

## Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 4 Castleton

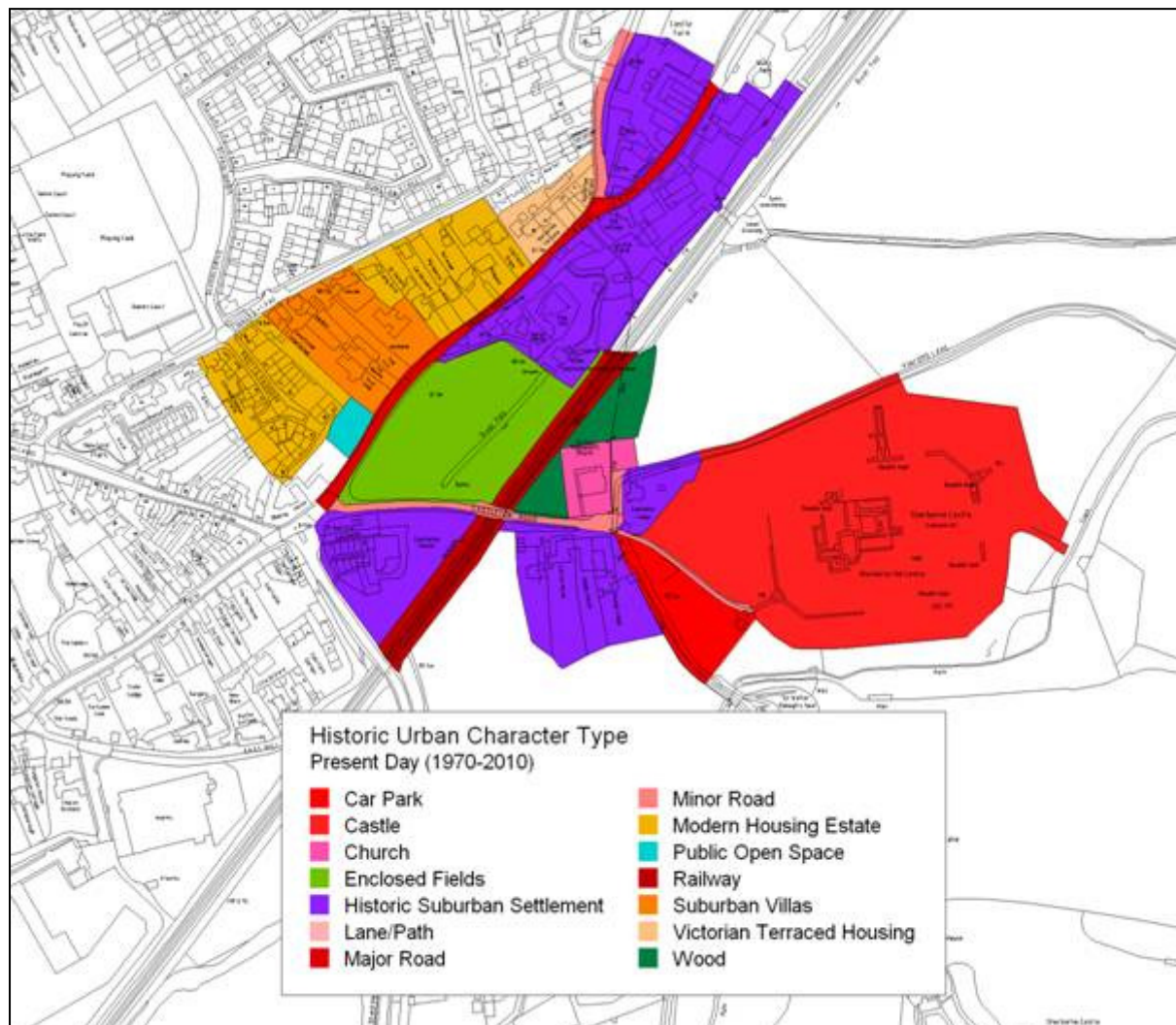


Figure 121: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 4, showing current historic urban character type



