

Civil Parish of Fontmell Magna



View of the former Town Mill and pond from the church tower

Conservation Area Appraisal

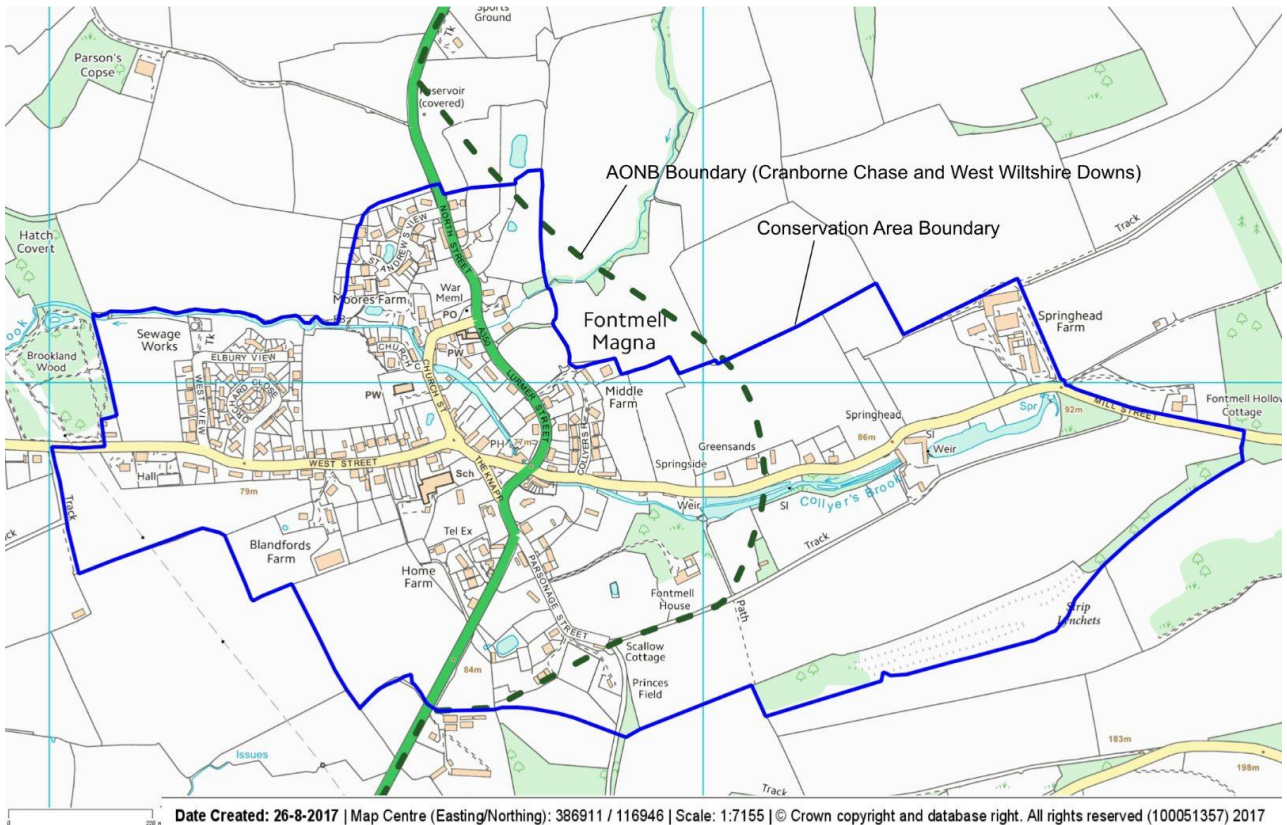
Prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
on behalf of Fontmell Magna Parish Council
Adopted by North Dorset District Council
on 14th February 2018 &
amended on 23rd August 2018

Fontmell Magna
Parish Council

 North Dorset
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Map 1: Fontmell Magna Conservation Area

1. Preface

This Appraisal of the Conservation Area in Fontmell Magna, carried out on the 40th anniversary of its designation in May 1977, was instigated during the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole of the civil parish. During the Strategic Environmental Assessment for that plan it was understood that no appraisal existed to show why the status of 'Conservation Area' had been conferred upon the village.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment response from Historic England, prior to the Options Consultation stage of the Neighbourhood Plan programme, stated that 'the absence of a Conservation Area Appraisal represented a key omission of evidence in terms of comprehensively setting out how the area's special architectural and historic interest defines its character and appearance, and the issues associated with ensuring its preservation and enhancement.'

'This information, and understanding the significance of other relevant designated heritage assets in sufficient detail, will be key to the successful evaluation of the sites identified for future development in accordance with the historic environment provisions of the NPPF¹. In addition, issues identified can help inform the regime of policies which the Plan might contain for tackling them as well as populate a schedule of projects deemed eligible for CIL² funding in due course.'

As it was anticipated that the North Dorset District Council (NDDC) would not have the available resources to produce such an appraisal within the limited time available, members of the Neighbourhood Plan group undertook to prepare an appraisal under the available Historic England guidelines in order to provide the required evidence and a clear reference document to guide future development. They were assisted in this exercise by the important and invaluable resources of the Fontmell Magna Village Archive Society (www.fontmellmagna.net).

¹ National Planning Policy Framework

² Community Infrastructure Levy

Subsequently a report prepared in 1976 by the local planning authority³ came to light summarising the village in just three paragraphs. However it was considered that this was too brief a document to satisfy the required level of scrutiny when assessing the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, so it was agreed to continue with this appraisal.

This appraisal was adopted by North Dorset District Council's Cabinet on 14th February 2018 and amended on 23rd August 2018 by Cabinet.

2. Introduction

Conservation areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The District Council is required by Section 69 of the Town & Country Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate such areas following a Conservation Area Appraisal.

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. So where there are development opportunities within the conservation area it is required that new buildings respect the local context in terms of scale, mass, materials, footprint, character and site layout. Therefore by taking an informed and creative approach, the quality of a new building should aim to complement its neighbours whether it is of contemporary or more traditional design.

3. Planning Policy Context

The Local Planning Authority's guidance on assessing the effects of development on the historic environment is given in Policy 5: The Historic Environment, of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1, adopted January 2016.

Within the Fontmell Magna Conservation Area there are 35 listed buildings (34 grade II, one grade II*) and one ancient monument (strip lynchets) as shown on Map 6. There are also non-designated assets which contribute towards the heritage of the District as a result of their local rather than national interest. Examples include:

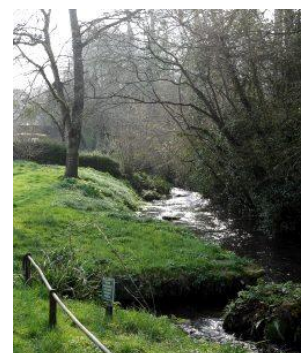


Former Brewery

- non-listed buildings, such as Victorian dwellings, farm buildings, shop and locally significant landmarks;
- non-registered parks and gardens as identified by the Dorset Gardens Trust, namely Springhead
- historic and cultural features of the landscape, such as the raised footway in Church Street, ancient hedgerows, stone bridges and water courses.



Springhead



Collyer's Brook

This Conservation Area Appraisal will form an annexe to the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan when it is submitted to the Local Planning Authority for acceptance.

³ North Dorset District Council report dated 21st July 1976 - see Appendix A.

4. Location and setting

The Conservation Area of Fontmell Magna includes not only the Settlement Area of the village to the west of the A350 trunk road, but also extends to the east of the A350 into the escarpment of the chalk downland, which is within the AONB⁴ of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs. Landscape character is a highly valued asset of the area with the undulating features of Fontmell Down and Sutton Hill forming a distinctive backdrop to the Conservation Area.

The setting of the Conservation Area is the rural landscape comprising fields to the north and south of the village, Brookland Wood to the west and the wooded escarpment of the Cranborne Chase to the east.

It is important that the character of any changes to the built environment is considered in the light of their visibility from the higher ground of the adjacent escarpment of the AONB and the setting of the Conservation Area.



View from Fontmell Down

5. Historic development and archaeology

Although artefacts have been discovered in the area, dating back some 6,000 years, the physical evidence of occupation dates from about 2,000 BC in the form of earthworks on the adjacent higher ground of the AONB, and there is later evidence of field structures, which are considered to be pre-Roman. While no evidence has been found of Roman occupation in the form of building materials, the finds since 2,000AD would indicate that tracks passed through the area with sufficient frequency for artefacts to be found in recent times from the Romano-British era. There is some evidence that Bedchester was a former Roman signal station.

The settlement of Fontmell Magna has grown up where two tracks crossed a brook (the one running north-south being a significant trade route, and the secondary one running west-east). The name Fontmell derives from the Saxon *Font* (spring) and *moel* (bare hill), probably related to the springs arising through the Greensand and chalk of the higher Cranborne Chase. While there are no Saxon structures remaining in the village today, evidence from the Domesday book shows it as being valued at £10 and would have had a population of about 280 persons⁵.

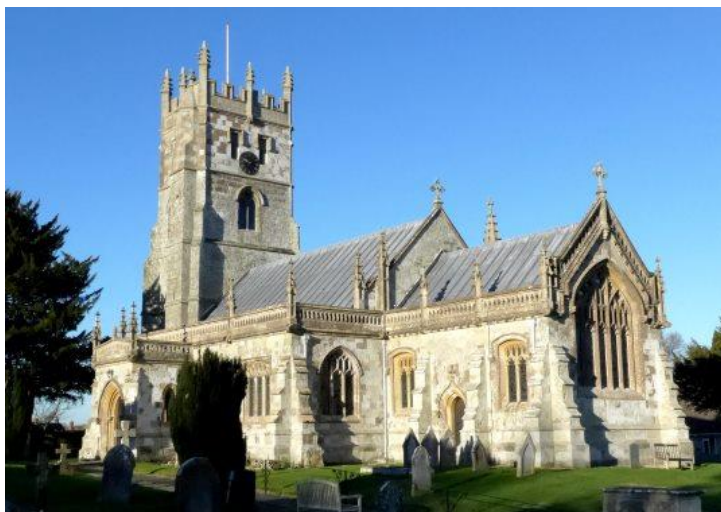
The area of Fontmell (*Funtemel*) was granted by King Athelstan to Shaftesbury Abbey in AD 932 and the villagers were bound to the Abbey and worked the land on their behalf. Much of the area would have been more heavily forested than today. After the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 Fontmell passed to the Arundell family of Wardour until 1807

⁴ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

⁵ Domesday Book – Dorset, edited by John Morris and published by Phillimore 1983

when it was sold to the Glyn family – whose descendants later sold their interests in three sales, in 1919, 1926 and 1927.

It is likely that there was a Saxon church, possibly of timber, which was replaced by a stone structure in the 13th century. Certainly by the 15th century it had been enlarged and included a tower, most of which remains today, albeit the main body of the church was rebuilt and enlarged in 1862.



