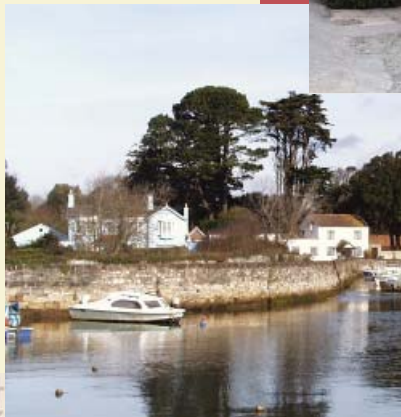


Teignbridge District Conservation Area Character Appraisals

Cockwood



The conservation area boundary as indicated here is for illustrative purposes only, and is not intended to be a true representation of the conservation area as formally adopted. The accurate and definitive conservation area maps can instead be inspected at the main reception area of Teignbridge District Council offices, during normal office hours.

Not all important features of this conservation area are necessarily highlighted here, therefore no omissions that may have been made as part of this appraisal are intended to imply that omitted features that are found to be of interest from future reviews of the document are not of significance in their own right.

Acknowledgements

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Archive information and historic maps were obtained from the Westcountry Studies Library and Devon Records Office in Exeter. The archaeological analysis was informed by the Sites and Monuments Register, maintained by Devon County Council.

Consultations

Any comments, observations or suggestions relating to this document should be sent to:

Policy and Heritage,
Planning Department,
Teignbridge District Council,
Forde House, Brunel Road,
Newton Abbot, TQ12 4XX.
Tel: 01626 361101

Alternatively you may e-mail your response to: designandheritage@teignbridge.gov.uk

CONTENTS

- 1:0 Introduction
- 2:0 Facts & Figures
- 3:0 Location & Geology
- 4:0 Morphology & Archaeology
- 5:0 Architecture
- 6:0 Building Materials
- 7:0 Positive Character Features
- 8:0 Negative Character Features

- Appendix One: Characteristic Features of Buildings
- Appendix Two: Architectural Character Survey
- Appendix Three: Historical Maps
- Appendix Four: Listed Buildings
- Glossary of Terms

If you need this information in a different language or format phone 01626 361101 or e-mail info@teignbridge.gov.uk.

1:0 INTRODUCTION

The Conservation Area Character Statement for Cockwood was endorsed by the Planning Committee on 18 December 2000. Since that time it has been the subject of public consultation, with copies being distributed to the Parish Clerk and many individuals. It has also been available for download from the Teignbridge website - a facility that has proved very popular. The document was discussed at a public meeting in the village in February 2002.

The feedback from the public and other interested bodies has been fully considered and a number of amendments have been made as a result. The new boundary will be confirmed during the next few years and the Parish Council will be informed when that happens.

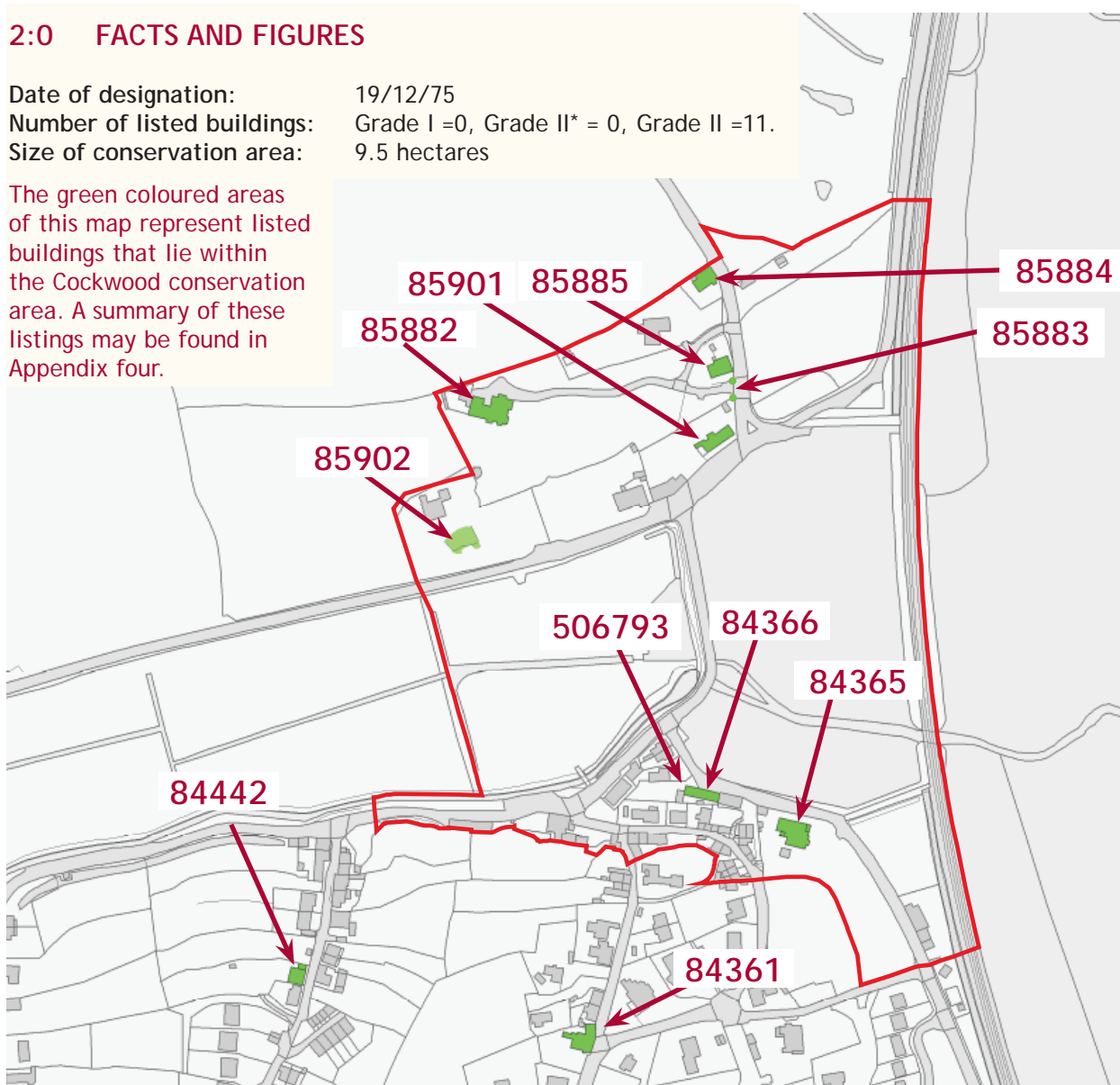
This completed Character Appraisal has been adopted via the Development Plan Steering Group as a document to support current and future development plans. Consequently its contents are now a material consideration for any planning application which affects the conservation area or its setting. It will be distributed to the utility companies, Devon County Council and other interested parties such as English Heritage. Printed copies will be available for public viewing at Forde House and it may be downloaded from www.teignbridge.gov.uk as well.

