

## Axminster Interim Conservation Area Review

### Purpose of the Review

There is a requirement under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 of all local authorities to review their conservation areas and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. Reviews must be carried out every five years as the character and appearance of a conservation area can change over even small periods of time. The purpose of this interim review is to identify the principal changes since the publication of the Conservation Area Appraisal and to outline potential changes to the conservation area boundary which will form part of a full consultation exercise when the draft Management Plan is produced.

### Key recent changes in Axminster Conservation Area.

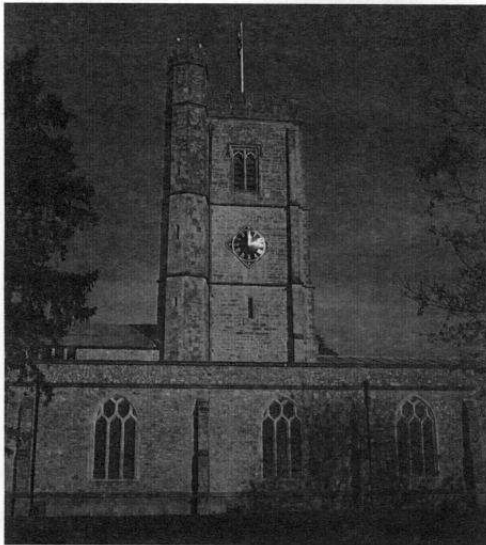
- Axminster remains a relatively unaltered market town with the most recent development being well-conceived residential units on brown field sites in the town centre. The largest and most apparent of these is the re-development of the cattle market. The western edge of the site lies in the conservation area while the majority is located outside the boundary. However the recently completed development has taken the precedent of local vernacular architecture and has utilised a variety of materials, finishes and architectural detail. The mix of rendered, blue lias stone and local chert elevations creates a rich mix and character that is clearly coherent with the character of the conservation area. The massing of the development has also taken into account the urban hierarchy of the area with a higher ridge and eaves line on the units nearest the town centre.



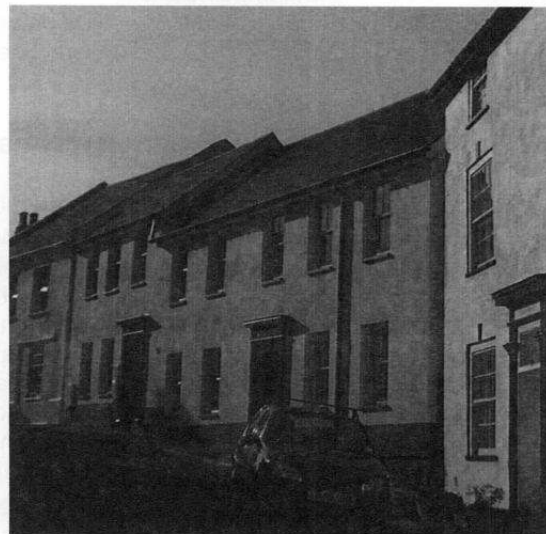
*Recent re-development of the cattle market has had a positive impact upon the conservation area and its setting.*

- Another significant recent development is a terrace of houses in Market Place. In a similar way to the cattle market site development the urban grain, massing and proportions of the terrace have made a positive response to its historic context. This site is entirely within the conservation area and is sandwiched between statutory listed and locally listed buildings. While it perhaps lacks the degree of variety of the cattle market development there has been some careful attention to detail.
- Following fund raising in the town the Minster has recently undergone an extensive scheme of re-pointing of the tower in lime mortar. Although this was rather stark and bright when completed it has already begun to weather down. The use of correct materials will greatly benefit the historic fabric of this 12th and 13th century origin church.
- Some inroads into improving the character and appearance of South Street have been made over recent years including the restoration of Rose Cottage with the reinstatement of

- iron railings on the road frontage.
- It is worth noting that on sites adjoining the conservation area boundary there has been some significant development which to varying degrees has had an impact upon the character and appearance of the historic town centre. Most notably is a retirement apartment development next to The Guildhall and a new Tesco supermarket behind West Street. While such development attracts mixed reaction it is quite apparent that Axminster has seen significant investment over the last ten years which will hopefully encourage and enable property owners and businesses in the conservation area to maintain and improve their buildings.



*Newly re-pointed tower of St Mary's Church.*



*Recent residential development in Market Square.*

### **Potential review of conservation area boundary.**

The existing conservation area boundary covers the majority of the historic core of the settlement. Development outside the boundary is on the whole either modern or much altered Victorian development and does not meet the criteria for inclusion in the conservation area. However there are areas such as the river crossing at Stoney Bridge where there is likely to be archaeological potential and historic significance. These aspects of conservation area review will be fully considered during the consultation process.

### **Principle reasons for erosion or changes to conservation area character.**

- The appraisal of the conservation area highlights the lack of maintenance of several buildings with vacant commercial units and flats above. This has been addressed to an extent over the last ten years and Axminster remains a town of some very fine historic shops and independent businesses with a clear lack of the principal chain stores. This can add character to the town but businesses such as these can be vulnerable in times of economic difficulty. There are still a number of shopfronts that have no visual cohesion with the historic building to which they are associated. This includes over-sized fascias, large areas of glazing and garish plastic and illuminated signs.
- The area of land between Silver Street and South Street is partially occupied by burnt out

buildings following a major recent fire. While there is no historic merit in the buildings themselves the land contains the heart of the original Saxon town and there is likely to be archaeological potential.

- Axminster conservation area contains the greatest number of entries on the local list than any other conservation area in East Devon (about 90 in total). There is no statutory protection over material changes to these buildings apart from where planning permission is required. They have been identified as being of local historic and architectural significance and incremental changes to fenestration, roof claddings and extraneous additions are gradually eroding their character. The management of these buildings will be discussed in the future Management Plan for the conservation area.
- While there is no statutory control over replacement windows in many unlisted buildings the pressure to replace traditional timber windows with PVCu alternatives remains. There is greater awareness of the environmental impact of PVCu production and waste and while it is hoped that timber replacement windows are seen as the more sustainable option the marketing drives of the major PVCu window companies continue. In the light of this it is anticipated that a proposal to serve an Article 4 Direction to control replacement windows would form part of a future public consultation exercise.
- Axminster contains a wealth of stone-clad buildings, including the use of Beerstone, Hams-tone, a local version of the blue lias found in South Somerset, and chert. A combination of inappropriate cement pointing and pollution is taking its toll on these materials, some of which are quite soft and friable, and subject to spalling.

# **AXMINSTER**

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with contributions from Town and Parish Councils and Amenity Societies in East Devon

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# AXMINSTER



*Castle Street showing Mill buildings on the River Axe and largely open countryside beyond*

## 1. HISTORIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1.1 Axminster has a long history. When the Romans laid down the Fosse Way running across the country from Lincoln to the River Axe, the small town of Mondunum was built here.

1.1 The origins of the present compact market town well sited on a prominence above the Axe, results from Axminster becoming one of the earliest settlements in the Saxon occupation of Devon, in all probability, after 660. A minster or monasterium was founded here c.705 within the see of Sherborne. It is certain that a minster existed here in 755, when Cynehead the Atheling was buried at "Axanmynster" but no trace remains.

1.2 The valley of the Axe is considered to be the likely site of the Battle of Brunanburgh (937), between King Athelstan and the Athelings on one side and Anlaf the Dane, and the Picts and Scots on the other. Athelstan is said to have founded a college here in commemoration of victory, "...which fight began at Calix Down in the parish of Colyton, and extended to Colecroft below Axminster" (Cartulary of Newneham Abbey). All traces of Athelstan's college have also completely vanished.

1.3 The locality was part of the Royal estate until 1204 when King John granted it to William Brewer. From the Brewers it passed by marriage to the Mohuns and was then given to the Cistercian Abbey of Newneham, founded to the southwest of the town in 1246. Only small traces of walling now remain at the site.



*Chard Street*



*South Street at the junction with Combe Lane*

1.4 After the dissolution the Greys and then the Howards became principal landowners. Lord William Howard then sold the estate to Lord Petre in 1605. There then followed a gradual disposal of land from the estate which was completed in 1824.

1.5 A Sunday market is known to have started in the 12th century and was confirmed to William Brewer in 1204. A charter in 1209 is said to have made Axminster a free borough, and another in 1215 granted the burgesses an 8 day fair starting on the feast of St John the Baptist. It is known to have continued until 1822, but has since ceased.

1.6 In 1644 during the siege of Lyme Regis, Axminster was occupied by the Royalists, and suffered severely, being almost destroyed by fire.

1.7 In 1689 William of Orange after landing at Brixham, stayed for some days at the Dolphin, originally the home of the Yonge family.

1.8 Dr. William Buckland, the geologist, was born here in 1784, and began to collect fossils from the lias in the locality. Another famous geologist, W.D. Conybeare, was a former vicar of Axminster.

1.9 According to tradition, two annual fairs have been held on each Tuesday after April 25th and on Wednesday after October 10th; the latter known as having a good show of sheep, horses and cattle.

1.10 Carpet manufacture started in Axminster in 1755, and some sources suggest failed in about 1835 when the factory went bankrupt, the machinery being sold to a weaver at Wilton which went on to become equally famous for its carpets. The original factory building, where the carpets were made entirely by hand on looms, can still be seen near the Church. A new carpet factory was built on the edge of the town in 1937 and is still in operation.

1.11 The population has increased considerably during the past two centuries. In 1851 it was 2,769; in 1911 3,007 and in 1991 was 5180.



*Lyme Street; towards junction with South Street*

## 2. SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

### History of Designation and Extent

2.1 The present Axminster Conservation Area consists of the majority of the 19th century and earlier development which is centred on Trinity Square and St. Mary's Parish Church. This area was designated as a Conservation Area by the County Council in 1973.

