

Conservation Area Appraisal Beckington

August 2010





This appraisal aims to identify the essential elements that give an area its character. It is, therefore, a snapshot in time.

Elements and details of an area may be important even if they are not specifically referred to in the text.

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August 2010

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Beckington Conservation Area was first designated in 1973 by Somerset County Council. The boundary was subsequently amended and extended in 1996 by Mendip District Council.

1.2 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on Local Planning Authorities to determine from time to time 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 to designate these areas as conservation areas.

1.3 Planning authorities also have a duty to protect these areas from development which would harm their special historic or architectural character and this is reflected in the policies contained in Mendip District Council's Adopted Local Plan.

1.4 The purpose of this appraisal is to define the qualities of the area that make it worthy of conservation area status. A clear, comprehensive appraisal of the character of a conservation area provides a sound basis for development control decisions and for developing initiatives to improve the area. It will also enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of the area, on which applications can be considered.

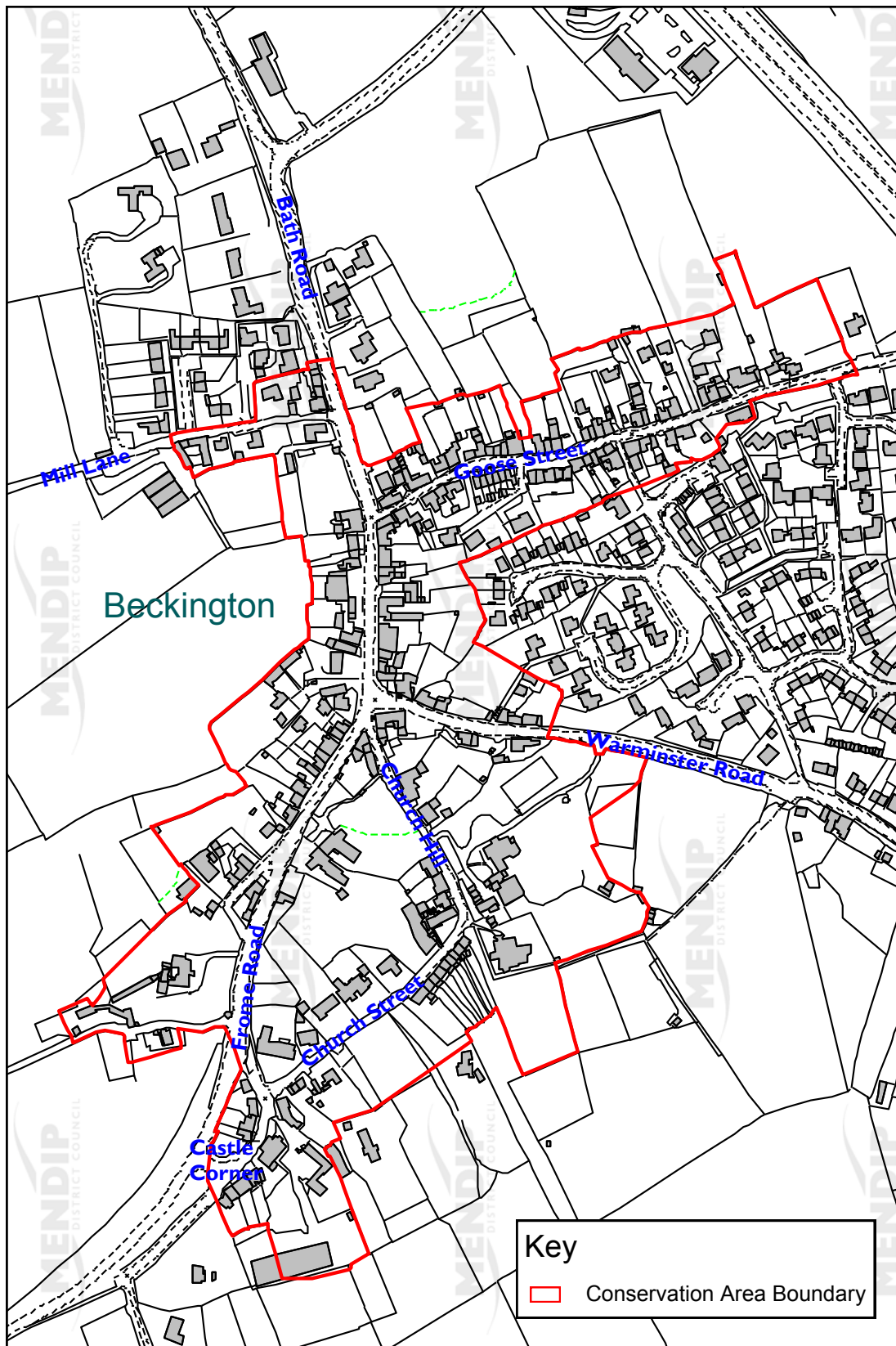
1.5 This appraisal has been produced in accordance with the English Heritage publication: 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' (August 2005).

1.6 This appraisal was endorsed by the council on 18th August 2010 as a material planning consideration, and will be taken into account when assessing local planning applications.



The Old Manse, Bath Road

1. Introduction



Ordnance Survey Map showing Beckington Conservation Area Boundary

2. Location and Landscape Setting

2.1 Beckington is situated near the Somerset-Wiltshire boundary, 13 miles (20km) south of Bath and 3 miles (5 km) north-north-east of Frome, situated west of the junction of the A36 (T) main route from Bath to Warminster and the A361 Frome to Trowbridge road. Before the construction of modern road improvements the village was a route centre on a junction between roads from Bath to Frome and to Warminster and Trowbridge.

2.2 The village is situated on the east side of the valley of the River Frome at about 80m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) with the core sited on a fairly level platform above the river's flood plain between low rounded hills to the north and south. Bath Road, the spine of the village, falls from north to south to its junction with Church Hill and Warminster Road and then rises up

Frome Road. Church Hill climbs steeply from its northern end and the Parish Church is situated at one of the highest points. There are rectangular fields with hedges to the south of the village and the course of the river to the west, marked by trees. The A36(T) runs in a long sweep to the east and north-east.

2.3 There are clean edges to the village to the south and south-east, from the Frome Road 'gateway', south of Church Street and up to the undeveloped south side of Warminster Road; along most of the western side behind Bath and Frome Roads and to the north-east, behind Goose Street. This undeveloped land is important in maintaining historic boundaries, preserving views into and out of the village and providing a setting for older buildings.

2. Location and Landscape Setting



Aerial Photograph showing Beckington Conservation Area Boundary

3. History and Development

3.1 There are several recorded scatters of prehistoric flints and Romano-British pottery around the village. The Parish Church has impressive Norman features in its tower and chancel, suggesting rich patronage. A fair was granted in 1318 and there was a market cross until the late 18th century. The Abbey site was earlier called Beckington Grange and was a hospital of Augustinian Canons founded in 1502. The buildings were subsequently altered in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Castle had local claims to be an early manor house but limited archaeological and structural investigation suggests a late 16th- or early 17th-century date. The adjacent Wool Hall attests to the importance of the wool and cloth trade in the 16th century and later.

3.2 Early industry includes a fulling mill at Clifford's Mill, documented in 1543, and rebuilt in the 16th and 17th centuries, burnt in local riots against trade conditions and the introduction of machinery in 1802 and subsequently rebuilt. Eden or Carpenter's Mill was a corn mill with an attached four floor cloth factory, which survived into the 20th century.

3.3 The village appears to have a preponderance of 17th- and 18th-century stone-built houses (but these often hide earlier structures behind their facades) with well-lit upper floors that are typical of cloth-producing areas in the Mendips and edge of the Cotswolds. The cloth trade failed by the early 19th century, due to competition from larger, more mechanised northern mills that also had better access to transport.



The Parish Church of St George, Church Street

3. History and Development

3.4 The Victorian village had a range of houses, including gentry houses, middling properties and humbler cottages. There was a Baptist Chapel and manse, a number of inns (probably due to the village's position on an important junction of drove roads), shops and services such as a blacksmiths (later garage), bakehouse and slaughterhouse. In Goose Street is Enderby Hall, formerly the Victorian village hall, given by a Miss Enderby of Beckington House. Also in the same street, was a group of three almshouses founded in the latter half of the 17th century and rebuilt in 1846.

3.5 The 20th century saw considerable changes, with the closure of some village shops, the introduction of new

businesses, new housing on the Bath Road and in a larger block between Warminster Road and Goose Street. The construction of the trunk road improvements has taken through-traffic out of the village.

