

13 High Street (south)

Context

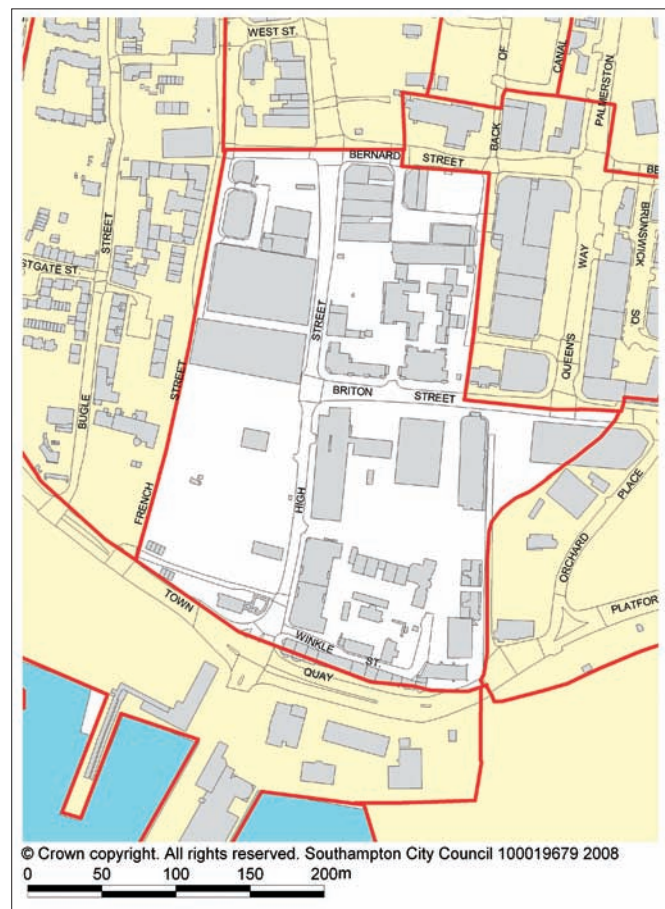
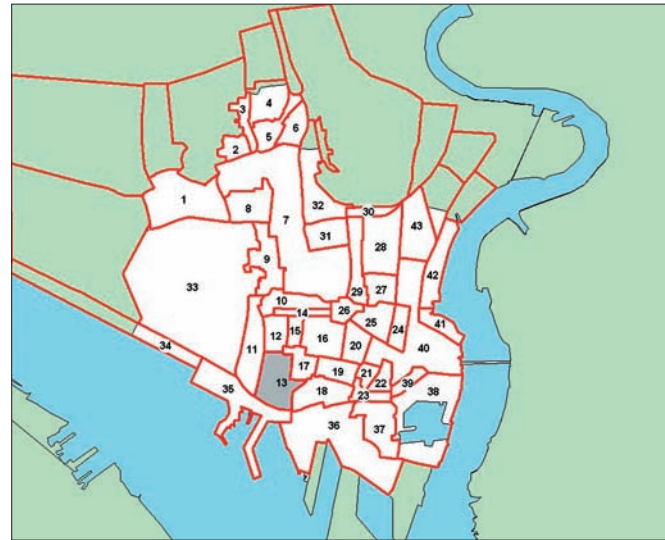
This area centres on the southern end of the High Street and comprises the south-eastern quarter of the area covered by the medieval walled town. About 50% of its area has been developed as high density residential development yet it retains much visible archaeology. The area abuts CA17 to the east, CA12, the Upper High Street to the north, CA11, the western half of the walled town, and CA35, Town Quay and Mayflower Park, to the south. The area is almost flat, but slopes gradually towards the waterfront.

The existing length of High Street was, until the fourteenth century, divided into two by Holy Rood Church raising questions about the origins of the lower part of High Street. It is thought that the area to the east of High Street was more intensively developed than the land to the west – the fact that the Franciscan Friars were able to build a friary within the area suggests that there was space available here in the mid-thirteenth century. After this time the area possibly became a more favourable area for merchants, especially after the development of Town Quay. The historic character of the area differed from the south-west corner of the walled town as it had long burgage plots stretching back to the town wall or the Friary contrasting with the network of streets west of High Street.

