

# Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 10 Victoria Grove

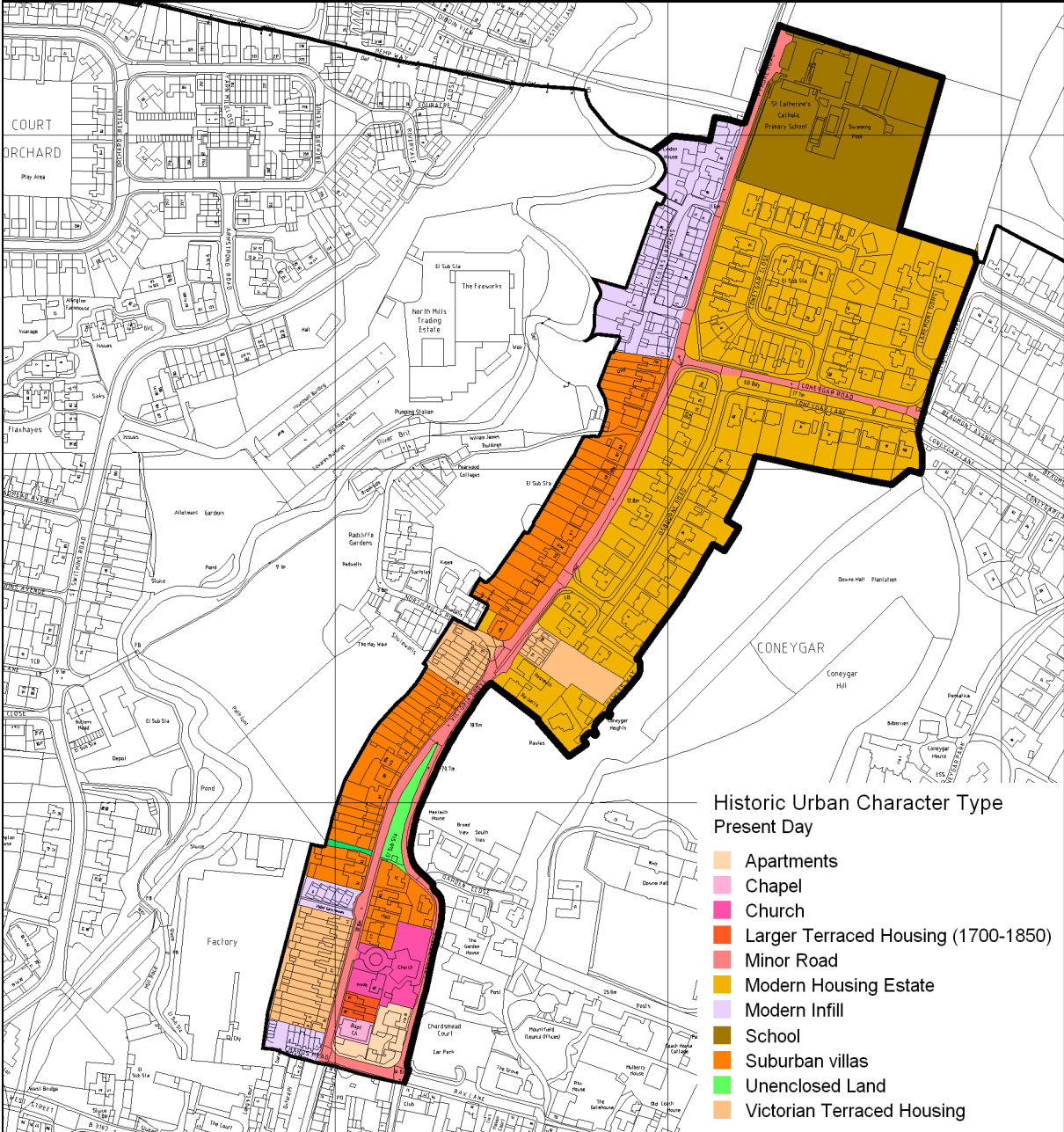


Figure 123: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 10, showing current historic urban character type.

## Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 10 Structure of Character Area

### Overview

This character area lies just north of the medieval town on the eastern side of the Brit valley. Victoria Grove forms the spine of this area, running north from the town to Pymore (and in the medieval period continued on to Beaminster).

### Topography and Geology

The ground is sloping down to the west between the steeper slopes of Coneygar Hill to the east and the flatter land of the Brit floodplain to the west, with the northeastern part of the area rising up onto a saddle between Coneygar and Watton Hills. The geology is mostly sandstones of the Down Cliff Sand Member, Thorncombe Sand Member and Bridport Sand Formation with superficial deposits of alluvium in the Brit valley.

### Urban Structure

The area consists of the long linear, slightly sinuous, Victoria Grove with North Street dividing off it at the southern end and acting as a back street. There are relatively few minor roads off Victoria Grove other than North Mills Road to the west and Coneygar Road to the north east. The plots are generally rectangular in shape directly off one or both sides of Victoria Grove. At the north east of the area the properties do not relate to the main roads but to looped road and culs-de-sac networks off Coneygar Road.

### Present Character

Figure 123 shows the present day historic urban character types. Along Victoria Grove are predominantly Suburban Villas interspersed with smaller blocks of Victorian Terraced Housing, Larger Terraced Housing (1700-1850). The north and east part of the area is Modern Housing Estate and School with Modern Infill on the site of the former Visitation Convent School. There are further small blocks of Modern Infill to the south with small areas of Apartments,



Figure 124: View north up Victoria Grove just south of junction with North Street.

Chapel and Church.

### Time Depth

This area was agricultural land until the later 18th century and was developed primarily for housing during the 19th century following the extension of Victoria Grove southwards to connect with West Street. Originally North Street provided the only access to this area and it and the northern part of Victoria Grove are probably medieval or older in origin, but weren't built up until the late 18th and 19th centuries. The oldest elements are to the south; with the Baptist Chapel (1841), St Mary and St Catherine's Church (original church built 1846) and the short terrace of houses Nos. 30-34 Victoria Grove (built pre-1845) the earliest built elements in this area. The terraces of Victorian housing Nos. 13-41, Nos. 54-60 and Nos. 113-127 and the large semi-detached and detached housing Nos. 42-52 all date from the second half of the 19th century. The last decade of the 19th century saw the development of the semi-detached and detached houses Nos. 51-111. The semi-detached houses Nos. 129-179 were built after World War I. At the northern end of the area the housing estates off Coneygar Road are 1960s and the St Cecilia's Gardens housing estate was built in 2003 on the site of the former Visitation Convent School (established 1899). St Catherine's School was built in 1967.

### Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is one of medium to high density ribbon development along Victoria Grove, with the detached, semi-detached and terraced houses within regular plots. The terraced housing at the south end of the area is set on or close to the street frontage, but the semi-detached and detached houses tend to be set further back with garden walls and railings defining the frontage. To the northeast is low-density estate housing of mainly detached and some semi-detached bungalows and houses set well back from the suburban estate access roads and screened from Victoria Grove by thick hedges. The St Cecilia's Gardens estate has a block of attached three-storey neo-Georgian town houses on the street frontage.

There are very few open spaces, other than the triangle at the junction of North Street and Victoria Grove and the grounds of St Mary and St Catherine's Church, but trees and hedges form an important element giving a rural lane feel to North Street and the northern part of Victoria Grove. There are glimpsed views of Coneygar Hill and good views across the Brit valley and Allington Hill from a number of places in the area.

## Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 10 Built Character

### **Building types**

The area is characterised by terraces and rows of detached and semi-detached housing primarily dating to the second half of the 19th century. Many of the houses have a strong character with interesting architectural detailing. The 1841 Baptist Chapel has a simple bold rendered front. The 1876 British Legion Hall is in Victorian Gothic style. One of the most extravagant buildings is the former St Hilda's private school at 52 Victoria Grove, which has an eclectic mix of Tudor, Gothic and Arts and Crafts elements. The modern St Mary and St Catherine's Church, set back from the frontage and with a sweeping modern profile is an interesting modern addition to the built character of this area.

The northern part of this area is mainly 1960's suburban detached houses and bungalows that have no local distinctiveness in terms of form, architectural detailing and materials used. The St Cecilia's Gardens estate is a mixture of neo-vernacular and neo-Georgian houses in a range of materials including brick and stone rubble.

### **Building Materials**

The 19th century houses are primarily of brick with stone and stucco details and slate roofs. The mid 20th century bungalows and houses are of brick with clay or concrete tile roofs and the mid 21st century houses are a mixture of brick, stone and rendered walls with slate or tile roofs.

### **Key Buildings**

*Public Buildings:* Baptist Chapel, the modern St Mary and St Catherine's Church and 19th century Presbytery, the British Legion Hall.

*Houses:* 52 Victoria Grove, 13-21 Victoria Grove, and 51-127 Victoria Grove.



Figure 125: Baptist Chapel, Victoria Grove.



Figure 126: British Legion Hall with 48-50 Victoria Grove adjacent and No. 52 in background.



Figure 127: 23 and 25 Victoria Grove with the three-storey 27-37 Victoria Grove behind.



Figure 128: 51-55 Victoria Grove.

### Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 10 Archaeology

#### **Archaeological Investigations**

There have been no archaeological investigations in this character area.

historic boundaries depicted on maps dated to the later 19th century, mainly historic property boundaries or fossilised former field boundaries.

#### **Archaeological Character**

The lack of any archaeological investigation in this area constrains any consideration of the archaeological resource. The archaeological character remains unknown. However, the area lies on the edge of the Brit valley and may contain evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity. The possibility for Roman activity is suggested by the discovery of a Roman burial on nearby Watton Hill. Figure 129 shows

