

Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 7 Colway Mead and Charmouth Road

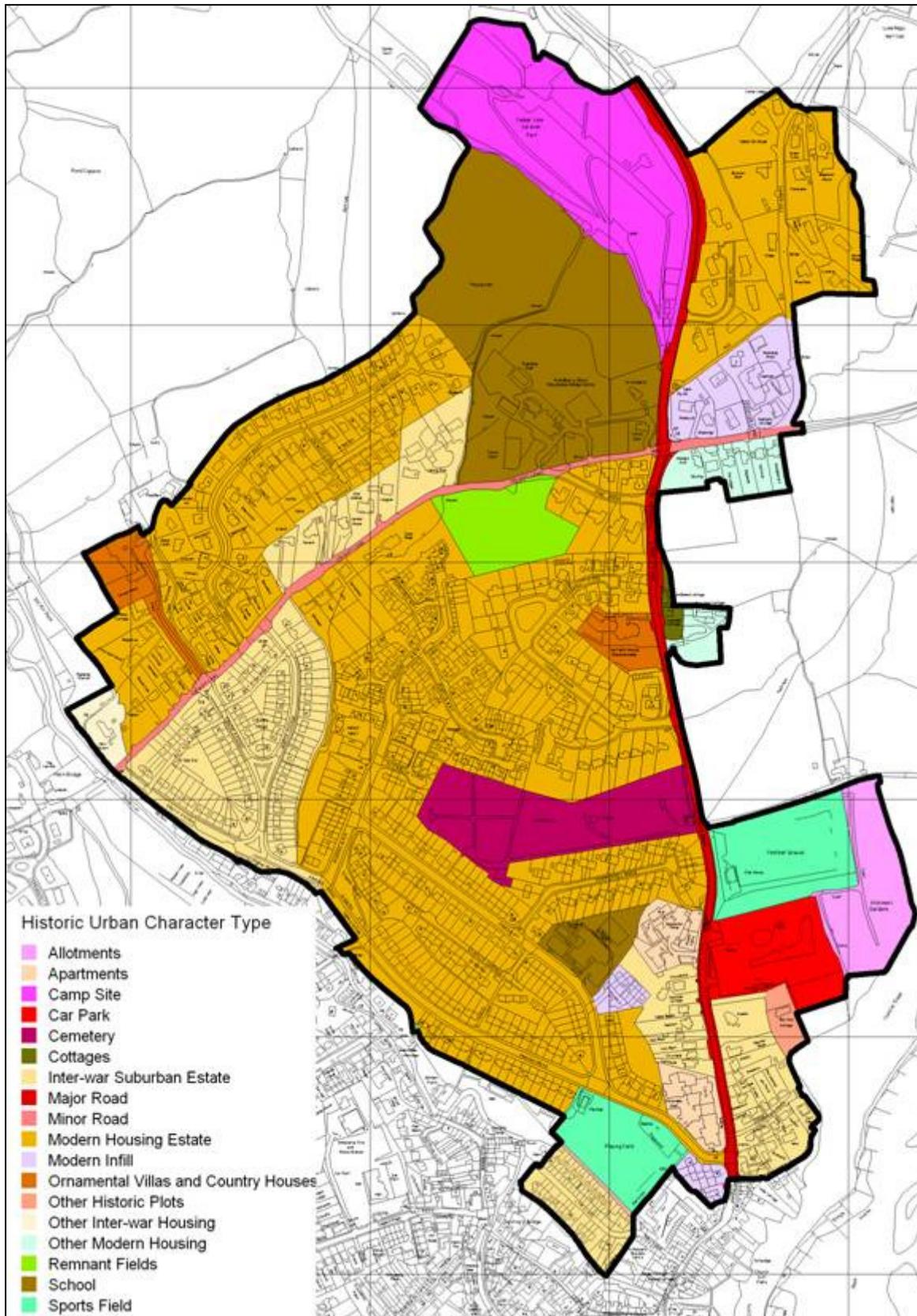


Figure 101: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 7, showing current historic urban character type

Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 7 Structure of Character Area

Overview

This comprises largely 20th century suburban expansion on the northeast side of the town. It is defined partly by the extensive modern housing estates with very few historic buildings. The boundaries of the area are largely formed by the urban edge to the north and east.

