

42 Itchen Shore – working wharfs (modern)

Context

This character area starts to the north of the historic American Wharf complex (CA41) and has the industrial estates (CA40) and football stadium (CA43) to its west. It extends north beyond the study area boundary. To the east the Itchen shoreline forms the boundary though this can only be viewed publicly from the opposite shore of the Itchen looking west.

This area represents land that has gradually been reclaimed through the building of jetties and wharfs out from the historic shoreline and the subsequent infilling of the areas between. This process began at the southern end of the area c.1800 and increased in the 1830s/40s. The construction of wharfs spread northwards so that by c.1870 the river-front development was complete. The wharfs along the west side of the Itchen were a focus for commercial shipping and boat-building; names such as Baltic Wharf and Sunderland Wharf are suggestive of the origins of some of the cargoes unloaded here in the nineteenth century.

Grain

Buildings and structures are of a medium to coarse grain and in part define Marine Parade and Belvidere Road which form its western boundary. The area is low density in terms of built form but with much of the open space laid over to aggregate storage in large piles of material. The machinery and infrastructure of the industry is large scale and industrial in character.

Scale

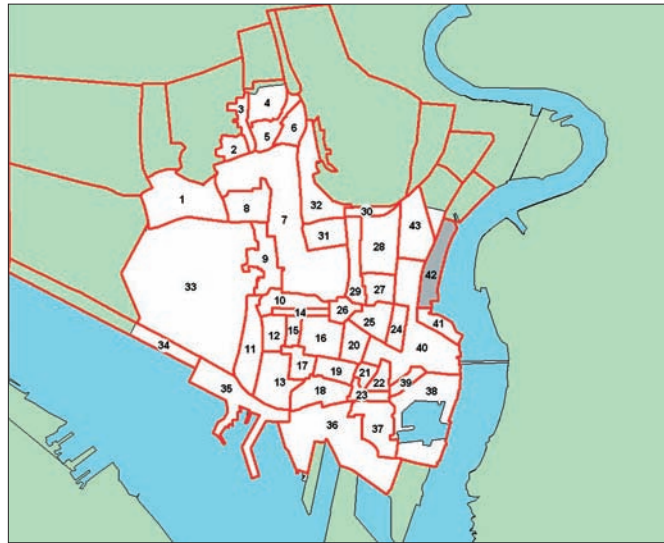
Most buildings are no higher than the equivalent of two and a half storeys. Aggregate belts associated machinery are large scale and equivalent to five storey domestic buildings, however their massing is far less intrusive with multiple gaps to sky.

The cranes to the north end of the character area are a notable group of landmark structures and can be seen from a number of viewpoints. From the edge of the character area there are a number of glimpsed views east across to the occasionally tree-lined ridge of the opposite bank of the Itchen. There is a river view down a public slipway to the south of the cranes.

Uses

The primary uses are those related to the import and processing of aggregates – mainly sand and gravel and the import of grain. The operation of these industries on the river is an important characteristic of the working port, creating activity and large boat movements.

There is also a smaller scale industry relating to the marina and boatyard to the south of the character area



and includes boat building, repair and related marine services.

Public Realm

Due to the working wharf character of this area there is very limited public realm. Where this is present it comprises relatively narrow pavements finished with concrete paving slabs.

Connectivity

There is very limited connectivity due to the restrictive nature of the uses on the sites. There is no publicly accessible connection to the waterfront other than an under-used, poorly maintained slipway to the northern end of the character area.

Views

To the northern end a collection of redundant cranes form important landmarks on the skyline looking east and north-east towards the character area from CA40.

The degree of enclosure with built form or high boundary walls along Marine Drive prevents all but the occasional uninterrupted view to the river and its far bank and ridge. These are usually only glimpsed between the infrastructure of the aggregate industry which lines the edge of the river. Also of note along Marine Drive are the glimpsed views to the Itchen Bridge.

There are good open views of the football stadium on travelling north along Marine Parade.

Building types

Functional shed type buildings with some ancillary office accommodation. Large conveyor belts, storage hoppers and bins.

Architectural qualities

The buildings in this character area are highly functional and utilitarian displaying very little architectural quality.

Heritage Assets

The area is considered to possess a high degree of evidential value due to the fact that there is potential for the survival of archaeological evidence for any wharfs or jetties that were built out from the Saxon shoreline buried beneath the existing wharfs. The area lies within a Local Area of Archaeological Importance to reflect this potential to yield significant evidence for past activity in the area.

There are no built heritage assets in this character area. Whilst there are no built reminders of the historic development of the area, the use of the area as wharfs and boat-related businesses retains to an extent the cultural and associative values in terms of the use and character of the area.



