

Tipton St John



Village Design Statement

This Village Design Statement has been researched, written and published by the villagers of Tipton St John and printed by Business Boosters Ltd, Oxford.
Photographs of old Tipton courtesy of Ottery St Mary Heritage Society.

May 2005

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A Message from the Villagers of Tipton St John

Our Village Design Statement is a declaration of how we – the villagers – wish to see Tipton St John develop in the years ahead.

It has been prepared by a group of independent villagers, all interested in the future prosperity and well-being of the place where we live.

It has taken just over 12 months to produce and in that time they have conducted a comprehensive survey of every household, held public meetings, provided and gained feedback through reports and a Village Open Day and had discussions with the relevant local authority bodies.

All in all it has been a very positive exercise and its conclusions are firmly based on the household survey, which was issued to all adults in the village and which drew 370 responses (67% of those surveyed). They are also fully supported by our own organisations. (see Statement of Consultation for further details on p23)

We hope that this document will be used by anyone who has an interest in changing an existing building or creating a new one in the village;

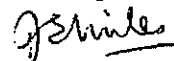
and that they will respect and adhere to the guidelines drawn up here by the village so that its setting is protected, its facilities safeguarded and its wonderful community spirit fostered.

Signatories of Representative Organisations

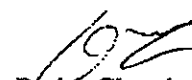
Tipton Community Hall



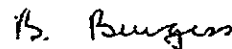
Tipton Garage



Golden Lion Public House



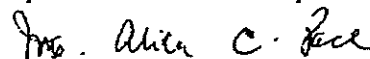
Parish Church Council



Tipton Playing Fields Association



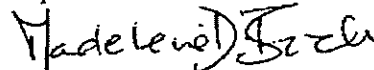
Tipton Post Office & Shop



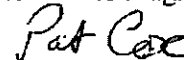
Tipton Residents' Association



Tipton School Governors



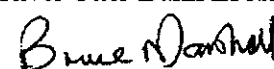
Tipton Times Magazine



Tipton Wives



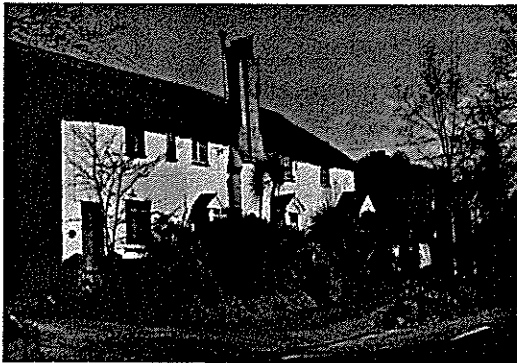
River Otter Bank Erosion Group



What is a Village Design Statement?



Village Green opposite Stanley Cottages



Four thatched cottages

In making its recommendations (expressed as *Planning Guidelines*) the project team has taken into account the wishes of the community, concluded from a survey, and the character, size and shape of the village.

Consideration has also been given to Tipton St. John's rural setting, landscape and the pattern and type of existing housing and business premises.

The Village Design Statement (VDS) is as important to individual residents (considering small alterations or ambitious planning applications) as it is to architects and developers.

It is a *positive* document that aims to encourage planning and development that is tasteful and acceptable to residents and the community as a whole.

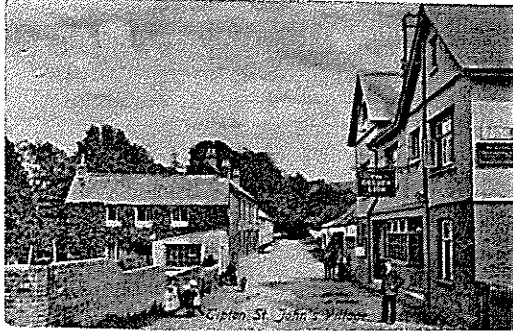
The project team has involved the whole community at every stage of preparing this VDS. It can be seen on the EDDC website (www.eastdevon.gov.uk), and a summary of the survey results has been communicated to all villagers.

Because the VDS has been prepared in accordance with guidelines laid down by the Countryside Agency and approved by the planning authorities, it has been adopted as *supplementary planning guidance* that will be considered by East Devon District Council in all planning applications within the village.

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 1

Development should be sensitive to the character of the village and the style of existing properties.

The Early Years



The Golden Lion Inn early 1900s



The Railway Station



Four thatched cottages

Tipton was probably derived from the personal name of a local landowner, "Tippla", with "tun" added to indicate a farmstead or village. There were two mills in the vicinity of Tipton recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 and a village settlement is shown on an 1831 map.

Some of the present buildings go back to the 16th century. By 1831 there were nearly 500 people living in Tipton, Metcombe and Fluxton, and it was decided that these three areas should be incorporated in one parish with its own church. A public subscription was opened and the church of St. John the Evangelist was consecrated in 1840. Thus Tipton became Tipton St. John.

