

About the Chiselborough Village Plan

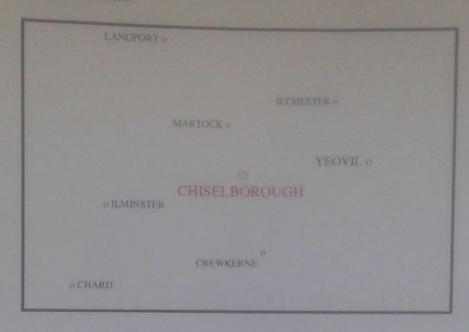
In 1998 the residents of Chiselborough, in partnership with the South Somerset District Council, participated in a well-attended Village Design Day. The purpose of which was to identify what they liked about the village, what they disliked and whether they felt could anything could be done to improve Chiselborough. These findings were to be collated and discussed, leading to the production of a report. Part of that report would be a "Village Design Statement". This would take into account the history of Chiselborough, its development through the ages and it's harmonisation with the environment. It is only with an understanding of the village's past that the unique character can be maintained in the future.

With ever increasing demands for housing it is possible that there will be applications for development of some sort in and around the village. The design statement which has now evolved into the 'Village Plan', is not intended to prevent building, it is intended to provide a set of recommendations for those who may be planning alterations or new development. These guidelines, in conjunction with the constraints imposed due to the Conservation Area, Listed Building Consent and the sympathetic expertise of the Council planning officers will help to ensure that Chiselborough continues to develop in accordance with the views of the community.



CHISELBOROUGH VILLAGE PLAN

Chiselborough is one of the most attractive villages in Somerset, lying in rural South Somerset near to Ham Hill



<u>Location</u> The landform surrounding Chiselborough is dictated by the characteristics of the Ham Hill plateau, where outcrops of Jurassic limestone, mainly the Ham Hill stone, overlay the Yeovil Sands.

The land rises to a height of 131 m. at Ham Hill where the honey-coloured limestone has been quarried for centuries. It was used as the main building material for many miles around, traditionally the distance a wagon and horses could reach in one day.

The west escarpment of the plateau drops quite steeply to the shallow valley floor of the River Parrett. Several small, steep sided valleys run down this west side, with some sunken "hollow" lanes. There are several villages only a mile or two apart on the valley floor connected by narrow and winding country lanes.

Chiselborough is the best placed of these villages, lying as it does at the conjunction of two small valleys, its boundaries having been set by the natural physical features of the landscape. To the west is the open valley floor of the upper reaches of the Parrett, where the rich alluvial soil has been intensively farmed for generations. The river is the western boundary of the parish, the whole of which is now part of the controlled River Parrett Catchment Area. Formerly it would have been subject to widespread and prolonged flooding in winter months.

The village boundaries have also been constrained by the nature of the land ownership over the past three centuries. The result is that Chiselborough is delightfully located within the natural landscape, with wide and distant views to the west, and a background of well wooded hills and small hillside fields to the east.



LOOKING WEST

Adjacent to the dwellings on the NE side is an area of 1.8 hectares of Common Land owned by the Parish Council. Part of this Common, together with some land on the side of adjoining Gawlers Hill, has been designated as a County Wildlife Site



History. Chiselborough has a long history of occupation and settlement. The easily worked soils of the Yeovil Sands, well watered by the River Parrett, have been formed part of the ploughlands commanded by the Iron Age settlement on Ham Hill.

The Romans established large estates and villas in the locality, close to the Fosse Way lying less than 2 miles distant. Roman artefacts have been found on land at Manor Farm and Roman drains at the eastern end of the village are recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record.

There was a well established Saxon settlement, believed to have been located around the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, at the west end of the village. Shards of Saxon pottery have been identified in the gardens of Court House, south of the church. The name of the parish was then Cealsberge, possibly after Chealin the 3rd West Saxon king (561A.D.). The Manor of Chiselborough was first recorded in the time of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066).

At the time of the Norman Conquest it was held by Allured and then called Ceolsberge. The boundaries do not appear to have varied to any great extent since the time of the Domesday Survey when it was said to comprise 5 Hides, about 750 acres. The present day parish comprises 797 acres, thus equating to the ancient Manor.

The street plan of the village is complex and influenced by the steep lower slopes of Gawlers Hill, but it is possible to identify three historic plan elements.

