

CHESHIRE HISTORIC TOWNS SURVEY

Frodsham

Archaeological Strategy



2003

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Frodsham: Area of Archaeological Potential

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP) has been identified in Frodsham comprising four Archaeological Character Zones (ACZs). Each Zone is identified by its defining archaeological or historical characteristics, or *Primary Characteristics*. For example, in the Planned Medieval Borough (Archaeological Character Zone 2), the defining characteristics include the medieval borough, medieval market place, and the site of a medieval fortified manor house.
- 1.2 Each Archaeological Character Zone may also include sites and features which are not characteristic of the Zone but are nonetheless of archaeological and historical importance, and these are identified as *Secondary Characteristics*. For example, Archaeological Character Zone 2 includes a number of post medieval buildings, which have been identified as a Secondary Characteristic.
- 1.3 The list of characteristics is not exhaustive, and it is possible that other types of important archaeological remains and features exist within each Archaeological Character Zone. The boundaries of the AAP and the Archaeological Character Zones, and the list of Primary and Secondary Characteristics are intended as a guide for planners and developers. They are based on current knowledge, and are therefore subject to change as new information is revealed.

2. Existing Designations (Figure 1)

Scheduled Ancient Monuments	None
Listed Buildings	Grade I – St Lawrence's Church Grade II*- The Old Vicarage, Vicarage Lane Grade II – 56
Conservation Areas	Two - Overton and Frodsham
Registered Parks and Gardens	Castle Park

3 The Archaeological Character Zones (Figure 2)

Zone 1: Early Medieval Estate Centre

Primary Characteristics	
Early Medieval Estate Centre	The Domesday Survey (1086) indicates that there was an important early medieval estate centre at Frodsham, which was owned by the Earls of Mercia. The location of this estate centre is thought to have been at Overton in the vicinity of the parish church of St Lawrence.
Early Medieval Church/Minster?	An early medieval church is thought to have stood on the site of the medieval church of St Lawrence. This may have originated as a chapel within the estate centre and a carved grave slab of pre-Conquest date suggests that it was of high status, perhaps a Minster church.
Market Place	A market is likely to have developed at the estate centre, allowing the provision and exchange of produce.

Secondary Characteristics	
Medieval Estate Centre	During the medieval period there continued to be an important estate centre based in Overton. However, in the 13th century the focus apparently shifted from Overton to Frodsham and the newly created Borough and fortified manor house (see ACZ 2).
St Lawrence's Church	St Lawrence's church contains architectural fabric dating from 12th and 14th century remodelling. Much of the original fabric was lost in 1880-2 when the church underwent restoration.
Post Medieval Settlement	A number of post medieval buildings survive in this Zone, some of which are listed.

Zone 2: Planned Medieval Borough

Primary Characteristics	
The Medieval Borough	A Borough Charter was granted to Frodsham between 1209 and 1228 by Ranulph de Blundeville, Earl of Chester. Evidence of the long, narrow tenements or 'burgage plots', which were laid out for the burgesses of the town, partially survives along Main Street and High Street.
Market Place	A market place appears to have been deliberately laid out in Main Street.
The Manor House/Castle	A manor house is referred to from the mid-13th century onwards. This was burnt down in 1654 and replaced by Park Place, a Georgian Manor House, which is now used as council offices within the public park known as Castle Park.

Secondary Characteristics	
Post Medieval Settlement	A number of post medieval buildings survive in this Zone, a large proportion of which are listed Grade II.

Zone 3: Newtown Medieval Settlement

Primary Characteristics	
Frodsham Bridge	When the bridge was first constructed is unknown but this is likely to have been an important crossing place of the River Weaver from an early period.
Port	In 1283 a port is documented, from which the Lords of Frodsham received £10. It has been suggested that this port was located in the vicinity of Frodsham Bridge, where vessels unloaded until the creation of the Weaver Navigation in the 18th century.

Medieval Settlement	Settlement developed in the vicinity of the bridge and this became known as 'Newtown', a name typical of new medieval settlement.
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Secondary Characteristics	
Post Medieval Industry	During the post medieval period a small number of industries developed in this Zone, including a bone works.
Post Medieval Quayside	An area to the north of Frodsham Bridge is identified as a quay on an 18th century map.
Post Medieval Settlement	Post medieval settlement was no doubt attracted to this area by the economic activity provided by the quayside and the industries established in this Zone.

