# Drewsteignton Conservation Area Character Appraisal

# Drewsteignton



Conservation Area Character Appraisal

DARTMOO DANS P TATIONAL PH

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.

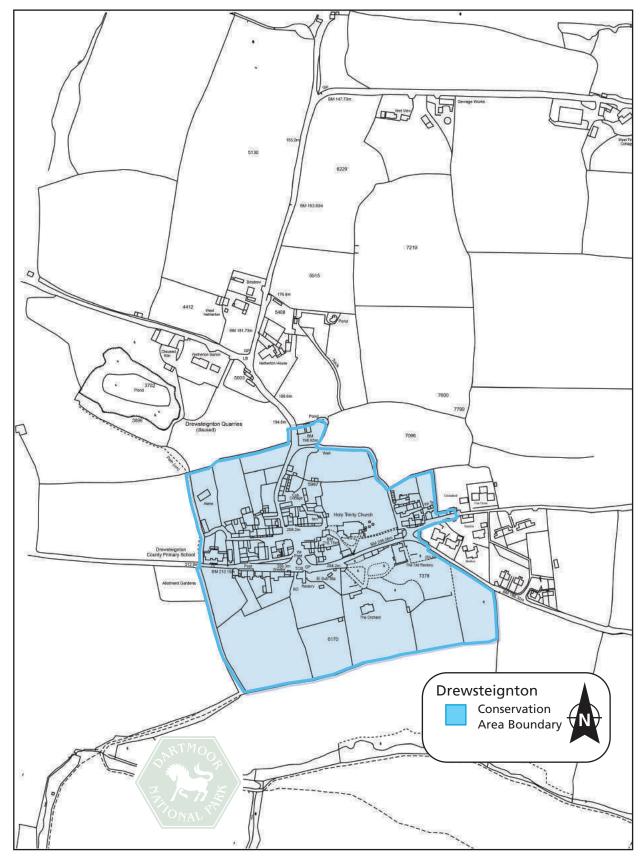


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# Map 1 Conservation Area Location



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# Introduction

The ancient village of Drewsteignton is located on the eastern fringe of the Dartmoor National Park, within West Devon District about 13 miles west of Exeter. The village is thriving and retains its post office / shop as well as its famous pub.

Situated on a high ridge above the deep gorge of the River Teign, Drewsteignton is a picturesque village, popular with visitors to the nearby attractions of Castle Drogo and Fingle Bridge. Lying outside the granite mass of the high moor, the area has a complex geology. The ridge upon which the village is sited is composed primarily of dolerite surrounded by metamorphic strata such as schist and slate. The presence of significant outcrops of limestone proved to be an important local resource.

The Conservation Area was designated in October 1972 and its boundary amended slightly in August 1993. Based on the findings of this Character Appraisal areas to the north and south of the village were considered appropriate for inclusion in the Conservation Area and were formally designated in March 2012. These included the adjacent fields on the south and north-west sides.

# 1 Village History

Recorded in the Domesday book, the name Drewsteignton is derived from a personal name – Drewe or Drogo – and the location. So literally it means 'Drewe's settlement on the Teign'.

Like many parish centres in Devon, the village appears to have changed little over time. Made up of homes and functional buildings that provided the services necessary to the local population, the village has enjoyed stability that is evident and tangible. There has been the slow evolutionary change of individual buildings, the occasional addition of new ones and sporadic conflagrations that claimed others and resulted in change. Yet the village of today retains the same recognisable character that has been its own for many generations. Homes of the 16th – 18th centuries are the backbone of Drewsteignton, with its charming and prominent church at their centre.

For the greater part of its history the village was a stopping off point on one of the historic roads from Exeter to Okehampton. This meant that the village was much more accessible to trade during the centuries when transport in Devon was poor at best and frequently atrocious. This advantage, together with good land and management, may help to explain the quality and number of public buildings in the village and indicates sustained economic success over the centuries. This relative wealth was undoubtedly founded on farming, especially the wool trade through medieval times and into the 18th century.

Lime quarrying and production at Blackaller must have been a major factor in the local economy as well as the social structure of the village. It produced lime for both building and agricultural purposes and also stone for the construction of walls. Although not the most productive in the parish, there was a small tin mine nearby at Drascombe Farm, which went on to yield copper and even a little silver at greater depths - though its size and relatively short life would suggest it made a lesser contribution to the local economy. This was probably true also of the other mines in the locality, from which copper and lead were extracted.

Census information indicates that Drewsteignton underwent prolonged de-population through the 19th century. Like many other villages this was only arrested in the second half of the 20th century. The village has had the good fortune not to have had a level of new development that has been intrusive, either in scale or location. As a consequence there has been a greater emphasis on the refurbishment and adaptation of old buildings. This has, for the most part, been achieved with sensitivity to the buildings and their wider setting, but there are a few examples where authentic character has been obscured or destroyed in the process of conversion.



