



Teignbridge District Conservation Area Character Appraisals

Kingskerswell

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

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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 Kingskerswell 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 Council 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 on 30th July 2001.

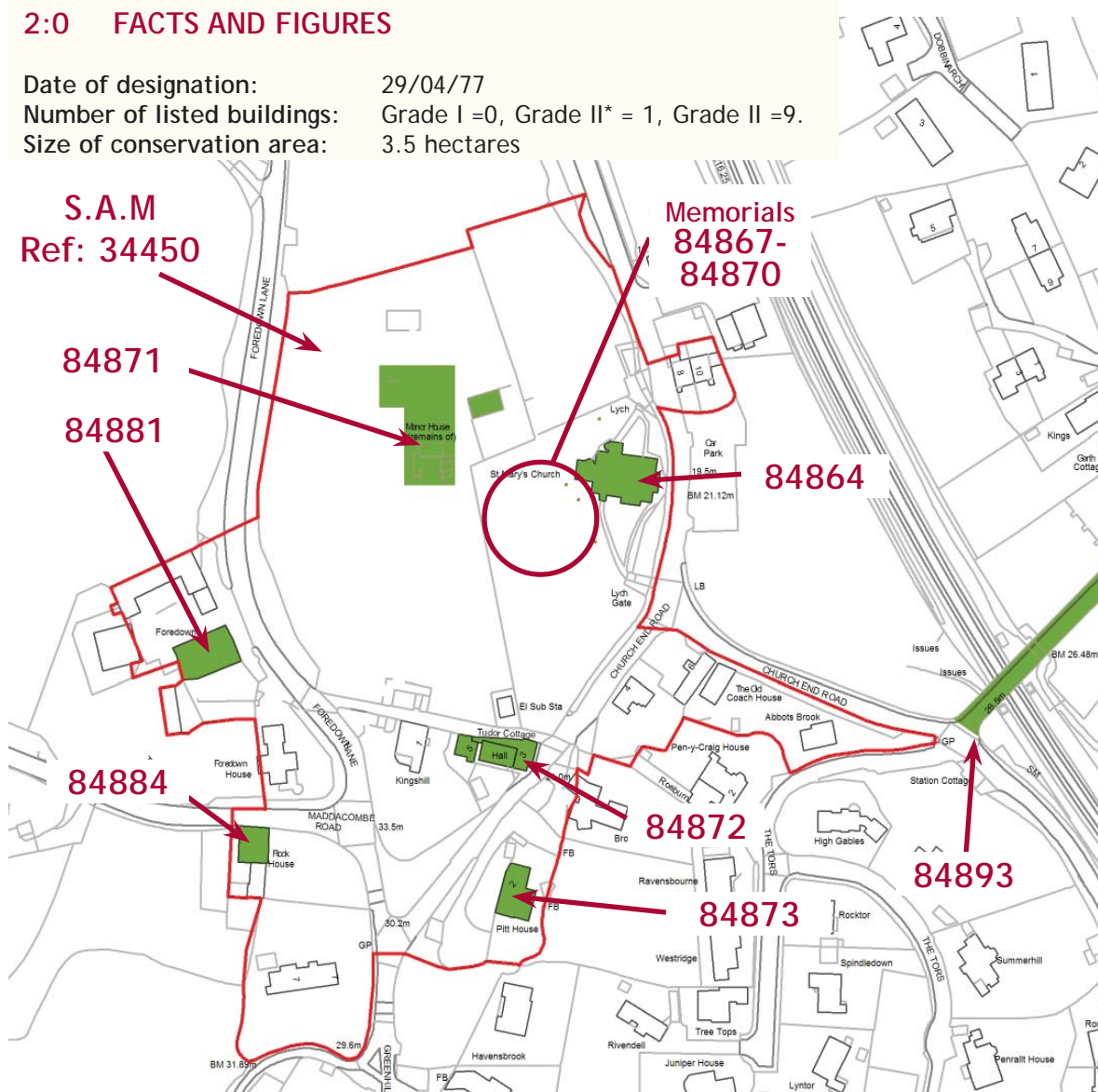
The feedback from the public and other interested bodies has been fully considered and a number of amendments have been made as a result - notably further amendments to the proposed Conservation Area boundary.

