

# Cullompton Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan



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# Part 1 Character Appraisal

## 1 Summary

### 1.1 Summary of Special interest

The character appraisal of the Cullompton Conservation Area concludes that the special interest of the area derives from the following key characteristics:

- A coherent and well preserved street pattern of at least mediaeval origins with a tight urban grain
- Interesting and important network of yards and passages, reflecting former burgrave plots, and historic functions
- Intimate and walkable character
- Traces of Cullompton's former industries including leather working, bell founding, paper making and woollen industry and three mills on the leat
- Weekly market, still taking place on the original livestock market site at the Higher Bullring
- Fine landscape setting with views of and from the surrounding countryside
- Some outstanding buildings especially the St Andrew's Parish Church and Merchants Houses, including The Walronds
- Landmark quality of St Andrew's Parish Church tower
- A rich and varied townscape, stemming from buildings of different periods and the gently meandering line of the main street
- Other listed buildings, and buildings of local interest, many of group value
- Number of surviving 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century shopfronts
- High number of independent retailers contributing to the town's distinctiveness

### 1.2 Key Issues

Based on the negative features identified in Section 9 - The Character Areas of the Conservation Area - a number of issues have been identified and are listed below. These form the basis for the Management Proposals in the part two of this document.

#### **1 Volume and Nature of traffic, and Highway Management.**

Given the nodal connection to the motorway, there is high volume of traffic in the main streets of Cullompton which is passing through on its way to and from the motorway. This includes heavy good vehicles passing through the historic core. The volume of traffic results in queuing at the principal junctions, and when deliveries are made along Fore Street. Along with the narrow pavement widths, this makes the experience of the historic core quite unpleasant, with the noise, fumes and dirt from the traffic, and at times a feeling of danger for those on foot and bicycle.

#### **2 Traffic Management**

There is clutter from signage, road markings and traffic islands, some of which relates to highways for direction or for restrictions such as parking.

### **3 Public Realm**

A number of negative impacts in the public realm have been identified within the conservation area appraisal. Some are site specific whilst others have an impact throughout the conservation area.

- Uncoordinated and poor quality floor scape: Paving and surface materials throughout the area are generally modern, uncoordinated and poor quality. In almost all cases they fail to enhance or re-inforce the historic identity of the conservation area. Patch repairs in the public highway, or where service trenches are cut, can lead to alternative lower quality and out of place materials being used
- The public accessible pathways to the leat, Forge Way car park, and to Shortlands Road are not legible or welcoming. It is not clear, other to those who know, that they are public paths and where they lead to. The path back to Forge Way car park is not marked
- The public path along New Cut accesses Shortlands lane. The former Methodist Chapel is accessed via this lane with an open area to the front and a derelict site to the rear of No 20 Fore Street. The Chapel is no longer in use for worship and is in private ownership and with planning permission for an alternative use. The run nature of this area is uninviting and harmful to the conservation area
- Trotts Almshouses are an attractive building listed as being of national importance. The seating area to the south gable is an attractive and well used area. To the south of this is an expanse of tarmac and tactile paving, signage and traffic control associated with the busy highway junction. This appears quite bland and out of character by reasons of the materials and the open nature of the site
- The street furniture, as distinct from traffic control, has grown organically. This has led to a cluttered and uncoordinated appearance
- The Higher Bullring is dominated by car parking, the volume and nature of traffic passing through it and associated traffic control measures, and street furniture which has been provided organically over time. The listed War Memorial is a key land mark building here. It is compromised by car parking, and uncoordinated street furniture
- The raised concrete double kerb along Fore Street works to divide the footpath from the carriageway and as a method of surface water control, the path and road being at the same level. It is an unusual, non-traditional, incongruous and unattractive feature in the conservation area which also harms the setting of highly graded listed buildings

### **4 Loss of original architectural details and inappropriate building materials.**

Many of the unlisted, and some of the listed, buildings in the conservation area have been adversely affected by the replacement of original timber sash windows, casement windows and doors with uPVC or aluminium, the replacement of natural roof slates with man-made slate or natural slate being turnerised. In the case of shopfronts there are a number of cases where the replacement or alteration of historic shop fronts and advertisements has spoiled the external appearance of a building and the local streetscape.

### **5 Poor quality of new developments, building alterations and extensions**

Some relatively modern developments are out of character with the conservation area by reason of their inappropriate design, scale or materials.

## **6 Lack of routine building maintenance and repair**

Buildings in the conservation area are generally in good condition but there are instances of the neglect through lack of routine maintenance and repair which results in unsightly buildings.

## **7 Unsightly satellite dishes**

Satellite dishes are a feature of modern living. Unfortunately, when located on the front of a historic building, a satellite dish can spoil the appearance of the building and the street scene. They have a particularly noticeable adverse effect when a black dish is sited on a light background, especially render. In certain circumstances, satellite dishes may have been installed without the need for planning permission and/or listed building consent.

## **8 Sub-division of properties into flats**

Sub-division of properties into flats or let for multiple occupancy can tend to erode external character through poorly maintained buildings, gardens and shared areas by absentee landlords. There can be a lack of external storage for bins etc. and multiple external wires for services.

## **9 Overhead power lines and telephone lines**

A number of streets retain above ground servicing by telephone and power cables radiating out from and between telegraph poles which adds clutter to the street scene. In many cases the telegraph poles are metal and have been poorly maintained.

## **10 Negative sites and buildings**

This appraisal has identified 'negative' buildings and areas i.e. buildings and areas which clearly detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area and could suitably be redeveloped or improved. In addition, there are vacant sites where some form of built development has the potential to improve the town-scape. The following sites and/or buildings, marked on the accompanying map 5, clearly detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area, and in some cases to the setting of listed buildings.

- Land adjacent to No 12, Gravel Walk
- Cobbles at Pye Corner
- Hebron Evangelical Church, off Queen Square
- Hayridge Centre Car Park
- Land at No 19 High Street
- Clarks Court Off High Street
- Public Toilets and land adjacent to Station Road
- Police Station, Station Road
- Roundabout at Entrance to Supermarket on Station Road
- No 60 Higher Street
- Trotts Almshouses, Higher Street



## **2 Introduction**

### **2.1 Statement of Objectives**

The purpose of this Character Statement is to provide a basic summary of the elements that together contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area. It is intended also to be supporting information for alterations to the conservation area boundary.

The intention is that the completed document will be adopted by Mid Devon District Council.

It is hoped that local residents, the Town Council, Devon County Council and others (such as utility companies) will also find the document useful.

The Conservation Area Appraisal has been compiled to analyse the Conservation Area. The Management Plan is to be read in conjunction with the Appraisal and puts forward proposals for its future, and how it will be managed.

The Conservation Area Appraisal will be considered by Mid Devon's Cabinet for formal adoption in the late spring/early summer of 2021.

### **2.2 Community Involvement and Consultation**

Prior to commencing preparation of this draft document, the Town Council, District and County Councillors and key stakeholders were consulted and asked if they had any views on the existing documents.

Staff in the Mid Devon planning office have been consulted on this draft document.

The next stages will be that the Planning Policy Advisory Group of Mid Devon Council considered the document on the 18th of March 2021 and agreed that the document, with some minor alterations, be forwarded to Mid Devon's Cabinet.

The document will be consulted on in accordance with the Council's Statement of Public Involvement. This will include consultation with all Key Stakeholders, and the owner/occupier of all properties where there is proposed to be a change to their property (being taken into or out of the conservation area) will be written to. It is anticipated that notices similar to those used to advertise planning applications will be positioned in the areas of greatest change with links to the Council's website where the document will be on display. During the 6 week consultation period there will be one public meeting held taking into account the Covid restrictions in place at that time.

This section of the document will be updated as the process moves forward.

### **2.3 The purpose of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

A conservation area is defined as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to



formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. In response to this statutory requirement, this appraisal document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. This appraisal conforms to Historic England's guidance as set out in Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Second edition, Historic England Advice Note 1, 2019. This document therefore seeks to:

- define the special interest of the conservation area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of Part 1: Character Appraisal);
- provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement (in the form of the Part 2: Management Proposals)

## **2.4 The Planning Policy Context**

This appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Conservation area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework produced by Mid Devon District Council. Any applications will also be considered in the wider statutory context and against the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the SPD produced by Mid Devon and any relevant guidance produced by Historic England.

### **Statute**

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) gives a general duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions. The Local Planning Authority is required, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

There are other statutory duties with regard to applications which relate to a listed building and or affect the setting of listed buildings where the Local Planning Authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. (Section 16 and 66 of the above Act).

These provisions have been subject to case law in the Courts, and they must be given considerable importance and weight.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The NPPF should be read as a whole and is the main guidance from Government in relation to the determination of applications by the Local Planning Authority.

Chapter 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, is the main part relative to heritage. This requires that great weight is given to a heritage assets conservation.

### **Local Plan**

Applications for development must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise as required by section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 was adopted on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2020 following the publishing of the Inspectors Report which concluded that the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 provides an appropriate basis for the Planning of the District, provided that a number of main modifications (MMs), are made to it to make the Plan sound and capable of adoption.

The Mid Devon Local Plan Review 2013-2033 will guide development in the district over a 20 year period and aims to ensure that new homes, jobs and services needed by communities are located in the most sustainable places. It will also help deliver the infrastructure, facilities and other developments needed to make this possible. The spatial strategy of the Plan is to make the market town of Cullompton the strategic focus of new development which reflects its existing status as one of the larger settlements in the District as well as its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity.

Development will be targeted to:

- Provide sustainable urban extensions containing a mix of fit for purpose homes, businesses, local shopping and other services and sustainable transport links
- Provide enhancements to the town centre through additional investment, traffic and transport improvements and environmental enhancements to provide a significant boost to its vitality and viability, provide for a better range of retail and other uses and a significantly improved visitor environment
- Develop any remaining underused brownfield sites within the town
- Protect and enhance the key environmental assets including heritage, biodiversity and air quality.

In addition to District wide policies, a strategic policy is set out in the Local Plan for Cullompton. This sets out the strategic focus of Cullompton whilst recognising the closely related issues of air quality and traffic impact which affect the centre of the Conservation Area.

### **Policy S11 - Cullompton**

Cullompton will develop as a fast growing market town with a strategic role in the hierarchy of settlements in Mid Devon. The town will become the strategic focus of new development reflecting its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity. This strategy will improve access to housing through urban extensions and expanded employment opportunities. There will be significant improvements to the town's infrastructure and connectivity, including the reopening of the railway station, and improved services for its population and nearby rural areas. Proposals will provide for approximately 3,930 dwellings, of which 1,100 will be affordable, and 73,500 gross square metres of commercial floor space over the plan period.

### **The Council will guide high quality development and other investment to:**

- a) Make any necessary strategic mitigations to maintain highway capacity, safety, integrity, and sustainability including the M5 and local highway network in conjunction with current and relevant infrastructure plans;*

- b) Promote further public transport improvements within Cullompton and to other urban centres (particularly Tiverton and Exeter) and improved access to the rail network by the reopening of Cullompton Railway Station;*
- c) Continue measures to support the implementation of the Cullompton Air Quality Action Plan including the construction of new highway links to relieve the town centre and enhanced walking and cycling opportunities around the town;*
- d) Manage the town centre so that economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other by promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which are well designed and contribute to vitality and viability;*
- e) Provide community infrastructure such as education and enhanced open space to support new development proposals;*
- f) Enhance the tourism and visitor role of the town and surrounding area; and*
- g) Support measures to reduce flood risk within Cullompton and make provision for green infrastructure.*

## **Other Advice and Guidance**

The District Council has produced the following advice

The Mid Devon Design Guide - which was adopted in 2020

Design Guide to Windows and Doors

Design Guide to Roofs and Chimneys

Design of Shopfronts and Associated Advertisements, which is Supplementary Planning Guidance in the course of preparation at the time of writing.

Historic England produce a wealth of advice and guidance on the historic environment. This can be found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/find/a-z-publications/>

## **2.5 Wider Planning Context**

### **Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan Submission**

The Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan represents the community's vision and priorities for how they would like to see the Cullompton area develop and change in the coming years. The Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to an independent examination, and with the examiner's recommended modifications can proceed to a referendum. This referendum is expected to take place in the spring 2021. Should the referendum be passed then the plan will be capable of being adopted by Mid Devon District Council as part of the statutory development plan for the area.

The Cullompton Neighbourhood

- Ensure all new developments contribute to the overall sustainability of Cullompton as a

town and a community

- Improve mobility, accessibility and reduce the overall use and impact of the motor vehicle
- Provide new dwellings to meet a wide range of needs and demands
- Respect and appreciate our natural environment
- Protect and enhance our historic built environment whilst broadening the appeal of the town and its cultural activities
- Make Cullompton more business friendly and commercially viable
- Provide first class local community facilities and develop community-based services that meet the growing demands of the community

Plans sets out a number of planning policies which seek to:

- Ensure all new developments contribute to the overall sustainability of Cullompton as a town and a community
- Improve mobility, accessibility and reduce the overall use and impact of the motor vehicle
- Provide new dwellings to meet a wide range of needs and demands
- Respect and appreciate our natural environment
- Protect and enhance our historic built environment whilst broadening the appeal of the town and its cultural activities
- Make Cullompton more business friendly and commercially viable
- Provide first class local community facilities and develop community-based services that meet the growing demands of the community

## **Culm Garden Village**

In January 2017, the Government identified an area to the east of Cullompton on the other side of the M5 as a 'Garden Village', with the potential to deliver up to 5,000 new homes alongside jobs, schools and community facilities. The Garden Village includes an area which is allocated for mixed use development in the Local Plan. A masterplan is being developed for the Garden Village which considers the strategic location of homes, neighbourhood centres, employment areas, community facilities, green infrastructure and connections, as well as principles for the development. The stage 1 draft of the Culm Garden Village masterplan was consulted on in January/February 2019.

## **Heritage Action Zone**

Following a successful bid, Cullompton has been selected for the High Streets Heritage Action Zones scheme and the District Council with its partners will work with Historic England to develop plans to revive the high street over a four-year programme. The fund will deliver physical improvements and cultural activities to regenerate Fore Street and restore local historic character. Through the programme, councils, businesses and community groups will be able to access expert advice and investment to bring historic buildings back to life.

## **Cullompton Town Centre Master Plan**

The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan presents a vision and spatial framework to guide future development and investment in Cullompton Town Centre. It provides realistic principles and overarching guidance to bring together the design and future delivery of development, public realm improvements and transport projects in Cullompton. It provides an overarching framework within which the Heritage Action Zone will operate.

## **North-West Urban Extension**

The Local Plan allocates sites for development on the north-west edge of the town. A masterplan for the area was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2016. Since then, planning applications for the first 600 homes are in the process of being approved which will also deliver a new road, around the north of the town.

## **Relief Road**

Traffic in the town centre is having an adverse effect on air quality, living conditions, the heritage assets and their setting, and the overall attractiveness of the town. A key objective of the Local Plan has been to implement a relief road which diverts traffic away from the town centre and improves capacity. Following an option analysis and consultation, a preferred route option was approved by Devon County Council in March 2019. The route runs through the CCA fields alongside the rail line, joining Duke Street to the south and Station Road to the north. The planning application for the relief road was approved in January 2021 by Mid Devon District Council. The relief road is planned to be completed by 2023.

The Relief Road is being designed to minimise impact on the CCA fields, and presents an opportunity for the Masterplan to seek to improve the sense of arrival to the town at Millennium Way/Station Road.

## **Improvements to M5 Junction 28**

Devon County Council is presently pursuing funding for works intended to address capacity, environmental and safety concerns, whilst also providing a substantial improvement for pedestrian and cycle movements across the motorway.

## **Cullompton Rail Station**

The Local Plan sets the objective of reopening the rail station. This is currently being led by the District Council who are seeking funding opportunities.

# **3 Location and Landscape Setting**

*Note the following section is largely a reproduction of the Devon Historic Coastal and Market Towns Survey for Cullompton and full acknowledgement is given in that respect.*

## **3.1 Location and Activities**

Cullompton is located in Mid Devon. It lies within the Culm Valley, which extends from the Blackdown Hills to join the Exe on the outskirts of Exeter. Twelve miles north of Exeter, 20 miles south-west of Taunton and 4 miles south-east of Tiverton, the town is focused on the western valley side, on a spur of raised ground between tributary streams, with the River Culm meandering through its floodplain to the east. The valley bottom is also dissected by the mainline railway and M5 motorway, running parallel, along the eastern side of the town. This part of Mid Devon is an important transport corridor between Devon and Somerset, and, although it no longer has a railway

station (closed 1960s), Cullompton has its own motorway junction (and services, occupying part of the former station site). The B3181 (part of a much earlier route from Bristol to Exeter) passes north-south through the town centre, and historic roads from Honiton (A373) and Tiverton run in from the east and west, with several lesser roads and lanes radiating out to surrounding farms, hamlets and villages.

### **3.2 Geology and Topography**

The underlying geology is red marl, sandstone and conglomerate, which make up the Devon Redlands and give rise to distinctive hummocky hills, examples of which frame Cullompton – Paulsland Hill to the north-west, St Andrew's Hill to the west-north-west, Padbrook Hill to the south – and form an important aspect of its topographical setting. Viewed from these hills the town appears to be nestled down onto the Culm valley bottom, yet most parts are elevated above it. The historic core (and main thoroughfare) of the town lies between St Andrew's Hill and the River Culm, occupying a north-south strip of relatively level ground just above the valley floor. While it is backed against the hill on the west, the historic eastern limit of Cullompton is a sub-channel of the Culm, which was important as the town's mill leat and survives today as a prominent topographical feature. To the north and south, the older town limits are defined by the valleys of tributary streams running west-east to join the River Culm near the bottoms of Station Road and Duke Street.

Since the mediaeval period, Cullompton has expanded well beyond the spur of level ground bounded by these tributaries down into the two valleys, which provided water for post-mediaeval and later industry, and into meadows edging onto the main valley floor. Large-scale civic, retail and recreational activity is now focused here, and (particularly during the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries) there has been a large amount of mainly residential development to the north and west of the historic core, which has more than trebled Cullompton's size. St Andrew's Hill, previously an area of enclosed rough ground, is now part of the urban area and an extensive swathe of more gently undulating mediaeval farmland is covered by housing and a new network of associated roads.

Water continues to be an important element of Cullompton: in addition to the river/valley-side setting, there are streams, leats, culverted water supplies or the river itself, encroaching on or running through most parts of the town.

### **3.3 Historical Development**

The natural resources of this part of the Culm Valley were clearly exploited by hunter-gatherers and early farming communities. This included settlement of the elevated, valley-side plateau that later became the focus of the mediaeval town. Prehistoric settlement remains (ditches, gullies and pits) have been recorded at two locations within the study area in both cases on sites subsequently occupied during the Roman period east of Shortlands Lane and West of Willand Road. Further evidence of prehistoric activity has been recorded in the surrounding vicinity.

