

# Stalbridge Historic Urban Character Area 3

## Barrow Hill

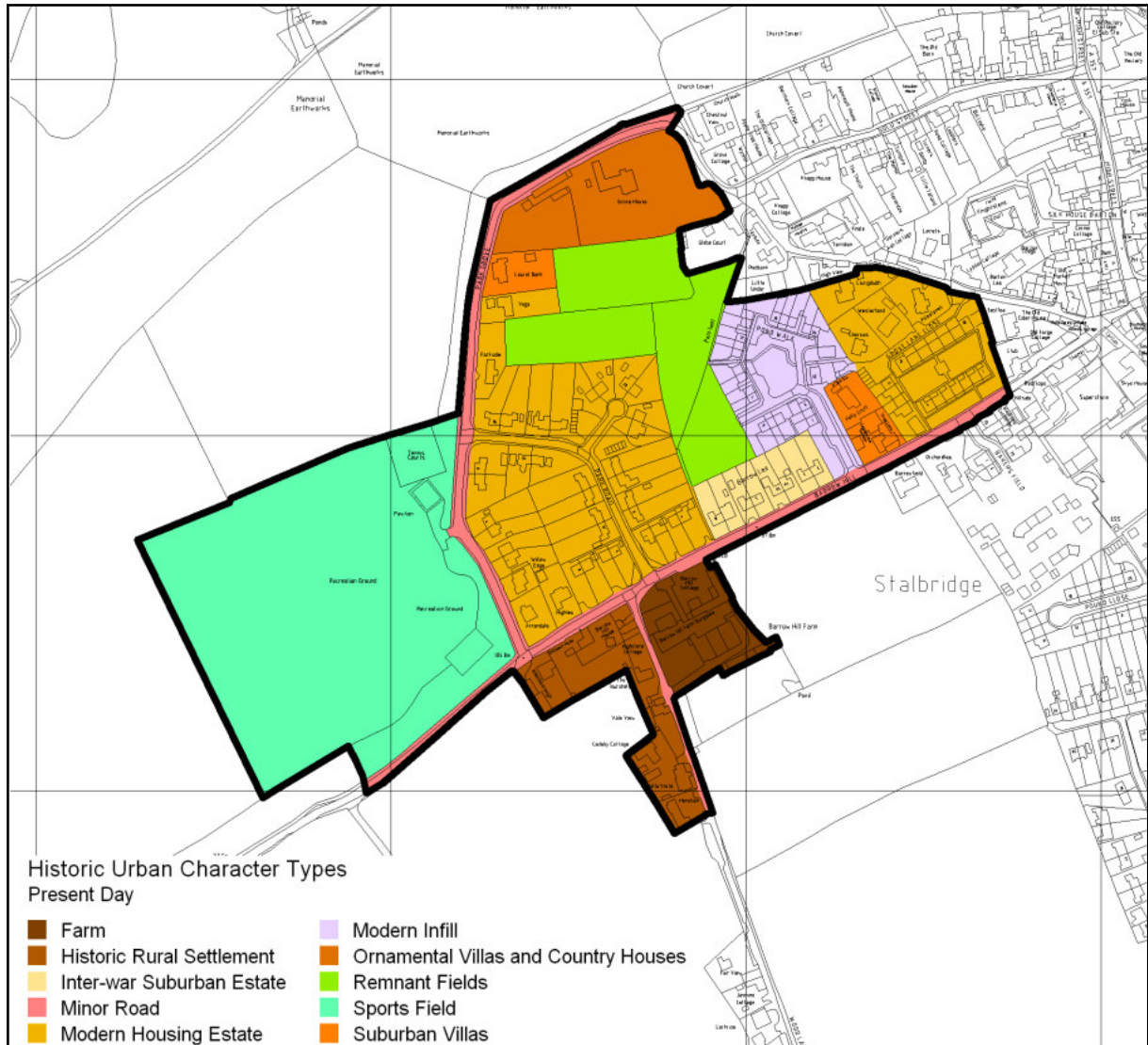


Figure 55: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 3, showing current historic urban character type



Figure 56: Barrow Hill Farmhouse.



