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1 Introduction

1.1 Conservation Areas are designated by Local Planning Authorities under the Planning Acts. Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines 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’.

1.2 North Devon Council, as the local planning authority, has a duty to designate parts of the District it sees appropriate as Conservation Areas. There are currently 40 Conservation Areas in this District (excluding those within Exmoor National Park).

1.3 Carrying out a Conservation Area Character Appraisal is an important method for identifying the qualities and characteristics that such an area possesses and to provide a basic summary of the elements, which collectively contribute towards the special character and appearance of the conservation area. A clear and comprehensive appraisal of the Berrynarbor Conservation Area provides a sound basis for development control decision-making, and assists the Council in defending such decisions that are subject to appeal. Generally the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be preserved or enhanced through:

- Providing controls and regulating development through the planning system.
- Applying the extra controls that designation provides over demolition, minor development and the protection of trees.
- Environmental enhancement schemes and possibly providing financial assistance for the repair and restoration of specific buildings.

1.4 Encouraging public bodies such as the local highways authority or utility companies to take opportunities to improve the street scene through the appropriate design and sensitive sighting of street furniture (and retention of historic features of interest), or the removal of eyesores and street features that have a negative impact such as overhead wires.

1.5 The purpose of this character appraisal is to:

- Analyse the character of the designated area and identify the components and features of its special interest.
- Outline the planning policies and controls that apply to the Conservation Area.
- Identify opportunities for the future enhancement of the Conservation Area.

1.6 It should be noted that the omission of any particular building, structure, tree, wall or any other feature from being highlighted within this character appraisal does not imply that it is not of special interest, nor is there an implication in such an omission that it does not make a positive contribution, or conversely a negative contribution, to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Also the map is unable to identify accurately every tree of significance and value to the Conservation Area.

2 Background

2.1 This appraisal of the Berrynarbor Conservation Area was initiated in July 2010. The first designation of land within the present conservation area boundary was by North Devon Council in September 1983. There have been no revisions of the boundary since this date.

The existing boundary of the Berrynarbor Conservation Area, together with its listed buildings, is given in Appendix 4(II)

2.2 Berrynarbor is a rural hillside village, made up of modest cottages lining its streets. The outlying areas show the agricultural base of the local economy with farms and their ancillary buildings. Despite the small size of the village it has some grand buildings and community facilities, including the Manor Hall, which was the Manor House.

3 Facts & Figures

3.1 The conservation area covers an area of 10 hectares (24.6 acres). Of the buildings within the conservation area 15 buildings are included on the 'List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest' (Listed Buildings). Of these 14 are grade II listed and one, the Parish Church of St. Peter, is grade II*.

A list of the Listed Buildings within the Berrynarbor Conservation Area is given in Appendix 1

3.2 There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the boundaries of the conservation area, or in the immediate vicinity.

4 Historical Development

4.1 Berrynarbor has the advantage of being close to the coast and main roads while still being a relatively isolated and rural inland settlement. The setting of the village, along the side of a valley surrounded by low hills shelters it from the worst of the coastal weather.

4.2 The earliest written reference to the Village is in Domesday Book, at which time the local population was only 20 people, with a further 10 farming land outside the village within the area owned or administered by the Manor. The manor at this time was held by 'Walter of Douai', who had extensive land holdings including Hagginton, Stoodleigh, Dipford, Kerswell, Knowstone, Dunsford, Uffculme and Bampton. Walter had fought at the Battle of Hastings and was granted extensive lands in Devon and Somerset by William the Conqueror. The inclusion of the settlement in Domesday Book would indicate that the origins of Berrynarbor reach back at least to the Saxon period and perhaps further.

4.3 The village takes its name from the local manor lords, the Berry family who held the manor and much of the surrounding land until as late as 1708, with several monuments to the family in the Church today. Earlier names for the village include '*Berry*' and '*Berry Nerbert*'.

4.4 The Bassett family (of 'Watermouth') later acquired the manor in 1712. A Mrs. Basset of this family had a drinking fountain (now grade II listed) erected at the junction of Mill Lane in commemoration of the 60th year of Queen Victoria's reign.

The surviving parts of The Manor, now 'Manor Hall', stand beside the church and have features from the Tudor and late medieval periods.



4 Historical Development

The tower of the Parish Church rises to a height of 29 metres making it the most dominant feature of the village.



4.5 The Church and Manor House represent the oldest standing buildings within the village. The North transept arch of the church incorporates fabric from the 11th century but may have been rebuilt at a later date. The 13th century chancel is the oldest significant component of the church building. It is possible that an earlier Saxon church stood on the same site, although this was likely to have been a modest timber structure and no archaeological evidence has been identified.

4.6 The Manor House contains some fragments of material from the early Tudor period (late 1400's) including the 4 light mullion and transom window arrangements. The building had a porch which carried the date of 1634, probably the date of major renovations, but this was subsequently moved to 'Westaway' in Pilton. The Manor previously had an additional wing and would have been a significant and grand house for North Devon, however this wing was demolished in 1889 leaving the building much as it is today.

