

Policy Group – 22 November 2017

Morden Conservation Area review

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to seek recommendation that the draft appraisal and boundary proposals prepared for Morden Conservation Area be approved for formal adoption.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 The periodic review of Conservation Areas is a statutory duty under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Purbeck District has twenty five Conservation Areas, twenty-two of which have been appraised and reviewed since their designation, twenty-one of these since 2008.
- 2.2 Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights the importance of ensuring that conservation area designations are justified. This is the key objective of the boundary review, and ensures fairness in the application of controls, and soundness in case of appeal against planning decisions.
- 2.3 The Council has a statutory duty to consider the impact of planning proposals upon conservation areas. This is reflected in paragraph 129 of the NPPF, which requires local planning authorities to assess the significance of heritage assets as part of the development management process. Assessment of significance is a key objective of conservation area character appraisals, and therefore provides the Council with an important part of the required evidence base in decision making.
- 2.4 A six week period of formal public consultation on the draft boundary proposals and appraisal ran between 7th November and 16th December 2016. Details were sent to the Parish Councils six weeks in advance, and the consultation was subsequently extended until 21st February 2017 to allow further time for comments. Consultation materials were made available online and at Westport House. A leaflet was posted to every property affected and officers attended a Parish meeting to explain the draft proposals and take comments. The consultation was advertised through local media and Council newsletters. Following the recommendation of the July Council meeting, a further event was held at Westport House for residents and parish representatives from East Creech and Morden on 6th September 2017. Comments and responses are summarised in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.5 Copies of the draft conservation area appraisal and the boundary proposals are contained in **Appendices 2-3**. Councillors may also view colour copies of the documents in the Members' Room at Westport House.

3. Recommendation

A report be submitted to Council recommending that the appraisal and boundary proposals prepared for the Morden Conservation Area be adopted.

4. Policy issues

4.1 How will this affect the environment, social issues and the local economy?

4.1.1 The historic environment plays an important role in providing local identity, character and interest to the District, and enhancing the experience and quality of life of people who live, work in or visit it.

4.1.2 The conservation area appraisals will be used to provide guidance on the design of new development, and works requiring planning permissions and consents. It will also be useful where such permissions and consents are not required. This will help to ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved and enhanced in line with the objectives of the NPPF, and policies in the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1, and that it continues to make a positive contribution to the character and quality of the District in general.

4.1.3 The conservation area appraisals will be a useful resource for bodies or individuals wishing to undertake improvement or enhancement works, or whose activities could be designed in such a way to achieve this.

4.2 Implications

4.2.1 Resources

Costs will be involved in placing advertisements detailing the variation of boundaries as required by statute. These costs can be met from within existing budgets.

4.2.2 Equalities

There are no equalities implications.

5. Main report

5.1 Plan based boundary proposals arising from the review of Morden Conservation Area is attached as Appendix 2. Written details are provided below together with statements of justification for the proposed changes.

5.2 Due to the dispersed historic development pattern and rural location the original boundary of the conservation area was widely drawn, including significant amounts of open agricultural land and woodland. As far as reasonably possible it is necessary and appropriate to draw a distinction between a settlement and its landscape setting in designating a conservation area. This is because conservation area controls are not applicable to agricultural and forestry operations. In Morden the inclusion of such land is often unavoidable. The spaces between dispersed component parts of the conservation area, together with woodland and historic connecting routes provide important, and to some extent defining aspects of character. Some open land originally included is nonetheless better viewed as forming the setting of the conservation area.

5.3 Changes are proposed to the conservation area boundary in order to ensure that the designation is focused on the dispersed area of historic settlement and historic routes, including the important spaces and woodland between.

5.4 Modifications will help to ensure that the designation is fit for purpose in line with its statutory definition, and paragraph 127 of the NPPF. Elements proposed for removal are:

- open agricultural land north of West Morden, Morden and the road between them;
- woodland and open land north of Whitefield Wood and east of Cold Barrow;
- an irregular piece of open land immediately southeast of Brickfield Farm; and,
- an irregular piece of land west of No. 149 Whitefield where the boundary runs through a paddock.

5.5 Elements proposed for addition are:

- The Bungalow, Quarr Hill. Requested by the Parish Council at the special meeting on 6th September 2017, and agreed on the basis of it being an outlying element of the dispersed settlement pattern not previously included, and a scarce example of a prefabricated building type.

Appendices:

- 1 - Consultation feedback**
- 2 - Proposals maps**
- 3 - Draft Morden Conservation Area Appraisal**

Background papers:

There are none.

For further information contact:

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Morden Conservation Area Review

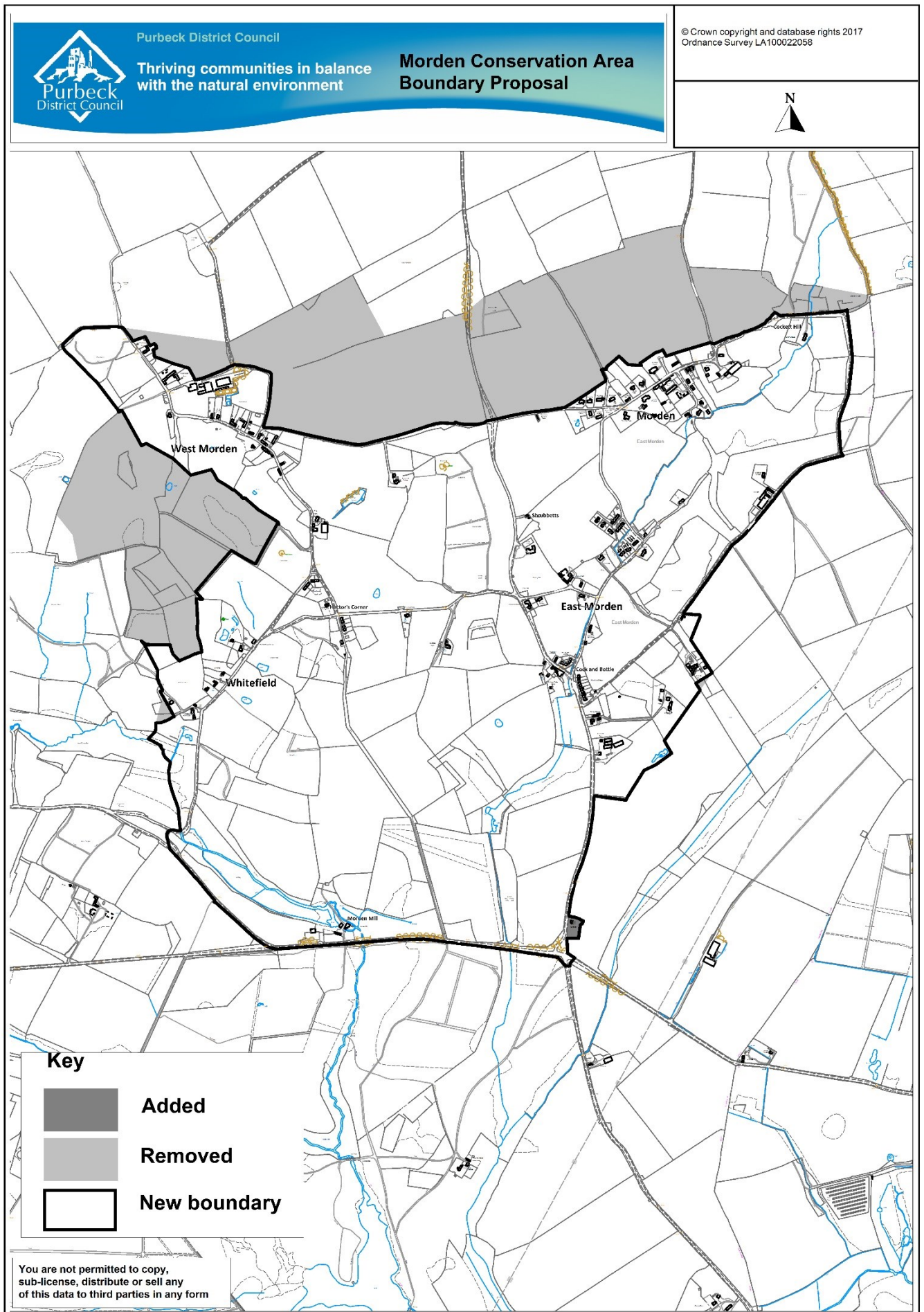
Public consultation: summary of comments and responses

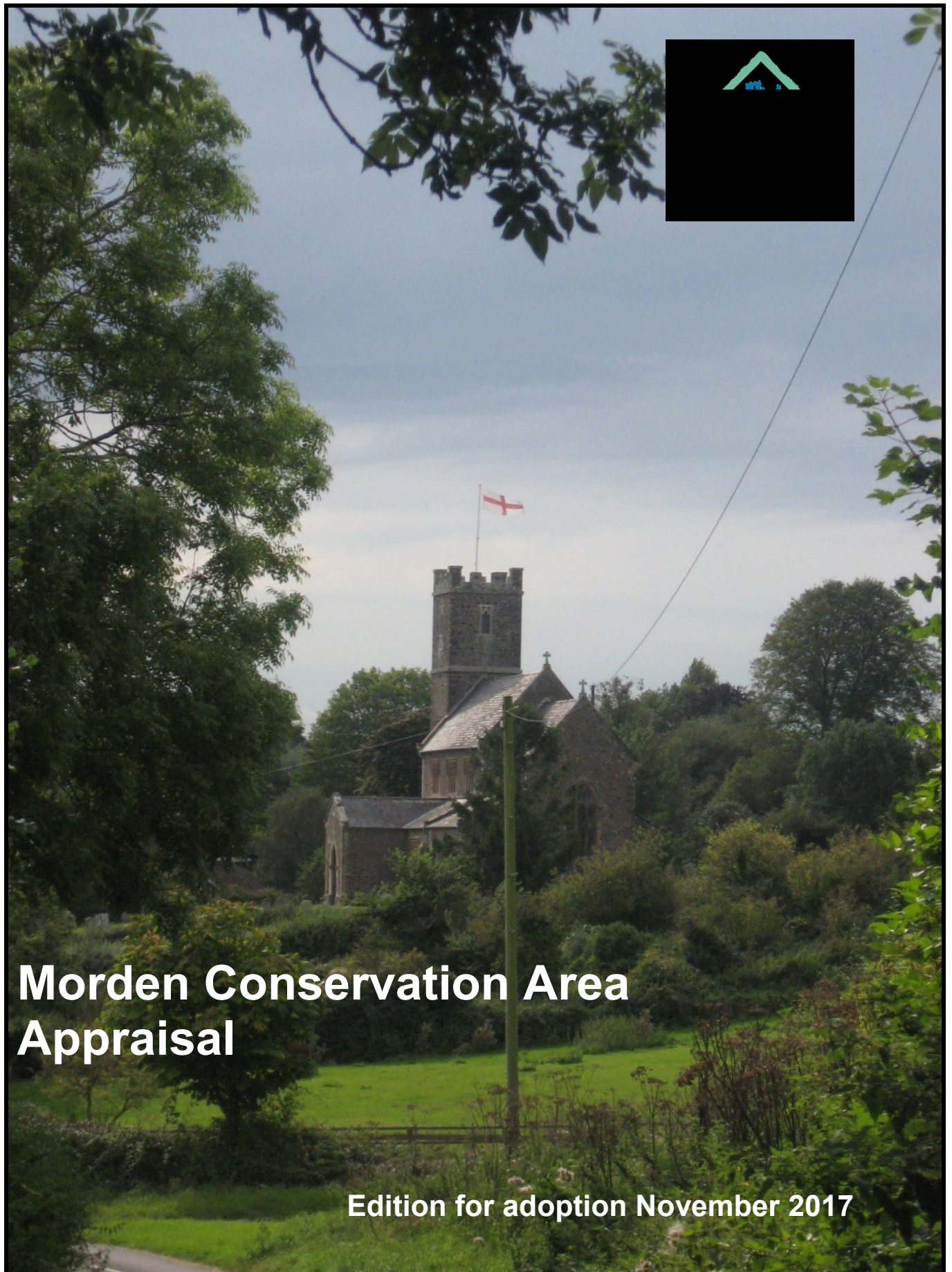
Response number and point	Comments submitted	Response/Action
1	<p>The PC would have liked to have been engaged at an earlier stage when PDC were collating their ideas, to have been provided with more information online and distributed in hard copy for residents and councillors, more evidence that changes conform to the recommended criteria, better maps, and better feedback.</p>	<p>A pre-review phase of consultation was tried in a number of past reviews including the reviews of Swanage and Wareham conservation areas. The consultations drew so little feedback that the exercise was considered wasteful of resources and added little value to the process.</p> <p>All materials produced were publically available during the consultation. It would have been very costly to print and post a draft Appraisal document to every resident.</p> <p>The size of the conservation area is such that issues of scaling arise when producing a map to fit in a leaflet. High resolution maps were however available online.</p>
1.1	<p>MPC echoes parishioners' concerns that the new boundaries are in close proximity to private gardens</p>	<p>The revised boundary runs closer to some gardens than previously, albeit in these locations it is appropriate to and possible to make a distinction between settlement and its agricultural setting.</p>
1.2	<p>Morden Mill building should be excluded as separated from the rest of the settlement.</p>	<p>The character of settlement is dispersed, with a wide scatter of buildings lying between the group of settlements covered by the designation. This means that gaps between buildings (generally formed by agricultural land and woodland) are an aspect of character, and inclusion of such land is unavoidable in drawing a</p>