#### **3.3.1 Roman proto-urban military settlement:**

During the Roman period, as a result of its proximity to the legionary fortress and civitas capital at Exeter, and its position overlooking the River Culm, the location became strategically important and the focus of military and related activity. Most notable are the earthwork and below-ground remains of two (successive) Roman forts and camps on top of St Andrew's Hill, on



the north-western edge of the present town, and, on the plateau below a civilian settlement and cemetery. It may have extended as far north as the base of St Andrew's Hill, up to (and perhaps across) the line of Tiverton Road.

Present evidence suggests that alongside the continuation of pre-Roman farming communities, a proto-urban settlement developed on the western part of the site later occupied by the mediaeval town. Originating during the Iron Age or earlier prehistoric period, this may have evolved in response to the establishment of the fort on St Andrew's Hill during the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD, servicing the garrison with local produce and benefitting from the opportunity for increased foreign trade. The late 4th century date of the settlement's final occupation phase ties in with it having gone out of use as a result of the fort being abandoned and Roman occupation of Britain coming to an end.

### **3.3.2 'Columtune' – Saxon royal estate and minster.**

There is an hiatus of direct evidence in terms of the historical development of Cullompton during the 500 years from the end of the Roman period to the late 9<sup>th</sup> century AD, by which time a Saxon settlement was in existence.

The earliest documentary record is contained in the will (AD 872) of King Alfred the Great, in which he bequeathed 'Columtune' to his younger son, Ethelward, indicating that it was a royal holding. The place name is derived from the Celtic river name cwlwn ('looped' or 'winding' river) and -ton, suggesting an important early estate centre. In 1020 Cullompton passed to Gytha, the Danish princess who married Earl Godwin and mother of King Harold.

At Domesday (1086), Cullompton was not recorded as a separate manor and was probably included as part of the royal manor of Silverton. There is, however, a reference to a church at Cullompton, suggesting a pre-conquest minster. Emerging during the late 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries and often located at royal centres, minsters housed groups of priests serving the pastoral needs of the population in their parochiae (large territories subsequently divided up into today's smaller local parishes).

The presence of a minster church, combined with the place-name evidence and advantageous location (on the banks of the Culm, within a fertile lowland plain), suggests that Cullompton may have been the centre of an early estate, the administrative centre of which later moved to Silverton. The Domesday Survey records, at 'Colump', a church with five prebends (manors which financially supported it) -Upton, Colebrook, Weaver (partly in Plymtree), Henland (in Kentisbeare) and unidentified 'Esse'. The fact that some of these are in neighbouring parishes may be evidence for Cullompton's previous wider influence.

Analysis of the present-day plan-form and topography, together with the location of St Andrew's Parish Church, indicates a geographical shift in settlement focus, from the Roman site on the west side of Fore Street (below St Andrew's Hill), south-east to the crest of the spur overlooking the River Culm. It is possible, however, that earlier (Roman) settlement occurred there as well.

The present church is set well back from (south-east of) Cullompton's main (mediaeval) street, within a sub-rectangular enclosure, formed by the churchyard and the lanes running around its west, south and part of its east side. This has the appearance of a precinct or close, and may



be a survival of the layout of a minster church surrounded by Canon's houses, with wide tenement plots behind.

At the death of William the Conqueror (1087), Cullompton church was given to Battle Abbey, along with its prebends. The annexation would have deprived the minster church of its income and although the 'college' of priests may have continued to exist for a while, the structure of the foundation would have been undermined, and with the transfer of the church and its endowments to St Nicholas's Priory in Exeter during the late 11<sup>th</sup>/early 12<sup>th</sup> century it probably ceased to be Collegiate. By the late 12<sup>th</sup> century there was only a single vicar and the church would have become indistinguishable from an ordinary parish church.

### **Mediaeval market town.**

During the mediaeval period (c1066-1540) Cullompton's diminishing religious status was replaced by its increasing role as a trading and manufacturing centre for the surrounding farming area. Benefitting from its location next to the River Culm, with water-powered mills at nearby Higher and Lower Kingsmill from at least the 13<sup>th</sup> century, it became a base for flour production and for the woollen cloth manufacture for which Devon was famous from the later mediaeval period.

Despite not being documented as a borough until 1640, when it is recorded as 'Burgus', the evidence indicates that Cullompton was a town long before then - a grant was made in 1278 for a market on Thursday and a 3-day fair at the festival of St John the Baptist; in 1317/18 a Tuesday market and fair at the feast of St George was granted. Moreover, the town has a plan-form that confirms it as a part organically evolved and part deliberately laid out mediaeval urban settlement.

### **The key phases/components of the mediaeval town are:**

- Minster /St Andrew's Parish Church - existing minster church, apparently dedicated to St Mary, was replaced by a new parish church during 15<sup>th</sup> century (re-dedication to St Andrew granted 1436); Lane Chapel erected 1526 by wool capitalist (decorated with symbols of the wool trade, including carved angels holding cloth shears); large tower added 1545-9; church restored and partly rebuilt in 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Initial urban development – likely to have been focused on the area (adjacent to the church/precinct) already settled during the Saxon period
- Initial market place - may have been a sub-triangular area formed by: the splayed area, known as Lower Bull Ring where Exeter Hill and Cockpit Hill merge at the south end of Fore Street; together with Queen Square (formerly a more open space); and the area now occupied by the buildings fronting the east side of Fore Street, at its south end, and the north side of Queen Square
- Initial streets, Church Street and Lower Church Street connecting the minster church precinct to the initial market place
- Fore Street - main axis of the mediaeval town: which runs north-south, along and taking advantage of the long axis of the plateau on which the town developed; together with the burgage plots either side of it, this street appears to be a deliberately laid out rectangular block of urban development
- Burgage plots - rectangular blocks of long, parallel strips now fossilised by property boundaries on both sides of Fore Street; on the west side burgage plots front the whole of Fore Street and the southern end of High Street; on the east side this northern

limit is defined by the line of a (still partly surviving) west-east leat, and the block of burgage plots extends as far south as the northern edge of the already established early mediaeval (minster) settlement.

- Tiverton Road – the straight, eastern end of this lane runs through the burgage plots and is part of the planned layout of the mediaeval town; it may originally have curved around the base of St Andrew's Hill, before being redirected to provide access into the mediaeval Fore Street, with which it forms a T-junction. Alternatively, the original route may have followed the approximate line of what (in the post-mediaeval period) became Shortlands Lane
- Town Leat and New Cut – a watercourse for domestic supply granted to the town by the Abbot of Buckland in 1356; water rising in the hills 2½ miles to the west flowed as a stream into a pond at Shortlands, from where it ran along several open channels into the centre of town (including along what is now New Cut), and then both ways along Fore Street and to other parts of the town; covered over since the 1960s, but line still detectable in places
- Later market place, Higher Bull Ring – wide lozenge-shaped area formed by the 'bowing' out of a street (High Street) used as a market area; this market place may date back to the late mediaeval period or be of early post-mediaeval origin
- Possible late mediaeval tenement plots – shorter parallel plots fronting both sides of Higher Bull Ring, to the north of the burgage plots; may be late mediaeval in origin or early post-mediaeval.

The remaining land within the present town extent would have been covered in strip fields and other agricultural enclosures, with two farmsteads, Padbrook and Padbrookhill, located on the south, and water meadows on the valley floor to the west providing rich summer pasture.

### **Post-mediaeval processing and trading centre**

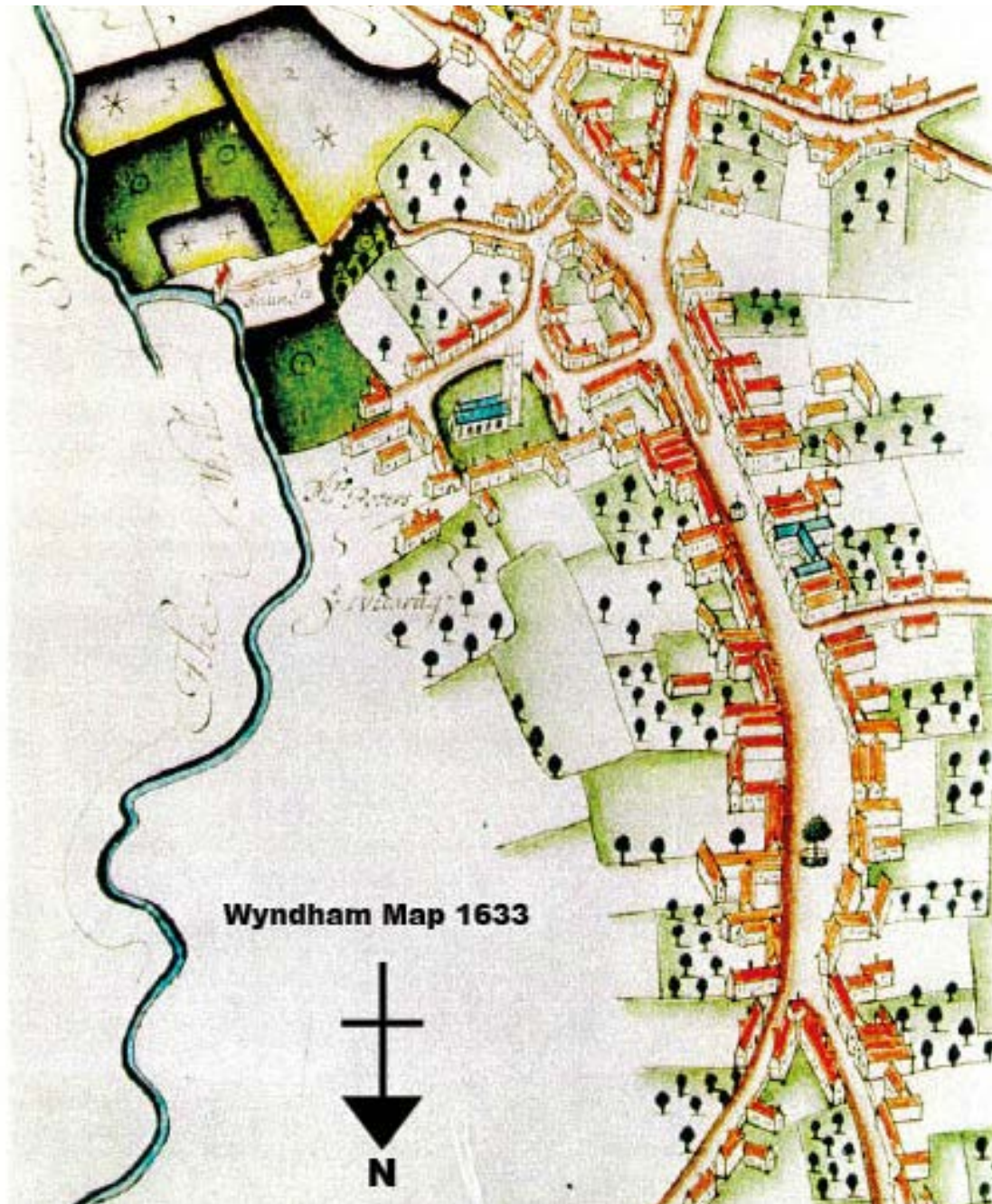
During the post-mediaeval period 'Culliton' continued to flourish as an important processing and trading centre for surrounding farms and villages. Woollen manufacturing increased, with Cullompton, like other Devon towns, manufacturing kersey for sale in London and abroad. Cloth produced was initially sent to Exeter for finishing, but by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century speciality kersey stockings were being produced in the town. Other industries were established – leather working, papermaking, bell founding – taking advantage of the ample water supply from the River Culm and numerous side streams. The town also benefitted from passing trade resulting from its location on the main Bristol to Exeter post road, along which it extended for '4 furlongs' according to Ogilby's 1675 atlas, no doubt being one of the places 'accommodated with fitting entertainment for travellers'.

From 1753 the road, which entered the town on the north via Higher Street and continued on to Exeter up Padbrook Hill, was improved and managed by the Exeter Turnpike Trust, with a tollhouse opposite the Bell Inn. Other routes also converged on Cullompton, including the road from Tiverton, maintained from 1767 by the Tiverton Turnpike Trust, with a toll chain/gate and house near North House, west of the post-mediaeval town, and the Honiton Road to the east, on which there was another tollhouse.

Much of the commercial core is depicted on the 1633 Wyndham Map, by which time development had expanded beyond the church area and Fore street into High Street, and buildings had started to extend out from the centre along the roads and lanes leading into the town – Higher Street and Lower Street (now Station Road) to the north, Tiverton Road to the west, Exeter

Hill, Cockpit Hill/Duke Street and Crow Green to the south (with the suggestion from the 1633 map that by that date Shortlands Lane was also in existence, running along the back of the mediaeval burgage plots, to the west of Fore Street).

At the southern end of the town, the extension of roadside frontage down back lanes (Church Street, Lower Church Street, Cockpit Hill, Way's Lane, Lower Mill Lane) and the widening of several junctions (Lower Bull Ring, Queen Square, Pound Square) created two distinctive, detached blocks of development - to the west of the church and at the triangular junction of Cockpit Hill with Exeter Hill.



Wyndham Map 1633 shows St Andrew's Parish Church, almshouses and merchants town houses

Over the next century, as Cullompton's economy grew, the density of development would undoubtedly have increased, but the only significant change to the plan form between 1633 and Donn's 1765 map was New Street. Laid out in a straight, diagonal line from the top of Exeter Hill to the lower part of Shortlands Lane, this was a planned single-phase development associated with the expanding woollen industry.



By the time of the c1802 OS surveyor's drawings, however, further accretive expansion had taken place around the older centre – to the north as far as Goblin Lane; on the west along Shortlands Lane; and, on the south, down Exeter Hill into the tributary valley, on the other side of which an additional settlement area was forming around the Bell Inn. To the east, the Mill Leat created a linear physical boundary (although the valley-slope between it and the back of Fore Street remained largely undeveloped), with the routes leading down to the Higher and Middle Mills adding two new lanes to the town plan.

The key physical changes/components of the post-mediaeval period are:

### **Commercial/mixed**

- The eastern side of the initial mediaeval market place was in-filled with buildings fronting onto the south end of Fore Street and rebuilding and back plot development took place along the rest of the street
- The commercial core of the town grew to encompass the whole of the area from the top of Lower Street (now Station Road) in the north to the top of Exeter Hill in the south, with three distinct market areas operating in conjunction with each other:
  1. Higher Bull Ring was a wide area for trading sheep and cattle driven in from the surrounding countryside
  2. Fore Street was where produce was made and sold: the street was lined with coaching inns and merchants houses (with back courts containing stables, woollen workshops and workers housing); most notable is the stretch of largely unaltered c1600s street frontage (of large wool merchants 'houses: The Walronds, and Manor House, at the north end of Fore Street, on its western side; a market cross is shown on the 1633 and 1802 mapping in the centre of the street, half way along its length; and the shambles (meat and corn market) is depicted as a long thin building running down the middle of the street towards its southern end
  3. Lower Bull Ring including Queen Square, appears to have been a secondary livestock market, with Pound Square providing an additional area for holding animals (for market) and the name Cockpit Hill suggesting a location for cock fights.

### **Industrial**

#### **Mills**

- Higher, Middle and Lower Mills (with an associated mill pond), known as Cullompton Mills, along with Higher Kingsmill (2 mills) and Lower Kingsmill to the west of the town; the six mills are mentioned in a mortgage deed of 1700
- Higher Mill, also called Town Mill, and Lower Mill were used for grinding corn; Middle Mill had two wheels, one for corn, and one for leather processing
- Cullompton Leat which takes its water from the Spratford Stream (a tributary of the River Culm), fed the three mills (Higher, Middle & Lower) on the western side of the town from at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (Lower Mill and part of leat shown on the 1633 Wyndham Map)
- Higher Kingsmill had two (woollen) tucking mills in 1608 and was used for making paper from c1729; Lower Kingsmill in 1674 included 'three water greist mills one

fullinge mill one paper mill' (the earliest reference to a paper mill on the Culm), with 'Lower and Higher Rackfield' (indicating areas of racks on which fulled cloth was stretched) recorded in 1792.

## Woollen industry

- Shortlands Woollen Mill - William Upcott's serge manufactory, constructed on the western edge of the town (late 1700s?)
- Possible woollen factory/workshops, north end of Higher Street, opposite Goblin Lane – line of small buildings on south side of lane to Court Farm (named as 'The College') also depicted on the 1802 OS drawings & Tithe Map, may represent an earlier part of the woollen factory north of lane on 1904 OS map.

## Bell founding

- Bell foundry – 1746 Thomas Bilbie established 'The West of England Church Bell-foundry' in Cullompton; over 400 bells hanging in Devonshire church towers were cast and founded there (including 8 of the 10 bells in St Andrew's Parish Church); 1815 business sold to William Pannell and was continued in the town, until moved to Exeter by his son in 1850; over the years various sites used by the foundry, including Almshouses building, Methodist Court, and Middle Mill.

## Civic

- Almshouses - on east side of Higher Street, north of Lower Street; founded 1522 for six poor men, by wealthy cloth merchant, John Trott
- Workhouse – appears to have stood in a back plot west of Fore Street, on south side of New Cut (on the site now occupied by the Royal British Legion hall); disused by 1839.

## Religious

From the late 17<sup>th</sup> century non-conformism grew in the town.

- Unitarian Chapel, Pound Square - 1698, rebuilt 1912
- Baptist chapel, High Street - 1743, rebuilt 1858. John Wesley first preaching in the town in 1748
- Wesleyan chapel, New Cut - 1764, replaced 1806, restored 1872 following a fire.



Unitarian Chapel, Pound Square Church

## **Residential/mixed**

- 17<sup>th</sup> century (1633 Wyndham Map) individual cottages and short rows lined the roads leading into the town centre (Exeter Hill, Crow Green, Duke Street, Tiverton Road, Higher and Lower Street (now Station Road))
- The area either side of Exeter Hill started to develop as a mixed residential and industrial area, with New Street being constructed in the early-mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to provide additional housing (with back yard work space) for those employed (by Upcott's) as home workers in the woollen industry
- A similar area of workers' housing and larger houses with (woollen and other) workshops behind started to develop at the north end of the town, along Higher Street and down into the top of Station Road (previously known as Lower Street)
- In contrast, the area immediately west and to the south of the parish church took on a village-like appearance, as it became transformed into a genteel residential enclave, away from commercial and industrial activity
- Vicarage - built north of church, with grounds occupying area of early mediaeval tenement plots, transforming it into landscaped garden; building depicted on 1633 Wyndham Map
- Other (later post-mediaeval) large detached houses, set in their own grounds – Court House, on the northern edge of the town; Brooke House on the south
- On the southern edge of the town, a linear settlement area along (mainly the west) side of Exeter Road had begun forming by at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (Wyndham Map 1633). With the Bell Inn forming its northern end point, it would probably have served as a resting place for travellers into the town, especially at market times and when the road into the town was blocked by floodwater from the adjacent tributary stream or the River Culm itself. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the location of a tollhouse here would have made this a natural stopping point
- Another edge of town settlement area was Waterloo, a farm and collection of cottages at the south-west end of Duke Street. In 1695 Celia Fiennes described 'Culimton' as 'a good little market Town'. By the end of the post-mediaeval period it had evolved into more of an industrial settlement. Yet it still retained its country-town feel, surrounded by farmland and (according to the 1802 mapping) with orchards occupying most back plots and gardens.

