

# CONSERVATION AREAS IN EAST DORSET

# PENTRIDGE



# Foreword

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

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

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

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

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

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## Introduction

The village of Pentridge lies in a deep fold of the Cranborne Chase to the west of Pentridge Down. Penbury Knoll, nearby, is the highest point in the District at 606 metres. An Iron Age hill-fort was sited on the summit of the long, narrow chalk ridge, capped with Reading Beds and Clay with flints, but this has long since been damaged by gravel-digging. On the steep north and west-facing slopes are the remains of 'Celtic' fields which are contemporary with the hill-fort. Running parallel to the village immediately to the west, is the Dorset Cursus. Extending over six miles this Neolithic ceremonial monument is the largest of its kind in Britain, though near the village itself the Cursus has been obliterated by farming activity. Other important archaeological sites in the area include Bockerley Dyke and Grim's Ditch, to the north of Pentridge, and many Round and Long Barrows and other tumuli. Ackling Dyke, the Roman road from Salisbury to Dorchester, coincides with the A 354 where it passes the village.

*Drove, north of Manor Farm*



## Setting

The village is surrounded by the open chalk landscape of the Cranborne Chase. The steep grassy slopes, tree-less except for Penbury Knoll, contrast with the intimate treed character of the valley. To the north and south of Pentridge, the more gentle slopes of the valley are farmed. Field sizes are large and there are few trees.

The open character of the surrounding hills tend to extend into the village itself, especially on the south-east side where the influence of Pentridge Hill is particularly strong. Several houses look out towards the landscape beyond

the village. Lower down the village, near Pentridge House, the area has a more enclosed and intimate character, before opening out again towards the southern end.

*View along the Village street, Yew Tree Cottage on the left*



## Approaches

A narrow lane, with hedgebanks, forms the sole approach to Pentridge, except by foot where there is an extensive network of paths leading into the surrounding countryside. From the road the village is completely hidden by the nearby hills. The descent towards the village road and the distant view across fields to the short, broached spire of St Rumbold's Church, represent the first indication of the settlement.

The line of Scots pine that forms the northern edge of the village, and which continues along the track to the north, forms a particularly distinctive feature. Their survival in this chalk landscape is probably due to the presence of valley gravel. Other trees in the village provide shelter and enclosure. Together, they reinforce the contrast between the valley settlement and the surrounding landscape.

## Scope

The boundaries of the Conservation Area, which was designated in October 1990, encircles the whole village, except for some modern agricultural buildings at the extreme southern end. The Conservation Area includes gardens and paddock areas associated with the houses together with the extensive curtilage of Pentridge House.

On the eastern side, to the north of Pentridge House, the boundary is drawn across the open field to connect with curtilages higher up the street. The field actually flows uninterrupted down to the village street at this point.

Further north, beyond the confines of the settlement, the Conservation Area has been extended to include the line of Scots pine that form such an important feature to the setting of the village.

## Form

Pentridge is a linear settlement, in common with other Chalk valley villages. The Parish Church, reconstructed in 1855, is situated on higher ground to the north-west of the village street and is approached by a narrow track. Nearby is the former schoolhouse and school room. The latter is used today as the village hall. These buildings look out onto a sloping 'green'. The rough track passes diagonally through the grass and then continues across country as a public right of way to Morgans Lane.

The Parish notice-board opposite the track suggests that this junction forms the centre of the village. There are no other village facilities, except a post-box higher up the street.

Manor Farm, formerly known as Pentridge Farm, with its close grouping of barns and high boundary walls, forms an 'anchor' at the southern end of the village. Small cottages and houses extend in fairly regular pattern close to the street. Pentridge House breaks this pattern, in size, form and siting. Further up the street, the Estate houses are situated behind long front gardens, but the rhythm of development is maintained.

On the south-east side, groups of buildings alternate with open spaces to create a different rhythm.

The village street descends gently from north to south. A small stream follows the lane for part of its length before being culverted. It then reappears on the other side near Pentridge House where it continues to Manor Farm.

