

# CONSERVATION AREAS IN EAST DORSET

# HORTON



East Dorset District Council Policy Planning Division  
Supplementary Planning Guidance No.7 April 2006



# Foreword

This document is based upon work carried out in 1994 to define the special qualities of the Conservation Area that was subsequently published as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the East Dorset Local Plan (see paragraphs 6.118 to 6.131 and accompanying policies BUCON 1 to 4 of the East Dorset Local Plan adopted 11 January 2002).

The text and illustrations of the original publication have been revised and updated to reflect any significant changes that have taken place in that time since the original survey and appraisal of the area were undertaken.

The appraisal provides guidance to those elements and characteristics that should be taken into account when considering proposed developments and other works requiring consent. The information contained in the appraisal will be treated as a material consideration by the Local Planning Authority when considering planning applications.

The revision does not extend to reviewing the boundaries of the designated area. This work will be undertaken between 2006 and 2010 in parallel with the Local Development Framework process, as currently programmed.

The maps used in the document are based upon the Ordnance Survey mapping currently available to the Council.

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## Introduction

In common with Wimborne, Witchampton and Cranborne, Horton was originally a monastic centre. Its Priory, founded in 961, was dedicated to St. Wolfrida, an abbess who died in the settlement. Both the present Church and Abbey House stand on the site of the monastery, erasing all traces of the original building.

Abbey House at the south side of the Church is a surviving remnant of a mansion built by the Uvedale family and subsequently re-built for Sir Anthony Sturt in 1718.

His son, Humphrey Sturt, built Horton Tower as a folly or 'eyecatcher', half a mile to the south, from where, it is reputed, he sat and watched the hunt in his old age. He also constructed two landscaped lakes in the vicinity of the house, but these disappeared soon after the House was abandoned in 1765 when Sturt inherited Crichel.

*Horton Tower, a Grade II\* listed building is a prominent landmark now used as a telecommunications relay tower*



## Setting

Horton is situated at the head of a shallow Chalk valley, where springs source Uddens Water. It is surrounded by open, rolling down land and enclosed by higher ground on all sides. On the north side, Haythorne Copse forms a backcloth to the village.

*View from Linen Hill looking northwards towards Horton*



The open, undulating down land contrasts with the intimacy and enclosure of the village, a feature that is emphasised by its well-defined built-up edges.

## Scope

The boundaries of the Conservation Area, which was designated in November 1989, are drawn to enclose almost the whole village. The boundaries also encompass the large area of open hillside between the village and Horton Tower in order to reflect their close historical and visual relationship.

This includes Horton Hollow adjacent to the Tower and now comprising a group of modern houses set amongst an oak copse overlooking the village. The trees conceal the buildings and form part of the village setting. In the 17th and 18th centuries clay was dug here for pottery and bricks thus creating Cook's Pond.

## Form

The Ringwood-Shaftesbury turnpike established the strong linear form of the village. It remains a busy cross-country route.

The older buildings in the village street are grouped close to, and facing, the highway with spaces between enclosed by high brick walls. The walls join buildings together and, together with the gentle curve in the street alignment,

contribute to the strong sense of enclosure in this part of the village.

*View south east along the village street*



The Church of St Wolfrida stands on the south side of the churchyard on slightly elevated land overlooking the village to the north and northeast. It forms a separate grouping with Abbey House, part of the former service wing of the long demolished Manor.

Manor Farm completes this group. First comprising a small farmyard of 18th and 19th century barns, the farm has expanded significantly, both within the site and on land to the east. The most recent and largest barns project into open farmland. Latterly, vacant sites and barns have been developed with modern dwellings around the northern edge of the farm.

*The barns at Manor Farm*



## Buildings

The Conservation Area features buildings of outstanding architectural and historic interest. It also includes a number of post war dwellings that fit less harmoniously, but most of these tend to be concealed by trees or high boundary walls or hedges. Most of the traditional buildings are

constructed in brick, which reinforces the visual cohesion of the village. A small number of modern dwellings break from this distinctive pattern.

