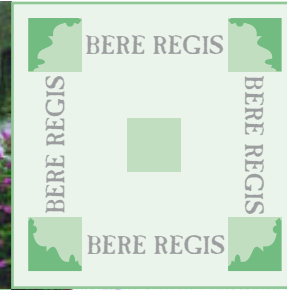
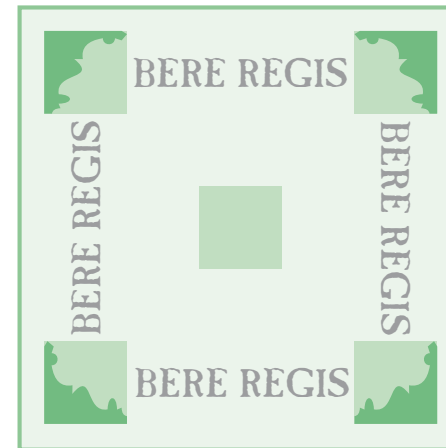




BERE REGIS
July 2002
BERE REGIS





STATUS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The appraisal has been prepared by Purbeck District Council in partnership with Bere Regis Parish Council. The production of the appraisal was agreed by Bere Regis Parish Council at a meeting on 12th July 2001.

A first draft was presented to representatives of the Parish Council in November 2001.

Following additions to the text and amendments, the draft was adopted by Purbeck District Council as supplementary planning guidance at a meeting on 16th July 2002.

The statement should be read in conjunction with the most recent versions of the Purbeck District Council Local Plan and the Dorset County Structure Plan or any possible revision to this statutory framework. In addition careful reference of this document should be made to all national policy guidance, especially Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) - Planning and the Historic Environment or any possible revision to this guidance note.

The assistance of Bere Regis Parish Council, District Councillor P. Wharf and Parish Councillor P. Fysh and Bournemouth University in assistance with the production of this document is acknowledged.

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1. INTRODUCTION

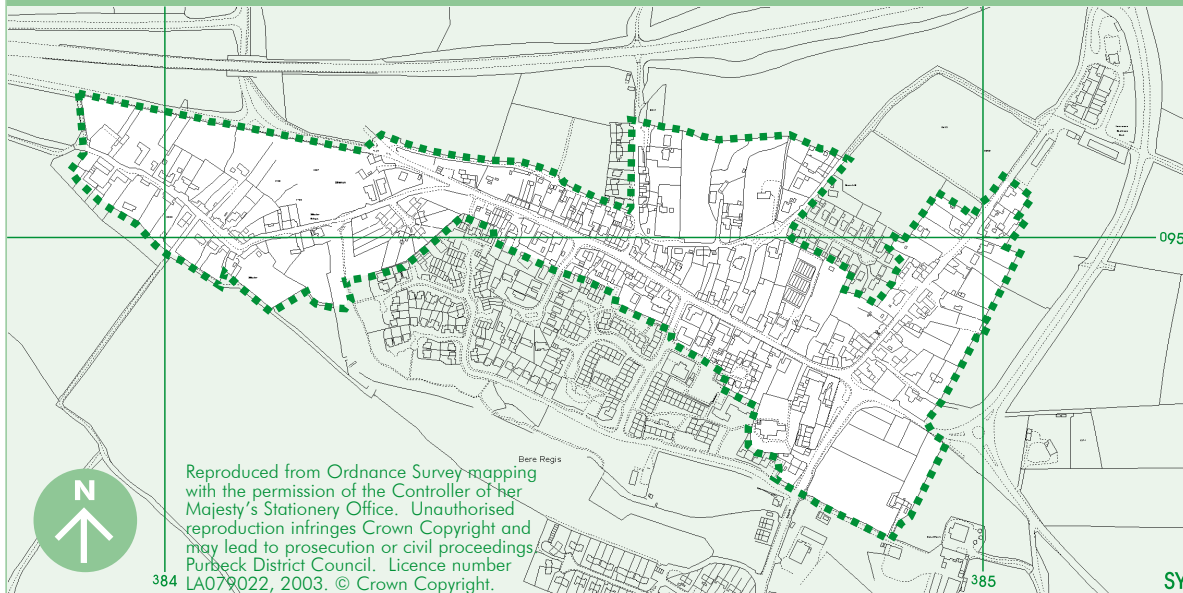
1.1 A Conservation Area is an area designated by a local planning authority because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

This definition is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Bere Regis Conservation Area was designated in 1981 by Dorset County Council.

1.2 English Heritage expect local authorities, acting in consultation with communities, to produce a written appraisal of what makes each Conservation Area special. This will provide a sound basis, defensible on appeal, for the development plan policies and



BERE REGIS CONSERVATION AREA



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2. LOCATION & POPULATION

2.1 The village of Bere Regis stands at a crossroads at the intersection of roads between Blandford Forum and Wareham (North/South), and Poole and Dorchester (East/West). Historically, these roads gave rise to the principal streets of the village, West Street and North Street.

2.2 In topographical terms the village is located on ground which rises from the Bere Stream and a dry valley which separates it from Woodbury Hill. It is this location at a cross roads, and the rising ground upon which it is located, which are two of the village's most distinctive features when viewed from the surrounding countryside. The underlying geology of chalk, sand and gravel creates the undulations of this part of Dorset.

2.3 The current population of the village is around 1,800.

3. THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF BERE REGIS

3.1 Bere Regis can be described as a "roadside village", with West Street being the main artery. Historically, its location in a largely agricultural part of the county accounted for its principal source of income. Although much of the present population arrived after the agricultural industry had declined, that influence on the form and function of the village is apparent in the Conservation Area buildings with their obvious origins as farmsteads and workers' cottages.

3.2 The village is surrounded by archaeological remains from numerous periods. However, it is primarily Saxon in origin, a manor house existed in 978 and the parish church dates from the 11th century. The Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (RCHM) suggests the origin of the village of Bere Regis as an amalgamation of three formerly separate settlements – Shitterton, Doddington Farm and Bere Regis itself. The layout of the settlement is recognised as having post Norman Conquest influences with linear formats served by back lanes.



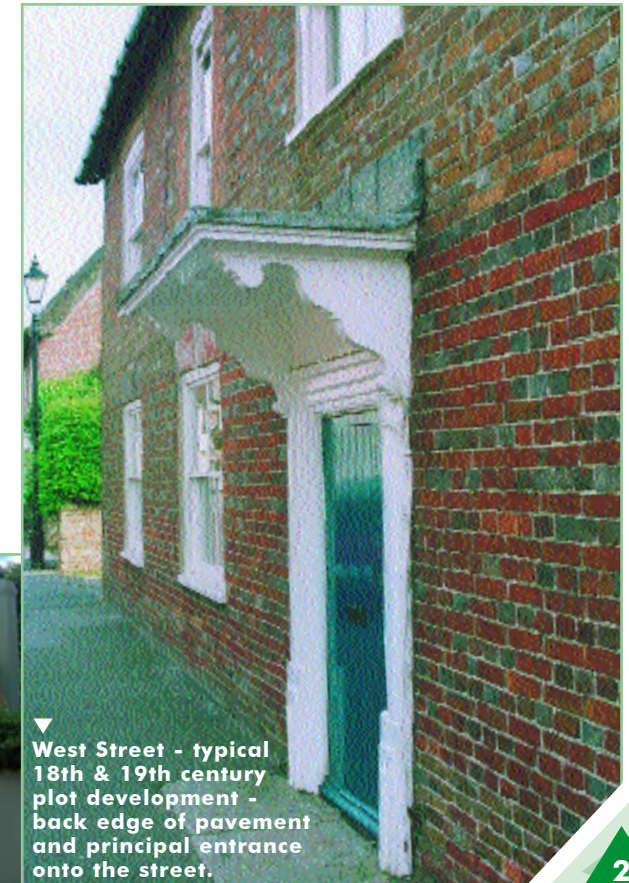
► The landscape setting of Bere Regis

Shitterton, which is part of the Bere Regis Conservation Area, still displays a semblance of separate identity and character. As with other Dorset towns and villages constructed primarily in earlier periods of timber, cob and thatch, fire has helped to shape Bere Regis' development. A fire of 1788 destroyed much of the centre of West Street. Its influence is demonstrated by many of the earlier buildings in West Street being identified in listing descriptions as eighteenth century. The maps of 1777 and 1804 (see page 3) clearly show the effects on the building plan forms.

