



BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS Character Appraisal

April 2007



**Mel Morris
Conservation
for
HIGH PEAK
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

mel morris
conservation



High Peak Borough Council
working for our community

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Wonder 6 – BUXTON WELL

*“The Sun burnt clouds but glimmer to the sight,
 When at fam’d Buxton’s hot bath we alight.
 Unto St. Ann the Fountain sacred is:
 With waters hot and cold its sources rise,
 And in its Sulphur-veins there’s med’cine lies.
 This cures the Palsied members of the old,
 And cherishes the Nerves grown stiff and cold,
 Crutches the Lame unto its brink convey,
 Returning the ungrates fling them away.
 The Barren hither to be fruitful come,
 And without help of Spouse, go pregnant home,
 Into a Cistern Square, the water flowes;
 And seldom higher than five foot it goes.
 The prying gazer’s view the Walls prevent,
 To th’ Rain the Roof is an impediment.
 One common Wall with open doors doth joyn.
 While therefore turfie fewel does prepare
 Our supper, jointly we resolved are
 Our wearied limbs in the warm bath to cheer.
 Soon stripp’d, the clearer waters round us glide,
 And our nak’ed limbs, with Christal covers hide.
 Upon our face we swim, then backward try,
 But fail. ‘Tis known some others may outvy.
 After an hours sport i’th troubled fload,
 Come out, dry sheets does our wet bodies shroud.
 Then each again is cloth’d in’s own array,
 Any the spread table speaks our suppers stay.”*

1636 - Thomas Hobbes “Wonders of The Peak
 in Darbyshire”

Buxton is generally acknowledged as the highest town in England. Although for most of its history it was a small upland settlement near the River Wye, its growth into a town at this altitude (1000 feet), in this remote part of Derbyshire, is entirely due to the presence of thermal spring water, which led to its prolific development in the late 18th century and the second half of the 19th century. Interest in the medicinal and healing properties of water has been cyclical – following the Roman development of a spa, there was a spate of interest in the late 16th century, then again in the 18th century, then again in the late 19th century. The development of the spa town followed these trends and surges in interest.

Until its expansion in the late 18th century, the town was also probably a focal point for trade, being right next to the boundary with three counties and drawing in trade from a wide area of upland Derbyshire and Staffordshire. The old part of the town was concentrated around the market place, which continued to have an important role in the 19th century, although, eventually, the commercial focus of the town moved from Higher Buxton down to Spring Gardens, in the 20th century.

Buxton was developed largely by the principal landowner, the Dukes of Devonshire, from the late 18th century through until the beginning of the 20th century. The dominance of one family, with a select group of architects and agents, who each had considerable longevity of involvement with the town, has had the most significant impact on the character of the town, the quality of the infrastructure (parks, and public spaces and public buildings) and the architecture.

The plan of the town has evolved and expanded outwards as a result of; the location of the thermal spring water and the route of the River Wye, the presence of a plateau of high land overlooking the river valley and the complex road network reaching out of the valley in all directions.

The street names create a continual reminder of Buxton's Devonshire Estate roots and are a major part of its historic identity – Holker, Carlisle, Burlington, Cavendish, Compton, Hardwick, Lismore, Spencer, Devonshire. These names were largely decided by the Devonshire Estate using the family names or names from their other estates and landholdings in England. There are a few exceptions, which were based on older names – Hall Bank, High Street, Market Place, South Street and Bridge Street – or names of prominent townspeople such as Dr. Robertson, Buxton's foremost water physician.

Buxton was entirely geared up as a health resort. It was exceptional as the town developed to entertain thousands of visitors every year. It had no industrial heartland although in the 19th century quarrying grew in importance on the outskirts of the town.

The “lodging house” is a particular phenomenon in Buxton. Many properties were purpose-built as lodging houses, and others were built as private houses but immediately used as lodging houses. The Trade Directories list many lodging houses, which were probably residences, seasonally used for accommodation.

From most locations, looking out of the town, the horizon is a fresh deep green during the spring and summer months, with tree-lined ridges above the valley. The town is essentially, therefore, inward looking with few distinguishing landmarks in the surrounding landscape. The only prominent landmark beyond the town is the Solomon's Temple, a 19th century viewing tower on Grinlow, visible in a clearing on the southern horizon.

The decline of the town in the post war years of the 20th century, emphasised by the closure of a number of the largest buildings, culminated in 2000 with the closure of the Devonshire Royal Hospital. However, this sad chapter in the town's history appears to be coming to an end as a public sector heritage led regeneration programme has seen considerable investment in the town's historic buildings and parks. The same programme has also been linked to the town developing in new directions with the former Devonshire Royal Hospital being converted into a new University campus and proposals for a new hotel and spa based in the Crescent, Natural Baths and Pump Room.

The distinctive characteristics of Buxton can be summarised as follows:

- dramatic and surprising architecture within a hilly landscape

- high quality landmarks making the most of the rolling topography
- a lasting impression of a holiday destination, revolving around culture and the arts
- immediate appeal for the visitor to want to explore the town
- The Crescent - one of the finest Georgian buildings in England
- use of Buxton mineral water for over 2000 years, providing immense historical continuity and a sense of antiquity
- a series of high quality public parks threading through the Wye valley, making full use of the presence of the river and adapting its course and flow to create lakes, ponds and waterfalls
- a dense concentration of mature trees forming a fringe to the bowl-shaped valley and a backdrop to the town. Mature deciduous trees forming avenues within the streets. An exotic mix of conifers and evergreen shrubs creating points of interest within the large residential gardens
- a high proportion of Georgian and Victorian buildings co-existing, with relatively little modern development
- many buildings designed with reference to Buxton's Roman classical origins, incorporating arched windows, pilasters, columns, colonnades and arcades
- striking Victorian architecture, with a cohesive character, using gritstone as the main building material, largely influenced by single estate ownership
- approaches into the town characterised by full-height two-storey bay windows
- surviving cast-iron arcades and decorative metalwork, amongst the most distinctive materials
- building types dominated by villas, hotels and lodging houses
- strong presence of the railway network despite the loss of many of the station buildings

LOCATION & CONTEXT

Buxton is located in the north-west of Derbyshire, 3 miles from the County boundary with Cheshire and only 2 miles from the boundary with Staffordshire.

The town lies at one thousand feet above sea level (300 metres) and is renowned for having a cold and wet climate. The town lies at the junction of several major arterial routes through Derbyshire. The A6 runs to the south-east side of the town, from Buxton to Bakewell, following the course of the River Wye, and it leaves Buxton in a northerly direction to Chapel-en-le-Frith. The A515 from Ashbourne terminates at Buxton and much of its straight course follows the route of a Roman road. The A53 and A54 leave the south-west side of Buxton for Leek and Congleton respectively and connect with the A537, just outside Buxton, to Macclesfield. The A5002 leaves Buxton northwards towards Manchester.

Buxton lies within the administrative area of High Peak Borough Council. Until the 1974 local government reorganisation, all responsibility for local planning, housing, building control and environmental health fell within the control of Buxton Urban District Council, an independent Borough. Buxton is almost entirely surrounded by the Peak District National Park, which is within three kilometres in most directions.

The town underwent a dramatic growth during the second half of the 19th century, which can be seen at a glance by comparing population figures. In 1801 there were 760 people living in Buxton. By 1851 there were 1235 and by 1901 this had shot up to 6480. The most recent census figures (2001) give a figure of 21,331 for the resident population within the whole of Buxton, including all outlying areas outside the four conservation areas.

Planning Policy Context

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 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The Council is obliged by section 71 of the Act *to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area, which are conservation areas.*

This document is prepared with reference to Policy BC5 (Conservation Areas and their Settings) of the Adopted High Peak Local Plan March 2005.

The contents of this document is intended both as a guide for owners and occupiers of buildings within the conservation areas as well as a guide for the local planning authority, being a material consideration when determining applications for development, defending appeals or proposing works for the preservation or enhancement of the area.

The core of Buxton was designated a conservation area on 1st November 1968 (Buxton Central).

In time there were three extensions to this core, which were designated as separate conservation areas in their own right: The Park (November 1980),

College and Hardwick (1st November 1989). There were no detailed statements prepared to describe the character of these four separate conservation areas.

The four separate conservation area boundaries at 2nd October 2006 are shown on Figure 2.

In association with this appraisal, further extensions to the boundaries of the conservation areas were approved by High Peak Borough Council on 20th March 2007 (see Area Maps) and at the same time a small area was removed from the Hardwick conservation area.

The boundaries of the original four conservation areas knit closely together and are generally contiguous. However, as a result of the piecemeal and fragmentary nature of the process of designation, the areas do not necessarily relate to phases of development or to areas of particular character and there are a number of situations where several stretches of a street appear in a succession of conservation areas.

The current appraisal seeks to address this anomaly by looking at the character and historic development of the town as a whole.

9 distinct character areas have been identified, which could be considered as sub-areas within the whole conservation area designation. These are:

1. The Crescent (incorporating the main Georgian developments within the town within the valley of the River Wye)
2. Higher Buxton
3. Spring Gardens
4. Pavilion Gardens & Serpentine Walks
5. The Park (Buxton Park & Devonshire Park)
6. Hardwick
7. College (incorporating College Road, Green Lane & Temple Road)
8. Poole's Cavern
9. Ashwood Park

Although the town of Buxton is associated with very early human occupation, both from the prehistoric period and the Roman period, there are no scheduled monuments within the conservation areas. The importance of the archaeological potential, however, is widely recognised and this is described in more detail in the section on Archaeological Significance.

An Area of Archaeological Interest has been identified and is included in the High Peak Local Plan, accompanied by a series of policies concerning archaeology (Policy BC10).

The landscaped gardens within the centre of Buxton, that overlook and follow the River Wye are included in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens. There are two separate entries: Pavilion Gardens (grade II*), which includes the Serpentine Walks between St. John's Road and Burlington Road, and The Slopes (grade II) overlooking The Crescent.

A large number of the Georgian buildings within the town are listed buildings. However, as a result of the nature of the listing criteria, which separates buildings into periods of construction, 1840 is a critical date. Buildings that date

from after 1840 are only listed selectively, and largely only if there is a national or prominent local architect involved in their design or they are otherwise unusual building types. Therefore, only a few of the Victorian and Edwardian buildings within Buxton are listed, even though their character is preserved to a high degree.

Descriptions of listed buildings in Buxton and the English Heritage Register for parks and gardens can be seen at the Borough Council offices at Municipal Buildings, Glossop, and the main public libraries in Derbyshire. The designations can be seen at a glance on Figure 1.

The 19th century buildings within Buxton are regionally acknowledged for their high quality and their good state of preservation. This has been formally recognised by the introduction of an Article 4 (2) Direction in July 1996. This affects all of the single family dwelling houses in the four conservation areas, which would otherwise have permitted development rights. The Article 4 (2) Direction does not affect flats, houses in multiple occupation and commercial properties, as they do not enjoy any permitted development rights.

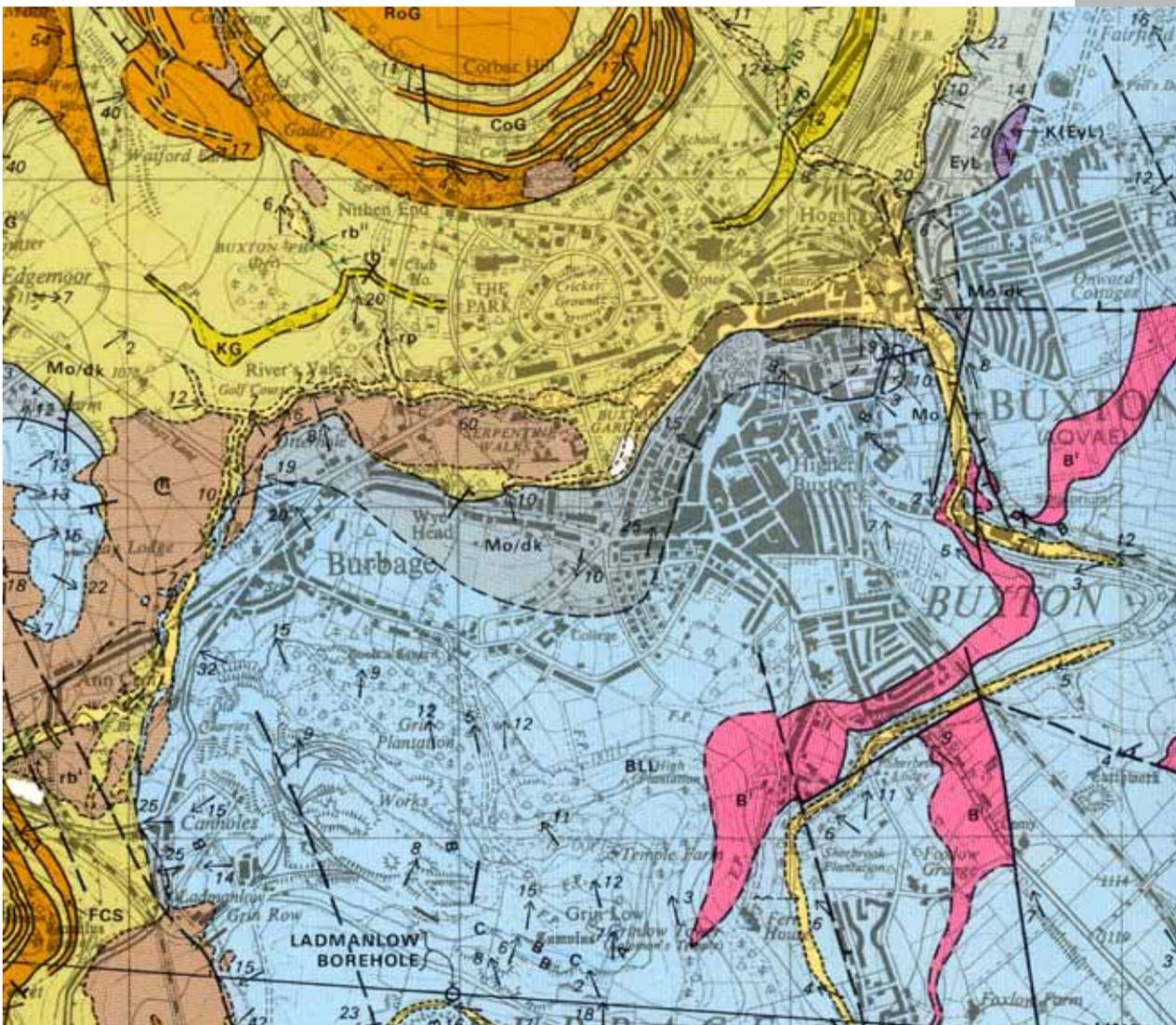
Subject to certain conditions, the introduction of the Article 4 (2) Direction in 1996 has brought under the control of the planning authority a large number of works that could otherwise erode the character of the conservation areas, such as changes to boundaries, roof materials, alterations to proportions and materials of windows and doors, or the removal of chimneys.

THE ORIGINS & DEVELOPMENT OF BUXTON

Geology & Topography (The Landscape Setting)

Buxton lies in an area of “Classical Geology”, on the divide between the White Peak and the Dark Peak, which define the two characteristic landforms of The Peak District.

The southern part of the town sits on a carboniferous limestone plateau overlooking the valley of the River Wye. The Wye runs roughly from west to east and then diverts south-east through a steep-sided limestone dale that runs all the way to Ashford in the Water.



The land to the north and west of the River Wye falls on the Millstone Grit, which distinguishes the upland landscape to the north of the town.

The limestone to the south of the town has been exploited by quarrying, particularly from the second half of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century. Extraction of limestone is on a massive scale and is used as aggregate and for a large number of chemical and industrial processes. Limestone quarries are not evident in views from the town centre but old

quarries and limekilns are located just beyond the brow of Grinlow and at Harpur Hill. Limestone eroded as water found its way through faults and fissures creating caves and caverns. Poole's Cavern (a public showcave) is only one of many caves in the limestone to the south and east of the town.

Small quarries are still evident within the town, although largely overgrown, such as on the northern side of Manchester Road, but these were mainly extracting Millstone Grit for building stone.

The limestone within the immediate area of Buxton is classified as Chee Tor Rock. It is of national importance as it incorporates fossil rich layers of special importance for accurately dating the sequence of rocks in the early Carboniferous Period. The Chee Tor Rock is separated from the alluvium, following the Wye, by a band of Monsal Dale limestone with dark, well-bedded characteristics. It was probably the coursed limestone used for a number of 18th century buildings in Higher Buxton.

The source of the River Wye comes from several tributaries and a large catchment which drains the surrounding high moors, as well as underground river systems, the main one being visible within Poole's Cavern, that has a resurgence in the valley bottom (Wye Head Resurgence).

The upper section of the River Wye runs through a semi-pastoral landscape within a gently sloping valley. Where the Wye meets the Nun Brook and Hogshaw Brook at the top of Ashwood Dale, the valley becomes more steeply sided. The River Wye then snakes through Ashwood Dale, which then becomes more enclosed and well defined as the Wye Valley (now tracked by the route of the A6). A narrow strip of alluvial soil follows the course of the River Wye from its source.

There are something like nine thermal springs rising within the valley in the immediate vicinity of The Crescent. These were documented in 1734 along with several cold springs. Chalybeate (iron bearing) water is also found in the area, and was used extensively as part of the treatments on offer at the spa. The main source of spring water rises in the bottom of the former "Gentlemen's First Class Public Bath", which is visible from within the Tourist Information Centre, at a rate of approximately eleven litres per second.

The thermal (or tepid) water that rises in Buxton as spring water comes from deep within the earth's crust and emerges under hydrostatic pressure, geothermally heated by the earth's interior to a constant temperature of 27.5 degrees Centigrade (82° F). The consensus view is that the water has percolated through the limestone south of the town, over thousands of years, from a depth of 1500 metres. It naturally works its way northwards until it hits the harder gritstone, which forces the water to the surface via a fault line roughly at the foot of The Slopes. The water is rich in minerals and the surrounding limestone through which it passes gives it a high concentration of calcium.

Early prints and paintings of Buxton show that in the 18th century the immediate landscape and valley of the River Wye was quite bleak, with relatively little tree cover. Hills were largely barren of prominent vegetation. A process of deforestation had taken place over many years. A large upland population in an isolated location would have quickly led to the removal of sources of fuel and

poor, thin soils would have created problems in establishing further woodland.

On arriving in Buxton from the surrounding hills, today, there is still a sense of its extreme isolation and the hills are quite stark, with large areas of open rolling heather moorland on the Dark Peak gritstone and rocky outcrops on the limestone plateau. There are expansive panoramic views across the town from the high ground. By contrast, the aspect out is quite different and from within the town most of the local hills appear quite lush with large clumps of trees on the better quality soils.

Throughout the 19th century there was a tree-planting programme by the Devonshire Estate and many of the plantations have their origins in the early 19th century. This concerted effort to plant trees was probably largely intended to provide shelter and windbreaks, but undoubtedly the picturesque movement, which had such a strong influence in Derbyshire, had some influence over the location of the plantations and the setting of the grand buildings. Adam in *“The Gem of the Peak”* (1838) states “sterile, heathy moors, scarcely relieved by a single tree or shrub, were improved, with trees, rides and drives..” Corbar Walks to the north of the town were laid out by Joseph Paxton as a series of public walks beneath Corbar Woods plantation. Although from the town the horizon has a green fringe peeping above the buildings and foreground trees, these plantations are on the whole quite small and finish at the brow of the hills. Within the town, the better quality soils along the alluvium enabled the establishment of mature trees and parks.

The topography within the town of Buxton is characterised by a gently undulating landform with a few steep gradients between the Wye valley and the limestone plateau. This creates many intimate and interesting views and has led to the exploitation of landmarks around the town.

Where the River Wye runs in an open course through the core of Buxton along the length of St. John’s Road, the valley was originally broad and quite flat. The 19th century gardeners, Paxton & Milner after him, increased the opportunities for a multiplicity of views by adding embankments, mounds and hollows in an undulating landform along the route of the River Wye through the Serpentine Walks and Pavilion Gardens. The planting of trees upon raised mounds was first established by Loudon at Derby Arboretum and the same practice can be found in Buxton, although it had reached a more subtle and naturalistic interpretation by the 1850s. Along the edge of the Serpentine Walks and along Burlington Road, for example, sections of the southern perimeter are emphasised by a raised mound.

Within The Park and elsewhere, the slope of the northern side of the valley was exploited in the tiered layout of the houses, but the relationship of houses to gardens and to the public domain was also manufactured through the introduction of mounds of earth around the perimeter of gardens, the levelling of building sites and the creation of large flat lawns separated from the houses by embanked borders.

On the south side of The Wye, The Slopes (known earlier as The Terraces) were adapted from St. Ann’s Cliff, which given the geology probably started out as a limestone outcrop, but was completely smoothed out shortly after the construction of The Crescent. Subsequent designers made full use of the topography to display The Crescent to its best advantage, although the

openness of the site and the playful manipulation of the geometry in the design of paths have largely been lost following the introduction of trees in the early 20th century.

Archaeological Significance

A full summary of archaeological remains and potential is set out in the document produced by English Heritage & Derbyshire County Council “Derbyshire Extensive Urban Survey – Buxton Archaeological Assessment Report”, Gill Stroud, 2002.

The earliest evidence for human occupation in Buxton is to the west of the town at Lismore Fields (just outside the Central & Park Conservation Areas). This site is a scheduled ancient monument and was the site of a Mesolithic (c6000BC) settlement and a succeeding Neolithic village (c4000-3500BC) with the remains of recognisable buildings. There are also a number of barrows and Bronze Age burial mounds in the area around Buxton and it was thought that there was a barrow on the site of “The Slopes” but all evidence was destroyed when they were re-landscaped in the 18th century. There is no evidence of prehistoric settlement in the core of Buxton, although the origins of the Roman name “*Aquae Arnemetiae*” are rooted in a pre-Roman religious cult centred on the natural hot and cold springs rising alongside the River Wye, which threads through the valley. The cult was dedicated to the worship of a Celtic goddess, the goddess of the Grove, (Arnemetiae being her Roman name) and it was a recognised cult of early British people. The only other Roman place name in Britain with the title Aqua (meaning waters) was Bath (*Aquae Sulis*). Buxton and Bath are the only places in Roman Britain with thermal water to have been used by the Romans for a bathing complex. Unlike Bath, the precise appearance of the Roman baths at Buxton is hidden, and probably destroyed, underneath The Crescent and The Old Hall Hotel.

Although Buxton is not mentioned in Domesday Book, its Roman origins are well documented. It was first identified in the Ravenna Cosmography as *Aquae Arnemetiae*.

In the Roman period a spa town developed around the springs, possibly with a classical temple overlooking a set of Roman baths, similar in situation to Bath, although smaller in scale.

There are a large number of entries in the County Sites & Monuments Record for Buxton, many of which relate to “spot finds” of Roman material (dating from the 1st to the 4th centuries) although tending to be concentrated around the sites of the baths and temple (The Slopes & The Crescent) or from the area of Holker Road and the Silverlands plateau. Even so, relatively little is known about a Roman settlement in Buxton.

There has been considerable speculation about the presence of a Roman fort in Buxton, given its strategic location, but there has been no conclusive evidence for either a fort or the location of a settlement, although it is generally assumed that one or both would have been located on the high ground (the plateau in Higher Buxton formed by the market place and Silverlands) overlooking the Wye valley to the north and east. Its location and extent have never been pinpointed and despite “watching briefs” for the redevelopment of many sites within the town, its presence continues to elude archaeologists. The

only known location for Roman structures is the well-documented records of buildings and finds in the vicinity of The Crescent and the base of The Slopes and the occasional evidence for a section of Roman road around the town.

During the 17th and 18th centuries discoveries of lead-lined baths, red plaster & building remains were made in the sediments at some depth beneath the area surrounding St. Anne's Well. The discovery of a deposit of 232 Roman coins near the location of the natural baths in the 1970s has confirmed that there was a Roman presence here for four hundred years.

Excavations at Poole's Cavern in 1981-83 revealed a large assemblage of Romano-British metalwork and burials, most dating from the 2nd century AD. It is thought that the presence of metalworking may represent a seasonal trade based on a market at the nearby spa.

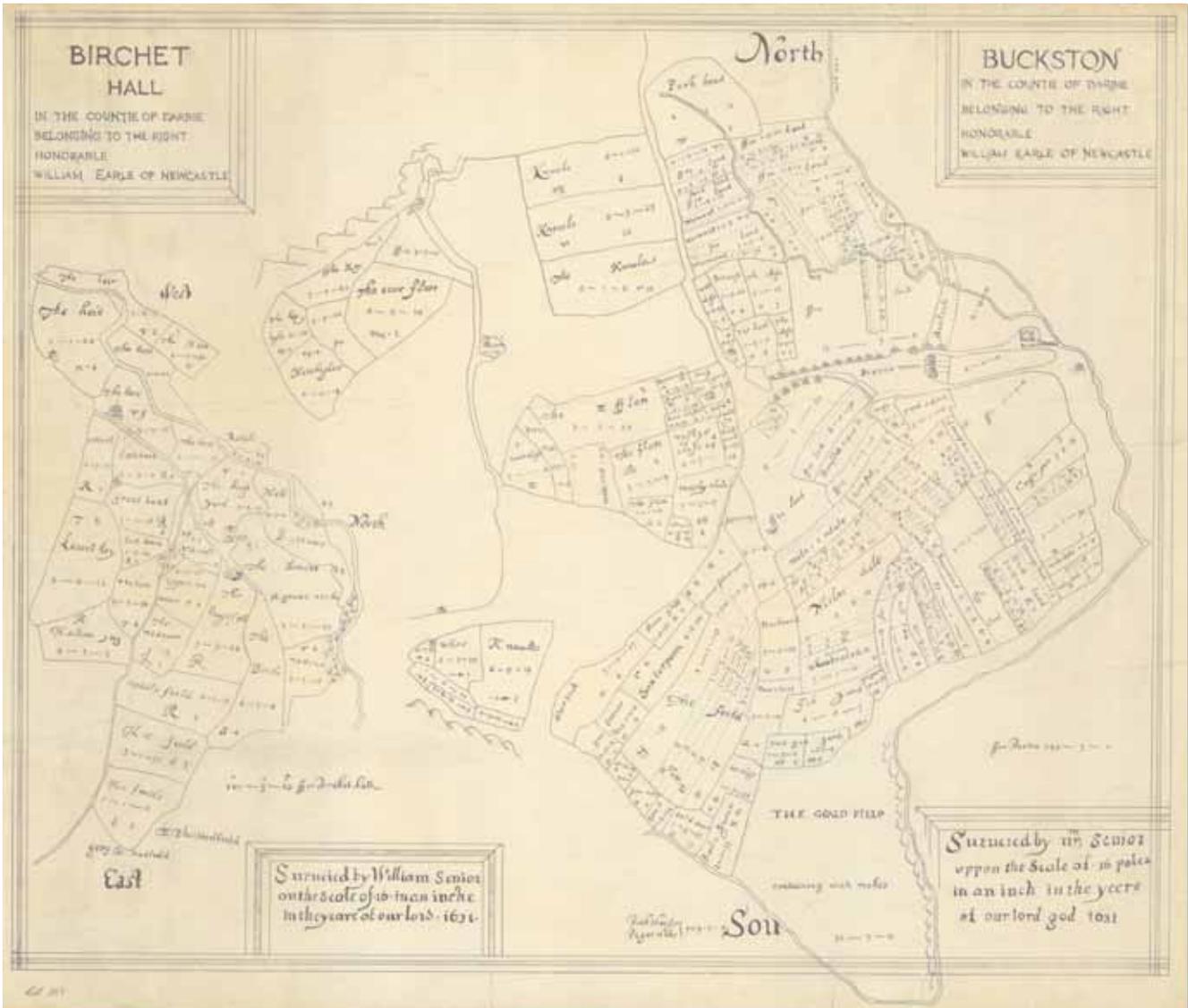
There is little accurately known about Roman Buxton but equally there is very little known about the development of Buxton in the intervening years between the Roman period and the 17th century.

The next surviving written reference to Buxton is in the beginning of the 12th century. It is first recorded as *Buckestanes* on a foundation charter for land given by William Peverel to found Lenton Abbey in Nottinghamshire. The derivation of the name is not clear. It either comes from **būg-stān** - 'rocking stone(s)' or **bucc, stān** – buck stone(s) (a reference to the medieval hunting forest). There was a mill recorded at Buxton in the early 13th century, probably within the narrow part of the Wye valley near the current site of Morrisons Supermarket.

The use of the water for healing and its medicinal properties continued with Christian religion, which created St. Anne's Well, a holy well, documented by the mid 15th century. St. Anne, like the Virgin Mary, was venerated for her healing powers and was linked with wells, and chapels associated with wells, from the 12th century. Eventually, as with many sites of pilgrimage, a chapel was established alongside the well, to enable pilgrims to pray and leave devotional offerings.

Nothing of the layout of medieval Buxton is known, with any certainty, and our assessment is based largely on the earliest map of the town (1631) and comparison with later maps. The 1631 map clearly shows that the main part of the settlement is on the higher land in the area around the current market place, and known from the second half of the 19th century as Higher Buxton. The precise location of the Roman roads is not known, but the evidence suggests that several roads from the west, north and south converged on the town and probably continued to have an important presence throughout the medieval period.

The medieval core of the settlement was located along the current High Street and Market Place. The roads from the south-east and south-west funnelled into the settlement and met at the present-day junction of High Street, London Road and West Road. At the northern end of the medieval settlement two roads, of similar size and importance, left the market place area (now Hall Bank and Terrace Road), each one running down the hill to a crossing point of the River Wye.



▲ Pl. 1 - 1631 map of Buxton - Land belonging to the Earl of Newcastle, surveyed by William Senior

The well and chapel were closed by Thomas Cromwell in 1538 but soon re-opened. In 1572 Dr John Jones wrote the first medical book on Buxton waters entitled *The Benefit of the Auncient Bathes of Buckstones*. Then between 1573 and 1584 Mary Queen of Scots visited the waters and bathed at Buxton in an attempt to treat her rheumatism and other ailments. Whilst she was in the custody of the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, she visited for several weeks at a time, on at least five separate occasions. She stayed at the Hall (now the Old Hall Hotel), which was built by the Earl of Shrewsbury as a secure house to accommodate her (although its appearance was very different at that time). This led to a renewed popularity for the baths, which were visited by many of the Tudor gentry and courtiers. After Mary's execution and Shrewsbury's death in 1590 the town's popularity waned.

The development of modern Buxton starts in the late 18th century and this is summarised in the next section.

Summary of Historic Development

The main historic maps that have informed the assessment of historic development are;

- 1631** William Senior map of “Buckston in the Countie of Darbie belonging to the Right Honorable William Earle of Newcastle” (copy held by Buxton Museum & Art Gallery)
- 1774** Parliamentary Enclosure Map for Buxton parish (DRO – Q/RI 26a)
- 1848** Tithe Map & Award for Buxton parish (DRO - D2360/3/56a)
- 1852** layout plan of The Park by Joseph Paxton (original at Buxton Museum & Art Gallery)
- 1879** 1st edition Ordnance Survey map
- 1897** 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map
- 1922** 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map
- 1938** Provisional 6” Ordnance Survey map



▲ *Pl. 2 - 1848 Tithe map of Buxton*

There are a number of books published on the history of Buxton. The main books and reports that have informed this appraisal are;

- “The Book of Buxton”, John Leach, 1987
- “Buxton – A People’s History”, Mike Langham, 2001
- “Derbyshire Extensive Urban Survey – Buxton Archaeological Assessment Report”, Gill Stroud, 2002

The development of Buxton has been well documented. It was influenced by a large number of external factors; surges of interest in spas, influential people and the publication of a number of medical books and tourist guides. There were a number of critical factors influencing the main periods of growth, which have been summarised here. For the purposes of this appraisal, the major events have been summarised in a timeline.

The development of each separate element of the town is described in more detail in Appendix 1, supported by maps showing the main building phases within each conservation area. The phases have been selected largely for accuracy based on dates of key maps or events, as follows:

Before 1780 – The construction of The Crescent from 1780 represented a turning point in the development of the spa and a catalyst to further development. Before 1780 a number of buildings in Buxton survive, of which the majority are Georgian (1750-1770). Very few buildings survive from the early history of the town – from the medieval period up to the 17th century. Fragments of 17th century buildings survive along High Street, the church of 1625 still stands and several 17th century cottages near Poole’s Cavern. There was much redevelopment and demolition in the 19th century, particularly the smallest, oldest buildings, many of which appear on historic maps and photographs.

1780-1848 (Georgian Buxton) – From 1780 up to the early 1800s there was a significant amount of investment by the Devonshire Estate in the town and this phase represents the main period of Georgian development within Buxton. This included the construction of The Crescent between 1780 and 1789 and the Great Stables, two new bridges, St. Anne’s Well, The Square and the new church of St. John’s. The Duke also pumped money into the refurbishment of other inns and lodgings. However, after the death of the 5th Duke in 1811, there was little building work within the town until the 1850s. It was probably during this period that the first rows of commercial properties were built along the north side of Spring Gardens, with others capitalising on the success of the Duke’s speculative investment.

1848-1879 (Victorian Buxton – phase 1) – Between 1848 (the date of the Tithe map) and 1879 (the date of the first Ordnance Survey map) the town underwent the most prolific and radical amount of development under the 6th & 7th Dukes of Devonshire. This period of 30 years represents the main period of development within the conservation area. From 1848-1859 there were several large houses built within The Park, the Quadrant was built and Hardwick Street was developed. By 1879 large areas had been completely developed on “greenfield” sites – Devonshire Park and the whole of the hillside between Higher Buxton (the market place) and the houses running along Broad Walk. The estate looked far ahead in setting out roads and developing public parks.

1879-1900 (Victorian Buxton – phase 2) – the main central area had been developed by the 1870s. The last quarter of the 19th century was dominated by the provision of high quality housing, most designed for the new professional classes who were moving to Buxton to live (i.e. very little of it private lodgings). This included the western half of The Park (Carlisle Road), Temple Road and College Road to the south of the town, and swathes of smaller terraced houses for the working classes to the south-east of the town, approached from Dale Road (outside the conservation areas). There was also a small quantity of middle-class housing development around Hardwick Square.

1900-1938 (Edwardian Buxton & inter-war years) – From 1900 the development of Carlisle Road and Temple Road continued but was halted by the First World War. This period was characterised by the redevelopment of key sites along Spring Gardens (the Boots building & the Timothy Whites & Taylors building) and Marks & Spencer (1930s). Much of the development was

of high quality. The most important building of this period was arguably the Opera House, built in 1903 and it represented the end of an era of major public buildings. The main new area to develop was Holker Road.

By 1905 there were 27 hotels in the town and 300 lodging houses providing facilities for 4,000 visitors per week (Langham). The quality of housing stock after 1938 (the date of the provisional OS map) and after the Second World War, was markedly different and there are some areas of Buxton within the conservation area that exemplify these changes and shortage of building materials and skilled labour.

1938 - present day – there has been little new development within Buxton conservation areas, with the exception of “infill” housing along Green Lane and the post-war housing at Curzon Road & Kedleston Road.

The period saw the town fall into relative decline as the National Health Service ended its recognition of the traditional spas and leisure patterns changed with the growth of cheaper overseas holidays. The fragile local economy, based mainly on tourism, led to the closure of several hotels. This same period saw the closure of The Opera House as a live theatre before re-opening in 1979 as the focus of a rejuvenated International Music Festival. Both bath complexes ceased to function – the Thermal Baths became an indoor shopping centre (Cavendish Arcade) whilst the Natural Baths remain largely empty. The Crescent became fully redundant in 1992 and was quickly followed by the Pump Room. Finally, the Devonshire Royal Hospital remained as the last NHS supported centre for hydrotherapy until it eventually closed in 2000.

Following intensive conservation & regeneration initiatives led by High Peak Borough Council, the town has started to see renewed interest and investment in its large redundant historic buildings and public spaces and a reversal of fortune.

Main Factors Influencing Development

Water treatments and cures

Throughout its history the thermal water at Buxton has been the main inspiration for the development and growth of the town. It was always taken both internally and externally, it being commonly assumed that the skin was porous and that the water could seep through the skin and have a beneficial effect on the body.

The curative powers & health benefits of the water at Buxton have continued to grab the imagination from Roman times to the present day in an almost unbroken chain. Although the thermal water at Buxton fell into relative obscurity after the fall of the Roman Empire, the source of the water was revived as an early Christian site for pilgrimage to St. Anne, to petition her for cures from sickness, a common phenomenon during the 14th and 15th centuries. The site became associated with miraculous powers of healing. In the 16th century the well and its chapel were closed during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, but such was the importance of local popular religious devotion that, like many religious sites with a particular local significance, the well was re-opened soon after.

Buxton achieved fame whilst Mary Queen of Scots came to take the waters for

her rheumatism and it later became fashionable for the Tudor nobility to come to Buxton to take the waters.

Towards the end of the 18th century, following a revival in interest in Georgian spas stimulated mainly by the development of Bath, the 5th Duke of Devonshire established a suite of facilities to rival other major spas.

Again in the mid–late 19th century there was another revival of interest in spas and particularly hydrotherapy.

Buxton Mineral Water is now bottled and sold as a healthy alternative to drinking tap water. The baths, however, have fallen out of use, although the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa Project (proposed completion 2009) aims to create a new thermal mineral water spa in the Natural Baths.

