



# Historic Newbury Fit for the Future

The Newbury Historic Character Study



West Berkshire Archaeology Service  
2006



## The Newbury Historic Character Study

The importance of Newbury's historic environment has long been recognised. Its history, as a planned Norman market town that prospered as a significant cloth production centre in the late medieval period and was subject to a variety of economic and social pressures, has left its mark on the physical environment that survives into the 21st century. Ensuring that the town retains its unique character, as well as allowing it to evolve and change to meet new demands relies on a proper understanding of its history and the significance of the resource handed down over many generations.

The Newbury Historic Character Study is an attempt to define the historic environment in the town and to describe its historic character, as well as its archaeological significance. Settlement form, building materials and architectural style have been considered and historic urban character areas have been mapped for the study area.

West Berkshire Council commissioned the study, which was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology. Throughout the project the work and results have been subject to review and comment by a Steering Group comprised of representatives from Newbury Town Council, Newbury Civic Society, English Heritage, West Berkshire Council Planning Policy team and West Berkshire Council Heritage Service. Their support of and contribution to the project was significant and extremely helpful.

This report has been prepared by West Berkshire Council's archaeology team with valuable input from a range of organisations and individuals, whose contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

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The layout and design of the report was undertaken by West Berkshire Council's Graphics team.



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# Historic Newbury Fit for the Future:

## The Newbury Historic Character Study

*'Characterisation is not an academic exercise but a vital tool for developers and planners to make sure that a place's historical identity contributes properly to everyone's Quality of Life.'*<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Newbury is fortunate that much of the historic fabric, in terms of its buried archaeological resource, its historic buildings and its street pattern, has survived. This is in stark contrast with many towns of similar size and character that have suffered from insensitive development in the latter half of the 20th Century. The task ahead is to ensure that Newbury continues to grow and prosper without destroying its historic character.



*Newbury Town Centre from the south east*

<sup>1</sup> 'Characterisation' English Heritage website 2004 [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)



*Northern end of Bartholomew Street*

*'Communities without character, which lack historical reference points, where heart and soul are destroyed, where people are not involved in changes,... are hard to make sustainable communities. Communities which understand and value their past, and make it relevant to their present, are communities with a sustainable future.'<sup>2</sup>*

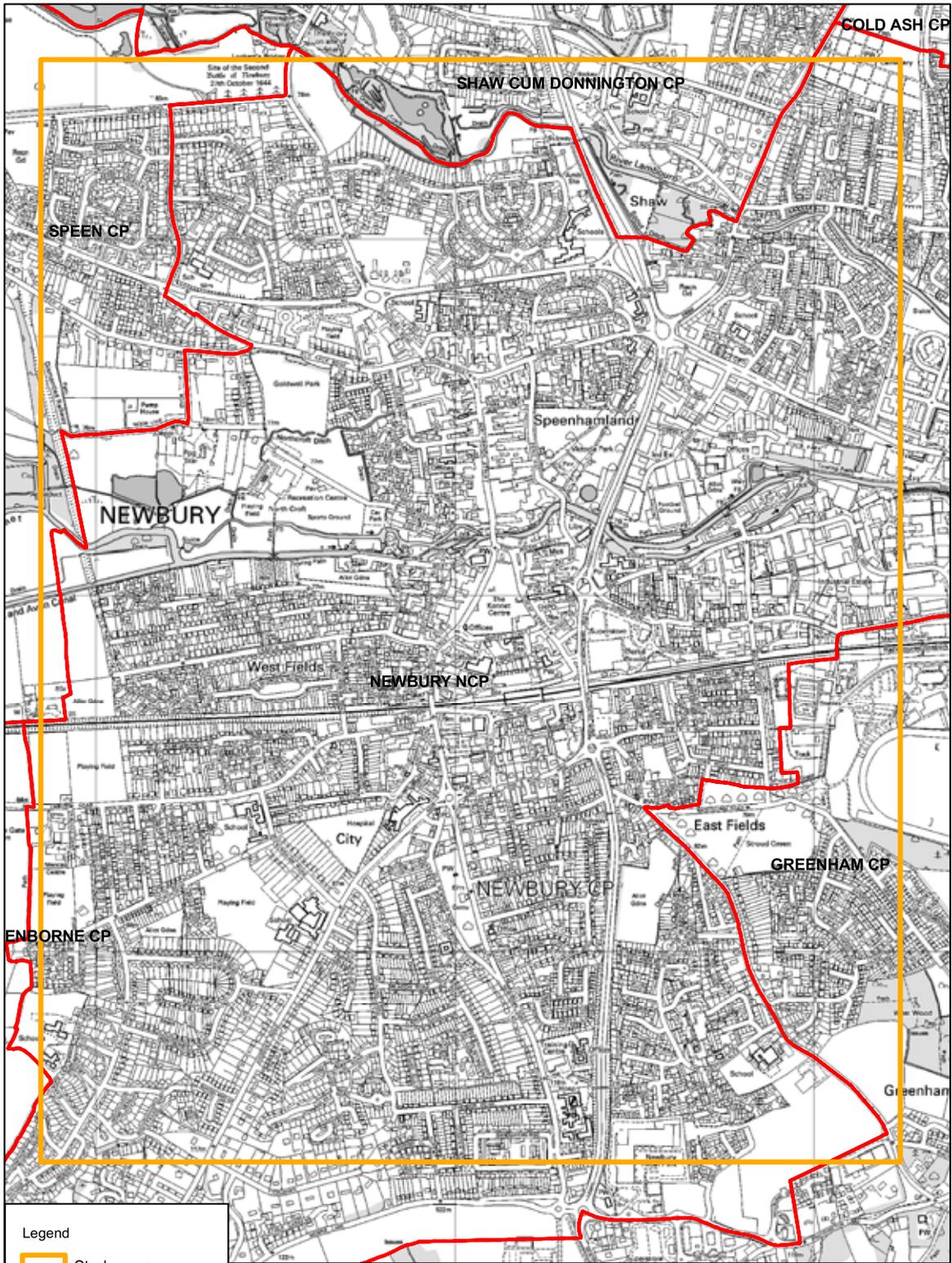
*'The threat is particularly severe in the smaller market towns which largely escaped earlier waves of redevelopment, many or them predominantly of a Georgian or early Victorian character'<sup>3</sup>*

This report describes and summarises a detailed study which recorded, analysed and characterised the historic environment within the town of Newbury. It draws from the Newbury Historic Character Study 'Assessment Report' produced on behalf of West Berkshire Council by Oxford Archaeology<sup>4</sup>, but also adds interpretation and highlights areas and issues of significance. It was decided that the area included in the study would be a rectangular area encapsulating Newbury as it existed in 1900. Some of the more modern suburbs were therefore not included.

<sup>2</sup> 'Conservation Led Regeneration; The work of English Heritage' English Heritage 1998.

<sup>3</sup> 'Shopping in Historic Towns' English Heritage

<sup>4</sup> 'Newbury Historic Character Study: Assessment Report' Oxford Archaeology 2005.



**Newbury Historic Character Study - The study area**

The Study was underpinned by the philosophy that the historic environment is not an obstacle to be overcome when planning for new development within an historic town, rather an understanding of the historic environment of a place can lead to better quality development that enhances and supports the special character of that place.

*'The right approach is to be found in examining the context for any proposed development in great detail and through relating the new building to its surroundings through an informed character appraisal.'* <sup>5</sup>

Characterisation of the historic environment as a tool for planning and management has been increasingly used in recent years, an approach developed and advocated by English Heritage. The role for the historic environment in economic and development activity was fully recognised in 'Power of Place', the English Heritage led review of historic environment policy: -

*'The historic environment is the context within which new development happens.... An early understanding of the character and value of the historic environment prevents conflict and maximises the contribution historic assets can make to future economic growth and community well-being.'* <sup>6</sup>



*17th century cottages on the canal at West Mills*

Although no single definition of historic urban characterisation has been produced it can be summarised as the process of **recording, analysing and interpreting a wide range of historic sources to develop an understanding of the factors which have created 'distinctiveness' and 'sense of place'.**

<sup>5</sup> 'Building in Context: New development in historic areas' English Heritage and CABE 2001.

<sup>6</sup> 'Power of Place: The future of the historic environment' English Heritage 2000.

It is important that any development schemes for Newbury are sustainable, not just economically, but also in terms of social well-being, community cohesion and sense of place. Characterisation can help bring sustainability issues to the heart of decision-making within a historic town.

*'We build sustainability; integrating the past with the future through enlightened policies' <sup>7</sup>*

## The Broader Context

A great deal of work has gone into the production of the 'Newbury 2025 Vision'<sup>8</sup>. This has involved much public consultation and debate. One of the key issues recognised in this exercise is the need to ensure that the historic character of the town is not needlessly or thoughtlessly lost as a result of development pressures. The 2025 Vision recognises the value of the Historic Environment, but also reflects :-

*'At present the historic environment, which is a significant asset, is not necessarily being given the attention it deserves.'*



The Newbury Historic Character Study will inform a number of the actions contained in the Newbury 2025 action plan, especially the delivery of a Development Framework and Town Design Statement, and will help deliver several of the Vision's key objectives. Of special relevance is the objective :-

*'Character – to build on Newbury's unique historic character and identity'*

The 'Newbury Town Design Statement' produced by the Town Council<sup>9</sup> provides a broad overview of the character of the whole of the current town and includes an account of the surviving historic features. However, a more detailed assessment of the historic character of the town will help guide and inform the development of design guides, planning policy and development strategy.

**Early 19th century villa in Donnington Square**

<sup>7</sup> 'Conservation-led Regeneration: The work of English Heritage' English Heritage 1998

<sup>8</sup> 'Newbury 2025: A Vision for Newbury Town Centre' West Berkshire Council 2003

<sup>9</sup> 'Newbury Town Design Statement' (Draft Document) Newbury Town Council 2004.

The only assessment of the archaeology and history for Newbury remains that produced by Grenville Astill in the middle of the 1970s<sup>10</sup>. Although this report contains many useful insights it was prepared over 25 years ago and was never intended to be more than a summary of the level of knowledge at the time of publication. Since then further work has been carried out including some significant archaeological investigations, many developments have taken place in the town and our understanding of historic towns has developed.

## Archaeology and History of Newbury

*'Newbury remains a Market Town with an impressive collection of historic buildings, although its character is changing with the rapid increase of light industry and commerce.'*<sup>11</sup>

Newbury as a town has its origins in the period following the Norman Conquest, a period of economic growth when new landlords sought to gain maximum advantage from the development of new market centres. However, archaeological investigation has shown that people have been active in the Newbury landscape for over 10,000 years. It is worth briefly considering the archaeological and historic background to the town and its landscape.

### Prehistoric Period (500,000 BC – AD 43)

Archaeological evidence of national significance relating to activity during the Mesolithic period has been recovered in Newbury town centre. However, there is little evidence that there was significant settlement during the rest of the prehistoric period.

Evidence for a significant level of activity during the Mesolithic period was first identified during the 19th and early 20th centuries and confirmed by excavations within the town centre during the second half of the 20th century. Finds dating to this period have been found elsewhere near to the rivers.

The presence of Mesolithic hunters in the Kennet Valley is well established with many important sites found further east around Thatcham and west towards Kintbury.



*Archaeological field evaluation at Highfield Avenue*

<sup>10</sup> 'Historic Towns in Berkshire: an archaeological appraisal' G. C. Astill 1978.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

From the Neolithic period onwards the Newbury area does not seem to have been a particular focus for activity although isolated finds of stone implements and metalwork have been made, often close to the rivers. The only site of later prehistoric date which has been identified is an Iron Age farming settlement on the western edge of the modern town at Enborne Gate Farm, which appears to have continued in use into the early Roman period.

### **Roman Period (AD 43 – AD 410)**

Newbury was not a town during the Roman period despite the possibility of a river crossing. The main Roman Road in the area was Ermin Street which ran from Silchester to Cirencester through Speen. It has been suggested that Speen was the site of a settlement called 'Spinae', but little archaeological evidence has been found to confirm this.

Finds dating from the Roman period have been found across Newbury, mainly in the form of single coins or pieces of pottery. Many of these are from the historic core of the town, although this is likely to be because most excavation has been carried out in that area. Significant finds have been recorded in three areas of the town. A cemetery was found in Shaw churchyard in 1878 and pottery kilns and a possible cornmill were excavated nearby. Another cemetery was found in the 19th century on the site now occupied by SCATS/Sainsbury's. A possible Roman building was also found in the vicinity of Salcombe Road to the west of the town centre in 1907.

### **Early Medieval (Anglo Saxon) Period (AD 410 – AD 1066)**

Very little evidence relating to the early medieval period has been recorded, but by the time of the Domesday Book (1086) there was a manor Ulvritone, somewhere in the Newbury area, although its location remains unknown.

### **Later Medieval Period (AD 1066 – AD 1550)**

The first mention of Newbury, then 'Neoburiae', comes from a land grant in 1079. Borough status was granted in 1189 and by 1204 there was a market, corn mill and fulling mill. Newbury acquired some importance in the 12th century when King Stephen besieged its castle. The location of the castle, once thought to be close to Newbury Wharf, has not been discovered. St Bartholomew's Hospital, which stood just outside the town on what is now Newtown Road, was granted a fair in 1215, another sign of prosperity. In the later part of the 13th century documentary evidence suggests that the town was in decline, reviving in the late 14th century.

The focal point of the town of Newbury is a crossing point on the River Kennet. During the later medieval period there was a timber bridge, but it is possible that crossing was originally via a ford. This crossing marks the junction of two roads from the

south, one from Winchester/Andover and one from Kingsclere/Basingstoke, which are likely to have been established early in the town's development. On the opposite side of the river a single road, Northbrook Street, leads northward, intersecting with the important road from London to Bristol to the north of the town. This inverted Y-shaped plan can be distinguished on all available historic maps and was fixed at an early date in the town's history.

*Some of the medieval burials excavated in 2004 at Pound Street*



Near the river at the north-west corner of Bartholomew Street is St Nicolas Church, founded in the Norman period, but rebuilt in the 16th century. It is possible that the first settlement at Newbury consisted of a small number of houses close to the church, possibly with a green, and surrounded by fields. Land south of the river lies on the gravel terrace, which would have been more favourable for settlement than the floodplain to the north. Newbury soon established itself as a market town. It is probable that the market area was originally larger than present, extending towards the church.