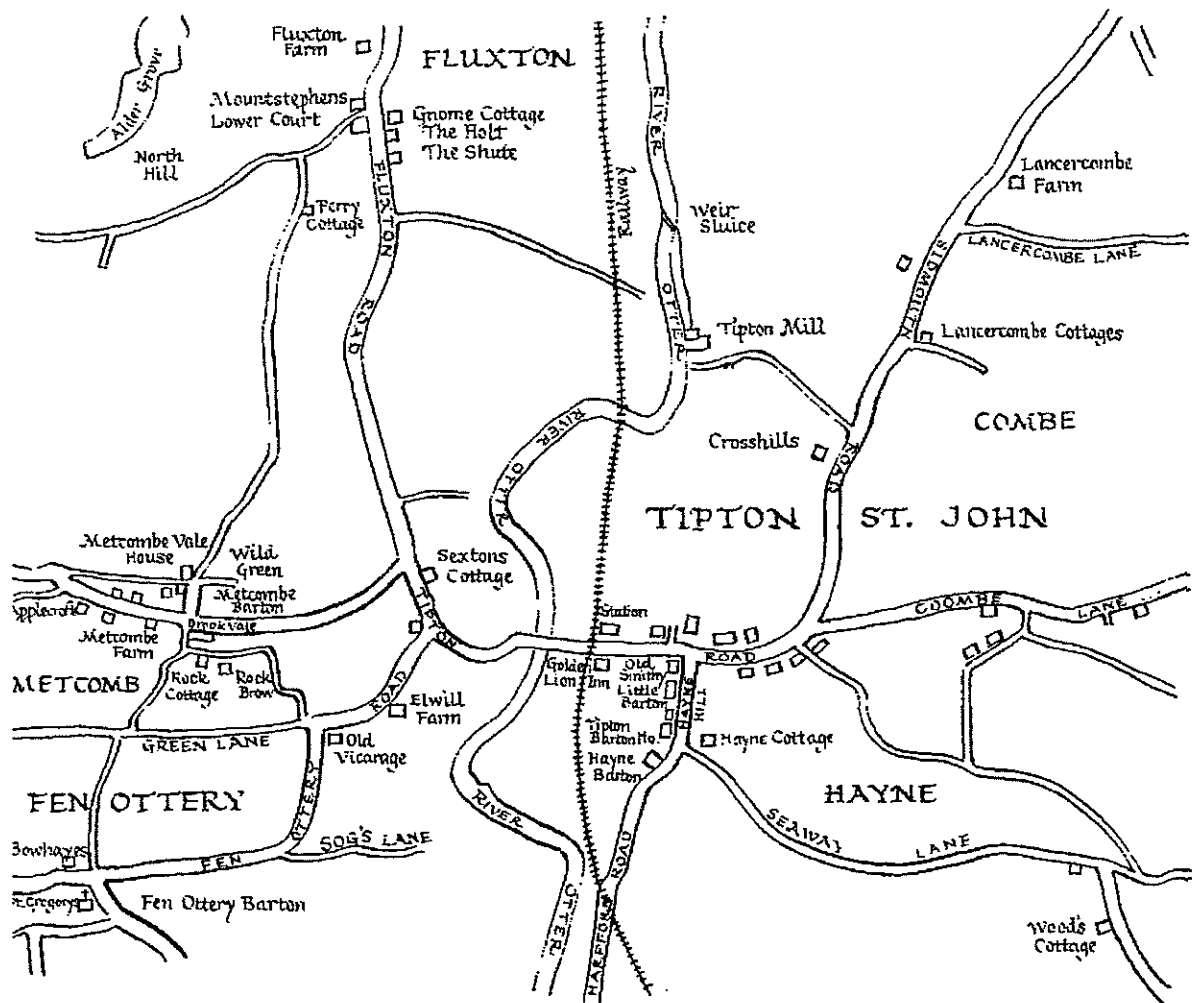
The village inn was originally where Stanley Cottages now stand. In 1902 it burnt down and was replaced by the present Golden Lion.

The railway came to Tipton St. John in 1874 running to Sidmouth with a branch line opening later to Budleigh. The railway was closed in the 1960's.

The village school opened in 1843, the community hall in 1914 and the original village sports field (behind the Post Office) in 1931. The present seven acre playing field was purchased by the village in 1965.

Originally an agricultural community of farms and farm cottages with a couple of farriers and two village shops, Tipton St. John first saw council housing during the inter-war period. Since the 1950's private housing has been directed at the growing number of people either retired, or working outside the village.

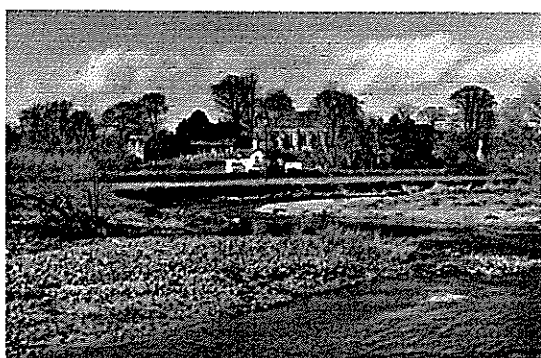
How Tipton St John looked in 1880



About the village



Jubilee Clock



View of Church from the playing field

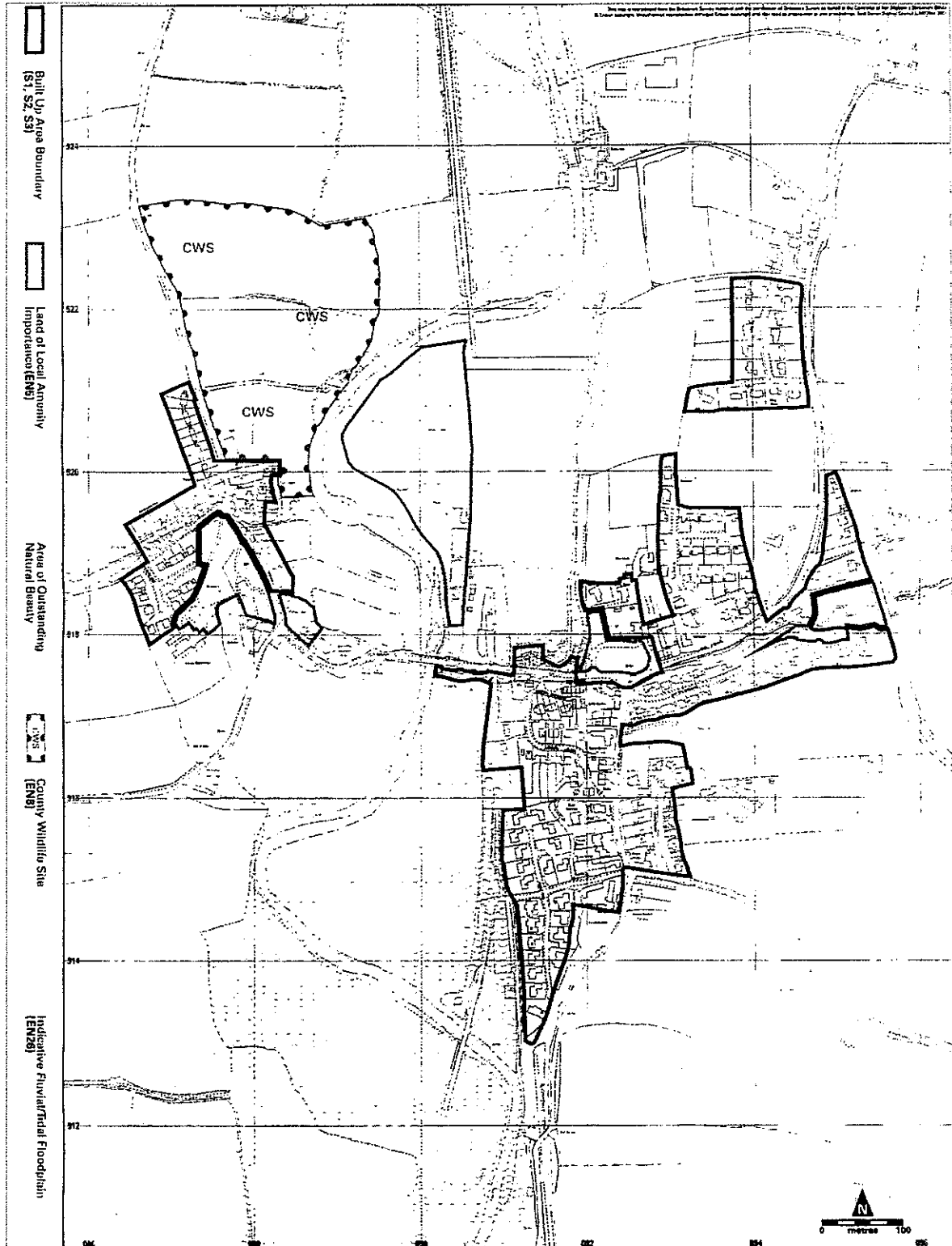
Tipton St. John has a population of about 1200 with over 400 private dwellings and 15 businesses. The most important of these enterprises are the pub, the Post Office and village shop, garage, Angela Court (a care home), guest houses and B & B's and the village's neighbouring farms.