The Dukes of Devonshire - Estate Ownership

The Dukes of Devonshire had acquired land in Buxton through the Cavendish line of the family in the 1540s. The family later in the 16th century acquired piecemeal the chapel, bath and springs at Buxton. Through the middle of the 18th century the Devonshire family purchased other land and property in Buxton. The 5th Duke of Devonshire inherited an immense fortune in 1764, on the death of his father. He devoted a long part of his life to making Buxton into a spa town to rival Bath and Cheltenham. Although the land was not in outright ownership of the Devonshire Estate, it controlled a large amount of the land, and in particular the outlying agricultural land, which it was able to quickly develop, without the constraints of potential wrangles with tenants. In 1774 the Devonshire Estate had 24 acres of land in the town, but by 1811 they had acquired most of the township – 547 acres in Buxton township, 504 in Fairfield and 1166 in Hartington township (Langham). Hence, the development of the older parts of the town was piecemeal and slow, whereas the “greenfield” sites to the west were comprehensively developed in a short time.

In 1811 the 5th Duke of Devonshire died and there was little development in the town in the years following his death and as a result Buxton had a short period of decline as a fashionable resort.

The 6th Duke (known as The Bachelor Duke) lived until 1858 and was reputedly the richest man in England. He became actively involved in the life of the town and brought his Head Gardener and companion Joseph Paxton to Buxton to carry out some improvements. Paxton’s involvement in the town is largely related to a plan produced in 1852, which shows a series of proposals for landscape improvements and new buildings to the north of the River Wye, as well as part of the existing layout around The Crescent and Stables. He developed the Serpentine Walks near the Hall gardens, he provided the masterplan for The Park, laid out walks at Corbar Woods, remodelled The Slopes and designed The Quadrant, although the architectural details of this were probably left up to Henry Currey. Paxton regularly collaborated with trained architects on commissions, so it is often difficult to pin down who was responsible for which element. Paxton’s long career under the 6th Duke between 1826 and the Duke’s death in 1858, and his strong friendship and influence, meant that he probably had a behind-the-scenes role in much of the development of Buxton during this period.

After the death of the 6th Duke in 1858, and the arrival of the 7th Duke, the

Chatsworth Estate started to reduce its liabilities. The new Duke had inherited large debts with hefty interest payments to cover. He made economies in his household and took a more business-like approach to the estate, marketing the landholding and plots in Buxton much more aggressively. From 1863 the Buxton architect Robert Rippon Duke worked for the Devonshire Estate as architect, surveyor and building inspector (Langham) and he provided continuity within Buxton for nearly 40 years.

The Devonshire Estate promoted the development of the town. It was a self-regulating authority, before planning authorities were created, and controlled the location and design of development throughout the town. The Devonshire Estate dominated all facets of development: utilities (sewerage system and water supply), public health standards, street layout and size and architecture of buildings.

From the first developments in 1850 the estate employed the use of restrictive covenants on all new construction sites. They placed the better quality housing on the main approaches and the working class housing generally out of sight or behind the better quality housing.

Between 1880 and 1905 the Devonshire Estate, anxious to release as much land for building as the market could stand, instructed their architect R. R Duke to lay out a number of roads.

“The influence of the estate gave way to control through the local authority progressively as urban land values rose and the estate sought new forms of investment which carried fewer management burdens” (Langham, 2002)

A large proportion of the estate was transferred to the Buxton Corporation in 1905. The estate continued to sell building plots after the Second World War, until death duties forced the sale of the Buxton estate in 1951.

Improvements to the road network

Historically Buxton had a number of Roman roads crossing the town and a Roman milepost was discovered at Silverlands in 1856. The origins and alignments of these Roman roads are obscure now, although fragments survive and at least five routes radiating out from the town centre have been identified. The presence of several Roman roads crossing the town may have led to this being a major hub for communication in the post-Roman period, as there were several early saltway routes that met at Buxton.

The river had two crossing points by 1774, both bridges shown on the Buxton Enclosure map (1774). The bridge at the west end of Buxton was located on the original route between Buxton Market Place and Manchester Road. The George Hotel was built when this road layout was still in existence and its main frontage faced this road. However, this road was swept away with the construction of The Crescent. The bridge at the east end of the town crossed the river at the end of Spring Gardens.

Despite the ancient Roman infrastructure, the road network to Buxton was poor until the turnpike acts started to have a major impact on the condition of the road surfaces and led to the construction of new roads. Buxton was the first place in Derbyshire to have a turnpike road, in 1724. Road improvements stimulated growth and led to Buxton becoming the natural focus of the western part of the Peak.

Following the 18th century turnpike improvements, the town had a period of growth and even before the 5th Duke of Devonshire built The Crescent in 1780, he and others had started to develop the area around the market place with a number of hotels and coaching inns and to develop the west end of Spring Gardens (The Shakespeare Inn, in 1711, and The Grove Coffee House in the mid 18th century).

The junction of Terrace Road and Spring Gardens developed further following the re-routing of the main road in 1781, which was moved from Hall Bank to Terrace Road and across a new bridge, near the current location of The Quadrant.

With the opening of the 1810 turnpike (the route of the present A6 to Bakewell) Spring Gardens started to develop as the fashionable retail focus and by the mid 19th century it was fully developed, although it did have several subsequent transitions in the character of the redevelopment.

The principal turnpikes that crossed Buxton were as follows, in chronological order;

North – from Buxton to Manchester via Whaley Bridge (1725)

It followed a line through Buxton from the Market Place and approximately down Hall Bank across the back of what is now Old Hall Hotel, and then turned in a northerly direction and passed between the Old Hall and its eastern garden (the Grove) before crossing the river Wye. It then followed the present route of Manchester Road out to Cold Springs Farm (outside the conservation area). The road was swept away in 1780 with the construction of The Crescent, under the provisions of a 1764 Act, and the turnpike was re-routed to run from the market place down Terrace Road and cross the Wye on a new bridge to the east of The Crescent. The new alignment took it to the west of The Grove Hotel, which had a renaissance as a result.

South – from Buxton to Derby (1744)

Going south out of Buxton the turnpike stopped at Sherbrook Hill where it joined the old Roman road which was not turnpiked at first – it is thought because it was in a better condition, being on higher, better drained ground.

North – from Buxton to Sheffield via Fairfield & Hargatewall (1758)

The route ran along Spring Gardens and crossed the Wye at Bridge Street before following the current route out of the town through Fairfield.

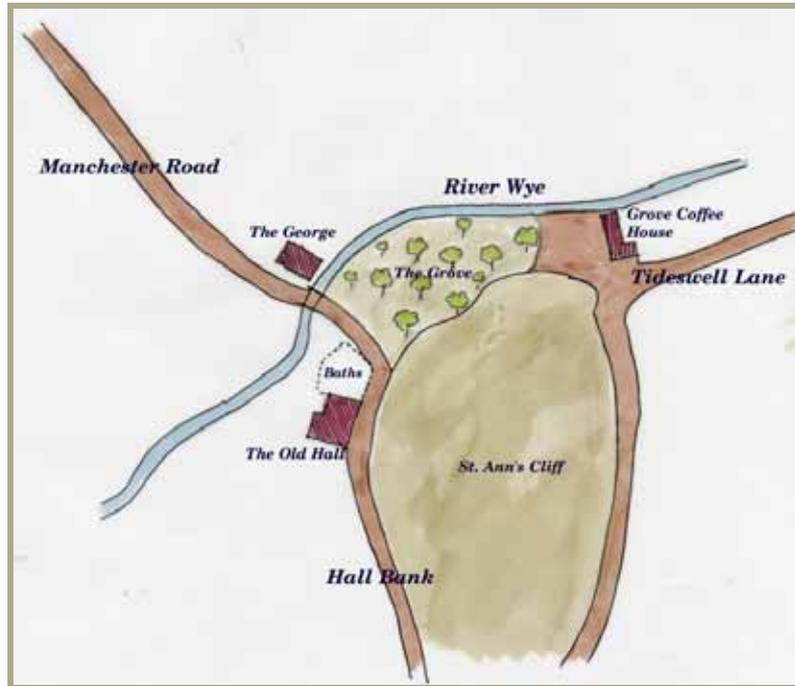
West – from Buxton to Macclesfield (1759)

The road that ran west out of Buxton from the junction of High Street and London Road is one of the earliest routes within the town. The route, which connected Buxton with Burbage, formed today by West Road and Macclesfield Road, is clearly indicated as a major road on the 1631 William Senior plan of the town. However, the road connecting Buxton with Macclesfield, past the Cat & Fiddle, was only built when the road was turnpiked in 1759. The Macclesfield / Buxton route began at the West Road / London Road intersection and followed West Road and Macclesfield Road.

West – from Buxton to Leek (1765)

Although the existing route along the pre-existing turnpike (to Macclesfield) was more direct between Buxton and Leek a number of disputes over the use of the turnpike resulted in the creation of this alternative route along Green Lane (then called Leek Road). The Leek / Buxton route, therefore, followed the present A53 and Green Lane. It joined the Macclesfield/ Buxton and Derby /

Road network circa 1770 pre- Crescent



Manchester routes on London Road.

North – from Buxton to Dove Holes via Fairfield (1801)

East - from Buxton to Ashford-in-the-Water (1810)

The road between Buxton and Bakewell was created as a new road, following the route of the Wye in 1810. At the same time the route to Tideswell was created.

The main road network circa 1770 along the route of the River Wye, before the construction of the Crescent, is shown on the sketch plan.

The construction of The Crescent & development of the baths & spa treatments

The development of the Georgian spa at Buxton by the 5th Duke of Devonshire was done as a speculative venture to enable Buxton to compete with other spa towns, most particularly Bath. The Duke’s aim was to maximise rental income from a multi-purpose development that would, within a single shell, provide all the facilities deemed necessary for a Georgian health resort¹. The construction of The Crescent incorporated two large first class hotels² – The Great Hotel (later The Crescent Hotel) and St. Ann’s Hotel – a handsome Assembly Room with ballroom, card and coffee rooms, six good private lodging houses and a series of shops at ground level. All of this was contained within a simple uniformly treated, elegant semi-circle. There was more; the whole scope of work included the development of four new baths and the construction of two bridges crossing the River Wye. A vast new range of public stables and coach-houses was built (The Great Stables) in 1785-89 and provided stalls for in excess of one hundred horses, accommodation for grooms and carriages and a covered ride for use by visitors in inclement weather. In building The Crescent the site of St. Anne’s well was displaced and John Carr designed a new building to house the public well in 1784. Once the building operations were over, it was intended to convert the slopes overlooking the building into a new public garden to replace the one lost by the construction of the new Crescent. It was all contained behind a large wall, with a gated entrance from the bottom of Terrace Road.

By 1811 Buxton had a suite of six baths using the natural mineral water at 82° F (27.5°C) and a further bath, known as the Matlock Bath, whose temperature was raised to 68°F, in order to approximate that of the spring at Matlock Bath. In 1817, in common with other spas, artificial hot baths were installed at Buxton. By the early 19th century, the provision of a complex of baths with access to hot, tepid and cold waters was very fashionable. Bathing water was also available from another spring fed supply at the end of Burlington Road in a complex known as the “Tonic” or “Cold Plunge Bath”. This was fed by warm and cold springs. The original house (2 Macclesfield Road) serving this bath still stands although the bath has been removed and the site developed with a new

1. Ivan Hall – “The Heritage Importance of the Buildings at Buxton”
 2. In the mid 18th century “hotels” were a continental building type being experienced by the newly established tourist classes undergoing the Grand Tour of Europe. The two hotels in the Crescent were amongst the first to be built in the United Kingdom

dwelling (14 Burlington Road).

By 1822 Buxton had seven tepid baths (provided by the thermal water) at the west end of The Crescent and a suite of Hot Baths (artificially heated) at the east end of The Crescent.

The facilities available in Buxton provided the impetus for several eminent doctors to come to Buxton to treat patients. Sir Charles Scudamore came to Buxton from London and practised in Buxton from 1820 to 1848. He wrote several papers on the properties of Buxton water. Dr William Henry Robertson came to Buxton in 1835 from where his reputation grew. He became the pre-eminent water physician extolling the virtues of Buxton water as, in his view, the nitrogen and carbonic acid gases in the mineral water aided the absorption of water through the skin, a theory that was entirely unproven. He was also a well-respected local figure and wrote the main authoritative tourist guidebook to Buxton in the mid 19th century.

The Devonshire Hospital eventually came to play a central role in the development of water medicine at Buxton. The Buxton Bath Charity commenced in 1779 and a bath was specifically designated for the poor, although there had been a “poor bath” provided in 1695 by Cornelius White in association with improvements to The Old Hall. This was supported by public subscription and collection. Public access to Buxton water had always been made available, and is still maintained today at St. Anne’s Well where the water flows freely to residents & visitors alike who arrive with their plastic containers.

The trustees of Buxton Bath Charity wanted a hospital as the various patients had to travel from their various lodgings all over the town to the baths for treatment, and in 1859 the Duke of Devonshire was persuaded to use part of John Carr’s Great Stables, the upper floor of which was converted to provide 120 beds. The stables continued in use until a new site was found north of the railway stations in 1877, when the Devonshire Hospital was able to use the site exclusively for hydrotherapeutic medicine. Between 1879 and 1882 the whole of the Great Stables was adapted by Robert Rippon Duke as a hospital, providing 300 beds.

In spite of the impression of a thriving middle class town, it is important to remember that water treatments were available to all levels of society, and it was not just the rich who came to stay in Buxton. In fact the growth of Buxton during the middle of the 19th century was largely as a result of its promotion as a medical health resort, rather than as a spa leisure resort. The tradition of charitable treatment of the sick within Buxton continued with the treatment of the insane at the Wye Asylum (demolished) and dipsomaniacs at Corbar Hill House (redundant & vacant).

During the 1840s in Britain there was a national movement to promote “hydropathy”. This referred to a cold water cure popularised by Vincent Priessnitz in Austrian Silesia. In England, Captain R. T Claridge is credited with being the first person to publicise this regime, known as the “water cure”. In Matlock, hydropathy took off and a number of establishments (Hydropathics) were developed in the 1850s.

Buxton was slow to take up this movement, as it had no immediate need, other traditional water treatments being available and well respected. Eventually in

1855 the first of several “hydros” was established at Hall Bank, but it was a low-key affair. Eventually, with hydros becoming part of the medical establishment, hydros began to appear in the town. The first was Malvern House Hydro, built in 1866 (demolished). In 1899 it was re-named The Buxton Hydropathic (later the Spa Hotel). The site is now a large block of flats - Hartington Gardens. Others were adapted from pre-existing buildings and lodging houses (Buxton House on Terrace Road & The Clarendon on Manchester Road) and there were two purpose-built hydros on London Road, both outside the conservation area. The Buxton House Hydropathic Hotel was developed into the Peak Hydro in about 1880 but its life was short. It was sold in 1909. The Peak Hydropathic still stands (now in use as Buxton Museum and Art Gallery).

Arrival of the railways

There was a great surge in building activity and influx of visitors and residents in the town after the arrival of the railways. Both the Midland Railway (MR) and the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) connected Buxton with Derby and Whaley Bridge respectively in 1863. This was quite late compared with other towns in Derbyshire and the public conviction in rail travel had already reached such momentum that it must have opened the floodgates. Certainly the sustained campaign of building in the 1860s and 1870s has had a marked impact on the character of the town and can be seen at a glance by the extent of yellow on the development phase plans in the Central and Park conservation areas.

The LNWR was technically promoted by the Stockport, Disley & Whaley Bridge Railway but taken over by the much bigger player. Both lines terminated at the same point. Paired stations with matching massive semi-circular lunette windows were designed. Only the end of the LNWR station survives today.

By 1888 LNWR had started to build a further line in Buxton to connect the town with the Cromford & High Peak Railway (CHPR). This entailed the construction of the two massive viaducts that dominate the end of Spring Gardens and Dukes Drive, to the south of the town. Later in 1899 a line was built to connect Ashbourne with the CHPR at Parsley Hay, so opening up a further route to the south.

In time most of these lines closed, and only the passenger route between Buxton and Manchester has survived, although some of the lines are preserved for freight traffic.

TIMELINE

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

AD 700 Ravenna Cosmography. A monk in the monastery at Ravenna compiles a list of all known towns throughout the Roman Empire. "Aqua Arnemetiae" translates as "The Spa-town of the Sacred Groves".

1536 - Thomas Cromwell initiates the dissolution of the smaller monasteries, which also involves the removal of many shrines and sites of pilgrimage

1572-1584 – The captive Mary Queen of Scots visits Buxton on at least five separate occasions as she is in the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury

1767-74 - The Royal Crescent at Bath is built, designed by John Wood the Younger

EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH BUXTON

1460 – William Worcester makes the first known reference to the curative properties of the water at Buxton in his *Itinerarium* "the source of the waters of Wye...makes many miracles making the infirm healthy, and in winter it is warm, even as honeyed milk"

1536 - Cromwell orders dismantling of St. Anne's shrine ("place of many small miracles")

1568 – St. Anne's Well is restored to use

1572 – Dr John Jones writes "*The Benefit of the auncient Bathes of Buckstones, which cureth most grievous sicknesses, never before published*"

1573 – the Hall is built. By 1577 it is recorded as an "inn", one of only two in Buxton

1636 - Thomas Hobbes writes "*De Mirabilibus Pecci Being The Wonders of the Peak in Darbyshire*", which contrives the seven wonders, including St. Anne's Well (Wonder 6) and Poole's Hole (Wonder 7)

1681 - Charles Cotton writes "The Wonders of The Peake", elaborating on Thos. Hobbes earlier book

1709 – St. Anne's Well is rebuilt

1712 – the baths adjacent to the Old Hall are rebuilt under the instruction of the 2nd Duke of Devonshire

1725 Manchester to Buxton Turnpike – formalised route from the market place in Buxton down Hall Bank, crossed the Wye just beyond the Old Hall Hotel and then followed the Manchester Road north

1759 Sheffield to Buxton Turnpike – the route ran along Spring Gardens (once called Sheffield Road) and crossed the Wye at Bridge Street

1759 Macclesfield to Buxton Turnpike – began at the junction of West Road and London Road and followed West Road & Macclesfield Road

1760 – The Duke of Devonshire builds The Eagle Hotel, replacing The Eagle and Child

1765 Leek to Buxton Turnpike – followed Green Lane

1780 - The 5th Duke of Devonshire commissions John Carr of York to design The Crescent, baths and two bridges over the River Wye

1781 - The Manchester turnpike road is moved with the construction of The Crescent (under the provisions of an Act of 1764) to run down Terrace Road and cross the Wye on a new bridge to the east of The Crescent

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

1797 - Dr James Currie writes “*Medical Reports on the Effects of Water, Cold and Warm, as a remedy in Fevers and other Diseases*”

1814 – Royal Pump Room & Baths built at Leamington Spa

1842 - “*Hydrophaty or the Cold Water Cure*” is published, written by R. T Claridge

1843 – J Wilson “*The Water Cure*” published

1843 – 1847 Birkenhead Park is laid out to plans by Sir Joseph Paxton

1848 – Public Health Act - identifies all the major public health issues of the time & makes public health the responsibility of local people

1851 – The Great Exhibition is held within the Crystal Palace, designed by Sir Joseph Paxton

1858 Medical Act – introduced a General Council of Medical Education and Representation to set & regulate standards

EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH BUXTON

1784 - St. Anne’s Well is remodelled

1785-89 - The Great Stables are built to designs by John Carr of York

1792 – Hall Bank is laid out between 1792 and 1798 and “St. Ann’s Cliff” (The Slopes) is first landscaped in 1792

1796 – “*A Description of Buxton and the Adjacent Country, or the New Guide for Ladies and Gentlemen, Resorting to that Place of Health and Amusement*”, by W. Bott is published

1803-1806 – The 5th Duke commissions John White to re-design the baths and to create more accommodation for visitors by building The Square and to build a new church (St. John The Baptist)

1811 – 5th Duke of Devonshire dies

1812 – White completes St. John’s Church, the new parish church of Buxton

1817 – artificial hot baths installed at Buxton

1818 – Jeffry Wyatt (later known as Wyatville) landscapes the terraced walks overlooking The Crescent

1820 – Sir Charles Scudamore’s treatise on Buxton Water published “*A Chemical & Medical Report of the Properties of the Mineral Waters of Buxton, Matlock, Cheltenham (et al)*”

1838 – Dr W. H. Robertson publishes “*Buxton and its Waters*” c1838 – Serpentine walks and lakes are adapted by Sir Joseph Paxton

c1840 – Paxton modifies The Terraced Walks (The Slopes)

1842 – an early tourist guide is published “*The Buxton Guide and Excursive Companion to the Beauties and the Wonders of the High Peak*”

1849 – The Wesleyan Methodist Church is built on the market place to a design by James Wilson of Bath

1852 – plans for the development of Buxton Park are drawn up by Sir Joseph Paxton
1852-1853 - the Natural & Hot Baths are remodelled to designs by Henry Currey

1853-1864 – The Quadrant is laid out to a plan by Joseph Paxton & detailed design by Henry Currey

1854 – “*A Handbook to the Peak of Derbyshire and to the use of The Buxton Mineral Waters; or Buxton in 1854*” is published, (Dr. W. H. Robertson author)

1859 – John Carr’s Great Stables converted by Henry Currey into “The Devonshire Hospital & Buxton Bath Charity”

1859 – Buxton Local Board is established, and takes responsibility for sewerage, drainage and the provision of the water supply

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

1872 Public Health Act

1894 – Local Government Act

1904 – King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra visit Buxton

1992 - Dept. of National Heritage serves its first ever listed building repairs notice to force the repair of The Crescent

EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH BUXTON

1860 – “*The Buxton Diamond. The Terrace, Gardens, Serpentine, and Corbar Wood Walks*” is published, written by John C. and Henry B. Bates

1863 – construction of the Midland and London & North Western railways (Midland connects Buxton to Derby, LNWR connects Buxton to Stockport & Manchester)

1864 – The Railway Hotel on Bridge Street is built

1864-66 – Palace Hotel is built to designs by Henry Currey

1866 – Buxton Hydro (The Malvern) opens on Hartington Road

1866-1868 – the villas along Cavendish Terrace (Broad Walk) are laid out

1869 – Buxton Improvements Company is formed with a view to creating Winter Gardens for the recreation of visitors to the town

1870-71 – Pavilion Gardens are laid out to designs by Edward Milner

1875 – The Octagon concert hall is built to design by Robert Rippon Duke

1888 – Buxton Improvements Company changes its name to The Buxton Gardens Company

1889 – The Town Hall is built to a design by William Pollard of Manchester

1891 – extended link on the LNWR line between Buxton & the south of the county is provided which creates the new viaduct over Bridge Street

1894 – Buxton Urban District Council is formed

1894 – the Pump Room opposite The Crescent is built to a design by Henry Currey

1901-03 – The Opera House is built to a design by Frank Matcham

1963 – The Hot Baths close

1972 – the Natural Baths close, when a new swimming pool opens at the west end of the Pavilion Gardens

1973 – the Assembly Rooms are converted to the public library

1987 – the Hot Baths are re-opened as a shopping arcade (Cavendish Arcade) and the Tourist Information Centre opens in the old Natural Baths

1989 – “St. Ann’s Hotel” closes

1992 – the Library closes

1993 - St. Ann’s Hotel acquired by High Peak Borough Council

2000 – Devonshire Royal Hospital closes

2005 – The Devonshire Royal Hospital re-opens as part of Derby University - The Devonshire Royal Campus

Key

- ★ Listed Buildings/Structures
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Ancient Monument
(Grid ref 404,970 373,210)

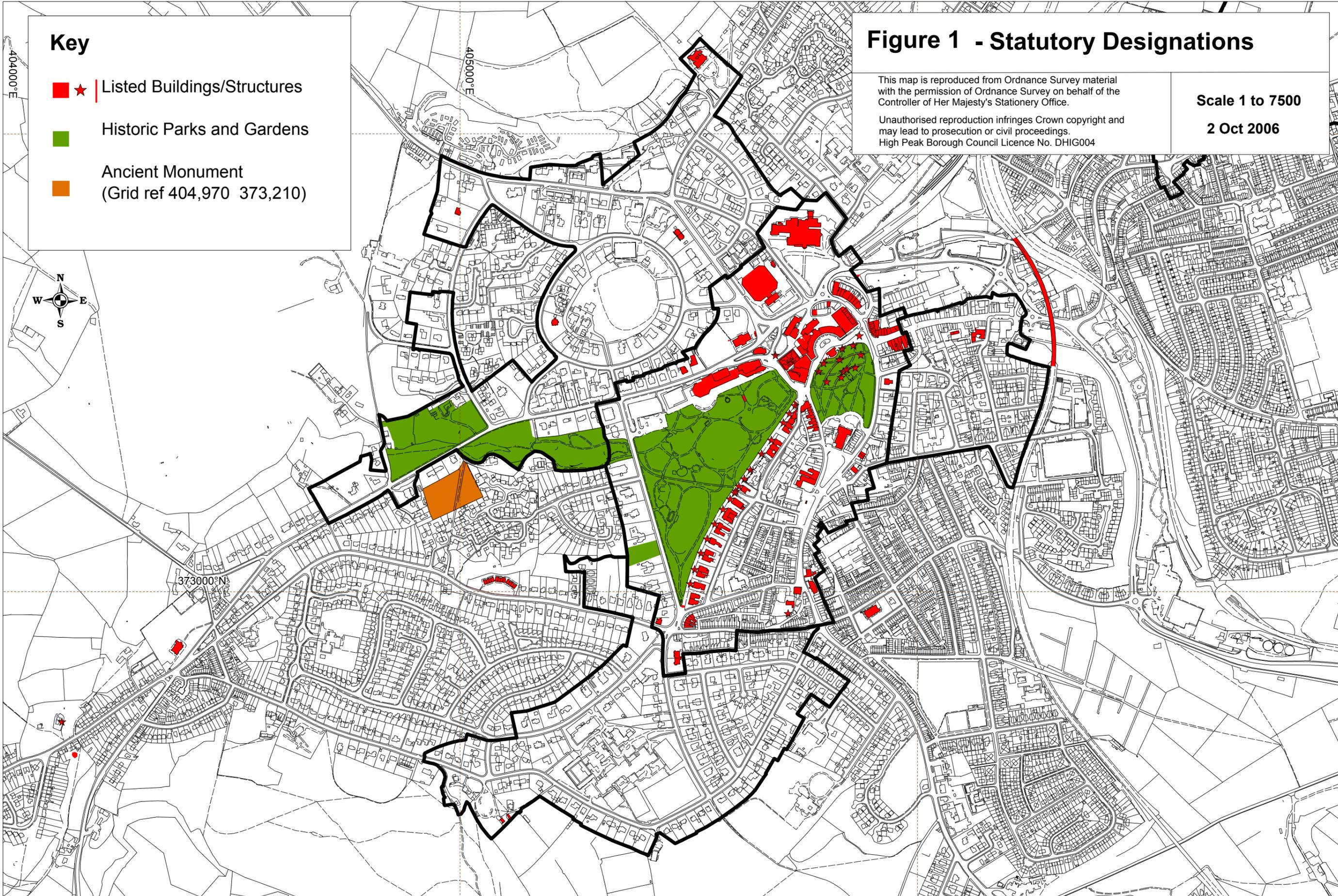
Figure 1 - Statutory Designations

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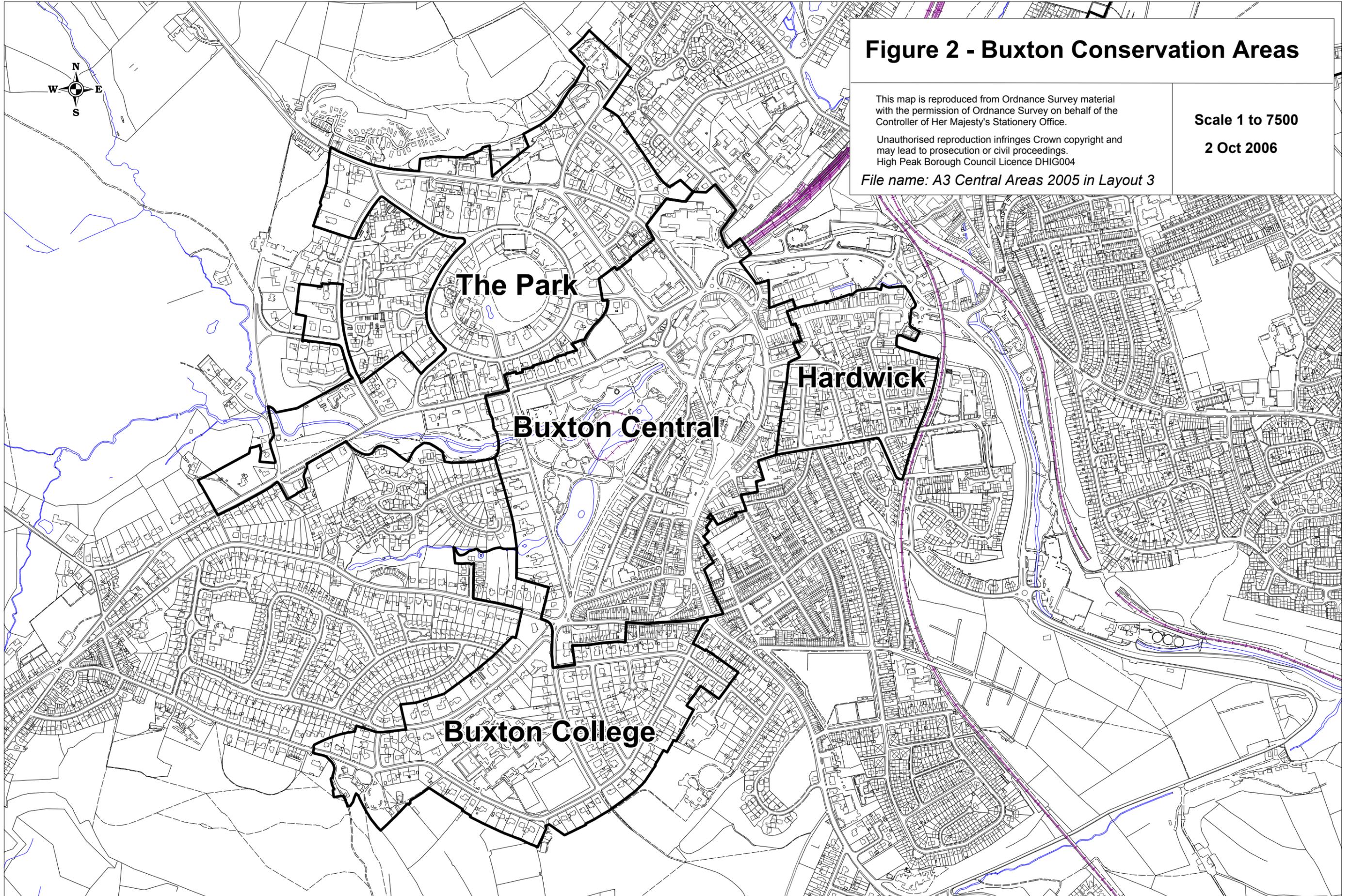


Figure 2 - Buxton Conservation Areas

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Scale 1 to 7500

2 Oct 2006

APPROACHES

The approach from the south along London Road

This ancient approach into the town once followed a Roman road, although the route now takes a meandering approach into the town from the outskirts. It passes through a built-up area, taking the visitor past several large hotels, which started life as hydros. The current conservation area boundary lies just beyond the traffic lights, on High Street, at the junction of High Street, Dale Road, West Road and London Road. This is a large open space at the intersection of five major roads, and now dominated by traffic. High Street rises up, to the north, leading from the junction in a narrow and confined space, enclosed by tall buildings, following the curved alignment of the street, which leads the eye up and into the next space.

The junction was once an important space, the main focal point for visitors from the south and an obvious entrance to the historic town, as the buildings are splayed out at the bottom of High Street. The London Road Inn, which stands on the corner of High Street and West Road, is situated on the perimeter of the medieval settlement.

The approach from the north-east along Fairfield Road

As the road descends the hill from Fairfield, it follows several long bends and the street is lined with bay-fronted terraced town houses, which form a hard edge, enclosing the space. The road passes under a steel railway bridge before opening out into a deep, bowl-shaped valley that is partly enclosed by the immense, overshadowing presence of the viaduct and the imposing backdrop of elevated trees and vegetated limestone outcrop, above the A6 (Bakewell Road). The northern side of the space is more intimate, framed by buildings following the convex arc of the street. The wide arch of the railway viaduct as it passes over the road forms a striking gateway into the town.

The approach from the south-east along Bakewell Road (A6) and Station Road

The route running alongside the River Wye, through the Wye valley (the A6), was a recent creation in the history of the town (1810). To some extent, this reflects the lack of an obvious focal point or sense of arrival in Buxton from this direction. The road through the valley is confined by tree-covered, steep, limestone slopes and is tracked by the Midland Railway on the other side of the valley. It passes a public park, Ashwood Park, which was created in the 1920s. Probably the greatest sense of arrival is when the road passes under the railway viaduct of 1891. At one time, the entrance into the town from the east would have been suggested by crossing the River Wye but a culvert now hides the river. The road then led on through Spring Gardens. Although the bridge over the River Wye was removed, coincidentally it was close to the location of the present giant skew-arch railway bridge that crosses the road.

The closure of Spring Gardens to vehicular traffic and the diversion of traffic along Station Road, removes a purposeful sense of arrival in the town. From Station Road looking west the Station fanlight is a prominent landmark and three further major landmarks can be seen together, aligned on the horizon -

the dome of the Devonshire Royal Campus, the iron cresting on the mansard roofs at The Palace Hotel, and the bell-tower of St. John's Church, an important but entirely coincidental relationship, as most of these buildings predate both the railway line and the road. To the visitor, they help to announce the arrival in Buxton.

From Bridge Street and Station Road the backs of buildings on Spring Gardens are particularly prominent, as are a series of public car parks. This reflects the fact that these spaces were not intended to be seen by the visitor to the town. Like many historic settlements, for much of its history the river frontage was not an important space and was instead used as an open public sewer before the sewerage infrastructure was improved (1860). This area of the town was once dominated by a steam laundry, and later the gas works, and other low-key light industrial and workshop uses before the development of the railway and its sidings. By the end of the 19th century the approach had been softened by trees, which lined Sylvan Park (now the site of a public car park at the foot of the viaduct).

The approach from the north along Manchester Road

From Manchester Road the first sight of Buxton is the terrace of cottages at Nithen End that line the south side of the street. They step down the road and lead the eye along the street and into the town. The cottages are distinctly different from the rest of the houses along Manchester Road, which sit back, deep within large garden plots. The cottages and the small farm complex opposite form a very definite entrance into the town. Behind these farm buildings, the open moorland of Corbar Hill forms a stark backdrop. As the road descends into the town, it becomes leafy and the tree canopy crowds over the road. The immediate character is one of an enclosed space, formed by the dense tree cover on both sides of the road, and little sense of the buildings, shrouded within the trees. There are no long or short views or even glimpses of the town from here. Descending Manchester Road the views eventually open out where it meets Corbar Road and the character becomes gradually more urban. The cupola and the mansard roofs of the Town Hall are prominent landmarks on the horizon. Towards the bottom of the hill, the broad side flank of George Mansions is an immediate focal point and there is an important glimpse of The Crescent through a gap in the buildings between George Mansions and the buildings behind.

The approach from the west along Leek Road & Macclesfield Road

Leek Road leads from Axe Edge and the moor above Buxton down into the town where it joins up with Macclesfield Road & St. John's Road, which start at Burbage. Macclesfield Road is characterised by an almost unbroken belt of suburban housing, much of it developed between the 1920s and 30s. The conservation area boundary includes a number of highly distinctive semi-detached houses at Wye Grove, although the start of the conservation area is not particularly marked. The approach into the town is leafy in character with some substantial houses set within large gardens. There is a marked difference in the quality of the housing at the start of the conservation area. High quality, stone-built Edwardian detached houses on Macclesfield Road lead on to a distinctive row of terraced houses ranged in an arc around the corner of Bath Road, leading the eye up the street. The arcading, arched upper floor windows and distinctive punched quoins are typical of the late 1850s and early 1860s in

Buxton. On the opposite side of West Road a group of small-scale buildings, standing on their own (Numbers 75-79), is a focal point in the view from Burlington Road, and is notable for the decorative “fishscale” slate roofs.

From West Road, where it meets Bath Road, the approach into the conservation area changes as the buildings are altogether smaller in scale and are generally built close to the road, with little private space. There are some notable exceptions, set high up on the south side of the road – Hartington Terrace and Belvedere Terrace. The approach is quite broad with a gentle gradient, which contrasts markedly with the limestone crags that outcrop on both sides of the street behind the main frontage. It seems quite likely, therefore, that at an early date a large amount of limestone was removed to even out the topography and engineer a route through the limestone in this location.

The approach from the west along Leek Road follows the small tributaries of the Wye downstream, and the gently sloping land within the upper levels of the valley, eventually becoming St. John’s Road. In this part of the valley, the topography provided more shelter and the land is settled for a long distance. The conservation area commences with the heavily planted park and fields at Gadley Lane, just before the River Wye passes under the road.

IEWS AND LANDMARKS

The main views and landmarks within the conservation area are illustrated on the townscape analysis maps within each character area (see Part Three).

There are a few key locations where there are far reaching views that help to define Buxton, where several landmark buildings can be see together. These are described in detail within Part Three (Character Areas).

