

## Puddletown, Stinsford & Lower Bockhampton & Tolpuddle Conservation Area Appraisal

## Distribution list

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

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## Introduction & Executive Summary

Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The District Council is required by Section 71 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. This can be achieved through Conservation Area Appraisals.

West Dorset has 79 Conservation Areas and the council has agreed on a programme of character appraisals. Puddletown, Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton, and Tolpuddle Conservation Areas form part of this appraisal work, grouped together because of their geographical proximity.

The three Conservation Areas were designated as follows:

- Puddletown, originally designated in July 1975 and extended January 1994;
- Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton, November 1990;
- Tolpuddle, January 1976.

In order that designation is effective in conserving the special interest, planning decisions must be based on a thorough understanding of the Conservation Areas' character. Appraisals are therefore essential tools for the planning process. They are also of prime importance for any enhancement works and may provide a longer-term basis for effective management of Conservation Areas.

The appraisal document is prepared following advice from English Heritage. There are **common core elements** (planning policy context, landscape setting, historic development and archaeology, introduction to the spatial analysis section, community involvement, general condition, local generic guidance, recommendations for management action and developing management proposals) that either relate to all four settlements or are linked by the need to provide a reasoned overview of the whole area, highlighting the broader characteristics. There are also more detailed **place specific descriptions** (character analysis and definition of the special interest of the conservation area), which concentrate on each Conservation Area, and will only be found within each individual chapter.

The appraisal, including initial ideas on management needs and priorities, was the subject of a public consultation (July-August 2007), during which, an information event was held in the villages, manned by district council officers. Following consultation, officers recommended a number of amendments to the appraisal and in December 2007, the district council adopted the appraisal as a technical document supporting policies in the West Dorset District Local Plan (Adopted 2006).

The **Executive Summary** sets out the key characteristics of each village and any issues associated with them:

### **Puddletown**

The key points of quality analysis are:

- A fine landscape setting, with undulating topography, an attractive river course, remnants of managed water meadows and mature trees;
- Good clean edges to the settlement to the north, NE and east;
- Related to this, well defined entry points, particularly from the west and east, on the former A35;
- A rich archaeological heritage, with a range of sites from Prehistoric barrows and cultivation remains, a Roman road, a Medieval settlement site, and Post-medieval vernacular buildings, industrial and farming structures and the earthworks and channels relating to water meadow management;
- 39 Listed Building entries, including a Grade I church, three Grade II\* gentry houses, a strong underpinning of smaller cottages and substantial buildings relating to a major mid-Victorian development of a model farming estate;
- Over a dozen unlisted buildings and building groups of character and/or group value;
- Coherent groups of Listed and unlisted buildings, boundary walls, railings, trees and details, notably on the western part of High Street, Mill Street, The Square, the ancillary buildings of Ilsington House and The Green;
- Consistent use of South Dorset limestone, cob, local brick clays, thatch and vernacular building details that give an overall unity to the village;
- Some good quality modern infill and building conversions that add to the sense of place and enhance the historic core;
- Some good details, including shop fronts, doorways, walling and ironwork.

There are few detrimental features, such as unsympathetic alterations to unlisted buildings of value; the loss of details such as chimney pots; poles and wires around Mill Street and The Square; a shop front with inappropriate colours and materials; and a boundary on High Street with potential for landscaping enhancement; and the intrusion of modern development into green space on Blandford Road.



Fig 1. Puddletown Brymer Estate – Buildings & Details

### **Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton**

The particular qualities of the Conservation Area are:

- Areas of good quality landscape adjacent to or within the Conservation Area, particularly the river and channels, water meadows, and the gardens of the several large houses, including the 96ha Grade II\* Park of Special Historic Interest at Kingston Maurward;
- Major cultural historical significance in the Thomas Hardy connections, particularly at Stinsford Church and churchyard;
- Important trees that enhance the setting of buildings, particularly at Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton;
- 30 Listed Building entries, including three Grade I buildings and a Scheduled Monument;
- About ten unlisted buildings of character and group value;
- A rich palette of building materials and details, including local limestone, cob, smooth render, brick, thatch, clay plain tiles and pantiles; there is a range of architectural detail from the C13, late medieval period, C16, early C17, C18 and early/mid C19, notably fine ashlar stonework with carved detail, gate piers and boundary walls;
- Coherent groups of buildings at Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton.

The detriments include the intrusive effects of some modern development at Kingston Maurward; a scrap yard south of Birkin House; wires at Church Lane, Stinsford; inappropriate hard landscaping at the entrance to Stinsford churchyard; some introduction of uPVC windows; the effects of traffic along Bockhampton Lane; and a poorly detailed entrance in Lower Bockhampton.

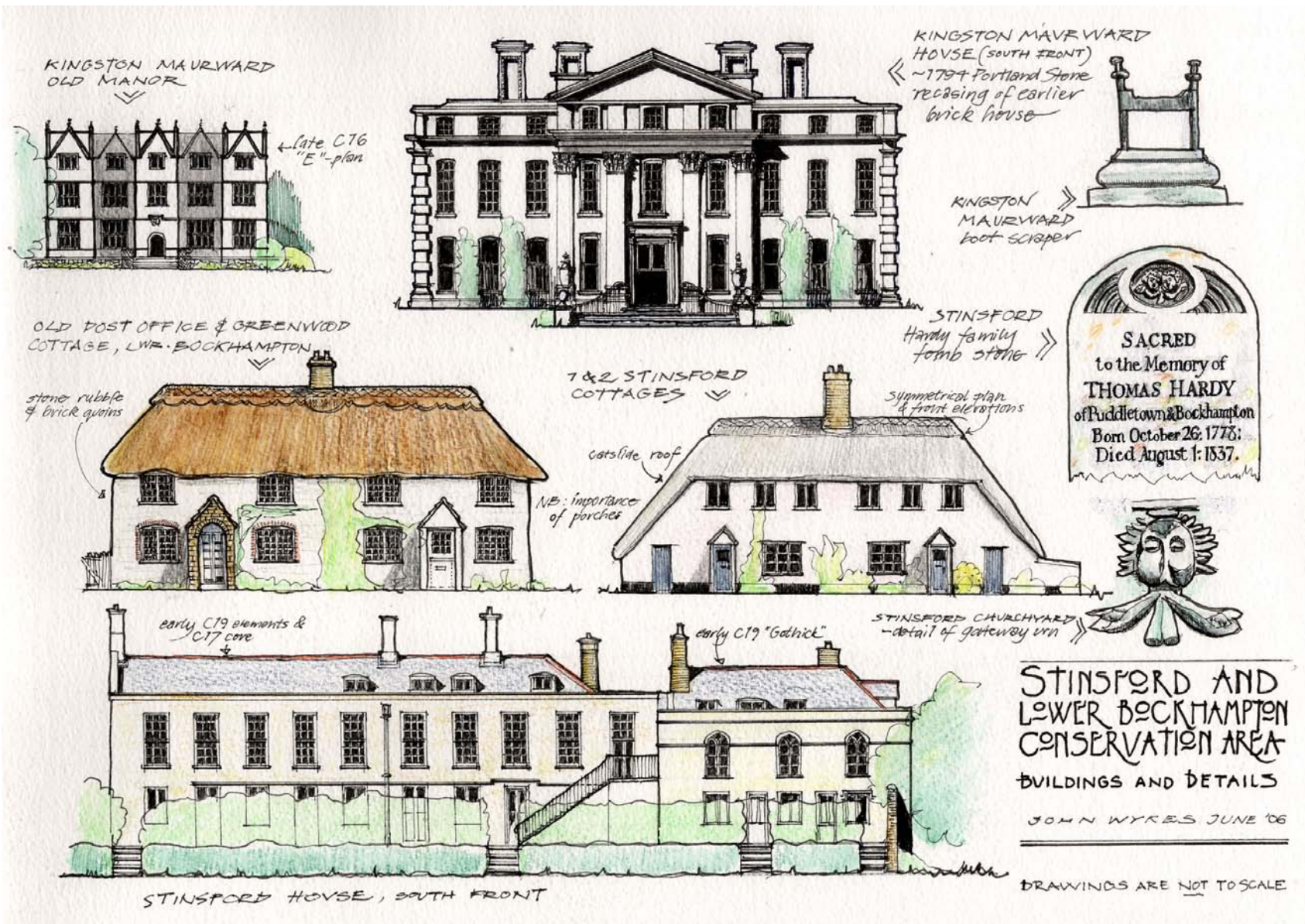


Fig 2. Stinsford & Lower Bockhampton - Buildings & Details



## **Tolpuddle**

The overall quality of Tolpuddle may be summarised:

- A distinctive and attractive landscape setting, in a chalk valley set amongst rolling hills and by a river, with some fine trees;
- Well defined entry points, on the west by the TUC Memorial Cottages and from the south, by the crossing point of Southover Lane over the river;
- 24 Listed Building entries, of which two are Grade I and three are Grade II\*, with an interesting Parish Church, a large gentry house and several farmhouses, a former Mill, characterful agricultural buildings and a strong underpinning of smaller cottages;
- About a dozen unlisted buildings of character and group value;
- Coherent groups of Listed and good quality unlisted buildings, boundaries, trees and details along the west end of Dorchester Road, The Green and Southover Lane;
- A rich mixture of building materials, with local limestone, flint, cob, render, brick, thatch, tile and slate;
- Details such as memorial inscriptions, cob walls and ironwork;
- A rich cultural heritage related to the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

Problems include the poor relationship between the village core and some areas of modern development; some alien materials, details and boundaries, the residual character of trunk road engineering, loss of details on some Listed and unlisted buildings of character; weak boundaries; concerns over the condition of a Grade II\* Listed Building; several sites that detract; two areas of poles and wirescapes; and the potential improvement to the grassed area in front of the TUC Memorial Cottages.

## **Common issues**

- The pressure of infill housing development in Puddletown with potential loss of green wedges, views, gardens and boundaries;
- The importance of details in repairing or maintaining structures: respecting local thatching traditions, avoiding gentrification, using lime mortar for pointing repairs and avoiding strap pointing or other projecting types; and not painting brick or stonework;
- The problems of sourcing materials where local quarries have closed and the care needed in matching colours and textures of available sources;
- The number (about thirty) of important local buildings in the villages, most of which have group value and some of which have definite visual qualities and may be potential additions to the *Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Interest*;
- The importance of trees, green wedges and gaps and the wider landscape setting of the conservation areas;
- The gaps in archaeological knowledge, particularly vernacular houses and industrial archaeology.

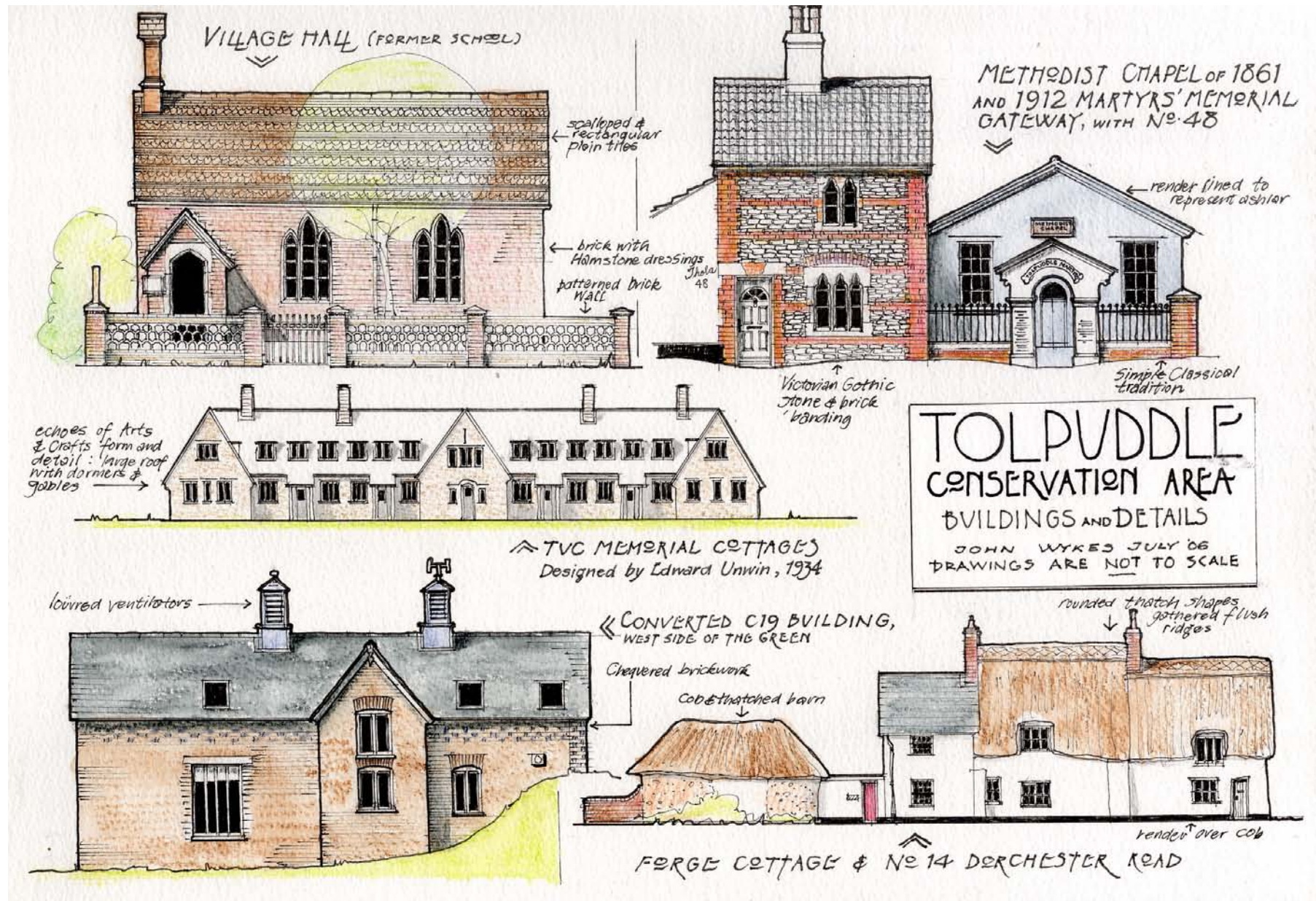


Fig 3. Tolpuddle - Buildings & Details

## The Planning Policy Context

Contained within the **West Dorset District Local Plan (Adopted 2006)** are a number of planning policies relevant to one or more of the four settlements:

- *Safeguarding Assets*, Policy SA1 seeks to protect the natural beauty of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); development must be in keeping with the landscape character of the area (SA3); protection is given to areas of Land of Local Landscape Importance (SA6); Policies SA9, SA10 and SA13 seek to protect natural environment assets, particularly Sites of Special Scientific Importance, Sites of Nature Conservation Interest and Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites; 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*: Policies AH1 and AH9 relate to restrictions on development in Flood Risk Zones and Development Consultation Zones due to unpleasant emissions from existing sewage handling facilities respectively;
- *Settlement Policy*: Policy SS1 relates to development within Defined Development Boundaries (DDB); SS3 relates to development outside the DDBs;
- *Housing, Employment and Tourism, Community Issues, and Transport and Infrastructure*: there are a number of general policies relating to these issues and associated land use;
- *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.

