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1 Introduction

1.1 Section 69 of the 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990' states that "every local planning authority":

- (a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and
- (b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

1.2 The same section of the act describes 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.

1.3 Combe Martin has long been identified as a settlement within North Devon worthy of having a designated conservation area. The 1994 Combe Martin Local Plan discusses the issue and mentions recommendations having been made for conservation areas within the village by the Combe Martin Conservation Group. Some analysis has been undertaken previously which identified two areas for potential designation. The first centred around the village's beach and the second centred around the parish church.

1.4 This appraisal focused on these previously identified areas as a starting point.

1.5 The purpose of this character appraisal is to:

- Assess the character and significance of the Combe Martin area and identify the extent of the area's special architectural and historic interest.
- Propose a boundary for a conservation area, potentially in two discrete parts, which would facilitate the future protection of this special interest.
- Outline the planning policies and controls that apply to a conservation area.
- Identify areas which could be enhanced in future to the benefit of the local area's character.

2 Background

2.1 Several Local Plans have identified Combe Martin as having potential for a designated conservation area, including the current adopted North Devon Local Plan for 1995 to 2011 as follows:

27.9 The original village of Combe Martin was centred around the Parish Church and has since extended down the valley. The church of St Peter ad Vincula is Grade I listed. West Challacombe Manor to the north of the village in the Exmoor National Park is also an important historic building and is grade II. There is no Conservation Area within the village. However, the designation of a Conservation Area will be considered within the plan period focusing on the following areas:*

- *Around the Parish Church*
- *The Seafront*

2.2 Some initial research work was done back in 1999-2000 however this was never completed and no conservation area was designated at that time. With the ongoing review of conservation areas in the district there is again an opportunity to build upon this previous work for Combe Martin.

2.3 In early 2010 a site visit was undertaken with members of Combe Martin Parish Council and conservation staff from North Devon Council to get a feel for the area and to re-examine the tentative proposed boundaries that the research work a decade before had suggested.

2.4 It was found that those boundaries were, broadly speaking, still appropriate and with a few minor alterations work was progressed into an appraisal of the two suggested areas.

2.5 Following further work during 2010 consultation was undertaken on a proposed boundary for a conservation area covering two areas in 'Head Town' and 'Seaside'. Public consultation ran from 25th November 2010 to 14th January 2011. The feedback received during this period demonstrated support for the principle with little opposition to the concept and the boundaries as proposed. As a result the boundaries given illustrated in the appendices of this appraisal were formally adopted as Conservation Areas in March 2011.

3 Landscape and Setting

3.1 Combe Martin is a linear settlement running along the UMBER valley for around 2 kilometres inland from the beach. The course of the River UMBER runs through the valley to the south of the main street.

3.2 The historic core of the village is based around the Parish Church, 1.3 kilometres inland, where the valley is more sheltered from the full force of coastal weather. A similar pattern can be seen at nearby Ilfracombe where the town grew from an inland settlement near the Parish Church and a separate harbour side fishing settlement.

3.3 As the village of Combe Martin grew its development spread along the valley floor rather than up its slopes forming the long linear village spread along the main road that we see today. Development at the beach end of the village was small scale until relatively recently. Undoubtedly the beaching and unloading of boats happened here and there were probably storage buildings and associated infrastructure, but it would appear that people preferred to live in the more sheltered area around the church. The two parts of the village were, and still are, connected by the main road (A399) which also forms the arterial route through Combe Martin.

3.4 Several lodes of silver lead bearing ores run through the area higher up along the sides of the valley. The infrastructure of the mines, their shaft heads, powder houses and forges grew up along the slopes of the valley as a matter of necessity, while homes for the workers of the mines never strayed far from the valley bottom.

3.5 The area is geologically varied and from a relatively small area silver, lead, iron ore, limestone, copper, manganese and umber (from which the river gets its name) can all be obtained. However, this variety is not reflected in local building materials, which tend to be local slate stones or brick. The process of quarrying for mineral extraction does not usually yield materials suitable for construction.

3.6 The land within the sheltered valley is also good agricultural land leading to the growth of the Combe Martin trade in strawberries and other fresh produce. Historic field patterns still survive within the lower slopes of the valley sides, while the higher ground still retains a coverage of woodland.

3.7 The wider landscape contains a number of late medieval parish boundary markers. These worked stones were placed at intervals to mark the boundary of neighbouring parishes and were once a common sight. Many have been lost or removed throughout the country so as to make any that survive a rare occurrence. Several of the old Combe Martin markers still survive, with 4 examples around Trentishoe being Grade II Listed.