2.2 An Axminster Town Centre Management Plan was jointly published by Devon County and East Devon District Council in May 1991, having regard to the completion of the A35 by-pass, and addressing traffic management and conservation issues. The latter will be referred to as part of this appraisal.

2.3 Within the existing conservation area are about 55 individually listed buildings, some in groups, giving 46 separate list entries, with an additional approximately 90 buildings included on the local list which is non-statutory. This total is larger than for any other of the East Devon conservation areas. Both types are shown on Map 1.

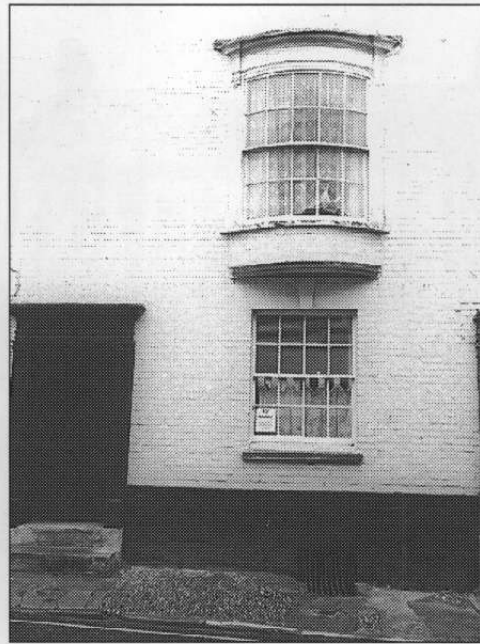
### Basic Form and Layout

2.4 The present layout appears to reflect the town's Saxon origins which would probably have been roughly oval in shape within an enclosure. No sign of this now remains apart from the alignment of several streets (e.g. Church Lane and South Street) which are closely aligned with a possible extent of enclosure<sup>1</sup>. The town was largely rebuilt in the 17th century after severe damage during the Civil war, but a period of prosperity, mainly during the 18th and early 19th century, when the carpet works and coaching trade both flourished has left many good examples of buildings of that period.

<sup>1</sup> see Fig.21 of Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit Report 91.14 published March 1991



*Church Street*



*West Street; early 18th century detail; the footway has now been repaved.*

### 3 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Axminster conservation area has a stronger and more cohesive character than many; no doubt a reflection of the town's great antiquity. Nevertheless separate areas can be identified which reflect different phases of development. These are identified on Map 1 and outlined below.

(1) Market Square/Victoria Place

3.2 One of the main commercial foci of the town with mixed frontages including hotel, shops, banks and market hall. There is an intricacy of scale enhanced by two island sites and a generally strong sense of enclosure with three-storey frontages predominating. The exception is the approach to Castle Hill along Victoria Place where views to open countryside are quite suddenly encountered and the location of the town on a small plateau above the River Axe can best be appreciated.

(2) West/Silver/Church Streets/Trinity Square

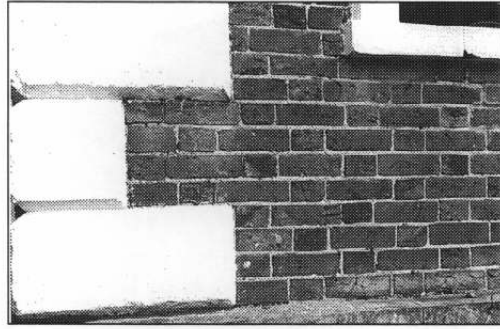
3.3 The northern part of this area fronting the Parish Church and Trinity Square continues the commercial frontages but with a different aspect; the church forming a strong focal point. Church Street and Silver Street are partly residential and free of through traffic, but contain several important buildings in stone or brick, including the original carpet factory. West Street has a short but imposing row of Georgian houses, all that remains of a larger group now partly demolished. There is a mixture of two or three-storey elevations throughout.



*Castle Hill; one of several Venetian windows in Axminster.*



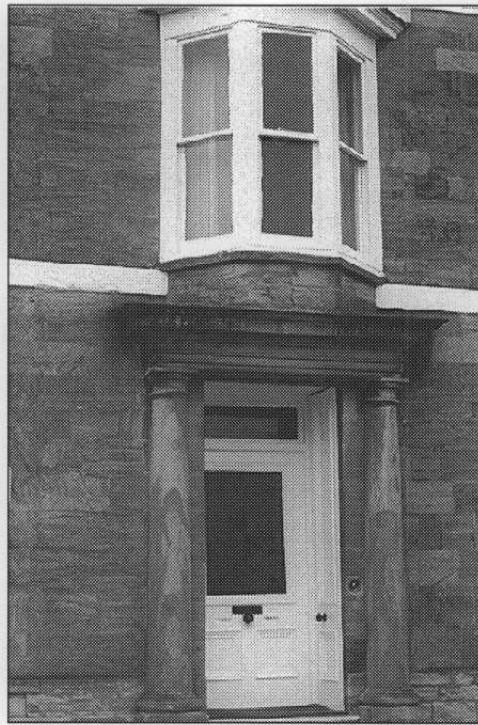
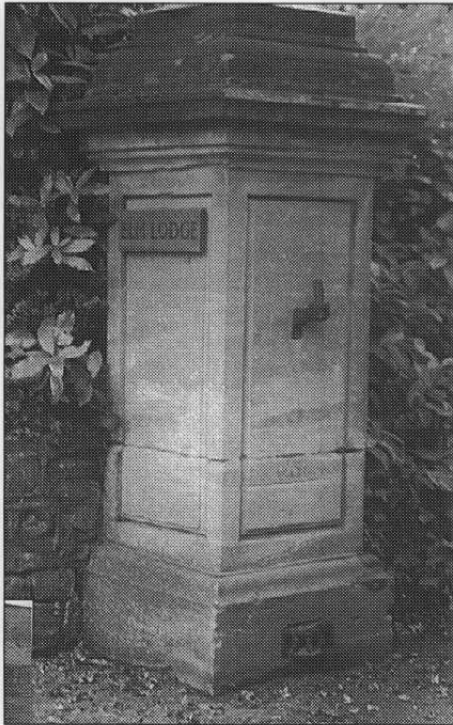
*Oak House (1758); probably the finest town house; note wood-fired headers; and probable beehive niches in garden wall (right)*



*Good buildings and vistas extend beyond the present conservation area boundary. A 1920's bungalow in Lyme Road has interesting period detail.*



*A striking house and large cedar to the rear closes the view when leaving the town via Lyme Road.*



*Lyme Road (above); Victoria Place (above right) showing use of ashlar Ham Hill stone;*

(3) **Castle Hill**

3.4 Viewed from the top where the road drops steeply this is the most dramatic townscape in Axminster, with rural views over rooftops across the Axe valley. Apart from one or two exceptions buildings are residential and somewhat plain of two- storeys only. Several former mill buildings, mainly three-storey dominate to the west, some just beyond the conservation area.

(4) **Chard Street/North Street**

3.5 The two rows of plain, much altered terraced cottages in North Street contrast with some grand and generally well-preserved Georgian houses such as Castle Hill House, North Street and Oak House, Chard Street. This was the northern edge of the town from the mid 19th century until much post 1945 housing, schools and other public buildings were built in spacious surroundings on relatively level ground further to the north and east.

(5) **Lyme Street/Lyme Road/Coombe Lane**

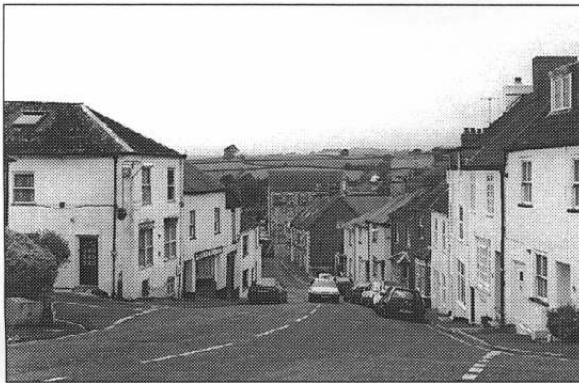
3.6 In some respects this area contains the finest entry into the town; a long but very slightly curving street on a gentle gradient gradually narrowing to a strongly urban 2-3 storey elevation with some good frontages including the spectacular Georgian corner shopfront at the junction with South Street. Coombe Lane forms a sharper curve with varied, mainly 18th/early 19th century frontages and also interesting changes of level at its junction with Lyme Road. A fine group of trees behind a continuous stone wall which marks the conservation area boundary, fronts the north side of Lyme Road.

(6) **South Street**

3.7 Forming a virtually separate entity to the main commercial part of the town but leading towards the Cattle Market just outside the conservation area. Although a relatively short street, there is a greater variety of building dates, heights and styles than any other street. There is also a prominent gap, and several buildings vacant or in poor condition



*Lyme Road; view towards town centre*



*Castle Street showing Mill buildings on the River Axe and largely open countryside beyond*

## 4 LANDSCAPE AND TREES

The Conservation Area is essentially urban, and trees for the most part are not a dominant feature. The only exceptions are:

- (i) The Churchyard
- (ii) The south and the north side of Lyme Road (the latter immediately adjoins the conservation area)
- (iii) adjoining the boundary wall, West Street car park
- (iv) adjoining Vale Lane and the former corn mill buildings off Castle Hill and close to the railway

Evergreens, mainly yew and cypress predominate at (i) and (iii), a mixture at (ii) and mainly deciduous at (iv).

