



Charmouth & Chideock (incl Seatown) 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. Charmouth and Chideock Conservation Areas form part of this appraisal work, grouped together because of their geographical proximity.

The Conservation Areas were designated as follows:

- Charmouth, December 1972;
- Chideock, August 1973, amended January 1994, amended November 2008 and amended December 2009; Seatown, November 2008 and amended December 2009; North Chideock, November 2008.

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 the 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 public consultation in 2007 raised the possibility of conservation areas at Seatown and North Chideock and extending the Chideock Conservation Area. A public consultation on this was held (May-July 2008), and following consultation, the district council approved the Seatown and North Chideock conservation areas and the Chideock conservation area extension in November 2008. Details of these changes have been incorporated into this conservation area appraisal. The consultation in 2008 included the request to extend the conservation area at Chideock and Seatown, which was then consulted on during May-June 2009. In December 2009, the district council approved the Chideock and Seatown extensions, details of which are in the appraisal.

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

Charmouth

The key points of quality analysis are:

- A dramatic landscape setting, adjacent to a World Heritage coastline and within the Dorset AONB, with high hills, sea cliffs, woodland and deep, treed watercourses;
- Mature trees and tree groups within the village, particularly to the north and along The Street, that enhance the setting of historic buildings, integrate modern development and add to the quality of views in and out of the village;
- A substantially intact medieval planned layout, representing a rare C14 Cistercian speculation, with visible burgage plots and boundaries (see also Laurence Keen, 1999);
- 33 Listed Building entries, including a Grade II* early C16 large house/inn, several C16 and C17 houses with screens or through passages and intact internal features; a particularly attractive legacy of early C19 Regency houses; and some notable Victorian public buildings and houses;
- About 48 unlisted buildings of quality and character, complementing Listed buildings and forming parts of several coherent groups of particular interest;
- Distinctive local building materials, notably chert and Blue Lias limestone, render and thatch that, combined with building traditions, give a strong sense of place;
- Interesting details such as cast iron railings, gates, verandas and porches, pitched and setted pavements and boundary walls.

There are a number of detrimental features including poles and wires; several spaces that would benefit from better boundary definition and the reduction of clutter; the loss of traditional details on a number of historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted; several buildings in need of repair and a shop front in poor condition. There is also pressure for infill housing development with potential loss of green wedges, views, gardens and boundaries.

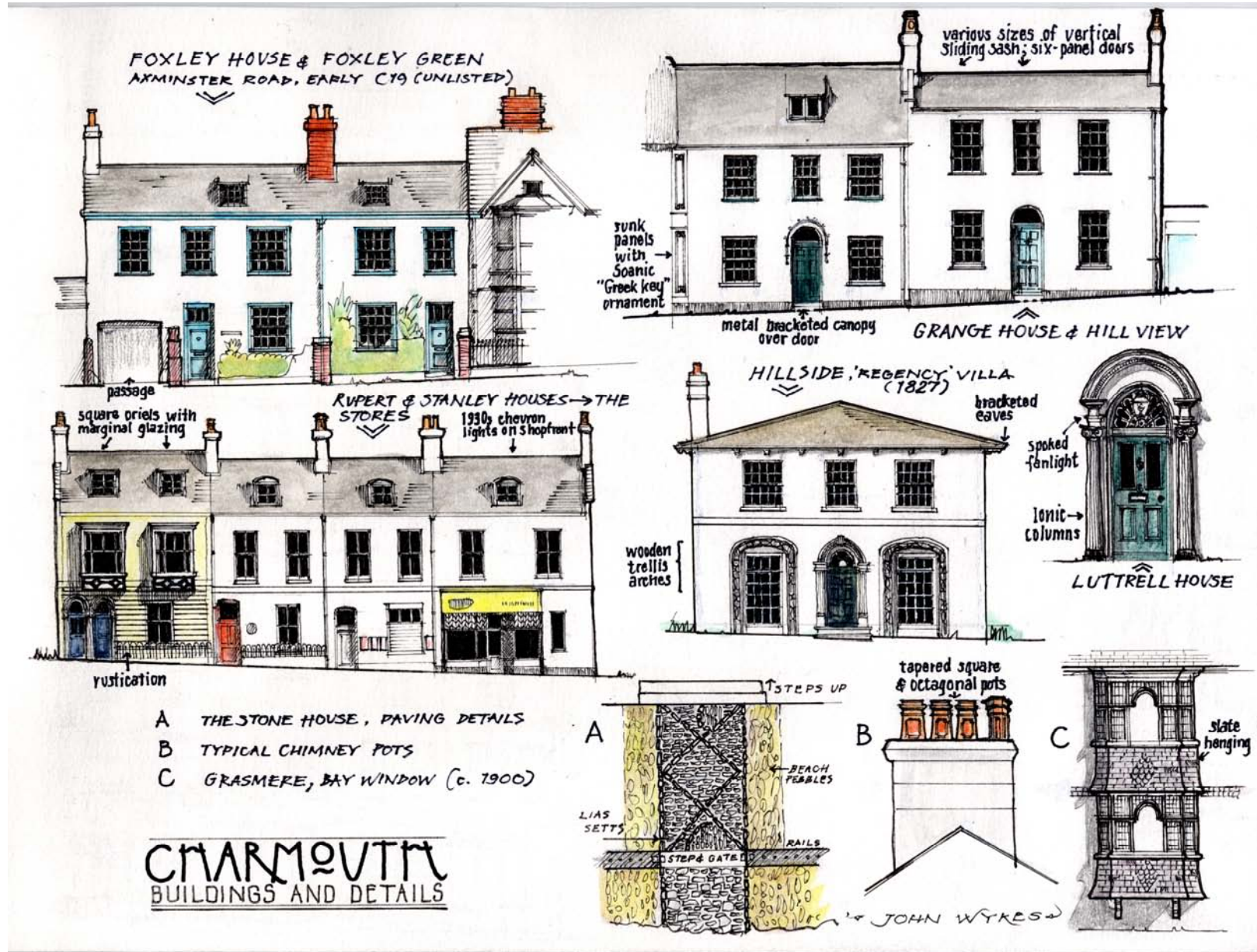


Fig 1. Buildings & Details of Charmouth

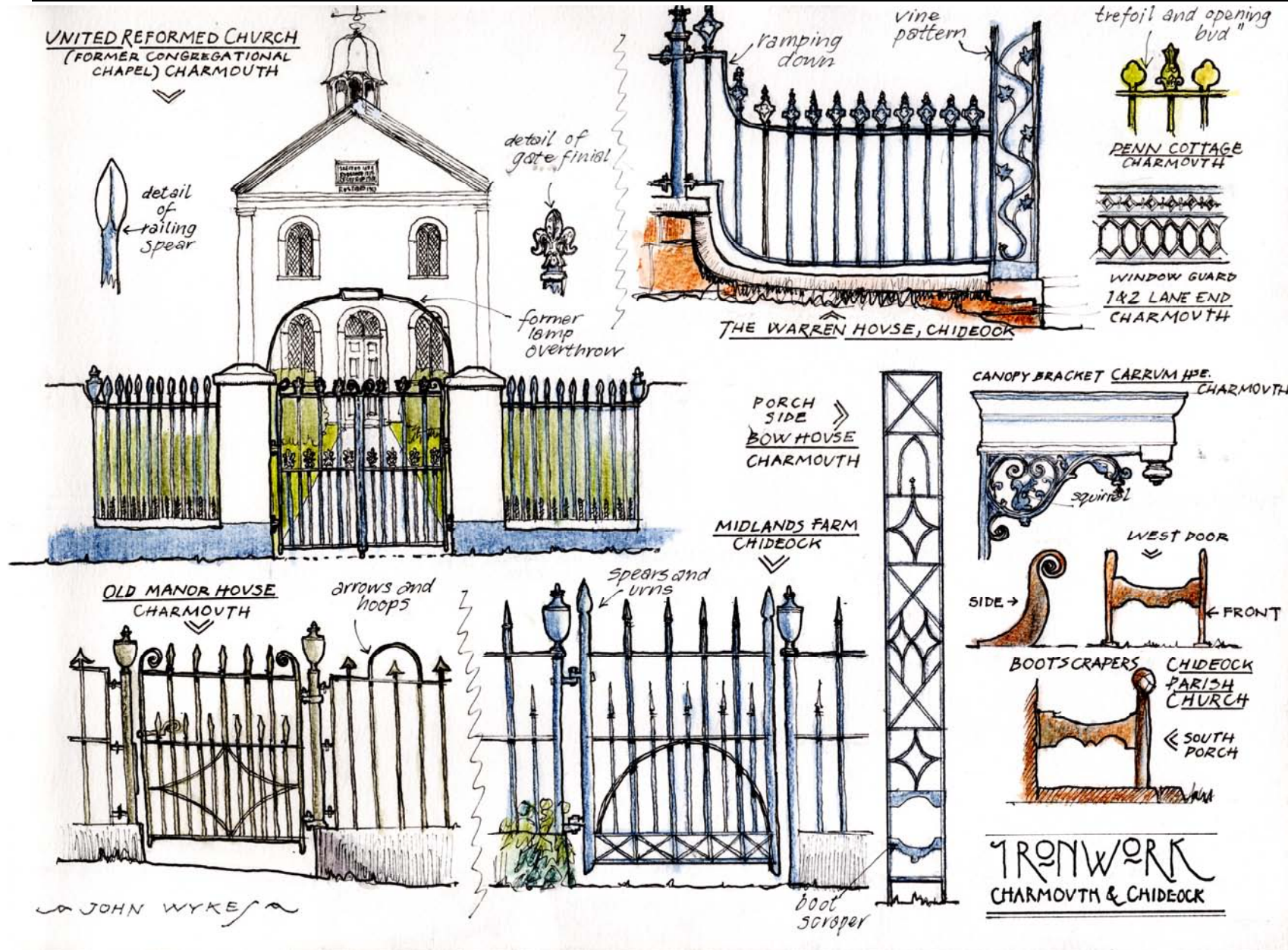


Fig 2. Ironwork of Charmouth & Chideock

Chideock (refer also to Appendix A)

The particular qualities (refer also to Appendix A) of the whole Conservation Area are:

- An attractive wider setting, within the Dorset AONB and adjacent to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, with a landscape framework of high cliffs, an historic coastal settlement at Seatown and another inland at North Chideock, high inland hills, trees and hedges;
- Important individual trees and tree groups within the village, particularly along the course of the River Winniford and in the grounds of Chideock Court and Beech House and The Old Cottage;
- A reasonably intact historic plan, with noticeably regular plots on the north side of Main Street and a small southern adjunct along Duck Street and Sea Hill and Mill Lanes;
- 41 Listed Buildings, including a Grade I medieval Parish Church, a number of C17 large gentry, farm and yeoman houses, former farm buildings, smaller thatched cottages and a mid-Victorian Roman Catholic Mortuary Chapel;
- 13 unlisted buildings of character that are of group or townscape value;
- Several coherent groups of good quality buildings, linked by stone walls, hedges and trees;
- Attractive details, such as distinctive local building materials (chert and Inferior oolite limestone), stone walls, cast iron railings (see fig 2 above) and gates and thatched roofs.

Detrimental features include the severe impacts of heavy traffic, poles, wires and ugly lighting, and loss of detail on several Listed Buildings and unlisted buildings of quality and group value.

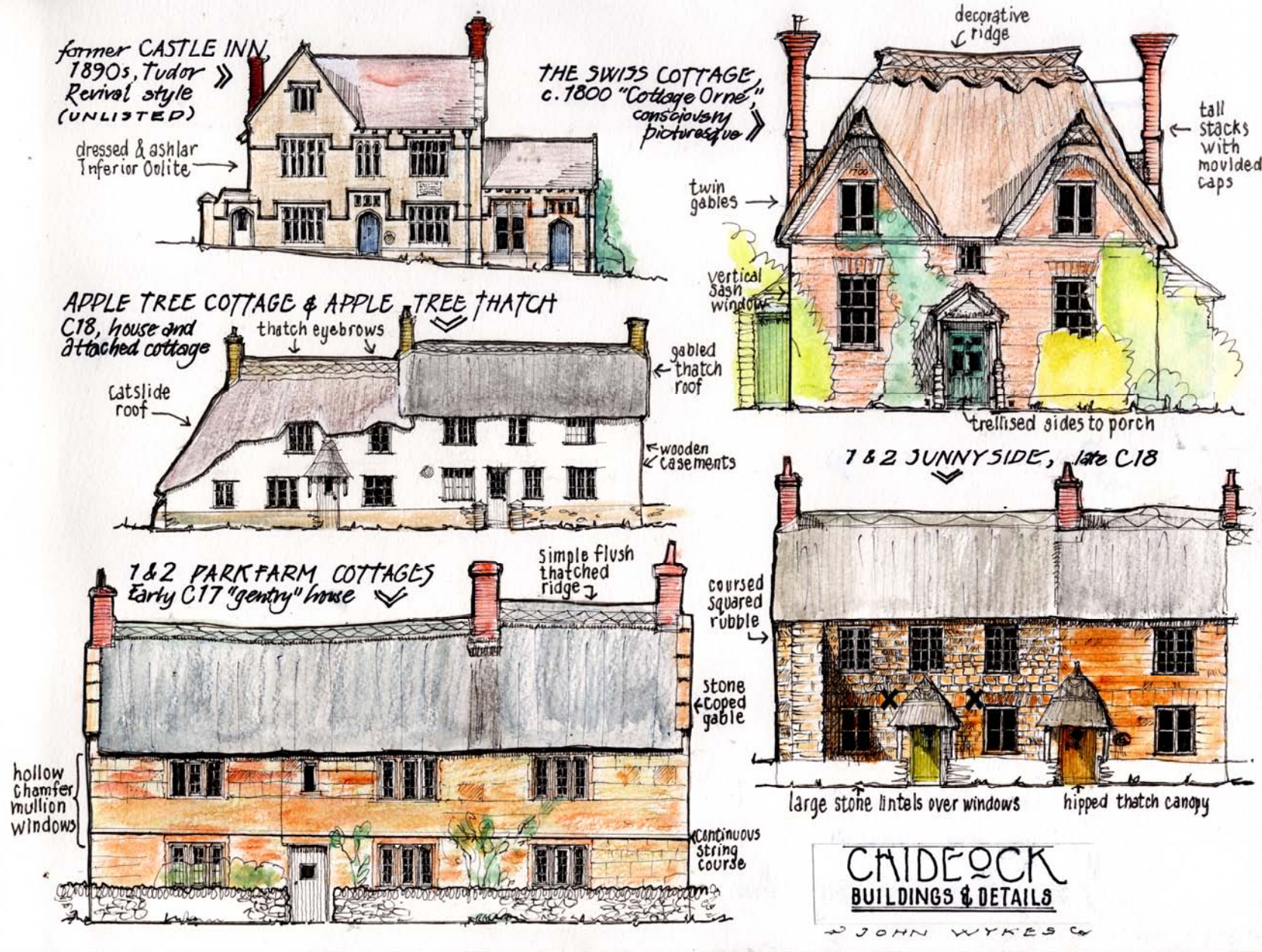


Fig 3. Buildings & Details of Chideock

Common issues

- The importance of details in repairing or maintaining structures: respecting local thatching traditions, choosing replacement windows and doors that copy or are mindful of local details, taking care in the detailing of porched, side additions and boundary alterations, 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;
- Over fifty 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 the details of the Charmouth medieval planned town, vernacular houses and industrial archaeology;
- The potential for improving design standards in the public realm (road improvements, signs, paving materials, wires and poles and the potential for reducing the visual impact of parked vehicles).

