



Bridport

Conservation Area Appraisal

Working for West Dorset

Contents of report

1.	Approach, aims and executive summary	1
2.	Setting	2
3.	Historical background, evolution, archaeology and building uses	8
4.	Building materials and local building traditions	18
5.	Townscape description of individual Sub-Areas	20
5.1	South Street	20
5.2	East and West Streets	24
5.3	South East Quadrant	28
5.4	St Andrew's Road	32
5.5	Coneygar Hill Area	34
5.6	Victoria Grove	38
5.7	South West Quadrant	41
5.8	West Allington	48
5.9	North Allington	50
6.	Problems and detriments	52
7.	Review of the Conservation Area boundary	54
8.	Bibliography	56
9.	Appendix A	57

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Page 2, Item 1.2 – text to read

Bridport was one of the first Conservation Areas in the District to be designated, in October 1972. It has since (1994, 2000, 2004 and 2010) been extended to its present boundaries, to embrace over 500 Listed Buildings and a number of distinct character areas.

Page 2, Item 1.3 – text to read

In recent years, there has been increasing recognition that our experience of an historic area depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings – it also includes the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; on a particular mix of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and design of contemporary buildings; on the quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on views along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of spaces. As such, this appraisal contains a general description of the history, evolution, settlement layout, building uses, materials and traditions of Bridport and a character statement of each of the nine Sub-Areas listed below. These are identified on the pullout map at the back of the appraisal: -

1. South Street
2. East and West Streets
3. South East Quadrant
4. St Andrew's Road (refer also to Appendix A)
5. Coneygar Hill Area
6. Victoria Grove
7. South West Quadrant
8. West Allington
9. North Allington

Appendix A provides a character statement of the St Andrew's Road, Cemetery and Skilling conservation area extensions of 2010.

Each of the Sub-Area descriptions and Appendix A provide a more detailed analysis of the buildings and open spaces, and highlight key buildings, building groups and buildings of local importance that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Where there is no reference to particular buildings or spaces, this does not imply that they are of negative value or are unworthy of retention and respect.

The appraisal draws attention to issues and problems within Bridport, which may be threatening to its character, and reviews the geographical boundary of the Conservation Area.

Public consultation, including changes to the Conservation Area boundary, took place over a six-week period from 7 January – 18 February 2004. Following consultation, the district council's Executive Committee adopted the Bridport Conservation Area Appraisal on the 20th April 2004 as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Adopted West Dorset District Local Plan. In 2010, the appraisal was reviewed and considered still relevant and useful in guiding planning in Bridport. The review included a reassessment of the conservation area boundary and the proposal to extend it in three areas: St Andrew's Road, Bridport Cemetery and Skilling. On 12 October 2010, after public consultation (May-June 2010), the Executive Committee approved these extensions and their incorporation as Appendix A to the Bridport Conservation Area Appraisal.

Page 3, Item 1.4.2, c) Settlement Layout or Pattern, I. – text to read

Retain and respect the identities of each Sub-Area, Skilling and Bridport Cemetery in the Conservation Area.



Page 4, Item 1.4.2, f) – sub-heading to read

Characteristic to all Sub-Areas, Skilling and Bridport Cemetery

Page 32, Item 5.4 – heading to read

Sub-Area 4: St Andrew’s Road and Appendix A

(Please also refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal)

Page 54, Item 7 – heading to read

Review of the Conservation Area Boundary 2004

Page 56, Item 8, Bibliography – second paragraph, last sentence to read

West Dorset District Council, licence Number 100024307 2010

Page 57, Appendix A inserted

This Appendix covers the Bridport conservation area extensions at St Andrew’s Rd and Skilling and the satellite conservation area at Bridport Cemetery.

Amendments to the Bridport Townscape Description & Sub-Area Map (a pullout at the back of the appraisal)

The map has extra notes in the Legend under “Conservation Area Boundary”; under Copyright, the Ordnance Survey licence number is amended to “100024307 2010”; and again under Copyright, there is the new sentence “Additional Map Data © West Dorset District Council 2010”.



1 Approach, Aims and Executive Summary

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

- At the strategic level, provide a basis for monitoring and controlling change and threats to the special interest of the Conservation Area;
- Provide a basis for guidance in assessing planning applications for development;
- Identify whether there is a need to review the Conservation Area boundary;
- Create a framework for future enhancement schemes.

1.2 Bridport was one of the first Conservation Areas in the District to be designated, in October 1972. It has since (1994 & 2000) been extended to its present boundaries, to embrace over 500 Listed Buildings and a number of distinct character areas.

1.3 In recent years, there has been increasing recognition that our experience of an historic area depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings – it also includes the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; on a particular mix of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and design of contemporary buildings; on the quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on views along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of spaces. As such, this appraisal contains a general description of the history, evolution, settlement layout, building uses, materials and traditions of Bridport and a character statement of each of the nine Sub-Areas listed below. These are identified on the pullout map at the back of the appraisal: -

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2. East and West Streets
3. South East Quadrant
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6. Victoria Grove
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8. West Allington
9. North Allington

Each Sub-Area description provides a more detailed analysis of the buildings and open spaces, and highlights key buildings, building groups and buildings of local importance that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Where there is no reference to particular buildings or spaces, this does not imply that they are of negative value or are unworthy of retention and respect.

The appraisal concludes by drawing attention to issues and problems within Bridport, which may be threatening to its character, and reviewing the geographical boundary of the Conservation Area.

Public consultation, including the changes to the Conservation Area boundary, took place over a six-week period from 7 January – 18 February 2004. Following consultation, the district council's Executive Committee adopted the Bridport Conservation Area Appraisal on

the 20 April 2004 as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Adopted West Dorset District Local Plan.

The **Executive Summary** contains a set of development principles that emerge from the appraisal, aimed at promoting and reinforcing the existing qualities of the character of Bridport.

1.4.1 Overall there are some strong character themes evident in Bridport. It is important that these are recognised and that every attempt is made to preserve or enhance the character of Bridport through controlled development and sensitive enhancement. The strong character themes in Bridport can be identified as: -

- a) The wide East, West and South Streets with their characteristic 'T' shape and historic market place.
- b) The pattern of land/burgage plots that with the road system establish the historic layout of the town.
- c) The legacy of the town's net and cordage industry in terms of the buildings, industrial gardens/rope walks and open spaces required by the industry and its workforce.
- d) The impressive views from within the town to the surrounding countryside and conversely.
- e) The physical connection between the town, its river valleys and adjoining and surrounding hills.
- f) The urban variety and visual richness encouraged by a long history and the different types of building/land uses, architectural styles and traditions that economic and social needs have evolved.

1.4.2 The following **guidelines** summarise the character appraisal in terms of preserving or enhancing the Conservation Area, improving its nature or appearance and our understanding of it, setting objectives and outlining priorities for action. Reference should also be made to relevant policies in the Adopted West Dorset District Local Plan (WDDLDP) and the emerging new Local Plan.

a) Setting

It is essential that any future development within the visual envelope¹ of the hills respect views.

b) Historical Background, Evolution and Archaeology

Archaeological significance and potential

- I. Opportunities should be taken to build up a more comprehensive picture of the archaeology of Bridport (and Allington) from site survey, archaeological investigation, watching briefs and documentary research. Also of value would be research into housing types, status and social and economic linkages and architectural and archaeological recording of buildings and landscape features relating to the structures of the rope, twine and netting industries.
- II. Where a planning application is likely to have archaeological implications, the application should be accompanied by an appropriate archaeological assessment and/or evaluation report. For information on this matter, the Advice and Management Archaeologist at Dorset County Council should be consulted.

¹The geographical area marked on a plan, within which, a feature, building, object or development is visible.

c) Settlement Layout or Pattern

- I. Retain and respect the identities of each Sub-Area in the Conservation Area.

Road system

- II. Preserve the historic highway network (including footpaths that were once highways), especially the T-shape together with its weekly market.
- III. Respect and as necessary emulate the hierarchy and pattern of historic highways.
- IV. Avoid cul-de-sacs and emulate the historic highway strength of permeability (offering a number of alternative ways through the town or part of the town).
- V. Roads to be parallel to the boundaries of burgage plots and to respect the integrity of existing building or boundary frontages.

Property divisions or burgage plots

- VI. Respect plots and their ratio in order to sustain the shape of the town, the scale of the built environment and industrial legacy. Respect the wider rural plot that can be found in Allington and the broader type of plot that can be found behind the medieval burgage plots.
- VII. Retain the boundary walls (and the occasional railings) of burgage plots and other land plots as such walls have traditionally defined plots and therefore delineated the shape of the town and the edge of the highway or alleyway.
- VIII. Retain surviving industrial gardens or rope walks.
- IX. Building set backs to respect historic precedent.
- X. Respect the historic context and retain the contrast provided by the grander plots/substantial gardens.
- XI. Maintain the parallel orientation of buildings and boundaries to road frontages.

Open spaces

- XII. Retain and seek to improve open space that reinforces the town's historic character or layout.

d) Building Uses

- I. The varied uses and activities generated by the occupancy of the buildings in the various parts of the Conservation Area form an essential part of the evolution, identity and vitality of historic Bridport.
- II. It is important that the mix of uses and the correct scale of buildings and activities be retained and encouraged. It is important that shift does not cause the historic retail and business function of the historic 'T' to shrink towards its centre.

e) Building Materials and Local Building Traditions

- I. The large number of historic buildings of quality construction and of natural materials and the tradition of living and working in close proximity have produced a distinctive townscape, which should be respected and sustained.
- II. Preserve and respect the traditional treatment of public ways and other forms of access.
- III. Respect the traditions of the net and cordage industry.

f) Characteristic to all Sub-Areas

- I. Safeguard the traditional urban or rural character of the public ways into the Conservation Area and its Sub-Areas.
- II. Maintain important public viewsheds, views and glimpses in the Conservation Area and also where they contribute to its setting.
- III. Preserve the visual importance and character of landmarks and focal points, and in particular, Coneygar Hill, St Mary's church and the town hall that are prevalent landmarks.
- IV. Retain the integrity of significant building groups.
- V. Preserve the historic scale and integrity of building frontages on highways, alleyways and other traditional forms of access.
- VI. A building's status and use should be expressed in a manner that reflects local tradition.
- VII. Care should be taken with alterations and repairs to buildings that have been identified as being of "local importance".
- VIII. Respect significant open space that reinforces historic character/layout or is associated with the net and cordage industry.
- IX. Retain and seek to improve important natural features (including hedgerows and green banks) and trees of historic and amenity value.
- X. Safeguard the town's tradition of hand painted business advertisements.
- XI. Preserve traditional ironwork and where suitable encourage the reinstatement of ironwork.

g) Sub-Area 1: South Street

- I. Preserve the significance, character and vitality of Bucky Doo square.
- II. Support the significance of the parish churchyard and its role as a link between the town and the countryside.

h) Sub-Area 2: East & West Streets

Respect the visual connection between the west side of the Sub-Area and Colmers Hill.

i) Sub-Area 3: South East Quadrant

Preserve and seek to improve the character of the riverbank and its role in the setting of the Sub-Area.

j) Sub-Area 5: Coneygar Hill Area

- I. Safeguard the setting of Downe Hall, Mountfield and Coneygar Hill and in particular, safeguard the large and mature gardens and woodland fringes that act as a 'buffer' between Coneygar Hill and surrounding development.
- II. Support the character of the landscape of Mountfield, Coneygar Hill and Downe Hall as a whole.
- III. The area's character is derived from the varied expressions of status (larger plots and houses set in substantial grounds) and care should be taken to ensure that such status is not diminished needlessly. The same care should also be applied to the wealth of features and buildings that attend or relate to such status, for example, former garden houses, lodges, stables, estate cottages, garages and coach houses.

k) Sub-Area 7: South West Quadrant

- I. Preserve the character of the riverbank and its role in the setting of the Sub-Area.
- II. Preserve the visual link between the Bridport Industries building and Rope Walks car park.
- III. Safeguard the physical and visual eminence of St Mary's church.
- IV. Respect the industrial heritage that is concentrated on the St Michael's Trading Estate.

l) Sub-Areas 8 & 9: North & West Allington

Safeguard the setting of Allington Hill.

m) Problems & Detriments

Impact of traffic

- I. Where possible, ameliorate the impact of traffic and the effect of public and private car parking on the Conservation Area and its setting.

Street furniture, poles and wires and shop fronts

- II. Improve the standard of street furniture and remove overhead wires when opportunity arises.

Building maintenance & other urban issues

- III. Support the appropriate reuse of the Literary and Scientific Institute.
- IV. Reduce, by appropriate means, the under-use of buildings.

- V. Encourage the timely and correct methods of building maintenance and repair of historic buildings, features and boundaries.
- VI. As opportunity arises, improve the standard of material changes to unlisted buildings and the design of shop fronts.

Historic town layout or pattern

- VII. Where necessary, take the opportunity to reinstate street definition and plot and highway boundaries.

Buildings of Local Importance and potential new Listed Buildings

- VIII. Of those buildings that are of Local Importance, consider No. 5 West Allington; the Bridport Industries building; 4-22 Victoria Grove; Nos. 6-16 West Allington; and Mountfield in terms of their potential for listing.

2 Setting

- 2.1 In West Dorset, Bridport is an important town with a population of about 8000. It lies at the junction of the A35 and A3066 and is 16 miles west of Dorchester. The whole area lies within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)² designated because of the high quality of its landscape and scenery. The town is also within, and has a major influence on, the Brit Valley Landscape Character Area³. The setting of Bridport is primarily river valleys that bisect it and hills within and around the town, forming a varied topography. The old meadows that are associated with these valleys provide an important network of accessible open spaces as well as “ buffers” between parts of the town.
- 2.2 Watton Hill, Allington Hill and Coneygar Hill, especially, provide readily accessible areas of public open space close to the town centre. Colmers Hill to the west is a particularly strong and evocative landmark with its pine trees planted on the summit. Hyde Hill to the east and the hills either side of West Bay, North Hill and West Cliff, also contribute to the wider setting of the town. The hills inside and outside Bridport are integral to its character, providing dramatic views and a strong “sense of place”. The importance of these hills and valleys to the way the town grew, and their contribution towards the setting of the town, is reflected in many of them being designated as Land of Local Landscape Importance (LLLLI) in the West Dorset District Local Plan.

² The Dorset AONB was designated in 1957 by the then Countryside Commission. The AONB Partnership, which includes West Dorset District Council, is preparing a Management Plan for the Area - to be completed by April 2004.

³ Defined in the West Dorset 2000 Survey of the Built & Natural Environment of West Dorset, *Landscape Character Areas* adopted by West Dorset District Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 12 February 2002.

3 Historical Background, Evolution, Archaeology and Building Uses

3.1 Evolution

A lack of excavation and systematic research hinders the understanding of the archaeology of the town. However, an appraisal of maps and other historic records provides the following overview (fig 1).

3.1.1 Saxon, Medieval & Post-Medieval

- a) There is some agreement that Bridport is likely to be the location for the fortified Saxon 'burh' called *Bridian*. Comparison can be made with the known Saxon burhs of Christchurch and Wareham that occupy similar promontory/river mouth positions. There were probably defensive ditches and ramparts around the burh, and the Saxon burh's church would have occupied the same site as St Mary's, which together with the market in broad South Street would have been the focal point of daily life. At right angles to South Street, streets would have led to the town's east and west defences and it is possible that Gundry Lane, Church Lane and Folly Mill Lane were such streets. Although property divisions fronting South Street are generally considered to be medieval in origin, they may in places reflect or fossilise earlier, Saxon property boundaries.
- b) In the 13th century, additional property boundaries were marked out to the north elongating South Street and creating equally broad East and West Streets. This planned extension created the definitive 'T' shape of the town. The long, narrow plots of land may reflect early rope-making activity, and characterise the 13th century planned 'new town' on East-West Streets. South Street lost trade and importance as the market moved to East and West Streets and their junction became the centre of town life. A defensive ditch was dug, (roughly following Rax Lane), to protect the northern extreme of the 'New Town'.
- c) To the north of the burh, a separate Saxon settlement, Allington, also grew up on the old Broadwindsor Road. The village was a staggered crossroads whose minor arms connected the village to Symondsbury in the west, and, via a river crossing, Bridport to the east. Allington's parish church was built on the east arm of the crossroads.
- d) Apart from several known medieval structures, three of which are standing, it is possible that archaeological material from other major religious and public buildings may survive, as well as evidence of relatively undisturbed burgage plots and economic activity, and that earlier structures and building fragments are incorporated in later buildings.
- e) By the 18th century, the town had grown further down South Street and along East and West Streets - outside the original entrances into the town - and uphill along Wykes Court Lane (North Street) and Stake Lane (Barrack Street). Alleyways such as Chancery Lane and Globe Alley are considered to be a feature of Medieval street plans. This modest growth entered the neighbouring parishes of Allington, Bradpole and Walditch. Allington similarly began to grow south towards Bridport, and the construction of large town houses began, the most prestigious being Downe Hall. By the 1750s, West and East Street were part of the great east/west turnpike route, which along with the market, boosted business in these areas. Many medieval properties in the main streets were rebuilt or refaced in the architectural fashion of the time and generally, kept within the existing property boundary. The removal of St Andrew's chapel and the shambles at the junction of South, East and West Streets was followed by the construction of the new town hall in 1786. This rationalisation improved the market and eased the movement of coaching traffic in East and West Streets. Adjoining the town hall in South Street, a corn market was built. Its removal in the 20th century led to the creation of Bucky Doo Square.

