

Chapter 6

Assessment of designated heritage assets with the potential to experience setting change

Land North of Dorchester
January 2021

the early OS maps meaning that it must have been visible during the mapping surveys. It would also need to survive well in order to qualify for scheduling.

6.41 In terms of setting, there is limited visibility from the scheduled monument due to vegetation to the immediate north and south, along the present road, meaning it is not possible to see Dorchester. A second much larger section of the Roman road with a dog-leg bend is scheduled further northeast [NHLE ref: 1004562]. However, this scheduled section lies within woodland and so there is no experiential relationship between the two. A Roman milestone [NHLE ref: 1154863] also stands at the A35/ B3150 roundabout about 945m southeast of the monument and 90m east of the site (the NHLE spatial marker shows the asset approximately 50m northwest of its correct location). However, this is not its original position as the stone was moved a short distance c. 1866 and again in 1957, and it now stands almost 1m above the level of the modern road.⁷² It too has no experiential relationship with the scheduled section of the road by Hollow Hill (or the development site).

Figure 6.9: Roman milestone [NHLE ref: 1154863]



Significance

6.42 The heritage significance of this asset is high and is derived primarily from its archaeological and, to a lesser extent, historical illustrative interest as a good example of a highly representative monument of the Roman period. It will contain archaeological and environmental evidence relating to the road's construction, development, maintenance, social, strategic, political, economic, and military significance, its role as a major communications route through time and its overall landscape context. Setting does not appear to contribute to

the road's significance, although it might be argued that the present road – which is of similar alignment to the southwest – allows for an approximate understanding of the route of the Roman road.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.43 Due to intervening vegetation and topography the site makes no contribution to the landscape setting of the asset.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.44 The development site cannot be experienced from or in combination with the asset. It is therefore not sensitive to the development of the site and not at risk of harm.

Level of effect

6.45 Taking into account the significance of the asset (high) and the risk of harm to its significance (none), the overall level of effect of the development of the site on the historic environment is **none**.

Options for sustainable development

6.46 As there is no risk of harm from the development no options for sustainable development have been outlined.

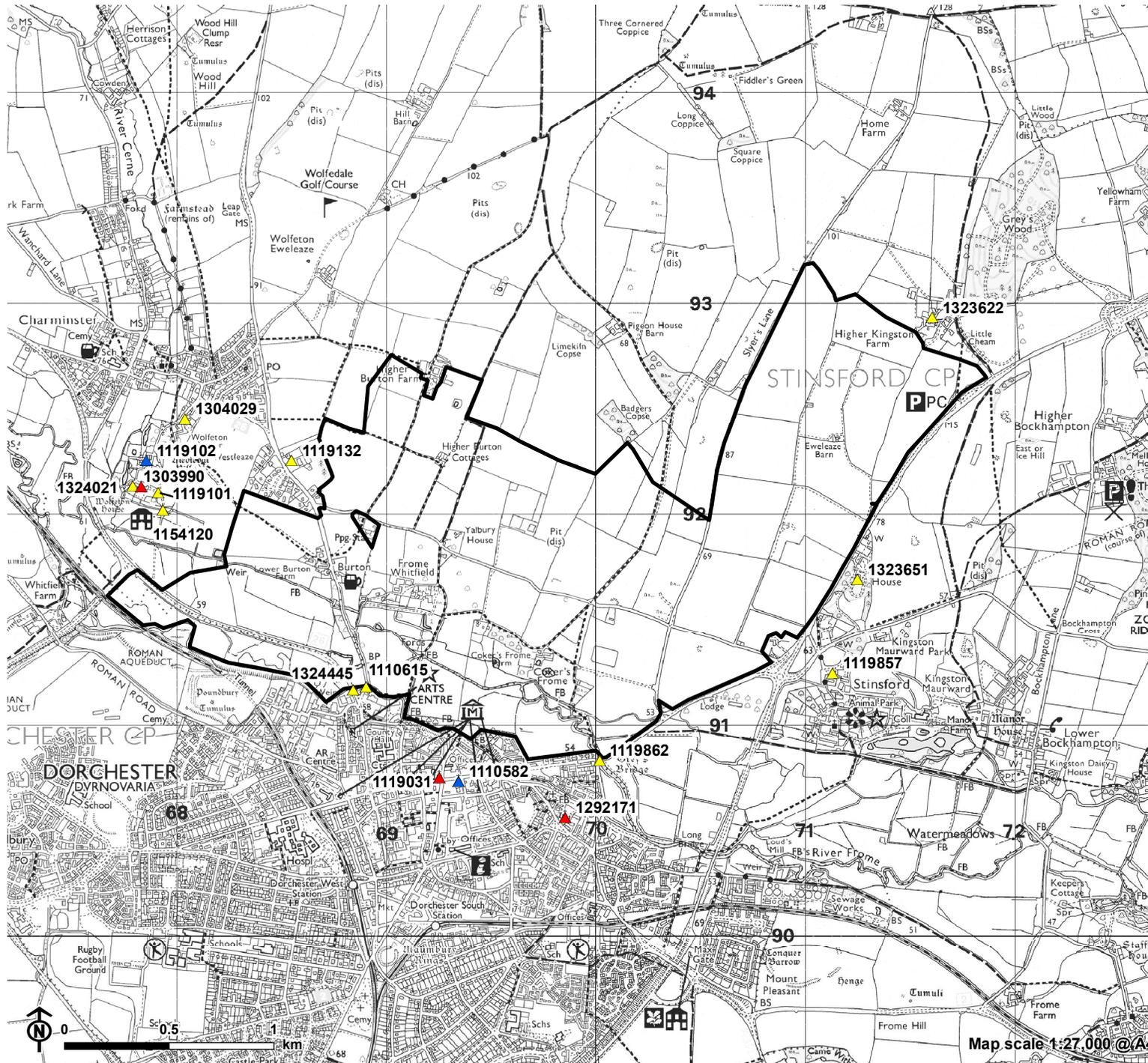
Listed buildings

6.47 The location of the listed buildings identified as potentially being sensitive to setting change are shown on Figure 6.10 (below).

⁷² 'Stinsford', in *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Dorset*, Volume 3, Central (London, 1970), pp. 252-257. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol3/pp252-257> [accessed 27.03. 2020].



Figure 6.10: Listed buildings potentially sensitive to setting change



Site boundary

Listed Building

- ▲ Grade I
- ▲ Grade II*
- ▲ Grade II

Birkin House [NHLE ref: 1323651]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	Low	Low-medium
Grade II listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

6.48 Birkin House is a grade II listed building located on the eastern side of the A35, approximately 0.7km north of Stinsford. The house and its grounds are included in the Stinsford Conservation Area and the boundary of Kingston Maurward RPG is drawn along the eastern boundary of the building's grounds (so excluding it from the designation).

6.49 The house is a moderately sized Victorian villa – or small country house – built in 1874 in the classical style and set in generous grounds. The 1st edition OS map for Dorset (published 1888) shows the house as a U-shaped building with the principal elevation facing south and two service wings extending north behind the principal range. The main drive to the house enters the grounds at the south-west corner from the old turnpike road (now the A35), which defines its entire western boundary. The drive gently winds towards the house, giving views of its principal garden elevation across an area of 'parkland' dotted with trees, and then continues past it to join up once again with the A35, thus providing a service entrance to the site. North of this second entrance is a walled garden and gardener's house.

6.50 The western boundary of the site between the principal and service entrances is shown to be heavily wooded, presumably in order to give the site privacy and to shelter it from the noise and activity of the road. This shelterbelt planting extends around the site's perimeter to the south, (beyond which are located chalk pits and old gravel pits) and some way up the eastern boundary.

6.51 Today the boundary of the grounds is still legible, still defined by its shelterbelts, but the layout has changed and has

been fragmented in terms of use. By the 1957 1:2,500 OS map the principal entrance has been removed and, shortly afterwards, a new approach to the house made from the south-east; a small gap in the trees on the A35 is the only indication now of the original approach. The service entrance and the walled garden and grounds to the north of the site have been separated from the house and are now home to several houses and a car mechanics.

6.52 The proposed development site is located adjacent to the asset's western boundary on the opposite side of the A35. The proposed use along the whole of the asset's western boundary is as employment land.

Figure 6.11: Entrance to Birkin House



This is the later, south-eastern entrance to the grounds of Birkin House, although it is possible that the gate piers of those of the original entrance onto the A35.

Figure 6.12: Western boundary of Birkin House



The view south along the A35. The densely planted shelterbelt to the grounds of Birkin House are to the left of the photograph; the site is beyond the tall hedge to the right.

Figure 6.13: Eastern boundary of Birkin House



View north-west from Kingston Maurward RPG showing the heavily planted boundary of Birkin House grounds in the far distance.

Significance

6.53 The significance of the asset is **high**. It derives principally from the building's architectural interest as a well-executed, if a little stylistically antiquated, country house. This is enhanced by grounds of the house, which although altered provide an enclosed, quiet, private setting that complements the building's grandness as well as allowing appreciation of its inherent aesthetic qualities.

6.54 The asset also has historic value as it illustrates the Victorian fashion of the day for emulating the design and status of large country estates on a smaller scale. These were often built on the outskirts of towns by members of the burgeoning and aspiring professional classes who had found new wealth in the industrial and commercial expansion of urban centres and wanted their own slice of the country idyll, whilst remaining in proximity of commercial centres. The house and its grounds are both key elements of this value, as is the asset's location and relationship with surrounding settlements and neighbouring estates.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.55 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is **low**. The historic maps show that Birkin House is a site that has been inherently insular and private since its inception, with its boundary clearly defined by the A35 to the west and Kingston Maurward Park to the south, east and north. The asset has no historical connection with the site, and the orientation of the building and the densely wooded boundary to its grounds means there is extremely limited – if any – intervisibility; if there is, this would be from the roof of the building, an assessment that is supported by the outcome of the ZTV.

