

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 10 Herston and Townsend

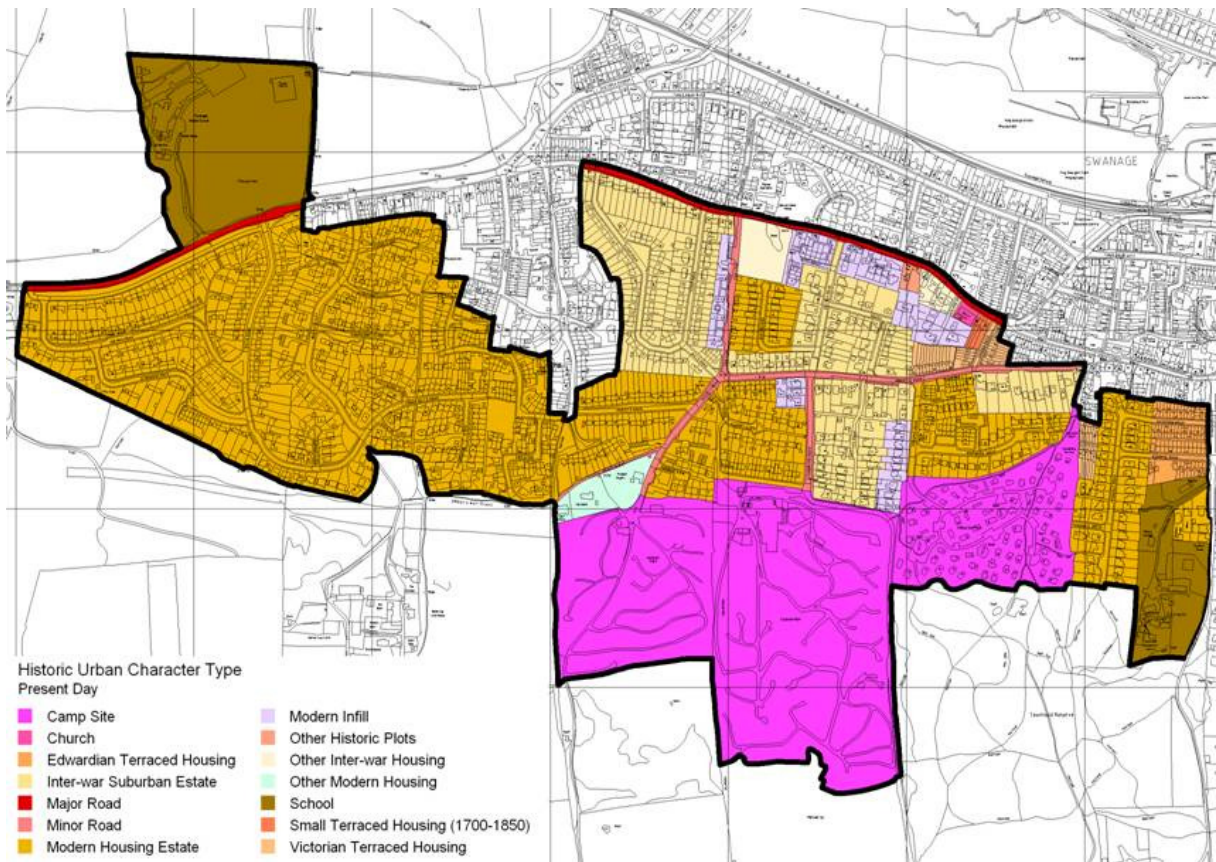


Figure 136: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 10, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 137: 1950s council housing, Greyseed.



Figure 138: Modern housing estate, Higher Days Rd.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 10 Structure of Character Area

Overview

This is the area of primarily 20th century suburban expansion to the south of the High Street, engulfing the former quarries of Townsend and surrounding the historic core of Herston. It is defined largely by this 20th century suburban housing.

Topography and Geology

The area lies on the southern side of the broad Purbeck Vale on the edge of the flat low-lying ground at the base of the valley and rises up fairly steeply to the south on the slopes of the valley side up on to the Purbeck limestone plateau to the south of the area. Most of the area is on the limestones of the Middle Purbeck Beds, with a thin strip of Upper Purbeck Beds along the northern edge.

Urban Structure

The High Street runs along the northern edge and Priest's Road runs diagonally across the eastern part of the area. There is also a small number of N-S aligned roads running through the area. Suburban housing estates accessed by a series of linear and curvilinear local access roads and culs-de-sac comprise most of the area. In the eastern half, the estates are largely fitted within a regular N-S grid, but the western half has a much more irregular complex curvilinear network of estate roads. The plots are generally rectilinear in shape and are fairly regular within individual housing estates, but there is variation in size and proportions between different estates.