**West Dorset 2000, a Survey of the Built and Natural Environment of West Dorset**, provides a description of archaeological and built environment assets and it includes bullet points on broad generic characteristics (related to 22 Landscape Character Areas). The District Council adopted it as Supplementary Planning Guidance in February 2002. It is a useful reference for this current document.

The **Framework for the Future of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2004-2009** contains a number of relevant policies relating to the **Historic Environment** (historic landscapes, archaeology, historic parks and gardens) in Policy Objectives H1-9; the **Built Environment** (historic buildings, Conservation Areas and other developed areas) in Policy Objectives BE1-9; and **Landscape** in Policy Objectives L1-14.

The West Dorset District Local Plan and West Dorset 2000 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](http://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](http://www.dorsetforyou.com)

## Assessment of Special Interest

This includes two common core elements: location and setting; and historic development and archaeology; and a series of individual settlement descriptions of spatial and character analysis, providing detail on topics such as spaces within the developed areas, important edges, key views and vistas and a whole range of character components, such as land uses, building plan forms and types, the architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and structures, local details and building materials, the contribution made by greenery and the extent of loss, intrusion or damage.

### A. Location and setting

Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton are situated in the central part of the District, two kilometres east of Dorchester, on the shallow north slope of the Frome valley. Puddletown and Tolpuddle lie on the River Piddle, eight and twelve kilometres ENE of the county town.

There are low, rounded chalk slopes and ridges on the north side of the Piddle, with small streams flowing into the main valley, notably the Devil's Brook. The two river valleys are separated by a low ridge of gravel, rising to over 100 metres AOD and characterised by areas of heath and several large forestry plantations. The river valleys themselves are broad and shallow, with areas of water meadow and pasture. The southern side of the Frome has large stretches of undulating sand and gravel over the chalk, actively worked for minerals or arable farming and forestry.

Puddletown is sited on a shelf on the south side of the Piddle, about 56m AOD, at an historic junction of two main routes, the former A35 Dorchester-Bere Regis road (now bypassed to the north) and the A354 Blandford road. The extensive wooded area of Puddletown Forest is to the WSW and the historic parkland of Athelhampton House to the east. Tolpuddle is four kilometres to the east, astride the former A35, north of the river, with a crossing point to Southover and Affpuddle.

Stinsford is only separated from Dorchester by water meadows and part of the Dorchester bypass. It is a very small settlement situated just above the flood plain. Lower Bockhampton lies less than a kilometre to the east, above a bridging point over the Frome. Again, it is a collection of a few houses, related to one of the entrances to the adjacent Kingston Maurward estate. The historic parkland (now part of Kingston Maurward College) separates the two settlements.

### B. Historic development and archaeology

The settlements have a rich and varied archaeology, with about 140-recorded sites or finds on the Dorset Sites and Monuments Record. The chalk and gravel summits have a rich prehistoric archaeology, with evidence of Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age earthworks, notably bowl and round barrows. There is clear evidence of the major Roman road from Dorchester to Badbury Rings through the Kingston Maurward parkland (which also has traces of a second road), Puddletown Forest and in the centre of Tolpuddle. There is a possible Roman milestone on Stinsford Hill.

Puddletown, Tolpuddle and Stinsford have largely medieval parish churches, that of Puddletown is of particular value as a C12-early C16 structure, with rich interior fittings. There are remnants of medieval field systems and lynchets on some of the upper slopes and there are two known settlement sites at Frome Whitfield and Bardolfeston. Undoubtedly, some track ways and hedges have significance in landscape history, as visual features or as boundaries. Puddletown has the late C16 Tudor Cottage and remnants of C16 timber framing in The Old Vicarage.

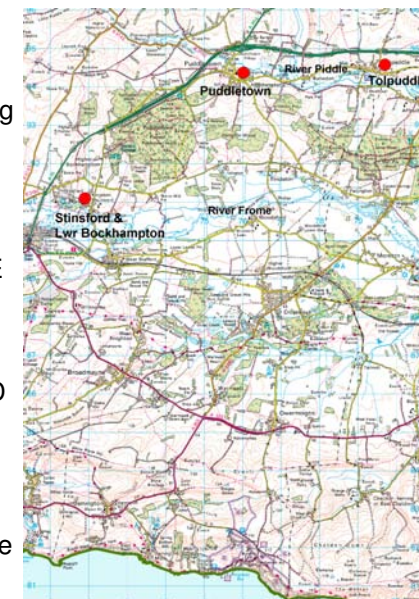


Fig 4. Location map  
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There are some significant post-medieval gentry houses in Waterston Manor, Kingston Maurward Old Manor House and Stinsford House. The first two houses all have historic grounds of value, on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Kingston Maurward has the late C16 Old Manor and the C18 House (c.1717, altered in 1794 and 1910-20). Ilsington House, Puddletown, has late C17 origins, but is mainly of the early and late C18. Its grounds also provide an attractive setting for the architecture. Tolpuddle Manor House has a 1656 date plaque and later extensions. There are Georgian and early-C19 gentry and large farm houses in the c.1828 portions of Stinsford House, Trent Meadows, Ilsington Cottage, no. 5 High Street and parts of the Old Vicarage (Dawnay House) in Puddletown. There are also numerous vernacular cottages in the settlements, built of local materials, as well as examples of agricultural and industrial buildings. Bockhampton Bridge is a C19 structure, a Scheduled Monument; The Old Mill at Tolpuddle retains its upper wheel; there are several barns and stable buildings, and a notable group of converted outbuildings to Ilsington House and other conversions at Tolpuddle Manor. Along the courses of the Frome and Piddle are historic water meadows. George Boswell, farmer and trader, who wrote the renowned *Treatise on Watering Meadows* in 1779, lived in Puddletown for some years.

The Victorian contribution is significant: a large gentry house in Birkin House, Stinsford; alterations to Waterston manor and late C19-early C20 garden designs at Athelhampton House and Waterston; major estate housing development at Puddletown, along with a school and reading room; several Nonconformist chapels; and a large complex of farm and milling buildings at Home Farm, Puddletown. There is a limekiln at Druce Higher Barn.

The area is also rich in cultural history, with Thomas Hardy's birthplace at Higher Bockhampton, the burial site of his heart, his wives and several family members, as well as another Poet Laureate in Cecil Day-Lewis at Stinsford (whose church appears in several Hardy works); and the Tolpuddle Martyr story evidenced by a cottage, the remains of a contemporary chapel, barns, the sycamore tree, the grave of one of the transportees, pre-War TUC Memorial Cottages and a modern museum.

The **archaeological issues** are:

- Lack of understanding of the resource: industrial archaeology, including the structures relating to water meadow management, and vernacular houses (only Listed Buildings have some description, mainly confined to the exterior);
- The potential for research into the street pattern and plot development of Puddletown and Tolpuddle;
- Potential for further research into the garden history of the larger houses.

## C. Spatial and character analysis of each village

Each settlement differs in its relationships between buildings, public space, gardens and open countryside and it is very difficult to generalise. Within Conservation Areas (usually the historic core of the village), there are unique progressions of spaces, with varying degrees of physical and psychological enclosure and exposure, depending upon the density and height of buildings, their position relative to the highway, the character of boundaries and the dominance or dearth of trees, views out to countryside or into the village core, and the effects of topographical levels – 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 village 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.

### C1 Puddletown

Puddletown is a large village with an extensive Conservation Area and a large number of Listed Buildings and unlisted buildings of value. Although there are potentially sub-areas that have differences in development density or layout and particular historical influences, the Conservation Area has an overall physical coherence and interdependence between High Street and the area around Mill Street and The Square and the surrounds of Ilsington House. There is a mixture of vernacular cottages, larger C18 and early C19 gentry houses and Victorian estate houses throughout the village. It is thus proposed to describe the settlement as one character area.

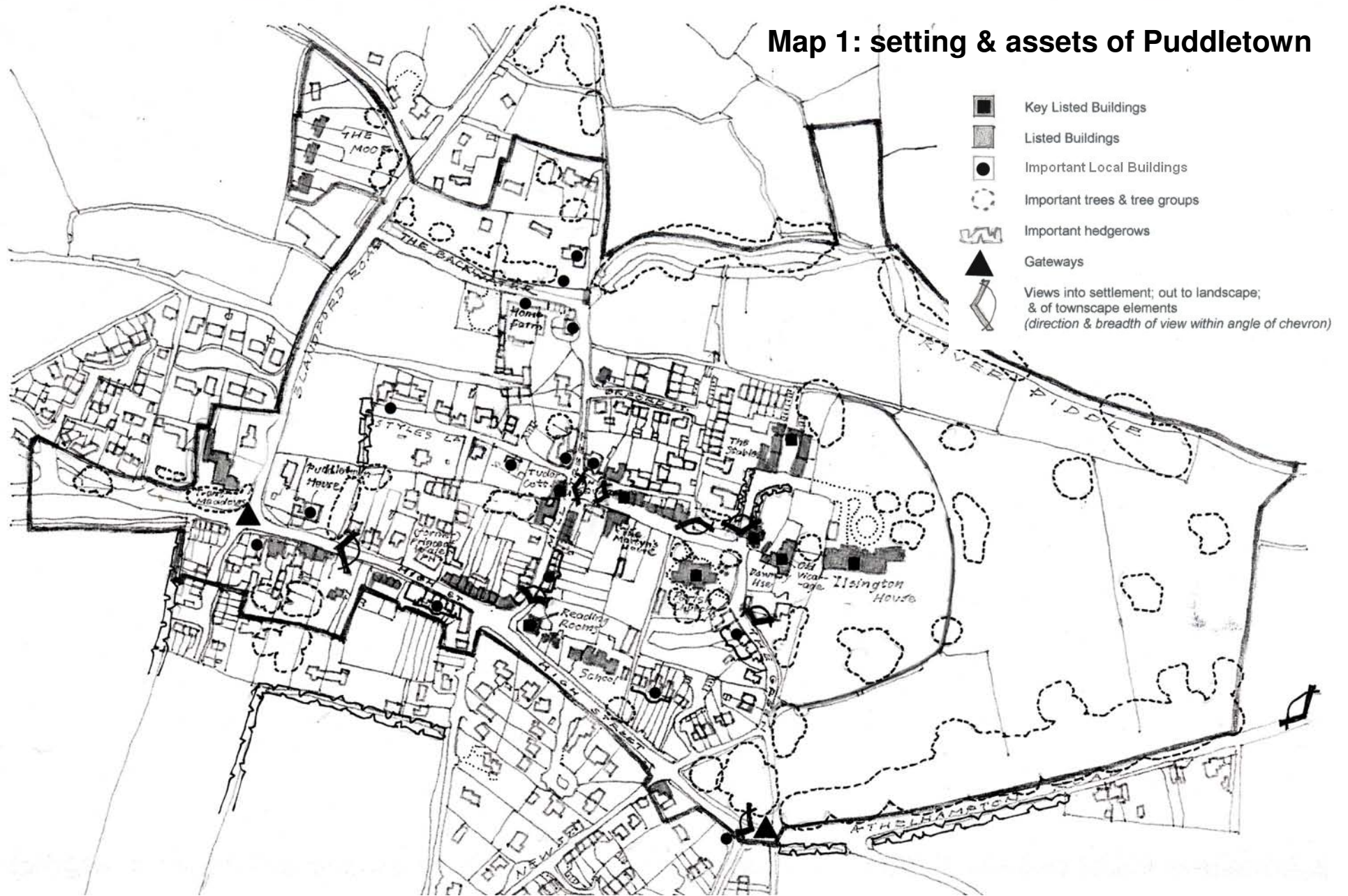
#### Spatial analysis & character and interrelationship of spaces within the Conservation Area

The wider setting of Puddletown shows a settlement on the valley floor, slightly elevated above a river and slightly offset from the junction of a main east-west route along the Piddle valley (the former A35, High Street and Athelhampton Road) and a NE route to Blandford (Blandford Road), which crosses the modern dual-carriageway bypass to the north. The main road ran historically eastwards from High Street north up Mill Street, east into The Square, back south onto the Athelhampton Road. The route to Blandford ran north up a now vanished continuation of Mill Street. A series of turnpike improvements in the early C19 provided more direct entries and exits at either end of High Street; removing the old eastern road from the grounds of Ilsington House and creating The Green; and forming the present Blandford Road.



Fig 5. The Square looking eastwards with the churchyard right

Map 1: setting & assets of Puddletown



It is important to understand the building history of the village. Up to the mid-C19, Puddletown was a medium-sized village focused on the central block around the Parish Church, Ilsington House and Vicarage, with limited development on the east-west, High Street, route. There was a series of large gentry or dower houses related to Ilsington House, exemplified by Myrtle Cottage, Ilsington Lodge (now Trent Meadows) and Cottage and Ilsington Lawns (White House). Between 1857 and 1861, the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Orford built three pairs of semi-detached estate cottages at The Moor. In 1861, he sold the estate to John Brymer, who, from 1864 onwards, developed a model agricultural estate, with decent terraced cottages for his workers, a new school, reading room and a Home Farm utilising the technological developments of the period (see fig 1). According to Pevsner, the designers were *Wainwright and Heard*, Chartered Surveyors of Shepton Mallet. The north side of High Street was rebuilt in 1864, the school in 1865, new terraces were built on the south side in 1869-70. A row of houses in Mill Street, the East and West Lodges, the stables and other ancillary buildings to the House are all of the same period. Improvements continued until 1913 (1911 date stone on semi-detached cottages in Styles Lane) and in 1921 the estate was sold and many of its properties were bought by a multiplicity of private owners. The Brymers remained in the House until 1977.

The village has a very definite nucleated **plan** form, with a densely developed core of mixed uses on Mill Street, The Square and The Green, with the parish church set in the angle between the historic east-west and Blandford routes. Ilsington House, is located at the eastern extremity of the main development block, with its ancillary buildings forming an outer precinct to the core of the village. The Old Vicarage and Dawnay House are also positioned on this eastern edge, separated from the House's parkland by a substantial brick wall. The Square cuts the central block almost exactly in half, running off a large junction with Mill Street, east to the entry to House and Vicarage, past the churchyard. The Square's western portion has the appearance of a public space and was the site of fairs and the village maypole and stocks. Hundred House filled the junction space until the early C19. From the space, roads run either side of an island block of development, with a wider southern limb, Front or Fore Street, compared to the narrow northern lane, Back Street. There is an early C19 sinuous exit back to the main road, in the form of The Green, which is firmly bounded by the high brick wall and trees of the House's parkland. There is also a narrow pedestrian lane running south from The Square, at the side of the churchyard, back to High Street.

Mill Street runs down from High Street, past The Square, in a gentle, continuous curve, by the former Mill Stream and performs a sharp right-angled turn by the former Home Farm. There is a short northern continuation to The White House, where the road becomes a track (Little Lane), on the line of the historic Blandford road. The metalled road runs west, along The Backwater, back to Blandford Road, at The Moor. There is a modern Orford Street, parallel to and north of The Square, on the site of the House's greenhouses and kitchen garden. Styles Lane runs off Mill Lane to the west, serving a few cottages and modern infill on the site of a sawmill and coal yard, with a footpath link to Blandford Road.

