



Lyme Regis Conservation Area Appraisal (Review 2010)

Distribution List

In addition to public consultation, this appraisal was distributed for comment to the following:

Lyme Regis Town Council
Lyme Regis Development Trust
Lyme Regis Society
Lyme Regis & Charmouth Hotels and Restaurants Association
Lyme Regis Museum
Dorset County Council
Dorset Gardens Trust
Dorset Natural History & Archaeology Society
Dorset Industrial Archaeology Society
English Heritage
Southern Electric Contracting (street lighting)

CONTENTS

| | | | |
|---|----|--|----|
| Introduction | 4 | Community Involvement | 35 |
| Executive summary | 4 | Review of the Conservation Area boundary | 36 |
| The planning policy context | 5 | General condition | 40 |
| Location and setting | 6 | Summary of Issues and Proposed Actions | 40 |
| Historic development and archaeology | 7 | Developing Management Proposals | 41 |
| Spatial and character analysis | 9 | Advice | 41 |
| Introduction | 9 | References | 42 |
| Spatial analysis | 9 | | |
| Settlement pattern | 9 | | |
| Pattern and grain of development | 11 | | |
| A description of spatial character | 13 | | |
| Landmark buildings or structures | 16 | | |
| Character Analysis | 17 | | |
| Areas and types of activities/building uses | 17 | | |
| Size and scale of buildings | 18 | | |
| Predominant building character | 19 | | |
| Building types and layouts | 19 | | |
| Key Listed Buildings and Structures | 21 | | |
| Important Local Buildings | 23 | | |
| Building Groups | 25 | | |
| Traditional Building Materials and Architectural Details | 25 | | |
| Special local features and traditions | 30 | | |
| Important open spaces and views | 32 | | |
| Important trees | 33 | | |
| Detrimental Features | 34 | | |
| Definition of the Special Interest of the Conservation Area | 35 | | |

Introduction

Lyme Regis is situated at the western end of the district and is well known for its harbour called The Cobb. The Lyme Regis Conservation Area was first designated in 1970 and extended in 1993, 2004 and 2010.

Conservation areas have special architectural or historic interest and it is desirable to preserve or enhance their character or appearance. West Dorset has 79 conservation areas, for which there is an ongoing programme of review that includes reviewing the 2004 conservation area appraisal for Lyme Regis.

Planning decisions must be based on a thorough understanding of the conservation area's character in order to effectively conserve the area's special interest. Conservation area appraisals are therefore essential tools for the planning process. They are also of prime importance for informing any enhancement works and may provide a longer-term basis for effective management of conservation areas.

This appraisal review document is prepared following current advice from English Heritage. Included are summaries of the planning policy context, landscape setting, historic development and archaeology. There is also a more detailed description of the character of the town's buildings, groups, building materials and architectural details, green elements and detrimental features. All of these are brought together into a definition of the special interest of the conservation area. There are recommendations for management action and development. The boundary of the conservation area has been reviewed.

The Lyme Regis Society, Town Mill Trust and Lyme Regis Museum have all contributed knowledge and publications on the town's history and buildings.

The appraisal review was subject to public consultation (May-June 2010), during which an information event, manned by district council officers, was held in the town. Following consultation, officers recommended a number of amendments and in October 2010, the district council approved the appraisal review, which is a technical document supporting policies in the West Dorset District Local Plan (Adopted 2006).

Executive Summary

The key characteristics of the town's special interest and any issues are considered to be:

- Situated within the Jurassic Coast (World Heritage Site) - a spectacular landscape setting with undulating topography, River Lim with its outlet to the sea, trees and woodland;
- The Cobb and associated views and panoramas;
- Cobb Gate, Broad Street and Middle Row and associated views and panoramas;

- Marine Parade, Lister and Langmoor Gardens and associated views and panoramas;
- Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval industrial, coastal and urban archaeology;
- C18 - C19 suburban and seaside resort expansion;
- C16 and C17 timber-framed buildings, often behind later fronts;
- Particularly rich assembly of late C18, Regency and early Victorian villas and town houses with related details, materials and techniques;
- 210 Listed Building entries, including four Grade I and four Grade II*;
- 22 important local buildings;
- Coherent groups of buildings of quality within the town, including Marine Parade, and in Cobb hamlet;
- Architectural and historic details and features overall;
- Consistent use of local Lias limestone, chert and other traditional materials;
- Associations with famous scientific, literary and artistic names.

There are some detrimental features: the effect of traffic on the character of Cobb Square and Cobb Gate and on narrow streets; and incorrect repointing to stone walls.

The Planning Policy Context

The **Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (Adopted 2000)** contains policies relating to the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

Contained within the **West Dorset District Local Plan (Adopted 2006)**, there are a number of planning policies relevant to the settlement:

- *Safeguarding Assets*, Policy SA1 seeks to protect the natural beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Policy SA2 seeks to protect the character and natural beauty of the Heritage Coast; development must be in keeping with the landscape character of the area (SA3); Policy SA7 protects green corridors within the town; Policy SA10 seek to protect Sites of international, national and local importance for nature conservation; Policies SA18, 19 and 20 cover the demolition, alterations to, and the settings of Listed Buildings; SA21 seeks to protect the character or appearance of Conservation Areas; SA22 is concerned with demolition within a Conservation Area; and SA23 relates to the protection of sites of national archaeological significance;
- *Avoiding Hazards*: Policy AH5 relates to development in land instability zones;
- *Settlement Policy*: Policy SS1 relates to development within Defined Development Boundaries (DDB); SS3 relates to development outside the DDBs;
- *Housing, Employment and Tourism and Transport and Infrastructure*: there are a number of general policies relating to these issues and associated land use;
- *Community Issues*: Policies C0 and C1 relate to the town centre and primary shopping areas;

- *Design and Amenity*: a specific chapter contains several policies regarding design and amenity considerations, including Policy DA1, relating to retention of woodland, trees and hedgerows and other important landscape features;
- *Western Area*: Policy WA 24 allocates land for mixed use at Woodberry Down; Policy WA25 identifies a traffic management and environmental improvement action plan.

National Planning Policy and Legislation protects sites of international and national importance for nature conservation. Flood risk is addressed in the Government's Planning Policy Statement 25.

The Supplementary Planning Document **Design and Sustainable Development Planning Guidelines** were adopted by the district council in February 2009. This contains 10 design policies that apply to different types and scales of development. Accompanying this is the **West Dorset Landscape Character Assessment** adopted February 2009, which addresses the 35 landscape areas of the District.

The Framework for the Future of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009-2014 contains a number of relevant policies relating to the Historic Environment (historic buildings, archaeology, historic parks and gardens); the Built Environment (historic buildings, Conservation Areas and other developed areas); and Landscape.

The West Dorset District Local Plan, Design and Sustainable Development Planning Guidelines and Landscape Character Assessment are available at district council offices, whilst the Framework for the Future of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan is available from Dorset County Council. The documents can be viewed on www.dorsetforyou.com and main libraries will hold relevant printed copies. Information on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is also available on www.dorsetforyou.com

Location & Setting

Lyme Regis is a small town on the dramatically undulating coastline of Lyme Bay. This coastline, of paramount importance to Lyme's history, is part of the Jurassic Coast (Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site) and the West Dorset Heritage Coast. The town itself is in the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These landscape and geological international and national designations underline the importance of Lyme's setting.

Lyme is situated in the steep Lim valley and on the coastal slopes to the west, north and NE of the valley. To the west of the town are the Undercliff and impressive cliffs rising to 150 metres; to the north, Rode and Dragon's Hills rising to over 170 metres; to the NE, the dramatic slopes of The Spittles and Black Ven; and continuing eastwards, past Charmouth, the spectacular Jurassic coastline that includes Golden Cap and Portland.



Fig 1 Location map

Historic Development and Archaeology

Saxon and Norman

The siting of the Parish Church and the character of the streets nearby, suggest the likelihood of an early centre of settlement being focused on the area where the Lim valley meets the sea. Salt working was important revenue.

Early Medieval

Corresponding with the town's economic prosperity (enhanced by being made a borough in 1284) and its importance as a channel port in the 13th century was the urban expansion of Broad Street with its street market and regular tenements (property divisions). Such expansion might have been planned as a whole rather than incremental.

Economic prosperity encouraged the construction of the protective breakwater and harbour, The Cobb, which served the town and a large hinterland. Goods were transported between the harbour and the town across the beach at low tide on what became known as the Cart Road. It is possible that Cobb hamlet, which developed as a separate entity, dates back to construction of the Cobb in the C13.

Later Medieval and Elizabethan

The Cobb was severely storm damaged, and storms and landslips ruined or removed parts of the town, especially, it is thought, in the area where the River Lim enters the sea. It was not until the 16th century that the harbour was repaired, houses restored and rebuilt (some survive from this era) and prosperity rekindled by sea trade and a woollen and linen industry that developed in the Lim valley at Jordan and Mill Green in the form of weavers homes and cloth mills.

18th Century and 19th Century

In the early 18th century, the town suffered a severe economic downturn, which was reversed later in the century by the actions of the resident philanthropist Thomas Hollis, who succeeded in turning the town into a health and holiday resort. In order to satisfy the influx of visitors and new residents, many town properties were refashioned in the late Georgian style. Other gentry, wishing to retire near the sea, built elegant Georgian and Victorian houses on the adjoining hillsides, which along with the new boarding houses and hotels encouraged the town's expansion along Silver and Pound Streets. The town's association with the famous names of Mary Anning, Jane Austen, Beatrix Potter and James McNeill Whistler was also established.

Hollis established the town's first seafront walk or promenade at what is today the eastern end of Marine Parade. This popular walk eventually continued to Cobb hamlet above the ancient Cart Road, and in the following century, the town's seafront buildings extended part way along Marine Parade.

In 1844, a serious fire in Coombe Street, Bridge Street and the low end of Broad Street destroyed the shambles (meat market), the Customs House, and other commercial premises and irreparably altered the character and appearance of the historic centre.

Following repairs over the centuries, it was the storm of November 1824 that required The Cobb to be largely rebuilt and given the appearance that is generally known today.

It was in the 18th century that Cobb hamlet developed as a separate entity next to the harbour.

20th Century

The private gardens situated between the seafront and properties on Pound Street were vulnerable to ground slippage and there were attempts to prevent movement by building a retaining wall at the back of Marine Parade. The difficulty of owning such unstable land eventually led to the town acquiring most of the private land as public gardens, Langmoor in 1913 and Lister in 1965, which continue to provide enjoyment for visitors and residents alike. The creation of public gardens continued the historic physical separation between Cobb hamlet and the town.

This century saw the town expand into the hinterland, predominantly onto higher ground, keeping away from the instability of the coastal slopes. At Gunn Cliff, a recent drainage and sewage treatment and coastal protection scheme established an exciting public space.

John Fowles (1926-2005) author of the well-known *French Lieutenant's Woman* for which Lyme Regis was the setting, lived at Belmont, Pound Street.

