

# Dawlish Conservation Area



## Character Appraisal



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## TEIGNBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Dawlish Conservation Area

## Character Appraisal

### CONTENTS

#### Conservation Area Appraisal

- 1.0 Introduction**
  - 1.1 Statement of community involvement
  - Map 1
- 2.0 Facts & Figures**
- 3.0 Location and Geology**
  - Map 2 Geological map
  - Map 3 Location map
- 4.0 Historical Background & Development**
  - 4.1 Background
  - 4.2 The Mills and Leat
  - 4.3 18th & 19th Century Development
- 5.0 Archaeology**
  - 5.1 Prehistoric
  - 5.2 Roman
  - 5.3 Saxon
  - 5.4 Medieval
  - 5.5 Post Medieval & Modern
  - 5.6 Archaeological Sites with Statutory Protection
  - 5.7 Archaeological Potential
    - Map 5
    - Map 6
    - Map 7
    - Map 8
- 6.0 Activities & Uses**
- 7.0 Landscape & Streetscape**
  - 7.1 Historical Development
  - 7.2 Walls, Boundaries, Railings
  - 7.3 Paving Surfaces
  - 7.4 Street Structures & Artefacts
  - 7.5 Trees
  - 7.6 Dawlish Water
- 8.0 Architecture**
- 9.0 Building Materials**
  - 9.1 Render
  - 9.2 Brickwork
  - 9.3 Stone
  - 9.4 Cladding
  - 9.5 Roofs
- 10.0 Architectural Character Survey**
  - 10.1 Outstanding
  - 10.2 Positive
  - 10.3 Neutral or Negative
    - Map 8
- 11.0 Recommendations for statutory listing**
- Appendix A Summary of Listed Buildings**
- Appendix B Glossary of terms**
- List of illustrations**



## 1.0 Introduction

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.

The intention is that the completed document will be adopted by Teignbridge District Council as a Technical Guidance Document.

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 analyses the Conservation Area. The Management Plan is to be read in conjunction with the Appraisal and discusses how to best manage the Conservation Area.

## 1.1 Community involvement

Prior to commencing preparation of the draft document Dawlish Town Council, Dawlish Museum and ward members were consulted.

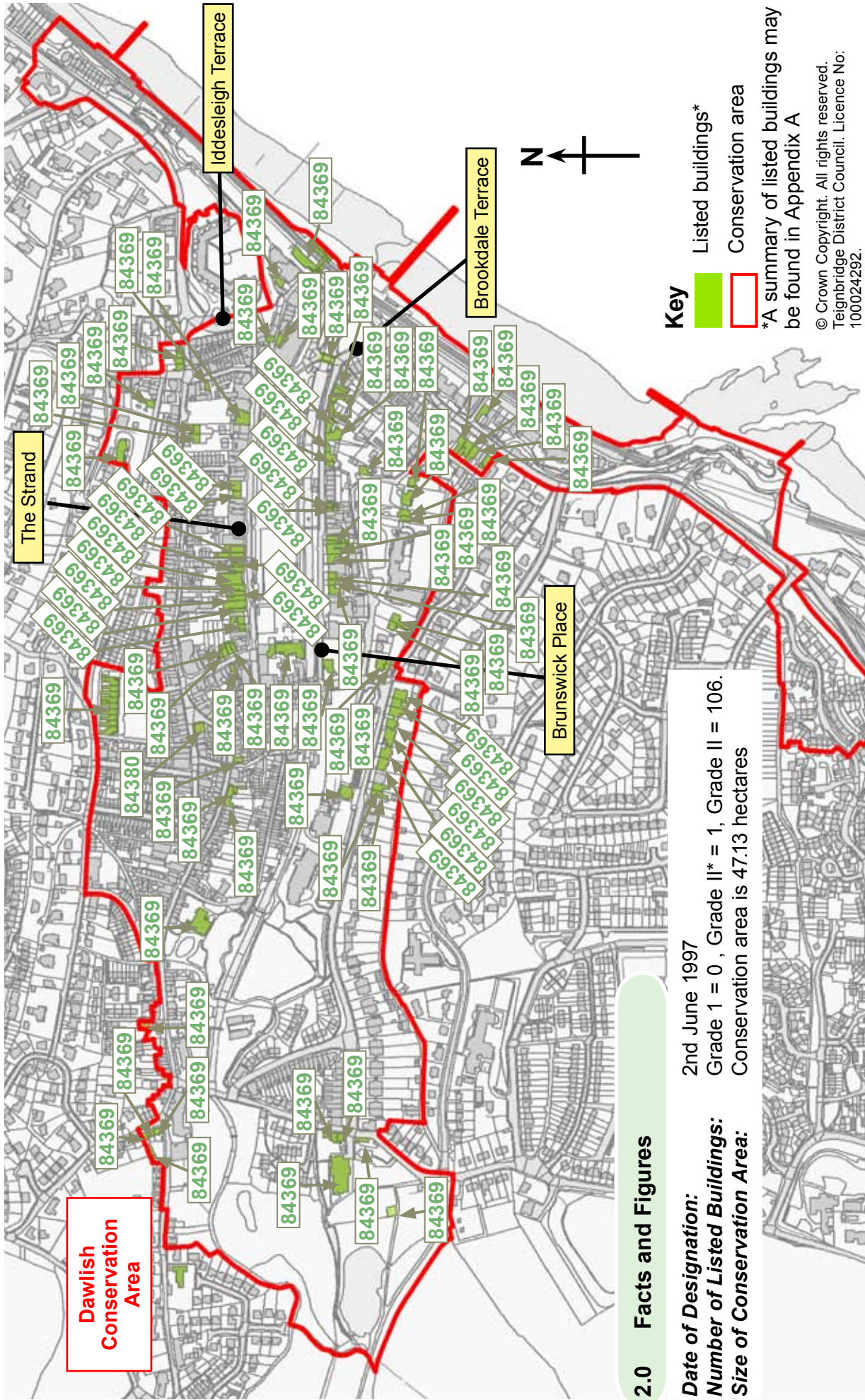
Displays were made available at the local library, documents available to view at the local Council offices and consultation was available online. The consultation was advertised through the local media and Council channels. Views were invited from Dawlish Museum, Dawlish Town Council, Ward Members, English Heritage and Devon County and site notices were posted locally.

A public meeting was held on 9th February 2008 and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted by Executive Council on 19th May 2008.





Map1 Dawlish Conservation Area



3.0 Location and Geology

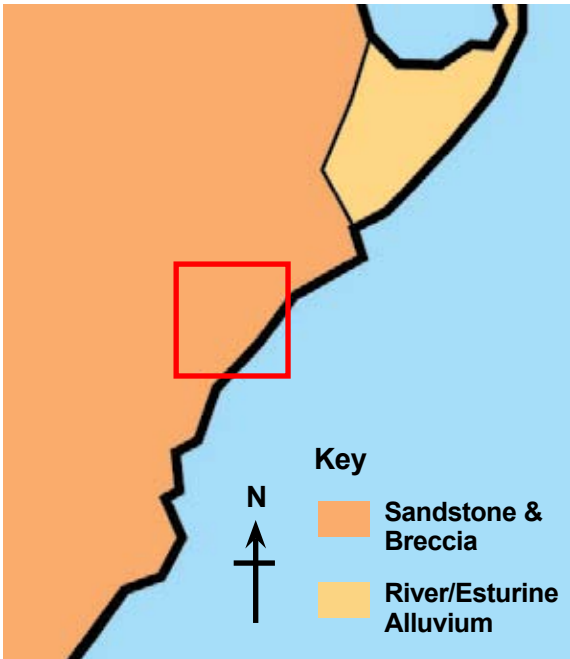
Dawlish is situated on the South Devon coast almost midway between the mouths of the Exe and Teign estuaries, where the stream called Dawlish Water flows into the sea. The more historic parts of the town occupy the banks and enclosing valley sides of the stream which here have a quite regular, east-west, alignment. Just to the west of the town, where Dawlish Water has its source, is the high plateau of Haldon which, although quite a formidable landscape feature, was traversed by the main route into and out of the town (via Ashcombe en route to the stage-post town of Chudleigh) prior to ‘coastal’ routes to Teignmouth and Starcross being improved in the early 19th century.