# Collompton Tithe Map 1835





## **19<sup>th</sup> century - decline and revival**

The limited expansion beyond the post-mediaeval town limits was mainly the result of industrial development on its northern and southern edges.

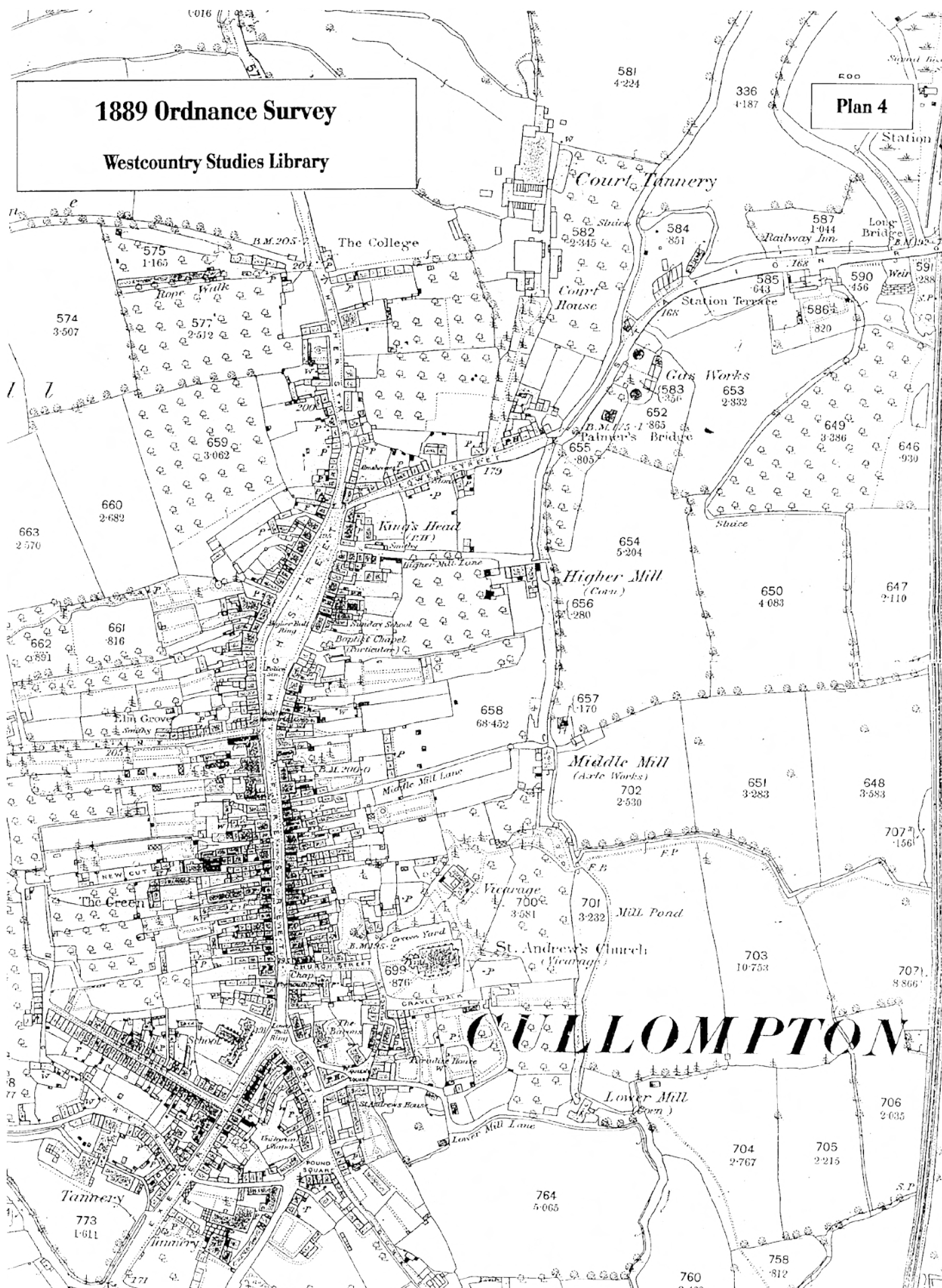
By the early 1800s the commercial centre of the town seems to have been in a state of decline, being described in 1809 as 'principally of one old street badly paved and the centre much disfigured and obstructed by some old shambles', with the lack of any sewer system and resulting pollution of water supplies leading to insanitary conditions and frequent outbreaks of typhoid and malaria.

Woollen cloth manufacturing continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with 60 weavers and many spinners being employed in 1816 at the Shortlands mill, which by the 1840s was the biggest employer in the town. In 1838 Cullompton still had 500 looms, now used to produce (poorer quality) serge cloth. Both Middle Mill and Lower Mill were adapted for woollen cloth production in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, by the late 1800s one had become an axle works and the other was being used to grind animal feed, and in 1869 Shortlands closed, presumably as a result of the mechanisation of the weaving industry. Although woollen manufacture became a lesser part of Cullompton's economy, a (mechanised) branch factory was established by Fox Brothers in 1900, on the northern edge of the town, opposite Goblin Lane and around the same time there was a small-scale revival of the hand-weaving industry, in the stables of Heyford House, which evolved into the machine-knitting of garments.

Leather production gradually became the major industry in the town, helping to revive its fortunes. Large-scale tanneries were built on either side of the road at the bottom of Exeter Hill (Crow Green Tannery), north of Court House (Court Tannery), and (later) further to the east. Papermaking continued (at Kings Mill), changing from hand to machine-made in the 1890s, and a range of other industries also developed, such as: cabinet making, with Luxton's Furniture Factory occupying two sites in Duke Street: a twine works in Goblin Lane; East Culme Brick and Tile Works (off Knowle Lane). There were also two smithies in the town – one on Tiverton Road, the other on Higher Mill Lane.

The town also benefitted from significant improvements to the transport infrastructure. From 1813, the Cullompton Turnpike Trust established a new route to Exeter, replacing the earlier hilly Exeter Turnpike Trust route (up Padbrook Hill and via Bradninch and Killerton) with a more level one via Broad Clyst (now part of the B3181). In 1843-4 the Bristol and Exeter Railway, the southern extension of Brunel's Great Western Railway line from London to Bristol, was extended into Devon, passing just east of Cullompton, with a station being built north-east of the town. In addition to accommodating passengers, Cullompton Station became an important trading centre, with coal and goods yards, cattle trucks, a milk train and other local produce (such as bales of skins) exported by rail. As well as the development beginning to creep eastwards out from the town, along what was now Station Road, the Railway Inn was built west of the station.

The wealth, opportunity and status gained from revived industrial activity and improved transport links led to redevelopment of the commercial centre (High Street, Fore Street, top of Exeter Hill), with remodelling of older fronts and insertion of shop fronts, and the erection of some new buildings, such as a police station (1898) and several banks in Higher Bull Ring. The latter continued to be the location for sheep and cattle markets and for fairs, while the southern end of Fore Street



remained the focus for the sale of meat and other produce, with the Shambles being removed in 1811 and a replacement Market House established in the former Court House.

Other civic, religious and residential additions and improvements took place elsewhere in the town. Cullompton School was built c1870 at the top of Exeter Hill and in 1865 a town gas works in Station Road. A public cemetery, with two (Church of England & Non-conformist) mortuary chapels, was laid out on the western town edge, in Tiverton Road, the site also of an Independent chapel, erected in 1830 and later converted to assembly rooms. St Andrew's Parish Church was restored (1848-50), and the vicarage (1820), together with Church Street and houses to the east of the churchyard were all rebuilt in a grander style.

Lesser scaled, rows of industrial housing continued to be built adjacent to the edge-of-town factories and in connection with the building of the train station (Railway Terrace), and in 1839 a catastrophic fire led to the rebuilding of most of the worker's cottages in New Street and Crow Green, as well as many houses in Lower Bull Ring (thatched roofs and cob walls being replaced with slate and rendered stone and brick).

At the end of the century, more substantial terraces were constructed for the wealthier inhabitants of Cullompton, including Belle Vue Terrace on Station Road. Located just above the valley floor, at right angles to the road, with front gardens running down to the Mill Leat, this would have formed an attractive gateway into the town from the railway station. Beyond the town, along the approaching roads and lanes were wayside cottages, in places forming small hamlets, such as at St George's well, to the north.

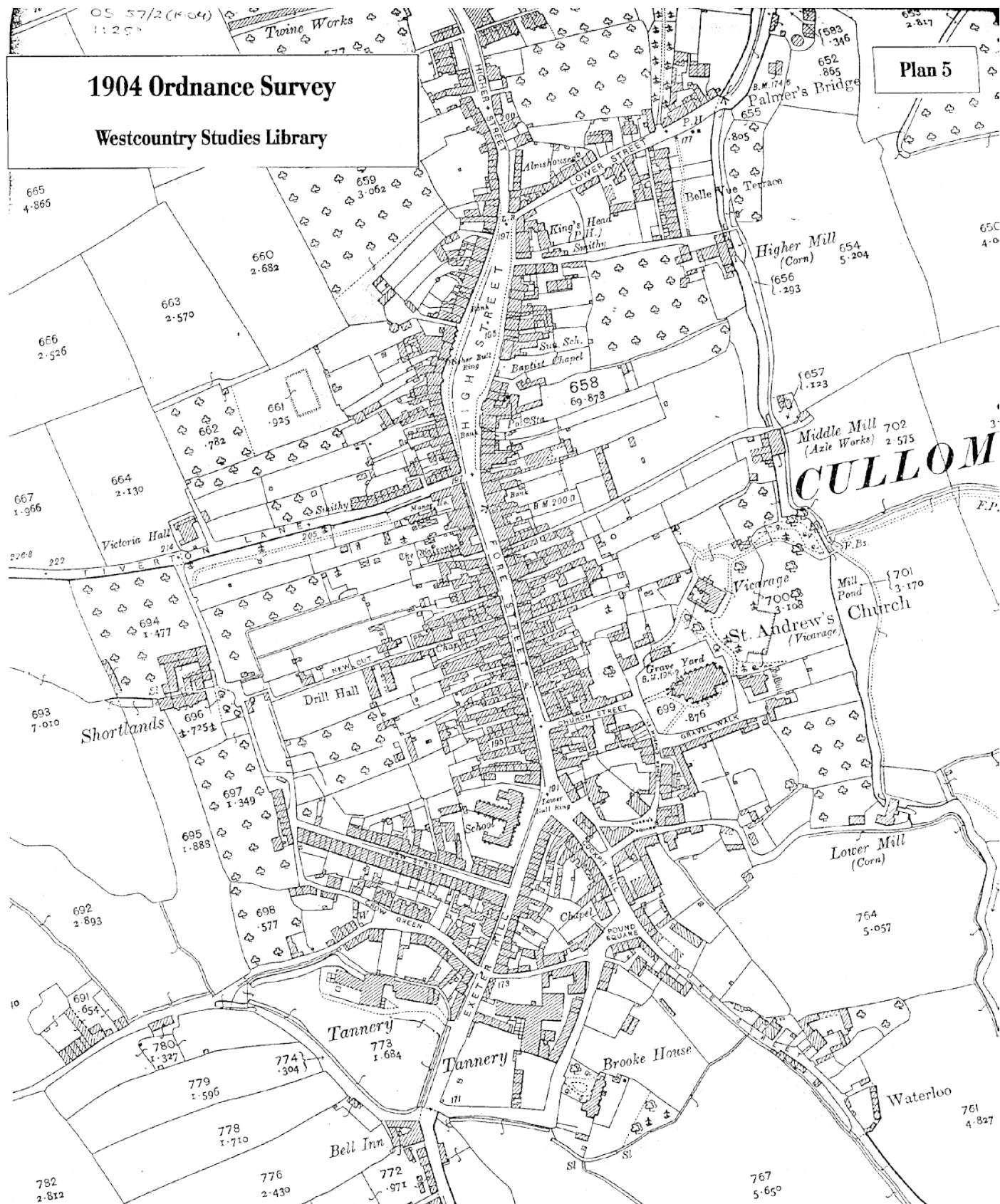
The revival of Cullompton by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is indicated by a 1910 account, which states that 'the houses for the most part are clean and smart in appearance, and the side streets and recently built terraces add considerably to the beauty of the town'.



# 1904 Ordnance Survey

Westcountry Studies Library

Plan 5



## **20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century service and commuter town.**

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century Cullompton expanded dramatically beyond its former limits.

From the early 1900s commercial and industrial development extended out across the valley bottom to the railway. This included the cattle market (relocated in 1918 from Higher Bull Ring to a field behind the Railway Inn), Culm Leather Dressing Works (established 1921 beside the station) and a sawmill on the east bank of the mill leat. Later in the century trading/industrial estates developed on the valley floor south of Station Road (an area now, in part, occupied by a large supermarket).

Smaller-scale commercial/industrial ventures sprung up elsewhere, including the 1930s Cullompton Hotel, at the southern entrance to the town. Further towards the town, Selwood's Tannery at Crow Green continued in operation until gutted by a fire in 1958, since when parts of the site have been occupied by a petrol station and supermarket. Some small-scale light industry still takes place in the northern part of the town, though the Woollen factory there closed in 1977 and Court Tannery is now a farm.

Twentieth century alterations to the regional/national rail and road infrastructure have had a great impact. While direct rail links were withdrawn by the closure of Cullompton Station in 1964, a road bypass completed in 1969 was upgraded in 1974 to part of the M5, with the town having its own motorway exit (and services on the former railway station site since 1999). As a result, Cullompton has become an important commuter town for Exeter, significantly increasing its population.

In addition, its role as a service centre for the wider Culm Valley area has grown and diversified over the century. During the 1930s a new primary school was built on the south-east side of St Andrew's Hill, with the 1960s seeing the opening of Cullompton Secondary School to the east of Exeter Road and Willow Bank Primary School on Crow Bridge Road. In addition to schools, the town's civic, recreational and social facilities now include a police station; fire station; large sports centre area of extensive playing fields, bordering on the mill leat, now a recreational walkway; modern community centre next to the church and a modern library and community learning hub (The Hayridge Centre) on a site formerly occupied by a magistrates court and health centre site: with the new Culm Valley Integrated Centre For Health, as well as a GP surgery and vets practice; and care homes – the old vicarage and the Court House. Post war housing estates were laid out on the slopes of St Andrew's Hill and in former orchards and farmland to the west of Cullompton, with linear roadside development and estate housing also occurring along Willand Road and at St George's Well on the northern edge of the town. Later 20<sup>th</sup> (and early 21<sup>st</sup>) century residential development has further increased the western town extent, created a spear-head of expansion to the north and wrapped around the town's southern and south-eastern edge. Within the historic core of the town, the backs of former burgage plots on both sides of Fore Street and Higher Street have also been progressively infilled with houses during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Twentieth/Twenty-first century religious additions include: the 1929 St Boniface Roman Catholic Church at the bottom of Shortlands Road; Hebron Evangelical Church in Queen's Square, originally 1962, rebuilt 1980s; modern place of worship at the west end of Tiverton Road. Adjacent to the latter is an electrical sub-station, with other utilities (sewage/water) located east of Millennium Way and on the town's southern edge. Several new roads – St Andrews Road, Shortlands Road, Swallow Way, Langeland's Road, Forcefield Road, Meadow Lane, Millennium Way – have been laid out to provide access to the expanded town, which now covers five times the area that it did at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 4.0 Historic Urban Character

Cullompton's natural topography, coupled with the imprint on its plan-form and fabric of previous land use and over a 1000 years of continuous development, have resulted in a varied historic urban character -part village, part market town, part industrial settlement, part service centre/commuter belt, played out across the modern settlement.

The village-like character of the area around St Andrew's, overlooking remnant meadow-land on the valley bottom below, belies the fact that is part of the urban environment.

Fore Street, Higher Bull Ring and their back plots, however, have the enclosed and tightly-developed appearance and varied architecture of a mediaeval town core that has undergone successive rebuilding (including in response to at least four disastrous fires that damaged the town during the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries)

In contrast is the more homogenous architecture of the areas of later post-mediaeval and 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial expansion to the south and north of the centre. The slither of Shortlands Lane on the west, despite 20<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding, still references Cullompton's earliest factory, while the more open-plan character of the land adjoining Station Road reflects the larger-scale industrial and commercial development encouraged by the routing of the mainline railway, and the M5 along the eastern side of the town.

20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century social and private estate housing, together with associated civic (educational, health, recreational) facilities, defines the character of most of the rest of the town. A large swathe wrapping around its north, west and south sides, although St Andrew's Hill is a prominent and still largely undeveloped element of the urban topography.

Flowing through these disparate parts is the network of water courses (river, tributaries, Mill Leat, other channels and culverts) fundamentally important to Cullompton's historic development, influencing its location, supplying water to its inhabitants and powering its industries. The significance of this integrated water system cannot be overestimated and surviving elements are best understood as part of the overall character of the town, rather than just within the individual character areas.

Another distinctive characteristic of Cullompton is that rather than having a well-defined civic and communal focal point, these functions have shifted through time and are spread throughout the historic core. This shifting pattern, together with the lack of a predominant building material or phase, makes it difficult to give an overall architectural summary for the town; this is best achieved through the individual character area descriptions.



## 5.0 Key Historic influences

- Strategically important Roman settlement and fort
- Saxon Royal Holding and high religious status
- Mediaeval trading and manufacturing centre making wool products and six mills within the Parish
- 18<sup>th</sup> century one of four cloth towns in Devon manufacturing serge but declined by the end of the century. Other manufacturing include leather tanning and goods and paper mill
- Meeting point for 4 Turnpike Trusts in Georgian period, - Exeter, Honiton, Tiverton and Cullompton. However, its success as a transport centre was stifled by several major fires. One of the worst was in 1839, resulting in large-scale rebuilding. Despite the loss of a great number of old buildings, the medieval street pattern survived
- The opening of the station in 1844 supported the town's development and by 1899, Cullompton was a small town with a population of around 3,000 people. The railway station closed to passenger traffic in 1964
- By 1968 there had been considerable growth to the west and north and industrial development at the site of the former Kings Mill works. The Cullompton bypass was under construction and Cummings nursery had opened at Stonyford Bridge. Around the old station were Longridge Meadow and Alexandria Trading Estates. The bypass extended in the 1970s to Exeter as part of the M5. Since then, there has been further development at Kings Mill (Saunders Way), the supermarket store on site of former industry, and a new library in the town centre.

