

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 5 Northwest Quarter

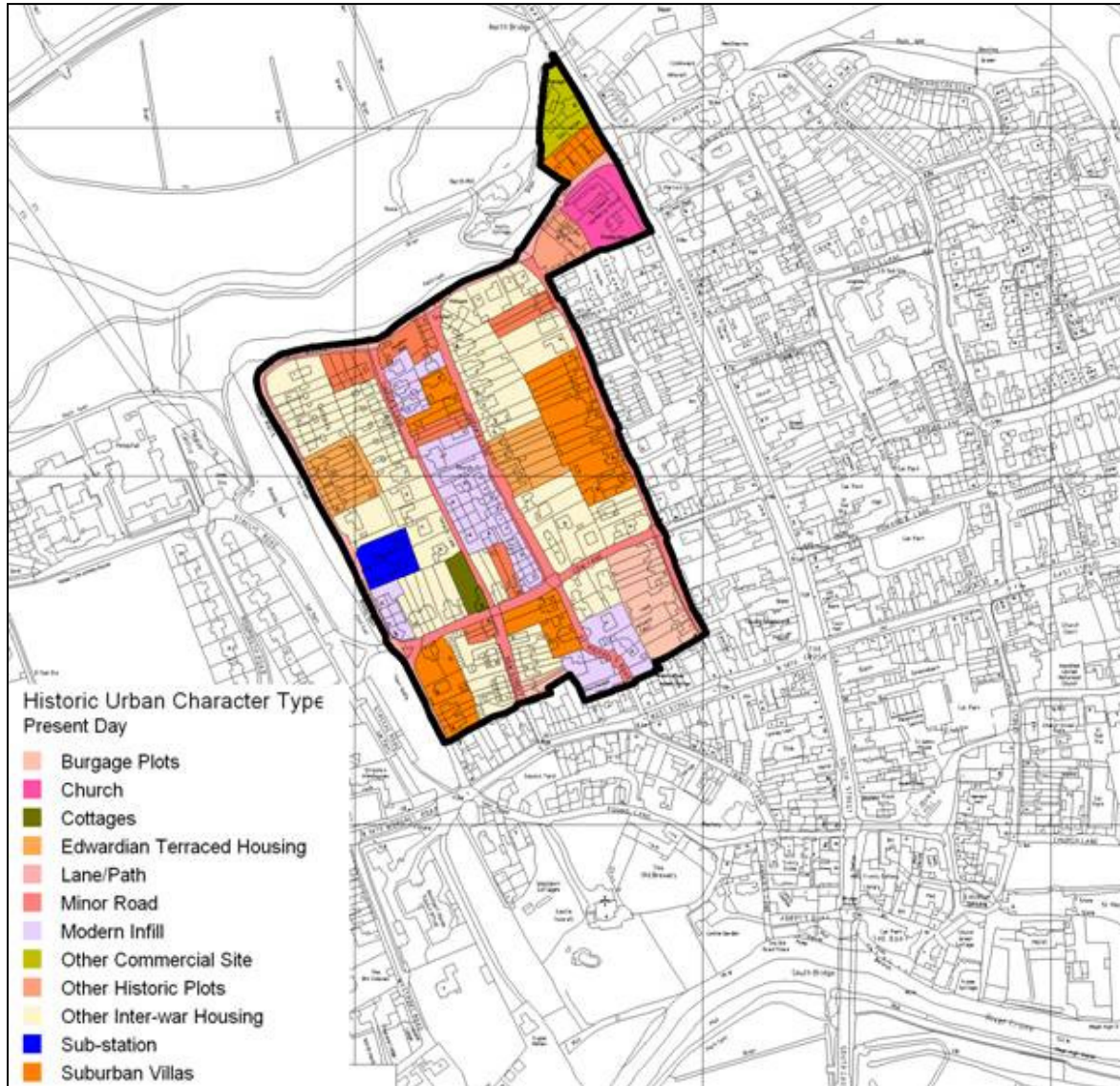


Figure 91: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 5, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 92: View east along Cow Lane.