6.56 Although the site does not directly contribute to the building's significance, its undeveloped character does ensure that there are no visual distractions above the treeline of the boundary from within the grounds; as such, the site in its current form indirectly influences our experience of the asset by allowing a better appreciation of its historical and aesthetic significance.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.57 The sensitivity of the asset to the development of the site is **low**. The indicative masterplan for the site indicates that the rural land to the west of the house and grounds would be developed as employment land. This could result in the introduction of built development up to 15-20m high. This has the potential to be visible even above the strong tree-lined boundaries of the grounds and so may marginally detract from the experience of seclusion within the grounds and visually distract from the architectural value of the building.

Level of effect

6.58 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.59 In this instance, harm to the heritage asset could be avoided by ensuring that any development on the site is not visible above the tree-line of the boundary of Birkin House. To that end, it is recommended that any applications for development of this part of the site include verified views of the asset to demonstrate that the development will not visually intrude on the asset.

Dorset Military Museum [NHLE ref: 1292171]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	None	None	None
Grade II listed building	The site does not contribute to the heritage significance of the asset.	The significance of the heritage asset will not be harmed.	Asset of high, significance where the development of the site does not interact with the asset or its significance. The development may still be

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Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
			perceptible as a change to the asset's setting, but this change would not harm the significance of the asset.

Description

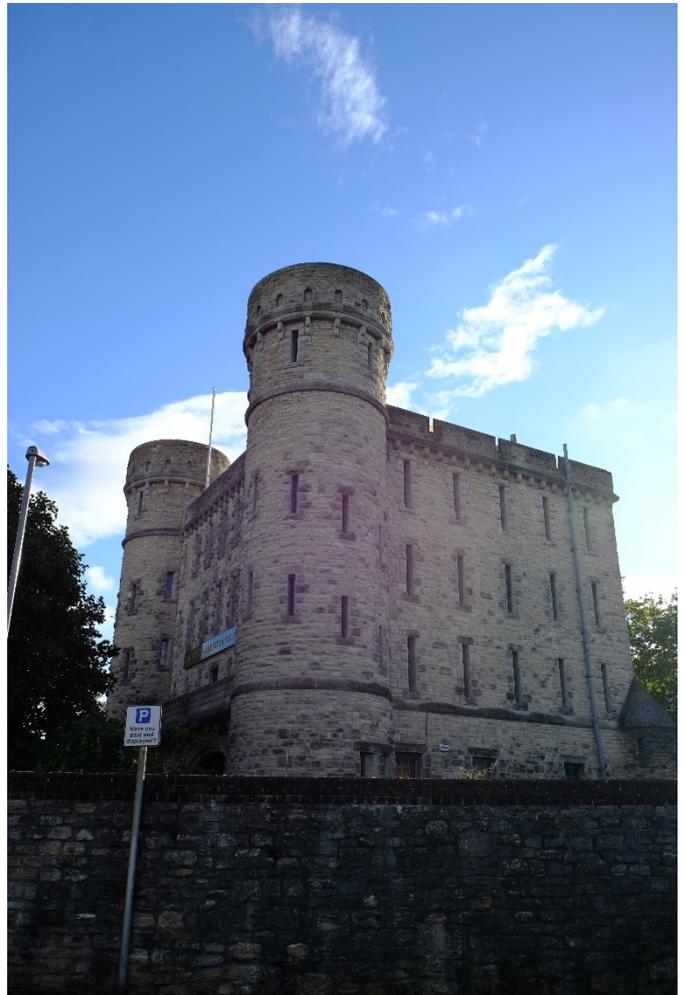
6.60 Dorset Military Museum is a grade II listed building located on the north side of Bridport Road at the far end of Dorchester's High West Street and the western boundary of Dorchester Conservation Area.

6.61 The building is the former gatehouse to the infantry barracks for the Dorsetshire Regiment and also functioned as its armory. It was built c.1879 possibly to designs by the head of the War Office design branch Major A. C. Seddon. It was conceived in a stylised neo-Norman design in imitation of medieval castle keeps: narrow, arrow-slit windows set into an expanse of rusticated stonework give the building an unbalanced solid-to-void ratio that contributes to its robust demeanor and conveys the solemnity and importance of its purpose. It stands at an imposing 4-storeys tall with corner turrets extending up beyond its intermittently castellated parapet.

6.62 The building's is orientated north-west to south-east, with its commanding frontage facing the town and overlooking the arterial east-west route and Roman Road through Dorchester. The 1st edition OS map for Dorset (published 1888) shows us the associated barracks that this building fronted, laid out on a grid around a central parade ground. The barracks buildings were more modest in scale and practical in design; one surviving block is listed grade II, but infill development, demolition and change of use has severely compromised the spatial and visual relationship of the gatehouse with the rest of the former barracks site and reduced its legibility as the former entrance to a military complex.

6.63 The site boundary lies approximately 0.5km to the north of the asset, although the asset is not visible from this point. Further back into the site from higher ground – around Lower Burton Farm and the footpath towards Charminster – the turrets of the building can intermittently be made out in wider views back towards Dorchester.

Figure 6.14: Dorset Military Museum



The principal (south east) elevation to the left, framed by corner turrets, and one of its side elevations.

Figure 6.15: View along Bridport Road



The view from Bridport Road looking east towards the town centre. The more impressive, principal elevation faces towards the town, and we can see the plainer rear façade, which would have faced into the barracks site, to the left.

Figure 6.16: View from Lower Burton



A zoomed in view from the footpath that passes to the north of Lower Burton. The turrets of the building can be seen reaching above the roofline of the town to the left. Because the turrets only frame the principal elevation, it is clear to read even from this point that we are looking at the rear of the building as it faces the town.

Significance

6.64 The significance of the asset is **high**. Much of this significance derives from the building's architectural value, but perhaps more so from its historic illustrative and symbolic values. The gatehouse was built following the Cardwell reforms of the 1870s, the aim of which was to place barracks within existing communities to give a local presence, facilitate local connections and encourage local recruits.⁷³ The gatehouse was the figurehead of these new urban military complexes, and the example at Dorchester is no exception: it looks like a defensive structure, but in actuality it was just designed to look this way to recall the country's long-standing military prowess and convey a sense of longevity and stability. Thus, one of the main purposes of the building was to act as an advocate for the military and an advert to remind people of the opportunities the military offered.

6.65 The location of the barracks was crucial in this regard: if new recruits were to be encouraged then the site had to have a conspicuous presence in the town, which is possibly why a site at the top end of town was chosen and why the gatehouse was orientated to face into the town. It also had a symbolic role marking the transition from the civilian into the military domain.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.66 The site makes **no contribution** to the significance of the asset. The building was not designed to have a relationship with the site, its principal focus and purpose being to establish a prominent presence in the town in order to engage with the

local community. There are partial views of the building from limited points within the site, principally towards the western end, but there is no evidence that these views were in any way planned. Our ability to see the building from this angle is of interest in a wider context – notably in our experience of the conservation area – but they do not contribute to the architectural of historic interest of the asset as a listed building.

6.67 Similarly, views from the asset to the site are limited and although they may provide any interesting perspective of the surrounding landscape, they do not contribute to the heritage significance of the building.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.68 The significance of the asset will **not be harmed** by the development of the site because it does not contribute to the building's significance. Moreover, the incidental views of the asset from the site around Lower Burton and any from the water meadows will be retained as this area is to remain open space.

Level of effect

6.69 The development of the site would result in no harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **none**.

Grey's Bridge [NHLE ref: 1119862]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	High	Low	Low-medium
Grade II listed building.	The site forms a considerably important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

⁷³ Historic England (2017) Military Structures Listing Selection Guide.

Description

6.70 Grey's Bridge is a grade II listed building located on London Road at the far eastern end of Dorchester's high street. It bridges the River Frome and carries the historic route between Dorchester and Stinsford. Pre-20th century, it formed part of the boundary between the parishes of Fordington and Stinsford; today, it marks the transition from the county town and parish of Dorchester and West Stafford from the rural parish of Stinsford.

6.71 The bridge was constructed in 1748 to replace Stockham (or Stocking) Bridge, which once stood a few hundred feet to the north. It is constructed of stone and stands at road level, supported by a central rounded arch with two slightly smaller supporting arches to either side. A plain stone parapet with flat copings extends upwards from road level. The structure was repaired in c.1835 and was widened by 6ft on the downstream side in 1927, presumably to accommodate increasing traffic and use of motorcars.

6.72 The bridge was, historically, on the periphery of the town, with a break of open space between it and Dorchester proper; on the 1st edition OS map for Dorset (published 1888) London Road is shown to be planted with an avenue of trees stretching out along the roadsides either side of the bridge and a viewpoint is identified from the bridge upstream along the River Frome and out over the water meadows that line it.

6.73 This setting remained much the same over the next 50 years, but by the 1938 OS map it was starting to change as the town expanded eastwards. Gradually, the land between Dorchester and the bridge was infilled and today housing extends right up to the river and the western edge of the bridge. Despite the building of the A35 ring road around Dorchester, London Road remains a very busy road as the principal approach to the town centre.

6.74 The south-west site boundary is directly adjacent to the bridge, taking in the water meadows and river to the and north-west of the bridge. There are long-reaching views across the site from the bridge, but views of the bridge from the site are more limited due to its immediate environs.

Significance

6.75 The significance of the asset is **high**. Much of this significance derives from the building's inherent architectural value, but perhaps more so from its historical interest and association with Thomas Hardy. Grey's Bridge is mentioned by name in several of Hardy's works, most notably in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, where it became "an accustomed halting-place" (Ch.38) of Michael Henchard, one of the principal characters of the story. In it, the bridge is described as being located "further out on the highway — in fact, fairly in the meadows, though still within the town boundary" (Ch.32)

and becomes a place that characters in Hardy's stories, in times of need and desperation, gravitate to in order to find solitude to meditate on their affairs.

6.76 The setting of the bridge contributes to both the aesthetic and historical values of the asset in that the water meadows that Hardy describes still have a strong visual relationship with the bridge; however, the expansion of Dorchester means that the bridge is no longer a secluded spot on the outskirts of town, and the busyness and noise of the road make it an unlikely location for contemplation. That said, the town boundary has not grown beyond the bridge and so it is still legible as an important entrance point to the settlement, as well as marking the transition from rural to urban.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.77 The site makes a **high** contribution to the significance of the asset. The bridge's spatial and visual relationship with the water meadows within the site remain highly legible and contribute to our appreciation of the asset's aesthetic and historical associative values.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.78 The sensitivity of the asset to the development of the site is **low**. The indicative masterplan for the site indicates that the water meadows will remain as open green space and so the visual and spatial relationship of the bridge with this part of its setting will not be affected. There is potential, however, for residential development in 'housing east' to appear in the backdrop of views from the bridge. This would detract to some extent from our current experience of the bridge marking the transition from urban into rural.