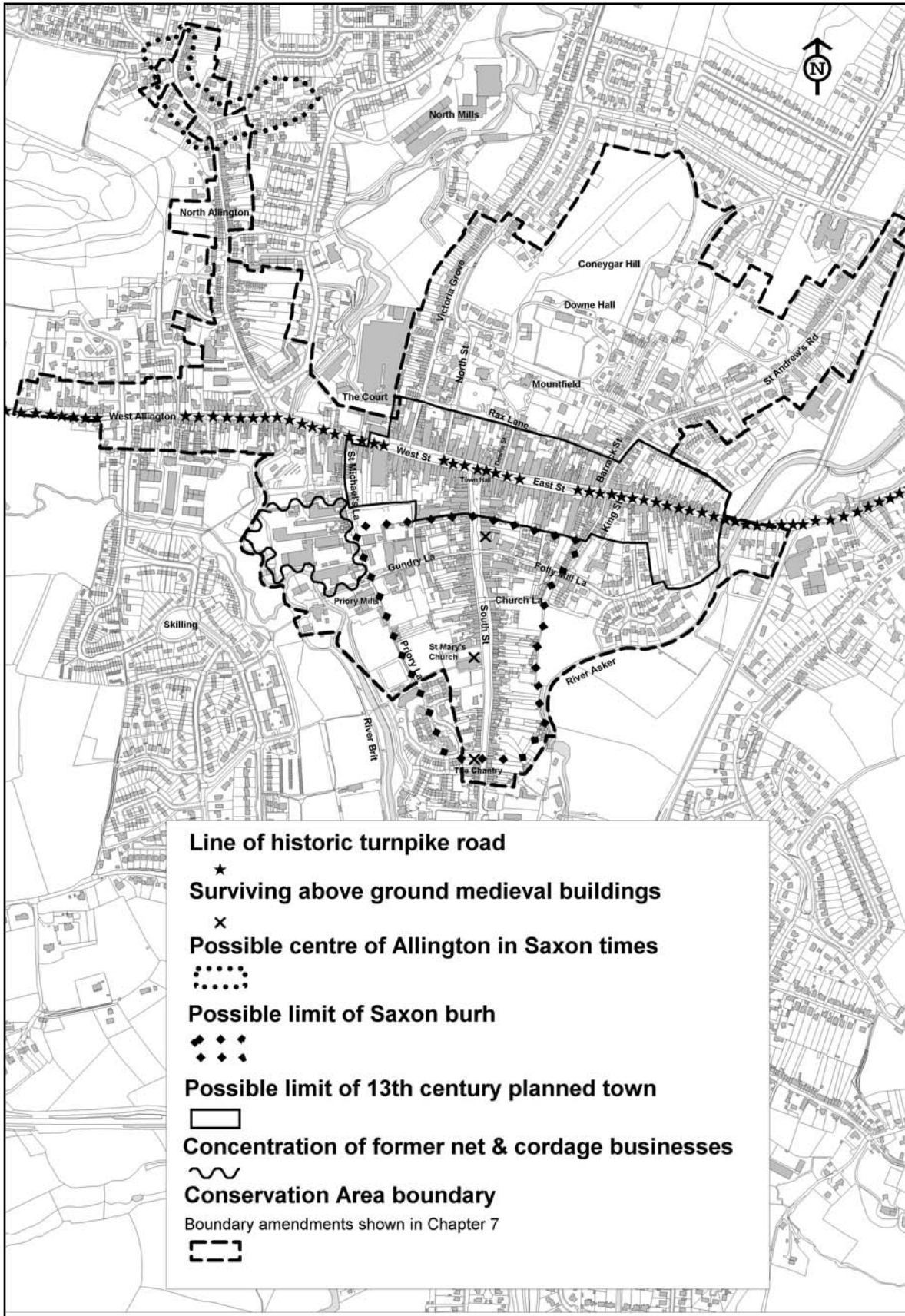


Fig 1 Map of Evolution & Archaeology – not to scale.

- f) The rope, net and twine industries had a marked influence on the evolution of post-medieval Bridport. The South West Quadrant, between South and West Streets, contains an impressive array of mills, works, smaller workshops, stores and associated workers' housing, as well as surviving structures and plot patterns. Surveys undertaken by English Heritage⁴ conclude that "despite widespread demolition and alteration, Bridport probably retains the best-preserved collection of rope and twine walk⁵ structures in the country".

3.1.2 19th Century

In response to the town's growth and future aspirations, the village of Allington became part of Bridport as additional land was developed for homes with workshops and rope walks associated with a buoyant net and cordage industry. Around this time, the tradition of having a family home and net and cordage premises sharing the same property divisions was, to a degree, challenged by purpose built mills that occupied land either near or by the rivers. Examples include Priory Mills, North Mills and a greatly extended Court Works. By 1845, a sizeable expansion on the river valley floor had taken place south of West Street and west of St Michael's Lane, comprising a tannery, stores and dwellings with rear gardens and rope walks. Also by this time, the river valleys and even the lower slopes of Coneygar Hill were no longer relatively free of development, and the tightly defined T shape of the old town was expanding outwards. This gradual expansion continued into the late 19th century, stimulated by economic prosperity and the arrival of the railway in 1857. Agricultural land within and adjoining the town was developed, particularly for workers housing and industrial premises, and enclosed works for the production of net and cordage eventually superseded the ancient tradition of the 'industrial garden'.

3.1.3 20th & 21st Centuries

- a) The need to find sizeable development sites serviced by new roads, particularly for housing after the First World War, saw the development of farmland on higher ground situated beyond the flood plain and urban limits. Examples of this are the Skilling and Court Orchard developments. Residential ribbon development on the road to Bridport Harbour gathered pace in the 1920/30s and today there is only a small gap that separates Bridport from West Bay.
- b) The scale of growth increased considerably from the 1960s onwards. Lengths of river were straightened and subject to flood defence works, which further encouraged housing development of the valley floor. Housing expansion on higher ground on the slopes of the landmark hills resulted in Bradpole, Bothenhampton, and to a lesser degree Walditch, becoming outer suburbs of Bridport.
- c) Following the closure of the railway in 1975, the disused branch line became part of a bypass for the A3066 and A35 trunk roads, which meant that traffic was no longer compelled to drive through the centre of Bridport. The need to meet the demand for parking within the town led to the removal of the old tannery, south of West Street, to create a coach park; and the demolition of Wykes Court (north of Rax Lane) and condemned properties in Rope Walks, to form public car parks. Public car parks were also formed on the south side of East

⁴ English Heritage carried out a South West Textile Mills Survey in 1998 and has also produced a draft document, 'Bridport: an assessment of townscape and buildings' (2002).

⁵ A whole garden can be described as an open rope walk, but such a garden could comprise a number of walks, parallel to each other and served by small auxiliary buildings at the end of the garden. In a walk, hemp fibres would be spun into yarn, which in turn would be used to make twine and rope. For fuller details see: *Rope, Twine & Net Making*, A Sanctuary, Shire Publications Ltd, 1996.

Street and the east side of South Street and involved the removal of medieval property boundaries.

- d) The 20th century saw the decline of the net and cordage industry, and today, only the Court Works remains a sizeable centre of production. Other renowned centres such as North Mills and St Michael's Lane became trading estates. The New Zealand Works, which was east of South Street by the River Asker, was demolished, and business buyouts and amalgamations, especially in West Allington and St Michael's Lane where larger scale net and cordage works prevailed, resulted in the gradual loss of historic property boundaries.
- e) Despite Bridport's continuing expansion, the town's medieval 'T' shape, together with its back lanes and road links in and out, can still be discerned. Edged by river valley and hill, undeveloped land, much within the floodplain and on valley slopes, prevents the town's historic shape being lost entirely to change.

3.2 Settlement Layout or Pattern

3.2.1 Road System

- a) The essential 'T' shape of Bridport remains discernible (fig 2) and South Street and East and West Streets with their impressive width, especially at their junction, still hold important weekly markets for which they were designed.
- b) Almost as well preserved are the primary approach roads from the north, west and east as well as the road connection to its former port, West Bay. There has however been a reduction in priority with some of the approach roads. For example, North Street became subsidiary to Victoria Grove and Sea Road North, on the line of the old railway line, overtook Barrack Street and St Andrew's Road. In general, the secondary approach roads also survive, albeit not necessarily in the form of highway status, and some have lost their original significance and become footpaths, either through changes in land and building use or preferred routes of travel. North Allington has retained its primary north/south route, which remains an approach road into Bridport. This route however used to form a crossing with a primary east west route, but today this crossroads is indiscernible. This change, together with the reduction of short cuts that once crossed the Brit valley between Allington and Bridport, has increased the linear road pattern of this area.
- c) Linking the approach roads and the main streets were back lanes, such as Rax Lane and Priory Lane. They marked the limit of property boundaries or the town's defences and adjoined land, situated between the town and the rivers, that was used for agriculture and livestock grazing. These lanes also provided short cuts around town or to the local mills and gradually encouraged expansion onto land behind the main streets. Many have survived.
- d) Side roads and narrow alleyways at right angles to the main streets also developed to offer short cuts and linkages between back lanes and the main streets. Good examples are King Street and Barrack Street.
- e) The above outlines the character of the road pattern, with the width reflecting the status in the hierarchy of historic routes. A number of 20th century developments have not reflected this character in their design, and their tendency to broadness, even when of minor importance, their cul-de-sac nature, wide junctions and visibility splays have in part disrupted historic road frontages, even to the point of removing several property divisions at any one time.

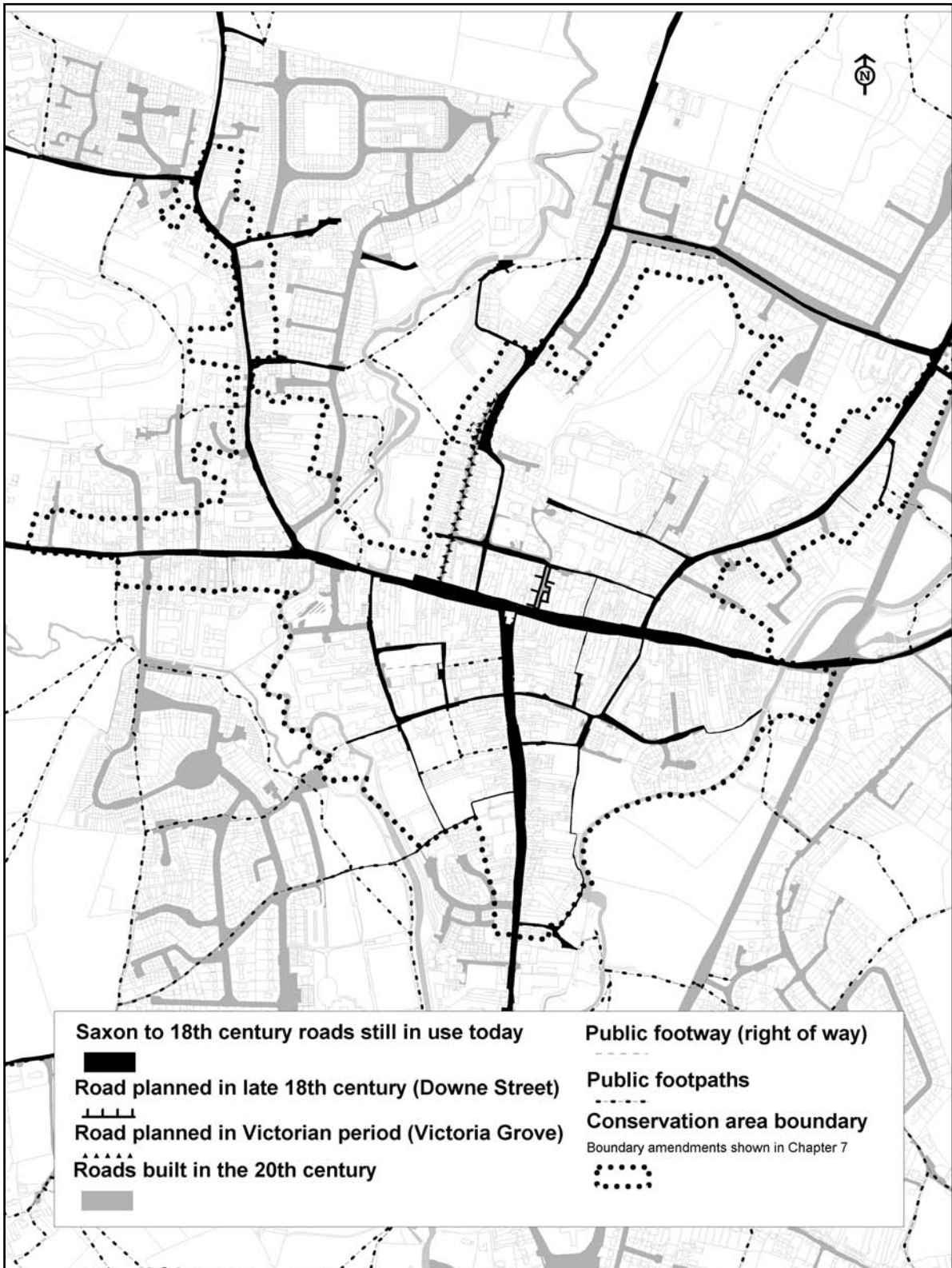


Fig 2. Map of the Road System - not to scale.

3.2.2 Property Divisions or Burgage Plots

- a) Medieval Bridport and its subsequent historic expansion comprised long, narrow property divisions, also known as burgage plots, at right angles to the main streets. This supported the town's industry of net and cordage production wherein the garden or open rope walk behind the main property was used for industrial production as well as subsistence gardening. Although over the centuries, rebuilding and changes in land use have occurred, a number of gardens of medieval origin and with an industrial past have survived. Known surviving industrial gardens or rope walks of medieval origin or later are indicated on the following map (fig 3) and represent a remarkable continuity in settlement layout and Bridport's industrial and domestic heritage.
- b) The medieval and later boundaries of the burgage plots were often marked by a wall and along with the road system and alleyways helped define the settlement shape and the scale of the built environment.
- c) Plot ratios in Allington differ to that of medieval Bridport because land was more available in the country parish. As such, property divisions could be wider, resulting in a broader street frontage.
- d) Within each burgage plot, the principal building traditionally formed the street frontage - situated at the back of the pavement but occasionally set back from it. Plots parallel to a side street gave opportunity for development across the width of the plot, for example, the terraced housing in King Street and Downe Street. Back lanes which corresponded with the rear boundaries of main street plots often allowed the end development of such plots, thereby giving rise to separate dwellings, businesses and rear entrances, as evident in Rope Walks, Back Rivers Lane and Rax Lane.
- e) A main frontage building that was set back was often associated with a religious or specific communal role, for example, The Chapel in the Garden in East Street and the former workhouse/Port Bredy hospital in Barrack Street. Other set backs express upper and middle class aspirations, one of the most ambitious was Downe Hall, but other, more modest examples are The Grove in Rax Lane and the 19th century villas or terraces in West Allington. Even with the creation of a space between a building and the street, a wall usually marked the front edge of the plot and therefore retained definition.
- f) Many of the burgage plots and boundaries have survived despite land use and building changes. There have however been instances where plots and boundaries have been undermined and with them the character and layout of Bridport and Allington. For example, town centre public car parking and the removal of boundaries and old rear premises to achieve on site delivery and parking. There has also been plot amalgamation in order to incorporate buildings of untraditional widths, resulting in a loss of boundaries and older frontage buildings, which has adversely affected the character of the street and layout of the town, for example, No. 42-48 West Street.
- g) In the 20th century, certain development of vacant plots has not established frontages parallel to the street and have also weakened road edge definition by introducing pull-ins or lay-bys. The same century has seen the fragmentation of the grander hillside plots, which comprised large houses, set in substantial gardens. Some plots remain and should be respected because of their historic context and contrast to the town's burgage plots.

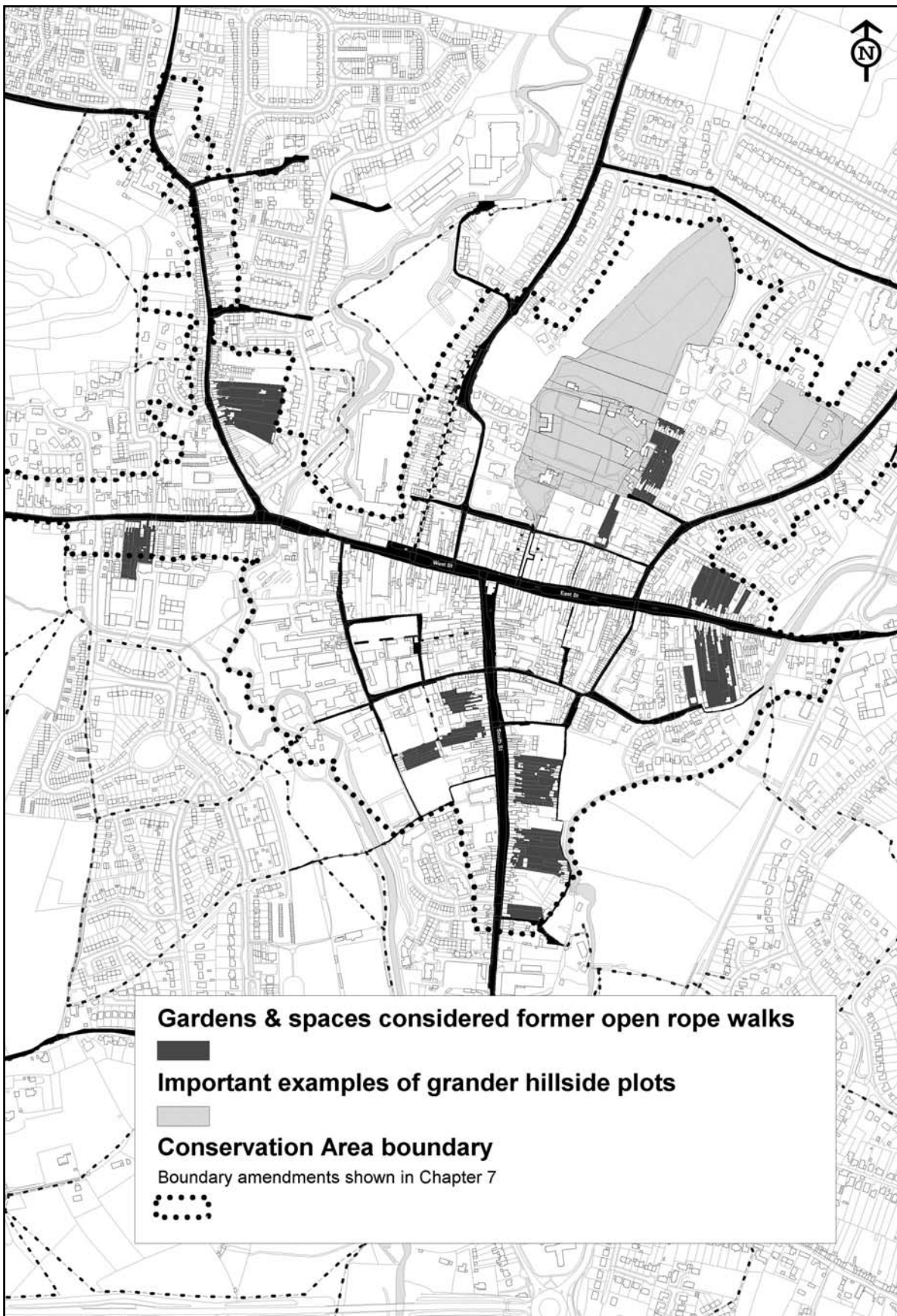


Fig 3. Map with the location of open rope walks & grander hillside plots in Bridport & Allington - not to scale

3.3 Open Spaces

The once close proximity between town and country⁶ is still evident in the form of allotments, pasture and public open space, especially to the east and west of South Street. These open spaces have helped sustain the town's settlement character and layout, in particular, the historic 'T' shape and the visual dominance of the parish church of St Mary's.

