

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 2 Station Road

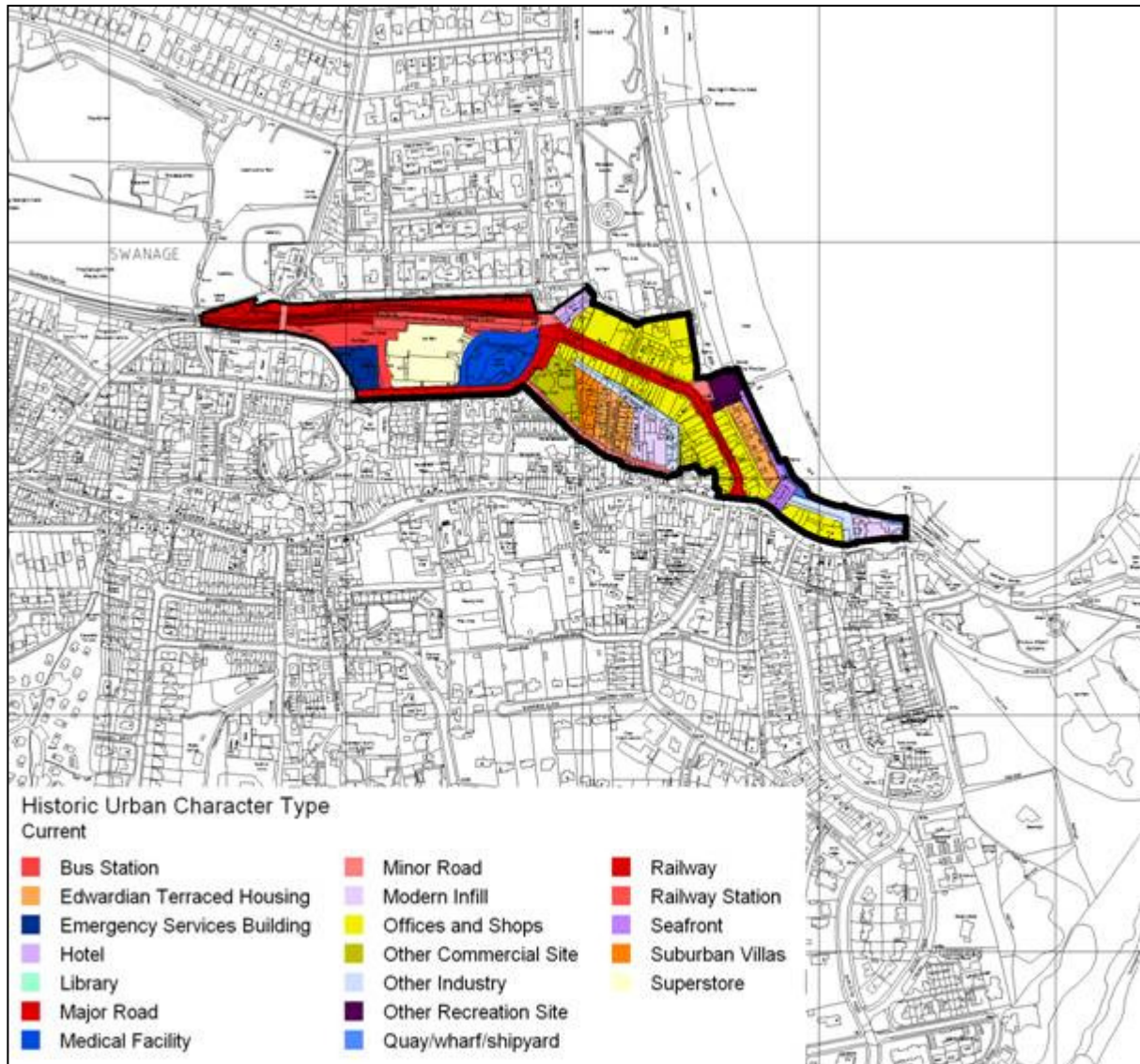


Figure 54: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 2, showing current historic urban character type.



Figure 55: Station Road, looking towards the station.



Figure 56: Swanage station.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 2 Structure of Character Area

Overview

The focus of this area is that part of the town between the railway station and the sea along Station Road and Institute Road. It represents the core of the Late Victorian and Edwardian town development and remains the commercial centre of the town. It is defined by its low-lying geographical position, its period of development and commercial function.

Topography and Geology

The area is generally flat and low-lying, being the former floodplain of the Swanage brook. It rises up to a low E-W ridge to the north. The geology is Lower Cretaceous Wealden sands and clays overlain by areas of alluvium.

