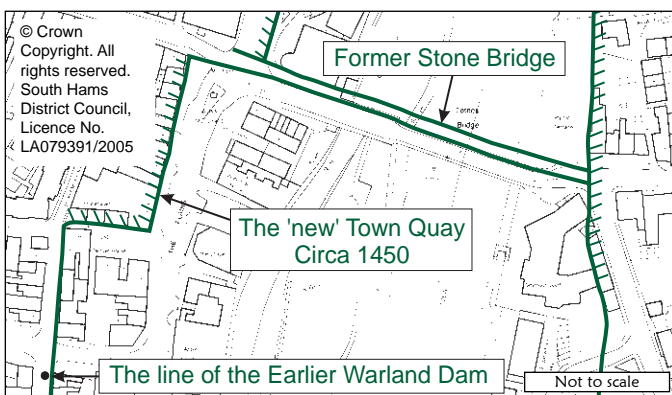


3.1 Setting the Scene

This part of Totnes was always likely to be developed first once the inner enclosure of the Saxon burh had established itself and looked to expand beyond its bounds. Even before 1086 (according to the Domesday Book) tenements were being occupied here, along the important highway (now Fore Street) that linked the town's main gate to the river, across land that was within the burh's outer enclosure.

- The layout of the tenements (burgage plots) followed the pattern of the earlier ones (off High Street), being long, narrow, and stretching back from the main street to the enclosing boundary. Today, the north-side boundary is disjointed and somewhat indistinct, suggesting this side of the street grew up in a piecemeal fashion, within a boundary that was maybe no more than a hedge. On the south side, however, the line of the boundary clearly survives, being fossilised in the alignment of The Grove and Victoria Street. The split levels along The Grove suggest it was indeed a significant feature; not unlike that along South Street and with a similar storey to tell [below].



- It wasn't until the middle of the 15th century that the west bank of the Dart downstream of the bridge (now the Mill Tail) began to be 'moved' to where it is today. This was when a new quay was built next to the old bridge to unload stone for the new tower of St Mary's. It was forward of any earlier made-up ground, but nevertheless only reached out as far as the corner where Fore Street starts today. This left The Plains and all the land east of Warland (including the Dartmouth Inn square) still part of the tidal marshes [above].



- The permanent reclamation of the river marshes started early in the 13th century with the building of a dam-come-road along the line of Warland ('Weiland'). This cut across two small creeks, and as well as providing a much more direct link between St. Peter's Quay and the town (via Ticklemore Street to Fore Street instead of the less convenient route via Maudlin Road and Leechwell Street), it also created new ground. This enabled a hospital to be built as part of a new 'suburb' along Warland's west side, and although built in 1270, parts of the building still survive in the fabric of number 10 and possibly its neighbours. The last significant reclamation hereabouts was when the warehouses beside the river were built; not on an existing quay, but on new ground created at the time-which means the buildings rise cliff-like from the river's bed [shown above before conversion]. Altogether, the development of the town's port facilities involved a considerable amount of tidal reclamation so below ground evidence of it may be preserved across a wide area between the river and the line of Ticklemore Street and Warland.



- There were reclamations upstream of the bridge too, with The Seven Stars probably occupying the first area of quay that extended out from the natural shoreline at Mill Lane. The early shoreline actually continued more or less on the line of Coronation Road as it entered a narrow creek fed by Malt Mill Lake that was tidal to a point just north of where Antrim Terrace starts today [artist's impression above]. Safeway's site and most of the Industrial Estate were part of the river marshes too, so at high tide the expanse of water would have stretched to cover the ground where the traffic islands are sited on both sides of Brutus bridge!

- Although Fore Street is quite steep as it passes beneath the East Gate to become High Street and enter the core of the Saxon town, it is not easy to recognise here just how pronounced the change in level between the Saxon ramparts and the ground outside could be. Nowhere is this clearer, than in this view across the 'Somerfield' service area [below].



- Although timber-framed fronts were 'fashioned' out of existence during the 18th and 19th centuries, a few attempts were made to reintroduce their appearance (for purely decorative effect) in the earlier part of the 20th century. None really gives a very convincing portrayal of local traditions, however, including that applied to 20/22 Fore Street [right - middle] which, ironically enough, is one of the few early buildings in the town that seems to have been built entirely of stone!