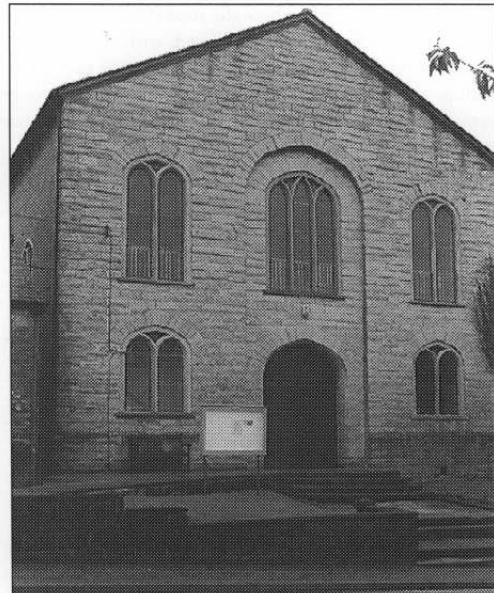
Glimpses of surrounding countryside are best seen from Castle Hill and West Street, the former constitutes an abrupt edge between historic townscape and open countryside, and as such a rare survival; the town not having expanded beyond the railway and preserving a view that has remained virtually unchanged since the 19th century. The foreground view from West Street has been much compromised by relatively recent development.

An attractive aspect from Lyme Road is provided on the approach to the town centre by glimpses of open countryside beyond the town which presents an almost completely unspoilt and modest skyline of slate roofs and brick chimney stacks.

## 5 HARD SURFACES

5.1 Axminster has a survival of traditional surfacing in several locations, notably in South Street with round cobbles and blue lias slabs. Unfortunately the latter are badly fractured in most locations. However, there has been a resurgence in blue lias quarrying near Somerton, Somerset in recent years, and it should be possible to obtain this material in a suitable form for replacement.

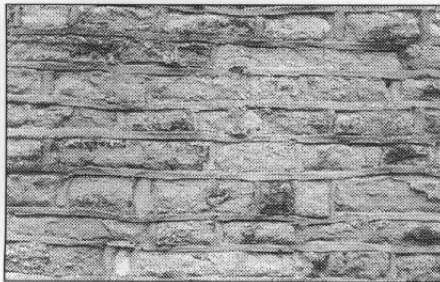
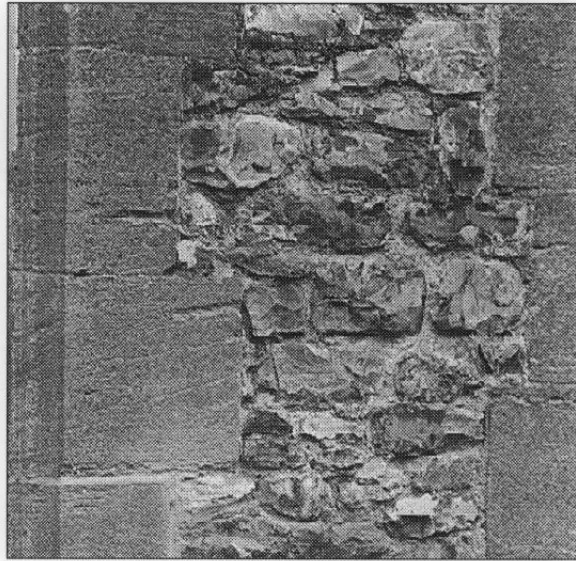
5.2 There are also a few surviving examples of tessellated surfaces to shop entrances.



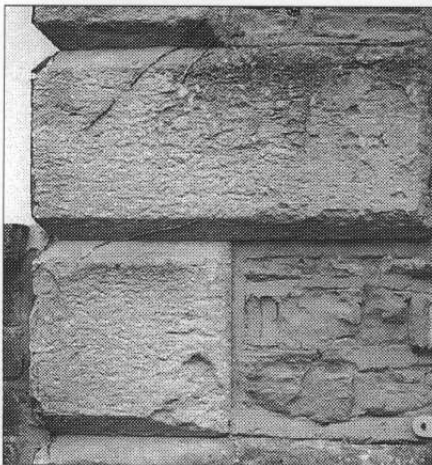
*Chapel in Chard Street built of local liassic limestone.*

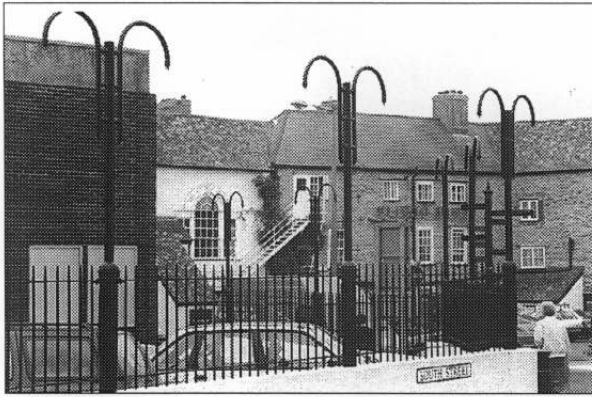


*Former town house (now offices) in Silver Street. Mellow stone or brickwork are a particular Axminster feature and this building is faced with cream mathematical tiles.*



*There is an abundance of local building materials in Axminster, not all in a good state of repair. Soft liassic limestone, difficult to repoint (above left), Beerstone dressings beginning to spall (below left) Ham Hill stone dressings and chert rubblestone infill (below right).*





*Junction of South Street and Lyme Street*

## 6 BUILDING MATERIALS AND ORNAMENT

6.1 Axminster is very rich in natural building stone, with the extensive use of at least two types not usually encountered elsewhere in East Devon. Most significant is a local form of liassic limestone, similar to the blue lias encountered widely in South Somerset, but of a more brownish colour and of greater bed thickness (up to 20cm).

6.2 Less widely used here than in some surrounding villages is chert. In the example shown on page 9 the stone has been roughly squared and is combined with another stone variety quite widely used in Axminster, which is Hamstone found only in the vicinity of Ham Hill in Somerset where there was a very flourishing quarrying industry in the 19th century, although there is evidence that use of this stone dates back to Roman times. In Axminster several good examples of its use in ashlar may be seen.

6.3 Some good examples of the use of Beer stone for dressings may be seen, as shown in the illustration of rusticated quoins at Castle Hill House.

6.4 Brick has also been commonly used with red and pale brown varieties, the latter combining effectively with local stone. Mathematical tiles are to be found at the Law Chambers and Castle Hill House. At Penny's Terrace as well as stone with brick dressings are examples of well preserved doorways and horizontally-sliding sash windows. Since this example lies outside the conservation area, it emphasises the need for encouraging good conservation practice wherever the need arises. The very attractive brickwork at Oak House with dark grey headers forming a pattern with red stretchers arises from ash glazing of the headers when in a wood fired kiln which was the normal method of firing prior to the 19th century.

6.5 A further feature of Axminster is the extensive use of stucco and painted render or brickwork, particularly in shopping streets within the town centre where its use in combination with shopfronts to the ground floor and double-hung sash windows with glazing bars to upper floors is almost universal and a feature to be cherished. There are several buildings where poor maintenance of wall surfaces and windows are creating a shabby appearance even though a fair proportion of original materials and detail has survived.

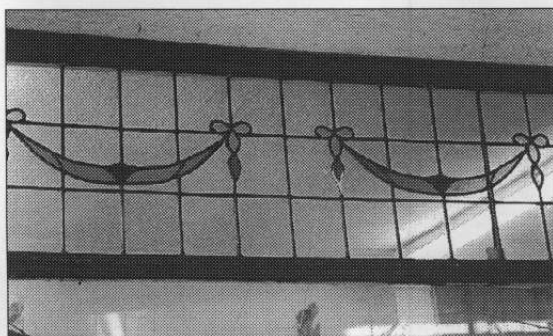
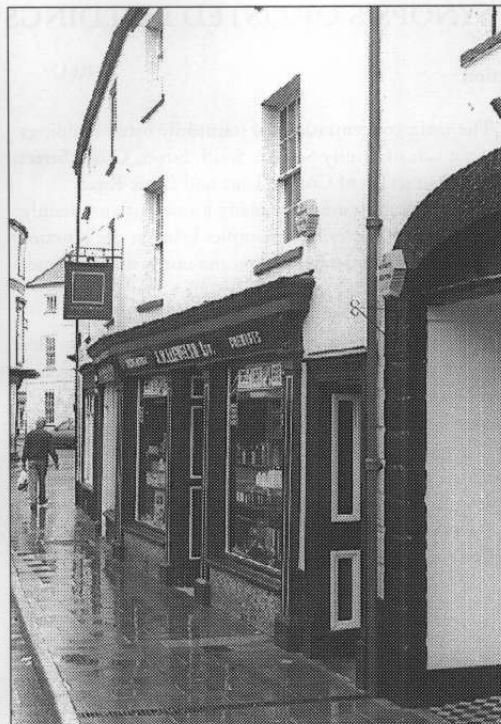
6.6 The predominant roofing material in the conservation area, particularly the town centre, is Welsh slate, although bitumenising and replacement with artificial substitutes is quite widespread. There is a surprisingly high incidence of corrugated iron roofs even on quite sophisticated buildings, presumably replacing thatch. Tiles, particularly the Bridgwater derivatives of pantiles and double Roman are quite widespread (e.g. Castle Hill). Most chimney stacks are of brick, plain or rendered.

6.7 Freestanding boundary walls and retaining walls are not a particularly widespread feature in comparison with some other east Devon towns, for example Honiton and Ottery St Mary. However, where they do survive however they are noteworthy additions to the townscape, for example; the 3-4 metre wall, mostly of chert, forming the northeast boundary to the West Street car park; a long section of limestone wall (1-2 metres high) on the north side of Lyme Road; and an attractive roughly coursed random rubble limestone wall in Vale Lane.