## Buildings

There is a mixture of building ages and styles in Pentridge. Building materials are varied too, including walls of brick, stone, cob and weatherboarding, and roofs of tile, slate and thatch. With the exception of Pentridge House and Manor (Pentridge) Farmhouse, the houses are modest in scale and have narrow roof-spans. The small Church of St Rumbold's, having walls of flint and rubble with ashlar

dressings, was rebuilt in 1855 in a 14th century style. Its roofs are tiled. The most distinctive feature of the building is its unusual short, broached spire that is visible over the surrounding trees. It is surrounded by a roughly oval grassy churchyard bounded by yews and other trees. Two table tombs of 1774 and 1797, south of the Chancel, predate the Church itself.



The Church forms one of a small group of buildings that stand on elevated ground set back from the village street.

To the north of the Church is an attractive, but unlisted, pair of single-storey-with-attics semi-detached cottages. The nineteenth century cottages have walls of brick with flint banding under a half-hipped tiled roof and feature a large, central chimney stack. Each cottage has a matching small dormer window and porch. Close to the churchyard boundary stands a black weatherboarded granary on staddle stones.



The Schoolhouse and Schoolroom are located back further behind the 'green'. This pair of 19th century buildings, having brick walls under a scalloped-tile roof, are also of considerable architectural interest, although not included on

the Statutory List. The Tudor rubbed-brick window-heads to the two large schoolhouse windows are a feature of the building, as are the double chimney flues set diagonally on plan. From this elevated position there are commanding views over the surrounding countryside, especially across the valley to Pentridge Hill.



At the bottom of the track, close to the corner with the village street, is the oldest cottage in Pentridge. Chestnut Cottage is a single-storey-with-attics, timber-framed building dating from the 17th century. Some of the infill between the timbers is of wattle and daub; elsewhere the walls are of brick and flint. The cottage, which now has a tiled roof, faces onto the village street behind a small enclosed front garden.

*Chestnut Cottage, a Grade II listed building*



Pentridge House stands opposite on the south side of the street surrounded by gardens bounded by high walls. On the north-east and north-west sides, the walls are constructed of chalk cob with traditional tile capping. The same tile capping is used over a high brick wall that extends the full length of the south-west boundary. The house itself was the former Rectory, having two storeys and attics, and whitewashed rendered walls of cob and brick

under tiled roofs. The earliest parts of the building date from the early 18th century, but brick extensions on the (now exposed) south elevation were added in the late 19th century. Within the curtilage of Pentridge House, sited end-on to the road, stands a traditional barn having weather-boarded walls under a corrugated iron roof. The building forms an attractive feature in the village centre and acts as a visual pinch-point or restriction in the village street. A high wall of brick and flint, with tile capping, extends from the barn to conceal a smaller building behind.



These buildings form part of a group of structures that form the nucleus of the village. Yew Tree Cottage, on the north side of the village street, is a long narrow cottage having white-painted brickwork under a hipped slate roof. Its old central chimneystack suggests a much earlier origin of the building than its present 19th century exterior appearance. The building contains an eclectic mix of architectural features, mostly internal, such as the oversized door case on the rear elevation imported intact from Harley Street. The property is bounded on two sides by high cob walling under tiled capping. On the other side of the village street is a modernized thatched cottage having brick and flint walls and 'mullion' windows. The building is partially concealed by high yew hedging along the road frontage. Adjacent stands a barn-like structure having weatherboarding under a slate roof. This is sited close to the road and screens a graveled tack yard behind.

Manor Farmhouse (Listed as 'Pentridge Farmhouse') represents the second major house in the village. This, too, stands largely hidden behind high boundary walls. These are entirely of chalk cob with tile capping. The Farmhouse is constructed of brick under a

parallel range slate roof. The simple, symmetrical front elevation of this modest 18th century house, now whitewashed, is visible through the entrance formed in the high wall. The house is approached by a long sweeping graveled driveway that passes diagonally through an open grassed area bounded by some important trees. A public right of way extends to the southern boundary .

*Manor Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building*



Sited on the roadside, the listed 18th century timber-framed barn, clad with weatherboarding over a brick plinth and having a half-hipped tiled roof, remains in agricultural use. Attached to its southern end is an ancillary building of brick with a tiled roof. Beyond this building, adjacent to the track and forming part of the farmyard grouping, is a high cob wall with tile capping. The traditional structures effectively screen the larger, more recent agricultural buildings inside the group.