- While most of the town's wealthy 16th and 17th century merchants sought and built houses in High Street, the higher end of Fore Street was also a desirable location, particularly on the south side where the burgage plots are the longest in the town and enjoy a southerly aspect. Some of the best examples of domestic architecture (and interiors) of the age can be found here, including the Museum at No.70 which was restored between 1958 and 1962 to reinstate much of its original 'timber-framed', 'gable-fronted' character [below left]. It's use today makes it the most accessible of all the Totnes buildings that have the distinctive 'front- and back- block' plan form...(ten of which are actually concentrated here in Fore Street, among the thirteen numbered 48 to 72). In the courtyard at the rear, the timber-framed gallery connection at first floor has also been beautifully restored [below right].



- As elsewhere in the Conservation Area, brick was used only sparingly. A few late examples are secluded in The Grove, but it's in Fore Street and on the Plains where the most historic, and probably the town's best, examples are to be found. Most impressive of all is the Mansion House at 36 Fore Street [below] which, like the similarly aged (late 18th century) examples at 47 Fore Street and 8 The Plains, had its brickwork 'tuck pointed' at some time to smarten its appearance. ('Tuck pointing' was done to mask the use of less-than-perfect bricks. The joints were first finished flush using a mortar that was coloured [with brick dust] to match the bricks. Then precise bands of white lime putty were applied to give the appearance of narrow mortar joints between perfectly-made bricks [below right].



■ Render is easily the most common finish to elevations in this part of the Conservation Area, occupying most, and dominating many, street scenes. When applied to the more 'socially ambitious' houses (especially during the 18th and 19th centuries and particularly along the main streets), its texture was nearly always smooth. This was to create the appearance of dressed stone, and many examples still have their original 'ashlar-lining' intact or renewed (the lines scribed into the render to imitate coursed stonework). The rendered panel on the side elevation of 65 Fore Street clearly illustrates this architectural device [right] although what makes this example extra special is that it survives in its original 'unpainted' form.



■ Textured, 'rough-cast' renders are much less common. The few examples that do exist in the main streets appear to be modern replacements of smooth finishes (and tend to look out of place in their 'town-centre' setting). Those in the 'side streets', however, are more numerous, and the thoroughly practical appearance of the finish gives many of the cottages an authentic, 'rustic' character that suits their age and status [above]. Looking less compatible, however, are the few examples of Pebble-dash, whose introduction in the 20th century followed a short-lived 'national' fashion. This didn't really respect local traditions, although it's interesting to note the wide variation in the pebbles' size [both right]. The architectural embellishment of rendered elevations in this part of the Conservation Area is generally restrained. Most, in fact, are plain, while those that do have decorative features are quite unpretentious in their appearance. The terrace of four on the Plains exemplifies this, and also that restrained colour schemes, which minimise contrast, tend to best preserve their dignified appearance [right].



■ Stonework elevations are more common in this part of the Conservation Area, figuring prominently in important views of the town's 'industrial quarters' – like this one of the riverside warehouses from the bridge [above] and this one 'channelled' along Mill Lane towards the Town Mill [right]. Elsewhere the numerous gaps and set-backs along Fore Street and Warland add to these examples by exposing side elevations that display their rubble-stone construction. Local volcanic tuff in various shades of brown typifies older buildings, while later 19th century ones are mostly built of 'not-quite-so-local' pale grey-pink or grey-blue limestones which have a more rounded form.

3.1 ... Setting the Scene

Other than at the top end of Fore Street, gabled fronts are an uncommon feature in this part of the Conservation Area. Most roofs have an eaves line running parallel to the street, and the most attractive of them are finished with an ornamental cornice [right]. While the majority have only a shallow projection (as in High Street), a significant number do have very deep eaves with a series of brackets beneath to give visual support [below]. On The Plains and New Walk, however, a very different treatment of the eaves prevails, with most being hidden behind parapets [below right]. This architectural device lends height and dignity to a building's façade, and indeed the space it faces, so its dominance here is entirely appropriate. It also has the desirable effect of creating a visual link with the buildings on the Bridgetown side of the bridge since parapets are characteristic there too.



Although the buildings in Fore Street and High Street are similar in many respects, some of their 'group' characteristics are quite different and tend to set the streets apart. A preponderance of projecting bow-, bay- and oriel windows, which concentrate at the top end of Fore Street, is one of them [left]. Much wider plot widths is another, especially below Lloyds Bank on the north side where a number of buildings have 4-window fronts [right]. The way buildings are ranged along the streets differs too, with more in Fore Street set back from the pavement and many more with gaps between them leading off to private sites and public ways. In Fore Street too, there are more buildings of 2-storey height, and because the view east down the street is more open, and its width is ever more wider, the feeling of enclosure towards its lower end is far less tight [below].