Berrynarbor; a village and a parish in Barnstaple district, Devon. The village stands on an eminence, on the coast, 2½ miles East of Ilfracombe, and 9 North of Barnstaple railway station. It has a post office under Ilfracombe; and contains a richly sculptured mansion of the time of Edward IV (1442-83). The parish comprises 4,958 acres. Real property, £.5,235. Population, 775 Houses, 184. The property is divided among a few. Bowden farmhouse was the birthplace of Bishop Jewel in 1522 (Bishop of Salisbury 1559-1571). A small circular camp occurs about ½ a mile from the shore. The living is a rectory in the diocese of Exeter. Value, £715. Patrons, the Bishop of Exeter and others. The church has a Norman arch, an early English chancel, a perpendicular nave, and a decorated, high, massive tower; and is in tolerable condition. There is an Independent chapel.

Extract from the 'Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales' 1870-72.

4.7 Other industries must have been prevalent within the parish, the Devonshire Directory of 1850 states that the hills within the parish are good sources of limestone and other stones. The prominent building stone locally is a shale stone / slate, probably

meaning that the limestone in the area is of poor quality and more suited to lime burning for making mortars or as an agricultural land improver. The limestone quarries at Combe Martin also produced lime for this purpose.

4.8 Recently Berrynarbor has expanded beyond its historic core towards the main Ilfracombe to Combe Martin road (A399) as North Devon became a popular retirement or holiday home spot, increasing the demand for homes in the coastal villages.

5 Landscape & Setting

5.1 Berrynarbor is set on rising ground within the steep sided Sterridge valley around 1.2 kilometres inland. It is located along the old road joining Ilfracombe (via Hele) with Combe Martin but set away from the coastal route. The surrounding landscape is a mixture of established woodland in the more steeply sloping areas with agricultural pasture on the more gentle slopes. The valley sides also retain a degree of woodland and tree coverage.

5.2 There are limited remnants of quarrying within the parish, although little in the immediate vicinity of the village. The river has been used to provide power for a sawmill since at least the 17th century and has probably been used for other purposes, such as flour making, for even longer. The mill building is surrounded by the remains of leats and ponds as part of the water management system.

5.3 Higher ground around Berry Down to the south is highly exposed and the landscape here is marked by an extensive series of Bronze Age burial barrows, approximately 2.8 kilometres from the village.

5.4 The village is entirely within the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a nationally important landscape designation in the UK, containing a wide diversity of coastal landscapes and habitats.

5.5 The immediate agricultural landscape of the village is made up of fields first enclosed in the latter middle ages, however curving hedge banks and other features suggest that these fields were previously farmed as an open system of strip-fields. The wider setting is of modern enclosures within which survive some boundaries which represent fragmentary remains of the medieval field pattern. The area around Home Barton was probably enclosed between the late 15th and early 18th centuries, with fields being typically larger than those around the village.

5.6 The south west section of the conservation area consists of a series of fields, the northern of which form the village recreation and sports field, while the southern are old Glebe land called St. Peters Field. The close association with the church, together with evidence of surviving water channels from its past as a water meadow, gives these fields a significant association with the settlement and a degree of historic interest in their own right.

6 Key Views

6.1 Within the village views are largely channelled along the narrow streets by the modest cottages which line them on either side. On streets such as Pit Hill the sloping gradients allow views to also take in the valley setting of the village and the green space scattered with sections of woodland that makes up the surrounding landscape.

6.2 Within the village, views converge on the Parish Church and the open space of the churchyard with the attractive grouping of the church Lych Gate and the adjacent stone covered bus shelter. This forms the focus of views from Birdswell Lane, Silver Street, Castle Hill and Barton Lane. The double junctions set just apart at either end of the south side of the churchyard form the widest section of street in the village, allowing for better views of the buildings which border onto this open space, particularly the Parish Church, Dorma House (Miss Muffets Tea Rooms), Bessemer Thatch and the set back properties of Jacobs Well, Ferndale and The Olives.

6.3 The elevated area of the churchyard itself allows for some views which take in more of the roofscape of nearby buildings within the conservation area, however there are few opportunities for any more distant views into the wider landscape, with the exception being to the south and south west.

6.4 Views to the south, particularly from along Castle Hill and the south end of Silver Street, take in the surrounding rural landscape, again dotted with patches of woodland, most of which represents surviving fragments of secondary growth of ancient woodland.

Views from Hagginton Hill take in the roofscape of the village with the Parish Church and Church House being particularly prominent.



6.5 Views across the village are particularly striking from the high ground of Hagginton Hill with the tower of the church being particularly prominent surrounded by green space trees and glimpses of buildings clustered around. The more modern development along the roads leading out of the valley can also be seen and easily identified in these views.

7 Architecture

7.1 The main focus of the conservation area is on the rows of traditional two storey cottages along Pitt Hill opening out into the crossroads in front of the Parish Church.

7.2 These houses form an impressively consistent element of the character of the village. All are finished in white render, some with the unnecessary and inelegant texturing which appears to be a feature of the Combe Martin area. The properties along the south side of the road have little or no frontage but have their walls flush with the roadside, while those on the north side have more significant front gardens behind whitewashed stone walls. The few properties which have small frontages on the south side also have similar low walls, but rendered instead of whitewashed.

The View along Pitt Hill shows the street lined with white rendered cottages, the cobbled gutter strips also stand out at the roadside.



7.3 The majority of the cottages have had their windows replaced with uPVC units of various styles, however there are examples which retain their traditional side hung casement windows, such as number 37 and 38 (Forge Cottage) which form a good pair, 37 also having an infilled fanlight above the door painted with the 'bats wing' tracery; 38 probably had a matching fanlight although this is completely infilled.

