

## Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 4 Pound Street

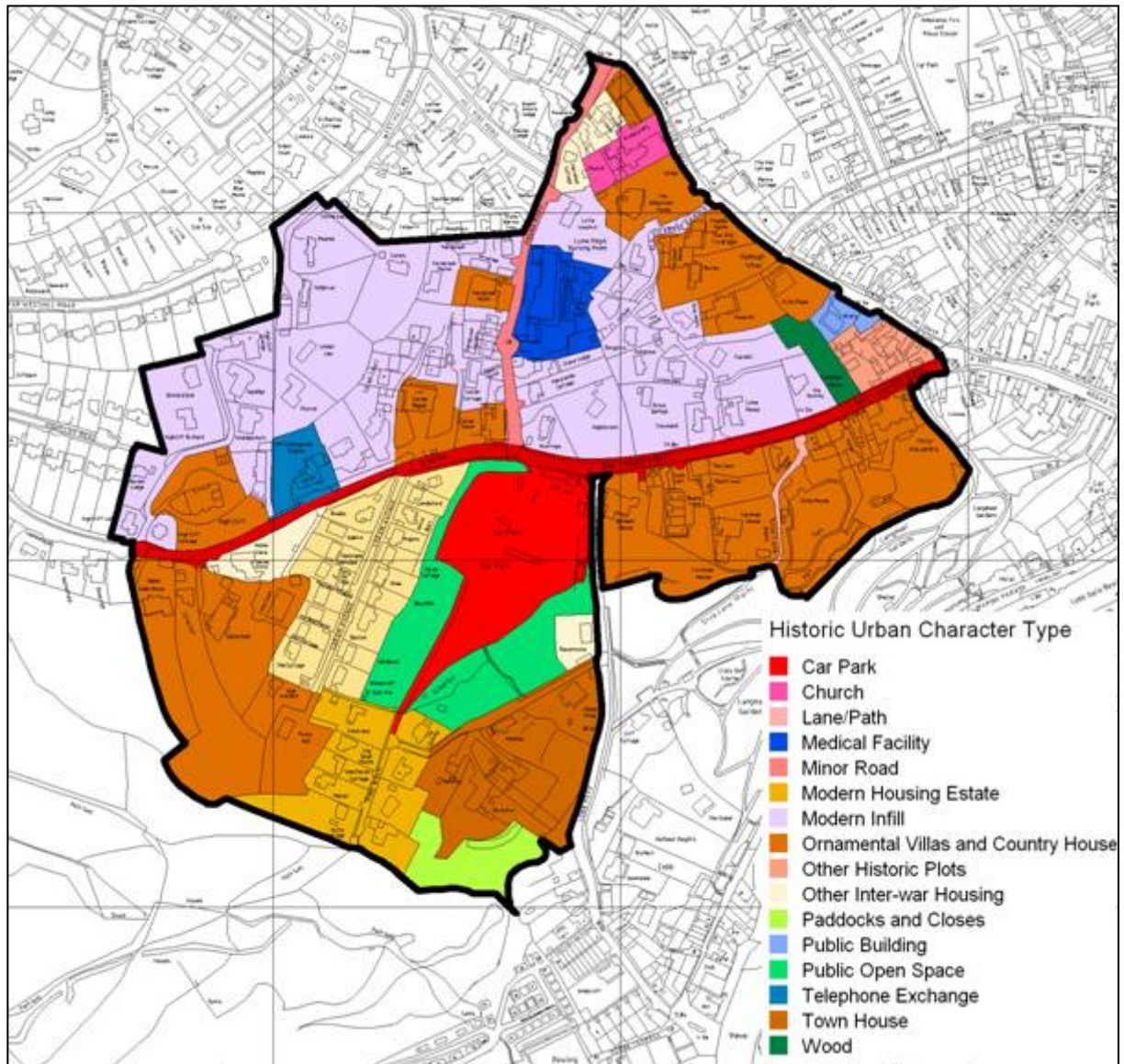


Figure 71: Map of Historic Urban Character Area 4, showing current historic urban character type



Figure 72: View down Pound Street with Holmbush car park on right.



