

# Clyst St Mary & Sowton

Neighbourhood Plan

Design Codes and Guidelines

## Quality information

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## Revision History

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A photograph of a row of white terraced houses with red-tiled roofs. A large, leafy green tree is on the left side of the image. The sky is blue with some white clouds. The houses have white walls and dark window frames. A small porch with white columns is visible on one of the houses.

**Introduction**

**01**

# 1. Introduction

## This section provides context and general information to introduce the report.

AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to Clyst St Mary and Sowton Neighbourhood Planning Group through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) - funded Neighbourhood Planning Programme, led by Locality. This document has been produced to inform new residential (only) development proposed in the Clyst St Mary and Sowton Neighbourhood Area requiring a planning application. It presents a summary of the key characteristics which make this a special place to live and visit and this information is used to inform specific Design Codes and Guidelines which promote sustainable development and guide best practice.

The approach set out here is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which encourages local authorities to consider using design codes, to help deliver high quality outcomes for new development.

It is important however, that guidance finds the balance between promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and allowing for innovation and originality. The NPPF suggests that 'design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics' (NPPF, 2021).

The NPPF also emphasises that 'the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work helps make development acceptable to communities' (NPPF, 2021). It is therefore important that planning policies and decisions should address the connection between people and place and how any new development will respond to, and integrate successfully into the natural, built and historic environment.

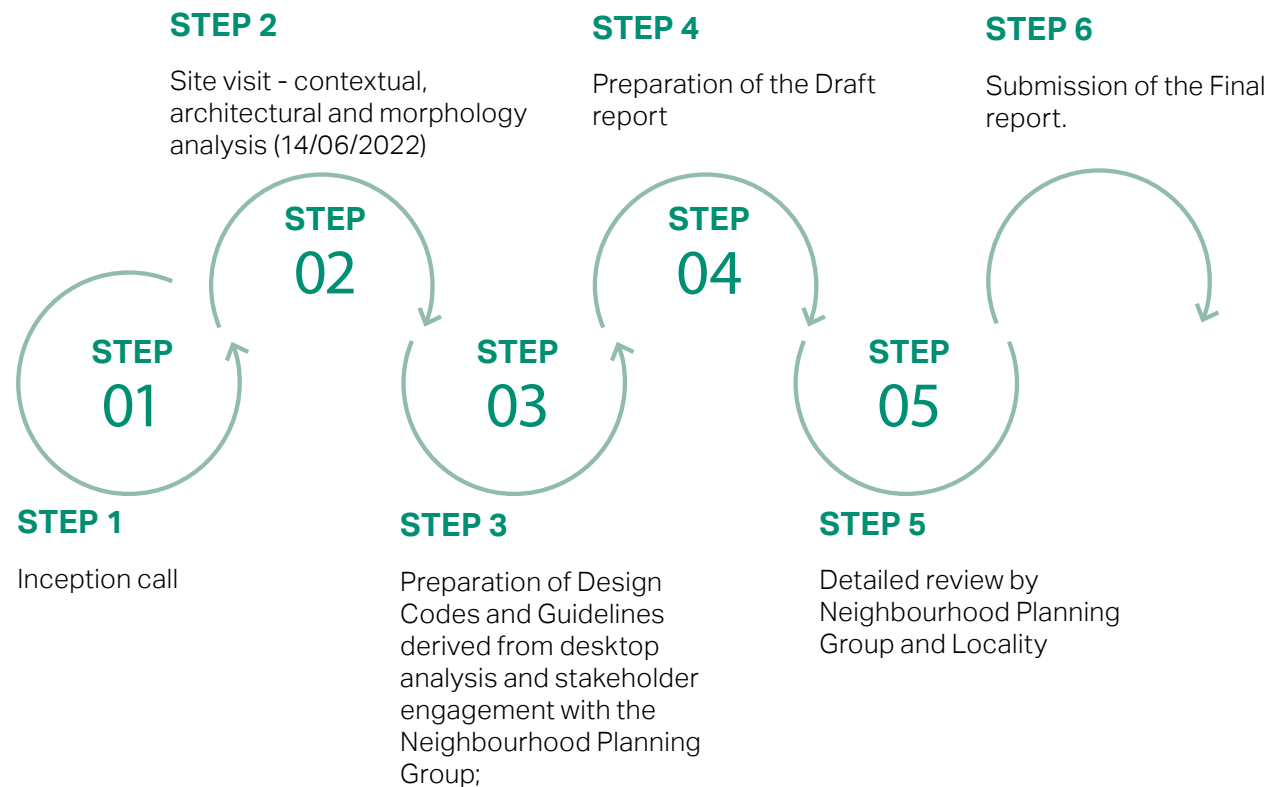
## 1.1 Objectives

The main objective of this document is to establish principles to ensure new development is designed and planned according to existing character and the context of Clyst St Mary and Sowton. It sets out a series of Design Codes and Guidelines related to residential development.

The document initially provides context 'character assessment' to the Design Codes and Guidelines including strategic issues identified by the Neighbourhood Planning Group together with the aspirations of the community, as although not strictly design issues, these must be considered in the context of any design proposal.

## 1.2 Process

The following steps were undertaken to produce this document:





**Neighbourhood Area  
context analysis**

**02**

## 2. Neighbourhood Area context analysis

### 2.1 Location and area of study

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Area (Map 01) covers an area of approximately 784 hectares and is situated within the East Devon district in the County of Devon. The Neighbourhood Area covers two former separate parishes: Clyst St Mary and Sowton, which were combined following a merge of the parish councils in 1976. The villages of Clyst St Mary and Sowton, along with the Cat & Fiddle park homes development, make up the main settlements in the area. These are surrounded by the open countryside of the Clyst valley with dispersed farmsteads and overall Bishops Clyst has a predominantly rural setting.

The nearest city, Exeter, located immediately west of the Neighbourhood Area, on the opposite side of the M5 and separated from the settlement areas by the Clyst Valley and floodplain. The M5 forms the western boundary of the NP Area, providing north south connections. Two of the main roads which service the area are the A30 and Sidmouth Road (A3052), which

both branch off east from the M5. The A30 runs along the northern boundary of the NP Area and provides direct connection to Honiton, a market town around 20km north-east of Clyst St Mary. Sidmouth Road runs through the south of the NP Area and provides a direct connection from Clyst St Mary to Sidmouth, approximately 17km east of the village. The other main road in the area is Exmouth Road (A376) which runs south from Clyst St Mary to the coast and port town of Exmouth.

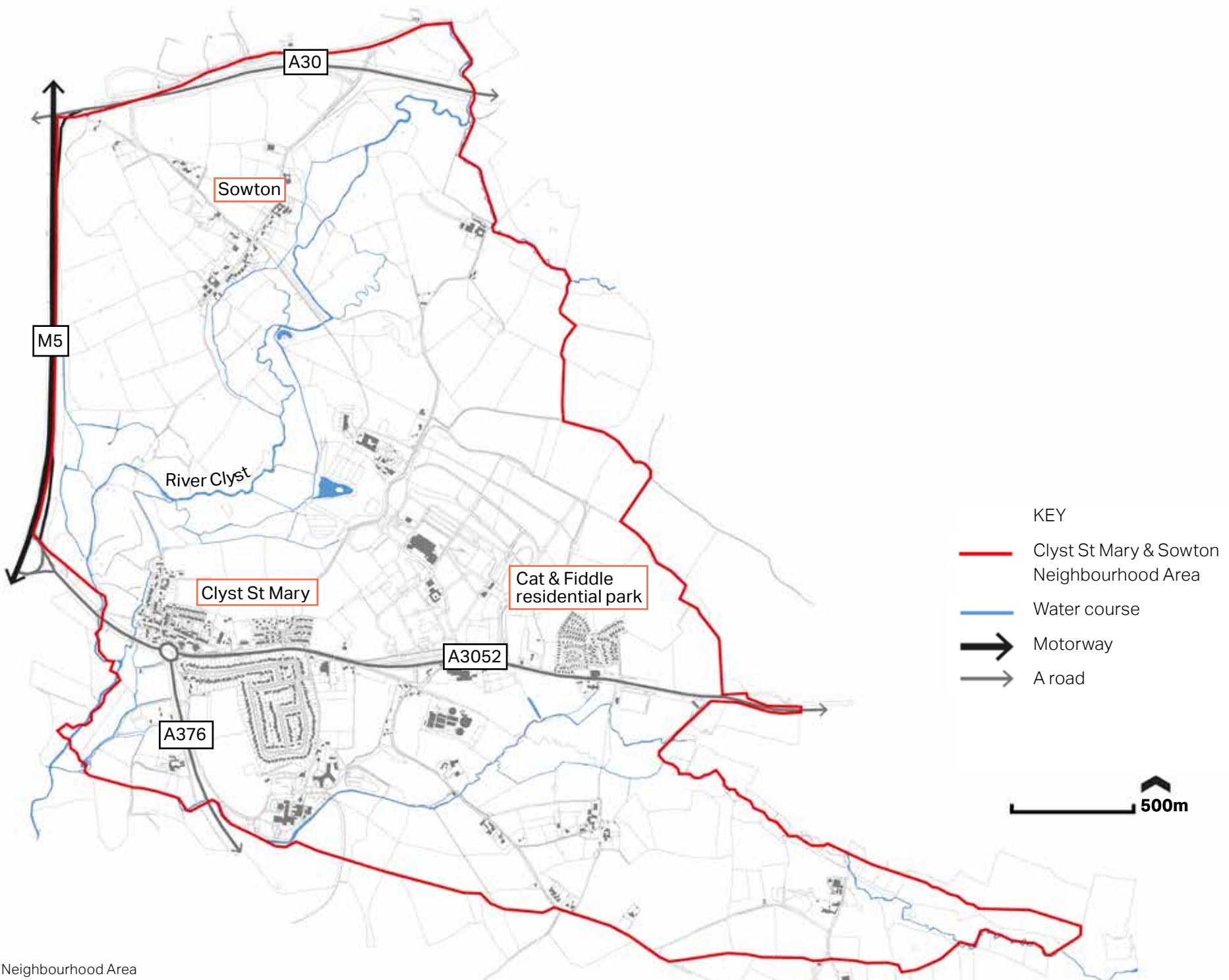
Exeter Airport is located to the north-east, about 3km from Sowton village and is reached from Exeter via the A30 through Bishops Clyst. The closest rail links to Clyst St Mary are Digby & Sowton and Newcourt stations in Exeter, both part of the Great Western railway line which runs from Exmouth to Paignton. These are 2-3km from the village. Pinhoe station on the South Western railway line is the closest rail link to Sowton village, about 6km north, which runs from London Waterloo station to stations in Exeter city centre. The Exmouth-Paignton line also runs to stations in central Exeter

and onwards to Barnstaple in North Devon. There is cycle/footway to Digby & Sowton station as well as being on a bus route.

The NP Area falls wholly in the Devon Redlands National Character Area (England), which is characterised by undulating landscape rising to the north, distinctive red soils from underlying red sandstone, mixed farming with widespread areas of pasture and the estuary, rivers and tributaries with corresponding flood plains.



**Figure 01:** Views over River Clyst floodplain towards M5 and eastern edge of Exeter.



**Map 01:** Neighbourhood Area

## 2.2 Land Use

The two villages in the Neighbourhood Area are predominantly residential, though Clyst St Mary village has several local amenities including a village shop, primary school, post office, village hall, church, pub, garden centre, recreation ground and football field. There is also a car-maintenance and sales business along the village street.

Sowton is a smaller village with fewer amenities, limited to a church and village hall. The Cat & Fiddle Residential Park is a collection of park homes and features a roadside pub, the 16th Century Cat & Fiddle Inn. The Exeter City Football Club are based near the residential park at the Clifford Hill Training Ground.

Elsewhere in the surrounding countryside there are a few varied land uses including Westpoint, a showground, exhibition and event venue used for an on-going programme of events including the County Show. There is also the mixed use area of Winslade Park, south of Clyst St Mary and Langdon Business Park on Sidmouth Road between Clyst St Mary and the Cat

& Fiddle Residential Park. Additionally near the Grade I listed Bishops Court manor is Bishops Court Gardens Business Park and an equestrian centre.