21st Century

Major coastal protection and slope stabilisation works along the seafront and in Langmoor and Lister Gardens and Cobb Road were completed in 2006, forming the second phase of five phases of work. Opportunity was taken to redesign the gardens and consider improvement to the associated length of Marine Parade.

Archaeology

The Parish Church and major buildings are described in the West Dorset RCHME volume, but otherwise, there has been little archaeological investigation. Apart from some local historical summaries and collections (see references), the most useful source is KJ Penn's *Historic Towns in Dorset*, now thirty years old. Limited descriptions of building plans, interiors and land plots also survive. An 1841 map of the town is helpful in terms of town development.

The **areas and topics of archaeological potential** are:

- The Cobb;
- Area of early settlement near the Parish Church;

- Waterfront, notably early quay sites around Cobb Gate and Gun Cliff;
- Land plots or tenements, especially in Broad Street, Combe Street and Sherborne Lane;
- Salt working, including that in Sherborne Lane;
- Early building structures, for example, medieval houses and cellars;
- The medieval hospital site ;
- Lepers' Well;
- Industrial sites, including milling and fulling (cleansing cloth to remove impurities and make it thicker).

Spatial & Character Analysis

Introduction

Each settlement differs in its relationships between buildings, public space, gardens and open countryside. Within conservation areas (usually the historic core of a place), there are unique progressions of spaces, with varying degrees of physical and psychological enclosure and exposure. These sensations depend upon the density and height of buildings, their position relative to the highway, the character of boundaries and the dominance or dearth of trees, and views out to countryside or into the settlement core. Also important are the effects of topography – the rise and fall and alignment of roads and paths. These are all elements of **townscape**, a method of giving visual coherence and organisation to the mixture of buildings, streets and spaces that make up the settlement's environment. Townscape enables places to be described, using three elements:

- The sequence of views obtained in passing through an area, depending upon road alignment, positions of buildings, views etc.; the chain of events is usefully termed serial vision;
- The feelings of relative exposure and enclosure depending upon the size and shape of spaces and buildings;
- Content: colour, texture, scale, style, personality and the many little details of materials, street furniture, signs and other local distinctiveness characteristics.

Spatial Analysis (see also Review of the Conservation Area boundary)

Settlement pattern

Important historic routes & gateways

The essential shape of the town is derived from highways radiating out from the Cobb Gate area, where the river Lim meets the sea. The busier Church Street and Broad Street, (which branches out into Silver Street and Pound Street) climb the steep hillsides to the north and north-west of Cobb Gate, whereas the quieter highway between them, Jordan/Mill Green/Coombe Street, follows the gentle gradient of the Lim valley. The valley route is considered to be the oldest, once forming the main street of the original royal borough. After The Cobb was built, a further radial route from Cobb Gate was



Fig 2 Church St



Fig 3 Coombe St

established along the shoreline. Known as the Cart Road, it predominantly carried cargo, which had to proceed between the town's customs gate (Cobb Gate) and the harbour. The connection of Cobb Road to Pound Street after 1830, which allowed The Cobb to effectively circumvent the town, led to the demise in the Cart Road's importance for harbour traffic, although its shoreline location ensured an increase in its recreational use, only to be overtaken by Marine Parade, which then ran parallel to it at a higher level.

'Gateways' can be found on the highways, marking important visual points of entry into the historic areas of the town. The Georgian and Victorian suburbs on Silver Street and Pound Street have the Dorset House B&B and Mariners Hotel and Coram Tower and the trees opposite it respectively marking 'gateways'. The building group of Tudbold Almshouses, 37, 38, & 40 Church Street forms the hillside 'gateway' into the early town, whilst its valley entry is marked by Jordan Cottage and the river nearby. The town's maritime 'gateway' is of course The Cobb.

As well as the highways radiating out from the historic centre, there are a number of historic routes that continue to act as shortcuts, increasing permeability within the town: Stile Lane, linking Cobb hamlet with the top of town; Sherborne Lane, connecting the top of town to the Lim valley; and Monmouth Street, providing easier access to the Parish Church.

The narrowness of many of the old routes, capturing the atmosphere of the past when travel was by foot, packhorse or cart (some routes remain pedestrian today), is in contrast to the singular and great width of Broad Street which spreads out at its low end to form a middle row of shops, underpinning its importance as a market place as well as a thoroughfare.

Besides the gradient of the highways and their width, the continuous building frontages or stone boundary walls that often define the edge of the highways, as well as the occasional wooded slope, seawall, beach and riverside, also establish overall, an impressive and varied character.



Fig 4 Jordan

Pattern and grain of development

The town and Cobb hamlet (to the west by the harbour) have developed as two distinct areas connected by the old Cart Road and the linear walk of Marine Parade but clearly separated by the contrasting open character of Langmoor and Lister Gardens. They remain dependent on each other, share many development characteristics, but also, keep an historical distance from each other.

The Town

The historic town's compactness or density is greatest in the vicinity of Cobb Gate and Bridge Street, although generally, density of street frontages is high, only gradually lessening in Silver Street and Pound Street.

Where density is high, land plots or tenements are generally narrow, rectilinear and at right angles to the street. Sherborne Lane has particularly distinctive long and thin tenements. In the 18th century, the town expanded at a lower density along Silver Street and Pound Street, and established wide as well as generous land plots.

In the compact parts of the town, building frontages are either situated at the back of the pavement or up against the road, and occasionally, are set back behind a front wall or railings. The same frontage positions can be found in Silver Street and Pound Street, where the town expanded, but properties are also well set back from the street, reflecting greater social aspiration and desire for good views. The Guildhall and Lyme Regis Museum also have a special arrangement in that they share an open courtyard on Bridge Street that maintains a strong civic and community presence at the centre, whilst middle row (Nos 4A – 6A Broad Street) has the unique situation of being double-fronted. Occasionally, older tenements have frontage arrangements allowing access to rear uses, for example, through passageways to ranges of cottages and workshops, and carriage entrances to yards with shops.

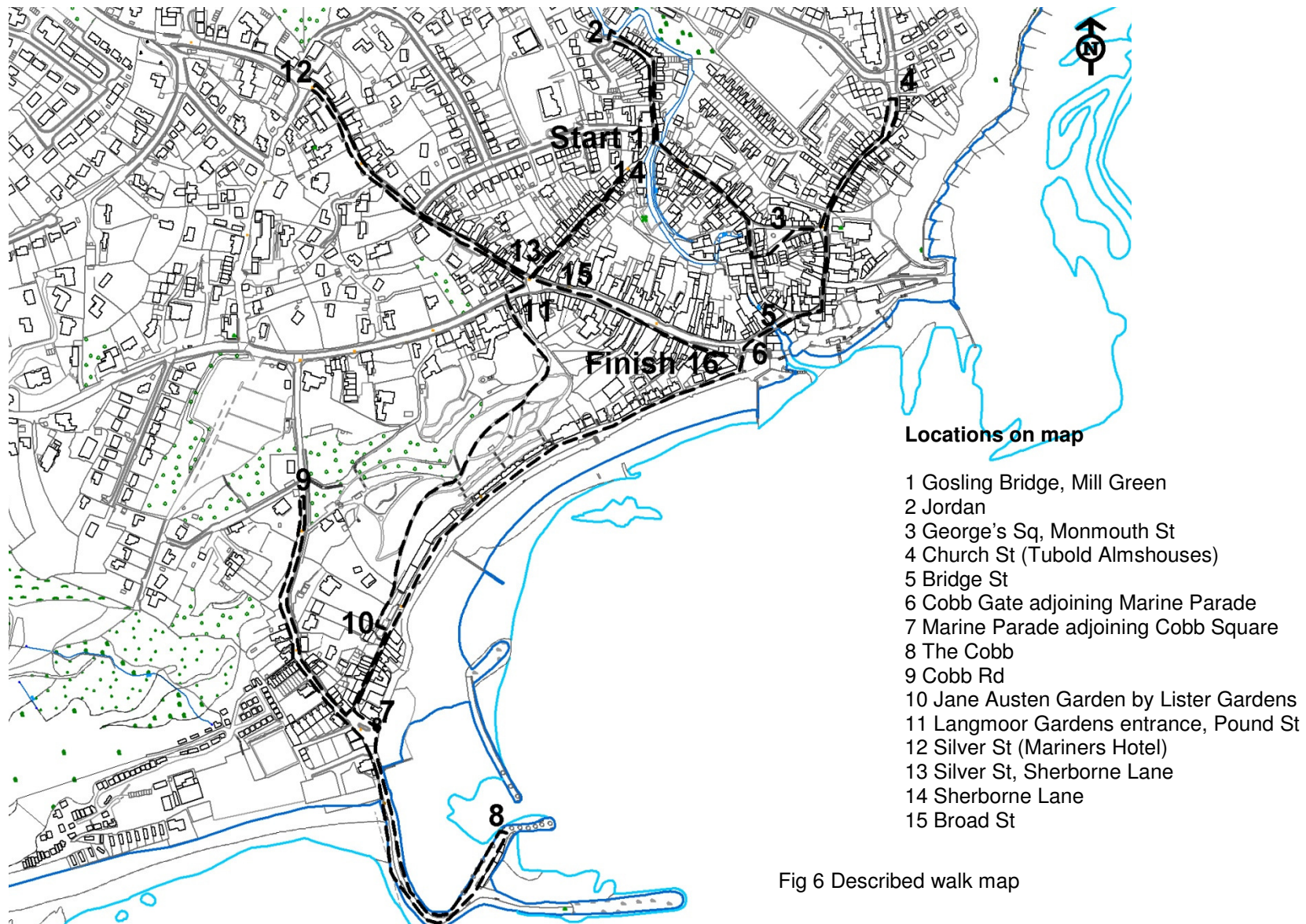
A number of the older tenements still have gardens, which represent a link to the past and provide important contrast in the urban setting. The larger, less dense, land plots tend to have mature gardens, sometimes with woodland, providing a naturalness that can be absent from the compact areas.

Cobb hamlet

The compactness of Cobb hamlet, as well as the contrasting spaciousness in and around the development to the north of it, is visible from The Cobb. In the hamlet, the land plots tend to be shorter than old town tenements. Building frontages are also like the old town, either at the back of the pavement or on the road, or occasionally set back, but also differ, in being at right angles to the road when a seaward aspect was required. North of the hamlet are low density land plots characteristic of those in Silver and Pound Streets, expressing social aspirations through favourable aspect and spacious gardens. In Marine Parade is an example of the tradition of providing shops within a rear yard.



Fig 5 Sherborne Lane



A description of spatial character

Starting in Mill Green, a described walk, as indicated on a map (fig 2), provides an example of spatial character in the conservation area.

Mill Green/Jordan (map locations: 1 to 2 with a return to 1)

Mill Green's narrow width is defined by mostly historic development. It climbs steadily from Gosling Bridge, then descends and curves around to the delightful ford crossing on the River Lim. The two and three storey houses are set on the curving road line which establishes an interesting space or enclosure half way along its length, with properties beyond Orchard Close creating a minor focal point. The relatively open riverside becomes apparent, with water, trees, boundary walls, and a mixture of large older houses and modern development. The area is called Jordan and still has the feel of the old packhorse river route. On returning to Gosling Bridge, there is a gradual fall in level down to the irregular space by the bridge, where several routes meet.

