

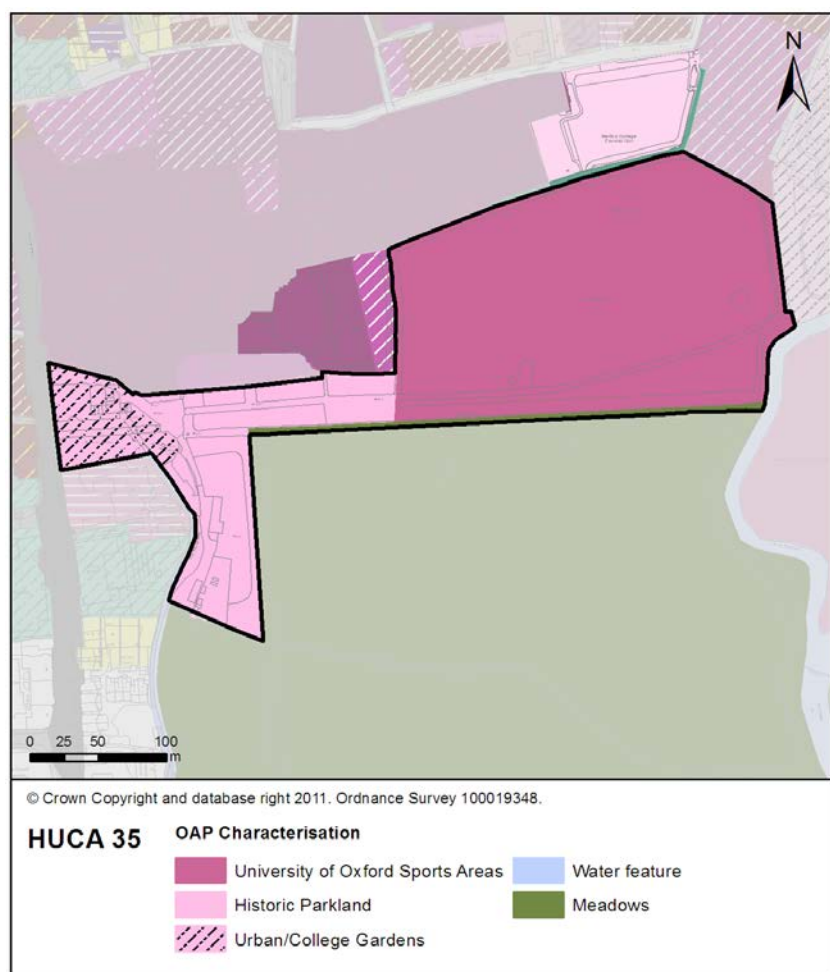
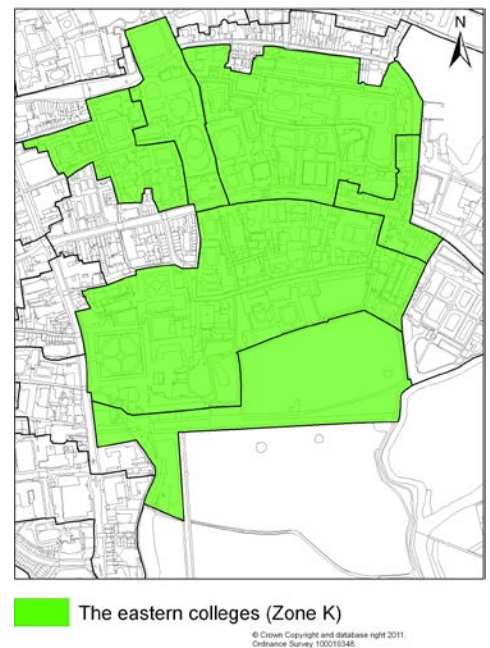
**HISTORIC URBAN CHARACTER AREA 35:
THE EASTERN COLLEGES- BROAD WALK**

The HUCA is located within broad character Zone K: The eastern colleges.

The broad character zone comprises of the eastern part of the historic city which is dominated by the enclosed quadrangles, gardens and monumental buildings of the medieval and post-medieval University and colleges.

Summary characteristics

- Dominant period: Post-medieval
- Designations: Three Grade I and five Grade II listings; Grade I Registered Park and Garden; Central Conservation Area
- Archaeological Interest. Located largely outside the town wall; there is potential for earlier route ways and channels across and along the interface between the 1st and 2nd gravel terrace. There is also potential for peripheral Saxon and medieval activity including activity around the site of the medieval Trill Mill. The remains of the Royalist Civil War defences may also be preserved in this area.
- Character: University of Oxford recreation areas, designed gardens, medieval town wall.
- Spaces: This character area comprises large open green space divided by railings and low walls.
- Road morphology: Retains medieval lane along southern face of the city wall known as Deadman’s Walk. Designed linear gravel walks.
- Plot morphology: Post-medieval large designed plots.
- The area lies on the alluvial floodplain at a height of around 58-55m OD.
- Survival of townscape elements:
 - Historic college gardens
 - Medieval town wall
 - Historic meadow and raised riverside tree lined walk next to the Cherwell.
 - Veteran trees
 - Deadman’s Walk
 - Trill Mill Stream (Late Saxon water channel)



Historic urban character area showing modern urban landscape character types.