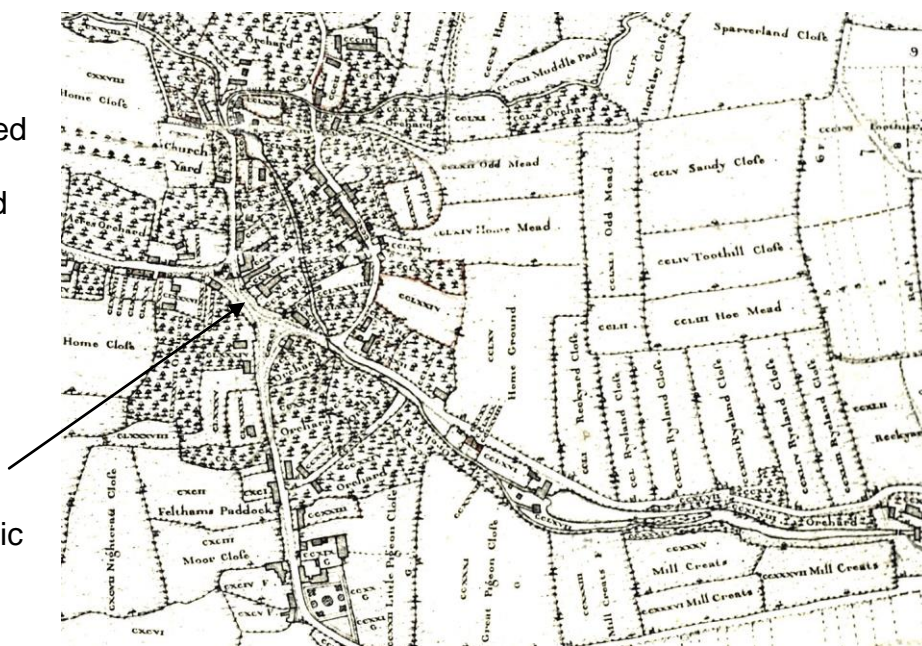
St Andrew's Church

What records exist refer to the existence of three mills within the Conservation Area. The crop returns of 1801 to the Tithe Commissioners⁶ indicate that the village was very much a farming community with a 3-field system⁷ and associated local trades - like many similar villages it was largely self-contained and slow to change, and very much dependent on the landowner (Lord of the Manor) - in Fontmell's case, the landowner does not seem to have pressed ahead with changes and so the community was relatively settled and there was little movement in the population, except perhaps between neighbouring parishes.

Map 2: The Ingman map of 1774

This extract from the Enclosures map, prepared for Lord Arundell, shows the location of tracks and houses in fairly similar positions to their present arrangement. It also shows many fields, meadows and orchards divided up into separate ownerships.

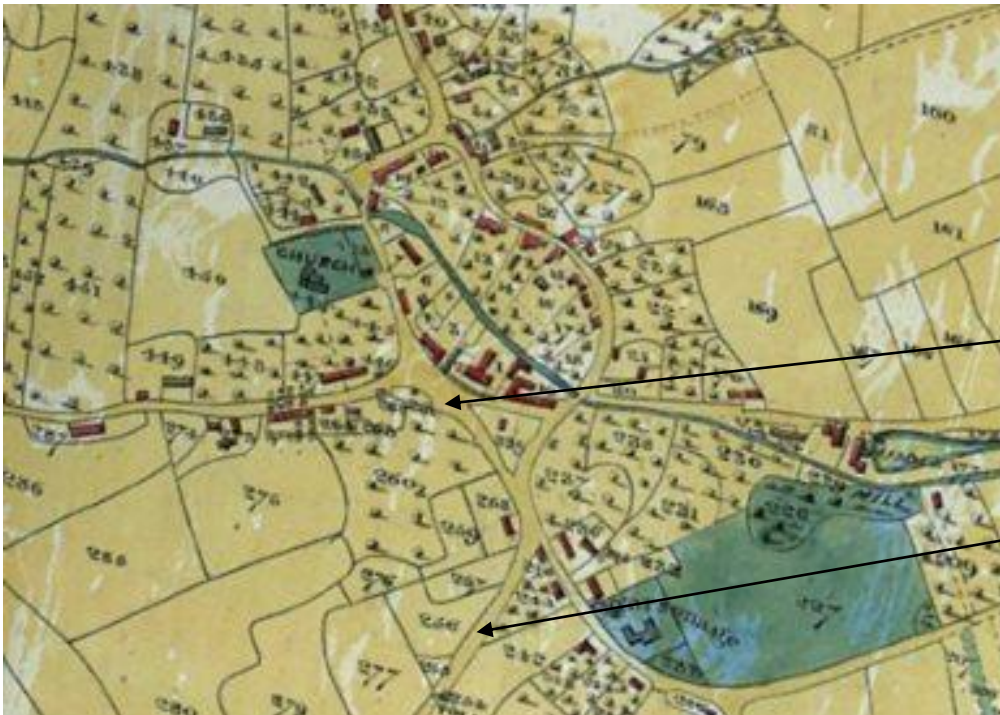
What appears to have been a fairly central public space is subsequently encroached upon by the time of the 1839 Tithe map overleaf.



Reproduced by permission of the Dorset History Centre. (D-GLY/B/P/3)

⁶ p.103 of Somerset & Dorset Notes & Queries

⁷ more information on fields in this village can be found on the Fontmell Magna Village Archive Society website www.fontmellmagna.net



Map 3: Tithe map of 1839 (extract.)

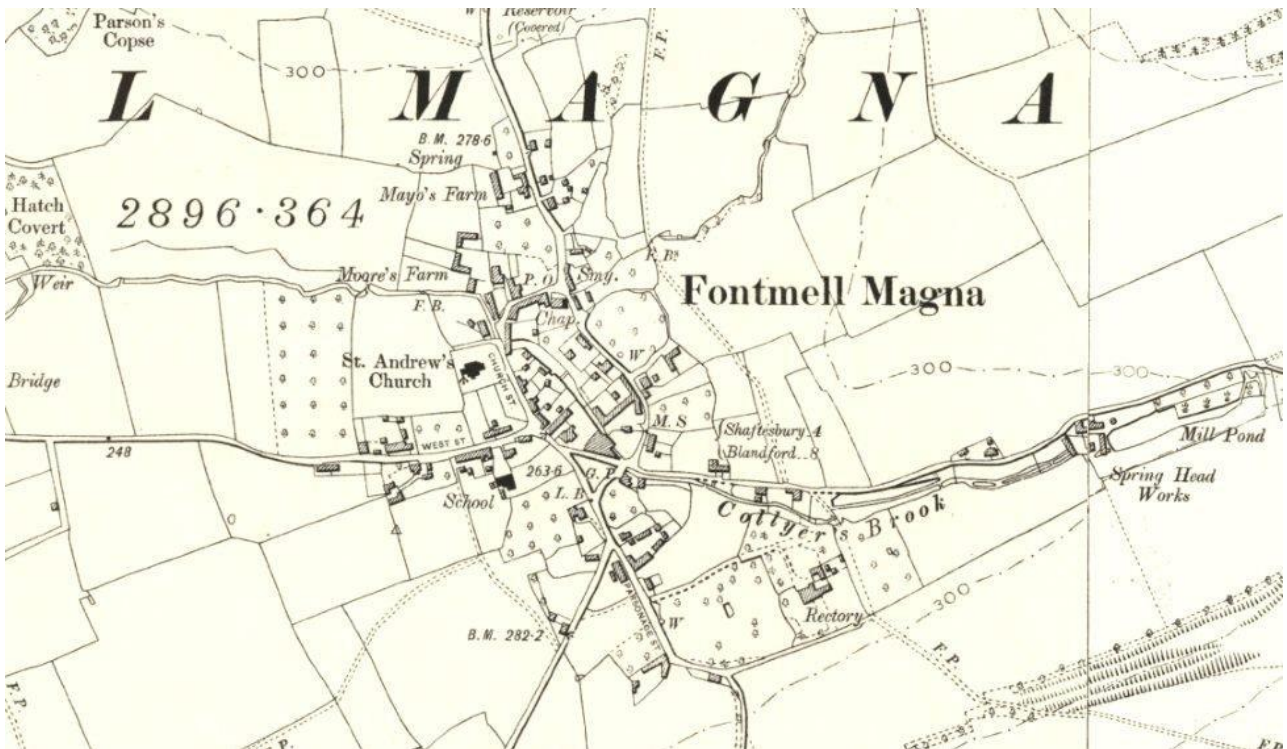
In this map the roads and houses are even closer to the present day layout. The previously open space here has been gradually reduced. Also the new toll road (now A350, South Street) leading towards Blandford can be seen.

Reproduced by permission of the Dorset History Centre (T/FOM)

Right up to the twentieth century the main occupation was agriculture; in addition there was button making, three mills, and a brewery from circa 1870-1900, a malting and at Springhead an engineering works in the 1890s/1900s, to be replaced by a milk and cheese factory. There were also a number of trades – Fontmell had a bakery, blacksmith, a tailor, wheelwrights and carpenters, but most of the trades were to support the business of agriculture. Most of the mills had stopped working by WW2. There were also a number of farms and small holdings in the parish (30 in 1941) and the evidence of many orchards suggests a cottage industry making cider.

Given that there is no evidence of any defensive structures for the last two thousand years, the inhabitants must indeed have experienced a rather settled existence, other than during the English Civil War in 1645 when a group called ‘The Dorset Clubmen’ met on the Down. The only vestige of a possible defensive system is the cross dyke on Fontmell Down from about 4,000 years ago, but equally, this may have been an ancient boundary marking. So the Conservation Area itself has nothing to offer in this regard.

The map on the following page shows the layout of the village around 1900. This would be recognised today from the road pattern, the named structures and much of the field pattern. It also pinpoints the buildings which were subsequently listed and others which, while not being listed, have survived until the present time and contribute to the character of the village (see Section 8 and Appendix C for more detail).



Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland

Map 4: OS Map of approx.1900

The major expansion of the village took place after the Second World War with the building of Orchard Close and West View in 1949 (some 43 new houses) by the Local Authority, for renting to those unable to afford to rent from the private sector or to buy their own homes.



Orchard Close - answering a need for affordable homes in 1949

Later, in 1970, six bungalows were added to West View as a private development and in 1980, eight more bungalows were built at Collyer's Rise, apparently without regard to the protection given by the Conservation Area status of the village in 1977.

In 1994 and 1997, the Local Authority built the 9 houses forming Elbury View, again for renting. In 1998, 24 houses were built at St Andrew's View, mainly for sale as a private up-market development, with just four terraced houses included for renting.

Other smaller developments include three houses in The Mead (off South Street), the five houses in Church Close (the latest two of which were built in 1995) and the replacement of the garage (opposite what is now The Fontmell,) with the Old Coach House (a terrace of five dwellings) in 2008. Elsewhere, there has been some local infilling, for example in West Street, but no further large scale development in the village.