The small Church of St Wolfrida is built partly of brick and part (predominantly the north side) in Green sandstone. The chancel and part of the nave date from the 12th century but were extensively remodelled around 1720 reputedly by John Vanbrugh, who also built its architecturally important tower. This diminutive tower has a highly distinctive pyramidal spire, each face having a louvered dormer with pediment over. The north transept was added in 1755 to create an 'L' shaped form. The building is listed, Grade I.

*Church of St. Wolfrida*



Apart from an occasional glimpse between buildings, the Church tends to be obscured from the village street. From the Chalbury road, the churchyard is contiguous with open landscape beyond, creating a peaceful country setting for the Church.

*Abbey House, a Grade II\* listed Building*



To the south of the Church stands Abbey House. It is not certain whether the existing two-storey house forms the remains of the original mansion or was its service wing. Its symmetrical 18th



century brick front conceals a 15th century timber frame. The building, which is listed Grade II\*, is largely obscured from view by Manor Farm and by trees and hedges. Its West parapetted front, however, adjoins open farmland, which can be seen from the eastern approaches to the village. Abbey House is currently divided into two residential units. The rectangular garden to Abbey House South is fully enclosed by old high walls and the rear walls of barns.



The barn forming part of the west garden boundary is the oldest of an important group of traditional farm buildings arranged around a central yard. Modern portal frame barns have subsequently been added within the yard. Barns have also extended the farm complex to the north and east. The result is a line of barns of different ages and materials, but sharing similar large scale and simple windowless building forms, which form a distinctive hard edge to the southern side of the village.



Many of these are now considered redundant for present farming activities. The most important barn, forming part of a long range of farm buildings, forms the southern edge to the village. It features high brick walls un-punctured by window openings, under a simple tiled roof.

*Barns at Manor Farm, marking the southern approach to Horton*



The main village street contains a mix of traditional and modern dwellings. The influence of the older buildings on the character of the Conservation Area is more apparent as these are sited closer to the road. There tends to be three groups of traditional buildings, separated by garden plots and other open spaces.

The most important group occurs in the centre of the village street, at the northeast corner of the churchyard. This 18th century group comprises Horton Cottage and Orchard Farm, both of which are listed Grade II and two traditional buildings of local architectural interest, Manor Cottage and Abbey Cottage sited opposite. Each building faces the road behind a short front garden enclosed by low brick walling- and in the case of Manor Cottage- white painted picket fencing. Unusually for the village, Horton Cottage has roughcast walls painted white. Enclosing a courtyard on the east side of the house is a single storey range of old outhouses recently restored and converted to residential use.

*Abbey Cottage*



*Horton Cottage, a Grade II listed building*



Orchard Farm has distinctive burnt header walls with red-brick dressings and stone keystones. On the west gable wall, the initials 'I C' and numerals '1777' are incorporated in dark brick.

*Orchard Farm, a Grade II listed building*



Manor Cottage is a simple two-storey village house having white painted brickwork under a low pitched slate roof. It features three tall chimneys and a symmetrical front focussing on a central doorway with ornate open porch.

The north gable of Abbey Cottage abuts the village street. Its white-painted render acts as a focal point in the street, flanked by high brick walls and planting. The two storey house is mostly of painted brick under low-pitched slate roofs.

*Former schoolhouse and the village hall*



A second building group occurs at the junction of the village street with the Chalbury road. A Victorian range of two and single storey buildings, including the former school house and present village hall, stands on the southeast corner adjacent to the road. These small buildings are built of brick under slate roofs and feature decorative brickwork around the windows. In front of the Old School House is a well-preserved open porch with bracketed roof. The front elevation of the village hall features a tall chimney with a very tall pot. At the rear, visible from the churchyard, the diverse building forms of this group display good townscape qualities.