A full review of this Character Appraisal was undertaken in August 2009, when its effectiveness was considered and necessary amendments made. A public meeting will be held if either Teignbridge or the Parish Council consider that it would be beneficial. Minor changes may be made with the agreement of the Parish meeting and the Ward member. The most up to date version will always be available on the website. A further review of the character appraisal will be undertaken within 5 years. Fieldwork was carried out in August 2009. The revised Appraisal was approved on 22nd March 2010.

2:0 FACTS AND FIGURES

Date of designation: 19/12/75
 Number of listed buildings: Grade I =0, Grade II* = 0, Grade II =11.
 Size of conservation area: 9.5 hectares

The green coloured areas of this map represent listed buildings that lie within the Cockwood conservation area. A summary of these listings may be found in Appendix four.



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3:0 LOCATION & GEOLOGY

Cockwood lies on the west side of the Exe estuary, between Starcross and Dawlish Warren. The settlement is scattered between four separate, but linked hamlets, at Westwood, Middlewood and Cockwood on the south side and Southbrook on the north side. Only the latter two are presently in the conservation area.

A small creek, Cockwood Lake, divides Southbrook from Cockwood. They are connected by the Sod, an 18th century earthen causeway faced with stone which carries the road. The creek was reclaimed for agriculture in 1808 by installing sluices in the Sod to keep the tide out. The low-lying meadow and marshland remains a significant landscape feature which is integral to the character of the setting of the conservation area.

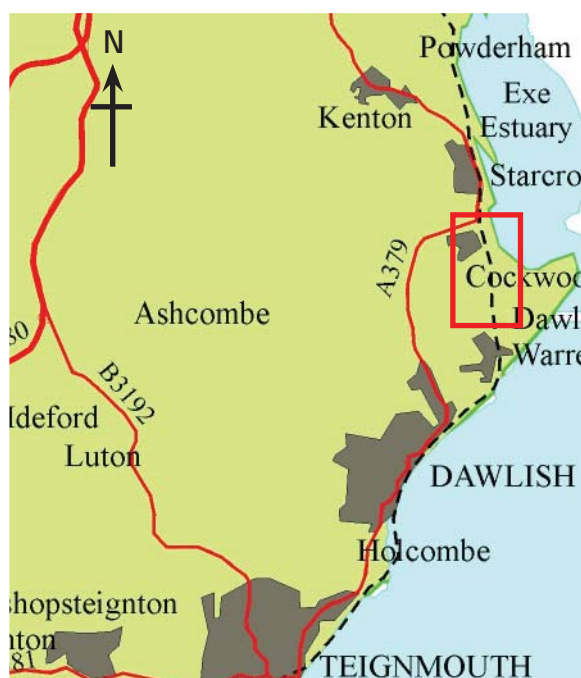
To the east of the Sod, the tidal mouth of the creek is separated from the Exe estuary by the railway, constructed along the west side of the estuary in the 1840s. This runs along a stone causeway; a small bridge allows boats to enter Cockwood Lake. These maritime and transport related features contribute considerably to the unique character of Cockwood.

The landward setting of Cockwood is essentially agricultural with large arable fields along the north side of the valley. To the south, modern infill development has broken up this rural appearance.

The underlying geology mainly consists of Permian breccia, exposed in the old cliff on the south side of Cockwood Marsh. Deposits of Permian sandstone occupy the higher ground to the west. Differential erosion of the very soft breccia has resulted in a strange corrugated effect in the landscape of the north and south sides of the former creek. It is within the folds of these corrugations that Westwood and Middlewood have developed.

