PORLOCK, TA24 8QJ

St Dubricius Porlock 1398

JUNE 2025

REV: 01 - Glass doors removed

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1.1 Summary

The church is intending substantial, once-in-a-generation repair and maintenance work, including alterations to improve building efficiency.

The following works, which are part of this scheme, require planning consent:

- Installing PV panels to the south pitch of the nave in the concealed central valley.

~~- Installing a pair of glazed doors in the porch in the porch.~~

The below repair strategy primarily consists of :

- **South face of Nave roof slates to be refurbished, re-using existing slates where possible**
- **Replacement slate covering north porch**
- **Re-shingled spire**
- **Defective cement flaunching removed**
- **Repointed open joints to west elevation ashlar parapet**
- **Damaged slates to north pitch of nave and chancel roof replaced**
- **Cast iron rainwater goods repaired and redecorated**
- **Moss growth to localised area of south pitch of south aisle caused by overhanging yew tree removed**
- **Redecorated weather vane & replacement flat lead roof covering**
- **Repaired plasterwork and decoration to arcade and tower walls from roof valley above**
- **Repaired lath and plaster and decoration to ceiling**
- **Repaired lime plaster and decoration to inside of north wall and turret stair wall**
- **High-level plant growth to rubblestone walling of north porch removed**
- **Defective spire gutter repaired**
- **Repointed open joints in rubblestone walling**
- **Slipped and missing oak louvres to lucarne repaired and replaced**
- **Lucarne frames repaired**
- **Defective spire gutter outlet repaired and correctly configured**
- **Fragmented masonry above head of windows repaired and repointed**
- **Vegetation growth to head of buttress removed and repointed**
- **Conservation of the Reredos & Triptych**
- **Addition of Motion detectors to main internal lighting**
- **Upgrades to existing electrical wiring in tower and spire**

South Wall

West End

2.0 SETTING & SIGNIFICANCE

St Dubricius Church, centrally located within Porlock, Somerset, serves as a prominent landmark within the village. Its origins date back to the 13th century, with remnants of an earlier structure from around 1120. As a Grade I listed building, it retains significant medieval features, including Norman windows and a 15th-century octagonal font. The church also houses unique artefacts such as a pre-Norman cross fragment and a medieval clock without hands or a face. The spire, damaged in a storm in 1703, was restored in 1889. In the churchyard stands an ancient yew tree, estimated to be over 1000 years old and protected by historic legal provisions.

Porlock is a coastal village situated on the edge of Exmoor National Park, in the South West of England. The church's location within the village makes it a central landmark, providing a connection between the local community and the surrounding countryside. Over the centuries, it has shaped the villages identity, standing as a historical and cultural reference point. Today, it remains an active place of worship, hosting several services weekly aswell as community events, including a flower festival.

3.0 LISTING

Statutory Address:
CHURCH OF ST DUBRICIUS, HIGH STREET
The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: Somerset (Unitary Authority)
Parish: Porlock
National Park: EXMOOR
National Grid Reference: SS 88639 46664

SS8846 PORLOCK CP HIGH STREET (South side) 24/55 Church of St Dubricius 22.5.69

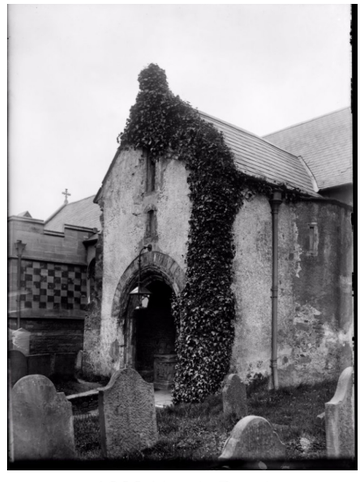
GV I Parish church. C13 tower, late C13-early C14 south arcade, C15 porch and east vestry or sacristy added, 1703 spire damaged, 1769 screen removed, 1889 tower restored, 1890 organ chamber added, 1892 church restored and choir stalls added from designs of J D Sedding, 1901 further alterations including stained glass by E Buckle. West tower, 4-bay nave and south aisle, south chapel, north porch, north-east choir vestry with organ chamber, chancel with south east priest's vestry.