Fig 3 Uncoursed limestone



Fig 4 Uncoursed wall of red brick and cobbles



Map 2 Geology

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Map 3 Location Map



## 4.0 Historical Background and Development

### 4.1 Background

Although there is evidence of earlier settlement on the higher slopes of Haldon to its west, the earliest reference to Dawlish is in a charter issued in 1044 by Edward the Confessor when granting land to Leofric – a chaplain of

The first mention of a church at Dawlish is in a deed drawn up in 1148 by Robert Chichester, the then Bishop of Exeter, who appropriated it, among others, to the Canons of his Cathedral. The present Church of St Gregory (fig 6) is of various, later, dates since much rebuilding has taken place, not only on account of its falling into disrepair but also to enlarge its accommodation to meet



Fig 5 Aerial picture of Dawlish

the Saxon King who later became the Bishop of Exeter. It is recorded as 'Doflisc ford'; the 'ford' element suggesting it was located at or near a crossing place of the stream - Dawlish Water. The place name is probably derived from the Old English or Celtic description of dark or black water, perhaps associated with the stream's discolouration after heavy rain.

In 1069, shortly after the Norman Conquest, William I granted Leofric the same land with Holcombe and Southwood added, but this time it was not a personal gift but was given to him as Bishop of Exeter for the benefit of his Church.

In the Domesday Book of 1086, Dawlish is recorded as still being in the hands of the Church, with an economy based mainly on the husbandry of sheep. It remained with the Church, in fact, until the end of the 18th century when it was finally sold to a number of purchasers – although before then, in about 1640, it had been let on a lease to raise funds for Charles I to help him 'thwart the designs of his enemies'. Sir Peter Balle was possibly the first personal Lord of the Manor, being mentioned as such in 1665.



Fig 6 Church of St Gregory

the needs of an expanding congregation that was swelled by summer visitors. The chancel dates from the most recent rebuilding between 1873 and 1875; the nave, aisles and transept date from 1824, while the tower is medieval and dates from 1438 (apart from the pinnacles on top which are thought to have been added in 1803, fig 6).

The original village grew up near the site of the parish church, close to what was then the lowest crossing point of Dawlish Water about a kilometre inland from the sea. This small area remained the focus for settlement at Dawlish until the latter part of the 18th century, although by 1592 a much smaller 'outpost' had developed close to the beach, called 'The Strand' in the church warden's accounts. This was probably no more than a gathering of fishermen's cottages and huts, which no doubt had been in existence in some form or other from an early date. During the post-medieval period the fishing industry and maritime trade played some part in Dawlish's development. The first documentary reference to the industry dates from 1465, although several Dawlish-based ships were recorded in the Exeter Port Custom Rolls in the 1580's, and these doubtless sailed to the Newfoundland fishing grounds. In 1759 an entry in the Grand Gazetteer published in Exeter described Dawlish as having a fishery 'especially for pilchards in their season (which are esteemed the best that are brought into Exeter) they having the most commodious strand for drawing in their Seins (nets) imaginable'. The industry was longstanding, however, as an Inventory compiled in 1590 for Joan Brownscombe confirmed she was a maker of pilchard nets.

#### 4.2 The Mills and Leat

Two water mills were in service; the Town Mill, situated in the angle of Church Street and Barton Crescent (in Dawlish village) and Strand Mill (fig 9), close to Dawlish Strand at the east end of Brunswick Place, which was formerly known as Mill Row, consisting of the Mill and a few cottages nearby. The latter, which is thought to have been built in 1729 and mostly rebuilt in 1825, was worked until 1958 and survives today as a Tea Rooms. Also surviving for much of its length is the leat that served it, originating off the mill-tail of Town Mill (fig 8) and following a line alongside Barton Road (fig 7) and part of Coryton Close before turning north, and being carried by a tall launder (aqueduct) to supply the 30 feet diameter wheel.

The Town Mill operated until 1970 and was demolished in 1972, but most of its leat survives and the mill pond in Newhay that fed it, just north and east of St Gregory's church. The Mill had a date stone,



Fig 7 Millers Walk



Fig 8 Dawlish Leat

1717, but this is believed to relate to the time of its rebuilding and that a Mill had stood here a long time before. Both are shown as Corn Mills on the late 19th and early 20th century OS

Maps, but at least one had for some time been a Grist Mill, grinding malted barley for the brewing of beer.

#### 4.3 18th and 19th C Development

While Donn's Map of Devon drawn in 1769 shows the village of Dawlish and the hamlet of Dawlish Strand as being quite separate (with the valley of Dawlish Water between them an empty space), it was not much

later, in the closing years of the 18th century, that the two began to expand and in no time at all, it seems, they were joined. This was the age when the curative virtues of sea water and sea air were being extolled, and when it became highly fashionable in well-to-do circles, to spend summer by the seaside enjoying the pleasures of bathing with the ladies using the main beach, and the gentlemen the beach at Coryton Cove (fig 11). The setting of Dawlish village was the favoured place for building larger houses with grounds.



Fig 9 Former Strand Mill





Fig 10 Dawlish main beach



Fig 11 Coryton Cove

Bridge House (fig 12) was the first to be constructed in 1793, on a site formerly occupied by cottages. Brook House (fig 13) followed a few years later, while Manor House (fig 14) was built about 1811, then on the very edge of the village. Stonelands was added

development as being 'built in the form of an amphitheatre facing the sea'. He was a well-travelled merchant, and went on to explain 'a new town has arisen within a few years from the marshy vale near the shore, perhaps the most pleasant and elegant of any of the accustomed watering-places in this County. The houses have neat little flower gardens inrailed before them. I have never spent a week more agreeably than in this place'.



Fig 12 Bridge House in 1817 and later became the home of Sir John Rennie, the eminent architect and engineer. The wealthy banker, Charles Hoare, established his presence a little to the west, employing John Nash to build Luscombe Castle in 1800-04, and Humphrey Repton to lay out the grounds. (It was Nash who also designed Stonelands a few years later).



Fig 13 Brook House



Fig 14 Manor House

Dawlish Strand, on the other hand, was better placed to satisfy the demand for beach-side, sea view accommodation. By 1796 there were already eight houses on West Cliff and about the same on Marine Parade. By 1800 there must have been houses on the east side too, as Martin Dunsford, visiting in that year, described the sea-front



Fig 15 Marine Parade

A public Bath House was built on Marine Parade (fig 15) in 1805 to help establish Dawlish's credentials as a fashionable seaside resort, but it was the action taken by a local businessman, John Edge Manning, around 1807 that provided the foundation on which the town could rapidly develop its tourism role – for it was he who channelled Dawlish Water (fig 17) and reclaimed the marshes beside it to create a grassy setting fit for the most fashionable of summer visitors. A flood in 1810 undid much of his work and swept away eight bridges and two newly-built houses in Brook Street, but repairs and improvements followed swiftly after.



*Fig 16 The Strand*

By then houses occupied the northern side of the so-called Pleasure Grounds (now The Lawn), effectively combining Dawlish Village with Dawlish Strand to create Dawlish Town. None the worse for this financial set-back, it seems, and in order to meet the growing needs of visitors, Manning proceeded to build 'Public Rooms' at the foot of East Cliff

of transformation, entering it as two small and unimportant clusters of buildings around the church and near the shore, and leaving it as a very well-known seaside town that was popular for retirement and leisure. It also became famous for its black swans, which were first introduced in 1906.



*Fig 18 Brunswick Place*



*Fig 17 Dawlish Water*

in 1812, providing rooms for reading, billiards and the sale of refreshments (which could be combined for balls and similar functions), and not surprisingly, perhaps, rooms for lodging as well. (They were removed in 1866 to make way for the Royal Hotel, now Richmond Court).