Figure 1 Glebe Cottages, probably early to mid 20th century

# 2 Settlement Plan

The village is sited on a strategic ridge above the Teign valley which appears to have been a significant routeway, probably since prehistoric times. This physical location has given the village a somewhat linear character running east – west. The structure appears to be a typical example of a village made up of a number of farms linked by lanes which have developed around a focal point – the church. These have then been progressively developed by later infill in the form of cottages. The lane that enters the village from Netherton to the north is likely to have become of much greater significance after the opening up of the quarry.

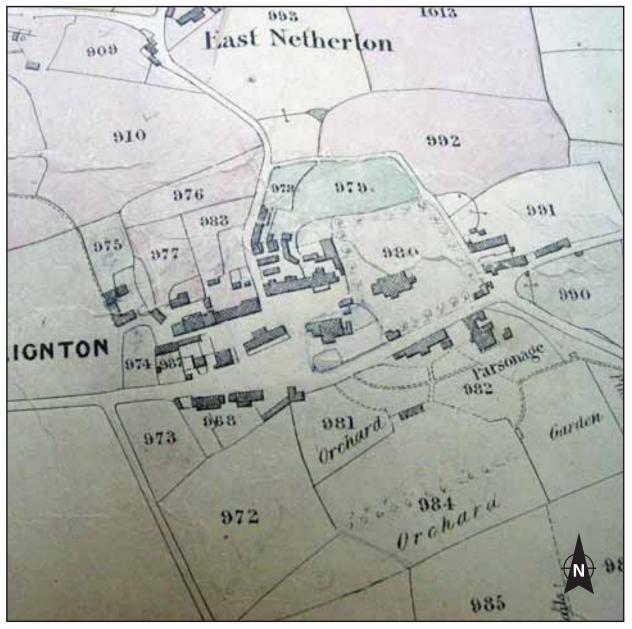
The clearly dominant feature of Drewsteignton is the Church of the Holy Trinity which, with its grounds, spans the ridge and separates the village into two parts. This appears to occupy a very early settlement site. To the east is an interesting pair of terraces. The square to the west of the church precinct may well be a planned feature – perhaps dating from the time that the present church was erected, but may be older. Its origins are uncertain but village squares are quite unusual in the context of Dartmoor. Apart from this, the most significant change to the settlement came in the early 19th century when the Rectory was enlarged and its extensive gardens created.

The great majority of buildings have a linear form and are built tight to the street frontage, with room only for a little planting – a tradition which thrives in most of the village. There are no pavements, though some historic cobbled areas remain that mostly identify private spaces without enclosure. Dwellings are clustered in informal terraces made up of buildings added or re-modelled over the centuries. These blocks of building are pierced by cart entrances to rear gardens and outbuildings. These offer tantalising and attractive glimpses of trees and buildings that add significantly to the special character of the Conservation Area.

There has been a small amount of 20th century development but most of this has occurred outside of the Conservation Area to the east.



## Map 2 Tithe Map 1840



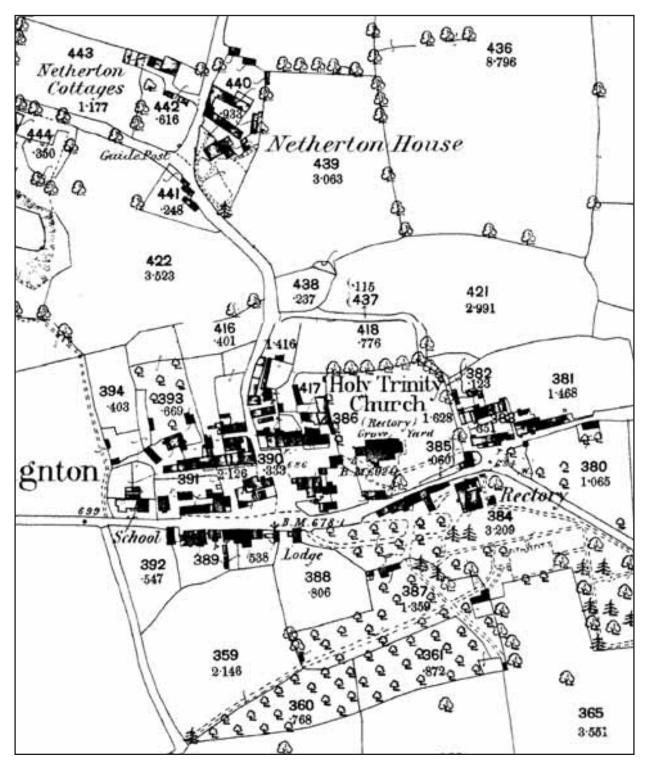
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#### **Historical Footnote:**

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.