Zone 4: Post Medieval Expansion

Primary Characteristics	
Post Medieval Settlement	Frodsham failed to attract industry, with the exception of small scale manufactories in Newtown including a flour mill and a salt works. The township experienced limited growth during this period and in the late 19th century the centres of Frodsham, Overton and Newton were still separate entities.

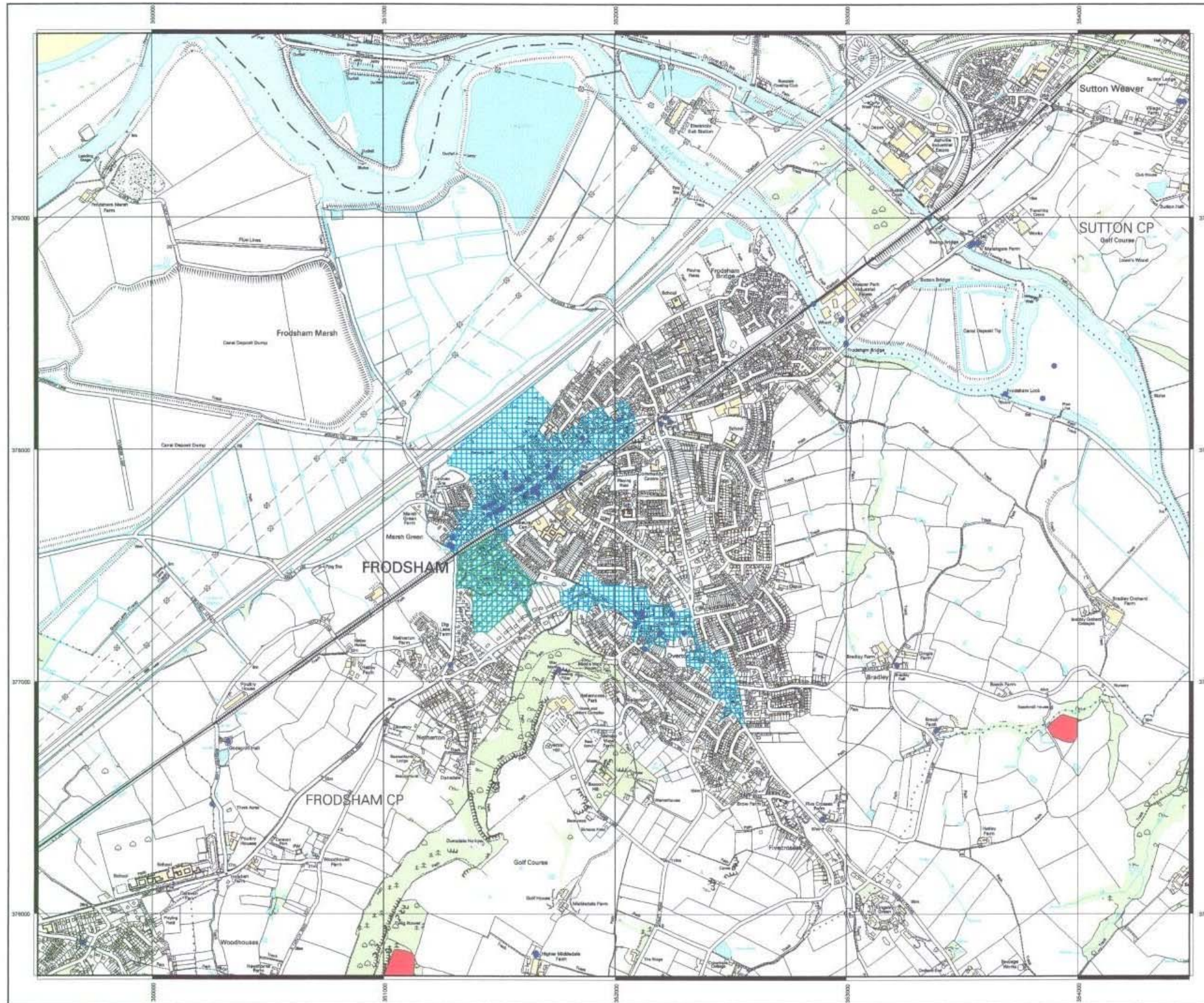





Figure 1: Frodsham Existing Designations

-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  Listed Building
-  Registered Park and Garden Conservation Area