Grain

The area is structured around the High Street which tends to slightly narrow and curve from north to south. Briton Street joins it at the midway point. Until the construction of the residential development, Briton Street formed a crossroads which, to the west of High Street, swept northward as Castle Way to join French Street to the west. This western extension (a post-war intervention) has now become part of a building plot. Bernard Street forms the northern boundary of the area, the line of the medieval wall and South Gate the southern boundary and French Street the western boundary. Much of the original grain of deep burgage plots with narrow frontage has disappeared as a result of recent development. The only significant remnants are at the northern end of the area. Even some of these plots remain only in their alignment, having been rebuilt in the 1950s.

Most of the centre of the area has been redeveloped as perimeter blocks. Broomhouse Lane has been reinstated as part of the redevelopment of this area and now successfully links High Street and French Street, and is terminated by the timber-framed Tudor Merchant's House on French Street. Two historic lanes situated behind the walls, Winkle Street and Porters Lane, run parallel with the walls facing the waterfront and are an important survival of the pattern of cross lanes present



from the medieval period. The grain becomes more loose and open in the south-west corner due to the school and its playgrounds, and the creation of a pocket park around the ruins of the medieval walls.

Scale

A variety of building heights and scales exist within the area; from two storey 1950s redevelopment in the north eastern extremity, to three to five storey 19th and early 20th century civic scaled buildings, to six to seven storey residential developments dating from the last five to seven years. Street sections reflect the general sense of enclosure in the Area, from about 1 : 1.5 : 1 in Briton Street to 1 : 1 : 0.8 in parts of High Street, to 1 : 0.3 : 1 in the reinstated Brewhouse Lane. A sense of openness is experienced in the south-west corner of the Area.

The best surviving group of traditionally massed buildings is around the High Street/Briton Street corner (south-west side), with continuous articulated elevations and skyline interest. Similar massing exists almost opposite on the east side. There is also a good group to the north side of Town Quay of between two and four storeys and set in narrow plots (some of which have been amalgamated giving a varied but pleasingly traditionally scaled townscape). Otherwise most of the recent residential development tends to be flat roofed, albeit with a more varied roofline than its 1950s – 1960s counterparts.

Uses

The predominant use above ground floor is residential, although there is also a significant amount of commercial office space. Some shops are located in the northern half of the area and the newly completed blocks contain lettable office space. There are 3 or 4 pubs in the area and some restaurants facing the Town Quay. A primary school fronts onto French Street and the City Archaeology Service occupies a former school building.

Public Realm

Little public realm exists other than pavements, except in the extreme south-west corner area where there is a pocket park which absorbs the difference of level of about 2.5 metres between the area north of the walls and the Town Quay. The park is of relatively recent date and has a suburban, rather than urban, portside character. The soft landscape is dominated by shrubs, flowerbeds and grass, rather than trees. The park provides a rare elevated vantage point to view the waterfront.

There is some remnant paving to Winkle Street and along the link to the Back of the Walls.

Connectivity

High Street and French Street provide good north-south connectivity. The lanes at the southern end, Winkle



- 01** Remnants of the walls seen looking south into Back of the Walls
02 View looking west through God's House Gate into the walled town
03 New development to southern end of High Street within setting of impressive survivals of Medieval wall

Street and Porters Lane, Briton Street and the reinstated Brewhouse Lane, and Bernard Street to the north, provide less direct but nonetheless important east-west links. The school grounds also tend to inhibit east – west movement. There is poor pedestrian connectivity to the Town Quay due to the traffic-dominated Town Quay Road.

Views

Glimpsed views through the arch of God's House Tower looking into Winkle Street and glimpses through the gate towards the waterfront (or at least the docks) are valuable townscape features of this part of the character area.

The reinstated Brewhouse Lane is very attractively terminated once more by the timber-framed facade of the Medieval Merchant's House. Views along Briton Street are now terminated by a new development helping to continue to give the perception of a high degree of enclosure within this character area.

The strategic view to St Michael's spire passes along the northern boundary of this character area.

Building types

Pre-war building types include 19th century commercial premises of small to medium size, warehouses (some of the few remaining in the city, again relatively small), community buildings and pubs. Post-war buildings are predominantly flats over shops on medium to large footprints. There are also apartment blocks, again on relatively deep plans.

Architectural qualities

The most coherent and architecturally significant groups of historic buildings are those at the junction of High Street and Bernard Street (south-west corner) and the range on the east side of the High Street, a little further south. They date from the Victorian and Edwardian periods and are consequently an eclectic mix of styles, which nevertheless relate well to each other as they have similar eaves/cornice heights and plot widths. Those buildings on Bernard Street form an effective framing ensemble, with the former Bank building on the north side of Bernard Street (Area 12) enclosing the view to the east end of St Michael's Church. The buildings here are mostly Italianate with lively texture and details. The Gothic-Revival buildings in this group face High Street and the rooflines are particularly well designed. Across the road the Art Nouveau white faience work facade of the pub is unique in Southampton as a representative of a rare style, and designed with confidence. The building's neighbours are Edwardian Baroque in character, in their use of red brick and warm buff stone banding.

