



Dersingham

Conservation Area

Character Statement



DERSINGHAM is a large well-built village, on the Hunstanton road, 8 1/2 miles N.N.E. of Lynn, sheltered on the north by rising and well cultivated fields, and bounded on the south by a sandy heath and rabbit warren of 1,900 acres, of which 1,500A. are in Wolverton and the rest in Sandringham, West-Newton and Dersingham.

The Parish contains 676 inhabitants and 2,951 acres of land, extending nearly two miles westward to Lynn Deeps and three miles eastward to Ling House.

WILLIAM WHITE 1845

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Introduction

A Conservation Area - “An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

The conservation of the historic environment is part of our quality of life, helping to foster economic prosperity and providing an attractive environment in which to live or work. The Borough Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of West Norfolk's historic built environment and significant parts of it are designated as conservation areas.

Conservation areas were introduced by the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Local Authorities were required to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest, whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate them as conservation areas. This duty is now part of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act which also requires the review of existing conservation areas and, where appropriate, the designation of new ones. The quality and interest of a conservation area depends upon a combination of factors including the relationship and architectural quality of buildings, materials, spaces, trees and other landscape features, together with views into and out of the area.

Setting and Location

Dersingham is 11 miles (17.5 km) north-north-east of King's Lynn, 7 miles (11 km) south of Hunstanton and two miles (3.2km) inland from the Wash to the west. It is a large village of approximately 5000, a

large proportion of whom live in post-war houses and bungalows built on the rather marshy low ground between the Church in the east and the former railway station to the west.



It is on average about 30m above sea level with the ground rising to the east, north-east and south-east. To the north are the villages of Snettisham and Ingoldisthorpe and all three share a bypass (the A149 King's Lynn to Hunstanton Road) which passes to the west and now separates Dersingham from the sea. To the east of the village is open countryside and to the south is a large area of sandy heath on which is the Sandringham estate and country park. There was once on this area a rabbit warren of 1900 acres shared between several parishes. To the south-west is Dersingham Bog, now a National Nature Reserve, which encompasses mire, heath and bog.



The conservation area is low lying in the west but rises up Sandringham Road to the south, Doddshill Road to the east and Sugar Lane and Fern Hill to the north. The most densely populated section is the western part, whereas the north-south part has more open space and offers more views, particularly of the church, tithe barn and of open country to the east. To the west the conservation area borders the extensive built-up section of Dersingham, to the east and north open country, and to the south the Sandringham Estate.

Origins and Historical Development

The area now known as Dersingham was probably originally settled because of its ready supply of fresh water from springs and its height, which made flooding from the sea unlikely. The village probably has Saxon origins – it has a mention in the Domesday Book and the name derives from Old English meaning 'homestead or village belonging to Deorsige'. The Domesday Book entry mentions that Dersingham had a salt house and a fishery, as might be expected from its almost coastal location.

Medieval Dersingham was dominated by a number of manors including, West Hall, Pakenham Manor, Gelham Manor, Snaring Hall and Brookhall. The area around the community centre (once the village school), the Feathers and Doddshill were all part of the Manor of Pakenham and the old house of Pakenham Manor survived until 1934 as a pair of cottages in the schoolyard. The manor house of West Hall survives to this day as Westhall Manor Cottages on Manor Road.



13th Century poll tax returns show that Dersingham was well populated for the time, with a figure of about 115 people to 1000 acres, compared with an average 68 for Norfolk and 34 for rural England in general. This suggests the parish was quite prosperous and the East Anglian woollen trade was healthy. The parish Church of St Nicholas was begun in the early 14th Century when the nave and chancel were built, the tower being added about 1370 when the aisles were raised to their present height and the clerestory was built.



By 1671, the year of the great flood on this area of coast and of the building of the tithe barn, the population had risen to about 400. The buildings of Dersingham at that time were of carstone and were dispersed along Chapel Road and Manor Road. There were also small groups of dwellings around the nucleus of Gelham Manor (now the site of Budgens supermarket), around the nucleus of Pakenham Manor where the Feathers is now and on Doddshill and Fern Hill. There were 73 houses with various outbuildings. At that time, one of the largest houses would have been the precursor to Dersingham Hall, a manor house of carstone, apparently built by Thomas Pell, who also built the tithe barn. Dersingham Hall is thought to incorporate part of the original manor house. There were also twelve large cottages or houses, probably on the sites of the farms marked on the tithe map of 1840.



At this point in time there were a few yeoman farmers, some skilled tradesmen, a couple of shopkeepers and a large number of agricultural labourers. The economy relied on sheep and corn; the large area of marsh towards the coast (which was nearer to the village than it is now) offered rough summer grazing. On the rising land behind the village large arable fields were cultivated to feed the villagers and their livestock. At this time the most important family in the village was the wool merchant dynasty of the Pells, puritans who had been in Dersingham for about 150 years and who were Parliamentarians in the Civil War.

Enclosure took place in 1779 and according to White's Directory of 1836, "160 acres were allotted in lieu of the vicarial tithes and 457 acres were enclosed within a ring fence for the use of the parish, viz., 329 acres of marsh as a stinted common, and 128 acres of heath, for providing whins and turf"

The 19th Century brought many changes to Dersingham. The population increased from 534 in 1821 to about 1000 in 1900, the rate of building increased and the northern and southern parts of the conservation area expanded. New houses, shops and business premises were built along Manor Road,

Brook Road, Heath Road and Chapel Road during this Century. Other accoutrements of Victorian life appeared, such as the New Connexions Chapel (1851), the Foresters' Hall (1893) and the Public Elementary School, now the Community centre, built in 1875 on land provided by the Prince of Wales. More public houses appeared, including the Feathers and the nearby Coach and Horses.

The railway arrived in 1862 linking Dersingham with King's Lynn and Hunstanton. The church was massively restored in the 1870s and a new vicarage built. There was very little new building within the historic core of the village around the church, until the Church Institute or Hall was built in 1911/12.