- a). Although no traces of the original Saxon buildings are visible, the church gives an indication of the prosperity of this time. It contains remnants of a Norman capital and two bases of colonettes between the nave and the canopy. The original low tower had an upper stage and an octagonal spire added in the 13th century. In 1292 the Prior of Montacute received an annual pension of £5 from the Rectory. The charter for the Great Fayre of Chiselborough, held annually on St. Lukes Day, was granted in the 13th century. In 1327 the Lay Subsidy returns show the parish contained the highest number of taxpayers in the Houndsborough Hundred.
- b.) The second plan element comprises the Medieval Settlement east of the church. Early 16th century Court Rolls give an indication of medieval buildings but only Court House and School House (now Michaelmas Cottage) have evidence of the existence of dwellings which may have been superseded.

By the 16th century the Manor had passed to the Strangways of Dorset and the Wadhams of Devon. An estate survey carried out for Nicholas Wadham, founder of Wadham College, Oxford, lists 40 copyhold estates or tenements comprising 23 houses and 17 cottages.

As the population increased there was a demand for accommodation for labourers, however there was no freehold land available for building. The relaxing of the Cottagers Act 1589 allowed squatters cottages to be built on the Lord's Waste.



The first licence was granted in 1614 and this started the linear development of small, mainly 18th and 19th century cottages lying just below Gawlers Hill.

c.) The squatters cottages constitute the third plan element. A survey of 1808 listed 22 cottages for which

no rent was paid, after this date a yearly rent of 10/- per cottage was levied. From 1618 to 1818 the Manor was held as a whole under the tripartite ownership of the Strangways, the Egremonts and the Wadhams, but by 1857, the entire estate was owned by the Earls of Ilchester.

In the first half of the 19th century the replacement of Lifehold by Rack Rent tenancies resulted in tenants no longer having any incentive to maintain their dwellings and the general condition of the houses deteriorated. The 1841 estate rentals show no new dwellings, the population was contained within the 70 units, which had existed in 1808. Some had been divided to make 82 units. By 1856 the condition of the cottages caused the Medical Officer of Health to call for improvements.

In 1857 Lord Ilchester purchased Lord Egremont's share of the estate and re-allocated land, houses and farmsteads. He erected the new Manor Farm and built a prestigious farmhouse. Lord Ilchester's sister was the wife of the Rector, who, being dissatisfied with the old rectory in Skilgate Lane, had a new one built at Byme Bridge. This was the first house to be built outside the village perimeter.

The population had peaked in 1841 and thereafter had begun to decline. By 1901 it had dropped to 258 and 13 of the 73 dwellings were uninhabited. In 1914 Lord Ilchester sold the major part of his estate. The squatters' cottages were not included and it is unclear how the freehold of these properties was obtained. In 1930 most of the buildings were thatched and built of the local stone from the quarries on Chiselborough Hill. The higher grade Ham Hill stone was only used for window mullions, doorframes, quoins, coping and fireplaces. The population dropped to 196 in 1951 and the dwellings to 65.

In 1958 families from the old and unfit cottages were rehoused on a new Council estate at Taylor's Orchard. The properties vacated were sold for renovation, and with in-filling, development has resulted in the population returning to near the 1891 figure of 285.

In the last 30 years the number of dwellings has almost doubled and in 2006 stood at 145, Except for two new farmhouses and the old rectory(now Chiselborough House), all have been accommodated within the original village boundary. Chiselborough must therefore be almost unique in South Somerset in being still contained within its medieval boundary.

Nineteen of the original 16th century copyhold farmhouses have survived. All have been restored, seven are still thatched and nine are Grade II listed buildings.

The village today contains a great mix of buildings old and new. In the Conservation Area nearly all have been built of Chiselborough Stone or Hamstone. Outside the area many of the newer houses are well designed and built, others are more suited to suburbia or merely plain and dull. It is ironic that the only two houses built by the County Council are the least attractive both in style and materials. However, all of them, because of their compactness within the natural boundaries, with the unspoil backdrop of the hills and their well kept and well stocked gardens, combine to present a very pleasing and attractive living environment.

All the above should be kept in mind if the character of the village is not to be lost. The Design Day meeting of the villagers was clearly aware that the same factors which make Chiselborough so attractive to them, also make it particularly vulnerable to development around its perimeter.

