

Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 7 Lenthay

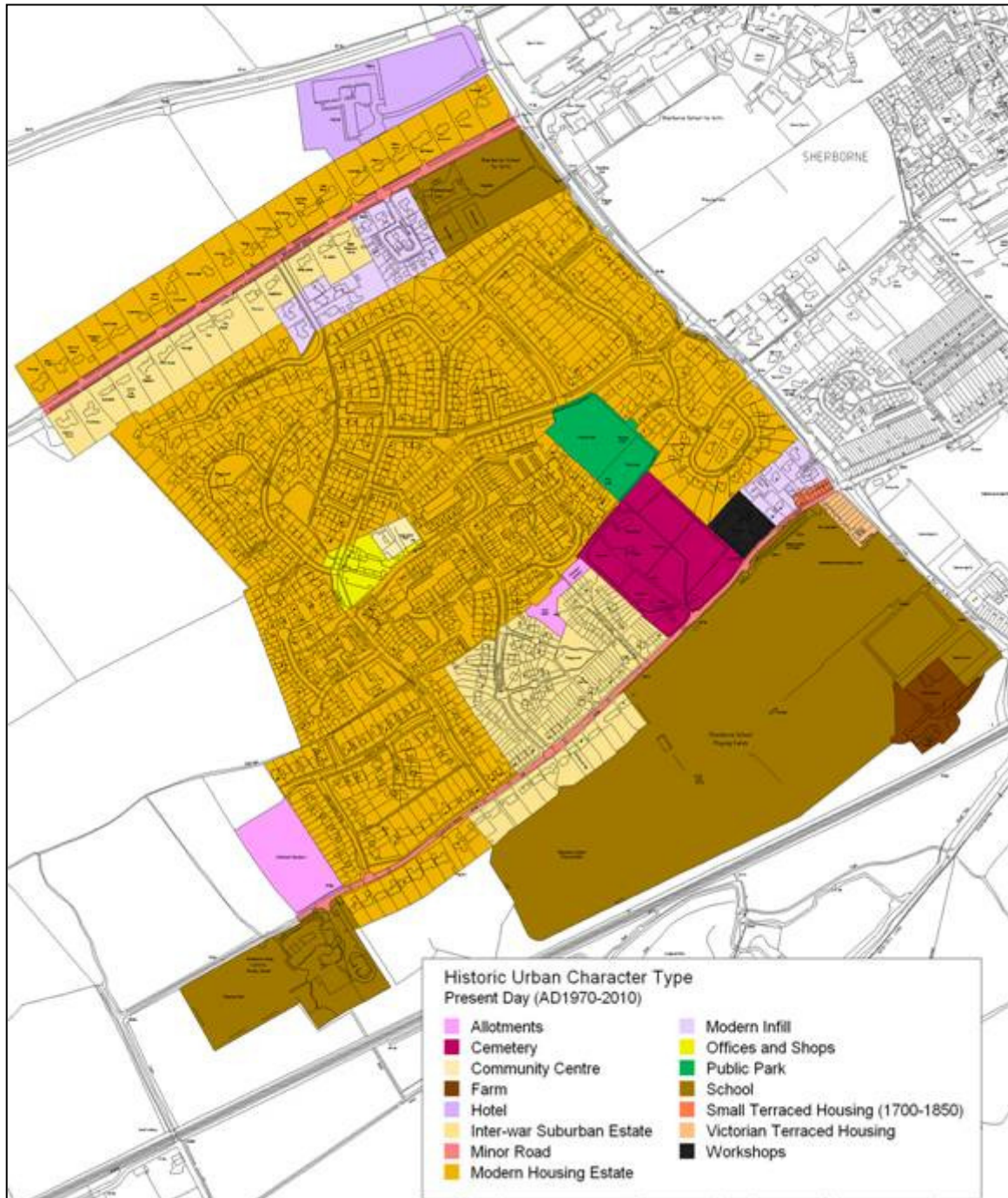


Figure 151: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 7, showing current historic urban character type

Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 7

Structure of Character Area

Overview

Historically this area was common meadow. Today its primary component is a large modern housing estate bounded by Bradford Road, Horsecastles, Lenthay Road and the fields of Silverlake Farm. The area south of Lenthay Road is dominated by playing fields, once the fields of Hyle Farm which belonged to Sherborne Almshouse since at least 1440. Important elements include The Sherborne Hotel, Aldhelmstead East (Sherborne Girls School), Bradford Road, Lenthay Cemetery and Sherborne Abbey Primary School.