		boundary. This is not the same as designating an area of open landscape which contains no buildings, or the setting of a nucleated settlement. It is worth noting that some of the 'gaps', including that between Whitefield and Morden Mill, have been made wider as a result of the loss of buildings which historically stood within them (see Appraisal).
1.3	Trees of distinction located East Morden and Cockett Hill.	Any important trees within land proposed for removal, and indeed more generally, can be protected by TPO. The tree officer will review any areas proposed for removal when the final proposal is presented.
1.4	Brimland Wood at the top of Hectors Lane is one of the ancient woods and is only partly in the area now.	No ancient woodland falls within areas proposed for removal.
1.5	Green Bungalow at Park corner is not in the area though corrugated tin and timber boarded buildings are mentioned in the appraisal document as being a locally distinctive style.	This property has never been included within the conservation area, therefore proposals did not seek to exclude it. The apparently high local value placed on this building – a scarce type of prefabricated dwelling which appears to have been constructed during the first half of the twentieth century – and argument that it forms a currently excluded element of the dispersed settlement pattern, could be agreed as a basis for inclusion. This would also require adjacent areas of woodland/agricultural land proposed for removal to be retained.
1.6	The church roof and pointing inside have been dealt with in the last couple of years, so the comment in the Appraisal is inaccurate.	This point has been clarified within the Appraisal.

<p>1.7</p>	<p>The Parish Council regrets the reduction in size that is being proposed by the consultation but accepts the changes if they are compliant with the criteria from the national framework.</p>	<p>No action required, though note point 1.5 above.</p>
<p>1.8</p>	<p>Please provide a forward narrative on the long term effect of these changes and what the likely impact of these changes will have on the Parish.</p>	<p>As no buildings are removed from the conservation area there will be no change in terms of the control of permitted development rights applicable to them. Any trees removed can be protected by TPO. All open space remains subject to strict Green Belt controls. In the event of any proposed development within the immediate setting of the conservation area the NPPF makes clear that impact on setting can be considered. The Green Belt is however a far greater hurdle in this regard. In summary there should be no discernible change directly resulting from alteration of the conservation area boundary.</p>
<p>1.9</p>	<p>In this time of austerity with cuts in so many valued services, an exercise that does not benefit anyone shouldn't be a priority.</p>	<p>This point contradicts point 1 which implies that not enough time and money was spent on the consultation exercise. The review is part of a long running project required as both a statutory duty and in fulfilment of national planning policy. Ensuring the correct designation and proper operation of conservation areas within the planning system benefits all those with an interest in the land they contain. The review has been handled in house with minimal additional costs incurred in public consultation – the only 'optional' aspect given that public consultation isn't required by law.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>The contribution made by trees and green spaces will be eroded by boundary changes The field to the North East of Morden Park corner could be lost, also one field to the North West of Whitefields. This is the thin edge of the wedge</p>	<p>In the same way as trees and green spaces form part of the setting of the current conservation area, any trees or green spaces removed will do the same. If any particular tree warrants protection this can be provided by TPO. It is important to note that protection from development is provided over the whole</p>

	reducing the area so much. Though there are other protections in place for our countryside, this is the start of the degradation of that protection.	area by presence in the Green Belt, whose specific function is to preserve openness and safeguard the countryside from encroachment (see NPPF section 9).
3	No reason why the current area should be reduced as it enhances the buffer zone surrounding villages which contain buildings of great historical value and should be preserved for future Generations to enjoy. Proposed changes a slippery slope of relaxing controls.	The settlements have a 'setting', some of which will inevitably fall outside the conservation area boundary. The NPPF allows impact of any development on the setting of a heritage asset to be taken into account within the planning process. The whole area is however protected from development by the green belt.
4	What kind of development is proposed – commercial, industrial or housing? What changes to road widths will occur? A mix of housing is required, however the village has limited existing services.	The review is unrelated to development. Conservation areas do not prevent appropriate development. The whole area remains within the green belt.
5	No reason for change if the existing works well. Greater threat of development.	There is no increased 'threat' of development. See point 4 above.





Morden Conservation Area Appraisal

Edition for adoption November 2017

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Map 2: Conservation area quality

What is a conservation area?

1. Conservation areas are defined within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as:
“areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
2. Conservation areas are designated to cover the streets and places in towns and villages which hold enough architectural and historic interest to warrant special consideration as part of the planning process. Whilst this brings some added controls over ‘permitted development’ rights the purpose of designation is not to prevent change but rather to enable effective management of its quality.
3. Morden Conservation Area was first designated by Purbeck District Council on 10th July 1990. The boundaries were altered in 2017.
4. Conservation areas are designated by local authorities as a duty under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 72 of the same Act makes it a duty for local authorities to consider the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas in exercising planning controls. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides policy guidance on the latter. At District level, policies within the Purbeck Local Plan are also relevant, and are supported by the District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.
5. Restrictions apply to the types of work you can carry out to properties within conservation areas, principal amongst which is the legal requirement to gain planning permission for carrying out ‘relevant’ demolition of unlisted buildings and structures. To find out more about restrictions see guidance on the Council’s website: www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk. Where you are considering undertaking works within a conservation area that requires planning permission, the Council will be happy to provide you with pre-application advice. A charge is made for this service. See the Council’s website for details.
6. New development should conserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas. You should use this character appraisal to assist you in formulating appropriate designs for new development, and in making sensitive alterations to existing properties.

About this appraisal and how to use it

7. This appraisal has been prepared for Morden Conservation Area. It was researched and written by Benjamin Webb MRTI IHBC during 2015-2016. It was revised prior to and following public consultation during 2017 – see below.
8. This document was formally adopted by Purbeck District Council on *****
9. In line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement a six week period of consultation was arranged. A formal public consultation on the draft boundary proposals and appraisal ran between 7th November and 16th December 2016. Details were sent to the Parish Council six weeks in advance, and the consultation was subsequently extended until 21st February 2017 to allow further time for comments. Consultation materials were made available online and at Westport House. A leaflet was posted to every property affected and officers attended a Parish meeting. The consultation was advertised through local media and in Council newsletters. Consultation responses were taken into account in preparation of the final version of this document.
10. The purpose of this appraisal is to provide an in depth analysis of the architectural and historic interest, character and appearance of the conservation area in order to assist the planning process, and to promote careful management and enhancement.
11. When you are reading or using this document it is important to note that its contents are not comprehensive, and that ample scope exists for new sources of information to enrich our understanding of the significance of the conservation area and its component parts. Whilst some aspects of the appraisal may be limited to areas that are visible from publically accessible land, visibility may itself vary seasonally, and the character of an area is not wholly dependent on public visibility. You must not therefore take failure to mention a particular element or detail within this document to mean that it is of no importance, and thus of no relevance in the Council's assessment of planning applications.

Summary of special interest

12. The conservation area boundary is designated to include the whole of the group of related historic rural settlements of Morden, East Morden, Whitefield and West Morden. The boundary necessarily incorporates large areas of open agricultural land and woodland insofar as this falls within the gaps and spaces between dispersed elements of the settlement, or in the case of woodland, provides strong edge features.
13. The purpose of the following paragraphs is to provide a brief (non-exhaustive) summary of the special interest and significance of the conservation area, which forms the basis for its designation. A more detailed analysis of its historic and architectural character and appearance will follow in subsequent sections.

Special historic interest

14. The historic layout of the conservation area is of particular interest, as the dispersed pattern of rural settlement connected by a network of lanes and tracks is a distinctive feature not seen elsewhere in the District.

Special architectural interest

15. The conservation area contains a reasonably large number of listed buildings of agricultural, industrial and domestic type. These display use of an interesting range of local materials and details which help to provide a distinctive character. Buildings include good examples of vernacular construction as well as more formal designs.

Context and setting of the conservation area

16. The conservation area is located in the north of the District and covers an area of dispersed rural settlement centred on the village of Morden and hamlets of West Morden, Whitefield and East Morden. Further named localities exist, generally reflecting the historic presence of secondary clusters of development within the overall pattern. Many of these disappeared during the second half of the twentieth century.
17. The conservation area is located within a gently undulating landscape which allows some views both into and out of it. The broader context is characterised by the presence of agricultural land, forestry and some apparently unmanaged woodland. The whole is currently encompassed within the South Dorset Green Belt.
18. Land and properties within the conservation area were historically largely the property of the Morden Estate based at Charborough. Estate ownership is still an important factor and some properties remain tenanted, though others have been sold into private hands, some as second homes.
19. Aside from the parish church, the conservation area contains a well-used pub and the village hall. These provide some focus for community life, though the pub also draws business from further afield. The village school has been closed for many years, as too has the post office in Morden. A working men's club also previously existed in Morden, and a Methodist Chapel at Whitefield. The latter has been converted to residential use and the club replaced with a house in recent years.
20. The primary importance of agriculture in the historic economy of the area is reflected in the large number of historic farmhouses – most of which no longer function as such. Milling and brickmaking were also two important activities, though both ceased during the twentieth century. Today agriculture, forestry and shooting are the predominant economic activities within the general context, though the number of active farms has decreased.

Historic background and influence

Medieval

21. According to the English Place Name Society the name 'Morden', recorded as 'Mordune' in the 1086 Domesday survey, means 'hill in marshy ground'.
22. The lower part of the tower of St. Mary's Church has been dated to the thirteenth century (see FIG. 1 below). The top of the tower and remainder of the building were constructed in the 1870s.



FIG. 1: *St. Mary's Church, Higher Street. A picturesque and well positioned building, the church is of particular interest as for being almost entirely constructed from heathstone. Little remains of the medieval church it replaced.*

23. The network of historic lanes within the conservation area is of particular interest and many of these are likely to be of ancient origin. Whilst some lanes evident in eighteenth century maps now exist only as footpaths (e.g. the lane formerly connecting Goodwin's Lane with Higher Street via Giles's Lane), others remain identifiable. Amongst these Collin's Lane (see FIG. 2 below) has the best claim of being a 'holloway' given that it is sunken along parts of its length. At least one building is shown part the way down the lane on the 1760 Estate map though this had disappeared by 1847. A cluster of seventeenth century buildings otherwise stood at and helped to define the entrance to the lane on Lower Street until the late twentieth century. No trace now remains.



FIG. 2: *Collins's Lane. The lane is a sunken track which remains a right of way. It connects Goodwin's Lane with Lower Street.*

Sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

24. References to Ridgeway Mill which formerly stood just south of Whitefield occur by 1550. A number of extant buildings within the conservation area have been identified as of sixteenth and seventeenth century origin. The rate of survival would have been higher had a wave of late 1960s-1970s demolition not claimed at least five others (see further discussion below). The earliest domestic buildings still in existence are thought to be Home Farm House in Higher Street (FIG. 3 below), West Morden Farm House and Paddock Cottage (see FIG. 21), which are each of late sixteenth century origin. Evidence for rebuilding of earlier heathstone houses in brick can be seen at Home Farmhouse, No. 60 Higher Street – a building of the seventeenth century (FIG. 3 below) – and Hill Farm Cottage, which is of unknown date.