High Street has historic development, on either or both sides, from the Blandford Road junction (by Ilsington Lodge/Trent Meadows) eastwards to New Street. New Street, which prior to turnpike changes was part of the village centre, has a ribbon of buildings on its south side. On a 1902 Ordnance Survey map, the present High Street is named King's Arms Street and the southern portion of Mill Street is shown as High Street. The current High Street has modern development, houses and a library and village hall, on its southern side, between the Mill Lane and New Street junctions. The historic part of High Street has a cluster of late C18 and early C19 houses around the Blandford Road junction, including three larger gentry houses and, to the east, ribbons of mid to late-C19 estate terraces, a large Victorian primary school, and a former reading room, with a converted public house, two shops, a garage and library/hall. The estate development extends into the eastern side of Mill Street, as far as The Square. Opposite the parkland is an eastern outlier called Zoar, where a Nonconformist Chapel and



Fig 7. The Square looking westwards towards Mill St



Fig 8. New St - formerly part of the village centre



schoolhouse were built in the 1870s on land donated by the nearby Athelhampton Estate, in direct defiance of John Brymer, then owner of Ilsington House. This group, which enhances the eastern approach into the village, has a direct connection with the parkland trees opposite that were planted by John Brymer to hide the non-conformist neighbours. Blandford Road has a much looser density and grain of development, formerly with limited development either side of the river crossing point and only a few estate houses at The Moor and an outlier at Northbrook and Stafford Park Farm. The Blandford Road has been subject to modern infill, on higher ground either side of the river crossing. Modern development has occurred in the form of a large adjunct south of High Street, between Cow Lane, New Street and Rod Hill Lane; in the NW angle of Three Lanes End and Blandford Road; and north of the Mill Stream, on the site of the former Cat Inn. There has been extensive and intensive residential infill, converting the ancillary buildings of the House and Old Vicarage and developing small courtyard layouts on the sites of the sawmill and coal yard.

Building plots within the historic core tend to be rectangular, with evidence of planned layouts in the mid-C19 terraces. Most properties are tight on the road line with front gardens more evident around some of the larger houses: Trent Meadows and The Old Vicarage/Dawnay House, and in some of the Victorian estate houses, west of the primary school and on The Moor. There is a predominance of two forms of terrace: the organic group of older houses of varying sizes and plan forms, seen around The Square and the west end of High Street; and the Victorian planned terraces seen in the southern part of Mill Street and the central part of High Street.

The spatial character of the village is complex and richly varied. Development is reasonably compact, with clean edges to the NE and east, where the grounds of Ilsington House still provide a definite break in development, and to the SW, where the western approach and the southern side of High Street are relatively unspoilt. Modern development has affected the quality of the western approach, the NW angle between the old A35 and Blandford Road being infilled; and both sides of Blandford Road have a number of modern individual house plots and a new development west of the surgery. The former car showroom adds to the feeling of sporadic development. The river and pastures form a clean edge to the north of Orford Street. The majority of the modern expansion lies to the south, with the large precinct of the Middle School and estate cul-de-sacs infilling a large block between narrow lanes. The southern approaches to the village core have the least obvious traditional character.

The route across the Conservation Area, from the western entry to High Street, down Mill Street, into The Square, back down The Green to Athelhampton Road and eastwards along High Street to the primary school, characterises a representative mixture of spaces, landmarks, views and sensations of relative enclosure and exposure: the elements of townscape.

From Three Lanes End, there are glimpses of modern development to the left (north) behind auction rooms and York House, but the trees and high brick wall of Trent Meadows dominate the junction with Puddletown Road. There are only fleeting glimpses of the house's brick front elevation. On the right (south), modern terraces, on the site of The King's Arms, provide a suitably modest and appropriate introduction to High Street. The traffic lights and road markings at the junction seem to be left over from the pre-bypass era. There is a long view down the slope of Blandford Road of meadows and hedges and distant trees, interspersed with untidy modern suburbia.



Fig 9. Small front gardens to Nos 1 & 2 Styles Lane



Fig 10. Nos 16-30 High St with the former Reading Rooms in the distance

There is a group of late C18-early C19 houses on both sides of High Street, with a mixture of styles and materials: to the north, the severe Georgian brick of Puddletown House, heralded by a humbler ancillary wing and a modern incurving brick wall, railings and gates; on the south, a Victorian Tudor building, a handsome early C18 house, with sashes and central porch; and some neighbouring cob and render thatched and tiled cottages. The architectural tension reduces on the north side, with mixed modern infill and a more considered 1930's rendered and gabled block of the former Prince of Wales pub. There is then a good framed composition of stone Victorian terraces, with a Gothic and early Tudor flavour, on either side, focused on the bayed and gabled elevation of the former Reading Rooms, at the junction with Mill Street. The sharp perspectives of High Street terraces are enlivened with rhythms of gablets and bold chimneystacks.

At the Mill Street entry, a curving building line to the left, a corbelled corner building and falling levels lead into a vista of Victorian imitation half-timbering and a hint of more subtle, brick buildings beyond. A hundred metres walk reveals the attractive detailing and building materials of Tudor House and a sudden expansion of space opposite, where The Square opens out. There is a firm grouping of houses of mixed age and character, particularly on the north side, with Victorian brick, render and thatch, a looser arrangement on the south, where the well-mannered Telephone Exchange is hidden by a tall hedge, and a charismatic centre-piece in the form of no. 3, the former Stephens shop. The combination of thatch, local versions of fashionable Georgian window details, thin iron columns, a recessed ground floor and railings and terracotta plaques establish a centre of high townscape value. There is a good timber shop front to the side. To the north, on Back Street, there is an intricate wooden porch. This narrow lane has some single storey estate buildings and a sharp curve back to Front Street, with a narrow view of the flank of the Church and an interesting gated, brick arched pathway at the side of The Vicarage.

The churchyard then begins to show, with a newer extension and a wooden lych gate, a narrow lane running back to High Street between stone and brick walls and the yews screening much of the Church tower and porch. The green space is thickly populated by memorials and is elevated above the roadway. Gates and a substantial iron overthrow complete with Victorian Gothic lamp mark the entrance. The eastern end of the space is adorned with mature trees, around the Old Vicarage and Ilsington House. The right-angled turn in the road almost conceals the cast iron gates and railings and the Italianate Lodge that lead into Ilsington House and the former Stables. There is an unexpected view through the gates, down a drive bounded by yew hedges, to a handsome Victorian Gothic stable block, with a spiky fleche and bell tower to one side.

Turning the sharp corner into The Green, the east end of the Church stands up well, elevated above the road and framed by yews. There is a glimpse of the blank, arched openings on the side elevation of Dawnay House, trees and ornamental shrubs, railings and iron Doric gate pillars at the Old Vicarage entrance and views of converted stables and the high brick wall of Ilsington House. Mature trees hang over the wall and road and gate piers frame the arched doors to a subsidiary entrance to the House. The other, western, side of The Green has a modest row of rendered and painted brick cottages that hug the inside of the curve in the road. Another bend leads to the grassed space and trees of The Green itself surrounded by roads and heralding the former main road. The trees emphasise a curving approach to High Street, introduced by the thatched, rendered garage. A slight hill rises up to the gabled First School block, with estate mock half-timber to the east and Brymer stone Gothic to the west and the Reading Rooms and Mill Street. By the primary school is the south-westerly entrance of the pedestrian passage to The Square. From this route, the newly designed Church Room can be partly seen, over the churchyard wall.



Fig 11. View of stable block from The Square



Fig 12. No 3 The Square

**Key views and vistas** are the first sight of High Street from the western entry, by the Puddletown Road traffic lights, where the slight curve of the road line exposes two of the Victorian terraces, on either side, framing the strong visual centrepiece of the Reading Rooms; the view down Mill Street from the High Street junction, of mixed Victorian and older cottages; the view into The Square from its Mill Street junction, of the very characterful end-piece to the central block (no. 3), an oblique view of the churchyard and the termination provided by the fine trees around Dawnay House and the grounds of Ilsington House; the view west out of The Square to Tudor Cottage; the glimpse of the Church from the narrow turn from Back Lane to Front Lane; the closer view of the south flank from the gated entrance into the churchyard; the sight of The Stables from its gated entrance, by its roadside Lodge; a verdant view from The Green of sections of Dawnay House and the chimneys of Ilsington House through a garden and between the converted Stables and Coach House; and a view of large trees dominating the curve into the east end of High Street and the gable end of the Garage by the junction with Rod Hill Lane. The Church tower only shows in distant views from the NW, on Blandford Road, at The Moor; and Ilsington House is virtually invisible, apart from a distant view from the eastern, Athelhampton Road, approach, where the Church tower also appears between trees.

The obvious **landmarks** are the primary school and the Reading Room on High Street; the end elevation of no. 3 The Square; and the church tower (limited to intimate, local views and two longer views). The spired tower to The Stables is also seen from The Square and The Green.

### Character Analysis

#### Building Uses

Existing uses reflect the village's primary functions as a residential centre. The Parish Church, Ilsington House and several other gentry houses, a range of smaller houses and cottages and large blocks of former estate housing reflect the historical social hierarchy. The Victorian village school has survived and there are other modern amenities, such as a surgery, library and village hall. One public house survives and one shop, a general store and Post Office. A local butcher has closed recently and merged with the general store and the Prince of Wales pub has been converted to housing. A veterinary practice and antiquarian bookseller both use historic buildings.

Historically, Puddletown had a variety of economic activity, with employment related to Ilsington House (greenhouses, laundry and other garden and household activities, the garden alone employed seven staff), other domestic work (over twenty servants besides those at Ilsington House), forge, saw mill, coal yard, a small malthouse and farms within or adjacent to the village. An 1859 Post Office Directory lists a population of 1334 and seven shopkeepers, three blacksmiths and a combined saddler and harness maker. The village had five public houses in the mid-C19 and population, economic decline, road widening and fires (notably the loss of The Prince of Wales in 1932) have accounted for most of the losses.

The village has seen a noticeable amount of conversions of older buildings to housing, including the division of Trent Meadows, Puddletown House and Ilsington House's ancillary buildings to apartments and conversions and new build around the former saw mill and the conversion of the Prince of Wales public house.



Fig 13. View of the parish church from the later churchyard



Fig 14. Tudor Cottage

### Building Types and Layouts

The Parish Church is a good example of a C12-early C16 accretion and rebuilding, with major C17 Laudian refitting and a largely Victorian chancel to create a chancel, nave, aisles, north porch, south transept or chapel with Martyn monuments and west tower.

Tudor Cottage, the core of the Old Vicarage (remains of timber frame, ceilings and fireplace), no. 9 The Square (cruck roof) and no. 4 The Square (cruck post) represent post-medieval houses. Tudor Cottage has a central entrance with two heated rooms downstairs and a rear range to form a double pile plan.

Ilington House is an example of a medium-size country house, late C17-early C18 with later alterations. The House has a central entrance with projecting wings, an added 1871 wing with a billiard room and an attached service range. Larger Late C18 and early C19 houses tend to have symmetrical planning, with central doorways and hallways, exemplified by Trent Meadows and Puddletown House. The former has an L-plan, with an attached rear stable range. Two storeys are the norm, with occasional dormer windows. No. 5 High Street has a central entrance with a central blind window on the first floor. Most medium sized houses tend to be attached, in a row, parallel to the street, with side or rear wings or humbler lean-tos (no. 15 High Street). No. 12 Mill Street, Willoughby Cottage, has a two-storey front range and a parallel one storey plus attics rear wing, connected by a link with a staircase.

The Victorian estate houses are terraced units, of identical plan form in the terrace, on the pavement or road edge and flat fronted, although nos. 17-25 High Street (see fig 1) have small front gardens and projecting porches. There are semi-detached units at nos. 34 and 36 High Street, with porches and front gardens and at The Moor, where there are three pairs of semi-detached cottages. Nos. 38a-46b High Street are also semi-detached pairs, built close enough to suggest a terrace. The primary school is a large block, with, originally, separate entrances for infants and juniors and a large central hall. There was a schoolhouse attached, with its own porched entrance. The Reading Rooms were a two storeyed arrangement of rooms (see fig 1), presumably with varying functions. There are two detached lodges (see fig 1) to Ilington House, one L and the other T-shaped. The Stables/Walpole Court (see fig 1) are a good quality conversion of an 1868 three-sided yard of one and two storey coach house, stables with hay lofts over and staff accommodation.

Home Farm is a mid-Victorian (seemingly after 1842, with a major rebuilding and extension in 1877-8, with older elements on the mill site) assembly of combined grist and saw mill (with a shared 14' diameter breast-shot water wheel), barns, fattening shed, stables, cattle pens, piggeries, root house, built in a square around a yard and associated with a mill leat and mill pond.

### Key Listed Buildings and Structures

There are 39 Listed Building entries in the Conservation Area, of which the Parish Church is Grade I and three buildings are Grade II\* buildings. The key Listed Buildings are:

- The Parish Church, with many important elements and details, including the medieval timber nave roof, Norman font, medieval Martyn tombs and Post-medieval monuments, an intact set of Laudian fittings and wall paintings; there are churchyard monuments of artistic and visual quality, of which five groups or individual ones are Listed Grade II; the Church is a visual focal point in the centre of the village;
- Ilington House, Grade II\*, late C17 to late C19, with an impressive main front and garden front, internal fittings and garden features; it is not very visible from the village core;



Fig 15. No 12 Mill St



Fig 16. Former estate cottages at The Moor

- The related estate buildings to the west of the House: gate lodge, stables and coach house, walls and entrance gates;
- The Old Vicarage and Dawnay House, an urbane Grade II\* brick group, with some refined details;
- Tudor Cottage, a dated house of fine details and striking materials, in an important position at the entry to The Square;
- No. 3 The Square, particularly important for its picturesque end elevation, with Venetian windowed first floor bay on columns; central feature in The Square; the rest of the terrace, nos. 4, 5 and 6 are also of great importance to the setting of the Church;
- The Reading Rooms, a strong assemblage of gables and bays, in a key position at the junction of High Street and Mill Street.

### Important Local Buildings

The contribution made by important local buildings is important and there are a number of individually attractive and interesting unlisted buildings, most of which contribute to the value of larger groups:

- No. 3 High Street, a brick, Victorian Tudor building, with stone dressings, at right angles to the road, very prominent in the approach from the west; brick gate piers to yard entrance, capped with stone birds of prey (an estate building?);
- Puddletown House, a dignified early C19 brick cube, with good brickwork and a central chimney stack;
- Nos. 27-41 High Street (see fig 1), large brick and slate estate buildings, with strong end and mid-façade gables, cartouche and octagonal chimney stacks;
- Nos. 38a-46b High Street, later estate houses, of brick, stone and mock half timber; an important group in the eastern end of High Street, grouping with the First School and stone estate buildings west to the Reading Rooms;
- Nos. 4-8 The Green, simple rendered and painted brick row, of townscape and group value;
- A building on the north side of The Square: no. 1, the handsome double bayed Victorian house on the corner with Mill Street;
- Nos. 1-13 Mill Street, brick and mock half-timber estate houses, of group value and a key feature in the view down Mill Street from the High Street junction;
- No. 16 Mill Street, early C19 painted brick corner building, of group and townscape value;
- Nos. 18 and 20 Mill Street, a semi-detached pair of estate houses, dated 1878, with two shallow gabled wings, a central wooden porch with quatrefoils, scalloped barge boards, Gothic details, chequered brickwork and fish-scale tiles and a crenellated roof ridge: unspoilt, on an important corner site;
- Nos. 1 and 2 Styles Lane, a pair of flint and stone Tudor Revival estate cottages, with a date lozenge of 1911 and John Brymer's initials, attractive and unspoilt;
- The cob and pantiled boundary wall adjacent to no. 3 Styles Lane;
- Home Farm's mid-Victorian barns, sheds and grist and saw mill, an important example of farming technology, attractive materials and details;
- Myrtle Cottage, with its thatched cob boundary wall; the house has a good eastern elevation to the lane, brick and sashes and square ground floor bays and iron railings, with fleur-de-lis finials, in front;
- The K6 telephone box on the boundary of the Conservation Area, at the junction of Athelhampton Road and Butt Close.