Housing is varied: old (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), Victorian, Edwardian and modern (post-war). About a half of its residents are retired, the rest work locally or in Exeter, which is 12 miles away. The nearest towns are Ottery St. Mary (2 ½ miles away) and Sidmouth (3 miles).

People love the village and are dedicated to keeping its magic alive! It is a thriving community with the Post Office and village shop, pub, church, primary school, village community hall, playing fields, garage, surrounding farms and several other businesses. The River Otter flows through the village, and flooding and bank erosion are major concerns. Tipton St. John is particularly proud of its self-help ethos with the playing fields and village community hall both communally owned and run.

Its rural character is reinforced by attractive open spaces, trees, footpaths and beautiful surrounding countryside, some of which is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. People from neighbouring hamlets in Tipton St. John's parish (Metcombe, Coombe Vale and Fluxton) are fully involved in village activities. Many residents from Venn Ottery also contribute in a major way.

Village Boundary Map



Buildings and Spaces

Survey Results

- *At first asking 64% of the village is against further development but when pushed 63% will accept it on a limited scale*
- *The most acceptable forms of development are infilling(62%), starter homes(61%) and small groups of up to 6 dwellings(54%)*
- *A mix of housing styles are preferred; cottages, terraced housing, bungalows and semi-detached houses being the acceptable choices*
- *Further estate development and executive style houses are not wanted*
- *The third most frequently mentioned concern about the village's future was the need for more younger families and the lack of affordable housing for them*

We all like to think that the place in which we live is unique; that's certainly true of Tipton St. John, which does not fit the mould of a typical English village.

Its church and school are separated from the main street, with its post

office, pub and garage, by the River Otter and they are quarter of a mile apart. There is a small village green in the village centre but the main open space is the playing field, owned and run by the village, and used by much of the wider community for its recreational needs. (This facility is currently under threat by river erosion and its preservation is a major issue at the moment.).

Besides the groupings of houses in the village there are also a number of dispersed settlements outside the village centre, which, for all intents and purposes, are considered part of Tipton St. John. These settlements, which are also included in the VDS, and the village itself, are surrounded by agricultural land, much of it designated as an Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the views between them, together with the many footpaths that link them, are seen as major benefits of the area which must be protected.

Throughout the settlements there is a mix of period and more modern houses, and it is generally not expected that any one style should predominate in any infill development.

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 2

Whilst period houses contribute historic and visual value to the village, houses of contemporary design should not be excluded.

Groups of Houses

Main Street/Tipton Road

Main Street is the principal thoroughfare through the village centre and its housing is mainly period terraced and semi-detached cottages. Tipton Lodge, now divided into 3 residences, is also situated on this road. There is a pavement, of sorts, along its central stretch but not east of Dolphin Cottage.

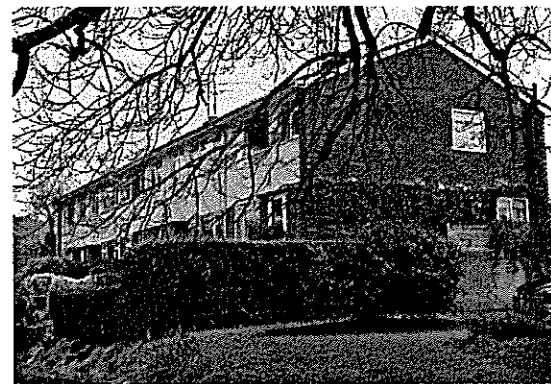
The only scheme for extending pavements in the village that has any measure of support is between Ellacombe Cottages and Dolphin Cottage, because of pedestrian safety concerns. Parking is predominantly on-street. Flooding along this road is also a problem.



Stanley Cottages, Tipton Road

Barton Paddocks, Chrystel Close

Two housing groups, one of two-storey terraced houses and one of bungalows built in the 1960's behind the village green and Golden Lion pub just off Main Street.



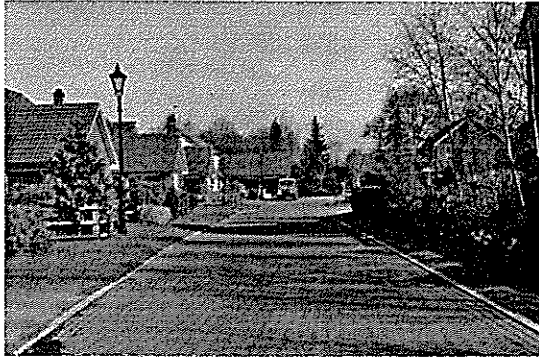
Barton Paddocks

Hayne Hill, Seaway Lane

A mix of older characterful and more recent larger houses, mostly detached and some semi-detached properties. Hayne Hill is a narrow lane with no pavements and off-street parking; Seaway Lane has a pavement and on-street parking and is subject to water run-off problems at times of heavy rain.



