

Moretonhampstead



Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Dartmoor National Park Authority June 2017

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 21 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.

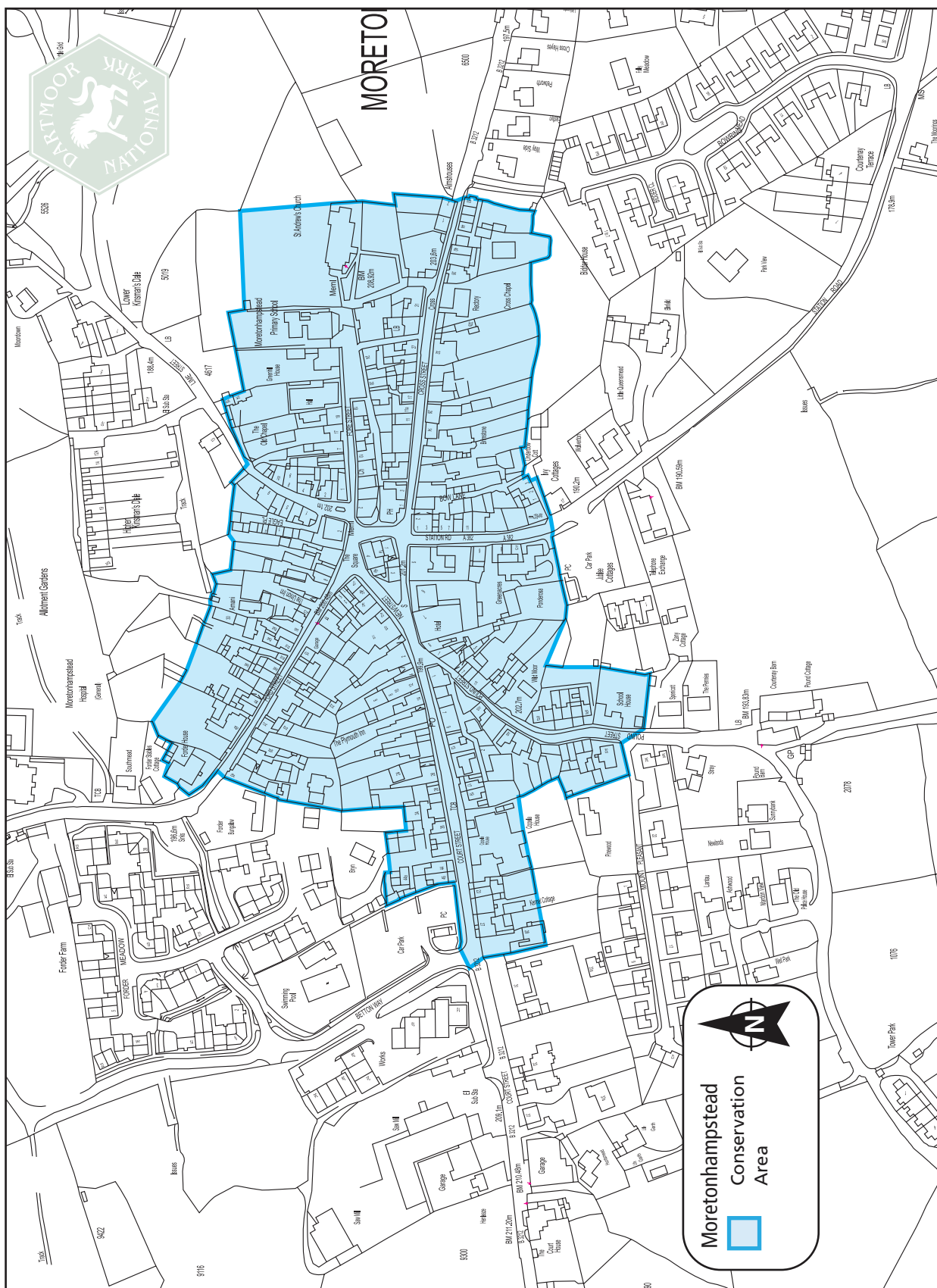
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Map 1 Conservation Area Location



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Introduction

Moretonhampstead is a small town in Teignbridge District set within a broad band of undulating farmland that is bounded along one side by the northeast fringes of Dartmoor's high, moorland mass and along the other by the length of an outlying range of hills that include the heights of Mardon Down. Its population in 2005 was about 1,300.

Located on the southwest route out of Exeter that continues to Tavistock across the heart of the Moor, the town's claim to being the "Gateway to the High Moor" seems justified indeed, particularly as the main junction in the town is where the road from Exeter crosses the road that skirts this side of the Moor, linking Okehampton to Bovey Tracey on a northwest to southeast line.

After its original designation in June 1973, the Conservation Area was extended slightly in February 1976. A review of the Conservation Area identified an Area of Historic Setting in 2010, details of which are incorporated in section 10 of this Appraisal.

1. Town History

Although the parish of Moretonhampstead has a history of occupation dating back to the Bronze Age (a hut circle on Mardon Down is actually the largest recorded on the Moor), and includes evidence of Iron Age settlement as well (including one of the most strongly defended forts around the Moor at Cranbrook, and perhaps the most sophisticated fortified site at Wooston Castle, with what appears to be four lines of defence), the first record of Moretonhampstead as a place of settlement is in the Domesday Book of 1086. This does, however, refer to its origins in Saxon times, being described as a royal manor in Edward the Confessor's reign (ending in 1066).

The creation of new farmland continued apace, and with parish productivity and population increasing, Moretonhampstead was made a borough in 1207 and granted a licence by the King to hold a market. By the early 14th century the settlement was clearly flourishing, sharing in the considerable wealth created by Devon's woollen trade. A fulling mill and three corn mills are recorded as operating by 1297, and in 1335 Hugh de Courtenay (of Powderham, and Lord of the Manor) obtained a Charter giving Moretonhampstead the right to hold a fair as well as a market. By this time farms had been established on the higher altitude slopes of the parish so that the extent of the farming landscape was much as it is today. Based on the Poll Tax return of 1377, it seems the settlement was holding its own as an important local market centre, having more taxpayers (198) than Chagford (135), Dunsford (80) or Bovey Tracey (150).

The woollen trade – including the rearing of sheep, the processing of wool and the manufacture of woollen cloth – played a very major role in sustaining the economy of both parish and town, so when it eventually fell into decline in the 18th century, and ceased altogether in 1776 when the last fulling mill was closed, the impact on the town's fortunes was serious indeed. Less prosperous times ensued, and although Moretonhampstead continued its market town function serving the many smaller settlements and farmsteads dotted around it, by the 1790s it must have appeared very much down at heel, for this is when the Reverend John Swete described it as 'being mean and dirty and nothing of consequence'.



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Figure 1 Greenhill circa 1900

At the very beginning of the 19th century, agriculture provided only a third of Moretonhampstead's working population with employment, and much of this was of a seasonal kind. But for one or two larger-scale enterprises, such as the making of 'paste-boards' for packaging at the former fulling mill (which finally closed in 1826) the remainder were employed – or self-employed – in almost every kind of activity and trade including leather tanning and curing, quarrying, rope making, candle making, coopering, baking, harness making, thatching, blacksmithing, brewing, clock making and rabbiting (the last serving markets that were far afield). Small businesses have since prevailed, while major projects, such as the coming of the railway in 1866, the coming of telephones and electricity in 1930 and 1933, the building of Castle Drogo between 1911 and 1930, and of the Fernworthy Reservoir between 1936 and 1942, have all played a part in helping to sustain the town's economy – which seems to have been all the more challenging on account of the many devastating fires the town suffered during the 19th and early 20th centuries (and possibly in earlier times as well). The worst of these was in 1845 when forty buildings in Cross Street and Fore Street were reported as being lost, and about fifty families left destitute, but other fires commonly accounted for ten or more properties and broke out at one

time or another in all the main streets. In 1926 the last of the major blazes destroyed part of The Square and the buildings on New Street beside it.

These fires were made all the more devastating by the tightly packed nature of the settlement and the preponderance of buildings roofed in combustible thatch. They explain too (from photographic records of the damage they caused) why such a relatively small number of medieval buildings survive today – although as old photographs also show, a number of road widening schemes also took their toll.

Nevertheless, and despite these losses, the heritage of buildings that survive today means that Moretonhampstead not only continues its traditional role as an important local centre serving a large rural hinterland, it is a tourist destination in itself, at a strategic location in the National Park.

2. Settlement Plan

The focus of Moretonhampstead's plan today is The Square, where most of its commercial premises are centred and where all the roads entering the town converge. These arrive from almost every point of the compass, and although Station Road is a relative newcomer, they all lend testimony to the settlement's centuries-old significance as the market centre for an extensive agricultural hinterland.

In medieval times, however, The Square was probably open, without an island of buildings occupying its heart. Indeed, it is almost certainly the case that the whole of the space between the north side of Fore Street and the south side of Cross Street was originally an open market place, with the parish church on the town's highest point dominating its eastern end – and visually prominent, therefore, throughout much of the settlement. The later infilling of most of this area (leaving only the space called Greenhill as a remnant [figure 1]) has produced a very compact urban form which, as the Tithe Map shows, was actually more congested with buildings in the 19th century than it is today.

The built-up island in The Square was itself more extensive, while the entrances to both Ford Street and Lime Street had buildings shoehorned into the highway. At the former, the Earl of Devon built a single-story market house and shambles in 1827, but this was later shortened and finally demolished in 1890 as a hindrance to traffic. A private school with a dwelling above it occupied the latter, but this two-storey building gave way to a drinking trough for horses in 1901, and then in 1927 became the site of Dartmoor's only example of underground toilets – which remained in use until 1977. Being mostly sited at the back of the pavement (or on the highway itself if there was no pavement) other buildings were lost to road widening schemes, including another market building constructed by the Earl of Devon in 1827 that stood close to where the war memorial stands today; in front of, but still allowing access to, the entrance to Back Lane which ran between the backs of properties facing Fore Street and Cross Street. Its unfortunate demise came in 1920, while in the late 1940s

the widening of the first corner in Pound Street caused the loss of a long and low building with an impressive lateral stack on its front, whose appearance was similar to examples in Chagford, which have an essentially rural form and date from the early part of the 16th century.

