Whitchurch has retained its picturesque qualities thanks to its landscape setting and historic buildings.

**Historical:** The historical character of Whitchurch is sensed immediately on entering this zone from any direction. Whitchurch was a town in the 13<sup>th</sup> century with the creation of a market and borough and the laying-out of house plots on the western side of High Street, close to the market place. Roads may also have been diverted at that time compounding a shift in focus away from the area around the church. The medieval market and borough probably lasted less than a century and with the decline of the market the settlement grew to the south along High Street and this zone became the commercial focus and most populous part of Whitchurch.

Plots closest to the castle and market were smaller whilst those further south, on the western side of High Street were more regular and longer. Their sinuous shape may show they were carved out of the ploughed fields, as part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century town planning process. Plots on the east side of High Street are irregular and deeper.

Until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Whitchurch was a community of farmers, tradesmen and labourers and its inns catered for travellers on the road between Aylesbury and Buckingham. Many buildings were apparently erected, or altered, during the 17<sup>th</sup> century period of the "Great Rebuilding" of England. The high status of several buildings is signified by the use of jetties.

Several large houses dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century show increased prosperity probably as a result of the turnpiking of the main street and the Parliamentary Enclosure of 1771. The population reached a peak in 1841 when homes which now house one family were divided into several tenements. The decline in cottage industries such as lacemaking combined with the agricultural depression resulted in a substantial drop in the population. Increasing affluence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has led to the consolidation of previously divided houses and less dense development in this zone. Historical value in the built heritage has been maintained by listed building status and conservation area designation. Demolition has thus been limited and conversion of redundant farm buildings encouraged. Whitchurch is associated with some notable people. Particularly associated with this zone is the antiquarian and historian of Buckinghamshire, Dr. George Lipscomb (1773-1846) who lived and practised medicine here for several years.

**Evidential:** Survey and documentary should provide more information on medieval town-planning in Whitchurch and diversion of routes, such as the track which used to run parallel to and on the eastern side of High Street. The large stock of historic secular buildings (listed and unlisted from the 15<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) is a considerable source of evidence for the origins and development of the settlement. In particular there is scope for a study on buildings erected or altered in the 17<sup>th</sup> century for comparison with other places in the context of the "Great Rebuilding".

**Aesthetic:** John Betjeman and other writers have noted the picturesque qualities of Whitchurch owing to its buildings, hilly landscape setting and magnificent views into and out of the village. The diversity of ages, styles and materials in the buildings all contribute to its aesthetic appeal.

**Communal:** Communal facilities in this zone include the Methodist church, church hall and the one remaining village pub (The White Swan). There are also two garages (one with a convenience shop), a couple of other shops and one working farm. The village buildings are nearly all residential. Pride in the history of the place is evident; there are information boards and seats around the village and a large network of footpaths for walkers.

Archaeological Assessment		Built Character (general characteristics)		
<b>Period:</b> Survival: Medieval foundations <b>Group Value:</b> N/A <b>Diversity:</b> High <b>Potential:</b> High	<b>Morphology:</b>	Linear Historic lane	<b>Density:</b>	High/ medium
	<b>Character Types:</b>	Non-conformist chapel Burgage type plots Irregular plots Victorian terraces Private housing 1980 to current	Rural historic (post medieval) Post medieval: wide frontage Post medieval: narrow frontage Residential 1700-1900 Private housing 1945-1980	
	<b>Architecture</b>	Vernacular	Georgian	Victorian
<b>Heritage Values</b>	<b>Plan Form</b>	Medieval wide frontage Medieval narrow frontage 1600-1900 rural cottages	1600-1900 wide frontage 1600-1900 terraces Modern: Conversions	

<b>Evidential Value:</b> High (buildings) <b>Historical Value:</b> High <b>Aesthetic Value:</b> High <b>Communal Value:</b> Medium/High	<b>Build Materials:</b>	Brick handmade red Brick handmade colour Brick machined red Close studding & render Cruck frame & render Cruck frame & brick	Brick rendered Brick painted Stone Box frame & render Box frame & brick
	<b>Roof Materials:</b>	Thatch Slate	Tile: clay handmade Tile: clay machined

<b>Zone 4: Church and Kempsons Farm</b>				
<b>Summary:</b> This zone comprises the parish church, Kempsons, Kempsons Farm, The Old House and properties in Church Headland Lane. There are four listed buildings and about half of this zone is within the Whitchurch Conservation Area. This zone is quite and secluded with only a few buildings and a rural character.				
<b>Historical:</b> This is probably the zone of earliest settlement in Whitchurch. A pre-Conquest stone church gave Whitchurch its name and the present 13 <sup>th</sup> century church is a significant landmark in the rural landscape. The Saxon settlement is likely to have been around the church and the name of the road, Church Headland Lane, indicates an ancient route along a headland in the medieval open fields. With the building of the castle and creation of the market the focus of the medieval town moved away from the church and there may be an early shrunken settlement here.  Apart from the parish church other highly significant historic buildings are the 15 <sup>th</sup> century Old House, associated with Woburn Abbey, former rectors of the parish church, and Kempsons, a 17 <sup>th</sup> century former manor house.  Amongst the notable people associated with the village is the scientist and industrialist, Frank Kearton, (1911-1992) who took his title, Baron Kearton of Whitchurch, from the village and who lived at The Old House. He is buried in the churchyard.				
<b>Evidential:</b> This zone has strong archaeological potential as the possible early focus for the settlement. "Humps and bumps" in fields to the south-east of the church may be house-platforms and warrant investigation as does the possibility of diversion of historic roads in favour of the High Street. Although The Old House has been much restored, investigation of its built-fabric as well as documentary research could provide information on the role of Woburn Abbey in the history of Whitchurch and the parish church. Research into the history of Kempsons could also shed light on the history of the manor.				
<b>Aesthetic:</b> The parish church and churchyard have great aesthetic appeal. Picturesque qualities are also evident in the stone and half-timbered The Old House, set above the main road. Kempsons, an attractive old manor house in spacious grounds can just be glimpsed; its high stone wall is important in setting the rural character of Church Headland Lane. There are spectacular far-reaching views from the churchyard over the rolling pasture lands of the shrunken hamlet of Creslow, said to have been the largest pasture in England in the early-modern period and famous for its prize-winning cattle.				
<b>Communal:</b> The parish church is the most significant communal facility in the village and clearly has spiritual value. There is historic communal value in The Old House, because of its Woburn Abbey connection – might this have been a medieval church house? Kempsons also had communal value as a former manor house.				
Archaeological Assessment		Built Character (general characteristics)		
<b>Period:</b> Saxon foundations (earthworks) Medieval (buildings) <b>Survival:</b> Uncertain (earthworks); High (buildings) <b>Group Value:</b> N/A <b>Diversity:</b> High (buildings) <b>Potential:</b> High (buildings)	<b>Morphology:</b>	Historic lane		<b>Density:</b> Low
	<b>Character Types:</b>	Church (parish) Manorial: post medieval Pre-1536 monastic – (possible church house)		Residential 19 <sup>th</sup> century Private housing post 1960
	<b>Architecture</b>	Gothic	Vernacular	Georgian Victorian Modern: General
<b>Heritage Values</b>	<b>Plan Form</b>	Medieval wide frontage 1600-1900 Mansion 1600-1900 rural cottages		Modern: Conversions Modern detached
<b>Evidential Value:</b> High (buildings) <b>Historical Value:</b> High (buildings) <b>Aesthetic Value:</b> High (buildings) <b>Communal Value:</b> High (buildings)	<b>Build Materials:</b>	Brick handmade red Brick machined red Stone		Brick rendered Brick painted Box frame & render Box frame & brick
	<b>Roof Materials:</b>	Slate Tile: Concrete		Tile: clay handmade Tile: clay machined

