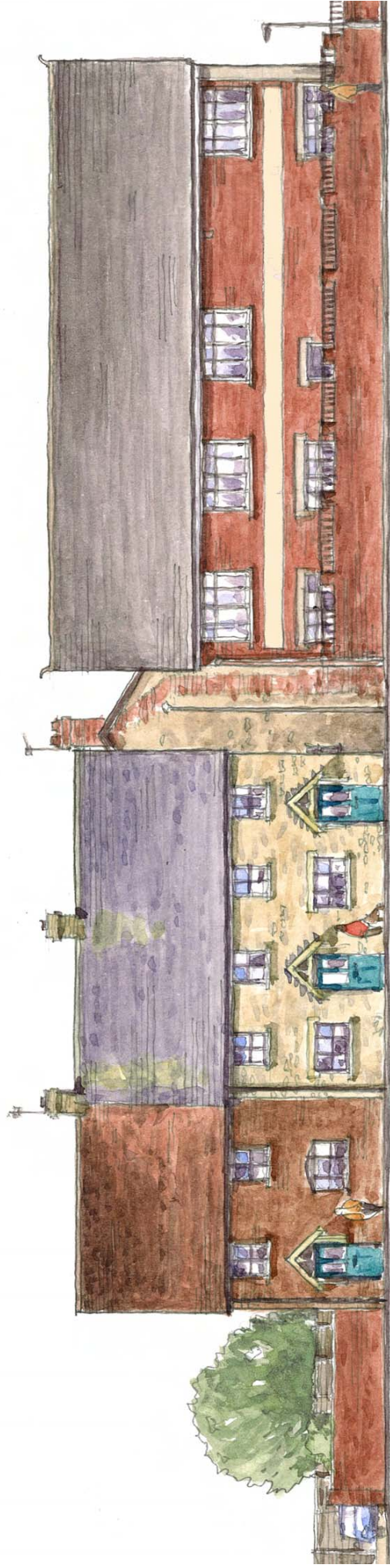


03 Map-based analysis



Map-based analysis 03.01 Listed buildings, Conservation Area etc.

This drawing emphasises well the marked distinction between the old, southern part of Sturminster Newton and the northern part.