Coombe Street and Monmouth Street (map locations: 1 to 3)

From Gosling Bridge, there is a view south to The Lynch and the green slopes around Lepers' Well and the skyline of trees beyond. The Lynch's character is that of an unusual squeeze between the deep sided River Lim and the shallow mill leat. Coombe Street has the enclosed, intimate and winding qualities of the early medieval street with most buildings lining the highway edge. The street's slight curve emphasises the importance of the former Bethany Chapel. Beyond, opposite, the narrow entry into Mill Lane reveals the broad gable ends of the Town Mill, set in an attractive courtyard with trees behind.

After the junction with Monmouth Street, Coombe Street widens, having a large garage on the west and bayed and porched fronts on the east where a low archway and steps also lead to the intimate space called George's Court and then George's Square, overlooked by continuous houses in Monmouth Street, which form an attractive frontage to the town's only public square. To the east is a fine, framed view of the Parish Church.

Church Street and Bridge Street (map locations: 3 to 4 to 5)

Walking from George's Sq to Tudbold Almshouses, Church Street with its boundary walls, building frontages, twists and hilliness create the effect of a small ravine cutting through the town's historical past. The long building frontages are situated on the back of the pavement and only two larger houses on the west side have space around them. The east side has a mixture of terraced housing and larger scale buildings in the form of the Parish Church, two halls and modern flats. The church is elevated above Church Street and has an interesting arrangement of archway and internal steps from street level up to its western entrance. The eastern end of the churchyard has a sudden and exciting view of the sea, The Cobb, Cobb Gate and the spectacular coastline.



Fig 7 Monmouth St

The shape of Church Street divides it visually with The Gables acting as a focal point when looking north and the side wing of The Guildhall as a focal point on the sharp turn into Bridge Street. A narrow view down Monmouth Street into George's Square is particularly noteworthy. At the Guildhall, two arches frame unexpected views of the sea.

Bridge Street is short and narrow defined by a curving continuous frontage on its north side and on the south, predominated by the Guildhall and Museum with their shared courtyard and access to the sea, which all together, establish strong civic, and community importance. Just beyond, the squeezed Coombe Street entry, there are sudden views from Buddle Bridge of the Lim River, partly channelled by house backs and stone walls, as it flows into the sea.

Cobb Gate (map locations: 5 to 6)

The historical importance of Cobb Gate is weakened by its current function as a car park, yet from it are stunning views of The Cobb and the coast and a compelling view up Broad Street. The Pilot Boat Inn's handsome rounded corner and the tall C19 façade of the Rock Point Inn provide Cobb Gate with positive boundaries, as do the stone retaining walls and steps of Bell Cliff.

Marine Parade (map locations: 6 to 7)

Marine Parade has three separate characters: from Cobb Gate, a genteel walk alongside a delightful seafront of Georgian origins with architectural highlights in the form of Sundial House and the thatched Nos. 6A-9; in the middle, with a backdrop of the Langmoor and Lister Gardens, a parade of modest 20th century seaside entertainment and shelters, with a central faience shelter as a focal point; and at Cobb hamlet a narrow road of old houses, warehouses and inns. Joining up the three separate characters of Marine Parade is the archetypal experience of the seaside - its sights, sounds and smells – and the unique pleasure of walking parallel with the Cart Rd, defined by a unique combination of seawall, beach and tide, towards The Cobb.

Cobb hamlet and The Cobb (map locations: 7 to 8 to 9)

At the end of Marine Parade, at the foot of Cobb Road, is Cobb Square, the centre of the hamlet and the historic access to The Cobb. The square is surrounded by the Cobb Arms, shops, a former chapel, the Lifeboat Station and the former C19 Customs House and is dominated by traffic. From the square are important views of the harbour.

Walking The Cobb is one of the great Lyme experiences, whether on the top paved route out towards sea or at the lower level around the harbour with its famous steps called Granny's Teeth, stores, anchored boats and views inland and along the coast. The Cobb's structure is equally memorable.

At Cobb Square, Cobb Road continues uphill passing the seaward facing and elevated Ozone Terrace and Cobb Terrace



Fig 8 Marine Parade & Cart Rd



Fig 9 Cobb Sq

(former coastguard cottages) and other roadside properties of varying ages before becoming sunken and tree lined. The road retains the character of a coastal cliff lane leading down to The Cobb and the sea.

Langmoor and Lister Gardens (map locations: return from 9 to 10 to 11)

The return towards town is via the redesigned Jane Austen and Langmoor and Lister Gardens, taking in expansive grassy slopes, winding paths and large shrubs and trees on the upper slopes. Impressive views towards the sea and The Cobb are left behind as the interesting upper entrance, next to the former Peek Memorial Chapel, leads into Pound Street.

Pound Street and Silver Street (map locations: 11 to 12)

By the former chapel, Pound Street climbs and curves steadily to the west, with a good run of early C19 buildings on the southern side. A combination of light brick and painted, stucco classical buildings, evergreens, palms, shrubs and trees, together with glimpses seaward, gives the area an exotic feel. To the east, the road meets Silver Street at the top of Broad Street, a meeting emphasised by the canted corner of Broadway House, formerly the Langmoor Hotel.

Silver Street is steep and sinuous with the sea visible on the downhill approach. Beyond the narrow run of continuous frontage at the town end, the road's character differs on each side. On the SW side, the Regency villa Dorset House and the impressive Roman Catholic Church overlooks the road, but otherwise, tall boundaries walls overhung with trees define its edge. An exception is the open green space in front of the library. On the NE, is an attractive succession of mainly C19 properties, including the Mariners Hotel and the Nags Head Inn, set behind the pavement or occasionally behind modest front gardens.

Sherborne Lane (map locations: return from 12 to 13 to 14)

Returning towards Broad St, the white painted Baptist Church heralds the start of the now pedestrian Sherborne Lane. Starting fairly level, the lane then cascades down to the river at Gosling Bridge. The lane's cart width is edged by mainly C18 and C19 (or earlier) houses and cottages, some with small, walled front gardens. The intimate scale of the lane is a strong characteristic.

Broad Street & Bell Cliff (map location: return from 14 to 15 to 16)

On the return to Broad Street and set back behind a nondescript forecourt, the Regent Cinema opposite is a point of interest. From here, the street runs downhill to the older part of town where river and sea meet, its generous width contained by three or four storey continuous street frontages, providing abundant architectural and historical interest. Walking down, a particular feature may catch the eye, such as a tall projecting window (Three Cups, The Royal Lion), but the main focus becomes Middle Row, nestling against Bell Cliff, with a backcloth of sky and sea.



Fig 10 Lister Gardens



Fig 11 Broad St & Middle Row

Passing along Cornhill on the south side of Middle Row, above the level of Broad Street, the railings of Bell Cliff are a necessary stop, allowing people to enjoy the timeless views of the Parish Church and Lyme Bay.

Landmark buildings or structures (please refer to Assets Map at the back)

The most prominent landmark is The Cobb, which is a unique element, providing immense architectural, historical and visual interest. Next, in term of prominence and interest, is the Parish Church, which signifies the town centre, and in accord with tradition, remains visually unchallenged from the many viewpoints in and around the historic town. Other buildings that form particular reference points are as follows:

- The former Peek Memorial Chapel with its bell-cote, marking the entrance to Langmoor Gardens;
- The Town Mill that signifies the presence of the river and the town's former reliance on it;
- The imposing Coram Tower that stands at the western entrance or 'gateway' of the historic town;
- The prominent Roman Catholic Church that visually identifies Silver Street;
- The Lyme Regis Museum and adjacent Guildhall that signify a civic centre;
- Sundial Cottage, Nos 1 & 2 Library Cottage and Nos 4 – 9 Marine Parade that form two visual groups characterising the seafront;
- The Three Cups Hotel, Red Lion Hotel and the adjoining No 58 that provide Broad Street with eye-catching architectural features;
- Middle Row, (especially No 6 with its external painting of Broad Street), that is historically linked to the former shambles and figures in famous views down Broad Street;
- The Congregational Chapel that gives Coombe Street a particular architectural interest;
- The round fulling tower, north-east of Gosling's Bridge, and one of few visible references to the town's woollen and linen industry;
- The Rock Point Inn and The Pilot Boat that enclose Cobb Gate;
- The cylindrical tower at Gunn Cliff implemented as part of a sea defences project.



Fig 12 Gunn Cliff

Character Analysis (see also Review of the Conservation Area boundary)

Areas and types of activities/building uses

The town's current activities and building uses provide continuity with those of the past, which underpin the town's character.

Broad Street is the town's bustling main street with its impressive concentration of retail and business frontages that include inns and hotels. In some rear yards, residential and retail uses follow tradition, whilst the street's after hour uses, especially restaurants and the cinema, help extend liveliness.

At the top of Broad Street, a concentration of hotels begins, and this traditional use then continues along the south side of Pound Street. Amongst the hotels are residences that are representative of the town's emergence as a seaside resort. The same residences are present in Silver Street, although nearer to town, frontages have a greater variety of use. Overall, quieter uses prevail in these two streets.

At the lower end of Church Street, a group of civic and community buildings, for example, the Guildhall and the Marine Theatre, and other retail uses are an important reminder that this area, close to the Parish Church, is an historic centre of the town.

Coombe Street has a lively mix of light industrial, residential, community and retail uses, which are important historically as the area predated Broad Street as the town's main street. Off Coombe Street is the lane to the restored Town Mill whose community and partial retail use safeguards an example of water-powered industry in the Lim valley. Up the valley, in the residential area of Mill Green, the Angel Inn is a rare surviving link to the area's once thriving cloth-making community.

Along with the holiday lets and the Bay Hotel, Marine Parade's modest mix of uses, including robust, simple shelters either side of a pre-eminent pavilion, are well suited to the town's delightful yet restrained seafront (reminiscent of the heyday of the Georgian resort), as are the adjoining areas of outdoor recreational areas called Lister and Langmoor Gardens.

Cobb hamlet has the same mix of uses, although there are others, for example, the fishmonger, the Harbour Master and the Lifeboat Station that relate to The Cobb as harbour and breakwater with its present-day fishing and leisure boats.

Lyme Regis is famous for the collection of fossils and has several fossil shops.