<b>Zone 5: Bolebec Castle</b>			
<b>Summary:</b> This zone comprises the site of Bolebec Castle which is intersected by Castle Lane, a narrow 20 <sup>th</sup> century road. It is a scheduled ancient monument and lies within the Whitchurch Conservation Area. The castle, said to have been built of stone, survives only as earthworks.			
<b>Historical:</b> The castle was built in the 12 <sup>th</sup> century when Whitchurch became a prestigious place as head of the Barony of Bolebec.			
<b>Evidential:</b> Owing to the absence of surviving buildings the castle's chief heritage value is evidential. There is substantial archaeological potential in the earthworks at Bolebec Castle which have not been subject to archaeological investigation. It has generally been interpreted as a motte to the south and a bailey to the north of Castle Lane. The southern part is visible from Castle Lane and nearby footpaths, but the earthworks north of Castle Lane are within a private garden and concealed by trees. The spoil from the digging of Castle Lane has exaggerated the slope to the north. Excavation would be required to ascertain the structure and phasing of the castle and determine whether it was designed primarily as a defensive structure or as a prestigious manorial centre. There is a local tradition that the castle was destroyed in the Civil War when it was, in effect, used as a quarry to furnish stone for buildings in the village. Building surveys are required to test this theory.			
<b>Aesthetic:</b> This zone is away from the main road in a tranquil, secluded setting with several trees. Aesthetic value comes from the rural landscape and fine views to the south and south-west.			
<b>Communal:</b> Pride in the history of the place is evident through Whitchurch; there are several public footpaths in or near this zone and an information board in Castle Lane.			
Archaeological Assessment		Built Character (general characteristics)	
<b>Period:</b> Survival: Medieval foundations	<b>Morphology:</b>	Lane (modern)	<b>Density:</b> No buildings
<b>Group Value:</b> N/A	<b>Character Types:</b>	Manorial: medieval (castle)	
<b>Diversity:</b> N/A	<b>Architecture</b>	N/A	
<b>Potential:</b> Medium	<b>Plan Form</b>	N/A	
Heritage Values		<b>Build Materials:</b>	N/A
<b>Evidential Value:</b> High		<b>Roof Materials:</b>	N/A
<b>Historical Value:</b> High			
<b>Aesthetic Value:</b> High			
<b>Communal Value:</b> Low			



<b>Zone 6: Market</b>					
<p><b>Summary:</b> This zone comprises Market Hill, Mount Pleasant, Rickyard Close, parts of Castle Lane and Oving Road and a few houses at the north end of High Street. It includes the area which was set out as a market place, just north of Bolebec Castle, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when the Earl of Oxford obtained a charter for a weekly market. The main road to Oving passed through the market at that time, whilst the present Oving Road served as a back lane. The size of the market place was reduced by later encroachments and the market itself only seems to have lasted about a century. The commercial focus of Whitchurch moved to the High Street, although old photographs show shops on Market Hill in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The zone is now almost completely residential. Historic buildings at Manor Farm have been converted and modern cottages built on the farmyard. The whole of this zone is within the Whitchurch Conservation Area and contains 15 listed buildings.</p>					
<p><b>Historical:</b> Although the market was comparatively short-lived it has left a permanent reminder of Whitchurch's former status as a town in the form of the surviving market place. Most of the buildings in this zone also have historical value and there is considerable diversity in their ages, styles and former uses.</p> <p>Among the notable people associated with Whitchurch is the writer Jan Struther (real name Joyce Anstruther) (1901-1953), author of the novel <i>Mrs Miniver</i> and of hymns including <i>Lord of all hopefulness</i>, who lived at Whitchurch House. She spent her childhood in the village and her ashes are buried in the family grave at the parish church.</p>					
<p><b>Evidential:</b> The morphology of this zone raises several questions. For example, why was the market laid out on such a steep hill? How far did it extend? When, by whom and why were the encroachments made? Further investigation through documentary research and building survey is warranted, as it is for the stock of surviving historic buildings which may have origins earlier than their listed-building descriptions indicate..</p>					
<p><b>Aesthetic:</b> The diversity of ages, styles and materials in the buildings all contribute to this zone's aesthetic appeal. The topography and plan-form with sloping terrain and irregularly shaped blocks of buildings mean that only small areas can be seen at once. The zone has an enclosed, intimate character with views that unfold. This contrasts with the High Street zone where the straighter road allows longer views.</p>					
<p><b>Communal:</b> The former school, now the Legion Hall, is in this zone.</p>					
Archaeological Assessment		Built Character (general characteristics)			
<p><b>Period:</b> Medieval foundations  <b>Survival:</b> Medium/High (buildings)  <b>Group Value:</b> N/A  <b>Diversity:</b> High  <b>Potential:</b> Medium/High (buildings)</p>	<b>Morphology:</b>	Linear market	Linear Historic lane	<b>Density:</b>	High/medium
	<b>Character Types:</b>	Market (medieval) School (historic) Irregular plots Rural historic (post medieval) Post medieval: wide frontage Residential 1700-1900		Victorian terraces Residential 1900-1919: Middle class housing Private housing 1945-1980 Private housing 1980 to current	
	<b>Architecture</b>	Vernacular Arts and crafts	Georgian Victorian	Modern general	
<b>Heritage Values</b>	<b>Plan Form</b>	Medieval wide frontage 1600-1900 rural cottages 1600-1900 wide frontage 1600-1900 terraces		Modern: Conversions Modern detached Modern terraces	
<p><b>Evidential Value:</b> Medium/High (buildings)  <b>Historical Value:</b> High  <b>Aesthetic Value:</b> High  <b>Communal Value:</b> Medium</p>	<b>Build Materials:</b>	Brick: handmade red Brick: handmade colour Brick: machined red Brick rendered		Brick painted Stone Box frame & render Box frame & brick	
	<b>Roof Materials:</b>	Thatch Slate		Tile: clay handmade Tile: clay machined	

<b>Zone 7: Oving Road</b>			
<b>Summary:</b> This zone comprises the stretch of Oving Road west of Weir Lane as far as 31 and 34 Oving Road. There are four listed buildings in this zone and all but the westernmost field is within the Whitchurch Conservation Area. This was the western edge of the town, a zone of farms, labourers' cottages and orchards, with Townend Farm at the limit of the built-up area until the inter-war period. The terrain slopes up to the west. Development is linear with buildings set close to the road, and above the level of the road giving an enclosed, and semi-rural character to this zone. Farm buildings have been converted and the public house (Crown and Thistle) closed so that the area is now completely residential.			
<b>Historical:</b> Listed building descriptions indicate there are no pre-17 <sup>th</sup> century surviving buildings in this zone. This zone may have been a 17 <sup>th</sup> century expansion of the settlement with the building of yeomen farmsteads. The artist Rex Whistler (1905-1944) lived at Bolebec House, and painted his famous view of the Vale of Aylesbury from his garden.			
<b>Evidential:</b> The historic buildings merit further investigation by measured surveys and documentary research; in particular this could provide information on the history of this part of Whitchurch, and farming methods.			
<b>Aesthetic:</b> This zone displays a great variety of building materials in a small area. The rural, picturesque qualities have been well preserved. Rex Whistler painted a well-known view of Aylesbury Vale from the garden of Bolebec House.			
<b>Communal:</b> There are no communal facilities in this zone.			
Archaeological Assessment		Built Character (general characteristics)	
<b>Period:</b> Probably post 1536 <b>Survival:</b> Medium/High <b>Group Value:</b> N/A <b>Diversity:</b> Medium <b>Potential:</b> Medium/High (buildings)	<b>Morphology:</b>	Linear	<b>Density:</b> Medium
	<b>Character Types:</b>	Rural historic (post medieval) Narrow plot (post medieval) Private housing 1980 to current	Residential 1700-1900 Private housing 1945-1980
	<b>Architecture</b>	Vernacular	
Heritage Values	<b>Plan Form</b>	1600-1900 rural cottages	1600-1900 wide frontage Modern: Conversions
<b>Evidential Value:</b> High (buildings) <b>Historical Value:</b> Medium <b>Aesthetic Value:</b> High <b>Communal Value:</b> Low	<b>Build Materials:</b>	Brick handmade red Brick handmade colour Brick machined red Timber cladding	Brick rendered Brick painted Stone Box frame & render Box frame & brick
	<b>Roof Materials:</b>	Thatch Slate	Tile: clay handmade Tile: clay machined