The nearness of the Sandringham estate, the largest landowner in Dersingham, has had considerable impact on the village, with a number of houses being built by the Royal family (for example, the older houses on Sandringham Hill and those on Shernborne Road) and various buildings being the result of gifts of land (the former school and Foresters Hall). Economically the arrival of royalty in 1862 was beneficial to the village as the royal family could provide a great deal of employment to the village and has continued to do so.



Dersingham has continued to grow throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. The population has increased from was around 2000 in 1961 to around 5000 now and large numbers of post-war houses and bungalows have been built on the previously unoccupied parts of the village between the Church and the Railway. The railway closed in the 1960s and the village has been bypassed. It has acquired a police station, Catholic Church, and new schools and it continues to thrive.

Character Overview

The conservation area in Dersingham is to the north, east and south of the village and takes in the historic core that existed before the extensive development to the west and in the centre took place. It forms an approximate reverse-C beginning in the south west corner at the junction of Manor Road/Lynn Road from where it runs eastwards along Manor Road - including Brook Road and parts of Heath Road and Sandringham Road - to the Community Centre and former school. The eastern section includes the northern/south part of Manor Road, Church Lane and Shernborne Road to the east, whilst the northern part

runs the length of Chapel Road from its junction with Manor Road in the east to Lynn Road in the west.

The sections are rather different in character. The eastern part is quite open and rural in character with clusters of buildings here and there, or single buildings in large plots which may be hidden behind walls or hedges. It contains the historic core of the village, including the church, the tithe barn, two manor houses and a moat and has a number of former and current farm buildings, indicating the agricultural nature of Dersingham's history. It also includes a civic area with the Church, Church Hall, a medical centre and, at the southern end of this section, the community centre. There are good views afforded by the incline and plenty of trees and bushes. The area around the church is an attractive green open space which means that the Church dominates this section.



The south-western part, which begins just south of the junction with Doddshill Road, at the Feathers Hotel, is more built up and suburban in character. Here we find shops and small businesses mixed in with the houses, and many are built close to the

street edge. Here the buildings are mainly 19th and 20th Century with a few older ones mixed in.



The northern section along Chapel Road has a similar character with a few small businesses including a garage between the houses and cottages. The age range of the buildings is also very similar although the older buildings have greater influence, perhaps because of the terraces of cottages towards the western end of the road.



Throughout carstone dominates as a building material, usually combined with brick and often pantiles, which give the buildings a distinctive reddish brown colour. Heights of buildings are generally two storey, with a few

single storey buildings such as barns and bungalows, and the rare appearance of taller buildings such as Dersingham Hall and the church. They vary greatly in size from small cottages and terraces in Manor Road and Chapel Road to the larger more individual houses on Shernborne Road.



Spaces and Buildings

The western edge the conservation area is entered via **MANOR ROAD**, a busy street with a mix of buildings and a mix of periods, styles and uses, from the 17th Century former Manor House and 18th Century carstone cottages to brick buildings of the late 20th Century. It only became fully built up during the last Century. Some buildings are right up to the street edge, some set back behind front gardens.



The conservation area starts on the **south side** of the road and in a rather haphazard manner with Victorian cottages with gaps between. First is a pair of cottages. No 1 fronts Hunstanton Road whilst No. 2, with its gable of slip carstone, is the first dwelling on Manor Road. After a selection of sheds comes No. 4 set further back from the road with a bay to the front and 20th Century windows. Beyond this is a wall of mixed brick and then and then a pair of garage doors in the gable end of a single storey outbuilding, possibly the old forge, which runs southwards beside a narrow track giving access to modern buildings beyond. After the track are two cottages, (No. 6 & 8) the first slightly taller, of red brick with carstone gables and pantiled roofs. The next gap is altogether greener and forms part of the garden of Lyncroft and substantial Edwardian house of red brick and pantiles but again with modern windows.



At this point the conservation area moves to the **north side** of the road where the first property is Victoria House. Possibly built as a public house in the 19th Century but now with modern alterations. Next is a small terrace, gable end on to the road. At first glance Nos. 5, 5a & 5b are of little interest having a facade of common brick but the gable and rear walls are slip carstone. They appear to have been added on to the remains of the mid 17th Century Manor House of West Hall Manor, later a work house and now two cottages of dark slip carstone under a steep pantiled roof with deep parapets strong detailing and ghosts of previous openings. At the end of the terrace is No. 5g on a slight return with a small half gable window. No. 5f at rear has first floor addition with a 17th Century brick Dutch gable.

Next comes No. 7, Mere House, an attractive Edwardian style house with a white stuccoed front and deep sash windows and set in large garden behind an old boundary wall. Trees and hedges are a strong feature of this part of the conservation area with the next property, Wood Royal, being largely concealed from view behind a high hedge and mature trees.



Moving eastwards one comes to the entrance to Willow Drive, a small group of three modern houses. This is followed by three more which front Manor Road, and then the entrance to Beech Drift with a pair of 19th Century carstone cottages at the end. These have pantiled roofs and modern conservatory style extensions to the front. Whilst this short section of Manor Road is comprised of essentially modern buildings, the number and quality of mature trees and high hedges give a sense of enclosure and form a link between the traditional buildings. Nos. 19 and 21 are a pair of cottages in carstone with brick dressings and slate roofs. The late 20th Century extension to No. 19 sits well.

Still on the north side is **BROOK ROAD**, a quiet side road with a dead end and houses only on the **east side**. It has a feel of informality with its shingled surface and the houses sit behind informal front gardens with low walls or have nothing to announce them at all. They are a series of late 19th and early 20th Century houses, of different builds, heights (including one bungalow) and roofing materials, unified by the fact that they are all in brick of varying hues. Some are detached, some semi-detached and near the end there is a small terrace. They form an attractive

collection, with some nice detailing. There is a good view down Brook Road as the houses are stepped back on the right and the curve helps to frame the view. At the end the road is a fairly substantial white painted brick house. A number of trees and shrubs and a hedge form a boundary along the west side.