By about 1830, Brunswick Place (fig 18) to the south of The Lawn had been mostly built up, and throughout the remainder of the 19th century Dawlish continued to expand and develop rapidly along both sides of its east-west valley – accelerated no doubt by the arrival of the railway in 1846, which increased the town's accessibility and popularity. Its population of 1,424 in 1801 soon grew to 3,132 in 1841, and by 1891 had reached 4,925. The 19th century was indeed Dawlish's age

The majority of the large detached and semi-detached villa developments in the town had been completed by c1900, mainly on the higher, peripheral slopes such as at either end of Barton Road and at Plantation Terrace on the south side, and on and near East Cliff Road, Oak Park Road and Longlands to the north. Large villas in terraces were similarly located in peripheral locations; on Exeter Road, at West Cliff (fig 20) and on Marine Parade near the sea, at Haldon Terrace



*Fig 19 Dawlish Water*

(fig 21) on the north side, at Lawn Terrace at the head of The Lawn, and opposite Barton Villas near the church. Dominating the rest of the town, north of the Strand (the principal commercial street) and west of Lawn Terrace, smaller terraced houses prevailed where most of Dawlish's working



families were housed - although along the old route from the village to the beach (via Old Town Street, Park Road and High Street) a great many commercial and artisan activities were pursued.



Fig 20 28-30 West Cliff

The Ward Lock Guide for Dawlish published in 1950 described the town as 'essentially pretty and polite – a gem amongst sea-side resorts'. Since then the town has witnessed further residential expansion well beyond its east-west valley confines, including a development at Oakland Park (fig 22 and 23), off the coast road to Teignmouth, built in the 1970's and designed as a model for future housing estates that might be added to small towns and villages throughout the County.



Fig 22 Oakland Park



Fig 23 Oakland Park



Fig 21 Haldon Terrace



Fig 24 10 King Street

## 5.0 Archaeology

This archaeological background relating to Dawlish is based on information that is currently held in Devon County Council's Historic Environment Record. The knowledge it embodies is likely to evolve and be revised over time.

### 5.1 Prehistoric

No prehistoric sites are recorded within the Conservation Area. However, prehistoric activity in the wider area is demonstrated by the presence of a possible settlement site located to the south-west of the town which was identified using aerial photography. To the north-west several prehistoric funerary monuments have been identified, while within the cemetery a polished Neolithic axe was found by workmen and a Bronze Age palstave (a type of axe) and another axe were found in the southern part of the town.

### 5.2 Roman

There are no known Roman archaeological sites recorded within the Conservation Area or the modern town.

### 5.3 Saxon

The parish church of St Gregory (fig 25) has probable Saxon origins but no archaeological sites from this date are recorded within the Conservation Area or modern town. However, the survival of Saxon documentation regarding this area does suggest Dawlish had pre-conquest settlement.



Fig 25 The Parish Church of St Gregory

### 5.4 Medieval

Dawlish Old Town probably occupies the area of the medieval settlement – centred on the parish church of St Gregory. While the church retains some of its 14th century fabric in the form of its tower – little else from this period survives other than the remains of a medieval cross (fig 26) relocated to a position just east of the church, probably during the rebuilding of the church in the 19th century. Several of the nearby farmsteads – outside the modern town – are recorded as having medieval origins; such as Gatehouse Farm, recorded as the home of Eustace “ate yate”, and Aller Farm, both recorded in 1333.

### 5.5 Post Medieval and Modern

In the late 18th century the Gentleman's Magazine described Dawlish as a ‘bathing village’ and its growth in popularity as a bathing resort is demonstrated by the development of the town. In the early 19th century the stream was straightened and landscaped to create The Lawn, while Brunswick Place and The Strand (fig 27) were laid out parallel on either side. Much of the subsequent 19th century development in the town survives to this day and includes villas located on the hillsides above the town. The arrival of the railway in 1846 accelerated this growth by making the town much more accessible.



Fig 26 Medieval village cross



Fig 27 The Strand

In addition to the residential development of the town a small commercial and artisan area developed along the old road from the village to the beach (High Street, Park Road and Old Town Street). The 19th century Ordnance Survey map shows the presence of a brewery, coal yard and two saw pits in this area.



On the south side of The Lawn a gas works is shown on the late 19th century OS map. Two Corn Mills are also shown along with their associated leats.

There are several former WWII anti-invasions military sites in the vicinity of the town, consisting of pillboxes and searchlights as well as an anti-aircraft battery.



Fig 28 The Lawn c 1900



Fig 29 Brunel South Devon Railway line

## 5.6 Archaeological Sites with Statutory Protection

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Conservation Area, although many of the Georgian and Victorian houses are listed buildings. St Gregory's Church is a Grade II\* listed building, and in the south-west corner of its graveyard is the elaborate vault of the Hoare family who lived at Luscombe Castle built 1800-04 (fig 30).



Fig 30 Hoare family vaults at Church of St Gregory c1865 by George Gilbert Scott, Architect

## 5.7 Archaeological Potential

The highest potential for the survival of medieval deposits within the Conservation Area is within the vicinity of St Gregory's church in Dawlish Old Town. Further east near the sea, archaeological remains may survive associated with the post-medieval settlement of Dawlish Strand, while waterlogged deposits associated with the pre-canalised Dawlish Water may survive. Waterlogged deposits, by the exclusion of oxygen and agents of decay, can preserve environmental evidence as well as organic artefacts such as wood and leather. Within the historic core of the town any development is likely to affect archaeological deposits associated with the post-medieval development of Dawlish. The WWII military structures are also of archaeological importance and consideration should be made of them whenever development is proposed in their vicinity.

Map 4



Law's Map 1787



Map 5



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DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

#### Devon Historic Environment Record

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Title: Dawlish Conservation Area  
HER Appraisal  
1880-90 OS map

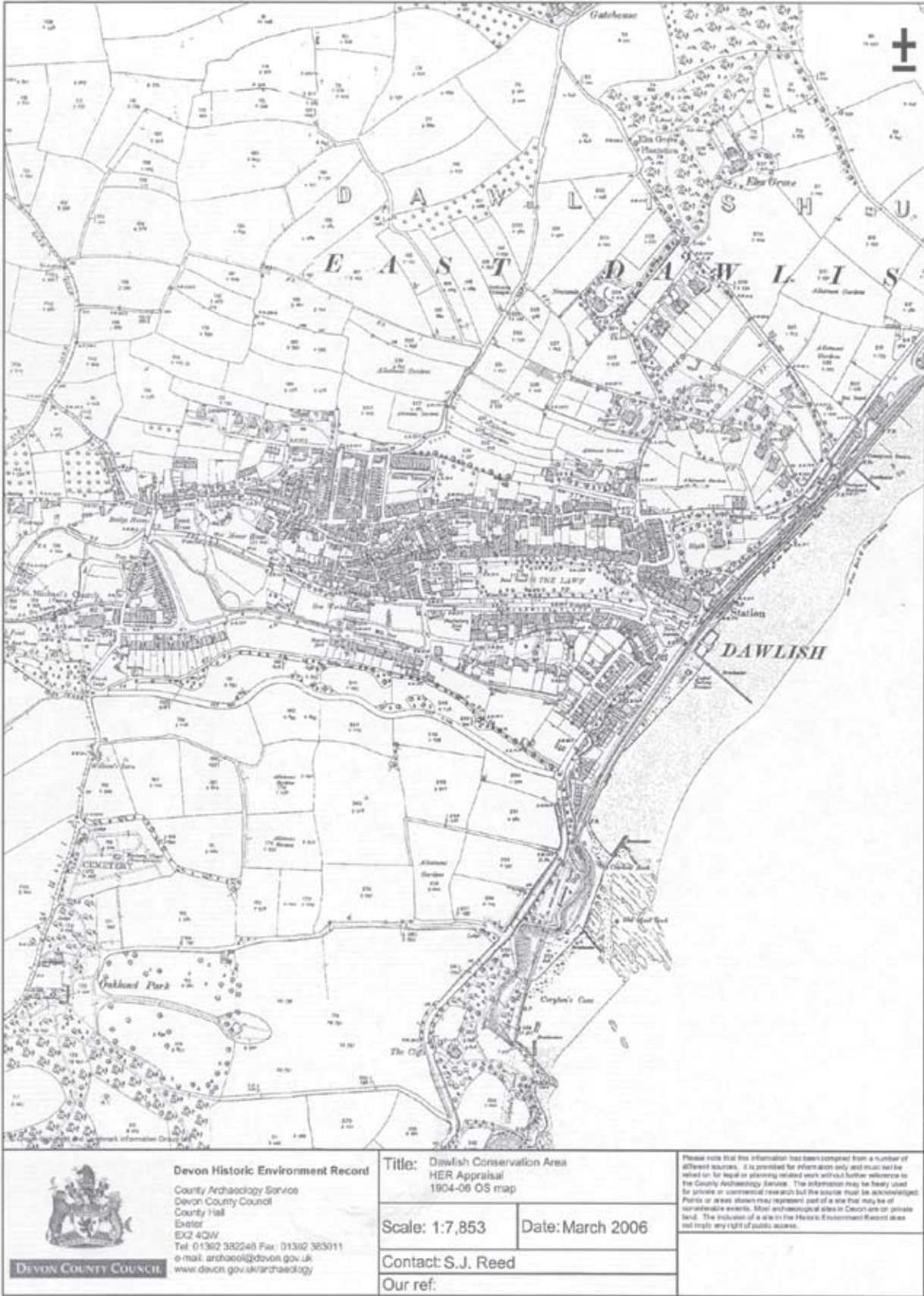
Scale: 1:7,853

Date: March 2006

Contact: S.J. Reed

Our ref:

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Map 6





### Map 7

## 6.0 Activities and Uses

The days when farming and fishing were the mainstays of Dawlish's economy were well and truly left behind when the settlement grew rapidly during the 19th century to become a residential seaside resort. Other than the Gasworks that was situated next to Dawlish Water to the north of Knowle House fig 31 (now the Museum), large industrial buildings have



Fig 31 Knowle House

never been prominent in the Dawlish scene, with only two mills, a brewery and a printing works (now the library) of any significant size. Instead, the larger of the non-domestic buildings served the resident and visiting population in very different ways – mainly meeting their spiritual, educational and recreational needs, and comprised churches, chapels, schools, a library, a bath house, a theatre and the so-called 'public rooms'. Conversions and redevelopment have taken their toll of several of the original buildings, but generally speaking the activities and uses carried on in the Conservation Area today continue to reflect the town's importance, not only as a tourist resort and a popular place to retire to, but also as a place to live and work – and indeed commute from, on account of the town's proximity to other easily accessed centres such as Newton Abbot and Exeter.



Fig 32 Lloyds Bank



Fig 33 South Devon Railway line by Brunel 1846



Fig 34 Dawlish Railway Station rebuild 1873

Commercial uses of the 'all-seasons' kind, including shops, offices and banks, are mainly concentrated along the length of The Strand. They also continue into Queen Street and Park Road, but here there are rather more residential properties mixed in to create the character of a local, neighbourhood centre that mainly serves the needs of the permanent population living close by. Close to the seafront and the main entrance to



Fig 35 Brunswick Place

the beach, however, along Piermont Place and the east end of Brunswick Place (fig 35), more seasonal uses serving the visiting population tend to prevail, including cafes, take-aways, gift shops, ice-cream parlours and an amusement arcade. Although there are a few exceptions, the majority of these uses occupy buildings that were formerly 'high-status' houses and a hotel.



## 7.0 Landscape and Streetscape

### 7.1 Historical development

The landscape around Dawlish is a traditional agricultural landscape of undulating rounded hills, ridges and enclosed valleys, with distinctive red cliffs at the coast. A patchwork of mixed farmland with small to medium sized fields with hedgerows, mature trees and mixed woodland is typically characteristic, with the parkland and woodland of Luscombe Castle to the west of the town. Small streams, narrow winding lanes, scattered farmsteads, houses and cottages are features. Field systems are predominantly medieval or post medieval with an area to the north around Gatehouse Hill of medieval enclosures based on strip fields and an area of modern enclosures around Secmaton Lane. The dramatic coastline of red cliffs, marked by mature trees and scrub and the railway line and sandy beach form the coastal views of the town.

The original village grew up nearly a mile back from the coast and from about 1808 the growing resort developed within the valley on land between the old village and the sea on either side of Dawlish Water.



Fig 36 1875 The Lawn Gardens

latter part of the 20th century, however, this defining backdrop was progressively clad with new housing, which eventually reached the skyline, and on the coastal strip spread well beyond.

Although enveloped by new development, the historic town nevertheless retains key historic landscape features in a series of linking parks and gardens alongside Dawlish Water. The stream was straightened in the early 19th century with stone revetments in a formal channel with artificial weirs and pedestrian bridges. The most significant of these parks is perhaps – The Lawn – whose formalised greens had provided Dawlish with



Fig 37 Piermont

Even though the settlement expanded considerably during the 19th century to become an established seaside resort, by 1900 it still remained largely confined to the floor and lower slopes of the Dawlish Water valley, with the higher slopes forming an immediate and enclosing rural backdrop which was essentially agricultural in character. During the



Fig 38 Brunswick Place

the foundation and focus for building its reputation as an elegant seaside resort. The mainly 2- and 3-storey heights of the buildings that face it mean the space is neither overly exposed nor overly enclosed, and help characterise Dawlish as a 'small-town' resort. Linking with the Lawn and also drawing the countryside to the heart of the town, are the landscaped gardens and public grounds of Newhay

Park, Bridge House, Brook House, Manor House and grounds upstream of the large car park off Barton Hill and the sites of the adjacent (nondescript) hospital and surgery buildings. These late 20th century buildings, large car park and the housing developments at Manor Close, Overbrook and Newhay Close, have considerably depleted the parkland valley setting. The introduction of the housing in particular has modified the significance of the space in terms of the contribution it made towards creating a village-like setting around St Gregory's church, and a parkland setting to Barton Crescent and Villas and in terms of the character it once had which was formerly not unlike that of The Lawn, with building frontages, not back gardens, defining its boundaries.



*Fig 39 Gardens to Haldon Terrace*

The Lawn has been modified from its original design by an early 20th century bowling green and car parking in front of Lawn Terrace, but retains its essential character.

York Gardens also complement the Lawn's significance as the town's primary open space, providing an essential open link at its seaward end to form part of perhaps the most memorable view of Dawlish, looking west from the station platform or from carriages passing by.

The parks, gardens and mature trees along Dawlish Water provide the focus and setting for the historic town and link with the 19th century historic parks at Stonelands and Luscombe Castle and the wider countryside.

Just as the gardens and grounds of the Manor House, Brook House and Bridge House are characteristic of their age and form an integral part of their settings, so too is the garden area to the front of Haldon Terrace (fig 39), laid out at the time of its construction to provide a setting suited to the status of the individual dwellings. The same is true of the gardens

of other substantial houses in and near the Conservation Area, so that their preservation as gardens is of the utmost importance.



*Fig 40 Luscombe Terrace*

One of the more notable gardens is at The Manor, c1807-1810, now occupied by Dawlish Town Council. The rockery was originally built by FW Meyer as part of an ornamental garden of the Manor House. The garden is a continuation of the Lawn.



*Fig 41 Dawlish Water*

## 7.2 Walls, Boundaries, Railings

Although the majority of houses in the Conservation Area do not have garden areas at front that require protection, walls are nevertheless generally common, either defining property boundaries or retaining ground where changes in level occur. Those constructed of grey limestone are undoubtedly prevalent, including most of the revetment walls that channel Dawlish Water (fig 41), the coastal walls protecting the railway, the walls around the churchyard, those that retain raised garden beds, and the several individual examples such as the very tall one on Stockton Road that retains the school yard and school buildings above. Of very special interest, however, are the walls constructed of large cobbles (presumably collected from the beach) such as the one built about 1800 around the garden plot of 1 Brunswick Place. Very much 'vernacular' in character, it seems well suited to the building's cottage ornée style.





Fig 42 Barton Crescent

Although red sandstone walls do exist (such as the section built to 'retain' the cliff close to the railway station) their numbers are few, doubtless reflecting the fact the stone's weathering qualities have long been known to be poor. Rendered walls (fig 42) are not unknown, but much more common are walls of brick – which was used extensively to build the front garden walls of houses that were themselves built of brick. These walls usually followed the colour combination which the houses possessed, so that the body of the wall was normally of red brick, and the cappings and gate piers normally fawn. Such co-ordination in the use of materials certainly enhanced the quality of the street environment – none more so, perhaps, than at the west end of Barton Road where the elegance of the street scene was heightened through the repetition of a well-proportioned, stylish-looking garden wall design.