The written accounts and photographs of the damage caused by the town's many fires give reason to believe several of the buildings affected were late medieval. The White Horse Inn, for example, which was lost in 1838 and rebuilt as the White Horse Hotel in 1840, was founded in 1682 in a building which may well have been built earlier. Of the many buildings lost in the most devastating fire of 1845, one in Cross Street, called Mount Arthur, was described as 'an inn with a façade which bore testimony to its antiquity', while another was reported as being the Church House, built between 1475 and 1500 next to the churchyard on the south side of Greenhill, and last occupied as a poor house on the ground floor with schoolrooms above. When a new school was built on its site a few years later, a new lane was also created beside it (called New Cut) to provide an alternative route between Cross Street and Greenhill that avoided entering the churchyard. One other photograph of note, taken after the last major fire in New Street in 1929, reveals massive granite stacks and timber framed construction of at least part of the front elevations, suggesting original building dates possibly earlier than the 18th century.



© DNPA

Figure 2 Ford Street circa 1900

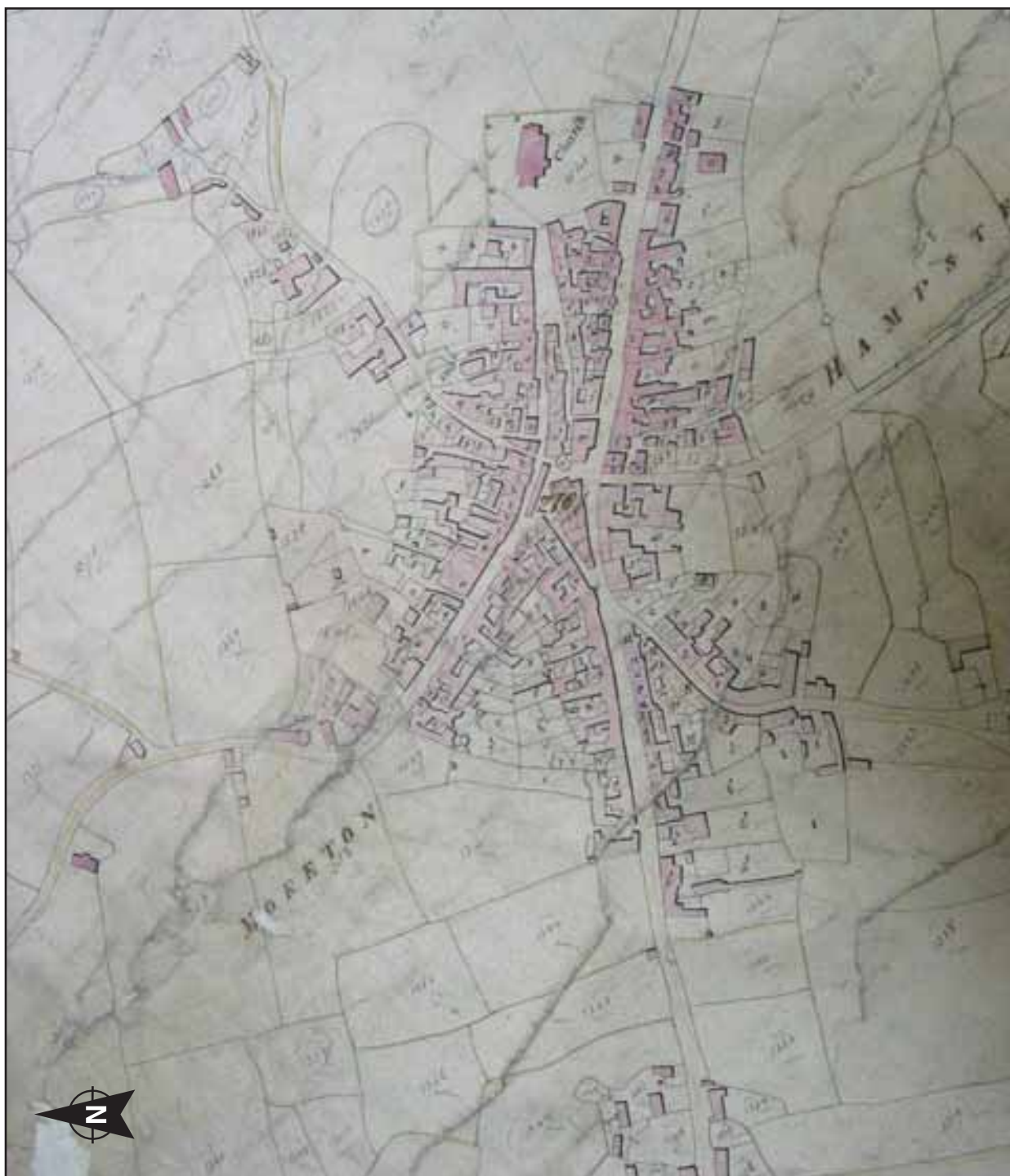
Notwithstanding the demolitions for road widening and the losses by fire, Moretonhampstead's plan form has changed little since the 19th century, with the basic elements of the medieval layout still in place. Properties were sited along the street frontages and had long narrow burgage plots extending behind them. The boundaries of most of these plots persist to this day and help define the extent of the medieval town. It was common where this type of layout existed for ancillary buildings to be constructed along the length of the plots, served by alleyways off the main street and with courtyards to provide light and air. The Tithe Map shows these were

well developed at Moretonhampstead, and although several of the buildings have since been lost, a good many survive as an essential part of the town's historic plan.

The alleyway entrances are a particular feature of most street frontages, allowing glimpses of courtyard buildings or the countryside beyond. A particularly good example of an alleyway and courtyard development is at Bow Lane off Cross Street, its far end being subsequently linked to Station Road, probably when Ivy Cottages, located there, were constructed in the early part of the 19th century. Another such development is at Eagle Place entered off Lime Street, which was formerly much more extensive and attached to one of the pair of frontage buildings facing The Square, which were replaced by Moreton House (with its 'off-street', side entrance) in the 1840s. Surviving as a reminder of how diverse the range of uses were that occupied these plots is the former Slaughter House behind 45 Ford Street, built in the early to mid 19th century when the house at the front was the residence of a butcher.

The basic highway pattern of the medieval settlement remains much the same as well, with roads leading off the former market area towards Chagford (Ford Street), Exeter (now Cross Street but formerly Lime Street en route to Doccombe), North Bovey and Lustleigh (Pound Street), Wray Barton and beyond (Cross Street) and westwards to the moor (Court Street). Station Road, however, is an altogether more recent addition to the settlement's plan; most likely being cut some time between 1790 (it does not appear on a town plan of that date) and 1799 (when the cattle market located alongside it was first recorded as being in use). Its importance as a route into the town increased considerably with the coming of the railway, its naming probably coinciding with the opening of the station in 1866.

Map 2 Tithe Map 1840

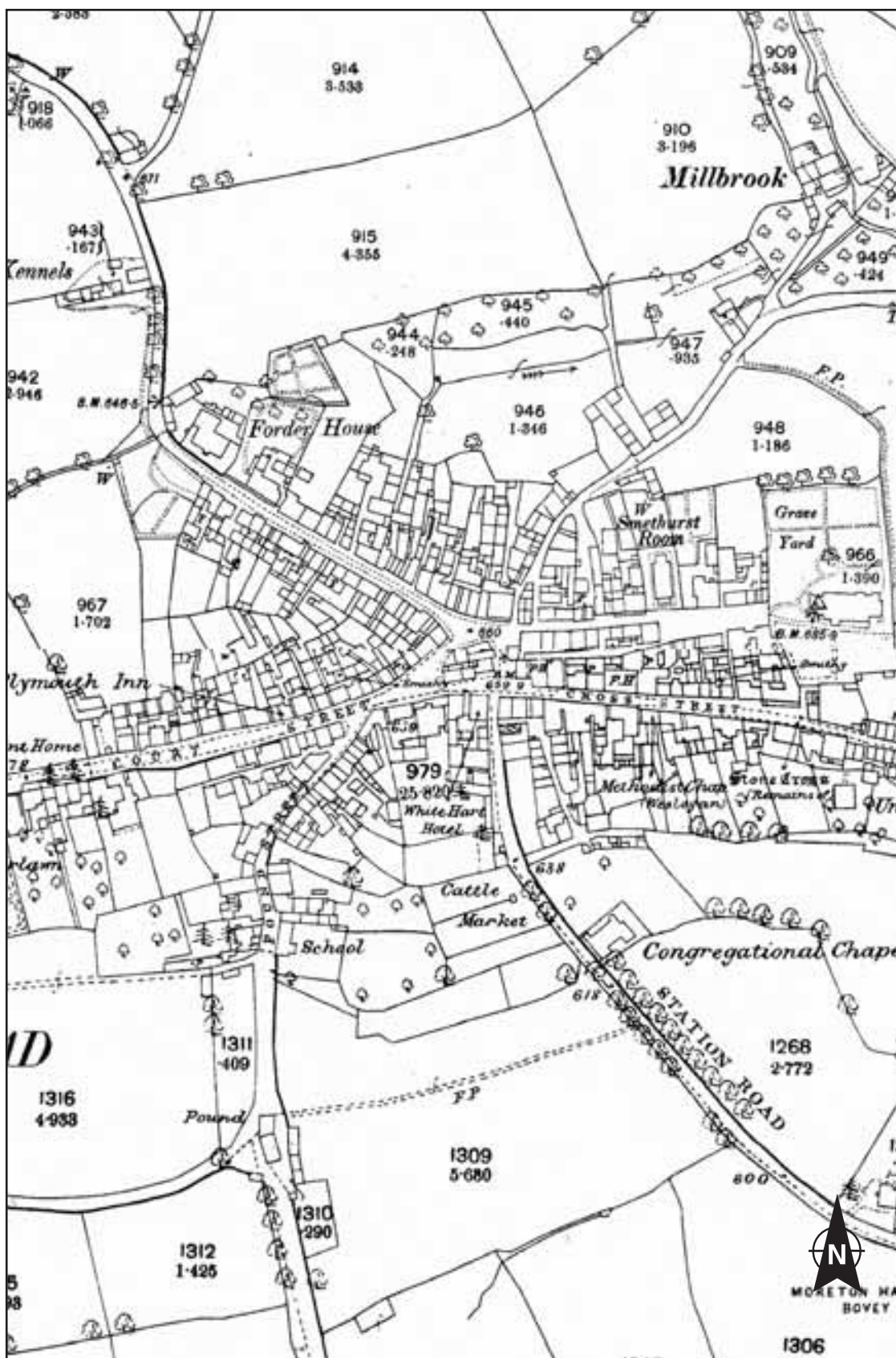


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Historical Footnote:

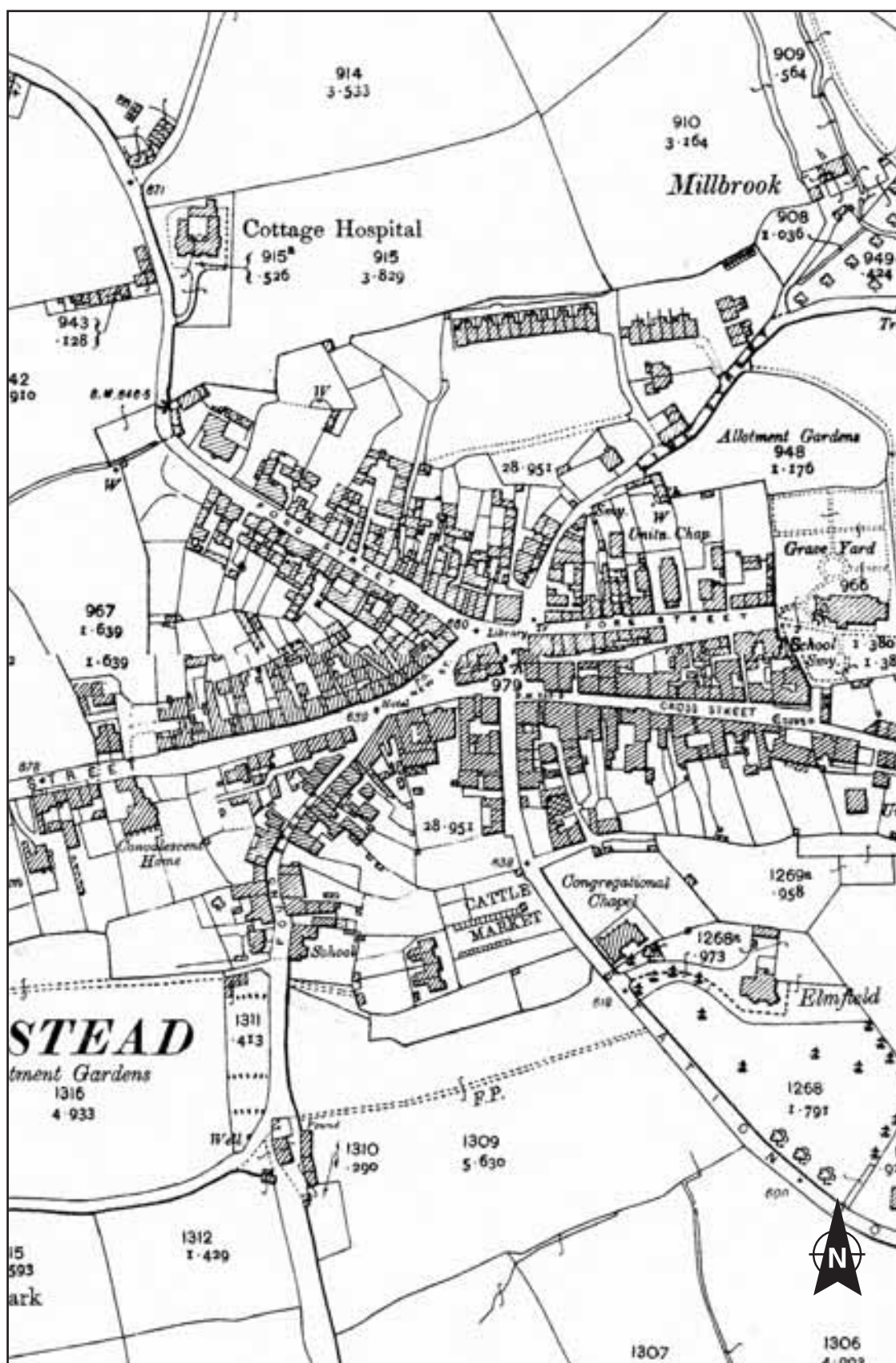
The tithe system provided the traditional means of supporting the clergy in England for many centuries. However, over time abuse of the system led to the *Tithe Commutation Act 1836* which empowered the newly formed Tithe Commission to commute tithes paid 'in kind' to an annual money payment. A Commutation 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 1936* provided for the gradual redemption of all tithes by the end of the century.

Map 3 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1885



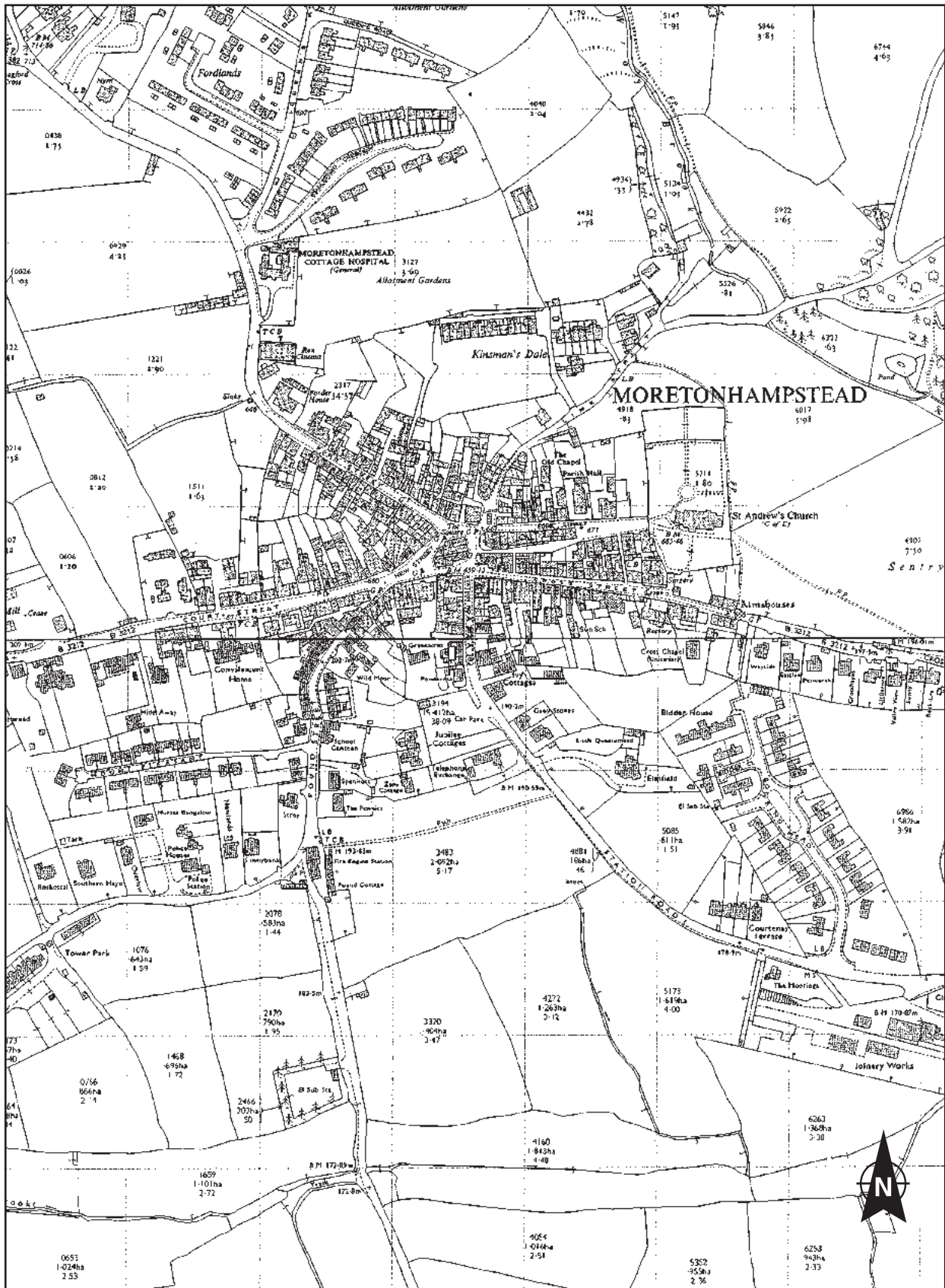
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Map 4 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1905