3.3 The role of transport and transportation routes cannot be underestimated in influencing on the growth and development of the village. The range of uses which had grown up in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries indicate a village which was relatively isolated and therefore displayed a need to be self-sufficient. Although it appeared at the centre of an ancient track

way system with a Roman Road passing to the north of the Conservation Area, Bere Regis was not on a major through route until the construction of the east/west turnpike road in 1841. This established the village's position on a crossroads. This remained the case until 1981 when both West Street and North Street were bypassed.

3.4 Partly as a result of the lack of comprehensive transport routes in and out, the village developed as a market centre for the surrounding agricultural area. Historically a market was established by Royal Charter in 1215. In the surrounding area an annual fair was held on Woodbury Hill, coming into being at around the same time as the market. The fair became the largest in southern England in medieval times, continuing into the nineteenth century, and eventually ceasing in 1951 when it had become an annual amusement fair.



▼ West Street - typical 18th & 19th century plot development - back edge of pavement and principal entrance onto the street.



► Shitterton - a glimpse into courtyard farm complex



► West Street - example of outstanding individual historic building

4. PREVAILING FORMER USES

4.1 The agricultural industry and the village's principal function as a hub for this industry has significantly influenced the growth and development of the settlement. After the Norman Conquest the manor of Bere Regis stayed with the crown until passing to Simon de Montfort and then to the Turbevilles as Lord of the Manor before sale to Drax in 1738. With the subsequent loss of the ancient manor house itself, agriculture predominated and this is apparent in the style and form of many of the buildings. This also serves to identify the village as a working village that grew up in these different ownerships at different times. This differentiates it from other "agricultural villages"



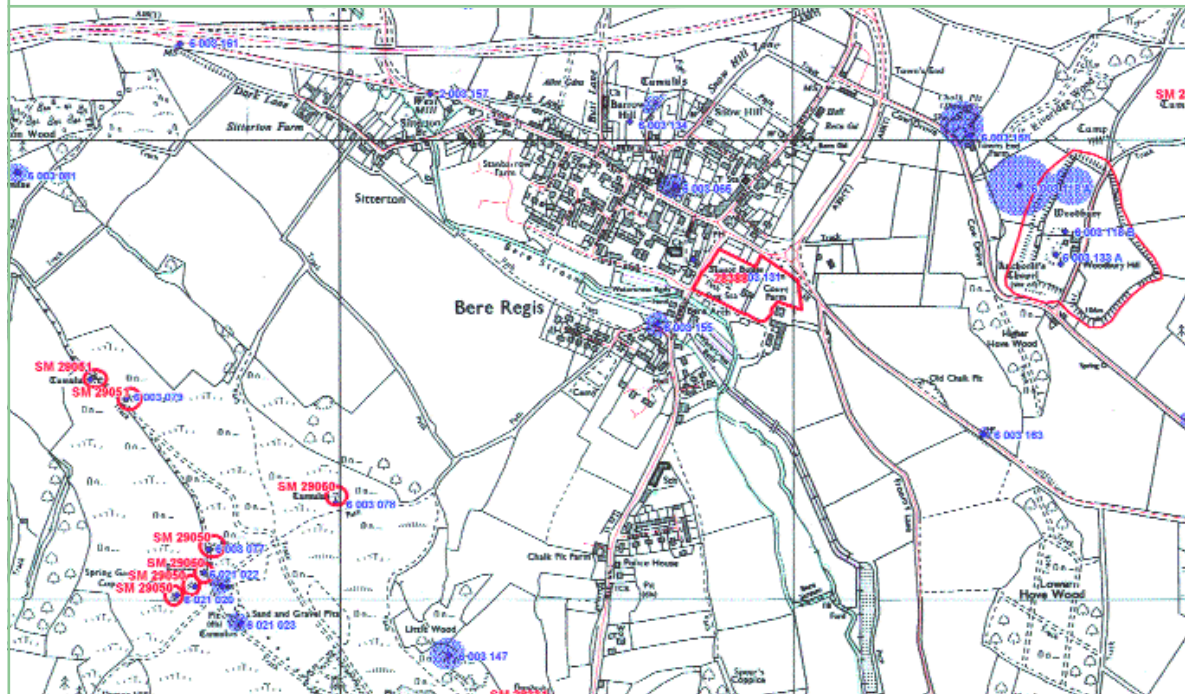
► View along North Street showing the more dispersed nature of buildings

which may have been in the ownership of one estate, or have been developed in one particular style or era. The agricultural service function of the village is also evidenced by the numerous outbuildings which remain, although some have been converted to other uses.

BERE REGIS ARCHAEOLOGICAL MAP

Sites delineated with a red line are protected as Scheduled Monuments.

Sites shaded in purple are other archaeological sites and find-spots that are recorded in the Dorset Sites and Monuments Record. The above are only the known archaeological sites. It is extremely likely that as yet unrecorded archaeological material extends beyond these known sites, for instance within the historic core of Bere Regis. Hence, developments away from the known sites may also have archaeological implications.



4.2 Uses which have been identified as operating in the village include: button making; saddle making; general builders; tailoring; cobblers; tallow chandlers; butchers; grocers; public houses and brew houses. All the uses indicate that at some point Bere Regis demonstrated a considerable amount of commercial activity, which emphasises its role as a service centre for the surrounding agricultural hinterland.



► Royal Oak at the entrance to North Street with views out to the wider landscape

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BERE REGIS AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

5.1 The parish is rich in Bronze Age material and the village is overlooked by the Iron Age Hill Fort on Woodbury Hill.

5.2 The parish of Bere Regis contains 25 Scheduled and around 50 unscheduled ancient monuments. The existence of a Scheduled Ancient Monument within the Conservation Area at the manorial settlement of Court Farm reinforces the village's Saxon origins. The remainder of the ancient monuments consisting largely of barrows and field works fall outside the Conservation Area. Many of these sites date from the Iron Age and Roman periods. The extent and variety of archaeological sites in and around the village are indicative of the likely presence of a settlement during much earlier eras.



6. ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES

6.1 English Heritage guidelines advise on the factors that should be considered when analysing the architectural and historic qualities of a Conservation Area. Each Conservation Area has its own character and appearance and therefore the way in which each of the elements is treated in an appraisal should be dictated by the settlement itself.