Ironwork railings erected in the 19th century (fig 45) were formerly much more common but most were removed in the 1940's to be recycled for the war effort. The few sections that remain have considerable rarity value and add a certain dignity to the scene, such as at 5 Queen Street. The most extensive run to survive, however, is alongside the railway line on Marine Parade, probably retained for



Fig 44 1 and 3 Queen Street



Fig 45 Former railings alongside railway line



Fig 43 Jubilee Bridge

reasons of safety – and the fact it presented an obstacle to invading forces! Making a much more obvious contribution towards creating the resort's essential '19th century' character are the sections of cast iron balustrading that adorn two of the bridges across Dawlish Water: Jubilee Bridge carrying the main A379 from Brookdale Terrace to Piermont Place (dated 1885), and the foot bridge from Brunswick Place to the south-west corner of the bowling green (fig 43).

### 7.3 Paving surfaces

Historic paving surfaces in the area have to a large extent been covered in tarmac or replaced with concrete slabs and bricks of various sizes. There are, however, some significant survivals, including sections of pavement cobbles (often with limestone kerbs, fig 46) at Brook Lane near the Alexander Road junction, at Town Tree Hill, Lawn Hill and Badlake Hill, along the frontage of Haldon Terrace, and forming an apron in front of the archway entrance to Thompson Path (off Richmond Place at the end of Beach Street). Outstanding in their state of repair and preservation, however, are the limestone setts and cobbles that are laid the length of Albert Street, creating one of the most characterful and highly distinctive surface treatments in the district.



Fig 46 Limestone kerbs and cobbles



Fig 47 Albert Street

Other characterful historic surfaces include the irregular limestone slabs used on the beach-side walkway close to the station and bridge, and the granite setts at the entry to Lawn Hill off the Strand. Queen Lane has granite kerbstones laid centrally, possibly as a drainage channel, while similar stones are laid across the top end of Stockton Lane. Throughout the area generally, however, a good number of thoroughfares retain their original limestone kerbing, adding local distinctiveness wherever it survives. Especially noteworthy for doing the same is the improvement scheme undertaken of the steps leading down from Exeter Road to Beach Street (fig 48). The balance between the use of old and new materials is admirable, creating a most attractive and evocative 'Old Dawlish' picture incorporating cobbled verges, limestone steps, ironwork hand rails and a pathway of concrete setts that have a suitably informal appearance.



Fig 48 Steps to Exeter Road

## 7.4 Street Structures and Artefacts

Other notable structures and artefacts that contribute towards the area's historic and visual character are varied in nature, one of the largest being the fountain erected in



Fig 49 6 Beach Street

1881 (at York Gardens) by Richard Early – the man who later built the wall and promenade to improve access to the beach at Coryton Cove (in 1887). Serving a more practical purpose is the drinking fountain dated 1877 that is set in the



Fig 50 Fountain at York Gardens



Fig 51 Drinking fountain at Brook House

angled boundary wall of Brook House in Old Town Street (fig 51). Also set into a wall is a plaque commemorating the repair of the bridge which extends Church Street over Dawlish Water. Some of the town's older letter boxes are similarly set into a wall, the one in Church Street





Fig 52 Bridge Plaque, Church Street

opposite Barton crescent being erected in Edward VII's reign between 1901 and 1910. Others are set into the wall of the railway station and a wall outside 34 High Street, while yet another is set into a purpose-built, fawn brick pier (at West Cliff). Of the two freestanding examples, the one outside 27 The Strand is perhaps the more unusual,



Fig 53



Fig 54 Post Box at the Strand

### 7.5 Trees

Trees play a very important role in sustaining Dawlish's established, 19th century, character, particularly those associated with the green areas alongside Dawlish Water where they help create the appearance of parkland along the length of the valley floor. Mature trees



Fig 55 Blue tile street names - local features



Fig 56 Willows at Dawlish Water

include a Monterey Pine at the Manor House, Limes & Horse Chestnuts at The Lawn and Willows and other mature trees along Dawlish Water. Mature trees frame the boundaries of the existing and former parks and gardens and may well have been planted when the greens were originally laid out. This 'well-stocked area' character is supplemented by the specimens planted in the landscaped gardens of the larger 19th century properties that occupy the valley slopes on either side, so that, even in the most urban streets where trees are largely absent, trees almost invariably break the skyline.

### 7.6 Dawlish Water

While not as conspicuous as the channelling of Dawlish Water, another man-made water-course exists in the town, namely the leat that first served the Town Mills before being continued to serve the Strand Mill on Brunswick Place (fig 57). Although only partially flowing with water, the leat is nevertheless a feature of considerable historic importance in terms of its age, construction, alignment and purpose.



Fig 57 Dawlish Leat

## 8.0 Architecture

The building activity in the 19th century that accompanied Dawlish's rapid transformation into a fashionable resort was so intense that only about half a dozen buildings survived to evidence the town's earlier 'village' origins. The most ancient structure is the tower of St Gregory's church which dates from the mid-15th century (fig 25), while the earliest houses are of 17th or 18th century date, nearly all of them characterised by low storey heights and thatched roofs (fig 58). Most true to their original vernacular style is the



Fig 58 1-7 Exeter Road

range (now in four) on the corner of Exeter Road where it meets High Street, alongside the old route between the beach and the village. Not only are its storey heights low and its roofs thatched, but typical of the style, it has massive stacks and casement windows arranged in a quite informal manner. Most of



Fig 59 6 Beach Street

the other vernacular-styled examples have had their character modified over the years through the introduction of 'fashionable' sash windows, roof dormers and, at 6 Beach Road, a shop window.

Throughout most of the historic parts of the town, therefore, the polite and dignified classical styles employed during the 19th century prevail – creating a generally unified appearance characterised by tall, well-proportioned sash windows, mainly rendered elevations and a range of architectural features which became more numerous and lavish as the century progressed – particularly on the more prestigious, higher status houses.



Fig 60 Valetta, Brunswick Place

With only a limited sea-frontage, the opportunity to create a grand promenade did not exist at Dawlish, so that substantial houses in long formal terraces (like those on the Den at Teignmouth) are not an obvious characteristic of the town. Of the two examples that do exist, which are both 3-storeys and 9 or 10 units in length, one occupies a quiet secluded location, on the hillside north of Park Road which is perhaps unfortunate as architecturally it is a very uplifting, very elegant, set piece. Called Haldon Terrace (fig 61) and built in the early



Fig 61 Haldon Terrace



to mid 19th century in a classical style, it is adorned with pilasters between each house, a bracketed cornice along the length of the eaves and individual cornices over the first floor windows, where, within the window reveals, a series of most attractive gothic-styled fascias are used to mask folding



Fig 62 Iddesleigh Terrace

canvas sun-blinds. The second long terrace, on the other hand, is prominently sited facing the coast-road approach from Exeter (called Iddesleigh Terrace, fig 62). More handsome than elegant, it was built around 1890 and has a more robust appearance with heavily moulded stonework bay windows



Fig 63 Barton Villas

and door surrounds which contrast with the red-brick façade. The bay windows are a particular feature that characterises many of the houses built in the latter part of the 19th century, including the only other two terraces of 3-storey, 'higher status' houses that were built as a single composition - at Brookdale Terrace and at 21-27 Marine Parade, both just five units long. Rather more impressive in their appearance and impact on the street scene, however, are the seven pairs of like-designed, semi-detached houses called Barton Villas (fig 63), at the west end of Barton Road with a further detached unit standing forward at one end which serves to emphasise their presence. For the most part, therefore, the larger 19th



Fig 64 Barton Villas

century houses in Dawlish are singular in their design; a few are detached within large garden plots (as at 5, 7 and 8 at the eastern end of Plantation Terrace ), and a few designed in semi-detached pairs (as at 13 and 15 Plantation Terrace), but the vast majority have frontages that fill the width of their plots to create terraces that are full of variety in terms of their storey heights, roof forms and architectural treatments (as along The Strand, parts of Brunswick Place and Barton Road and at West Cliff and Piermont Place).



Fig 65 13-15 Plantation Terrace

The more elegant houses generally date from the first half of the 19th century; most of them substantial in size (eg. 1 – 3 Barton Road), but some quite modest, including three of the thirteen properties in the town adorned with bow-windows, at 17 Brunswick Place, 13 Strand Hill and 38 The Strand. These are notable as being amongst the four best-preserved houses with bow windows, the fourth being 4 Brunswick Place, which is of similar age but quite elaborate for the period. Normally architectural embellishment was quite restrained as at 33 The Strand, which has similar bow windows at first floor but lacks the decorative pilaster and has a plain parapet at the eaves.