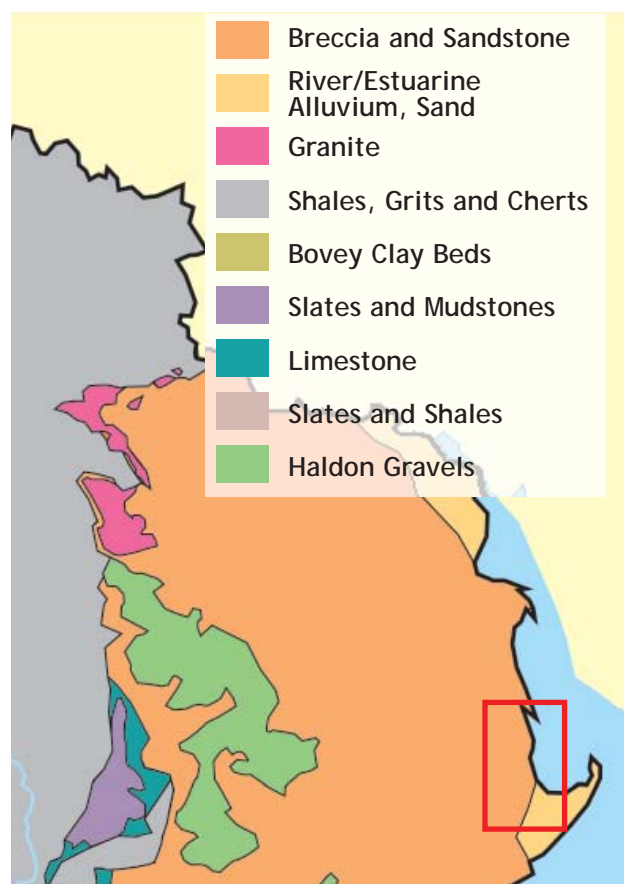


Locally quarried greensand has not been used for nearly 200 years



Location

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Geology

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4:0 VILLAGE MORPHOLOGY & ARCHAEOLOGY

The settlements which make up Cockwood have landscape features with characteristics of medieval enclosure, though there is no supporting evidence that there was a medieval settlement here.

The creek frontage was developed, around the southern end of the Sod, but as none of the present buildings are older than the 17th century, it must be a relatively late development.



Located in a beautiful coastal position, Cockwood is a group of four settlements. Reclamation of the marsh and enclosure of the harbour by the railway has dramatically altered the appearance of Cockwood without destroying its charm.

Southbrook, to the north, also seems to have been planned. It follows the road to Kinton and Exeter and had a similar plan to the other settlements, with long, closely set linear plots. Comparison between the 1761 Courtenay Estate map of Kinton parish and the present one, reveals extensive desertion and destruction of the road and field patterns at the north end of a once-large area of settlement.

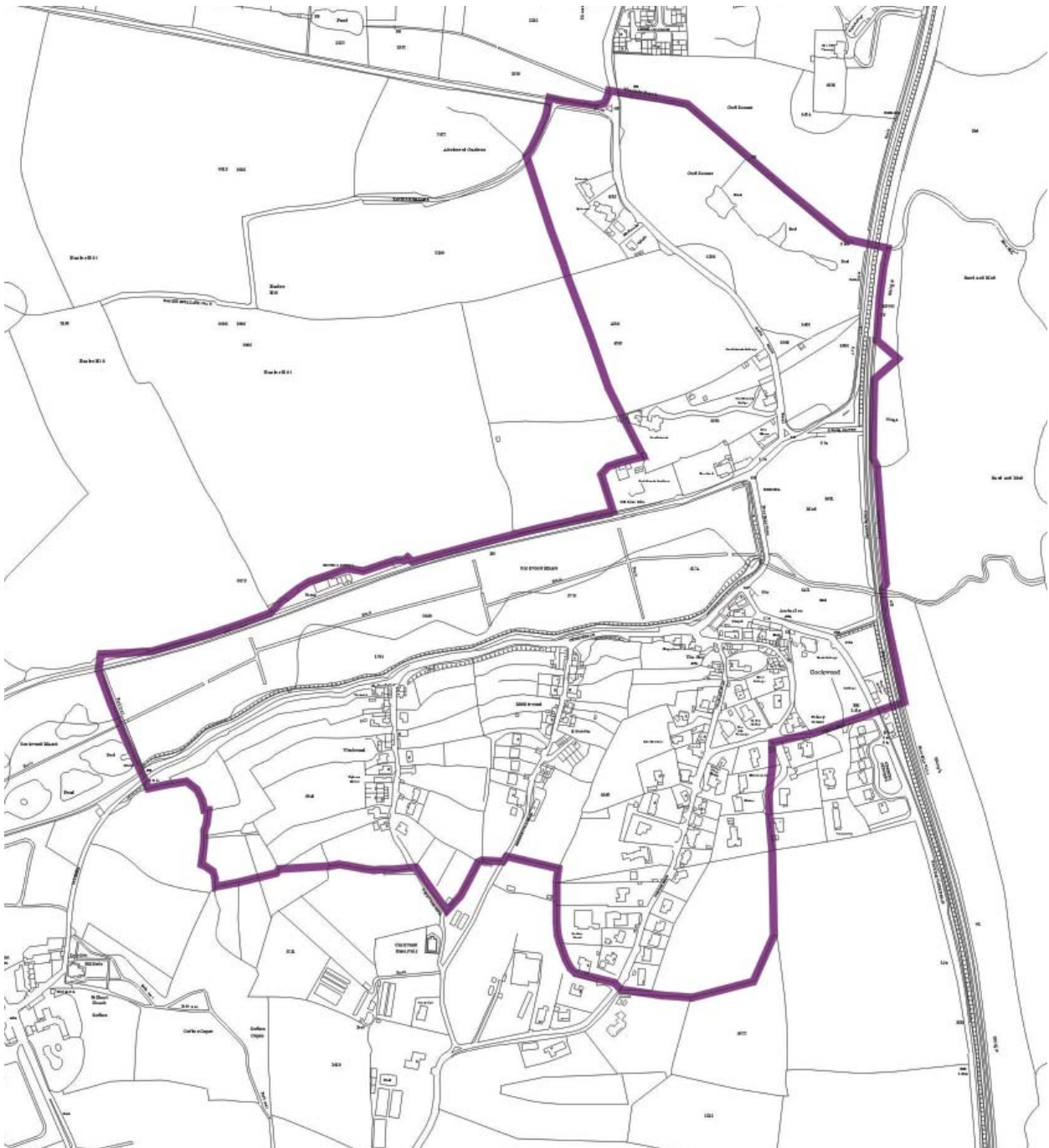
The extensive development of burgage style plots, gardens are an important characteristic of the conservation area. The fact that the existing conservation area boundary does not take account of this reflects the date of designation and the government guidance prevailing at that time. An expansion of the conservation area is, therefore, recommended (see management plan, section 4).