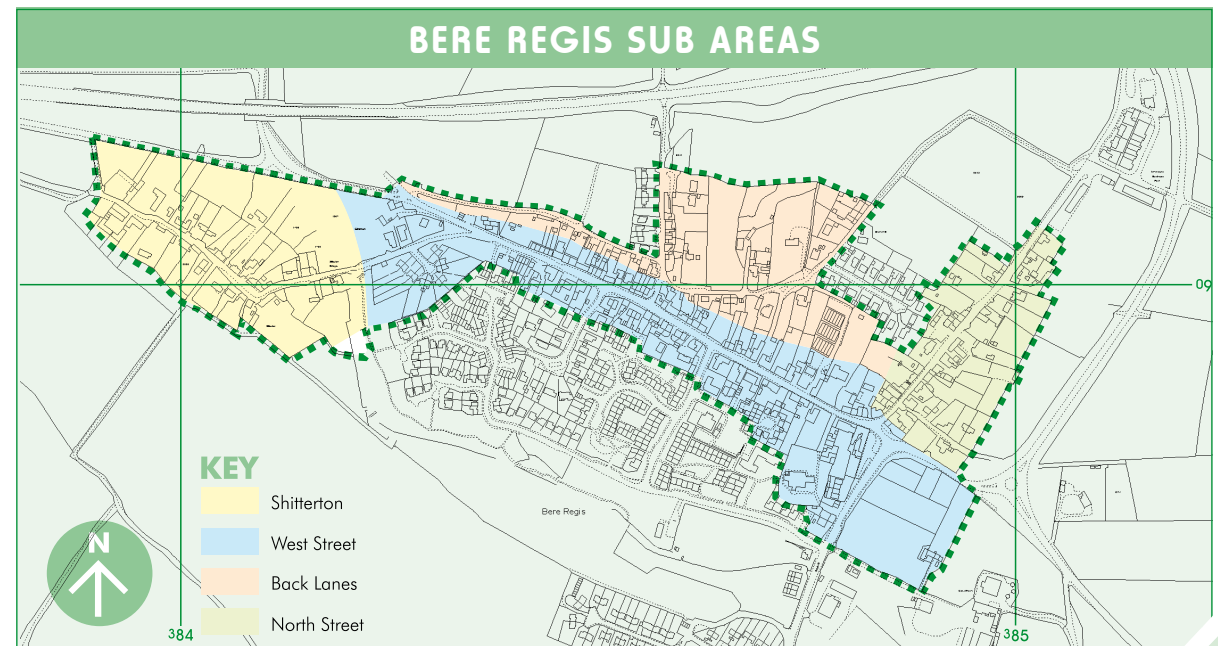
6.2 In Bere Regis, where no one particular style, form or era prevails, it is appropriate to deal in turn with each area which displays a particular homogeneity of character and analyse the following:

- ◆ Important topographical or physical features which add to the character or appearance of each area;

- ◆ The presence of notable buildings (both listed and unlisted);
- ◆ Architectural styles which are important to the character of each area;
- ◆ The presence of important groups of buildings which give the area its character;
- ◆ The presence of any vernacular traditions.

6.3 Bere Regis can be divided into four principal character areas:

- ◆ North Street
- ◆ West Street - including the area around the Church
- ◆ Shitterton
- ◆ The Back Lanes above North and West Street



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7. NORTH STREET

7.1 Topography, Development Pattern and Street Features

7.1.1 North Street begins at the petrol filling station on the new bypass. This is where a traveller from Wimborne and Blandford in the pre-bypass days would have entered the village and begun to appreciate its character.

7.1.2 Just outside the Conservation Area, the northern end of North Street is characterised by an unharmonious collection of buildings, which begin with the petrol filling station, continuing as cottages, Townsend Farm (Listed GII), a small industrial estate and a sports club. With the exception of Townsend Farm, all of the buildings in this location were developed after the completion of the bypass and add nothing to the entrance of the Conservation Area. All these buildings lie on the eastern side of the street and the area could benefit from some landscaping and screening.

7.1.3 The western side of the street is probably more historically typical of this part of North Street, demonstrating the relationship the village had with its rural surroundings. The western part of North Street, opposite the cottages and petrol filling station, at first displays an openness which is interrupted by field boundaries made up of hedgerows with field gates. This openness is punctuated by the start of Snow Hill



▶ Mixed uses active in North Street



▶ Approaching the Conservation Area from the North



▶ Informal rural landscape details complementing the buildings in North Street



▶ Moving North the pattern of development becomes more dispersed



▶ Buildings enclosing and defining the space at the entrance to North Street



▶ High quality window and door details

Lane. This lane has the appearance of a “hollow-way” in parts, possibly being of the Saxon or earlier medieval period. It is from its junction with North Street to where it turns southwards that its hollow-way character is most pronounced.

7.1.4 It is after the junction of North Street and Snow Hill Lane that the character of North Street in the Conservation Area begins to consolidate. Moving southwards the land rises steeply to the west of North Street and drops down to the playing pitches to the east.

7.1.5 The Conservation Area is entered just after the grounds of the sports club are passed. In this part of North Street the notable feature is the steep bank to the west which helps to retain the fields which are bounded to the west by the continuation of Snow Hill Lane. The creation of this pronounced difference in levels between North Street and the adjacent field to the west, is probably the result of either the process of tilling the soil in the fields over a period of centuries, or adjustment to facilitate tending of closed or open strips, into which the fields were once divided. The bank and hedgerow in this location form an important feature in this part of the Conservation Area and set the tone for the more tightly enclosed southern part of North Street.



▶ Key building forms at the entrance to North Street



▶ Townsend Farmhouse forming a landmark at the entrance to the conservation area



▼ Thatch building with gable onto North Street

7.1.6 Further southwards the buildings increase in frequency, and the transition from rural to the built character begins. In terms of the pattern of development, virtually all the properties existed at the time of the 1777 map. The eastern line benefits from a number of interesting larger properties sitting on green plots close to the street with land to the rear. On the western side the gaps between the smaller cottages are few, many of which were obviously engaged in commercial activities. On neither side do the properties follow a simple frontage line. The former main road has had the effect of imposing a false tarmac edge, however, the earlier pattern can be deduced by the fact that a pavement only exists for a short distance on the western line towards the Cross. The tightly knit/back of pavement character of development here shows that the core of the settlement has been reached.

7.2 Notable Buildings - Listed and Unlisted

7.2.1 North Street contains a number of notable buildings both listed and unlisted. The eastern side of North Street contains the largest number of listed buildings with 7 buildings on the east side and 2 on the west side.

7.2.2 The listed buildings themselves display a range of types and materials. They illustrate the variety of uses that have been present in the village and the different styles and building materials from which all of the older buildings in the Conservation Area are constructed.

7.2.3 Important listed buildings in this respect are:

- ◆ Number 18/17, at the Cross - a large thatched house that is attached to a former shop. The size of the property indicates the commercial importance of the location at the cross roads. The property also displays many of the features which are present in the village – thatched and hipped roofs, chimneys on the gables and rendered walls, some of cob.

- ◆ Number 15 - House set at right angles to North Street, facing on to Blind Street, principally constructed of brick, cob and thatch, low eaves.
- ◆ Number 14 - House set immediately on the back of the pavement. Low eaves, thatched with walls constructed of brick and plastered cob.
- ◆ Number 9 - House of thatch and brick and cob walls - plastered.
- ◆ Number 8 - House of thatch and with rough cast walls. Located on back of pavement.
- ◆ Number 6/7 - Single house (once was a pair of cottages). Constructed principally from cob, on a brick plinth and thatched.
- ◆ Numbers 105 and 104 - Pair of cottages, rough cast with thatched roofs.
- ◆ Number 16 Blind Street - House at right angle to the historic route to the east, thatched with brick and cob walls. Bricked up window gives indication of previous use as a dissenting meeting house.

7.2.4 The listed buildings described above represent the older 16th, 17th and 18th century buildings in North Street which was unaffected by the major fire and therefore still retain the expression of their original form and materials. It is also typical of the street that these houses have been used for a variety of purposes reflecting the commercial importance of Bere Regis over the years.

7.2.5 However it is not just the listed buildings that are recognised for their architectural or historic interest which give North Street its character and appearance. The contribution made by unlisted buildings of note needs to be outlined. On the eastern side the 19th century additions numbers 10 and 11 constructed of rendered brick and slate follow the pattern of earlier buildings by fronting the street. On the western side towards the south only number 94 is of this later date where it adds to those that reinforce the sense of enclosure and built character of this location, before the street opens at the angled number 92 at the Cross.