Topography and Geology

This character area is on the northern slope of the upper Yeovil valley, and slopes gently upwards from the southern end of Sherborne School playing field to the Sherborne Hotel. The geology is mostly oolitic limestone with Fuller's Earth Clay in the southern third of the area. A layer of gravel approximately 0.35m thick sits above the Fuller's Earth. These gravels contain Palaeolithic flint implements, possibly derived from the Coombe dry valley.

Urban Structure

This character area is largely suburban in nature, consisting almost entirely of modern housing estates around curvilinear culs de sac. The area is served by Horsecastles Lane, one of Sherborne's major through routes connecting the A30 with the A352.

Present Character

Figure 151 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area is dominated by modern housing estates. The Sherborne Hotel sits alone at the junction of Yeovil Road and Horsecastles Lane. Bradford Road marks the northern limit of modern housing. One of the houses of Sherborne Girls School sits at its eastern end with a small area of modern infill next to it. The mass of the Lenthay Housing estate is broken internally only by small areas of shops, community centre and playing fields. Lenthay Road marks the southern boundary of the housing estates. It has the new Sherborne Primary School and allotments at its western end and Lenthay cemetery (Figure 152), workshops, modern infill and 19th century terraces at its eastern end. There are extensive playing fields south of Lenthay Road, with Hyle Farm south of that.

Time Depth

Bradford Road and Lenthay Road are parallel and follow an ENE-WSW alignment in common with many field boundaries in the Sherborne region. These may be remnants of a late prehistoric field system fossilised in the modern landscape. The earliest settlement in the area is Hyle Farm. Bradford Road was the main route west from Sherborne before the establishment of the turnpike trusts in the mid 18th century. Historically this was common meadow. The name *Lenthay* suggests that commoners were bound to restrict access for their cattle to the common until Lent. Lenthay cemetery was consecrated in 1856. There are two rows of mid 19th century terraces to the east of the cemetery (Figure 153). The remainder of Lenthay Road and Bradford Road are lined with large mid 20th century detached houses in large rectangular plots. At the east end of Bradford Road, Aldhelmstead East, part of Sherborne School for Girls (Figure 154) and Sherborne Hotel were both established in the mid 20th century.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is essentially one of modern detached houses and bungalows arranged around curvilinear culs de sac. Lenthay Road and Bradford Road are generally lined with large detached houses set back from the road within large rectangular plots. Semi-detached houses are common in the older (post-war) parts of the estate such as South Avenue (Figure 155). The more recent parts contain short rows of small terraced houses arranged around culs de sac. The only settlement dating from before the 20th century is two short rows of 19th century terraces at the junction of Horsecastles Lane and Lenthay Road.



Figure 152: Lenthay Cemetery

Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 7

Built Character

Building types

The oldest building in the character area may be Hyle House (Figure 56) and its associated barns (Figure 156). The former farm house has a symmetrical frontage with a half-hipped central porch, three windows on the first floor and a half hipped roof and two gabled dormers. The barns are also half hipped and date from the 19th century but are now converted to commercial and educational use. The Digby Mausoleum in Lenthay cemetery (Figure 158) was built by George Wingfield Digby for his family; it dates from about 1862 and is richly ornamented. There is a pair of 19th century gothic chapels in Lenthay cemetery, one with bell turret; and a pair of cruciform lodges.

The only part of the Lenthay area to be included in the Sherborne conservation area is two rows of mid-19th century terraces at the junction of Horsecastles Lane and Lenthay Road. The area is otherwise dominated by modern housing estates begun in the 1960s, and comprise mainly detached but also some semi-detached and terraced houses arranged around curvilinear culs de sac.

Building Materials

The Digby mausoleum in Lenthay cemetery is in fine ashlar, with a stone slate roof. The other cemetery buildings are in ashlar or squared and coursed rubble with ashlar dressings and plain tile roofs. Of the two 19th-century terraces at the junction of Lenthay Road and Horsecastles Lane; 1-7 Lenthay Road has rubble walls with ashlar door and window arches; numbers 1-5 have plain tile roofs and numbers 6-7 have slate roofs; all have brick chimney stacks. Garden walls are also in Sherborne stone rubble. The Gardens on Ottery Lane also have stone rubble walls with slate roofs and brick stacks. The post-war semi-detached houses on South Avenue are in red brick. Other modern buildings are in a variety of non-local materials.