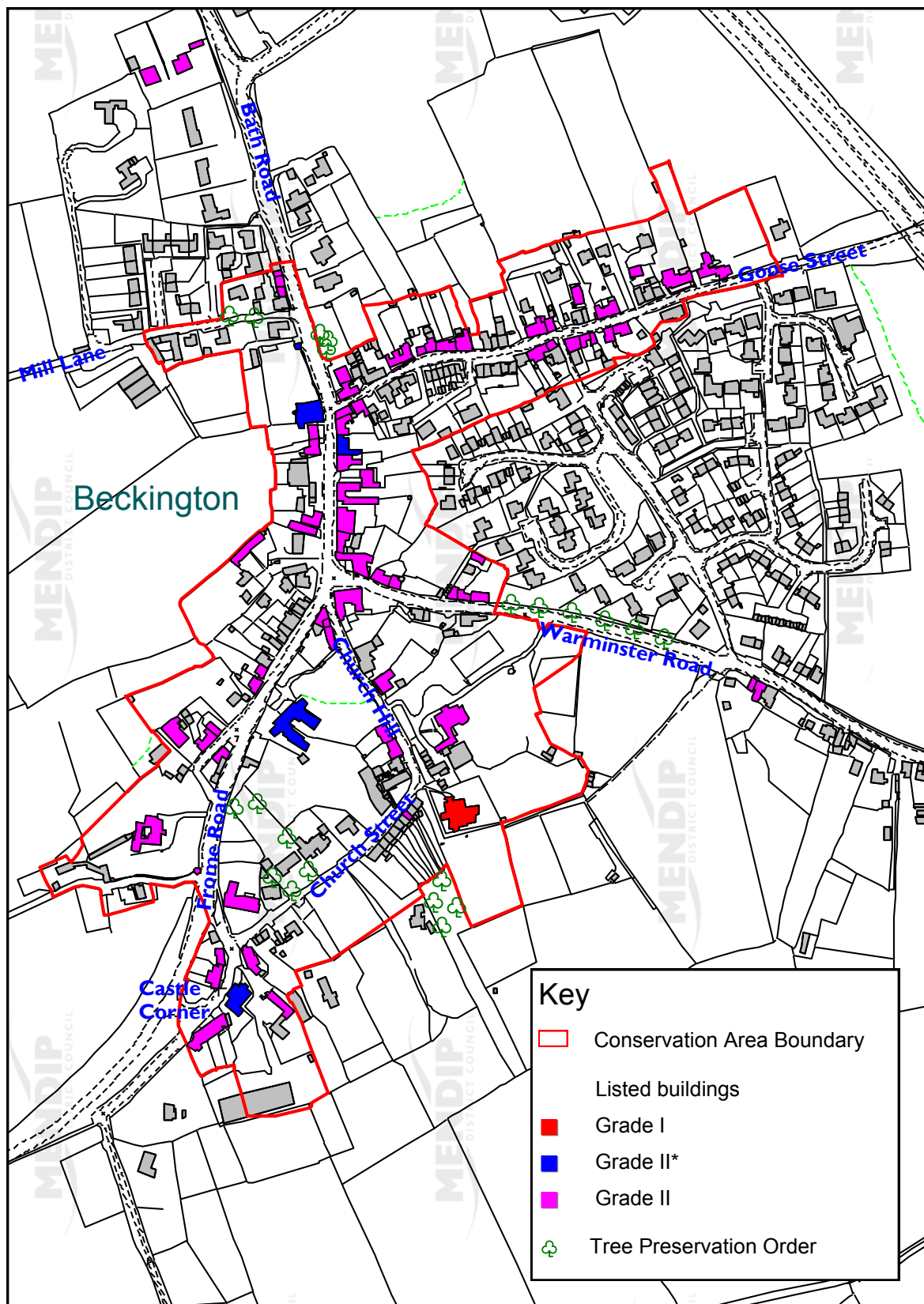
3.6 There are 85 Listed Building entries within the conservation area (some entries cover more than one building). Of these, the Parish Church is Grade I and there are five Grade II* entries.

3.7 There are also a number of trees within the conservation area that are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.



The Baptist Chapel, Frome Road

3. History and Development



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Statutorily Designated Sites and Features

3. History and Development

Map Progression

3.8 Unfortunately the tithe map of c1840 for Beckington shows very few buildings; its original purpose being an interest in land ownership from where tithes should be collected. The pattern of streets within the village is, however, clear and has essentially remained unchanged.

3.9 The Ordnance Survey map from c1900 shows the road layout essentially as it is today with the centre of the village at the convergence of three principle routes: Frome Road, Bath Road and Warminster Road. The only change is the slight re-routing of the Frome Road, leaving Castle Corner as a quieter enclave.

3.10 There has been some development in the village since the 1900 map, most notably the infill of the land between Goose Street and Warminster Road where residential cul-de-sacs have branched off either side of Sandy Lane.

3.11 Other additions to Beckington include, some larger detached dwellings on either side of Bath Road to the northern edge of the village, a small area to the north of Mill Lane, and some minor backland development to the north of Goose Street.

3.12 The most significant recent change affecting the character of Beckington occurred in 1989 when the A36 which ran through the centre of Beckington was diverted to bypass the village to the east, forming a dual carriageway joining Warminster Road and Bath Road. This had the effect of removing the majority of through traffic from the village, allowing it to return to its earlier, more rural character.

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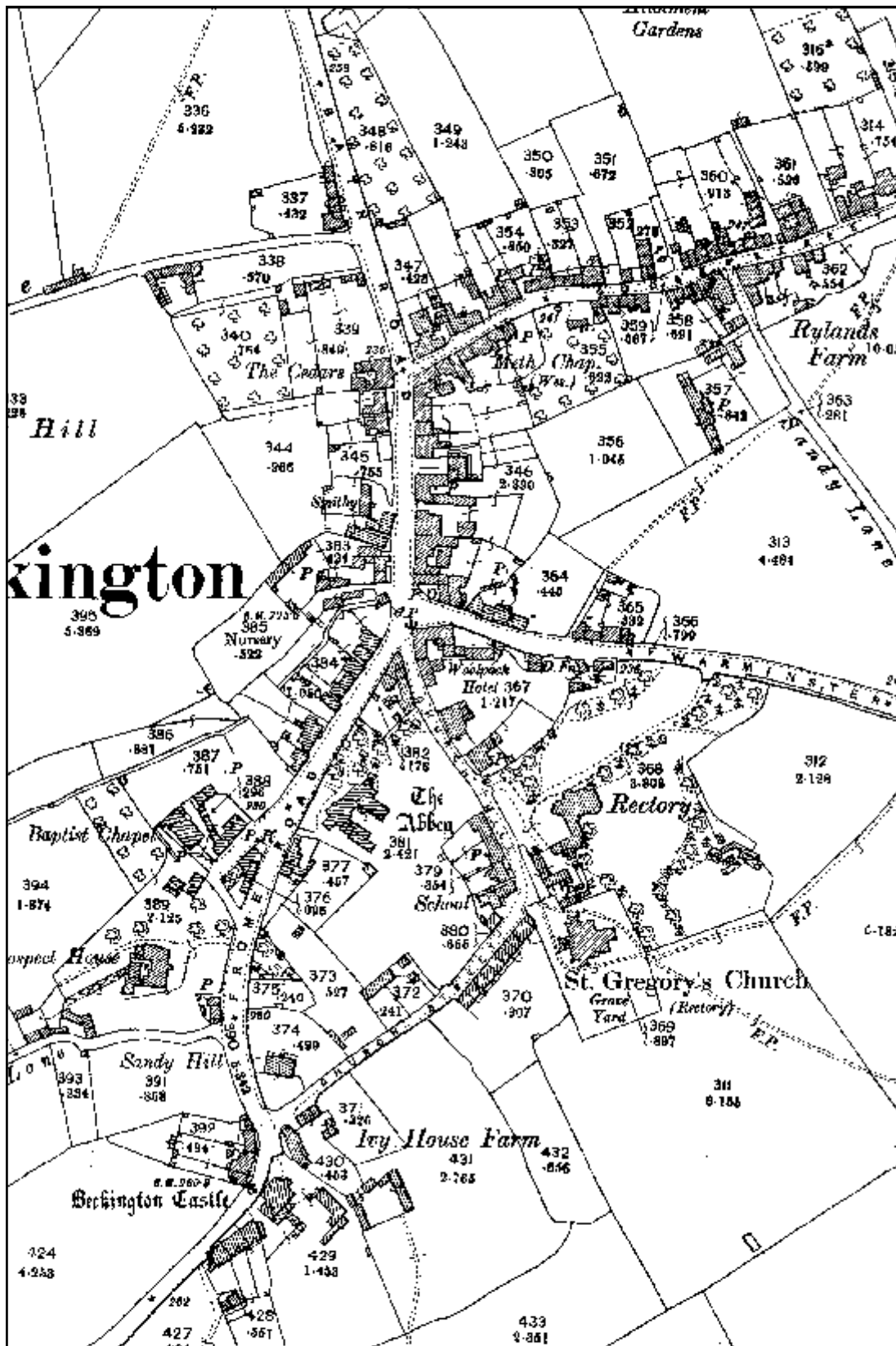
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3. History and Development



c1900 Ordnance Survey Map of Beckington

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4. Character of Beckington

4.1 The village has the character of a small rural town in its portions along Bath and Frome Roads and Goose Street. This impression is due to the density of development, in long rows; the architectural quality of some of its larger houses; and the range of building uses. There is evidence, historically, for a number of shops and public houses and, today, surviving food and specialist businesses.

4.2 There are, however, contrasting enclaves of a more rural character: Warminster Road soon becomes a lane bounded by banks and overhung by trees; Church Hill is a quiet assemblage

of Parish Church, two large houses, smaller houses and cottages and the Primary School. There are two remnants of the older village set along an old road line, at Castle Corner and west of the Frome Road, that have survived highway improvements.

4.3 Modern residential development has not unduly affected historic townscape, apart from two adjacent developments in Goose Street. The larger block of housing between Goose Street and Warminster Road is not particularly evident from the historic core.



Warminster Road, looking east

5. Spatial analysis



The Woolpack - central space

5.1 Each settlement differs in its relationships between buildings, public space, gardens and open countryside and within conservation areas (usually the historic core), there are unique progressions of spaces with varying degrees of enclosure and exposure. These perceptions depend upon the height and density of buildings, their position relative to the highway, the character of boundaries, and the dominance or dearth of trees. Views out to countryside or into the village core are also important, as are the effects of topography – the rise and fall and alignment of roads and paths.