Views

From the highest points in the town, there are opportunities for **panoramic views** across the River Wye and its valley. Despite this dramatic topography, much of the town is inward looking and the wider landscaped setting was not heavily exploited in the views. Dense plantations create a green fringe to the horizon without drawing attention to the wider setting of the town, apart from creating a more lush character. There are a few significant panoramic views, which appear to have been deliberately exploited, where the rise of the ground creates a vantage point on the edge of the limestone plateau, or on the broad flank of the gritstone, where the occasional large open space provides sufficient height above the tree canopy to enjoy the panorama;

- the vista from the north end of High Street looking south towards Solomon's Temple
- the vista from the Slopes and Hall Bank looking towards The Crescent and Devonshire Royal Campus with the backdrop of Corbar Woods
- the vista from the top of Holker Road looking north to the hills at Corbar Hill and beyond to Combs Moss. This is unfortunately marred by the presence of the industrial units within the former railway sidings
- the vista from the cricket pitch at Buxton Park, looking south towards Higher Buxton and Solomon's Temple
- the vista from the bottom of Hardwick Square West to the hills beyond to the north



▲ *Panoramic view from The Slopes*

Where there are open public parks there are a variety of views. There is a marked contrast in the open character of the Georgian Terrace (The Slopes) overlooking The Crescent and the enclosed character of the Victorian Pavilion Gardens, surrounded by railings and shrubberies. The Slopes were planted with trees in the early 20th century and the original designed views have been radically altered.

The Pavilion Gardens were laid out in a Victorian style of gardening in 1870, which created a largely planted edge to the perimeter of the garden, further contained by railings. It was essentially an enclosed public space with few views and vistas connected to the surrounding town and its wider setting. Views were intimate and contrived within a tight framework. The same devices apply

to the Serpentine Walks, between Burlington Road and St. John's Road, which were created within narrow embanked contours.

There are occasional glimpses between Broad Walk and the Milner gardens and there are exchanges of view between The Square and the gardens. During the later extension of the Pavilion Gardens, at the end of the 19th century, the ideas of public parks had changed and the park became more open in character without railings or boundary walls. The views are more open and expansive from Broad Walk to the upper lake and into the park from Burlington Road.

The same sense of privacy and enclosure can be said for a great deal of the town laid out during the early Victorian period. Tall buildings (often three or more storeys) situated on the slope of the hill between Burlington Road, Bath Road, Hartington Road and St. James Terrace, and associated tree-lined avenues, provide containment, with few opportunities for long public views across the valley. The main exceptions are the private views enjoyed by the houses themselves.

As the town grew in the late 19th and early 20th century, streets were laid out with more generous dimensions, and comprised lower, mainly two storey buildings, many houses built by private commission (e.g. Carlisle Road and Temple Road). This created a more open character with fewer landmarks and the urban framework is less rigid and distinct, with fewer glimpsed views.

Glimpsed Views

There are three particular areas where a series of glimpsed views are highly significant and help to characterise the settlement:

1. Hardwick Square - the land falling between the plateau and the river valley, the network of old footpath alignments (Trinity Passage and the path between Hardwick Mount and Holker Road) and the generous spacing of the semi-detached villas enables glimpses of local landmarks. From Hardwick Square West there are intermittent glimpses of landmarks to the west – the clock tower, lantern and ironwork crestings on the mansard roofs at the Town Hall, the corner copper-clad cupola on the Buxton Museum buildings, and the bell-cote on St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church. To the east, around Hardwick Square and Holker Road, there are glimpses between the buildings of the tower of Trinity Church.

2. Behind the Crescent, there is a network of narrow roads and passages falling between George Street, Manchester Road, The Square and The Quadrant. Here, buildings were sometimes squeezed between the roads and the back of The Crescent. The 18th century changes to the road network have resulted in unusual circulation patterns and a series of awkward spaces, with a few "pinchpoints" formed by the clashing angles of buildings and glimpses between buildings of attractive focal points in the street (the arched windows of The Quadrant & the arched end window of the Devonshire Hospital Pump Room). The relationship between public and private space is confusing for both pedestrian and car driver, as the spaces fluctuate between open areas and narrow confined spaces.

3. Within Higher Buxton the historic street pattern, with its various back alleys

often singled out by surviving gritstone setts, and backyards visible from the main street, under an arch or between buildings, provides a rich network of glimpsed views of the old parts of the town and a sense of its more complex evolution along High Street and Church Street. There are interesting views of buildings in different streets or glimpses down a winding street, particularly behind St. Anne's Church and behind the east side of the High Street, leading into South Street and Hobson's Court.

Landmarks

The principal landmarks in Buxton before 1800 were Buxton Hall (Old Hall), The Crescent and The Great Stables. John Carr exploited the topography to enable long views of these buildings from high vantage points at the top of The Slopes and descending Terrace Road and Hall Bank. The importance of these landmarks and their theatrical stage-like setting is illustrated by the number of early paintings and engravings of these buildings, taken from the south, showing them in their landscape context. The triangular pediment at the front of the Stables building was a focal point in views before this was overshadowed in the late 19th century by the Rippon Duke dome. Although the Great Stables (Devonshire Royal Campus) is still present in many key views, the presence of The Crescent and its landmark status has shifted with the increase in the tree canopy and change to the open character of The Slopes, from where its full impact and grandeur could once be appreciated. Now it is only clearly visible approached obliquely. Views are much clearer in the winter, but even then from The Slopes the whole panoply of the elevation is not visible at once. Before 1780 and the construction of The Crescent, the landmark status of key buildings was signified by their height. Several buildings in Higher Buxton were built a full four storeys and this made them stand out from the crowd, even though the buildings themselves were relatively plainly treated (The Eagle Inn, The White Hart).



▲ *Glimpsed view - Church Street*



▲ *Landmark mansard roof at The Palace Hotel*



▲ *The Town Hall cupola*

As the town expanded and grew in the mid 19th century, and the tree canopy grew, the landmarks became less obvious and architects and builders appear to have looked for new ways to create landmark buildings. Height and size alone were no longer sufficient to make an impact.

The undulating landform was exploited by the architects of the mid to late 19th century in their designs, which sometimes incorporated features that have become local landmarks; a tower, spire or cupola, dome, louvred vent, finial or fleche. Buxton benefits from a large number of these features.

The topography lends itself to the creation of landmarks. Although many relationships were deliberately contrived, equally many are coincidental. With the changes to the road layout over the years, and the demolition of a number of historic buildings, it is sometimes difficult to separate these.

By the end of the 19th century the low-lying part of Buxton, along the route of the Wye, was characterised by a series of major buildings, which have iconic status. Although they are not necessarily landmarks in the true sense of the term, as structures visible from afar, they are immediately identifiable. The Opera House, distinctive for its paired ribbed domes and its exuberant, compact entrance frontage with its central Diocletian window, is approached obliquely and is a delightful surprise. It is not an obvious landmark, by contrast with St. John's Church, which was designed to be approached from the east, as the road sweeps around past The Quadrant.



▲ *St. John's cupola*

The possibilities for creating expansive views and landmarks were enhanced by the breadth of the streets and the generous plot sizes and spaces between buildings. Within Marlborough Road and Devonshire Road, the dome of the Devonshire Royal Campus building is an occasional landmark, and from areas within Buxton Park the dome of The Octagon is a prominent feature. The quality of the incidental and glimpsed views is one of the most significant elements of the townscape and would be all too easy to lose.

The most prominent landmarks within the town are:

- The Crescent
- The Devonshire Royal Campus dome, clock tower & four small domes
- The cupola to St. John's Church
- The mansard roof to The Palace Hotel
- The tower of Trinity Church
- The railway station fanlight
- The mansard roof and the cupola of the Town Hall



▲ *The Town Hall cupola & bellcote to the Roman Catholic Church*

Most of these landmarks are visible from a wide geographical area outside the conservation areas.

Sadly, a large number of Buxton's churches and chapels have been demolished during the 20th century, which has resulted in the loss of significant landmarks. These landmarks once served to help with orientation around the town, there being few natural landmarks that stand out beyond the confines of the town. The main exception is **Solomon's Temple**, built in 1896 to replace an earlier building and designed by local architect G. E. Garlick. It is a major landmark on the southern horizon, outside the conservation areas and is prominent from a number of places;

- From High Street, looking south
- From the Cricket Pitch and Park Road ring at Buxton Park
- From the end of Rock Terrace

In long streets (both residential avenues and commercial areas) where there were not the same possibilities for creating landmarks, the rhythm of the street was occasionally interrupted with a focal point of interest (a local landmark), sometimes within the street and sometimes at the corner of two streets. A canted end with decorative moulded stonework and carved panels was a particular local feature. These are illustrated on the character maps as focal points (e.g. The Royal Hotel, The Savoy, 2 Torr Street, The Hydro Tea Rooms).



▲ *The copper clad cupola to Buxton Museum & Art Gallery*



▲ *Roofscape of the Town Hall - pavilion mansard roofs enliven the skyline and create depth*

LANDSCAPE QUALITY

Trees and the wider setting

From within Buxton, trees are one of the most significant elements that help to define the character of the town and its landscaped setting. They:

- define the horizon in many views looking out of the town to the hillsides beyond
- provide a lush foreground for the setting of large villas
- provide structure and balance where they line the streets as formal avenues (e.g. Hardwick Square East and West, College Road, Marlborough Road, Hartington Road, Burlington Road)
- provide counterpoint to buildings and soften views when planted intermittently along the edge of the road (e.g. Hardwick Square South & Silverlands)
- fill open public spaces (e.g. the Hardwick Mount, the square in front of The George Hotel)
- particular species selected for their foliage, bark or habit, provide visually stimulating focal points in gardens and public parks
- provide valuable wildlife corridors

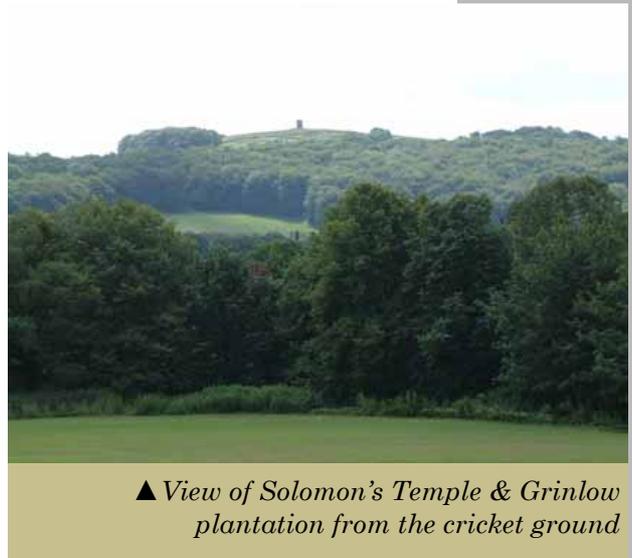
The Devonshire Estate established plantations around the town from the early 1800s, encircling the town; Grin, Brown Edge, Burbage Edge, Staden, Corbar, Cold Springs, Sherbrook, Gadley & Lightwood. By contrast with the 18th century engravings of the town and views out, when there was little sign of any tree-cover, the backdrop has changed dramatically over the years. The local Devonshire Estate agent, Phillip Heacock, was responsible for much of the tree-planting programme during his time in his official position (1805-1851).

Tree cover was an important consideration even in the late 18th century, illustrated by the controversy over felling the trees at The Grove, during the construction of The Crescent.

Street trees

Early photographs show that when College Road was developed in 1892, at the same time an avenue of trees was planted along its length. It is not possible to be precise about when the avenues of street trees were introduced into Buxton. It is most likely that they were introduced from the 1880s and 1890s, as there are none indicated on the detailed first edition Ordnance Survey map (1879). It was at this time that the preoccupation with health had almost become a national obsession and trees were seen as a barrier to dust, and therefore a health benefit. This was particularly appropriate in Buxton, the health resort.

Given that many of the trees within the town were planted when the streets were laid out at the end of the 19th century, many specimens have suffered



▲ *View of Solomon's Temple & Grinlow plantation from the cricket ground*

from compaction damage, drought and damage to roots. There have been a number of losses, particularly along the avenues. Many trees are not protected by Tree Preservation Orders and instead the mechanism of conservation area legislation gives them some protection, but this is limited and is largely reactive to threats. Many of the trees, which are not veteran, are unrecognised for their streetscape value or individual significance. Some were species introduced into Britain in the 19th century as part of the development of towns and parks.



▲ *Street trees on College Road*

Within Buxton there are a number of streets that were developed with avenues of street trees. These are;

- Marlborough Road – lime & sycamore
- Hardwick Square East – broad-leaved lime and sycamore
- Hardwick Square West - broad-leaved lime and sycamore
- Hardwick Square South – incomplete avenue of sycamore & lime
- Burlington Road – mainly sycamore on the west side only
- Hartington Road – lime and sycamore
- West Road – (north side only) sycamore, depleted
- Bath Road – (south side only) mainly sycamore, some lime
- College Road – lime and sycamore
- Robertson Road – mainly sycamore, but depleted
- Spencer Road – horse chestnut, sycamore, lime, depleted
- Green Lane – fragments of sycamore, lime, beech & rowan
- Carlisle Road – fragments of sycamore

There are only four trees on the Market Place (3 sycamore & 1 lime), rather stunted and in poor condition. In the early 20th century there were many more (see Plate 4).

Trees in general

Most of the avenues within the town were planted with sycamore and lime, although others may have not survived the occasionally harsh climate and disease (e.g. elm and oak). Trees generally grow at a slower rate and are slightly smaller than the national average in Buxton. The sycamores tend to be small-leaved and the character of the bark indicates many 19th century specimens.

There are a number of large horse chestnuts planted in important public spaces, which provide a large, lush canopy and shade, although during 2006 they have suffered from the drought conditions. Several elms have died in 2006 as a result of the drought conditions. Within large gardens and parks, there are also a number of beech, many possibly dating from the early 19th century.

In accordance with the fashionable introduction of large numbers of conifers in the 19th century, Buxton has a high proportion of conifers. By far the greatest numbers are yew, supplemented with cypresses, cedars and pines, and these were largely introduced by Joseph Paxton, Edward Milner, and Head

Gardeners from the Devonshire Estate.

Public Parks

The main public parks lie within the bottom of the Wye valley, and thread together along the route of the River, but there are large areas of public walks within the woods created by the Dukes of Devonshire on the surrounding hillsides (e.g. Corbar & Grinlow) and these are an important part of the setting of the conservation areas.

The parks have very different characters, although they are interrelated in the way that they have been managed and planted over the years. The open character of The Slopes, for example, with its strong geometric pattern of paths, flights of steps and majestic classical urns, exemplifies the Georgian character of public parks. In contrast, the Serpentine Walks are hidden away and exemplify the mid 19th century fashion for containment and intimate public gardens.



▲ *Bandstand in the Pavilion Gardens*

One of the strongest characteristics of the public parks is the importance given to public recreation - the use of the space for physical activity - and this reflects the emphasis on the inland resort as a health-driven spa, and not just a place for relaxation and entertainment. In the first half of the 19th century the main emphasis was on public walks and getting fresh air. By the second half of the 19th century, this popular pastime had been taken over by bowling greens, roller-skating and ice-skating rinks, tennis courts, boating and a cricket ground (at Buxton Park). In recent years the emphasis has changed again to children's playgrounds and train rides, whilst for adults access to the outdoors has become more challenging and comfortable and walking in the hills has taken over in popularity.

Hard landscaped spaces

Buxton is blessed with generous, broad streets particularly in the core areas - the Market Place, Terrace Road, The Crescent and The Square. Here, at the intersection of the main streets, there are now large expanses of hard landscaping, using traditional stone materials:

- The space surrounding Turner's Memorial, at the intersection of Terrace Road, The Crescent and Grove Parade
- The Market Place
- The forecourt to the Opera House

The most formal open area that has not been restored is the forecourt to The Crescent.

It is easy to assume that these paved spaces are based on historic paving finishes, but all of these spaces started life as parts of the highway, at the intersection of several public roads, and the majority of these spaces were once

covered with bound limestone pitching, a hard-wearing surface, used for areas exposed to large amounts of traffic before the advent of tarmac. Yorkstone pavements were mainly restricted to aprons in front of the buildings. Today these spaces provide important areas where the public can relax and enjoy the sights and sounds, without fear of being run over by a car.

Gardens

The trees and shrubs that fall within private domestic gardens are part of the whole landscape of Buxton, and it is often difficult to draw a distinction in the canopy between the public parks, avenues and trees in private gardens. This is illustrated very effectively where the loss of trees and shrubs, in private gardens, such as within Buxton Park, creates an obvious hole in the character of the conservation area. Although many streets are lined with boundary walls, equally many are lined with privet and yew hedges, which make a significant contribution to the lush, green setting of the conservation areas.

In the 19th century there were a large number of journals and books published on gardening and the main emphasis was on how the house and garden should be designed as a unity. The most influential books, that influenced the design and layout of the middle class garden, were: “The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion” J. C. Loudon (1838), “How to Lay out a Garden” Edward Kemp (1850), and “The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds of Small Extent” Frank Scott (1870). These were supplemented by regular journals such as “The Garden” – a magazine published by William Robinson in 1870, then “Gardening Illustrated” in 1879.

J. C. Loudon was one of the most influential figures in architecture and garden design in the 19th century. He pointed out the importance of the “*connexion of Villa Architecture with Landscape Gardening*” and commented in detail on how to lay out a villa and its aspect. Although he was largely advising on the layout of estates for the upper classes and upper middle classes, his advice trickled down to the middle classes and the same principles can be seen reflected in the layout of the small villas and their gardens throughout Buxton, but most particularly in Buxton Park, Devonshire Park and Broad Walk:

*“The Position of the House.....This is to be effected, first, and principally, by elevating the base or platform from which the structure appears to rise; and secondly, by the disposition of the plantations by which it is connected with the surrounding scenery...by raising the house on a platform of twenty or thirty feet high, or more, according to the dimensions of the house; and by connecting this platform with the surrounding grounds and plantations, by gradations of terraces and shrubberies, the main body of the house will be raised higher than the highest of the surrounding trees.....In order to make the most of a villa residence, it is found desirable to have the grounds around the house laid out in two distinct characters. The surface on the entrance front should be so disposed as to be in a less refined style of design and ornament than that on the other fronts; or at least, on that generally designated the lawn front, or that on the drawing-room side of the house. This side should in all cases, look towards the best views which the situation affords.” (Loudon, *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm & Villa Architecture*, 1846)*

Edward Kemp was a garden designer and author who trained at Chatsworth under Paxton. He assisted Paxton with the design of Birkenhead Park and Hesketh Park in 1864. His book “How to lay out a Garden” (1850) became an

instant success and an important influence on the High Victorian style. This was aimed at the middle classes, with gardens smaller than those addressed by Loudon.

His advice on the layout of a garden for a formal style of house (Grecian, Roman or Italian) would have influenced the villa gardens at Buxton;

“Commencing at the house, which should always be raised three or four feet above the common ground level, this may be supported by either a flat grass platform, with a grass slope from it to the edge of a walk below, or what is better, the walk may be on the level of the house, and parallel with it, and either a sloping grass bank, or a low ornamental wall, break the change of level.....the grass at the edge of the walk, whether on top of the bank or at the bottom of the slope, should be quite flat....and this rule must not be departed from in any similar case.....A terrace walk at the top of a slope, and close to the house, has the advantage of commanding a good view of the whole garden, with the symmetry of its arrangements....”

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of Buxton reveals just how many flat lawns were designed as part of the grounds of the villas. The creation of lawns for private gardens within towns is largely a mid 19th century phenomenon. Until the invention of the lawnmower in 1830, only the very wealthy could afford a lawn, mown by hand-scything.

He regarded the use of *serpentine lines* as the characteristic of the *mixed style* and certainly this appears to be what Paxton was seeking to attain at Buxton Park. Kemp’s advice was that *“on the whole, the mixed style, with a little help from both the formal and the picturesque, is altogether best suited for small gardens. An absolute adherence to one style is not, therefore, to be reckoned among the paramount virtues of the art; but only one style should predominate and either of the others be quietly introduced....”*

The most important conclusion to draw from this historic evidence is that the house and its garden were integral in the mid to late 19th century, and usually designed at the same time. Both form a strong characteristic of the historic and architectural interest of Buxton.

ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY

Although Buxton has undisputedly one of the finest Georgian buildings in England in The Crescent and several landmark buildings such as the Opera House, the town as a whole is most marked for its large concentration of exceptional Victorian housing. It also contains a large amount of high quality turn of the century Arts and Crafts housing.

The vast majority of buildings within the conservation areas make a positive contribution to the character of Buxton. For this reason, only the negative or neutral buildings are highlighted on the Character Area Maps (Part Three).

Early on in the Georgian period, the Duke of Devonshire employed architects with a national reputation. As time went on, with the great growth in the architectural profession, more local architects were used during the 19th century, but even some of these enjoyed a national reputation (such as Joseph Paxton, and much later Barry Parker).

Buxton is significant for the dominant presence of buildings conceived by a handful of designers appointed by the Duke of Devonshire; John Carr, Joseph Paxton, Henry Currey, Robert Rippon Duke & W. R. Bryden. Their influence can be felt throughout the town. To a lesser extent, towards the end of the 19th century, George E. Garlick & William Holland also made a contribution to the architecture of the town.

The Devonshire Estate agent was a key figure in the growth of urban Buxton (Langham). The estate had complete control over new development on its land through the role of the Devonshire Estate Agent. There were only a handful of agents during the 19th century, as they tended to stay in the post for many years, which meant continuity and probably a certain degree of conservatism as the estate controlled development through restrictive covenants. These agents would have had a significant interest in the building styles and naturally adopted their own particular tastes and preferences in controlling development.

The Devonshire Estate control over development had an unusual effect on the pattern of growth. Unlike other major towns, it was not subject to the same commercial pressures on development, although it was not averse to speculation. Large areas of land and streets were laid out on the basis of speculative growth. However, unlike speculative builders, the estate could afford to wait until the right time for development. The Burlington Hotel, for example, was built by the Devonshire Estate as a commercial venture. Elsewhere within England, the kinds of speculative development undertaken in the second half of the 19th century created huge varieties of building styles and exploited the widest range of available materials. In Buxton, the estate insisted on good quality local building stone and this predominance only changed from the 1900s. Where it did not have control over development, greater differences in building tradition and materials emerge.

As a result, the town doesn't have a straightforward history of building styles that can easily be attributed to particular periods. For example, the classical style villas, with their large overhanging bracketed eaves that are typical of the late Georgian period (up to 1840) are plentiful in Buxton, occurring throughout the 19th century.

Part of the architectural quality of the town is the relationship between the buildings and their immediate garden and wider parkland setting. This can be largely attributed to the Devonshire Estate in laying out a large part of the residential road network and dictating the building lines and alignments and later the Local Board. One of the provisions of the bye-laws was that “no building (was) to be erected on the side of any new street within 10ft of the edge of the footpath”.

The scale and density of buildings within Buxton has changed over the years, from tight-knit, dense development along High Street to well-spaced, bespoke, detached houses within Buxton Park. Towards the end of the 19th century detached and semi-detached house plots were becoming smaller and the density increased in areas such as Robertson Road.

With the commercial confidence in the town at an all time high in the early 20th century, the town attracted some large multi-national companies who were able to stamp their own brand of architecture onto the commercial core of Spring Gardens; Marks & Spencer, Boots and The Co-op each had their own style that is still evident today.

Key buildings are highlighted in bold in the text. These are largely those iconic buildings that are admired and which people immediately associate with Buxton.

The architectural quality of Buxton is described in terms of the main building types, then the main building styles and finally the prevalent building materials and details.

Main Building Types

Hotels & lodging houses

Buxton has more than its fair-share of purpose-built hotels, ranging from the earliest (the 16th century Old Hall, later absorbed into The Old Hall Hotel) to the splendid late 18th century “Crescent”, which at one time contained three hotels, and the mid 19th century Palace Hotel, one of the most prominent landmarks in the town.

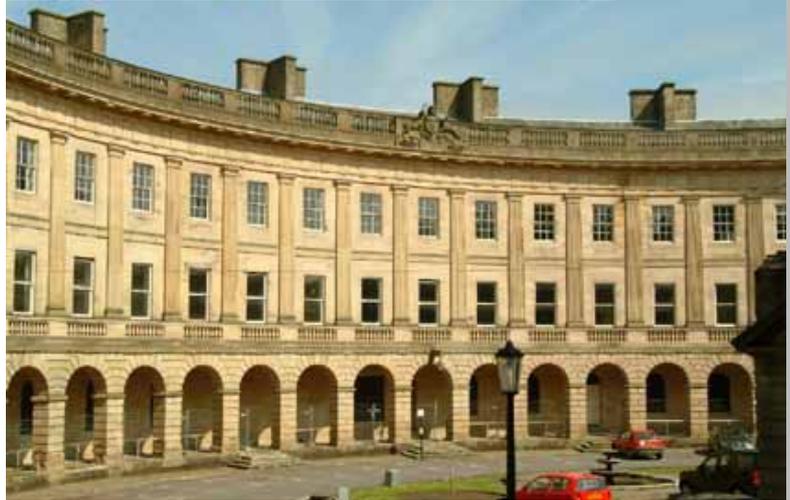
The Old Hall Hotel is the oldest known building in Buxton, although this is not at first apparent. The front elevation dates from 1725, and disguises a 16th century core, but the mid 19th century sash windows belie its considerable age. As the location of the original spa hotel, and the building occupied by Mary Queen of Scots, it is of national importance.

As his first venture in providing accommodation for visitors to Buxton in the 18th century, The Duke of Devonshire built **The Eagle** (c1760), as a replacement for the earlier coaching inn (The Eagle and Child) on the market place and in 1806 he acquired **The George Hotel** (c1770) from another private owner. **The Eagle** was a striking building, a four-storey purpose-built hotel, now completely overshadowed by its neighbour **Eagle Parade**, a block of commercial shops with flats over.

The Eagle and The George Hotel are unusual and rare survivals of purpose-built Georgian spa hotels. They were taken over in significance by the

construction of The Crescent, on a new site at the foot of the hill. The Grove is an old hotel that started life as a coffee house (c1776). It changed, grew and adapted over the years but was largely successful because it occupied a strategic position in the town.

The Crescent (1780-89) designed by John Carr of York is probably the best-known building in Buxton and is arguably of equal significance to other **Georgian** buildings of national importance, such as Nash's Royal Crescent in Bath. The front elevation is an elegant semicircle with an open ground floor arcade of rusticated ashlar. The walls are enlivened with repeated giant fluted Roman Doric pilasters, a guilloche band and a deep cornice. It is both simple in design, and quite breathtaking in execution, the epitome of the best Georgian architecture.



The former **Royal Hotel** (now 5-17 Spring Gardens), built in 1852 and designed by Samuel Worth, is another monumental building, built in a style known as the "palazzo" style, part of the **Italian Renaissance Revival**. The style originated in Rome and was employed by architects of the Renaissance for large town houses (or small palaces) in the centre of the City, e.g. The Palazzo Farnese. It was entirely apt that it should be adopted in Buxton, with its Roman roots. In the early Victorian period architects such as Charles Barry used the palazzo-style for large public buildings. It was also a favourite style for the new gentlemen's clubs – Mansion at Kensington Palace Gardens (J. T. Knowles, 1847) and, closer to home, The Atheneum in Sheffield (George Alexander 1848). The former Royal Hotel, which incorporates an elegant curved front, is comparable with these buildings.

The Palace Hotel (1864-66), designed by Henry Currey and built in a **Second Empire Style**, is a major landmark within the town and commands a key location at the junction of several strategic routes. It is a hugely impressive building raised up above Station Road, and set at the back of its plot with tiers of terraced lawns in the forefront. It is highly decorative, with cast iron balustrades to the balconies, French windows leading onto these balconies, and mansard roofs with dormer windows, each one finished with a cast iron finial. The central mansard roof has a cast iron cresting. The building is embellished with a great deal of stone carving including an "aedicule" to each window and an exaggerated stone bracketed cornice.

In the same year that The Palace Hotel was built (1864), following the opening of the railway lines, **The Railway Hotel** was built, in a completely different style of picturesque **Gothic Revival**. This, in its own more low-key way is also a key building at the east entrance into the town and the original attention to detail has been carefully preserved.

Of the principal hotels, The Palace, The Old Hall Hotel and The Grove are still used as hotels and The Crescent is to be returned to this use in time.

As well as the main hotels, a large number of small hotels and lodging houses were built around the town, many of which are still in use for this purpose. The character of these small hotels and lodging houses relates closest to the 19th century villas (e.g. The Buckingham, The Lee Wood Hotel, The Bedford & Portland Hotel). **The Savoy** of 1874 (formerly The Burlington) on Hall Bank, and designed by Robert Rippon Duke, however, is different as it has similarities with commercial warehouses in Manchester & Nottingham, by having a large proportion of window glass to wall. It was designed with rounded corners, an elegant architecture which made use of the aspect and views of the townscape through its large sash windows of curved sheet glass.



▲ *The former Savoy Hotel*

Public Houses

There is a clear distinction between the scale of the hotels and large purpose-built lodging houses and the more intimate scale of the traditional public houses in Buxton. The pubs stand out from the crowd. In some cases this is because they were not owned or built by the Devonshire Estate and very often they were built with cheaper materials. The scale of the two-storey Cheshire Cheese and The Sun Inn on High Street, both set back behind the main building frontage, is particularly noticeable within the predominantly three-storey Victorian terraces on either side. Other pubs such as The Queen's Head and The Swan had a long history of use and the many phases of evolution can be clearly seen externally. At one time they were respectively rendered and limewashed to disguise these alterations.

Detached & semi-detached villas

There are several hundred villas in Buxton, most of which make a strong contribution to the character of the conservation areas. Almost every one of these houses or lodgings was built from high quality materials – gritstone with natural slate roofs and bespoke joinery. Most have additional details, in the form of stone carving or unusual joinery at the eaves or verge, that make them unique or unusual. With the amount of tree growth in the town, obscuring views and encasing private gardens, it is sometimes difficult to appreciate just the enormous quantity of villas within the conservation areas and the variety of detail. These take a large number of forms although the predominant model had a symmetrical front elevation, sometimes shared by a pair of semi-detached houses.

One of the most common devices found on both two and three-storey detached villas is the use of a symmetrical frontage with a central door and a segmental arched window or aedicule above, framed by a two-storey bay window on either side. This is commonly used along St. John's Street and Broad Walk. Elsewhere, the semi-detached houses either double up this model (e.g. 16 & 17, 21 & 22 Broad Walk) or they adopt a Gothic character.

Terraced Houses

There is a distinct difference between the regular, orderly rhythm of terraced buildings in Georgian Buxton and the staccato street frontages of Victorian Buxton. The flat and largely plain, restrained frontages of most of the Georgian buildings, embellished by perhaps only a single horizontal raised band or a

plinth or a stone architrave around the window (The George Hotel, The New Inn, The Eagle Inn), gave way to much more exuberant designs - pronounced extended eaves, with highly decorative brackets, multiple bay windows, decorative carved stonework, dormer windows and canted corners.

This exuberance characterises much of the Victorian terraced housing within Buxton. The repeated rhythm of attic dormers with gabled roofs, bay windows and chimneys makes a major contribution to the character of the town. There are a large number of groups of between four and eight houses within a terrace, and some with as many as eighteen (Bath Road).

Commercial Terraces

There are equally important commercial terraces that make up a large part of the character of the commercial streets. The best examples of commercial terraces (Eagle Parade, 10-28 Spring Gardens & The Quadrant) have a dual purpose – they are of high quality designs in their own right but also have a townscape function and help to create a strong architectural framework for the two commercial areas of the town.

Churches

With the growth of the town during the second half of the 19th century, there was increased demand for places of worship. A number of Anglican churches were built to cater for the increase in population. The main one was St. John's Church, a landmark building built in a classical style. Of the other landmark buildings, both The Church of St. James (1870-71) built on Bath Road and the Church of Holy Trinity (1873) built off Hardwick Mount, initially as a chapel of ease, were demolished in the 20th century.

The Roman Catholic Church was opened in 1861 on Terrace Road and this still stands, an exercise in simple Early English style by J. J. Scholes, as does Trinity Church off Hardwick Square, designed by R. R. Duke, but dominated now by an ungainly extension. In addition, a handful of non-conformist churches were built, but given the size of community, there were relatively few of these. A further landmark Wesleyan Methodist Church within Devonshire Park was demolished. The loss of these buildings has depleted the town of some of its most striking landmarks and Gothic buildings.

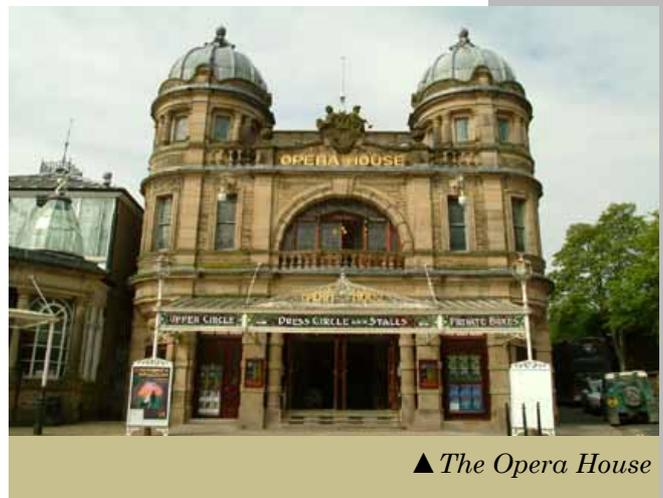
Other Key Buildings

There are three landmark buildings that don't fall within a building category. They are each unique, incorporating one-off designs.

The Opera House

Designed by the best theatre architect of his day, Frank Matcham, in 1903, the building is described by The Theatres Trust as "a masterpiece of Edwardian theatre architecture". The frontage occupies a tight space into which Matcham pushed a large amount of sumptuous detail, incorporating

robust carved stonework. The narrow central bay and entrance are framed by fluted and banded Doric columns, above which sits a Roman Diocletian window, surmounted by draped figures seated on either side of a central lyre.



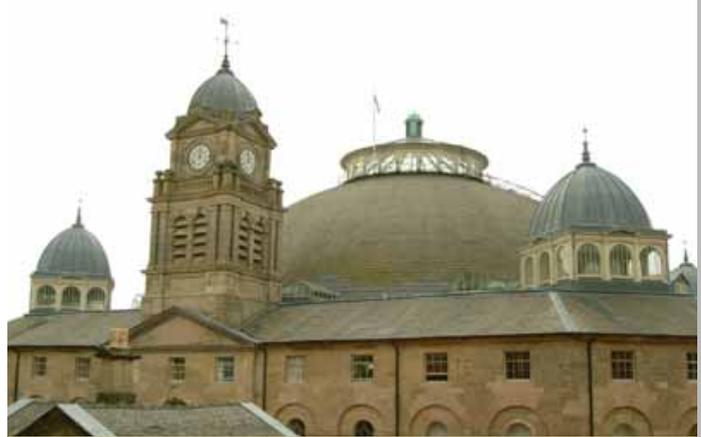
▲ *The Opera House*

On either side of the entrance bay he positioned a pair of ribbed lead domes on low drum-shaped towers using Baroque details. The side flank of the Opera House facing Water Street has a utilitarian function, forming the stage entrance, but was enriched with narrow pilasters and pediments.

Frank Matcham was also the designer of “The Hackney Empire”, The Tower Ballroom in Blackpool and The Grand Opera House in Belfast. He was renowned for his opulent interiors and exuberant, imaginative, eclectic exteriors.

The Devonshire Royal Campus (former Royal Hospital)

Best known as the largest unsupported dome in the world in its day, the Devonshire Royal Hospital achieved monumental landmark status when it was converted from the Great Stables of the spa to hospital accommodation by Robert Rippon Duke between 1879 and 1882. The original building of 1785-89 designed by John Carr of York was adapted with the addition of the huge dome, small pavilion lanterns and clock tower (1882).



▲ *The Devonshire Royal Campus*

The original stableblock was recently described as a “lavish horse palace”, and accommodated over 100 horses. The highlight of this building was its circular covered ride under a Tuscan colonnade, but this is hidden from the outside. The appearance of the original John Carr building from the town is of a cool, classical building, with the simplest of details treated expertly. Although only two-storey, the footprint of this building was very large for its day. The size was carefully managed by the creation of a series of short elevations, or facets, and projecting bays and pediments. The ground floor has a continuous series of round-headed windows set within a semi-circular blank arch, all linked horizontally by a string course. All of these elements helped to break up the massing and improve the classical proportions.

The Rippon Duke conversion was very ambitious and quite expertly done, marrying the old building with the engineering expertise and monumental scale of the Victorian era. The rhythm of the arched windows in the lanterns, the use of classical pilasters and pediments in the joinery, the use of leadwork and the graduated Westmoreland slate roofs all helps to ground and tie the Victorian building together with its Georgian “mother”.



▲ *The Octagonal Concert Hall*

The Octagon & Pavilion (Winter Gardens)

The Octagon, designed by Robert Rippon Duke in 1875, is most memorable for its dome, an eight-sided structure that is reminiscent of the dome of “The Duomo” in Florence, and perhaps not by accident. It also incorporates high-level Venetian windows. Both the Octagon

and the winter gardens buildings rely for their dramatic effect on surface decoration. The complex pattern on the roof of the dome, of purple Welsh slate and bands and crosses of green Westmoreland slate, is a good example of the attention to detail, along with cast iron cresting, balustrading and finials. The Pavilion (winter gardens) was originally designed by Edward Milner as a central hall with two side pavilions. The buildings evolved and changed on the site with several manifestations. The original symmetrical plan has altered, most significantly to create the site for the Buxton Opera House, but the external appearance is well-integrated and forms a complete group with the Octagon.

