

Crockernwell



Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Dartmoor National Park Authority January 2011

Conservation Areas were introduced through the *Civic Amenities Act 1967*. Section 69 (1) (a) of the Act gives the definition of a Conservation Area as:

'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'

There are now over 9,000 Conservation Areas nation-wide. Local Planning Authorities are required to designate Conservation Areas, keep them under review, and if appropriate, designate further areas (Section 69 (2)). There are currently 23 Conservation Areas within Dartmoor National Park.

Designation brings certain duties to local planning authorities:

- ◆ to formulate and publish from time to time proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and submit them for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate (Section 71)
- ◆ in exercising their planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Areas (Section 72).

Conservation Area Character Appraisals aim to define and analyse the special interest which constitutes the character and appearance of a place. It is these qualities which warrant the designation of a Conservation Area.

An appraisal will provide a sound basis, defensible on appeal, for policies within the Local Development Framework and Development Management decisions. It can also form the groundwork for a subsequent **Conservation Area Management Plan**, which will contain defined issues, proposals and policies for the conservation and enhancement of the area. It is also intended that the document will be helpful to those involved in drawing up Enhancement Projects and Village Design Statements within the National Park area.

The main function of the Conservation Area Character Appraisal is to enable Dartmoor National Park Authority and the community to relate planning proposals to the Conservation Area.

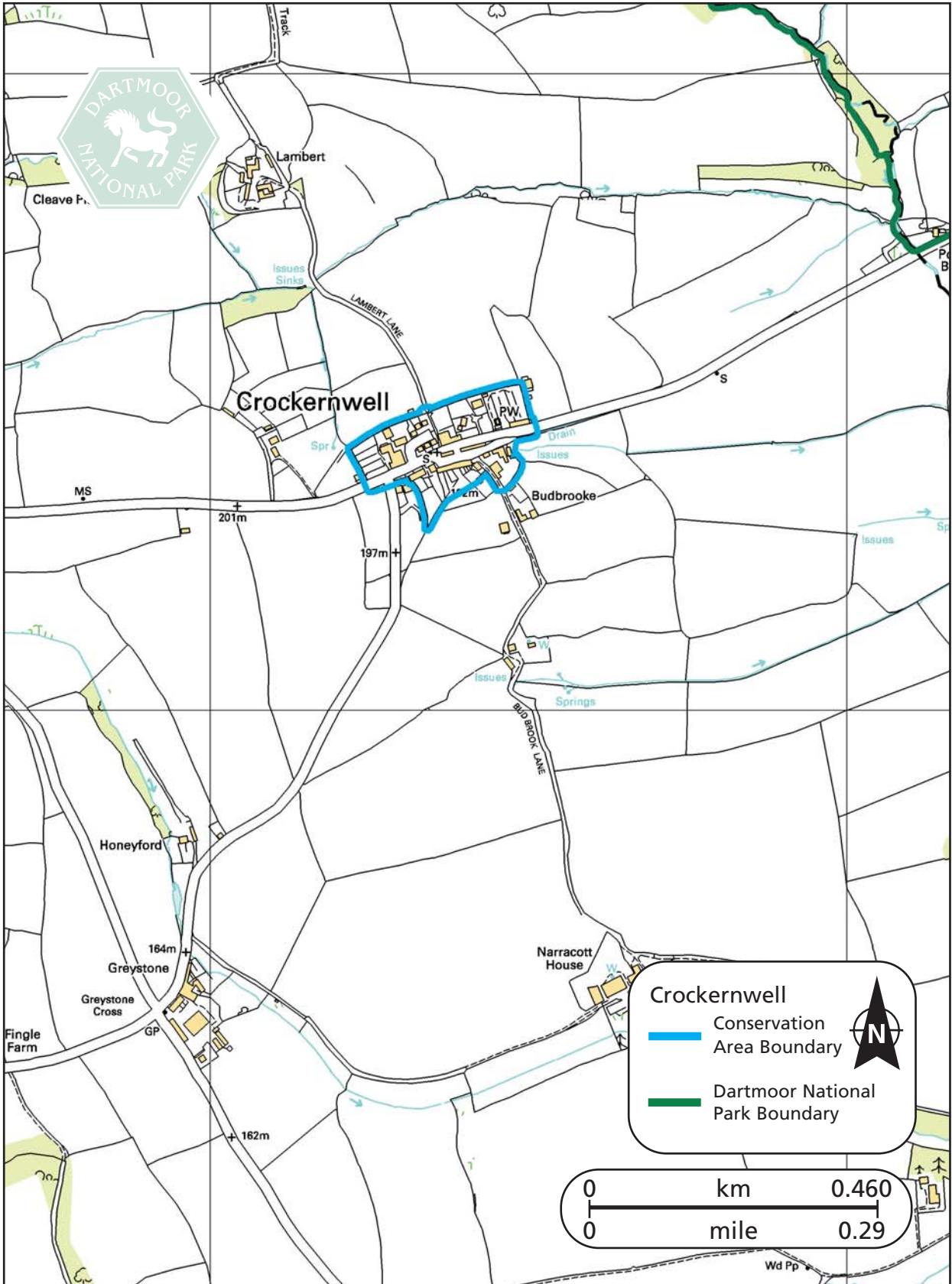
Defining the character of an area is not a straightforward exercise and it is not always possible to reach a truly objective view. The statement of character and appearance in this appraisal is based on various detailed methods of analysis recommended by English Heritage. A range of qualities are looked at including: historical development, building materials, and relationships between buildings and open spaces. However, character appraisals are not intended to be fully comprehensive and any omission does not imply that something is of no interest.

This Character Appraisal has benefited from several public consultations which have taken place through the Parish Council.

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Map 1 Conservation Area Location



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Introduction

The historic village of Crockernwell is located on the ancient ridgeway between Exeter and Okehampton, approximately 11 miles from each. For centuries this was a very important trade route – becoming the A30 in the last century. Although most traffic now uses the dual carriageway, the road still dominates Crockernwell and traffic speed can be a problem.

Located some distance from the granite mass of Dartmoor, the village is underlain by rocks of the Culm Measures.

Formerly, the settlement straddled the border of Cheriton Bishop and Drewsteignton parishes and this appears to have had an impact on the village's development over the centuries - possibly because its ownership was also split. In 1987, however, the parish boundaries were modified and since then it has been solely within the parish of Drewsteignton in West Devon District.

Until 1990, when an amendment was made, the settlement straddled the Dartmoor National Park boundary. The Conservation Area was originally designated in August 1993 and based on the findings of this Character Appraisal no changes to its boundary were considered appropriate [Map 1 page 4].

1 Village History

Crockernwell is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The name is possibly derived from *crock*, as in pot or vessel, so it may refer to a place where pots were made or found. Elements of the village plan suggest a phase of medieval planning, probably adding to an existing settlement. Despite the location on a main route, Crockernwell does not seem to have aspired to any status other than a small farming village and stopping off point. Unlike other settlements such as South Zeal and Sticklepath, there is no tangible evidence that a town was intended. As there is no documentary evidence either, it seems most likely that this was always a minor settlement.

It is known that a Chapel of Ease existed in the 14th century, though the location is uncertain. Holy Trinity Chapel is said to have been converted from 17th century cottages in the early 20th century, and has in recent years been converted back to a dwelling. There is a modern chapel to the north of the main road.

