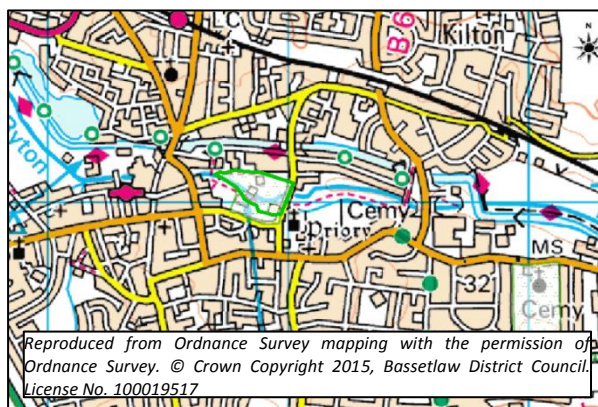


Unregistered Park & Garden:
Canch Recreation Ground
(Workshop)

NCC/BDC Ref:
UPG08

Date(s):
 C18, 1763, 1817-1835, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1933,
 1937/8, 1940s, 1977, 1995, 2010/11.



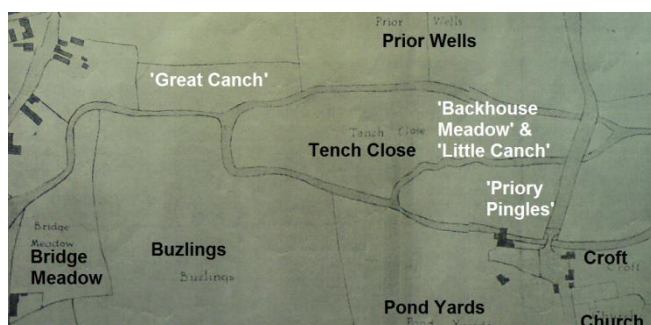
Description & historic information:

The first reference to the word ‘canch’ is found in Harrison’s survey of 1636, who names two meadows in the area as “Great Canch” and “Little Canch”. The term ‘canch’ is often attributed to mining, although for this site, it may in fact be related to some form of quarrying (possibly of the red sandstone) or the construction of fish ponds in the medieval period. By the time of Harrison, the site was primarily water meadow, with the River Ryton (more specifically the mill leat, diverting water from the river) flowing through from west to east, powering the Priory’s mill.

The area of Workshop known as The Canch has a long history, originally being associated with the former Augustinian Priory (founded c1100) to the east. A water mill and fish ponds are likely to have been constructed on the site in the early-12th century (part of the area is referred to as ‘Pond Yards’ on an early/mid-18th century map and ‘Tench Close’ on the 1763/1775 Kelk maps – see extracts below). The original course of the river flows along the northern boundary of the site. When the mill was constructed (possibly 12th century), a mill leat was dug out to the south, flowing in a north west to south east direction, with a separate by-pass channel upstream of the mill site. These water courses still exist, although much altered.

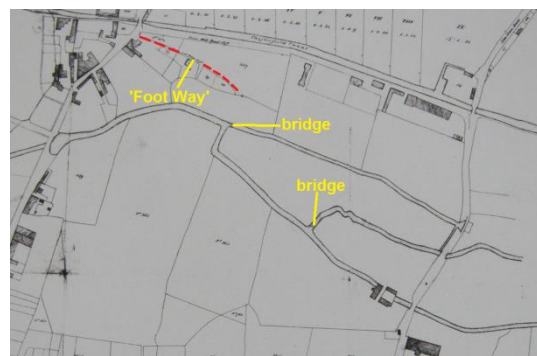


Early/mid-18th century map of ‘Pond Yards’ (source: Sheffield Archives).

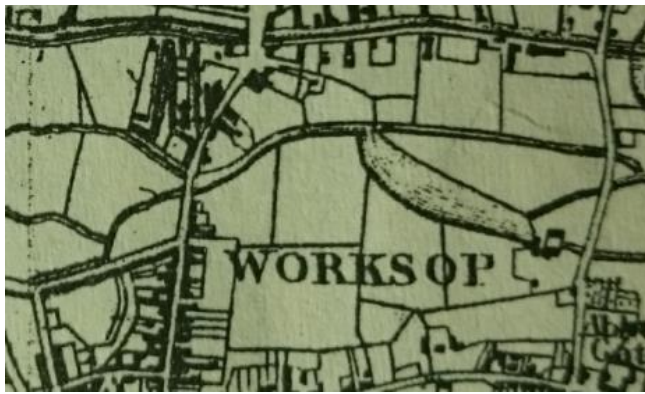


1775 – Kelk’s Map of the Manor of Workshop – the field names from Harrison’s 1636 survey are in white (source: Workshop Library).