Main Building Styles

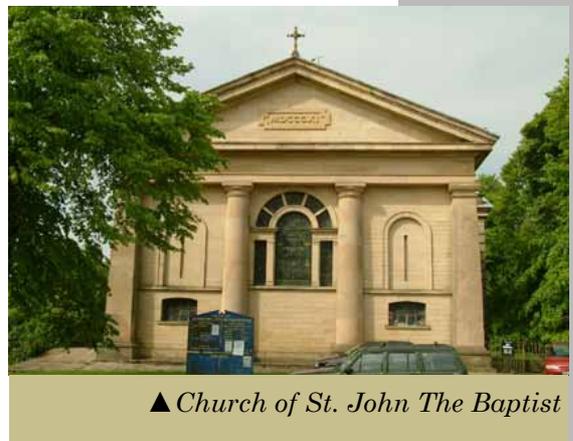
Classical styles adopted in Buxton

Although there is almost nothing to show above ground for its Roman history, Buxton has its roots and heart firmly in its Roman origins, and was the inspiration for much of its architecture. It was the Romans who developed the complex use of geometry into building plans and into an art form – the half-circle and the circle being adopted for both plan form and detail – and this continued to be a strong influence on design in Buxton in the late 18th and throughout the 19th century.

Whilst **Georgian** buildings have their roots firmly in the classical tradition, the Georgian buildings in Buxton dating from before The Crescent, were relatively simple and austere structures, with few adornments. The four-storey commercial buildings found in Buxton do not relate to classical proportions of architecture in any case, and were created in order to maximise the floor space to provide lodgings and hotel accommodation for visitors.

Classical Roman architecture was the inspiration for John Carr, both at the Great Stables, which relates to the circular form of The Pantheon and Roman temples, and at The Crescent, which has something of the character of a semi-circular Roman theatre, the building echoing the form of the auditorium and The Slopes the stage.

Later, St. John's Church (1802-11, designed by John White) was built in the style of a classical Roman temple, its date carved into the tympanum in Roman numerals, although its bell tower is entirely Baroque.



▲ Church of St. John The Baptist

Within the town centre the style favoured by the Devonshire Estate in the 1850s and 60s was **Italian Renaissance Revival**. This was a national style but was probably favoured for its strong associations with Roman architecture, a direct link to Buxton.

Later on, architects, such as Joseph Paxton, made extensive use of half and quarter circles and others adopted elegant curves in their designs for the Royal Hotel, Cavendish Circus and Eagle Parade.

The Roman arch, vault and dome were the keynotes to the system of construction in Roman architecture. They are found throughout Buxton in later interpretations of the Roman classical style (the arcades of The Crescent and

ITALIANATE VILLAS



The Square, the arches of the Hot Baths and the Natural Baths, the dome of the Devonshire and the Octagon, and the arches of the viaduct.

There are a group of buildings, spread through the town, that were designed in a similar Italian Renaissance Revival style; The Quadrant (1853-64), Nos.1-6 Bath Road (1865), & 6 & 7 Hall Bank (1858). These employ the use of heavily punched raised quoins, rows of semi-circular arched windows, and a deep overhanging eaves cornice. A number of these were designed by Henry Currey.

Round arched windows find their way into other buildings (mainly villas), but are less obvious and are reserved for gable windows (e.g. 1 & 11 Broad Walk, 4 Hardwick Mount, 27 Marlborough Road) and shallower, segmental stone arches are used on many of the villas.

The majority of the villas built in Buxton during the 1860s and 1870s were built in the **Italian Villa** style but it was not ubiquitous. The style was exemplified by a wide overhanging eaves supported by pronounced decorative timber brackets and a shallow hipped roof and round arched windows. The true Italian Villa was asymmetrical in plan and only Buxton Park had the space for this to find its fullest expression. Here, the main examples of this style are Corbar Hall, Braeside (38 Park Road), Park Lea, Nithen End and 9 & 11 Manchester Road. Elsewhere the style was diluted, necessitated by smaller plots and the need to make more compact buildings (e.g. Broad Walk).



▲ *Corbar Hall (Henry Currey) off Corbar Road*

A number of buildings in Buxton were built in a French Renaissance Revival style, known as the “**Second Empire Style**”, named after the Second Empire of Napoleon III, 1852-70. It was mostly a roof architecture in which steep mansard roofs were used with ornate dormers, and truncated pyramidal roofs in the French 17th century manner. This was a particularly popular style for hotels, and can be found at **The Town Hall** (1889, designed by William Pollard of Manchester), the



John Duncan School (Wye House) and **The Palace Hotel**. The details found on these buildings often appear as small architectural embellishments on other buildings around the town (e.g. the two-storey porch at Breeze Mount, Park Road and the mansard roof with iron cresting at 7 Terrace Road).



▲ *Wye House, Corbar Road*

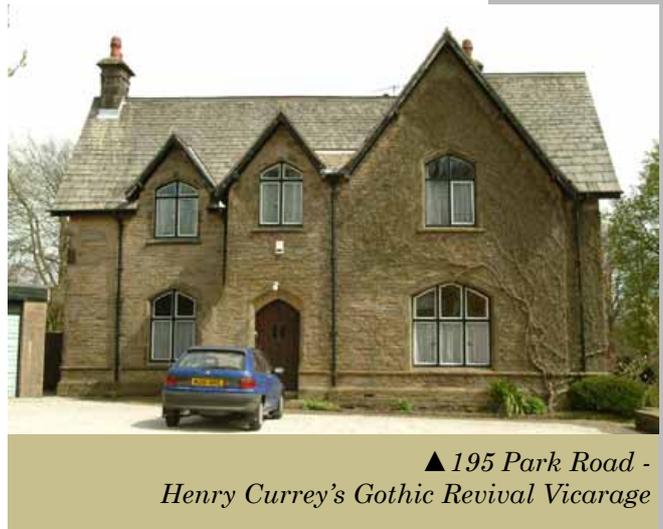
Gothic styles adopted in Buxton

The **Gothic Revival** styles of the 19th century can be found in Buxton, particularly in The Park, where designs were less constrained by one repeated formula, and houses were on the whole more individual in design.

The earliest form of Gothic architecture found in Buxton was the Georgian *Gothick* style adopted from the early 19th century and used for small cottages and villas for its picturesque qualities. It was developed from the Picturesque movement which started off as a landscape movement but moved into the sphere of building design. The domestic buildings could be both asymmetrical and symmetrical in plan. It adopted local vernacular traditions such as render and limewash and elements of Gothic architecture, particularly hood moulds over windows, interesting decorative chimneys, traceried casement windows in lead or cast iron, decorative bargeboards, and pointed arched doorways. It was admirably suited to semi-detached and terraced houses as the formula could disguise the regular rhythm of repeated doorways by placing them at the side or within a shared porch and it often adopted a symmetrical plan. This style was adopted at the house serving the Cold Tonic Bath at the end of Burlington Road and the Lodge to Poole's Cavern and on several terraced rows of cottages (e.g. 3-13 St. James Terrace).

The simple formula of disguising a pair of buildings as one was repeated through the 19th century in Buxton and we see many instances where semi-detached houses were designed to look like one building.

The Gothic architecture within Buxton on the whole is quite loose, and not easily defined, incorporating an eclectic mix of styles. The main elements of the Gothic Revival style were chosen for their picturesque qualities, such as multiple gables, with deep overhanging fretted or scalloped bargeboards, which created interesting shadows. There were few architects practising in the town who fully embraced the mid 19th century Gothic Revival movement. Architects and builders adopted elements that incorporated gable-fronted asymmetrical styles, with steeply-pitched roofs and bargeboards, and perhaps a hood mould over the windows, crenellated parapet, or a pointed arched window or chamfered stone surrounds. Many buildings with Gothic details were built with a simple classical symmetry, often on pragmatic grounds, as space was limited (e.g. 17, 21 & 41 Park Road). There are very few exceptional true Gothic Revival buildings, the main exception being 195 Park Road (the former Vicarage, designed by Currey). The best examples were the churches and chapels, many of which have been lost. The best surviving example is the Methodist Church at the top of Fountain Street. Other examples include the former Unitarian Chapel on Hartington Road & The Gospel Hall on Hardwick Square South.



▲ 195 Park Road -
Henry Currey's Gothic Revival Vicarage

The Gothic style of architecture was also almost universally adopted for school buildings and can be seen at Buxton Infants School and the Sunday School at Hardwick Square.

The main 19th century architects working within Buxton adopted their own unique styles, and their signature favourite details can be found repeated on many of the buildings (see Mike Langham's book – *Buxton, A People's History*).

ARTS-&-CRAFTS HOUSES



Arts-&Crafts Architecture

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Arts-and-Crafts Movement developed in England. It has its origins in dissatisfaction with factory mass-production and an admiration for traditional art and craftsmanship. Interestingly, in the 19th century Buxton never absorbed mass-produced factory-made products into its buildings, although there will be undoubtedly some exceptions. As a rule, the stone carving and dressed walling stone that we see was carried out by stonemasons, rather than turned on machine lathes.

Buxton has a large number of Arts-and-Crafts Movement buildings within the conservation areas, the majority being detached houses built for the wealthy professional classes. The best known is 1-3 College Road, designed by Barry Parker & Raymond Unwin, but there are many other good examples of Arts-and-Crafts houses (see listing recommendations – Part Four) and other examples of Barry Parker’s work in the town.

The movement influenced young architects and crusaded to make towns beautiful. In this respect, the bottom end of High Street, where the visitor first arrives, was embellished with Arts-and-Crafts inspired additions to the otherwise plain buildings (41-47 High Street). Sadly, here many of the original details have been lost and the most important building (48 High Street) was demolished and has left an ugly gap, so the original intention has lost its impact.

The chief legacy of the Arts-and-Crafts Movement was a revival of interest in vernacular architecture. New buildings were inspired by the ordinary buildings, as opposed to grand architecture. In Buxton, the earliest traditional buildings were limewashed rubble limestone. The use of timber-frame that we see in most of the Arts-and-Crafts buildings in the town, took its inspiration from a much wider regional context.

Traditional & Prevalent Building Materials & Details

Walling Materials

Stone

There is an abundance of local quarries around Buxton and ready access to quarries owned by the Devonshire Estate has meant that stone is the naturally dominant building material.

There were two locally quarried stones; carboniferous limestone, a hard intractable limestone, and Millstone Grit, a sandstone that could be freely worked. The limestone was historically quarried to be burnt in limekilns (for use as a mortar and as an agricultural fertiliser), with the surplus being used as walling stone. The local Monsal Dale limestone that outcrops in Higher Buxton was easier to dress than the carboniferous limestone to the immediate south of Buxton and is found within a handful of buildings in Higher Buxton, laid in even courses, in conjunction with gritstone dressings. The nature of the carboniferous limestone is that it is full of large fossils and difficult to dress. It was used for boundary walls and as a cheap general walling material, in random rubble construction, usually reserved for small cottages, outbuildings and rear elevations, and was usually covered in limewash. There are on occasion rear extensions built in rubble limestone to the important villas (e.g. 9



▲ Pl. 3 - Church Street - 19th century view of rubble limestone cottages, painted with traditional limewash (BMAG)

Terrace Road, 14 Broad Walk) and it was commonly used for the rear elevations of the less important terraced houses.

There are examples of rubble limestone walls in Higher Buxton that were once limewashed, but this has often been removed, usually in the name of improvement. Examples can still be found at 45-49 West Road (now finished in masonry paint) and 85-89 Green Lane (still limewashed).

Coursed Monsal Dale limestone, with raised bands of gritstone, gritstone quoins and window dressings can still be seen at 10 & 11 Concert Place and Buxton House, 17 Terrace Road, as well as fragments in some of the older buildings behind the main frontage (e.g. rear of 14 High Street).



▲ Coursed limestone with gritstone dressings

Millstone Grit (gritstone) is a sandstone. It is the dominant building material in Buxton, very occasionally used as a rubblestone for the side and rear elevations.

There were a series of quarries running parallel with Manchester Road, which may have provided the source for much of the stone in the town in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, before transport communications improved. Following the arrival of the railways in Buxton in 1863, the availability of building stone



▲ Pink gritstone with buff stone dressings

would have increased as the routes ran through areas of Derbyshire with a range of gritstone quarries. The Duke of Devonshire also had a number of quarries on his land. The texture of Millstone Grit varies around Derbyshire, from quarry to quarry and within quarries, from coarse to fine-grained, and colours vary from deep pink to pale buff, yellow and lilac and this variety can be found in Buxton. The majority of gritstone buildings in Buxton are built in a buff stone but there are examples of other colours such as pink gritstone; at 8-10 High Street, 2-4 & 10-14 Hardwick Street & 30-32 Spring Gardens, and 10-13 Terrace Road.

The Georgian buildings in Buxton were on the whole quite plain. Stone was used as a raised architrave to a window, or maybe a single horizontal raised stone band, or a plinth, and little more. In these buildings the stone stands out, as it has not weathered particularly well, and often has the patina of age and discolouration. Rusticated quoins were deliberately used in association with fine ashlar at The Eagle to create a decorative effect.

There are several types of stone quoin; the smooth flush quoins, found on the villas such as 9 Park Road, raised rusticated quoins, found on The Lee Wood Hotel and the highly decorative sparrow-picked or punched quoins. The latter are particular to Buxton and are found on several buildings dating from 1853 in the Park (Corbar Hall, 9 & 11 Manchester Road), and they are also found in the 1850s and 60s at Hall Bank, The Quadrant, 4-6 High Street, 4-6 Terrace Road, 8 & 9 Terrace Road, 1-6 Bath Road, 26 St. John's Road & 26-28 Hardwick Street.



▲ *Decorative carved stone at "Braeside"*

The majority of the Devonshire Estate properties were built using dressed stone, which was finished by a stonemason. The subtle pattern of tooling varies from building to building. It is important, with all the subtle differences found, that any new work should be firmly based

on the original tooled stonework for that particular building. Plain horizontal bands of ashlar are commonly added to add relief to an otherwise plain coursed stone wall. Stone is also used in different ways, to make a feature, such as the slips of stone laid into square panels, alternating on end, to make a decorative feature of a gable end, as at The Old Clubhouse, Wye Grove and 5 College Road, and the use of exposed relieving arches at 38-40 St. John's Road & 15 College Road.



▲ *Punched quoins / pilasters at The Quadrant*

Stone was carved to create decorative panels over doors and windows. This was a common detail for houses within Park Road, Manchester Road and Marlborough Road. Occasionally the stone was carved by cutting into the face, to create a filigree effect, a technique that was probably carried out

in-situ.

Stone was carved with architectural motifs. Signature buildings can be found through the use of motifs in stone - the shaped stone gable of Bryden (Marlborough Mansions, 12 Park Road & 9 Burlington Road), the decorative stone lintel of Rippon Duke with sawtooth or roundel moulding or the stone bay window with a small raised triangular or segmental arched head (10 & 20 Marlborough Road & 8 Manchester Road).

Carved stone also occasionally incorporated the insignia of the person who, with some pride, commissioned the building. Examples can be found within Buxton Park on Nithen End, Braeside, Breeze Mount & Brooklands. Initials can also occasionally be found (e.g. 23 Broad Walk). Datestones were more common (e.g. Belvedere Terrace 1877, and Hawarden Terrace 1889).

The name of the house is often carved into the stone entrance gatepiers, or occasionally on the door lintel (e.g. The Laurels, 14 Marlborough Rd). The street name is sometimes carved into a stone band, high up on a building.

Render

Historically render has always been used as a weatherproof finish to masonry but by the early 19th century its use had become more ornamental. Most early types of render were made by combining lime with sand or small graded stones, often painted with "limewash", or sometimes self-coloured with natural pigments. It was applied either by throwing a coarse aggregate against the walls of the building (known as "wet dash" or roughcast), or by applying a less coarse lime render with a wooden "float" to create a smooth surface. When used in combination with cement this was known as stucco. The only location where old "wet-dash" is found within the conservation areas is the Church of St. Anne. This finish was generally left unpainted to weather naturally. It came back into use in the early 20th century (e.g. Holker Lodge, Holker Road).

The use of render became highly fashionable during the Regency period, with many terraces in the major Georgian towns treated in this way. It was used to create a refined appearance where stone was prohibitively expensive. This often covered up rubblestone or brickwork of poor quality. During this period, render was often "lined-out" (incised) to imitate dressed ashlar walls. Within Buxton there are a number of examples of rendered walls from the Georgian period, with incised lines; The Queen's Head, The Old Sun Inn, the rear wing of The Old Hall Hotel, The Grove Hotel & 58-60 Spring Gardens and some examples from the mid 19th century of rusticated stucco; The London Road, the former Star Inn (28 & 28a High Street), and The Cheshire Cheese.

Render fell out of favour during the High Victorian period, as it was regarded as dishonest, and it is not found in Buxton again until the end of the 19th century.

Render regained a fashionable foothold throughout the country at the beginning of the 20th century, largely influenced by the architecture of Charles Voysey, whose Arts-and-Crafts tradition buildings were predominantly rendered, with decorative elements pared down, relying heavily on the geometry of the building for impact. In Buxton the fashion for render took two forms in the early 20th century. It was associated with the use of timber-frame, in the style known sometimes as Northern Arts-and-Crafts and can be found in small quantities. After about 1910, roughcast render and tile-hanging became fashionable

throughout the country, Buxton being no exception, and there are large areas of Buxton where render became the predominant building material; within the conservation areas, the 20th century buildings along Temple Road and a large proportion of the buildings on the south side of Green Lane (nos. 49-95). Here, the links with the special character of Buxton are, therefore, more dilute and the special character is derived more from the individual quality of the house designs. To the east of Holker Road a post-war housing development was built, in roughcast cement render. This makes no contribution to the special character of the town.

Other walling materials

For all the range of building styles and materials available to architects and speculators in the late 19th century, Buxton remains stalwartly dominated by gritstone and that is the most enduring legacy of the Devonshire Estate. Under the control of the estate, on their land the materials of much of the development within the town was specified, until their hold was gradually relinquished in the early part of the 20th century as the local authority took over responsibility for controlling development. Only then do we see more examples of materials such as terracotta, tile-hanging, and brickwork creeping in to the town, but even so, there are still only a handful of examples within the core of the town and these buildings therefore, stand out from the crowd, e.g.

- The Boots Building of 1906 at 62 Spring Gardens, a masterful example of buff **terracotta**, following a model set by Boots in Nottingham and other major cities
- 7 & 8 Wye Grove, a rather extraordinary confection of a building incorporating **red moulded brick** interspersed with stone, **terracotta**, **slate-hanging** & pierced bargeboards
- The Crossways, Temple Road, a mixture of unusual **brindled brickwork**, slate hanging and render
- 45 High Street (Goddards Music Shop) & No. 47 High Street – a pair of old buildings with an Edwardian revamp, covering the stone with **tile-hanging**, and mock timber-frame

The development of the commercial areas of Higher Buxton and Spring Gardens were much less rigidly controlled, but as we have seen this was probably as a result of private ownership and lack of estate control. The result is a much more eclectic mix of materials, particularly around 1900, more typical of the range found elsewhere within Derbyshire.

There is no tradition of **brick** building in Buxton, although it does appear on occasion, used more for its practical durability, rather than its aesthetic beauty. The backs of Numbers 42-56 High Street were built in blue semi-engineering brick, as were the backs of 10-11 Scarsdale Place. Rear extensions to properties on Bath Road were occasionally built in brick, which was then painted. 3-13 St. James Terrace was built in brick but finished in stucco. **Gault brick** was used for window dressings in place of stone at 16-22 Hardwick Street, an unusual choice. Later buildings at the turn of the 20th century incorporate brick, the greatest concentration being along Green Lane.

Decorative Metalwork

Although cast iron was manufactured commercially in the early 18th century, it was only in the first quarter of the 19th century that it came to be widely used in

Britain. The main material chosen for the Crystal Palace, it was the fashionable choice for the Winter Gardens in Buxton in 1870 and was incorporated into the construction of the baths complexes, providing supporting columns for the large glazed roofs. Iron was, of course, the major component of the vast dome at the Devonshire Royal Hospital.



▲ *Cast iron column*

Whilst cast iron can be found used on many of the small details, such as the railings at the Old Court House, its use in Buxton exploded with the late 19th

century fashion for balconies, verandahs, and conservatories. Cast iron is immensely strong under compression and cast iron posts could be used to support lightweight glazed structures, such as the canopies found at Spring Gardens, Grove Parade and The Colonnade. Cast iron, however, corrodes easily if not maintained and regularly painted and all too often these details have been lost in Buxton.

The main uses of cast iron that can still be found are;

- Half-round or ogee guttering and rainwater pipes
- Spandrel-shaped brackets used to support balconies, arcades, door canopies and porch roofs
- Railings and particularly cast finials and posts
- Cast iron columns – (e.g. the frontage of 1-6 Bath Road)
- Lamp standards
- Highly decorative flourishes used to embellish buildings – coronets, cresting & quatrefoil panels used at the Pavilion Gardens, cresting over bay windows (17 & 21 Park Road), balconies at the Palace Hotel & The Grove Hotel, balcony at former Peak Hydro (Buxton Museum)

Wrought iron was used extensively in Buxton. It regained a fashionable foothold during the Arts and Crafts revival and some good, surviving examples of gates can be found. Elsewhere, its durability was ideal for weathervanes, finials and cresting for lanterns and mansard roofs, none of which could be easily reached to be maintained. It is occasionally found used as railings for balconies (e.g. 151-153 Park Road & 19-23 Spencer Road).

Roof materials

The principal traditional roofing material until the late 18th century was stone slate and has been used in Derbyshire since antiquity. Stone slate roofs survive



▲ *Decorative cast iron balcony*



▲ *Wrought iron railings*

▼ *Cast iron balustrade*



at 45-49 West Road, 75, 85-89 & 105 Green Lane. At the turn of the 20th century it was reintroduced as part of the vernacular revival in the Arts-and-Crafts tradition and a few examples can be found (e.g. 11 Temple Road, 75 Green Lane & 84 St. John's Road).

With improved transport networks in the 18th century, upland areas of Derbyshire started to see the use of Staffordshire blue clay tiles. They are extremely durable and the survival rate of these tiles is very high compared with other traditional roofing materials. 103 the Lodge, Green Lane & 1 The Vicarage, St. James Terrace are examples of the use of bands of patterned clay tiles to create a picturesque effect, particularly useful as these buildings were viewed from a number of directions.

Blue clay tiles also appear on some of the small two-storey vernacular buildings in the town, particularly in Higher Buxton – and was revived as part of the Arts-and-Crafts tradition, red clay tiles being favoured (e.g. Greenmoor, Carlisle Road, 1 & 3 College Road & 25 & 29 Temple Road).

During the 18th century Burlington slate and Westmoreland slate were introduced into Derbyshire from Cumbria. Burlington slate is characteristically a dark blue-grey and was laid in graduated courses. It was used at the Old Hall Hotel. Westmoreland slate is characteristically a grey-green colour and was also laid in graduated courses. It was used in conjunction with bands of lead fixed onto timber rolls on the hips and ridges and can be seen at both the Devonshire Royal Campus (both the Georgian Carr roofs and the Rippon Duke dome) and The Crescent, as well as many other Georgian buildings in the town.

Westmoreland slate was favoured during the Arts-and-Crafts revival and was reintroduced into Buxton at the end of the 19th century. This can be found at The Hawthorns (5 Burlington Road) and buildings along Temple Road (12-16), Carlisle Road (The White House & West Mount) and 83 & 91 Green Lane as well as The Branksome & The Old Clubhouse.

By far the most prevalent roofing material in Buxton is Welsh slate, which is both grey-blue and a distinct purple hue and was laid in regular courses. It was used almost universally after the railways arrived in Buxton in 1863 and can be found used before then from the 1820s. Patterned slates survive at Moorcroft, Burlington Road, 75 West Road, 8 Church Street, & the kiosk at Poole's Cavern.

Welsh slate is hard and strong and can be split into very thin sheets. This meant that it could be laid with a much shallower pitch than tiles or stone slate and this lent itself to hipped roofs, with mitred joints at the hips. It was ideal for the shallow-pitched roof of the mid 19th century villas, but it is also found laid at a pitch of 45-55 degrees on countless "gothic" inspired buildings.



▲ *Decorative Staffordshire blue clay tiles*

▼ *Decorative Welsh slate*



Joinery

Traditional window joinery within Buxton has two main forms:

- the Georgian sash, of multiple panes
- the Victorian sash windows of two-over-two panes

There are a few instances where the original Georgian sash windows survive, as at The Crescent, The Square, The Cheshire Cheese and Hyde House, Torr Street. In many other instances, the Georgian sashes have been restored.

The two-over-two sash window is an almost universal pattern within Buxton, although there are some unusual variations incorporating Gothic glazing bars (e.g. 3 Hartington Road). In many cases making the top sash arched or pointed made the sash windows more interesting.

Casement windows can also be found in Buxton, although they are uncommon. They were generally used where an architect wanted a building to be more authoritatively Gothic in character or where a window incorporated timber tracery or stone mullions.

Towards the end of the 19th century, as a result of the Arts-and-Crafts revival, there was a renewed interest in old craftsmanship techniques and a number of traditional windows were re-introduced, such as leaded-light windows. Examples can be seen at 10 & 12 Park Road, and 3, 6, 11, 12, 14, 25, 26, 29 & 30 Temple Road.

The other main area of traditional joinery is the eaves treatment. This was either in the form of bargeboards or bracketed eaves.

Bargeboards, which follow the verge of a gable, are on the whole quite simple, occasionally fashioned with a scalloped edge or more often just an open trefoil or roundel at the base of the bargeboard, where it oversails the eaves. These were in some instances also embellished with additional studs and a horizontal beam or cross bracing, to increase the rigidity at the apex of the gable and provide more interesting shadows. Occasionally the eaves was also finished with a decorative fascia board, but few of these survive.



▲► *Timber-frame concentrated on the gable-ends - Arts & Crafts houses*

Timber brackets were used in large quantities. They varied from the small brackets applied to a timber cornice to carry the gutter, to full-blown ornate brackets shaped like braces that extend the eaves out from the wall plane by almost a metre. A deep overhanging eaves was a particular requirement of an Italian villa.

The Bay Window

Perhaps more than any other feature, the bay window seems to be synonymous with the character of Buxton and this is not by accident. The bay window became increasingly popular in the mid Victorian period. The revival of interest in the bay was specifically linked to the fashion for a healthy home and access to fresh air. By the 1850s, this was commonplace in seaside resorts, such as Brighton and Hove, but Buxton's aspirations as a health-driven, inland resort meant that, from the 1860s, it became ubiquitous. It was also status driven and was regarded as an asset to any suburban house. Thus, many of the terraced houses that lined the main roads into the town were embellished with two storey timber bays; namely, West Road, Bath Road and Fairfield Road. Larger window panes came to replace the typical Georgian multi-paned sash window, following the abolition of Window Tax in 1851 and the repeal of duty on glass in 1857. Sheet glass was introduced from 1832 and the old convention of six or more panes to a sash was abandoned for most of the Victorian period.



▲ ▼ *Timber bay windows*



Throughout Buxton there is evidence that houses that were built in the 1840s and 1850s without a bay window, had one or more added shortly after, usually in timber, which could be easily added.

Within the commercial areas, the bay window became an "oriel" window, oversailing the ground floor shopfront (e.g. 9 & 10 Hall Bank, Eagle Parade, 25, 30-32, 37 & 39 Spring Gardens and 206, 42-46 & 50-56 High Street). Two to three-storey stacked "oriel" were used at 85 & 87-95 Spring Gardens as well as 41-47 High Street & Eagle Parade.

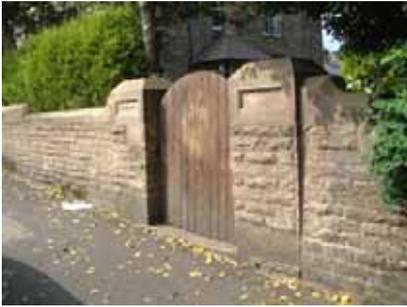
Boundary treatments

One of the distinctive characteristics of the Buxton conservation areas is the consistent use of gritstone for the boundary walls and gateposts. In the core of the town, stone boundary walls were usually built from evenly coursed gritstone, with fine joints, sometimes thinly bedded, sometimes in large rock-faced blocks, and usually finished with a chamfered shaped coping. Further out towards Grinlow, the boundaries revert to rubble limestone drystone walls, which was the vernacular tradition in the upland dales.



Gatepiers were almost always built from carved gritstone, and there were very few standardised patterns. Large balls on top of plain square gateposts were used in several locations around Hardwick Square, rounded gateposts with trefoil carved panels can be found along Marlborough Road, and large square ashlar posts with pedimented cappings can be found on Burlington Road. There are

some local differences, but the most significant characteristics are the variety, individuality and quality. Gateposts are usually highly ornate and very costly to replace. In general, the gateposts relate in scale to the size & status of the villa or house to which they belong.



◀◀ *Coursed gritstone walls with chamfered copings, Holker Road & Marlborough Road*

The Public Realm

For further details of locations and photographs of examples of materials in the public domain and street furniture, please see Appendix 3.

Gritstone is the universal material used for paved surfaces within Buxton. Any earlier examples of limestone pitching or other later 19th century materials have been largely lost or buried under tarmac. Gritstone has been supplemented over the years with Yorkstone paving and gritstone paving flags that have a similar geological composition, although not local origins.

Setts - the greatest proportion of original stone paved setted surfaces within the town can be found in the back streets and alleys, the majority of which are not adopted as part of the public highway, and have therefore escaped tarmac. From the mid 19th century, back yards and alleys, where there was considerable wear and tear, were laid out with setted surfaces; large blocks of gritstone laid in even courses, usually with a central drainage channel running in the opposite direction. Earlier examples are few and far between. There are a few surviving sections of setted paved surface, laid in thinly bedded courses, and several places were squared small blocks of gritstone survive on footpaths, possibly dating from the 18th century.



▲ *Narrow gritstone setts - in front of the Old Wheatsheaf, Church Street*

Bands of stone setts occasionally survive at the side of a road, forming a gully, which suggests that the road surface was made up of limestone hoggin or pitching.

Kerbs - There are many places where original lengths of gritstone kerb survive. These were usually very broad. In front of The Crescent, large lengths of stone cut as segments of a circle, were laid in multiple courses creating a broad band that follows the curve of the building and complementing a series of shallow steps.

Paving flags – all of the paving flags that can be seen in the public domain have been introduced into Buxton within the last 20 years, although historic photographs show that the use of paving flags for pavements was widespread. Under the arcade of The Crescent the gritstone-paved surfaces survive and the

private spaces, such as the forecourt to The Sun Inn and The White Lion, retain some examples of Yorkstone paving. Recent paving schemes have used the following materials;

- Opera House & junction of The Crescent and Terrace Road - High Moor sandstone Yorkstone paving
- Market Place - Elland Edge Yorkstone for paving flags, setts and kerbs



▲ *Paving flags under the arcade - The Crescent*

DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTER AREAS

Summary

The Buxton conservation areas fall within the heart of the Wye valley and on occasion extend to the hillsides above the valley. The conservation areas include designed parkland, commercial areas, spa development with grandiose buildings and large areas of middle class Victorian and Edwardian housing, all very different character areas. Whilst the geographical spread of the conservation areas is dominated by land once owned and developed by the Dukes of Devonshire, the older, tight-knit areas of the town fell within a number of private ownerships and exhibit a wide range of materials and building details, more typical of historic towns in the region.

This section of the appraisal looks primarily at the relationships between the structures and the spaces, their historic and current relationships, identifying the views, landmarks, spaces, & details that characterise the area.

Nine character areas have been identified, which relate to areas of distinct character.

The negative aspects of each of these nine areas are summarised in a separate section for the area as a whole, as there are several common factors.

The omission of any particular building, feature, view or space within this appraisal should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

AREA 1 – contains relatively few buildings, but some of the largest and highest status buildings within the town. It includes The Crescent, the landscaped Slopes overlooking The Crescent, The Devonshire Royal Campus, The Palace Hotel, St John’s Church and the historic Georgian and Victorian spa buildings that lie between these large landmarks.

The large buildings contrast with small ancillary buildings and the topography creates a series of glimpsed views of the major landmarks. Open expanses of park and lawn were laid out and conceived in relation to the buildings, often forming a foreground setting.

AREA 2 – is principally inward looking. It includes the core of medieval Buxton - the buildings surrounding the Market Place, along High Street and around the old church of St. Anne’s, limited on its south side by West Road. It also includes the buildings that lie on the north-west facing slopes of the limestone plateau above the Wye valley, which were developed by the Devonshire Estate in the 1860s - Bath Road, Torr Street, St. James Terrace and Hartington Road.

This is an area of strong contrast between the mainly hard landscaped area of the old town on the top of the hill, where buildings line the streets and the only private space is in small yards at the rear, and the generous tree-lined avenues and spacious garden setting of the streets laid out below to the west.

AREA 3 – includes the buildings that line Spring Gardens and their service buildings at the rear, which were developed from the late 18th century. It is mainly linear in character, and follows the route of the River Wye, within the

bottom of the valley to its south.

AREA 4 - includes the gardens and parks laid out initially by the Dukes of Devonshire (Pavilion Gardens and Serpentine Walks) and subsequently by the Buxton Improvements Company and then the local authority, all as part of the attractions on offer for the visitor to the spa. It includes the Octagon and The Opera House.

AREA 5 - includes the planned development of Buxton Park and Devonshire Park, developed by the Dukes of Devonshire between the 1850s and 1880s to landscape layouts by Joseph Paxton and Robert Rippon Duke.

AREA 6 - includes the Buxton Board School built in 1875 and the subsequent development of middle class villa housing on the hillside above Spring Gardens laid out from the end of the 19th century.

AREA 7 – includes Buxton Endowed School built in 1881 and the subsequent development of middle class housing and streets developed at the end of the 19th century. The area is characterised by two distinct types of housing, the late 19th century tall town houses, developed by the Devonshire Estate and the mainly two-storey Arts and Crafts and Vernacular Revival houses of the turn of the century and first quarter of the 20th century, influenced by national styles of architecture, and less obviously rooted in the traditional character of Buxton, as developed by the Estate.

AREA 8 – includes the small fragments of settlement developed on the edge of Buxton at the former hamlet of Buxton-le-Grene and the buildings associated with the original tourist attraction of Poole’s Cavern.

AREA 9 – includes the northern end of Ashwood Park and the buildings that form a periphery to the valley enclosed by the LNWR viaduct of 1891 and Midland Railway line steel bridge, crossing Fairfield Road. It is an inward looking space, confined by the dramatic topography of the valley and the limestone dale to the south.

Guide to Maps

Each character area is accompanied by a map, annotated with a series of townscape symbols:

Significant Views and Viewpoints – these views are limited to the best defining and most memorable views within Buxton. They are generally broad and often panoramas, sometimes linking subjects in the middle distance and far horizon.

Glimpse Views – these views are confined by the presence of buildings or trees. They offer a glimpse of something interesting in the distance, often viewed down an alley, an open space between the trees or over the rooftops. It may be a glimpse of a landmark, or an interesting feature.

Architectural Landmarks – landmarks are usually buildings or parts of buildings (features such as domes and towers) that can be seen from several directions and viewpoints. They help to orientate people around the town. Landmarks are not necessarily the most significant architectural or historic

buildings.

Focal Points – these are features within framed views, subjects to which the eye is drawn and framed by buildings or trees. They can be part of a building, rather than a whole building (a feature such as a bay window or a decorative doorway). They were, more often than not, consciously designed to reflect their important location at the end of a particular viewpoint.

Negative Buildings – these buildings in scale, materials, design or massing, or a combination of these, have a negative effect on the historic character of the conservation area. They do not relate to the surrounding topography or building form and are usually situated in a prominent site, which makes them stand out.

Neutral Buildings – these buildings are often 20th century buildings that do not preserve the character of the conservation area in their building design or form, even where they make use of local materials. They are unobtrusive, and do not stand out and usually respect the topography and scale of the surrounding building form. Neutral buildings are also occasionally older properties that have been heavily altered and, for this reason, no longer preserve the character of the conservation area.

All buildings that are not highlighted on the maps are **Positive Buildings**. They make a strong contribution to the character of the conservation area and the local authority is likely to strongly resist proposals for their demolition.

1. THE CRESCENT, THE SLOPES & DEVONSHIRE ROYAL CAMPUS

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- Large public and individual, iconic buildings
- Major landmark buildings dominate the townscape
- Large number of focal points framed by the buildings
- Contrast between the valley and the rising land creates multiple vistas and glimpsed views
- Circulation pattern revolves around The Crescent
- Landmark focal points (domes, finials, cresting, louvres, finials, weathervanes, etc.) punctuate the skyline
- Parks, lawns and formal open spaces were laid out in association with the major buildings and form a foreground

The area is dominated by **The Crescent**, which occupies a large footprint. The Crescent in many ways represents the heart of Buxton, even though it is not currently in use and is not a focal point in the main views. The building embraces a large, central, public circulation space at the edge of which is the Pump Room, which later became the focal point for the source of the thermal spring water in the early 20th century.