On the **south side** of **MANOR ROAD** the conservation area picks up again with No. 24, a large carstone and brick house with a slate roof. Next is a 20th Century bungalow, followed by a pair of semi-detached cottages (Tresco and Tresco Cottage) built in a similar style to No. 24 with dark carstone slips and decorative zigzag brick detailing. Next is a modern bungalow set well back from the road with a long drive and front garden. On the curve of the road are two semi-detached houses of the 19th Century, rendered and painted white and set at an angle to the road, which, with the open courtyard of Rossiters Garage, gives a sense of opening up towards Heath Road. The corner is rounded by Rossiters Garage, a post-war purpose built brick structure which replaced an earlier building, with cars parked in the forecourt.



The opposite corner of Heath Road and Manor Road is marked by a solid Victorian villa facing east. This marks the beginning of **HEATH ROAD** which travels south west and uphill towards Dersingham Common. With its lack of pavement and generous trees, hedges and bushes the road has more rural feel, and after eight or nine houses on each side it becomes open country.

The houses are a mixture of Victorian and post-war, set back behind hedges and gates in fairly generous plots and the road has a prosperous feel. Beginning on the **north side**, No. 4 is a solid early Victorian three bay villa in mellow red brick, with window surrounds and quoins in yellow brick detail. It has a later timber porch and tiled roof. Next is a pair of semi-detached houses (Nos. 6 & 8) well set back, of similar materials and detailing to No. 4, with a bay window added to No. 8. Then follow three post-war bungalows in brick and render behind hedges, after which is a good group of a farmhouse and outbuildings (No. 16) also behind a hedge. The house is of three bays with a chequer pattern front in red and yellow brick, with coursed carstone blocks behind and a modern tiled roof. It has its original sashes. The outbuildings use pantiles and coursed carstone, amongst modern

materials, and are enclosed by a low wall of carstone blocks with brick and tile atop. After this, is the Dersingham Common.

On the **south side** of **HEATH ROAD**, going back to Manor Road, the first property is a rendered bungalow swiftly followed by No. 17, a carstone house of the early 20th Century with modern extensions well set back. It hides Nos. 17a & b, a pair of cottages much extended in brick, which began life as a 19th Century cottage of carstone rubble and brick. Next is a 1970s house in a vaguely Scandinavian style of pale brick and render with large picture windows follows, then the 19th Century Cromarty House in a darker coursed carstone with brick detail, a solid double pile of three bays, replacement sashes and a tiled roof. Moving down the hill a good pair of carstone and brick 19th Century houses follows, although No. 9 has been extended at the front. No. 7 is well preserved with original sashes and door, of coursed narrow carstone piece with pantiles. No. 5 is also 19th Century and is of carstone and flint, unusually for Dersingham with the front patterned with pebbledash and render. No. 3 was built around 1900 in redbrick with bay windows to two stories on one side and sits behind a modern low brick wall with railings atop. There is some use of stone for the window surrounds. No. 1 provides a firm ending to the road with three bays in tightly coursed thin carstone pieces and bay windows on the ground floor. It has painted brick work around the windows and inappropriate replacement sashes.



After Heath Road, **MANOR ROAD** begins to feel like a coherent street. Initially the **south side** lacks definition with the Funeral Directors, a two storey building rendered and painted white, set back at an angle. Here an expanse of car parking behind a low brick wall creates a visually unattractive gap in the street line. After this the buildings are set closer to the back of the pavement beginning with No. 40, early 20th Century with modern plastic windows. No. 42-44 and 48 were built around 1900. 42-44 are the kind of red brick early 20th Century small houses found everywhere. No. 46 was built a little later and has a shop front in timber with decorative brackets and original sashes. It also has considerable outbuildings behind, previously used as a bakery. Its lean-to extension to the east is in painted brick with crow stepping to the single storey façade. Then there is a fairly solid line of buildings up to No. 70 which is built up to the pavement edge giving an urban feel. Nos. 52-58 and 60-64 are rows of late 19th Century cottages with brick fronts and carstone rubble behind, fairly humble, with altered windows and porch extensions and an unfortunately intrusive telegraph poles in front. Nos. 66 & 68 are of red brick, 19th Century and have extensive outbuildings with an arch between them allowing access. No. 70, Liddel House, has

a datestone of 1881 and replacement windows and doors. It has a brick front with carstone down one side and cement render on the other. Up the hill behind it is High Tudor built in the late 20th Century. After a carstone wall are the buildings behind No. 2 Sandringham Hill (Corner House Bed and Breakfast), a good 18th building in coursed carstone and brick, the side facing Manor Road with irregularly spaced sashes. It is a substantial building of charm and character to turn the corner.



The **north side** of this section of **MANOR ROAD** is quite varied with buildings of various ages, styles and functions. Continuing from Brook Road, the garden of No. 23 (which has some gable detailing in coloured brick) creates a gap in the street line but the curve of the road is bounded by a low wall and fence. Two garages in concrete are followed by a small brick single storey shop, 'Flowers by Yvonne', which is built right on the street in front of a post-war bungalow in brick, render and tile. There is no pavement here but after the shop the houses are slightly set back from the road. Moving east there is a three-bay two storey red brick house built in the late 20th Century which has been built on to the front of an L-shaped range of two 18th Century cottages

and an outbuilding of a completely different scale. The latter are single storey with attics and although they have been much altered with porches and dormer windows, they have clay pantiles and walls of carstone and flint and they retain their character.

After a modern brick house we come to Askers Row, an 18th Century row of five houses in coursed narrow carstone with brick dressings and a pantiled roof. They are gable end to the road and face east. There have been a number of alterations including two porches, but most alterations and repairs are fairly sympathetic and they retain a good deal of charm. Nos. 33-35 Manor Road are a pair of cottages of similar materials to Askers Row although on a less humble scale, set behind a low wall. As the road curves there is a gap in the street line which gives one a view back towards Askers Row. There follows a pair of early 19th Century cottages in carstone and pantiles and a later pair (Nos. 37 & 39) of carstone, with interesting detail in their brick dressings and two gables apiece. These sit behind a hedge which turns the corner into Holyrood Drive and offers a view into the 20th Century in the middle distance.