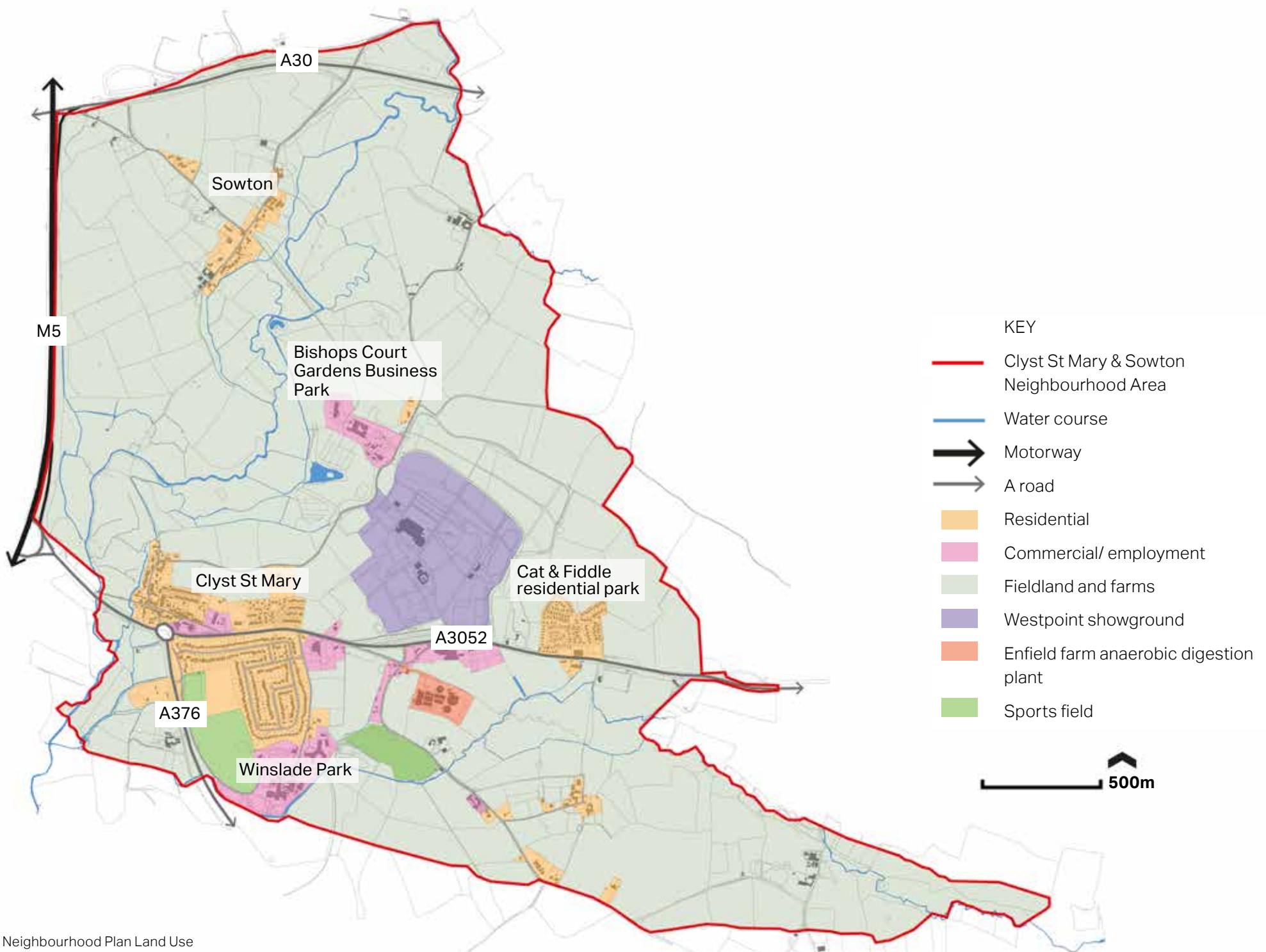
Enfield Farm anaerobic digestion plant is located just outside Clyst St Mary on Oil Mill Lane. The plant uses farm waste to produce renewable energy. The remaining land is primarily agricultural pasture and arable fields with dispersed, often listed, farmsteads.



**Figure 02:** Londis shop in Clyst St Mary.



**Figure 03:** View over floodplain towards elevated section of the M5.



KEY

- Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area
- Water course
- ➔ Motorway
- ➔ A road
- Residential
- Commercial/ employment
- Fieldland and farms
- Westpoint showground
- Enfield farm anaerobic digestion plant
- Sports field

➔ 500m

Map 02: Neighbourhood Plan Land Use

## 2.3 Landscape, ecology and heritage designations

### *Within Neighbourhood Area:*

- There is one scheduled monument, located in Clyst St Mary: Clyst St Mary Bridge and causeway (Ref. 1020209), which is a multi-span bridge dating to the medieval period. The bridge features medieval masonry, five arches and a causeway and was originally constructed for foot and horse traffic crossing the River Clyst as part of the wider route from Sidmouth to Exeter.
- There is a Conservation Area around Sowton village, designated in 1976. This covers the entirety of the village, as well as surrounding field-land which is important in retaining the village's rural setting.
- There are a total of 49 buildings and structures of grade listed status, three of which are grade II\* listed and four of which are grade I listed. Three of the grade I listed structures are part of Bishops Court: the stable block adjoining Tithe barn (ref. 1333998), Tithe barn (ref. 1164637) and Bishops Court itself (ref.

1097577) which was originally a medieval palace belonging to the Bishops of Exeter. The other grade I listed building is the parish church of St Michael and All Angels in Sowton (ref. 1334001).

- Additionally there is the unique Sowton War Memorial with commemorations from WWI, which is unlisted, but historically significant and part of the Imperial War Museum's war memorials register.
- There are areas of deciduous woodland and traditional orchard priority habitats across the Neighbourhood Area and also an area of wood pasture and parkland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat covering Bishops Court garden.

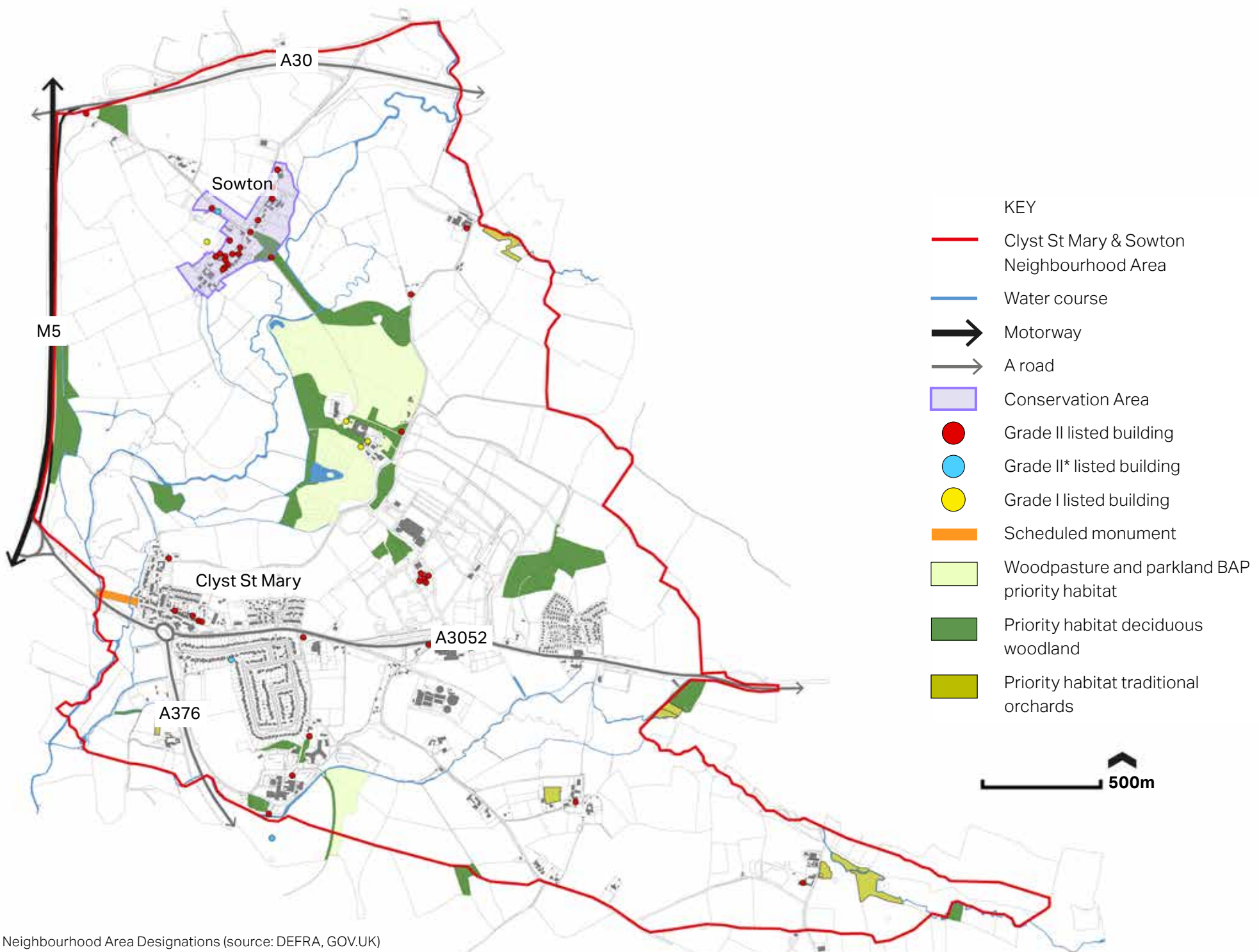
### *Outside the Neighbourhood Area:*

- The River Exe which runs to the south-west of the parish and whose tributary, River Clyst runs through the parish has a number of designations, which include a Ramsar Site, Site of Special Scientific

Interest (SSSI) and Special Protection Area. To the east and south-east of the Neighbourhood Area is the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



**Figure 04:** View of a footpath through the surrounding countryside of Clyst St Mary and Sowton.



**Map 03:** Neighbourhood Area Designations (source: DEFRA, GOV.UK)

## 2.4 Water and flood risk

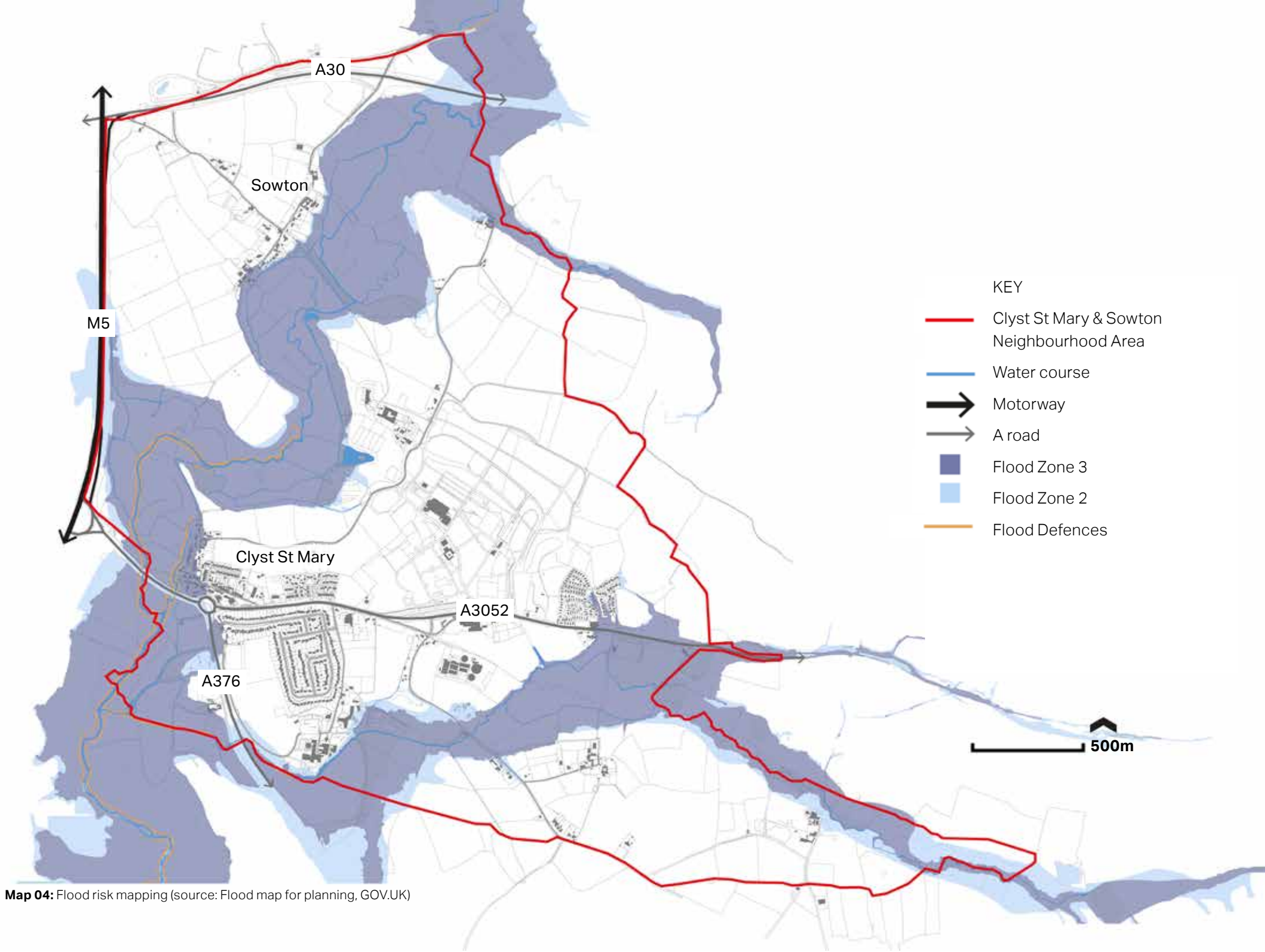
The main sources of flooding in the Neighbourhood Area are the River Clyst, a tributary river of River Exe which flows into the sea at Exmouth, and Grindle Brook, a tributary of the River Clyst. Both water courses pose significant flood risk with large areas of Flood Zone 3. The River Clyst flows from the north of the NP Area south past Sowton and Clyst St Mary; both these villages as a result are, in part, covered by flood risk zones. Grindle Brook flows along the south of the NP Area and the corresponding flood zones affect part of the Cat & Fiddle Residential Park, although the site has not been flooded in the last 35 years.