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 review of this Character Appraisal was undertaken in September 2009, when its effectiveness was considered and necessary amendments made. Minor changes may be made with the agreement of the Parish. Fieldwork undertaken September 2009. The revised Appraisal was approved on 22nd March 2010.

2:0 FACTS AND FIGURES

Date of designation: 29/04/77
Number of listed buildings: Grade I =0, Grade II* = 1, Grade II =9.
Size of conservation area: 3.5 hectares



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

3.0 LOCATION & GEOLOGY

Kingskerswell is spread across the floor of the Aller valley, 3km south-east of Newton Abbot. The historic core of the village, around the church, lies on the west side of the valley. A small tributary stream passes through, beyond which the land slopes steeply up to the west. The conservation area covers this historic centre, while the rest of the village to the east has been enveloped by 20th century suburban development.

The historic maps show that Kingskerswell was once a very rural community, with extensive orchards and gardens. Only the immediate vicinity of the conservation area preserves this character, with remains of orchards west of the church and meadows on the hillsides and beside the railway. Mature trees grow along the south side of Church End Road.

Permian breccia underlies the majority of the village, with alluvium across the valley floor. A tongue of middle Devonian limestone occupies the high ridge immediately south of the church, outcrops of which form natural cliffs along the south side of Church Road and behind Pitt House. This has been quarried in the past; a particularly large working being immediately south-west of Foredown Farm.

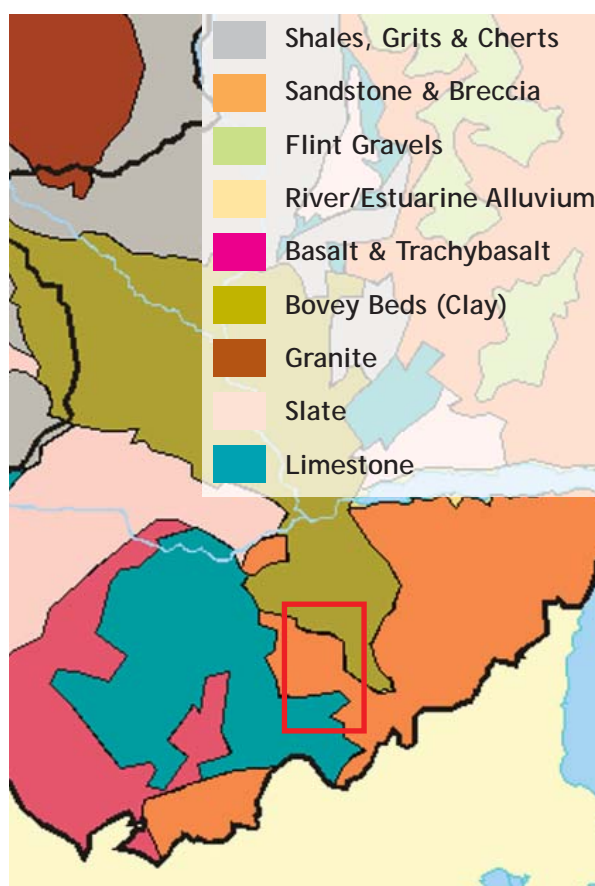


Grey Devonian limestone is the main building material in Kingskerswell



Location

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Geology

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4:0 VILLAGE MORPHOLOGY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Part of the unique character of Kingskerswell is the survival in a field near St. Mary's Church, of the medieval manor house of the Dinham family, 14th century effigies of whom survive in the church. The close proximity of these buildings, coupled with the ovoid enclosure surrounding them, suggests a very early site. The 1890 OS map shows a pond, south of the church, which may have been the manorial fishpond. This is now filled in under a graveyard extension.