## 6.0 Setting of the Conservation Area

The immediate landscape setting of the conservation area is defined by the hills to the west and north, the river to the east which continues it over the plateau which extends to the foot of the Blackdown Hills. The town is well defined to the east by the natural flood plain of the river, and has grown on the more gentle gradients to the west. To the north and south the older limits of the town are defined by the valley of the streams running west to east to join the River Culm near the east end of Station Road and Duke Street.

The conservation area is broadly linear in form along Fore Street and High Street following the planned mediaeval form, forming a Y to the north along Higher Street and Station Road. At the South end there is an inverse Y to Exeter Road and Cockpit Hill with a small accretion around the Parish Church. The hills to the west mentioned above define the setting, and there are good views to the town from various viewpoints above such as near Trinity, and to the north from St Andrew's Hill (the site of the Scheduled Ancient Monument)

The strong visual containment continues to the east where there is no high land for some distance to see down onto the town, and where the conservation area is visible, it is the Parish Church Tower which stands out over the trees of the historic vicarage garden.

In summary its side of valley position on a plateau above the river with little development the steeper valley to the flood plain makes the town quite intimate and self-contained within the landscape with the Parish Church being the principle indicator of development.



## 7.0 General Character and plan form

The historic core of the conservation area is essential linear in form along the North South axis of Fore Street and High Street, with a Y and inverted Y at both ends (or a stretched X) and takes form from the topography on the southern plateaux above the river valley and the historic road pattern, which is essentially an extended crossing of 4 routes.

The principle streets of Fore Street, High Street, Higher Street, Station Road, Exeter Hill and Cockpit Hill have building lines on the road frontage and streets are of varying widths giving a tight knit character to the urban area. This pattern of main streets define the character and form. There are few secondary streets, these are principally to the south of the Parish Church and includes the small and more intimate Queen Square and Pound Square.

## 8.0 Landmarks, Special Features, Views and Materials

### Landmarks:

Landmark buildings are dealt with in more detail in each of the character areas, but a sample would include

Parish Church of St Andrew and Church Yard with its tower is prominent from many locations

Trott's Almshouses and attached covered seating area

The War Memorial in the Higher Bullring

K6 Telephone box in the Higher Bullring

The Former Police Station (1898) and Town Hall. Both with public clocks.

Manor Court Hotel, The Walronds and Merchant House in Fore Street

The open spaces of Cockpit Hill, Higher Bullring, Lower Bullring and Queen Square are all notable landmarks.

### Special Features:

The strong sense of enclosure on the streets with buildings directly to the rear of the pavement. Where a building is set back, there is a boundary wall, often 2m and taller to continue the sense of enclosure.

The mill leat is an attractive and tranquil rural edge of settlement public way fare.

Cobbles appear as paths in a variety of patterns, particularly on the accesses through the covered ways into the courts for example adjacent to The White Hart public house. In addition they appear in gullies along roadsides for example along Church Street or in front of properties as at the north side of Station Road and at Pye Corner.

Black diamond patterned clay pavements are also a distinctive material used around the town for footways for example on the south side of Queen Square. This material has been used in enhancement schemes for example on High Street.

Traditional cast iron street signs can be seen throughout the conservation area.

## **Materials**

Buildings are constructed in a variety of materials, although red clay brick (in Flemish bond) and render (rough cast and smooth) predominate. Some of the moulded brickwork is of high quality with detailed patterning, and several properties display the use of contrasting coloured bricks. Cob is not an uncommon survivor beneath the render.

Roofs are mostly blue/grey slate including artificial slate; a few have red clay tiles and a couple have thatched roofs. Some slate has been turnerised (covered in fabric and pitch). Dormers are rare but where they appear they are usually small, narrow and gabled.

Another characteristic feature of buildings in the central part of the conservation area is the oriel window or canted bay windows to the upper floors.

Shopfronts are wooden and painted. Whilst surviving complete historic shopfronts are rare, elements of earlier shop fronts survive in others, which includes historic decorative elements, which can be hidden by later alteration.

Most street furniture is modern, much of it the result of enhancement schemes in the 1990s.

## **Views**

The views are considered in more detail in each character area.

The character of the conservation area is that views out of the conservation area to the countryside are rare and are glimpses only.

There are views down on to the town from the hills the west, north and south.

The Parish Church of Andrew is often the focal point of views. These are largely fortuitous, but unplanned views do not have a diminished importance. The principal views of the Church Tower are

- East along Church Street
- South East along Higher Street
- South along Forge Way
- South East from St Andrews Hill
- West from the CCA fields, the railway line and the Church
- From the mill leat north of Lower Mill
- North up Gravel Walk from Queen Square.

## 9.0 Character Analysis

Conservation Areas are designated for their special character, but within the area there will usually be zones that express character variations but contribute to the whole. The definition of these 'sub areas' and the elements making up their character aids a more detailed and nuanced description of the character of the conservation area.

When using this document it should be noted that there will often be a transitional area between defined character areas where the character may contain characteristics of both adjacent areas. Cullompton's historic core, the conservation area, has a reasonably cohesive character based upon its network of streets and their mostly close-set built frontages, a distinct palette of materials and consistencies of scale. The area can be subdivided into six areas to aid description, also shown on Map 2:-

- **Character Area 1 - Parish Church of St Andrew and Environs**
- **Character Area 2 - Character Area Boundaries**
- **Character Area 3 - Exeter Hill**
- **Character Area 4 - Fore Street**
- **Character Area 5 - High Street/Higher Bullring**
- **Character Area 6 - Higher Street and Station Road**

## **9.1 Area 1: Parish Church of St Andrew and Environs**

This area encompasses the projecting spur overlooking the River Culm that was the focus of Cullompton's early mediaeval settlement, occupying the level crest and extending down gently sloping land to the mill leat (which forms its eastern edge) and the modern development to the north of Lower Mill Lane (on the south).

The Saxon origins of this area of the town are partly preserved in its plan-form – the sub-rectangular churchyard and surrounding lanes (Lower Church Street, Gravel Walk) probably reflecting the precinct of the minster church, with the wide, parallel garden strips to the south likely to be remnants of the tenement plots (behind Canon's houses) that once surrounded the early mediaeval church. The spur is now crowned by the dominant presence of the 15<sup>th</sup> century St Andrew's Parish Church.

Set back from the mediaeval market area and away from post-mediaeval industry, the church environs evolved during the post-mediaeval period into a quiet residential enclave, including a vicarage (now converted) standing in extensive landscaped grounds. The area's genteel detachment was re-enforced by late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding in the relatively polite and classically-influenced style of the vicarage, houses to the east of the churchyard and along the roads leading out to the Lower Bull Ring and Church Street. The latter was formed into an attractive formal approach from Fore Street, framing the view of the church tower. This character was reinforced by later 19<sup>th</sup> century Queen Anne and Arts and Crafts houses and extensions.

In general, this area has a small-village church-town feel, with narrow streets feeding into the central, open, churchyard area from the west and south-west, and the green and leafy grounds of the former vicarage (now a nursing home) and spacious gardens of other detached residences creating a rural appearance. Even the building of a large modern community centre along the northern side of the churchyard has not significantly diminished the village-green appearance of the latter. From within this area, its urban context is hinted at by glimpses of Fore Street, down Church Street.

To the west and north-west of the church, open areas of woodland and open grassed areas which are in the main historically the garden to the vicarage and slope down to the mill leat.

Historically, the northern part of this area, either side of Middle Mill Lane consisted of the backs of the mediaeval burgage plots which fronted onto Fore Street and the southern part of High Street. A leat running along the south side of Forge Way Car Park (north of area 1) marks their likely northern extent. The area to the north would probably have been mediaeval strip fields.

Although the parallel-strip pattern of this northern areas mediaeval origins has become blurred by modern subdivision and infill development, it is still detectable in the present plan-form. There are a considerable number of trees, good-sized gardens and a generally open feel to this area (increased by the watery presence of the mill leat and the views over the valley floor afforded by the sloping ground above), which provides a reminder of its earlier, semi-rural character.

### **Special architectural and historic interest:**

This area is the location of the Saxon minster from which the market town later developed, preserving evidence of these pre-urban origins in its plan-form and its set-apart, village-like character. This is focused around the mediaeval parish church, the size of which, together with the quality and richness of its 16th century tower and Lane Aisle makes it significant in its own right and as a reflection of the continuing wealth of the town during the post-mediaeval period. The surrounding buildings emphasise this high status and attendant good quality of design – confirming the area's intrinsic aesthetic values and its significance as an indicator of Cullompton's past wealth and success and continuing role as a centre for the surrounding countryside.

To the north it incorporates the backs of the eastern block of burgage plots and later mediaeval/early post-mediaeval tenements, which are part of the historic town core, with original plan-form and back-plot character still apparent, despite modern infill.

### **Scale, Height and Building line:**

Residential properties are two storey and historically on the back of the pavement with the exception of 2 Church Street and Nork House, No 15 Gravel Walk, which are set back behind contemporary low brick walls.

### **Significant Buildings and groups:**

St Andrew's Church: 15<sup>th</sup> century St Andrews Church with its Church yard and associated boundary walls, gates, railings and church yard monuments. It was built in 15<sup>th</sup> century with a large tower added in the 16th century. The Lane aisle was also added in the 16th century by wool merchant, John Lane. It is decorated with symbols of the wool trade.



St Andrew's Parish Church



St Patrick's, 1 Church Street: Detached two storey house with outbuildings, circa 1840. Symmetrical three window range, with later 19th century extension to left, single storey outbuilding to right.

4 and 5 Gravel Walk: Early 17th century house with later modifications and extensions, formerly a three-room and through passage plan house, now two properties.

The Retreat, 12 Gravel Walk: House forming part of a row to the south of the parish church. Circa 1660s with later alterations.

Church Cottage, Gravel Walk: House, forming part of a row to the south of the parish church. Seventeenth century, considerably remodeled in the 19th century.

Old Chimes, Gravel Walk: Detached house, mid-19th century, possibly the remodeling of an earlier house. Originally possibly a three-room cross-passage plan with later wings to front and rear.

15 Gravel Walk: Substantial detached red brick house occupying a prominent position to the east of the parish church, built 1888. Interior notable for the high quality of its craftsmanship.

The grade 2 listed The Retreat, Church Cottage, Old Chimes, Nork House, and Nos 1, 3, 4 and 5 Lower Church Street (Nos 1 and 3 not listed) which form the frame to the church as a group.

### **Key unlisted buildings:**

The Old Vicarage: Early 19th century vicarage, two storeys, L-shaped plan. Five window front with balcony in centre, and wood Doric porch in end wall. Much extended.

2 Church Street: Attractive and little altered terracotta and buff brick villa with interesting detailing. Also of interest is the low front brick wall and boundary wall.



2 Church Street.

The boundary walls to between Nos 4 Church Street and No 1 Lower Church Street, and the boundary wall

## **Trees and green spaces**

The Parish Church stands in an open church yard, giving the building space to be appreciated. Yew Tree in churchyard is an important visual feature standing in isolation.

The garden area to the front of No 2 Church Street is an important open space with its trees. To the north east and east of the church there is an area of grass, open land and trees which is a remarkable rural and quiet area which leads down to the leat. This is the remains of the extensive garden to the historic vicarage.

## **Local Features**

High walls fronting onto the road enclosing the raised church yard and private gardens. Some of the walls may be cob judging by their thickness.

## **Some cast iron railings to enclose front gardens.**

Cobbles: The cobbles remain on both side of Church Street in front of the houses and into Pye Corner where they lead to the Church Hall. There is evidence that they extended round into gravel walk in front of Nos 1, 3 and 4, but they have been covered in cement.



Cobbles at Pye Corner

Chimneys are red clay brick with plain terracotta pots. Chimneys are on the ridge, but there are some examples of smaller chimneys on the front roof slope.



## **Typical details**

The roofs are gabled, there are few hips and one half hip, but this is part of a roof which appears to have been historically thatched with a flush ridge.

Eaves details are largely traditional with small fascia boards close to the front of the building, or with overhanging rafter feet. There is little boxing in with a soffit, and where that does occur it is less than 100mm unless associated with the design of the house.

Rainwater goods traditionally cast metal half round with round down pipes and painted black on black fascia boards.

The typical orange-red brick is most often in Flemish bond.

Windows are both sliding sash and casements, and are painted. Casements are rebated and balanced. Windows have a vertical emphasis. Window surrounds are typically plain, but there are some period raised surrounds.

Doors (front doors and those to gardens) are painted.

There are very few historic dormers. Where they do appear they are usually small, narrow and gabled.

The boundaries of the burgage plots remain well defined. This includes to the rear of the properties which face onto the Church and to the rear of the White Hart Inn on Fore Street, where the modern house, Monk's Walk, has been inserted but the area to the east remains open and to grass. Outbuildings to the rear are subservient and at right angles to the road, the buildings lower in height away from the road frontage.

Boundary walls are 2m or more high and capped with brick or rounded or flat stone, or clay double roman roof tiles.

## **Key colour characteristics**

Render painted white and cream with black plinth. Brick is terracotta with buff or black detailing. Windows are painted white with one example of black.

Doors are painted panelled or boarded.

Roofs are dark, typical blue welsh slate or weathered clay.

## Views

The view to the Church along Church Street from Fore Street is exceptional with the entrance to the church yard and church tower at the west end framed by the houses in the street forming a strong vista.

There is also a strong view of the church north east from Lower Church Street when approaching north from Queen Square



St Andrew's Church from Queen Square



St Andrews Church east along Church Street

## Materials

Walls: Painted render. Render is roughcast and smooth. There may be some lost stucco work on the more formal dwellings

Red clay brick with stone detailing and the use of buff and dark bricks. Bricks in Flemish bond with high quality rubbed brick voussior and other details.

Roofs: Majority blue Welsh Slate with terracotta plain clay tiles, and one historic thatch roof.

Windows are historically timber painted, in the majority white, with one black example.

Boundary Walls to the road are stone, render, brick and painted brick, and typically are of the same material as the building they relate to.





Cobbles damaged by utilities on Church Street



Cobbles at Pye Corner showing damage.

### Key Negatives

Replacement timber and uPVC windows which do not respect the historic form or character of a property harming its character.

Poor maintenance and damage to the cobbles from in provision of utilities.

### Parking area off Gravel Walk



Double yellow lines in historic context

The area of open parking on the corner of Gravel Walk and Lower Church Street. There was historically a building on this land, but it was gone by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This area is informal and allows this otherwise enclosed character to spill out and be dominated by parked cars.

Double yellow lines dominate streets Church Street, jarring with the historic cobble surfaces to the front of the houses.

## **9.2 Character Area 2: Mill leat and Mill buildings**

Cullompton's leat forms a distinctly peaceful area defining much of the eastern boundary of the conservation area. To the north it separates the garden areas serving Garden Terrace and Belle Vue Terrace from the Western Way Industrial Estate at the north end of the town. To the south it divides the large private gardens of properties east of the Parish Church from the public open space at the south. Whilst this southern section of the mill stream is rural in appearance, this otherwise tranquil backwater is subject to the background noise of the nearby M5 motorway.

The leat takes its water from the Spratford Stream (a tributary of the River Culm), and historically fed three mills (Higher, Middle & Lower) on the western side of the town from at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (Lower Mill and part of leat shown on the 1633 Wyndham Map).

The mills were variously used for grinding corn, working leather, making bells, manufacturing wool, as an engineering works and for producing animal feed. Higher Mill (also known as Town Mill) was converted to a house in the 1970s, while Middle Mill survives only as a ruin. Higher Mill, also called Town Mill, and Lower Mill were used for grinding corn; Middle Mill had two wheels, one for corn, and one for leather processing. Both Middle Mill and Lower Mill were adapted for woollen cloth production in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, by the late 1800s one had become an axle works and the other was being used to grind animal feed.

Combined with the wooded area to the east of the Parish Church and historic Vicarage, the millstream and millpond form the landscape setting for the eastern side of the conservation area. This green area with its public footpath link with other areas of open space such as the rear gardens of properties east of the church or the gardens at Belle Vue Terrace and Garden Terrace.

### **Special architectural and historic interest:**

This leat is known to have existed for the last 400 years and along with the historic road network and the few buildings known to be of this age, is one of the fixed historic features of the town.

It forms the eastern boundary of the town being on the edge of the water meadows associated with the River Culm, and has formed, and continues the form, the edge of development for a large part of the east of the town.

The leat is part of a network of water courses that together are fundamentally important to Cullompton's historic development, influencing its location, supplying water to its inhabitants and powering its industries. The significance of this water system cannot be overestimated.

### **Scale Height and building line:**

There are very few buildings in this area. Other than the mill buildings, all buildings are set back from the leat, with no building on the land to the east south of the supermarket site, which is itself well screened and not readily experienced when walking the path along the leat.

### **Significant Buildings and groups**

The earliest certain documentary evidence for Middle Mill appears to be a mortgage deed of 1700 which refers to 'six mills commonly called or known by the name of Cullompton Mills'. These are presumed to be Higher, Middle and Lower Mills.



Higher Mill and Mill House (also known as Town Roller Mills, Town Mill and Clarke's Mill): Higher Mill seems to have always been used for grinding corn. Possibly the mill depicted in a watercolour by Swete circa 1800. Advertised for sale in 1800 with two undershot waterwheels driving four pairs of millstones. A painting of circa 1848 shows the mill with a single, large, breast shot wheel. A turbine and roller plant were installed in 1893 to supplement waterwheel and millstones, the mill having been rebuilt about this time. Power was subsequently supplemented by an oil engine. The mill continued to work until 1974. Now house converted. The turbine is confirmed by the current owner to be in place in Spring of 2021



Higher Mill and Mill House

Middle Mill: The site of Middle Mill was used for several different purposes during its working life. In the 18th century there were two waterwheels, each serving a mill on opposite sides of the leat. In 1793 that on the town side was a grist mill, while on the other side was a leather mill, which later burnt down. The site is associated with Bilbies bell foundry between 1754 and 1813. By 1813 the grist mill had been converted for use as a woollen manufactory. The site is shown as an Axle Works on the 1889 Ordnance Survey map and in 1911 the site was occupied by the Middle Mills Engineering Company. Buildings fell into disuse from 1970s and were gradually demolished, although some remains can be found at the bridge over the leat. The millpond has now been filled in and the buildings largely demolished. The exact location of former 18th century buildings at Middle Mill is uncertain but likely that situated adjacent to documented structures.

Lower Mill: The mill has also been known as Luxton's or Hydon's Mills. In 1779, John Luxton insured his dwelling house and adjoining mill house with waterwheels and going gears there for £170. The buildings are described as being of stone, cob and thatch. A sale notice of 1795 refers to the mills having been lately repaired at considerable expense. In 1802 the mills contained four pairs of millstones and a bunting mill for



Lower Mill

making fine flour. At some point in the 19th century it appears to have been converted for use as a woollen mill. In the 1880s, however, it was being used for provender milling (animal feed). The present waterwheel was installed in 1926 which drove two pairs of stones through cast iron gearing. The machinery was altered in 1950 when a hammer mill was installed and also a generator. The mill last worked commercially in 1968. It has now been converted but the waterwheel and some of the gearing and millstones are reported to remain.