Fig 13 Bay Hotel

Size and scale of buildings

Many of the properties are small, mainly two-storey in height with a narrow frontage, reflecting modest financial means or social aspirations, or an earlier building that for whatever reason, avoided the town's dramatic changes, examples of which are the terraced cottages (Nos 13 & 14) in Sherborne Lane and house and former shop (Nos 2 & 3) in Coombe Street and the shop (No 50) in Broad Street. Buildings of greater size and scale, particularly evident in and near Broad Street, are associated with particular uses or personal aspirations, for example:

- Main coaching inns and purpose-built hotels and lodging houses, for example, the broad fronted, three-storey Royal Lion and Three Cups Hotels in Broad Street;
- An important public service, for example, the broad fronted, three-storey Post Office;
- Shop or workers premises, as in the narrow fronted, three-storey No 14, Coombe Street and Nos 22 & 22A, Mill Green;
- Community and civic roles as performed by the physically distinct Lyme Regis Museum and Guildhall;
- Expressions of social status in and outside the town, for example, the attached, broad fronted, three & half storey Nos 53 and 54, Broad Street, and the detached, broad fronted, two-storey Belmont, Pound Street;
- Storage as at the broad fronted, three-storey bonded warehouse, Cobb hamlet;
- Public worship as expressed by the Parish Church, the Roman Catholic Church and Baptist Church;
- Seaside leisure as announced by the Bay Hotel at the end of an important row.

The influence of topography on the prominence of buildings is noticeable, particularly on the hills and cliffs, and in the steep streets, such as Broad Street, where the slope of the ground can diminish or increase the prominence of a frontage depending on where it is situated.

What is generally evident throughout the town is that despite topographical differences and variations in size and scale, buildings sit comfortably alongside or near each other, and those buildings that by tradition have particular prominence remain unchallenged.



Fig 14 View towards Cobb Rd from The Cobb

Predominant building character

The prevailing late Georgian and early Victorian architectural character, which is visible across a broad social spectrum, is a remarkable legacy. It followed the town's revitalisation as a fashionable resort, whereby many properties (often Elizabethan in style) were rebuilt or re-fronted, but often such properties still have evidence of earlier construction, a particular example being Tudor House in Coombe Street. Interspersed amongst the prevailing architectural character are also late Victorian, Edwardian, Inter-war and contemporary buildings that enhance the town.

The late Georgian and early Victorian period of construction has established important themes as follows:

- A domestic architecture of workers cottages; town houses, suburban houses, sea resort villas and seaside homes;
- Many attractive and well-proportioned shop fronts;
- Main facades or street frontages with a settled or balanced appearance resulting from roof ridges that are parallel to them, as well as their overall use of moulded cornices and parapet walls, overhanging eaves, banding between floors and rows of proportioned windows.
- Vertical shaped windows of Georgian and occasionally Victorian Revival design, mainly sashes with multiple glass panes, although in workers' dwellings there are also casements windows;
- A general abundance of architectural details and ornament.

Together, the above architectural themes comprise a rich visual coherence, which along with those elements that reflect an earlier period, give the town and Cobb hamlet a satisfying character and appearance.

Building types and layouts

The Parish Church is particularly interesting, an amalgam of a C12 and C13 cruciform church structure with a central tower, then altered radically in the C15.

The former Congregational Chapel follows a national type having a five bay, symmetrical front, with a central entrance. There is a separate former schoolroom. The Baptist Church is four by two bays, with the entrance on the narrower front. The Roman Catholic Church is a fine example of early Gothic Revival style, with an attached belfry to the NW.

The picturesque late C19 Guildhall (with older fittings and details) comprising a large upper council chamber and other rooms on two floors, has an octagonal stair projection that becomes a tower. Part of the ground floor is open, with through passages. Lyme Regis Museum has similarity of plan and overall style, L-shaped, two storeys and again, a projecting stair turret and cupola. The Regent Cinema and Marine Theatre are both comprised of a main auditorium and separate entry



Fig 15 Thatched cottages, Sherborne Lane



Fig 16 Parish Church

spaces. The cinema is an example of a pre-War small town 'super cinema', designed by W H Watkins in 1937. It has an attached shop unit, a foyer and a stadium-type auditorium with a raised gallery of double seats.

The Town Mill, C16-C19, has two main ranges, three and two storey. Cast iron and wooden machinery and a restored wheel, related to a working operation and interpretation, give the site particular interest. Also of interest as a rare building type related to the clothing industry is the circular fulling tower near Gosling Bridge. Buddle Bridge is an important single span structure, with C12 elements and the double arched Gosling Bridge is probably C17.

The Royal Lion Hotel has incorporated another establishment, the New Inn, and acquired two attached blocks with a former assembly room at the rear, a large attached wing and a carriageway entrance to the former stable yard. The Three Cups is three storeys with a three bay front, the central entry via a prominent bowed porch with a plan running back some distance from the main street. The smaller public houses seem to be an assembly of rooms with specific uses, either as separate bars, function rooms or private accommodation.

Shops usually occupy the ground floor, either inserted into a house front or purpose-built. Many are central entry, with a recessed central door and display windows either side, but there are examples of offset side entries. Separate entries to accommodation survive and there are a number of passages leading to accommodation at the rear of the main frontages.

Houses include large, early-mid C19 detached villas, double pile in plan with lean-to verandas and dormer windows, and semi-detached Regency houses, usually three storeys or two plus attic. Fronts or refronting of earlier buildings tend to have symmetrical openings with a central entrance, three or five bays wide.

On Marine Parade, there are several houses that are adaptations of purpose-built buildings, such as No. 11, where the ground floor (the original entrance to the bath house) projects forward of the two upper floors. No. 12, Library Cottage, was two early-mid C19 cottages converted into one by the Arts and Crafts architect Arnold Mitchell. Nos. 4 and 6 were originally three two storey cottages but in the later C19, a third floor was added and two three storey end wings added. These have arched entries and steps up to the main level. In contrast, the Bay Hotel of six bays, three storeys and accommodation in the roof space is a 1920's purpose-built block rather than a conversion of a private house. There are also houses and cottages set in informal terraces or rows, notably the group of Nos. 6A-9, sharing common details but avoiding the regularity that can be associated with C19 seafront development. Cobb House Flats comprise a six bay and four storey planned terrace. The 1830-ish adjacent Old Bonded Store (converted to flats) has its original security reflected in iron studded double doors.

Smaller houses and cottages are usually in rows, two bays and two or three storeys, with a ground floor entrance hall and front room. Cellars exist in some properties, notably in Church Street and Coombe Street, where there are examples of refronted C16 and C17 houses. There are few planned terraces (for example Cobb and Ozone Terraces) although there are three very similar houses in Nos. 9-11 Church Street. Later C19 and early C20 houses are attached in rows, semi-detached or detached.



Fig 17 Town Mill



Fig 18 Regency villa, Silver St

In Cobb Hamlet, the former Custom House had two floors with a first floor balcony (removed) that presumably gave officers views of activity in the harbour. The group of the Royal Standard and its neighbours has gabled ends directly onto the street, possibly reflecting the norm for buildings related to maritime uses, before the sea became a fashionable asset. Cobb Terrace is a ten bay row of former coastguards cottages. Higher up Cobb Road are a number of smaller cottages set at right angles or roughly parallel to the curving road line. Westfield shows an interesting use of steep levels, being single storey on the upslope and two storeys, at right angles, downhill.

Key Listed Buildings and Structures (please refer to Assets Map at the back)

The Cobb and Parish Church are Grade I, whilst the Roman Catholic Church, Belmont and the Guildhall are listed Grade II*.

The key buildings and structures are:

- St Michael the Archangel, a significant Parish Church;
- The Cobb, a truly iconic structure with remains from many periods, including late C18 walling on the east face of Victoria Pier, substantial portions rebuilt after the storms of 1783 and 1824, and the addition of Victoria pier between 1842 and 1852;
- Roman Catholic Church of St Michael and St George, confident early Gothic Revival with tower and spire;
- Former Congregational Chapel, refined Mid-C18 with a handsome street front;
- The Guildhall and Lyme Regis Museum, characterful Victorian civic buildings;
- Belmont, a late C18 gentry house, Elinor Coade connections and Coade Stone ornamentation;
- Three Cups Hotel and Royal Lion Hotel, both with prominent details;
- Town Mill, archaeological and structural importance with surviving machinery;
- Tudor House Hotel, surviving C16 timber frame elements and details;
- No. 4 Monmouth Street, building history and refined details to main front;
- Coram Tower, interesting Victorian interpretation of a college masters house;
- Burley, The Old Vicarage and West Hill, Silver Street, three good examples of early C19 large villas with Regency details including verandas and ironwork;
- Regent Cinema, 1937 building with successful interior decoration;
- Nos. 6A-9 Marine Parade, a picturesque thatched and rendered row with a sympathetic piece of 1930's infill in Little Madeira (No. 6A);
- No. 12 Marine Parade (Library Cottage) and the adjacent Sundial House: the former, a cottage conversion by the Arts and Crafts architect Arnold Mitchell who incorporated handsome leadwork; the latter, an accomplished house with delightful details designed by and for the same architect;
- Holme Craig and Shire End, on the west side of Cobb Road, both good examples of detached early-C19 villas;
- Royal Standard, as an example of pre-resort functional building.

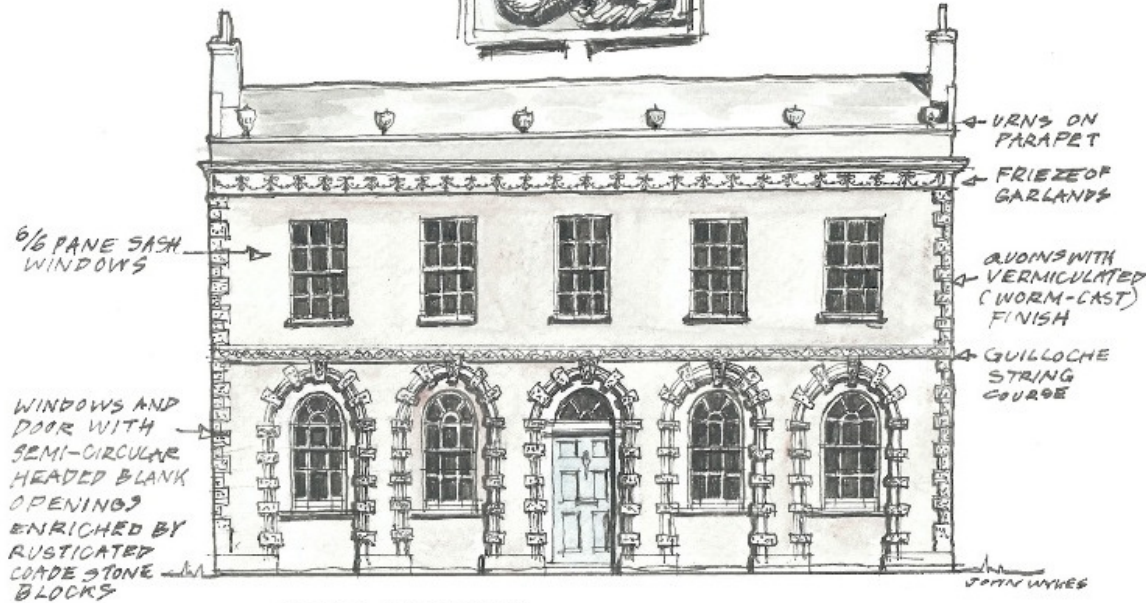


Fig 19 Royal Standard

ORIGINALLY BUILT IN 1774 AS 'CASTLE BUNTER', THE HOUSE WAS ACQUIRED BY ELEANOR COADE (1733-1821) IN 1784 AND REDECORATED AND ENHANCED BY HER FIRM. THE HOUSE WAS GREATLY ENLARGED IN THE LATE C19 AND REDUCED IN SIZE IN THE MID-C19. IN 1968, 'BELMONT' WAS BOUGHT BY THE NOVELIST JOHN FOWLES.