Key Buildings

Cemetery buildings: Digby Mausoleum; Cemetery Lodges; Cemetery Mortuary Chapels

19th century terraces and farm houses: Hyle House and barns; 1-7 Lenthay Road; The Gardens, Ottery Lane

20th century buildings: Aldhelmstead East, Bradford Road; Sherborne Hotel (Figure 158), Horsecastles Lane



Figure 153: The Gardens, Ottery Lane; viewed from the south west with numbers 1-8 Lenthay Road in the background



Figure 154: Aldhelmstead East, Sherborne School for Girls, Bradford Road



Figure 155: South Avenue, Lenthay Road



Figure 156: Hyle Farm Barns

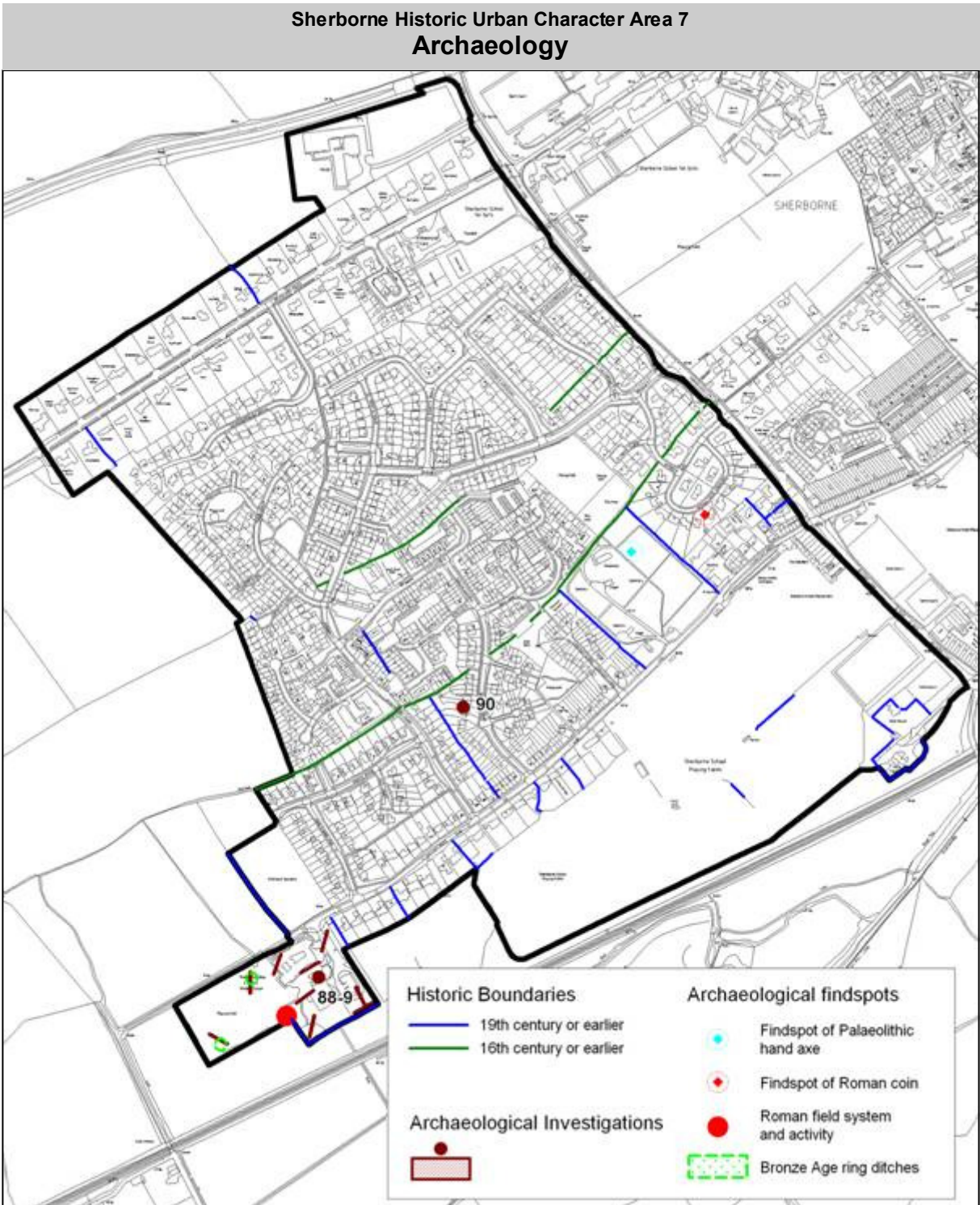


Figure 157: Archaeological Sites and Investigations in Historic Urban Character Area 7

Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 7 Archaeology

Archaeological Investigations

Three archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area (Figure 157; Appendix 3, Nos 88-90).

The only archaeological evaluation within the character area was of the Sherborne Abbey Primary School replacement site at the west end of Lenthay Road [88], preceded by a geophysical survey [89]. Possible prehistoric ring ditches and