The other ranges of buildings lie hard against the southern medieval walls. These include a red brick ware-

house of the latter end of the 19th century, a local skyline feature. This building helps to provide some enclosure and street frontage, where little exists in this part of the Area. A little further east another range of varied architectural periods, uses and elevational design, is nevertheless coherent due to the controlling grain of the plots. The very late Victorian school has a robust architectural design. The modest example of the Arts and Crafts style building; the Mission Hall (now the City Archaeology Unit) has some well-detailed features; particularly the small belfry attached to the chimney and the fine Arts and Crafts porch. The remainder is overwhelmingly of recent origin, displaying features of the early twenty-first century, especially in the use of functionally expressed steel lintels and balconies. Generally, these buildings are of neutral character and in places over-scaled. The most distinguished recent elevations are those of the retirement flats on the east side of French Street, opposite the Merchant's House (Area 11). These are of appropriate massing and scale, with well considered gable end designs.

Heritage Assets

The area is considered to possess a high degree of evidential value due to its particularly rich survival of highly significant and visible remains of Southampton's medieval past, most of which are Scheduled Monuments and some are also listed. The town wall to the east, God's House Tower and museum and adjacent gateway and the remains of the Watergate and the remains of the South Gate are part of one of the best preserved medieval town walls in the country although the east section is largely hemmed in by development. These highly significant heritage assets are culturally important in their role of defining how the medieval city functioned and was ordered. They have associative value for their historic role as one of the most important ports in England. Other highly significant assets include the twelfth century Merchant's House, Canute's Palace, and the remains of vaults, some obscured on what appear to be vacant sites and the hospital of St Julian (or God's House) on Winkle Street. The setting of these assets is not always appropriate and development has gone some way to eroding the heritage values, particularly aesthetic values with associated with these assets. For example, some have been fenced off by railings or used as informal car parking areas. A fragment of medieval wall on the east side of the High Street at the service entrance to new development is not well integrated into the scheme and is partially obscured by traffic signs. The proximity of the very busy Town Quay Road does not provide a sympathetic setting. The pattern of streets and lanes is evidence of the extensive survival from the medieval town and is a culturally significant and illustrative element of the heritage of Southampton.

Adjacent to the town wall was the site of the medieval Friary which had a burial ground where many merchants

of the town were buried. The development of this part of lower High Street in the medieval period, with the suggested movement of the merchant classes to the area to the east of High Street after the construction of the defences is of particular interest. For this reason, this area is considered to have high evidential value in terms of what information can be gained from the sequencing of progressive development on sites and how this has influenced present development. There is also evidence for the Roman and late Saxon use and occupation of this area. Accordingly, any archaeological remains within the area are regarded as being of national importance and the area is within a Local Area of Archaeological Importance to reflect this potential to yield significant evidence for past activity in the area.

Geddes Warehouse stands on the former line of the town walls and forms an important part of the sequence of buildings in this area which form landmarks of historic and aesthetic significance (including God's House Tower and gate). Although they are not necessarily the tallest buildings within the character area or within their immediate environs, they reinforce the sense of the 'town wall' defining the medieval town.

The Red Lion, despite its unassuming late facade, hides a late fifteenth/early sixteenth century hall and timber frame and is Grade II* listed. For this reason, it is considered this building has cultural as well as illustrative value in so much as what the building tells us about the building type; inns and the commercial trade associated with the town in this period. There are a number of later listed buildings, two locally listed buildings and the area lies within the Old Town South Conservation Area. The remaining listed and locally listed buildings reflect the high quality and good survival of evidential and aesthetic values relating to how Southampton developed over time to its present position.

Materials

Traditional materials include stone, mainly rubble for the town walls and gates; some Portland Stone and Bath Stone for dressings, cills, pediments etc; otherwise predominantly brick, mainly red, some darker, some buff. Faience work appears on one prominent facade. Recent architecture makes considerable use of render of

various colours and shades, in juxtaposition with semi-engineering brickwork (buff or red).

Condition

Historic buildings are in reasonable condition, although some show possible neglect. Some upper floors are either unused or underused. Recent buildings are in good condition.

Ownership

Generally medium to small scale ownership, commercial development in company management, some in City Council and Local Education Authority ownership.