3.4 Building Uses

- 3.4.1 The current mix of uses provides continuity with the community and trading activities of Bridport's past, which underpin the historic character of the Conservation Area.
- 3.4.2 The main streets contain the town's concentration of primary retail and business frontages, with offices and shops at ground floor and occasionally at first floor. Behind the frontages, in attached rear buildings, there is also some industry. There is a noticeable change in the intensity and multiplicity of frontage building uses the further the distance from the centre, especially along East Street and South Street, and an increasing amount of residential occupancy, some of which are converted shops. The market is held in the main streets two days each week, providing further vibrancy and variety, and is a stimulating example of historic continuity that embellishes and sustains the Conservation Area.
- 3.4.3 Behind the main frontages, can also be found the traditional residential terrace and its modern equivalent. Some upper floors or rear yards or building ranges behind frontages have been utilised for flats, and this, along with the presence of late-hour shops and a number of entertainment uses, means that most of the main streets have reasonable activity and vitality after normal working hours. The parish church and the Arts Centre in South Street provide a focus of events and activities.
- 3.4.4 A number of the former rope and net making premises have been skilfully converted to offices and retain their productive character. At the end of West Street, the renowned Court Works preserves key buildings as offices and continues historic net and cordage uses. West Mill is another skilful conversion to offices.
- 3.4.5 There is a cluster of currently underused buildings in West Street, which are the subject of refurbishment and redevelopment proposals. Elsewhere, there is no obvious evidence of unused buildings, apart from the Literary and Scientific Institute in East Street and the old Palace Cinema.
- 3.4.6 The South West Quadrant has mainly industrial and comparison⁷ uses, with a concentration on the St Michael's Trading Estate, but there are also pockets of residential and community services. The former St Mary's School still has a community role that appears to support its integrity and historic significance. Alongside it, a concentration of youth facilities exists in the former drill hall and yard. The bonded store in Gundry Lane retains its use as a store, which is a continuity of considerable years. A scarce historic reference is still to be found on the trading estate in the form of a company that makes nets. In the better months, the work can be observed through open doors, allowing the activity to be shared by passers-by.

⁶ "Sometimes he went round by the lower lanes of the borough, where the rope walks stretched... and looked at the ropemakers walking backwards, overhung by apple trees and bushes, and intruded on by cows and calves, as if trade had established itself at considerable inconvenience to nature (Thomas Hardy, *Fellow-Townsmen*, Wessex Tales, 1880)."

⁷ For example, electrical goods, antiques, motor spares, bathrooms and furniture.

3.4.7 Outside these areas, the buildings' uses and character are primarily housing interspersed with other uses. Clusters of community uses such as public houses, shops, health centres, and more limited business activity can be found at the core of North Allington, near the junction of West Allington with West Street and at the northern end of St Andrew's Road.

4 Building Materials and Local Building Traditions

- 4.1 Bridport has a rich assortment of building materials, which contribute immensely to the character and quality of the historic core.
- 4.1.1 The town lies within an extensive area of Inferior (lower) Oolite and Forest Marble limestones. The most widely used stone is Forest Marble (grey to grey/blue in colour), quarried at Bothenhampton (known as Baunton Stone). This appears as squared ashlar blocks, coursed dressed walling, squared sett paving for alleys and passages and stone plinths for brick facades. The Inferior Oolite is an orange to cream-coloured limestone, fine-grained and capable of being worked into ashlar or dressed stone, as well as rubble. It appears in combination, as walling above a Forest Marble plinth, giving a pleasing range of greys and orange hues. It also appears in window and door surrounds (sometimes in combination with brick) or, rarely, in large portions of buildings, such as St Mary's Church. Other limestones, notably grey-white Portland stone, appear in late 18th century and early 19th century buildings (the Town Hall and Downe Hall). Ham Hill Stone dressings are used in The Chantry and The Castle.
- 4.1.2 Bricks from local sources were introduced about 1720. There were 7 brickyards within a mile of the town centre in the 19th century, although all closed by the 20th century when rail communication and other economic factors meant the increasing introduction of imported bricks. Many Bridport buildings display high quality red/red-orange brickwork, with "rubbed and gauged" window and door lintels. Header bond is particularly striking in several West Street properties. Brick appears in combination with ashlar stone (quoins, keystones etc.) and rubble. Contrasting colours of brick were used from the mid-19th century to create a decorative effect, with reds, blues, buffs and terracotta colours. Castle Terrace, in South Street, and Victoria Grove are both good examples of the use of contrasting colours.
- 4.1.3 Bridport also has a number of smooth rendered, stucco buildings, notably the current Arts Centre in South Street and the early 19th century villas on the approaches to the town centre.
- 4.1.4 Tile and slate hanging may be seen on the side or rear elevations of buildings.
- 4.1.5 There is scant evidence of medieval timber-framing, although there may be limited examples from the 17th century, such as Nos. 16 and 18 South Street.
- 4.1.6 Roofs tend to be predominantly of Welsh slate or clay plain tiles. Chimneystacks are usually simple but there are examples of spectacular, tall, buff clay chimney pots.
- 4.1.7 There are many examples of good architectural ironwork, ranging from balconies to railings and there were at least five foundries in the town up to the early 20th century producing some of the material.
- 4.2 There are a number of local building traditions:
- a) High quality brickwork, with rubbed and gauged lintels and fine, precise lime mortar pointing, later 19th century work employed polychromatic, contrasting colours, with terracotta and moulded brick details;
 - b) Classical symmetry, with (predominantly) vertically hung sash windows, pillastered door surrounds or recessed door openings, semi-circular fanlights and simple cornices;
 - c) A range of stone walling (rubble to ashlar) employing local Forest Marble and Inferior Oolite;

- d) The use of smooth render or stucco with Greek or Italianate Classical elements, such as columns and Greek Key decoration, bracketed, overhanging eaves and ironwork porches and balconies;

4.3 Other traditions are the result of the town's long association with the cordage and net industry, which has created a particular interaction between land uses and building layout. The components of which may be summarised as:

- a) Buildings of the cordage, net and sailcloth industries demonstrate a progression from small-scale activity through to large-scale, factory working. Alongside other specialised industrial buildings, textile mills, built as a response to the challenges and opportunities of the Industrial Revolution, also survive. The typical mill building is of 3 or 4 storeys, stone or brick and with gabled roofs.
- b) Long burgage plots were typically used as open walks for the production of yarn, twine and rope and often had small buildings (winding houses) at 1 or both ends of the plot. Some of these plots were later covered, producing one or more storey linear buildings, utilitarian in nature and of brick and stone, which have survived.
- c) Many 18th/early 19th century properties have combined industrial and domestic features with cart doors and passages leading to former rear warehouses, stores and stables. Also smaller domestic buildings still have features like loading doors and hoists in front and side elevations.
- d) Housing types range from grand detached mansions and detached and semi-detached villas originally built for managers and the better-off business owners, to terraced housing built for the working class. For workers' housing, often the former burgage plots were developed, with groups down the length of the boundaries (at right angles to the main street frontage); parallel to the frontage; or in larger, grouped terraces around open spaces and courtyards.

4.4 There are also surviving examples of specialised community buildings such as the former workhouse (later Port Bredy hospital) and almshouses for the old and poor.

5 Townscape Description of Individual Sub-Areas

5.1 Sub-Area 1: South Street

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.1.1 Setting

South Street runs in a fairly straight alignment, with only subtle curves either side of St Mary's Church and a gradual downhill gradient south towards the sea. The notable exception to the continuous ribbon of development is the open space of St Mary's churchyard. There is significant backland development to the east and west, the latter being the historic industrial heartland and the former associated with the Killings Mill. As a complete contrast, there are substantial areas of verdant water meadow along the courses of the two rivers to the east and west.

5.1.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

- a) South Street contains the southern section of the commercial heart of the town. It hosts a range of shops at the northern end, and housing, notably on the eastern side, from Folly Mill Lane southwards. It is the area of the Saxon "burh", around which the town developed. It has a series of regular long, thin burgage plots extending from buildings set directly on the main street frontage, east and west, to back lanes, rough pasture, allotments and even other burgage plots of West and East Streets. A number of the burgage plots are surviving open rope walks with occasionally small stores/winding houses at the end of a plot. Between and at the end of the burgage plots are often attractive brick or stone boundary walls but in places redevelopment, vehicular access and parking have diminished this unifying strength.
- b) The character of this main street is consistently attractive with the key focal points of Bucky Doo Square, Parish Church and The Chantry, all linked by large groups of terraced 18th and 19th century houses. The width of the carriageway, generous pavements, trees in the churchyard and on the street and a subtle curve in the building line on the eastern frontage all contribute to the quality and character of the Sub-Area, framed by a remarkable run of listings on both sides of the street.

5.1.3 Approaches to and routes through

There is an almost unbroken frontage of buildings down to South Bridge, with a few openings to side lanes, such as Gundry and Folly Mill Lanes and Church Street and South Walk at the southern extremity of the Conservation Area. There are also about 18 other pedestrian or vehicular entry passages. Some of these are purely for access to rear gardens or former rope walks; some, such as Balaclava Place, still provide access for small businesses; others are public routes (for example, The Tanyard) and a number of them lead to small enclaves of housing, notably Bolton Place and St Mary's Place.



Fig. 4 South Street looking north towards the Town Hall

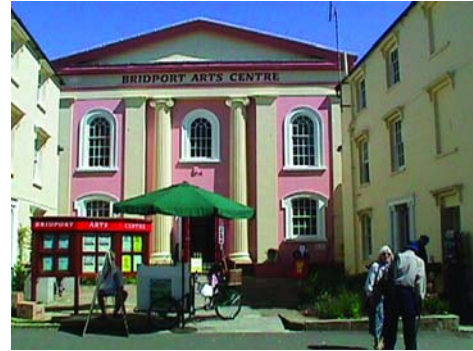
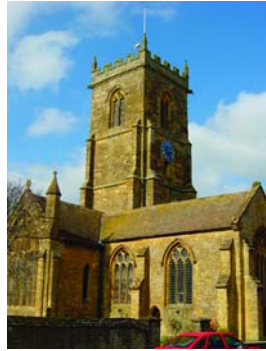


Fig. 5 Two of the key buildings: left; St. Mary's Church & right, Bridport Arts Centre

5.1.4 Key buildings, important building groups and features

- a) The key buildings are: St Mary's Church; the 1786 Town Hall (also a major element in the East and West Street Sub-Area); the 1838 former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (now the Arts Centre) and its flanking houses; the early 16th century Castle (Museum and Art Gallery); the Chantry, a rather enigmatic medieval building; the Friends Meeting House complex, tied in with Daniel Taylor's Almshouses; the Palace Cinema and its shops on the street frontage 1926, a rare and little altered example of a 1920's cinema; and No. 32 (the former Town Council offices), the substantial early 19th century townhouse formerly with a large garden (Borough Gardens) and industrial adjuncts in Gundry Lane.
- b) The whole of South Street forms, a group of high quality buildings but there are several breaks due to modern or poorer quality buildings. A number of particularly coherent groups are: -
 - I. On the western side, from The George Hotel south to No. 24;
 - II. On the western side, a long progression of mainly Listed elevations from Gundry Lane to St Mary's and The Rectory, where a high stone wall terminates the group;
 - III. South of the junction with Folly Mill Lane, the eastern side forms one long sequence, from The Palace Cinema shops to Church Street and southwards from No. 53 to No. 159. These provide a run of mainly two storey brick, stone and render facades; and the raised pavement on the south-eastern end helps to underline the quality of the adjacent building group.

5.1.5 Local building materials, details and traditions

- a) There are many attractive details in this Sub-Area, including the modern paving and sculpture of Bucky Doo Square; the War Memorial and its flanking walls; churchyard memorials at the Parish Church and at The Society of Friends; a large number of older hanging signs, sign-written business names, 19th century shop fronts, the glazed tiles of the former "Five Bells" public house and the terrazzo floor sign relating to the "Palace Cinema"; a K6 telephone kiosk on the eastern side; setted and paved cart entrances to former rear buildings, often with cast iron gates; and features such as elaborate fanlights and "Gothick" windows on otherwise sober facades.



Fig. 6 Decorative fanlight, local brick & Bothenhampton stone plinth



Fig. 7 The Chantry is built of Bothenhampton stone



Fig. 8 Tanyard cartway with smooth Bothenhampton stone sets

- b) Materials are representative of the wide range used in the historic core. The local Forest Marble Bothenhampton Stone appears in ashlar, worked and rubble forms as well as paving. The more orange-coloured Inferior Oolite (limestone) is less predominant but appears on key buildings like the Parish Church and The Castle. Portland Stone is used on the Town Hall. The 3 local brick clays contribute an attractive variety of reds, oranges and yellow-greys. Brick walls may have a Forest Marble plinth or there may be a more designed combination of brick with stone detailing (notably on the Town Hall). Some brickwork is colour-washed, particularly on commercial premises. Smooth render or stucco makes an occasional but significant appearance, exemplified by The Arts Centre group. Roofs are predominantly of Welsh slate or plain clay tiles. Modern materials do not intrude unduly: the recent Library conversion used carefully matched stone in its new ground floor; the new residential development at the corner of Folly Mill Lane employs a combination of high quality brick and stone.

5.1.6 Significant spaces, trees and views



Fig. 9 St Mary's Churchyard looking towards South Street



Fig.10 Bucky Doo Square

- a) There are three significant spaces in the Sub-Area: the triangular Bucky Doo Square with its strong definition, attractive paving, public sculpture and nearby cafes provides a valued sitting-out and meeting place. In a way, the space can be perceived to extend further south, past the Library to Church St, underlined by the lively activity in this wider area on Market Days. The Borough Gardens, behind No. 32, is a walled public garden with links to Gundry Lane and Rope Walks. The garden is of obvious amenity value. The churchyard around St Mary's with its memorials and trees is also of considerable amenity value but would benefit from more sympathetic street furniture and improved hard landscaping. The churchyard links together the original urban centre of Bridport with its more rural surroundings.

- b) The sequence of spaces associated with the Friends Meeting House is also of value, particularly the Memorial Garden and burial ground. The front garden of No. 90 is a rare domestic set back in South Street, and before Nos. 1 to 6 St Mary's Place is the only communal green behind South Street.
- c) Trees and green elements are not major components, apart from the tree in Bucky Doo Square and those in the Parish churchyard and Rectory garden that project over the street boundary wall. The tree planting along the north eastern side of South Street and in Bucky Doo Square is of value but, as yet, too small to form a major element.
- d) There are several important views: Hyde Hill can be seen from the rear of The Friends Meeting House; out of the two "arms" of Folly Mill and Gundry Lanes, enclosed by buildings and walls on curving building lines are downhill views ended with the outline of hills; the flank of Priory Mills (depository) and the smaller Museum Store show up particularly well when looking down the slope of Gundry Lane; the compelling views along South Street, especially north towards Bucky Doo Square and the Town Hall and south towards the Parish Church; and the sequence of views from South Street whilst walking through the churchyard that ends with a panorama over rough pasture and river valley towards Skilling and distant hills.

5.2 Sub-Area 2: East and West Streets

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.2.1 Setting

East and West Streets run in a fairly straight course, with subtle changes in alignment and slight widening and narrowing. East and West Streets are generally wide, notably at either side of the South Street junction. The two streets both rise up markedly from riverside meadows to a level saddle of land around the South Street junction. Buildings rise in stepped roof lines to the climax of the Town Hall. Both streets have similar approaches of white stuccoed villas and obvious landmark entry buildings: West Mill and The Court on West Street and the side elevations of The Bridge House Hotel and the large block on the site of the Hospital of St John the Baptist herald the gentle rise of East Street, when viewed from East Road.



Fig. 11 The Literary and Scientific Institute, East Street



Fig. 12 A white stuccoed villa on the approach to East Street



Fig. 13 A view of the south side of East Street

5.2.3 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

- a) This Sub-Area is part of the commercial heart of the town, where the largest and richest merchants' houses and shops existed in the medieval period and where their 18th and 19th century successors became closely related to the net and twine industries, in terms of building types and plan form. Despite the loss of traditional industries and the introduction of modern commercial premises and new housing, the area retains a remarkable quantity and consistent quality of historic buildings and townscape. It also maintains an urban character, with a mixture of shops, offices, public houses, chapels, housing, a hotel and the Town Hall.
- b) The Town Hall projects beyond the general building line and dominates the central section with its bulk and height, its tower and cupola standing at about the highest point of the Sub-Area. Part of The Court and No. 62 West Street also project beyond the building line and narrow the perspective view down West Street from the Town Hall.
- c) The long, thin burgage plots are particularly evident on both sides of East Street (complete with boundary walls, remains of rope sheds and small enclaves of workers' houses) and on the south side of West Street, although the latter area has been modified by modern incursions and plot amalgamations. The loss of street boundary wall and street edge defined by buildings has diminished the character of Rax Lane and especially Rope Walks. The north-east end of East Street has a concentration of working-class housing types.

5.2.4 Approaches to and routes through

East and West Streets have one major junction with South Street (although this is disguised by the bulk of the Town Hall and the narrowness of the South Street carriageway). There are other narrow breaks created by lesser streets to the north and south. There is a complex pattern of through passages (to the long back gardens and rope walks) and pedestrian routes to back lanes and directly to the River Asker. There are in excess of a dozen of these routes. There are also significant back lanes, running parallel to the main streets and forming boundaries to this particular Sub-Area: in the north, Rax Lane; on the southern edge, Folly Mill Lane and Back Rivers Lane and Rope Walks.



Fig. 14 One of the remaining traditional garden rope walks at the rear of East Street from Back Rivers Lane



Fig. 15 The 'Chapel in the Garden' (Unitarian) set back from the general building line in East Street but still retaining its traditional boundary wall



Fig. 16 Early 19th century shop front columns and balcony

5.2.5 Key buildings, important building groups and features

- a) There are over 140 Listed Buildings, with some coherent, unbroken groups. The key buildings in the Sub-Area are: The Town Hall (shared with the South Street Sub-Area); the Court (visually prominent as well as a fine example of a mid-19th century industrial building); the Portland stone ashlar Literary and Scientific Institute of 1834; the Unitarian Chapel of 1794; No. 74 East Street, a mid-18th Century brick and stone-fronted grand house with an amazing ensemble of decorative features; the two entry buildings into East Street: The Bridge House Hotel (No. 115) and the remains of the Hospital of St John the Baptist opposite; and West Mill, which is a dramatic "gateway" building at the western entry; in East Street, the 1859 gothic influenced Bridport United Church, and No. 9 (ex Beach the chemist) has two bow windows, a double bowed shop front and a shaped and scrolled name board across the top of the elevation.
- b) The intact unlisted Victorian terrace of 1 to 7 Lily Terrace, St Michael's Lane, with its strong character, good materials and contribution to group character, is considered to be of local importance, as are the unlisted Melville Square, Asker Terrace and 91a-91c East Street, which are important 19th century planned housing development in rear plots.
- c) The whole of East and West Streets form a fairly coherent run of buildings and the best groups are:
 - I. On the south side of East Street, from No. 8 to the Bridport United Church;
 - II. On the north side of East Street, from No. 21 to No. 57, on the junction with Barrack Street and from No. 61 to No.115 (Bridge House Hotel).

5.2.6 Local Building materials, details and traditions

- a) The street frontages are very consistent in terms of height (two and three storeys); plot width and a predominance of flat fronted Georgian buildings with few projections in the form of bay and oriel windows or deep porches. Roofs are relatively consistent too, with a singular absence of mansards, gables or dormer windows. Chimneys are conspicuous in perspective views up or downhill. The great majority of buildings are set directly on the street frontage, with the only railed private areas in front of The Court and Ringstead House.
- b) Other important details add much to the enjoyment of the Sub-Area: two red telephone kiosks (K6) outside the Post Office in West St; painted sign writing on two gable ends in East Street; stone paved alleyways and yards into side lanes; hanging signs; the italic name plaque for Downes Street; the Coade Stone urn on the parapet of the "Lord Nelson" pub in East Street; the curved glazing to the shop front of No. 10 East Street; the excellent 18th/19th century gravestones in front of the Unitarian Chapel; cast iron railings and gates at The Court and bounding one of the East Road villas and a couple of balconies in East Street (plus curvaceous late Victorian/Edwardian ones opposite the Town Hall).