Little Bartons, Hayne Hill



Hayne Park

Hayne Close, Hayne Park

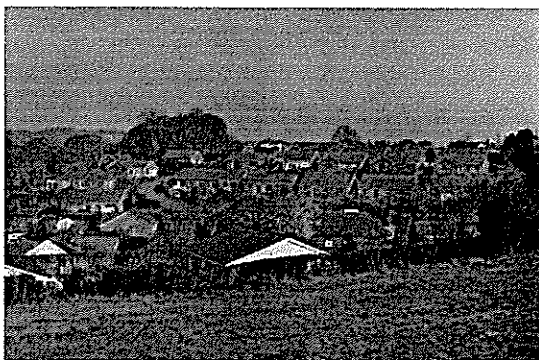
Two separate cul-de-sac developments, the first of medium sized detached houses, mostly rendered white, built on a slope in the 1970's; the latter of brick faced executive bungalows and houses built alongside the River Otter in the 1990's. Hayne Park suffers from the same water run-off problems as Seaway Lane.



Barton Orchard

Barton Orchard

A cul-de-sac of detached bungalows and medium sized houses, mostly rendered white, built in the 1960's. The road has pavements on both sides with drives and roadside parking.



Mallocks Close

Mallocks Close

A series of fairly steep hillside cul-de-sacs of 2 or 3 bedroom, brick bungalows built at the end of the 1960's. The roads have pavements on one side and parking is predominantly off-street in garages and drives.

Coombe Cross

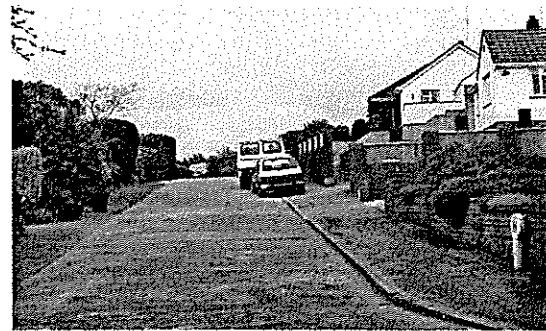
A mix of detached and semi-detached houses and cottages built around the crossroads. There are no pavements and on-street parking causes visibility problems, especially along the busy, derestricted Sidmouth Road.



Coombe Cross

Otter Close

Otter Close is an unadopted road off the busy Sidmouth Road. The housing, built in the 1960's, comprises a mix of larger bungalows and houses, mostly rendered white. The development is on the hillside overlooking the river valley and village centre. Water run-off into the village from extending similar sites is likely to be a problem.



Otter Close

Tipton Vale

A group of semi-detached houses and bungalows, built in the 1950's as a council estate. Some are now owner-occupied. There is an incomplete pavement on the west side of the road, which is fairly busy and on a bus route. The houses on the east side of the road may at some future date be at risk from river erosion.



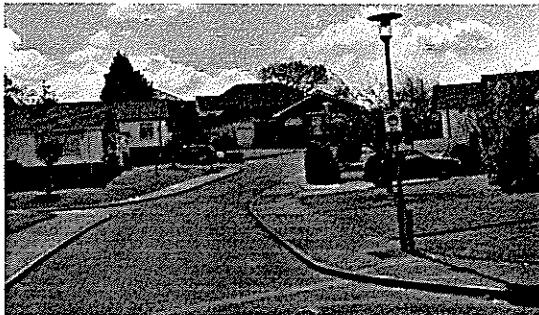
Tipton Vale



Fluxton

Fluxton

A small, dispersed community, principally of older farmhouses and buildings interspersed with some modern barn conversions and a few newer build detached houses. The Fluxton Road is subject to flooding; there are no pavements and traffic speeds on the narrow, winding road are problematic. Parking is generally off-road.



Metcombe Rise

Metcombe Rise

A group of brick and white rendered modern bungalows built in the 1960's and set out as two cul-de-sacs. There are ample pavements and on-street parking within the development.



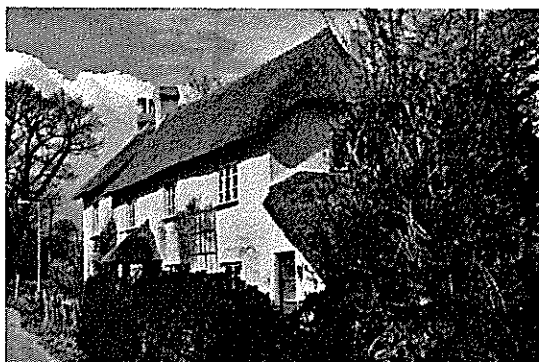
Metcombe Vale

Metcombe Vale

A line of modern terraced houses built in the 1950's, originally as council housing, with on and off road parking. The road is narrow and there are no pavements.

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 3

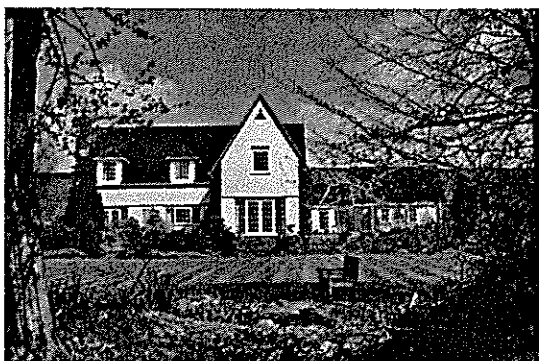
Where groups of dwellings are built around a central open area that central area should be protected from development through designation as Land of Local Amenity Importance.



