

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**COLEFORD
CONSERVATION AREA
CHARACTER APPRAISAL**



CONSULTATION DRAFT
March 2001

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COLEFORD CHARACTER APPRAISAL

1 HISTORIC & TOPOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1.1 Coleford is the major historic centre in the northwest of the Forest of Dean. The town is long established and first recorded with certainty in the 13th century when it was known in 1282 as Coleforde "a ford across which coal is carried."¹ It undoubtedly had early associations with the iron-smelting industry, known to have been established by the Romans, and supplying royalty from the time of Edward the Confessor when 100 rods of iron were supplied for making nails for the king's ships. The Forest retained a pre-eminent position, as a centre of the English iron trade well into the 14th century. The Victoria County History states: "it had its own chapel by the late 15th century and it had emerged as the principal settlement on the west side of the Forest of Dean by the early 17th century." A county map of 1760 shows Coleford, together with "Michel Dean" to be the principal market settlements of the Forest, on a main route between Gloucester and Monmouth.

1.2 The main part of the town is almost completely enclosed by surrounding hills, though industry and housing now tend to dominate the skyline rather than the original dense woodland. The present plan and the town's inherent urban quality derive from its relatively early development and subsequent importance as a market town, although it remained a tithing within the parish of Newland until 1894, when it became a separate civil parish. The town and especially some neighbouring settlements expanded rapidly in the late 19th century as a result of the local extractive industries. Further expansion throughout the 20th century was more gradual. Even so, the basic plan form of the historic core has changed remarkably little over several centuries and largely accounts for the present attractive and generously proportioned townscape quality of the conservation area.

1.3 In more recent times the former mining, quarrying and metallurgical industries especially flourished from the end of the 18th century to the mid 20th century. This coincided with the Industrial Revolution and building of railways, which in the Forest started life as tramways from about 1795. The former Monmouth tram road forms a boundary to the western half of the conservation area. It opened in 1812 with several branches near Broadwell serving the coal mining and iron-ore operations towards the western edge of the Forest. West of Coleford it followed the Newland Valley, serving the Whitecliffe iron furnaces, quarries and lime kilns, and linking to the River Wye and tin-plate works at Redbrook. A new branch line from Parkend to Coleford off the Lydney to Cinderford and Mitcheldean railway opened in 1875 signalled the end of the tram-road. The section west of Coleford became a branch of the Great Western Railway with a new terminus built just to the south of the town centre. This line never really flourished and

¹ Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names

was one of several that closed to passengers in 1916 as a result of the First World War. Nevertheless, the bridge over Newland Street remains a significant feature some 100 metres beyond the edge of the conservation area.

1.4 The vigorous 19th century industrialisation in the vicinity of Coleford did much to revitalise the local economy, although the centre of Coleford has retained more of the quality of a rural market town. Several neighbouring settlements closer to the mines and quarries absorbed much of the new population growth. The long-established iron industry which had provided supplies to several kings, (Henry II, Richard I, John and Henry III, including armaments for the Crusades, had declined prior to 1800, although thereafter the industry staged a revival when blast furnaces were introduced.

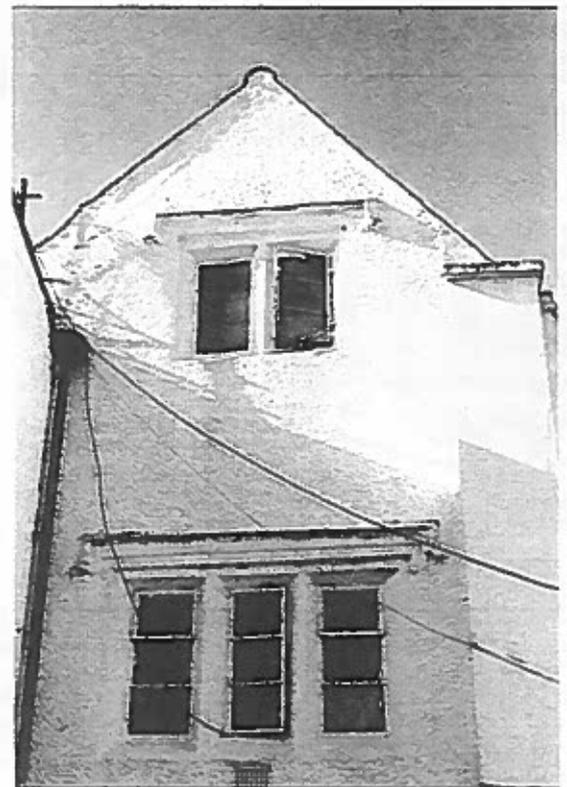
1.5 A major part of the renaissance of the local iron industry was the result of David Mushet (1772-1847), a scientist and metallurgist from Scotland who moved to Forest House, Coleford in 1810. He was a partner at Whitecliffe Furnace built c.1800 as an early coke-fuelled blast furnace, and he was to become internationally regarded as a foremost authority on iron and steel. He helped to develop the Bessemer process and built another furnace at Darkhill, although by 1845 his business was failing and his three sons briefly took over before it was closed. Despite these setbacks, his pioneering paid off and his youngest son Robert (1811-91) perfected the Bessemer process in 1856, and produced a self-hardening steel for tools, known as "Mushet's Special Steel." For several decades from 1862 this was made at the Titanic Steel and Iron Company at Milkwall, a mile to the south of the town. The renaissance of the local iron industry had reached its peak during the latter part of the 19th century, and it is recorded that in the 1880's local pits around Coleford were producing some 12,000 tons of ore annually.

2 THE CONSERVATION AREA

(i) Background & Setting

2.1 The present Coleford Conservation Area was designated in 1980, and comprises a tightly drawn boundary covering the historic core of the town largely based on a probable medieval street plan of roads converging on the central Market Place. The majority of existing buildings, based on frontage detail, are of 18th to 19th century construction, but some probably have considerably older fabric embedded within the overall structure, whilst others will have partially or completely replaced earlier buildings on the same site.

2.2 Within the conservation area are some 17 listed building entries, covering 21 separate properties. Although not within the present conservation area, The Parish Church of St. John is a dominant feature in an adjoining part of the town that started to be developed as a separate entity from the 1860's (see 8.12).



THE TOWN CENTRE

Top Left High Street slopes gently towards Market Place with the Clock Tower a dominant feature.

Top Right Market Place is a large urban space with a strong sense of enclosure. The tree, wrought iron seating and paving represent different phases of enhancement started c.1970.

Centre left Market Place, west side, has a uniform scale, and retains a fair proportion of historic detail; a mix of coursed stone and painted render, sash windows with prominent voussoirs and cills. Shopfronts are a mix of traditional and contemporary. The shop blind is of a type that suits a historic setting.

Bottom Left and Right The Old White Hart Inn has a mainly 19th century frontage but to the right is a 17th century frontage with mullioned windows and hood moulds.



ELEVATIONAL DETAIL

Although a unified late 18th/early 19th century style predominates centred on three-storey height and three to six paned sash windows with narrow glazing bars and splayed voussoirs and keystones, there are other frontage variations.

Top Left Nos. 2-10 High Street ranging in height from one to three storeys, with and without parapet and a mix of stone and painted render.

Centre Left Nos.34,35 and 36 Market Place, also a mix of stone and render. The wide ground floor shop front detracts from the overall proportions of the elevational detail and roof profiles above.

Bottom Left North side of Market Place with early-19th to early 20th century frontages. Again the wide fascia with large lettering tends to detract from otherwise well-proportioned elevations.

Top Right and Lower Right In some parts of the centre, townscape is weakened by certain features such as bland shop-fronts and in the example in St.John's Street (top) by the recessed building in the foreground with a flat roof. Concrete tiles or artificial slates rather than natural slate also tend to detract. The bank frontage (lower) is a good example of early 20th century design using imported limestone (probably of Cotswold origin) and a classical design with Venetian windows.

(ii) Purpose of the Character Appraisal

2.3 The statutory definition of a conservation area is “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for designated conservation areas. This requirement is expanded upon in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 section 4.

2.4 An English Heritage Conservation Area Practice Note published in June 1993 also states that “Local Authorities should..define that special architectural or historic character which warrants designation by means of a published detail character analysis.” Part of the purpose of such a document is to “incorporate policies in the statutory local plan... the most important (of which) will be a presumption against the loss of elements which have been identified as making a positive contribution to that special interest which warranted designation.”

2.5 A process of change within a conservation area is inevitable. The purpose of a character statement such as this is to define as clearly as possible the historic (and by implication archaeological), architectural, and natural components of the conservation area that are considered especially important and contribute most to its character. It is also intended to advise on the scope for repair or restoration where needed and to encourage improvement or removal of unsightly features. There is an emphasis upon the use of local traditional materials and methods of construction. It is intended that this should offer specific guidance that will lead to a reversal of more recent unfortunate trends.

2.4 To summarise, the principal aims of this document are intended to define:

- what influences have given Coleford its particular character
- what chiefly reflects this character and is most worth conserving
what has suffered damage or loss and may need reinstating
- what should be considered in guiding future changes
- what visual features particularly need safeguarding
- what existing or potential resources may be available to maintain character and assist in enhancement.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15 and 16 and other Government circulars have advised that archaeology has become a “material consideration” in the planning process.

Planning authorities must now consider the balance between the need for development and the effects it has on the historic environment.

3.2 The County Sites and Monuments Record shows a considerable number of entries for the parish of Coleford as a whole. Many of these are of industrial archaeological significance and have a particular bearing not only upon the early phases of the town's development, but also the rise and fall of the industries related to mineral extraction that have shaped its more recent past.

3.3 The Victoria County History refers to Coleford having eight or more houses in 1349, described as a street in 1364, and with a chapel by 1489². Earliest documentary references to specific streets date from the early 17th century. An early map of 1608 shows the main axis of the town running south-east to north-west from what is now Newland Street, Market Place and Gloucester Road. This formed an essentially linear plan with a scattering of houses on the Berry Hill Road (later St. John's Street). There appears to be some remaining evidence of medieval burgage plots. These are most clearly defined on the southern side of Newland Street. They were characteristically long and narrow in order to provide property units with direct access to the commercially viable street frontage. Since these tenement plots date back to at least medieval times, it is fairly certain that the site of many dwellings fronting the main streets are of equally early date. If, as seems likely, medieval fragments still survive behind much later frontages, their extent can only be assessed, by detailed internal inspection. The route of the 1812 tram-road north of Newland Street, Market Place and St. John's Road may well have sliced across earlier plots and those in Gloucester Road would have originally have run down to Thurstan's Brook.

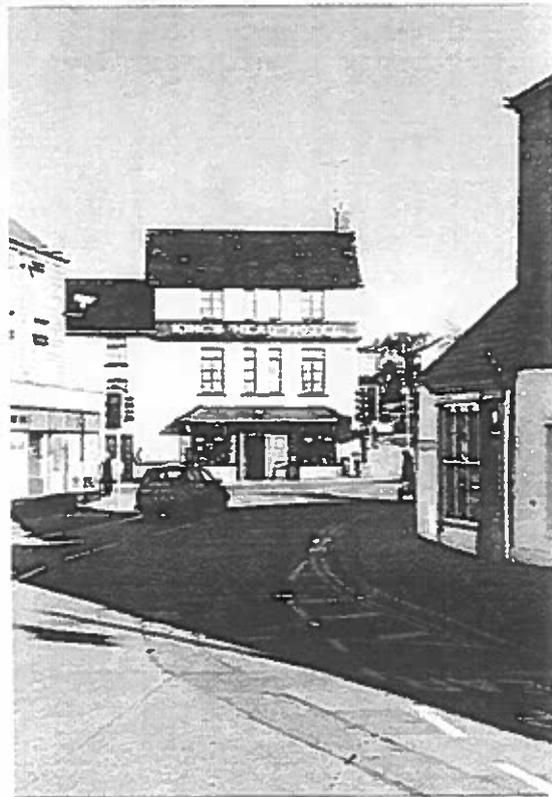
3.4 The 1608 map also indicates a Cross to the north-east of the original 15th century Chapel of Ease. This was demolished in 1820 to be replaced by an octagonal building, which apart from the remaining tower, was itself demolished in 1882, shortly after the first phase of the new St. John's Church in Boxbush Road had been completed in 1880. Also occupying Market Place on an island site facing the Angel Hotel was the Market House. This was originally built in 1679, following the grant of a market to Coleford in 1661, and was sometimes also referred to as the Town Hall, having been considerably altered and enlarged in the 19th century. It was demolished as recently as 1968 as part of a scheme to ease traffic congestion. Early 20th century photographs also indicate the loss of the former churchyard and its enclosing features.

4 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

(i) Architectural Character

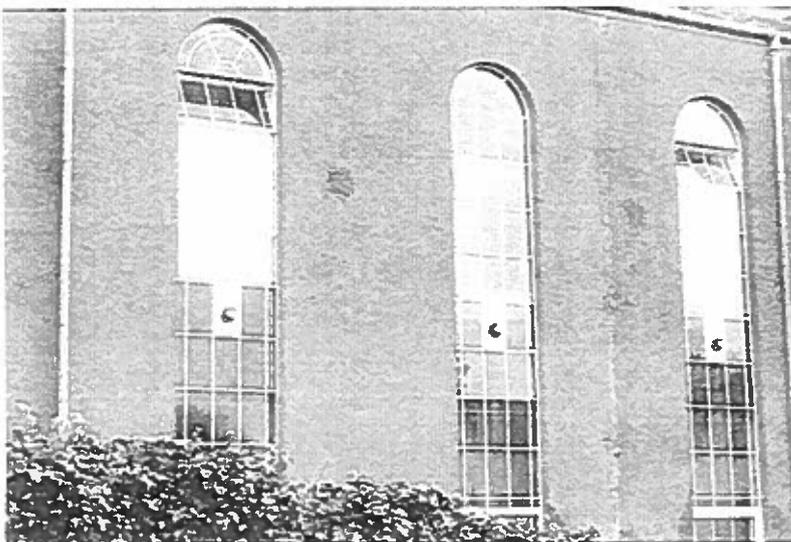
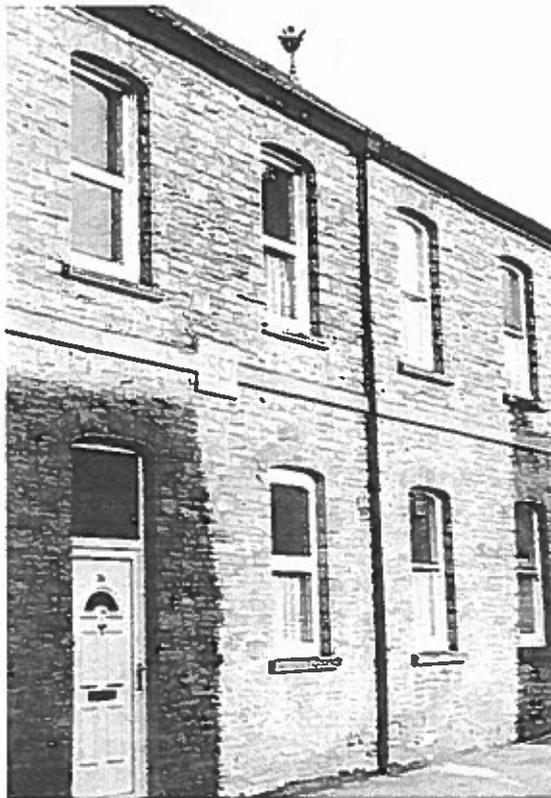
4.1 As has been demonstrated, Coleford is a relatively ancient settlement. Many buildings reflect in abundance the local vernacular style of walls of local red-brown

² Victoria County History – Gloucestershire Volume 5 p.117



STREET FRONTAGES – ST. JOHN'S STREET MARKET PLACE

Top Left and Right St. John's Street consists mainly of 19th century frontages of two to three storeys, mainly smooth rendered. A good proportion of sash windows survive, some with narrow glazing bars. Shop fronts are a mix of modern and traditional. Some could benefit from refurbishment. Note the street lamp and ground surfaces; part of an enhancement scheme recently completed. *Bottom Left and Right* Market Place is the most visually pleasing part of the town; the shopfront (*left*) retains some historic timber detail, probably dating from the late 19th century. The King's Head Hotel (*right*) provides an important visual stop at the eastern end of Market Place



NEWLAND STREET

Top Left and Top Right Newland Street is on a gently curving alignment and slight upward slope with the view into Market Place gradually widening. Some later infill replaces earlier buildings (left) and there are several traditional shopfronts (right)

Centre Left Part of a stone-built former school converted to dwellings. Note date-stone "1887" semi-elliptical arches and decorative finial.