Figure 57: View south along Wood Lane from the junction with Barrow Hill .

### Stalbridge Historic Urban Character Area 3 Structure of Character Area

#### Overview

This area lies to the west of the medieval town and comprises modern suburban housing adjacent to and incorporating an earlier dispersed rural settlement at Barrow Hill Farm. The greater part of the area is bounded by Barrow Hill, Grove Lane and Park Grove Roads. The Barrow Hill Farm settlement lies to the south at the junction with Barrow Hill and Wood Lane and Stalbridge Recreation Ground lies to the west of the Barrow Hill/Park Grove junction. The northern part of the area is characterised by large villas and remnant fields.

#### Topography and Geology

Barrow Hill lies just below the crest of the N-S aligned limestone ridge on the gentle western dip slope and commands wide views to the east over the Blackmore Vale. The majority of the area lies on the well drained and fertile Combrash. Only the western half of the Recreation Ground, at the extreme western end of the town, lies on the Forest Marble. The recreation ground represents the highest point of Stalbridge. The name Barrow probably refers to the rounded natural hill at the southern end of the ridge rather than a prehistoric monument.

#### Urban Structure

The area lies primarily north of an E-W road, Barrow Hill, with a number of lanes and local access roads off it. Most of the area north of Barrow Hill comprises small suburban housing estates accessed by short culs-de-sac, which have surrounded some small areas of green space. South of Barrow Hill is more rural with Barrow Hill Farm and a small area of historic rural settlement.

#### Present Character

Figure 55 shows the present day historic urban character types. The central part of the area is taken up with modern suburban housing estates. The Barrow Hill Farm rural settlement lies to the south of the Barrow Hill Road. The northern part of the area comprises large villas and gardens, separated from the housing estates by a few small remnant fields. The western part of the area comprises the Stalbridge Recreation Ground.

#### Time Depth

Barrow Hill Farm (Figure 56) probably represents the site of a medieval dispersed farmstead or hamlet. The Barrow Hill road and Wood Lane are also likely to be medieval or

earlier in origin; they run parallel and perpendicular to the topographic grain and may have formed part of late prehistoric system of land division. Barrow Hill road may represent an early E-W route connecting Shaftesbury with Milborne Port and it certainly formed part of the central crossroads of post-medieval Stalbridge. Wood Lane (Figure 57) also represents part of the medieval road from Stalbridge to Thornhill (Good 1966, 92). No further development took place in the area until the 19<sup>th</sup> century construction of Grove House and a couple of other isolated suburban villas on Barrow Hill and Park Grove (Figure 59). The remainder of suburban development date from the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is primarily low density mixed semi-detached housing and short terraces set back from the street frontages along linear culs-de-sac and minor roads. Semi-detached housing predominates in the south west and short terraces in the south east, along with a small area of detached houses set centrally in their plots on Grove Lane Close. The north is dominated by large detached villas and the south comprises detached cottages set on the Barrow Hill and Wood Lane frontages (Figure 60). The open space of the Recreation Ground and the fields to the south of the area emphasise the town edge location (Figure 58).



Figure 58: View of Barrow Lea remnant fields

### Stalbridge Historic Urban Character Area 3 Built Character

#### **Building types**

The area is characterised by a large number of mid to late 20th century suburban houses. The majority are brick built, some with hipped tile roofs (Figure 61), although gabled houses with slate and tile roofs are also common. Eighteenth and 19th century vernacular cottages near Barrow Hill Farm are built in local stone rubble with slate roofs (Figure 62). Barrow Hill House is built in the Georgian style with Ashlar detail. The Victorian villas are brick built with gabled slate roofs.



Figure 60: The Old Coach House, Barrow Hill.