In particular the following buildings are significant:

- ◆ *All the cottages which lie on the back of the pavement from number 92 to number 99 on the west side of the street contribute in some way to the character and appearance of the conservation area and many have at some time contained commercial uses.*
- ◆ *Numbers 100 to 103 also reflect in their form and position the character of North Street. Although 100 and 101 are of basic cob construction the former has been unsympathetically re-roofed in concrete tiles and has a flat roofed rear extension. However the outbuildings to the rear display attractive features including decorative red ridge tiles. Number 103 has an attached thatched workshop, which is another feature typical of the street.*
- ◆ *Other buildings in the street which make a positive contribution to its character and appearance are: numbers 3/4, and the old Post Office at number 13.*
- ◆ *The Drax Hall, which existed as a Dissenting Meeting house in the 1777 map and became a Congregational chapel before it was renovated in 1893, displays typical features of this time, including a shallow roof pitch, red brick construction, elegant sash style windows and yellow brick corbelled hood mouldings.*

7.3 Important Groups of Buildings

7.3.1 The most notable group of unlisted buildings occurs half way along the street at number 10 and 11, together with the adjoining workshop and showroom of Griffin and Son. Number 10 itself is in use as an office with a plain rendered front and slate roof, 3 casement windows at first floor and two sash windows at the ground floor with a central recessed porch. The showroom is single storey with a pitched and corrugated iron roof with plain rendered walls and plain joinery



▶ Red brick facade of Drax Hall



▶ A mixture of building orientation onto North Street

shopfront. These two buildings, together with the semi derelict farm building with decorative red ridge tiles above some beautifully coloured brick wall presents a utilitarian work space within the street which is a reminder of the more commercial character of North Street in previous generations.

7.4 Architectural Styles, Traditional Features and Materials

7.4.1 The architectural style of North Street is principally domestic with the few other buildings that currently display other styles standing out from this predominant style.

7.4.2 The style of the street is also governed to a large extent by the period in which the building was constructed. The principal listed buildings are all from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries and display a unity of style which is demonstrated in such things as the prevalence of thatch, hipped roofs (half or full), substantial chimney stacks, low overhanging eaves, casement windows (flush shutting), mixed cob and brick walls and shallow plan form with ridges parallel to the road. The one exception to this is number 15 and whilst the ridge is at right angles to North Street it is parallel to Blind Street, the street which it faces.

7.4.3 The unlisted buildings are more diverse in their style. Most of them exist on the 1777 map, and either have cob construction under hand made tile roof or are brick and rough cast faced, with slate or tile roof. The 19th century additions to North Street, whilst respecting the back of pavement siting of earlier buildings, tend to have narrower frontages and deep plan form, use sash windows (where they have not been subsequently replaced by some other type - UPVC and powder coated aluminium) and are constructed of brick and tile or brick and slate. Chimneys are still a feature of these buildings, however they tend to be more consistently located on the gable ends.



▶ Court Farm cottage on the open site of a former Manor House

8. WEST STREET

8.1 Topography, Development Pattern and Street Features

8.1.1 The analysis of West Street will take a more thematic approach than that of North Street. Because of the street's orientation (south-westerly), the buildings on the north side receive the bulk of the sunlight during the day, while those on the south side receive sunlight upon their façades only during the early part of the day, i.e. from the east.

8.1.2 The characteristics of West Street and North Street differ considerably. West Street has developed something of an urban character, albeit of a modest scale. There is a distinct change at the eastern end of the street where the open rural aspects of the eastern approaches to Bere Regis give way to the hard urban enclosure of West Street. There is a pronounced gateway effect as the Royal Oak pub and the junction

of West Street with North Street is passed. West Street is entered at the Royal Oak pub, from which point it rises to a crest in the vicinity of Butt Lane and then falls again until it leaves the Conservation Area. The street itself is imposing and follows an unusually straight line.

8.1.3 The sense of enclosure in West Street is fairly distinct. This however is not an overly dominant characteristic due to the modest height of the street frontages in relation to the width of the street, and the street's relationship with the surrounding countryside, particularly at each end. The sense of openness and the proximity to the landscape is further enhanced by the countryside scene to the east, opening to Woodbury Hill.

8.1.4 West Street is the principal street in the village and was once the main route through it. As such it collected numerous non-domestic uses (breweries, the village lock up, an early school, tithe barn etc.) in the village and evidence of these can still be seen today

along with those which remain (shops, pub etc.). Early domestic uses in the street were principally farmsteads. Later additions filled the gaps between the farmsteads only to be destroyed, along with some of the farmsteads, by the succession of fires which affected the village. The sizeable gaps that remain are a characteristic of the pattern of development in West Street. Some of these have been filled by 20th century development which has generally been set back from the road with enclosed front gardens which further interrupt the continuity of the original building line.

8.1.5 The area at the junction of West and North Street has always been known locally as the Cross. The east end of West Street clearly opens out on its northern side and the entrance to North Street is narrow. Bere was granted a royal charter for a market in 1215 and it would be normal in a medieval village to find a cross in this location and for the area to be the centre of commercial activity. The narrow entrance to North Street is typical, as entry to a market place would be controlled in the medieval period. A toll sold on the goods would have added to the coffers of the lord of the manor. In Bere the manor itself sat close at what is now Court Green. Despite present appearance there was no crossroad as the exit from the village to the east was through Blind Street.



▶ Buildings enclosing West Street display a wide variety of roof forms and materials



▶ Small lanes and trails run off West Street to the North & South



▶ Looking East the position of Bere Regis within the landscape is clearly illustrated

8.2 Notable Buildings - Listed and Unlisted

8.2.1 West Street contains a considerable number of notable buildings both listed and unlisted. The descriptions given below are not meant to be comprehensive but represent an amalgam of those considered to be notable because of the contribution they make to the street scene individually or the contribution they make to understanding the growth of the village.

8.2.2 Number 58 has a simple thatch roof above a white painted roughcast façade, punctuated by just 3 windows, irregularly placed, and a red front door set within a recessed arch. There is a further step forward on plan to Nos. 59/60; a listed building called D Day Cottage. Here, there is a subtle change in the vernacular with a decorative and sculptural thatched roof arching over 1st floor dormer windows, with modern tile hanging at 1st floor level above some fine brick walls to the ground floor storey below.

8.2.3 Looking eastwards in West Street from numbers 59/60 on the north side the junction with Butt Lane is emphasised, where No. 72, an end of terrace Grade II Listed property, turns the corner visually with a robust tapered brick buttress separating the brick façade to Butt Lane and the rendered, painted façade to West Street. There is a thatched roof on both the front and side façades, punctuated by a strong brick chimney feature. Immediately to the east is a single storey building with a slate roof, which was used as the village lock up, and a 2 storey building next door, No. 71 West Street (Woodbury Cottage), showing part end gable under a slate roof. This particular detail is included to demonstrate the diversity of form and character, unified by the use throughout of traditional materials and forms, all related in scale to the human form.

8.2.4 The Drax Arms, a 19th century public house (including an attached stable to the rear), has roughcast walls over 2 storeys, with smooth plastered quoins beneath a cropped hip tiled roof incorporating tall chimneys. There are double hung sash windows to



the 1st floor and one dormer in the roof, bay windows and main door with gabled tiled wood on brackets.

8.2.5 No. 87 West Street is a fine detached 18th century house with a double pile plan, with twin gabled roofs - parallel to the road. There is a simple plastered façade incorporating sash windows and central door feature.

8.2.6 On the south side, opposite 34 West Street, is a detached mid 18th century brick house under a thatched roof, with 3 double hung sash windows at 1st floor, and on the ground floor again one sash window and canted bay window, with a panelled centre door beneath a plain hood. The Manor Farm House, No. 35 next door, is a sombre brick house, 2 storeys, with sash windows, ledged door in classical surround with a moulded hood, all spoilt, as it were, by a modern concrete tile roof. (The brickwork to both houses is in patterned "Flemish Bond").

8.2.7 There are several more listed and unlisted buildings of considerable character, namely No. 26 The Cedars, next door to The Royal Oak (west side), with plain plastered walls and ornamental, diamond patterned, cast-iron windows (side hung casements), with elegant details incorporating an under eaves dentil course, connecting downwards to cast pilaster surrounds and cills to the upper storey windows. There is a tiled roof to the house and to the rendered boundary walls.