Lower Right and Bottom Left The Baptist Church, built 1858 with a Romanesque style is a fine example of the period and grade II listed. The tall round-headed windows to both side elevations are a distinctive feature.



STREET FRONTAGES – NEWLAND STREET GLOUCESTER ROAD

Top Left A largely unspoiled frontage to a cottage in Newland Street which retains period detail.

Lower Left A listed frontage in Newland Street with early 19th century detail. The insertion of a recent glazed door in the arch strikes a discordant note.

Top Right Frontages in Newland Street leading into Market Place show largely unaltered 19th century detail at first and second floor level. Some historic detail to shop fronts survive, for example fascias with cornices and reeded pilasters.

Centre Right A further example of traditional shop fronts in Gloucester Road worthy of retention

Bottom Right A listed frontage in Newland Street with well-preserved 19th century shop front



sandstone, some of which have been painted over. The majority of buildings are of smooth or roughcast render with several examples of plain pebble-dash, probably covering stonework and originally dating from the Arts & Crafts movement of the late 19th/early 20th century. Roofs are either hipped or gabled with a variety of pitches, and in places complex arrangements to accommodate considerable plot depths. Stacks vary considerably, being either of coursed sandstone, brick or render, and are mainly at the roof apex with up to eight flues. A few tall stacks with one or two flues emerge from the rear eaves. Pots are mostly of cream or red terracotta, mainly the latter, although some stacks are now virtually denuded.

4.2 Buildings within in the conservation area can be grouped into the following broad categories:

- (i) The larger buildings, including those prominently placed in the street scene, or enclosed within a well-defined curtilage. These include the Baptist Church in Newland Street, the Independent Chapel at the junction of Bank Street and Staunton Road, and most prominently the surviving tower of the former Chapel of Ease, now known as the Clock Tower. Several significant old inns dating from the 17th and 18th century have largely maintained their inherent character and are indicative of the town's former importance as a staging post between Gloucester and Monmouth (see Map 1).
- (ii) The principal town centre street-frontage domestic and commercial buildings tend to reflect the town's prosperity at that time. These display most ornament, and include several present or former private houses, mainly of the 18th to 19th centuries. There is some especially good Georgian frontage detail of the late 18th and early 19th centuries; for example, classical doorway pediments or hoods, carved brackets to eaves, tri-partite sash windows and distinctively patterned fanlights. Most of these buildings form part of a continuous frontage and usually extend to three storeys with elegant proportions, especially to the first and second floor elevations which are generally well-preserved. The flat-arch window openings with broad voussoirs and prominent keystones are particular features of several late Georgian/early Victorian houses overlooking Market Place.
- (iii) In the third category are the plainer domestic dwellings mostly forming small groups or short terraces, or in the case of Gloucester Road and St. John's Street, largely continuous terraces. These are mainly two-storey and have been most prone to unsympathetic alterations, which in a number of cases have significantly altered their original appearance.

(ii) Townscape Character

4.3 The setting within a relatively narrow valley and with a street pattern converging upon Market Place have combined to give the town a very close-knit and enclosed street pattern. The varied use of local materials forms the essence of the historic built environment. Although there has been some loss of traditional timber windows and doors, many still remain. The eastern part of Newland Street in particular has retained much historic frontage detail, including 19th century/early 20th century shop-fronts and the divergence of building lines into Market Place with the Clock Tower as an emerging focal point adds further visual interest.

4.4 The conservation area can be sub-divided into separate areas that consist of special characteristics or a broadly coherent visual entity. These are outlined below and indicated on Map 1: [Existing Conservation Area & Listed Buildings].

1 High Street/Newland Street/Market Place

4.5 Both High Street and Newland Street, the former down a gentle slope, lead into Market Place with dominant views of the Clock Tower. This part of the town centre contains most of the finer domestic buildings, many of which now incorporate commercial uses. There have been some later 19th century additions, most notably the two bank buildings, either side of the Angel Hotel.

2 St. John's Street/Staunton Road

4.6 A narrowing of the street just north of Market Place, tends to create a separate visual entity to this part of the conservation area. Whilst St. John's Street is a well-enclosed urban space, at its northern end where several streets converge are many visual contrasts including dramatic curving walls indicating the route of the former tramway.

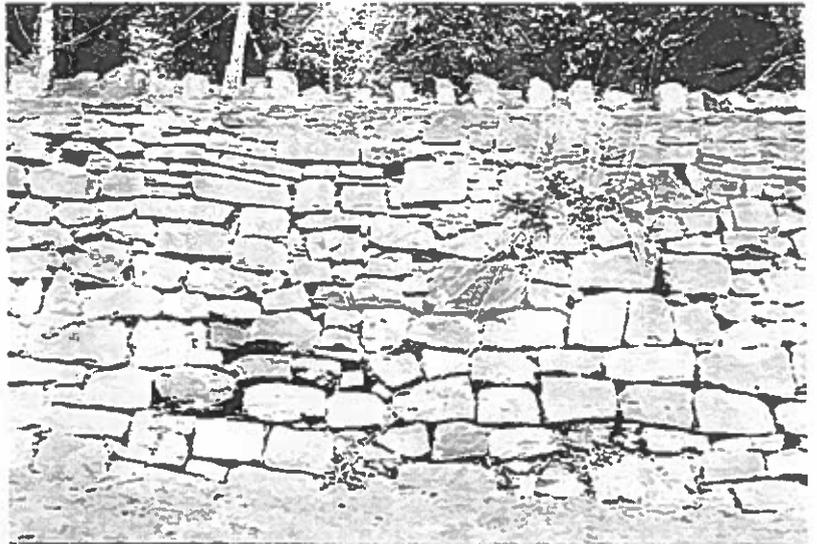
3 Gloucester Road

4.7 A somewhat separate entity of the conservation area almost entirely of two-storey domestic buildings and a secondary retail frontage with a wide variation of condition and detail.

5 USE OF MATERIALS

(i) Buildings

5.1 The most striking building material is exposed sandstone, squared-off and regularly coursed. This is widely used in many buildings, including some of the earlier ones, although many were subsequently lime-washed and have since been rendered or pebble-dashed. It is surprising that in a locality with such abundant supplies of timber there are no



STONEMASONRY DETAIL

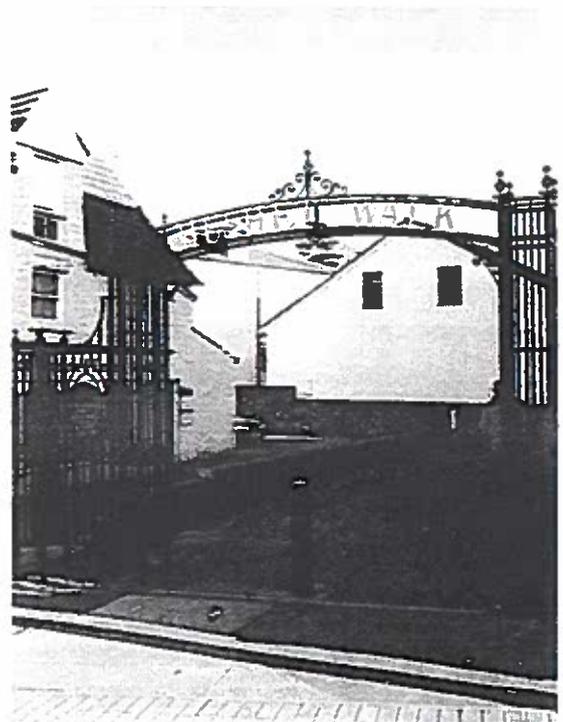
Top and Lower Left Examples of heavily corroded stone exacerbated by unsuitable mortar mixes. These are the softer varieties.

Top Right A good example of late 19th century stone masonry. This is an example of harder carboniferous stone possibly from the Bixhead quarries which still operate.

Centre Right A section of dry-stone retaining wall of local sandstone near the Baptist Church, Newland Street, marking the boundary of the former tram-road.

Bottom Right Nos. 6-7 High Street with regularly coursed and ashlar red sandstone, probably Devonian Old Red a durable stone found near the rim of the Forest.





SURFACES AND STREET FURNITURE

Much of Coleford town centre has been subject to environmental improvements which in recent years have been guided by the Coleford Partnership which has enabled both public and private funding initiatives to complete phases 1 and 2 with phase 3 anticipated to start in autumn 2001. .

Top Left and Top Right Recent ground surface improvements in Market Place and St. John's Street respectively. As well as brick paving natural stone paving slabs and setts have been used with historic features emphasised, including the 19th century stone and cast iron drinking trough (left) and route of the former tramroad of 1812 (right).

Lower Left Some street paving and forecourt areas could benefit from modest improvements, using natural materials where possible. The early 19th century houses were originally enclosed by railings. The loss of the original triple sash windows is also unfortunate.

Centre Right and Bottom Right Iron-work adds quality and texture to the historic built environment. The early 19th century railings at the lower end of High Street are especially fine. The recent example on the west side of Market Place commemorates the most celebrated of the early 19th century iron-founders.

obvious examples of timber-frame construction, although it is quite possible that some timber framing remains concealed by later re-fronting. There is also virtually no evidence of early brickwork, although there are some later 19th century examples.

5.2 There appear to be three main types of stone. There is a soft-textured brown to reddish-purple sandstone that has the texture of New Red Sandstone of the Permian series. As this type of stone is more widely found some distance north and east of Coleford, it is more likely to be inferior quality sandstone from the Carboniferous series. It is seen mainly in walls away from main frontages and is sometimes heavily eroded, especially where exposed to salts or the use of hard cement mortars, both of which have a heavily detrimental affect. The fine quality sandstone seen in the town centre frontages is probably derived from the much more durable Pennant sandstone of the Carboniferous Series. This is normally blue-grey to yellow-brown in colour and is still quarried commercially as a Forest of Dean building stone. Old Red Sandstones which form much of the rim of the Forest also yield good building stones of similar texture, normally red-brown in colour, but are not so much in evidence, although there is a good example of the use of this stone in High Street.

(ii) Boundaries

5.5 Because of the extent of continuous frontages there are few prominent stretches of boundary or retaining wall in the town centre. There are several examples towards the conservation area boundary, all of sandstone, for example adjoining the tram road, and in Boxbush Road. Stone walling also forms some plot boundaries to the rear of main frontages, and there is a good section between Bank House and the Community Centre, in this case outside the conservation area. In places such walling poses a potential conservation problem since, as the illustrated examples show, it can often be prone to deterioration, or in some cases to structural defects. There can also be the question of ownership responsibility. Nevertheless, such walling makes a valuable contribution to the character of the conservation area, as well as providing a sense of enclosure or privacy in some cases.

(iii) Ground Surfaces

5.6 What remains of earlier natural stone is mainly confined to a scattering of older, probably 19th century, street kerbs and gullies. An interesting sandstone drainage channel running between buildings into Newland Street from the slope to the south was noted. Later replacements have been of standard concrete or asphalt, including paving slabs or interlocking blocks. In recent years in Market Place and St. John's Street there have been extensive street improvement schemes to allow better pedestrian and loading facilities, improved gyratory traffic flows, and a lessening of the impact of stationary vehicles within Market Place in particular. Much of the new surfacing consists of brick pavoirs, but the most recent enhancement, as part of a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme completed in 2000, has reintroduced natural materials to good effect, including dressed sandstone paving slabs and granite setts.

5.7 To the rear of several of the main frontages, surface treatment leaves much to be desired. Most evident is the access off Bank Street, known as the Spout, which is little more than an unmade track. This serves the rear of the King's Head and several stone outbuildings which include the decayed walls of a long disused brewery. A rear service access at the north end of St. John's Street, following the route of the former tramway is also in a very poor condition. An area to the rear of the eastern side of Market Place is much used by pedestrians visiting the town centre from adjoining car parks but currently presents an untidy and uncoordinated appearance.

6 BUILDING FORM & ORNAMENT

6.1 Much of the character of Coleford derives from the largely continuous frontages along at least one side of all of the town's main streets. There are many different alignments, with slightly advanced or recessed variations in the building line, and a convergence into narrower "pinch points", for example between Newland Street and Market Place. At the southern end of St. John's Street, and where the separate frontages of Market Place converge at its eastern end, there is a pleasing sense of enclosure. Occasional small gaps between buildings, especially in Market Place and Newland Street, provide constantly changing glimpses. The several streets that converge on the centre have provided many opportunities for significant corner treatment and contrasting alignments. The generally gentle slopes, are much more accentuated between High Street into Newland Street, where building frontages drop by a full floor level, and between the opposing frontages facing across Market Square where the difference in level is also quite considerable.

6.2 Many town centre buildings from the earliest (17th century) to late 19th century exhibit some excellent period detail and ornament. Other striking buildings are mostly of stone or render and reflect modest rather than extravagant urban prosperity at the time they were built. The period most represented is between the 1790's to 1830's. There is what Thomas Sharp describes as "unity of dissimilar elements through common building materials and fenestration forms."³ Typical features are: broad eaves with carved brackets, rusticated quoins, pedimented doorways, hood moulded or panelled door and window surrounds, decorative fanlights and stepped entrances. Many are well-mannered, rather than excessively ornate.

6.3 The mixture of traditional elevational detail in no particular pattern and with no material being characteristic of a particular street, although render tends to predominate, provides a diversity which is itself a special characteristic of the town. The extensive space enclosed within Market Place provides an especially attractive urban setting in which buildings and their relationship to each other can be appreciated as a whole. The sense of enclosure is enlivened by vistas between street frontages that terminate in significant buildings or structures. Examples are, the King's Head Hotel facing Market Place, the

³ Town and Townscape by Thomas Sharp p.23

tower of the former Chapel from St. John's Street and the lower end of High Street, and the Nonconformist Chapel from Boxbush Road. There is also an emerging glimpse of the frontage of Bank House, now the Forestry Commission Regional Headquarters, from the lower part of Lord's Hill.