7.4 The dominant roofing material is natural slate, although a number of properties have been re-roofed in concrete tiles, which have a much bulkier appearance. Others have been re-roofed using fibrous artificial slates, which are slightly bulkier, lack the shine of slate when wet and have visibly greater growth of moss than the natural slate roof thanks to their more porous nature.

7.5 Another feature here is the cobbled gutters which run down the hill on either side of the road. The small element of colour and texture which this added to the road surface makes a noticeable and positive contribution to the character of this street.

7.6 The Lodge is one of the last buildings westwards within the core of the village. The building is more modern and stands out within the modest cottages which form the rest of the street. The building is built in the Victorian Arts and Crafts style, featuring clay tile hanging, mock timbering and multiple gables. It is also set back from the road and significantly larger in terms of scale and height than its surroundings.

The view looking into the core of the village along Silver Street shows a similar scale of building, but with features such as eyebrow windows indicating a later, Victorian, period of construction.



7.7 Silver Street and Castle Hill follow similar patterns to the south and east of the centre respectively, with modest cottages lining both sides of the narrow streets. The architecture of Silver Street has slightly more variety as the Victorian Gothic style school of 1847 stands along this street. The building is of exposed stone, unlike the rendered houses, but is of a similar scale to its neighbours, although with a steeper and taller roof.

7.8 As the road twists around towards Rectory Hill the pavements become elevated, and the last building within the conservation

area, 61a, retains exposed stone vousier arches over its windows and door. Overall the building takes the form of a modest rural cottage, but with a single window breaking the roofline with a small gable projection above. Several other properties along Silver Street share this trait of upper floor windows projecting above the roofline, including the former Post Office (Briar Cottage) and number 61, which is another arts and crafts inspired building with mock timbering in the gable projections and clay tile roofs.

7.9 The buildings surrounding the Grade II Listed Manor Hall and Old Court have a slightly different character. Old Court is fronted by a Georgian range with sliding sash windows that faces south towards the Congregational Church. The rear of the house runs alongside the road at right angles to the Georgian front and features a series of various casement windows and dormers, including one with a rounded head. The building probably dates to the mid 18th Century, but has been extensively remodelled during the 19th century.

52 Birdswell Lane is unique within the village in having its main facade completely slate hung.



(Manor Cottage) stands opposite Court Cottage and is unusual in being entirely slate hung on its principal facade, making it unique within the village.

7.12 At the western end of the village there is another cluster of buildings, several having been built shortly after the initial designation of the conservation area in 1983. Many of these modern buildings do not fit in well with the character of the historic village in which they stand.

7.13 Within this area there are still a number of older buildings, including 30 and 31 Pit Hill and Rose Cottage.

7.10 Further up Birdswell Lane is Court Cottage, again remodelled during the 19th century, although to a lesser extent. The building is of rubble stone and cob, and while the red clay tile roof and tall red brick chimneys are clearly part of the later remodelling, the remainder of the building still shows its earlier origins, in the timber casement windows and projecting eaves.

7.11 Number 52 Birdswell Lane

7.14 30 and 31 Pit Hill are a pair of modest cottages, of rendered rubble stone and cob. Set at an angle they overlook the junction of Pit Hill and an un-named lane connecting to Hagginton Hill. These modest buildings are similar in scale and character to those in the centre of the village. Rose Cottage, which stands opposite, is larger and set back within its own grounds. Like Old Court it has been extensively remodelled, this time in the late 19th century in the arts and crafts style, with decorative clay tile roof coverings and mock timber framing in the gables.

Street Furniture

7.15 There is not a large quantity of street furniture within the village, although there are benches and bus shelters at either end of Pit Hill. The stone built shelter beside the church Lych Gate is a particularly prominent piece of street furniture.

7.16 The signage within the village is mainly provided by timber finger posts which fit in well with its historic character. Even so there is still a degree of standardised highways signage, often located immediately next to the more traditional finger posts.

Signage at the Barton Lane and Castle Hill Junction is a mixture of traditional finger posts and standard highways signage.



8 Boundary Changes Adopted March 2011

8.1 Several significant changes to the Conservation Area boundary as adopted in 1983 have been identified as part of the appraisal process.

A map showing the proposed changes to the boundary of the Berrynarbor Conservation Area is given in Appendix 4.

8.2 An area of modern houses built after the initial designation of the conservation area which do not add to the character of the area was removed from the boundary at the bottom of Pit Hill and Hagginton Hill. Some of the buildings on the rise up to Hagginton Hill are of greater interest, however they are separated from the body of the conservation area by this band of more recent buildings, and they are also Victorian buildings which, although of interest, do not have the same character as the older core of the area.

8.3 The open fields to the south of Pit Hill remain within the area in recognition of their contribution to the setting and enclosure of the lower part of Pit Hill and also of the association of Peters Field with the parish church and the surviving buried features for water management from its time as a water meadow.

8.4 An extension to the conservation area is proposed to the east to include the short terraces along Castle Hill. These outlying buildings reflect the agricultural basis for the local community. Moules Farmhouse consists of a whitewashed and rendered rubble stone building with clay pantile roof attached to a short row of three matching cottages of exposed stone. These cottages have raised ground floors and sets of stone steps lead up to their doors, one of which appears to have been recently re-built. Buddicombe

A view along Castle Street and the proposed extension to the conservation area.



