



Devon Historic Coastal and Market Towns Survey

South Molton



Historic Environment Projects

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Within Historic Environment Projects, Cornwall Council the Project Manager was Andrew Young, and Nick Cahill acted as Historic Urban Characterisation Adviser for the project also providing input for HUCA area descriptions.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of Historic Environment Projects and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

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Cover illustration

East Street and Broad Street looking west (taken 22/11/2011).

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Abbreviations

CA	Conservation Area
EH	English Heritage
EUS	Extensive Urban Survey
DCC	Devon County Council
HE	Historic Environment Projects, Cornwall Council
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
HUC	Historic Urban Character
HUCA	Historic Urban Character Area
HUCT	Historic Urban Character Type
NGR	National Grid Reference
NRHE	National Record for the Historic Environment
OD	Ordnance Datum
OS	Ordnance Survey

1 Project summary

South Molton was assessed during autumn 2012 under the Devon Historic Coastal and Market Towns Survey (DHCMTS). Part of a national programme of Extensive Urban Surveys initiated and supported by English Heritage, DHCMTS is aimed at increasing understanding of 17 medieval towns within the county, prioritised because of their high historical significance and archaeological potential and the immediacy of development pressure.

DHCMTS constitutes a deepening of Devon’s Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project, completed in 2004. Standard, easily available sources are used to identify Historic Urban Character Types (HUCTs), which divide a town up on the basis of land use. Incorporating time-depth allows a town’s urban extent and uses to be mapped during the different periods of its history. The HUCTs are then grouped together to define distinct geographical areas – Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) – distinguishable by their specific origins, historical development, plan-form, buildings and degree of survival. HUCAs are the principle tool for describing the character of the historic towns included in the survey. The project results are held digitally in a GIS database as part of the Devon Historic Environment Record and presented in a report for each town (together with a project synthesis to be published at the end of the project).

South Molton was chosen for the survey because it is listed as a Domesday settlement and contained a pre-conquest ecclesiastical centre. Its prosperity was generated from its wool trade and livestock market, both of which saw a decline in the mid 19th century. It has high archaeological potential. Development pressures include Local Development Plan proposals for in-filling and edge expansion together with market town enhancements. Fifteen individual HUCAs were identified during the survey and are listed in the table below.

HUCA no.	Historic Urban Character Area	Above ground heritage significance	Below ground heritage significance
1	Exeter Gate	Low	Low
2	South Molton western expansion	Low	Low
3	Mill on the Mole Park Homes	Low	Medium
4	South Molton southern expansion	Medium	Low
5	Mill Street and Poltimore Road	Medium	High
6	River Mole farmland and mills	High	Medium
7	New Road infill	Low	Low
8	Central infill	Medium	High
9	Town centre	High	High
10	The west end	High	High
11	North Road and Gunswell Lane	Medium	High
12	Winston Park development	Low	Low
13	North Street expansion	High	High
14	Dean’s Lane expansion	Medium	Medium
15	East Street (east)	High	High

2 Town context

2.1 Location and setting

South Molton is an historic market town located in North Devon, approximately 11 miles east of Barnstaple and 18 miles west of Tiverton, on the west side of the River Mole (from which the town derives its name) (Fig 1). For centuries it was an important centre for the wool industry to which it owes its historic growth and prosperity. The town is situated on a hilltop overlooking the River Mole with its church (St Mary Magdalene) located as a focal point at the junction between the main streets (Broad Street, East Street and South Street). The town has spread out from this historic core (mainly during the 20th century) to double in size. Earthworks located just to the north of the town indicate an earlier area of settlement of probable Saxon, Medieval or post-medieval date (MDV51831 and MDV759). More earthworks to the south of the town are suggestive of prehistoric or Roman settlement (MDV29582 and MDV29062).

2.2 Geology and topography

The town lies on a hilltop at a height of approximately 145m OD and slopes down to the River Mole on its eastern side. The northern approaches to the town rise up steeply to meet a ridge defining the original northern extent, whilst to the south the land drops away gently. It is surrounded by farmland with rounded hills and valleys except to the north where a modern industrial estate has built up around the 19th century railway station which lies approximately 1km outside the town. Views out to the surrounding landscape are part of the town's appeal, along with the historic buildings and surviving medieval plan.

The underlying geology comprises Bude Formation mudstones and siltstones (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The identifiable remains of medieval strip field systems surrounding the town indicate sustained agricultural land use and the continuity of the town development is an indication of good quality farmland.

2.3 Previous archaeological work

Only minor archaeological intervention and recording has taken place in and around South Molton to date.

Eleven archaeological Events Records including assessments, evaluations, watching briefs and building surveys are recorded in the Devon HER within and adjacent to the study area. These events comprise the following:

- EDV4131- An archaeological evaluation at land off Parsonage Lane immediately north of HUCA 13. Here, areas of dense, grey/brown clayey soil containing charcoal and some burnt clay were identified, extending over c20m between Parsonage Lane and Station Road. These possibly represent remains of an occupation site. Earthworks visible on a Cambridge air photo (MDV759) immediately north-west of this, indicate earth banks and platforms at the crossroads, extending towards the vicarage. These are suggestive of settlement remains.
- EDV4264 - An archaeological evaluation at land off Gunswell Lane in HUCA 2 revealed remains of medieval and post-medieval field boundaries.
- EDV4424 - An archaeological evaluation at Amory House, 125 East Street. Here undated urban features were identified as well as 17th, 18th and 19th century pottery.
- EDV4245 - A watching brief at Queen Street (HUCA 9) where no archaeological remains were encountered.
- EDV4251 - A watching brief at Southley Road, Veterinary Surgery in HUCA 8 (no description available).

- EDV5087 - Evaluation and watching brief of a new Care Home on land adjacent to South Molton Hospital in HUCA 10 recorded post-medieval/modern boundary ditches.
- EDV4456 - A watching brief at South Molton Community College in HUCA 4 where no archaeological remains were encountered.
- EDV4599 – North Devon Buildings at Risk Survey 2000-2003.
- EDV5716 – A building inspection at Ormonde, Poltimore Close (HUCA 5).
- EDV4602 – A building record of the Old Gaol, East Street (HUCA 9).
- EDV4665 – An archaeological assessment of land at Dart Park and New Road in HUCA 7. Medieval field boundaries were identified during the assessment.

3 Historical development

This section summarises the physical development of the town through time (Figures 3-7), highlighting the key components and influencing factors, as part of the process of identifying its historic urban character (it is not intended as a detailed historical narrative).

Historic Environment Record numbers (prefix MDV) have been included for cross reference with Devon County Council's database of archaeological sites and historic buildings (where site-specific descriptions and bibliographical references can be accessed).

Cross-reference is also made to the Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs).

3.1 Prehistoric and Roman

There is no indication of either prehistoric or Roman activity within the town itself. However, a rectilinear enclosure (MDV29582) located to the south of the cemetery along with a group of phased enclosures (MDV29062) identified from aerial photographs just to the south-west of this suggest the presence of prehistoric or Roman settlement immediately south of the town. Finds of prehistoric and Roman dates have also been recovered from fields outside the town.

3.2 Early medieval ecclesiastical centre and settlement

During the Saxon period an ecclesiastical college (Minster) was founded at South Molton almost certainly on the site of the present parish church. The evidence for this comes from the mention of the existence of a monastery at South Molton in 8th century Northumbrian Annals incorporated into the *Historia Regum* of Symeon of Durham (Arnold 1885) (NRHE No. 34952). The term *minster* is first found in royal foundation charters of the 7th century where it corresponds to the Latin *monasterium* or monastery (<http://en.wikipedia.org>). The same Northumbrian Annals also suggest that there was an area of sanctuary close by indicated by the name 'Nimet' (meaning sanctuary), applied to the river Crooked Oak in Bishop Nympton parish (SS 7623) and 'Nimed' applied to the river Yeo (SS 7103) in Zeal Monachorum. These represent stream names lying within two separate areas defined by Barbara Carbonell which she suggests were 'sanctuary land in pagan times' (Carbonell 1931 and English Place Name Society Devon 1931).

Another indication of the presence of a Minster at South Molton is in the Domesday Survey of 1086 which lists South Molton as a royal manor containing four priests with a virgate (30 acres) of land. This implies an important ecclesiastical presence from an early date and suggests the existence of a collegiate church at this date. In Dugdale's *Monasticon*; "Tanner, from Mr. Willis's Parochiale, speaks of a College here to which the Rectory was appropriate" (Saunders 1908). As yet no physical evidence for the location and extent of a Saxon settlement or a collegiate church has been identified. However, the plan form of the present church, churchyard and inward facing surrounding

buildings strongly suggests that this was the site of the collegiate church which would comprise a church, associated buildings and houses set within an enclosed precinct. There is evidence that the church which preceded the present one was a Norman structure, evidenced by the 'enormous thickness' of the chancel walls of the existing church (Hussell c1910). It is also possible, however, that these walls are the remains of a tall, narrow Saxon church.

The existence of a small village at South Molton during the Saxon period seems likely since by 1086 there was a population of approximately 100 to 200 people estimated from the Domesday listings (Edmunds 2002). Glebe lands around the Vicarage (former Parsonage) to the north of the town may represent part of the virgate of land held by the four priests mentioned in the Domesday Survey (Creswell). Here there are visible earthworks including banks and possible building platforms (MDV51868 and MDV51831) which may alternatively represent remains of Saxon settlement. An intriguing, regular rectangular enclosure underlying the present mid 20th century housing development at Dean's Lane and Hugh Squire Avenue on the north-east side of town may also indicate the presence of a pre-medieval site located on the ridge overlooking the river valley.

The Geld (Taxation) Roll of 1084 records only *Moltone* (Gover, Mawer and Stenton 1932) which suggests that in the earlier Saxon period the manors of North and South Molton were a single unit quite possibly together with Bishop's and King's Nympton (Southwest Archaeology 2005). Such large units of land based around a principle settlement with a river-derived name are thought to characterise land-holding in Britain before the development of manors and were frequently possessions of the Crown (Southwest Archaeology 2005).

A Saxon route to the settlement probably lay along the line of North Street (continuing from West Street), and possibly heading south-east into East Street towards Mole Bridge (Southwest Archaeology 2005). This route follows the top of the ridge along North Street and forms a linear east-west route immediately north of the church. It also seems likely that the north-south route had been established during the Saxon period linking the settlement with Exeter to the south and the coast to the north. When the borough was laid out during the medieval period both routes were altered to send all passing traffic directly into a newly established market place (Broad Street). Another likely Saxon route is Parsonage Lane which leads northwards from the church towards North Molton and into former Glebe lands.

3.3 Medieval Borough

South Molton derives its name from the River Mole. The earliest record of the name is in the Domesday Book of 1086 where it appears as 'Sud Moltone' and is distinguished from North Molton.

The Domesday survey records South Molton as being a royal manor held by the King (Thorn and Thorn 1985). The survey lists that there was land for 40 ploughs; there were 12 villeins, 4 bordars, 2 serfs and 12 swineherds; there was woodland, 10 acres of meadow, 30 acres of pasture and 9 head of cattle. A separate entry lists that there were also 4 priests with one virgate of land (Edmunds 2002). This suggests that South Molton at the time of Domesday comprised a village of roughly 100 to 200 people alongside a collegiate church.

At the end of the 11th century the manor of South Molton was granted to the Barony of Gloucester which embraced many Devonshire manors. During the 12th century the town became a borough and the probable date of its first charter, introduced by Gilbert de Turberville, was around 1150 (Edmunds 2002). The charter was confirmed in c1199 by Payn de Turberville. In 1238 South Molton was represented as a borough by its own burgesses at the eyre (Beresford and Finberg, 1973). In the Hundred Rolls of 1273 a yearly fair is mentioned at South Molton as is the fact that the town held a weekly market (Edmunds 2002). Twelve jurors are also listed revealing South Molton's status

as a legal centre and in the list of townsmen 'Thomas the Fuller' is mentioned which suggests an established wool industry at this date.

Becoming a borough would have entailed a radical restructuring of any existing settlement. Typically, the physical lay-out of boroughs comprised a broad main street at right angles to which individual tenements stood with houses gable-end on to the street and long, narrow 'burgage plots' behind. The main street would widen out at one end, usually nearest to the church, to accommodate a market place, which in later centuries often became infilled with buildings (Weddell 1985, 96-100). Many boroughs failed, but South Molton was successful and prospered, and in the reign of Edward I in 1302 sent burgesses to parliament. Based on taxation returns Edmunds suggests that the total population at the beginning of the 14th century was between 1000 and 1800 (Edmunds 2002). In South Molton East Street and Broad Street appear to represent the main east-west street of the borough settlement with its original market place located in Broad Street leading right up to the junction with Station Road but later concentrated at the west end in Broad Street adjacent to the church. During the medieval period the town was substantial and the market area may well have been the whole of the main east-west street, not just the west end (Broad Street). South Street represents the main north-south street of the borough settlement and also led directly to the market place on Broad Street.

The medieval historic core of South Molton is concentrated along Broad Street, East Street and South Street, which formed the main routes within the medieval settlement. The long narrow strips either side of East Street and South Street are typical of medieval burgage plots. From the present layout of the streets it appears that South Street was established during the medieval period but had been shifted to the east from an earlier route which would have continued northwards from the right-angled bend in Cook's Cross to meet Barnstaple Street to the west of the church. The likely reason for this shift during the medieval period was to bring all passing trade directly into the market place on Broad Street. This would mean that Cook's Cross follows the earlier route from the south. Likewise, the original east-west route (leading from West Street into North Street and down to Mole Bridge) appears to have been diverted to the south of the church with the creation of Broad Street and East Street.

Following on from its establishment as an ecclesiastical centre during the Saxon period, South Molton continued in this roll into the medieval period. The Domesday Survey listing indicates an important ecclesiastical presence from an early date and suggests the existence of a collegiate church.