3.8 Land to the north east of the valley represents the foothills of Exmoor with the national park boundary running close to the north edge of the village. The landscape to the south of the valley is of hills separated by smaller valleys of tributaries of the

Umber. The smaller valley between Clorridge Hill and Stoneditch Hill creates a wider area where it meets the main Umber valley and it is in this wider and flatter area that the Parish Church stands. The crossroads here also provides a route southwards to Berrydown. The steep, but more direct, route via Hodges is the older while the longer route via Henstridge is the old turnpike road created around 1840 (act of Parliament for Combe Martin turnpikes was granted in May 1838 but this was not the first stretch completed).

4 Scope of the Conservation Area

Maps showing the extent of the Conservation Area and the Listed Buildings they contain are given in Appendix 4.

A list of the 18 Listed buildings contained within the two areas is given as Appendix 1.

4.1 The Conservation Area for Combe Martin is made up of two distinct parts. The first covers an area of 4.8 hectares (11.9 acres) in the 'Head Town' part of the village, while the second is centred around the beach and covers an area of 7.28 hectares (18.0 acres).

4.2 The 'Seaside' area contains 3 listed buildings, all of which are Grade II Listed, while the 'Head Town' area contains 15 listed buildings (14 Grade II and 1, the Parish Church, Grade I Listed).

4.3 'Head Town' contains the older buildings of the village, together with remnants of historic plot layouts. 'Seaside' is a more recent development and contains formally designed groups of Victorian and Edwardian buildings and grand terraces giving it a more consistent feel.

4.4 Although the parts of the village between the two areas do contain good examples of historic buildings, some of which have the same interesting features which make up the character of the conservation area, there is a lower degree of consistency outside of the proposed boundaries. It is expected that examples of good quality buildings outside of these boundaries will be investigated for inclusion on the emerging '*List of Buildings of Local Significance*'. One such example would be the branch of Lloyds TSB 50 metres to the west of the Head Town area which retains elaborate etched glass windows featuring the 'black horse' logo.

5 Views and Vistas

Views from the high ground on either side of the valley take in the village making the roofscape particularly prominent.



5.1 The valley setting of Combe Martin allows for good views from the higher ground on either side, looking down on the village. Due to the continual development along much of the valley bottom, views along the valley are restricted due to the gentle turns that the main street, and the line of building, makes as it proceeds along the valley.

5.2 From Mine Tennament, the only mining site within the conservation area with standing remains and well

preserved buried remains under archaeological investigation, views across the the village are particularly striking and from here it is the tower of the Parish Church that takes on a visually dominant role.

5.3 The route of the South West Coast Path also allows views from this higher ground over the village, and with the growing number of walkers using the route an increasing number of people get their first view of Combe Martin from this high ground.

5.4 A particular focal point is the cross-roads at High Cross where the road opens out and the junction is bounded by several buildings with unusual shapes so as to maximise development of their plots. Although views from the junction along Church Street are rewarding, thanks to the low terraces of cottages along the west side and the Victorian Gothic Revival style former school, now community centre, the view does not take in the church itself or any of its immediate setting. For this views are best achieved from immediately to the north across the open space of Adams Hay. The church is clearly visible atop a small rise, surrounded by the green space of its churchyard.

5.5 The church tower itself is visible from many spots within the Head Town area and forms a prominent local landmark from wherever it can be seen. Due to the great length of the village the church goes completely unnoticed from the Seaside area.

5.6 Views from Seaside Hill, especially from the car park, are an opportunity to take in the area surrounding the beach as well as the natural landscape beyond. The Fo'c'sle stands out as a dominant building behind the beach, while the slender corner building of Sea Croft stands out as splitting Borough Road and Cross Street.

The view to the Church from High Street to the north of High Cross is perhaps the best view of the church. The wedge of open space between High Street and the churchyard is likely the site of the medieval marketplace.



6 Historic Development

6.1 Combe Martin takes its name from the Old English word 'Combe' meaning a wooded valley and the family name of the Manor Lords who were granted the Manor following the Norman Invasion. Martin of Tours was the first of the family to be lord of the manor here, and the crest of the family featured a swan and shield, echoed by the symbol on the lawns overlooking the beach and sea today.

6.2 The oldest part of the village grew up around the Parish Church, the oldest parts of which date to the 11th century, while the area around the beach developed later, first as a fishing village and later as a resort. These two centres were referred to as 'Head Town' near the church and 'Seaside' near the beach, with the 18th and 19th century maps clearly showing these two distinct settlements. These two settlements were eventually linked as development grew up between them during the later 19th and 20th centuries, leading to the long linear settlement we see today.

6.3 The first mention of Combe Martin is in Domesday Book when the village was held by William of Falaise, Falaise having been the birthplace of William the Conqueror. Its mention in Domesday Book indicates that there had been a settlement here prior to 1066.

6.4 From 1730 until 1919 Combe Martin had absentee manor lords, (the manor was located near the site of Manor Cottage and was sold off in 1919) allowing a greater degree of freedom and self governance for the local population.

6.5 Combe Martin was made a market town and borough at the request of Nicholas Martin by a charter of 1264 in the reign of Henry III, although the entry for the town in the 1870 *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* states that the market had long since been lost.