On the east corner of Holyrood Drive and Manor Road is Newhaven Court, a modern red brick development of 6 flats. Next to this is the Police Station, a nice example of a 1930s civic style building, in red brick with concrete. It is a rectangular box with flat roof and prominent metal multipaned windows on the side elevations but unfortunately those to the front elevation have been replaced with a 21st Century front entrance. It is set back behind a tarmac expanse and separated from the pavement by decorative railings. A pair of redbrick houses of similar date follows and behind these are three 20th Century houses in brick. Next is the Foresters Hall set in a large gravelled car park. It is a late Victorian confection built mainly of carstone rubble with brick dressings and buttresses. The façade is a somewhat bizarre mixture of materials, with coursed carstone, rubble carstone and decorative brick in its gable with Dutch overtones, stone arches over the large windows on either side of the porch and a stone door surround to the porch opening to the main building. The porch itself, possibly later, is a Tudorbethan timber and brick affair with a gable. It is an interesting example of a provincial civic building of its time.



The conservation area continues eastwards with Nos. 51-59 Manor Road, a row of five small 18th Century cottages set back behind small front gardens. They are of coursed rubble with nice brick arches to the ground floor and brick dressings to the first floor windows. Next is a white painted post war bungalow set back from the road and with garages in front. The space between this and No. 61 is shingled and occupied by a garden shed company in a temporary wooden building. The building line finishes with Nos. 61 & 61a, probably early 19th and 18th Century respectively but much altered on the façades. No. 61 is a striking three storey building with stuck-on timbers on the gable, but its sides and rear are of un-coursed carstone with brick decoration. It has a good shopfront in timber with large decorative brackets and narrow iron pillars. The rear has been used as a warehouse and has a loading platform on modern square brick pillars. No. 61a is lower, two stories and three bays with two bay windows inserted. Behind is an attached wing, projecting north of carstone and pantile.

Here the conservation area extends southwards to take in **SANDRINGHAM ROAD** or **SANDRINGHAM HILL** which has an increasingly rural feel as it goes up hill from Manor Road. It is bounded to the east by Dersingham Heath and, after a few houses set slightly back on the west side, it becomes a road through open heath towards Sandringham House. The flat fronted pairs of large cottages, Nos. 20 & 18 and 12 & 10 are of the 1880s and built by the Prince of Wales. The fronts are red brick with yellow brick detail but the sides and backs are of carstone rubble. Between these are two single detached houses in the same materials but built around the turn of the

Century with more elaborate facades, bays and gables. Between Manor Road and these houses are some infill bungalows.



As **MANOR ROAD** turns north-east from its junction with Sandringham Road its character changes from the previous urban style to something more rural with clusters of buildings interspersed with large areas of open space. This section is very green with trees, hedges, bushes and open space. It is also on a hill with the ground rising as one travels north and as a result offers more views. On the **north side** are three modern houses in brick, set back in sizeable plots and well screened from the road with hedges and trees. On the **south side** of the road the land rises to the south, giving a view of open heathland.

The next cluster of buildings comes as Manor Road curves to the north. The Feathers Hotel, a rectangular block with a north west projecting stable block, sits on the bend with a large garden to its west. It is an attractive building of five bays facing the road in coursed narrow carstone pieces and casements with red brick quoins and window surrounds. The west facing façade has two oriel windows at ground floor level and to the north east is a single storey stable

block in the same materials, with semi-circular windows surrounded by brick arches. The Feathers has a large tarmac car park to the north which looks west over the playing fields. On the opposite side of the road, behind a tall hedge is The Emblems, an attractive carstone house of the mid 19th century with various outbuildings.



After The Feathers car park another cluster of buildings appears. On the **east side** is the Community Centre and former village school, a late 19th Century red brick schoolhouse with yellow brick detail, gables and a tiled roof which turns the corner tightly into Doddshill Road. It is built right up to the edge of the narrow pavement and has some 20th Century additions. This building is sadly unused and with its boarded up windows and overgrown tarmac playground, it is quite an eyesore in the corner of the village. On the west side, opposite the old school, is the charmingly simple New Connexions Chapel, a single bay, gable to the street, in coursed carstone with brick detail around the two narrow arched windows which flank the arched doorway. The date stone says 1851.



DODDSHILL ROAD is a narrow leafy country lane as it rises up quite a sharp incline eastwards out of Manor Road. On the **south side** the return of the former school is built right up to the edge of the narrow pavement. On the **north side** of the road, the conservation area finishes in this direction after the large Hall which was built in the early 20th Century. It is an extensive building in coursed carstone with various multipaned casement windows. From here there are excellent views of the Church to the north and the northern section of the conservation area.

Beyond Doddshill Road, the **east side** of **MANOR ROAD** continues with two recently built houses facing inwards in yellow brick (which is not much seen in Dersingham) and machine made pantiles. Next is a barn converted into a house with dormers inserted in carstone and brick with pantiles. It has an attractive gable end of carstone with gault brick used for the quoins, string course and zig zag eaves detail, and a brick circle beneath the gable point. This barn and the new houses are partially hidden from the road by a wall of carstone rubble with a curved top and large timber gates on restored brick gateposts.



Opposite, on the **west side**, is the The Coach and Horses Public House. This is a 19th Century Inn, of elaborate Victorian design in carstone with decorative red brick dressings. The east front has three gables, with small brick turrets and ball pinnacles, and the north and south gables have these also. The building is extended down the incline at the rear with a single storey carstone extension with attic and pantiled roof. It is flanked to its south by a two storey house, Pastures View, built of carstone rubble with red brick dressings behind a low wall of the same materials. Next to this are a pair of semi-detached cottages, gable end to the road and built on the slope going down towards the playing fields. To the north of the public house is a modern brick house (No. 79), somewhat obscured by the many pub signs and then an older red brick house with banding in pale brick.