The church, unusually for a manorial settlement, was a chapel of ease in the parish of St. Marychurch, Torquay. It did not achieve parochial rights of its own until the 1530s. This may mean that the splendid structure now surviving is relatively late: most church building had ceased by the 1540s, not to resume on the same scale until the 19th century.

The position of the church however, is typical of other ovoid enclosures in the District, such as Kingsteignton, whose church was founded before AD 909. The position of the manor house, in the centre of the enclosure, is reminiscent of other very early sites in south Devon, such as Great Englebourne in Harberton and Linham in West Alvington; both in South Hams District.

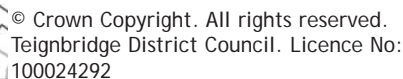
This part of Kingskerswell has a very rural feel, with farmhouses which have lost their outbuildings, such as Pitt House and still with them as at Foredown. The unusual thatched non-conformist chapel beside Church End Road was converted in the 18th century from another farmhouse, whose colossal 16th century chimney stack is still visible.

The construction of the railway to Torquay in the late 1840s resulted in many large villas, evident on the 1890 OS map. These were the country residences of wealthy businessmen who worked in Torquay and Newton Abbot; thus Kingskerswell became an early dormitory town. These large villas, although mostly of pattern book design (like many others in Newton Abbot and Torquay), make a strong positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, even where they are presently outside its boundary.



The 'Old Village' is ancient in origin and is characterised by a loose development pattern. Buildings range from medieval to modern with a good collection of Victorian villas. Generous open spaces with plenty of trees add tremendous character to the place.

- ## Area of Archaeological Potential



5:0 ARCHITECTURE

The parish church of St. Mary is a fine building in the perpendicular style, with the tall tower and relatively short nave typical of south Devon churches. Its location means it can be viewed from many places within the village.

Traditional vernacular forms are common in the conservation area, although many of the older buildings have been altered in the 20th century. Rock House in Addacombe Road is a fine mid-19th century house with stable block alongside. No. 7 Greenhill Road is an unusual 1920s house in late Arts & Crafts style with a delightful graded slate roof.

- 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 Archaeological character survey and a brief summary of the criteria used can be found in appendix two



Classical late Georgian design



Traditional vernacular



7 Greenhill road

6:0 BUILDING MATERIALS

Kingskerswell is an area where straw thatch was the predominant roofing material until the 1840s, when the railway first brought cheap slates from Wales. Where a building was originally thatched and there are real townscape benefits to be gained by its re-instatement, this should be encouraged.

In recent years, traditional Welsh slate has been replaced with much asbestos slate. This incremental erosion of character gives these old buildings a less attractive appearance.

Walls are mainly natural stone or render in Kingskerswell conservation area.

Timber windows of various ages are found within the village. On older vernacular buildings the openings are usually small and the windows recessed. The 19th century buildings have larger sash windows. The use of modern materials or finishes will strike a discordant note and must be avoided.

Owing to the practice of pastoral farming west of the village, Devon banks and mixed deciduous hedgerows form most of the enclosure in these parts. Limestone walls are also found, especially in the vicinity of the church and south side of the conservation area. They are commonly found east of the railway line and the railway bridge is built of limestone. In the village, these walls are of coursed or random limestone and breccia rubble, tightly laid in lime mortar with a coarse aggregate. Outside the village, occasional field and roadside walls are constructed of weathered surface limestone without mortar.