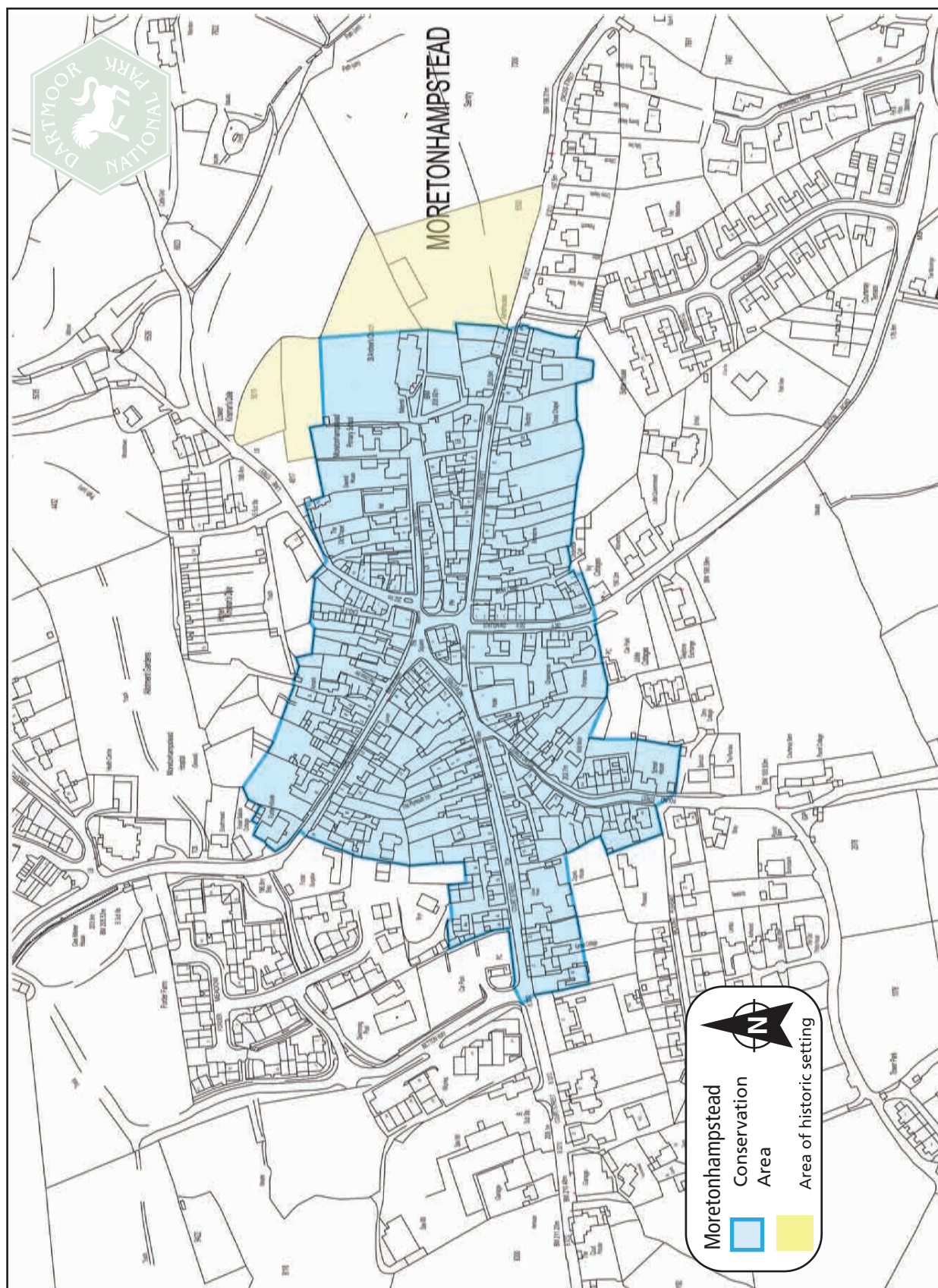
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Map 5 Ordnance Survey Map 1954



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Map 6 Conservation Area: Moretonhampstead Settlement



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3. Building Types, Materials and Styles

At first sight, Moretonhampstead's historic buildings appear to mostly date from the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, with sash windows and rendered finishes (often ashlar-lined) prominent in most street scenes and helping to create the polite and urban character that is generally associated with a town. Some, however, have earlier origins disguised by later remodelling, although the jettied upper floors surviving at 3 Ford Street give a clear indication of its late 16th or early 17th century age [Figure 3 below]. At three storeys, it is one of a range of larger buildings in and around The Square, which, together with their tightly knit layout and mainly commercial use, give the centre a particularly urban feel. The vertical emphasis that characterises many of the buildings along the streets that radiate from The Square, and their siting at the back of the pavement, does the same [Figure 4 below] and likewise the preponderance of iron railings along frontages in place of stone walls.

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Figure 3 3 Ford Street with its jettied upper floors

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Figure 4 Vertical emphasis of buildings in Fore Street

Evidencing a more rural, vernacular character that probably persisted right to the end of the 18th century, are the buildings of that age or earlier which have survived with either their thatched roofs intact (about ten in all), their casement windows still in place, or retaining their long and low form. One of the least altered thatched roofs is at Greenhill House with its ridge laid flush in the Devon tradition [Figure 5], while Mearsdon Manor well preserves its long and low form [Figure 6].

The piecemeal replacement and remodelling of buildings, in the 19th century especially but during the 20th century as well, has contrived to create a very mixed pattern of building throughout much of the town – but particularly so in and around The Square, where the juxtaposition of differing scales, forms and materials creates a great deal of contrast and variety. While greater consistency and harmony tends to prevail



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Figure 5 Thatched Roof of Greenhill House with flush ridge



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Figure 6 Long and low form of Mearsdon Manor

elsewhere, here steeply pitched gabled roofs sit beside those that are shallow and hipped; the grandest civic building in the centre (the Bowring Library) has the smallest of cottages as its close neighbours, while in close proximity, and against a general backdrop of rendered facades, the Library, the Bell Inn and the building on the opposite corner of Cross Street have individual styles that contrast as much as the materials they are faced with, namely local stone with yellow terracotta, imitation 'black and white' timber framing, and buff coloured brickwork (the latter two finishes being the least in character with local traditions).

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Figure 7 Bowring Library and Bell Inn

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Figure 8 Bell Inn and building on the opposite corner

Beyond The Square, modest two-storey cottages are the most prevalent building type, most of them constructed in the 19th century [Figure 9]. Others were created through the sub-division of more substantial houses built earlier, such as Nos. 2, 4 and 6 Ford Street, and Nos. 15 and 17 Ford Street [Figure 10], which in both cases were formerly part of a single dwelling built in the 15th or early 16th century.



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Figure 9 Prevailing 2-storey cottages



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Figure 10 15 and 17 Ford Street

Modest houses constructed early in the 20th century include the terrace of four opposite the Almshouses in Cross Street, in a design that reflects this proximity [Figure 11], and a terrace of six in Pound Street, built in 1913 in a style characteristic of the Hambleden Estate [Figure 29].

Houses of substance, on the other hand, are relatively few. There are one or two typical Victorian villas [Figure 12], but at the north end of Ford Street, Forder House and Pitt House are both exceptional examples

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Figure 11 Terrace opposite The Almshouses in Cross Street

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Figure 12 One of a small number of late Victorian villas

of their age and type; the former (circa 1800) for being virtually unaltered and having interior features of the highest quality [Figure 13], and the latter (circa 1700) for being a rarity in Devon (substantial houses of this period are uncommon in the County) and having its internal and external features mostly intact [Figure 23].



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Figure 13 Forder House in Ford Street



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Figure 14 Lucy Wills Nurse's Home at 38 Court Street

The streets of the town are characterised not only by large and small houses but by a variety of other building types too. Although some have a distinctly negative impact on the Area's character and appearance (such as the Primary School annexe next to the Church, the former garage situated in Pound Street and the flat-roofed shop premises in Court Street), most make a positive contribution. Perhaps the most outstanding are St Andrew's Church and the Almshouses nearby, but the Bowring Library and the pair of hotels on The Square, the Lucy Wills Nurse's Home in Court Street [Figure 14], and the unusually high number of non-conformist chapels dotted around, are significant as well, adding visual diversity to most street scenes and throwing light on former times.

Although the majority of buildings are rendered and colour-washed, with either a roughcast finish or a smooth one that is often ashlar-lined (to imitate the appearance of finely jointed stonework), a good many have their granite walling exposed, including some of the most notable buildings in the town, such as the Church, the Almshouses, the Library and Pitt House. Buff and red coloured brickwork is present too, arriving late in the 19th century as a walling material [Figure 15] but used only sparingly before then, mainly in the construction of chimneystacks. In earlier centuries chimneystacks were nearly always massive granite structures, often incorporating dripstones that bear witness to the former dominance of thatch. The many fires in the town doubtless hastened its replacement with slate, which is now the dominant roofing material – the natural variety (not the imitation types) being truly representative of local traditions.



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Figure 15 Circa 1900 use of brick in Ford Street

Figure 16 Early granite chimney stack with Weathering for thatched roof covering

The commercial nature of the town's centre means shopfronts are an important element of its character and occupy key positions in and near The Square. A number of Victorian and early 20th century examples survive which are divided into well-proportioned panes that create a vertical emphasis. A notable one is at 3 The Square, with its fluted mullions, fleur-de-lys capitals and bulbous acanthus bases [Figure 17 below]. The simple, traditional appearance of a number of other historic shopfronts may seem a little makeshift [Figure 18 below] but they nevertheless characterise local traditions and are more suitably scaled than modern examples that incorporate large areas of plate glass.