Figure 93: View along West Walls from 'Bloody Bank'.

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 5 Structure of Character Area

Overview

This area comprises the northwestern corner of the historic town core within the Saxon town defences. It lies behind the main street frontages of North Street and West Street. The northern and western sides are defined by the Saxon town defences.

Topography and Geology

This area lies on the northern side of the gravel ridge between the rivers Frome and Piddle. It overlooks the Piddle to the north, rising up to the north to a height of about 11m OD. The Geology of the area consists almost entirely of Eocene gravels of the Lower Bagshot Beds.

Urban Structure

The streets and lanes of this area form an irregular grid pattern aligned on the main streets and the Town Walls. One lane runs around the inside of the West Walls and North Walls and other than this, there is only one E-W street (Cow Lane). The streets are generally straight, other than St Michael's Lane which has a distinct kink in its southern end. The properties are generally long and narrow, but of varying width along the streets. This character area also includes a small part of the extra-mural settlement on the west side of North Causeway.

Present Character

Figure 91 shows the present day historic urban character types. Other Inter-war housing is the dominant character type, interspersed with areas of Edwardian Terraced Housing and Suburban Villas, together with Modern Infill. There is a block of Other Historic Plots at the southeastern corner of the area. Other character types include Cottages, Sub-station, Other Commercial Site (at North Causeway) and Church.



Figure 94: View north along Mill Lane.

Time Depth

This area lies within the defences of the late 9th century Saxon burh and the grid of streets is aligned to the defences and the main streets. However, it is not clear at what date the individual streets were laid out. Cow Lane may be the oldest feature in the area as it lies on the line of a prehistoric track which ran along the length of the Bestwall peninsula. New Street by its very name is unlikely to have been an original part of the Saxon grid layout. Much of this area was laid out as gardens and allotments, with occasional houses and cottages in the 18th century. However, the whole area was gradually infilled with housing from the late 19th century, through the 1920s and 1930s and continuing in the post-war and modern periods. The houses at North Causeway are late 19th century in date. St Edward's Church was built in 1933.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is one of high to medium density housing, generally aligned along the grid of lanes. There is no consistent building line along these lanes, with some houses set directly on the edge of the carriageway and others set back behind small walled front spaces or front gardens of variable size. Generally the earliest buildings are set closest to the road. The narrowness of the lanes and the position of many buildings directly behind the carriageway gives a great sense of enclosure. Where the buildings are set back, the frontage is often defined by a low brick or stone wall.

There are no open green spaces in this area, but some garden trees, and grass verges provide a green contribution to the area. There are a number of large mature trees adjacent to Elm Villas. Shatters Hill provides some good views over the countryside to the north.



Figure 95: 21-25 New Street.

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 5 Built Character

Building types

The historic buildings can be subdivided into two main types; 19th century houses and suburban villas and 18th-19th century vernacular cottages and short terraces. Vernacular cottages are exemplified by the 18th century 34 Cow Lane. A short terrace of small 18th century houses lies at the north end of Roper's Lane. The inter-war houses tend to be semi-detached with hipped roofs. Later 20th century infill tends to comprise a mixture of short terraced, detached and semi-detached houses with pitched roofs.

Building Materials

Brick is by far the most common walling material in the character area. This includes local pink brick and blue glazed bricks to give polychrome detail in 18th and 19th century houses, notably at 41 Roper's Lane (Figure 97). 34 Cow Lane is built in cob with a thatched roof and probably represents a remnant of a building style that was once more common in Wareham (Figure 98). Numbers 46 and 48 Roper's Lane have a Purbeck rubble plinth with brick walls above. Brick walls, brick chimney stacks and pitched tile roofs represent the predominant style. A small number of buildings are rendered or pebble-dashed.