The earliest buildings date from the 16th and 17th centuries, others are of the 18th and 19th centuries. With increasing traffic on the improved turnpike road in the first half of the 19th century there was a demand for coaching facilities. Within years of the road improvement there were two substantial hostelries, The Royal Hotel and The Golden Lion, both located on the northern side of the road.



Fig 1 Chings Saddlers

Physical evidence tends to indicate that Crockernwell never really thrived as an agricultural settlement, although there are wealthy farms nearby. The reasons for this are not entirely clear. White's Directory of 1850 records only one tenant farmer, but there was an interesting range of other trades operating in Crockernwell. As well as the two inns and a Post Office/shop, there were coopers, blacksmiths, saddlers, butchers, masons carpenters, wheelwrights and boot/shoemakers. This all supports the impression of a village offering services to travellers and the local rural population. Several properties have larger windows that may have once been shop windows - although those at Chings Saddlers were inserted in place of garage doors.

2 Settlement Plan

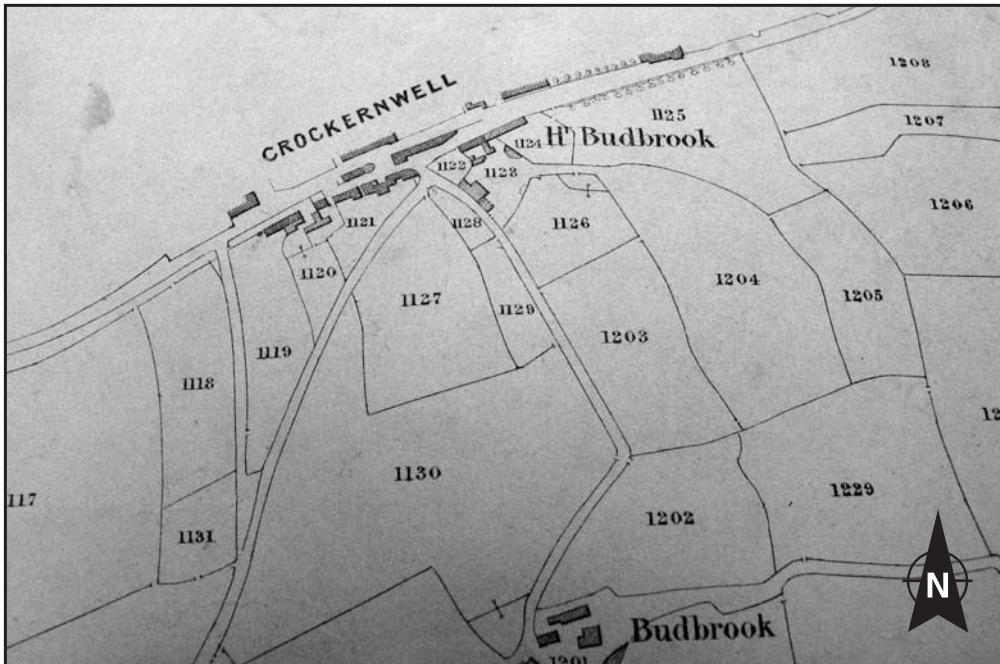
The plan is essentially linear and developed along the main road [Map 2 page 8]. There is an interesting island of development in the centre of Crockernwell that seems to be a product of 19th century road improvement. The central island properties are older and appear to relate to the rectangular plots to the north. The buildings on the north side of the main road were constructed during the 19th century, but interestingly they appear to still relate to these established plots.

The tithe map extracts [Map 2 page 8] indicate five plots, one split by the lane heading north. They are almost square and the dimensions suggest that they were planned as tofts and may date from medieval times. These may be considered the rural equivalent of the burgage plots seen in larger settlements (such as South Zeal) – the intention being that farmsteads would be established by tenants within the plots. The evidence from historic maps and standing buildings suggests that only the plots at the centre of the village were developed. It is possible, however, that there was abandonment of farmsteads and/or replacement with other uses – the former Royal Hotel could be an example of this. The clarity of this plan has been eroded by recent developments, especially Stanbury's Orchard where the former boundary between two putative tofts has been erased. Saddler's Close is built within another toft, as were Fordton Cottages in the 19th century.

The back lane immediately south of the main road, known as Stonelands, appears to have been the original through road. Consequently, the oldest buildings are found fronting this tight and curving stretch of road. After the insertion of the new road the cottages adjacent to Holy Trinity Chapel, and others like 2 Ducks Alley, seem to have taken the opportunity to enclose gardens on the former road. Conversely, Oak Beam Cottage remains unenclosed, as the tithe map indicates it was before the construction of the new road. The boundaries on the south side of the back lane have a strip-like appearance similar to burgage plots. This is, however, most likely coincidental and not indicative of medieval planning. It seems that the division of the settlement between two parishes, (and almost certainly different manors), does appear to have left a tangible legacy in the layout of Crockernwell.

Budbrook is an historic farm site and provides the only agricultural character in Crockernwell today. Part of the barn on the eastern side of the lane appears to be an historic structure of some antiquity. Lilac, Holly and Pilgrim Cottages were created from a former farmhouse. Apart from these the majority of dwellings in Crockernwell were cottages occupied by artisans and labourers.

Map 2 Tithe Map 1847



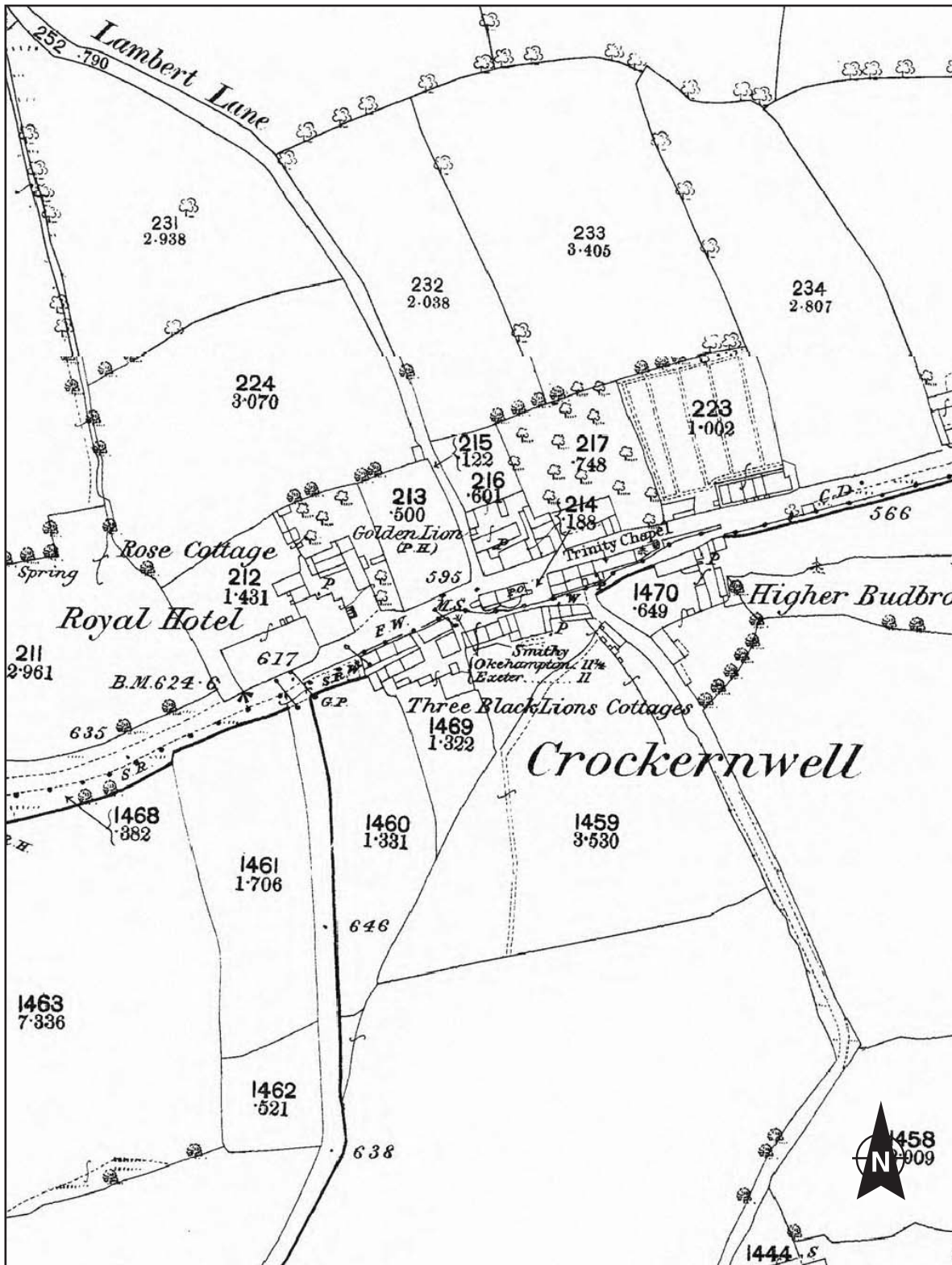
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Historical Footnote:

