

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 8 Bestwall Road

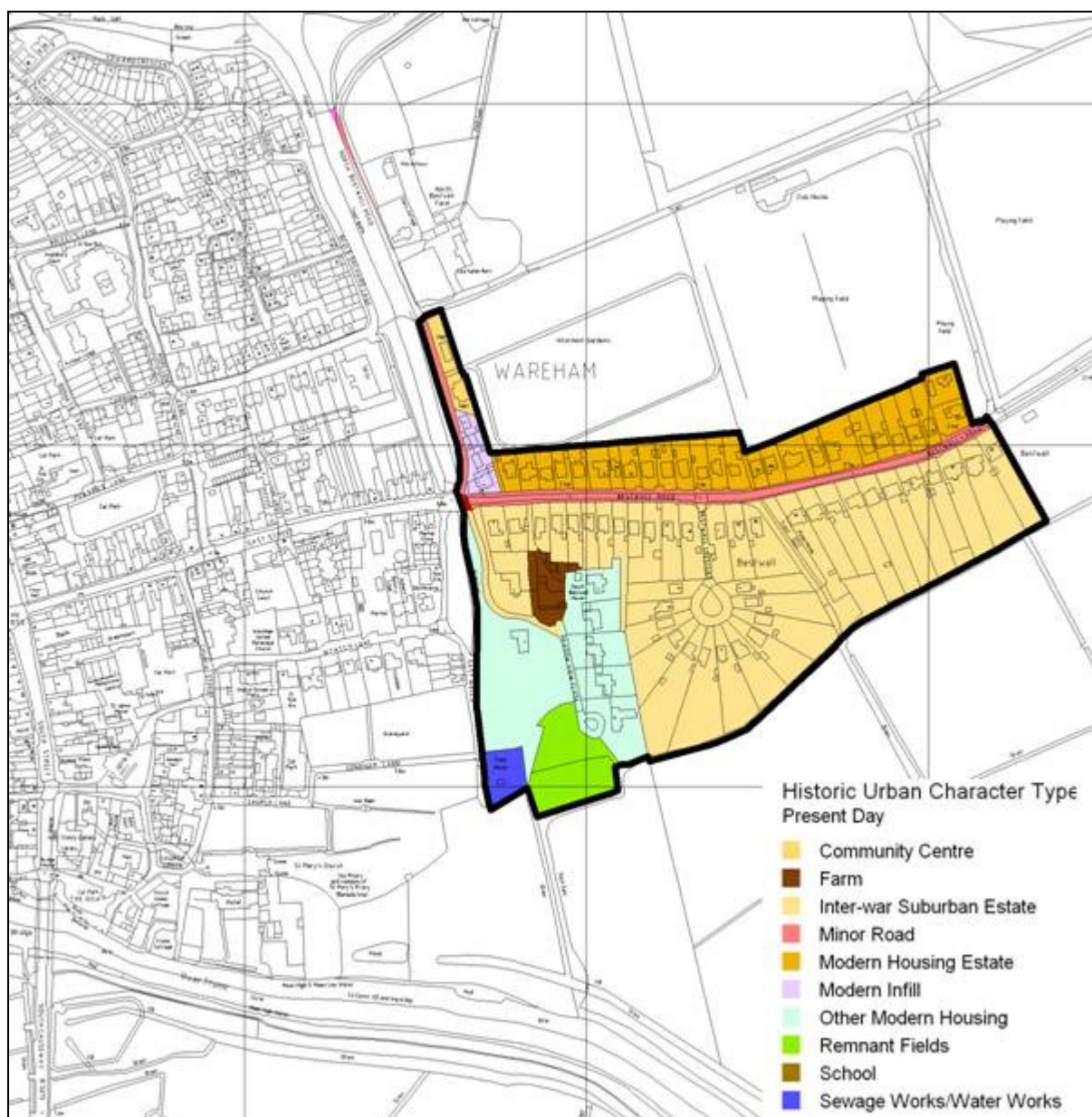


Figure 121: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 8, showing current historic urban character type.

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 8 Structure of Character Area

Overview

The suburb of Bestwall Road lies immediately outside the Saxon walled town to the east. This area is dominated by inter-war and post-war suburban housing.