Fig. 17 Early 19th century shop front



Fig. 18 Traditional painted sign writing on a gable end in East Street



Fig. 19 Remains of traditional stone set paving in East Street

- c) Materials are varied: high quality Portland stone and Ham Hill ashlar; local Bothenhampton stone in coursed rubble or slabbed pathways; Inferior Oolite usually laid to courses; range of splendid orange, red and yellow bricks; painted brickwork; smooth render and stucco; more modern roughcast; clay plain tiles, and Welsh slate roofs. Inappropriate and conspicuous concrete pantiles are used at The Bridge House Hotel. Modern bricks are dark brown, reds and oranges (sometimes used in combination) and concrete panels are used (unfortunately) on one building in West Street. Elaborate ironwork railings appear at The Court and at one of the East Road villas. Modern shop fronts display a range of unsympathetic aluminium, tiles and plastics.

5.2.7 Significant spaces, trees and views

- a) Significant spaces are the wider parts of the two streets, notably the north side of West Street, from North Street to The Court, defined by a widened pavement, street trees and the forecourt and projecting building at The Court; and from the Town Hall eastwards to Barracks Street, on both sides of the road. Trees are restricted to the pollarded Limes in West Street and to the pleasant garden in front of the Unitarian Chapel.



Fig. 20 View west from East Street towards Town Hall with Colmers Hill in the distance

- b) There are excellent views from the higher ground east and west to green hills and magnificent trees: to Colmer's Hill and its Scots Pines and, to the north west, Coneygar and Allington Hills; and to Hyde Hill to the east. There are also good views of attractive buildings and mature trees up Downes Street and Barrack Street (both with the tremendous backdrop of Coneygar Hill) and South Street may be glimpsed either side of the Town Hall.

5.3 Sub-Area 3: South East Quadrant

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.3.1 Setting

- a) This Sub-Area lies between East Street and South Street and comprises river valley slope and floor with the River Asker forming a natural edge to the east, which used to be allotments. The western edge coincides with the town's assumed eastern defences and also marks the limit of the burgage plots in South Street. The northern edge is mainly defined by boundaries or properties belonging to the burgage plots of East Street.
- b) Generally, the north part of the Sub-Area is urban whilst the southern part is rough pasture. The northern section contributes to the setting of East Street and Coneygar Hill, whilst the southern section benefits the frontages at the rear of South Street, which define the line of South Mill Lane, and more distantly St Mary's church. The vegetation of the meadows and riverbanks help soften the intrusiveness of the riverside development in the northern part of the Sub-Area.

5.3.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

- a) Up until the late 18th century, this Sub-Area comprised agricultural land with a water mill which became known later as Folly Mill powered by a leat (mill stream) leading from the river. By the end of the 19th century, other industries had moved into the Sub-Area, such as the net and twine Pelican Works on Folly Mill Lane and a skin yard, known as the New Zealand twine works situated by the river. Other growth was in the form of housing and a school. In the 20th century, the river was straightened, which encouraged further housing development, and the mill was demolished and its leat partly filled. The Pelican Works were replaced by housing and the New Zealand Works removed as part of a planning permission that was never built.



Fig. 21 View from Asker Meadows of the rough pasture in front of South Mill Lane



Fig. 22 Prospect Place in King Street looking towards Folly Mill Lane

- b) As such, different types of traditional land plots and open areas are present in the Sub-Area. The rough pasture in front of South Mill Lane is the Sub-Area's only representative of land that supported the local workforce economy, and helps sustain the historic shape of the town. The Sub-Area's only example of 19th century net and cordage expansion onto land behind the burgage plots of East Street is found in 19A, Folly Mill Lane, whose long rear rope walk remains intact. The school met its needs on a broader plot of land (setting itself back from Folly Mill Lane to create a front yard) but this plot has lost its west boundary and back yard to car parking, and with them, townscape coherence.
- c) Buildings define the street edge, or where set back have impressive front boundary walls providing coherence, although where lost to redevelopment and off street parking this identity has been reduced. The same cohesive strength can be found in the boundaries between plots and the same loss of strength where such boundaries have been removed.



Fig. 23 Part of the old school as seen from the car park's pedestrian entry in King Street



Fig. 24 On the left, former workshops in Chancery Lane

- d) In terms of hierarchy, the former Bridport General School is the foremost building in the Sub-Area. Its extravagant Tudor Revival style, elevated position and substantial form reinforce its significance. Other than the former school, the architectural means of expression is generally modest, although variations in scale, frontage, layout and detailing are used to express status.

5.3.3 Approaches to and routes through

- a) The approaches into the Sub-Area from South and East Streets tend to have a narrowness and strong enclosure reflecting their medieval origins, although in places this character has been diminished by the loss of boundaries to off-street parking. Strong focal buildings and views of Hyde Hill also act as visual terminations. The approach from the Asker water meadows, which is a delightful mix of riverbank, river crossing, mill and water features, along with Back Rivers Lane, have a more discreet and rural nature that underpin that historic relationship between 'town and country'.



Fig. 25 View of South Mill from Asker Meadows

- b) In certain places, such as in lower Church Street and lower Folly Mill Lane, road widening and the loss of street definition have weakened the lane's character.

5.3.4 Key buildings, important building groups and features

- a) The former school is the Sub-Area's key building. The distinctive roofline of the school in Folly Mill Lane adds to the setting of the Sub-Area.
- b) There are coherent groups that support the character of this Sub-Area by strongly defining its edge: Nos. 15 to 25 Church Street; Nos. 2 to 16 and 24 to 38 South Mill Lane including the boundary wall of the Friends' Burial Ground; and Nos. 3 & 4 Chancery Lane, including the attached tall wall that leads into Folly Mill Lane.
- c) In the Sub-Area itself, there are also important building groups consisting of listed and unlisted but locally important buildings as follows: -
- I. Nos. 20 to 44 King Street, including Prospect Place which also relates to its domestic garden on the opposite side of the road, and Nos. 6 to 18 King Street;
 - II. W G Ackerman & Sons, No. 19A Folly Mill Lane, the listed wall of 74 East Street and the listed 76C East Street;

- III. Nos. 20 & 22 Chancery Lane are former domestic and industrial premises of local importance, which have a group value with listed No. 18 Chancery Lane;
- IV. Nos. 24 to 30 South Mill Lane are also of local importance and provide group value to the adjoining listed properties and also define the edge of the lane.

- d) Within the Sub-Area, historic terraces, often with a classical and symmetrical façade, prevail. The presence of sturdy chimneys and changes in roof height provide visual contrast; and small front gardens vary the form of street definition, thereby creating additional interest.
- e) A recurring feature that provides the Sub-Area with coherence and strength are stone and brick boundary walls, some with attractive copings, pillars and entrances. Certain lengths of wall are listed but much is not, therefore, the following are considered of local importance: -
 - I. In South Mill Lane, the west boundary of the New Zealand site;
 - II. In Folly Mill Lane, the northern curved wall of the pinch point; the boundary of the public car park and old school, including the school entrance; the front garden boundaries of Nos 1-16;
 - III. In Back Rivers Lane, the boundaries alongside the right of way and the former leat;
 - IV. Intermediate historic walls between property divisions or plots.

Also of local importance are the unlisted garden railings in King Street, the school safety barrier in Folly Mill Lane and the surviving stonework of the former mill leat.

5.3.5 Local building materials, details and traditions

- a) Traditional materials are: slate, brick and render for domestic properties; and stone for small industrial and more prestigious buildings. Old domestic properties tend to have small paned casement or sash windows. Community or social importance is expressed by the use of architectural embellishments using imported stone or special brick detailing. The Sub-Area's 20th century housing introduced untraditional materials and largely fails to reinforce the local character of the area, however, the recent Nos. 1-3 Ackerman Cottages form a more traditional terrace.
- b) Traditional paving, gutter and kerbstone can be found in the Sub-Area, for example, all along South Mill Lane, at the lower end of Folly Mill Lane.

5.3.6 Significant spaces, trees and views



Fig. 26 Back Rivers Lane & infilled mill leat



Fig. 27 South Mill Lane & its green foreground

- a) The area of rough grazing alongside South Mill Lane provides the foreground setting to many views and panoramas eastwards and links with the Asker water meadows and the river.

- b) Within the Sub-Area, established trees help provide an attractive form of street and plot enclosure, visual interest within the car park areas, and together with other shrubs mark the passage of the river along the Sub-Area's eastern boundary. The trees along King Street adjoin small private gardens, which are unusual in being across the street from their owners at Prospect Place. The gardens, along with the lack of vehicular traffic, give the street the feel of an attractive open space.
- c) Back Rivers Lane has positive qualities similar to King Street. The lane is bordered by the former millstream or leat, which today is a succession of garden or green space.
- d) Along its southern length, where it turns and bends, South Mill Lane also enjoys a sequence of views across the meadows towards the town and Coneygar Hill.
- e) From the area of rough pasture, there is an historic 'town & country' view of South Mill Lane, comprising the wall of the Friends' burial ground, cottages and glimpses of the St Mary's church tower.
- f) From the lower part of Folly Mill Lane, there are views of the tower of St Mary's which aids a sense of direction. Also, the grouping of the curved stone wall, Ackerman & Sons store and the gable and chimney of 76C East Street create sufficient interest to entice people forward and turn the hidden, sharp corner into Back Rivers Lane.

5.4 Sub-Area 4: St Andrew's Road

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.4.1 Setting

- a) St Andrew's Road is the backbone of the Sub-Area. When viewed from the east side of the town, the long ribbon of development has a critical visual significance to the setting of Delapre House and Downe Hall and Coneygar Hill, which rise dramatically above. The backbone is clearly defined by its tall houses, the former St Andrew's Church and the Port Bredy Hospital (converted into residential use).
- b) The south end of St Andrew's Road runs into Barrack Street, which joins East Street, whilst its northern end continues towards Bradpole. The eastern edge of the Sub-Area partly coincides with Sea Road North, although its definition has been depleted by the rear development of gardens and yards. The western edge runs through private gardens and has an important bearing on the Coneygar Hill Sub-Area.

5.4.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

- a) Up until the late 18th century, this Sub-Area had a rural nature, but in the 1800s, heightened by the incursion of the railway in 1857, development pressure led to its intensification.
- b) The plots differ in size and shape according to the period and type of housing, with development ranging from grand detached houses to semis and terraces. They share a common sympathetic response to the street frontage, either on or near the back edge of the pavement with strong boundary features such as impressive stone and brick walls. Older plots on St Andrew's Road, Barrack Street and Bedford Place stretch backwards from the road frontage, defined by former field boundaries and other factors such as the railway line. There is little or no evidence of former rope walks within plots, apart from those on the north side of Bedford Place.



Fig. 28 The Barrack Street approach to the St Andrew's Sub-Area with the former Port Bredy hospital visible at the end



Fig. 29 The former school at the northern 'gateway' into St Andrew's Road

5.4.3 Approaches to and routes through

St Andrew's Road provides the main route through and is approached from the south and north. From the south, Barrack Street is generally narrow but widens when it runs into St Andrew's Road. This transition is marked by the presence of the former Port Bredy Hospital which acts as a cliff-like sentinel, raised-up above the main route and very apparent in views up Barrack Street from East Street. The northern approach into the Sub-Area has a more modern engineered junction with Sea Road North and less strong character. It is the former Victorian school building, now the Adult Education Centre, with its cupola, that effectively marks the northern 'gateway' into St Andrew's Road.

5.4.4 Key buildings, important building groups and features

- a) The key buildings are the Port Bredy main block; Delapre House; the former St Andrew's Church; the former school (now the Bridport Adult Education Centre). These buildings range in style from severe Classical, softer villa-style Georgian, Victorian Gothic and Arts and Crafts Tudor but they all have a commanding presence in the Sub-Area, as well as architectural quality.
- b) Reasonably intact groupings of unlisted Victorian terraces and detached houses and semis, with strong character and good materials such as: Nos. 18-24, 31-49, 68-74 St Andrew's Road are considered to be of local importance, as is the former school.
- c) There are a number of coherent groups: -
 - I. The whole of Barrack Street, from its entry from East Street to the junction with Bedford Place on the west and Holly House on the east, including the focal point of the view up the street, Port Bredy;
 - II. On St Andrew's Road, the former St Andrew's Church, the whole of the south side up to No. 118; and on the north side, from No. 31-49 and the former school.



Fig. 30 Victorian housing (Nos. 31-49) in St Andrew's Road

5.4.5 Local building materials, details and traditions

Materials are varied, ranging from high quality 18th century orange/red brick; Bothenhampton stone (hammer-dressed or coursed rubble, or as a base to brick walls); Inferior Oolite, hammer-dressed and ashlar on St Andrew's Church and former school; painted brick; smooth render or stucco; rough-cast and pebble dash render to 1920s and 1930s buildings; brick and render on the late Victorian terraces and semis; artificial stone on Post-War infills. The tradition of boundary walls is often represented in Bothenhampton stone. Roofs are of slate, plain tile and concrete tile.

5.4.6 Significant spaces, trees and views

- a) Significant spaces are restricted to the widening-out of Barrack Street to St Andrew's Road, the entry into Bedford Place and the forecourt and green slopes of Port Bredy.
- b) Trees, shrubs and hedgerows are of great importance to the Sub-Area: Coneygar Hill shows up well behind Port Bredy, the former police station site and Delapre House.
- c) Views are also important: from the East Street/Barrack Street junction towards Port Bredy; up and down Bedford Place towards the entrance of Downe Hall and Mountfield and across the Asker valley to Hyde Hill. From Bedford Terrace, there is a view across the town to West Bay. The curve in St Andrew's Road establishes a sequence of views in either direction with the bellcote of the former St Andrew's Church acting as a fingerpost en route.

5.5 Sub-Area 5: Coneygar Hill Area

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.5.1 Setting

This Sub-Area lies to the north of Rax Lane and is dominated by Coneygar Hill, which provides the Sub-Area with an informal and rural feel which gradually becomes more urban as the Sub-Area blends into the historic town. The wooded sides and the grassland summit of Coneygar Hill are of prime importance to the character of this area and in views from other Sub-Areas, and the gentle transition in terms of density of development from the summit to urban centre is a key component.

5.5.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

- a) This area remained largely undeveloped up until the 18th century. Of key importance in its evolution was the acquisition of land by William Downe who acquired the southern slope and summit of Coneygar Hill and subsequently commissioned Downe Hall. In 1786, he purchased a meadow on the north side of Rax Lane and Rax House. This purchase allowed him to establish a direct link to East Street with his construction of Downe Street (1792-5); and to build other houses: the earlier Mountfield (around 1794) and possibly The Grove. Gradually development took place, and by the late 19th century, the Sub-Area generally comprised large houses set in impressive grounds. In the 20th century, community and residential infilling in the landscaped gardens and walled kitchen gardens reduced the contrast between this Sub-Area and the remaining historic town.

- b) Within the Sub-Area, varied types of traditional property division or plots are represented. This ranges from the broad plot demonstrating the less intense form of expansion to be found outside the confines of the medieval town (for example, Rax house and Downe Hall) to the long narrow plots reminiscent of burgage plots (for example, Nos. 18 & 20 Rax Lane). Buildings either define the street edge or if set back (expressing social aspiration) have impressive front boundary walls, although in places, this strength has been undermined by losses to off street parking and redevelopment.



Fig. 31 Rax House as seen from the terrace of Mountfield

- Plots also still retain their in between boundaries (often a freestanding or retaining wall) which along with the street boundaries, 'hold' the Sub-Area together.
- c) Hierarchy: social significance is represented by single expressions of architectural scale and style, with important buildings set in landscaped gardens and/or parkland. Mountfield, standing on its elevated position in an impressive landscape has the foremost position and status in Rax Lane and is given further prestige by Rax House acting as a sentinel at the gate. Further up the slope of Coneygar Hill, above Mountfield, is Downe Hall, whose architectural style, form, location and landscaped setting give it the pre-eminent status in the Sub-Area. The courthouse however does not follow the tradition of expressing importance in terms of architectural form.
- d) The Sub-Area's character is derived from the varied expressions of status and care should be taken to ensure that such status is not diminished needlessly. The same should also be applied to the wealth of features and buildings that attend or relate to such status, for example, former garden houses, lodges, stables, estate cottages, garages and coach houses.

5.5.3 Approaches to and routes through

- a) Routes lead into as opposed to through this Sub-Area.
- b) The main approach is from Downe Street. With its uphill gradient, strong street enclosure and visual termination in the form of Mountfield, this approach retains the drama created by its 18th century founder, William Downe. The yew tree at the entrance to Mountfield is partly obscuring the effect.
- c) The Bedford Place approach leads to the tree overhung entrances of Mountfield and Downe Hall, with a sense of the country estate heightened by No. 1, The Lodge, Downe Hall. The rear access to the telephone exchange on Rax Lane, which has created a wide gap in the street boundary, lessens the effect.

5.5.4 Key buildings, building groups and features and locally important buildings



Fig.32 Left, Mountfield



Fig.33 Right, former lodge to Downe Hall

- a) The key buildings are the large detached houses of Coneygar House, Downe Hall, The Grove, Mountfield and Rax House.
- b) The following building group has been identified:
 - I. Nos. 18 & 20 Rax Lane (No. 18 being of local importance).
- d) In the Sub-Area, the following unlisted buildings/features are also of local importance: -
 - I. Coneygar House is not listed, but it has architectural merit and is a significant landmark;
 - II. The Garden House, North Street, contributes to the adjoining listed wall and is a focal point;
 - III. Mountfield is not listed, but it has architectural merit, an elemental relationship with the surrounding designed landscape and is a significant landmark. The Coach House, Bedford Place, and its yard are historically associated with Mountfield and have architectural merit;
 - IV. No. 1, The Lodge in Bedford Place is historically associated with the Downe Hall, has architectural merit and is a focal point;
 - V. The Old Coach House & Hayloft, Rax Lane, including the front boundary wall, entrance piers and urn finials are historically associated with Rax House and provide group value to listed Rax House and its listed wall.

5.5.5 Local building materials, details and traditions

- a) Except for Coneygar House, the large, detached houses were first constructed in the 18th and early 19th century and then prone to remodelling - Rax House and Mountfield in the Classical Revival style; and the back of Downe Hall by the Arts & Crafts architect E. S. Prior²⁵ who left the Palladian (a neo-classical interpretation) front intact. The outbuildings such as the combined cottage, stables and garage at Downe Hall and the Coach House just inside the entrance to Mountfield reflect their association with the large houses by means of design and material used.
- b) The historic walling materials are local and imported red brick, imported yellow brick, and local stone. There is a tradition of external render, but it is used with care and along with brickwork, is often dressed at corners or around windows and doors with imported stone. Slate is the prevalent roofing material, but there are instances of clay tile. Historic windows are often sash and multi-paned. Of the contemporary housing in the Sub-Area, those in the grounds of Downe Hall are the closest to the old in terms of expressing status by choice of material.
- c) Traditional paving, gutters and kerbstone can be found in Rax Lane. Stone paved yards are a particular feature and are associated with the former large residences and their ancillary buildings. Such traditions should be preserved.