Cottage has its steps left open while the other two both have later mild steel railings. The windows of the property are all crude modern uPVC replacements, as are the doors. Despite this, and the corrugated asbestos roof, the overall impression to the passer by is of a group of quaint rural cottages on the edge of a village.

8.5 The second set of cottages 'Hill's Tenement' span two eras of building. Easter Barton at the west end of the row is the oldest and of either rendered rubble stone or rendered cob. This part of the row lacks the front eyebrow gables that the rest of the row has. Easter Barton also gets a front boundary wall of heavily whitewashed rubble stone topped with white spar, a feature more prominent in nearby Ilfracombe and Combe Martin.

8.6 Numbers 1 and 2 are at the east end and are later, probably from the mid Victorian period around 1880. They are built of exposed rough coursed local stone with red brick dressings around window openings and in the gables. These properties also have large open porches topped with gabled roofs supported on slender red brick pillars. Number 3 marks the transition between the two styles of the terrace. It has the eyebrow gables and the front porch of numbers 1 and 2 but its stonework is rendered leaving only the red brick elements showing. This helps draw the two different architectural styles together visually.

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.

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 is dependent 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 instead of less damaging siting and designs being agreed.

9.3 There are also specific pressures faced by Berrynarbor. Its valley setting introduces the risk of flooding in small areas of the village. The growth of car ownership is always a problem within historic settlements which were not designed with the car in mind, however thanks to the relatively small size of the village core the parking area near the village shop and post office can serve a significant number of the properties.

9.4 Many of the local services, such as the post office, shop and school are only marginally justifiable by the size of the local population. As such there is always pressure on the viability of these services and small changes in the demographics of local homeowners could have a major impact on these services making them unsustainable. In order to maintain demand for these services a small degree of growth may be necessary.

9.5 As a rural settlement in an attractive coastal area, Berrynarbor has the perennial problem of relatively low wages and high property prices. Demand for property within the attractive rural areas of North Devon means many second home owners look to purchase a second home or a retirement property here. Second homeowners will reduce the number of permanent residents regularly needing the services of the shop, while people retiring to the village will have no need for a school. In turn young families who have ties to the village may be unable to afford a home here and be obliged to leave, making local needs and affordable housing significant issues for the village.

9.6 A site for community facilities which could include local needs housing is identified in the local plan on the field to the east of the shop and post office.

9.7 Although some areas of the conservation area have high density of development, with terraced cottages built close to the road site, there are detached properties in larger plots and areas of open space which could attract infill development. In appropriate locations and with sympathetic designs this may be possible, however care would have to be taken not to have an adverse impact upon the established character of the area.

10 The Future

10.1 The aim of this character appraisal has been to identify which buildings, open spaces, and features from Berrynarbor's past and present survive to contribute towards its special character.

10.2 The character appraisal has also aimed to identify potential development pressures the area is likely to face in the near future and to identify areas within the designation which may benefit from redevelopment or enhancement schemes.

10.3 What this document does not aim to achieve is to propose the means and methods by which the identified character is to be safeguarded, or enhanced, for the future. This will be the subject of a subsequent management plan for the conservation area. The aim of such a document will be to propose the ways in which the characteristics identified within this character appraisal can be protected from unsympathetic alterations and future developments, or enhanced by positive and well designed schemes. This will also ensure that all future planning decisions that affect the conservation area and its setting are treated in a consistent manner.

1 Listed Buildings Within the Berrynarbor Conservation Area

Birdswell Lane

Address	Listing Grade
Court Cottage	II
Manor Hall	II
Old Court	II

Castle Hill

Address	Listing Grade
Capel Cottage	II

The Churchyard

Address	Listing Grade
Church of St. Peter	II*
Group of 3 Chest Tombs 0.5-3 Metres South East of South East Corner of South Porch of Church of St Peter	II
Group of 8 Headstones and 6 Footstones approximately 1-6 Metres South East of South East Corner of South Porch of Church of St Peter	II
Nutt and Irwin Headstones with Accompanying Footstones approximately 3 Metres South of South East Corner of South Aisle to Church of St Peter	II
Cutcliffe Headstone approximately 5 Metres South of Priests Door to Church of St Peter	II
Footstone on West Side of Path approximately 10 Metres South of South Porch of Church of St Peter	II
Group of 3 Encased Headstones Set in East Wall of Pathway approximately 10 Metres South of South East Corner of South Porch of Church of St Peter	II

Address	Listing Grade
Allin Headstone and Footstone approximately 10 Metres South of South East of Corner of South Aisle of Church of St Peter	II
Lych Gate to Church of St Peter	II

'The Village'