Topography and Geology

Bestwall Road lies on the southern edge narrow ridge of gravel running E-W between the rivers Frome and Piddle and to the east of the walled town. The ridge only rises to a maximum of 5m above OD east of the town and the Bestwall character area lies between 2m and 3m above OD. The geology of the area consists almost entirely of Eocene gravels of the Lower Bagshot Beds in the eastern and northern parts of the area. The southeastern half of the area lies upon alluvium of recent geological origin.

Urban Structure

This character area comprises ribbon development along Bestwall Road, with some suburban housing on culs-de-sac behind the frontage to the south. North Bestwall Road runs at right angles northwards along the eastern side of East Walls.

Present Character

Figure 121 shows the present day historic urban character types. The predominant character type is Inter-war Suburban Estate and Modern Housing Estate, with smaller areas of Modern Infill, Other Modern Housing and Farm.

Time Depth

Although Bestwall Manor is known to have existed before 1066, and extensive Roman and middle Saxon industrial activity took place at the eastern end of the Bestwall peninsula, it is not known when the area of South Bestwall Farm was first settled. The current house dates from the 19th century. All other development in the

area dates from the mid-late 20th century.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The settlement pattern is primarily low density ribbon development along Bestwall Road, with further low density suburban development behind the frontage to the south. The streetscape is typical of mid 20th century suburban estates with the houses are set well back from the street frontage behind front gardens. The frontages are defined by low garden walls.



Figure 127: Bestwall Road, looking west.



Figure 128: Bestwall Crescent.

**Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 8
Built Character**

Building types

The area is characterised by a high proportion of mid-late 20th century detached housing. The majority are bungalows with hipped roofs, although later extensions tend to be gable ended and attic dormers are common. Later modern infill tends to comprise large detached houses on two storeys with gabled roofs. South Bestwall House is a large detached house built during the early 19th century in the Regency style and on an L-shaped plan (Figure 124). A new scout and guide hut has been built on North Bestwall Road (Figure 126).

Building Materials

Generally the mid 20th century bungalows are built in brick with tile roofs. South Bestwall House has a slate roof, colourwashed brick walls and an ornamental iron veranda with concave roof.

Key Buildings

South Bestwall House



Figure 124: South Bestwall House.



Figure 125: Modern bungalows, Meadow View.



Figure 126: New Scout Hall, North Bestwall Road

Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 8 Archaeology

Archaeological Investigations

Two archaeological investigations have been undertaken in this character area (Figure 127; Appendix 3, Nos. 68-69) and in addition part of the Wareham Sewer Replacement trench extends into this area (33). All of the archaeological investigations have been very small scale.

The two watching briefs on North Bestwall Road revealed no archaeology, though the upper fill of the ditch of the Saxon town defences may have been encountered.

Archaeological Character

The archaeological character of South Bestwall is largely unknown. Very few archaeological investigations have taken place within the character area, although it does fall at the western end of the Bestwall promontory, partly on the gravel terrace. The eastern end of the

promontory underwent a major archaeological investigation in advance of gravel extraction between 1992 and 2005. This revealed evidence for large scale industrial activity from the late Iron Age through to the middle Saxon period, as well as prehistoric field systems, burials and dispersed settlement (Ladle & Woodward 2009). Bestwall is recorded as a manor in Domesday and it is possible that there has been settlement in the vicinity of South Bestwall Farm from the late Saxon period. The only known archaeological monument is the ditch of the East Town Walls.

Figure 127 also depicts a number of 19th century boundaries fossilised within the modern townscape. Those in the north-western part of the area represent paddocks and closes associated with the former South Bestwall Farm. Others are former field and track boundaries of uncertain origin.