From about the middle of the 19th century, classical styling became progressively elaborate in character, with large, multi-storied bay windows incorporated into many of the designs, as at 2 – 6 Plantation Terrace and 28 – 30 West Cliff nearby but most elaborately of all, at 16 West Cliff where the bays have highly ornamental balustrades at first floor and curved pediments at their heads.

The more modest 19th century houses in the town are for the most part 2-storeys and congregate in the area north of The Strand and west of Alexander Road, generally astride the old route between the beach and the village but with new roads at right angles climbing the valley side (north of Park Road), and older ones continuing the east-west line of The Strand where the houses back onto Dawlish Water. It is here, in Brook Lane, and along Old Town Street to the west of the Manor House (which was once on the edge of the village) that most of the earlier 19th century houses are found, with just a few others surviving in pockets towards the east end of High Street, on Commercial Road and across the road and down the steps to Beach Road. They are characterised mainly by their plain and simple elevations and windows that are flush with the wall face or only slightly recessed. The most valued amongst them retain their original timber, multi-paned sashes, like the trio of single and double-fronted houses at 35, 36, and 37 Old Town Street (fig 66).



Fig 66 35-37 Old Town Street

The modest houses of the mid-19th century tend also to be quite plain (e.g. 6 Alexander Road), but as the century progressed modest architectural features like door hoods and door cases became more common – sooner on houses built for the slightly better off (e.g. 6 Queen Street), but in most cases later (e.g. 12 King Street). Towards the very end of the century, however, modest houses were being built with features similar to those found on more

‘up-market’ properties. Indeed, the terrace on the east side of Luscombe Terrace is essentially a 2-storey (with basement) version of 3-storey Iddesleigh Terrace on Exeter Road. It only lacks a few brackets at the eaves, while the buff-coloured stone to the bays and door arches is perhaps more agreeable than the creamy-grey variety used on its taller counterpart. This terrace of modest-sized houses, and others of similar, late 19th century age, is characterised by having small garden areas at front. As a general rule, earlier 19th century houses of similar size do not, being built directly onto the pavement. There are just a few exceptions, principally along the east side of Queen Street, while on the west side two rare examples of railed-in forecourts exist.

Because of their ground floor locations, shopfronts have a very significant impact on the architectural and historic qualities of the streets they occupy, which in Dawlish includes Park Road and Queen Street as well as the extensive frontages facing The Lawn and York Gardens. Old photographs show that by the middle of the 19th century Dawlish could boast a very fine display of shopfronts designed in a traditional, classical, manner – their fascias with projecting cornices along the top; pilasters giving them visual support, and mullions dividing the windows into smaller, vertically proportioned sections. As such they contributed greatly towards the town's character and interest, adding dignity to its principal streets. By the end of the 20th century, however, all but half a dozen of these shopfronts had been lost, disfigured or replaced; mainly with materials and designs that display little or no respect for the character of the historic buildings they occupy. Possibly the least altered and best preserved historic shopfront is at 31 The Strand (fig 67); surviving to substantiate the claims made by earlier generations that Dawlish was indeed an elegant place.



Fig 67 31 The Strand



## 9.0 Building Materials

### 9.1 Render

Rendered elevations are prevalent in all but a few streets in the Conservation Area, bringing visual unity in addition to protecting cob,



Fig 68 Queen Street

stone or timber-framed structures beneath. For the most part the render has a traditional, smoothly-textured finish which suits the 'town' location and enhances the appearance of buildings which have architectural features applied – such as raised string bands and quoins. A fair number still have traces of incised ashlar lining intended to create the appearance of finely-jointed stonework – not only on the more prestigious buildings but on more modest houses too, such as at 13 King Street (fig 69) where the architectural device appears to have been renewed. Mechanically applied, roughly-textured, modern finishes are fortunately few. They have a rustic appearance which appears somewhat out of keeping in an urban setting, particularly when applied to a building with 'polite' architectural styling, such as Valetta (fig 60) on Brunswick Place. Another finish evident in the area is pebbledash; a treatment that became universally fashionable in the earlier part of the 20th century. Its effect, however, is to erode rather than reinforce local distinctiveness, so, again, it is perhaps fortunate that examples are few. Invariably the render is painted, most



Fig 69 13 King Street

commonly in white or pastel shades that help preserve the dignified character most buildings possess.

### 9.2 Brickwork

Although brick has a long history of use for the construction of chimney stacks, it wasn't until the latter

part of the 19th century, after the arrival of the railway, that brick was used extensively for constructing whole houses (Wellington, in Somerset, was the source of at least some of the red bricks). It was especially favoured for building more



Fig 70 Luscombe Terrace

modest, terraced houses, mainly across the north side of the town and principally on Hatcher Street and Luscombe Terrace where its use is dominant. Shorter terraces are nearby, in Old Town Street, Park Road, Regent Street and High Street, while others exist in the vicinity of Alexander Road and Brook Street, filling in the available gaps. Examples of brick across the south side of the town are very much fewer; a pair in Church Street, another in Plantation Terrace and another in Barton Road (next to the brick-built Masonic Hall). However, as if to assimilate the material into the otherwise 'rendered and painted' scene, one of the pair in Barton Road has been painted. These two, the pair in Plantation Terrace, and 3-storey Iddesleigh Terrace on Exeter Road, are amongst the very few 'higher-status' houses but in brick, so their appearance is somewhat uncharacteristic. Appearing particularly out of keeping with its setting, however, is the large-scale, late 20th century brick-built block on Marine Parade – located in an area of essentially high-status houses along the length of the sea front that was formerly distinctive on account of the material's absence. The building's incongruity is further emphasised by the use of dark grey/blue bricks for the window dressings, as the local tradition favoured the use of light, fawn-coloured bricks (or stonework) that contrasts with the red brick of the façade. Other 20th century buildings which introduce entirely different coloured bricks also appear incongruous, including the supermarket building at 3 to 4 The Strand.

### 9.3 Natural Stone

Buildings with a natural stone face are relatively uncommon, not least because the locally sourced red sandstone is friable and



Fig 71 Natwest bank

The Strand the material is cut finely into small rectangular blocks and laid in courses; a practice shared by the only other significant red-sandstone building in the Conservation Area – the chapel and house on Exeter Road next to the Elm Grove Road junction. More common, but still few in number, are examples of exposed grey limestone. At the Natwest Bank (fig 71) building at the end of Brookdale Terrace and the United Reform Church on The Strand the stone is (as at Lloyds Bank) cut into blocks and laid in courses, but otherwise it was used in characteristic rubblestone fashion for the construction of a few other chapels and schools and small ‘public’ buildings.

#### 9.4 Cladding

Other traditional materials and claddings are relatively scarce, so their general absence rather than presence contributes towards creating Dawlish’s individual character. Slate hung elevations are extremely rare; the two most significant and obvious historic examples being next door to each other at 3 and 4 Brunswick Place, (fig 72); not on their front elevations, however, but on their side gable elevations facing west. Examples of weatherboarding are equally rare, the two most interesting uses being to clad the upper floor of the signal box on the station platform, and the single-storey coach house behind 6 The Mews (itself incorporating stables, and together with the coach house, formerly associated with one of the larger residences on West Cliff).



Fig 72 4 Brunswick Place

Other walling materials and claddings exist, but these tend to look incongruous and erode, not contribute towards, the area’s distinctive

characteristics. All were introduced in the latter part of the 20th century and include exposed concrete block, corrugated metal sheeting, imitation stone claddings, stone claddings comprising irregular flat pieces applied on edge giving the appearance of crazy-paving, concrete tiles and, as previously mentioned, pebbledash coatings and bricks that are neither red nor fawn. In addition, imitation ‘Tudor’ timber framing, however well executed (as on the Woolworth building at 2 The Strand), does not reflect local building traditions.

