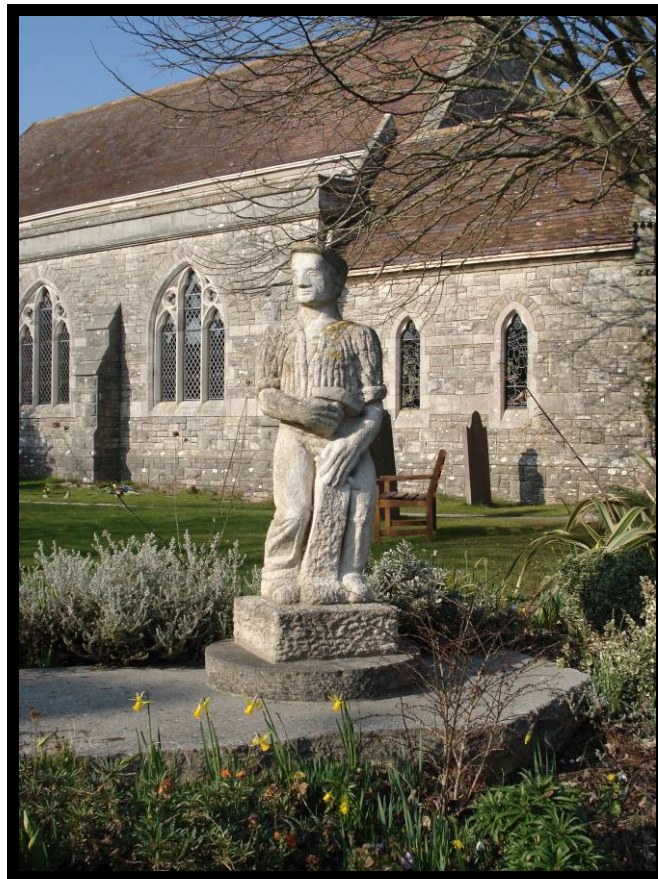




# Langton Matravers Conservation Area Appraisal Document



**Adopted Document**

**December 2008**

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This Appraisal has been prepared for Langton Matravers Conservation Area which was first designated on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1976.

Section 69.1(a) of the Planning(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)Act 1990 defines Conservation Areas as:

*“areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.*

Conservation Areas are designated to cover the streets, spaces and places in our towns and villages that are considered to warrant special consideration within the planning process by virtue of their historic and architectural interest. While bringing some added controls the object of designation is not to prohibit change or development but rather to manage its quality and contextual appropriateness.

The purpose of this appraisal is: 1. to provide an in depth analysis of character which will inform both planning and development management at the Local Authority, 2. to assist property owners and their agents in the formulation of sensitive development proposals, 3. to assist property owners and their agents in execution of sensitive alterations allowed under permitted development rights, and 4. to identify potential for enhancement works within the Conservation Area.

## 1.2 Planning Policy Framework

Conservation Areas are designated by local authorities in fulfilment of section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Planning Policy Guidance 15 *Planning and the Historic Environment* provides the statutory guidance for their administration, while specific Local Authority policies will also apply. Further guidance regarding the legal implications of designation can be found in Appendix B.

## 1.3 Development Within a Conservation Area

If you are considering undertaking works to a property, or developing land that lies within a conservation area you are advised to contact a Conservation Officer and the responsible Development Control Officer at Purbeck District Council for assistance. This appraisal will assist in the formulation of appropriate design strategies for new development, which should be fully articulated within a Design and Access Statement accompanying any planning application. CABE has produced useful guidance (see Appendix A).

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## 1.4 Preparation and Survey Limitations

This Appraisal was researched and written by **Benjamin Webb**, Conservation Officer at Purbeck District Council, during 2006-7, and revised following consultation during August 2008. The document was formally adopted on 9th December 2008.

When reading or using an Appraisal it is important to note the document can never be fully comprehensive. For instance, some aspects of the survey information are limited to those areas which can be reasonably recorded from the public highway and other accessible land.

Failure to mention a particular element or detail must not be taken to imply that it is of no importance to an appreciation of the character or appearance of the Area and thus of no relevance in the consideration of planning applications.

## 1.5 Community Involvement

In line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement two six week phases of consultation were arranged. The first (31<sup>st</sup> March – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008) involved information gathering using a questionnaire made available locally and at Westport House which provided an opportunity for public input to the formulation of proposals and production stage of the document. The second (23<sup>rd</sup> June – 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008) involved formal consultation on the finalised boundary proposals and appraisal document with a leaflet delivered all properties directly affected. All consultation materials were made available online. The consultation was advertised through local media and Council channels. Views were invited from local amenity groups and administrative bodies. Consultation responses have been taken into account in preparation of the final version of this document.

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## 2. Summary of Special Interest

The object of the following paragraphs is to provide a brief (non exhaustive) summary of the reasons for designation of the Conservation Area. A more detailed introduction to and analysis of historic and architectural character and appearance will follow in subsequent sections.