Fig 17. Myrtle Cottage



Fig 18. Nos 18 & 20 Mill St

There are some modern contributions to the Conservation Area that are positive features, such as the modern Vicarage, housing developments in the Old Coalyard and Sawmills, Kingsmead, Orford Street, The Courtyard and The Stables, and the new Church Rooms in the old graveyard, SW of the Church. This last building may be a controversial choice, recalling some local objections to its siting, but it is undoubtedly a carefully detailed and distinguished building. There is a modern infill office and house next to no. 4 in The Square, which is well detailed and sympathetic in terms of materials and colours. The new development at Catmead appears to be in keeping with local vernacular forms. The proposed reuse of the Home Farm buildings (including the retention of the mill machinery) for residential use, with new build units, is encouraging and should lead to the protection and appreciation of much of this important model farm group.

### Building Groups

Good groups are:

- Around the High Street/Puddletown Road junction, with Trent Meadows and its boundary wall, Puddletown House and Cottage and wall and gates; and on the south side, nos. 5, 9, 11 and 15;
- Two Victorian terraces in High Street, nos. 16-30 (north side) and 17-25 (south); the Reading Rooms and two adjacent houses, nos. 34 and 36; the primary school; and the later estate houses, nos. 38a-46b; a very important cross-section of Brymer estate houses and public buildings;
- In Mill Street, nos. 15-21, nos. 1-13 (one Listed and one unlisted estate terrace) and two important unlisted corner buildings, no. 1 The Square and no. 16 Mill Street;
- Linked with these, no. 3 The Square (the centrepiece), nos. 4, 5 and 6 adjoining, no. 2, the Parish Church and graveyard, with its yew trees, and no. 9, The Martyn's House on the south side;
- The Stables and Lodge and gates; Dawnay House and The Old Vicarage and the Coach House and Stables conversions, and the unlisted row, nos. 4-8 The Green; and the boundary wall to Ilsington House.

### Building Materials and Architectural Details

There has been extensive use of a Lower Purbeck Oolitic limestone, possibly from one or more quarries along the Ridgeway, including Portesham (Athelhampton House), Friar Waddon, Windsbatch, at Upwey, and Poxwell. The stone appears both in dressed Lower Purbeck for walling and Portland Freestone ashlar. The distinctive silvery grey stone is seen at the Parish Church, in rubble form, mixed with flints, and ashlar on the dressings. The Brymer estate houses used stone in dressed rubble or rough ashlar form with ashlar dressings (nos. 16-30 High Street), and rock-faced ashlar (Reading Rooms and nos. 34 and 36 High Street). Orange-brown Hamstone is also used in ashlar form, at Tudor Cottage, and on some of the estate buildings, nos. 15-21 Mill Street, Walpole Court/The Stables and no. 7 The Square. It is used in thin horizontal bands, as a contrast to the grey local stone, on the Reading Rooms. Flint is also evident, particularly in boundary walling, along with limestone rubble. It is carefully squared and knapped and arranged in bands with limestone at Tudor House and at the unlisted nos. 1 and 2 Styles Lane (with one brick end elevation) and is arranged in bands with brick at nos. 3-8 The Moor.

There are several brick colours, ranging from a pale sandy yellow, mid-brown and a bright orange. This may suggest a number of sources for the material, including Broadmayne and a local brickyard, in the C19, on Sandy Lane/Rod Mill Lane, which provided the bricks for the Brymer improvements. Nos. 15-21 Mill Street, no. 23 (a former lodge) and the large stables, coach house and estate cottage group west of Ilsington House (Walpole Court, nos. 1-8 The Stables) have brick walling and ashlar dressings. Decoration and refinement are provided by red/orange rubbed and gauged work on C18-early C19 houses like Dawnay House/The Old Vicarage, where there are also gauged arches and aprons under the cills, and Puddletown



Fig 19. Nos 4-8 The Green



Fig 20. Nos 36a-48b High St

House. Many buildings display a chequer pattern, either created by the contrast of slightly darker headers against paler stretchers or by the deliberate burning or vitrification of the headers in the kiln. Brick is sometimes colour washed, with limewash on parts of Home Farm, colour wash at nos. 5, 9, 11 and 32 High Street.

There is some exposed timber framing at the Old Vicarage. Render, either rough-cast, smooth or stucco (Trent Meadows front elevation), covers a number of rubble and cob walls (no. 9 High Street and on part of the stable block of Trent Meadows). At Ilsington House, render covers brick and there are exposed ashlar dressings.

The estate also employed applied half-timber at first floor level and on a brick base, at nos. 1-13 Mill Street and nos. 36a-48b High Street.

Boundary walling uses limestone in rubble, dressed or rock-faced form; roughly coursed flints and rubble; and brick. The latter has been used to build gate piers at Ilsington House and The Stables/Walpole Court, topped with moulded stone caps and ball finials. No. 3 High Street has bird finials on brick piers. There are some fine brick walls between the House and The Stables and The Green. Copings are of shaped stone (lane between The Square and High Street and the bridge over the Piddle, on Mill Street). High walls with shallow buttresses run along Mill Street, between no. 1 The Square and Orford Street. There are also cob walls, coated with plaster and with pantiled or thatched protective cappings: at the western end of Styles Lane and on the riverside front to Myrtle Cottage.

Traditional roofs range from lead (the Church), stone tiles graduated in size from ridge to eaves, as in the north porch of the Church, clay plain tiles and pantiles (particularly on the Home Farm buildings), and slates. Some of the clay tile roofs have stone slates at the verges (Dawnay House/The Old Vicarage). Gable ends may have stone coping or barge boarding, with exaggerated cusping in the Victorian buildings. These are seen on the porches of the Reading Rooms (see fig 1), no. 23 Mill Street and no. 7 The Square (former lodges to Ilsington House) and nos. 17-25, 34 and 36 High Street. Dormers appear in tile and slate roofs, either with hipped roofs (Dawnay House), monopitched roofs or with Victorian Gothic gables and ridges. Ridge tiles often have decorative scalloping or crockets.

Thatch detailing is traditionally of soft, rounded forms, with eyebrow dormers, undulating eaves lines and flush, wrap over ridges, hips or half-hips. No. 9 The Square, The Martyn's House, has (modern?) dormers deeply recessed into the slope of the roof.

Chimneystacks and flue-pots (see fig 1) are a special feature of Puddletown, with many tall, prominent brick and stone stacks. Brick is occasionally combined with a stone base or capping; many stacks are rendered; C19 estate examples may have rock-faced stone. There is one remaining stack with octagonal brick flues on nos. 15-21 Mill Street and a complete set on the unlisted block, nos. 27-41 High Street. Equal sophistication is seen in several brick or rendered stacks with corner pilasters and an oversailing cap: brick at Dawnay House and render at Puddletown House. Pots are often high, circular types, with projecting bands or a very handsome pale yellow square type, with a top and base mould and battered sides, sometimes with a shallow inset panel.

The modern infill developments at the Sawmills, Old Coal Yard and Orford Street and at Catmead all use a range of materials that reflect traditional character.



Fig 21. Boundary wall of Ilsington House, The Green



Fig 22. No 9 The Square

Windows vary from stone mullions, with moulded labels over and inset metal casements (Tudor Cottage and on many of the C19 estate buildings); at the primary school and Reading Rooms (see fig 1) horizontal transoms create a stone grid on larger windows; side hung wooden or metal casements with only one or two horizontal bars or multi-pane divisions; vertically hung sliding sashes, with thin glazing bars and later C19 types with larger glazed areas and fewer bars or solely the two horizontal meeting rails. The Garage on High Street has early Victorian sashes with marginal glazing, where the wooden mullions and transoms are restricted to the margins of the window, leaving a large central pane. No. 5 High Street has early C18 sashes that are set flush with the wall, an interesting comparison to later types set behind reveals. Nos. 12 Mill Street and 9 The Square have tripartite sashes, where two wooden mullions break the windows into three parts, the central portion having greater width and number of panes. No. 3 The Square has a Venetian window set in a curved bay and adorned with a frieze and cornice. Some C18 windows have gauged arches and projecting stone keystones (Dawnay House/Old Vicarage and no. 5 High Street). Ilsington House has moulded surrounds to its sashes on its main elevation. Amongst the predominantly flat fronts, there are several first floor canted bay windows, notable at no. 3 The Square and no. 12 Mill Street, Willoughby Cottage. The Reading Rooms have a Victorian two storey canted bay, with a hipped roof and no. 7 The Square has a ground floor bay. The same building has round-headed windows, giving an Italianate character to the Lodge, matched at another former lodge at no. 23 Mill Street. On the estate buildings, a common feature is a mullioned window with a flat lintel and a pointed relieving arch over. The village only has one good early C19 timber shop front, at no. 3 The Square, with features like side pilasters, moulded entablatures, multiple panes and a central doorway. No. 32 High Street has a square bay shop window with sashes and no. 9 has a similar bay with a thatched canopy over.



Fig 23. Shopfront of No 3 The Square

Doors and doorways vary with building age and status. Tudor Cottage has a four-centred stone arch with continuous mouldings. Ilsington House's central porch has a pair of doors flanked by pilasters and with a fanlight over. Dawnay House also has a pilastered doorway with a round arched fanlight over. There is a variety of porches, an intricate pierced and framed timber example at no. 2 The Square and thatched canopies and simpler wooden, flat roofed canopies with scrolled supporting brackets (nos. 5 High Street and 9 The Square). No. 6 The Square has a shallow gabled hood with shaped brackets. The Victorian porches tend to be gabled and barge boarded with shouldered-arched heads. Doors range from ledged, fielded and sunk panels and half-glazing or unadorned plain glazed fanlights over.

There is some good ironwork in the Conservation Area, ranging from simple spear-topped, wrought iron railings in front of no. 5 High Street, in front and north of no. 23 Mill Street and at the side of Dawnay House; larger spear heads on the Lodge gates and rails to The Stables (running back west to the lane between Front and Back Streets) and in a brick gateway by The Vicarage. Myrtle Cottage has more decorative Victorian fleur-de-lis finials. The entrance piers to the House and The Stables/Walpole Court are of cast iron, panelled and with heavy mouldings topped by pyramidal caps. There are fluted Doric column gateposts at the entrance to The Old Vicarage. The garden front of Ilsington House has a Gothick-style iron balustrade to its balcony. Nos. 17-25 High Street have boundary railings with shaped tops. The simple railings and more elaborate gates to Puddletown House appear to be modern. There are many other details, such as the functional estate fencing around The Green's grassed space; date stones (1573 on Tudor Cottage, various 1861-1911 dates on estate buildings); the cast iron Gothic lamp and overthrow to the churchyard; a number of shaped gravestones, with cherubs, scrolls and good lettering, and the churchyard cross.



Fig 24. Churchyard gates and lamp overthrow



### Parks, Gardens and Trees & Open Spaces

The village core has few front gardens and the back areas are usually not visible. The exceptions to this are the grassed and treed churchyard; the area south of Dawnay House and The Old Vicarage; and deep front gardens to former estate houses on The Moor (where there is a delightful stream with footbridges over, grass, shrubs and trees) and nos. 40-46 High Street. The Green's triangular grassed and treed space is also visually important. The landscaped grounds to Ilsington House, complete with ha-ha, are virtually invisible from the village core, screened by large trees along Athelhampton Road; a high brick wall on The Green and ancillary buildings on The Square. There are occasional small shrubs and climbers on front walls, around The Square, for example.

There are several other important green spaces within the Conservation Area: a meadow at the western end of Styles lane, behind Puddletown House; and the stream and sides known as The Backwater. The village edges are blessed with a number of fine, mature trees, at Ilsington House (seen to particular advantage along Athelhampton Road and The Green); on The Green itself; in the churchyard; between Styles Lane and the south side of High Street; and along The Backwater. Large yew hedges bound the drive to The Stables. There is a solitary yew, on the pavement edge between Puddletown House and no. 8 High Street that is of visual value.

### Detrimental Features

There are a number in this large village:

- The residual trunk road accoutrements, in the form of traffic lights and road markings at the High Street/Puddletown Road junction;
- Loss of detailing, in the form of uPVC replacement windows and doors on unlisted buildings of character on High and Mill Streets;
- A visually obtrusive (in terms of colours and materials) shop front to the general stores on the south side of High Street, in an unlisted estate terrace of quality and group value;
- The loss of many chimney pots and the mutilation of some previously bold stacks;
- Painting of brickwork;
- Poles and wires on the Mill Street/The Square junction;
- The rather bleak boundary on the south side of High Street, near the Library, where there is very visible car parking;
- The single storey hair salon on The Green, tidily presented, but of the wrong scale for the area;
- Modern development on Blandford Road that has reduced the value of the open green space either side of the river and has introduced suburban characteristics to an important approach.

### **Definition of the Special Interest of the Conservation Area**

- A fine landscape setting, with undulating topography, an attractive river course, remnants of managed water meadows and mature trees;
- Good clean edges to the settlement to the north, NE and east;
- Related to this, well defined entry points, particularly from the west and east, on the former A35;
- A rich archaeological heritage, with a range of sites from Prehistoric barrows and cultivation remains, a Roman road, a Medieval settlement site, and Post-medieval vernacular buildings, industrial and farming structures and the earthworks and channels relating to water meadow management;



Fig 25. The Backwater



Fig 26. Parkland trees alongside Athelhampton Road and opposite Zoar

- 39 Listed Building entries, including a Grade I church, three Grade II\* gentry houses, a strong underpinning of smaller cottages and substantial buildings relating to a major mid-Victorian development of a model farming estate;
- About a dozen unlisted buildings of character and/or group value;
- Coherent groups of Listed and unlisted buildings, boundary walls, railings, trees and details, notably on the western part of High Street, Mill Street, The Square, the ancillary buildings of Ilsington House and The Green;
- Consistent use of South Dorset limestone, cob, local brick clays, thatch and vernacular building details that give an overall unity to the village;
- Some good quality modern infill and building conversions that add to the sense of place and enhance the historic core;
- Some good details, including chimneys, doorways and windows, date stones, walling and ironwork.

