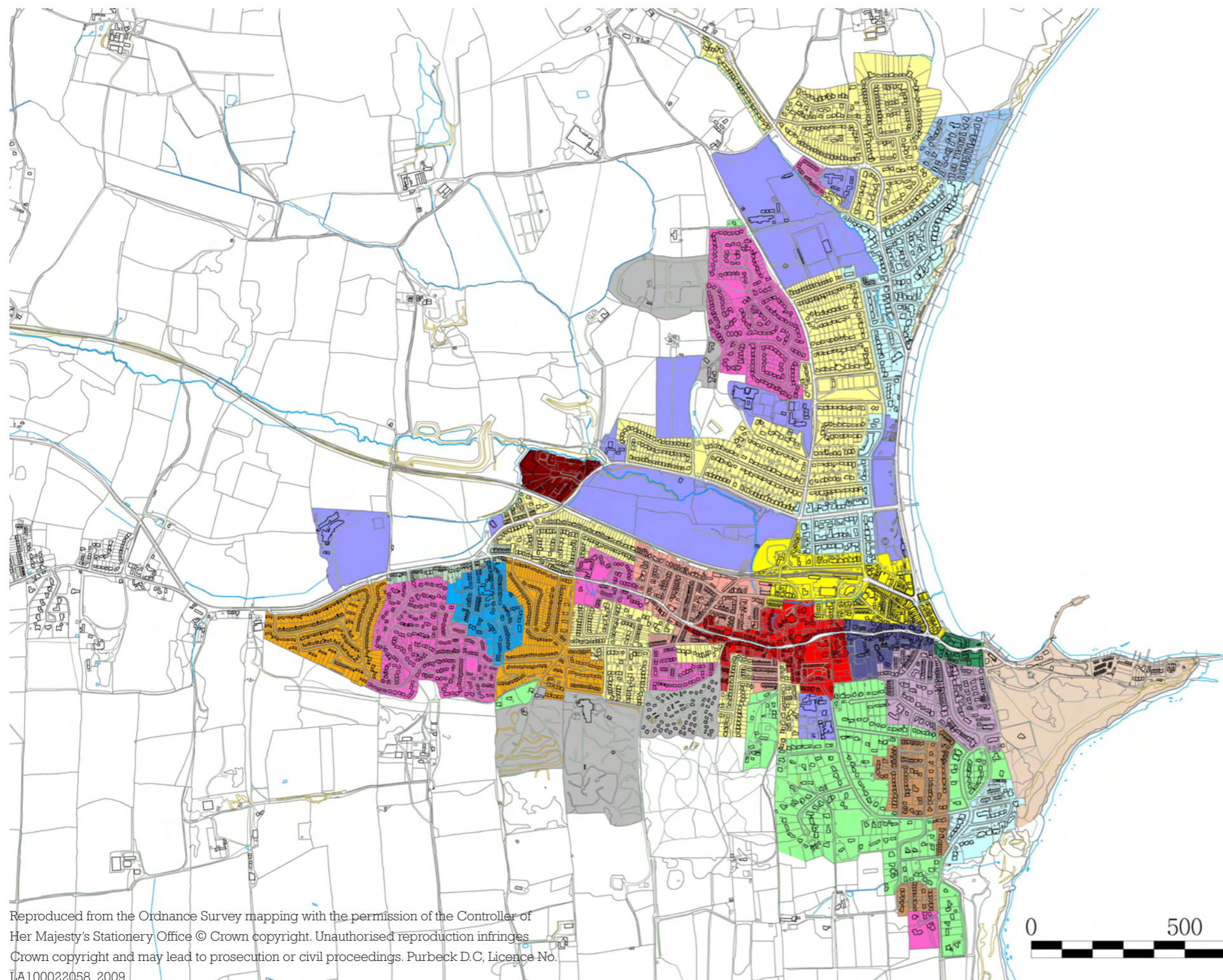


Swanage

Character types

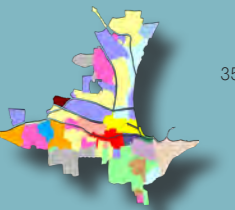
04.1

Character types



- High Street west
- Station Road area
- High Street centre
- High Street east
- Peveril
- Park Road area
- Ballard Down
- Mobile home park
- Industrial character
- Large buildings - mixed
- Mixed pre- & post-war housing & bungalows
- Low density residential
- Swanage lanes
- Edwardian housing
- Council estate development
- Late C20th estate development: 1960s-present
- Herston High Street
- Herston Village
- Community & Institutional character

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4.1.1 This section of the report identifies the different types of development that together combine to make up the settlement as a whole. These are described as 'character types' and have been identified as a result of the preceding town analysis. The map opposite indicates the locations of each character type within the settlement.

4.1.2 The Government's urban design guidance *By Design* (2000) identifies those aspects of our built environment, i.e. the buildings, structures and spaces, which are the physical expression of our townscape. These are what influence the pattern of uses, activity and movement in a place and the experiences of those who visit, live or work there.