#### 9.5 Roofs

Before Dawlish’s expansion during the 19th century, when it was still a small village with an ‘outpost’ near the beach, the majority of its buildings would have been roofed in thatch. The significance of the few surviving examples is therefore considerable, with those finished with a simple flush ridge (not block-cut or ornamental) truly reflecting Devon’s local traditions. As the settlement expanded, slate replaced thatch as the dominant roof cladding. At first the slates were doubtless



Fig 73 Church Cottage, 18th century. NB Narrow gable width

sourced from South Devon quarries, but after the railway arrived supplies from Wales and Cornwall took their place – the latter being more a match with the grey-blue colour of the local varieties. Cast iron rainwater goods, with ogee or half-round profiled guttering (not square or angular) were the norm, while windows, doors and other joinery, such as bargeboards at the gables and fascias at the eaves, would have always been made of timber and given a painted finish, not stained. Modern replacements, such as concrete tiles and substitute slates on roofs, plastic for rainwater goods and aluminium, upvc or stained hardwood for windows and doors (whatever their design) are wholly incongruous in an historic setting, and even in small numbers their use significantly harms the authenticity of the area’s architectural and historic qualities.



## 10.0 Architectural Character Survey

The purpose of this survey is to identify the contributions buildings make to the character of the Dawlish Conservation Area. Three categories are used and the criteria for each are summarised below. Also identified are 'key' or 'landmark' buildings which, as the name suggests, occupy significant sites and are therefore especially important in a visual sense.

In assessing individual buildings, it is the combination of 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, however, that plastic windows in a building which makes a positive contribution to the area are in themselves a positive feature. They may, however, have prevented it from being classed as 'outstanding'. Where extensions to existing buildings are large in scale, they have been considered separately and may be in a different category to that of the original building.

### 10.1 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.



Fig 74 Outstanding

Buildings identified as outstanding are the highlights of any conservation area. Planning applications and other proposals which may affect 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.

### 10.2 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



Fig 75 Positive

building and the contribution it makes to the character and 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.

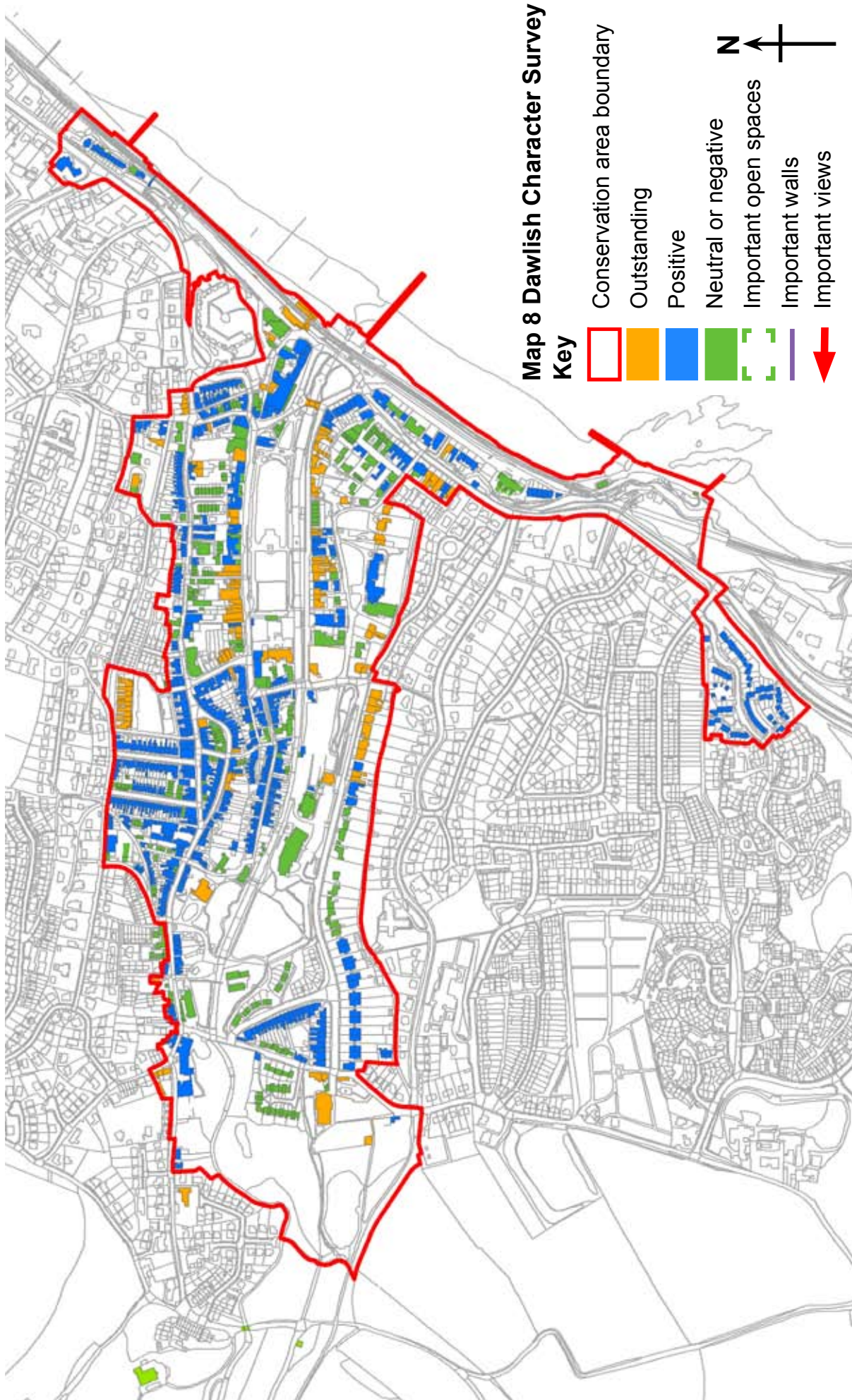
### 10.3 Category 3 : Neutral or Negative

Most conservation areas have buildings that are neither positive nor negative in their contribution to overall character. These will often be 20th 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 appearance and character of that area. These will most commonly be 20th 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 so the 'neutral' and 'negative' categories have been combined.

Planning applications for the alteration, extension or replacement of buildings in this combined 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 low 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.





## 11.0 Recommendations for Statutory Listing

Although constructed in the latter part of the 19th century, 1-15 Barton Villas and the terrace opposite forming 1-10 Barton Crescent, comprise a cohesive enclave of excellent, well-preserved, mid-Victorian architecture that possesses exceptional group value in its historic setting leading directly to St Gregory's Church. Such groupings of this quality and age are a rarity in the district, and in these circumstances their statutory listing would seem entirely appropriate and justified.



Fig 76 1-10  
Barton Crescent



Fig 77 1-15  
Barton Villas

### Appendix A Summary of Buildings Listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest in the Dawlish Conservation Area

Ref. No.	Grade	Date of Listing	ID (IOE) No.	Item
<b>Badlake Hill</b>				
7/6	II	1951	84324	No. 1, Old Badlake House
7/7	II	1977	84325	No. 3, Cobblestones
7/8	II	1977	84326	No. 5, Chilmark
<b>Barton Hill</b>				
7/9	II	1985	84327	Nos. 1 and 1A, Hill House and Hill Top
<b>Barton Terrace</b>				
7/10	II	1977	84328	No. 1, Florenville
7/11	II	1977	84329	No. 2, Lamorna Hotel
7/12	II	1977	84330	No. 3, Brook House
7/13	II	1977	84331	No. 4
7/1	II	1951	84332	No. 5, Speke House
7/15	II	1951	84333	No. 6
7/16	II	1951	84334	No. 7, Keyberry House
7/17	II	1985	84335	Nos. 9 and 10, Maudwell and Poulton House.
7/18	II	1985	84336	Museum (The Knowle)
<b>Beach Street</b>				
8/20	II	1951	84337	No. 6, Reed Cottage
8/19	II	1985	84338	Railway Inn
<b>Brunswick Place</b>				
7/21	II	1951	84339	No. 1, Brookdale
7/22	II	1985	84340	Garden Wall to No. 1
8/23	II	1951	84341	No. 4, Stanley House
8/24	II	1951	84342	No. 5, Hampton House
8/25	II	1985	84343	No. 6
8/26	II	1985	84344	No. 8, Valetta
8/27	II	1985	84345	Nos. 9 and 10, The Brunswick Arms