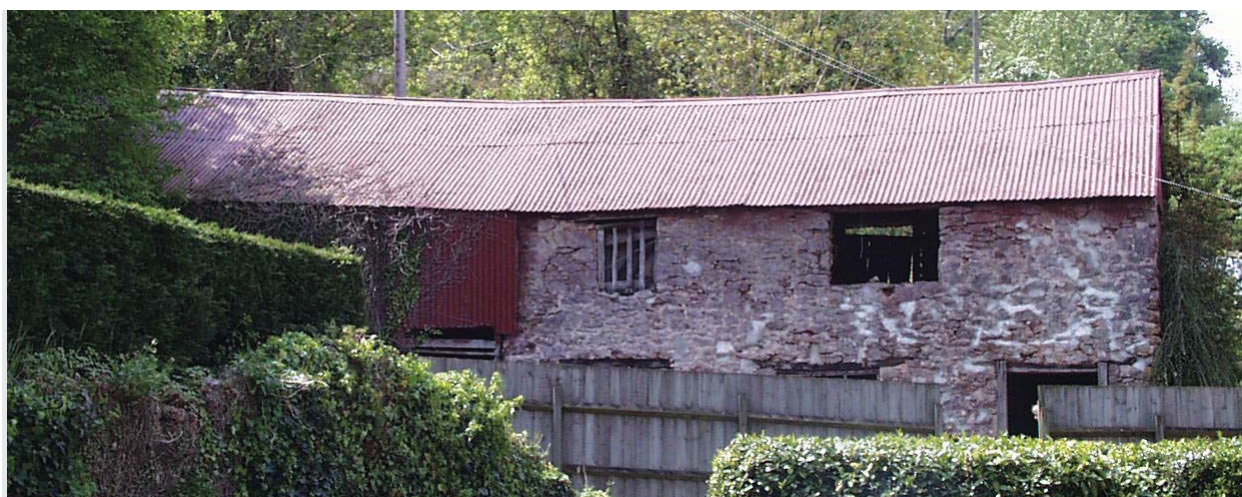
- The characteristic architectural features and building materials of Kingskerswell are summarised in Appendix one.



Rubble limestone walls often form enclosure



An unusual window offers incidental interest



This barn at Foredown Lane has great character

7:0 POSITIVE CHARACTER FEATURES

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

7:1 SURFACING: Little historic surfacing survives within the conservation area to illustrate the types of treatments used in the past, but limestone slabs, setts and cobbles are found in a few privately owned locations.



Angular limestone cobbles are distinctive

7:2 TREES: Specimen trees add considerably to focal points within the village, notably the churchyard. Some hedgebanks to the west of the church and along the mill leat to the north are extensively overgrown, with large mature trees. These are especially prominent on the steep slope to the south of Church End Road. Close up they offer shade, shelter and ambience. Hedgerows provide visual and ecological links. Where they are becoming overgrown, active management is needed if their character value is to be preserved.



Trees add to the quality of many views.

7:3 ORCHARDS: The old maps show the extent of orchards in the past. Their relevance to the cultural history of the village cannot be overstated, nor can their vulnerability to contemporary decline. The remaining orchards, including isolated trees must be retained and new ones should be planted. This could be achieved as part of a community project with the involvement of local schools and amenity societies.



7:4 WATER: The leat serving Kingskerswell Mill to the north of the conservation area, forms a large millpond opposite Dobbin Arch. This is prominent on the 1890 Ordnance Survey (Appendix 3). Where it flows past the churchyard, the sight and sound of this running water is an especially attractive feature of the conservation area.

The remaining orchard trees are under threat.



The leat is a major feature which has been harmed by a phalanx of bollards.



The Manor ruins are the subject of an ongoing conservation project involving Parish, District, County and English Heritage.

7:5 MANOR RUINS: These are currently in serious decay. Some of their associated farm buildings have been conserved within the churchyard, the important courtyard mansion of the Dinham family has now been rewarded. It is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a project is in motion to conserve and interpret the area.

7:6 VIEWS: Panoramic views into the conservation area from the north and west are a positive feature of Kingskerswell, as are those out of the village to the west. The mature trees to the south make a dramatic backdrop to this part of the conservation area.

The impact of developments such as the proposed by pass and new houses must be considered, even though their sites may be quite a distance from the conservation area.



Rolling hills to the north and west present a charming backdrop to the conservation area.

8:0 NEGATIVE CHARACTER FEATURES

8:1 CARS: Certain parts of the conservation area have very narrow lanes, where car parking and traffic are a problem. A small car park is provided for the church in an attractive meadow between it and the railway. This is the main view of Kingskerswell church seen by users of the railway as well as pedestrians approaching over the railway bridge. It would benefit from enhancement through judicious planting and possibly the use of a less strident surfacing material.