FIG. 3: *Buildings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Left: 60 Higher Street, the heathstone end gable of which is seventeenth century. Right: Home Farm a building of sixteenth century origin likewise rebuilt in the eighteenth century.*

25. Other buildings of the seventeenth century, typically altered in the eighteenth century and later, include 43 West Morden, 79 Giles Lane, 76 Higher Street, the original portions of the Old Vicarage and associated stables (see FIG. 30), 48 West Morden, and Whitefield Farmhouse (see FIG. 11).

Eighteenth century onwards

26. Key sources for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are 1770s Estate maps showing enclosed land in West and East Morden, the 1847 tithe map and early editions of the Ordnance Survey. The tithe map provides a more legible view and hence extracts are used in this report. Comparison of the Estate map with the tithe map shows that relatively little change occurred during the years between. Again the 1900 Ordnance Survey (OS) map showed limited change.
27. Sources for the twentieth century are chiefly OS maps and the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments (RCHM) survey of historic ‘monuments’ (buildings of historic and architectural interest), accurate to 1967 but published in 1970.
28. The local scene seems to have remained relatively stable until at least 1960 (OS of this date), though the RCHM survey provides a snapshot before dramatic change. During the late 1960s and early 1970s the Estate’s demolition of numerous old cottages and other old buildings in need of repair was reported within the press; featured in a Sun article of 1967, and Dorset County Magazine article by Rodney Legg of 1972. In 1967 The Sun reported that Morden, “bearing the scars of 34 demolished or decaying cottages, is slowly dying”, and includes the Area Planning Officer’s poignant description of “the wholesale slaughter of old cottages”. In 1972 Legg reported that the Sun article had done nothing to stop the destruction, describing and documenting several further losses. The devastating impact Estate policy at this time had upon local heritage is evident looking at the RCHM inset map of Morden. This identifies at least fifteen sites of historic and architectural interest dating between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that were subsequently destroyed within the compass of the conservation area alone. Most of these were dwellings, but the list included at least two barns.
29. Given that the settlement pattern within the conservation area is made up of a number of named places and other clusters of dwellings dispersed over a wide area, further discussion of their history below deals with each in turn.

Cockett Hill

30. Cockett Hill, east of Morden village, historically contained a cluster of cottages (see FIG. 4 below), but today contains only a single dwelling of eighteenth century origin – Cherry Cottage, once a row of three (see FIG. 18). Though comparison of maps shows that the number of dwellings contracted slightly during the second half of the nineteenth century, and a further dwelling was lost during the 50 years following,

several dwellings remained here post-war and are recorded on contemporary OS maps. All but Cherry Cottage were subsequently demolished. The sites of cottages on the north side of the lane are now covered by woodland.

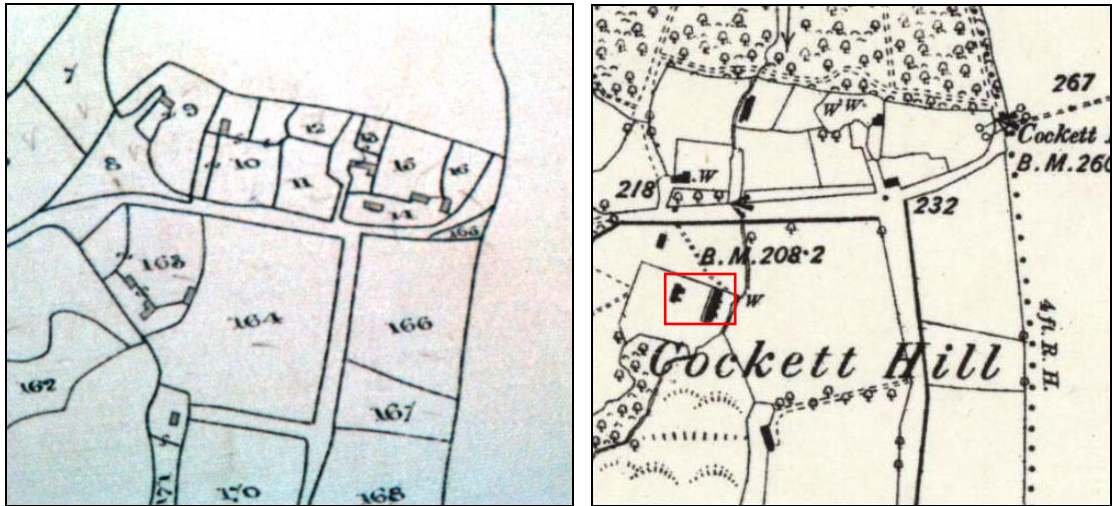


FIG. 4: Cockett Hill. Left: 1847 tithe map shows several cottages most of which remained in 1887 (right). Only Cherry Cottage (boxed) survives – see FIG. 18. Maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Morden

31. As referenced on old OS maps (see FIG. 5 below) 'Morden' is the principal part of the settlement centred on Higher Street.
32. As noted above, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw some earlier buildings rebuilt and altered. In the cases of 60 Higher Street and Home Farmhouse (FIG. 3 above) the work is evidenced in the contrasting materials used, whilst rebuilding of the parish church employed materials to match, and substantial extension of the Old Vicarage (see FIG. 30) masked the original building. No. 76 Higher Street (FIG. 29) was an addition of the eighteenth century, and Church Villa a stylistically notable contribution of the early nineteenth century.



FIG. 5: Morden. Left: 1847 tithe map showing little change since the 1770s. Right: 1900 OS. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

33. In common with other parts of the conservation area, Morden saw some loss of historic buildings and addition of unremarkable modern housing during the twentieth century. The most notable loss was of a range of 3 seventeenth century cottages recorded in the RCHM survey which once stood on the site now occupied by No. 73 Higher Street, and a cottage opposite No. 60 Higher Street.

East Morden

34. As referenced on old OS maps, 'East Morden' represents the area of dispersed settlement south west of Morden village (see FIG. 6 below).

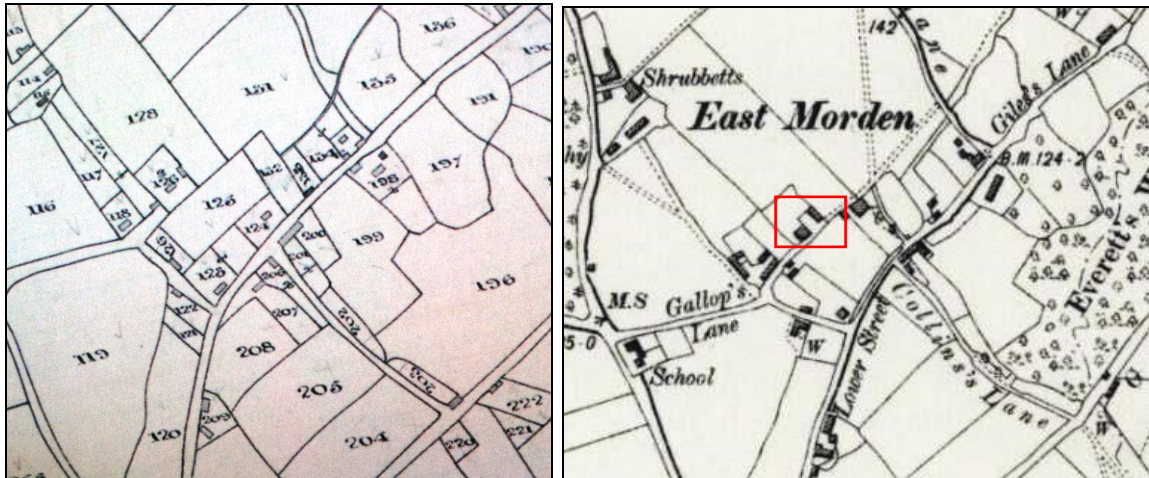
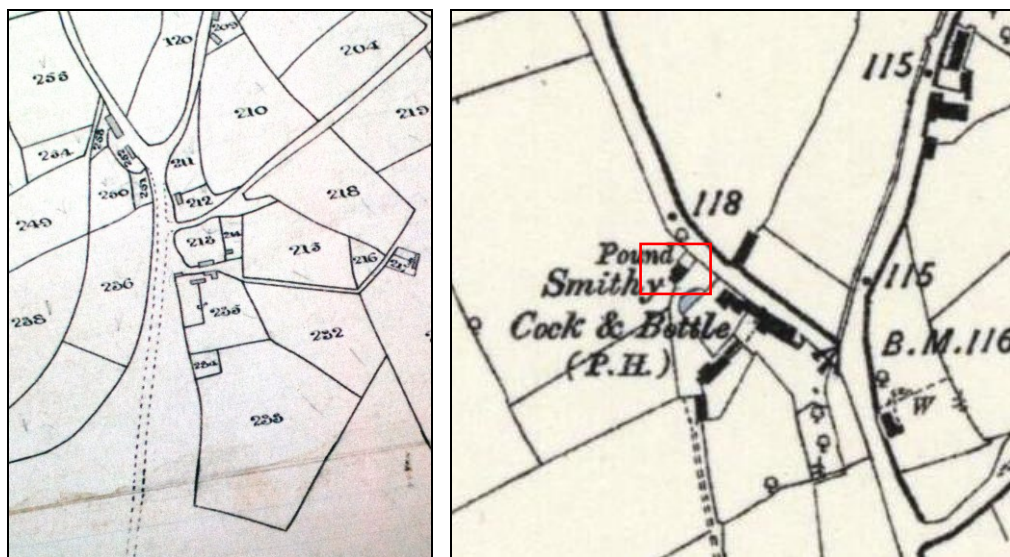


FIG. 6: East Morden. Top and bottom left: 1847 tithe map excerpts showing little change since 1760s. Top and bottom right: 1900 OS excerpts. The scene top right changed considerably during the 1970s. The red box top right indicates the site of the buildings shown in FIG. 8, and that bottom right the building shown in FIG. 7. Maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.



35. The layout of East Morden and its connection with Morden to the north east is of great historic interest. Formed by a network of named lanes and tracks this is most

clearly appreciable in early editions of the OS (see FIG. 6). This network has survived for the most part through definition of some routes has been lost through removal of enclosing features (typically hedgerows), and general disuse. As elsewhere in the conservation area the pattern of development here otherwise remained reasonably stable from the 1760s until 1960, after which significant change occurred. Having been up until this point rich in vernacular buildings with a high frequency of thatch, the area became dominated by generic modern housing.

36. Amongst extant historic buildings, Sticklands Farmhouse (see FIG. 21) was an architecturally distinguished addition of the eighteenth century. The Cock and Bottle Inn (see FIG. 17) – labelled as such on the 1900 OS – and No. 90 also originated during this period. Notable nineteenth century additions included the school and school house (see FIG. 35), old fire station and smithy (FIG. 7 below), and Merraway (originally known as Morden Villa), which bears some architectural similarity with Church Villa (see FIG. 22).



FIG. 7: *Features of interest in East Morden. Left: Cock and Bottle Inn sign. Whilst the sign itself is not particularly old, both the unusual name and image have a long history which adds interest. Right: Old smithy opposite Fire Station Cottage, now used as a store. A pound was formerly attached to the gable on which the parish notice board is now located – see FIG. 6 above for map location.*

37. The presence of brickworks in East Morden was recorded by the 1847 tithe. Two sites employing clay dug on site are shown on the 1887 OS: one on Goodwin's Lane and another off Quarr Hill (see FIG.25) – the name 'quarr' itself indicates quarrying. That on Goodwin's Lane closed by 1900, though that off Quarr Hill remained in use after this time (see FIG.25). The sites are now largely scrub covered and the ground remains uneven and scarred.

38. Loss of two buildings midway along and at the Goodwin's Lane entry to Collin's Lane occurred during the nineteenth century. Decline in the use and status of the route may have occurred after this. Further losses of historic buildings only occurred in the late twentieth century, and included the majority of those identified as being of interest by the RCHM survey. These included a seventeenth century cottage on the present site of Kingman, Harvey and Foster Cottages (a development which bears a date stone of 1974), two eighteenth century cottages on Gallops Lane, another with thatched barn to the north east of the modern site of Sellar's Farm (see FIG. 8 below), a further row of cottages adjacent to the Lower Street entry to Collin's Lane, and another dwelling opposite Orchard Cottage. Most of the sites remain empty with no trace of previous development.