GUILLOCHE ORNAMENT TO A STRING COURSE ENCLOSING SMALL ROSETTES
 COADE STONE KEYSTONE TO MAIN ENTRANCE ARCH, IN THE FORM OF A CROWNED RIVER GOD
 DOLPHIN CAPITAL TO ARCH



6/6 PANE SASH WINDOWS
 WINDOWS AND DOOR WITH SEMI-CIRCULAR HEADED BLANK OPENINGS ENRICHED BY RUSTICATED COADE STONE BLOCKS

URNS ON PARAPET
 FRIEZE OF GARLANDS
 QUOINS WITH VERMICULATED (WORM-CAST) FINISH
 GUILLOCHE STRING COURSE

'BELMONT'. POUND STREET

Fig 20 Belmont

Important Local Buildings (please refer to Assets Map at the back)

The contribution made by important local buildings is, in spite of the high proportion of Listed Buildings, significant and there are a number of individually attractive and interesting unlisted buildings, most of which contribute to the value of larger groups. These are:

- HSBC Bank, Broad Street, early C20, single storey Tudor style, with a steep pyramidal roof and ball finial and the use of chert and ashlar dressings;
- The Gables, Church Street, late C19 former Cottage Hospital, with a steep pyramidal roof, corner tower with candle snuffer spire, canted bay, render and tall chimneys; an eye-catcher with interesting detail;
- Two large, C19 - early C20 buildings immediately south of the Parish Church - the Church Hall (first primary school opened in 1834) in stone with stepped lights and a coped gable, the Boys Club (earlier school's assembly hall) in brick with graduated lancets, establishing a larger scale to respond to the elevated church and its boundary walls;
- Nos. 1 & 2 Hadleigh Villas, Silver Street, a pair of late C19-early C20 houses of definite Arts and Crafts character, with bold canted bays and gables, handsome and unspoilt;
- NE side of Silver Street from Whitsbury, a detached late C19 house, to the listed Silverleigh, including the Nag's Head Inn and other late C19 houses, some with Arts and Crafts details, providing interest and comprising group value;
- No. 2 Silver Street, a late C19 two colour brick house with a deep two storey bay and Italianate detailing;
- Bethany Chapel, Coombe Street, a simple gabled front (late C19-early C20) with two pointed arched windows with Y-tracery and a central arched door;
- Post Office, Broad Street, an accomplished Neo-Classical front with good ironwork details and a date of 1929 on the hopper heads;
- Sewage treatment and coastal protection scheme, Gunn Cliff, a modern recipient of a Civic Trust Award and a seafront adornment;
- K6 telephone box in the Holmbush car park, outside the conservation area but important to its setting;
- Nos. 2 & 3 Marine Parade, a late C19-early C20 brick pair, with two storey square bay windows and paired central doors with a glazed canopy over, group value;
- Cobb Arms, a 1937 'Home Counties Tudor' building, good detailing and quality materials, important visually when seen from The Cobb;
- Bay Hotel with visual qualities in the rhythm of windows, the end oriels, the big central gable, roof dormers and round-headed entrance;
- Corporation shelter, c 1924, with quality faience (glazed terracotta) detailing, pivotal to Marine Parade's shelters and where the town clock (removed for refurbishment) is normally situated;
- Contemporary work such as the Hix Oyster and Fish House in Lister Gardens.

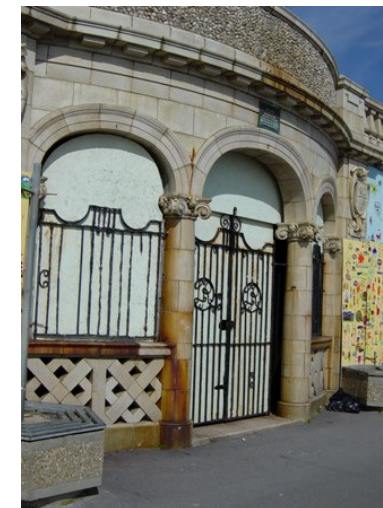


Fig 21 Corporation shelter



Fig 22 Sundial House & Library Cottage

Building Groups

The whole of Mill Green (excepting modern infill on the eastern side), Coombe Street, Monmouth Street and George's Square and Church Street (excepting the modern flats south of the Parish Church) and Bridge Street form a large group of coherent character and quality. The whole of Broad Street, the south side of Pound Street and the west side of Silver Street comprise another very extensive group. Sherborne Lane also has overall coherence.

No.1 Marine Parade to the Bay Hotel form a significant coherent group. The western end of Marine Parade, from Nos. 19 and 20 to No. 24 and the Royal Standard and Nos. 27 and 28 form another group. There is also an important grouping up Cobb Road, from the Custom House to No. 7 on the west and Westfield to No. 12 on the east side.

Traditional Building Materials and Architectural Details

There are a number of known timber framed structures, where older houses have survived fires and demolition, such as Middle Row and Nos. 50-52 Broad Street. However, the predominant local building material is Lower or Blue Lias stone with a softness that can make it vulnerable to the weather, resulting, along with changes in architectural fashion, in the application of render, stucco (lined to simulate ashlar jointing), roughcast and varied patterns of slate hanging (Library Cottage, 30 Broad Street). The Volunteer Inn, Broad Street and Corporation shelter, Marine Parade, have areas of pebble mosaic. Horizontal timber cladding adds a suitable maritime touch to the front elevation of Nos. 27 & 28 Marine Parade.

Another local stone is chert, granular and very durable (flint is similar but has a more glassy texture), but intractable and difficult to work and usually appearing as raw cobs or beach cobbles laid as random rubble. On the Guildhall, Museum and HSBC Bank, the cobs are carefully selected for size and shape. Grand buildings (Parish Church) and those pertaining to grandness (Sundial House, former Peek Memorial Chapel) have used imported stone (Hamstone, Portland, Purbeck) for architectural features such as ashlar dressings at corners and around doors and windows.

Local clays produced a rich red brick seen in Nos. 53 & 54 Broad Street and buildings rebuilt after the 1889 fire. Other brick facades (Nos. 1 & 2 and 14 & 15 Pound Street) have rubbed and gauged brick lintels and door arches. Nos. 28 & 29 Broad Street and Nos. 14 & 15 Pound Street are an instance of yellow brick, fashionable in the early C19, whereas Nos. 2 & 3 Marine Parade are a later example of red brick. More limited in use, brick, where unpainted, forms a careful contrast in the urban scene.



Fig 23 Slate hanging, Marine Parade



Fig 24 Nos. 32 – 36 Broad St

Belmont, built in 1774 and originally Bunter's Castle, is an advertisement for Coade Stone, produced in Lambeth by Elinor Coade from 1769-1840, and fashionable for architectural details (door surrounds, swags, keystones, quoins and statuary). Elinor Coade occupied Belmont and embellished it with products from her factory. The front parapet of Nos. 34 & 35 Broad Street has Coade Stone urns and the human head pediment corbels of Nos. 28 & 29 Broad Street may be of the same material.

Boundary walls are of great significance such as the tall retaining walls around the Parish Church, in Sherborne Lane and Silver Street, along the river and mill leat channels, on the sea front and upper slopes and around individual properties. The walls can be squared, coursed rubble Lias stone but are usually built of uncoursed chert cobs in combination with smaller stones, such as the boundary wall of Jordan House. Exposed brick wall is less common, for example, Nos. 2 and 3 Marine Parade and the attractive brick upper courses of the former National School, Church Street. Copings can be vertical stones, pebbles set in mortar, flat or cambered stone caps. Some walls have ornate iron railings (Parish Church and Bell Cliff steps).

Roofs are predominantly slate but there are examples of clay plain tiles, occasionally with stone tile eaves courses. Elaborately crested ridges embellish some late C19 buildings. There is a remarkable number of thatched roofs (in Sherborne Lane, No. 39 Broad Street and Nos. 6A-9 and No. 12 (Library Cottage) Marine Parade. Roof types vary, for example, compass (curved roof rafters), hipped and mansard, the latter often with flat roofed dormers inset. Early-mid C19 houses can have wide, bracketed eaves and later C19 gables decorative details include elaborate timber bargeboards. Dormer windows usually have flat, monopitch roofs.

Chimneys are of great visual importance, often tall and built of brick or rendered, with round thrown pots or square or octagonal moulded types. Coram Court has an accomplished statue of St George and the Dragon on its large chimney.

Traditional steps, for example Gunn Cliff and the famous Granny's Teeth on The Cobb, along with the harbour's paving, are part of the town's rich, continuing heritage of external surface features. There are stone setts to be found at the foot of Bell Cliff, in front of the Guildhall, in the Town Mill courtyard and at the thresholds of properties (No. 6 Cobb Rd), as well as areas of Lias pavement (often thinly covered with tarmac) in Coombe Street, by the HSBC Bank, at the Church Street end of Monmouth Street and on the corner of Church and Bridge Streets. The Alexandra Hotel has a pebbled courtyard with a Lias path. Lias kerb stones are evident in Silver Street, Coombe Street and the SW side of Broad Street, the ford at Jordan has large pebbles and there are stone wheelguards in the narrow lanes. A large stone slab defining a property's threshold is not uncommon. Modern Lias setts on Gun Cliff and Coade Stone paving at the Museum continue the tradition. Following the 2005-2007 Phase II Land Stability Works, Langmoor and Lister Gardens have new Lias ramps, steps and paths that connect garden levels and provide access to Marine Parade.