6.6 The silver veins for which the village became famous were probably first discovered around the 13th century. Silver from Combe Martin has featured in several events of historical interest. It is recorded that part of the wedding dowry of Eleanor, the eldest daughter of Edward I, was paid as 270 pounds (weight) of Combe Martin silver.

6.7 Productivity of the mines increased over the years and was at £704 3s 1d by 1295 (at this time a poor to middling knight would earn around £45 a year, about the same as the cost of a warhorse while a skilled worker might expect around £4 10s per year). Seeing that it would be profitable to invest in the mines 337 miners were brought from Derbyshire to work at Combe Martin, and a further 270 men the following year from Wales and the Peak District.

6.8 The 'Hundred Years War' with France was largely funded through the sale of Combe Martin Silver or through its use for minting money to pay the army, at times being debased with tin from the Devon stannaries. As a sign of the importance of Combe Martin silver to the nation, a royal order was issued in 1364 which forbade the export of precious metals from Barnstaple or Ilfracombe.

6.9 Even after the end of the Hundred Years War the crown continued to have an interest in the Combe Martin mines. King Henry VIII appointed German mining engineer Joachin Hochststter to work in Combe Martin and throughout Devon with a workforce of a thousand men.

6.10 Further veins of silver ore were discovered and worked during the reign of Elizabeth I and these mines were later re-opened in 1659 at the suggestion of Thomas Bushell who was a student of Francis Bacon. On this occasion there was little success and the mines soon closed again. The first half of the 18th century saw a period of decline for mining in Combe Martin.

6.11 In 1796 there was renewed activity with 9000 tons of silver and iron ore being exported to South Wales for smelting

6.12 The mines were again worked from 1813 and over the next 3 years 208 tons of galena ore were shipped out to Bristol. A private company set out to mine silver in 1835 but was never greatly successful. After an outlay of some £30,000 on equipment the mines were almost closed without any silver having been extracted until at the last minute a new vein of silver was found. The company was able to cover its expenses and make a small profit for its shareholders before the vein was exhausted and the operation forced to close in 1848. Attempts to reopen the mines in 1875 were even less successful and mining in the village came to an end in 1880 with the closure of Combe Martin Mine.

6.13 Since the late 1980's extensive research and exploration of the mining history of the village has been carried out by the Combe Martin Silver Mines Society including the rediscovery of several shafts and re-excavation, to significant depth, of the workings.

6.14 Silver was not the only metal to be mined in Combe Martin. The silver ore also contained lead but iron ore was mined at Wild Pear Bay (between Lester Point and Little Hangman to the north of the village just north of Combe Martin beach), manganese at Rawn's (between Little Hangman and Blackstone Point) and copper was also mined in the area, with over nine thousand tons of iron and copper ore being shipped to South Wales in the 6 years following 1796. A glance at a map of the area shows numerous disused quarries.

6.15 Other local industries included lime burning, with many kilns being located around the village. Burning limestone at high temperatures produces a product known as quick lime, which can be used either for improving acidic agricultural land or for

making lime mortar for building. The raw material, limestone, was often imported however in Combe Martin a supply was available from Berry's Quarry at the east end of the village.

A map showing the locations of quarries, mines and lime kilns around Combe Martin is supplied in Appendix 3

6.16 A particularly good example of a lime kiln once stood at the entrance to Cobblers Park where there is now a carpark. This kiln was in use until after the end of the First World War, showing how enduring lime burning had been. However with the introduction of mass-production of lime in large gas fired furnaces there was no longer a place for localised production on this scale. That combined with the growing use of cement as a building material at the end of the 18th and start of the 19th centuries, led to the terminal decline of lime kilns and lime burning in the area.

6.17 During the 18th century growth in the local population could be directly linked to the periods when the silver mines were being worked, implying that at times outside specialist labour was brought in to either work or oversee the working of the mines. Throughout the Georgian and Victorian periods the bottom of the valley slowly became more developed with more dwellings appearing in the gaps between the old and eventually stretching out to join Higher Town and Seaside together.

6.18 Between the periods of relative prosperity there was instability and decline for the village. Descriptions from 1822 and late 1700's describe Combe Martin as 'a decayed market town' and 'ruinous and almost depopulated'.

6.19 When the railways reached the North Devon coast at Ilfracombe in the 1870s increasing numbers of holidaymakers began to visit the area, raising the demand for luxury agricultural produce grown in the sheltered valley around Combe Martin. The area became particularly famed for its strawberries. By 1900 boarding houses began to appear in Combe Martin as the village began to take direct advantage of growing tourism, especially in the seaside part of the village.