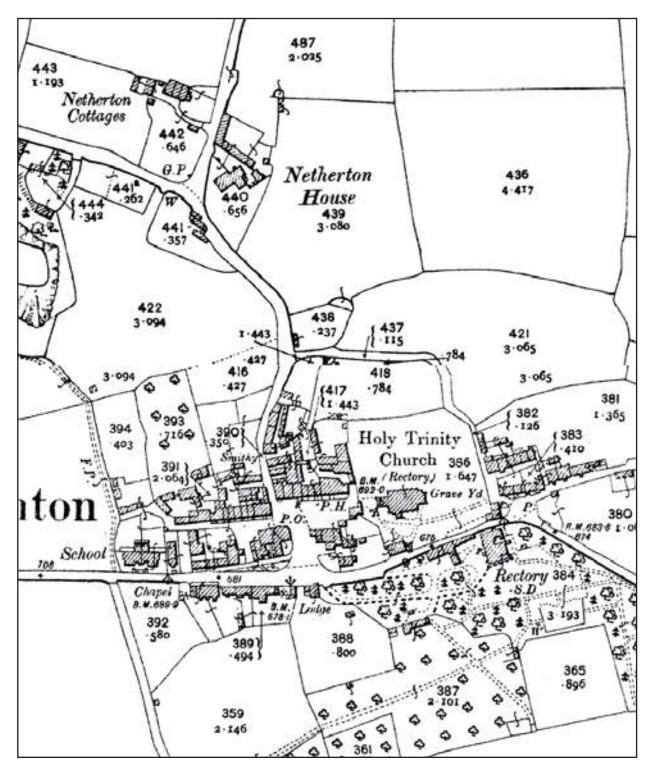
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# Map 3 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1886



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**2** Settlement Plan

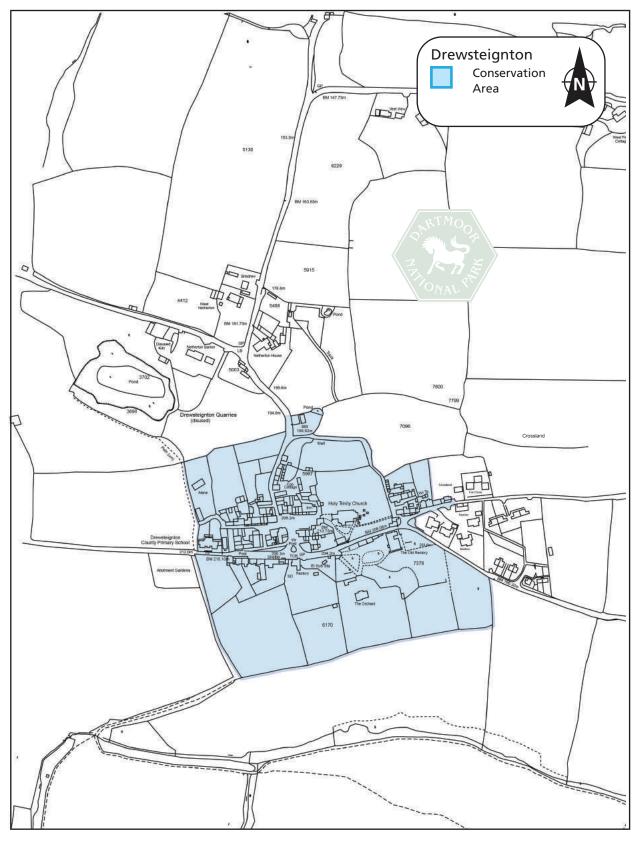
# Map 5 Ordnance Survey Map c.1954



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# Map 6 Conservation Area: Drewsteignton Settlement



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# **3 Building Types, Materials and Styles**

Drewsteignton has a remarkably high percentage of properties that date from the 17th century or earlier. A significant number date from the 16th century and several of these are truly special survivals in such a small village. An outstanding collection of early public buildings are constructed of exposed ashlar granite, demonstrating their status and the architectural as well as social ambition they represent.



Other buildings are of traditional vernacular construction – rubble stone (mostly dolerite) and cob walls, protected with render and limewash. [Figs 2 & 3]. There is no evidence for the historic use of slate-hanging and brick is rarely used as a building material, with the notable exception of the Victorian cottage on Chagford Road at the southeastern corner of the village.

Figure 2 Outbuilding immediately west of the churchyard.

The earlier buildings are two storey structures but generally have lower eaves, demonstrating that they started out as open hall houses that had upper floors inserted later. Buildings of the later 17th and early 18th centuries are usually taller but of the same construction and character. Window openings tend to become larger and more regular in later buildings. Several of the earlier dwellings retain outbuildings, which are either built at right angles to the village lanes or surrounding small yards. These functional structures are generally of exposed rubble stone, some are painted and no doubt many were formerly limewashed. From the later 18th century onwards buildings have a more formal appearance, slate roofs and sash windows.

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Figure 3 Outbuilding to the rear of the Old Inn.



Historically, virtually every building in the village would have had a thatched roof and this remains the characteristic roofing material. Simple plain ridges are prevalent, usually finished flush with the roof slope but some are straight block-cut types. A substantial number of formerly thatched buildings now have slate roofs and there is some clay tile – a recent introduction that is rather inappropriate. Outbuildings and lean-to structures sometimes have corrugated iron roofs.