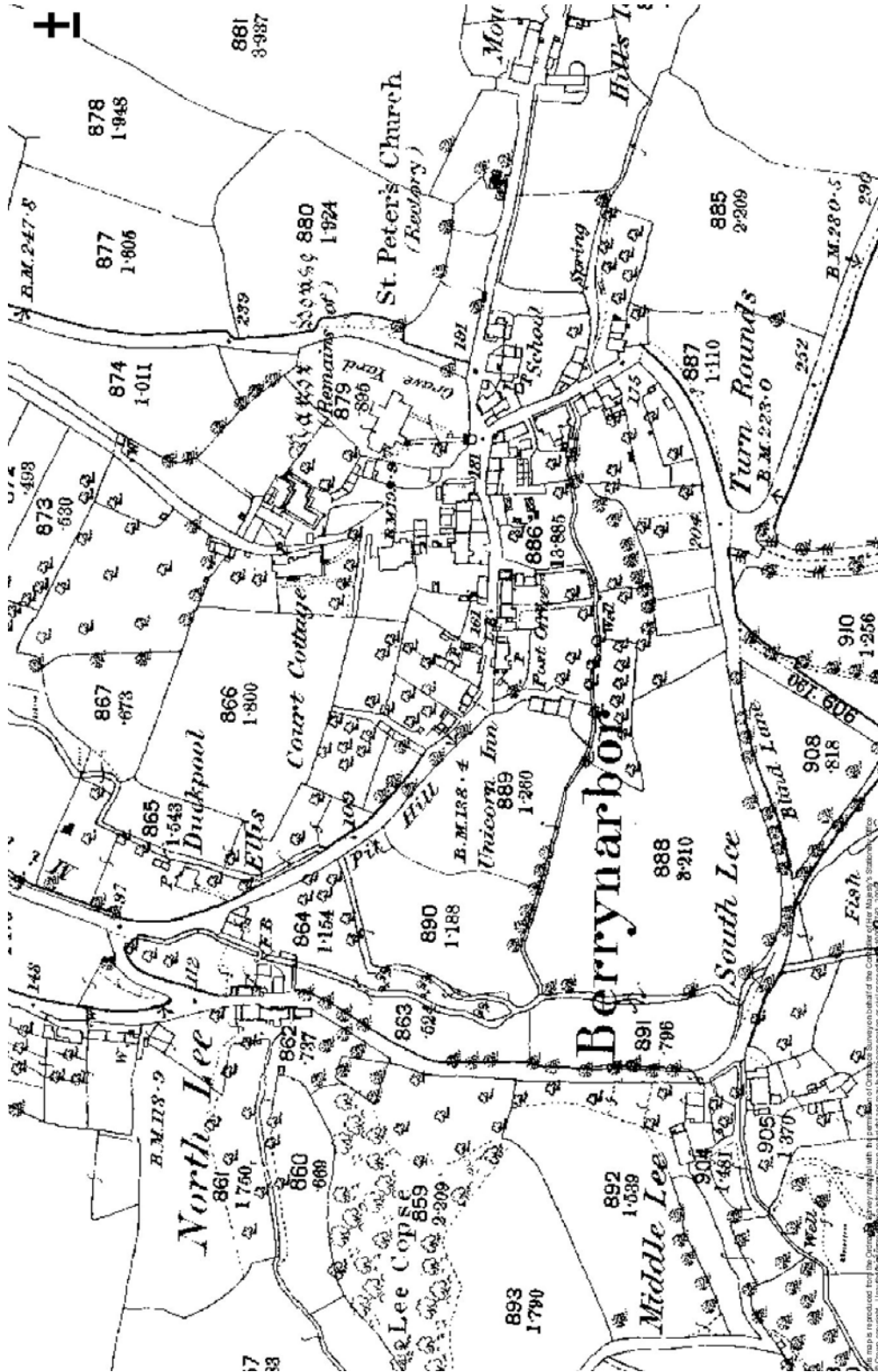
Address	Listing Grade
Number 37	II

2 Historic Mapping

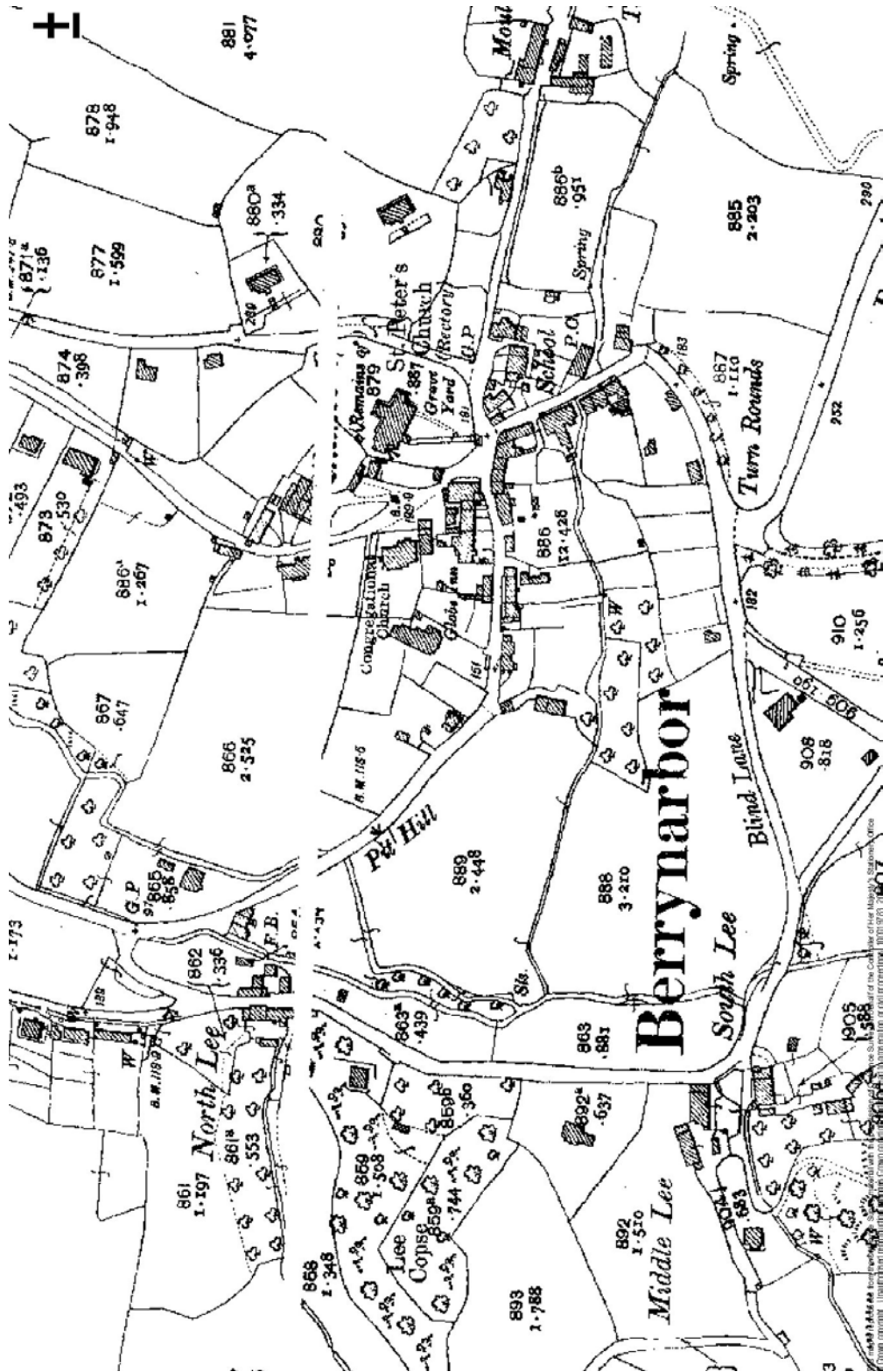
I - 1st Series Ordnance Survey Map c.1880