5.2 These factors are all facets of **townscape**, a description of the mixture of buildings, streets and spaces that make up the village environment, using three elements:

- The sequence of views and events obtained in passing through an area;
- The feelings of relative exposure and enclosure;
- The important details such as colour, texture, scale, style, personality and the myriad of little details that make up the local distinctiveness of the area.



Goose Street, looking east

5.3 Beckington has an interesting **plan form** with a marked central focus where the Bath, Frome and Warminster Roads meet in a triangular space. A fourth street, Church Hill, runs into the junction. Church Street curves round at its southern end to rejoin the Frome Road. There is a short stub of historic development along the Warminster Road but, to the north, on the east side of Bath Road, Goose Street is a major linear extension. Mill Lane is a minor limb on the western side of the former main road.

5. Spatial analysis

5.4 The village's plan may thus be described as a series of linear routes focused on a central 'market place', thus with a nucleated centre, but with an offset Parish Church at the south-east extremity of the village. Most of the older development is at one plot's depth from the roads, either set directly on the road edge or, in the case of several larger gentry houses, such as The Old Rectory and Beckington House, positioned in large gardens.

5.5 It is possible to bring these characteristics and other townscape details to life by describing a route, or transect, through the village. Routes from any of the main entry points would be instructive but the chosen one is from the northern entry, on Bath Road, east into Goose Street and returning to the former main road, down to the Warminster Road junction, then round the Church Hill loop, back to Castle Corner and the Frome Road and, finally, a return to the centre of the village.

5.6 Entering from the north, the Bath Road is wide and descends past a mixture of older and modern houses to the first obviously historic group on the right (west), at the junction with Mill Lane. An impressive bayed Victorian house turns the corner with aplomb and the then the brick and stone gazebo to The Cedars is very prominent, its visual qualities further emphasised by adjacent high stone walls topped by urns. The gabled side elevation of The Cedars is seen above the boundary wall. This is echoed at the other side of the road by another long stretch of wall and they form a strong frame to a long view downhill to the village core, with buildings in perspective, with parapets,

gables, roof slopes and chimneys. The road curves slightly to the right and the building group partially stops the view. Large trees form a horizon feature behind the buildings.

5.7 The entry into Goose Street is heralded by a set-back building on the left (no.22, Dolby Wolds), backed by a strong gable ended block (no.20, The Hawthorns). Opposite, the full splendour of the three-gabled façade of The Cedars is seen and the view southwards opens out to The Woolpack and the junctions with Warminster Road and Church Hill at either side. The Old Manse's gables are also seen in perspective on the left side.

5.8 Goose Street is a long corridor, slightly wavering in its course and, on the whole, tightly bounded by rows of buildings. The slight deviations in alignment and the gentle climb from the junction create townscape effects of partial closure and a gradual progression of views of the buildings.



The Bath Road entry, looking south

5. Spatial analysis



The entry into Goose Street, looking east

There is a mixture of two-storey mullioned and casemented vernacular cottages and later sashed frontages, with Classical details. There are occasional small front gardens on the north side and two side lanes, with cottages at right angles to the main alignment and views of countryside. The southern side of the street starts with a strong Victorian Gothic gable (Enderby Hall) and, after the first curve, the one serious disruption to the overall coherence is met in the form of a modern terraced development and a row of flats, unfortunately set back behind a concrete apron and with incongruous details and materials.



The Old House

5.9 Beyond this historic buildings are seen on both sides with an opening to the south down Sandy Lane. There are some particularly attractive details such as former shop fronts and Venetian windows and, on the northern side, there is a particular flourish in the form of no.59, The Abbey House, with its mullioned front and gate piers with a lamp overthrow and nos.61-5, The Old House, an L-shaped block of 16th- and 17th-century elements, picturesquely grouped.



The Cedars

5.10 The return back to Bath Road reveals a sequence of curving rows of buildings, revealed gradually and the modern intrusion is not so evident due to its set-back building line. The Cedars is the final termination to the view westwards. The walk down the remainder of Bath Road is enjoyable with the continuous run of high quality historic buildings on the left, broken only by no.8 being set back from the building line, adding contrast. Stone and render predominate and the view is firmly stopped by the projecting long frontage

5. Spatial analysis

of The Woolpack and the canted corner of no.1 Frome Road. The visual quality is reduced somewhat on the right side where the continuity of buildings is interrupted by the garage, Beckington Motors, which is relatively acceptable in terms of materials but the forecourt inevitably has an area of undefined space and there is some clutter due to advertisements. There is another empty space in front of housing to the south, also diluting the consistent quality of the village centre.

5.11 There is a roughly triangular space at the junction with the Frome and Warminster Roads and Church Hill, the site of a medieval market cross. It is well defined by historic buildings, with a cant or splay into Warminster Road (with the added interest of an L-shaped group and associated garden at nos.1 and 3) and strongly projecting building blocks on the south side, notably in The Woolpack. The rather disappointingly bare space gives good views up a curving Warminster Road, edged by cottages on the left (north) and stone walls to the right, where The Woolpack car park creates another leaking-away of space. There is a pedestrian lane, up steps to the left, to Rylands. The view is terminated by walls, banks and big trees.

5.12 Back at the junction, there are views of an elevated terrace, Mount Pleasant, behind the west side of the main road and south into Frome Road, which appears as a treed corridor, curving uphill. The chosen route climbs the steep slope up Church Hill, bounded by cottages and walls and with a treed horizon. Old Church House is built directly onto a rock outcrop. The lane curves round to the left and reveals a



Bath Road, looking south



Complex townscape at The Woolpack junctions



Church Street and the bend by the Parish Church

5. Spatial analysis



Castle Corner

glimpse of the large garden of The Old Rectory and then the Parish Church's west tower. This sits at a right-angled turn of the road into Church Street, thus the Church provides a firm reference point.

5.13 On the right hand side, on the inside of the bend, stone cottages (including Glebe Cottage and Four Gables, both with medieval elements) and then the Primary School, exactly on the corner, lead into a long lane, bounded by a stone row to the south and more sporadic development, in the form of two large detached houses, to the north. There is an important field on the south side, hedged and backed by large trees.

5.14 Church Street terminates at a junction with Castle Corner, part of the old Frome road but now a quiet backwater. Old cottages are set at angles around the junction and Ivy House Farm House's rounded corner and the short row created by Nos.38 (Knole Cottage) and nos.40 and 42 are a prelude to the tall, brightly coloured extravagance of The Castle. This landmark has mock military entrance gates and walls. A short, urbane row, nos.19-23, provides a suitable final flourish before the wide spaces of the Frome Road are reached. Road improvements have introduced laybys and openness but there is a promising view north back into the village. Large trees frame a distant view of buildings and, to the left (west) the gables of Beckington House appear through trees and over a stone boundary wall. A circular stone gazebo nicely marks the entry into Stubbs Lane.