### **Key unlisted buildings**

Higher, Lower and Middle Mill and Mill House described above with their associated buildings and machinery.

Although outside the conservation area, the weir and any sluices that act as part of the water course to control water into the leat would be important unlisted buildings or structures related to the mill buildings and the leat.

### **Trees, green spaces and open spaces**

Once away from the elevated section to the north of Station Road, the leat provides an attractive and tranquil walk close to the town centre.

South of Station road it is enclosed on the east side and there is little experience of the large supermarket adjacent, and the gardens to Belle Vue Terrace open out to the pleasant aspect of the terrace of houses. The planting to the east of the leat adjacent to the car park is important as a screen.

Once beyond Middle Mill, the leat continues its tree lined course slightly elevated above the former water meadows, now open recreational land, to the east.

The gardens of the new vicarage and modern bungalows off Walter's Orchard back onto the leat, but do not erode the character.

### **Local Features**

The mill buildings referred to above, the course of the leat including filled in mill ponds, and the open, rural and tranquil nature close to the town centre.



View to St Andrew's Parish Church from mill leat just north of Lower Mill

## **Views**

The view back from the pathway just north of Lower Mill to the Parish Church is impressive giving a feeling of the height and prominence of the Church and religious primacy when it was built. The roof and intricate chimneys of No 15 Gravel Walk can also be appreciated.

There are views back to the Parish Church from various positions to the east beyond the conservation area, looking west, where the tower can be seen over the trees on the rising ground.



View West from CCA fields towards St Andrew's Parish Church

## **Key negatives:**

Replacement timber and uPVC windows which do not respect the historic form or character of the properties harming their character

Background noise and some movement from the motorway.



### **9.3 Character Area 3: Exeter Hill**

This sub area extends south-west down Exeter Hill, into the north end of Exeter Road, and to the east of that line (into the lower part of Cockpit Hill, Pound Square, Way's Lane and Brook Road) and westwards (into New Street and Crow Green). It occupies land which slopes relatively steeply down into and across the mouth of a tributary valley, just before it joins the flood plain of the River Culm. Previously mediaeval strip fields and water meadows, this area started to develop (south of Fore Street) as a mixed residential/industrial/commercial area from the early post-mediaeval period, with New Street (additional accommodation for woollen industry home workers) added in the early-mid 18th century. Rebuilt in stone after a disastrous fire in 1839 badly damaged this part of town, some earlier structures survive and the earlier cob walling is still detectable.

The built development is characterised by smaller-scaled rows and terraces of houses and (now largely disused) Victorian shop fronts, with back yards containing mews accommodation and workshops interspersed with larger-scale buildings, including the new library and learning hub (the Hayridge Centre) at the top of Exeter Hill, on the site previously occupied by the town's health centre and law courts, and, before that, the original Cullompton School (built c1870).

#### **Setting:**

In the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19th century the construction of a large tannery was constructed on either side of the road at the bottom of Exeter Hill. Despite a disastrous fire in 1958, which ended the tannery's life, both sites retain substantial original historic fabric. This, together with the large outdoor spaces typical of such industrial sites, still gives this part of the area an industrial feel, which is reinforced by the type, scale and spatial characteristics of the modern re-use and development (including a petrol station and supermarket).

#### **Special architectural and historic interest:**

Area 3 is an area of post-mediaeval (and later) industrial expansion with its original character largely reflected in the surviving historic fabric (which exhibits a degree of time depth) and the design and scale of modern development. Despite being of less obvious aesthetic value, the industrial buildings and their special relationships are significant survivors of small-town Devon industry and there is high group value in terms of the presence of associated workers' housing, as part of an integrated industrial quarter. An area which made Cullompton what it was during its later history.

#### **Scale Height and building line:**

Residential and industrial properties are two storey and historically on the back of the pavement. There is one three storey building of industrial origin. There are long runs of terraces, although there are no long runs of identical buildings, there is a uniformity of massing, form and detailing.

## **Significant Buildings and groups**

### **Buildings**

No 8 Duke Street: Detached two storey cob cottage, with a stone plinth and thatched roof, late 17th or early 18th century.

No 15 Pound square and detached outbuilding: Large 17th century house, three-room and through-passage plan with lower-end rear wing, extended in 19th century when converted to cottages. Now used as offices and workshops.

Unitarian Chapel, Pound Square - 1698, rebuilt 1912.

### **Groups**

The buildings grouped around Pound Square form an important piece with the open space of the square. There is a feeling of space as the narrow streets open out into the squares. None of these are formal designs but are fortuitous arrangements which are now quiet and tranquil areas in contrast to the main road.

New Street is an important group being a planned single-phase development associated with the expanding woollen industry. It was constructed in the early-mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to provide additional housing (with back yard work space) for those employed (by Upcott's) as home workers in the woollen industry. Rebuilt in stone after a disastrous fire in 1839.

The remains of the industrial buildings on the edge and just beyond the conservation area are significant survivors of small-town Devon industry and there is high group value in terms of the presence of associated workers' housing, as part of an integrated industrial quarter.

### **Key unlisted buildings**

Unitarian Chapel, Pound Square - 1698, rebuilt 1912, Site of oldest nonconformist congregation in Cullompton, Originally building "the Protestant Dissenters Meeting House" was built in 1698 and replaced by a much larger building in 1815 which was constructed of cob and in 1911 the congregation has to vacate the building when it collapsed. A new chapel was built and opened in 1913.

13 and 14 Pound Square: Two storey house, rubble and cob with hipped roof (thatched until at least late 1970s), probably 17th century. Originally part of a longer row.

37 New Street: Two storey house, two window front, round headed central door with panelled door case

50 to 54 (even) New Street: Row of cottages, two storey one window fronts, early 19th century. Examples of a type which once comprised the whole of New Street.

7 to 11 Exeter Hill. Good surviving historic shopfronts.

Brick Tannery Building and brick wall on east side of Exeter Road adjacent to the supermarket. One of the few remaining buildings from the tannery that was active on this site from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Forms a key entrance to the town.



Shopfronts on Exeter Hill



Tannery building and brick wall on east side of Exeter Hill



Large Brick Built Tannery building on west side of Exeter Hill



Adjacent to the conservation area: Large brick built tannery building: One of the few remaining buildings from the tannery that was active on this site from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Imposing large building visible from street.

## **Trees, green spaces and open spaces**

Pound Square is an important open space as it retains the historic pattern of the streets and has a historical relationship with the pound. As noted above the openness and tranquillity are notable against the narrow entrances and the noise and movement in the main street nearby.

There is some significance where there is no building set against the road where the car park is at the Hayridge centre, as the buildings historically were set back, but cars parked here do jar with the character of the conservation area, where historically there was a wall enclosing a school yard and a mid-Victorian School.



Hayridge Centre Car Park

## **Local Features**

Long runs of terrace housing backing onto the pavement.

There are a legacy shop fronts on Exeter Hill and Cockpit Hill where the building is no longer in commercial use but are important in significance terms as they part of the commercial story of the town and add character and variation to the street scene.

Small intimate gardens to the rear of housing.

A number of walkways and carriageways through the terraces to access the rear garden. These have or had a wooden door at the back of the pavement enforcing the sense of enclosure.

## **Typical details**

The roofs are gabled, there are there are few hips and no half hips.

Eaves details are largely traditional with small fascia boards close to the front of the building, or with overhanging rafter feet. There is little boxing in with a soffit, and where that does occur it is less than 100mm unless associated with the design of the house.

Rainwater goods traditionally cast metal half round with round down pipes and painted black on black fascia boards.

The typical orange-red brick is most often in Flemish bond.

Windows are both sliding sash and casements, and are painted. Casements are rebated and balanced. Windows have a vertical emphasis. Window surrounds are typically plain, but there are some period features. There are rare examples of oriel or cantilever windows at first floor.

Doors (front doors and those to gardens or though archways) are painted.

There are very few historic dormers. Where they do appear they are usually small, narrow and gabled.

The historic property boundaries defined to rear or the buildings.

Boundary walls are usually 1m but examples of 2m or more survive. Walls are capped with specialist clay brick manufactured for the purpose or rounded or flat stone, or clay double roman roof tiles.

Chimneys are red clay brick with plain terracotta pots. Chimneys are on the ridge. There are no examples of external chimneys.

## **Key colour characteristics**

Render painted white and cream with black plinth dominates. There are the odd light blue or dark pink property but there is no evidence that these colours are historic and representative of the conservation area.

Brick is clay terracotta with buff or black detailing.

Windows are painted white with one example of black.

Doors are painted panelled or boarded, with dominate colours being black and white, with some light green or very occasional dark blue.

Roofs are dark, typical blue welsh slate.



## Views

The key views within/through this area, are a combination of sweeping ones (such as down Exeter Hill and across the western tannery site) and more constricted lines of sight along the narrow side roads and lanes.

## Materials

Walls: Painted render. Render is majority roughcast with some smooth. There may be some lost stucco work on the more formal dwellings.

Red clay brick with stone detailing and the use of buff and dark bricks. Bricks in Flemish bond with high quality rubbed brick voussior and other details.

Roofs: Majority blue Welsh Slate and few terracotta plain clay tiles, and one historic thatch roof. Windows are historically timber painted white.

Boundary walls to the road are render and brick, and typically are of the same material as the building they relate to.

## Key negatives:

Volume and nature of traffic (heavy vehicles) passing along Exeter Hill to and from the motorway network.

Narrow pavements and proximity to heavy traffic as a pedestrian.

Replacement timber and uPVC windows which do not respect the historic form or character of a property harming its character.

Unauthorised satellite dishes at varying heights on the runs of terraces:

Inappropriate signage on shop fronts.

Lack of routine building maintenance and repair: Whilst many of the buildings in the area are generally in good condition but there are instances of the neglect of routine maintenance and repair.



Original and replacement windows side by side



Satellite dishes on terraces



Heavy and outdated overhead power lines in New Street.

Car park at Hayridge centre being at odds with the built development and character of the conservation area.

The Hayridge Centre which at the street is too dominant in the street scene by reason of the elevated eaves height and materials.

Overhead power and phone lines



Hayridge centre

## 9.4 Character Area 4: Fore Street

Area 4 consists of Fore Street, the historic commercial core of the town and its main axis since the mediaeval period, when it was laid out as a piece of planned urban development. It incorporates remnant burgage plots on either side, and at its southern end an earlier open market associated with the Minster church – a sub-triangular area formed by Lower Bull Ring, Queen's Square, and the area now occupied by buildings fronting the east of Fore Street, either side of the entrance into Church Street.

Developed and rebuilt over time in response to the town's economic fortunes and after fires, Fore Street's plan-form (and to a considerable degree its standing fabric) reflects the typical post-mediaeval sub-division of wider burgage plots into narrower tenements, with merchants' houses and coaching inns occupying the street front and long, thin back courts (containing workers' housing, workshops, stables and other ancillary buildings), accessed through covered alleyways.

There is an unusually well-surviving stretch of early 17th century street scape on the western side of the street's northern end - formed by the Manor Hotel, The Walronds and the Merchant's House – adjacent to the site of a (no longer existing) market cross. The fact that these buildings weren't significantly rebuilt in later centuries may relate to a shift in commercial focus.

Elsewhere, the street has undergone more successive remodelling and rebuilding, with a preponderance of Victorian (and later) shop fronts, though evidence of earlier phases can be detected in many of the buildings or their back courts. The overriding sense is of a street frontage containing more complexity and time depth than may at first appear.

Running north-south in a straight line along a plateau of level ground, this relatively narrow street has an almost unbroken frontage on both sides, with many three (and one four although this appears to be a modified three) storeyed buildings, creating a strong sense of enclosure. Views are largely along the length of the street, although towards its southern end Church Street provides a stunning view of St Andrew's Church and Middle Mill Lane, New Cut and shorter alleyways provide glimpses into back plots. At either end, views open out as Fore Street fans out into Higher Bull Ring to the north and splays open into the converging tops of Exeter Hill and Cockpit Hill to the south.

During the post-mediaeval period, the open market place at the southern end of Fore Street was reduced by encroachment and infill – the (no longer surviving) 'Shambles' market house was built in the centre of the street; Lower Bull Ring, with Queen Square, where there was an animal pound, appears to have functioned as a secondary livestock market; and Cockpit Hill became a location for cock fights. The pound was built over during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and an Evangelical Church added to the north side of Queen's Square in 1962, and although the still relatively open spaces hark back to the area's previous use, they are mainly fringed with houses; bustling market activity having been replaced by a more subdued residential character.

To the west of the built up frontage onto Fore Street the area is defined by the back of the mediaeval burgage plots. It lies on relatively level land below St Andrew's Hill (sloping very gently north-west to south-east towards the south end of Fore Street) although to the north of Tiverton Road (Area 5) the ground rises up more steeply at the base of the hill.



The long, parallel strips of the mediaeval burgage plots can still be detected in the present plan-form, despite 20th century infill development partly obscuring their pattern. Their dominance perhaps reflects the degree of remodelling associated with the deliberate creation of the new mediaeval town. The 1840 Tithe map shows a clear, north-south boundary line across the plots, which would have divided them into 'tofts' and 'crofts' (the front of the plot on which the house was built and the land behind used for pasture or arable), but this has now been almost completely removed, but still does survive in part to the north end on the west side.

The Tithe and early OS mapping shows that this area was largely undeveloped until the mid-1900s. Some of the courts behind Fore Street had been extended further back to create space for additional ancillary buildings and yards, and a Wesleyan (Methodist) Chapel had been built at the east end of New Cut (a mediaeval water channel, which became an alleyway). Otherwise, most of the area was comprised of undeveloped gardens and orchards, with a scatter of small sheds and greenhouses. The 1880 OS map names the area along the south side of New Cut as 'The Green', perhaps suggesting a communal recreational space; by 1904 it was associated with a drill hall. From the 1960s the back plots were increasingly built over, however, many of the long and high rubble stone walls that defined these plots still survive, in some cases with traces of former buildings.

Passage through is via Tiverton Road and New Cut running back from Fore Street - all historic routes running east-west, parallel with the burgage plots (eventually leading into Shortlands Lane). Otherwise, access and views across this area are restricted, owing to the enclosed nature of the original plots and their subsequent sub-division and infilling with modern development.



New cut showing leat to right hand side. Methodist Chapel on end on left

### **Special architectural and historic interest:**

The area encapsulates the planned mediaeval town, where its original plan-form can still be understood; the standing fabric reflects the function of this particular street as being the original commercial core, with continuity of use to the present day. It is the main axis connecting the dispersed elements of the rest of the historic town, and the range of building dates, and variety and quality of materials and detail reflects the intrinsic value of the standing fabric, as well as it providing evidence of the area's continuing primary function.



## Scale Height and building line:

All buildings back onto the pavement with the exception of The Walronds which has a small garden to the front which the building wraps around in a C shape.

Buildings are two, three and one four storey (from an adapted three storey) in Fore Street. The majority is two storey with three storey and two storey with dormers. There is no even building height, with variation in height within both two storey and three storey.



North along Fore Street

## Significant Buildings and groups:

The Manor Hotel, 2 Fore Street: Former merchant's house rebuilt in 1603 following a fire and renovated and extended in 1718. Of three storeys it has stone and cobb end walls with timber-framing in between, although the ground floor of the front elevation has been rebuilt in stone.

4 Fore Street: Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century two storey house, four window range with late 19th century oriel window over entrance porch at left end. Now part of Manor Hotel.

The Walronds, Fore Street: Completed in 1605 using local red sandstone and volcanic trap with Beerstone dressings. The front elevation is symmetrical, with the main range and two side wings enclosing a small cobbled courtyard. The interior retains many early features.

8 Fore Street: Half-timbered three storey house with cob and stone mix to side and rear. Important and intact survival of a 17th century Devon merchant's townhouse.



8 Fore Street and The Walronds

10 Fore Street: House with shop, 17th century core with early 19th century refronting. Symmetrical three window range, three storeys with attic, 20th century shop front.

12 Fore Street: House, with shop below, forming part of a long row, early 19th century. This building probably represents the infilling of the tenement access to number 10.

14 and 16 Fore Street: Dwellings with shop below forming part of long row, 17th or 18th century. Remodeled in 19th century.

18 Fore Street: Dwelling with shop below forming part of long row. Early 19th century with late 19th or early 20th century shop front.

20 Fore Street: Three storey house with shop, 17th century with 19th century remodeling. Symmetrical two window range with central shop front and flanking doors.

22 Fore Street: House with shop below, mid-19th century but possibly with earlier core. Two storeys and attic with gabled dormers, 20th century shop front to left and carriageway through to right.

24 Fore Street: House with shop below, 17th century or earlier core, remodeled in 19th century with 20th century shop front.

26 Fore Street: Late 16th or 17th century building with 19th and 20th century alterations. Ridge line of slate roof considerably lower than neighbours.

30 Fore Street: House, circa 1830 but possibly with earlier core, originally one build with 32 Fore Street. Now apartments with late 20th century shop front below.

32 Fore Street: House with shop below, originally one build with 32 Fore Street. Possible 17th or 18th century core, refronted and altered circa 1830.

1 Fore Street: Early 19th century building, two storey, five window range, with central entrance, and carriageway under to left. Possibly on the site of the Half Moon Inn.

White Hart Inn: Early 19th century frontage but older fabric almost certainly survives behind. Almost symmetrical two storey, three-window range, with central porch.

21 Fore Street: Dwelling with shop below forming part of a long row, late 19th century with earlier work evident at rear. Sham timber framed frontage under slate roof with crested ridge tiles.

39 Fore Street: Two storey dwelling, early 19th century, but probably retaining earlier core. Edwardian shop front has large plate glass frames with curved corners and moulded cornice.

41 Fore Street: Shop, early 19th century, forming part of a long row. Two storey, three window range with carriageway through to right, double fronted shop window to left.

1 and 2 Lower Bull Ring: Pair of mid-19th century two storey houses that to the left altered circa 1900, with bay/oriel windows, some Art Nouveau glazing bars and coloured glass.

Paradise House, 1 Queen Square: Substantial 16th or 17th century house, probably originally a three-room and cross-passage plan, much disguised by late-18th century rebuilding. Brick, with cob rear wing.

4 Queen Square: House, possibly 17th century core, largely remodelled in 19th century. Main range possibly originally a three-room and cross-passage plan, with rear wing. Early 19th century features remain throughout.

## Key unlisted buildings

No 34-36 Fore Street. Former Post Office.

Nos 56 to 62 Fore Street – 3 storey rendered building. Three good historic shop fronts, oriel windows to first and second floor, top floor cantilevered. Windows all of one piece.

66 Fore Street: Three storey rendered building with date stone of 1706 in south gable.

No 5 Fore Street. Former Bank. Main range 3 storey with 2 storey southern extension. Brick with stone window surrounds and quoin. Tall imposing building in the street. Former Devon and Cornwall Bank.