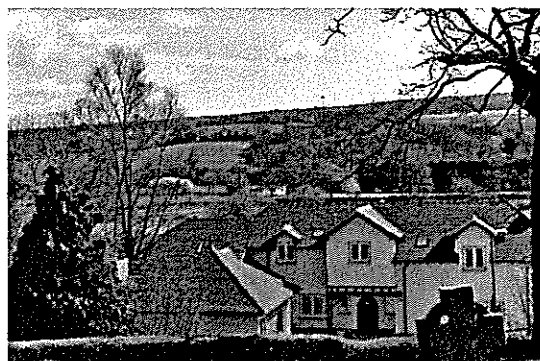
Thatched Cottage at Metcombe

Metcombe

A small, dispersed community of mixed housing types along the Metcombe Road: older cottages and more recent medium/large detached houses. Metcombe Road is narrow and winding in places; there are no pavements and parking is generally off-road.



House at Metcombe



New house opposite church

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 4

New infill buildings should be designed in sympathy with the village's rural character and with their immediate surroundings in terms of height, mass, scale, materials, detail and colour.

More isolated buildings should include the best of modern design and be in sympathy with the surrounding landscape.

Extensions should complement the character and, where practicable, include design features of the principal building.

The issue of environmental sustainability should also be given important consideration in any new planning application.

Planning submissions should clearly demonstrate how the proposed development will appear in relation to its surroundings. Once approved, the Parish Council should be consulted about any amendments.

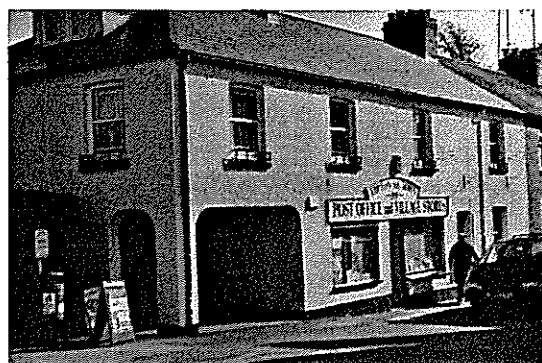
Organisations in the village

Survey Results

- *All village organisations are highly valued by a substantial majority of residents: the Post Office (94%), shop (91%), village community hall (90%), primary school (90%), garage and other non-food businesses (88%), pub (84%), children's playgroup (82%), Residents' Association (82%), church (82%) and the residential care home (69%).*



The Golden Lion



Post Office and Stores

The main businesses in Tipton St. John are the Post Office and shop, the pub (The Golden Lion), Tipton Garage, a care home (Angela Court) and the surrounding farms, some of which have bed and breakfast facilities.

The Post Office and village shop is particularly valued, and its closure is seen as a major threat to Tipton St. John's future. There are also several other businesses (e.g. a forge) and home-based enterprises including a few buy-to-let properties.

Although there are these houses and some holiday homes, Tipton St. John strikes a good balance between thriving businesses, development and rural attractiveness. The village must be economically viable as well as an attractive place to live. However, a major concern of villagers is the noise and danger of heavy vehicles, passing through the village, or visiting its businesses. This needs to be addressed.

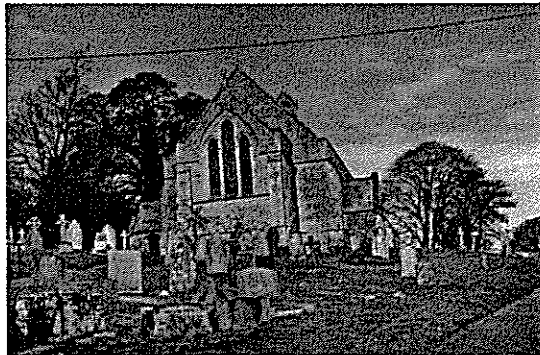


Tipton Garage

Tipton St. John has several community run organisations that are vital to village life: the Residents' Association, the village community hall and the Playing Fields Association.

The church is highly valued both spiritually and architecturally. It is a key landmark on the village landscape.

The school is also central to village life through its participation in community events like the Village Open Day and many residents having children there.



The Church



Community Hall



Old School House

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 5

Development must take into account the needs of local businesses, whilst preserving Tipton St. John's distinctive rural character.

Particular encouragement needs to be given to small businesses, because their contribution to the village economy is highly valued.

However, any business development must comply with Planning Guideline 4 and must not be disproportionate to neighbouring buildings.

Public footpaths and pavements

Survey Results

- *94% of residents believe that footpaths are important to Tipton St. John's environment.*
- *71% of all villagers consider that there are sufficient pavements in the village, but 41% of those on the east side of the village would like some consideration for a facility on safety grounds between Ellacombe and Dolphin Cottages.*

Footpaths are widely considered to be a vitally important part of people's leisure.

The walks on footpaths 7 and 24 to and from Ottery St. Mary and Harpford along the Otter are particularly popular with ramblers.

The pub does good trade providing them with liquid refreshment!

Please refer to the facing footpath map.