## **C2 Stinsford & Lower Bockhampton**

### **Spatial Analysis**

Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton are two hamlets, Stinsford having a Parish Church and former manor house and possibly qualifying as a small village. They are situated on the north slope of the shallow Frome valley, Stinsford being visible from the eastern limb of the Dorchester bypass. The village is about one kilometre from the eastern edge of Dorchester, near a roundabout where the A35 and B3150 meet, but seems to be very isolated and rural. Lower Bockhampton is a very small settlement, strung along the unclassified Bockhampton Lane, which runs over the Frome north to Higher Bockhampton, Troy Town and Puddletown. Bockhampton Lane crosses the Tingleton Road at Bockhampton Cross. The two settlements are separated by the parkland and buildings of Kingston Maurward College, the site of a manor since at least the C14 and a large house since the late C16. The Royal Commission on Historic Monuments notes that, at the time of Domesday, there was a chain of small settlements along the north bank of the Frome, each with a strip of land running back from the river: Bhopmston, Bockhampton, Kingston, Stinsford, Coker's Frome and Frome Whitfield. The last is the only one to retain any trace of a medieval village. It is possible that the building of large houses at Kingston and Stinsford resulted in the absence of anything approaching a village in size and complexity. The Parish Church at Stinsford was, on the evidence of burials, closely related to both Kingston Maurward (Grey and Pitt families) and Stinsford Houses (Strangways family). Lower Bockhampton has no buildings earlier than the C18, but it is possible that it existed earlier as an adjunct to the Elizabethan Old Manor.

Although there are three components, in the two settlements and Kingston Maurward house and park, they are within the same parish and interrelated in terms of their history and physical character. It is thus proposed to describe the Conservation Area as a whole, without sub-divisions.

In terms of **plan forms**, Stinsford is a small, nucleated settlement, positioned at the end of a cul-de-sac Church Lane off an unclassified road east to Tingleton, which is the continuation of the line of the B3150 road through the centre of Dorchester. There are a number of Rights of Way that continue beyond the end of the road, from the Church south to the river, Lower Bockhampton and Grey's Bridge. The access road, Church Lane, passes parts of the Kingston Maurward College buildings and portions of Stinsford Farm incorporated into the estate and leads to the Church, The Old Vicarage and Stinsford House. The Lane continues, as an unsurfaced path south to a junction, one route going west to Grey's Bridge and the other east to Lower Bockhampton. There is one extended, former keeper's cottage on this southern extension of Church Lane. Stinsford



Fig 27. River Frome & Bockhampton Bridge with Lower Bockhampton in the distance

House has been converted into apartments and new development has formed two sides of a triangle to the north, with the House being the base. Newcombe Lane forms the hypotenuse, seemingly following an older entrance to the House. The limited historic development consists of the House, a large gentry house built in a long succession of rooms, facing south over small walled gardens and with two north-south wings, all in a small precinct of yards, with ancillary buildings (and, now, modern housing for company); the Old Vicarage, a smaller gentry house, again running east-west above the river, set in modest gardens; and St Michael's Parish Church, possibly of Saxon foundation, set in a rectangular churchyard. The close proximity of House and Church suggests a symbiotic relationship. The House has some medieval elements and was an Ilchester Estate property from, at least, the early C18.

Lower Bockhampton lies within Stinsford Parish and is a linear settlement, with about twenty houses strung out in a ribbon along Bockhampton Lane, from a bridging point of the Frome, up a continuous slope northwards. The Lane has a junction with an historic entrance into the Kingston Maurward estate almost exactly half way along the ribbon of development. There is also an eastern access lane to Lower Bockhampton Farm, which is the only thickening of development apart from the individual plots either side of the Lane. There was an historic spur, with properties, south of Bockhampton House, which has disappeared. Apart from the Farm, the older, eastern properties all lie on the road edge or very close to it. They are mainly semi-detached or short rows of attached cottages, with the exception of Yarbury Cottage (formerly two cottages), which is a larger detached house, with a substantial wing running at right angles to the road. Their plots are markedly regular and rectangular.

The properties on the western side of the Lane are mainly detached set back off the road with front and rear gardens. Bockhampton House is a larger house, set at right angles to the Lane, facing the river, with its gable end hard onto the road space. At the northern side of the junction of the entrance to Kingston Maurward, a former Victorian school has been converted to a house. There are several modern infills, particularly on the western side of the Lane. Thus the settlement consisted historically of a larger house, school, farm and cottages. There appears to be an historic relationship with the Old Manor at Kingston Maurward, underlined by the physical proximity of big house and tenants' buildings at the gate.

Kingston Maurward estate has a long history related to noble families, but the key periods are the late C16, when Christopher Grey built the Old Manor; and the early 1700s, when George Pitt married the last Grey heiress and built a new house 300m to the west. The Old Manor was left to become first a farmhouse, then an almshouse, tenements and now a private house. The later house was encased in stone in 1794 and remodelled internally in the mid-C19 and again about 1920. Between 1774 and 1787, John Pitt laid out the park and formed the lake. Ownership changed several times in the C19 and C20 and in 1947, Lady Hanbury sold the estate to Dorset County Council for use as a Farm Institute. The 96ha historic park and gardens have a number of components: a lodge at the main entry; parkland trees (belts, avenues and individual specimens); a 3ha lake; 4ha of formal gardens and informal pleasure grounds; and a kitchen garden near the Old Manor. There are a number of modern buildings and structures related to the current educational uses: farm buildings, classrooms, sports facilities and car parking, as well as several small closes of staff housing and recent tourism-related facilities, such as a visitor centre and children's farm.

There is an isolated Victorian small country house, Birkin House, adjoining the northern part of the estate, off Tingleton Road. There is also a minor scatter of houses SSW of Birkin House, between the A35 and the minor road to Tingleton, consisting of four small blocks of cottages.

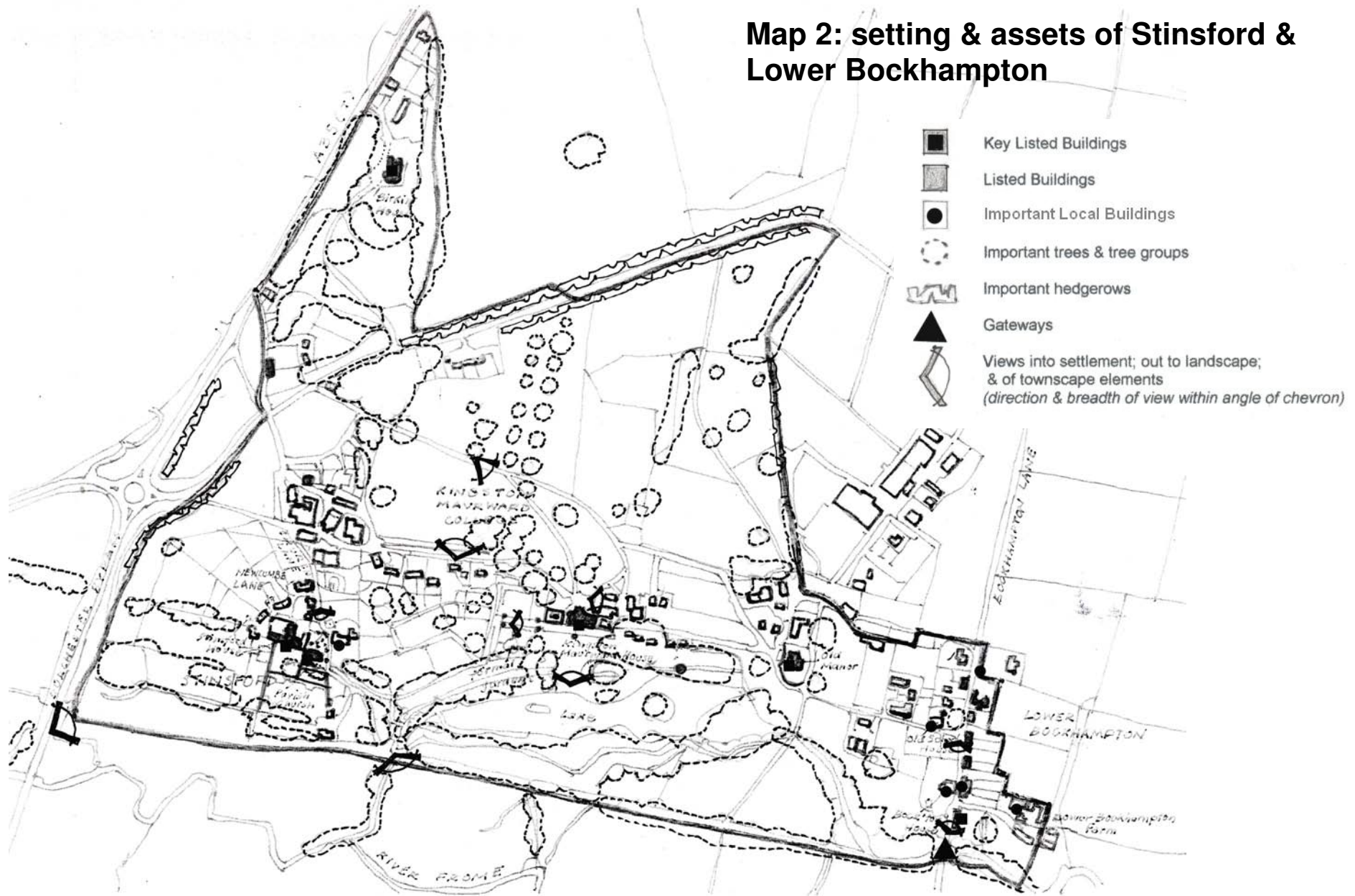


Fig 28. Lower Bockhampton



Fig 29. Nos 1 & 2 Stinsford Cottages

## Map 2: setting & assets of Stinsford & Lower Bockhampton



The whole Conservation Area might be characterised as two very small hamlets and other isolated, sporadic housing scattered around the perimeter of an historic estate, which, itself, has a number of components and phases of development.

**The character and interrelationship of spaces** may be described by reference to the two small settlements and the historic parkland. For each, a transect, in the form of a short walk, will be taken and topography, buildings, the spaces between and around them, colours and details and trees and other landscape features will be described.

**Stinsford** is approached from the west, off a busy roundabout (or across more tranquil water meadows from Dorchester), onto a relatively quieter minor road, with a view of the red brick lodge entrance into Kingston Maurward, backed by a large area of mature woodland. Church Lane climbs up onto a ridge, past a group of farm buildings (one obviously historic house in the Stinsford Business Centre and modern metal and timber sheds, barns and stock yards). The Lane curves and descends to reveal a group of well-mannered, modern vernacular cottages, set in immaculate gardens. A diversion right (west) leads down Newcombe Lane, past more carefully crafted neo-vernacular houses to an unexpected opening out of space fronting two tremendous gate piers and the rich classical west porch into the House. It is possible, with permission, to walk round to the south elevation, which stretches out along a terrace to the square tower of the Church. Lawns, gravel paths and brick walls lead the eye to a splendid London plane tree.

Back on Church Lane, a glimpse of the House's flank may be had through an entrance. There is an apparent termination in the form of the churchyard wall and mature trees, notably yews. A pair of ornamental, urned gate piers leads into a tranquil churchyard where the Hardy family group of graves is apparent, shaded by large yews. The path leads diagonally to the west end of the Church; to a tiny space much used by literary pilgrims and general visitors. A locked door bars an archway in the adjacent brick wall, but a short step around to the south side of the Church reveals more graveyard and trees, contained by old walls. The path curves round east to another gateway and plunges down into an unsurfaced lane in a green tunnel, overhung by trees, with a view of another graveyard. All is enclosed and mysterious, slightly tempered by a view of a former keeper's cottage and outbuildings complete with three bears outlined in the thatch. The lane arrives at a junction, with dark, watery spaces and a small brick footbridge over a water channel. There are contrasting wide views south over verdant meadows, often populated by grazing cattle and sheep. In the meadows are relics of C18 hydraulic engineering: sluices, channels and brick structures.

**Lower Bockhampton** begins at the rise up to the scheduled, brick bridge over the green meadows and clear channel of the Frome. There is a view of thatched and slate cottages rising up the lane, framed by overhanging trees by the river. To the left (west), there is a more open meadow and garden of Bockhampton House, with the handsome brick house facing the river. A lane leads off right to a large farmhouse and sheds and barns (Lower Bockhampton Farm), backed by open countryside. Back on Bockhampton Lane, the gable end of the House sits tight on the road line rearing over the climb up hill. The cottages on the right reveal themselves one after another. On the left, a lane led into the Kingston Maurward Park and the modern Knapwater development, revealing a part of the Old School House on the corner. Bockhampton Lane continues its linear progression, the slope flattening out and with more modern development mixed in with older cottages. A red K6 telephone box marks the sharp transition to countryside.



Fig 31. Main entrance to Stinsford House



Fig 32. Bockhampton River Path

**Kingston Maurward parkland** is a completely different experience, characterised by wide expanses of pasture, active farmland, bold tree planting and curving drives. The main public entrance is on the Tincleton road, heralded by an imposing red brick and stone lodge. The driveway has several forks and junctions, with views of a rendered former farmhouse, staff houses and more utilitarian farm buildings on the slope towards Stinsford village. The main route curves through pasture, usually with grazing animals, and woodland, bounded by park fencing. Suddenly, there is a view of the main house, on a ridge, framed by old ornamental parkland trees. Taking one of the routes to the right (south), the front steps of the House are reached, with views across a shallow valley towards higher ground to the north and a glimpse of the silvery stone bays of the Old Manor to the east.

Walking along the top of the southern ridge, a striking copper beech avenue runs downhill and up the far slope, not aligned to the House, but to an area of formal gardens to the west. Passing through the visitor centre, there is an experience of enclosure and exposure in the series of eleven gardens, with their hedges, steps and avenues. Highlights such as the Red Garden, Terrace, Crown Garden and Laurel Lawn are linked in firmly drawn axes. Topiary is used particularly well to define space, create secrecy and intimacy and lead the eye to new areas downhill towards the lake. The south front of the House is seen above a lawned slope. The gardens offer two routes from the House to the lake, by a series of enclosures and unfolding garden rooms or by the sweeping lawns, steps and long vistas of an alternative landscape tradition, composing buildings and landform in bold, flowing forms.

There is a route from the House to the Old Manor in the form of an avenue of young oaks, passing some less worthy modern buildings, but the view of the late C16 west front, with its projections and recessions of masonry, is worth the effort. There is an adjacent brick walled Elizabethan Garden behind the Old Manor, again contrasting with the wider parkland landscape.

From the above, the **key views and vistas** are the view down Church Lane to Stinsford Church; the intimate churchyard group of Hardy tombs and trees; the longer views of the water meadows from the paths on the southern boundary of the Conservation Area; and one distant view from the Dorchester bypass NE to the tower of the Church and a pale, low front of the House, surrounded by large trees. There are glimpses of Kingston Maurward House set in its C18 parkland from the A35, east of Birkin House; the first views of the House from within the grounds, coming from the entrance lodge; the series of views within and out of the formal gardens to the lake and back from the lowest level to the House; the view north from the vicinity of the visitor centre along the copper beech avenue, to chalk hills and small woods; and the views east to the Old Manor from the House. In Lower Bockhampton, there is a fine view from the bridge and the adjoining riverside path of Bockhampton House and of the cottages up Bockhampton Lane. There is an equally enjoyable view south, down the Lane to the river and meadows beyond, south of the Old School House.

Obvious **landmarks** are St Michael's Church tower and the two tiers of Stinsford House, from the bypass; the lodge into Kingston Maurward; and the House and Old Manor.

## Character Analysis

### Building Uses

The area has a small number of buildings, related to the settlements (Church, Vicarage, former school), cottages, modern houses and bungalows, farm houses and associated buildings, and four large gentry houses, one converted to educational



Fig 33. Kingston Maurward House from terraced gardens



Fig 34. The Old Manor at Kingston Maurward

and administrative use, another to apartments, and two (Old Manor and Birkin House) remaining in residential use in one ownership. Birkin House operates as a hotel and venue for wedding receptions. There is also a small hotel and restaurant at Lower Bockhampton (Yalbury Cottage).