### 2.1 Special Historic Interest

Developmentally, Langton Matravers represents an unusual amalgam of historic village, with scattered farmsteads and hamlets stitched together by a road and latterly infilled. The Conservation Area focuses upon two key components of the historic settlement: the hamlet of Coombe and the relatively dense 'core' along the High Street. Having important connections to the quarrying industry settlement itself developed within the context of a robust linearly defined pattern of land ownership which has strongly influenced its form and layout. This remains discernable in the distribution of development, of boundaries, routes and open spaces. Coombe in particular retains its character as a detached if somewhat encroached upon hamlet.

### 2.2 Special Architectural Interest

Drawing materials from quarries on the Purbeck limestone plateau the Conservation Area contains a range of distinctive stone built vernacular house forms and building types. The latter include working farm buildings and a small number of minor gentry houses. Numerous buildings within the Conservation Area are listed.

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## 3. Conservation Area Site, Situation and Zoning

### 3.1 Location and Setting

Langton Matravers is a straggling settlement which lies for the most part on an east-west orientation on the edge of the Purbeck limestone plateau between Kingston and Swanage. At Coombe settlement dips into the Wealdon, while land falls away into the valley to the north and east providing outstanding views of the Purbeck chalk ridge opposite. The Conservation Area is defined around two of the historic elements which make up the modern village (see Section 2 above). Both appear heavily encroached upon by modern development which has acted to merge formerly distinct elements of the historic settlement pattern. The break in the broader settlement at Putlake plays an important role in the setting of Zone 1, while the undeveloped fringe at Coombe helps provide an important break between this and Herston. Much of the northern edge of Zone 1 retains a close historic proximity to the surrounding landscape.

### 3.2 Socio-Economic Profile and Uses

The broader settlement of Langton Matravers contains a range of house types and tenures, most of those within the Conservation Area historically the dwellings of quarrymen and labourers. A proportion of these small but 'quaint' properties have been purchased as second or holiday homes though a resident population exists to sustain local services and schools. While the Conservation Area is largely residential in character, notable is the continuation of agricultural activity at Coombe Farm which helps to anchor the settlement to its broader context and contribute toward a sense of vitality. The schools are also important in the latter regard and continue a strong historic tradition of the provision of educational services within the village.



**FIG. 1:** *Cows grazing within the curtilage of Coombe Farm. The presence of an active farm and animals within the townscape of the Conservation Area adds greatly to its character.*

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### 3.3 Study Zones

While at least latterly developmental history and context can be seen to unite the Conservation Area, for ease of analysis and clarity it will be split between character 'zones'. These relate to variations in perceived character, and are here informed by the broader pattern of historic development. These are shown on Map 2 and comprise:

**Zone 1:** The historic hamlets of Coombe and Gully with Leeson House. Characterised by small clusters of development set in space.

**Zone 2:** The High Street between North Street and Crack Lane, with part of Mount Pleasant. Characterised by a mixture of dense frontage with more well spaced development at depth.



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## 4. Historic Morphology and Archaeology

### Medieval-early Eighteenth Century:

The land here was split laterally between two separate manors: in the east Langton Matravers, in the west Langton Wallis. These are illustrated by Treswell in his map of the 1580s, which appears to show the modern 'centre' of the village falling within Langton Wallis together with the hamlet of Acton. Both manors sat within the pattern of linear landholdings demarcated from ridge to coast from Worth Matravers to Swanage across the limestone plateau. The provenance of this pattern of landholding – the boundaries of which are typically demarcated by stone walls – is unclear, various dates having been advanced. If Saxon it is tempting to hypothesise that the name 'Langton' – or 'long farmstead' – may make reference to the character of one such landholding.

The pattern of landholding indeed appears to have formed an important context for historic settlement, the pattern of which was obscured by eighteenth century construction of the cross cutting B3069 and subsequent infilling along it. Prior to this time, and indeed right into the nineteenth century (see FIG. 2), settlement comprised a series of farms and small hamlets loosely strung along the ridge. The settlement pattern appears to have been influenced by the availability of fresh water from the springs which rise at intervals along the ridge into Swanage, and was somewhat displaced from the ancient Priest's Way and the network of lanes which linked properties in the valley to Corfe. Linear north-south/south-north tracks which traced property boundaries provided the principal means of connection to these routes, and these survive at several locations within the modern settlement. The best example is Crack Lane, formalised in the 1860s, which formed and still forms a bookend for development on High Street. While these tracks provided routes for carriage of stone, livestock and produce, local connections also existed, the steps which ascended Coombe Hill from Putlake for example referenced in the name of the council estate located here. Ground conditions and slope at Putlake meant that this route was not easily passable and the 'gap' within the broader settlement at this point is important in reflecting the historic separation of the different elements brought together in modern Langton Matravers.

There is evidence for the intensive cultivation of the surrounding landscape both prior to and during the medieval period, though quarrying and sheep farming appear to have displaced such activity during the following centuries. A number of properties may be dated to or contain elements dating from this period.