5.5.6 Significant spaces, trees and views

- a) The contrast between the more formal part of the grounds around Mountfield and the rural character of the hill is an attractive and an appealing aspect of the whole space. From the top of Coneygar Hill, there are excellent views past Downe Hall and over the town to the Town Hall with its cupola, St Mary's playing field on the west side of the River Brit, the surrounding hills and West Bay on the coast. The extent of viewshed²⁶ is indicated on the pull-out Townscape Description map.

Historically, Downe Hall, Coneygar Hill, Mountfield, The Grove & Rax House were in single ownership and to a great degree integrated as one landscape. Coneygar Hill was the 18th century designed "pleasure gardens" of Downe Hall.²⁷ Differing ownerships of the various parts provides a greater challenge in ensuring that ongoing management is co-ordinated and retains the character of the original landscape of as a whole.

Coneygar Hill continues its role as "pleasure gardens" in a low-key way, managed for informal passive recreation with nature conservation principles in mind. The woods and hilltop can be very quiet and peaceful and constitute a countryside experience within a short distance of the busy town. This is therefore, a unique space within the Conservation Area.

The more formal grounds in front of Mountfield respect the old boundary features and edges, and have been opened up for public use and enjoyment. The views of the town, the surrounding hills and nearby Allington, are impressive. The yew tree near the entrance to Mountfield restricts a key view along Downe Street. This however is to be remedied by appropriate tree surgery. The gardens of Rax House, Varulam and 18 & 20 Rax Lane contribute to the historic and visual setting of Mountfield, and therefore, its grounds. From Mountfield, Rax House is an important focal point.

²⁵ An unpublished *Historical Assessment of Mountfield & Coneygar Hill, Bridport*, prepared for West Dorset District Council by the Dorset Gardens Trust (copyright reserved), 1998.

²⁶ An area from which there is either one or a number of significant views.

²⁷ The grounds of Downe Hall and Coneygar Hill are included in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens as advised by English Heritage in 1996.

The garden setting of The Grove has been diminished over time, but the splendid views of Allington Hill and Colmers Hill from it remain.

- b) There are a number of other trees of townscape significance: those in the Wykes Court car park; east of the Court House; the garden of The Garden House, North Street; alongside the raised walkway, Victoria Grove; Mulberry House garden, Rax Lane; and front gardens of Garden Close.
- c) In addition to views from Coneygar Hill, there is a good view westwards from Garden Close, which also includes the towering St Hilda's. In Rax Lane a sequence of constricted views of westerly hillside opens up at the pinch point to a broader view of Allington Hill and Colmers Hill.



Fig. 34 Left, view from Coneygar Hill with Downe Hall evident & right, view westwards from the terrace of Mountfield

5.6 Sub-Area 6: Victoria Grove

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.6.1 Setting

Victoria Grove is the spine throughout the Sub-Area. When viewed from Allington Hill and the Brit Valley, the spine has a critical visual significance to the setting of Coneygar Hill, which rises above the ribbon of housing development. The hill dominates the built form and the trees along the River Brit form a delicate foreground. The eastern edge of the Sub-Area is strongly marked by the stone embankment and high walls of North Street, only weakened by the development at Garden Close. The western edge coincides with the adjoining Court Mills and the floodplain of the Brit.

5.6.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

a) Up until the 18th century the Sub-Area was mainly farmland. Victoria Grove was started about 1841 and substantially complete by 1887. It was constructed parallel to North Street and subsequently North Street became a back street.

b) In terms of building types and plan form, the Sub-Area is comprised of regular plots of terraced or semi-detached housing, which define the street frontage, being built directly at the back of the pavement or set back parallel to it to form small front spaces. There is a marked contrast between the west and east sides of the street: the west has a progression of terraces and large semis on, or near to, the road line; the east has a terrace up to the junction with Rax Lane and then development form is more varied, with a mixture of land uses (a Baptist Chapel and a Catholic Church, a former school and a hall) shorter plots and greater set-backs.



Fig. 35 Terraced housing on the west side of Victoria Grove

c) Walls and railings often mark front boundaries and provide a strong street definition, but have been subject to adverse removal. Between plots, walls also define boundaries but have experienced similar problems.

5.6.3 Key buildings, important building groups and features and buildings of local importance



Fig. 36 Left to right, St Hilda's, The Baptist Chapel & the RC Church of St Mary & St Catherine

- a) The key buildings are the 1841 Baptist Chapel, with its bold but simple pedimented front; the modern R.C. Church of St Mary and St Catherine with a centralised plan and sweeping profile (unlisted but a positive element of the area) and, as a complete contrast, the Victorian Tudor Presbytery; the Victorian Gothic British legion Hall; and Nos. 48 and 50 (St Hilda's) a domineering three storey block with an amazing assemblage of Tudor, Gothic and domestic Arts and Crafts elements.
- b) The most obvious building group is the long curve on the west side, comprised of red brick, stucco and stone terraces and semi-detached houses, from No. 51-127.
- c) The unlisted Victorian terraces and detached houses and semis, with strong character and good materials, such as: St Hilda's (No. 52), 6-22, 27-41, 48-50, 53-127 Victoria Grove, contribute to group character and are considered to be of local importance.

5.6.4 Local building materials, details and traditions

Materials on the terraces are fairly consistent, orange or red brick, with Bath Stone or stucco details, there are ironwork fences and balconettes and elaborate roof ridge crests; smooth render or stucco is used also on the Baptist Church and several complete facades; Inferior Oolite is seen as rubble at The Presbytery and coursed blocks at Nos. 58-60. Bothenhampton stone rubble appears in many boundary walls and particularly in the more "rural" northern part of North Street. Traditional roofs are predominantly slate. Windows are wooden, vertically-hung sashes, usually with the mid-Victorian large areas of glazing and thin glazing bars, smaller panes and more bars are seeming Georgian throw-backs; Nos. 48 and 50 have diamond and other decorative features. Plastic replacement glazing is making unwelcome incursions into a number of terraces.



Fig. 37 Red/orange brick, slate, decorative timberwork and iron railings are typical of the materials and details in Victoria Grove

5.6.5 Significant spaces, trees and views

- a) Significant spaces are few: the attractive garden fronting the R.C. Church; and the planted triangle between Victoria Grove and North Street, a part of the important Coneygar Hill green space. However, trees, shrubs and hedges are important in this Sub-Area as they combine to create a rural lane character to the northern extremity of North Street, and also frame views along Victoria Grove.
- b) The climb uphill from the junction of North Street with Victoria Grove leads to sudden views of Coneygar Hill above Garden Close and a southern vista down the walled North Street to the roofs of West Street and the Town Hall cupola. There are excellent vistas of the Brit valley and Allington Hill to the west from various points along Victoria Grove. There are glimpses of the Downe Hall trees across the R.C. Church garden. The junction with Chards Mead Road and Rax Lane provides views of the impressive red brick flank to Court Mills to the west.

5.7 Sub-Area 7: South West Quadrant

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.7.1 Setting

- a) This Sub-Area lies between the south side of West Street and the west side of South Street and comprises river valley slope and floor with the River Brit forming a natural boundary.
- b) The Rivers Brit and Simene and the old mill leat mainly form the western boundary. The southern boundary of the Sub-Area follows Ponchesford Lane, whilst its east and north boundaries about the burgage plots of South Street and West Street. The Sub-Area includes a broad, rich range of buildings types and land uses that provide interest and have resulted in a diverse skyline. The green public spaces, private rough pasture and allotments that adjoin the edge also add softness and support river character.



Fig. 38 View from St Mary's playing field towards Priory Mills with Coneygar Hill in the background

5.7.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

- a) There is a grid like pattern to the lanes that originally divided the land behind the town's burgage plots into manageable and accessible fields. Up until the 1770s, the Sub-Area mainly comprised pasture and agriculture that supported the local economy, alongside several hemp stores linked with the net and cordage industry.
- b) In the early 19th century, the introduction of multi-storey mills, for example Priory Mills, and later by single storey factories was largely concentrated in this area. To the west of St Michael's Lane developed Bridport's most important area (today's St Michael's trading Estate) of cordage and net industry. At first, it was mainly stores and houses on St Michael's Lane with rear rope walks that stretched to the river, but by the early 20th century, the rope walks had developed into purpose built works of various sizes. Over the same period, the area known as Rope Walks was gradually developed such that, by the 1920s, it had rope workers' housing, drill halls and a church school. A terrace of cottages also appeared on Priory Lane and set up rope walks behind. The pace of change slowed by the mid 20th century. Some development did occur, such as the establishment of a bowling green near the river, and demolition of the old tannery behind West Street to form a coach station and car park. More car parking followed in the 1970s, when sub-standard housing was demolished in Rope Walks and a modern service road (Tannery Road) was built linking West Street to St Michael's Lane. Later in the century, the river was straightened and net and cordage production moved out of the St Michael's area and it became a trading estate instead.
- c) The evolution of this Sub-Area has left a legacy of different types of traditional land plots and open areas. The rough pasture to the west of St Mary's and extending to the river, and the allotments to the south of Gundry Lane are representative of land that supported the local workforce economy and this characteristic sustains the historic links between the town and countryside and helps preserve the landmark importance of St Mary's. The cottages on Priory Lane and their rear gardens are the only example of 19th century net and cordage expansion on a domestic scale. There are a number of broader plots that provide contrast

to the tightly defined nature of the town's burgage plots and which give the Sub-Area an important openness (for example the former cattle market on St Michael's Trading Estate). On these broader plots, buildings have situated themselves to suit their needs. However, the most dominant form is that of plots at right angles to the street, which for manufacturing reasons, originally emulated the long, and narrow medieval burgage plots. The St Michael's Trading Estate is perceived by English Heritage to be "the most dramatic illustration of the type of development which characterised the 19th century expansion of the town's cordage industry."²⁸



Fig. 39 Foundry Lane with good boundaries

- d) With all types of plots, the buildings defined the street edge, or if set back, traditionally have had front boundary walls or railings doing so, and highway boundaries adjoining the green spaces defined by banked hedgerow, providing contrast to the more urban boundaries. Today, such boundaries still have this important role, but erosion of hedgerow, wall and railing is evident.



Fig. 40 Left, view of the Bridport Industries building as seen from Rope Walks car park & right, the main frontage of the same building overlooking the former cattle market



- e) **Hierarchy** within the Sub-Area is depicted by the buildings reflecting, in terms of scale, design and layout their specific functions and economic status, which also mirrors the various changes in net and cordage manufacture, resulting in the rope *works*²⁹ as opposed to the rope *walk*. The progression of industrial change, as exemplified on the Trading Estate, is an important archaeological and historic legacy.

²⁸ In 2002, English Heritage produced a draft report entitled '*Bridport: An Assessment of Townscape & Buildings*', which recognised the historic significance of the St Michael's Trading Estate. It is English Heritage's intention to continue with a more detailed assessment of Bridport.

²⁹ Net and cordage production and workers were placed under one roof and no longer solely distributed within and without the town.

- f) Priory Mills' landmark role is bolstered by the arrangement of its factory complex, as well as its highly visible location, and the status of the Bridport Industries building on the St Michael's Trading Estate is not only derived from its size, architectural detail and landmark water tower, but from its visibility - it forms an important frontage on the south side of the former cattle market, - especially from Rope Walks. What is also evident on the Trading Estate is that despite variations in form and scale no building jostles with each other in terms of role and none challenge the eminence of the building frontage in St Michael's Lane.



Fig. 41 Left, Burwood Electrics & right, Unit 104 with a covered drying shed attached at the rear on the St Michael's Trading Estate



- g) Community importance was also expressed by architectural form and detail, such as the former St Mary's school in Gundry Lane with its dignified ecclesiastical appearance.

5.7.3 Approaches to and routes through



Fig. 42 Gundry Lane looking west in the direction of St Michael's Lane



Fig. 43 St Michael's Lane street frontage from Rope Walks car park

- a) The Gundry Lane approach has the medieval qualities of narrowness and strong enclosure. The lane travels downhill and provides a compelling view of distant hill. It widens as it continues through the Sub-Area and whilst doing so, there is the experience of extreme containment and spaciousness depending on whether passing adjoining yards and allotments or tall industrial buildings. St Michael's Lane is particularly medieval in origin, especially its northern end, but its junction with Tannery Road, the removal of houses to form Hope Terrace car park and weak boundary definition provided by the Rope Walks car park have undermined its enclosure, although it remains strong on the west side. Rope Walks was and still is a back lane area that allows access to the rear of burgage plots on West and South Streets. Following the removal of buildings and boundaries, the only part of it with strong enclosure and medieval proportions, is the section between St Mary's School and Priory Works. The same lack of enclosure applies to the historic east/west footway that crosses the southern end of the car park in Rope Walks.

- b) The pedestrian approach from Plottingham Field is undermined by an absence of townscape coherence. It requires local knowledge to negotiate this approach, which leads into a mundane coach station and car park and from where any sense of direction is confused. The adjoining Tannery Road approach suffers similar incoherence, although the new police station helps to direct movement around the road's sharp turn towards St Michael's Lane. In contrast, St Mary's Bridge and Ponchesford Lane allow a fine appreciation of the river and the 'town and country' character that prevails in the Sub-Area. From the bridge, an array of focal points & landmarks³⁰ act as visual markers, as do St Mary's and the Church House in South Street, when proceeding along the lane. Too narrow for vehicular use, the lane has the hallmarks of a medieval, country road, but such qualities have been intruded on by urban expansion, and eroded by hedgerow removal and inappropriate street furniture. Similarly, the presence of pasture, allotments and riverside provide the Foundry Lane approach with a rural nature before passing through an industrial part of the Sub-Area. The lane has the traditional qualities of narrowness and defined boundaries but widened vehicular entrances have eroded the latter.



Fig. 44 Left, Priory Lane looking north towards St Michael's Lane & right, Ponchesford Lane looking east with the bowling club on the left & Church House at the end



- c) Priory Lane almost has country road hallmarks throughout. The Bridport Evangelical Church marks a pinch point in the lane and acts as a focal point. Closed to vehicular traffic, inappropriate highway features mar the southern section of the lane, which has the important feature of banked hedgerow.

5.7.4 Key buildings, important building groups and features and buildings of local importance



Fig. 45 Left to right: Priory Mills, the former St Mary's School & the Bonded Warehouse/Malthouse

- a) The key buildings are the landmarks: Priory Mills and the Bridport Industries building.
- b) In the Sub-Area, there are also important building groups - some of the groups include buildings in the adjoining Sub-Areas of South Street and West Street as follows: -
- I. Nos. 26 to 50 St Michael's Lane that define St Michael's Lane and also act as a frontage to Rope Walks.

³⁰ Such as St Mary's parish church, Priory Mills, Town Hall cupola, Coneygar Hill and Bridport Industries building.

- II. No. 5 Hope Terrace and the Hope & Anchor public house, which define St Michael's Lane and the corner of Rope Walks.
- III. Nos. 13 to 23 Priory Lane that define part of the lane and are conspicuous.
- IV. The bonded warehouse/malthouse, and former Assembly Rooms in Gundry Lane that establish the lane's main frontage.
- V. Nos. 30 & 32 St Michael's Lane - whose origins are much earlier, are intact, and have a group value with adjacent listed dwellings and contribute to the lane's main street frontage.

5.7.5 Buildings of Local Importance

- a) A number of unlisted buildings in the Sub-Area are also of local importance: -
 - I. On St Michael's Trading Estate, Unit 104 with attached corrugated iron covered drying area that also has an open rope walk parallel to it on the south side. The unit was formerly one of the area's earliest industrial buildings and still has an external crane. The unit and covered drying area define much of the southern edge of the coach station area and along with the new police station, mark the modern entrance into the trading estate.
 - II. The ranges of industrial buildings - ending with Howard Burwood Electrical and Wessex Wines - that are attached to the rear of No. 40 St Michael's Lane represent an important example of the more domestic scale of the net and cordage industry of St Michael's Lane and define a traditional alleyway.
 - III. No. 1 Stover Place (at the rear of listed Nos. 42 & 44 St Michael's Lane) is the only remaining habitable example of workers terraced housing that occupied rope walks behind St Michael's Lane. As is customary, the dwelling is accessed by through passage off the lane.
 - IV. Units 47 & 52 - including the workshop with the roof vents - of the St Michael's Trading Estate that form the western edge of the old cattle market and are of significance being historically associated with the manufacturing processes of the Bridport Industries building.
 - V. On the St Michael's Trading Estate, Units 37, 60, 61 and 67 represent, what was the area's largest early 20th century net and cordage expansion in the form of the Stover Works.
 - VI. Unit 58 of the St Michael's Trading Estate, which is a focal point from Allington Hill.
 - VII. The Bridport Industries building is the greatest expression of former industrial purpose and importance on the St Michael's Trading Estate. By the Sub-Area's architectural standards, the building is marked out by its size, and the visual balance (aided by a central water tower) and decoration of its northern façade.
 - VIII. Nos. 66 to 68 St Michael's Lane were dwellings, originally with rope walks at the rear, forming the earlier net and cordage business that is now occupied by the Bridport Industries building.
 - IX. The former Assembly Rooms in Gundry Lane that provides group value to the listed adjacent malthouse/bonded store.
- b) Other buildings, that are in the burgage plots of South Street are of local importance: the attractive Decorating Centre on the east side of Rope Walks which defines the street and acts as a focal point; and the Church House that is an important focal point.
- c) There are also features of local importance: the boundary wall parallel to the north side of the Bridport Industries building; the wall between Rope Walks car park and the old coal yard, and further west, the wall with the stone military plaque; the hand-painted "Recovery Service" sign of Oxenbury Garage; the stone wheel guards and stone paving in cart entrances and through passages.

5.7.6 Local building materials, details and traditions



Fig. 46 Examples of how windows can influence the form and appearance of buildings: left is the 'saw tooth' north lit roof of the former Stover Works & right is the rhythmic window pattern of the workshop of Oxenbury's Garage



- a) In the Sub-Area, a number of local traditions are apparent: the provision of cartways and through passages giving access from the street to the rear (particularly in St Michael's Lane), the incorporation of existing structure, including boundary walls, in building modifications; the modification of industrial premises and stores for new manufacturing processes, or new functions, for example, the Assembly Rooms or workers housing³¹; the effect of industrial processes and their storage requirements on a building's appearance and form. Daylighting was one manufacturing need that had a marked influence and whilst the amount of window varies, it was often generous providing attractive runs of glazing that established balanced facades and interesting rhythms.
- b) As manufacturing and storage prevailed in the Sub-Area, the prominent buildings are industrial in nature, and tend not to have indulged in decoration, for example, the old warehouse of No. 40 St Michael's Lane and the malthouse/bonded store in Gundry Lane, which act as focal points.
- c) Earlier buildings in the Sub-Area tended to be of Bothenhampton stone, although some also have brickwork due to modification. The importance of the old school was expressed in local stone with imported stone for decoration. Modifications to existing buildings generally account for the modest use of external render. Later buildings were constructed of red brick, the Bridport Industries building being the prime example. Blue slate is the more popular form of roofing, followed by red tile. Timber sash, casement and fixed windows are generally multi-paned as are the industrial iron/steel windows on the Trading Estate. Corrugated sheeting for roofing is indicative of a later, particularly utilitarian period of the net and cordage industry. In former days, natural materials for roofs would have prevailed.