4.1.3 The key 'aspects of development form' identified in *By Design* (set out in the boxes opposite) have been applied consistently to each character type to help identify the different characteristics and qualities of each distinct part of the town.

4.1.4 Each character type is accompanied by a series of photographs illustrating typical scenes within those areas to provide a flavour of what each place is like.

4.1.5 Finally, a SWOT analysis identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, has been applied to each character type. This is to explore what potential may exist for future development opportunities and how the character of these areas could be threatened through inappropriate or insensitive changes.

Aspects of development form

Definition	Explanation
<p>Layout: urban structure The framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way developments, routes and open spaces relate to one another.</p>	<p>The layout provides the basic plan on which all other aspects of the form and uses of a development depend.</p>
<p>Layout: urban grain The pattern of the arrangement of street blocks, plots and their buildings in a settlement.</p>	<p>The degree to which an area's pattern of blocks and plot subdivisions is respectively small and frequent (fine grain), or large and infrequent (coarse grain).</p>
<p>Landscape The character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements, and the way these components combine.</p>	<p>This includes all open space, including its planting, boundaries and treatment.</p>
<p>Density and mix The amount of development on a given piece of land and the range of uses. Density influences the intensity of development, and in combination with the mix of uses can affect a place's vitality and viability.</p>	<p>The density of a development can be expressed in a number of ways. This could be in terms of plot ratio (particularly for commercial developments), or number of dwellings (for residential developments).</p>
<p>Scale: height Scale is the size of a building in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly in relation to the size of a person. Height determines the impact of development on views, vistas and skylines.</p>	<p>Height can be expressed in terms of the number of floors; height of parapet or ridge; overall height; any of these in combination; a ratio of building height to street or space width.</p>
<p>Scale: massing The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces.</p>	<p>Massing is the three-dimensional expression of the amount of development on a given piece of land.</p>
<p>Appearance: details The craftsmanship, building techniques, decoration, styles and lighting of a building or structure.</p>	<p>This includes all building elements such as openings and bays; entrances and colonnades; balconies and roofscape; and the rhythm of the facade.</p>
<p>Appearance: materials The richness of a building lies in its use of materials which contribute to the attractiveness of its appearance and the character of an area.</p>	<p>The texture, colour, pattern and durability of materials, and how they are used.</p>



Swanage Character types

04.2 High Street West

High Street West

Urban Structure

- Linear character area extending along the High Street beyond the retail centre and including the enclave around St. Mary's Church.
- Sinuous road of generally narrow and varying width. Slight changes in direction restrict long views and encourage a sense of transition and progression.
- A strong sense of enclosure generally, but more spacious at Convent Mews and around St. Mary's church.
- The area has a high proportion of stone vernacular houses and is strongly traditional and organic in character with just one or two insensitive modern developments.
- Buildings also have a strong sense of permanence and solidity.

Urban Grain

- Mostly narrow plot widths at right angles to the road create tight frontages but with many irregularities (creates a sense of long, organic evolution).
- Built edges mostly along the back of pavements but with some small set-backs or front gardens.

Landscape

- Generally a hard environment but relieved by occasional trees and small gardens that have an important effect in softening and punctuating the road.
- Some open space and mature trees exist around St. Mary's church and in the grounds of the Purbeck House Hotel and Louisa Lodge and some other back gardens. Some larger trees have significance in wider views across town.
- Water makes a pleasing surprise in the area at the former mill pond next to St. Mary's church.

Density and Mix

- High density location with near-continuous frontages.
- A substantially residential area with some community and residential uses.
- A generally quiet road with regular pedestrian movement to and from the town centre.

Height

- Generally 2-2.5 storeys, but scale varies considerably according to floor to ceiling heights (largely influenced by building age)

Massing

- Considerable variation in the scale of buildings including overall height and width. Groups of joined buildings can form interesting and cohesive compositions.
- House forms are generally simple but the overall effect is enriched by some varied styles and arrangements.
- Varied ridge heights and numerous chimneys create a rich skyline.

Details

- The older vernacular buildings are generally plain with very few embellishments, but they are nonetheless strong and positive in character owing to the consistent building forms, the limited palette of materials, the quality of detailing and the organic relationships between buildings and the street and adjacent buildings.
- Windows in vernacular buildings are very variable in arrangement, size and proportion.
- Dormer windows are hipped or square under an angled, sloping roof.
- Colours are generally very muted (stone and red brick), with occasional highlights of colour on front doors.
- Heavy rectangular stone lintels predominate.

Materials

- Walls: Purbeck stone is the predominant building material for houses, boundary walls, kerbs and pavings. Later buildings are constructed with local red bricks of a consistent colour but often with Purbeck stone facings. Very little painted render present.
- Roofs: Many stone roofs, but also some tiles and slates.



Strengths

- Strong identity and sense of place.
- High quality environment.
- Consistent building forms and materials with interesting variations.
- Convenient walking distance to town centre.
- Sustainable edge-of-town-centre location,
- Little unnecessary signage and other street clutter.