Figure 122: Sherborne Old Castle; the West Gate



Figure 123: View east along Osborne Road from the junction with Castletown Way

## Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 4

### Structure of Character Area

#### **Overview**

Castleton is an historic borough established at the entrance to Sherborne Old Castle, probably in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The area is dominated by the castle, which was destroyed after the Civil War. The ruins were incorporated into the 18<sup>th</sup> - century landscaping around the New Castle. The settlement has become fragmented by partial desertion and the building of the railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Topography and Geology**

Sherborne Castle was built at the western end of a ridge of Fuller's Earth Rock, which divides the headwaters of the river Yeo. The character area straddles the upper Yeo valley, and settlement extends on either side of the Yeo which lies on Fuller's Earth Clay. The Osborne Road runs along a low scarp on the edge of the inferior Oolite beds, marking the north western side of the valley.

#### **Urban Structure**

The current structure is a result of shrinkage and then division by the railway. Buildings at the Castle entrance retain an urban feel, although there is now only a single row here (Figure 31). This part of the settlement was originally arranged around the church of St Mary Magdalene and a central cross road, only one arm of which is now metalled. The railway divides the historic suburb into three portions, with meadows and woodland between. The Osborne Road runs through the northern part of the suburb and links Castle Farm with the town centre (Figure 123).

#### **Present Character**

Figure 121 shows the present day historic urban character types. The Castle and its associated car park (Figure 122) sit on the eastern edge of the area and the historic suburb of Castleton



Figure 124: Castleton; Marsh House looking east

close up against it on the west. That part of the settlement around Castle Farm on the northern banks of the Yeo is rural in nature, and severed from the main settlement by the railway. A group of buildings just above the valley on the north side of the Osborne Road has a late 19<sup>th</sup> century suburban character. The north west side of Osborne Road has 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban housing.

#### **Time Depth**

The borough of Castleton was probably established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It was recorded as a tithing of Sherborne containing 13 taxpayers by 1332, and had a weekly market on Thursdays and an annual. The Castle was built in the 12th century, though there is some evidence for an earlier settlement and cemetery on Castle Hill. After its decline, the Castle ruins were used as a source of building stone. The main road from London to Sherborne passed either side of the Castle until 1752. The layout of the settlement has changed dramatically since 1733 when it is depicted as having a central crossroads. It was in decline by 1802 and further reduced and divided by the construction of the railway c. 1860.

#### **Settlement Pattern and Streetscape**

The settlement of Castleton survives in two main parts: one along Castleton Road, itself divided into an east and west section by the railway, and the other along Osborne Road, including Castle Farm and mill. The former retains some semblance of urban character in two terraced rows (Figure 42). However, these now front on to a quiet lane following the realignment of Castleton Road in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The area of Castle Farm and mill is distinctly rural in character and is separated from the urban area of Sherborne by low lying meadows on the river Yeo; historically marshland (Figure 124). The north side of Osborne Road has only been developed since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and includes large detached houses fronting on to Tinney's Lane and Osborne Road as well as small modern terraces arranged around the cul de sac of Knotts Paddock (Figure 125).

## Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 4 Built Character

### **Building types**

Castleton contains several historic buildings and structures, of which Sherborne Old Castle is the most significant (Figure 126). The Castle was completed c. 1137 and has a concentric plan with curtain wall and gate towers. It was rendered untenable in 1645, although the ruins have remained a romantic adjunct to the grounds of the new Sherborne castle. St Mary Magdalen's church was built in 1601, though the present structure dates from a rebuild of 1715. Other key buildings include three 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century town houses (Raleigh Lodge, Middle House and lattice House) and Castleton Terrace, either side of the railway on Castleton Road, an L-shaped farmhouse and outbuildings at 275-6 Osborne Road, and Castleton Mill.

### **Building Materials**

Sherborne Castle was built in rubble, faced with closely-jointed ashlar. The church of St Mary Magdalene is a rectangular stone ashlar building with a stone slate roof. It is set in a graveyard with iron gates and stone piers topped with balls. Sherborne stone and Ham Hill ashlar dressings are common in the rest of Castleton some with render or cement wash. Mid to late-19<sup>th</sup> century estate buildings, including Waterloo Terrace (Figure 127) and Castle Farm (Figure 128) on Osborne Road, are built in Sherborne Stone rubble with red brick dressings. Roofs and windows are varied.

