

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 3 West Charmouth

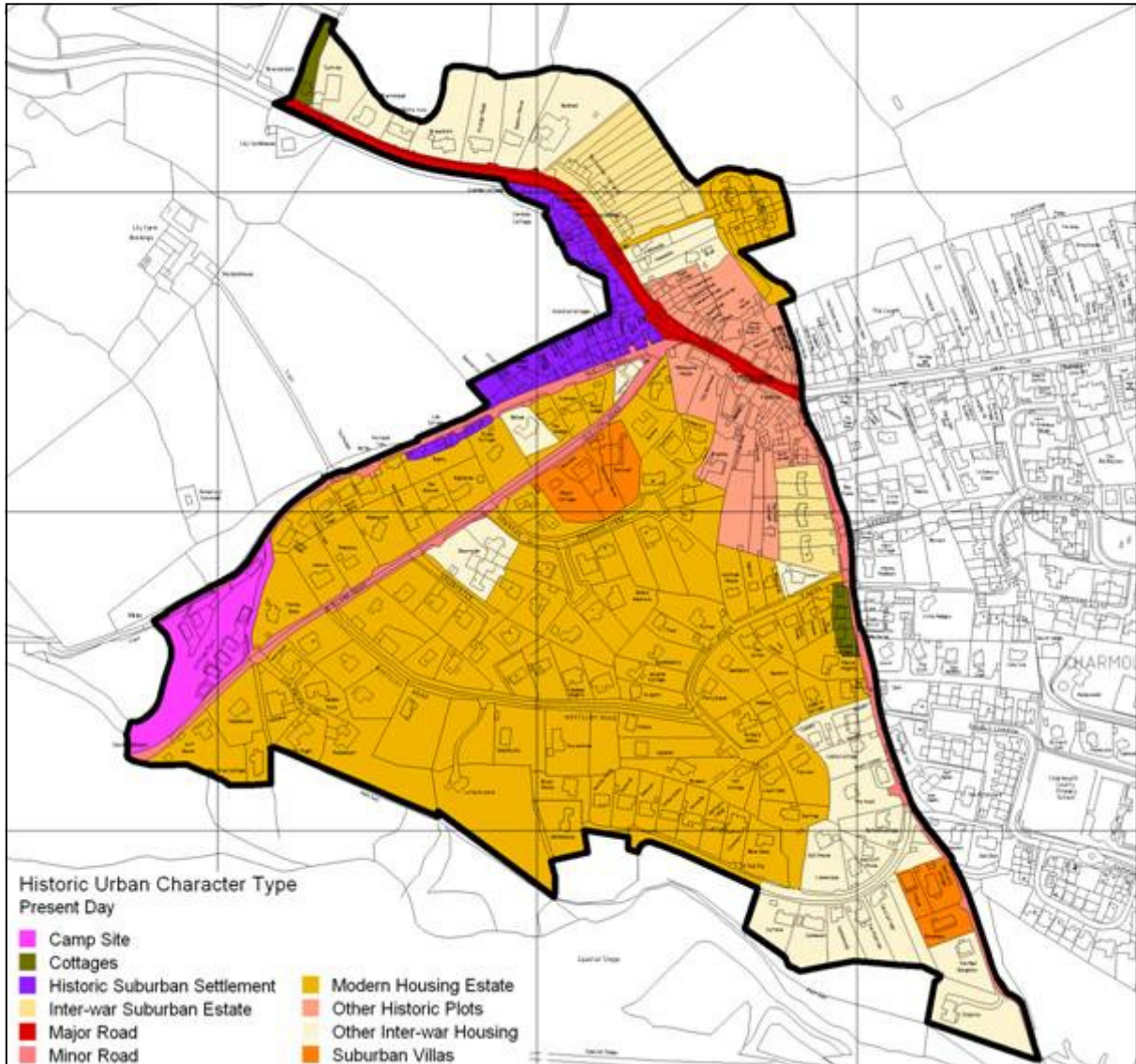


Figure 47: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 3, showing current historic urban character type



Figure 48: View down Axminster Road towards The Street.



Figure 49: View down Old Lyme Road towards Charmouth.

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 3 Structure of Character Area

Overview

This is the area to the west of the planned medieval town and its associated fields. It includes post-medieval development westwards along the main roads and largely 20th century suburban development. The area is defined by its location outside the medieval town.

Topography and Geology

The area lies on the eastern slopes of Timber Hill. The ground drops steeply down to the east and rises steeply up to the southwest. Axminster Road rises steeply up to the west, curving round the slopes of the hill. The area to the north of this road drops down steeply to the north and northeast. The area lies on Lower Jurassic Liassic clays with the upper western part on Upper Greensand.