8/28	II	1985	84346	No. 11, Brunswick House and Book Shop
8/29	II	1977	84347	No. 16
8/30	II	1977	84348	No. 17
8/31	II	1985	84349	Nos. 19 and 20
8/32	II	1985	84350	No. 21
8/33	II	1951	84351	No. 22
8/34	II	1951	84352	No. 23, Torbay Mills
8/35	II	1951	84353	Nos. 24 and 25
8/36	II	1951	84354	Nos. 26 and 27
<b>Church Street</b>				
7/37	II*	1951	84355	Parish Church of St Gregory
7/38	II	1985	84356	Hoare Vaults in Churchyard of St Gregory
7/39	II	1985	84357	Remains of Village Cross outside Parish Church of St Gregory
7/40	II	1951	84358	No. 7, Church Cottage
7/41	II	1985	84359	Wall forming W and SW boundary of No. 7 and S boundary of St Gregory's Churchyard
7/42	II	1951	84360	No. 16, and 18
<b>Exeter Road</b>				
8/53	II	1951	84368	Nos. 1 to 7 (odd)
<b>Haldon Terrace</b>				
7/54	II	1985	84369	Nos. 1 to 9 (consec)
<b>High Street</b>				
8/55	II	1985	84371	Nos. 9 and 13, The Cobbles and Cleveland House
<b>King Street</b>				
7/64	II	1985	84380	Central Hall for Christian Fellowship
<b>The Lawn</b>				
8/65	II	1985	84381	Jubilee Bridge
<b>Lawn Terrace</b>				
7/66	II	1985	84382	Arborfield
7/67	II	1985	84383	Brooklands Hotel
<b>Marine Parade</b>				
8/80	II	1951	84396	No. 10
<b>Old Town Street</b>				
7/81	II	1985	84397	No. 66, Pixie Cottage
7/82	II	1985	84398	Manor House
<b>Plantation Terrace</b>				
8/117	II	1951	84400	No. 5, Kia-Ora
8/118	II	1951	84401	No. 7, Ilex Lodge
8/120	II	1985	84402	Little Holt
8/119	II	1985	84403	No. 9, The Holt



7/121	II	1951	84404	Nos. 13 and 15, Walton House (Listed as Penwarne) and Clyde Ho.
8/122	II	1985	84405	No.8, Hope Cottage
<b>Priory Road</b>				
8/85	II	1951	84406	No. 3, Lammas Park Hotel
8/86	II	1985	84407	No. 4, The Priory
<b>Queen Street</b>				
7/87	II	1985	84408	No. 5
7/88	II	1985	84409	Nos. 2, 4 and 4A
7/89	II	1985	84410	No. 6
7/90	II	1985	84411	No. 8
<b>Regent Street</b>				
7/91	II	1985	84412	Nos. 3 and 5
7/92	II	1985	84413	No. 7
<b>Richmond Place</b>				
8/93	II	1985	84414	Medina
<b>Station Road</b>				
8/96	II	1951	84417	Dawlish Railway Station
	II	2004		Signal Box at Dawlish Station
<b>The Strand</b>				
8/97	II	1985	84418	Lloyds Bank
8/98	II	1951	84419	No. 15
8/99	II	1951	84420	No. 16
8/100	II	1985	84421	Nos. 27 and 28, The Prince Albert Inn
8/101	II	1985	84422	Nos. 29 and 30
8/102	II	1985	84423	No. 31
8/103	II	1985	84424	No. 32, United Reform Church
8/104	II	1985	84425	No. 33
8/105	II	1985	84426	No. 34
8/106	II	1985	84427	No. 35
8/107	II	1985	84428	No. 36
8/108	II	1951	84429	No. 38, Little Hame, No. 39 and No.39A, The Moorings
<b>Strand Hill</b>				
8/83	II	1985	84430	No. 13
<b>Town Tree Hill</b>				
7/115	II	1985	84433	No. 12. Town Tree House
<b>Weech Road</b>				
7/123	II	1985	84434	No. 2, Bryony Cottage
<b>West Cliff</b>				
8/110	II	1985	84438	No. 22, Elsecot
8/111	II	1985	84439	No. 24. Roborough
8/112	II	1985	84440	No. 26
8/113	II	1985	84441	No. 32, Hawtreys

## Appendix B Glossary of Terms

**Cob:** Walls built of mud, straw and sometimes dung and horse hair.

**Crinoid:** Marine fossil indicative of warm shallow seas.

**Cruck:** Early (medieval) roof structure which rises from a basal point within the wall. May be a single piece of timber or two or more jointed together.

**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.

**Mitred hips:** Traditional roofing detail. Slate is cut so that two roof slopes meet almost seamlessly.

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

**Plank and muntin:** Timber partition screen made of posts with thinner planks set into grooves.

**Spilitic lavas:** Extrusive igneous rock similar to basalt.

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

## List of illustrations

### List of Maps

- Map 1 Dawlish Conservation Area
- Map 2 Geology
- Map 3 Location Map
- Map 4 Laws Map 1787
- Map 5 HER Appraisal 1880-90
- Map 6 HER Appraisal 1904-06
- Map 7 HER Appraisal - Selected Archaeological sites
- Map 8 Dawlish Character Survey

### List of photographs

- Fig 1 Dawlish Water
- Fig 2 Dawlish Water and Brookdale Terrace
- Fig 3 Uncoursed limestone
- Fig 4 Uncoursed wall of red brick and cobbles
- Fig 5 Aerial picture of Dawlish
- Fig 6 Church of St Gregory
- Fig 7 Millers Walk
- Fig 8 Dawlish Leat
- Fig 9 Former Strand Mill
- Fig 10 Dawlish main beach
- Fig 11 Coryton Cove
- Fig 12 Bridge House
- Fig 13 Brook House
- Fig 14 Manor House
- Fig 15 Marine Parade
- Fig 16 The Strand
- Fig 17 Dawlish Water
- Fig 18 Brunswick Place
- Fig 19 Dawlish Water
- Fig 20 28-30 West Cliff
- Fig 21 Haldon Terrace
- Fig 22 Oakland Park



- Fig 23 Oakland Park
- Fig 24 10 King Street
- Fig 25 The Parish Church of St Gregory
- Fig 26 Medieval village cross
- Fig 27 The Strand
- Fig 28 The Lawn c1900
- Fig 29 Brunel South Devon Railway
- Fig 30 Hoare family vaults at Church of St Gregory c1865 by George Gilbert Scott, Architect
- Fig 31 Knowle House
- Fig 32 Lloyds Bank
- Fig 33 South Devon Railway line by Brunel 1846
- Fig 34 Dawlish Railway Station rebuilt 1873
- Fig 35 Brunswick Place
- Fig 36 1875 The Lawn Gardens
- Fig 37 Piermont
- Fig 38 Brunswick Place
- Fig 39 Gardens to Haldon Terrace
- Fig 40 Luscombe Terrace
- Fig 41 Dawlish Water
- Fig 42 Barton Crescent
- Fig 43 Original cast iron railings
- Fig 44 5 Queen Street
- Fig 45 Former railings alongside railway line
- Fig 46 Limestone kerbs and cobbles
- Fig 47 Albert Street
- Fig 48 Steps to Exeter Road
- Fig 49 6 Beach Street
- Fig 50 Drinking fountain at Brook House
- Fig 51 Fountain at York Gardens
- Fig 52 Bridge Plaque, Church Street
- Fig 53 Edward VII post box
- Fig 54 Post box at the Strand
- Fig 55 Blue tile street names - local features
- Fig 56 Willows at Dawlish Water
- Fig 57 Dawlish Leat
- Fig 58 1-7 Exeter Road
- Fig 59 6 Beach Street
- Fig 60 Valetta, Brunswick Place
- Fig 61 Haldon Terrace
- Fig 62 Iddesleigh Terrace
- Fig 63 Barton Villas
- Fig 64 Barton Villas
- Fig 65 13-15 Plantation Terrace
- Fig 66 35-37 Old Town Street
- Fig 67 31 The Strand
- Fig 68 Queen Street
- Fig 69 13 King Street
- Fig 70 Luscombe Terrace
- Fig 71 Natwest bank
- Fig 72 4 Brunswick Place
- Fig 73 Church Cottage, 18th century . NB Narrow gable width
- Fig 74 Outstanding
- Fig 75 Positive
- Fig 76 1-10 Barton Crescent
- Fig 77 1-15 Barton Villas