8.2.8 Almost opposite The Cedars is The Old Vicarage, an imposing house set well back from the road, with a "T" shaped plan, producing hipped gables to the splendid roof of blue natural slate and red terracotta hip tiles and brick chimney adorned with corbelling and string courses. At 1st floor level (and seen from the road) are 4 pane sash windows of elegant vertical proportions, set in a smooth rendered façade. At the entrance are gate piers surmounted by pyramidal copings and wooden field type gates coupled thereto. There is a fine curved brick wall attached to the gate piers and past which is seen the lush green vegetation of the garden.

8.2.9 On the north side of West Street, perched between the brush but effective façade of the General Stores and set back from the road, is Cyril Wood Court, a complex of sheltered housing in a modern idiom, fronted by a glazed hall and flanked by No. 89 West Street, a Listed Building converted and incorporated within the modern housing complex. There is an informal garden in front of the hall and together, the shop, the ruined barn and modern development, by sheer contrast, one with the other, give an input of vigour into the street scene, somehow lacking in other places within the Conservation Area overall.

8.2.10 The main architectural focus of the village comes in the form of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist. The oldest structure in the village, it contains indications of all the main medieval styles of architecture from the 11th to the 16th century and there is evidence that a church stood on the site in Saxon times. It is large and highly decorated in contrast to the relative plainness and modest scale of the village buildings. Of the many internal features the most striking is the exceptional nave roof of about 1485. This is unique for the region in its decoration and particularly in the hammer beam projections carved into full sized figures to represent the Apostles. The distinctive tower is built in three stages, externally faced in chequered ashlar and flintwork, with angled buttresses and culminating with a crenelated parapet with pinnacles. Seen through gaps in the building line it can be glimpsed from many points within the village, and is a notable landmark from views outside the village.

8.2.11 Other buildings have been identified as notable, having features which are typical or common to other buildings in the village and these are:

- ◆ 78/77 - A pair of cottages which link with the village's past and linked to a former school room and tithe barn
- ◆ 76 - An early Victorian rebuild
- ◆ 53 - A cottage dating from pre 1777 and linked to another building of note namely 52 which again is pre 1777 which displays an unusual, but later two storey porch
- ◆ 51/50 - Currently cottages, but were formerly a boot and shoe shop, again existing pre 1777.
- ◆ 49/45 - A terrace of late Victorian houses. These act as a termination of the old village and replace an older terrace of cob cottages.
- ◆ 44 West Mill
- ◆ 42 Stanbarrow House
- ◆ 38/38a - A single dwelling which existed in 1777



- ◆ Old barn conversion at the head of Manor Farm Road with origins back to pre 1777
- ◆ 31 - An altered property with origins as a blacksmiths and builders
- ◆ 30 - Recorded as a tailoring business extant in 1777
- ◆ 28 The Vicarage - late Victorian, but important, as are all the properties lining Church Lane, together with the cob wall to the Cedars in preserving the setting of the Church of St John the Baptist and views to it.

8.3 Important Groups of Buildings

8.3.1 There are a number of notable groups of buildings along West Street, which help to define the character of the Street and Bere Regis Conservation Area.

8.3.2 The properties on the north side generally have the major architectural impact and without doubt the most significant group comprises property nos. 55, 56, 57, 58, 59-60. Nos. 55, 56, 57 are of late Victorian origin in design and detail, with triple brick gables set into a slate roof, with sash windows (8 panes each sash) below, with beautifully detailed brick and stone arches.

VILLAGE APPRAISAL

8.3.3 Within the centre of West Street is a small cluster of Listed Buildings - on the north side Nos. 83, 85, 85a, The Drax Arms and No. 87, while opposite on the south side there is 34 West Street and No. 35 (Manor Farm House). No. 83 is a 2 storey end of terrace house with a brick façade and canted bay at ground floor, beneath a tiled roof with dormer. 85 and 85a represent an interesting commercial group comprising the Post Office and General Store, 2 storey with roughcast walls, with a simple thatch roof, with sash windows throughout at first floor and 20th century shop windows below.

8.3.4 At the staggered crossroads to the east end of West Street and its junction with North Street and Northbrook, there is a small cluster of Listed Buildings comprising 90 and 91 West Street to the north, The Royal Oak Inn and 26 West Street (The Cedars) to the South and on the opposing corner is 18 North Street (Apple Garth). The Royal Oak Inn is by far the most imposing and dominant building. The walls to this building are part roughcast rendering to the east side, painted brickwork to the north side and on a short return of wall adjacent to 26 West Street (The Cedars), there is smooth rendering with scribed joints. A rendered gable incorporating a chimney stack dominates the west elevation and in relation to this large scale, the 1st floor sash windows, although of substantial size, look quite diminutive. Three dimensionally, however, The Royal Oak, 90 and 91 West Street and Apple Garth at 18 North Street make a powerful, imposing and successful composition, drawing the eye to the entrance to the village from the east. There is a happy juxtaposition of roof tiled forms, rendered gables (Royal Oak), a curving tiled roof (92/93 North Street) and a powerful hipped, slated roof to 18 North Street - all unified by cream façades below roof level.

8.4 Architectural Styles, Traditional Features and Materials

8.4.1 West Street displays architectural styles which demonstrate the development of the village over a number of centuries rather than the Street having one dominant architectural style or period.

8.4.2 Buildings in West Street are predominantly two storey with the occasional frontage building of single storey, and even more occasional building with a second floor, an attic and dormers. There is a considerable variety of eaves heights along the street, although there is a tendency for the grander buildings to be towards the eastern end. Most of the buildings in West Street have fairly plain, flat facades facing on to the street, surmounted by simple pitched roofs with eaves lines parallel to the street. Variety and rhythm is provided by a range of eaves heights, roof pitches and substantial chimney stacks. There is also variety in walling and roofing materials and window styles. Architectural details include porches gabled brick with spy holes on side walls, and flat doorheads on curvilinear consoles. Hence whilst individually fairly plain, the mix and juxtaposition of buildings result in a complexity and richness.

8.4.3 The rooflines above properties 59-60 inclusive are all punctuated by brick chimneys, providing a punctuated rhythm seen in silhouette against the sky. In addition, the placement of window boxes, flower tubs and simple patches of informal, seemingly overgrown, gardens in front introduces a feeling of softness into an otherwise visually hard scene, seen at close quarters.

► Flush ridges on thatch are a common Dorset tradition



► Important landmark building on West Street



► Typical example of roof line variants



► The imposing facade of the Drax Arms



8.4.4 Taking into account the view overall at the west end of West Street, the contrast between sunlight on the north side and shadow on the south side can be seen. The vista is partially terminated by views of the countryside but there is no particular design element to achieve this ending other than the stepping forward of the final run of cottages (Nos. 45-49), with a rendered gable now seen end on.

8.4.5 Some of the traditional features have been referred to in other sections, however it is interesting to note the presence of bay windows which have been added to augment the architectural interest of some properties, as well as decorated brick eaves, gable parapets and dormer windows. It must be emphasised that the variety present in West Street derives more from gradual difference in building form rather than ornamentation, and from past alterations to meet a changing trade rather than to reflect new fashion.

8.4.6 The 20th century infill developments do little to detract from its historic character or appearance.

8.4.7 It displays all the principal building materials which are present in the village. These include:

- ◆ brick
- ◆ cob
- ◆ plaster
- ◆ render
- ◆ tile
- ◆ slate
- ◆ thatch
- ◆ clay tile

Many of the materials are used in combinations, for example, brick, cob and thatch.

Butt Lane

8.4.8 Butt Lane is a short narrow route climbing up the steep slope northwards from West Street, containing numerous dwellings and leading to a 19th century chapel which has its origins as a schoolhouse. Originally the route extended to and perhaps beyond the open field to the north to the Roman Road at Bere Down, but now terminates at the bypass. It contains traditional terraced cottages on its eastern side fronting directly onto the lane. Houses on the western side are modern and are set behind long front gardens.

8.4.9 Notable unlisted buildings in this area are:

- ◆ *The eastern side of Butt Lane, in particular numbers 62-67*
- ◆ *White and Red Rose Cottage*
- ◆ *The Congregational Church*

9. SHITTERTON

9.1 Topography, Development Pattern and Street Features

9.1.1 Whilst Shitterton is both part of the parish of Bere Regis and an integral part of the Conservation Area, it was once part of its own manorial small holding and exhibits a substantially different character and appearance to other parts of the village.