Although plot widths are generally wider, especially in the lower half of Fore Street, shop display windows tend not to be wider as a result. Instead, ground floors are either occupied by a pair of separate shopfronts or by one that's divided by a central doorway [left]. Sometimes a side passage entrance exists as well [right], so generally speaking the 'small-scale' pattern of shop fronts that characterises other parts of the shopping street is found here too.



Built more as a route out of the centre to by-pass Castle Street's steep incline and narrow North Gate (in about 1830), Station Road is flanked by characteristic buildings near its Fore Street end, including the mid-19th century villa on the left which was probably the first house built to take advantage of the location's convenience [above].



Before 1937 direct access to the former warehouse to the right of the trees (above) was only possible via Mill Lane. Construction of the 'Coronation Road by-pass' changed that completely - along with the enclosed nature of the Plains hereabouts, since a very substantial, apparently 17th century, building called Portland House, which stretched the width of the road, was demolished in the process.

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Vertical sliding timber sash windows dominate domestic buildings throughout this part of the Conservation Area, including the more modest houses residing on Warland [above left]. The vast majority are multi-paned, and although some are in pairs and others have sidelights (like those in the Seven Stars) most are placed singly in the wall. Rather special amongst them are the curved ones at 30 Fore Street, set into its rounded corner with Bank Lane [above right]. In Bank Lane, of course, are the most noteworthy and unusual 'non-sash' windows in the Area - the pointed-arch casements of Gothic House [below].



New Walk - on its west side, **1, 2 and 3**, and on the east, with their opposite sides rising directly off the Mill Tail revetments, **Applewharf** (listed as Holman's Warehouse) and **The Malthouse** (listed as The Old Cider Factory whose range includes a tall chimney structure).

The Plains - occupying the north side, **The Royal Seven Stars Hotel**, while on the west are **1, 2 and 3** (the 4th in the terrace has a Fore Street address), **4 and 5** (No.4 entirely rebuilt after a fire in 1986 and probably the 'youngest' listed building in the country!), **5A**, and, set back behind its square, the **Dartmouth Inn**. On the east side, the **Former Methodist Chapel**, and **9, 11 and 12**, all forming part of the 'Waterside Development'. Also listed are the **Obelisk Memorial to John Wills** and **Two Granite Piers** set in the pavement nearby, said to be the central and one of the outer piers of the former Toll Gates on Totnes Bridge. (When listed they were located in a verge in Coronation Road).

St. Peter's Quay - a small group including the **Steam Packet Inn**, the converted **Warehouse adjoining the Inn**, and **Nos.1 and 2 St. Peter's Terrace with Seagull Cottage** adjacent.

Ticklemore Street - **No.1** and the **Bollard** in the passage link to Fore Street.

Victoria Street - **The Waterman's Arms** public house (No.3), and **10, 11 and 12 with 14** opposite, all adjacent to the entrance to Bank Lane.

Warland - on its west side, **No.1**, then across St Catherine's Way to **5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 (Hope Cottage) with 12A and 13**. On the east side, **22, 23, 24 and 25**, and then back over St Catherine's Way to **26** which faces onto it. **No.10**, with its remnants of a 13th century chapel, is also a **Scheduled Ancient Monument**.