6. Settlement pattern

The settlement of Fontmell Magna has grown up along two tracks (the major one running north-south and the secondary one west-east) at a point where they cross a brook which runs eventually southwest to the River Stour. Consequently all the properties which survive within the Conservation Area from before the twentieth century are found along these routes (see Map 4). Most properties are set with ridges parallel to the road while there is a more even split between those built on the road edge and those set behind gardens – whether the present relationship fully reflects their history is open to question.

The historic evidence of three mills along the Collyer's Brook from the time of the Domesday Book and their use until the late nineteenth century indicates that this was a pretty much self-sustaining community. The heritage which survives not only includes ancient earthworks (strip lynchets) but also built structures dating from the 15th century.

The village has developed over the last century in such a way that a pattern of open spaces, including small fields and large gardens, has prevented the settlement from becoming a high density village, an aspect which is much valued by the community according to the 2016 questionnaire for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

The village has, as a back-drop, the higher ground of not only Fontmell Down but also Melbury Hill and Sutton Hill on its eastern side and the lower Penn Hill to the west. Within the village the significant landmarks are the church of St Andrew on elevated ground with its 25m tower, the War Memorial, also elevated, the Strip Lynchets and the ponds and watercourses of Collyer's and Fontmell Brooks. From the higher ground of the Down and adjacent hills, the village nestles within a soft carpet of vegetation, such that its buildings are not overly dominant, while the church tower stands out as indicating the centre of a community.



Fontmell Down viewed from the Churchyard



Fontmell Magna from Sutton Hill escarpment looking towards Penn Hill

The setting of the village within the 'Rolling Blackmore Vales' is protected by virtue of the boundary of the Conservation Area being set wide of the settlement area, and extending to the east to include the Strip Lynchets and the Gardens of Springhead with its series of springs. The setting to the west and south remains protected by the inclusion of fields, while to the north, what was Mayo's Farm became the new development of St Andrew's View in 1998 (see Maps 1 & 8).

7. Character analysis

The Built Environment

Most building types are residential and reflect the area's later history of tenant farmers, with several farms based in the village and groups of smaller cottages, some of which during the last century were combined into single dwellings for those who could afford more generous living accommodation – one exception is a fifteenth century inn which is now three dwellings.



Former Inn C15



Example of 1½ storey house

50% of the existing buildings are either single-storey or 1½ storey, ie. where the upper storey is built substantially within the roof space. Eaves heights for two-storey buildings are relatively low with 55% being below the head of the upper windows. Few buildings (3%) are three storey, including those where the third storey is within the roof space.

Non-domestic buildings include, a pub (part of a brewery and 'brewery tap'), a former brewery associated with the Flower family (a remarkable survival of a small late C19 brewery according to Dorset Industrial Archaeology Society), a large former rectory, a shop, a former chapel, a primary school and a fine church built in the gothic perpendicular style. Various barn type structures remain from farmsteads that are no longer working.



Examples of pre-1940 houses

The buildings which survive from prior to 1940 are of brick, stone and flint, located along the tracks (now roads) referred to earlier. Many of the later cottages were built for the Glyn Estate and are considered to contribute significantly to the character of the area.

After 1940 estates of houses were built on land which was previously in agricultural use, either as fields, orchards or closes, and in the main, were of a style that could be found in any provincial town. While these developments might otherwise be seen to dilute the local character, their layout as closes rather than through roads makes them perhaps less dominant and allows the earlier fabric to dictate more of the character of the village in respect of scale, materials and detail.

Locally Important Features

Distinctive features of the roads and tracks in the Conservation Area are the high banks and hedges and the absence of footways. Until the housing developments of the twentieth century, there were no footpaths at the roadside other than the distinctive raised historic footway alongside the churchyard.



West Street resembles a country lane

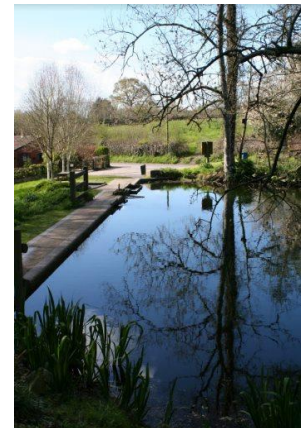
As well as buildings for habitation, the village offers distinctive features which add to the interest of the area, some of which are within protected buildings:



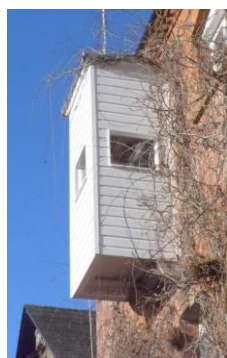
- Bridges over the Collyer's/Fontmell Brook
- War Memorial
- Gossip Tree (Formerly the site of the preaching cross for centuries)



- Village pump and its thatched shelter
- Town mill structure, mill race and former water fountain with curved roof *
- Sheep Wash within the brook
- Water chute and dam at Middle Mill, providing a tranquil area for picnics
- Old pump house at Middle Mill
- Springhead gardens and mill pond
- Pleasant green spaces along the brooks
- Raised footway and steps by the church
- Verge-marker stones
- Finger posts
- Strip Lynchets (Scheduled Monument)
- Grain hoist at the Old Brewery *
- Brook running under the Fontmell Pub



* protected by Listed Building status



Landscape Character

The Conservation Area appears to have been drawn wide of the settlement area and its water features, to include the fields which provide a setting for the village. It extends from the edge of the wooded chalk downland of the Cranborne Chase in the east towards the Blackmore Vale in the west. The chalk downland which rises to the east with its dramatic steep and narrow escarpment is within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB, which skirts around the settlement of Fontmell Magna on the eastern side. This escarpment is mostly unimproved grassland with some hanging woodlands. There are four designated SSSIs (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and several scheduled monuments in this area.

The area round the Conservation Area is characterised by small fields, hedgerow trees, small copses and narrow twisting lanes with high banks surmounted by hedgerows. The brook that has its source in the grounds of Springhead towards the east end of the village is the main watercourse and passes through the centre of the village of Fontmell Magna before turning to the southwest.

The area immediately to the east of the A350, which is not within the boundary of the AONB, does still form part of the setting of the AONB. Any development in this visually sensitive area could seriously affect the character of both this internationally important landscape and also the Conservation Area – it being highly visible from Open Access Land overlooking this side of the village and also from within the settlement area, especially when viewed from the churchyard. The Fontmell Conservation Area status therefore also serves to protect the setting of the AONB.

For the most part, the edges of the village provide a transition between the countryside and the built environment and have grown organically with it, such that a ‘soft edge’ to the built environment has been created with hedges, trees and mature gardens.

Open spaces, gardens and trees

While not having a formal village green or central open space as such, the Conservation Area does have a number of other open spaces (see Map 5) which are important to both the character of the village and also the enjoyment of the community, offering attractive views and places of quiet. The fields surrounding the settlement, which are also within the Conservation Area, bring an awareness of the rural nature of the area into daily life both visually and through the sounds of livestock.

The Conservation Area is enhanced by the landscaped gardens of the Springhead Trust, (which are open to the public on certain days of the year) and is bordered on the west side by Brookland Wood (which is managed by the Woodland Trust). Wild flowers are abundant in gardens, hedgerows, and most notably in the churchyard, which has received commendations for its achievements in creating and maintaining a ‘Living Churchyard’.



Springhead gardens

Trees are a regular feature of the village and exist in such a number that from a distance the dwellings are not easy to see due to the soft blanket of green which enfolds them.



While it would be impractical to list every group of trees due to their sheer number, the most mature tree groups are in the vicinity of Knapp House, West Lea and the School grounds and in the area of Fontmell House and Collyer's Brook (see Map 5)

Hedges are recognised as playing an important role as wildlife corridors as well as being an important visual feature of the village, such that some landowners have supported the traditional craft of hedge-laying using the skills of a resident craftsman.



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Map 5: Open spaces and Tree groups

Street Lighting

The absence of street lighting not only provides for good views of the night sky but, when viewed from any distance, allows the settlement area to be more easily appreciated from illuminated windows at night. Street lights can detract from this visual information as they can give an artificial form based on highway routes alone.

Landmark Views

In addition to the views shown earlier in this appraisal, notably the details on page 10, the following are significant.



Fontmell Down as a backdrop seen over roofs



The Church in its setting by the Collyer's Brook



The range of listed buildings at Crown Hill



The 'Gossip Tree' site and Church Street



Collyer's Brook by Moores Farm

It will be appreciated from the number of photographs already provided that almost any walk through the village provides views to the surrounding hills, local landmarks and to features of interest. Such a sample of views is given on the following page during a walk from the Village Hall to the Strip Lynchets via West Street and Mill Street.

Occasional views of the church spire of Sutton Waldron show the important visual relationship between Fontmell Magna and its near neighbour.



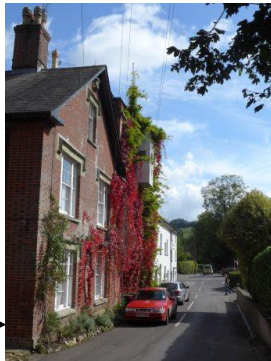
West Street with glimpses of church tower between cottages



Gossip Tree junction with view of church, Church Street & Elbury Hill and view to Foretop between cottages