At the centre of the forecourt is a stone-edged flowerbed with grass and summer bedding and a 20th century fountain. These appear lost in the centre of the space. The grandeur and scale of the original open space in front of the building is damaged by the large quantity of car parking that lines every available corner.

The Crescent takes up such a large footprint, with its forecourt and rear service area, that combined with the baths complex, it has largely controlled the subsequent development of the town around it. At the rear of The Crescent, the addition of buildings to service the spa, squeezed between St. John's Road and The Crescent frontage, has created some unusual relationships. The back of The George Hotel is very prominent set up high above road level, whilst The Old Court House which stands central to the space, and was once known as the Promenade Room (1848), is set well below road level. Its original use may have been as stabling. From close quarters it hides the back of The Crescent from the passer-by. On either side of the old Court House there are views of the Crescent. Its unrelenting, massive, four-storey curving rear elevation has a very imposing presence. The best view of the rear elevation of The Crescent can be had from the bottom of Devonshire Road.

Along George Street the road moves from a large circulation space in front of The Old Court House to a pinch-point to the west and then opens out again to embrace large spaces alongside The Square and The George Hotel. The

separation of public and private spaces is not clear and this confusion has led to a large number of white painted signs on the road and a sea of both on-street and off-street opportunistic car parking.

Development is tight knit with a concentration of glimpsed views. There are interesting glimpses between the angles of The George and the ancillary buildings attached to The Old Court House. The arched window and pediment of the Devonshire Hospital Pump Room is one focal point framed by the buildings, and further along the street, The Quadrant is another. From within the area, the domineering presence of the Crescent can be felt through the repeated glimpses of the roof - parapet balustrade, long, unbroken sweep of the Westmoreland slate roof and massive cruciform stone chimney stacks. There is no single element of the building that is a landmark.



▲ *Glimpse of The Hospital Pump Room with its arched window*

The open space where the roads meet in front of the Opera House is a natural hub and meeting place. It is surrounded by three major buildings which face into the space; each is entirely different and a design of its time; the Old Clubhouse, the Opera House and Winter Gardens and The Square.

The busy road network immediately beyond this quiet space, where St. John's Road meets Manchester Road, is masked by the tree cover within the two open spaces between The George Hotel and The Old Clubhouse. These spaces were originally landscaped in association with the construction of The Square, and at one time contained raised flowerbeds with highly colourful bedding, but it has changed to reflect more of the wooded character of the Pavilion Gardens. This is evident as early as 1852, as the trees appear in the same groups on the Paxton plan.

The east side of The Crescent is dominated by a series of highly decorative frontages, incorporating cast iron canopies that wrap around **Grove Parade** and **The Colonnade**, with scrolled spandrels, fretwork frieze and iron cresting above roof level. The rhythm of these ornate elements continues in the arched windows, stone balustrade and alternating urns and lobed finials along the parapet of **Cavendish Arcade**, which with its heavily articulated frontage is one of the most ornate buildings within this part of Buxton. It still retains the ornate cast iron panel balustrade at the pavement edge and the base of the columns that once supported a canopy. The lively relationship between the frontages that line either side of the street is the most marked characteristic of this area.



▲ *The Crescent & Cavendish Arcade*

A focal point of the canopy on the east side of the street is the arched entrance to the Grove Hotel and the coloured glass lettering, redolent of Tiffany lampshades, emphasising its presence from street level.

The ornate character of the canopies is complemented by the treatment of **Cavendish Circus**, further along the street. The gentle convex curve of the building frontage is enlivened by the curving lines of the parapet and the pilasters finished with scrolled miniature pediments and urn finials. This purpose-built row of shops once housed some of the best shop frontages in the town, as can be seen by the size and quality of each shopfront. The convex frontage has the effect of emphasising each one of these in turn. Several of the early high-class shopfronts survive. Cavendish Circus is a prominent group in approaching from the station, although it is now unfortunately dominated by traffic.

The long sweep of buildings that run from Terrace Road into Station Road, known as **The Quadrant**, is one of the most significant and successful pieces of townscape design in Buxton. Descending the hill from Manchester Road into St. John's Road, the arc of the building frontage and the rhythm of arched windows at the Quadrant draws the visitor into the town centre. Conversely, looking north from Turner's Memorial the visitor is drawn to explore the street leading to The Devonshire Royal Campus. It was a clever piece of town planning by Paxton, as the terrace helped to bridge the gap between arguably the two most significant buildings in Buxton – The Great Stables and The Crescent.



▲ *The Quadrant*

The arched windows along the upper level of **Hall Bank**, has a similar role as at The Quadrant in leading the eye along the street.

St. John's Church and its churchyard are an important part of the Georgian town. They are now absorbed into the wider Victorian setting of Buxton, but for 50 or more years they stood in splendid isolation midway between the Great Stables and The Crescent. The church once stood at the very edge of the road, and was almost like a civic building in stature and pre-eminence. The road network has been altered and the church now stands at the back of a gravel forecourt, behind an apron of stone flags and a narrow strip of lawn. The roadside is lined with tapered cast iron bollards, and the forecourt is frequently covered in parked cars. Ever since the original entrance portico was filled in at the end of the 19th century, and the entrance was moved to the side of the building, the whole aspect and townscape status of the building appears to have changed, although it is still a major landmark and focal point. The churchyard has an ethereal, time-stood-still quality and is richly planted, which gives the impression that it is a vast, semi-wooded space. The churchyard is entirely unfenced along St. John's Road and there are continual views through the yew trees and long grass to Georgian and Victorian gravestones & monuments, some in a precarious state.



▲ *St. John's Churchyard*

The **Devonshire Royal Campus** lies at the northern perimeter of this character

area. It relates in historic use to the Crescent although its physical relationship with that building is mainly related to the views from The Slopes and Hall Bank, which take in both buildings. The building disguises its changing uses very well. The Georgian building has a series of simple, faceted elevations with small projecting bays and triangular pediments emphasising each separate frontage that faces the three different streets. This cool character is in marked contrast with the jubilant Victorian character of the hospital conversion. The huge dome reveals its circular plan. The intricate roofline with the lantern on top of the dome, the ornate clock tower surmounted with a weathervane, and four separate lead-clad, domed corner lanterns finished with tall finials all help to increase the stature of the building in terms of its townscape importance and generate a lively skyline. The building is lined to the north by villas that were developed as part of Devonshire Park, but over the years have been taken into the ownership and use of the hospital, and now University. They still relate in scale and detail to Devonshire Park. Only the loss of boundaries reveals the changing pattern of use.

The lawns in front of the building were laid out by the same Devonshire Estate gardeners who developed the Pavilion Gardens in the late 19th century. The simple, elegant series of terraced lawns with paths once provided a fitting stage for the main building but they were altered in the 1970s and are now a shadow of their former appearance. The tree cover softens the views, as it does within the grounds of the Palace Hotel.

Views

The area surrounding The Crescent and The Slopes is dominated by glimpsed views between and over the roofs of buildings sometimes as far as Hartington Road looking south and as far as Corbar Woods looking north.

As a result of tree cover planted on the Slopes, the main panoramic view within this area is from Hall Bank. Descending the street, views open out of the dome and clock tower on the Devonshire Royal Campus, the Palace Hotel roof, then the Old Hall Hotel, the Opera House, The Old Clubhouse, and over the rooftops, the pediment and cupola of St. John’s Church. The view from The Old Hall Hotel is one of the most significant in Buxton. The rich tapestry of building details and focal points, such as the ribbed lead-covered domes, ball finials and statuary on the Opera House, the louvred vents on the Clubhouse and the church roof, and the Baroque open cupola on the church with its copper clad dome and weathervane, all catch the eye. The gradual, rising slope of the land



▲▲ *Sequence of memorable views descending the hill from Hall Bank and from the front of the Old Hall Hotel*

enhances the sense of a stage set.

From Hall Bank and the west side of The Crescent, views of The Crescent are restricted to oblique impressions.

From The Slopes, the trees interrupt the vistas and now break up the views of The Crescent. There are no points at which the whole elevation, in its entirety, can be seen from The Slopes, although it is easier in winter without leaf cover to gain a sense of its grandeur. A long avenue runs between the Town Hall and Spring Gardens, following a natural desire line that is focussed upon the front door of the Town Hall. This is only evident within the park, as the edge of Terrace Road appears to have been edged with trees from Wyattville's 1818 re-landscaping, masking the formal open space.

The main views of the Crescent are from the junction with Terrace Road, approaching via Turner's Memorial. These are also oblique but are the most dramatic, revealing the true scale of the building.



▲ *The Crescent & Old Hall Hotel - both focal points viewed from Hartington Road*

2. HIGHER BUXTON

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- Inward-looking spaces
- Hard-edged with a strong, almost continuous, enclosure
- Dominated by the wide open space of the market place
- A few landmark buildings
- A few panoramic views
- Intimate scale and glimpsed views
- Largest concentration of vernacular buildings
- Regular rhythm of three-storey commercial buildings and terraced houses
- Houses with small front gardens, back yards & alleys

High Street narrows as it approaches the **Market Place**, tunnelling the visitor towards the main open space. The tapered building frontage stops at “The Vaults”, just beyond the neck of the street. Hereafter it opens out into a wide space emphasised by the low two-storey buildings along its eastern perimeter.

The Market Place is the highest settled point in the old part of town and there is a positive sense of arrival from any direction.

Arriving from the north, as Terrace Road emerges into the Market Place, the buildings placed along the east side, Nos.1-6 Market Place, lead the eye into the space in a regular rhythm within a mainly Georgian façade. **Scarsdale Place**, in the form of its two main blocks, frames the perimeter of the Market Place. From the centre, in front of the Town Hall, looking south, the east side appears to be almost continuously enclosed, although this is not the case and they are in fact a series of short elevations in different planes.

The **Market Place** is dominated by the Town Hall and Eagle Parade. The Town Hall occupies a deep plot, which was split between the town hall, which faced The Slopes, & a public hall/ ballroom, which faced the market place. These divided uses led to two very different facades - one overlooking the market place with a clock tower and cupola and the other overlooking The Slopes with a central mansard roof in the Second Empire style. This north-facing elevation is only visible obliquely from close quarters, although the roof is a major landmark from the north side of the town.



▲ Eagle Parade

Eagle Parade with its shallow convex curvature is an elegant piece of townscape design, as it leads the eye along the street to the top of Hall Bank, but ebullient in detail with a regular rhythm of repeated dormer windows with complex shaped gabled dormers, oriel windows and rusticated pilasters. The Eagle, which once commanded the space, is now slightly lost and has lost its individual landmark identity alongside the heavily ornamented Victorian buildings.



▲► Pl. 4 - High Street - then and now, looking south towards Solomon's Temple - notice the number of street trees in the 19th century photograph

The continuous enclosure along both sides of **High Street** is a marked characteristic of the southern approach into the town. The majority of buildings on both sides of the street are three-storey and have a flat eaves profile that varies little. There are two key buildings on the east side of the street that have a completely different scale and relationship with the rest – The Cheshire Cheese Inn and The Old Sun Inn. These are two-storey, of horizontal proportion, and give relief to the street and create points of interest. Not only are the two inns set back from the main building line, in small forecourts, but also they have interesting features that draw the eye in – an archway and gap in the frontage with glimpses of an interesting space and buildings behind, bay and bow windows, and a change of material to render.



The contrast in scale between the four-storey coaching inns and spa establishments of Georgian Higher Buxton and the rest of Higher Buxton, which

was so marked in the early 19th century, has largely been lost with the increase in the height of buildings throughout the 19th century to an overall height of three-storeys, most echoing the proportions of Georgian town houses. Where pockets of two-storey buildings survive, therefore, they reveal much about the complex, changing fortunes of the town.

From High Street there are glimpses between narrow passages to buildings at the rear. One alley to the south-east, **Wood's Ginnel**, defines the limit of the medieval town. The route follows an old footpath marked on the Tithe map. The development of the cattle market in the 1860s, created a pocket of isolated land adjacent to this footpath, which was quickly and opportunistically developed. It includes the housing on the east side of the footpath, known as Wain's Cottages. The area has an intriguing character with workshops and ancillary outbuildings scattered amongst the dwellings.



Where the High Street meets Church Street, the space is marked by the White Swan, which is a prominent focal point in views from the north and expresses more of the character of old Buxton. The building appears to have evolved and expanded widthways, encroaching onto the High Street from the area closest to the church.



▲▲ Pl. 5 - The White Swan - then and now

The main elevation, as a result, is a series of gable-ends.



▲ Nos. 41-47 High Street - Arts & Crafts commercial architecture

The scale of buildings changes in the southern part of **High Street**. The group of four early 20th century three storey buildings on the east side of the street (Nos. 41-47), incorporating distinctive black and white timbering, have a strong identity when viewed from the north, and were once reflected in the character of a similar building opposite, but this was demolished and has left an ugly "gapsite". Nos. 23-27 also have the quirky, individual character of an Arts and Crafts building, with details suggesting a date of around 1900. As the High Street approaches London Road, the

scale changes and properties drop down to two-storey, so that by the time they turn the corner into Dale Road, they have a neat, square proportion, emphasised by the hipped slate roof on the corner. The scale and proportion is mirrored by the buildings on the south side of the junction with **Dale Road**, at the start of **London Road**. Both groups of buildings frame the entrance into Dale Road.



▲ Workshops at the rear of Torr Street

The buildings behind the main street frontage to the High Street and Market Place, within **Torr Street** and **St. James Street**, provided housing for the working classes, as well as accommodating workshops. Terraces line the streets forming an almost continuous frontage and the character of the area is inward looking, serviced by back yards. The east side of Torr Street is interesting as it reflects its long history and includes a mixture of building types, some sections that are set back behind the main building line, which backs onto the footpath, a mixture of gable frontages and buildings sitting squarely onto the road, and a wide variety of building materials and colours of stone. Looking north along Torr Street, the decorated Methodist Chapel window, with its



fretted parapet, is a focal point.

The scale of the terraced cottages, mainly two storey, with small gardens, is in marked contrast with the buildings along **St. James Terrace**, which are generally of higher status, three-storey, commanding good views to the north-west, but even these have very little private garden space. The terrace Nos. 15-27 is similar in character to those on Bath Road.

Bath Road is one of the most elegant pieces of 19th century townscape within Buxton and typifies the Victorian character of the town. It has a regular rhythm of three and four-storey terraces with two-storey bay windows, which drops down the south side of the street. The survival of a high proportion of the joinery - bay windows, bracketed timber eaves and sash windows – marks the street out. All of the bays are timber rather than the higher-class stone, and this has enabled different paint colours to be chosen, which has enlivened the character of the terrace. The houses are set back behind a



▲ Nos. 1-5 Bath Road, incorporating cast iron columns and arched ground floor windows

private yard that forms a light well to the basement, once lined with a set of railings, but all of the original examples have been removed. A large section of Bath Road has a full basement storey, probably accommodated by quarried out

sections of the limestone, of which small outcrops can be seen in the back alley and in the car park to The Bakers Arms. The houses themselves look imposing lining the street and are of high quality, but have little private garden and yard space.

St. James Terrace and Hartington Road are softened by street trees, those to Hartington Road forming a broad avenue lining both sides of the street. St. James Terrace has a regular rhythm of repeated two-storey bay windows for multiple terraced buildings of three storeys and uniform pattern of stone walls, with chamfered stone copings. A similar pattern of boundary walls is repeated along St. James Street.

Hartington Road was originally partly developed as a service road for the large villas facing Broad Walk, but it was a wide street and the east side commanded good views. This side was developed with some large semi-detached villas as well as The Spa Hotel

(demolished & replaced with Hartington Gardens). These buildings were mainly set up high above the road, and the surviving villas still have a strong imposing presence overlooking the street (e.g. Pavilion Mansions, No. 2 and 2-10 Rochester Terrace). Along the west side of the street the backs of the Broad Walk villas were often treated with gable frontages, used to create a picturesque effect along the street, as at Grosvenor Mansions & 14 Sandringham Court. There was also later speculative development along this frontage, which was not designed as part of the original layout and has a less distinct character.

The character of **West Road** is dominated by two-storey terraces lining the street frontages, and a regular rhythm of single and two-storey bay windows, many with pointed arched sashes. The cottages have small private front gardens, most only large enough to accommodate a flowerbed. There are occasional glimpses of the back alley to the north and an important glimpsed view of Church Street, as it leads in a curve up the hill. The three-storey row of cottages (Nos. 2-12) near High Street is an example of modest Georgian terraced housing, one of the few examples of Georgian workers housing left standing in Buxton, unaltered by later bay windows and Victorian embellishments, although it has many modern late 20th century alterations. Stylistically the terrace has the character of a building of circa 1800, although the Tithe map evidence suggests a very



▲ *Hartington Road - hilly topography creates dramatic relationships between villas, retaining walls, road and a glimpse of The Crescent*



▲ *West Road - two-storey terraces line the north side of the street*

conservative design and a date from closer to 1850. It was designed to be a landmark building and stands out in the early engraving of the junction with London Road (Plate 21). Its significance is now largely lost amidst surrounding later development and alterations.

The steep change in level between West Road and both Bath Road to the north and Spencer Road to the south is most marked within the narrow back alleys and passages between the terraced rows, where the full impact of the limestone outcrop can be seen and the rubble limestone walls of terraces along Bath Road tower dramatically above the alley. There is cohesion between the limestone rubble walling and the immediate geology from which it may have been quarried.



▲ Glimpse of the rear of Bath Road from West Road

The single-storey building on the corner of West Road and Church Street is a focal point as it is noticeably different in scale from the immediate buildings and it leads the eye up Church Street. Although it has been altered (stonework painted white and original joinery replaced) and is in a low-key use, the area would benefit from it being treated as an important pivotal landmark. Another striking local building is the Bakers Arms, which is the earliest surviving building on this side of the street, although the mansard roof is a later alteration.

The south side of West Road has a different character. The two imposing terraces, Belvedere Terrace and Hartington Terrace, elevated above the road behind large retaining walls and forecourts were built to make the most of the heightened aspect. They were built with an access road at the rear, still largely complete with its setts. From here, access was provided in the form of narrow passages leading between the terraces, which provide glimpsed views north towards Higher Buxton.

The buildings alongside these passages dwarf the pedestrian. Further along West Road the buildings are a mixture of styles and periods, incorporating some of the earliest buildings in Buxton (Nos. 45 & 47) and some of the most recent (9, 11 & 17). The range of buildings is indicative of an area that developed over a long period. Several of the 18th century and probably earlier buildings illustrated on the 1894 sketch drawing have been demolished in recent times and replaced with an assortment of unsympathetic 20th century houses.



▲ ▲ Pl. 6 - Church Street - then and now

Within **Church Street** the buildings are mainly small in scale, forming a strong enclosed space, clinging to the sides of the street, with little private space. The character has changed over the years, with a large amount of demolition and loss of original, limewashed, rubble limestone cottages, but the relationship of buildings to the street and the pattern of passages (ginnels) survives unaltered and evokes a distinct sense of its historic 17th century origins.



To the east of the High Street the land was developed as a cattle market in the 1860s and sandwiched between the two is **South Street**, which continues towards Hardwick Square South as **South Avenue**.



▲ ▲ Pl. 7 - Church Street - then and now. Church Street has undergone some of the most significant alteration with the demolition of limestone cottages

At one time South Street was known as Back Lane, presumably because it tracked High Street. The alignment is marked on the 1631 Senior plan.

South Street and **South Avenue** are, like Torr Street and St. James Street, very typical of the working class housing within Buxton, hidden behind the main streets. They are, nevertheless, of high quality, built with features such as stone bay windows and stone pilastered doorcases.

The houses were built with little or no private frontage and the sense of enclosure is, therefore, a significant part of the character of the street.

Where the enclosed frontage is lost, on the east side, with the construction of the Grangeside Flats, the effect is particularly damaging. On the west side of the street, the regular rhythm of repeated bay windows as the road gently curves, is particularly pleasing on the eye.

On the corner of South Avenue and Market Street stands the former Co-operative Stores (Whaley Bridge & Buxton Co-operative Society Ltd.), a large building that straddles the corner with decorative corbelled stonework emphasising the entrance doorway. It provides a clue as to the general means of the people living in the immediate area. Membership of a Co-operative Stores was mainly a working class phenomenon in the late 19th century. The area had its own little, separate community, and some traditional shopfronts still survive, even though there are no longer any retail uses on South Avenue.

As South Avenue approaches Hardwick Square South, the size of the properties changes to semi-detached villas and street trees start to appear.

The old Buxton School was built on the corner of South Street and Market Street in 1867, with an attached teacher's house. There is a later short terrace of houses that form part of the same frontage. On the other side of Market

Street stands Odd Fellows Hall, which has a carved datestone of 1895 high up in the gable, and behind it a row of tiny, contemporary, two-storey cottages. It was designed by William Holland.

Ash Street contains two opposing terraces of three-storey high quality Edwardian housing with ground floor bay windows, the south row with cast iron cresting to the bays. Built close to High Street, it reflects the prosperity of the High Street at the turn of the 20th century. The northern row is built with a front wall of snecked limestone, a constructional detail seldom found in Buxton.

London Road forms the fourth side of the “Five Ways” junction and is on the main approach into Buxton from the south. The east side of the street is lined with rows of late 19th century and Edwardian shops with first floor “oriel” bay windows. The buildings are well preserved and together make a strong contribution to the character of the space.

On the opposite side of the street, and set back from the edge of the road, are The Primitive Methodist Chapel and adjacent Manse, built in 1890 and designed by local Buxton architect G. E. Garlick (now the New Life Christian Centre and No.10 London Road). These buildings were once fronted with a fine set of railings but the railings in front of the chapel and manse were removed, leaving a low plinth.

The building that turns the corner with Green Lane was originally a terrace with two-storey bay windows. It has been disfigured by partial alteration to a garage, but it is still a commanding and pivotal three-storey building.

Views

From Church Street there are a series of narrow glimpses between buildings, as the streets follow the medieval alignments, and tight-knit pattern of development. Narrow access paths and small, two-storey artisan dwellings



▲ *View of Hall Bank and glimpse of the valley to the north from the King's Head on the market place*



▲ *Glimpse of Church Street from The White Swan*

contrast with the backs of the commercial buildings on High Street, creating some strange juxtapositions. The narrow lane, rising from West Road to High Street, leads the eye around the bend and views of the cottages lining the

street unfold.

There is a glimpsed view between the end of Eagle Parade and Hall Bank of rooftops and the hills beyond.

From the Market Place there is a long view of High Street with its narrow frontages and irregular gay rhythm created by the use of different materials, jostling within the space. Further along High Street, the Swan Inn acts as a focal point, mirroring the effect of the Town Hall at the opposite end of the space.

In Higher Buxton the views across to the landscape beyond are limited. The massive expanse of the market place spread across the broad belly of the limestone plateau, and lined in places by three and four storey buildings, creates an enclosed inward-looking space, with few opportunities for views beyond. Within this space, the buildings edging the space form the main landmarks – the main ones being the Town Hall, Buxton Methodist Church and Eagle Parade. The crest of the hill where the Market Place meets Terrace Road and Hall Bank provides some of the best long-range views within Buxton, looking beyond the town to Corbar Hill and Combs Moss. On the west side of the market place, the steep descent down to the Wye valley is laid out with tiers of terraced houses along Torr Street, St. James Terrace and Hartington Road. The descent is masked by mature trees and the building themselves, which accommodate the steep slope by varying the number of storeys on each street. The steepness of the ground is most marked where there are no buildings and instead massive retaining walls make up the different levels, as at the north end of Hartington Road and between Hartington Gardens and Kwik Save on the Market Place.

Whilst the spaces within Higher Buxton are generally contained within an enclosed framework of buildings lining the streets, there are some views out to the landscape beyond. From High Street there are views of Solomon's Temple on the southern horizon. From the top of Bath Road there are occasional glimpses of the hill in the far distance at Burbage Edge. From the north end of St. James Terrace there are wide views looking down the valley towards the main Georgian landmarks in the town.

3. SPRING GARDENS

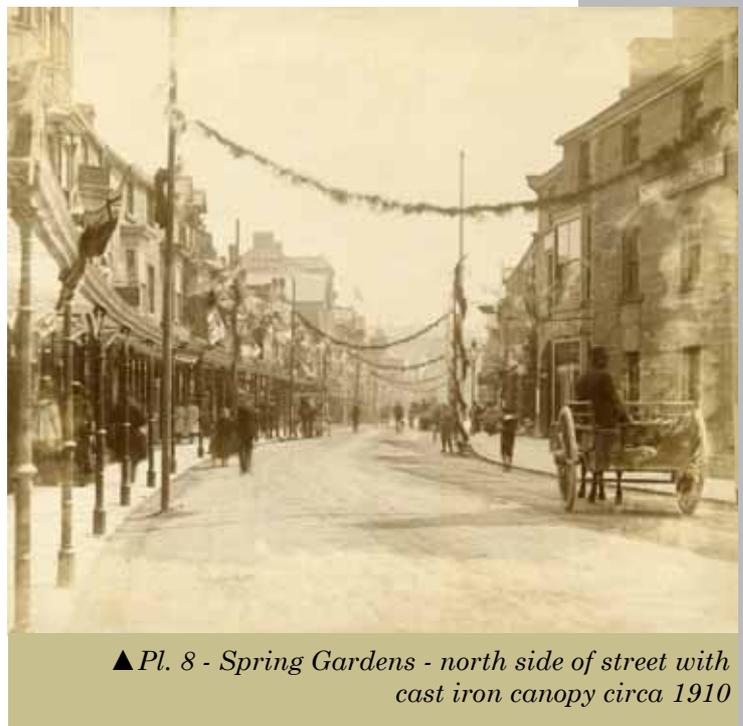
The main characteristics of this character area are;

- Linear, almost continuous, built-up frontage forming a strong enclosure
- Mainly flat landform tracking the route of the River Wye in the valley bottom
- Glimpsed views into back yards and narrow streets
- A variety of building styles & materials
- Views opening out into wide vistas at each end of street, dominated by The Crescent at the west end and the Viaduct at the east end

Spring Gardens is a long street with almost continuous linear settlement along its length, built up to the road frontage (now pedestrianised). It is a busy place with a completely active frontage. It tracks the original route of the River Wye, which is now mostly hidden within a culvert behind the northern side of the street, and only visible from the public car parks, accessed via Station Road. To all intents and purposes, the river flows past unnoticed until it emerges within Ashwood Park.

The shallow curve of the street arose as a result of its relationship to the river, and this means that there are only glimpses along its length of the buildings in the middle distance. Compared with other streets within the town, the frontages are close together and the high three and four-storey enclosed west end helps to tunnel the views down the street. The almost continuous unbroken frontage and shallow curve of the street means that there are few opportunities for landmark buildings. The addition of street trees in recent times, at the east end of the street, has increased the visual clutter and in time as they mature, will lead to the loss of views along the street.

The valley floor provided deep plots both between the street and the river, which once contained gardens and ancillary buildings, and to the south of the street, which contained inns and their stables and some low quality lodgings. As a consequence, the area is characterised by glimpses of back street buildings and development behind the main frontage.



▲ Pl. 8 - Spring Gardens - north side of street with cast iron canopy circa 1910



▲ ► Pl. 9 - Spring Gardens - then and now. The same view. Notice the amount of clutter today obscuring the view, in the form of lighting columns, trees, seating and bollards

The corner of the former **Royal Hotel (Nos. 5-17)** stands out as a local focal point along the street, in approaching from the east, and is the most prominent building. At the west end of the street the buildings are predominantly stone and were built in large blocks, of some substance and quality, which is a reflection of their Devonshire Estate ownership.

Numbers 12-28 (1878) in particular is a handsome row of purpose-built shops with most of the original frontages still complete. These are complemented by other buildings that are more like villas than commercial properties (30-32). Along the northern edge, the buildings are characterised by a number of narrow, single-bay frontages, which, in the oblique views, create a gay assembly of alternating materials; stone, render and painted elevations. Historic photographs show that these buildings were once more consistent in character and treatment, and attempts were made to unify the street with the introduction of a continuous cast iron canopy.



▲ Landmark - the former Royal Hotel (5-17 Spring Gardens)

In contrast with the high quality buildings at the west end of Spring Gardens, which relate to the Grove Hotel and the spa buildings surrounding the east end of The Crescent, the east end of Spring Gardens is understated with much lower buildings, a marked contrast considering that it is the original entrance to the main shopping street. It was never particularly built up, as early illustrations show, but the end buildings once faced the visitor and embraced the entrance. The building on the northern side was replaced by the Co-op. The railway viaduct tends to take centre stage and dominate the views today, with the end of Spring Gardens only visible obliquely. There are several reasons for this;

- The narrow character of Spring Gardens and the shallow curve along its length, which leads to only narrow glimpsed views, means that it is easily overlooked when approaching by car
- the end of Spring Gardens, where it meets Bridge Street, is dominated by visual clutter - a secondary service road, street furniture and signs, and several small street trees on the traffic island. The buildings behind, which sweep around the corner of Bridge Street are lost behind this visual clutter

- the building on the southern corner, Iceland, is a low, single-storey building with no visual presence or relationship with the character of Spring Gardens and has a negative effect on the conservation area



▲► Pl. 10 - Then and now. The east end of Spring Gardens ca.1910 & in 2006. Note the loss of the pivotal three-storey building on the corner with Bridge Street

The railway viaduct encloses the east end of Spring Gardens. The cohesive character of the space has been affected by the traffic management measures put in place to pedestrianise Spring Gardens and the addition of several trees. The space always had a certain rural and simple character and an engraving of 1872 shows the centre of the space dominated by a large tree. This was later formalised and kerbed as a traffic island. Bridge Street took its name from the original railway bridge that served the Midland Railway, which still crosses the road, beyond the skew-arch bridge. Bridge Street was, therefore, developed from 1864.

To the south of Bridge Street lies a public car park, which was formed as Sylvan Park in the 1860s or 1870s. The car park still retains some of the surviving trees from Sylvan Park, and the planted banks. The name “Sylvan” was quite a common name during this period and probably refers to the wooded cliff where the River Wye runs into the limestone dale. The River Wye flowed at that time in an open channel sandwiched between the road and the Park, but is now culverted. It was laid out before the construction of the railway viaduct of 1892 and extended part way down Bakewell Road. It was originally developed as a public park to complement some small villa housing at the bottom of Spring Gardens and on the raised land to the south. The housing along Spring Gardens has been replaced with large retail premises (Iceland). The villas on the south side survive but their setting has been compromised and the car park was excluded from the conservation area. It has gradually been degraded although there are some remnants of planting on the southern periphery and trees alongside the road.

The construction of the viaduct in 1892 provides a positive sense of arrival in the town from this point on and is a major focal point in views looking east from Spring Gardens. The whole of the bridge ranges across the valley and creates a dramatic skyline, the scale overshadowing the buildings in front. This overwhelming structure and “The Railway” are both well-preserved and significant landmarks, integral to the significance of the development of the town, and the importance of the railways and improved communication to the

development of the spa. The buildings lining Bridge Street follow the arc of the road as it returns under another skew-arch bridge, although the vista and impact is marred by the remains of a steel bridge, which relates to the former railway sidings. Near the junction of the three streets is a row of substantial gritstone three-storey town houses. This was once complemented by another group to the other side of The Railway, but this has been demolished. The scale of the buildings reduces further along Bridge Street, moving away from the town centre. From Bridge Street there are dramatic glimpsed views of the arches of the viaduct and ancillary workshops and interesting buildings, including the old Co-operative Hall, crowded into the space. From the junction of Station Road with Bridge Street, the tower of Trinity Church is a prominent landmark to the south, as it rises above the general roofscape.



▲ ► Pl. 11 - Spring Gardens - then and now. The same buildings with some unsympathetic alterations

Buildings styles and details

The 19th century photographs of Spring Gardens reveal a rhythmic quality to the frontage, with repeated first floor bay windows running down the north side of the street. The street was also unified in the early 20th century by the addition of an arcade – a cast iron canopy attached to the northern frontage, presumably added to provide shade from the sun's rays as much as protection from the inclement weather. The result was a gradual curving frontage of high quality. The two-storey buildings are late Georgian in origin, the best surviving example being **The Milton's Head**. Over the years the character of the north side of the street has become fragmented. The south side of the street has a higher proportion of Victorian three storey buildings, which have generally fared better.

Being commercially driven and historically subject to less architectural constraints, Spring Gardens has always had some potential for buildings of individual quality. Some buildings of high quality stand out and equally there are some recent eyesores.

The Amusement Arcade (No. 57) was originally built for Timothy Whites & Taylors in 1902. It has similarities with the **Boots** building at **No. 62**. Both incorporate the use of a full shop floor at first floor level; hence the use of large glazed windows and the attention paid to highly decorative details at this level. The elevations contain Renaissance Revival details, but the soft curvaceous lines of the windows are influenced by the Art Nouveau movement. Both

buildings illustrate the commercial confidence in Buxton at this time. At around the same time, a steady increase in the number of Arts and Crafts buildings was beginning to affect the character of the town. **No. 75 (Hydro Café Tea Rooms)** is the best surviving example of this building style on Spring Gardens and introduced tile-hanging and a new colour, red, into Spring Gardens. The corner of the building, where Spring Gardens meets Wye Street, was canted, designed to be seen as a focal point and continued the use of carved decorative stone found on much older buildings around the town. Several other buildings designed in the Arts and Crafts style have been significantly altered. **No. 85** – the building may have started life as a rather plain 19th century stone building, but the addition of two-storey bays, with panels of lead, enlivens the elevation. **Nos. 87-95** are a high quality frontage, with two-storey stone bays (or oriels) with clusters of composite marble and stone columns and original shopfront surrounds.



▲▲ Pl. 12 - Spring Gardens - then and now. The late Georgian character was replaced during the 20th century with a variety of materials

4. PAVILION GARDENS & SERPENTINE WALKS

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- **Gardenesque & Serpentine landscaped public parks of the 19th century**
- **Highly unusual and individual public and semi-public buildings**
- **A series of inward looking spaces**

This area includes the landscaped public gardens laid out from the early 19th century, known as Serpentine Walks and Pavilion Gardens. They fall on either side of Burlington Road. The area also includes the houses along Broad Walk and Burlington Road, which have a strong relationship with the public park.

The Pavilion Gardens are edged by Broad Walk to the south-east and Burlington Road to the west.

Broad Walk occupies a wide stretch of public promenade, with a row of lodging houses and villas along its south-east side, slightly raised up above the level of the road. Each villa, pair of semi-detached villas, or row of terraced lodgings, was an individual design with a highly decorative, symmetrical frontage. Each building presents itself to the public park and was intended to catch the eye of the visitor. The frontage has been deliberately kept low, without boundary walls. Instead, low, planted flowerbeds or rockeries edge the promenade, so that the buildings are clearly visible, almost like a piece of street theatre. In recent years, many of the narrow flowerbeds have been replaced with a mown strip of grass. The buildings are intimately related to the promenade, intended as a place for strolling and enjoying the high quality environment. Over time, this relationship has changed with the development of Pavilion Gardens into a more inward-looking space and the growth of evergreen trees along the south-east perimeter. The main view of the first row of villas to be built on Broad Walk (1861-1870) is now oblique, glimpsed from the north end of Broad Walk.

Several of the villas on Broad Walk were demolished and replaced with the modern flats "Milton Court". These are largely hidden behind the deep bank of yew and cedar planting along the perimeter of Pavilion Gardens and, therefore, make little impact on the character of the Walk. To the south of Fountain Street, the



▲ *Broad Walk - view from the west end*

▼ *Glimpse into the Pavilion Gardens from the east end of Broad Walk*



character of Broad Walk is more open and its relationship with the public park reflects its earlier character, with villas visible from a distance across Burlington Road and Pavilion Gardens. In recent years, the character of the promenade has been restored in recent years but affected by the occasional removal of the flowerbed fronting the villas and replacement with tarmac to create more car parking.

Burlington Road has the character of a street with an avenue but in fact only the west side of the street has street trees (mostly sycamore); the other side is lined by the large mound forming the boundary of Pavilion Gardens, which is planted with large beech & yew. Overall the character of the street is quite dark, dominated by the overwhelming tree canopy. Glimpses of houses and sky to the west, and the occasional view into the Pavilion Gardens, above the bank to the east, provide relief. The tall, mainly three-storey houses along the west side of the street are set back, deep within large grounds and are only obliquely visible in short range views from along the street. The boundaries are generally formed by a low coursed gritstone wall supplemented with tall privet hedges, but each entrance is emphasised with a statuesque pair of ashlar gatepiers, much grander in scale than in many other parts of the conservation area. There are clear views above the boundary of shrubs and hedges of the first and second floors, which are often framed by the trees. Several of the houses, designed by W. R. Bryden, incorporate a large shaped gable, or a decorative raised coped gable, which is shared by a pair of semi-detached properties. The scale of these gables is very large (when shared by two houses) and a great deal of attention was paid to the detail of these elements, with carved features - ball finials and decorative pediments, contrasting horizontal bands of stone and decorative kneelers. The windows at the highest level of the building were also slightly more decorative, finished with mullions and drip moulds. By comparison, the ground and first floor are relatively plain. The gables and second floor windows are important features punctuating the street and appear to have been consciously designed with this aspect in mind.

Topography

The River Wye follows a looping route through the **Pavilion Gardens** from Burlington Road to a culvert opposite The Square. It is formed largely within a deep channel at both ends, but opens out where the River has a "meander", which has shallow margins now largely grassed banks, used extensively for sitting out and enjoying the water. This is the main place where members of the public have access to the banks of the river. The river is occasionally hidden behind trees and shrubs, which hang over the water in places (using weeping varieties) but can be viewed from bridge crossing points.