## 6.6 Modern Settlement

Zone 2: Bushmead				
<p><b>Summary:</b> Bushmead zone comprises the area at the south-eastern fringe of Whitchurch. It includes the former brick and tile making yards where a shed and earthworks survive. There are a few historic (late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century) buildings (non-listed) and the western end of this zone is within the Whitchurch Conservation Area. The rest of the housing is 20<sup>th</sup> century comprising some early council houses, small private cul-de-sac estate developments and individually designed detached houses on spacious plots. Bushmead Road is a minor road with a rural character. Views over the surrounding countryside are a significant element in the character of this zone.</p>				
<p><b>Historical:</b> Historical value in this zone is illustrative, connected with the brick and tile making activity of the 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century, although this may have earlier origins.</p>				
<p><b>Evidential:</b> This zone has potential for evidence of past activity through investigation of the former brick and tile making area and former farming practices.</p>				
<p><b>Aesthetic:</b> Aesthetic value is derived from the rural setting and fine, distant views over the surrounding countryside.</p>				
<p><b>Communal:</b> There may be some communal value associated with the brick and tile making industry which only ceased in the 1920s.</p>				
Heritage Values	Built Character (general characteristics)			
<p><b>Evidential Value:</b> Medium  <b>Historical Value:</b> Low/medium  <b>Aesthetic Value:</b> Medium  <b>Communal Value:</b> Low</p>	<b>Morphology:</b>	Linear	Looped network	<b>Density:</b> Medium
	<b>Character Types:</b>	Social housing 1919-1945 Private housing 1945-1980 Victorian terrace	Private housing 1980 to current Residential detached villa 1900-1919	
	<b>Architecture</b>	Victorian	Modern municipal (inter war)	Modern general Arts and Crafts Mock historic (barn type)
	<b>Plan Form styles:</b>	Modern detached Modern conversion	Modern semi-detached	Modern bungalow Rural terrace (19 <sup>th</sup> century)
	<b>Build Materials:</b>	Brick handmade red Brick machined red	Brick rendered Pebble dash (non-local) Weather boarding	
	<b>Roof Materials:</b>	Slate natural	Pan tile machined	Tile: clay machined Tile: concrete

**Zone 8: Ashgrove estate/ modern housing**

**Summary:** This zone forms the western and northern 20<sup>th</sup> century village extensions off Oving Road, North Marston Lane, and either side of the A413, which was diverted eastwards in the 1960s. Apart from a few inter-war houses on the south side of Oving Road this area comprises post World War II development of the 1950s Ashgrove Gardens estate of council housing, later individually designed private houses on spacious plots along Oving Road and more recent small cul-de-sac estates of private houses. It includes the 1970s school and playing fields in North Marston Lane, a recently built medical centre and allotments on the south side of Oving Road and so has a civic element which gives this zone the character of a separate settlement apart from the rest of Whitchurch. There is a small industrial compound next to the medical practice. The character along Oving Road becomes more rural beyond the junction with North Marston Lane and there are distant views over the fields. This zone also includes Manor Farm, a working farm which has been relocated to the eastern side of the A413.

**Historical:** There was a windmill in this zone in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and possibly earlier, but otherwise this zone was covered by enclosed fields until developed, mostly after World War II. There are some inter-war detached private houses on the south side of Oving Road. Municipal housing was started before World War II at Ashgrove Gardens and completed in the 1950s. Other development is late 20<sup>th</sup> century private housing, mainly detached, a school and doctor's surgery and modern farm buildings at Manor Farm.

**Evidential:** Visual inspection shows no evidence of the windmill. There are no historic buildings and archaeological potential would be low.

**Aesthetic:** Ashgrove Gardens is a well-maintained and homogeneous example of municipal housing with plots which are generous by current standards. Gardens and trees give this zone a reasonably leafy character but the main aesthetic value comes from the wide views over the surrounding countryside. In 1969 the Roskill Commission recommended the building of a third London airport at Cudlington. In a dissenting opinion, the noted planner, Sir Colin Buchanan wrote: "The ridge road from Whitchurch through Oving and Pitchcott to Waddesdon is as beautiful a road (for its views) as any I know in the home counties." (The airport was eventually built at Stansted).

**Communal:** This area has little communal value given its mainly residential character but communal value may grow in the future because of the presence of the school here. This zone contains allotments, several of which look untended. A recreation ground has also recently been created just outside the study area off The Meadows.

**Heritage Values**

**Evidential Value:** Low  
**Historical Value:** Low  
**Aesthetic Value:** Medium (views)  
**Communal Value:** Low

**Built Character (general characteristics)**

<b>Morphology:</b>	Linear	Looped network	<b>Density:</b>	Medium/High
<b>Character Types:</b>	Social housing (inter-war and 1945-1980) Private housing 1945-1980 Farm post war	Private housing post 1980 School modern Medical NHS modern Allotments Industrial modern		
<b>Architecture</b>	Modern municipal	Modern general	Arts and Crafts Mock historic	
<b>Plan Form styles:</b>	Modern detached	Modern semi-detached	Modern bungalow (detached and semi-detached)	
<b>Build Materials:</b>	Brick machined red (Fletton) Brick machined red		Rendered	
<b>Roof Materials:</b>	Tile clay machined		Pan tile machined	



## **7 Management Recommendations**

### **7.1 Conservation Area Appraisals**

There may be potential to extend the conservation area to the west to include more of the area associated with Bolebec Castle, i.e. the Lords Garden which appears to be within the six acre area recorded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and possibly some of the former parkland. On the eastern side there may be scope to extend the boundary to the east to include the area which may have been part of the earlier settlement near the church. This potential needs to be tested with further research and surveys in the field.

### **7.2 Registered Parks and Gardens**

There are no recommendations for addition to this register.

### **7.3 Archaeological Notification Areas**

An extension of the archaeological notification area south east of the church yard is recommended.

### **7.4 Scheduled Monuments**

Further documentary research and archaeological investigation of Bolebec Castle might indicate that the scheduled area should be extended and/or the schedule description be amended.

The castle monument would benefit from a detailed measured earthwork survey which would establish the monuments extent and possibly resolve the debate surrounding its form and chronology.

Overall the castle earthworks are in good condition and management. Livestock (mainly sheep) are periodically used to browse the grass and check the growth of vegetation on the castle motte. Although the use of sheep brings positive benefits, this approach can have some negative consequences; accommodating livestock has resulted in some erosion of the monument with a few sheep scrapes noted around the side of the motte. It is recommended that the situation is monitored to note any visible deterioration. There is also evidence of a badgers sett in the western side of the motte. It is recommended that the situation is monitored.

### **7.5 Listed Buildings**

There are no immediate recommendations to designate additional buildings for listing in Whitchurch. However there a number of buildings that merit further examination for potential listed status, this includes the ancillary buildings at the Firs; that were once associated with the war time activities of Churchill's Toyshop.

## 8 Research Agenda

### 8.1 Prehistoric and Roman

- Is there any evidence for Prehistoric or Roman occupation in Whitchurch? The site of Bolebec Castle has been cited as a possible Iron Age hillfort; is there any archaeological evidence to substantiate this claim?

### 8.2 Anglo-Saxon

- Whitchurch (mainly zone 4): It is known that Whitchurch has a history dating back to at least the late Anglo Saxon period. It is assumed that the focus of the settlement centred on the present medieval church but is there any archaeological evidence to support this assertion?
- The presence of what appear to be house platforms to the south west of the church merit further investigation. Could this be part of a late Saxon settlement or is this an earlier phase of the medieval settlement, now a shrunken village?

### 8.3 Medieval Period

- Bolebec Castle (zone 5): To date there is uncertainty over the history, configuration and function of Bolebec Castle. In order to further our understanding of this nationally significant monument and its relationship with the village; more historical research and non-invasive archaeological investigation is required. Of particular benefit would be a detailed measured earthwork and geophysical survey of the castle 'motte' and its bailey to determine the date, the phasing of its construction and to locate any former buildings or features on the monument.
- Depending upon the results of the results of the survey, there may be justification for a small scale/targeted excavation of the castle. This could provide valuable information about the degree of wealth/status, diet, of the occupants and possibly provide a final date for the dismantling of its fortifications.
- To undertake a historic buildings survey to determine (if at all possible) whether any building material from Bolebec castle has been used in the construction of Whitchurch's post medieval buildings.
- Medieval settlement planning (zones 3 and 6): Find out more about the creation of the market place and burgage plots. Archaeological survey and documentary research could help establish where planned plots were laid out and the differences between the west and east sides of the High Street.
- Medieval Roads and Routeways: What were the principal routeways running through Whitchurch? Was there an early east-west route with a crossroads near the church? Was the road from Cublington diverted southwards? Was there an early north-south route farther east passing near the church?

### 8.4 Post Medieval

- Systematic Investigation into Whitchurch's historic buildings, (zones 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7). The use of measured surveys, preferably supported by dendrochronological dating, and documentary research could provide a wealth of information about the development of village and its social and economic history. Such research could well show that buildings are earlier than their list descriptions indicate. A study of 17th century buildings could contribute to the national debate about the "Great Rebuilding". Reports produced by individuals or groups such as BAS, whether as research projects or in connection with planning or listed building applications should be made publicly available through the HER.
- There is a local tradition that Bolbec castle was destroyed during the Civil War. Is there any evidence for this? Might other buildings in Whitchurch have been damaged or destroyed; building surveys might reveal evidence of work done shortly after the war.