Urban Structure

The railway line forms the northern edge of the area. Kings Road West runs parallel along the southern edge curving round to meet the railway station. Station Road/Institute Road and Kings Road East run roughly parallel south-eastwards from Kings Road West and the station to meet the High Street to the south. There is a small square adjacent to the seafront. Station Road and Institute Road form the backbone of the area with mainly relatively regular narrow rectangular properties along both sides. The western part of the area (the former railway yard) has large commercial and community buildings.

Present Character

Figure 54 shows the present day historic urban character types. Offices and Shops predominate, particularly along Station Road and Institute Road, interspersed with Hotels, Other Commercial Sites, Other Recreation Sites and Modern Infill. Off Kings Road East are areas of Edwardian Terraced Housing, Suburban Villas, Other Industry and Other Commercial Sites. The western half of the area

includes the Railway Station and Railway, with a Medical Facility, Emergency Services Building, Bus Station and Superstore on the area of the former railway yard.

Time Depth

This area predominantly dates to the later 19th and early 20th century. It includes the railway, Station Road, Institute Road, Kings Road East and West, which were all built in the 1880s and 1890s. Most of the property boundaries have their origins in the late 19th century. The Mowlem Institute was built in the 1960s, but is on the site of the earlier Mowlem Institute built in the 1860s. The railway yard area was developed in the 1980s and 1990s.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The area divides into several sub-areas. Station Road and Institute Road are straight roads with high density commercial development along both sides, opening up at the junction with the Mowlem and The Square. The buildings are of a regular consistent scale, with many common details, along both roads and are set directly along the back of the pavement. Station Road is noticeably wider than Institute Road, but both can clearly be identified as the main shopping streets. Kings Road East, in contrast, has more 'back lane' feel, with high density converted small former industrial buildings, interspersed with Edwardian housing development. The area around the station is much less enclosed with large modern development with open areas of car park and the bus station.

There are few green spaces in this area. Trees and greenery is largely restricted to the bank and cutting along the north side of the station. The area also includes a small area of sea front accessed via The Square.



Figure 57: Supermarket on site of former railway goods yard.



Figure 58: King's Road East.

**Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 2
Built Character**

Building types

The area is characterised by a large number of late Victorian and Edwardian buildings. These are mainly two to three storey terraced and attached shops with accommodation above. These have many with many similar architectural details that provide coherence to the area. The Parade is a very fine Late Victorian seaside development with cast iron balcony. The predominant style has 'Arts and Crafts' influences with steep gables, bay windows and some mock timber frame detailing. There is a single Art Deco building at 8 Institute Road.

The area has a range of former industrial buildings, most converted to other uses. The station and associated engine and goods sheds are the most visible and important. A number of small workshops and warehouses survive along Commercial Road and the Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre in the Square is housed in former transit sheds adjacent to the former tramway to the pier.

The modern buildings include some infill along the street frontages in gaps caused by WW2 damage. These range from utilitarian buildings to some that attempt greater integration of style with the surrounding buildings. The most visually prominent modern building is the Mowlem, a large 1960's modernist block, at odds with the general character of the buildings in the area.

Building Materials

Red brick is the predominant building material, often used with Purbeck stone or yellow brick dressings. The station is Purbeck Stone. The Mowlem, the Fire Station and the Co-op supermarket are stone-clad. A small number of buildings are rendered. Slate or tiled roofs predominate.

Key Buildings

Community Buildings: The Mowlem, Swanage Conservative Club.

Commercial Premises: Albion Place, 8 Institute Road, 20-22 Institute Road, former Station Hotel, former Cinema.

Residential Buildings: The Parade.

Industrial Buildings: Swanage Station, Engine Shed, Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre 21-37 Commercial Road.



Figure 59: Edwardian shops and accommodation in Station Road.



Figure 60: Institute Road with Art Deco frontage of No. 8.



Figure 61: Former industrial buildings in Commercial Road.



Figure 62: Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre in former industrial building.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 2 Archaeology

Archaeological Investigations

There have been no formal archaeological investigations in this area.

Archaeological Character

The physical and topographic characteristics of this area suggest that it once formed a creek and floodplain of the Brook. It is unlikely to have been a focus for settlement, but early accounts indicate that there may be remnants of earlier activity buried at depth. Some substantial remains of a timber structure, thought to have been part of a Stone Boat, were found in 1912 at a depth of about 1.8m during the digging of a water main in Kings Road West. A flight of stone steps was found buried nearby. A small anchor was found at a depth of about 2.75m beneath the High Street close to the junction with Institute Road (Hardy 1908).

The area along the seafront north and east of Institute Road and High Street, was the site of the stone 'bankers', where stone was stored prior to sale and shipping. Remains may survive beneath the present surface. The whole of this area may be reclaimed, as remains of what was identified as an earlier stone quay were found beneath the High Street during the laying of sewers in the late 19th century (Hardy 1908).