The Community Travel Plan needs to address the 'rat-run' problem without recourse to more invasive physical measures.

8:2 REPLACEMENT WINDOWS, DOORS etc: There are some dismal examples of modern windows and doors which do not even attempt to imitate those they replaced. The same applies to roofing materials, rainwater goods and other features vulnerable to insensitive alteration. Guidance will be made available to encourage a conservative approach to maintenance and repair. The possibility of Article 4(2)* directions and/or grant aid, to influence some of these changes will need to be considered.

8:3 BOLLARDS The seemingly gratuitous installation of unsightly bollards along the side of the leat is regrettable. There seems to have been little consultation and the actual bollards are cheap and unattractive. They detract from the setting of the church and ought to be removed.



Rose Hill

APPENDIX ONE

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF BUILDINGS IN KINGSKERSWELL

BASICS

- Steeply pitched slate or thatched roofs. Corrugated iron may also be considered traditional for sheds, stables, etc., depending on location and design.
- Clay tile ridges and mitred hips on slate roofs.
- Rendered walls in stone and/or cob, limewashed and often angled from base to eaves. Some buildings have exposed rubble limestone
- Heavy limestone chimneys, often rendered with slate or limestone drips and tapered tops.
- Small windows set in deep reveals with a dominance of solid over void.
- Traditional side-hung casements and vertical sliding sashes in painted timber.
- Buildings set tight up to the street frontage, or within gardens enclosed by stone walls

PALETTE OF MATERIALS

ROOFING: Natural slate, thatch in some locations and plain (or black/dark green painted) corrugated iron on outbuildings.

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

WALLS: Render, often roughcast, but sometimes smooth (normally lime mortar on old stone/cob buildings) and natural stone, either of which may be limewashed. Yellow brick with a smooth surface, was occasionally used for chimneys in the past. Natural or black/grey stained timber weatherboarding may have limited uses.

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

ENCLOSURE: Mostly limestone rubble walls, with Devon banks and/or hedgerows in more rural locations. Hazel hurdles can provide a quick solution for temporary or short-term enclosure.

SURFACING: Angular or waterworn limestone cobbles, dolerite or granite setts, hoggins or blacktop (if used judiciously). Rustic concrete setts may be acceptable in non-prominent locations.

MATERIALS TO BE AVOIDED

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

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

WALLS: Brick, reconstituted stone and textured renders (apart from roughcast). Stained timber or plastic weatherboarding.

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

ENCLOSURE: Brick or block walls, even if rendered are not acceptable. Larch-lap or close-boarded fencing and evergreen hedges, especially conifers.

SURFACING: Large areas of blacktop, concrete or chippings should be avoided. Brick pavements have no place in a conservation area with the character of Kingskerswell.



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 characters 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.