7 CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

7.1 Buildings in the conservation area are generally moderately to well maintained, although there are some examples of under-maintenance, especially to historic frontages at upper floor level where ground floor extensions have been brought forward from the original; building line making access more difficult.

7.2 Some localised deterioration in the condition of brickwork and stonework is noted throughout the conservation area. In some locations unsuitable mortar mixes have been applied which has had the affect of accelerating natural weathering. This should be avoided on some of the softer varieties of local sandstone. Several sections of masonry to buildings and boundary walls have considerably deteriorated and would benefit from specialist advice before any repairs are undertaken. A known source of relatively small quantities of one of the better quality local sandstones would be beneficial when carrying out repairs.

7.3 There is a good survival rate of timber windows, mainly sash or casement on main frontages and normally casement or fixed light in the relatively few dormers. Panelled doors and ornamented fanlights, the latter relatively plain, also feature strongly in the conservation area. Whilst the standard of upkeep throughout is generally good, retention of original frontage detail inevitably brings problems of maintenance. Repair or restoration of period joinery and other forms of detail can be costly and time consuming but normally repays the effort involved. Several window frames and sills in particular were noted as being in somewhat poor condition, but much original joinery remains distinctive and well crafted. There is an understandable wish to use convenient and maintenance free materials in place of traditional joinery, but these are invariably visually inferior, even in the case of unlisted buildings where group value is often of great importance in the street scene.

7.4 There appear to be some problems with maintenance of gutters, drainpipes and eaves, especially in the case of three-storey buildings in the town centre. In the case of listed buildings, cast iron gutters and downpipes should be fitted in any restoration work. Grants may be available from the District Council to assist in this.

7.5 It is the smaller buildings in the conservation area, where original vernacular style and detail may have become obscured, that the main problems of repair using inappropriate or sub-standard replacement materials are occurring. There is a need for information to be made widely available concerning what is or is not considered acceptable when building maintenance or restoration is being considered. This should include guidance about suitable repair methods, and a list of firms, preferably local, with

the ability and skills to ensure that as far as possible the use of traditional styles and materials in the repair of historic buildings is maintained, even the plainer ones.

8 KEY BUILDINGS

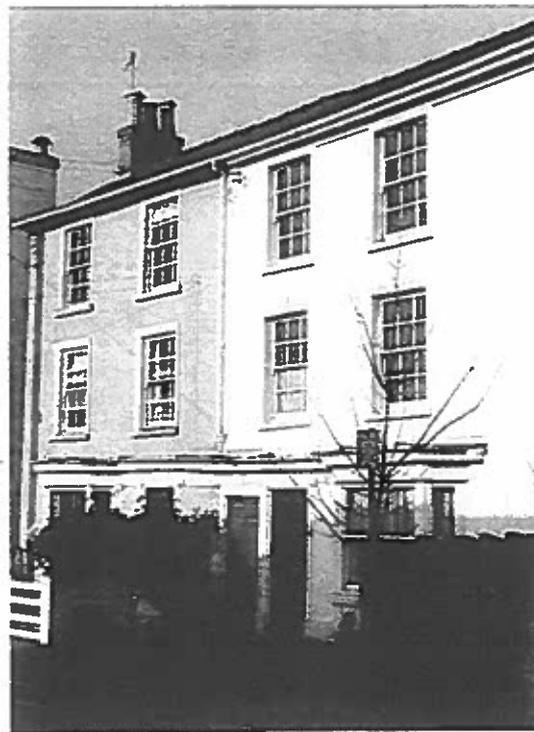
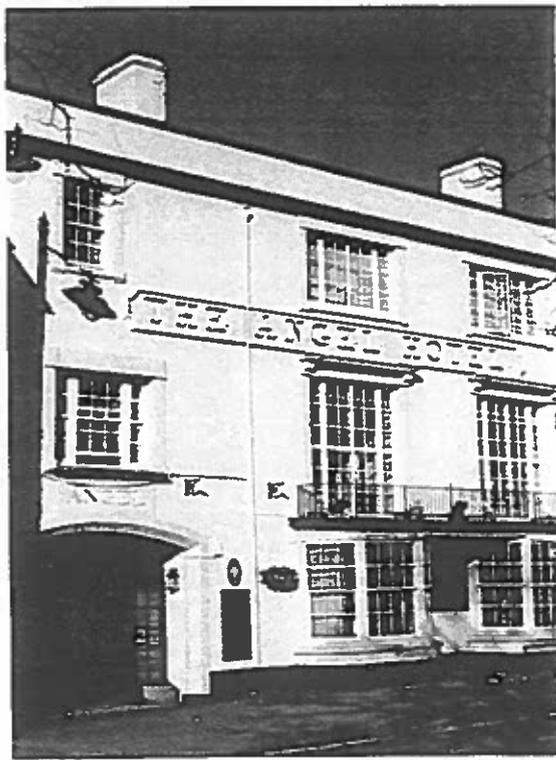
(i) Listed Buildings

8.1 The town centre is chiefly characterised by its predominantly late Georgian architecture. The foremost feature is the **Clock Tower (grade II)** of the former Chapel of Ease, built 1821. This historic site, known as The Tump, was the site of a chapel from at least 1489, which was enlarged in 1743. The 1821 building, demolished in 1882, was octagonal in plan and designed by Henry Poole, who was also architect of other local churches at Berry Hill, Bream and Parkend; the last-mentioned also octagonal and built the following year. The tower with its plain three-stage neo-Gothic openings, parapet battlements and corner pinnacles, is all that remains of the former building marked by a large blind arch on its eastern side.

8.2 The two other ecclesiastical buildings, both at the fringe of the conservation area, are locally dominant townscape features. The **Baptist Church (grade II)** in Newland Street, was built in 1858 by Charles G. Searle who was to build a larger one in Gloucester in 1872 which has since been demolished. It has a fine stone ashlar front with neo-Romanesque detail including pyramid-capped twin towers, and tall round-headed windows to the side elevations. The former **Independent Chapel (grade II)** facing Boxbush Road dates from 1842, is stucco-faced with projecting Doric porch and distinctive round-headed windows, enclosing two round-headed lights with circle above.

8.3 Most listed buildings within the conservation area form part of the main commercial frontages in the town centre. In Market Place the **Angel Hotel (grade II)** now consists of the original late 18th century or early 19th century three-storey coaching inn frontage with original incised lettering to the right with carriage entrance, and an early 19th century two-storey house to the left with attic dormers. Adjoining to the west is **no. 20 Market Place (grade II)**; a late 18th century house of coursed stone rubble, over-painted and with first-floor voussoirs and grooved keystones. Beyond that to complete the group and on a prominent corner site is **Lloyds TSB Bank (grade II)** of early 20th century date in a neo-Classical style of ashlar limestone and with Venetian windows. Beneath the moulded stone cornice is believed to be the original "Lloyds Bank Limited" name also in stone, although this is now obscured by an added fascia.

8.4 A further significant late Georgian group is at the junction of High Street and Market Place. **Nos. 6, 8 and 10 High Street (grade II)** are a row of three early 19th century three-storey houses, with parapet, in coursed stone rubble. The windows, under voussoirs with grooved keystones, are tri-partite sash, most retaining narrow glazing bars, but with an unfortunate later insertion to the ground floor of No. 6. Each house has a projecting round-headed door-case on bracketed consoles and relatively plain tracery to



LISTED BUILDINGS

- Top Left* Nos. 4-5 High Street; early 19th century houses .
Centre Left The Angel Hotel, Market Place. The present frontage is probably a remodelling of the early 19th century.
Top Right Former Independent Chapel with 1842 date-stone. Note the spear-headed iron railings
Centre Right A semi-detached pair with complete original frontage detail in Boxbush Road dating from the mid 19th century
Bottom Right Nos. 1-3 Newland Street, a large late 18th century town house, once the home of James Teague, a pioneering local industrialist



fanlights. Nos. 6 & 8 both have six-panel doors, probably original. Adjoining are **no 4 High Street** (grade II) of similar date and period detail, but with, rendered walls, no parapet, and ground-floor canted bays. The doors are more deeply recessed, and the windows plain sash, but with complete narrow glazing bars. Adjoining the corner, **no. 2 High Street** (grade II) is single-storey of coursed stone rubble, and with a forecourt enclosed by iron railings, probably early 19th century, with spear-headed finials and urn-capped posts. Around the corner, the steep drop into Market Place leads to ground floor-frontages a full storey below those in High Street such that **Nos. 1-3 Market Place** (grade II), are of broadly similar frontage detail but are two-storey with attic dormers under the same roof-line as No.2 High Street. The forward projecting commercial frontages at pavement level are later additions, probably of the early 20th century.

8.5 On the eastern side of **Market Place** is one further small group consisting of **nos. 33, 34 & 35** (grade II). These now consist of two ground-floor shops but were formerly three separate late 18th century houses. The former is painted coursed stone-rubble, the latter coursed and dressed, but unpainted. Each has original sash windows with narrow glazing bars, and stone lintels with voussoirs to both upper floors. The shop interior of no.33 has an elaborate wrought-iron screen behind the fascia, and the shop-front to nos. 34-35, although visually disproportionate to the upper floors, is a good mid-20th century example with original glazing including recessed openings. This was formerly the site of Trotter's until 1992, a shop which was originally started in 1830 by Thomas Trotter as a grocery and drapery business. The listing details mention that some interior joinery and fittings survive, and that no.35 is a good example of a town-house design.

8.6 The northern side of **Newland Street** contains a significant listed group of **nos. 6 -14** (grade II). This continuous frontage of three-storey late 18th to early 19th century dwellings includes two 19th century shop-fronts. That at no.10 is probably late 19th century with a fascia comprising modillion cornice under projecting flat cornice. The shop-front has four thin wood columns with decorated columns and a recessed doorway. The shop-front at no.6 with a reeded architrave matching the adjoining door-frame appears to be early 19th century. The two upper floors have sash windows with narrow glazing bars across eight bays. The entire group has recently been sensitively restored; the smooth rendering to nos.10-14, contrasting with rough-cast to nos. 6 -8 with splayed voussoirs above first and second floor windows emphasised. On the south side, **nos. 1-3 Newland Street** (grade II) is a prominent late 18th century town-house of five bays and three floors with stone ashlar frontage and central pedimented door, now divided into flats. This was formerly the home of James Teague (died 1818) one of the earliest of the local industrialists who built a coke-fired furnace at Whitehill c.1801 producing iron which supplied the tin-plate works by the River Wye.

8.7 Somewhat on the periphery of the town centre are **nos. 4-6 Boxbush Road** (grade II), a mid-19th century 3-storey stuccoed pair with moulded architraves, six-panelled doors and complete six-light sash windows to the first and second floors. In Bank Street, the former **Bank House** (grade II) is of similar date with five bays and central pediment

containing a second floor wheel window, first floor round-headed window, and projecting Regency style porch with timber lattice detail.

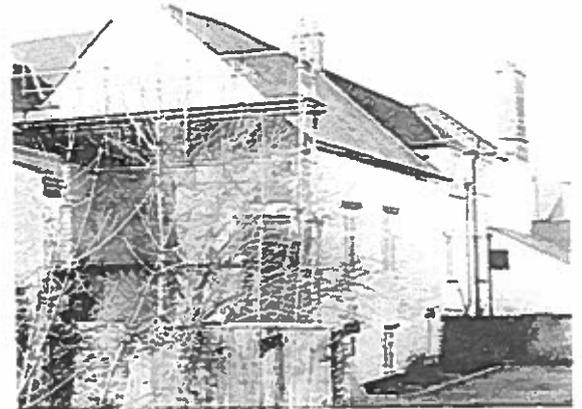
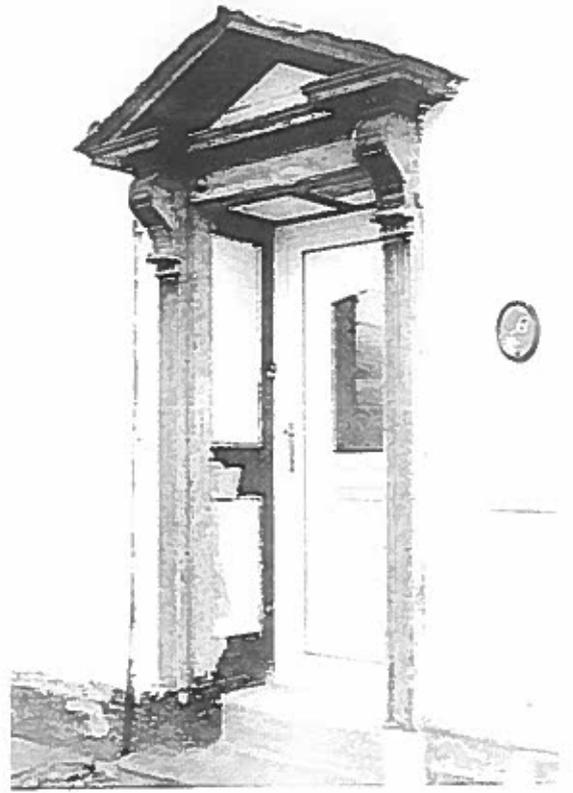
(ii) Other Important Buildings or Building Groups within the Conservation Area

8.8 Apart from the buildings included in the statutory list, the conservation area contains a number of other buildings, mainly in groups, that contribute much to the quality of the street scene. Much of the town centre underwent considerable rebuilding between about 1795 and 1830 and many frontages in Newland Street, Market Place and the lower part of High Street are of a unified design, with for example, fluted keystones, and sash windows with narrow glazing bars. It is likely that this re-fronting hides several buildings of earlier origin. The only surviving example appears to be part of the **Old White Hart Inn**. Although much of the frontage is late 19th century, a recessed three-storey wing facing St. John's Street is 17th century with stone mullioned windows and hood moulds above. This may have originally been a private house. Some good unlisted examples of the late 18th-early 19th century remodelling are **No. 4 Newland Street, nos. 10-17 and nos. 26-28 Market Place** are good examples. **Nos. 6-8 St. John's Street** continues the theme of three-storey frontages with voussoirs and keystones to upper floors, but appear somewhat later (mid 19th century).

8.9 Other buildings have later frontages, for example **no. 2 Newland Street, 38 Market Place** and **6 High Street** all have later 19th century canted bays extending to first or second floor level. The first floor bay at 38 Market Place is undoubtedly the surviving half of a former two-storey 19th century shopfront. Although many earlier shopfronts have been replaced, several good examples survive, for example, **nos. 26-28, 29a Market Place, no. 36 Market Place** (adjoining Mushet Walk); and **nos. 2-4 Newland Street**. There are also several on the west side of **St. John's Street** (for example no. 9-11 and 19), and several more in **Gloucester Road**, (for example nos. 7, 17 and 45).

8.10 In addition to the Angel Hotel (8.3) and Old White Hart Inn (8.8) are two other historic inns. **The King's Head** is a dominant feature closing the view at the eastern end of Market Place and probably dates from the early 19th century. **The Feathers** inn is an unusual layout being deeply recessed from the main street frontage and a rear elevation with projecting wings facing the town's main car park. This too could well have pre 18th century origins.