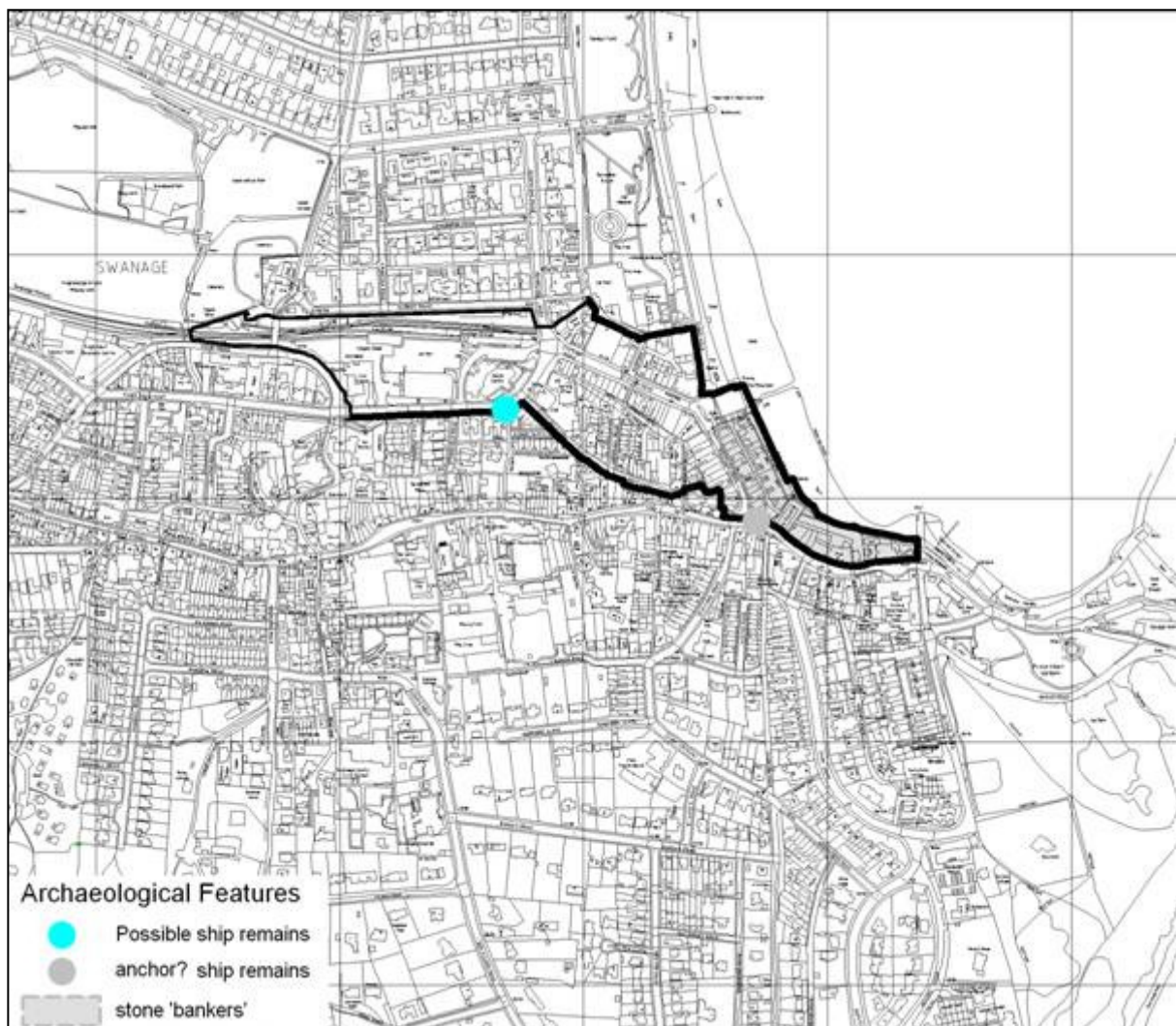


Figure 63: Archaeological investigations and features in Historic Urban Character Area 2.