Dark blue highlights the flood extent of Flood Zone 3 – 1% or higher chance of fluvial flooding and 0.5% or higher chance of tidal flooding in any year.

Medium blue highlights the extended flood extents of Flood Zone 2 – 0.1-1% chance of

fluvial flooding and 0.1-0.5% chance of tidal flooding in any year.

The original stretch of flood defences along the River Clyst which run from where the river meets the River Exe in the south to just north of Clyst St Mary are made of earth flood banks dating to the mid-19th Century and have been affected by erosion. However there have been improvements made to flood defences over recent years including new flood works to protect Clyst St Mary village to a standard of 1 in 100 years.



KEY

- Cyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area
- Water course
- ➔ Motorway
- ➔ A road
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Flood Defences

500m

Map 04: Flood risk mapping (source: Flood map for planning, GOV.UK)

## 2.4 Historic development

The Tithe maps (Fig. 5-7) around the period of 1837-89 show that the landscape is mostly comprised of large and irregular parcels of agricultural land surrounding the small settlements of Sowton and Clyst St Mary (St. Mary's Village to the north and Winslade Park to the south). Winslade Park refers to Winslade mansion, the medieval Parish Church of St. Mary and Rectory. Much of the land within the NP Area was in use as arable fields, with several fields of pasture, orchard and meadow.

The settlements in the early 19th Century were all small; the largest settlement at this time was St Mary's Village, as shown in Figure 6.

The village of Sowton at this time comprised a central crossroads with a church, parsonage, a mill and several sparsely placed houses to either side of the roads. The village of Clyst St Mary consisted of a small, densely populated village concentrated along a main road running east to west. To the south-east of the village is Winslade Park, with several buildings located along a main road aligned north to south and included the church, parsonage and Winslade House.



Figure 05: Sowton 1837

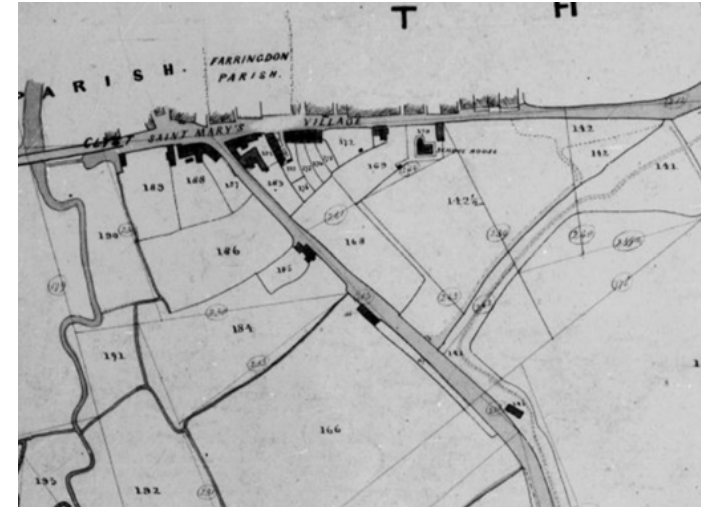


Figure 06: St. Mary's Village 1838



Figure 07: Winslade Park 1838



Figure 08: St. Mary's Village 1889

The 1889 Ordnance Survey maps indicate not a lot of change to the landscape except perhaps to the north of St. Mary's Village (Fig. 7).

The settlements remained small, compact villages and the surrounding land was agricultural. A number of buildings are named on the first edition OS map of Clyst St Mary, including a school, a corn and sawmill and several farms. The medieval Bishops Court is also recorded to the north-east of the village, with surrounding parkland (Fig.7).

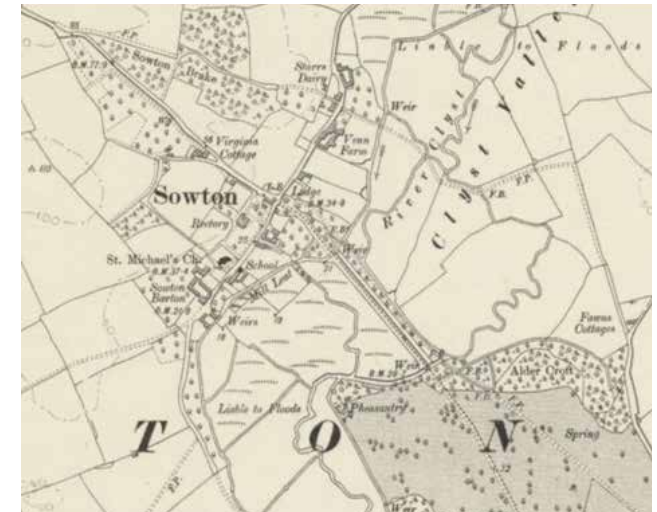
By 1906, several further buildings had been constructed in Clyst St Mary, although the layout remained fairly unchanged and many of the existing buildings were still present Clyst St Mary (Fig.9) and Sowton (Fig.10). Winslade House, church and associated parkland at Winslade Park remained unchanged into the early 20th Century (Fig. 11), although with some changes were recorded to the complex of buildings to the east of the church.

The 1946 edition OS maps show a similar

trend. The villages remained small, with some minor additions. The surrounding landscape remained predominantly rural in nature, with rectilinear-shaped fields and areas of orchard and woodland (Fig. 12 & 13). In the mid-20th Century, the village of Clyst St Mary expanded to the south. The first of these new residential roads are recorded on the 1967 OS map of the area (Fig. 14).



**Figure 09:** Six Inch Ordnance Survey map Devon Sheet LXXX. SE (published 1906)



**Figure 10:** Six Inch Ordnance Survey map Devon Sheet LXXX. NE (published 1906)



Figure 11: Six Inch Ordnance Survey map Devon Sheet LXXX.SE (published 1906)

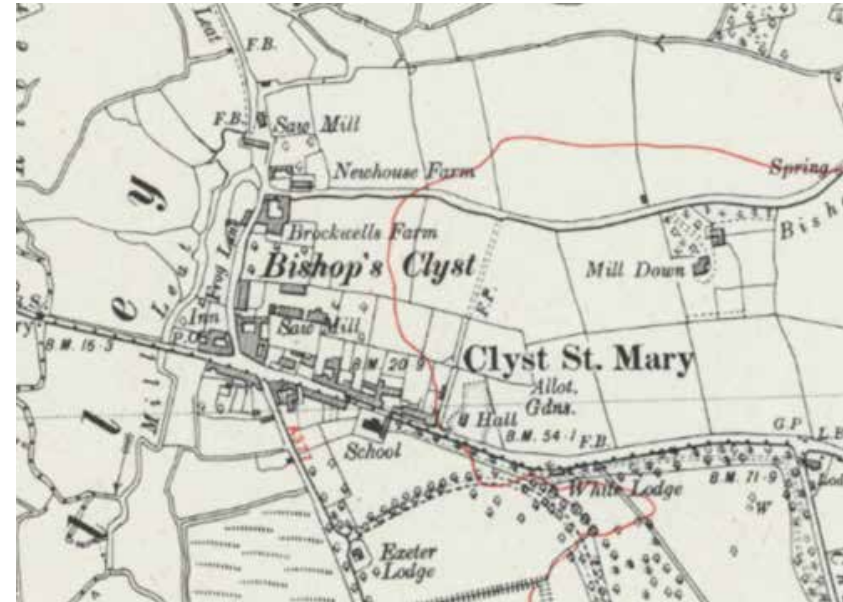


Figure 12: Six Inch Ordnance Survey map Devon Sheet LXXX.SE (published 1946)



Figure 13: Six Inch Ordnance Survey map Devon Sheet LXXX.SE (published 1946)