Topography and Geology

The northern end lies on the upper slopes of Dragon's Hill and Timber Hill and the ground slopes down steeply southwards towards the sea and to the southwest into the river Lim valley. Almost the whole of the area is on Lower Lias clays, other than a very small part of Upper Greensand geology at the very northern tip.

Urban Structure

There is one major route, Charmouth Road, the main approach road to Lyme from the east, which runs N-S. Also there is another minor but older route over Timber Hill. Colway Lane is the only E-W through the area, providing a cross-town route. Between these roads is a network of local access roads for the widespread housing estates in this area.

Present Character

Figure 101 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area is predominantly modern housing estate, with small areas of inter-war estate and other housing, together with some areas of modern infill. Fairfield House and associated cottages are the only historic buildings in the area. The municipal cemetery forms a large block on Charmouth Road, with the football ground, car park and allotments on the other side. To the north, the Timber Vale Caravan Park and the former St Alban's School form large blocks west of Charmouth Road. Other smaller character types include historic plots at Bay View Cottages, St Michael's Primary School and the Anning Road Sports Field.

Time Depth

The oldest element in this area is likely to be the historic route of Colway Lane, which may be prehistoric in origin. Charmouth Road is much more recent and the present course dates from 1924. The site of Colway Manor is Saxon in origin, though the present house is largely 20th century. Fairfield House dates from the early 19th century. The municipal cemetery was laid out in 1856. The earliest housing estates are the former council houses of Lym Close (1911) and Colway Mead (1929) and there is some late

1920's and 1930's development along the lower end of Charmouth Road, along Colway Lane and on Timber Hill. St Albans School was also established in the inter-war period. The majority of the housing dates to the post-war and modern periods. The Anning Road and Talbot Road estates date from the post-war period and the remainder from the 1970s to the present day. The Charmouth Road car park and football ground date from the 1960s, but the allotments are older.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is one of medium and low density housing in a rather open pattern, with the majority of buildings set back from the roads behind front gardens. There are relatively few buildings set directly along the major through routes, the majority of houses are within planned housing estates or are modern infill within existing larger plots. The layout of the housing estates is fairly typical, with largely curvilinear looped networks and culs-de-sac and the houses laid out in a regular pattern along the roads. The character of Charmouth Road changes along its length. At its southern end it has a typical built-up street frontage with houses facing on to it on both sides. Further uphill to the north, the buildings all face away from the street and the west side is defined by fairly high stone walls and the east side by a high hedge and by an increasing number of trees. Colway Lane is a hollow way with high hedge banks on one or both sides along its length. Most of the houses along it are set well back, often screened by vegetation.

The northern edges of this area become increasingly green, with a large number of mature trees, including some prominent pine trees on Timber Hill. There are some impressive views over the town and along the coast from Timber Hill and down Charmouth Road.



Figure 102: Charmouth Road, with Fairfield Cottages on left.

Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 7 Built Character

Building types

The area is primarily characterised by the large number of modern estate houses, with some inter-war and early 20th century buildings ranging from council houses to large detached private dwellings. The historic buildings are few in number and include one large villa and a small number of cottages.

Fairfield House is a large early 19th century house on the west side of Charmouth Road, with the contemporary Fairfield Cottages, built for some of the staff of Fairfield House on the opposite side of the road. Cumberland Cottage further down the hill is of early 19th century date and was adjacent to the now demolished large early 19th century Summer Hill House.

The early 20th century council houses on Lym Close are short terraces of two-storey houses. The inter-war council houses at Colway Mead are two-storey semi-detached houses. The other inter-war houses include a number of large two-storey houses such as Overton House and Horn Tavern. Colway Manor was rebuilt in 1921 incorporating the porch from the earlier, 17th century, house. There are some typical 1920's-30's suburban houses along Charmouth Road and two small thatched cottages, Providence and Penrose Cottage. Colway Gate is a distinctive modernist 1930's house in a prominent position (Figure 104).