5.7.7 Significant spaces, trees and views

- a) The main open spaces in the Sub-Area are the two principal car parks (Coach Station area and Rope Walks), which are of utilitarian nature and as such do little to enhance the Conservation Area, although they do provide substantive views, especially Rope Walks.
- b) The former cattle market, also used for car parking, represents a rare form of space on the St Michael's Trading Estate and provides a setting to the main front of the Bridport Industries building.

³¹ Residential adaptation was modest and was only to meet the need of an associated industry.

- c) Church Field is immediately north-west of St Mary's churchyard. Once allotments, the field affords a setting to St Mary's, is in foreground views from the churchyard and continues the historic interrelation of urban and pastoral land uses within the town. Similarly, the rough pasture and bowling green to the west of Church Field complement its character and the views to and from it. These spaces are particularly significant in terms of the link they provide between the town and river corridor, their association with the net & cordage industry as former allotments and drying grounds and the setting of the listed St Mary's church.
- d) From across the river, vantage points in Skilling show the importance of the Sub-Area's green spaces and topography which allow views towards the town - and in particular the major landmark of St Mary's Church - behind which nestle the surrounding hills. Still on the west side, the same visual experience can be enjoyed from the river valley floor. At this lower level, the focal importance of the Bridport Industries building, Priory Mills, Priory Cottages, and the Town Hall cupola is clear, as well as the backdrop afforded by Coneygar Hill and the screening of the St Michael's Trading Estate by the riverside trees.
- e) From Allington Hill, the Sub-Area is visible across Plottingham playing field, which softly frames the western edge of the Sub-Area. Again, the landmark qualities of the Bridport Industries building and Priory Mills stand out, as does the focal importance of the riverside trees, new police station and a red brick store situated by the River Brit's tributary, Simene. The general east-west orientation of St Michael's Trading Estate draws the eye towards St Mary's Church.
- f) In addition, the new riverside walk and St Mary's Bridge provide fine 'town and country' views into the Sub-Area, for example, that of Priory Mills with a green foreground and Coneygar Hill background and St Mary's Church with a green foreground and a hilltop background; the private allotments adjoining the bonded store/malthouse provide a rural view of St Mary's actually within an urban context; Coneygar Hill, the Town Hall cupola and an attractive rising roofscape are visible from St Michael's Lane; and the channelled views along Foundry Lane and the Trading Estate's alleyways terminated by riverside trees. The trees outside No 68 St Michael's Lane help frame the attractive views towards Priory Lane and St Mary's beyond.

5.8 Sub-Area 8: West Allington

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.8.1 Setting

West Allington stretches westwards from Court Mills to West Street. It contains a mixture of elegant early Victorian villas, two older detached stone houses, humbler terraces and more modern detached properties. To the north and south lie the 20th century developments of Allington Park, Park Road and Skilling (whose origins can be traced back to the 1919 plans of the early town planner Barry Parker).

5.8.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

- a) West Allington developed as an expansion to Bridport in the 19th century when development took place on land to the west, along the old coaching road towards Lyme Regis. The overall road alignment is fairly straight, with only a subtle curve west of the Allington Park junction. Building lines and density of development vary, with terraces and rows on the south side adhering closely to the road line and larger semis and detached houses being set back, at a higher level above the road. In the centre, on the north, Nos. 20-34 and Park House are set back in gardens and they, and the slight but significant set-back of the building line west of No. 63, combine to produce a looser texture of buildings.
- b) The south side of West Allington has plots of land associated with the expansion of the net and cordage industry. Whilst several important rope walks remain, the majority of plots have been shortened by the construction of the Dreadnought Trading Estate.

5.8.3 Approaches to and routes through

West Court and Nos. 6-16 are three storey terraces, on the north side, which, together with the run of terraces to the south, enclose the eastern end of West Allington. Nos. 42 and 83 provide the same function at the West Road extremity.

5.8.4 Key buildings, important building groups and features

- a) The key buildings are Allington Court (an urbane, stuccoed 1840-ish detached villa, with some refined Greek Revival details); No. 83, a high status 18th century brick group, providing one of the western 'gateway' elements; No. 27, a late 18th century house, brick, round-headed windows set in wall arches and with a flamboyant shop front on the return building at the west end; No. 5, a prominent residence with twin shop fronts; Nos. 69-71, 20-34 and 46-52, all 1840-ish, stuccoed villas with porches, conservatories and Greek details (No. 24 has a narrower façade and is of painted brick).



Fig. 47 No. 5 West Allington



Fig. 48 Nos. 24 & 26 West Allington

- b) The unlisted fine early 19th century No. 5 West Allington is a focal point and also considered a building of local importance.
- c) Two central building groups on either side of West Allington (Nos. 18-34 & 43-71), together form an important larger group.

5.8.5 Local building materials, details and traditions

Materials are varied, ranging from red brick on the south side, with occasional colour-washing and the use of Bothenhampton stone (often forming the base to brick walling) in No. 5 and the Magdalen Almshouses; Inferior Oolite appears at Nos. 42; smooth stucco and painted brick were the fashionable materials for the late Regency-early Victorian villas and the later Nos. 6-16; and rough-cast render appears at No. 18. West Court has a brown brick and render combination. Artificial stone makes an unwelcome intrusion at the junction with Magdalene Lane. Roofs are predominantly slate, with some plain tiles. Bothenhampton stone setts and paving stones can be found in yards, alleyways, and through passages, which are the traditional forms of access from the street.



Fig. 49 Left to right: alleyway to rear terraced housing, entrance of No. 18 & through passage off the street.

5.8.6 Significant spaces, trees and views

- a) Significant spaces are confined to the river channel that runs east of Allington Court. From West Bridge, the channel, and linear green area alongside it, are observable and are enhanced by several trees. Private gardens, with mature trees, are very visible in front of the larger villas (Copper Beeches) and on the west side of the Magdalene Lane junction, fronting No. 83 (Scots Pine).



Fig. 50 The front of Nos. 27 & 29 West Allington



Fig. 51 Villas with attractive front gardens & mature Copper Beech trees

- b) There are some important views in the Sub-Area: up West Street from the North Allington junction and northwards up North Allington from the same location; southwards into Tannery Road and Magdalene Lane, with indifferent foregrounds but longer views of hills and trees; northwards up Park Road, Allington Park and West Gables Close to grand houses and the superb woodland on Allington Hill; and westwards towards Symonds bury.

5.9 Sub-Area 9: North Allington

(Please refer to the map at the back of the Appraisal.)

5.9.1 Setting

The overall impression of North Allington is of long groups of stone and brick terraces, hugging and enclosing the narrow B3162.

5.9.2 Evolution, structure and hierarchy

North Allington, once a separate settlement of Saxon origins that became part of Bridport in the 19th century, still has a distinctive expanded village character. Many of the buildings are of terraced form, built onto the back edge of pavements on the east side and behind small front gardens on the west side. Only the Parish Church of St Swithun and a few larger detached houses are set further back from the road. There are conspicuous long rear plots to the east of the main road, south of Fulbrooks Lane, which appear to be former ropewalks and have also accommodated a terrace of cottages (Portland Place). The historic pattern has been disrupted by: modern housing developments at Fulbrooks Lane, Cooper Court and Hibernia Close; flats at the St Swithins Road junction and Hannah Court; small private housing infills at Mount Pleasant and other locations along the main road; and in large areas to the east. These, without exception, are set back from the road, with gardens and lawns.



Fig. 52 Nos. 131-139 North Allington



Fig. 53 The parish church of St Swithun

5.9.3 Key buildings, important building groups and features

- a) The key buildings are the Parish Church of St Swithun, (Neo-Greek of 1827); No. 2 Parsonage Road, a fine brick Georgian house; No. 5 North Allington, a much damaged 18th century house but with a three storey net loft to the rear (all windows and doors are uPVC replacements); two late 17th century/early 18th century rural vernacular houses, Nos. 131-139 and 145 North Allington; and the Oddfellows Arms.
- b) The best groups are: Nos. 8-44 North Allington and “The Kings Arms”, a long terrace of cottages, mainly humble but providing a good entry to the area; and the central part of the main street, from Nos. 67-97 on the west and Nos. 84-138 on the east.
- c) Of local importance are the attractive unlisted Nos. 67-69 North Allington which add group value to the neighbouring listed properties, and the unlisted No. 176 and Oddfellows public house that add character to the Conservation Area.

5.9.4 Local building materials, details and traditions



Fig. 54 Left to right: parish church entrance gate, plaque of Reform Place & gate of No. 2 Parsonage Road

- a) There are one or two pleasant details, such as, the boundary walls, gates and dated 1850 lamp overthrow to the Parish Church; Reform Place's bold plaque; the blue enamel name plate to Parsonage Road; and the local-patterned iron gate to No. 2 Parsonage Road.
- b) Materials are the Bothenhampton stone, seen in buildings (Diments Square, Sunnybank, "The King's Arms", "The Boot"), as a base for many brick buildings and as stone boundary walls (churchyard and Parsonage Road). Hammer dressed Inferior Oolite appears in the two older survivors, Nos. 131-139 and 145 North Allington and several 19th century cottages. Both stones appear in rubble form on the side and rear elevations of properties. Stucco is seen at the Parish Church and Hibernia House and a slightly textured render is seen in Reform Place. There is a preponderance of local red/orange brick in many of the 19th century cottages. Brick also was used in combination with stone, either as brick quoins and lintels to stone walling or as dressed stone details in brick elevations. Brick is often painted and the long terraces have a mixture of stone, brick and render. Roofs are predominantly slate but clay pantiles are seen in two or three buildings. Modern concrete tiles are apparent on newer housing and refurbished cottages.

5.9.5 Significant spaces, trees and views

- a) Significant spaces are confined to the churchyard, the smaller yards in front of St Swithun's House and the Medical Centre and the grassed area in front of Sunnybank (albeit a private space and compromised by a confusion of parked cars). The mass of Allington Hill is the biggest and most visible of the open spaces that are immediately adjacent to the settlement. There are decent trees and greenery that make an impact in the parish churchyard, particularly the two large Yews and a smaller Yew avenue. The hedge in front of the Medical Centre is important in screening parked cars and the gardens to No. 2 Parsonage Road and Hibernia House also provide some relief to the long rows of buildings.
- b) Significant views include the steep slopes of Allington Hill and its lush woods as glimpsed where the terraced frontages on the B3162 are interrupted, and also views of Coneygar Hill to the east along Fulbrooks Lane and Parsonage Road. The view up the main street northwards from Allington Court, the contained vistas north from St Swithun's House and south-east from Diments Square show groups of buildings to their advantage.

6 Problems and Detriments

There are a number of problems and detriments within the Bridport Conservation Area that have an effect on its character and environmental quality.

6.1 Impact of traffic

6.1.1 Traffic is a particular problem in East and West Streets, at the junction with South Street and along North Allington. On market days, the problem is exaggerated, as the volume of traffic entering Bridport from surrounding rural areas is increased as well as movement to car parks and cross town journeys. Traffic not only causes environmental and safety problems but is also visually intrusive to the rich architectural surroundings.

6.1.2 The practicalities of providing surface car parking have had a detrimental impact. Also, the coach station by Tannery Road and the car parks in East Street, Ropewalks and Rax Lane, to varying degrees, have undermined townscape coherence. Off Folly Mill Lane, the setting of the Listed former school has been eroded by the East Street car park and in Rax Lane, the garden setting of Listed The Grove has been depleted by parking.



Fig. 55 The entrance to East Street car park creates a 'hole' in the traditional townscape of East Street



Fig. 56 Traffic in East Street, which along with West Street was part of the historic Exeter to Dorchester turnpike and coaching road

6.2 Street furniture, poles and wires

6.2.1 Unkempt, mismatched street furniture and lamp posts, as well as poles and overhead wires, are a common problem throughout the Conservation Area, detracting from its character. Poles and wires are especially a problem in Victoria Grove, North Allington and St Andrew's Road. Also, the very large lamp posts in East Street form a dominant skyline feature when viewed from East Bridge.



Fig. 57 Large lamp posts in East Street are visually intrusive



Fig. 58 No entry signs to Barrack Street



Fig. 59 Poles and wires detract from views, the street scene & the form of buildings

6.2.2 Double 'no entry' signs in Barrack Street, where the road is actually blocked by a continuous pavement create clutter in the street scene and are not totally necessary. St Michael's Lane is visually cut in half by the junction arrangement with Tannery Road.

6.3 Building maintenance and other urban issues

- 6.3.1 There are obvious signs of under-maintenance and under-use in Listed and unlisted buildings, such as poor decorative order, defective rainwater goods, decaying timberwork, damp, missing roof tiles, and empty properties. Many upper floors are used for storage and under-use may contribute to maintenance problems. These problems are particularly obvious on the St Michael's Trading Estate, where a number of buildings, external spaces and features lack sustained maintenance and sympathetic repair and alteration, resulting in a negative effect on a sizeable part of the Conservation Area that already devotes itself to activities of a functional nature.
- 6.3.2 The Literary and Scientific Institute remains redundant and has structural problems.
- 6.3.3 The external repointing of old buildings is not always of a suitable standard.
- 6.3.4 Many Victorian terraces in the Conservation Area have had their unity eroded by replacement windows and doors and painting of brick and stonework. Generally, material changes to unlisted buildings are a cause for concern as it often results in a loss of character that affects the Conservation Area.



Fig. 60 Properties left empty or undeveloped for too long lack general maintenance, which in turn can attract vandalism and fly posting



Fig. 61 Inappropriate shop fronts dilute the character of the historic buildings & the Conservation Area

- 6.3.5 Poor shop fronts and loss of details, with many examples of inappropriate replacement windows and doors in plastic and aluminium (mainly 1960s/70's) have resulted in a loss of historic character.
- 6.3.6 Flyposting, especially on windows of empty shops and street furniture, is affecting the appearance of the town centre.

6.4 Green Space and Tree Maintenance

- 6.4.1 Bridport's hillsides, riverside walks, parks and garden trees are important elements of the Conservation Area. Conservation Area designation and a number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) provide protection against felling and inappropriate lopping, but, old age, weather, and underground services all pose problems to long term survival.
- 6.4.2 The riverside walks are faced with erosion and require ongoing maintenance, often complicated by the array of agencies involved.

6.5 Archaeology

All recent archaeological activity in Bridport has been as a result of the requirements of Government Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 16 and is therefore reactive in nature. This

would benefit from a long-term strategy for planned research, excavation, publication and display.

6.6 Historic town layout or pattern

There has been a serious loss of street boundaries and street definition, especially on approach roads, back and side lanes and a loss of boundaries between burgage plots and land plots generally: all of which undermines the historic layout and cohesive nature of the Conservation Area.

6.7 Buildings of Local Importance and potential new Listed Buildings

A range of “buildings of local importance” has been highlighted in the analysis of the Sub-Areas and particular care should be taken with alterations and repairs of these buildings. Consideration should be given to the potential for the Listing of some of these notably:

- No. 5 West Allington;
- The Bridport Industries building on the St Michael’s Trading Estate;
- Some of the least spoilt terraces with obvious architectural quality: 4-22 Victoria Grove; and Nos. 6-16 West Allington;
- Mountfield.

7 Review of the Conservation Area Boundary

The review found a Conservation Area boundary that embraced the historic core (fig 62), the late 18th and 19th century extensions to the town and the important industrial area, the St Michael’s Trading Estate. The latter was included in an amendment to the Conservation Area boundary in February 2000.

There were also areas that had potential for inclusion in a revised Conservation Area boundary and following public consultation, it was decided that the Conservation Area should be extended to include:

1. South Mill, to the south-east of the current boundary on South Street. This includes two Listed buildings, South Mill and South Holme, a number of attractive water management features and a pleasant riverside ambience. The boundary extension also includes the County Council Highway Depot which is situated at South Mill.
2. A small area just north of St Mary’s Bridge, by Ponchesford Lane, which tidies up an apparent boundary anomaly by including the whole of the River Brit (as the boundary does northwards to West Allington).

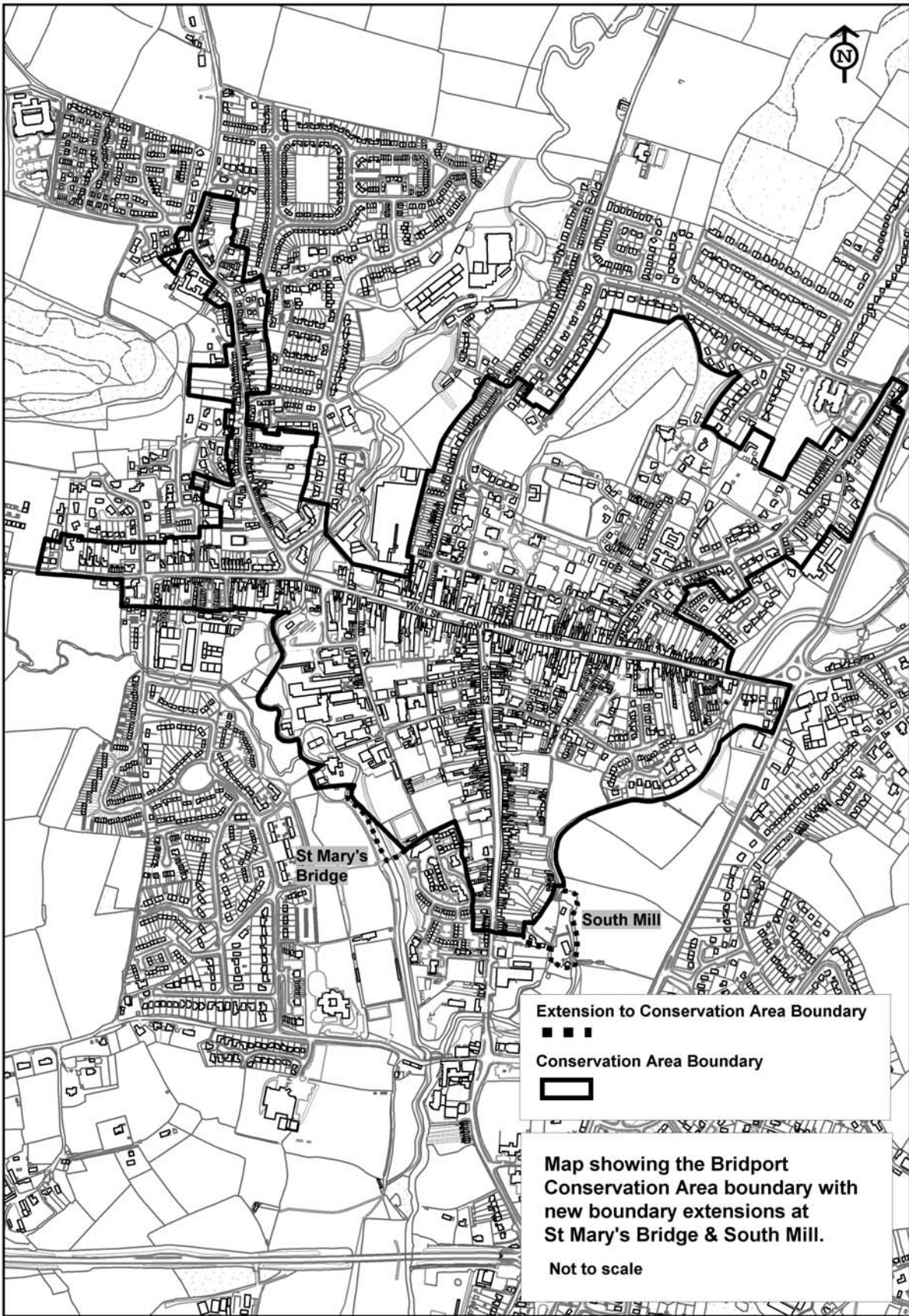


Fig. 62 Map of extensions to Conservation Area Boundary - not to scale.