II - Revised Ordnance Survey Map c. 1930

I - c.1880 Ordnance Survey Map



II - Revised Ordnance Survey Map c.1930



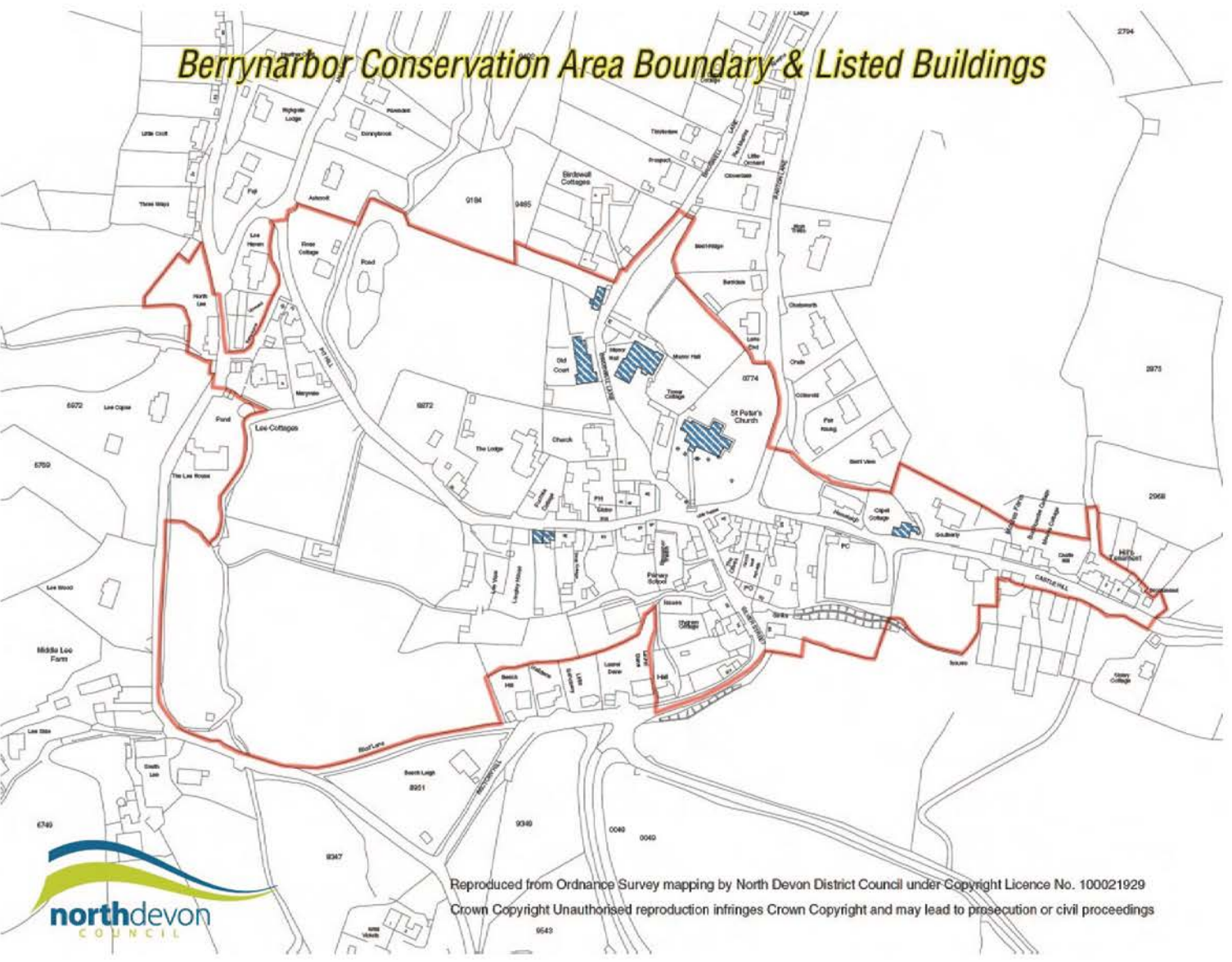