No 63 Fore Street



No 5 Fore Street

Nos 59- 61 Fore Street – Decorative building bearing the date 1889.

No 63 Fore Street – Brick building, Oriel windows little altered with original windows. Now a post office started life as a Plymouth Brethren Chapel

The New Cut: The New Cut is an alleyway linking Shortlands Lane to the Fore Street. Despite its name, it may well date to the 14th century when the Abbot of Buckland granted a water supply to the town. One of the leats ran down The New Cut.

Methodist Chapel, New Cut. Wesleyan chapel. Originally built in 1764, replaced in 1806, and considerably restored in 1872 following a fire.

2 Queen Square: Two storey house, plain front with sash windows and a central door with fluted columns and a bracketed hood.

## Trees, green spaces and open spaces

There are no green spaces or Trees on Fore Street.

There is a small open space to the front of The Walronds, which is significant to that building and to the street scene.



To the west of the built up frontage, the burgage plots remain and in places are not developed. These survives best to the rear of The Walronds, and south of this to the rear of Nos 10 to 16 Fore Street. These areas are down to grass and have individual trees.

The area to the front of the Methodist Chapel on New Cut.

## **Local Features**

The unbroken frontage of building along Fore Street with the variation of heights and designs.

A number of walkways and carriageways through the frontage to access the rear garden. These have or had a wooden door at the back of the pavement.

Historic alleyways and paths through to the mill leat and to Shortlands Lane.

Groups of outbuildings and mews buildings and cottages to the rear of the frontage. Outbuildings are at right angles to the road and step down in ridge height.

There are occasional buildings which have a gable onto Fore Street.

## **Typical details**

The roofs are gabled, there are there are few hips and no half hips.

Eaves details are largely traditional with small fascia boards close to the front of the building, or with overhanging rafter feet. There is little boxing in with a soffit, and where that does occur it is less than 100mm unless associated with the design of the house. There are also parapets and cornices in evidence.

Rainwater goods traditionally cast metal half round with round down pipes and painted black on black fascia boards.

The typical orange-red brick is most often in Flemish bond.

Windows are both sliding sash and casements, and are painted in the majority white with the occasional black window. Casements are rebated and balanced. Windows have a vertical emphasis. Window surrounds are typically plain, but there are some period features. There are rare examples of oriel or cantilever windows at first floor.

Doors (front doors and those to gardens or through archways) are painted.

There are historic dormers. Some are larger and more dominate, but work within more classical order with regard to their size relative to the windows below. They are all gabled.

The historic property boundaries remain defined to rear of the buildings. There are few historic development which step across the burgage plot boundaries.

Boundary walls are usually 1m but examples of 2m or more survive. Walls are capped with specialist clay brick manufactured for the purpose or rounded or flat stone, or clay double roman roof tiles.



Chimneys are red clay brick with plain terracotta pots. Chimneys are on the ridge with the occasional chimney breaking the front roof plane. There are no examples of external chimneys.

Shopfronts are painted, and tend to be dark and restrained colours, and there is no typical historic pattern to where doors are positioned or if it is recessed.

### **Key colour characteristics**

Render painted white and cream or ochre with dominates. There are the odd light blue or dark pink property but there is no evidence that these colours are historic and representative of the conservation area.

Brick is clay terracotta with buff or black detailing.

Windows are painted white with two examples of black.

Doors are painted panelled or boarded, with dominate colours being black and white, with some light green or very occasional dark blue.

Roofs are dark, typical blue welsh slate or weathered clay. There is no clay roof onto Fore Street.

### **Views**

The view of the Church from Fore Street along Church Street is exceptional with the tower framed by the buildings in Church Street.

To the north end of Fore Street the boarding of the road into Higher Bullring is legible.



View of St Andrew's Parish Church from Fore Street

## Materials

Walls: Painted render. Render is majority roughcast with some smooth. There may be some lost stucco work on the more formal buildings.

Red clay brick with stone detailing and the use of buff and dark bricks. Bricks in Flemish bond with high quality rubbed brick voussior and other details, or in stone.

There is a small amount of painted brick.

Roofs: Majority blue Welsh Slate.

Windows are historically timber painted white.

Boundary walls to the road are render and brick, and typically are of the same material as the building they relate to. Brick bond is Flemish but there is some garden wall bound in the boundary wall to the rear of the Manor Court Hotel.

## Key negatives:

Volume and nature of traffic (heavy vehicles) passing along Fore Street to and from the motorway network.

Narrow pavements and proximity to heavy traffic as a pedestrian.

Raised kerbstone which is non historic and inappropriate.

The position of the zebra crossing immediately adjacent to the grade I listed The Walronds.



The Walronds with raised kerbs and pedestrian crossing in front



Modern Shop front and signage in Fore street

Replacement timber and uPVC windows which do not respect the historic form or character of a property harming its character.

Inappropriate and modern shopfronts and signage at odds with the historic character and street scene.



Blocked and overflowing downpipe



Unwelcoming and poorly designed signage



Poorly designed signage

Unauthorised satellite dishes at varying heights on the buildings.

Lack of routine building maintenance and repair: Whilst many of the buildings in the area are generally in good condition but there are instances of the neglect of routine maintenance and repair. A number of properties have been vacant long term and look particularly poor and uncared for.

A number of the public alleyways and paths are uninviting, and not clear to non-residents that they can be used. The new cut is an example where the former Methodist Chapel, vacant and in decline and uncared for, and the area to the front of it is not maintained and has a poor surface treatment.

Visual clutter including highway signage.

Evangelical Church: The Church building is mid to late 20th century building on an elevated site in the conservation area. The design does not respond well to the context in the dominant elevated position above Queen Square.



Evangelical Church from Queen Square



## 9.5 Character Area 5: High Street/Higher Bullring

This area is focused on High Street, 'bowed' out to form the wide, lozenge-shaped area known as Higher Bull Ring –a market place for trading sheep and cattle. High Street continues the line of Fore Street northwards, bending towards the north-east in order to keep taking advantage of the plateau of relatively level ground along the valley side.

The rectangular block of mediaeval burgage plots laid out along Fore Street appears to have extended into the southern end of High Street, although subsequent sub-division and infilling has blurred the plan-form here. It is difficult to be precise about the exact northern limit of the planned mediaeval market street. Tiverton Road runs parallel with the south side of these plots, before making a T-junction with Fore Street/High Street; to the north, the plots stop short of St Andrew's School, where the more steeply sloping land of St Andrew's Hill would have truncated their continuation.

The shorter parallel plots fronting both sides of High Street to the north of the burgage plots, appear to be later in date – representing late mediaeval or early post-mediaeval expansion, along with the Higher Bull Ring market place. The line of the (now covered) town water supply can be traced in the pavement on the west side of the street.



Higher Bullring with War Memorial

While this part of town continued to be the location for sheep and cattle markets and fairs until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century it acquired additional financial and civic functions (including several banks and a police station), with additional notes of refinement and ceremony provided by the planting of ornamental trees along both sides of the street and the erection of the war memorial in 1920.

The defining character is the generous spaciousness of its streetscape and the architectural scale, variety and quality of the buildings that line it. Internal views are much more open than in Fore Street, with external lines of sight provided by Higher Mill Lane and St Andrew's Road (a 20<sup>th</sup> century widening of an earlier alleyway). At its northern end, Higher Bull Ring pinches in again, before meeting the junction with Higher Street and Station Road. Here, as in Tiverton Road, larger-scale higher-status buildings give way to rows of modest workers cottages.

As an extension of Cullompton's commercial centre, High Street/Higher Bull Ring has the same long back courts (used for stabling, manufacturing and subsidiary housing during the post-mediaeval and later periods) as Fore Street. The street frontage, however, has evolved differently, with substantial Georgian buildings (some with later shop fronts inserted), interspersed with earlier inns and houses and a Baptist



## **Special architectural and historic interest:**

Higher Bullring is a really good example of, and a good place to experience, the size and form of a late mediaeval/early post-mediaeval bowed market street and to see how with the buildings lining the street how this area was the focus of 18<sup>th</sup> century commercial expansion beyond the mediaeval Fore Street, to the point where it attracted 19<sup>th</sup> century and later financial and civic functions.

## **Scale Height and building line:**

All buildings back onto the pavement.

Buildings are two and three with the three storey tending to be on the west side and towards the central section. The three storey buildings with one exception separated by at least one two storey. There is no even building height, with variation in height between both two storey and three storey.

Tiverton Road on the north side consists of two terraces two storey properties.

## **Significant Buildings and groups**

No 44 High Street: Mid-19th century house forming part of row. Symmetrical three-window range, has central doorway with segmentally headed arch which retains its fanlight.

42 High Street: Mid-19th century house forming part of row. Symmetrical three-window range, has central doorway with elliptically headed arch with fanlight.

40 High Street (Conservative Club): Mid-19th century two storey house forming part of row. Asymmetrical three-window range. Upper hornless 16-pane sash windows; three horned sash windows to ground floor (one to left of entrance), now with one pane per sash. Semi-circular headed doorway.

38 High Street Mid-19th century house forming part of row. Two storeys, slightly asymmetrical three-window range, with sash windows each side of doorway with pediment.

28 High Street: Late 18th century house, brick with double hipped slate roof behind parapet. Symmetrical three bay front, the outer bays with bowed window bays extending from ground to parapet base/

20 High Street: Mid-19th century three storey house, now a restaurant with accommodation above. Symmetrical three-window range with central porch.

War Memorial: Constructed 1920 by Eastons of Exeter and paid for by public subscription. Rock-faced granite. Square plinth with large slightly tapered pedestal in two parts, surmounted by Celtic cross with tapered shaft. Bronze crossed rifles on the front of the plinth and bronze wreath on the back of the pedestal. Inscription on the front of the pedestal and names of the dead servicemen on the front and sides.

## **Key unlisted buildings**

33 High Street. Group of shop, public house and dwelling. All with historic windows and good shop surviving shop front.

Kings Head is 33-35 High Street, part of the pub was once the public library (33 High Street) Originally a coaching inn named after Charles II.

31 High Street: Good historic shop front.

Free Standing Pillar Box, to Front of No 31 High Street: The red post box is a landmark feature within the bow-shaped Higher Bull Ring.

22 and 24 High Street: A pair of early 19th century two storey houses. Each house has a panelled door case with hoods on scroll brackets to right, sash window to left, on ground floor; three sash windows to first floor.

Baptist Chapel, High Street: Baptist chapel built in 1743 and almost entirely renewed in 1858. During the 1870s the church decided to expand to cope with the growing Sunday School and a new schoolroom was completed in 1883. In 1904 a Manse was built on land next to the church, completed in 1906.

21-23 High Street: Market House Inn

9 High Street: Three storey house, probably early 19th century. Three window range with carriageway under two storey bay on right, shop front to centre and left.

Nos 3 to 7 (odd) High Street: Three storey building, divided into three shops. Four window range, No 3 to right has a first floor bay and a good late 19th century shop front.

Town Hall: Originally known as the Parish Rooms the Council decided to rename it in 1995 but it still looks very much as it did in the 1930s. It is built on land that was a coaching inn known, at one time as the Green Dragon, and later as the Half Moon. The Half Moon was a coaching inn that took in all the land from the Town Hall to Middle Mill Lane down to the Mill Leat. In 1870 part of the coaching inn was sold to the town to be used as a Town Hall. The building was later demolished and a new town hall was built. Before the second world war the fire-engine was housed in a section at the front of the building with access directly onto High Street. During the Second World War the Town Hall became a first-aid post.

Old Police Station: to clock dated 1898. Transformed about 1846-50 by public subscription into a Town Hall and included a lock-up. It was used for concerts, lectures etc. and as a police court. The clock was an afterthought placed there sometime after the building was converted. The town sold the building to Devon County Council in 1870 to be used fully as a police station and court room and the money raised was used to purchase some old premises a few doors away; these were part of a coaching inn known as the Half Moon where the judges stopped in coaching days on their way to the Assizes. Land on the north side was purchased from Mr Alfred Batten in 1914 for the erection of a yard and garage to accommodate the police patrol car.

10-26 Tiverton Road - Row of workers cottages

## **Trees and green spaces**

There is very limited green spaces, both public and private in this character area. The lime trees in the Higher Bull ring provide it with character, and are likely to be the same trees as are seen in the undated (early 20<sup>th</sup> Century) photograph below.



## **Local Features**

There is a substantial granite war memorial commemorating the dead of both world Wars standing in the Higher Bull Ring. Also within the Higher Bull Ring there is a traditional 'K6' red telephone box and free standing pillar box.

The trees mentioned above are a key feature of this open space, and one of the few areas of green in the historic core.

## **Typical details**

The roofs are gabled, there are there are very few hips and no half hips.

Eaves details are largely traditional with small fascia boards close to the front of the building, or with overhanging rafter feet. There is little boxing in with a soffit, and where that does occur it is less than 100mm unless associated with the design of the house. Some parapets are in evidence.

Rainwater goods traditionally cast metal half round with round down pipes and painted black on black fascia boards.

The typical orange-red brick is most often in Flemish bond.

Windows are both sliding sash and casements, and are painted in the majority white. Casements are rebated and balanced. Windows have a vertical emphasis. Window surrounds are typically

plain, but there are some period detailing. There is one oriel window and one bay window.

Doors (front doors and those to gardens or through archways) are painted.

There is one example of historic dormers. They are small, narrow and gabled.

The historic property boundaries to the west remain defined to the rear of the buildings. On the east side Forge Way has cut across the rear of the properties and modern houses have been built into the rear gardens of the properties to the front, but the burgage plots have been respected.

Chimneys are red clay brick with plain terracotta pots. Chimneys are on the ridge with the occasional chimney breaking the front roof plane. There are no examples of external chimneys.

Shopfronts are painted, and tend to be dark and restrained colours, and there is no typical historic pattern to where doors are positioned or if it is recessed.

### **Key colour characteristics**

Render painted white and cream or ochre with dominates. There are the odd light blue or dark earth property but there is no evidence that these colours are historic and representative of the conservation area.

Brick is clay terracotta with buff or black.

Windows are painted white.

Doors are painted panelled or boarded, with dominant colours being black and white, with some light green or very occasional dark blue.

Roofs are dark, typically blue Welsh slate.

### **Views**

There is a glimpse of the countryside to the east along Higher Mill Lane.

The vista north to the junction with Higher Street and Station Road is dominated by traffic control and signage.

### **Materials**

Walls: Painted render. Render is majority smooth with some roughcast. There may be some lost stucco work on the more formal dwellings

Red clay brick with stone detailing and the use of buff and dark bricks. Bricks in Flemish bond with high quality rubbed brick voussoirs and other details, or in stone.

Roofs: Blue Welsh Slate or similar.

Windows are historically timber painted white.



Boundary walls to the road are render and brick, and typically are of the same material as the building they relate to. Brick bond is Flemish.

### **Key negatives**

Volume and nature of traffic (heavy vehicles) passing along through to and from the motorway network. There are regular tailbacks at the junction with Higher Street/Station Road.

Narrow pavements and proximity to heavy traffic as a pedestrian on Tiverton Road.

The traffic light junction to High Street, Higher Street and Station Road: This is dominated by direction signage, lights and associated road marking.

Dominance of cars in the area within both the road and parking.



Car turning left from Tiverton Road

Visual clutter including highway signage. Some of the older street furniture is not well thought through. A bike rack in front of a bench.

Setting of war memorial is compromised by car parking and clutter.

Vacant plot at No 19 which was lost in a fire and subject to action regarding amenity by the Council. 3

Clarks Court – unrelated in scale or form to the conservation area.

On Tiverton Road, there are a number of poor box dormers on the terrace of houses closest to High Street.

Unauthorised satellite dishes at varying heights on the runs of terraces:

Inappropriate signage on shop fronts.

Lack of routine building maintenance and repair: Whilst many of the buildings in the area are generally in good condition but there are instances of the neglect of routine maintenance and repair.



Box dormers on houses in Tiverton Road

## 9.6 Character Area 6 - Higher Street and Station Road

Area 6 is comprised of Higher Street and the western part of Station Road (formerly known as Lower Street). Higher Street is a northern extension of High Street, along the level shelf of ground below St Andrew's Hill, while Station Road slopes relatively steeply, from its T-junction with the two roads down the main valley side to the mill leat, which forms the Eastern boundary of the conservation area.

Previously an area of mediaeval strip fields and open ground, in 1522 John Trott's Almshouses (refurbished) were built on what would then have been the northern edge of the town. During the post-mediaeval period the area developed as an area of rows and terraces of workers' housing and larger houses with woollen and other workshops behind. Its industrial focus increased during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the establishment of a leather tannery north of Court House and a woollen factory at the north end of Higher Street, opposite Goblin Lane (both outside the conservation area), where there was also a twine works on the site of a former ropewalk. In addition, there was a blacksmiths south of Station Road, adjacent to what is now Forge Way.

Nevertheless, at the time of the 1904 OS map, much of the south side of Station Road and most of the area behind the street frontages and around the factory sites was still undeveloped, with a predominance of large orchards. A flavour of this former openness is still provided by the drive and remaining grounds of Court House, a large 18<sup>th</sup> century residence associated with the tannery, and the lane leading to the latter from Higher Street.

Along with other pockets of modern infill/backfill, this development adds to the non-industrial residential aspect already created by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century terraces (Belle Vue Terrace and Garden Terrace) either side of Station Road - picturesquely-sited, with gardens sloping down to the mill leat, with its iron-railed walkway.

The views are narrow and linear along Higher Street and wider and more open down the less tightly lined streetscape of Station Road.

### **Special architectural and historic interest:**

This area reflects post-mediaeval (and later) industrial expansion to the north of the mediaeval town, with relatively good survival of historic buildings, which, despite being of less obvious aesthetic value, have significance as evidence of small-town Devon industry. This is an integrated industrial quarter similar to Exeter Hill to the south, although the character has become more diluted by subsequent (re)development.

### **Scale Height and building line:**

The majority of buildings back onto the pavement. There are a few exceptions with gardens to the front. Some buildings are side onto the road and present their gable to the road with gardens to the side. All front gardens are enclosed by a wall of at least 1m in places higher. All give a feeling of enclosure.



North west along Higher Street

Buildings are two storey and the majority are in terraces with occasional single houses of higher status or later infill.

There is no even building height, but the massing of the buildings is fairly consistent.

### **Significant Buildings and groups:**

Trotts Almshouses: Almshouses founded in 1522, restored 19th and 20th centuries. Six two storey units, one room per floor, entered from rear with main central entrance to front, now blocked. Erected in 1523. The row of local rubble stone houses was much altered in the 19th and 20th century refurbishments

25 Higher Street: Early 19th century house of cob on a stone plinth. Symmetrical three-window range, ground-floor has canted bay with tented roofs to either side of porch with tented canopy.

### **Key unlisted buildings**

The seat and area surrounding on the gable end of Trotts Almshouses. It is located at the junction of High Street, Higher Street and Station Road.