Weaknesses

- Some frontage in Convent Mews is weak and poorly defined.
- A high quality area not readily seen or found by the visitor.
- Inappropriate street lighting.
- Lack of nearby open space.
- Some negative buildings ie. modern additions.

Opportunities

- Improve lighting.
- Upgrade standard tarmac surfaces in key locations.

Threats

- Increased traffic noise and disturbance.
- Highway clutter and signs.
- Insensitive development and house extensions.
- Replacement of traditional windows with uPVC equivalents.
- Subdivision of houses into flats resulting in increased demand for parking.
- Loss of vegetation in back gardens particularly for parking where access may permit.



Swanage

Character types

04.3

Station Road area

Station Road area

Urban Structure

- This character area, that covers much of the town centre retail area and some edge of town centre land, includes a wide range of different land uses and development types. These range from main retail frontage along Station Road and Institute Road to discrete retail premises in Commercial Road, service yards and back lanes, as between Institute Road and the sea front, residential streets ranging from terraced cottages (Springfield Road) to large Edwardian villas (Gilbert Road), areas of recent redevelopment including the health centre, supermarket, bus station and car park on Kings Road and part of the sea front itself.
- Unlike the original High Street, defined in this study by the High Street, West, Centre and East character areas, the Station Road area is not vernacular in character, but is essentially Edwardian in its layout and fabric. Whilst not rigidly orthogonal in layout, it is very different in this regard from the meandering nature and varying road widths of the original High Street, and there is a much clearer sense of purpose and order in, say, the direct connection between the station and the Mowlem centre and the sea down Station Road, and the regular arrangement of development along it.
- The Station Road area is generally a well-integrated townscape except in the former station yard area where the otherwise close urban fabric and easy transitions to adjacent areas are rather disrupted. Here road frontage is rather weak and buildings tend to sit within road-dominated spaces with rather left-over incidental areas of soft landscape.
- However, generally common features of the Station Road area are an essentially Edwardian town centre urban fabric, a generally consistent scale and height of development, common materials and also some common details.
- In general the more varied articulation of building forms, the care over proportion and detailing and the brighter and more varied colours used in the Edwardian buildings create a lively effect that contrasts markedly against the earlier vernacular building manner.

Urban Grain

- Plots are generally narrow and right angles

to roads with generally consistent, repeated dimensions that are the result of planned developments. Development densities are relatively high.

- Built edges are situated mostly along the back of pavements but with some narrow set-backs where terraced cottages occur in front of some recent buildings. However more substantial front gardens occur in front of large villas in Gilbert Road.

Landscape

- A generally hard environment with little vegetation apparent.
- Trees principally occur on the cutting between the station and Gilbert Road and in some back gardens in the Eldon Terrace locality.

Density and Mix

- High to medium density area.
- A substantially retail area including some community and transport-related uses. Residential and office uses and residential development exists on some edge-of-town-centre streets as well as along the sea front.

Height

- Mostly 2 – 3 storeys.

Massing

- Although buildings do vary in height, the overall massing and scale is generally quite consistent and compact, especially in wider views from higher ground.
- Minor variations in ridge heights and chimneys create a generally rich skyline.
- Development along the sea front is well defined and counteracts adjacent weak frontage in the High Street East character area.

Details

- Being mostly Edwardian, buildings generally have Arts & Crafts influences such as steep gables, bay windows and a range of other details typical of the period. (Bay windows are a particularly distinctive feature in this area) More varied and irregular house forms in back streets as well as short terraces.
- Occasional turrets define corners.
- Detailing on buildings (i.e, quoins, cornices etc.) is widespread but restrained.
- Buildings generally of brick with stone dressings

on quoins, sills, copings etc. (In some instances yellow brick is used as an alternative)

- Some buildings are entirely built with stone or brick.
- Garden and boundary walls are generally brick with stone copings, but also wholly stone.
- White bargeboards and other white-painted timberwork especially around bay windows.
- Some ornate stone dormer window fronts.
- Windows with classical proportions with some double mullions.
- Generally brick chimney stacks with well-defined cornices.
- Finials and decorative ridge tiles although almost all now replaced with plain details.
- Deep cornices over shop windows low walls below and elegant divisions.
- Along sea front, first floor balconies with decorative iron balustrades.

Materials

- Common use of local red brick of a consistent colour.
- Purbeck stone used throughout or for dressings.
- White painted timberwork especially around windows.
- Slate roofs and tiles, although most tiles probably replace original slates.
- Red clay ridging tiles.



Strengths

- Generally consistent and well integrated character.
- A good quality, generally traditional environment.
- Contrast of Edwardian style with earlier vernacular buildings in High Street area.
- Relatively little unnecessary signage and other street clutter.
- Consistent use of materials including use of Purbeck stone that identifies local context.
- Spaces well linked.
- Strong built facade along sea front.

Weaknesses

- Kings Road frontage and urban grain weak and inconsistent with the rest of the town centre.
- Some buildings of indifferent quality.