The plot layout, which can be seen on historic maps, suggests that Northbrook Street was set out as a planned extension to the town. The east side of the street has a pattern of narrow regular burgage plots, running back to a stream which formed the eastern boundary. Recent archaeological work has shown that land reclamation was carried out there in the 12th century. The plots on the west side of Northbrook Street are not as regular. They seem to have begun as larger areas which were subdivided in an irregular fashion. The two sides may represent different phases of development of the street or result from the lack of a clear boundary line to the west.

### **Post-Medieval Period (AD 1550 – 1900)**

Little expansion took place during the early post-medieval period, but the town appears to have extended northwards to include Speenhamland. There was also some growth on the west side of the town, near to the mills. Many of the older buildings in the core of the town were rebuilt, or at least refronted during this period. These have survived well and there are many well-preserved Listed Buildings in the town centre.



Extract from Rocque's 1761 Map of Berkshire

During the 16th century, Newbury was a prosperous woollen cloth producing town and the Winchcombe family, who included Jack of Newbury, was among the most prominent merchants. Another cloth producing family, the Dolmans, acquired Shaw Manor and built the present house, which was finished in 1581. However the dominance of the cloth industry was short lived and had declined by the beginning of the 17th century.

Newbury played an important part in the Civil War. In 1643 the First Battle of Newbury took place in the south-west of Newbury and in 1644 the Second Battle of Newbury was fought around Speen and Shaw, on the north side of the town. Neither battle produced a clear victor. Donnington Castle, just north of the town, was a Royalist stronghold.



*St Nicolas Church, almost entirely rebuilt in the 16th century*

Newbury's cloth industries did not revive following the Civil War. To assist the poor, wealthy individuals established a large number of almshouses. St Bartholomew's Hospital had become a grammar school following the Reformation, but almshouses had been built on the site in 1618. Pearce's almshouses in West Mills were established in 1671, but probably occupied existing buildings. Raymond's almshouses were built off Newtown Road in 1676 and these were followed by Coxedd and Hunt almshouses in West Mills and Robinson's and Child's in Northcroft Lane around 1700.

The economic position in the town began to improve from the late 17th century when Bath began to gain popularity as a health resort. Newbury lay midway between Bath and London, making it a regular overnight stop, particularly following some improvements in roads arising from the Turnpike Acts between 1707 and 1756. The fast mail coach service was introduced in 1784. A number of coaching inns, mostly in Speenhamland, into which Newbury had expanded by 1700, opened to service this trade.



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Ordnance Survey 1st Edition c.1880

Newbury's prosperity received a further boost in 1725 when work on the Kennet Navigation was completed, making the river navigable between Reading and Newbury. A basin and wharves were constructed on the east side of the town centre to handle bulky materials and food. The Kennet and Avon Canal was built between 1794 and 1810 to extend this link to Bath.

The railway reached Newbury in 1847 when a branch line from Reading to Hungerford was opened, linking the town to London. The railway's rapid delivery times soon led to its out competing the canal for goods. Newbury began to expand southwards and along the line of the railway. Despite the improved infrastructure and the growth of some local industries Newbury remained predominantly a market town.

### **Modern Period (AD 1900 – Present)**

By 1900, when the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map had been published, two additional railway lines had been constructed, one from Southampton to the Midlands and a branch line serving Lambourn. Elsewhere in the town, house building and other development had continued slowly. Subsequent OS map editions chart the gradual expansion of the town. The edition published around 1920 is the first to show Newbury racecourse, which was built in 1905. During World War I, the racecourse was taken over for military purposes.

During World War II, the racecourse was again requisitioned by the military. Greenham Common was also requisitioned: initially as a British base, but later occupied by the US 101st Airborne Division. Unlike the racecourse it was not returned to civilian use in the years immediately following 1945.

The earliest post-war OS map shows the town in the late 1950s. Work had begun on construction of the housing estates to the south of the town around Andover Road and west of Newtown Road, which were for workers at the newly opened research stations at



*Newbury Library, one of Newbury's most prominent modern buildings*



Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 1899

Aldermaston and Harwell. The Trees Estates south of the River Lambourn and the estates north and east of Shaw were also under construction. Newbury College opened on the east side of Oxford Road in 1948. The site closed in 2001, with the college moving to the south of the town.

By 1980, Newbury had expanded almost to its present extent within the area covered by this study. Dramatic changes had occurred within its transport network, including the closure of the railway lines to Didcot and the Lambourn Valley. Construction of the A34 relief road, now the A339, had begun in the late 1950s and was completed by the section to Monks Lane in 1979. Newbury now extends into the parishes of Greenham, Speen and Shaw cum Donnington while in the east it merges with Thatcham. To the west the boundary of Enborne parish still marks the limit of the town.

## The Built Environment

### Settlement Form

The core of Newbury is built around the inverted Y-shape of Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street converging at the bridge over the River Kennet, which leads to Northbrook Street on the north side. This street is terminated at the Broadway by Oxford Street and London Road, which were part of the main road from London to Bath until the second half of the 20th century.

The main streets in the historic core of the town form a self-contained block. There are few routes leading out into the rest of the town and these are generally fairly narrow. However, the width of the main streets, the open area of Market Place and restrictions on through traffic help to generate an open atmosphere. Modern development has, in the main, been sympathetic to the post-medieval character along the street frontages, although the layout of plots, established during the medieval and early post-medieval periods, has not survived as well in the redevelopment work to the rear.

Communication routes dominate the plan of the town. The A4, London to Bath road, has been re-routed further north, along Western Avenue which ends at the A339. Built to divert traffic away from the town centre, the A339 north-south route runs along the east side of the town centre, forming a significant physical and visual barrier on the eastern side of the historic core.

The town also includes three marked east-west features, which have influenced its development. To the south of the town centre is the railway line, while the River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon Canal run through the middle. The River Lambourn in the north used to separate the settlement at Shaw from Newbury itself, but the village has now been encircled by modern development.

The rate of housing development, which began in the 19th century, increased rapidly during the second half of the 20th century and there are now extensive estates north of the town centre and to its south and south-west. The housing developments share a



*Newbury Lock and the bridge on Northbrook Street*

number of features, which give a distinctive character to the town. Gardens, mostly to the rear of properties, are large and there are large numbers of mature trees, often in gardens rather than along roadsides. The road layout frequently employs curves and there are many cul-de-sacs. The overall impression of the estates is of garden suburbs.

### **Standing Buildings**

Newbury contains a large number of significant historic buildings. The contribution made by standing buildings to the character of the town lies not only in their individual features, but, perhaps more importantly, in their group value.

There are very few buildings to which a medieval date can confidently be assigned. The remaining parts of Jack of Newbury's House, 24 Northbrook Street, and the rear of 50 Northbrook Street both date to c 1500. The parish church of St Nicolas was rebuilt between 1523 and 1532, and Litten Chapel and Bartholomew Manor in Argyle Road are both also from this period. Bartholomew Manor is a late medieval hall house. It is possible that other late medieval structures survive in the town, hidden by more recent buildings.

The historic core of Newbury contains some 17th century buildings. The Old Weavers Cottages in West Mills were originally a terrace of seven cottages. During the post-medieval period there was substantial rebuilding and refronting of structures along the street frontages in the historic core of the town. Buildings with origins in the 17th century include the Dolphin Inn and The Eight Bells in Bartholomew Street, the Monument Inn and part of Camp Hopson's Department store in Northbrook Street and Kings Coffee House at The Broadway.

18th century buildings survive in significant numbers along the line of the major north-south route along Bartholomew Street and Northbrook Street and the intersecting east-west



*Jack of Newbury's House, a fine 16th century jettied building*

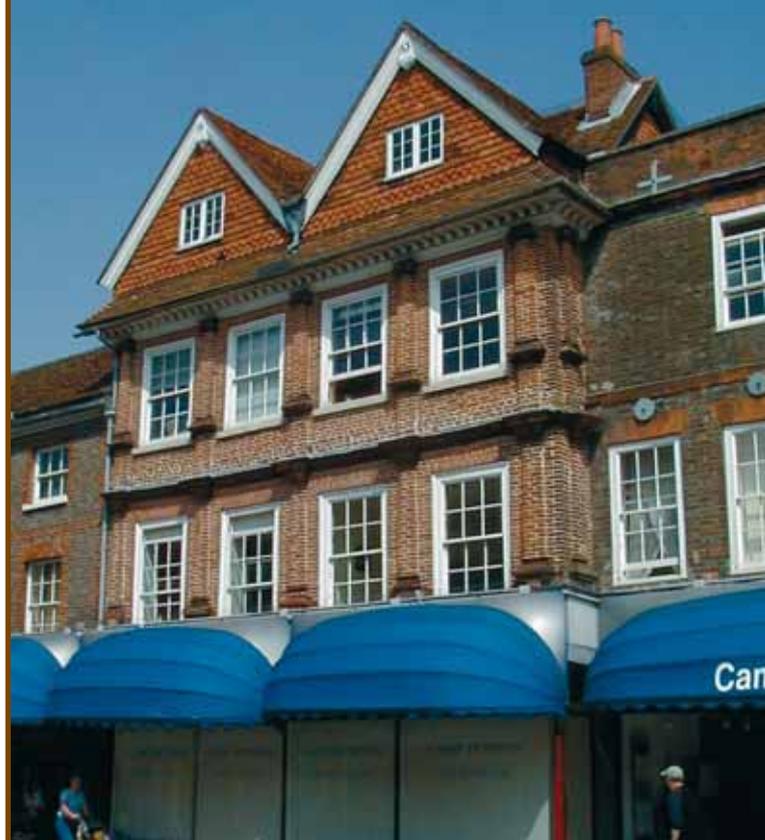
route of London Road, Oxford Street and the Old Bath Road. During this period Newbury became an important staging post for coaches. There were a number of 18th century coaching inns, some of which are still hostleries. The rear yards of some of these coaching inns still have ranges of stable blocks and coach houses.

Many houses and shops, not just along the coaching roads, also date to this period. Their size and character ranges from tenements in Argyle Road to the former St Nicolas Rectory in Northbrook Street. Behind 19 The Broadway is Saddlers Court, containing a number of small shops. Goldwell House, Speen Court and The Lawn in Bath Road are among a number of large detached houses from this period.

The range of surviving buildings dating from the 19th century is greater, with some major public buildings constructed. Many houses, shops and business premises from the 19th century can be seen along the principal streets of Newbury where they provide a major component of the character of the historic town centre. The early phases of the town's expansion can also be seen in the distribution of housing from this date. Donnington Square and Donnington Villas on Oxford Road were part of the northerly growth. Across the town there is a selection of property types, including villas and town

houses, but also a number of interesting terraces.

The number of major 20th century buildings of note is limited. With a few notable exceptions the 20th century housing in Newbury generally follows national trends in design and materials, although Mill Lane contains an interesting 1920s terrace with a central archway.



*Camp Hopson's department store before its recent makeover*



*Carnarvon Terrace in West Street, a good example of early 19th century housing close to the town centre*

## Historic Building Materials and Architecture

Timber-framing was widely used as a building technique during the medieval period and into the 17th century. Newbury contains many examples of timber-framed buildings. Those from the 16th century include Jack of Newbury's house and No 50 Northbrook Street, 11-13 Market Place and Bartholomew Manor in Argyle Road. Remains of jetties can be seen in side passages or to the rear of several buildings and more obviously on 1-3 Wharf Street and the early 17th century Cloth Hall.

*Architectural detail from Cheap Street, a good example of 19th century brick work*

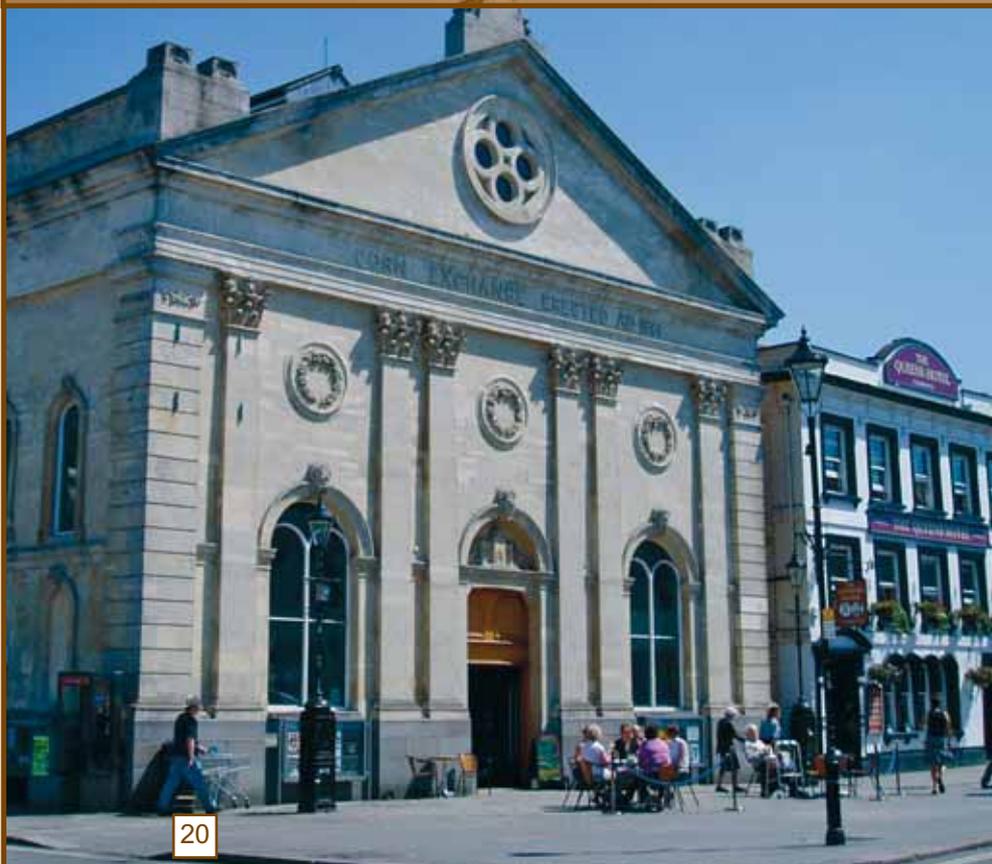


The dominant building material from the later 17th century onwards is red brick and the majority of the 20th century housing estates are built using this material. An orange-red shade of brick is characteristic of this area. Other colours of brick are employed, most notably grey, and combinations of coloured bricks are used for decoration. Rubbed brickwork is another feature of the area.

The Litten Chapel, which dates to the 16th century, is unusual for Newbury in its use of rubble for the walls. The 19th century Salvation Army Hall in Northcroft Lane and the cemetery chapel off Newtown Road also have flint walling. Other stone buildings include the Stone Building at the Wharf and the Corn Exchange which were both constructed in the 19th century. The 16th century St Nicolas Church, the 19th century St Mary's at Shaw and the Methodist Church in Northbrook Street are all of ashlar construction.