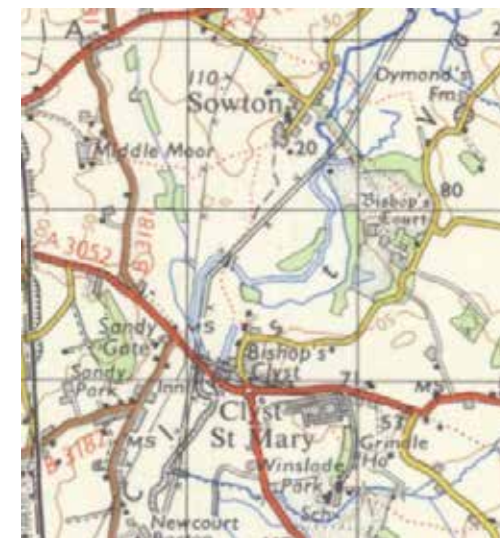
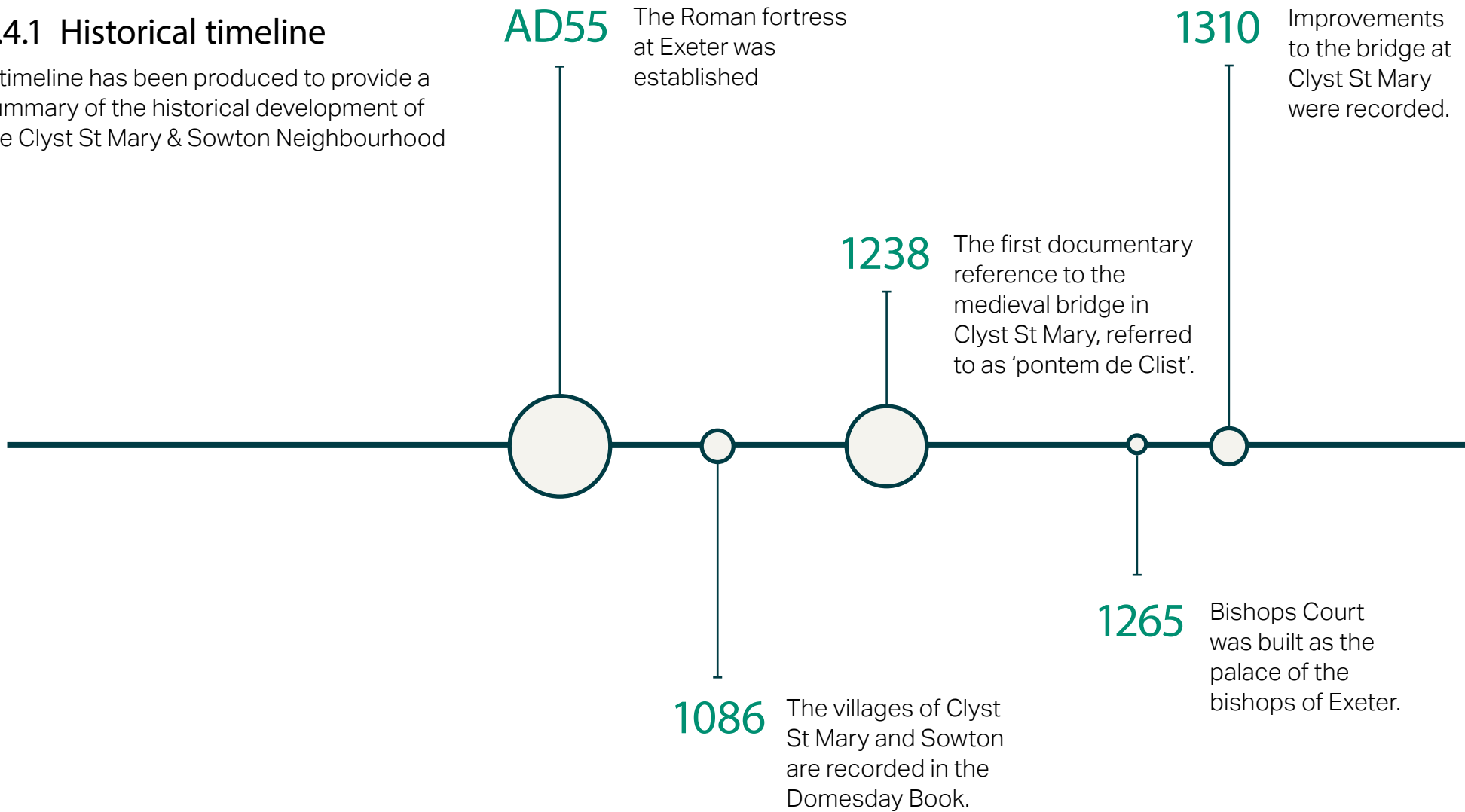
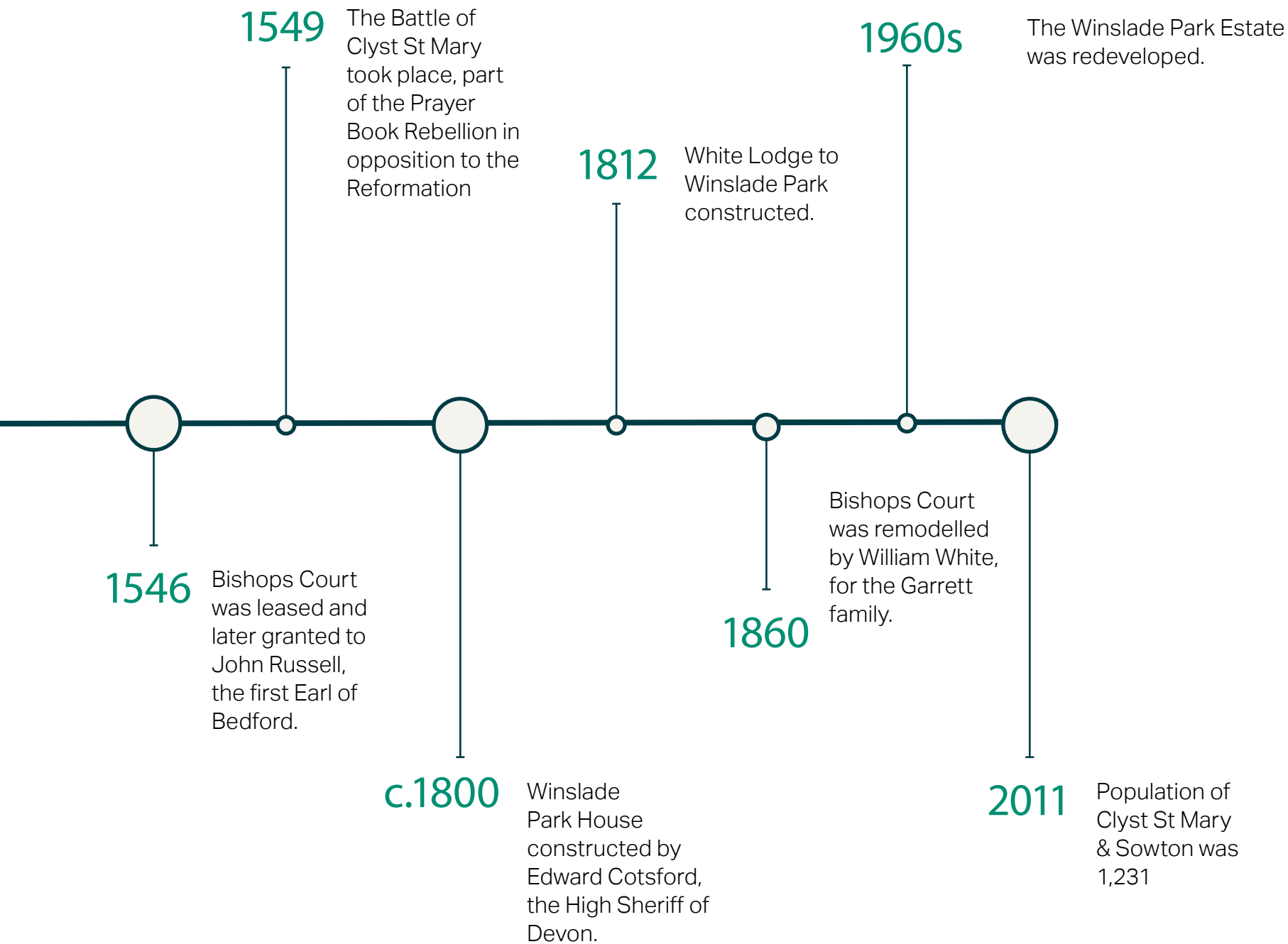


Figure 14: One Inch Ordnance Survey map Sheet 176 - Exeter - B Edition (published 1967)

## 2.4.1 Historical timeline

A timeline has been produced to provide a summary of the historical development of the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood





## 2.5 Stakeholder engagement

Members of the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Planning Group were invited to share their knowledge and experience of the Neighbourhood Area during a site visit to discuss the stakeholders' requirements, key elements of settlement character areas and aspirations for the Neighbourhood Area.

Several key considerations and strategic issues emerged from the consultation, which have informed the preparation of the Design Code. These issues have been identified at a wider scale and represent the aspirations of the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Planning Group that can be achieved through design and masterplanning.

These are summarised below:

### *Themes:*

- Historic rural parish community;
- There is a sensitivity and desire to retain the rural parish identity and not become consumed by sprawling parts of Exeter;
- Questions regarding practicality and the impacts on the area by the Devon Show;
- Severance created by A3052;
- Community relationships and synergy between large scale development (recent and past) and the parish core;
- The influence of the surrounding landscape context; and
- Attractive place to live and work.

## 3. Character assessment

This section outlines the broad physical, historic and contextual characteristics of the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area.

### 3.1 Introduction

Character assessment is used to describe and articulate what is special and distinctive about a place. It is used to identify recognisable patterns of elements or characteristics that make one place different from another. This guidance is focused on the residential character of townscape and the landscape setting, informed by the work of the Neighbourhood Planning Group and the site visit by the AECOM consultant. Features introduced in this section are later used to inform the Design Codes and Guidelines.



**Figure 15:** Church of St Michael & All Angels Church, Sowton.

## 3.2 Character assessment

The character assessment is informed by the work conducted by the Neighbourhood Planning Group and is structured around the main settlements within the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area.

Illustrated on Map 5 are the 3 distinct areas created by development evolution in Clyst St Mary & Sowton (Cat and Fiddle has been omitted from the character assessment as it consists of park homes). The characters consist of:

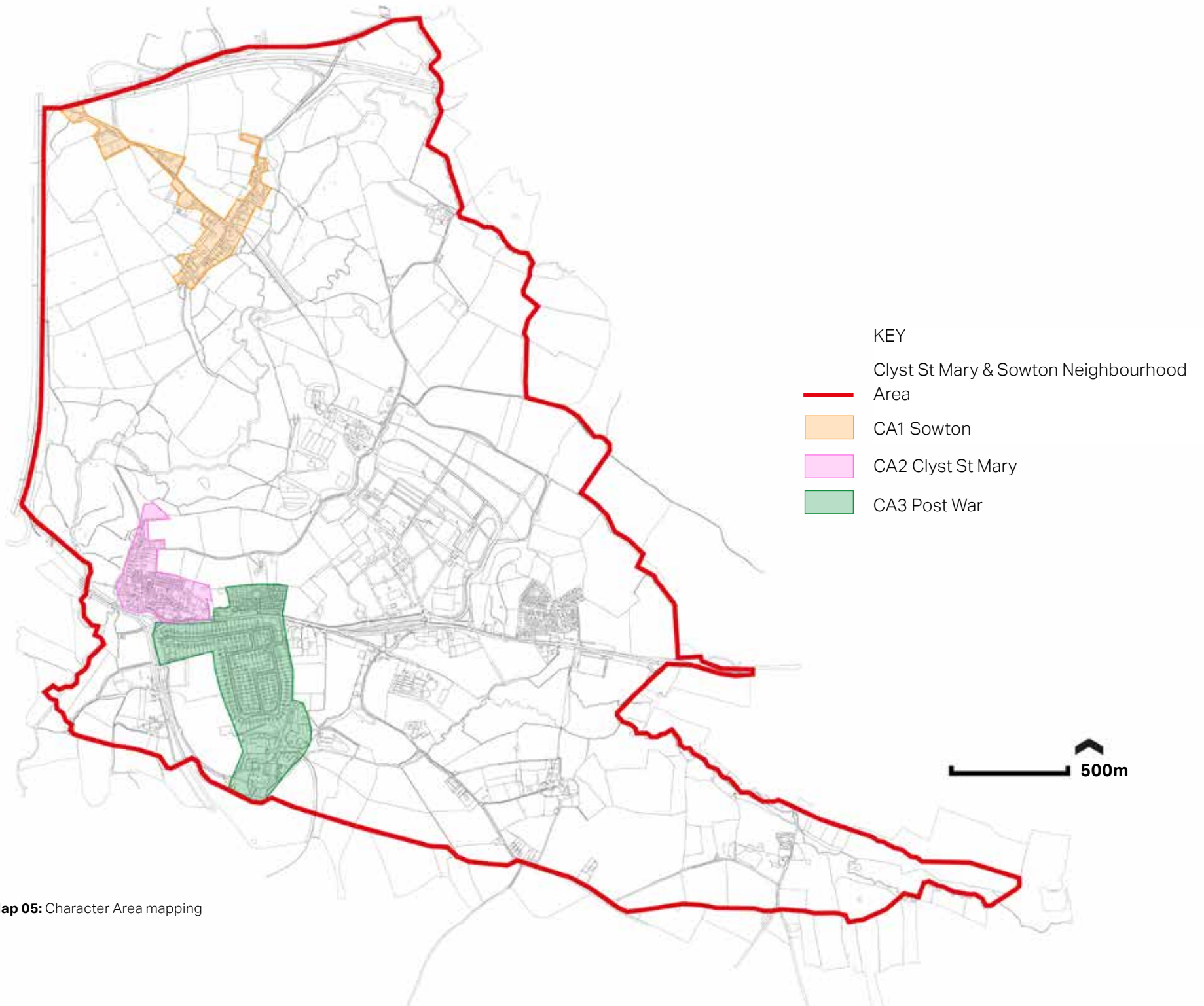
- **CA1 - Sowton;**
- **CA2 - Clyst St Mary;**
- **CA3 - Post War.**

The elements that will be analysed for the character areas are:

- Pattern and layout of buildings;
- Access, green infrastructure, active travel and open space ;
- Architecture and details;
- Materials;
- Building modifications, extension & conversion; and
- Sustainability and building performance, Waste, recycling and utilities.



**Figure 16:** Scattering of buildings is glimpsed through a tunnel of trees in Sowton.



**Map 05:** Character Area mapping



## CA1 -Sowton

<p><b>Pattern and layout of buildings</b></p>	<p>The historic core of the village is located along Sowton Lane and comprises linear rows of post-medieval houses on either side of Sowton Lane as well as the village hall and parish church. The physical pattern of development was on generous plots on the south side of Sowton Lane. The church dominates the north side of the village. Over the years, infilling of these generous plots (south side) occurred with more modern developments and these have been set back from Sowton Lane with generous front gardens. In contrast the frontage of most of the older buildings tends to be either on or perpendicular to Sowton Lane rather than set back.. Within the Conservation Area are some 25 individually listed buildings. .</p>
<p><b>Access, green infrastructure, active travel and open space</b></p>	<p>Sowton is served by Sowton Lane and is just 1.2km in length. It is accessed via the A30, north east of the village. It is a non-through road which terminates in the north close to the M5 junction 29. Road access is narrow with no road markings or pavements. Mostly there are grass verges and stone walls partially covered in vegetation. One “break-out space” exists opposite the church presumably for on-street parking. There is also a unique War Memorial at the crossroads of the village, which lists all those from the village who fought in World War I. Conservation Area status around Sowton Village, covers the entirety of the village, as well as surrounding field land which is important in retaining the village’s rural setting. The extent of tree cover within the village, especially near the centre, is considerable, and best appreciated on the approach into the village from the northwest. Here a scattering of buildings is glimpsed through a tunnel of trees, and elsewhere near the T-junction trees either dominate or partially obscure buildings. The remains of an avenue of trees, now somewhat fragmented, extends southeast from Court Lodge, well beyond the Conservation Area boundary and forms the approach to Bishops Court. Elsewhere in the village trees are much more scattered, mainly in small rows or groups as deciduous hedgerow species.</p>
<p><b>Views and landmarks</b></p>	<p>The secluded location of the village is emphasised by the extensive surrounding countryside with long distance views to the south and east. The parish Church of St Michael and All Angels is a Grade I listed Church and local landmark. It is situated in a prominent central village position. In addition to the attractive sense of rural seclusion and spaciousness, the listed buildings themselves form landmarks, having distinctive architectural features (described below) including hatched roofs and important gaps between buildings, A K6 red phone kiosk is also prominently located, which forms an important feature of the street scene in this part of the village.</p>



**Figure 17:** Red and dark brickwork pattern with clay, pantile roof and use of out of character barge board.



**Figure 18:** Hipped roof house with clay tiles and overall red brickwork, though with colour variation including darker bricks.