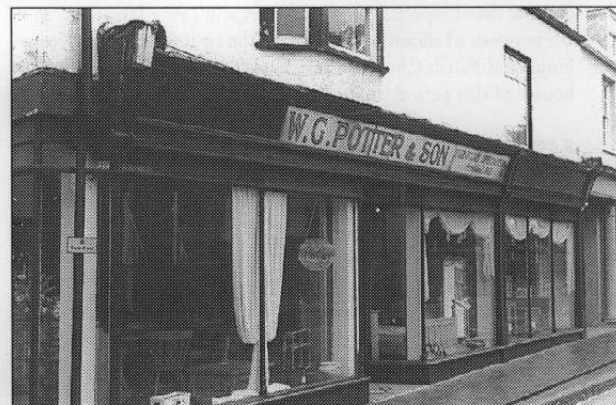
## 7 STREET FURNITURE AND SPECIAL FEATURES

Axminster has a good distribution of ornamental features which fall into the following categories;

- major features (e.g the stone fountain in Trinity Square)
- porches with pilasters or freestanding columns supporting a hood, fanlights, steps and handrails to front entrances
- ornamental cast or wrought ironwork to railings, balconies and parapets
- crested ridge tiles, ornate terracotta finials and chimney pots
- traditional shopfronts, including several 18th century bow fronted examples and 19th century examples with decorative cornices, carved brackets and traditional lettering
- decorative bargeboards
- four and six panelled doors
- round and gothic arched windows with ornamental glazing bars including margin lights and in 19th and early 20th century examples, colour patterned glass
- fine examples of Venetian windows at The George Hotel, George Street; Castle House, North Street and Oak House, Chard Street
- stone dressings to door and window surrounds, sills, parapets, quoins



*Early 20th century shopfront, Victoria Place*



*Several good examples of traditional frontage detail in the town centre, largely preserved. Some frontages would benefit from repair or restoration (centre and bottom right)*

## 8 SYNOPSIS OF LISTED BUILDINGS

### Distribution

8.1 The main concentrations of statutorily listed buildings are on the east side of Trinity Square, South Street, Chard Street and around the junction of Combe Lane and Lyme Road. Buildings on the local list are particularly numerous and mainly comprise terraced groups, typical examples being at the junction of Castle Hill and North Street, and on the north side of Lyme Street.

8.2 Most of the conservation area is characterised by a close knit pattern of development in terrace form, sometimes forming straight, sometimes curving frontages. Here both statutory and non-statutory listed buildings for the most part form significant groups. Several statutorily listed buildings and most buildings on the local list are therefore included mainly for their group value to the townscape. The result is that the visual integrity of the group as a whole is likely to be the over-riding consideration when assessing development proposals that will affect the frontage.

### Summary of Townscape Quality and Important Buildings

8.3 Axminster, although devastated in the Civil War, had over 200 rebuilt houses by 1669. A considerable number of 18th and 19th century town houses of quality survive in largely original detail especially in West Street and Lyme Street and in the network of minor streets around the twin foci of the George Hotel and Parish Church. There also are a scattering of outlying houses of this period, some well beyond the conservation area.

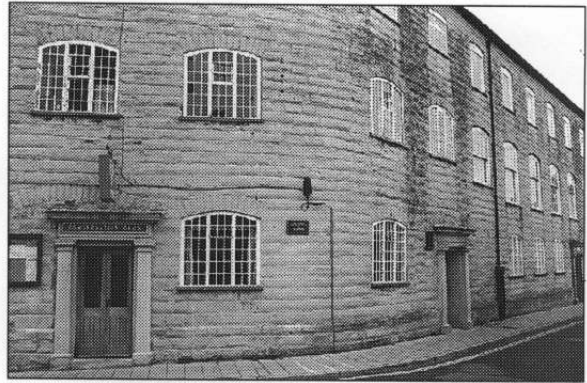
8.4 The Parish Church of St.Mary has "a tall strong tower over the crossing, a Dorset rather than a Devon feature"<sup>2</sup>. Much of the fabric is of 12th to 13th century origin. A Norman doorway formerly a south doorway has been reset in the east wall of the south chapel. The piers of the crossing tower and the west parts of the chancel are 13th century; the chancel windows are 14th century. A chancel aisle was added by the Yonge family c.1480 and the north aisle c.1530. the south aisle, clerestory windows are early 19th century additions and the north aisle roof is a facsimile of the medieval one dates from 1903. The pulpit and reading desk of 1633 and a fine chandelier c.1750 are also worthy of note

8.5 The United Reformed Church was built by the Independents in the late 1820's having a three bay ashlar front. The Sunday School is on the site of a 1698 chapel.

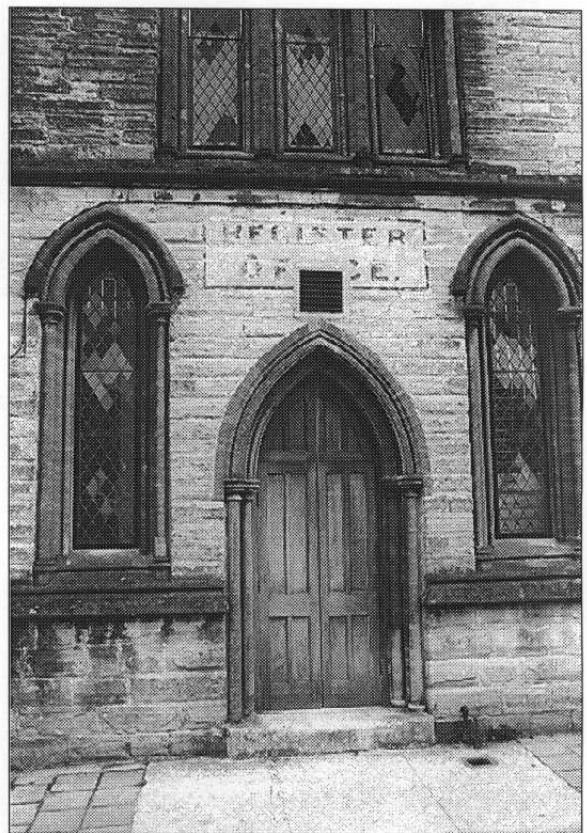
8.6 The former Axminster Carpet Factory, Silver Street (established in 1755 by Thomas Whitty) is a group of three storey buildings dating from after a fire of 1827. Built of large dressed limestone blocks, there are wide segmental windows with original small panes on the lower floors. Three doors have large entablatures and Tuscan pilasters.

8.7 The Law Chambers, Silver Street is Whitty's House, cream mathematical tiles, with two-storey bow windows and a porticoed central door. To the west is the former Register Office in bold Victorian Gothic with a traceried fanlight.

<sup>2</sup> *The Buildings of England - Devon - by Bridget Cherry and Nikolau Pevner p142*



Silver Street; former Carpet Factory



Silver Street; former Register Office

8.8 The George Hotel has a plain 18th century three-storey painted brick front. Over a carriage arch is a later 18th century assembly room with Venetian windows either end and an especially attractive interior including an Adam style ceiling.

8.9 In West Street and Chard Street are many more worthwhile buildings among which are:

Victoria Terrace c.1840 on a slight curve with the remains of a once continuous balcony.

Near the junction of Castle Street, a **late 18th century shopfront** with Doric columns and a doorway with incised pilasters, and in Chard Street an **early 19th century shopfront** with a fine pair of bow windows. Nearby is a broader house with shallow curved bow windows on two floors and a wooden doorcase with fluted columns.

**Oak House**, Chard Street, built 1788 by Simon Bunter, a lawyer is considered by Cherry and Pevsner to be the best house in Axminster with a dentilled cornice in diapered brick, stone quoins at the corners and stone window surrounds. There is a central Venetian window over a similar tripartite group of door and two side windows. It is also an excellent example of the use of wood-fired grey headers used for decorative effect.

8.10 **Castle Hill House**, late 18th century, is faced with mathematical tiles, and has rusticated quoins and a Venetian window. **Gloucester House** is early 19th century, also with mathematical tiles. At the bottom of the hill are several former Mills; **The Old Brush Factory** is of three storeys and five bays; stone with brick dressings, a pantiled roof and small-paned round-headed windows. **Castle Mill**, red-brick, also three storeys and a castellated parapet; and a further six-bay stone and brick mill with pantiled roof.

8.11 In Castle Street is a **former Methodist Chapel** of 1796 in red brick, now the Axminster Sale Rooms; and in Market Square the **former Market Buildings** of 1830, single storey and now much altered as showrooms.