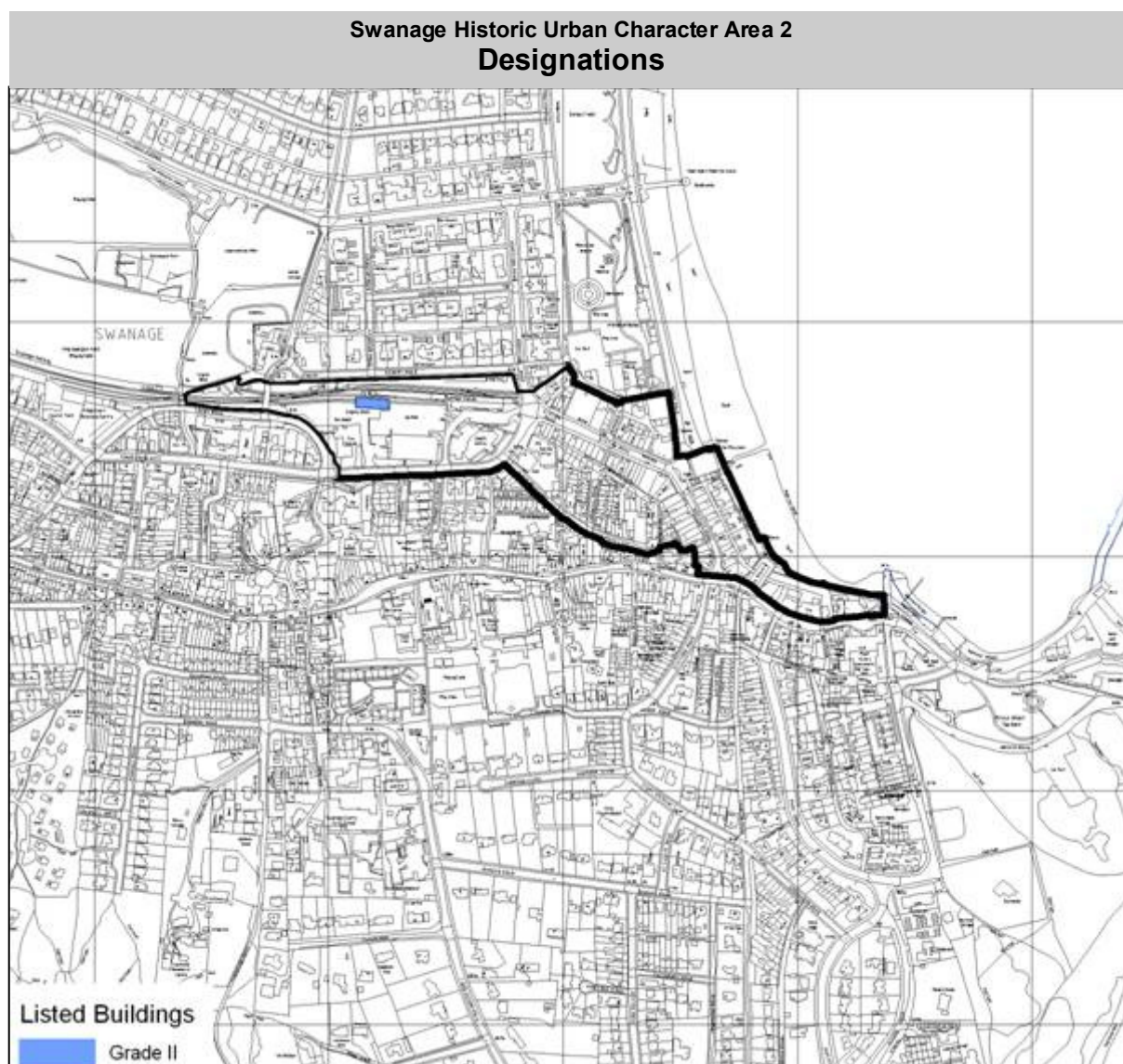


Figure 64: Listed Buildings in Historic Urban Character Area 2.

Listed Buildings

There is one Listed Building in this Character Area – the Grade II Goods Shed at Swanage Station.

Conservation Areas

The whole of this Character Area lies within the Swanage Conservation Area (Figure 42).

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 65: The former Station Hotel.

Swanage Historic Urban Character Area 2 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **strong**. Overall, Station Road and Institute Road have a coherent Late Victorian and Edwardian character, with generally consistent architectural details and use of building materials. Away from the main street frontages are some surviving industrial buildings. The layout and mix of buildings reflects the history of development of this part of the town. The character of the station is enhanced by the heritage railway and helps underscore the prominent part it played in promoting the development of this area. There are a few areas that weaken the historic character, particularly the development on the former of railway yard.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Large scale development along the major roads is likely to disrupt the scale and rhythm of the Edwardian development. There are a number of post-war developments in this area which have already eroded the historic character. Development away from the street frontage is likely to have a strong impact on the surviving industrial remains.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **low**. There is a relatively restricted period of development in this area with consequently a low potential for evidence for earlier phases of activity in the town. The potential for industrial archaeological remains is higher, with a number of former industrial buildings surviving, which may contain evidence for their former use. Also the former stone bankers along the shoreline may still survive below ground and could provide information on the earlier stone industry in Swanage. Remains of the brewery could potentially survive beneath the health centre.

There is potential for deeply buried remains within and below the alluvium, some of which are likely to be waterlogged and have good preservation of organic materials and palaeo-environmental evidence.

This area has the potential to provide information which could contribute to Research Questions 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Late Victorian and Edwardian commercial centre
- Prominent bay windows on many buildings
- Some surviving historic shopfronts
- Railway Station
- Straight route between the railway station and the seafront
- Late 19th century Parade
- Industrial remnants of stone trade