6.79 There is also potentially some risk of indirect physical effects arising from increased traffic use of the bridge. However, such effects are considered far less likely than for the other listed buildings assessed within and adjacent to the site, because of its location in relation to the development.

Level of effect

6.80 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.81 Harm to the asset could be minimised – or potentially avoided – by pulling the boundary of the housing back, possibly to the Charminster to Stinsford road (that runs east to west across the site). This would increase the buffer of green space and potentially draw the development back out of view from the bridge.

6.82 To that end, it is recommended that the boundary in this area is reviewed and informed by verified views. This will help establish the extent of the visual impact and how amendments to the boundary and / or restricted building heights might help avoid the harm identified.

6.83 Further assessment of the potential for indirect effects will be needed.

Kingston House [NHLE ref: 1323622]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	None	None
Grade II listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset will not be harmed.	Asset of high, significance where the development of the site does not interact with the asset or its significance.

Description

6.84 Kingston House is a grade II listed former farmhouse located to the north side of the A35 some 3km north-east of Dorchester. It stands within the Higher Kingston Conservation Area, towards its northern end. The northern boundary of the grade II* registered Kingston Maurward RPG lies on the opposite side of the A35 approximately half a kilometer to the south-east of the farmhouse.

6.85 The building is a handsome, brick-built, 18th century former farmhouse. It was extended in the 19th century to the north and west elevations to form a large L-shaped dwelling; the earlier double-pile plan form is still discernible by the positioning of the chimneys on the front range, which signify the original extend of the building. The 1st edition OS map for Dorset (published 1888) shows a complex of large agricultural buildings arranged around courtyards to the north of the house. There are also some smaller buildings standing to the west of them, the footprints of which correlate with houses that survive today, as too do most of the agricultural buildings.

6.86 On the 1888 map, the farmhouse does not appear to have any gardens as such and is clearly and closely connected to the farm buildings by a number of paths. This

relationship is not as legible today, as boundaries between domestic and working buildings have been strengthened and planting around and between the two has introduced a degree of visual, if not spatial, separation.

6.87 The boundary of the proposed development area starts approximately 25m west of the access road to the asset and the Higher Kingston Conservation Area. From here it takes a north-westerly course, perpendicular to the principal elevation of the house which faces south-east back towards the A35 and boundary of Kingston Maurward RPG. It extends past the house at a distance of approximately 120m and continues until it meets Slyer's Lane.

6.88 This boundary corresponds almost exactly with historic land ownership as shown on the 1839 tithe map: land immediately to the south of the asset and just within the site boundary was owned at that time by the Earl of Ilchester and occupied by a Stephen Harding (resident at Stinsford Farmhouse, discussed below); that to the north of the boundary – from Higher Kingston Farm northwards – was owned by William Grey Pitt, owner and occupier of Kingston Maurward, although the house and land are shown as being occupied by Joseph Bedloe and Thomas Lock.

6.89 Although physically very close to the asset, visibility of the site is extremely limited because the house stands within one of the dry valleys that typify the area; this particular one extends up from the floodplains of the River Frome through Kingston Maurward RPG and then takes a slight turn to run parallel with the site boundary. Consequently, the landform rises relatively quickly to the south-west of the farmhouse, interrupting almost all intervisibility with the site bar the very northern boundary, which currently extends to include the brow of the hill.

Figure 6.17: Kingston House



The south (principal) and eastern (gable end) elevations of Kingston House. The gardens of the house can be seen rising up behind it and the site begins at the crest of the incline.

Figure 6.18: The drive to Kingston House



The view along the drive towards the farm from the A35. Kingston House is hidden behind the trees to the right of the photo; the building in the far distance is historic farmworkers cottages. The site is over the brow of the hill to the left of the photograph.

Significance

6.90 The significance of the asset is **high**. It derives principally from the building's architectural interest as a polite dwelling of some stature. This is enhanced by its positioning within a secluded and well-treed dip in the landscape, which adds to its picturesque qualities and provides a sense of seclusion despite the proximity of the A35.

6.91 The survival of the farm's associated agricultural buildings and workers' housing provides further historic interest, as collectively the group illustrate the improvements made to the farm in the 19th century and demonstrate the purpose and interdependency of the components of a farm complex. The surrounding agricultural landscape also contributes much to this illustrative value, as it is the very reason for the farms siting in the first place.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.92 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is **low**. The asset does not appear to have a historical associative or functional relationship with the land contained within the site; however, there is some limited intervisibility, with the site forming a small part of the backdrop to the asset. The site's rural character and the lack of any other development ensures there are no visual distractions and so it contributes to the asset's aesthetic qualities.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.93 The significance of the asset will **not be harmed** by the development of the site. It is indicated on the indicative masterplan that the part of the site that contributes to the asset's significance is to remain as open green space and so

the contribution it makes to the asset's aesthetic value will not change.

Level of effect

6.94 The development of the site would result in no harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **none**.

Hardy Monument [NHLE ref: 1118682]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	None	None	None
Grade II listed	The site does not contribute to the heritage significance of the asset.	The significance of the heritage asset will not be harmed.	Asset of high, significance where the development of the site does not interact with the asset or its significance.

Description

6.95 This grade II listed monument is located approximately 7.5km to the southeast of Dorchester on Black Down Hill, near Portesham. It was built in 1844 to commemorate Vice-Admiral Thomas Masterman Hardy (1769 – 1839). Hardy was a key naval figure during the Napoleonic Wars, during which Lord Nelson famously died in his arms aboard HMS Victory during the Battle of Trafalgar. Constructed of Portesham ashlar, the octagonal tower, with battered base, heavy cornice, and parapet, is 21m high and is designed to look like a telescope. There is a door in the north facing side of the base, above which there is a memorial plaque. Inside there is a spiral staircase lit through small slits. Originally built by Henry Goddard of Bridport, it was restored in 1908 by Arthur Acland-Troyte Esq. It is currently owned and maintained by the National Trust.

6.96 The monument is located close to the family estate at Portesham, which lies between the monument and the coast. This location was selected specifically to enable the monument to function as a daymark for sailors off the coast to the south. It has been included on Admiralty charts since 1846 and can be seen from up to 60 miles away. It was also reportedly used as the meridian of the OS county maps for Dorset. By virtue of its height, as well as its elevated and exposed location, the monument has become a local landmark.

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Figure 6.19: The Hardy Monument looking southwest



Figure 6.20: View south towards the coast and English Channel from the Hardy Monument



Significance

6.97 The heritage significance of this asset is **high** as reflected by its listed status. It is derived from a combination of its architectural value and historical illustrative value as a well-preserved memorial/daymark of unusual design. It also has high historical associative value as a memorial to Vice Admiral Hardy, the Napoleonic wars, and historic OS surveys. It also has some communal value as a daymark and local landmark.

6.98 In terms of setting, the monument's visibility and siting are important to its function as a memorial. However, it is specifically sited to be visible from the sea in order to function as a daymark. It also has an important spatial relationship with Portesham, where Hardy lived.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.99 The site makes **no contribution** to the significance of the asset. The monument can reportedly be seen from approximately half the county and this does include some parts of the site – most notably the Stinsford end of the Stinsford to Charminster Road. However, these views are incidental rather than planned and extremely limited: although technically visible from the site when visibility is good, the distance between the site and the monument makes the asset very difficult to distinguish and only identifiable if you already know what you are looking at (see Figure 6.21 below). At such a distance, the architectural value of the monument cannot be appreciated, nor its historical illustrative value as a memorial/daymark (its designed relationship with the sea not being appreciable). Thus, our ability to see the building from this point is of interest in a wider landscape context but these views do not contribute to the architectural or historic interest of the asset as a listed building, nor allow appreciation of those values.

6.100 Similarly, views from the asset to the site are limited and although they may provide any interesting perspective of the surrounding landscape, they do not contribute to the heritage significance of the building.

Figure 6.21: View of the Hardy Monument from the Stinsford To Charminster Road



The monument can just be made out on the horizon in the far distance, behind and to the left of the chimney of the county hospital (centre of the photo)

Figure 6.22: View northeast towards Poundbury, Dorchester and the site from the Hardy Monument



Sensitivity and potential harm

6.101 The risk of harm to the heritage significance of this asset is **none**. Development of the site may reduce some of the points from which the asset is visible in very long-distance views. However, this would not result in any harm to the heritage significance of the asset because it would not affect any of the key relationships that contribute to its significance (e.g. the designed relationship with the English Channel or the spatial/ visual relationship with Portesham); nor would it affect the building's architectural interest.

Level of effects

6.102 Taking into account the significance of this asset (high) and the risk of harm to its significance (none), the overall level of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on this asset is **none**.

Little Court [NHLE ref: 1119132]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	None	None	None
Grade II listed	The site does not contribute to the heritage significance of the asset and so the asset is not sensitive to development of the site	The significance of the heritage asset will not be harmed.	Asset of high, significance where the development of the site does not interact with the asset or its significance.

Description

6.103 The grade II listed Little Court is an early-20th century, detached Arts and Crafts house set in landscaped grounds (DHER ref: MDO37800). It stands to the east side of Westleaze Road on the outskirts of Charminster and about 1.5km from the centre of Dorchester.

6.104 The house and gardens were built c.1907-9 for Katherine Thruston (1874-1911), an Irish novelist, to designs by Percy Richard Morley Horder (1870-1944). Morley Horder was primarily known for his work with country houses, often building in an Arts and Crafts style. He also undertook several church, domestic and university commissions – his best known being his work for Nottingham University and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Later, the building would be bought and owned by Gilbert Tongue of

'Kearly and Tongue'; a major Tea and Produce Merchants that many years later became part of Somerfields Supermarket.