Opportunities

- Potential redevelopment on former station yard site.
- Redevelopment of lower quality buildings.
- Upgrade streetscape generally including standard tarmac surfaces in key locations.
- Restoration of lost details on buildings.

Threats

- Increased traffic congestion.
- Highway clutter and signs.
- Insensitive redevelopment.
- Replacement of traditional shop windows and other windows with uPVC equivalents.
- Incremental loss of building detail.



Swanage Character types

04.4 High Street Centre

High Street Centre

Urban Structure

- The High Street Centre Character Area is, in effect, an extension of the essentially vernacular character of the High Street West Character Area, but with town centre retail uses on ground floors and with greater variation in building ages and styles owing to later Victorian/Edwardian character redevelopment.
- Sinuous road, but with wider pavements than in the High Street West Character Area. Slight changes in direction restrict long views and encourage a sense of transition and progression.
- A strong sense of enclosure generally, with buildings rather higher than in the High Street West Character Area.
- The area has some older stone vernacular buildings that distinguish it from the rest of the town centre and is traditional in character with generally sensitive shop fronts.
- Some modern residential development behind the main frontage is substantially out of character with the rest of the area in terms of plot form, massing, scale, height, building form, materials and detailing.

Urban Grain

- Mostly narrow plot widths at right angles to the road create tight frontages but with irregularities.
- Built edges mostly along the back of pavements but with some front gardens.
- Modern residential development behind is substantially out of character with the urban grain of the area.

Landscape

- Generally a hard environment but relieved by one or two trees and small gardens that have an important effect in softening and punctuating the road.

Density and Mix

- High density location with near-continuous frontages.
- A substantially retail area with residential uses above.
- An active road with regular pedestrian movement to and from the town centre.

Height

- Generally 2-3 storeys, but scale varies considerably according to floor to ceiling heights (largely influenced by building age).
- Residential flats behind main façade is 4 storeys in height.

Massing

- Considerable variation in the scale of buildings including overall height creates a varied sense of building mass.
- Building forms are generally simple but the overall effect is enriched by some varied styles and arrangements.
- Varied ridge heights, chimneys and a turret create a rich skyline.

Details

- The older vernacular buildings are generally plain with few embellishments, but they are nonetheless strong and positive in character owing to the consistent building forms, the limited palette of materials and the quality of detailing.
- Later, Edwardian and Arts & Crafts buildings have some quite rich and, in one instance, even flamboyant detailing.
- Detailing on modern buildings is generally bland.
- Windows in vernacular buildings can be variable in arrangement, size and proportion, and on some Edwardian buildings bay windows are a feature, extending vertically from first floors.
- Shop fronts are generally sensitive, retaining a number of traditional details at ground floor level.
- Colours are generally very muted (stone and red brick), but with colour associated with shop fronts.

Materials

- Walls: Purbeck stone is the predominant building material for houses, kerbs and pavings. There is little red brick and painted render present.
- Roofs: Roofs may be of tile, slate or stone.



Strengths

- Identity consistent with the town centre but with its own sense of place.
- A high quality traditional environment.
- Varied building forms united by a common building material.
- Little unnecessary signage and other street clutter.
- Discrete street lighting.

Weaknesses

- Some inappropriate modern development, but fortunately largely concealed behind the main façade.

Opportunities

- Improve some shop fronts.
- Upgrade standard tarmac surfaces in key locations.

Threats

- Increased traffic congestion.
- Highway clutter and signs.
- Insensitive redevelopment and house extensions.
- Replacement of traditional shop windows and other windows with uPVC equivalents.
- Loss of vegetation and character in back area, particularly for additional development and parking.



Swanage

Character types

04.5

High Street East

High Street East

Urban Structure

- The small High Street East Character Area is, in effect, an extension of the High Street Centre Character Area but it is essentially less vernacular in character because the buildings are mostly more recent.
- Like the rest of the High Street, the road follows a sinuous course but it differs insofar that the overall width between facades is rather wider. This gives the area a rather more spacious and less contained quality.
- The curve in the street restricts longer views, but this encourages a sense of progression and discovery for the visitor with a view of the sea and Peveril Point gradually opening up as the motorist or pedestrian moves east along the road.
- Nonetheless there is strong sense of enclosure generally, with buildings rather higher than in the High Street Centre Character Area.
- The High Street East Character Area features rather more local stone than in the Station Road Character Area that covers most of the town centre, but it contains very little red brick.
- Shops fronts are largely original, or at least traditional in character.
- The area includes a short section of sea front, but this is disappointing since the buildings here are generally low and mundane. However the stone sea wall and paved promenade are attractive with fine views across the bay.

Urban Grain

- Plots are variable in width and generally shallow, but frontages are near continuous.
- Built edges are situated mostly along the back of pavements but with some narrow set-backs in front of some recent buildings.
- The block between the High Street and the sea has no pedestrian permeability.

Landscape

- A wholly hard environment with no vegetation.

Density and Mix

- High density area.
- A substantially retail area including food and tourism-related uses on ground floors and

- residential uses above, but also on ground floor of recent developments.
- A very active town centre road.