Stone decorative features are employed on buildings, at the south-east corner of Broadway and on the Post Office in Cheap Street for example. Several buildings have ashlar dressings, including Shaw House and the Litten, but the most interesting examples are on the Temperance Hall where they have been inscribed with anti alcohol texts. Stucco, render and colour wash have also been employed for decoration.

*The Corn Exchange in the Market Place, one of the few ashlared fronted buildings in the town.*



Roofing materials vary, although plain clay tile dominates. Slate has also been used since the late 18th century and was selected for much of the 19th century expansion.

Some of the modern developments are less than sympathetic in their choice of material. Yellow brick appears in some housing developments and in commercial developments on Bath Road. Most industrial units are roofed and clad in modern sheet material systems. A few buildings, such as the Telephone Exchange, employ concrete. This is one of very few tall buildings in the town, as the majority reach a maximum of three storeys.

Although no single architectural style dominates in Newbury and the older buildings are of varying heights, the mixture along the principal streets within the town centre is mostly 18th and 19th century and creates a coherent atmosphere. There are a few examples of architectural style which are arguably less sympathetic, such as Boots in Northbrook Street, but the materials and the two to three storey heights are generally in keeping with the surroundings. The Kennet Centre incorporates some older buildings in the northern part, uses brick and is the appropriate height, but it is of little architectural merit. Further out from the centre the coherence of building heights and plot sizes does not survive as well. Regents Court in West Street fails to reflect any of the styles in the surrounding area. In the West Street and Northcroft Lane areas the pattern is broken up by open spaces, mainly used as car parks.



*The Town Hall dominates the Market Place and is one of Newbury's prominent landmarks*

### **Landmarks and Views**

Newbury's monuments are generally small in scale. The war memorial stands at the corner of St Nicolas churchyard, and there is also the 1929 Clock House in The Broadway. The mid 20th century St John's Church acts as an imposing gateway to the historic town centre when entering from the south. From a distance the prominent landmarks include the towers of St Nicolas and St Joseph's churches, the clock tower of the Town Hall and the late 20th Century telephone exchange building.

The views into and out of the historic core of the town are limited. The centre is low-lying and the principal streets lined by buildings. Access routes to the rear are limited in number and quite narrow. The best views out are from the town bridge looking along the River Kennet and in the area around the river and canal to the west. From Northcroft Lane there is a fine perspective of Newbury Lock with St Nicolas Church beyond.

## Newbury's Historic Character

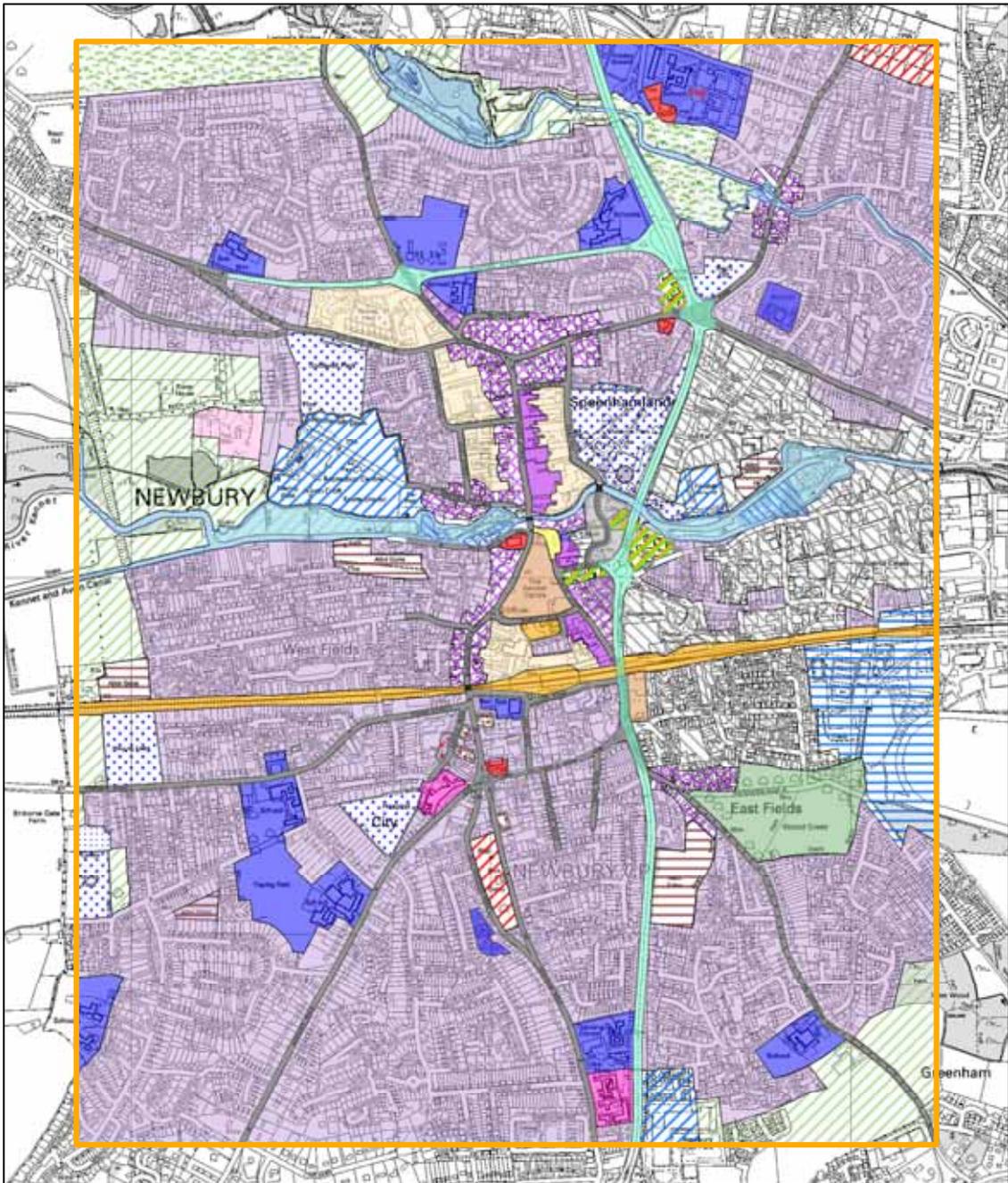
For the last thousand years Newbury has been a focus for human activity in the area. Its long and complex history has produced an environment with a wealth of historical and archaeological features. These historic character types can be mapped across the study area. Newbury is one of the physical representations of what is distinctive about the culture and society of West Berkshire.

Owing to the concentration of historic structures and archaeological remains within the town and the fact that Newbury is the focus of residential and commercial activity in West Berkshire, the historic town of Newbury offers the opportunity for using enhancement of the historic environment as a means of promoting economic activity. A high quality historic urban environment can stimulate economic growth and prosperity, both directly (e.g. in terms of heritage tourism) and indirectly by encouraging a strong sense of community and pride in place, which in turn creates a positive climate for economic activity. Sustainable development that acknowledges and respects historic character is crucial to this process.

Sustainability in terms of the historic urban environment is not aimed at static preservation, but is a way of managing change that capitalises on the value of the historical assets and ensures that these are not sacrificed for short-term economic gain. Regeneration schemes and development projects within Newbury are an important aspect of its future prosperity and viability. It is crucial that such schemes enhance rather than detract from its distinctive historic character. A good understanding of the character of the town is essential if sustainable development is to be achieved.



*The 'Bacon Arms' one of the surviving coaching inns in Speenhamland*



Legend	
	Study area
	Allotments
	Bridges
	Burgage plots
	Business development
	Cemetery
	Charity
	Churches and churchyards
	Great House
	Green
	Hospitals
	Industrial estate
	Irregular historic plots
	Major roads
	Market
	Mills
	Open fields
	Parks
	Public services
	Public transport
	Racecourse
	Recreation ground
	Religious site
	Retail
	Roads
	Schools
	Sports field
	Suburbs
	Urban infill
	Utilities
	Waterways

0 680 Meters

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### Newbury's Historic Character Types

In the first instance the role of the natural physical environment in shaping the town must be acknowledged. Although human activity has shaped and moulded that environment to suit its own ends the geology, river system and topography have all had an impact on the form of the town. The most prominent feature in this is the River Kennet and its floodplain. The river, although canalised from the early 18th century, remains an influence in the movement of people through the town and has directly influenced land-use and building styles. The floodplain of the river, especially to its north, has shaped the growth of the town and the presence of Victoria Park in this area can be shown to be a direct result of this factor.

Newbury has particular archaeological potential for the Mesolithic and the medieval periods. The high number of Mesolithic sites found in the Newbury area is an indication of the importance of this resource. Excavations at a number of sites in the area, including those in the town centre of Newbury, have produced evidence of national significance and have produced major new evidence of human activity in the post-glacial era.



*Archaeological Evaluation for the Parkway redevelopment at the rear of Marks and Spencer's*

Newbury has produced a few tantalising finds of Romano-British activity, suggesting that a significant settlement existed somewhere close to the town centre. However, the exact location and character of this activity has yet to be determined.

There have been relatively few major archaeological investigations within the medieval core of Newbury. For this reason little detail on the location of the original Norman town, the growth of the town, the industrial or commercial activities or the nature of the population during the medieval period have been recovered. As illustrated by the recent excavations at the medieval cemetery at Pound Street, the potential for archaeological work to help unravel the medieval history of the town is considerable. This is especially true of the late medieval/early post medieval period when we know from historic records that the scale of the cloth industry was a significant economic driver and yet the archaeological resource of this phase and the cloth industry in particular is poorly represented.

Newbury has remained primarily a market town since the medieval period, a role helped by its convenient location at a river crossing and at the intersection of two important roads. These features might also have provided a focus for industry, but, although

businesses such as wool, malting and brewing and, later, boatbuilding and metal-working have been established in the town, they have never developed sufficiently to change its primary character.

The historic core of the town has survived well into the 21st century although some less sensitive developments have taken place in the southern part of it. The Y-shaped layout of Bartholomew Street, Cheap Street and Northbrook Street around the crossing of the River Kennet has existed since the medieval period. During the post-medieval period, the town expanded to include Speenhamland to the north.

Few medieval buildings survive, as extensive rebuilding and refronting took place from the 17th century onwards. The principal streets in the centre of the town are still predominantly lined with 18th and 19th-century buildings, houses and shops. Although there has been some more recent redevelopment these buildings make a significant contribution to the character of the town centre. Expansion of the town was limited until the later 19th century, but the large areas of 19th and 20th century housing have established their own distinctive character. The 19th and early 20th century expansion is characterised by terraces and a gridded layout, whereas the post WWII suburbs can be characterised by large gardens, the presence of mature trees and a street pattern of curving roads and open green spaces.

Many older buildings or parts of buildings are to be found at the rear of more recent developments. Particular care needs to be taken when dealing with future development proposals to ensure that buildings at these locations are fully appraised before demolition or alteration is allowed to proceed.



*The Eight Bells on Bartholomew Street, a rare 17th century survival in the town centre*

Within the town centre there have been a number of significant late 20th century developments, the Kennet Shopping centre between Bartholomew Street and the Market Place/Cheap Street and the Bayer office campus on Strawberry Hill being notable examples. The scale of these new buildings, the choice of materials and their locations away from the main street frontages mean that they have not had a significant detrimental impact on the

historic character of the town. Whilst the pattern of medieval plots has been eroded by this type of development, a process that will continue with the proposed Parkway shopping and residential scheme, the overall impact on the town has been minimal.

Newbury has two particularly strong character traits: the historic market core and the 'garden suburbs'. The historic market core is reinforced by the historic street pattern, the character of the Market Place and the scale and materials used in the largely 18th and 19th century buildings fronting the Market Place, Northbrook Street, Bartholomew Street



*Maplespeen on the Old Bath Road, modern architecture within a historic context.*

and Cheap Street. The garden suburb character is the result of much of the second half of the 20th century development being low density with significant retention of existing trees or new landscaping schemes. Retaining this feel, whilst allowing new development, is a significant challenge for the 21st century.

Within this framework are many smaller areas that have their own particular character, arising from a combination of standing buildings, historic development and current land use.

## Further reading

It is not intended to provide a full bibliography within this report. Some of the key texts are referred to in the footnotes, but for anyone wishing to explore the history of Newbury further the following would be a good starting point.

Astill G, 1978, *Historic Towns in Berkshire: an archaeological appraisal*

Higgott T, 2001, *The Story of Newbury*

Millson C, 1998, *The Story of Shaw-cum-Donnington*

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Morris W A D, 1969, *A History of the Parish of Shaw-cum-Donnington*

Newbury Town Council, 2005, *Newbury Town Design Statement*

Oxford Archaeology 2006 'Newbury Historic Character Study: Assessment Report' Unpublished client report.

Peake H, 1931, *The Archaeology of Berkshire*

Pevsner N, 1966, *The Buildings of England: Berkshire*

Tolman S, 1994, *Newbury: History and Guide*

Vince A G, Lobb S J, Richards J C & Mephram L, 1997, *Excavations in Newbury 1979-1990*, Wessex Archaeology Report No 13

West Berkshire Council, 2003, *Newbury 2025: A Vision for Newbury Town Centre*

### Maps

Willis, 1768 'Map of Newbury'

Rocque, 1761 'Map of Berkshire'

Enclosure map for Speen 1780

Newbury Tithe map 1839

Greenham Tithe map 1840

Shaw-cum-Donnington Tithe map 1838

The West Berkshire Historic Environment Record remains the primary index of archaeological sites and other historic environment features and is accessible through West Berkshire Council Heritage Service ([www.westberks.gov.uk/archaeology](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/archaeology)).