Footpath No 24 by the weir



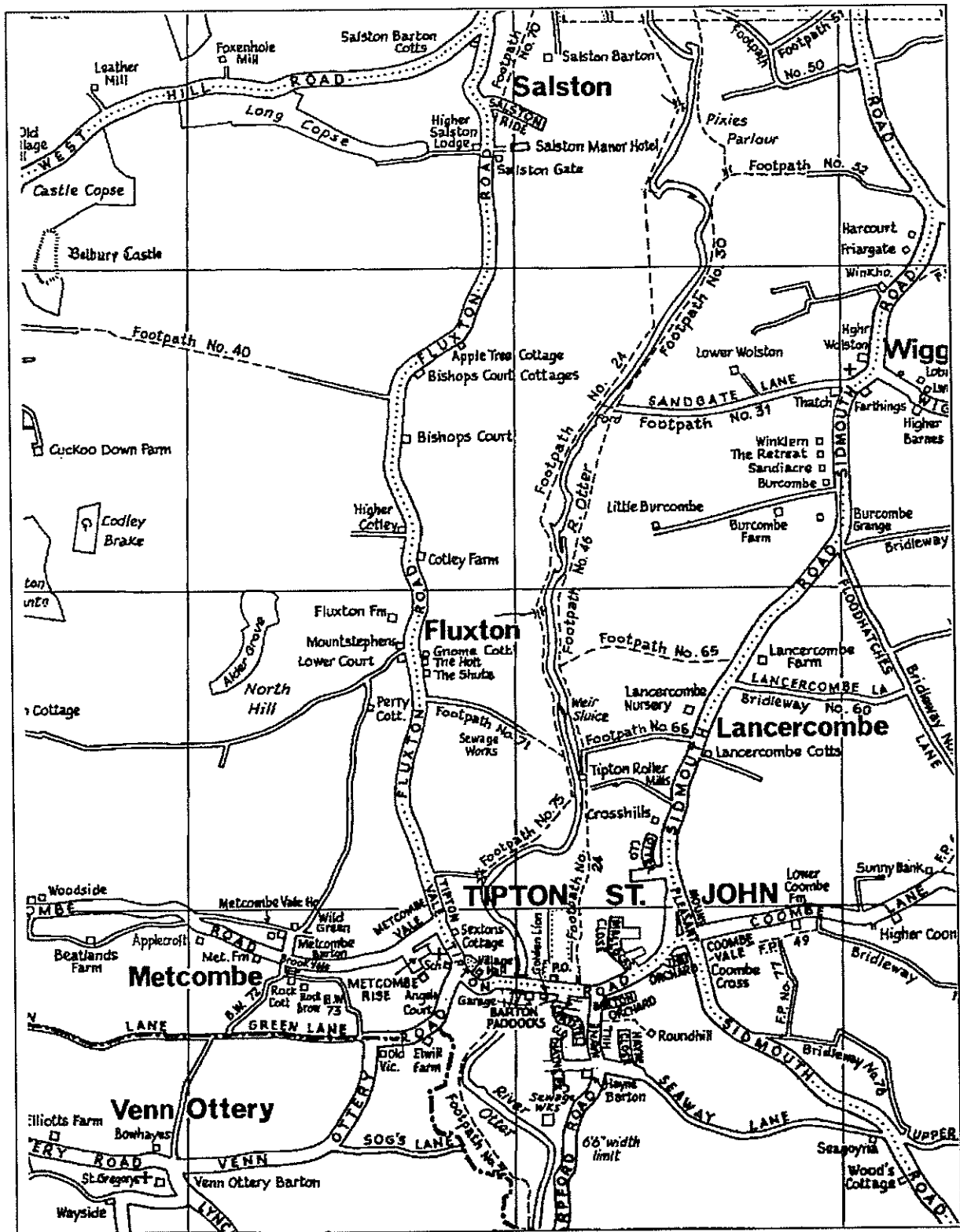
Footpath No 75 from the old railway bridge

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 6

All footpaths should be retained as an important recreational amenity.

Any extension of a pavement must use the same materials as the original.

Map of Footpaths around Tipton St John



Open spaces and recreation

Survey Results

- *Over 95% of residents want the village's open spaces protected.*
- *Recreational activities are widely supported: the playing fields (91%), village community hall (90%), the village news magazine, The Tipton Times (90%), the children's play area (86%), the church (82%), village drama group (75%), the mobile library (74%) and tennis courts (72%).*
- *There is considerable support for a youth club from the young people of the village.*
- *Residents believe that flooding and bank erosion are major threats to the future of Tipton St John.*
- *The village community hall's facilities need updating, in particular the toilets (supported by 48% of residents), kitchen (32%) and the provision of more storage space (48%).*

There are four particularly valued open spaces in Tipton St John:

1. The East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is situated south of the main street and east of the Harpford road.

2. The village "amenity land", large green areas within the village: the gardens of Tipton Lodge and Angela Court, the wooded area at the top end of Barton Orchard, the playing fields and the school grounds.
3. The County Wildlife Site, north of Tipton Vale.
4. The river Otter – with its lovely views and walks along its banks.

The village community hall and the playing fields are both independently owned, financed and run by the village and its representatives. They are considered vital to the recreational life of the village and are extremely well used not only by the villagers but also by people from the surrounding area.



Cricket on the playing field



Tennis courts

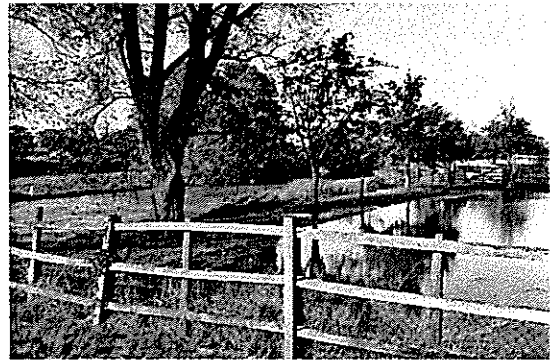
Flooding and bank erosion of the river Otter are huge areas of concern within the village. They threaten the very heart of Tipton St. John: the playing fields, council housing in Tipton Vale, the bridge over the Otter and houses and businesses on the flood plain including the Post Office and shop, pub and garage (please see the map on the following page).

Under the instigation of the Residents' Association and Playing Fields Association, the local MP set up a multi-agency committee to address the issue, embracing the Environment Agency, Devon County Council, East Devon District Council and the village's River Otter Bank Erosion Group.

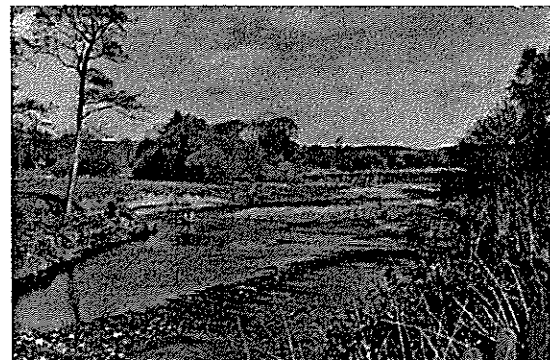
The whole village is anxiously awaiting a satisfactory solution to this potential environmental catastrophe. There is also a risk of flooding from East Hill into the main street and from Hayne Hill into Hayne Close and Hayne Park.