The modern buildings are largely residential estate houses of one or two storeys, with a range of styles typical of their period of construction. The houses on Talbot Way and Colway Close are primarily bungalows. Elsewhere there is a mixture of houses and bungalows. The housing development on Applebee Way is in neo-vernacular style. There are a small number of modern three storey blocks of flats.

Building Materials

The historic buildings are constructed from the local Blue Lias limestone rubble, with brick or stone dressings. Fairfield House is rendered and has an ornate two storey cast iron filigree veranda. Fairfield Cottage is slate-hung on its gable end. The roofs are slate.

The early 20th century and inter-war housing are of brick, but mainly rendered and with tiled roofs. The modern houses are of red, brown and buff brick, some rendered or with reconstituted stone cladding. The roofs are of clay and concrete tiles and slate.

Key Buildings

Historic Buildings: Fairfield House, Fairfield Cottage, Cumberland Cottage

Earlier 20th century Buildings: Council Houses on Lym Close and on North, South and Manor Avenues; Overton House; Colway Gate, Providence and Penrose Cottage, Charmouth Road.



Figure 103: Fairfield House.



Figure 104: 1930's house, Colway Gate.



Figure 105: Post-war Council Housing, Anning Road.

Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 7
Archaeology

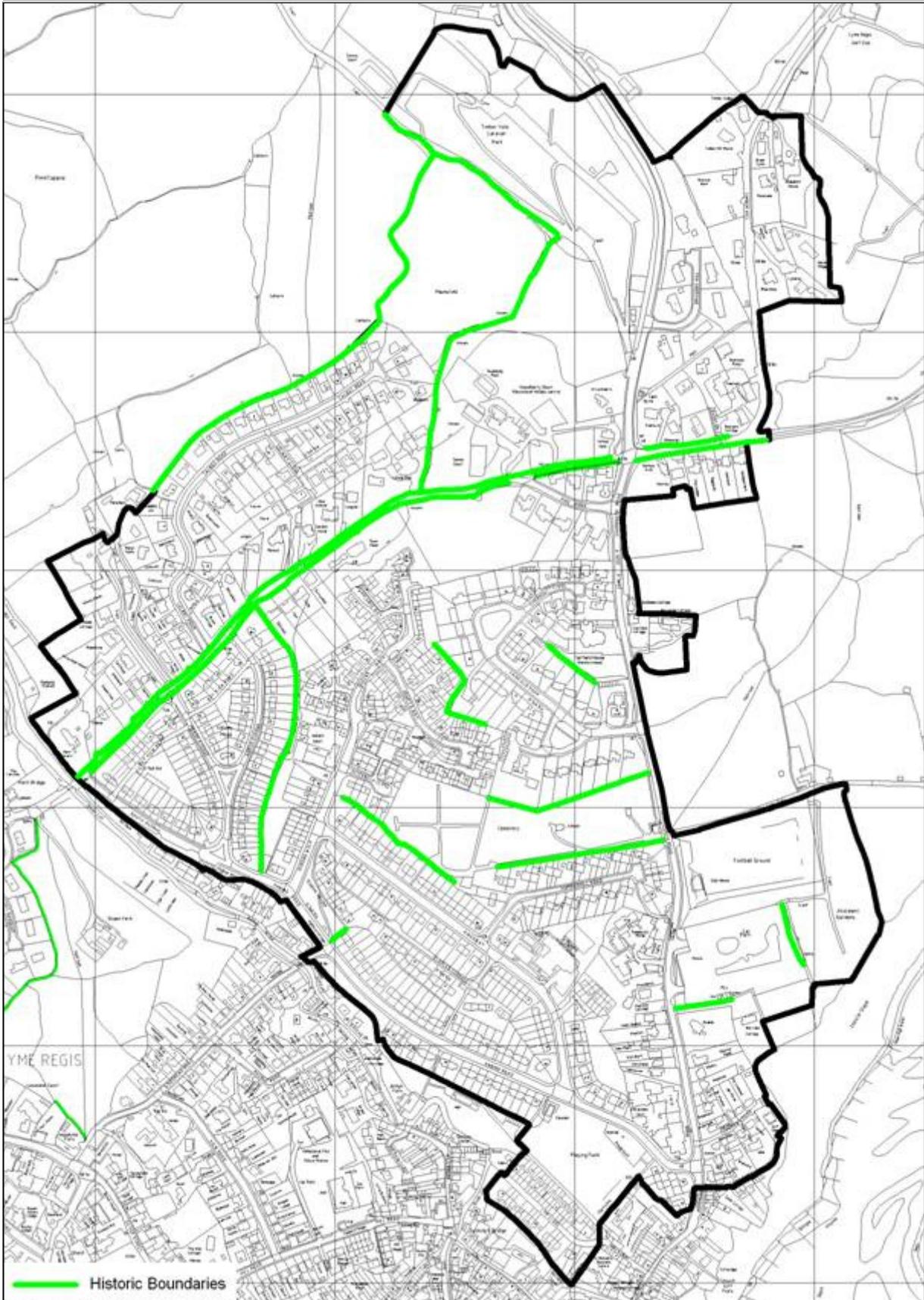


Figure 106: Archaeological features within Historic Urban Character Area 7.

Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 7
Archaeology

Archaeological Investigations

There have been no archaeological investigations in this character area.

Archaeological Character

The lack of below-ground investigation constrains the consideration of the archaeological resource. It is unlikely that the potential archaeological resource of this area will contribute much to our knowledge of the urban development of Lyme Regis as it lies well beyond the historic core and was largely agricultural land until the 20th century. A number of historic field boundaries have been fossilised within the present day layout of housing estates (Figure 106). These are 19th century and earlier in date.

Colway Lane is a route of considerable antiquity and survives as a hollow way. Colway Manor is the site of a Saxon Manor. It is possible that there may be remains associated with this early route or with the Saxon Manor, though it is unclear what form these may take. Colway Manor was one of the strongholds of the Royalist forces during the siege of Lyme in 1644 and evidence of Civil War defensive works and other activity may survive within the area.

Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 7
Designations