8.11 Elsewhere in the conservation area buildings tend to rather more modest architectural significance. Close to the junction of Staunton Road and Sparrow Hill are two cottage groups, vernacular in style with casement windows, probably of 17th or 18th century origin. **No 7 Staunton Road** is the best preserved with traditional plank and ledged entrance door, whilst **no. 6** has a rather fine late 18th century entrance with corniced timber pediment on console brackets, reeded pilasters and panelled reveals. Unfortunately the original door has been replaced. Map evidence suggests that **nos. 16-18 Newland Street** built of randomly coursed and dressed sandstone with an 1887 date-



OTHER BUILDINGS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

Away from the main street frontages, there is still much of visual interest that relates to the historic built environment

Top Left Bank House off Bank Street is grade II listed and dates from the 1780's, believed to be built for James Coster a descendent of John Coster another of the Forest's famous metallurgists who founded a copper works at Redbrook in 1698. In the 1860's the building served both as a bank and office for the Deputy Gaveller of the Forest

Upper Left and Top Right At the junction of Staunton Road and Sparrow Hill are two groups of cottages, probably dating from the 17th to 18th centuries. The c.1800 timber porch is unusually ornate for a cottage of otherwise modest proportions.

Lower Left and Lower Right The rear aspect of buildings can have considerable impact. These two views are of the rear of the eastern side of Market Place, show the complexity of roof profiles and elevational detail, some of which is of poor quality.

Bottom Left Another rear view is of buildings in St. John's Street seen from Bank Street. Here historic profiles and detail is largely preserved. The loss of chimney pots to the stack on the right, shows that historic detail can continue to be lost without adequate controls.



stone, is part of a former school, the original building to the west having been demolished. There is an ornate cast-iron finial at the apex of the gable end. At the junction of Boxbush Road nos.23 and 25 St.John's Street, both have an intriguing plan with side/rear stone-faced elevations following the tight curve of the former tramroad. Both buildings probably date from the early to mid 19th century.

(iii) Important Buildings or Building groups outside the Conservation Area

8.12 Close to the centre of Coleford, but not at present included within the conservation area are several buildings worthy of note, most of which have some visual impact upon it. Most prominent is the **Parish Church of St. John** (grade II*) built to replace the Chapel of Ease in Market Place. The first phase was begun in 1878 but was not completed until 1907. The architect, Frederick Sandham Waller, was the first of three generations of ecclesiastical architects who built or restored many churches in the diocese of Gloucester and Coleford is described as "one of his biggest and best."⁴ The firm sometimes associated with the Gambier-Parrys of Highnam and the later chancel and transepts were built by Sidney Gambier-Parry, son of Thomas, in 1885.

8.13 The Parish Church is in a part of the town, north-west of the centre, laid out as a well-spaced grid plan in 1858 by the British Land Society which developed other housing estates east of Coleford near Poolway and Milkwall. The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, surveyed around 1880 indicates that this was a series of separate plots, only a minority of which had been built upon by this date, mainly along the north side of Victoria Road and Boxbush Road. There are several good late 19th century examples, among them nos. 8-18 Boxbush Road where several frontages are of ashlar sandstone and nos. 19-21 Boxbush Road adjoining the church which are stone-faced and of three storeys. In Albert Road, there was formerly a Brass and Iron Foundry and a Colour Paintworks. A new cemetery was also established as part of this layout, with Anglican and Nonconformist chapels forming a pair. These were consecrated in 1868, but having become dilapidated, were demolished in 1976. This area, by virtue of its establishment and subsequent gradual development, is of considerable interest in terms of town planning history.

8.14 In 1926-28 still vacant sites on the south side of Victoria Road and Albert Road were developed as **Council Housing** by the then Coleford Urban District Council. This Council had a short life between 1919 and 1935 before being incorporated into the West Dean Rural District; their respective offices being at **Lawnstone House** at the top of High Street from 1927 onwards. In the 19th century this house was owned by William Roberts, a solicitor who until 1858 was former steward of the manor of St.Briavels and Newland which then passed to the Crown and since 1991 have been managed by the Forestry Commission.⁵ Some 80 metres further south, the former Tump House, now **Forest House Hotel** dates from the late 18th century and was acquired by David Mushet in 1810 (see 1.5)

⁴ Buildings of England – Gloucestershire The Vale and The Forest of Dean by David Verey p. 163

⁵ op.cit. Victoria County History p. 132

8.15 Set back from Newland Street, and adjoining the former tramroad are **Rock Castle** (grade II) and **Rock House**. The latter dates from the 1820's and was home to W.H.Fryer in 1867, and it is probable that he was responsible for the former, an interesting example of neo-Gothic fantasy which became briefly fashionable in the early-mid 19th century. Also close to the conservation area boundary and just east of Bank House is a group of stone buildings, somewhat dilapidated, comprising a **former brewery**. Coleford had a brewery in 1686⁶, although its location then is not known. The existing stone buildings appear to be early 19th century. The site is marked as a brewery on the First Edition Ordnance Survey (c.1880).

8.16 Two further important buildings in Coleford are situated some distance beyond the conservation area but are worthy of mention. **Poolway House** (grade II) in Gloucester Road is known to date from the 17th century, although its five bay, two storey frontage is probably early 18th century. Situated to the north of the conservation area, a significant building having close links with the town's 19th century development is **Coombs** (grade II) on high ground above the town off Berry Hill Road. This was built around 1860 in a French chateau style with central tower for Isaiah Trotter (1818-1906) another of Coleford's 19th century industrialists and a local benefactor. He had several interests in the locality including dealing in malt and corn, and significant involvement in the Oakwood Chemical Works and Coleford Gas and Coke Company. In 1945 the author Vera Brittain (1894-1970) was a temporary resident at Coombs during a period of convalescence.

9 LANDSCAPE & TREES

9.1 Soft landscape features are not a strong characteristic of the conservation area, and the few trees and tree groups are mainly peripheral, for example bordering the route of the former tram-road and in the longer garden plots, for example on the south side of Newland Street, although few are prominent. Historically, there is little evidence of what an earlier report has termed "sophisticated soft landscaping other than the grassed area and straggling trees and ivy around the Clock Tower sometime after 1882"⁷ which have long since been removed. When highway modifications were made in the late 1960's to Market Place, a Locust Tree (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) was planted, and is now mature. With the added circular iron seat at its base, it now forms an attractive feature.

9.2 A large expanse of asphalt pavement at the junction of Staunton Road and Sparrow Hill straddles the conservation area boundary and would benefit from some form of improvement using hard and/or soft landscaping as it is an important entry point to the town centre. Within the town centre, the lack of major green landscape elements as part of the overall street scene inevitably results from the largely continuous building line of historic frontages. To the rear of main street frontages, some trees, mostly sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) have become naturalised, for example at the rear of 17 Market Place, and 5-9 High Street. In any future enhancement scheme, their removal and replacement with a

⁶ *ibid.* p.130

⁷ Coleford Town Centre Draft Townscape Analysis p. 6

wider variety of species of young trees more suited to a compact urban setting is considered desirable.

9.3 Within the relatively narrow valley setting, some trees are prominent from within parts the conservation area even though they are situated beyond the boundary are prominent, for example at the eastern end of Newland Street and on the slopes of Bowen's Hill. Another important group is that to the rear of the Independent Chapel when viewed from Boxbush Road. These are mostly deciduous, probably naturalised, and provide good winter silhouettes. Elsewhere, there are some introduced conifers, for example Lawson's Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lasoniana*) providing privacy and shelter, but tending to be incongruous in a historic setting. None can be considered unduly intrusive at present, but may become so if their growth continues unchecked. In those few locations where rear former burgage plots, now mainly private rear gardens, are of sufficient length a few mature trees have been enabled to flourish, but very few form a dominant feature within any part of the conservation area. There are no significant views beyond the town from within the conservation area, apart from a glimpse of forest trees on the skyline beyond the built-up area. These are most clearly visible from the northeast corner of Market Place, and again from the upper part of Newland Street. There is also a skyline view of deciduous trees beyond buildings visible from High Street, notably within the vicinity of The Coombs, some distance to the north of the town centre.

10 DETRACTIONS & VULNERABILITY

10.1 There are several factors that are tending to cause a loss of character within the conservation area and need to be addressed.

- The threat to some buildings in the town centre through vacancy, and the early stages of dilapidation is of concern. This appears to be a quite recent trend that may be linked to changing patterns of commercial activity, associated with settlement hierarchies and changing shopping habits.
- The deteriorating condition of some boundary walls, and sandstone walls to buildings which require a properly coordinated programme of repair, and expert guidance in the use of suitable mortar mixes.
- Although much has already been achieved in improving pedestrian spaces and street furniture in parts of the town centre, there are still some instances of visual intrusion as a result of:
 - (i) poorly surfaced areas unrelieved by any attractive features. These are mainly situated on, or just beyond, the periphery of the conservation area.
 - (ii) commercial frontages, including forward projecting flat-roof extensions, that are unsympathetic to the building as a whole.

- (iii) several instances of prominently positioned road signs
- (iv) unsuitably proportioned doors and windows in non-traditional materials
- (v) some areas of utilitarian street-lighting that bears no relationship to the historic built environment.
- (vi) the rear of some of the main historic frontages that have become unsightly or neglected
- (vi) other marginal sites to the rear of or detached from the main historic frontages where existing and prospective development (including minor works) need to be better coordinated.

11 KEY LOCAL FACTORS & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

11.1 Proposals for new development, restoration of existing buildings or features, and enhancement projects, should include consideration of the following principles.

(i) Buildings in the Conservation Area

11.2 Many buildings in the conservation area have already lost their original features. Others still retain them but as yet have little if any statutory protection. There are often few incentives to use or reintroduce traditional methods because of a lack of local availability both of suitable materials and skills. The following are guidelines that should be followed when considering alterations, repair or restoration to historic buildings within the conservation area.

- Encourage re-pointing of stonework using suitable soft mortar mixes, ideally with a lime base. This is particularly the case for local sandstones where hard cement mortars rapidly accelerate weathering.
- When repairing or renewing roof coverings preferably use clay tiles (where records indicate tiling was originally used) or natural slate. Traditional materials should always be used in the case of listed buildings, for which grant aid may be available to offset additional costs. The use of concrete tiles and undisguised artificial slate substitutes should be avoided in the conservation area.
- Where existing stone walls need restoring, a soft lime-based mortar should be used for re-pointing, and when replacing heavily decayed stone this should match existing in colour and texture.

- Where existing features are concerned, (such as original doors, windows, porches, shop-fronts, boundary walls, gateways etc.), all forms of repair or replacement should attempt to match like-for-like. This particularly applies to traditional timber casement or double-hung sash windows, including glazing bars. Similarly, timber doors especially when being replaced, should maintain and respect the local vernacular or “polite” tradition of panelled doors, moulded door-cases, fanlights etc. The same principles should apply to period porches and reveals, and the extent to which doors and windows are recessed within openings.

(ii) Townscape

11.3 Variations in roof height, type and pitch together with roof line parapets provide great contrast and visual interest – what Thomas Sharp has called “unity and rhythm in variety”⁸. The almost complete absence of later additions of dormers and roof-lights is a distinguishing feature of buildings fronting Market Place. Because of the ability in such a large and enclosed urban space to view individual buildings or building groups as an entity, any alterations to roof height, pitch and insertion of dormers would require very careful treatment. Other important townscape considerations are as follows:

- In any proposals for new development or redevelopment involving existing buildings or structures, it should be borne in mind that stricter safeguards against any form of demolition in conservation areas have recently been introduced.
- Existing features of quality that typify the historic built environment should be retained. Any proposals for additional development should echo existing in terms of scale, height, building lines and in relation to street frontages. An exception might be any proposals for the removal of added forward-projecting extensions of shopfronts where these have obscured original historic detail at ground-floor level
- Stone boundary and retaining walls, and existing banks should be safeguarded, especially where these identify the historic street pattern, tramway route and any surviving burgage plot boundaries.
- Ensure retention of historic street-furniture. As part of a continuing programme of enhancement, consider reintroduction of cast iron street name plates to match existing, and continue replacement of street lighting appropriate to the historic setting (e.g. High Street)
- As the opportunity arises reduce the impact of road traffic signs which tend to be intrusive, especially in Market Place and Bank Street.
- Where possible reduce the impact of unsympathetic and prominent shop-front fascia designs.

⁸ op.cit. Town and Townscape p.96

(iii) Features

11.4 There are elements of the historic built environment that have tended to be overlooked or are not considered to be of sufficient merit

- Encourage the conservation of existing historic railings and associated ironwork. .
- Ensure necessary protection of all natural stone kerbs and gulleys, and continue to encourage natural stone paving or cobbled areas to be reintroduced, in both public and private ownership. There should be an ongoing programme of enhancement where surfaces are badly decayed, especially rear accesses and locations near the periphery of the conservation area that appear neglected.
- Seek to retain or reinstate all existing period windows, doors, and cast iron rainwater goods.
- Consider introduction of an Article 4(2) Direction to effect control over installation of UPVC windows and doors, inappropriate roof materials, external cladding, and use of exposed blockwork, Such a measure would also include boundary features such as stone walls, including existing openings.

11.5 It is advised that if time and resources allow an inventory of such historic detail is prepared and monitored.

(iv) Historic Setting and Landscape

- Protect the integrity of the historic town plan which has survived largely unaltered since medieval times
- Before any demolition or redevelopment takes place ensure that consideration is given to the survival of ancient boundaries, especially those forming the remains of burgage plots.

11.7 Existing mature trees, including those beyond the conservation area boundary, referred to in section 9.3 have an important bearing upon the setting of the conservation area, and should be especially safeguarded. Although many are of considerable age, most appear to be healthy, although some may be becoming over-mature and should have periodic health checks. There has been some planting of introduced conifers, such as Lawson's Cypress, which can strike a discordant note in a historic setting. The virtual absence of trees within the main streets of the town centre, appears to have historic precedent, and is a characteristic of many small market towns with close-knit street frontages. No additional planting should necessarily be encouraged.



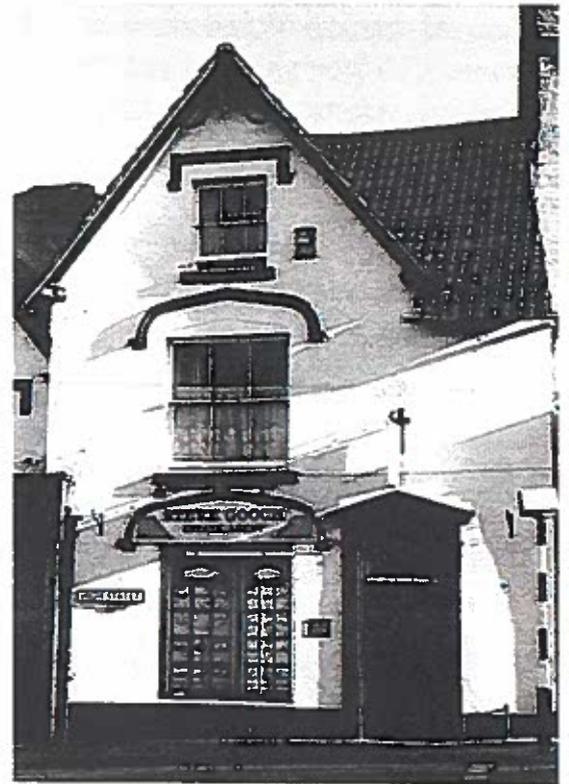
SHOP FRONTS I

There are some good examples of mainly late 19th to mid 20th century shop fronts in Coleford town centre. Several of these (*top and centre left*) are either vacant or in alternative use.

