

Shaftesbury Historic Urban Character Area 3

St James

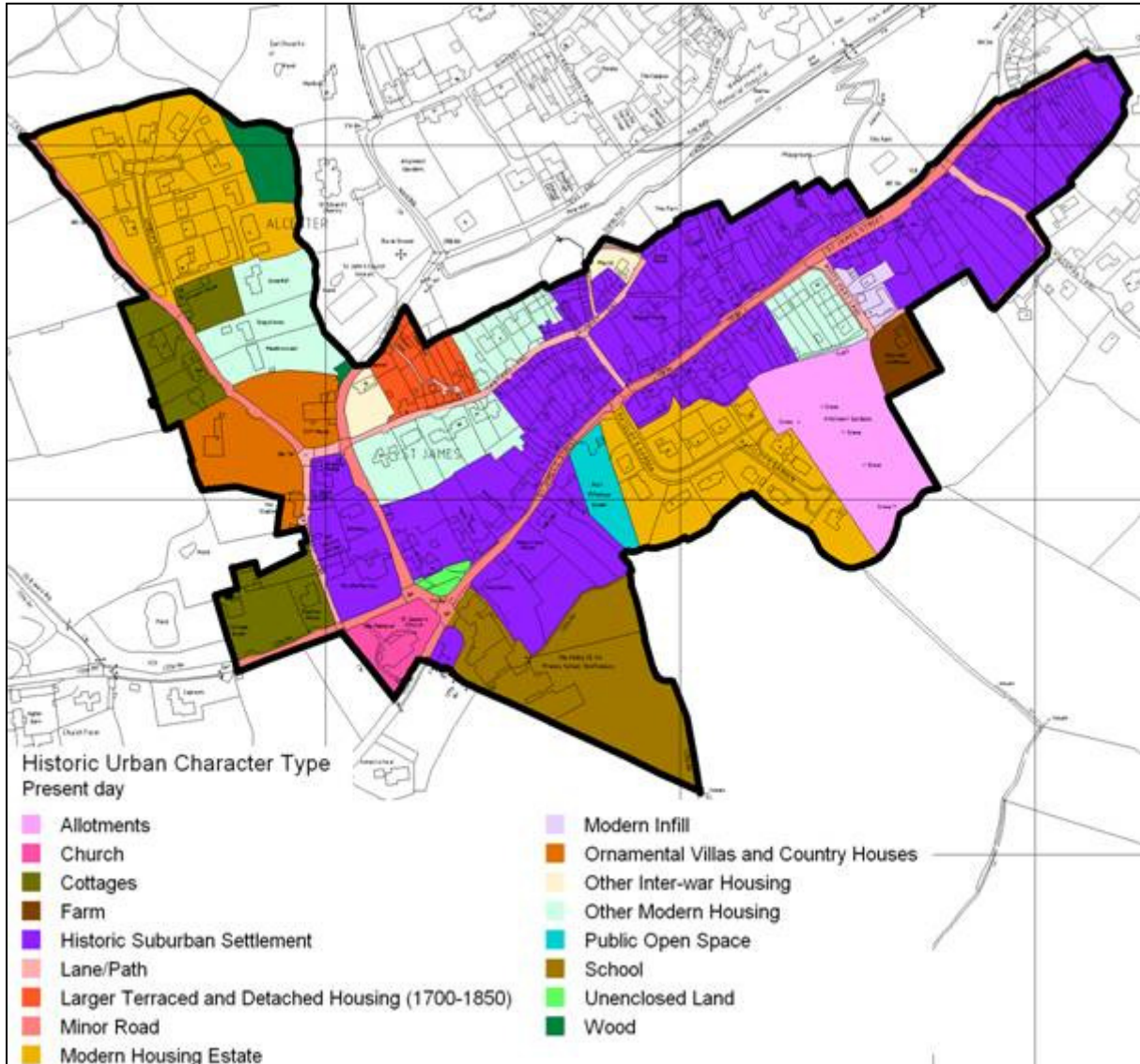


Figure 71: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 3, showing current historic urban character type



Figure 72: St James from Park Walk.