#### **Building Materials**

The majority of houses in the area are built in brick with slate or tile roofs. Forest Marble is used on the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century cottages adjacent to Barrow Hill Farm and in many of the farm buildings. Imported Ham Hill stone is used for the ashlar detail on Barrow Hill House.

#### **Key Buildings**

Commercial Premises: Barrow Hill Farm House  
18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century houses: Barrow Hill House, Grove House  
18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages: Old Coach House, Bella Vista



Figure 61: View east along Park Road showing mid 20<sup>th</sup> century semi-detached houses.



Figure 62: Vale View, Wood Lane.



Figure 59: Nineteenth century suburban villa, Laurel Bank, Park Grove.



Figure 63: Grove House, Park Grove.

### Stalbridge Historic Urban Character Area 3 Archaeology

#### Archaeological Investigations

There have been two archaeological investigations in this area (Appendix 3 Nos 5-6). Roman occupation material, including Roman coins, pottery, animal bone and oyster shell was discovered in a field northeast of Barrow Hill Farm. These finds strongly suggest the position of a Romano-British occupation site lying just below the crest of Barrow Hill on the eastern side in the angle formed by Grove Lane and Grove Lane Close (RCHME, 1970, 252). Further down slope to the west, an archaeological evaluation in advance of the development of Pond Walk, found a small quantity of medieval and post-medieval pottery and areas of possible quarrying and landslipping (Butterworth 1995, 126).

settlement and agricultural activity. The area on the slopes of Barrow Hill appears to have been part of a small Romano-British occupation site, with occupation debris, and potentially surviving remains of structures, pits and other features. The discoveries are less than 200m from Gold Street, where a Roman burial and coins were found.

Boundaries depicted on Figure 64 represent modern property boundaries that fossilise the line of former field boundaries visible on 19<sup>th</sup> century maps. These are likely to be medieval or post-medieval in origin.

#### Archaeological Character

In general, the archaeological character of this area is likely to be one of dispersed medieval