Key Buildings

18th-19th century cottages: 34 Cow Lane, 19-23 Roper's Lane, 37-43 Roper's Lane, 1-2 Shatters Hill, 21-25 New Street.

19th century houses and suburban villas: Elm Villas, 15-19 Mill Lane.



Figure 96: 37-43 Roper's Lane



Figure 97: 41 Roper's Lane.



Figure 98: 34 Cow Lane.



Figure 99: Suburban villa on Mill Lane.

**Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 5
Archaeology**

Archaeological Investigations

Eleven archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area (Figure 100; Appendix 3, Nos. 47-57). These have generally been very small in extent and the majority have been watching briefs. The investigations have been mainly concentrated around the gardens of Roper's Lane and Tinker's Lane and on West Walls, where evidence for Roman activity was found in the 1950s (48-49). More recent watching briefs have recorded little evidence other than a dark humic soil layer (51-56).

Archaeological Character

Despite a number of archaeological investigations, the archaeological character of this area is not clear. The discovery of apparently a dozen or more Roman pottery vessels on the site of the electricity sub-station

in the 1920s (47) has been suggested as indicating the site of a Romano-British cemetery, but nothing of archaeological significance has been found in more recent work adjacent to the site. A series of pits and ditches containing Late Iron Age and Roman pottery have been recorded in the West Walls/ Tinkers Lane area. From the surviving records, it is unclear exactly what this activity represents and again more recent work in the area has not revealed any similar material, only a dark humic cultivation soil containing medieval and post-medieval pottery.

Figure 100 shows historic boundaries depicted on maps dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. Some of these are likely to represent garden plot boundaries fossilised in the modern townscape and subdivided during the 19th century and later, partly as building plots.