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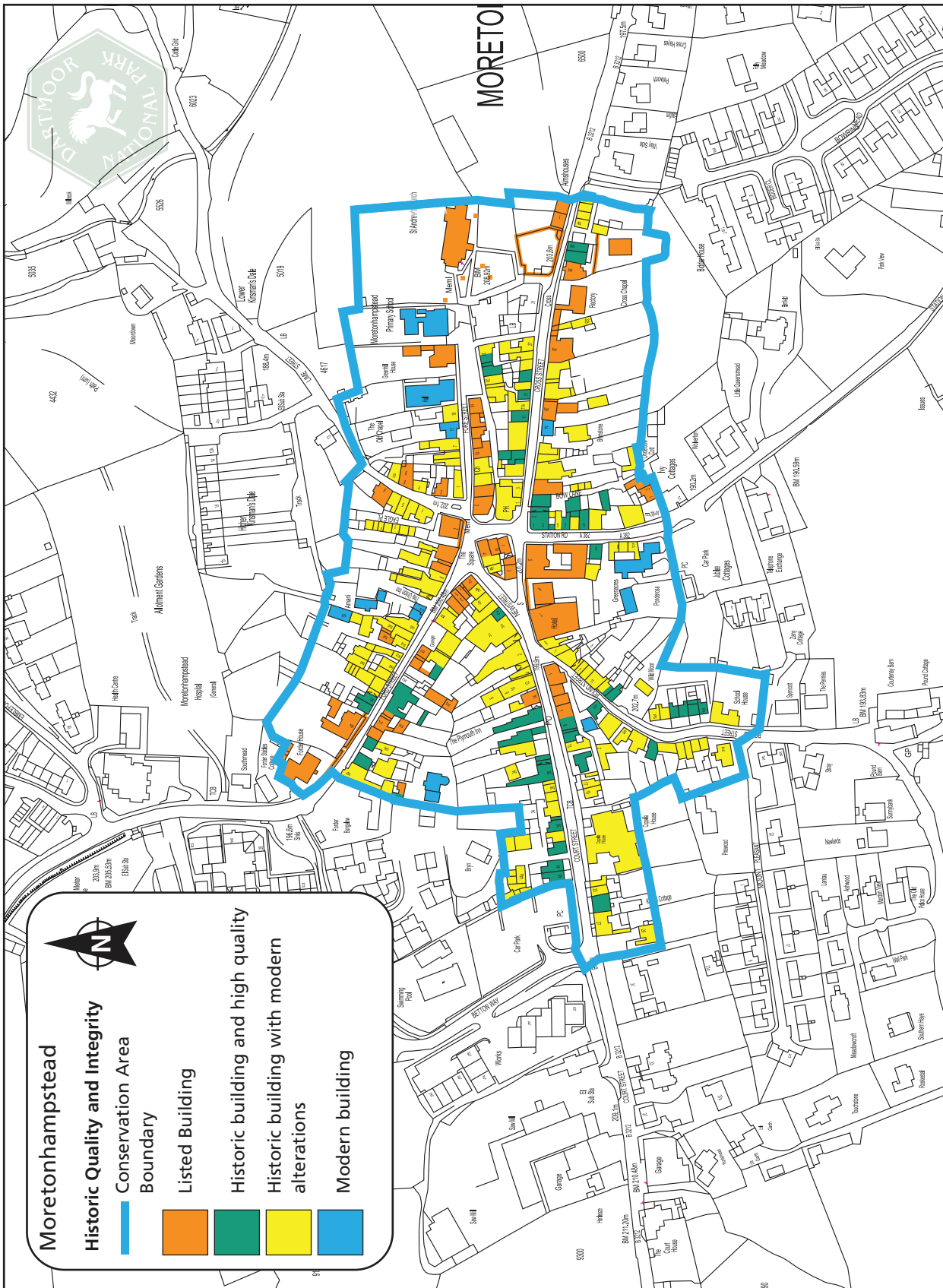
Figure 17 Shopfront at 3 The Square



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Figure 18 Shopfront at 1 Ford Street

Map 7 Conservation Area: Historic Quality and Integrity



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4. Key Buildings

There are seventy Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area, thirty-one dating from between the 15th and 17th centuries, fifteen from the 18th century, and the remaining twenty-four from the early to mid 19th century. St Andrew's Church and the Almshouses are both Grade I, Mearsdon Manor in Cross Street, together with Pitt House and Numbers 2, 4 and 6 in Ford Street are Grade II* and the remaining sixty-three Grade II. Whatever their grade, they all make a significant contribution towards the Conservation Area's special interest and character.

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Figure 19 St Andrew's Church

St Andrew's Church: grade I

Located at the highest point in the town, the Church, or more specifically its tower, is a landmark that dominates the skyline in almost every approaching view [Figure 19]. Since the filling of most of the marketplace, its dominance in the town itself has been somewhat reduced, but it nevertheless retains its focal importance in views from The Square along Fore Street and from much of the length of Court Street. Although heavily restored in 1856 and 1905, its perpendicular style remains true to its 15th century origins.

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 2,861 listed buildings.

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Figure 20 The Almshouses

The Almshouses, Cross Street: grade I

This is probably the most recognised building in Moretonhampstead, with its famous arcaded loggia running the length of its symmetrical front. Although its rear is rendered (possibly over cob), its chief [Figure 20] elevations are of granite; the front in ashlar, the left end in rubblestone and the right end coursed and squared. Its surviving thatched roof is impressive indeed, enhancing its historic character – as well as the part of the Conservation Area in which it is located – and lending weight to the possibility that, although inscribed with the date 1637, the building represents aremodelling of an earlier building, which was possibly part of the medieval hospital founded here in 1451.

The Bowring Library, Fore Street: grade II

Completed in 1902 to a design by Sylvanus Trevail in a Jacobean style, this building was given to the town by Sir Thomas Bowring – whose business was shipping but whose family fortunes were founded on the woollen trade. The richly detailed terracotta dressings complement the intricacies of the snecked granite walling, while the building's larger than average scale enhances the significance of its town-centre setting. The Lucy Wills Nurse's Home at 38 Court Street [Figure 14 page 20] is very similar in style but entirely of granite and with a smaller, more domestic, scale. Built just before the Library in 1898, it too was a benefaction (by George Wills in memory of his wife).



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Figure 21 The Bowring Library



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Figure 22 The Unitarian Chapel

Unitarian Chapel, Cross Street: grade II

One of a number of non-conformist chapels in Moretonhampstead, most of which are 19th century reconstructions resulting from dilapidations or fires. This one dates from 1802, and in common with them all, has a rendered finish and a plain and simple design that is characterised by a dominance of solid over void [Figure 22].



Figure 23 Pitt House

Pitt House, Ford Street: grade II*

Not quite as long as the Almshouses, but certainly the most substantial house in the town, with an impressive, dressed granite, seven-window front set off by a Tuscan doorcase [Figure 23]. The weatherings on all the granite stacks suggest it was also thatched when 'created' in 1700 from a very substantial remodelling of an earlier house. Sir Thomas Bowring stayed here on his frequent visits to Moretonhampstead towards the end of the 19th century, which is about the time the roof was replaced in slate and when the multi-paned sash windows were changed to four panes from either twelve or sixteen.

Greenhill House, Fore Street: grade II

One of the few thatched houses surviving in the town, Greenhill House originates from the early 17th century or earlier, although the appearance of its front, with its rusticated quoins, string band and tripartite sash windows dates to a mid 19th century refashioning – a time when many of the houses on Greenhill and the south side of Fore Street were being restored and rebuilt following the 1845 fire. Of added interest is the thatched outbuilding at the rear, built in the 18th century in the tradition of burgage plot development.



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Figure 24 Greenhill House



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Figure 25 Ponsford House

Ponsford House, Cross Street: grade II

Originating somewhat later than Greenhill House, in the early part of the 18th century, Ponsford House was also refashioned in the 19th century – a little earlier than Greenhill and with more in the way of architectural embellishment, including ashlar-lined render, a porch with Tuscan columns, hood moulds above the first floor windows and, probably in association with its conversion from thatch to slate, a roof with a dentilled eaves cornice, carved bargeboards and crested ridge tiles. Indeed, its façade is one of the more elaborate in the town and adds architectural distinction to the street it is in [Figure 25].



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Figure 26 The White Hart

The White Horse and White Hart Hotels, The Square: both grade II

In their prominent town centre locations, these particular buildings make a significant contribution to the architectural and historic interest of the town: their similarities of scale and appearance bring definition and visual cohesion to The Square – which is otherwise somewhat lacking; their largely unaltered façades are of architectural interest in themselves, while their uses are a reminder of Moretonhampstead's role as a staging post on the route between Exeter and Princetown – with both premises playing an essential part. Both are alike in having rendered, almost symmetrical, five-window fronts comprising multi-paned, painted-timber sashes. Although the White Hart [Figure 26] has three storeys and the White Horse two, [Figure 27] their apparent heights are quite similar as the storeys of the latter are taller and it has a parapet at the eaves (an unusual feature in Moretonhampstead). This is to do with the fact that about a hundred years separate their construction, with the White Hart the older, being built in the mid 1700s with lower ceiling heights. It was actually reported as still being thatched in 1838, at the time of the fire which destroyed the White Horse's predecessor – an Inn that was founded in the 18th century. When rebuilt shortly afterwards, the main entrance was sheltered by a metal canopy with the words 'Hotel' fretted into each of its three sides. Constant damage by

vehicles lead to its removal – and led to the truncating of the porch to the White Hart, which formerly had freestanding columns and extended over the pavement.



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Figure 27 The White Horse

10 – 18 Fore Street: grade II

Telling of Moretonhampstead's greatest tale of misfortune – the most devastating fire of 1845 – are these modest houses in Fore Street [Figure 28], which are typical of those built to replace the ones that were lost, sometimes incorporating earlier fabric or repeating an earlier plan. Largely unaltered since they were built, their rendered elevations and multi-paned sashes create the polite, classical styling that is characteristic of their age. The largest, the Chimes at No.18, is of particular interest, being built as a police house and surviving with almost all its original features intact including the cells. Externally, the lead rolls used to weather the roof hips are particularly fine, creating a most attractive and traditional appearance.

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Figure 28 10-18 Fore Street

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Figure 29 29-39 Pound Street

29-39 Pound Street: not listed

Built seventy years later than the houses in Fore Street in an entirely more rustic, quite Arts and Crafts style, are these estate-workers cottages in Pound Street. In a co-ordinated terrace of six, they were built by Lord Hamblenden in 1914 (also following a fire), and are characteristic of the style he adopted for all kinds of buildings around his Moretonhampstead estate.

