

# **BEER**

## **VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**



**Beer, Devon, 2006**

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# BEER VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

## **1 The Village Design Statement**

### **1.1 What is it?**

Village Design Statements are intended to provide guidance for all proposals for building development and to influence the way the planning system works locally. They are not intended as bulwarks against future changes to the built environment. They provide a way to ensure that new developments are designed and located in a way that reflects local characteristics and the qualities that its residents value in their village and its surroundings. Village Design Statements are produced by local communities for use by planners, developers, local authorities, householders, businesses and farmers.

The VDS may influence policies in the review leading to future versions of the local plan.

At present, residents of a village may hear about proposals for building developments only when the design has been completed and approved. While Parish Councils are asked for their views on planning applications, they may not have the opportunity to offer as much input as they would like, particularly in terms of the proposed design and materials of new building development. However, once the District Council has received and approved a Village Design Statement, it is aware in advance of the sorts of things that are acceptable or unacceptable to local residents.

### **1.2 Why produce one for Beer?**

The aim of Beer's Village Design Statement is to ensure that all future building developments proposed in the parish are based on an understanding and appreciation of the area's past and present. It draws attention to what is special about the buildings, open spaces and settings of the village and helps to protect its unique character from unsympathetic development. Most importantly, it gives local residents a strong voice in the future of their village by recording their views on how this unique character may best be recognised and respected.

### **1.3 How has the Village Design Statement been produced?**

This statement has been produced by the residents of Beer with the support of Beer Parish Council and East Devon District Council. It has evolved out of public consultation involving the parish at all stages and including:

- several public meetings and exhibitions
- a detailed questionnaire circulated to all households in the village
- on-going consultation with EDDC planning officers.

The widespread response of Beer residents to the issues raised in the questionnaire has provided a range of strong and positive views, ideas and comments. These are reflected in the Statement.

## 1.4 How will it work?

This Design Statement describes the parish of Beer both as it was in the past and as it is today, highlighting the qualities that its residents value and wish to be preserved and reflected in any future developments of the built environment. It is intended to be a practical tool capable of influencing decisions affecting building design and materials used in the parish. It should assist both Parish and District Councils in their consideration of all planning applications.

## 1.5 Who is it for?

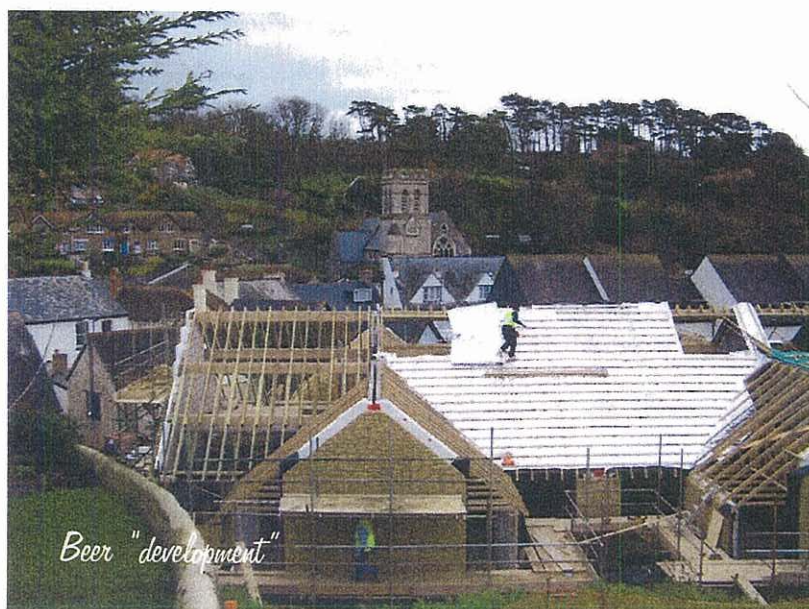
Change in the village is brought about not only by the erection of new buildings but also by smaller, incremental alterations to homes and gardens, open spaces, paths, walls, fences and hedges, which can affect the appearance and ethos of the whole village.

This Design Statement provides guidance for anyone considering development in the area. It will be as valuable to individual householders wishing to build extensions as it will be to planners, developers and architects proposing new buildings. It provides a source of ideas for designers to work with local building styles and materials which have helped to make Beer distinctive.

## 1.6 What does it cover?

This Design Statement contains sections on:

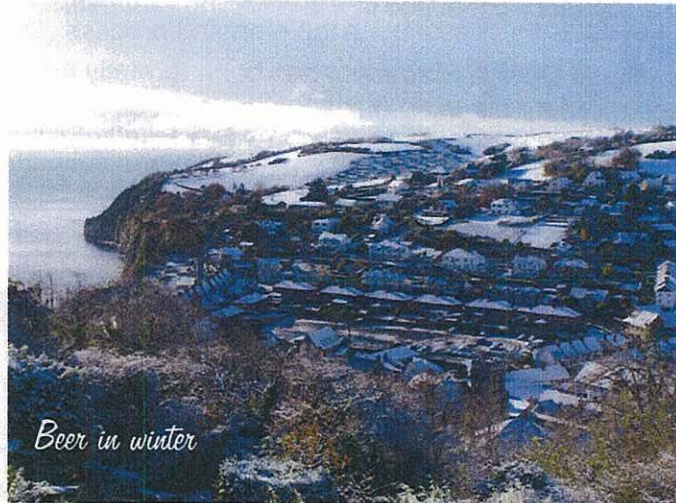
- the nature, functions and importance of Village Design Statements
- Beer in the planning context
- the history, geographical setting and geological origins of Beer and its environs
- the views of Beer residents on future developments of the built, managed and natural environments of the parish
- other issues raised in the course of the VDS project which are strictly outside its terms of reference but are nonetheless important matters in need of consideration
- conclusions and appendices.





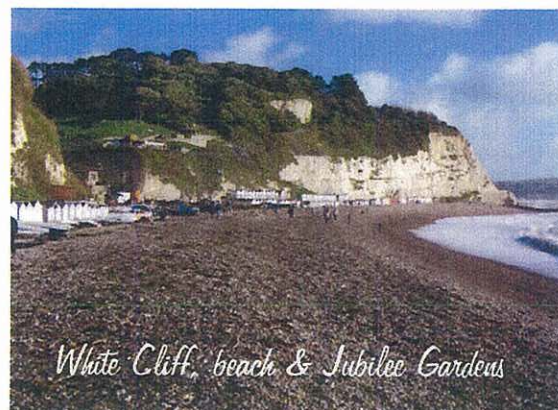
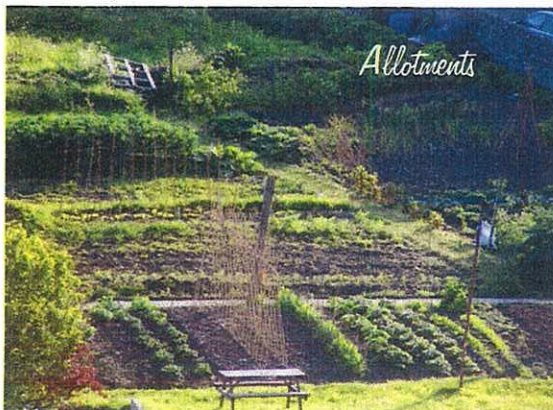
## 2 Beer in the local planning context

**2.1** Because of the unique character and natural setting of Beer, the current District Council planning policies confirm that the existing built-up area boundary of the village should not be expanded.



**2.2** In exceptional circumstances small-scale development for proven social housing demand may be permitted outside of, but normally adjacent to, the designated built-up area boundary. Special statutory planning legal agreements will be applied in these circumstances to ensure perpetual occupancy for local needs is enforced.