Features relating to trade and industry are few, but the large 18th-19th century limekiln fronting the former creek in Southbrook is marked on a map of 1808. The use of the remaining tidal portion of Cockwood Lake for mooring pleasure boats is a reminder of the village's former connections with water-borne trade. Archaeological evidence of boat-building and possibly salt-making could survive and saltworking is known to have occurred in the 18thC north of Cockwood.

- The shape and layout of Cockwood is one of its basic characteristics. This character should not be eroded further by backland development, as the burgage plot gardens were integral to the historic plan. The scope for enlargement of the village is thus strictly limited.

- An Area of Archaeological Potential (see map) has been identified to recognise the archaeological importance of the identified zones of settlement and the potential for waterlogged environmental and boat remains in the former creek. Any planning applications within the identified area involving significant ground disturbance should be informed by an archaeological assessment. Approvals must incorporate archaeological conditions.
- Historical research should be carried out into the origins of the Cockwood settlement group. This might be a useful project for local history societies, perhaps with the involvement of Cockwood School.

Area of Archaeological Potential



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5:0 ARCHITECTURE

Traditional vernacular architecture is commonly found in the village. The most characterful groups of vernacular buildings are pre-19th century, thatched (or formerly thatched) and built of stone or cob. The most outstanding group is in Southbrook, where two thatched properties, one a 19th century gothic lodge to Southbrook House, are prominent in the foreground of the impressive Victorian villa.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, a number of villas and terraced houses were built, mainly in Cockwood village. These are mostly found along the road south to Dawlish Warren. The later ones are built of red and yellow brick with slate roofs. Two early 20th century institutional buildings in red brick, the chapel possibly Plymouth Brethren and village hall, are also in this group, with a late 19th century stuccoed primary school further up the hill. The Old Vicarage is an attractive Victorian house built in dressed limestone and located prominently on the hilltop above Cockwood.

Some modern buildings have merit. For example, the flat roofed chalet 50 metres east of the Ship Inn is unashamedly modern but its scale, position and simple rendered walls are quite fitting.

Very few buildings in the Cockwood group are listed. Many buildings have the potential for the survival of early fabric and a number should be considered for listed building assessment and designation.

- Any building which is allowed within, or affecting the setting of, the conservation area (including garages and other service buildings), must be of a demonstrably high design standard incorporating quality materials. Applicants must show how their proposal will contribute positively to the character of the area and the setting of nearby buildings.
- The results of an Architectural Character Survey are illustrated on the map, along with a brief summary of the criteria used, in Appendix two.



View of Southbrook across the lake



Traditional vernacular character



The Old Vicarage



Honest but modest modern infill

6:0 BUILDING MATERIALS

The older buildings of Cockwood are built of local rubble stone and cob with a protective coating of render and limewash. Only the limekiln and sea walls display exposed stonework as they did not require rendering. The lower part of the harbour and Sod walls are constructed of local limestone, sandstone and greensand from the Haldon hills. Devonian limestone from perhaps either Torbay or Chudleigh quarries is used on the upper part of these walls and is a common building material in the 19th and 20th centuries. From the later 19th century, red Exeter brick became common in new buildings.

A few buildings have tile roofs, from 19th century tileries in the Exeter area. The Anchor Inn is a good example; its steep pitch suggests that it may have been originally thatched. Slate is the most common roofing material, but many roofs have been replaced with artificial materials.

Where a building was originally thatched and there are real townscape benefits to be gained by its reinstatement, this should be encouraged. The Anchor Inn is a prominent example of a building which would benefit from thatching.

Timber windows and doors of various ages are found within the village. It is most important that appropriate timber windows are used to suit the character of individual buildings.

For the most part, Devon banks and mixed deciduous hedgerows form enclosure. Where stone walls are found, they are usually of mixed grey limestone, sandstone and greensand rubble. In some places rounded river stones are used which reflect the varied geology within the catchment areas of the Exe and local streams.

- The characteristic architectural features and building materials of Cockwood are summarized in Appendix one.



Local materials used to make an architectural statement



A variety of stone sources have been used in Cockwood



The limestone surface adds great character to this slipway



Simple materials suit a functional building

7:0 POSITIVE CHARACTER FEATURES

The special character of Cockwood Conservation Area is not derived solely from the buildings therein. Some other features are summarized below:-

7:1 TREES: Specimen trees add considerably to the appearance of certain parts of the village, notably the gardens of Southbrook House. Occasional wild areas, such as the old cliff along the south side of Cockwood Marsh have many naturally seeded mature trees and scrub. Some hedgebanks in this area and along the lane to the west are extensively overgrown and active management is needed if their character value is to be preserved. Hedgerows provide visual and ecological links between the settlement centres. The hedgerow marking the conservation area boundary to the north of Southbrook is an important screen to views from the direction of Starcross. It also provides an attractive backdrop to the buildings of Southbrook.



Trees frame and punctuate many views

7:2 WATER: The remaining tidal part of Cockwood Lake is extremely attractive, especially when the tide is in. With its moored boats and close relationship with the village and the Sod, it reinforces the settlement's historic links with the Exe Estuary. The changing appearance of the estuary according to tide and weather is timeless.



View towards Dawlish Warren

7:3 VIEWS: Panoramic views from parts of the conservation area are a positive feature. The well-preserved wreck of a coal boat lies a short distance away in the sandbanks of the Exe Estuary. This is an important feature in the wide view across the river and towards Dawlish Warren.