1:16000

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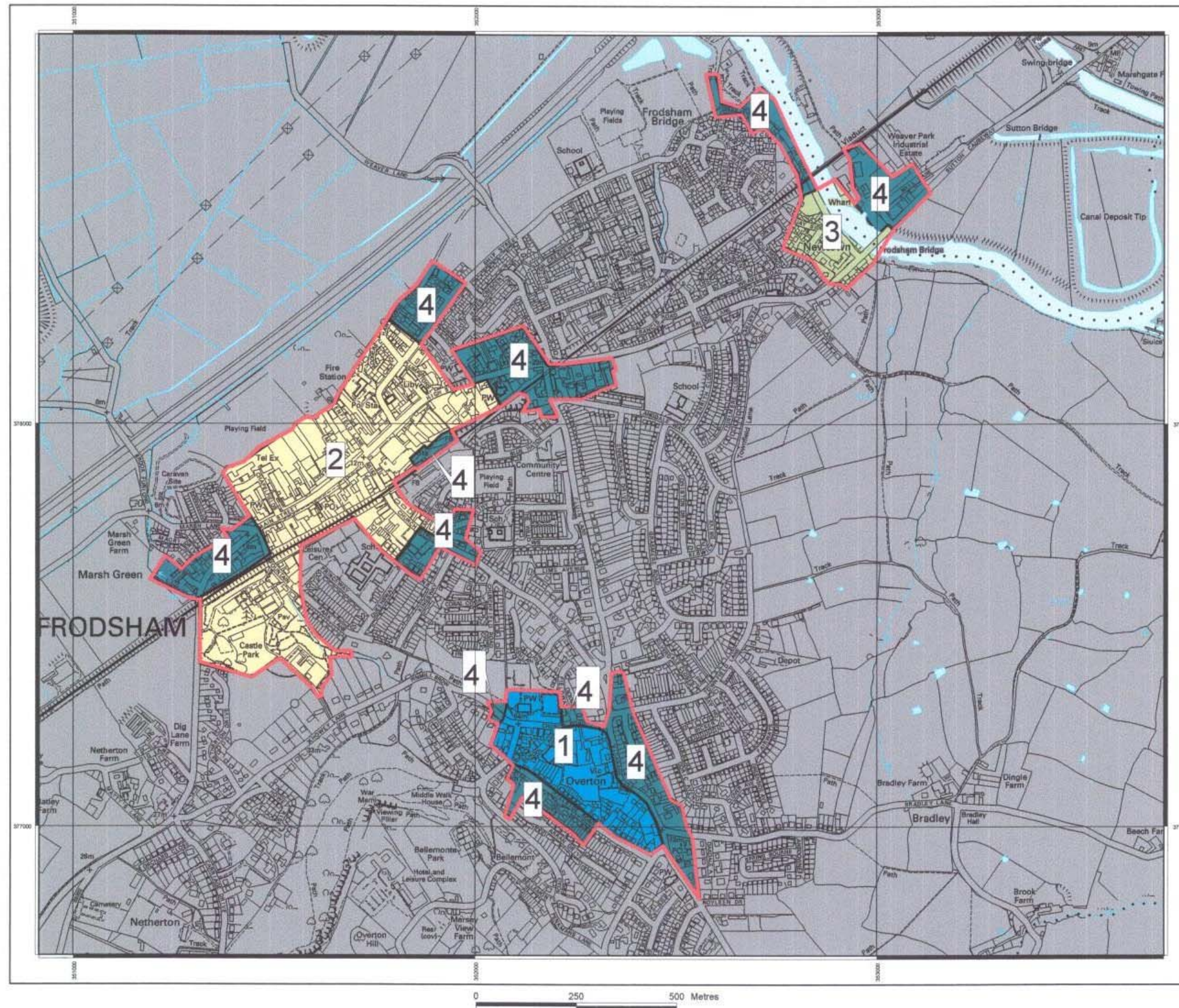


Figure 2: Frodsham Area of Archaeological Potential and Archaeological Character Zones

- Area of Archaeological Potential
- ACZ 1: Early Medieval Estate Centre?
- ACZ 2: Planned Medieval Borough
- ACZ 3: Newtown Medieval Settlement
- ACZ 4: Post Medieval Expansion
- Area Outside the Historic Core

1:9000

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