

DOULTING

Conservation Area Appraisal



Doultling is situated approximately 2 miles east of the historic market town of Shepton Mallet. It occupies an elevated position on the western edge of the Cranmore Ridge, with views over the Sheppy Valley to the east. It is an ancient settlement grouped around four major historic buildings: St Aldhelm's Church, Doultling Manor, Manor Farmhouse and the Abbey Barn.

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This appraisal aims to identify the essential elements that give an area its character. It is, therefore, a 'snapshot' in time. Elements and details of an area may be important even if they are not specifically referred to in the text.

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August 2006

1. Introduction

1.1 The Doultong Conservation Area was first designated in 1992 by Mendip District Council.

1.2 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on Local Planning Authorities to determine from time to time which parts of their area are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' and to designate these areas as conservation areas.

1.3 Planning authorities also have a duty to protect these areas from development which would harm their special historic or architectural character and this is reflected in the policies contained in Mendip District Council's Adopted Local Plan.

1.4 The purpose of this appraisal is to define the qualities of the area that make it worthy of conservation area status. A clear, comprehensive appraisal of the character of a conservation area provides a sound basis for development control decisions and for developing initiatives to improve the area. It will also enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of the area, on which applications can be considered.

1.5 This appraisal has been produced in accordance with guidance contained in English Heritage's 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' (August 2005).

1.6 This appraisal was endorsed by the Council in August 2006 as a material planning consideration, and will be taken into account when assessing local planning applications.



Figure 1. Doultong Conservation Area

2. Location and Landscape Setting

2.1 The village of Doultong is situated approximately 2 miles east of Shepton Mallet, on the A361 to Frome and 210m above sea level. It occupies an elevated position on the edge of the Cranmore Ridge with views out over the Sheppey Valley to the west. It is founded on extensive areas of Doultong Stone, an Inferior Oolitic Limestone, which is used extensively within the village, as well as for rubble walling, copings, plinths and window surrounds throughout the Mendip area.

2.2 The village is surrounded by farmland to the south, east and west, much of which was enclosed in the 17th and 18th Centuries. To the north, nestled in a wooded landscape, lies the small hamlet of Chelynych and the Doultong Stone Quarry. To the west, a belt of mature trees provide a natural screen to the farmland beyond and mark the location of the remains of the water powered Edge Tool Works and the source of the Sheppey River.

2.3 The rural setting of the village is reinforced by the farmland which extends into the heart of the village on the south and east sides. To the south of the main road which bisects the village, the 17th Century Manor Farmhouse and the adjacent 15th Century Abbey Barn form an important group of buildings and focal point within the village. Together with the prominent church spire, these buildings are the first to be seen on three of the four approaches into the village, emphasising their historical importance and status. The undulating topography around Doultong means that the village has limited views of neighbouring areas, and that the village is very much concealed within the landscape.

2.4 To the north east of the village and outside the conservation area boundary, a modern housing estate and primary school now occupy the site of the medieval St Andrew's Quarry and surrounding farmland.



Figure 2.
Aerial Photograph of Doultong, 2001
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3. History and Development

3.1 Although the Romans are known to have settled at Shepton Mallet and used Doultong stone for construction, no evidence of a Roman settlement has ever been found at Doultong itself.

3.2 The earliest written reference to Doultong occurs in a Charter dated 705AD, confirming the village's ancient origins and historic connection with Glastonbury Abbey, over 10 miles to the west and for which the medieval Abbey Barn was built. Around this time, the Church of St Aldhelm was founded by Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury Abbey in Wiltshire. Following his death at Doultong in 709 AD, an ancient holy well situated to the west of the Church was named in his honour; the remains of the well can still be seen today.



St. Aldhelm's Well, Doultong

3.3 The 1843 tithe map of Doultong shows a small village concentrated to the north east of the Church of St Aldhelm. Both the Church and the 18th Century Vicarage are set within large open grounds. The main road originally ran south towards Stony Stratton, passing to the east of the 17th Century Manor Farm and the earlier 15th Century Abbey Barn before a junction carried it west towards Shepton Mallet.

3.4 The influence of the underlying geology and the topography of the area on the village's industrial heritage are evident on the early tithe map and subsequent 1st Edition OS map. To the north of the village, the freely available Inferior Oolitic Limestone resulted in the proliferation of small quarries, stone from which was extracted for use in both Glastonbury Abbey and Wells Cathedral. To the west, the combination of topography and the presence of natural springs offered an ideal location for water powered technologies. The narrow Well Lane heads west from the centre of the village, past St Aldhelm's Well and down to a series of ponds and associated mill buildings, identified on the 1st Edition OS Map of c.1880 as the Edge Tool Works. The ponds and remains of the buildings are still visible from the public rights of way that cross the site.

3.5 The late 19th Century saw a period of change within Doultong. In 1871, a new road from Shepton Mallet was built, passing between the Church and the Manor Farm. The remains of the old road, now a public right of way, is bounded in places by a stone wall on the north side and forms a hollow-way at the west end. Around the same time as the new road, the centre of the village was remodelled, with the construction of the high quality estate buildings for the Paget family of Cranmore Hall. These buildings were designed by the distinguished architect G.J. Skipper, who was also commissioned by the Clarks family, founders of Clarks Shoes, for a number of buildings in Street. The Abbey Barn Inn appears to have been one of the last to be constructed, not appearing until the 2nd Edition OS map of c.1900.