Beckington House and gazebo

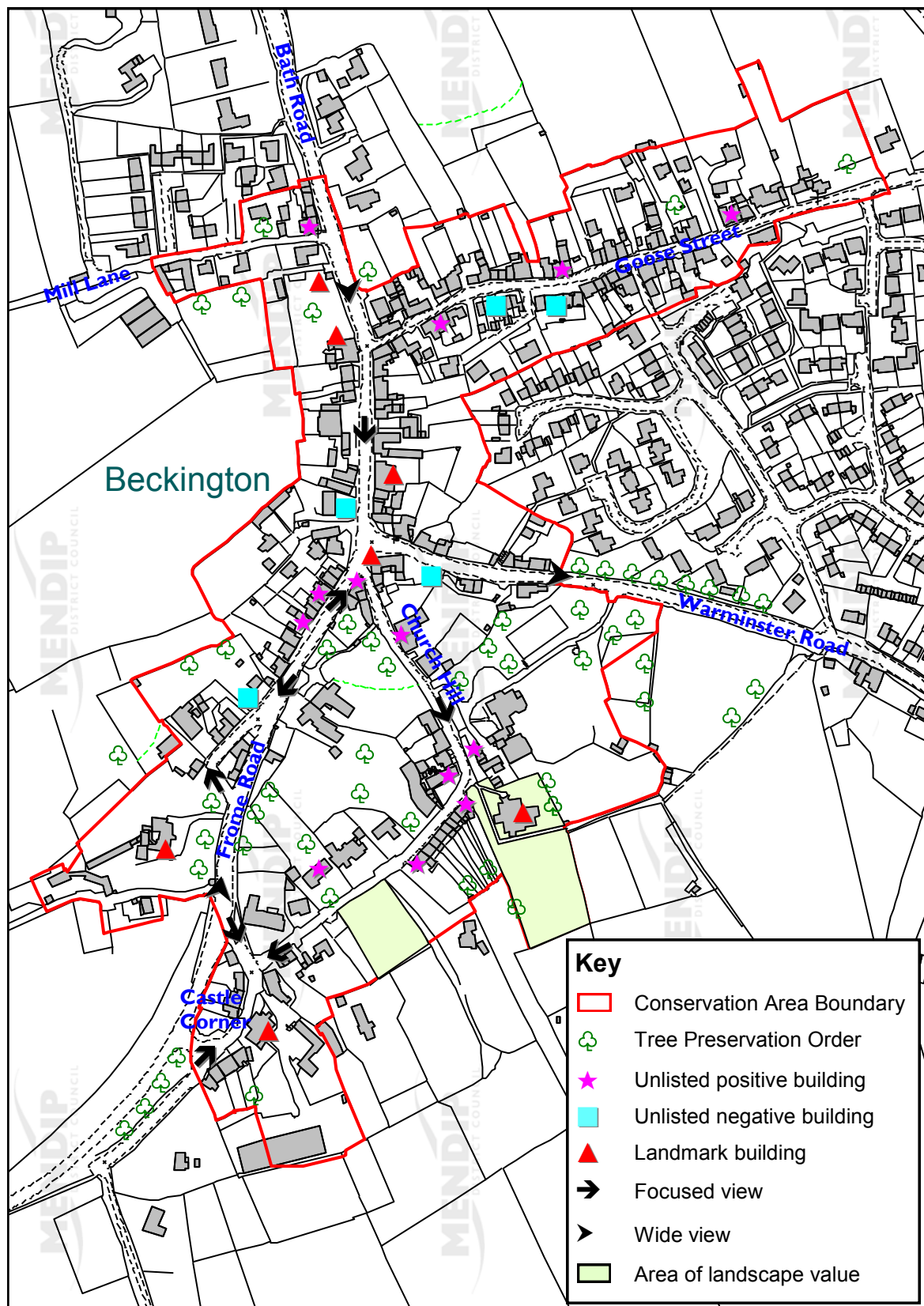
5. Spatial analysis

5.15 Then there is a stone-wall-bounded lane to the left with a glimpse of the front façade of the Baptist Chapel. This bypassed dog-leg returns to the main road past a short terrace (including a former public house), and the island block between the old and modern routes includes no.32 (The Haven) which has a symmetrical, sashed façade facing north towards the village. There are the remains (pedimented door and blocked window) of a house on the right (east) side, next to no.9, then another major landmark in the gabled and battlemented form of Beckington Abbey and The Grange. The large complex of buildings is set back behind a stone boundary wall and gargantuan gate piers and gates.

5.16 The main road then passes groups of cottages and infill on both sides, with a high bank, trees and inset bus shelter to the right, and returns to The Woolpack junction. There is a good view up the rise of Bath Road towards The Cedars.

5.17 There are a number of landmark buildings, including The Cedars, the urbane block of no.4 Bath Road (Monmouth House), The Woolpack, the Parish Church, The Castle, and Beckington House.

5. Spatial analysis



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Ordnance Survey Map showing spatial analysis

6. Character Analysis

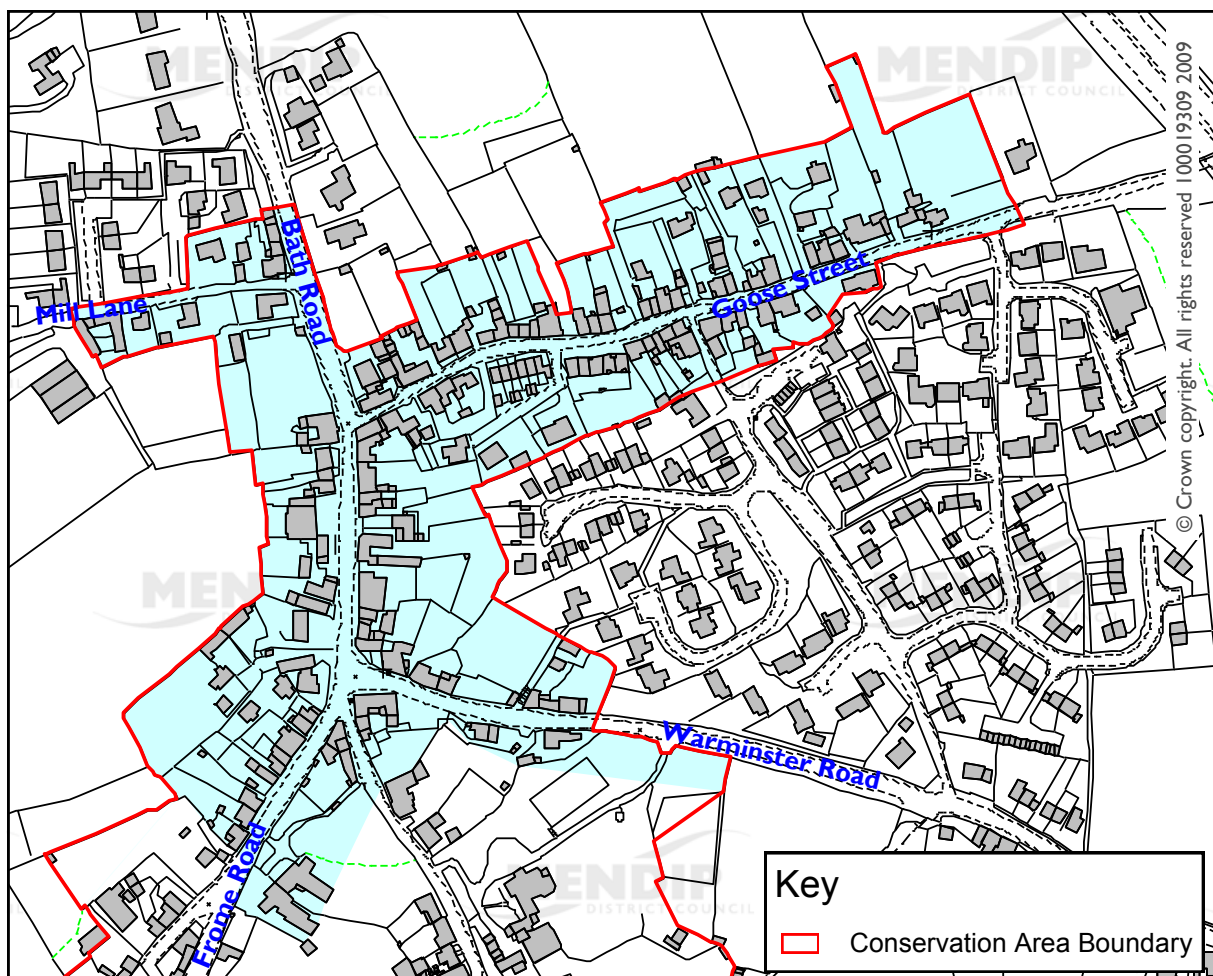
6.1 Beckington has a number of distinctive character areas, formed by differing historical factors and the effects of topography.



*Richmond House and Monmouth House,
Bath Road*

6.2 Bath Road, the northern end of Frome Road, the western end of Warminster Road and Goose Street:

This is the most 'urban' part of the village, comprising long rows of stone houses and cottages, interspersed with larger gentry houses positioned in or adjacent to the building groups. There are interesting mixtures of architectural styles and details, vernacular and polite. The former main road north-south corridor has evidence of its former commercial importance and market functions, with a remaining large inn and a number of shop fronts.