Intervention

- Most of the area has now been redeveloped. The historic buildings (outlined above) that are not statutory listed could be vulnerable to redevelopment or unsympathetic refurbishment. Therefore it is important to maintain an active watching brief over these buildings. Efforts should be made to encourage the use of upper floors.
- The setting of the Walls and Gates.
- A plan for the sensitive safeguarding, presentation and management of the setting of these important assets should be considered and implemented. This should be integrated with similar plans for the Walls in Character Area 11.

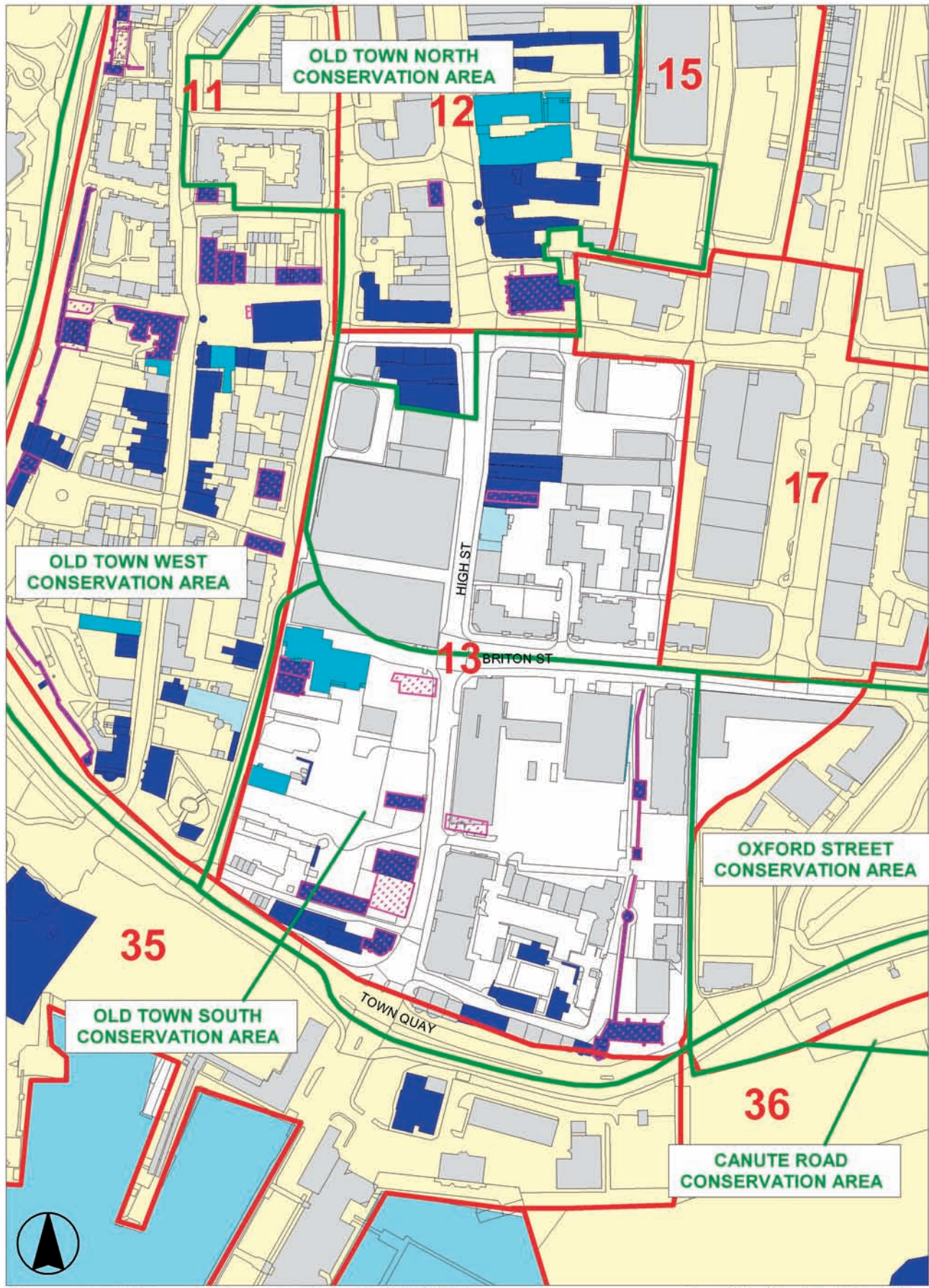
Design Principles

- Active conservation of historic buildings, structures and below ground remains in any development on or near to Heritage Assets.
- The design and location of any conversion, extension, signage or shopfitting works should be the subject of expert advice. Replica heritage or insensitive approaches should be avoided.
- A general scheme for the north and east walls (including CAs 15 and 17) should be developed as a priority (developing upon the work of the Old Town Development Strategy – April 2004 Southampton City Council).
- The opportunity should be taken to celebrate and reinforce the survival of early streets and lanes and encourage the reinstatement of these where they are lost and where at all possible.