### Eighteenth – early Nineteenth Century:

In 1761 a turnpike road (privately financed and maintained toll road – the first 'modern' roads) was constructed by the Wareham Trust between Swanage and Corfe Castle via Kingston. This provided permanent physical connection between the farms and hamlets on the ridge for the first time. Subsequent development occurred in relation to this road and appears to have varied by landowner. Within the Durnford estate, which straddled the two manors at the centre of the modern settlement, dense development of cottages occurred along the High Street stopping abruptly at the margins of the landholding. Investment was made in construction of Durnford House – known here as the manor house – and church,

both of which were however subsequently rebuilt. To the east in the manor of Langton Matravers relatively little development occurred, the hamlets of Coombe, Gully and the manor farm on Coombe Hill remaining well separated. At this time Leeson House was modified to provide the manorial seat. To the west, beyond Durnford, there was likewise relatively little development.

### Mid-late Nineteenth Century:

The 1860s saw application by Wareham Trust to abandon the Kingston-Swanage Road in favour of a new route between Corfe and Langton via Harman's Cross. While closure did not take place the new road, in part formalising pre-existing tracks, was constructed and entered Langton along Crack Lane. The mid-late nineteenth century otherwise saw development of increasingly urban character, vernacular styles displaced by standard pattern book forms albeit in local materials. These tend to form isolated developments, and the contemporary tithe map (see FIG. 2) still shows settlement relatively broken east and west of the High Street. To the west of the centre a series of terraces were constructed running at right angles to the street for reasons not entirely clear. The pattern is continued to the west and south west of the village at East and West Acton Field and at Blacklands. The most notable example is the North Street development (see FIG. 5).



**FIG. 2:** *Parish of Langton Matravers tithe map 1841. At this time there were three distinct clusters of development with scattered buildings between. (DRO T/LAM)*

### Twentieth Century:

1905 saw the Valley Road cut through Coombe Farm bypassing Crack Lane, and Coombe Hill. The first half of the twentieth century saw a major increase in development, with both the development of both council housing and of small 'suburban' style estates. These were constructed without apparent coordination in fields either side of the road providing the broader settlement with an unbalanced and bitty character. Latterly the infill of large gardens and street frontages has taken place, resulting in a process of coalescence which together with estate

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building has helped to obscure the historic settlement pattern through filling the gaps between buildings and groups of buildings. This has provided the misleading perception of modern Langton Matravers as a historic village entity, whereas in historic townscape terms it can be more useful to consider the modern village an amalgam of elements.

**Archaeological Potential:**

Archaeological potential in Langton is unlikely to be great given that it is not a settlement in which there is a long history of heavy development. This said the surrounding landscape is rich in features and remains of various periods, a large hoard of Bronze Age axes heads recently recovered from fields at Putlake Farm. Reference to the County HER should always precede the drawing up of development proposals.

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## 5. Townscape Analysis

### 5.1 Urban Structure

Langton Matravers is today characterised by its linear ribbon like composition around and along a principle road. Tracks and accesses leave this road at right angles following historic routes south to Priests Way, and north to the old South Valley Road – in this reflecting the regular linear subdivision of the broader landscape which has latterly helped condition patchy and unharmonious development in blocks – while rough back lanes loop at a couple of points within the Conservation Area providing some historic depth to the townscape.

### 5.2 Building Density

A concentrated area on the south side of the High Street in the centre of Zone 1 provides development of the greatest density. Here buildings abut, front directly onto the street and have very shallow plot depth. Similar density is only reached locally within the Conservation Area where terraced forms, such as found in North Street, are fitted into relatively small spaces. Greater spacing generally exists on the north side of High Street which contains a succession of large buildings and spacious plots located to the rear of the street frontage – the latter often providing a second tier of development within the townscape. The majority of buildings on this side of the street have some form of forecourt though in places these have been merged with the footway through removal of enclosure or setting back of replacement buildings. Within Zone 2 overall density is low, buildings forming loose groupings and standing in space, though terraced forms do act to concentrate development.



**FIG. 3:** *Terraced estate cottages on High Street. The most densely developed part of the Conservation Area; these houses were historically associated with Durnford House and manor.*

## 5.3 Building Height

Most development within the Conservation Area stands at two storeys, though variation occurs within this category with differences in architectural proportion and changes in ground level – resolved by stepping along High Street. A few very diminutive historic one and one and a half storey properties provide interesting texture, though sprawling modern bungalows represent an intrusive feature. The three storey heights of broadly contemporary 39 and 107 High Street are exceptional, the latter providing an interesting punctuation, though appearing somewhat out of place. The grouping of Nos. 35, 37 and 39 High Street perhaps illustrate best the influence of all the above factors in providing variation (see FIG.4).



**FIG 4:** *Contrasts in height. Here viewed from one and a half to three storeys between 35 and 39 High Street. Note the Swanage brick flank wall of No.39.*

## 5.4 Plan Form and Massing

The typical massing of buildings varies by period, buildings of the later nineteenth century often having the most visible and often sometimes unharmonious presence – as epitomised by the bulk of 107 High Street. Within Zone 1 orientation is most commonly with frontage facing the highway, though at the west end of High Street a lateral orientation of historic buildings has occurred which is most evident in North Street, this possibly carried out as a means of maximising developable space within linear plots. In Zone 2 orientation shows greater variation, Coombe Court for example arranged around a triangular courtyard. Plan form is inconsistent with some cottage plots broader than deep and vice versa, though most form variations on simple rectangular arrangements. Large detached properties show significant variation in form sometimes related to individual architectural style and use.