There are various buildings related to the big houses, former stables, coach houses, a lodge and a home farm, most of which have been converted to residential, educational or business uses. Kingston Maurward has an array of farm buildings, demonstration units, classrooms, student and staff accommodation, and a visitor centre, besides garden structures, such as two temples and large greenhouses.

#### Building Types and Layouts

There is a possible Roman stone, circular milestone, without inscription, by the roadside at Stinsford Hill. Stinsford Church is an example of accretion and change from the early C13 to the mid-Victorian period. It comprises a C13 chancel and nave arcades, C14 west tower, C15 south aisle, 1630 north aisle and a north vestry of 1868. Stinsford House (see fig 2) also has a complex building history, with medieval, C17 and C19 elements. It consists of a long, one storey with attics over basement, east-west range, with a north wing. The main entrance is on the west side of the north range and the House is mainly single storey (possibly as a result of an early C19 fire), with extensive basements and attics. The Old Manor (see fig 2) at Kingston Maurward is an example of a more obviously planned gentry house, late C16 and an early C17 east wing, two storeyed with attics and with an E-plan. The house has been much altered, but appears to have originally had a ground floor large hall, a central screens or through passage and a large kitchen.

Kingston Maurward House (see fig 2) is a good example of a Classical country house, originally constructed in brick in the early C18 and recased in stone in 1794 and subsequently altered in the mid-C19 and about 1920. It has three storeys and a basement; nine bays and main show fronts to the north and south, with a pedimented central pavilion and symmetrical flanking wings. The central entrance hall rises through two storeys. There are lower former ancillary buildings to the east, now converted to College use. The gate lodge is a good example of a late C19 estate building, of two storeys and of an L-shaped plan. The Lakeside Temple dates from 1774-87 and is of brick faced with Portland Stone, Ionic in style, with a central portico and curved wings. The Temple of the Four Winds is a late C20 replica of a 1920's Ionic circular structure, designed and sited as a focal point and arbour.

Birkin House is a Victorian country house of 1874, designed in a Classical style that was more fashionable thirty years previously. It has a central porch, hall and staircase and an attached service wing. Of the other historic buildings, there are several gentry houses and larger farmhouses: Stinsford Farm House (now Business Centre) was the former dairy house to Stinsford House and is mainly C18, with a central entrance, a two storeyed rear wing and a single storey lean-to. The Old Vicarage is a mid/late-C19 brick detached house, with central door and a large return wing off the lane entrance and attached service buildings. Bockhampton House is positioned at right angles to its lane, with the two-storey block seemingly an accretion of several cottages of various materials and dates. The entrance is offset to one side. It has a detached two storey former stable with hayloft over. The Old School House, at Lower Bockhampton, is comprised of an early Victorian two-storey house with an attached schoolroom. Lower Bockhampton Farm is a large Victorian brick block, with a central entrance and farm buildings arranged behind or at the end of the access lane. At least two of the buildings are C19, of one and two storeys, brick and pantile.



Fig 35. Birkin House



Fig 36. The Old School House

Cottages are usually semi-detached or part of a short row, of rendered cob, brick or limestone rubble, thatched or slate. Nos. 1 and 2 Stinsford Cottages (see fig 2) have a shared central chimney and symmetrical catslide roofed extensions at each end. Pump and Bockton Cottages at Lower Bockhampton are also of this form, former estate cottages, with entrances in the end gable walls, a characteristic shared with The Cottage and Morello nearby. Bridge Cottage is of one storey plus attics, with an attached former forge. There are several other one and a half storey cottages with half or eyebrow dormers. Old Post Cottage and Greenwood Cottage, former estate cottages (see fig 2), also at Lower Bockhampton, both have front entrances with porches.

### Key Listed Buildings and Structures

There are 29 listed Building entries in the Conservation Area, all Grade II, apart from the Grade I Parish Church, Kingston Maurward House and the Old Manor. The key Listed Buildings are:

- St Michael's Parish Church, interesting C13 elements, possible Saxon sculpture and monuments, including the Hardy graveyard group and stone to Cecil Day-Lewis; also of great cultural historical and literary significance as Hardy's Melstock church and the burial place of his parents, sister, his heart with his first wife Emma; the main churchyard entrance piers and urns are also notable;
- Stinsford House, grouping well with the Church, with details of various dates, again with strong gate piers and brick garden walls incorporating C17 work; well converted to apartments after period of disuse and poor repair;
- Kingston Maurward House, Old Manor, garden temples, terraces, steps and walls: the two houses are of architectural sophistication, being good exemplars of late C16 and C18 fashion; the formal gardens, garden buildings and structures, and the wider landscape are an important ensemble; their current uses and accessibility are of major benefit to the local and wider community;
- Birkin House, as an unspoilt example of mid-Victorian design and details;
- Bridge Cottage at Lower Bockhampton, one of a group of attractive thatched and slate cottages, but at the prime position by the bridge and with an interesting combination of house and forge.

### Important Local Buildings

There are a number of buildings of group and townscape interest:

- The Old Vicarage, Stinsford, mid-Victorian brick, with wooden sashes, handsome and unspoilt, in a key position adjacent to the Church and churchyard;
- The lodge at Kingston Maurward, probably Listed by virtue of its position in the curtilage of the House, but worthy of separate note: Victorian red brick and stone, slate roof, strong chimney stack, porch canopy in the angle of two wings, composes well with entrance piers and balustraded wall;
- The Old Schoolhouse, Lower Bockhampton, handsome early Victorian stone and tile Tudor house and schoolroom: altered and extended, but of real presence and with Thomas Hardy connections (he attended the school);
- The row of four rendered cottages, from Hillcrest to Gardeners Cottage, Lower Bockhampton, all with front porches, casements and tall chimneys and pots; of group value; these were apparently single storey and thatched until substantially rebuilt in 1894;
- Bockhampton House, a seemingly early/mid-C19 range (formerly separate cottages) of brick and stone, with a detached former coach house or stable: important position by the bridge and water meadows;
- Bockhampton Bridge, unlisted but a Scheduled Monument, early C19 brick, three circular arches with stone keystones, parapet: attractive and unspoilt, groups well with Lower Bockhampton cottages;



Fig 37. The Old Vicarage



Fig 38. Bockhampton House



- Lower Bockhampton Farm: the substantial brick house may have been built by Thomas Hardy's father; there are two C19 barns, of brick and with pantiled roofs;
- A K6 telephone box north of Yalbury Cottage, notable for quality of design and increasing rarity value.

### Building Groups

Good groups include Stinsford Church, House, the graveyard, gate piers, brick boundary walls, and the Old Vicarage; and the Lower Bockhampton ribbon, from and including the bridge, Bridge Cottage and the whole row on the eastern side of the lane, up to Yalbury Cottage and Pump and Bockton Cottages, the Old School House and Bockhampton House and its stable/coach house on the west.

### Building Materials and Architectural Details

The Conservation Area has a rich variety of building materials, typical of chalk valleys near the Ridgeway, from where oolitic limestone of the Portland-Purbeck series was available, as well as chalk-based cob, flint and clays suitable for brick making, all available more locally.

The grey Portland/Purbeck limestone is Portland Stone ashlar on Kingston Maurward House, its two garden temples and steps, Birkin House and the west porch, arches in boundary walls and some chimneys at Stinsford House. The Old Manor has Portland-Purbeck squared and coursed rubble walling with ashlar dressings. Elsewhere, such as at Stinsford House and Church, Portland-Purbeck appears as coursed or random rubble, with some Hamstone dressings on the Church and Old School House. The Kingston Maurward entrance lodge has Portland Stone dressings and a pink-red brick. Humber Cottages, such as Morello at Lower Bockhampton, have coursed rubble walling or, at Yalbury Cottage, rubble stone acts as a base for brick walling. Old Post Office and Greenwood Cottage in Lower Bockhampton have thin brick dressings in rubble walling.

Cob appears in several Lower Bockhampton cottages and is seen very clearly on the narrow building at the northern side of Bridge Cottage, from the lane down to Lower Bockhampton Farm. This structure has a thatch covering. Render often provides a weatherproof coat to cob and stone rubble, in the forms of smooth, lime-based covering, stucco and roughcast. Smooth finishes are sometimes scribed with lines to simulate masonry, as seen at Stinsford Farm House. The Coach House to Kingston Maurward has a smooth render, possibly Roman Cement, which might be expected on a late C18 building. The easternmost unit on the front of Stinsford House is also coated with smooth render or stucco.

Late C18 and early C19 brick is a brown colour, ranging to grey. The C17 walling around the front gardens at Stinsford House appears to be hand made, with random darker, vitrified headers. The nearby Old Vicarage has Victorian (Broadmayne?) brick with cambered window and door heads expressed by two courses of bricks on end. Birkin House has a buff/yellow brick with stone ashlar dressings.

Boundary walls are built of coursed and squared or random rubble or brick. There are some tall brick walls south and east of Stinsford House that have bold rampings down to lower levels. Copings are of chamfered stone or half round brick specials.

Roofs vary between wheat reed thatch, with simple, flush ridges and, generally, rounded forms, flowing eaves lines and the occasional appearance of eyebrow dormers, water reed, clay plain tiles and pantiles, which provide subtle textures, and slate is common on C19 buildings. Stone tiles are seen on the Old Manor, graduated in size from ridge to eaves. There are stone



Fig 39. Morello & The Cottage, Lower Bockhampton



Fig 40. Yalbury Cottage, Lower Bockhampton

coped gable ends at the Old Manor and the Old School House, which also has deep gables with bracketed eaves. Pump and Bockton Cottages have courses of fish-scale tiles as decoration. Hips and half-hips are seen on thatched cottages. Orange clay pantiles appear on the porches of some cottages and on the farm buildings at Lower Bockhampton Farm.

Chimneys are usually of brick, with simple banding, but sometimes with more elaborate corbelling and oversailing courses and, occasionally, each individual flue has its own brick rectangle that is gathered into a larger stack, giving the appearance of a pilastered cube. The big houses have ashlar stone stacks, with pronounced top moulding at Stinsford House and the Old Manor and blank panels with gadrooning at Kingston Maurward House.

Windows range from stone mullioned late C16 types at the Old Manor, with cross-transoms and drip moulds, simpler mullioned windows at Stinsford House and Tudor Revival examples at the Old Schoolhouse; wooden casements with a basic division by one or two horizontal bars or multi-paned examples; metal casements with multiple square or diamond lights; vertically-hung sliding sashes with thin glazing bars, commonly six over six lights (twelve over twelve at Kingston Maurward House and nine over nine at Stinsford House), marginal glazing bars on the side door at Stinsford Farm House, and larger, undivided panes with strengthening horns on the meeting rails, usually after 1850 in date. There are Georgian Gothick traceried windows on one part of Stinsford House.

Doors include basic planked types, with or without lights, six or four panelled (flush or fielded) with two lights glazed or with a glazed light over. There are porches with columns and architraves (the big gentry houses) or less sophisticated brick, render and boarded examples (some with pantiled roofs), with arched openings in Lower Bockhampton, the unlisted Hillcrest-Gardeners Cottage group having four identical types.

There are many traditional details that add greatly to the enjoyment of the Conservation Area. There are gate piers with elaborate urns at Stinsford churchyard and at the lower graveyard to the south and Stinsford House has impressive ball finials. The river and associated watercourses have brick arched footbridges. There is a variety of wrought and cast iron work, mainly in simple spiked railings at the Old Rectory and the lower graveyard and estate or parkland fencing on the Kingston Maurward estate and by Lower Bockhampton Farm. The Parish Church has a large four-post boot scraper by the west door and Kingston Maurward has scrapers set into stone bases (see fig 2). The Stinsford gravestones range from finely lettered Portland Stone C18 and early C19 examples, with adornments like cherubs' heads; the horizontal, coped Hardy tombs (see fig 2) and the modern slate stone to Cecil Day-Lewis.



Fig 41. Gated entrance to parish church



Fig 42. Kingston Maurward's lake

### Parks, Gardens, Trees & Open Spaces

The 96ha Kingston Maurward parkland is graded II\* in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England. It is a late C18 structure of house, landforms, lake and generous planting, overlain with a 1920's sequence of formal gardens and late C20 restoration of wartime damage and neglect. It is very much a working landscape, as an educational, farming demonstration and, latterly, a tourism destination. It has some superb planting, belts and avenues and individual specimens, and new planting to form a legacy for the future. The College is building a major new Resource Centre, east of the main house; car parking can be a visual problem. However, a green travel plan may reduce the intrusive effect of cars. It is important that the College maintains a balance between functional improvement and amenity. Some sort of master plan, setting out needs and alternatives, assessing likely impacts, costs and benefits, within the context of an imaginative landscape strategy would be beneficial.

Stinsford House has the substantial remains of an avenue of sycamores, from the west entrance to the old main road, the B3150, which has been severed by the Dorchester bypass, but which is still an important landscape feature.

Trees are a major component of the Conservation Area, although there is only one, albeit large, Tree Preservation Order (TPO) around Birkin House. Stinsford House and Birkin House both have gardens with lawns, shrubs and mature trees. Birkin House is well screened from the A35 and the Tincleton roads by shelterbelts. Stinsford House has a particularly fine London plane in its southern walled garden. The nearby churchyard has large yews and the continuation of Church Lane down to the river is thickly planted. The river corridor has contrasts between meadows and trees, seen at Bockhampton Bridge. The water meadows have the potential for the restoration of some of the historic engineering and landscape features.

### Detrimental features

- Some utilitarian structures and visible car parking in the grounds of Kingston Maurward;
- A scrap yard and some unsightly objects south of Birkin House;
- Poles and wires at the top end of Church Lane, on the way to Stinsford Church;
- The use of artificial materials, cast slabs and sets, at the threshold to the Stinsford churchyard, creating undue formality in an important rural setting;
- Loss of details on some unlisted buildings of value, with the introduction of uPVC windows at, for example the lodge at Kingston Maurward and Lower Bockhampton Farm;
- The effects of through traffic on Bockhampton Lane, creating noise, danger and loss of amenity;
- A large and intrusive highway set-back at a Lower Bockhampton property, exacerbated by dwarf walls in artificial stone, utilitarian gate piers, urns and a very visible garage.

### **Definition of the special interest of the Conservation Area**

The particular qualities of the whole Conservation Area are:

- Areas of good quality landscape adjacent to or within the Conservation Area, particularly the river and channels, water meadows, and the gardens of the several large houses, including the 96ha Grade II\* Park of Special Historic Interest at Kingston Maurward;
- Major cultural historical significance in the Thomas Hardy connections, particularly at Stinsford Church and churchyard;
- Important hedges and trees that enhance the setting of buildings, particularly at Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton;



Fig 43. A view of the water meadows

- 29 Listed Building entries, including three Grade I buildings and a Scheduled Monument;
- About ten unlisted buildings of character and group value;
- Coherent groups of buildings at Stinsford and Lower Bockhampton;
- A rich palette of building materials and details, including local limestone, cob, smooth renders, brick, thatch, clay plain tiles and pantiles; there is a range of architectural detail from the C13, late medieval period, C16, early C17, C18 and early/mid C19, notably fine ashlar stonework and carved detail, gate piers and boundary walls.