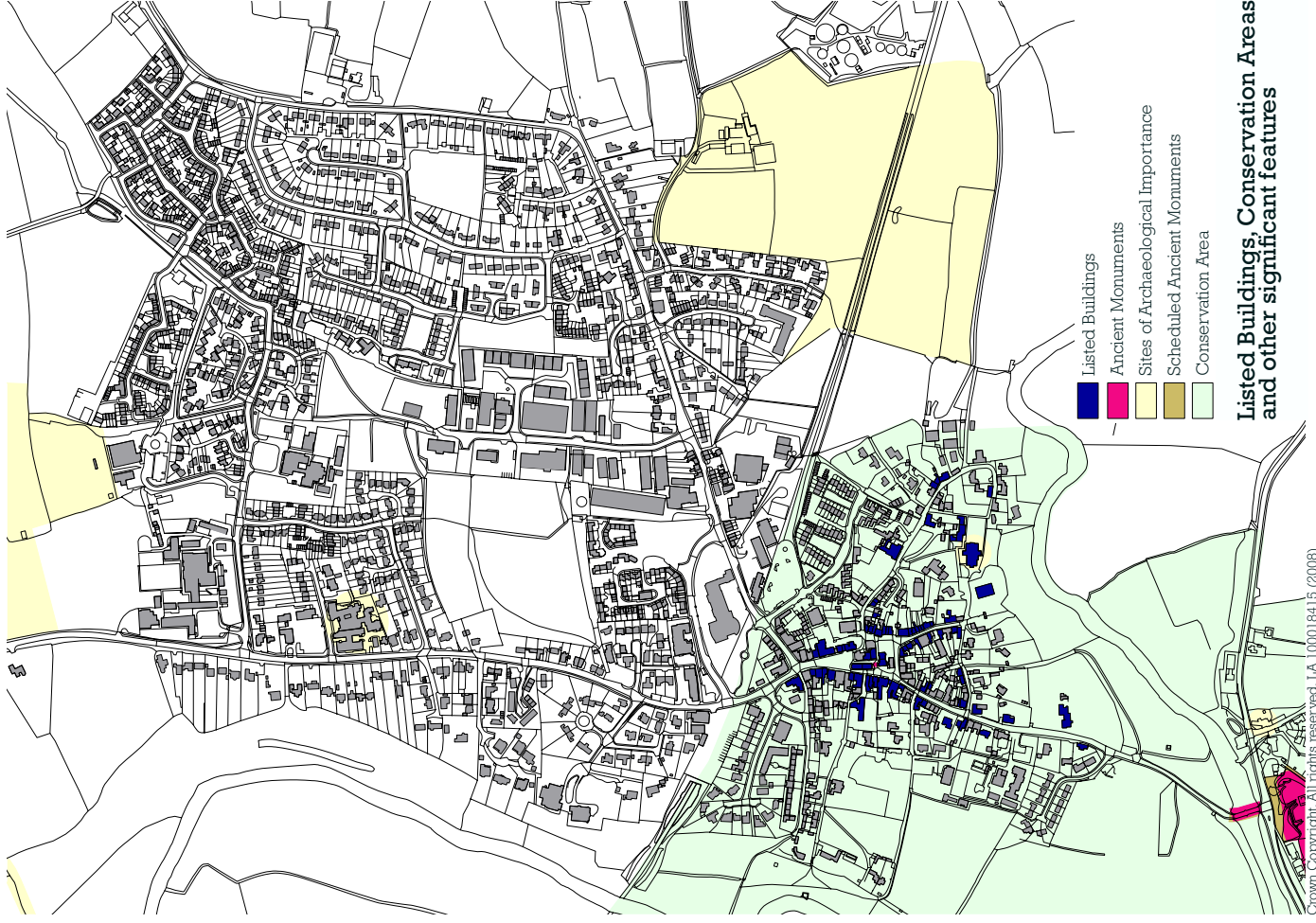
All the town's listed buildings are situated in the southern part of the town, substantially around the Market Place, but also extending south along Bridge Street and down Church Street and Penny Street.