With acknowledgements to:

"The Houses, Cottages and Farms of Chiselborough" - John Dallimore

"Medieval Villages in South East Somerset" - Ann Ellison

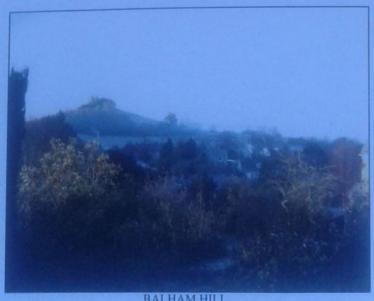


TOPOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

grazed. The particularly steep land above the common is grazed farmland. Few houses and established woodland above. The dwellings at the open western end comprise predominately of old and established buildings (including the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul) infilled with modern developments together with active farms.



GAWLERS HILL AND FAIR PLACE



BALHAM HILL

CONSERVATION BOUNDARIES

Much of the older sections of the village are contained within a defined conservation area due to the existence of many old buildings of architectural interest and visual pleasure. Figure 1 indicates the limits of the current conservation area boundaries. New building developments have, as a result, been restricted within this envelope to the infilling of spaces between existing properties and now ensures that the visible construction materials used and the architecture are sympathetic to the overall visual environment.

The inhabitants of the village recognise that the conservation area should be extended to incorporate other old properties, either by extension of the current boundary or as satellites of it. In addition, it should incorporate important archaeological features found higher up the valley such as strip lynchets that do not fall within the confines of the village common. Alternatively, and preferably, the entire village as defined by the topographical boundaries stated above should be contained within an enlarged conservation area in order to ensure that not only the architecture but also the landscape features are protected for the future.

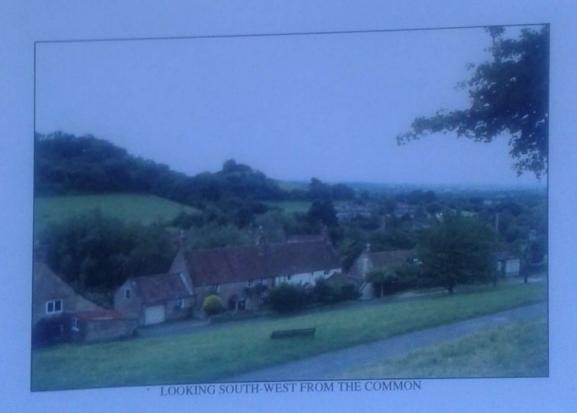


FIGURE 1 - THE CONSERVATION AREA

VISUAL BOUNDARIES

The visual boundaries are provided by the steep and converging valley sides to the north and south and by the existing buildings to the west, predominantly the church with its unusual spire, a landmark that is visible from many directions and at great distance.

Within the valley the visual dominance is provided by the scale of the high valley sides over the lower dwellings and the predominately old and established character of the dwellings and the randomness of their orientation. These combine to provide a vista where the openness of the rural green setting agreeably dominates and encloses the habitation. This is enhanced by the fact that the rural elements are not open agricultural fields but a mixture of small pasture (both open and enclosed), woodland and a village common, which includes rare plant life. The result is one of the most attractive scenes within Somerset.



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HEDGES, TREES AND THE COMMON

Hedges The hedgerow survey carried out in 1997 showed that there were 22000m of hedges in the parish of which 29% (6400m) would qualify for protection under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The most common hedgerow species are Hazel, Blackthorn, Elder, Hawthorn, Rose, Field Maple and Ash.

Trees The large number of trees that cover the sides of the valley provide a most agreeable backdrop to the village. "The Landscape of South Somerset" (SSDC) mentions this area as "having ancient coppice stools of Oak, Ash, Field Maple and Hazel." These species still form the bulk of the mature trees in the parish.

In 1997 Dr R Rathbone, as Tree Warden, carried out a survey of 'Veteran' trees in the parish; defined as a girth over 3.7m at a height of 1.3m above ground. There were eight such trees in the parish, all Oaks. Their location by grid reference was reported to SERC (Somerset Environmental Records Centre). A more recent survey was carried out in 2005 and is attached as Appendix 4.