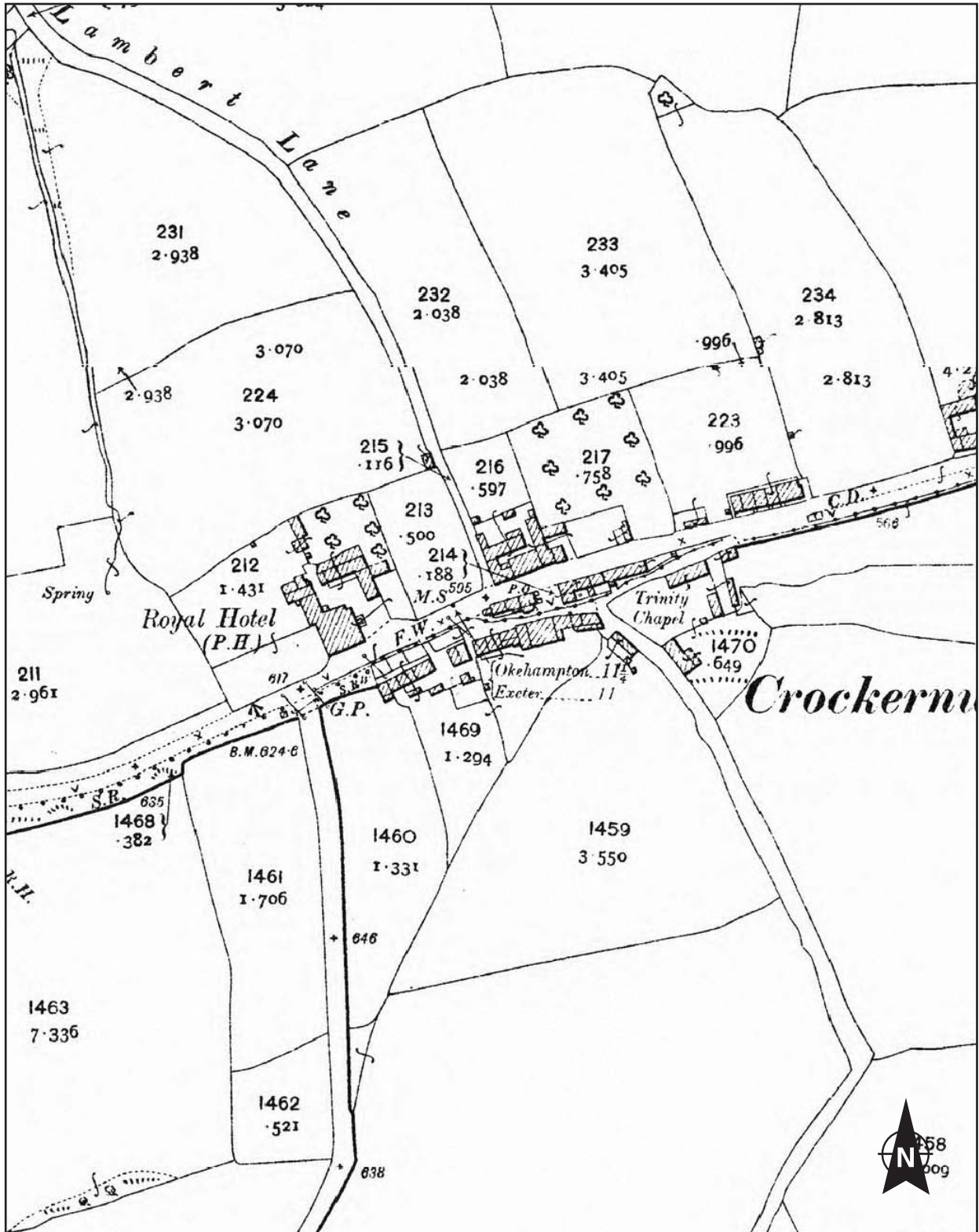
The tithe system provided the traditional means of supporting the clergy in England for many centuries. However, over time abuse of the system led to the *Tithe Commutation Act 1836* which empowered the newly formed Tithe Commission to commute tithes paid 'in kind' to an annual money payment. A Commutation Agreement required the creation of a large scale Map showing each plot of land in the tithe district and an accompanying Apportionment listing relevant details. The Tithe Act 1836 provided for the gradual redemption of all tithes by the end of the century.

