



Holcombe Burnell

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

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 be viewed via the My Neighbourhood feature on www.teignbridge.gov.uk.

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

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1:0 INTRODUCTION

The Conservation Area Character Statement for Holcombe Burnell 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. The document was discussed at a meeting in the village.

The feedback from the public and other interested bodies has been fully considered and a number of amendments have been made as a result.

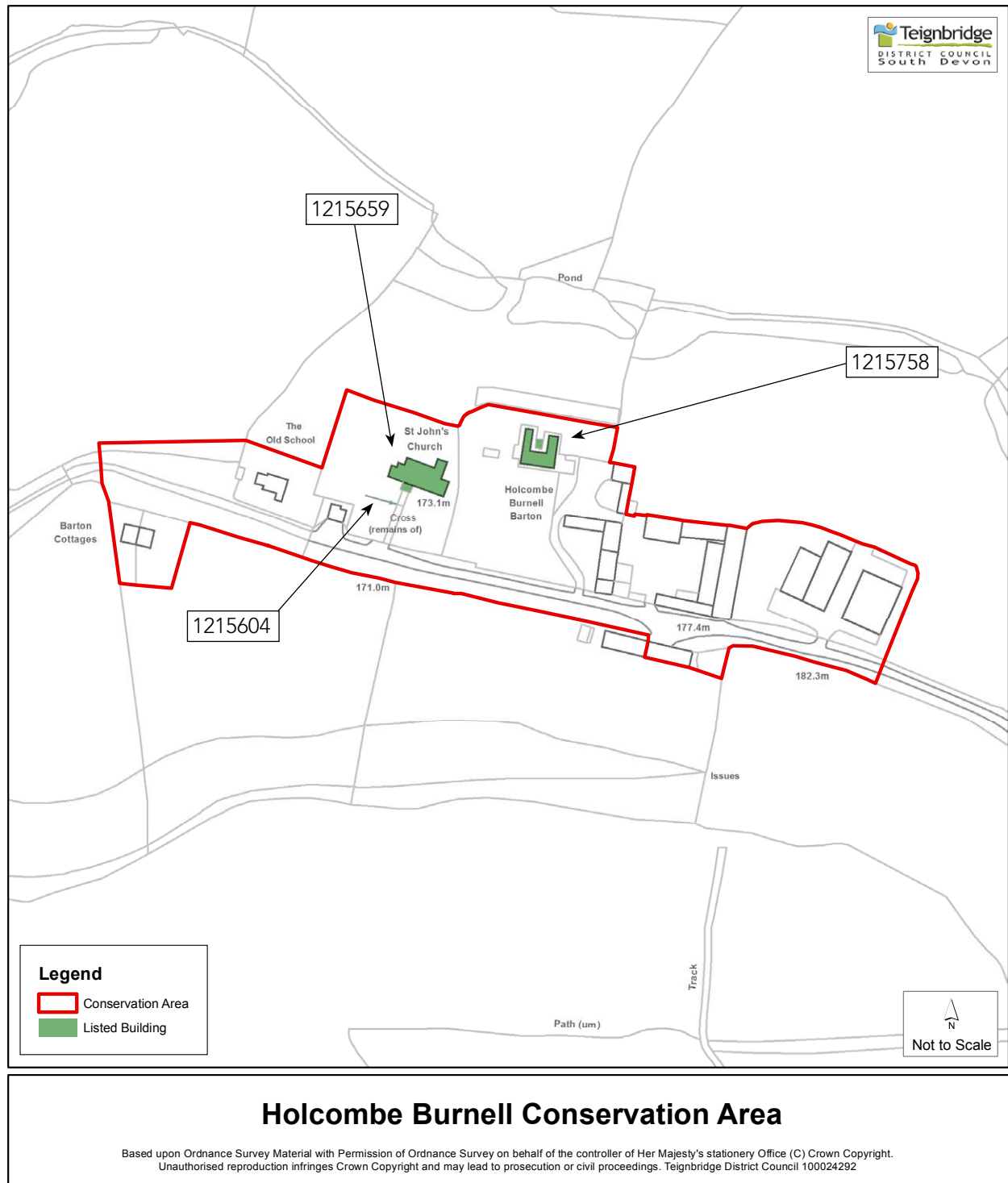
This completed Character Appraisal was adopted in May 2004 via the Development Plan Steering Group as a document to support current and future development plans. Consequently its contents are now a material consideration for any planning application which affects the conservation area or its setting. It will be distributed to the utility companies, Devon County Council and other interested parties such as Historic England. 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. 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. The revised Appraisal was approved on 4th January 2010.