The present Church of St. Mary Magdalene, located immediately north of the medieval market place on Broad Street, is 15th century in date (although altered in the 19th century) and is possibly the third church to have stood on this site (Listed Building description). John Cocks, in his book "Records of the Borough of South Molton," gives some historical facts with regard to the building. In 1410 an enquiry was held as to the "grievous dilapidation" of the chancel of the then existing church. This led to the construction of the present church soon after (Hussell c1910). Hussell suggests that the church which preceded the present one was a Norman structure, evidenced by the 'enormous thickness' of the chancel walls of the existing church which 'could only have been built in the Norman period'. He also mentions that when the 15th century south porch was taken down in 1865, parts of a Norman font were found built into the walls. This was almost certainly the font from the former church since a new font was supplied when the rebuilding took place in the 15th century (Hussell c1910).

Besides the parish church there were also four chantry chapels recorded in South Molton when they were dissolved in the Reformation in 1547-8. Two chapels are mentioned in the register of Bishop Lacey in 1449 located in or by the churchyard of the parish church (Edmunds 2002). One of these chapels (Chapel House) still stands, although much altered, to the south of the church.

From the medieval period onwards South Molton created its wealth from the production of wool and woollen cloth and had fulling mills as well as corn mills located along the River Mole to the east of the town. It was also the centre for a thriving livestock market.

The town's earliest Royal Market Charter was granted in the 12th century (Edmunds 2002). During this period a trade in the manufacture of wool began to grow. The first fulling mill at South Molton is mentioned in 1327 (Hoskins 1972). The Lay Subsidy of 1332 records 5 tax-payers called Tucker (Erskine 1969) (a tucker was engaged in "tucking" or fulling the finished cloth), indicating woollen manufacture at that date (Southwest Archaeology 2005). The town was a base for merchants where wool could be bought from local farmers and either sent to Exeter to be made into cloth or manufactured locally (Edmunds 2002). It was the alnager's job to ensure that finished cloth conformed to the legal requirements when it was put up for sale and in the alnagers' returns for 1395-6 South Molton is listed as having 213 cloths from five merchants (Edmunds 2002).

The wool industry relied on the rearing of sheep and access to good pasture in the surrounding countryside. South Molton can be seen as one of a group of towns that ring the great south-west moorlands and arose in part from exploiting their resources. Records from the medieval period show that sheep, cattle and horses from South Molton were grazed on Exmoor during the summer months and kept close to home during the winter (Edmunds 2002). The Domesday Book of 1086 lists land for 40 ploughs, 12 swineherds, woodland, 10 acres of meadow, 30 acres of pasture and 9 head of cattle which gives an insight to the town's economy and shows that much of the land was in cultivation. To the west and east of the town long, narrow fields (medieval strip fields) can still be discerned, and are arranged at right angles to an east-west axis represented by Nadder Lane leading to West Street, Broad Street and East Street continuing almost all the way to Mole Bridge.

South Molton has a network of early routes leading into the town from all directions and linking it with a number of early settlements. During the Saxon period it seems likely that there was an east-west road passing to the north of the church (West Street into North Street and down to Mole Bridge) and also a north-south road (continuing northwards from the right-angle bend at Cook's Cross) passing to the west of the church. During the laying out of the borough in the 12th century the earlier east-west route appears to have been diverted to the south of the church with the creation of Broad Street and East Street which were also designed to form a wide passage for animal marketing. Also the central part of the earlier north-south route was shifted eastwards (South Street) from a line which would have continued northwards from the right-angled bend in Cook's Cross to meet Barnstaple Street to the west of the church. Both existing roads were re-routed in order to divert traffic directly to the market place (Board Street). Another route which almost certainly dates to the laying out of the borough is Station Road. This created a new route from Exmoor and North Molton (replacing the earlier Parsonage Lane) and again designed to bring all traffic directly to the market place from the eastern end of the town. Sheep and other livestock would be taken along this route to summer grazing on Exmoor and also be herded in this way to sell at market.

The main south-north route through the town is a link to Exeter to the south along Alswear Old Road, and Barnstaple and the coast to the north along North Road. The main east-west route leads from East Street eastwards across the River Mole to Bishop's Nympton and westwards from West Street and Nadder Lane to Great Torrington. Another early route to the south is George Nympton Road leading to George Nympton.

The River Mole to the east of the town formed another north-south route between North Molton to the north and Alswear to the south.

3.4 Post-medieval development and trade

During the post-medieval period in South Molton settlement grew along the two main routes (South Street and East Street) extending into former medieval strip fields towards the river on East Street and more sporadically at the southern end of South Street and Cooks Cross.

The town was incorporated as a municipal borough in 1590 when its Royal Market Charter was granted by Elizabeth I. This charter was renewed under Charles II in 1684 to hold cattle, sheep and produce markets. Queen Elizabeth I had granted the manor of South Molton to Thomas Whitmore, who conveyed it to Hugh Squire (Lysons 1822). Hugh Squire was a successful merchant who was born in South Molton in 1625. He founded a free school here in 1684 on East Street (on the site of the old, derelict Hunt's Almshouses (Edmunds 2002)) and in his will he made further provision for the school as well as bequeathing property and money for the upkeep of the town (<http://www.everythingexmoor.org.uk>).

During the Civil War South Molton was the scene of a skirmish between the Royalists and Parliamentary forces. In 1655 200 Royalists, under Sir Joseph Wagstaffe and others, were defeated by Cromwell's troops. Tradition says that Wagstaffe escaped by leaping his horse over the north wall of the churchyard, which is still known as 'Wagstaffe's Wall'.

St Mary Magdalene church continued as a focal point throughout the post-medieval period and shows evidence of a variety of alterations and repairs dating to the 17th century. The Parliamentary army, who stabled their horses in the Church in 1655, were said to have defaced the stone pulpit and caused other damage (Hussell, c1910).

In 1662 Edward Hunt, an Independent or Congregationalist established a regular congregation in South Molton that met in a barn in Lower East Street.

From the medieval period until the late 18th century South Molton continued to derive its wealth from its two main interlinked trades; livestock markets and the production of wool and woollen cloth. During this period fulling mills as well as corn mills were located along the River Mole to the east of the town. There are records of three fulling mills established on the river in 1644 (www.everythingexmoor.org.uk). Serges and perpetuanas (a similar kind of lighter woollen cloth) replaced the earlier kerseys (a coarse woollen cloth) which had previously been made in South Molton (Edmunds 2002). South Molton would have manufactured and marketed on a small scale getting wool locally and from Barnstaple and probably supplying larger merchants from Tiverton and Exeter (Edmunds 2002).

Other industries recorded include a tannery on East Street from the 16th century (Devon HER) and organ builders by the name of Chappyngton (responsible for building the organ for Westminster Abbey in 1596: Edmunds 2002)). Evidence from wills written during the 17th century hint at a selection of other industries in the town during this period. The will of a butcher by the name of Aaron Lock shows that he was both a butcher and small scale farmer; another will is for Walter Kingsland who appears to have been a glove-maker and market stall owner (Edmunds 2002). The market place during this period was concentrated in Broad Street and had temporary buildings creating a shambles in the centre of the street around the High Cross. The cross no longer exists but was probably in the middle of the road adjacent to the avenue leading to the church (Edmunds 2002). The official administrative centre of the town was the old Guildhall. This probably stood close to the site of the present sorting office (Edmunds 2002)

It is likely that Mill Street (continuing along Poltimore Road, formerly Mill Lane) and North Street were established during the post-medieval period since they appear on Benjamin Donn's map of 1765 (Fig 10 and the 18th century Map of the Borough of South Molton within the Manor of Hacche (Fig 9) but are not primary medieval routes.

3.5 Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

During the 18th century and into the early 19th century South Molton reached its peak of prosperity due to its livestock markets and wool industry. The prosperity of the 18th and 19th centuries is reflected in the buildings on Broad Street and East Street including the fine 18th century Guildhall and adjoining 19th century market house. At this time retail shops on Broad Street, East Street and South Street were replacing market stalls for much trading (Edmunds 2002) and much of the shambles on Broad Street was demolished to make way for a new large open market place with wooden shambles (www.everythingexmoor.org.uk). During the 19th century the expansion of the town was particularly noticeable with newly developed areas along North Road, the north side of North Street (where a new industrial suburb was created), further eastwards along East Street, along Mill Street and Mill Lane (now Poltimore Road) and southwards along Cooks Cross to Exeter Gate. The 19th century also saw the introduction of new amenities such as a cemetery, a new workhouse, gasworks, a reservoir, sewage works, a police station and a National School. The fortunes of the town began to decline in the second half of the 19th century when the wool industry began to suffer due to the introduction of wool-combing machinery, competition from Yorkshire, cheap cotton goods and a reduced market (South Molton museum).

During the mid 18th century the population of the town was estimated at 2,500 and the number of inhabitants, according to the census of 1811 was 2,739 (Lysons 1822). In the early 19th century approximately 2,200 of these were involved in manufacturing and the remainder in agriculture (Edmunds 2002). Frequent fires were recorded in the town during the 19th century and were responsible for the destruction of many buildings. The worst recorded was in 1841 when 70 buildings in South Street were consumed (Edmunds 2002).

The opening by the London and South-Western Railway of a line from Exeter to Barnstaple in 1854 unfortunately placed South Molton Road Station too far away to be convenient and the cattle market lost out to Eggesford and Molland. The opening of the Taunton to Barnstaple railway in 1873 with a more convenient station did not greatly improve the situation and the town continued to decline commercially. Nevertheless the new station goods yard became the venue for a well-attended monthly cattle market. The area is now an industrial estate to the north of the town (Southwest Archaeology 2005).

In 1715, the Independents and Baptists had congregations at South Molton (Lysons 1822) and during the 18th and 19th centuries the Non-conformists and Methodists grew in numbers. The first Methodist chapel to be given a licence in 1807 was located in a barn on East Street (Edmunds 2002). After this date several other chapels and churches were established including the large Wesleyan Methodist church at the top of Duke Street, a Congregationalist chapel in the churchyard, a Plymouth Brethren chapel on South Street, a Baptist chapel on New Road and a Bible Christian chapel on East Street. There was also a strong Temperance movement during the 19th century and a Temperance Hall was constructed on New Road.

Although the Nonconformist churches were strong in South Molton the Church of England still had loyal support. This is indicated during both the 18th and the 19th centuries by the large number of repairs, alterations and rebuilds carried out to the parish church. In 1857 a cemetery was opened on Mill Street after the closure of the graveyard (Edmunds 2002).

Farming around South Molton remained much as it had been previously during the 18th and early 19th centuries, with pastoral farming being dominant and a certain amount of grass and cereal crops being grown (Edmunds 2002). The livestock markets in the town remained as an important part of the economy.

The principal trade and manufacture in the town during this period was in woollen goods including shalloons, serges and coarse woollen cloth. The manufacture of lace was also introduced during the 19th century. In 1851 there were 37 tailors and 10

tailors' apprentices employed in the clothing trade; 53 married women and 93 single women and girls were milliners or dressmakers. Most of this work took place in South and East Street as well as Broad Street. Wool serge was exported to Europe but during the second half of the 19th century the industry declined, unemployment was high and by the 1890s the woollen trade had died out because of competition from Yorkshire. In 1800 the first factory for spinning wool was opened alongside the river by Factory Row and continued working until 1888. It reopened in 1890 as a shirt and collar factory employing mainly women and was in operation until quite recently when part of it became a laundry (www.everythingexmoor.org.uk). Other industries in the town included a machine works, tanneries, maltsters, shoemakers, saddlers, cabinet makers and carpenters. The tannery in East Street is recorded in 1851 when the master tanner, William Gould Smyth, employed 28 men, 18 of whom lived in cottages close by (www.everythingexmoor.org.uk).

Another industry relating to the wider area during the 18th and 19th centuries and by which the town's economy was no doubt affected was metalliferous mining. South Molton Consols, also known as South Molton or Coombe Mine, lay to the east of Molland and was worked for silver and lead in 1849-54 as Coombe. It was reopened in 1874 by Coombe Molton Silver-lead Mining Co. and taken over in 1876 by South Molton Consols Mining Co. and worked by them until 1879. Rich iron-stone was also once mined near South Molton and the ore was sent annually from the neighbourhood of Wild Pear Bay near Combe Martin to a Mr Raby's iron-works at Llanelli in South Wales (Nix 1991).

However, during the second half of the 19th century it was becoming cheaper to import ores rather than produce them in England, which caused the closure of many mines in the area (Edmunds 2002). Cheap grain and meat was also being imported creating a depression in farming. This, together with the decline of the woollen industry was the cause of depression and unemployment in South Molton during the second half of the 19th century.

In 1723 South Molton became a post town which meant that the maintenance of the roads became necessary for the mail coach. There were also regular stage wagons which led to a gradually increasing amount of transport and improved state of the roads. It also led to the construction of more coaching inns on East Street, Broad Street and South Street. South Molton Turnpike Trust was established in 1839, which resulted in the building of New Road, Alswear New Road and another new road to North Molton. The Mole bridge was rebuilt after a storm destroyed the old bridge in 1841.

The opening of a railway line from Exeter to Barnstaple in 1854 placed South Molton Road Station nine miles away from the town, making it far too inconvenient for commercial use. The later opening of the Taunton to Barnstaple railway in 1873 with a more conveniently placed station just to the north of the town came too late to improve the situation at a time of commercial decline (Southwest Archaeology 2005).

3.6 Twentieth century expansion

During the 20th century South Molton expanded dramatically to approximately double its earlier size. The expansion began gradually during the first half of the century and increased at speed during the second half and into the 21st century. In 1974 the reorganisation of local government meant that South Molton lost its status as a borough and became part of North Devon District Council (Edmunds 2002).