Map 3 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1886



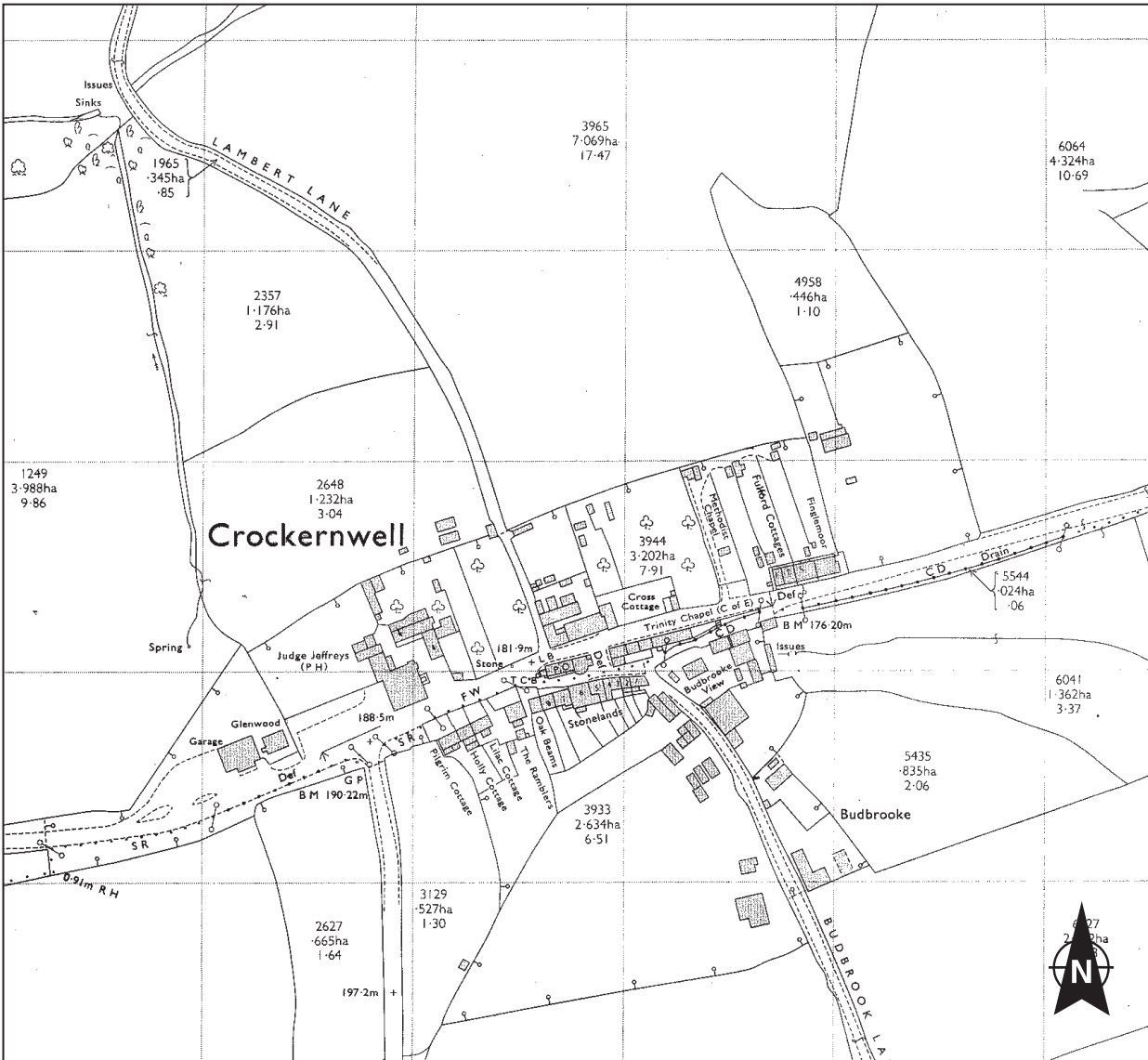
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Map 4 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1905



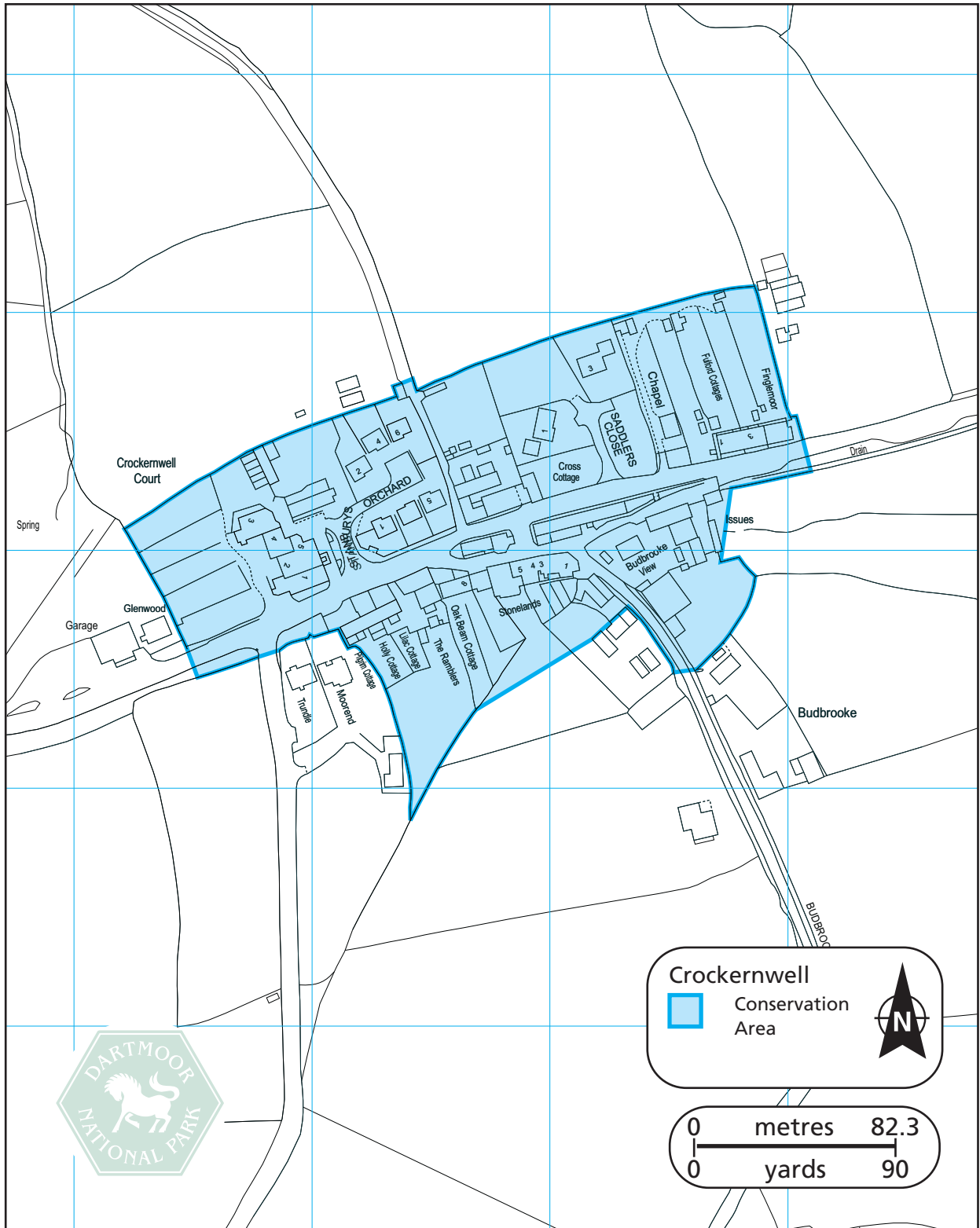
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Map 5 Ordnance Survey Map c.1954



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Map 6 Conservation Area: Crockernwell



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3 Building Types, Materials and Styles

The historic character of buildings in Crockernwell is essentially vernacular - this is typified by the buildings that line the back lane. The older properties are built parallel with and tight to the street, one room deep with low eaves and steeply pitched roofs. Rubble stone and cob were the building materials for most of the village, finished with lime render and limewash.

Buildings of the 16th – 18th centuries have casement windows of various ages; the earlier openings are smaller than those that have been enlarged during later modifications. Later homes, mostly of the 19th century, are deeper and taller but still built on the street frontage, albeit behind a pavement on the main road. They tend to have vertical sliding sashes that reflect their age. A significant proportion of properties have had windows replaced in styles that fail to complement their historic character, some in modern materials like PVCu.