A review was carried out on the Character Appraisal and Conservation Area in November 2017. The revised Conservation Area Appraisal was confirmed by Portfolio holder decision on 10th August 2018.

2:0 FACTS AND FIGURES

Date of designation: 22 July 1996
Number of listed buildings: Grade I = 0, Grade II* = 2, Grade II = 1.
Size of conservation area: 1.69 hectares



The green coloured areas of this map represent listed buildings that lie within the Holcombe Burnell Conservation Area. A summary of these listings may be found in Appendix Four.

3.0 LOCATION & GEOLOGY

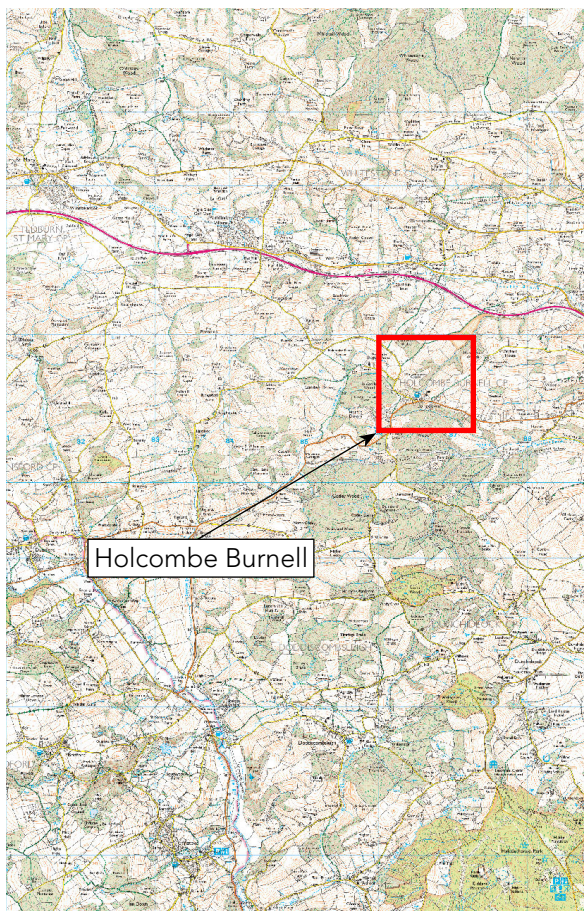
Holcombe Burnell occupies a narrow spur on the west side of high ground at the northern end of the Haldon ridge. It is an unusually exposed site which offers no protection from prevailing winds and storm fronts. The site is dramatic, prominent and offers a fabulous panoramic view of surrounding farmland and the moors.

Small streams to north and south converge just east of the hamlet and flow down towards the River Teign, 5km to the south-west.

Holcombe Burnell has changed little in the last 150 years. The tithe map of 1841 and the first edition OS map of 1905 show more or less the same buildings as we see now. The intensively pastoral agriculture, closely linked with extensive deciduous woodland, is still an important feature of the hamlet and its surroundings.