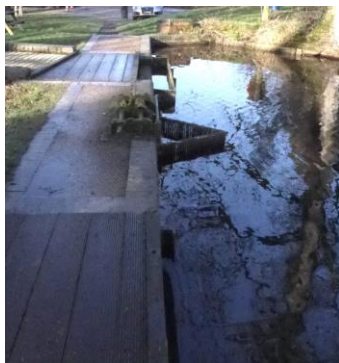
The Knapp



Crown Hill



Mill Street with Collyer's Brook

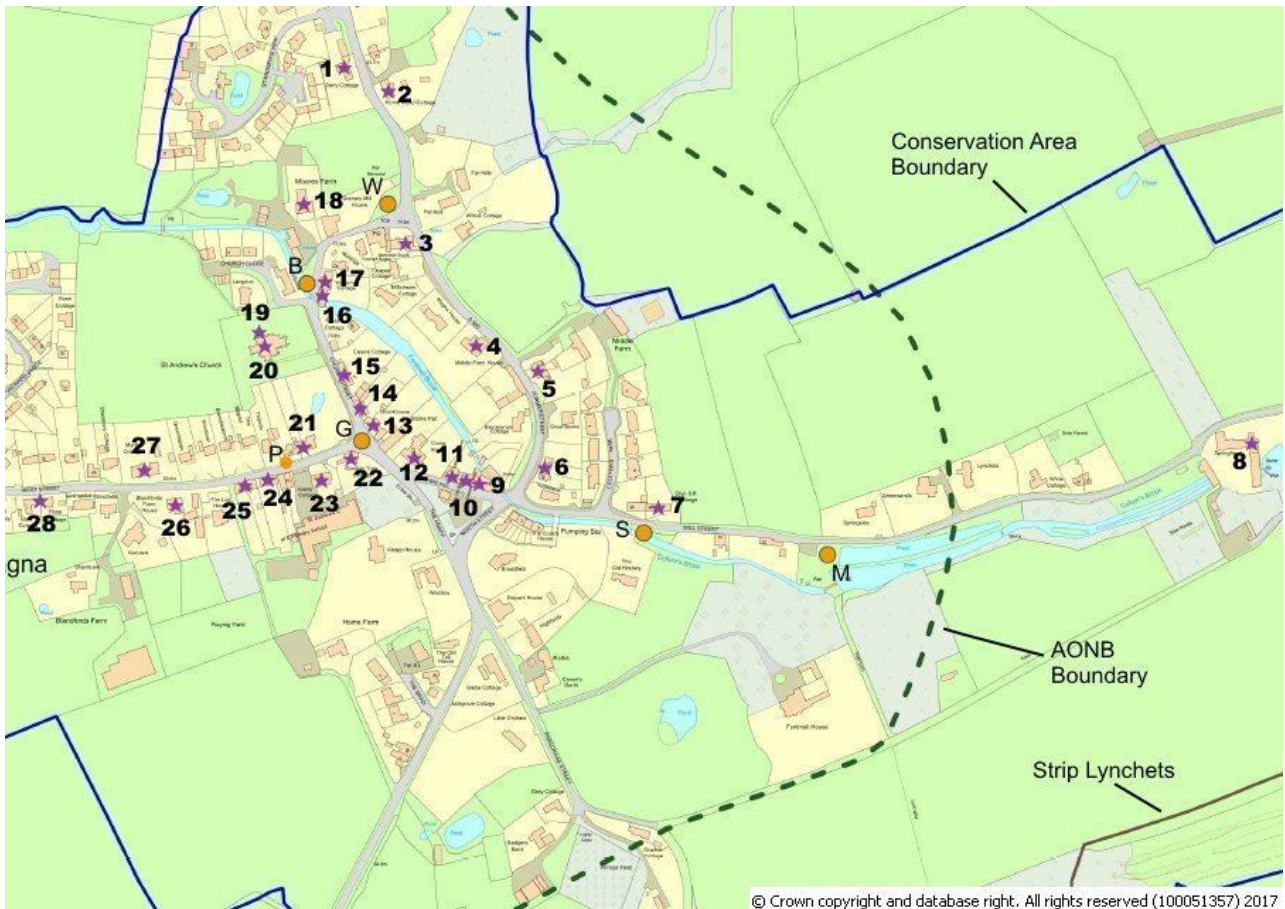


Middle Mill dam picnic area, with sluice and path towards Sutton Hill and the Lynchets



View below the strip lynchets looking east towards Fontmell Hill

8. Listed Buildings



Map 6: Listed Buildings and features of local interest

Listed Buildings

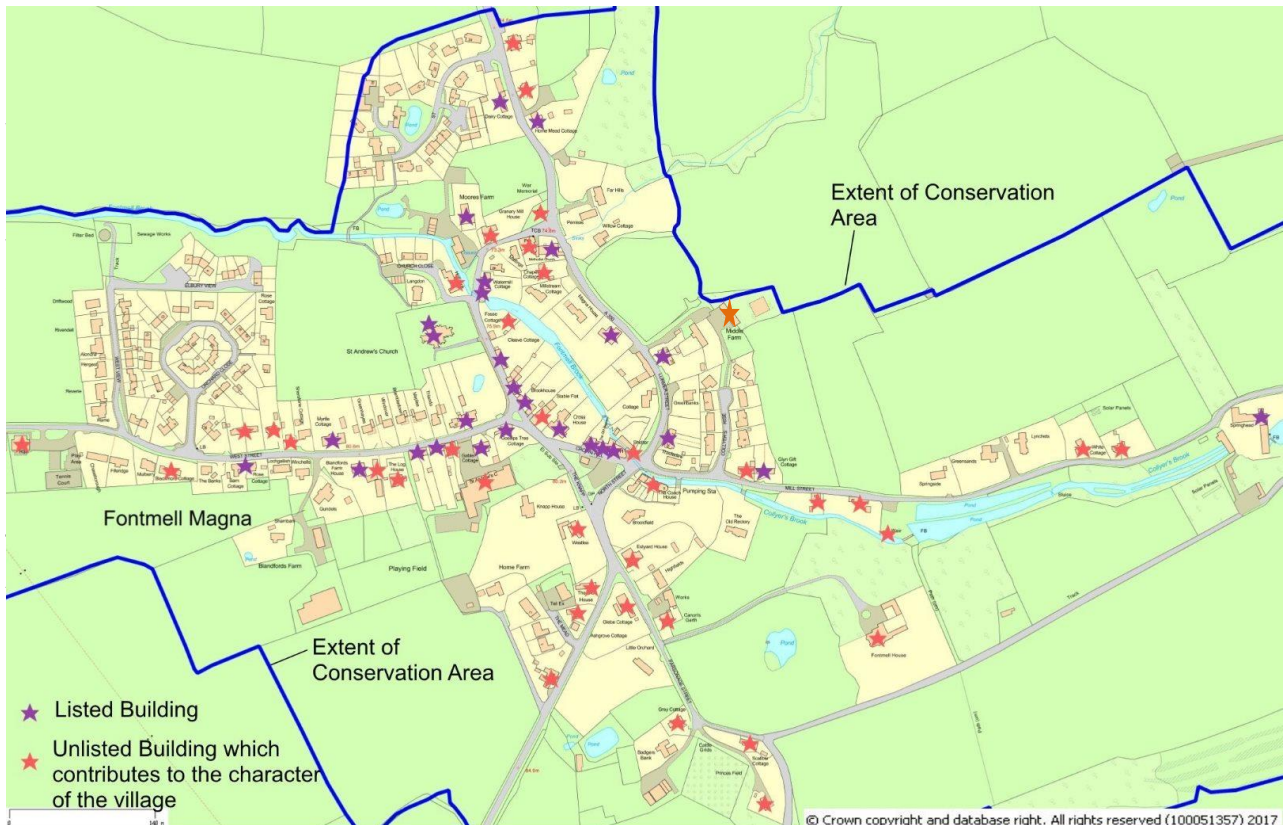
- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Dairy Cottage, No 7 North St | 15 Cleeve Cottage, No 47 Church St |
| 2 No 8 North St, Home Mead Cottage | 16 Town Mill & Mill House |
| 3 Methodist Chapel & Schoolroom | 17 Watermill Cottage |
| 4 Middle Farm House | 18 Moores Farmhouse |
| 5 Ferring Cottage (No 20) & No 21 | 19 Bennett Bishop Monument |
| 6 Collyer's Cottages | 20 St Andrew's Church |
| 7 Glyn Gift Cottage | 21 Pump & Plum Tree Cottages & No.69 |
| 8 Springhead | 22 Gossips Tree Cottage |
| 9 The Crown (now The Fontmell) | 23 Gable Cottage |
| 10 The Old Brewery (Fontmell Potteries) | 24 56 West St |
| 11 Millbrook House (former brewery house) | 25 Parsley Cottage & No.58 |
| 12 Cross House | 26 Blandfords Farm House |
| 13 Brookhouse | 27 Myrtle Cottage |
| 14 48 & 49 Church St | 28 Barn Cottage & Rose Cottage |

Features of local interest

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| W War memorial | P Pump in thatched shelter |
| B Town Mill Bridge and water fountain | S Sheep Wash |
| G The Gossip Tree (Preaching cross) | M Middle Mill dam and sluice |

Of the 43 listed buildings within the parish, 35 lie within the Conservation Area, of which 19 date from the 15th to 18th centuries (all grade II except for the St Andrew's church which is grade II*) and 16 date from the 19th century (all grade II); some of these are grouped together in the official list descriptions keyed on the previous page. Many have been enlarged or have had facades added over subsequent centuries but retain their essential character and scale. The listing references can be found in Appendix B to this appraisal.

The Conservation Area also has many other buildings which contribute to the character of the village, mainly of 19th century but also some 20th century stock (see Appendix C). The map below shows how these are spread evenly along the through roads.



9. Coherent groups (Both historic and 20th century)

While there is no central core of historic buildings, there are a number of historic buildings which read as groups in Church Street, West Street and Crown Hill as identified below.



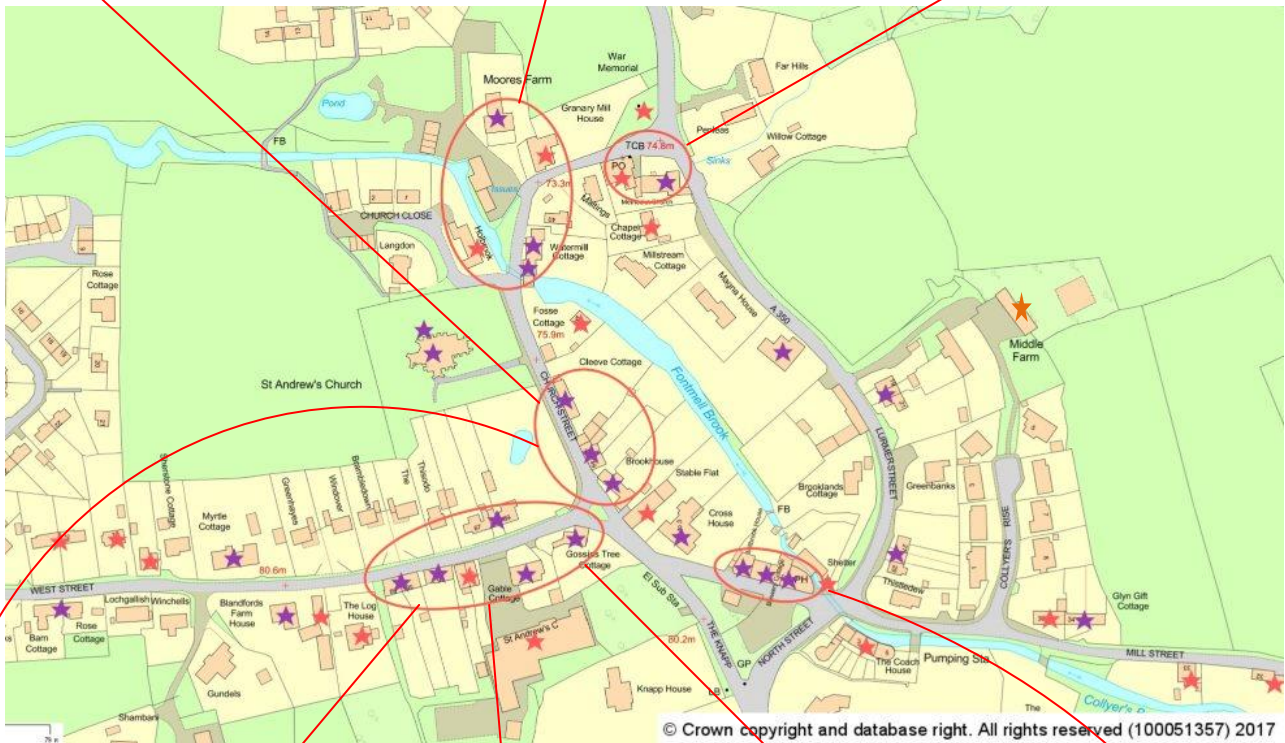
Church Street



Town Mill & Moores Farm group



Former Chapel, Shop & Tea Room



Map 8: Historic Building groups



West Street and Gossip Tree group



Brookhouse, Church Street



Crown Hill group

As mentioned previously, the buildings which provide the attractive character of the village are fairly well spread along the routes established in earlier centuries. By contrast, the developments which took place in the latter half of the twentieth century, (some of it after the designation of the Conservation Area,) took place in clusters, mainly on fields or 'closes' and were provided with all the standard streetscape elements of the age, such as pavements, drives, fences and building lines, just as one would find in a suburban setting.