6.20 The 'Hunting of the Earl of Rone' procession is held annually in the village and is a celebration of the fictitious events surrounding the capturing, and multiple shootings, of the 'Earl of Tyrone' in around 1607 following his shipwreck at Rapparee Beach. In reality The Earl did flee Ireland in 1607, forfeiting his title in the process, following the end of the Nine Years War and the Tudor re-conquest of Ireland, but it arrived safely in Italy, after an uneventful journey, where he died in 1616.

6.21 The 'Hunting of the Earl of Rone' takes place over a week finishing in a 2 mile procession along the closed off main street, featuring Redcoats, music and hundreds of dancers in old fashioned dress. The procession was banned in 1838 but was revived in 1970.

7 Architectural Character

7.1 The two distinct parts of the Conservation Area had very different origins and developed in different ways over the years before joining together as housing flourished along the bottom of the valley. These two areas represent separate character zones within the Conservation Area.

7.2 Few buildings of any great apparent antiquity survive within the village today, although some of these buildings probably hide older structures behind facades remodelled during the later 18th or 19th centuries.

7.3 The majority of the built environment of the area as it appears today dates from the late 18th and early 19th centuries during periods when the mine workings were being re-investigated and worked. The level of building and the rise in population indicates a degree of prosperity as well as a sizable degree of inward migration to the village of mine workers and specialists from other parts of the country.

'Head Town' Character Zone

7.4 The oldest standing structure in Combe Martin today, just like in other towns and villages across the country, is the Parish Church. The oldest parts of the church, the chancel and south transept, date to the 13th century but much of this part of the building is hidden from the outside by later work in the perpendicular style of the 15th and early 16th centuries.

7.5 The early village would have grown up between the site of the Parish Church and the former site of the Manor House to the east of Comers Lane. Despite this there is little apparent in the frontages of the buildings along High Street and Castle Street that dates to any earlier than the 18th century. It is likely that at least some of these frontages hide older fabric behind.

7.6 The number of properties which retain, to various degrees, traditional shopfronts or which show clear signs of having had shopfronts removed and blocked in is an indication of the wealth of this small village during the late 18th and early 19th century. Now few of these shopfronts remain in active use and the majority of those are within the area surrounding the beach. However shops continue to appear along the length of the main road, often as isolated examples or in small clusters. This results in an unusual pattern of shops scattered amongst housing which makes up part of the historic character of the Head Town area of Combe Martin.

7.7 The layout of the area, with properties arranged along the frontage of High Street and Castle Street is in itself an interesting characteristic of the area. The formal layout of towns and villages during the medieval period was as a series of burgage plots. These plots of land were long and narrow so as to allow a high number of local

'burgesses', wealthy freemen who were often craftsmen or merchants, to have shops along the main streets while providing space behind these shops for workshops, stabling or living accommodation.

7.8 Most historic towns and villages have this historic plot layout along their main streets, often partly eroded over time as owners brought out neighbours so as to expand, or subdivided plots to better suit their needs. In Combe Martin this pattern also had the advantage of maximising the density of building along the flat land low down in the valley while providing extra space for plots on sloping land at the rear. For this reason of convenience it is likely that some new plots in Combe Martin continued to be laid out in this style even after the practise generally died out elsewhere.

7.9 Although the majority of buildings in Combe Martin are built right up to the frontage of their plots there are examples of properties set back with small areas of front garden. The most notable is Hammond House which is set back almost as far as the back walls of neighbouring properties. It retains wrought iron railings across the frontage to enclose its front garden. The property itself is Georgian in its style and is probably contemporary with buildings to either side although executed in a grander fashion. It may be that while neighbouring properties had their facades remodelled the owner of this property was sufficiently wealthy to have any former building on the site cleared and a new building constructed set back from the roadside. This building, unlike its more modest neighbours, also has service accommodation in the rear, again illustrating the wealth of the family responsible for its construction.

7.10 Despite the wealth that must have been available to some members of the Combe Martin community, especially during the times of working of the silver mines, this wholesale rebuilding and reconfiguring of plots and building lines, is something unusual within the streetscape. Many of the other set-back properties are only a few feet from the pavement edge, just sufficient to provide bay windows to the frontage, often with a low wall or railings as a boundary feature.

The use of white spar as a decorative element in walls can be seen throughout Combe Martin



the stone formed on the gate piers.

7.13 Oriel windows are another prominent feature within the village. On properties which immediately front onto the main road through the village, an obvious way to increase internal space without encroaching onto the road would have been the addition of Oriel windows. Some properties, those around the Church being the most prominent, do have bay windows rising from ground level.

7.14 Water also plays a prominent role within Combe Martin, with the river itself and various smaller streams and leats bringing the sound of running water to areas around the village. The grade II listed packhorse bridge along Wet Lane is now the only remaining packhorse bridge within the village. Before smelting and refining facilities for excavated ore were available in Combe Martin, the material would likely have been transported away from the village in the panniers of packhorses or in simple carts, making bridges such as this 19th century example essential.