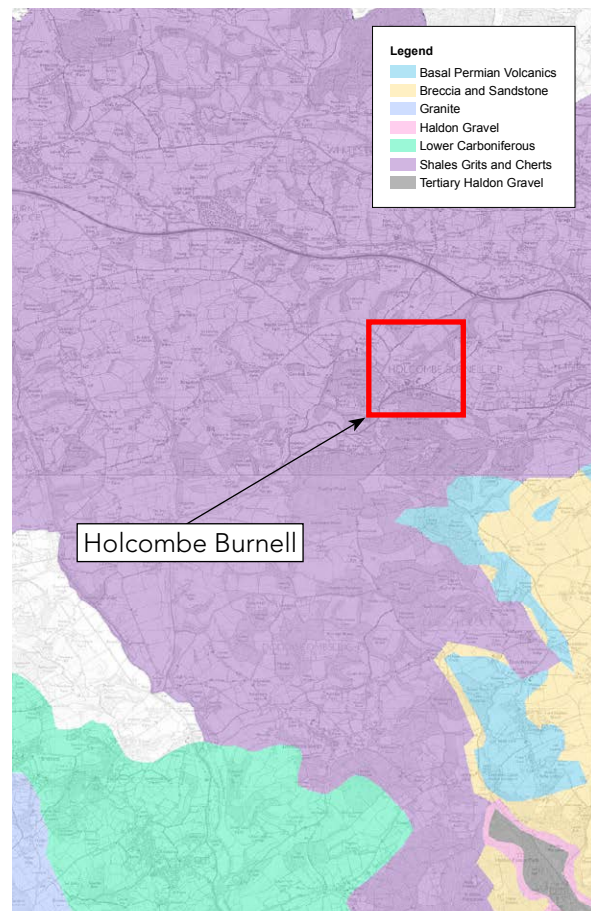
The Carboniferous shales of the Culm Measures form the underlying geology. Their soft, easily eroded nature explains the deeply cut valleys in the vicinity. Their unsuitability for building has resulted in cob being a common building material, used extensively for the farm buildings at the east end of the hamlet. The more important buildings are constructed of brown basalt and purple trachybasalt, which outcrop in the vicinity of Ide and Dunchideock.

Location



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Geology



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4:0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

The development and form of the village is very simple, consisting of the manor house, 'home' farm, and church with the school and a pair of cottages added later. These are served by a single straight lane which peters out into an agricultural track at the end of the village.

It is uncertain why a settlement was ever founded here, although there was a medieval tradition of putting isolated chapels on hilltops. One possibility is that it is on a prehistoric hilltop site, although there is no evidence for this. A strange curved boundary on the hilltop to the north is puzzling, and could have been a medieval deer park pale, but its origins remain obscure.

The parish is recorded in the Domesday Book as belonging to Matilda, William the Conqueror's wife. On her death it passed to Tetbald Fitzberner, from whom the hamlet is named, Burnell being a corruption of Berner. A chapel dedicated to St Nicholas was recorded as being here in 1150. In the late 15th century, the manor was acquired by the Dennis family, who largely reconstructed the church and the manor house. They sold the manor in 1604 to the Godolphin family of Cornwall, who carried out further alterations to the house and probably laid out the terraced formal gardens to the front and rear, remains of which still survive.

The house appears to have had an outer courtyard, flanked on its east side by a threshing barn, with a chapel and other buildings on its west. These were demolished in the 18th century. Former fishponds in the valley to the north are now abandoned, but may be of mediaeval date. One was re-used as a water feature at the bottom of the formal garden.

- The historic plan, limited settlement and prominent location of Holcombe Burnell are intrinsic parts of the hamlet's charm. Development should not be permitted that would be harmful to the settlement.
- Much of Holcombe Burnell may have considerable archaeological remains relating to its origins and development. In view of the unusually high level of survival of archaeological remains and the important 17th century garden earthworks, an Area of Archaeological Potential marked in pink (shown on page 8), has been created to take account of these. Any planning applications involving ground disturbance within this area must be informed by an archaeological assessment and approvals must incorporate archaeological conditions.



Holcombe Burnell is an ancient hilltop settlement characterised by its small size. The dominance of the agricultural landscape within which it is located is a special feature.

Area of Archaeological Potential



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5:0 ARCHITECTURE

The best buildings are the 15th century church, heavily remodelled in 1843 and the early 17th century manor house. The latter is a particularly attractive example of its type, with its impressive stone mullion windows and leaded lights.

The courtyard barns east of the church are well-preserved, with unusual buttresses of brick and re-used Beer stone on the south side. The school is plain but attractive and notable for its small size, which seems about right for Holcombe Burnell.