In places the banks are steep and the planting was deliberately lush, integrating both native deciduous trees and introduced conifers, although there are many sections on the shallower banks where shrubs have not been replaced and the lawns now reach the riverbank.

Between the water and the level of Broad Walk, to the south, the land is heavily modulated and there is a large change in level, which is carefully masked and largely hidden by the subtle design of the man-made topography; humps and hollows were created by Milner, planted with trees so that the trunks are often visible at eye level and the form can be appreciated. In general, mounds were planted with trees on top, a device also adopted by Loudon at Derby



▲ *Gently undulating mounds and hollows within Pavilion Gardens*



▲ *Knotty roots of trees on mounds take centre stage*

Arboretum. Parts of the Hogg landscape copied Milner's use of large mounds. The knotty framework of partially exposed tree roots is attractive and occasionally may have been deliberate. A number of these trees are likely to be much older than the 1870 date of the park. Where the paths thread through the trees, they are often hidden by the undulating ground, a deliberate device to enhance the sense of separation from other people.

The recent restoration project has reinstated Milner features including the serpentine ponds, semi-circular lime avenue and the rose mound. However, there are several stretches of straight path, which originally terminated in a feature (a rustic shelter, urn, bandstand), which are still missing, and the path now ends in an open space. Heavy foot traffic along natural desire lines has occasionally led to ground compaction and bare soil becoming exposed. There is also a general loss of tree cover and vegetation with many more open spaces than in the original layout.



▲ *Restored serpentine pond, seen from Broad Walk*

Views

The layout of the Milner landscape is different from the later Hogg design, beyond Fountain Street. From Broad Walk, the Milner design allowed only glimpses between the gardens and the surrounding buildings. The gardens were essentially inward looking, surrounded by a perimeter fence and a large amount of tree and shrub planting on mounds, and there is only one exchange of view with the surrounding buildings beyond the park railings, and that is the view from the lower area of the gardens towards The Square. A large amount of the perimeter is edged with yew and western red cedar and this provides privacy all year round. The complex web of views, both glimpses and broad views, can be seen on the character map. Changes to the gardens, with the loss of trees and shrubs, have opened up new views and it is often difficult to pick out the deliberate manufactured views from those that are now incidental. The Hogg design, by contrast, is without a boundary between the gardens and Broad Walk or Burlington Road. There are clear, continuous views between Broad Walk and the Upper Lake, right across the Hogg landscape and the expanse of the large upper lake.

Within the early gardens there are confined views, looking along the promenade, across the River over bridges and between key focal points such as the base of the bandstand and the giant flower urn, between and through clumps of trees across the undulating land.

Through the re-introduction of railings, there is now clear separation between the two phases of the gardens, even though the character of the two areas merges together quite seamlessly in places.

The landscaped public spaces running along the course of the River Wye, Pavilion Gardens and Serpentine Walks, have a similar character. They were originally conceived together, although the Pavilion Gardens was extended, adapted and embellished. They continue to be managed together today by the Borough Council. However, the development of Burlington Road in the 1870s, and the dense tree cover lining the street and within the gardens has tended to divorce these two areas into distinct gardens.



▲ *The complex and interesting web of views within Pavilion Gardens are enjoyed by many*



▲ *Glimpse of Hall Bank & the Town Hall cupola from Pavilion Gardens - one of very few views out*

Beyond Burlington Road, the River Wye threads through the **Serpentine Walks** and a winding path runs on either side. There were originally two paths on the south side of the river. The remains of the lower path can still be found in places. The landform is gently undulating, and the planting is purposeful, both designed to provide a variety of views and intimate relationships. The paths open out into pools of light in sections of lawn between a largely wooded framework. Although the tract of land formed by Serpentine Walks is long and thin, the landscape was carefully manipulated so that the views of the River are limited and there are few places where the two paths connect or there are views across the valley from one path to another. In some places this may be the result of self-seeded plants having



become established, and the original structure and manipulation of views is not always clear. The view of the weir from the pedestrian bridge near Burlington Road is deliberately framed by cherry laurel, the dark pool framed by bright green leaves. Long vistas within the grounds are finished with tall conifers providing punctuation and a low skirt gliding over a plain lawn (western red cedar). The trunks of trees rise on mounds, near the footpath, so that the texture of the tree could be seen at its best, and this provides contrast with the soft backdrop of greenery. The trunks of a group of conifers (yew, cypress and western red cedar) with a red hue and rough texture are planted as a group, the dark canopy amassed above.

The undulating topography, relationships, pleasing views and planting were laid out by Paxton, although there are some instances where the plantsman's hand of Milner or Hogg may be evident. There is continuity in the design and the whole landscape appears to be very natural and uncontrived, although of course it is almost entirely artificial and only the course of the River Wye appears to have stayed the same. The only elements which stand out as deliberate interventions are the use of large blocks of limestone, edging the paths and retaining the banks in the southern side of the Serpentine Walks, which were probably introduced by Paxton, and the retaining walls alongside the upper section of the River Wye, which are finished in a harsh concrete. Here, the path that runs alongside the River is a much more recent introduction. The original path skirted the perimeter of the site, and still survives. The distinct bund that was created by Paxton to separate the walks from the outlying land and strengthen the self-contained character of the site can still be seen in this south-western stretch.



▲ *The River Wye threading through Serpentine Walks*

On the north side of St. John's Road, the Serpentine Walks continue into an area called **Serpentine Wood**, roughly following the route of the Wye and bordering St. John's Road, as far as the old Gadley Lane parish boundary. There are long views across this parkland, from the roadside, only constrained by the tree canopy above. The area was originally intended to contain a long Serpentine Pond, through the adaptation of the Wye. This was never realised. The Wye is now hidden by a block of rhododendron and there is no public access to the river. The parkland space fronts the road and there is no boundary, which helps to connect the two parkland spaces on the north and south sides of the road. Lime, hornbeam and horse chestnuts are dominant and there is only one beech and one large pine. The richness of the mixed planting of broadleaved and coniferous trees, part of Paxton's original planting scheme, has been depleted over the years, although there is widespread new oak and horse chestnut tree planting, which in time will create more of a woodland character.

Water Street & St. John's Road

The Playhouse building is a piece of street theatre, designed by W. R. Bryden principally in relation to its frontage onto St. John's Road. The elevation is highly theatrical with heavily articulated windows and bays, repeated shaped gables and elongated ball and urn finials as well as theatrical motifs such as carved masks & musical instruments. Beyond this there are several ancillary buildings to the winter gardens and there is a steep gradient between the road and the gardens. This is marked by a bank of shrubs and a large number of yew trees planted around the corner where Burlington Road meets St. John's Road. These once masked the roller skating rink, but now largely hide the tiered car park.

The **Pavilion** (Winter Gardens) and **Octagon** face into the Pavilion Gardens and relate mainly to the promenade, although the dome of the Octagon is a prominent landmark from several locations along and north of St. John's Road. The lightweight, black and white painted cast iron superstructure and joinery is striking. Hidden largely from the surrounding town, as it is located within the

“dip” of the river valley, it is a truly monumental series of buildings of great stature and presence, visible from The Square, and associated more with seaside resorts and promenades.

The **Opera House** was commissioned by The Buxton Gardens Company and filled in the space between the winter gardens and Water Street, but also involved remodelling the east pavilion of the winter gardens and giving it a new stone portico. The frontage of the Opera House is the most compelling elevation within the immediate area and the forecourt is a focus of activity.



▲ *The Pavilion viewed from the gardens*

In a national context, the complex has many similarities with seaside resorts and interestingly a similar complex of winter garden, theatre and pavilion were also built at Eastbourne as part of a complex (called Devonshire Park) on land given by the 7th Duke of Devonshire.

5. THE PARK (BUXTON PARK & DEVONSHIRE PARK) & CORBAR WOODS & WALKS

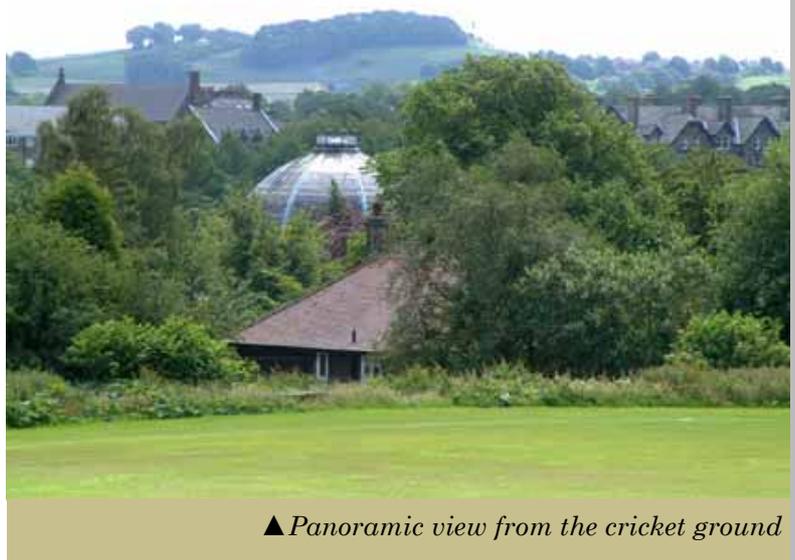
The main characteristics of Buxton Park are;

- Large detached & semi-detached villas set within large mature gardens
- Soft-planted boundaries
- Level lawns surrounded by planted shrubberies and houses raised up on building platforms
- Short and gradually unfolding views, contained by the tree cover alongside the roads & the curve of the street
- Expansive panoramic views from the central oval
- Glimpses of important historic buildings

Landscape quality, planned development & views

The character of Buxton Park is dominated by the gently curving sweep of Park Road, which takes a gradual progression through the space.

There are no major landmarks, although there is the occasional focal point, such as 41 Park Road or the pair of Scots pine in front of 87 Park Road. There is an occasional view out, mainly from the central cricket pitch, where there are wide panoramic views to Higher Buxton, the hills beyond and Solomon's Temple. From the cricket pitch, the tree canopy in the southern part of the oval is sufficiently low, even now that many trees have reached maturity, that a wide panorama is still evident and was probably a conscious element of the design, indicating the skill of the landscape designer in planning ahead for when the trees reached maturity. The tallest private houses within the highest parts of The Park probably also enjoy these panoramic views.



▲ *Panoramic view from the cricket ground*

The planned layout of The Park is a strong characteristic. It creates an ever-changing vista that slowly unfolds and leads the eye around corners, to explore the next bend, but the plan is not really evident at street level. The presence of large numbers of mature trees within private gardens, crowding over the roads

and framing the vistas along the roads, is now the most striking characteristic of the area. Dense tree cover within mature gardens, often set high up behind embankments, disguises the presence of many of the houses, offering only occasional glimpses of interesting buildings through the leaves.

The 19th century houses were deliberately set back within each plot. A Devonshire Estate plan dating from 1877 shows the layout of a series of plots on either side of the “reservoir” on Manchester Road. It has a prescribed building line, behind which the new properties should be set. It falls several metres behind the Manchester Road frontage and at least 16 metres behind the Park Road frontage. This appears to have been adhered to in the 19th century in the layout of each plot. This means that at street level the boundary treatments are often the most significant part of the streetscene. They vary from soft hedges - some clipped into shape and many allowed to grow into more natural shapes, where the density of the planting provides privacy - to coursed gritstone walls. However, the building line has been eroded in the 20th century with a few houses built much closer to the Park Road boundary (evident on the Phase Plan in Appendix 1).



▲ *Park Road - views unfold slowly, crowded by the tree canopy arching over the road*

Planting & boundaries

The entrances into the park along the original three entrance drives were very generous, with a wide sweep of walls framing two of the entrances and leading in to planted boundaries. The inner oval of the park was laid out as a cricket ground, almost from its inception, and was planted along its periphery in informal clumps with serpentine edges. There are two surviving clumps from the original design – one near the former pavilion and the other near the turnstiles. These clumps were both planted on an engineered, raised mound to give greater emphasis. The northern group comprises limes and sycamores and one beech, underplanted with more lush evergreen shrubs – cherry laurel and Highclere holly (*Camellifolia* cultivar). The southern group comprises a group of sycamores, a lime and a horse chestnut. Half of this latter mound was excavated when the adjacent property was built (2 Park Road), but several trees still survive from this important part of Paxton’s landscape design.

It is not possible to ascertain how much of the Paxton planting within the surrounding area was already established before it was developed for housing, some time later in the 1880s, but it is likely that the framework was laid out. Certainly, the trees within the oval parkland and cricket ground appear to have been established in accordance with Paxton’s plan by 1879 (the date of the first Ordnance Survey map). The 1877 plan of The Park is useful as it shows the existing planting within the plots. Clumps of trees were laid out along the contours in drifts, with serpentine edges. These would have been drastically but selectively thinned to make way for the house plots as the plan shows that the tree planting did not relate to Paxton’s or the eventual plot layout.

The main difference between the 1879 OS map and the layout today, is that there are now many more trees around the perimeter of the oval, including a row of 17 beech and 1 lime to the north of the bowling green. Apart from the loss of the oval parkland space to housing, the spaces between the trees,

which gave relief and interest and were a critical part of the design, have largely been filled in with paraphernalia (tennis courts and bowling green) and the original design has been obscured. Now, rather than have clear views around the perimeter of the oval parkland, there are just glimpses.

In Paxton's landscape design the southern perimeter of the oval park had a long belt of trees. The construction of a large number of houses within the southern side of the oval does appear to have removed a large proportion of these trees. However, there are a series of mature limes planted along the Park Road boundary set within gardens, which are likely to have been retained from the Paxton parkland, when the house plots were developed. Rows of mature limes are also planted along the Park Road boundary of Devonshire Villas (9 & 11 Manchester Road) and the boundary to 151-157 Park Road. Within several gardens there are some very large, mature beech trees, which probably date from the 1850s.

Within The Park, there is an air of informality about the boundaries. The boundaries along Park Road are largely soft, planted edges of evergreen shrubs. The earliest shrubs that probably date from the Paxton planting are yew and cherry laurel, which were allowed to grow to a natural profile and not clipped, although privet is also commonplace along Manchester Road. It is probably a slightly later introduction, after the house plots were developed. Shrubs and hedges are interspersed with some walls made of large blocks of coursed gritstone. The roads are largely overshadowed by trees, with few views of the houses, which fosters a sense of privacy and exclusivity. The estate appears to have been less concerned with the appearance of boundaries than elsewhere, where they had strict guidelines, and they are not treated uniformly. Perhaps many of the boundaries were already defined in the form of shrubs. The boundary to the cricket pitch and tennis courts is marked by a set of wrought-iron railings with a spike finial. Whilst it is likely that there would have been railings to this space early on, the current pattern is unlikely to be the original one.

Along the southern side of Manchester Road, in the outlying areas beyond No. 9, there is little evidence for a traditional boundary wall or hedge. Perhaps along Manchester Road, it was assumed that the steep changes in ground level would be accommodated by planted banks and trees. The boundary wall to The Lee Wood Hotel is attractive, distinctive and low (with a bulbous heavily dressed ashlar coping) and stands out, as it is one of only a handful of traditional walls along this road. At the northern junction of Park Road with Manchester Road the coursed stone boundary walls reappear to frame the wide entrance. Today, in an effort to provide both security and privacy, boundaries along Manchester Road have been added in the form of an assortment of panel fencing, palisade fencing and concrete blocks, which detract from the character of the conservation area. Despite the lack of boundary wall or distinct hedge, many of the houses along Manchester Road have prominent stone gatepiers defining the entrance drive.

The northern entrance into Park Road, off Manchester Road, is framed by a large spruce on one side of the road in the garden of Nithen Cottage and a sycamore and two large elms in the garden of No.37 The Gables. The gardens on either side of the road were heavily planted with yew and cherry laurel, as a soft and lush understorey on one of the main approaches into Buxton Park, with later additions of hawthorn. No.37 The Gables was given additional privacy with

the creation of a large linear mound around the perimeter of the site, which was then planted with shrubs and trees. This is probably part of the Paxton layout. It is integral to the landscaped design of villas at this time (see Part Two on Landscape Quality).

The junction of the inner ring, where it meets the northern entrance from Manchester Road, was heavily planted and some trees still survive, including two Scots pine and a horse chestnut.

In several instances the loss of the trees within the gardens of the houses at Buxton Park has a marked effect on the character of the conservation area and has created obvious holes and gaps in the street.

Architectural quality & setting of buildings

The houses were laid out with the garden aspect reserved for the south, south-east, or south-west facing elevation. This meant in practice that the best plots that were taken up first were those with a generous south-facing garden. Numbers 17-41 Park Road didn't enjoy this aspect and were developed piecemeal, over a long period, the best plots on this side of The Park having been taken up by the houses fronting St. John's Road.

Most of the houses running along the north side of The Park, along Manchester Road, were designed to have a southerly aspect that would accommodate French windows and they were set back deep within their plots to provide them with additional height and light and a view over the rest of The Park. 1 Park Place, on the corner of Park Road and Manchester Road, for example, faces south-east and overlooks a long lawn, rather than Manchester Road. The same can be said for Nithen (121 Park Road), which looks south over its large flat lawn.

The best preserved parts of Buxton Park, which still have the character of Paxton's design, are the buildings and their gardens along the northern and eastern edge of Park Road, where it follows Manchester Road from St. John's Church to Nithen End. These areas, and the cricket ground, have the largest concentrations of mid 19th century planting, if not the original villa layout. Elsewhere, the density of the housing and loss of vistas and green setting has removed much of the spaciousness and parkland character of the original concept.

The terraced rows that Paxton envisaged, and were executed in his more urban parks in Liverpool, were not executed in Buxton. The terrace Athelstane Villas evokes this character, but was built at a much later date.

Corbar Road, which was developed as part of Paxton's Park, has similarly informal boundaries of mainly hedgerows with low boundary walls in places. Feelings of vulnerability have led to the replacement of hedges with modern panel fencing along the east side of Corbar Road. The villa houses on the north side of Corbar Road had pride of place in the town; the highest locations, offering the best south-facing aspect, with dramatic views over the town and to the hills to the south. This area was developed early on (1850s) and the sites of the three main houses on the north side of the street were identified in the same locations on Paxton's plan. The tree canopy along the periphery of each plot has matured to such a degree that there are only the smallest glimpses of

buildings visible from Corbar Road.

Three large houses were built on the north-west side of Corbar Road - Corbar Villa (now Corbar Hall), Northwood & Corbar Hill House (re-named Wye House in 1901 when it changed use to an asylum - “an establishment for the care and treatment of the insane of the higher and middle classes”). They are each very different;

- Corbar Hall is a classical Italianate villa of the mid 19th century, designed by Henry Currey and very typical of his style with broad overhanging eaves and asymmetrical plan,
- Northwood is an eclectic mix of the original Gothic Revival building (with a castellated porch and two-storey bay, raised coped gable and a double-height bow window with pierced parapet) and later additions that have an early 20th century Arts & Crafts influence, such as tile hanging,
- Wye House, which looks slightly like a French chateau (Second Empire Style)

Each of these in their own right is part of the rich, but coherent, range of building styles found throughout Buxton.

The size of these villas has sadly often been their downfall, many having been neglected and redeveloped or fallen into disrepair. They were so large that each could command its own large range of ancillary buildings. Corbar Villa (now Corbar Hall) had its own lodge and Nos. 21, 23 & 25 Corbar Road appear to have been built as accommodation for servants and a gardener. The first edition OS map shows the detailed layout of the garden with walled garden, lawns and walks through a wooded area. There has been some encroachment onto the original gardens with the development of No. 19, Whitegates & No. 1 Corbar Woods Lane. There is a complete air of neglect with Wye House, which is in a semi-derelict condition. The gardens have been developed for new housing but the main house remains untouched.

St. John’s Road was part of the original Buxton Park and it shares similar planted boundaries with the rest of the Park; mainly privet hedges, occasionally interrupted by a more open vista as flowerbeds line the roadside. This treatment and the symmetrical arrangement of villas have similarities with the character of Broad Walk, which also has an open aspect with planted strip of flowerbeds.

Although part of the area set aside for Buxton Park, St John’s Road overlooks Pavilion Gardens, and at first impression relates more to that space, although it never benefited from the same quality of views as Broad Walk. The north side of Pavilion Gardens, when it was created from the earlier Serpentine Walks in 1870, became a rather secondary frontage and the planting along the bank was dense, with a large quantity of yew, intended to screen the gardens from the road. The houses along the north side of St. John’s Road, however, are of a very high quality, benefiting from their south-facing aspect, many being large detached villas.

The main characteristics of Devonshire Park are;

- Continuous boundary walls with chamfered copings
- Houses set up high on platforms with level lawns
- Striking, large buildings, many built for multiple occupation
- Glimpses of important historic landmarks

Marlborough Road is part of the later development of “Devonshire Park”. It is different from Buxton Park in that not only are the houses smaller, set within smaller plots of land, but the boundaries are much harder, composed largely of coursed rock-faced gritstone at a uniform height of approximately 1 metre, and finished with a chamfered ashlar coping. There are stretches that have been given additional height and privacy by the addition of a privet hedge, but the soft-edged impression of Buxton Park is largely absent. Street trees, planted in an intermittent avenue of lime and sycamore, soften the views. Pedestrian access gateways are often framed by a raised scalloped coping, with round and angular gateposts and carved inset panels.

Many of the houses are standing in plots overlooking a large flat lawn and as a result of the topography this is often set much lower than the house, meaning that the ground is shaped into a series of graded banks. Today it is unlikely that so much effort would go into making a flat lawn, but a flat lawn was a highly prized and fashionable commodity, since the invention of the lawn mower in 1830, which made a lawn easily manageable for most middle class families. The uniform low height of the walls and the sloping nature of the site, whereby buildings sit on raised building platforms, provide generous views of the buildings, which are prominent in the street, even where the gardens are large and mature.



▲ *Glimpse of the Devonshire Royal Campus dome from Marlborough Road*

The gentle curve of the road is typical of the layout of streets within the second half of the 19th century. Given this street pattern, there are occasional glimpses of the lantern on the dome at The Devonshire Royal Campus.

This part of Buxton is dominated by the work of two architects – Robert Rippon Duke and W. R. Bryden, both of whom practiced locally for many years. Many of the historic villas are extremely good examples of their types, with little subsequent alteration, and the different styles of the two architects can be distinguished.

Devonshire Road is the second main street of “Devonshire Park”, although it has had more alteration than Marlborough Road and there is less cohesive character. There is no evidence that this was laid out with an avenue of trees.

The south side of the street, leading downhill from Corbar Road, is part lined with a tall gritstone boundary wall, a large proportion of which was formerly the garden wall to No. 8 Manchester Road. The central gateway with its carved wyverns and figure of a man leaning over the gate is probably a self-portrait of Robert Rippon Duke, who built the house for himself. Along the north side of the street Holmlea Gardens is a block of flats notable for being completely out of place, both in design and scale. This part of the conservation area, and the south side of Corbar Road, has been subjected to a large amount of demolition and redevelopment. There are a series of glimpsed views of the modern flats between the older buildings. The topography increases their prominence.



▲ *Probable portrait of R R Duke, overlooking his garden wall - Devonshire Road*

The main characteristics of Corbar Woods & Walks are;

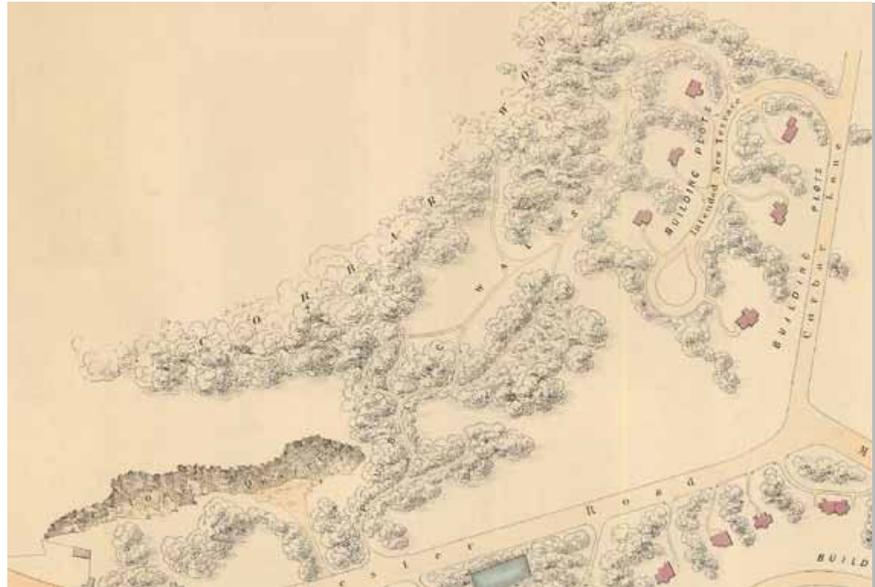
- **Mixed planting of deciduous and conifer with a lush understorey of evergreen shrubs**
- **Network of footpaths contouring around the former quarries, softened by planting and mounds of topsoil**
- **Fragments of historic steps and revetments**
- **Large number of short-range views within a small area, using the topography to create points of drama**

A series of Public Walks (**Corbar Walks**) were laid out by Joseph Paxton at the same time that he was developing Serpentine Walks and his ideas for Buxton Park. These were laid out and planted with trees by the Devonshire Estate as a further attraction for visitors within old gritstone quarry workings, which it is said were used for the construction of the Crescent. Above these walks is the 19th century plantation of **Corbar Woods**, developed by the Devonshire Estate, which are contiguous with the public walks.

The Paxton plan of 1852 shows quite clearly the layout of the paths and trees between Manchester Road and Corbar Woods and they are described on the plan as “Public Walks”. From this elevation, before the growth of the tree canopy, there would have been extensive views across the town, although today there are none.

The network of paths was also illustrated on the 1879 OS map and still survives to this day, although the structure is not as obvious with the creation of short-cuts, new routes and soil erosion, and the loss of some revetments and steps, all of which has disturbed the original alignments. Nevertheless, the structure of Paxton’s woodland walks still survives remarkably intact. The area is

characterised by humps and deep hollows, softened with topsoil, humus & leaf litter. The original pathways were occasionally emphasised with a revetment and lined with trees; several sections survive, including a long row of yew trees, behind which were planted clumps of rhododendron and a clump of limes. Elsewhere, yew trees are planted in groups of four or more. The deciduous trees are mainly beech, lime and sycamore and the northern section of the walks is dominated by some tall specimens.



An early engraving entitled “Rustic Bridge” shows Corbar Walks sparsely planted with tall conifers with a rustic bridge, crossing a ravine. Another rustic bridge appears in a mid 19th century photograph (below). Neither bridge survives, but their location can be identified from the topography. One bridge has probably been replaced with a raised revetment wall. There are several sections of the wood that retain the evidence of trees planted along raised mounds and several sections of stone steps (these also appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey map), although natural and pedestrian erosion has removed much of this.



▲ Pl. 13 - Early photograph of Corbar Walks with rustic bridge

The extent to which these walks were already developed by 1852 is unknown. It is documented that they were laid out by Sir Joseph Paxton and he was probably recording a scheme that was a few years old in the 1852 drawing.

“These fantastic and beautiful walks wind in and about the irregularities of old gritstone quarries, from which a great portion of the stone for the Crescent and other buildings was obtained. The quarries being afterwards planted, lofty trees now throw their agreeable shade over the rambler...while the ground is covered with a profusion of ferns, folksglove, rhododendron, wild raspberry....It is, indeed, a scene of fairy-like enchantment, where Oberon and Titania.... might hold their midnight revels”

1860 - “The Buxton Diamond”

6. HARDWICK

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- The landmark Trinity Church tower is a focal point in many views
- Large detached and semi-detached houses with glimpsed views between of local landmarks
- Long panoramic views looking north from the brow of the hill at Holker Road and Hardwick Square South
- Tree-lined avenues

The early development of this area comprised mainly villa housing surrounding an open green, edged with railings, and was known as Hardwick Terrace and **Hardwick Street**. Large trees now dominate this space and it no longer functions as a public green. The character has also changed with the loss of several of the villas. The trees now mask the modern buildings of Haddon Court. Along Hardwick Street commercial buildings line the street following a gentle curve, leading on to Spring Gardens. Even the commercial buildings have the character of villa housing and may have been designed with upper floor lodgings in mind as an additional income. There are two particularly distinct groups of buildings on Hardwick Street – one group which straddles Spring Gardens, built from pink gritstone with buff stone dressings, white, bracketed timber eaves and upper storey bay windows, and another group facing the green that has a very unusual alliance of pink gritstone with yellow (Gault) brick dressings. Sadly, one of these has been completely degraded by painting in brown masonry paint. A few slightly older buildings sit alongside these.

Within the area surrounding **Hardwick Square**, the streets were quite narrow, compared with others laid out in the town at the same date. Avenues of street trees along the east and west sides of the street have grown to envelope many views of the buildings and the area is characterised by confined views dominated by the tree canopy and glimpses between the buildings of landmarks, to the west in Higher Buxton – the Town Hall, Buxton Museum & Art Gallery and the Catholic Church, to the east - the tower of Trinity Church.

The villas have some very subtle differences such as half-hipped roofs (Bank House) and wide overhanging bracketed eaves (Trinity Parsonage) but there is no single designer or builder that marks them out. They are unified by the use of stone and the consistent boundaries. The detached and semi-detached villas largely retain their original boundaries, with entrances marked by carved gritstone gateposts.



Glimpses of landmarks - ▲ The Town Hall & Roman Catholic Church

▼ Trinity Church Tower



At the bottom of Hardwick Square East the side flank of 4 Hardwick Mount is a focal point in the street, but is notable for the unsightly array of satellite dishes.

The area also has a large number of semi-public buildings, which were probably established here because it is a strategic location, roughly midway between the upper and lower areas of the town, although their original uses have changed; namely, Buxton Community Nursery (former Congregational Sunday School of 1881), St. Anne's Community Centre, and Buxton Infant School and the Register Office.

Holker Road follows an almost straight route from Hardwick Square down to Spring Gardens. By contrast, most of the other streets in the Hardwick area accommodated the steep changes in level with subtle changes of direction in the roads and changes in the direction and layout of the house plots. The land falls away steeply down to Spring Gardens. The buildings are striking for their prominence, particularly when viewed from Spring Gardens, where they sweep up the curve of the hill and are a picturesque group, with the landmark tower of Trinity Church rising behind them. On the west side of the road, the houses are set up high above the road and drop down the hill in pairs. To the east, a large stone outcrop defines the edge of the road, and above and beyond this sit the later post-war housing development of Kedleston Road and Curzon Road, which are only just visible from Holker Road. Houses are mainly detached or semi-detached (there is only one terrace). The gaps between the houses, the gradient of the hill, the gable frontages and the stepped boundary walls that are



▲ *Holker Road & Trinity Church*



▲ *Panoramic view of Combs Moss from Holker Road*

uniformly treated, make a staccato and interesting street frontage. From the crest of the hill there are wide-ranging views across the Wye valley to Combs Moss, only spoilt by the looming presence of the industrial units within the old railway sidings in the middle distance.

The south side of **Hardwick Square South** was developed shortly after Hardwick Square East and West and was fully developed by 1897. The long terraces of houses, with multiple two-storey timber bay windows have a strong cohesive character. The gable dormers and the rhythm of two-storey bay windows throughout punctuate and enliven the street. Much of the original timber eaves detail survives – scalloped eaves boards, decorative bargeboards, and timber bracketed cornice. They were lower status houses than their neighbours on Hardwick Square East and West, but they are typical of Buxton's Victorian architecture. They are well preserved and complete the fourth side of the square, complemented by street trees.

The little church that stands on its own, on the corner of Darwin Avenue (The Gospel Hall), was built by The Catholic Apostolic Church in 1896, mainly appealing to the upper classes, and designed by W. R. Bryden. The principles of the church, in attempting to return to the fundamental tenets of the early Christian church, were matched by the choice of Early English architecture. It has a graduated Westmoreland slate roof and apsidal chancel end, and is a simple design, and one of the best preserved surviving chapels in Buxton.

7. COLLEGE

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- A series of highly individual Arts & Crafts houses arguably of national importance set within generous gardens
- Tall gritstone three-storey Victorian houses
- A series of glimpsed views between the streets laid out on different levels
- Roads laid out on gradual curves
- Wide streets defined by avenues or metre high gritstone boundary walls
- A spacious setting - wide roads and large gardens

The streets laid out at the turn of the 20th century in the southern part of Buxton have very different characters, even though they were laid out in quick succession. There are five main areas; (1) College Road, (2) Temple Road, (3) the network of streets off College Road - Spencer Road, Robertson Road and Spencer Grove, & Compton Road (4) Green Lane and lastly (5) Wye Grove and Macclesfield Road.

One of the most marked characteristics of the area is that although a large proportion of the buildings were only built in the short period between 1900 and 1938, they nevertheless exhibit some of the widest ranging designs to be found in Buxton, from the very conservative detached Buxton-formula, stone-built villas along Macclesfield Road, to the Voysey-inspired, rendered two-storey houses, to the post World War I houses at Spencer Grove.

From **Green Lane**, there are mainly two-storey houses along the south side of the street, which enables long views over the roofs looking south towards Grinlow Wood, which forms a backdrop and tree covered ridge.

The character of Green Lane has two distinct identities. The early part to be developed has some surviving street trees and is mainly lined by coursed gritstone walls with chamfered copings. Additional privacy is maintained through a dense hedge of privet above the wall. The Victorian buildings are of high quality, mainly semi-detached three-storey villas. Beyond Netherdale (no.16) and No.15 opposite, the street changes in character. The boundary walls change to mainly limestone rubble, both mortared and drystone, with a wide assortment of copings. The coursed gritstone walls reappear near Robertson Road. The houses were developed much later and range from turn of the century Arts and Crafts inspired houses, to very recent 20th century houses.

College Road leads from West Road to Green Lane. It was the first street to the south of West Road to be laid out as a complete residential development in

1892. The street is now dominated by an avenue of tall street trees, sycamore and lime, that have reached maturity, although there are some depleted sections of the avenue. The gentle rise of the land from West Road to Green Lane, and the subtle curve of the street provide a slowly revealed, gentle progression along the street with no strident features. The use of a gently curving street was deliberate, a late 19th century backlash against the rigid gridiron structure of early Victorian streets. The buildings that line the east side of the street were built at roughly the same time that the avenue was planted, before 1900. They are characteristically tall - three storeys or two storeys with an attic storey. At either end of the street is a pivotal building that occupies a corner location – The Towers, which turns the corner with Spencer Road, and No. 23 College Road & 44 Green Lane, which turns the corner with Green Lane. Both of these buildings were designed as corner buildings with landmark slated turrets, designed to catch the eye as focal points in the street, although the tree canopy has largely obscured these local landmarks from long distance views.



▲ *College Road - avenue*

The buildings along the east side of the street are set above road level on rising land and tower over the street. Their striking presence is now diminished by the tree canopy. The houses were built in local gritstone and were of high quality but not innovative. There were originally 5 detached and 4 semi-detached properties, although over time some have been sub-divided into flats and two of the detached houses were split vertically into two houses; Nos. 7 & 9 were built as one house and Nos. 23 College Road, & 42 & 44 Green Lane were also built as one house.

Along College Road and Compton Road the paired (semi-detached) houses were often designed with porches at the side, in order to create the impression of one large detached house, a more robust appearance that fitted in better alongside the detached houses. A covered, stone-built porch at the side of the house could provide protection from the weather and fit neatly between the angles of a rear wing without drawing attention to itself, at the expense of the whole composition.

The large gaps between the houses along College Road provides glimpses of properties at the rear on the raised land at Robertson Road and show that the plots were not deep, the main emphasis being on the front garden. This may have been directly influenced by the Estate requirements, as it was normal by this time for houses to have larger private gardens at the rear.

The front gardens are mature and contain some large specimen trees and rich evergreen foliage. Although the houses are standardised and old-fashioned in some ways, the boundaries and gardens have great variety. There was no attempt to create a uniform boundary along the road, and the soft boundaries of privet and laurel hedges and rockeries with ferns are mixed with occasional walls and some more unusual & individual expressions of taste and less sympathetic close-boarded fences. The entrances to properties were generally emphasised by a pair of carved ashlar gateposts in local gritstone, an important

characteristic of Buxton as a whole.

The west side of the road is split into the site of Buxton Community School and a sequence of houses built after World War II. The school site & playing fields are hidden behind a planted hedge and thickly planted embankment. The school entrance from College Road was at some point planted with an avenue of limes, which still stand. The houses on this side of the street are collectively of little interest, with the exception of No. 2, which was designed by W. R. Bryden in 1904 along with the Alison Park Hotel.

1&3 College Road (listed grade II) sit at the end of the street. Whilst they were built at the same time as the other more conservative stone villas on College Road, they were very different, incorporating a contemporary Arts & Crafts design by local architect Barry Parker & his partner Raymond Unwin.