**2.3** Various planning designations apply to the village and parish of Beer. The western half of the village and its surrounding countryside are situated in the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The central area, beach and eastern slopes were designated as a Conservation Area in 1973. This was expanded in 1990 and now contains some 40 listed buildings. The remaining area of Beer is classified as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The Jubilee Gardens, Common Lane and Little Lane (Broken Cliff) allotments and the play area below the primary school (Ash Hill) have been identified as being of recreational amenity importance. The cliffs and foreshore form part of the UNESCO World Heritage Coast as well as being designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).





**2.4** Currently, all applications for planning permission must comply with the East Devon Local Plan 1995-2011 and the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 and are decided by the local planning authority, East Devon District Council (EDDC). These plans reflect central government's planning policies and guidelines. The District Council will shortly be required to introduce a Local Development Framework for East Devon, also in accordance with these statutory guidelines. The planning authority is required to consult Beer Parish Council on all applications for building developments within the parish. The Parish Council cannot grant or refuse planning permission as its role is solely that of a statutory consultee in the planning process.

**2.5** Once Beer's Village Design Statement has been formally adopted by EDDC, it will be used as supplementary planning guidance to assist all those involved in the submission of planning applications in ensuring that all plans submitted reflect these community guidelines.





### **3 The Village and Parish of Beer**

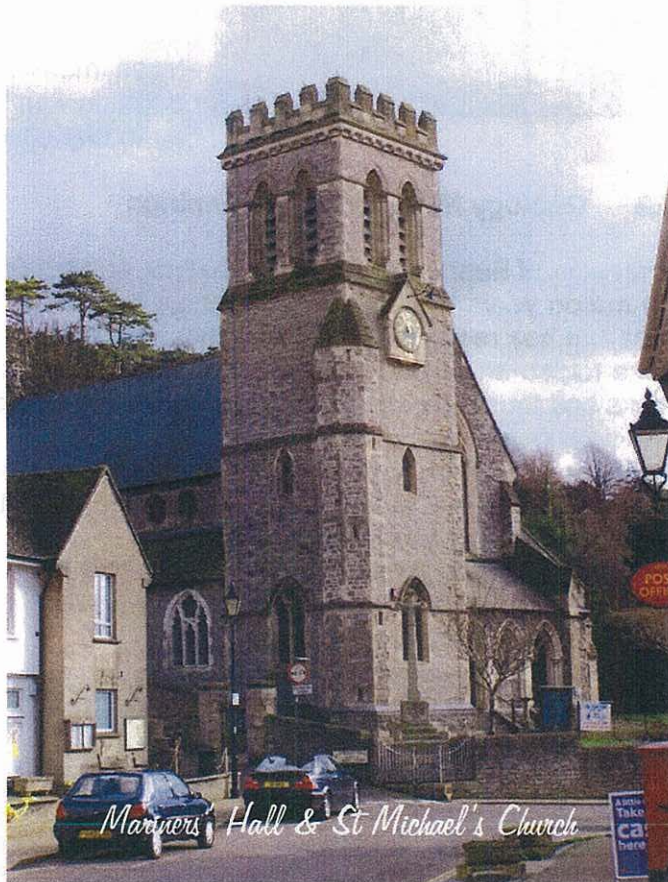
#### **3.1 Beer in the present day**

The village of Beer is a relatively large and diverse community with a population of approximately 1500 people situated about half way round Lyme Bay within a few miles of the Dorset border. This stretch of coastline is now known as the Jurassic Coast, designated in December 2001 as England's first, and to date only, Natural World Heritage site. It is an area of great beauty and geological significance, the name Jurassic being derived from the best known of the geological periods found within it. The village stands on the eastern edge of the Parish of Beer where it abuts the town of Seaton. The parish comprises some 1740 acres/704 hectares. the other boundaries of which are, to the south the sea, to the north the parish of Southleigh and to the west the parish of Branscombe. The village is situated in a small valley running down to the sea, with its own natural bay surrounded by cliffs of white chalk. Among many noteworthy features of the village are:

- the Parish Church and Congregational Church opposite each other in Fore Street
- the large and well equipped village hall, known as the Mariners' Hall
- the Church of England primary school high above the village
- the village post office, a vital centre of business and social life in the community
- the youth hostel
- Beer Albion Football Club
- Beer Sailing Club, which has produced European champions and the winners of the transatlantic rowing race 2005/6 and hosted international sailing events.

The village is also home to several important businesses, including:

- Jimmy Green Marine, Peco, and The Big Man's Shop, with their international mail-order operations
- Focal Research, a knowledge based business supporting the construction industry
- three art galleries particularly noted for their fostering of local artists and craftspeople
- a diverse range of pubs, restaurants, shops, hotels and guest houses.





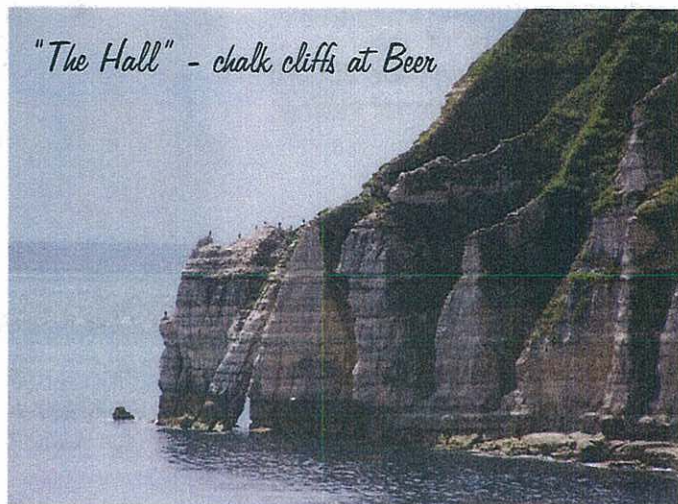


However, for the many visitors to Beer, particularly families holidaying in the summer months, its principal attractions may well be, firstly, the picturesque beach, with its high flanking cliffs, colourful fishing boats and fish shop selling, among other specialities, the famed Beer crab; and its range of beach cafes, recalling the golden age of the English seaside holiday. A recent addition to the amenities on the beach is the Beer World Heritage Centre. A registered charity, this is an ambitious development by local residents from the more modest Beer Marine Heritage Centre which it replaces and forms part of the world-wide marketing of the World Heritage Coast. Other important attractions for the visitor include the Pecorama factory and show rooms with its pleasure gardens and railway spread out across the heights above the village; and the celebrated Beer quarry caves, with their history going back to Roman times (see below). Finally, Beer has its own Parish Council, consisting of eleven members responsible, in close co-operation with East Devon District Council, for the day-to-day governance of village and parish.

### 3.2 Geology Matters: the Beginnings

The rocks of Beer were formed in shallow, sub-tropical seas that covered the area about 70 million years ago. Most of the chalk has since been eroded from the surrounding area but has remained in the vicinity of the village. This is because the layers of rock were folded and faulted downwards here, making the chalk layer level with the older rocks and thus protected from later erosion. Red Triassic rocks can be seen to the east and west of the village of Beer.

It was as a result of more recent geological events, occurring between 10 and 15 million years ago, that the scenery and landscape of Beer Parish are unique in Devon. These tectonic events occurred when the northwards moving African Plate collided with the European Plate. In southern Europe this collision resulted in the depression that is now filled by the Mediterranean Sea, and in the uplift of the Alpine and Pyrenean mountain ranges. In northern Europe, as far north as southern England, it resulted in gentle folds. One of these folds brings the Cretaceous chalk down to sea level between Beer Head and Seaton Hole, the only place in Devon where it does so. Consequently, almost the whole





of Beer Parish is sited on soft limestones of the Chalk, which give rise to a characteristic type of downland landscape, flora and fauna. The action of rainwater on the free-draining and soluble limestones has produced the dry valleys, or coombes, of Bovey Lane, Quarry Lane and the valley that runs south-west from Fore Street, with their typical rounded shoulders, steep sides and dry floors.

