

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 4 East Charmouth

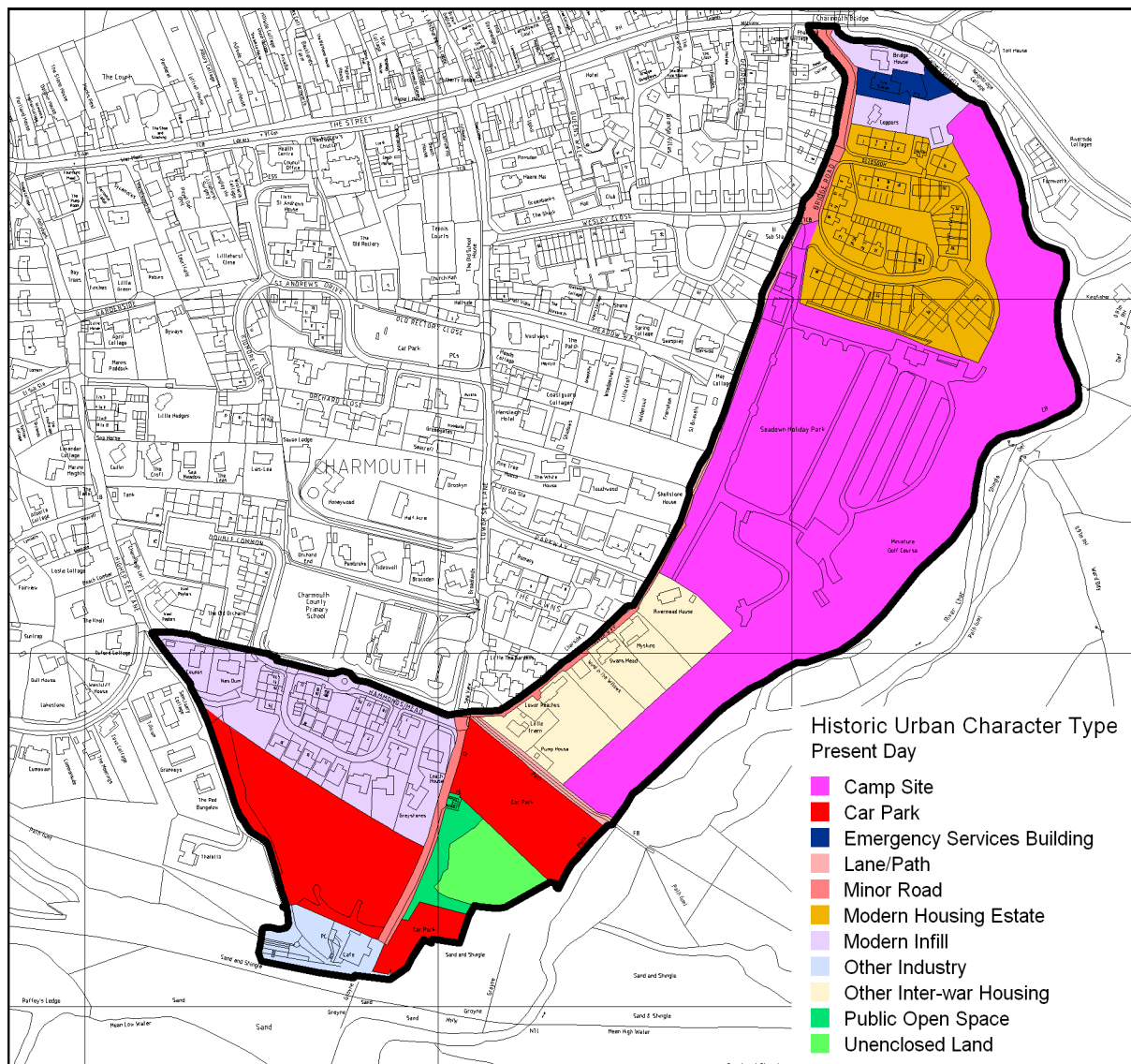


Figure 59: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 4, showing current historic urban character type



Figure 60: The Char valley looking northwards across character area.



Figure 61: Seadown Caravan Park.

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 4 Structure of Character Area

Overview

This area is not well defined and comprises the fringes of the town to the east of the historic core, adjacent to the river, including the area down to the coast.