3.6 Some minor infilling along School Lane and the residential development of the St Andrews Quarry site mark the general extent of 20th Century change within the village.



Figure 3.
Doultong Tithe Map of 1843

Figure 4.
Ordnance Survey
1st Edition
c. 1880

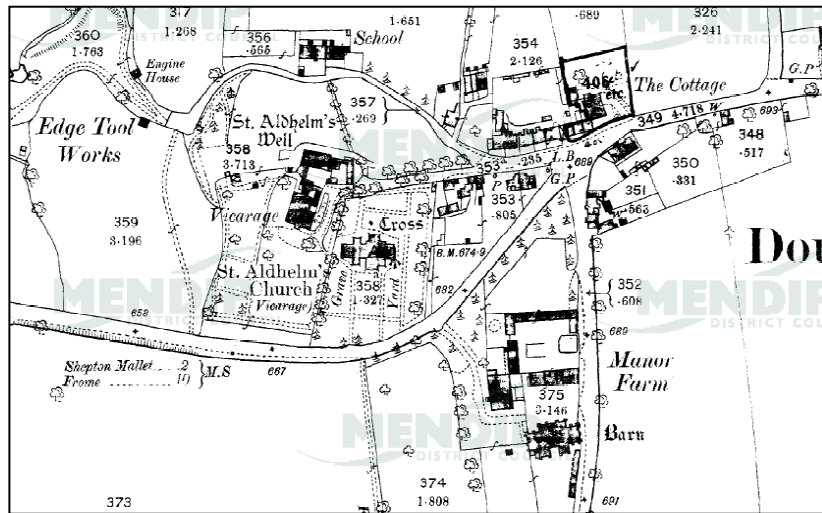
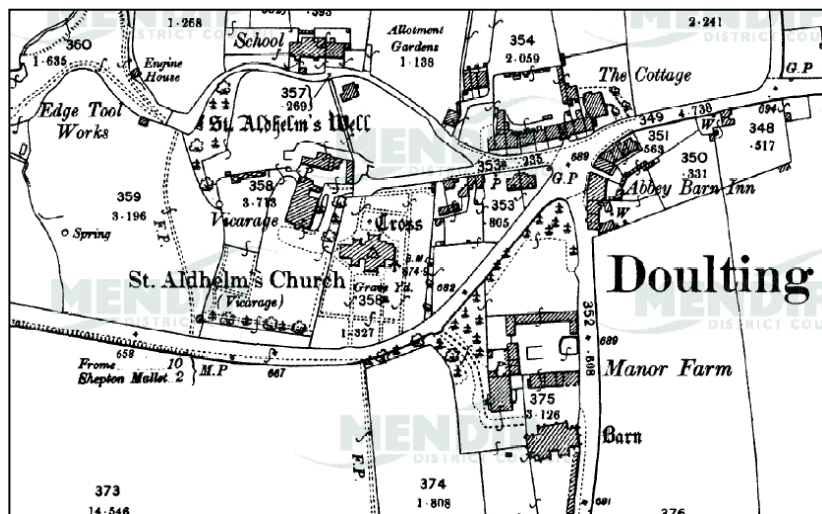


Figure 5.
Ordnance Survey
2nd Edition
c. 1900



3.7 There are 23 entries in the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest within the Doultong Conservation Area, accounting for over 46 individual buildings or structures (some entries cover more than one building/structure).

3.8 St Aldhelm's Church and the Abbey Barn are both listed grade I, the Abbey Barn also being a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Doultong Manor, Doultong Manor Stables and the Churchyard Cross are all listed grade II*.