In 1931 eight bungalow type cottages were built on a site adjoining the Alswear Road on the outskirts of the town (www.northdevonlink.co.uk). A cottage hospital was built on West Street in 1934 and the workhouse became an old people's home (Edmunds 2002). Mid 20th century expansion included a large housing development to the south of the town including the construction of a new secondary school, new housing developments along Poltimore Road and a housing development at Dean's Lane to the north-east. Later 20th century expansion included extensive housing developments, an industrial estate and a new hospital on the western side of town, new housing to the

east of New Road including the construction of a supermarket, a new livestock market, a car park and amenities to the west of New Road, the Winston Park development on the north side of town and an industrial estate (Pathfinders) outside the town to the north.

There were more buildings on the north side of the post office (old corn market) on Broad Street including Poole's Printing Works but these were demolished during the 20th century to allow access for increased traffic to and from Barnstaple.

During the 20th century non-conformity continued to be an active part of religion. In 1932 a new Methodist chapel was built in Duke Street and the congregation continued to flourish during the late 20th century. The Church of England also continued to flourish during the 20th century.

Although South Molton's woollen industry died out during the 19th century, its farming and livestock industry has survived as an important part of town's economy and livestock markets are still held regularly. Throughout the 20th century tourism was also an important part of the economy as a result of the introduction of the railway. In the 1920s tourism was the largest industry in the area. In the early 20th century banking expanded so that there were at least five banks in the town during the 1920s (Edmunds 2002).

Industry has been encouraged into the town in recent years by the development of industrial estates at the old railway station to the north of the town and Cook's Cross to the south.

Most of South Molton's present industries, including a chocolate-making factory, are located to the north of the town on the Pathfields Estate which is built on the site of the old railway station which was closed in the 1960s (www.everythingexmoor.org.uk). During the second half of the 20th century the town maintained its importance as a centre for local commerce, light industry and the tourist trade (Southwest Archaeology 2005).

During the first half of the 20th century the railways created a national market and also introduced tourism to South Molton. The railway continued in popularity until the 1950s when the motor car started to supersede it. The South Molton line was finally closed in 1966. Due to the increase in road traffic some streets in the town were widened during the mid 20th century. This led to the demolition of some buildings around the junction of West Street and North Street and also a row of shops in King Street, opposite the Kings Arms.

4 Historic Urban Character

General layout

South Molton has developed on high ground on the western side of the River Mole valley stemming from the church as its focal point which is located on a ridge of ground running east-west along the northern side of the town. The older parts of the town are laid out along both an east-west route and a north-south route crossing at the church and the main early development is focused on an L-shaped plan formed by East Street, Broad Street and South Street. Later expansion in all directions (although limited by steep slopes to the east) and infill has now created a sub-circular urban plan. Development along the riverside to the east has occurred outside the main part of the town and is part of a separate but early industrial focus.

Main historic routes

South Molton has a network of early routes leading into the town from all directions and linking it with a number of early settlements. During the Saxon period it seems likely that there was an east-west road passing to the north of the church (West Street into North Street and down to Mole Bridge) and also a north-south road (continuing northwards from the right-angle bend at Cook's Cross) to join North Road. Another likely Saxon route is Parsonage Lane which leads northwards from the church towards North Molton and into former Glebe lands. During the laying out of the borough in the 12th century the earlier east-west and north-south routes were diverted to create Broad Street and East Street and South Street. Another route which almost certainly dates to the laying out of the borough is Station Road. This created a new route from Exmoor and North Molton (replacing the earlier Parsonage Lane).

The main south-north route through the town is a link to Exeter to the south along Alswear Old Road, and Barnstaple and the coast to the north along North Road. The main east-west route leads from East Street eastwards across the River Mole to Bishop's Nympton and westwards from West Street and Nadder Lane to Great Torrington. Other early routes are George Nympton Road leading to George Nympton, Gunswell Lane and the B3226 to Clapworthy.

It is likely that Mill Street (continuing along Poltimore Road, formerly Mill Lane) and North Street were established during the post-medieval period since they appear on 18th century maps but are not primary medieval routes. During the first half of the 19th century New Road and Alswear New Road were built.

Development of plan-form

The plan of the town as it exists today is medieval in origin. The core of the town comprises a grid of streets, which developed over time around the site of the church and wide sub-triangular market place to the south of it (Broad Street). East Street, Broad Street, Barnstaple Street, South Street and Cook's Cross come together to form an L-shaped plan which was the focus for medieval settlement. Many of the long narrow medieval burgage plots set at right-angles to these roads are fossilised as property boundaries today. A separate focus during this period would have been the crossing point on the River Mole to the east of the town close to which corn mills would have been located.

Although the western half of North Street fossilises an earlier Saxon route, this road probably developed as a back lane for rear access to the burgage plots fronting East Street. Narrow passages giving access through to the backs of the burgage plots from the frontages on the main street are clearly a common feature and it appears that Duke Street may have begun as one of these passages.

During the post-medieval period settlement expanded gradually along the main developed streets. Settlement on East Street expanded eastwards towards the river and settlement on South Street and Cook's Cross expanded southwards. Open spaces immediately to the south and west of the church were gradually infilled with buildings

as was the market place (Broad Street). The infill in the centre of the market place caused the creation of King's Street and Queen's Street. Also during this period a secondary funnel-shaped market was created along the west end of North Street leading into West Street. The separate focus of industrial development along the riverside also continued.

In the 19th century an industrial suburb with associated settlement was created on the northern side of the town along West Street and North Street and North Road and there was also sporadic expansion along Mill Street to the south.

20th century expansion has been vast when compared with any other phase of development and during this time the town has doubled in size expanding in all directions to fulfil needs for more and more housing.

4.1 Exeter Gate (HUCA 1)

4.1.1 Historic character

HUCA 1 is an area of 20th century urban expansion on the south side of the town, either side of George Nympton Road leading southwards from the historic turnpike at Exeter Gate. Its eastern extent is Alswear Old Road and north-western extent is the B3226. It lies on land that slopes down to the north-west. Key views are over 20th century development to the north and east and farmland to the west and south.

Until the 20th century HUCA 1 was almost totally undeveloped farmland shaped by medieval strip fields with one or two buildings at its northern point between George Nympton Road and Alswear Old Road shown on the c1840 Tithe Map and a few field barn scattered elsewhere. A building at the northern point was almost certainly the Exeter Gate Toll House. A pattern of east-west orientated strip fields occupied the block of land between George Nympton Road and Alswear Old Road, and fields derived from north-south orientated strip fields occupied the western block of land between George Nympton Road and the B3226.

In the early to mid 20th century the Exeter Gate and Buckingham Close housing developments were completed.

During the late 20th century Tower Park and Meadow Park housing developments were added and in more recent years Howards Close and Stoats Close were constructed to the south.

Although the housing developments are for the most part nondescript bungalows and houses with little evidence of a cohesive or locally specific design code there is a low density with green space and mature planting.

The majority of 20th century housing has been laid out with respect to the medieval strip field boundaries, hedges and roads which historically defined this area. Alswear Old Road in particular retains its character of a deeply embanked lane.

4.1.2 Above ground heritage significance

Low - HUCA 1 is an area of 20th century development, with a largely modern plan-form, but some historical time depth retaining its historic road layout and remnants of its earlier rural use. In the western half of the area there are fairly densely distributed bungalows and in the eastern part of the area a slight less uniform mix of bungalows and houses with larger green spaces. The structures have minimal architectural impact.

4.1.3 Below ground heritage significance

Low - The whole area has been built on during the 20th century. The following types of buried remains may survive in pockets of undisturbed ground.

- Medieval and post-medieval – field boundaries, field barns and buildings
- Prehistoric remains

4.2 South Molton western expansion (HUCA 2)

4.2.1 Historic character

HUCA 2 is an area of late 20th – early 21st century urban expansion on the west side of the town, extending from Gunswell Lane to the north and the B3226 to the south. The area occupies a shallow valley aligned east-west which slopes upwards from a stream in the centre to the north and also to the south. It lies on land that slopes down to the north-west. Key views are over 20th century development to the north and south and historic farmland to the west.

South Molton western expansion (HUCA 2)



Looking south from Nadder Lane along Raleigh Park



Looking north from Nadder Lane to Kingdom Avenue

Until the late 20th century HUCA 2 was undeveloped farmland with a few scattered field barns shown on the c1840 Tithe Map and c1880 OS map. A lane (Deep Lane) is also shown on these maps in the southern part of the area. A pattern of north-south orientated strip fields occupied most of the area but to the east remnants of the rear parts of tenement plots are shown on the c1840 Tithe Map and c1880 OS map. These may represent early plots pre-dating the laying out of the borough that were associated with the earlier north-south route later replaced by South Street.

During the second half of the 20th century several housing developments were completed including West Park, Marlins Close, Raleigh Park, Parklands and Churchill Crescent along with a small industrial estate to the south-west of Cook's Cross at Horsepond Meadow. These were followed in the late 20th/early 21st century by the construction of further housing developments including Kingdom Avenue, Jury Park, Nadder Meadow, Widgery Drive, Thornes Terrace, Hares Green, Raleigh Mead, Raleigh Close, Livarot Walk, Normandy Way, Oak Meadow, Whitehall Close, Paramore Way and Parklands Close. Also associated with the construction of Widgery Drive is South Molton Community Hospital.

Much of the developed land within this area has been laid out with respect to the former medieval strip field boundaries.

4.2.2 Above ground heritage significance

Low - HUCA 2 is an area of 20th and 21st century development, with a partially modern plan-form, but some historical time depth and surviving remnants of former field boundaries. There is dense terraced housing and an industrial area with large sheds in the southern part of the area with more detached houses and bungalows (but still densely distributed) and a hospital in the northern part. Throughout standard housing types and designs are used with occasional open spaces. The hospital within the northern half of the area is a large low pitched roof structure with minimal architectural

or townscape impact. The area lacks a clear street layout and although there is no coherent development pattern, there are some hints where former boundaries have been followed.

4.2.3 Below ground heritage significance

Low - The whole area has been built on during the 20th century. The following types of buried remains may survive in pockets of undisturbed ground.

- Medieval, post-medieval and 19th century – field boundaries, field barns and buildings
- Early medieval and Medieval - tenement plots to the east, road, burgage plot boundaries, buildings and associated features, occupation material, industrial activity, wells
- Prehistoric remains

4.3 Mill on the Mole park homes (HUCA 3)

4.3.1 Historic character

HUCA 3 is a residential park home development established during the second half of the 20th century. It is located on the eastern outskirts of town immediately south-east of Mole Bridge on the south side of the B3227 either side of Ham Lane. It lies on a level area of land next to the River Mole and has views out to historic farmland in all directions.

Mill on the Mole Park Homes (HUCA 3)



Looking south-east from the B3227

Until the late 20th century HUCA 3 consisted of undeveloped post-medieval meadows adjoining the site of Mole Mills (corn mill) and a leat to the west. There was a lane (Ham Lane) running through the area from north to south which still survives within the park homes development and a stream cutting across from north-east to south-west.

4.3.2 Above ground heritage significance

Low - HUCA 3 is an area of late 20th century development of typical park homes form, with a largely modern plan form, but some historical time depth in the form of its boundaries and surviving historic lane.

4.3.3 Below ground heritage significance

Medium – There is potential for below ground remains associated with activity outside the main urban centre of South Molton. Although the whole area has been occupied by park homes during the late 20th century the below-ground impact is not as destructive as standard housing. The following types of buried remains may survive in pockets of undisturbed ground.

- Medieval, post-medieval and 19th century– field boundaries, field barns, buildings and structures associated with mills
- Prehistoric remains

4.4 South Molton southern expansion (HUCA 4)

4.4.1 Historic character

HUCA 4 is an area of early and mid 20th century urban expansion on the south side of the town, to the east of South Street and Alswear Old Road and south of Mill Street. It includes a terrace of houses named Artisan's Dwellings on Mill Street dated 1914, Kingsway, a 1950s housing estate to the north, and South Molton Community College (also built in the early 1950s) to the south. Both developments have been added to during the second half of the 20th century which includes the construction of Williamson Way.

South Molton southern expansion (HUCA 4)



HUCA 4, looking south-east along Kingsway

The area lies on land that gently slopes down to the north. Key views are over the historic parts of the town to the north and north-west, the cemetery to the east, modern housing to the south-west and historic farmland to the south and south-east.

Until the mid 20th century HUCA 4 was almost totally undeveloped medieval farmland with one house on its northern side fronting Mill Street and a few field barns (linhays) along the boundary which now separates the housing estate from the school shown on the c1840 Tithe Map and c1880 OS map. A pattern of north-south orientated strip fields occupied most of the area except at the southern edge where the strips are aligned east-west.

Some of the developed plots have been laid out with respect to the medieval strip field boundaries which historically defined this area, whilst others have been entirely lost.

4.4.2 Above ground heritage significance

Medium - HUCA 4 is an area of early and mid 20th century development, with a largely modern plan-form, but some historical time depth and surviving remnants of its earlier rural use. The area contains low density short terrace blocks set within generous gardens in the northern half with a school in the southern half. At the northern end of the area there are denser red brick terraces which also appear on Mill Street. The original 1950s Modernist style block of the school with its canted wings still survives, set in generous landscape grounds, although now surrounded by a series of later System-built blocks.

4.4.3 Below ground heritage significance

Low - The whole area has been built on during the 20th century. The following types of buried remains may survive in pockets of undisturbed ground particularly in large areas of undisturbed ground around the Community College.

- Medieval and post-medieval and 19th century- field boundaries and field barns
- Prehistoric remains

4.5 Mill Street and Poltimore Road (HUCA 5)

4.5.1 Historic character

HUCA 5 is an area now dominated by 19th and early 20th century urban expansion on the south side of the town, to the south of Mill Street and along Poltimore Road. It includes South Molton Cemetery to the west, a variety of early 20th century housing developments dating from the 1930s and an area of undeveloped land to the south-west. The area lies on land that gently slopes down to the north-east. Key views are downhill to the river mole to the east and across historic farmland to the south and east.