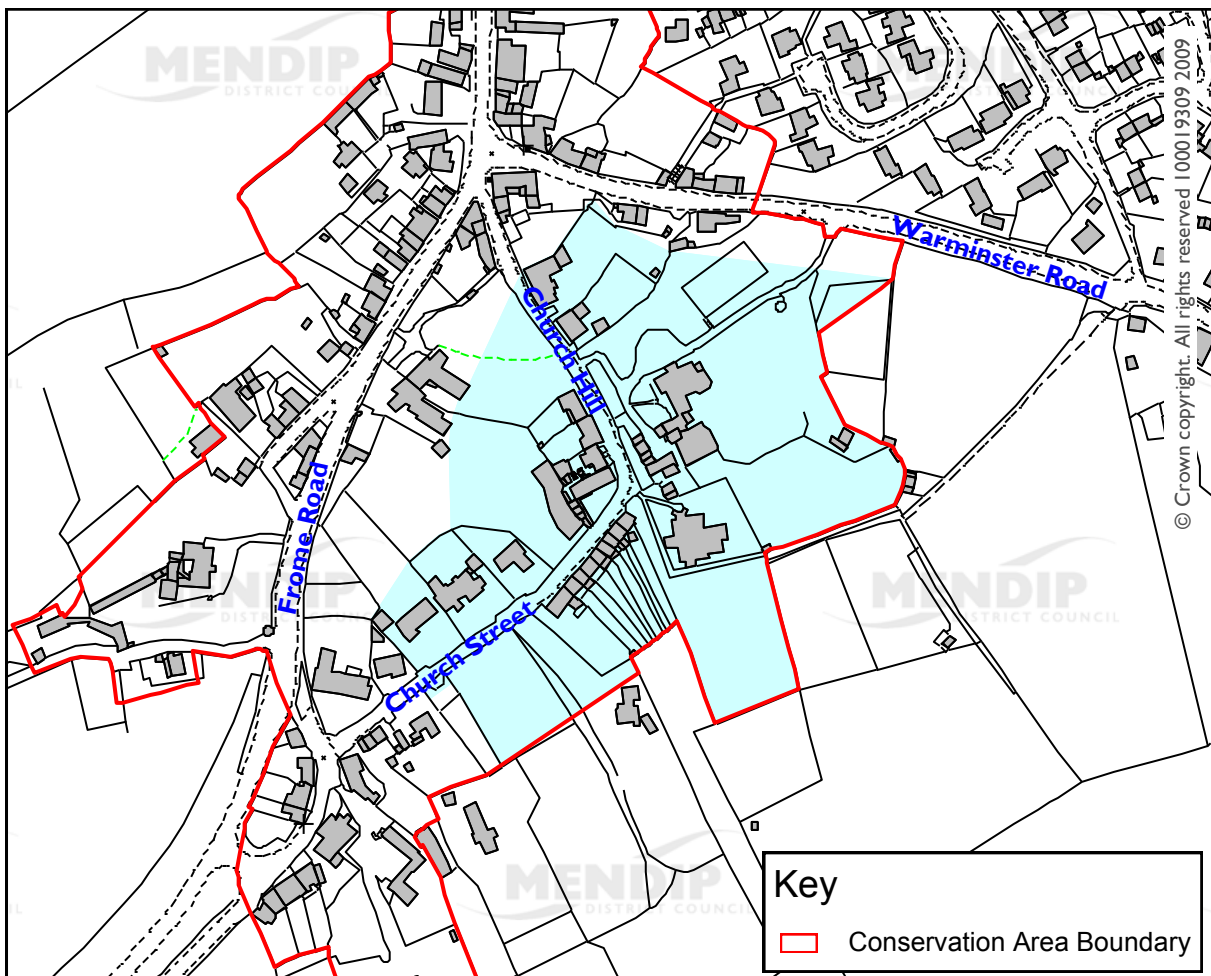


6. Character Analysis



Church Street

6.3 Church Hill and Street: To the east of the former commercial core, this is a quiet enclave formed around a sharp dog-legged lane that begins at the historic market place and returns to the main road via Castle Corner. It has a more rural, village character, with several important buildings (Parish Church, Old Rectory and Primary School), a terrace and smaller groups of cottages, and two larger detached houses, all set in a well-treed environment, with gardens and gaps in development. The latter introduces fields and hedges.

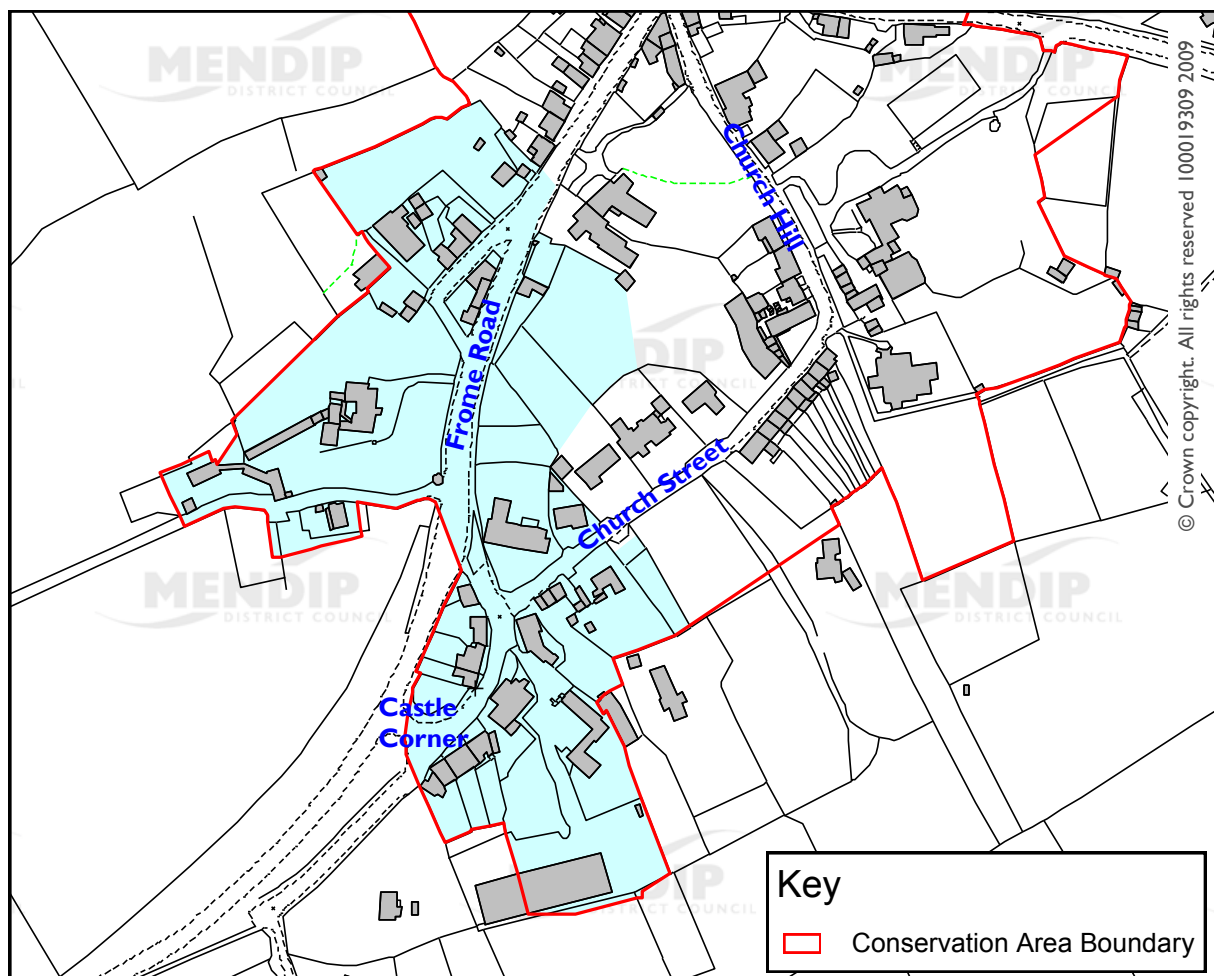


6. Character Analysis

6.4 Castle Corner and the remainder of Frome Road: The former main road portion has a small area of complex townscape around the junction with Church Street, with individual historic cottages clustered around the impressive entrance into The Castle. This landmark has long had an important physical and historical presence for the wider village. The area's intimacy contrasts with the wider spaces of the improved main road which has a series of grand houses set in their grounds and large trees. There is another old road enclave by the Baptist Chapel, with a cluster of buildings and stone boundary walls.



The Castle and Castle Corner



7. Local Building Patterns



Beckington Abbey and The Grange

7.1 The Parish Church displays a range of building periods and architectural styles, from the Norman west tower, 14th-century chancel and 15th-century south chapel and mid-15th-century clerestoried nave and aisles. Victorian restoration work by St Aubyn did not alter the basic plan.

7.2 Beckington has a surprisingly large number of late medieval houses, with surviving evidence of plan forms and building details. Many have been refronted (or have had new frontages added, in the case of buildings set at right angles to the street line, to an original gable end) in the 17th and 18th centuries. The houses seem, from their size and status, to have been built by woollen or cloth merchants but Beckington Abbey and its neighbour, The Grange, were built by monastic patrons. The Grange was the original northern hall, cross passage and kitchen and Beckington Abbey a southern cross wing that contained the solar; no.16 Church Hill was a 15th-century cross-passage house, as was nos.47 and 49 Goose Street. No.3 Bath Road (The Laurels) and no.5 (The Forge), are examples of a later addition of a new front to a medieval house.



The Abbey House, no.59 Goose Street

7.3 The village has a number of gentry houses, ranging from the 16th and 17th centuries and the Georgian and Regency periods. The Castle seems to be a substantial late 16th-century house built by the Long family, prominent local clothiers and patrons of the Parish Church. It has three storeys plus attics in gables. There are other substantial 17th-century stone houses, usually gabled and of L- or T-plan forms: no.14 Bath Road (The Old Manse), no.20, no.13 (The Cedars), and Beckington

7. Local Building Patterns

House. They are characterised by, normally, two storeys of mullioned windows with a third attic storey in prominent gables, doorways set in arches or enclosed porches and ashlar stone chimneys. Some main elevations show attempts at architectural organisation with the lining up of windows and approximately central entrances. No.59 Goose Street (Abbey House) is a good example of this and has, in addition, a canted bay window.

7.4 Later houses embrace the Classical canons of symmetry and proportion more whole-heartedly with good examples in Goose Street of the vernacular/polite overlap: nos.5 and 7, dated 1702, have casemented dormers and a central doorcase with some Classical detailing but mullioned windows and nos.52 and 54, dated as late as 1763, still employ the same window form that is basically a survival of early Tudor forms.

7.5 The later 18th- and early 19th-century house uses the full Classical vocabulary of symmetry, central architraved or pedimented doorcase, sash windows, corner quoins and string courses. Good examples include no.4 Bath Road (Monmouth House) with an ashlar façade and shallow segmental arches around windows; nos.21 and 23 (1820) are two austere villas with iron verandahs along their frontages; and The Old Rectory is a refronting of an older house with tripartite sashes and a swagger Tuscan columned porch. No.9 Warminster Road (Rylands Cottage) has a splendid ashlar front with tripartite sashes stepped up to the central light, a pedimented doorcase and delicate Adam-style ornament on the string course. There are many other smooth ashlar or rendered frontages throughout the village with details like Venetian windows (nos.62 and 66 Goose Street) and tripartite sashes (Sandy Hill House on Castle Corner).



No.9 Warminster Road



No.62 Goose Street

7. Local Building Patterns



18th- & 19th-century houses, Warminster Road



Smooth render, nos. 10 & 12 Bath Road



17th-century mullioned and labelled windows at The Hawthorns, no. 20 Bath Road

7.6 The 19th century saw the rebuilding or introduction of specialised building types such as the almshouses in Goose Street and the Baptist Chapel in Frome Road. The former, rebuilt in 1846 in Tudor Revival style, consisted of a number of small living rooms, accommodation for the overseer or master and communal dining facilities, the latter being a large room with galleries on three sides and a pulpit on the fourth, entered from the front, gable end.