Topography and Geology

The area is generally flat, sloping gently down to both the east and south. It lies adjacent to the river and is largely within the river floodplain. The area lies on Lower Jurassic Liassic clays.

Urban Structure

There is little defined structure to this area. To the north the west side of the area is formed by Bridge Road with houses and a housing estate off it. Most of the eastern part of the area is formed by Seadown Park caravan park and car parks beyond. At the southern end is a housing estate at Hammond's Mead and car parks within earlier field boundaries and the seafront.

Present Character

Figure 59 shows the present day historic urban character types. Most of the area is taken up by a camp site and car parks, with relatively restricted areas of inter-war housing and modern housing estates and infill housing. The remainder of the area consists of an Emergency Services Building (fire station) and Other Industrial Site (the former cement factory).

Time Depth

The line of the roads and paths are probably the earliest elements in this area, possibly dating to the medieval period or earlier. The boundaries of the former fields in the south of the area are post-medieval in date. The cement factory was built in the 1850s. The housing development along River View dates to the 1930s and the housing estate on Bridge Road was built post-war. The housing estate at Hammond's Mead was built in the late 1990s. The camp site was established after World War 2.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

There is no clear single settlement pattern in this area. At the northern end off Bridge Road there is medium density housing arranged around curvilinear culs-de-sac. The houses are set back from the street behind front gardens. The other block of housing is at Hammond's Mead to the south, which consists of medium density housing arranged around a looped network of roads.

Most of the rest of the area is open, either as car parks or caravan parks. The Seadown Holiday Park is screened from the town to the west by a belt of trees and hedges.



Figure 62: Charmouth Beach, looking towards Heritage Centre.



Figure 63: River Way.



Figure 64: Post-war housing, Ellesdon, off Bridge Rd.



Figure 65: Hammond's Mead.

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 4 Built Character

Building types

There are only two historic buildings within this character area: the former cement factory and the Lookout. The cement factory is a simple two storey building built in the 1850s, now altered to form the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre. Behind the cement factory building are the visible remains of a lime kiln. The lookout is a small octagonal building with pitched roof built during the Napoleonic Wars as part of a coastal warning system.

The modern buildings comprise estate houses, a fire station and structures associated with the holiday park and the seafront. The houses are a mixture of one and two storey houses, typical of their time and of no particular local distinctiveness. The fire station is a typical post-war design.

Building Materials

The historic buildings are of Blue Lias stone rubble with slate roofs. The Lookout is rendered. The cement factory has brick surrounds to the windows. The modern houses are of brick with tile roofs. Those in Hammond's Mead are rendered and have artificial stone cladding decoration.

Key Buildings

The Lookout, Old Cement Factory (Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre).

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 4 Archaeology

Archaeological Investigations

No archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area.

Archaeological Character

The area lies on the edge of Char outside the area of the medieval town. This area is unlikely to have been a preferred location for settlement, but may have been used for hunting and fishing. There are historical references to medieval and earlier saltworking (Keen 1999), but archaeological remains associated with this activity are likely to have been eroded away by the sea. The possibility that there is evidence for activity in this area is suggested by two medieval finds recovered from just outside the

character area: a honestone was found eroding out of the cliff at the west end of the sea wall (Farrar 1957, 116) and a 12th century wooden bowl was found at the mouth of the Char (Anon 1984).



Figure 66: Former cement factory building.



Figure 67: Charmouth Fire Station.