Height

- Ranges from 2 – 4.5 storeys, but generally 3 – 3.5 storeys. Later buildings with higher floor to ceiling heights tend to be taller overall.
- Single storey along much of the sea front.

Massing

- Although buildings do vary in height, the overall massing and scale is generally quite consistent, except for single storey development along the sea front.
- Variations in ridge heights and chimneys create a generally rich skyline.
- Recent buildings can be devoid of chimneys which diminishes the quality of the buildings and skyline.

Details

- The older vernacular building (The Ship Inn) is generally plain with few embellishments.
- The Georgian buildings have formal, symmetrical fronts, as do the later Edwardian buildings.
- First floor balconies with decorative iron railings are a feature of this locality as are low parapets and cornices surmounting facades (except for recent development).
- Windows of classical proportions generally follow a regular rhythm.
- Bay windows at first floor level are also a feature of the area.
- Windows along the sea front tend to be arched.
- Shop fronts are generally sensitive, retaining a number of traditional details at ground floor level.
- Colours are generally very muted (stone and some red brick), but with colour associated with shop fronts.

Materials

- Walls: Purbeck stone is the predominant building material for houses, kerbs and pavings. There is little red brick but painted render features in the area.
- Roofs: Predominantly slate, but stone on the Ship Inn.



Strengths

- Identity consistent with the town centre but with its own sense of place.
- A high quality, generally traditional environment.
- Varied building forms united by a common building material.
- Little unnecessary signage and other street clutter.
- Discrete street lighting.

Weaknesses

- Single storey facades along the sea front.
- Roofs on recent buildings without chimneys look bland in this context.
- Commercial waste bins left on pavements.

Opportunities

- Improve some shop fronts.
- Upgrade standard tarmac surfaces.
- Improve building frontage onto sea front, including possibly raising building height.

Threats

- Increased traffic congestion.
- Highway clutter and signs.
- Insensitive redevelopment.
- Replacement of traditional shop windows and other windows with uPVC equivalents.
- Incremental loss of building detail.



Swanage Character types

04.6 Peveril

Peveril

Urban Structure

- A large broadly triangular area of grassed down land, bounded by Peveril Point Road and the foreshore to the north and Seymer Road to the west.
- There are no through roads, instead the urban structure comprises a number of meandering access lanes, predominantly around the edge of the Bay, which branch off from the road that provides access to residential areas, fishermen's huts and lifeboat station further along the Point.
- Broad Road provides a link between Seymer Road and Peveril Point Road and a number of both formal and informal footpaths pass through the area.
- With its steep cliffs, rocky foreshore and extensive coastal views, the area is defined primarily by its relationship with the coastline rather than its limited road network.

Urban Grain

- Plots are generally arranged in an irregular pattern of short terraces.
- Mixed plot forms with cottages on long, narrow sites.
- The Haven is clustered together within a large private site.
- Open urban grain to the working area around fisherman's huts and lifeboat station.

Landscape

- Steep undulating area of grass down land East of Seymer Road and South of Peveril Point Road, containing mature trees. These are particularly important as they comprise the majority of this area.
- Enclosed along its south-west edges by mature woodland.
- Two areas of mature undergrowth within the grassed area.
- Rugged foreshore area and cliff tops around Peveril Point.
- Public spaces include the amphitheatre within distinctive columns and the hard landscaped area along the sea front, incorporating public art.

Density and Mix

- Development is concentrated along the northern edge of the area, above the rocky foreshore.

- Uses include the sailing club, pier for visiting ferries, Water Company sewerage works, fishermen's huts and landing area, RNLI lifeboat station and the Coastguard Station on the Point itself.
- Residential development is somewhat mixed and located in two areas; The Haven development and Marine Villa's and Coastguards Cottages.
- Although the number of dwellings is low, with short terraces reasonably well spaced, relative densities are quite high due to buildings situated closely together on small plots.

Height

- Historic buildings range between 1 and 2 storeys.
- The Haven and Villas near the Point range between 3 and 4 storeys.

Massing

- A range of massing is present amongst the area of built development, resulting in small and relatively large development (the Haven and Villas) sitting amongst smaller cottages.
- The Haven is a large mass of dwellings grouped above the foreshore and presenting a large bulky mass.
- Traditional buildings in the this area display a more modest form and domestic massing.

Details

- Remnant stone gutters along some road edges.
- Plain brick chimneys with pots.
- Stone groins and cobbled boat ramps to north foreshore.
- Relic defensive structures remain.
- Stone walls define tracks and edges.
- Tall lighting columns.
- Mature trees.

Materials

- Walls: Painted render (notably The Haven), stone (the sewerage plant, lifeboat station and Villas), timber (fisherman's huts) and concrete (historic bunkers).
- Roofs: Slate roofs to traditional dwellings, corrugated sheeting to huts, red/orange concrete tiles to later properties.



Strengths

- Attractive area of informal downs with unique coastal views.
- Interesting and varied foreshore area.
- Mature landscape with wooded edges and several public spaces provide visual interest.
- Well defined area.
- Excellent community resource.