Few buildings present gabled ends to the street frontage and there is a general absence of dormers in the village. Porches and door canopies are uncommon but those that exist are mostly attractive.

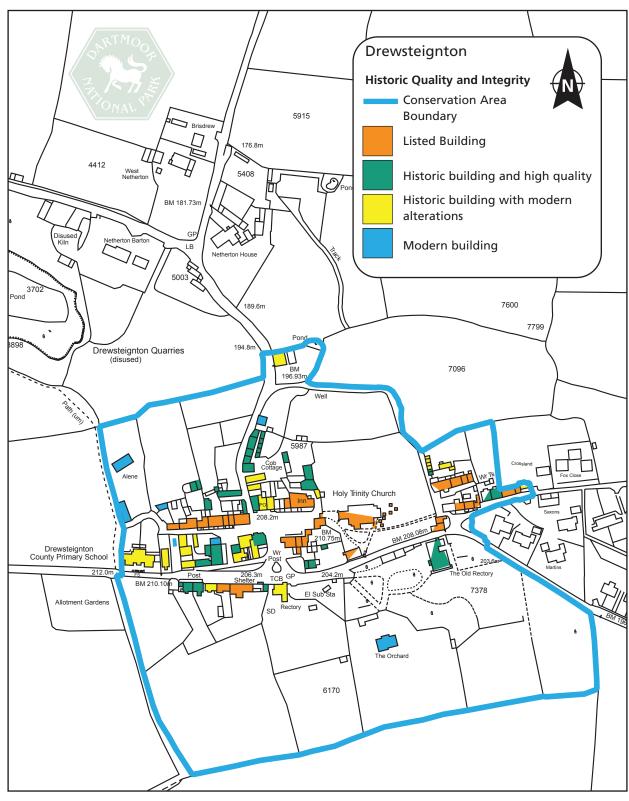
Chimneys are an important feature of the village, especially when viewed from higher ground to the west. Some properties have lateral stacks, such as Lady House, but the majority are axial and punctuate the continuous, but irregular, ridge lines. Most chimneys are of stone construction but the tops of many stacks have been re-built in brick since the late 18th century. As well as adding to the attractiveness of many views, they offer evidence as to the age, development and function of buildings. Some outshuts still retain thin chimneys which indicate the presence of coppers or the like. [Fig 4]



Figure 4 The attractive roofscape of Drewsteignton

Map 7 examines the historic quality and integrity of the village Conservation Area by identifying existing buildings accordingto four categories. Listed Buildings by definition have special architectural or historic interest and act as a bench mark for examining the quality and integrity of the area. Visual inspection of individual buildings in order to assess such factors as their historical significance and changes to their appearance help give a picture of the present position for the Conservation Area. New buildings within the Area are also identified.

# Map 7 Conservation Area: Historic Quality and Integrity



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# 4 Key Buildings

Drewsteignton Conservation Area has an excellent collection of 27 listed buildings at its core. Most of these are listed at Grade II and are typical vernacular buildings that have immense group value but are perhaps not outstanding in their own right. A number of these fine and unusual buildings deserve to be highlighted as being key elements of the special historic character of the area. They are identified below.

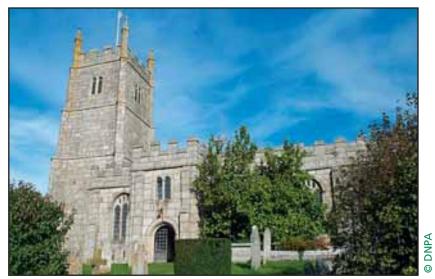


Figure 5 Church of the Holy Trinity.

#### Church of the Holy Trinity: grade I

A very attractive parish church, constructed of coursed granite ashlar with a slate roof, in the Perpendicular style of the 15th century. The tower and nave are the earliest elements and the tower dominates views throughout the village and is prominent on the skyline from far around. [Fig 5] The 'postcard' view from the west is complemented by the surrounding buildings including the 19th century lych gate, which is listed at Grade II. [Fig 7]. The church and its grounds remain a most important focal point of the village, used and appreciated daily by residents and visitors of all ages.

#### 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 2861 listed buildings.



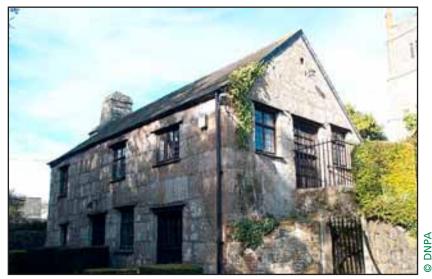


Figure 6 The Church Rooms.