Until the late 19th century HUCA 5 was largely undeveloped farmland apart from a few wayside cottages and barns fronting Mill Lane (now Mill Street and Poltimore Road) and a toll house on the corner of Alswear New Road along with one or two field barns/linhays in the fields to the south. The historic roads in the area shown on the c1840 Tithe map include Mill Lane, New Road, Alswear New Road and Tucking Mill Lane. A pattern of north-south orientated strip fields occupied most of the area.

In the late 19th century South Molton Cemetery was established in the western part of the area along with its two chapels and in the early 20th century (between the 1930s and 1950s) terraces and housing estates were added along Mill Street, Poltimore Road, Aclands, Gwythers, Oakhays and Poltimore Close. In the late 20th century housing at Meadow Croft was added.

Most of the developed plots have been laid out with respect to the medieval strip field boundaries aligned at right-angles to Mill Street and Poltimore Road which historically defined this area. A few of the earlier buildings shown on the c1840 Tithe Map still survive. Much of the undeveloped land in the south of the area remains as it was in the 19th century although a few field boundaries have been removed. This area is part of the town setting rather than part of the urban area.

4.5.2 Above ground heritage significance

Medium - HUCA 5 occupies the edge of the built up area, where open spaces still prevail. It is an area of 19th and early 20th century development, with surviving historical time depth and surviving remnants of its earlier rural use. Architectural and social interest is evident in the cemetery with its chapels, lodge and tombs. The mid 19th century Italianate toll house and the extremely attractive early 20th century Old English/Arts and Crafts almshouses (a curving single storey rendered and slate range with tall Tudor-style brick chimneys set in mature gardens) are elements of architectural merit.

4.5.3 Below ground heritage significance

High - the southern part of HUCA 5 has not been developed and a rectilinear cropmark enclosure has been identified on the HER (MDV29582). The following types of buried remains may survive, particularly in large areas of undisturbed ground to the south.

- Medieval, post-medieval and 19th century – field boundaries and field barns
- Prehistoric - enclosure and associated remains

4.6 River Mole, farmland and mills (HUCA 6)

4.6.1 Historic character

HUCA 6 is an area of largely undeveloped land on the east side of the town occupying the western slope of the Mole valley and the slopes either side of a small stream called 'Oliver's Gutter' running from west to east into the River Mole from the backs of the plots on the south side of East Street. Development within the area is largely limited to industrial buildings and structures along the banks of the Mole and a toll house to the east of the bridge. The area includes farmland, allotments, mills and a sewage works. It lies on land that slopes quite steeply down to the east. Key views are to the River Mole and surrounding farmland in all directions and also to the eastern side of the town including the historic eastern approach route.

HUCA 6 has remained relatively unchanged throughout the town's history. It has maintained its historic character and fulfils the role of the town's important historic link with the surrounding countryside. There has been a River crossing at Mole Bridge from an early date and mills along the river since the medieval period through to the 20th century. East Street leading from the river to the market place was established as part of the borough in the 12th century and Poltimore Road (formerly Mill Lane) is likely to have early post-medieval origins. Apart from development along the riverside the rest of the area has remained as farmland and water meadows except to the west where an allotment has been established in recent years. A pattern of north-south orientated strip fields once occupied most of the area running at right-angles to East Street and Poltimore Road. A few of the boundaries remain *in situ* but many have since been removed.

In the late 19th century the large former corn mill (now apartments) on the east side of the river (in the parish of Bishop's Nympton) to the south of the road was built, replacing an earlier building as part of Mole Mills. The large mill complex including workers' housing to the west of the river on the north side of the road is Mole Mills woollen factory which is shown on the c1840 Tithe map. To the rear (north) of this large mill building there is a former shirt and collar factory. By c1880 a gasometer had been installed to the south of the former corn mill on the east side of the river and during the first half of the 20th century a sewage disposal works was constructed on the west side of the river to the south of the bridge.

The historic character of HUCA 6 has remained remarkably intact since the 18th or 19th century when large scale mills were introduced. The medieval strip-derived fields which historically defined much of this area are aligned at right-angles to East Street and Poltimore Road. The early mills and industrial buildings shown on the c1840 Tithe Map and c1880 OS map still survive and maintain the historic industrial character of the riverside. The undeveloped land making up most of the area remains as it was in the 19th century although a few field boundaries have been removed.

River Mole farmland and fields (HUCA 6)



Looking north from East Street to Factory Row and mill



Looking north to former woollen mill



Looking east over Mole Bridge



Looking south from east side of bridge to former mill building



Looking north-west to Mole Bridge



Looking south-west from Mole Bridge

4.6.2 Above ground heritage significance

High - HUCA 6 is an area of both historic farmland and historic industrial activity, with surviving historical time depth and surviving remnants of its earlier rural use. It is essentially a rural landscape within a valley. In the valley bottom are the substantial three to four storey stone-built mill buildings on either side of the river with attendant cottages, outbuildings and parking areas. Although these buildings are important to the history of the town their character and built form are entirely consistent with their rural setting. The current bridge on the historic site was rebuilt after it was destroyed y a

storm in 1841. On the west side of the area the fields turn into allotments along the southern side of the valley where it merges into the edge of the town.

4.6.3 Below ground heritage significance

Medium - Much of the area has not been developed and the riverside is the site of historic mill complexes and river crossings. The following types of buried remains may survive.

- 19th and 20th century industrial sites
- Medieval and post-medieval – field boundaries, field barns, mill sites with associated features, other industrial sites and river crossings
- Prehistoric remains

4.7 New Road infill (HUCA 7)

4.7.1 Historic character

HUCA 7 is an area now dominated by late 20th century urban infill to the south of East Street and east of New Road on the east side of the town. It includes late 20th century housing estates and a supermarket. The area is topographically divided in two by 'Oliver's Gutter' a small stream that runs from west to east down to the River Mole. The land to the north of the stream slopes down to the south-east and the land to the south of the stream slopes down to the north-east. Key views are downhill to the river mole to the east across historic farmland.

New Road infill (HUCA 7)



Looking north-west from Dart Park

Until the late 20th century most of HUCA 7 was undeveloped medieval strip-derived farmland orientated north-south and containing one or two field barns/linhays. The northern part of the HUCA (to the north of Oliver's Gutter), however, formed the rear of the medieval burgage plots and post-medieval expansion plots fronting East Street. There are no major historic roads within the area although New Road was constructed during the early 19th century and there is small 19th century lane at the northernmost point.

In the late 20th century Dart Park housing estate was established followed by The Gavel, Oakwood Court and Brook Meadow.

Most of the developed plots have been laid out with respect to the medieval strip-derived field boundaries orientated north-south although most of the historic character has been lost.

4.7.2 Above ground heritage significance

Low - HUCA 7 is mostly an area of late 20th century development, with surviving remnants of earlier boundaries. The supermarket and area around it show traces of mid 20th century industrial use. The rest of the area is modern housing with red brick used in the southern half and rendered housing in the northern half.

4.7.3 Below ground heritage significance

Low - All the land in HUCA 7 has been developed. The following types of buried remains may survive, in pockets of undisturbed ground. The most sensitive area being to the north of 'Oliver's Gutter' in areas of former burgage plots.

- Medieval and post-medieval – field boundaries, field barns, paths, burgage plot boundaries, buildings and associated features, occupation material, industrial activity, wells
- Prehistoric remains

4.8 Central infill (HUCA 8)

4.8.1 Historic character

HUCA 8 is an area now dominated by late 20th century urban infill with one or two surviving earlier buildings. It is located to the south of East Street and east of South Street in the centre of town. It includes 20th century cattle and sheep markets, car parks, a leisure centre and a recycling centre. The area lies at the top of a shallow valley associated with 'Oliver's Gutter' further to the east and forms a shallow bowl dropping down from the backs of the burgage plots on East Street. Key views are onto Mill Street and the backs of the properties along East Street and South Street.

Central infill (HUCA 8)



Looking south-east from Southley Road to livestock market

From the medieval period through to the 19th century the northern part of HUCA 8 was occupied by the rear of the burgage plots fronting East Street and the southern part of the area was occupied by medieval strip fields. These two areas were divided by an

east-west boundary continuing from the line of Oliver's Gutter further to the east. The c1840 Tithe map indicates that by the early 19th century little had changed but shows a few barns and linhays fronting Mill Street. The c1880 OS map shows little change again, except that a Temperance Hall and soup kitchen had been built fronting New Road. During the first half of the 20th century a recreation ground had been established to the south-east and two buildings associated with a livestock market had been constructed to the north-east with one or two other buildings also constructed elsewhere in the area. During the second half of the 20th century the area underwent radical change; a large car park was created in the central space with the recreation ground (Central Park) to the south-east along with the leisure centre (including swimming pool), a large livestock market was built to the north-east and several other buildings were constructed. Despite large scale alteration of the southern and central part of this HUCA northern parts of the area within the medieval burgrave plots were only altered in as much as they changed use from gardens and yards to car parking areas. Many historic boundary walls dividing the plots still survive.

The former medieval strip-derived field boundaries in the southern part of the area have been lost but one of the early 19th century field barns survives fronting Mill Street in the south-west part of the area.

4.8.2 Above ground heritage significance

Medium - HUCA 8 is an area in the centre of town dominated by late 20th century infill, but with some surviving burgrave plot boundaries and a few surviving 19th and early 20th century buildings. The overriding character of this area is a bleak open space lacking definition or landscape character, largely given over to car parks. The underlying historic layout has gone along with the stream (Oliver's Gutter) and the southern ends of the burgrave plots fronting East Street and Broad Street. However, enough is known of the underlying structure to inform future development and help to reinstate the historic character. The cattle and sheep market performs an important role within the town but needn't have such a downgraded appearance and surroundings in order to do so. The leisure centre both as building complex and open space, whilst functional, has limited townscape merit or architectural significance. The recycling area comprises small concrete buildings of no architectural merit.

4.8.3 Below ground heritage significance

High - HUCA 8 occupies an area in the centre of town partially within medieval burgrave plots and the majority of the area has not undergone any major below-ground disturbance. The following types of buried remains may survive.

- Medieval, post-medieval and 19th century – field boundaries, field barns, paths, burgrave plot boundaries, buildings and associated features, occupation material, industrial activity, wells
- Prehistoric remains

4.9 Town centre (HUCA 9)

4.9.1 Historic character

HUCA 9 covers the eastern part of the present and historic commercial core of South Molton, which is located on relatively level ground. It includes the church and historic market place. The area encompasses the likely site of a Saxon Minster (collegiate church) within the site of the present church, churchyard and surrounding buildings. It also includes an east-west route which pre-dates the establishment of the medieval borough along the line of North Street possibly cutting across to East Street and may include Saxon settlement.

Town centre (HUCA 9)



Looking west to Broad Street



Former burgage plot to the south of East Street



The Guildhall and Market Hall on Broad Street



St Mary Magdalene church on site of Saxon Minster



Buildings on island in Broad Street



Buildings on island in Broad Street

When the town was laid out as a borough in the 12th century the present layout was devised with East Street and South Street forming the main routes into town, both meeting at the church and market place which occupied Broad Street and East Street. This area became the heart of the medieval town.

Although the open medieval market place was subsequently in-filled at the west end, it was located within the present King Street, Queen Street and Broad Street and formed a wide open space to the south of the church continuing out along East Street to the junction with Station Road.

The siting of a grand guildhall here in the post-medieval period to the south of a medieval market cross and a later market hall and corn market (now the Post Office sorting office), confirms this as the historic trading centre of the town.

Although the medieval fabric of the houses, shops, inns and public buildings fronting East Street, Broad Street and South Street has in the most part been replaced by post-medieval and later remodelling and rebuilding, all the properties are associated with surviving former medieval burghage plots running back at right angles to the road.

The streets in HUCA 9 are now mainly lined with 18th and 19th century buildings, with some earlier structures and fabric surviving, including the Rose and Crown on South Street which has a surviving medieval interior, Chapel House in the churchyard originally built in the 15th century, Falcon House on Church Street which has surviving 16th century roof timbers and Northam House on East Street which has 17th century elements. New Road was built in the early 19th century and retains much of its original 19th century character with the major buildings of this date surviving such as the Temperance Hall, Masonic Hall, Baptist Church and former school infants' school.

The buildings have a mixture of domestic, commercial, social, religious and civic use with a concentration of larger establishments (the imposing guildhall and market house, together with banks, post office, inns/hotels) in Broad Street.

The present church (dating to the 15th century) and churchyard together with inward looking surrounding buildings maintain the character of an early medieval Minster which would have been laid out to incorporate a selection of buildings within a precinct set around the church.

HUCA 9 has retained much of its medieval plan and historic character. It has views along the streets within it and views from the rear of the burghage plots onto North Street to the north and to the car park and livestock markets to the south of East Street and East of South Street.

4.9.2 Above ground heritage significance

High – HUCA 9 is located on early medieval routes, containing an early medieval collegiate church and possibly settlement, and part of the commercial core of South Molton since the town became a borough in the 12th century, with good survival of its medieval plan-form and relatively intact post-medieval and later historic fabric.

The area can be split in two with the west end becoming the defined market area during the post-medieval period. This is a large well-defined space where the main civic buildings are concentrated. Much of the south side of the market area is relatively unified early 18th century streetscape of three-storey stucco and brick buildings, possibly all built as part of a town remodelling scheme. In contrast, the north side of the street is more mixed in terms of date, height and plot size but still indicative of the commercial core. The post-medieval market space is framed at either end by semi-public buildings- the corn market and medical hall. Emphasising the semi-formal layout of this space (opposite the town hall) is the grand gateway to the churchyard.

The west end of the market area is closed off by the corn market and to the south of this a boldly detailed, white brick, 19th century commercial building that turns the corner to South Street. The area to the west and north of these buildings shows an

immediate change in character. Historic fires and road improvement have altered the street pattern here, but this is still a network of narrow streets with a wide variety of two and three-storey buildings of variable height and plot width and, despite an overall appearance of render and Victorian detailing are of variable date as well.

