

3 Building types, materials and styles



© DNPA

Fig 4: Rendered cob and thatch – the essential character of Dunsford

At its heart Dunsford has a fine collection of cross passage houses in the Devon vernacular tradition. Although many have been altered and extended, the majority of homes have a linear plan, being only one room deep, and run parallel with, and tight to, the street. Their origins range in date from the 15th century (Lewishill) to the 18th century (e.g. East Steps and Foxhole) and all are built of (usually) roughcast rendered cob on stone plinths with thatched roofs. The traditional ridge finish of a wrapover type, either flush or straight block cut is the prevailing character. Until the 19th century every building except the church would have had a thatched roof. After that time slate was introduced, firstly on new build and in the 20th century as a replacement for thatch. The almost ubiquitous use of white or cream on walls reflects the historic limewashed finish and adds to visual harmony.

Earlier buildings have lower eaves and most have eyebrows over the upper floor windows. The Post Office is one example that may be compared with the adjacent Old Post Office. The latter of these two was the 17th century service end of the former, which dates from the 16th century. The chimneys of these two properties further indicate their relative ages; the Post Office has a substantial and showy lateral stack and the Old Post Office has the massive gable end stack constructed of coursed granite. Chimneys are a notable feature in Dunsford, though the majority are more modest axial stacks with brick shafts. Where dormers have been introduced into the roofscape it has usually been detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area.



© DNPA

Fig 5: Thatched canopy at Dymond Cottage

Entrance canopies are quite commonplace and clearly have a practical function, especially below thatched roofs, most are slated, some are thatch and a few are leaded. Apart from several quite modern examples porches are not a feature on the historic buildings of Dunsford.

The great majority of windows are casements, though there are not many really old examples left. One exception is a chamfered mullion window in an outbuilding opposite Old School House. Buildings of the 19th century tend to have vertical sliding sashes. The number of properties with inappropriate replacement windows, both in timber as well as PVCu, is increasing. The pattern of subdivision and mode of opening is often altered, with the introduction of quarter-lights or fanlights and the loss of glazing bars especially notable. There is a mix of boarded and panelled doors in the village.



© DNPA

Fig 6: Mullioned window



© DNPA

Fig 7: Even subtle differences can make replacement windows significantly different to original examples

Historically just about all of the outbuildings in the village would have been of similar vernacular construction with thatched roofs. Only the Doctor's surgery at the eastern end of the Conservation Area retains this character. Other barns have corrugated iron instead of thatch and those that have been converted to residential use have slate.

Apart from chimneys there is little use of brick in Dunsford, with the obvious exceptions of The Royal Oak and the village hall.

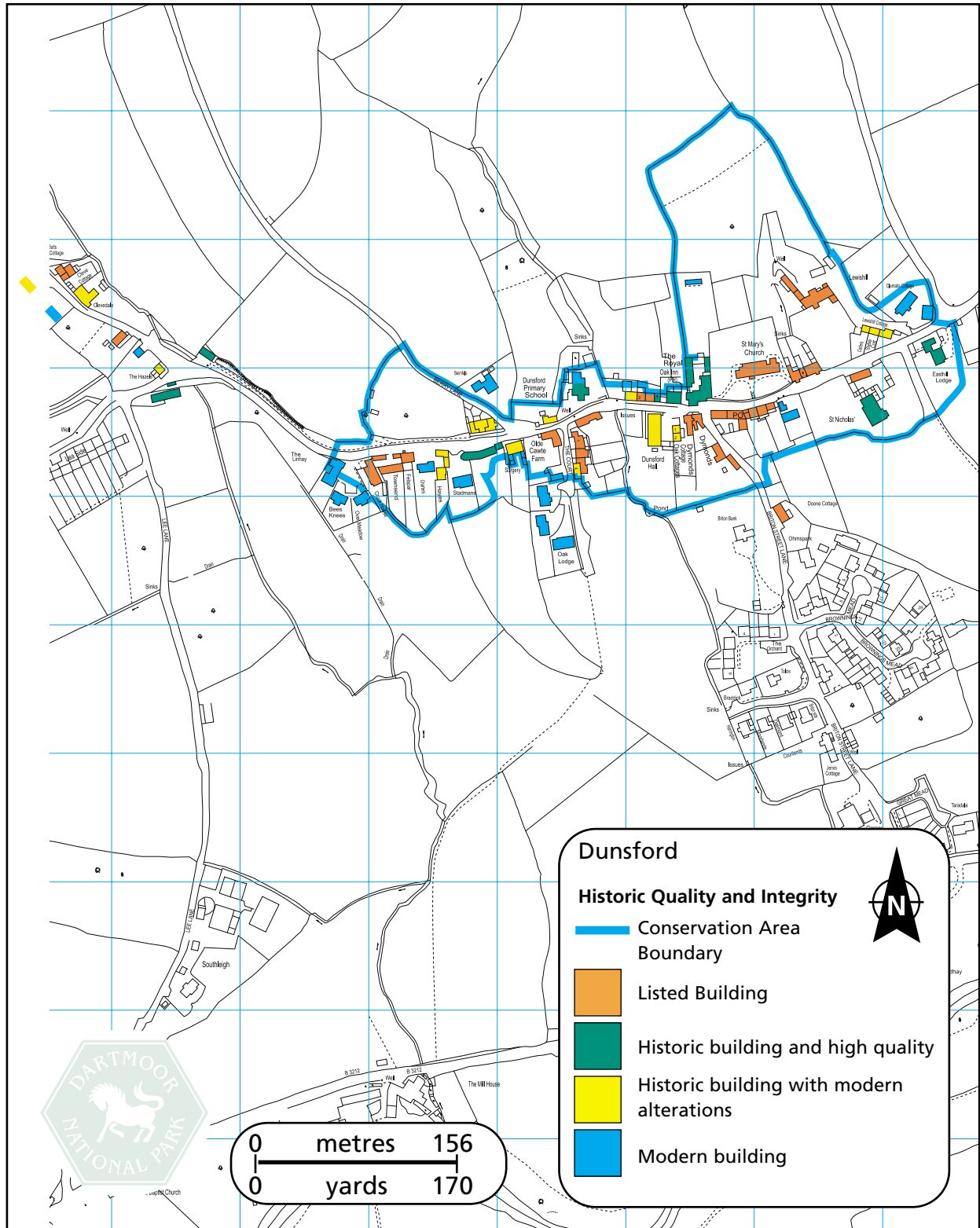
Refer to *Historic Integrity and Quality* – Map 7 page 16.



© DNPA

Fig 8: The Doctor's Surgery – the random slate on the extension is now a rarity

Map 7 Conservation Area: Historic Quality and Integrity



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Dartmoor National Park Authority. 100024842 2005.