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Fig 2 An early 19th century casement window



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Fig 3 Decorative sash window at Court House

Up to the 19th century thatch was ubiquitous in Crockernwell. Along with The Ramblers Cottage, the row of cottages at the eastern end of the Conservation Area seems to be the last of the traditional vernacular buildings to be erected. The remaining thatched roofs are characterised by simple flush-finished wrapover ridges. Buildings built or re-modelled after that time had slate roofs and a few have clay tiles. In recent times a number of roofs have been replaced using artificial slate lacking the character of a natural product. The variety of eaves and ridge heights throughout Crockernwell add to its charm and draw attention to the many chimneys. Dormers are not a traditional feature here and there are presently few rooflights.

Corrugated iron is common, especially on agricultural and ancillary buildings, but also notably on the large gable of Stonelands.



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Fig 4 Corrugated iron is a traditional material

Chimneys contribute a great deal to the character of the village. Most have brick stacks, with the notable and outstanding exception of Pilgrim Cottage that has its original granite shaft. An interesting and unusual feature of Crockernwell is the number of stacks that have drips constructed in brick. This is a distinctive local character feature that also indicates the level of formerly thatched roofs.

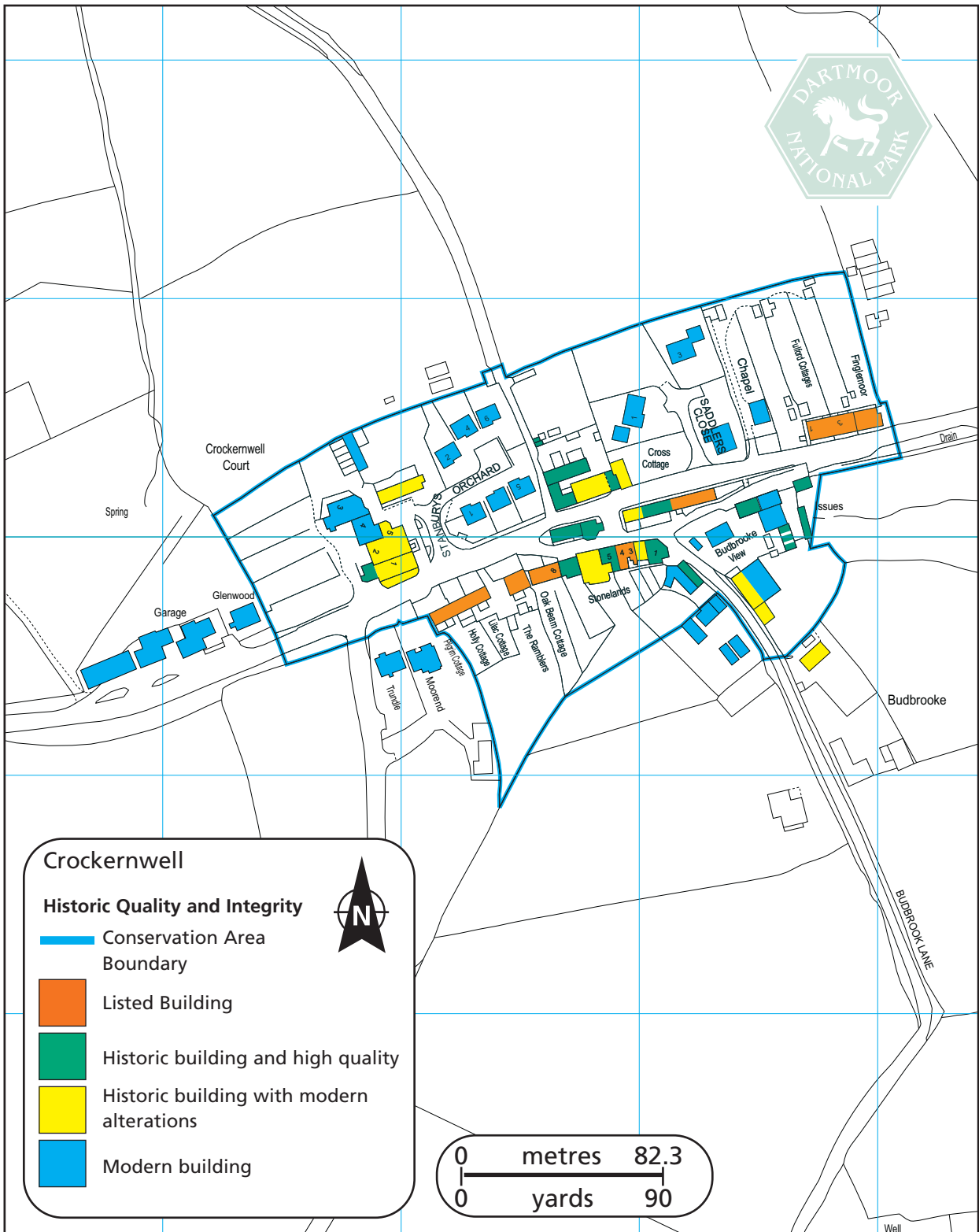


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Fig 5 Chimney with brick drip course showing the height of the former thatched roof at The Old Post Office

Porches are found on a significant number of properties, though none appear to be historic in themselves. On the back lane in particular they are a prominent feature.

Map 7 Conservation Area: Historic Quality and Integrity



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4 Key Buildings



Fig 6 Lilac, Holly and Primrose Cottages

Lilac, Holly and Pilgrim Cottages: Grade II*

Originally a farmhouse built in the 16th century to the usual three room cross passage plan. Partly re-modelled in the 17th century and extended in the 18th or 19th centuries. Converted to cottages and substantially altered in the 20th century. An eye-catching range at the western end of the village.



Fig 7 Holy Trinity Chapel

Holy Trinity Chapel: Grade II

This is an important and unusual building at the heart of the Conservation Area. Quite anonymous from the main road but the ecclesiastical windows are a feature of the back lane.

Listed Buildings Footnote:

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport is required to compile lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for the guidance of local planning authorities. Conservation policies are often based on these lists. The re-survey of all Dartmoor parishes was carried out during 1985-88.

A listed building is 'a building of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. There are about 500,000 listed buildings in England. Nationally, 2% are grade I listed, 4% II* listed and the balance of 94% are grade II listed. Within Dartmoor National Park there are 2,563 listed buildings.



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Fig 8 The former Golden Lion Inn

Golden Lion House: Unlisted

This large 19th century property, with the lower (and earlier) range to the west and its extensive outbuildings, was The Golden Lion inn. It appears to have been purpose-built when the Exeter to Okehampton road was improved – possibly before the grander Royal Hotel. The completeness of this group is rare and is an essential element in the special historic character of Crockernwell and it is located within one of the toft plots.



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Fig 9 Fulford Cottages

Fulford Cottages: Grade II

Although they have been altered this remains a row full of character in a prominent location on the eastern edge of the settlement.



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Fig 10 Cob barn

Cob barn at Budbrook: Unlisted

A narrow and strongly linear 19th century stone and cob barn with later adaptations, prominent in views of Crockernwell from the east. One of a pair of barns of about the same age – the other immediately to the west now collapsed. Another stone barn north of this has partially collapsed and further loss of this historic group would be a significant loss to the character of the Conservation Area.



© DNPA

Fig 11 Oak Beam Cottage

Oak Beam Cottage: Grade II

Although the fenestration has been re-ordered this cottage encapsulates the historic character of cottages in the old centre. The survival of thatch here shows how much impact the introduction of slate and tile has had.