## Appendix 1 - Newbury's Historic Character Areas

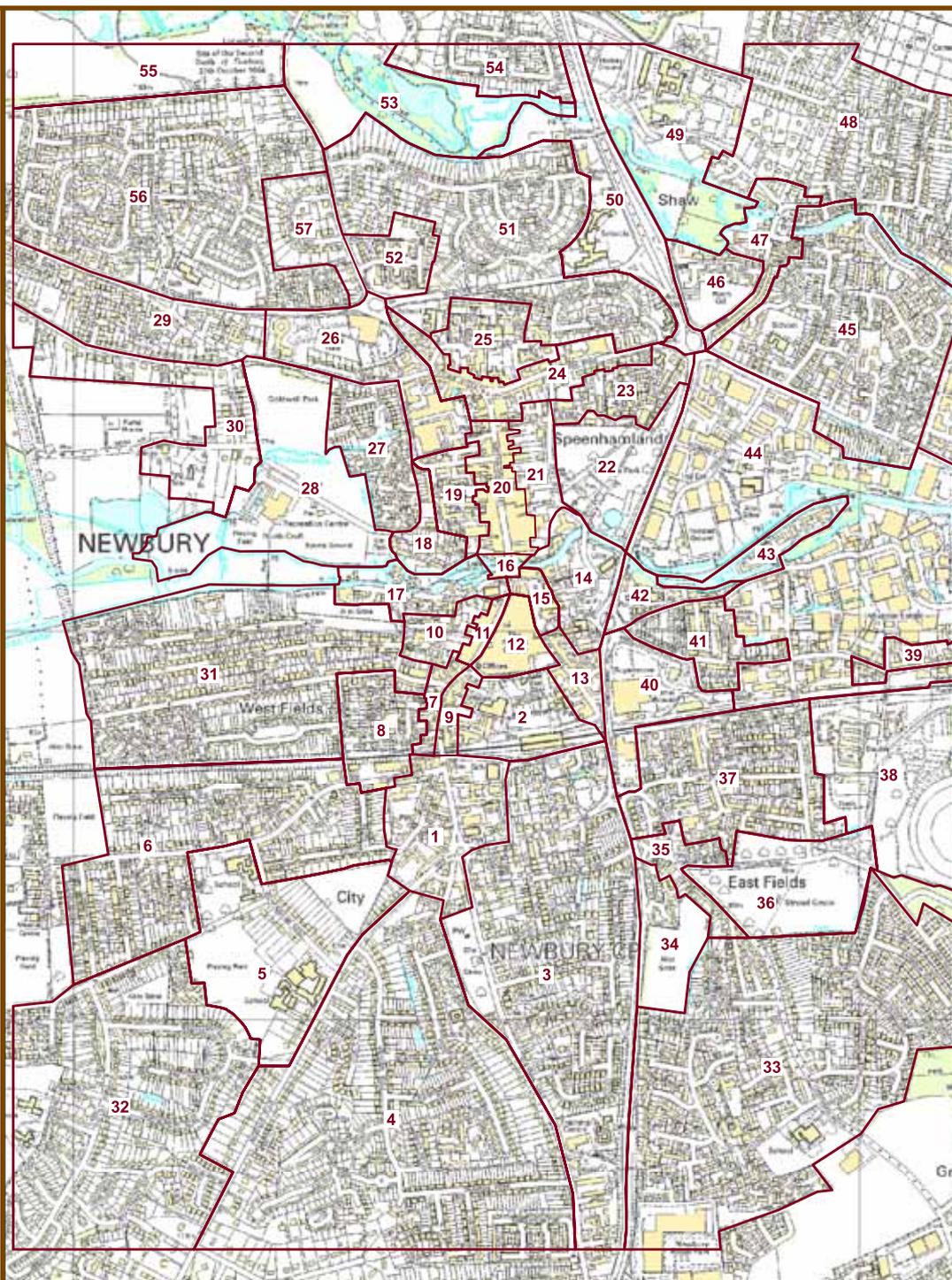
The 57 Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCA's) are defined as zones where common characteristics have been identified.

The definitions of the HUCA's are based on consideration of factors such as:

- Built environment
- Townscape rarity
- Time depth
- Completeness
- Forces for change
- Amenity value
- Association.

Additionally physical and historic characteristics which inform the definitions include:

- Predominant architectural style
- Historical development
- Archaeological potential
- Quality and character of their fabric
- Topography, layout and street patterns
- Nature of their designed spaces.

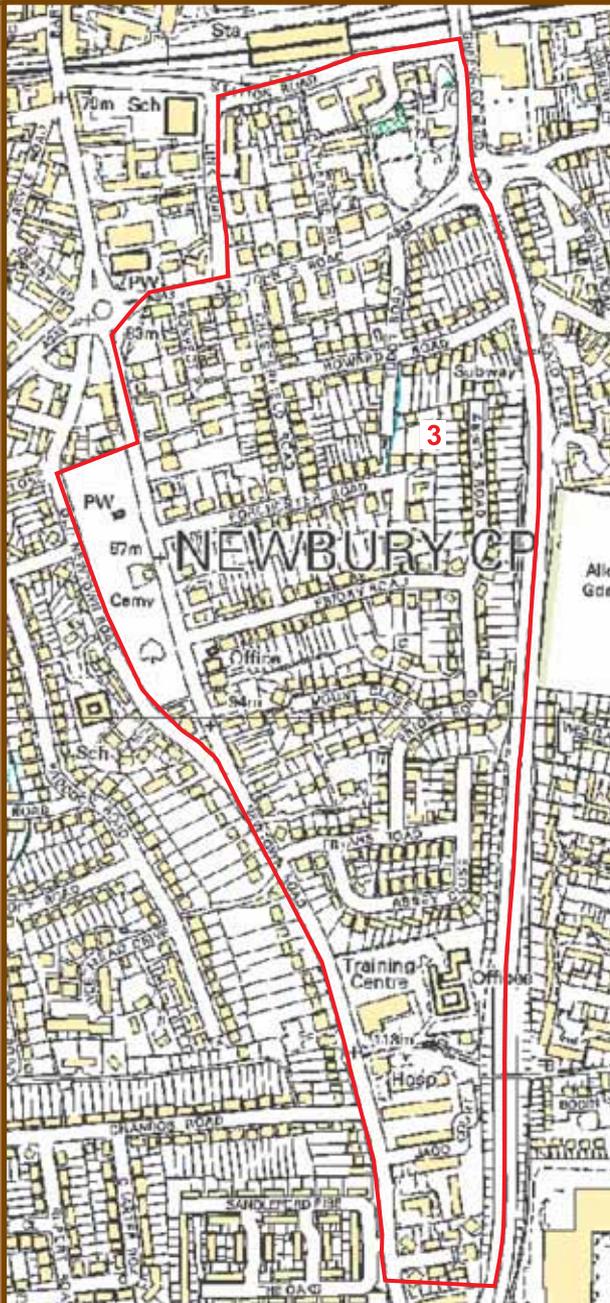


### 1 St Bartholomew's and The City

This area in the south-west of the historic core has a mixture of buildings styles from a range of periods, from the medieval Litten Chapel to ongoing development. However, from c 1200 when St Bartholomew's Hospital was founded, this area has provided a focus for what may be termed 'social services', including hospitals, almshouses, places of worship and schools. Newbury Hospital has recently been demolished, but is being redeveloped for a housing association, including some sheltered dwellings. The name "The City" was applied to a wider area to the south-west of the town centre from the middle of the 19th century and it has been preserved for the recreation ground north of Andover Road (which lies within HUCA 5). Most of the older buildings, including several sets of almshouses, are in Argyle Road and Derby Road, which are quiet, narrow streets where infill development could prove detrimental to their character.



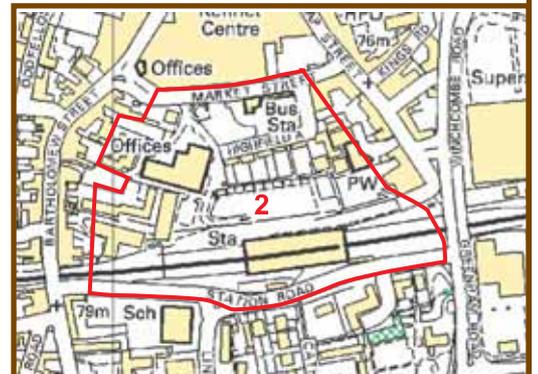
1. St Bartholomew's and The City



3 Newtown Road

### 2 Market Street

South of Market Street are modern offices and the new Baptist Church, bus station and railway station. These occupy the rear of former medieval plots along Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street and an area between these which remained as open fields until the railway was built in the 1840s. The early 20th century station building remains although alterations have been carried out. At present there is a row of early 20th century houses between it and the bus station. The bus station site was first developed for the cattle market and later became a multi-storey car park. Brick and tile are the predominant building materials, although the West Berkshire Council offices, which dominate the area have flat roofs. Street furniture is of modern design apart from older style lamp-posts close to the railway station building.

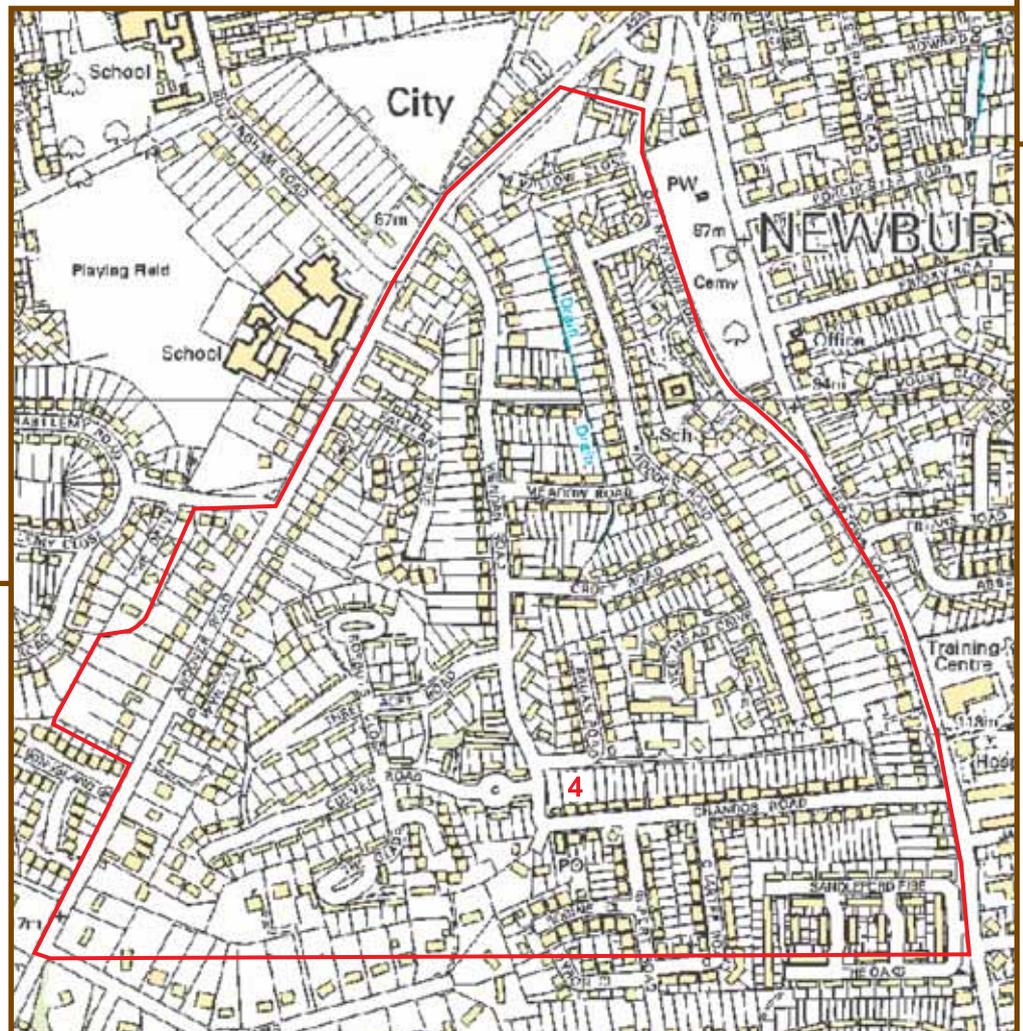


2 Market Street

### 3 Newtown Road

The land east of Newtown Road remained as open fields, part of East Field, until after enclosure in the 19th century and some of the former field boundary lines can still be identified in the lines of the roads or the boundaries of gardens. At the southern tip of the area the Union Workhouse was constructed in 1835. This became Sandleford Hospital in the 20th century. Newtown Road was realigned to straighten it, although Old Newtown Road remained open. Housing development spread along Newtown Road towards Friars Road by 1900 and the cemetery was opened on the west side. Between Station

Road and St John's Road was Greenham House, set in extensive grounds. These were redeveloped partly in the 1930s and the rest at the end of the 20th century, although the house itself has survived. During the 20th century house building continued until the whole area, apart from the southern tip, was finally developed in 2003-4. Unlisted buildings of interest within the area are the cemetery chapel and Church and Childs almshouses opposite, both of 19th century date.



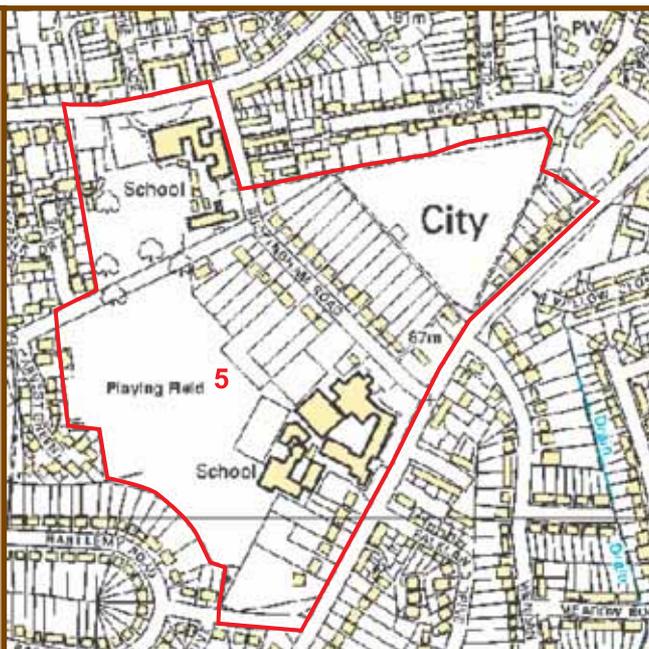
4. Andover Road

**4. Andover Road**

The land between Andover Road and Newtown Road was enclosed fields in the late 19th century and is now almost all occupied by 20th century housing. The pattern of large gardens, plentiful trees and complex road layouts produces an attractive residential suburb. Some of the former field boundary lines can still be identified in the lines of the roads or the boundaries of gardens. There are a few 19th century and

earlier houses along the northern parts of the main boundary roads, but in general the area was not used for development until recently. 61-67 Andover Road dates from the 18th century. Much of the housing around

Wendan Road was built in the 1950s to house workers from UKAEA at Harwell and AWRE at Aldermaston. This area is a mixture of two storey detached and semi-detached housing in brick with tiled roofs.