Chiselborough Common

At the northeast head of the valley is Chiselborough Common. The 1.8 hectare site is owned by the Parish Council and consists of a sloping hillside with areas of unimproved grassland, some scrub and a number of trees. The northern area of the Common forms part



of a County Wildlife Site. These

sites have been recognised by SERC as being especially important for wildlife, including; plants, insects, birds, mammals, and all "biodiversity"

In November 1999, in order to preserve and protect this valuable feature, Mr Terry Franklin of the South Somerset District Council produced a Management Plan. This plan is implemented by a group of volunteers and funded by the Parish Council. The success of the management is reflected in the results of surveys carried out on the flora and fauna. A survey carried out by SERC in 1991 recorded 123 plant varieties; by 2002 this had increased to 157 different plants and 43 species of fauna. The species observed include Henbane, Corn Parsley, Agrimony, Ladies Bedstraw, Green Woodpecker and various species of butterfly including Common Blue and Marbled White. Several of these are designated "Somerset Notables" due to their rarity in this part of the county.

In 2001/2002 a new hedge was planted at the northern boundary to replace the existing defunct hedge. The Common has approximately 21 maturing trees of mainly native species and a process of management and replanting is in place.

With its fine views over the surrounding countryside, the Common is a popular place for villagers and visitors alike to sit and enjoy the rural scene, and several benches

to the village, and it well rewards the efforts made towards its regarded as a great asset

Balham Hill.

old County farm) from Somerset County Council. This will be managed by the Parish

DEVELOPMENT

New development Any new development would have to be carefully considered. Anything other than very limited development would be unacceptable for the

The village community feels strongly that any such development would be visually unacceptable for two reasons:

- (a) The raised elevation of any development that would have to be clustered on the south valley side would inevitably dominate the view. This would destroy the village's existing attractive visual aspect irrespective of how well the developments were undertaken. The elevated new developments and not the older buildings would be what the eye was drawn to.
- (b) The desirable dominance of the green pasture and woodland over the housing would be eroded, possibly dramatically.



- (c) The narrow lanes and lack of off-road parking already cause major problems for emergency services, Council services, deliveries and agricultural traffic.
- (d) Limitations of the drainage and sewage system already cause problems of overflowing with potential health implications. Any increase in use would be unacceptable.

Infill Development It is important that any such development should be in keeping with the existing buildings, which give the village its attractive appearance. The

Conservation Area should help to provide some protection against unsuitable buildings, but equal care should be taken to ensure that development outside of this

The role of the Parish Council in the planning process is vital. Their ability to comment on applications permits the views of the villagers to be known to the District Council. This is important as a recent report stated "The village (Chiselborough) has no defined development limits, so for the purposes of planning determinations the site is treated as open countryside".

After discussion of the views put forward at the Village Design Day, it was recommended that a set of guidelines would be helpful for those intending to alter or develop property in Chiselborough. The guidelines that follow should not be considered exhaustive

PLANNING GUIDELINES

Buildings should be of the traditional, smaller sized design, and should reflect the characteristics of the older style cottages. They should have a maximum of two storeys and an attic. It is unlikely that large, modern or futuristic designs will be suitable.

Where possible natural Hamstone should be used for the walls, in preference to the use of reconstituted stone. There are few brick built properties in the village.

Roofs should be pitched, the angle being similar to neighbouring properties, with clay tiles, slate or thatch used for covering. Tiles should be of a similar colour to surrounding tiled roofs. Care should be taken with the selection of guttering and water pipes and the use of white plastic should be avoided where possible.

Windows should be of proportionate size and should be of similar style to those of other properties. Ideally they would have timber frames or stone mullions. The use of UPVC windows will need very careful consideration as to the design and colour.

Large areas of glass should be avoided.

Doors should be of conventional design, especially if close to the street. Again, UPVC will seldom be the best choice.

To preserve a pleasing visual aspect, provision should be made for off street parking of vehicles. Garages should be built to the same guidelines as dwellings. Where their doors are visible from the street the use of timber doors should be considered. Where metal one-piece doors are used they should be painted in a restrained colour.

Boundary fences and walls should be of similar appearance to surrounding boundaries.

Generally any development should attempt to merge into its surroundings rather than stand out from them.