*Manor Farm Cottages*



Facing Chalbury road, Manor Farm Cottages comprises a post War range of two-storey dwellings. Sited on elevated ground, the row of three cottages form a focal point from Chalbury road. The first floor gables echo those on the Old School House opposite. Vehicular access to these cottages is at the rear which allows the entire frontage to be enclosed by beech hedging.

The third building group of note, comprising a row of 19th century two storey white-painted render and slate cottages, is sited at the eastern end of the village street, overlooking open country and



Horton Tower to the south. These cottages, known as Postman's Cottage, Shopkeeper's Cottage, Middleways and Pond Cottage respectively, face directly onto the public pavement, forming a well-defined edge to the settlement. Their siting, scale and form are more important than their elevation quality, on account of the modern windows.

*Row of Victorian cottages at the eastern end of the village*



Opposite Postman's Cottage the former village pump is housed in an open timber shelter that was constructed in 1901. This little building, which is listed Grade II, has a distinctive concave pyramidal tiled roof with a lead finial that reflects the design of the Church spire. 'The Gift of W.H.Carter AD 1909' is scribed in a cross-beam.

To the west of the village pump, between Hill View and Carpenters Cottage (both modern houses) stands an old barn of part brick, part weather-board construction under a tiled roof. The little building, though not of a quality which renders it eligible for listing, has considerable character on account of its age, form and materials and makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Its rear (south) gable wall connects with a brick boundary wall separating the garden curtilage from open countryside.

*The village pump, a Grade II listed building*



Elsewhere in the village are other buildings that make a positive contribution to the overall character of the Conservation Area. Welchnut Cottages comprise three identical pairs of semi-detached houses overlooking the west side of the churchyard. They follow a formal, symmetrical layout in common with many 1950's housing developments of its type and feature large gardens both in front and behind the dwellings. The group is served by a single informal access drive flanked by high hedges. Other high hedges enclose the gardens. It is important that the architectural unity of the group should be retained, particularly in terms of retaining the spaces between the dwellings, chimneys, window openings and dormers.

The Conservation Area boundary has been drawn to include land between the village and Horton Tower, half a mile to the south, on account of their strong historical and visual association. The tower, built by the celebrated Baroque architect Thomas Archer for Humphrey Sturt in 1742, is an eye-catcher on an enormous scale and still dominates the village and surrounding landscape. Its dramatic siting at the summit of Linen Hill is emphasised by the open grassland, grazed by sheep.

The six-storey brick tower has an hexagonal plan with three-quarter-round turrets against alternate faces. The turrets extend two-thirds of the tower's height and are capped with ogee domes with ball finials. The tower is a mixture of classical and gothic: pediments and narrow pointed windows. Restored in 1993, the building is used as a mobile phone antennae station. Antennae attached to the top of the tower are colour coded to match the brickwork; the majority of the equipment is housed underground nearby.

*Antennae, painted to match brickwork*



churchyard is a formal row of beech, fast developing into large, well-shaped trees.

The space is spoilt by gloomy conifer hedges, poor timber panel fencing and inferior trees.

The enclosed garden spaces that surround Abbey House North and South provide the setting for these important listed buildings. The long shady access drive contains a number of good pines and other trees. The space connects with the enclosed garden of the Old Rectory House (c1960) to form a well-treed secluded area to the south of the Church.

The gardens around Manor Farmhouse, at the southwest end of the village, are open on three sides to public view,. The lack of enclosure around the garden exposes the incongruous stone clad farmhouse.

In the village street, garden spaces between buildings are a distinctive feature of the Conservation Area. They articulate each building and introduce greenery into the village street.

## Spaces

Within the village, the churchyard forms the most important green space. It is an introspective space, enclosed by high conifer screens on its north and south boundaries. Other than Welchnut Cottages, no buildings look onto it. A footpath runs diagonally through the space connecting the village street with the Chalbury road. The south-west entrance features wrought iron gates having a scroll design. These were erected in 1956.