Figure 73: St James viewed from St Rumbold's churchyard.

Shaftesbury Historic Urban Character Area 3 Structure of Character Area

Overview

This area represents the historic underhill suburb of St James, lying to the south and southwest of the Greensand spur. It is defined by its topographical location and coherent historic suburban form and concentration of historic buildings.

Topography and Geology

St James lies on the lower southern and southwestern slopes of the greensand spur, on ground sloping down to the west and south. The slopes rise up increasingly steeply to the north. The geology of the area consists almost entirely of Upper Greensand, except perhaps the southern tip of St James School playing field, which lies on Gault Clay.

Urban Structure

St James comprises a single main street which curves round the base of the spur. At the western end it widens out into a triangular green in front of the church. There are a number of minor roads and lanes that run down the slopes of the spur and curve around its western end, which join the main street. The settlement is largely arranged along both sides of the street and along the minor lanes.

Present Character

Figure 71 shows the present day historic urban character types. The area comprises principally Historic Suburban Settlement along St James Street with small areas of Other Inter-war Housing and Modern Infill. There is a small area of Modern Housing Estate off the south side of St James Street and another at the northwest corner of the area. There are some areas of Larger Terraced and Detached Housing (1700-1850) and Ornamental Villas at the western end of the area. Other character types present include Church, School, Cottages, Allotments and Public Open Space.



Figure 74: View east along St James Street.

Time Depth

The general arrangement of St James Street with settlement along both sides and the church at the western end probably have their origins in the Late Saxon or early medieval period. St James is first documented from the 12th century but is undoubtedly of earlier origin. The network of lanes running down the spur is probably medieval in origin. The houses are mainly 19th century in date, with small areas of inter-war and post-war housing.

Settlement Pattern and Streetscape

The historic settlement pattern is one of high density housing arranged along the main street and back lanes. The streets and lanes are narrow and St James Street has a sinuous course following the grain of the topography with much of the street built up with a large number of small attached 18th and 19th century houses set directly on the street frontage. There are some areas where the street frontage is opened up into a small courtyard or several houses set back. At the eastern end it opens onto the Park. The western end of the area has a less dense settlement pattern with larger houses set back from the roads in large grounds. The inter-war and modern houses generally do not respect the earlier building lines. The small modern housing estates have a cul-de-sac arrangement running off the historic roads.

The topography has a major effect on the settlement pattern, with the spur dominating the area and defining the orientation of the settlement. The grassed and wooded slopes of the spur, together with the mature trees and gardens at the west end of the area provide a significant green element to the character of the area. There are small but significant green spaces in front of the church and at the Roll Millennium Green.



Figure 75: St James Church and green in front..

Shaftesbury Historic Urban Character Area 3 Built Character

Building types

St James is typified by 18th and 19th century vernacular houses and cottages, which make up most of the street frontage. A small number of earlier houses dating from the 16th and 17th centuries are also present. There are relatively few modern houses.

The 18th and 19th century houses are of two storeys but vary in size, height, window arrangement and detail and have a range of different roof pitches. In general, there are few architecturally remarkable buildings, but the similarity of scale, and use of local building materials, together with a diversity of individual architectural details, gives St James Street a very pleasing group character. The Manor House is in a more polite architectural idiom. There are some out-houses, including some long low single storey buildings on Tanyard Lane, which may have been industrial buildings or stables. A number of surviving stone boundary walls of 18th or 19th century date and some cast iron railings make a positive contribution to this area. The most well-known group of buildings is probably Pump Court (formerly St Andrew's Yard) set around a central cast iron water pump.

The earlier houses are of a similar scale to the 18th and 19th century houses and cottages, but include some with ashlar fronts.

The larger houses at the west end of the area are mainly 19th century in date and some are enlarged from an earlier core.