3 Conservation Area Mapping

I - Existing Conservation Area Boundary

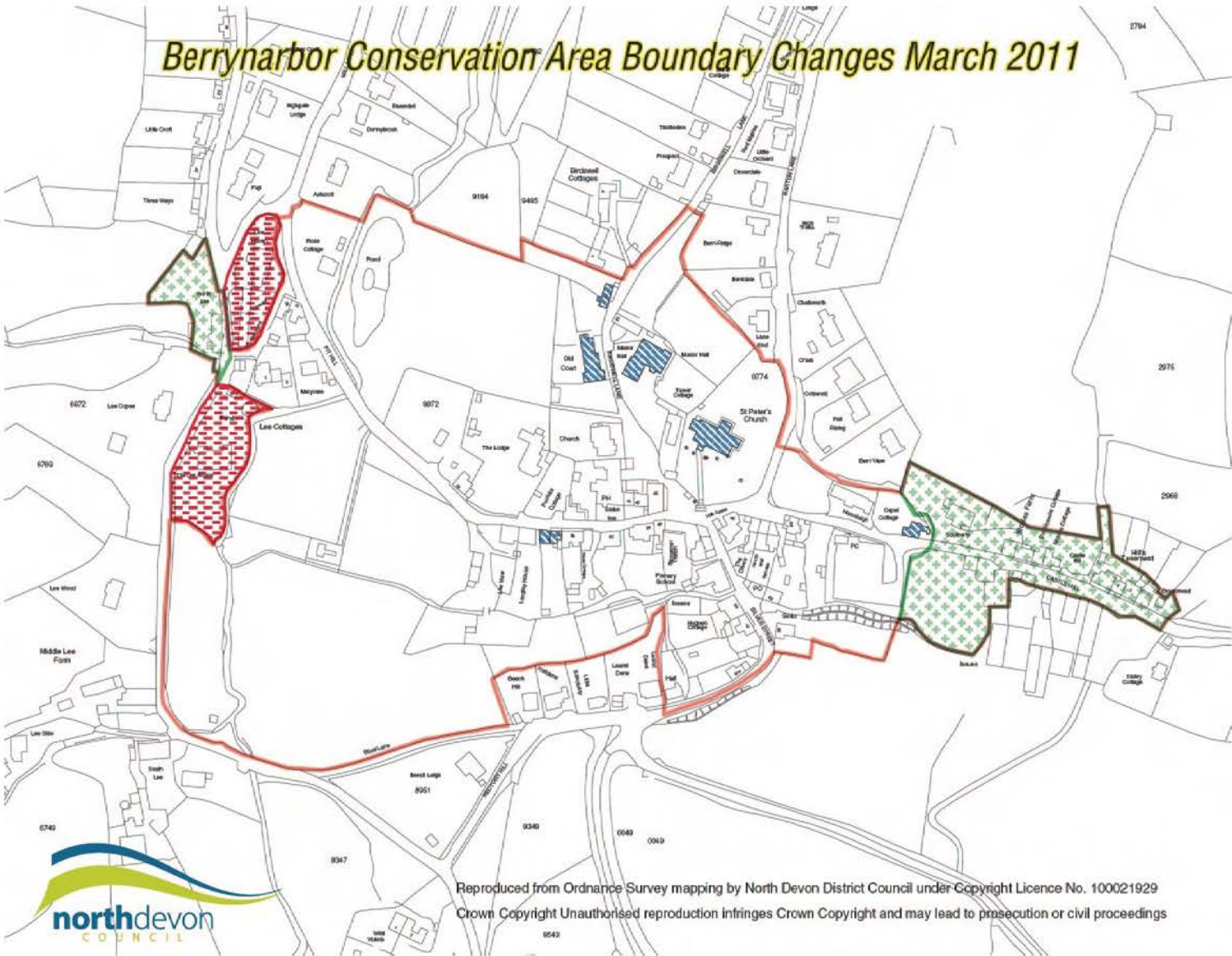
II - Proposed Conservation Area Boundary Changes