The Planning Policy context

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

- *Safeguarding Assets*, Policy SA1 seeks to protect the natural beauty of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); Policy SA2 seeks to protect the character and/or natural beauty of the Heritage Coast; Development must be in keeping with the landscape character of the area (SA3); Policies SA18, 19 and 20 cover the demolition, alterations to, and the settings of Listed Buildings; SA21 seeks to protect the character or appearance of Conservation Areas; SA22 is concerned with demolition within a Conservation Area; and SA23 relates to the protection of sites of national archaeological significance.
- *Avoiding Hazards*: Policy AH9 relates to Development Consultation Zones due to unpleasant emissions from existing sewage handling facilities; Policy AH5 relates to Instability Zones 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- *Settlement Policy*: Policy SS1 relates to development within Defined Development Boundaries (DDB); Policy 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; and specific policies WA 22 Charmouth Core Area and WA23 Site Allocated for Employment Uses at Catherston Manor Farm, Charmouth.
- *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.

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

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

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

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

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

The two settlements are situated in the western part of the District, Charmouth about 10kms and Chideock 4kms west of Bridport. The A 35(T) runs through Chideock and formerly ran through Charmouth, although the latter is now bypassed to the north. Charmouth extends south to the coast and the River Char flows into the sea on the eastern edge of the village. To the west are the two large masses of Fern Hill, rising to 172m and, forming a large area of unstable cliff, Black Ven and The Spittles, which extend to Lyme Regis. To the east is the impressive mass of Stonebarrow Hill, rising to over 120m. The coastal area is within the West Dorset Heritage Coast and the East Devon and Dorset Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. The wider area is within the Dorset AONB.

Charmouth occupies the valley between the two large sea cliffs (seen clearly from along the coast at Lyme Regis). To the north of the village is an area of rounded hills dissected by tributaries of the Char. The historic core runs along the former main road, from a bridge across the Char west to Old Lyme Hill and Axminster Road, in a marked climb of 35m (about 130 feet).

Chideock lies about one kilometre inland from the coast at Seatown, firmly astride the A 35(T), with minor roads to the sea in Duck Street and Sea Hill Lane and Mill Lane that terminates at Roadstead Farm, connecting to bridleway No 18 which leads to Seatown, and a northern route via North Road to Chideock Manor and North Chideock. A small watercourse, the River Winniford, runs from Ryall south to Seatown, in a narrow valley between two high sea cliffs, Doghouse Hill to the east and the immensity of Golden Cap (rising to 191m) to the west. Chideock occupies the relatively level ground either side of the river but runs west about 100m in terms of levels up Chideock Hill.

B. Historic development and archaeology

The settlements have an interesting archaeology, with about 20 recorded sites or finds on the Dorset Sites and Monuments Record. Of these, one is a Scheduled Monument. These numbers may seem to indicate a relative paucity of material but there are, nonetheless, some particular features of interest and value. There was a Neolithic settlement at the foot of Doghouse Hill, at Chideock. The A 35(T) represents the line of the Roman road from Dorchester to Axminster and both The Street at Charmouth and Main Street in Chideock may be seen to be part of this route. The medieval period is well represented, with a deer park to the north of Chideock and strip lynchets on Quarry Hill to the east and the earthworks and moat of Chideock Castle to the north of the village. The Castle's gatehouse was illustrated by Buck and was destroyed in 1741. The Parish Church is largely C14 and C15. Old Lyme Road is a medieval greenway, now partly lost to landslips. Charmouth has a remarkably intact medieval plan form, running either side of the main road, with burgage plots well preserved on the north side. The layout seems convincingly to be associated with a planned settlement created by the



Fig 4. Location map
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monastic owners, the Cistercian Forde Abbey, in the late C13 or early C14. The plots seem originally to have been laid out on a module of 66 by 330 feet. The new town is a notably late foundation, compared with the majority of C12 and early-C13 examples. It does not seem to have been a successful settlement and certainly did not grow beyond the original development envelope. At the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the settlement lost its ecclesiastical lord and remained small, limited to a main street and church (there was a mill by the Char bridge). It was only in the 1830s and 50s that the village developed as a minor resort, with a rebuilding of the Church in 1836 and the erection of distinctive villas in the 1840s. Its population actually declined in the latter half of the C19, at 601 in 1851 and 560 in 1901. There has been extensive residential growth in the C20, particularly to the south towards the sea.

Chideock has an historic core either side of the main road, originally of one plot depth and with particularly deep plots on the north side. There has been some intensification of development, through building on the backlands of some plots; and the modern extension of the basic ribbon at both ends of the village and along North Road. At both villages, there are few medieval domestic survivors (apart from possible reused fireplaces from the Castle in Chideock Manor and the particularly interesting early C16 Queen's Arms Hotel at Charmouth). There are interesting C16 and C17 gentry houses and later vernacular cottages, as well as the examples of early-Victorian villas at Charmouth. Charmouth also has a former Congregational Chapel, founded in 1689 and substantially rebuilt in 1815 and 1866. Other village buildings, existing in the C19, were a school, almshouses and coastguard station on Lower Sea Lane, Charmouth and a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Board School, Roman Catholic chapel and school on Main Street or North Road, Chideock.

At Charmouth, three limekilns existed by the shoreline, one of which survives by the former lime mill, established in the 1850s, at the end of Lower Sea Lane. One kiln is shown in an illustration of 1827. An OS Map of 1888 shows the cement mill as disused (an 1867 sale catalogue suggests that it was only working for seventeen years). There were also two kilns at Chideock, at Quarry Hill and to the west of the village.

Chideock has the site of a Second World War pillbox and an extant air raid shelter adjacent to the cemetery.

The **archaeological issues** are:

- Lack of understanding of the resource: the plan form and plot layout of Charmouth and the development of Chideock;
- The potential for research and survey of the Chideock Castle site;
- Further research and investigation of the C19 lime manufacturing and processing activities at Charmouth.

C. Introduction to spatial and character analysis

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 spaces, with varying degrees of 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 Charmouth

Charmouth is a large village with an extensive Conservation Area and a number of Listed Buildings and unlisted buildings of value. Most of the historic interest relates to The Street and its extensions up Old Lyme Hill and Axminster Road, where a strong progression of late Regency and early Victorian houses and cottages provides visual continuity. It is thus proposed to describe the settlement as one character area.

Spatial Analysis

The character and interrelationship of spaces within the Conservation Area

The wider setting of Charmouth shows several characteristic elements, the proximity to a superb coastline of world fame, an inland landscape of riverside meadows and high hills capped and flanked with woodland and a more immediate context of fields and bypass to the north of the village. The historic core has a very obvious edge to the adjoining countryside, marked by a stone wall of unknown age and hedges, between back gardens, infill development and fields. A large recreation ground adds a more managed element and a caravan and camping site at the eastern edge of the village is an additional ingredient. To the south is an extensive area of C20 residential development, stretching almost to the shoreline, which has changed the relationship of the core to the coast. The village has trebled in size over the last eighty years.

It is conceivable that the crossroad created by the main east-west route (an old road with, at least, a Roman basis) and the north-south axis of Barr's and Lower Sea Lanes may be the site of a small settlement predating the early C14 planned medieval town. This has effectively disguised earlier plan forms and, even though the planted town failed to reach its full potential, its general shape and form, plot divisions and building positions relative to the highway have survived and form the basis of the character of the Conservation Area. The medieval core seems to have extended from Charmouth Bridge and the former Abbot's Mill west to the junction of The Street with Higher Sea Lane. The side lanes, Higher and Lower Sea Lane and Barr's Lane, do not appear to have had any substantial development before the mid-C19, exemplified by the former school and Parish Hall on Lower Sea Lane. There is a substantial extension to the medieval core west and NW up Axminster Road



Fig 5. General view from the east

and Old Lyme Hill and Old Lyme Road. The latter two are interesting in that they represent old routes to Lyme Regis along the coast over the unstable geology of Black Ven. Frequent major landslips led to the loss or abandonment of the routes and the creation of a newer, existing, inland route along Axminster Road. The development on the western slopes appears to be markedly residential, with terraced cottages from 1830 onwards. There is infill of later Victorian villas and C20 houses at the western extremity.

The historic village thus has a very definite linear **plan** form, represented by The Street-Axminster Road main axis. The older elements are about one kilometre in length and a maximum of 100 metres plot length either side of the road. Along this route is sited the Parish Church, Congregational Church (dating back to the late C17), a hotel with, at least, a late medieval pedigree, two other public houses, The Court, the largest house, the Manor House, Catherston Manor Farm, several other large gentry houses (some converted to hotels) and a more-or-less continuous frontage of smaller cottages. There is a late Victorian and early C20 redevelopment of purpose-built shops on The Street, on the east side of both the Lower Sea Lane and Barr's Lane junctions. The shops, hotels and pubs were probably based on the village's position astride the then main road to the west, a major tourist route, as much as serving the local population. The various uses around the crossroads may be seen as the actual focal point of the ribbon and, in the wider context of an exploded settlement, with its large extensions to the south, the shopping centre/church/library/parish hall/car park/pubs are also the centre of a wider village. Thus, a more modern nucleated feature overlays an historic ribbon.

The Street retains large portions of its medieval layout, with regular burgage plots of about 20m x 100m (the original specification of 66 feet x 330 feet), particularly on the northern side, although some reduction in width or amalgamation has occurred due to redevelopment, the incursion of modern backland development and the formation of vehicular accesses to serve this. On the south side, there is less clarity and consistency, with a mixture of plot sizes and shapes, suggesting that the medieval plan has been severely modified or that there was a less formal layout from the start. The 1841 Tithe Map and the 1888 First Edition OS sheet show the core before much of the later infill and extensions and it is evident that the southern plots were dominated by specialist and large uses, notably the Parish Church, Congregational Chapel, Charmouth House, Rectory and Manse (now The Queen's Arms). C20 development has infilled the street frontage where gaps existed and the rear gardens and former meadows have been comprehensively built upon with cul-de-sacs and longer spur roads off Lower and Higher Sea Lanes. The older properties tend to be arranged in organic terraces along the road edge or behind small front gardens. The exceptions are the Church and Chapel and several larger houses, such as The Court, set in the remains of larger grounds. The Court is set at right angles to the street, with an entrance at the side (front).

The Street is not completely straight, having a subtle double curve and it climbs steeply west to Axminster Road. The frontage buildings vary in their position to the road with some set backs and occasional projections of bays and porches. There are odd landmarks like the Church tower and other visual focal points such as trees and there are glimpses up side passages and lanes as well as views of the wider countryside, adding up to a rich and complex sequence of spaces, views and other townscape experiences. It is possible to characterise and summarise these by describing a route through the Conservation Area in the form of a walk from the eastern end to the western extremity at the top of the hill. It is, of course, equally valid to describe the route from west to east but the chosen one has the advantage of experiencing a gradual increase in levels as well as views back over the village and thus a more comprehensive picture may be developed.



Fig 6. Old Lyme Hill



Fig 7. View down The Street

Starting at the river crossing, one of the *transportation* plaques may be seen on the parapet of the rebuilt 1957 bridge. There is a narrow view of the Manor Farm Holiday Park to the right (north) and a mixture of small cottages and modern infill ahead on The Street. The road line curves gently to the left and a wider view of The Street and the impressive mass of the slopes up to the west is opened out. Buildings hug the back edges of pavements and bay windows project further, with the particularly bold examples of The George Hotel and Stow House on the right. To the left (south), the attractive wooden cupola of the United Reformed Church (former Congregational Chapel) suddenly appears between flanking buildings, set back in a small courtyard. Next-door is the rendered long façade of the Queen's Armes, marking the start of a more obvious rise in levels, echoed by the more vertical mass of Devonedge opposite, with a towering assemblage of canted bay, oriel window and dormers. The architectural tension is relaxed somewhat by the Pre-War shopping group either side of the road (although the covered walkway in front of The Arcade is attractive) and a large space running into Lower Sea Lane, weakened further by a nondescript space against the flank wall of Littlecote. Lower Sea Lane has large detached houses, a Parish Hall with Arts and Crafts details, tennis courts and a large car park. A wall fronts the tennis courts and large trees at the rear provide a foil to the visible backs of buildings at higher levels. The tall, thin tower of the Church rises above lower buildings. The car park has trees and shrub planting but a large expanse of tarmac leaks away due to the lack of a defined boundary on the St Andrew's Drive and Lower Sea Lane frontages. The Coastguard Cottages and Old School House both provide highlights on the east side of Lower Sea Lane.



Fig 8. Queen's Armes Hotel

There is an interesting detour back to The Street via St Andrew's Drive and a narrow path by the side of the Library, giving a good view of the Church tower and arriving back on the main village axis on the slopes of a steep hill with a good view east down to the crossroads. Returning from Lower Sea Road directly to the centre, a diversion north up Barr's Lane leads to a narrow funnel of buildings and high stone walls. A large rendered house and trees mark another demarcation line, the edge of the medieval plots and an expansive view of playing fields, trees, hedges and the bypass over-bridge. To east and west, the backs of the burgage plots have long stretches of stone boundary walls.

Returning to The Street and turning right (west) uphill, the architectural quality suddenly increases, with white rendered Regency villas, good ironwork and the flank of the Church, set in a small churchyard, with yews. Opposite, slightly uphill, are three urbane rendered regency villas, two with contemporary railings, gate piers and gates and adorned with trees and shrubs. On the right side, buildings climb the contours, often linked by ramped walls. A fine progression of iron railings provides further cohesion. The Court and Charmouth House Hotel are larger detached buildings that provide visual focuses, the Hotel, in particular, creating a major stop at a crucial point, where there is a junction with Higher Sea Lane and where the main road curves round sharply to the right. The Court's large conifers show up particularly well. The War Memorial is a lesser landmark, set in a small sheltered green space. Occasionally, the building line recedes, notably from Dolphin House to Fountain Cottage, exposing the flank of adjoining buildings that have returned to the general on-street line (Portland House is an example of this).



Fig 9. Barr's Lane

The Higher Sea Lane junction is marked by a small, grass bank above which is elevated impressively a row of houses (Foxley Cottage, Badgers and unlisted neighbours to the east). On the other side, Askew House is literally askew the general building line, its impressive Victorian bulk and details seeming to mark effectively the top of the hill and curve of the road. Rendered cottages hug the road line and the main road performs another major turn to the west, adding to the sense of enclosure. The almost continuous run of frontages ends on the east side of Axminster Road and is replaced by short rows of C20 houses, set in gardens. The historic character is resumed on the left (west) side, with a sinuous row of rendered, sashed

houses. There are tremendous views to the east, over trees and a deep valley, out to hills and woodland. The views can be enjoyed between modern houses and down one side lane (giving an almost Italian hill town character of tight space dominated by buildings and the immensity of views out across dramatic landscape).

Returning east, downhill, the twists and turns of the main road underline the enclosing effect of the building frontages with a sudden view SE to Stonebarrow and the sea. The Street then descends sharply back to the crossroads, with a splendid view straight down the main axis to the distant bypass and a landscape of hills and woodland. The steep descent highlights gable ends and chimneys, with some decorative pots being apparent to the viewer at a higher level.

Key views and vistas are the progression of townscape experiences up and down The Street and Axminster Road; the wide views from the upper slopes of the higher ground to coast and countryside; the sudden transition on Barr's Lane to green space and the sight of the medieval boundaries of the burgage plots. The obvious **landmarks** are the Parish Church tower; the frontages of the George (with its large bay) and The Queen's Armes; and the large detached blocks of The Court and Charmouth House Hotel. .

Character Analysis

Building Uses

In the medieval period, Charmouth had a range and a hierarchy of building uses and types, with a church, manor house, guildhall and Abbot's court (on the site of the present Court) and mill (on the site of or near a later corn mill that survive into the C20), as well as the burgage plots and, possibly, a market in the roadway of The Street. Catherston Manor Farm is probably on a much older site and represents a continuity of use. The Queen's Armes is, at least, an early C16 house, probably converted to an inn at a later period. In the post-medieval period, almshouses were added, adjacent to The Court, and the Congregational Chapel built. The George Hotel has C17 portions and there are a number of C17 and early-C18 vernacular houses. There are examples of large houses subdivided into smaller units at the Manor House and Badgers/Foxley Cottage. In the early C19, speculative villa development replaced some of the earlier buildings or infilled older land plots. Several large gentry houses were built or redeveloped, including The Court, Charmouth House and a Rectory south of the rebuilt Parish Church. The expanding C19 village saw the introduction of a school, coastguard cottages and Parish Hall and, in the C20 purpose-built (as opposed to partial use of houses and cottages) shops were introduced around the historic crossroads.