Present Character

Figure 136 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area is dominated by Inter-war Suburban Estates and Modern Housing Estates, with a large area of Camp Site along the southern edge. Small areas of Other Inter-war Housing, Other Modern Housing and Modern Infill is found mainly to the east. There are also small areas Victorian and Edwardian Terraced Housing. On the northwest fringe is a large School and its grounds.

Time Depth

The roads are the earliest elements in this area, with both the High Street and Priest's Road being medieval or earlier in origin. A number of the N-S roads are aligned on field boundaries of Saxon or medieval date and served as quarry roads before this area was absorbed into suburban Swanage. The earliest housing developments comprise terraces dating to the

early and late 19th century in the eastern part of the area. The greatest period of suburban expansion belongs to the inter-war and post-war/modern periods.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is one of low to medium density housing in irregular perimeter block or linear and curvilinear looped networks and culs-de-sac. Generally, the houses are set back from the street frontage behind front gardens in typical suburban housing estate style, except at the eastern end, where there are rows of terraced houses set directly on the street frontage. Some properties are defined by low stone walls or hedges, but a great many have no formal definition along the street frontage. The individual streetscapes change from housing estate to housing estate, but the steepness of the slopes provides a unifying characteristic to this area. A number of the N-S roads are unmetalled.

There are a few small open green spaces in this area, but there are many views across the valley to the north, often framed by the houses along both sides of the N-S streets. Some individual gardens provide green focal points along the streets, but many have no more than grassed small front lawns. The caravan parks have significantly larger numbers of trees and green spaces.



Figure 139: Edwardian terraces, Osborne Road.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 10 Built Character

Building types

The majority of the buildings in this area comprise suburban inter-war and post-war/modern detached, semi-detached and short terraces of estate houses. There are also a small number of 19th and early 20th century terraced houses in the eastern part of the area. Modern static caravans and mobile homes form another minor group of buildings in this area.

The terraced housing in this area, though limited in extent, is of diverse style. The later 19th century terrace at Carrants Court is stone with a gabled roof and a stone string course and Alexandra Terrace is Georgian in style. The Edwardian terraces in Osborne Road are typical of the period with two storey bay windows, while those in Richmond Road are without bays.

The inter-war houses include red brick semi-detached council houses and detached suburban houses of a type and style typical of the period in Swanage and elsewhere.

There is a range of post-war and modern houses including typical post-war semi-detached and short terraces of council houses at Greyseed. The short terraces along Priest's Road have greater local distinctiveness in their use of local materials (Figure 140). There are also some rather more unusual post-war terraced houses with mansard roofs and using some precast concrete sections in their construction (Figure 141).

The modern estate houses are typical one and two storey buildings with little local distinctiveness. There is a small estate of modern neo-vernacular houses at Ash Close.

Building Materials

The 19th and early 20th century houses are of stone or brick with stone dressings and tile or slate roofs. The inter-war houses are of brick with some pebble-dash render, particularly of the upper storey, and tile or slate roofs. The post-war houses include both red brick and a mottled salmon pink brick or stone walls with tiled roofs. Some use of precast concrete panels is also present. Cement render, often painted, is used on the houses at Greyseed. The modern houses are primarily of stock brick or stone-clad with tiled roofs.

Key Buildings

Terraced Houses: Carrants Court, Alexandra Terrace, Osborne Road, Richmond Road.

Post-war Council Houses: Priest's Road.



Figure 140: Council housing by Fred Walsh, Priest's Road.



Figure 141: Housing along Priest's Road.



Figure 142: Neo-vernacular houses, Ash Close.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 10 Archaeology