3.9 There are also a number of trees within the conservation area that are protected under Tree Preservation Orders.

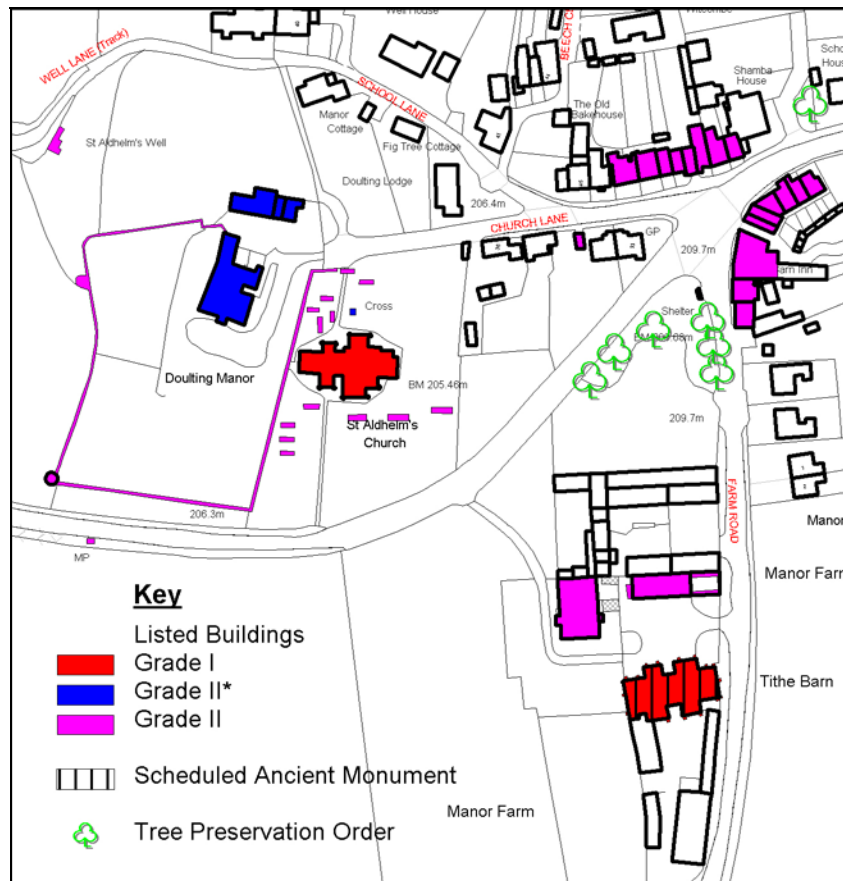


Figure 6. Statutorily Designated Sites and Features

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4. Character of Doultling

4.1 Doultling has a strong rural character with farmland extending into the heart of the village on the south and east sides. The village has a very loose-knit layout, with linear and curving terraces of historic estate buildings lining the sides of the main road at its centre. St Aldhelm's Church, Doultling Manor Farm and Abbey Barn provide a spacious, green edge to the west of the village, merging into the farmland beyond. To the north and east, modern 20th Century housing developments dilute the traditional rural character.

5. Spatial Analysis

5.1 On approach from Shepton Mallet, Doultling is predominantly obscured from view by the higher land to the south west of the village. Occasional fleeting glimpses of the top of the church spire offer the only evidence of a settlement nestled in the landscape until a sharp right hand turn reveals the village. The principal elevation of Doultling Manor Farm and the gable of the adjacent Abbey Barn terminate the view on this approach.



Doultling Manor Farm and Abbey Barn.

5.2 Trees, banks and hedges line the approach to the village, creating a funneling effect before opening out into the centre of the village. The imposing, architect designed terraces of historic buildings create a strong well defined edge to the space.



Southern 'Paget' Terrace

5.3 To the east, past the terraces, the village opens out with buildings set back within their plots, protected from the road by stone walls and hedging. The play area provides an important open space for the village and marks the boundary edge of the conservation area. Low density, 20th Century housing lies to the north of the village centre, past which the belt of trees of Chelynch Wood provide a natural screen to the undulating landscape beyond.

5.4 To the south, the farm buildings of Doultling Manor Farm present long unbroken elevations and roofs to the village centre. High gables and interconnecting boundary walls provide a solid, impenetrable edge to the roadside, in stark contrast with the open rural landscape opposite. The rural character of the village is very evident, with fields encroaching almost into the village, providing an important link between the village and its surroundings.