#### Church Rooms: grade II\*

Second of the fine ashlar granite buildings in the centre of Drewsteignton and originally the Church House, this building also dates from the 16th century and has a remarkably complete interior. Since its early days it has been in service as a public building, more recently as a school and is now a parish hall. Such continuity is extremely rare and a special feature of this building and the Conservation Area. [Fig 6]



Figure 7 Church Cottage and the Lych Gate.



Figure 8 The Drewe Arms public house.

#### Church Cottage: grade II\*

A remarkable and small cottage with a 2-room plan that was built in 1677 and has undergone only minor alteration since that date. The quality of construction is good, but the variety of stone and more rubble-like appearance indicates an attempt to complement the church and church house with more limited resources. This adds to the charm of the little building and its contribution to the setting of the church is significant. Formerly thatched, it now has a slate roof. [Fig 7]



#### Drewe Arms: grade II\*

It is not unusual for an ancient village to have at its centre a public house in a building dating from the 16th or 17th century. Often these are Church Houses and buildings of great interest. What is exceptional about the Drewe Arms is that it underwent adaptation in the latter part of the 19th century and has been effectively unchanged since then. The unique combination of built character and traditional hospitality has made this pub a place of pilgrimage to ale enthusiasts for decades. [Fig 8]



Figure 9 Glebe Cottages



Figure 10 Glebe Cottages from the south-west

#### **Glebe Cottages – Grade II**

Although this group of four cottages is not as old as some already mentioned, the centre of Drewsteignton would be much less distinctive without them. Their vernacular character is a wonderful foil for the majestic centrepiece of the church and the contribution they make is maximised by the use of traditional plain ridges on the thatch and limewash on the walls. [Figs 9 & 10].



Figure 11 Looking east from the churchyard



Figure 12 Lady House and Church Gate Cottages

#### Lady House: grade II

A three-room and cross passage house of the 16th century that has undergone several phases of adaptation, including the addition of a large bread oven when it was a bakery in the 19th century. [Fig 12]. This listed building and the following three entries all form part of an outstanding group of thatched buildings to the east of the churchyard. [Fig 11]

#### 1 – 3 Church Gate Cottages: grade II

These cottages form part of a terrace with Lady House. Although of later construction they are a fine group and typical of the local vernacular. [Fig 12].



Figure 13 Primrose Cottage

#### Primrose Cottage: grade II

The later date of this building, originally a pair of cottages, is suggested by the more regular pattern of fenestration. The substantial stack at the northern end is a prominent feature adjacent to the church gate. [Fig 13].





Figure 14 Rookwood and Ashplants Fingle Cottage

#### Edgecumbe, Rookwood and Ashplants Fingle Cottage – Grade II

Another group of 16th or 17th century cottages of considerable character and particular group value. The granite porch to Rookwood, with its 2-centred arch, probably dates from the 16th century [Fig 14].



Figure 15 The Old Inn

#### The Old Inn: grade II

A very substantial building of the 17th century, with a double depth plan resulting from a major re-modelling in the 19th century [Fig 15]. The range of buildings to the rear indicates what a busy inn it must have been in its heyday.

#### Other notable buildings



Figure 16 Hunts Tor

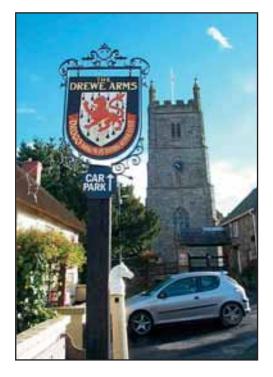
#### Hunts Tor: Not listed

A large and polite house from the mid 19th century that nonetheless fits in with the overall character of the village. With its attractive verandah and small front garden enclosed by railings, this may be the best unlisted building in Drewsteignton. [Fig 16].



# 5 Local Details and Street Furniture

It is a basic character feature of Drewsteignton that there is a general lack of street furniture. Despite being a tourist centre and consequently suffering congestion at times, there is a general absence of gratuitous traffic signs, street lighting, yellow lines etc. Quite a number of attractive views are, however, somewhat blighted by overhead power and telephone cables.







The traditional pub sign at the Drewe Arms strikes just the right balance, identifying the premises and adding to the scene without standing out [Fig 17]. The cobbled entrance to the pub is also a very typical example of how the local stone is used in the floorscape, [Fig 18] but historically does not seem to have extended into the public realm.Together with other examples at Church Cottage and on the south side of Chagford road, west of the bus shelter, this appears to have inspired the new surfacing at the Park Garden [Fig 19].

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There is a nice little mounting block against the gable end of Edgecumbe that is a feature seen when leaving the east gate of the churchyard. [Fig 20]. Around the corner, opposite Rookwood is a small green with a seat next to a water pump.

Historically, enclosure was provided by stone walls and Devon banks. There are a handful of examples of 19th century railings which have their place [Fig 21]. There is evidence of recent suburban boundary treatments appearing close boarded and panel fences that nearly always detract from an historic setting. The telephone box and bus stop are attractive, but the red box was in dire need of painting at the time of survey. [Fig22].