FIG. 8: *Eighteenth century farmhouse and barn. Photo (right) taken from the 1970 RCHM survey – see FIG. 6 for position shown on a map. Note modern Council houses on New Road in the background. The thatched buildings were subsequently demolished though a few related buildings (left) remain in use by Sellar's Farm.*

39. Housing development since the 1960s has seen addition of clusters of generic modern houses and bungalows. Sellar's Farmhouse is also a relatively modern addition showing greater resemblance to Sticklands than the thatched cottage which previously stood on the site (FIG. 8 above). Just off the maps shown in FIG. 6, the character and setting of Brooks Farm has been significantly gentrified.

Shrubbetts

40. Until the 1970s a cluster of dwellings and structures marked 'Shrubbetts' on early OS maps existed roughly north of the current village hall (see FIG. 9 below). The 1900 OS shows a smithy, shown together with other buildings which the RCHM survey records as a seventeenth century cottage and barn, and eighteenth century cottage. None of these buildings now exists, the area now occupied by woodland and a semi-derelict tin shed.

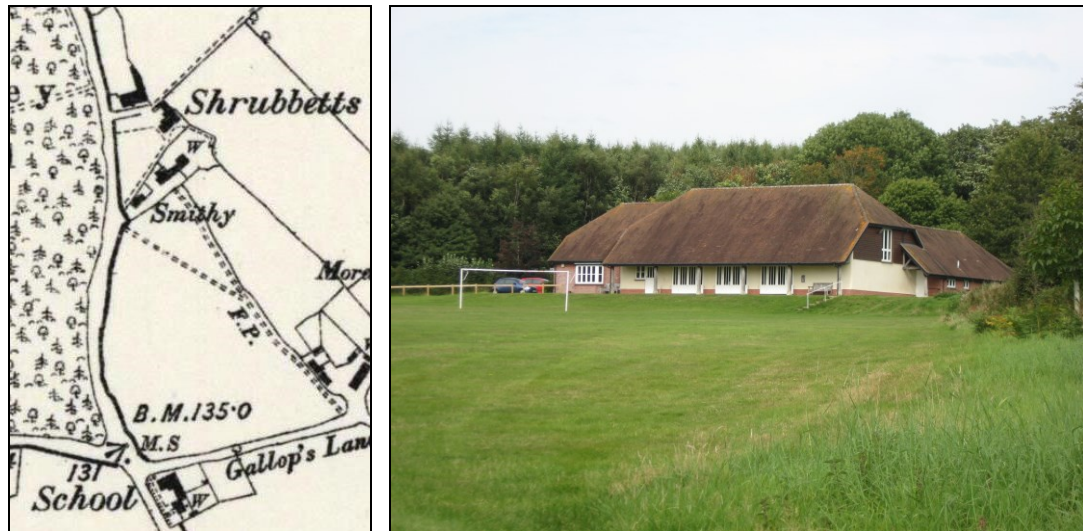


FIG. 9: Shrubbetts. Left: As shown on the 1900 OS. (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland). The site is now occupied by woodland and a tin shed. The village hall (above) stands just to the south.

Hector's Corner and Frogmoor

41. Frogmore Farm, a building of eighteenth century date, today stands at the end of a short lane running south from Lousey Wood. Several dwellings historically stood on this lane which extended south to a pair of cottages labelled 'Frogmoor' on the 1900 OS (see FIG. 10 below). To the south of Frogmoor lay former common land, now a plantation of conifers. Two cottages located on the centre section of the lane disappeared during the second half of the nineteenth century, though the pair of eighteenth century cottages at Frogmoor, and another seventeenth century dwelling at the top of the lane survived long enough to be identified by the RCHM survey.
42. The cottages at Frogmoor and the top of the lane recorded in the 1970 survey were each subsequently demolished. The lane itself remains a right of way though is no longer fully enclosed south of Frogmore Farm. Most of the field boundaries shown in FIG. 10 no longer exist. The site of the two dwellings at Frogmore is currently a pheasant pen.
43. A cluster of three dwellings was shown at Hector's Corner in 1847 (see FIG. 10). Maps of 1760 show the cottages standing amidst common land, parts of which had only recently been enclosed at the time of the 1847 tithe. It is possible that the historic group at Hector's Corner may originally have been encroachments on the common (i.e. houses built on common land – a traditional form of squatting). Two of these cottages had vanished by 1900, but the third still survives. Other dwellings now present here are of post-war date. The green lane running south survives as an enclosed route despite extensive loss of field boundaries elsewhere, and is a historic landscape feature of particular interest.



FIG. 10: *Frogmoor and Hector's Corner. Note, Hector's Corner is the junction marked with a star. Left: 1847 tithe map. Right: 1900 OS. Only three of the dwellings shown in 1847 survive. The lane running to Frogmore remains a right of way but lacks enclosure south of Frogmore Farm. Maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.*

Whitefield

44. The 1847 tithe map identifies the presence of a brick kiln at Whitefield, close to the site subsequently occupied by the Methodist chapel.
45. Whitefield Farmhouse (FIG. 11 below) is of seventeenth century origin. Nos. 152, 153 (FIG. 11 below) and 154 were originally built as three identical cottages during the eighteenth century, and was noted in the RCHM survey. Subsequent alteration, which has radically transformed No. 152 in particular, has reduced the group's uniformity.



FIG. 11: *Thatched buildings at Whitefield. No 153 and Whitefield Farmhouse. Note the contrast in ridge styles – a flush ridge is the local traditional finish.*

46. A number of nineteenth century additions include No. 155 and No. 49 which date between early and mid-century, and the Methodist Chapel (see FIG. 12 below). The latter was constructed in 1873 and is now a residential property.



FIG. 12: *The old Methodist chapel at Whitefield. Note decorative brickwork.*

Ridgeway Mill and Morden Mill

47. As noted above, Ridgeway Mill was recorded as early as 1550, and in 1887 stood amongst a cluster of cottages to the south of Whitefield (see FIG. 13 below). Post-war the scene was unchanged except for loss of the cottage east of the mill. The RCHM map recorded two surviving eighteenth cottages north and northwest of the mill, though the mill itself may have been lost by this time. Both cottages were also subsequently demolished and no traces remain of any buildings at this location.

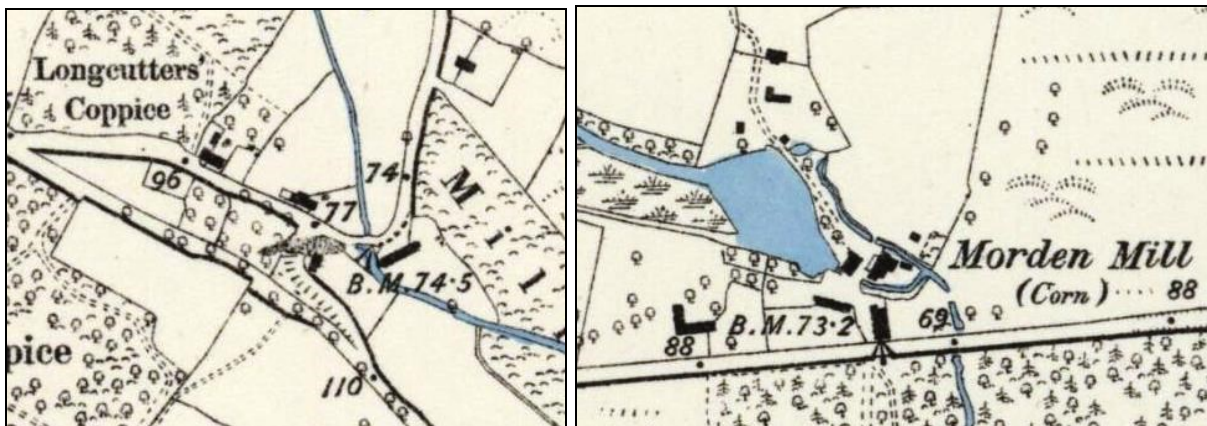


FIG. 13: *Mills. Left: Ridgeway Mill and adjacent cottages shown on the 1887 OS map. Right: Morden Mill, adjacent cottages and buildings shown on the 1887 OS map. The mill and farmhouse are pictured in FIG. 14 below.*

48. Morden Mill and the adjacent mill house (FIG. 14 below) are of eighteenth century date. The mill was originally water powered but was later adapted to be driven by machine. Much of the internal workings remain intact. Until relatively recently the mill and the adjacent mill house were occupied. Now disused and uninhabited the

buildings and their historically well-ordered context have slipped into decay. Of the other structures present in 1887 (see FIG. 13), only the stable range survives derelict.



FIG. 14: *Morden Mill and Farmhouse. Derelict listed buildings, albeit the farmhouse was inhabited until recently. Note the attached timber framed and clad outbuilding – a common feature of Morden Estate properties around the conservation area. Maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.*

West Morden

49. Buildings in West Morden which originated during the eighteenth century include No. 36 ('Wayside' – FIG. 21), the large outbuilding at West Morden Farmhouse, No. 45, and King's Corner Farmhouse, though most of the latter is of nineteenth century date.
50. Comparing maps of the area between 1847 and 1900 (FIG. 15 below) there was some contraction in the number of dwellings, four cottages disappearing from the west side of the hamlet: one south of No. 43, one west of No. 36 and a couple north of West Morden Farm. Other notable changes included the construction of farm buildings at King's Corner Farm and opposite West Morden Farm.



FIG. 15: *West Morden. Left: 1847 tithe map showing little change since 1760s. Right: 1900 OS. Maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.*

51. Absence of the cottage opposite No. 43 from the RCHM survey plan shows that it must have disappeared in the period after 1948, however aside from this there appears to have been little significant change until the late 1960s. Of the other buildings highlighted in the RCHM survey, a thatched seventeenth century cottage on the site of No. 44 may survive at least in part within the current structure, whilst eighteenth century cottages opposite Ernle Farmhouse and West Morden Farmhouse, and an eighteenth century barn between Paddock Cottage and No. 40 were demolished in the late 1960s-1970s. In addition to these losses, nineteenth century buildings attached to the main barn at King's Corner Farm were also demolished, as too a barn west of West Morden Farm.
52. Other change of note included replacement of nineteenth century buildings to the south of West Morden Farm with an extensive collection of modern agricultural structures, whilst remnants of old buildings stand amongst the new at Ernle Farm. Ernle farmhouse itself evidently underwent significant alteration at some point in the twentieth century, and whilst the front elevation presents a modern appearance older openings are evident in the gable. As was generally the case across the conservation area, significant loss of field boundaries also took place during the second half of the twentieth century.

Archaeological potential

53. The conservation area contains a single scheduled ancient monument holding significant archaeological importance – the beacon mound on Beacon Hill. This is a mound composed of clay, marl and turf, reaching 18m in diameter and 1.5m in height, constructed to support a signal beacon. The beacon itself is recorded on Isaac Taylor's map of 1773.
54. Elsewhere the cleared sites of buildings demolished during the second half of the twentieth century are likely to hold at least some archaeological potential.

Spatial character and built form

Layout

55. As an area of dispersed or diffused rural settlement, the interconnection of the various components of the conservation area by lanes and tracks is an important aspect of its character. The principal settlements at Morden, West Morden, Whitefield and East Morden remain directly and closely connected to one another, such that it is possible to take a more or less 'circular' route between them. A pattern of secondary connecting historic routes – footpaths and tracks – provide further linkages.
56. Within the network of lanes junctions are necessarily frequent features. Some of these, such as Hector's Corner and Firestation Corner, are specifically named. The broad junction at the north end of Whitefield is shown in FIG. 16 below.
57. In contrast to other elements of the conservation area, Morden has a clearly identifiable 'village street', which is given a sense of focus by the parish church and war memorial. Like Morden, West Morden and Whitefield are each largely defined by the linear arrangement of development, though a loop in the road at West Morden creates some elaboration to the layout. Settlement in East Morden is far less cohesive in character and the historic pattern of lanes and connecting routes more complex (see history above). Here two clusters of largely modern development occur amidst what is otherwise a general scatter.