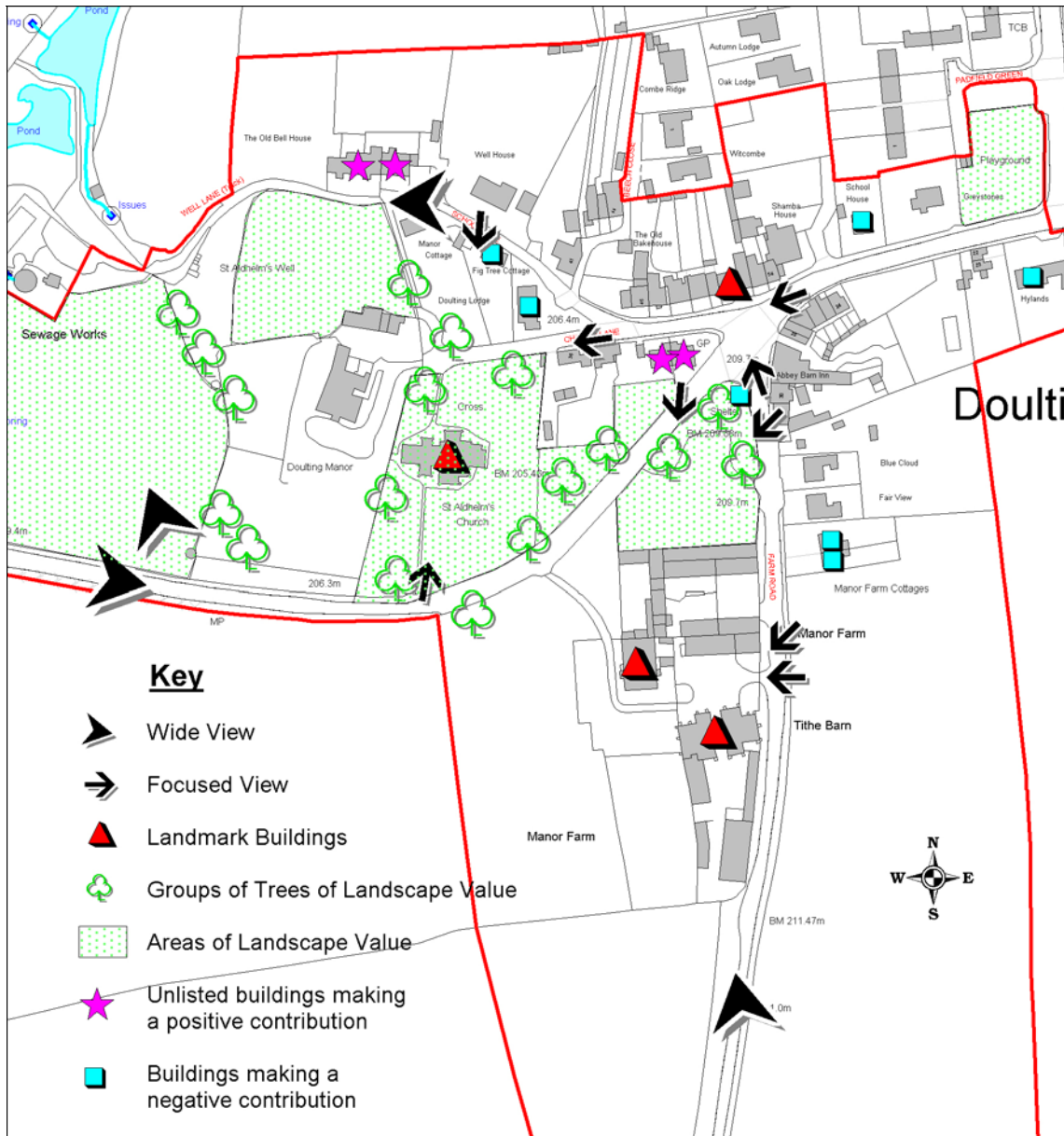


Figure 7. Spatial Analysis of Doulti

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View across field to Doultling Manor Farm

5.5 The village is dominated by the busy main road that bisects it, and Chelynych Road that serves the nearby quarry. Paths are narrow and, away from the main roads, become non-existent. Trees, though, do form an important element in the character of Doultling, with a number of large deciduous species located in the centre of the village and to the western boundary.



Northern 'Paget' Terrace terminating view from Doultling Manor Farm.

5.6 There are few landmark buildings in the village. The Church is the principle landmark building, the spire being one of the main features visible from outside the village boundaries and from numerous vantage points within it. The Manor Farm and Abbey Barn are also key landmarks within the village, and are visible, along with the church spire, from

outside its boundaries. This is especially notable on the approaches from the east and west, when the rest of the village is predominantly hidden from view. The three storey gabled gateway of the northern terrace of buildings provides a deliberate and strong terminating view when entering the village from the south, past the Abbey Barn and Manor Farm.



St Aldhelm's Church, Doultling



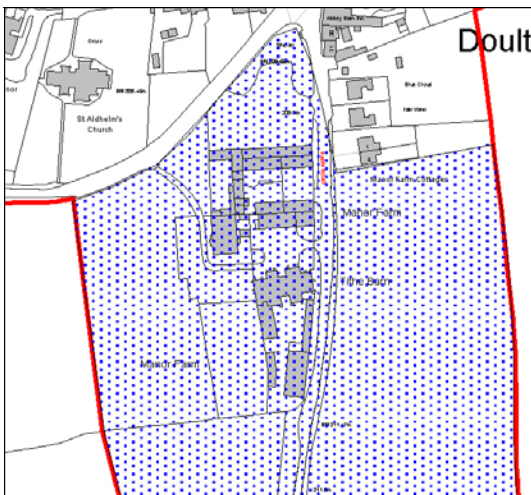
Abbey Barn

5.7 The early 18th Century Doultling Manor, located adjacent to the Church, is practically concealed from view from the majority of the village, other than in the immediate vicinity of the church. The tree-lined entrance along the gently inclined Church Lane cleverly draws the eye to the gates and gate piers which, in turn, terminate the view and provide a clue as to what lies beyond.



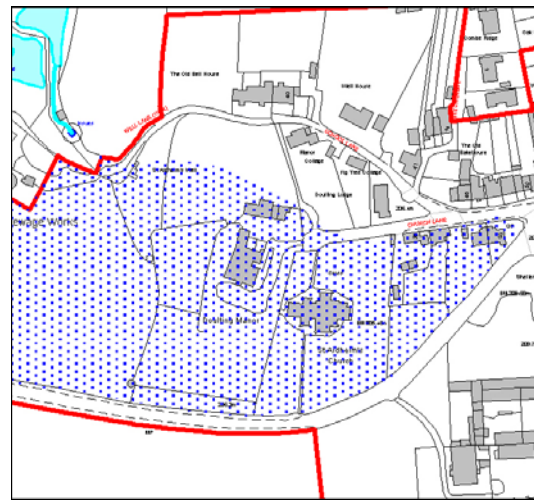
6. Character Analysis

6.1 Despite its relatively small size, it is possible to identify four distinct areas within the village, each with its own identifiable character. This appears to have arisen through a combination of the historical hierarchy of the spaces within the village, historic land uses and an element of dynamic change arising from increasing wealth and new ownership of the estate.