7.15 Before the advent of steam powered pumps many of the deeper silver mines were cleared of water by water powered pumps, explaining the number of leats within the area which form an engineered remnant in the local landscape.

7.11 Although the vast majority of properties do not have front gardens, boundary walls still manage to make a significant contribution to the area. This is particularly apparent around the Parish Church and War Memorial where rubble stone walls are topped with copings of white spar. This white stone used to be found along beaches in North Devon and was a readily available and decorative feature which can also be seen as copings in Ilfracombe.

7.12 Trafalgar Cottage takes the decorative use of white spar on garden walls further with striking pyramids of

The packhorse bridge over the UMBER on Wet Lane is a survival of bridges which must have been common in the area at one time



7.16 Unusual architectural features include a door to number 1 Bowling Green Lane which is set at an angle in a deep recess. The door, when closed, is not in alignment with any of the external walls of the property and makes for a highly unusual feature.

7.17 Within the Head Town area the vast majority of chimneys are constructed of red brick, with a very small number in Marland brick; a pattern almost the opposite of that found in the Seaside area.

'Seaside' Character Zone

7.18 The area surrounding the beach and the river mouth is a more recent development than 'Head Town' and the layout of buildings here do not have the historic burgage plot layout.

7.19 Although the vast majority of properties do not have front gardens, boundary walls still manage to make a significant contribution to the area. The driveway to Sea Wood has walls with white spar copings combined with herringbone patterned walling, a feature of the North Devon coast particularly prominent around Mortehoe.

7.20 The decorative 'pyramids' of white spar seen on gate piers are more prominent, and seen more frequently, around the Seaside area compared to Head Town. Copley Villa and Elm Bank on King Street and Homewood on Woodlands all have particularly extravagant examples of these decorative pyramids.

A selection of the painted and gilded fanlights carrying the names of properties



7.21 Another prominent feature of the Seaside area are fanlights carrying the names of their properties. This particular feature is reflective of the areas of the village with high concentrations of guest houses offering bed and breakfasts. As a feature this can also be found in Head Town, but in far fewer numbers reflecting the lower number of guest houses away from the beach.

7.22 The Oriel windows typical in Head Town can still be found in this area, however the later period of development here means most buildings are set slightly back from the pavement edge and have full height bay windows, balconies or even verandas.

7.23 The creation of front boundary treatments and balconies also results in a greater degree of architectural ironwork in this part of the village, in the form of balcony rails and low level boundary edging.

7.24 Balconies and verandas are particularly prominent along Woodlands, with good examples at Channel Vista and Number 3 Woodlands. Channel View retains an upper leaf which formed a balcony for the upper floor, with the railings now lost. A door giving access to the upper balcony is formed in the north side of the bay window.

7.25 The adjacent property shows a row of dentil corbels which match those on Channel View and presumably supported a similar upper balcony. Despite the similar balcony arrangement, the style of the two buildings has distinct differences, with round headed windows to Channel View while number 3 gets flat window heads and marland brick string courses.

7.26 Other properties along Woodlands get full width projecting roofs creating shallow verandas at ground floor level sheltering the windows from direct sunlight and forming a rain porch over doorways. Examples can be seen at Holmleigh, Burleigh and number 8.

7.27 Tile hanging after the arts and crafts style is also a prominent feature of the Woodlands area. Lyndon House along the main road shows the decorative use of 'fish-scale' red clay tiles, while the terrace from Homewood to Hill View takes the style further with elaborately decorated verandas, bargeboards with pendants and sash windows incorporating marginal coloured glass lights.

7.28 Decorative barge boards are a feature seen beyond the arts and crafts style properties of Woodlands, indeed examples can be found throughout the village. Rooflines are also frequently decorated with cornice detailing, typically in the form of simple dentils made up of projecting bricks or is the form of rubbed brick 'brackets'. The dentil style detailing also appears on the bay and oriel windows in the seafront area of the village.

7.29 Decorative external joinery seems to be a particularly prominent feature of the seaside area, with Cross Street featuring examples of carved fluted timber pillaster columns along ground floor windows.

7.30 The majority of buildings are built of local stone, either rendered or given decorative polychrome detailing in the form of Marland brick reveals around windows and doors, and quoins. Chimneys are also frequently of Marland brick in the seaside area of the village, practically to the exclusion of other materials.

Homewood exhibits decorative clay tile hanging as well as lavishly decorated timber verandas.



7.31 The beach itself is dominated by two buildings, The Fo'c'sle Public House and Sea Croft Gifts. Sea Croft is all the more striking thanks to its corner site and its late Georgian Gothick style which sets it apart from the character of other buildings within the village. The Fo'c'sle is the largest single building overlooking the Beach, views of the building being particularly striking from the carpark overlooking the beach to the west. The parapet wall hiding the roof form of the building, added to provide an additional storey after storm damage, gives it a modern appearance against its surroundings despite its Georgian origins.