III - Key Views

IV - Key

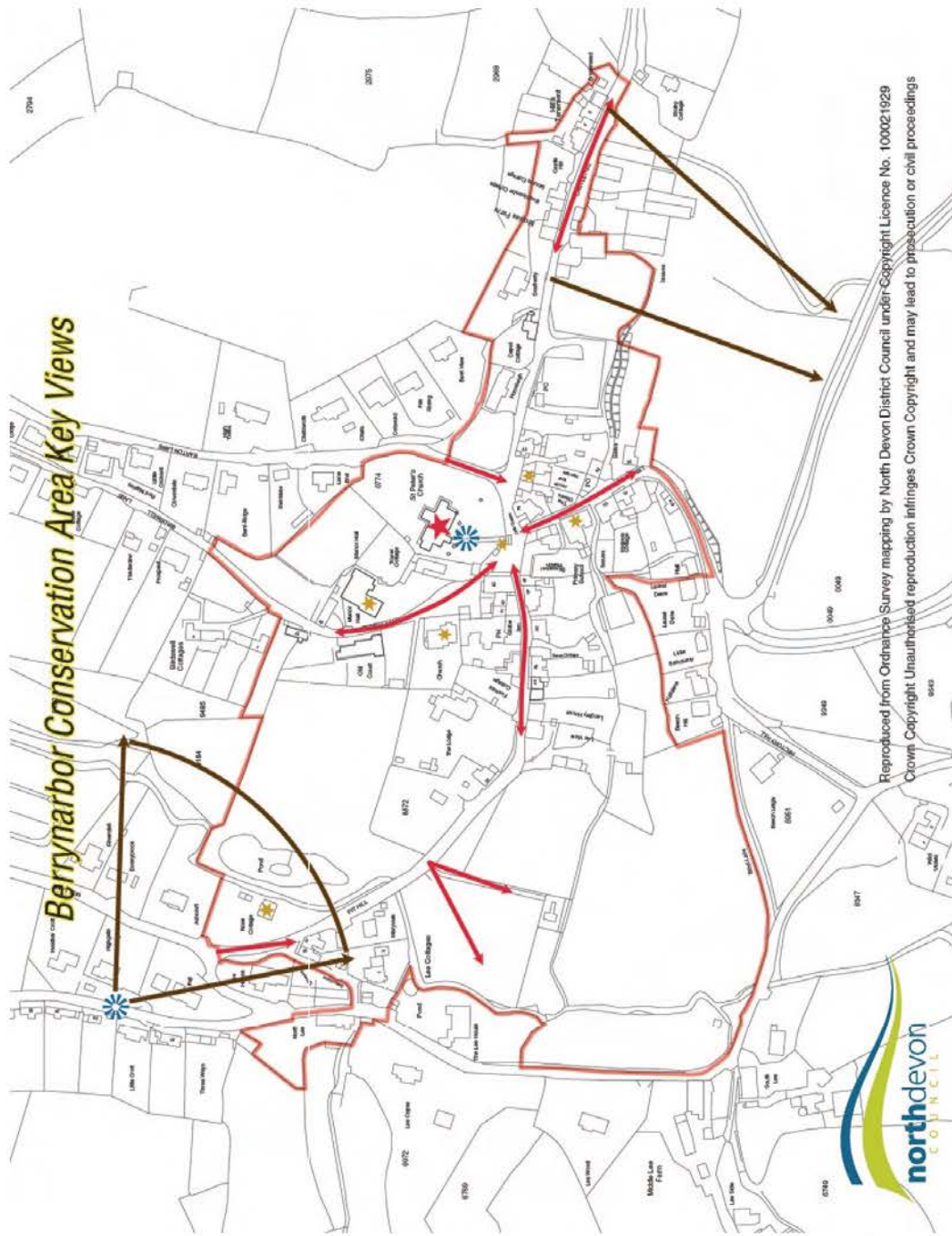


Berrynarbor Conservation Area Boundary Changes March 2011



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Key To Mapping

	Grade I Listed Building		Road & Building Plot Outline
	Grade II* Listed Building		Building Outline
	Grade II Listed Building		Existing Conservation Area Boundary
	Single Storey Building		Wall With Slate Hanging
	2 Storey Building		External Views
	3 Storey Building		Internal Views
	4+ Storey Building		Morte Slate Boundary Wall
	Area To Be Added To Conservation area		Morte Slate & White Spar Boundary Wall
	Area To Be Removed From Conservation Area		Focal Point Of Views
	Building Making a Neutral Contribution to Local Character		Key Viewpoint
	Building Making a Positive Contribution to Local Character		Prominent Bay Window
	Building Making an Outstanding Contribution to Local Character		Prominent Bow Window
	Building With Rendered Walls		Negative / Positive Public Seating
	Building With Bare or Limewashed / Painted Walls		Positive / Negative Bollard
	Building With Slate Window Sills		Decorated Barge Boards
	Public Green Space		Negative / Positive Street Lighting
	Building In Poor Condition		Memorial - ie. War Memorial
	Area For Potential Enhancement		Mosaic Feature
	Building With Decorated Eaves		Important Tree / Tree With Tree Preservation Order
	Various Seperate Character Zones		Miscellaneous Feature (Labled)
	Scheduled Ancient Monument		Miscellaneous Linear Feature (Labled)
	Historic Door		Railings As A Positive Streetscape Feature
	Historic Bridge		Railings As A Negative Streetscape Feature
	Intrusive Overhead Lines		River / Aquatic Feature
	Historic Post Box		Public Right of Way
			Focal Streetscape Feature
			Negative / Positive Signage Feature
			Historic Telephone Kisok
			Position of Historic Town Gate