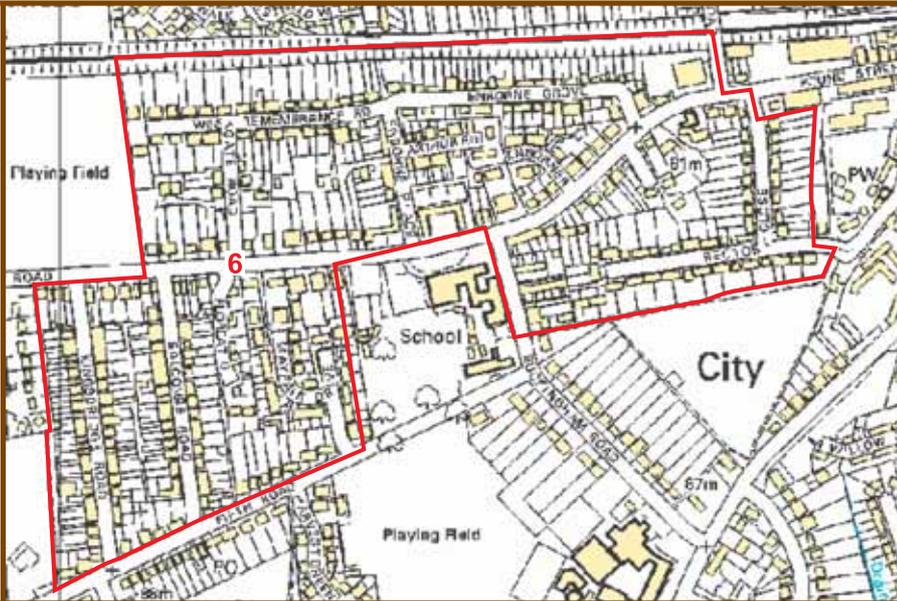
5 Buckingham Road and St Bartholomew's School

**5 Buckingham Road and St Bartholomew's School.**

This was an area of enclosed fields in the late 19th century. The recreation ground and the two school sites with their extensive playing fields create an unusually large block of green open space within residential suburbs. The houses on Buckingham Road in the centre have particularly long gardens. Aside from activity associated with the schools, this is a quiet residential suburb.

## 6 Enborne Road

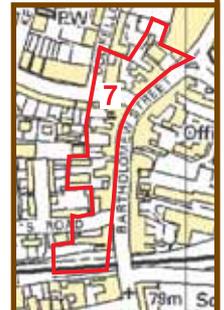
Enborne Road joins onto the post-medieval Pound Street and the date of its origin is therefore also uncertain. Most of the land on either side was enclosed fields in the second half of the 19th century. The area is now covered with 19th and 20th century housing, predominantly semi-detached. Although these properties are generally smaller than those in the southern suburbs, trees and gardens are still noticeable features. The area east of Buckingham Road was developed in the 19th century and included the site of the former St Nicolas School and a set of almshouses erected in 1885. Blocks of flats have been erected close to these in recent years, one using the winged shape typical of almshouse blocks elsewhere in the town. Opposite the St Nicolas School site is the Pentecostal Church Centre, the core of which dates to the 19th century and is in a similar style.



6 Enborne Road

## 7 West side of Bartholomew Street

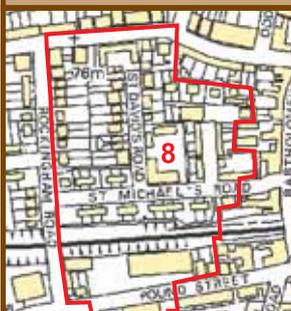
The west side of Bartholomew Street between Market Street and the railway line formed part of the historic medieval core of the town. However, it appears from the lack of archaeological evidence and size and shape of plots shown on historic maps that the area was not laid out in burgage plots, but was subject to piecemeal development. Today, as elsewhere in the town centre, the street frontages are lined with 18th and 19th century properties of brick construction. The majority of these have two storeys and are occupied by shops or small businesses. The lower part of Bartholomew Street represents a less prosperous area of the town and the buildings are less impressive than those nearer the centre. However, their designs produce a very coherent aspect to the street. The appearance of the area is marred by on-street parking, modern shop signs and the railings where the pavement changes level over the bridge.



7 West side of Bartholomew Street

## 8 Rockingham Road

Neither Rockingham Road nor St Michael's Road existed by 1768, although Willis' map of that date suggests a road did exist from the river towards Bartholomew Street on a different alignment from the modern road network. The 1849 Enclosure map shows Rockingham Road, but St Michael's Road does not appear on maps until the 1930s. Away from the rear plots of the Bartholomew Street medieval development, the area was undeveloped prior to the 19th century. The area to the rear of Bartholomew Street was used in the 19th century for the Phoenix Brewery and other industries, but by the 1930s a change to housing was underway. East of Rockingham Road and extending either side of the railway line is now an area of mainly 20th century housing.



8 Rockingham Road



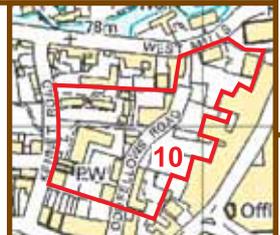
**9 East side of Bartholomew Street**

**9 East side of Bartholomew Street**

The east side of Bartholomew Street seems, from archaeological evidence, to have been laid out in burgage plots in the medieval period. The buildings on the street frontage were rebuilt during the post-medieval period in brick, either two or three storeys high and with varied architectural features. The southern part of the street has been the subject of considerable recent redevelopment. From The Eight Bells northwards the post-medieval street frontage has a higher survival rate. The former public house itself dates from the 17th century. Only one and a half storeys high, the building has a carriageway on the south side, which now leads to a new residential area and a row of small businesses. More 17th century properties extend northwards along the street, while the end closest to Market Street dates from the 18th to 19th centuries.

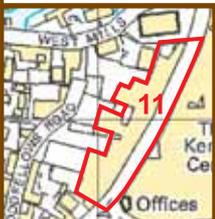
**10 Oddfellows Road**

The land either side of Oddfellows Road occupies what had been the rear of the properties along the west side of Bartholomew Street. These originated in the medieval period, but were extensively altered during the post-medieval period. By the end of the 19th century the area included malshouses and West Mills brewery. Current development is mixed, with modern flats as well as offices and car parking areas.



**10 Oddfellows Road**

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**11 Bartholomew Street North**

**11 Bartholomew Street North**

Bartholomew Street was laid out during the medieval period, and parts of the west side are thought to have been occupied by burgage plots. The buildings along the frontages were largely rebuilt during the post-medieval period and have been altered subsequently, but the plot layouts can still be distinguished along much of the street. The proportion of commercial usage has increased, but some shops have continued to serve their original function.

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**12 Kennet Centre**

The area between Bartholomew Street, Cheap Street and Market Place was one of the earliest occupied areas of the medieval town. It appears from archaeological evidence to have been laid out with burgage plots along both sides. During the 19th century the rear yards were heavily built on, both for housing and for industrial usage. These older buildings were demolished when the Kennet Centre shopping mall was built in a number of phases from the 1970s. Although the Centre fills the area, a number of older buildings along the street frontages have been incorporated, mainly towards the northern end. The interior of the Kennet Centre is typical of a modern shopping mall. The external appearance at the southern end is slab-like for the most part. Along the sides the design is not entirely out of keeping with the older buildings around in terms of roof heights and the centre is made of brick, but the frontage is completely uninteresting with no variety, unlike the surrounding streets.



**12 Kennet Centre**

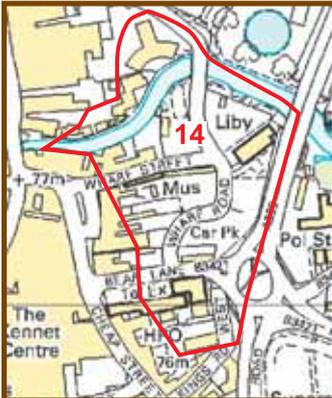
**13 Cheap Street**

Cheap Street was part of the medieval core of the town and at least part of the east side was laid out in burgage plots. The buildings were rebuilt in the 17th to 19th centuries, with a mixture of architectural styles similar to those seen elsewhere in the core. The frontage of Cheap Street retains its historic character for most of its length. The open area on the south side of Bear Lane created for the Post Office yard is out of character for the centre of Newbury, where all the streets are closely lined with buildings. Further south the building line mainly survives although the areas behind have been opened up and some larger, modern blocks constructed. Cheap Street is primarily a commercial area, with many small businesses. The southern end has been foreshortened by the A339 and Station Road.



**13 Cheap Street**

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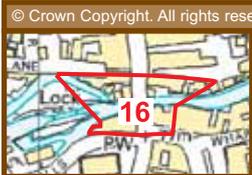


**14 The Wharf**

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### 14 The Wharf

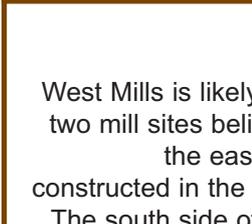
Newbury Wharf was developed to capitalise on the opportunities provided by the construction of the Kennet navigation in the early 18th century. Wharf Street itself existed from an earlier period and contains a number of post-medieval buildings, including the former house of the master of the Wharf. On its south side is the Cloth Hall, and the Granary building. Wharf Street is a narrow road, which retains its historic character from Market Place to Cloth Hall. The opposite bank of the river, linked by a 20th century bridge is currently lined with buildings of a mixture of dates and styles. Much of this area was not developed until the 19th century. The former Wharf area on the south side of the river was redeveloped in the 20th century and the A339 relief road crosses the canal here next to a large roundabout in the centre. Grouped around it are car parks and a number of public buildings, including the former Telephone Exchange, a concrete tower out of place in its surroundings. Newbury Library was added in 2000. This area is dominated by the transport infrastructure.



**16 Newbury Bridge**

### 16 Newbury Bridge

This area covers both the road and the river/canal. The views to and from the bridge are a significant feature of this part of the town. There has been a crossing point on the River Kennet at this location since at least the medieval period. A timber bridge was replaced in 1623 and the current structure was opened in 1772. It has a single span over the river, but smaller arches lie below the road on each side. The four corners originally held free-standing stone arches, but these have been incorporated into the present buildings, which are mostly late 18th century and now in commercial use. The area around the bridge has a cohesive architectural style.



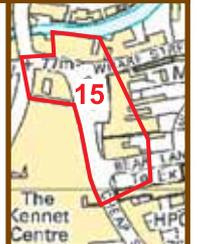
**17 West Mills**

### 17 West Mills

West Mills is likely to have existed in the medieval period as it leads to two mill sites believed to be medieval in origin. Adjacent to the river at the east end of West Mills is the parish church of St Nicolas, constructed in the medieval period and rebuilt between 1523 and 1532. The south side of the road is lined with 17th to 19th century buildings. Their architectural styles and decorations are varied, some consisting of small cottages, including some almshouses, and others imposing detached houses. The Town Mills site has been redeveloped for flats. There is also housing on the West Mills site, but there re-use of the existing buildings, including the Hovis building, has preserved the mill appearance. A swing bridge connects the housing on an effective island to West Mills. The Kennet and Avon Canal and the channels of the river pass through this area. Newbury Lock, the first built on the canal, has been restored and includes the site of the Lock Keeper's Cottage, which burnt down in 1989. Despite the changes, the area retains the atmosphere of an active waterfront from an earlier era.

### 15 Market Place

The historic market place dates from the medieval period and has always formed a focus for activity in the town. The twice-weekly market still operates and on Thursday and Saturday the area is bustling with activity. Two of the major public buildings of Newbury are located around Market Place: the Town Hall, built in Gothic style in 1878-81 and employing blue and red brick and the Corn Exchange, now used for concerts and other public functions. Around the open area are predominantly 19th century buildings. The Market Place contains some of the most imposing of the town's buildings, including the National Westminster Bank and the Queens Hotel. Apart from the Town Hall clocktower, buildings are all of two or three storeys and are architecturally varied.



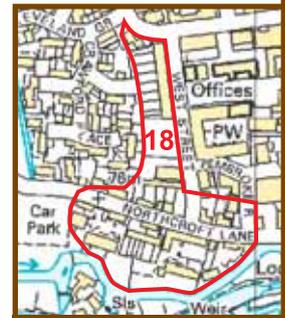
**15 Market Place**

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**18 Northcroft Lane**  
 Northcroft Lane leads from the historic core of Newbury to Northcroft Mead, open grazing land from the medieval period to the mid 20th century. Many post-medieval buildings are now closely mixed with modern developments. The western end of the lane is almost all modern. The pattern of small streets lined with buildings which existed by the mid 20th century, is now disrupted by open areas, often on corner plots, which are used for parking. These detract from the character of the area, which is based on unbroken street frontages. Although very close to the main centre of the town, the atmosphere is quiet and relaxed.



**18 Northcroft Lane**



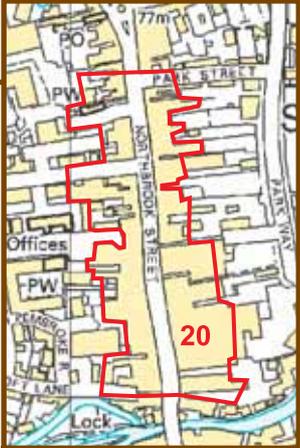
**19 United Reformed Church and Environs**

**19 United Reformed Church and Environs**

The rear yards of the Northbrook Street properties have been redeveloped although some of the plot boundaries can still be detected. The area is now mainly commercial in character. There are a number of unattractive 20th century office blocks on the southern part of West Street, three-storey blocks of utilitarian construction. At the bottom end there is a small terrace of 19th century houses. The northern part of West Street provides one of the few roads opening onto Northbrook Street. The modern buildings, Regents Court in particular, employ a mixture of styles.

**20 Northbrook Street**

Northbrook Street was laid out during the medieval period although archaeological evidence would suggest that it was a later phase of the medieval town's development. Buildings extended along both frontages, but only the east side appears from layouts shown on post-medieval maps to have been laid out in burgage plots. The buildings were extensively rebuilt in brick during the post-medieval period. Both sides of the street are lined with shops and commercial premises, the street frontages of which preserve the early layout, even within larger retail establishments such as the Camp Hopson department store. Buildings of the 18th and 19th century predominate although a few date from the 17th century and 24 Northbrook Street incorporates part of Jack of Newbury's House from c 1500. There is a mixture of two and three storey construction in a range of architectural styles. Northbrook Street is the principal shopping street in Newbury.