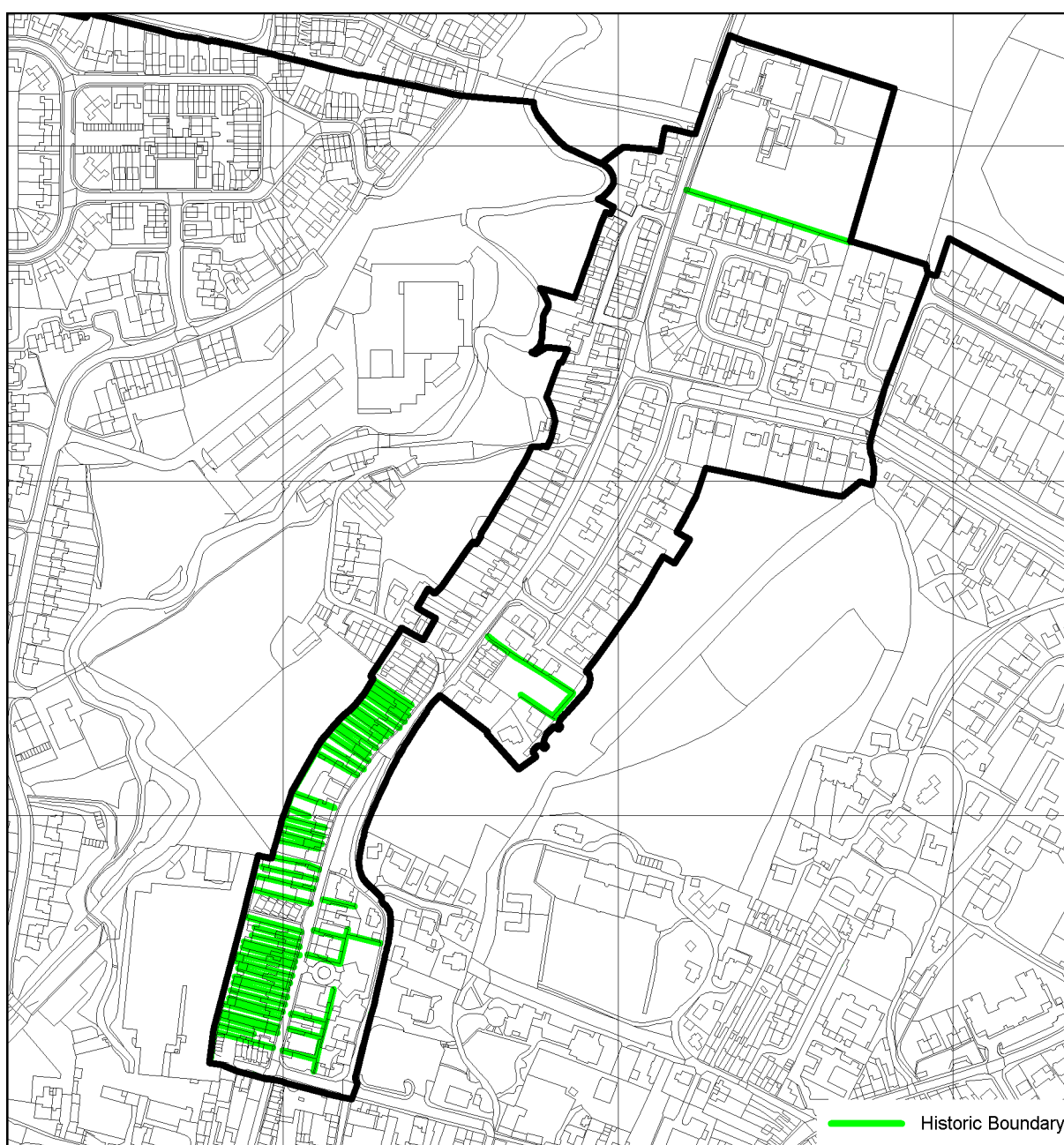


Figure 129: Archaeological features in Historic Urban Character Area 10.