Two other principal geological deposits occur in Beer Parish. Beneath the chalk, the sandstones of the Upper Greensand are exposed in the lower part of the Bovey Lane valley and its seaward continuation, and these give rise to the springs that feed the celebrated stream that runs down Fore Street. The high ground at South Down Common above Beer Quarry, Hol(l)yhead Road and Stovar Long Lane, which forms part of the East Devon Plateau, is underlain by clay-with-flints. This is a complex mixture of clay, flint, chert fragments and pockets of sand and gravel. It results in a relatively featureless, undulating topography underlain by poorly drained, heavy, stony clay soils.

### **3.3 History Matters: Beer Then and Now**

Archaeological discoveries, including chert and flint tools, arrowheads, axes and an Early Bronze Age burial mound, suggest that Beer was a site of significant human community and activity for some centuries before the Roman conquest of Britain approximately two thousand years ago. It was during their construction of the Fosse Way from Axmouth that the Romans discovered a layer of limestone beneath the chalk at Beer. This stone proved excellent building material, and consequently the Romans began the process of quarrying it, which has continued, at first from underground and in more recent years from above ground, across the intervening centuries. Used all over the country for the construction of churches and cathedrals, as well as for more modest buildings, it has become known as 'Beer Free Stone'. Available now in only small quantities, Beer stone is used principally in the crafting of high quality artefacts. The Romans also began the planting of vineyards on the southern slopes of the valley, another activity that continued for some centuries after their departure from Britain, the wine produced being destined for the religious community at Sherborne Abbey.

Following the conquest of England by the Normans, religious refugees introduced lace-making to Beer. It was during Norman times too that the Beer lugger, still a familiar sight in the waters around the village, made its first appearance. Five centuries later, a further influx of refugees, Huguenots fleeing religious persecution, revitalised the lace-making industry, which flourished over the succeeding three centuries. The seventeenth century in Beer was also notable for an outbreak of plague





that carried off many inhabitants of the village, a situation exploited by the survivors of a Spanish shipwreck in 1645.

By the eighteenth century fishing had become an important source of livelihood for Beer people, the sheltered situation of the village providing an ideal environment in which sea-going skills could develop. This combination of skills and 'safe haven' siting had its more questionable outcome in the development of smuggling as a form of local



business initiative. The most famous practitioner of this trade was one Jack Rattenbury, known as 'the Rob Roy of the West', whose charismatic character and career are now celebrated in Beer on its annual Jack Rattenbury Day.

By the middle of the nineteenth century Beer was a well established community with a population approximately the same size as today's. Its chief economic activities remained quarrying, fishing and lace-making. One third of the population was concerned in various ways with the sea, while upwards of a hundred Beer lace-makers were employed in the production of Queen Victoria's wedding gown. The resulting fame led to a great demand for their work. By this time Beer Village had its own separate schools for boys and girls, while the current Parish Church of St Michael was completed in 1877. In December 1905 Beer became a parish in its own right.

The twentieth century was a period of great change and development in the country, and indeed the world, as a whole. In some measure due to its topographical isolation - apart from an aerial view, it's impossible to see the village until one is about to enter it - these changes have perhaps been rather less dramatic in Beer than in many other communities. Nevertheless, significant developments have taken place in the village during the century following its elevation to the status of parish. The built environment has increased in size as new housing crept up the sides of the valley until, particularly on the northern and western edges, it reached the top. Traditional village activities of fishing and, more especially, quarrying and lace-making, have declined in economic importance, with many fewer villagers involved in them. Fishing continues, but those concerned in it have diversified into the provision of recreational activities for the many seasonal visitors. While, as noted earlier, the population has not increased much in size over the past century and a half, its composition has significantly changed to a point where approximately forty percent of the present population consists of



immigrant retirees. However, perhaps the most noticeable change has been the transformation of Beer from a relatively isolated community into a popular destination for visitors of various kinds. In the late spring, summer and early autumn months, the population is swollen by tourists attracted to the seclusion and tranquillity of the village and the delights of its beach. The primary focus of this aspect of Beer is perhaps the



annual Regatta Week in mid-August, an event that, with the exception of the Second World War, has run continuously for over 90 years.

### **3.4 Beer in the future**

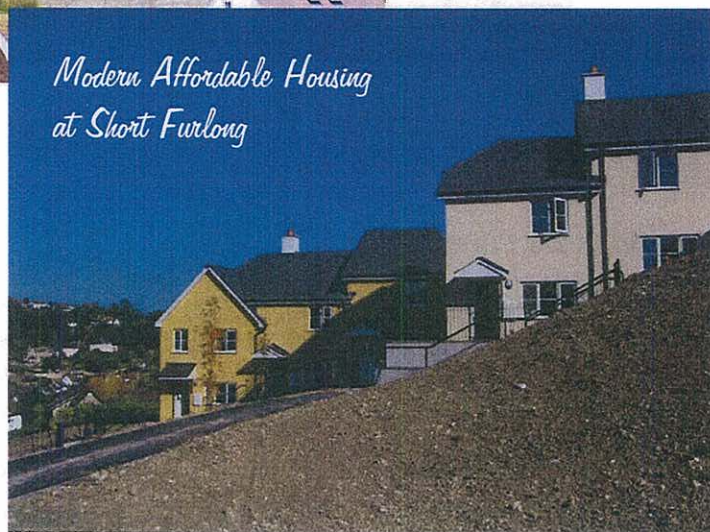
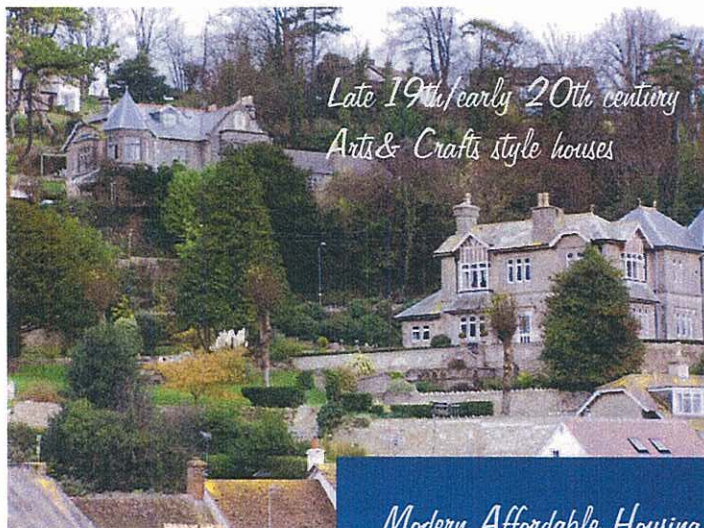
Given the position of Beer in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and as a popular stopover on the South-West Coast Path, together with its newly acquired status as an important Gateway Community with access to the World Heritage Coast, the importance of various kinds of tourism to the economic, social and cultural life of village and parish is likely to grow in the years ahead. This fact gives added significance to the successful production of a Village Design Statement as a further means of ensuring as far as possible that future changes to all aspects of the environment of the village and parish are managed in ways that enhance rather than impair the characteristics most valued by both those who live here and those who visit for their recreation, entertainment and education.

#### **4     The current Built Environment of Beer**

**4.1**     The village of Beer is ancient. Originally it grew round its centre, Fore Street, in the bottom of the coombe where fisherman and quarrymen lived. Subsequently, the village has extended up the steep slopes and along the coombe, with the most rapid expansion being in the 20th century. Consequently the village has a variety of architectural styles with buildings from different historical periods and ranging from modest cottages to grand houses.