## 9 FEATURES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

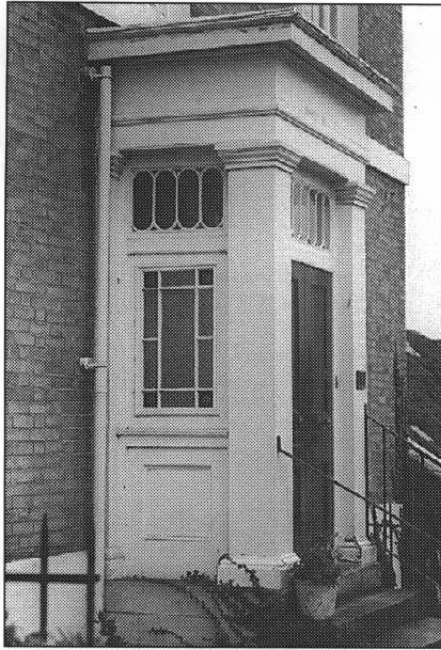
9.1 Among the main elements which contribute to the essential qualities of the conservation area are:

- the wide variety and extensive representation of local building materials
- a compact, intimate character with many vistas both short and long
- sudden changes in level, particularly in Castle Street and West Street providing a strong bond between the historic town core and surrounding landscape
- several fine early 19th century shopfronts with bow windows
- several fine Georgian town houses/inns with good classical features including Venetian windows and a masterly and well balanced handling of building materials.
- buildings with well documented history and important former identity (e.g the Old Carpet Factory, the Register Office)
- a reasonable survival of ornament; cast iron, colour-patterned glass; 19th century/early 20th century shopfronts

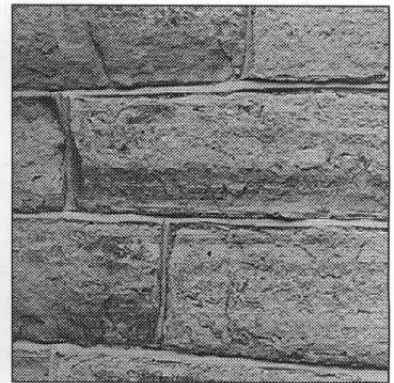
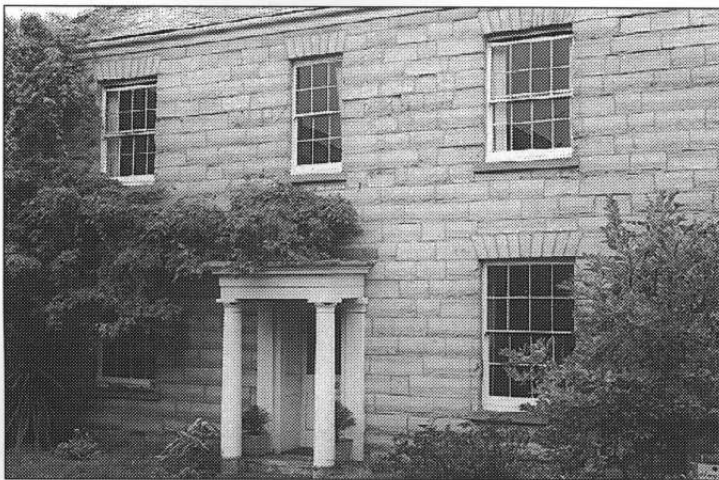
- many excellent surviving original panelled doors and double-hung sash windows, the latter often especially complete at first and second floor level
- important tree groups or individual specimens, particularly surrounding the Parish Church, along the north side of Lyme Road and to the rear of buildings along its south side
- several instances of use of natural stone for ground surfaces; paving, cobbles and steps.



*Lyme Street. Good example of inventive mid 19th century entrance and frontage detail involving stucco and brick.*



*Castle Hill. Good examples of inventive mid 19th century entrance and frontage detail involving stucco and mathematical tiles giving the appearance of brick.*



*Early 19th century house in blue lias, a local building stone found more widely in neighbouring South Somerset.*

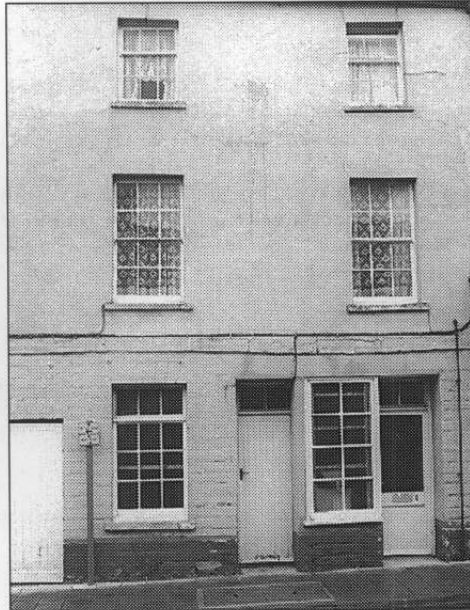


*Fine late 18th - early 19th century shopfronts; South Street/Lyme Street (above); Chard Street (right)*





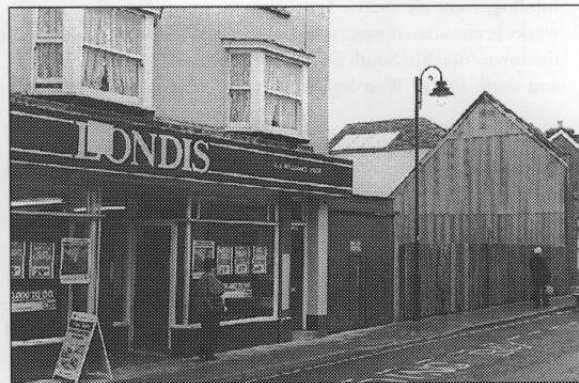
*Chard Street; a good example of hand-made brick and replacement when necessary needs particular care. Note stone footings.*



## 10 LOSS OF CHARACTER AND INTRUSION

10.1 The following factors are tending to lead to a loss of quality within the conservation area:

- several instances of low levels of maintenance and dilapidation of buildings, some of which are vacant; especially in South Street and West Street
- the poor quality of some replacement shopfronts which bear little relation to upper floors and which lack any design cohesion in relation to their context within the street as a whole
- several stretches of highway within the conservation area have street lamps which are utilitarian rather than having regard to their historic surroundings.
- frontage gaps, poor quality 1960's infill, garish shopfronts and loss of original detail on important street frontages.
- the use of substitute artificial slate, concrete tiles or corrugated iron replacing original natural slate or thatch
- a tendency to use machine made bricks in place of hand-made ones
- the gradual erosion of traditional carpentry by replacement PVCU or "off the shelf" windows and doors



*South Street/Lyme Street area show indications of low maintenance, under-use, poor frontage detail, unsightly gaps etc. and are suggestive of a need for grant-assisted enhancement (e.g. a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme)*

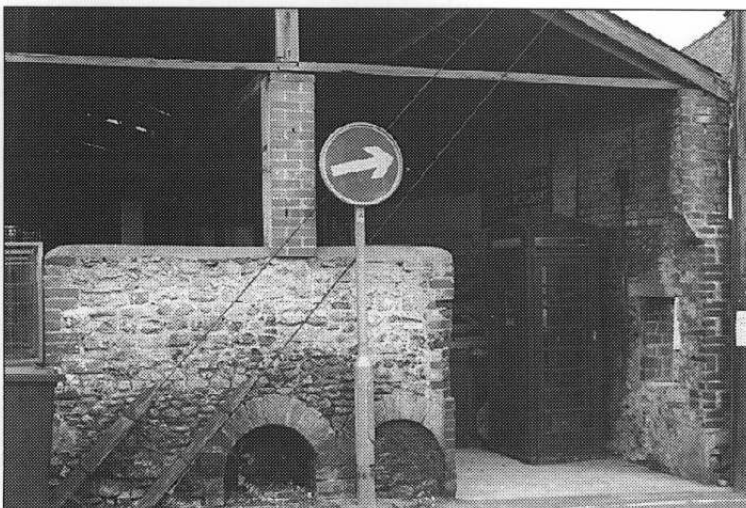
## 11 SUMMARY

11.1 Axminster, like Honiton, is a town with strong associations that extend well beyond the region, even the country, and is a natural gateway to Devon for many visitors. Its period of importance and prosperity is reflected in the range of particularly good domestic and early public buildings with much evidence of traditional craftsmanship and appropriate use of locally available materials.

11.2 Since the town has been by-passed the opportunity for enhancement has been taken as proposed in the 1991 Town Centre Management Plan. Allied to this it is considered there is a need for a carefully considered approach to the practical conservation of the wealth of stone buildings and other ornament, including original hard surfaces in poor condition.

11.3 Whilst there is not perceived to be a large scale threat to buildings as a result of pressure to redevelop, there are instances of neglect through vacancy and under-use of upper floors. The scale of dilapidation and low levels of maintenance is considerable, and if not to be considered as a suitable case for CAPs funding, some alternative form of grant assisted programme of works is considered necessary to revitalise some run down parts of the town, notably South Street, the lower end of Lyme Street, and south side of West Street.