A footway has existed through the site for a considerable period, first being visible on the 1813 & 1817 maps. This route connects Bridge Place, follows the line of present-day Church Walk, then crosses over the original river course, then follows the route of the mill leat and on towards the Priory Church – now the footpath is called ‘Canch Walk’ but is labelled as ‘The Canch’ on late-19th century maps.



1817 – Workshop Enclosure Map – the footpath and bridges are highlighted (source: Workshop Library).

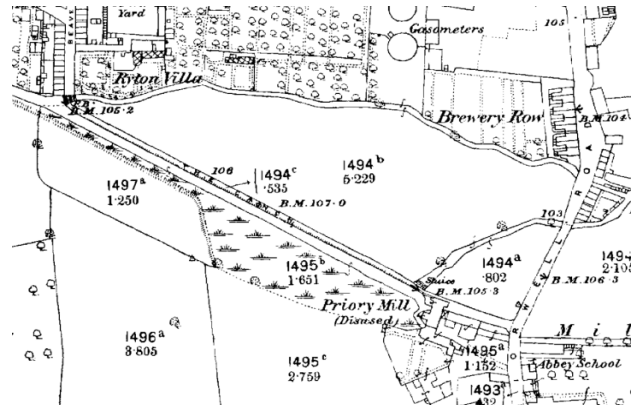


1835 – Sanderson's Map (Nottinghamshire County Council, 2003).

Around 1820, the mill leat was dammed, with the resulting mill pond formed to the west of the mill (first visible on the 1835 Sanderson's map). The land to the north was not developed, however, presumably due to the nature of the ground conditions (the site historically being a meadow, i.e. often water logged). In 1876 the corn mill operation ceased and the mill pond silted up (or was deliberately infilled). The land to the north again remained undeveloped. In 1900, a cattle market was constructed to the west of the site.



1850 – Worksop Tithe Map (source: Nottinghamshire Archives)



1886 OS Map

In the early-20th century, there was a growing demand in the town for public recreation facilities, particularly of a public park and swimming baths. In February 1907, much of the Priory Mill was destroyed by a fireⁱ in the then premises of W. Brammer & Co (chair makers). In October 1907, the Duke of Newcastle offered to sell to the Worksop Urban District Council: *"the field to the north of the Canch, including the Priory Mill, such of the rights as the Duke possesses in those portions of the Canch, and over the Canch Walkⁱⁱ"*, for the purposes of the creation of a recreation ground and an open-air swimming baths. The Worksop UDC purchased the land soon after.



1906 View of Canch Walk, with mill and church in background (source: Bassetlaw Museum).



1900 photo of The Canch, mill pond and the former mill farm buildings (Source: Bassetlaw Museum)

The swimming baths would be located immediately behind the former mill buildings, which were being demolished, although with some walls remaining. On Thursday 9th June 1910, the swimming baths were officially opened, soon referred to locally as the 'Canch Lido'. The opening day featured demonstrations in live-saving and the event was well-attendedⁱⁱⁱ. The baths immediately proved popular, with over 1000 visitors recorded for the following Saturday (11th June 1910)^{iv}.



View of life-saving demonstration from opening of new swimming baths (source: Sheffield Evening Telegraph, 10th June 1910).

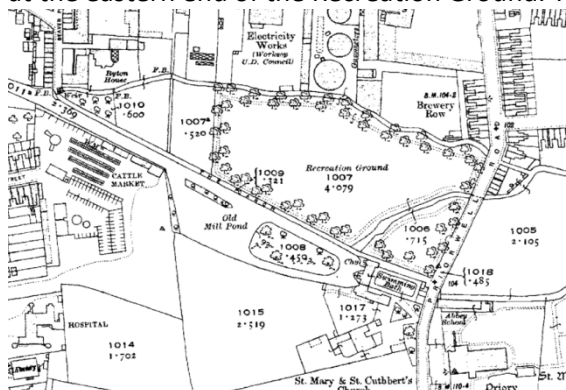


View of swimming baths from 1920s/30s (source: Bassetlaw District Council, 'Canch Park Management Plan, 2013-2016').