Urban Structure

The main road runs through the northern part of the area. Higher Sea Lane runs off this road down towards the coast and forms the eastern limit of the area. Old Lyme Hill and Old Lyme Road are two former roads to Lyme Regis, but are now minor lanes. Connected to these roads are a number of 20th century housing developments accessed by a network of curvilinear local access roads and culs-de-sac.

Present Character

Figure 47 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area comprises predominantly modern housing estates with smaller areas of inter-war suburban estates and other inter-war housing. Along Axminster Road is an area of historic plots and historic suburban settlement, which continues up Old Lyme Hill. Minor historic urban character types include small areas of cottages, suburban villas and a camp site (now a private chalet site).



Figure 50: Higher Sea Lane.

Time Depth

The roads are the earliest elements in this area, with Axminster Road and Old Lyme Hill probably being of considerable antiquity, perhaps Roman or earlier. Higher Sea Lane may be medieval and Old Lyme Road dates to 1824. The earliest settlement is along Axminster Road, probably dating from the later 16th century, with infill and replacement of buildings and properties from at least the 18th century onwards. Settlement along Old Lyme Hill dates from the late 18th century onwards. There are occasional small areas of 19th century houses along Higher Sea Lane and Old Lyme Road, but suburban development really starts after World War 1, with the larger part of the area being infilled in the post-war period.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is one of low density housing primarily arranged either along the main roads or in a curvilinear arrangement within planned estates. The only 'urban' part of this character area is along the eastern part of Axminster Road, where the houses are either attached or set closely together and are mainly set directly on the street frontage. Further west along this street, there is a more suburban feel with the houses mainly set much further back from the road behind front gardens and the street edge defined a stone wall. Over most of the rest of the area, the houses are set well back from the roads within, often quite large, gardens, commonly hidden behind hedges. The roads can have hedgebanks (Old Lyme Hill) or grass verges.

Trees, shrubs and other vegetation provides a significant element to this character area, particularly on the higher slopes where there are a number of prominent pine and other mature trees. Mature garden planting and wide grass verges contribute to the green semi-rural aspect to the suburban settlement in this area.



Figure 51: View down Westcliff Road.

**Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 3
Built Character**

Building types

The majority of the 19th century and earlier buildings are on Axminster Road and to a lesser extent along Old Lyme Hill, Old Lyme Road and Higher Sea Lane. A range of different historic buildings are represented, including 17th century houses and 19th century cottages and larger houses. However, the area comprises mainly inter-war and post-war suburban houses.

The 17th century houses have been heavily altered. Badgers/Foxley Cottage was originally a single farmhouse (RCHME 1952) and Springfield and The Wellhead apparently have 17th century fabric (Pavey 1968a). There are a number of late 18th and 19th century two storey attached cottages along Axminster Road and Old Lyme Hill. The larger 19th century houses are mainly detached two storey houses. Askew House is a distinctive house set at an angle to the road with bold decorative features. Waterloo House and Granville House have simple historic shopfronts, formerly with a forge to the rear.

The 20th century houses include inter-war council house developments of terraced houses at Nutcombe Terrace and semi-detached houses on Higher Sea Lane. The post-war houses comprise a variety of different one and two storey detached houses giving the estates a varied

appearance, but none is in a distinctive local style.

Building Materials

The major building materials used in the historic buildings are Upper Greensand chert and Blue Lias limestone from the beach. The walls are mainly rendered. The roofs are of slate or thatch.

The houses of the first half of the 20th century are of red brick or of chert and Blue Lias rubble with brick or stone dressings. The roofs are of slate or tile. The modern houses are of grey or brown brick, some are rendered or painted and many are stone clad. A small number have wooden shingle cladding. The roofs are mainly concrete tile.

Key Buildings

17th century houses: Badgers and Foxley Cottage, Springfield House, The Wellhead.

19th century cottages: Thatched Cottage, Hill View, Grange House, Alpine Cottage, Hillcot Cottage, Heron Cottage, Charm Cottage,

19th century houses: Askew House, Melbourne House, Claremont, Bayville Cottage/Waterloo House/ Granville House, Eastwell/Westwell House, Sanctuary Cottage.



Figure 52: Bayville Cottage, Granville House and Waterloo House.



Figure 53: Askew House.



Figure 54: Nutcombe Terrace.



Figure 55: Post-war houses off Westcliff Road.

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 3 Archaeology

Archaeological Investigations

One investigation has been undertaken in this character area – an archaeological evaluation in advance of the construction of Nutcombe Close. This revealed that the area had been previously quarried (Wessex Archaeology 1992).

occurrence of ‘grange’ place-names here may indicate the location of the medieval abbey grange in this area.