- Little London (zone 1) Building surveys and documentary research could reveal more about the origins and history of Little London and the industry there.

#### 8.5 Modern Period

- Churchill's Toyshop at The Firs (zone 1): What really happened here and how far did work done here contribute to the war effort?
- What evidence is there on the ground and in documents for the quarrying and brick-making industry Whitchurch (zone 2)? Did it start before the 19<sup>th</sup> century? Is there any evidence to suggest that quarrying contributed to the building materials in the village?

#### 8.6 Historical research (general)

- A new history of the village with references for its sources would be welcome.

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[http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag\\_dendro/](http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag_dendro/)

VAG Cruck Database:

[http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag\\_cruck/results.cfm?REDSQUIDARCHIVE\\_S\\_51213\\_11C95622-680F-45E0-88BAB588620F2DF1](http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag_cruck/results.cfm?REDSQUIDARCHIVE_S_51213_11C95622-680F-45E0-88BAB588620F2DF1)

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<http://www.bucksinfo.net/whitchurch/village-walk/>

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Roger Bettridge, 'Lipscomb, George (1773–1846)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2009

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## Abbreviations

BAS	Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society
BGS	British Geological Survey
CBS	Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
OD	Ordnance Datum
OS	Ordnance Survey
RCHME	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
VAG	Vernacular Architecture Group
VCH	Victoria County History

## 10 Addresses

Name	Address	Contact Details
Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service.	Countryside and Heritage, Buckinghamshire County Council, Annexe A, County Hall, Bucks, HP22 1UY	Tel. 01296-382927
English Heritage South East Region	English Heritage, Eastgate Court, 195-205 High Street, GUILDFORD, Surrey GU1 3EH	Tel. 01483 252000
Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society	Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society County Museum, Church Street Aylesbury, HP20 2QP	Website: <a href="http://www.bucksas.org.uk">www.bucksas.org.uk</a>
Aylesbury Vale District Council	AVDC, 66 High Street Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1SD	Tel. 01296 585858

## 1 Appendix: Chronology & Glossary of Terms

### 1.1 Chronology (taken from Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past Website)

For the purposes of this study the period divisions correspond to those used by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Historic Environment Records.

Broad Period	Chronology	Specific periods	
Prehistoric	10,000 BC – AD 43	Palaeolithic Mesolithic Neolithic Bronze Age Iron Age	Pre 10,000 BC 10,000 – 4000 BC 4000 – 2350 BC 2350 – 700 BC 700 BC – AD 43
Roman	AD 43 – AD 410	Roman Expedition by Julius Caesar	55 BC
Saxon	AD 410 – 1066	First recorded Viking raids	AD 789
Medieval	1066 – 1536	Battle of Hastings – Norman Conquest	1066
		Wars of the Roses – Start of Tudor period	1485
		Built Environment: Medieval	Pre 1536
Post Medieval	1536 – 1800	Dissolution of the Monasteries	1536 and 1539
		Civil War	1642-1651
		Built Environment: Post Medieval	1536-1850
		Built Environment: Later Post Medieval	1700-1850
		Victorian Period	1837-1901
Modern	1800 - Present	World War I	1914-1918
		World War II	1939-1945
		Cold War	1946-1989
		Built Environment: Early Modern	1850-1945
		Built Environment: Post War period	1945-1980
		Built Environment: Late modern-21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Post 1980



## 1.2 Glossary of Terms

Terms	Definition
Borough	Medieval town that was granted some level of self-government during the medieval period.
Charter (market)	Official charter granted by the sovereign to legitimise a corporate body such as a borough or to grant rights to a percentage of the revenue from a market or fair to a private individual
Conservation Area	An area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance (Planning Act 1990)
Enclosure Award	Acts of Parliament were introduced to enclose (erect fencing) open fields and commons. Main period of enclosure by Act was 1750-1860, carried out on a parish basis.
Evaluation	Archaeological evaluation is made up of a number of different techniques that are tailored to assess the archaeological potential of a site, often before planning permission is given. Evaluation usually involves one or more processes from the following: desk based assessment, test-pitting, fieldwalking, geophysical survey, topographical survey or trial trenching.
Excavation	Archaeological investigation whereby below ground deposits are uncovered, recorded and either removed or preserved in situ. Ultimately destructive.
Find spot	Location where a specific artefact was found
Manor	An official manor is based around a unit of jurisdiction rather than a geographical area and can include small sections of land spread across a parish, or several parishes. Typically a manor requires a lordship in possession of a coat of arms and who must hold a court for the manor. Can date from Saxon to modern period.
Manor [Reputed]	Unofficial manor held as freehold by someone not in possession of a coat of arms (i.e. does not have a title) and who does not have the authority to hold a manorial court. Usually date to medieval period or later.
Mint	Mints were places for the production of coinage and were only granted by the monarchy. Mints were used from Roman times onwards but most commonly in the Saxon and medieval periods.
Posse Comitatus	Record of all able bodied men within a given unit of land for the purposes of military service.
Prescriptive charter (market)	Prescriptive charters were granted to towns that had historically held a market for an extended period of time without an official charter from the monarchy. The given dates then mark the date of the charter rather than the date of the inception of the market.
Trial Trenching	Trial-trenching refers to the archaeological sampling of a site by machine-dug trenches to determine the presence, date extent and condition of any buried archaeological remains in order to decide whether preservation is justified or if further archaeological investigation needs to happen prior to development.
Turnpike Trust	Essentially the privatisation of stretches of roads by Act of Parliament whereby the Trust was charged with the proper maintenance and repair of their allotted road and in return they constructed toll gates and houses along the route to charge travellers.
Watching Brief	A watching brief is the term applied to the task of monitoring non-archaeological work (construction/demolition/quarrying) in order to record and/or preserve any archaeological remains that may be disturbed

## 2 Appendix: HER Records

### 2.1 Monuments HER Report

HER No.	Name	NGR	Period	Summary
0030600000	SP 7996 2081	Bolebec Castle	Medieval	Bolebec Castle, medieval motte and bailey castle
0030600001	SP 79940 20890	Bolebec Castle	12th Century	Medieval 'bailey' earthworks to north reinterpreted as possible motte or ringwork
0030601000	SP 79970 20800	Bolebec Castle	Medieval/Civil War	Historical records of medieval keep demolished in the Civil War
0203503000	SP 7911 1944	Viatores 173A-D	Roman	Possible route of Roman road
0239200000	SP 7915 1965	Folly Farm	Roman	Three Roman ditches recorded in watching brief
0239200002	SP 79115 19381	Folly Farm	Roman	Roman ditch found in evaluation for gas pipeline
0244100000	SP 79800 20400	Chatwell Stream	Roman/Saxon	Local tradition of Roman and Saxon burial ground.
0285100000	SP 79980 20300	Dunn Mill	Medieval/Modern	Historical records of medieval to post-medieval watermill, mill house survives.
0285101000	SP 7998 2028	Dunn Mill	Medieval/Post Medieval	Site of post-medieval windmill, possibly moved to Wingrave before 1824.
0400000000	SP 80050 20950	Market Hill	Medieval	Historical records of site of medieval market
0400001000	SP 80050 20950	Market Hill	Medieval	Tradition of medieval market cross at this location
0430000000	SP 79400 21200	Mill Piece	13th-18th Century	Historical records of medieval to post-medieval windmill
0430800000	SP 8064 2043	Bushmead Road	19th Century	brick and tile-works and lime kiln recorded in field survey and on historical documents
0513100000	SP 80220 21130	Parish	19th Century	Nineteenth century map marks site of limekiln
0538000000	SP 80000 20500	Parish	Medieval	Field-name and historical evidence of medieval parks
0853900000	SP 79434 21076	Oving Road	1957-1991	Royal Observer Corps monitoring post, opened in 1957 and closed in 1991.
0938800000	SP 801 208	Whitchurch	Medieval/Modern	Medieval and post-medieval settlement of Whitchurch, recorded in Domesday Book
0944600000	SP 80458 20450	The Firs	19th Century	house used during the war for experimental development of munitions and known as 'Churchill's Toyshop'.
0945700000	SP 8039 2024	S of The Firs	1939-1945	Site of incendiary bombing raid on Whitchurch during World War II.
0945800000	SP 8023 2094	Kempsons garden	1939-1945	Site of incendiary bombing raid on Whitchurch during World War II.