Other Notable Buildings



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Fig 12 The former Royal Hotel

Court House (formerly The Royal Hotel): Unlisted

Built end on to the main road, this substantial 19th century coaching house and its associated buildings retain an impressive presence. The surviving historic sashes give an impression of the status the owners sought to convey. Alterations to the building and its setting have rather diminished its historic character.



© DNPA

Fig 13 The Cottage and Old Post Office

The Old Post Office and The Cottage: Unlisted

The prominent location of the formerly thatched historic dwelling, once the Post Office, makes it a focal point for those passing through. The Cottage has an interestingly curved south elevation which is an attractive character feature on the back lane.



Fig 14 Stonelands

Stonelands: Unlisted

The sudden change in depth of plan and ceiling heights, compared to the old cottages either side, gives this 19th century building a colossal presence. An eye-catching and characteristic building because of the context into which it was inserted.

5 Local Details and Street Furniture

Apart from the necessary road signs there is little street furniture and signage in Crockernwell. There are, however, overhead cables that detract from several views, especially the entrance to the village from the east and the pole at the top of the back lane. The pavements on the main road remain very narrow and the road is still the width it was before the dual carriageway. The pavements are generally unattractive concrete and tarmac with concrete kerbs.

At the back of the stretch of raised pavement outside the Stanbury's Orchard development is a collection of three historic milestones built into a modern stone wall. These reflect the importance of the main road over the centuries (the one on the right was probably brought here from Cheriton Cross as it reads "here ends Exeter trust").



© DNPA

Fig 15 Historic milestones

There is little sign of historic surfacing with the notable exceptions of the path to Holly Cottage and the entrance to Holy Trinity Chapel. There is a gully that runs down the north side of the back lane that offers the sound of trickling water but is mostly formed of concrete.



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Fig 16 Cobbled path at Holly Cottage

The retaining wall supporting the new road east of Holy Trinity Chapel is well built in rubble stone with a granite post at the end and nice granite coping [Fig 17 page 22]. There is an overgrown set of steps nearby that could be maintained as a positive feature [Fig 18 page 22].



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Fig 17 Retaining wall with granite post



© DNPA

Fig 18 Stone steps linking the back lane with the new road

Enclosure is mostly provided by stone walls and there are some hedges. The last few years has seen the appearance of timber fencing in a variety of forms. This rather suburban form of enclosure has tended to reduce the quality and historic character of the Conservation Area and in some cases is exacerbated by the introduction of fast-growing coniferous hedge planting.

6 Spaces and Views

Spaces

A Back Lane

The narrowness of the lane and the enclosure of the buildings creates a strong sense of place that is augmented by the gap on the northern side. This space occurs at the pinch point where the lane is tightest. This area feels like the village centre and appears to be a longstanding feature [Fig 19 page 26].

B Forecourt of former Royal Hotel

The creation of the Stanbury's Orchard development has fundamentally changed what must have been the forecourt to this substantial inn. It remains a significant space but now lacks definition and the stone planters fail to provide focus or interest [Fig 20 page 26].

C Bus shelter

On the other side of the entrance to Stanbury's Orchard is the bus shelter. This functional modern structure does offer a visual and social focal point [Fig 21 page 26].

Views

1 Entering Crockernwell from the east

The nucleus of the village is nicely framed by Fulford Cottages to the right and the farm buildings to the left. The eye is further focussed by the gables of Holy Trinity Chapel and Cross Cottage so that there is a sense of arrival [Fig 22 page 27].

2 Looking up the back lane

The informal sense of enclosure makes this a village view full of character. The gable end of Stonelands marks an interesting jump in scale and the deflected view at the far end draws the viewer forward [Fig 23 page 27].

3 Down the back lane

This view is solidly enclosed on the south side and on the other is dominated by the curved rear wall of The Cottage. The slightly sinuous nature of the lane adds interest and the view is punctuated by the cob barn at Budbrooke, but continues into countryside and on to the horizon [Fig 24 page 27].

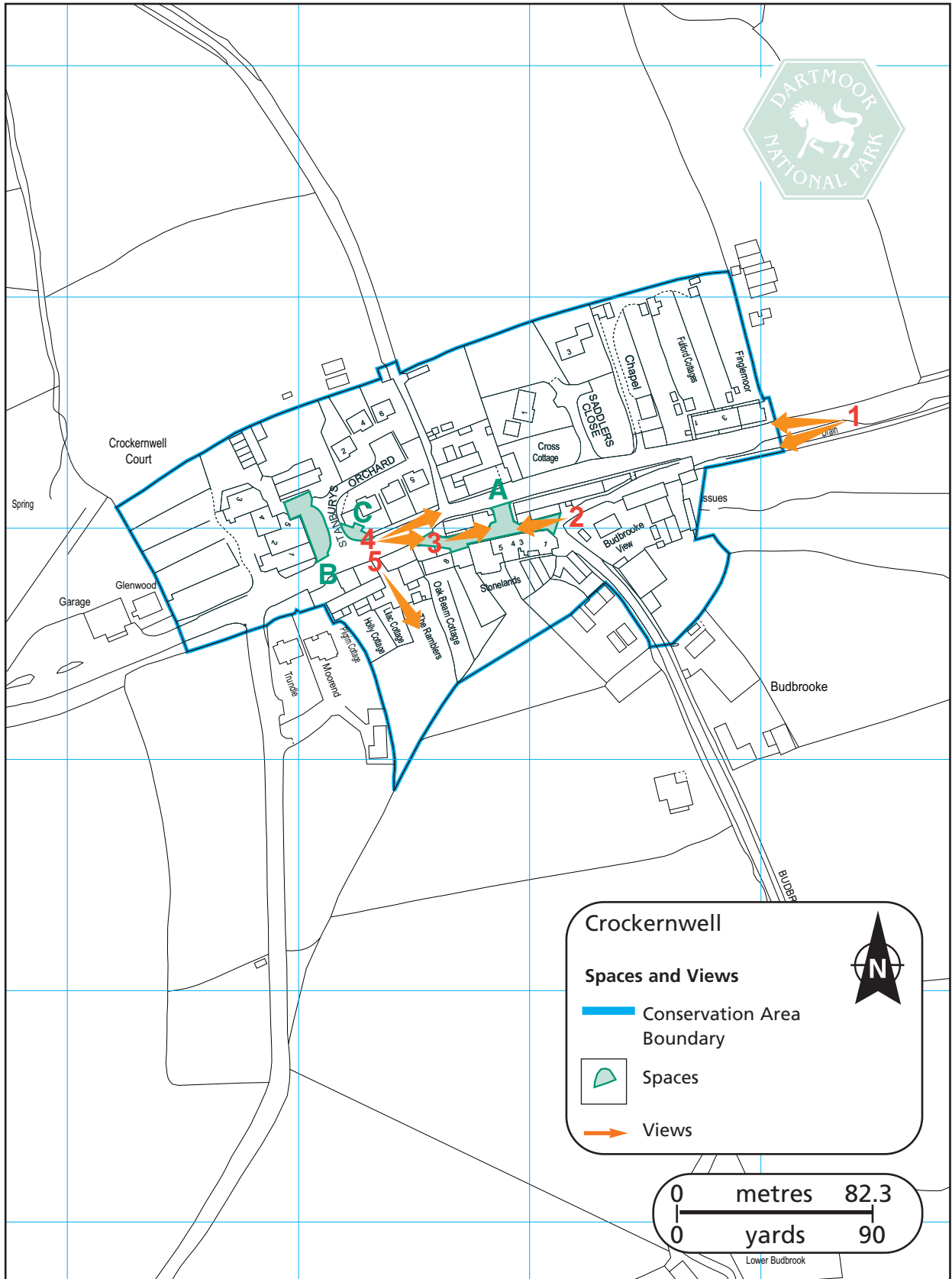
4 Looking east from the bus stop

This view encapsulates the unique layout of Crockernwell. There is the clear view down the main road and on towards Cheriton Bishop, then the eye is led towards the back lane and a sense of anticipation is generated as the road disappears behind the Old Post Office [Fig 25 page 28].