By mid-1911, the former mill pond had been adapted for use as a boating lake, with reports of this use recorded in May 1911^v. Throughout 1911, little work took place on the remainder of the site, although a gift of plants and flowers was made by local businessman Mr Alderson in May^{vi}. On the 18th September 1911, at a meeting of the Worksop Urban District Council, it was requested that its Recreation Ground Committee *"take into consideration the desirability of completing the layout of the Recreation Ground at an early date"*^{vii}. Finally, on the 13th November 1911, a full layout plan was presented by the Recreation Ground Committee, which was subsequently approved later that month. The approved plan included the purchasing of 100 lime trees and 20 poplar trees^{viii} (many of these trees survive today). This plan also included a dwarf stone wall at the western end of the site, together with large sections of iron railings (again, much of the wall and parts of the railings still survive).

In January 1912, the Worksop UDC requested that half of the recreation ground be seeded with grass in the spring^{ix}. By May, this was being carried out, with the site being opened as a children's playground soon after.

In 1916, the Worksop Urban District Council agreed for the Recreation Ground to be used for the growing of potatoes as a result of the food shortage caused by WW1^x. This use ceased after the war ended. Shortly after WW1, in 1919, a British tank was presented to the town and was put on display at the eastern end of the Recreation Ground. The tank was scrapped in 1935^{xi}.



1920 OS Map

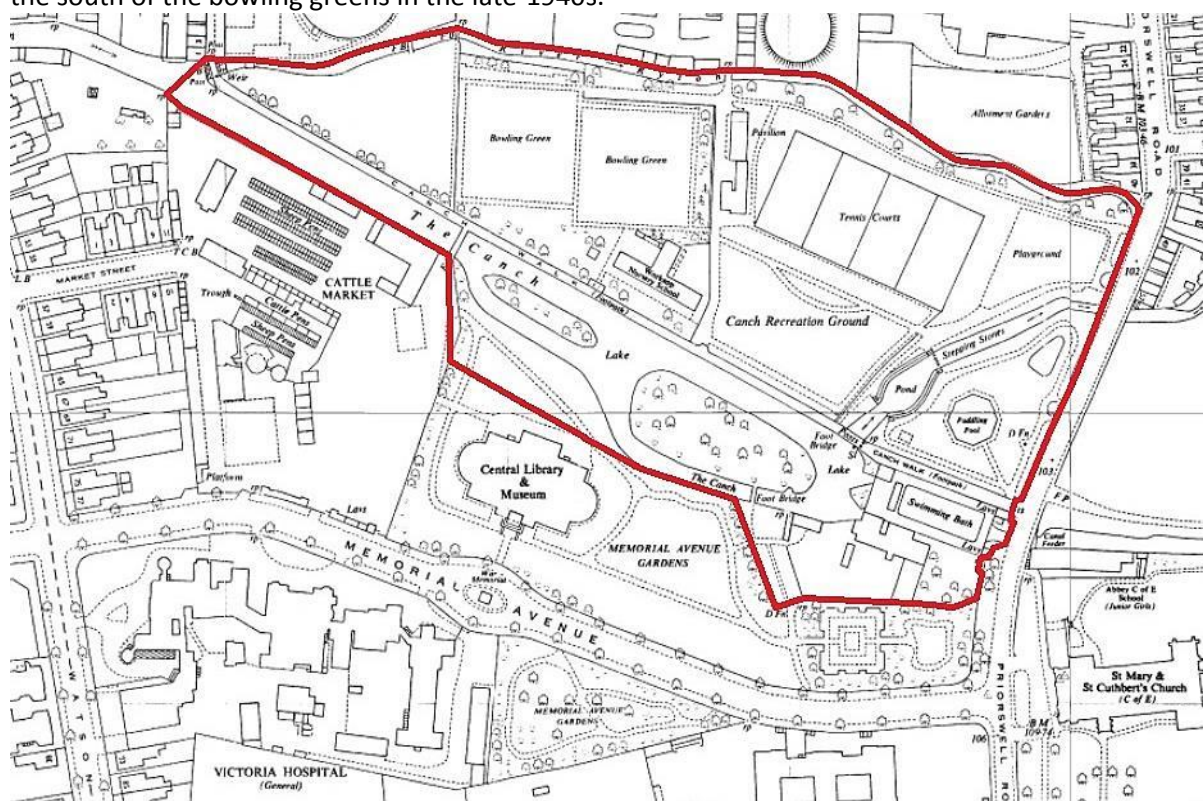


1920 view of the tank, sited at the east end of the Canch Recreation Ground (source: Bassetlaw Museum).