Top Left and Bottom Right St. John's Street

Centre Left Market Place at the junction with Bank Street

Bottom Left and Top Right
Gloucester Road



SHOP FRONTS II

Elsewhere, there are a range of different type and age of shop front. None of the buildings shown are listed

Top Right A succession of frontages on the east side of Market Place.

Top Left A closer view of two shop fronts shown above. These mid 20th century examples have been brought forward from the original building line. Both retain some earlier features, including recessed doorways and that on the right has canvas roll blind fixtures.

Lower Left The later ground floor shop front also brought forward, replaces a "double-decker" frontage of a type that flourished in the late 19th-early 20th century. The first floor elevation with decorative timber and glazing detail is worthy of preservation.

Centre Right and Bottom Right Examples of largely unspoiled commercial frontages. The added stone ashlar frontage may previously have been a bank. Although incongruous to the frontage behind it adds variety to the street scene.

(v) Re-introduction of Traditional Materials and Features

11.8 There is a growing awareness of the need to reintroduce traditional building materials, for example, a recent English Heritage initiative to promote the use of natural roofing materials. Where appropriate, steps should be taken to ensure adequate supplies of stone or slate, preferably from their original historic sources, and to encourage builders to develop skills in their use. The following guidelines are intended to encourage best conservation practice whenever possible.

- Encouragement should be given to the reinstatement of historic features that have been lost. This is particularly the case where later changes, for example redundant uses or ephemeral materials, have caused harm to the overall character and appearance of the building. In such cases, future development proposals and subsequent building work should provide an opportunity for such faults to be partially or fully rectified. This is particularly the case with some doors, windows, and ground floor commercial frontages, including shop-fronts, as well as some instances where unsuitable re-pointing, rendering or cladding has been used.
- It is recommended that owners and occupiers of historic buildings within the conservation area should be encouraged to approach the District Council for advice on all such matters even where formal permission is not required. It is understood that it is the intention of the District Council to publish illustrated guidance on several aspects of design and conservation to assist such informal consultation when changes to existing buildings or construction of new buildings or extensions are under consideration.

(vi) Possible Alterations to the Conservation Area Boundary

11.9 Two additions to the existing conservation area are suggested for further consideration, and are as follows:

- 1) Land to the rear of Gloucester Road where the existing conservation area boundary crosses a group of stone outbuildings, some badly decayed. These are part of a former brewery site. This part of the town centre periphery could benefit from conservation area designation and help to enable a programme of revitalisation and restoration of badly decayed historic buildings and spaces.
- 2) In the late 1850's a spacious layout in a grid plan of streets was laid out consisting of Boxbush Road, Victoria Road and Albert Road, linked to the town centre by Bowen's Hill Road to the west and to Staunton Road to the east. This early example of enlightened town planning established by the British Land Association is worthy of some conservation status in purely historic terms. However, the nature of plot disposal led to a very gradual development over several decades, much of which would not normally be considered worthy of conservation area designation. Boxbush Road is the most complete representation of the earlier period of development, prior to 1900. The Parish Church of

St. John completed in 1880, is the dominant feature at the southwest end and the Independent Chapel of 1842 is an important visual stop at the opposite end. There are several short terraces of ashlar stone or render, some of quite significant proportions stepped down the slope. As such, parts of the southern and much of the northern side of this street is a relatively unspoiled and pleasing example of late 19th century townscape and considered worthy of designation.

12 SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS

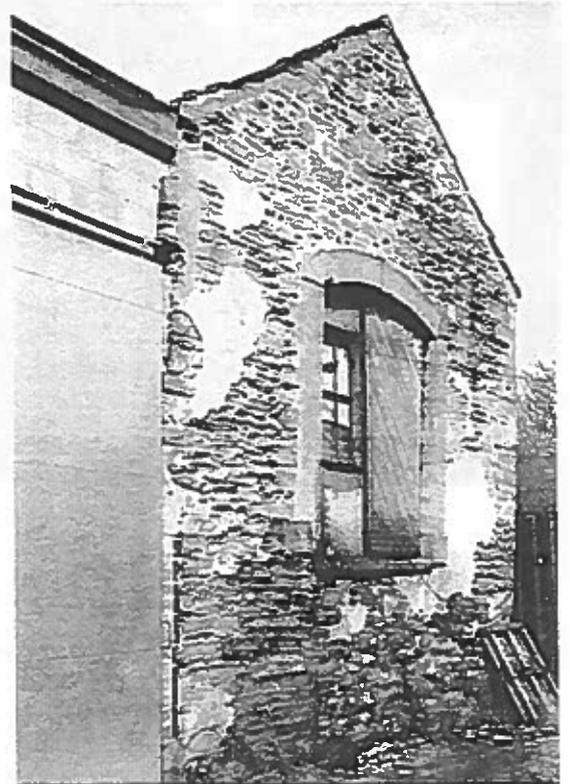
12.1 Coleford has preserved the overall character of its mainly late 17th to mid 19th century historic heart to a considerable extent whilst absorbing several subsequent surges in population growth. From medieval origins to the early decades of the 20th century the town largely maintained its visual integrity, with many examples of competent craftsmanship in traditional materials.

12.2 During the latter half of the 20th century parts of the town centre have been damaged by pressures resulting from social changes, increased traffic flows, and in the increasingly fluctuating patterns of commerce. This has led to alternative land uses and there was a considerable amount of demolition of buildings that would now be considered part of the historic built environment. All such demolition, including the Market Hall, much of which was earmarked for redevelopment, had already taken place prior to conservation area designation in 1980. The most obvious examples are at the southern end of High Street, and the lower part of Lord's Hill.

12.3 Gloucester Road, although retaining much of its historic building line, has also suffered from poor quality alterations, resulting in much unsatisfactory elevational detail which fails to have regard to the town's inherent architectural character. These alterations have compromised the intimate relationship between individual building frontage and the overall street scene.

12.3 A considerable number of historic elevations, especially at ground floor level, have been largely disregarded by commercial occupiers, with some frontages having scant regard for the building as a whole. There is also the creeping intrusion of double-glazing and UPVC windows and doors, much of which fails to reflect the generally better proportioned and integrated use of the original timber openings that preceded them.

12.4 Several historic buildings in the town centre are suffering as a result of under Maintenance. Some outbuildings to the rear of the main street frontages also appear to be falling into disuse or dilapidation. There are therefore many ongoing challenges to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area but encouraging signs are emerging that more appropriate measures are being taken to conserve what remains and restore and enhance using best conservation practice.



OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATION AREA I

Coleford has several localities beyond the present conservation area boundary that are of architectural and historic interest and may be considered for eventual inclusion.

Top Left Boxbush Road, leading towards Staunton Road. The lower part of this road and the Chapel which forms an important visual stop are within the conservation area, but the nearer buildings, the result of a planned layout dating from 1858, also form 19th century townscape of good quality.

Centre and Bottom Left Boxbush Road; late 19th century stone-built houses with well-preserved original detail.

Top Right Boxbush Road; the Parish Church, built between c.1880 and 1905 is a dominant feature at the western end of the street. The three-storey stone-fronted houses beyond help to maintain the scale
Bottom Right (see also next photograph) A group of stone-built outbuildings at the Spout – to the north of Gloucester Road – are recorded as first a tannery, then as a brewery from c.1833 to c.1900. Several of the buildings recorded on the 1880 O.S. map are still standing. Although there is evident structural deterioration, restoration is considered feasible.



OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATION AREA II

A further selection of buildings and structures which although beyond the conservation area boundary, are sufficiently close to have an impact upon it.

Top Left The Spout, an unmade road off Bank Street provides access to the former brewery, currently disused as well as several other partly stone-built outbuildings, currently in light industrial or service use. Bringing this enclave into the conservation should increase its potential for regeneration within historic guidelines.

Top Right St. John's Church from the junction of Newland Street and Bowen's Hill. Several late 19th century houses on Bowen's Hill and Boxbush Road virtually surround it.

Lower Left Rock Castle (left) and Rock House (right), the former grade II listed, are situated just west of the present conservation area boundary and could be considered suitable for inclusion within a revised boundary. The mature trees forming a backdrop are the most prominent group close to the town centre.

Lower Right 19th century milestone at the junction of Gloucester Street and Lord's Hill

13 IMPORTANT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

13.1 Consideration should be given to the extensions of the existing conservation area indicated on Map 8.

13.2 Unlisted buildings identified as other key buildings or groups of buildings making a significant contribution to the townscape, are shown on Map 4. These should be considered for inclusion within an Article 4 (2) direction to control inappropriate changes to the principal elevation(s).

13.3 This appraisal has acknowledged the success of the Coleford Town Partnership in achieving environmental improvements that have helped to raise the quality of townscape and enabled increased economic vitality within the conservation area. The importance of such partnership agreements acting in accordance with official published guidance, for example, *Quality in Town and Country* (published July 1994) and *Power of Place* (published December 2000) should continue to be recognised.

13.4 Subject to Local Plan Policies and guidance, and the advice given in the Forest of Dean Residential Design Guide, due consideration should be taken of the key local factors and guiding principles (section 11) when considering development proposals within Coleford conservation area.



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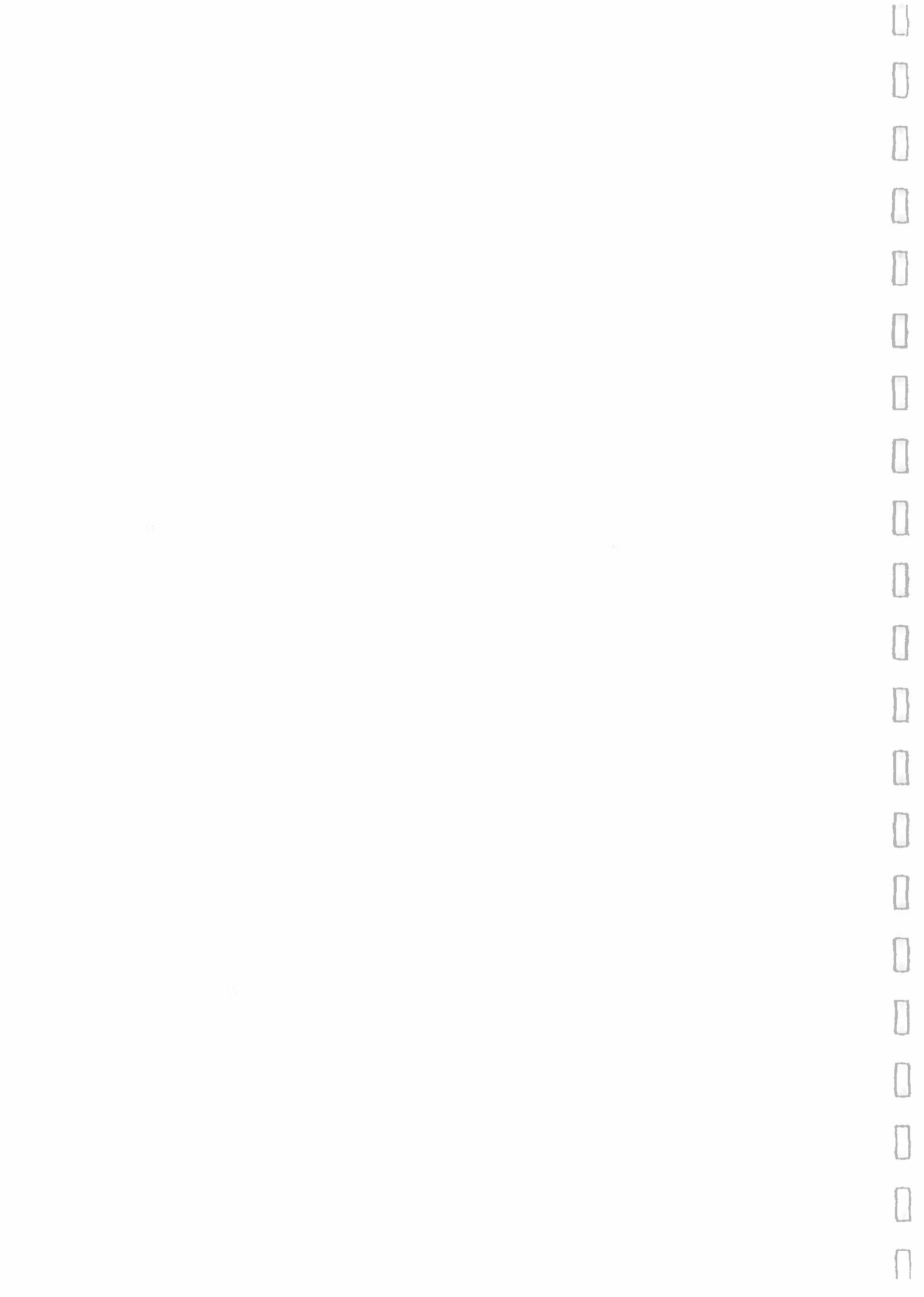
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Quality in Town and Country
Crown Copyright July 1994