**4.2**     Today the total number of dwellings in the parish of Beer is about 700, of which some 43 are outside the designated built up area boundary and 246 are in the conservation area.

The main architectural styles are early vernacular (Rolle cottages and almshouses) and late 19th and early 20th century Arts & Crafts. Local materials, such as flint and Beer stone, particularly add to the appeal of buildings from all historical periods. Some



of the dwellings built in the second half of the 20th century lack local character. Nevertheless there are some good examples of 20th century design, such as the affordable housing at Short Furlong.

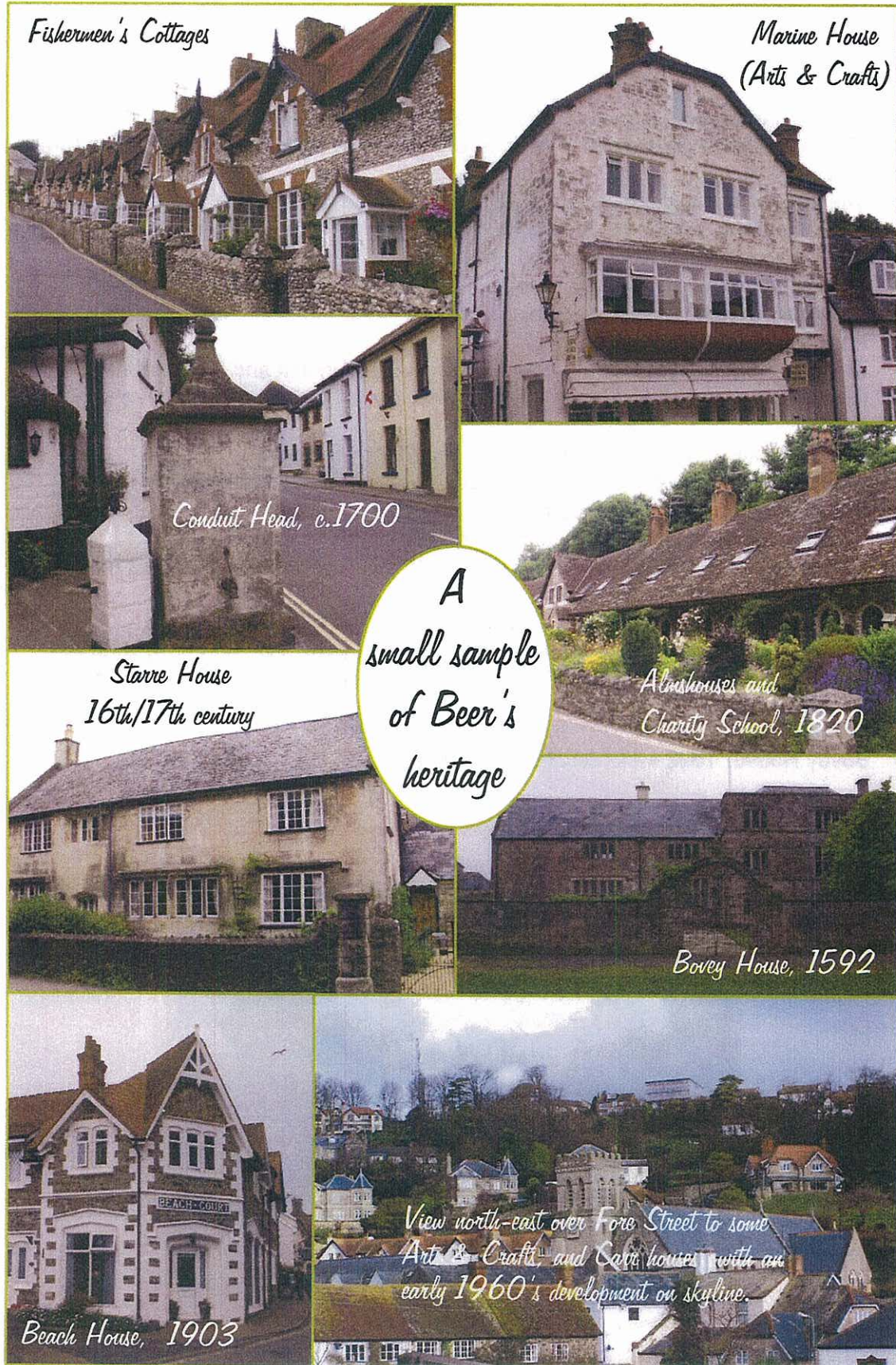


**4.3** The parish retains a rich architectural stock from its long past. The following buildings are either listed or are generally agreed to be of architectural interest:

- The parish church of St. Michael, 1876/77, built on the site of an older church - grey limestone, northwest tower, plain exterior but with a rich interior
- The Congregational Church, 1866 (extended 1880) - tall and faced in flint
- The Almshouses and Charity School, 1820 - Gothic design with deep eaves
- Cemetery Chapel, 1866 - decorated style
- Fore Street with Conduit Heads c1700
- The Square (or Cross), 1664 - three storey houses in flint and rubblestone
- Diamond House, 17th century - three storey in flint and Beer stone in chequer pattern
- Dolphin Hotel - flint and stone with four tall upper windows
- Number 2 Fore Street 1894 - stone mullion windows and patterned tile roof
- Beach House, 1903 - spiky corner gables
- The Cottage Fore Street - steep thatched roof
- Marine House Fore Street - tall Arts & Crafts building with corbelled out bays & mullioned ground floor windows
- Common Lane Cottages, 1870s - brick-trimmed flint frontage
- Above Fore Street to the East and North - several large 19th and early 20th Arts & Crafts (Carr) houses in landscaped setting with spreading roofs and mullioned windows
- Starre House, small 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century ashlar house
- Bovey House, 1592 - fine Jacobean carving.









## **5     The Natural, Managed and Built Environments**

### **5.1   The Natural Environment**

5.1.1 The natural environment of Beer and its delicate interaction with the managed and built environments are widely seen as making an essential contribution to the distinctive character and ethos of the village.

5.1.2 The geological features of the area, hills, cliffs, headlands, valleys, beach, provide a range of vistas from many points in and around the village. These include:

- views across the village, taking in the church, Fore Street and the sea
- views from the cliffs east to Lyme Bay and west to Beer Head
- views inland of hills, fields and woods.

5.1.3 Many residents consider that in parts of the village these vistas and skyline have already been impaired to some degree by building developments and that all ridges and high ground should in future be protected in order to preserve what remains of the skyline.

5.1.4 The flora and fauna of the area are also seen as making a vital contribution to the rural ethos of parish and village.

5.1.5 An overwhelming majority of respondents to the questionnaire feel strongly that existing trees should be protected and also that they should be better managed than they currently are.

5.1.6 A very substantial majority support the planting of more trees where this would be practicable.

5.1.7 Virtually all respondents feel strongly that existing areas of natural vegetation should be protected, as should ancient hedgerows. They would also support the setting aside, again where practicable, of areas of land as nature reserves.

5.1.8 There is widespread recognition that wild creatures share the village and that they make a positive contribution to its character.

5.1.9 Almost all respondents think that bats, slow worms, butterflies, dormice and indeed most forms of wildlife should be protected. A rather smaller majority would extend this protection to badgers and squirrels. As these latter two cause damage to property and gardens, respondents feel they should be subject to a measure of humane control.

5.1.10 The positive contribution of birdlife to the character of the village is also widely appreciated by Beer residents.