Figure 72: Abbeyfield House (formerly West Hill) glimpsed from Silver Street, with the Old Vicarage to left.

## Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 4 Structure of Character Area

### **Overview**

This area lies beyond the historic core to the west and is the primary area of large 18th and 19th century villa development. It is defined by the distribution of large houses and villas and their former grounds and the edge of the area is largely formed by modern plot boundaries.

### **Topography and Geology**

This area lies on a spur of land running down to the east, with a crest running across the northern part of the area. The land slopes down fairly steeply to the east and to the south. A small area in the northern part drops down to the northeast towards Silver Street. Much of the area west of Pound Lane lies on Upper Greensand and the remainder is on Lower Lias clays.

### **Urban Structure**

The area has one major route (Pound Street/Sidmouth Road), which runs roughly east-west through the centre and one minor road, Pound Lane, which runs north-south linking Pound Street with Silver Street and the Uplyme road. Silver Street forms the northeastern boundary of the area. There are some culs-de-sac giving access to small housing estates off these roads. The area principally comprises large relatively irregular plots with houses generally set well back from the road frontages. The exception is in the eastern end of the area at the junction of Pound Street and Silver Street, where the buildings are directly on the frontage and have a more urban rather than suburban character.

### **Present Character**

Figure 71 shows the present day historic urban character types. There are large villas along both sides of Pound Street and the west side of Silver Street, with large areas of modern infill housing to the north of Pound Street. Along Silver Street are historic plots at the junction



Figure 74: View down Sidmouth Road towards Coram Tower.

with Pound Street, the Public Library, and St Michael's and St George's RC Church. Pound Lane has the former hospital and an area of inter-war housing. The coastguard station is on the north side of Sidmouth Road. An inter-war and a small modern housing estate together and a large car park lie on the south side of Pound Street at Holmbush.

### **Time Depth**

This area represents suburban expansion of Lyme dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. It is the main area of large villa development, many of which still survive, but most of their grounds have been developed for housing from the later 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The hospital moved to the Pound Lane site in 1927. The Holmbush estate along Coram Avenue was built in the early 1930s and the Pine Walk housing development in the 1950s. Holmbush car park dates from the 1960s. The earliest surviving elements are Pound Street which is likely to be medieval or earlier in date and a number of surviving property boundaries probably dating from the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

### **Settlement Pattern and Streetscape**

The settlement pattern is primarily low density housing in an irregular layout. The streetscape has an open layout with most of the houses set well back from the frontage and consequently many are not very visible from the road. Some of the larger villas along Pound Street/Sidmouth Road and, more prominently, along Silver Street have large stone walls defining the edge of the property along the street frontage. There are a small number of buildings along Pound Street and Silver Street which are set directly on the street frontage. The Holmbush estate is notable for its more regular layout with regular plots along a straight cul-de-sac.

Trees and vegetation form a large element in this area, with mature plantings in most of the gardens and around Holmbush Car park. Sidmouth Road has an almost rural aspect at the western edge of the area, with high grassy banks, hedges, stone walls and overgrown vegetation. Coram Tower provides a distinctive 'gateway' in the approach to Lyme Regis from the west along Sidmouth Road (Figure 74).

## Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 4

### Built Character

#### **Building types**

The area is characterised by large 18th and 19th century villas, exhibiting a large degree of variation in design and architectural details. Perhaps the most remarkable is Belmont, a late 18th century house formerly owned by Eleanor Coade and lavishly decorated in Coade Stone detailing. The other very distinctive building is the late 19th century Coram Tower with its tall four storey central tower block and peaked roof, which occupies a prominent position on Sidmouth Road. The adjacent Coram Court, built as a late 19th century vicarage has a number of elaborate half-timbered gables. The Alexandra Hotel is a large three-storey house built for the Poulett family and the largest of the houses in Lyme. There are number of early 19th century villas of two and three storeys with typical stuccoed walls, often with a pilastered front, wide bracketed eaves and hipped slate roofs, some with trellised cast iron verandas.

Another element in the historic building types is the small ornamental cottage. Tivoli Cottage in Pound Street is an octagonal two-storey cottage of late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Umbrella Cottage in Sidmouth Road is an octagonal thatched *cottage orné* of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date.

