

# Sturminster Newton Historic Urban Character Area 4 The Railway and Butts Pond Industrial Estate

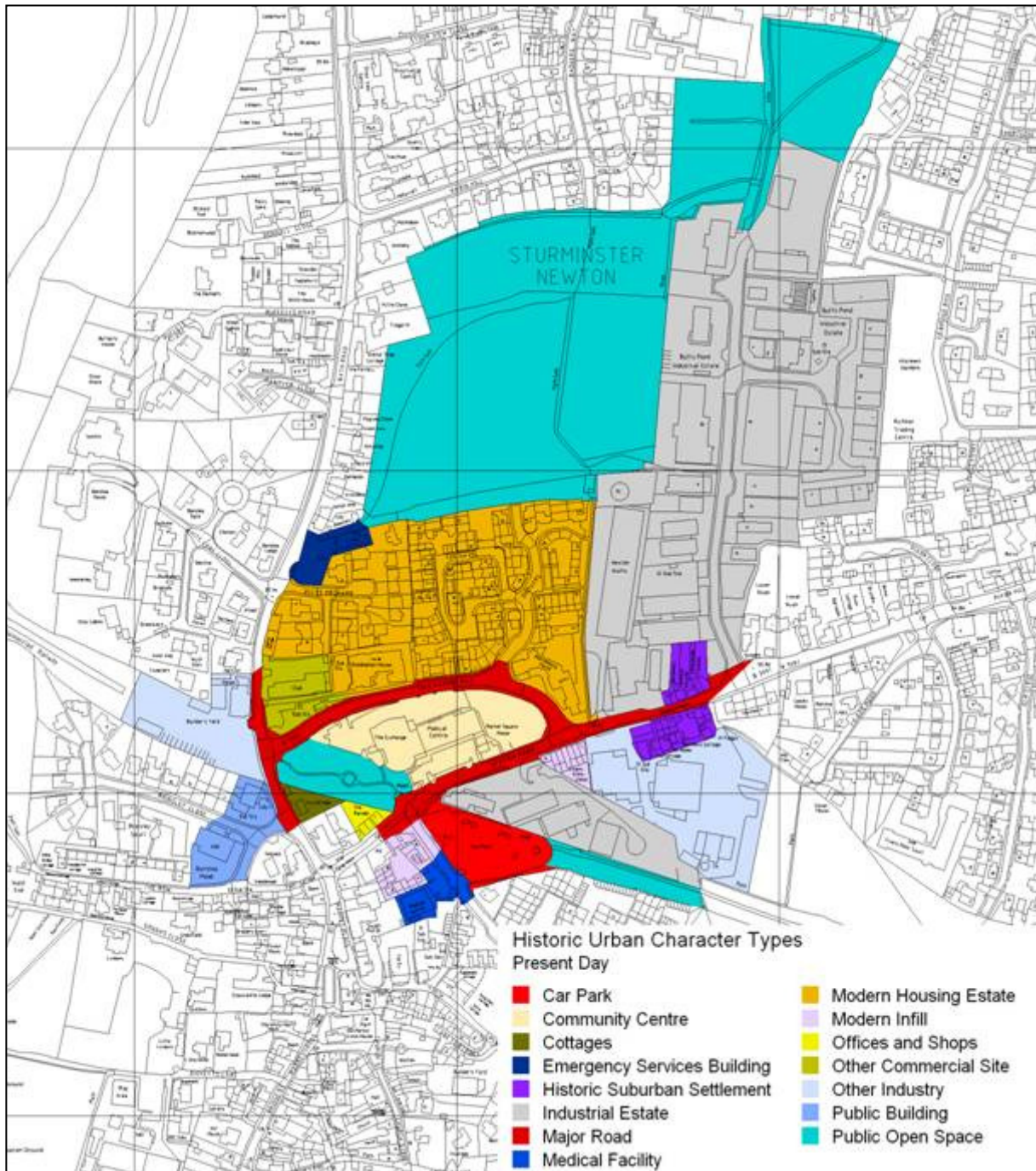


Figure 81: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 4, showing current historic urban character type

## Sturminster Newton Historic Urban Character Area 4 Structure of Character Area

### Overview

This area essentially comprises the site of the former railway, station and goods yard, and associated commercial development, as well as the modern industrial estate at Butts Pond. The site of the former Cattle Market (now the Exchange) and the Milk Factory are central to this area and provide a spatial and temporal link between the two elements of former railway and later industrial estate.

### Topography and Geology

The prominent feature of this character area is its location within a slight valley running along the central axis of the Corallian Limestone Ridge. Rixon Hill delineates this valley on the east side with Bath Road on the west.

### Urban Structure

The major route through this area is the B3091 Station Road and Old Market Road. There is some small areas of settlement directly fronting on to the road, but most of this area comprises larger blocks of industrial and housing estates accessed by local culs-de-sac road layouts. The former railway line also forms a distinctive defining line within this area.