There are no listed buildings in the northern part of town.

Ancient Monuments are identified in the Market Cross, the historic bridge over the River Stour and in the Iron Age hill fort at Newton to the south.

The Conservation Area covers the whole of the old town including all the area between the town and the river which rightly acknowledges its fundamental contribution to the setting of the town.

It will be noted that the Conservation Area ends abruptly along the line of the former railway. This distinction effectively confirms the marked change in the quality of the urban environment north and south of this line. To the south, the town retains significant historic local interest and quality in its urban environment, whereas to the north the character is ubiquitous and often monotonous, generally lacking in urban quality.



Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and other significant features

Map-based analysis

03.02

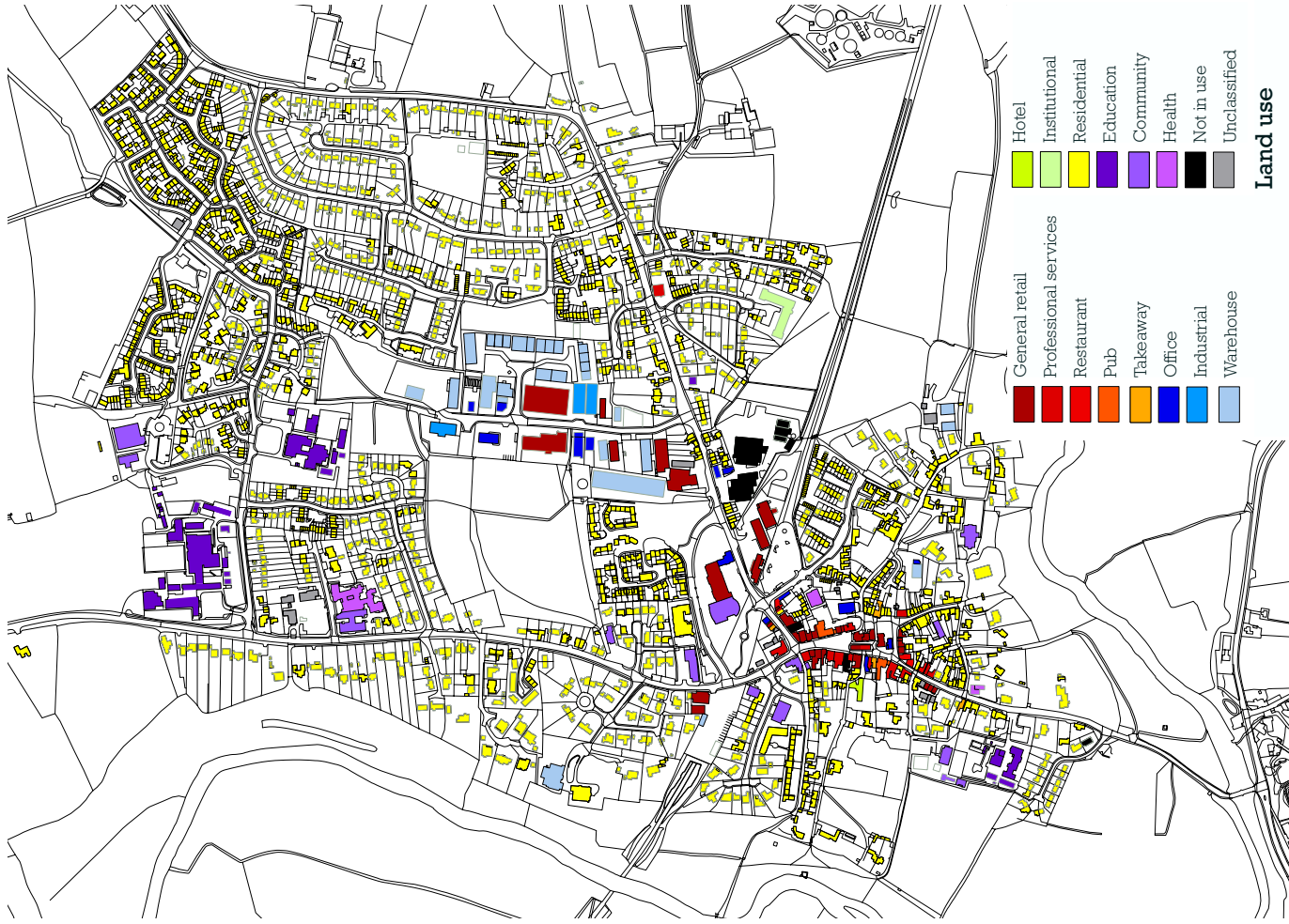
Land use

The land use drawing shows a clear disposition of general retail, professional services and food-associated uses grouped tightly around the Market Place. There is little spread of these uses along secondary frontages adjacent to the Market Place and little or no depth of these uses behind the main retail facade.

Beyond the Market Place in the old town the buildings are almost exclusively in residential use with few other uses of which these are mostly in some kind of community use such as the church or scouts.

In the northern part of the town, residential uses again predominate. However, in the area around the former station subsequent redevelopment has given rise to a greater range of uses in this vicinity including community uses (the new Exchange building), general retail (Co-op supermarket and other retail uses on former railway land) and a derelict site (former creamery) as well as new residential development.

In addition to some large educational establishments and a new sports centre towards the northern edge of town, there is a relatively large block of warehouse, office, industrial and large retail uses in the centre of the northern area at the Butts Pond Industrial Estate.



Map-based analysis

03.03 Building heights

The study of building height across Sturminster Newton shows an interesting pattern. (The heights shown on the drawing give a good overall impression and may not necessarily be correct for each individual property)