The inter-war houses along Coram Avenue are a mixture of two-storey houses and bungalows, with some chalet-style dwellings. The inter-war, post-war and modern houses to the north of Pound Street and Sidmouth Road have a wide degree of variation in design and include two storey, detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows.

#### **Building Materials**

Most of the historic buildings are constructed from the local Blue Lias limestones; the majority have been rendered, stuccoed or roughcast. A small number of historic houses are of brick or have brick fronts. Ham Hill stone is used as dressings on Coram Tower and Coade Stone is used extensively in the decorative features of Belmont. The roofs are mainly slate. Kersbrook Cottage is thatched.

The inter-war and modern buildings are of red and brown brick, often painted or rendered, some with stone cladding. The roofs are mainly tile.

#### **Key Buildings**

*Religious Buildings:* St Michael's and St George's RC Church, Peek Memorial Chapel

*18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century large houses:* Belmont, Alexandra Hotels, Stile House, The Lawn, Buena Vista, Coram Tower, Coram Manor, High Cliff, Little Cliff (Upper Cobb House), Holme Cleve (Gatesfield), The Little Place, Rosehill, Burley, The Old Vicarage, West Hill, Dorset Hotel, Belle Vue (Kersbrook Cottage).

*Ornamental Cottages:* Umbrella Cottage, Tivoli Cottage



Figure 75: Belmont, Pound Street.



Figure 76: Alexandra Hotel



Figure 77: Umbrella Cottage, Sidmouth Road.

### Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 4 Archaeology

#### **Archaeological Investigations**

There have been no formal archaeological investigations in this area. However, there is a report that the remains of a Roman hypocaust were found when the stables to Belmont were built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. No details are known and the identification must remain doubtful.

#### **Archaeological Character**

The lack of any archaeological investigation constrains any consideration of the archaeological resource. The area lies beyond the medieval and post-medieval town in former farmland, developed from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The former field boundaries suggest

that the majority of the fields dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, though the narrow curving fields south of Sidmouth Road, in the area of Little Cliff could suggest these have their origin as enclosed medieval strip fields. A number of boundaries dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century or earlier still survive fossilised within later development (Figure 78).

The possible Roman material at Belmont highlights the possibility of the discovery of earlier pre-urban archaeology within the area, though the precise character of this archaeology cannot be determined on present evidence.