After this point the conservation area becomes very open with a low hedge on the left providing a green view over the playing fields to the modern estates beyond, and on the right a higher hedge beyond which is a green expanse of field on an upward slope to a stand of trees at the top. The historic core of the village is announced by a still

visible medieval moat and the remains of a sheep dip to the west with various trees and old brickwork amongst it.



To the north an excellent view of the St Nicholas Church is flanked by the church hall to the left and cottages to the right. The church hall is set well to the west side of the road and is Edwardian with multipaned windows and 'stick on' half timbering. It is nicely done in carstone rubble and brick with a tiled roof and south facing gables at either end. Behind it to the west open land gives way to the post war housing estates that dominate the centre of Dersingham. It shares a site with the bowling pavilion, a late 20th rectangular brick building.



To the east, opposite the moat site, is a pair of cottages, Nos. 80 & 80a, in coursed thin carstone pieces and brick but with replacement windows, behind a walled yard which has good brick walling topped with tiles with charming curves for doorways. The yard itself presents a somewhat untidy appearance with various outbuildings and is marred by a tall electricity stand. This area was part of the extensive Manor Farm complex.

This section of the conservation area is dominated by the Church of St Nicholas, which sits on a slight incline on the island created by Manor Road to the west, Church Lane to the east and Shernborne Road to the north. It is attractively situated with the graveyard in front, a low wall round the graveyard and a number of good trees. Its relative isolation and the hill mean that there are good views of it from the northern part of the conservation area. To the south of the church, the southern most point of the small island is protected from the road by a series of square timber posts.

The Church is a large building in carstone with stone dressings. It is Grade I listed and dates from the 14th and 15th Centuries (the chancel and nave were built in the early 14th Century, with the decorated nave, clerestory, aisles and west tower being dated around 1470) but it was heavily rebuilt between 1877 and 1879. To the south of the Church in the graveyard there is a mediaeval cross base which is Grade II listed.



This whole area appears to have grown up organically and is unplanned with the result that the sparse buildings are dotted around in a charming manner. Within the churchyard yet edging Manor Road to the west of the Church is one of Dersingham's oldest and most notable buildings, the Tithe Barn, which was built in 1671 in squared chalk and carstone and with brick dressings and a pantiled roof. Despite its name, it was never used to collect tithes but was built as an ordinary agricultural store. It is set into the wall that surrounds the churchyard and is set back slightly from the road.



After the Church Hall, **MANOR ROAD** curves gently up the incline with the Church yard wall to the east and past part of the former

grounds of Dersingham Hall lined with a fence, a hedge and tall trees on the west. These partially hide Croft House, a large late 20th Century villa built with some attention to detail which, despite being in brick does nod to local materials with its pantile roof. It is set in a large garden behind a carstone wall topped with brick and has brick gateposts with stone balls and timber gates. Next comes Church Crofts, five late 20th Century houses in two terraces in carstone rubble.

Next comes the junction of Manor Road with Chapel Road off to the north-west, and to the east **SHERNBORNE ROAD** which runs gently up hill and out to open countryside. It has small number of dwellings on the **northern side**. They start with a neat row of early 19th Century buildings set almost right up to the street edge. The first is a small detached house with dormers immediately followed by a terrace of six cottages, all of coursed carstone with brick details. Next is a pair of cottages set back from the road but also in carstone with painted brick surrounds and a hipped roof and then a detached house of carstone with brick details and a projecting front window. Apart from new UPVC windows in most of the cottages, they have been preserved close to their original state.



From this point the road begins to develop a more rural feel characterised by wide grass verges with narrow drainage ditches backed by mature hedges. Those on the northern side are neatly trimmed and behind them we find substantial houses in large plots on the way out of the village. First and well set back up a long drive is the Old Vicarage, built in 1879 of carstone and brick, and at the bottom of the drive the new Vicarage, a modern brick and timber house with large single paned windows. Its impact is softened by the high hedge and mature trees in the front garden. No. 12 is a large late Edwardian house of carstone with brick dressings and hipped pantile roof. Two bays project forward and the space between has been infilled to form a porch at ground floor with a balcony above. Windows are wide and divided into vertical panels. This house sets the style for the remaining houses in terms of materials, roofs and windows and the continuity is not surprising as the older properties are all of a similar age and are understood to have been linked with the nearby Sandringham Estate. The theme has been picked up in No. 12a, a very large modern house built in on the site of a former tennis court. Although comparatively new, it takes its emphasise from the older properties along the road being of carstone with brick

dressings under a hipped pantiled roof and with heavy joinery. It has an open aspect which is softened by the hawthorn hedge planted along the front boundary. A large willow tree marks the eastern boundary of the property and this is followed by a mature hedge backed by large trees which largely obscure Hillside, another carstone and brick Edwardian villa with windows in pairs. Those to the first floor are original.



Beyond this is a wide track into the field behind the houses and then comes Winkfield, continuing the theme of carstone with brick dressings, hipped pantile roofs and vertical paned replacement windows. Again the projecting front bays have been linked at ground floor level to form a porch with a lean-to roof, also a feature of the two square bay windows on either side. The large garden forms a natural break before one comes to the final three houses which are more closely set together. First is Greenways, following the style of those before but more modest in size and somewhat marred by the large plate glass window in the front façade and a flat roofed extension visible to the left hand side to the side, then Chelwood House, a late 20th century carstone and brick house which also takes its form and detailing from the older

properties and as a consequence sits comfortably in its surrounding. The last house is No. 17 which varies only in that it has smaller original sash windows arranged in pairs. Along the eastern boundary is a bank of mature trees which mark the transition between the end of the conservation area and the open countryside beyond.

On the **southern side** of the road the verge and hedge are less manicured and there are good views over open countryside to the woods of the Sandringham Estate in the distance. To the southwest one can see the roofs of Manor Farm outbuildings and the church tower is just visible above the trees - although the view is rather invaded by telegraph poles.



Back at the bottom the hill, **CHURCH LANE** runs from Shernborne Road to join Manor Road south of the Church. On the **western side** a slip carstone wall, curves to the corner and is topped, in part, with iron railings. This bounds a small paddock and beyond that is a charming view of the roofs of farm buildings further down the lane. There are also good views of the roof and tower of the church and a fine backdrop of mature trees.