FIG. 16. *Junction. Heading away from Whitefield the road splits left to West Morden, right to East Morden, the routes forming two sides of a triangular piece of former common land. Continuing right, Hector's Corner is located at the crossroad whose northern branch forms the third side of the triangle.*

Density

58. Building density varies on a localised basis within the overall pattern of widely dispersed settlement. The largest concentrations of buildings generally correspond with the main village and hamlet ‘centres’ at Morden and West Morden. Distinct building clusters and scatters of varying size characterise the pattern elsewhere, with various isolated dwellings (generally former or extant farmhouses) completing the pattern.
59. A continuous developed frontage of attached buildings currently occurs only opposite the parish church in Morden, and at the Cock and Bottle in East Morden (see FIG. 17 below). Further development of this type historically existed at the Lower Street entry to Collins’s Lane (see FIG. 6). Elsewhere buildings are generally separated from their neighbours by appreciable spaces of various size and form.
60. The position of buildings within plots varies. Pavement edge development is generally infrequent, but aside from the specific localities noted above, is also a sporadic feature in West Morden. The majority of buildings stand within distinct enclosed plots of varying size, appearing most spacious at Whitefield (see for example FIGs. 11 and 26).

FIG. 17: *East Morden building frontage. This is one of only two continuously developed frontages in the conservation area. Variation in building form, orientation and height here provides visual interest.*



Height and massing

61. Buildings do not generally exceed two storeys, though overall height varies with floor to ceiling height, which is itself linked to style and historic status. The high imposing forms of Sticklands Farmhouse (see FIG. 21), West Morden Farmhouse and later elements of the Old Rectory lie at the upper end of the social and stylistic scale, contrasting with the more modest proportions and unassuming appearance of the majority of contemporary workers’ dwellings. Some older vernacular houses are

better considered as being one and half storeys, the upper rooms being partly accommodated within the roof space.

62. Single storey bungalows are an intrusive twentieth century introduction, whose suburban character often appears at odds with the traditional rural context. Substantial single storey forms are otherwise typically associated with former agricultural uses.

Building form and orientation

63. Amongst historic buildings, simple linear plan and building forms are generally most common. These gain modest depth in those cases where rear catslide roofs covering rear service accommodation are a feature of the design. Similarity in form is seen between roughly contemporary historic buildings though the finer details don't always match (see FIG. 18 below). The former is likely to reflect similarity in the requirements the buildings fulfilled their construction by the same landowner, and the latter, absence of direction by an architect.



FIG. 18: *Simple rows. Typical two storey rows of brick cottages; simple in form, appearance and detailing. Left: Nos. 46 and 47 West Morden. Right: Nos. 103-105 (Cherry Cottage) Cockett Hill.*

64. The orientation of buildings relative to the street again varies, adding visual interest and variety where differences occur in close proximity (for examples see FIGs. 17 and 22). Historic dwellings standing in isolation or scattered amongst the fields typically adopt an independent orientation, though it is noted that a south facing aspect is favoured by a number of such dwellings in the central part of the conservation area. Elsewhere, though it is most common for buildings to be positioned parallel to and facing the street, many exceptions occur. These include No. 48 West Morden and a number of buildings adjacent to the Cock and Bottle where a perpendicular orientation occurs, and King's Corner Farm where the house backs directly onto the road.

65. Single storey timber framed and clad structures, generally lean-to forms characterised by their use of vertical boarding and tiled roofs occur as historic additions to several properties in the conservation area (e.g. Morden Mill Farmhouse, No. 47 West Morden etc). These visually subservient structures generally complement the linear building forms to which they have been added.

Edges and enclosure

66. Brick boundary walls frequently provide street edge enclosure to plots in West Morden. These are also an important feature along Higher Street in Morden, where the heathstone churchyard wall adds variety. Elsewhere, and in areas of lesser density, enclosure is more often provided by hedging, the most sensitive of which makes use of native species.
67. Hedgerows play an important role in defining field boundaries along lane edges, and make a particularly notable contribution to character where narrow lanes are slightly sunken below the level of adjacent land. Along parts of New Lane and Gallop's Lane this provides a heavily enclosed feel to the road (see FIG. 19 below).
68. Within fields themselves a few notable hedges exist, such as that running between Shrubbetts and New Lane. Compared to the boundaries shown on old maps however the number of hedges appears to have been substantially reduced, and there are surprisingly few hedgerow trees. There is no evidence of traditional hedgerow management anywhere in the conservation area, and this has resulted in progressive thinning and generally poor condition particularly where also heavily flailed (see FIG. 19 below). Continuing to treat hedges this way may lead to their eventual loss.

FIG. 19: *Hedges. Below: fragments of a hedge at Whitefield. Some field boundaries are in a similar condition. Right: hedges contribute to the heavily enclosed feel of Gallop's Lane.*



69. Gates are typically used to close field accesses. The use of particular design of iron estate gate, numerous examples of which can be seen around the conservation area (see FIG. 20 below), is a distinctive local feature. The condition of these gates varies, many remaining in use, others overgrown. Most would benefit from a protective coat of paint.



FIG. 20: *Gates. Left: the entrance gateway to the parish church. Note the lanterns either side. Right: a typical estate gate. Numerous examples of this design can be seen around the conservation area.*

Building style, materials and details

Architectural style

70. The simplest and oldest vernacular architecture – that executed with the cheapest immediately available materials according to informal local tradition – is generally represented by use of cob, thatch and varying amounts of brickwork. Good groups exist in West Morden and Whitefield, though as mentioned elsewhere, frequency was much reduced across the conservation area by demolitions during the 1960s and 1970s. Historic variation in status may be suggested by the survival of substantial heathstone remnants of early buildings at No. 60 Higher Street (FIG. 2) and Home Farm, though in both cases later rebuilding has obscured the evidence. Paddock Cottage (FIG. 21 below) otherwise represents an interesting case mixing both vernacular and more formal architectural details.
71. Solid roofed brick cottages of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries appear more orderly in composition but generally ‘plain’ in appearance. Detailing is simple, and typified by segmented arches over openings, but is not consistent between buildings, indicating continued absence of formal design. Such buildings represent a later phase of the vernacular. A sense of formal ‘style’ is infrequent, the best examples being Stickland’s Farmhouse (FIG. 21 below), a building of clearly high status, and remodelled elements of the Old Vicarage (FIG. 30). Nos. 149 (see FIG. 26) and 155 Whitefield also provide interesting examples of simple styling applied at a more modest scale.



FIG. 21: *Architectural variation. Left: Stickland’s Farmhouse, the original part of which features a bold symmetrical frontage with high quality brickwork and detailing. Right: Paddock Cottage and No. 36 West Morden (‘Wayside’), two vernacular structures showing possible variation in historic status.*

72. The conservation area contains two interesting examples of Regency design represented by Church Villa and Merraway, the latter originally named Morden Villa (see FIG. 22 below). Church Villa has a particularly distinctive appearance given its unusual chimney stack design, whilst both buildings feature a range of stylised components.



FIG. 22: *Church Villa. This early nineteenth century building has an ornate Regency design. The chimney stacks are a particularly notable feature.*

73. Standard bungalow and house designs of the late twentieth century form a number of clusters within the conservation area, most noticeably in East Morden and between Whitefield and West Morden. The designs are generic, relating poorly to their contexts and making no obvious contribution to local distinctiveness. These clusters disrupt the continuity of historic character across the conservation area.

Walls

74. The geological character of the conservation area and the immediate vicinity is mixed, incorporating chalk, and overlying clays and sands. Old Ordnance Survey maps show that a range of raw materials were quarried on a small scale. Sand, gravel, stone, chalk and clay pits are shown. These materials contribute in varying degrees to the character of historic local construction.

Heathstone

75. Heathstone (see FIG. 23 below), also known locally as ‘Lytchett Matravers Sandstone’, is an iron-cemented sandstone of distinctive orange colour. Geologically speaking, the material derives from the Reading and London Beds, each of which is exposed in the area, or exists as a redeposited component within later sands and clays. Heathstone is the principal material used in construction of the parish church

where it lends the building a striking appearance. Stonework here is clearly a product of purposeful quarrying as opposed to opportunistic use which is more characteristic of earlier periods. Heathstone does not otherwise feature as a principal building material around the conservation area, however it was clearly a component of early buildings for which evidence exists at the later remodelled 60 Higher Street (FIG. 2). Here original elements are constructed from heathstone, however it is hard to judge to what extent this reflects the original construction of the building as a whole.



FIG. 23: *Heathstone. Blocks of heathstone seen at the parish church. This detail shows failure of poor quality pointing, the raised and smeared appearance of which has greatly disfigured the appearance of the building and may have accelerated decay of the stonework.*

Cob

76. The local availability of clay rich soils and chalk provided favourable conditions for construction in cob (earth). As such cob forms an important component of the historic vernacular, and as is common in the broader context, it is used in conjunction with thatch. The frequency of cob buildings within the conservation area was much reduced by demolitions of the 1960s and 70s. Cob buildings retaining their original rendered appearance are now scarce within the conservation area, though include No. 76 Higher Street (see FIG. 29) and Nos. 153 and 154 Whitefield (see FIG. 11). Brick patching, and sometimes encasement of cob was common historically. Several of the demolished buildings recorded in the RCHM survey were described as patched. Cob with brick is still seen at Nos. 36 and 48 West Morden (FIG. 24 below).

FIG. 24: *No. 48 West Morden. Over time brick patching or facing was often added to cob structures, as seen in the example. The thatch on this property has been renewed, the relatively thin coat accentuating the dormers. With successive recoating using wheat straw dormers in roofs like this traditionally gained a flush appearance.*



Brick

77. As with cob construction, the extraction of clay and manufacture of brick was often conducted close to the site of use, and so was of temporary duration. At a later stage larger scale industrialised production commenced. Maps show that clay was historically extracted for brickmaking in both East Morden and at Whitefield. Whilst activity close to the site of the later chapel had ceased by around the middle of the nineteenth century, in East Morden two kilns with related clay pits are shown on late nineteenth and turn of the century maps and labelled 'Morden Brick Yard' (see FIG.25 below). The industry continues to be recalled locally in the name 'Brickfield Farm'.

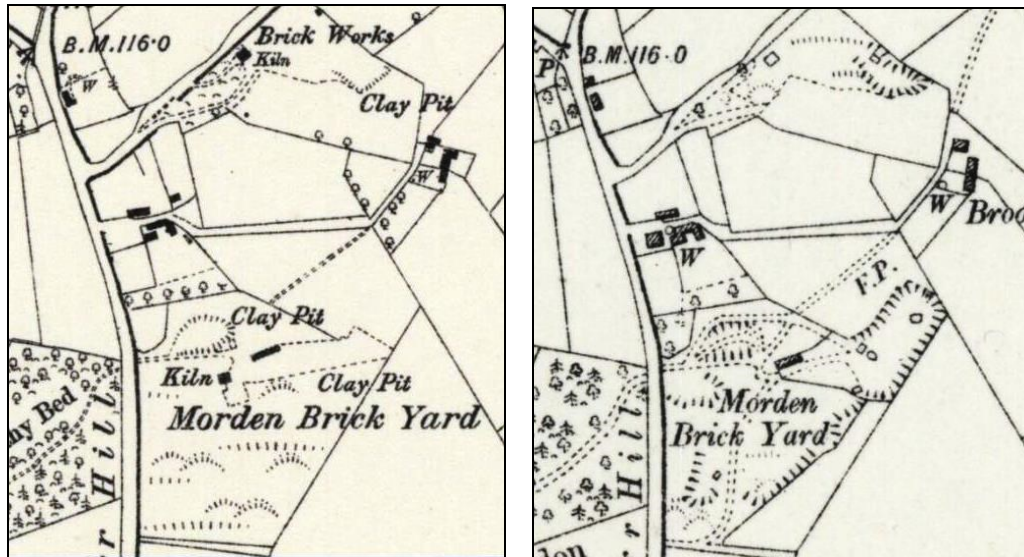


FIG. 25: Brick making. Two brick works are shown in East Morden on the 1887 OS (left), with kilns and clay pits. By 1900 (right) the site on Goodwin's Lane had ceased operation. Maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

78. Clay extracted at East Morden and Whitefield was of two types – Reading Clay at Whitefield and London Clay at East Morden. Old bricks within the area are typically shades of orange, except where burned for decorative effect (discussed below). Use of white brick at No. 149 Whitefield is wholly exceptional (see FIG. 26 below).