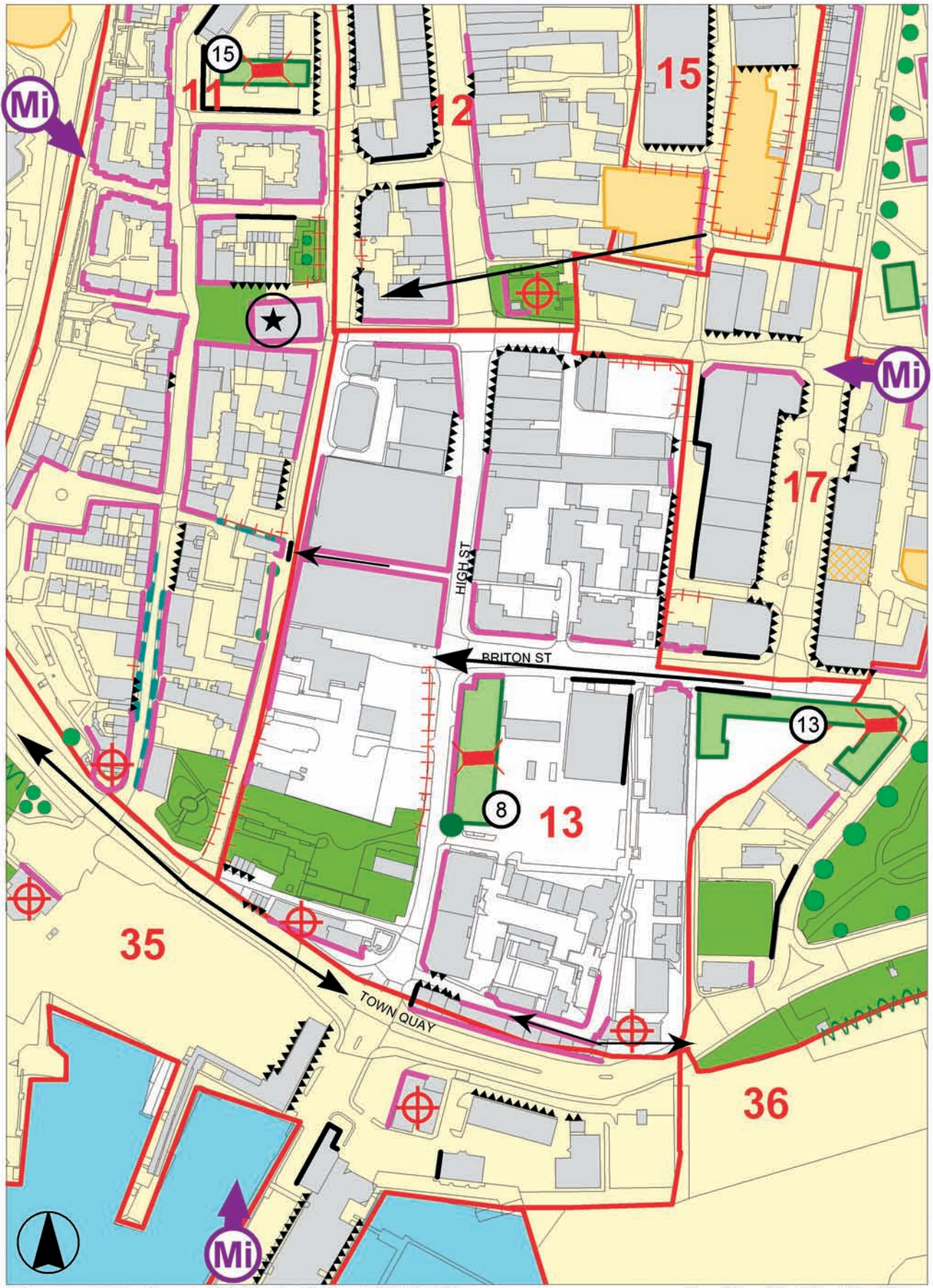
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Heritage Assets



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Townscape