5.1.11 A very large majority of respondents think that house martins, pheasants, owls and sparrows and indeed most birds together with their habitat should be protected. There was rather less enthusiasm for rooks and crows, while many believed that seagulls should be subject to humane control measures. It is widely felt that the appearance of the built environment of the village would be improved by more efficient



means of garbage disposal and collection, as this would prevent the spread of rubbish from plastic bags ripped apart by, for example, seagulls, foxes and badgers.

### **Planning Guidelines**

**BVDG(i) Proposed building developments in Beer should NOT be permitted where they would:**

- **have a detrimental effect on existing vistas and skylines for a substantial number of people living in the village**
- **result in the permanent destruction of existing trees and areas of natural vegetation**
- **have a detrimental effect on wildlife habitats.**

**BVDG(ii) New building developments should be required to maintain or replace all mature, healthy trees on the site to be developed (NB This guideline does not apply in the case of saplings or trees that are diseased).**

*(Other issues arising but not appropriate for inclusion in the guidelines are listed in the appendices)*

## **5.2 The Managed Environment**

5.2.1 The way in which the built and natural environments are managed has an immediate impact on the quality of life in the village. Strong views have been expressed regarding the management of traffic, the upkeep of hedges and walls and the maintenance of cleanliness across the village.

5.2.2 A majority of respondents is strongly in favour of the improvement of existing amenities and tourist attractions and would like to see more of them open all year round, though opinion is fairly evenly split over the desirability of further amenities or tourist attractions.

5.2.3 An overwhelming majority of respondents is in favour of placing services, such as electricity and telephone, underground and would welcome the option to have cable TV.

5.2.4 Pollution is an issue that concerns many in the village. A clear majority of respondents is in favour of controlling smoke pollution to a greater extent and would like to see noise and light pollution strictly managed.

5.2.5 The beach scene is an important characteristic of the village. Residents wish to retain the charm of its combination of working fishing beach and leisure amenity for locals and tourists. There is general satisfaction concerning the access, signs and seating. However, a majority feels that the beach area would be improved by stricter litter control and the provision of toilets at beach level.

5.2.6 Materials used in the construction of boundaries in the form of walls, hedges and fences should wherever possible match those existing in the local area. A substantial majority in the village favours the use of local building materials.



5.2.7 Gardens and open spaces are important to the people of Beer. Virtually all local residents express the desire to preserve Jubilee Gardens. They are also strongly in favour of allotments and want green space to be a requirement for all new development. Some residents are in favour of maintaining front gardens (i.e. not making them into parking spaces), while many people appreciate the views of some of the prominent private gardens.

5.2.8 Farmland in and around the village should be preserved in the form of small fields, hedgerows and wooded areas. Beer residents strongly support sustainable farming practice, which helps to avoid flash flooding.

5.2.9 Footpaths which criss-cross the village are seen as particularly desirable. A majority of villagers would like to see the inclusion of footpaths in any new development. A very large majority would support maintenance to allow all weather use. Residents favour consistent footpath signage and would support the use of low level footpath lighting.

5.2.10 Most residents think that roads should be of traditional Devon design with banks, walls and hedges, though a minority favours wide, modern roads with parking and pavements.

5.2.11 Although Beer gets many visitors in cars, there is no overwhelming desire for a pedestrian only area around Fore Street. However, the majority is in favour of giving pedestrians priority in Fore Street. There is strong support for the provision of some residents only parking, while many are in favour of a visitors Park & Ride scheme.

5.2.12 The issue of Road Safety is taken seriously in Beer and a very large majority of people would welcome a 20mph speed limit. Traffic calming measures would be supported by many, as would the provision of pavements in a number of locations.

5.2.13 The street scene is important to the character and safety of the village. However, opinions are very mixed as to how improvements could or should be made. Some are happy with current facilities, while others think that lighting could be improved and more public seating provided. The cleanliness of the village is the most important issue for the majority of residents, who want to see an improvement in waste bin facilities. The provision of wheelie bins is one of the suggestions for dealing with the problem of seagulls and other scavengers tearing open plastic bags and strewing the contents about the street. Importantly, however, everyone who answered wants our streets to be clean and free from litter and especially from dog dirt.

### **Planning Guidelines**

**BVDG(iii) Proposed building developments in Beer should make provision for:**

- **placing services, such as electrical and telephone cables, underground**
- **the inclusion of footpaths and green spaces**
- **all boundaries to match the prevailing style in the relevant areas, preferably using local materials.**

**BVDG(iv) Proposed developments that involve new or modified roadways or accesses should preserve the Devon style of narrow lanes with hedges or banks as boundaries.**

**BVDG(v) Proposed developments in Beer should NOT be permitted where they would:**

- **unnecessarily reduce the number of amenities (or tourist attractions), particularly those operating on a year round basis**
- **encroach on the remaining open spaces in the village, including prominent gardens.**

*(Other issues arising but not appropriate for inclusion in the guidelines are listed in the appendices)*

### **5.3 Built Environment**

5.3.1 A very large majority of people living permanently in Beer feels strongly that the built-up area boundary of the village should remain as it currently is. An overwhelming majority of respondents took the view that the only grounds on which an extension of the designated built up area boundary would be justified would be further provision of affordable housing for local occupation governed by a planning legal agreement.

5.3.2 Much infill activity has taken place in Beer in recent years and as a result few appropriate sites remain for possible development of further private accommodation within the present designated built-up area boundary. While the need for more accommodation is recognised, the most popular options are: the extension of existing properties and the conversion of larger properties into two or more dwellings.

5.3.3 Very strong views were expressed on the conditions that should govern all future extensions to properties in the village:

- in terms of dimensions, design and building materials, extensions should always retain the character of the original building
- they should not exceed 25% of the size of the original building
- where dormer windows are used they should not exceed 15% of the overall roof size
- window design and materials should be the same as those of the original building
- roof shape and materials should be the same as those of the original building, while the height of an extended roof should not be greater than that of the original building.

5.3.4 Where new building developments are concerned, the view was strongly expressed that, in terms of dimensions, style and building materials, they should be in harmony with neighbouring properties. When asked to name up to three buildings in the village that have a negative effect on the built environment, a very large majority cited the Pippins Court development of five houses in New Cut. In all cases, the reason given was that the building materials used for walls and roofs are out of character with those in the immediate vicinity. The vast majority is NOT in favour of ultra modern designs or creeping suburbia.



5.3.5 The preferred materials for new buildings are, dependent on their location in the village: slate, clay tiles or thatch for roofs; Beer stone, flint or rendered brick for walls; timber, plastic or stone for windows.

5.3.6 There was a very strong preference for pitched roof design for roofs and porches. Flat roofs were unanimously rejected as out of keeping with the prevailing character of the built environment in Beer.

5.3.7 Where new building developments are concerned, village residents showed strong awareness of the need for designers, planners and builders to take contemporary environmental concerns into serious consideration. It was largely agreed that all new developments should:

- not unduly increase the burden on current services such as sewerage
- be constructed of materials that use low amounts of energy in their manufacture and are recyclable
- be required to demonstrate a neutral effect on the environment in respect of management of rainwater run-off and use of grey water
- wherever possible incorporate the use of solar panels.

5.3.8 In addition, over 50% of respondents considered that energy audits for all households in the village would be advantageous.

5.3.9 A substantial majority feels that new businesses should be welcomed. Approximately half of those responding to the questionnaire think that existing businesses in Beer should be encouraged, where practicable, to extend their activities.

### **Planning Guidelines**

**BVDG(vi) The current built-up area boundary of Beer should not be extended. This guideline is based on the understanding that any future affordable housing project(s) can, if necessary, be built outside the current built-up area boundary.**

**BVDG(vii) All proposed new buildings in Beer should:**

- be in harmony with neighbouring properties in terms of dimensions, design and building materials
- unless a compelling case can be made to do otherwise, use slate, clay tiles or thatch for roofs; Beer-type stone, flint or rendered brick for walls; timber or stone for windows. The primary emphasis should be on materials that reflect the local geology.
- have pitched roofs and, where applicable, pitched roof porches
- be required to demonstrate awareness of contemporary environmental issues.