To the east of the medical hall on Broad Street the buildings become largely two-storey, although many now have 19th century features such as shop fronts and first floor canted bays; many clearly have older fabric behind the frontages, with the exception of the late 19th century tall ornate brick and stone Lloyds Bank building. In the eastern half of the HUCA although there are still one or two commercial premises there are increasingly more domestic two-storey buildings which are rendered with slate roofs. These also have 19th century frontages hiding earlier fabric. Unlike other Devon towns the principal frontages in South Molton are continuous and Duke Street offers a rare chance to view the back elevations, building plots, outbuildings and walls.

The church is a major monument and stands to one side of the commercial core which reflects its origin as a minster with its own ecclesiastical precinct. The narrow alleyways to the church lead to a space more akin to a cathedral precinct with sunken stone-lined pathways through the graveyard and a variety of buildings looking into this area including a converted early chapel, some good quality 18th century houses and a 19th century chapel. The north side of the church enclosure has lost some definition through the removal of historic buildings. The roads (Duke Street, North Street and Parsonage Lane) indicate possible realignment around an existing precinct enclosure.

4.9.3 Below ground heritage significance

High - HUCA 9 has high archaeological potential. The following key types of remains are likely to be uncovered during ground works.

- Early medieval – church and associated buildings and precinct, settlement activity, trackways, field boundaries, artefacts
- Medieval – church and associated buildings and precinct, market place, streets and paths, burgage plot boundaries, dwellings and associated features, other buildings, occupation material, industrial activity, wells
- Post-medieval and later – streets & paths, houses, shops & other buildings, cellars, boundary walls, wells, leats and drains, industrial structures & debris, domestic occupation material and non-domestic artefacts

4.10 The west end (HUCA 10)

4.10.1 Historic character

HUCA 10 covers the western part of the present and historic commercial core of South Molton and historic extents of the town to the north, west and south. It is located on ground which slopes gently from the north down to the south along South Street and Cook's Cross.

HUCA 10 includes a north-south route which pre-dates the establishment of the medieval borough leading northwards from the right-angled bend in Cook's Cross to meet North Road and also includes the western part an early medieval east-west route along West Street. The area may include Saxon settlement. When the town was laid out as a borough in the 12th century the present layout was devised with East Street and South Street forming the main routes into town, both meeting at the former market place which occupied Broad Street. This area became the heart of the medieval town. West Street continued to be used throughout the medieval period for access from the west and Cook's Cross also continued in use as a route from the south.

Although the medieval fabric of the houses, shops, inns and public buildings fronting the streets has in the most part been replaced by post-medieval and later remodelling

and rebuilding, many of the properties are associated with surviving former medieval burghage plots running back at right angles to the roads.

The west end (HUCA 10)



Cook's Cross looking north



South Street looking north



South Street looking south-west



West Street looking east



North Road looking south-east



South Molton United Junior School

The streets in HUCA 10 all have medieval or earlier origins but are now mainly lined with 18th and 19th century buildings, with some earlier fabric surviving.

The buildings have a mixture of domestic, commercial, social, religious and civic use but are generally of lower status and not as impressive as those located on Broad Street and East Street. The area also appears to have a more industrial nature with

workshops and warehouses scattered amongst houses and shops. These include a coachbuilder's yard and workshop and a brick and timber yard on South Street, a blacksmith's workshop on North Road and a corn merchant's warehouse on Barnstaple Street. West Street and Cook's Cross are more domestic in their nature but generally fit the character of the rest of the area. Some of the buildings of note within the area are the United Junior School on the corner of North Road and North Street, an 18th century toll house at Cook's Cross and the former Cottage Hospital on West Street.

HUCA 10 has retained much of its medieval plan and historic character. It has views along the streets within it and views from the rear of the burgage plots on South Street across the modern expansion to the west.

4.10.2 Above ground heritage significance

High – HUCA 10 is located on early medieval routes and is part of the commercial core of South Molton since the town became a borough in the 12th century, with good survival of its medieval plan-form and relatively intact post-medieval and later historic fabric.

The southern end of this area including Cook's Cross and the southern end of South Street is typified by houses interspersed with workshops, with larger houses and green spaces further to the south. South Street is typified by artisan housing towards the south end of the street with occasional grander houses and coaching inns. They are by and large, two-storey, rendered and have been built piecemeal and are difficult to date. There are individual buildings, usually of mid to late 19th century which are taller and ornate and add interest and variety to the street scene (a prime example is the red brick 19th century police station- No. 18). There are no open or green spaces and this area is clearly part of the town core.

Towards the north end of South Street there are increasing shop frontages rather than mixed workshops and housing which are found further to the south of the area. In South Street and Queen Street there are a large number of coaching inns, many of which are still pubs. These are indications of a trading area. Leading into Barnstaple Street in the northern part of the area, the workshops and housing of an industrial area spread right into the town. Here there are large three to four-storey commercial/manufacturing buildings. The townscape around the junction of Barnstaple Street, West Street and North Street has been altered by road improvement and is dominated the large and once fine 19th century school complex. There appears to have been considerable 19th century rebuilding in this area. West Street is a mix of two-storey houses and workshops of 17th 18th and 19th century date - largely stucco with slate roofs and occasional red brick houses. There is evidence of the 19th century redevelopment of a post-medieval funnel-shaped secondary market area at the east end which probably extended into North Street. The west end of West Street peters out into 19th century ribbon development housing and early/mid 20th century Cottage Hospital and terraced housing. West Street gives a sense of entering the town to meet the church, but is taken away from by the modern road layout where it meets the junction of North Street, Barnstaple Street and North Road. Gunswell Lane itself retains its historic character and the housing appears to have been added piecemeal with large houses and green spaces.

4.10.3 Below ground heritage significance

High - The following key types of remains are likely to be uncovered during ground works.

- Early medieval – settlement activity, trackways, field boundaries, artefacts
- Medieval – market place, streets and paths, burgage plot boundaries, dwellings and associated features, other buildings, occupation material, industrial activity, wells

- Post-medieval and later – streets & paths, houses, shops & other buildings, cellars, boundary walls, wells, leats and drains, industrial structures & debris, domestic occupation material and non-domestic artefacts

4.11 North Road and Gunswell Lane (HUCA 11)

4.11.1 Historic character

HUCA 11 is an area of 19th and 20th century expansion on the north-west side of the town and also of medieval strip-derived fields. It includes a 19th century workhouse, a 19th century reservoir and 20th century housing and commercial and civic buildings. The area is located on the top of a hill (to the north) and its gentle south facing slope. Key views are across medieval farmland to the west, along Gunswell Lane and along North Road.

North Road and Gunswell Lane (HUCA 11)



Looking north-east to former workhouse

Until the 19th century HUCA 11 was undeveloped medieval strip-derived fields orientated north-south in the western half and east-west in the eastern half and containing one or two field barns/linhays. The workhouse and reservoir remained external to the town and set within fields until the 20th century when the open land between the workhouse and the town was infilled by development. North Road represents a north-south route which pre-dates the establishment of the medieval borough in the 12th century and Gunswell Lane is likely to be at least post-medieval in date.

In the early 20th century a couple of houses were built in the western part of the area fronting Gunswell Lane but it was in the late 20th century that most of the area was developed and included a new police station. The north-western part of the area remains undeveloped.

Within the developed land much of the historic character has been lost, but the main historic focus is the surviving workhouse.

4.11.2 Above ground heritage significance

Medium - HUCA 11 is an area of 19th and early 20th century development, with surviving historical time depth and surviving remnants of its earlier rural use. It has

medium heritage significance due to its 19th century workhouse and reservoir and farm building, surviving medieval and post-medieval boundaries.

Gunswell Lane itself retains its historic character. To the north of this is an area containing modern civic and commercial buildings and what appears to be a 19th century farm building surrounded by open spaces. The former workhouse setting is now too much given over to tarmac surfaces. The principle entrance block remains as an impressive, simple, classical frontage. The heritage value lies in the 19th century buildings (workhouse and farm building). North Street has large verges on the western side due to highway engineering.

4.11.3 Below ground heritage significance

High- The north-west part of the area has not been developed and a rectilinear cropmark enclosure has been identified on the HER (MDV16910) immediately to the north. The following types of buried remains may survive, particularly in large areas of undisturbed ground to the north-west.

- Medieval and post-medieval – field boundaries, field barns
- Prehistoric - enclosure and associated remains

4.12 Winston Park development (HUCA 12)

4.12.1 Historic character

HUCA 12 is an area now dominated by 20th century urban expansion on the north side of the town, between North Road and Parsonage Lane. It includes a 19th century gasworks to the east, Winston Park housing estate built in the second half of the 20th century to the north and later 20th century housing and a fire station to the south. The southern part of the area lies on the top of a ridge of land that slopes down fairly steeply to the north and east. Key views are to the Vicarage (former Parsonage) to the north, farmland and 19th century housing to the east and along Parsonage Lane, North Street and North Road.

Winston Park development (HUCA 12)



Looking north-east along North Road

Until the second half of the 20th century HUCA 12 was largely undeveloped medieval farmland apart from a 19th century gasworks fronting Parsonage Lane to the east and one or two field barns/linhays in the fields elsewhere. The historic roads in the area include Parsonage Lane which pre-dates the establishment of the medieval borough

created in the 12th century. This lane now leads from the church to the Vicarage (former Parsonage) and the Glebe lands where there are earthworks marked on the HER (MDV759 and MDV51831) just to the north of the area. It is possible that these earthworks, which appear to include building platforms, are the remains of Saxon settlement. Other historic roads bordering the area are also early routes and include North Road and North Street.

In 1836 South Molton Gasworks was built to the east of Parsonage Lane. The works was still in use during the second half of the 20th century when Winston Park was constructed. In the late 20th century Mole Ridge Way and Exmoor View housing estates were added along with the fire station fronting North Street.

Most of the developed plots have been laid out with respect to the earlier fields boundaries aligned at right-angles to North Street. The gasworks was demolished during the second half of the 20th century leaving one 19th century house associated with it on the bend of the road in Parsonage Lane.

4.12.2 Above ground heritage significance

Low - HUCA 12 is an area of early 19th and late 20th century development, with little surviving historical time depth but some surviving remnants of its earlier rural use.

Little of the historic character of this area remains, apart from the line of Parsonage Lane (although for much of its length it has lost its enclosing hedges) and the small building associated with the gasworks. The form of the land has been given over to a scattered housing estate of standard house types and communal open spaces.

4.12.3 Below ground heritage significance

Low - HUCA 12 has low archaeological potential because of the way it has been developed during the 20th century including loss of hedges and grading of slopes. However, the undeveloped area immediately to the north has **high** potential for archaeological features (although unrelated to the town core) due to the survival of earthworks identified on the HER which may represent early settlement remains. The following types of buried remains may survive in pockets of undisturbed ground within the developed area.

- Early medieval - settlement, trackways, field boundaries, artefacts
- Medieval and post-medieval – field boundaries, field barns, buildings fronting North Street and Parsonage Lane
- Prehistoric remains

4.13 North Street expansion (HUCA 13)

4.13.1 Historic character

HUCA 13 is an area dominated by 19th century urban development on the north side of the town, to the north of North Street. There are also possibly remnants of 18th century development along Parsonage Lane and the western part of North Street. The area includes South Molton Methodist Chapel to the south-west, a variety of early and late 19th century housing, a smithy and a rope works and early and late 20th century development. It also includes an area of undeveloped land to the north. The area lies on land that slopes quite steeply down to the north from the top of a ridge along North Street. Key views are to historic farmland to the north and east, to Winston Park housing estate to the west and along North Street and Parsonage Lane.

This area is likely to have first been developed from medieval strip fields (aligned north-south) during the post-medieval period along the western part of North Street and southern part of Parsonage Lane. During the 19th century development expanded from the south-west corner of the area along North Street to the east and along Parsonage Lane to the north. Until the 20th century the medieval farmland to the rear of

the developed roadside plots remained undeveloped. During the 20th century some of this farmland was developed behind the existing properties but much of the land to the north-east remains undeveloped.

North Street expansion (HUCA 13)



North Street looking west



North Street looking east



East end of North Street looking west



Factory building at east end of North Street

One or two field barns/linhays are shown in the fields on the 19th century maps. The historic roads in the area include Parsonage Lane which pre-dates the establishment of the medieval borough. This lane now leads from the church to the Vicarage (former Parsonage) and the Glebe lands where there are earthworks marked on the HER (MDV759) and (MDV51831) to the north-west of the area. It is possible that these earthworks, which appear to include building platforms, are the remains of Saxon settlement. Other historic roads bordering the area are also early routes and include North Street and Station Road.

In the early 19th century Albert Place was constructed along with a smithy, a rope works and other housing. In the late 19th century South Molton Methodist Church was

built on the site of an earlier chapel and school in the south-west corner of the area and in the early and late 20th century other buildings were added to the rear of the plots and an agricultural merchant's built on the corner of North-Street to the south-east.

Many of the developed plots have been laid out with respect to the former medieval strip fields boundaries aligned at right-angles to North Street. The majority of the 19th century buildings remain *in situ*. The undeveloped land in the north of the area remains as it was in the 19th century (as shown on the c1840 Tithe map).

4.13.2 Above ground heritage significance

High - HUCA 13 is an area of 19th and 20th century development, with surviving historical time depth and surviving remnants of its earlier rural use. It has high heritage significance due to its intact 19th buildings, surviving medieval and post-medieval boundaries and potential early sites.

This area should be seen as linked to the general redevelopment of the north side of town (see West Street and Barnstaple Street HUCA 10) in the mid to late 19th century with a variety of often large-scale and ornate community and commercial uses set amongst workers' housing, almost like a 19th century industrial suburb. The Methodist Chapel and adjoining school stand out as architecturally dominant and significant. The richness of the treatment of the chapel must have been a clear statement so close to the church. On the north side of North Street there are frontages which show the piecemeal development of different dates, but on the south side there is gable-fronted infill and outbuildings in the burgage back plots associated with East Street. In essence this has preserved the back lane boundary of the medieval town. At the east end of North Street is a particularly significant grouping of factory, workers' housing and managers' house. There are also one or two modern houses to the east of the area with gardens and open spaces. In the western part of the area there is a large modern industrial site.