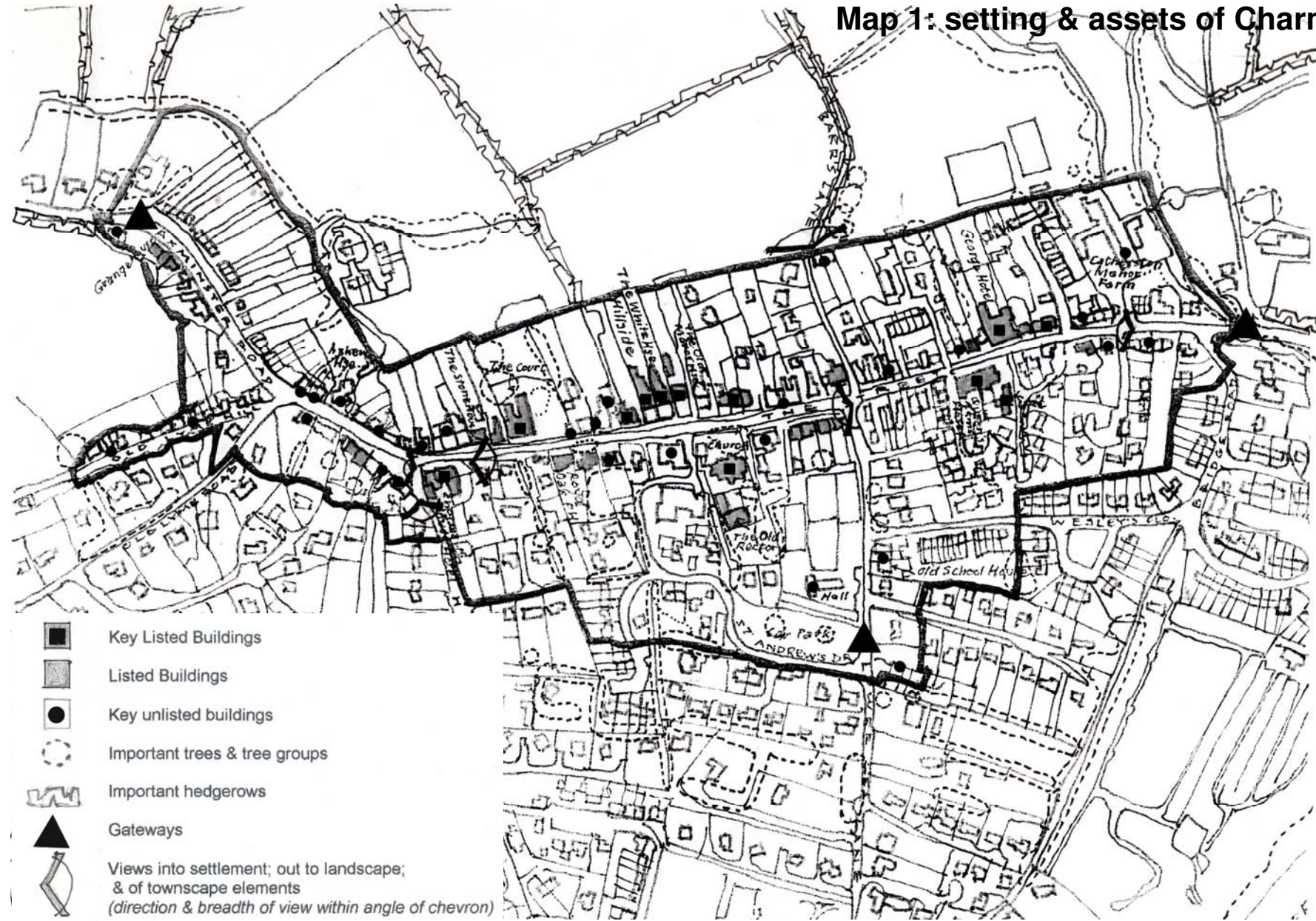


Fig 10. Askew House



Fig 11. Old Lyme Hill near The Street junction

Map 1: setting & assets of Charmouth



The main road location and the growth of tourism and leisure generally have encouraged the conversion of several of the larger houses to hotel use and the continuation of a variety of village shops. Some of these have become more specialised, selling fossils or books or becoming cafes. There are a number of former shops that are now wholly residential, although the small shop fronts survive. Three pubs/hotels survive, but at least one public house has closed, to be converted to housing (The Coach and Horses). The Primary School has been converted to housing and a new building sited further south down Lower Sea Lane. St Andrew's Community Hall is still used for its intended purposes but, on The Street, The Elms has been converted to a Health Centre and Parish Council Office. There is also a doctors' surgery uphill, in a Georgian house. There are examples of modern housing infill, in the cul-de-sacs off The Street east of Barr's Lane, and in developments like St Andrew's House behind the Church. Modern infill housing occurs west of The Royal Oak and, more extensively south of The Street along and either side of Lower and Higher Sea Lanes.

The demands of the car have created a bypass to the north of the village and a large car park off Lower Sea Lane. The former is an undoubted benefit and the latter serves shoppers and visitors but is a large intrusion into the village.

Building Types and Layouts

The village has a range of types and layouts, reflecting historical activities, adaptation and growth. The Parish Church is a good example of early Gothic Revival design and layout, before the influences of the Ecclesiologists. Its symmetrical plan includes a chancel that only projects three feet beyond the body of the church, an arrangement not favoured by later liturgical fashion. The Congregational Chapel/United Reformed Church has a main entrance in its main, northern, façade and a seemingly inaccessible gallery over it.

There are several main building types:

- Late medieval-early C17 large houses, with a cross passage and service and living rooms on either side, exemplified by The Queen's Armes (the screens passage and other internal divisions partly survive) and Badgers/Foxley Cottage (originally one farmhouse);
- C16-C17 large houses with a series of rooms and subsidiary wings, The George is an example of the former (with a through passage to the former coaching yard at the rear) and the Charmouth House Hotel the latter, with two lower rear wings forming an overall U-plan;
- Smaller vernacular C17-early C18 houses, usually thatched, with entrances to one side, such as The Cottage;
- Polite architecture: attached and detached houses and cottages, from the mid-C18 onwards, with symmetrical fronts and central entrance, usually render and slate; bigger gentry houses like The Old Rectory may have detached coach houses and stables; the three Hillside villas are good examples (square plan, double depth), as are Grange House and Primrose Cottage on Axminster Road; a variant is the two windowed façade with doorway on one side of the ground floor window, lined up to the window above.

Most of the buildings run parallel to the road line; either positioned hard on it or set behind a small front garden or paved space. Only one or two larger houses are built at right angles to the road or set in more extensive grounds. The Old School House is a good, unspoilt example of Victorian planning, with a two storey house at right-angles and attached to a single storey school room block and with an entrance porch in the angle between the two elements.



Fig 12. Former primary school



Fig 13. Congregational Chapel/
United Reformed Church

Key Listed Buildings and Structures

There are 33 Listed Building entries in the Conservation Area, all Grade II apart from the Grade II* Queen's Armes Hotel.

The key Listed Buildings are:

- The Parish Church of St Andrew, 1836-8, by Charles Fowler, good example of First Pointed early Gothic Revival, interesting mix of materials, conspicuous tower;
- The Congregational Chapel (now a United Reformed Church), mostly of the 1815 rebuilding, attractive window and cupola details, interior fittings;
- The Queen's Armes Hotel, important early C16 building with original external door and interior fittings;
- The George Hotel, C16 core and later alterations and additions; the projecting bay window and porch is an important townscape feature, internal fittings;
- The Court Hotel, large Regency detached house, attractive details, including sliding shutters and railings; townscape value;
- The Cottage, C17, thatched, canted bay window, major townscape feature;
- Hillside (see fig 1), The White House and The Rectory, a designed group of detached villas, all 1827, by Joseph Wilson; stuccoed stone walls and pyramidal slate roofs, with attractive Regency details: tall sashes, fanlights, wooden trellis work and iron railings and gates; a good group;
- Nos. 1, 2 & 3 The Manor House, C16 core and later refacing; historical value, internal fittings and roof details;
- Charmouth House Hotel, C17 and C19, thatched, interior fittings major townscape feature;
- Bow House, C18 and C19, possible older core, thatched, attractive iron porch, townscape value and entry feature.

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. A number of mid and late Victorian houses and cottages have been selected, particularly on Axminster Road, which all have unaltered windows and doors and other details:

- At the eastern entry, part of a row of rendered Victorian cottages, 4, 5 & 6 Jasmine Cottages, casements and a shallow porch over a window and doorway; group value;
- Melbourne House, an unspoilt mid-Victorian rendered house, with bay windows and marginal glazed sashes;
- Catherston Manor Farm buildings, red brick and orange pantile, mid-late Victorian, forming a U-shape, partly ruinous but of visual merit and historical value;
- Mintaka, a white rendered Victorian house, with marginally glazed sashes, a four panel door with plain fanlight over and raised architraves around door and windows; unspoilt and a definite townscape feature;
- Nos. 1 & 2 and 3 & 4 Firlands, render, casements and square bay window, 1 & 2 with a gablet and decorative bargeboard and a sheeted metal roof; and 3 & 4 with thatch; group value;
- Bay Tree Cottage, small, scribed render and slate, two Victorian sashes and original door, unspoilt, group value;
- No. 1 Devonedge, a large, conspicuous Victorian house on The Street, with a rich vocabulary of bays, oriel window and dormers;
- Nos. 1 & 2 Greensted and Nos. 1 & 2 Lane End, Barr's Lane (formerly Pryer's Villa), 1850-ish render and slate, six surviving sashes, wavy edge to eaves and ironwork balconettes, much altered but of some visual value and in an important position by the Playing Fields;



Fig 14. Stow House & George Hotel



Fig 15. Melbourne House

- The mid-Victorian block on the north side of The Street, from Charmouth Stores uphill to Rupert and Stanley Houses; stucco, sashes and inset doorways, Stanley House being enriched by round-headed and reeded doorways, a rusticated ground floor and two bold square first floor oriel windows; There is a detached house set back up a passage behind The Stores that displays an unspoilt front elevation;
- The Coach and Horses conversion, a large late Victorian rendered block with painted brick, channelled voussoirs, vermiculated decorative panels and two large canted bays; a real townscape focal point on the hill;
- The Elms, two very different parts: a rendered Tudoresque element with a large moulded brick or terracotta mullion and transom window, and a red brick classically-inspired uphill part with a pediment and *oeil de boeuf* window, again a very positive townscape incident;
- Langley House, a rendered house with Victorian tripartite sashes and a pilastered and architraved door surround, twin modern shop fronts;
- Albury Cottage, a former coach house, rendered and with its gable end to the street, distinguished by a first floor square oriel window with decorated brackets;
- Luttrell House and Perla, two rendered Victorian houses with canted bays and marginal glazing; Luttrell House has a surprising elaborate Classical doorcase (see fig 1) with fluted Ionic columns and a moulded semi-circular canopy, enclosing a pretty spoked fanlight (it looks to be earlier than the rest of the building);
- Shoe and Stocking, much altered by replacement windows but mentioned for its stone sheds behind, railings and setted and pebbled path;
- Dolphin House, Grasmere and Fountain Cottage, three rendered C19 cottages, set back in a short row, with varying details, including a balcony on Dolphin House and slated bays with Arts and Crafts detailing on Grasmere; of group value, also valuable for area paving and railings;
- Portland House and Garden Cottage, rendered and sashed, round headed doorways, unspoilt and the east elevation to Portland House is very visible from the climb uphill;
- Bayville Cottage, Granville House and Waterloo House (Old Forge Fossils) are all rendered, with intact details and two simple former shop fronts;
- Askew House, a heady concoction of bold Italianate details and enrichments, unspoilt windows; a key building on the upper part of the hill, marking the curving road line;
- Melville, render, three dormers with frilly bargeboards, marginal glazing and Victorian doors;
- The Rosery, The Holt, the former with a two storey canted bay, marginal glazing and two distinctive gable ends facing downhill; The Holt has a ground floor square bay window;
- Heron and Charm Cottages, render and sashes, group value;
- Knap and Box Cottages, Foxley House and Foxley Green (see fig 1), an unspoilt group of C19 houses, in a row, at a very visible point in the climb up Axminster Road: the first two are lower, lime washed chert, casements (or horizontal sliding sashes?) and penticed roofs over their porches; Foxley House and Green are very handsome sashed fronts, with a setted path and railings;
- Claremont, a big Victorian house, canted bay with gablet (replacement windows) and fleur-de-lis heads to the railings
- Alpine Cottage and Hillcot Cottage, on Old Lyme Hill, are unspoilt, retaining original windows, the former having sashes and a bracketed door canopy and the latter having casements and a penticed roof porch; both have group value;



Fig 16. Dolphin House



Fig 17. Luttrell House & Perla

- Candida and Grange Cottages, render and sashes, Greek key detail on latter (but a large dormer window in poor repair detracts), good entry feature from the west;
- Old School House and former Primary School, Lower Sea Lane, attractive Victorian Tudor, details include materials, roof, wooden porch at angle of gable and main block;
- Coastguard Cottages, Lower Sea Lane, rendered mid-Victorian row with sashes and porches (much altered), separate single storey stone building; of townscape value;
- St Andrew's Parish Hall, early C20 Arts and Crafts building with attractive details;

Building Groups

Good groups are:

- At the eastern end of The Street, a good entry group, including The Queen's Arms and George Hotels, from Alica to Bow House on the north side and The Queen's Arms and United Reformed Church on the south;
- The western part of The Street from the crossroads up the hill to the Royal Oak and War Memorial on the west and on from Charmouth House Hotel to Melbourne House;
- On the eastern side, from Mulberry Lodge to Hope Cottage, including the Hillside Regency villas, The Court, The Stone House, Portland House and Askew House;
- On the west side of Axminster Road, in a very conspicuous position at the top of the hill, from Knap Cottage to Melbourne House, including two Listed buildings;
- A short run of early C19 rendered houses on the west side of Axminster Road, from Springfield House to Grange Cottage.

Building Materials and Architectural Details

Underlain by Lower Lias limestones and clays, Charmouth is flanked with Upper Greensand hills on either side of the Char valley. The village is characterised by the extensive use of two building stones, chert and Blue Lias limestone. Chert is a hard but brittle material, similar to flint but less glassy and more sugary in texture and lighter in appearance and colour. The chert cobs are usually split or knapped to expose a grey/blue core. The material has been used in random, uncoursed walling but there is usually a need for quoins in another, more workable material. The chert originated from the shoreline or from nearby quarries at Hardown Hill, Morcombelake. It is commonly seen as pieces up to 30cm square. It may vary in character, from rough, unshaped pieces in the massive (four metre) boundary wall on the west side of Devonedge Lane, to carefully shaped hexagonal pieces, with thin joints, on The Old Schoolhouse.

The other common building material is the distinctive Blue Lias limestone, from the beach at Charmouth (in the form of cobbles) and from the beach and ledges of Lyme Regis, a grey/blue rubble, sometimes roughly coursed and often mixed with the pebbly chert beach. This mixture is very evident on boundary walls that have not been rendered or painted, particularly on Barr's Lane. The Blue Lias stones are markedly flat and thin in shape. Both materials are unsophisticated, intractable building materials and they were often covered with a smooth lime render, Regency stucco or later roughcast. There are several examples of tile or slate hanging over stone, to provide extra protection on exposed elevations (The Cottage has particularly attractive slates on its east elevation with a double-arched window). Brick is seen as quoins to stone buildings, particularly in subsidiary farm or stable buildings, contrasted with an urbane, rendered main house. The Parish Church is an interesting mix of materials, with a chert rubble core from the beach, split chert facing from Morcombelake, the



Fig 18. Coastguard Cottages



Fig 19. St Andrew's Parish Hall

chalky Beer Stone and golden Hamstone for dressings and a plinth of hard Forest Marble limestone from Bothenhampton. One building, The Stone House, stands out because of its contrasting colour and texture, being constructed of ashlar, possibly Bothenhampton(?). There are Hamstone adornments on the Victorian Devonridge, including string courses, quoins and brackets.