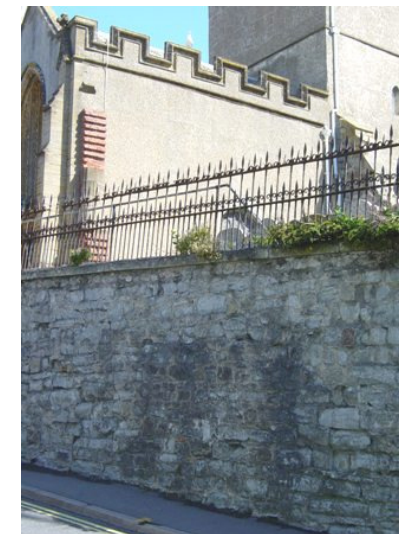


Fig 25 Churchyard wall & railings

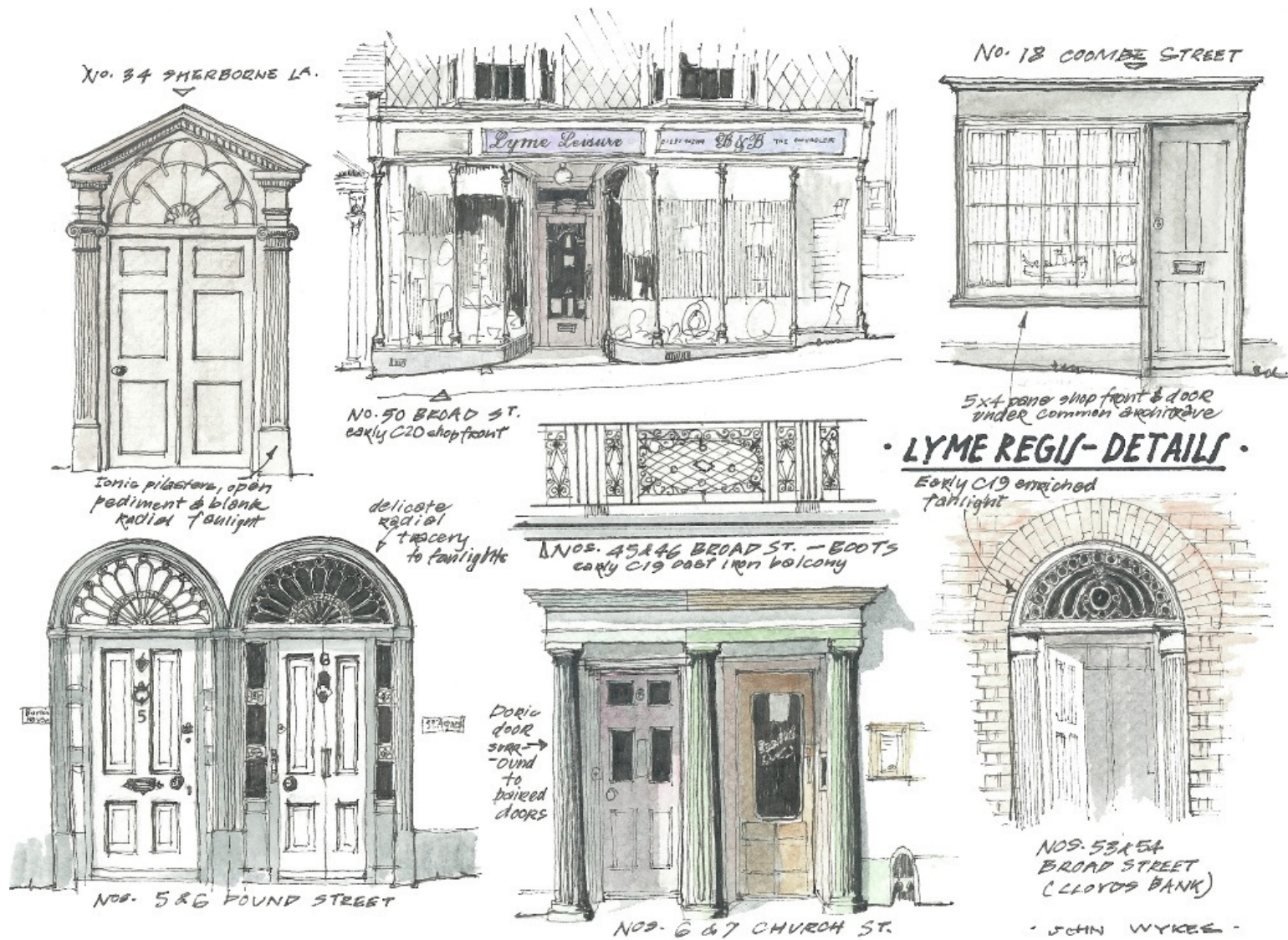


Fig 26 Details of doors & shop windows

The predominantly C18-C19 character of the town means the vertically-hung wooden sash window is prevalent with many varieties of detail but usually (unless inserted into an older structure) based on the proportion of 6 over 6 panes or 8 over 8 panes and with lintels or cambered arches (particularly on former maritime buildings). Windows with triple sash lights divided by wooden or stone mullions are common. There are circular-headed (Baptist Church) windows and Venetian (central arched light flanked by square-headed lights) windows (Guildhall). Lyme is also a place of canted bay (Sundial House, Red Lion), oriel windows (Nos. 4 & 6 Marine Parade) and semi-circular (The Three Cups) or segmental curved bow windows (Nos. 6A-9 Marine Parade), usually with wooden dentilled cornices. Older, smaller cottages have wooden sash but also casements windows, often with multiple panes.

Many larger houses have balconies (Nos. 45 and 46 Broad Street) over entrances and verandas with swept roofs and ornamental ironwork. These are prevalent on the SW side of Silver Street (The Little Place, Rosehill, Burley, The Old Vicarage and West Hill). First floor windows, opening onto balconies and verandas, are usually of French casement type. No. 14 Pound Street has an impressive long staircase window on its gable end and The White House, Silver Street has a similar window in one wing.

Late C19-early C20 buildings (Guildhall and Museum) have eclectic details, with Tudoresque mullions and transomes, French Renaissance and Dutch oriels and bays and circular and oval windows. The Roman Catholic Church has Early English Gothic Revival lancets and an elementary rose window.

Door surrounds are usually of stucco or painted timber in the form of a simple moulded architrave or pilasters. The former Congregational Chapel has a full Doric doorcase and frieze. Monmouth House has an Ionic, pedimented doorcase (a modern replacement) and No. 34 Sherborne Lane an entrance with Ionic pilasters, pediment and blank radial fanlight. Many stucco fronted buildings have plain door openings. There are also round or segmental headed openings with an enriched fanlight, exemplified by Nos. 53 & 54 Broad Street and Nos. 5 & 6 Pound Street. No. 6 Sherborne Lane has a rich semicircular hood, moulded and bracketed with a curvilinear fanlight and arched door panels, whereas No. 1 Monmouth Street, a semi-circular fanlight with three unadorned circles inset.

Porches with Tuscan, Doric or Ionic columns and entablatures are usually confined to the larger houses. Smaller houses have a variety of canopied wooden porches with shaped brackets and straight side pieces angled to the wall (both types seen on the south side of Sherborne Lane). More modest, wooden porches can be found on Nos. 7 & 8 Marine Parade. The doors of Woodmead, Silver Street and The Lawn, Pound Street, have trellis work.

Doors vary from vertical planked types (on vernacular buildings or C19 stylistic revivals) to six panels or four later in the C19.

Well-detailed and attractive shop fronts abound, especially in Broad, Bridge, Church and Coombe Streets. The shop fronts range from early C19, multi-paned examples with a classical fluted and moulded surround (No. 14 Coombe Street) to mid



Fig 27 Lyme Regis Museum

and late-C19 pilasters, thin mullions, canted fascias and inset central entries. Details can include decorative spandrels between mullions (No. 36 Broad Street) and carved or moulded console brackets. The Fossil Shop, Nos. 4 - 4A Bridge Street, is an example of a late C19-early C20 front, with arched spandrels to each mullion. Chapman's Book Shop, on the lower end of Broad Street, has a quality modern shop front, with 'Gothick' mullions and appropriate sign writing.

There is a comprehensive vocabulary of early-mid C19 cast and wrought ironwork with front railings (spears, urns, fleurs-de-lis); balconies and smaller safety rails; verandas with trellis work supports and fascias; gates and handrails. No. 35 Broad Street has examples of iron railing spearheads and urns, as does No. 6 Cobb Road. Other ironwork includes anthemion or honeysuckle, S-scrolls, lozenge and saltires, 'Gothick' arcades and tracery. The large houses on the SW side of Silver Street have Greek Revival detailing and ironwork. Later ironwork is evident in the window spandrels of Nos. 4-6 Marine Parade and the Arts and Crafts-inspired gates on the Corporation shelter. The public garden called George's Square has iron railings.

Other features of interest are the early C20 coloured glass 'Theatre' projecting sign in Edwardian letter-face and the lead and iron rainwater goods with initials and dates. Good sign writing is seen on some shop fronts and on hotels, like Dorset House on Silver Street.

Special local features and traditions

Lyme craftsmen were renowned for their skilfully built sea defences. The ancient Gunn Cliff is an example of their skill and The Cobb, the epitome of what constitutes a special local feature and tradition, owes its very existence to it. Later work, such as the 1826 repair of The Cobb and the 1995 additional sea defence at Gun Cliff, upheld the tradition in terms of quality of material and construction, which benefited local character.

References to the tradition of fossil collection such as real ammonites in external walls (Sundial Cottage, Marine Parade), or Coade Stone representations (entrance to the Museum) or a theme based on them (new streetlights and motif on balustrade along Cobb Rd and Marine Parade).

Where occasionally a building is end on to the street, there is nearly always a front entrance in the gable wall facing the street.

Many of Lyme's religious, civic and community buildings (Guildhall, Museum, Coram Tower, former Peek Memorial Chapel) have a prominent architectural feature, in the form of a tower, turret, lantern or bell-cote, which gives these buildings added significance.



Fig 28 Streetlight, Marine Parade



Fig 29 Guildhall



... REGENCY VILLA, BASED ON 'BURLEY' AND 'THE OLD VICARAGE', ON SILVER STREET ...

Fig 30 Regency villa based on Burley & Old Vicarage, Silver St

Important open spaces and views (please refer to Assets Map at the back)

Langmoor and Lister Gardens are a vital part of the town's seaside tradition, providing public access to the seafront and between the town and Cobb hamlet, whilst forming the historic buffer that separates the two settlements. The gardens have been redesigned as part of a major coastal stability scheme. Lister Gardens provides extensive, significant views (called a viewshed), stretching from Lyme Bay to The Cobb. Langmoor Gardens offers more intermittent, important views and panoramas, notably, the historic view of The Cobb from the top north-east corner.

Stretching from The Cobb to the town are three parallel linear open spaces or walks: Marine Parade, the Cart Road, and the beach that also extends beyond Church Cliffs. All three open spaces are connected to each other by proximity or deliberate access points and have considerable historical value. Marine Parade, the town's formal seafront walk, has the same role as the public gardens above, that of upholding the separation between the town and The Cobb, and this it does, by having a back edge that responds differently when passing a public garden or town backdrop. The beach and Cart Road (in part) are subject to the tide and provide a more intermittent seaside experience, as well as informal access between settlements. The three open spaces also provide important views, not only seaward, but also landward, and act as viewsheds (areas with innumerable views). From the beach is the view over Cobb Gate and up Broad Street that symbolises a town that runs into the sea.

Due to its sinuous form, The Cobb comprises an open linear space or walk allowing experience of the sea and providing significant views, not only of itself, but also of Lyme Bay and the open sea, Monmouth Beach, Lyme, and Cobb hamlet. At low tide, small beaches appear, providing important views of the Bay and The Cobb, similar to those available at the harbour side of Cobb Square. In total, The Cobb and its immediate surrounds form an extraordinary public space with innumerable views (viewshed).