9.1.2 Shitterton is purely a residential hamlet, over the Bere stream set lower down the hill than the principal settlement, although it was originally the main thoroughfare by Dark Lane to Dorchester from West Street prior to the turnpike road of 1841. It is rural in character with none of the urban features associated with West Street and parts of North Street. Two features of the hamlet reinforce the separation from Bere Regis itself, its valley bottom location and the requirement to cross the Bere stream to enter.

9.1.3 In terms of the pattern of development found in the hamlet, this is set by predominantly two storey dwellings set either side of the narrow lane with their eaves and ridges parallel to the street. Many of the traditional buildings are either set on the back of the roadway or have small flower borders in front of them. This pattern continues, with some modern development being set well back from the road, until the western end of the settlement when it ends abruptly at a former farm yard now converted to residential use. Beyond the farmyard the influence of the bypass can be experienced both through the noise generated by the traffic and the sight of the vehicles passing by on the ridge close to the hamlet.

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9.1.4 Numerous lanes and trackways (some Saxon in origin) lead from the principal street into the surrounding agricultural land. This reinforces Shitterton's character as a distinctly agricultural part of the Conservation Area.

9.1.5 Principal features, other than the buildings themselves, are the presence of two prominent boundary walls, one cob and thatch and one cob and tile, and the presence of a brick built pillar box. Shitterton also boasts the earliest dwelling in the Conservation Area: a fine listed building, number 18 Honeycombe Cottage, with the earliest part of flint and stone dated to the 16th century and extensions in cob all below a thatched roof.

9.2 Notable buildings - Listed and unlisted

9.2.1 In all there are nine listed buildings and two listed walls within the hamlet. The buildings are primarily constructed from cob and thatch, the exceptions being Shitterton Farmhouse which is brick with a thatched roof and two of the former barns within its curtilage, which are brick and tile/slate. The barns appear to have been re-roofed at some stage. The listed walls are a prominent feature in the eastern part of the hamlet and are set on top of a narrow grass verge. They are constructed from cob and are thatched.

9.2.2 All the dwellings in Shitterton, with the possible exception of the recent barn conversions, have typically low and sweeping eaves in thatch or plain clay tiles above a brick or rendered cob wall.

9.2.3 In terms of notable unlisted buildings several are prominent in the hamlet, and include:

- ◆ *1/2 formerly the house of the head teacher of Merrydown school until 1929*
- ◆ Bridge House
- ◆ Shitterton House
- ◆ 5/6
- ◆ 7/8

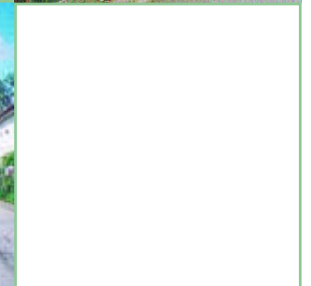
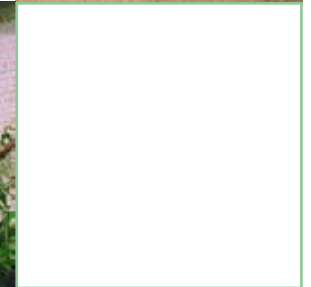
9.2.4 Due to the unity of character and form displayed by the buildings in Shitterton it is difficult to single out one particular group of buildings, which is important to its character and appearance. In this instance it is probably correct to say that they all are.

9.3 Architectural styles, traditional features and materials

9.3.1 The architectural style of Shitterton is determined by its function as a purely residential hamlet that grew from its previous history as a farming settlement, evident from some of the former dwelling



uses, as in number 10 Dairy Cottage. Therefore most of the buildings are domestic in scale, of traditional construction (brick and tile or cob and thatch), have ridges and eaves parallel to the street, are located on the back of the road way or in some cases separated from the road way by a narrow grass verge or flower border. All have some form of chimneystack and porches are a common feature, although they do vary considerably in style and construction materials.





► Rare examples of medieval back lanes

10.1.2 The small network of other lanes to the north of West Street (comprising Back Lane, Snow Hill Lane and Tower Hill Lane) lead up a steep slope to other dwellings on the outskirts of the Conservation Area. These lanes retain a rural character, principally derived from the banks, hedges and soft landscaping and their relationship with the open countryside surrounding the village. They have a number of links to the main streets and contribute significantly to the permeable street layout of the village. Taking into account their considerable historical significance, they are a major contributor to the character and legibility of the settlement.

10.2 Notable Buildings - listed and unlisted

Notable unlisted buildings in this area are:

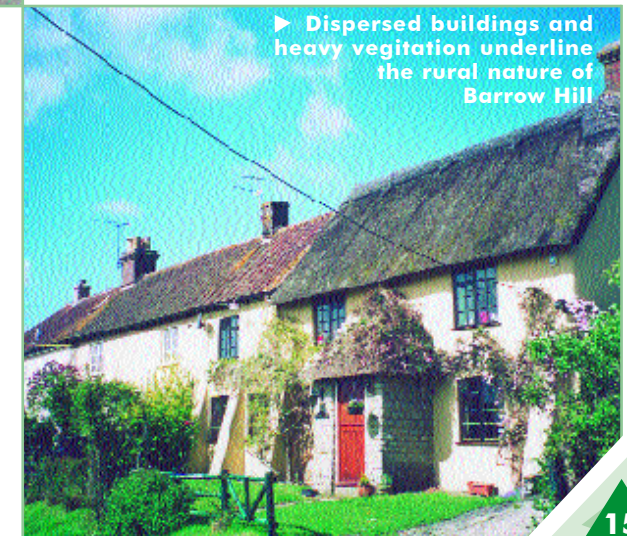
- ◆ 68/69 Tower Hill
- ◆ Barrow Hill
- ◆ Early Victorian cottages at the junction of Snow Hill and Little Drove

10. BACK LANES

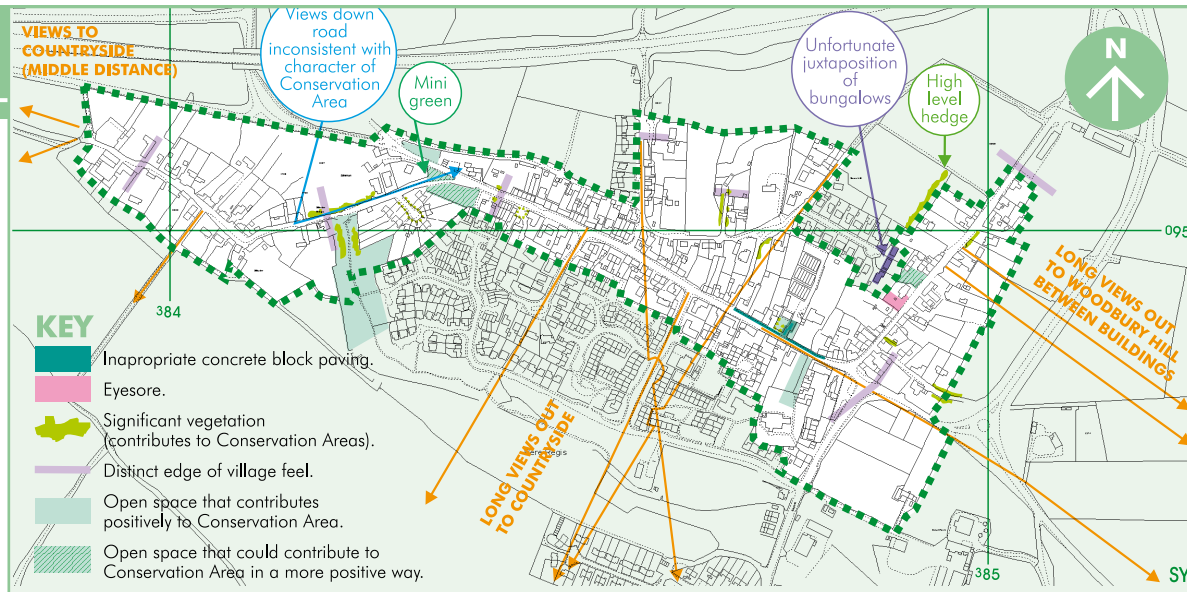
10.1 Topography, Development pattern and street features