6.105 The house sits off-centre (to the north) of a square plot, with a driveway leading from Westleaze road to the courtyard area at the front of the house. It was originally L-plan in form with family quarters in the south range and services and a water tower in east range. However, the house was extended soon after completion – sometime before the survey for the 1929 OS map – with an additional north range. This created the 'U'-shaped footprint of the house as visible today.

6.106 The 1929 OS map also shows ancillary buildings located to the north of the house, including a glasshouse, only one of which appears to survive today. To the northeast of the house was a walled kitchen garden and to the south were lawns, including a tennis lawn and small orchard. Google aerial imagery suggests that most of the 'harder' elements of the garden survive e.g. the walls of the kitchen garden and the walk; however, much of the original planting does not, and a pool has been inserted into the vegetable garden, while the tennis lawn is now a hard court.

6.107 The whole site is enclosed within a brick wall/ fence/ hedgerow and so is quite self-contained and private in character. The design of the garden does not deliberately encompass any external views and, equally, it is not overlooked from any direction. Beyond the house and its grounds, there is undeveloped agricultural land to the north, east and west. That to the north and south of the house includes further vegetation that contains views from the upper floors of the house.

6.108 The house and grounds are 100m east and north of Open Space South and approximately 180m east of Housing West, with the Local Centre another 200m east beyond that.

Figure 6.23: Little Court viewed from the southwest



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Figure 6.24: View of grounds northeast towards the site from the grounds of Little Court



Figure 6.25: View from the rear upper floor of Little Court looking east towards the site



Figure 6.26: View west from Housing West (south of Higher Burton Cottages)



Significance

6.109 The significance of Little Court is **high**. This is derived primarily from its architectural and historical interest as an attractive and well-executed example of large, individual, architect designed house that successfully and wholeheartedly embraced the visual traits of the Arts and Crafts movement. It also has historical value through its association with Morley Horder and as one of the few examples of his gardens. It also has some further historical associative value given its ownership by Katherine Thruston and Gilbert Tongue.

6.110 The building's landscaped grounds contribute to and complement the building's aesthetic qualities, and further underline the building's status and exclusivity. The surrounding agricultural landscape provides historical context and amenity value, but only really contributes to the significance of the asset by helping to maintain its sense of isolation. As the surrounding landscape is largely only visible from the upper floors of the house, the contribution it makes is not so much visual but experiential, providing a peaceful and tranquil environment. Consequently, this influence on the experience of the house and grounds diminishes the further away you go from the boundary of the grounds, and is essentially limited to those fields immediately adjacent to the house.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.111 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of this asset is **none**. The site includes much of the agricultural land to the east and south of the house, but not that immediately adjacent to it. As such, it does not include the area that influences our experience of the house as a private and secluded residence.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.112 The significance of the asset will **not be harmed** by the development of the site because it does not contribute to the building's significance. Development within the site may be visible from the upper floors of the house but this would not change our experience of the asset or the ability to understand and appreciate its architectural and historical interest.

Level of effect

6.113 Taking into account the significance of this asset (high) and the risk of harm to their significance (none), the overall level of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on this asset is judged to be **none**.

Options for sustainable development

6.114 There is no harm to the heritage significance of this asset that requires mitigation. However, if the effects to the

visual amenity/landscape setting of the asset require mitigation then screening by vegetation may be an option; the existing plantation to the southeast of the grounds could be extended to join the tree-lined boundary to the north without affecting the heritage significance of the asset.

Church of All Saints [NHLE ref: 1110582]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	Low	Low-medium
Grade II* listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

6.115 The Church of All Saints is a grade II* listed building located on the south side of High East Street in the centre of Dorchester, within the town's conservation area. It occupies a prominent site, standing back of pavement on the south-west corner of the crossroad junction between High East Street, Friary Lane (to the north) and Church Street (to the south).

6.116 The church was built in 1843-45 to designs by Benjamin Ferrey, a well-respected Victorian gothic revival architect and a prolific hand locally; most notable, he was responsible for the county hospital (1841) Market House (1848, known as the Corn Exchange and now a grade II* listed building) and the Church of the Holy Trinity (1876).⁷⁴ Ferrey was assisted by A. D. H. Acland-Troyte who reportedly also physically helped build it.⁷⁵ The church was conceived in the Decorated English Gothic style with reticulated tracery to its narrow windows and a tall broach spire, which was added c1860.⁷⁶

6.117 All Saints stands on the site of an earlier church which was demolished to make way for the building that occupies the site now. This predecessor church had, in turn, replaced an even earlier church, which was destroyed by fire in 1613.⁷⁷

As well as contemporary internal fixtures and fittings, the current church also contains a monument to Matthew Chubb (dated 1617), a late-15th / early-16th century window in the vestry, two 17th century bells and numerous 18th century floor slabs and memorials.

6.118 The proposed site lies approximately 250m north of the asset. Although physically relatively close, the asset is not visible from this point and, likewise, no part of the site is visible from the asset. This is because the church is situated within the close urban grain of the town centre, whose busy streets naturally frame, contain and curtail views out of the settlement.

6.119 Further back into the site and from higher ground, the spire of the church starts to come into view and becomes a defining, although not permanent, feature of the roofscape of the town, visible from various points within the site.

Figure 6.27: The north elevation and tower of All Saints



⁷⁴ Post Office Directory of Dorsetshire, 1855. Kelly and Co.
⁷⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1110582#contributions-banner>

⁷⁶ https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?resourceID=1012&uid=MDO1018
⁷⁷

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Figure 6.28: All Saints spire



A view from the site looking south-south-west towards Dorchester, on the footpath through the site north of Slyer's Lane leading towards Coker's Frome Farm. The spire of All Saints is the first visually distinguishable and identifiable built historic feature in the landscape from this far out – approximately 1.2km from the asset. The indicative masterplan shows the boundaries for housing east and west areas in the fields either side of this footpath.

Figure 6.29: All Saints spire – view from the water meadows



View from Ten Hatches Weir on the River Frome to the far eastern end of the site. From here, the spire is now more legible as part of a collection of landmarks that signpost the historic core of the town, including the tower of St Peter, visible to the right of All Saints.

Figure 6.30: View from the Charminster to Stinsford road



The field in the foreground is the part of housing east that ends south of the Charminster to Stinsford road. The spire of All Saints can be seen in the centre of the photograph, and the tower of St Peter's can just be made out to the right of it. See also photographs of St Peter's.

Significance

6.120 The significance of the asset is **high**. It derives principally from the building's architectural interest as a confidently executed 19th century Gothic Revival church. Up close, the building is well-executed but a little uninspired, and has an uncomfortable relationship with the streets it faces due to its windows being raised well above street and eye-level – a conscious design response to a busy urban environment, but one that has left pedestrians faced with a solid wall of stone. Start to move away from the building, however, and the design begins to come together with far more powerful effect: the tiered and stepped buttresses animate the north elevation and its interaction with the street, the windows can be read as a coherent set that give the building rhythm, and the scale of the assertive yet elegant spire can begin to be fully appreciated in contrast to the predominantly low-rise character of its urban setting.

6.121 The survival internally of contemporary 19th century features and incorporation of fabric from the preceding church

adds to the building's aesthetic appeal, but it also contributes to its historical value by illustrating the continuity of religious use of the site. The conspicuous siting of a church in the centre of the town is an important part of this value, illustrating the Church's conscious decision to place itself at the heart of social and commercial activity, and the building's purpose as a permanent reminder to its residents of their moral and religious duties towards the Church.

6.122 The building's association with Ferrey, who was responsible for several notable buildings within Dorchester and surrounding settlements and was a well-respected architect specialising in gothic revival architecture, also makes some contribution to its historical significance. Monuments within the church dedicated to other prominent locals from the town's past also add historical interest through association – such as with Matthew Chubb, a wealthy resident of the town in the 17th century who became a local dignitary and MP, and endowed almshouses in the town following the fire that gutted the first church that occupied the site.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.123 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is **low**. The asset does not have a historical associative or functional relationship with the land contained within the site – although historically All Saints was a parish church it had no tithe apportionments or glebe land and so its income will have come from endowments – and it does not contribute to the architectural interest of the building. However, the asset is visible from the certain points within the site and so what it does do is offer a perspective from which we may appreciate the scale of the building and its role as a manifestation of the Church in what was – and continues to be – an important urban centre in the region.

6.124 This contribution is greatest in medium-range views from the water meadows and on the approach to Dorchester from the north, and to the eastern end of the Charminster to Stinsford Road and to the far west of the site beyond Lower Burton Farm, as this is where the spire can be most clearly be seen; the spire is visible at other points as you travel further westward along the Charminster to Stinsford Road until you reach Yalbury Lodge / Park, but views are far more intermittent and restricted due to the height of hedging and the low road level. The site also forms part of the backdrop to the town from the south at Came Down, and the spire is evident in these views too.

6.125 These views, which come and go as you move around the site, are not designed but incidental. Whilst that does not make them any less pleasing it does limit the contribution they make to the artistic, architectural and historical significance of the building. The serendipitous view of spire and rural foreground or backdrop seen in combination may be

considered to have a scenic quality that contributes to the character of the area, but that quality concerns the contribution the church makes to the landscape, not what the landscape contributes to the heritage significance of the building.

6.126 As such, the importance of the site to the significance of the church is not so much in its appearance, use or its proximity, but that its undeveloped character allows us to read the relationship of the wider settlement with the building; it provides a different perspective that adds to our ability to understand and appreciate the historical connection between town and church, but it is not fundamental to that relationship.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.127 The risk of harm to the asset from the development of this site is **low**. This is because the majority of the site that contributes to the significance of the asset will remain as open space and so its contribution will not change. There is potential for some views from around the southern end of Slyer's Lane and along the Charminster to Stinsford road to be lost as a result of the sections of 'housing east' and 'housing west' that extend south of the road, and through the associated 'strategic landscaping'. This would have a minor effect on the ability to appreciate the significance of the asset.

6.128 The site may appear in conjunction with the spire in more distant views; however, this will largely be read as an extension of the existing settlement and will not challenge the church as a notable townscape feature and so will not affect its significance.