### **Key Buildings**

*Public and ecclesiastical buildings:* Sherborne Castle; St Mary Magdalene Church; Castleton Mill and Pumping Station.

*17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century town houses:* Raleigh Lodge, Middle House and lattice House, Castleton Road.

*17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular houses:* Castleton House, 275-6 Osborne Road, Stable Cottage, Castletown Way.

*Late 19<sup>th</sup> houses:* Castleton Terrace; The Beeches, Osborne Road; 11-14 Waterloo Terrace.



Figure 125: Knott's Paddock, Tinney's Lane



Figure 126: Sherborne Old Castle; North Gate



Figure 127: Waterloo Terrace, Osborne Road



Figure 128: Castle Farm House, Osborne Road

## Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 4 Archaeology

### **Archaeological Investigations**

Seven archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area (Figure 129; Appendix 3, Nos. 70-76). Excavations at Sherborne Old Castle [72-3] showed it was on the site of an earlier Christian cemetery and a bank and ditch, and revealed details of the castle's layout and construction sequence. Work at Tinney's Lane [74-6] revealed activity ranging from Bronze Age to the post-medieval.

### **Archaeological Character**

The area is dominated by the ruins and subsurface deposits associated with the 12<sup>th</sup> - century Castle and its later modifications. Glimpses of the site's earlier history come from early Christian burials and an undated but associated feature, perhaps an enclosure.

Foundations outside the curtain wall may be a chapel seen by Leland c.1540, possibly one mentioned in the 12<sup>th</sup> century dedicated to St Probus, and so linked to the origins of Sherborne.

Excavations south of Tinney's Lane revealed evidence of a prehistoric and Romano-British field system, Iron Age pits and burials, post-Roman burials, a medieval tentering rack and quarries, and post-medieval pits (Mckinley 1999). There was a significant Bronze Age and Iron Age settlement in the vicinity.

Figure 129 shows historic boundaries visible on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century maps. The 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier boundaries on the north side of the river follow the same alignment as Romano-British ditches at Tinney's Lane.