5. Local Details and Street Furniture

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of most of Moretonhampstead's streets is the abundance of ironwork railings protecting frontages in what is a quite urban and elegant manner. Nearly all the larger houses have them, and a number of smaller houses too, while at the end of Fore Street and Cross Street respectively they are used to enclose the burial grounds of St Andrew's Church and the Unitarian Chapel. Such is their quality and distinctiveness that nine sets have been listed, three in their own right, outside Forder House and Pitt House in Ford Street [Figure 30 and Figure 23] and around the Chapel burial ground [Figure 31 page 33], and the other six as part of the building they serve, including Great House and Moreton House on opposite sides of The Square and Ponsford House in Cross Street [Figure 32]. All but one of these sets have spearheaded shafts, the odd one being in front of Cross Tree House which has arrowheads instead. They mainly date from the 18th and 19th centuries and are mostly set into granite plinths or dwarf stone walls.

Sometimes associated with these railings, but occurring elsewhere as well, are other ironwork features of similar date, including boot scrapers such as those on either side of the porch to Ponsford House [Figure 33] and a cast iron lamp standard at the Chapel burial ground. The contemporary ironwork railings alongside the raised pavement in Court Street continue the established tradition [Figure 33], while the replica 19th century lamp standards introduced in Lime Street [Figure 41] and The Square [Figure 44] appear entirely appropriate in their 'island' locations.



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Figure 30 Railings at Forder House and on the garden frontage opposite

© DNPA



Figure 31 Railings at the Unitarian Chapel

© DNPA



Figure 32 Railings, boot scrapers and granite slab pavement outside Ponsford house, Cross Street



© DNPA

Figure 33 Contemporary pavement railings in Court Street

Stone boundary walls are largely absent from the built-up part of the town, mainly because frontages are mainly occupied by buildings and otherwise protected by railings. Significant examples do exist, however, at the western ends of both Court Street and Ford Street, but the most significant of all are those near the east end of Cross Street adjacent to the Almshouses. They enclose the gardens of Cross Tree House in their detached location on the opposite side of the churchyard lane. Of granite rubble with a shaped brick coping, they possibly incorporate earlier material from the medieval hospital which was founded here in 1451. Apart from this example, however, walls are an important feature in the setting of both the Church and the Almshouses [Figure 34].

Granite structures are otherwise uncommon, the most notable being the War Memorial in The Square [Figure 35] and the structures associated with the famous Cross Tree located beside the lane to the churchyard at the east end of Cross Street. [Figure 36]. The chamfered granite base and the remains of the ancient market cross add considerable historic character to the scene. Not so ancient, but nevertheless increasingly rare, are the surviving K6 Telephone Kiosk in Court Street [Figure 37] and the wall-mounted, George V Post Box in the lane beside Greenhill School [Figure 38].

Historic surface treatments are now quite rare as nearly all the pavements in the town have now been laid with tarmac. Granite kerbs still prevail, however, and two short sections of granite slabs survive, one in Fore Street and the other in Cross Street outside Ponsford House [Figure 32 page 33]. Early photographs show these locally sourced slabs were formerly more widespread, although cobbling appears to have been far more common. Examples of the latter treatment are also few and tend to occupy private or semi-private spaces, such as Bow Lane [Figure 39], the approach to the churchyard [Figure 34] and the forecourt of the former Rectory [Figure 40 page 37] all off Cross Street.

© DNPA



Figure 34 Stone wall and cobbles on lane next to Cross Tree House

© DNPA



Figure 35 The War Memorial

© DNPA



Figure 36 The Cross Tree with the former Rectory opposite

© DNPA



Figure 37 K6 telephone kiosk, Court Street

© DNPA



Figure 38 George V Post Box opposite Greenhill School

While examples of late 19th/early 20th century brick-sized pavements and tiles also survive (such as in the passage leading to Bow Lane, off Station Road opposite the White Hart Hotel), most of the town's alleyways and passages are now surfaced in earth, gravel, tarmac or in-situ concrete. The use of granite setts and kerbs in the schemes to enhance both Lime Street and The Square [Figure 41] appear wholly in keeping with the town's historic character, while the decorative, mosaic-style paving outside the church gate seems entirely suited to its location between the school buildings on either side [Figure 42].



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Figure 39 Cobbles in Bow Lane

© DNPA



Figure 40 Cobbles in former Rectory forecourt

© DNPA



Figure 41 Traditional streetlamp, granite setts and gate at Greenhill

© DNPA



Figure 42 Contemporary paving outside the church kerbing in Lime Street

6. Spaces and Views

Significant spaces and views in the historic parts of the town are either limited or restricted by its tightly knit form and the narrowness of its streets, which are lined almost continuously by buildings.

Spaces

A number of small open spaces bring relief to the enclosure created by the town's built form. One is a remnant of the original market place (Greenhill) and the others the result of building demolitions (including the space in front of the Chapel in Cross Street).

The large open space known as The Sentry contributes towards the Area's historic interest as well as the qualities of its landscape setting. Refer to Map 8.

- 1 the rectangular open space at Greenhill used partly as a car park [Figure 43]
- 2 the triangular open space in The Square which has been paved using granite setts and provided with distinctive seating as part of an enhancement scheme [Figure 44]
- 3 the triangular open space in Pound Street which has been landscaped and provided with sculptures as part of an enhancement scheme [Figure 45]
- 4 the semi-private open space in front of the Chapel in Cross Street [Figure 46]
- 5 The Sentry Field east of St Andrew's Church and the Almshouses [Figure 47]



Figure 43 Greenhill open space

© DNPA



Figure 44 The open space in The Square

© DNPA

© DNPA



Figure 45 The open space in Pound Street

© DNPA



Figure 46 The space in front of the Chapel



© DNPA

Figure 47 The open space called The Sentry

Views

The more important views are those which illustrate the survival of the Area's close relationship with the farming landscape around it. Most are from the edge of the Conservation Area boundary, on the roads leading in an easterly or southerly direction. The cross-town views from Court Street towards the Church, and the glimpsed views down certain of the burgage plot alleyways, have a similar significance.

- 1 from St Andrew's churchyard gate looking E [Figure 48]
- 2 from the Almshouses in Cross Street looking E [Figure 49]
- 3 from the first corner in Lime Street looking NE [Figure 50]
- 4 from near the car park in Station Road looking SE [Figure 51]
- 5 from the Mount Pleasant junction in Pound Street looking S [Figure 52]
- 6 from near the car park in Court Street looking E [Figure 53 page 43]
- 7 glimpse through a passageway entrance on Ford Street looking N [Figure 54]

© DNPA



Figure 48 View E from St Andrew's churchyard

© DNPA



Figure 49 View E from the Almshouses in Cross Street



© DNPA

Figure 50 View NE from Lime Street



© DNPA

Figure 51 View SE from Station Road

© DNPA



Figure 52 View S from Pound Street

© DNPA

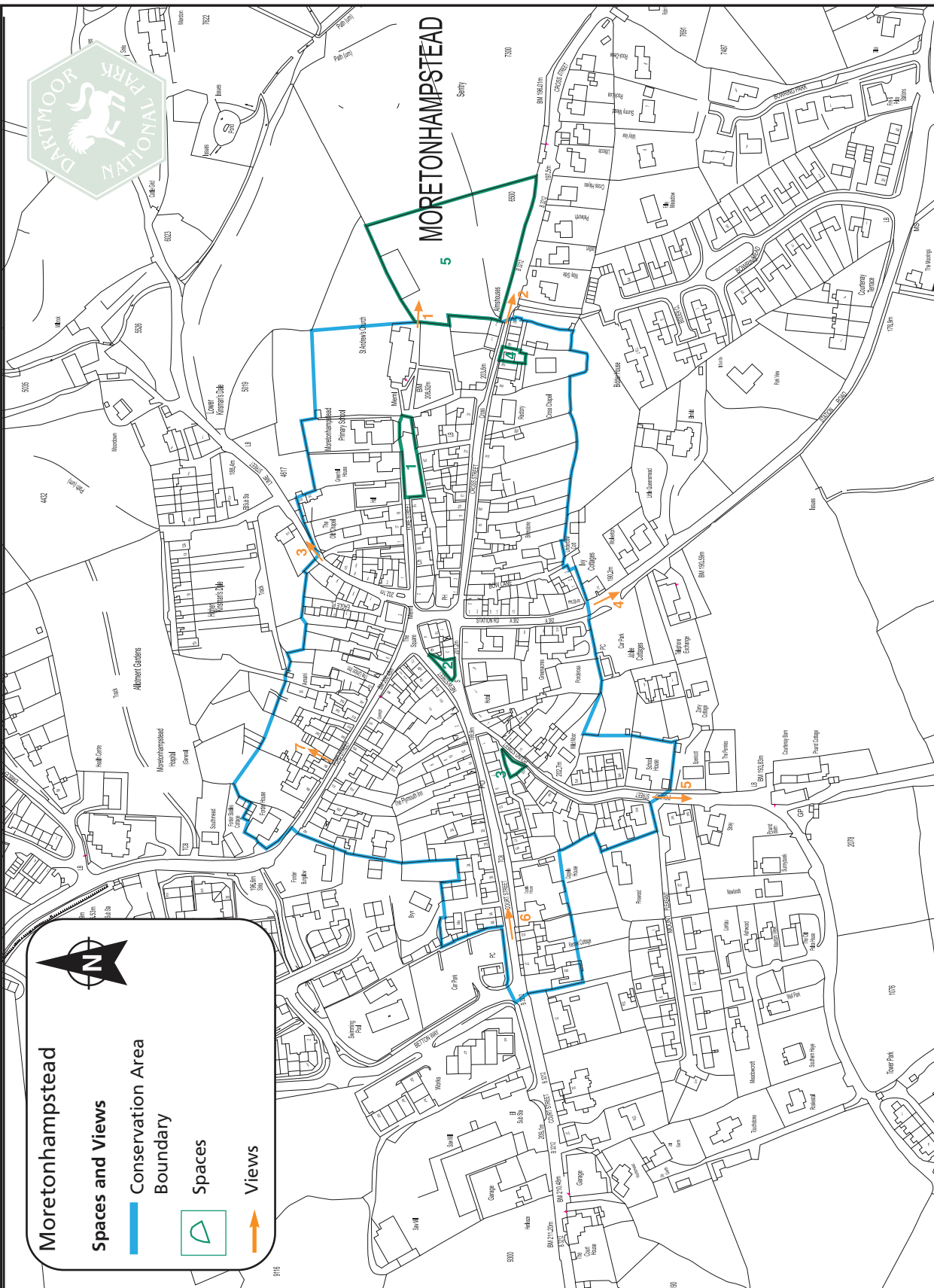


Figure 53 View E towards St Andrew's Church from Court Street



Figure 54 Glimpse N through passage on Ford Street

Map 8 Spaces and Views



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7. Modern Development

20th century developments in the Conservation Area have largely been piecemeal in nature and have often gone hand-in-hand with the demolition of existing buildings. This is not a new phenomenon in Moretonhampstead, but whereas in earlier centuries the replacement buildings possessed similar styles and materials to those that were lost, this has not always been so in the 20th century – in its early years as well as later – and the effect has been to erode the town's distinctive and well established character. One of the most recent examples is the Primary School annexe at Greenhill, which old photographs show replaced a very characterful range of thatched cottages [Figure 1]. Other examples include the single-storey shop premises in the heart of the town and the former garage building in Pound Street.