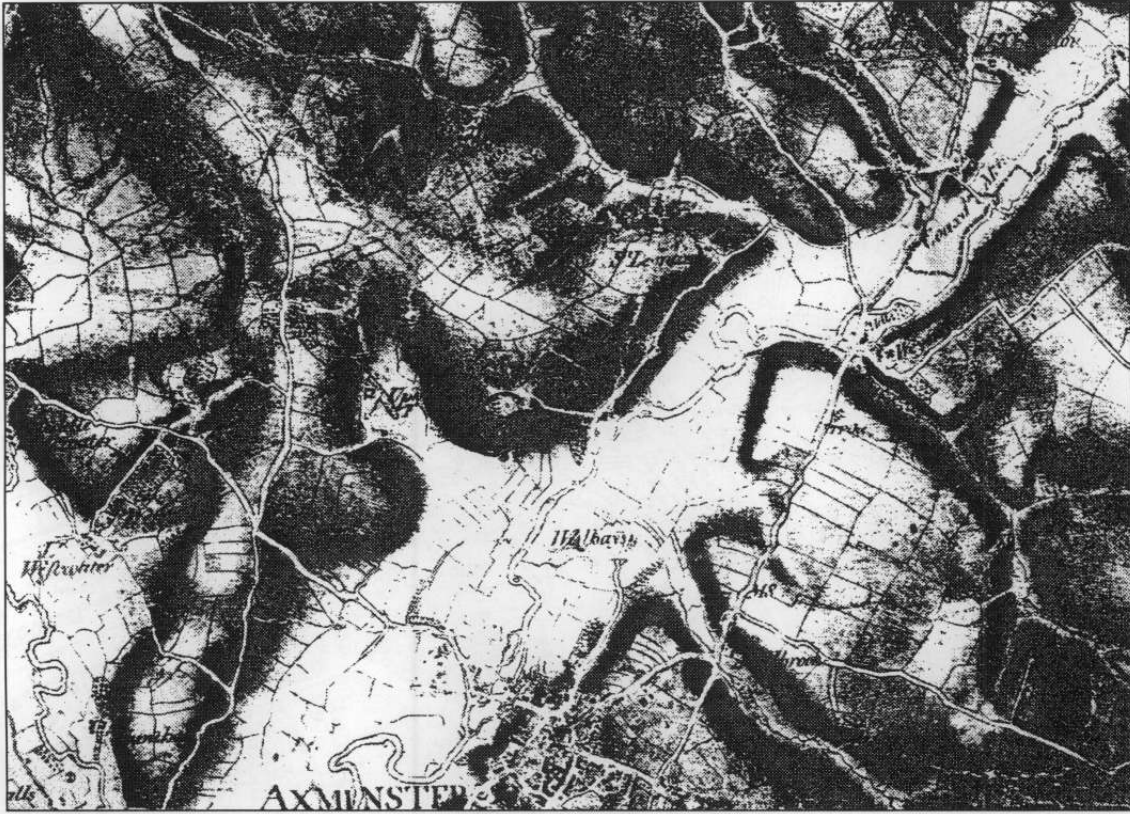
11.4 It is further considered that the conservation area boundary which has not been revised since 1973 is probably too tightly drawn in places and the existing boundary needs to be examined carefully to consider what additional areas might be included contiguous with the existing boundary. In view of the importance of the area within a wider context archaeologically<sup>3</sup> the consideration of outliers where a particular form of protection may be necessary. This would need to be assessed on the basis of consultation within the local community and between the relevant professions.



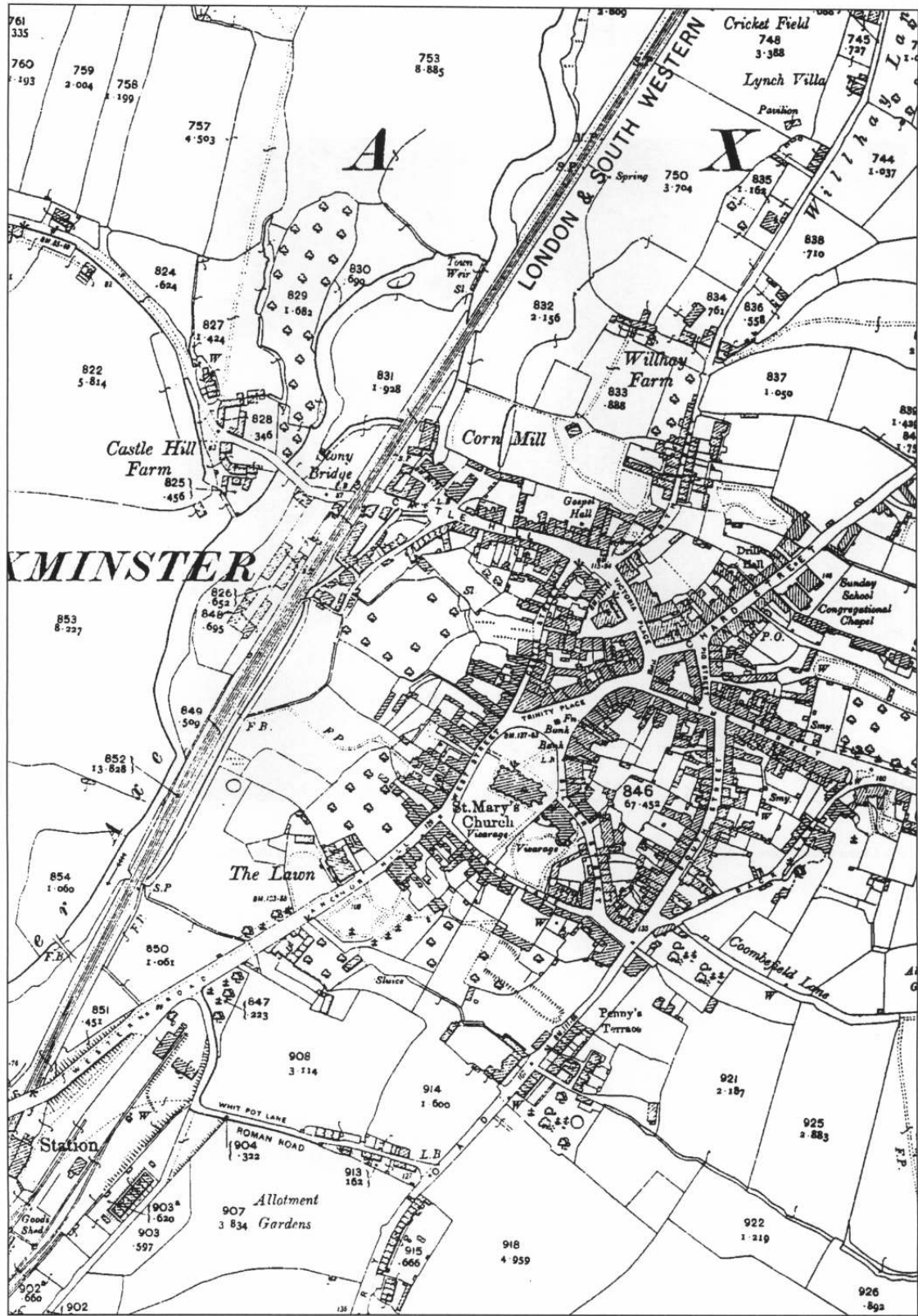
*The Cattle Market with K6 telephone kiosk and stove-enamel advertisement sign opposite the junction of South Street and Church Street retains character and authenticity.*

<sup>3</sup> *op cit* Axminster Archaeological Appraisal

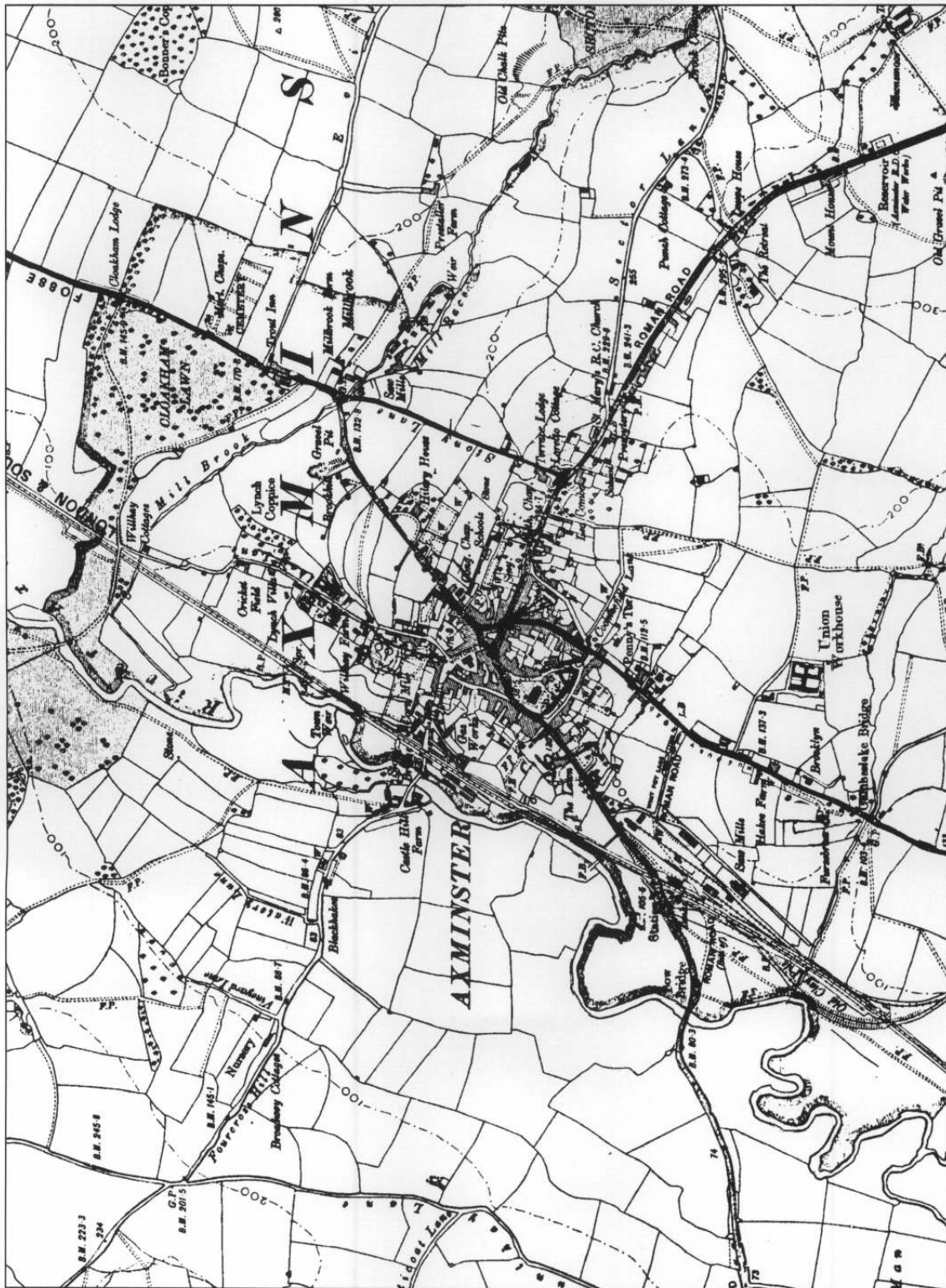
## HISTORIC MAPS



*1805 Devon County Survey: Scale: originally 3 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of the report)*