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Appendix A

Bridport Conservation Area Extensions at St Andrew's Rd & Skilling and the Satellite Conservation Area at Bridport Cemetery

Contents

St Andrew's Rd	59
Cemetery	62
Skilling	64
Information	67
References	67

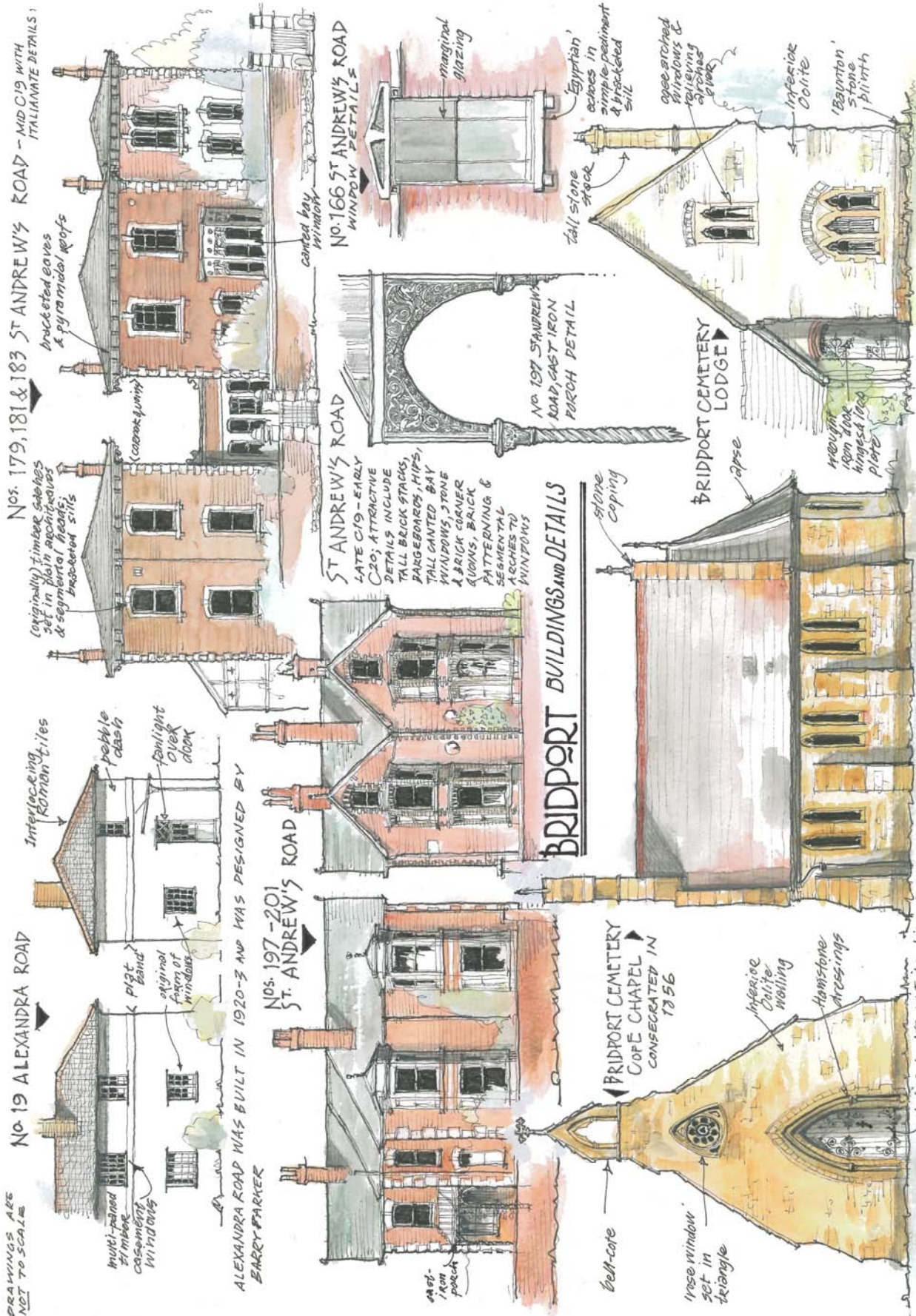


Fig A Buildings & Details

St Andrew's Rd

In the Bridport Conservation Area Appraisal, St Andrew's Rd Sub-Area 4 (page 32) only stretches from Barrack St to the new Sea Road North junction but St Andrew's Rd actually continues towards Bradpole (A3066) and is an original route into Bridport from the north, which reflects the town's expansion, particularly after the arrival of the railway in 1857.

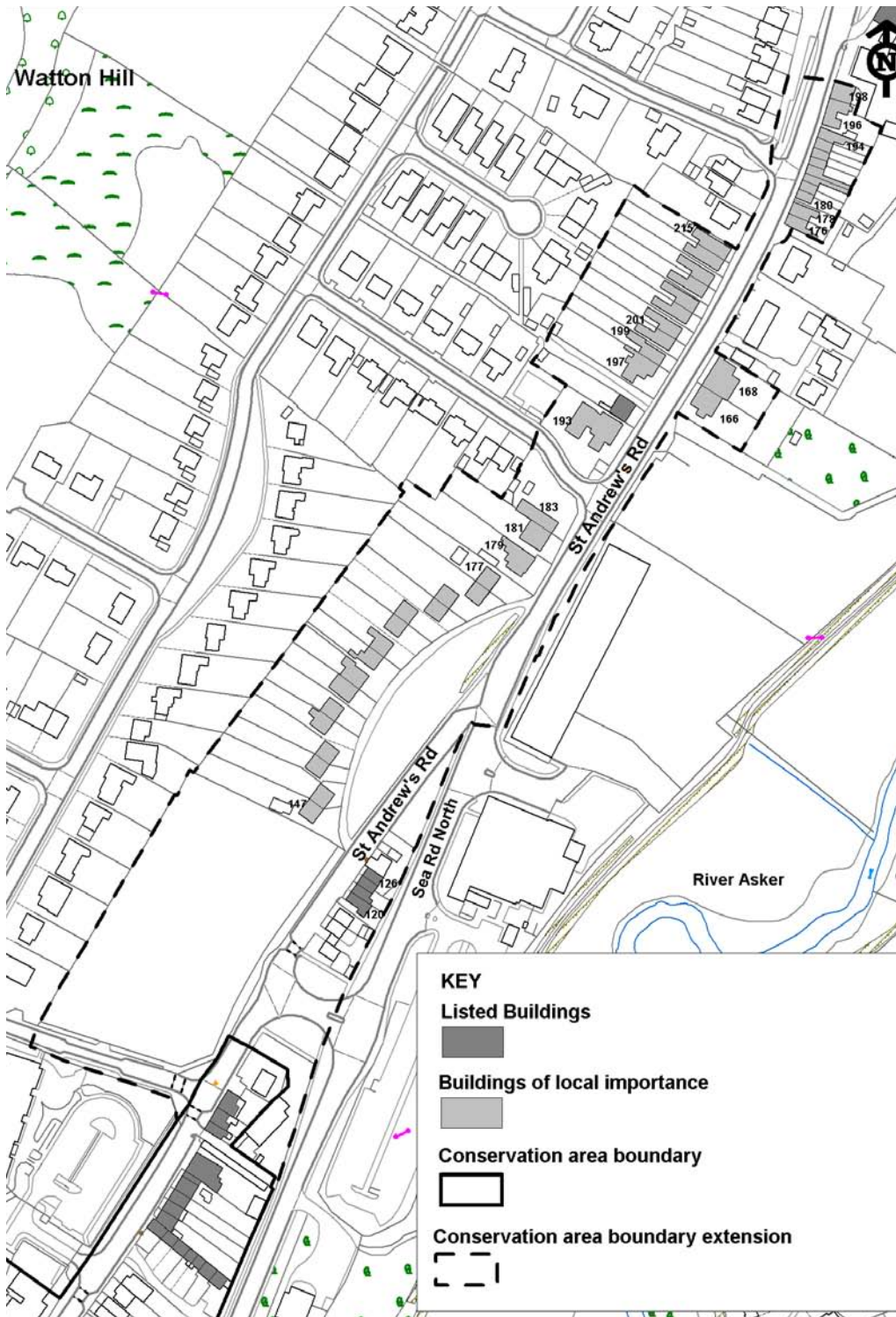


Fig B St Andrew's Rd
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At a northern point along St Andrew's Rd (fig B), on the east side, is a terrace, Nos 194- 180 evens, of red brick and slate worker's cottages with rear access and originally Yorkshire sliding windows¹ (evident in No 182), appear on the 1837 Bradpole parish map. By 1902, either side of this terrace, were semi-detached houses, Nos 198 & 196 (much changed) and Nos 178 & 176 of red brick and slate. A small shop later filled a gap. The local importance of this property line, situated behind the pavement, is the way it draws the eye towards imposing houses diagonally opposite, together acting as an entry or gateway into Bridport.



Fig C Nos 215 – 201 odds St Andrew's Rd



Fig D Nos 166 & 168 St Andrew's Rd

The imposing, late Victorian/early Edwardian, semi-detached houses opposite are Nos 215 – 201 odds, comprising two and half storeys of red brick with buff brick decoration, two storey bay windows, slate roofs with ridge end finials, including on the lucarnes² which provide light to the front attic rooms, overhanging eaves and verges with barge boards and three red brick chimneys with original pots each. Most of the windows are replacements but original single-paned, sash windows are evident on No 209 and some side elevations. At the southerly end of these properties are the semi-detached houses, Nos 197 & 199 (fig A) of the same period and height but with a difference. No 197 is larger, being situated on a wider plot than the neighbouring long, rectangular plots. It was not uncommon for a housing speculator to have a bigger home to the rest. It shares with No 199 two storeys, red brickwork with stone quoins (corners), stone sills and stone dressings over windows, full height, stone constructed bay windows capped with slate above the eaves line, slate main roofs with finials, tall chimneys with original pots, but also, has a side wing stepped back from the main frontage. In the corner of this side wing is the front door with a glazed, decorative cast iron canopy that extends round the wing. No 197 retains original doors and windows, whereas No 199 has the occasional window replacement. All these houses are in line, set back behind small front gardens with rebuilt brick boundary walls and because of their grouping and appearance are considered of local importance.

Opposite Nos 199 & 197 are further late Victorian/early Edwardian semi-detached houses (Nos 166 & 168) of local importance due to contributing to the group value of their neighbours over the road. Set behind walled, small front gardens and called Riverdale and Rushmere above their original front doors, the two-storey red brick fronted and slate roofed properties have bracketed, overhanging eaves, render and brick (with dentils) plats or banding, doors and windows (fig A) with Egyptian Revival lintels and sills, original wooden sash windows and flat roofed full height bay windows (window frames replaced). Rushmere retains an attached, side garden wall with its Egyptian Revival entrance, whilst Riverdale has been extended sideways.

Back on the west side, past Nos 199 & 197, towards town, are Nos 195, 193, 183, 181 & 179 (fig A), which were built during the period 1845 – 1888, representing early development on St Andrew's Rd and beyond town limits. No 195 is listed and more simply in detail compared to its unlisted neighbours. Nos 193 – 179 odds suggest a phase of Victorian (Gothic/Italianate?) Revival villa construction, the similarity in design – red brickwork with stone quoins (corners), windows with stone surrounds, bracketed sills and arches with key stones, sash windows with decorative, vertical glazing bars, pyramidal slate roofs with bracketed overhanging eaves and tall chimneys – establishing a strong appearance and group value that is of local importance. A ground floor, canted, stone bay window provides No 181 with extra prestige and No 183 has the name Fern Villa carved into a quoin stone. All these properties are in line behind small front gardens with rebuilt boundary walls, incorporating original gate piers.

¹ Multi paned, two light window, one light fixed and the other a sash sliding in grooves in a horizontal direction.

² In this instance, it is brickwork that is continued up, off the main wall, to provide attic windows.

Staying on the same side, nearer town, the roadside is defined by an attractive grass banked hedgerow, which as a former field boundary, predated the construction of Nos 147- 177 St Andrew's Rd. These houses represent the Town Council's initial site for post First World War working-class houses, before purchasing farmland at Skilling. The architect Barry Parker was commissioned to design St Andrew's Rd, which commenced in 1920. Each house has a rectilinear, small front and long back garden (sufficient for self-sufficiency), achieved by keeping at right angles to the road. By setting back the central properties, a sense of grouping was formed round a segmental green, which to this day, acts as a buffer between the houses and the road and old railway goods yard opposite. The high position provides the houses with views over the Asker valley and when looking back at them, Watton Hill acts as a backdrop. The front entrance to each property is situated in the gable end wall, allowing a spacious front living room with a sunny aspect, a Parker requirement. This arrangement meant shared, front, garden paths. The external appearance, and much in evidence today, was pebble dashed walls with a smooth render band (plat) just below first floor windows; wooden multi paned casement windows; and hipped roofs of interlocking clay Roman tiles with overhanging eaves and imposing chimneys. Only No 167 retains its original windows. Because of their social and architectural history, Nos 147- 177 have local importance, as does the K6 telephone kiosk by the grass bank.



Fig E No 167 St Andrew's Rd



Fig F Watton Hill & playing field viewed from the St Andrew's Rd & Coneygar Rd junction

Continuing to town, the width of St Andrew's Road is more defined and attractive views along it are complemented by the banked hedgerow that becomes a stone retaining wall with trees above it (original field boundary) and playing field adjoining, and opposite, a line of properties. The trees in this section of St Andrew's Rd link with those in Coneygar Rd, especially when viewed at the roads' junction. Of the properties, situated close to the road, Nos 120-126 evens are listed and likely associated with the railway. Between this listed terrace and listed No 118 (already in the conservation area) is the new junction with Sea Road North, where once the station stood.

In St Andrew's Rd, the historic, close proximity of Bridport to the wider setting is evident in the views and glimpses of hills, especially Watton Hill.

Due to its special historic and architectural interest, this length of St Andrew's Road is worthy of inclusion in the conservation area.

Cemetery

Situated in the parish of Bothenhampton in once open countryside, Bridport cemetery was consecrated in 1856. Comprising about four acres at the time, it stretched from East Rd southwards to a field boundary, short of Lower Walditch Lane, although in 1900, an extension linked the cemetery with the lane. By the 1960s, farmland west of the cemetery was developed for housing and the cemetery extended eastwards across fields. A Tree Preservation Order covers much of the 1960s extension. In 2002, one such unused field became a children's play area (to return to cemetery sometime in the future) associated with an adjoining new housing estate, and a long, thin, additional area provided on the east side of the 1900 extension. In 1989, the original access on East Rd was closed and a new one provided on Lower Walditch Lane.

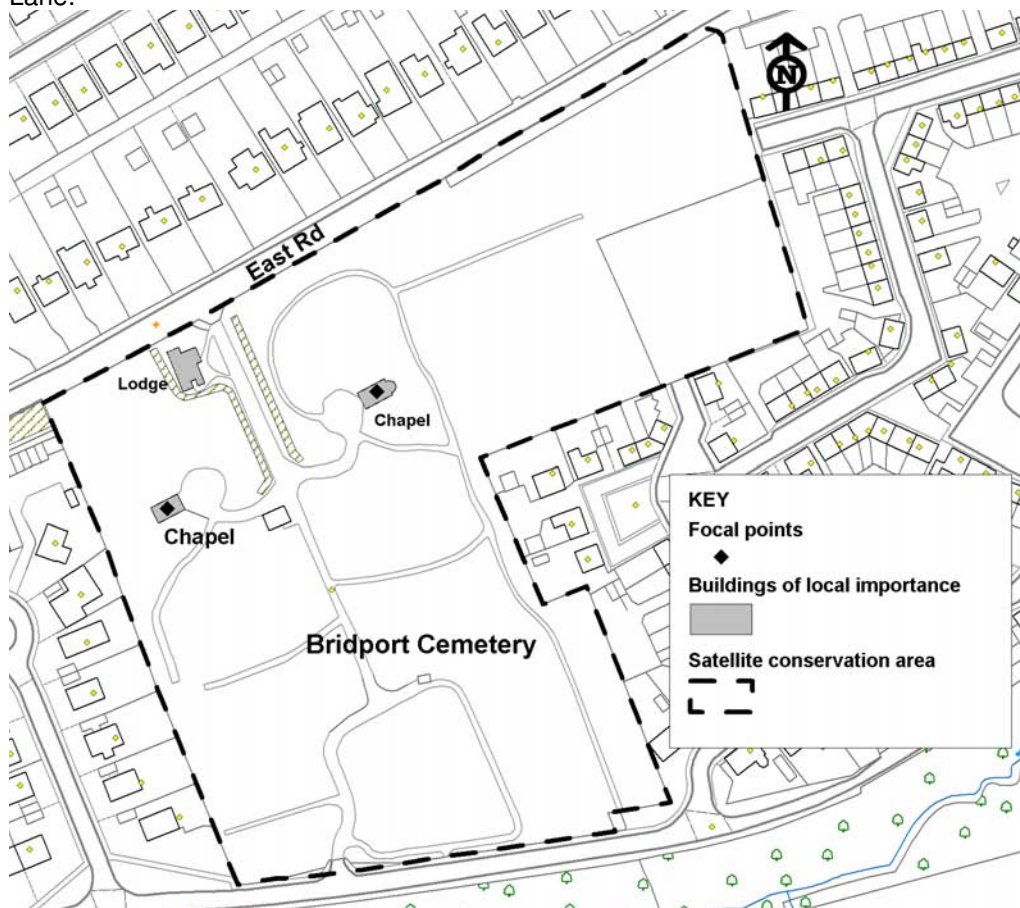


Fig G Bridport Cemetery, East Rd

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The character of each section of the cemetery will be described in chronological order followed by a brief conclusion.

Original cemetery

On a field that slopes to the south, the original cemetery was constructed to Burial Board requirements with its high standards of landscaping, architectural design, construction and materials. Overall, architecture is set within a planned and borrowed landscape, aiming at the informal picturesque layout.

The entrance on East Rd is a Bothenhampton (Baunton)³ stone vehicular gateway (with wrought iron gates) and a pedestrian (now overgrown) gate, flanked either side by Baunton stone retaining wall below an earth embankment with the field hedgerow on top. Mature trees on a low bank identify a remnant of the east field boundary but the west boundary is more intact with bank, hedge and occasional trees (some old pollards) marking various stages of it. The south boundary is now a change in level between the original cemetery and the 1900 extension.