FIG. 26: No. 149 Whitefield. Use of white brick in this small house of formal design is entirely exceptional, though in terms of general design the frontage is similar to that No. 155 Whitefield.

79. Brick finds use in all types of historic building within the conservation area, and currently makes the strongest visual contribution to character. Some increase in relative frequency however results from the disproportionately heavy loss of cob buildings during the 1960s and 70s.
80. Header bond used at Stickland's Farmhouse is a rarity and creates a distinctive appearance (see FIG. 27). Use here is a sign of the historic status of the building which otherwise adopts a formal architectural style. The design of No.149 Whitefield is again formal in character (see FIG. 26 below).
81. Elsewhere old brickwork frequently employs decorative use of 'flared' headers within Flemish, Flemish garden and English wall bonds (see FIG. 27 below). This generally involves use of blueish brick alongside red stretchers to provide colour contrast. The result is a chequered pattern in Flemish bonds, and stripes in English. In the case of the old chapel at Whitefield, more elaborate and consciously stylistic patterns (termed 'diaperwork') are formed. Examples of basic patterning are seen in both domestic and agricultural buildings around the conservation area, suggesting that this was characteristic of local construction over a reasonably long time period. This lends interest and distinctiveness absent from modern brickwork.



FIG. 27: Brickwork. Top left: English bond at King's Corner Farmhouse with striped effect created by use of flared headers. Note segmented arch Top right: header bond at Stckland's Farmhouse. Note gauged brick arch with keystone. Bottom: 49 West Morden, with chequer pattern created through use of flared headers (see also FIG. 21).

Render

82. As noted above, render provides the typical finish for cob. Render is otherwise provides a formal and stylistic finish to several other buildings – Church Villa, Merraway and the Old Vicarage (see FIG. 30).

Timber boarding

83. Vertical timber board incorporating battens laid over the joints is frequently seen used as a cladding material for attached timber framed outbuildings or sheds (see FIG. 28 below). The board is typically black in finish, reflecting the traditional use of pitch as timber preservative. In recent years some of these outbuildings have been replaced by more permanent extensions which have been clad in the same manner (see for example No. 43 West Morden). Both the use of the board and context of its use clearly reflect past practice on the estate, and make a small but significant contribution to local distinctiveness.
84. Horizontal timber boarding is not a frequent feature in the historic context, though it is used to clad one timber framed elevation of the agricultural building adjacent to West Morden Farmhouse, and was similarly a feature of the eighteenth century barn that once stood on the site adjacent to Paddock Cottage. Rodney Legg's 1970 Dorset Magazine article features a photograph of this building prior to its demolition. Timber framed structures of this type are generally unusual in the local context. Boarding on the end gable of the Cock and Bottle is a questionable recent addition, as too that on the reconstructed outbuilding adjacent to Stickland's Farmhouse.



FIG. 28: *Timber boarding and corrugated iron. Left: shed at 47 West Morden featuring the distinctive use of vertical timber boarding. Corrugated iron covers the roof. The latter is frequently seen around the conservation area as a partial or full cladding as in the semi-derelict structure located at Shrubets (right).*

Corrugated iron

85. Corrugated iron sheds and corrugated iron roofed timber structures are a frequent feature around the conservation area, both in an agricultural and domestic context.

The group includes one corrugated iron house – The Bugalow adjacent to Morden Park Corner – an increasingly scarce prefabricated housing form of which there are a few examples around the District. The material was particularly popular from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth centuries. Though corrugated iron structures are often in a poor, sometimes derelict condition (see FIG. 28 above), the material nonetheless makes a noticeable contribution to the rural scene.

Roofs

86. Roof forms show some interesting variation (for examples see FIG. 29) which is sometimes, though not exclusively, related to the materials used as covering. This lends significant visual character to the street scene. Buildings with asymmetrical pitched roofs are unusually frequent, these commonly equipped with a rear catslide roof. The latter can be seen on the original part of the Old Vicarage in Morden (see FIG. 30), at Brickfield Farm, Church Cottage and No. 165 (see FIG. 29).



FIG. 29: Varied roof forms. Top left: Pitched roof with rear catslide at No. 165. Top right: half hipped thatch roof of No. 76 Higher Street. The slate roof of No. 74 adjacent appears to have replaced a roof similar to that at No. 76. Right: 'M' shaped roof at No. 69 Higher Street.

87. No single roofing material is currently predominant within the conservation area, though not all make an equal contribution to local distinctiveness. The variety of coverings is discussed further below.

88. Amongst historic solid roofed buildings cast iron rainwater goods are frequently mounted on rise and fall brackets.

Thatch

89. Thatch forms a key component of the historic local vernacular, and it is typically seen used in conjunction with cob (including where the latter has been brick-faced). Once common, the frequency of thatched buildings was drastically reduced by the wave of demolitions which occurred during the 1960s and 1970. As recorded in the 1970 RCHM survey, thatched buildings previously included those in both domestic and agricultural use, one of the latter pictured in FIG. 8. At least some extant solid roofed buildings may originally have carried thatch. This seems likely to be the case at No. 74 Higher Street where the roof form has been modified (see FIG. 30 above). Good groups of thatched buildings continue to survive in Whitefield and West Morden, though elsewhere thatch is now more sporadic.
90. With only one exception all thatched buildings in the conservation area carry flush ridges. This is typical of the local traditional style, whereas the ornamental block ridge seen at Whitefield Farmhouse is a more modern introduction in the local context (see FIG. 11). Use of block ridges undermines local distinctiveness.

Slate

91. Slate is most typically a feature of nineteenth century buildings within the conservation area, reflecting in part the period in which distribution from North Wales was facilitated by growth of the railways. The best examples of slate roofed buildings are the parish church (FIG. 1) and old school (FIG. 35). In some cases slate may have replaced earlier roof coverings or superseded them when modifications were undertaken. This was the case for example at Home Farm in Higher Street, and is likely to have also been the case at the Old Vicarage (FIG. 30 below) and No. 74 Higher Street (FIG. 29 above). The Old Vicarage has recently had its attractive covering of distinctively coloured heather blue Penryhn slate renewed.



FIG. 30: *The Old Vicarage, Higher Street. The roof of this building has recently been re-covered with Welsh slate. The original part of the property is to the rear and can be identified by the steeply pitched roof with catslide – similar to others within the conservation area. Clay tiles are likely to have covered the oldest part of the building originally, though slate would have suited the lower pitches used when enlarged during the nineteenth century.*

Plain clay tiles

92. Plain clay tiles are a feature of some late eighteenth and early nineteenth century solid roofed buildings. Plain clay tiles used in combination with a Purbeck stone tile eaves course can be at West Morden Farmhouse, Stickland's Farmhouse and Morden Mill Farmhouse. This finish appears to have been popular in many parts of the District during the late eighteenth century and is most typically found on larger houses constructed at this time. The function of the stone tiles appears to have been to help shed water from the eaves.

Double Roman tiles

93. Large format clay double Roman tiles are a frequent feature around the conservation area, and most particularly its eastern half around Morden and East Morden. The tiles appear to have found common use on the estate generally during the past, and frequency of use is indeed greater than seen elsewhere in the District. As such the tiles make an important contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The same is not true of concrete interlocking tiles seen in some late twentieth century development.



FIG. 31: *Double Roman tiles. As seen on the roofs of Nos. 64-67 Higher Street (left), a building at Hill Farm (top right) and the Old Post Office Higher Street (bottom right).*

94. Double Roman tiles were historically manufactured at Bridgwater in Somerset and distributed around the broader region by rail during the nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries. As with slate, the context of use in the conservation area is therefore in relation to buildings constructed or re-roofed during the same period.

95. Around the District generally double Roman tiles are typically found on agricultural and other functional structures, and use in this context is also seen in the conservation area. Notable examples include the old forge (see FIG. 7) and fire station in East Morden, each of which carries specially shaped ridge tiles. Single storey former agricultural structures on Higher Street are also of note for the clear glazed tiles they incorporate to admit light, and larger agricultural structures including those at Sellar's Farm, (FIG. 8), West Morden Farm, Hill Farm and to the rear of No. 60 Higher Street also carry double Roman tiles.
96. More unusually double Roman tiles find historic use in a domestic context around the conservation area. This is most notably seen along Higher Street where Nos. 64-67 and the Old Post Office (FIG. 31 above) are fully roofed by the tiles. At the latter an ornamental crested ridge tile is also used. Past domestic use elsewhere is more restrained including use to roof the rear wing of No. 90 Gallop's Lane and a side extension of Orchard Cottage.

Chimneys

97. Chimneys are an important feature of traditional domestic architecture around the conservation area. The large external heathstone stack of No. 60 Higher Street (see FIG. 2) is a relic of an earlier building. Also of considerable size is the stack of Home Farmhouse (see FIG. 2). Visually elaborate stack designs can be seen as stylistic features of Church Villa, Merraway and at the old school house (see FIGs. 22 and 35). The chimney stack of the old school itself is distinctive given the incorporation of hanging for a bell at its centre. The bell itself is unfortunately missing. Both individually and collectively these chimneys provide considerable visual and architectural interest.
98. More generally speaking, chimney stacks are brick built with simple corbelled tops. Pots are often absent, though where present are often simple cylindrical designs. Where building elevations are rendered it is common for the finish to be also applied to the stacks.

Windows and doors

99. Timber windows and doors are important features of the traditional streetscape. Amongst historic buildings sash windows and flush faced casements are features of cottages and buildings of higher status alike. Whilst vertically hung sash windows are common, Yorkshire, or horizontally sliding sash windows were previously present in

larger numbers than currently exist at West Morden Dairy, and are still present at No. 45 West Morden and Cherry Cottage.

100. UPVC timber window and door replacements are always harmful to the character of traditional buildings, as too the traditional appearance of historic streetscapes. Whilst plastic doors and windows now feature in many twentieth century buildings they are currently absent from the majority of earlier buildings. This to some extent reflects listing, however unlisted buildings of interest remain vulnerable.
101. Window designs featuring margin lights are important stylistic elements in the designs of Church Villa and Merraway (see FIG. 22). At Merraway these are also used in the porch, whilst the frontage additionally features an oculus.
102. Brick arches are typically formed over openings in brick buildings within the conservation area. The type of arch varies with architectural style, and to a lesser extent also the status of the building. Fine flat arches in gauged brick typical of formal Georgian design are seen at Stickland's Farmhouse, at Nos. 149 and 155 Whitefield, and more unusually at Paddock Cottage (see FIGs. 26 and 27). Curved segmented arches of one or two brick thickness are however most common, giving a plainer, more functional appearance to domestic and agricultural buildings alike (see examples in FIGs. 17, 27, 31, 29, 35, 37).

Public realm

Surfaces

103. Consistent with its historic rural character, the conservation area generally lacks formal public pavements. A noted exception is around the small cluster of 'council houses' on New Lane where the pavement is an aspect of the generally unsympathetic design of the development.

Street Furniture

104. Three finger posts are located in the conservation area. That adjacent to the Cock and Bottle (FIG. 32 below) is in good condition and retains its distinctive roundel. That adjacent to the old school (see FIG. 37) is in poor condition and has lost its roundel, though retains its historic cast lettering. Old maps record presence of a milestone on the site, though this appears to have been removed. A third finger post at the junction of the B3075 with the roads to East Morden and West Morden is in reasonable condition though lacks a roundel and appears to have lost some of its pointers. The roundel from a fourth finger post at Morden park Corner is now awkwardly mounted on top of a modern highways sign adjacent to the junction.



FIG. 32: Street furniture. Left: Pillar box in West Morden. The Victorian box is fitted into the wall of an agricultural building at King's Corner Farm. Note the chequered Flemish bond brickwork using red stretchers and blue headers. Right: Finger post at the Cock and Bottle. Two fingers have clearly been replaced, but it retains its original roundel which records the location. The appearance of the post is spoiled by the speed sign attached below. Surprisingly the speed limit here is 60 mph.

105. Rectangular wall mounted posting boxes occur at a number of locations. Three periods are represented: the cipher of Queen Victoria on the box at West Morden in the wall of a building associated with King's Corner Farm, of George VI in a free standing brick pillar at Firestation Corner, and of Elizabeth II in a freestanding brick pillar on Higher Street. As the building at West Morden is listed this protection also extends to the post box.
106. The conservation area contains three red K6 telephone kiosks at Whitefield, Firestation Corner, and Higher Street. All three are 'jubilee' models identified by use of the Tudor crown, which were typically installed 1935-52. None of these kiosks are listed or likely to be eligible for listing, leaving them vulnerable to future removal. Unusually the kiosk at Whitefield is under CCTV surveillance. The kiosks at Firestation Corner and Higher Street are associated with posting boxes.