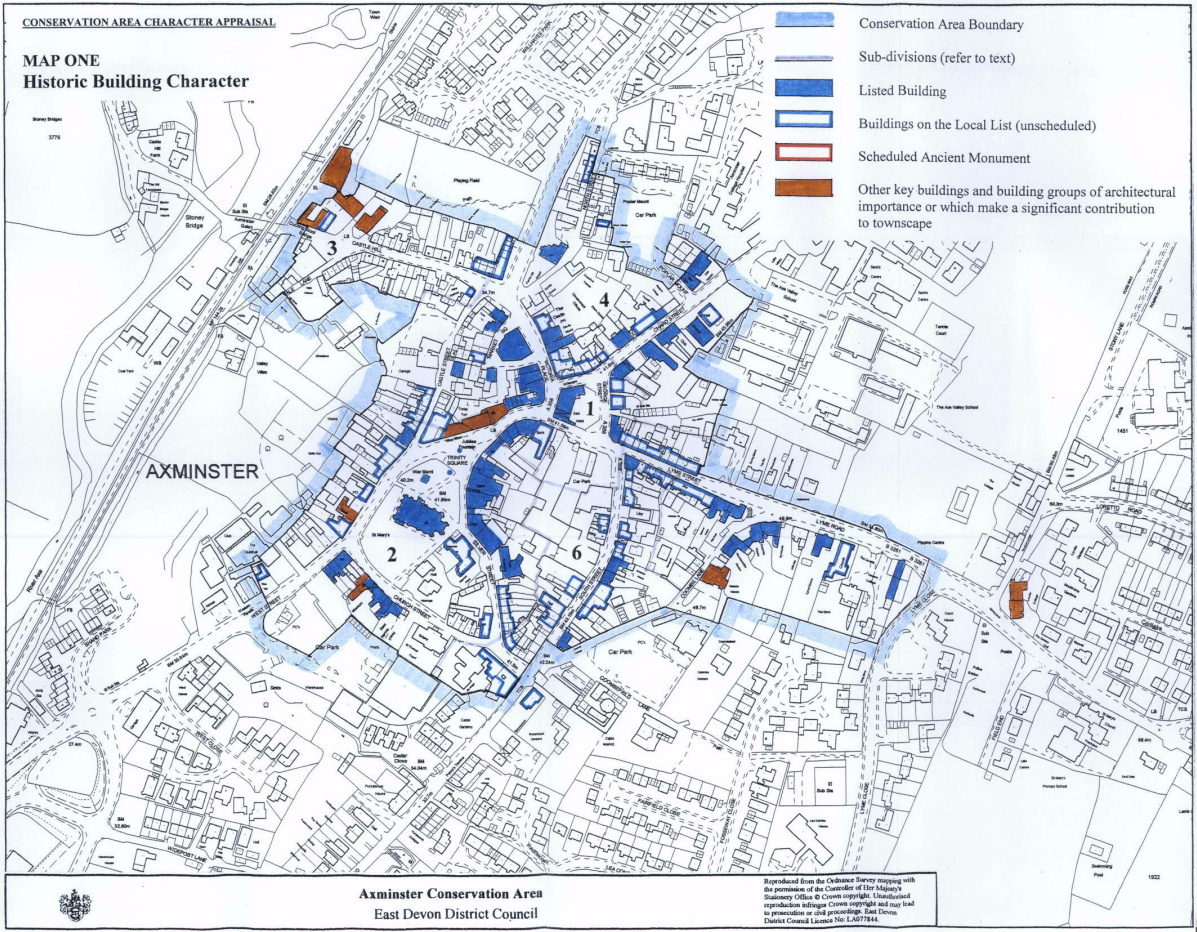


c.1905 Ordnance Survey Second Edition. Scale originally 25 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of fitting the report)



Early 20th Century Ordnance Survey Second Edition or Provisional Edition. Scale originally 6 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of fitting the report)

MAP ONE  
Historic Building Character

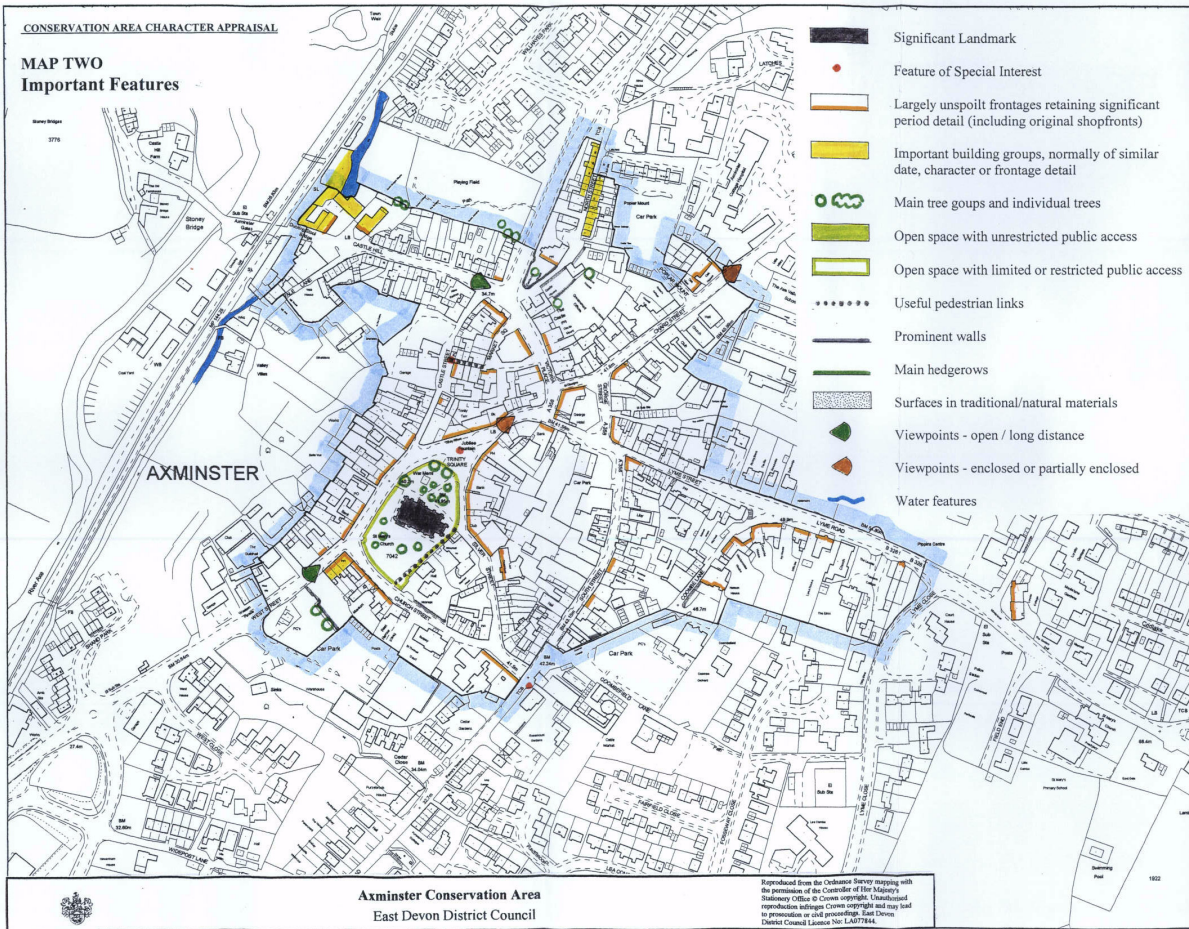


Axminster Conservation Area  
East Devon District Council

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MAP TWO  
Important Features

Scale: 1:5000  
2016



- Significant Landmark
- Feature of Special Interest
- Largely unspoilt frontages retaining significant period detail (including original shopfronts)
- Important building groups, normally of similar date, character or frontage detail
- Main tree groups and individual trees
- Open space with unrestricted public access
- Open space with limited or restricted public access
- Useful pedestrian links
- Prominent walls
- Main hedgerows
- Surfaces in traditional/natural materials
- Viewpoints - open / long distance
- Viewpoints - enclosed or partially enclosed
- Water features