Other modern developments that have had the same erosive effect include the removal of historic windows and doors and their replacement with incongruous types (such as those made of upvc which have fanlights built in) and the insertion of shopfronts which were designed and built with little regard to local traditions. Fortunately, these developments are in the minority, but in overall terms the 20th century appears to have left the Conservation Area with a good deal to improve and enhance as well as to repair and conserve. Of particular note, however, is the distinctive way in which a number of important locations have been enhanced (such as in Court Street, Green Hill, Pound Street and The Square) through the provision of benches, railings, floor surfaces and other street furniture, in a contemporary manner that builds on the traditions of former times.

8. Archaeological Potential

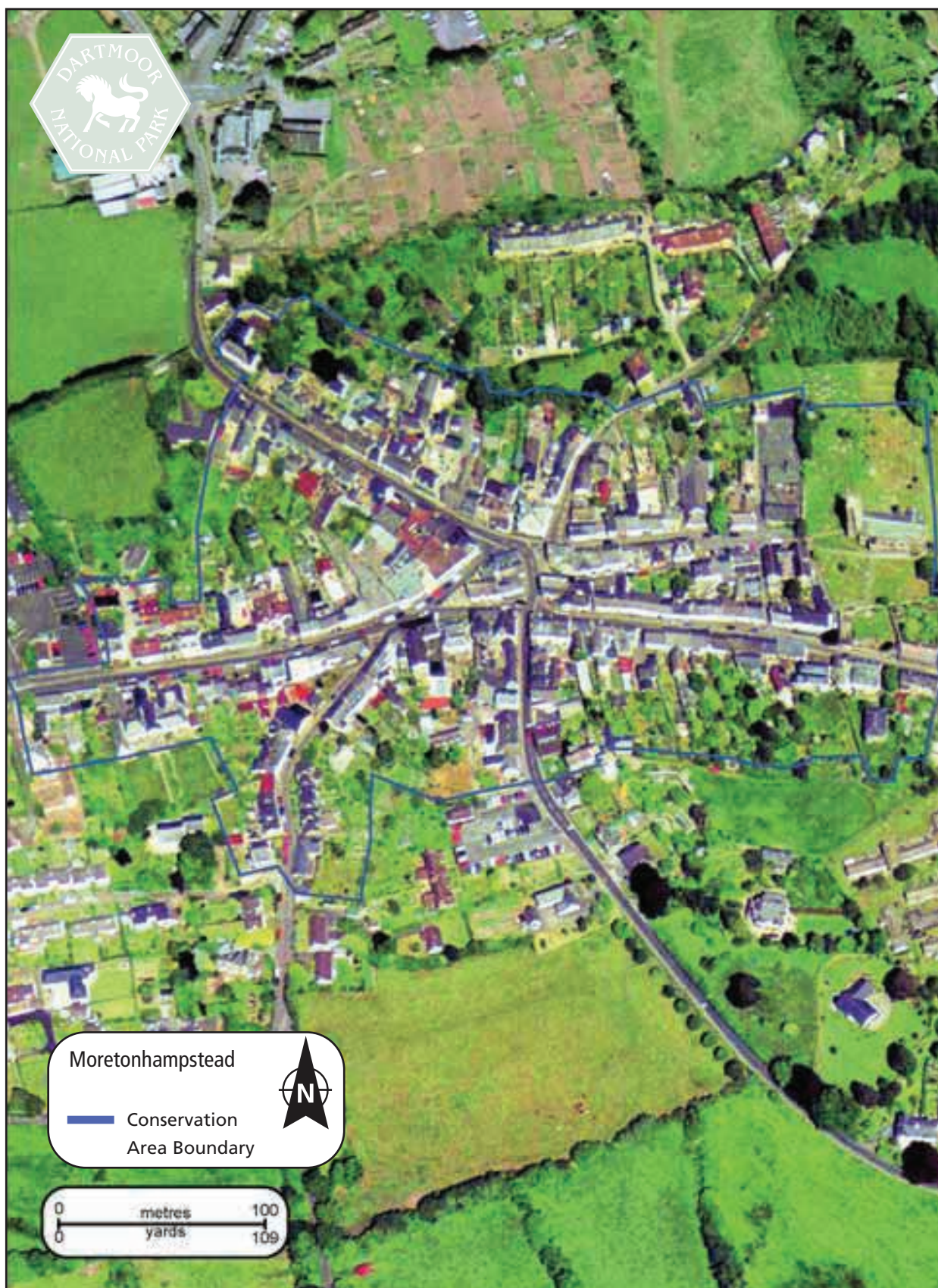
The origins of Moretonhampstead lie mainly in the medieval period and therefore any ground disturbance within the historic core of the town will have archaeological implications and must be informed by archaeological evaluation. The town's remaining burgage plots are still clearly visible on modern maps and serve to define the boundaries of the medieval town, these are therefore of historic importance and should be retained. Post medieval development took place behind the earlier buildings and down the burgage plots and therefore these areas too have archaeological significance and should be treated as such.

9. Trees

Moretonhampstead is unusual in that the trees within the Conservation Area are not a significant feature of the town. Very few trees are visible from the centre of the town as most are to be found growing in the rear gardens of the larger properties. There are only glimpsed views of the trees. The most significant trees are the Oak growing in Fore Street, the Western Red Cedar growing close to the Unitarian Church in Cross Street, and the trees standing in the grounds of Forder House. Generally, there is a good mix of tree species with a diverse age range bordering on the Conservation Area. The mature trees growing along the main roads leading into Moretonhampstead are important features in the landscape, but the most valued tree is the magnificent Wych Elm growing on the northern boundary of St. Andrew's Church. It is possibly the oldest Elm growing on Dartmoor. Many young trees have been planted in the Conservation Area, mostly in the larger gardens, but there is now little opportunity for an extensive tree planting programme. Outside the Conservation Area more land is available which may be suitable for planting.

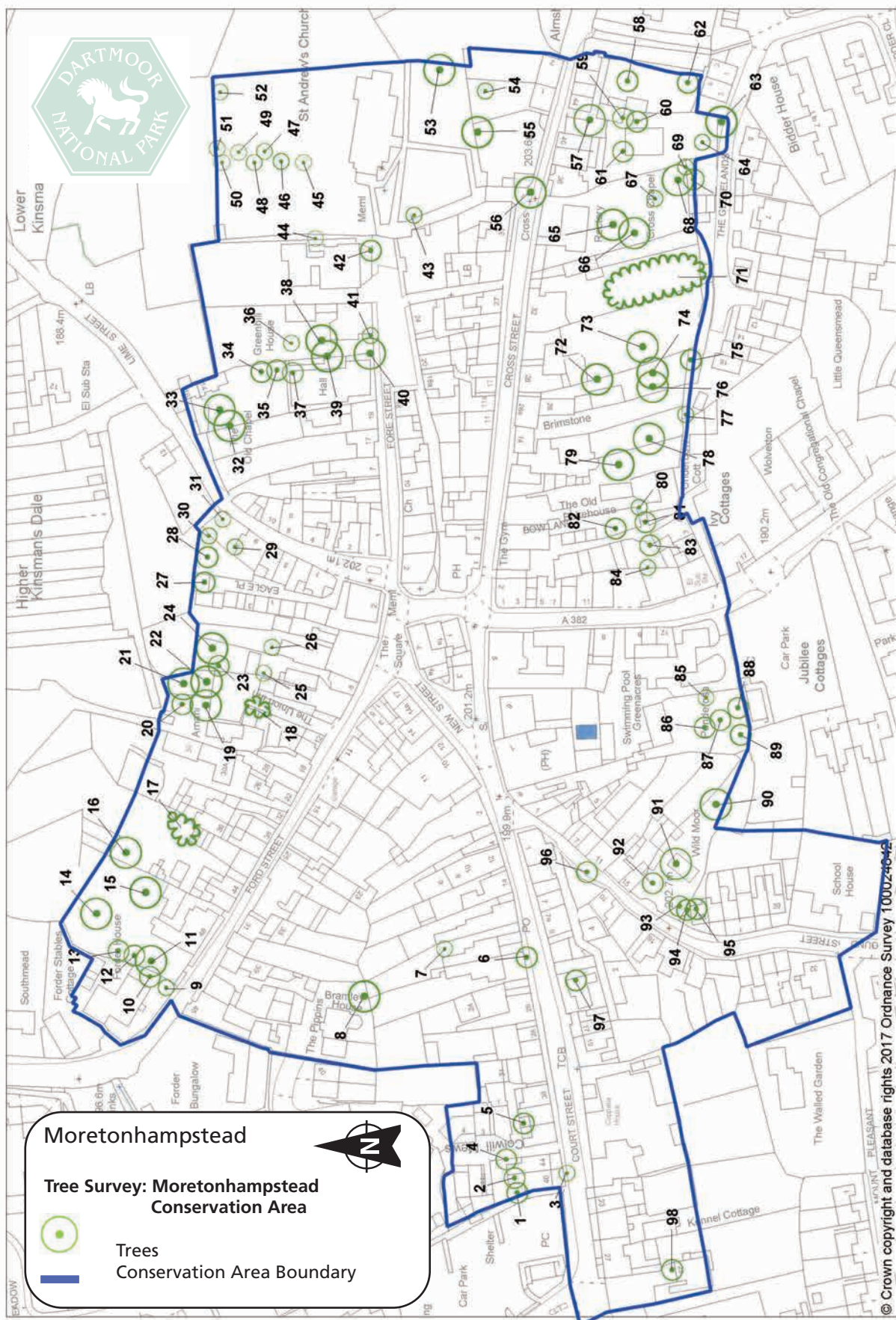
Trees in Conservation Areas Footnote:
The Town and Country Planning Act: Section 211 makes special provision for trees in Conservation Areas not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Anyone who wishes to cut down or carry out works to a tree in a Conservation Area must give the Local Planning Authority 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.