The smooth rendered houses may, as already noted, have a stone core but brick seems to have been used more commonly under render as the C19 progressed. Several Victorian buildings show a rich orange brick façade: The Elms, Highfield and the Coach and Horses (now painted). Some Regency and early Victorian houses have incised or scribed lines in the render to suggest ashlar stonework. On the higher end of Axminster Road, at Grange Cottage and Hill View (see fig 1), there is a vertical, incised Greek Key pattern in the render. On the Victorian Stanley House, the render is more deeply channelled. The Blue Lias limestone, from the shoreline or from Uplyme, was ground at the lime mill and burnt, forming the basis for stucco and render and lime mortar.

There are many surviving pavements into properties and paths made of Blue Lias, either local or from Keinton Mandeville in Somerset. The thin sets and blocks are often edged with small beach pebbles to form decorative patterns. The area in front of The Stone House (see fig 1) is a good example of this distinctive local asset (with a diagonal framework and infill with setts), as are others fronting Stow House, Charmouth Stores, The Royal Oak, Shoe and Stocking, Monks Rest, Little Hurst and the Dolphin House, Grasmere and Fountain Cottage group.

The village's historic buildings seem to group themselves into three basic types, according to date and materials (see the discussion on building types above): an older C16-mid C18 vernacular cottage; the Regency-early Victorian villa or large detached house; and later Victorian houses. The vernacular houses tend to have thatched roofs, originally of long straw or wheat reed, gabled, sometimes with stone coping, or hipped, with rounded, flowing shapes and simple flush ridges (Badgers and Foxley Cottage are good examples of this detailing). June Cottage has a thatched gablet and its neighbour, with a corrugated metal roof (replacing thatch?), has a similar gablet, in slate and with a decorative bargeboard. Pantiles appear on several rear outshuts and sheds. Also evident are rendered walls over stone; and stone mullioned windows (The George) or horizontal wooden casements (Charmouth House Hotel, Albury House). Many windows have been replaced by C19 sashes and with sashed canted bays. Doorways may have wooden or cast iron trellised porches, penticed slate roofs or thatched roof canopies.

Charmouth has a particularly attractive collection of Regency - early Victorian villas (see fig 1) and large houses, conforming to national fashions in their details: the urbane, smooth rendered façade, with sashes with thin glazing bars, Classical door (see fig 1) surrounds (pilasters or reeded mouldings, fanlights and ironwork), iron balconies or verandas, features like elliptically arched blind recesses with windows set-in, and overhanging eaves with brackets. Tripartite sashes appear at Beech and Winton Houses and the Charmouth Medical Practice. The Court has original sliding wooden shutters with a frilly wooden valance over the windows. There is one particularly elaborate Classical door surround at No. 6 The Street with a round moulded open pediment, architrave, Ionic pilaster and a semi-circular fanlight with spokes. The Old Rectory has reeded pilasters and a semi-circular fanlight with curvilinear glazing bars. Roofs are of slate, gabled but, more commonly,



Fig 20. Rendered houses, The Street



Fig 21. Thatched Bow House

hipped. The Parish Church has Boscastle slate roofs. Red clay ridge tiles are seen in contrast to the grey slate. Dormer windows, surprisingly uncommon, are simple rectangular types, with casements and flat roofs.

The Victorian contribution may carry forward older elements, smooth render, sashes and details like scribed false masonry joints or deeper rustication, and debased classical doorways. The row uphill from The Stores has sober stuccoed frontages with sashes, plat bands, recessed doorways, rustication and round-headed ones on the western pair, and square first floor bay windows. The Coach and Horses block has a bold composition of first floor bay windows and sashes, with a particularly broad gable end. The canted bay window is very characteristic, with rich horizontal mouldings and rendered walling or slate hanging. Some sashes have marginal glazing bars, indicating a date of 1850-60. Melbourne House, on the upper slopes of the hill, has tripartite first floor sashes with marginal glazing and single storey canted bays, each with a hipped slate roof. Dormer windows tend to become more prominent and richer detailing and details in terracotta or moulded brickwork begin to appear towards the end of the century (The Elms has moulded brick or terracotta surrounds to windows as well as a red brick wing with a pediment and round window). Askew House has an assemblage of bays, dormers and porch, with Italianate window arches and wavy bargeboards. The former Primary School, in Lower Sea Lane, is built of local chert and oolitic limestone ashlar dressings (an honest expression of materials) in a debased Tudor style. The roofs are of clay tiles with fish-scale or scalloped courses. The former Congregational Chapel has plain rendered gate piers with more florid ironwork on the gates and the remains of a lamp overthrow. Grasmere (see fig 1) has a square bay window with slate hanging and Arts and Crafts glazing (round arched central light). The Parish Hall in Lower Sea Lane is an interesting Arts and Crafts-inspired building, complete with roughcast, flush casements, half-timbering in the gable and triangular buttresses

There are many details common to all building types, due to alteration and adaptation: tall rendered or brick chimney stacks with a variety of thrown clay or moulded pots (see fig 1), including a Victorian yellow clay tapered type with a sunk panel, plat bands and string courses (there is a variant, on Old Lyme Road, with quarter circle projections on the top, rather like Greek *antefixae*), six-panelled doors with the top two panels glazed or with fanlights over and iron railings and gates.

Charmouth has a fine collection of decorative cast ironwork (see fig 2), seen in porches, verandas and railings and gates, particularly associated with Regency buildings. Porches also have wooden trellis-work (Littlecote) but the patterns are shared: Gothick quatrefoils and arches and more fluid foliage ornament. Bow House, for example, has lozenge, lancet and saltire trellis patterns. A boot scraper is incorporated at the base of this example. Stanley House also has a simple scraper. Littlecote has a very elaborate porch and outer door composed of quarter circles and spokes, a central lattice and smaller saltire crosses. Railings and gates display spear, arrowhead (The Stone House, The Court, Beech House, Hillside and The Rectory) and fleur-de-lis (Congregational Chapel) finials with standards adorned with varying urns. There are also hooped types with spears within the hoop. Penn Cottage has heads on the standards that appear like opening buds and its ordinary rails have unusual plain trefoils. Gates may have saltire cross reinforcements and there are examples of quadrant arched rails with rails following the overall shape (Charmouth Lodge). Littlecote and Carram House have a characteristic early Victorian vertical S-shape, thickly inhabited with vine leaves and scrolls, the gate piers having pineapple finials. The churchyard gates have free-flowing scroll-work in the middle of plain verticals. The related stone walls and gate piers date from the rebuilding of the Church in 1836 and the stone wall copings and Gothic Revival gablets on the piers are noteworthy. There are a number of houses that have been altered but retain their boundary rails and gates, particularly on Axminster



Fig 22. Tripartite sashes at Beech & Winton Houses



Fig 23. Canted bays windows of the former Coach & Horses

Road. There is one prominent first floor balcony at Dolphin House, entirely composed of scrollwork. Carrum House has a door canopy with elaborate scrolled brackets incorporating a squirrel amongst its curves and leaves.

There are many other attractive details, including the reset transportation plaque on the bridge, the plaque on the former Congregational Chapel recording various rebuildings, a painted *trompe l'oeil* sash window on the Royal Oak, an undulating link wall uphill from The Court that ramps down and up by a series of quadrant curves, the leaded lights on The Elms and Stanley House and the semi-circular tin porch canopy at Hill View. There are two simple wooden Shopfronts, with moulded fascia boards, by the Fossil Shop on Axminster Road, at Granville and Waterloo Houses.

Before water supplies were internal, there were external standpipes (small arched niches with an outlet for a tap), situated on the corner of Barr's Lane and by Hall Cottages, Lower Sea Lane and possibly elsewhere.

Parks, Gardens and Trees

Charmouth has a large number of tree groups and individual trees as well as valuable green spaces. The green space south of the bypass to the edge of the historic core includes an area of playing fields and is particularly valuable in forming a clean edge with development and preserving historic boundaries. It has several hedgerows that date from before the 1841 Tithe Map. The fields are crossed by the course of the River Char, which extends a treed corridor from the bypass south to the eastern end of The Street and SE towards Newlands Bridge. Here, thick woodland helps to screen the Seadown Holiday Park, which also has a decent screen on its western boundary. The riverside trees provide an effective boundary on the western side of the Manor Farm Holiday Park but, apart from a thick hedge by the main entrance, there is little internal planting, apart from two or three individual trees.

A small copse of trees runs around two sides of the Nutcombe Close outlier, off Axminster Road and continues west behind the modern ribbon development back to the line of the bypass. Within the historic core, mature trees help to frame, separate or link groups of buildings and are valuable assets in long views into the village from outside and from viewpoints within the Conservation Area. Particularly notable are the trees from Askew House east to The Court and Albury Cottage; west of St Andrew's House, behind properties on the south side of The Street; in the grounds of the Old Rectory; behind The George Hotel, one large poplar behind The Queen's Armes, and, further west, on the Barr's Lane boundary of the play area. The churchyard has three yew trees that contrast effectively with the colours and texture of the building materials.

There are a very high number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), reflecting the importance of trees in the village, on the northern side of Axminster Road; both sides of Barr's Lane; an extensive one east of Newlands Bridge; two adjacent to Stonebarrow Gate; two on the Seadown Holiday Park boundaries; a large one covering the Lower Sea Lane car park, running through to The Elms; others further south on Lower and Higher Sea Lanes; and small and individual TPOs on the south side of The Street.

The Court has an enigmatic circular mound in its front garden, possibly a C16 or C17 viewpoint (there is a similar Mount at Bindon Abbey but this is associated with adjacent canals and ponds). Gardens are limited to small front areas, with an attractive mixture of shrubs in front of the three Hillside villas (magnolias and others).



Fig 24. Transportation plaque



Fig 25. View towards Nutcombe Close from Axminster Rd

Detrimental Features

There are a few problems in the Conservation Area:

- Poles and wires and conspicuous light fittings on The Street;
- A gap created by a rather indeterminate space by The Grange;
- The central shopping area is somewhat untidy with some visual clutter and the side of Littlecote has a bare space;
- Lower Sea Road has a rather exposed area around the Parish Hall, characterised by parked cars and tennis courts at a higher level to the road; and a large public car park with some planting but particularly undefined boundaries and views of expanses of tarmac and parked vehicles;
- The former Catherston Manor Farm buildings are in very poor condition;
- The Manor Farm Holiday Centre would benefit from additional tree planting;
- The Old Rectory appears to be in poor condition, with decaying sash windows, thick creeper on the NE angle; there is an untidy gated path from the churchyard;
- Langley House has a shop front in poor condition;
- The Stone House has modern replacement windows of unsympathetic details and materials (although these must have been introduced before the building was listed); there are a number of pleasant C19 cottages on the north side of Axminster Road that have had replacement uPVC windows of non-traditional detailing;
- Several examples of rusted and broken cast iron railings, with a missing section at Littlecote, lost railings at The White House and very fragmentary railings at The Court;
- Recycling banks in the car park of Lower Sea Lane;
- The grass bank in front of Knap Cottage and neighbours has clutter in the form of a post and wires, a public utility box, seat and litter bin.



Fig 26. Trees & tennis courts, Lower Sea Lane

Definition of the Special Interest of the Conservation Area

- A dramatic landscape setting, adjacent to a World Heritage coastline and within the Dorset AONB, with high hills, sea cliffs, woodland and deep, treed watercourses;
- Mature trees and tree groups within the village, particularly to the north and east and along The Street, that enhance the setting of historic buildings, integrate modern development and add to the quality of views in and out of the village;
- A substantially intact medieval planned layout, representing a rare C14 Cistercian speculation, with visible burgage plots and boundaries (see also Laurence Keen, 1999);
- 33 Listed Building entries, including a Grade II* early C16 large house/inn, several C16 and C17 houses with screens or through passages and intact internal features; a particularly attractive legacy of early C19 Regency houses; and some notable Victorian public buildings and houses;
- About 48 unlisted buildings of quality and character, complementing Listed buildings and forming parts of several coherent groups of particular interest;
- Distinctive local building materials, notably chert and Blue Lias limestone, render and thatch that, combined with building traditions, give a strong sense of place;
- Interesting details such as cast iron railings, gates, verandas and porches, pitched and setted pavements and boundary walls.

C2 Chideock (refer also to Appendix A)

Chideock is a large village with a number of historic buildings and there is a marked contrast in traffic noise between the main road and the lanes north and south, but there is a continuity of building types and materials and similarities of layout and plan form. It is proposed to describe the Conservation Area as a whole without recourse to sub-areas.

Spatial Analysis

The village is set in the Winniford valley with steep slopes and high hills either side (rising over 130m from the valley floor). To the south is a dramatic stretch of World Heritage coastline, with cliffs over 100m high, culminating in the 191m Golden Cap, to the west. The village is sited partly on a saddle between the high cliffs and partly up the slopes of Langdon Hill. The wider landscape is characterised by hedged fields and small woodlands rising up to barer ground, with scrub and bracken, on the highest areas.

The Conservation Area is focused on Chideock, positioned astride a Roman route from Dorchester to Axminster, the A35. In terms of **plan form**, Chideock is linear, extending about 1500m along the main road. Its pre-C20 plan showed development on both sides of the road to a depth of a single plot. A crossroads is an obvious focal point where a minor road (North Road) from North Chideock crosses the main road (albeit with a slightly staggered junction) to become Duck Street, with a continuation in Sea Hill Lane to Seatown and another continuation to Seatown via Mill lane and a bridleway, which rejoin at Seatown. The crossroads has the Parish Church, a former public house, Chideock Court and several other large gentry and farmhouses around it, with another former farm house sited in Duck Street. Main Street has other gentry and yeomen's houses strung along its length, from Warren House in the west to Beech House in the east. There is a particularly impressive group of C17 and early C18 large houses on the north side of Main Street, east of the river crossing. In this area there is also a large pub in The George Inn and the remnants of the Victorian village school.

Most of the village's historic development consists of short, informal terraces of cottages built on the edge of the carriageway or set behind small front gardens. Most are orientated parallel to the road, there being few properties at right angles. Only a minority of larger detached houses are set back from the road, in landscaped grounds, exemplified by Beech House, The Old Rectory and Underhill on Main Street and White House on Mill Lane. Many plots are small, particularly on the south side of Main Street and the northern end of Duck Street but, on both sides of the main road, plots appear to be rectangular and regular, with markedly long, deep plots on the northern side. This is evident east of the Winniford, from Apple tree Thatch east to Gate Cottages. Old maps and village histories show the existence of orchards in many back gardens. Modern infill development has tended to introduce a sub-division of the northern plots, with large detached houses behind old houses and cottages on the road frontage. It is conceivable that the large regular plots reflect an element of medieval or Post-medieval planning, seen in West Street in Abbotsbury, where regular plots contrast markedly with the varied plot shapes and sizes of the village core. A fire of 1893, near the Castle Inn, damaged properties on both sides of Main Street and necessitated the rebuilding of the pub and a terrace on the south side, east of the Duck Street junction, as well as the former Manning's Stores (now holiday accommodation) further uphill.

Pettycrate Lane also runs off Duck Street west towards Langdon Hill. The main road, Main Street and its western continuation in Chideock Hill, has several small lanes running off at right angles, one to the south (now a bridleway) linking up with Mill Lane and another, a northern cul-de-sac in Ruins Lane has a former Nonconformist chapel. To the south of the



Fig 27. Main St looking west



Fig 28. Properties on north side of Main St

Castle was an extensive deer park, running up to the existing historic boundary behind the properties on the north side of Main Street. Park Farm's name is evidence of its existence.

Boundaries have remained important features, with a clear line along the rear of the northern Main Street properties (somewhat compromised by intensive backland development); an equally important large green field and hedgerows on the southern side of Main Street properties; woodland and green space marking the historic edge to the area between Sea Hill and Mill Lanes; and hedgerows forming a firm edge to the western boundary around Ridwood and Midlands farm. Linear extensions up Chideock Hill and east along Broadmead have compromised historic patterns and the St Giles and Winniford Close development off North Road is a more obvious area of modern housing.