Figure 20 Mounting block adjacent to Edgecumbe



Figure 21 Railings are an attractive oddity where they exist.



Figure 22 K6 telephone box



# **6 Spaces and Views**

#### **Spaces**

The special character and appearance of the Conservation Area are not derived solely from the buildings. The quality of the various spaces between the historic built environment are also of considerable importance. [Refer to Map 8].

#### A Churchyard

The churchyard occupies a considerable proportion of the village and the natural topography means that the land falls away from the church itself to the north and south. This emphasises the primacy of the church and allows fine views. Due to the fact that the churchyard effectively dissects the village it is well used by those passing through, as well as those who are visiting the church. Children play there and others find room for thought and relaxation. The churchyard has a fine selection of tombs and headstones, quite a number of which are listed, which add to the special historic character of the space [Fig 23].

**B** The Square

Most importantly, this space offers an attractive visual foil to the church. With the pub and shop here it is very much the hub of the community and as a consequence it is inevitably used as a car park. With the provision of the new village car park to the north of the churchyard there may be an opportunity to reclaim a little of this space from vehicular use [Fig 24].

C Park Garden

This small space demonstrates how the use of quality natural materials in a manner that echoes, but does not replicate the past, can create something very special and peaceful for all [Fig 25].

D Small green at the junction in front of the Rectory

The little green known locally as the Triangle owes much of its attractiveness to the lack of pretension and clutter. The engraved granite stone which commemorates the Millennium is suitably discreet [Fig 26].

#### Views

The physical location of Drewsteignton is such that there are views to be enjoyed in virtually every direction looking out of the Conservation Area. This is especially so in the direction of the Teign valley which falls dramatically away to the south with the high moors beyond. Some otherwise fine views are diminished a little by regimented forestry planting [Refer to Map 8].

1 From the churchyard

Views to the south are especially appealing and the seats in the churchyard are a pleasant spot from which to enjoy them [Fig 27].



2 The Square

This is one of the prettiest village centres in Devon and from the top of Hillmorhay Lane to the square itself, a sequence of delightful views may be enjoyed [Fig 28].

3 The church from the east

The view of the church from in front of Rookwood Cottage is delightful but in time the church tower will be obscured by the planting of a chestnut tree in the churchyard [Fig 29].

4 Pinch point

The entrance to the heart of the village from the north is made especially theatrical by the way in which the lane narrows dramatically and the space is filled by the large 3 storey Victorian edifice at the top. The contradiction of scale is a little confusing and makes the joy of the open square a more remarkable surprise for the visitor. It also acts as an effective 'informal' traffic calming measure [Fig 30].

5 Glimpses

Gaps between buildings frame a variety of intriguing glimpsed views of gardens, outbuildings and countryside beyond [Figs 31,32,33 and 34].

6 Lanes

The narrow winding lane to the north and east of the Conservation Area (known as Froggy Lane) is an attractive historic route and is proposed for inclusion [Fig 35]. Likewise, the lane adjacent to the south west corner of the Conservation Area is a classic little bit of Dartmoor worthyof comment

(known as Shute Lane) [Fig 36].

The following views are from the outside looking in.

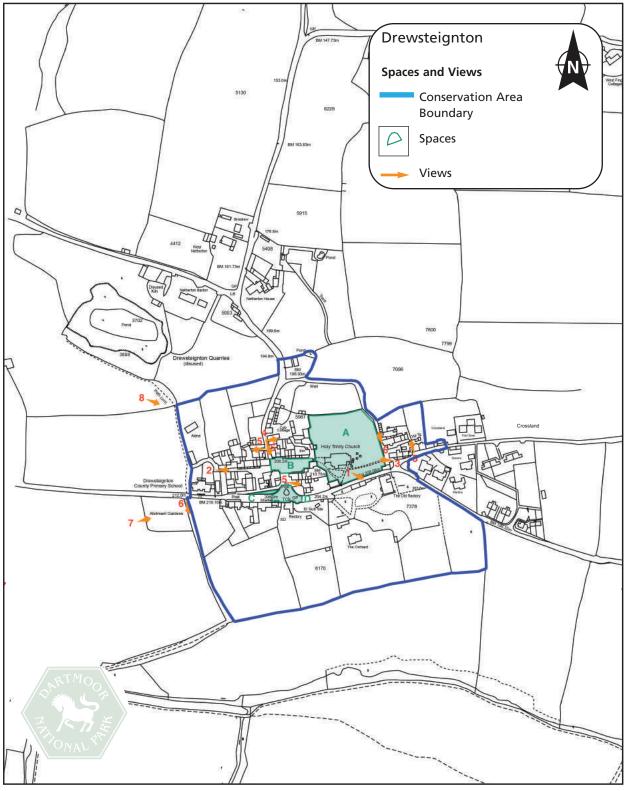
7 Castle Drogo drive

The Church of the Holy Trinity is a landmark for miles around, but perhaps the best view of the whole village is from the entrance drive at Castle Drogo. The extensive tree planting in the grounds of The Old Rectory can be fully appreciated from this vantage point [Fig 37].