There are a small number of non-domestic buildings including St James Church (rebuilt in 1866-7 in a 14th century style), St James School (built 1873), and Quaker Cottage, the former Friends Meeting House (built 1746).

The inter-war and post-war houses are a mixture of one and two storey detached and semi-detached houses typical of their period with no local distinctiveness.

Building Materials

Greensand stone is the dominant building material, most commonly used as rubble, but with the occasional ashlar front or dressings. Brick is used relatively rarely in the historic houses, but is the dominant building material on the 20th century buildings. A small number of houses are painted or rendered. Roof materials vary more widely and mainly include slate, plain tile, thatch and occasionally corrugated iron.

Key Buildings

Public Buildings: St James Church, St James School.

16th-17th century Houses: 101 St James St, 21 St James St, 65 St James St, 96 St James St.

18th and 19th century vernacular houses: Pump Court, The Manor House, The Chantry (all St James St), The Two Brewers Inn and outbuilding, 96 St James St, 55-67 St James St, 1 St James St, 29-33 St James St, 35 St James St.

Larger Detached Houses: The Old Rectory, Cliff House, Cottage Green.



Figure 76: Pump Court, St James.



Figure 77: The Manor House, St James Street.



Figure 78: St James Street with number 101 on the right.

**Shaftesbury Historic Urban Character Area 3
Archaeology**

Archaeological Investigations

There have been no archaeological investigations in this Character Area.

Archaeological Character

The lack of archaeological investigation constrains any consideration of the archaeological resource. Nevertheless, the character of the area, a medieval or Saxon suburb that retains many of its historic boundaries with relatively little infill development in the rear of the plots suggests that medieval and post-medieval pits, ditches and other features, may exist at the rear of the historic plots. This 'backland' archaeology may also contain evidence of industrial activities, as this area had a number of documented industries. This may include outhouses and other structures used for small-scale industry. Very few finds have been recorded from this area, but include a 12th century silver penny

(PDNHAS 1974) and a 16th century goblet (Figure 79).

Figure 79 depicts burgage plot boundaries visible on 18th and 19th century maps and potentially originally dating from the medieval period. There are also some surviving field boundaries at the western end of the character area.