The character and interrelationship of spaces may be described by means of a short walk, covering topography, buildings, the spaces between and around them, colours and details and trees and other landscape features. Starting from the eastern end of the Conservation Area, by Beech House, Main Street is seen to have several subtle curves and a dip by the river and then a sharp climb towards the west. The slopes of Langdon Hill and its cap of woodland form a backdrop to the village core and the walk towards the west. On the left (south), two large, stuccoed early C19 houses, Beech House and The Old Cottage, are almost hidden behind trees, hedges and boundary walls. The south side continues with a mixture of older terraced cottages sited hard on the road edge (there is no pavement), one block at right angles to the road and modern infill terraces and individual houses. A short Victorian terrace, Greenwich, is set back behind the main road frontage and its roofs and first floor are glimpsed above boundary walls and a garage court. The main road seems to dominate and intimidate the buildings.

On the other (north) side, there is a contrast in building styles, forms and layouts, with a notable progression of large C17 and C18 houses, detached and set back or attached in short groups and set nearer the road, linked by stone walls and united by the use of a honeyed Inferior Oolite building stone. Thatch, mullioned, casement and sash windows, porches, bold chimneys all add to the pleasure of the wider ensemble. A former barn, attached to the eastern end of Park Cottages, runs at right angles to the general building line and projects to the back edge of the pavement, thus providing a minor visual stop to the group, especially when viewed from further west along Main Street. The George Inn creates a colour contrast, being rendered and painted. On the north side, also, is Ruins Lane (a quiet contrast to the bustle of the heavily trafficked trunk road) with a mixture of older stone cottages, a handsome C19 chapel and modern houses. This lane leads to Chideock Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument).

Returning to Main Street, the good run of cottages and larger houses continues on the north side and, although the grain of development is looser, there are several attractive cottages on the south side, thatched and with orange stone or white rendered walls. A group of thatched, white rendered cottages heralds the river crossing and large trees, on the course of the Winniford, contrast with the whiteness of the buildings. The bridge has good iron balustrading. The road begins a sharp climb and buildings either side manage the changing levels by being cut into the slope and, where attached, stepping up in ascending blocks, exposing gable ends and chimneys. On the south, a long, high stone wall, ornamented with a Gothic Revival arch, hides the grounds of Chideock Court and Chapel Cottage. A stone terrace then leads to the junction with Duck Street. On the northern side, Chideock House Hotel exposes an attractive stone flank but its road elevation is partly hidden by vegetation. The former Castle pub then rises up the hill in two blocks, with Victorian Tudor detailing. The Parish Church is



Fig 29. George Inn, Main St



Fig 30. Ruins Lane

suddenly revealed, setback slightly in a small churchyard, hidden by surrounding buildings and yews. The handsome tower, south elevation and porch are seen, with a few gravestones and a good cast iron entrance gate.

A short row of thatched cottages, at right angles to the main road, marks the narrow entry into North Road, made to seem even smaller by the mass of the Church tower sitting on the corner. The southern end of North Road has a high stone wall on the Church side, punctuated by an elaborate iron gate and stone piers. Looking through, there is a framed view of the Weld Mortuary Chapel, an exotic Byzantine concoction. Looking NE, over modern housing, a wooden cross marks the site of the Castle and, looking back south to the main road, there is a view of Church tower and the thatched Clock House Hotel on Main Street, in a narrow slot framed by the tower and Stoke Cottage.

Back to the traffic and noise, a short continuation up Chideock Hill passes the particularly pleasant details, including an iron front porch, of Warren House. Turning back downhill, there is a tremendous view of a descending main street, Church tower, trees and a backdrop of hills and cliffs, including Quarr Hill and Eype Down in the distance. Turning right (south) down Duck Street, there is instant calm and quiet (outside the holiday periods) and a row of attractive thatched and slated stone houses from Chervil Cottage southwards. Roadstead Farm and its mighty boundary wall sit firmly in the middle of the junction between Sea Hill and Mill Lanes. The Swiss Cottage attractively marks the other side of the junction. There are stone cottages and barns further down Sea Hill Lane and thick woodland, giving enclosure and shelter. Down Mill Lane, a curving road line, walls and trees lead to a particularly good group of cottages, from The Farmers Arms to Meadow Cottage, set hard on the lane, with a constantly curving building line. Opposite, in complete contrast, the pale elegance of White House stands aloof in its landscaped grounds.

On Mill Lane, the green expanses and trees of the Clapp's Mead Recreation Ground lead to a rural path (Bullen's Lane) back to the main road, crossing the river and giving views of the backs of some of the Mill Lane cottages, as well as visually important woodland and the slopes of the high ground to the west of the village.

From the above, the **key views and vistas** are the series of townscape views of Main Street from the eastern and western entry points, with the mass of Langdon Hill to the west and equally fine views east from the high points above the Duck Street and North Road junctions; the narrow framed view from North Road back to the Church and main road; the view down Duck Street to Roadstead Farm; and down Mill Lane to the Farmers Arms group; and from the Recreation Ground west over the edge of the village. From footpath W10/8, which starts from Ruins Lane, are important views of the setting of the Conservation Area that includes Chideock Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument). Obvious **landmarks** are the Park Farmhouse group and The George on the eastern entry; the group of white cottages and houses either side of the bridge; Chideock House; the Clock House Hotel and the Parish Church tower.

Character Analysis

Building Uses

Both the 1888 and 1904 Ordnance Survey maps show a village that extends from the village hall vicinity (formerly Manor Farm) east to Park Farm and with only a few cottages along Sea Hill and Mill Lanes. The uses included the normal range to be expected in a medium sized village: Parish Church (plus the Roman Catholic Weld Mortuary Chapel), Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, larger gentry houses (Chideock House and Court, a Vicarage, Beech House, Warren House, Chimneys, Roadstead Farm and Manor and Park Farmhouses), four public houses, a Board School, a range of village shops (including



Fig 31 Parish Church, Main St



Fig 32 Mill Lane

a Post Office on the south side of Main Street, near the Duck Lane turn, later by the garage), cobblers, carpenter's shop, bakery, general stores and milliner/draper), smithy and smaller cottages. The Swiss Cottage (see fig 3) was an Infants School until 1881. There were a number of barns and sheds associated with the village farms. An interesting example is the Cheese House, adjacent to Park Cottages. It was actually a cider house, the cheese being part of the process of cider making. There was a granary and dairy also in this group of buildings.

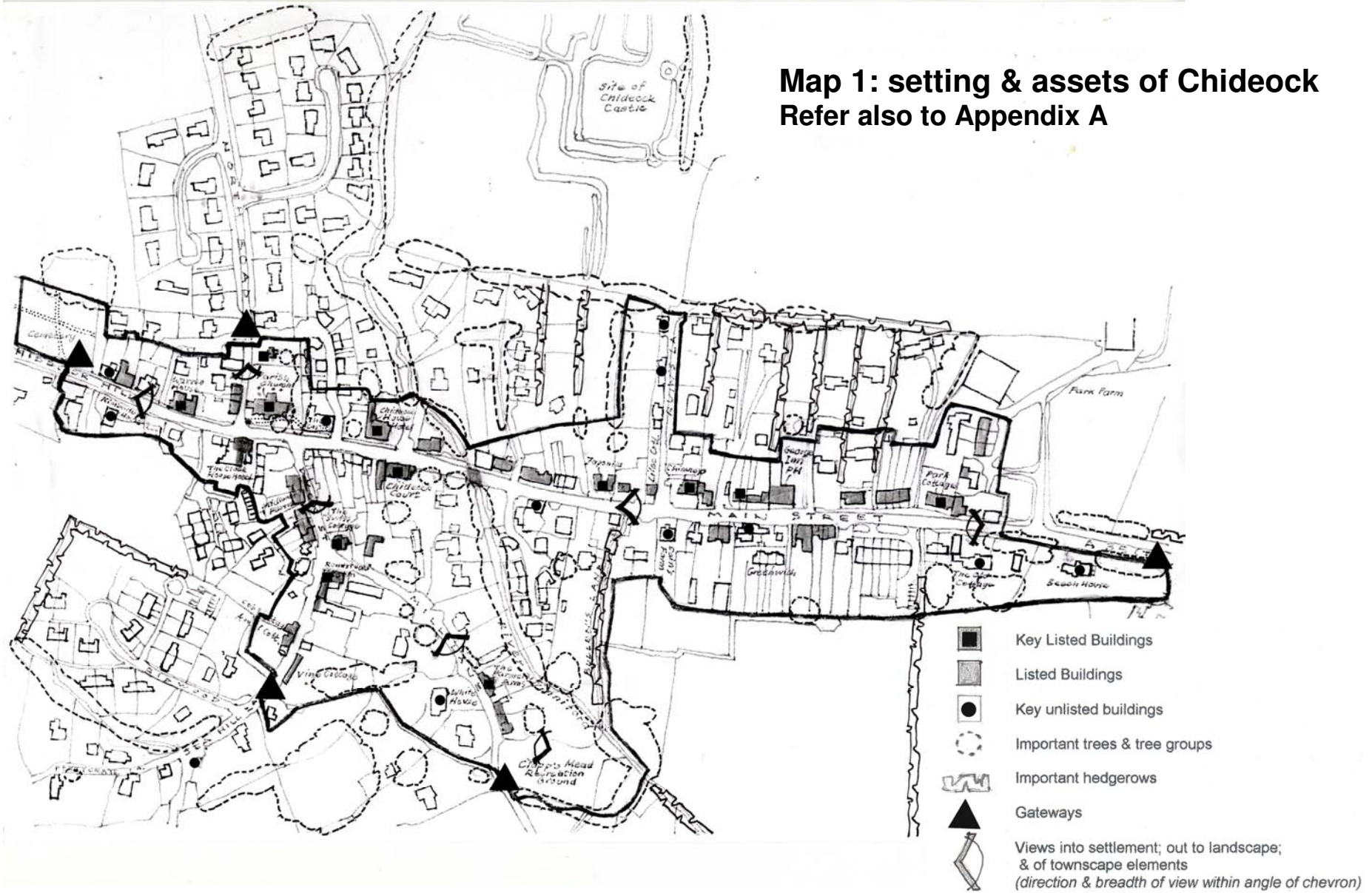
The current population is over 600. Many of the historic properties have changed their original uses: Chideock House has become a B&B, the Court's former ancillary buildings, including The Coach House and Dawn Cottage, have become separate houses. The Nonconformist Chapel is no longer used for religious worship and appears to be used for storage; the large farmhouses have been converted for residential use; two of the pubs have become private houses; as has the Vicarage (used as such until the 1970s); the School has been converted similarly and there is now only one village shop. Farm buildings, also, have tended to become residential conversions, although Cains Farm still has working buildings on the south side of Main Street. Several Main Street properties relate to the local tourist trade or to passing traffic. The former Manning's Stores is a tearoom and holiday accommodation.

A village hall is situated on Chideock Hill, originally built before the Great War as an Artillery or Drill Hall.



Fig 33. Beech House

Map 1: setting & assets of Chideock
 Refer also to Appendix A



Building Types and Layouts

The village has a medieval Parish Church with west tower, nave, south aisle, north transept, south porch and chancel with a south chapel. There is no clerestory and the chancel was completely rebuilt in 1880. The Weld Mortuary Chapel is a detached cruciform structure, a fairly rare type and of particular interest as the burial place of many members of a powerful local Roman Catholic family who built the first licensed RC church at West Lulworth and the Parish Church of Our Lady of Martyrs and St Ignatius at North Chideock. The former Methodist Chapel in Ruins Lane is an interesting example of an early C19 structure; square on plan and with an entrance offset to a corner, with no great architectural pretensions, its details harking back to earlier Georgian examples.

Other public buildings include the former Board School on Main Street, a small east-west block and a separate building at right angles, possibly a teacher's house, all greatly altered. The former Infants School at The Swiss Cottage is a consciously picturesque building, with elements of symmetry and its conversion to residential use in 1881 seems to have retained its earlier character. It may thus be an early example of a Dame School, before the 1874 Education Act. The Village Hall, as noted above, was built as a Drill Hall. The various public houses seem to be a mixture of conversions from houses or purpose built structures, The Farmers Arms and Clock House being examples of the former and The George and Castle being the latter. The George has a substantial C20 extension. Houses may be grouped into a number of categories, according to size and date:

- Post-medieval-early C19 large houses, including the Chideock Court, Chideock House, Chimneys, May, Winniford and Japonica Cottages and The Warren House gentry or yeoman houses and large farm houses (some now subdivided) such as Park Farmhouse, Nos. 1 & 2 Park Farm Cottages, Midlands Farm and Roadstead Farm; all of these may be termed vernacular buildings even though several have Late Georgian additions and alterations. There are recognisable Tudor survival details in mullioned windows, drip moulds or continuous string courses and chamfered doorways, along with the use of good quality ashlar stone and thatch (not on Chideock Court or Midlands Farmhouse). Several have evidence of a cross-passage; Chimneys Hotel has a central hall, parlour and a service room, with a rear outshut; Japonica Cottage has a large rear wing; Winniford Cottage has plank and muntin partitions both sides of its cross-passage. Chimneys Hotel has a particularly interesting plan, with a rare, for Dorset, example of a large, projecting, lateral, chimney breast and stack on a long, front wall, which is a feature associated with Devon and West Somerset late medieval and post-medieval houses;
- Smaller vernacular cottages of the C18 and early C19, exemplified by Peter's Finger and Duck Cottage in Duck Street, Bridge, Apple Tree and Apple Tree Thatch (see fig 3), Ivy Cottages on Main Street and Cob and Vine Cottages on Sea Hill Lane; thatched, one-and-a-half (with dormers into the roof) or two storeys and with either irregular fenestration or doors offset from the centre or at a gable end, all evidence of informal planning, many with rear outshuts;
- Early C19 cottages, such as Betchworth House, By The Stream and Staddlestones, Lilac Cottage, Hill View and Fernley, with casements and thatch (slate roofs beginning to make an appearance), with main doors positioned in the centre, suggesting a degree of planning and two main rooms either side of a hallway.

There are three early-mid C19 large detached houses, Beech House, The Old Cottage (former Vicarage) and White House that share a common architectural vocabulary, render, sashes, slate roofs and Classical details, all with a clearly expressed entrance, hall and stairs and a series of rooms related to family use, with service and servants' rooms at the side or rear.



Fig 34. Weld Mortuary Chapel



Fig 35. Chimneys

Greenwich is a locally rare example of a purpose-built short terrace, later C19, facing south and with a small rear space and long front gardens. There are a number of farm buildings, mostly converted to residential use: a good group north and east of Park Cottages, related to the former Park Farm, with a former Cheese House (cider house), cart shed and barn and stables, the first two one-and-a-half storeys and the cart shed and stables having an internal loft.

Key Listed Buildings and Structures

There are 41 Listed Building entries in the Conservation Area, all Grade II, apart from the Grade I Parish Church. The key Listed Buildings are:

- The Parish Church of St Giles, C14 and C15, with Late Victorian restoration and additions, which stripped much of the earlier fittings, thus the Church is particularly notable for its prominent tower and stair-turret, external grouping of elements and position in the village;
- The Weld Mortuary Chapel, built in 1853 (but date of 1857 also) by Charles Weld, attractive materials and details, including inscriptions, insignia and stone rood;
- Chideock House, formerly Myrtle Cottage, early C17, attractive and very visible on the main road, internal features and historical associations with the Chideock Catholic Martyrs and with General Fairfax in the Civil War siege of the Castle;
- The Warren House, C17 and C18 alterations, prominent on western entry, particularly attractive tented porch with running vine pattern cast iron-work, and contemporary boundary railings;
- Japonica Cottage, C16 and C17, with remains of cruck roof, partly constructed of cob;
- Chimneys, C16, extensively altered but the projecting front stack is a landmark feature and there are some original internal features;
- May and Winniford Cottages, C17, another of the progression of attractive, thatched stone cottages in this part of Main Street; plank and muntin partition to former cross-passage and interior features;
- Nos. 1 & 2 Park Cottages (see fig 3), early C17, intact windows, an attractive stone house at the eastern entry to the Conservation Area;
- Roadstead Farmhouse, C17, a landmark building sited on a junction, its attached four metre wall is a significant feature on Duck Street;
- Chideock Court, C17, C18 and C20 extensions, much altered but in an important position by the river, many historical architectural fragments; the high stone wall and garden are landmarks in the centre of the village;
- The Farmers Arms, Mill Lane, possibly dating from the 1660s, the licensed premises closing in the 1920s, the adjacent, unlisted, Stone Cottage was possibly an associated stables and cider house, large and built of large squared stone blocks, attractive details;
- Road Bridge over River Winniford, early C19 structure, possible Roman origins, central to village;
- The Swiss Cottage (see fig 3), late C18 picturesque, thatched and gabled, an unusual example of the *cottage orne* tradition, prominent townscape feature in the lanes off the main road.