Weaknesses

- Wide roads, the car park, extensive stone walls and expanses of tarmac intrude on the informal nature of the area.
- Public spaces can appear somewhat under-utilized.
- Steep undulating topography limits access to certain users.
- Tall urban lighting columns appear somewhat incongruous in this context.
- Pier Head building remains vacant and incongruous.

Opportunities

- Potential for alternative lighting columns designs that are more appropriate to the intimate and low scale character of the area.
- Upgrade roads and/or areas of tarmac to a more appropriate surface treatment and minimize their incursion into the area.
- Improvement or replacement of the Pier Head building.

Threats

- Redevelopment of Pier Head with an inappropriate form and/or scale of development.
- Degradation of remaining military relics e.g. bunkers at Peveril Point.



Swanage

Character types

04.7

Park Road area

Park Road area

Urban Structure

- A quiet residential area situated on sloping ground overlooking Swanage Bay and the town centre.
- The area is largely Edwardian in origin, with some Georgian, and buildings of this period include some large individually designed villas as well as some substantial terraces. (These buildings generally define the character of the area)
- In recent years, the area has had sporadic redevelopment and infilling with some quite large developments. (The sense of scale and prominence is enhanced in views looking uphill towards them)
- Despite some varied redevelopment, the area still has a well-integrated character that is largely defined by its elevated position and views.
- On the east of the Character Area, a well-defined frontage faces onto Seymer Road and across open space that is part of Peveril Point. Elsewhere properties have partial and glimpsed views to the north.
- Informal tracks and lanes provide permeability between streets.

Urban Grain

- Principal roads (Seymer Road and Park Road) run up the hill from the seafront at the eastern end of the High Street.
- Some incongruous low-level 1960s housing.
- Mostly relatively large buildings on comparatively small plots set at right angles to the road. Buildings are set back slightly from the back of pavements.
- Some terraced development, particularly to the north, near to the town centre.
- The curved layout of Park Road is distinctive, and the mews-like character of Belvedere Road is unusual and distinctive in this area.

Landscape

- Trees are relatively limited in this area, no doubt partly as a consequence of restricted open space and the desire to retain views. However the extensive open space and trees on Peveril Point adjoining make a pleasing contrast.
- Some recent developments can appear bleak, partly as a consequence of limited tree cover and other vegetation.

Density and Mix

- Although the area has a sense of spaciousness, the density is, for the most part, relatively high. Density varies across the area, being higher near the town centre to the north and decreasing uphill to the south, although recent developments in this area have been reducing this difference.
- The area consists substantially of single-occupancy houses, and possibly some hotels and boarding houses, but flats have become widespread.

Height

- Traditionally ranged from 2-3 storeys, but some recent developments are up to 5 storeys high.

Massing

- Massing varies across the area with tighter, often terraced, development near the town centre and larger more spacious villas and later large redevelopments on higher ground to the south.
- Some large recent developments introduce a scale and massing that is somewhat uncharacteristic of the grain and scale of the area.

Details

- These vary considerably, given the range of building ages:

Earlier buildings at the north end of Seymer Road:

- These buildings face onto the open space opposite and have a simple, if slightly austere classicism that is interesting and distinctive.
- The buildings are rendered and painted with symmetrically placed and classically proportioned windows. (This style of architecture is generally uncharacteristic of Swanage at large.)

Edwardian development:

- Elsewhere typical Edwardian features inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement are typical, including steep roof pitches, gables with deep eaves, bay and sash windows, red brick and stone banding etc.
- A typical Edwardian corner turret on Seymer Road is distinctive, and this detail reappears on a nearby recent development.

Interwar and post-war development:

- Whereas Edwardian development often used local stone, some post-war flats lack any sense of local identity, but more recent developments in the area demonstrate some more positive attempts to acknowledge and even contribute to local identity.

Materials

- Walls: Painted render on some earlier buildings and also some recent buildings. Stone and red brick are common on Edwardian buildings. Recent developments exhibit more varied materials including various shades of brown brick. (It should be noted that local stone is commonly used for boundary walls, and this not only provides local distinctiveness, but also helps to integrate more disparate developments).
- Roofs: Slates and plain tiles.



Strengths

- Distinctive setting including well-defined park frontage along Seymer Road.
- Views across Swanage Bay and the town from Seymer Road and glimpsed views elsewhere.
- Generally spacious character.
- Some good quality buildings.
- Close proximity to town centre.

Weaknesses

- Some poor frontage in later developments.
- Some more recent development shows inconsistencies of scale, massing, frontage etc.
- Some poor and indifferent quality buildings.

Opportunities

- Further redevelopments could provide an opportunity for appropriate high-quality architecture.

Threats

- Continued loss of elegant Edwardian character through redevelopment and subdivision of existing properties.
- Insensitive redevelopment including excessive scale and massing.
- Loss of front gardens and other vegetation through over-intensive and insensitive redevelopment.
- Continued loss of traditional details on older buildings (i.e. Sash windows, chimneystacks, cast-iron guttering etc.)
- Boarding houses have always been common here, the shift from traditional B&Bs would change this character.