5 Between The Ramblers Cottage and Lilac Cottage

The traditional track entrance leads the eye forward between the thatched roofs to the gardens beyond. Only the pole and cables detract from this view [Fig 26 page 28].

Map 8 Spaces and Views



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Fig 19 The back lane and central space



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Fig 20 The forecourt of the former Royal Hotel



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Fig 21 The Bus Shelter



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Fig 22 The eastern entrance to Crockernwell



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Fig 23 The view up the back lane



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Fig 24 The view down the back lane



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Fig 25 The view of the village centre from the bus stop



© DNPA

Fig 26 A glimpsed view

7 Modern Development



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Fig 27 Stadbury's Orchard

There are two significant modern developments within the Conservation Area – Stanbury's Orchard and Saddler's Close. Both are cul-de-sac developments within toft boundaries on the north of the main road. They have reduced the clarity of the historic plan and the form of development, (detached houses not relating to the street), and fail to respect the historic character of Crockernwell. The designs are nearly all of a standard housebuilder type and the materials lack character in places, especially concrete roof tiles and PVCu windows.

A pair of modern houses west of Pilgrim Cottage have little in common with their surroundings, but as they are set back from the road their impact is reduced.

Outside the Conservation Area to the west, on the former garage site, is a recent development of better quality.

8 Archaeological Potential

With its mention in Domesday, plus evidence from its existing land boundaries of a moderately well established medieval settlement, the archaeological potential which Crockernwell offers is good.

Particular sensitive areas should be seen as the older buildings clustered within the central island of the village and formerly set in their own almost square plots lying to the north, which indicate their medieval origins.

9 Trees

The tree cover in Crockernwell is extensive with a wide range of species and age classes in and adjacent to the Conservation Area.

Crockernwell is a small Conservation Area with few trees growing in it. The most important trees are the linear groups of mature broadleaves to the south of the village and the group of trees near Crockernwell Court. There are a surprising number of semi-mature elms growing in the village but, unfortunately, they are likely to succumb to Dutch Elm disease.

Some new planting has been carried out within gardens of the newer properties within the Conservation Area, but there are numerous other sites suitable for further tree planting. Outside, there are many potential tree planting sites.

Outside the Conservation Area there are very few significant trees. The settlement is surrounded by agricultural land and the hedgerows forming field boundaries are heavily managed with few trees growing on them. The most visible trees are a line growing along the southern side of the main road to the west of the village.

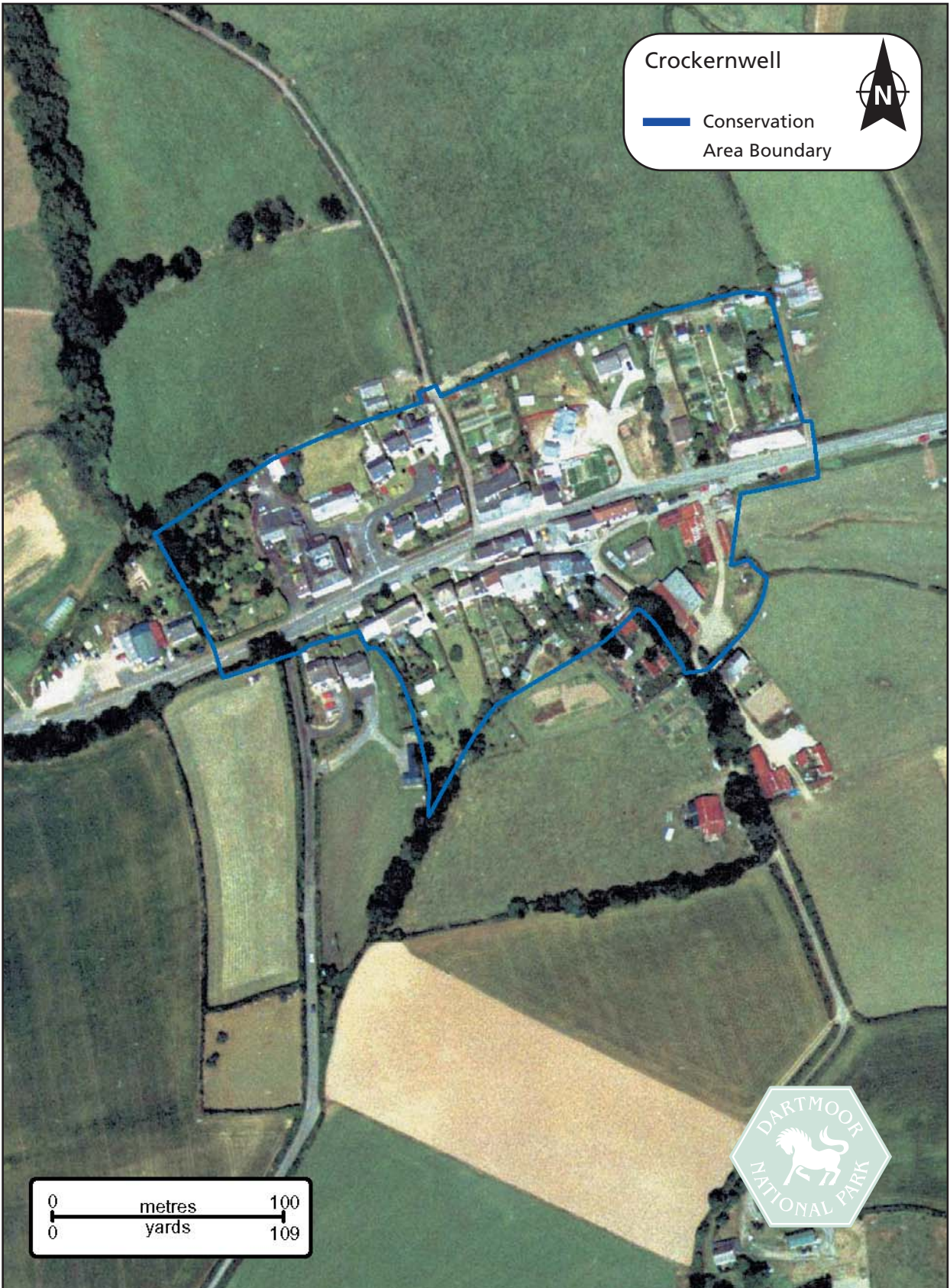
Trees in Conservation Areas Footnote:

The *Town and Country Planning Act*: Section 211 makes special provision for trees in Conservation Areas not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Anyone who wishes to cut down or carry out works to a tree in a Conservation Area must give the Local Planning Authority 6 weeks prior notice. The purpose of a Section 211 Notice is to give the Local Planning Authority the opportunity to protect the tree with a TPO. A tree is not defined in the Act, but a Section 211 Notice is only required for a tree with a diameter exceeding 75 mm in diameter. Trees in a Conservation Area already protected by a TPO are subject to the normal TPO controls. A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by the Local Planning Authority in respect of trees and woodlands. The principle effect of a TPO is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of a tree without the Local Planning Authority's consent.