Fig 36. Roadstead Farmhouse



Fig 37. Chideock Court

Adjoining the Conservation Area at the end of Ruins Lane is the site of Chideock Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument).

Important Local Buildings

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

- Beech House, large c1840 gentry house, partly hidden but in an important position on the eastern edge of the historic core;
- The Old Cottage (former Vicarage), similar to the above;
- Ashley Cottage and Home Cottage, Ruins Lane, the former has a corrugated metal roof and the latter thatch with eyebrow dormers, casements and lean-tos on gable ends; two simple, unspoilt early C19 cottages;
- Humbers, Chideock Hill, large, white rendered, replaced casements but the gable end is the first building seen on the north side when descending the hill, of group value;
- Pound Cottage, Main Street, stone and render, much altered but the gable end projects to the road line and is of townscape and group value;
- Cain's Farmhouse, Main Street, a large detached house, mid-Victorian, stone with brick lintels and quoins to the sashed (now uPVC) windows, central porch, joists expressed at eaves, good stone gable end is very prominent on the south side of the main road; of townscape and group value;
- Foss Cottage, Main Street, adjacent to the Post Office, render, casements with a vertical emphasis, original central door with bracketed canopy, of visual merit and conspicuous on the main through route;
- Former Castle Inn (see fig 3), rebuilt after a fire in 1893, Victorian Tudor, with mullioned and transomed windows and four-centred arched doorways, two stepped down units, remnant of inn sign, attractive and prominent by the Parish Church;
- Kimberley House, Chideock Hill, a large detached late Victorian house, gable end to the road and forming a space with the separate thatched shed or barn, chert gable end, Inferior Oolite and brick quoining, two large gables and dormer set in a gablet, sashes, banded chimney stack with tapering square pots; a pleasant ensemble, seen on the western entry to the village;
- White House, Mill Lane, formerly known as Chideock Villa, built c1830 by the Weld family, render and slate, sashes, central round-headed doorway and a (later) ground floor canted bay window;
- The Donkey House, on the junction of Sea Hill and Pettycrate Lanes, just outside the Conservation Area, but an unspoilt stone and pantile single storey shed;
- Former Mannings Store, part of Baytree Tearoom, of historic and social interest;
- Former Baptist Chapel (later Wesleyan Methodist), Ruins Lane, built in the 1830s, with baptismal pool under the floor, Inferior Oolite rubble and Portland Cement, round headed doorway and windows, with radial glazing bars and circular windows with radial spokes, a seemingly unspoilt exterior, of cultural and historical interest and groups well with the above entry.



Fig 38. Former Manning's Store



Fig 39. Former chapel, Ruins Lane

Building Groups

Good groups are the long sequence of C17 houses from By The Stream east to The Cheese House on the north side of Main Street and Ashford Cottages and the Ivanhoe to Thatch Cottage group on the south side; the Bridge Cottages, Chideock House Hotel, Chideock Court and its roadside boundary walls and trees; the parish Church, Weld Mortuary Chapel, churchyard walls and trees, the row of cottages, Montyike, Gingerbread and Stoke, at the junction, the War Memorial, The Clock House Hotel, Warren House and The Castle; Chervil Cottage, Midlands Farm- Peter's Finger, The Swiss Cottage and Roadstead Farmhouse and boundary wall on the Duck Street/ Mill Lane junction; and The Farmers Arms, The Cottage, Trim and Meadow Cottages, and White House in Mill Lane.

Building Materials and Architectural Details

The most important building stone is the Inferior Oolite of the Middle Jurassic, an iron-stained limestone with few fossils. Its rich orange colour and ease of working to dressed stone and ashlar has endowed the village with some distinctive and high quality buildings. The stone originated from Quarry Hill to the west of the village. By the end of the C19, the local quarry seems to have been worked out and sources further from the village may have been used. It appears in the Parish Church and many C17-mid-C19 houses and cottages are built with large squared and coursed blocks (bordering on ashlar work in some cases) or with squared blocks of varying sizes roughly brought to courses. Window and door heads and quoins are usually of fine ashlar work. Occasionally, uncoursed rubble may appear on fronts but is seen more commonly on side elevations (where the fronts may be of better quality stonework) or on farm sheds, barns and boundary walls. The stone varies in colour from deep, rich orange, through a pale biscuit, to almost a colder grey. The Farmers Arms has particularly distinctive large blue/grey blocks.

Local chert cobs, from the beach, appear in boundary walls, such as those at the northern end of Duck Street, and split cobs, exposing the sugary face of the material is seen in boundaries, in the front elevation of Kimberley House (along with brick dressings) and on the southern gable end of Vine Cottage, along with Inferior Oolite rubble. The high wall on North Street, fronting the Mortuary Chapel, is a combination of split chert, Inferior Oolite banding and a topping of chert cobs, combined with Inferior Oolite ashlar gate piers. Some boundary walls appear to be built of thin slats of blue/grey Blue Lias.

There are, at least, two obvious examples of cob walling, on the appropriately named Cob Cottage (and, logically, its attached neighbour, Anvil Cottage?) and on the gable walls of Japonica Cottage (exposed at the time of writing). Many others may be securely hidden by the ubiquitous smooth rendered walling in the village. This may also be a coating for poorer quality stone rubble or local chert or Blue Lias (as at Charmouth). The marlpit in the Eype Clay near North End Farm (Symondsbur Estate) may have been the source of clay for cob.

A rich orange brick occurs in parts of C19 buildings, in quoins and window and door heads and in the gable end of part of the former Castle Inn.

Roofs are thatched, originally with long straw or wheat reed, most now with the latter. Details are, traditionally, a simple flush ridge, hips, half and quarter hips, stone, coped gable ends, full eyebrows around first floor windows or subtle undulations of the eaves line over windows. There are one or two modern reinterpretations of thatching details, notably the elaborate blocked ridge with decorative points and scallops, unfortunately not part of a traditional local vocabulary. In the C19, slate roofs were more common, with decorative scallops on the Weld Mortuary Chapel. Pantiles are also seen on outbuildings and sheds, for example, the Donkey House and Staddlestones. Chimneys are largely of brick, simple and practical, with the exceptions of the tall, rendered stone one at Chimneys and the twin, panelled brick ones at The Swiss Cottage (see fig 3). There are some handsome square, tapered chimney pots, exemplified by Kimberley House and The Warren House. Windows vary with building date, function and building history. There are good examples of C17 stone mullioned, usually with hollow chamfers and of two to five lights at the Chideock House Hotel, Japonica Cottage and Nos. 1 & 2 Park Farm Cottages (see fig 3). Details include separate drip moulds over each window or, in the case of the last property, a continuous dripstone stringcourse over the ground floor windows. Individual lights are either wooden or metal casements or squared or lozenge pattern leaded lights. Most of the houses and cottages have wooden or metal casement windows, usually with two or three lights, the latter sometimes with the outer lights fixed and the centre opening. Glazing bar patterns vary between one



Fig 40. Cob & Anvil Cottages



Fig 41. Donkey House

central transom, additional horizontal and vertical bars and multiple panes. Cills are of wood or stone and lintels of wood or heavy stone blocks, sometimes with central flush or raised keys. In larger, higher status houses, such as Chideock Court and Park Farmhouse, and late C18-early C19 rebuilds or alterations, vertical sash windows were introduced, with thin glazing bars. Hill View and Fernley exemplify a combination of sashes (often on the ground floor) and casements. Betchworth House has a painted *trompe l'oeil* casement window on its first floor.

Door openings tend to be simple: a hollow chamfer at Chideock House Hotel, many examples of hipped thatched porches with timber supports, a thatched canopy on wooden brackets (Apple Tree Cottage and Sunnyside – see fig 3), simple segmental canopies (Nos. 1 & 2 Gate Cottages), a rendered porch with half-hipped thatch roof (Clock House Hotel), a pentice wooden canopy (Dawn Cottage) and wooden boarding with trellis work and a pitched slate roof over (The Swiss Cottage – see fig 3). Doors vary from vertically planked types to flush or recessed panels, occasionally with the upper lights glazed.

Ironwork is a minor but enjoyable pleasure of the Conservation Area (see fig 2), mainly in the form of cast railings and gates: narrow spikes and urn standards on Midlands Farmhouse, which also has a gate with a half circular reinforcement and saltire crosses; a spear shape on the bridge parapet; a hollow lozenge with spiked standards, gracefully ramped down in a series of quadrant curves, at The Warren House, where the porch has an S-shaped vertical running vine pattern; fire-tongue finials and urns fronting By The Stream and Staddlestones; solid Gothic lancets and quatrefoils on the Churchyard front gates; and an elaborate Victorian combination of wheel shapes, sacred monograms and darts, scrolls and fleurs-de-lis on the gates to the Mortuary Chapel. There is a remnant of the Castle Inn's hanging sign, a horizontal top piece with circles, crosses and a central *patera*. A former village pump survives up Ruins Lane. There are three boot scrapers at the Parish Church: a pair with scrolled, curving uprights (rather like a Viking ship's prow) by the west door and a single one with polygonal knopped finial by the porch. The churchyard has a number of Victorian iron railings around tombs, with elaborate Gothic, simpler cusped lancets and spear tops. The traditional lantern-style AA sign (possibly a modern reproduction?) at Chideock House Hotel is an interesting detail.

Parks, Gardens and Trees

The important green spaces are the churchyard, particularly on the northern side of the Church, where there is a wildlife area; the burial ground at the western end of the village, up Chideock Hill; and Clapp's Mead Playing Fields and the rural Bullen's Lane.

Trees are an important asset to the Conservation Area, with belts along the course of the river; on the rear boundary of the properties on the north side of Main Street, partly the remains of an old hedge and partly composed of larger tree groups; in the churchyard (yews and a holly) and north of the burial ground; east of Clapp's Mead; south of Roadstead Farm, with a particularly important copse south of Yew Cottage; up Ruins Lane; and in the grounds of The Old Cottage. Chideock Court has a fine *Ginkgo biloba* tree in its garden, as well as other mature trees. There are Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the angle of the river and northern boundary, behind Apple Trees Lane and an individual tree by the south side of the main road river bridge.

Important hedgerows include the remains of old plot divisions north of Main Street, the field boundary south of Cains Farm to The Old School House, the northern and western edge of Ridwood, and along Bullen's Lane.



Fig 42. The Old Cottage with sash windows



Fig 43. Clapp's Mead Playing Fields

Gardens are also notable, adding to the enjoyment of historic buildings and spaces, on the northern side of Main Street between Chideock House Hotel and Park Farm (for example, Japonica); the grounds of Chideock Court (difficult to see over the boundary wall); and cottage gardens along Duck and Mill Streets, where climbers and small front gardens are more evident.

Detrimental features

- The noise, pollution, danger and visual intrusion of main road traffic;
- The impact of traffic-borne dirt and water splashes on properties, particularly on the southern side of Main Street;
- Ugly poles, wires and lighting along Main Street and Duck Street;
- A rather run-down garage area to the east of Beech House, at the entry to the Conservation Area;
- Slipping roof slates on the Weld Mortuary Chapel;
- Loss of details or inappropriate modern ones on several Listed Buildings;
- Inappropriately detailed replacement windows and doors on a number of unlisted buildings of character and group value.



Fig 44. Garden of Dawn Cottage, Mill Lane

Definition of the special interest of the Conservation Area (refer also to Appendix A)

The particular qualities of the whole Conservation Area are:

- An attractive wider setting, within the Dorset AONB and adjacent to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, with a landscape framework of high cliffs, an historic coastal settlement at Seatown and another inland at North Chideock, high inland hills, trees and hedges;
- Important individual trees and tree groups within the village, particularly along the course of the River Winniford and in the grounds of Chideock Court and Beech House and The Old Cottage;
- A reasonably intact historic plan, with noticeably regular plots on the north side of Main Street and a small southern adjunct along Duck Street and Sea Hill and Mill Lanes;
- 41 Listed Buildings, including a Grade I medieval Parish Church, a number of C17 large gentry, farm and yeoman houses, former farm buildings, smaller thatched cottages and a mid-Victorian Roman Catholic Mortuary Chapel;
- 13 unlisted buildings of character that are of group or townscape value;
- Several coherent groups of good quality buildings, linked by stone walls, hedges and trees;
- Attractive details, such as distinctive local building materials (chert and Inferior Oolite), stone walls, cast iron railings and gates and thatched roofs.

Community involvement

The local community, Parish Councils, district councillors and statutory authorities were consulted on the appraisal during July – August 2007, on the new Seatown and North Chideock conservation areas and Chideock conservation area extension during May-July 2008 and extensions to Seatown and Chideock conservation areas during May-June 2009. Comments received helped finalize the appraisal, which was adopted by the district council in December 2007, finalize the Chideock extension and Seatown and North Chideock conservation areas, which were agreed by the district council in November 2008 and finalize further extensions to Seatown and Chideock as agreed by the council in December 2009.

Review of the Conservation Area boundaries

In 2007, public consultation on this Conservation Area Appraisal raised the matter of extending the Chideock Conservation Area and designating new conservation areas at Seatown and North Chideock. Following further public consultation in 2008, the district council approved the Chideock Conservation Area extension and Seatown and North Chideock conservation areas in November 2008. The 2008 consultation included the request to extend the conservation area at Chideock and Seatown and following further consultation, the district council approved the extension of Chideock and Seatown conservation area in December 2009. Appendix A (page 41) provides details of the conservation area changes.

Charmouth's Conservation Area boundary was reviewed as part of the appraisal work and reconsidered following public consultation on the appraisal. The boundary remains satisfactory and no changes are proposed.

General condition

The villages are characterised by a general good condition of the building stock, boundaries and the public realm. The Old Rectory and the former buildings to Catherston Manor Farm, in Charmouth give some cause for concern.

Summary of issues and proposed actions

CONSERVATION AREA ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION/S	LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS
Standards & methods of repair and maintenance of historic buildings and structures	Upon request provide advice	WDDC	
Sourcing local materials & continuation of building traditions	Upon request provide advice on known sources & building traditions	WDDC	
Design standards in the public realm (overhead cables, traffic signs, road space with amenity value & use).	Identify opportunities to enhance & consider traffic management	DCC (Highway Authority), WDDC	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	
Review Chideock Conservation Area boundary	Consider modest adjustments to boundary	WDDC	Parish Council
Exchange of archaeological information	Consider how to assist Dorset Historic Environmental Record and local heritage projects	WDDC, DCC	English Heritage Charmouth Parish Council

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;
- Small-scale improvements could qualify for the Council's Countryside and Conservation Grant Scheme (see above).

Advice

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

Useful information and contact details

Criteria used for assessing the contribution made by 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

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Maps

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**Appendix A
North Chideock, Seatown & Chideock
Conservation Area Designations or Extensions
(revised December 2009)**

Appendix A

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Appendix A

Conservation Area Designations or Extensions for North Chideock, Seatown and Chideock

Introduction

In 2007, public consultation on the Charmouth and Chideock Conservation Area Appraisal raised the matter of designating conservation areas at Seatown and North Chideock and extending the Chideock conservation area. Following further public consultation, the district council approved a Chideock Conservation Area extension and the Seatown and North Chideock conservation area designations in November 2008. Public consultation also took place the following year regarding additional extensions in Chideock and Seatown, which were approved by the council in December 2009. This Appendix briefly appraises the character and quality of these new areas.