Opposite Manor Farm stands a pair of cottages dating from the 17th century. They are constructed of brick-faced cob under a thatched roof. The form and appearance of the cottages has been disrupted by an extension on its southern end that introduces a gable to the front elevation. The cottages, having white-painted

brickwork, are sited within generous gardens with grassy frontages behind trimmed hedges.

*Yew Tree Cottage*



To the north of these cottages stands Strangmoor, a brick and tile cottage sited with its end gable close to the road. Having early origins, the building has been successively extended and altered. It has lost much of its historic interest but still contributes to the character of the Conservation Area. A recent building next to this cottage also makes a positive contribution, on account of its modest size, simple form, good proportions and attention to detail.

*Strangmoor*



The range of building styles and materials found in the northern half of the village is similarly varied. At the corner of Morgans Lane and the village street stands an 18th century cob and thatched cottage, with brick and tiled extensions at each end. Opposite is another thatched cottage, having distinctive brick and flint banding. The building is situated behind a small front garden bounded by trimmed box hedging. A single yew tree growing out of the hedge forms a sculptural feature in the lane. Another feature is the red "GR" post box.

The Estate houses, set behind long front gardens on the north side of the road, are an important feature of Pentridge. They are simple 19th century semi-detached cottages constructed of brick and slate. Each has a distinctive high central chimney stack. The third pair of Estate cottages, situated lower down the village, is rendered have a more articulated form, with symmetrical side extensions and small dormers featuring shaped bargeboards. This pair too has a prominent central chimney stack.

*Former estate house near Butler's Barn*



Between the Estate houses is Butlers' Barn, a well-proportioned five-bay house of brick and tile of possibly 18th century origin. The building, which is not listed, has an interesting chimney comprising three successively smaller stacks all linked together. This attractive, creeper-clad house, sited behind a clipped beech hedge, has a symmetrical front elevation with a central porch.

*Butler's Barn*



## Open Spaces

The well dispersed buildings set amongst large garden areas and paddocks are important features of the village. Many are still cultivated as cottage gardens, but others appear mostly

unused. Irrespective of their use, these open spaces are a characteristic feature of the form and character of the village. They provide spacious settings for the village houses and allow the surrounding landscape to permeate the settlement.

The link between village and the surrounding farmland is reinforced by the field that extends to the village street, opposite Butlers' Barn. It also invites views to its outstanding local landscape feature, Penbury Knoll.

Another important open space is the paddock to Manor Farm. This large, grassed area is open to the road and also affords views of Pentridge Hill.

The village 'green' area near the Church provides a valuable setting to the buildings that overlook the space and an opportunity to park cars during Parish and other meetings.

## Trees and Hedges

Pentridge village is generally well-treed, with some important groups and individual trees. The most distinctive features, seen from both the village and the surrounding landscape, are the two parallel lines of Scots pine. Those which follow the bridleway form an important backdrop to the houses as well as providing shelter and enclosure.

*Backdrop of Scots Pine*



Surrounding the Church are yews, chestnut and beech. Tall oak trees line the track leading down to the village street. Within the same garden, but near the north-eastern boundary, are yew and pines which provide winter interest and a foil to the deciduous trees. Some of the more notable of these are situated at the entrance to Pentridge House. These are mature chestnuts. They also occur alternately with sycamores

along the south-eastern side of the lane. The trees are located on banks and overhang the road to provide shelter and sense of enclosure, without blocking the views of the adjacent countryside.

*View of the churchyard yews, Meadow Cottage to the right*



Other outstanding trees are to be found on the paddock to Manor Farm. The group of large beech trees near the southern boundary are of particular visual importance. Two large lime trees near the north-west corner have been damaged and have lost their elegant form.

A variety of hedging materials line the road frontage. Some of the hedging is intrinsically poor, but collectively they are valuable and help unify the village and reinforce its rural character.









# Planning Policy in Conservation Areas

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Trees

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

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

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

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

## New Development

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Conservation Area analysis

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

## Grants

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

# Design and Conservation Services in East Dorset

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

## Historic Buildings

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Conservation Areas

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

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

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

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

## Designated Conservation Areas in East Dorset



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## Advice

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