On low-lying lands, the impact of developments such as farm buildings must be considered, even though the site may be quite a distance from the village. Views towards Haldon ridge, Mamhead House and its historic park need particular care. Even views from East Devon District need to be considered, especially those from Exmouth sea front and the National Trust property 'A La Ronde'.

7:4 SURFACING: Some surviving remnants of historic surfacing illustrate the types of treatments used in the past. Traces of waterworn cobbles survive in the narrow footpath to the north-west of Rose Cottage in Cockwood village. The two 19th century slipways on either side of Cockwood Lake both have high quality limestone cobbling, which may continue across the Sod. It is likely that other parts of the village were treated in a similar way in the past.



Old cobbles are very vulnerable to damage or destruction

7:5 PUBLIC HOUSES: Thanks largely to the extraordinary character of its location, Cockwood enjoys two apparently thriving pubs.

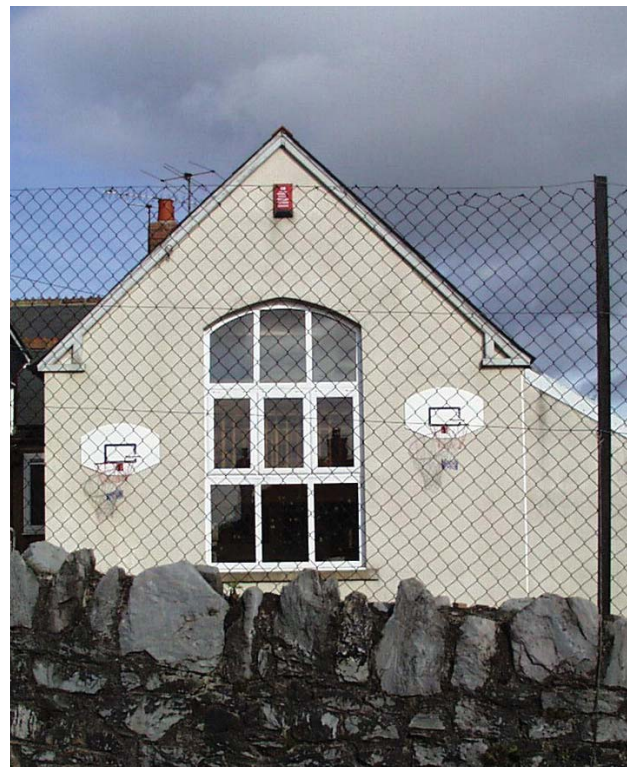
7:6 THE VILLAGE SCHOOL: Another less common feature of such a small village, the school is an essential part of Cockwood, representing a link to the past, present and future of the community. It's character has been diminished by later additions and plastic windows.



Cockwood rises gently above the tidal lake



The Ship Inn (built c1640) allegedly a well known smugglers Inn.



The School (built 1872)

8:0 NEGATIVE FEATURES

8:1 OVERHEAD CABLES: Cockwood has extensive overhead telephone cables and power lines on obtrusive tall poles. Removal of these would improve the appearance of the area considerably. The power line which runs along the length of Cockwood marsh is particularly intrusive.

8:2 STREET LIGHTING: While not a major problem, a number of modern steel street-lamps detract from the appearance of the conservation area. These should be replaced with more attractive designs or even removed.

8:3 ROADS: The main Exeter - Teignmouth road passes through Southbrook. Road improvements must be strictly controlled to reduce the impact on the conservation area's character. The Sod itself must not fall prey to any form of road improvement. Traffic management to and from Dawlish Warren would benefit Cockwood.

8:4 PARKING: Parking is a problem on some of the narrow streets. Consideration should be given to providing a residents' car park in a discreet location.

8:5 REPLACEMENT DOORS AND WINDOWS: The character of many buildings has been severely harmed by the installation of unsuitable windows.



APPENDIX ONE

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF BUILDINGS IN COCKWOOD

BASICS

- Many buildings are situated tight to the street frontages. Historically, there were strips of cobbling between the base of the wall and the road. These verges were often planted with traditional cottage climbers like honeysuckle.
- Steeply pitched thatch or slate roofs, commonly hipped, with traditional ridge and eaves details. Dormers rarely present though where in existence they have flat heads.
- Limewashed and/or rendered walls in varied local rubblestone and/or cob. The latter construction is often tapered from base to eaves, with corners rounded off.
- Massive chimneys with tapered tops and limestone or rough slate drips. Often re-built in brick above the roofline with clay pots.
- Small windows often set in deep reveals with a dominance of solid over void.
- Traditional side-hung casements and vertical sliding sashes, with and without horns.



PALETTE OF MATERIALS

ROOFING: Thatch, slate and clay tile all have a tradition in Cockwood. Corrugated iron, painted in subdued colours (eg: matt green or black) is traditional for sheds, stables etc., depending on location and design.



The use of brick followed the arrival of new money and materials with the railway

RAINWATER GOODS: Half-round or ogee gutters in cast iron.

WALLS: Render, often roughcast, but sometimes smooth (lime mortar on old stone/cob buildings) and natural stone, either of which may be limewashed. Red or yellow brick, while it has been used in the past, must be restricted to locations where it is already found. Natural or black/grey stained timber weatherboarding may have limited uses on outbuildings.

WINDOWS & DOORS: Painted softwood, (opaque stains are occasionally suitable for new build). Natural timber may be suitable for doors and maybe windows in some instances, but only if it is oak.



Authentic doors and windows add to the appearance of old buildings





SURFACING: Waterworn cobbles of varied rock types, angular limestone and red volcanic stone. Hoggin is traditional and appropriate.