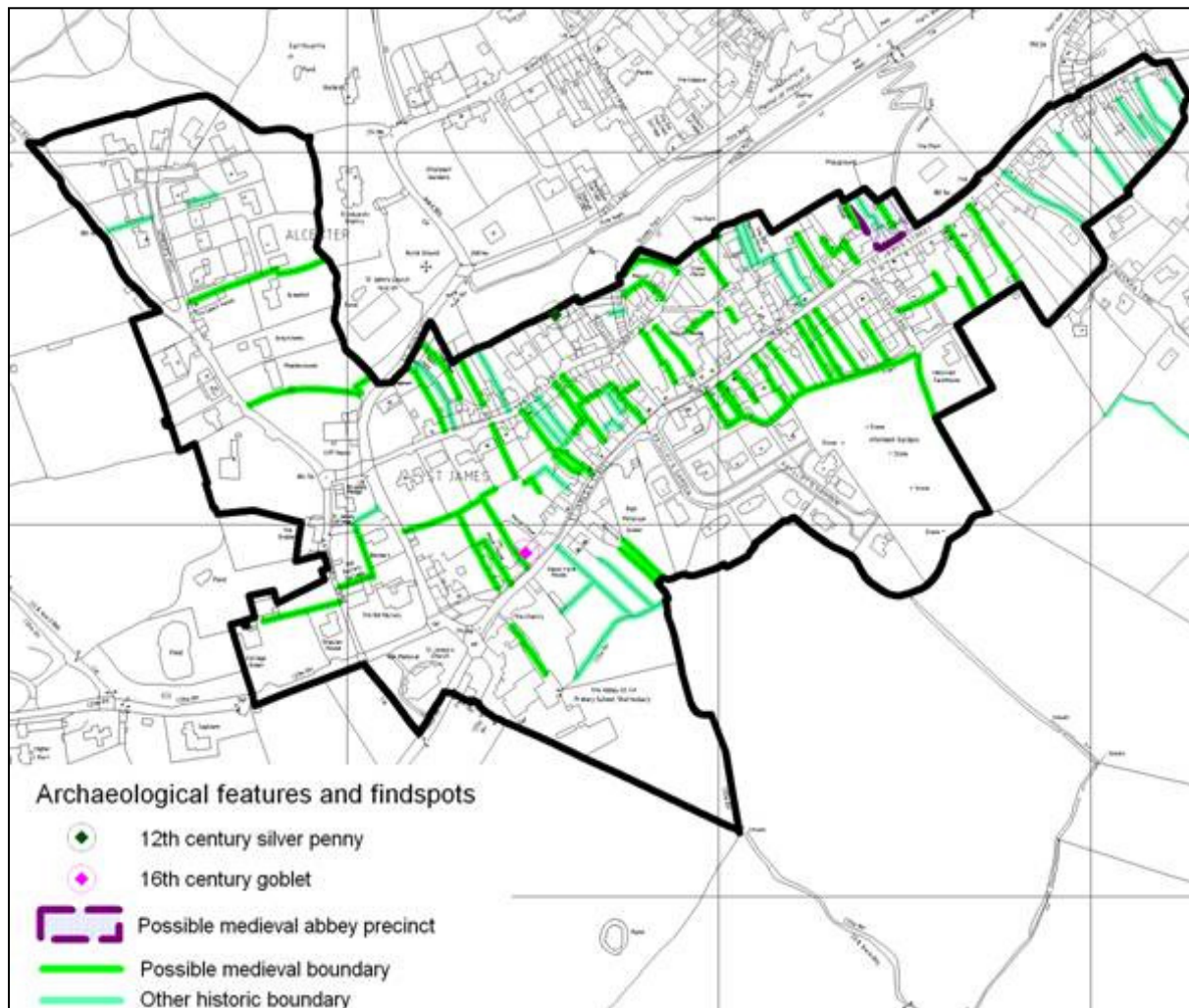


Figure 79: Archaeological investigations in Historic Urban Character Area 3.