Bungalow developments built between 1970 and 1980 (Orchard Close built 1949 is illustrated on page 7)

These later developments are shown marked in blue on the map below and, in the main, do not reflect the rural nature of the remainder of the village but are typical of dwellings of their time and of an urban style and setting, and tend not to follow the characteristic streetscape of the village, with its dwellings either parallel or at right-angles to the road.



Map 9: Twentieth century developments outlined in blue

The most recent development, St Andrew's View, takes a different approach. It employs a wide range of materials and features to evoke a rural character. However, with its random arrangement it fails to reflect the essence of the rural vernacular, creating instead a 'model village' for a market quite different from the rest of this village. This development therefore does not reflect the character of the Conservation Area, where the buildings worthy of protection came into being to support an agrarian lifestyle.



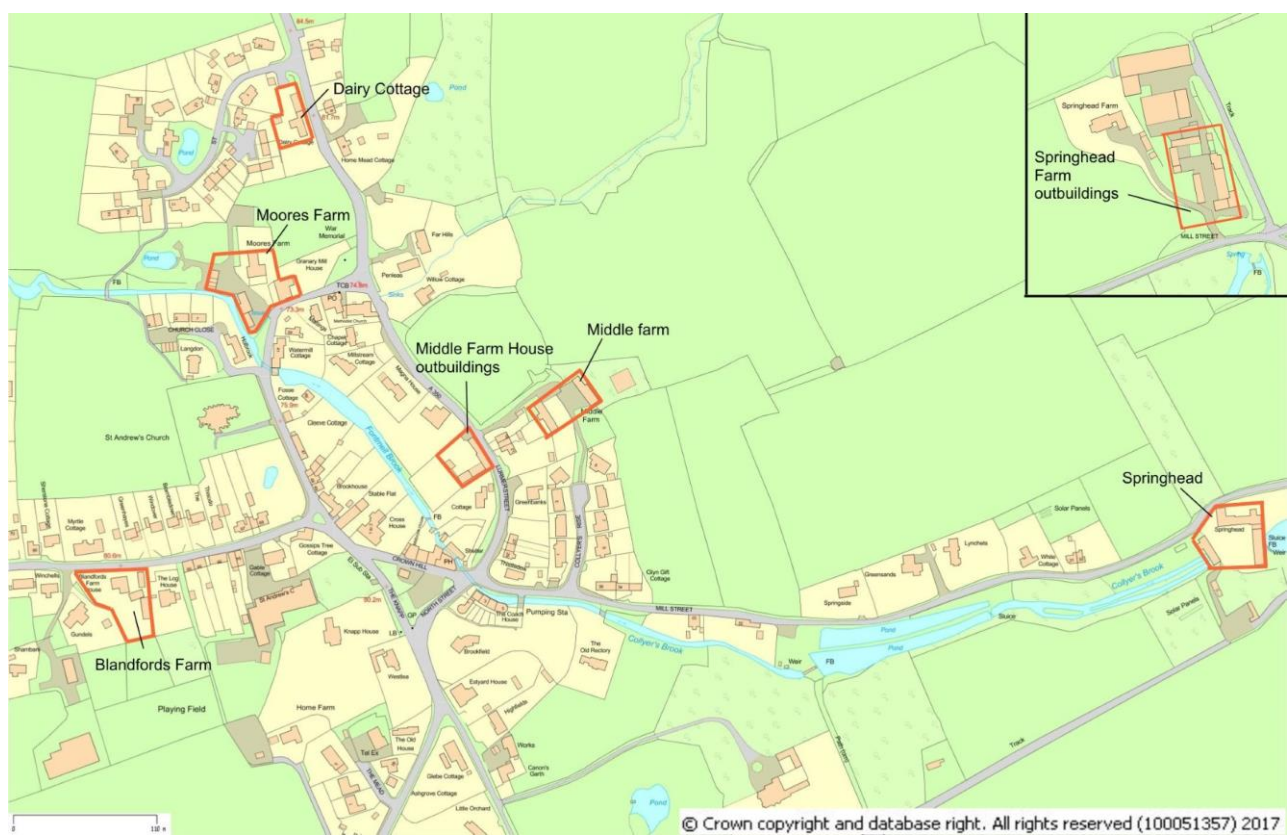
St Andrew's View

The St Andrew's View development also has a number of features which are not worthy of repetition such as:

- Substantial brick buttresses
- A Doric portico
- Decorated and oversized bargeboards and fascias
- Rather unwelcoming flat walls for the rented properties
- Face-applied timber frame with infill, which is clearly not structural

There are some other groups which usefully provide a record of the agricultural history of the village and its small industry. These are mainly farm structures, some of which have been renovated and some rather neglected. The buildings at Springhead, once the engineering works of J W Flower & Co and later a cheese factory, are now a rural centre for creative and sustainable living and the gardens frequently open to the public.

While no longer having the full farming activity of the past, the grouping of these buildings provides a contrast with the more orderly way of aligning dwellings parallel to the roadside, adding variety to the orientation of roof lines and providing further 'texture' to the Conservation Area.



Map 10: Small Coherent Groups formed by former and present farm buildings



Moores Farm



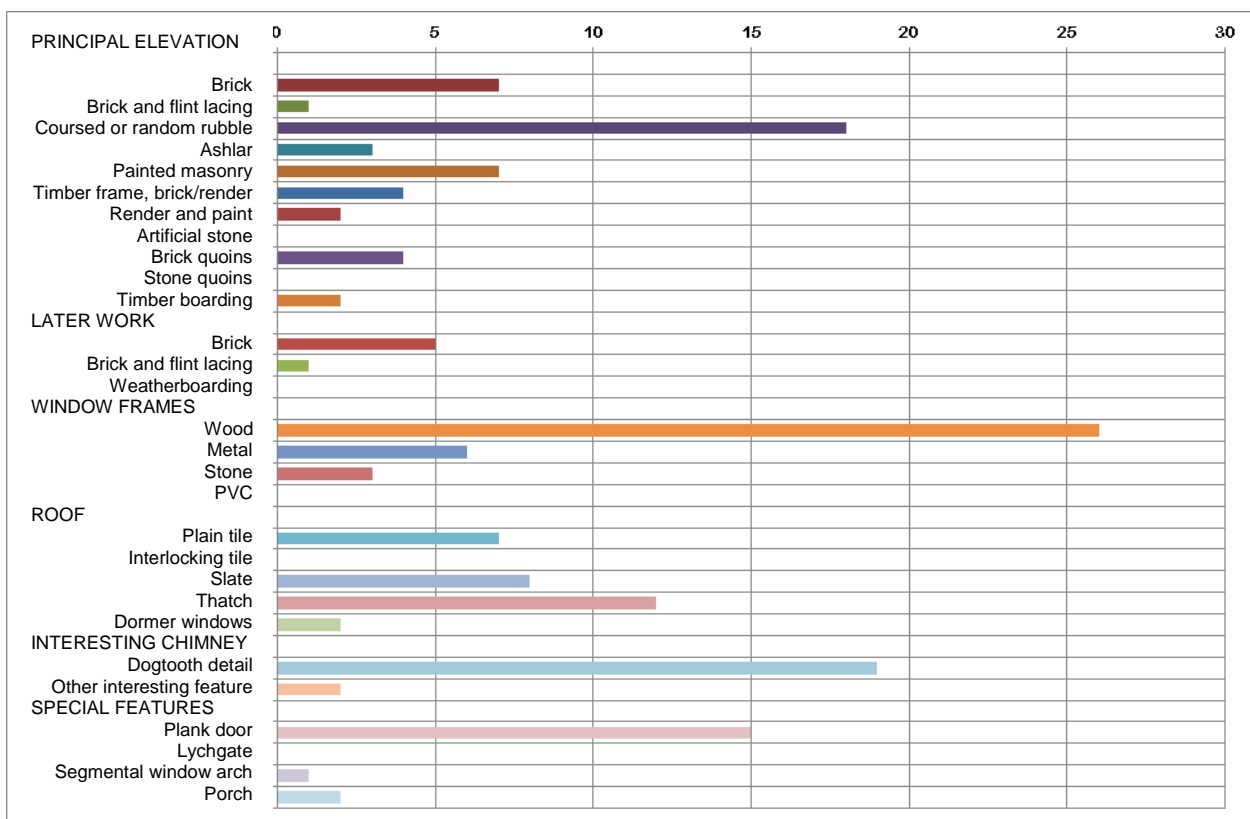
Middle Farmhouse

10. Building materials and architectural details

In the preparation of this appraisal, an inspection was made of every readily visible building to assess its character in relation to the village as a whole and to record the materials used in the principal elevations. The results were logged in a spreadsheet in order to be able to produce the charts that follow for historic and other groups of buildings.

As will be seen from the Table 1 below, for the Listed Buildings the principal material used to build the external walls was coursed or random rubble. Brick and painted masonry are the next most common, followed by timber frame infilled with brick or render, ashlar and painted render. Timber window frames are very evident as is an absence of PVC frames. Roofing is in thatch more often than slate or plain tile.