ENCLOSURE: Limestone, sandstone, greensand and rounded riverstone are all found in walls. Devon banks and/or hedgerows are particularly suitable for boundaries with farmland or other open spaces / larger gardens. Hazel hurdles can provide a quick solution for temporary or short-term enclosure.

MATERIALS TO BE AVOIDED

ROOFING: Artificial slate and tile (especially concrete) and man-made ridge/hip tiles. Industrial-type corrugated sheeting.

RAINWATER GOODS: Plastic guttering in grey, white or brown, especially in box-section profiles.

WALLS: Non-local brick, reconstituted stone and textured renders (apart from roughcast). Stained timber or plastic weatherboarding.

WINDOWS AND DOORS: All inappropriately designed, PVCu, stained timber and powder-coated metal frames are incongruous.

ENCLOSURE: Reconstituted stone, brick or block walls are not generally characteristic in Cockwood. Larch-lap or close-boarded fencing and evergreen hedges, especially conifers.

SURFACING: Large areas of blacktop, concrete or chippings should be avoided. Brick pavements and imprinted concrete are unsuitable in a conservation area with the character of Cockwood.

APPENDIX TWO

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to identify which buildings within the conservation area contribute positively or negatively to townscape character. Three character bands are used (see map 1) and the criteria for each are summarised below.

In assessing individual buildings, it is their form, design and architectural potential which is most important. Ephemeral considerations like plastic windows or slight disrepair will not usually result in buildings being categorised lower. This does not imply that, for example, plastic windows in a building making a positive contribution to the area are in themselves a positive feature. They may, however, have prevented it from being classed as 'outstanding'. In addition, a quite modest but attractive building in a very prominent location may be rated as 'outstanding', even though it might only be judged as 'positive' if it were tucked away among other buildings.

Category 1 : Outstanding

These buildings may be of any age, but are most likely to be either ancient and unspoiled vernacular buildings or distinctive examples of a particular architectural style.

Buildings identified as outstanding are the highlights of any conservation area. Planning applications and other proposals which may effect their character, or that of their setting, should only be considered if they offer an enhancement. Harmful proposals must be rejected and demolition is very unlikely to be accepted under any circumstances.

Category 2 : Positive

Buildings in this category are the backbone of every conservation area. They will usually be unpretentious but attractive buildings of their type that do not necessarily demand individual attention, but possess considerable group value. Some may have been altered or extended in uncomplimentary ways, but the true character of these buildings could be restored.

The majority of structures in most conservation areas are likely to fall into this category. Alterations should only be made to positive items if they result in an enhancement of the building and the contribution it makes to the character or appearance of the conservation area. Demolition must only be considered in exceptional circumstances where significant aesthetic enhancement and/or community benefits would be realised.

- **Proposals which would detract from the special character of these buildings will be resisted.**