In 1925, the War Memorial (the cenotaph, plus an extension to the Victoria Hospital) opened to the south of the Recreation Ground. This was accessed by a new road, officially opened 3 years later in 1928, called Memorial Avenue. In 1933, the mill farm buildings were demolished, to make way for

the new 'Memorial Avenue Gardens'. The new gardens would effectively double the size of the public park area. In February 1934, a motion was passed by Worksop Borough Council for the construction of a new library, to be located at the western end of the new gardens. In July 1937, the Council's Parks' Superintendent, Mr Hazlehurst, had been tasked with the laying out of the new gardens^{xii}. The Library was officially opened on the 24th March 1938^{xiii} although the new gardens were still being finished in late-1938.

Following the completion of the new library/museum and adjacent gardens, plans were requested by the Council, in December 1938, to redevelop the Canch Recreation Ground with new facilities to cater for the expanding town's population^{xiv}. Those improvements (including bowling greens, tennis courts and a pavilion) were carried out shortly after WW2 ended, between 1945-1950. The lake was also narrowed at the western end. The Canch Nursery School (now a private nursery) was erected to the south of the bowling greens in the late-1940s.



1959 OS Map – the original Canch Recreation Ground (including lake) is outlined in red, with the later gardens to the south.

A foliage garden was laid out in 1977 to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee, in the south east corner. In 1995, the lido was filled in and replaced with a sensory garden, with the boundary wall around the lido being retained and railings added. The facilities on the Canch Recreation Ground, now referred to as the 'Canch Park', were comprehensively remodelled in 2010-2011.



Former boundary wall to Lido, now enclosing a sensory garden

Today the Canch Recreation Ground primarily consists of open lawns and gardens with tree-lined footways, together with new play equipment, leisure facilities and a children's splash pool.



Aerial photograph of Canch Recreation Ground, taken 2007 (source: Bassetlaw District Council)



Late-Victorian footbridge between Canch Walk and Church Walk



The mill's former by-pass sluice, re-used as part of the park, forming a pond with stepping stones.



Remains of 18th century mill building.



View from west end of site, looking eastwards along Canch Walk. View along Canch Walk, looking eastwards.