Table 1: Materials used in Listed Buildings

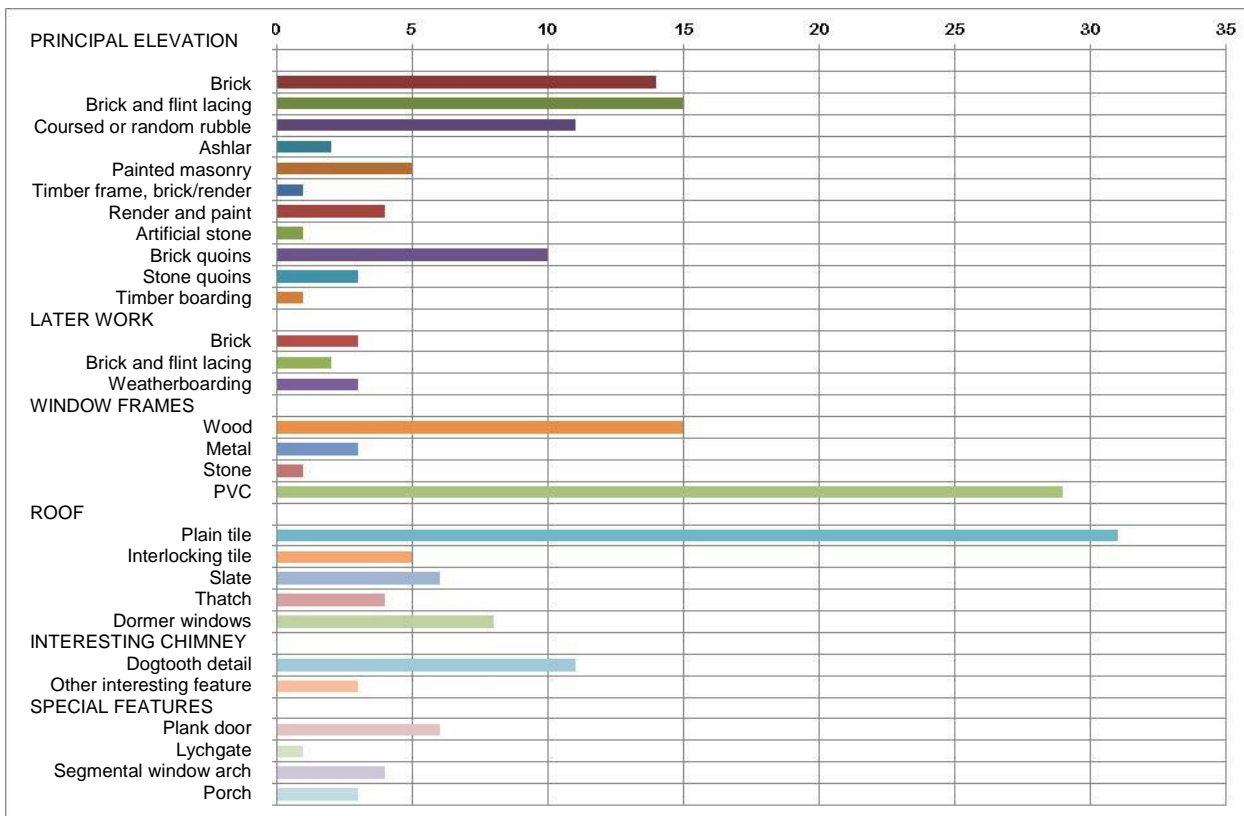


When examining the unlisted buildings which contribute to the character of the village, for purposes of clarity the latest development at St Andrew's View is considered separately, as its character with pavements and suburban spacing, together with the use of almost every conceivable material, does not make for an objective analysis.

In the rest of the village, some 47 non-listed buildings are considered as contributing to its character and include structures dating from 17th to 21st centuries. Here the overall picture is different: flint and brick lacing, together with plain brick are the most common materials for walls, followed by stone rubble and painted masonry or render. Window frames have frequently been replaced by PVC, and roofs in the main are covered with plain tile.

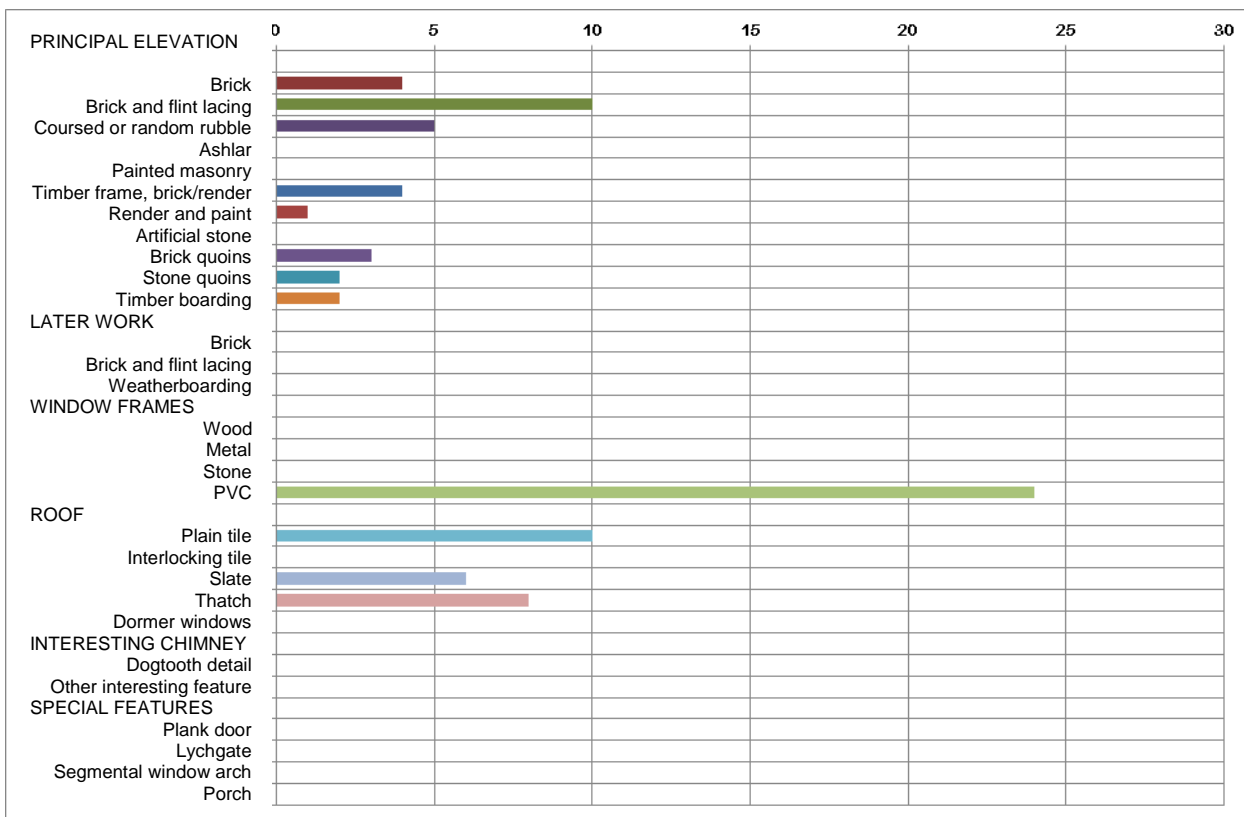
It is interesting to note that the dogtooth detail to chimney tops has been consistently used in nearly all buildings up to the 20th century when a simply functional approach became the norm and the craftsman's art declined. (See Table 2 overleaf)

Table 2: Materials used in Non-listed Buildings contributing to the character of the area



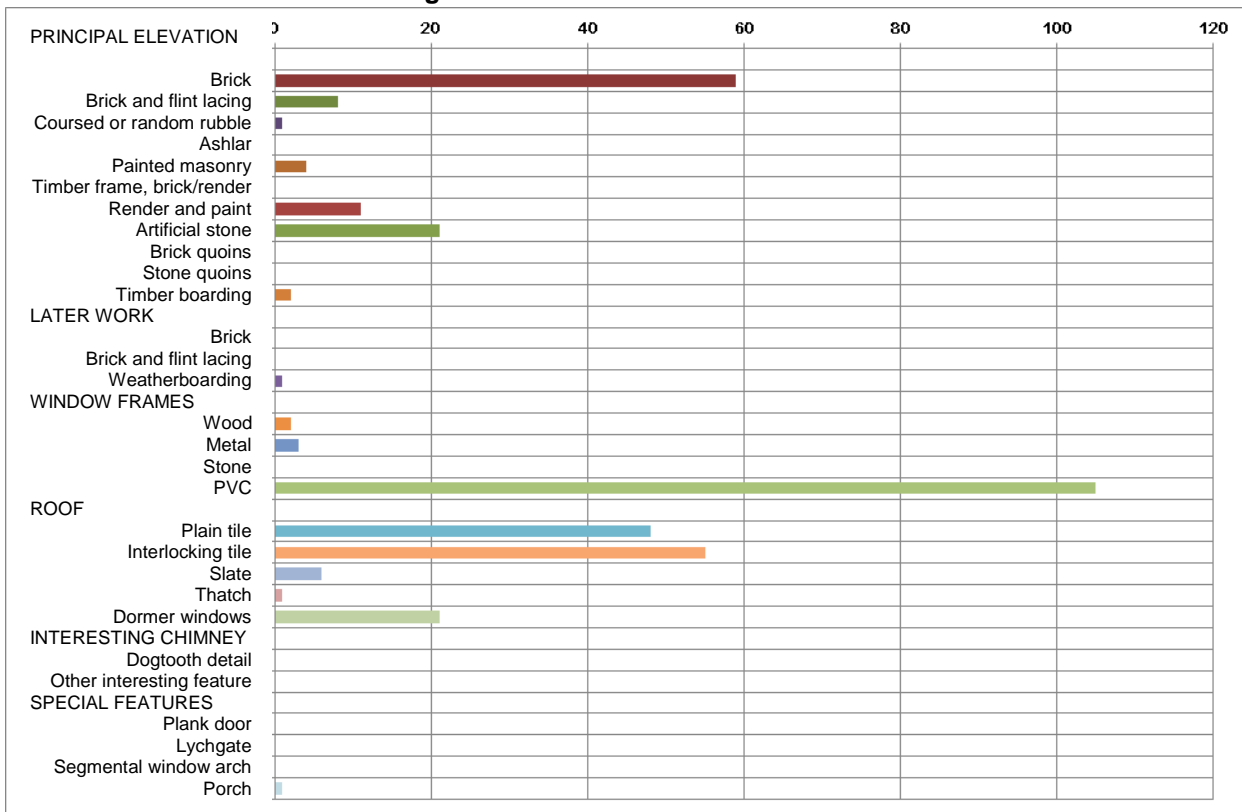
Turning to the recent development at St Andrew’s View, a very different pattern emerges, with brick and flint lacing being the dominant walling materials, then in near equal measure, brick, stone rubble and timber frame. Windows are all of PVC as far as could be ascertained and thatch, slate and plain tile roofs are more equally used as shown below.

Table 3: Materials used at St Andrew’s View



Finally, when considering those properties which were considered not to contribute to the historic character of the area, it is clear that the palette of materials was limited as shown in Table 4 below, where the predominant materials were brick or artificial stone for walls, plain and interlocking concrete tiles for roofs and almost universally, PVC window frames.

Table 4: Materials used in Buildings which do not contribute to the character of the area



Looking to the use of materials for future buildings, while locally sourced Greensand was once affordable for those who could aspire to build to last, its use may be limited in view of present budgets. Thus the predominant material for new work might need to be brick, or possibly flint faced blocks laced with brick.