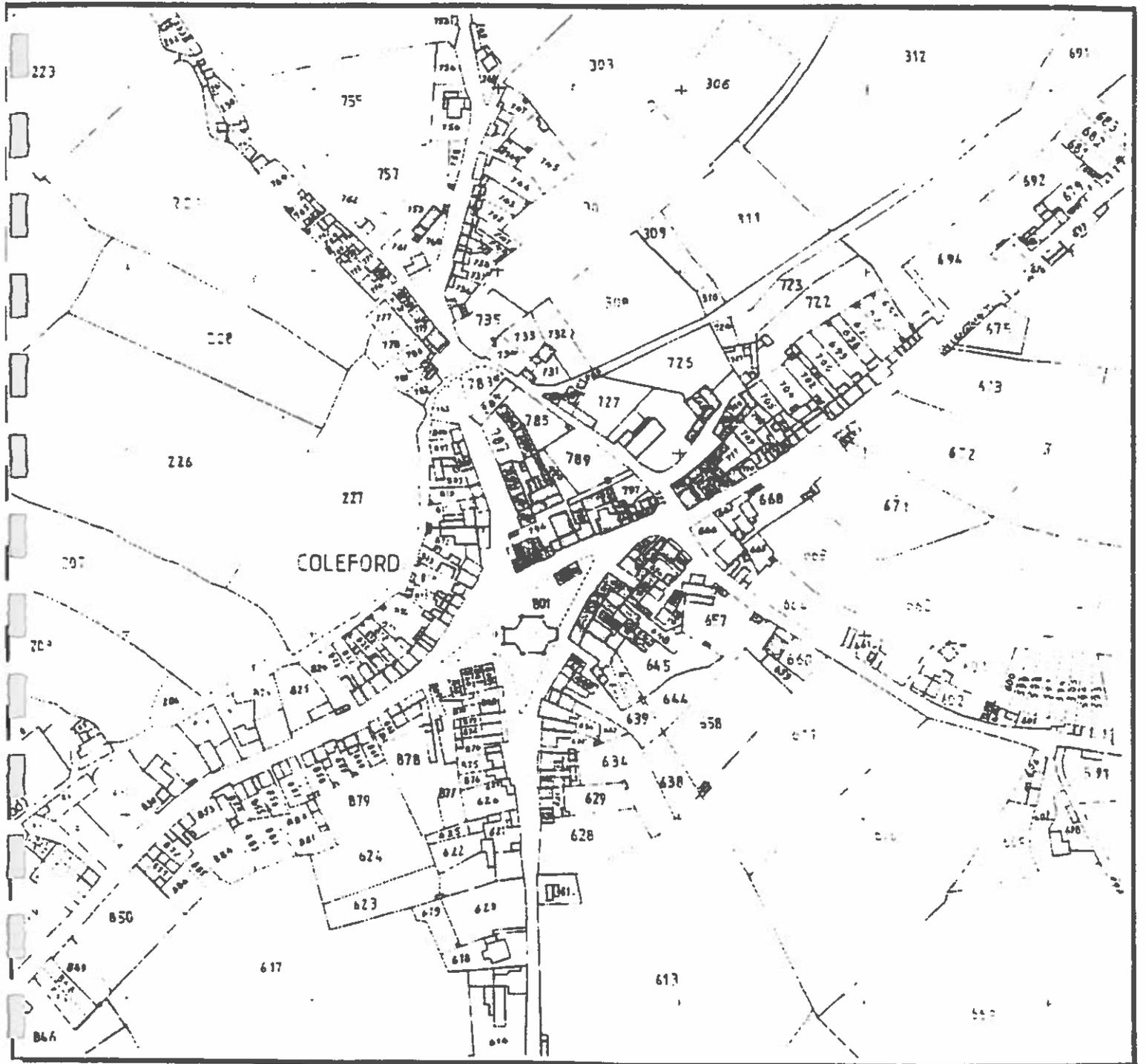
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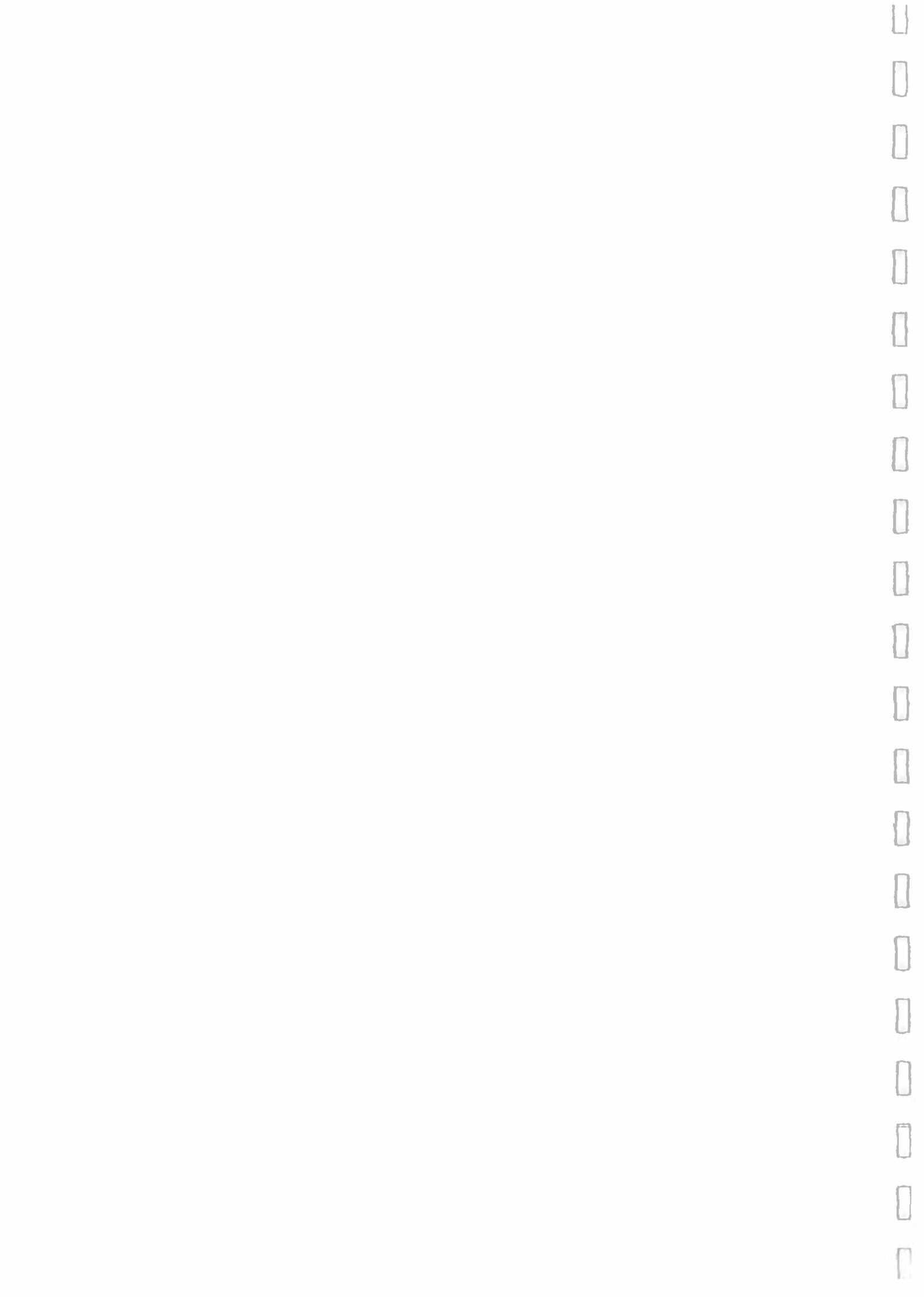
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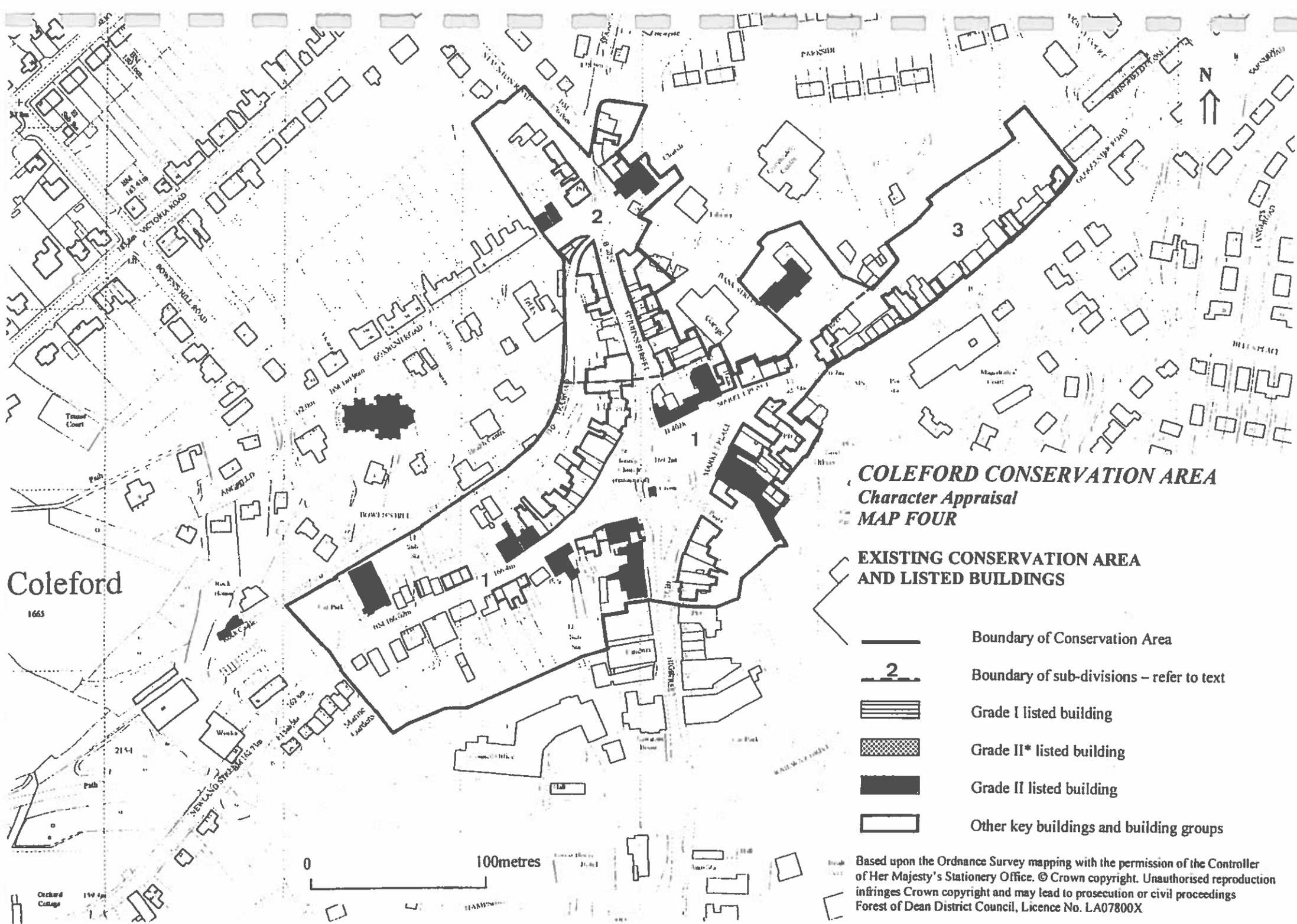




MAP TWO Tithe Map of Coleford Town Centre 1840







COLEFORD CONSERVATION AREA
Character Appraisal
MAP FOUR

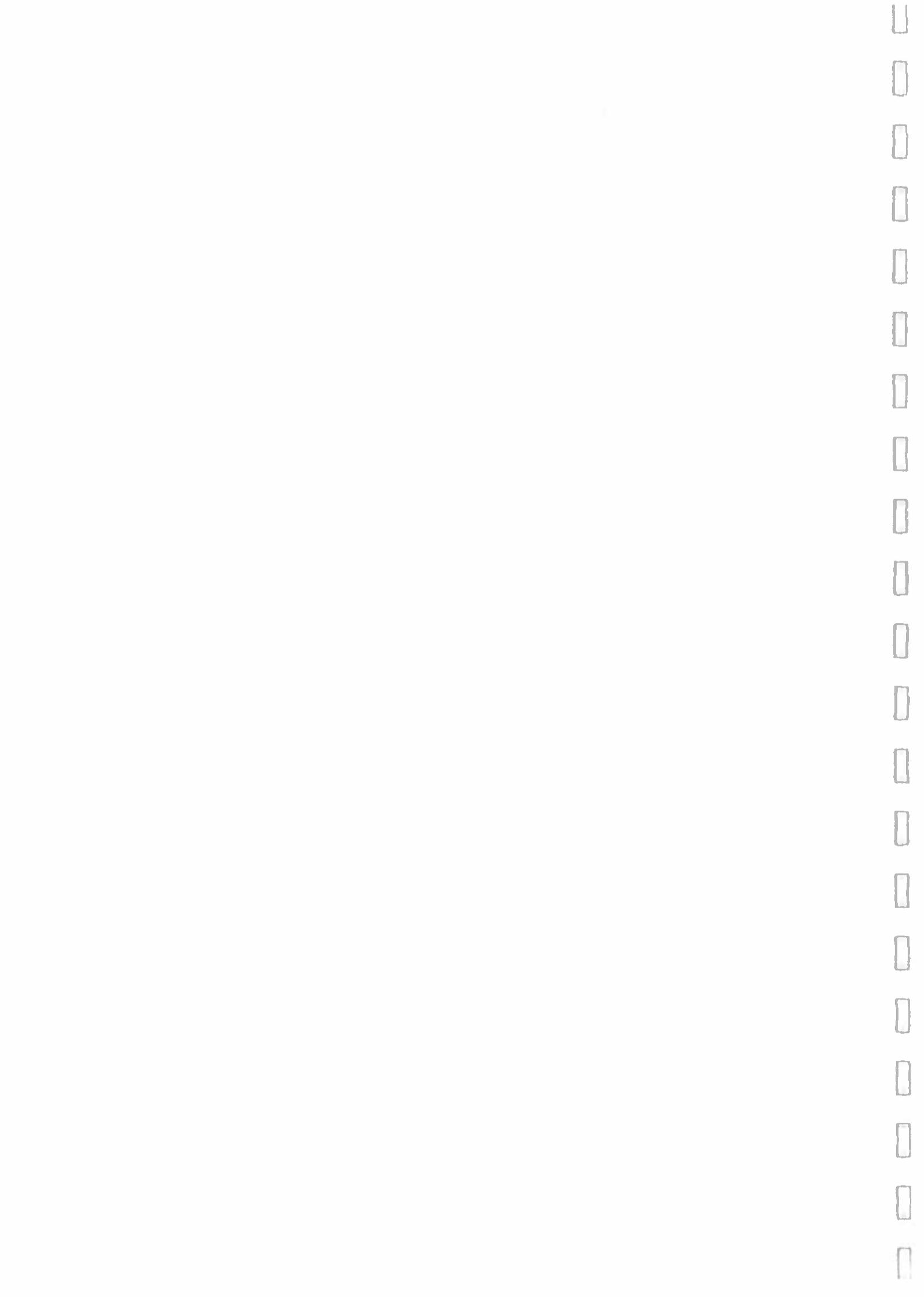
EXISTING CONSERVATION AREA AND LISTED BUILDINGS