4.13.3 Below ground heritage significance

High - This area lies immediately outside the boundary of the medieval town but may encompass areas of former Saxon settlement. The northern part of the area has not been developed and earthworks possibly associated with early settlement exist to the north. The following types of buried remains may survive.

- Early medieval - settlement, trackways, field boundaries, artefacts
- Medieval - field boundaries, field barns
- Post-medieval and 19th century - streets & paths, houses, shops & other buildings, cellars, boundary walls, wells, leats and drains, industrial structures & debris, domestic occupation material and non-domestic artefacts
- Prehistoric remains

4.14 Dean's Lane expansion (HUCA 14)

4.14.1 Historic character

HUCA 14 is an area of mid 20th century urban expansion on the north-east side of the town, to the east of Station Road and north of East Street. It comprises a housing estate set along Hugh Squire Avenue and Dean's Lane. The area lies on a more or less flat hill top. Key views are across farmland to the north and east, and historic parts of the town to the south and west.

Until the mid 20th century the northern part of HUCA 14 was undeveloped farmland and the southern part incorporated some of the backs of the post-medieval urban plots fronting East Street. Prior to development, the northern part of the area was made up of two adjoining square fields named Deane's Ground on the Tithe Apportionment. These two fields are associated with Dean's Lane which is shown on the Hacche map of

c1700 and has now been incorporated within the housing estate. The underlying field pattern (two adjoining square fields named Deane's Ground) form a regular rectangular area which appears to contrast with the surrounding field pattern. This may be indicative of a pre-medieval site, but no archaeological evidence for this has ever been recorded.

Dean's Lane expansion (HUCA 14)



Hugh Squire Avenue looking north-west



Dean's Lane looking north-west

Most of the housing estate was built in the mid 20th century but it was extended southwards into the rear of the plots fronting East Street during the late 20th century.

The main part of the housing estate has been laid out with respect to the two former fields (Deane's Ground) and the post-medieval track (Dean's Lane). Later 20th century houses to some extent respect the former post-medieval plots and medieval strip fields boundaries which historically defined this area.

4.14.2 Above ground heritage significance

Medium - HUCA 14 is an area of mid and late 20th century development, with a largely modern plan-form, but some historical time depth and surviving remnants of its earlier rural use.

The layout of the housing estate is formal and adheres to the underlying field pattern creating a definite sense of place enhanced by the simple, well proportioned, rendered housing blocks and boulevard type roads, street trees and front gardens with vistas and views out into the countryside. This contrasts with the slightly less defined, more recent bungalow estate in the southern half of the area.

4.14.3 Below ground heritage significance

Medium - Although the whole area has been built on during the 20th century the underlying field pattern form a regular rectangular area which appears to contrast with the surrounding field pattern. This may be indicative of a pre-medieval site (possible Saxon burgh). The following types of buried remains may survive in pockets of undisturbed ground.

- Early medieval - settlement, trackways, field boundaries, artefacts
- Medieval and post-medieval – buildings, structures, plots, field boundaries, field barns
- Prehistoric remains

4.15 East Street (east) (HUCA 15)

4.15.1 Historic character

HUCA 15 can be characterised as a spread of post-medieval and 19th century expansion along East Street on the east side of town. The medieval eastern extent of the town appears to have reached the junction of Station Road and East Street. After this point the ground starts to slope down towards the river.

East Street (east) (HUCA 15)



East Street looking east



Large merchant houses on East Street close to junction with Station Road



North side of East Street looking east



Former Hugh Squire's School on East Street



Tannery buildings to south of East Street



Cottages to east of tannery on East Street

During the early post-medieval period an isolated group of buildings appear to have sprung up on East Street at a midway point between the Station Road junction and the river. These buildings included a tannery with associated workers' housing and Hugh Squire's school (built on the site of earlier almshouses) all dating from the 16th and 17th centuries. Slightly later post-medieval merchant housing (dating to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries) also began to expand eastwards around the Station Road junction and during the 19th century development continued down the hill until it met the isolated post-medieval buildings and also extended beyond this. Key views are along East Street, to historic farmland to the east and south, to the housing estate on Dean's Lane and Hugh Squire's Avenue to the north and across the modern housing estate to the south-west.

This area was first developed from medieval strip fields (aligned north-south) either side of East Street during the post-medieval period. During the 19th century development along the road continued. During the 20th century a terrace of 19th century cottages were demolished at the eastern extent of the town and replaced with modern detached housing and one or two other late 20th century houses were also constructed at the eastern end of the town.

Many of the post-medieval and 19th century plots have been laid out with respect to the former medieval strip fields boundaries aligned at right-angles to East Street. The majority of the post-medieval and 19th century buildings remain *in situ*.

4.15.2 Above ground heritage significance

High - HUCA 15 is an area of post-medieval and 19th century expansion, with surviving historical time depth and surviving remnants of its earlier rural use. It has high heritage significance due to its intact post-medieval and 19th buildings, surviving medieval and post-medieval boundaries and potential early sites.

The Junction of Station Road and East Street is where the 19th century industrial development along the north of the town meets the commercial core and the suburban ribbon development down East Street as typified by the stables and outbuildings of Louchrigg in HUCA 9 and the former commercial yard on the east side of Station Road opposite the North Street junction. The extent of the medieval town may continue a few plots east of the junction with Station Road. To the west of the junction is the end of the commercial core of South Molton (HUCA 9). The much rebuilt shops and premises contrast with the more clearly residential properties stretching eastwards from this point. These are large, elegant, classically detailed houses on the north side of the road and slightly smaller brick and rendered houses on the south side. The same sort of housing continues on both sides further down the road with the exception of the grandly porticoed Eastleigh House. This residential character contrasts with the workshops and shops on the approach to the western side of town. The 17th century Hugh Squires school is set back from the road, the neighbouring cottages superficially look like the 19th century houses spreading out from town, but the proportions of the buildings, their roofs and fenestration suggest the survival here of a much older group. The finest building on the street is the tannery house, behind which survives a complete tannery complex with tannery buildings of various dates. This complex is a rare survival and warrants further research and designation. The scale, the significance and the use of local stone gives a coherence which forms an important end stop to the town notwithstanding the occasional modern house further downslope.

4.15.3 Below ground heritage significance

High - HUCA 15 has high archaeological potential since development from the post-medieval period onwards generally remains intact. The following types of buried remains may survive.

- Medieval- field boundaries, field barns

- Post-medieval and 19th century – streets & paths, houses, shops & other buildings, cellars, boundary walls, wells, leats and drains, industrial structures & debris, domestic occupation material and non-domestic artefacts

5 Suggestions for future research

- Identifying the location and extents of the Saxon Minster and settlement. To include detailed building analysis of the church and surrounding buildings to establish the survival of any elements associated with the Saxon church and precinct buildings.
- Research into the use and phasing of individual burgage plots and buildings.
- Detailed study of the standing buildings within the historic core of the town
- Consideration given to providing listed building status for the tannery complex on East Street
- Although there were once many historic field barns within the town extents, the majority have been removed during later development and now only one survives within the study area. It is suggested that this remaining field barn, which fronts Mill Street in the south-west part of HUCA 8, is the subject of a historic building record. It is also suggested that any field barns threatened by future development are treated as significant heritage assets.

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- <http://www.northdevonlink.co.uk/cottagehomes.htm>
- <http://www.everythingexmoor.org.uk>

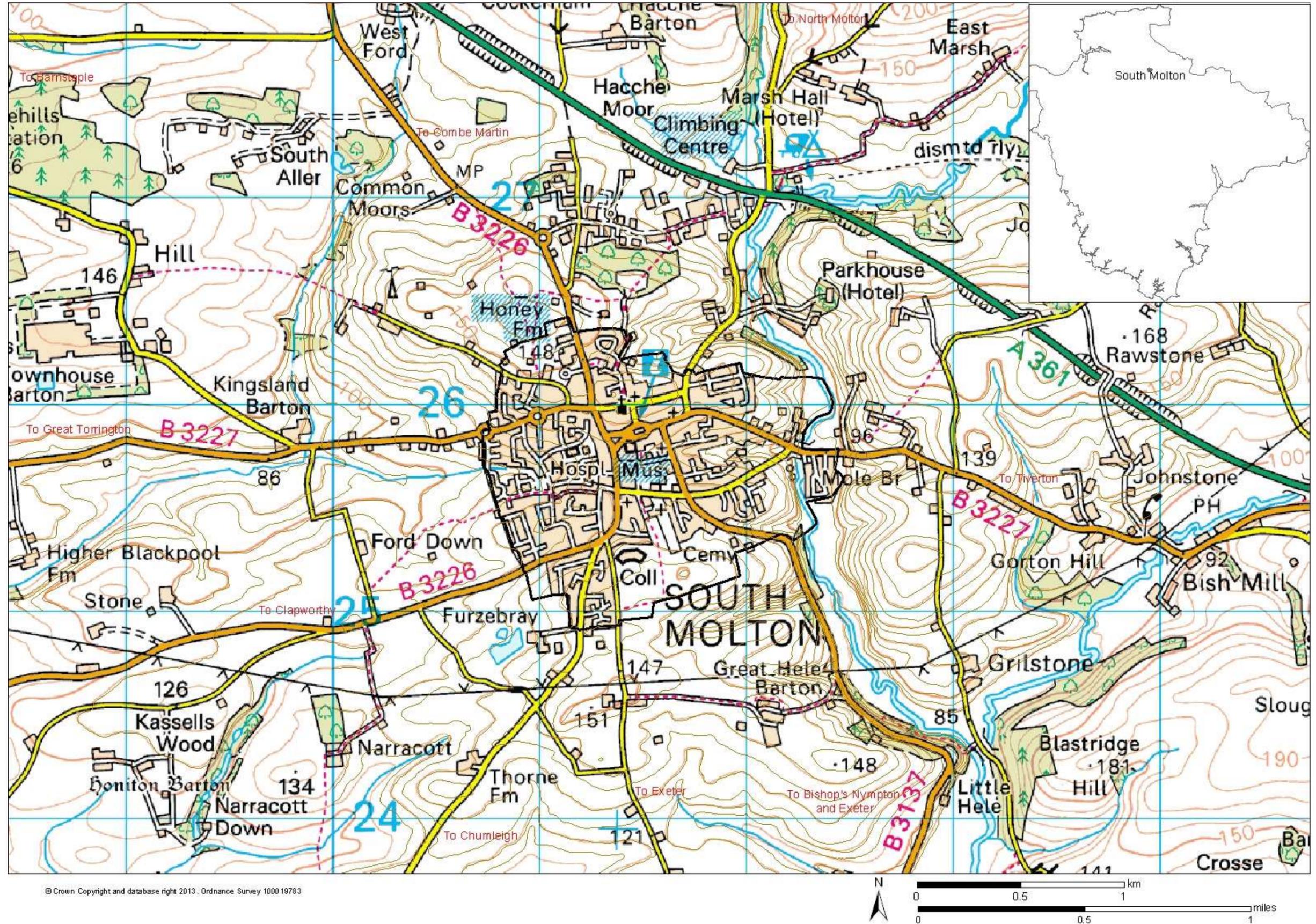


Fig 1 Location and setting



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Fig 2 Roads and streets

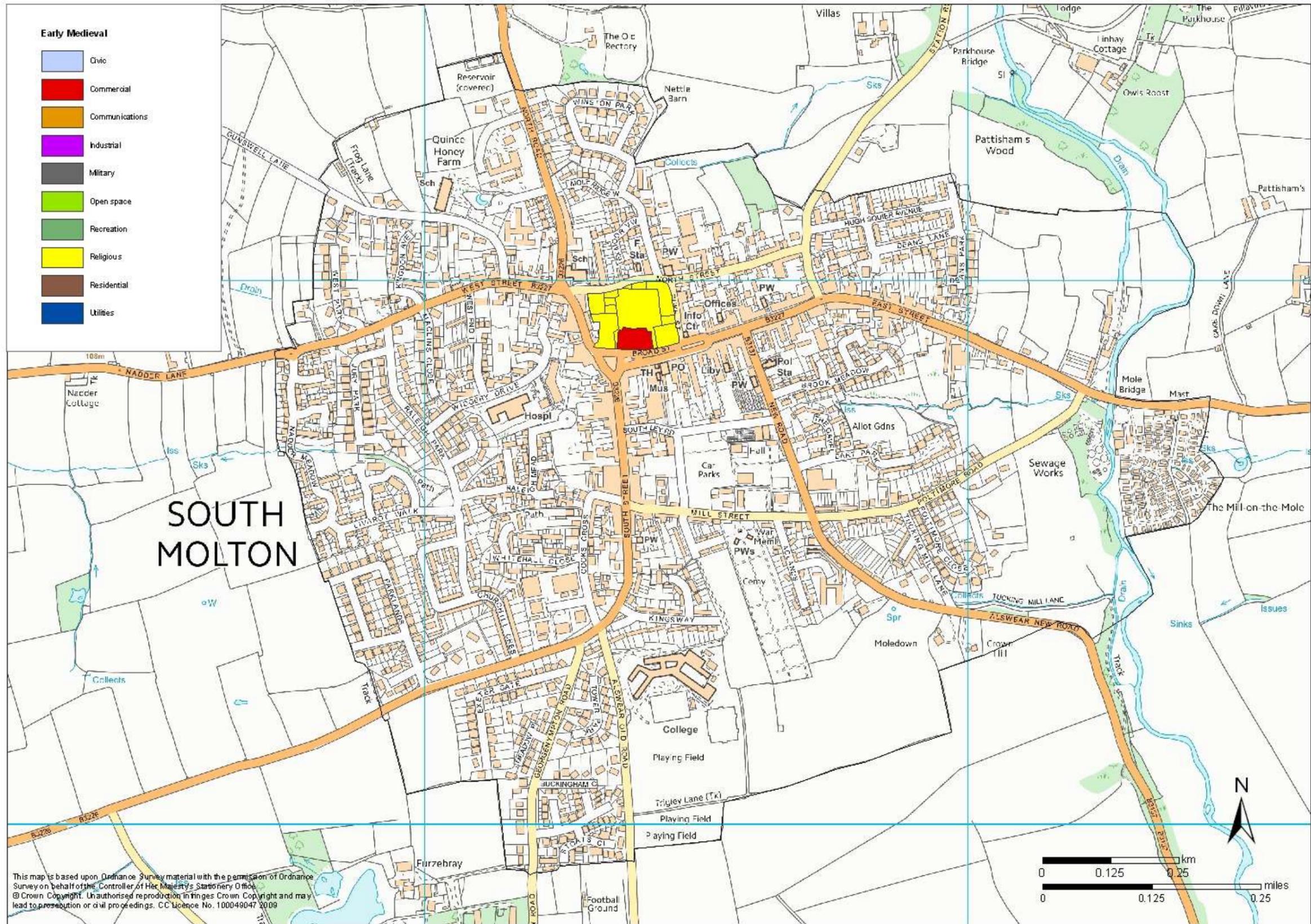


Fig 3 Historical development (Early Medieval)