10.1.1 A feature of Bere Regis is the continued survival of a complete and very rare example of medieval back lanes. The land to the north of West Street rises sharply and is reached and serviced by Snow Hill and Butt Lane (leading off) and, at the higher level, Back Lane (the principal means of access). It is here that a complete change of character occurs, brought about

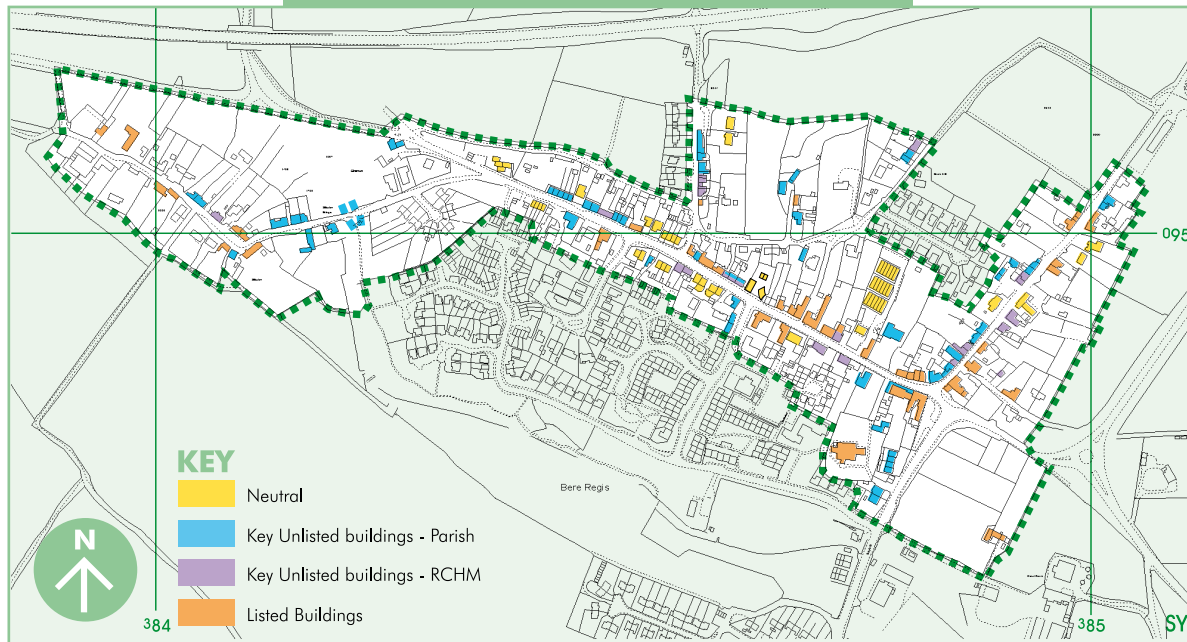
by the incidence of individual houses set in their own gardens and at varying levels, due to the steep contours of the land, with the sky punctuated by the silhouettes of high chimneys and poles carrying overhead service cables. At this high level, it is possible to look down upon the main village, with its sculpture of rooftops, with glimpses of the Church tower and the rolling landscape beyond. There is also a level of some dereliction – of overgrown sites, with redundant garden structures.



► Dispersed buildings and heavy vegetation underline the rural nature of Barrow Hill



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11. THE CHARACTER AND RELATIONSHIP OF SPACES WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA

11.1 The core of the Conservation Area contains few wide open spaces but has several featured spaces which contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the settlement:

- ◆ The area of the ancient monument at Court Green provides a wide vista from the Cross towards the Purbeck Hills. It also gives a spacious opening to the entry to the village from Woodbury Hill.
- ◆ The approach to the church and its surroundings are an important setting
- ◆ At Tower Hill and Snow Hill Lane the sense of the village edge merging into a rural space is marked
- ◆ From West Mill to Shitterton over the bridge creates an area of considerable attraction
- ◆ Views to Black Hill from the wide junction of West Street and Manor Farm Road create a feeling of ruralness in the centre of the village

11.2 These spaces are shown on the accompanying Conservation Area map and schedule of important trees and hedgerows. This will be reproduced in the final document.



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12. PREVALENT & TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

12.1 The Conservation Area comprises 52 individual listed structures, including cottages and boundary walls. There is a rich variety of traditional materials within the Bere Regis Conservation Area which together influence the overall character of the "village". The location and nature of these materials are as follows.

12.2 WALLS

- (a) **Brick** usually in **Flemish Bond**, ie solid wall construction with headers and stretchers in varying tones of dark to light to give interest. (Note the use of varying tones of colour originated from using bricks from the top of the kiln, where the temperature was highest, causing the clay to darken with a reducing darkness descending to the bottom of the kiln, with its relatively lower temperatures.)
- (b) **Painted Brickwork**. This is usually effected with limewash in varying tones of off white-cream.
- (c) **Rendering**. This is divided into two categories, ie smooth with masonry joints cut in, or rough cast both painted in colours varying from off white to cream.
- (d) **Weatherboarding**. Usually horizontal ship-lap with a dark stained finish.
- (e) **Natural Stone**. Combining flint with dressed stone.

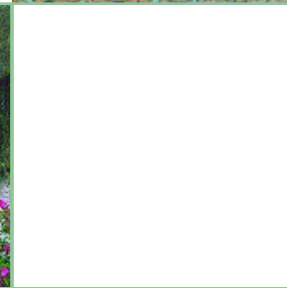
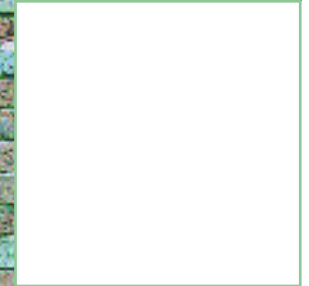
12.3 ROOFS

- (a) **Thatch** either simple or ornate. In the case of the "ornate" thatch this usually involves a ridge with a scalloped edge and pattern of sways. Additionally we see examples of bird motifs fashioned in thatch materials.
- (b) **Tiles**. The use of plain clay tiles together with Purbeck stone lacing courses at the roof eaves.
- (c) **Natural Slate**. Natural slate used in conjunction with terracotta ridge or hip tiles.



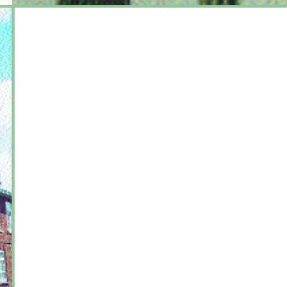
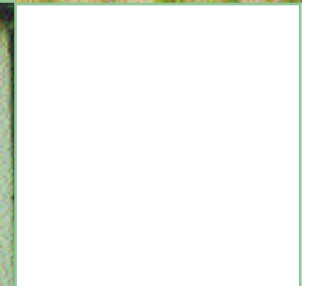
12.4 Windows

Usually timber sash or casements, the former vertically sliding and the latter side hung and hinged. (There is also one example of casement windows with cast iron glazing bars.)



12.5 Chimneys

Clay brick chimneys with their terracotta chimney pots, are one of the most significant architectural features of the Conservation Area and apart from their functional use, give variety and interest to the roof line silhouettes through the Conservation Area.



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12.6 Doors, hoods, porches and bay windows

There are a rich variety of panelled front doors, simple or complex hoods and porches to these doors.

12.7 The most interesting and significant features at ground level are the variations in the design of bay windows, either square or canted together with slated pitched roofs, sometimes linking two bays together.