³ Baunton stone (local name for Bothenhampton stone) is recognised in Jo Thomas' *Dorset Stone* as Forest Marble, which is tougher than Inferior Oolite and preferred for use in industrial buildings.

Entering from East Rd, immediately on the right is Cemetery Lodge (fig A) built of slate and local Baunton (plinth) and Inferior Oolite (walling) and imported Hamstone (dressings, coping stones and ridge tiles) in the Gothic Revival style. The Lodge retains original features, although the tops of its large chimneys have been rebuilt in brick. Continuing along the sunken access, graves and planted trees become more evident, as do the mortuary chapels that face each other, the Nonconformist to the west and Church of England to the east (fig A), with the access splitting and curving back to stop outside each chapel before continuing as footpath in a wide loop. The chapels are Gothic Revival and similar in height, form and feature (steep roofs, buttressed single storey side walls with tracery windows, buttressed, coped (apex stones with cross finials), gable walls with pointed arched entrances with double, decorative (intricate wrought iron ironmongery), timber doors, recessed rose windows and bell-cotes with cross finials) and materials (slate roofs, Hamstone dressings, ridge tiles and coping stones and Inferior Oolite walling). The chapels differ in finer detail, and on its east side, the Church of England chapel has a five sided apse covered by a multi hipped slate roof with lead rolls and a cross finial (hip knob). The quality and intactness of the gateways, lodge and chapels mean they are of local importance.



Fig H East Rd entrance



Fig I Nonconformist chapel

Near the Nonconformist chapel is an incongruous, timber clad store which is used for maintenance of the cemetery.

Throughout the original cemetery, many internal views have acquired a special sculptural quality, comprising a mix of lodge, chapels, gravestones, memorials, hedgerows and trees, whilst wider views, that become more apparent where the ground slopes away, have the added, stunning benefit of the hills and plantations to the south, plus the avenue of trees along upper Walditch Rd. In other views, the chapels are main focal points. There are also views across to the 1960s extension with its hedgerows and views over the 1900 extension with its stone boundary wall and pavilion.



Fig J View SE towards Walditch



Fig K Cemetery trees

The original cemetery has a splendid collection of evergreens (mostly Corsican pine and holm oak), which lends a slight, yet appropriate, sombre character. Amongst an important group of pine trees near the centre of the cemetery, a single pine tree has acquired such prominence that it is visible from every direction within the cemetery and is a landmark in distant views towards the cemetery. The trees are key component of character, providing considerable amenity value.

1900 extension

The 1900 extension is simple in layout and more open with fewer trees and grave mounds and grave kerbs. Originally, the extension had a central, circular footpath but the east side is now a vehicular access, linking the entrance in Lower Walditch Lane to the original cemetery.

The west boundary is a continuation of the field hedgerow mentioned above, the east is a path separating it from the 2002 extension and the south is an attractive Baunton stone boundary wall with a pillared entrance. A Baunton stone wall retains a change in level, signifying the north boundary and incorporated into it is a small, open-fronted pavilion built of clay tile and Baunton stone.

The views south enjoy the same wooded hills and treed avenue as referred to previously and the view north benefits from the sculptural and focal qualities of the trees and chapels in the original cemetery. From within, the uniformity of the First World War gravestones attracts the eye.

1960s extensions

Open with original field boundary hedgerows to the north and furthest eastwards and newly planted hedges elsewhere. From within it, there are important views of the original cemetery.

2002 extension

The 2002 extension benefits from adjoining the 1900 extension and from the views it has of the original cemetery. Its east boundary is domestic fencing.

Bridport Cemetery as a whole

Bridport cemetery is a fine example of a mid Victorian cemetery design and layout and changes that have taken place in cemetery provision in subsequent years. This together with its location and setting, make it a public burial ground and open space of exceptional historic and architectural special interest. It is proposed to designate the cemetery as a satellite conservation area to the Bridport conservation area.

Skilling

The Garden Suburb⁴ of Skilling, a scheme for working class housing on farmland outside the borough (fig L), was designed by the architect Barry Parker⁵ who was commissioned by Bridport Town Council.

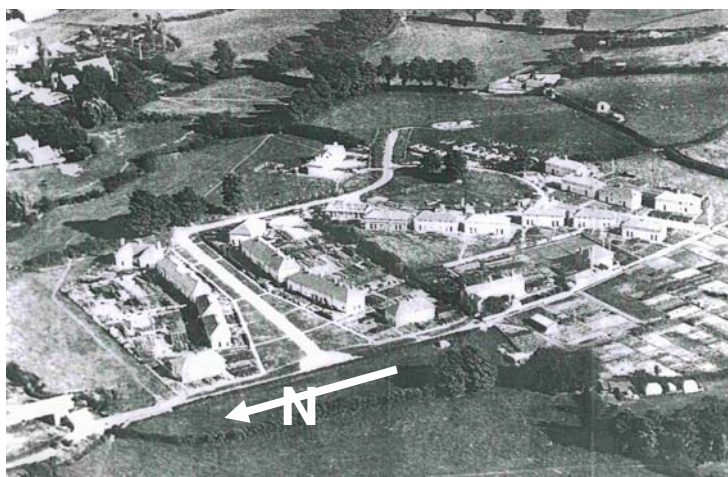
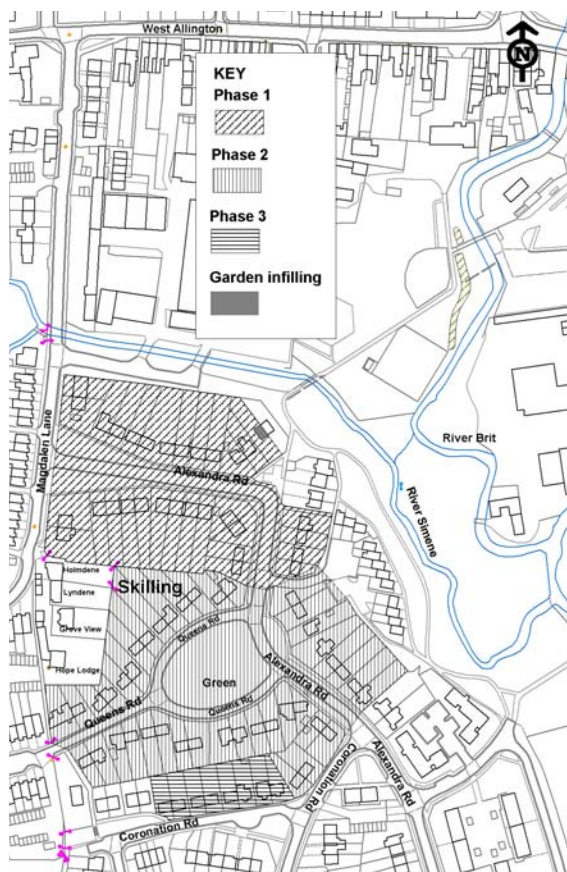


Fig M 1920s aerial photograph of Skilling

Fig L Skilling Garden Suburb phases of construction

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⁴ This is a dormitory suburb of low density, combining the benefits of both town and countryside.

⁵ Until the First World War, Barry Parker was in partnership with the town planner Raymond Unwin. Together they were responsible for "landmarks in community planning and housing layout and design" (Miller, 1999, p 1) such as Letchworth Garden City and Hampstead Garden Suburb.

Under the 1919 Housing Act, which required local council's to provide working-class housing, Bridport Town Council was committed to 278 houses. The initial site in St Andrew's Rd was too small, so land was also purchased at Skilling, and by March 1920, a scheme for 60 houses had been approved. The first phase (fig L) was houses in Alexandra Rd (1920-23), followed by a second phase in Queen's Rd (1923-27). The last phase (1930) was on Coronation Rd. This resulted in a total of 78 pre Second World War houses, with all others in Skilling built after 1945. Amongst the pre-war construction, there has been small areas of infilling, otherwise, Parker's layout is intact.

Abutting the parish of Symondsburry, Parker's layout made use of the hillside location, retaining important views and natural features. A 1920s aerial photograph (fig M) of Skilling shows the road layout, the almost complete construction of phases 1 & 2 and the retention of trees and field hedgerows. The boundary between the south side of Alexandra Rd and the north side of Queens Rd is such a hedgerow.

The mainly rectangular housing plots (a few are square or triangular), generally fit in with the road layout, or in the case of Alexandra Rd, the tapering green sward. Houses follow the curve of the green (fig L) by being set back, keeping a more regular shape to the gardens. Unless there was a schematic reason not to, houses still kept in line with each other, usually behind small front gardens. The 1919 Housing Act required a maximum density of 12 houses per acre which often resulted in generous rear gardens, capable of feeding a household. Besides the retention of original field hedgerows, hedges were planted, some of which still define property boundaries.

The construction phases are described in more detail.

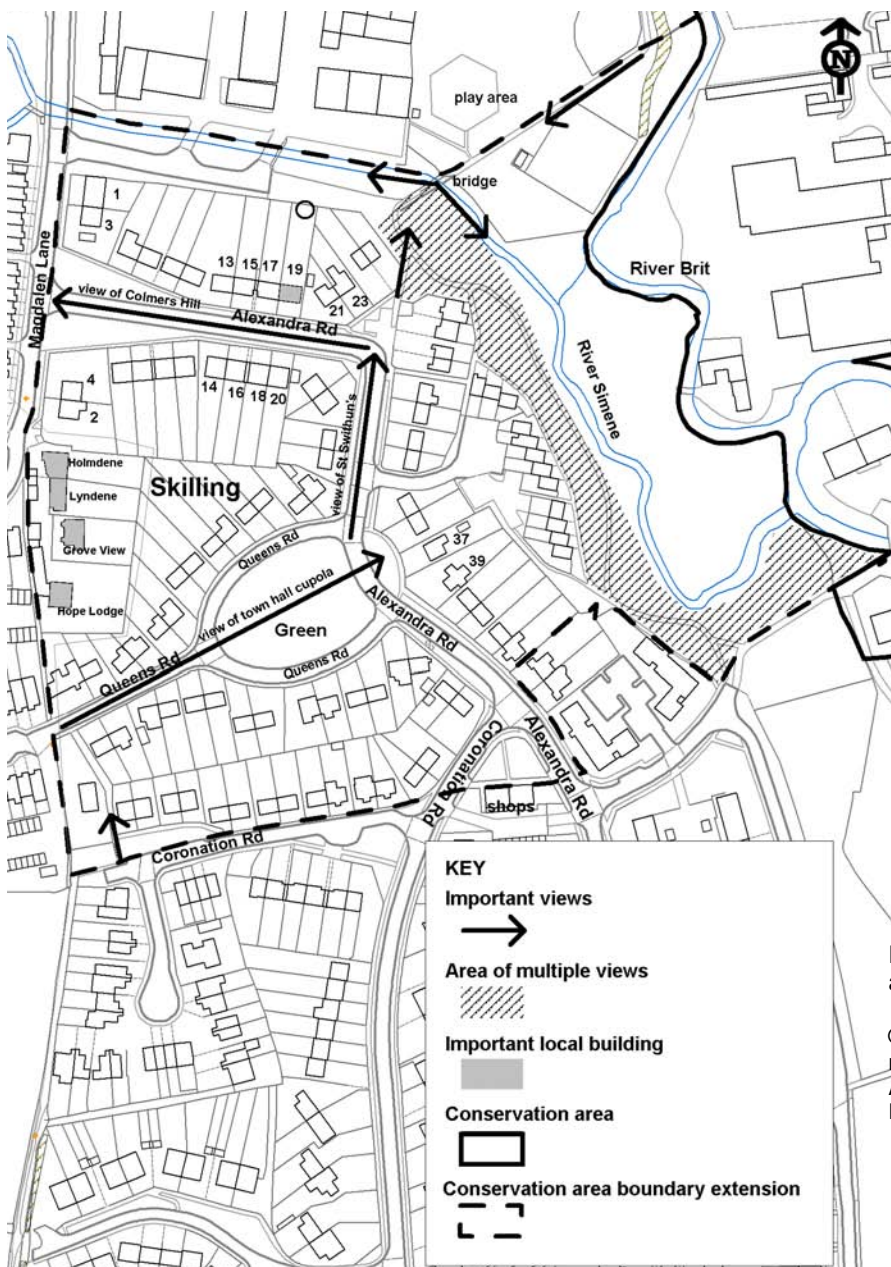


Fig N Proposed conservation area extension at Skilling

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Phases 1 & 2

In Alexandra Rd (fig N), Parker designed two pairs of houses (Nos 1 & 3 and 2 & 4) facing Magdalene Lane and set wide apart to act as the main sentinels at the beginning of a tapering greensward that directs the view up to what was originally, a group of trees (Miller 1999). Development replaced the trees but the essential, entrance nature of Alexandra Rd remains. Miller (1999) discovered that Queens Rd, which splits to form an oval green, is visually aligned with the town hall cupola (fig N). Its hillside position also enjoys views of Coneygar and Watton Hills. The NE tip of the green, although sliced by Alexandra Rd, is marked out by the footpath and front garden boundaries on the opposite side of the road. At this lower end and in the road, the cupola of St Swithun's, Allington is visible and when leaving the suburb along Alexandra Rd, Colmers Hill appears in the distance. These views and focal points establish a connection with the town and countryside, benefiting the suburb's amenity.

Phase 1 comprises 30 dwellings, either terraces or semi-detached, showing an economy of material and detail that is recognisably Parker with pebble dashed walls with a render plat (smooth band) under the first floor window sills, low pitched roofs with wide, overhanging eaves covered in interlocking Roman tiles, brick chimneys and multi paned timber windows that altogether establish an attractive, cottage appearance. No 19 Alexandra Rd (fig A) has kept its original features, including an attractive timber fanlight over the front door and is a building of local importance.



Fig O Phase 1 - Alexandra Rd



Fig P Phase 2 – looking towards Allington Hill from the green

In Phase 1, Parker's desire to achieve well-ventilated, sunny living rooms, despite a property's aspect, resulted in interesting design features. Semi-detached properties (Nos 17 & 19) have front entrances in gable walls, allowing two large window openings across their width. Sometimes, achieving a sunny aspect meant small windows (stairwells and larders) on front elevations, providing contrast with larger windows (Nos 2 & 4). In terraces (Nos 14, 16, 18 & 20), front doors with a smooth render surround face the street, together with small stairwell windows, which enliven the façade. At the centre of terraces, an arched passage way allows rear access.

Other architectural interest is provided by semi-detached (Nos 17 & 19 and 15 & 13) properties being linked, providing additional storage and bedrooms. The link is set back from the front façade to create the illusion of separation. Nos 21 & 23 are particularly different not only in their position, which responds to the pedestrian route to and from town rather than the road layout, but in their short, rear wings and swept eaves detail below the eaves line of the front façade.

Phase 2 comprises 38 dwellings, all semi-detached with more modest features, reflecting the town council's reduced funding at the time. Unlike Phase 1, front entrances (some recessed and arched, others with plain horizontal rain hoods) are central. Where the front façade receives sunlight, main windows are either side of the front door, where sunlight is received at the rear, the internal layout changes placing ancillary spaces at the front, resulting in one window only besides the door. Windows were originally multi paned metal (Miller, 1999) but the roof tiling, wall finish and overhanging eaves were the same as Phase 1. On the NE side of the green, Nos 37 & 39 Alexandra Rd appear to have been accommodated within Parker's layout but not designed by him.

In both phases chimneys are a visually strong feature. In Alexandra Rd, a post war K6 telephone kiosk and type B pillar post box stand side by side and an attractive detail is the cast iron road plaque fixed to the plat of an end or corner property.

Phases 3

Phase 3 comprises eight dwellings of a reworked design, possibly by the town's Borough Surveyor. Similar to Phase 2, this last phase originally had single paned timber sash windows (Miller, 1999).

Symondsbury Parish Group of Properties

The Symondsbury parish housing group of Holmdene, Lyndene and Hope Lodge (fig N) appear to be Victorian but are likely to be older. Their neighbour, Grove View, appeared after the First World War. All share an access with traditional paving and bounded on the west side, alongside a public footpath, by attractive, old outbuildings and walling. The earlier Holmdene and Lyndene are long, semi-detached cottages of brick and Bothenhampton (Baunton) stone (partly rendered), having a slate roof with an overhang. Holmdene retains original windows and Lyndene an attractive open porch. Hope Lodge is square shaped, built of Baunton stone with a hipped (lead rolls), slate roof and has old windows. Grove View is entirely of red brick with a slate roof and full height bay windows. Original chimneys are prominent. The group has historical cohesiveness and interest and all are buildings of local importance.

Trees, Open Spaces and Setting

Cherry trees complement Parker's broad, entrance greensward and verges in Alexandra Rd. The green is a central, community space with playground and football pitch and has four trees that add interest. Outside the corner shops is a semi-circular green area with three trees, which provide an attractive setting to the shops. The Symondsbury dwelling group has mature garden trees. The green spaces, trees, hedges and grass verges either link historically with the former farmland or visually with the wider views of trees and hills, and altogether, uphold Parker's garden suburb design.

The River Simene corridor on the north side of Skilling is an important buffer between the houses in Alexandra Rd and the Dreadnought Trading Estate. From Magdalen Lane, a public footpath (W1/29) passes through the buffer and continues southwards. This buffer links visually with the approach into Skilling that starts from Tannery Rd, crosses the play area west of the River Brit and heads towards the footbridge over the River Simene, marked en route by three, impressive pollarded trees. The amenity afforded by the River Brit and River Simene and their confluence are particularly evident from the footbridge. At the bridge, there is a choice of routes, either straight into Alexandra Rd, towards the northern buffer or left along the footpath past planted groups of trees, keeping close to the rivers with their flood plain, riverside trees and patches of scrub, all reminiscent of past countryside. This footpath then joins another path with a rural nature that connects Skilling with Foundry Lane. On the town side, the St Michael's Trading Estate hangs back from the river corridors, thereby supporting the historic division or buffer between the town and its Garden Suburb expansion. The river corridors themselves retain the limits of Parker's Skilling and provide a succession of attractive, multiple views, some of which include the parish church, town hall cupola and surrounding hills.

Changes affecting the cohesiveness of the garden suburb design

All, except one property, have undergone replacement doors and windows and a number have different roof tiles and porches and new ground floor, front extensions. Post war overhead cables and poles are especially intrusive on and near the green. There are fewer trees, for example in Alexandra Rd, a loss of field hedgerows, a reduction in verge due to driveways and front hedges have been replaced with fences or walls.

Proposed conservation area boundary extension

It is proposed to include the Skilling Garden Suburb, the Symondsbury group of dwellings and -the corridors of the Rivers Simene and Brit within the Bridport conservation area as shown in fig M.

Information

Criteria used for assessing the contribution made by **important local buildings**:

In line with English Heritage guidance, an "important local building" is one that makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, and where this is the case, the building will be included in a local list within the conservation area appraisal. Two basic criteria were used; the actual design characteristics, such as mass, skyline, interesting details, materials and existing or former use; and position relative to the wider setting, individual or groups of Listed Buildings.

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