7.7 **Walls.** The predominant building material is Forest Marble, a limestone that is durable and is seen mainly as a grey to buff, thin, slaty rubble but may be dressed for features like corner quoins and door and window surrounds. The stone was probably dug from within the property boundaries but there was at least one quarry to the west of Bath Road. There is also a more gingery rubble, possibly a more sandy Forest Marble or Cornbrash. Bath Stone, a creamy oolitic limestone, is a high quality ashlar and appears in a number of late 18th- and 19th-century buildings.

7.8 A number of 18th- and early 19th-century facades are smooth rendered, occasionally with features like quoins and window and door surrounds being exposed as natural stone (no. 3 Bath Road (The Laurels)) while no. 16 Bath Road has a roughcast finish.

7.9 **Windows and Doors.** Types and details vary according to the history and status of buildings and a wide range is seen in the village. 16th-, 17th- and early-mid-18th-century buildings have ovolo or hollow moulded stone mullioned windows, sometimes with horizontal transoms (The Old Manse),

7. Local Building Patterns

varying in size from two or three lights up to six lights (The Abbey). Typically there are projecting drip moulds over a window opening, returned at each end with square labels. Beckington Castle has a continuous drip in the form of a string course. Relieving arches may be seen above the drip mould (The Abbey). Fronts are usually flat but there are examples of projecting canted bays, at no.40 Castle Corner and at no.50 Goose Street (Abbey House). The Castle has a combined three-storey porch and window bay.

7.10 Mullioned windows may contain leaded lights or opening wooden or metal casements. Narrow sash windows may, rarely, have been inserted into earlier openings. Casement windows, sometimes with wooden lintels, may be seen on some of the smaller cottages, with a central-opening, wooden-barred light flanked by leaded lights at no.7 Warminster Road. The vertical, wooden sash becomes the common window type after the middle of the 18th century, with earlier examples being flush or very near to the wall face and later ones being set in deeper reveals and showing less of the sash box frame. Glazing bars vary in thickness and profile (tending to become thinner into the 19th century) and their patterning, and hence the number of lights also varies. No.11 Bath Road (Laurel Cottage) has 'Gothick' detailing with attractive intersecting glazing bars. The Victorian introduction of plate glass resulted in a reduction in the number of bars and the sash with only one large pane above and below the meeting rail.



Porch and window bay of Beckington Castle



Casement with timber central opening flanked by leaded lights at no.7 Warminster Road



Typical sash windows at nos.19-23 Castle Corner

7. Local Building Patterns



*Venetian window and sashes
at no.66 Goose Street*

7.11 Sashes are set typically in plain architraves, often flush with the adjoining wall, and they may be grouped in twos or threes with narrow stone bars or piers. Sandy Hill House's tripartite sashes have narrower openings either side of a wider centre. The fully-fledged three-light Venetian window with an arched centre piece and radial glazing bars is seen on several houses such as nos.62 and 66 Goose Street. No.22 Bath Road has round arches embellished by emphasised keystones and imposts on its first floor windows. No.4 Bath Road (Monmouth House) has three bays of sashes set in shallow recesses with segmental arches, a typically refined early 19th-century arrangement.



*Door and fanlight at The Foresters
Arms, no.58 Goose Street*

7.12 Doorways and doors show equal variety and interest with a number of four-centred arches, flat lintel or segmentally arched 16th- and 17th-century examples and simple Classical detailing later, usually with door surrounds with an edge mould or beading and a flat stone hood supported on shaped stone brackets. No.40 Castle Corner has a semi-circular hood and no.4 Bath Road a pediment. No.13 Bath Road (The Cedars) has a segmental pediment and columns to its doorcase, while its gazebo has a broken, swan-necked pediment over its door. More refined classicism is seen at The Old Rectory, with its full-blown Tuscan porch with columns, and at no. 18 Frome Road, where the segmental headed opening has an expressed keystone and imposts with a decorative fanlight. Other fanlights with rectangular or spoked bar patterns are seen at The Old Rectory and nos.35 and 58 Goose Street.

7. Local Building Patterns

7.13 Doors vary from vertically planked types with features like covering strips, expressed rivets and elaborate hinges (a good example is at no.18 Church Hill (Glebe Cottage)) to Classical four or six panels, raised, sunk or fielded. Often a window light is seen in the earlier doors and, in the panelled types, the top two may be glazed or a larger fanlight may provide light. There is a gothicised door with intersecting 'tracery' including small glazed lights at the rear of no.20 Bath Road (The Hawthorns). There is an attractive Victorian timber gate with inset ironwork panels and a decorative crest at the side of no.5 Bath Road.



Planked door with rivet heads and strapped hinges at no.18 Church Hill

7.14 **Roofs.** The village is endowed with a range of high quality roofing materials. Roofs have subtle variations in colour and they undulate and ripple, especially in features like the swept valleys between roof slopes, gables and dormers. Stone tiles are seen on many of the older, higher status buildings, such as the Parish Church, Beckington Abbey, The Old Manse, The Cedars (house and gazebo), The Castle, The Old Rectory and Beckington House (and its gazebo). The tiles may be of Forest Marble (thick and heavy) or from the lighter, thinner Bath Stone.



Stone tiles and pantiles, hipped and gabled dormers on Goose Street

7.15 The most common roofing material is the clay tile; commonly seen as pantiles but there are also examples of Double and Triple Roman tiles. It is buff or orange in colour and probably came from Bridgwater or Glastonbury. Clay tiles are also seen, sometimes with two or three courses of stone tiles at the eaves. There is a notable combination at no.66 Goose Street with the upper slope of a mansard roof in pantiles, the lower in clay plain tiles and the verge in stone tiles. Slate appears on Regency



Pantiled mansard roofs on nos.1 & 3 Warminster Road

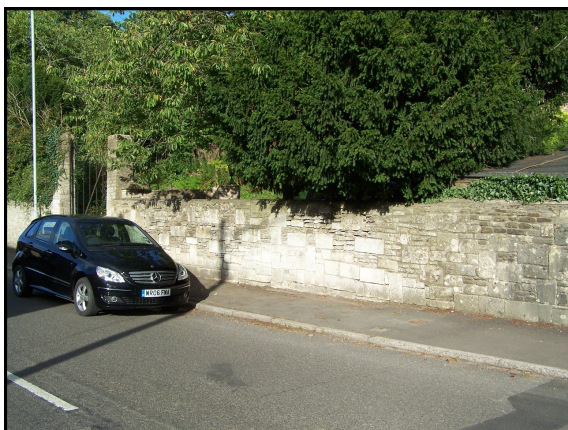
7. Local Building Patterns



Coped gable and massive chimney stack, The Old Church House, Church Hill

and early Victorian buildings, a fashionable and (with canals and, later, railways) a transportable material.

7.16 Roof types include the compass roof with stone copings (sometimes with shaped kneelers or small onion-shaped finials) and large gabled upper rooms, the gables also coped; half-hipped and hipped roofs. The double pitch or mansard roof is seen, lit by dormers, supposedly to give light to upper weaving lofts (although mansard roofs became fashionable in Classical architecture and could also accommodate servants). No.35 Goose Street (Dainton House) has a mansard that is also half-hipped. Dormers appear occasionally on compass roofs, in box, gabled or hipped form (three on nos.5 and 7 Goose Street, refronting dated 1702). Chimney stacks are an important visual asset, 16th- and 17th-century examples in ashlar, with moulded caps and, sometimes, bases; rubble, render and brick are also employed. The Old Church House in Church Hill has a large rubble end stack in three stages with weathered offsets. Pots are thrown clay types. Tapered square pots with a moulded cap appear at no.15 Bath Road.



Boundary wall, Beckington Abbey

7.17 **Boundaries.** Garden walls are a major asset in the conservation area, enclosing space, forming edges, providing privacy and linking buildings. They vary in height from one-metre-high forecourt walls fronting buildings like no.28 Warminster Road, higher examples at the Baptist Chapel, nos.5 and 7 Goose Street, no.3 Church Hill and The Abbey House and two-metre walls at The Castle, to long stretches up to three metres in height. They tend to be of coursed rubble with features like

7. Local Building Patterns

entrance doorways, ramps to accommodate changes in height (for example, at nos.21 and 23 Bath Road) and ashlar capping of various profiles: flat, weathered and feather-edged. Beckington House's boundary wall has Double Roman tile capping and the boundary wall to Beckington Abbey on Church Hill rises to four metres for a stretch of 100 metres and has a distinctive portion of rusticated ashlar with an arched entrance. On the Frome Road frontage the wall is an attractive chequer work of larger slabs and smaller, thinner slats. Gate piers are also visually important, of ashlar or dressed stone, with moulded or pyramidal caps. The Baptist Chapel has rusticated ashlar piers while The Castle has a very military arrangement of square piers and buttresses with mock arrow-cross loops.

7.18 Other details: Other details include a number of good quality, mainly 19th-century shop fronts, usually characterised by flanking pilasters, consoles or scroll brackets, moulded top edges to fascia boards and the division of the shop windows into two or more lights by thin wooden mullions and transoms. Many surviving fronts are in the form of central entrances and flanking display windows. Nos.2 and 4A Bath Road have two six-pane fronts; no.5 has a six-light front; no.18 (Corner Stores) has twin six-light fronts. No.1 Frome Road is a prominent corner site with six lights and delicate detailing. No.56A Goose Street (The Old Bakery) perhaps takes the palm, with double nine-lighters and a twelve-pane window on its return elevation.