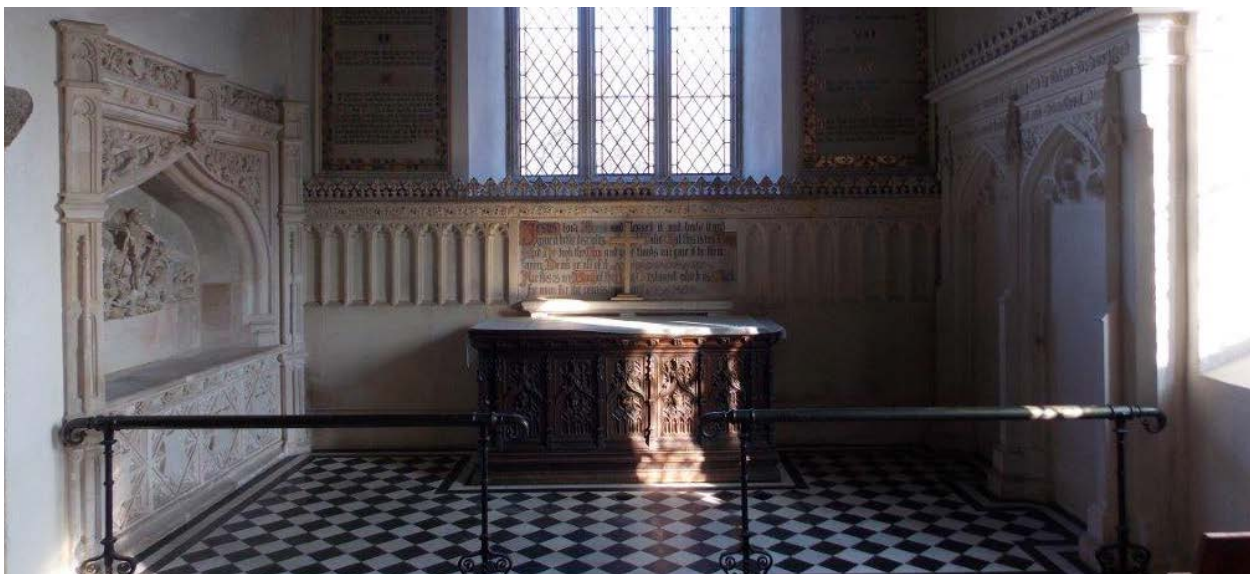
- Any building which is allowed within, or affecting the setting of, the conservation area (including garages and other service buildings), must be of a demonstrably high design standard incorporating quality materials. Applicants must show how their proposal will contribute positively to the character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



The listed cross shaft and church



Holcombe Burnell Barton



The Church of St James: the altar is said to be an adapted Elizabethan chest from Culver House and the tomb is an Easter Sepulchre tomb to the Dennis family

6.0 BUILDING MATERIALS

The underlying geology has had a minimal effect on the buildings of Holcombe Burnell. Cob is commonly used on the older farm buildings, but the poor quality slate has meant that the church and manor house are built of imported volcanic rocks and breccia from neighbouring parishes. Basalt is used for external dressings, especially on the manor house, as well as for cobbling. Several windows here and in the church are carved from Beer stone, imported from east Devon.

Although thatch was probably used as a roof covering in the past, Welsh slate is most common in Holcombe Burnell. This is likely to have been introduced in the later 19th century. Given the status of the manor house, it is quite possible that slates from south Devon were imported in previous centuries.

Timber windows and doors of various ages are found within the village. The use of modern materials or finishes will strike a discordant note and must be avoided.

For the most part Devon banks and mixed deciduous hedgerows form enclosure. This gives the impression that the countryside is essentially uninterrupted by the settlement and reinforces its dominant character over any evidence of urbanity. Where stone walls are found, as around the churchyard, they are constructed of local stone laid in lime mortar with a coarse aggregate.

The brick wall in front of the manor house is a very unusual example of 18th century (or possibly earlier) brickwork in such a rural setting. It was undoubtedly a sign of the status of the house and its occupants.

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



Irregular cobbled paving



A variety of stone is used in the walls of Holcombe Burnell



The historic brick wall is very unusual in a small rural village

7.0 POSITIVE CHARACTER FEATURES

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

7:1 Surfacing: Some surviving remnants of historic surfacing illustrate the type of treatments which were used in times past. The cobbling along the roadside fronting the church and Holcombe Burnell Barton incorporates basalt, dolerite and Haldon flint pebbles. Laid in earth and tightly packed they produce a hardwearing surface full of character and locally distinctive. Other parts of the hamlet are likely have been treated in a similar way in the past and it is possible that more of this cobbling survives beneath currently grassed areas beside the road.