Lighting and wiring

107. Overhead power and telephone cables are a persistent and unattractive feature around the conservation area. This is more so given the dispersed nature of development. Cables often interfere with views – see for example that of the parish church from Cockett Hill pictured on the front cover.
108. The conservation area does not contain street lighting. In this context an old street lantern installed as a garden ornament at the Old Post Office on Higher Street appears somewhat incongruous. The absence of street lighting helps to reinforce the rural character of the conservation area.

Public space

109. The principal 'public' space within the conservation area is that associated with the village hall, and within which a small play area is located. This space is however largely undifferentiated from other fields within the general context. The grassed area on which the war memorial is located on Higher Street has more the character if not status of a village green, whilst the churchyard otherwise forms a formal publically accessible space.

Trees, green spaces and ecology

110. The conservation area contains a significant amount of woodland comprising a mixture of broadleaved trees and coniferous plantations. The latter has sometimes replaced the former, though within the broader context coniferous plantations have also been established on historically open land.
111. A significant amount of the woodland within the conservation area is classified as 'ancient'. This means that it has been continuous wooded since at least 1600. Ancient woodland includes Chapel Wood, Fry's Wood, Whitefield Wood, East and Lower East Morden Withy Bed, and Frogmoor Coppice. The names 'coppice' and 'withy bed' each reflect forms of past management and produce. Ancient woodland is an important and nationally scarce asset often rich in plant and animal life. Whilst replanting with conifers, as has occurred at Everett's Wood, causes catastrophic reduction of biodiversity value, even here bluebells and other wildflowers have managed to survive along some of the less dense margins. If a shift back to more traditional management ever occurs these plants could slowly recolonise the wood.
112. Earth banks which appear to have provided the historic boundaries of Everett's Wood are visible from Collins's Lane. The modern plantation here however now spreads beyond this former boundary.
113. Verges are an important resource for wild flowers, and during spring bluebells and primroses are seen along many of the lanes in the conservation area (see FIG. 33 below).



FIG. 33: *The importance of verges. Here attractive spring flowers including primroses and bluebells are seen in a verge along Goodwin's Lane.*

114. Partly due to the undulating nature of topography, and partly due to the relatively large amount of woodland within the local area, trees frequently play an important role in providing a backdrop to views across open land within the conservation area. Strong contributions are made by Everett's Wood, Lousely Wood and Pound Wood, whilst trees otherwise form an almost continuous backdrop along the west side of the conservation area. In this way trees and topography combine to contribute to a localised sense of seclusion and compartmentalisation within the broader landscape.
115. A prominent clump of trees stands on Duke's Hill.
116. Buildings, garden spaces, non-coniferous woodland lacking pheasant pens, verges, intact hedges and less intensively managed fields, all provide important nesting, roosting and feeding opportunities for birds, bats and small mammals. Within a rural conservation area such as Morden the contribution made by wildlife is an important part of the everyday scene and changes with the seasons.
117. The conservation area contains a range of agricultural structures suited to use by swallows. Many of these birds can be seen together with house martins in late summer. Future conversion works should aim to fully retain the value of these habitats.
118. Sherford River and the associated Mill Bog provide important riverside and wetland habitat.

Visual qualities

119. The undulating nature of the ground within and around the conservation area provides frequent opportunities for long but often restricted views across the landscape. This allows many varied and differing perspectives of dispersed settlement to be gained moving through the conservation area and emphasises the importance of openness as well as the contribution made by agricultural and woodland settings.
120. The elevated site of the parish church lends it localised prominence in Morden (see cover photo and FIG. 34 below). The church is the principal focus of views from the south and east (see view from Cockett Hill on the front cover) to a point at which the ground again rises abruptly to reach a similar level. In other directions a more immediate rise in ground level greatly reduces visibility, though a good view does exist from Morden Drove. The churchyard itself provides good views to the south.



FIG. 34: *The parish church viewed from the south. The church towers over buildings below which gradually rise up the slope. Note intrusion by wires*

121. Whilst generally rising ground around much of the conservation area means that views are often contained, views from higher ground across the broader landscape setting itself are nonetheless often expansive. This is the case along the upper parts of Goodwin's Lane and at the north end of Pound Wood where the landscape appears to fall away.

Important unlisted buildings and features of interest

122. Unlisted buildings and structures which make a 'positive' contribution to the historic or architectural character or appearance of the conservation area by virtue of their historic and or architectural quality are detailed on Map 2. Given their significance (further understanding of which may be enriched by future work) these buildings can be considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' as defined within the NPPF. Alongside listed buildings, positive buildings should form a focus for conservation. Key examples (the list is not exhaustive) are provided below:



FIG. 35: *The old school and school house. Note the chimney stacks which in the case of the school itself were designed to also hang the school bell.*

- *The old school and school house, East Morden.* (FIG. 35 above) Two visually prominent roadside buildings which made an important contribution to the historic social life of the area. The school itself has not undergone conversion and remains a good example of its type. The two buildings feature some attractive architectural details.
- *The Old Post Office, Higher Street.* (see FIG. 31) An architecturally attractive historic building which occupies a prominent position on Higher Street and makes a strongly positive contribution to the street scene.
- *Hill Farm Cottage.* This small cottage incorporates both domestic and functional ends. Showing clear signs of reconstruction, it seems likely that a structure has stood here for a long period of time. The porch has an interesting design.
- *K6 phone boxes at Fire Station Corner, Higher Street and Whitefield.* (see FIG. 36 below). These are classic townscape features. As noted above, all are 'jubilee' models typically installed 1935-52.

- *Merraway*. Originally known as Morden Villa, the exact date of construction is not known. The building however features interesting Regency styling complementing that seen at Church Villa.



FIG. 36. War memorial in Higher Street, and telephone kiosk at Whitefield.

- *War memorial, Higher Street.* (see FIG. 36 above). The war memorial is a modest structure of great local importance. Not currently listed.
- *64-67 Higher Street.* (see FIG. 31). An attractive row of nineteenth century brick cottages.
- *Gravestones in the parish churchyard.* The churchyard contains an interesting collection of gravestones some of which are inevitably older than the church itself. A few good carved designs are present, though the inscriptions are often difficult to read. Ivy growth is affecting some monuments (see for example FIG. 36) and is causing damage.
- *Fingerposts* (see FIGs. 32 and 38). Locally distinctive items of Dorset street furniture widely installed during the 1920s and 1930s.
- *Old agricultural buildings including those at Sellars Farm, to the east of Coppins, opposite Orchard Cottage (FIG. 37), Hill Farm (FIG. 31), and the old smithy building in East Morden (FIG. 7).* These functional buildings of largely nineteenth century date make a strong contribution to the historic rural character of the conservation area

Issues and opportunities

Negative factors

123. Surveyed in late summer 2015 a number of public footpaths were impassable due to being overgrown.

Evaluation of condition

124. A range of unlisted 'positive' structures within the conservation area are observed to be in poor condition. This appears to be principally a result of neglect, often arising from disuse. Some of these structures, such as the derelict tin sheds north of the village hall, are of limited interest, whilst others such make a contribution to local character and interest that could be enhanced by their renovation. Examples are provided in FIG. 37 below.



FIG. 37: *General neglect. A range of structures within the conservation area show signs of general neglect. Top left: overgrown building opposite Orchard Cottage. Top right: ivy clad obelisk in the parish churchyard. Bottom: barn at West Morden Dairy.*

Buildings at risk

125. Listed buildings and structures are termed ‘at risk’ where aspects of their condition, use or context threaten those features which provide special historic or architectural interest.
126. Morden Mill, Morden Mill Farmhouse and the adjacent stables are clearly at risk due to their disuse, poor condition and continuing deterioration (see FIG. 14). Whilst measures have been taken to secure the buildings these have caused harm in themselves. Given visibility from the A35 the buildings are regularly invaded by rough sleepers and urban explorers who post photos of their exploits on the internet.
127. Former agricultural buildings at West Morden Dairy (see FIG. 37) are in poor condition though a scheme for their conversion has been approved in the recent past.
128. Observed in late 2015 the parish church was in need of repairs to its roof given slipped and missing slates. The exterior has suffered from inappropriate repointing that has caused localised degradation of stonework, whilst some internal walls are damp and suffering growth of algae.

Threats, pressures, challenges

129. The principal challenge locally appears to be addressing the poor condition of many buildings and structures within the conservation area. In some cases this may be related to finding new uses and implementing schemes for those already approved, and in other cases simply carrying out maintenance.
130. The consultation draft of this appraisal noted that none of the historic telephone kiosks within the conservation area was listed and that they were therefore vulnerable to removal. BT did indeed propose their removal in late 2016. Fortunately the Parish Council opted to adopt them, though they will no longer provide a payphone service.

Enhancement opportunities

131. The character and appearance of the conservation area can be preserved and enhanced by the efforts of all who have an interest in the land and property within it. Maintaining those buildings, structures and aspects of which make a ‘positive’ contribution to the special architectural or historic character or appearance of the conservation area (see Map 2) should be a key priority. On the other hand, buildings, structures and aspects which have marked ‘negative’ impact upon the character or appearance of the conservation area provide a focus for positive change. This may include but is not limited to, sensitive redevelopment. Buildings marked ‘neutral’ on

Map 2 are a diverse and harmless group which lack importance. Whilst improvements or change here may deliver benefits, these are unlikely to be as significant as for those marked negative. Use of this appraisal to inform the design and assessment of planning proposals helps to ensure that conservation objectives are achieved through the planning process.

132. The list below provides a summary of potential areas for action, implementation of which will depend upon opportunity, priorities and funding, and may involve or be achieved by a range of different stakeholders.

Maintenance of footpaths

133. Better maintenance of public rights of way would be beneficial. Viewed in September of 2015 a number of paths were choked by vegetation. The path running south from Frogmore eventually becomes lost in a plantation (see FIG. 38 below).

Undergrounding of overhead cables

134. The conservation area could be made more attractive by concealing cables underground.

Restoration of the finger post adjacent to the old school

135. The finger post adjacent to the old school is a piece of historic street furniture currently in very poor condition and minus its roundel. Renovation of the post and reinstatement of the roundel and striped post would be beneficial. Similar projects are currently being undertaken by communities across Dorset given the Highways Authority no longer maintains the posts, and some very high quality accurate restorations have been achieved.



FIG. 38: Areas for possible improvement. Left: finger post in poor condition adjacent to the old school. Right: the footpaths with which this sign in the plantation south of Frogmore is associated seem to have disappeared.

Locally distinctive design

136. Modern housing in the conservation area lacks a distinctive character. Though the Green Belt designation places very strict control over any new development, the Parish Council has indicated its desire for new housing on previously developed sites such as Shrubbetts. Many of these sites were cleared of historically and architecturally interesting vernacular buildings – mostly thatch and cob cottages – during the 1960s-70s (see History section above). This had a correspondingly negative impact on local character. Should development of such sites take place in the future it would therefore be appropriate for particularly strong architectural emphasis to be placed on new design which strongly reflects and reinforces the characteristics of the distinctive local vernacular. Whilst Morden's numerous lost historic buildings can never be replaced, the contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the locality they once made can be evoked and recalled by appropriate design.

Repair and maintenance of hedgerows

137. Where hedges have been aggressively flailed or become gappy through lack of traditional management sensitive restoration and future care would help to sustain these important and ecologically valuable rural features into the future.

Repair and reuse of historic buildings

138. Allied to the local desire for more housing, rehabilitation of existing vacant housing such as Morden Mill Farmhouse and sensitive reuse of redundant historic agricultural buildings would be beneficial.

Appendix

Appendix A – Further information and advice

Legislation, guidance and policy

- *Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.*
- *National Planning Policy Framework.* DCLG, 2012.
- *Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.* Purbeck District Council, 2012.
- *Conservation area designation appraisal and management.* Historic England, 2016.

Design

- *District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.* Purbeck District Council, 2013.