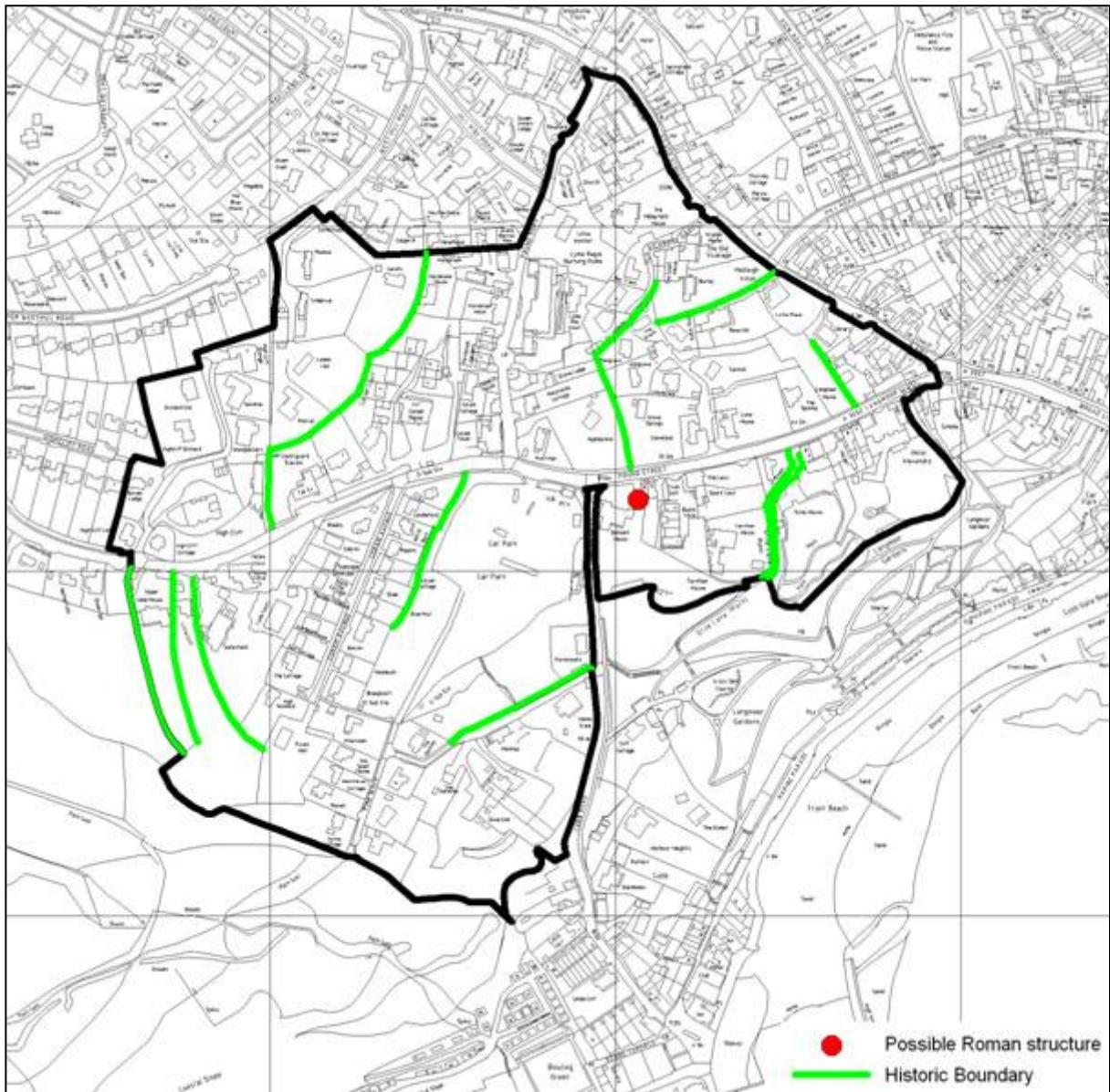


Figure 78: Archaeological Investigations and features in Historic Urban Character Area 4.

**Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 4  
Designations**

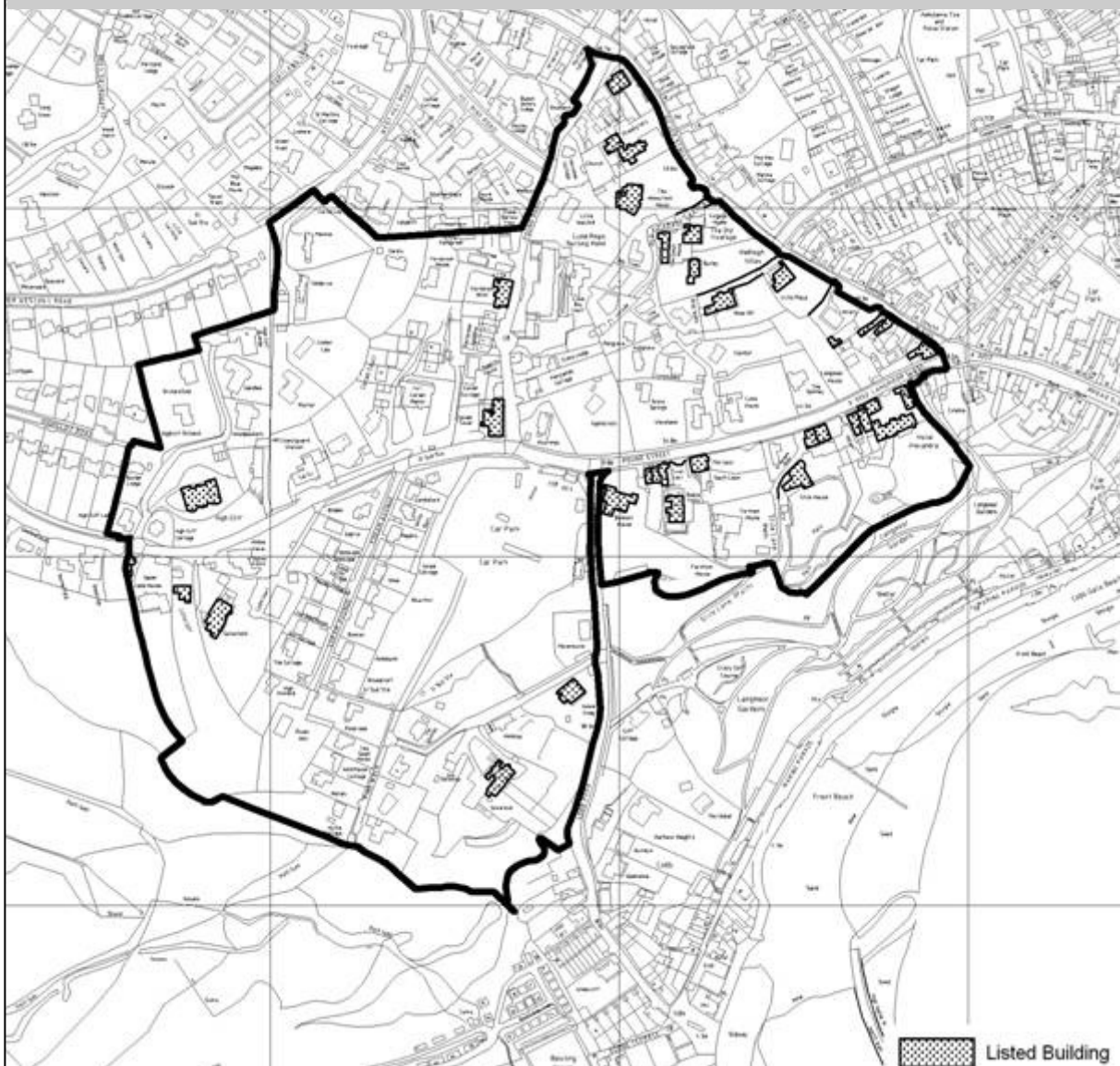


Figure 79: Listed Buildings and other designations in Historic Urban Character Area 4.

**Listed Buildings**

There are 35 Listed Buildings in the Character Area. Two buildings are Grade II\* (Belmont and St Michael's and St George's RC Church). The remaining 33 buildings and structures are Grade II.

**Conservation Areas**

A small part of this area, comprising the Silver Street frontage and the area to the south of Pound Road, lies within the Lyme Regis Conservation Area (Figure 36).

**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 80: St Michael's and St George's RC Church, Silver Street.

## Lyme Regis Historic Urban Character Area 4 Evaluation

### **Strength of Historic Character**

The strength of character of this area is judged to be **medium to strong**. Although there is good survival of large villas and houses, particularly along Pound Street and Silver Street (which can be considered the areas of strongest historic character in this character area), many of the grounds of these houses have been truncated and built upon by modern infill housing, diluting the effect of the historic character. Nevertheless there are a number of very high quality landmark buildings and the extensive mature planting contributes towards defining the historic character of large houses in extensive grounds.

### **Sensitivity to Large Scale Development**

The area has a **medium** sensitivity to major change. Large parts of the area have already been developed for housing during the last 50 years or so, which has already fundamentally altered the historic character of this area. Any major development which would have a significant impact on the setting of the historic buildings or which compromised the mature landscaping elements would have a negative effect on the historical context of this area.

### **Archaeological Potential**

The archaeological potential of this area is judged to be **low**. It lies beyond the core of the medieval and post-medieval town and has potential to reveal details on the development of the town, consequently it is unlikely to provide much data on the early development of the town.

There is potential for recovering archaeological information on the pre-urban activity (perhaps suggested by the possible Roman remains at Belmont) .

This area has the potential to provide information which would contribute to Research Questions 1, 2, 4, 18, 24 (Part 7).

### **Key Characteristics**

- Eighteenth and nineteenth century villas
- Prominent landmark of Coram Tower
- Roman Catholic Church of St Michael and St George on Silver Street
- Mature trees, gardens and landscaping
- Large visible boundary walls to many villa properties, particularly along Silver Street
- Dramatic sloping topography with good quality views over Lyme Bay