For roofs, clay plain tile and slate are affordable. The local tradition of thatching should be maintained and encouraged as appropriate. Door and window joinery should respect the traditional simplicity of plain plank doors and simple wooden casement frames, although flush-faced composite profiles reflecting traditional joinery proportions might be acceptable where budgets do not allow for timber.

11. Design features

There are a number of architectural features which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area such as:

- Dogtooth brickwork detailing to chimney tops and string courses
- Carved stonework details such as hoodmoulds to windows.
- Exposed purlins at verges
- Gabled dormers, especially breaking through the eaves
- Upper window heads tight to eaves
- Simple bracketed porches with tiled or slate roofs.
- Segmental arches over windows, especially in flintwork.

- Louvred cupola
- Projecting hoist feature on brewery building
- Flemish bond headers of deeper colour

These features exhibit the will of the builder/designer to implement something that goes beyond the pure function of the feature, thereby providing that element of delight or uplift so sadly missing in recent constructions – perhaps a rich inspiration for new properties?

By contrast, there are some features which detract from the local character such as:

- Artificial stone, especially when of a distant region.
- Poor quality facing bricks
- PVC window frames based on universal standardised shapes
- Ungainly proportioned dormer windows
- Plastic weatherboarding
- Pavements on both sides of the road in new housing developments (which are generally cul-de-sacs with little traffic to justify such).
- Large radius junctions
- Large areas of hard paving or tarmac to driveways

12. Summary

The aspects which define the character of the Conservation Area might be summarised as follows:

- **Setting:** The setting is the arable land between the higher ground of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB and the rolling vales to the west. It is surrounded by fields (used for both pasture and crops), together with planted woods and orchards.
- **Location:** Origins likely to be the crossing point of tracks between nearby towns (see Section 5), the brooks and the presence of springs, all important for trade, settlement and a source of power for milling/machinery respectively.
- **History:** Existed from Saxon times, rich in cultural features and based on an agricultural lifestyle with some light industry. No defensive structures.
- **Scale:** Mainly low level vernacular structures with few higher than 2 storeys.
- **Character:** Numerous listed buildings of 15th to 19th centuries and even more unlisted buildings which positively contribute to the character and charm of the village. Much of the 20th century housing development is out of character with the remainder of the Conservation Area.
- **Settlement pattern:** Mainly low density with a chequer pattern of undeveloped green spaces, many mature trees and narrow roads lined with hedgerows.
- **Materials:** Wide variety of materials and finishes such as stone, render, brickwork, and flint with brick lacing under plain tile and occasional slate roofs, with thatch common on earlier stock and a few new dwellings.
- **Features:** Traditional casement frames, plank doors, dogtooth brick courses, exposed purlin ends and upward extensions in lighter materials, all offering a range of textures.
- **Landmark views:** Backdrop of AONB hillside, brook-side routes, millponds, church, historic groups of dwellings, sometimes thatched, Springhead Gardens.
- **Street lighting:** An absence of street lighting allows the settlement area to be more easily appreciated at night.

The wide boundary of the Conservation Area with its inclusion of fields remains a useful tool to protect the setting of the historic fabric of the settlement, notwithstanding the development of St Andrew's View which has infilled such a space. There would be little merit in a further boundary extension, while there would be harm caused to the Conservation Area if the boundary was reduced.

The many attributes listed in this summary demonstrate the special qualities of the Conservation Area and the need to continue protecting it from any development which would cause harm; this protection would be consistent with the aim of the NDDC 1976 report (see Appendix A), which sets out the reason for the Conservation Area's first establishment and the manner in which it should be protected.

13. Protecting the Conservation Area for the future

The value of this appraisal is not only to record the present state of the fabric but to set down pointers for those considering new works or alterations. Protecting the Conservation Area for future generations is the responsibility of all who wish to make changes to the fabric including not only the local community but also the Local Planning Authority, developers, agents and architects and it is hoped that all will engage with this aim.

It is acknowledged that the Conservation Area is not a museum, but both a living and a historic rural landscape, therefore care is required to ensure that new developments preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Since the designation of the Conservation Area in 1977, there have been a number of changes, both in planning policy and public opinion, on how the importance of conservation should be considered in relation to development. These changes have sometimes been at odds with the design criteria set out in the 1976 Conservation Area report (item 3.3) – see Appendix A of this Appraisal. It is essential that future planning policy and development management gives greater weight to the importance of the Conservation Area, so as not to harm the setting of the listed and non-listed buildings which contribute positively to the character of the built environment.

Similarly traffic management has a part to play in ensuring grass verges and roadside structures are not damaged by passing vehicles and wide loads.

14. Management of the Conservation Area

It is proposed that the Local Planning Authority should annually request that the Parish Council notify them of any concerns relating to potential harm which may have arisen or that may arise, due to:

- pressure for new development
- major alterations
- neglected areas
- Buildings at Risk or other fabric decay
- material changes under Permitted Development Rights

This early advice will assist the Local Planning Authority in periodically carrying out its duty to review conservation area appraisals and consider any relevant remedial action.

Alongside this it is also acknowledged that protection of the Fontmell Magna Conservation Area is now afforded by virtue of this adopted appraisal and also the forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan, the policies of which will assist in safeguarding the area from inappropriate development and alterations. Similarly traffic management by DCC Highways working with the Parish Council has a part to play in ensuring grass verges and roadside structures are not damaged by passing vehicles and wide loads.

15. Community Involvement

A public consultation took place between 1 December 2017 and 12 January 2018 and appropriate amendments were incorporated into the final document approved by Cabinet. This document is available on www.dorsetforyou.com and www.fontmellmagna.net

Further consultation on buildings at Middle Farm, Lurmer St, took place between 7 May and 18 June 2018, which resulted in amendments to the Adopted Appraisal.

16. Acknowledgements

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group is grateful for the assistance of Dorset History Centre, the National Library of Scotland, Fontmell Magna Village Archive Society (www.fontmellmagna.net) and North Dorset District Council in the preparation of this appraisal.

Appendix A - 1976 Report

Copy of the North Dorset District Council July 1976 report

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971-74
CONSERVATION AREA - FONTMELL MAGNA

1. INTRODUCTION

The village of Fontmell Magna is located in north Dorset approximately 4 miles south of Shaftesbury, astride the main Shaftesbury/Blandford road, the A350. Lying to the south west of Fontmell Down, it is a village of considerable charm and history. Only 70 years ago it was probably more or less self supporting with small industries such as brewing, malting and button-making it also boasted several shops, a tailors, butchers, grocers etc. Today it is a quiet residential village with a small school, a public house, a grocers shop, a garage and several small farms. The former brewery building is now the home of a small cottage industry, a pottery/woodworking concern.

2. THE CONSERVATION AREA

The conservation area boundary has been drawn so as to include the whole of the village and all of its listed buildings of which there are 18 and important open areas of land to the south and east. The majority of the older buildings are 18th century, a few are 17th century and there are several large victorian houses scattered around the village. The buildings are constructed in a variety of materials including brick, stone, flint, slate, tile and thatch. St Andrews Church, a building of some note is situated in the centre of the village on the western side of the A350. Dating in part from the late 15th century, it is an elaborately styled building, that was extensively rebuilt in 1863.

Fontmell Brook/Collyers Brook originating from a spring to the east of Springhead and running westwards through the village is a most attractive feature, particularly where it flows into the two lagoons north-east of the Rectory grounds. Trees and hedges, both within the conservation area and those embraced in the external views play an important part in the enhancement of the villages environmental quality. Its fine landscape setting, attractive village core and buildings of distinctive character combine to make Fontmell Magna well worthy of being designated as a conservation area.

3. ACTION IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

1. Within the conservation area it is the policy of the Local Planning Authority to protect and preserve all those buildings, open spaces, trees, views and other aspects of the environment that together make up the character of the area.

2. The demolition of buildings listed as being of special Architectural or Historic interest will normally be resisted. The demolition of buildings in the supplementary list and the demolition of other buildings which contribute significantly to the character of the conservation area will similarly be resisted.

3. Applications for new buildings and applications for alterations to existing buildings will be considered on their merits, having regard to the County Development Plan, this general policy statement and any other relevant policy statements as may, from time to time, be promulgated by the responsible authority. The following design criteria will be applied:-

- (i) The position of the building on its site shall be determined by its relationship with adjoining buildings and/or open area.
- (ii) The materials to be used shall be appropriate to the area and sympathetic to the adjoining buildings.
- (iii) The mass of the building shall be in scale and harmony with the adjoining buildings and the area as a whole.
- (iv) The design of any alterations to existing buildings shall be such that the proportions and details relate to and are appropriate to the existing building.
- (v) Detail drawings of door and window openings etc, will be required where appropriate.

4. Wherever new buildings and alterations to existing buildings are permitted the highest possible standard of professional design will be required.

5. Whilst it is recognised that in some cases it may be necessary to reproduce exactly a historical style of architecture, the Planning Authority will encourage building in a modern idiom in sympathetic relationship to the surroundings.

6. The Local Planning Authority will require the submission of detailed plans with applications for development within the conservation area.

7. Changes of use which are likely to have an adverse effect on listed buildings, buildings on the supplementary list, or other buildings which contribute significantly to the character of the conservation area will not be permitted.

8. Proposals which in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority would affect the character or appearance of the conservation area will be advertised and the Authority will take account of any representations received.

9. In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to consider the relaxation of regulations and standard requirements where these are in conflict with conservation policies.

10. Where applicable, tree planting will be encouraged and, in such cases, the authority will expect a landscape scheme to be submitted as part of the application.