There are a number of other important open spaces:

- The Parish Churchyard with its social and historic significance and important views down Church Street, Monmouth Street and across town and Lyme Bay;
- The only formal public square called George's Square that has the town's War Memorial and lies in the shadow of the Parish Church;
- The historic defence of Bell Cliff with its well-known views seaward and towards the Parish Church, and the adjoining raised walk that was Cornhill (west of 6A Broad Street), next to the ancient meat market or shambles, which burnt down in 1844;
- Cobb Gate, (at the town end of the Cart Road), where all maritime goods once passed through the customs gate and which later held social events in the town's Assembly Rooms;



Fig 31 The Cobb



Fig 32 War memorial,
George's Sq

- Gunn Cliff, the historic gun battery with its seaward and Cobb views;
- Cobb Square, the historic access to The Cobb and centre of the hamlet with important views of the harbour.

The Lim valley with its treed slopes and small green riverside areas, including Leper's Well, provides an historical and visual contrast to the coastal and resort emphasis of the town.

An important characteristic is the downhill approach to the centre of town and The Cobb and the succession of views of townscape, sea, distant hills and coastline. At times, there is the sensation of ending up in the sea. Jane Austen described Broad Street as "the principal street hurrying into the water".

Other key views or viewshed:

- At the northern end of Mill Green into the green river corridor at Jordan;
- At Gosling Bridge down The Lynch and into Coombe Street;
- From Coombe Street into Monmouth Street towards the Parish Church and back along Monmouth Street towards George's Square;
- From Coombe Street into the courtyard dominated by the Town Mill;
- Up and down Church Street;
- From the Parish Churchyard over Coombe Street, into Monmouth Street;
- At the corner of Church Street and Bridge Street through the arches of the Guildhall towards the sea;
- From Bridge Street into Coombe Street and upriver and downriver from Buddle Bridge;
- At Cobb Gate towards The Cobb, Church Cliff and Lyme Bay;
- From Cobb Gate to Bell Cliff steps, Middle Row and the first part of Broad Street;
- Down Pound Street towards the junction with Broad Street;
- From the middle of Cobb Road towards Cobb Hamlet and The Cobb;
- Down Sherborne Lane.

Important trees

From the seaward side, the trees on the cliff above the east end of Monmouth Beach and in and above Lister Gardens visually isolate Cobb hamlet allowing it to retain its own identity. The trees in and above Langmoor Gardens, as well as Lister Gardens, also assist the gardens in their role as a buffer between the town and Cobb hamlet, thereby protecting the historical identity of each. The same trees contribute to the character of the gardens themselves. The importance of these trees is observable from The Cobb.



Fig 33 Cornhill & Bell Cliff

Areas of the Lim valley are still wooded providing character and attractiveness that can be enjoyed from riverside and valley slope walks and the Lepers Well garden. From Mill Green and Coombe Street such trees also provide an attractive backdrop. The Lim valley trees along with those in the mature gardens Silver Street and Pound Road above are an important element of the attractive views from the Parish Churchyard and Monmouth Street.

Because of the historic presence of residences set in large gardens, trees are part of the character of Silver and Pound Streets, which underlines the importance of those that remain. The Alexandra Hotel and Belmont have particularly important trees. Formerly owned by the well known poet and glass engraver Lawrence Whistler, The Woodlands, Pound Street has a combination of native broadleaf species and evergreens which are visible from the other side of the Lim valley.

The tree at the east end of George's Square in Monmouth Street is an attractive feature in the view from west of the Parish Church and the tree overhanging the garden wall of Benets adds to Jordan's attractive riverside character.

On the south-east side of Holbush car park is a treed, green area, allowing glimpses of the sea and The Cobb and forming part of the wooded character in this part of town. Along with Coram Tower, a group of trees on the car park's north-west corner create an impressive grouping.

Detrimental Features

In the Conservation Area these are:

- Chert and Blue Lias are very difficult materials to repair or repoint without compromising their character; there are many examples of the excessive use of modern cement, often resulting in raised pointing;
- In a town of whites, creams and pale render colours, appropriate colour choice is needed;
- Traffic affects narrow streets, particularly Church and Bridge Streets;
- As a civic space, the Cobb Gate car park is disappointing and has potential for improvement: shared space for pedestrians and cars, redesign of floor surfaces and removal of street furniture clutter;
- Cobb Square is essentially a traffic turning space that has potential for improvement: shared space for pedestrians and cars, redesign of floor surfaces and removal of street furniture clutter;
- Some modern replacement railings, such as those on the top of Bell Cliff, are utilitarian, ignoring the heritage of historical patterns in the town;
- There are small areas of overhead poles and wires, such as the western end of Marine Parade and at Gosling Bridge;
- Traditional railings at the Parish Church and George's Square are in need of repair and refurbishment and are subject to Your Heritage Lottery Grant application.



Fig 34 Trees in westerly view from churchyard

Definition of the Special Interest of the Conservation Area

The special interest of Lyme Regis is as follows:

- Situated within the Jurassic Coast (World Heritage Site) - a spectacular landscape setting with undulating topography, River Lim with its outlet to the sea, trees and woodland;
- The Cobb and associated views and panoramas;
- Cobb Gate, Broad Street and Middle Row and associated views and panoramas;
- Marine Parade, Lister and Langmoor Gardens and associated views and panoramas;
- Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval industrial, coastal and urban archaeology;
- C18 - C19 suburban and seaside resort expansion;
- C16 and C17 timber-framed buildings, often behind later fronts;
- Particularly rich assembly of late C18, Regency and early Victorian villas and town houses with related details, materials and techniques;
- 210 Listed Building entries, including four Grade I and four Grade II*;
- Over 15 important local buildings;
- Coherent groups of buildings of quality within the town, including Marine Parade, and in Cobb hamlet;
- Architectural and historic details and features overall;
- Consistent use of local Lias limestone, chert and other traditional materials;
- Associations with famous scientific, literary and artistic names.

Community Involvement

The appraisal review was subject to public consultation (May-June 2010), during which an information event, manned by district council officers, was held in the town. The comments received helped finalise the review.

Review of the Conservation Area boundary

There are areas of special interest that are included in an extended conservation area boundary.

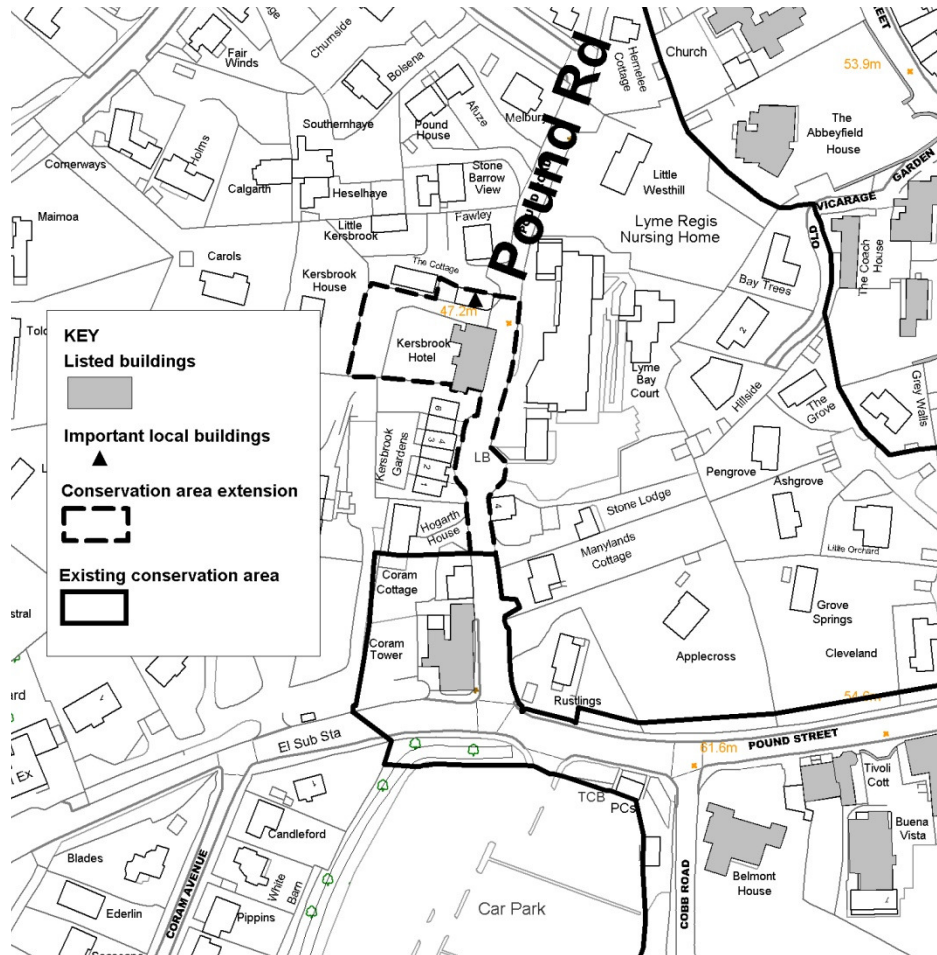


Fig 35 Pound Rd conservation area extension

Pound Road

Coram Tower is situated at the junction of Sidmouth Rd with Pound Rd, drawing together the western gateway or entrance into the conservation area (Sidmouth Rd) with the northern gateway (Pound Rd). Indeed, Pound Rd was and is an alternative means of gaining access to the route west and The Cobb without having to enter the centre of town. Its historic and architectural interest is included within the conservation area.

In Pound Rd, the interesting view southwards begins by the listed Kersbrook Hotel (Kersbrook Cottage) and ends by Coram Tower. The hotel with its prominent bay windows and porch was built in 1791 by Samuel Coad, believed to be uncle to Eleanor Coad, the manufacturer of Coade stone. The strong visual link between these two buildings reduces the affect of roadside boundaries lost to change over time.

Evident on the town's 1841 map and adjacent to Kersbrook Hotel (north side), is a single storey, thatched and refurbished property end on to the road. Its age, attractiveness and visual association with the hotel means it has local importance.

Lyme Regis Cemetery

Lyme Regis cemetery, originally situated in open countryside, was consecrated in 1856. Defined by former field boundaries, and conforming to the standard Burial Board layout, it was amended in 1876 to provide more burial space. The cemetery still retains its Nonconformist mortuary chapel and Church of England mortuary chapel (chapel bell turrets removed possibly 1930s), and at the entrance on Charmouth Rd, the former porter's lodge. On the opposite side of the entrance there stood a waiting hall (demolished 1930s).

In 1933, the cemetery was extended westwards across adjoining farmland. A low, stone capped wall now marks the division between the C19 cemetery and C20 extension.