**20 Northbrook Street**



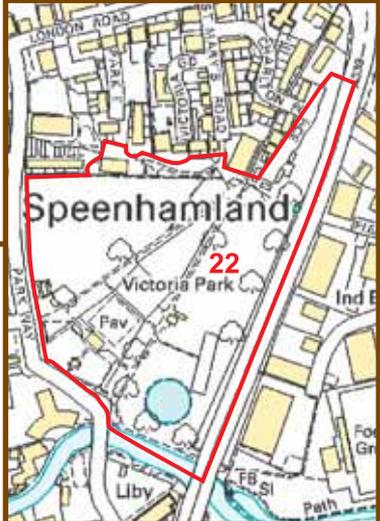
**21 Park Way**

**21 Park Way**

Park Way covers the rear areas of the burgage plots along the east side of Northbrook Street. These plots have been cleared and patchily redeveloped, mainly with warehousing and car parking. Some traces of earlier plot boundaries can be distinguished, mainly as changes in ground level or as sections of fencing. Access to Northbrook Street is limited. Marsh Lane is a narrow straight alleyway, but Jack Street doglegs through modern blocks.

**22 Victoria Park**

Victoria Park lies on the area of open grazing known historically as 'The Marsh' and has never been developed. It was formally established as a public park in the 19th century. The park contains a number of traditional features, all dating from the 20th century such as the bandstand, 1934 bowling green and a number of ponds, but there are also more modern facilities such as skateboard ramps close to the A339.



**22 Victoria Park**



23 St Mary's Road

**23 St Mary's Road**

This part of Newbury was developed gradually during the post-medieval period. The area north of Victoria Park contains a mixture of 19th century development, terraced and detached housing and modern redevelopment, some of which consists of small blocks of flats. This is a secluded area linked to the park by pedestrian and cycle ways. At the edge of the area is the prominent feature of St Joseph's Roman Catholic church with its large statue of Christ atop the Italianate building.

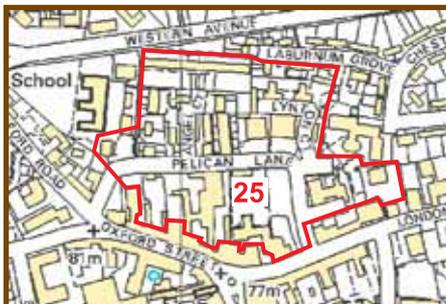
**24 Oxford Street**

Oxford Street and London Road represent the original line of the road from London to Bath. This lay outside the medieval town of Newbury and was developed during the post-medieval period. During the 18th century many coaching inns were built, several of which survive as pubs or hotels, including parts of the George and Pelican, which was the largest. There is an interesting variety of architectural styles and decorative finishes, but the overall effect is cohesive. Along London Road to the east there is a gradual transition from a terraced frontage to villas and larger detached properties dating from the 19th century. From Park Way west the street frontages are lined with buildings, all two or three storeys in height. Most are brick, with some use of render.



24 Oxford Street

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25 Pelican Lane

**25 Pelican Lane**

Pelican Lane existed by the late 18th century as rear access to the Oxford and London Road properties. The north side was not developed until the 19th century. The land to the rear of Oxford Street has been largely redeveloped, but the original plot layout has been maintained. Modern housing surrounds the surviving early terraces, which have a distinctive character. The large open space formed by the Pelican Street car park tends to dominate the area, drawing attention away from more interesting features.

**26 Bath Road Commercial**

Roadside development took place along the main road between London and Bath during the post-medieval period. On the north side of the road a 19th century enclosed field survived until the 1960s when a small row of detached houses was constructed with playing fields behind. The area also contains a group of 18th and 19th century properties on the south side of Oxford Street. On Strawberry Hill's east side are offices of Vodafone and Bayer. This southern part of this area occupies the rear of plots along the west side of Northbrook Street.



26 Bath Road Commercial



27 Strawberry Hill

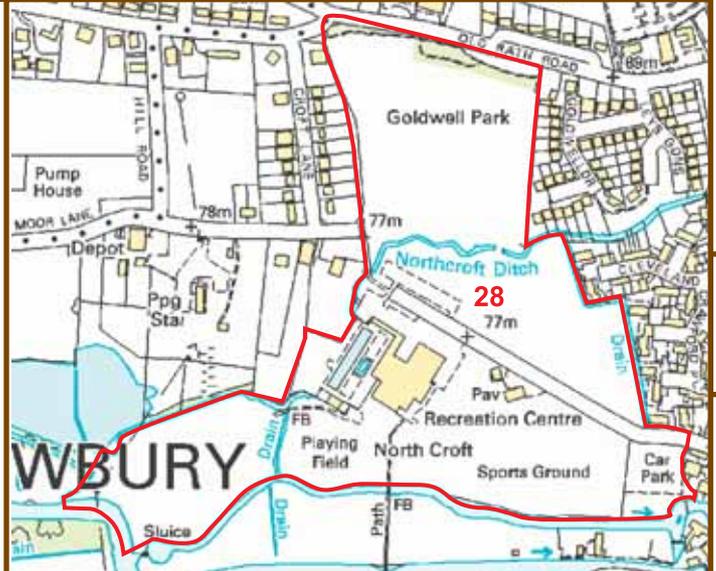
**27 Strawberry Hill**

Originally meadow, in the late 19th century this area covered the former grounds of Goldwell House and an enclosed field to their south. It was divided by the Northcroft Ditch which had fishponds on its north side. The ditch is still visible, but the ponds have gone. The west side of Strawberry Hill is now mainly covered by late 20th century housing.

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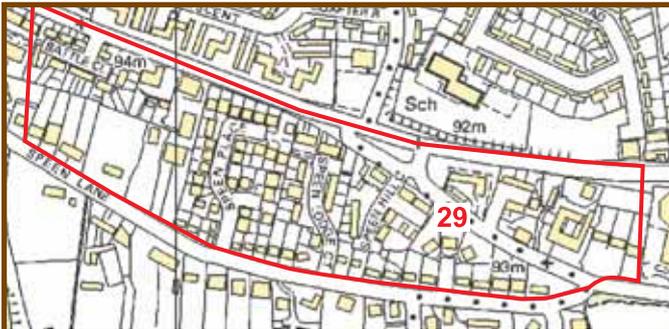
**28 Goldwell Park and Northcroft Lane Recreation Centre**

On the west side of Newbury, north of the River Kennet is a large area of public open space. This falls into



28 Goldwell Park and Northcroft Lane Recreation Centre

two parts; one an informal park and the other organised sports facilities. Goldwell Park was enclosed field in the 19th century. To the south is Northcroft Lane Recreation Centre and its extensive playing fields. This area was part of part of the Northcroft Mead in the medieval period and has never been developed, probably because of the flood risk.



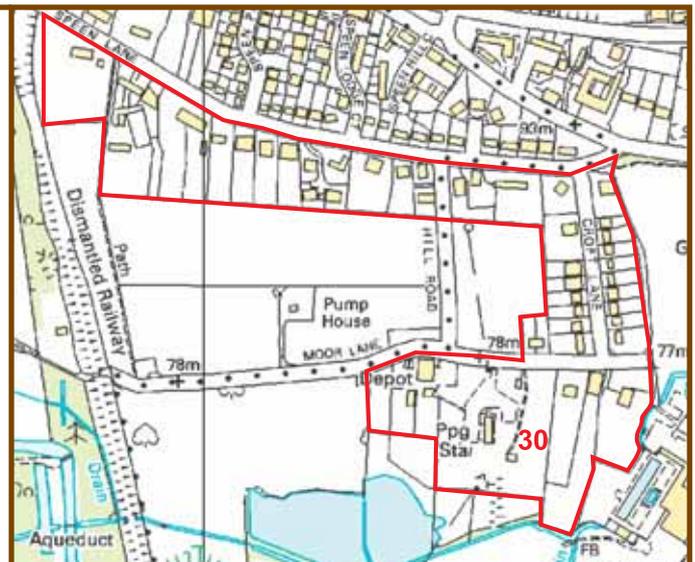
29 Bath Road

**29 Bath Road**

Following enclosure, this area was a mixture of large detached properties and plant nurseries. Between Speen Lane and the A4 now are 20th century housing estates with a few surviving 19th century properties on the corner of Old Bath Road.

**30 Speen Lane**

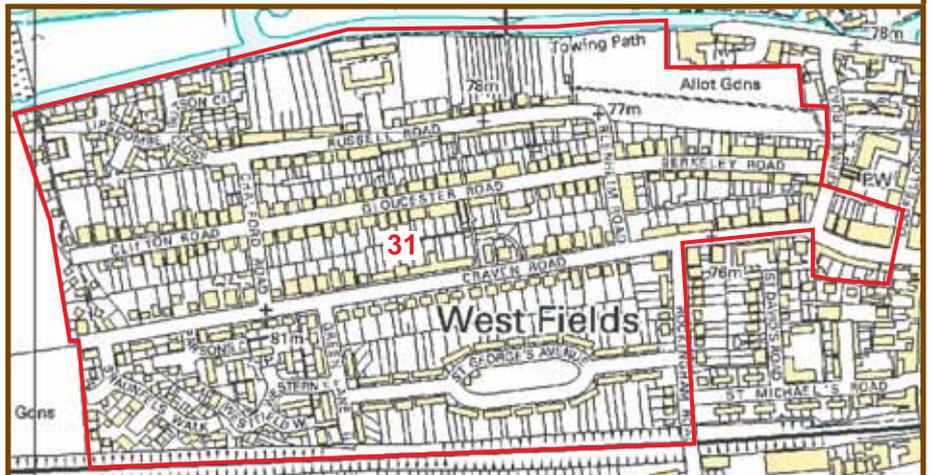
This area consisted of enclosed fields in the late 19th century. The south sides of Speen Lane and Croft Lane are lined with late 20th century housing, detached properties with substantial gardens. Speen Lane itself existed from a much earlier date.



30 Speen Lane

### 31 Craven Road

Most of this area was enclosed fields in the late 19th century, although development had begun on Russell Road and Gloucester Road. Between the railway line and the Kennet and Avon Canal is a large area of 19th and 20th century housing. These houses are generally smaller than those to the south of the town and were intended originally for less affluent households. They consist of a mixture of terraces and semi-detached properties.



31 Craven Road

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### 32 Bartlemy Road

This is an area which was enclosed fields in the late 19th century. It is now mid 20th century housing, a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties, within which some lines of former field boundaries, can be distinguished. The two-storey properties are of brick and tile construction. The curved roads, particularly Bartlemy Road itself, the large gardens and plentiful trees create an attractive garden suburb.



32 Bartlemy Road

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**33 The Racecourse Estate**

**33 The Racecourse Estates**

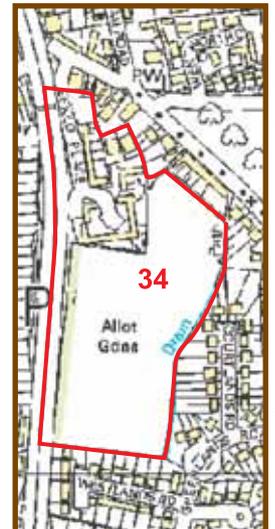
The estate was laid out on land that had been enclosed fields in the late 19th century, apart from a small number of large houses around Greenham Road. On the hillside south of Stroud Green overlooking the racecourse are large areas of 20th century housing estate, within which the lines of some former field boundaries can be distinguished.

**34 Stroud Green allotments**

This area was enclosed fields in the late 19th century and the allotments were established in the early 20th century.

Following construction of the A339, a small modern development, Eeklo Place, was squeezed in on the north-west corner. It is fairly well screened from the main road by trees and accessed from the fairly busy Greenham Road.

The housing in this general area is rather isolated from the main part of the town.



**34 Stroud Green allotments**

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**35 Around The Green**

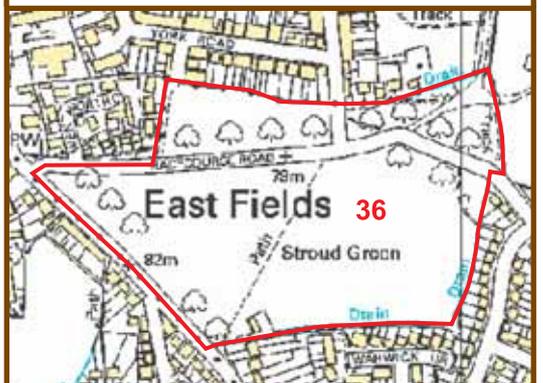
It is likely that there was some settlement around the corner of Stroud Green from the medieval period onwards. Around the north-west corner of Stroud Green development was well advanced by the later 19th century, with a mixture of large detached properties and roadside terraces. There is an attractive range of late 18th and 19th century houses on the west side of Greenham Road overlooking Stroud Green.



**35 Around The Green**

**36 Stroud Green**

The open space of Stroud Green probably dates from the medieval period. Stroud Green is a large green space which maintains some sense of a separate rural location. On the south side of the Green are the attractive Pound Cottages, probably of late 18th century date.



**36 Stroud Green**

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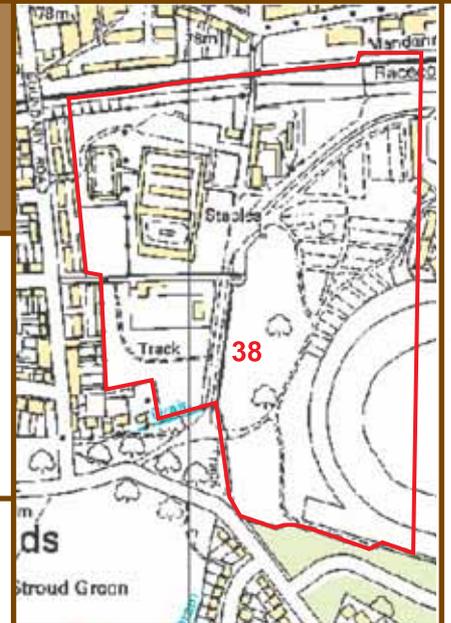
37 Queen's Road

### 37 Queen's Road

This area was enclosed fields into the late 19th century. The area south of the railway line was developed for housing at the end of the 19th century and into the 20th century and some traces of former field boundaries can be distinguished. This was an area of smaller, less expensive properties, semi-detached and terraced.

### 38 Newbury Racecourse

East of Newbury in the late 19th century were enclosed fields where Newbury racecourse was established in 1905. Originally just outside the town, the course now has industrial estates along its north side and housing on the west. It is among the major racecourses in the country and includes the Norman Foster designed Vodafone stand.