- 01 Storage hoppers, bins and elevated conveyor belts for the loading and unloading of aggregates at the waters edge
- 02 Group of older cranes define the skyline to the northern corner of the character area
- 03 Very poorly defined public realm and limited active frontages form the character of this part of the study area

Materials

Some stock brick, prefabricated panelled buildings, profile metal and asbestos sheeting. Steel structural supports for conveyor belts.

Condition

The condition of the character area appears to be fair and it functions well in its present uses.

Ownership

Multiple ownership by companies.

Intervention

- Improved access to the water where possible.
- Present access to the water enhanced (build upon slip if under-used) to provide the opportunity to view the working wharfs and the riverside.

Key design principles

- Seek to encourage good design in replacement buildings fronting Marine Parade/Belvidere Road which have a more dynamic and active relationship with the roadside.
- Seek to maximise views/glimpses across the water wherever possible.

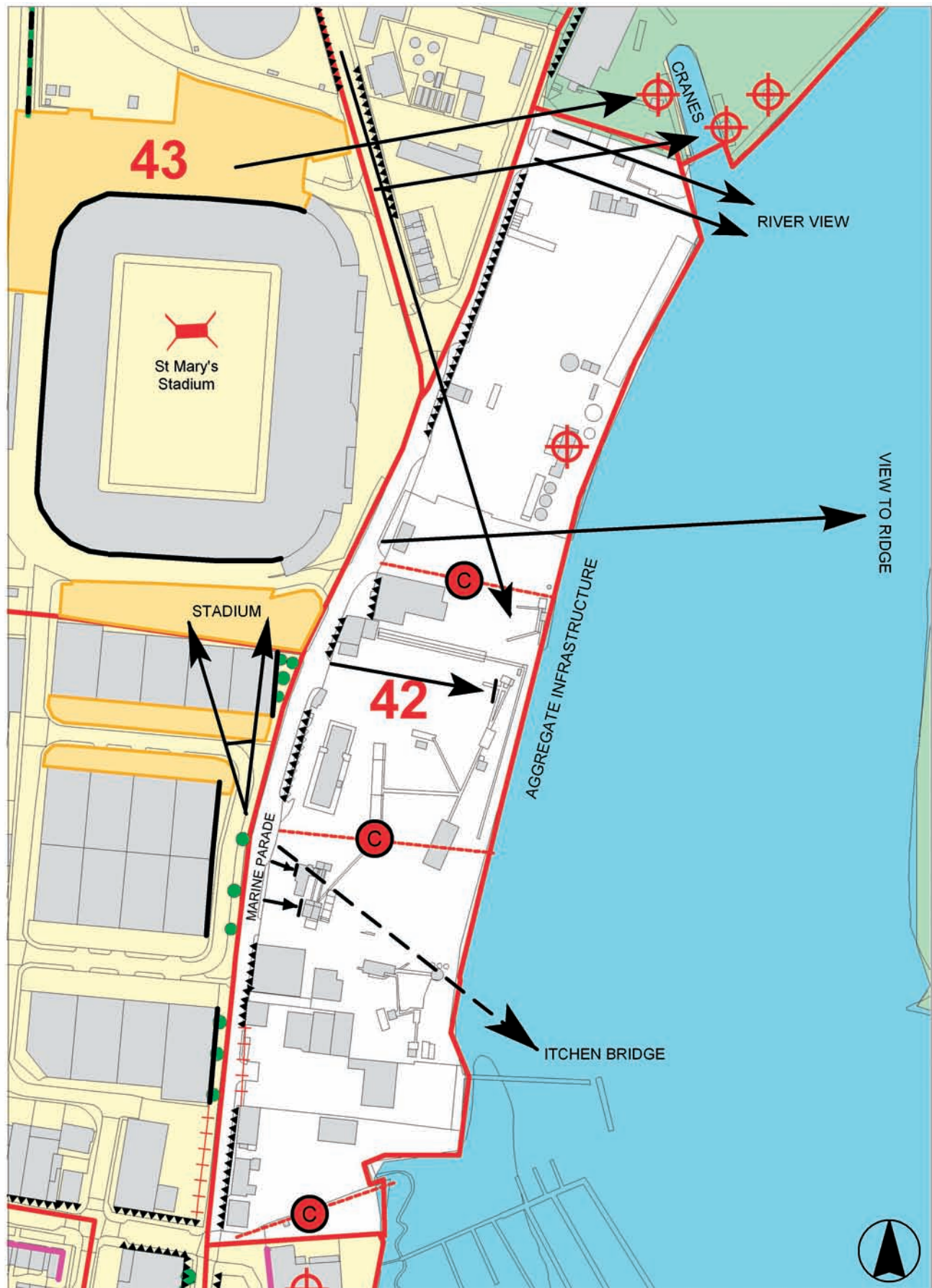


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Heritage Assets



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Townscape