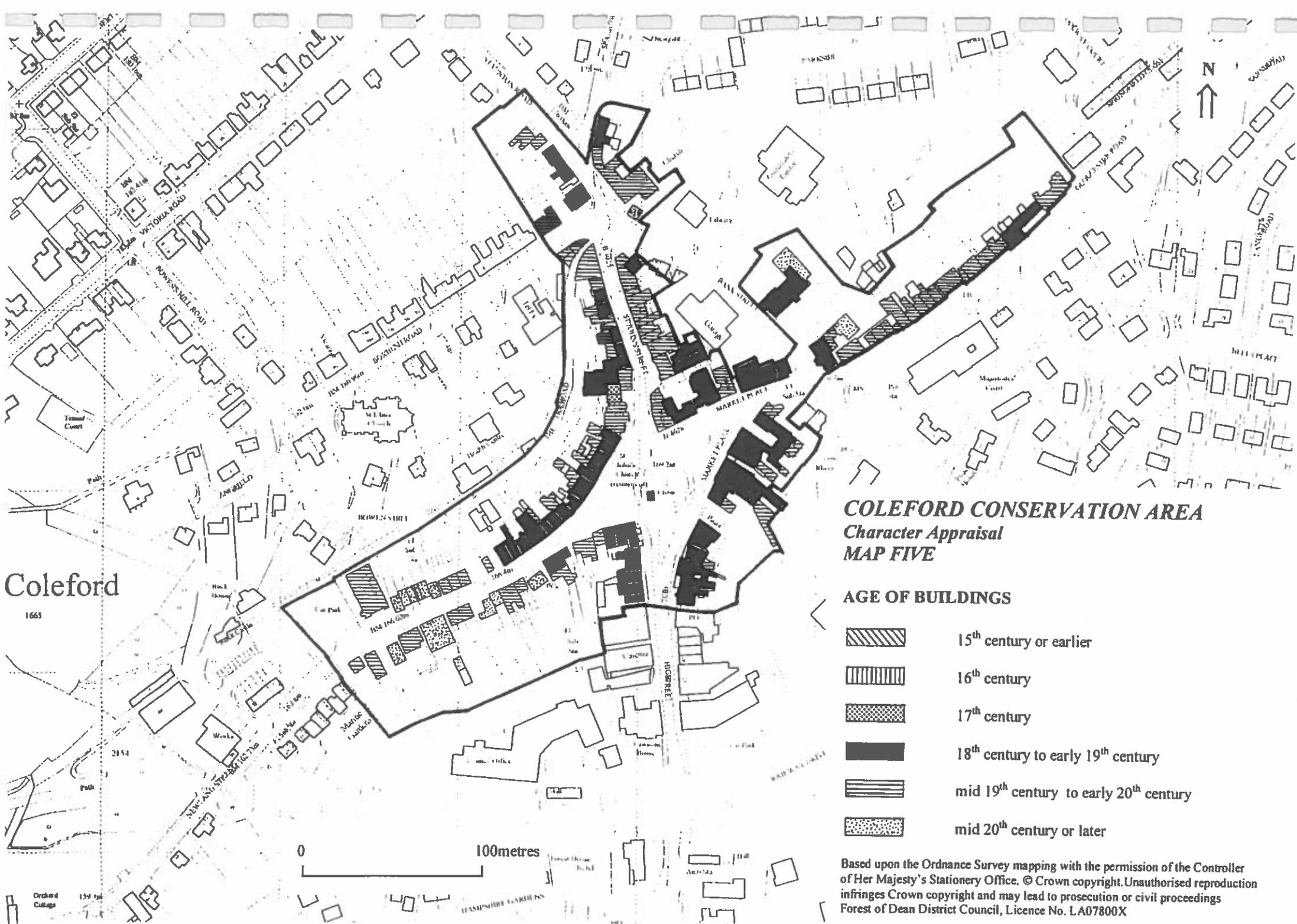
-  Boundary of Conservation Area
-  Boundary of sub-divisions – refer to text
-  Grade I listed building
-  Grade II* listed building
-  Grade II listed building
-  Other key buildings and building groups

0 100metres

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Coleford
1665





COLEFORD CONSERVATION AREA
Character Appraisal
MAP FIVE

AGE OF BUILDINGS

-  15th century or earlier
-  16th century
-  17th century
-  18th century to early 19th century
-  mid 19th century to early 20th century
-  mid 20th century or later

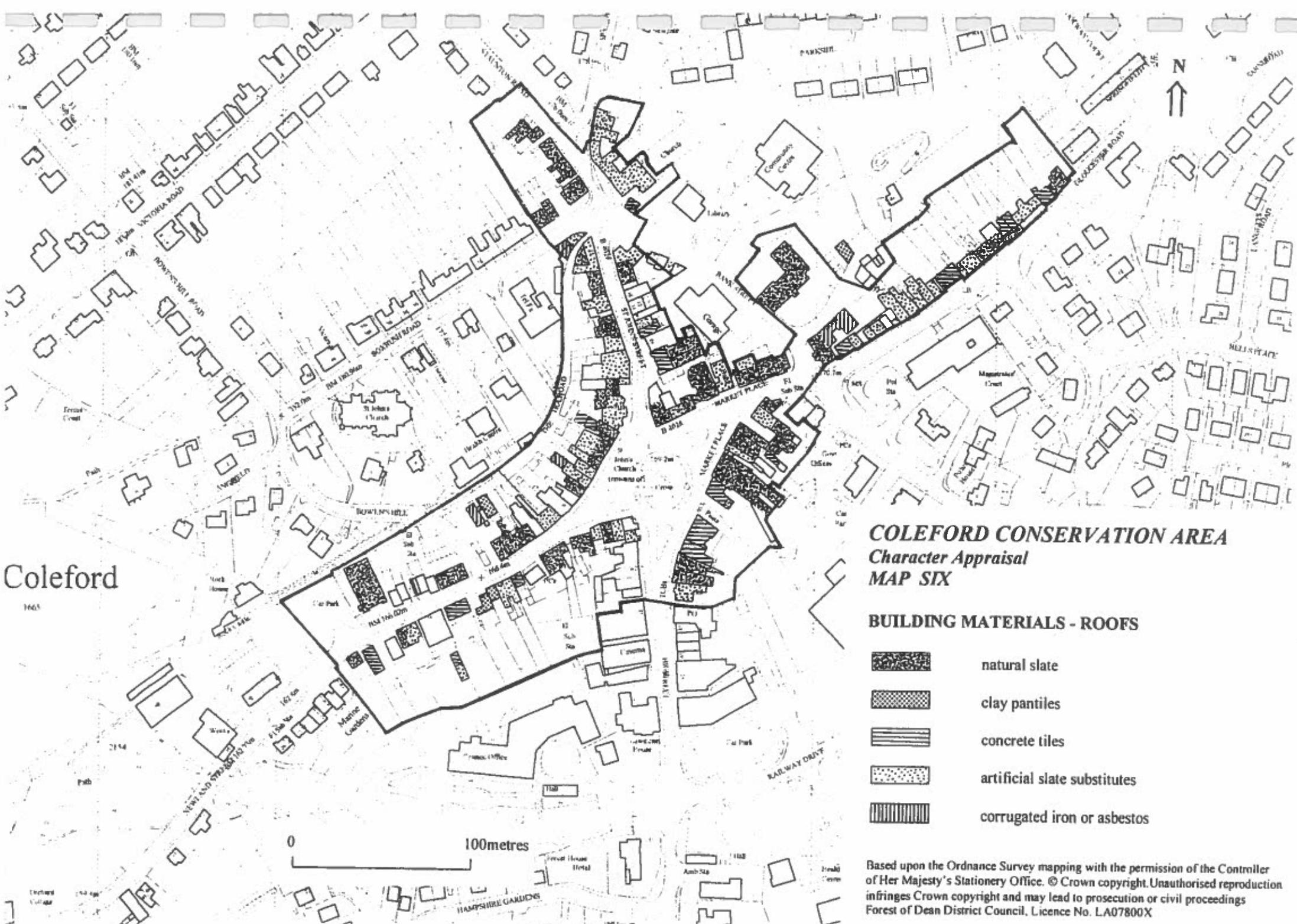
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Coleford
 1663

0 100metres

Orchard College 199





Coleford

1663

COLEFORD CONSERVATION AREA
Character Appraisal
MAP SIX

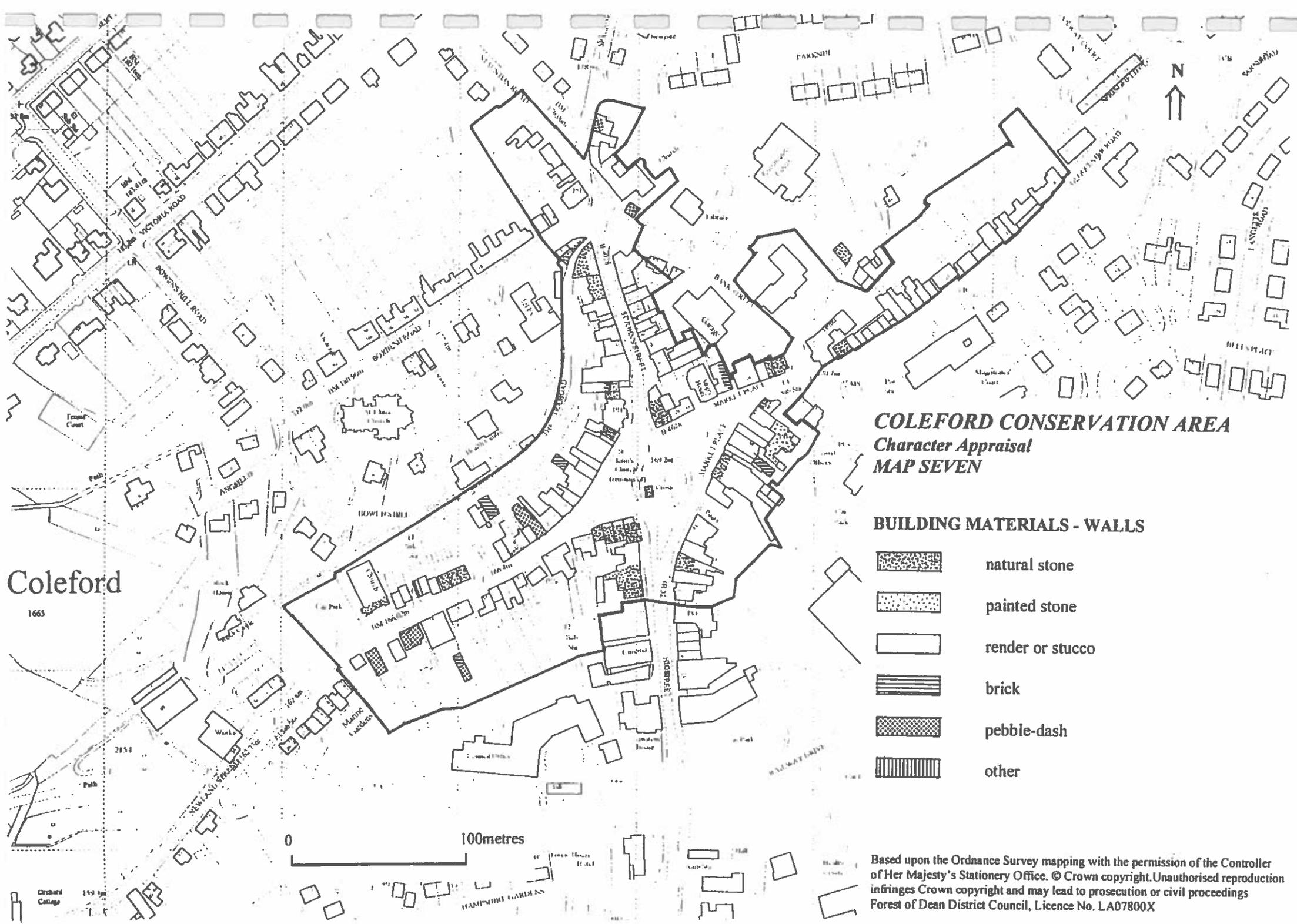
BUILDING MATERIALS - ROOFS

-  natural slate
-  clay pantiles
-  concrete tiles
-  artificial slate substitutes
-  corrugated iron or asbestos

0 100metres

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COLEFORD CONSERVATION AREA
Character Appraisal
MAP SEVEN

BUILDING MATERIALS - WALLS

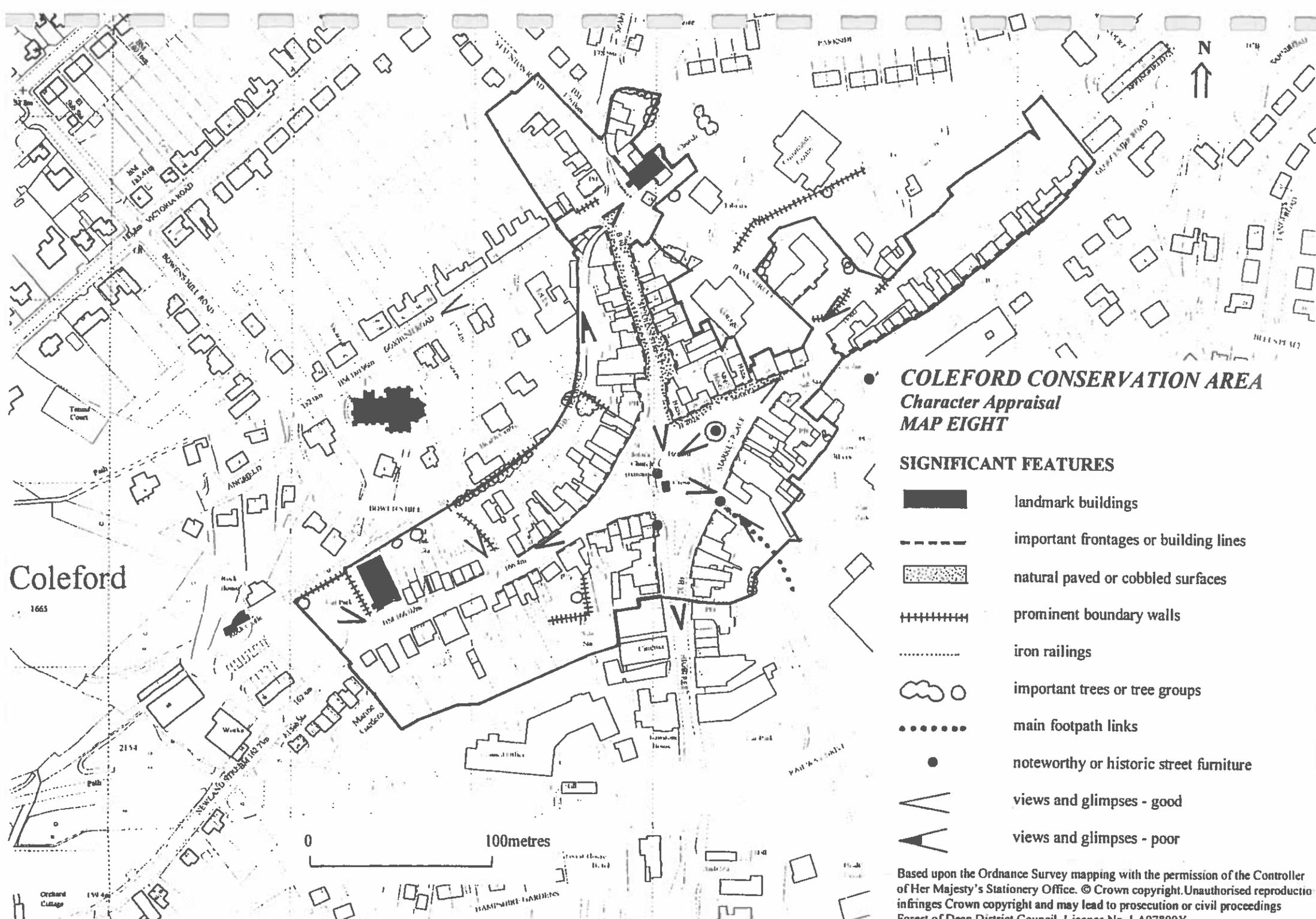
-  natural stone
-  painted stone
-  render or stucco
-  brick
-  pebble-dash
-  other