field boundaries were discovered below 1.2m of hill wash. Some of the field boundaries may be Roman and associated with the Lenthay Roman villa, just outside the study area. Medieval and post-medieval features were also recorded.

Fourth-century material was found in the field north of the railway during clearance of field ditches may be associated with the villa.

Part of a Neolithic stone axe was found during building work in South Avenue [90]. A Palaeolithic axe was dug up at Lenthay cemetery (Bean 1950, 79).



Figure 158: The Digby Mausoleum, Lenthay Cemetery

Archaeological Character

There have been significant finds of Roman material from this character area, mostly in the south-east corner during the archaeological evaluation of the Abbey Primary School. This activity is thought to be associated with the villa site at Lenthay.

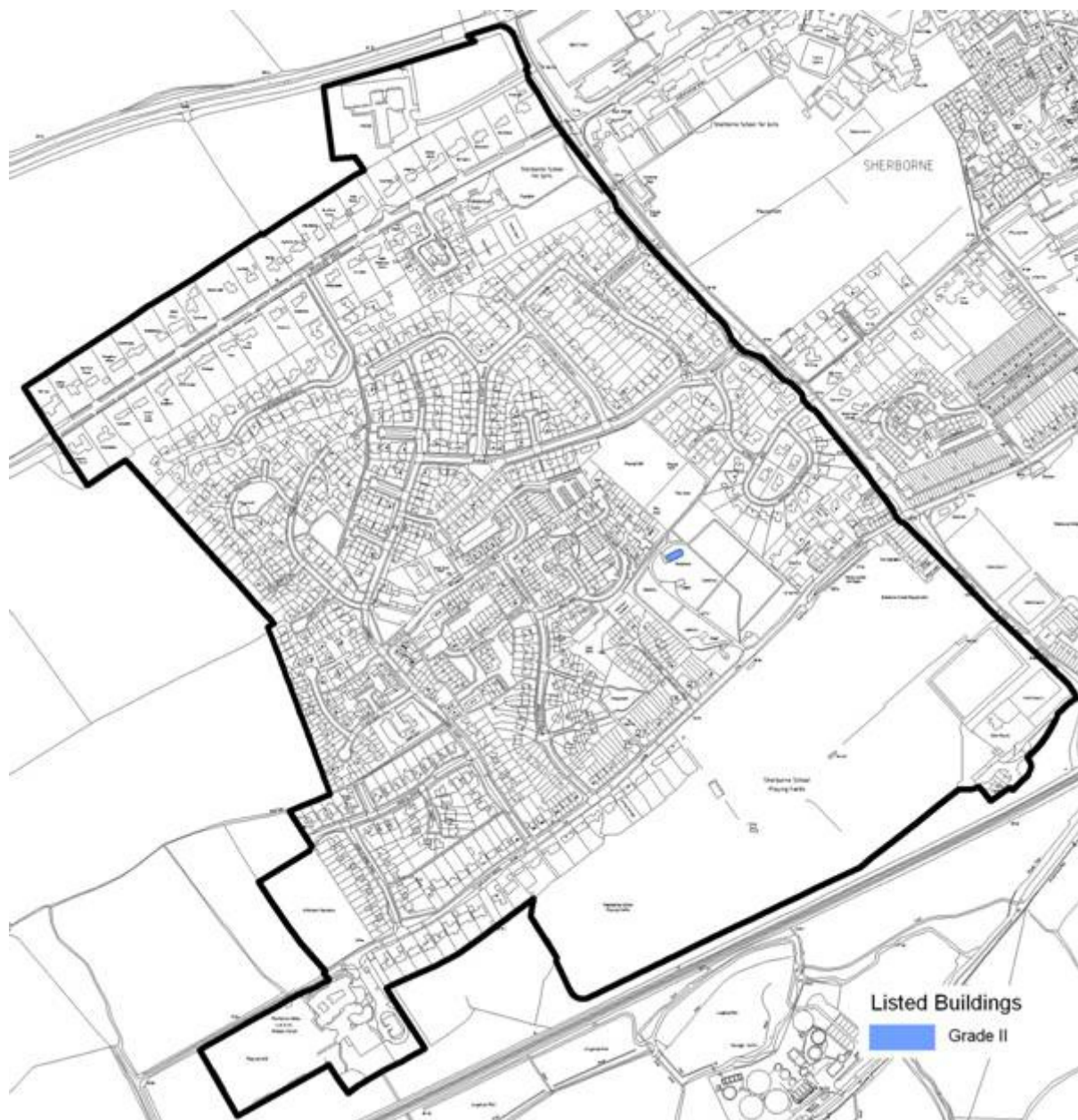
During the medieval and post-medieval periods the area seems to have been largely common meadow and finds are likely to be sparse. However, Hyle Farm has been in existence since at least medieval times and may provide a focus for finds from these periods.