### **C3 Tolpuddle**

The Conservation Area is large and linear but relates closely to the through route and may be considered as a whole, without recourse to sub-areas

#### **Spatial Analysis**

Tolpuddle is situated on the north side of the River Piddle, just above the flood plain, along the former A35 trunk road from Dorchester to Bere Regis. There is one significant junction in the centre of the village, where a minor road to Southover and Affpuddle crosses the river. The modern A35 bypass runs about one kilometre to the north of the village. The former main road (Main Road) is at about 45mAOD and there are some northern blocks of development running up the northern slope of the valley to about 70m AOD.

The **plan form** is markedly linear, running along both sides of the old main road (to be called Main Road (called Dorchester Road in listing descriptions) for its whole length, apart from The Green, for the sake of simplicity) for over a kilometre, usually only a plot's depth from the road. There is a slight thickening of the linearity east of the Parish Church, where Southover Lane runs off Main Road and Tolpuddle House and the former Mill are sited off the main village axis, at a lower level. This junction has the village green in its western angle (road alignments and the actual shape of The Green have changed with a reduction of a former A35 bend) and an unsurfaced track runs northward, on the opposite side of Main Road, suggesting an historic crossroad. There is another historic route to the east, again north off the east-west route, up White Hill, which is partly aligned on the Roman road from Dorchester to Badbury Rings. This has a wedge of older and modern cottages and houses, either side of White Hill, and three short spurs, including White Hill Lane to the west.

Apart from the House and Mill, the linearity of the plan is reinforced by the location on Main Road of the Parish Church, Tolpuddle Hall (another gentry house), village hall, remaining pub, former garage, chapel and several large farms, as well as the majority of older houses and cottages, and considerable areas of post-War ribbon development and a number of infill housing sites currently under construction.

Most of the older houses are built parallel to the road, formerly on the highway edge, but now set behind pavements, a relic of the days when a busy and dangerous trunk road passed through the village. Tolpuddle Manor House is set in a large garden, by the river, fronted by a former coach house and other ancillary buildings. Central Farmhouse has a smaller plot, elevated from the main road. Older cottages are set on the edge of plots of varying shapes and sizes and some of the southern ones, east of Southover Lane, are more linear, running down towards the flood plain of the river. The 1842 Tithe Map shows development from the Church eastwards to White Hill, where there are scattered plots, and extending to East Farm Cottages on the north side of Main Road and East Farm on the south side. Several cottages seem to have been



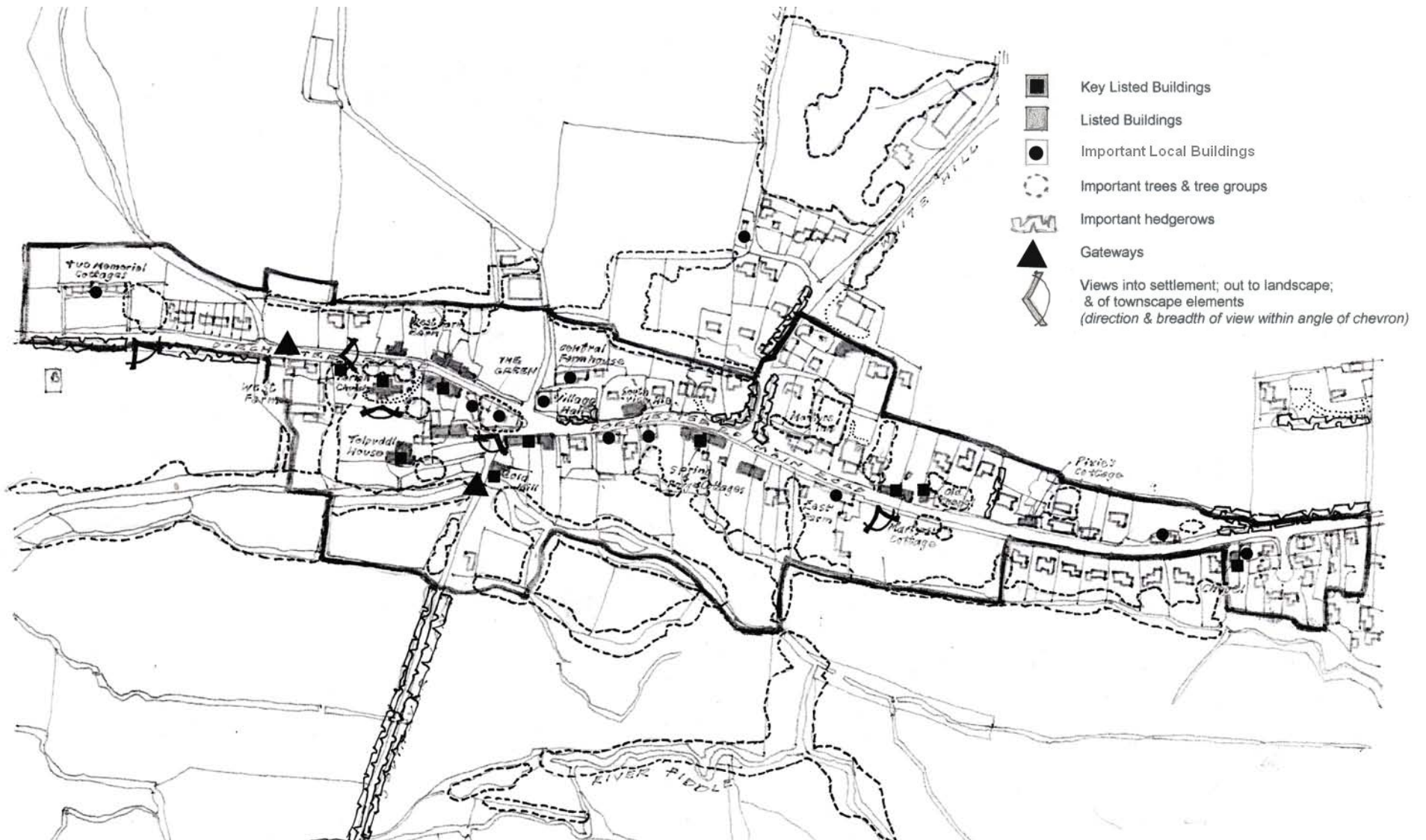
Fig 44. Main Road



Fig 45. Cottages at the back of the pavement

demolished for road improvements or redevelopment, notably at the foot of White Hill; on its east side, where James Hammett's barn was demolished for housing redevelopment; the Crown Inn in 1929 for road widening; and two cottages west of East Farm for bungalow development. Modern development has replaced some older cottages and filled in the spaces where there was previously an open gap. It tends to have more regular plots, with the properties sitting in the middle, with front and rear gardens. Many on the northern side of Main Road are elevated up a steep slope. There are three modern cul-de-sacs at the eastern end of the village, a plan form that is non-traditional to the village.

Map 3: setting & assets of Tolpuddle



### The character and interrelationship of spaces within the Conservation Area

Despite the expectation that a basically linear form may reduce the variety and complexity of spaces and townscape experiences, the meandering form of Main Road (despite various road improvements), the subtle changes in level, and the one major junction with Southover Lane, all provide changing perspectives and visual interest. These qualities tend to diminish at the eastern end of the Conservation Area, where road widening and modern development are very apparent.

Approaching from the west, on Main Road, there are views of modest green hills to the left (north) and of verdant water meadows and trees to the left (south). The river is a constant companion to the main road, although it can only be effectively seen at the Southover Lane crossing. Among the smooth meadow grassland, waterside trees mark the river. The TUC Memorial Cottages are the first built incident, elevated on the hillside, slightly aloof above mown grass and a roadside hedge. There is then a group of noticeable red brick houses, the first of new vernacular infill housing and two modern detached houses set up the slope off the road. On the southern road edge, there is a rather suburban planting of ornamental cherry trees. West Farm hugs the road line and its sheds and barns are tucked away behind, around a yard, but are more visible from a lane down to the river, overhung with trees on the eastern side. The stone and flint wall to the churchyard and Tolpuddle Manor House forms a firmer boundary in front of the trees.

Back on Main Road, the church is glimpsed between large, rather unruly trees, with a view of silvery stone and flint and gravestones. Entering into the graveyard, a curving path leads round to the south side, where there is a better view of chancel, aisles, porch and west tower. The nearby grave of James Hammett, the only Martyr to return and live in the village, is adjacent to a good view over the roofs of the Manor House, its attractive gardens and the water meadows beyond. Returning to the main street, there is the first piece of subtle townscape, created by a marked right curve and downhill drop in the road, emphasised by older properties hugging the line. A group of four cottages on the north side is set slightly above the outside of the curve, behind a brick-edged pavement. Opposite, a buttressed, thatched former barn projects almost into the road, at a slight angle, and then there is the minor punctuation provided by the gable end of a brick shed. More modern infill opposite is helping to fill the gaps and increase the visual tension. This is particularly important on the north side, where the road curves back in the second part of a double bend. This is seen from a framed view by the barns and older cottages.

The Green then suddenly appears on the right, with big trees overhanging the road and younger trees populating the lower slope, surrounding a picturesque thatched shelter. A thatched row to the right runs at an angle to Main Road's curves, pointing to the line of Southover Lane, which performs a near right angled turn and drops down to the Mill, bridge and a hedged lane. There are views of the gables and chimneys of the Manor House, with a magnificent copper beech to the left, and a small, informal precinct in front, created by the Coach House and other brick sheds, one of which runs up the contours at the west side of The Green, back to the main road. The Manor House also has a more formal drive through tall gate piers and elaborate iron gates.



Fig 47. Lane between the parish churchyard & West Farm



Fig 48. View of The Green from Southover Lane

Back to Main Road, there is a chalky lane opposite The Green, running uphill towards an impressive belt of trees that has been running parallel to the main route, at a higher level, for some distance, from opposite West Farm to the lane and eastwards behind Tolpuddle Hall towards White Hill. Tolpuddle Hall shows up behind its high boundary, but more conspicuous is the Victorian Gothic Village Hall, near the road edge. Looking back westwards is an instructive view of the doubly curving main road, edged by the trees of The Green, older cottages and new houses, the belt of trees behind, on the northern valley slope, and another narrow view down the slope of Southover Lane, framed by thatched cottages and The Green.

The eastern part of Main Road is an anticlimax, due to road improvement and the lack of subtlety provided by some modern development. There is, however, a reasonable impression of the older qualities of enclosure and serial vision up to the White Hill junction and East Farm to the south. The road line performs a sweeping double curve, with slight changes in level and older properties run on or near the southern edge, with some sense of coherent grouping. There are remnants of enclosure on the northern edge, but the tension is stretched by a large concrete lay-by and modern houses set back off the road, either with poor or non-existent boundaries, or elevated above the road, with generous accesses (again, a relic of the days of the trunk road). East of the White Hill junction, The Martyr's Inn is a minor focal point, answered by East Farm's long, graduated range on the south side. New housing then offers an opportunity to pull together an attenuated and fragmented townscape, but at the cost of reducing the tremendous views south over the river and meadows. It is pleasing to note that the new layout will allow a framed view from the main road to the river.

Main Road then performs a series of generous curves east, with a small cluster of older cottages on the northern, concave edge (including Standfield's Cottage and the adjacent Old Barn, which are associated with the Martyrs) and the later Methodist Chapel on the south, near the eastern edge of the village and the Conservation Area.

**Key views and vistas** include a series of views of the wider landscape setting at the western entry on Main Road, from the southern part of the churchyard, and from the main road east of East Farm; the view down Southover Lane by The Green and of the side elevation of the Manor House; and the sequence of townscape experiences along the main road, particularly its western and central portions (this is experienced in both directions of travel).

The Church tower and Tolpuddle Manor House are too offset from the main route to be seen or are partly hidden by trees, but are more obvious from Southover Lane and are thus **landmarks**. On Main Road, the Village Hall, Martyr's Inn and the buttressed barns west of The Green are also particularly noticeable.

## Character Analysis

### Building Uses

The C19 village had the Church, two gentry houses in the Manor House and Tolpuddle Hall (the Vicarage and, after 1952, a farmhouse, now a private house), farmhouses, the Mill, many smaller cottages, two Nonconformist chapels (one replacing the other) and three pubs. The 1794 Enclosure Act had divided the one Manor Farm into three units, West, Middle or Mill and East Farms. The Parish has experienced fluctuations in population, with an 1861 Census peak of 401 and 223 in 1931 (2001 figure?). This suggests a reduction in occupancy levels of individual dwellings and in the number of houses, with shrinkage in the extent of the village and loss of actual buildings. The 1851 Census shows some of the village occupations, with button makers, blacksmiths, three millers and only one shopkeeper. There was a village school until the 1930s, but the building has



Fig 49. View southwards from the churchyard



Fig 50. Parish church from Main Rd



survived in the form of the Village Hall. A 1921 Particulars of Sale document lists a post office and shop, baker's and schoolmaster's house. The shop and post office survived until 1978. One pub survives, the Crown Inn, rebuilt in 1929, and later renamed The Martyrs Inn. The Mill has been converted to residential use; the former Methodist Chapel became the Old Barn, after the opening of the new chapel in 1861 (see fig 3). There are agricultural buildings in West and East Farms and converted barns, stables and coach house adjacent to the Manor House and The Green. In the 1930's Sir Ernest Debenham (a great farming moderniser with a social conscience) bought West Farm, brought piped water to the village and donated land at The Green for the erection of the Martyrs' shelter.

There is considerable modern housing development along the western end of Main Road, in a large site east of East Farm, up White Hill and, in the future, on sites like the garage and adjacent to the pub. This development has been partly stimulated by the removal of the trunk road and the arrival of a sewage treatment facility.

#### Building Types and Layouts

The Parish Church is an example of a process of accretion and alteration from the C12 to the late medieval period, with substantial rebuilding (chancel and vestry) in the C19. Its plan consists of chancel, nave, north aisle and chapel and west tower. The south transept has disappeared.

Tolpuddle Manor House shows some attempt at symmetry, with a central door and porch, two storeys and attics, with a substantial wing of one storey plus attics and a later continuation of this of one storey. Most of the smaller cottages seem to be informally laid-out, with few symmetrical plans characterised by central doorways, halls and an ordered arrangement of windows. Entrances are offset, often with several units of differing details and builds joined, with higher and lower rooflines. Additions are often in the form of lower units in line with the main house, side additions with cat slide-roofs or substantial rear wings at right angles to the main unit.

Nos. 14 and 16 Main Road have a mixture of thatch and slate roofs, one and a half and two storeys, with an attached cob and brick barn to Forge Cottage (no. 16). Nos. 1, 2 and 3 The Green are arranged in a row, three cottages of one storey and attics, under thatched roofs and with a unit at a lower level attached to no. 3. The latter was originally a long-house of open hall form, the lower level unit being the original byre, now incorporated into the main house. There are examples of two or more small cottages in a row being converted to larger houses, such as nos. 55 and 57 Main Road (Martyrs' Cottage) and nos. 67 and 69 (Pixie's Cottage).

The 1934 TUC Memorial Cottages (see fig 3) are an interesting example of planned, quasi-public housing, built, at the time, to an exemplary standard of accommodation. The designer was Edward Unwin, son of Sir Raymond Unwin, architect and town planner. There is conflicting evidence as to who actually designed and who supervised the work, thus both father and son were probably involved.