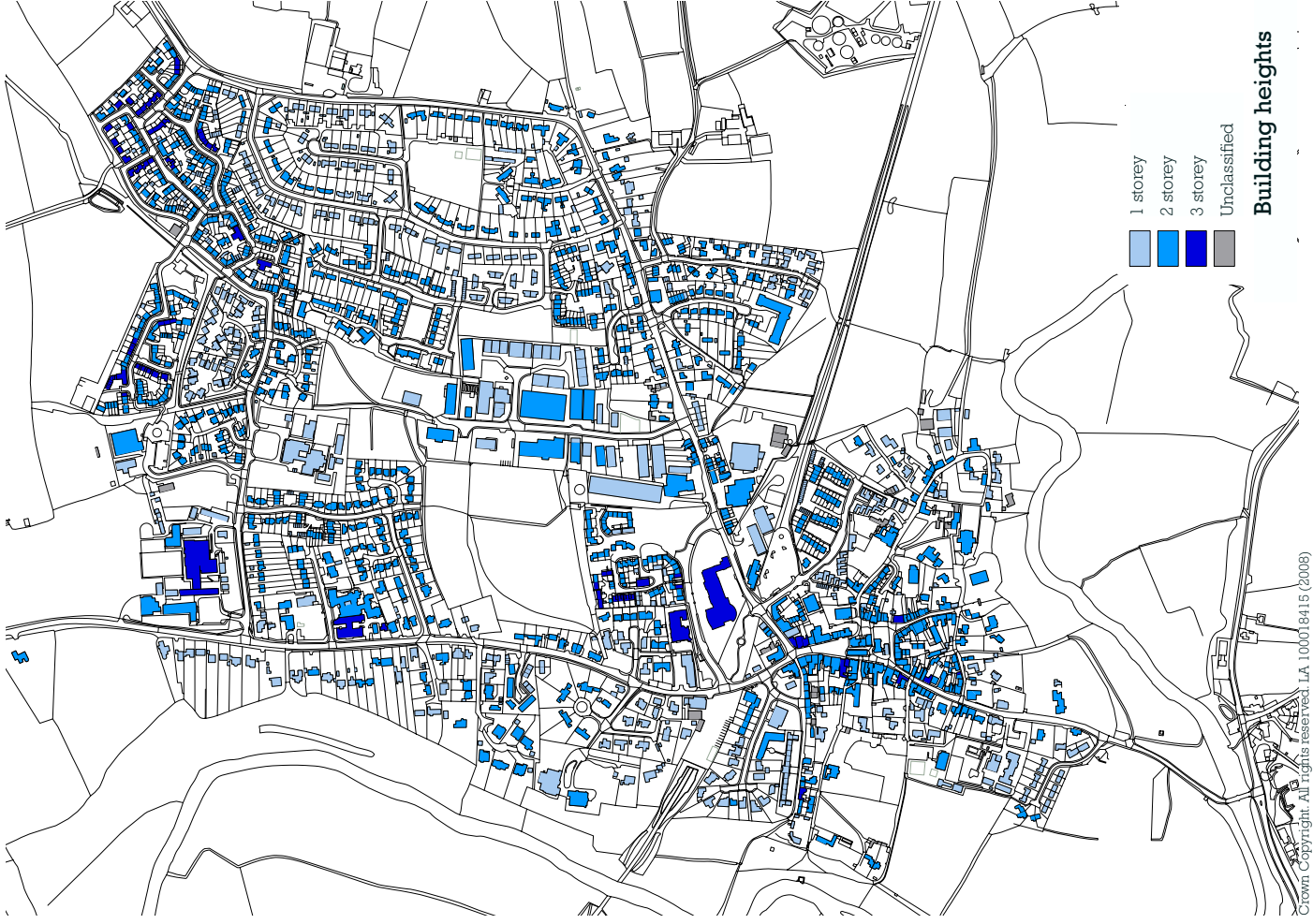
The historic centre can be identified as a tight development of 2 storey buildings facing onto the Market Place and other historic town centre roads and lanes such as Bridge Street. Occasionally buildings rise to 3 storeys.

Elsewhere in the old town comparatively recent infilling has been mostly of 2 storeys although there is a clear pattern of bungalow development to the west of Market Place and Bridge Street in the area immediately behind the historic frontage. This consists substantially of inter-war bungalow development infilling former market gardens, orchards and the like. A scattering of other single storey development can be seen near the eastern end of Penny Street.

Looking at the northern part of the town, other inter-war development consists of a mixture of 1 and 2 storey development. Here the creation of small estates can be identified through the mostly exclusive construction of rows or groups of the same building heights, such as along Green Close.

A marked change in building height can however be identified in the most recent development in the Honeymead Lane and former Cattle Market areas where recent policies that encourage the development of higher densities have resulted in a scattering of 3 storey houses. Many also include rooms in roof spaces which, although not recorded here as an additional storey, often result in buildings that are slightly taller than a conventional 2 storey house.

Taller development on the former Cattle Market site appears appropriate to its edge-of-town centre location, whereas the rise in building height (together with greater building density) does not follow the general historic trend of building height reducing away from town centres.



Map-based analysis

03.04 Building ages

This drawing confirms the historic growth of the town through the estimated ages of the buildings themselves. (Buildings were mostly dated on site approximately from their external appearance and they are not therefore necessarily correct individually. However the exercise gives a good general impression of the progressive expansion of the town)

The original foundation of Sturminster Newton around the Market Place can be immediately identified, together with a scattering of old buildings along and adjacent to Penny Street, including of course the church that was rebuilt to what is substantially its present form in 1486.

Most of the oldest buildings are situated in the southern part of the old town because the extensive fire of 1729 destroyed the buildings in the main market square, whereas those to the south near Market Cross survived and it is here that older buildings are found, such as the White Hart. Buildings around the northern Market Place therefore date mostly from the mid eighteenth century.

Later development, mostly from the inter-war period can be seen extending north of the town centre along Bath Road and Mansston Road.