A Conservation Area, which is an area of special architectural or historic interest, is given planning protection because it is desirable to preserve or enhance its character or appearance.

North Chideock

Location and setting

North Chideock is located along the shallow valley of the River Winniford, commencing at Gate Farm, about 500m (one third of a mile) north of the Anglican Parish Church. The modern residential developments of St Giles and Winniford Closes separate the existing Conservation Area from the sporadic, linear development of North Chideock. The north-south lane, North Road, runs past Yenhay Lane (leading east over the river and to the main entrance of Chideock Manor); the Roman Catholic Chapel of The Queen of Martyrs and Saint Ignatius; the grounds of the Manor; northwards past Carter's Lane (running west to Morcombelake); to a T-junction at Hounsell's Corner; and east along Hell Lane with Brighthay Lane to the north. The setting is one of farmland and the gardens and woodland of the Manor, with a backdrop of high hills to the west, north and east. The settlement lies entirely within the Dorset AONB.

Historic development and archaeology

There is an interesting local history of Roman Catholic recusancy (formerly, a Roman Catholic refusing to attend services of the Church of England), linked to the Arundell family, with five 'Chideock Martyrs' who died for their faith between 1535-1681. The RC Chapel is a very significant building both in historical terms and as a piece of architecture.

In the early C19, the Weld family built the Manor House and in 1872 Charles Weld enlarged the house and the chapel. The grounds and gardens of the Manor are extensive and there are a number of lodges and estate buildings along North Road, as well as buildings formerly associated with the Chapel. The 1811 and 1888 Ordnance Survey sheets both show the basic linear layout of the village, and the current configuration of lanes, although the road to Quarry Cross and Symondsburry is now used as a public right of way. The 1881 map, in particular, shows the Manor, grounds and Chapel and a number of farmhouses and smaller farm cottages, many of which have survived, albeit with some changes of use. Modern development has been confined to an area around Hounsell's Corner.



Fig 45 North Rd



Fig 46 Gate Farmhouse

Appendix A

Spatial analysis

The character and interrelationship of spaces

North Road begins by its junction with Main Street, runs past the Parish Church and the two burial grounds and then through an area of modern residential development, with wide verges, pavements and junctions. At Gate Farm, the character changes dramatically, with a narrowing of the lane, banks or walls at either side or tall trees. The Lodge marks the junction with Yenhay Lane, which falls, turns and rises, in thick woodland, to more open ground, to the main Manor entrance, where there are extensive views over the gardens and the wider rural setting.

Back on North Road, there is a narrow corridor, dominated by the mature ornamental planting of the Manor to the east and occasional views of farmland and high hills to the west. There is then a partial view of the Chapel, slightly downhill, backed by the Manor and its ancillary buildings. High boundary walls provide privacy but there is a contrasting open aspect where another entrance gives a view of the grounds. The lane passes Manor Cottage, which is set at an angle, and then falls to a small valley, at a crossing of a small tributary stream. A thatched barn and C19 farm buildings form a yard on the east side, at The Hollow, and then the lane rises to Taddle Farm and a junction with Carter's Lane to the west.

North Road continues past the yard and house of Silverbridge Farm and, on the opposite side, modern houses and bungalows form a short ribbon up to and around the Hounsell's Corner junction. The historic character is restored down the right-hand Hell Lane, with the most obvious cluster of cottages and a barn on both sides. There is then a fork in the lane marked by tall conifers, with Hell Lane becoming a green lane and Brighthay Lane continuing as a metalled road, performing two right angled bends and with a group of older buildings on its eastern side. Wells Farm is the last property in the Parish, the boundary with Symondsburry being marked by the River Winniford.

There are large fields at the northern end of the settlement, with a footpath from Hell Lane back to North Road, giving wider views of the village and the high hills around the river valley.

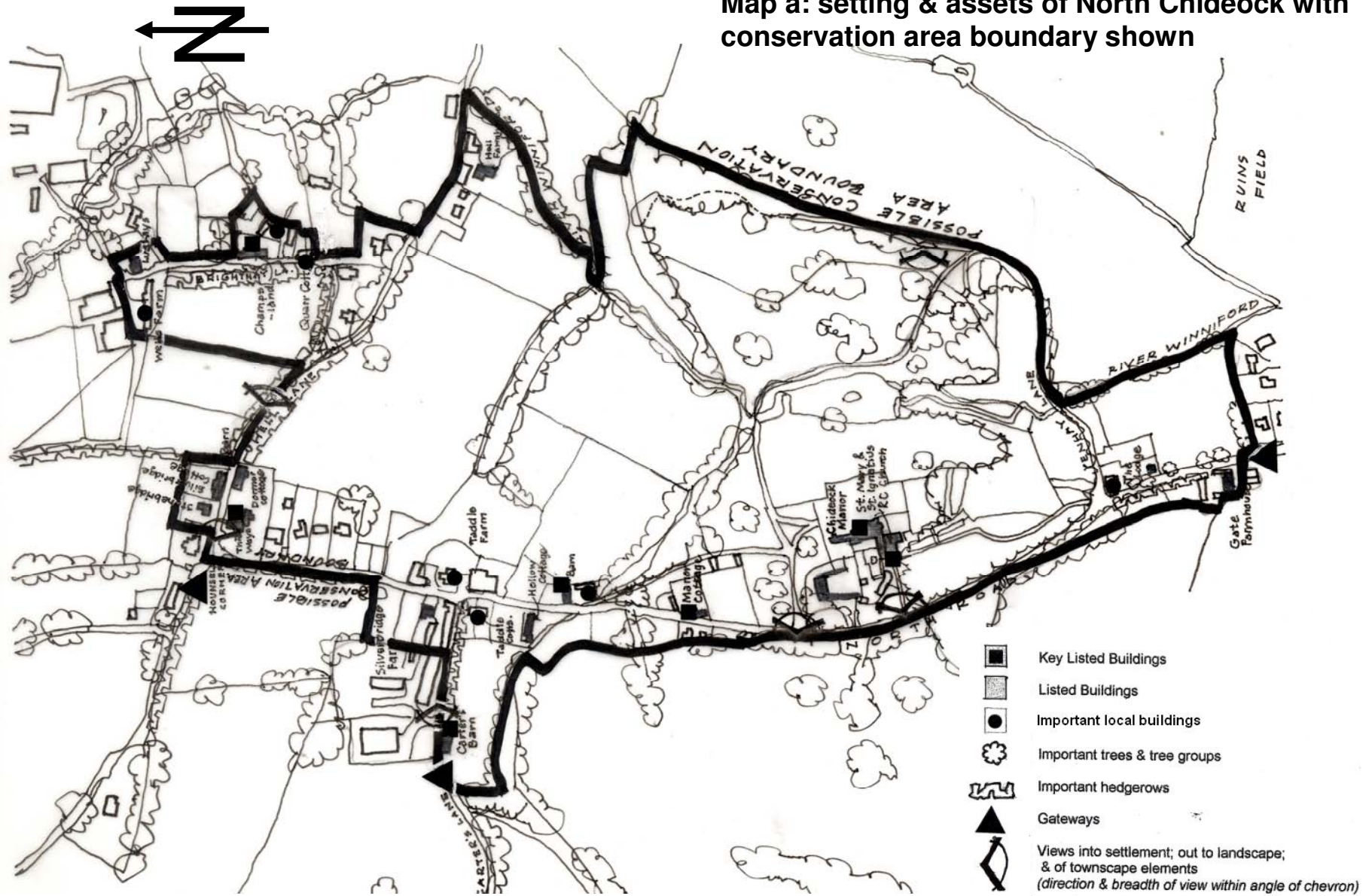
Key views and vistas

Much of the North Road route is bounded by thick woodland and hedges, but there are occasional views out to wider countryside: over Ruins Field from the St Giles Close entrance; from the eastern end of Yenhay Lane into the Manor grounds; to the Chapel and Manor from North Road; a wider view of the grounds further north by The Orangery; west down Carter's Lane; west and east at Hounsell's Corner; east down Hell Lane; and north up Brighthay Lane. Footpath No. 3 gives good views west over North Road to Langdon Hill.



Fig 47 Landscape setting in the north

Appendix A
Map a: setting & assets of North Chideock with conservation area boundary shown



Appendix A

Character analysis

Building uses

The Manor and its estate have influenced many of the historical building uses, with the main house; ancillary buildings like The Lodge, an ornamental gazebo and The Orangery; other cottages such as Manor Cottage (formerly Gardener's Cottage) and a number of estate farms. A disposal of some of the properties in 1953 introduced other private ownerships. The Chapel was originally an agricultural barn but its extension and reordering in the later C19 created a purpose-built place of worship. Associated with it were a presbytery at The Lodge (originally Drum Cottage, the estate dower house) and a school at Glendale (now Hollow Cottage).

Building types and layouts

The area contains an interesting mixture of building types: the Manor is an early C19 two storey, four bay block, with some C16 interior features (brought from the Castle site?). It has a range of ancillary buildings and garden structures. The Chapel has a C18 barn incorporated in its transepts and, otherwise, is a Victorian example of a basilican plan, with a western narthex and central, octagonal crossing tower. The Lodge is a large L-shaped building, late C19, probably extended from an entry lodge (lower block) to a presbytery (higher block at right angles).

There are a number of C15-C17 vernacular farmhouses and cottages: Dormer Cottage has a C15 core with a C17 ceiling to the original open hall; Gate Farmhouse has a heated cross-passage; Champsland has a former attached dairy. Most are thatched with one-and-a-half or two storeys, attached ancillary units or rear wings (Silverbridge Cottage and, originally, Hell Farmhouse). Plans tend to be informal, with offset entrances, although later C19 cottages, such as Manor Cottage, Hollow Cottage and Lushays have central entrances. Manor Cottage has rudimentary Gothick (C18 style vaguely based on real Gothic) windows and may be a piece of consciously picturesque estate building. There is a pair of later C19 semi-detached farm accommodation at Taddle Cottages. The houses and cottages are either set parallel to the highway edge, both behind small gardens and directly on the road; or there are a number of properties placed at right angles to the road.

There are several good examples of farm buildings, with a c. 1700 thatched barn at The Hollow; a C18 barn and attached cart shed at Carter's Barn (with an arcaded front to the cart shed and a date of 1846 on one rebuilt gable end); a C17 barn on Hell Lane; and a C19 group of farm buildings related to The Hollow barn, complete with Victorian 'model farm' tower and ornamental cap.

Key Listed Buildings and structures

There are 18 Listed Building entries in the area, all Grade II apart from the Grade II* Chapel. The key buildings are:

- The RC Chapel, because of its social history and intrinsic architectural quality, as well as its fittings;
- Chideock Manor, refined detailing and a landmark in the wider landscape;
- Manor Cottage, very prominent on North Road and attractive detailing;
- Dormer Cottage and Three Ways Cottage, early internal features and good right-angled group at a road junction;
- Champsland, ashlar façade, former attached dairy and internal features;
- The Hollow barn, an example of an unconverted building, and, similarly Carter's Barn.



Fig 48 The Manor



Fig 49 RC Chapel

Appendix A

Important local buildings

Despite the low density of development, there are several interesting buildings of visual quality and/or group value:

- The Lodge, mid-late C19, ornamentation in the use of materials (Inferior Oolite, chert and brick banding with dentils), a commanding entry feature;
- The Victorian farm buildings related to the Listed barn at The Hollow, attractive detailing and group value;
- Taddle Cottages, late C19 stone and slate pair, wooden casements, group value;
- Taddle Farmhouse, late C19 stone and tile roof, casements and sashes, group value;
- Green Cap and Quarr Cottages, later C19 stone and tile, casements, group value;
- A thatched stone barn (not mentioned in Statutory List description) behind Champsland;
- Wells Farmhouse, later C19 or early C20 stone and tile, with camber-headed windows, extended and altered but of some quality;
- Home Farm Cottage, slate and local stone, group value.

Building groups

There are two coherent groups: the Chapel, Manor, ancillary buildings and boundary walls; and the Hell Lane group from Three Ways to the barn to the east and Stonebridge and Silverbridge Cottage.

Building materials and architectural details

Notable is the use of local stone (Inferior Oolite) in ashlar, coursed and squared rubble and random rubble forms (the latter with dressed stone quoins and other dressings); whole and split chert cobs; and brick. Combinations of these may be seen, with all three at The Lodge; a chert lean-to at the Hell Lane barn; and chert footings to Oolite walling. Cob is also present; there are cob elements at Manor Cottage. Boundary walls are of rubble limestone or chert, with pantile and shaped stone capping at the Manor (where there are also long stretches of brickwork). There are simple gate piers at the Manor and Chapel, with flat or pyramidal caps.

The majority of roofs are of thatch, most with traditional local rounded details and flush ridges, gabled, hipped, and half-hipped or with quarter-hip 'granny bonnets'. There are examples of stone coping with shaped kneelers. Otherwise, slate and clay tiles are evident. Stacks are of brick, simple in form (Chideock Manor has rendered stacks).

Doors and windows vary with building history and status, wooden casements predominating (some with wooden lintels, others with stone lintels, cambered or straight heads or expressed keystones), although the Manor has sashes with thin glazing bars, some tripartite in form. Doors are planked or panelled, with thatched canopies to porches. The Manor has a Classical doorcase with pilasters and an arched door with fanlight.

Other details include the whale jaw bones over one of the pedestrian entries to the Manor grounds; the remains of a County finger post at the Carter's Lane junction; the crucifix by the Chapel; and spear-heads and hooped railings fronting The Lodge and Manor Cottage respectively.



Fig 51 The Lodge



Fig 52 Taddle Cottages

Appendix A

Parks, gardens and trees

The grounds of Chideock Manor are of great landscape and value, with elements of early C19 and Victorian planting and structures, later additions and features like small lakes, ornamental trees and larger belts. There are a number of attractive smaller cottage gardens, with trees, shrubs and climbers. The wisteria at Manor Cottage is of particular note. The whole area is enhanced by mature trees such as those up the length of North Road, in the grounds of the Manor, on Yenhay Lane and at the eastern end of Hell Lane. There are no Tree Preservation Orders.

Detrimental features

There is occasional harsh, cement repointing of rubble walling and some poles and wires in Hell Lane.

Definition of the special interest of the area

- An attractive wider setting, in a river valley almost surrounded by high hills and the nearer enhancement provided by the grounds of Chideock Manor;
- Important groups and individual trees throughout the settlement, particularly along North Road, around the Manor and Chapel;
- 18 Listed Building entries, including the regionally important RC Chapel;
- Seven important local buildings, mainly later C19 estate and farm buildings;
- Several coherent groups of buildings linked by stone walls and hedges and trees;
- Attractive local building materials, such as Inferior Oolite, chert, cob and brick, thatched roofs, stone and brick boundary walls and iron railings.

General condition

Buildings seem to be in good condition.

Conservation Area boundary

In view of the special interest of the area, the Conservation Area boundary (Map a) runs along the west side of North Road, including Gate Farmhouse, Hollow Cottage, the unlisted Taddle Cottages; runs down Carter's Lane to include the Barn; around Silverbridge Farm; to Hounsell's Corner (south side); thence along Hell Lane up BRIGHTHAY Lane to Wells Farm (including the pasture to the south of the buildings); back along the east side of BRIGHTHAY Lane and around Hell Farm; thence back around the Manor grounds to Yenhay Lane and including the field to the south back to the boundary with St Giles Close.

Seatown

Location and setting

Seatown is situated about one kilometre (two thirds of a mile) south of the centre of Chideock, on the coast, at the end of Sea Hill Lane, at the mouth of the River Winniford. The small settlement lies on the western side and at the foot of a steep slope down to the small area of level ground around the watercourse, around the junction with Mill Lane. The setting is



Fig 53 Seatown & Golden Cap

Appendix A

dramatic, on the Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Coast and within the Dorset AONB. Golden Cap rises to 191m to the west and Ridge Cliff and Doghouse Hill to the east.