Shaftesbury Historic Urban Character Area 3 Designations

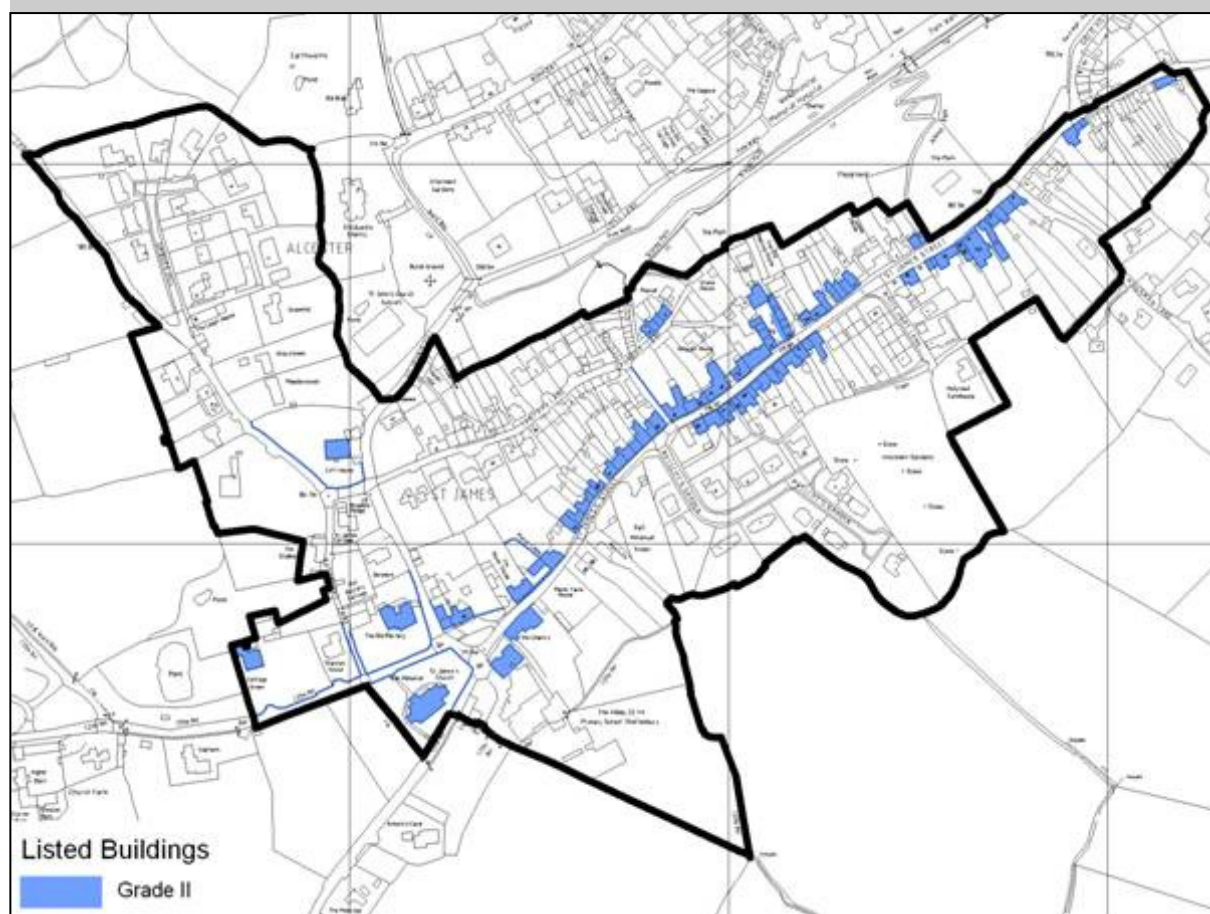


Figure 80: Listed Buildings in Historic Urban Character Area 3.

Listed Buildings

There are 56 Listed Building designations in the Character Area. All are Grade II (Figure 80).

Conservation Areas

Almost the whole of this Character Area lies within the Shaftesbury Conservation Area. Only the west side of Breach Lane and Raspberry Lane, and the modern housing estate of Umbers Hill on the site of the former Union Workhouse, lie outside the Conservation Area (Figure 54).

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.

Shaftesbury Historic Urban Character Area 3 Evaluation

Strength of Historic Character

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **strong**. It has good survival of the medieval suburban village layout along St James Street including surviving historic boundaries. There is a strong contribution from the large number of historic buildings, primarily of 18th and 19th century date (together with a few earlier survivals). The widespread use of local materials and a range of different building heights and architectural details give both coherence and interest to this area. There are relatively few modern intrusions to reduce the overall group value of the historic buildings.

Sensitivity to Large Scale Development

The area has a **high** sensitivity to major change. The street frontage is almost completely built up with historic buildings and a significant number of historic boundaries survive. The scale and shape of the historic streets and lanes and plots reflect considerable time depth and provide the underlying structure which gives this area its historic character. Any large scale development would seriously impact on this pattern. The area is also overlooked by

Park Walk and any major development would be highly visible.

Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **high**. It is the site of the medieval or late Saxon settlement of St James and has the potential to reveal details of the origins and development of the suburb, on medieval and later industrial activities, and the economy and diet of its inhabitants.

The large number of historic buildings and outbuildings have a high potential to contain the remains of earlier structures hidden within their fabric.

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1- 3, 5, 17, 19-22, 24, 25 and 27-9 (Part 7).

Key Characteristics

- Distinctive topographic position along the base of the southern side of the Greensand spur
- Intact medieval (or late Saxon) suburban street and lane layout based on a single main street with triangular green and the church at its western end
- High proportion of historic buildings, mainly 18th and 19th vernacular houses and cottages