8 Public footpath to the west

From this elevated vantage point it is clear how important the roofscape and trees are to the overall character of the village [Fig 38].

# Map 8 Spaces and Views



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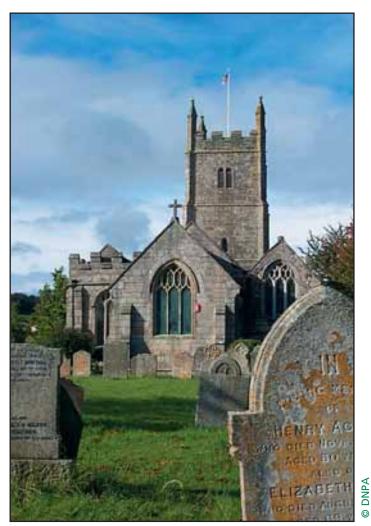


Figure 23 The churchyard is at the heart of the community



Figure 24 The Square



Figure 25 The Park Garden



Figure 26 Small green at the T-junction in front of the Rectory



Figure 27 View from the churchyard towards Prestonbury Castle



Figure 28 Enclosed view from the top of Hillmorhay Lane



Figure 29 The church tower framed by Primrose Cottage and Edgecumbe



Figure 30 The tightly enclosed entrance to the centre of the village

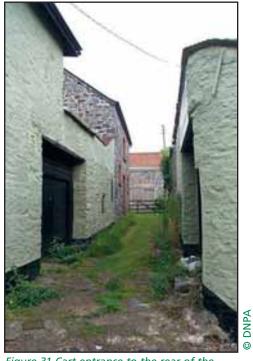






Figure 32 Other glimpsed views



Figure 33 Other glimpsed views



Figure 34 Other glimpsed views



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Figure 35 Looking down the lane adjacent to Lady House



Figure 36 The 'two moors way' lane to the south-west of the village



Figure 37 View from Castle Drogo drive



Figure 38 Elevated view from footpath west of the village

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# 7 Modern development

There is no significant modern development in the Conservation Area.There are, however, a number of conversions of outbuildings, the schooland chapel. The quality of these varies from good to very poor.

# 8 Archaeological Potential

Given its medieval origins and the lack of modern development the archaeological potential for the existing Conservation Area of Drewsteignton is extremely good. Furthermore, there is the strong possibility, given its situation and belief that the present church replaced an earlier foundation, that the origins of the settlement are even earlier. It is worth noting that on the 1886 OS map an earlier Rectory is marked to the east of the Church.

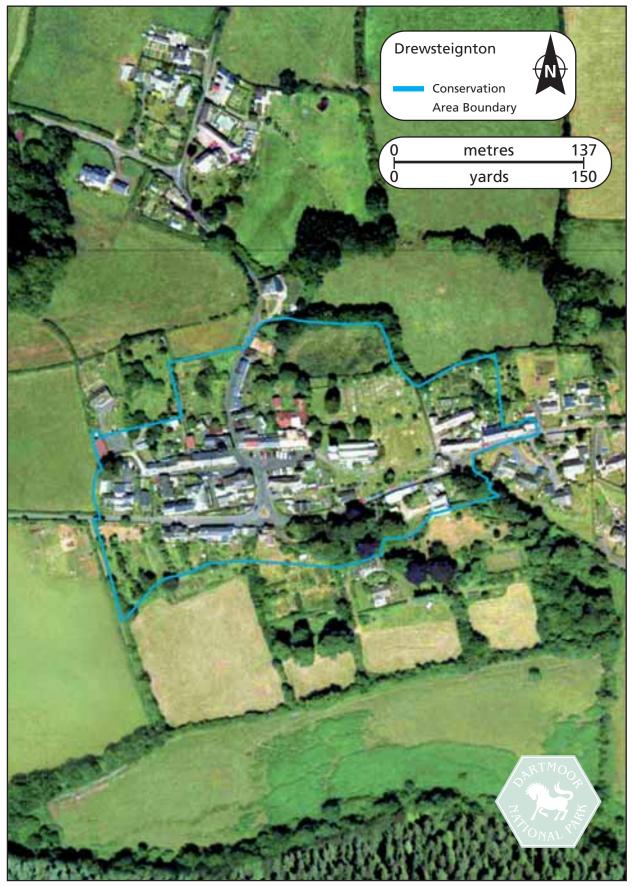
The suggested inclusion of the area around Netherton House and its associated buildings also contains archaeological potential, with buildings which are marked on the Tithe Map being no longer visible.

The lime kilns and other areas nearby also offer archaeological potential. Consideration should perhaps be given to the inclusion of at least part of the limestone quarries within the proposed extended Conservation Area given their importance to both the economy of the village and as a source of local building material.