Level of effect

6.129 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.130 Harm to the asset could be minimised – or potentially avoided – by pulling the boundary of the housing back to the north of Charminster to Stinsford road. Furthermore, consideration should be given to how the layout of any development can incorporate glimpsed – or potentially even framed – views of the church and town. This will help maintain the ability to appreciate the asset's role as notable townscape feature – as well as celebrating its status as a local landmark – so it becomes a point of interest for the new development as well as the old.

6.131 The appropriateness of screening the development with strategic landscaping also requires greater consideration, as there is the potential for planting to restrict views of the asset

and the town even further. Screening is not an excuse for poor design and the transition from urban to rural surroundings needs to be carefully designed, not glossed over.

6.132 To that end, it is recommended that the boundary in this area is reviewed and informed by verified views. This will help establish the extent of the impact of the development on views of the asset and how amendments to the boundary, development layout and / or restricted building heights might help avoid the harm identified.

Church of St Peter [NHLE ref: 1119031]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	Low	Low-medium
Grade I listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

6.133 The Church of St Peter is a grade I listed building located on the north side of High West Street in the centre of Dorchester, within the town's conservation area. It occupies a prominent site at the head of Cornhill, which was historically the epicentre of civic and commercial activity in the town. It stands approximately 90m west of the Church of All Saints.

6.134 The main body of the church was constructed c.1420. Like All Saints, the extant building replaced an earlier church that had stood on the site since the 12th century – evidence of which can be found in the recycled doorway that provides the southern entrance to the building. Alterations were made in the mid-19th century and early-20th, but otherwise the building survives remarkably well in its 15th century form.

6.135 The church was conceived in the Perpendicular Gothic style and, as such, has a strong verticality to its exterior that is emphasised and embellished by visually rich detailing and decoration: from the ground, set-back buttress draw the eye up the elevations, between which sit tall, pointed arch windows divided by long and slender mullions and tracery.

Above that, the crenellated parapets to the side aisles and tower are punctuated by crocketed pinnacles that taper towards the sky, beneath which sit a set of individual and charismatic grotesques (those to the tower being gargoyles).

6.136 The tower was a defining feature of Perpendicular Gothic: rather than using spires on top of towers to draw out the height of the building, it was the tower itself that was the eye-catcher. In order to reach the desired height, towers therefore had to be more substantial and often buttressed to keep them standing, and St Peter's is no exception: it is an impressive structure, much more substantial than the spires and chimneys of its historic neighbours. Consequently, St Peter's is not only a distinct and distinctive feature of the town but an instantly recognisable accent in its skyline.

6.137 The proposed site lies approximately 230m to the north of the asset. Although physically relatively close, the asset is not visible from this point and, likewise, no part of the site is visible from the asset. This is because the church is situated within the close urban grain of the town centre, whose busy streets naturally frame, contain and curtail views out of the settlement.

6.138 Further back into the site and from higher ground, the top tier of the tower starts to come into view and becomes a defining, although not permanent, feature of the roofscape of the town, visible from various points within the site.

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Figure 6.31: Church of St Peter south elevation and tower



Figure 6.32: St Peter's tower viewed from the site



This is a telephoto view of the town taken from the footpath between Wolfeton House and Lower Burton Farm. The tower of St Peter's is visible behind the crane to the far left of the photograph (as is the spire of All Saints). The architectural interest of the building cannot be appreciated at this distance, but the scale of the tower is appreciable. See also photographs for All Saints.

Significance

6.139 The significance of the asset is **high**. It derives principally from the building's architectural interest as a striking and largely intact early-15th century town church with good survival internally of high-quality architectural features. The substantial survival of historic fabric from a single phase plays a particularly strong role in the building's aesthetic value, not only through the conscious design and quality of the architecture, but also fortuitously through the unique patina of age that materials naturally develop – a quality that can only be achieved given time. This weathering results in an accumulation of idiosyncrasies that impart an authentic sense of antiquity and tells a story that is unique to each building. For St Peter's, it is evident and virtually ubiquitous across the building, which has a powerfully unifying and pleasing visual effect.

6.140 Alterations to the church in the 19th century were, on the whole, aesthetically sympathetic and have additional associative interest in that they were made by John Hicks with assistance from Thomas Hardy.

6.141 The building has further historical value as it contains a multitude of monuments, floorslabs and memorials that together form a biography of the local community – albeit the wealthier set that could afford to buy space for their commemoration within the church itself.

6.142 The memorials to notable local inhabitants and the money spent by them on the building itself is also illustrative of the importance and prosperity of the town at the time. This is further evident in the building's conspicuous siting in the centre of the town, illustrating the Church's conscious decision to place itself at the heart of social and commercial activity, and the building's purpose as a permanent reminder to its residents of their moral and religious duties towards the Church.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.143 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is **low**. Although historically St Peter's was a parish Church, it had no tithe apportionments or glebe land and so would have had to rely on patronage and endowments; the 15th century rebuild was funded at least in part by an endowment of 20 marks left in the will of Robert Grenelefe *alias* Baker in 1420 to be put 'to the fabric of the new construction of the body of the church of St Peter in

[Dorchester].⁷⁸ As such, the asset does not have a historical associative or functional relationship with the land contained within the site and it does not contribute to the inherent architectural interest of the building. However, the asset is visible from the certain points within the site and so what it does do is offer a perspective from which we may appreciate the scale of the building and its role as a manifestation of the Church in what was – and continues to be – an important urban centre in the region.

6.144 This contribution is greatest in medium-range views from the water meadows and on the approach to Dorchester from the north, and to the eastern end of the Charminster to Stinsford Road and to the far west of the site beyond Lower Burton Farm, as this is where the tower can be most clearly be seen; the tower is visible at other points as you travel further westward along the Charminster to Stinsford Road until you reach Yalbury Lodge / Park, but views are far more intermittent and restricted due to the height of hedging and the low road level. The site also forms part of the backdrop to the town from the south at Came Down, and the tower is evident in these views too.

6.145 These views, which come and go as you move around the site, are not designed but incidental. Whilst that does not make them any less pleasing it does limit the contribution they make to the artistic, architectural and historical significance of the building. The serendipitous view of church tower and rural foreground or backdrop seen in combination may be considered to have a scenic quality that contributes to the character of the area, but that quality concerns the contribution the church makes to the landscape, not what the landscape contributes to the heritage significance of the building.

6.146 As such, the importance of the site to the significance of the church is not so much in its appearance, use or its proximity, but that its undeveloped character allows us to read the relationship of the wider settlement with the building; it provides a different perspective that adds to our ability to understand and appreciate the historical connection between town and church, but it is not fundamental to that relationship.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.147 The risk of harm to the asset from the development of this site is **low**. This is because the majority of the site that contributes to the significance of the asset will remain as open space and so its contribution will not change. There is potential for some views from around the southern end of Slyer's Lane and along the Charminster to Stinsford road to be

lost as a result of the sections of 'housing east' and 'housing west' that extend south of the road, and through the associated 'strategic landscaping'. This would have a minor effect on the ability to appreciate the significance of the asset.

6.148 The site may appear in conjunction with the church tower in more distant views; however, this will largely be read as an extension of the existing settlement and will not challenge the church as a notable townscape feature, and so will not affect its significance.

Level of effect

6.149 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.150 Harm to the asset could be minimised – or potentially avoided – by pulling the boundary of the housing back to the north of Charminster to Stinsford road. Furthermore, consideration should be given to how the layout of any development can incorporate glimpsed – or potentially even framed – views of the church and town. This will help maintain the ability to appreciate the asset's role as notable townscape feature – as well as celebrating its status as a local landmark – so it becomes a point of interest for the new development as well as the old.

6.151 The appropriateness of screening the development with strategic landscaping also requires greater consideration, as there is the potential for planting to restrict views of the asset and the town even further. Screening is not an excuse for poor design and the transition from urban to rural surroundings needs to be carefully designed, not glossed over.

6.152 To that end, it is recommended that the boundary in this area is reviewed and informed by verified views. This will help establish the extent of the impact of the development on views of the asset and how amendments to the boundary, development layout and / or restricted building heights might help avoid the harm identified.

⁷⁸ 'Dorchester', in *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Dorset*, Volume 2, South east (London, 1970), pp. 104-132. British History Online

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol2/pp104-132> [accessed 6 October 2020].

Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity [NHLE ref: 1119072]**Summary**

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	Low	Low-medium
Grade II listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

6.153 The Church of the Holy Trinity is a grade II listed building located on the north side of High West Street in the centre of Dorchester, within the town's conservation area. It occupies a prime location within the town, its south aisle projecting forward of the established building line either side of it. It stands approximately 70m west of the Church of St Peter.

6.154 The parish of Holy Trinity is one of the 3 ancient parishes of Dorchester, the others being St Peter's and All Saints, and there has been a church present on this site since at least the 11th century.⁷⁹ It was also the largest of the three parishes – the only one to extend beyond the boundary of the town – and included land to the north of the town that brought it an income in the form of tithes.

6.155 The present church, however, dates from 1876 when Benjamin Ferrey – the same architect who, some 30 years previous, was responsible for the rebuilding of All Saints – was employed to design a replacement building for the site, although it does potentially incorporate some fabric from its predecessor; there are certainly fittings, monuments and floor-slabs that pre-date the building that stands there today.

6.156 Ferrey approached the design in his customary gothic revival style, but this time adopted the earlier, more modest decorative detailing of the Early English style: the same

stepped buttressed are present as at All Saints and the windows again placed high above street level, but this time containing more understated plate tracery. The most notable difference visually and in planform is the absence of a west tower; instead, a bellcote crowns the apex of the west gable of the nave, surmounted by a small, simple cross.

6.157 The proposed site lies approximately 250m north of the asset. Although physically relatively close, the asset it is not visible from this point and, likewise no part of the site is visible from the asset. This is because the church is situated within the close urban grain of the town centre, whose busy streets naturally frame, contain and curtail views out of the settlement. Furthermore, its lack of a spire or tower means that it is not visible above the roofline of the town from anywhere else in the site.

Significance

6.158 The significance of the asset is **high**. It derives principally from the building's architectural interest as a well-executed 19th century Gothic Revival church. The building's modest stature and decorative detailing, as well as its position closely hemmed in by buildings either side, mean that it is not so assertive in the streetscape as All Saints and St Peter's, but its south aisle, projecting forward of the building line, suitably announces its presence and it certainly makes a fine addition to the streetscape.