6.2 Manor Farm: In the south, the agricultural nature of the historic Manor Farm creates an area with a distinctive rural character, populated by agricultural

buildings and open fields, and dominated by Doultling Manor Farm and the Abbey Barn. The triangle of open land between the farm and the village centre provides a sense of physical separation, but the close historical association of the farm with the village remains evident. This area of land is an important open space within the village and contains a number of large trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

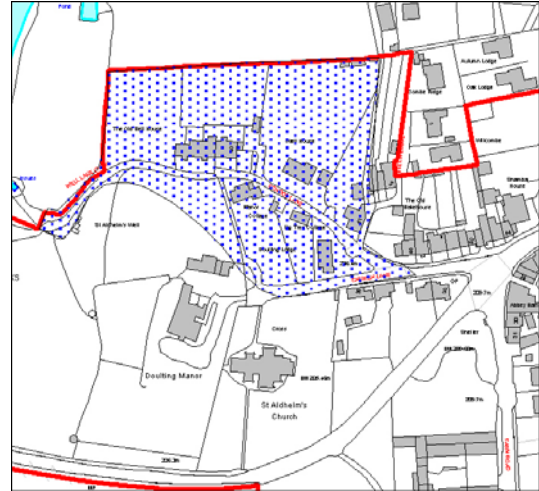


6.3 Douling Manor & Church: To the west of the conservation area, the character of the village is shaped by the presence of important historic buildings, specifically the Church and Douling Manor. These buildings form an important group, reflecting the hierarchy and status of this area of the village. Prior to the construction of the adjacent road, this area would have included the Manor Farm complex. Both buildings are set in large grounds, creating a distinct sense of space and openness. Whilst direct views of Douling Manor are limited, its boundary wall creates a strong demarcation of the western most edge of the village, rising up from the fields in an almost defensive manner, emphasised by the castellated turret and circular gazebo at its corner.



Gazebo and boundary wall to Doultling Manor

6.4 To the east of Doultling Manor, Church Lane marks the start of the transition between the adjacent character areas. Opposite the raised churchyard, a set of high stone walls and a narrow winding lane provide a link to The Old Bell House, formerly the village school. Heading further east, a short terrace of modest 17th/18th Century cottages are followed by the grade II listed village pump before the lane then enters the formal centre of Doultling, defined by the Victorian terraces.



6.5 Well Lane – School Lane: To the north of Doultling Manor, the character changes, with the sense of openness and space giving way to one of enclosure and confinement. This area is characterised by narrow rural lanes and high stone walls, occasionally breached to allow access to the buildings set behind them. The winding nature of the lanes, rising steeply from St Aldhelm's Well to the Old Bell House, combined with the height of the walls creates a sense of disorientation by funnelling visitors along.



Lane to Old Bell House and Well Lane



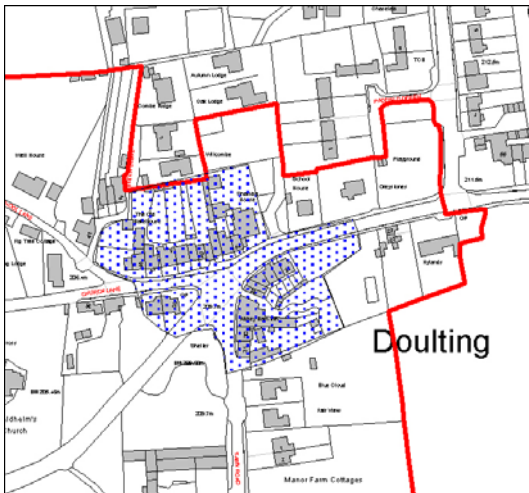
View down Well Lane towards St Aldhelm's Well

6.6 At the Old Bell House, the lane widens slightly and the walls temporarily drop to afford views of individual

buildings or glimpses of the church spire. This area of the village was not redeveloped by the Paget family and has retained a generally loose-knit grain, with one or two 20th Century buildings, such as The Well House and The Cedars, encroaching onto former agricultural or allotment land



School Lane with Old Bell House to right



6.7 Paget Terraces: The rebuilding of the centre of the village by the Paget family has given this final area a distinct and almost homogeneous character, with formal terraces creating well defined edges to the north and south east of the road. The high walls and narrow lanes associated with the nearby School Lane and Well Lane have disappeared. Instead, small front

gardens with low hedges or dwarf walls, some with low railings, border the northern terrace. The southern terrace by contrast, built at a slightly later date, sits directly on the back edge of the pavement. A pair of Victorian semi-detached villas occupy a prominent position at the junction of Church Lane and the A361, beyond which can be seen the church spire.