Listed Buildings

A single Grade II Listed Building lay within this character area, Summer Hill House, which was demolished in 1987

Conservation Areas

None of this area lies within the Lyme Regis Conservation Area (Figure 36).

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 107: Colway Lane.



Figure 108: Modern housing estate, Fairfield Park.

Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 7 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **medium**. The ancient route along Colway Lane survives as a hollow way with hedge banks in places giving it a strong sense of historic character, enhanced by the large numbers of mature trees and vegetation, which obscures some of the more modern development. It is continued eastwards by the old road to Charmouth which survives as an earthwork feature. There are relatively few historic buildings surviving in this area and these are diluted by the large number of modern houses, which have altered the context of these buildings. However, this area contains the earliest council housing in Lyme, which, together with a number of inter-war and later private housing estates, gives an interesting cross-section of the social development of suburban housing in the town. The modern suburban housing estates have filled in much of the area, reducing its former open character.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Although large parts of the area have already been developed for housing during the last 70 years or so, some of the inter-war and

immediately post-war developments along Colway Lane and Timber Hill have developed significant mature gardens and planting. This is now a major element of the historic character of this area and would be sensitive to large-scale development, particularly as it occupies the higher ground and is very visible.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **medium**. Although it lies well beyond the historic core of the town and has low potential to reveal details on the development of the town, there is a higher potential to reveal some evidence on the Civil War activity immediately outside the town and earlier pre-urban activity, perhaps associated with the ancient routes through this area, though it is unclear what range of activities could be represented.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1,2, 3, 4, 6, 18, 24 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Ancient hollow way with some with surviving hedgebanks along Colway Lane
- Site of Colway Manor
- Pre-war and inter-war council housing estates
- Inter-war suburban housing
- Modern suburban housing estates
- Mature trees and gardens, particularly along Colway Lane and Timber Hill
- Good views over the town and coast
- Timber Vale Caravan Park