6.159 The survival internally of contemporary 19th century features and incorporation of fabric from the preceding church adds to the building's aesthetic appeal, but it also contributes to its historical value by illustrating the continuity of religious use of the site. The conspicuous siting of a church in the centre of the town is an important part of this value, illustrating the Church's conscious decision to place itself at the heart of social and commercial activity, and the building's purpose as a permanent reminder to its residents of their moral and religious duties towards the Church.

6.160 The building's association with Ferrey, who was responsible for several notable buildings within Dorchester and surrounding settlements and was a well-respected architect specialising in gothic revival architecture, also makes some contribution to its historical significance.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.161 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is **low**. This contribution stems exclusively from the building's historical relationship with the site: the part of the site between Westleaze and Slyer's Lane, from the water meadows on the edge of Dorchester to the site's northern

⁷⁹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1119072> [accessed 7th October 2020]

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boundary, was all part of the historic parish of Holy Trinity. None of the land appears to have been glebe land – that is, owned by the Church – but the incumbent of Holy Trinity will have received an income from the tithes that were wrought from the tenants of the land that fell within the parish boundaries. As such, there is an historical functional and associative relationship between the site and the church.

6.162 The reason this contribution remains low, however, is because this relationship is not legible on the ground: the lack of a physical or visual relationship between the church and the lands from which it drew tithes means that although they have a shared history it is not one that is appreciable from the existence of the site alone. Furthermore, Holy Trinity parish no longer exists – having been drawn into Dorchester parish now along with St Peter's, All Saints and Fordington – and the church was sold by the Anglican Church in the 1970s and is now in use for Catholic worship.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.163 The risk of harm to the asset from the development of this site is **low**. The development of the site will include the loss of some of the agricultural land that historically used to provide an income for the church, but this will not fundamentally affect the architectural or historical interest of the building.

Level of effect

6.164 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.165 In this instance there is little that can be done to avoid all harm if the site is developed because it is the principle of changing the use of the land from agricultural to developed that will cause the harm, and this cannot be overcome with design. However, the retention of the water meadows and some open space throughout the development does help to minimise the harm by retaining some important features that help illustrate the area's rural past. Likewise, harm may be minimised further through the careful siting, layout and design of development to take account of the features of the historic landscape character as discussed in Chapter 3.

6.166 Thought could also be given to interpretation or reference to the historic parish within the site to raise awareness of the site's deep historical connection with the

church and the town; this would not count as an enhancement but could be considered along with other mitigation works.

Church of St George [NHLE ref: 1292171]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	Low	Low-medium
Grade I listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

6.167 The Church of St George is a grade I listed building located to the north side of the High Street in Fordington, opposite the green. It stands within Dorchester Conservation Area at the far eastern boundary in what was historically the separate settlement of Fordington.

6.168 St George's was the parish church of Fordington, a substantial parish that one encircled Dorchester to its east, south and west. It is the product of centuries of investment by different incumbents who sought to remodel and update the building – a reflection of the considerable wealth brought in from the thousands of tithes within its parish boundaries. Surviving within the structure is fabric dating from the late-11th, 12th, 14th, 15th, 18th and 19th centuries, all incorporated into the extensive rebuild that took place in the early-20th century. The result of this latter intervention now forms the main body of the church, but incorporates important relics of the building's earlier forms, including the south aisle and porch (late-11th, 12th and 15th century), the substantial west tower (15th century), and numerous fittings and monuments from all through its long history.⁸⁰

6.169 The many hands at work and many interventions made have certainly resulted in a building of distinctive character, a little unbalanced in proportions but one that on the whole

⁸⁰ 'Dorchester', in An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Dorset, Volume 2, South east (London, 1970), pp. 104-132. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol2/pp104-132> [accessed 5

October 2020] and <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1292171> [accessed 5th October 2020].

holds together relatively well. This is due in part to the 20th century works adopting the Perpendicular Gothic style of the 15th century west tower, the building's most striking architectural feature externally. This tower is remarkably similar to that of the Church of St Peter in the centre of Dorchester: the whole structure is held steady by stepped, set-back buttresses that extend up the tower's three stages, topped with the same arrangement of crenellated parapet with crocketed pinnacles underpinned by gargoyles.

6.170 As with St Peter's Church, the tower is the building's most dominant feature, but the topography of the area and the church's location set back into its churchyard away from the street edge mean that it is less prominent in views around the area. As such, when it does reveal itself it is an impressive and pleasing sight, and the building as a whole is a distinctive feature of Fordington.

6.171 The south-east corner of the proposed site lies approximately 300m to the north of the asset. Although physically relatively close, the asset is not visible due to the intervening topography, tree cover and modern housing. Likewise, no part of the site is visible from the asset either; however, the site is visible from the northern boundary of the churchyard.

6.172 Further back into the site, around Coker's Frome Farm and on various points along the footpath leading from the farm towards Grey's Bridge, the top tier of the site starts to come into view as a lone accent on the periphery of the town. However, due to the building's location at the far eastern edge of the town and the site boundary, views from within the site are more transient and less frequent.

Significance

6.173 The significance of the asset is **high**. It derives principally from the building's architectural interest as a striking and substantial parish church. What survives of the historic fabric from earlier phases of the building adds to this, not only through the conscious design and quality of the architecture, but also fortuitously through the unique patina of age that materials naturally develop – a quality that can only be achieved given time. This weathering results in an accumulation of idiosyncrasies that impart an authentic sense of antiquity and tells a story that is unique to each building. For St George's, this natural – and largely inescapable – process adds to the visual charm and romance often attributed to such seasoned features, especially when viewed in contrast with work from later phases.

6.174 The survival of different phases of work – the incorporation of old with new – also has historical value as a physical record of the evolution of the church and the people who determined the building as we see it today. The number of times the building has been added to and altered and the

quality of the work illustrates the prosperity of the parish and the devotion – and wealth – of the incumbents and their parishioners. As with the spire of All Saints and the tower of St Peter's, the tower especially acts as a palpable and permanent reminder to local residents of their moral and religious duties towards the Church and is a local landmark.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.175 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is **low**. The site was not part of Fordington parish and so the asset does not have a historical associative or functional relationship with the land; nor does the land contribute to the inherent architectural interest of the building. However, the asset is visible from the certain points within the site and so what it does do is offer a perspective from which we may appreciate the building's role as a manifestation of the Church and as a local landmark.

6.176 Views of the tower are less numerous than with All Saints and St Peter's due to the topography, intervening development and tree cover, and the way the building is orientated in relation to the site, but are most notable on the approach from the north towards Dorchester and around Coker's Frome Farm, and to the middle and eastern end of the Charminster to Stinsford Road. These views, which come and go as you move around this part of the site, are not designed but incidental. Whilst that does not make them any less pleasing it does limit the contribution they make to the artistic, architectural and historical significance of the building. The serendipitous view of church tower and rural foreground seen in combination may be considered to have a scenic quality that contributes to the character of the area, but that quality concerns the contribution the church makes to the landscape, not what the landscape contributes to the heritage significance of the building.

6.177 As such, the importance of the site to the significance of the church is not so much in its appearance, use or its proximity, but that its undeveloped character allows us to read the relationship of the wider settlement with the building; it provides a different perspective that adds to our ability to understanding and appreciate the historical connection between town and church, but it is not fundamental to that relationship.

6.178 Views of the site from the churchyard of St George do not contribute specifically to the significance of the listed building but do have a role in our understanding and appreciation of Fordington; this contribution to the special interest of the settlement is considered in the discussion about Dorchester Conservation Area.

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Sensitivity and potential harm

6.179 The risk of harm to the asset from the development of this site is **low**. This is because the majority of the site that contributes to the significance of the asset will remain as open space and so its contribution will not change. There is potential for some views from the Charminster to Stinsford road to be lost as a result of the sections of 'housing east' and 'housing west' that extend south of the road, and through the associated 'strategic landscaping'. This would have a minor effect on the ability to appreciate the significance of the asset.

6.180 The site may appear in conjunction with the church tower in more distant views; however, this will largely be read as an extension of the existing settlement and will not challenge the church as a local landmark.

Level of effect

6.181 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.182 Harm to the asset could be minimised – or potentially avoided – by pulling the boundary of the housing back to the north of Charminster to Stinsford road. Furthermore, consideration should be given to how the layout of any development can incorporate glimpsed – or potentially even framed – views of the church and town. This will help maintain the ability to appreciate the asset's role as notable townscape feature – as well as celebrating its status as a local landmark – so it becomes a point of interest for the new development as well as the old.

6.183 The appropriateness of screening the development with strategic landscaping also requires greater consideration, as there is the potential for planting to restrict views of the asset and the town even further. Screening is not an excuse for poor design and the transition from urban to rural surroundings needs to be carefully designed, not glossed over.

6.184 To that end, it is recommended that the boundary in this area is reviewed and informed by verified views. This will help establish the extent of the impact of the development on views of the asset and how amendments to the boundary, development layout and / or restricted building heights might help avoid the harm identified.

Church of St Michael [NHLE ref: 1292171]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	Low	Low-medium
Grade I listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

6.185 The Church of St Michael is a grade I listed building located to the west of Church Lane, Stinsford, some 340m east of the A35. It is located to the south-west corner of Stinsford Conservation Area and approximately 70m beyond the western boundary of the grade II* registered Kingston Maurward park and garden. Contained within its churchyard are a further 10 listed buildings: nine are monuments, the other the gate piers and entrance to the churchyard.

6.186 St Michael's is the parish church of Stinsford, an ancient parish that historically bordered the parishes of Fordington and West Stafford to the south (now both part of Dorchester and West Stafford parish) and Holy Trinity to the east. It is a compact building set on rising ground between the flood plain of the River Frome to the south and a crest of land to the north and north-east, upon which the buildings at the core of the Kingston Maurward estate are located. It is surrounded to its north, east and south side by its churchyard, enclosed by a brick boundary wall, and to its west by Stinsford House and its grounds. Church lane approaches the building from the north and skirts round its eastern boundary before diminishing first into a track and then to a footpath. The area is heavily treed and (at the time of the site inspection, at least) lush with vegetation and mature planting that displays and reinforces the rurality of the location.