On the **eastern side** of the lane is a boarded fence with a young hedge on the road side and then the gate to The Manor House. This is an extensive two storey building of carstone with red brick detailing. It has a central gable and a good collection of sashes but is hidden partly from the road by a wall of coursed carstone blocks. Opposite are two single storey farm buildings, one with semi-circular windows the other with larger doors, sit facing each other and end on to the road.



From here is a good view down the hill but narrowed on the western side by a carstone out-building and a large carstone and pantiled barn attached to The Manor House. The barn has honeycombed ventilation panels at regular intervals and two large doors, one of which has been glazed to provide light to the interior. It is unfortunate that the timber work has been painted white giving it a more domestic appearance. Beyond this is the rest of the Manor Farm complex, an attractive group of barns in a courtyard style. Now known as St Nicholas Court, they are of semi-coursed carstone rubble with pantiles and have been renovated and sensitively converted into office space and shops as well as a new health centre for the village. The conversion

has preserved the original shapes and materials, some two storey, some single, and introduced painted timber to fill in the original entrances which would be overlarge for their present use. The car-park could have been surfaced in a more natural material, but the barns back on to open country rising gently towards the east and the area still retains its open, rural feel. At this point a low carstone wall runs along the western side of the lane surrounding the graveyard and allowing excellent views of St Nicholas Church.

CHAPEL ROAD begins at the junction of Manor Road with Shernborne Road and runs in a westerly direction towards Hunstanton Road. Slightly off-set from the junction is **SUGAR LANE** a narrow unmade lane which runs up the hill to the north. Initially there is a post and rail fence to the east and beyond that a field which is included in the conservation area because of its contribution to the setting of Dersingham Manor and the Tithe Barn. On the west side the garden of Lane End is marked with a low brick wall topped with railings, which continues round the corner and along Chapel Road. Shrubs and trees behind the wall offer privacy to the garden and the conservation area end at its northern boundary although the Lane continues as a narrow path bounded by hedges which hide a few widely spread buildings. Looking back the raised land affords good views downhill over the village.



Back on **CHAPEL ROAD** the village becomes more urban in character again with a mix of 18th Century carstone cottages and modern 20th Century houses. On the corner with Manor Road is another of the buildings belonging to the historic core of the village, Dersingham Hall. This served as Dersingham's vicarage in the 18th Century; later it was Jannoch's nursery, then a hotel and is now private apartments. It is an imposing building that dominates this corner. The east elevation is partially hidden by a large Holm Oak tree behind the wall. The north façade fronts Manor Road, with its distinctive tall sashes, one of which is arched. It is unusual for Dersingham in that it is stuccoed although there is brick and carstone rubble behind. It has black and red glazed pantiled roofs and is on an H plan. It is of two storeys with attics and has very distinctive crow stepped gables to its steeply pitched roof and battlemented bays. It was built around 1600 with 18th and 19th Century additions and details. Beyond, to the west, there is a two storey extension of the 18th

Century and beyond that three further wings, the western most two of carstone and brick. The wall surrounding it to the east and north is grade two listed. The courtyard to the west, Jannochs Court, contains a number of cottages and houses of differing heights converted from the outbuildings of Dersingham Hall, and also some modern terraced houses of carstone. A large amount of new red brick walling is in evidence.



The conservation area continues on the **north side** of the road with No. 92, a bungalow of the 1930s with an ironwork open verandah, set back behind a fence and front garden, and a tiny single storey carstone and brick cottage facing east with its gable end to the street, converted from outbuildings. The next building is Beck House, a Victorian double pile house in brick with coursed carstone gables and extension, with an extensive garden to its east behind a wall of brick with flint. This house is followed by a late 20th Century garage set well back from the road but with its front boundary marked by a much older brick and carstone wall and then the junction of Kings Croft, a development of modern houses. On the far side of the junction and set at an angle is No. 84, a 19th Century carstone and brick building which once housed the village Post

Office. It has been much altered at ground floor level but it retains a pleasing appearance which draws the eye. Next is No. 82, a substantial 19th Century red brick house with an original bay windows and portico. It is set in a large well stocked garden with mature trees and the copper beech in particular is a prominent feature in the street scene.



Beyond this, Fern Hill leads north out of the village while the conservation area moves to across Chapel Road to the **east side** to take in Investk Cottages, a 19th Century terrace in carstone and brick with the pattern of earlier openings clearly visible on the front façade. Back on the **northern side** of the road are a modern “Tudor” style house, a modern bungalow and a modern chalet bungalow. Beyond these one can see the roofs of the 19th Century Waldens Barns which are set back from the road behind Coronation Cottages a brick built terrace of 1902 with a late 20th Century extension to the western end and UPVC bay windows. The Barns have been well converted and extended with roof-lights in the front slope.

At this point the road begins to curve gently to the northwest presenting a good view of the slip carstone gable wall to No. 72, a late

19th Century building with a red brick front and modern windows. Attached to the western end is a lower 18th Century carstone cottage with replacement casement windows under brick arches.



The road continues to curve with the late 20th Century library on the left and on the right a number of 19th Century houses set back behind low walls and well shrubbed gardens. The first pair, Nos. 70-68 are of carstone with gable windows and concrete tiles whilst the second block (Nos. 62, 64 & 66) is a short terrace of three cottages of soft red brick with a band of flint in the south east gable and clay pantile roofs. No. 66 has a large central dormer and projecting extension. Moving on, No. 60 is a small house of 1876 set directly to the back of the pavement and built in the traditional carstone with brick dressings. Unusually it has a band of course chalk block on either side of the wide front window. Next are two more pairs of houses, again set back from the road behind low brick and carstone walls. Nos. 58-56 are in the same style as Nos. 70-68, brick with gable windows, and then come Nos. 54-52 a pair of 19th Century flat fronted houses in brick with carstone gable walls and a concrete tiled roof. Beyond these is

a rendered cottage of indeterminate age although its chimneys, the only visible brick would suggest late 18th Century origins.