All services to the property should be routed underground. At the Design Day it was agreed that the routing of electricity cables and other utilities overhead created "eyesores" and that representations should be made to the service suppliers to have existing cables etc re-routed



"EYESORES" (OVERHEAD POWER LINES)



CAT STREET



THE COMMON

APPENDIX ONE

LISTED BUILDINGS IN CHISELBOROUGH

- 1. The Cat Head Inn Cat Street: C17 origins. Formerly known as The New Inn.
- 2. Warren Cottage Cat Street: C18 thatched roof
- Church of St Peter and St Paul: C12 origin, chancel C17.
- 4. Unidentified monument in churchyard: C18 chest tomb.
- Group of six monuments in churchyard:
 - (a) Langdon headstone; early C19, Charles Langdon, died 1805.
 - (b) Taylor headstone; early C19, John Taylor, died 1801.
 - (c) Burges headstone; mid C18, John Burges, died 1755.
 - (d) Rogers headstone; early C18, Charles Rogers, died 1733.
 - (e) and (f) Unidentified headstones; early C18.
- 6. Greenham monument in churchyard: C18 chest tomb, William Greenham, Died 1727.
- 7. Pitt monument in churchyard: C18 chest tomb, Joseph Pitt, died 1789.
- 8. Dibble monument in churchyard: C18 chest tomb, Dibble family members, including Arthur died 1789, and George, died 1796.
- 9. The Court House Church Lane: C17 or earlier, thatched roof. First known reference of 1742 when the house was known as "Sealy's Cottage where the courts are usually held" (unpublished VAG report).
- 10. Shepherd's Cottage East Street: C17/C19.
- 11. Strapp Farmhouse East Street: C17/C18, modified.
- 12. Bridgestone Fairplace: C17 origins, thatched roof.
- 13. Barn East Street: probably late C18.
- 14. Wren Cottage East Street: C18 modified, thatched roof.
- 15. The Roundwell North Street: Spring and washing place, C18.
- 16. Peter's Barton North Street: C17 origins. Formerly known as 15 North Street (originally two cottages).
- 17. No.17 North Street: Possibly late C16, thatched roof.
- 18. Manor Farmhouse and gateway North Street: Dated 1861.
- 19. Strapp Cottage Skillgate Lane: Possibly C17 origin, remodelled in C19





APPENDIX TWO

VILLAGE FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

Church of St Peter and St Paul
Village Hall
The Cat Head Inn
The Common, with seats, picnic tables and views
Ladies Group
Community Lunch
Annual village hall market
Annual June street fair with Flower Festival in the church
Punkie Night
Christmas Crackers, amateur variety show, alternate years
Refuse and recycling collections
Bus Services to Yeovil plus community busses on request.
Field on the North side of Balham Hill.

FACILITIES LOST 1991-2007

Post Office and general store
Allotments
Museum of old farm implements etc
Fruit and vegetable shop
Play Group
Youth Club
Twice daily postal delivery
Return bus late afternoons from Yeovil
County Council Farm
Award winning Farm Shop

APPENDIX THREE

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

The Village School was built in 1872 for 100 pupils on land, given to the church by Lord Ilchester, and was formerly the site of a Wesleyan chapel. The estate provided no other recreational facilities. In the mid 1920's a redundant First World War hut was purchased by public subscription and erected adjacent to Hempalong footpath for use as a village hall. Following the closure of the village school in 1945, the building and the land was



donated to the village by the Ilchester Estate, for use as the Village Hall.

By tradition, the <u>Rectory Garden</u> would have been used for summer fêtes etc. This facility was lost when the 1860 Rectory was sold and the Rector moved his residence to Middle Chinnock Rectory. When this was also sold, a new Rectory was built in 1988 in Chiselborough. It has a small garden and is thus unsuitable for social gatherings.

From 1914, as the main employer in the village, <u>Manor Farm</u> offered recreational facilities and for many years a football team played on a field so provided. The old Great Barn was also the scene of village feasts and commemorative occasions. This barn fell down in 1990 prior to the sale of Manor Farm barns for development.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's the Parish Council thoroughly investigated the possibility of purchasing land in the village for a playing field and children's play area. With the big increases in the price of land, none of the landowners, farmers, church commissioners or County council were prepared either to donate or sell a piece of flat land at a realistic price for such a small parish. The only piece offered by the S.C.C. and considered, was a boggy and uneven corner of the field at the end of Taylor's Orchard. This was rejected as being too difficult and expensive to drain and level. Two other possible sites were considered, the old allotments on the Odcombe road and a redundant garden at Cat Head Cross, these were turned down by the County Council as being sites unsafe for children. The project was abandoned.