Archaeological Character

This area lies outside the historic core of the town and most of it is likely to have been agricultural land until the 20th century. The steepness of the slopes suggest that it is unlikely to have been a preferred settlement area in the past. There are a few fossilised field boundaries within the area (Figure 56). The

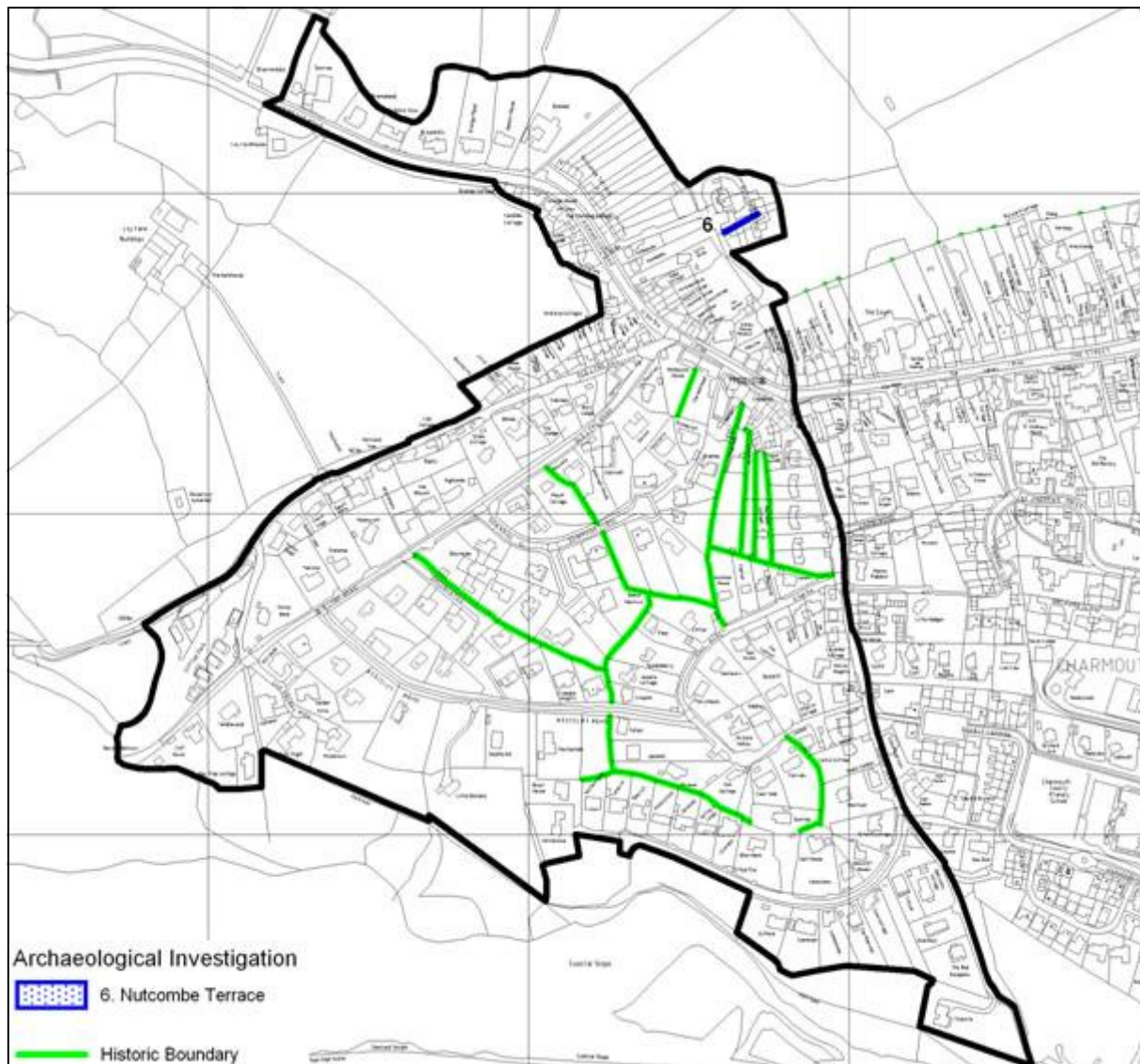


Figure 56: Archaeological features in Historic Character Area 3.