Militaristic details at the entrance to Beckington Castle

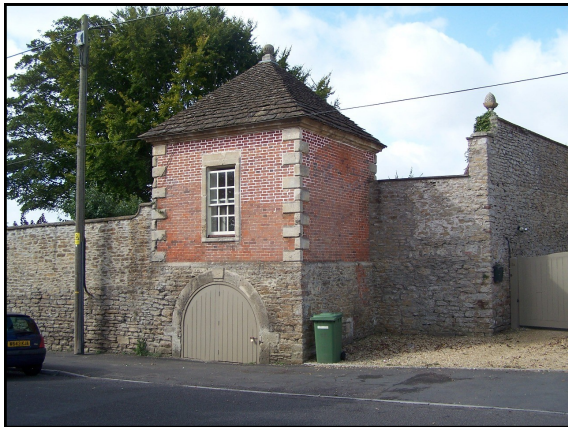


Shopfront, Warminster Road



Mid-19th-century shopfront, no.56a Goose Street

7. Local Building Patterns



Gazebo at The Cedars, Bath Road

7.19 There are many other details of local interest: delicate iron verandahs on nos.21 and 23 Bath Road; early 19th-century cast iron milestones, erected by the turnpike trust, in Bath Road and Warminster Road; the gazebos at The Cedars and Beckington House; spear-headed railings and lamp overthrows at the Baptist Chapel and no.9 Warminster Road, and a lamp overthrow and lamp at no.59 Goose Street (The Abbey House); a cast iron gate and railings at the entry into the Parish Church graveyard (with hooped railings and pinnaced standards plus a kissing gate), a hooped gate at the Primary School and railings and gate at no.28 Warminster Road. The churchyard has boot scrapers in the form of a long horizontal bar and a tall frame with the bar at the foot. Smaller details include a Sun Fire Insurance plaque at no.15 Goose Street, the iron commemorative plaque of 1846 on nos.17-21 Goose Street (former almshouses), other date stones, and a central blocked window at no.24 Warminster Road with a painted dummy or trompe l'oeil window. There is a round-arched, stone water point on the south side of Warminster Road and the remnant of an 18th-century house next door to no.9 Frome Road is also noteworthy.



Lamp overthrow at the Baptist Chapel, Frome Road

7.20 There is a water pump set in a gabled wooden surround on the corner of Church Hill and Church Street. The bus shelter on Frome Road is a stone structure inset to a bank and is entirely appropriate and attractive. (See the sheets of drawings of buildings and details in Appendix 1.)

7.21 **Trees and Green Spaces.** Trees are an important asset within and

7. Local Building Patterns

adjoining the conservation area with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) north of no.22 Bath Road. On the north side of Mill Lane and around no.12 Church Street, back to Frome Road. There is another TPO on Warminster Road at the entry point into the historic core. Other important groups are in the southern angle of the Bath Road/Mill Lane junction; in the back gardens of properties on the north side of Goose Street, from no.47 eastwards to the extremity of the conservation area; in the grounds of The Old Rectory (seen in views down Bath Road and up Church Hill); north-east of the Parish Church; in the grounds of Beckington Abbey and The Grange; and in front of Beckington

House, forming a treed southern entry to the village.

7.22 There are no publicly accessible green spaces apart from the churchyard, the space around the Baptist Church and a playing field south of the Church. The field on the south side of Church Street is important in visual terms.

7.23 The private gardens of the larger houses tend to be hidden behind boundary walls. There are, however, small front gardens on parts of Goose Street, Church Hill, Castle Corner and the Bath Road/Warminster Road corner that provide colour and texture from shrubs, hedges and climbers.



Trees forming a gateway on the Frome Road approach

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Stone setts on Goose Street

7.24 Surfaces. There are surviving areas of stone setts (probably of Forest Marble) at house and lane entrances on the northern side of Goose Street, at The Castle and to The Old Rectory, steps from Warminster Road to Rylands and stone paths within the churchyard. Most other surfaces are of tarmac but stone may be hidden underneath. Stone kerb edges are evident throughout the village and are an important asset.

7.25 Contribution of unlisted buildings. Despite the number and density of Listed Buildings in the village, there are several unlisted buildings of architectural merit in their own right and/or wider group value. These are:

- No.2 Mill Lane, a double-fronted corner house, mid-Victorian, rubble and dressings, pantiles, bracketed eaves, late 19th-century sashes, canted bay window on both elevations, pedimented and pilastered door case to Mill Lane;
- Nos.4 and 6 Goose Street, parts of a Victorian Gothic gabled building (the former Enderby Hall, once the village hall) with cusped lancets, big geometrical Gothic window in prominent gable and twin pointed arched doors with elaborate hinges (architectural and group value);
- Nos.25-27 Goose Street, a mid-19th-century group with sashes and casements, large corner quoins (architectural and group value);
- No.25A was originally a shed, with a first-floor loading door (of group value);



*Nos.4 & 6 Goose Street,
the former Enderby Hall*

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- Nos.53-57 Goose Street, 17th-century, various alterations, details like stone mullioned windows, sashes and a bracketed canopy to the door of no.57 (group value);
- A K6 telephone box adjacent to The Woolpack;
- The Old Church House on Church Hill, a Victorian Tudor Revival L-shaped building with a strongly constructed end chimney stack - internally there are substantial remains of an early 16th-century house (group value);
- Single-storey rubble and slate building in front of Honeysuckle Cottage on Church Hill (group value);
- Beckington VC Primary School, Church Street, Victorian Tudor Revival, ashlar, large end gable, three smaller gables to Church Street, large mullion and transom windows, weathered offset buttresses (architectural and group value). (The modern addition on Church Street is attractive and sympathetic.);
- The village pump at the corner of Church Hill and Church Street;
- Nos.1 and 3 and 7-17 Church Street (No.5 is Listed), a long 19th-century rubble row with varying details such as porch canopies, casements and sashes, some insensitive alterations but of wider group value;
- Nos.10 and 12 Church Street, two large detached Arts and Crafts-inspired houses, rubble with ashlar dressings, large gables, casements,



Building by Honeysuckle Cottage



Beckington First School



Unlisted Church Street row

7. Local Building Patterns



Nos.10 & 12 Church Street



Loss of boundary on Bath Road



Woolpack Inn car park

square bay to no.10, dormers and features like diagonally set stone chimneys (architectural value);

- Two late-Victorian houses on Frome Road, nos.8 and 16, with double-height canted bay windows and stone dressings (group value).

7.26 **Extent of intrusion or damage.**

The village's wider environment is attractive but there are a number of problems and detriments:

- Parked cars on Bath Road and periodic congestion;
- Poor quality road surfaces and street furniture at the junction in front of The Woolpack;
- Metal safety barriers and tall lampposts;
- Standard metal rails up the footway from Warminster Road to Uplands;
- Over-wide stretches of Frome Road and crude edge details and paving at Castle Corner;
- Poles and wires on Bath Road, Goose Street and Warminster Road;
- Poor or non-existent boundaries on the garage and an adjacent property on Bath Road;
- A bare car park at the rear of The Woolpack, again lacking any form of boundary definition;
- Conspicuous timber fencing, set above an embankment by The Grange on Frome Road;

7. Local Building Patterns

- Some unsympathetic modern infill development, particularly on Goose Street and on the west side of Frome Road;
- Problems with the introduction of incorrect or damaging repairs and “improvements” to both listed and unlisted buildings, manifested by:
 - The painting of stone rubble
 - Pointing of stonework with hard cement
 - The use of concrete tiles and pantiles
 - The introduction of poorly detailed replacement windows, either in timber or uPVC
 - The staining of timber windows
 - The insertion of an off-the-peg, historically incorrect door with combined semi-circular fanlight in an authentically fan-lighted doorway in Goose Street



Modern development on Goose Street

7.27 Condition of Built Fabric. Overall condition seems to be good apart from problems with two listed buildings: no.52 Goose Street and no.20 Frome Road. The pump in Church Hill/Street is in need of some refurbishment.

8. Synthesis of Appraisal

8.1 Beckington has the character of an important main road settlement and an industrial centre with a number of gentry and cloth industry-related houses, an impressive Parish Church and former shops and inns. It has a particular coherence along Bath and Frome Roads and on Goose Street. There are a significant number of late medieval and 17th-century surviving houses, usually behind later facades, an extensive heritage of vernacular houses and cottages and a late-18th- to early 19th-century introduction of fashionable Classical houses, no doubt influenced by Bath.

8.2 There are quieter enclaves of differing character: a more rural assembly of Church, large houses, School and cottages on Church Hill and Church Street; and two former portions of main road at Castle Corner and north of Beckington House. There are modern infills on Goose Street and on Bath and Frome Roads and larger areas of estate development between Goose Street and Warminster Road but, with one exception, these have not unduly affected the historic quality and character of the village.

8.3 The village has few dramatic views in or out and the Church is largely hidden from within the settlement. The best sequences of views relate more to townscape experiences of spaces and building groups, affected by road alignment and topography. Boundary walls have a particular importance in defining space and linking buildings. Trees are also important throughout the village, particularly in Church Hill and Church Street, and the Warminster Road and Frome Road gateways.