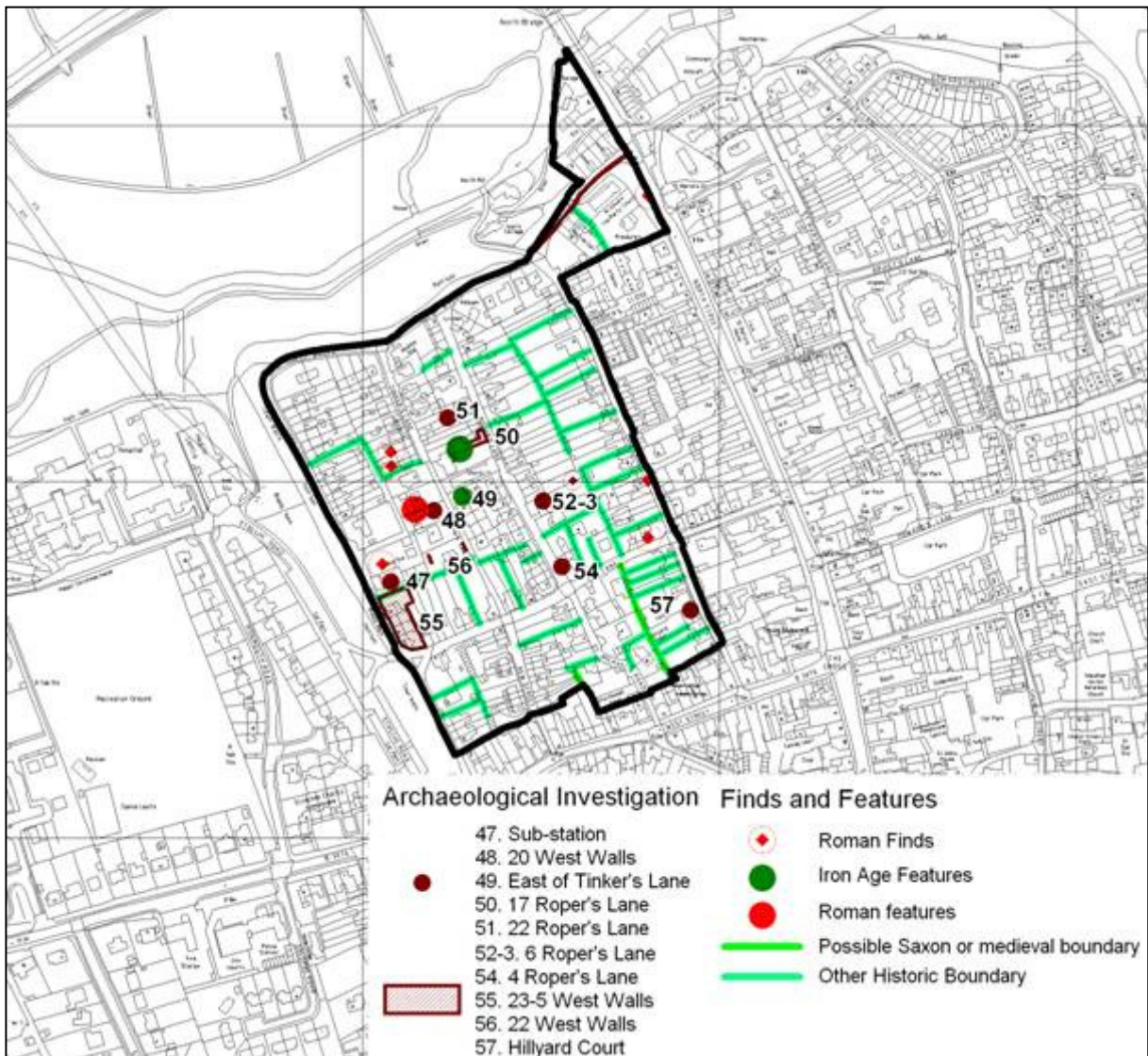


Figure 100: Archaeological investigations, features and findspots in Historic Urban Character Area 5.