There are some interesting agricultural buildings in the Conservation Area. West Farm and Central Farm Barns are adjacent and similar in form and details, originally one storey, with large cart doors, slit windows and hipped thatched roofs. Both have been converted to houses, retaining much of their external character. The Old Mill has been converted to a house, two storeys plus attics and a single storey addition. The millrace passes under the building; hatches survive below the ground



Fig 51. The Old Mill



Fig 52. Nos 67 & 69 Main Rd

floor, and there is one horizontal wheel extant. The Manor House has a single storey coach house and stables, partly converted to houses.

There are two chapels in the Conservation Area, both C19; the former Chapel, near Martyrs' Cottage, dates from 1818 and is a simple, much altered, single storey building, with its gable end to the road and with a central entrance to this end elevation. The present chapel is mid-C19 (see fig 3), with a similar plan.

#### Key Listed Buildings and Structures

The Conservation Area has 24 Listed Building entries, of which two (the Church and Martyrs' Cottage) are Grade I; three (Tolpuddle Manor, the former Methodist Chapel and James Hammett's memorial) Grade II\*, and three of the Grade II structures are churchyard monuments.

The key Listed Buildings are:

- Nos. 67 & 69 Main Road possibly C18 or earlier, cob and thatch, attractive vernacular;
- The Parish Church, a C12 to C15 building, C14 nave roof; some characteristic C18 graveyard monuments and a cultural history link to Hammett and the Martyrs; with its trees, the Church is in a key location in the historic core;
- Martyrs' Cottage, C18, house of Thomas Standfield, one of the Martyrs and the meeting place of the six agricultural labourers; thus important for its cultural, historical associations;
- James Hammett monument, again important in the history of the Trade Union movement; designed and carved by Eric Gill in 1934 and of artistic value;
- Former Methodist Chapel, 1818, place of worship of most of the Martyrs;
- Methodist Chapel, 1861, with 1912 Martyrs' memorial gateway in front (see fig 3); Martyrs' linkage and one of the few buildings of interest on the eastern approach to the village;
- Tolpuddle Manor House, 1656 and C18, with attractive vernacular, pre-Classical details, interesting stair and fittings from Fonthill; important position in the angle of Main Road and Southover Lane and the river crossing;
- The Old Mill, with some remains of its machinery; particularly valuable because of its position by the Southover Lane entry and its grouping with the Manor House and outbuildings;
- Forge and Spring Cottages and attached barn (nos. 14 and 16 Main Road – see fig 3), early C17, interesting plan and building history, original internal features; very visible on the inside of one of the main road curves;
- Nos. 1, 2 and 3 The Green, cob and thatch, C17; no.3 was a long-house of open hall form, the byre now being incorporated into the cottage; important position on Southover Lane junction and one of the components of the value of The Green;
- West Farm Barn and Central Farm Barn, two converted brick and thatch buildings, important townscape value on inside of double road curve between the Church and The Green.

#### Important Local Buildings

There are a number of vernacular, Victorian and later buildings and structures of interest and group value:

- Tolpuddle Hall, formerly the Vicarage and with, at least, a C17 site; the building history or details have not been researched but the house is an attractive range of mid-Victorian brick with sashes, a canted ground floor bay and two gables facing the road; of some presence and group value with the Village Hall;



Fig 53. Martyrs' Cottage, Dorchester Rd



Fig 54. Village Hall, Dorchester Rd

- Village Hall, former school, of Victorian ecclesiastical character, brick and slate, stone dressings to groups of three graduated lancets, porch and bellcote; attractive and of group value;
- Former stables, north of the Coach House, on the west side of The Green (see fig 3), Victorian brick and slate, ventilators on the roof, unassuming but unspoiled and an important component of the group comprising the two barn conversions, the Coach House, Tolpuddle Manor House and The Green;
- The Martyrs' Seat and Shelter, timber and thatch, on The Green, erected in 1934 as a centenary memorial, attractive, of social historical value and part of a wider group;
- No. 8 Main Road, Old Post Cottage, render and slate with sashes, townscape value;
- Nos. 12 and 12a Main Road, River View and River View Cottage, render and pantiles with casements, on road edge and of group value with South View House and Forge and Spring Cottages;
- East Farm, on the road edge and a survivor of road improvements; the main block is rendered and slated, with some tin roofs, stepping down in three units and with bold chimneys; a detached brick and slate shed, with half-hip gable end is particularly attractive;
- Nos. 77 and 79 Main Road, render, painted flint, thatch and pantiles; substantial modern addition, but retaining cottage character, casements, lean-to and door; remnant of east end of village street;
- House to the east of Methodist Chapel, no. 48, Thola (see fig 3), Victorian Gothic, polychromatic brick relieving arch, brown brick quoins, coursed stone rubble and dressed stone to Gothic windows; unusual but attractive and reasonably unspoilt;
- The TUC Memorial Cottages (see fig 3), designed by *Edward Unwin*, with his more famous father, *Sir Raymond Unwin*, and built in 1934, each representing a Martyr, with a recently improved museum; brown brick, three gables to the road and subsidiary porches; of no great architectural merit, but of cultural, historical interest and very prominent in the western approach;
- Roses and Jasmine Cottages, on White Hill Lane, thatched and rendered, Roses Cottage with large triangular sectioned buttresses at the gable end; possibly much altered and extended, but of some interest as an outlier to the main village linear development.



Fig 55. Martyrs' shelter &amp; seat



Fig 56. Nos 77 &amp; 79, Main Rd

A K6 telephone box, slightly east of the TUC Memorial Cottages, has been moved from The Green. It was Listed in its original position, but is not shown as a Listed Building in its new position.

#### Building Groups

The best group of buildings is comprised of West Farm, the Church and churchyard, the two converted barns, nos. 25, 27-33 Main Road, The Green, nos. 1-3 The Green, the Old Mill, the Manor House and ancillary buildings.

#### Building Materials and Architectural Details

There is a wide range of materials that are typical of the southern chalk valleys. Grey limestone ashlar appears at the Church and Manor, probably Portland-Purbeck Oolitic limestone, from the Ridgeway, possibly from the Poxwell quarry. The Church has a mixture of grey oolite worked rubble mixed with flint, in its walling, with ashlar dressings. Flint appears as unknapped, uncoursed nodules, but is knapped and coursed in a few instances where it is banded with brick, in parts of no. 18 Main Road and in the boundary wall east of Central Farm Barn and on the western side of the churchyard, by the lane to West Farm. The Village Hall seems to have Hamstone ashlar on its door and windows, combined with brick walling.

Many of the older cottages, barns and the former Methodist Chapel are constructed of cob, a mixture of chalk, mud and straw. Not being particularly weatherproof, cob is often coated with a smooth render or roughcast. The cob can be seen clearly where the render has fallen off, as at the former Methodist Chapel and the barn at no. 16 Main Road, Forge Cottage. It is seen with a rubble base at no. 20 Main Road, no. 1 Manor Cottages. Where it extends to the ground, render often has a black painted band up to one metre high. The Listed boundary wall between the Manor and churchyard was of rendered cob, protected by thatch and pantiles, but extensive repairs have introduced a harder cement render. The current Methodist Chapel and no. 8 Main Road, Old Post Cottage have smooth render scribed with lines to represent ashlar work.

Local clays provided the material for an attractive red brown brick, seen at the rear of the Manor House, the Old Mill, the two former barns west of The Green and the Village Hall. Blue vitrified headers are often seen, either as deliberate patterning (Stables and Coach House to the Manor) or scattered haphazardly. Nos. 1 and 2 East Farm Cottages, on White Hill, have the dark brown brick with occasional courses of blue headers and dark red stretchers combined in two courses of decoration.

The flank wall of West Farm Barn, by the churchyard entrance, has a telling mixture of local materials exposed at the base: chalk block, flint, stone rubble and brick. The chalk block, or clunch, is very eroded and it is not seemingly sawn to regular block shapes.

Boundary walling varies from rubble with stones on edge as a coping; rough flint with a thin brick band and cambered stone capping (nos. 18 and 20 Dorchester Road); rough flint and brick (wall between the Village Hall and Topuddle Hall) and brick with a brick-on-edge cap, ramped up to accommodate changes in level (Manor House). The Manor House has tall brick gate piers with stone caps and ball finials.

Roofs are equally varied, with the soft, flowing lines of central/south Dorset thatch (originally of long straw or combed wheat reed), with flush, wrap-over ridges, eyebrows and meandering eaves, where there is a need to ramp up or down to an attached building. There are also graded stone tiles (Manor House north wing), clay tiles, with stone tiled eaves on the Manor House, plain tiles (with decorative fish-scales or scallops at the Village Hall), slate and pantiles. Roofs forms include hips and half-hips on thatched examples, gable ends with plain bargeboards and brackets and one double-pitched mansard at the Old Mill. Corrugated iron roofs, over or replacing thatch, are seen on the lean-to at no. 14 Main Road, Spring Cottage.

Windows vary between stone wave-moulded mullioned and transomed types (Manor House); fixed leaded lights; metal and wooden casements, with simple horizontal glazing bars or multiple-paned; and vertically hung sashes, usually with thin glazing bars. Doors are equally varied; with simple planked cottage doors and more sophisticated six flush or fielded panelled types, often with the top two panels glazed. There are thatched canopies on timber posts (notably at nos. 67 and 69 Main Road, Pixie's Cottage, a hipped, tiled canopy on bracketed supports at no. 37 Main Road, South View House.

The village has very little ironwork, apart from the elaborate early-mid C19 gates at the Manor, possibly imported from Scotland, judging by the thistle motif and the simple spearheaded railings at the Methodist Chapel.

There are other distinctive details: the inscriptions to the Martyrs at the later Methodist Chapel, the thatched shelter on The Green; the plaque denoting the *Great British Tree* status of the Martyrs' sycamore; the patterned brick wall in front of the Village Hall (openwork formed by bricks in hexagonal patterns), and good C18 and early C19 lettering on tombstones.



Fig 57. Wall between the churchyard & Manor House



Fig 58. No 25 Dorchester Rd with thatched roof and door canopy and casement windows

### Parks, Gardens, Trees & Open Spaces

The churchyard is an important green space, with good views to the south. The Green is very much a visual and functional focus, owned by the National Trust. The river meadows are a very attractive green corridor, with large trees but not accessible by Rights of Way. The fine gardens of the Manor House are similarly private, but are partly visible from Southover Lane. There are other gardens visible from the public realm along Main Road, where there are front spaces, more obviously in the modern bungalows and houses. There are high hedges in front of Tolpuddle Hall and other main road properties (often coniferous and probably planted as a defence against the trunk road) and Southover Lane provides a rural, hedged approach, south of the river and millrace crossing.

The village has many fine trees: a block of woodland either side of the river, SW and south of the Church and Manor House; around the churchyard, showing particularly well on the Main Road side; the Martyrs' sycamore and younger progeny on The Green (again, overhanging the road); a splendid copper beech in the grounds of the Manor House; further east of Southover Lane, along the river; in a very important more or less continuous east-west belt, above and behind the properties on the north side of Main Road, to the east of the TUC Memorial Cottages to Church Hill, behind Tolpuddle Hall to White Hill and behind The Martyrs' Inn. Woodland, large trees and hedges are apparent further up White Hill. There are individual trees and small groups in the gardens of properties at the eastern end of the village, particularly opposite the Methodist Chapel, which help to temper the effects of a wide road and lack of firm boundaries provided by much of the modern development. The impact of trees is particularly noticeable looking west by South View Cottage, where those of The Green and the belt on the north slopes of the valley are prominent.

There is one tree Preservation Order (TPO) on the west side of White Hill.

### Detrimental Features

There are a number of problems:

- The poor relationship between some of the modern development on the east side of the village to the historic core, with the impacts of ribbons of single storey bungalows set back from a wide road, wide pavements, bungalows and two storey houses set back up slopes on the northern side and some non-existent or poor boundaries;
- Some alien materials and details on modern buildings, including the use of artificial stone and concrete drives and hard standings;
- The legacy of the trunk road, in over-engineered accesses, lay-bys and pavement width, combined with street lighting (of acceptable design but, possibly, unnecessary in a bypassed, rural village);
- The loss of some details on Listed Buildings and the erosion of character on some good unlisted ones, including the introduction of a poorly detailed wooden windows and (a limited extent of) uPVC windows and front doors;
- Concerns over the future of the former Methodist Chapel, seemingly at risk, with collapsing roof, eroded and failing walls and windows; the cob barn at Forge Cottage, no. 16 Main Road, also appears to be in poor condition;
- Eyesore sites, some awaiting development with active planning permissions: the garage and adjacent workshop; a collapsed tin structure (former village hall) near Pixie's Cottage; and the yard behind East Farm;
- The loss of enclosure created by the unenclosed car park to the west of the pub;
- The rather bare lawns in front of the TUC Memorial Cottages, which would surely have potential for landscaping with trees or an imaginative garden layout;
- Poles and wires on the east of Main Road and White Hill.



Fig 59. View of the river meadows

### **Definition of the special interest of the Conservation Area**

The overall quality of Tolpuddle may be summarised:

- A distinctive and attractive landscape setting, in a chalk valley set amongst rolling hills and by a river, with some fine trees;
- Well defined entry points, on the west by the TUC Memorial Cottages and from the south, by the crossing point of Southover Lane over the river;
- 24 Listed Building entries, of which two are Grade I and three are Grade II\*, with an interesting Parish Church, a large gentry house and several farmhouses, a former Mill, characterful agricultural buildings and a strong underpinning of smaller cottages;
- About a dozen unlisted buildings of character and group value;
- Coherent groups of Listed and good quality unlisted buildings, boundaries, trees and details along the west end of Main Road, The Green and Southover Lane;
- A rich mixture of building materials, with local limestone, flint, cob, render, brick, thatch, tile and slate;
- Details such as memorial inscriptions, cob walls and ironwork;
- A rich cultural heritage related to the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

### **Community Involvement**

The local community, Parish Councils, district councillors and statutory authorities were consulted on the appraisal during July – August 2007. Comments received helped finalize the appraisal which was adopted by the district council in December 2007.

### **General Condition**

The villages are characterised by a general good condition of the building stock, boundaries and the public realm. Home Farm, Puddletown (refurbishment work due to begin) and the former Methodist Chapel and Forge Cottage barn at Tolpuddle are the main causes for concern. The remains of water meadow hydraulic engineering structures need to be assessed and conserved.

## Summary of Issues and Proposed Actions

CONSERVATION AREA ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION/S	LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS
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	Parish Council & Group Parish
The contribution of trees & the landscape setting to the character & appearance of the conservation areas	Contribution to be perpetuated as far as possible & support suitable schemes through availability of Countryside & Conservation Grant	WDDC	DCC, Parish Council, Group Parish
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	Historical Society
Exchange of archaeological information	Consider how to assist the Dorset Historic Environment Record and benefit from the Dorset Historic Towns Project (Extensive Urban Study)	WDDC, DCC	English Heritage, Puddletown Society

## 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 areas 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;
- Consider the potential for a holistic management plan for the Kingston Maurward estate.

## 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, shopfronts, alterations and extensions to listed buildings and suitable materials. Contact details are provided towards the end of the document.

## Information and Contact Details

### Criteria used for assessing the contribution made by unlisted buildings

In line with English Heritage guidance, an "important local building" is one that makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, and where this is the case, the building will be included in a local list within the conservation area appraisal. 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](mailto:planning@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)



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## Maps

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