**Figure 19:** Plastered cob and thatched roof house with eyebrow dormers.  
Prepared for: Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Plan



**Map 06:** Noll map

## Architecture and details

- Nos. 9-17 Sowton Lane, are mostly 17th and 18th Century cottages and former farmhouses and are all Grade II listed buildings:
- Nos. 9 and 10 consist of a rough-cast building with a slate roof with red brick chimney stacks. The windows are 19th Century casements and the door to each house is to the left with a timber and tiled porch.
- Nos.11-13 comprises a two storey red brick building with a hipped slate roof, perpendicular to the road. The south front consists of a regular six-window range with cambered window arches. The entrance is to the left, with a hipped slate-roofed open porch. There are also two central dormer windows to the south front.
- Nos. 14-17 are a row of 17th Century cottages with a 19th Century extension, of rough-cast render on stone footings and a gabled thatched roof with tall red brick chimney stacks. The west front has an irregular six-window range with casement windows and 20th Century porches to numbers 14 and 16.
- Sowton Village Hall lies directly to the north of the row of cottages. The village hall is a Grade II listed, 18th Century building, formerly used as a school. It comprises a single storey of random rubble Heavitree stone with brick dressings, and a hipped thatched roof. The west front has three bays, each with a tall, round-arched window, which contain transoms and quatrefoil tracery.
- Opposite is the parish Church of St Michael and All Angels. The church is Grade I listed and comprises a 16th Century arcade while the rest was constructed in the mid-19th Century. It is constructed of coursed red sandstone with stone dressings and a fish-scale slate roof. It was built in the Early Perpendicular Gothic style, and consists of a west tower, nave, south porch, north aisle, chancel and north-east vestry.
- The church is surrounded by an associated graveyard, including several 18th and 19th Century tombstones and chest tombs, of stone and slate, a number of which are also Grade II listed. The churchyard is bordered by a rubble stone wall with a lychgate entrance. The entrance gate is constructed of Salcombe Regis stone with a pointed arch entrance. It has a gabled-end roof of heavy Salcombe Regis slabs, surmounted by an axial Celtic cross.
- Sowton Lane continues to the north-east and the north-west where the village includes several further houses and farms. To the north-west, the area is less-densely populated, with several further 18th and 19th Century houses.
- Virginia Cottage is an early 17th Century house of rough-cast cob with a gabled slate roof. The building consists of two storeys and the south-east front had a four-window range of 19th Century casements, and an off-centre entrance with a lean-to porch. Above each of the first floor windows are small, weather-boarded gables.
- At the north-western end of the Sowton area is the former lodge to Bishops Court The lodge was built in 1834 of snecked limestone with a gabled and hipped slate roof. The building comprises a single storey; the north-west front consists of three bays with a central recessed doorway, the bays either side of which contain a single lancet window with hood moulding. The gables above each of these two bays contain decorative barge-boards, with apex pendants. In terms of post war development, these buildings are relatively utilitarian. The house and garage have adjoining pitched roofs creating additional habitable space and a porch. There are also flat roof dormers windows.

## Materials

There is a rich mixture of building materials, with red brick probably most widespread. Of natural materials, plastered cob alternates with the local red sandstone local (Heavitree), which can be seen both in the soft gritty red-brown form, and a harder gritty purple-brown. Roofs are mainly of Welsh slate, although thatch, plain tile and Bridgewater tiles also occur; the last usually found on barns and outbuildings. 'Eyebrow' detail is a feature on the thatched roofs. The church is constructed of coursed red sandstone with stone dressings. The Salcombe Regis stone slabs on the Lynch Gate and variegated fish-scale slates on the church roof are important features and are a tangible indication of the time (19th Century) when the infrastructure supplying natural materials and the craftsmanship available in applying their use were much more highly developed. Brick dressings have also sometimes been added. There is a good example of polychromatic brickwork at December Lodge. Modern development includes masonry constructed cavity wall buildings with brick plinths and smooth rendered as well as red brick, concrete tiles and uPVC windows and doors in other developments. Boundary treatments to the plots include red brick and sandstone walls as well as privet hedge and wooden fence .

## Building modifications, extension & conversion

There are few examples of newer extensions on buildings within the settlement, such as rear/ side extensions and rear dormers. Some of these are out of character with the Conservation Area such as disproportionate window/ door openings or the materials used - uPVC windows and barge boards.

## Sustainability and building performance, waste, recycling and utilities

Earlier solid wall development, especially detached dwellings, with more exposed elevations will undoubtedly be positioned at the lower end of the building performance scale, with terraces benefiting from adjoined walls. Upgrades to windows seen throughout the main street will improve performance however these should be compliant to Listed building and Conservation Area policy. English Heritage provides guidance on how to improve the thermal efficiency of single glazed windows for example. Later development which incorporates insulated cavity construction will therefore have improved performance.



**Figure 20:** Thatched roof buildings front directly onto the road with little to no setback.



**Figure 21:** View of the tower of Church of St Michael & All Angels through a gap in the dense tree line.



**Figure 22:** Entrance into Sowton



**Figure 23:** Footpath in Sowton leading to River Clyst and Alder Croft



**Figure 24:** Linear development Sowton Lane with dense tree cover from St Michael & All Angels



**Figure 25:** Red brick



**Figure 26:** Local sandstone, dense tree cover and religious "shrine" at the crossroads of the village.



## CA2 - Clyst St Mary

<p><b>Pattern and layout of buildings</b></p>	<p>Settlement evolution is demonstrated by smaller sized, dense housing along both sides of Clyst St Mary, with spatially more generous plots north on Frog lane until approx.1889. Development on Frog Lane was mainly on the east side up until 1946. Most of this development was linear with primary elevations facing the street. From 1906 both areas were further developed so that they merged. There was also some back-land development in addition to development on the street. Post 1946, there has been considerable infilling throughout the settlement including a cul de sac, Manor Park. There are a mixture of typologies from modern semis to terraced cottages and town houses.</p>
<p><b>Access, green infrastructure, active travel and open space</b></p>	<p>Clyst is served by the roads Bishops Clyst, Frog Lane and Manor Park. It is accessed via the A3052, south of the village and Bishops Clyst Lane, north of the village. The village is compact and permeable. It has a good sense of enclosure due to all primary elevations (2 storeys) facing the street. However there is a lack of street trees and soft landscaping within the village. Two green spaces exist east of the village, one next to the primary school however it's not clear whether this is publicly accessible. Another large plot of green space exists next to the Village Hall with play equipment and a football pitch. There is surrounding countryside to the north of the village, but the green space to the south is severed by the A3052. There is just one narrow pedestrian bridge to access the area to the south which first leads the pedestrian along the A3052 rather than directly into the Winslade Estate. This bridge also provides access to cycles and buggies however there are no designated cycle lanes. West of the village lies the ancient Clyst St Mary Bridge which was the main road into Exeter until the by-pass was built. It is now a pedestrian and cycleway leading to the A376 (PRoW - see glossary). There are bus stops on the A3052.</p>
<p><b>Views and landmarks</b></p>	<p>Glimpsed views of the vernacular buildings along the two main streets provide characterful views, such as views of the Half Moon Inn and 28 Bishops Clyst. Views from Clyst St Mary bridge across the floodplain and long range views from the plateau behind Clyst St Mary village.</p>
<p><b>Architecture and details</b></p>	<p>This area comprises the historic core of the village of Clyst St Mary. The buildings include the school, public house and various residential buildings comprising former farmhouses and rows of cottages. The earliest buildings are of 16th and 17th Century date, while most date to the 19th Century. Many of the buildings are of plastered cob and tile roof construction, with some red brick, mostly towards the northern end of the village.</p>



Map 07: Nolli map

<p><b>Architecture and details</b></p>	<p>An early building in the village is Craig's Cottages, a row of late 16th Century cottages. The cottages are of rough-cast cob on stone footings with a gabled slate roof and consist of two storeys. The main front comprises a seven-window range, with 20th Century windows. A 17th Century window survives to the rear of no.3, which is a three-light timber window. South of these cottages are further post-medieval houses. Myrtle Cottage is a Grade II listed, early 19th Century house. It consists of two storeys of plastered cob with a gabled tile roof with crested ridge tiles. The south front comprises four bays with an entrance to the third bay, with a porch with moulded entablature and clustered columns. The windows comprise tall, 19th Century two-light casements with hood mouldings. There are two gables to the south-front, which were formerly weather-boarded, and now covered by tiles. Directly west of Myrtle Cottage is 28 Bishops Clyst a further cottage in the row. The building is similarly two storeys of plastered cob, with a pantile roof. The south front comprises two bays with a round-arched entrance to the left and two-light casements to the right, with pointed arch patterned glazing bars. There is also a dormer window to the right bay. Towards the centre of the village is the Maltster's Arms a possibly 16th Century public house with later alterations. The building is of plastered cob on stone footings with brickwork to the rear and a gabled slate roof. The building is two storeys with a three bay south front. There is a central doorway under a moulded canopy on console brackets and approached by three steps. To the left of the entrance is a three-light casement and to the right is a bay window. The first floor has three sash windows. Towards the northern end of the village is Newhouse a possibly 17th Century farmhouse with later alterations, and now two houses. The building is of red brick on a Heavitree stone plinth and a hipped slate roof. The building consists of two storeys, and the south front has a regular four-window range with late 20th Century casement windows to first floor and three casement windows to ground floor. The doorway is under a lean-to porch. Many of the houses to the northern end of the village are red brick detached buildings.</p>
<p><b>Materials</b></p>	<p>Rough-cast cob, Heavitree stone, slate, crested ridge tiles, pantiles, red brick.</p>
<p><b>Building modifications, extension &amp; conversion</b></p>	<p>Compared to Sowton (which has Conservation Area status), Clyst has substantial modification in terms of its historic street scene. This ranges from modern infilling to replacement uPVC windows. Listed buildings have fared better in terms of sensitive renovation. There is not much evidence of extensions which are visible on the street and new builds tend to be good quality.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and building performance, waste, recycling and utilities</b></p>	<p>Recent insulated cavity constructed properties with high performing R-value uPVC windows, will out perform older solid stone wall buildings however uPVC windows do detract from historic assets/ settings. Slimline double glazed hardwood windows or powder coated aluminium windows with similar profiles to historic windows are preferred to uPVC, listed buildings excepted (please refer to local policy). Examples of older cob/ brick/ stone buildings will have poor performance, albeit some have been upgraded with external insulation or an external insulated masonry skin retrospectively. PV usage across the settlement is limited to just a few properties.</p>



**Figure 27:** Modern infill and building modifications such as uPVC windows have eroded the streetscene.



**Figure 28:** Another example of building modifications specifically uPVC windows have eroded the historic streetscene.



**Figure 29:** Care needs to be taken when designing car parking within developments. Hard landscaping needs to be minimised in favour of permeable surfaces, soft landscaping can improve the biodiversity as well as outlook for residents and parking should always be to the rear of developments to improve the streetscene.



**Figure 30:** Better example of replacement windows - white hardwood (slimline double glazed preferable) or powder coated aluminium with similar profile to historic windows. NB please consult your local authority for any changes to a listed building.