8 Street Furniture & Streetscape

8.1 The streetscape within the village is dominated by the variety of buildings which closely bound the main street.

8.2 Despite this there are also a number of open spaces, particularly around the churchyard and in this area there is provision of street furniture including a number of black timber benches.

8.3 In areas overlooking the beach and cliffs there are railings of various varieties, often painted in a mix of silver and blue. Iron bollards, preventing parking on the pavement along the narrow main street, are also painted in this blue and silver colour scheme.

8.4 The majority of street lighting in the village is of modern utilitarian style, although advantage has been taken of mounting streetlights to telegraph and electricity poles so as to avoid the need for additional dedicated poles for lighting.

8.5 There are also a number of traditional style lighting poles, perhaps from the 1980's, around the beach area in an attempt to enhance the character of this area. Although there are no surviving gas lamps within the village there are a number of very early electrically lit examples on the carpark overlooking the beach - these are genuinely old pieces of street furniture (pictured on right) probably dating to the 1890's but potentially as early as 1881. One of the lamps has been upgraded and remains as a functional streetlamp today while most have lost their heads and lamps and stand as redundant poles. Very few examples of early electric street lamps survive today making this group a particularly significant part of the public realm in Combe Martin.



8.6 The most widespread element of historic street furniture is the black and white cast iron street signs that can

be found around the village. Several examples can be found in a group around High Cross. Some of these are chunky cast iron examples, while others are later reproductions in a similar style. Subsequent re-painting cycles of these signs have lost the original colour scheme and now some examples show white lettering on a black base, while others have black lettering on a white base. As the latter is the modern convention it is likely that it is the white lettering versions which represent the original form.

9 Development Pressures

9.1 Perhaps the biggest development threat facing conservation areas nation-wide is that of alterations carried out to dwelling houses which do not need planning permission. Such alterations may have only a minor impact on the character of the wider conservation area when viewed in isolation, however they can have a cumulative effect which can lead to major degradation of the historic character of the conservation area. Traditionally the largest such threat has come from the removal of timber sashes and casements in favour of the installation of uPVC windows. Many properties in Combe Martin have suffered from such work, although some examples of historic joinery remain, the majority of buildings which retain a complete set of historic windows are listed buildings.

9.2 As of 6th April 2008 the provision of some sources of renewable energy can be, under certain circumstances, a permitted development, which does not require planning permission or conservation area consent. The rules covering when the installation of, for example solar panels, is a permitted development depend on the location of the panels, their size and height, as well as the area they cover. As such advice should be sought from the planning office, as not all installations will be considered to be permitted without planning permission. The problem caused by this is that there will be no immediate control over such alterations within conservation areas, and as such there is potential for unsympathetic alterations to damage the character of the area.

9.3 As well as these typical issues which face the majority of conservation areas there are also some more specific issues which affect the Combe Martin Conservation Area.

9.4 The scattered shops of Combe Martin have been in decline for many years, perhaps since as far back as the last working of the silver mines in the late 19th Century. The strange pattern of having no real commercial centre, but instead a scattering of shops throughout the village, has perhaps not helped matters into the 21st century.

9.5 With the rise in the use of the car few people explore far into the village on foot, meaning only the clusters of shops closest to the parish car park above the beach receive good levels of passing foot trade. Those furthest from the car parks, often separated from the nearest other shops by considerable distances, have failed and been converted to residential use. This is not helped by the difficulties in parking along most of the length of the main street.

9.6 This trend has resulted in the loss of many traditional shopfronts and the unsympathetic alteration of others so as to better accommodate the demands of residential occupation. There is a great variance in the way in which such alterations

have been carried out, in some cases working well or retaining some elements of the former shopfront, while in other cases the alteration stands out through poorly matched materials and scaling of new windows.

9.7 Although the intention of improving thermal performance is a laudable one the better examples show how this can be achieved in a sympathetic manner, while the poor quality alterations demonstrate how such gains can be achieved cheaply if aesthetic and historical considerations are abandoned.

9.8 The character of the main street is defined by its continuously developed frontage, with the majority of buildings set along the pavement edge with no front garden to make the best use of the flat land at the valley bottom for building. Modern backland development and the desire to expand the village by building into the lower slopes of the valley sides, or on garden land behind existing properties, has resulted in demand for clearances and creation of openings within the streetfront to facilitate access to these new developments.

9.9 The loss of the continuous frontage in this way could considerably impact upon the established character of the area and should therefore be avoided, particularly within the conservation areas.