9. Trees



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Map 9 Trees



Tree Survey: Moretonhampstead Conservation Area

| Number | Species | Age Class |
|--------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Eucalyptus | Semi-mature |
| 2. | Apple | Semi-mature |
| 3. | Beech | Young |
| 4. | Cherry | Semi-mature |
| 5. | Willow | Semi-mature |
| 6. | Cherry | Semi-mature |
| 7. | Eucalyptus | Young |
| 8. | Holly | Mature |
| 9. | Cherry | Young |
| 10. | Cherry | Semi-mature |
| 11. | Oak | Mature |
| 12. | Lawson cypress | Semi-mature |
| 13. | Lawson cypress | Semi-mature |
| 14. | Scots pine | Mature |
| 15. | Beech | Mature |
| 16. | Birch | Mature |
| 17. | Group of willow and sycamore. | Young |
| 18. | Group | Young |
| 19. | Apple | Mature |
| 20. | Birch. | Semi-mature |
| 21. | Cypress | Mature |
| 22. | Ash | Mature |
| 23. | Ash | Semi-mature |
| 24. | Ash | Mature |
| 25. | Holly | Young |
| 26. | Ash | Young |
| 27. | Ash | Semi-mature |
| 28. | Ash | Semi-mature |
| 29. | Sweet chestnut | Young |
| 30. | Lawson cypress | Young |
| 31. | Cotoneaster | Young |
| 32. | Cherry | Mature |
| 33. | Apple | Mature |
| 34. | Cherry | Semi-mature |
| 35. | Eucalyptus | Semi-mature |
| 36. | Lawson cypress | Young |
| 37. | Cherry | Semi-mature |
| 38. | Holly | Mature |
| 39. | Holly | Mature |
| 40. | Oak | Mature |
| 41. | Holly | Young |
| 42. | Apple | Semi-mature |
| 43. | Holly | Mature |
| 44. | Ash | Young |

Tree Survey: Moretonhampstead Conservation Area

| Number | Species | Age Class |
|--------|--|-------------|
| 45. | Cypress | Young |
| 46. | Cypress | Young |
| 47. | Cypress | Young |
| 48. | Cypress | Young |
| 49. | Cypress | Young |
| 50. | Scots pine | Young |
| 51. | Yew | Young |
| 52. | Yew | Young |
| 53. | Lime | Mature |
| 54. | Eucalyptus | Young |
| 55. | Holly | Mature |
| 56. | Beech | Mature |
| 57. | Western red cedar | Mature |
| 58. | Cherry | Semi-mature |
| 59. | Lime | Semi-mature |
| 60. | Lime | Semi-mature |
| 61. | Lime | Semi-mature |
| 62. | Ash | Semi-mature |
| 63. | Birch | Mature |
| 64. | Sweet chestnut | Young |
| 65. | Mulberry | Mature |
| 66. | Birch | Mature |
| 67. | Cherry | Young |
| 68. | Apple | Mature |
| 69. | Beech | Young |
| 70. | Cotoneaster | Semi-mature |
| 71. | Group of birch, beech, cypress and willow | Semi-mature |
| 72. | Ash | Mature |
| 73. | Apple | Mature |
| 74. | Apple | Mature |
| 75. | Birch | Semi-mature |
| 76. | Poplar | Mature |
| 77. | Rowan | Young |
| 78. | Apple | Mature |
| 79. | Apple | Mature |
| 80. | Beech | Young |
| 81. | Eucalyptus | Semi-mature |
| 82. | Ash | Semi-mature |
| 83. | Rowan | Semi-mature |
| 84. | Amelancia | Young |
| 85. | Monkey puzzle | Young |
| 86. | Apple | Semi-mature |
| 87. | Apple | Semi-mature |
| 88. | Apple | Semi-mature |

Tree Survey: Moretonhampstead Conservation Area

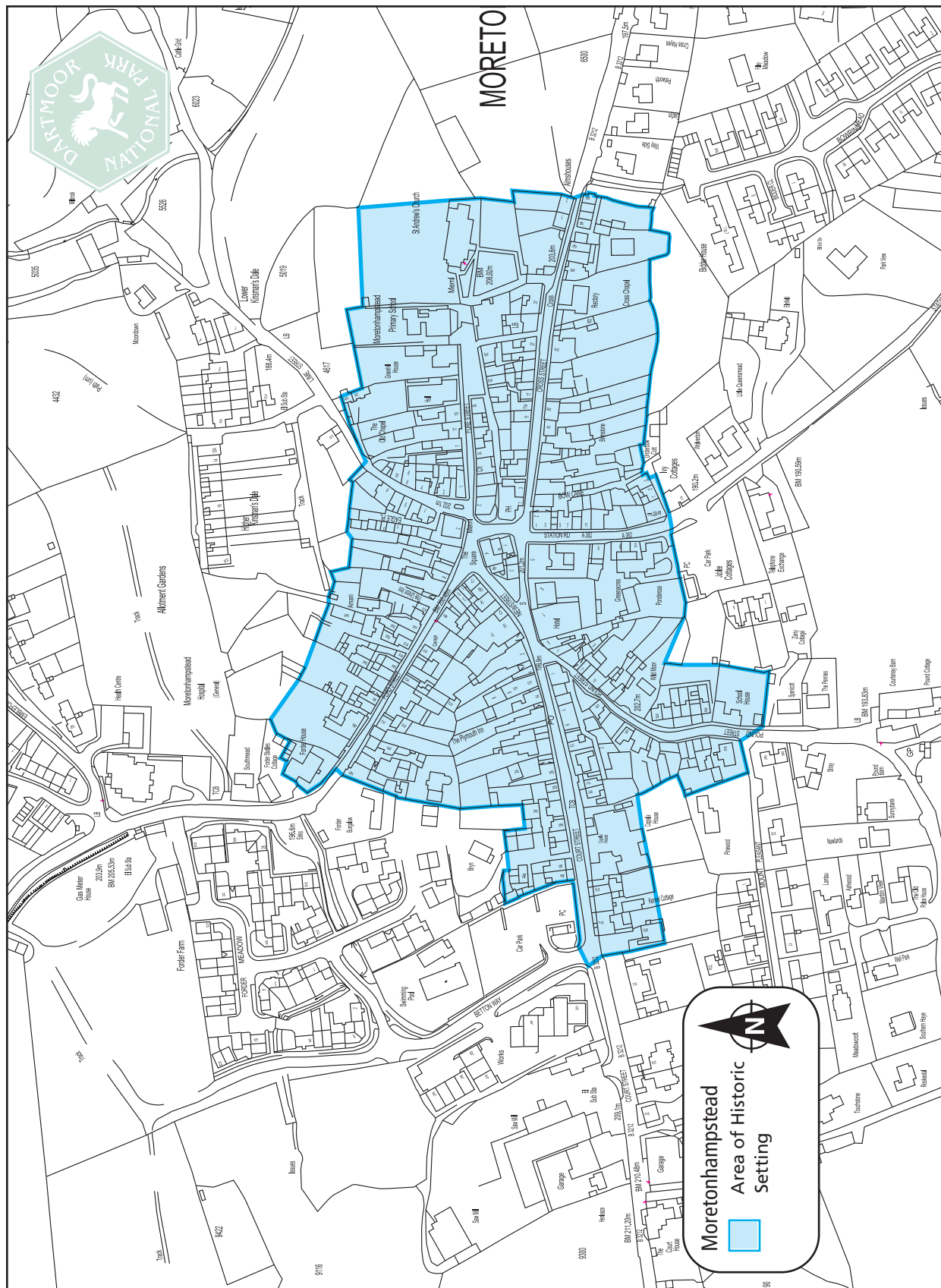
| Number | Species | Age Class |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 89. | Apple | Semi-mature |
| 90. | Birch | Mature |
| 91. | Rowan | Mature |
| 92. | Cherry | Semi-mature |
| 93. | Rhus | Semi-mature |
| 94. | Apple | Semi-mature |
| 95. | Yew | Semi-mature |
| 96. | Rowan | Semi-mature |
| 97. | Whitebeam | Semi-mature |
| 98. | Holly | Semi-mature |

10. Area of Historic Setting

Some conservation areas have large adjoining areas of rural land which possess special historic or setting value and therefore provide an important landscape context for the designated heritage asset. An Area of Historic Setting is considered to be a local heritage asset which may become a material planning consideration and appears on the Dartmoor Historic Environment Record (HER).

10 Area of Historic Setting

Map 10 : Area of Historic Setting



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