### 2.2 Landscapes HER Reports

HER No.	Name	NGR	Period	Summary
0640801000	SP 80298 20769	Vicarage garden	19th Century	Nineteenth century vicarage garden shown on historic maps and surviving largely intact.
1161102000	SP 8020 2094	Kempsons	19th Century	Nineteenth century walled garden shown on historic maps

### 2.3 Find Spots

HER	NGR	Location	Period	Summary
0229300000	SP 79990 19300	Near Hardwick Church	Roman	Roman pottery sherds found on ground surface
0239200001	SP 7915 1965	Folly Farm	Roman	pottery sherds found on ground surface and in watching brief
0246300000	SP 7981 2165	Bolebec Castle	Roman	Roman pottery found on ground surface
0246301000	SP 7981 2165	Bolebec Castle	Roman	Roman metalwork found in metal-detecting survey
0246301001	SP 79850 21700	Bolebec Castle	Saxon	Saxon metalwork found in metal-detecting survey
0246302000	SP 79800 21650	Bolebec Castle	Roman	Roman metalwork found in metal-detecting survey
0255900000	SP 79500 19620	Folly Farm	Neolithic/Bronze Age	Neolithic to Bronze Age flint tools found in watching brief
0299800001	SP 80170 20888	The Priory	16th-17th Century	metalwork found in the roof of the old court house
0414100000	SP 80100 20900	Parish	Roman	Roman coin found on ground surface in the early twentieth century
0414101000	SP 80100 20900	Parish	Roman	metalwork found on ground surface in the early twentieth century
0509200000	SP 79820 21500	Bolebec Castle	Medieval	Medieval metalwork found in metal-detecting survey
0510400000	SP 79550 21490	Bolebec Castle	Roman	Roman metalwork found in metal-detecting survey
0541800000	SP 79700 21300	Bolebec Castle	Saxon	Saxon metalwork found in metal-detecting survey
1159501000	SP 80248 20680	Cock Inn	16th-17th Century	painted wall plaster from old Cock Inn

## 2.4 Listed Buildings

EH	Grade	NGR	Address	Period	Summary
341, 2, 219	II	SP 79988 20915	13 Market Hill, Barn	1700-1799	Timber Framed Barn
341, 2, 220	II	SP 79936 20956	15 Market Hill	1600-1699	Timber Framed Cruck House
341, 2, 223	II	SP 79963 20962	10-14 Market Hill	1600-1732	Altered Row House
341, 2, 226	II	SP 79778 21001	11 Oving Road	1713	Brick House
341, 2, 227	II	SP 79719 21002	Townsend Farm barn	1600-1699	Timber Framed Barn
341, 2, 228	II	SP 79734 21021	Townsend Farm barn	1700-1799	Timber Framed Barn
341, 2, 231	II	SP 79935 21002	Whitchurch House	1600-1632	Stone & rubble House
341, 2, 232	II	SP 79703 21061	34 Oving Road	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 189	II	SP 80043 20902	2 Castle Lane	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 190	II	SP 80009 20877	5 Castle Lane	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 191	II	SP 80246 20845	3 Church Lane	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 192	II*	SP 80278 20871	St John's Church	1267-1366	Parish Church
341, 9, 193	II*	SP 80170 20888	Old House & walls	1400-1499	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 194	II	SP 80196 20863	Old House stables	1733-1766	Brick Stables
341, 9, 195	II	SP 80349 20534	7 High St	1767-1799	Brick House
341, 9, 196	II	SP 80277 20645	27 High St & barn	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 197	II	SP 80272 20657	29 High St	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 198	II	SP 80259 20669	31 High St	1830-1840	Brick House
341, 9, 199	II	SP 80252 20675	33 High St	1500-1599	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 200	II	SP 80192 20694	37, 37A High St	1792	Brick Barn
341, 9, 201	II	SP 80210 20718	41 High St	1500-1599	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 202	II	SP 80201 20744	49 High St, milestone	1733-1766	Milestone
341, 9, 203	II	SP 80192 20748	49 High St	1500-1599	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 204	II	SP 80173 20758	Old Barns, High St	1400-1540	Timber Framed Cruck Barn
341, 9, 205	II	SP 80158 20835	53 High St	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 206	II	SP 80141 20868	59 High St	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 207	II	SP 80117 20899	63 & 65 High St	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 208	II	SP 80114 20911	67 High St	1803	Brick House



EH	Grade	NGR	Address	Period	Summary
341, 9, 209	II	SP 80450 20500	White Swan, High St	1800-1832	Brick House
341, 9, 210	II	SP 80375 20581	12 High St	1767-1799	Brick House
341, 9, 211	II	SP 80326 20622	26 High St	1780-1820	Brick House
341, 9, 212	II	SP 80310 20647	28, 30 High St	1600-1632	Jettied Cruck House
341, 9, 213	II	SP 80220 20752	58 High St	1500-1566	Timber Framed Cruck House
341, 9, 214	II	SP 80230 20810	62-68 High St	1733-1799	Row House
341, 9, 215	II*	SP 80192 20822	Priory Hotel, High St	1400-1499	Jettied timber framed house
341, 9, 216	II	SP 80205 20948	Kempson House	1667-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 217	II	SP 80265 20549	Thatched Cottage	1600-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 218	II	SP 80000 20922	11 Market Hill	1567-1632	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 221	II	SP 80103 20928	2 Market Hill	1600-1732	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 222	II	SP 80067 20952	4 Market Hill	1832	Brick House
341, 9, 224	II	SP 80026 20936	1 Oving Road	1567-1699	Timber Framed House
341, 9, 225	II	SP 80032 20957	1 Oving Road barn	1794	Timber Framed Barn
341, 9, 229	II	SP 80039 20974	2 Oving Road	1500-1599	Timber framed jettied house
341, 9, 230	II	SP 80042 20988	Church Hall	1866	Brick School
341, 9, 233	II	SP 80304 20708	1 & 2 Post Office Lane	1900-1999	Dovecote
341, 9, 234	II	SP 80258 20812	4 White Horse Lane	1767-1832	Timber Framed House
341/0/10008	II	SP 80301 20790	The Vicarage	1845	Brick House

### 3 Appendix: Trade Listings and Population Data

#### Trade Directories

Artisan/trades	1830	1844	1853	1864	1877	1883	1895	1903	1911	1920	1935
Lacemaker						1					
Milliner/peroke		1									
Shoe/boot maker	2	3	2	4		3	3	1	1		1
Silk manufacturer			2								
Tailor	1	1	2			1	2	1	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Merchant/Dealer	1830	1844	1853	1864	1877	1883	1895	1903	1911	1920	1935
Brewery	1			1		1					
Dealer	5	9	1	10		5	6	3	5		1
Dealer (animals)						4	1	2			
Dealer (Corn/coal)		2		3		2	3	1	2		
Dealer (cycle/car)									1		1
Draper			3	1							
Grocer									1		2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
Agric/General	1830	1844	1853	1864	1877	1883	1895	1903	1911	1920	1935
Farmer			8	10		8	9	10	8		8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
Professional	1830	1844	1853	1864	1877	1883	1895	1903	1911	1920	1935
Banker				1							
Surgeon/physician	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		2
Teacher									1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
Service/Provisions	1830	1844	1853	1864	1877	1883	1895	1903	1911	1920	1935
Baker	3	4	1	2		2	2	2	1		
Beer Retailer		1	2			1	1	1	1		2
Blacksmith	1	2	2			1	1	1	1		1
Bricklayer/builder	1	1	2	1		1	1	1	1		2
Brick/tile maker	1	1		3		3	2	2	1		
Butcher	2	3	1	2		2	1	2	2		3
Carpenter	2	1	1	3		3	2	1	1		
Carrier			1	7		3	1	1	1		1
Chimney sweep								1	1		
Cooper	2	2	2	2							
Gardener								1	1		
Hotel/Inn							1	1	1		
Laundry						1	1	1	1		
Miller	1	1						1	1		
Plumber/electrician			2								
Pub	4	6	4			4	3	3	3		3
Roofer						1	1	1	1		
Saddler	1	1	1	2		1	1	1	1		1
School			2	3		2					
Wheelwright	1	1									1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>

#### Population Figures

Date	1798	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Population	121	646	714	845	928	930	915	884	799	725	709
Date	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Population	619	625	635	570	NA	609	780	732	NA	NA	857

## 4 Appendix: Historical Consultancy Report

### Background

Whitchurch was undoubtedly a small borough in the thirteenth century, and probably the twelfth. Domesday Book shows it as nothing more than a slightly larger than average rural manor in 1066, and it seems probable that Whitchurch's urban character developed after it became the *caput* of a small Norman barony, that of Hugh de Bolebec. Whether the town grew organically, by attraction of trade to the gates of the small castle which was constructed there early in the eleventh century, or was a deliberate creation, is not certain – a charter for a market and yearly fair was obtained in 1245, but that may have merely regularised an existing situation. No borough charter has survived, but a 1263 extent mentions the borough and burgesses (perhaps twenty of them).