Historic development and archaeology

The 1811 Ordnance Survey sheet shows a small settlement in the same general location as the present cluster of development, apart from the presence of several houses or cottages on the east side of the lowest part of Sea Hill Lane, opposite the present Anchor public house. These seem to have disappeared on the 1888 OS sheet. The 1851 Census shows fifteen houses and a population of 80, considerably bigger than the corresponding C20 and C21 numbers. The settlement may have been based on Seatown and Marsh's Farms, the latter dating back to the 1640s. There was a complex of farm buildings and a dairyman's cottage. The Weld family built the early C19⁷ Seatown Villa (now House) as a marine villa. Other significant buildings include the Watch House of c. 1820 and the Guard House Cottages of c. 1840, both related to the Coastguard's prevention of smuggling. The nearby Anchor Cottages were built after a major storm in the 1820s (it is conceivable that regular storm damage necessitated rebuilding and repairs and even loss of buildings at the seaward extremity of the settlement). An 1802 map show eight cottages in this area, three on the edge of the beach.

The Anchor Inn was established in the mid C19, with an extension at the end of the century. The coastguard station closed in 1912 and the area became a focus for holiday activities, with the growth of car use. In 1944, the footpath, Mill Lane was resurfaced in concrete but the Mill dates, at least, to mid C16 records, closing in 1933. In 1953, the Weld estate sold several properties and surrounding land. In the latter half of the C20, the former farm buildings were rebuilt or converted to residential use and the Golden Cap Holiday Park has had a major impact on the area north of Mill Lane.

Spatial analysis

The character and interrelationship of spaces

Sea Hill Lane climbs and descends steeply, giving first views of the sea. Banks and hedges enclose the road until a cluster of development is reached at Seatown Cottage and Glenacres. There is a narrow corridor between buildings affording a view of the bottom of the valley and the lower cliffs beyond. The junction with Mill Lane provides a panoramic view of the car park, river mouth and the grass slopes of Ridge Cliff and Doghouse Hill.

There is a walk to the end of Sea Hill Lane, past the characterful, pebbled wall of Seatown Farm House, the gardens of Seatown House, to the more open areas in front of Anchor Cottage and the Anchor pub. The road is elevated above the flat valley bottom and the narrow course of the river, which opens out into a shingled entry to the sea. Beyond the pub and the toilet block, there is a tremendous view of the coastline, with Golden Cap dominating the westward vista to Lyme Regis and Portland visible in the eastward view.

If the valley floor car park is crossed, via a bridge, and the slopes beyond are climbed, there is a good view back over to the Anchor and its neighbours, with The Watch House row and The Guard House behind, on the upper slopes and views back NE up the river valley, with the packhorse bridge, clumps of small trees, the Mill House and the edge of the Golden Cap Holiday Park.



Fig 54 Seatown Farmhouse with pebble wall

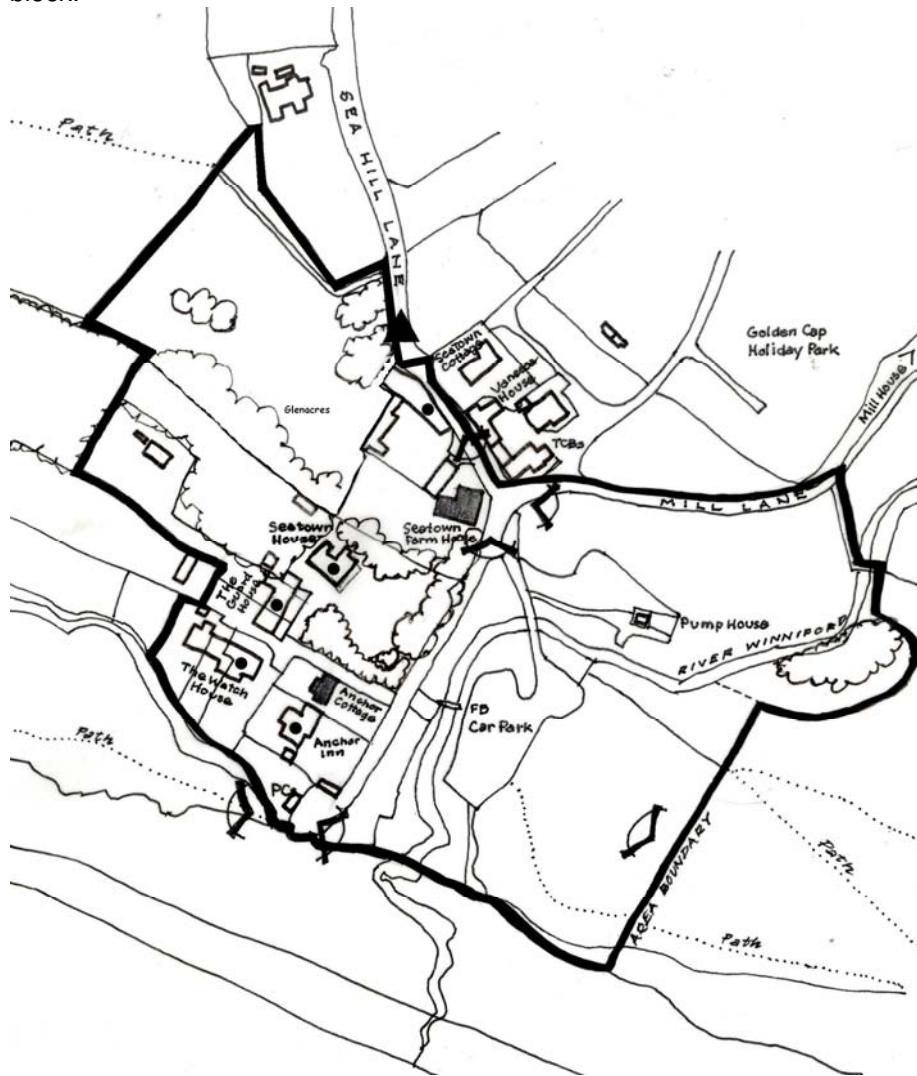


Fig 55 View over valley from Ridge Cliff








Appendix A

Key views and vistas

The most important views are down Sea Hill Lane before its junction with Mill Lane; over the valley bottom from the lane's final section; back over the valley from the slopes of Ridge Cliff; and over Lyme Bay from the Coast Path beyond the toilet block.



Appendix A
Map b: setting & assets of Seatown with
conservation area boundary shown
(revised December 2009)

-  Key Listed Buildings
-  Listed Buildings
-  Important local buildings
-  Important trees & tree groups
-  Important hedgerows
-  Gateways
-  Views into settlement; out to landscape;
& of townscape elements
(direction & breadth of view within angle of chevron)

Appendix A

Character analysis

Building uses

Most of the historic building uses have been referred to above, in the development history: farms; Coastguard Station; seaside villa; public house and corn mill. The Watch House and Guard House have been converted to private residential use, as have the former farm buildings (with some new build) and the Mill. The Holiday Park has introduced a modern administration block and seasonal shop on the northern edge of the Sea Hill/Mill Lane junction. A pump house and car park attendant's hut are sited on the valley floor and a modern toilet block is positioned on the southern extremity of the settlement, with the Old Boathouse Shop adjacent.

Building types and layouts

Seatown Farm House is a vernacular building, a small thatched and stone structure, with an L-plan. Anchor Cottage is C18 vernacular, thatched; originally two units and the two front doors reflect this. The Mill House is also a building with C18 elements, L-shaped and formerly with a wheel in the three storey unit at right angles to the house. Seatown House is an example of early C19 'polite' architecture, with a three bay block and rear wing, central doorway, sashes and front verandah (now a conservatory). The remains of the Coastguard Station show a row of three, originally five, houses of fairly standard type (built with four rooms and external privies, seen in other locations along the Dorset coast). The Anchor Inn has a C19 symmetrical front, with sashes and a central door, and a later C19 annex.

Key Listed Buildings and structures

There are two Grade II Listed Building entries:

- Seatown Farm House;
- Anchor Cottage.

Important local buildings

There are several buildings of intrinsic merit and/or group value:

- The Watch House, built about 1820 by the Admiralty, originally five houses; painted brick, render and slate, a large hipped roof block of group value; the easternmost house is the least altered;
- The Guard House, early C19 rubble and slate, much altered but retaining group value;
- Seatown House, c. 1810, the Weld's "marine villa and bathing house", render and slate, sashes and modern conservatory, retaining the swept roof shape of the predecessor verandah; of architectural and group value;
- The Anchor Inn, early-mid C19 render and slate, sashes, first floor canted oriel to left hand annex; architectural and group value (the adjacent single storey shop has some value as a simple maritime structure, originally a boat house);
- A thatched and rubble building on the west side of Sea Hill Lane, adjoining Glenacres, presumably once part of Marsh's Farm; group value.

The Anchor Inn has important boundary walls, the west, marking the boundary with the former Coastguard Station and the south, the field boundary of a farm lost to the sea. The latter has pebbles and cock and hen capping of great size, material that is no longer to be found on the beach.



Fig 56 The Watch House



Fig 57 Anchor pub & Anchor Cottage

Appendix A

Building groups

The whole of the cluster of buildings from the Anchor Inn to Seatown Farm House, including the Watch House and Guard House, forms a coherent group. The boundary walls of the Farm House and the garden of Seatown House are important components.

Building materials and architectural details

The area shares many of the characteristics of the main part of Chideock, with the use of Inferior Oolite walling (on the Mill House and Guard House) chert cobs; render; thatch, tile and slate roofs. The boundary wall to Seatown Farm House is particularly distinctive, with round chert cobs stacked neatly under a flat stone capping and larger, irregular blocks of chert under cock-and-hen coping. The latter type is also seen up Sea Hill Lane, by the alternative Coast Path entry. Windows vary between wooden casements, multi-pane and later Victorian sashes, and a canted oriel on the pub. Doors tend to be planked, with glass panel lights.

Other good details include the area of pebble 'mosaic' at the side boundary of Seatown Farm House and the large anchor in the garden of Anchor Cottage.

Parks, gardens and trees

The open space east of the car park, the cliffs and cliff slopes, the river and shingle banks, the beach, and in winter the car park itself, are important because they form a semi-natural landscape, providing coherence with the building group on the western side. The most significant garden is that of Seatown House, with its splendid cypress and other trees and shrubs, giving an almost sub-tropical setting to the House. With its groups of trees, the rear garden of Glenacres contributes to key views from the east side of the River Winniford and Ridge Hill.

Detrimental features

The area has a suitable maritime air and superb views along the coast but the Holiday Park has a visual impact, particularly in views from the car park and along Mill Lane. There are examples of inappropriate detailing of extensions and alterations and unsympathetic replacement of doors and windows. The Anchor Inn seems run-down, with an untidy front area and poor rear structures. The car park has a mixture of wooden fencing and there are untidy timber palisades around the attendant's hut and the nearby pump house. The monopitched roof of the toilet block projects into the superb view east from the Coast Path.

Definition of the special interest of the area

- A high quality setting within a World Heritage site, with coastal views;
- A good group of buildings on the west side of the river estuary, complemented by boundary walls and one luxuriant garden;
- Two Listed Building entries and five unlisted important local buildings;
- The use of distinctive local materials, notably chert cobs, Inferior Oolite and thatch, together with chert cob boundary walling.



Fig 58 Seatown House & garden

Appendix A

General condition

Overall building condition is good, although concerns are expressed on the Mill House and Anchor Inn.

Conservation Area boundary

In view of the special interest of the area, a boundary is drawn (Map b) around the main building group and some of the open space important to the setting of Seatown. The boundary runs from behind the Watch and Guard Houses and Glenacres on Sea Hill Lane, down to the Mill Lane junction, along Mill Lane to the packhorse bridge, back to the pump house (including the open field to its east), back to the coast, including the whole of the car park and the first field to the east.

Chideock

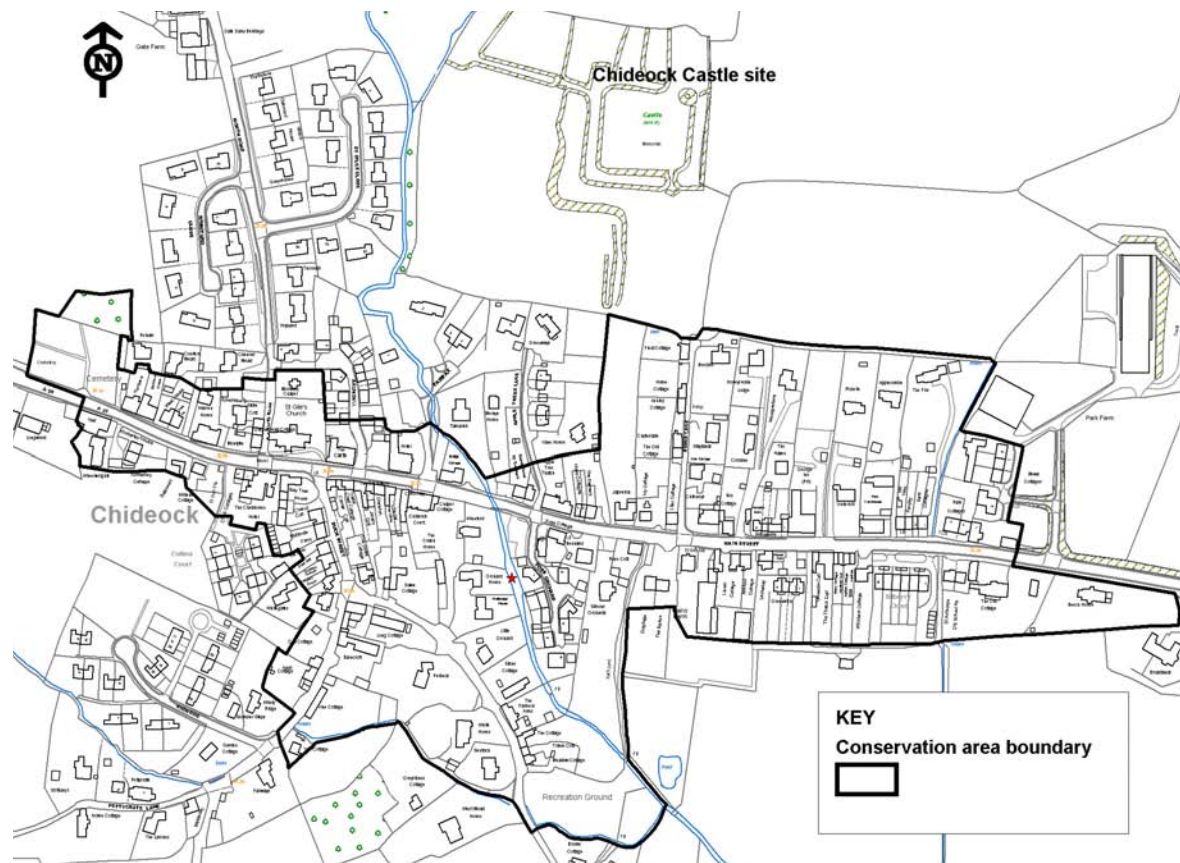


Fig 59 Chideock conservation area
(revised December 2009)

Appendix A

In November 2008, following public consultation on extending the Chideock conservation area, the district council agreed on:

- A small extension north of the cemetery off Chideock Hill to include the significant tree group with its World War II underground shelter;
- On the north side of Main Street and east of Ruins Lane, the extension of the boundary behind the historic properties, north to the ancient development boundary – the extension would better protect the important boundary hedgerows and trees and acknowledge the importance of the totality of the ancient plots.

In December 2009, following further public consultation, the district council agreed on:

- The inclusion of land to the rear of Japonica Cottage, which in its entirety stretches from Main Street to the Chideock Castle site and is considered to be a particularly important example of the original, northern, medieval land plots.

The extent of the conservation area is as shown in fig 59.

Useful Information & Contacts

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

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Maps

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West Dorset District Council
Stratton House, 58/60 High West Street
Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ
Typetalk calls welcome
Tel: 01305 251010 Fax: 01305 251481
Website: www.dorsetforyou.com