## CA3 - Post War

<p><b>Pattern and layout of buildings</b></p>	<p>Winslade Park to the south of CA3 is post-medieval and in the early 19th Century consisted of a Winslade House, St. Mary's Church, the Rectory and what appears to be a collection of farmhouses and perhaps tenant farmer houses. The buildings were located directly beside the road with no frontage. Roof ridge-lines follow the east/west linear settlement alignment. Most development has occurred along the primary access road, Church Lane. 20th Century development in this area retains the 3 historic buildings mentioned above but Winslade Park is now a modern commercial development. The north of CA3 is dominated by the 1960s and there is a 21st Century housing estate, Greenspire (north of A3052) developed as a cul de sac masterplan. Severance by the A3052 and A376 impacted the way the settlement developed to the north, however it is likely that these roads and the original 1960s settlement were developed at the same time when urban design principles were not at the forefront of Highways and Planning.</p>
<p><b>Access, green infrastructure, active travel and open space</b></p>	<p>Access to the area is east and west via Church Lane and the A376 respectively. The cul-de-sac layout of Greenspire development to the north is pretty insular with poor connectivity and relationship to adjoining roads, the rest of the neighbourhood and the nearby village of Clyst St Mary. Houses on the perimeter have their backs to the surrounding roads. The cul de sac layout severs vehicular connectivity particularly north to the village of Clyst St Mary. There is a footpath from Winslade Park Avenue through to the A3052 which can be used by both pedestrians and cyclists. From here there is a Pelican crossing over the A3052 and a pavement along the stretch of the A3052 leading to Clyst St Mary village entrance. This is part of a local cycle route identified by Travel Devon, Devon County Council. The settlement has a leafy feel, owing to the mature trees and hedgerows surrounding the perimeter of CA3 and within, particularly at the bottom of Church Lane and in the centre on Grindle Way. The generous front gardens and hedges add to this. There is also an open green space to the west of CA3 which has tennis courts and the football pitch however it is not very accessible from the housing development. It appears more connected to Winslade Park. This is a commercial venture offering leisure facilities and office space. The surroundings of St. Mary's Church also offers open space. Within Greenspire there is a central open space surrounded by a crescent of detached homes which works well, however the open space to the front of the development on Lower Hill Head Road is less well considered.</p>
<p><b>Views and landmarks</b></p>	<p>The land is quite flat and views of the landscape are visible from all around. Notable views are on Grindle Way looking north at the mature tree in front of 11 Grindle Way but also looking south on Grindle Way at the cluster of trees around Winslade Park. Views within Winsdale Park include views of Winslade House, St. Mary's Church, the Rectory on Church Lane as well as views looking across the open space to the west on Exmouth Road. The hedgerows and stone walls on Church Lane are also of note.</p>



Map 08: Nolli map

<p><b>Architecture and details</b></p>	<p>Earlier surviving buildings include the Grade II listed Woodlands and Trudgeon Farmhouse at the north-west edge of the village. Trudgeon Farmhouse (NHLE 1143996) was built in the early 19th Century of granite with stone dressings and a hipped slate roof with ridge tiles. Woodlands (NHLE 1312535) is also of early 19th Century date, constructed of granite rubble with brick dressings and a half-hipped slate roof. The building consists of two storeys with a symmetrical three bay front. The northern end of the village includes 20th Century houses, comprising a mix of two storey houses and bungalows, most of which are rendered and have concrete tile roofs with gable ends.</p> <p>The houses to the north of the A3052 in Greenspire are recent 2 storey detached, semi-detached and terrace housing. Some have dormers in the roof. South of the A3052 are mid 20th Century detached one and two storey buildings on large plots with generous front and back gardens.</p> <p>There are two lodges associated with the post-medieval Winslade Park located at the northern end of the area. White Lodge, a Grade II* listed building built in 1812, is a single storey classical style lodge of stucco. It comprises three symmetrical bays with a central entrance with a pediment under a pedimented portico supported by paired Doric columns. Large 16-pane sash windows are located either side of the entrance. An entablature with a cornice and triglyphs in frieze continues around the whole building, and both ends of the north front are projected with paired Doric columns. To the east is Red Lodge, Grade II listed, a mid-19th Century single storey lodge in Heavitree stone with a slate hipped roof and 2 light casement windows. The building has overhanging eaves and the gable ends of the roof wings have exposed rafters.</p> <p>Winslade Park lies at the southern end of the area. Within the former park is a Grade II* listed mansion built c.1800. The building comprises three storeys in a rectangular plan with orange sandstone rendering and a hipped slate roof. The north entrance front comprises five symmetrical bays, with a central portico with coupled Doric columns set on panelled plinth. The windows are all four-pane sashes, and the ground floor windows have pediments above. The building is now part of a modern business park. The modern buildings are late 20th Century commercial buildings with 21st Century adaptations, low scale (similar height to Winslade House).</p> <p>The Grade II listed Church of St Mary is located to the north of Winslade Park house. The church is of 13th and 15th Century date with 19th Century extensions. The church is of blocked stucco with a slate roof, in a cruciform plan and consists of a west tower, nave, chancel, transepts and a north-east vestry. The church is surrounded by a graveyard, raised from the surrounding land and bordered by a rubble stone wall. North-east of the church is the former rectory, the Grade II listed Grindle House. The house is of rough-rendered brick with a gabled slate roof and double chimney stacks and comprises two storeys. The south front consists of five symmetrical bays, with a central porch with Tuscan columns to flat entablature. The windows are all 12-pane sashes, and there is a parapet above.</p>
<p><b>Materials</b></p>	<p>Historic buildings are constructed using sandstone, render, stucco, slate and rough rendered brick. 20th Century detached houses are in brick, partial render, timber cladding, and concrete tile roofs. Langdon Way is render, red brick, timber cladding and slate roofs.</p> <p>Boundary walls on Church Lane consist of red brick and stone.</p>

<p><b>Building modifications, extension &amp; conversion</b></p>	<p>Examples of modifications and leisure and office building conversions mainly relate to heritage building stock. Grade II* Winslade House has been recently renovated and converted into a leisure and commercial space. Grade II listed Grindle House has also recently been renovated with new render.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and building performance, waste, recycling and utilities</b></p>	<p>Newer properties built to a higher performance will improve the overall energy efficiency of Bishop Clyst. Heritage buildings must sensitively balance energy performance whilst maintaining heritage value.</p>



**Figure 31:** Typical examples of recent development in Greenspire with mix of materials - red brick, render, wooden cladding and slate.



**Figure 32:** Typical example of mid 20th Century detached bungalow south of A3052 with mix of materials from local vernacular - red brick, stone, slate would be better than concrete tile. Also note generous front gardens and soft landscaping which improves amenity and biodiversity.



**Figure 33:** Re-rendered grade II listed building Grindle House on Church Lane.



**Figure 34:** Grade II\* listed Winslade House on right next to modern commercial development.



**Figure 35:** Grade II listed Church of St Mary with modern commercial buildings in the background. A more sensitive development may have been a traditional, local vernacular building with pitched roofs, red brick or stone.

A photograph of a row of white houses with red-tiled roofs and brick chimneys. The houses are set against a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. In the foreground, there are green bushes and a sidewalk. A large green circle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text 'Design guidance & codes' and the number '04'.

**Design guidance & codes**

**04**

## 4. Design guidance & codes

This section sets out the principles that will influence the design of potential new development and inform the retrofit of existing properties in the Neighbourhood Area. Where possible, local images are used to exemplify the design guidelines and codes.

### 4.1 Introduction

This section is divided into two parts. The first is a set of key elements to consider when assessing a design proposal. These are presented as general questions which should be addressed by developers and their design teams who should provide clarification and explanation as necessary.

The second part is the design guidance and codes, setting out the expectations of the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area. The elements that are more general are what we mean by design guidelines. Other elements that are more prescriptive or set out parameters are the design codes. The design codes are set out as 'Area-wide Design Principles' and 'Character Area Specific Design Principles' to ensure codes are adaptable to the unique characteristics of the NP Area. Area-wide principles apply to the entire NP Area.

The Area-Wide Design Guidance should apply to any development outside the Character Areas and the Design Codes for adjacent Character Areas should also

be referred to. Images have been used to reflect good precedent and demonstrate design issues for consideration.

The guidance advocates for character-led design which responds to, and enhances the landscape and village-scape character. It is important that new development responds to local context and enhances the "sense of place" whilst meeting the aspirations of residents.

This document focuses on residential development only, considering the local pattern of streets, the spatial layout of buildings, the spaces around buildings, construction traditions, materiality and the natural environment. Highlighting these to help determine the character and identity of new development, whilst recognising that new construction technologies can deliver good design also with enhanced building performance.

## 4.2 General design considerations

This section sets out a series of general design principles followed by questions against which the development proposals should be evaluated.

As an initial appraisal, there should be evidence that development proposals have considered and applied the following general design principles:

- 1 Development should demonstrate synergy with, and be complimentary to, existing settlement in terms of physical form, movement/access and land use type;
- 2 Development should relate sensitively to local heritage buildings, topography/landscape features, countryside setting and long-distance views;
- 3 Development should reinforce or enhance the established character of the settlement;
- 4 Development should integrate with existing access; public rights of way (PRoW), streets, circulation networks and understand use;
- 5 Development should explore opportunities for new development to enhance access to public green space, to reflect settlement needs;
- 6 Development should reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness, avoiding pastiche replication;
- 7 Redevelopment of heritage buildings including farms should aim to conserve as many vernacular features as is practicable;

- 8 Development should retain and incorporate important existing landscape and built-form features into the development which add richness;
- 9 Building performance in terms of 'conservation of heat and fuel' over-and-above building regulations, should be a key design driver for new development;
- 10 Development should respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- 11 Development should adopt contextually appropriate materials and construction details. Embodied carbon toolkits should act as a guide to material specification;
- 12 Development should ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access and parking relate well to each other; to provide safe, connected and attractive spaces;
- 13 Net Zero aims should be integrated and development should adopt low energy and energy generative technologies within the development at the start of the design process; and
- 14 Development should use nature-based water management solutions/ SuDS (see glossary) to manage on-site water and boost biodiversity habitat.



#### 4.2.1 Key points to consider when assessing planning applications

The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should demonstrate evidence to show how the design proposal or masterplan has responded to the context and provided an adequate design proposal.

The following fundamental questions should be used to evaluate the quality and appropriateness of development proposals within the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area:

##### **Pattern and layout of buildings**

What are the essential spatial characteristics of the existing development area and street pattern; are these reflected in the new proposed development?

Are building densities appropriate for the development area?

Is the plot to development ratio in-keeping/ appropriate for the location?

How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

Does the proposal respect, incorporate and enhance local landscape features including topographic features and hydrology?

How does the proposal relate to its setting? Have important physical and visual assets been identified and does the design respect these assets?

If the design is within or adjacent to a heritage/designated landscape asset, have all elements which contribute to their significance been considered and respected in the new proposal? And does the new proposal preserve or enhance the setting of the asset? (Heritage assets include listed buildings and designated landscape assets include Ancient Woodland and SSSI etc).

##### **Access**

Does it favour accessibility, permeability and connectivity? If cul-de-sac layouts are used, do they still allow pedestrian and cycle access?

Does the development promote active travel opportunities via building layouts, links/routes and practical equipment/spatial requirements?

Are new points of access appropriate in terms of visibility, patterns of movement, desire lines and road speed?

Do the new points of access and street layout pay regard to all users of the development; pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?

##### **Building heights and roofline**

Is the proposed new development building height appropriate for the location? Does it reflect the proximate scale of development and respect local area assets, existing development and views?

Does the proposed development height compromise the amenity/privacy of adjoining properties? Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens?

Does the height, form and massing of new buildings respond to contextual visual sensitivities, meaning views towards development from receptor areas?

If the proposal is an extension, is it subordinate to the existing property?

### **Building line and boundary treatment**

Does the proposal respect the existing building line/enclosure character and harmonise with the adjacent properties?

Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site? Have traditional Devon hedges been incorporated where possible?

### **Green spaces and street scape**

Has the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy been used to protect existing green infrastructure from development?

Have adequate protection measures been put in place to protect existing green infrastructure during construction?

Providing continuous green infrastructure linkages is vital for biodiversity. Do proposals enhance existing green corridors and biodiversity habitat networks?

Have the Green Infrastructure strategic objectives for East Devon been considered? (see Exeter & East Devon Green Infrastructure Strategy and Clyst Valley Regional Park 25 Year Masterplan in Appendix 1)

In rural and edge of settlement locations does the development negatively impact visual character or interrupt existing tranquility and has this been fully considered with sufficient mitigation included?

Is there adequate private/ communal amenity space for the development?

Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, has usage been considered? And are measures incorporated to successfully fund landscape maintenance work?

Have aspects of active and passive security been fully considered and integrated with development?

Is active travel promoted at street level, and does this connect to existing networks?

### **Views and landmarks**

What are the existing key views and visual landmarks in the area and have these been retained, incorporated or enhanced by the development proposal?

Does the development fall within any areas of key settlement views? How are these respected in the design?

Are new views of the existing settlement and surrounding area incorporated into the proposal?

## **Architectural details and materials**

Has the local geology and architectural character been reflected in contemporary or traditional design proposals?

Do the proposed materials harmonise with the local vernacular and geology? Are the construction details and materials of sufficient high quality?

Can local materials be specified to support local industry?

Has material specification considered user maintenance? Have appropriate materials been considered which provide longevity and robustness? Have developments in areas at risk of render staining considered appropriate alternative material finishes?

Does new development demonstrate strong design rationale, quality material specification and good detailing appropriate for the local climatic conditions?

Is building performance a priority, relating to Net Zero, running costs and user enjoyment?

Has a fabric first approach to energy efficiency been integrated as a primary design driver? Are there opportunities to improve the thermal performance of the building fabric and future proof development?

Have window, door, eave, verge and roof details been refined and considered in response to microclimates?

## **Parking and utilities**

Has adequate provision been made for car and cycle parking?

For appropriate housing typologies, are there opportunities to accommodate mobility vehicle storage areas?

Does new development include fast internet speeds and space to work from home?

Has adequate provision been made for bin storage, including areas for waste separation, holding and recycling?

Is the location of bin storage facilities appropriate in relation to the travel distance from the collection vehicle?

Has the design of bin storage facilities been fully considered; including the quality of materials and location?