1 Listed Buildings Within the Conservation Area

Head Town Area:

Castle Street

Address	Listing Grade
Cherri-Dene	II
Hammonds (Hammond House)	II

Church Street

Address	Listing Grade
Community Centre (Former Workhouse & School)	II
War Memorial	II
K6 Telephone Kiosk	II

Church Yard

Address	Listing Grade
Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	I
Kidwell headstone with accompanying footstone approximately 2 metres south of west tower of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula,	II
Newton chest tomb approximately 3 metres south of south west corner of south porch of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	II
Bawden headstone with accompanying footstone approximately 3 metres south of north porch of Church of St Peter As Vincula	II
Charley chest tomb approximately 4 metres south east of south-east corner of south transept of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	II
Group of 4 headstones approximately 4-7 metres south of south porch of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	II

1 Listed Buildings Within the Conservation Area

Address	Listing Grade
Anonymous footstone approximately 5 metres west of west tower of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	II
Gubb headstone with accompanying footstone approximately 5 metres north of north transept of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	II
2 headstones approximately 9 metres south east of south east corner of chancel of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	II
Draper Headstone With Accompanying Footstone Circa 12 Metres South East of South East Corner of Chancel of Church of St Peter Ad Vincula	II

Wet Lane

Address	Listing Grade
Packhorse Bridge	II

Seaside Area:

Newberry Road

Address	Listing Grade
Saltdean	II
Newberry Cottage	II

Borough Road

Address	Listing Grade
Seacroft	II

2 Historic Mapping

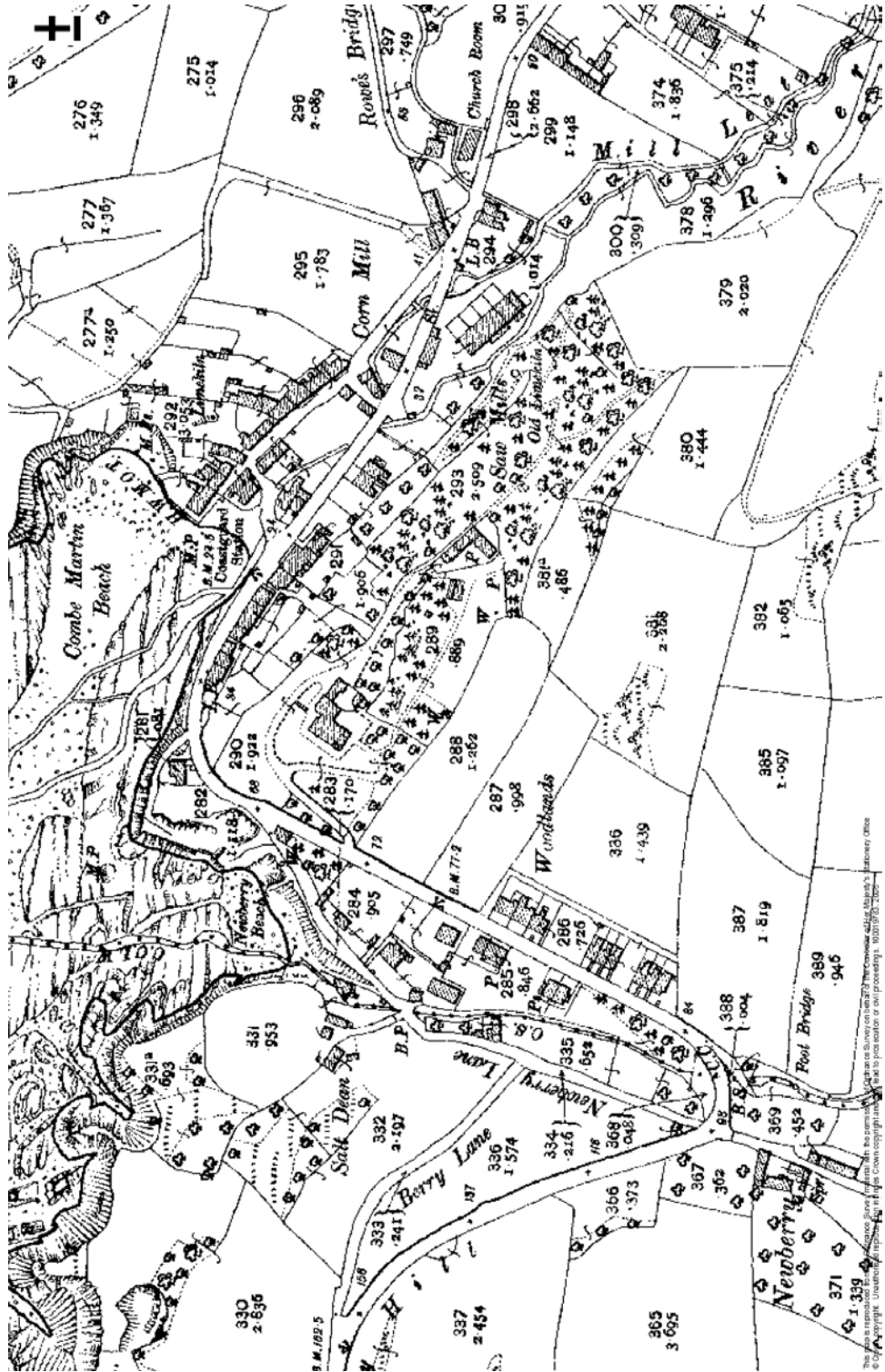
I - Seaside Area 1st Series Ordnance Survey Map c. 1880