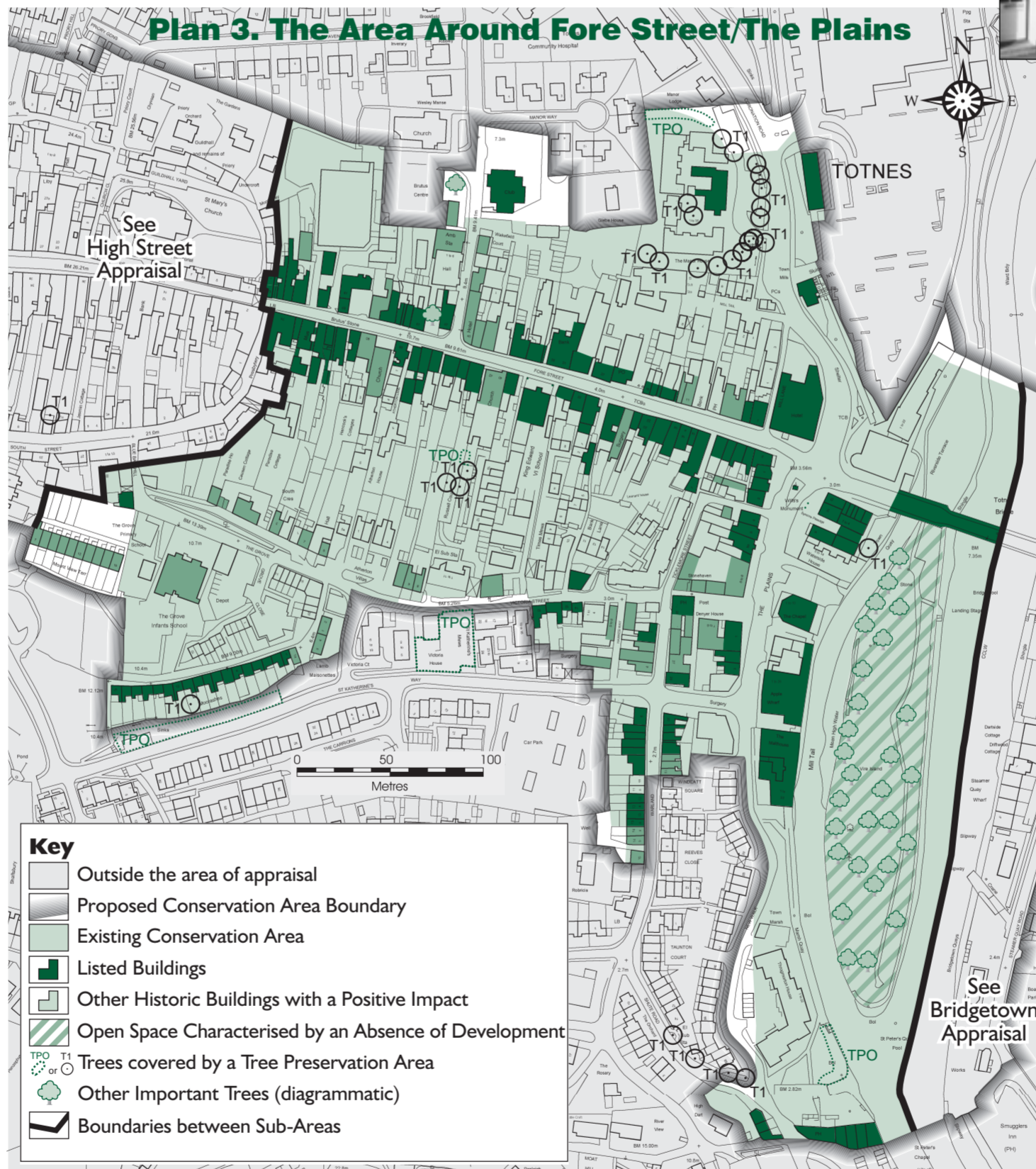
Key Conservation Components Map

3.2 The Conservation Area

When the Totnes Conservation Area was first designated by Devon County Council in July 1969, its focus here was on the many important, and mostly listed, historic buildings concentrated along Fore Street and The Plains. The equally important plots behind the Fore Street buildings were also included so that, on the south side, the boundary followed the line of The Grove and Victoria Street. It then turned at The Plains to include the range of historic water-front buildings sandwiched between New Walk and the Mill Tail. On the opposite north side, the boundary went beyond the rear of the Fore Street plots to include the Manor House and the 'Town Mills', the latter building being itself sandwiched between Coronation Road and the Mill Leat that still serves it.

Since then this part of the Conservation Area has been extended twice by the District Council mainly to take account of the listing of additional buildings near its boundary: in October 1985, to include the cottages at Moorashes and Warland and the range of buildings on St Peter's Quay, and in September 1992, to include the warehouse building on the former Bacon Factory site on Coronation Road.

Plan 3 identifies the boundary proposed based on up-dated versions of the Ordnance Survey Plans and taking account of the findings of this Appraisal. It supersedes all previous boundary designations.



3.4 The Scheduled Ancient Monument

The Medieval Chapel of the Holy Ghost and St Katherine at Warland - The site includes the gardens of 8 and 9 Warland and the L-shaped portion of garden wall (1.8m high) along the rears of 8, 9 and 10 (to cover the above and below ground remains of the chapel, other than those surviving in the listed cottages adjacent).