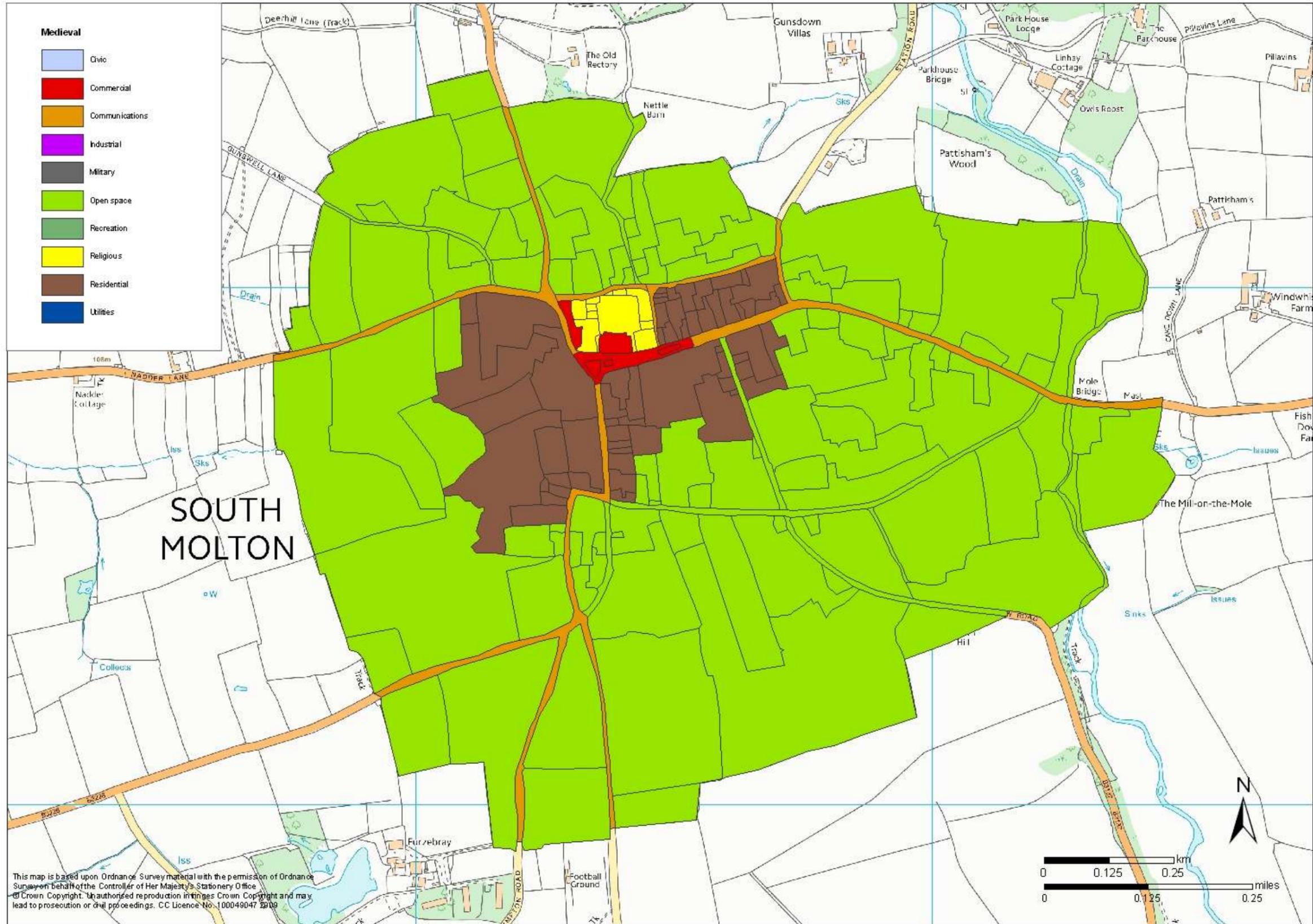


Fig 4 Historical development (Medieval)

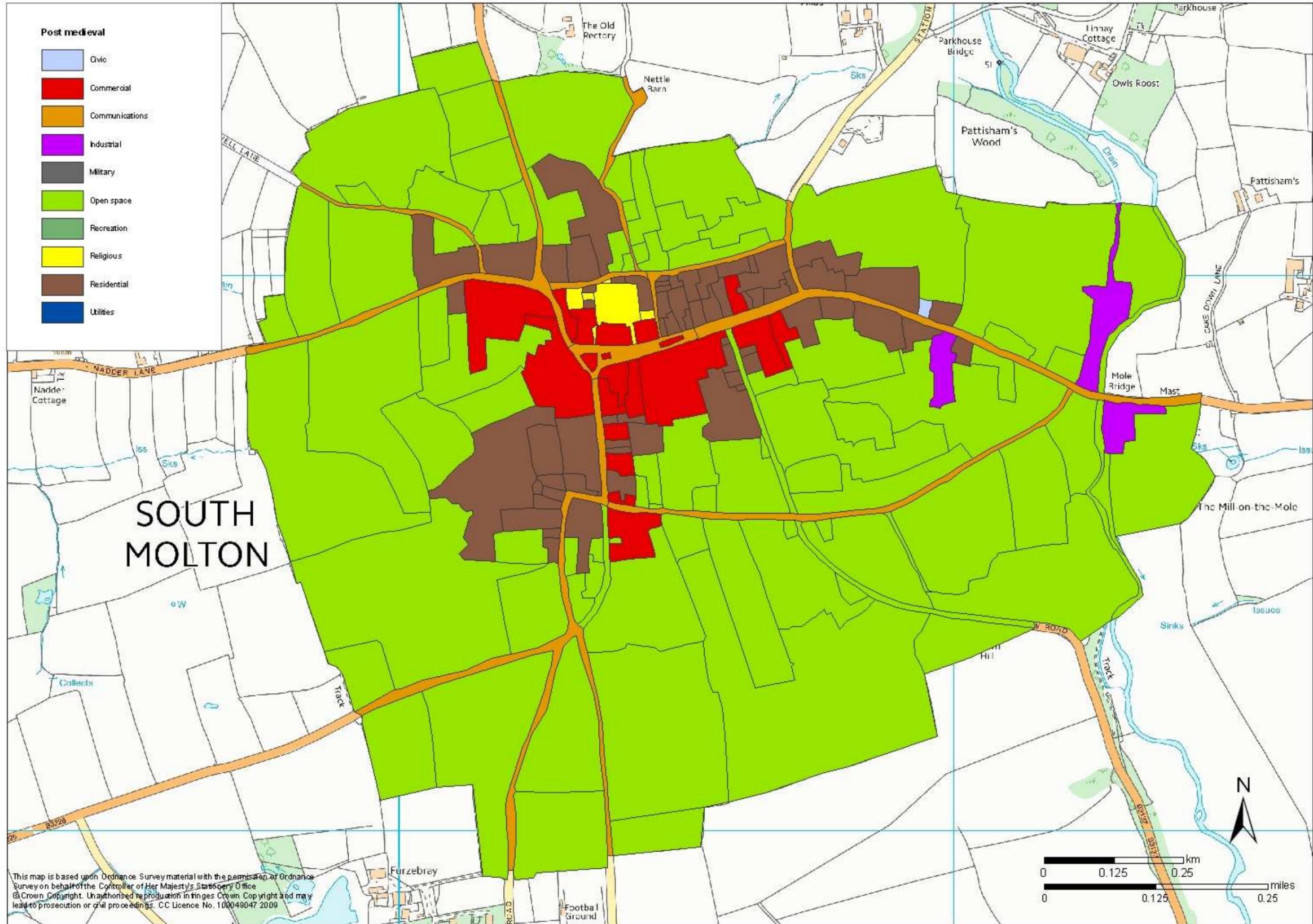


Fig 5 Historical development (Post-medieval)

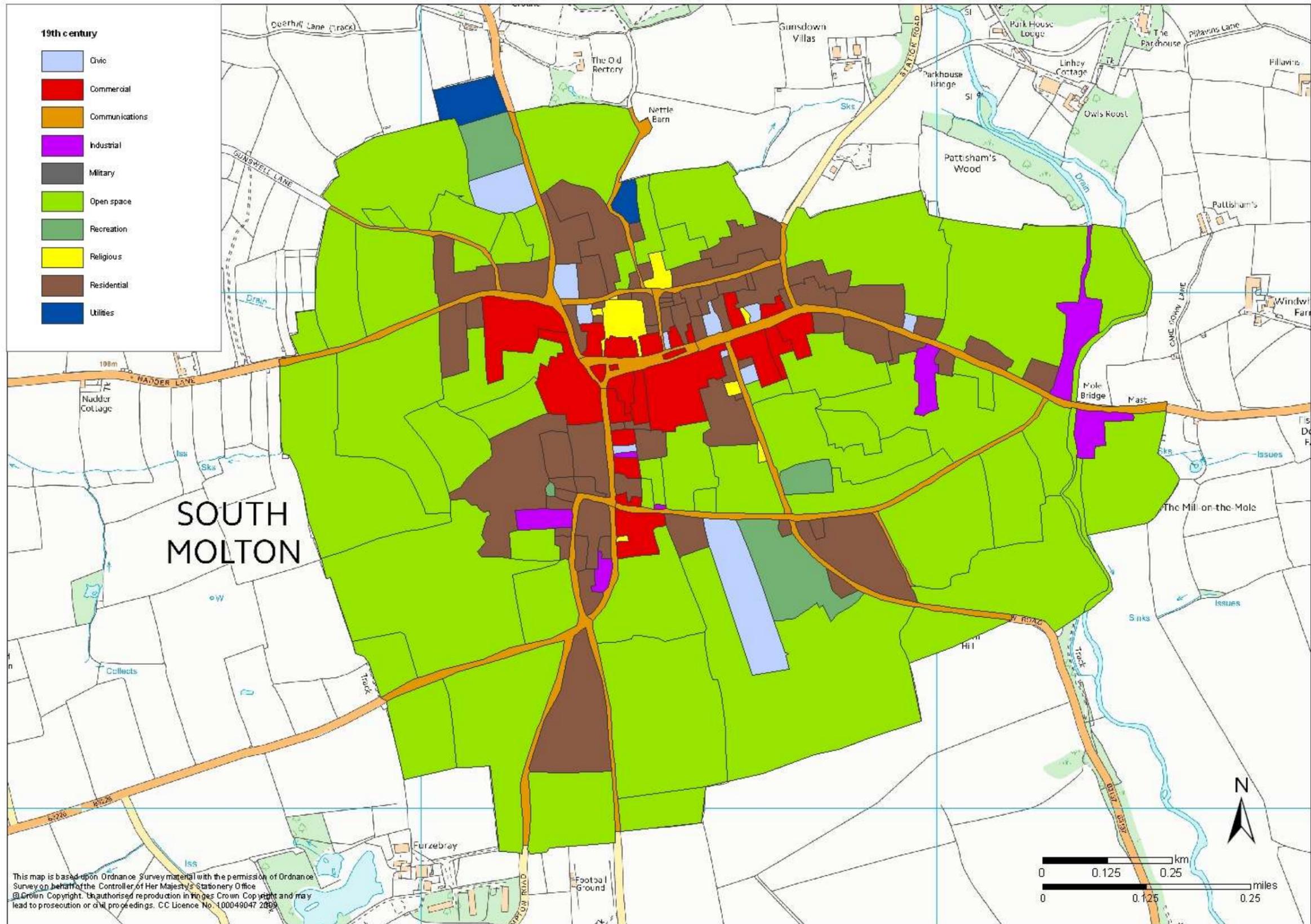


Fig 6 Historical development (19th century)