II - Seaside Area Revised Ordnance Survey Map c. 1904

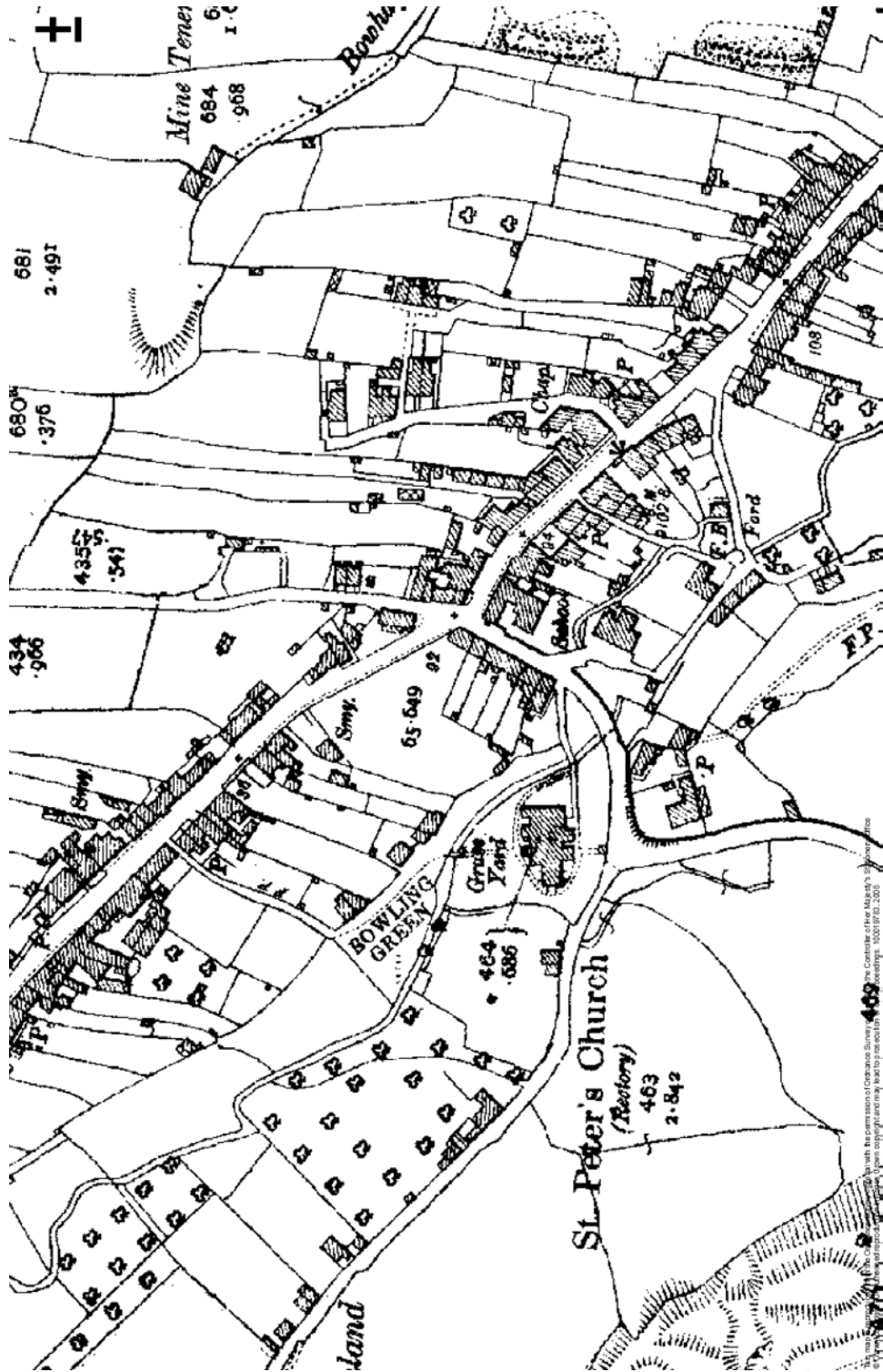
III - Head Town Area 1st Series Ordnance Survey Map c. 1880

IV - Head Town Area Revised Ordnance Survey Map c. 1904

II - Seaside Area c. 1904



IV - Head Town Area c. 1904



4 Conservation Area Mapping

I - 'Head Town' Conservation Area Boundary & Listed Buildings

II - Key Views Within 'Head Town' Conservation Area

III - 'Seafront' Conservation Area Boundary & Listed Buildings

IV - Key Views Within 'Seafront' Conservation Area

4 Conservation Area Mapping