6.187 Fabric in the main body of the building dates from as early as the 13th century in the chancel, but with proportionate additions of the west tower, south aisle and north aisle in the 14th, 15th and 17th centuries respectively. The church was also considerably and repeatedly altered in the 19th and early-20th centuries. Despite these many interventions, the building has

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retained its diminutive footprint and scale, its tower only just taller than the chimneys of the adjacent 17th century Stinsford House and the whole building fitting comfortably inside the nave of its comparatively metropolitan neighbour St George, Fordington. Scale is no reflection of quality, however, and St Michael's has many fine architectural features, proportions and detailing that make it a dignified, yet charming, building.

6.188 The proposed site lies approximately 0.5km to the north-west of the asset. The tower is visible at points from Stinsford water meadows to the south and south west and also from the churchyard of St George; however, due to intervening topography, trees, the enclosed nature of the church's surroundings as well as the building's small scale, the asset is not visible from the site and, likewise, no part of the site is visible from the asset.

Significance

6.189 The significance of the asset is **high**. It derives principally from the building's architectural interest as a fine and charismatic church with extensive survival of historic fabric from the principal phases of its evolution. The survival and legibility of the building's phasing, as evidenced in its historic fabric, adds to this aesthetic quality not only through the conscious design and quality of the architecture, but also fortuitously through the unique patina of age that materials naturally develop – a quality that can only be achieved given time. This weathering results in an accumulation of idiosyncrasies that impart an authentic sense of antiquity and tells a story that is unique to each building. For St Michael's, this natural – and largely inescapable – process adds to the visual charm and romance often attributed to such seasoned buildings.

6.190 The compact character of the building is not only visually appealing but has important historical value, as it reflects the building's role as a rural parish church, serving a much smaller and dispersed community than that of the parish churches of Dorchester or Fordington. This is reinforced by the secluded siting and verdant setting of the church, which creates a private environment for commemoration of the deceased and spiritual reflection and contributes to its scenic qualities; indeed, considered in conjunction with its peaceful churchyard and the surrounding rural landscape, the church fulfills what many would consider to be a scene of picturesque and rural idyll.

6.191 The building has further historical value as it contains within it, and its churchyard, a multitude of monuments that together form a biography of the local community, including the Hardy family. Not only was St Michael's the family church

of the writer Thomas Hardy – with family members and friends interred there – but was the inspiration for the church of the fictional village of Mellstock (based on Stinsford) in 'Under the Greenwood Tree'. Furthermore, the church (and family events associated with it), the churchyard and even some of its residents became the subject of several of Hardy's poems. As such, the church has strong associative value as an important inspiration for Hardy's fictional and autobiographical writings.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.192 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is low and stems exclusively from the building's historical relationship with the site: the part of the site between Slyer's Lane, the B3150 and the A35 and as far north as Waterston Ridge was all part of the historic parish of Stinsford. None of the land appears to have been glebe land⁸¹ – but the incumbent of St Michael's will have received an income from the tithes that were wrought from the tenants of the land that fell within the parish boundaries. As such, there is an historical functional and associative relationship between the site and the church. The reason this contribution remains low, however, is because this relationship is not legible on the ground due to the lack of a physical or visual relationship between the church and the site.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.193 The risk of harm to the asset from the development of this site is **low**. The development of the site will include the loss of some of the agricultural land that historically used to provide an income for the church, but this will not fundamentally affect the architectural or historical interest of the building.

6.194 The aesthetic values of the church will be unaffected due to the lack of a physical or visual relationship with the site. As such, the building's associative values with Hardy and the picturesque qualities of the area that inspired his writings will not be harmed by the development of the site.

Level of effect

6.195 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.196 In this instance there is little that can be done to avoid all harm if the site is developed because it is the principle of changing the use of the land from agricultural to developed that will cause the harm, and this cannot be overcome with

⁸¹ On the 1839 tithe map the land is owned exclusively by either the Earl of Ilchester or William Grey Pitt (owner and occupier of Kingston Maurward).

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design. However, the retention of the water meadows and some open space throughout the development does help to minimise the harm by retaining some important features that help illustrate the area's rural past. Likewise, harm may be minimised further through the careful siting, layout and design of development to take account of the features of the historic landscape character as discussed in Chapter 3.

6.197 Thought could also be given to interpretation or reference to the historic parish within the site to raise awareness of that part of the site's connection with the church and the rural parish of Stinsford to the east; this would not count as an enhancement but could be considered along with other mitigation works.

Stinsford Farmhouse [NHLE ref: 1119857]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	Low	Low-medium
Grade II listed building	The site forms a marginally important part of the setting of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of high significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

6.198 Stinsford Farmhouse is a grade II listed building located on the eastern side of Hollow Hill (just off the A35), approximately 1.2km northeast of Dorchester and 1km west of Lower Bockhampton. The building stands within Stinsford Conservation Area towards its eastern boundary, and c.60m west of the grade II* Kingston Maurward RPG.

6.199 The farmhouse is a 2-storey L-plan building with slate roof, rendered walls, gabled central porch, and sash windows. It is the last remaining historic building at Stinsford Farm, the possible home farm to Stinsford House [NHLE ref: 1154889] further south. The NHLE listing states that the building was originally an 18th century dairy house, with 17th century roof structure. The 1841 Stinsford Tithe map indicates that the farm comprised farmhouse, outbuildings, yard, and garden. It depicts an 'L' shaped building in the same location as the extant building, but its function is not stated and the wing of

the building is shown to the north, not the south, as it is on subsequent OS maps. This seems to suggest that the extant building has been substantially modified (or that there is a cartographic error on the Tithe map).

6.200 In addition to the main farm complex, the Tithe map indicates that the farm included some semi-detached workers cottages approx. 170m to the north. These cottages remain extant and are grade II listed [NHLE ref: 1119858]. Due to intervening vegetation and topography, there is no visual understanding of the spatial relationship between the farm and cottages.

6.201 Much of the rest of the historic farm complex appears to have been demolished in the 1970s and replaced by modern farm buildings. Today, the building forms part of Kingston Maurward agricultural college, with the main estate and RPG lying to the east of the farm. The building is clearly read as a historic farmhouse, with several large modern farm buildings to the rear (south). The building retains a little agricultural land to the east and north but lost some of its historic landholding to Birkin House to the north in the 19th century and yet more to modern development around Stinsford House to the southwest.

6.202 The proposed development site is located approximately 0.3km to the west of the building, beyond the A35. The Tithe map indicates that in the mid-19th century the landholding of the farm included most of the land in the eastern part of the site, up to Slyer's Lane and Higher Kingston Farm, including 'Eweleaze Barn'; however, the historical and functional relationship between the farm and the land within the site cannot be appreciated visually at ground level due to intervening vegetation and the A35, although there may be some views of the site from the upper floor of the farmhouse.

Figure 6.33: Principal (north) elevation of Stinsford Farmhouse



Figure 6.34: View northeast towards the site (and Stinsford Cottages) from Stinsford Farmhouse



This photograph was taken from the central entrance to the farmhouse. The trees in the middle distance are part of the southern shelterbelt of Birkin House and those lining Hollow Hill, beyond which are the cottages, then the A35 and then the site.

Significance

6.203 The significance of this asset is **high**. It is derived primarily from its inherent architectural and historical interest as a farmhouse dating from the 17th and 18th centuries that once formed part of a historic agricultural complex. Most of this interest is derived from the building's age, form, and fabric, but it has a functional relationship with certain elements of its setting (e.g. agricultural landscape, workers cottages, Stinsford House) that contribute to its historical illustrative value and understanding of its function and development.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.204 The contribution the site makes to the significance of the asset is **low** and stems exclusively from the building's historical relationship with the site, as part of the site includes land that once formed part of the farm complex.

6.205 The reason this contribution remains low, however, is because this relationship is not legible on the ground due to the A35 and intervening vegetation that have visually and spatially divorced the asset from the site. The lack of a physical or visual relationship between the farmhouse and the lands from which it drew income means that although they have a shared history it is not one that is appreciable from the existence of the site alone. Furthermore, the building has lost the associated historic farm buildings and immediate relationship with its agricultural setting, which would have made it legible as the farmhouse of a separate farm unit, and has now been drawn in to become part of the wider Kingston Maurward College estate.

6.206 It is possible that there may be some visibility from the upper floor of the house, but these views have amenity value

rather than directly contributing to the heritage values of the asset.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.207 The risk of potential harm to Stinsford Farmhouse is **low**. The indicative masterplan for the site indicates that the land that was historically associated with the farmhouse would be developed as Open Space South and Housing East. As such, the development of the site will include the loss of some of the agricultural land that historically used to provide an income for the farm, but this will not fundamentally affect the architectural or historical interest of the building.

Level of effect

6.208 The development of the site would result in a low level of harm to an asset of high significance. Therefore, the overall level of effect on the historic environment is **low-medium**.

Options for sustainable development

6.209 In this instance there is little that can be done to avoid all harm if the site is developed because it is the principle of changing the use of the land from agricultural to developed that will cause the harm, and this cannot be overcome with design. However, the retention of some of the land formerly associated with the farmhouse as open space does help to minimise the harm by retaining some important features that help illustrate the area's rural past. Likewise, harm may be minimised further through the careful siting, layout and design of development to take account of the features of the historic landscape character as discussed in Chapter 3.

Group of listed buildings at Wolfeton House

- Wolfeton House [NHLE ref: 1324021] – Grade I
- Stable block 10 metres west of Wolfeton House [NHLE ref: 1303990] – Grade II
- The Riding House 128m north of Wolfeton House [NHLE ref: 1119102] – Grade II*
- Icehouse and store hut 386m metres northeast of Wolfeton House [NHLE ref: 1304029] – Grade II
- Gate piers and flanking walls 50 metres east south east of Wolfeton House [NHLE ref: 1119101] – Grade II
- Gate piers and low flanking walls 125 metres south east of Wolfeton House [NHLE ref: 1154120] – Grade II

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	Low	None	None
Grade I, II* and II	The site forms a marginally important part of the heritage significance of the asset and this contribution to heritage significance may be affected by the development of the site.	The significance of the heritage asset will not be harmed.	The development of the site does not interact with the asset or its significance.