Around the C19 cemetery, trees reinforced former field boundaries, as evident today on Charmouth Rd and to the north where it abuts on Fairfield Park (protected by a Tree Preservation Order). Corresponding with a southerly field boundary, the 1933 extension shares an impressive line of trees with houses in Kingsway. Within the C19 cemetery, trees were planted at random but in the extension, the 1937 Coronation Commemoration Appeal provided additional trees and shrubs. Well constructed using local stone such as Blue Lias and Chert and finely detailed using imported Hamstone, the chapels and former lodge are attractive points of interest, and when seen as group amongst or against a background of trees, constitute some of the best views from within the cemetery. The former lodge and chapels are therefore buildings of local importance. Amongst important graves is the HMS Formidable Memorial, commemorating those who lost their lives when the battleship was torpedoed in 1915.



Fig 36 Thatched property by Kersbrook Hotel



Fig 37 Lyme Regis Cemetery

From the cemetery, gaps between adjacent houses allow glimpses of the town, sea and coast which are important reminders of the impressive views that the cemetery commanded from its hillside location.

The C19 and C20 layout and planting, overall character and appearance constitute a town cemetery of special historic and architectural interest. It is an island of tranquillity and Lyme history.

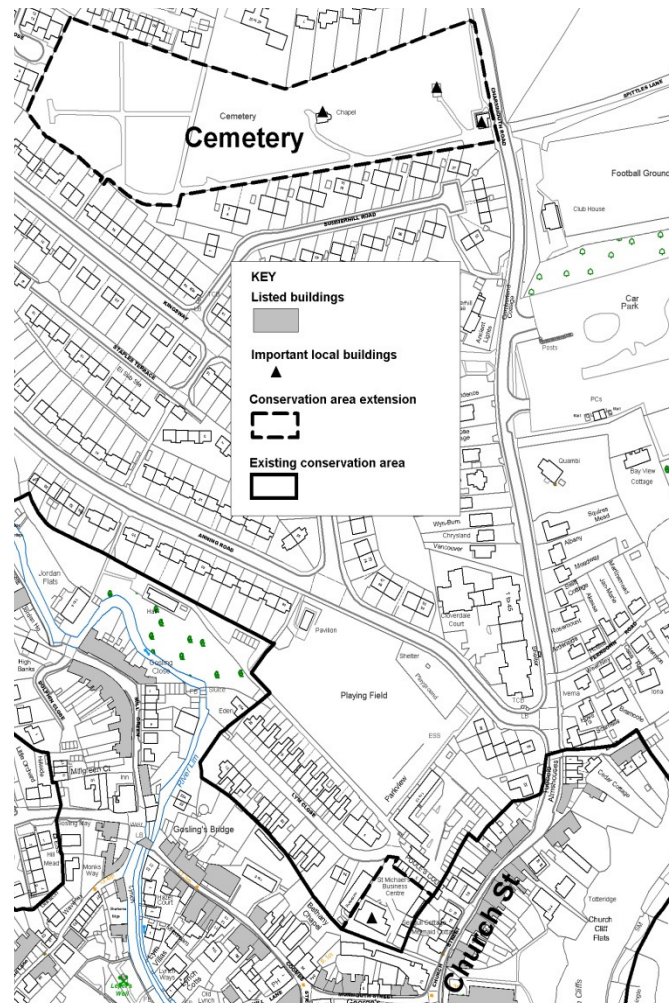


Fig 38 St Michael's Business Centre & cemetery conservation area extensions

Former Primary School

The St Michael's Business Centre is the former St Michael's Church (National Primary) School which opened in 1892 and closed in 1990s. Similar to Education Board schools in the Midlands in terms of layout (separated areas for boys, girls and infants) and appearance (red brick, gabled, steep roofs, large and plentiful windows for ventilation and light), although more modest, the former school's imposing appearance is complemented by choice of material, quality construction and intact detailing. The school's presence is evident at its entrance (date plaque 1892) in Church St and particularly from the west end of the Parish Churchyard, high above the street. The school is an important local building.

Already the church parish rooms (first primary school opened in 1834), boys club (earlier school's assembly hall) in Church St are in the conservation area, as is the schoolmaster's house (14 Church St) and street entrance to the former school of 1892. Walking away towards its entrance, there is an impressive view of St Michael's church towering above. To complete this educational grouping, and at the same time recognise the former school's architectural and visual contribution, the conservation area is extended to include the St Michael's Business Centre.

General condition

The town's public realm, buildings and structures are generally in good condition.

The narrow Church and Bridge Streets are affected by traffic, causing in some instances damage to buildings. There are several spaces in the town that have potential for visual and amenity improvement, such as Cobb Square and Cobb Gate. Other works required are repairs to the stone coping at The Lynch and to the railings of George's Square and the Parish Church. There has been incorrect repointing of certain rubble walls.



Fig 39 Former primary school

Summary of Issues and Proposed Actions

| CONSERVATION AREA ISSUE | PROPOSED ACTION/S | LEAD PARTNER | OTHER PARTNERS |
|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Standards & methods of repair and maintenance of historic buildings and structures | Upon request provide advice | WDDC | |
| Sourcing local materials & continuation of building traditions | Upon request provide advice on known sources & building traditions | WDDC | |
| Design standards in the public realm (overhead cables, traffic signs, road space with amenity value & use). | Identify opportunities to enhance & consider traffic management | DCC (Highway Authority), WDDC Utility Companies | Town Council |
| The contribution of trees & the landscape setting to the character & appearance of the conservation area | Contribution to be perpetuated as far as possible & support suitable schemes through availability of Countryside & Conservation Grant | WDDC | DCC, Town Council |
| A number of unlisted buildings have architectural & historic interest | Additions to the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest should be considered | WDDC | |

| | | | |
|--|---|-----------|------------------|
| Review Lyme Regis Conservation Area boundary | Consider additions and adjustments to boundary | WDDC | Town Council |
| Article 4 Direction | To protect small but important original details such as windows, doors and front gardens. | WDDC | English Heritage |
| Exchange of archaeological information | Consider how to assist Dorset Historic Environmental Record and local heritage projects | WDDC, DCC | English Heritage |

Developing Management Proposals

Based on the Summary of Issues & Proposed Actions, the following objectives might be set out as the basis of a long-term management plan:

- the contribution of the landscape setting and trees to the conservation area to be perpetuated using all means possible; suitable schemes could qualify for the Council's Countryside and Conservation Grant Scheme (offers limited financial support subject to criteria and availability); details available on *dorsetforyou.com* website;
- consider additional buildings for listing;
- provide the Dorset Historic Environment Record with relevant information as available;
- small-scale improvements could qualify for the Council's Countryside and Conservation Grant Scheme (see above);

Advice

The District Council can advise on the need for Listed Building Consent or any planning permission that may be required, and can provide advice on matters such as methods of maintenance and repair, shop fronts, alterations and extensions to Listed Buildings and suitable materials. Contact details are provided below.

Useful information and contact details

Criteria used for assessing the contribution made by important local buildings: two basic criteria were used; the actual design characteristics, such as mass, skyline, interesting details, materials and existing or former use; and position relative to the wider setting, individual or groups of Listed Buildings.

Contacts: West Dorset District Council Design & Conservation Officer (01305 251010) or e-mail planning@westdorset-dc.gov.uk

References

- Understanding Place*, Guidance on conservation area appraisals, English Heritage, August 2005.
- Dorset Volume I, West*, RCHME, 1952.
- The Schedule of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historical Interest*, DCMS.
- The Dorset Historic Environment Records (HERS)*, Dorset County Council
- Dorset, Buildings of England*, Newman & Pevsner, Penguin, 1972.
- West Dorset 2000 Parish Statements*, West Dorset District Council.
- West Dorset District Local Plan (adopted 2006)*, WDDC.
- Historic Towns in Dorset*, KJ Penn, DNHAS Monograph Series No. 1, 1980.
- Dorset Stone*, Jo Thomas, The Dovecot Press, 2008.
- Coade Stone*, Hans van Lemmen, Shire Publications Ltd, 2006.
- Discover Dorset, Stone Quarrying*, Jo Thomas, The Dovecot Press, 1998.
- Dorset in the Age of Steam*, Peter Stanier, Dorset Books, 2002.
- Lyme Regis Past & Present*. Jo Draper, Sutton Publishing, 2006.
- Towns and Villages of England, Lyme Regis*, Ted Gosling and Lyn Marshall, Alan Sutton, 1993.
- Lyme Regis Camera*, John Fowles, The Dovecote Press, 1990.
- Lyme Regis, Three Town Walks*, John Fowles, Lyme Regis Museum, 1983, revised 2003.
- A thousand years of milling, the Town Mill, Lyme Regis*, Martin Watts, The Town Mill Trust, 2005.
- The Concise Townscape*, Gordon Cullen, Architectural Press, 1971.
- The Functional Tradition*, Gordon Cullen, The Architectural Review, January 1950.
- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning & The Historic Environment*, Department of the Environment & Department of National Heritage, September 1994.
- Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology & Planning*, Department of the Environment, November 1990.
- A Short History of Lyme Regis*, John Fowles, The Friends of Lyme Regis Museum, 1982.
- Discover Dorset, Stone Quarrying*, Jo Thomas, 1998.
- Dorset Volume 1 West*, The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), 1952.
- Guide to Lyme Regis Parish Church*, Parochial Church Council, 1991.
- Historic Towns in Dorset*, K J Penn, Dorset Archaeological Committee, 1980.
- Lyme Regis in the 1950s, The Golden Years*, Lyme Regis Museum, 2003.
- Lyme Regis Seafront 'Historic Landscape Restoration' Report* prepared for West Dorset District Council by Gillespies.
- Lyme Regis Three Towns Walk*, John Fowles, Lyme Regis Museum, 2003.
- Lyme Regis Walkabout*, Serendip Fine Books, 2002.
- The Complete Guide to Lyme Regis*, Colin Sackett, 2004.

Towns and Villages of England, Lyme Regis, Ted Gosling & Lyn Marshall, 1993.
West Dorset 2000, a Survey of the Built and Natural Environment, West Dorset District Council.
Proposed Regeneration Marine Parade Shelters, Lyme Regis Design and Access Statement, Heighway Field Associates, 2009.
Lyme Regis Past, John Lello, Lello Publishing, 1999
Lyme's First Photographers, Jo Draper, Lyme Regis Museum, 2006
Lyme Regis Photographic Memories, Rodney Legg, The Francis Frith Collection, 2005
The Book of Lyme Regis, Rodney Legg, Halsgrove, 2003
Notes on the Cemetery, Lyme Regis, Dorset, Joan B Walker, Lyme Regis Museum, 1978
Over the Hills, The History of Coram Court Lyme Regis, Vol 2 No 33, Holiday Fellowship, Spring 1974
Mary Anning's Town – Lyme Regis, Jo Draper, Lyme Regis Museum, 2004
Around Bridport & Lyme Regis, Gerald Gosling & Les Berry, Tempus Publishing Ltd, 2004

Maps

Maps are reproduced from Ordnance Survey Material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. West Dorset District Council, Licence Number 100024307 2010.

Additional Map Data Copyright, West Dorset District Council



West Dorset District Council
Stratton House, 58/60 High West Street
Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ

Tel: 01305 251010 Fax: 01305 251481
Website: www.dorsetforyou.com
Typetalk calls welcome