APPENDIX FOUR

RECCOMENDATIONS FOR TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS FOR TREES IN CHISELBOROUGH

After the felling of two trees close to the Conservation Area (CA) boundary in 2005 at was apparent that mature trees only inches outside the boundary line had no protection in law unless on farm land where a felling license is required for any tree over 8cm diameter at 1.3m height. The Parish Council commissioned the Tree Warden to carry out a survey to ascertain whether there might be other such trees in and around the village that made a notable contribution to the appearance and attractiveness of the village that should be protected by Tree Protection Orders (TPO).

Trees within the CA are protected and the Common is within the CA, however, suggestions had been made that a few of the non-native species should be removed so the trees on the Common were included in the survey.

Trees close to rights of way have doubtful protection so The Bridleway and Old Road were included in the survey.

The categories of trees selected were, therefore, as follows:

- A. Those outside but close to the Conservation Area boundary.
- B. Those bordering the rights of way The Bridleway and Old Road.
- C. Trees on the Common.
- D. Veteran Trees close to the village. (Girth of at least 3.7 m. (1.2 m. diameter) at 1.3 m. above ground level.)

The location of the trees selected for consideration is marked on the attached village map together with a reference number. The accompanying table lists these reference numbers and other data which will be needed for a T.P.O. application: Location & Grid Reference, Species - Common Name, Apparent Age (Y Young, M Mature, O Old, V Veteran) and Landowner concerned (to the best of our knowledge).

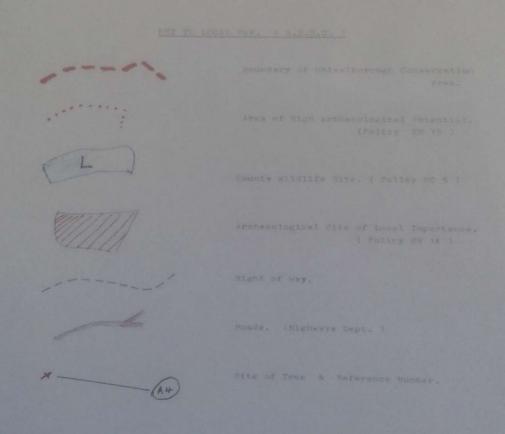
To the N. & NE. of the village, on the lower slopes of Gawlers Hill are two large areas designated as County Wildlife Sites (See Map), where trees, presumably have some measure of protection, and to the E. the belt of trees running up to Pease Hill (Coombe Copse)is similarly designated. But to the S. there is a belt of mixed woodland from Burridge Copse in the W. on to Brympton Copse and the trees on the NE. side of Penn Hill to the East end of the Bridleway. None of these would appear to have any protection in law. Further to the SE. the medieval Lynchetts above Allotment Rd. are registered with the Sites and Monuments Record held in Somerset County Museum in Taunton.

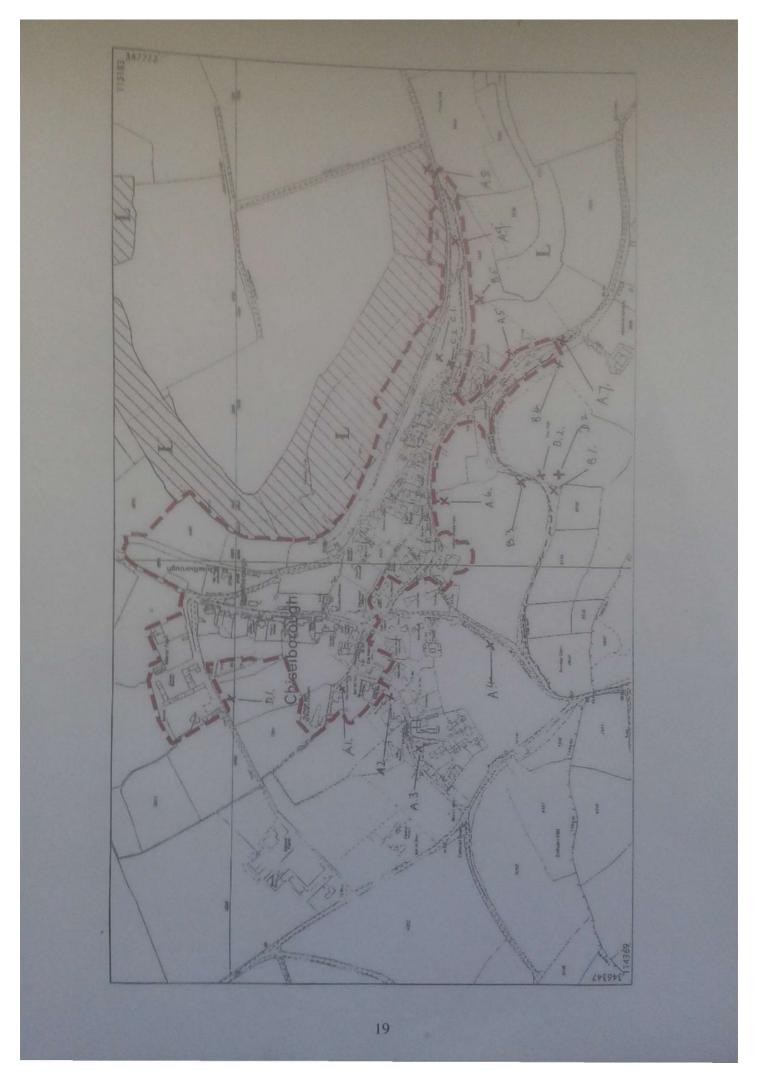
There are two ways in which these peripheral areas close to the village could be given protection. The first is by T.P.O. which can be extended to parts of a woodland, copse or other grouping of trees.