**FIG. 5:** *North Street. A terraced development set at a right angle to the High Street, the late nineteenth century buildings here have an urban feel. Note the worn stone pavements.*

## 5.5 Edges and Enclosure

- While along parts of the High Street buildings provide effective street edge enclosure through their direct frontage onto the pavement, elsewhere low limestone rubble stone walls are used to enclose garden and forecourt spaces. The same play a particularly important visual role in enclosing and defining the edges of open spaces where they break the continuity of development within Zone 1 – for example along the edge of the school playing field. Cock and hen coping is a frequent feature, and in Zone 2 this sees some use of Wealdon quartz grit. The diagonal coursing of stone is sometimes seen within walls, this apparently a local style of building recently revived. Linear walls which trace the boundaries of historic landholdings and continue into the landscape south of the Conservation Area are a recurrent feature perhaps best appreciated from the top of Garfield Lane.
- The tall wall which defines the settlement edge in the field east of Mount Pleasant is also a feature of historic interest, and appears to trace the former boundaries of Durnford House and the Rectory. The tight enclosure of the walkway running alongside the cemetery plays an important role in focusing views on the landscape beyond.
- Hedging has been used along the Valley Road and Three Acre Lane, the former sliced through the landholding of Coombe Farm and providing a harsh edge.
- In contrast to the generally enclosed character of the townscape of the Conservation Area, spaces to the rear of the Old Malthouse School are relatively open.

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## 5.6 Visual Qualities

The Conservation Area contains a number of interesting and attractive views into the landscape surrounding it; those from the top of Garfield Lane and the walkway running alongside the cemetery particularly good (see FIG.6).

## 5.7 Landscape: Trees and Green Spaces

Open green spaces make an important contribution to the character of both the Conservation Area and settlement in general, these reflecting its historic background as an association of scattered developments stitched together by the arterial turnpike road. The fields around and either side of Putlake Farm break the continuity of development at a historically relevant point (see FIG. 2 above), the space correspondent with linear estate boundaries which are traced to the north by Crack Lane which formed a historic stop for development.

Within Zone 2 open space around Coombe Farm plays a crucial role in the setting of this attractive listed farm complex, providing it with landmark quality at the eastern gateway to the settlement. The rising parkland of Leeson House visible at this point to the south provides further quality to context, which combined with land around Coombe Farm helps to protect the integrity of the former hamlet from encroaching development.



**FIG. 6:** *Links between settlement and landscape. The linear paths and tracks leading from the settlement into the broader landscape often follow historic boundaries and routes which anchor settlement to context. Left: Garfield Lane with views across the limestone ridge. Right: cemetery walkway with views of the chalk ridge.*

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## 5.8 Public Realm

**Groundscape:** Most of the High Street in Zone 1 retains Purbeck stone paving. This covers both public pavements and unenclosed forecourts, former demarcation of which is sometimes evident in the pattern of paving itself – as for example in the line of rectangular stones to the front of Nos. 42-46 High Street. Back lanes and alleys carry much rougher surfaces of earth or broken stone.

**Street Furniture:** Langton Matravers has a notable collection of public art which is gathered outside the parish church. This comprises a painted sign depicting the parish badge produced for the Festival of Britain, a carved litter bin produced for the Queen's Silver Jubilee and Millennium sculpture of a quarryman by Mary Spencer-Watson (pictured front cover). A carved stone memorial bench is located at the entrance to Durnford Drove, and an eighteenth century milestone at the top of Steps Hill.

**Lighting:** The stumps of cast iron lamp standards are visible at two locations within Zone 1 (Garfield Lane and adjacent to the cemetery – another lies outside the Conservation Area at the top of Steps Hill). Street lighting within Zone 1 is currently provided by 'heritage' lanterns which occasionally appear incongruous in a village context, though the worst excesses occur between Crack Lane and the old Ship Inn outside the Conservation Area. Box lanterns are otherwise mounted on some buildings along High Street.



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## 6. Building Style and Details

### 6.1 Architectural Style

The Conservation Area contains a range of vernacular structures and more formal pattern book designs constructed using a palette of local materials. Typical of the former are the area's smaller cottages which often exhibit an irregularity and inconsistency in terms of proportion and the arrangement of architectural elements. Typical of the latter are various late nineteenth century buildings readily identifiable through their generally larger proportions and strong vertical emphasis. Ornamentation is generally lacking though the Gothic Revival of Leeson House (see FIG. 7) and Regency style of Two Leas House represent notable exceptions related to their status. Twentieth century suburban style development has infiltrated the area in a number of locations and often stands out due to the conventions in composition and layout that it adopts.