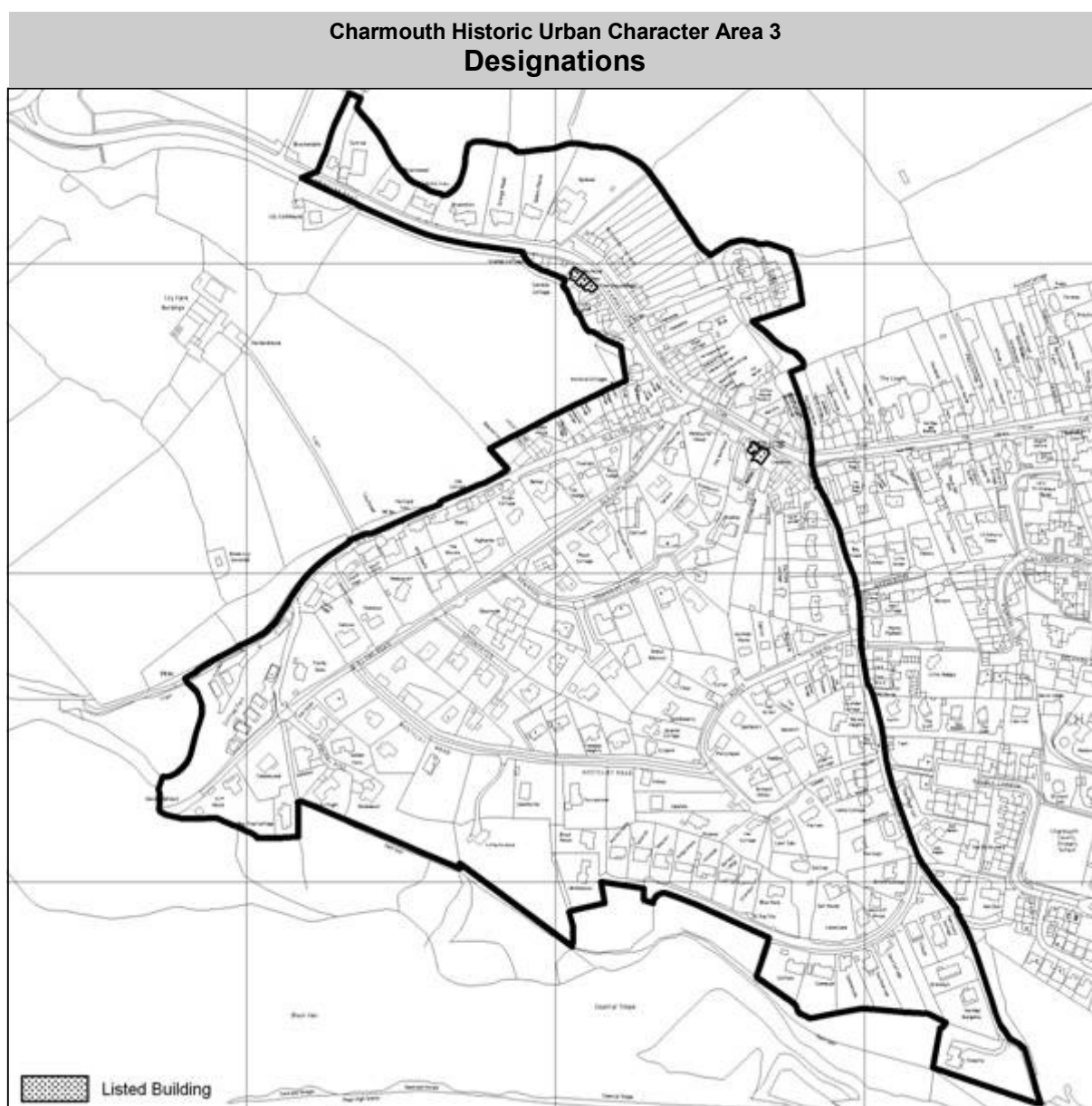


Figure 57: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 3.

Listed Buildings

There are four Listed Buildings in the Character Area. All are Grade II.

Conservation Areas

Part of the area along Axminster Road and along Old Lyme Hill lie within the Charmouth Conservation Area (Figure 25).

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 58: Badgers/Foxley Cottage, a former 17th century farmhouse.

Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area 3 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **medium**. Axminster Road and Old Lyme Hill are historic routes and the latter has some surviving hedgebanks. There is good survival of a range of different historic buildings along Axminster Road and to a lesser extent along Old Lyme Hill. However, most of the rest of the area is 20th century suburban housing, with some fossilised field boundaries.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **low** sensitivity to major change. There are few sensitive historic elements to this character area other than individual historic buildings. The area already has been largely infilled with modern housing.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **low**. It lies outside the historic core of the town, but with some post-medieval settlement along the historic routes. Most of the area was agricultural land until the 20th century.

There is some potential for recovering archaeological information on pre-urban activity, but the scale and form of this activity is unknown. The steepness of the slopes may suggest it was not a prime location for earlier settlement. The 'grange' place-names may indicate the possibility of the medieval monastic grange being in this area.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-3, 6, 9, 10 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Historic development along Axminster Road and Old Lyme Hill
- Old turnpike roads to Lyme Regis
- Historic cottages
- Inter-war council housing
- Inter-war and post-war suburban housing
- Mature trees and hedges
- Steeply sloping topography