*The churchyard*



To the east of the Church are a number of mature yews, which fill the space. To the west of the Church, forming the western edge of the



Outside the village immediately to the east, open grassland rises on each side of the Horton Road. Its open, undeveloped character enhances the Conservation Area and forms an attractive approach to the village. A public right of way connects the village pump with Horton Tower.

## Trees

There are some notable yew trees in the village, some of which are located near the Church and three large specimens in the centre of the village in the grounds of Horton Cottage. The dark, solid form of the yews contrast against the whitewashed walls of the listed cottage.



In the grounds of Old Rectory House and the adjacent driveway to Abbey House stand a number of good pines, firs and cedar, which can be seen from many parts of the village and from outside. This important group of trees provides a setting for the listed buildings and contribute to the identity of the village. As a group they provide contrast from the open, largely treeless grassland that surrounds the village. It is important that similar new trees are planted in order to ensure succession.



At Horton Hollow, framing Horton Tower on one side, are two oak copses known as Castle Copse and Brickplace Copse. The trees extend to the Chalbury Road and help conceal six modern houses that have been built on the hillside.

## Streetscape

Fast moving cars and heavy lorries create a hazard for villagers and cause noise and vibration that affects the ambiance of the Conservation Area. At the eastern end of the settlement are obtrusive speed-restraint signs. Their impact is made worse by other signs in the vicinity, together with the leaning telephone kiosk, telegraph poles and overhead wires, creating street clutter.

*The eastern entrance to the village, with the 'gateway' speed restriction signs*



At the western end of the village are important rural hedges on both sides of Horton Road that link village and countryside. The hedge on the southern side of the road extends round as formal clipped hedges into the Chalbury road in front of Welchnut Cottages, providing screening and enclosure.

# Boundary of Horton Conservation Area

Scale 1:5000 approximately

north



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SEE INSET MAP 1 FOR DETAILS

SEE INSET MAP 2 FOR DETAILS

Common

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# Horton Conservation Area Inset Map 1