Further expansion northwards, together with infilling between the two roads has continued up to the present, with the most recent development apparent at the extreme northern edge of the town in the Honeymead Lane area and indeed on the former Cattle Market site just north of the town centre. Minor infilling can also be identified within the old town.



Map-based analysis

03.05

Urban grain



A clear feature of the urban grain drawing is the dense frontage of development that faces onto the Market Place and the principal adjoining streets.

Beyond this frontage, where traditionally there was little depth of development, as already noted, infilling has subsequently taken place. In some instances 'one-off' houses have been absorbed into the organic forms of the old town, but some of the small estate developments can be readily identified from their regular and often cul-de-sac arrangements.

In the newer, northern part of the town, standard repeated house sizes and regular layouts belie the inter- and post-war period of these developments.

Also notable of all but the most recent development is the relatively low density of development. This contrasts with the old town with its high density core and lower density hinterland.

To the north, there is far less variation, not only in density but also in road and plot layout.

However in the extreme northern part of the town, and on the former Cattle Market site, density increases significantly for the most recent developments, and road layouts are again rather more organic with fewer cul-de-sacs.

Within the new town, there are several much larger buildings that stand out clearly from the others. These include the large sheds that are part of the Butt's Pond Industrial Estate, various schools, the new sports centre and the now derelict creamery. Amongst these larger masses of development is the Exchange building and associated Co-op development. This makes for a large building with a plan that compares more closely in scale with the industrial estate and education establishments rather than the old town or the other residential areas.

Map-based analysis

03.06 Trees and open spaces



In the old town part of Sturminster Newton there is a marked variation in tree cover and other vegetation between the town centre and the town edges.

In the centre of town in the Market Place and at Market Cross there is no tree cover, and this results in a remarkably hard, although certainly not unattractive, urban environment. (Interestingly, the only vegetation in the Market Place is a series of neatly trimmed climbers on the front of the Swan Inn. Although relatively small, they make an important contribution to the townscape)

Moving out from the town centre however, there is a progressive increase in the amount of vegetation that is generally in inverse proportion to the density of development. Walking down Penny Street, for example, development is initially hard up against the pavement, with no space for vegetation, but further down the road a larger house with a garden that partly adjoins the street introduces vegetation which, whilst not particularly substantial, has a considerable impact on the character of the lane. (See following elevation of Church Street)

This effect is quite typical of the old town, and there are several routes radiating out from the centre to east and west where the amount of vegetation increases whilst the density of development decreases. This does much to create a progressive and very attractive change in character between town and country.

In external views towards the town, trees and other vegetation in and around the town create a pleasing effect of buildings contained within and below trees.

In the new parts of the town north of the former railway, there is again a marked contrast. Tree cover in this area is altogether more limited, and much that exists survives along former hedges between fields, now incorporated into the town. Despite the generally lower densities in much of the new part of town there is surprisingly little vegetation, especially in the inter- and post-war estates, thus creating many hard and unrelieved skylines of repeated roof forms.

Also in the northern area, there is no gradual increase in vegetation towards the town edges, with the exception of the south-west corner opposite the River Stour, and this exacerbates the hard and uncompromising boundary between town and country already noted.