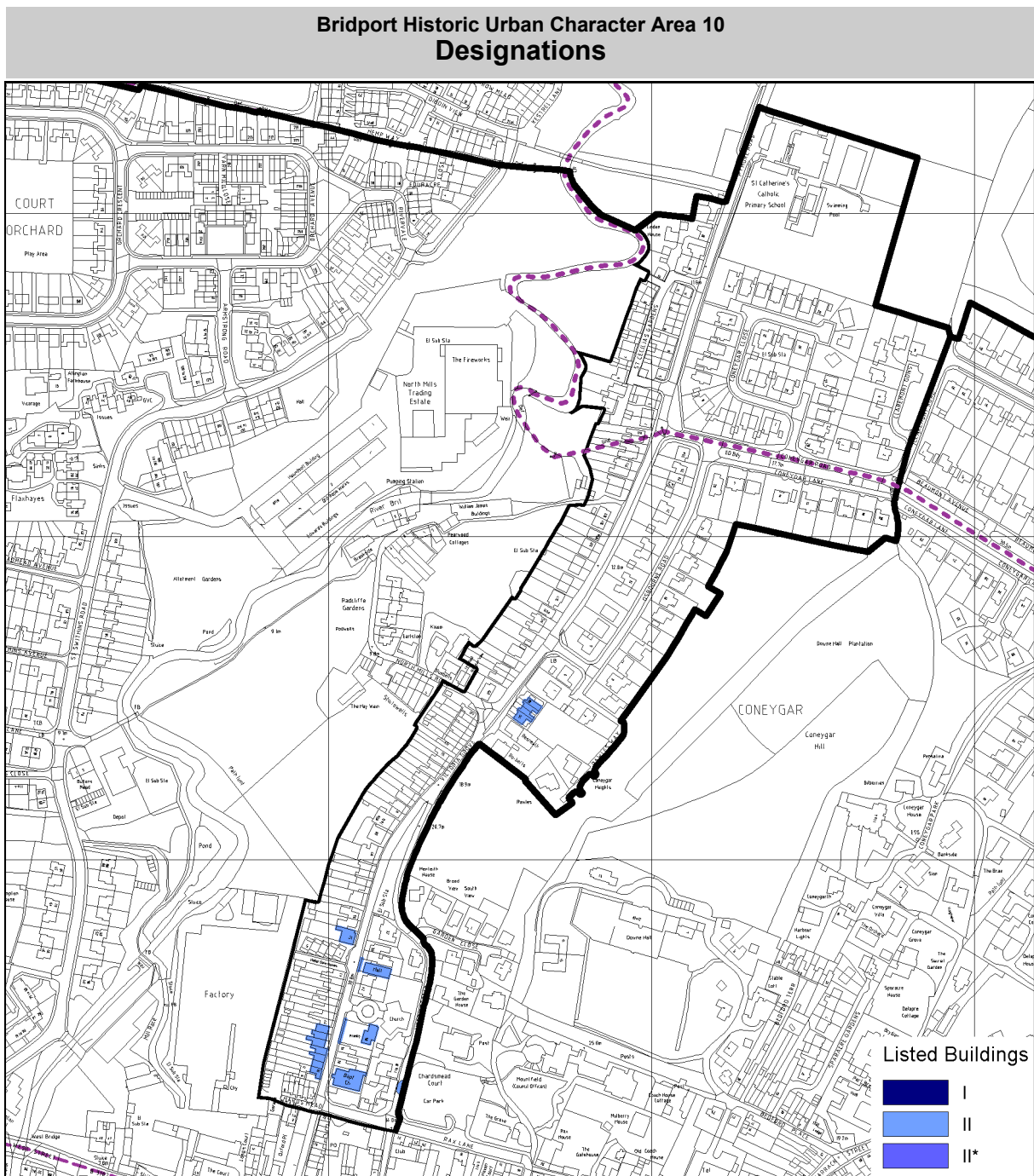


Figure 130: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 10.

**Listed Buildings**

There are 8 Listed Buildings in the Character Area, all Grade II.

**Conservation Areas**

The southern half of this Character Area lies within the Bridport Conservation Area (Figure 41).

**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.

## Bridport Historic Urban Character Area 10 Evaluation

### ***Strength of Historic Character***

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **Medium**. The structure of the area and the housing along Victoria Grove reflect the development from a country lane to a suburban area following the connecting of Victoria Grove to West Street in the 19th century. The historic buildings have strong character with many decorative details, which together with the garden walls and railings form a strong street definition. The extensive hedges along the street emphasise the former rural character of the road. The historic character of the northern part is diluted by the extensive modern housing developments.

### ***Sensitivity to Large Scale Development***

The area has a **Medium** sensitivity to major change. The southern half of the area has greater sensitivity to development as the scale of the plots and the character of the historic housing directly reflects the development history of this area and any major disruption of this would reduce the legibility and distinctiveness of this area. The northern part is less sensitive to change, as it comprises modern suburban housing developments that contribute little to the distinctive local historic character of this area.

### ***Archaeological Potential***

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **Low**. It lies beyond the historic core of the town and was largely developed in the late 18th and 19th century. There is some potential for recovering archaeological information on the pre-urban activity, even though no finds have been made in the area but the Roman burial on Watton Hill and the Palaeolithic handaxe findspot on Coneygar Hill are nearby.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1 (Part 7).

### **Key Characteristics**

- Baptist Chapel
- British Legion Hall
- St Mary and St Catherine's Church and presbytery
- Terraces, semi-detached and detached 19th century housing