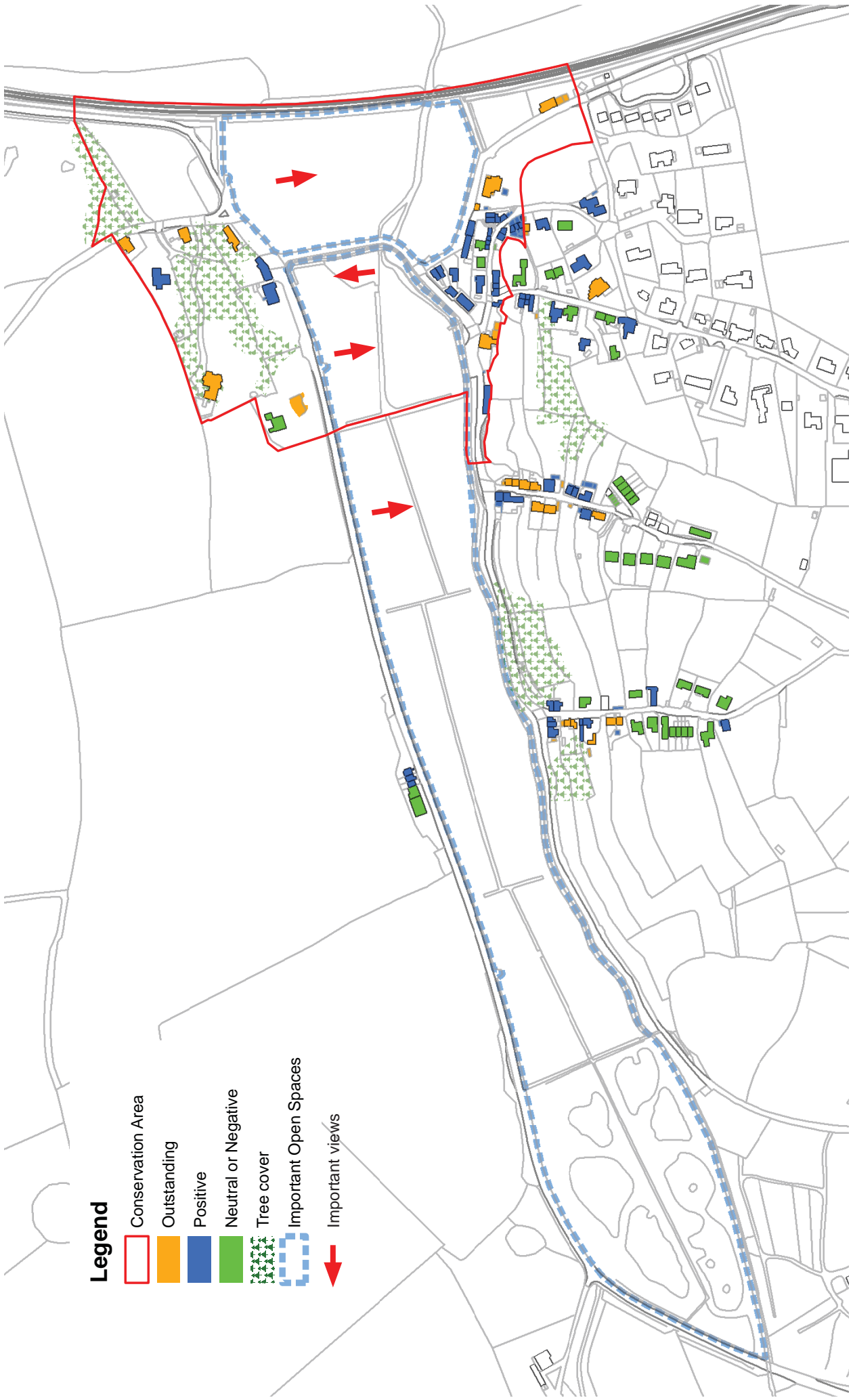
Category 3 : Neutral or Negative

Most conservation areas have buildings that are neither positive nor negative in their contribution to overall character. These will often be twentieth century buildings which may be inoffensive in scale and location, but which lack quality in terms of detailing, materials and design. It must also be accepted that there are usually some buildings in conservation areas which cause actual harm to the character and appearance of that area. These will most commonly be twentieth century buildings which, by a combination of scale, form, location, materials or design, are harmful to the character of the area.

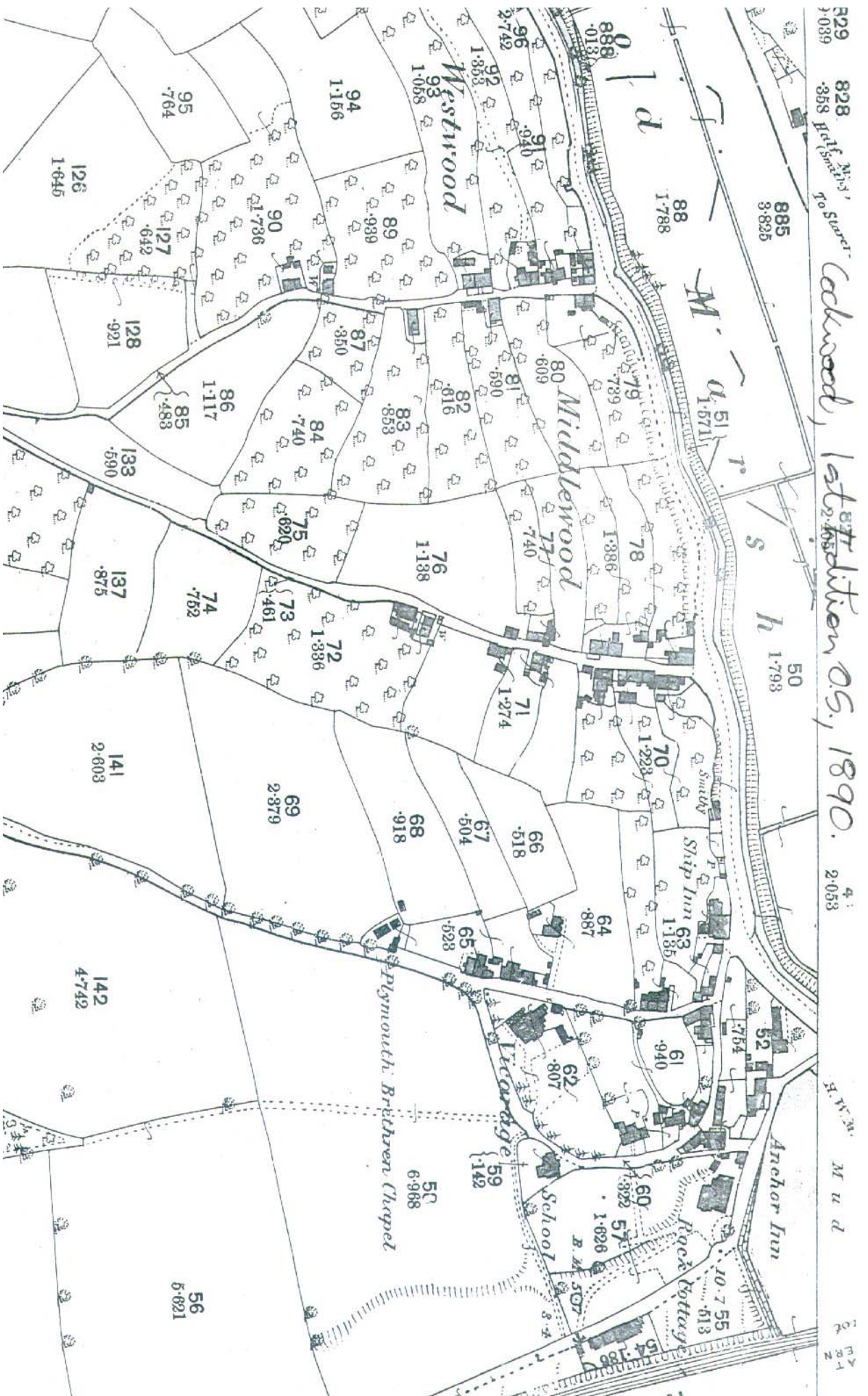
Judgements on these matters will always be open to criticism that they are subjective. Consequently the 'neutral' and 'negative' categories, (which featured in the draft Character Statement), have been combined in this Character Appraisal.