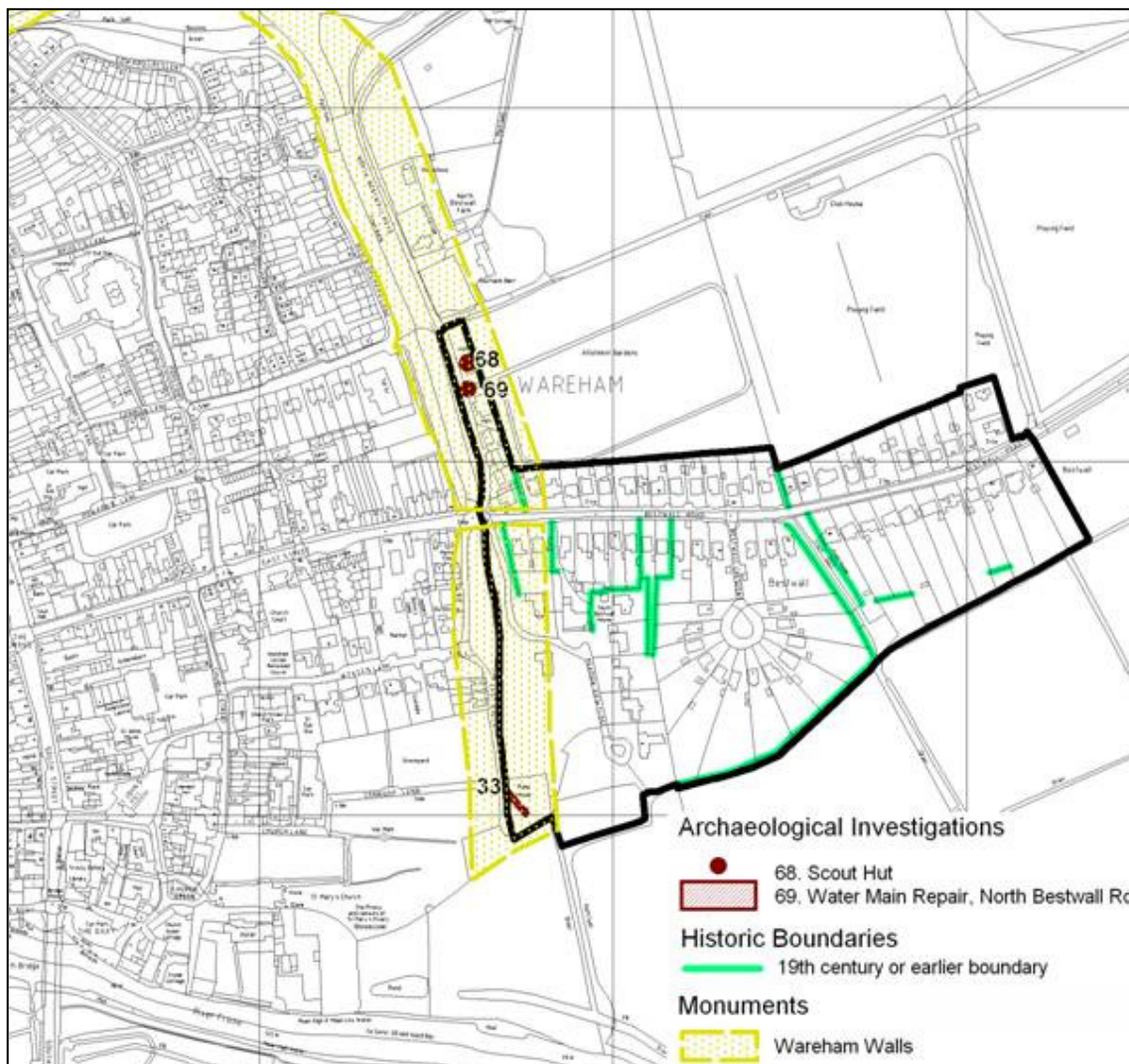


Figure 127: Archaeological investigations and features in Historic Urban Character Area 8.