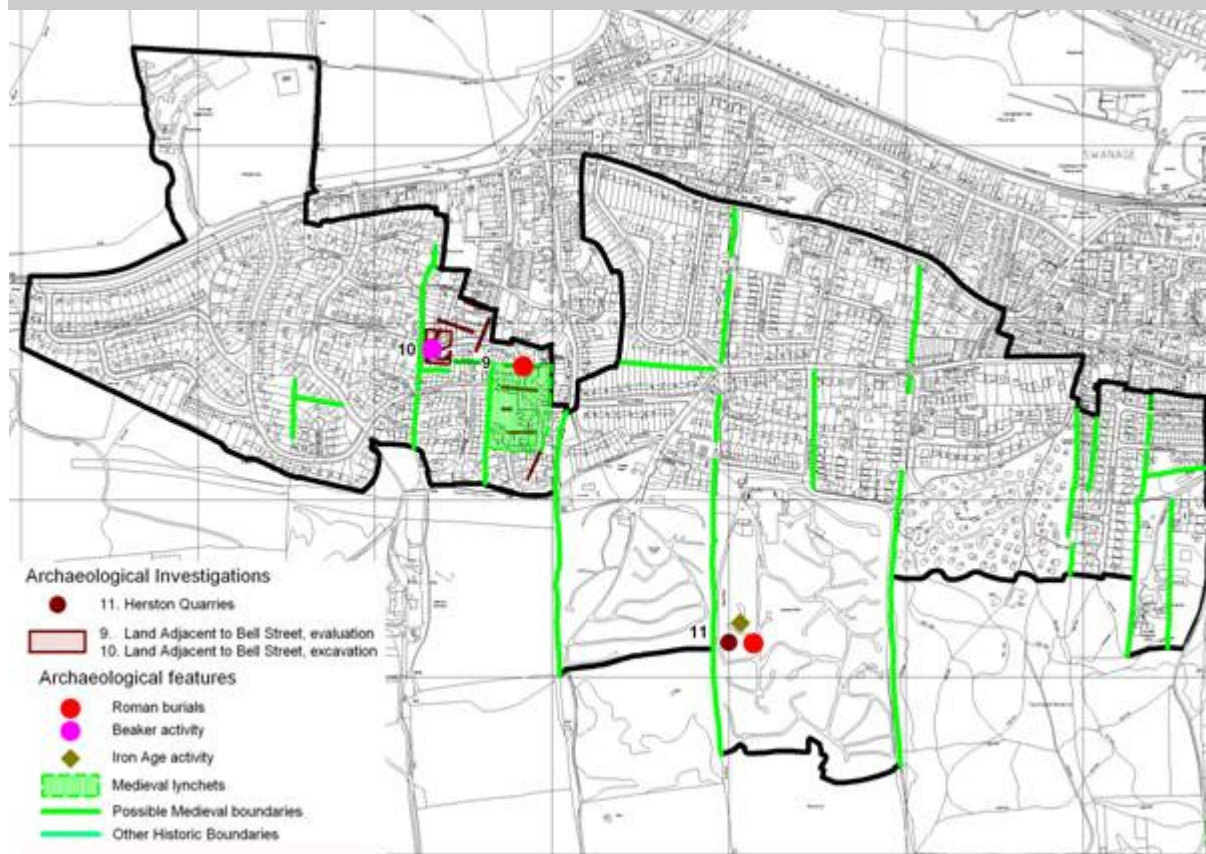


Figure 143: Archaeological Investigations and features in Historic Urban Character Area 10.

Archaeological Investigations

Three archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area – an evaluation and excavation of land behind Bell Street (Figure 143; Appendix 3, 10-11) and excavations at Herston Quarries (Figure 143; Appendix 3, 12).

The archaeological investigations behind Bell Street were done in advance of the construction of the housing estate. They revealed some evidence for Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age activity, which may represent the remains of a Beaker settlement (Figure 143) (Smith 1996; SAS 1997). These investigations also revealed a Roman field boundary ditch and evidence for medieval strip fields and lynchets, which had previously been surveyed by the RCHME (1970).

The Herston quarries (now Priest's Way Caravan Park) have revealed a range of Iron Age and Roman archaeology including occupation remains, evidence for shale armlet manufacture, and burials (Calkin 1948; 1953). An inhumation was found in a stone cist in about 1860 and several other extended burials in cists were found during blasting in the quarry in about 1930 (RCHME 1970). In 1931 Calkin

excavated two pits containing Late Iron Age pottery, bone needles and shale armlet waste. Further evidence for activity of Late Iron Age and early Roman date was found about 200 metres away, just outside the study area to the south, when three short cist burials of probable early Roman date were excavated in 1973 (Jarvis 1982).

Archaeological Character

This area is outside the historic settlement areas of Swanage and Herston and is unlikely to contain much archaeology associated with the historic development of the town. The area was also extensively quarried, which has probably destroyed much of the pre-urban archaeology. Much of the area of former quarries has now been built over, limiting the number of industrial archaeology remains.

Significant pre-urban archaeology has been found in some parts of this character area, including some possible Beaker settlement activity sealed beneath a layer of colluvium. Other earlier prehistoric features and finds may survive elsewhere in the area, protected beneath hillwash. The Iron Age and Roman evidence has included settlement, industrial and burial finds, features and structures. This

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 10 Archaeology

evidence can be related to similar evidence in Character Area 3 in a similar topographic position. It is likely that this forms part of an

extensive area of Late Iron Age and Roman settlement and agricultural activity all along this hillside.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 10 Designations

