

### 3.11 Lydford (Selected Rural Settlement)

#### [Introduction](#)

##### 3.11.1

While set against a village history which is of great significance, most of the buildings of Lydford are, by and large, late, unremarkable and modest, both in size and architecture. What is remarkable about Lydford is its relative lack of modern development and therefore the preservation of its historical form.

#### [Conservation of the built environment](#)

##### 3.11.2

There is evidence to suggest a Dark Ages (5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD) origin for Lydford. By the 10<sup>th</sup> century it had been created a burgh by the Saxon Kings of Wessex and it ranked in importance with Barnstaple, Exeter and Totnes. The late Saxon/early Norman period was probably Lydford's peak, and the small amount of subsequent development means that Lydford must rank as one of the most important medieval settlements in the county, if not further afield. The village owed its revival, in part, to the arrival in 1865 of the Launceston and South Devon Railway, and the Victorian 'discovery' of natural beauty, which drew visitors to Lydford Gorge.

##### 3.11.3

The Conservation Area includes all of the historic core - that is, the original Saxon town which lies within the ramparts and the extra-mural settlement which lies between the ramparts and the War Memorial and which also has great archaeological sensitivity. With the exception of the church, the stannary courthouse and gaol, and possibly the Castle Inn, all the visible buildings appear to date from the late 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The buildings are modest in size and architecture. They are generally set back from the edge of the street, with simple, symmetrical front gardens. Porches are common. Roofs are most commonly of slate and eaves lines are unbroken.

##### 3.11.4

Lydford is, arguably, the most archaeologically important village in the whole of the National Park. Any proposed development within the historic core is likely to destroy evidence of early and later medieval activity, and archaeological evaluation will be required for planning applications that are likely to affect archaeological interests within the Conservation Area. (See Policy AH5)

##### 3.11.5

The surviving traditional non-domestic buildings in Lydford make a significant contribution to its character. It is important to retain these buildings in as unaltered a state as possible.