**FIG. 7:** *The vernacular and polite. Left: 34 High Street, a courtyard development displaying various characteristics of the local vernacular. Right: Leeson House in Gothic Revival.*

### 6.2 Walls

Most walls within the Conservation Area are constructed using Purbeck stone – this latterly forming a cladding for other materials in modern construction. Many older properties, in common with boundary walls, employ roughly coursed spalls and lumps of rubble stone in their construction, some of which may have been derived from quarry waste. Contemporary houses of better quality show more regular coursing of squared stone rubble. More harsh looking sawn, rock faced blocks and more bulky chunks of often randomly coursed stone are employed in some late nineteenth century and more modern properties. The dark red Swanage brick of the flank walls of 39 High Street provide a strong visual contrast with the facing stone, though brick is not otherwise noted as a principal building material within the Conservation Area. The large sheets of render or

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pebbledash found on suburban type properties in Zone 1 is now largely intrusive, though style-related use of stucco does occur on a couple of historic properties (see FIG. 7), and it is possible that render was once a component of the historic vernacular.

## 6.3 Roofs

**Roofing:** The historic vernacular within the Conservation Area employs locally sourced stone roofing tiles laid with clay ridge. These are dressed on principle dwellings, whilst cruder slabs are employed on outbuildings visible in Zone 2. In most cases roofs carry a heavy and unattractive 'pointing' applied as a weatherproofing of little technical value. Recent development has typically utilised synthetic or reconstituted stone roofing products which provide a poor match to traditional tiles and may be seen to undermine the character and heritage of the settlement. The front elevation of the recent extension of the Rectory nursing home represents a notable exception unfortunately not continued to the rear. Slate is otherwise present on a number of mid-late nineteenth century properties, while a range of functional sheet coverings are characteristic features of agricultural buildings. Roofs are typically pitched, half hipped and fully hipped forms are an infrequent feature most often associated with intrusive forms of development.



**FIG. 8:** *Variety in roofing. The varied roof shapes, textures and coverings of Coombe Farm provide a point of visual interest. Visible are stone, slate, corrugated iron, asbestos cement and clay ridging.*

**Chimneys:** Chimney stacks are constructed from either stone or dark red Swanage bricks, the latter providing attractive contrast to stone tiles where used in combination. Where pots survive these are usually simple red or pale yellow clay forms, though the odd elaboration is sometimes seen. Many alterations are evident at this level including the ad hoc and sometimes makeshift formation of smoke hoods such as that on Coombe Farmhouse.

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## 6.4 Windows and Doors

**Windows:** The Conservation Area shows a generally good rate of survival for historic windows, this to some extent a product of the number of listed buildings it contains. A range of window types may be identified, these including vertically sliding sash, horizontally sliding sash (or 'Yorkshire sash'), casement and windows which have a central pivot – the latter perhaps the product of a particular local joiner. Also of note is the occurrence of both sash and casements with a lattice configuration of glazing bars (for example the Malt House School, Little Durnford, Coombe Farm amongst others). Flat stone sills and lintels are common, though arches are formed above some windows using slips of stone set on edge. In a few instances ashlar blocks are used to define the reveals of windows where rubble stone would provide a poor edge. Generally speaking the proportions of window openings in historic properties have either a moderate or stressed vertical emphasis contrasting with the strong horizontal emphasis viewed on many more recent houses.



**FIG. 9:** *Lattice glazing bars. Windows with lattice glazing bars are encountered frequently within the Conservation Area.*

Modestly sized full dormer windows with pitched or flat roofs occur as a repeated element in the design of a number of late nineteenth century properties within Zone 1. Where unaltered these do not exceed the width of and are often smaller than windows within the frontage. Dormers positioned on or half way between the eaves typically carry pitched or half hipped roofs while catslide roofs are normally only employed where upper windows graze the eaves. Exaggerated versions of the latter sometimes form a feature of modern construction.

**Doors:** Simple plank doors are common, often with small windows cut into them. Porches are infrequent, and are usually small in size and carry pitched roofs where they do occur. Canopies are mostly a feature of modern development though one late nineteenth century example does occur on High Street.

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## 6.5 Important Unlisted Buildings and other Features of Interest

Unlisted buildings which make a 'positive' contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area are detailed on Map 3 together with those deemed to have both a 'neutral' and 'negative' impact. Examples are provided below:



**FIG. 10:** Streetscape features. *Left: stump of a sewer vent pipe in Garfield Lane; Right: cast iron standpipe on High Street.*

- *Stone yard shelters:* Visible at Gully, these simple, open fronted dry stone shelters are typical of the structures historically constructed at quarries.
- *Venting pipe stumps (Garfield Lane, and High Street):* Embossed 'Adams Ltd York' (see FIG.10).
- *Standpipes (High Street):* taps set into cast iron bollards (see FIG.10).
- *North Street:*
- *39 High Street:* (see FIG.4) a landmark on High Street, this building is something of an oddity, out of place in its context and constructed with tie stones to take a potential neighbour.
- *Dovecote, Coombe Farm:* The dovecote positioned over the barn at Coombe Farm is an unusual feature.

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## 7. Ecology and Biodiversity

It is easy to underestimate the contribution made by wildlife to the character of a Conservation Area in terms of both sights and sounds. Buildings, trees and garden spaces provide nesting, roosting and feeding opportunities for birds and bats. These together with other animal species should be accommodated and provided for within new development in accordance with PPS 9. Within Langton Matravers it is also important to note the contribution made by lichen and mosses in softening the appearance of buildings while adding colour, texture and interest.