### Present Character

Figure 81 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area is dominated by industrial estates and other industrial sites along the eastern part. The northern part of the area is public open space in the form of undeveloped fields at the heart of the modern northern extension of the town. The site of the former cattle market is now a modern housing estate at the centre of the character area, as well as community buildings at *The Exchange* (Figure 83). Small areas of modern housing, shops and community buildings lie immediately to the

south of the railway and a small area of Historic Suburban settlement at Butts Pond.

### Time Depth

This character area formed part of the town's open arable fields during the medieval period and unenclosed strip fields are visible on the 1783 estate map (Rivers 1783). The Butts Pond suburban settlement probably dates from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The railway opened in 1863, heralding a 100 year period of industrial and commercial expansion in the area. The cattle market expanded rapidly in the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century, along with the milk factory. The oldest section of the Butts Pond Industrial estate seems to predate the closure of the railway and expanded even after the closure of the line in 1966. Elsewhere in the area decline gradually followed the closure of the railway, with modern redevelopment taking place in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern essentially comprises modern industrial, commercial and public sector development on either side of Station Road. There is a small area of 19<sup>th</sup> century or earlier ribbon development at Butts Pond consisting of small houses arranged in short terraces fronting on to the pre-existing main road (Figure 36). The housing estate on the site of the former Cattle Market consists of mixed detached, semi detached, short terraced houses and apartments set back from the street frontage within small plots arranged around linear culs-de-sac (Figure 85).



Figure 82: View north along the arterial road of Butts Pond Industrial Estate.



Figure 83: View from Station Road across the former railway to the redevelopment of the former cattle market site.

## Sturminster Newton Historic Urban Character Area 4 Built Character

### **Building types**

A small number of 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular cottages survive at Butts Pond (Figure 86) on both sides of Station Road, although they are interspersed with modern houses on the south side. The modern housing development on the former cattle market site is in a broadly neo-Georgian style with a mixture of detached, semi-detached and short terraced housing of two and three storeys. The Pitts Orchard estate has 1990s semi-detached houses with some Arts and Crafts or mock Tudor stylings.

There is a range of industrial buildings. The former Milk Factory comprises some original brick buildings with traditional louvred gables and an accretion of modern utilitarian sheds. The Butts Pond Industrial Estate contains large utilitarian sheds and other buildings typical of this type of development, with large low sheds on the former station yard site.

The most prominent building in terms of scale and visibility is the new Exchange complex, incorporating a community centre, supermarket and other functions which is built on a much larger scale than any other building in Sturminster.

### **Building Materials**

The few remaining 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages are built in squared local stone, red brick and painted brick with plain tile or slate roofs. The modern cottages along Station Road are built in red brick, white render with ochre banding, or artificial stone, with tiled or slate roofs. The modern housing development on the old Cattle Market Site is constructed in a range of different coloured bricks with painted render with tile and slate roofs. The modern industrial buildings are of brick or steel with steel roofs. The Milk Factory is of red brick.

### **Key Buildings**

*Commercial Premises:* Former Milk Factory; The Parade

*Public Buildings:* The Exchange; Sturminster Hall, Brinslea Close

*19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular cottages:* Pond Cottages, Ivy Cottage



Figure 84: View east along the line of the former Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway, now a public footpath.



Figure 85: View of Drovers housing estate on the site of the former cattle market.



Figure 86: View of Pond Cottages from the south east.



Figure 87: Mid 20th century industrial buildings, Butts Pond Industrial Estate.