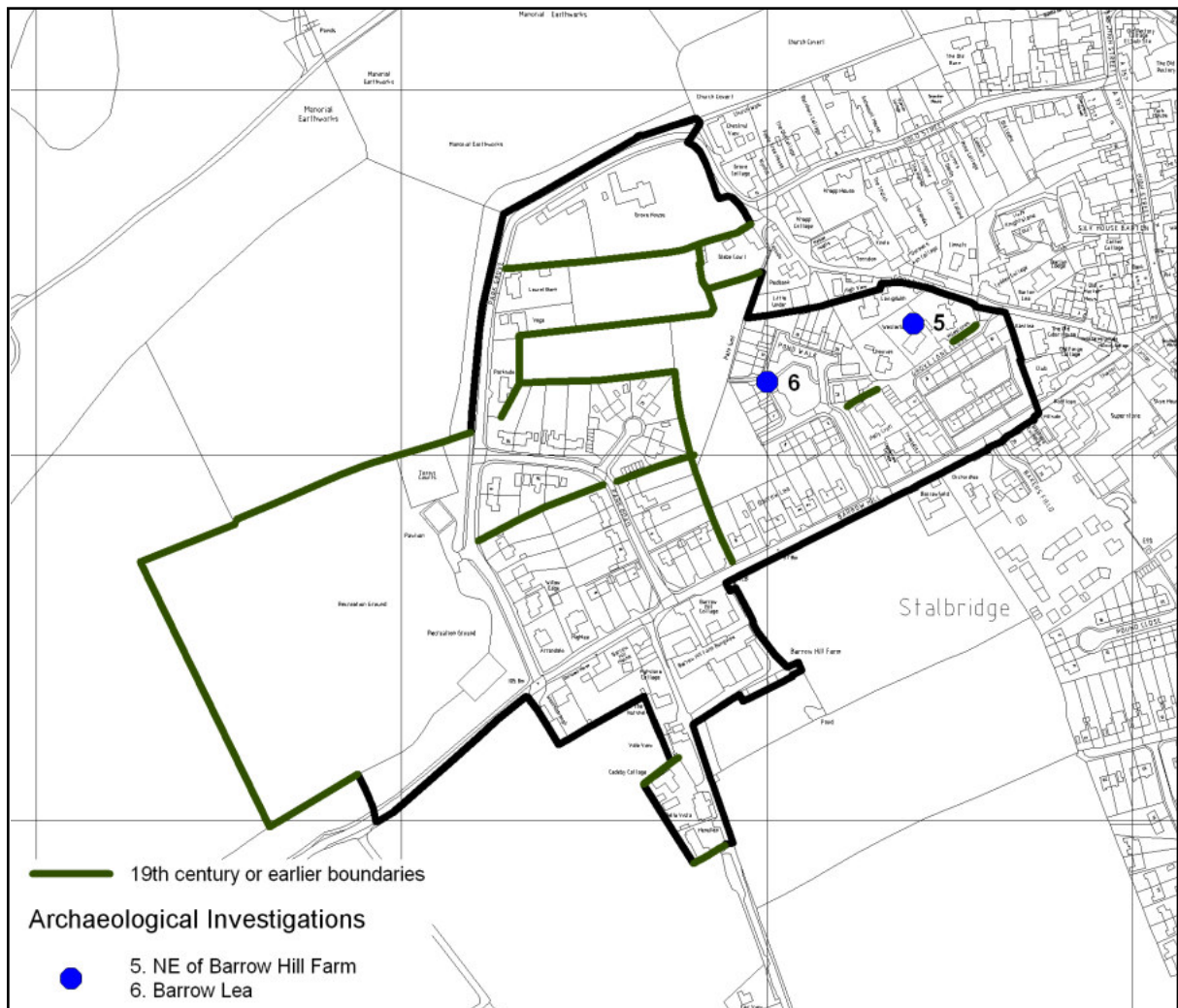


Figure 64: Archaeological features in Historic Character Area 3.

**Stalbridge Historic Urban Character Area 3  
Designations**

***Listed Buildings***

There are no Listed Buildings in the Character Area.

***Conservation Areas***

Almost the whole of this Character Area lies within the Stalbridge Conservation Area, except for the western half of the recreation ground and the southern part of the Barrow Hill historic settlement on Wood Lane (Figure 36).

***Registered Historic Parks and Gardens***

There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within the Character Area.

***Scheduled Monuments***

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the character area.

### Stalbridge Historic Urban Character Area 3 Evaluation

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

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **medium**. Although there is a distinct contribution from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century historic buildings in the vicinity of Barrow Hill Farm and the 19<sup>th</sup> century villas in the vicinity of Grove House and gardens, this is somewhat diluted by the modern housing, which has no locally distinctive characteristics. The area also benefits from the fact that a number of the former fields of Barrow Lea have been preserved in the centre of the area (Figure 58), although the southernmost part of this area has recently been developed for housing.

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

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Barrow Hill holds a prominent position above and adjacent to the historic town of Stalbridge. The visual impact of any major development needs to be considered. Furthermore, major development on the site of the few remaining fields of Barrow Lea would have a strong detrimental effect on the character of the place. The impact of major development on potential archaeological deposits also needs to be considered.

#### ***Archaeological Potential***

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **high**. Chance observations in the vicinity of Grove Lane Close have demonstrated that there are significant pre-urban archaeological deposits in this area. The deposits have the potential to answer questions concerning the origins of Stalbridge as a settlement. Furthermore, there is a high potential for medieval features such as pits, structures and boundaries surviving in the vicinity of Barrow Hill Farm. These also have the potential to help an understanding of the pre-urban settlement pattern in the region.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-5, 8, 9, 17 (Part 7).

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Medieval rural settlement site
- 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular houses
- 19<sup>th</sup> century villas
- Romano-British occupation site
- Modern suburb
- Remnant fields of Barrow Lea.