**BVDG(viii) Buildings with flat roofs should generally not be permitted.**

**BVDG(ix) Conversion of existing retail premises such as shops, restaurants, public houses and hotels to residential accommodation should generally be resisted.**

**BVDG(x) All proposed extensions to existing buildings in Beer should:**

- retain the character of the original building in terms of dimensions, design and building materials
- be clearly subordinate to the size of the original building
- ensure that dormer windows have pitched roofs and are clearly subordinate in size and scale to the main roof
- not incorporate a roof(s) higher than that of the original building.
- *(Other issues arising but not appropriate for inclusion in the guidelines are listed in the appendices)*





## **6 Conclusions**

**6.1** A high level of community involvement was achieved in the production of the Beer Village Design Statement by:

- having five open meetings and exhibitions attended by at least 300 people in total
- establishing a committed project team drawn from Beer residents
- involving many people in the distribution, collection and data input of the questionnaire
- obtaining questionnaire returns from more than half the resident households of the village.

**6.2** The questionnaire was comprehensive and benefited from advice on best practice from the planning authority in EDDC. The topics covered included:

- the natural environment
- the managed environment
- the built environment.

**6.3** The views expressed by Beer residents have been analysed and distilled into a set of proposed guidelines as follows:

### **Planning Guidelines**

#### **BVDG(i)**

**Proposed building developments in Beer should NOT be permitted where they would:**

- have a detrimental effect on existing vistas and skylines for a substantial number of people living in the village
- result in the permanent destruction of existing trees and areas of natural vegetation
- have a detrimental effect on wildlife habitats.

#### **BVDG(ii)**

**New building developments should be required to maintain or replace all mature, healthy trees on the site to be developed (NB This guideline does not apply in the case of saplings or trees that are diseased).**

#### **BVDG(iii)**

**Proposed building developments in Beer should make provision for:**

- placing services, such as electrical and telephone cables, underground
- the inclusion of footpaths and green spaces
- all boundaries to match the prevailing style in the relevant areas, preferably using local materials.

#### **BVDG(iv)**

**Proposed developments that involve new or modified roadways or accesses should preserve the Devon style of narrow lanes with hedges or banks as boundaries.**

**BVDG(v)**

**Proposed developments in Beer should NOT be permitted where they would:**

- unnecessarily reduce the number of amenities (or tourist attractions), particularly those operating on a year round basis
- encroach on the remaining open spaces in the village, including prominent gardens.

**BVDG(vi)**

**The current built-up area boundary of Beer should not be extended. This guideline is based on the understanding that any future affordable housing project(s) can, if necessary, be built outside the current built-up area boundary.**

**BVDG(vii)**

**All proposed new buildings in Beer should:**

- be in harmony with neighbouring properties in terms of dimensions, design and building materials.
- unless a compelling case can be made to do otherwise, use slate, clay tiles or thatch for roofs; Beer-type stone, flint or rendered brick for walls; timber or stone for windows. The primary emphasis should be on materials that reflect the local geology.
- have pitched roofs and, where applicable, pitched roof porches
- be required to demonstrate awareness of contemporary environmental issues.

**BVDG(viii)**

**Buildings with flat roofs should generally not be permitted.**

**BVDG(ix)**

**Conversion of existing retail premises such as shops, restaurants, public houses and hotels to residential accommodation should generally be resisted.**

**BVDG(x)**

**All proposed extensions to existing buildings in Beer should:**

- retain the character of the original building in terms of dimensions, design and building materials
- Be clearly subordinate to the size of the original building
- Ensure that dormer windows have pitched roofs and are clearly subordinate in size and scale to the main roof
- not incorporate a roof(s) higher than that of the original building.