8.4 Despite the overall architectural quality of Beckington there are a number of issues relating to the design of road space and street furniture; clutter provided by poles and wires; some bare spaces in the public realm that would benefit from improved boundary definition; examples of insensitive repair or improvement of buildings; and varying standards of design quality in modern infill development.

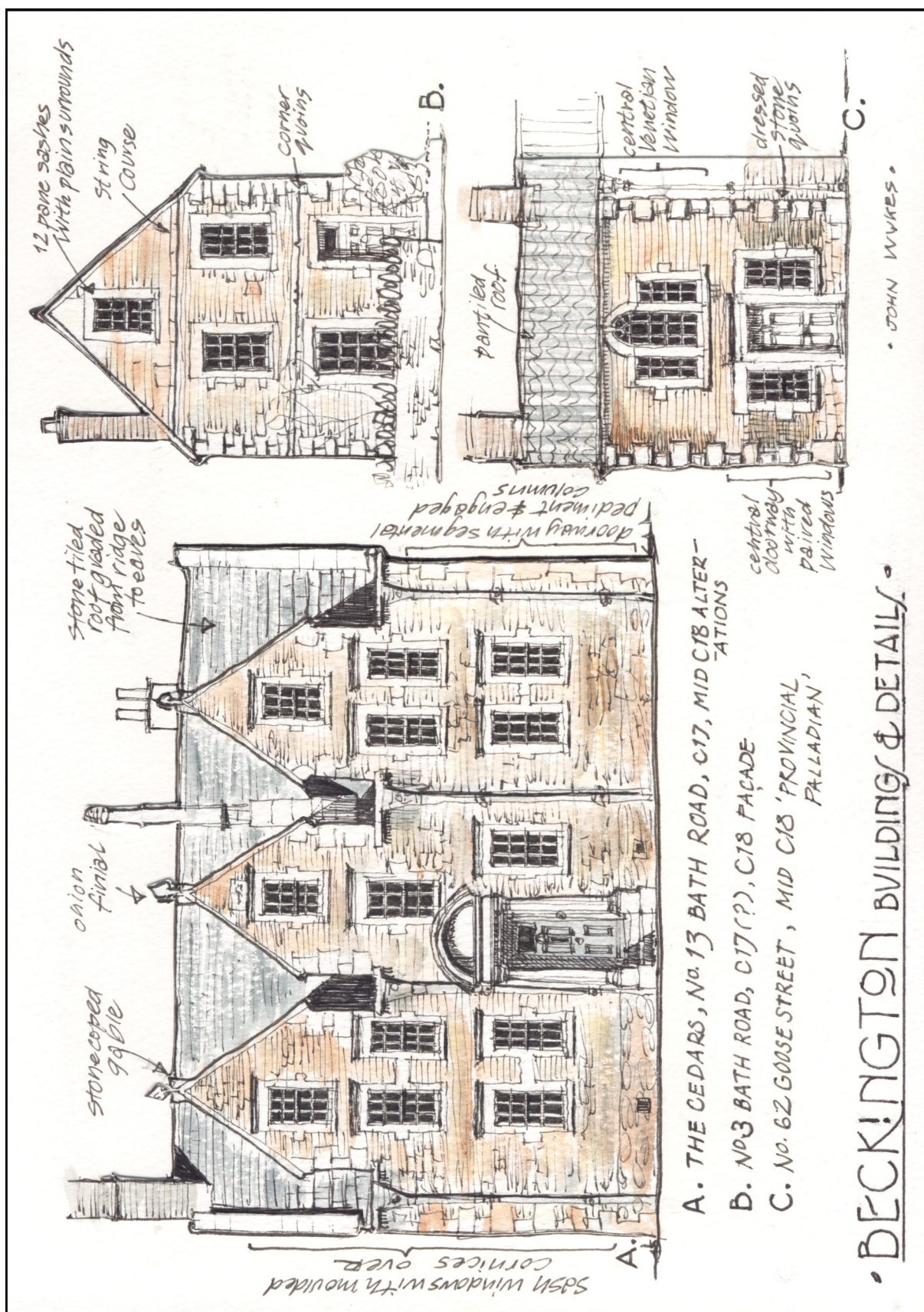
8.5 No changes are proposed to the boundary of the Beckington Conservation Area.

8.6 This Conservation Area Appraisal is to be read in conjunction with local planning policies and Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment.

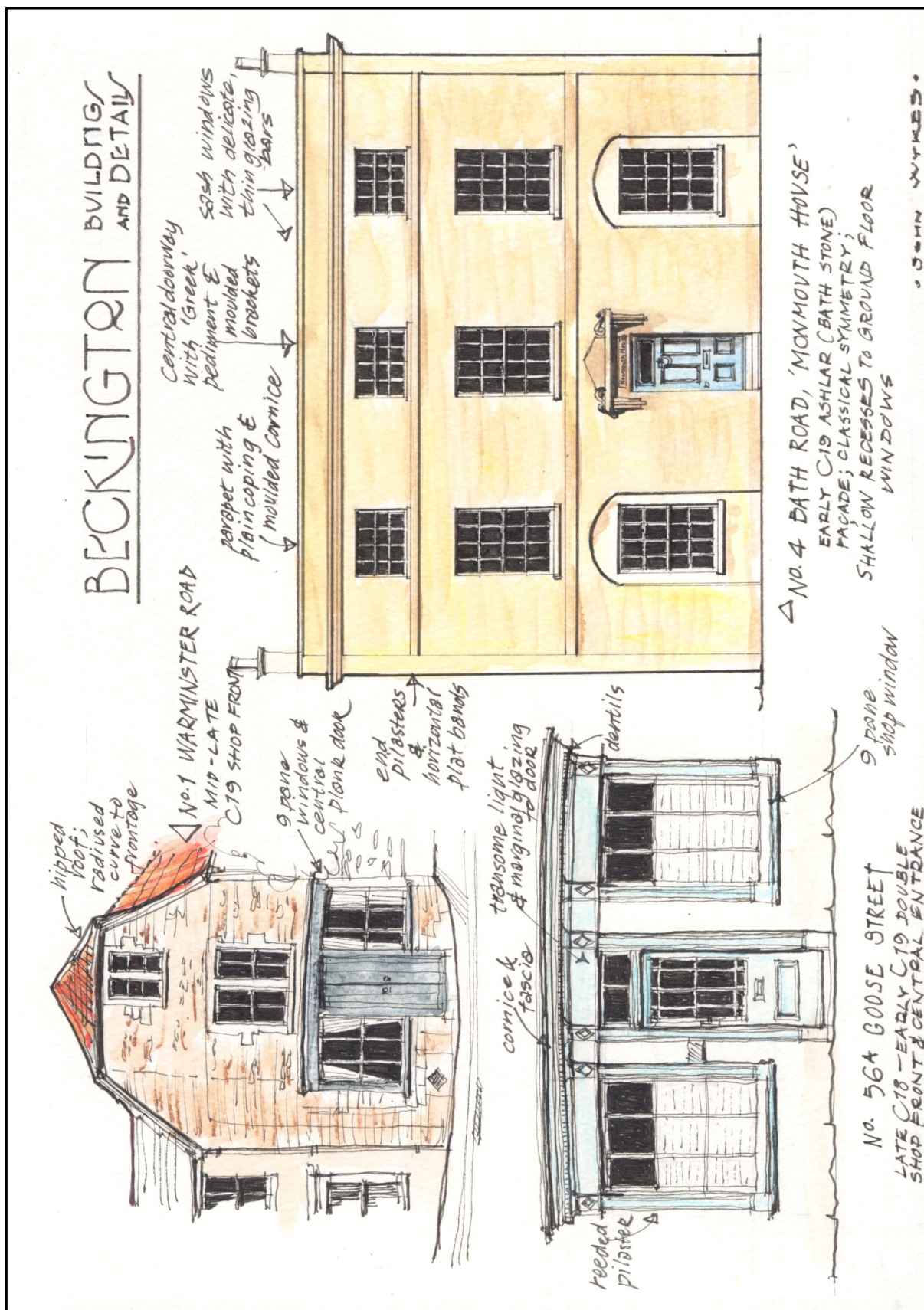


Beckington Castle

Appendix 1: Drawings



Appendix 1: Drawings



8. Summary of Key Characteristics

- Several well treed entry points or gateways to the village.
- Important trees throughout the village providing skyline features, frames to views and complements to the architecture.
- Large coherent rows of historic buildings in Bath Road, Frome Road and Goose Street, with a mixture of vernacular and Classical and Tudor Revival polite architecture.
- 85 Listed Building entries, of which one is Grade I and five Grade II*, and about a dozen buildings or groups of key unlisted buildings.
- The use of stone tiles, pantiles, double and triple Roman tiles, plain clay tiles and slate for roofs, with stone-coped gables and eaves.
- The use of local Forest Marble as rubble for walling, with dressed stone details and Bath Stone ashlar along with a limited use of render.
- Mixtures of stone-mullioned windows, casements and vertically hung timber sashes and canted bays.
- Timber plank doors and six- or eight-panelled doors, with features such as flat stone canopies on shaped brackets, fanlights or glazed lights in the door.
- Distinctive chimney stacks of stone, render or brick, with clay pots.
- Well defined boundary walls of roughly coursed or random rubble with flat, weathered or moulded capping and gate piers with pyramidal caps.
- A number of well designed 19th-century shopfronts with panes or vertical mullions, side pilasters, fascia boards and cornices over.