Victorian villas at junction of A361 and Church Lane

7. Local Building Patterns

7.1 Many buildings in the conservation area are modest, 2 storey buildings with generally horizontal proportions and a rather simple, yet robust appearance. They tend to form short terraces set sufficiently back from the road to allow a small front garden.



5 School Lane



Cottages on Beech Close showing traditional horizontal proportions

7.2 The exceptions to this are the modern properties which tend to be mostly detached houses and bungalows, and which are set further back in their plots. The 19th Century Paget buildings were built to a neo-vernacular design, elaborating on the style and design of the older cottages whilst introducing new features and architectural detailing. The Paget terraces, therefore, tend to have a more vertical emphasis and rhythm, accentuated by the skilful use of 2 and 3 storey gables and projections to create visual interest and avoid bland repetition.



Northern Paget terrace showing vertical emphasis and neo-vernacular detailing

7.3 The only Classical style buildings in the village are its two most important houses, Doultong Manor and Manor Farm. Both have been built on a much grander scale than those surrounding them, and are of typical classical proportions.



Doultong Manor Farm

7.4 **Walls.** With the proximity of the quarry, Doultong stone is the prevalent building material in the conservation area. The stone is characterised by its regular and uniform composition and when freshly cut, it has a pale cream or grey colour. With weathering, it becomes paler and harder although on certain exposed elevations the growth of surface algae gives the stone an orange-brown, sometimes red colouration.



Doultong stone showing weathered and un-weathered colouration

7.5 The stone is found throughout the conservation area in both dressed ashlar form and as the humbler, rough-hewn rubble. Where it is used as ashlar, walls are well coursed rather than snecked, and incorporate stone of varying bed depths. Joints are kept tight with virtually no mortar showing. In the older buildings, the rough hewn masonry tends to be of large proportions and partially dressed to provide a flat face. More recent buildings built of Douling rubble, such as Well House, tend to incorporate material of smaller dimensions and with a slightly tumbled appearance.



Douling stone used for dressed ashlar

7.6 Douling stone is also used for window and door surrounds, quoins, mouldings, chimney stacks, coping and decorative elements. It has given the buildings in the conservation area a distinctive yet harmonious appearance, despite their stylistic variations. Walls are generally left unpainted and not rendered.



Dressed Douling stone door surround

7.7 Windows & Doors. Most windows in Douling comprise two or three light stone mullion windows, with traditional, painted, side hung timber or metal casements of 2 or 3 panes. Where windows are non-opening, they are directly glazed into the surrounding stone. Some of these fixed windows have a top hung metal vent introduced into the uppermost pane. Most window surrounds and mullions are moulded, the style generally dictated by the age of the property. Stone label mouldings above individual windows is another feature common to the historic properties in the village.



Traditional stone mullion window with iron side-hung casement and direct glazing

7.8 The 19th Century terraces introduce slight variations to this general arrangement. Window heads in the northern terrace are arched rather than flat, in the southern terrace continuous string courses replace individual label moulds, and stone transoms are employed where greater emphasis is required. Oriel windows are also used to good effect in these terraces, reinforcing a sense of hierarchy and creating visual interest and depth in the elevations.



Southern 'Paget' terrace property showing Neo-vernacular design and use of continuous string course and oriel window

7.9 Doors are predominantly set in Doultong stone surrounds, some recessed, and are of painted timber planks, often with ribbed detailing. Porches tend to be absent from historic buildings but where they do exist they are often modern and of inferior design and quality.



Ribbed timber plank door in dressed stone surround with fanlight

7.10 **Roofs.** Roofs are mainly of natural slate, laid to regular courses, with blue/grey and occasional heather tones associated with Welsh slate. A smaller number of buildings have traditional plain clay tiles roofs. Some buildings are roofed in modern concrete tiles or asbestos slates. These modern materials tend to dilute the historic character of the conservation area and are generally considered inappropriate. The Church and Abbey Barn are the only buildings in the conservation area to have stone tiled roofs. Roof pitches are predominantly 40 degrees or greater with clay or stone tiles terminating the ridge. The prevalence of terraces results in long runs of unbroken roof slopes, enclosed in stone coped gables.



Natural Welsh slate roof enclosed in stone coped gables

7.11 Chimney stacks are a distinctive feature in the conservation area, forming important architectural elements of many buildings. Stacks are generally large and tall, formed in dressed stone and set in groups at the ridge. Many stacks are polygonal in design, with moulded caps and decorative clay pots. The height of the stacks tends to accentuate the verticality of the host buildings.



Decorative Doultong stone chimney stacks with clay pots

7.12 Rainwater goods are predominantly cast iron and held on gutter pins rather than fascia boards.

7.13 **Boundaries.** Boundary walls form an important feature in the conservation area, especially around Church Lane and Well Lane. Walls are mainly roughly coursed or random rubble Doultong Stone and range in height from low dwarf walls to high, defensive boundaries. Variations of 'cock and hen' capping are usually used to cap the walls, although mortar capping and stone copings are also employed. Some walls retain iron railings.