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 5 Designations

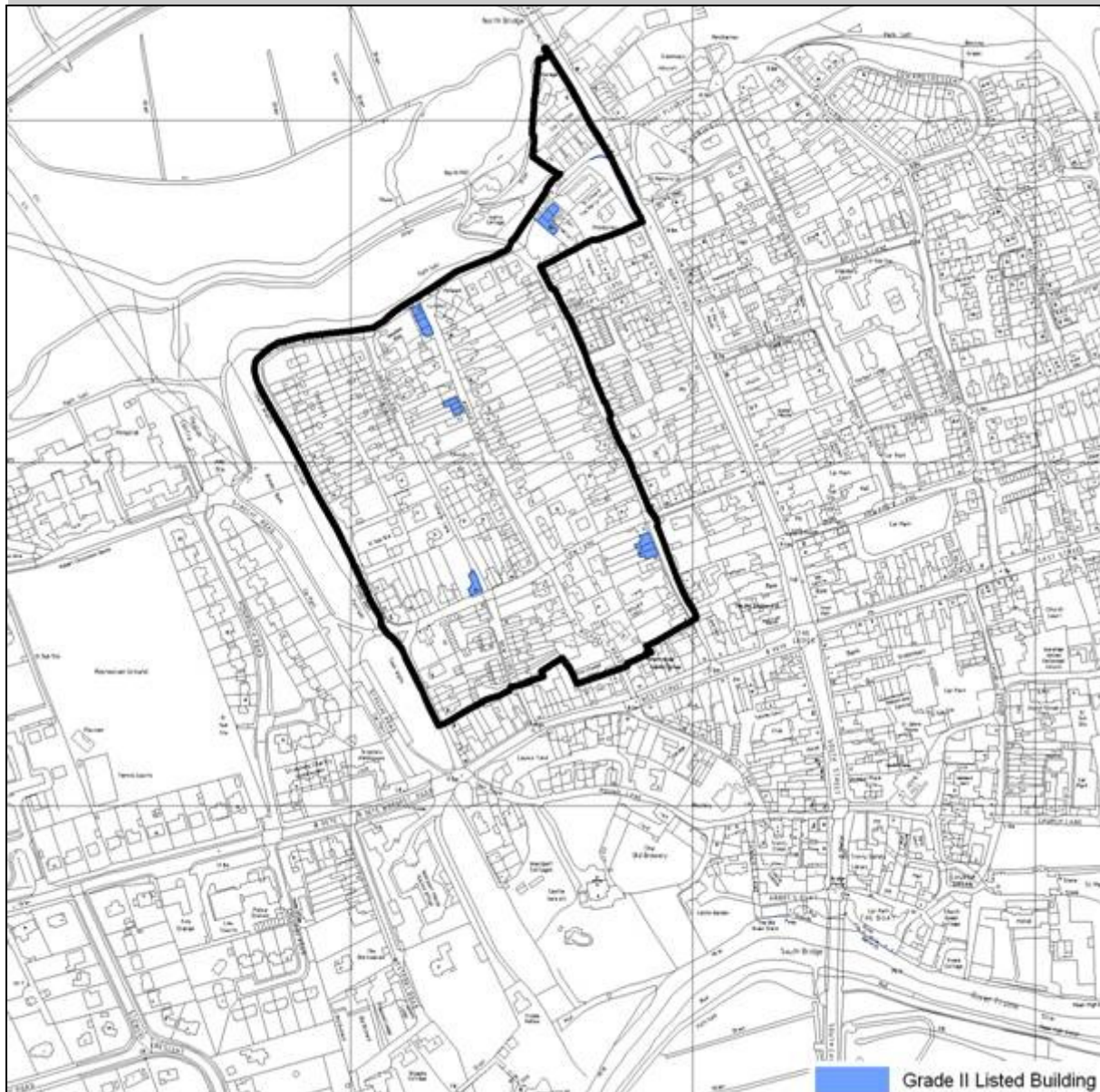


Figure 101: Listed Buildings in Historic Urban Character Area 5.

Listed Buildings

There are five Listed Building designations in the Character Area, all Grade II.

Conservation Areas

The whole of this Character Area lies within the Wareham Conservation Area (Figure 49).

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

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

Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monuments within this Character Area.

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 5 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **medium**. This area lies mainly within the late Saxon burh defences and the network of lanes forms part of the historic grid system laid out in the historic core and potentially of late Saxon origin. The narrowness of the lanes and the position of many of the buildings on the edge of the carriageway imparts a very different character to modern road layouts. There are a number of historic buildings of 18th and 19th century, including vernacular cottages and small estate houses, which underscore the semi-rural character of this area before the First World War.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to large scale development. There has been a significant amount of modern development with in this area, but in general this has not overwhelmed the existing overall historic character of the area. Earlier development has been in a piecemeal fashion along the historic lanes and within pre-existing plots. This has helped maintain the historic character of the area. Any development that would significantly

remove the historic property boundaries would have a negative impact on the character of this area.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **high**. This is based on the reports from the 1930s and 1950s of Iron Age and Roman features and finds being discovered in this area. This area is within the Saxon burh and has potential to reveal the extent to which it was laid out and occupied during the late Saxon and medieval periods. The fact that this area remained as undeveloped garden plots during much of the 18th and 19th centuries means that there is potential for the survival of further Roman remains. This area also fell outside the part of the town that was worst affected by the fire of 1762. For that reason there is some potential for surviving medieval architectural components within ostensibly later buildings and could therefore contribute to the further understanding of the town's development.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-2, 9-10, 12-13, 17-21 and 23-26 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Narrow lanes in a grid layout
- Some small vernacular cottages of 18th and 19th century date
- Small terraced and attached 19th century houses
- Site of Iron Age and Roman discoveries
- Historically an area of cultivation and allotments
- Piecemeal inter-war and post-war development