At this point the conservation area moves back to the **south side** of the road to include No. 48, an attractive Victorian carstone house with brick dressing and bays on either side of the central door. The windows, although new, are traditional timber sashes and it has a pleasing well kept appearance. A track to the side leads down to what appears to be a new house of red brick with clay pantiles set some distance back from the road and built to resemble a barn. Next come Nos. 47-39, a 19th Century carstone terrace with dropped gable dormers and a variety of modern windows. All bar one have removed the front boundary marker and half the front gardens are given over to parking.

Back on the **north side** of the road a high carstone and brick wall runs along the back of the pavement mark enclosing the rear garden of No. 2 Saxon Way a modern house but with a substantial tree in its garden. On the opposite corner of the road one comes to a pottery and gallery, housed in a brick and carstone building, gable end on to the road. Formerly a coach-house and stables

of the Sandringham Estate it has a pleasing array of windows facing the small gravel car park.



It is closely followed by No. 46, a two story house of dark carstone with "CC 1823" picked out in brick in the gable. It has UPVC windows on the front but otherwise is largely unaltered. After this is the drive to a small building at the rear and then a second entrance serving the front of a 19th Century carstone terrace (Nos. 40, 42 and 44) which stands some distance back and gable end on to the road. The next house, No. 38, is of similar size and also gable end to the road, known as the Old Bakehouse.

In this area a number of factors combine to give the street a more open feel - two road junctions almost opposite each other, on the south side the wide grass verges and modern bungalows in neat gardens and on the north side the buildings set back from the road. At this point front boundary treatments change and the walls, which have been a constant feature of the conservation area thus far, are replaced by a mix of hedges and fences as one moves westwards.

Continuing along the **north side** of Chapel Road is No. 36, a substantial house of painted render which gives no indication of it's origins. Attached to the west, No. 34 an early 19th Century cottage of dark slip carstone and brick presents a much more pleasing appearance as does No. 32 which projects forward and built of small carstone slips under a hipped pantile roof.

Here the nature of the conservation area changes again and it opens out to include the **south side** of the road. The first building one sees is the former Primitive Methodist Bethal Chapel built in 1878 with façade of course field flints with brick dressings and flank walls of squared course carstone. It has been converted to residential use but the work has been sensitively done and it still has a significant presence in the street scene.

On the **northern side** of the road the pattern of terraced cottages, set well back from the road continues with Nos. 30, 28, 26 & 24 built in the mid 19 Century of dark slip carstone with pantiled roofs. They have modern UPVC windows but otherwise remain largely unaltered and the parking spaces created in the front gardens are softened by the use of gravel and the shrubs and hedges. Next are Nos. 22 & 20, a pair of larger cottages of similar age but set slightly forward of their neighbours and built in carstone blocks with modern windows. The gardens are again given over to parking but without the mitigating greenery. Immediately adjacent to No. 20 is a drive leading to Nos. 8-18 (even) a row of dark slip carstone cottages with a larger property to the western end. Here the angle of the road changes slightly so these are the furthest distant from the carriageway and are partially hidden by small trees and shrubs in

the front gardens. Most have UPVC replacement windows but they still retain their overall character.



Beyond and partially in front of the cottages are modern bungalows but the eye is drawn past them to a pair of coursed carstone houses. The fronts have modern windows and No. 2 has a lean-to porch but the single storey side extension to No. 4 has been well built and the wide gable walls are a strong feature when viewed from either direction.

On the **south side** of the road the bulk of the former Chapel is closely followed by a terrace of eight early 20th Century cottages (Nos. 7-19 odd) built in random carstone with red brick dressings and set back behind small front gardens.



On the curve of the road are Nos. 3 & 5, a pair of houses early 20th Century houses. No. 5 still displays the red brick from which they were built but No. 3 has been rendered and both have garage extensions, and modern doors and windows. The final house on the south side of the road is No. 1 a substantial two storey late Victorian house with a small single story shop attached to the western end. It is built in random carstone and has unusually decorative brick dressings, window heads and chimney stacks. The shop was for many years the village butchers but is now sadly closed and the former slaughter house to the rear has been converted to residential use.

Here the conservation area ends and the new house built in the former shop car park is just outside the boundary.

Listed Buildings

There are six listed buildings or structures in the conservation area

Grade I

Church of St Nicholas. Parish Church, 14th and 15th Centuries, extensively rebuilt in the 1870s. Carstone, stone dressings, leaded aisle roofs, slated nave and chancel. West tower of three stages, nave and aisles with clerestory, south porch and chancel.

Grade II

5c and 5E Manor Road, West Hall Manor Cottages. Originally a mid-17th Century manor house in two storeys with attics. Rubble carstone with brick dressings and pantiled roof. Of two builds with straight joint and parapet marking the division. Casement windows and 20th Century porch Shaped gable to rear.

Tithe Barn, Manor Road. Actually two three-stead threshing barns built end to end. Built in 1671 of squared chalk and carstone with brick dressings and red pantiled roof. Central brick wedge buttress, brick dressed ventilation slits and steeply pitched roof with crow-stepped gables. Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Dersingham Hall, Manor Road. Manor House, 16th Century with 18th and 19th Century additions and details. Stuccoed brick and carstone rubble, red and black glazed pantiled roof. Two storey with attics on an H plan.

Garden Wall attached to east and south of Dersingham Hall. Garden Wall, entrance gates and gate piers. 18th Century

Cross base 30m south of Church of St Nicholas. Cross base and detached head of shaft in churchyard. Medieval, perhaps 14th Century.

Important Unlisted Buildings

The unlisted buildings of Dersingham make a considerable contribution to its character, given that there are only 6 listed buildings in the conservation area. Marked on the map are the unlisted buildings of local importance that are significant in the history and in defining the character of the village.