Robertson Road, Spencer Road & Compton Road

These streets sit on a secondary limestone plateau raised above West Road. The area is characterised by a wide variety of houses that exhibit both the traditional character of Victorian Buxton – tall three-storey buildings in stone, with stone bay windows and sashes - and the more eclectic and two-storey horizontal character of Edwardian Arts and Crafts influenced buildings, some still with their original graduated Westmoreland slate roofs. The majority of the 19th century houses are gable-fronted with gabled half-dormers and a high proportion of these retain their original decorative bargeboards and drop finials. All of them retain their original roof coverings of natural Welsh slate. The most elaborate houses were 19, 21 & 23 Spencer Road and were a-cut-above the rest in the street with much more carved stone and decorative cast iron balconies, serving first floor French windows. **Spencer Road** has a higher proportion of surviving street trees; those along Robertson Road have dwindled to a few sycamores. In the centre of Spencer Road the boundary walls curve in to frame the pedestrian entrance to a narrow ginnel, that connects the street with West Road at the bottom of the hill. Walls continue on either side in coursed gritstone with a chamfered coping and additional privacy is maintained with a dense privet hedge

Robertson Road has a generally more unusual mix of houses than either Spencer Road or Compton Road, and more individual variety within each pair of semis. The west side of Robertson Road overlooked College Road and there are interesting glimpses of buildings between the pairs of semi-detached houses.

Spencer Grove, a cul-de-sac off Spencer Road, and the south side of Spencer Road are different in that they were designed and built as a complete group, before the Second World War, and have a separate character, influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement. The houses are not identical but are variations of the same house-type. They each incorporate a coursed gritstone ground floor, roughcast rendered first floor, horizontal proportions with leaded-light or small-paned timber casement windows and a gable frontage with a half-timbered gable. There are some very subtle differences such as the projecting gable that was alternated with the use of a bow frontage, and casements were replaced with small-paned sashes. The central bays of No.1 Spencer Grove, the pair to 8 Spencer Road, Nos. 6 & 8, and Nos. 7 & 9 were jettied. Sadly, Nos. 4, 5 & 6 have lost much of their original detail.

Temple Road is slightly wider than College Road, a subtle distinction that reflected a slightly more well to do clientele. It has no tree-lined avenue although there are a few street trees near the junction with Milldale Avenue. The character of the street is more spacious and airy, although there are a higher proportion of evergreen trees and shrubs. The subtle curve of the street, as the land gently rises, creates unfolding short-range views, dominated by the front gardens and boundaries of large houses and glimpses of interesting buildings above the hedges.

The Alison Park Hotel, built on the prominent corner of College Road and Temple Road was set upon a raised platform and this main elevation, overlooking Pavilion Gardens in the distance, was designed as a focal point. It shares design characteristics with Nos. 1 & 3 College Road, which was built at the same time as the other, more conservative, properties on College Road.

The buildings along this street are generally more private, particularly the Arts and Crafts houses. These were intended to make bold design statements but were given additional privacy set behind more uniform, high boundaries, defined by coursed stone walls, and topped with thickly planted, neatly clipped hedges of yew, holly and beech. The houses occupied a slightly larger footprint, and had much larger gardens and the design has an emphasis on horizontality, a marked contrast from the height of the houses on College and Robertson Road. Some of the gardens on Temple Road have been subsequently subdivided for further development (e.g. No. 18 Infra House was built in the garden of No.16 and the garden of "Heatherston" was developed as Temple Court. The site of a single, large, detached house next to No. 29 is now occupied by four, modern, detached houses fronting Temple Road - 31 & 33 - and Green Lane – 94 & 96).

The houses built along this street were of a significantly different character from College Road, although only separated by as much as 10 or 15 years. This is largely as a result of the different commissions – College Road was developed largely by speculative builders, whereas the properties along Temple Road were on the whole individual commissions from architects.

The street exhibits a much freer use and wider range of materials. The turn of the century buildings are largely built in the eclectic Northern Arts and Crafts style, with the use of timber-framing reserved for key areas, particularly the gables and jetties, and this was a major departure of building style in Buxton, bringing in new materials such as tile-hanging (No. 25) and slate-hanging (No. 27), and of course timber-framing. They all, however, shared a solid ground floor of local gritstone.

The early 20th century buildings are largely rendered. This is found as a "wet-dash" textured finish, and was a common Arts and Crafts finish at this time, as it was thought to represent a national vernacular tradition. It was a traditional finish found in upland Derbyshire in the 18th century, applied originally over rubble limestone, although there are few examples left. Buildings such as Nos. 11 and 14 were clearly influenced by architects with a national reputation such as Charles Voysey. A number of other houses along the street reflect these ideas, but after World War II the design and materials were watered down and, as a result, the quality of the buildings was on the whole poor.

There is a sense of the traditional, although not necessarily local, in the use of timber-frame and leaded-lights and also a pleasing asymmetry, a complete

move away from the majority of 19th century buildings in Buxton. These buildings were refreshingly new and aimed at the discerning professional classes.

Gatepiers and gateways are much more individual, but nevertheless substantial and of high quality, not constrained by the Buxton formula.

Although only Nos. 1 & 3 College Road are listed, there are still a number of important individual, architect-designed buildings; Temple Court, 12, 14, 26 & 30, 3 (Alison Park Hotel) & 2 College Road, 11, 25 & 27 & 29.

Within the centre of the street is the Buxton Community School. The main buildings sit deep within the plot, also bounded by Green Lane and College Road. The original 1881 building still stands, surrounded by later development, including a George Widdows extension. There is little sense of the presence of the school in immediate views, as the site is surrounded by trees and tall hedges, the main impact being along Green Lane, which is fronted by a low limestone boundary wall.

The character of the street changes markedly, where it turns towards Green Lane. The new development of late 20th century houses on the south side of the street is bounded by a low, dry, limestone boundary wall, more characteristic of the more rural upland areas to the south of Buxton.

Wye Grove & Macclesfield Road comprise a separate area marked by Edwardian housing built in two blocks of speculative development. Conservative, stone-built Edwardian detached houses line the north side of Macclesfield Road with deep overhanging bargeboards, uniform coursed stone boundary walls and neatly clipped privet hedges. These contrast with the outlandish character of Wye Grove, which comprises three-storey semi-detached houses built with a distinctive, jettied, third (attic) storey, marked by a broad, plastered, coved eaves and highly decorative bargeboards. The buildings are mainly stone and render but each pair is different and some also incorporate moulded bricks, terracotta and slate-hanging. The black and white timbering is not used in the vernacular tradition but is used as applied decoration in combination with tile-hanging, most of which has been painted white. Numbers 7 & 8 are the most unusual, incorporating a little of everything, with filigree details.

8. POOLE'S CAVERN

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- A range of visitor attraction buildings developed in association with Poole's Cavern
- Series of small limestone vernacular labourers' cottages
- Self-contained area set at the foot of Grinlow plantation with a backdrop of trees

The small part of the conservation area that surrounds the entrance to Poole's Cavern has a distinct, separate identity from the majority of Green Lane. The backdrop to Poole's Cavern is now swathed in trees, part of Grinlow Wood, which was one of the Duke of Devonshire's 19th century plantations. The area is criss-crossed with footpaths, which may have arisen because the area was a focal point for public walks up the hill to Solomon's Temple, and before that, the hillside was part of a network of limestone workings, including limeburning. The remains of limekilns and platforms of spoil can still be found in the woods. All of the early buildings, that predate the opening of the showcave in 1853, are built from local rubble limestone, which was probably originally limewashed. Then the buildings would have stood out even more. The entrance to the cave is no longer evident from the road, covered by a large amount of vegetation.

A footpath leads from Green Lane past a small limestone cottage (105 Green Lane), which sits on the hillside above the opening to the cave. It is a focal point from Green Lane. From this cottage there is a view down to the pretty, patterned, tiled roof of the old Lodge, and spectacular panoramic views across Buxton to the Palace Hotel and beyond Combs Moss to the High Peak.

The three 17th century cottages at the back of the Poole's Cavern car park, purported to be the remains of the hamlet of Buxton-le-Grene, are small in scale and supported only a smallholding. They have a very unusual relationship to Green Lane, and may have been originally built as quarry workers cottages, encroachments onto the early route up the hill, and the same may be true for No.105 Green Lane. They are recorded as having been in use as an estate office by the Duke of Devonshire at one time, as well as a court room, and a Masonic lodge.

From the car park to Poole's Cavern and the public footpaths around the immediate area, there are glimpses of the old limestone cottages and long views looking south-east across the fields to the woods. The area still has a rural character, with small fields for grazing.

The setting has changed dramatically since the beginning of the 19th century. An open barren landscape of quarry working and lime burning, using small limekilns, was supplanted with broad-leaved woodland. When the Duke of Devonshire first developed Poole's Cavern as a major attraction, a lodge was built at the entrance to house the custodian. This still survives, designed by Robert Rippon Duke in a picturesque Gothic style. The rendered kiosk, at the

entrance to the cave, is the main fragment of the facilities provided in 1853 for the showcave. It started life as a small museum to exhibit some of the “finds” from the cave but in an effort to create further visitor attractions, it was extended and adapted for use as a “monkey house”.

With the change of ownership of The Lodge and the creation of the car parks, the entrances to Poole’s Cavern is much less distinct. The original ticket office and turnstile has been boarded up from the Green Lane side, and now looks like a garden shed or quirky garage at first glance - its significance is lost. The visitor centre was built in 1976 to replace the original building of the 1880s. It occupies a similar footprint, but has no impact on the conservation area.

9. ASHWOOD PARK

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- The landmark railway Viaduct
- Buildings ranged around the north side of the street overlooking the park
- Parkland setting following the route of the River Wye
- Deep, bowl-shaped valley created at the head of the limestone dale, contained by railway lines, roads and viaduct
- Historic uses (lodgings, villas & livery stables) associated with the spa development

At the east side of the town the space formed by the introduction of the two railway bridges (the Midland Line steel bridge and the later viaduct) is contained and has a distinct identity of its own.

The viaduct is a colossal 90 feet high and the principal arch is a large semi-circle that towers above the pedestrian in a “skew-arch”. Skew bridges are a technical term for vaulted brickwork that is set on a 45 degree angle to the main thrust of the arch. It creates a very strong bridge. This has a monumental quality.

The northern side of the street is lined with town houses, some probably built to serve as lodgings, and an assortment of buildings that include a small cottage with a graduated Burlington slate roof, that predates the viaduct, and a rare group of purpose-built Livery Stables (behind Brooklyn Place). These were developed for Brian Bates (Langham), a local spa hotelier, who owned The Royal Hotel, The Old Hall Hotel and The Lee Wood Hotel, and date from the 1860s. There is also a long building that runs alongside the original Hogshaw Brook tributary that joins the Wye at the foot of Fairfield Road. It was once owned by the Duke of Devonshire and may have originally been a mill. It is set below the road level, and has been re-fronted, suggesting that it predates the construction of the road and the stone road bridge that crosses the brook (dated 1878).



▲ *Pl. 14 - North side of Sylvan Park before the construction of the viaduct*

Ashwood Park was developed piecemeal as a public park. By 1879 the upper end, where the Nun & Hogshaw Brook meet the Wye, had been laid out as a park, an extension of Sylvan Park, with a small footbridge crossing the Wye, a large tree-covered lawn, some planted borders near The Midland Hotel and a bowling green. This landscape, which forms an attractive foreground to the setting of the buildings, and particularly the Midland Hotel, survives largely intact. The southern boundary of the conservation area runs along the limit of the original edge of Sylvan Park.

Sandwiched between the Bakewell Road (A6) and the River Wye on its western flank, and by the Midland Railway line on the east side of the valley, the park had little room for facilities. Photographs dated 1923 show the area newly planted and laid out. The gardens then included small, timber kiosks, rustic benches and pretty, white-painted, rustic timber bridges which crossed the river.

NEGATIVE FACTORS

Demolition

There has been a significant amount of demolition throughout Buxton during the 20th century. Much of this is, as one would expect, the large redundant buildings for which it was difficult to find alternative uses, once the original use was no longer viable. A large number of the churches and chapels that were prominent landmarks within the town were demolished, as were some of the largest hotels and hydros (e.g. The Empire Hotel, demolished in 1964, and Buxton Hydropathic Hotel, replaced by Hartington Gardens). The loss of these large buildings has affected the character of the skyline and reduced the number of landmarks. Despite this, the overall effect on the character of the conservation areas is almost imperceptible, as there are such a great number of high quality historic buildings that still remain.

In addition to the loss of large buildings has been the surprising loss of some small villas. Many of these were of exceptional quality and include:

- The Red House, The Park (Larner Sugden – 1897) demolished
- Parkfield, Carlisle Road (W R Bryden – 1910) demolished
- “Southcroft”, Carlisle Road (Charles Henry Heathcote – 1896) demolished
- “Thornwood”, Carlisle Road (Charles Henry Heathcote – 1899) demolished
- Broad Walk - Greville Institute demolished
- Broad Walk – 8 & 9 demolished in 1925

In several cases, demolished buildings, such as the row on the east side of Hardwick Street and the villas overlooking Sylvan Park, have been replaced with development that does not make a positive contribution to the conservation areas.

The redevelopment of these sites has often been the impetus for building massive blocks of flats and housing, as much as five storeys in height (e.g. Hardwick Gardens & Hartington Gardens). Most do not relate to the characteristic Victorian and Edwardian properties, either in scale or detail.

Gap-sites

There are several locations where the loss of a building creates a hole in the street. In some places the loss of a building was part of a planned programme of slum clearance by the local authority or was in the way of highway improvements, and the building was replaced by amenity planting. However, not all of these schemes have been successful, and there are a number of other places where the loss of a building has left an unsightly parcel of land without an obvious use.



▲ ► *Gap-sites at 46-50 High Street and Spring Gardens*

The principal gap-sites, which have a negative effect on the character of the

conservation areas are:

- Gap-site between Nos. 46 & 50 High Street (this resulted from damage caused by a vehicle collision)
- Gap-site between Nos. 25 & 37 Spring Gardens (this was created as a service road with the development of the Spring Gardens Centre)

In other instances, such as the corner of High Street and Bath Road, and the Bakers Arms car park on Church Street, the gap-site has a neutral effect.



▲ ► Pl. 15 - Then and now. Oxford House on the corner of Bath Road and High Street was demolished and replaced with shrubs and a “seating area”

Redevelopment

Buildings that have replaced others, which in turn make no contribution to the streetscene are as follows;

Spring Gardens

- 32a (Argos)
- 84-86 (The Job Centre)
- 88 (Iceland)
- 79-83 (Lomas Foods & Ethel Austin)
- 97-103 (Co-op)

Bath Road

- Buxton Health Centre

Devonshire Road

- Holmlea Gardens, 10-34

Subdivision of houses into flats

The subdivision of properties into flats has had two negative effects;

- (1) increased intensity of uses with requirements for additional off-street car parking
- (2) created a neglected air to some of the gardens and boundaries, particularly within The Park



▲ *The subdivision of houses into flats has often led to the neglect of boundaries*

Car parks have proliferated in places, with large expanses of tarmac dominating what was once green lawn and shrubberies. The important relationship between villas and their garden setting has often been lost through piecemeal redevelopment within the garden. A number of the boundary walls are in poor condition, and repairs undertaken probably as temporary expedients have been of poor quality, often in hard mortars and replacing stone copings with concrete.



▲ *the lawn of this villa has been replaced with tarmac*

Loss of original joinery

Joinery is the most vulnerable element of any building. Throughout Buxton there has been widespread loss of original historic joinery, although the tide has turned with the introduction of grant schemes aimed at restoring traditional joinery.

The double-height bay window is perhaps the quintessential Buxton feature. The rhythm of timber bay windows dropping down the steep streets in Higher Buxton in streets such as Bath Road, or on the long terraces at eye level above the road along



▲ *Loss of original joinery to uPVC along Rock Terrace*

West Road, are particularly striking. The main damage within the conservation areas is the loss of joinery on those remaining terraces that once had a unified and consistent finish, such as Rock Terrace, where the original timber double-height bays have been largely replaced with uPVC. Elsewhere, particularly within the commercial areas of the town, the upper floors have often lost their original sash windows.



Loss of joinery also includes the loss of less obvious, but equally important, eaves and verge details. Buxton's Victorian houses fell into largely two camps – either the classical Italianate villa, with wide, overhanging, bracketed timber eaves, or the Gothic villa, with picturesque, High Victorian bargeboards at the apex of a gable end, designed to cast interesting shadows. Whilst the bracketed timber eaves tend to survive better than the original bargeboards, in both cases there have been many losses and few reinstatements, compared with the success of the restored bay windows. The replacement of fretted and scalloped bargeboards with much plainer bargeboards is commonplace, as is the removal of the smallest shaped timber brackets, and the scale of this can only be appreciated by comparison of current buildings with old photographs.

In the residential areas, the survival rate of sash windows is very high. Those that have been replaced, tend to be with windows of different proportion and they stand out.

Loss of historic shopfronts

Along Spring Gardens, a large number of historic shopfronts have been lost. On the whole Higher Buxton has fared much better and there are a large number of surviving historic shopfronts.

The following shopfronts have not only lost the original treatment, but the proportions of the replacement shopfront have emphasised the fascia to such an extent that it is overblown in relation to the rest of the building and has a negative effect on the historic character of the street;

- 58 & 60 Spring Gardens (Jessops & Help the Aged)
- 48 Spring Gardens (British Heart Foundation)
- 50a Spring Gardens (Ikon)
- 39 Spring Gardens (Thomson)
- 53-55 Spring Gardens (Millets)
- 71 Spring Gardens (Scope)
- 93 Spring Gardens (Oxfam)



▲ *Jessops & Help the Aged, Spring Gardens*

The loss of the historic shopfront at Boots the Chemist (62 Spring Gardens) is particularly sad, as it was a very fine quality shopfront that complemented the high quality terracotta elevation above. The replacement makes no contribution to the character of the conservation area.

Vacancy of shops and under-use of upper floors

The main commercial street, Spring Gardens, has a healthy and vibrant character as every shop is occupied (100% occupancy at August 2006). This is in marked contrast with Higher Buxton where there are a high number of vacant shops (12 in August 2006), although a greater number of shops than Spring Gardens. However, this is misleading as along Spring Gardens approximately 16 properties have either no use on the upper floors or a very low-key use, such as storage for the shop premises. This creates a lifeless character to the upper floors of the street, many windows are blocked out with paper and the upper floors are obviously not as well maintained.



▲ *Vacant shops along High Street*

In Higher Buxton there are a much higher proportion of upper floors in use. Most of the uses appear to be residential (flats), which generates its own community and adds vibrancy to the area. The reasons for this contrast with Spring Gardens appear to be that most of the properties are slightly larger and there is much better access to both front and rear.

The most damaging frontages to the character of the conservation areas (which incorporate both shop and floors above) are:

- 10-13 Scarsdale Place, which has a negative impact on the historic character of the whole Market Place. It incorporates a group with a shopfront (The Co-op – no.11) that contains a screen behind the window and no relationship with the street, 10 – upper floors with major alterations to the original windows and a ground floor shopfront that has lost its cornice and pilasters, 12 – completely vacant in August 2006, in very poor condition and significant alterations to the original windows, 13 – upper floors vacant, in poor condition and significantly altered
- 50-56 High Street – a prominent row at the entrance into the conservation area, with all floors showing signs of wear and tear, and a continuous row of vacant shops

Loss of original wall finishes

In a few locations, there has been an attempt to disguise the original wall finish, either by removing limewash and exposing the stone or by replacing the render with an alternative, or by painting stonework. This has a detrimental effect on the character where these alterations affect terraced rows (e.g. 3-13 St. James Terrace – the original rendered finish which was a uniform finish applied to the row has been replaced with several forms of cladding).



▲ 16-18 Hardwick Street.
Original stone over-painted in a “chocolate” colour scheme

Loss of original boundaries, copings, railings & gates

The loss of the original frontage is particularly damaging in places where there was a consistent treatment. In several locations the original stone boundary wall has been removed entirely and the frontage has been replaced with tarmac and opened up for car parking (e.g. frontage to 18 Broad Walk & frontage to Norfolk House, Hardwick Square North). The redevelopment of the Wesleyan Chapel site on the junction of Devonshire Road and Marlborough Road incorporated the loss of the original copings to the boundary wall. Only a small fragment of the ashlar coping survives. The majority of the copings have been replaced with ½ round rough walling stone. Along the Devonshire Road frontage, the walls have been removed entirely and planted flowerbeds front the street.



▲ Locations where the original boundary has been removed for car parking

Railings were often removed for the war effort, in the belief that they would be melted down and recycled for munitions. Where a town made a conscious decision to do this, it seems to have been almost universally adopted. There are genuinely few instances where railings were historically used within Buxton. There are a few places where they were important, such as the frontage of the Old Clubhouse and the frontage of 1-18 Bath Road.

Whilst a high proportion of the stone gatepiers survive, there are relatively few of the original iron and timber gates.

Introduction of unsympathetic boundaries

In a number of locations, walls have been heightened and hedges have been replaced to create additional privacy. In many cases the use of concrete blockwork and modern panel fencing has been at odds with the local character of the conservation area, particularly along Manchester Road.



▲ *modern boundary alterations - a desire for additional privacy has created some unsympathetic finishes*

Loss of trees

Individual street trees and avenues are particularly under threat as no re-planting is undertaken when a tree is removed, if it is diseased or dangerous. Derbyshire County Council is responsible for the management of street trees in the highway. They have no programme of replacement, largely because of the effect of replacing a tree on the buried services of utility companies. The result is large gaps within avenues and the real threat that complete avenues will eventually be lost.

Poor condition of historic buildings

Although there have been a number of grant schemes within Buxton specifically targeted at the repair of the historic buildings, there are still some listed buildings that are at risk and in a very poor, semi-derelict condition. They are:

- Wye House, Corbar Road
- Cottages at Poole’s Cavern (85 & 87 Green Lane)



▲ ► *87 Green Lane & Wye House - “buildings at risk”*

Public realm & highway

There are three important, open, historic spaces that are spoilt by on-street car parking, poor traffic management and lack of definition for pedestrians:

- the forecourt to The Crescent
- the road fronting the Court House & space to the rear of The Crescent
- the east end of Spring Gardens where it meets Bridge Street

The forecourt to The Crescent is dominated by parked cars following the curve of the arcade. What was once an open space fitting the grandeur of the

building, has been reduced to a car park. There is no obvious pedestrian route across the frontage of The Crescent, without crossing the road to the Pump Room and a potential conflict between traffic and pedestrians.

The forecourt, or road area, in front of the Court House was always an important circulation space and may reflect an historic use as a forecourt to stabling within the main building. At one time it served several garages. The space is now dominated by both on-street and off-street car parking, with few defined areas for pedestrians.



▲ *Pedestrian and vehicle conflict in front of The Crescent*

The east end of Spring Gardens was once the main approach into Buxton. Perhaps in an effort to remove this identity, in association with pedestrianisation, the traffic island has become cluttered with trees, shrubs and street furniture. It now forms an edge to Bridge Street and the end of Spring Gardens is partially hidden behind the trees. The open character of the space has been lost and the area down-graded with buildings at the end of Spring Gardens (Co-op and Iceland) that are poorly designed in relation to the original space and do not reflect its importance historic status. The pedestrian routes between shops on Bridge Street, Spring Gardens and the Sylvan Car Park are sometimes awkward to connect.

Historically, each of these spaces was treated simply as a large open space, which addressed the buildings, forming a simple foil to the built frontages. In each instance this character has been degraded.

BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Areas

- 1** The Crescent, The Slopes and The Devonshire Royal Campus
- 2** Higher Buxton
- 3** Spring Gardens
- 4** Pavilion Gardens and Serpentine Walks
- 5** The Park (Buxton Park & Devonshire Park) and Corbar Walks
- 6** Hardwick
- 7** College
- 8** Poole's Cavern
- 9** Ashwood Park

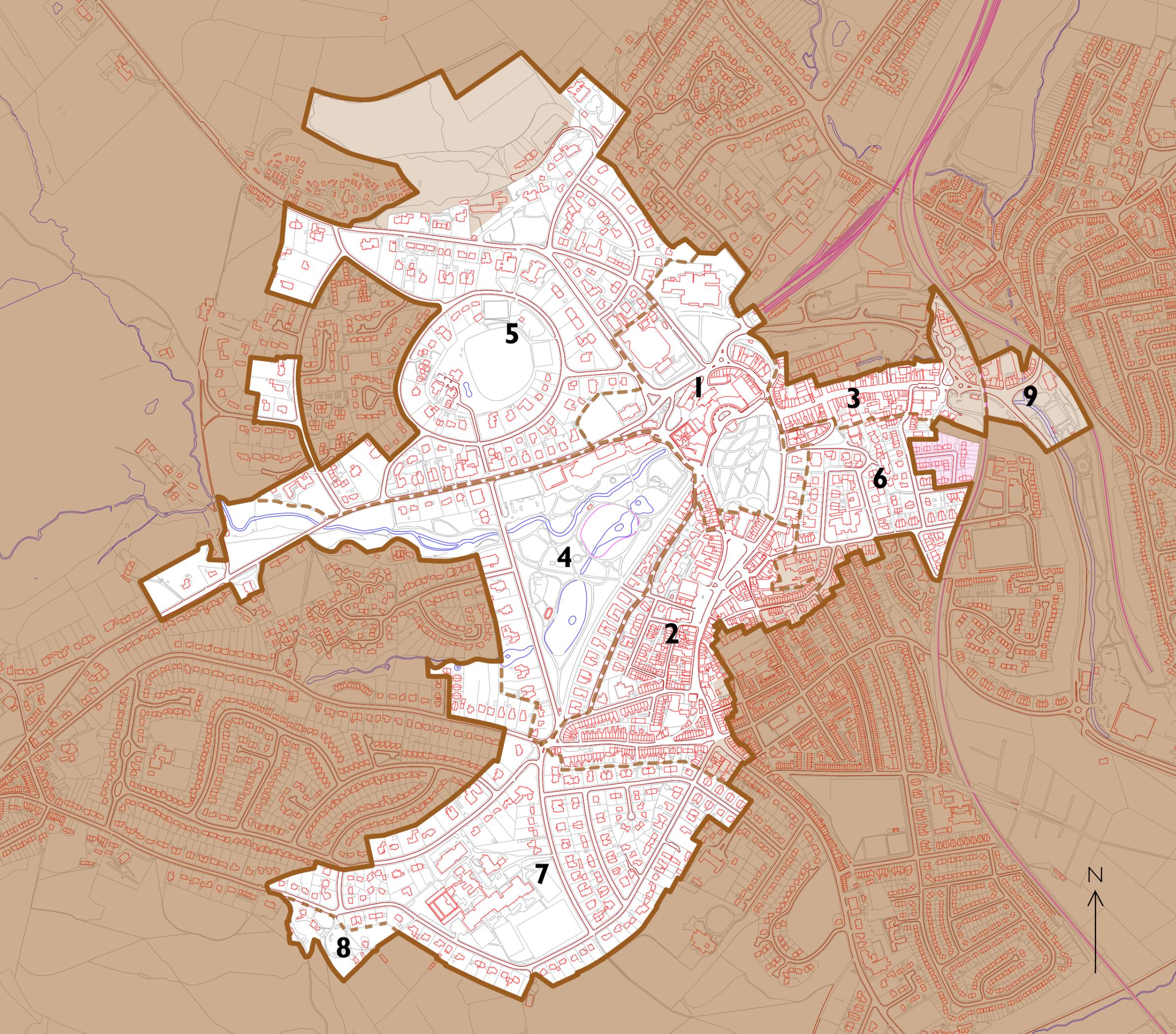
conservation area boundary 

character area boundary 

extension of conservation area approved 21.03.07 

area excluded from conservation area 21.03.07 

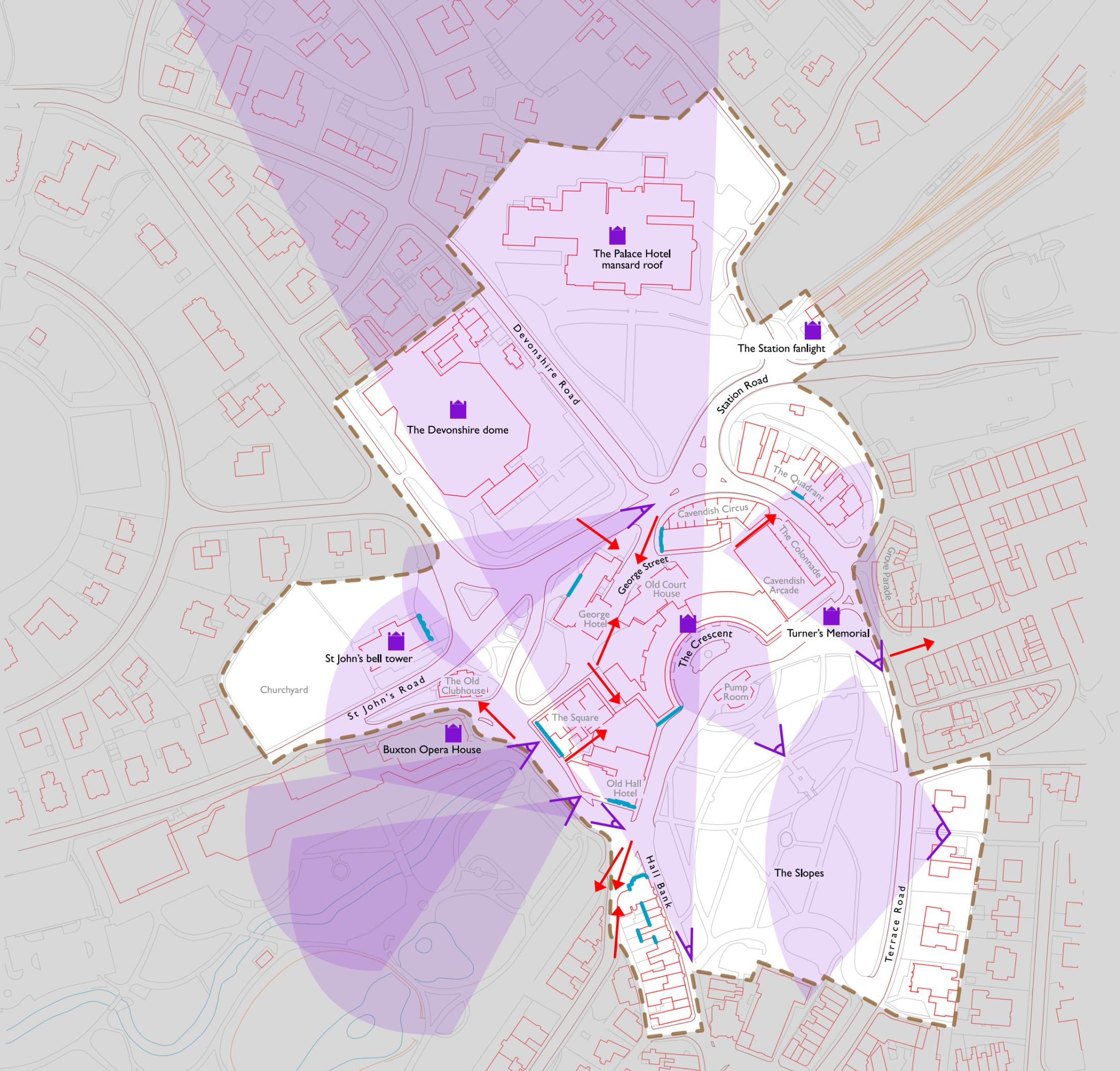
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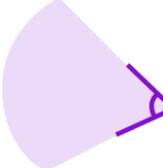


BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area I

The Crescent, The Slopes and The Devonshire Royal Campus



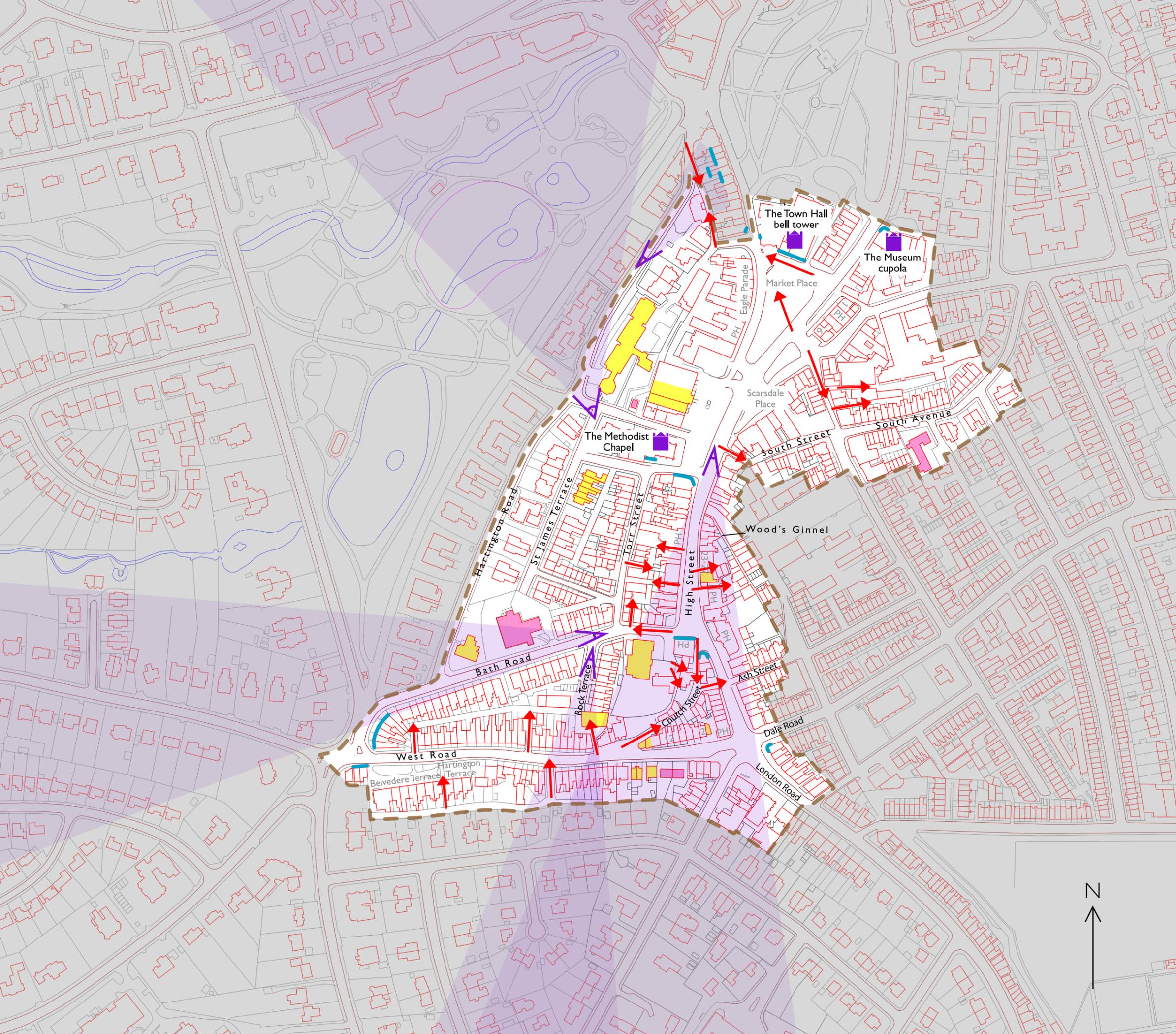
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- architectural landmark 
- glimpse view 
- significant view and viewpoint 
- character area boundary 
- negative building 
- neutral building 

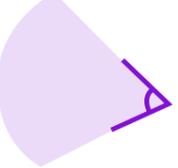
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BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 2

Higher Buxton



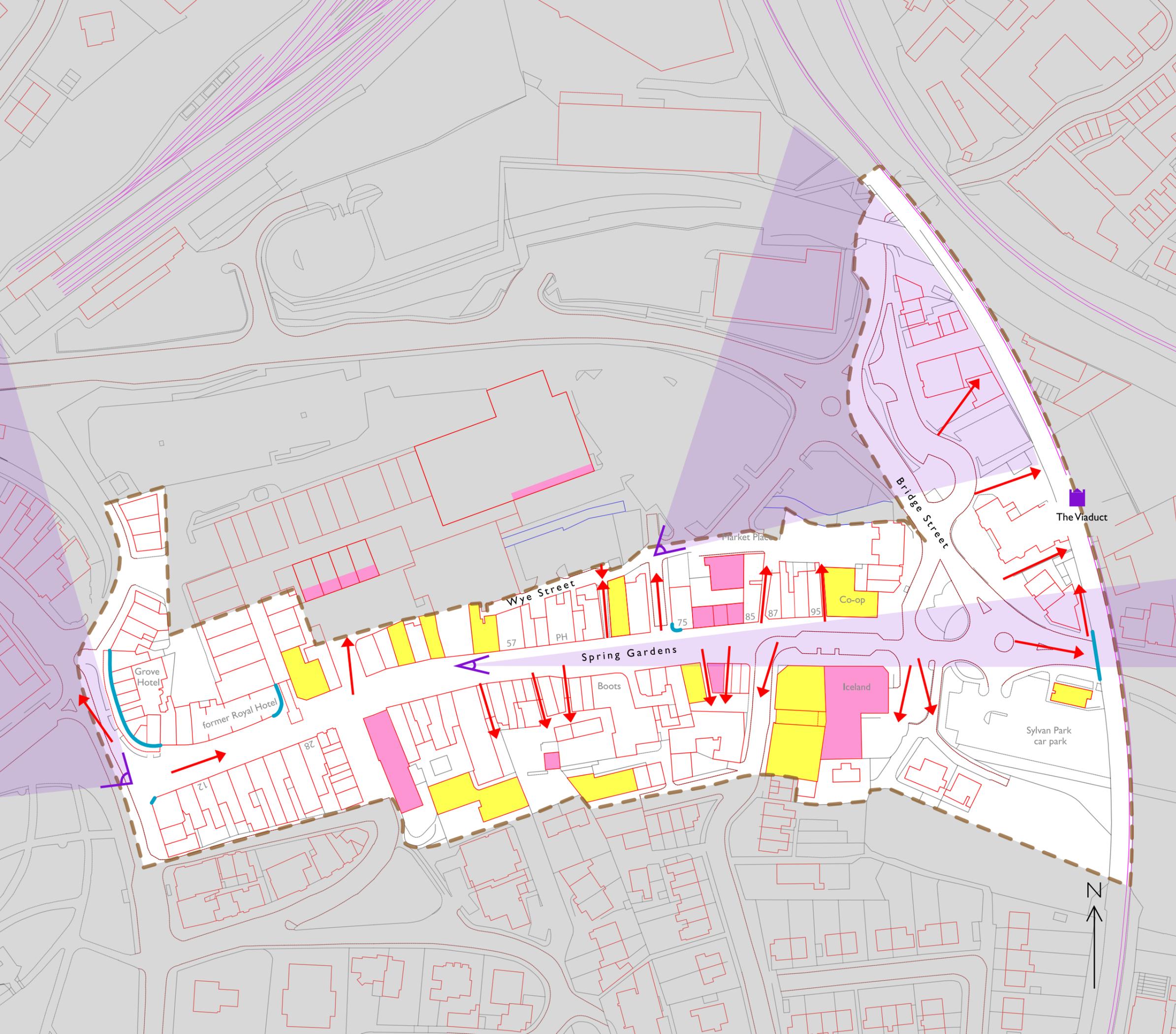
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- negative building 
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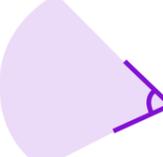
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BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 3