Figure 159 depicts Historic boundaries visible on 16th and 19th century maps. The 16th century or earlier boundaries are at least medieval in origin and are aligned with the prevailing late prehistoric rectilinear field system in the region. The 19th century or earlier boundaries may represent straight subdivision of the common following enclosures.



Figure 159: Sherborne Hotel, Horsecastles Lane

Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 7 Designations



160: Historic Buildings in Historic Urban Character Area 7

Listed Buildings

There is one Listed Building designation in the Character Area: the Grade II Digby Memorial in Lenthay Cemetery (Figure 160).

Conservation Areas

Only the Gardens on Ottery Road and numbers 1-7 Lenthay Road lie within the conservation area (Figure 88).

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

No Registered Parks and Gardens lie within the

Character Area.

Scheduled Monuments

No Scheduled Monuments lie within the Character Area.

Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 7 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **low**. It is dominated by modern housing estates. The south west part of the area, alongside Ottery Lane and including Hyle Farm and Lenthay Cemetery, is the only part to have any historic buildings, all dating from the 19th century. The southern part of the area also has the largest green spaces at Sherborne School and the Abbey Primary School playing fields. Bradford Road was an important medieval route and aligned with a late prehistoric field system, although it is now lined with large detached modern houses and gardens.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **low** sensitivity to major change. It is already dominated by extensive modern housing estates. Recent modern development at the Abbey primary school has not had a detrimental impact on the historic character of the area. However, it must be noted that Ottery Lane and the Sherborne School playing fields are important features of the town in a prominent position along one of its busiest transport routes. Any major development here is likely to have a negative impact upon the historic character of the town as a whole.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of Lenthay is considered to be **medium** overall. There is considerable potential to answer important

questions concerning the context of the Lenthay Roman villa. For example, whether there any surviving deposits relating to other rural settlement in the area and the economy of the villa (field systems etc). Also, the Lenthay area has the potential for deposits which might help understand distinctive rectilinear field alignments still visible in Bradford Road and Lenthay Road. There is also potential for further palaeolithic discoveries at Lenthay cemetery, Sherborne School playing field and neighbouring gardens. The northern part of the area is on a gentle well drained south facing fertile slope and as such has potential for settlement remains dating from any period from the neolithic onwards.

The character area was largely given over to common meadow in the medieval and post-medieval periods and is likely to have little in the way of archaeological deposits from these periods. The exception may be in the area of Hyle Farm which has been in existence since at least the late medieval period.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-4, 16, and 24 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- **Modern housing estate**
- **Alignments relating to a late prehistoric field system**
- **Medieval and post medieval common meadow**
- **Sub surface archaeological deposits associated with Lenthay Villa and river terrace gravels**
- **19th century Industrial terraces, Farm and cemetery**
- **School playing fields**