**Sturminster Newton Historic Urban Character Area 4  
Archaeology**

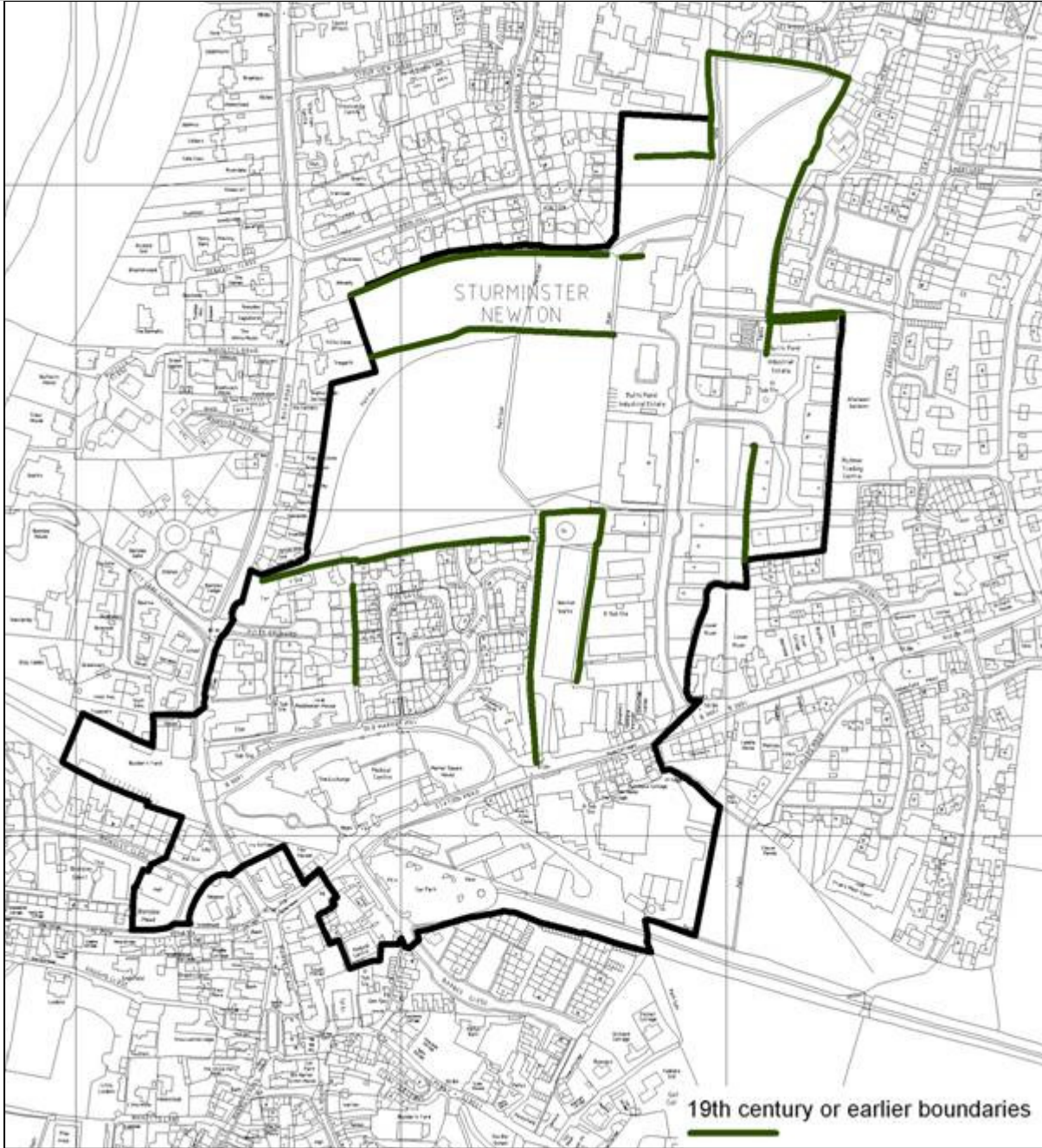


Figure 88: Archaeological features in Historic Urban Character Area 4.

**Sturminster Newton Historic Urban Character Area 4**  
**Archaeology**

***Archaeological Investigations***

No archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area.

***Archaeological Character***

This area lies beyond the historic urban centre of Sturminster Newton and most of the area was agricultural land until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its archaeological character is likely to be a reflection of its agrarian history as part of the town field of Sturminster. Field boundaries and isolated medieval and post-medieval artefacts can be expected here. A small number of historic boundaries are marked on Figure 88. These are the extant remains of the medieval field system, modified in the post-medieval period.

This character area lies on the Corallian limestone ridge and is a location that may have been favourable to pre-urban activity possibly dating from the prehistoric, Roman and Saxon periods, although no data are available on the nature and date of such activity.

**Sturminster Newton Historic Urban Character Area 4**  
**Designations**

***Listed Buildings***

There are no Listed Buildings in the Character Area.

***Conservation Areas***

Only the course of the former railway line and those parts of the character area that lie to the south of the railway fall within the Sturminster Newton Conservation Area (Figure 47).

***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.

**Sturminster Newton Historic Urban Character Area 4  
Evaluation**

***Strength of Historic Character***

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **weak**. There is only a handful of surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages. None of the original railway buildings or anything of the cattle market survives, reducing the character of the area's industrial heritage. The majority of houses and surviving industrial buildings in the area were constructed during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, there is a significant section of surviving fields to the north of the Butts Pond Industrial Estate which represent the only remnants of the medieval and post-medieval rural character of the area.

***Sensitivity to Large Scale Development***

The area has a **low** sensitivity to major change, providing development does not visually impact on the historic townscape of Sturminster Newton and respects any surviving buildings of Sturminster's industrial heritage and boundaries dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier.

***Archaeological Potential***

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **weak**. Although there is no time depth to the urban development of the area, there is potential for Roman or prehistoric remains. The prehistoric and Roman settlement pattern of the region is poorly understood.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1- 3, 18-20 (Part 7).

**Key Characteristics**

- Former Somerset and Dorset Railway
- Vernacular cottages at Butts Pond
- Former Cattle Market and Milk Factory
- Modern industrial area
- Modern housing development