The borough seems to have been short-lived, however, as it is not mentioned in two later extents from 1296 and 1331, or ever again. The market was still active in 1331, but thereafter neither market nor fair is recorded again. It may be that the town's decline was triggered by the inheritance of the Bolebec honour by the earls of Oxford in 1185, after which the castle, previously the principal residence of a baronial family and the centre of its honour, became just another administrative centre in a much larger estate.<sup>i</sup> However its position must always have told against it – halfway between Aylesbury, a town of Anglo-Saxon origins and some importance, and Winslow, and a mere four miles from each.

Throughout the late medieval and modern periods Whitchurch was no more than a large village. In 1798 its occupational structure differed hardly at all from that of the other larger villages in the area: though one third of the adult males were tradesmen or artisans of the usual rural sorts (sawyers, butchers, carpenters, tailors, masons etc), fully two thirds were either farmers, labourers or servants.<sup>ii</sup> It was governed through the usual rural parochial institutions – the churchwardens, constables, overseers, and latterly the vestry – and from the early nineteenth century became part of Aylesbury poor law union, and from 1874 Aylesbury Rural Sanitary District, which in 1895 became Aylesbury Rural District.

The manor of Whitchurch comprised the entire parish. It was held by the de Bolebecs from the conquest until 1185, and then by the de Vere earls of Oxford, who retained it until 1581 (though it spent several periods in the hands of dowager countesses and their second husbands, or of lessees). In 1581 it was sold and thereafter it passed through the hands of a series of local gentry families, among them the Waterhouses (1581-1643), Smiths (1667-95) and Williams (1741-1832).<sup>iii</sup>

Few medieval records have survived. The most informative are likely to be the extents incorporated in the Inquisitions post Mortem of the earls of Oxford who died in 1263 and 1331 (see below). In the modern period a much larger quantity of manorial records are available, together with a certain number of parochial records, but there is no large collection of estate records.

### Medieval Records (to 1500)

#### Manorial records

Labour accounts, with other manors (used as a wrapper of court rolls of St Pauls), 1324: Guildhall Library, Ms25318

Three Inquisitions post Mortem, of the fourth, fifth and sixth earls of Oxford, contain detailed extents of the manor of Whitchurch:

Hugh de Vere, 4th earl, 1263: TNA:PRO, C 132/31/1

- Summarised in *Cal. Inq. p. M., I: Henry III* (London, 1904), no. 586.
- Robert de Vere, 5th earl, 1296: TNA:PRO, C 133/76/7
- Summarised in *Cal. Inq. p. M., 3: Edward I, 1291-1300* (London, 1912), no. 367.
- Robert de Vere, 6th earl, 1331: TNA:PRO, C 135/28/17
- Summarised in *Cal. Inq. p. M., 7: Edward III, 1327-36* (London, 1909), no. 379.

### **Hundred Rolls**

Whitchurch is not mentioned in the 1254-55 or 1279-80 Hundred Rolls. It is mentioned briefly in the 1275-6 Rolls: *Rotuli Hundredorum*, Rec. Com. (London, 1812), i, p. 43.

### **Tax Records**

#### *Containing assessments on named individuals*

- 1327, Twentieth: TNA:PRO, E179/242/63 Part 2, rot. 10 Transcribed in A.C. Chibnall, *Early Taxation Returns*, BRS 14 (1966), p. 135.
- 1332, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/242/91, rot. 4
- 1380, Clerical Tenth and Poll tax: TNA:PRO, E179/35/12, rot. 1, m. 2; rot. 2 Printed in *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae, Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV, Circa A.D. 1291* (Record Commission, 1802), pp. 32-34, 45-48.
- 1406, Clerical Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/38/660, m. 1

#### *Containing communal assessments only*

- 1220, Carucage of 2s.: TNA:PRO, E179/239/241, m. 3 The total assessed is in Chibnall, A.C. (ed.), *Early Taxation Returns*, BRS 14 (1966), p. 113.
- 1327-1340, 8 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/378/10
- 1334, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/378/24, m. 1
- 1334, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/77/23, m. 1 The total assessed is in Chibnall, A.C. (ed.), *Early Taxation Returns*, BRS 14 (1966), p. 103.
- 1336, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/378/27, m. 1
- 1337, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/77/4, m. 1 The total assessed is in R. Glasscock (ed.), *The Lay Subsidy of 1334* (London, 1975), pp.18. also Chibnall, A.C. (ed.), *Early Taxation Returns*, BRS 14 (1966), p. 103.
- 1338, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/6, rot. 2
- 1339, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/7, m. 1
- 1340, 2 Ninths and Fifteenths and Tax on wool: TNA:PRO, E179/77/9, rot. 1d
- 1342, 2 Ninths and Fifteenths and tax on wool: TNA:PRO, E179/77/11, m. 2,
- 1346, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/13, m. 2
- 1347, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/14, m. 2
- 1348, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/15, m. 1

1349, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/16, m. 2  
1351, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/17, m. 2  
1352, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/18, m. 2  
1352, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/21, m. 1  
1353, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/19, m. 2  
1354, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/20, m. 2  
1380, 1½ Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/25, m. 2  
1388, ½ Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/77/27, m. 1  
1393, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/77/28, m. 1  
1393, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/77/29, m. 2  
1395, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/77/30, m. 1  
1398, 1½ Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/31, m. 1  
1432, 1 1/3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/52, m. 2  
1446, 1½ Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/77/65, m. 2 The total assessed is in A.C. Chibnall (ed.), *Early Taxation Returns*, BRS 14 (1966) p. 103.  
1449, ½ Fifteenth and tenth : TNA:PRO, E179/77/66

(The list of taxpayers for 1327 and the assessments for 1220, 1334, 1337 and 1446 are printed in: A.C. Chibnall, *Early Taxation Returns. Taxation of Personal Property in 1332 and later*, BRS, 14 (1966), pp. 103, 113, 135.)

#### **Parish records**

None.

#### **Other Ecclesiastical records**

Inquisition ad Quod Damnum, appropriation of Whitchurch rectory by abbey of Woburn, 1398-9: TNA:PRO, C 143/428/1

#### *Records of the archdeaconry of Buckingham*

Miscellaneous registers 1483-1523: CBS, D-A/We/1 (relate to the whole county).

Printed in E.M. Elvey (ed.), *The Courts of the Archdeaconry of Buckingham 1483-1523*, BRS, 19 (1975).

Visitation books, 1492-1788: CBS, D-A/V (relate to the whole county).

#### **Other Whitchurch records** (not an exhaustive list)

Inquisition into lands of earl of Oxford, mentioning that his tenants had been forced to take a lease of the manor, 1265: *Cal. Inq. Misc. (Chancery), I: Henry III and Edward I (1219-1307)* (London, 1916), p. 191 – more detail can probably be found in the original, TNA:PRO C 145/12 (formerly C. Inq. Misc., file 19, no. 17).

5 deeds, 13C: CBS, D/A/V/15.



Marriage settlement, de la Mare and Herberd (?free peasants), 1320: TNA:PRO C 146/3677.

Debt case, John de Oxford of London v William le Skinner, merchant, of Whitchurch, 1327: TNA:PRO C 241/179/107

Grant of lands in (inter alia) Whitchurch, 1358: TNA:PRO, C 146/3712.

Debt case, rector of Whitchurch v John Somerton of Whitchurch, 1390: TNA:PRO C 241/100/105

Grant of land at Ruggewayhed, Power to Fulford, 1395: TNA:PRO, C 146/3394.

Debt case, John Shadworth of London v William Burdon of Whitchurch, 1401: TNA:PRO C 241/190/71

Deed relating to piece of land by Holywellstream, 1434: Berks RO, D/ED/T189.