Hedgerows Footnote:

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 require owners of hedgerows bordering agricultural land to notify the Local Planning Authority before removing a hedgerow or section of hedgerow. The Authority has 6 weeks from receipt of the Hedgerow Removal Notice to determine whether the hedgerow is 'important' and if it is consider protecting it with a Hedgerow Retention Notice.

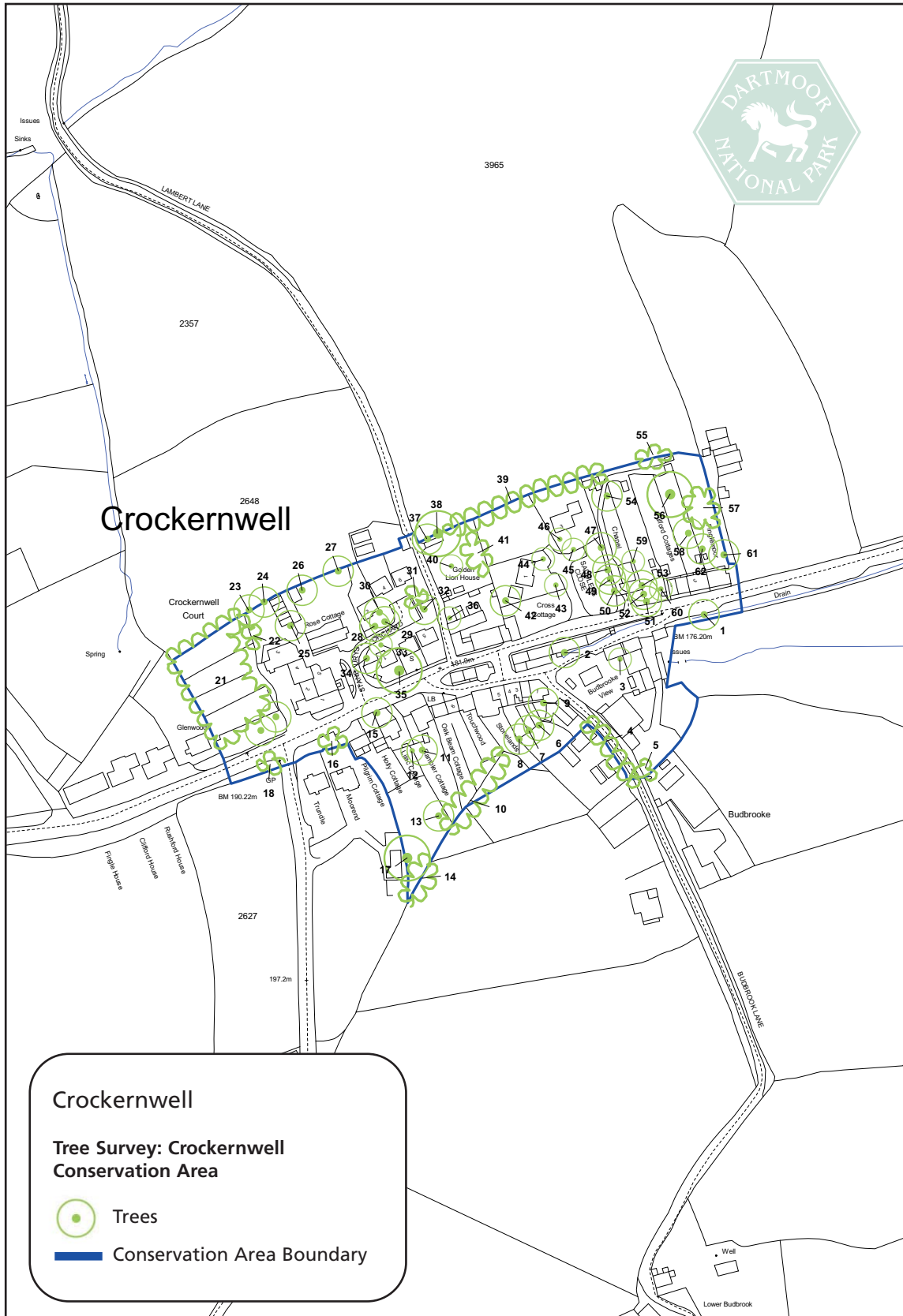
Map 9 Conservation Area: Trees and Boundary



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Appendix A

Tree Survey: Crockernwell Conservation Area



Tree Survey: Crockernwell Conservation Area

(see Tree Survey map page 34)

Number	Species	Age Class	Number	Species	Age Class
1.	Elm	Semi-mature	56.	Apple	Mature
2.	Rowan	Semi-mature	57.	Group of mixed trees	Mature
3.	Sycamore	Young	58.	Cherry	Semi-mature
4.	Linear group of broadleaves	Mature	59.	Holly	Young
5.	Group of elm	Semi-mature	60.	Rowan	Young
6.	Elm	Semi-mature	61.	Ash	Semi-mature
7.	Elm	Semi-mature	62.	Cypress	Semi-mature
8.	Elm	Semi-mature			
9.	Holly	Semi-mature			
10.	Group of mixed broadleaves	Semi-mature			
11.	Apple	Semi-mature			
12.	Ash	Young			
13.	Oak	Semi-mature			
14.	Group of mixed broadleaves	Mature			
15.	Holly	Semi-mature			
16.	Group of cypress	Young			
17.	Oak	Mature			
18.	Group of sycamore	Mature			
19.	Willow	Semi-mature			
20.	Sycamore	Semi-mature			
21.	Group of mixed trees	Semi-mature to mature			
22.	Group of cypress	Semi-mature			
23.	Lime	Semi-mature			
24.	Ash	Semi-mature			
25.	Ash	Semi-mature			
26.	Ash	Semi-mature			
27.	Eucalyptus	Semi-mature			
28.	Cypress	Semi-mature			
29.	Cypress	Semi-mature			
30.	Maple	Semi-mature			
31.	Group of birch	Young			
32.	Apple	Semi-mature			
33.	Hawthorn	Young			
34.	Cherry	Semi-mature			
35.	Apple	Mature			
36.	Ash	Young			
37.	Elm	Semi-mature			
38.	Apple	Mature			
39.	Linear group of elm	Semi-mature			
40.	Horse chestnut	Young			
41.	Group of elm	Semi-mature			
42.	Pine	Semi-mature			
43.	Hawthorn	Young			
44.	Hawthorn	Young			
45.	Pear	Young			
46.	Birch	Semi-mature			
47.	Elm	Semi-mature			
48.	Elm	Semi-mature			
49.	Elm	Semi-mature			
50.	Elm	Semi-mature			
51.	Elm	Semi-mature			
52.	Cherry	Semi-mature			
53.	Cypress	Semi-mature			
54.	Juniper	Semi-mature			
55.	Group of elm	Semi-mature			

The survey was carried out from publicly accessible land.