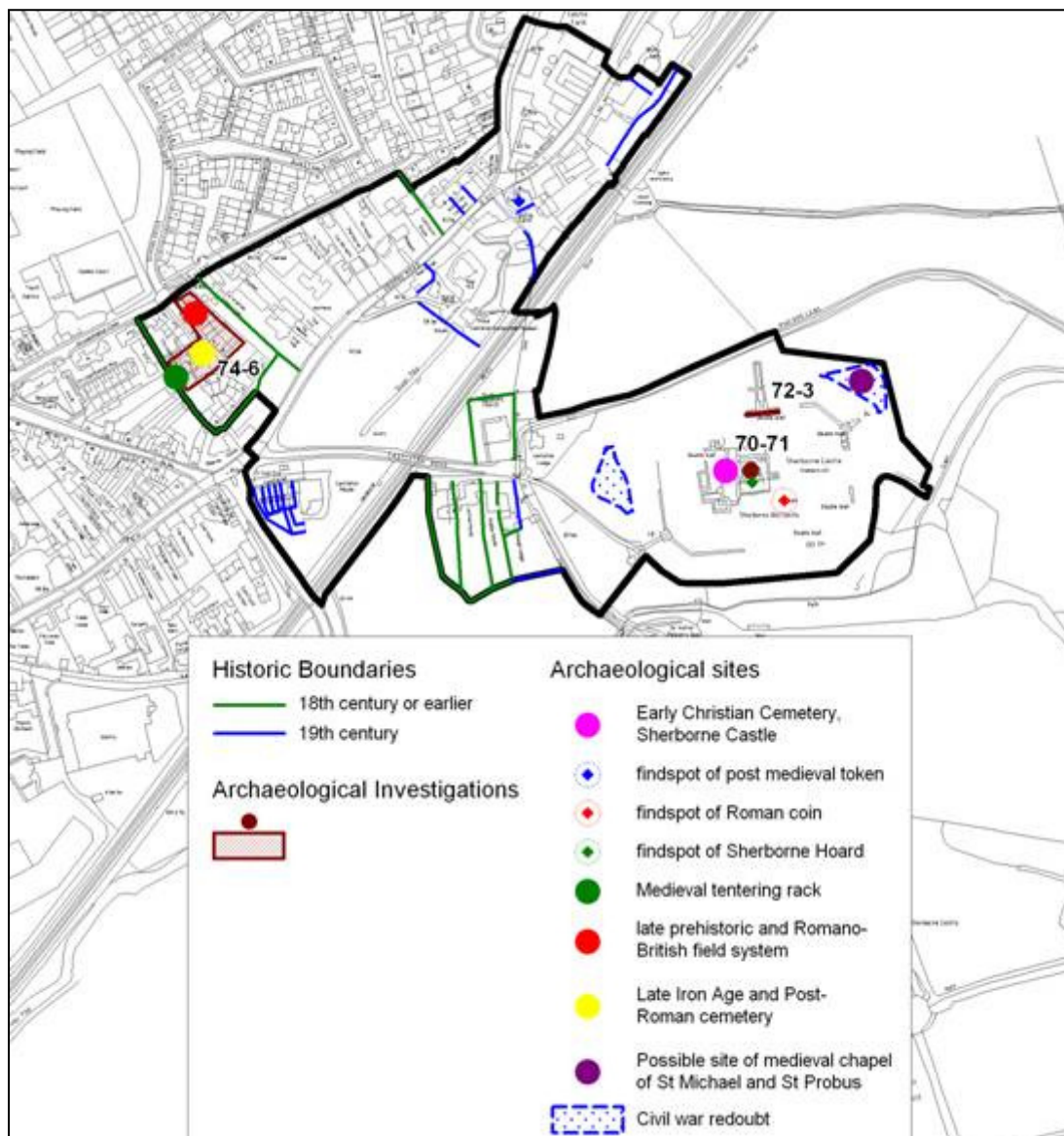


Figure 129: Archaeological Sites and Investigations in Historic Urban Character Area 4

**Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 4  
Designations**

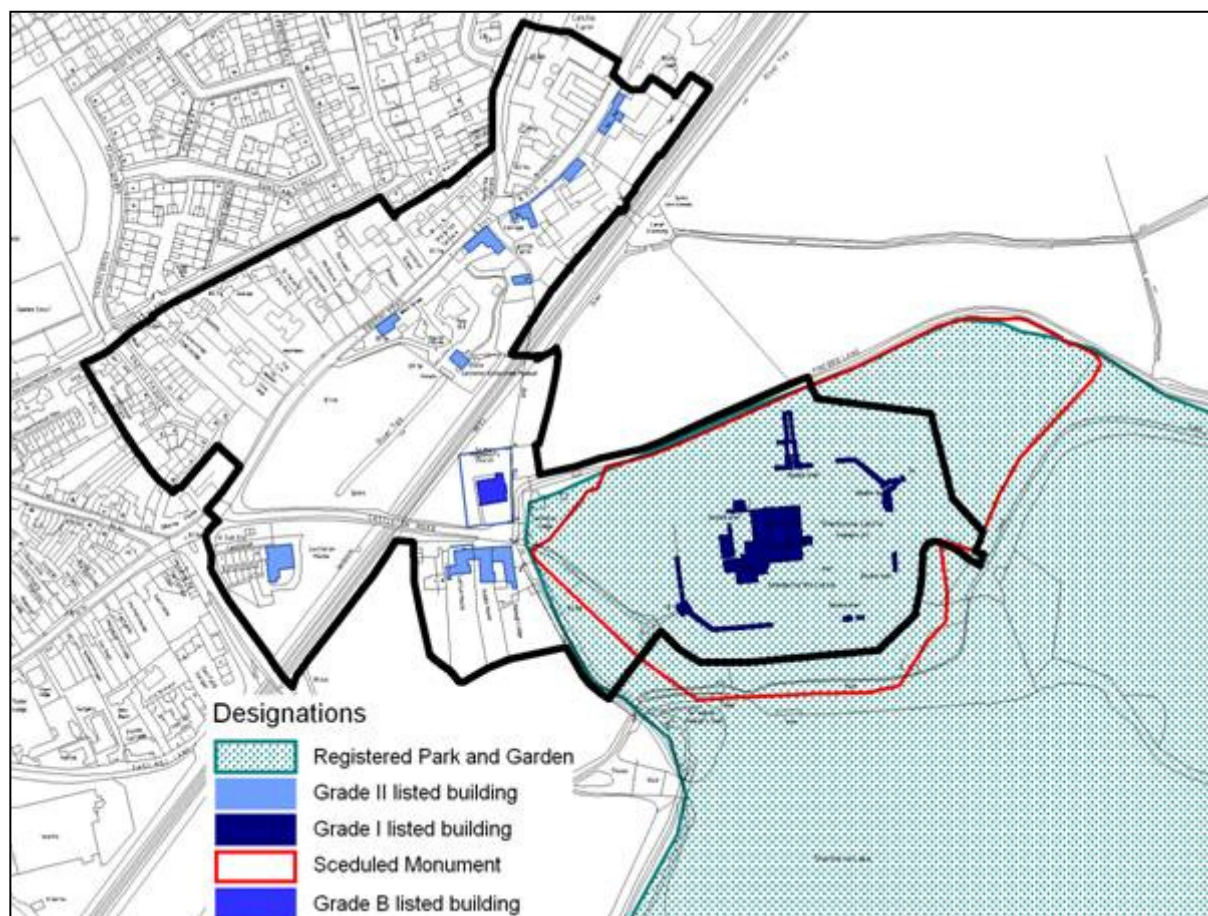


Figure 130: Historic Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens in Historic Urban Character Area 4

**Listed Buildings**

There are 17 Listed Building designations in the Character Area. Sherborne Old Castle is Grade I and St Mary Magdalene Church is Grade B. The remainder are all Grade II (Figure 130).

**Conservation Areas**

A significant portion of this Character Area lies within the Sherborne Conservation Area, although the Castle lies outside; presumably because it has been designated a scheduled monument. The majority of properties north of Osborne Road also lie outside the Conservation Area (Figure 88).

**Registered Historic Parks and Gardens**

Part of the Sherborne Castle Registered Park and Garden lies within the Character Area (Figure 130).

**Scheduled Monuments**

Sherborne Old Castle is a Scheduled Monument (No SM 22986).

## Sherborne Historic Urban Character Area 4 Evaluation

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

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **strong**, being a combination of the significant historical background and time depth, the positive contribution made by a very high number of historic buildings and the rich archaeological record. Over half the buildings in the character area date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. South of the Osborne Road close to 95% of buildings are late 19<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. The area also contains a scheduled monument and partly lies within a registered park and garden. The high number of mature trees and open meadows is also important. The Castle ruins form a valued landscape feature within the Capability Brown designed Sherborne Park. The historic borough has long since declined, although vestiges of its former glory add to the sense of time depth. The Victorian pump house also functions as a museum.

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

The area has a **high** sensitivity to major change, although this is perhaps less so on the north side of Osborne Road. The character area sits on the edge of the urban area of Sherborne and with open countryside and a historic park on two sides. Any major development would seriously impact on this aspect of the area's character. Major development may also have a detrimental visual impact on views from the historic Castle itself. Some medium-sized development has taken place on the south side of Tinney's Lane, although this is of a scale and character in keeping with the suburban nature of this part of town.

### ***Archaeological Potential***

The presence of a 12<sup>th</sup> century Castle and historic borough indicate that the archaeological potential of the area is **High**. Furthermore potential sub-surface archaeological deposits within the area of the Castle are of particular importance in our understanding of the origins of Sherborne and any post-Roman precursor to the middle Saxon see.

The lack of investigations within the former borough of Castleton is clearly indicative of the lack of development in this area since the construction of the railway in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Areas formerly occupied by buildings and with significant archaeological potential lie under the Castle car park and immediately to the north and west of the church. Any investigations in these areas may help in understanding the layout, development and economy of medieval Castleton.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 5-7, 14-16, 18 and 20-24 (Part 7).

### **Key Characteristics**

- 12<sup>th</sup> century Castle and bishop's residence
- Medieval borough of Castleton
- Early Christian hilltop cemetery and chapel
- Registered park and garden and scheduled monument
- Victorian pump house and museum