Court House, Station Road: Two storey house, 18th century, core may be earlier. Three window front with two modern bays to ground floor, and wood Doric portico with fanlight.

No 3 Station Road: Good Historic Shopfront

Belle Vue Terrace, Wishcroft Terrace and Pen-y-dur: Late 19<sup>th</sup> century constructed for the wealthier inhabitants of Cullompton.



Belle Vue Terrace

58 Higher Street

45 to 49 Station Road

37 Station Road

Outbuildings to the rear of No 21 Higher Street



## Trees and green spaces

The green wedge of the private garden forming a vista to Court House and Court House Cottages.

Given that most buildings are set directly on the back of the pavement the garden areas which abut the road are important green punctuations. These are to the front or side of

- Wishcroft Terrace
- No 23 Higher Street (and trees)
- Nos 1 to 8 Pen-y-dre, Higher Street
- No 13 and 15 Higher Street

The gardens to the east of Belle Vue Terrace (south of Station Road) and Garden Terrace (north of Station Road slope down to the leat). They are an important in front of the buildings and contribute to the open nature and appreciation of the leat and are significant to it. That at Belle Vue Terrace includes a large cedar Tree with a TPO.

To the east of the Roman Camp on St Andrew's Hill, there is an open area of undeveloped land. The Roman Camp is a scheduled ancient monument (SAM) and comprises two phases of fort, two annexes and a range of associated features are visible as a series of cropmark ditches, pits and earthwork banks in aerial photography. The open and undeveloped area to the east is important to the significance, understanding and appreciation of the SAM.



Area of land looking west from the track from Higher Street toward the Scheduled Ancient monument on the sky line

## Local Features

Unlike other character areas there are no carriageway access to the rear of the terraces. There are no historic dormers.

Seating Area to the south of Trotts Almshouses

## Typical details

The roofs are gabled, there are there are few hips.



Eaves details are largely traditional with small fascia boards close to the front of the building, or with overhanging rafter feet. There is little boxing in with a soffit, and where that does occur it is less than 100mm unless associated with the design of the house.

Rainwater goods traditionally cast metal half round with round down pipes and painted black on black fascia boards.

The typical orange-red brick is most often in Flemish bond.

Windows are both sliding sash and casements, and are painted in the white. Casements are rebated and balanced. Windows have a vertical emphasis. Window surrounds are typically plain, but there are some period detailing. There are three oriel window and two bay window. Except for the higher status buildings the detailing is quite plain.

Historic doors are timber and painted. There is a mix of boarded and panel doors which respond to the status of the building.

The extent of the historic property boundaries remains well defined.

Chimneys are red clay brick with plain terracotta pots. Chimneys are on the ridge with the occasional chimney breaking the front roof plane. There are no examples of external chimneys.

There is only one shopfront at the junction with Station Road.

### **Key colour characteristics**

Render painted white and cream or ochre with dominates.

Brick is clay terracotta with buff or black detailing.

Windows are painted white.

Doors are painted panelled or boarded, with dominate colours being black and white, with some light green or very occasional dark blue.

Roofs are dark, typical blue welsh slate.

## Views

The view south to the Parish Church south east along the southern part of Higher Street, frames the Tower and the eye is drawn along the road with a slight bend in it to the tower.



View south east along Higher Street

There is also a strongly framed view of the Parish Church along Forge Way.



View south along Forge Way from Station Road

## Materials

Walls: Painted render. Render is majority smooth with some roughcast. There may be some lost stucco work on the more formal dwellings

Red clay brick with stone detailing and the use of buff brick. Bricks in Flemish bond with high quality rubbed brick voussior and other details, or in stone.

Roofs: Blue Welsh Slate or similar, with the exception of clay tiles to the roof of the industrial building to the north of No 31 Higher Street.

Windows are historically timber painted white.

Boundary walls to the road are render and brick, and typically are of the same material as the building they relate to. Brick bond is Flemish. Boundary walls are at least 1m high and in some cases higher

## Key negatives

Volume and nature of traffic (heavy vehicles) passing along through to and from the motorway network.

The roundabout junction to the supermarket in Station Road is stark and utilitarian and does not complement the conservation area and gives a poor setting and approach to the conservation area.

The traffic light junction to High Street, Higher Street and Station Road: This is dominated by direction signage, lights and associated road marking. The widening of Station Road exposing the gable end and boundary wall of the buildings onto High Street, and poor handling of the area to the front Trotts Almshouses.

The police station: Poorly designed and positioned on its plot, inappropriate materials.

Unauthorised satellite dishes at varying heights on the runs of terraces.

Inappropriate signage on shop fronts.



Long term damage from poorly maintained rain water goods



Roundabout entrance to supermarket on Station Road



Traffic light junction to High Street (to right), Higher Street (to left) and Station Road (ahead)



West up Station Road. Police Station on left set back

Lack of routine building maintenance and repair: Whilst many of the buildings in the area are generally in good condition but there are instances of the neglect of routine maintenance and repair.



Public Toilets at junction of Forge Way: Poorly designed, and area around them handled poorly and positioned at a key gateway to the town.

The frontage to No 60 Higher Street is dominated by car parking.

Poor quality shop signage.

Replacement timber and uPVC windows which do not respect the historic form or character of the properties harming their character.

Condition of stonework to Trotts Almhouses – needs repointing.



View north east down Station Road from junction with Higher Street and High Street



Parking to front of No 60 Higher Street



Stonework in need of pointing



# 10. Proposed alterations to the extent of the Cullompton Conservation Area and Key Features

The conservation area boundary was reviewed at the time of the Cullompton Conservation Area Appraisal in 2003 and again in 2009. Historic England advise on a review period of 5 years and it was considered appropriate to look at the boundary and the key features within the conservation area to see if any alterations were required as part this new appraisal ConservationArea Management Plan.

These proposed amendments to the conservation area boundary are as a result of the assessment of the existing conservation area, which has taken into account changes on the ground since the last assessment and assessed whether other areas are of sufficient interest to remain in or be added to the conservation area.

*Please refer to maps at the end of this document for a visual representation.*

## Proposed changes to Cullompton Conservation Area:

### Additions:

1. Part of Leat to the north of the conservation area where it is visible from Station Road. Leat is a continuous important historic feature. Its age is uncertain but dates from at last 1633
2. The Cullompton Leat between Higher Mill and Middle Mill Lane. Its age is uncertain although it is shown on a map of 1633. Of historic interest
3. The Cullompton Leat south to and including Lower Mill. Lower Mill is first shown on a map of 1633. Originally a corn mill it was converted to a woollen factory in the 19th century, although by the 1880s in was being used for grinding animal feed. The mill last worked in 1968. It has now been converted. The mill is an important unlisted mill building, and areas which are residual open space
4. Tannery Building to east of Exeter Hill and wall: Important historic building at gateway to conservation area, and significant to the understanding of Cullompton and its industrial heritage
5. Land rear of Nos 62 to 28 Fore Street. Conservation area currently drawn to rear of buildings and often cutting buildings. This area brings in the residual areas of discernable burgage plots and the rear ranges of buildings
6. Open land to the south of Walronds and to the rear of numbers 12 and 18 Fore Street. This brings into the conservation area open land which is surviving and undeveloped burgage plots. Important historic remnants significant to the conservation area
7. Fields to West of 54 and 60 Willand Road: Open land to the east of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Roman Fort and Camp on St Andrews Hill. Open area important and of significance both to the Roman site and to the conservation area

## **Deletions:**

8. 51 to 61 Station Road: At the last review the site adjoining was removed. Whilst there is some significance to these houses which are shown on the First Edition OS as Station Cottages, their context and alteration made to them over time mean that the area no longer merits being in a conservation area
9. Clarks Court off Forge Way: Early 21st Century building. Not of sufficient interest for area to remain in conservation area
10. Land to south of Priory Cottage off Lower Mill Lane: Bungalow under construction not of sufficient merit to remain in conservation area
11. Part of building to the rear of No 5 Way's Lane. To exclude the part of the supermarket building included in the conservation area. The building is not of sufficient interest for area to remain in conservation area
12. House to east of 1b Tiverton Road. New house on plot bisected by conservation area. New house not of sufficient interest for area to remain in conservation area
13. Part of building to east end of Old Scout Hut, Tiverton Road. Building not of sufficient interest to be in conservation area
14. Small part of garden to No 3 Stoneleigh Gardens. Correction in boundary. Land not of sufficient interest to be in conservation area.

## **Proposed Changes to Visually Important Open Spaces (VIOS):**

### **Additions:**

1. Continue VIOS to front of Garden Terrace to include land to north east of No 49 Station Road: Land is part of the VIOS
2. Land to east of No 12 Middle Mill Lane. Important open space on edge of mill leat
3. Land south of Wavering on Middle Mill Lane, and to south of Monks Walk. Important open space. Residential open land within the burgage plots and not developed. Important continuation of land to the north and east of The Old Vicarage
4. Add pavement on east side of High Street/Higher Bull Ring. Pavement is part of VIOS
5. Queen Square: an important space in Cullompton as it retains the old street pattern which in other places has been lost
6. Gardens to the front of Nos 14 and 15 Gravel Walk: Important garden areas to the front of the buildings
7. Gardens to east of Nos 1 2 and 3 Lower Mill Lane rear gardens are residual open space with significance to the mill leat
8. Garden to the front of No 15 Willand Road. Adjacent to No 13 which is already designated. Part of coherent identification of VIOS on this road.

### **Deletions**

9. Area of land to west of Court House: Area has been built on. No longer open space
10. Priory Cottage, Gravel Walk grounds and land to the south. Area compromised by building of bungalow

## **Proposed Changes to Unlisted Important Buildings within the Conservation Area:**

### **Additions:**

1. Higher Mill, Higher Mill Lane: Higher Mill, also called Town Roller Mills or Town Mill, appears to have always been used for grinding corn. At the beginning of the 19th century it was powered by two waterwheels
2. Lower Mill, Lower Mill Lane is first shown on a map of 1633. Originally a corn mill it was converted to a woollen manufactory in the 19th century, although by the 1880s it was being used for grinding animal feed. The mill last worked in 1968. It has now been converted
3. Pound Square Unitarian Chapel. Brick built attractive building at junction, with brick boundary wall and railings
4. Tannery building on east side of Exeter Hill significant to the understanding of Cullompton and its industrial heritage.
5. No 3 Station Road: Good historic shop front
6. No 3 and 5 High Street. (7 already included) Nos 3 to 7 (odd) High Street: Three storey building, divided into three shops. Four window range, No 3 to right has a first floor bay and a good late 19th century shop front
7. 13 and 14 Pound Square: Two storey house, rubble and cob with hipped roof (thatched until at least late 1970s), probably 17th century. Originally part of a longer row.
8. 37 New Street: Two storey house, two window front, round headed central door with panelled door case
9. 50 to 54 (even) New Street: Row of cottages, two storey one window fronts, early 19th century. Examples of a type which once comprised the whole of New Street.
10. No 34-36 Fore Street. Former Post Office.
11. Nos 56 to 62 Fore Street – 3 storey rendered building. Three good historic shop fronts, oriel windows to first and second floor, top floor cantilevered. Windows all of one piece.
12. 66 Fore Street: Three storey rendered building with date stone of 1706 in south gable.
13. DeDevonand Cornwall Bank. all Bank
14. No 5 Fore Street. Former Bank. Main range 3 storey with 2 storey southern extension. Brick with stone window surrounds and quoin. Tall imposing building in the street. Former Devon and Cornwall Bank.
15. Nos 59- 61 Fore Street – Decorative building bearing the date 1889.
16. No 63 Fore Street – Brick building, Oriel windows little altered with original windows. Now a post office started life as a Plymouth Brethren Chapel
17. Methodist Chapel, New Cut. Wesleyan chapel. Originally built in 1764, replaced in 1806, and considerably restored in 1872 following a fire.
18. Baptist Chapel, High Street: Baptist chapel built in 1743 and almost entirely renewed in 1858. During the 1870s the church decided to expand to cope with the growing Sunday School and a new schoolroom was completed in 1883. In 1904 a Manse was built on land next to the church, completed in 1906.

### **Deletions**

19. Building on north side of Higher Mill Lane: Building redeveloped and altered. Due to partial demolition and alteration no longer of sufficient interest
20. No 19 High Street: Building lost to fire

21. Parish Hall to North of Parish Church. Building demolished through redevelopment
22. Delete the northern half of No 58 Willand Road. The area indicated is a garden not a building.

**Proposed Changes to Unlisted Important Buildings adjacent to the Conservation Area:**

**Additions:**

1. Tannery Building, on site to west of Exeter Hill on boundary with conservation area. Of significant to the understanding of Cullompton and its industrial heritage.

**Deletions:**

None proposed.



# Part 2 Management Proposals

## 11 Introduction

### 11.1 Format of the Management Proposals

Part 1 of this document, the Character Appraisal, has identified the special positive qualities of The Cullompton Conservation Area which together make the conservation area unique. Part 2 of this document, the Management Proposals, builds upon the negative features which have also been identified, to provide a series of Issues and Recommendations for improvement and change.

Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis, as set out in Section 11.

### 11.2 Issues and recommended principles.

The issues and recommended principles for management in the conservation area are set out below.

### 11.3 Volume and Nature of traffic.

Given the nodal connection to the motorway, there is high volume of traffic in the main streets of Cullompton which is passing through on its way to and from the motorway. This includes heavy good vehicles passing through the historic core. The volume of traffic results in queuing at the principal junctions, and when deliveries are made along Fore Street. Along with the narrow pavement widths, this makes the experience of the historic core quite unpleasant, with the noise, fumes and dirt from the traffic, and where the pavement is narrow, a feeling of danger for those on foot and bicycle.

At the time of writing (and to be amended as this document moves forward up to adoption) an application for the 'Construction was granted by Mid Devon District Council in January 2021. The applicant indicated in their application that commencement is anticipated in the winter of 2021 This new road is designed to reduce the through traffic from the historic core.

This will give opportunities for change within the conservation area to direct traffic away from the historic core, and to reconsider traffic management within the town overall.

### Recommendation:

***Management Plan Principle 1: The Council will engage with the Town Council, the Highway Authority, Highways England and other local interest groups to develop a strategy to implement and support a change to the local road hierarchy with a view to directing traffic onto the relief road. Any strategy or scheme which comes from it should adhere to the guidance in the Historic England publication – Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places***

## 11.4 Traffic Management

There is clutter from signage, road markings and traffic islands, some of which relates to highways for direction or for restrictions such as parking. There is an opportunity to both review the signage and highway markings, to ensure that it is all strictly necessary, and the need for on street parking, and that this evolves as the volume and nature of the traffic reduces as the relief road takes effect, and is part of the public benefit of the provision of the relief road. Redundant highway management measures should not be left to continue to harm the conservation area where they are not necessary.

This is conservation area wide matter, but a specific area of concern is the junction of High Street, Higher Street and Station Road.

One of the finest views in Cullompton is that of the Parish Church of St Andrew along Church Street. This is a splendid vista which is marred by the use of double yellow lines to prevent parking. There is a group of the most highly graded buildings, both grade I and 2\* listed buildings at the north end of Fore Street. The pedestrian crossing along with its lighting and road marking is immediately opposite the grade I listed The Walronds, and although in a town centre context, the pedestrian crossing could be sited in a position away from these buildings of noted exceptional importance. It should be considered for re-siting or removal as part of any scheme relating to traffic management in the core of Cullompton.

### Recommendation:

***Management Plan Principle 2: That the Council engage with Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to review the position of the pedestrian crossings, and all other traffic control including highway signage and road markings, including the method it is displayed (e.g. pole mounted or to a building), with a view to reducing that provided to the minimum necessary.***

## 11.5 Public Realm.

A number of negative impacts from in the public realm have been identified within the conservation area appraisal above. Some are site specific whilst others have an impact throughout the conservation area.

### 11.5.1 Uncoordinated and poor quality floor scape:

Paving and surface materials throughout the area are generally modern, uncoordinated and poor quality. In almost all cases they fail to enhance or re-inforce the historic identity of the conservation area.

Patch repairs in the public highway, or where service trenches are cut, can lead to alternative lower quality and out of place materials being used.

In contrast there are areas where historic surfaces survive or have been reused, for example in the Higher Bullring, as part of an enhancement scheme.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 3: That the Council engage with the Town Council, the Highway Authority, Utility Companies, private developers and land owners with a view to encouraging that where a pavement, road or other historic surface is repaired or dug up for repairs or for the provision/repairs to utilities or drives etc., all making good or repairs will be done with matching materials to those removed or repaired, with reinstatement of historic surfacing materials encouraged where appropriate.*

### **11.5.2 Public Alleys to CCA Fields and Shortlands Road.**

The public accessible pathways to the leat and Forge Way car park, and to Shortlands Road are not legible or welcoming. It is not clear other to those who know that they are public paths and where they lead to. The path back from High Street to Forge Way Car Park is not marked.

There is a missed opportunity to exploit the historic town layout and promote walking and promote traffic free links to the CCA fields and to the supermarket, and in the future to link to the Garden Village.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 4: That the Council engage with Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to more clearly identify the public pathways from Fore Street and High Street, to Shortlands Lane, the mill leat and to the Forge Way Public Car Park.*

### **11.5.3 New Cut, off Fore Street:**

The public path along New Cut accesses Shortlands lane. The Methodist Chapel is accessed via this lane with an open area to the front and a derelict site, with a recent planning permission, to the rear of No 20 Fore Street. The Chapel is no longer in use for worship and is in private ownership. The materials used to the area to the front of the Chapel are utilitarian. The run down nature of this area is uninviting and harmful to the conservation area.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 5: That the Council engage with the land owners, the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to develop a scheme to find a new and productive use for the chapel, to improve the open space to the front of it, to improve the appearance of the derelict site to the rear of No 20 Fore Street, and to generally make the public footpath more welcoming.*

#### **11.5.4 Area to South of seating area to south of Trotts Almhouses, at North end of High Street.**

Trotts Almhouses are an attractive building listed as being of national importance. The seating area to the south gable is an attractive and well used area. To the south of this is an expanse of tarmac and tactile paving, and signage and traffic control associated with the busy highway junction.

There is potential to increase the landscaping here, which in association with a review of the highway traffic management currently in place, would improve the setting of the listed Trotts Almhouses and the character of the conservation area at this prominent and busy position.

#### **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 6: That the Council engage with the land owners, the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to develop a scheme which in association with the reduction in traffic, to improve the setting of the listed Trotts Almhouses and this public realm in a highly prominent and visible position.*

#### **11.5.5 Street Furniture, Trees and on Road Parking**

The street furniture, as distinct from traffic control, in the conservation area includes benches, planting, bus shelters, bike racks, utility cabinets, CCTV and bollards for the control of cars. It also includes road name signage.

