

7 Archaeological Potential

The archaeological potential of Princetown is considerable. Its location in the centre of Dartmoor's upland area means that ground disturbance within the town could still provide the potential for revealing prehistoric archaeology.

There are range of maps, from the early prison plans to the Tithe Map of 1841, through to the present Conservation Area map which reveal how much change has taken place on the ground in the town since its creation over 200 years ago. In particular the changes within the Prison layout from its foundation as a War Prison in 1804 to today's Convict Prison will undoubtedly have left a considerable archaeological record.

The proposed inclusion of the sports field and former prison nursery and allotments within the Conservation Area has important archaeological significance. The 1812 plan of the Prison depicts the original barracks with a number of buildings, although this is now open space and traces of walls can still be seen. The area around the former railway station and yard should also be regarded as containing archaeological potential.

Other upstanding archaeological features of merit within the town, in addition to the buildings are; the churchyard of St. Michael and All Angels; the memorial cross made and erected by the prisoners; the small dry stone walled fields created and farmed by the prisoners; and the running and dry leats which carried water to and from the Prison.

8 Trees

The distribution of trees both within and outside the Conservation Area and their significance are covered by a survey in Appendix B.

There is a surprising number of trees with a diverse age class growing in the Conservation Area. These trees are an important visual component of the town scene. The most significant trees are the mature broadleaves growing around St. Michael and All Angels Church.

Outside the Conservation Area the mature trees growing to the west of the Prison are visible in the landscape, particularly when viewed from the east. The mature woodland to the north west and the conifer plantations to the east and west of Princetown are prominent, although the conifer plantations are very hard features and somewhat alien in this high moorland landscape.

Extensive broadleaf woodland planting has been carried out on the outskirts of the town and as these woodlands become established they will be seen as increasingly important features. Princetown is very exposed and the younger individually planted trees are struggling in the extreme conditions, which suggests that new trees will be slow to establish. There is, however, a lot of open ground immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area with good opportunities for additional tree planting in the future.

Trees in Conservation Areas Footnote:

The Town and Country Planning Act: Section 211 makes special provision for trees in Conservation Areas not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). A tree is not defined in the Act, but a Section 211 Notice is only required for a tree with a diameter exceeding 75 mm in diameter. Trees in a Conservation Area already protected by a TPO are subject to the normal TPO controls. A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by the Local Planning Authority in respect of trees and woodlands. The principle effect of a TPO is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of a tree without the Local Planning Authority's consent.