Description

This character area links together a series of publicly accessible college gardens, lawns and enclosed sports field that represent distinct areas of green space south of the walled town and Christ Church, Corpus Christi and Merton college precincts. The character area preserves extensive views across Christ Church meadow to the south.

The character area is comprised of an area of discrete spaces, the 20th century Memorial Gardens on St Aldates, the wide gravel walk south of Christ Church, and Merton College sports field which is enclosed by iron railings with gravel walks around. The Trill Mill Stream and River Cherwell provide a boundary to the character area to the west and east. The area contains a number of notable mature trees.

Historical value- means of connecting with the past

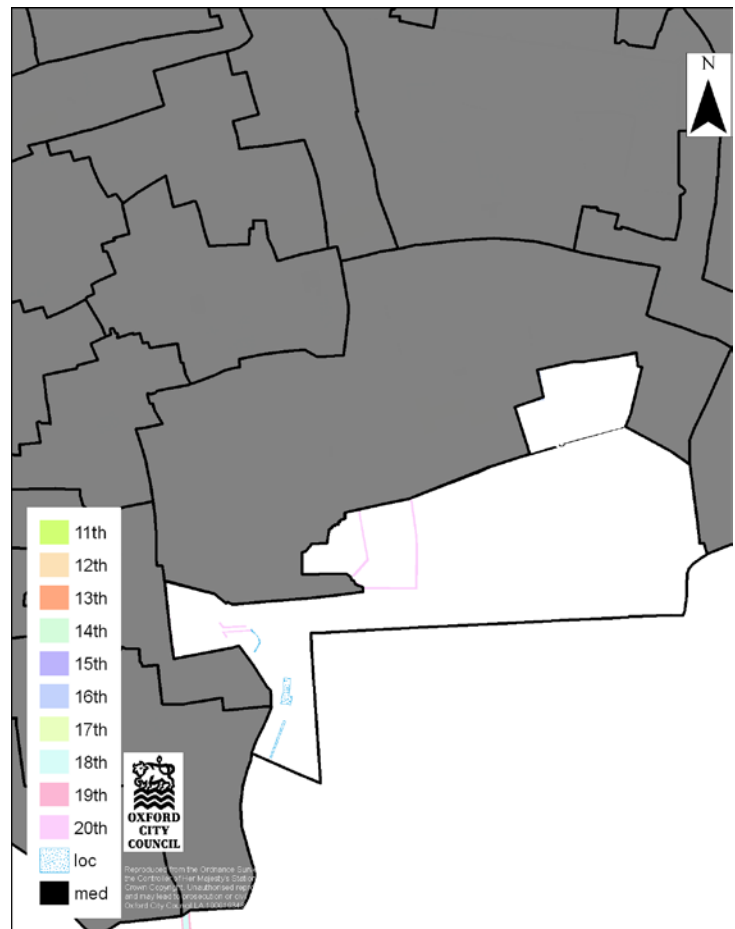
A hypothesised prehistoric or early historic north-south route across the Thames floodplain runs through the area (parallel to the St Aldates crossing) on the line of Parks Road and Magpie Lane city defences. This line is based on the observation of a stone ford observed in a now in-filled channel south of Christ Church.

The character area is located to the south of the Middle Saxon monastery or minster of St Frideswide's, the subsequent Late Saxon burh defences and 13th century town wall. Trill Mill Stream, an important Late Saxon and medieval mill stream, is located on the eastern edge of the area.

Surviving sections of the 13th century town wall (extensively rebuilt) can be appreciated along Dead Mans Walk, a gravel walk running along the foot of the wall. In the late 12th and 13th century Dead Mans Walk linked the Jewish quarter located around St Aldates with the Jewish Burial ground located east of the town until the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290.

This character area was historically open meadow land south of the town, later becoming a designed landscape for Cardinal and subsequently Christ Church College. Tree lined walks and channels are recorded on Agas' map of 1578.

There are further areas of designed gardens to the north and west of the character area.



REPLACE Listed buildings by date of earliest identified fabric (based on listing description)



Deadman's Walk looking east.

Evidential value- potential to yield primary evidence

There is high potential for Late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval remains in this location especially relating the Late Saxon and medieval town defences and the Royalist Civil War defences. The Urban Archaeological Database records ten events in this character area. Previous investigations have revealed late medieval stone foundations, an archway associated with the medieval town wall and 16th-17th century pottery.