Swanage

Character types

04.8

Ballard Down

Ballard Down

Urban Structure

- A small and compact estate of bungalows which originated as an army camp laid out during the First World War.
- Although many of the sites have been redeveloped, the estate still retains a distinctive and discrete character reminiscent of its origins.
- Small plots laid out along three parallel tracks.

Urban Grain

- Small rectangular plots, but with some irregularities.
- Garden space mostly very limited, although houses facing the sea have small front gardens with houses beyond along a consistent set-back.
- With the exception of Ballard Lee, buildings do not generally face the road, but are set at right angles to it.

Landscape

- This location is dominated by its landscape setting, with Ballard Down rising to the north and extensive views across Swanage Bay to the east.
- Although garden space is limited, the landscape setting and an adjacent grassed area along the top of the cliff give it an overall spaciousness.
- Boundaries are often defined by neatly trimmed hedges, but there is no tree cover.

Density and Mix

- Plots are small, making density relatively high for a bungalow development.
- Larger gardens along the northern boundary create a softer rural edge.

Height

- Exclusively single storey.

Massing

- Buildings have a generally consistent scale and form despite individual redevelopments, reflecting the fact that most originated as converted barrack huts. Buildings in Ballard Lee provide an exception, as whilst sharing many fundamental characteristics with the rest of the estate, dissimilarities in form reflect their replacement rather than reuse of military buildings, and/or development at a later date.

- Houses are generally of a rectangular form under a simple shallow-pitched roof, but often with subsequent extensions. Some squarer forms are seen along Ballard Lee. Most houses facing the sea have conservatories or large windows facing east.

Details

- Although there are similarities in building height, form and roof pitch, there are very few common details between buildings because of progressive redevelopments.
- Some bungalows have rooflights, and a couple have dormers, though these are not generally readily apparent.

Materials

- Walls: Shiplap boarding appears to have been the original building material although few examples survive; Walls now include local stone, render and various shades of brick. Roofing materials include tile and slate; A combination of neatly clipped hedges and Purbeck stone walls help to visually unify the area.
- Roofs: Roofing felt appears to have been used in the past, but now invariably slate or tile.



Strengths

- An area of distinct if simple character of interest for remaining reminiscent of the army camp from which it originated.

Weaknesses

- Loss of historic character through redevelopment and change.
- Erratic and ad hoc modifications to and redevelopment of properties reducing the visual cohesion of the estate.
- Pressure on and loss of amenity space arising from parking and extensions.

Opportunities

- Retention of the essential characteristics of the area will maintain references to its origins.

Threats

- Any 2 storey redevelopment would undermine the established character of this area and increase its prominence in this sensitive location.
- Loss of surviving buildings which are recognisable as former barrack blocks.



Swanage

Character types

04.9

Mobile Home Park

Mobile Home Park

Urban Structure

- Several edge of town mobile home parks in visually prominent locations.
- Large open sites with massed static mobile homes spread at largely uniform densities.

Urban Grain

- Layout on northern site at Ulwell in regular rows.
- Layout on southern sites above Herston informal, but with end windows generally facing views to the north.

Landscape

- All sites are very prominent, elevated locations on the edge of the town and are therefore widely visible. (Pale colours increase visual prominence)
- Northern site has little screening around boundaries and no planting within site.
- Southern sites are situated on irregular sloping ground, formerly quarried, and incorporate irregular vegetation and some trees at lower levels. (Vegetation has some screening effect)
- Caravans set in close-mown grass.

Density and Mix

- Relatively high densities for mobile homes, particularly on northern site.
- Uniform use but including some camping and caravan space.

Height

- Exclusively single storey.

Massing

- Small scale rectangular buildings with shallow pitched roofs, evenly distributed.
- Large single storey reception/admin/facilities buildings.

Details

- Mobile homes generally on wheels, parked on paved plinths.
- Plain facades with little detailing.
- Occasional bay windows and false shutters.

Materials

- Walls: Walls generally of corrugated steel painted with light colours of grey or cream.
- Roofs: Shallow pitch grey or white painted steel or interlocking tiles.



Strengths

- Southern sites set within irregular landform and scrubby vegetation that reduces visual impact on surrounding areas.

Weaknesses

- Mobile homes are incongruous with the town and country.
- The sites are prominent and often highly visible within the context of an historic town and surrounding AONB.
- Development is of a ubiquitous character unrelated to local forms and materials.

Opportunities

- The temporary nature of the structures offers scope for more sensitive replacements.
- Greater perimeter screening and planting within sites.

Threats

- Large scale developments associated with communal site facilities (i.e. Reception, shops, sports hall, covered swimming pools etc.)
- Potentially, some further intensification on southern sites.
- Potentially, the expansion of sites into open countryside.



Swanage Character types

04.10

Industrial Character

Industrial Character

Urban Structure

- A single cul-de-sac development with various industrial and office uses facing onto central space.
- Linear sites in southern part of the site.