## **Early Modern Records (1500-1800)**

### **Manorial records**

- Court rolls (draft), with other manors, 1528-1540: Privately held: enquiries to TNA, National Advisory Services, Steer 1019
- Court roll, 1620-1697: British Library, Add Ch 47370-47374
- Court roll, 1620: CBS, D/BASM 82/1
- Court rolls (4), 1630-1638 (non-consec.): CBS, D/BASM 82/2-5
- Court roll, 1646 (non-consec.): CBS, D/BASM 82/6
- Court rolls, (2) 1657-1661: CBS, D/BASM 82/7-8
- Court roll, 1668-1669 (non-consec.): CBS, D/BASM 82/9
- Court book, 1710-1726: CBS, AR 92/1986/1
- Court roll, 1710-1712 (non-consec.): CBS, D/BASM 82/10-11
- Court roll, 1722: CBS, D/BASM 82/12
- Court books (2) (indexed), 1738-1789: CBS, AR 92/1986/2-3
- Quit rents (2 items), with some later notes of admissions, 1785: CBS, D/BASM 82/16-17
- Court book, 1790-1806: CBS, D 132/1
- Admissions and surrenders (bundle), 1803-1850: CBS, D/PC/310
- Court books (3), 1808-1873: CBS, D/BASM 82/13-15
- Minute book, 1858-1888: CBS, AR 92/1986/4
- Court books (2), 1873-1935: CBS, D 132/2-3
- Notice of holding court (2), 1875-1881: CBS, D 58/7-8
- Fee book, 1907-1928: CBS, D/PC/311

### **Tax records**

#### *Containing assessments on named individuals*

- 1523, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/91, m. 2, m. 3
- 1524, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/104, rot. 4 Printed in A.C. Chibnall and A. Vere Woodman. (eds.), *Subsidy Roll for the County of Buckingham Anno 1524*, Bucks. Rec. Soc. 8 (1950), pp. 70-1 (a composite transcription with E 179/78/105)
- 1525, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/102
- 1525, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/105, rot. 6d
- 1541, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/122
- 1543, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/127, rot. 7
- 1544, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/79/285 Part 6, rot. 3d
- 1545, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/134, m. 2

1545, Benevolence: TNA:PRO, E179/78/140, rot. 3d  
1546, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/148, m. 2  
1547, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/78/149, m. 1  
1549, Subsidy ('relief'): TNA:PRO, E179/79/163, rot. 11  
1550, Subsidy ('relief'): TNA:PRO, E179/79/164, rot. 4  
1551, Subsidy ('relief'): TNA:PRO, E179/79/165, rot. 5  
1559, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/79/186, m. 2  
1572, Subsidy: CBS, D/DV/6/8.  
1594, 3 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/79/217, rot. 3  
1599, 3 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/79/242, rot. 4  
1600, 3 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/79/240, rot. 3  
1622, Free gift: TNA:PRO, E179/79/270A, rot. 3  
1625, 3 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/79/278, rot. 2d  
1628, 5 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/80/286, rot. 3  
1628, 5 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/80/295, rot. 1d  
1641, 4 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/80/299, rot. 2  
1641, 4 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/80/300, rot. 5  
1641, 2 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/80/303, rot. 5d  
1663, 4 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/79/285 Part 3, rot. 5  
1664, 4 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/80/337, rot. 4  
c1780-1832, Land Tax Assessments: CBS, Q/RPL

*Containing communal assessments only*

1543, 4 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/78/111  
1544, 4 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/78/116, rot. 1  
1547, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/78/143, rot. 5  
1553, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/172, m. 1  
1555, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/176, m. 1  
1558, Fifteenth and tenth: TNA:PRO, E179/79/182, rot. 2d  
1587, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/204, rot. 2d  
1588, 2 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/203, rot. 1d  
1591, 4 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/208 Part 1, rot. 2  
1593, 6 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/211, rot. 2  
1596, 6 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/215, rot. 2d  
1598, 6 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/222, rot. 2

1598, 3 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/79/229, rot. 3  
 1599, 6 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/224, rot. 2  
 [1604, 8 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/242A, rot. 2  
 1605, 8 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/243, rot. 2  
 1606, Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/261, rot. 2  
 1609, 3 Subsidies: TNA:PRO, E179/388/12 Part 15  
 1610, 6 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/255, rot. 1d  
 1624, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/271, rot. 1d  
 1625, 3 Fifteenths and tenths: TNA:PRO, E179/79/273, rot. 1d  
 1637, Ship money: TNA:PRO, E179/244/2, m. 6  
 1637, Ship money: TNA:PRO, E179/273/5, m. 6  
 1637, Ship money: TNA:PRO, E179/275/2, m. 10  
 1639, Ship money: TNA:PRO, E179/244/1A, m. 4  
 1657, Assessment for army and navy: TNA:PRO, E179/80/322, m. 2  
 1658, Assessment for army and navy: TNA:PRO, E179/80/321  
 1658, Assessment for army and navy: TNA:PRO, E179/80/325, m. 2  
 1658, Assessment for army and navy: TNA:PRO, E179/80/326  
 1659, Assessment for army and navy: TNA:PRO, E179/80/328  
 1660, Assessment for army and navy: TNA:PRO, E179/80/329  
 1660-7, Assessment of £70,000: TNA:PRO, E179/299/7, m. 10  
 1667, Poll tax: TNA:PRO, E179/80/343, m. 2  
 1671, Subsidy: TNA:PRO, E179/299/8 Part 1, m. 5

## **Parish records**

### *Registers*

Baptisms, marriages and burials, 1653-20C: CBS, PR 230/1/1-15  
 Bishops Transcripts 1575-1842: CBS, D-A/T/183, 184/1, 203/3, 224/6  
 Archdeacon's Transcripts (19C copy), 1575-6, 1601-6, 1609-23, 1627-41: CBS, D58/16

### *Other*

Glebe Terriers, 1607, 1674, 1703: CBS, D-A/Gt/10/3/1-3

The 1607 terrier is printed in M. Reed, *Buckinghamshire Glebe Terriers 1578-1640*, BRS 30 (1997), p. 252-3.

Glebe terriers, 1763, 1822: CBS, PR 230/3/1-3

Part of the 1822 terrier has been printed in Holloway, *History of Whitchurch*, pp. 15-16.

Glebe Terriers, 1700, 1724, 1780, 1822, 1828: Lincoln Diocesan Registry xiv/57 (1601)

Churchwardens' account book, 1710-85: CBS, PR 230/5/1

Some extracts have been printed in Holloway, *History of Whitchurch*, pp. 11-13.

Misc bills and accounts (11 items), 1788-9, 1826: CBS, PR 230/5/4

Misc Constables' accounts (6 items), 1788-9: CBS, PR 230/19/1

Misc Overseers accounts, bills, papers (19 items), 1788-9: CBS, PR 230/12

4 settlement certificates, 3 removal orders, 1719, 1764-85, 1811: CBS, PR 230/13

Copy Inclosure Award, 1772, with details of pre-inclosure holdings: CBS, PR 230/26/1-3

Inclosure Award (no map), 1772: CBS, IR 144A

Inclosure calculations, with names of proprietors and details of holdings, 1771: CBS, D-X/631/6

### **Ecclesiastical records and returns of religion**

#### *Probate*

Apart from wills proved in the PCC, which are not considered here, Whitchurch wills would have been proved in the court of the archdeaconry of Buckingham or, very occasionally, in the Consistory Court of Lincoln. No Buckingham archdeaconry wills survive from before the last decades of the fifteenth century, however. All pre-1660 wills are indexed in:

J. Hunt, R. Bettridge & A. Toplis, *Index to Probate Records of the Archdeaconry Court of Buckingham 1483-1660 and of the Buckinghamshire Peculiars 1420-1660*, BRS 32 (2001).

For later periods indexes to probate records of the archdeaconry court of Buckingham are available at the CBS.

#### *Other records of the archdeaconry of Buckingham*

Miscellaneous registers 1483-1523: CBS, D-A/We/1 (relate to the whole county).

Printed in E.M. Elvey (ed.), *The Courts of the Archdeaconry of Buckingham 1483-1523*, BRS, 19 (1975).

Visitation books, 1492-1788: CBS, D-A/V (relate to the whole county).

#### *Other records*

Church inspection, 1637: CBS, D/A/V/15

Inventory of church goods, 1547-58: TNA:PRO, E 117/1/37

Parliamentary survey of Whitchurch vicarage, 1647-56: Lambeth Palace Library, COMM/12A/3/105.

1563, 1605 diocesan returns: A. Dyer and D.M. Palliser (eds.), *The Diocesan Population Returns for 1563 and 1603*, Records of Social and Economic History, N.S. 31 (2005), pp. 237, 362.

Whitchurch was **not** listed in the 1676 Compton Census [Anne Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census of 1676 : a Critical Edition*, Records of Social and Economic History, NS 10 (1986), p. 306.]