Description

6.210 The grade I listed Wolfeton House is an early Tudor and Elizabethan manor house with attached gatehouse, located approximately 1.4km to the northwest of Dorchester and 0.5km south of the historic core of Charminster. It occupies a southwest facing spur at the confluence of the River Cerne and River Frome. Today, all that survives of the two-storey, stone rubble and ashlar courtyard-plan building is one range – the south wing – most of which is of 16th century date (with extensive alterations and restorations made in the 19th century). The house includes many important internal features including lavish original carvings and woodwork, plasterwork, and a monumental stone staircase.

6.211 The attached gatehouse faces east and once formed part of the eastern range of the house. Constructed in limestone rubble it is two storeys high with a slate roof and has an off-centre central archway entrance with two towers of different sizes. According to the attached date stone, it was completed in 1534, but the towers appear to be of earlier date than the rest of the gatehouse and may have been reused from an earlier fortified building on the site.⁸² The gatehouse is approached by a short drive that connects to a track leading south to the B3147 and north to Charminster. However, it is possible that the possible Roman Road/ track through Burton DMV may have continued on to the gatehouse and/ or the adjacent Wolfeton DMV.

6.212 Located 128m north of Wolfeton House is the grade II* listed Riding House, a rare, early example of this type of

building used for the elite training of horses and riders. This late-16th century building is constructed primarily in ashlar stone with a later coursed rubble wall to the north. It is of two storeys, although the upper floor is a later insertion. The building was altered and for many years it was used as a barn, but features such as its mullioned windows were out of keeping with this function. Traces of two subsidiary ranges at right angles to the building suggest the presence of stable ranges flanking an open-air manège, which lay to the north of the riding house. Reportedly, the upper floor would have been used for practicing archery.

6.213 The Wolfeton Estate also includes a series of other grade II listed buildings. That closest to the house is the stable block, which stands 10m to the west of Wolfeton House on the south side of the yard. This single storey building with loft is constructed in dressed stone with ashlar quoins and has a clay pantile roof and a brick and cobble flooring. It is of late-17th century date, although the rear wall may well be earlier, and the windows and doors are 19th century insertions.

6.214 There are also two sets of grade II listed gate piers and flanking walls that stand 50m and 125m southeast of the house. Both are of early-19th century date and comprise rusticated piers with ogival capstones and massive stone ball finials. The flanking walls are around 1m high and comprise dressed stone with coping stones.

6.215 Finally, there is an icehouse and store hut 386m northeast of Wolfeton House. This structure is of 18th century or later date and is entirely subterranean with low entry passage on west side. It has a rectangular chalk cob hut built over it with a pitched galvanised roof, cast iron window and plank door.

6.216 The gardens surrounding the house retain the layout and a significant proportion of the original 17th century enclosure walls.⁸³ The late-19th century and early-20th century shrubby walks around the river and pond, to the west of the house, also survive.⁸⁴ The wider landscape is more fragmentary and neither the Tithe map nor later OS maps depict a parkland area around the house. There is agricultural land to the west, south and east of the estate but, due to later reorganisation, they show no trace of a parkland boundary.

6.217 The historic approach to the house from Charminster survives but has been extended to run south down to the A37, which runs through the surrounding countryside to the west and south of the house at a distance of 260-325m. The present grounds include the remains of a medieval settlement [DHER ref: MDO761], located approximately 177m northeast of the main house, and all the aforementioned assets are

⁸² The Landmark Trust. 2016. Wolfeton Gatehouse History Album, p.7

⁸³ <https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/wolfeton-house>

⁸⁴ <https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/wolfeton-house>

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located in the southern spur of the Charminster Conservation Area.

6.218 Wolfeton House was built by the Trenchard Family one of the most prominent family's in Dorset, who also owned a manor in Lytchett Matravers. In the 18th century, the Trenchards lived mainly at their other house and Wolfeton was eventually let as a farmhouse in the late 18th century. By then it was owned by the Hennings, who had been both cousins and lawyers to the Trenchards. In the middle of the 19th century, they sold it on to yet more cousins, the Westons, and it was they who oversaw the extensive remodelling and renovations.

6.219 In 1874 the house was sold to Mr Bankes, a younger son of the Kingston Lacy family. Following the death of Mrs Bankes at Wolfeton in 1947, it was taken over by her granddaughter, the Countess Zamoyska, who divided the house into flats. Subsequently, the Thimblebys took over ownership of the house and have restored what remains of the house and its gatehouse to their former appearance. Since 1994, the Landmark Trust has arranged the letting of the gatehouse for holidays on behalf of the owners and the Riding House has been opened for weddings. Thomas Hardy reportedly visited Wolfeton in 1900 and the tale of Lady Penelope D'Arcy, the second wife of George Trenchard, appears in his book of short stories, 'A Group of Noble Dames'.⁸⁵

6.220 The proposed site lies c.0.5km to the east of the principal house and takes a course southwest at approximately the same distance until it terminates at the junction of the B3147 and A37 (c.0.4km south of the principal house). The intervening land between the assets and the site is all fields put to pasture. Views from the listed buildings and grounds out across the wider rural landscape are limited to the north and northeast by rising topography and more generally in all directions by vegetation, which includes tree cover around the gardens, tree-lined field boundaries and screening along the A37. This could change in wintertime when the vegetation thins, in which case there may be some intervisibility between the house and grounds and parts of the site south and downhill from the assets.

Figure 6.35: The grade II* listed Riding House



View of the Riding House looking southwest from a public footpath to the northeast; the gable end and pitched roof can be seen above later buildings. In the foreground part of the earthworks of the DMV can just be made out.

Figure 6.36: View of Wolfeton looking northwest from Poundbury



The trees in the middle-distance centre-left are those that now enclose the listed buildings; the field adjacent to them to the far left is part of the site proposed to remain as open space. The path of the Link Road goes through this field but at a point beyond the edge of this photo.

⁸⁵ <https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/search-and-book/properties/wolfeton-gatehouse-13195/#Overview> [accessed 06.10.2020]

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Figure 6.37: View south towards the site



This photograph was taken from the footpath to the north of the listed buildings looking south towards the site. Because of the tree cover and topography, the site is not visible at this point but is beyond the far field in the centre of the photo.

Figure 6.38: View east towards the site



This photograph was taken from the footpath to the north of the listed buildings towards the part of the site to the east of the house (the field around Lower Burton Farm).

Significance

6.221 The significance of all these listed buildings is **high**. Although now only a fragment of what was once a much larger house, Wolfeton remains one of Dorset's finest manors and an asset of national interest. It derives its significance primarily from its exceptional architectural and historical illustrative value as a very fine example of an Elizabethan manor, with earlier medieval components and later additions that are not only aesthetically appealing but document the continuation of occupation of the site over many centuries.

6.222 It also has considerable evidential value with the extant building and historical sources combining to inform our evolution of the house to its current form, and the social and

economic reasons for the changes that it underwent; this not only contributes to our understanding and appreciation of the house but extends to enhance our understanding of the historical division and management of land in the region, as well as economic and social influences and hierarchy. Any buried archaeological remains of the other wings of the house also have the potential to augment our understanding of the house's development and form, and help to fill in gaps in the (often-contradictory) historical sources. The house also has some historical associative value as a result of its prominent owners and cultural link to the work of Thomas Hardy.

6.223 The riding house especially is of exceptional architectural and historical illustrative value as the earliest surviving example in England of a rare building form; it may even be modelled on a Riding House built by the then Prince Henry VIII at St James Palace. Its early date means that it too may have some evidential value in terms of building fabrics, form, and construction. The buried archaeological remains of the other stable blocks will also be highly informative on the Riding House's use.

6.224 The other assets similarly derive most of their significance from their special architectural and historical illustrative value, as well-surviving examples of their kind. All of the assets are recognised for their inherent interest, but they also have strong group value as together they document the history of the estate, each one adding to the aesthetic and illustrative values of the others, which cumulatively enhances our experience, understanding and appreciation of the historic estate.

6.225 In terms of setting, the listed buildings have important historical and functional relationships with each other that are evidenced spatially and, in some cases, visually. The extant gardens of the estate are also important and contribute to the historical illustrative value of the main house. Having been created and maintained on income derived largely from sheep farming, the wider agricultural setting of the estate also contributes to their significance. It also helps to provide privacy and a sense of isolation, which is important to the appreciation of the estate as a high-status residence.

Contribution of the site to significance

6.226 The contribution of the site to the significance of the assets is **low** and stems almost exclusively from the building's historical relationship with the site, as the site includes a small portion of agricultural land that the Charminster Tithe map apportionment indicates was once part of the landholding of Wolfeton House.

6.227 The reason this contribution remains low, however, is because this relationship is not legible on the ground due to the topography of the land, later interventions in the landscape (e.g. the reorganisation of field boundaries) and intervening

vegetation, which means that the assets are visually and spatially divorced from the site. The lack of a physical or visual relationship between the assets and this part of the site from which, historically, the owners drew an income means that although they have a shared history it is not one that is appreciable from the existence of the site alone.

6.228 The part of the site that could have some intervisibility with the house and grounds (to the south), were it not for the tree cover, does not have any known relationship with the estate.

Sensitivity and potential harm

6.229 The risk of harm to Wolfeton House and its associated listed buildings is **none**. The indicative masterplan indicates that the land historically associated with the assets lies within Open Space South, although part of it is to be developed as the Link Road. The Link Road would be routed approximately 790m east of the grade I House and would involve the development of a former small strip of Wolfeton House's landholding within the Dorchester water meadows. Due to the intervening topography and vegetation, there would be no intervisibility between Wolfeton Estate and the Link Road; it is also unlikely that any associated noise and light could be experienced given the distance between the two. Any development further east within the site (e.g. Housing West) would also not be experienced from or on conjunction with the house or estate due to the distance between them and the intervening topography and vegetation.

Level of effect

6.230 Taking into account the significance of this asset (high) and the risk of harm to their significance (none), the overall level of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on the historic environment is judged to be **none**.

Registered parks and gardens

6.231 The location of the registered parks and gardens potentially sensitive to setting change as a result of the development of the site is shown on Figure 6.39 (below).