**6.4** Other issues were raised in the answers to the questionnaire and these have been collected and can be found in appendix 2.

~~~~~



## APPENDIX 1

### VALIDATION AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

The complete (anonymous) database, populated from the returned questionnaires, is currently held by a member of the Beer Village Design Statement team. Application for further details should be made via Beer Parish Council.

**“Data analysis errors are probably better than  $\pm 3\%$  and are mainly the result of ambiguous entries or, at this time, non-assignment of written comments. However, absolute accuracy is dependent on both the exactness with which the data was entered from the returned questionnaires into the database (which appears to be good) and (less certain) the accuracy with which the respondents have addressed the intended meaning of our individual questions”**

#### Comparison statistics:-

Source:-

National Statistics

2001 Census

Neighbourhood Statistics

Beer CP (Parish)

|                                            |             |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|
| All dwellings (all household spaces)       | 745         |
| All Households                             | 594         |
| includes vacant household spaces           | 22          |
| and second residence/holiday accommodation | 129         |
| Resident population (all ages)             | 1381        |
| Mean age                                   | 45.91 years |
| Average household size                     | 2.31        |

#### Questionnaire returns:-

Data from Part 1 of our questionnaire, “You and Your Household”, was examined to determine the size of the response and, where possible, it was compared with the National 2001 Census figures as a measure of the overall credibility of the answers, and as a test of the validity of our methods of analysis.

Percentages were calculated relative to the number of people addressing the question or part thereof. I.e. Null and “unspecified” responses were excluded, unless their number was significant taking into account the wording of the particular question.

#### **Observations from returns for Part 1 of the questionnaire**

Responses were received from people of all ages, and appeared to be distributed roughly in proportion to the local population age banding for Beer reported in the 2001 Census (unfortunately the age banding we used differed from that used by the Census). Only 1% of the respondents did not reveal their ages.

**309** completed questionnaires were returned of the **600** distributed. They came proportionately from all areas of the parish and represent **over 52%** of resident households.

The questionnaires returned accounted for **at least 620** respondents.



This equates to an occupancy rate of 2.0 per household. This may be compared with the 2001 Census figure of 2.31 but it is likely that not all household members were necessarily included on all returned questionnaires.  
Not necessarily all, or the same, respondents replied to all questions.

**29%** of respondents claimed to have moved to or been born in Beer in the past **6 years**.  
**32%** of respondents claimed to have lived in Beer for **more than 25 years**.

**4.5%** ticked the "Registered Disabled?" box.

**31%** were born in Beer; **30%** moved here with the family; **10%** moved here with the job; **15%** moved here on retirement. A significant number wrote comments to the effect "Fell in love with Beer and chose to live here".

**62** households reported **118** former members as having left the parish. Of these, **34%** left because of "**Lack of affordable housing**"; **38%** left "**To take up work**". No one indicated "Lack of public transport" as a problem.

Of the 289 households who specified their tenure, **79%** said **owner occupied**; **11%** **rented from Local Authority**; **10%** **private rented**. (Cf. 73%, 10%, and 17% respectively reported by the Beer 2001 Census.)

308 households gave information on the number of motor vehicles they had and where they kept them. **437 vehicles** were reported of which **33%** were kept in own garage or carport; **39%** on drive; and **13%** on the road.  
**40%** had two or more vehicles (cf. 36% from the Beer 2001 Census).

Commuting to work, school, or college: **38%** walk; **54%** use private car or company transport; **8%** use public transport. (cf. Beer 2001 Census figures for travelling to work of 37% travel "by other means or work at home", 61% "travel to work by car or van", 1.8% using public transport. Our figures include people at school or college).

As to where people work or study, excluding those retired or unemployed: **38%** said "**Within parish**"; **32%** said "**further afield**", 25% of whom said "Exeter".  
**25%** of our respondents were retired or unemployed. (cf. 25% from the Beer 2001 Census).

Results from **multi-tick questions** were analysed as a "**popularity poll**" relative to "**Within parish**" = 1.

For example,

**"Shopping habits" produced:-**

#### **Non-food shopping**

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| <b>Within parish</b> | <b>1.0</b> |
| <b>Seaton</b>        | <b>1.5</b> |
| <b>Sidmouth</b>      | <b>1.3</b> |



|                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>Axminster</b>           | <b>0.6</b> |
| <b>Honiton</b>             | <b>1.0</b> |
| <b>Further afield</b>      | <b>1.5</b> |
| <b>...of which, Exeter</b> | <b>0.9</b> |

**Main food shopping**

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <b>Within parish</b>  | <b>1.0</b> |
| <b>Seaton</b>         | <b>2.1</b> |
| <b>Sidmouth</b>       | <b>1.2</b> |
| <b>Axminster</b>      | <b>1.0</b> |
| <b>Honiton</b>        | <b>1.9</b> |
| <b>Further afield</b> | <b>0.6</b> |

....no obvious preference: Exeter, Exmouth, Lyme, Taunton, and the Internet were all mentioned.

**Daily shopping**

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <b>Within parish</b>  | <b>1.0</b> |
| <b>Seaton</b>         | <b>0.4</b> |
| <b>Sidmouth</b>       | <b>0.1</b> |
| <b>Axminster</b>      | <b>0.0</b> |
| <b>Honiton</b>        | <b>0.1</b> |
| <b>Further afield</b> | <b>0.0</b> |

....there were 5 entries of Exeter, one might assume those respondents work there?

**What additional shops would you like in Beer?**

713 suggestions were received

here the votes are shown as a % of 713.

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Butcher</b>                   | <b>38%</b> |
| <b>Greengrocer</b>               | <b>11%</b> |
| <b>Hardware &amp; DIY</b>        | <b>10%</b> |
| <b>Florist &amp; garden shop</b> | <b>2%</b>  |
| <b>Clothes shop</b>              | <b>4%</b>  |