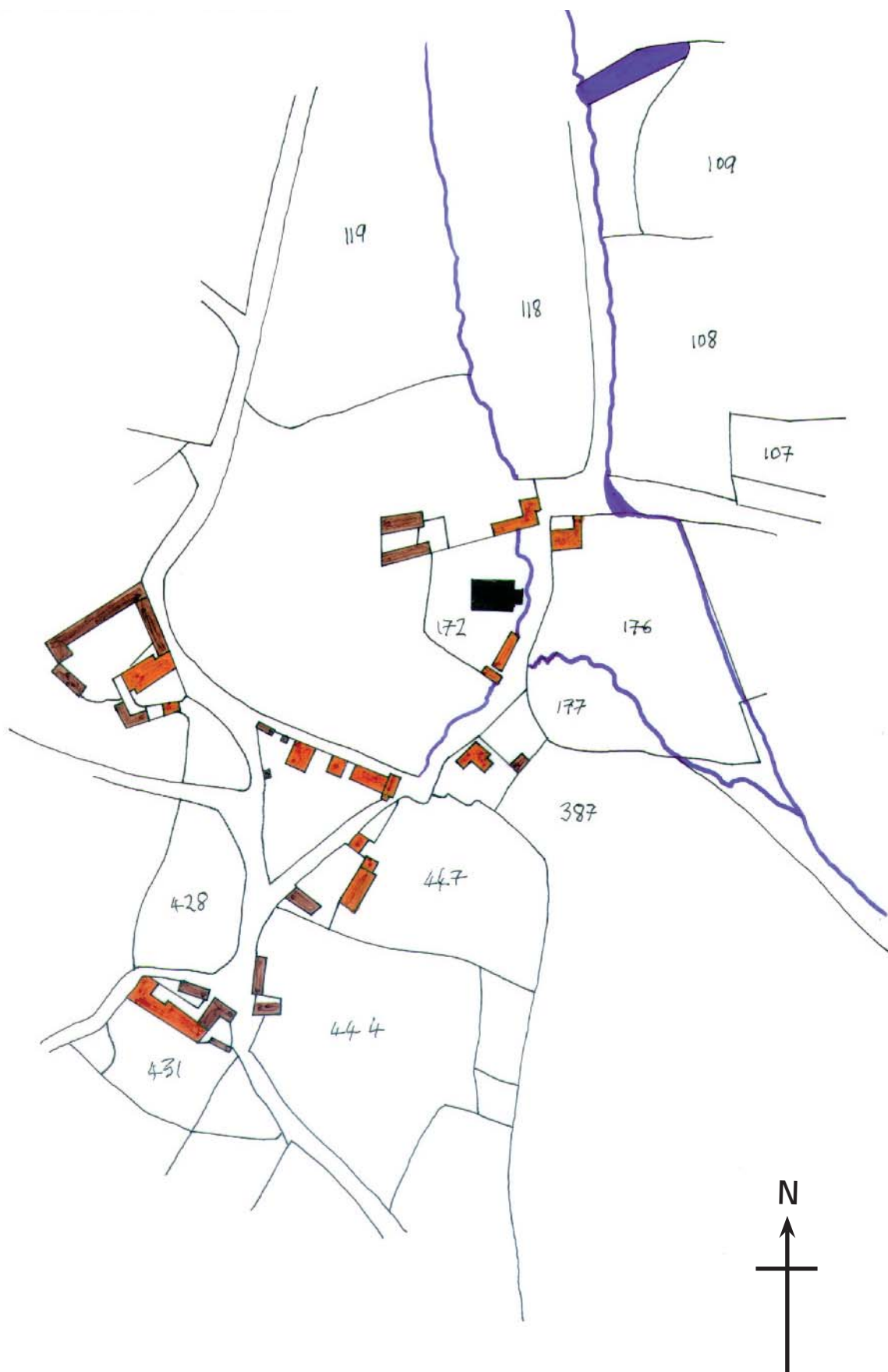
Planning applications for alteration, extension or replacement of buildings in this category will be expected to offer a significant enhancement of the conservation area. Where a building is clearly detrimental due to design, scale or location, its replacement will be encouraged. The use of planting,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