**FIG.11:** *Lichen on stone.*

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## 8. Issues and Opportunities

### 8.1 Problem Areas

More recent development within Langton has frequently shown little sensitivity to context. Lack of attention to detail and poor layout becomes a distraction along the western end of High Street, while the chunking of new development in small estates either side of both High Street and Coombe Hill creates a sense of imbalance and bittiness within the broader townscape. Of note is the repeated use of synthetic stone products for roofing, the best of which are reconstituted, the worst pigmented concrete slabs. This does little to help preserve or promote a sense of local identity and distinctiveness.

### 8.2 Evaluation of Condition

The condition of buildings within the Conservation Area appears generally good from external inspection though the heavy 'pointing' recently applied to some stone roofs suggests deterioration and leakage which the application of more mortar is ironically likely to exacerbate.

### 8.3 Buildings at Risk

The Conservation Area contains one of the District's most threatened listed structures – the gates to Durnford House (Grade II). These are severely corroded, the wrought iron splintered and fragmenting, the damage resulting from a lack of regular repainting – a simple and inexpensive maintenance task. Major conservation works are necessary if the gates are to survive. With sufficient commitment the Local Authority could compel such work. The curtilage listed gates of Leeson House are in a similar state (see FIG. 12 below).



**FIG. 12:** *Historic gates at risk. Left: those of Durnford House. Right: those of Leeson House - currently removed.*



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## 8.4 Threats, Pressures, Challenges

Accommodating new development can be a challenge for all villages though the linear form and composite character of Langton makes this a particularly difficult task, and one poorly handled in the past. Maintaining the open spaces which break up the broader settlement and which in particular help to separate Coombe from Herston and Langton from Acton will be particularly important if Langton is to avoid gaining an undifferentiated and suburban character.

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## 9. Recommendations

### 9.1 Boundary Proposals:

#### Proposed for Removal

Designated before current guidelines, the boundaries of Langton Matravers Conservation Area are drawn broadly, taking in significant areas of housing of little interest and mixed quality. Some of the latter is a product of thirty years of post designation infilling, however the boundaries appear to have been drawn with whole settlement development control in mind bringing all 'historic' buildings within the boundary while giving little consideration to the more important historic townscape context within which these occur. Not the object, but rather a tool for management of change within Conservation Areas, this is self defeating as far weaker statements in regard to townscape character can be made where quality is mixed, and thus far weaker quality control can be exercised. Langton falls within the AONB which largely duplicates restrictions to householder permitted development rights otherwise introduced by Conservation Areas, and brings strong control in terms of development which affects landscape (detailed in PPS7) – relevant in terms of development which may affect the fringes of the settlement. While trees may be protected by TPO, the added factors brought by Conservation Area designation are in terms of control over substantial works of demolition, positioning of solar panels and the quality and appropriateness of new design specifically in terms of historic/architectural context. A focus upon quality and consistency in the character of areas designated is essential in terms of the latter, and in Langton the nature of the historic settlement pattern would appear to lend strong backing to the boundaries proposed. The whole settlement overview and appraisal contained within the current (unadopted) Local Plan provides the most appropriate context within which to consider the broader direction of change in Langton.

- *Fields north of Valley Road, and Oakridge Cottage.* The Valley Road forms a particularly strong edge to the settlement, and in terms of townscape the fields which lay beyond appear detached from it. These fields logically form a component of the 'setting' of the Conservation Area – a material consideration in decision making – and thus it is not desirable or necessary to include within the boundary. Oakridge Cottage has protection from listing.
- *Three Acre Lane, Serrels Mead, Steppes, Lower Steppes, Manor Farm with barn conversions, Manor Farm Cottage, Linphil, The old Ship, Putlake Farm, public toilets and open land.* With the exception of three listed buildings, the above largely comprises a mixture of twentieth century council and other suburban housing of little architectural, historical or townscape merit. While the crescent of housing in Three Acre Lane did win recognition for its design at time of construction it no longer appears remarkable and otherwise encroaches upon historic Coombe. The insensitive nature of barn conversions carried out at Manor Farm has harmed their character while



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Steps Hill is otherwise dominated by council housing. Open fields on Coombe Hill, which play a notable role in breaking up the continuity of development within the broader settlement, are removed in the context of buildings which surround them. The fields around Putlake Farm, a listed building, play a similar role in breaking the broader townscape though Crack Lane represents a logical place to draw the boundary. The proposal allows a greater focus upon Coombe where the historic and architectural character and quality of buildings and spaces is particularly good. The separation of this part of the Conservation Area from associated Manor Farm is perhaps unfortunate but this is otherwise a strong and logical designation which will allow a more considered management of change at this location. To the west a clear definition of the High Street at the limit of its historic extent allows similar focus here but should not be seen as devaluing the general and historic importance of the break in broader townscape provided by open space at Putlake Farm.