Old Post Office flood damage, 1909



Flooding at playing field car park

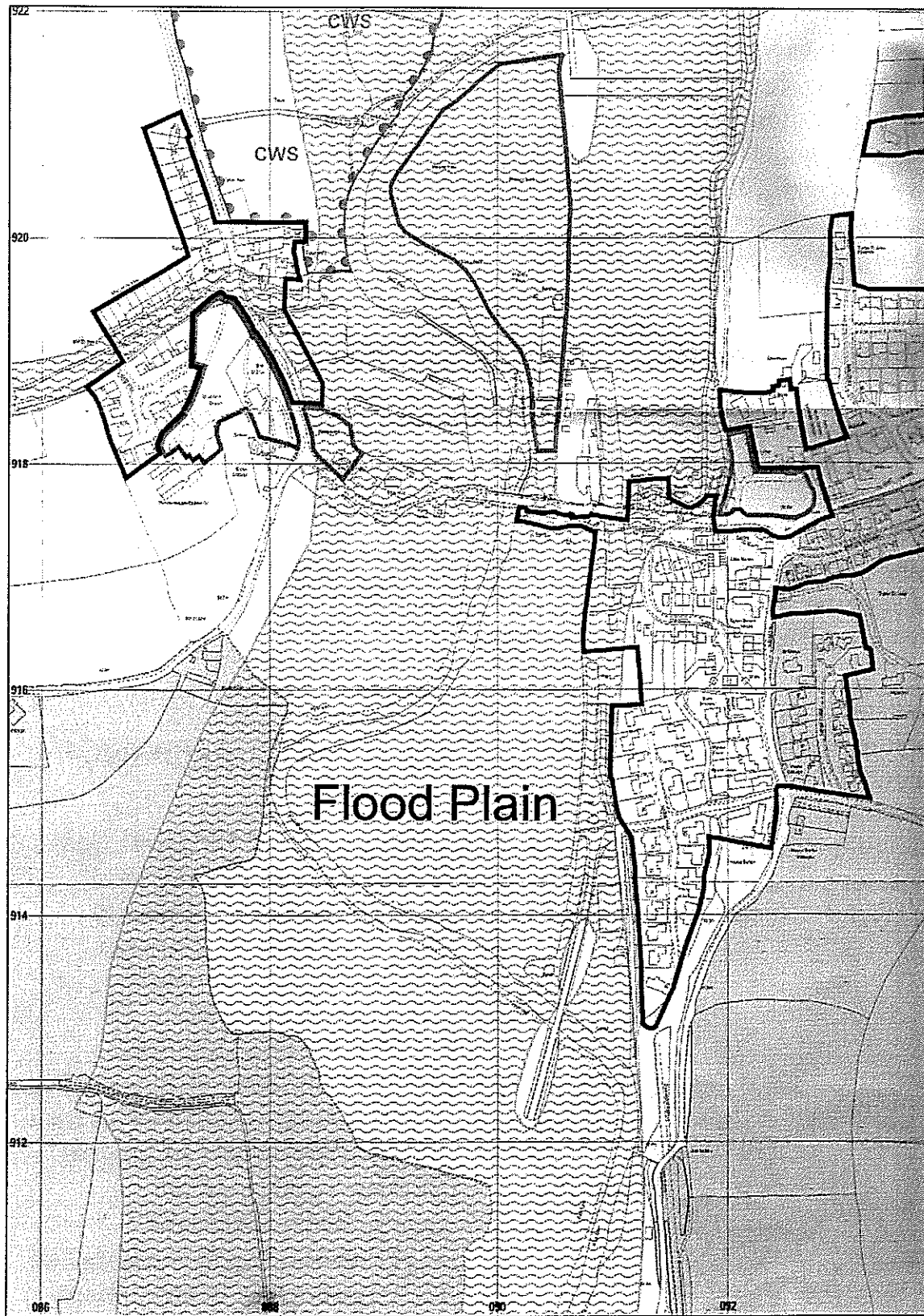


River Otter bank erosion

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 7

There should be no further development on the flood plain, or any other area that would increase the risk of flooding. New development must not increase the risk of flooding, as recommended by the Environment Agency in the Devon Local Plan. This prohibits any building or raising of ground levels within the flood plain of the river Otter, and any development that would exacerbate known flooding in the water course that drains down through the village.

River Otter Flood Plain at Tipton St John



Hedges, trees and boundaries

Survey Results

- *93% of residents support the retention of Tipton St. John's trees.*

There is a good variety of trees in the village including oaks, elms and pines.

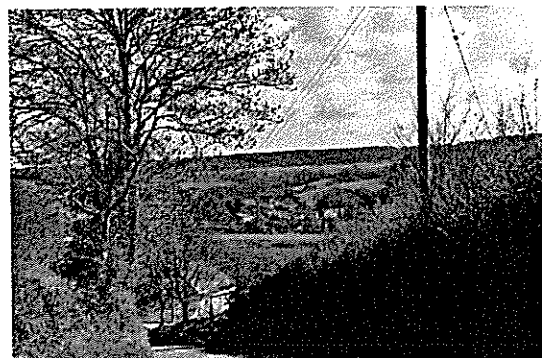
Well kept hedges, too, are considered to be important in preserving Tipton St. John's rural character.

Wooden fences and stone or brick built walls are also used as property boundaries.

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 8

Boundary structures should be sympathetic with the character of the locality and unnecessarily high structures avoided.

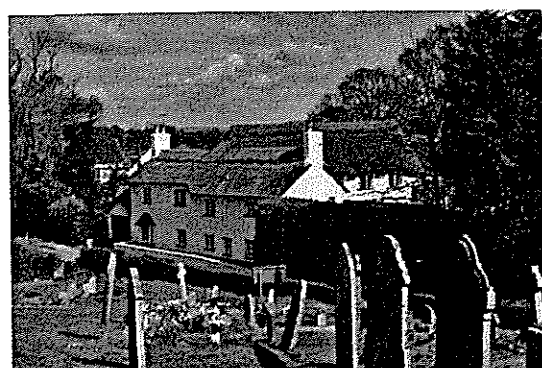
Materials and colours used should blend in with its surroundings.