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Scale 1:2500 approximately

north



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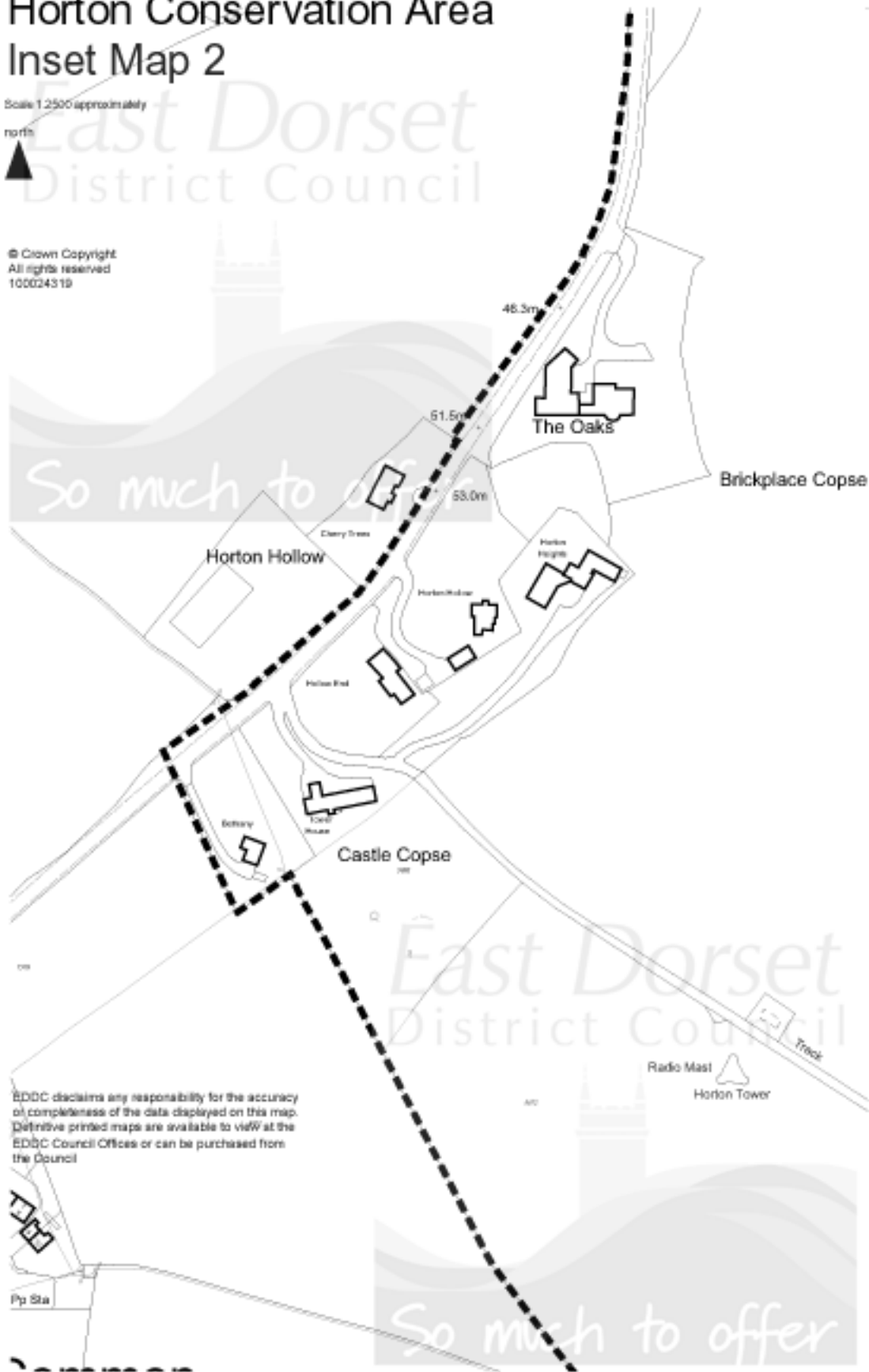
# Horton Conservation Area Inset Map 2

Scale 1:2500 approximately

north



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# Planning Policy in Conservation Areas

East Dorset has many attractive villages of special architectural or historic interest.

In order to protect their character and appearance, the best of these, including the historic centre of Wimborne Minster, have been designated as Conservation Areas by the District Council under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Under this legislation additional planning controls are exercised by the Council within designated Conservation Areas in order to preserve and enhance those aspects of character and appearance that define an area's special character.

These include controls over the demolition of most unlisted buildings. An application for Conservation Area Consent is needed for the demolition of an unlisted building in a Conservation Area.

The Council encourage the retention of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Any proposals which involve demolition of existing buildings will be carefully assessed for their impact upon the character of the area. The local planning authority will also need full details about what is proposed for the site after demolition.

**Certain types of development, which elsewhere are normally classified as permitted development (such as the insertion of dormer windows in roof slopes, the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting a highway) will require planning permission.**

Guidance and application forms can be obtained from the Planning and Building Control Division.

## Trees

Trees are an invaluable visual asset to the character and setting of many Conservation Areas.

Trees in Conservation Areas may already be protected by a Tree Preservation Order and the Courts can impose heavy fines for unauthorised felling or lopping.

In addition to these controls, and in recognition of the contribution that trees can make to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area special provisions apply to the lopping or felling of other trees which are not otherwise protected. Anyone wishing to fell or lop such trees needs to notify the Council in writing six weeks before carrying out any work.

Householders are also encouraged to seek advice from the Department on the management of their trees. By taking the correct action now mature trees can be made safer and their lives extended.

## New Development

When contemplating alterations to existing buildings or the construction of new buildings within a Conservation Area it is advisable to obtain the views of your local Planning Officer at an early stage. The Department is glad to help and the advice is totally impartial and free of charge.

When considering applications for new development, the Council as Local Planning Authority takes particular care to ensure that it fits in satisfactorily with the established character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Positioning, massing, design and choice of materials are of particular importance, as well as the visual impact of 'building over' an area of hitherto open land.