7:2 Trees: Specimen trees add considerably to focal points within the village, notably the churchyard and manor house. At a distance the mature trees help to identify these sites of cultural importance and close up they offer shade, shelter and ambience. Hedgerows provide visual and ecological value within the settlement. Where they are becoming overgrown, active management is needed if their character value is to be preserved. While no woodland areas are within the conservation area, in the valley to the south is Holcombe Wood, a large area of ancient managed broadleaf woodland. Further down the valley to the west, other areas of woodland survive, making views in this direction very attractive.

7:3 Farm: The presence of a working farm in the village, albeit outside the conservation area is an important character feature whose loss would be



Trees add greatly to the character of the area



View of the conservation area from the north



View from the east

a detrimental severance with the past. Any conversion of older farm buildings must preserve their essential character and that of the spaces around them.

7:4 Orchards: The old maps show the extent of orchards in the past. Their relevance to the cultural history of the village cannot be overstated. The 1888 Ordnance Survey (Appendix three) in particular shows an orchard, now gone, in the valley south of the church.

7:5 Views: The panoramic views into and out of the conservation area to the north, south and west are a positive and important feature. The impact of developments such as farm buildings must be considered, even though their sites may be quite a distance from the settlement itself.

7:6 Water: The streams flowing in the little valleys to either side of the conservation area are important landscape features, visible from the settlement.

7:7 Fishponds: The medieval or later fishponds in the valley to the north and north-east of the conservation area support wetland habitats in addition to their archaeological importance.

7:8 Historic Garden: The early 17th century garden earthworks at Holcombe Burnell Barton are an unusual survival, but need looking after. Perhaps local historical societies could carry out research into them, with a survey carried out by the Devon Gardens Trust and/or the Devon Archaeological Society.

8.0 NEGATIVE CHARACTER FEATURES

8:1 Farm Buildings: The scale of the modern farm buildings east of Holcombe Burnell Barton is rather alien to the context of the conservation area. Their value in terms of social character is acknowledged (see 7:3 above), but a deciduous copse could be planted around them to minimise their impact.

8:2 Overhead Cables: The electricity cables behind the Manor House detract from a number of views into and out of the conservation area.

9.0 PROPOSALS FOR THE PRESERVATION & ENHANCEMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

The Conservation Area is small and rural in character and there are no obvious proposals to enhance the area.



View to the West with fine brick wall to Holcombe Burnell Barton

APPENDIX ONE CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF BUILDINGS IN DUNCHIDEOCK

Basics

- Steeply pitched slate roofs with gables or mitred hips and wooden bargeboards.
- Limewashed or bare walls in stone and cob, angled from base to eaves on older buildings
- Stone and brick chimneys with stone drips.
- Windows often set in deep reveals with a dominance of solid over void.
- Traditional side-hung casements with a vertical emphasis.



Holcombe Burnell Barton

Palette of Materials

Roofing: Welsh slate, with black or dark green painted corrugated iron on outbuildings.

Rainwater Goods: Half round or ogee gutters in cast iron.

Walls: Render (often roughcast, sometimes smooth), some brick and natural stone, either of which may be limewashed. Natural or black/grey stained timber weatherboarding may have limited uses on agricultural buildings.

Windows And Doors: Painted softwood. Natural timber may be suitable for doors and maybe windows in some instances, but only if it is oak. Stone mullion windows are a feature of church and manor house.

Enclosure: Devon banks and/or hedgerows, local slate rubble walls with trap quoins. Hazel hurdles can provide quick solution for temporary or short-term enclosure.

Surfacing: Waterworn cobbles of Haldon flint/chert, dolerite setts, hoggin, blacktop (if used judiciously).



The materials used on the Barton and its outbuildings summarise the palette of materials for Holcombe Burnell

Materials to be Avoided

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

Rainwater Goods: Plastic, in particular box profile guttering in grey, white or brown.

Walls: Re-constituted 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. While handmade brick has been used to front the garden of Holcombe Burnell Barton, this is of such an unusually early date that it should remain unique in the village. 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 have no place in a conservation area with the character of Holcombe Burnell.

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 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.

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.



Easter Sepulchre tomb to the Dennis family

- 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.