View from Venn Ottery road



Hayne Barton farmhouse



Sexton Cottage from the churchyard

Highways and traffic

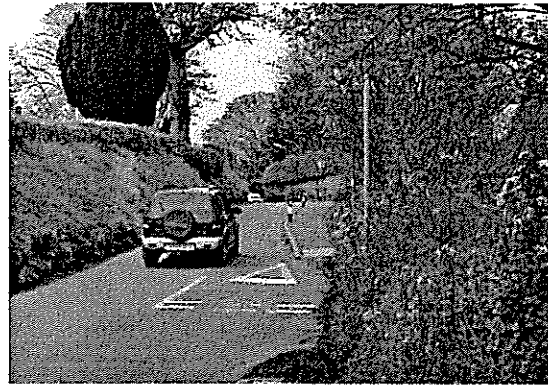
Survey Results

- *There is a widespread worry about the rising levels of traffic through the village and the speed at which it travels. 77% of residents support lower speed limits through the village.*

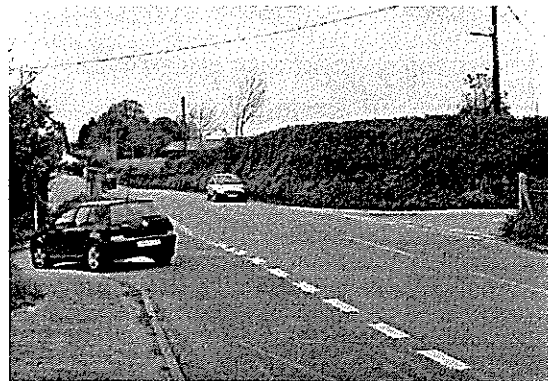
Tipton St John has a surprising number of roads into the village from Venn Ottery, Fluxton, Metcombe, Waxway, Harpford, Ottery St. Mary and Sidmouth. Much of the traffic through the centre is local, but rush hour traffic cuts through on the Metcombe road to join the B3180 to Exeter and on the Fluxton road through to West Hill and Ottery St. Mary.

Much traffic is also generated by the village school. The Sidmouth to Ottery St. Mary road now appears to have increased traffic since the new A30 dual carriageway was opened. The particular problem with this road is that its only straight section passes through Coombe Cross, resulting in dangerous speeds and overtaking by some drivers.

There are no public car parks in the village which necessitates a lot of on-street parking, particularly in the centre.



"Throat" at the school



Crossroads at Coombe Cross



The main street

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 9
Future planning decisions must take into account rising traffic, speed levels and adequate parking.

PLANNING GUIDELINES - 10
Signs should be clear but not excessive and carefully sited to preserve the rural character of the village.

A Statement of Consultation

A decision was taken at the AGM of the Tipton St John Residents' Association on 6th June 2003, attended by about 60 villagers, to undertake a Village Design Statement (VDS) for the village and an independent steering group was set up.

The steering group determined that the backbone of the VDS would be a self-completion questionnaire issued to all adults in the village and its environs and 600 copies were printed, thanks to a grant from Ottery St Mary Town Council. Allowing for vacant homes, illness etc 551 questionnaires were issued and 370 were completed and returned, representing an overall response rate of 67.2% for the area surveyed – a considerably higher than usual rate for a self-completion questionnaire.

Response rates for all parts of the village were very good, except for Fluxton, which was disappointing. However, that area is relatively small and on the edge of the village and its poor response is not considered to have an adverse effect on the overall results summarised below:

Area name	Q's distributed	Q's returned	%
Coombe	76	52	69.3
Mallocks	75	49	65.3
Orchard	55	36	65.5
Hayne	95	76	80.0
Centre	71	46	64.8
Venn Ottery Rd	36	30	83.3
The Vales	83	48	57.8
Metcombe	44	27	61.4
Fluxton	16	6	37.5
Total	551	370	67.2

A summary of the survey results was published in the April 2004 edition of the Tipton Times, a free local magazine distributed to all households in the village, and the full results were displayed for comment and consultation at a Village Open Day, held in the Village Hall on Saturday 24th April 2004 and funded by a grant from East Devon District Council. The Open Day was fully advertised in the Tipton Times and posters were displayed throughout the village. It was opened by the Chairman of Ottery St Mary Town Council, featured the work and presentations by many of the village organisations and was visited by an estimated 200 people. It was also used to collect photographs of the village's favoured buildings. It was reported in the Sidmouth Herald and the Ottery Advertiser.

Planning Guidelines

Design

PG 1 – page 3 Development should be sensitive to the character of the village and the style of existing properties.

PG 2 – page 8 Whilst period houses contribute historic and visual value to the village, houses of contemporary design should not be excluded.

PG 4 – page 13 New infill buildings should be designed in sympathy with the village's rural character and with their immediate surroundings in terms of height, mass, scale, materials, detail and colour.

PG 4 – page 13 More isolated buildings should include the best of modern design and be in sympathy with the surrounding landscape.

PG 4 – page 13 Extensions should complement the character and, where practicable, include design features of the principal building.

PG 4 – page 13 The issue of environmental sustainability should also be given important consideration in any new planning application.

PG 4 – page 13 Planning submissions should clearly demonstrate how the proposed development will appear in relation to its surroundings. Once approved, the Parish Council should be consulted about any amendments.

Industry

PG 5 – page 15 Development must take into account the needs of local businesses, whilst preserving Tipton St. John's distinctive rural character. Particular encouragement needs to be given to small businesses, because their contribution to the village economy is highly valued.

PG 5 – page 15 Any business development must comply with Planning Guideline 3 and must not be disproportionate to neighbouring buildings.

Planning Guidelines

Landscape

PG 3 – page 12 Where groups of dwellings are built around a central open area that central area should be protected from development through designation as Land of Local Amenity Importance.

PG 6 – page 16 All footpaths should be retained as an important recreational amenity.

PG 6 - page 16 Any extension of a pavement must use the same materials as the original.

PG 7 – page 19 New development must not increase the risk of flooding, as recommended by the Environment Agency in the Devon Local Plan. This prohibits any building or raising of ground levels within the flood plain of the river Otter, and any development that would exacerbate known flooding on the water course that drains down through the village.

PG 8 - page 21 Boundary structures should be sympathetic with the character of the locality and unnecessarily high structures avoided. Materials and colours used should blend in with the boundary structure's surroundings.

Traffic

PG 9 – page 22 Future planning decisions must take into account rising traffic, speed levels and adequate parking.

PG 10 – page 22 Signs should be clear but not excessive and carefully sited to preserve the rural character of the village.



Tipton from Roundhill in the early 1900's

Tipton Past and Present



Tipton from Roundhill in 2004