

9. Modern Development

The group of six houses just outside the Conservation Area on the Natsworthy road are the most recent dwellings to be added to the village, and indeed the first to be built for half a century or more. The open porches, grey-blue slate roofs, chimney stacks, timber casement windows and the treatment of the eaves, combine to create a vernacular character most suited to its edge-of-village location, while the granite wall constructed along the roadside frontage completes its integration into the village scene [figure 38 below].



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Figure 38. The group of houses on the Natsworthy road, including the stone boundary wall and the small green opposite

The extended café on the green, and indeed the toilet block adjacent, are other modern additions which, although not unattractive in themselves, appear less well integrated into the village scene. Although due in part to their locations in and next to the coach and car park, it is more the nature of their boundary treatments that does most to create a disharmonious appearance (An appearance also shared by the roadside boundary of the Old Inn car park). On the other hand, the timber cabin at the entrance to the private car park appears quite incongruous in comparison to the older village buildings of similar size (eg the stone and slate outbuildings on the Rugglestone lane).

Some modern developments, however, have eroded the character and interest of the settlement's existing historic buildings fundamental to Widecombe-in-the-Moor's attraction. These include the introduction of non-traditional forms, such as flat-roofed extensions, and non-traditional materials, such as concrete tiles. The most harmful of all, however, is the removal of historic windows and doors and their replacement in designs and materials that are clearly modern – especially those made of upvc, with fake glazing bars and non-traditional methods of opening, which appear wholly incompatible with the historic nature of the setting and the natural materials which dominate its character.