| <b>Bank</b>                      | <b>2%</b>  |
| <b>Supermarket</b>               | <b>3%</b>  |
| <b>"Youth interests"</b>         | <b>4%</b>  |
| <b>Other</b>                     | <b>26%</b> |

**NB.** 38% for "butcher" is probably highly biased by our inclusion of "butcher" as an example on the questionnaire!

"Youth interests" include: Toy shop, internet café, and pet shop.

26%, "Other", were mainly requests for shops and services which we already have, or for cheaper and/or better versions of the same!!

### **Observations from returns for Parts 2 to 4 of the questionnaire**

These were analysed along similar lines to Part 1. Detailed findings from Parts 2, 3, and 4 are not presented in this appendix but the relevant information is presented, mostly in narrative form, in the main document *Beer Village Design Statement*.

### **Conclusions**

**51.5% of the questionnaires distributed were returned accounting for 52% of households. 45%, or more, of residents took part.**

**Where applicable, data generated from the questionnaires bears favourable comparison with the 2001 Census figures: agreement is good except in the area of tenure which shows a small bias away from “private rented” towards “owner occupied”.**

**We conclude that a large and reasonably representative number of Beer residents took the opportunity of expressing their views through our questionnaire and that we have been able to retrieve, interpret, and present the data they provided in a true and fair manner.**

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## **APPENDIX 2**

### **ISSUES NOT INCLUDED IN THE PLANNING GUIDELINES**

The issues collected in this appendix fall into two categories:

**A.** Issues regarding the actions of Beer residents, which are not related to the planning process or to building developments.

These are organised under the heading "*The Good Beer Resident's Guide*".

**B.** Other issues, including those relating to traffic management, which are the responsibility of Devon County Council and other authorities.

These are listed for further consideration.

#### **A - The Good Beer Resident's Guide**

*A collection of views and advice from those who completed the questionnaire.*

#### **The Natural Environment**

Fellow residents of Beer appreciate and will seek to sustain the natural environment in the following ways:

**1) Trees**

Protect and manage existing trees on your own land. Where possible, plant more trees providing they would not interfere with your neighbours' views and/or light.

**2) Natural vegetation and hedgerows**

Protect and manage these areas. A good resident will trim hedges so that they do not pose a problem to passers-by.

Where possible, avoid concreting driveways or patios.

**3) Wild creatures**

A good resident will want to encourage wildlife and will seek to protect such creatures as bats, dormice, slowworms and butterflies and their habitats. However, don't feed squirrels and keep rubbish out of the reach of foxes and badgers.

**4) Birds**

Encourage and protect most of our local birds and their environments but do not feed seagulls, rooks or crows and ensure that garbage is managed to avoid them scavenging for food and creating a mess.

#### **The Managed Environment**

**5) Bonfires**

Bonfires cause less interference to others if they are not lit until dusk or after 8 p.m., according to season.

**6) Lighting**

To prevent light pollution, ensure that all outside lights and security lighting point downwards.

**7) Boundaries**

In maintaining or renewing your boundaries, try to use local materials where appropriate, or at least match them to those in the local area.

If your boundary forms the edge of a footpath, maintain it well to allow ease of use of the footpath.

**8) Parking**

If you can avoid it, try not to convert your garden into a hard surfaced car parking area.

**The Built Environment**

**9) Extensions and Repairs**

When designing new additions or when planning repairs and maintenance, which are not subject to explicit planning permission, observe the guidelines as set out in the VDS.

**B - Issues for the attention of Devon County Council and/or others**

*A collection of wants from those in the village who completed the questionnaire.*

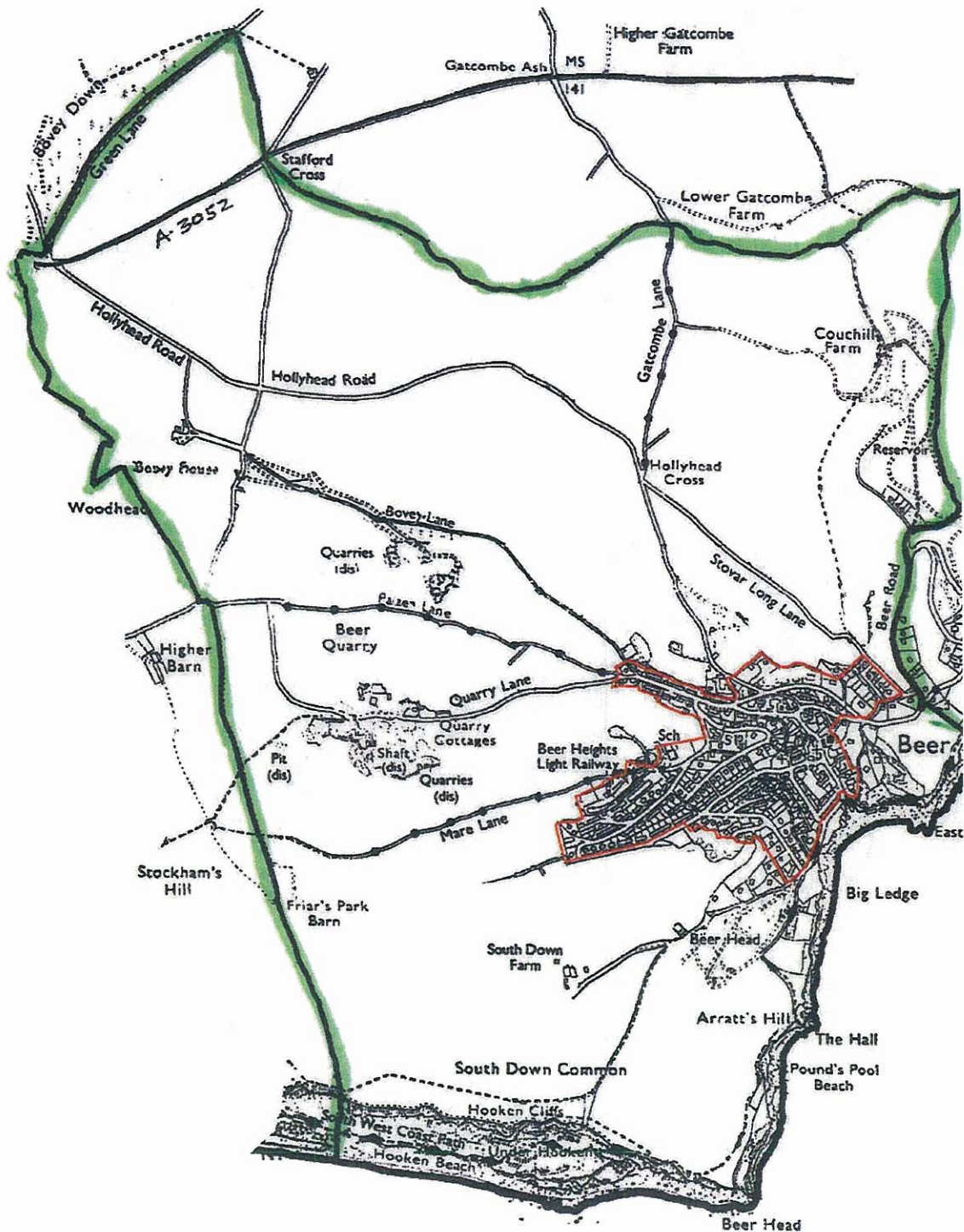
- 1) Provision of a cable TV system for the village because of:
  - reception issues
  - unsightliness of aerials and dishes on the skyline
- 2) Provision of toilets at beach level
- 3) New road layout in Fore Street to give priority to pedestrians (similar to that in parts of Sidmouth, near the market.)
- 4) Resident Only parking schemes in key locations in the village
- 5) Provision, in season, of a Park and Ride scheme
- 6) A 20 mph speed limit and traffic calming measures in key areas such as Park Road
- 7) Provision of pavements in some key locations, such as the route from the car park to Fore Street past the Dolphin
- 8) The provision of "wheelie bins" for rubbish
- 9) The provision, on request, of energy audits for householders in Beer.



### APPENDIX 3

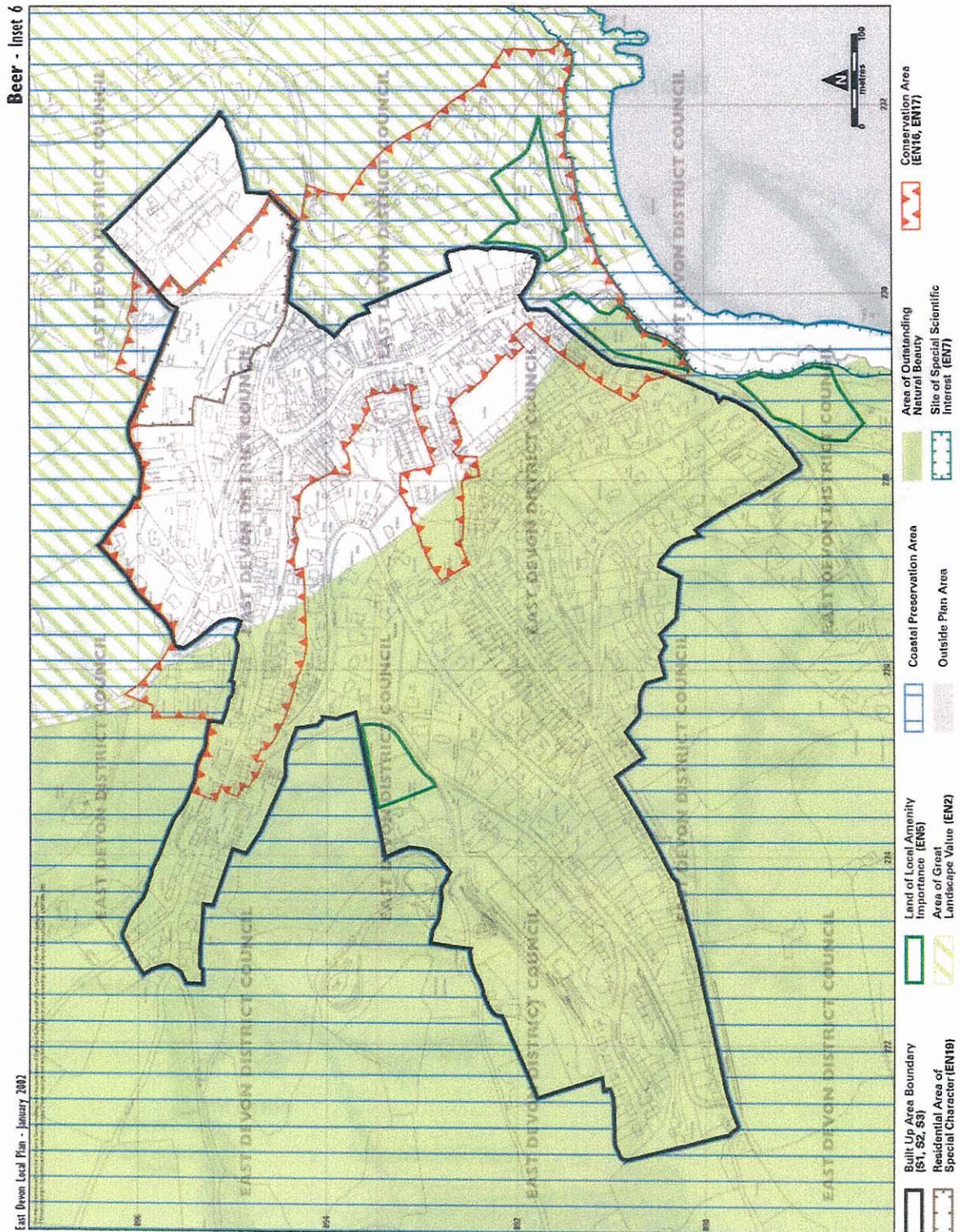
#### MAPS

#### The Parish of Beer & Beer village Built Up Area boundary





East Devon Local Plan 1995-2011 Deposit Local Plan for Beer, revised September 2003: *Residential Area of Special Character - ~~deleted~~*  
(The East Devon Local Plan will in due course be replaced by a Local Development Framework (LDF) as set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)





## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

East Devon AONB Service

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Beer Parish Council

East Devon District Council Planning Department

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Mr Ramues Gallois of Exeter for his contribution on the geology of Beer village and parish

Those residents of Beer who contributed their time and energies in the distribution and collection of questionnaires

Mr N.Groves and the staff of Beer Post Office for providing a centre for the collection of questionnaires

Those residents of Beer who inputted data necessary to create the database

Finally, to all those residents of the village who in numerous ways contributed to the successful outcome of the Beer Village Design Statement project.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

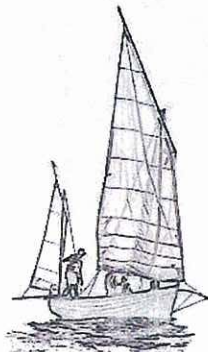
East Devon Revised Deposit Local Plan 1995-2011

Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016

Department of the Environment List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest / District Of East Devon

East Devon Conservation Area Appraisal - Beer

National Statistics 2001 Census, Neighbourhood Statistics, Beer CP (Parish)





*Beer Lugger*