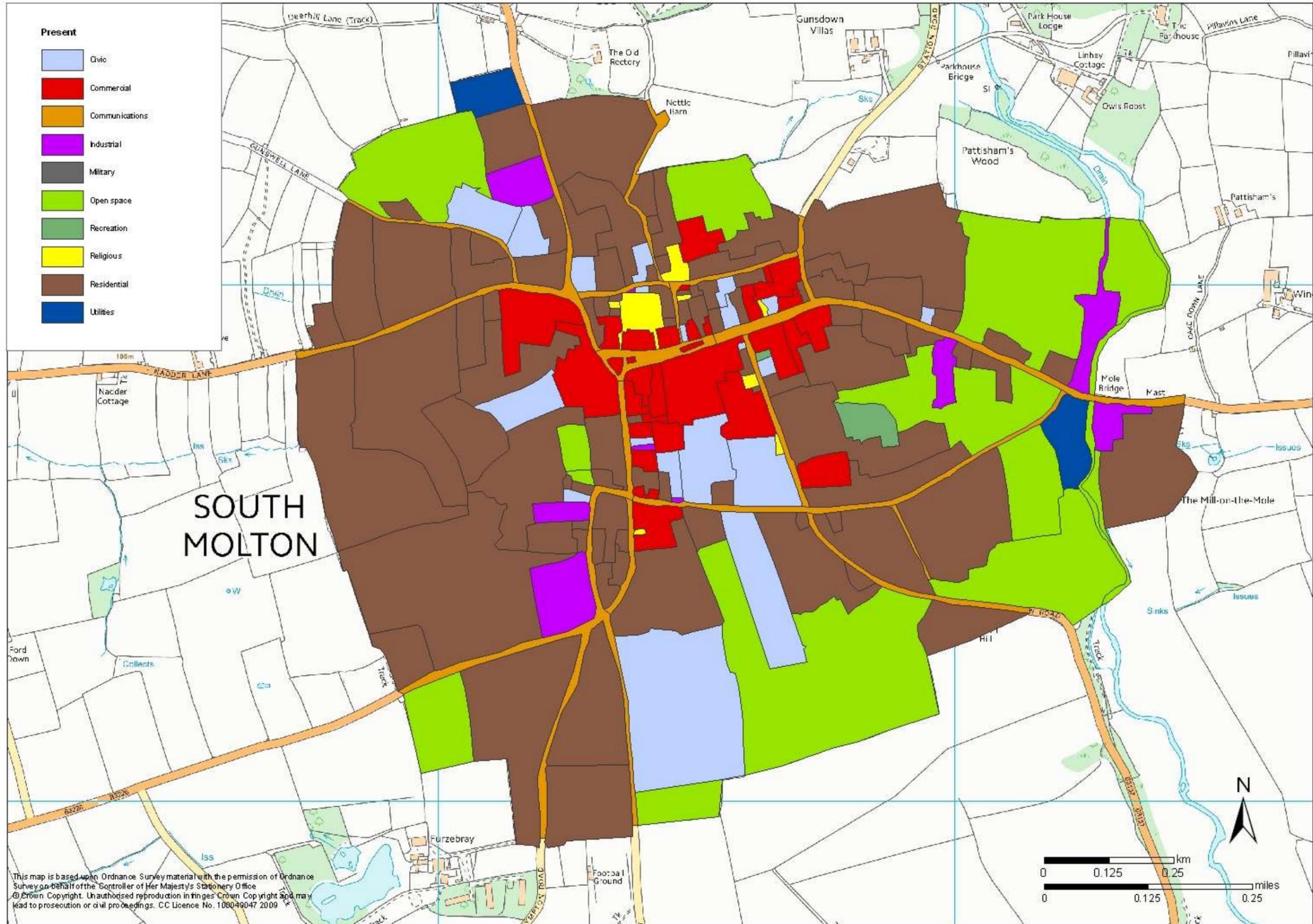


Fig 7 Historical development (Present day)

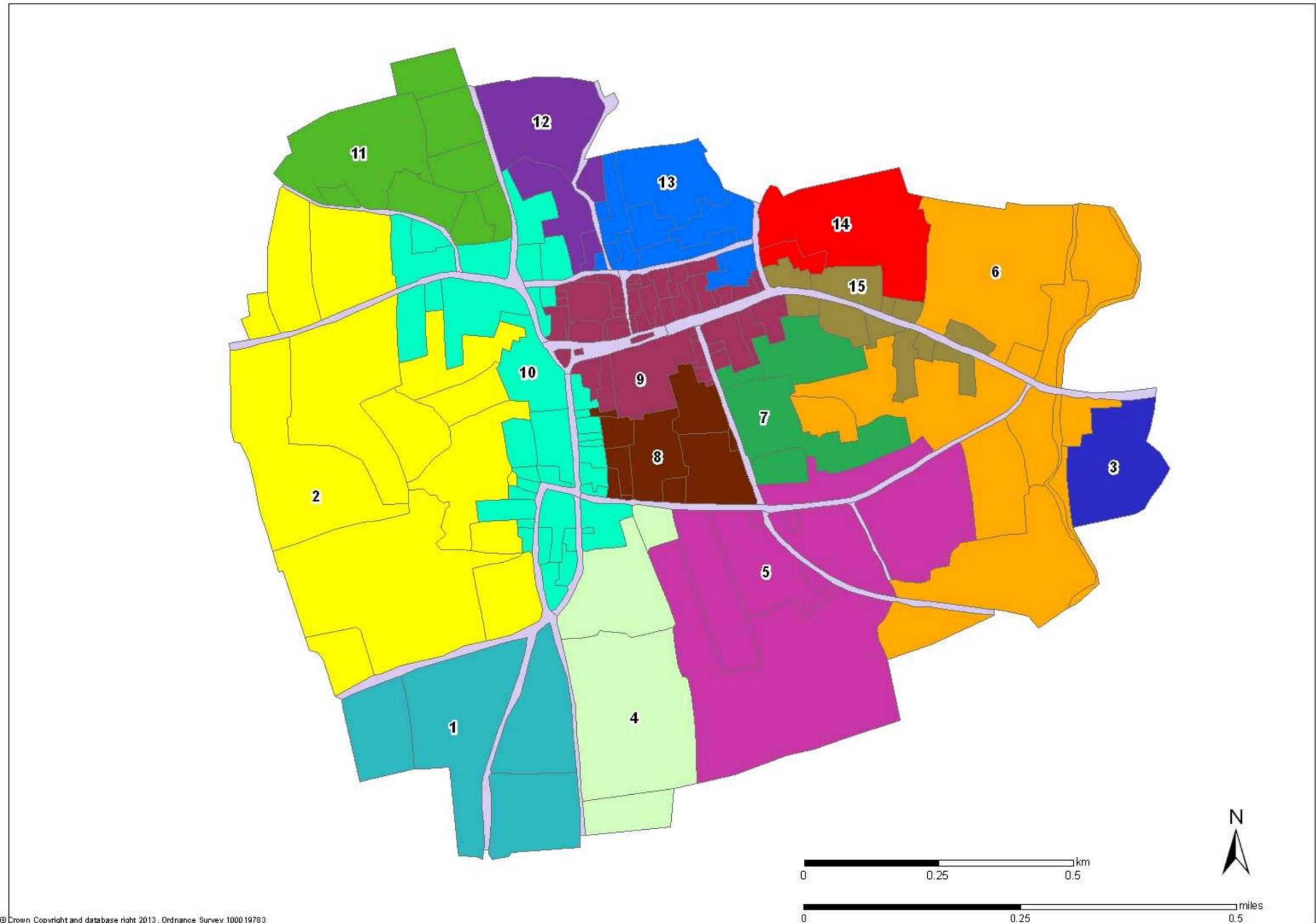


Fig 8 HUCAs location map

Appendix 1: Historic Maps



Fig 9 Map of the Borough of South Molton within the manor of Hacche (18th century)

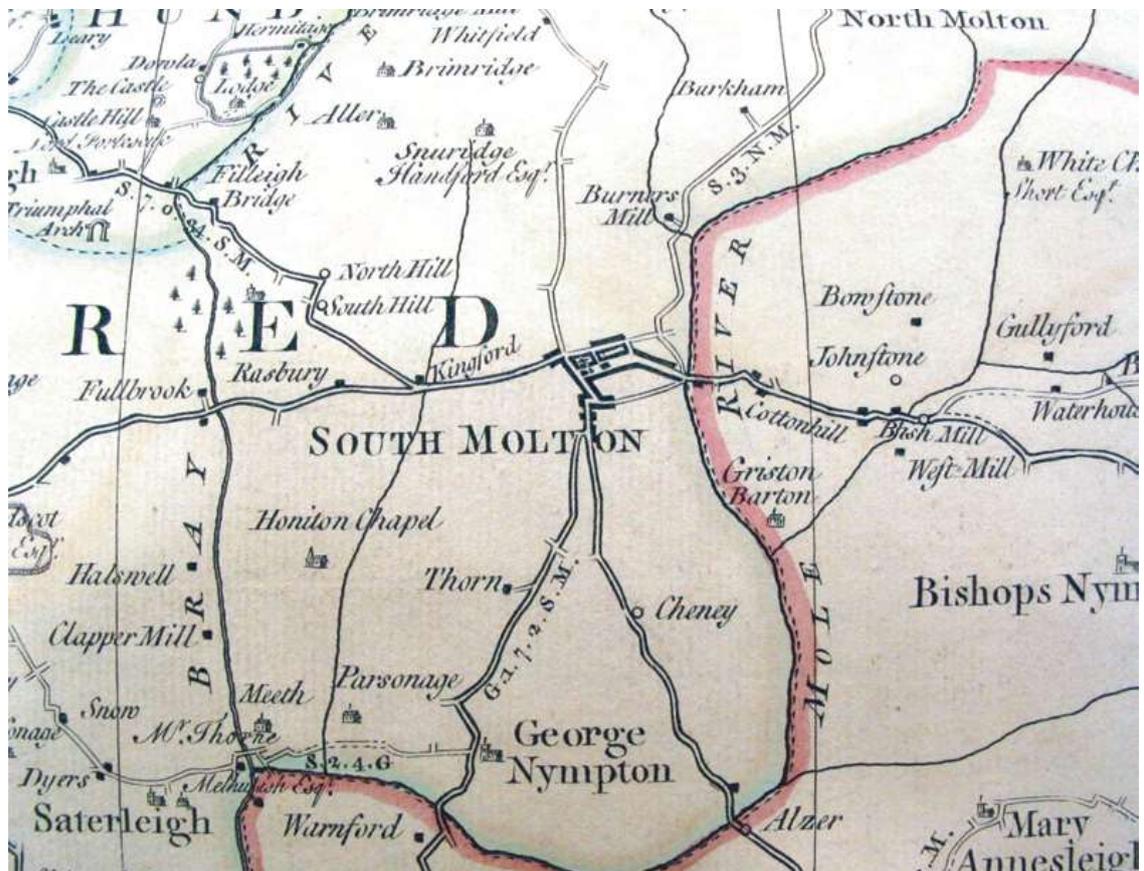


Fig 10 Extract from Benjamin Donn's map of 1765 (DRO)



Fig 11 Ordnance Survey Surveyor's Drawing of 1802

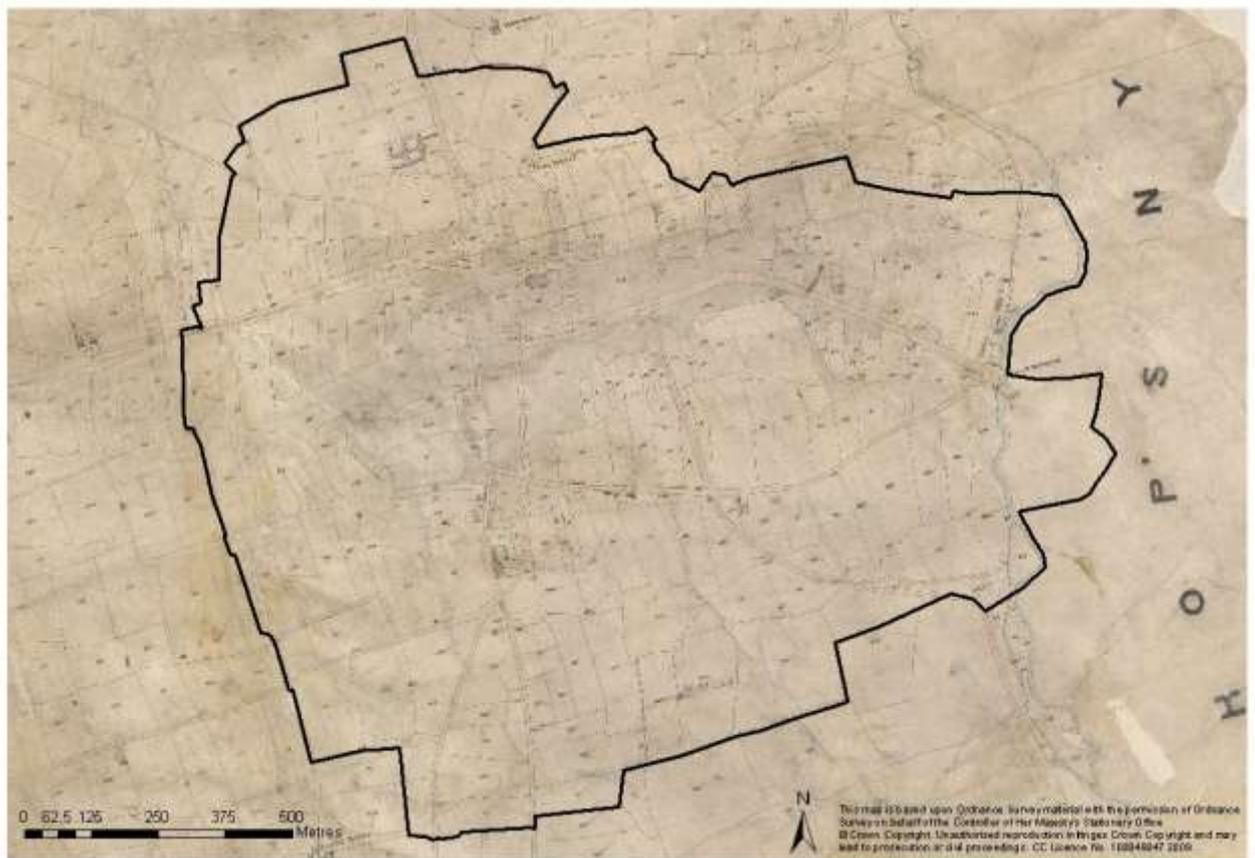


Fig 12 Tithe Map, c1840. Parish of South Molton