38 Newbury Racecourse



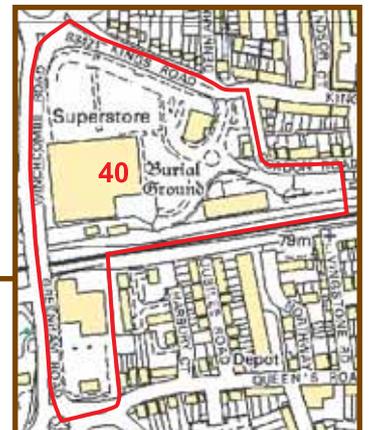
39 Hambridge Road

### 39 Hambridge Road

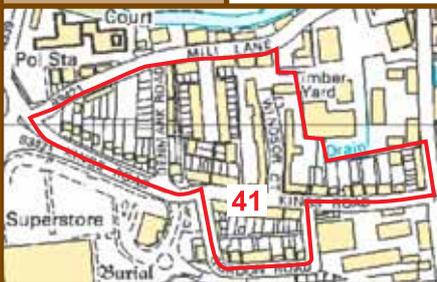
Within the industrial and commercial development on the east side of Newbury some terraces of early 20th century houses survive. The two-storey brick and tile properties are rather isolated within the recent developments.

### 40 Sainsbury's

East of the town centre were open fields until the railway was constructed in the mid 19th century when a goods yard and malhouses were constructed. The east side of the A339 now contains modern retail development, with Sainsbury's occupying the north side of the railway line and motor trade businesses the south.



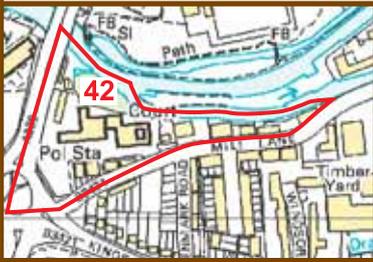
40 Sainsbury's



41 Mill Lane

### 41 Mill Lane

This area was enclosed fields into the late 19th century. On the south side of Mill Lane and along Kings Road is a small area of late 19th and early 20th century housing, within which some lines of field boundaries can be distinguished. These are smaller properties than in most parts of the town, probably intended for workers in the surrounding industrial area.

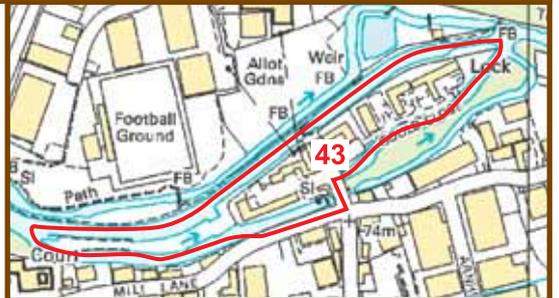


**42 Police Station**

**42 Police Station**

East of the A339, parts of the former Greenham Wharf are now occupied by the Police Station and Magistrates Court, both of which are uninspired late 20th century brick and concrete structures with flat roofs. The area around them contains industrial units and a few modern houses.

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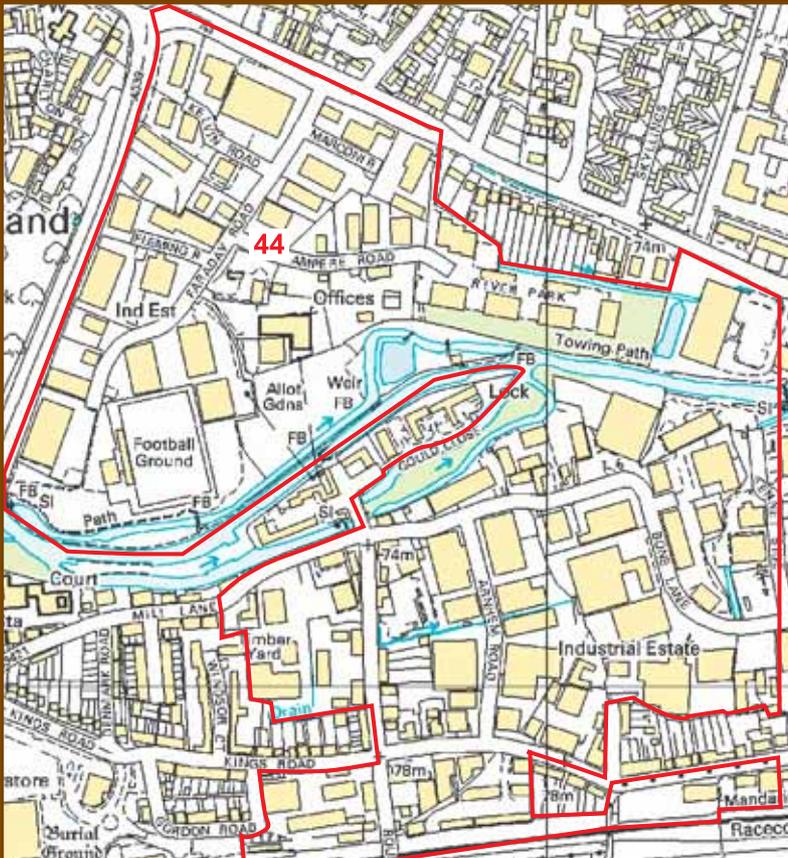
**43 Greenham Mills**

**43 Greenham Mills**

Greenham Mill is known to have originated in the medieval period.

By the late 19th century there was also a tannery in its vicinity. The island on which most of the mills were situated has recently been redeveloped as housing, brick and tile two-storey terraces without private gardens. None of the older buildings have survived.

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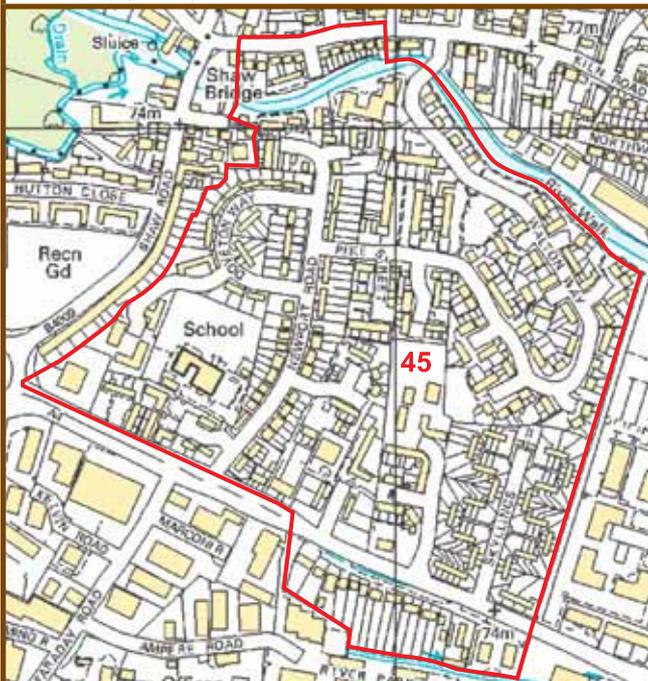


**44 Newbury Industrial Estate**

**44 Newbury Industrial Estate**

In the late 19th century the area to the east of modern Victoria Park and north of the River Kennet was meadow, crossed by streams and man-made water channels. A small farm and the sewage works occupied its centre. Development was slow, mostly consisting of sports fields and allotments until the 1960s when construction of industrial units began.

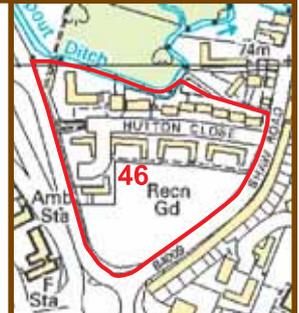
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**45 Newport Road**

**45 Newport Road**

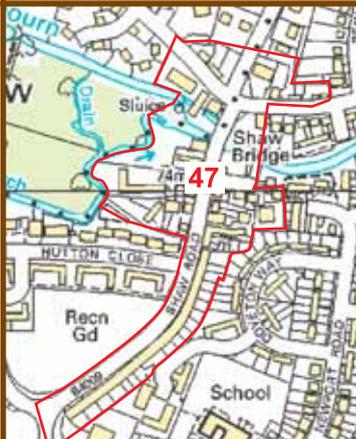
This area was an enclosed field in the late 19th century. The housing between the A4 and the River Lambourn is mostly of 1960s date.



**46 Hutton Close**

**46 Hutton Close**

This area was an enclosed field in the late 19th century. A small late 20th century development now lies on the west side of Shaw Road to the south of the Shaw Park, with two-storey brick and tile semi-detached and terraced houses.



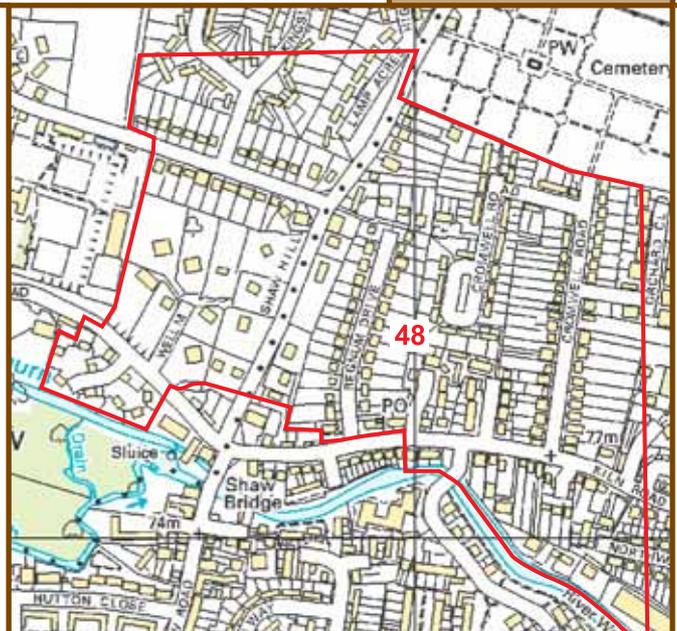
**47 Old Shaw**

**47 Old Shaw**

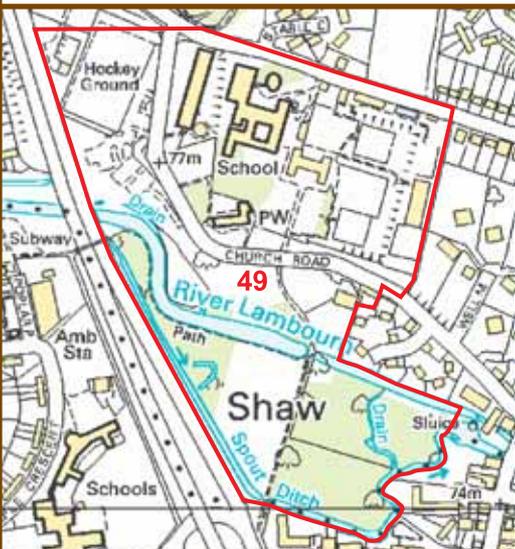
Although no medieval buildings have survived, the historic settlement of Shaw, which centred around Shaw Bridge and the River Lambourn can still be distinguished. A number of the post-medieval buildings survive, including the distinctive 19th century terrace on the east side of Shaw Road linking to Newbury. Buildings here are red brick, with tile and slate used for roofs.

**48 New Shaw**

North of the historic core of Shaw in the late 19th century were enclosed fields, although the west side of Shaw Hill was formerly within Shaw Park. During the 20th century the expansion of Newbury resulted in a merging of the town and Shaw. The housing development had begun in the 1930s, but most dates to the 1960s.



**48 New Shaw**



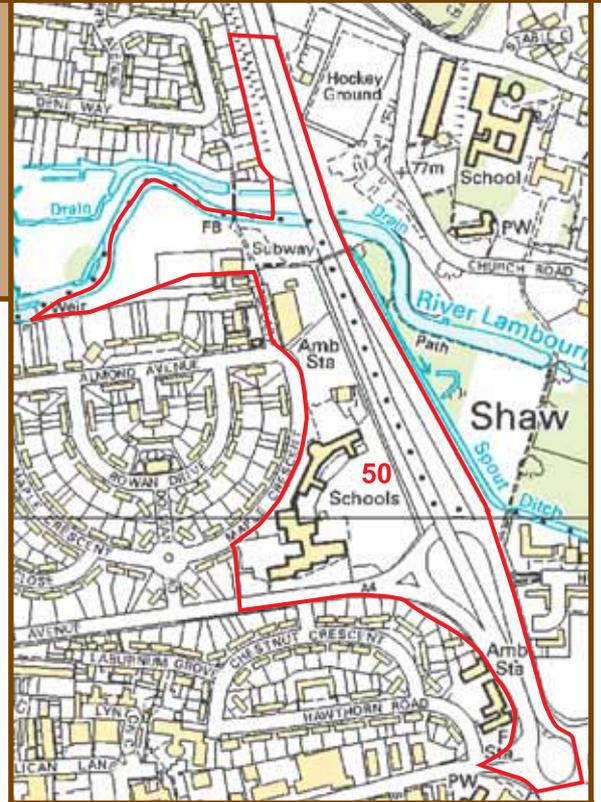
49 Shaw Park

### 49 Shaw Park

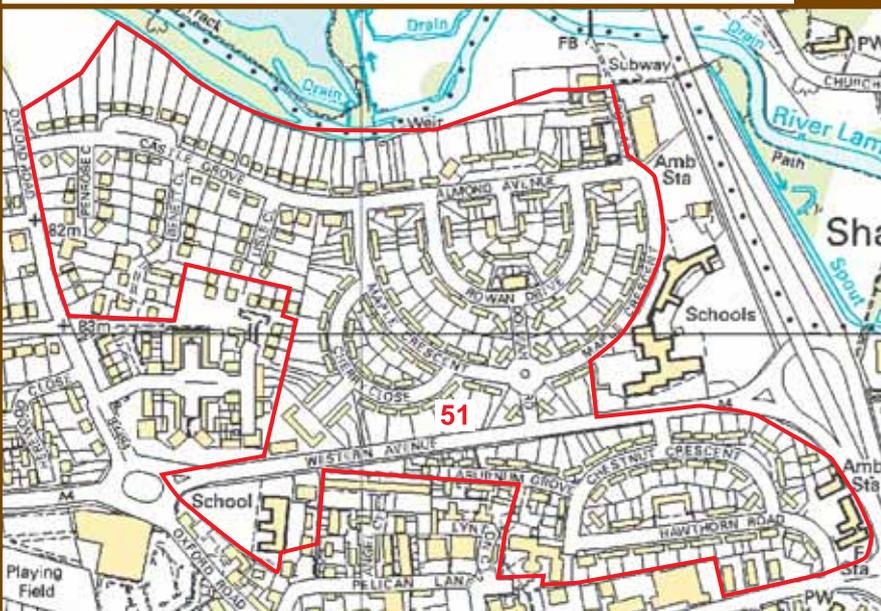
Shaw Park was established in the area of medieval Shaw Manor, continuing south of Church Road across the River Lambourn. It is included on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens. On the north side are the 19th century St Mary's Church and 16th century Shaw House. Within the green expanse to the south are earthworks of former parkland features.