Doultong stone boundary wall with dressed stone coping



Doultong stone also used for cock and hen capping on rubble walls

7.14 **Trees and Green Spaces.** There are a number of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders in the conservation area. The dense grouping of trees around the Church and Manor Farm reflects the rural nature of the village and creates an attractive tree lined gateway at the western edge of the village. The avenue of trees at the end of Church Lane also makes an important contribution to the character of the conservation area and shields the Manor House from public views.



Tree lined gateway into Doultong

7.15 The churchyard is an important open space in the conservation area. The presence of the main road immediately adjacent to it, however,

means that road noise becomes very intrusive.

7.16 The rear gardens of the buildings along Church Lane remain an important open space in the conservation area, contributing to the setting of the church. They also contain a number of mature trees which enhance the quality of the green spaces in the conservation area. Subdivision and development in these plots would not be acceptable.

7.17 The field separating Manor Farm from the centre of the village is an important open space visually and historically. It also contains a number of the mature trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders.



Copper Beech trees making positive contribution to character of conservation area.

7.18 There is one playing field in the conservation area. The field was originally open farmland but has since been surrounded by 20th Century housing.

7.19 **Surfaces.** All of the paths and roads in the conservation area are of tarmac finish with concrete edging. The wide expanse of road surface at the junctions of Church Lane and Farm Road with the A361 create an

unattractive void in the centre of the village.

7.20 **Contribution of unlisted buildings.** Old Bell House, formerly the village school, and 5 School Lane are of particular interest. Despite their relatively homogenous character, the buildings are of two distinctive phases of construction, with 5 School Lane carrying a date of 1637 on its front elevation. A slight step in the eaves and a clear vertical break in the masonry are evidence, though, of the different building phases. The buildings have a strong, robust vernacular character, with stone mullioned windows, dressed Douling stone walls, slate roof, large chimney stacks and coped gables. The original school bell tower survives to the west of the building and is a prominent feature in the streetscape of this part of the conservation area.



Old Bell House and 5 School Lane

7.21 Numbers 33 and 34 Douling also make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. These late Victorian semi detached properties possess many of the features that are characteristic of the adjacent listed terraces; steep slate clad roofs, dressed stone walls, projecting gables, and tall polygonal stacks. Despite its position at the top of the Church Lane, No. 33 does not address the main road,

presenting solid, blank elevations to the A361 and the approaching traffic.



33 and 34 Doultong

7.22 Extent of intrusion or damage.

Despite the availability of Doultong stone, a number of buildings in the conservation area have been built using reconstituted stone. Fig Tree Cottage, for instance, lacks the natural variation in texture, shape and colour that can be obtained from using natural stone. Furthermore, its roof pitch, window proportions, use of deep fascia and bargeboards, its ratio of solid to void and lack of chimneystacks all fail to relate to the character of the surrounding buildings.



Fig Tree Cottage

7.23 Doultong Lodge, a 20th Century bungalow, similarly fails to respond to

the general form and character of the surrounding buildings and appears inappropriate in its context and fails to contribute to the character of the conservation area.



Doultong Lodge

7.24 The group of four 20th Century dwellings opposite Manor Farm also do not relate well to the historic pattern of building or architectural styles. The dwellings, 2 bungalows and a pair of semi detached houses are plain in their design and set well back from the road edge. Similarly, Hylands is another bungalow situated at the eastern edge of the conservation area adjacent to a small grouping of trees that form a green edge to the village. These modern buildings fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, yet the sites on which they have been built are important in terms of its setting, and views into and out of it.



20th Century buildings on Farm Road

7.25 Due to the sensitivity of these sites and their visual relationship with the conservation area, the decision has been made to keep them in the boundary of the conservation area. This is to ensure that any future redevelopment of these sites responds to and enhances the character of the conservation area.

7.26 School House, a heavily converted 19th Century building, is a prominent building near the centre of the village. It is, however, a distinctive oddity in the conservation area by virtue of its design and form, it being effectively square on plan with a raised 1st floor with large, flat headed dormer windows, tile cladding, wide overhanging eaves and uPVC door and windows.

7.27 The wirescape in the centre of the village is having a significantly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area. This modern intrusion is unsightly and an inappropriate feature in an historic setting. Clutter from wires focussed on timber poles, which are also adorned with street lighting and junction boxes, is a particular problem at the top of Church Lane and detracts from the setting of the listed terrace.



Unattractive wirescape has a detrimental impact on the conservation area

7.28 The gradual replacement of traditional windows with uPVC alternatives in unlisted historic buildings is resulting in the incremental erosion of the historic character of the conservation area. The uPVC frames appear overly large and clumsy, especially in traditional stone surrounds and the use of floating glazing bars gives the windows a bland and lifeless appearance.



uPVC casement window in traditional stone surround

7.29 The use of timber fencing, or its erection on top of, or behind natural stone walls does not respect traditional forms of boundary treatment and detracts from the historic character and appearance of the conservation area.



Timber fencing behind traditional stone boundary wall

7.30 The concrete bus shelter in the centre of the village is an unattractive feature and detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area.



The concrete bus shelter is an unattractive feature in the heart of the conservation area

7.31 The presence of the main road is also very intrusive, creating a physical barrier between the two halves of the village. The lack of adequate crossings, the generally concealed approaches, the regular movements of heavy vehicles and the wide nature of the road contribute to a real sense of danger for pedestrians.