# 9 Trees

Numerous trees, with a diverse mix of species and age classes, are growing within the Conservation Area. These trees are an important component of the village scene. The most notable trees in the village are those mature trees standing in the grounds of the Old Rectory and adjacent properties, and the mature trees in the grounds of Holy Trinity Church.

# **Trees**



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### 9 Trees

There are a wide range of species with a diverse age class growing in and adjacent to the Area.

Within the Conservation Areas trees are mostly concentrated on the rear gardens of properties and are only partially visible from the roads running through the town. The most significant trees are the mature trees growing in the grounds of St Michael's Church and in the larger gardens of the properties located on the northern side of Mill Street.

Outside of the Conservation Area the mature trees growing around the boundary of Chagford House, the mature beech trees in Jubilee Field and the woodland to the east of New Street add to the setting of the town.

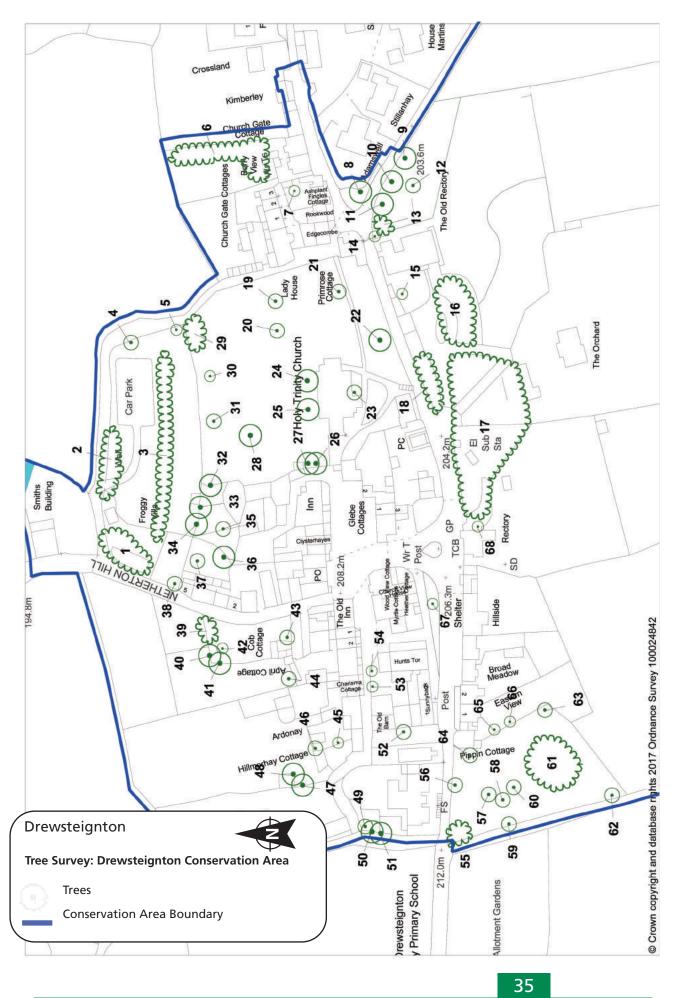
New planting has been carried out throughout the Conservation Area, mostly in larger gardens, but there is limited opportunity for further planting within the Area. Outside the Conservation Area there are many potential tree planting sites.

#### **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



Drewsteignton Conservation Area Character Appraisal Dartmoor National Park Authority June 2017

# **Tree Survey: Drewsteignton Conservation Area**

Number	Species
1.	Group of broadleaves
2.	Group of broadleaves
3.	Linear group of apple trees
4.	Sycamore
5.	Sycamore
6.	Linear group of broadleaves
7.	Willow
8.	Birch
9.	Beech
10.	Oak
11.	Oak
12.	Cedar
13.	Group of cypress
14.	Pear
15.	Birch
16.	Group of broadleaves
17.	Group of broadleaves
18.	Group of birch and sycamore
19.	Cypress
20.	Sweet chestnut
21.	Horse chestnut
22.	Yew
23.	Magnolia
24. 05	Cherry
25.	Cherry
26. 27	Yew
27. 28.	Pine
	Cypress Group of cypross
29. 30.	Group of cypress Tulip tree
31.	Oak
32.	Sycamore
33.	Sycamore
34.	Sycamore
35.	Sycamore
36.	Beech
37.	Apple
38.	Willow
39.	Group of cypress
40.	Beech
41.	Beech
42.	Apple
43.	Cherry
44.	Willow

#### **Age Class**

Young to semi-mature Young to semi-mature Young Semi-mature Young Semi-mature Young Mature Mature Mature Mature Semi-mature Young Young Young Semi-mature to mature Mature Young to semi-mature Semi-mature Semi-mature Semi-mature Mature Semi-mature Mature Mature Mature Mature Mature Semi-mature Young Semi-mature Mature Mature Mature Semi-mature Mature Semi-mature Semi-mature Young Mature Mature Young Semi-mature Semi-mature