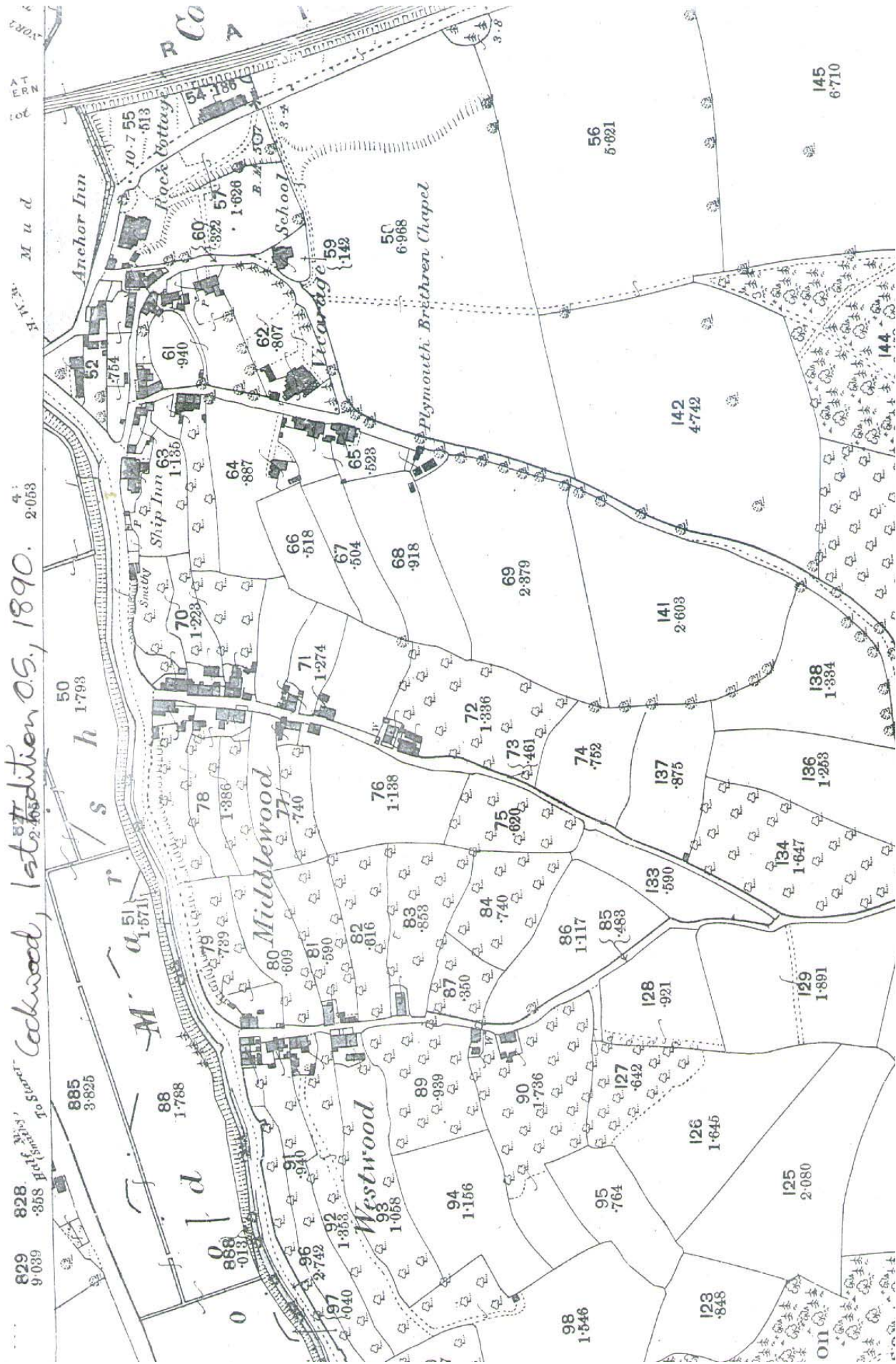
Planning applications for alteration, extension or replacement of buildings in this category will be expected to offer a significant enhancement of the conservation area. Where a building is clearly detrimental due to design, scale or location, its replacement will be encouraged. The use of planting, or other landscaping, to reduce the visual impact of less attractive buildings, may achieve considerable aesthetic benefits at relatively little cost.

- **Proposals to enhance the conservation area by either re-modelling buildings, or re-developing sites in this category will be welcomed. Re-development will be expected to demonstrate a very high standard of contextual design and a thorough understanding of prevailing character.**



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PARISH SUMMARY LIST OF BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORICAL INTEREST FOR:
COCKWOOD CONSERVATION AREA

L.B Ref. No.	Grade	Date of Listing	Item
Kenton Parish			
84365	II	1985	Rock Cottage
Dawlish Parish			
84366	II	1985	Anchor Inn
85884	II	1988	Southbrook Cottage
85882	II	1988	Southbrook
85885	II	1977	Southbrook Lodge
85883	II	1977	Gate piers at the entrance to Southbrook
85901	II	1988	Ilex Cottage, Exeter Road
85902	II	1988	Lime kiln in the garden of Southbrook gardens
84442	II	1988	16 Middlewood
84361	II	1988	The Thatches, 24 Crofton Hill
506793	II	2009	K6 Telephone box

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alluvium: Sand and soil deposited by a river or stream.

Breccia: A red stone with fragments of limestone and other rocks of varied size in a sandy mix.

Burgage Plots: Early (usually medieval) form of settlement planning whereby land is divided up and sold or leased for development. Plots are mostly long and thin, with a narrow frontage to a principle street.

Cob: Cob is made up of a mixture of mud, straw, dung, and sometimes horse hair.

Devonian: Geological period around 400 million years before present.

Hoggin: Compressed aggregate of varied size and composition used as a surfacing material.

Lime: Binding agent in traditional mortars.

Limewash: protective/decorative surface coating made using lime putty.

Ogee: Traditional decorative moulding profile, commonly used for guttering.

Permian: Geological period approximately 250 million years before present.

Vernacular: The traditional architecture of a locality which is functional and uses locally available materials.



Teignbridge District Conservation Area Character Appraisal