Post War Development

In contrast with the rest of Dersingham, post-war development is quite limited in the conservation area. There is No. 59a Manor Road, a white-painted bungalow largely hidden from the street, Nos. 45-47 Manor Road and the three houses behind them, the house to the left of Askers Row and No. 29 Manor Road, all in brick. Then there is the small flower shop and the bungalow behind it on Manor Road at the western edge of the conservation area.

Rossiters garage dominates the corner of Manor Road and Heath Road and there is a handful of bungalows on the west side of Heath Road. The south side has the large No. 15 of the 1970s and No. 70a Manor Road, High Tudor, is a decade or so later. Three large red brick houses of the late 20th Century are well set back in large plots on the north side of Manor Road to the west of the Feathers Hotel. There are also some bungalows at the northern end of Sandringham Road.

Some new buildings have been built in carstone in an effort to use appropriate materials for the village. Two carstone and gault brick houses have been built opposite the Coach and Horses on the site of a demolished house and a carstone and red brick one to the left of the pub.



Church Crofts on the west side of Manor Road near the church are also in carstone and brick as are No. 12A and Chelwood House in Sherborne Road both of which take their reference from the older properties in the vicinity. The new houses in Jannoch's Yard are quite successful because they are in scale with the other buildings in the yard and are carstone and brick.

Perhaps less successful at blending in, are the bowls club building and the new Rectory. Croft House is brick but quite well hidden. The new development of Newhaven Court on Manor Road built of red brick, the garage on Chapel Road and the modern bungalows at its western end have made no attempt to emulate the vernacular.

A certain amount of barn conversions have taken place within the conservation area including Weldons Barns in Chapel Road, the house opposite the Coach and Horses and, more recently, Manor Barns.

Traditional Materials

The chief building material of Dersingham is without a doubt, carstone. There are areas of Dersingham Bog where shallow pits remain from the quarrying of the thin, iron rich carstone slabs which can be found in a number of houses in the conservation area. When coursed, these pieces are often known as "slips or shell carr" and look almost like brick. There are also rubble pieces, coursed and uncoursed, and squared coursed blocks. Various colours are noticeable, from an orangey-brown, though various shades to very dark brown, and sometimes almost green. It was quarried at Snettisham and very probably in other places also.



Pantiles are also seen in all varieties – old red and black handmade ones, new handmade ones in red, and machine made modern ones. There is surprisingly little flint given the heavy use of flint in Norfolk in general but there is some in walls and the backs of some houses and there is very little stone although some is found in the Church. Brick of all hues can be seen. Old red bricks, probably made locally and, in lesser amounts, Gault brick from the gault clays of Suffolk are found as dressings for some carstone buildings, and there is plenty of

modern red brick. Some chalk is found, most notably in the tithe barn, but also in the sides and backs of some houses and in walls. Stucco is found at Dersingham Hall.

Archaeological Interest

The earliest evidence for human activity in the parish are finds of prehistoric worked flints, with concentrations of Mesolithic and Neolithic flints at two sites indicating clusters of activity. There are also records of Bronze Age and Late Iron Age pottery from the parish, which are relatively rare. Two socketed Bronze Age copper alloy axes are more common finds. Analysis of aerial photographs as part of the National Mapping Program have enabled tentative identification of Bronze Age round barrows and two later centers of possibly Iron Age and Roman activity.

A possible Roman salt works has also been identified along with a Roman rubbish pit that was found during field walking. These sites are all found on the chalk scarp edge, where modern settlement is also concentrated. In contrast Roman finds including Roman pottery and coins, are scattered across the parish up to the eastern boundary that runs along the Roman road, the Peddar's Way. A more unusual Roman find is the gold ring found by a metal detector in a molehill in the parish.

There is less evidence for Saxon settlement and activity, although there are several scatters of Late Saxon pottery and one report of Early Saxon pottery being found. Several Saxon metal finds have also been made including a lovely Late Saxon box mount with a decoration of a cat-like face and part of a Late Saxon bridle bit cheek piece.

By the medieval period there is more evidence for occupation and many sites have been identified from aerial photographs. Known medieval moated sites included within the conservation area are Pakenham Manor and Snaring Hall. The Gelham family is thought to have founded the chapel that existed in the churchyard to the south of the Church, built in 1264. Areas of medieval field boundaries, house platforms and extraction pits have been identified from aerial photographs. The parish also boasts a medieval deer park and watermill neither of which survived into the modern period. Field walking and metal detecting have also recovered a wide range of finds dating from the medieval and post medieval periods. In the early 20th Century, parts of a Medieval praying cross were discovered, which have now been restored and erected in the churchyard and a hoard of 129 post medieval silver coins in a silver cup were dug up in the late 20th Century by builders.

Detractors

Many buildings in the conservation area, particularly along Manor Road and Chapel Road, have replacement windows and doors of inappropriate styles and frequently in UPVC. There are also a number of porches added to buildings in styles and materials that do not complement the original building.

Dersingham suffers badly from a proliferation of overhead cables and the poles needed to support them. The car parking area in front of Rossiters' garage creates a poor corner between Manor Road and Heath Road. The Community Centre's boarded up windows and overgrown sports area is untidy and unattractive. The plethora of signs around a number of commercial properties including

the Coach and Horses Public House and the Fish Bar in Manor Road which detract from the buildings and the street scene.

Conservation Objectives

Statement 1

The overall conservation objective is to protect and reinforce the established special character of Conservation Areas and their setting.

This will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the retention and maintenance of buildings which contribute to the overall character of each conservation area
- Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to the special qualities and character of each conservation area
- Protecting the setting of the conservation area from development which adversely affects views into or out of the area
- The retention, maintenance and locally appropriate new planting of trees
- Maintaining and enhancing local features and details which contribute towards an area's local distinctiveness
- Working with the community to prepare schemes of enhancement
- Encouraging the removal of detractors to the special character of each conservation area

Contacts and advice

Within conservation areas, a number of special controls apply and it is advisable that anyone proposing to carry out new development, alteration, extensions, installations or demolition should seek advice from Development Services at an early stage. Special controls also apply to the trees and some may be subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Anyone wishing to carry out work to trees within a Conservation Area should therefore seek advice from Development Services.

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