- *East Drove and top of Durnford Drove.* East Drove is functionally a back alley, development along which makes little or no contribution to the character of the Conservation Area given its generally poor quality. The current boundary runs along the edges of properties to the south, partial control over which seems unjustified in this context. The strip of land at the top of Durnford Drove has little linkage to the rest of the Conservation Area.
- *Properties west of North Street including Capston Field Estate.* While a number of the properties within this area are listed or otherwise hold some architectural or historic merit these appear overwhelmed by modern housing development and townscape quality is otherwise spoiled by the insensitive layout of such development. Closing the boundary at North Street focuses greater attention upon the area of core townscape quality along High Street.
- *Rookhurst, Hideaway, Island View and peripheral fields surrounding.* While the latter are a group of modern houses the former comprises several parcels of largely undeveloped land at and beyond the fringe of the settlement.

### Proposed for Addition

- *Length of wall and remaining curtilage of Culls, Garfield Lane.* A corrective given boundary changes and development at this location since original designation of the Conservation Area.

## 9.2 Management & Enhancement

Through positive proactive management and focused and appropriate enhancement works, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area may be both preserved and enhanced for the future. Analysis contained within this appraisal should assist in both the formulation and evaluation of development proposals thus helping to ensure that objectives are partially achieved through

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everyday planning. More broadly the list below presents a summary of potential action areas. Implementation will depend entirely upon opportunity, priorities and funding, and may involve or be achieved by either the public or private sectors.

**Encourage sympathetic maintenance:** Encouragement of sensitive home improvement and maintenance could be achieved through production of topical guidance notes. An issue of relevance across all Conservation Areas.

**Secure the replacement of gates to Leeson House:** Curtilage listed structures; these were removed some time ago by the County Council and are currently decaying while they await attention. A long running issue resolution would be beneficial.

**Increase public awareness of the heritage resource:** It is important to raise awareness amongst the public of both the existence of the Conservation Area, and the important role they play as property owners in preserving and enhancing its character and appearance.

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# Appendix

## Appendix A – Further Information and Advice

### Legislation, Guidance and Policy

- Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. (see [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)).
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment. 1994. ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).
- DETR Circular 01/01. 2001. ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).
- Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas. English Heritage 2005. ([www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk))
- Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals. English Heritage 2005.

### Design and Development

- By Design. Urban Design in the Planning System. Towards Better Practice. CABE/DETR 2000. (see [www.cabe.org.uk](http://www.cabe.org.uk)).
- Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them. CABE 2006. ([www.cabe.org.uk](http://www.cabe.org.uk)).
- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development. ODPM 2005. ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).
- Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing. DCLG 2006. ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).
- Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas. ODPM 2004 ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).
- Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. ODPM 2005 ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).

### Historical Development and Archaeology

- Benfield, 1990: *Purbeck Shop*.
- Good, 1966: *Old Roads of Dorset*.
- Hardy, 1908: *Old Swanage, Purbeck*.
- Hutchins, 1861: *The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset*, 3rd ed., edited by W. Shipp and J.W. Hodson.
- Langton Matravers Village Trail Booklet.
- Langton Matravers Local History and Preservation Society Book 26: *Langton Matravers in Photographs*.
- Saville: *The parish of Langton Matravers, Dorset*.

### Architecture

- Newman and Pevsner, 1972: *Dorset (Pevsner Buildings of England)*.
- RCHM, 1970: *An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Dorset. Vol. II, South East Part I*.
- Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

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## Maintenance

- English Heritage, 1998: *Stone Slate Roofing Technical Advice Note*. (Download from HELM.org.uk).
- SPAB and IHBC: *A Stitch in Time: Maintaining your Property Makes Good Sense*. (Available from PDC).

## Further Enquires

Enquiries regarding this Appraisal and Conservation Areas should be addressed to:

Design and Conservation Officer  
Purbeck District Council  
Worgret Road  
Wareham  
Tel: 01923 557388  
[www.purbeck-dc.gov.uk](http://www.purbeck-dc.gov.uk)

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

Environmental Services Directorate  
Dorset County Council  
County Hall  
Colliton Park  
Dorchester  
DT1 1XJ  
Tel: 01305 224921  
[www.dorsetforyou.com](http://www.dorsetforyou.com)

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## Appendix B – Conservation Areas: General Guidance

### What is a Conservation Area?

A Conservation Area is defined as: 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Conservation Areas are designated to cover the most historically and architecturally important and interesting parts of towns and villages.

Various factors contribute to the special character of a Conservation Area. These include: the quality of buildings, the historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries, boundary treatments and patterns of enclosure, characteristic building and paving materials, uses and associations, the quality of the public realm and contribution made by trees and green spaces. A strong 'sense of place' is often associated with Conservation Areas. It is the function of a Conservation Area Appraisal to assess and evaluate 'character' as a basis for the formulation of management proposals and planning policies, and to assist in the evaluation of planning applications.