Does the installation of utilities include appropriate access for maintenance/ servicing?

Does new design or development consider provision of utilities with respect to the future need to move towards a carbon neutral environment, for example provision of electric car charging points including the needs of existing properties?

Is the use of renewable energy and energy saving/efficient technologies encouraged and maximised? Are these technologies well integrated?

Does the lighting strategy reflect the strategy of the settlement for both private and public lighting applications?

## 4.3 Design codes

# Design Code 01

## Pattern and layout of buildings

### Area-wide Design Principles

1. Development should adopt the predominant enclosure and density characteristics demonstrated in the surrounding context or evolve the design to create spatial placemaking improvements;
2. New development should be designed to be permeable, with new development roads providing strategic function to settlement users. The use of cul-de-sacs which do not loop should be resisted;
3. Development should provide space to design-in non-vehicular permeable access such as pavements and access tracks which connect to existing PRowS or other active travel assets to provide route option;
4. Development building layouts should integrate contextual views where possible, and there should be adequate provision to create habitat corridors or nature-based engineering solutions for water management;
5. Development layouts should incorporate space to sort and store waste bins/recycling bins to prevent bins impacting the street scene;



**Figure 36:** View of linear development along the main road and centre of Clyst St Mary.

6. Development masterplans should be considered strategically at settlement level, not in isolation. Contextual analysis should explore opportunities to integrate elements which improve settlement functions and placemaking for residents;
7. Edges of developments should be highly considered. Development should engage/mesh with existing development edges and building elevations should project an attractive and positive frontage;
8. Edge of settlement development should gradually transition to the surrounding landscape context;
9. New development layouts should respond to site specific microclimates to harness opportunities to improve thermal efficiency, reduce energy consumption and increase the environmental comfort for building users, both internally and externally; and
10. Masterplans should design-in passive surveillance for enhanced security, particularly relating to streets, pedestrian/bicycle access, play and parking areas.



**Figure 37:** Edge development in Clyst St Mary.

# Pattern and layout of buildings

## Character Area Specific Design Codes

### CA1 - Sowton

Building lines should be formal and development should mix housing typologies, comprising terraces in short rows (max. 5 houses), semi-detached and detached housing. Typology zones/ areas or mono-typology developments should be resisted. The space between neighbouring developments is important so generous plots are required. Cul-de-sacs are not suitable



Example street composition, mixed housing typologies, with generous building gaps and buildings fronting the road with subtle variations in the set back distance of the building line.

### CA2 - Clyst St Mary

Strong enclosure character should be created by building presence and a visible relationship with streets. There should be a mix of typologies, reflecting existing typology examples i.e. detached, semi-detached and terraced.



High enclosure of the main road through Cyst St Mary with linear development often fronting directly onto the pavement.

### CA3 - Post War

New development should provide front gardens and on-plot parking spaces. The impact of cars on the streetscape should be minimised through use of landscaping and soft boundary treatments. Frontages should orientate onto the street; layouts where houses back onto surrounding roads, such as in the development to the north, must be avoided.



Example of the lack of relationship with the street in the cul-de-sac development in the north of the settlement area.

# Design Code 02

## Access, green infrastructure, active travel and open space

### Area-wide Design Principles

1. Developments should be informed by biodiversity habitat connectivity and Biodiversity Net Gain requirements, with masterplans developed around the retention of existing green infrastructure elements (mitigation hierarchy);
2. Biodiversity Net Gain requirements should be delivered on-site only;
3. Opportunities to integrate Devon Hedges which are a traditional feature of Devon's landscape should be used as in-keeping boundaries which provide ecological networks;
4. Turf with plastic netting should not be specified;
5. Contextually appropriate species should be used, with schemes designed to thrive in the micro-climates of Devon and soils specific to the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area;
6. New development planting should be cognisant of, and resilient to climate change;
7. Nature based solutions, including SuDS water management should be integrated and used to deliver new development;
8. Opportunities to connect development to existing PRoW should be explored to help boost settlement active travel options;



**Figure 38:** Sensitive new development (top photo) in terms of traditional architecture and village green. Local vernacular materials - red brick, render, slate; windows and dormers in proportion. Add on chimneys should be avoided in favour of full length red brick chimneys on the gable end wall (bottom photo).

9. Any traffic calming measures should integrate SuDS or green infrastructure;
10. Development-to-plot ratios should reflect existing nearby ratios;
11. In Sowton, tree planting to assist the Clyst Valley Regional Park's goal of trebling tree canopy cover in the Clyst Valley should be considered and contributed to;
12. New development should incorporate bolt-on features to assist biodiversity including bat bricks, bird boxes (BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes) and hedgehog gravel boards; and
13. Open space, play spaces, community allotments or orchards should be explored and integrated to meet community needs.



**Figure 39:** Example of tree lined road in Sowton.



**Figure 40:** Street trees along residential road in post-war development character area.

# Access, green infrastructure, active travel and open space

## Character Area Specific Design Codes

### CA1 - Sowton

New development should incorporate a combination of garden frontages, green infrastructure and strong linear boundaries used to soften the street scene. Tree planting/ linear soft landscaping is important in the development plots, especially at the front. Car parking should not be visible from the street.



Example of the high levels of soft landscaping of existing front boundaries along linear plots in Sowton.

### CA2 - Clyst St Mary

The compact and permeable nature of Clyst St Mary should be retained and emulated by any new development. Development should take opportunities to increase biodiversity in the area through use of native trees and landscaping and to improve pedestrian connection into the countryside and surrounding settlement areas, such as Winslade Park Avenue south of the A3052.



Lack of green space and landscaping in a new development in Clyst St Mary.

### CA3 - Post War

New development should prioritise functional well-connected developments for both vehicular and non-vehicular means that reflect the original settlement character and overall spatially generous character of the area. The green, leafy feel of the settlement should be maintained and added to by new development, through proposal of street trees and hedgerow boundaries.



Example of the tree cover and hedgerow boundaries which contribute to a green, leafy feel in the settlement.

# Design Code 03

## Views and landmarks

### Area-wide Design Principles

1. New development should be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts on surrounding contextual views;
2. New development should respect existing views of landscape or heritage assets and integrated as placemaking elements within new development;
3. New development should demonstrate robust visibility analysis, and use this to inform development masterplans which aim to blend development within its surroundings;
4. Settlement edges should transition gradually using mitigation planting, development layouts and materiality to break-up development massing;
5. Densification at strategic locations next to existing development but avoiding other policies such as green belt, AONB (see glossary) etc should be encouraged, thus preserving greenfield areas from development sprawl;
6. Resident privacy should be designed into new development and care should be taken maintain the privacy of existing developments; and
7. Passive views can provide natural surveillance and security for development. Designers should use this concept, particularly towards streets, pedestrian access, open space, play and parking areas.



**Figure 41:** Carefully consider access points to new developments avoiding space left over and plots for car parking only. Consider instead car parking spaces designed more efficiently into hard landscaping throughout the site maximising soft landscaping and useable shared open space as much as possible



**Figure 42:** Views across surrounding countryside to Grade I listed Bishops Court.

# Views and landmarks

## Character Area Specific Design Codes

### CA1 - Sowton

Sowton has a strong mix of long distance views into the countryside to the south and east and historic architectural street interest which can be built upon and fused into modern development. The setting of, and short distance towards, historic landmark features in the village, such as the parish Church should be retained and, where possible, enhanced as part of new developments.



Example of long distance views south through generous development gaps along Sowton Lane.

### CA2 - Clyst St Mary

The winding nature of the principle route through Clyst St Mary & Sowton results in glimpsed views of vernacular buildings at corner junctions such as the Half Moon Inn. Any new development should not impede on these important glimpsed views as well as long distance views across the valley of the River Clyst to the north and west of the village. Entry points and backdrops should be carefully considered to maximise sense of place.



Example of unfolding views down linear roads characteristic of Clyst St Mary.

### CA3 - Post War

Views to heritage assets including Winslade House, St Mary's Church and the Rectory should be retained and integrated into any new development and gaps for both these views within the settlement as well as out into surrounding landscape should be provided. Development should be cognisant of the areas visibility and utilise subtle form and massing with mitigation planting where appropriate.



Example of the north settlement visibility in views from Clyst St Mary village.

# Design Code 04

## Architecture and details

### Area-wide Design Principles

1. New development should respond to the scale and form of existing buildings, with internal sizing generous and appropriate for modern use;
2. Architectural design should demonstrate design lineage derived from existing high-quality vernacular examples;
3. Architectural variety should be integrated, demonstrated as forms respond to areas of site topography, features and microclimates;
4. Amenity and privacy of residents is important, for example overlooking from balconies and roof terraces should be resisted;.
5. Buildings should be sited to articulate and create development area 'gateways', create enclosure and accord with settlement character;
6. Frontage variation (set back) should be used and designed as an urban design control tool, providing enclosure and focus or creating expansion and space where appropriate;



**Figure 43:** Good example of public realm - Grass verges, trees, green hedged boundary to each property. Raised surfaces on the highway slow traffic and create a feeling of safety/ "home-zone". Sufficient "defensible space" in front of properties. Natural surveillance from properties on to street also improves safety.

1. Traditional two storey pitched roofed houses should continue to be the predominant typology, however developments should comprise mixed typologies;
2. Flat roofs for buildings, extensions, garages, dormer windows and porches should be avoided. However, flat roofs with ecological green/brown roofs may be acceptable;
3. Net Zero building efficiency focused on the conservation of heat and fuel should be a key development design driver;
4. Chimney inclusion should be cognisant of Net Zero and sustainability targets. If chimneys are included, chimney height should be proportionate to the dwelling. Chimney position and height should consider neighbouring property window locations and prevailing winds; and
5. Flood resilience must be integrated into new development through a combination of passive and active control measures. For buildings, boundary walls, gates, thresholds, plinths, lower storey facades must be cognisant and respond to the elevated flood risk.



**Figure 44:** Good example of new developments and mix of materials including red brick, render and slate. Weather boarding adds a different texture but arguably is not a local vernacular material. Perhaps hanging tiles instead.



**Figure 45:** Tile pattern and roof detailing, Sowton.

# Architecture and details

## Character Area Specific Design Codes

### CA1 - Sowton

New development must demonstrate synergy to the local context through design lineage derived from the cottage and farmhouse vernacular character such as window proportions, rooflines or materials. Scale and massing of new development should be consistent with existing buildings to not overwhelm the Conservation Area. Design features such as dormers should take account of local context and roof lines for example by incorporating more glazing and low profile sides 'slim cheeks'. Materials in keeping with the local context should be used for example zinc or lead dressings and painted hard wood casement windows.



Some examples of characterful details include eyebrow dormers, vertically proportioned framing of windows, pitched roof porches and brick chimney stacks.

### CA2 - Clyst St Mary

New development should be in similar scale and mass to existing development and fit into local context for example window proportions, rooflines, boundary treatments, as well as materials to preserve the character of the village.



Example of a street facing building elevation where windows scale is out of character with local vernacular.

### CA3 - Post War

New development must demonstrate improved lineage with the architecture of the local vernacular, including the frontage relationship to street, form, scale, fenestration pattern and size and overall materiality, though contemporary design should be embraced. All roofs of the primary and subordinate parts of the dwelling must be pitched, unless a flat ecological green/ brown roof is specified.



Recent precedent for flat roof extensions is a good opportunity to improve design quality, water management, thermal performance and habitat via specification or green or brown ecological roofs.

# Design Code 05

## Materials

### Area-wide Design Principles

1. On exposed building elevations subject to prevailing winds, rain and also sunlight materials should be considered carefully and appropriate façade treatments specified to provide resilience. In the case of sunlight, elevations should be designed to provide shading where needed for example by using external shading and recessed design on balconies, as well as maximising on beneficial solar gain;
2. Materials should be specified that ensure longevity. The preference for locally sourced materials should be encouraged;
3. Net Zero should be a key specification consideration. Green guides should be used to source sustainable products and calculate emissions;
4. Stone construction is seen across the Neighbourhood Area and stone should continue to be specified which reflects the local geological character. Reconstituted stone or stone slips should be avoided. Instead, where the local stone is no longer available, good quality, close match or smaller amounts of stone can be used.
5. Traditional/innovative ways of building with cob or the use of straw bale construction should be encouraged;
6. Alternative materials can also be explored in particular in relation to using less concrete for example timber crib or gabions (filled with local stone);



**Figure 46:** The use of uPVC and the different styles of windows has eroded the historic features on this row of terraces. Going forward traditional wooden sash windows should be encouraged and uPVC with out of proportion profiles and imitation leaded lights avoided.

7. Slate tiles accord with local character;
8. Innovation which explores the integration of green/brown roofs should also be encouraged;
9. Windows size should be generous and facades should have balanced fenestration rhythm;
10. Contextually appropriate boundaries, including properly constructed Devon hedges or stone walls should be used; and
11. Traditional or natural materials are most appropriate for soffits or verge cappings.