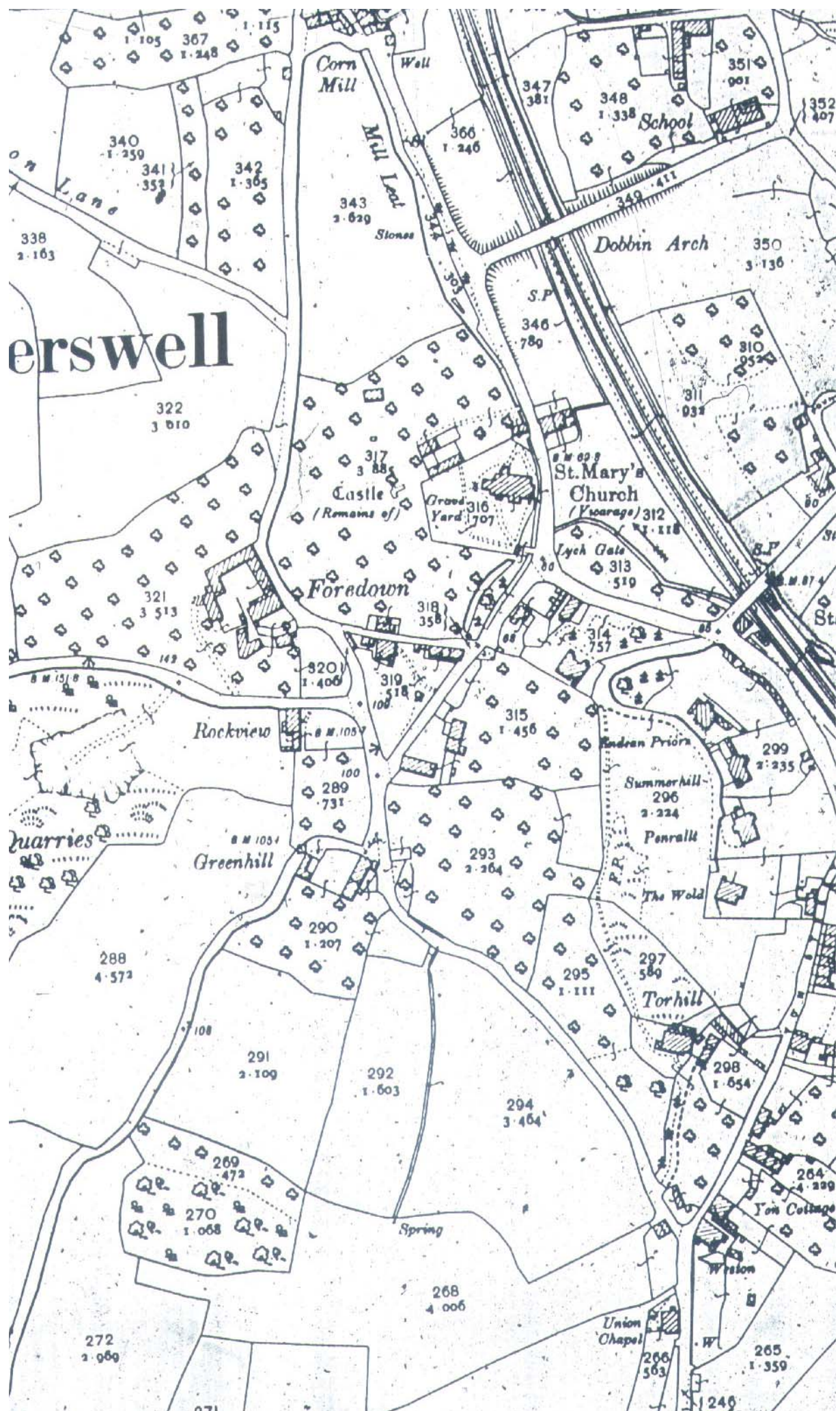
- **Proposals to enhance the conservation area by either re-modelling buildings, or re-developing sites in this category will be welcomed. Re-development will be expected to demonstrate a very high standard of contextual design and a thorough understanding of prevailing character.**



- Category 1: Outstanding
- Category 2: Positive
- Category 3: Neutral/Negative







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

Ref. No.	Grade	Date of Listing	Item
84864	II*	1955	Church of St Mary
84867	II	1987	Chaff headstone circa 4m south west of the Church of St Mary
84868	II	1987	Wills headstone circa 5m south of the Church of St Mary
84869	II	1987	Drew headstone circa 8m south of the Church of St Mary
84870	II	1987	How headstone circa 9m north west of north porch of Church
84871	II	1955	Ruins of Manor house circa 40m west-north-west of church of St Mary
84872	II	1977	Tudor Cottage and Gospel Hall
84873	II	1977	Pitt House Restaurant
84881	II	1987	Foredown Farmhouse
84884	II	1977	Rock House, Maddacombe Road

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 matrix.

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.

Perpendicular: Architectural style of the later medieval period, characterised by strong vertical forms.

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