3.3 The Listed Buildings

Of the 412 Listed Buildings in the Totnes Conservation Area 129 are located here, mainly in Fore Street (62), The Plains/New Walk (19), Warland (14), and Moorashes with its 18 cottages in a single row (Moat Cottage excluded). The Museum at 70 Fore Street is Grade I. Eleven are Grade II*, of which nine are in Fore Street (No.65 on the north side and on the south nos. 34,36,48,50,52,54,64, and 68). The other two are The Royal Seven Stars on The Plains and 10 Warland. The remaining 117 are Grade II. Plan 3 identifies all the buildings that are listed, while their addresses are summarised to the right:

Cautionary Note

The formal designation of Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Tree Preservation Orders and Scheduled Ancient Monuments is a continuous process so if you need to be certain that the designations shown on the Map are still correct, please check with the Planning and Building Control (Conservation Team) at the District Council.

Bank Lane - No. 1 tucked in behind 30 Fore Street. (Gothic House, within the Lane, has a Fore Street address)

Blue Ball Hill - No.1, at the bottom corner of this short hill, facing directly along The Grove [below].



The boundary of the Saxon outer enclosure probably extended on from the Grove towards South Street, across the site of No.1

Coronation Road - The **Manor House** on the west side, with the **Town Mill** and the former **Harris Bacon Factory Building** on the other.

Fore Street - on its south side, between The Plains and South Street, only 4 buildings aren't listed: the two churches, and numbers 26 and 60. **No.2** is the first that is. (Even though facing The Plains, its 'front door' is on the side elevation onto Fore Street). **4, 6, 8, and 10** follow before the passage to Ticklemore

Street intervenes. Then come **12, 14 with 14A, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 and 28** on the corner of Bank Lane, wherein lies **Gothic House**, set back a considerable distance where the Lane narrows to a tiny passage that seems to pass through it! Next are **30, 32 and 34 (with 32A and B) and then 36** (known as the Mansion) which is set back from the pavement. The **Pair of Forecourt Piers** in front are listed, while the railings between them were lately re-instated by Devon County Council.. **38** follows, and then **44, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54 and 56** complete the row between the two, unlisted, churches. The final row, up to South Street, completes the 'evens' side and includes **62, 64, 66, 68 and 68A** behind it, **70, 72 and 74**.

To the 'odds' on the north side, from their commencement at Mill Lane, the listed buildings are fewer in number and more widely spaced - at least at this end. **1 and 3** are followed by **15 and 17 with 17A and 19**. Then comes the **former Post Office at 25**, and in a short row **27, 29, 31 with 33, 35 and 37**. In the last stretch, between Station Road and the East Gate, 59 is the only building facing the street that isn't listed. They include, therefore, **47, 51, 53 with 55, 57, 61, 63, 65 with 'Little Priory'** behind, **67, 69, 71 and 73**. In addition, the so-called 'Brutus Stone' in the pavement outside 51 and 53 is also listed.

Moorashes - **1 to 18** of the terrace are listed but not 1A (Moat Cottage) at its east end.

Now called Moorashes, but known as Morass Cottages in 1652, the name of this terrace doesn't explain why it was built somewhat out on a limb, but it does throw light on the nature of its setting which was certainly marshy and possibly tidal (right)

- As elsewhere in the Conservation area, slate is the dominant cladding for roofs, although there is little evidence now of the local, silver-grey variety that must have prevailed for many years. This can still be found cladding walls, however, with at least six examples easy to view. Most obvious is the group of three at 53, 55 and 57 Fore Street. [below].



- In this part of the Conservation Area slate hung elevations are only common on the north side of Fore Street where just over half the buildings are so clad. Elsewhere, including on the south side, they are very much in the minority, with most of the few examples tucked away in rear courtyards, side-streets or passageways [above]. There is no obvious sign here, either, of the practice of painting slates, nor the introduction of patterns using shaped or different coloured varieties. Some of the most characterful looking slatework, however, is to be found on the 'less important' side elevations of buildings, like the east side of 29 Fore Street where small 'scantle' slates that have been carefully mortared still survive [below].



- The 'hybrid' appearance of buildings that is common in High Street (where fashionable 18th or 19th century styling was planted onto 16th or 17th century fabric and form) is still evident in Fore Street, mainly towards its High Street end. The example at Number 52 is special because the uppermost jetty is still supported by its original ornamental bracket [above]. Towards The Plains end, and within The Plains itself, the 18th and 19th century styling which prevails here as well is mostly genuine to the buildings' age. It's a sign, therefore, that a good deal more rebuilding (rather than refronting) was carried on here [below].



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