An alternative way would be by an alteration, and simplification, of the Conservation Area boundary to include these wooded areas close to the village. This was, in fact, the main recommendation which emerged from the Village Design Day Meeting held in 1998. The first draft Design Statement was published by Area West Planning Citice (S.S.D.C.) on 18, 8, 1999. The relevant passage stated:

"The inhabitants of the village recognize that the boundary of the Conservation Area should be extended to incorporate other old properties either with an expansion of the currently defined conservation limits or as satellites of the current boundary. In addition it should incorporate archaeological features higher up the vailey such as the strip lynchetts.

Alternatively and preferably, the entire village as defined by the topographic limits previously stated, should be contained within an enlarged conservation area in order to ensure that not only the architecture but also the landscape features are protected for the future ".





TREE RECCOMENDATIONS

Ref	Location			
A. 1.	Court House garden, Church Lane. ST 468148	Liquidamber	0	R J Rathbone, Court House.
A. 2.	Netherleigh garden, Cat St. ST 469147	Weeping Birch	M	T Perry, Netherleigh, Cat St
A. 3.	Taylors Orchard / Cat St. ST 467147	Liquidamber	M	B. Webber, 1 Taylors Orchard
A. 4.	West Side Skillgate Lane. ST 469146	Ash	M	SCC - Field retained from Balham Hill Farm.
A. 5.	E. end of East St. N. side. ST 473146	Ash	Y	R, Tonkin, Springfield, East St
A. 6.	S. side of East St. ST 471147	Sycamore	Y	Ms J Oliver.
A. 7.	Junction of Bridleway and East St. ST 473145	Sycamore	Y	SSDC (Manorial Waste)
A. 8.	N. hedge, top of New Rd ST 476 147	Ash	M	SSDC Highways Dept or R Holloway
A. 9.	Between New Rd and top of Old Rd. ST 475146	Ash	M	E. Ahern Penn View
B. 1.	S. boundary of Bridleway. ST 471145	Beech	0	Ms J Oliver.
B. 2.	SE. boundary of Bridleway, ST 471145	Oak	M	Ms J Oliver
В. 3.	MW. Boundary of Bridleway. ST 471146	Ash	M	SCC or Ms J Oliver
B. 4.	E. end of Bridleway. S, boundary. ST 473144	Ash	M	Ms J Oliver
B. 5.	Old Rd, South boundary. ST 475146	Ash	M	Ms R. Burns, Beam Cottage
C. 1.	SE. Common. ST 463146	Common Lime	M	Chiselborough PC
C. 2.	SE. boundary of Common	Ash	M	Chiselborough PC or P

Ref	Location			
	ST 4635 1455			Rees, Ivy Cottage.
D. 1.	Opposite SW. corner of Manor Barton, S. of Right of Way. ST 468150	Oak	V	G & R. Holloway, Manor Farm.
D. 2.	SE. of Bridleway, by track to Penn Hill. ST 472145	Oak	V	Ms J Oliver