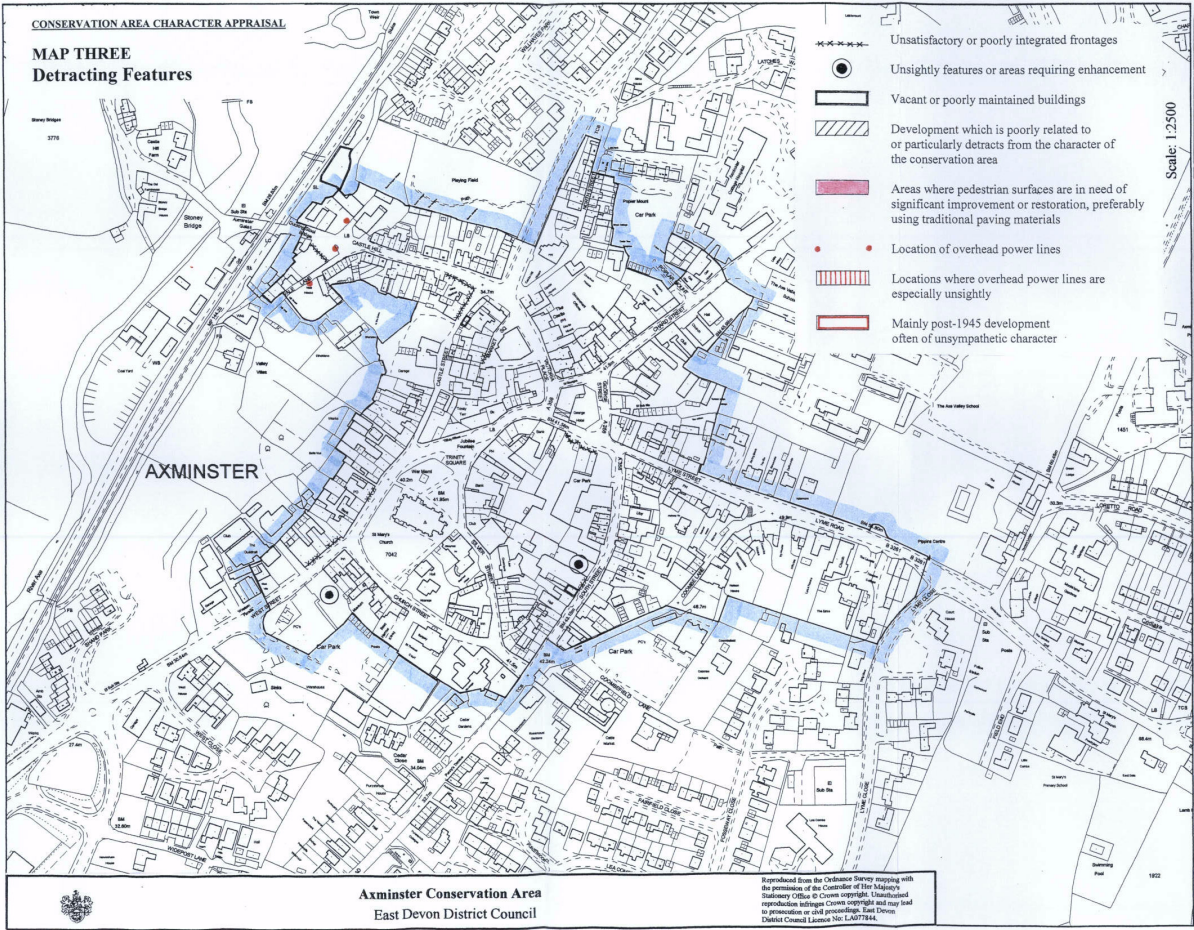
AXMINSTER

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MAP THREE  
Detracting Features

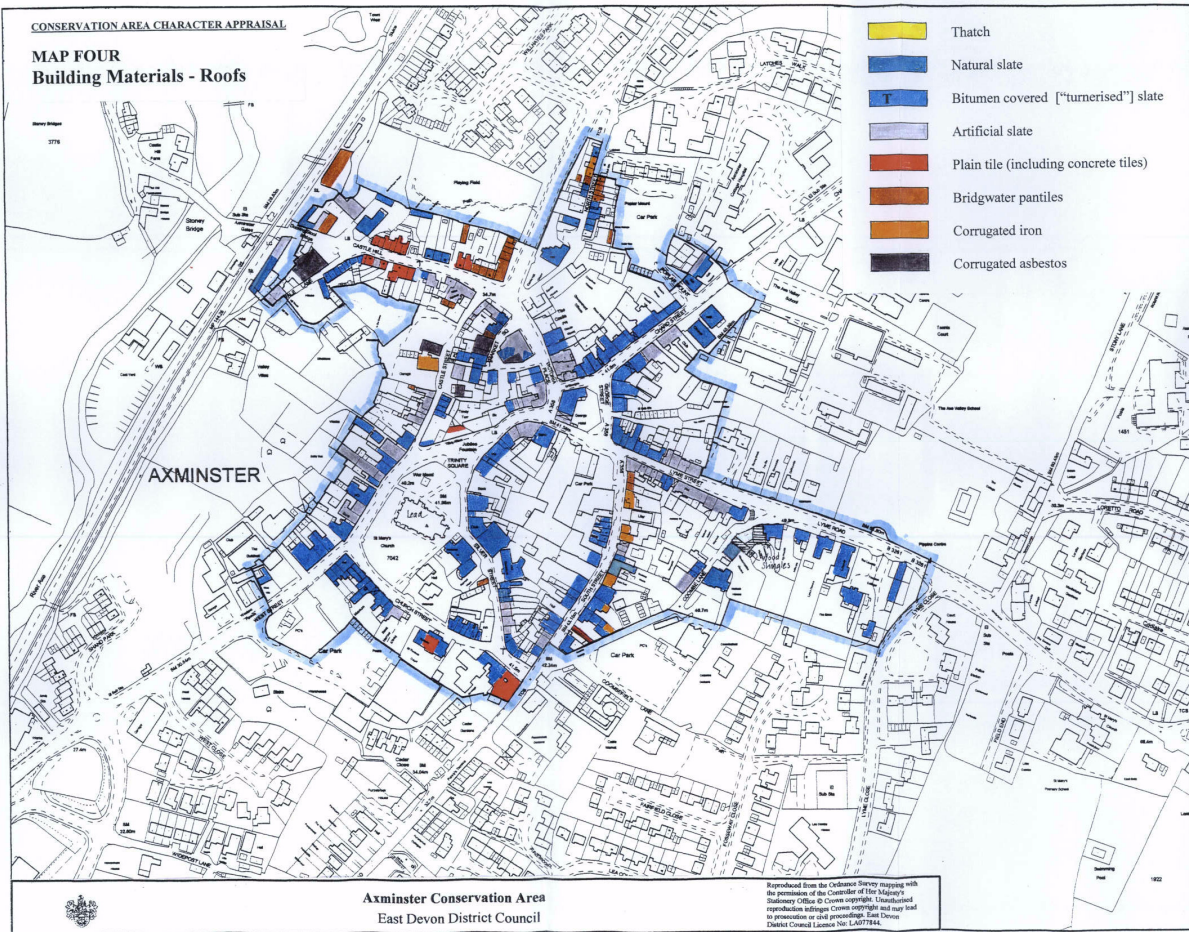
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279



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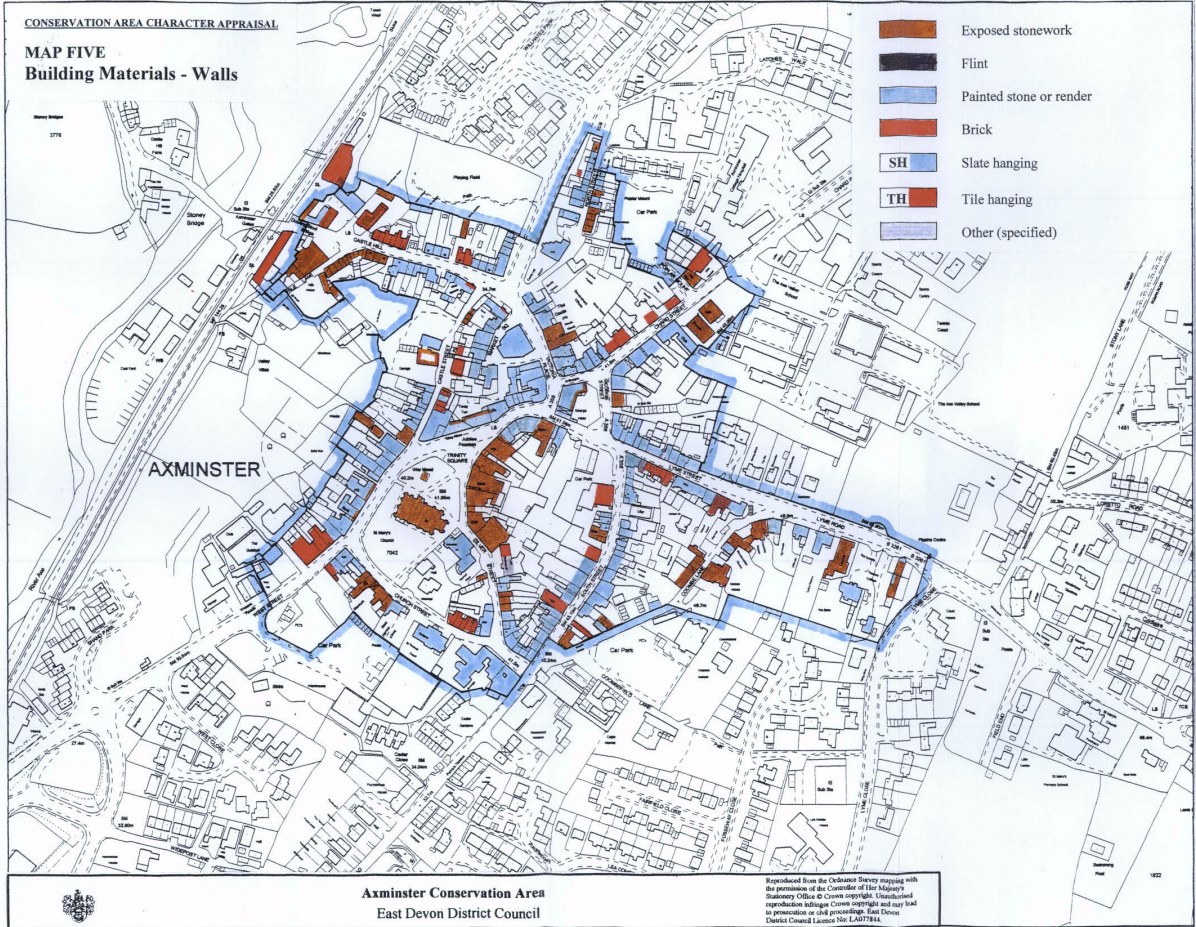
MAP FOUR  
Building Materials - Roofs



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MAP FIVE  
Building Materials - Walls



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