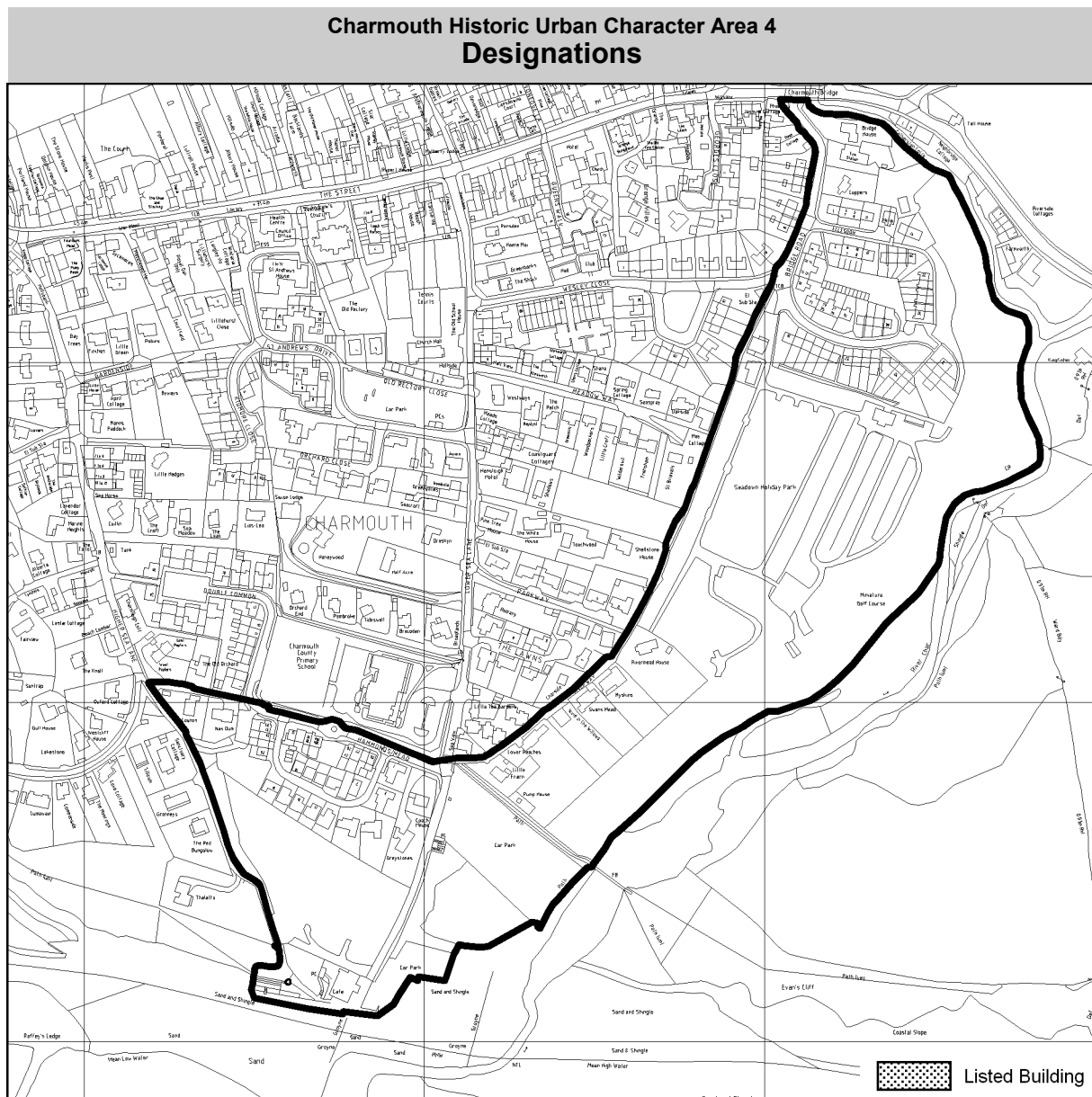


Figure 68: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 4.

Listed Buildings

There is one Listed Building in the Character Area. The Look-Out, adjacent to Charmouth Heritage Centre is Grade II.

Conservation Areas

None of this Character Area lies within the Charmouth Conservation Area.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

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

Scheduled Monuments

No Scheduled Monuments lie within this character area.



Figure 69: The Lookout on Charmouth seafront.

**Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 4
Evaluation**

Strength of Historic Character

Overall, the strength of character of this area is judged to be **weak**. The area lies outside the historic town and most of the area was developed in the post-war period. The exception is the coastal strip, where the remains of the cement factory, with associated limekiln, and also the lookout tower provide a reminder of earlier non-recreational uses of the coastal strip,

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **low** sensitivity to major change. Most of the area contains little in the way of historic structure.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **low**. It lies beyond the historic urban centre and consequently has a low potential to inform on the development of the town. Its location next to the river on mainly low-lying ground which was prone to flooding, means there is unlikely to be a high potential for earlier settlement remains. Any evidence for earlier settlement and other activities on the coast is likely to have been eroded away.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 2-4, 9, 10 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Coastal and river valley location
- Former Cement factory
- Napoleonic period lookout
- Modern caravan site.