### Owning and Developing Land and Property within a Conservation Area\*

PPG15 *Planning and the Historic Environment* provides a principal point of general guidance on Conservation Areas. In order to assist in the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas various additional planning controls exist within them:

The substantial demolition of unlisted buildings and structures requires Conservation Area Consent (as defined by case law this currently means the whole of a building or structure, or whole of a building minus the façade). Proposals will not normally be looked upon favourably where affected buildings or structures are deemed to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. An approved scheme for redevelopment will normally be required before consent to demolish will be granted. Exceptions to the rule include:

- any building with a total cubic content not exceeding 115 cubic metres (as ascertained by external measurement) or any part of such a building - with the exception of a pre-1925 tombstone;
- any gate, wall, fence or means of enclosure which is less than one metre high where abutting on a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway), waterway or open space, or less than two metres high in any other case;
- any building erected since 1 January 1914 and in use, or last used, for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;
- Certain buildings used for industry

Where demolition is being considered early consultation with local Planning and Conservation Officers should be sought. It is a criminal offence to carry out unauthorised works.

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Within a Conservation Area permitted development rights are subject to some restriction. Planning Permission will be required for:

- Cladding of the exterior with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles.
- Construction of an extension on the side elevation of an original dwelling house.
- Construction of an extension exceeding one storey on the rear of an original dwelling house.
- Any enlargement consisting of addition to or alteration of the roof.
- Provision of a building, enclosure, pool or container within the curtilage incidental to enjoyment between a wall forming a side elevation and the boundary of the dwelling house.
- Installation of a chimney, flue, or soil and vent pipe on a wall or roof slope fronting a highway and forming the principal or side elevation.
- Installation of microwave antenna on a chimney wall or roofslope facing onto or visible from a highway, or on a building >15m high.
- Installation of solar panels on the ground within the curtilage where these are visible from a highway; on the wall of a building within the curtilage where visible from a highway; on a wall which forms a principal or side elevation of the dwelling house where visible from a highway. *There is a general requirement for solar panels to be positioned with regard to minimising affect upon the external appearance of a building and amenity of the area within which it stands. Within a Conservation Area the mounting of panels on roofslopes visible from a highway is therefore likely to require Planning Permission.*

Further restrictions may be applied by the Local Authority or Secretary of State through use of 'Article 4' designations where a good case can be made (e.g. covering aspects such as change of windows).

High standards of design are expected for new development within Conservation Areas. Sensitive proposals which pay special regard to prevailing patterns of height, massing, articulation, use of materials and enclosure will be encouraged and have been given renewed emphasis in new statutory guidance notes PPS1 and PPS3. Early consultation should be sought with local Development Control and Conservation Officers.

Various types of advertisement including those which are illuminated will require Advertisement Consent. Advertisements must be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area.

All trees and shrubs with trunks 75mm or more in diameter at 1.2 metres above ground level are protected from felling, lopping and pruning. Six weeks' written notice must be provided to the Council's Tree Officer in each instance during which time a Tree Preservation Order may be served.

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## Implications for the Local Authority

The 1990 Act makes it a duty for Local Authorities to:

- In exercising their planning powers, pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- Formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area.
- Review designations from time to time.

*Information correct at December 2008.*

## Appendix C – Listed Buildings

Below is a table of the principal listed Buildings within the Conservation Area. For further information on these buildings see the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

Please note: The table does not include ancillary structures or those within the curtilage of named buildings. These are also covered by the listing. 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	English Heritage Reference No.
Coombe Farm House including front boundary wall and gate piers, Coombe Hill	II	109023
Range of farm buildings at Coombe Farm, 20m, north of the Farmhouse, Coombe Hill	II	109024
Range of farm buildings at Coombe Farm, 20m west of the Farmhouse, Coombe Hill	II	109025
Langton Manor Farm House, including attached barn on left, Coombe Hill	II	109026
Box Cottage, Coombe Hill	II	109028
Nos. 1 (Mayflower Cottage) 2 And 3 Coombe Court, Coombe Hill	II	109029
Coombe Court 4, Coombe Hill	II	109030
Leeson House, Coombe Hill	II	109031
Outbuilding in rear courtyard of Leeson House, immediately north-west of the House, Coombe Hill	II	109032
Twoleas, High Street	II	109034
Twolease Cottage 20, High Street	II	109035
Moonrakers 22, High Street	II	109036
Hyde View Cottage 24, High Street	II	109037
The Old Rectory, with boundary walls, High Street	II	109038
Parish Church of Saint George, High Street	II	109039
Entrance gates and gatepiers to Durnford House, High Street	II	109040
Boundary wall to Durnford House, abutting High Street, High Street	II	109041
82 And 83, High Street	II	109042
The King's Arms Inn, High Street	II	109049
Forge Cottage 41, High Street	II	109050
Fig Tree With Pump 43, High Street,	II	109051
Church Cottage 57, High Street	II	109052
The Village Hall, High Street	II	109053



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Nos. 61-71 with pump 61-71, High Street,	II	109054
75-81, High Street,	II	109055
Little Durnford, Mount Pleasant	II	109056
Windward, with boundary walls, Mount Pleasant	II	109057
Coombe Orchard, Valley Road	II	109060
47 And 49, High Street	II	435619
51, High Street	II	435620
53, High Street	II	435621
55, High Street	II	435622
34 and 36, High Street	II	435624