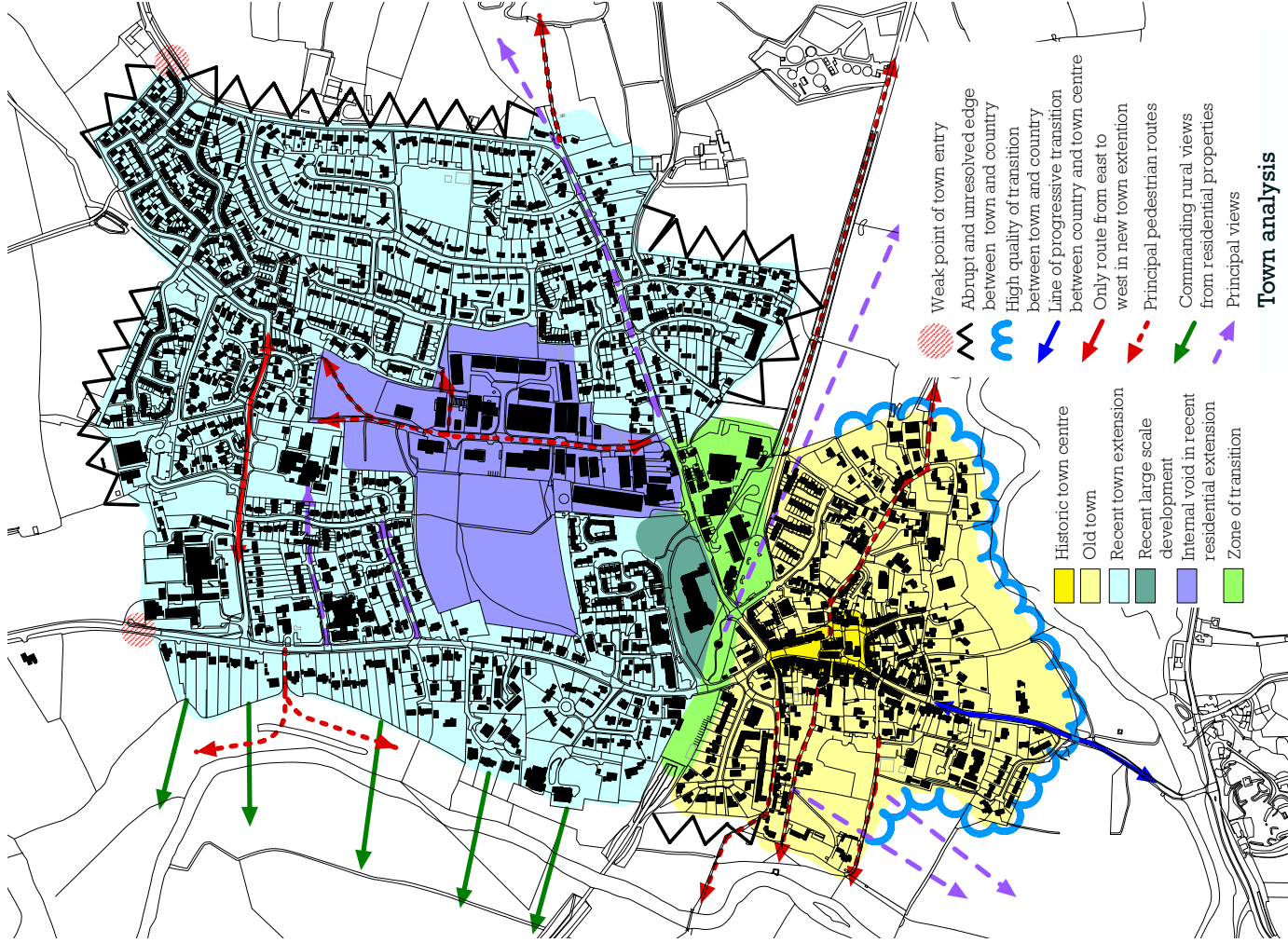
However, more reassuringly, recent development in the Honeyhead Lane area does exhibit some positive tree planning which demonstrates that it can be successfully integrated into higher density development.

The principal open spaces in the town, including allotments, are to be found in the northern area, although their quality and usefulness for informal recreation is limited. The recreation ground on the south-west corner of the old town is however far more appealing, offering extensive views towards the river and backed by many fine mature trees.

Traditionally there has been no public green space close to the town centre, but in recent years part of the former railway cutting between the town centre and the Exchange building has been backfilled to create a relatively small but welcome green space that fortuitously enjoys a fine view south-eastwards towards open country and Hambleton Hill.

Tree cover and open spaces

Map-based analysis 03.07 Town analysis



The Town Analysis drawing draws out the main strategic features of Sturminster Newton.

The principal feature of the drawing is the essential distinction between the old town to the south and the recent town extension northwards, divided along the route of the former railway.

The comparative scale of the two parts of the town can be readily appreciated from this drawing with the old town now significantly smaller than its later additions.

Between the two parts of the town is a marked zone of transition which, although containing some different Character Area types, nonetheless marks a dividing belt that runs east to west across the town. The zone of transition was created substantially by the railway and associated uses, such as the Cattle Market and Milk Factory, and since their closures the fabric of the town has never truly reconnected. The Exchange development (although at a scale atypical of the old town) and adjacent park do much to restore this division, but it is still apparent, and hopefully future development on and around the creamery site will continue this process.

The analysis drawing also identifies the high quality of transition between town and country around the old town. This feature no doubt exists because of the nearby river and floodplain that effectively compelled expansion to move northwards. However to the north there is an abrupt and unresolved edge between the new town and open countryside, as already discussed.

Associated with this issue is the weak point of entry into the town from the north along both main roads. This compares unfavourably with the delightful line of progressive transition between the town and country along Bridge Road to the south.

Town analysis