7.32 Existence of Neutral Areas.

Shamba House is a well proportioned 18th/19th Century building with dressed stone elevation and window surrounds and a stone porch supported on Doric columns on the return elevation. The property has unfortunately had uPVC mock Georgian sash windows inserted and a dilapidated timber greenhouse is positioned against the gable of the adjacent terrace. Whilst it is an attractive building, the uPVC windows and poor condition of the greenhouse means the building neither enhances nor detracts from the character of the conservation area.



Shamba House; uPVC windows and a dilapidated lean-to conservatory detract from this otherwise attractive historic building

7.33 Well House is a relatively new building constructed from traditional materials in a vernacular design. The detailing reflects, for the most part, the characteristic built form of the conservation area with Douling stone walling, stone mullion windows and natural slate roof with coped gables. The building is set back behind high stone walls which respect the character of this part of the conservation area. The Well House has a neutral effect on the character of the conservation area.



The Well House; a prominent building with a neutral impact on the character of the conservation area

7.34 Condition of Built Fabric. The majority of buildings in the conservation area are in good condition. The Abbey Barn, a grade I listed building and scheduled ancient monument is, however, starting to show signs of disrepair and erosion at the base of the walls.



Base of pier of Abbey Barn showing signs of stone decay and erosion

7.35 The Church boundary wall facing Church Lane is in a poor condition. Its iron railings have been removed and the wall, constructed from ashlar blocks, is starting to move and decay. Water damage, iron corrosion and

inappropriate cement repairs are causing further damage.



Damage to boundary wall of St Aldhelm's Church

7.36 The listed water pump in Church Lane is suffering damage from water collecting in the soil filled trough and the effects of vegetation growth.



Vegetation and water damage to listed water pump

7.37 The timber greenhouse attached to Shamba House is in a state of disrepair and its poor condition detracts from the setting of the adjacent listed buildings.

7.38 The traditional Somerset Finger Signpost at the junction of the A361 and Church Lane is in need of redecoration.

8. Synthesis of appraisal

8.1 Despite its relatively small size, the historical development of the village has resulted in the formation of small individual areas with quite distinct characteristics.

8.2 The open, rural character of the historic spaces around St Aldhelm's Church, Doultong Manor Farm and Doultong Manor contrasts with the strong architectural lines and well defined edges of the Paget terraces, whilst the narrow winding lanes leading down to St Aldhelm's Well create an overwhelming sense of enclosure not found elsewhere in the conservation area.

8.3 The architecture of the listed terraces and the dominance of Doultong stone as a building material create a sense of visual harmony in the heart of the conservation area. This, however, is weakened at the periphery by the use of modern alternatives such as reconstituted stone.

8.4 The key views of St Aldhelm's Church, Abbey Barn and Doultong Manor Farm and the surrounding areas of open land make an important contribution to the setting and character of the conservation area and must be protected.

8.5 The wirescape within the village is visually obtrusive and detracts from the character of the conservation area. Any proposals to underground or rationalise the wires will be supported.

8.6 There are a number of sites and buildings which presently fail to contribute to the character of the conservation area. Opportunities may, therefore, arise to redevelop such sites with a view to enhancing the character

and appearance of the Doultong Conservation Area, in accordance with adopted policies. Development in open areas of importance will be resisted.

8.7 The dominance of the A361 through the centre of the village is a significant problem, having adverse visual, physical and sensory impacts on the character and appearance of the conservation area. A 30 mile per hour speed limit is enforced through the village to reduce travelling speeds and improve pedestrian safety but the width of roadway in the centre of the village and the lack of defined crossing areas is a concern. Opportunities to successfully mitigate the effects of the traffic may, however, prove difficult.

8.8 No changes are proposed to the boundary of Doultong's Conservation Area.

8.9 This Conservation Area Appraisal is to be read in conjunction with local planning policies and the proposed Conservation Area Management Plan.

9. Summary of Key Characteristics

- Centre of village dominated by the 'neo-vernacular' architecture of the Paget terraces.
- Away from the centre, the historic built form is predominantly 2 storey buildings with horizontal proportions and simple, robust appearance.
- Buildings often grouped in terraces with ridges parallel to the street.
- Natural slate roofs with stone coped gables and steep pitches. Clay plain tiles used to a lesser extent.
- The use of Doubling stone for walling materials, moulded door surrounds and mullioned windows.
- Traditional side-hung, painted timber or metal casements with 2 or 3 panes per casement. Windows predominantly single glazed with narrow glazing bars. Non-opening windows usually directly glazed into surrounds.
- Painted timber plank doors.
- Distinctive chimney stacks, often grouped together, with moulded caps and decorative chimney pots.
- Cast iron rainwater goods supported on gutter spikes.
- Well defined boundary walls of roughly coursed or random Doubling Stone rubble.
- Avenues and groupings of trees, especially around important open spaces.
- Views and glimpses of the surrounding farmland reinforce the rural setting and character of the conservation area.