0 100metres

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Coleford
1665





COLEFORD CONSERVATION AREA
Character Appraisal
MAP EIGHT

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

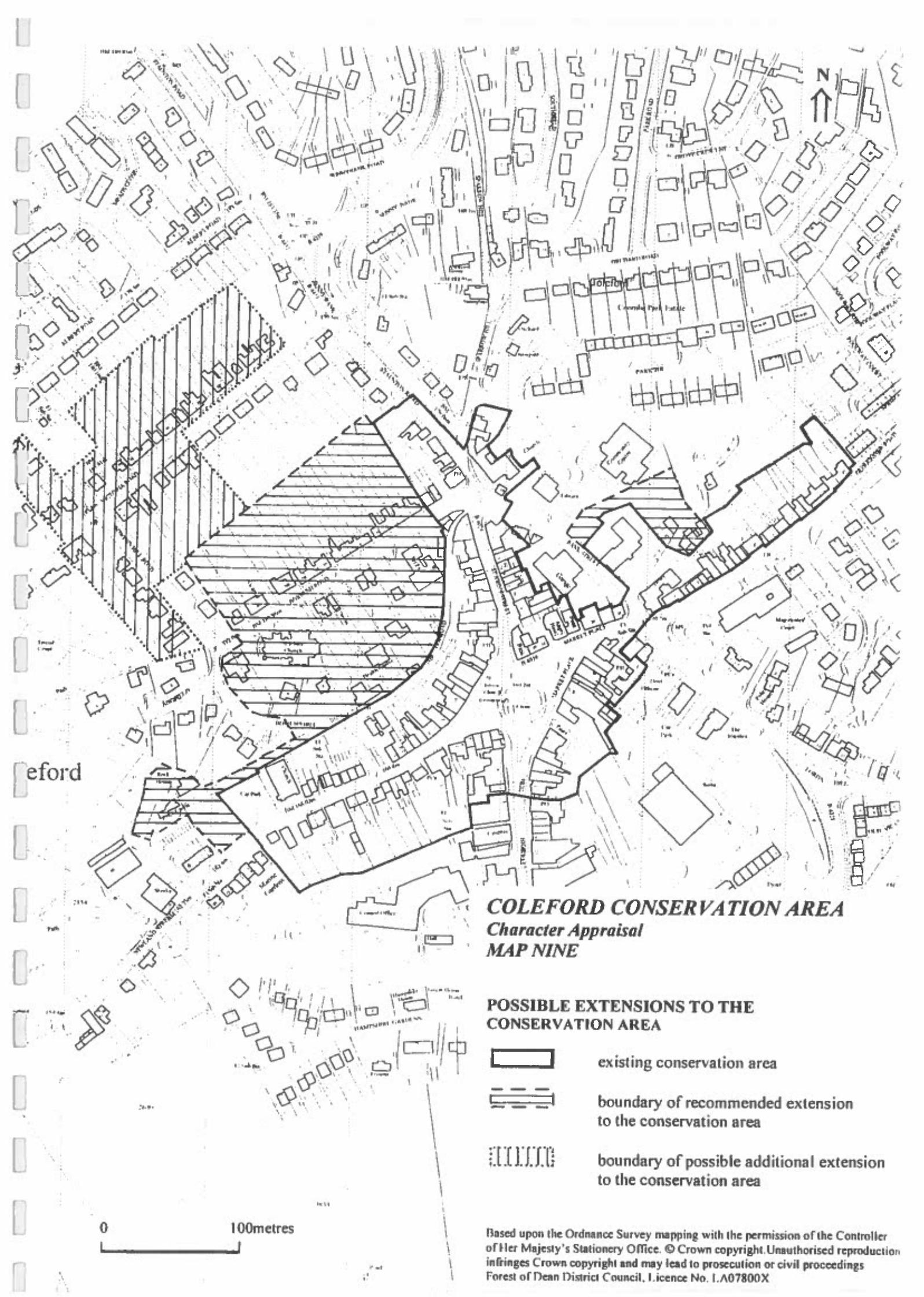
-  landmark buildings
-  important frontages or building lines
-  natural paved or cobbled surfaces
-  prominent boundary walls
-  iron railings
-  important trees or tree groups
-  main footpath links
-  noteworthy or historic street furniture
-  views and glimpses - good
-  views and glimpses - poor

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Coleford

0 100metres





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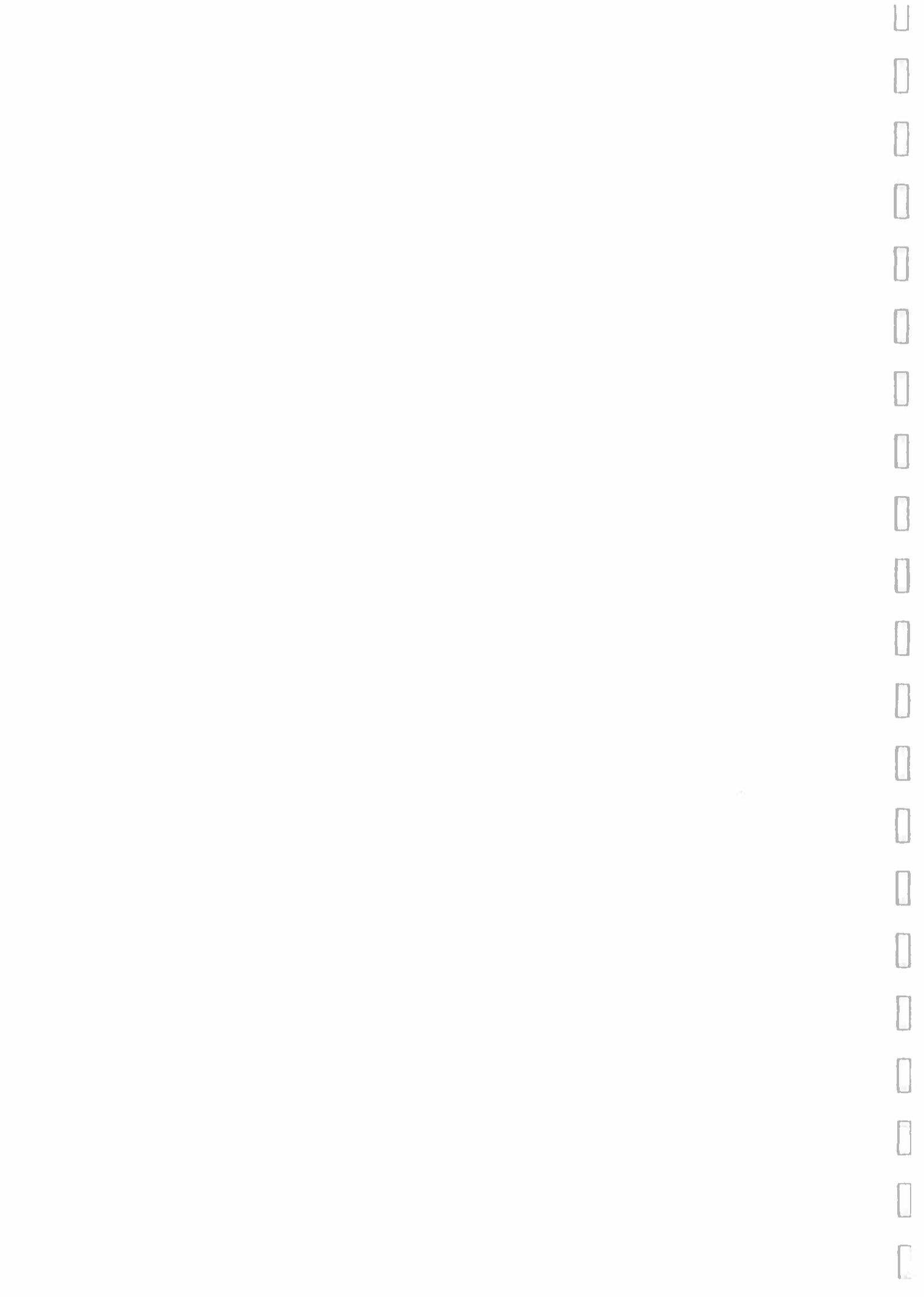
COLEFORD CONSERVATION AREA
Character Appraisal
MAP NINE

POSSIBLE EXTENSIONS TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

-  existing conservation area
-  boundary of recommended extension to the conservation area
-  boundary of possible additional extension to the conservation area

0 100metres

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APPENDIX ONE

IMPLICATIONS OF CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

A Conservation Area is defined in statute as:

“an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 published by the Government offers comprehensive advice for the protection of historic buildings and conservation areas. It states:

“It is the quality and interest of areas rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying Conservation Areas. There has been increasing recognition in recent years that our experience of a historic area depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings - on the historic layout of properties and thoroughfares; on a particular “mix” of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and detailing of contemporary buildings; on the quality ofstreet furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on vistas along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits the pedestrian use of spaces between buildings. Conservation Area designation should be seen as a means of recognising the importance of all these factors and ensuring that conservation area policy addresses the quality of townscape in its broadest sense as well as the protection of individual buildings”

Designation of a Conservation Area imposes specific duties on the Local Planning Authority which must formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area, and submit them to public consultation. This is in addition to paying special attention to such matters when exercising statutory planning powers which are briefly set out below. The intention is to provide a means of making everyone involved aware of their obligations and seeking their co-operation as part of the wider process of achieving best practice in conserving the historic environment.

(1) OWNERS AND RESIDENTS

In normal circumstances householders have certain “permitted development” rights to carry out minor works to their properties, such as small extensions and the erection of garden buildings. However in a conservation area these rights are reduced.

- The consent of the Local Planning Authority is required for the demolition of buildings.
- The lopping or felling of trees requires six weeks prior notification. The regulations make it an offence not to comply with this requirement.
- Planning Applications for proposals which affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area are advertised in at least one local newspaper

- Any new development including extensions would be expected to be of good design, and should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

As with all development proposals it is advisable to seek advice from the Council's Planning Department at an early stage. The recently published Forest of Dean Residential Design Guide offers detailed design guidance to try and ensure that buildings reflect the local characteristics which give each part of the District a sense of place and identity.

(2) **BUSINESSES**

Whilst it is understood that business uses need to clearly indicate their location and display their function, it is essential that in a Conservation Area frontage presentation, lettering, lighting, use of colour, relationship of ground floors to upper floors are all given due consideration. Again, it is strongly recommended that advice is sought at an early stage for all commercial proposals relating to historic buildings within the Conservation Area. In the case of all Listed Buildings and their settings, areas subject to Article 4 or 4(2) Directions and Areas of Special Control of Advertisements formal consent will almost always be required.

(3) **LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS**

It is essential that all departments of both the District and County Councils understand the significance of the Conservation Area, and act in coordination, in order that public works, such as street works, do not damage the historic fabric or appearance of the area. Other agencies such as water supplier or telecommunications companies must also be aware and give respect to the architectural and historic character of the area.

APPENDIX TWO

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION AREA LEGISLATION (INCLUDING SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE TO OWNERS OF DWELLING HOUSES)

1 INTRODUCTION

The legislation relating to conservation areas is complex and changes from time to time and this appendix gives an outline of the situation at the time it was prepared (late 1999). Detailed advice relating extensions to dwellings in conservation areas refers primarily to owners of single dwellings.

Anyone anticipating erecting or altering a building or structure, or intending to undertake work to a tree in a conservation area is strongly advised to contact the District Council for advice before proceeding.

It should be noted that owners or lessees of non-residential properties, shops and flats (or any combination of these in one building) may require planning permission for any external alteration or extension to the buildings irrespective of whether the building is in or outside a conservation area.

Designation of an area as a Conservation Area does affect residents of single dwellings in a number of ways.

- You need planning permission if the size of the extension to dwellings exceeds a maximum of the volume of the original house or 50 cubic metres (whichever is the greater).
- You need planning permission if you want to build any kind of addition or extension to the roof of your house
- If you want to erect a building and other structures on the land around your house, you may need planning permission if it is more than 10 cubic metres in volume
- You need planning permission to install a satellite dish or antenna on your house if it is positioned on a chimney, or on a wall or slope facing a highway.
- You need planning permission before cladding the outside of your house with, stone, tiles, artificial stone, plastic or timber.
- You may need permission to undertake certain works in addition to the above These are particularly specified in an Article 4 Direction (see section 5 below)
- You may also need permission to alter existing windows, doors, boundary walls and entrances etc. This will only be the case where an Article 4(2) Direction applies (see section 5 below)

2 CONTROL OVER DEMOLITION

In conservation areas consent may be required to demolish any building with a volume of more than 115 cubic metres or a significant part of such a building. There are exceptions to this and details can be obtained from the District Council.

Consent may also be required for the demolition of gates, walls, fences or railings over 1 metre in height abutting a highway or public open space and 2 metres elsewhere. If you are in any doubt how this will affect you, consult the District Council.

This added control over demolition is to seek to ensure that before work starts on a proposal which is irreversible and could have adverse effects on the character and appearance of the area, it is given due consideration.

3 CONTROL OVER WORKS TO TREES

Anyone proposing to cut down, or to top or lop, any tree in a conservation area, is required to give six weeks' notice to the planning authority before carrying out the work. This can be in the form of a letter giving sufficient information to identify the location of the site and the tree or trees in question.

The control over the works to trees is subject to a number of exceptions (including trees that are dead, dying or dangerous for example). However, if you are considering any work to a tree in a conservation area, it is always advisable to contact the District Council before proceeding. The purpose of this legislation is to allow time for the authority to make a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) if it is particularly important to the character of the area.

4 CONTROL OF ADVERTISEMENTS

In conservation areas, as in other areas where quality of environment has a high priority, there are likely to be measures in force to place additional control on the display of advertisements, their size, means of illumination, and materials used. Again, it is advisable to contact the District Council for further advice or information before submitting a formal application or proceeding with any alterations.

5 ADDITIONAL CONTROL RESULTING FROM ARTICLE 4 or 4(2) DIRECTION (if applicable)

There may be circumstances where the Local Planning Authority may decide to bring specific minor works not normally subject to legislation under normal planning controls, so that these works are carried out in harmony with the area. These are called Article 4 or 4(2) Directions. The latter can authorise stricter controls over minor alterations to frontages or boundary features normally allowed as permitted development.

When such Directions are made the Local Planning Authority will endeavour to ensure that they are well publicised, so that those likely to be affected will be made aware of the measures they may need to take.

6 ADVERTISEMENT OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning applications for proposals which would affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will be advertised in a local newspaper. This allows for a wider level of public consultation on an issue which could have significant implications for the area.

7 IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC BODIES AND OTHER AGENCIES

With the designation of the Conservation Area, public and other agencies responsible for work which has an affect on the character of areas will be made aware of the special nature of the area. They will be requested to take account of it when they are working in or around the area.

8 SCHEMES FOR ENHANCEMENT

Local proposals for enhancing and safeguarding the character of the area will be brought forward as and when funding permits via the Local Authority or other funding sources which are available through already established schemes, or local initiatives. Character Appraisals exist or are proposed for all the designated Conservation Areas. These are intended to identify areas or aspects of the area as a whole which require restoration or enhancement.

9 IMPLICATIONS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Policies in The Forest of Dean Local Plan that relate specifically to conservation areas will operate in all the designated conservation areas. The designation of a Conservation Area will not prevent development taking place of itself. The Local Plan will guide the scale and location of development through its policies and proposals for the area.

When a decision is being made on new development or demolition requiring the approval of the District Council, one of the aspects that is considered in coming to the decision is the affect of the proposal on the special character and appearance of the area. Inspectors dealing with planning appeals will also take note of the designation and the appraisal in reaching their decisions.

Designation of the Conservation Area initially and this Appraisal, which may be reviewed from time to time, is intended to have an affect upon the detailed design and layout of any new development so that it does not detract from the character and appearance of the area.