Aesthetic value- sensory and intellectual stimulation

The character area includes the Memorial Gardens on St Aldates and the gardens of Christ Church and Merton colleges. The entire area is a designated Grade I Gardens and has high aesthetic value with views onto the city wall and Christ Church and across the meadow to the south. Although there are no significant buildings in the character area, there are several rubble stone walls enclosing the garden areas at Christ Church and Merton. A surviving portion of the medieval city wall also extends across the northern part of the area bordering Merton College and the later garden walls use similar material and construction.

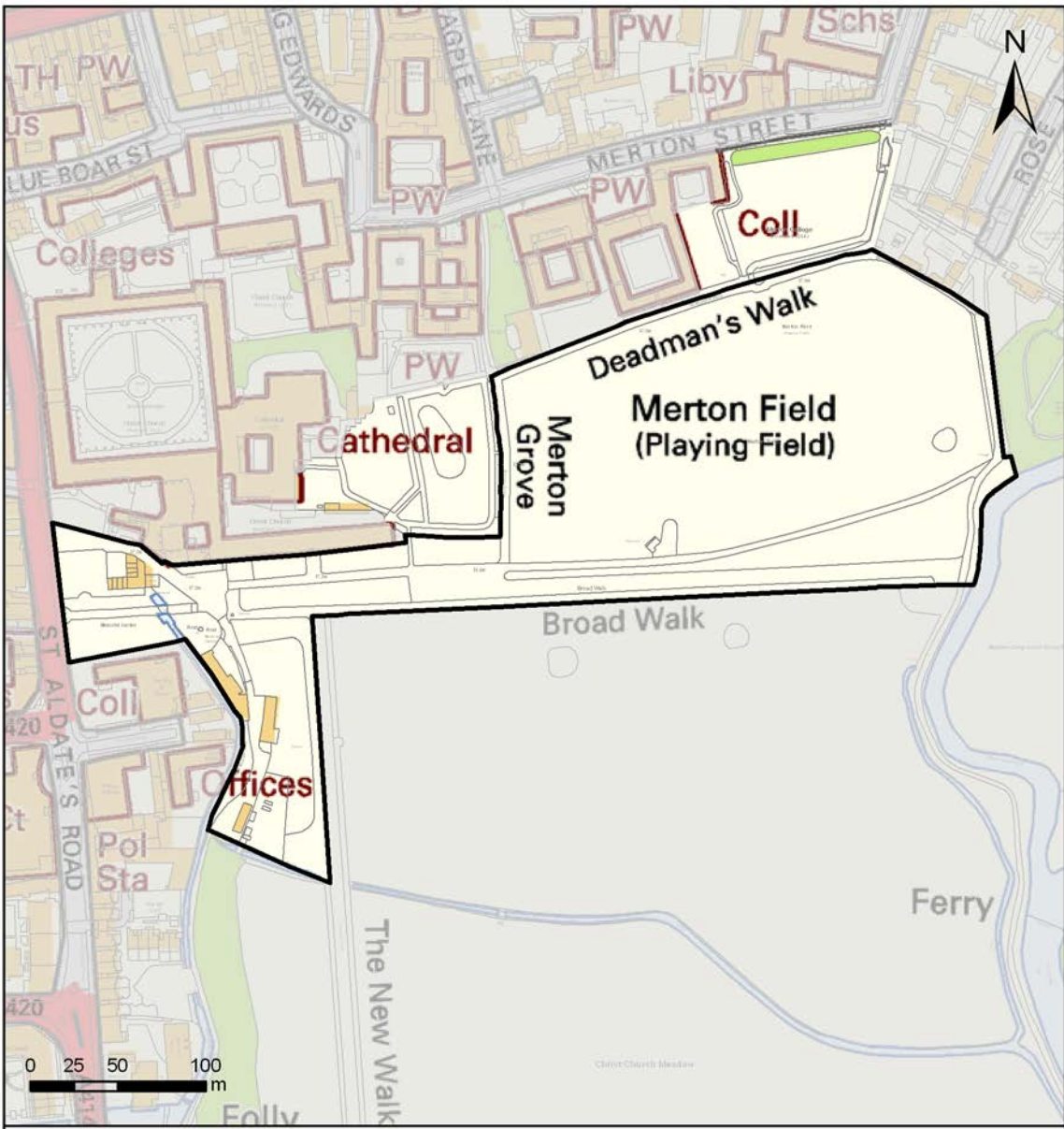


Christ Church Memorial Gardens looking east.

Communal value- meaning for collective experience and memory

This character area has a high communal value as an open space and promenade close to the heart of the city where visitors and residents gain access to the Thames path further to the south.

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HUCA 35 Orientation map