**Castle and Town**

Himeji Castle’s original fortifications extended beyond the main castle grounds to include several neighborhoods protected by moats and earthen embankments. This entire area was often collectively referred to as Himeji Castle. The residents were housed according to social standing: high-ranking samurai lived closer to the center, and merchants and craftsmen lived just beyond the middle moat.

Outside the castle fortifications were several villages that predated the castle. New communities and neighborhoods were established after the castle was constructed as people moved to the growing city. Some of the new areas were named for their residents’ occupations, including Zaimoku-machi (“lumber town”) and Takajō-machi (“falconer town”).

This scale model is based on a detailed housing map created during the rule of the Sakai clan, who oversaw Himeji between 1749 and 1868. The model’s property boundaries match those of the map, but the buildings and vegetation are the artist’s conception.