Appendix B - Listed Building references

All Grade II except St Andrew's Church Grade II*

See www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list

North Street

7/66 West Side - **No 7 Dairy House**

Listing NGR: ST8665417227

7/62 **No 8 Home mead Cottage**

Listing NGR: ST8663917198

Lurmer Street

8/67 **Middle Farm House**

Listing NGR: ST8670716987

8/64 **No 20 Ferring Cottage and No 21**

Listing NGR: ST8676016969

8/65 **Nos 27, 28 and 29**

Listing NGR: ST8676616891

Mill Street

8/39 **Glyn Gift**

Listing NGR: ST8685516861

2/42 **Springhead**

Listing NGR: ST8732616910

Crown Hill

8/70 **The Fontmell** (Formerly The Crown)

Listing NGR: ST8671316880

8/71 **Fontmell Potteries** (The Old Brewery)

Listing NGR: ST8670116883

8/72 **Millbrook House**

Listing NGR: ST8669016885

8/73 **Cross House**

Listing NGR: ST8665916902

Church Street

8/46 **Brookhouse**

Listing NGR: ST8662816923

8/47 **Nos 48 and 49**

Listing NGR: ST8661316942

8/48 **Cleeve Cottage**

Listing NGR: ST8660216966

7/49 Mill and Millhouse
Listing NGR: ST8658517026

7/50 Watermill Cottage 16-8-60 (formerly listed as No 41)
Listing NGR: ST8658817044

7/51 Methodist Chapel and Schoolroom
Listing NGR: ST8664417072

7/54 Moores Farmhouse
Listing NGR: ST8657117103

8/52 Church of St Andrew
Listing NGR: ST8654016985

8/53 Bennett Bishop monument, in the churchyard
Listing NGR: ST8653416998

West Street

8/76 Gossips Tree Cottage
Listing NGR: ST8660816899

8/74 Nos 67, 68 and 69
Listing NGR: ST8657616909

8/77 Gable Cottage
Listing NGR: ST8658516880

8/78 No 56
Listing NGR: ST8654216879

8/79 Nos 58 and 59
Listing NGR: ST8651916872

8/80 Blandfords Farm House
Listing NGR: ST8646716862

8/75 Myrtle Cottage
Listing NGR: ST8644216888

8/81 Barn Cottage and No 61
Listing NGR: ST8636116864

Appendix C - Unlisted buildings contributing to the character of the area

North Street

3, 4

C19. 1½ storey Greensand rubble extended vertically in brick and timber to form gabled floor under plain tile roof. Dogtooth chimney detail. Windows timber and PVC. Vernacular style, scale, materials and setting



5, 6

C19. 1½ storey Flint with horizontal brick string course under plain tile roof. Later small dormers. Dogtooth chimney detail. Windows PVC. Vernacular style, scale, materials and setting



Lurmer Street

Chapel Cottage

C20. 1½ storey. Flint with horizontal brick string course under Roman tile roof with small dormers. Weatherboard gable over porch. Dogtooth chimney detail. Segmental brick arches to PVC framed windows. Vernacular style, materials and details.



Stables/Garage Range, Middle Farm

Former stables/garage range, (east of Lurmer St). Late C19/early C20. 1 storey. Long linear form. Brick under interlocking, clay tile roof with traditional rooflights. Metal windows and timber stable doors. Retains much agricultural character. Part of farmyard group.



South Street

The Old Toll House

C19. 2 storey. Brick with stone quoins under slate roof. Tile hung extension. Windows part metal framed. Historical significance, unique design. Traditional materials of the time.



36

C21. 2 storey. Rubble, brick quoins and string course and segmental brick arches under plain tile roof. Windows PVC. Vernacular style, scale, materials and detail



37, 38

Late C19 with later extensions. Former estate cottages, 1½ storey. Flint with horizontal brick string course under plain tile roof. Stone window openings with arched heads.

Some original metal fenestration, others PVC. Traditional quality materials and scale in roadside setting



Mill Street

Coach House

C21. 2 and 3 storey. Mixture of flint and brick string courses, painted render and plain brick, Artificial stone cills, Doric columns and shallow arches. PVC window frames. Questionable design but interesting feature building giving a counterbalance to the Fontmell pub opposite



36 (Stumbles)

C20. 1½ storey. Brick under plain tile roof with gabled and hipped dormers. Dogtooth chimney detail and timber window frames. Arts and Crafts influences. Scale, form and detail contribute to the street scene



33

C19. 2 storey. Typical brick Victorian house with plain tile roof, dogtooth chimney detail and timber window frames. One bay set forward as shop front (former tailor's residence).

Vernacular scale, materials and details.



32 (Middle Mill)

C19 single storey. Greensand rubble original extended in brick with later interlocking tile roof. PVC frames. Small scale vernacular artisan dwelling in traditional materials.



Middle Mill Pump house

Early C20 pump house and associated valve chamber. Brick with slate roof. Historical significance.



The White Cottage

C19 extended cottage in painted render under a thatch and tile roof. Timber frames. Vernacular character maintained with modern extensions in high quality materials.



Charlie's Cottage

C19. 1½ storey. Flint with brick string course under plain half hip tile roof. Windows PVC in stone surrounds with brick relieving arch detail. Possibly Glynn estate cottages. Vernacular scale, materials and setting



Crown Hill

Bus Shelter

C20. Greensand ashlar with brick quoins and arched doorway under plain tile roof. Timber frames. Vernacular in character



Stables Flat (at Cross House)

C19. 1½ storey variously extended. Coursed Greensand and brick under plain and shaped tile roof. Vertical weatherboarding. Dogtooth chimney detail. Conversion of vernacular scale outbuilding for residential use in traditional materials.



Church Street

Fosse Cottage

C18. 2 storey artisan dwelling. Brick walls under recently replaced plain tile roof. PVC frames. While much of the original character has been lost through modern interventions, the scale and setting by the mill pond adds to the character of the street scene.



Millbridge (at Town Mill)

Poss. C19. Brick structure and arch with stone capping and lettering. Contributes to the character of the area beside the brook.



Holbrook

C19. 1½ storey. Originally 3 cottages, part greensand and part flint with brick string courses under plain tile roof with one original dormer and small later dormers. Stone window surrounds with metal lights. Scale, materials and setting by the brook are most attractive.



Granary Mill House

C19. 1½ storey converted barn. Mainly weatherboarded finish under plain tile roof. Scale and setting add to the character of the street scene.



Shop and tea-room

C19. 2 storey. Part brick, part Greensand rubble under interlocking tile and slate roofs. Display window and telephone box and segmental brick archways. Windows PVC. Dogtooth chimney detail. Historic former Malthouse. Traditional character group.



War memorial

C20. Stone cross, stepped base and curved stone seat set in an elevated position. The setting is most appropriate for the annual gathering on remembrance day.



Parsonage Street

Glebe Cottage

C19. 2 storey Greensand rubble with brick quoins and reveals under a slate roof. Timber frames. Traditional character building.



Estyrd House

C19. 2 storey brick house with gabled roof dormers under a plain tile roof. Timber frames and porch. Brick chimneys set at 45° as a feature. Character building in traditional materials and details.



Canons Garth

C19. Originally Greensand rubble walls extended vertically in coursed greensand under plain tile roof with dormers. Window frames and porch structure of oak. Ornate bargeboards. Traditional materials contribute to the character of the area.



Fontmell House

C19. Former Rectory on a grand scale. Brick with stone quoins and window frames under a plain tile roof. Tall stone chimneys set at 45°. Together with its outbuildings it forms a significant contribution to the area.



Grey Cottage

C19. Single storey. Originally rubble walls now part rendered with brick details and arches under a slate roof. PVC window frames. Modest scale, traditional character dwelling



Scallow Cottage

C19. Low 2-storey cottage. Greensand rubble walls with brick details and brick extension under plain tile roofs. Timber windows. Dogtooth detail to tall chimney. Traditional cottage style, small scale.



Princes Field

C20. 1½ storey. Brick with plain tile roof half hipped with hipped dormers. PVC window frames. Typical of its age and similar in scale to other properties in the village, using traditional materials.



The Knapp

West Lea

C19. Substantial 2 storey house with 3-bay gabled frontage set on raised ground. Flemish bond brick with ashlar quoins and window surrounds. Plain tile roof with decorative bargeboards and fascias. Adds interest to the character of the area and indicative of a wealthy status.



West Street

St Andrew's School

C19. Original building of coursed Greensand with twin entrances under a plain tile roof. Stone chimney. Original fenestration lost to PVC replacements. Form and setting signifies the presence of a school and adds variety to the street scene.



54, 55

C19. 1½ storey. Flint with brick string course under plain tile half hip roof. Windows PVC in stone surrounds with brick relieving arch detail. Dogtooth Chimney detail. Possibly Glynn estate cottages. Vernacular scale, materials and roadside setting.



Timbers (The Log House)

C20. Norwegian log-house design much extended with interlocking tile roof and timber framed windows. While contrasting with the appearance of all other properties in the village, its scale and design contributes to the variety of the street scene.



Blandfords Farm Cottage

C17. 1½ storey with walls of coursed rubble, cob, brick infilling, render and weatherboarding all painted white under a thatch roof. Positioned end-on to road as formerly a milking parlour. Timber window frames. Dogtooth chimney detail. Scale and detail adds interest to street scene.



Village Hall

Late C20. Pre-formed flint blocks with brick string course and details with large catslide slate roof. Timber window frames. While relatively modern the scale and use of materials contributes well to the character.



Fontmell Surgery

Late C20. Pre-formed flint blocks with brick string courses and details, plain brick to returns, under Roman style interlocking tile roof. PVC frames. While relatively modern the scale and use of materials contributes well to the character



70

C20. Distinctive 1½ storey house in the Arts and Crafts style. Rendered walls under steep pitch plain tile roof with large central dormer. Chimney flues octagonal brick. Windows flush pattern PVC. Scale and design adds interest to street scene and white render reflects white finish of listed properties opposite.



66

C19. 2 storey mannered 2-bay dwelling with central porch. Rendered walls under a slate roof. Vertical sash windows and plank door. Dogtooth chimney detail. Scale and form makes an interesting contribution to street scene.



Orchard Close

28, 29

C20. 2 storey terrace. Painted brick under plain tile roof with half hip to outshots. Attractive corbelled chimney tops. Part flush design PVC frames. Simple tiled porch. Scale, colour (as neighbouring houses) and setting contribute to the street scene. (The other properties in this development do not echo this pattern)



Appendix D - Glossary of architectural terms used in this appraisal

Artificial stone	Concrete blocks incorporating stone dust or aggregate with hewn face intended to resemble natural stone
Arts and Crafts	An international movement in the late 19 th and early 20 th centuries expressed in the decorative and fine arts, including architecture
Ashlar	Walls comprising squared and finely worked stone
Catslide	Continuation of a roof at a shallower slope (as at the Village Hall)
Cob	A locally sourced building material typically incorporating clay, straw and lime
Cupola	A small structure surmounting a pointed roof, it could be open, louvred or glazed and even domed
Dogtooth brickwork	Projecting course of bricks laid at 45°
Doric columns	The plainest of the three orders of Greek and Roman architecture, comprising round columns surmounted by simple capitals
Dormers	A vertical window which projects from a sloping roof, the gabled form has two sloping roofs, the hipped form has three sloping roofs
Fenestration	The arrangement of windows
Flemish bond	Brickwork showing a pattern of stretchers (the long face of the bricks) and headers (the short ends) in a regular pattern
Hoodmoulds	Carved projection over a window or doorway to deflect rainwater
Lacing	Pattern of laying different materials such as brick and flint in shallow bands
Metal lights	Metal window casements
Outshot	Side extension with lower roof line
Plank door	Traditional framed door with an outer surface of vertical boards
Purlins	Horizontal timbers which support the roof and are sometimes passed through the external wall to form a feature
Quoins	Outer corners of a building formed in a contrasting material
Rubble walling	Stone walls where the blocks have been worked minimally, sometimes in even courses, sometimes in random sizes
Segmental arches	Shallow curved arches over windows or doors in brick or stone
String courses	A horizontal band of masonry, usually with a slight projection
Weatherboarding	Horizontal boards, traditionally of timber, lapped to shed rainwater

Fontmell Magna
Parish Council