### **Military surveys and musters**

1522 Military Survey: A.C. Chibnall (ed.), *The Certificate of Musters for Buckinghamshire in 1522*, Buckinghamshire Record Society 17 (1973), pp. 173-4.



1535 muster roll: TNA:PRO E 101/58/16 (transcribed in R.T. Baldwin, *The Certificate of Musters for Buckinghamshire, 1535* (unpub. transcript, PRO Library, 1989)).

1798 Posse Comitatus: I.F.W. Beckett, *The Buckinghamshire Posse Comitatus 1798*, Buckinghamshire Record Society 22 (1985), pp. 209-10, 220.

Militia lists, 1810, 1812-13, 1814 (x2), 1815: CBS, L/M/14/34, 15/40, 50, 16/39, 17/39, 18/39

#### **Title deeds** (not an exhaustive list)

- lease of demesne lands to 3 husbandmen, 1607: TNA:PRO, E44/162
- survey and sale particulars of Creslow Pastures, 1649: TNA:PRO, E 317/Bucks/11, E 320/C6
- title deeds and miscellaneous papers (Bowler, Wilson papers), 1781-1910: CBS, D58/1-9
- 8 deeds of Hawtrey family estate, 1580-1602: London Metropolitan Archives, Acc/0249/
- misc. deeds, 1653-1915: CBS, D/PC/118-121, 154/1-3
- deeds of Rowland family estate, 1677-1749: CBS, D/X760/1-37, 43
- 7 deeds, copyholds in Whitchurch, 1689-1796: CBS, D/X276/64-68
- 4 deeds, 1691-1796: CBS, D97/102,
- settlement of 10a in Whitchurch fields, 1700: CBS, D12/44
- misc deeds, 1713-59: CBS, D72/46-51,
- 8 deeds, freehold estate, 1716-56: CBS, D/X282/2/1-7, D/X282/3
- conveyance of 20a, 1715: CBS, D/X331/2
- 3 copyhold admissions, 1731-48: CBS, PR 230/28/1-3
- deeds of Chandos beerhouse, 1746-1897: CBS, DE/X122/1-25
- settlement of, inter alia, land in Whitchurch, ?19C: CBS, D124/16
- sundry title deeds (details in CBS catalogue): CBS, D/5B, D72/46-51, D/OC/118-121A, D/X73, D/X171/47-58, D/X303, ST 116

#### **Other Whitchurch records**

##### *Lists of residents*

Protestation Return (transcript), 1641: CBS, M14

Protestation Return (original), 1641: House of Lords, HL/PO/JO/10/1/78

John Wilson (ed.), *Buckinghamshire Contributions for Ireland 1642 ...*, Buckinghamshire Record Society 21 (1983), pp. 61-2.

##### *Chancery, Star Chamber, Exchequer records (not an exhaustive list)*

Nothing noteworthy seen

##### *Miscellaneous*

- Antiquarian papers of G.W. Wilson relating to Whitchurch, 19C: CBS, D 58/10-23

### **County records with Whitchurch entries**

- Return of vintners, innholders and alehousekeepers in Bucks (transcript), 1577: CBS, D-X423/1. The full list of names can be found on-line, in the A2A catalogue.

- Registers of licensed victuallers, 1753-1828: CBS, Q/RLV

- Land Tax Assessments, c1780-1832: CBS, Q/RPL

Quarter Sessions - for Whitchurch references in these, see: W. le Hardy and G.L. Reckitt (eds),

*County of Buckingham Calendar to the Sessions Records, 1678-1733*, 8 vols

(Aylesbury, 1933-87).

Indexes for later periods are available at CBS.

### **Maps**

Tracing of working enclosure map, c.1771: CBS, IR 144b

(The original inclosure award map is not held by CBS)

There are also two 19C estate maps.

### **Trade Directories**

No pre-nineteenth-century Directory has an entry for Whitchurch.

### **Local Newspapers**

No newspapers were printed in Buckinghamshire until the nineteenth century.

### **Modern Records (Post 1800)**

Due to the volume of records existing from this period only those likely to cast a light housing by-laws and the installation of services are recorded in accordance with the 'Brief for Historical Documentary Research'. A list of useful secondary sources covering the period is also included.

#### **Housing by-laws and Installation of services**

No housing by-laws have been found, nor any records which apparently relate to the installation of services, though it may be that some references to these matters can be found in the following records of Aylesbury RDC and its predecessor bodies (the list contains very nearly all of the records which have been lodged at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies).

Records of Aylesbury RDC and its predecessor bodies

### **Whitchurch parish**

Copies of Vestry minute books (and land tax assessments 1874-88), 1820-1912: CBS, D58/17-20

Churchwardens' minute book, 1846-76: CBS, PR 230/5/2

### **Aylesbury Rural Sanitary Authority** (in existence 1875-95)

Minute book, 1882-92: CBS, DC2/39/1

Minutes, 1892-4: CBS, DC2/1/1

### **Aylesbury Rural District Council**

Minute books, 1895-1968: CBS, DC2/1/1-47

Minute books of Highways Committee, 1896-1930: CBS, DC2/1/48-52

Minute books of Sanitary Committee, 1924-1932: CBS, DC2/1/53-55

Minute book of Rating Committee, 1927-1939: CBS, DC2/1/56

Treasurer's general ledgers, 1897-1971: CBS, DC2/11/1-18

Whitchurch parochial poor rate book, 1926, : CBS, DC4/14/175

Whitchurch parochial valuation list, 1912-29: CBS, DC2/15/54

#### **Installation of services**

##### *Water*

No records have been found relating to the introduction of a water supply in the town. Kelly's Directory of 1939 states that mains water was available, but it is not clear where the supply came from (it was certainly not the Chiltern Hills Spring Water Co, which supplied Aylesbury but went no further north). At some point the supply would have become the responsibility of the Buckinghamshire Water Board (which became part of Anglian Water in 1973). The only records of the Board which have been found are:

Seal book, 1942-5: CBS, AR 89/2006

Map of Bucks Water Board area; Scale: 1 inch to 1 mile, 1960: CBS, DC13/38/12

Misc. records rel. to engineering projects, incl. contracts, bills of quantities and specifications, 1961-73: CBS, D/X 1370.

##### *Electricity*

No records have been found relating to the introduction of an electricity supply, but Kelly's directory for 1939 states that a supply was available. It may have come from the Aylesbury borough works – for which no records have been found – or from the Northampton Electric Light Co, which certainly supplied nearby Winslow and other villages in north Bucks. The whereabouts of that company's archives is not known, but the following has been found:

Signed minute book of general and board meetings, 1936-48: Univ of Nottingham Dept of MSS, BEN 1-3.

Companies Registration Office file: TNA:PRO, BT 31/31154/28640

#### *Gas*

It is not known whether or when Whitchurch received a gas supply.

#### *Telephone*

The telephone exchange opened in 1924.

#### **Some secondary sources**

- Joseph Holloway, *Two Lectures on the History of Whitchurch* (Whitchurch, 1889). Anecdotal.

- G.W. Wilson, *Chronicles of Whitchurch, Bucks.* (Aylesbury, 1909). Anecdotal, not very useful.

Both can be found on-line at [bucksinfo.net/whitchurch/assets/other/history-of-whitch](http://bucksinfo.net/whitchurch/assets/other/history-of-whitch).

#### **Key issues and recommendations for further study**

Whitchurch's urban history was short, and ended at such an early date that few sources are available to study it. Nothing survives from the period of its foundation, but there are some from the period of its decline - principally the two, possibly three, extents which were included in the Inquisitions post Mortem of three earls of Oxford. These have never been published, or even used in any study, and could no doubt cast some interesting light on a failed borough, especially in combination with the scraps of evidence that could be collected by a determined trawl through national records and those of neighbouring places (for example, the 1327 London lawsuit in which the defendant is described as a merchant of Whitchurch).

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<sup>i</sup> *V.C.H. Bucks*, iii (1925), p. 444; *Cal. Inq. p. M., I: Henry III* (London, 1904), no. 586 (1263 extent); *Cal. Inq. p. M., 3: Edward I, 1291-1300* (London, 1912), no. 367 (1296 extent); *Cal. Inq. p. M., 7: Edward III, 1327-36* (London, 1909), p. 379 (1331 extent); M. Reed, *A History of Buckinghamshire* (Chichester, 1993), pp. 108-10.

<sup>ii</sup> I.F.W. Beckett, *The Buckinghamshire Posse Comitatus 1798*, Buckinghamshire Record Society 22 (1985), pp. 209-10.

<sup>iii</sup> *V.C.H. Bucks*, iii (1925), pp. 442-9.