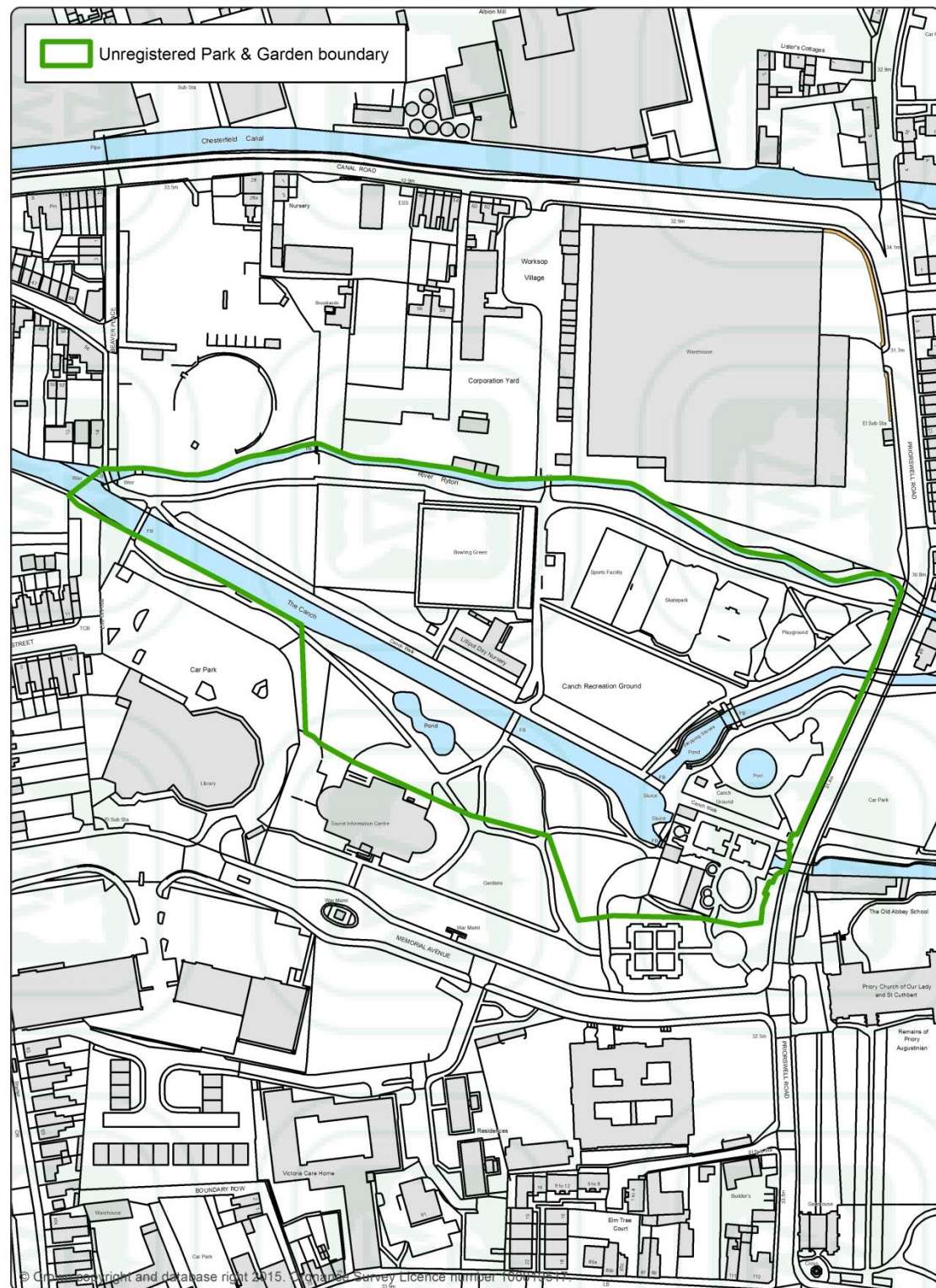
Features of significance:

Remains of 18th century mill buildings (incorporating stone possibly sourced from the remains of the Augustinian Priory buildings demolished in the mid-16th century^{xv}); Late-Victorian footbridge; 18th/19th century weir; historic thoroughfare of 'Canch Walk'; former leat and sluice for Priory Mill; sections of stone walling; numerous mature trees including tree-lined walks, tree rows and individual specimen trees; areas of lawn; early-20th century railings.

See 'Memorial Avenue Gardens' significance statement for information on adjacent site.

Listed Buildings:	n/a
Scheduled Ancient Monuments:	n/a
Conservation Area:	Worksop Conservation Area (last designated 6 th April 2011) – All relevant unlisted buildings and structures within the Conservation Area are regarded as 'positive buildings'
Local Interest Buildings:	n/a

Canch recreation ground



References:

- ⁱ Hull Daily Mail, 21st February 1907.
- ⁱⁱ *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*; 8th October 1907.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Sheffield Evening Telegraph, 10th June 1910.
- ^{iv} *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*; 14th June 1910.
- ^v Worksop Urban District Council; *Minutes Book – 1911-1912*; Meeting recorded on 15th May 1911.
- ^{vi} Worksop Urban District Council; *Minutes Book – 1911-1912*; Meeting recorded on 29th May 1911.
- ^{vii} Worksop Urban District Council; *Minutes Book – 1911-1912*; Meeting recorded on 18th September 1911.
- ^{viii} *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*; 15th November 1911.
- ^{ix} Worksop Urban District Council; *Minutes Book – 1911-1912*; Meeting recorded on 13th May 1912.
- ^x *Sheffield Independent*; 19th December 1916.
- ^{xi} Worksop Borough Council; *Minutes Book – 1935*; p87.
- ^{xii} *Worksop Guardian*; 30th July 1937.
- ^{xiii} *Worksop Guardian*; 25th March 1938.
- ^{xiv} Worksop Borough Council; *Minutes Book – 1938*; p875.
- ^{xv} *Nottingham Evening Post*; 30th January 1933.