### 50 A339 Fringe

A relief road was built in the 1960s to the east of Newbury town centre, cutting through late 19th century enclosed fields, water meadows and the historic park of Shaw House. Although it relieved traffic in the centre itself, the A34 as it was then, dominated the eastern side of the town.



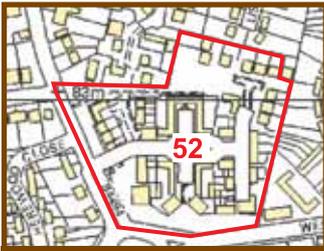
50 A339 Fringe



51 Trees estate

### 51 Trees estate

Between Newbury and the River Lambourn in the late 19th century were enclosed fields. South of the River Lambourn is now an area of 1950s - 60s housing, with trees used for the road names. The estate extends on both sides of the A4, Western Avenue, which was built at the same time. The layout uses crescents, similar to that of the adjacent Donnington Square.



52 Old College site

**52 Old College site**

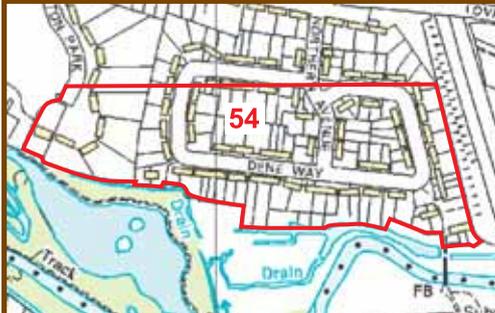
In the late 19th century enclosed fields were gradually being replaced by detached houses set in large grounds east of Oxford Road. The corner of Oxford Road and Western Avenue was formerly the site of Newbury College, but this site has recently been redeveloped for housing, much in three-storey apartment blocks.

**53 Lambourn Valley**

Along the banks of the River Lambourn is a band of open countryside, which forms a green barrier between Newbury and Donnington. On the north bank of the river is a surviving area of water meadow. To the south, between Oxford Road and the river, is pasture.



53 Lambourn Valley



54 Dene Way

**54**

**Dene Way**

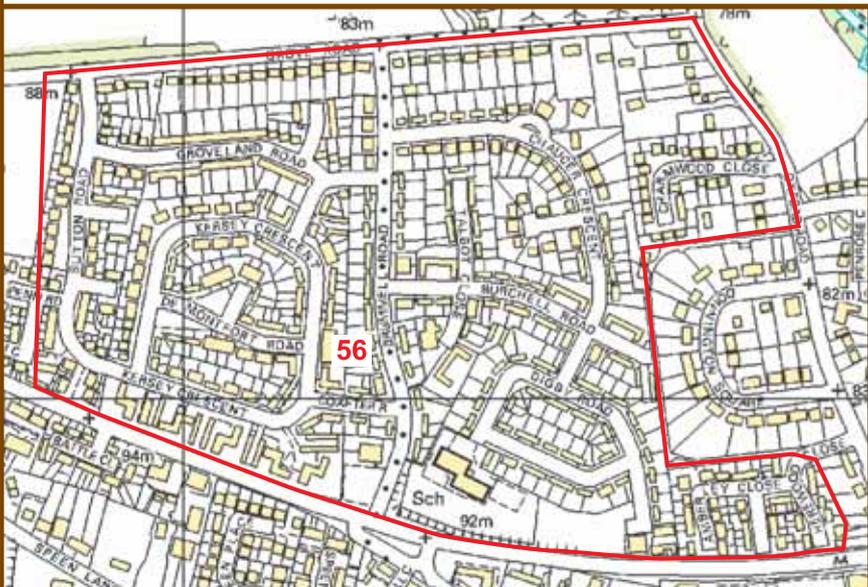
This area was enclosed fields in the late 19th century. The line of one former field boundary can be identified within the Dene Way estate, built in the 1960s. The curved road layout seen across Newbury has been employed again, but here combined to form a square. The houses are mostly semi-detached and built from brick and tile.



55 Donnington Grove

**55 Donnington Grove**

The park around the house at Donnington Grove was established in the 18th century. This area includes the part of the Registered Park and Garden of that name which lies south of the River Lambourn. This part of the park is laid out as a golf course, which extends as far as Oxford Road beyond the park boundary.



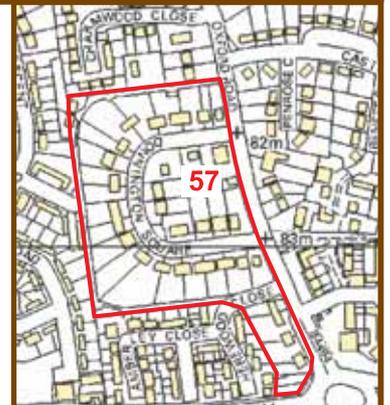
56 Grove Road

### 56 Grove Road

This area was enclosed fields in the late 19th century. A large area of post World War II housing now extends from Grove Road down to the A4. The brick and tile houses are a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties with some short terraces. As with most development in Newbury there are large gardens, many trees and a complex pattern of curving roads, in which the lines of some former field boundaries can be detected.

### 57 Donnington Square

Large, individually designed, 19th century, mainly semi-detached houses are arranged around three sides of a square. They are usually three storeys plus basement, with slate roofs. The brick walls are often rendered. When originally built the square was open to Oxford Road, but during the 20th century this area was filled in with further, mostly detached, properties. The irregularity of design, including some corner towers, suggests affluence. To the south, on Oxford Road, is Donnington Villas, built at the same time.



57 Donnington Square

## Appendix 2 - Research questions

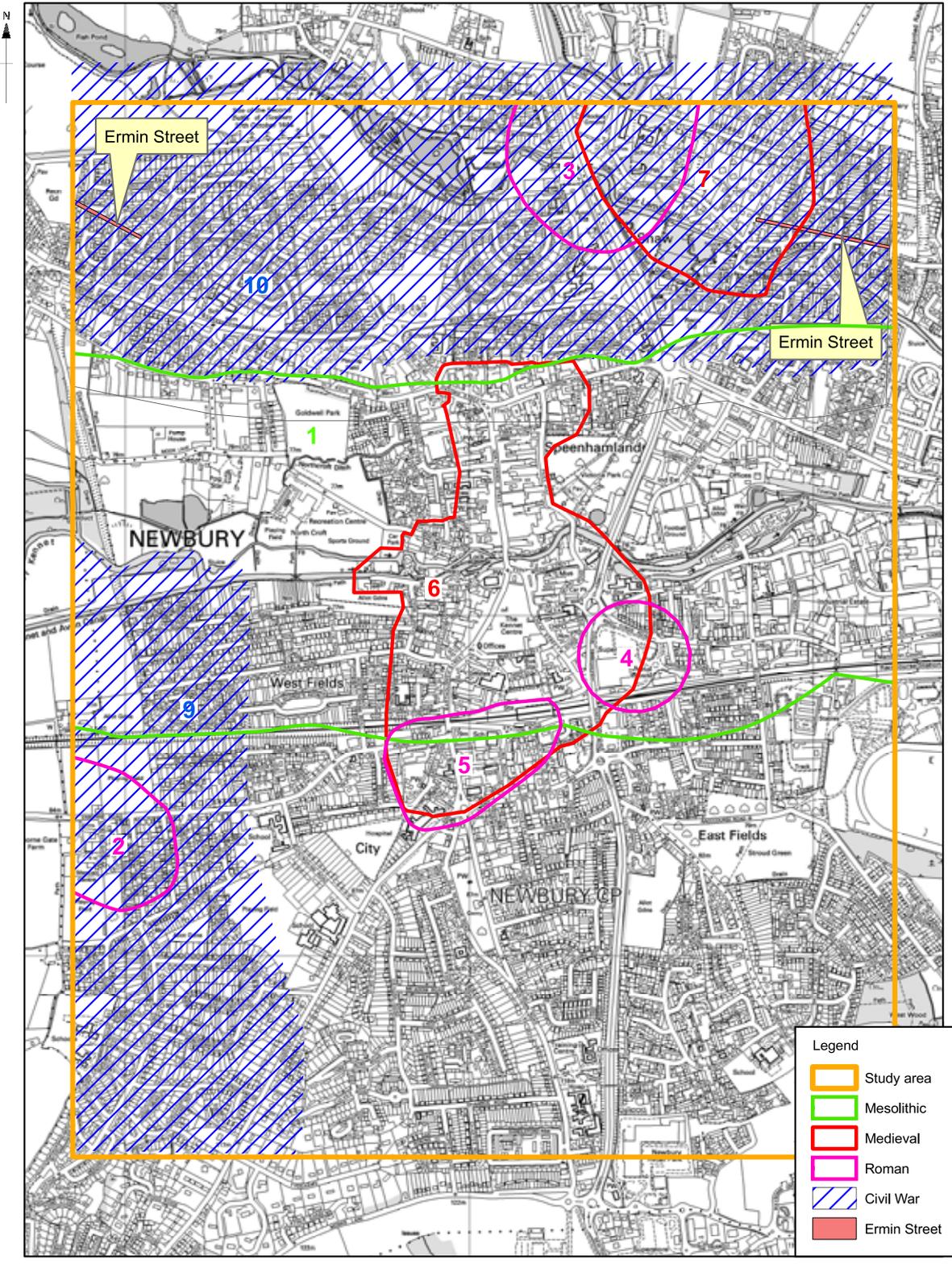
In order to continue to improve our understanding of the historic town, its development and character further research is required. Although not intended to be an exhaustive list the following issues have been identified where further historical or archaeological research would be helpful.

<b>Prehistoric</b>	<p>What was the nature and extent of Mesolithic occupation?          Is the lack of evidence for Neolithic/Bronze Age activity due to a lack of activity or lack of survival?          What was the extent of the Iron Age occupation at Enborne Gate Farm and was there continuity of use into the Roman period?          What riverside activities were carried out?</p>
<b>Roman</b>	<p>Is there any evidence for the route of Ermin Street near Shaw?          What was the nature and extent of roadside occupation/activity around Shaw?          Was there an occupation site in central Newbury relating to the goods yard cemetery?          What was the extent of Roman occupation around Enborne Gate Farm and was it in continual use from the Iron Age?</p>
<b>Early Medieval</b>	<p>What was the location and nature of the Domesday manor of Ulvitrone?</p>
<b>Later Medieval</b>	<p>Can the chronology of town development be refined, particularly in relation to Northbrook Street?          Was Speenhamland occupied during this period and, if so, what was its relationship to Newbury?          Are there surviving archaeological remains of Shaw manor?          What was the extent of the Litten cemetery and St Bartholomew's Hospital?          What was the location of Newbury Castle?          What was the location of Greenham Hospitaller's Preceptory?          What kinds of riverside activities were taking place and in what locations?</p>
<b>Post-Medieval</b>	<p>What further information can be obtained about riverside activity including wharves and mills?          When was Pound Street constructed and why on top of the cemetery?          Can more information about the two Civil War battles and their extents be derived from collection and plotting of residual artefacts?</p>
<b>Industrial archaeology</b>	<p>Is there any surviving evidence for Newbury's involvement in cloth-working?          Can more be learned about the locations and nature of other industries in the town?          Do any features survive which were associated with Newbury's 19th century railway network?          Are there opportunities to explore the importance of the Kennet and Avon Canal to the town?</p>
<b>Built Heritage</b>	<p>Can early post-medieval structures away from the street frontages be recorded?          Do more, as yet unrecorded, medieval buildings or parts of buildings survive within later structures?          Is the contribution to the character of the town from areas of late post-medieval housing which survive within recent redevelopment recognized through systematic recording?          Can the almshouses of Newbury and their history be studied as a group?</p>

## Appendix 3 - Archaeological Potential

As an historic town Newbury contains significant potential for the survival of below-ground archaeology. Nine areas of archaeological significance have been identified across the town. These are listed below in chronological order.

1. Kennet Valley Mesolithic - Large quantities of Mesolithic finds have been recovered from the Kennet Valley and flint-working sites and a hunting camp have been identified.
2. Enborne Gate Iron Age site - An area of Iron Age occupation has been identified on the western edge of the town, at Enborne Gate. This site continued in use as a farming site into the Roman period. Much of the surrounding area, which consists of playing fields and allotments, has not yet been developed and there is a high potential for survival of below-ground archaeological remains.
3. Roman Activity in Shaw - A Roman cemetery was identified at St Mary's Church in Shaw and kilns were found nearby. The site is near to the likely line of Ermin Street suggesting that it may represent a roadside settlement.
4. Roman Activity near Sainsbury's - Another Roman cemetery was identified when the railway goods yard was constructed in the 19th century. Although modern development may have compromised this site, the potential for associated settlement or industrial activity remains high.
5. Roman activity west of the A339 – To the west of the A339 and south of the railway line there has been a significant density of archaeological finds dating to the Roman period, which may suggest the presence of an occupation site linked to the Sainsbury's site cemetery.
6. Medieval Newbury - Newbury was established by the end of the 11th century, but the growth of the medieval town is not well understood. Few buildings remain from this period, but archaeological evidence for the early town has been found from a small number of development sites. There is therefore potential for the survival of below-ground archaeology dating to this period. An area of high archaeological potential has therefore been identified extending across the known extent of the medieval core with some buffering around the edges. This historic core also has a high potential for archaeological evidence from the post-medieval period.
7. Shaw Manor - There was a manor and mill at Shaw during the medieval period. No medieval buildings have survived, but the area has a high potential for below-ground archaeology from this period.
8. Late medieval/ early modern cloth industry. Newbury's cloth industry reached national prominence with the Winchcombe and Dolman families. Archaeological investigation can help create a better understanding of this historic industry in its local context.
9. 1st Battle of Newbury – The 1st Battle of Newbury took place in September 1643 over a large area to the south west of the town. A detailed understanding of the battles and how events unfolded can be obtained through targeted archaeological investigation.
10. 2nd Battle of Newbury - The 2nd Battle of Newbury took place in 1644 around Shaw, Donnington and Speen, with fighting over an extensive area. Archaeological investigation can help create a better understanding of the historical events that took place.



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**Areas of Known Archaeological Potential**



# West Berkshire Archaeology Service

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