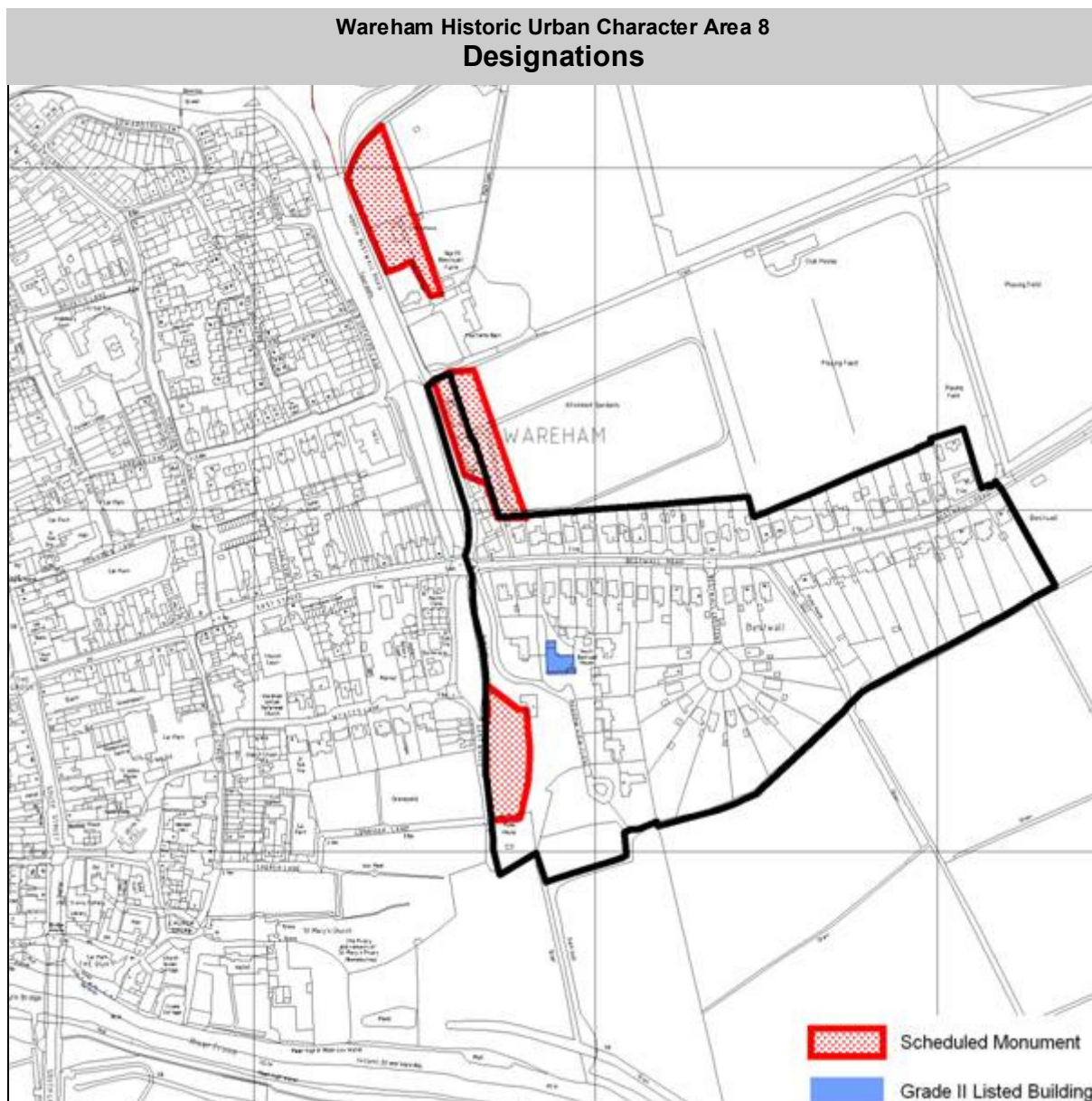


Figure 128: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 8.

Listed Buildings

There is one Listed Building designation in the Character Area, the Grade II South Bestwall House.

Conservation Areas

The majority of this Character Area lies outside the Wareham and Stoborough Conservation Areas. Only the area of South Bestwall House and North Bestwall Road lie within the conservation areas (Figure 49).

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

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

Scheduled Monuments

The south eastern part of the Wareham Town Walls Scheduled Monument (Dorset 94) lies within this character area.

**Wareham Historic Urban Character Area 8
Evaluation*****Strength of Historic Character***

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **low**. The area lies outside the Saxon town defences and largely comprises an inter-war and post-war suburban housing estate of typical form. South Bestwall House is the only building in the area that dates from before the 20th century, but is now surrounded by suburban development.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Although 20th century suburban housing developments already characterise this area, it lies immediately outside the historic burh. Future development needs to be on a scale that does not impact visually on views from the historic town.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **medium**. The ditch of the Saxon town defences runs beneath the western side of the area. South Bestwall Farm may have its origins as a Saxon farmstead and potentially there may be some evidence for this surviving in the area. Extensive evidence for prehistoric, Roman and middle Saxon activity has been recorded on the Bestwall peninsula and similar evidence may survive in this area also.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1-4 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Extra-mural location east of Saxon town walls
- Inter-war and post-war suburban housing estate
- Early 19th century South Bestwall Farm house