**Figure 47:** Red brick combined with local sandstone, Clyst St Mary.



**Figure 48:** Care should be taken to ensure that materials and the window compositions do not detract from the historic building or Conservation Area. uPVC should be avoided on windows, guttering and barge boards in favour of more traditional materials such as white painted wood for windows/barge boards and black painted metal for rainwater goods. Use casement or sash windows and avoid modern window proportions. New dormer windows should match the existing context so in this example, brick facing, larger casement windows, similar or no barge boards and lead cheeks may have preserved and enhanced the Conservation Area better. Red brick combined with local sandstone, Clyst St Mary.

# Materials

## Character Area Specific Design Codes

### CA1 - Sowton

New development must maintain material synergy with the existing material and colour palette and use high quality materials. Roofs should use materials which fit into the local context for example slate, thatch and clay tiles. Replacement of traditional timber windows with uPVC alternatives should be resisted. Both stone and brick boundary walls are an important feature and should be maintained and, where necessary, enhanced.



Example of brick boundary wall, and neighbouring sandstone and rendered facades with thatched roofs; all part of the wide range of materiality in Sowton.

### CA2 - Clyst St Mary

New development must be informed by material and colour palette of the local vernacular which includes, red brick, rough-cast cobb, slate, tiles and pantiles. Evolution is acceptable providing lineage is demonstrated and alternative materials are high quality. Use of natural stone and slate is seen throughout the village; reconstituted or imitation stone and artificial slate roofs in new development should be resisted.



View of linear development along the primary road in Clyst St Mary shows the variety of materials on frontages onto the street. Consistent building line, scale and fenestration pattern helps to unify the street.

### CA3 - Post War

New development must specify materials of high quality design and sustainability performance. Although contemporary as well as traditional design can be considered, care needs to be taken in the vicinity to listed buildings. Attempt to address the local context and use materials such as stucco, red brick, stone, render and slate.



Example of red brick and slate on Church Lane.

# Design Code 06

## Building modifications, extension & conversion

### Area-wide Design Principles

1. An extension can transform a property's appearance and increase its functionality. The design of extensions should therefore be used as an opportunity to enhance dwellings, and therefore extension type, position and materials should be considered robustly;
2. Extensions should always be subordinate and the original building should remain the dominant element regardless of the number of extensions;
3. The architectural style of an extension should accord with the host building, using the same or complimentary design language;
4. Modifications to existing buildings should preserve and if possible, enhance the existing building's architectural style;
5. The renovation of agricultural derelict or degrading properties should be encouraged as re-use is more sustainable and often provides more characterful development;
6. Extensions and plot infill should not cause unacceptable detriment to the privacy of neighbouring dwellings, the design should be cognisant of window position and rights to light;



**Figure 49:** New development onto an existing terrace - important to match window and door dimensions of neighbouring development as well as materials. It is good that the new development in this instance used wooden windows however it would have been better if they were painted white. The window proportions and where they are placed on the front elevation are also not quite correct. It is also peculiar why the new terrace has been set down from the eaves of the neighbouring terrace and not in line forming a continuous and uninterrupted terrace.

7. Mortars and renders should be specified carefully to ensure their suitability for use with all construction types;
8. The thermal upgrading of heritage assets is an important stage in renovation. Details should be cognisant of interstitial condensation risk;
9. Modern design with contrasting high-quality materials is often the best approach for extensions to listed or heritage buildings of significance, with clear definition between old and new. For more information see: <https://www.spab.org.uk/advice/alterations-and-extensions-listed-buildings>; and
10. External working from home office spaces should be well designed, provide enough natural light, be thermally efficient and secure.



**Figure 50:** Local example of rear extension in Sowton village, which perhaps could have used reclaimed red brick to blend better with the original building and historic wall.

A photograph of a stone building with a green circular overlay. The building has a stone wall, a window with white shutters, and a door. The green circle contains the text 'Deliverability' and '05' in white.

**Deliverability**

**05**

# 5. Deliverability

## 5.1 Delivery Agents

The Design Code will be a valuable tool for securing context-driven, high quality development in the Bishops Clyst Neighbourhood Area. It will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised here:

### Applicants, developers and landowners

As a guide to the community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.

Where planning applications require a Design and Access Statement, the Statement should explain how the Design Code has been followed.

### Local Planning Authority

As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications.

The Design Code should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.

### Parish Council

As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Code is followed.

### Community organisations

As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.

### Statutory consultees

As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

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# 7. Glossary

**Biodiversity Mitigation Hierarchy:** is a widely used framework that businesses, developers and ecologists can follow in their efforts to avoid, minimise, restore or offset biodiversity loss.

**AONB:** Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

**Building line:** The line formed by the frontages of buildings along a street.

**Built form:** Buildings and structures.

**Design lineage:** To demonstrate a continuation of design character through design evolution that is visibly traceable in appearance to the original building.

**Enclosure:** The use of buildings and structures to create a sense of defined space.

**Enclosure ratio:** The enclosure ratio details the spatial character of a street, calculated as the ratio between building façade height and width of street (elevation to elevation distance).

**Gateway:** The design of a building, site or landscape to symbolise an entrance or arrival to a specific location.

**Historic Environment Record:** A record held by the local authority of known archaeological sites,

historic buildings, and designed landscapes.

**Land Cover:** The surface cover of the land, usually expressed in terms of vegetation cover or lack of it. Related to but not the same as land use.

**Land Use:** What land is used for, based on broad categories of functional land cover, such as urban and industrial use and the different types of agriculture and forestry.

**Landscape:** An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

**Landscape Character:** A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

**Listed Building:** A listed building is one that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are three categories of listed buildings in the United Kingdom:

Grade I buildings, which are of exceptional interest, Grade II\* buildings, which are particularly important buildings and Grade II buildings, which are of special interest.

**National Character Area (NCA):** A National

Character Area is a natural subdivision of England based on a combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and economic activity. There are 159 NCAs and they follow natural, rather than administrative, boundaries.

**Net Zero:** The government is committed to reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This could be achieved in construction practices by encouraging renewable technologies like solar and heat pumps and sustainable urban drainage systems

**PRoW:** Public right of way

**Setting:** The context or environment in which something sits.

**SSSI:** Site of Special Scientific Interest

**SuDS:** Sustainable urban drainage. Used to slowdown the passage of water and often improve water quality.

**Vernacular:** The way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials and responding to local economic and social conditions.

# Appendix 1

## Existing policy, character assessments and design guidance

The following national level character assessments, management strategies and design guidance documents are relevant to the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area:

### 2014 National Character Assessment NCA Profile:148 Devon Redlands

NCA profiles are guidance documents which can help communities to inform their decision-making about the places that they live in and care for. The information they contain will support the planning of conservation initiatives at a landscape scale, inform the delivery of Nature Improvement Areas and encourage broader partnership working through Local Nature Partnerships



### 2021 - National Planning Policy Framework DLUHC

Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, NPPF Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being



## 2021 - National Design Guide DLUHC

The National Design Guide (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

## 2021 National Model Design Code DLUHC

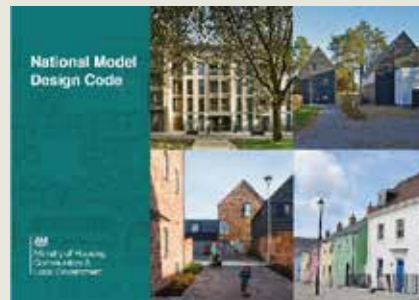
Provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide.

## 2020 - Building for a Healthy Life Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the crucial role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

## 2007 - Manual for Streets Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.



The following local level policy character assessments, management strategies and design guidance documents are relevant to the Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Area:

### **Clyst St Mary & Sowton Parish Plan and Design Statement**

#### **East Devon District Council**

Adopted in 2008, village design statements that have been adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the adopted East Devon Local Plan and will be taken into account in determining planning applications across the district..

#### **Local Plan 2013 - 2031**

#### **East Devon District Council**

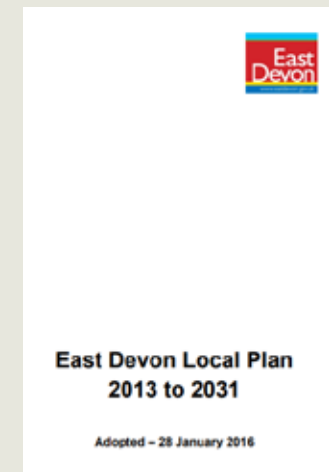
Adopted in January 2016, it provides a planning policy framework for East Devon up to 2031.

### **Clyst St Mary & Sowton Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031**

#### **Clyst St Mary & Sowton Parish Council**

Adopted Nov 2016

It represents the community's vision and priorities for how it would like to see the neighbourhood area change in the coming years.



## 2019 - East Devon and Blackdown Hills Landscape Character Assessment

The Landscape Character Assessment forms an easily understood, comprehensive and widely endorsed framework which will help to shape landscape-based projects across the area. This document facilitates the conservation and enhancement of these landscapes and their distinctive qualities, whilst accommodating people's needs, and responding to changes and pressures.

The Neighbourhood Area falls within the Clyst Lowland Farmlands Devon Character Area. Devon County Council describes this as being 'low lying, intensively farmed landscape with a

uniformity to its undulating topography'. Within these Character Areas there are 17 Landscape Character Types (LCT).

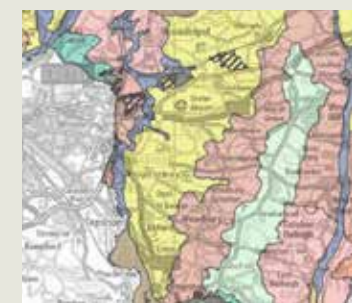
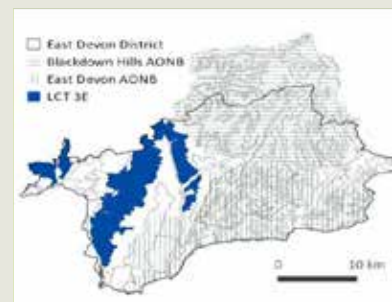
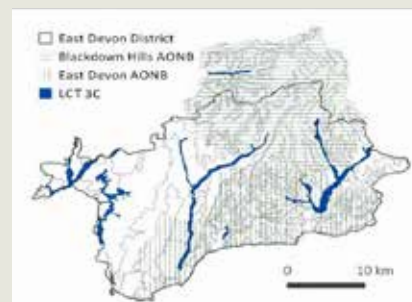
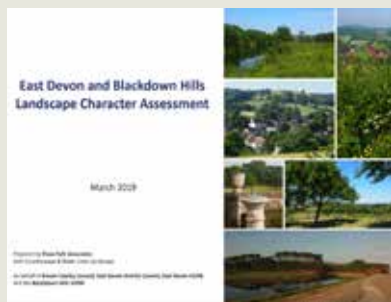
The LCT's relevant to this area are 3B 'Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Valley Slopes', 3C 'Sparsley Settled Farmed Valley Floors' and 3E 'Lowland Plains.'

LCT 3B occurs on the lower slopes of the valley sides, and is generally a medium scale landscape, often with long views. It is predominantly agricultural, with pastoral and arable land uses.

LCT 3C is associated with the main river valleys; in this case the River Clyst. It comprises the open, flat valley floors which often act as floodplains and which demonstrate active river processes such as meander formation.

The Assessment sets out that the Floodplains should remain largely free from development and planning for recreational use should respect and enhance the open character

LCT 3E comprises the gently sloping/ undulating land which surrounds the valley floors. Fertile red soils are a characteristic and are particularly noticeable where arable land use is dominant. There are surviving pockets of traditional orchards, and areas of pasture, paddocks and small woodlands. Fields are generally surrounded by wide hedgerows, often with mature hedgerow oaks, although some hedgerow loss has occurred. LCT 3E has a strong visual relationship with surrounding higher landscapes.



### 2009 - Green Infrastructure Strategy - Phase III

The Exeter & East Devon Green Infrastructure (GI) Study was published by the Exeter & East Devon Growth Point Team and its local partners in April 2009. The study established a vision and objectives for GI investment.

This strategy document is intended to provide greater detail in respect of specific opportunities to shape GI investment. These Character Areas there are 17 Landscape Character Types (LCT).

The LCT's relevant to this area are 3B 'Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Valley Slopes', 3C 'Sparsley Settled Farmed Valley Floors' and 3E 'Lowland Plains.'



### 2022 - Clyst Valley Regional Park 25 Year Masterplan

The Clyst Valley Regional Park is a protected Green-space originated from the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The purpose of this masterplan is to define a shared vision, objectives, and values as a platform for partnership in developing the Regional Park.

The masterplan will be a material consideration in assessing planning applications within the Clyst Valley Regional Park policy boundary.