12.8 The prevalent wall colours are the pale variegated orange/red tones of the locally made brick and the typically white or cream coloured paint finishes (originally lime washed) of smooth or rough cast rendered walls. Plinth courses to the rendered walls are in black painted, smooth render or red brickwork, with the occasional stone plinth.

12.9 Where free standing boundary walls are in cob, they typically stand on a brick plinth and are capped by several courses of plain clay tiles to form a miniature roof protecting the top from rainwater.

12.10 Many of the brick buildings are either rebuilding or refacings of earlier cob buildings (see Pitfield). This can be substantiated by the significant number of dwellings, which have surviving cob internal and rear walls. The historical form and association with such buildings is low-eaved, narrow range structure having relatively steeply pitched roofs (to take thatch) and large numbers having such characteristics survive today (and have been referred to in the text).

13. LOCAL DETAIL

13.1 The characteristic plainness of the village buildings derives partly from the origin of many as working farmhouses constructed in cob. Cob walling does not lend itself readily to the attachment of features or adornment. Possibly this set a precedent which the brick and rounded masonry buildings have started to follow. Apart from this, the loss of its three manor houses leaves the village with few examples of self-conscious architectural adornment. The remaining public houses, which date from the 18th century, the

medieval church and the 19th century vicarage, are among the few examples.

13.2 Another feature of the local vernacular buildings, particularly those constructed of cob, is the high proportion of solid wall to void of the window and door openings, with piers between windows being wider than the openings themselves, and windows often small.

13.3 At the eaves, which mostly follow the line of the street, simplicity of detail and the absence of fascia boards is noticeable, with all the thatched buildings and some other roofs having no rainwater gutters. In masonry walls, iron gutters are often supported on light metal brackets fixed directly to the walls, above two or three corbelled courses of brickwork. On some the middle course is dentillated, with attenuated projecting or chevroned headers.

13.4 The local tradition of frames within openings is not consistent, some being flush with the outer walls and some being set in. The result is that cill details vary, some windows relying on the timber cill integral with the frame and others on a stone sub-cill.

13.5 Heads of openings where in brickwork tend to be formed in shallow or flat arched brick voussoirs. The surviving traditional examples are mostly in tubbed and gauged brickwork. In rendered walls, the render is run to the opening head, sometimes with a moulding, rather than introducing intricate lintel dressings.

13.6 There are occasional, but significant in number, door hoods supported on console brackets with classically influenced details. Even more occasionally, there are timber pilasters to doorways. These are relatively simple details, but nevertheless add an imposing and eye-catching element to otherwise plain facades.



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14. SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE LANDSCAPE

14.1 It has been referred to numerous times in this appraisal that one of the key characteristics of Bere Regis is the way it sits in the surrounding landscape and the way in which it relates to that landscape. This can be described in the following way:

14.1.1 Presence of many vistas or view points out of the conservation area:

- ◆ *Adjacent to the Royal Oak on West Street looking east*
- ◆ *On North Street as the village is entered, again looking east*
- ◆ *Various vantage points along Snow Hill Lane, Butt Lane,*
- ◆ *Barrow Hill and Tower Hill*
- ◆ *The western end of West Street looking east*

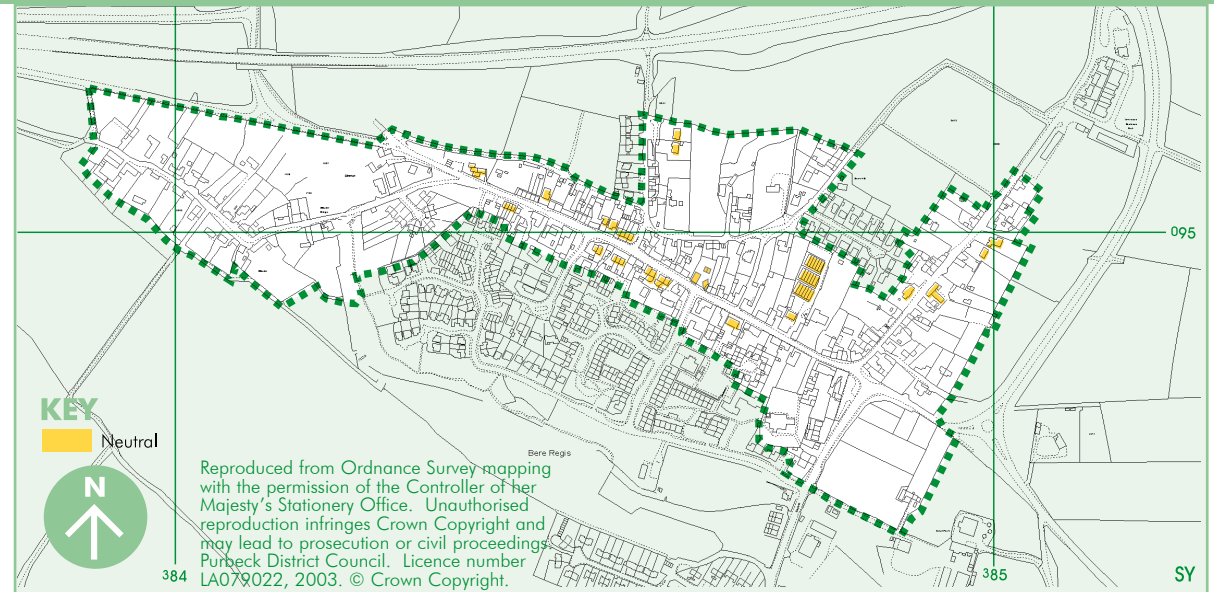
- ◆ *Various views to the south from West Street through gaps in the built form*
- ◆ *Views along the lanes leading from the street in Shitterton, which help to give the hamlet its rural character.*

14.1.2 Presence of many ancient track ways and ways into the village from the surrounding countryside - some of which had greater importance in previous times:

- ◆ *Blind Street - former principal route into the village*
- ◆ *North Street itself (and other routes from it to the east) - former principal route into the village*
- ◆ *Tracks leading from Butt Lane and Barrow Hill Lane into the surrounding countryside*
- ◆ *Dark Lane in Shitterton and others*
- ◆ *Tracks to the north of West Street which forms a continuation of Tower Hill*

14.1.3 The village when viewed from outside, especially Woodbury Hill.





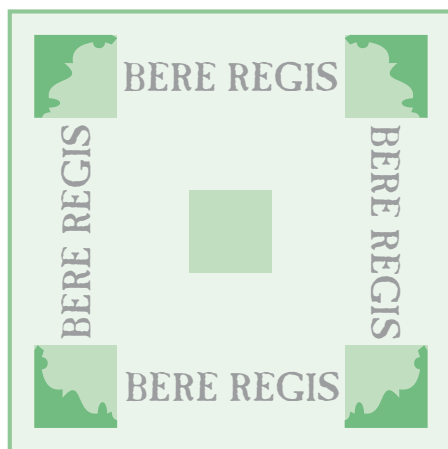
15. NEGATIVE FACTORS

- ◆ Large unenclosed featureless car park at barn conversions in Shitterton
- ◆ Unsympathetic housing development outside the Conservation Area which intrudes on its landscape setting, such as the buildings which close in around the church at Turberville Court.
- ◆ Major traffic movements on the C6 at the eastern end of the Conservation Area
- ◆ Although just outside the Conservation Area, the area round Townsend Farm and the petrol filling station
- ◆ Overhead wires, especially in the Butt Lane/Tower Hill/Snow Hill Lane area
- ◆ Bungalows on the ridge above North Street – modern feature above old traditional
- ◆ Traffic calming detail in West Street
- ◆ Featureless Royal Oak car park at the eastern entrance to the village

16. NEUTRAL FACTORS

- ◆ Fire Station site in North Street
- ◆ Modern infill development in the centre of West Street (Old Barn Cottages etc)
- ◆ Other more modern properties which do not add value to the Conservation Area, but in the concentration which they exist, do not detract from it either
- ◆ Cyril Wood Court





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