Urban Grain

- Buildings set behind areas of hardstanding.
- Relatively small units for an industrial area, but one building is significantly larger than the others.

Landscape

- Rural edge location.
- Very little vegetation within the site, but relatively effective low and medium shrub and tree screening around edges.
- However the large shed is higher than adjacent trees and it is consequently widely visible from higher parts of the town and the surrounding countryside.

Density and Mix

- Medium density development with adjacent areas of hardstanding.
- Mixed industrial with some office uses.

Height

- Generally 1 – 2 storeys except for the large shed.

Massing

- Various building forms including monopitch and flat roofs, but mostly low double pitch.
- The mass of the buildings is broken up by screening vegetation, varied building forms and materials except for the large shed.

Details

- A wide range of standard details common to industrial areas, but none that are noteworthy in defining local or distinctive characteristics.

Materials

- Walls: Varied materials including blockwork, brick (red and buff), profiled steel and timber cladding. The large shed is visually prominent in pale grey profiled steel throughout.

- Roofs: Mostly profiled steel and corrugated asbestos. Varied tones (and forms) help to break up the visual impact of the estate.



Strengths

- Limited in extent and mostly visually discrete including frontage onto Victoria Avenue.
- Generally low impacts on neighbouring uses.
- Most buildings low and discrete in wider views.

Weaknesses

- Generally low quality buildings and untidy internal environment.
- Large shed is relatively much larger than other development in the locality and it is widely visible in the local and wider area.

Opportunities

- Potential for higher quality of redevelopment.
- Additional planting around boundaries.
- Landscape and streetscape improvements along Victoria Avenue frontage.

Threats

- Inappropriate large scale development.
- Expansion into adjacent rural area without recourse to mitigating visual impacts through landscaping (area is identified for expansion in the Local Plan 2004).



Swanage Character types

04.11

Large Buildings, Mixed

Large Buildings, Mixed

Urban Structure

- An area that has traditionally defined much of the perceived character of Swanage.
- Two areas originally containing large individually designed Edwardian villas.
- Overlooking or close to the sea.
- An area that has been undergoing substantial and invariably negative character change.

Urban Grain

- A well-defined grain of large detached houses on relatively small plots.
- Houses front the street with small set-backs and well-defined building frontages.
- Orthogonal road layout in southern area, but more irregular in the northern area.

Landscape

- A character area with surprisingly little tree cover. (restricted space between buildings)
- Scrubby vegetation along cliffs and cliff-tops does much to soften development in views across the bay.
- Limited smaller garden vegetation.
- Redevelopment including removal of back gardens in the southern area has left parts almost devoid of vegetation (backs between Cranborne Road and Gilbert Road).

Density and Mix

- Relatively high-density area.
- Formerly family houses, boarding houses and hotels, now much converted to flats with associated changes in character.

Height

- 2 to 3 storeys, but generally 3 to 3.5 storeys.
- Some recent redevelopment up to 5 storeys.

Massing

- Traditionally of large domestic scale and massing employing carefully articulated Arts and Crafts forms such as gables, turrets etc.
- Subsequent redevelopment has for the most part substantially eroded this character through the removal of detail, the introduction of reproduction
- Art Deco and other forms or the use of substantially simplified Arts and Crafts forms.

Details

- Traditionally this was an area rich in typical Arts and Crafts details (steep pitched roofs, gables, dormers, turrets, bay windows, stone facings, porches etc.).
- Subsequent conversion and redevelopment of buildings has led to what is in some cases a massive loss of original details (especially chimney stacks), reducing them to basic and crude forms.
- Redevelopments that acknowledge some Edwardian features, but lack the quality of detailing, represent a significant reduction of the urban quality of the area, and the town as a whole.
- Redevelopments in other styles can be more successful, although they represent a departure from the traditional character of the area.

Materials

- Walls: Typically local red brick with stone facings or Purbeck stone throughout. White painted timberwork especially around windows.
- Roofs: Slate and tiles although most tiles probably replace original slates. Red clay ridging tiles.
- More recent developments employ a greater range of materials including bricks of different colour and render.



Strengths

- An area that still defines much of the essential character (and history) of Swanage.
- An area that still has a number of fine Edwardian buildings that retain original detailing.
- Relatively little unnecessary signage and other street clutter.
- Fine seaward frontage especially in wider views.

Weaknesses

- Significant insensitive and inappropriate alterations (including extensions) and wholesale redevelopment has greatly reduced the quality and coherence of this area.
- One area is now so altered that it now represents a low quality environment. (Backs between Cranborne Road and Gilbert Road)

Opportunities

- Introduction and enforcement of tighter controls that will protect the quality Edwardian buildings that remain. (In whole and in detail)
- Possibly new tree planting where practicable.
- Possible mews style development along certain backs before Gilbert Road and Cranborne Road to provide a more coherent and better defined space.

Threats

- Continued loss of quality Edwardian buildings in totality and through the progressive loss of details.
- Loss of front gardens to off-street parking.