The special character of these areas stem not only from the age, disposition and architectural interest of the buildings, but also from the treatment of the spaces in between.

The presence of gardens, paddocks, soft verges, hedges and old boundary walls contribute greatly to the individual sense of place.

Applications for new development must demonstrate that the proposal will harmonise with the Conservation Area i.e. that it will preserve or enhance its character. Potential applicants are strongly advised to seek proper professional advice.

Therefore when considering such applications the local planning authority will pay particular attention to the following elements of the design:

1. the positioning of the building and its relationship with adjoining buildings, existing trees or other features;

2. the proposed building materials, particularly the walls and roof, and their suitability to the area and in relation to neighbouring buildings;
3. the proportions, mass and scale of the proposal and their relationship with the area in general and adjoining buildings in particular.
4. whether the proposed development might adversely affect existing trees, hedges or other natural features of the site.

In some cases it may be necessary to reproduce an historic style of architecture in order to match existing buildings. Generally, however, the Council encourages new construction to be designed in a modern idiom provided the criteria listed above are applied. Poor copies or imitations of architectural styles detract from the genuine older buildings and are normally discouraged.

Full details of any proposed development must be submitted, showing existing site conditions with the proposals clearly marked. Details of the elevational treatment, including windows and doors, will normally be required. In many instances the planning authority will expect details of hard and soft landscaping including a specification of all the proposed materials.

## Conservation Area analysis

The District Council has carried out and published detailed studies of the Conservation Areas to identify those elements which contribute towards the unique character of each area. Any proposal which has an adverse effect on these features will not be permitted. Proposals that can be seen to enhance the Conservation Area will be encouraged.

## Grants

Grants may be available from the District Council towards the alleviation of eyesores, or measures that improve the street scene, such as tree-planting, hedging or other boundary treatments. Grants or loans may also be available towards the repair of Listed Buildings, particularly where such repairs make an impact on the Conservation Area.



# Design and Conservation Services in East Dorset

Conserving the best features of our environment, our historic towns, villages and countryside, is one of the most important of our planning functions.

## Historic Buildings

Our buildings are a record of our architectural and social history. As a society, we hold them in trust for future generations to cherish and enjoy. Investment in our architectural heritage assists local and regional social and economic development

The supply of buildings of the eighteenth century and earlier is finite; once demolished they are lost forever. Others suffer almost the same fate from alterations made without regard to their original design and character.

Historic buildings require special care if their character, which relies upon traditional building materials and practices peculiar to each region, is not to be spoilt by insensitive alterations or inappropriate methods of repair.

Owners of Listed Buildings contemplating altering or extending their building are advised to obtain Guidance Notes obtainable free from the Department.

An important function of the Design and Conservation Section is to advise owners of historic buildings and assist in achieving solutions which preserves their intrinsic interest.

The Section can help seek out the right materials for the job and advise on the correct method of repair.

It can also provide advice on both the law relating to listed buildings and sources of financial assistance.

## Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas are groups of buildings, villages or areas of towns having special architectural and townscape interest, the character of which should be preserved and enhanced.

East Dorset has 17 Conservation Areas, which range in size and nature from small villages such as Almer to the historic town centre of Wimborne Minster.

The siting, design and materials of new development, or alterations to existing buildings, are scrutinised by the Department to ensure that the character of such areas are protected.

Since 1980 the Council has invested in a programme of environmental improvements within the centre of Wimborne Minster. The effect of these measures has been to create an attractive place for residents and visitors to shop and to enjoy.

## Designated Conservation Areas in East Dorset



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## Advice

For advice on any aspect of the Council's building conservation work, the availability of financial assistance or to discuss your individual building, please contact our Design and Conservation Leader Ray Bird, or his assistant Alan Turner on 01202 886201 or e-mail: [planning@eastdorset.gov.uk](mailto:planning@eastdorset.gov.uk).