Spring Gardens



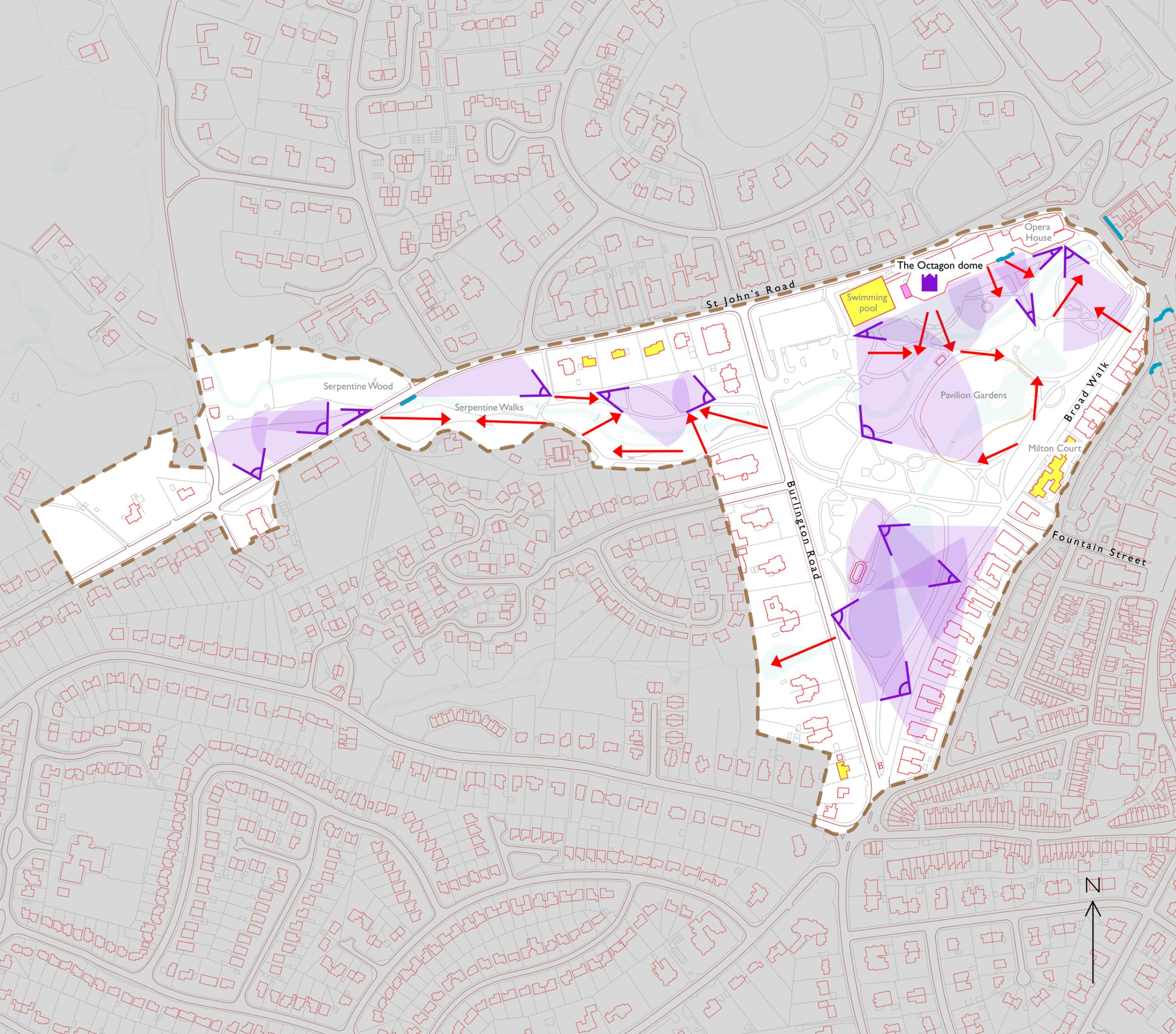
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- architectural landmark 
- glimpse view 
- significant view and viewpoint 
- character area boundary 
- negative building 
- neutral building 

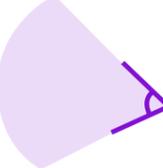
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BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 4

Pavilion Gardens and Serpentine Walks



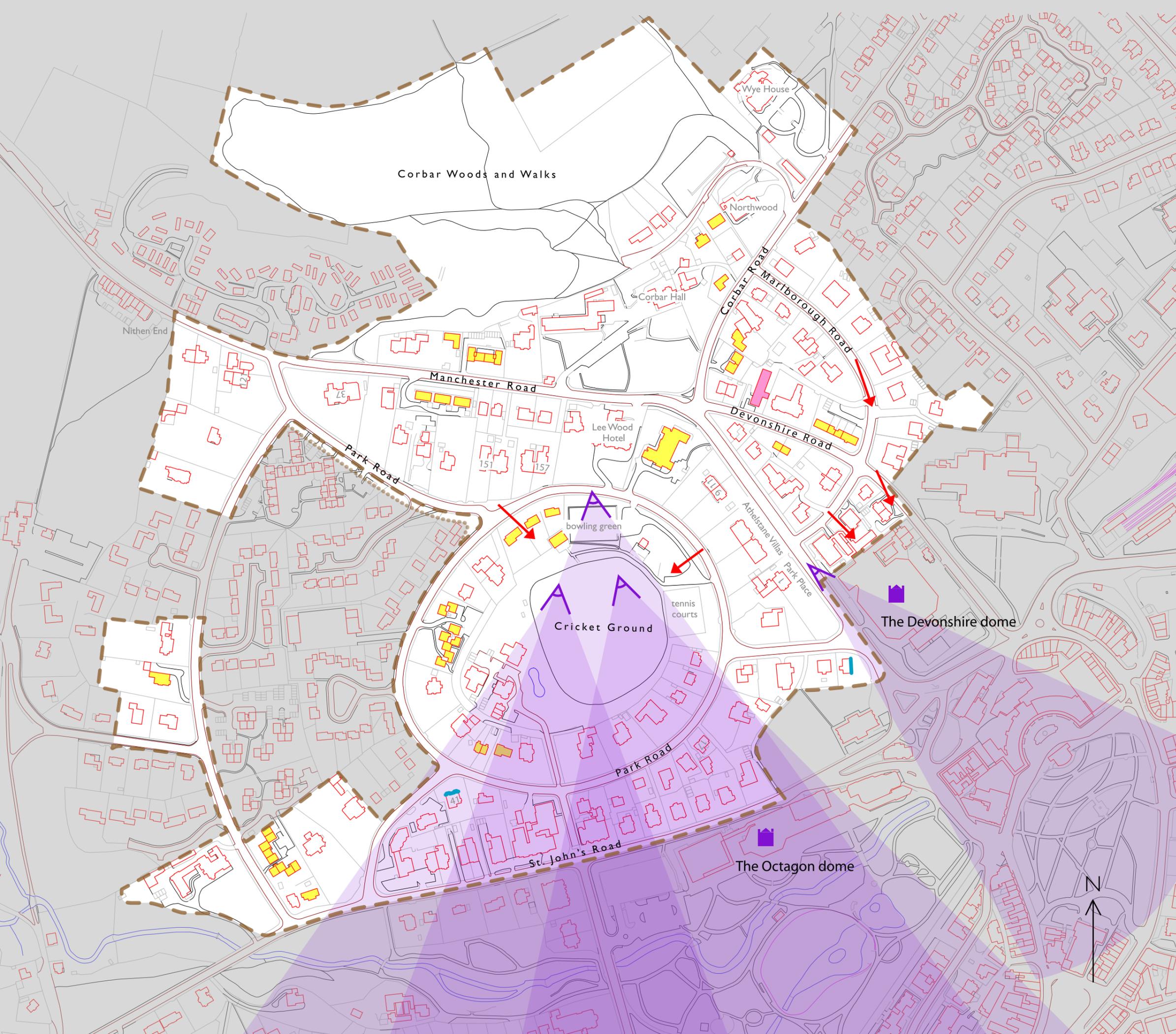
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- architectural landmark 
- glimpse view 
- significant view and viewpoint 
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- negative building 
- neutral building 

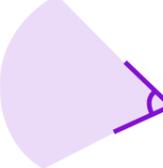
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BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 5

The Park
(Buxton Park & Devonshire Park)
and Corbar Walks



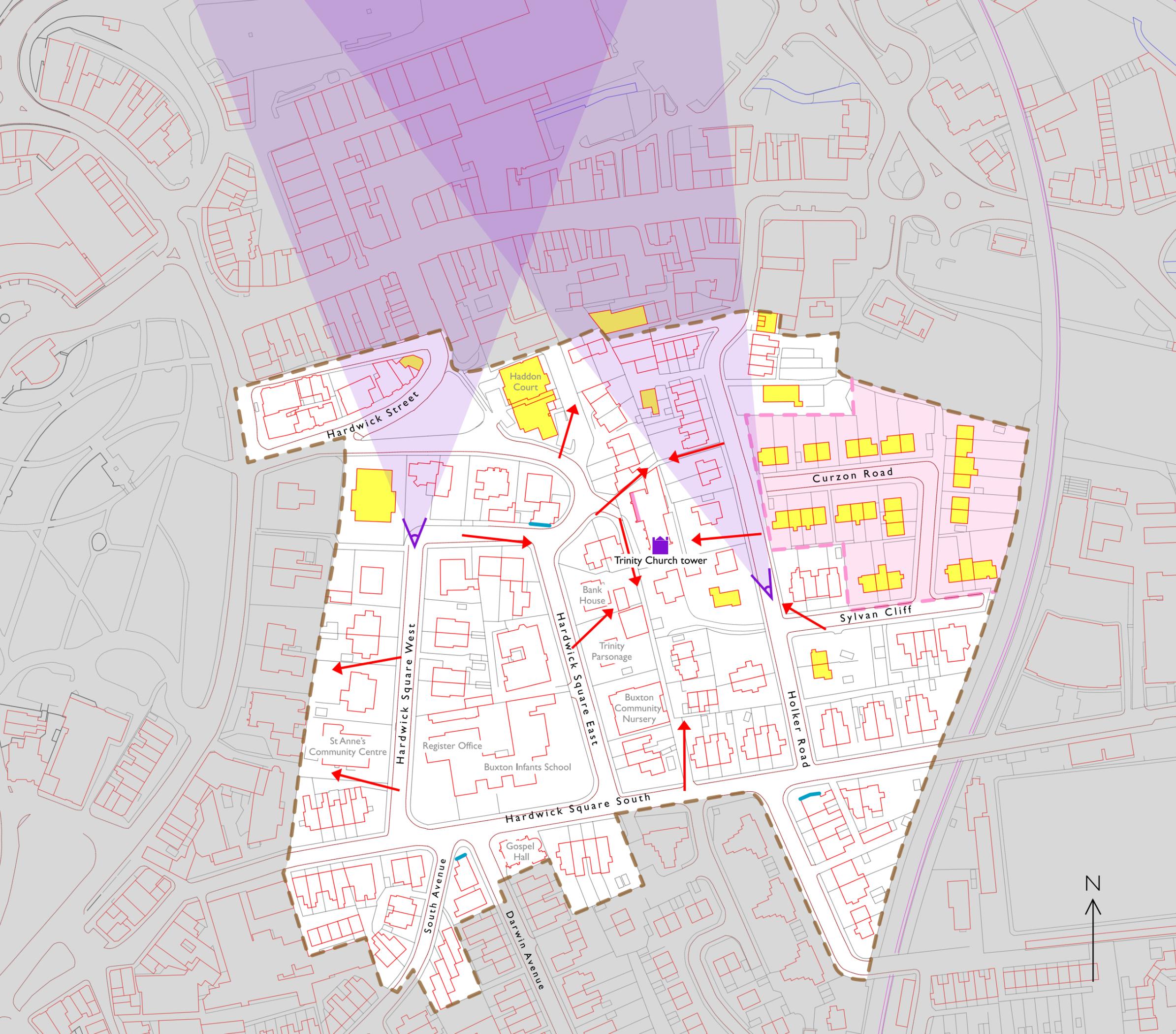
- focal point 
- architectural landmark 
- glimpse view 
- significant view and viewpoint 
- character area boundary 
- negative building 
- neutral building 

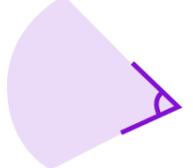
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BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 6

Hardwick



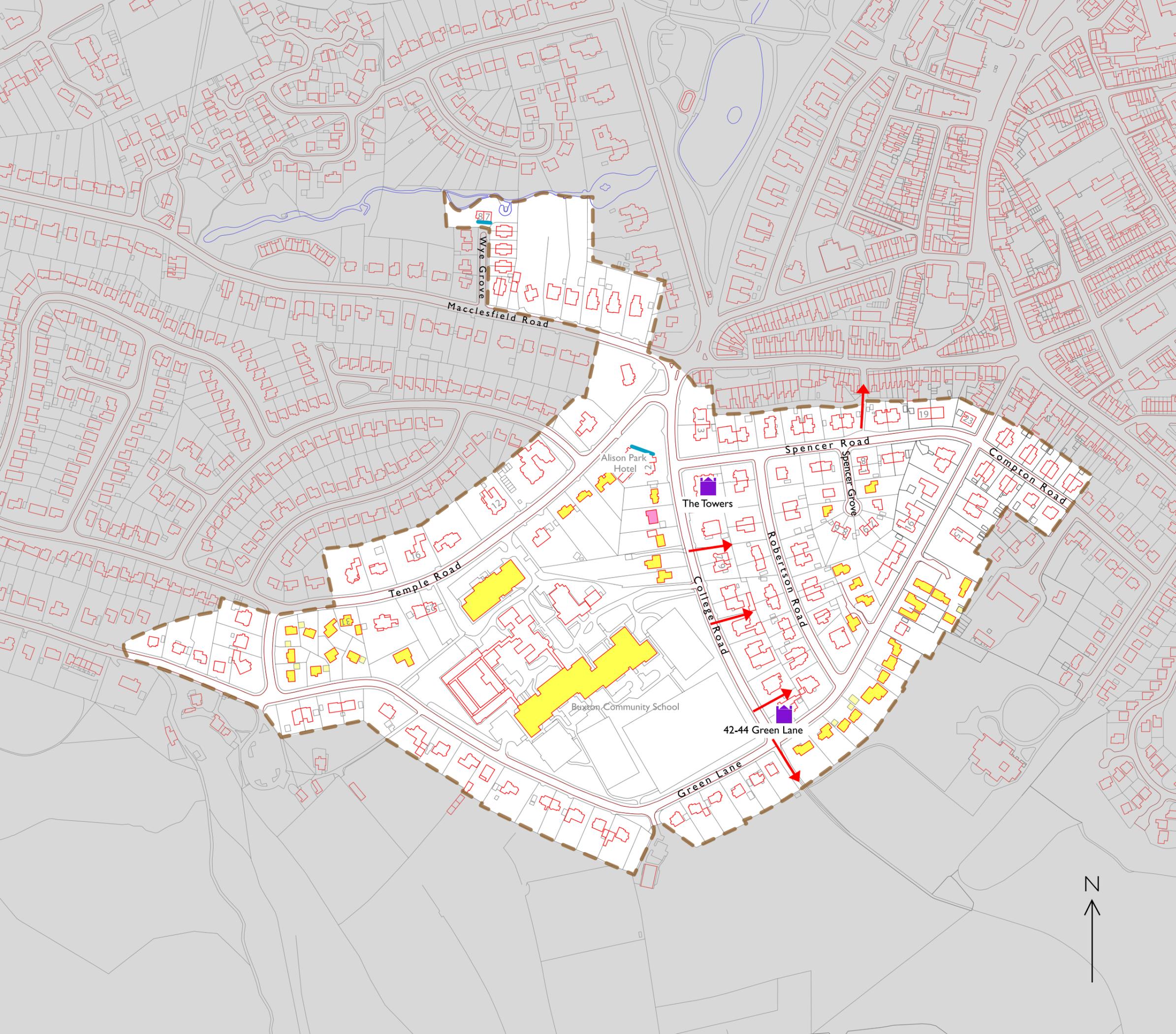
- focal point 
- architectural landmark 
- glimpse view 
- significant view and viewpoint 
- character area boundary 
- area excluded from conservation area 21.03.07 
- negative building 
- neutral building 

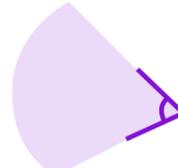
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BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 7

College



- focal point 
- architectural landmark 
- glimpse view 
- significant view and viewpoint 
- character area boundary 
- negative building 
- neutral building 

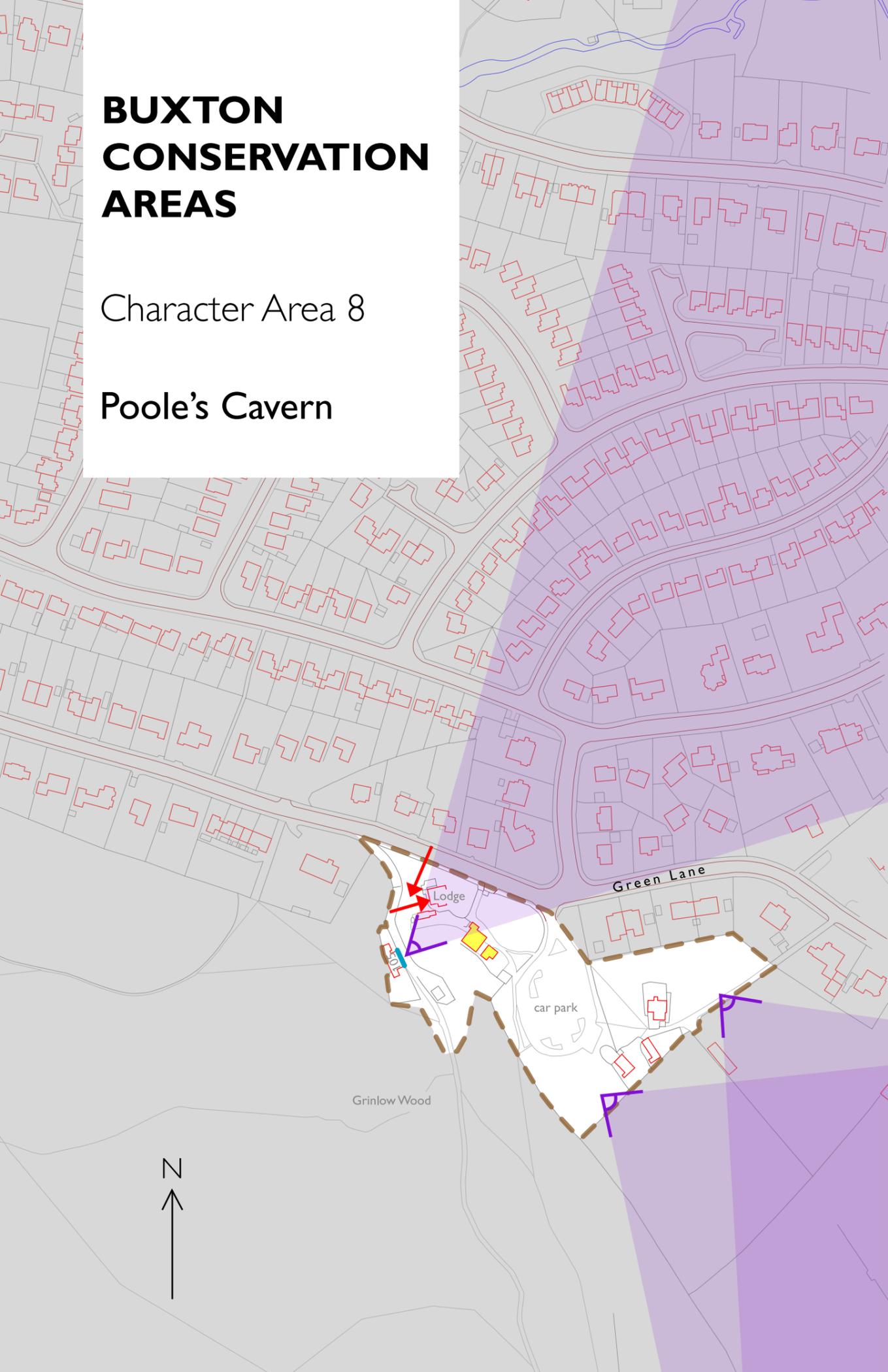


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BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 8

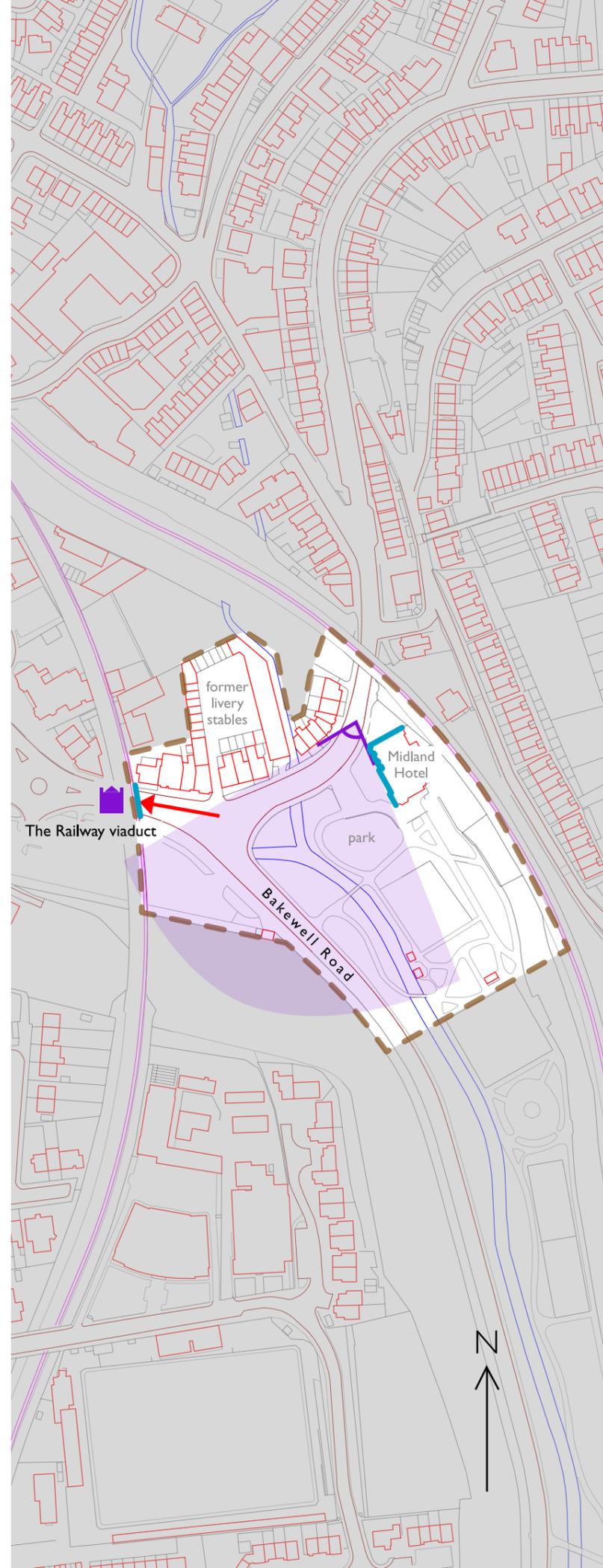
Poole's Cavern

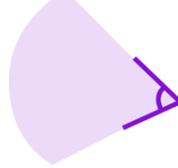


BUXTON CONSERVATION AREAS

Character Area 9

Ashwood Park



- focal point 
- architectural landmark 
- glimpse view 
- significant view and viewpoint 
- character area boundary 
- negative building 
- neutral building 

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list of key recommendations should inform the next stage of preparation of a management plan for the Buxton Conservation Areas.

1. MONITORING CHANGE

Photographic Record

The street-by-street photographic survey undertaken as part of the appraisal will require regular updating to make it an effective tool. An example of where lack of monitoring has had a marked affect on the character of the conservation areas is the loss of traditional joinery within commercial areas. Commercial properties and flats above shops do not have permitted development rights. Despite this, a large number of commercial properties have been altered without planning permission, particularly the replacement of sash windows in upper floors with uPVC windows. This is largely due to the previous lack of monitoring of change and inability to identify what has happened and when.

The full digital photographic survey undertaken as part of the appraisal will need to be regularly consulted and widely distributed within the local authority to ensure that alterations are effectively monitored.

A record should be made of each approved or unauthorised alteration, to keep the record up to date. This may be carried out by conservation staff, administering grant schemes, or by development control staff. The standard digital photograph should be a full elevational photograph, including the roof, if feasible, and taken as square as possible to the street frontage. The image will need to be shot at high resolution (typically 700kb), and use the same file naming system, giving a file name to match the existing with the date of the photograph. This will enable the image to be easily slotted into the existing survey. From this record, audits can be undertaken to monitor the effectiveness of future policies and the success of grant schemes or other initiatives.

In time, another full photographic record will be needed. Provided that there is a measure of continuity in maintaining the record, it is not anticipated that this will be needed for 15-20 years.

Trees

The gradual loss of street trees will in time have a marked effect on the character of the conservation areas. There needs to be a more pro-active approach to the management of street trees to assess condition, and threats (such as compaction damage, and service damage to roots) and opportunities to preserve and lengthen the life of the trees.

The Borough Council has undertaken a tree survey (by address) but this is limited in its scope. It is recommended that that the survey should be extended to a physical, plan-based survey with a database that identifies location, species, approximate age and condition and considers opportunities, in conjunction with the highway authority, to improve the conditions and preserve the main avenues.

Conservation Areas Appraisal

Given the amount of improvement within Buxton in the last 20 years, and most dramatically within the last 10 years, it is perhaps difficult to envisage much more change but there are a number of areas where there is pressure for change; for example, around the station and along Station Road and Bridge Street and within The Park. Many more improvements are likely in association with The Buxton Spa Project, particularly in and around The Crescent, The Pump Room and Natural Baths.

A recommended timescale for the review of the conservation areas appraisal is ten years. It may be appropriate to review the Conservation Management Plan more regularly, say on a five-year cycle.

2. RECOGNITION OF IMPORTANCE

Parks and Garden Register

In view of the significance of Joseph Paxton's landscape planning in Buxton, consideration should be given to including Corbar Walks within the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens. Further archive research work will be required in advance of this to establish the location of engravings and photographs that were not viewed as part of the character appraisal.

Historic Buildings - further evaluation of significance

A large proportion of the Victorian and Edwardian buildings within Buxton do not have statutory protection from listing. There are inconsistencies in the statutory list, villas being particularly under-represented. As part of the appraisal 27 buildings have been identified that fulfil the national criteria for listing. In due course, it is recommended that they should be put forward to English Heritage for consideration for "spot listing". Further research will be necessary to identify dates and architects, where evidence is missing, and to research the Chatsworth Archive for drawings and documentary evidence.

Wesleyan Methodist Church, Market Place	1849	James Wilson of Bath
Lodge to Poole's Cavern (103 Green Lane), former "Monkey House" and turnstiles	1852	Robert Rippon Duke
Corbar Villa (later Corbar Hall), Corbar Road	1853	Henry Currey
St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church, Terrace Road	1861	J J Scholes
"The Vicarage" 195 Park Road	1861	Henry Currey
"Park House", 8 Manchester Road	1870-71	Robert Rippon Duke
"Thorncliffe Cottage", 3 Hartington Road	1862	Robert Rippon Duke
"The Source", 7 Terrace Road	c1870?	?
"Spring Bank", 10 Marlborough Road	c1875	Robert Rippon Duke
"Nithen End", 121 Park Road	c1877	?
"Braeside", 38 Park Road	c1890	?
"Marlborough Mansions", Marlborough Road	1891	W R Bryden
"The Hawthorns", 5 Burlington Road	1891-92	W R Bryden
"Wychwood", 46 St. John's Road	1893	Charles Henry Heathcote
"The Branksome" (The Branksome Care Home), St. John's Road	1894	Huon A. Matear

Catholic Apostolic Church (The Gospel Hall) Hardwick Square South	1896	W R Bryden
“Villette”, 15 Green Lane	1897	Flockton, Gibbs & Flockton
“Lakenham” & “Inglethorpe”, 11 & 12 Burlington Road	1898	W R Bryden
“Elmwood & Elmbank”, 7&8, 9&10 Burlington Road (2 buildings)	1898	W R Bryden
Alison Park Hotel, Temple Road & 2 College Road	1904	W R Bryden
“Boots the Chemist”, 62 Spring Gardens	1906	Probably A N Bromley
“Brantwood”, 29 Temple Road	1907	Charles Swain
“Lerryn”, 25-27 Temple Road	1908	W R Bryden
“Brooklands”, 12 Temple Road	1910	John Bowden
“Ravensworth”, Carlisle Road	1912	W R Bryden & S Walton
“West Mount”, Carlisle Road	?	?
“Grey End”, 11 Temple Road	1926	Isaac Massey & Sons

Local List

There is currently no mechanism of recognising the value of particular local buildings to a wide audience. These are not of sufficient quality to be listed, according to national standards, but they may have individual architectural interest because they have been designed by a local architect of repute, or are set within gardens of high quality that were designed with the house, or they may have a particularly strong and meaningful association either because of their public use or because of their association with locally important people or events, or they may simply be prominent local landmarks by which people find their way.

It is recommended that a local list should be drawn up for Buxton, which would need to be reinforced through Local Plan policy. Although identification in this list does not in its own right convey any additional control, the local planning authority would endeavour to retain and preserve the special character of all buildings that fall into this list.

There are potentially over 100 buildings that might fall into this category and it is, therefore, recommended that this should be subject to extensive public consultation and invitation for suggestions, perhaps posted via a website link.

3. ENHANCEMENT

Negative Buildings

A number of buildings have been identified as “negative” as part of the appraisal. These properties may have a long life ahead, but it is recommended that each site should be identified as a target for a more sympathetic replacement building. In each case, the site is particularly prominent and will require the preparation of a **development brief** prior to any designs being considered. In some cases a landmark building may be an appropriate replacement, depending on its size & the quality of its design:

Spring Gardens

- 32a (Argos) – an important focal point at the corner of two streets. The site demands a high quality landmark building

- 88 (Iceland) – an important focal point at the east end of Spring Gardens – the opportunity to design a landmark was lost with the present building, but its replacement should make a major contribution to this entrance into the town
- 79-83 (Lomas Foods & Ethel Austin)

Bath Road

- Buxton Health Centre - built on the site of one of Buxton's most famous landmark churches, any landmark replacement will need to be of the highest quality of design

Devonshire Road

- 10-34 Holmlea Gardens

The following gapsite, identified within the appraisal, will also require a development brief;

- gap-site between Nos. 46 & 50 High Street

The decision about the need for a development brief for other sites will need to be at the discretion of the local planning authority.

Traffic Management & Public Realm Improvements

Within the appraisal, three clear areas have been identified that would benefit from careful improvements to traffic management. These need to be addressed in conjunction with the highway authority, which has a traffic management team experienced with issues in conservation areas;

- the forecourt to The Crescent
- the road in front of the Court House & space to the rear of The Crescent
- the east end of Spring Gardens where it meets Bridge Street

Historically, each of these spaces was treated simply as a large open space, which addressed the buildings, forming a simple foil to the built frontages. In each case, the desirability to restore the open character of the space is an important requirement, so that the principal buildings have an immediate relationship with the space, without street clutter or parked cars, which currently swamp the spaces.

However, given the lack of public car parking in the vicinity of The Crescent, some car parking will probably be required specifically for deliveries and servicing the businesses.

The proliferation of multiple surfaces and street clutter should be avoided (e.g. bollards, trees, flowerbeds and planters), but clear distinctions are needed between pedestrian areas and car trafficked areas. This may be achieved simply by removing traffic from key areas, rather than laying multiple surfaces.

Grant Schemes

As time goes on, different grant schemes emerge with different funding partners and changes in emphasis. Within Buxton, there have been several grant schemes over the years. The current townscape scheme operating in Buxton is called a HERS (Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme), funded by English

Heritage and the local authority High Peak Borough Council. It is aimed at the commercial core of Higher Buxton. It is due to finish in 2007.

The main commercial street, Spring Gardens, has a healthy and vibrant character as every shop is occupied (100% occupancy at August 2006), although above street level many of the upper floors are under-used. Spring Gardens does tend to have been overlooked in the past, in terms of grant aid, largely because of the number of better preserved historic properties in greater need elsewhere. However, there is an argument for enhancement of the commercial frontages along Spring Gardens, where a small investment will make a great impact in the quality of the street frontage. This should be aimed at restoration of historic shopfronts and high quality new shopfronts, where there is no historic evidence, and above street level it should aim to restore the original proportions of the windows, reinstate traditional joinery and generally repair walls, eaves and rainwater goods.

The success of the current HERS grant scheme should be evaluated at the end of the programme, in particular, the problems of vacancy and under-use of upper floors, identified as negative factors within the appraisal. The need for any further, targeted scheme, such as “Living Over The Shop” or a tailor-made scheme, to address specifically opportunities for removing vacant shops and premises within this commercial area, should be evaluated.

CONTROL

Design Guidance

Further design guidance is recommended to identify good and bad examples of boundaries, and particularly address the need for soft landscaped boundaries.

Urgent works to buildings at risk

The two main listed buildings that are at risk within the conservation areas will need to be treated with different strategies.

Wye House, Corbar Road – work to repair this building is associated with the redevelopment within the grounds. Condition should be monitored, as there is lack of progress on immediate repairs to prevent further water damage. This will lead to more costly repairs in the long term. If necessary, the local authority should use its powers to ensure the full repair of this building.

85-87 Green Lane – a group of buildings that were listed in their present poor condition. The local authority has little power to secure any meaningful repairs. The authority should work closely with the current owners to identify possible uses.

USEFUL INFORMATION & CONTACT DETAILS

For advice about this appraisal or any further information about Buxton Conservation Areas, please contact either of the following officers of the Planning Policy & Design Section at High Peak Borough Council;

Richard Tuffrey
 Business Unit Manager Planning Policy and Design
 tel: 0845 129 7777
 Email: Richard.Tuffrey@highpeak.gov.uk

Joanne Brooks
 Conservation Officer Planning Policy and Design
 Tel: 0845 129 7777
 Email: Jobrooks@highpeak.gov.uk

Address: High Peak Borough Council, Municipal Buildings, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 8AF

Further Reading

- “*The Book of Buxton*”, John Leach, 1987
- “*Buxton – A People’s History*”, Mike Langham, 2001
- “*Images of England – BUXTON from the Board Collection*”, The Archive Photograph Series, 1999
- “*A History of the Baths at Buxton*”, Mike Langham & Colin Wells, 1997
- “*Buxton, A Pictorial History*”, Mike Langham and Colin Wells
- “*A Thing in Disguise – The Visionary Life of Joseph Paxton*”, Kate Colquhoun, 2003
- “*Local Distinctiveness – Place, Particularity & Identity*” Common Ground, 1993
- “*Derbyshire Detail & Character*”, Barry Joyce, 1996
- “*The Victorian Society Book of The Victorian House*”, Kit Wedd, 2002

Buxton Museum and Art Gallery, Terrace Road

Opening times:	Tuesdays – Fridays	9.30 am – 5.30 pm
	Saturday	9.30 am – 5.00 pm
	Sundays & Bank Holidays	10.30 am – 5.00 pm

Tel: 01298 24658
 Email: Buxton.museum@derbyshire.gov.uk

National Organisations

English Heritage, East Midlands Region
 tel: 01604 735400
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Guidance Leaflets

Design Guide for Signs, Design Guide for Shopfronts, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings

These leaflets are prepared and published by High Peak Borough Council and are available by request from the Council by telephone 0845 129 7777 ext 3654 or email: conservation@highpeak.gov.uk

Author of Buxton Conservation Areas Character Appraisal

Mel Morris Conservation
 67 Brookfields Road, Ipstones, Staffordshire ST10 2LY