Historical development, archaeology and architecture

- *County of Dorset, Volume Two, South East, Part 1; RCHM, 1970.*
- *Dorset (Pevsner Buildings of England).* Newman and Pevsner, 1972.
- *How a village was left to die; Rogers. A, In The Sun, 11 March 1967.*
- *National Heritage List.* www.english-heritage.org.uk.
- *Place Names of Dorset, Part II; (Ed. Hill), English Place Names Society, 1980.*
- *The Drax Cottage Scandal; Legg, R in Dorset County Magazine, Winter 1972 p. 19-25.*

General

- *A Stitch in Time: Maintaining your Property Makes Good Sense.* SPAB and IHBC.

Further enquires

Enquiries regarding this appraisal should be addressed to:

Design and Conservation Officer
Purbeck District Council, Worgret Road, Wareham BH20 4PP
Tel: 01923 557388
conservation@purbeck-dc.gov.uk

Enquiries regarding archaeology and the County Historic Environment Record should be addressed to:

Environmental Services Directorate
Dorset County Council, Colliton Park, Dorchester DT1 1XJ
Tel: 01305 224921

Appendix B – Listed buildings

Listed Buildings within the conservation area are shown in the table below. For further information on these buildings see the National Heritage List (searchable online at www.historic-england.org.uk).

Please note: The table does not include ancillary structures or those within the curtilage of named buildings which are also likely to be covered by the listing where pre-dating 1948. Names of properties given below are those recorded at the time of listing and thus under which they are officially listed. It is possible that some names may have changed. This does not affect the listing itself.

Address	Grade	Historic England Reference No.
49, Whitefield	II	1171826
Whitefield Farm House	II	1305437
153, Whitefield	II	1120529
155, Whitefield	II	1171839
Greenwood Cottage, 154, Whitefield	II	1323313
Cherry Cottage, 103-105, Cockett Hill	II	1120557
90, East Morden	II	1120558
parish church of Saint Mary, including boundary wall, Higher Street	II	1120559
76, Higher Street	II	1120560
77, Higher Street	II	1120561
The Old Vicarage, Higher Street	II	1120562
Stables and coach house to the Old Vicarage, immediately south of the house	II	1171746
Morden Mill	II	1120564
Morden Mill Farmhouse	II	1171768
West Morden Farm House	II	1120565
Outbuilding 50 metres south west of West Morden Farmhouse	II	1305452
Wayside, 36, West Morden	II	1120566
Paddock Cottage, including boundary wall to road	II	1323292
43, West Morden	II	1120567

46 And 47, West Morden	II	1120568
King's Corner Farm House	II	1323293
Farm building immediately east of King's Corner Farm House	II	1120569
Sticklands Farm House, including front boundary wall	II	1171699
Church Villa, Higher Street	II	1171724
60, Higher Street	II	1171727
Home Farm House, Higher Street	II*	1171734
40 and 41, West Morden	II	1171792
45, West Morden	II	1171797
Karingal, 48, West Morden	II	1171800
The Cock and Bottle Inn	II	1305496
Frogmore Farm House	II	1323290
79, Giles Lane	II	1323291
Phylcott, West Morden	II	1323312

Appendix C – Scheduled ancient monuments

A Scheduled Ancient Monument is defined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the National Heritage Act 1983 as a protected archaeological site or historic building of national importance. The scheduling of a monument means that permission is required for works affecting that monument. The Secretary of State, in consultation with Historic England, assesses each case individually to ensure that damage to protected sites is kept to a minimum.

Description	Historic England Reference No.
Beacon mound on Beacon Hill	1016280

Appendix D – Boundary change 2017

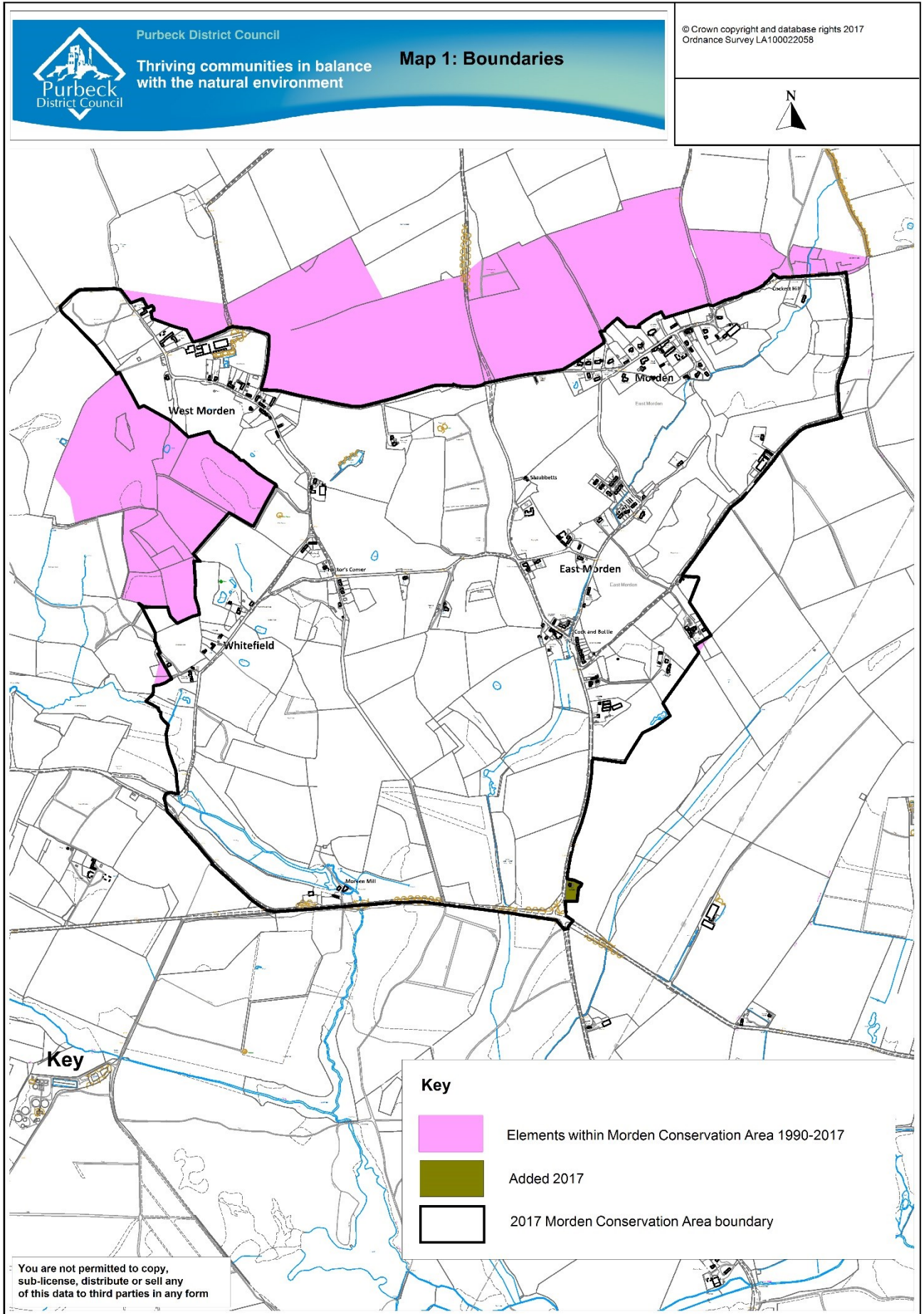
Due to the dispersed historic development pattern, the inclusion of open agricultural land and woodland forming the gaps and interlinked spaces between components of the settlement layout is unavoidable. Boundary review did however identify areas of land falling outside this pattern that could be reasonably considered to form part of the broader rural setting of the conservation area, and also an outlying building previously left outside the boundary.


Components excluded:

- Woodland and open land north of Whitefield Wood and east of Cold Barrow.
- An irregular fragment of land immediately southeast of Brickfield Farm.
- An irregular piece of land west of No. 149 Whitefield where the boundary passed through a paddock.
- Open agricultural land north of West Morden, Morden and the road between them.

Components added:

- The Bungalow, Quarr Hill. A pre-fabricated corrugated iron dwelling.






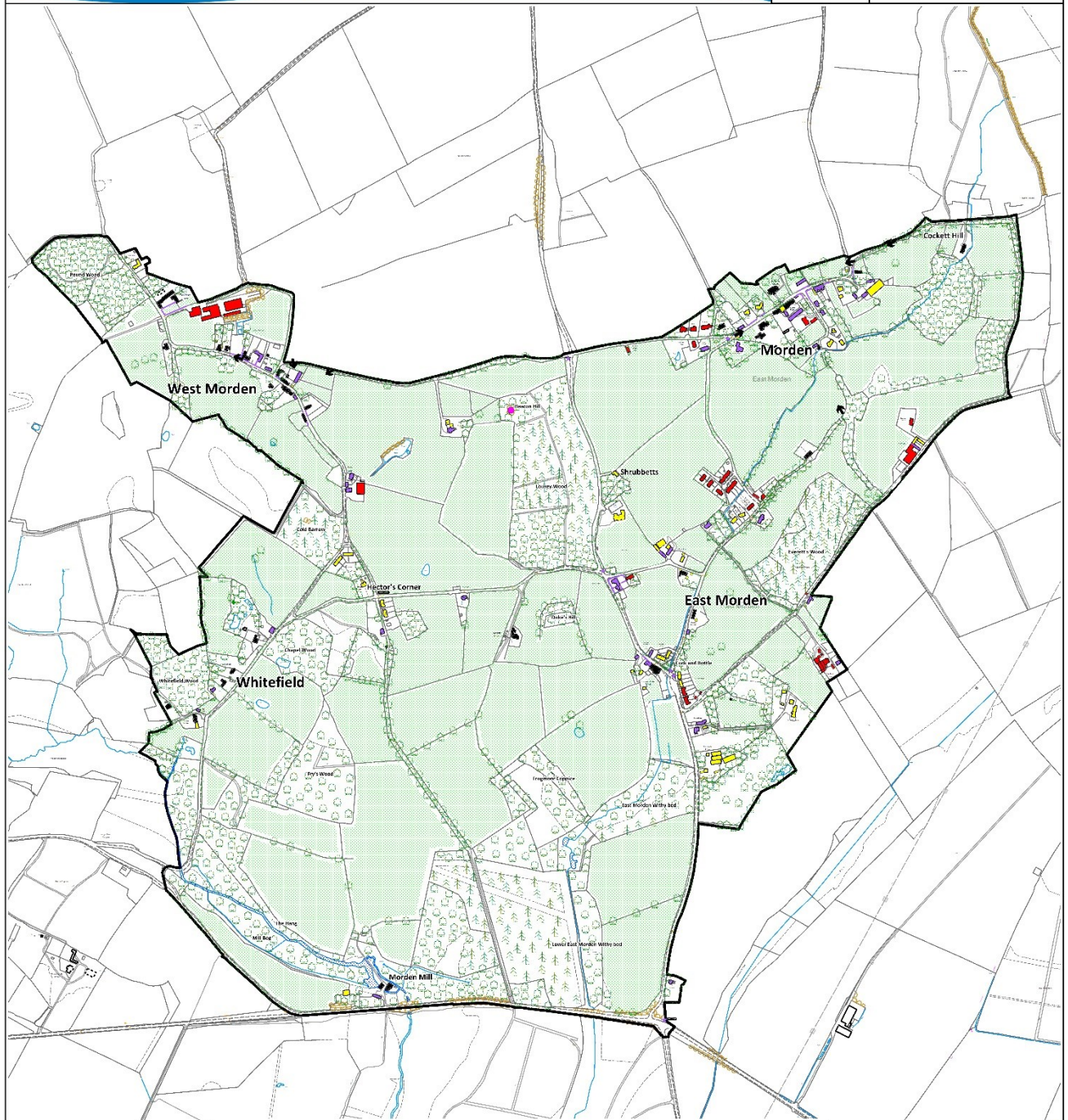
Purbeck District Council
 Thriving communities in balance
 with the natural environment

Map 2: Conservation Area Quality

For Identification Purposes Only



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 Ordnance Survey LA100022058



Key	
	Scheduled Ancient Monument
	Listed Building
	Positive building
	Neutral building
	Negative building
	Notable open green space
	Listed wall
	Positive wall
	Feature of interest
	View

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