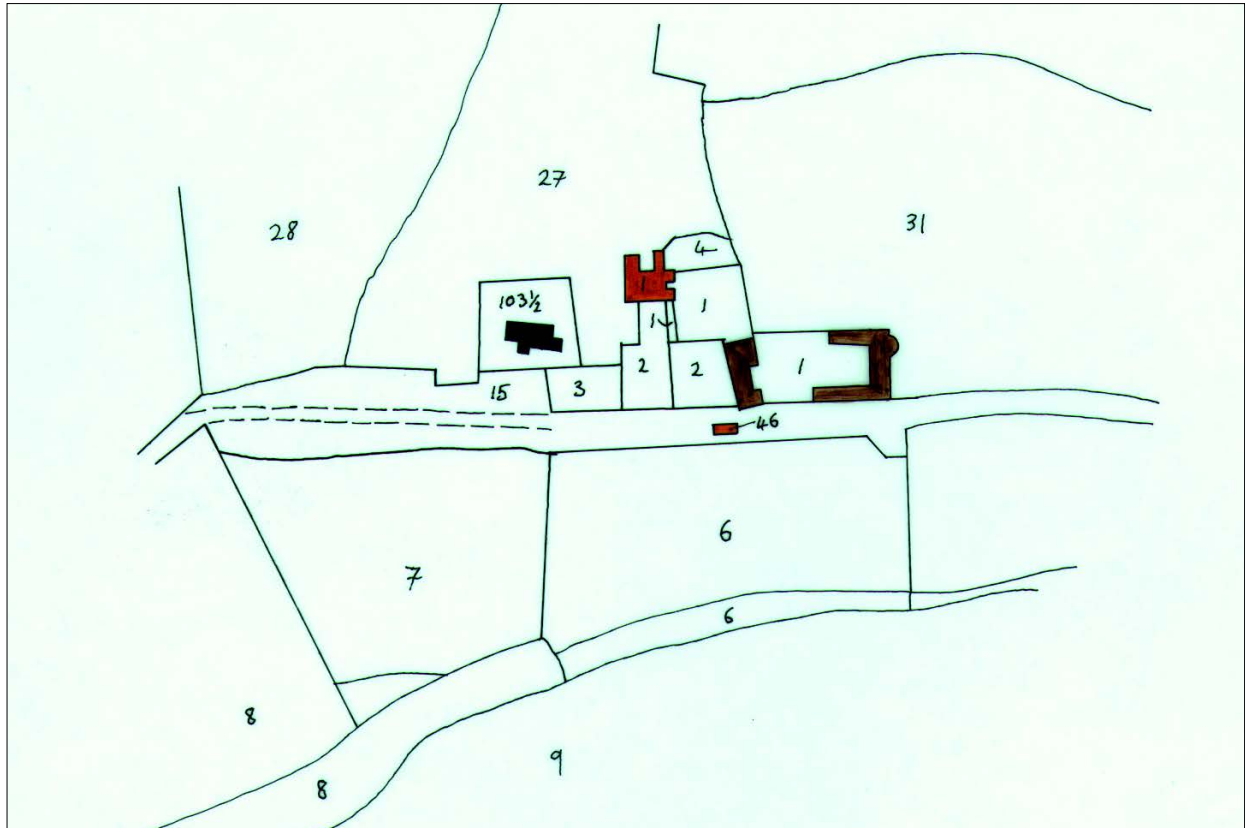


Holcombe Burnell Character Survey Map

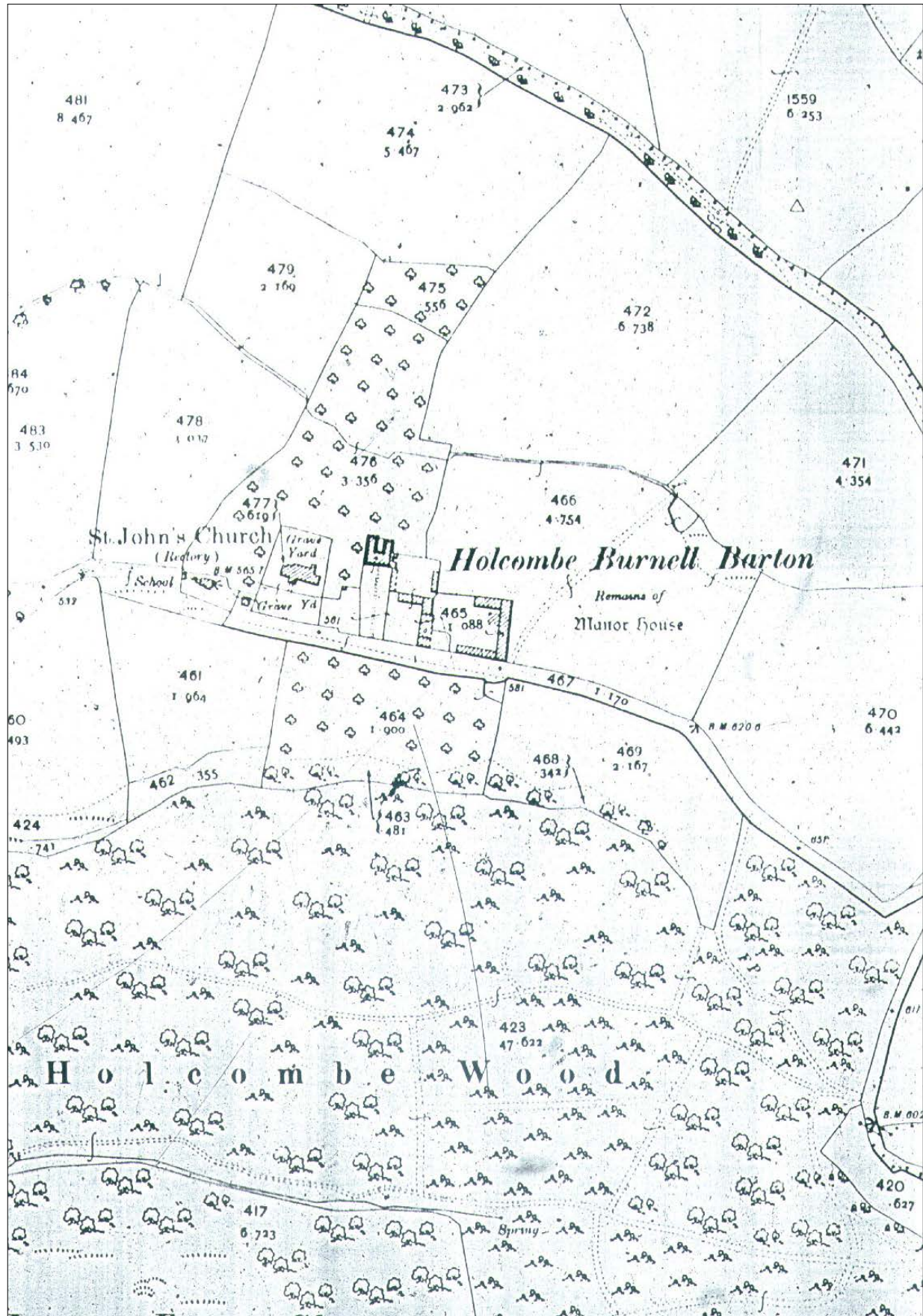
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APPENDIX THREE HISTORICAL MAPS

1841 Tithe Map



Title for map?



APPENDIX FOUR LISTED BUILDINGS

Listed Building Reference No.	Grade	Date of Listing	Item
1215659	II*	1986	Church of St John the Baptist
1215604	II	1986	2 walls and cross shaft 9m south of the Church
1215758	II*	1952	Holcombe Burnell Barton

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Basalt:	Extrusive igneous rock deposited as lava flows. Usually brown in Teignbridge.
Beer stone:	Creamy limestone from quarries at Beer in East Devon. Much used in medieval times.
Breccia:	A red stone with fragments of limestone and other rocks of a varied size in a sandy matrix.
Carboniferous:	Geological period around 300 million years before present.
Chert:	Flint-like stone found in profusion in the Haldon area and in watercourses around the higher ground.
Cob:	Walls made of earth.
Dolerite:	Intrusive igneous rock, very hard and usually green in colour in Teignbridge.
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.
Mullion windows:	Windows subdivided by strong vertical bars, usually having a moulded profile.
Ogee:	Traditional decorative moulding profile, commonly used for guttering.
Threshing barn:	Barn where corn was threshed to remove grain.
Trachybasalt:	Extrusive igneous rock, deposited as lava. Locally purple in colour, with vesicles (air bubbles) and white calcite veins.
Vernacular:	The tradition architecture of a locality which is functional and uses locally available materials.



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