The Higher Bullring is noted as an important open space both historically as it relates to the understanding of the evolution and function of the town, but is currently dominated by car parking, the volume and nature of traffic passing through it and associated traffic control measures, and street furniture which has been provided organically over time. It has the potential to be much more pleasant social and commercial space. The listed War Memorial is a key landmark building here. It is compromised by car parking, and uncoordinated street furniture.

In Church Street, bollards are provided which are of a poor design and are not maintained.

Historic road name signs have survived but some are in poor condition.



Power pole in poor decorative state





Bollard of poor design and lacking maintenance



Historic Road Sign

### **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 7: That the Council engage with Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups with a view to developing a scheme to redesign and reinvigorate the visually important open space and setting of the war memorial in context with the conservation area and the history of the space, and should seek to reduce clutter, and dominance of the car. Any scheme should adhere to the guidance in the Historic England publication – Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places.*

*Management Plan Principle 8: That the Council engage with Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to survey and refurbish the historic street signage and furniture and identify inappropriate street furniture beyond the area to be enhanced as part of the Heritage Action Zone.*

### **11.5.6 Raised Concrete Kerb along much of Fore Street**

The raised concrete double kerb along Fore Street works to divide the footpath from the carriageway and as a method of surface water control, the path and road being at the same level. It is an unusual, non-traditional, incongruous and unattractive feature in the conservation area, and often retains water on the pavement side.

It is particularly prominent in the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing at the north end of Fore Street where it adversely affects the setting of the listed The Walronds (grade 1), The Merchants House and No 2 Fore Street (both 2\*).

**Management Plan Principle 9: That the Council engage with Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups with a view to developing a scheme to replace the raised concrete kerbing whilst managing water runoff and highway safety in context with the conservation area and adjacent listed buildings. Any scheme should adhere to the guidance in the Historic England publication – Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places**

## **11.6 Loss of original architectural details and inappropriate building materials.**

Many of the unlisted, and some of the listed, buildings in the conservation area have been adversely affected by the replacement of original timber sash windows, casement windows and doors with inappropriate timber, uPVC or aluminium, and the replacement of natural roof slates with man-made slate or natural slate being turnerised.

In the case of shopfronts there are a number of cases where the replacement or alteration of historic shop fronts and advertisements has spoiled the external appearance of a building and the local streetscape.

Where single family dwellings are concerned, they can normally alter windows and doors, and undertaken other alterations without planning permission from the Council. Development of this kind is called “Permitted Development” (PD) and falls into various classes which are listed in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). Powers exist for the Council, known as Article 4(1) directions, to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interest of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Article 4(1) directions were implemented in certain parts of the conservation area in 2011 and were reviewed in 2015. They are restricted in their extent and do not cover the entire conservation area. The types of development covered are

2. Roof lights
3. Chimneys
4. Porches
5. Boundary Walls
6. Doors
7. Windows
8. Solar Panels.

Given that they were undertaken so recently it is considered there is no need to review them at this time. However, if the conservation area boundary is to be amended, it will be appropriate to consider whether the extended areas, or parts of them, should be added or the Direction may need to be amended where areas are removed from the conservation area.

Advertisements can similarly be changed or displayed without the need for a specific consent from the Local Planning Authority – Deemed Consent. There are two options to change Deemed Consent. One is to restrict deemed consent in a defined area, the other is to designate an area of special control. An area of special control order places additional restrictions on the display of advertisements. For example, some deemed consent classes are subject to reduced size limits if they are located in an area of special control.

It may be appropriate to designate an area of special control in locations where the local planning authority considers these additional restrictions are necessary, above and beyond its powers to restrict deemed consent and take discontinuance action, such as in rural areas or other areas which appear to the Secretary of State to require special protection on the grounds of amenity.

A local planning authority can only make an area of special control order after it has been approved by the Secretary of State. Before making an order and applying for approval from the Secretary of State, local planning authorities are expected to consult local trade and amenity organisations about the proposal.

### **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 10: The Council will seek to consider the need for the Article 4(1) Directions to be amended or new orders made in relation to any extension or deletion of the extent of the conservation area.***

***Management Plan Principle 11: The Council will consider the use of additional controls to prevent inappropriate advertisements being displayed that are harmful to the conservation area or setting of listed buildings.***

## **11.7 Poor quality of new developments, building alterations and extensions**

Some modern developments are out of character with the conservation area by reason of their inappropriate design, scale or materials. In the conservation area, where the quality of the general environment is already acknowledged by designation, the Council will encourage good quality schemes that respond positively to their historic setting.

The majority of the inappropriate shopfronts are not recent, but their effect of degrading the character of the conservation area is evident. Replacement with appropriately designed shop fronts and associated advertisements will improve the status and image of the shop that is behind it. In order to facilitate and guide the design of new shopfronts Supplementary Planning Guidance should be prepared.

The District Council has produced the following advice

- The Mid Devon Design Guide - which was adopted in 2020.
- Design Guide to Windows and Doors
- Design Guide to Roofs and Chimneys

In addition there is advice from Historic England such as the advice note on Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading from 2017 which is on their website.

### **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 12: Applications will be required to adhere to policies in the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan, especially with regard to Heritage and good design, the National Planning Policy Framework and the statutory duties within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.***

***Management Plan Principle 13: The Council will prepare and adopt Supplementary Planning Document on The Design of Shopfronts and Associated Advertisements***

## **11.8 Lack of Routine Building Maintenance and Repair**

Buildings in the conservation area are generally in good condition but there are instances of the neglect of routine maintenance and repair. Modest amounts of inspection, maintenance and repair carried out on a regular basis can safe-guard the well-being and condition of a building, while failure to identify problems early enough can lead to major faults and damage, which may then be extremely expensive to put right.

### **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 14: The Council will seek to monitor the condition of all historic buildings, report findings and take action, as necessary. Where the condition of a building gives cause for concern, appropriate steps will be taken to secure the future of the building, including the use of statutory powers.***

***Management Plan Principle 15: The Council will, during the period of funding the Heritage Action Zone, seek to work with the Town Council and other interest groups to educate building owners and tenants on causes of common defects***

***and how to avoid expensive repairs in the long term, and otherwise signpost good practice in the historic environment.***

## **11.9 Unsightly Satellite Dishes**

Satellite dishes are a feature of modern living. Unfortunately, when located on the front of a historic building, a satellite dish and associate wiring can spoil the appearance of the building and the street scene. They have a particularly noticeable adverse effect when a black dish is sited on a light background, especially render. In certain circumstances, satellites dishes may have been installed without the need for planning permission and/or listed building consent.

### **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 16: The Council will prepare guidance for householders, landlords and tenants on the sensitive installation of satellite dishes and the requirement, or not, for planning permission.***

***Management Plan Principle 17: Enforcement action will be considered, where expedient, to remove any unauthorised dishes where the owner cannot be persuaded to re-site the dish without recourse to formal action.***



## 11.10 Sub-division of properties

Any subdivision of a building is likely to increase pressure for change on the outside of the building, its garden or land, and sometimes that extends beyond with regard to storage and bins.

Sub-division of properties into flats or let for multiple occupancy can tend to erode external character through poorly maintained buildings, gardens and shared areas by absentee landlords gardens or gardens destroyed in order to ease maintenance/parking or where there is external storage including bins, and multiple external wires for services. There are examples where large communal bins are left on the street which is harmful to the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings.

### Recommendation:

***Management Plan Principle 18: The Council will engage with applicants for planning permission for the subdivision of a property, to achieve satisfactory solutions for the provision of household amenities (such as bin storage, clothes drying, car parking, fire safety works, satellite dishes etc) so these do not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.***

## 11.11 Overhead power lines and telephone lines, and on buildings

A number of streets retain above ground servicing by telephone and power cables radiating out from telegraph poles. New Street remains serviced by above ground electricity cables with wires along and between poles in the street and to individual properties which adds to the clutter along this street. Church Street is another example where telephone cables intervene into the view of the Parish Church.

Once the cabling meets the building, there are examples of haphazard and ill thought out routing of cables across the frontage of buildings and redundant cables left in place. This clutter is harmful to the character of the conservation area.



Six utility boxes on front of converted house



Bins left in front of entrance to the grade I listed Parish Church

## **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 19: That the Council engage with the utility companies, the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to investigate the possibility of removing the above ground wiring and associated telegraph poles, and where new wiring is to be provided on buildings to carefully consider the routing and removal of redundant cabling***

### **11.12 Negative sites and buildings**

This appraisal has identified 'negative' buildings and areas i.e. buildings and areas which clearly detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area and could suitably be redeveloped or improved. Some of these areas which are public realm have been considered above. The following sites and/or buildings, marked on the accompanying map, clearly detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area:

#### **11.12.1 Land adjacent to No 12, Gravel Walk**

The area of open parking on the corner of Gravel Walk and Lower Church Street. There was historically a building on this land, but it was gone by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This area is informal and allows this otherwise enclosed character to spill out and be dominated by parked cars. There is potential here to either redevelop the site, or retain the car parking but to enclose the site and to improve the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and the character of the conservation area.

## **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 20: That the Council engage with the land owner(s), the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups with a view to developing a scheme which is the optimum (least harmful) use of the land and to improve the appearance of the site in the context of the setting of the listed building and the conservation area.***

#### **11.12.2 Cobbles at Pye Corner:**

This is a large area of cobbles off Church Street, to the north of the entrance to the Parish Church yard. The condition of them is variable, with patches missing, but the area closest to, but outside, the Church wall has been removed, it would appear to provide for a utility trench. This is an unfortunate intervention with some loss of historic fabric and some loss to the setting of the Church.

It is unlikely that there will be a driver which will see the reinstatement of the cobbles which are not on the public highway. In line with the principle above regarding reinstatement of historic surfaces in the public realm, there should be resistance any further loss of historic surfaces in the conservation area, and should look for reinstatement where appropriate.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 3 applies equally with regard to reinstatement of historic surfaces.*

### **11.12.3 Hebron Evangelical Church, off Queen Square.**

The Church building is mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century building on an elevated site in the conservation area. The design does not respond well to the context in the dominant elevated position above Queen Square.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 21: That the Council engage with the land owners, the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups with a view to developing a scheme to which is the optimum (least harmful) use of the land and to improve the appearance of the site in the context of the setting of the listed building and the conservation area.*

### **11.12.4 Hayridge Centre Car Park**

The character of the conservation area is one of tight enclosed streets with buildings or occasionally domestic gardens to the rear of the pavement. The car park at Hayridge centre is at odds with this built development and character of the conservation area. There is potential to visually enclose the parking, and to improve the setting of the memorial garden to the front.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 22: That the Council engage with the land owners, the Town Council and Local Interest groups to provide more visual enclosure and reduce the visual dominance of parked cars to improve the appearance of the site in the context of the character of the conservation area*

### **11.12.5 Land at No 19 High Street.**

This plot of land is vacant due to a fire several years ago. The Council intervened at the time and took action to improve the amenity of the site, but this was only a short term measure and intended to be a holding position until the site was redeveloped.

There is clear potential to redevelop this site taking into account the setting the listed buildings nearby and the context within the conservation area. There is also the possibility of forming an additional pedestrian access through to Forge Way and the public car park, but also to Higher Mill Lane and the mill leat beyond.

## **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 23: That the Council engage with the land owners, the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to seek to develop a scheme to find a new and productive use of the land in context with its position in the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings.***

### **11.12.6 Clarks Court Off High Street.**

This recent, within the last 10 years, redevelopment is not considered to be of sufficient interest to remain in the conservation area. It is proposed to redraw the conservation area boundary to exclude this site.

### **11.12.7 Public Toilets and land adjacent to Station Road**

The public toilet building is a utilitarian single storey building. It is currently in limited use. It is set on an area of open land against the gable and rear garden to No 35 High Street and outbuildings to The King's Head Public House.

This is a typical area where the road was widened at some time in the past and a building removed. Little remediation appears to have taken place at the time to deal with an area which is now open to public view but was not built to be so.

It is a prominent and key site at the gateway into the core of the conservation area.

A scheme to redevelop the site has come forward and at the time of writing (November 2020) is pending but likely to gain consent. It is prudent to include a management plan principle.

## **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 24: That the Council engage with the land owners, the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to seek to develop a scheme to find a new and productive use of the land in context with its position in the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings, which includes the view of the Parish Church along Forge Way.***

### **11.12.8 Police Station, Station Road**

The police station whilst being of its time, is now considered poorly designed and positioned on its plot with the use of inappropriate materials. It is on a key road into the town centre and is in a prominent position.

This site has the potential to be redeveloped for housing which should be designed to better respond to the context. It is possible that any redevelopment could allow the Police use to be retained on the site depending on the nature of use that the Police have for the building and the amount of accommodation required.



## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 25: That the Council engage with the land owner(s), the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to seek to develop a scheme to find a new and productive use of the land in context with its position in the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings, which includes the view of the Parish Church along Forge Way.*

### **11.12.9 Roundabout at Entrance to Supermarket on Station Road:**

The roundabout junction to the supermarket in Station Road is stark and utilitarian and does not complement the conservation area and gives a poor setting and approach to the conservation area which is to one side. It is on a key road into the town centre and is in a prominent position. It is unlikely that there is to be any driver for change here, but a more conventional T junction would result in highway engineering being less dominant with a more traditional form of junction.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 26: That the Council monitors any proposals for changes to this junction and if any come forward engage with the land owners, the Town Council, the Highway Authority and Local Interest groups to seek to develop a scheme which reduces the dominance of the highway infrastructure in the context of its position adjacent to, and at the gateway of, the conservation area.*

### **11.12.10 No 60 Higher Street.**

This building is in a commercial use. The frontage is majority car parking which comes to the low front wall. The character of the conservation area is with buildings hard onto the pavement or planted gardens to the front. The dominance of car parking to the front of this property is at odds with the character of the conservation area.

## **Recommendation:**

*Management Plan Principle 27: That the Council engage with the land owners with a view to encouraging them to consider hard and/or soft planting to reduce the dominance of the car parking to the front of the property.*

### **11.12.11 Trotts Almshouses, Higher Street.**

Trotts Almshouses is a listed building in a conservation area. The Higher Street elevation shows signs of needing to be repointed, and there are signs that the property has been previously repointed in a cement pointing. Cement mortars (as opposed to cement free lime based mortars) are harmful to a stone building as they prevent the passage of moisture through the building, and are usually harder than the stone that the wall is made from. This results in damage to the stonework and can create damp within the building and be harmful to the fabric of the building.

## **Recommendation:**

***Management Plan Principle 28: That the Council engage with the land owners with a view to encouraging them to repoint the building in a cement free lime based mortar of a suitable mix, colour and profile.***

## **12 Monitoring and Review**

As recommended by Historic England, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of any changes to any Local Plan review with regard to what stage it is at, and government policy generally.

A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area boundary and designations within it to assess whether any changes are necessary;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;

It is possible that this review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the District Council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

# Appendix 1:

## Glossary of Architectural Terms

**Architrave:** lintels and jambs surrounding a door or window

**Art Deco:** 1920s and 30s style with bold outlines and streamlining

**Ashlar:** best quality masonry with smooth face and narrow joints

**Bargeboard:** wooden protective strips in the angle of a gabled roof, often decorated

**Battered:** a sloping back (retaining) wall

**Burgage plot:** medieval division of land leased to a burgess

**Cambered arch:** arch of an almost flat curve

**Canted bay:** splayed or angled sides to projecting window

**Casement:** opening lights hinged at one side

**Cock-and-hen coping:** vertical, alternating long and short stones on top of a wall

**Coped gable:** angled capping, usually raised above height of adjoining roof

**Corbel:** a projecting block

**Cornice:** a moulded projection crowning a wall

**Cross passage:** house plan with corridor directly between front and rear doors

**Cupola:** small dome or turret

**Dentil:** a projecting block on a cornice

**Double pile:** house plan with two rooms' depth

**Dressed stone:** masonry worked to produce an even finish but not as precisely as ashlar

**Drip mould and label:** projecting horizontal moulding to throw off rain and the decorative end stops commonly seen in Tudor, C17 and Tudor revival buildings

**Eared surround:** an architrave or moulding that sweeps further out at the top or bottom of a window or door opening

**Expressed keystone:** the central arch stone that projects further from the wall face than its neighbours

**Fascia:** on a shop front, the horizontal name or sign board

**Flemish Bond:** brickwork with alternating headers and stretchers in every course

**Four-centred arch:** Tudor arch of flattened profile

**Gentry house:** a high status house

**Glazing bar:** usually wooden division of a window light Gothic

**Revival:** C19 rediscovery and development of the pointed arch architecture of the Middle Ages

**‘Gothic’:** a playful and archaeologically incorrect C18-early C19 version of medieval gothic

**Greek Key:** an incised pattern on stonework with repeated rectangular spirals

**Header:** end of a brick

**Hipped roof:** both roof slopes are angled back at corners

**Hollow chamfer:** side of stone window or door or mullion with a sunken profile

**Lintel (or lintel):** horizontal stone or wood former to top of door or window opening

**Lucam:** projecting structure on industrial buildings containing hoist & taking in doors

**Mullion:** vertical bar dividing window lights Neo-Tudor: revival of C16 architectural style

**Oriel:** a projecting first or second floor window

**Outshut:** lean-to at rear or side of a building Palladian

**Revival:** classical architecture based on a C18 rediscovery of the pure design principles of Andrea Palladio

**Pantile:** a clay roof tile of shaped or curved section

**Pediment:** the triangular or semi-circular hood or gable end on classical architecture

**Pilaster:** a flat, slightly projecting version of a column

**Plat band:** a flat horizontal feature that may sub-divide a building’s wall

**Polite:** architecture that accords with national fashions and techniques, usually fairly up-to-date

**Portico:** a range of columns forming a porch

**Ramps/ramped up:** changes of level in a wall managed, sometimes, by curved sections

**Romanesque:** architecture based upon the round arch

**Rubbed brick:** high quality details created by careful abrading of bricks

**Rubble random:** unworked and unshaped stone walling without any form of coursing

**Rustication:** the deliberate deepening of joints to create a strong appearance

**Sash:** wooden window with two separate lights that can be moved vertically by pulleys and weights

**Soffit:** the underside of a roof that projects beyond the wall surface

**Stone coped gable:** a raised banding of regular stones that finishes and protects a gabled roof

**String course:** a thin horizontal projection dividing a wall surface

**Stucco:** a smooth render, fashionable in the C18-19

**Swag:** a decorative festoon or flowery loop Swept roof: a lean-to roof that curves upwards with a concave profile

**Transom (e):** horizontal stone or wood bar dividing a window

**Tudor Revival:** C19-early C20 reuse of Tudor forms and details

**Venetian window:** a three unit classical opening where the central piece is usually higher and wider than the outside ones, and usually round arched



## **Appendix 2      Bibliography**

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# Maps

Map 1 - Current conservation area boundary  
and proposed additions and deletions

Map 2 - Character Area Boundaries

Map 3 - Listed buildings, important unlisted buildings\* and scheduled  
ancient monument

Map 4 - Important Features

Map 5 - Key negative areas

Map 6 - Building Materialss - Walls