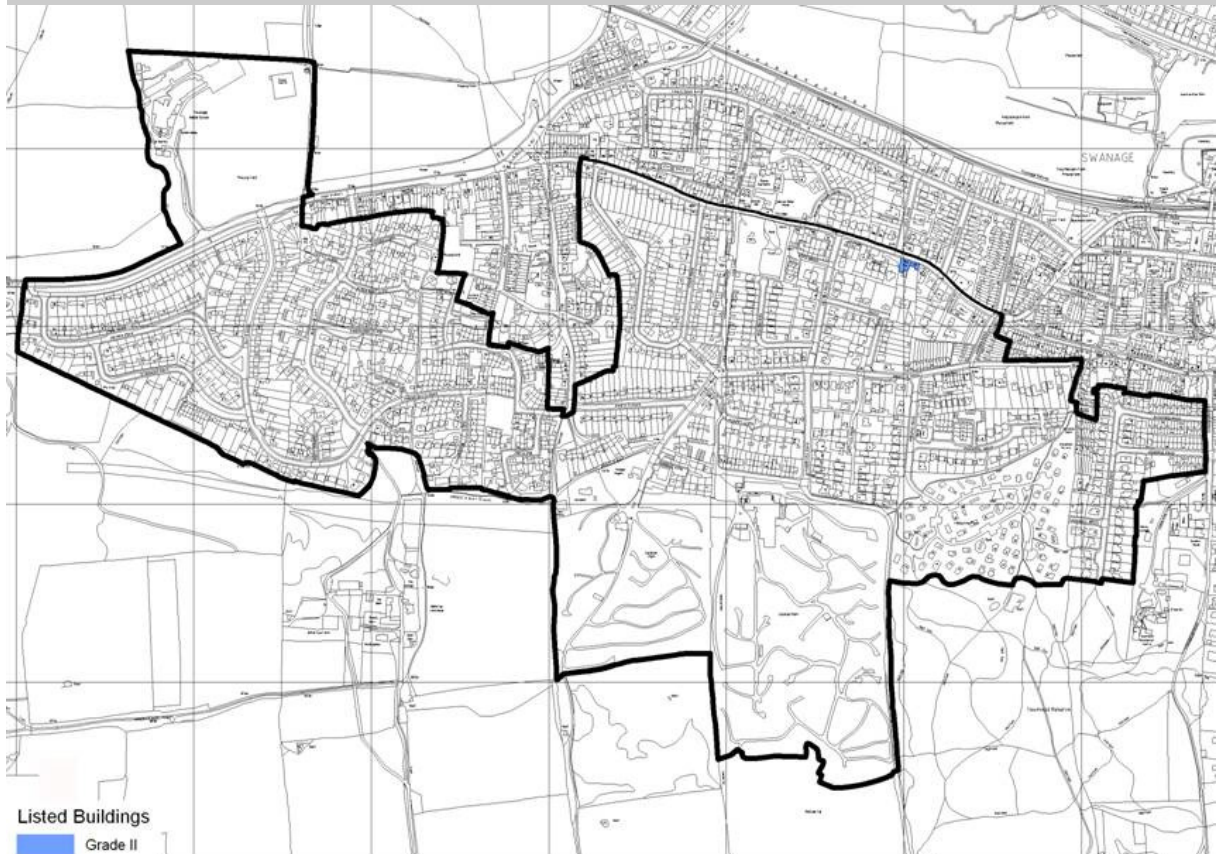


Figure 144: Listed Buildings in Historic Urban Character Area 10.

Listed Buildings

There are two adjacent Listed Buildings in the Character Area, both Grade II.

Conservation Areas

None of this Character Area lies within a Conservation Area (Figure 42).

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within the Character Area.

Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the Character Area.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 10 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **weak**. Most of the area comprises inter-war, post-war and modern housing estates which generally have very little distinctive character in either settlement layout, building type or use of building materials. The most distinctive historical survivals are a series of north-south roads and tracks which reflect medieval or earlier strip fields and manorial divisions. The Victorian, Edwardian and inter-war estates tend to be fitted within these earlier land divisions, but the later 20th century developments have largely removed these earlier boundaries.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **low** sensitivity to major change. Much of the area has little strength of historic character and large scale development, if comprising similar scales of building to those existing, will have little impact on the historic character of most of this area. The strength of character and hence the sensitivity to change is greater towards the east. Any development that would impact on the surviving historic strip field boundaries would have a major impact on the historic character of the area.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **low**. The potential for archaeological information on the historic development of the town is slight given the location away from the historic settlement core and the almost complete lack of historic buildings in the area.

There is a much greater potential for recovering archaeological information on pre-urban activity, perhaps particularly belonging to the Iron Age and Roman period. However, it is likely that both historic quarrying activity and the widespread construction of suburban housing estates across this area will have had a negative impact on its survival.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15, 22, 24, 25 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Inter-war and modern suburban housing estates
- Some 19th and early 20th century terraced housing
- Former quarry area with some extant quarry remains
- Fossilised boundaries of former strip fields