Blue lias and red sandstone random rubble, Ham stone dressings, organ chamber with squared and coursed sandstone above string course, snecked granite below Slate roof with slight bell-cast, coped verges, wooden shingles on tower roof. Two stage tower, stepped diagonal buttresses rising half a stage, octagonal broached spire, wooden shingles, 4 gabled dormers, truncated top, tall lancet west window, west door; 3-light west window in south aisle, three 2-light windows, 3 full height stepped buttresses, 3-light east window to aisle, grotesque gargoyle at junction with chancel, chancel 2-light south window, 3-light untraceried lancet window east end, vestry chamfered pointed arch doorway, 3-light window right, lancet to 1890 addition, north wall of nave 2-light windows flanking inserted C19 window left of stair projection, another 2-light window to right of 2-storey, gabled porch with clasping buttresses, blind niche and inserted trefoil headed lancet above pointed arch opening, inserted lancet on left return first floor, holy water stoop to left of chamfered pointed arch doorway, door erected 1953 in memory of Queen Elizabeth's Coronation, Perpendicular tomb chest resited from churchyard on east wall, quatrefoil decoration with Instruments of the Passion.

Interior: rendered, exposed quoins to openings. Five bay arcade of octagonal piers, pointed arch openings chamfered in 2 orders. No chancel arch, corbelled truss; pointed chamfered tower arch, C19 panelled oak screen. Late C19 roofs: ceiled wagon roof in chancel, rafter roof in nave and aisle, latter with remains of original wall plate on south wall, ceiled roof to chapel. Low trefoil-headed opening to rood stair door opposite third pier from chancel with roof loft opening in spandrel. Trefoil-headed piscina in chancel; 4-centred chamfered arch openings to priest's vestry from chancel, to blocked south aisle entrance, and to parvise stairway, 2-light cinquefoil headed window in north chancel wall above Perpendicualr tomb-chest ornamented with shields, trefoil headed niches flanking circular panels with trefoils. It is thought that the 2 tomb chests in porch and chancel are those mentioned in the will of Alice Hensley dated 1527. Aumbry in south chapel, with very fine canopy tomb with alabaster effigies of Lord Harrington, died 1417, and his wife, both defaced with inscriptions. Two moulded segmental headed tomb recesses in south wall, one empty, other with reset efigy of cross legged knight, late C13. Perpendicular octagonal font with C19 font cover. Two small incised pieces of a Saxon cross set in west end wall. Reredos by W H R Blacking dated 1931. Rare pre-pendulue clock thought to be c1400-50 at west end. Large panels of tinted glass with a floral design similar to Church of St Mary (qv) Luccombe CP give a pleasing effect. Tower said to contain C17 ladder to bell chamber. Rare dedication to St Dubricius, the C6 Welsh saint. (Photographs in NMR; Kelly's Directory, 1906).

Listing NGR: SS8864246665

1844 Yew tree in grounds



1892 North Porch

1893 Tower

4.0 NEED

The Church faces ongoing challenges in balancing preservation with modern functionality, struggling with outdated infrastructure, making it difficult to maintain comfortable interior conditions and ensure adequate security. Heating inefficiencies result in significant energy costs, alongside losing heat through drafts and poor insulation, leaving congregations uncomfortable during colder months. Additionally, the need for renewable energy sources has become more urgent as the DAC seeks to achieve net zero by 2030 and contribute to sustainability efforts.

To ensure the Church remains a comfortable and welcoming space, addressing draft prevention is crucial. Enhancing older entrances can significantly reduce unwanted air flow while preserving their historical integrity. This improvement also contributes to better weather shielding, protecting the interior from the elements and maintaining a stable environment for visitors. There is a desire to encourage visitors to see the heritage of the church by making the church doorway more inviting when seen from the road. With glass doors in place the inner doors can be left open when weather is good, and the interior will be visible from outside, inviting them inside. In addition to these benefits, security remains a key consideration, as safeguarding the Church against unauthorised access and vandalism ensures it continues to serve as a vital community space.

Addressing these needs requires a thoughtful approach that enhances the building's functionality while respecting its architectural significance, allowing the Church to continue serving its communities for generations to come.

Further information is contained within the Statement of Need and the Statement of Significance.

4.1 Church of England's Net-Zero Carbon Mission

The Church of England has committed to drastically reducing its carbon footprint by 2030, an initiative approved by the General Synod in July 2022 as part of efforts to combat the global climate crisis.

The mission includes:

• Reducing carbon emissions from buildings, schools, and transportation.

• Encouraging sustainable practices across dioceses, cathedrals, and institutions.

• Leading by example to inspire broader community action on climate change.

As an expression of faith, this effort aligns with the Fifth Mark of Mission, which calls Christians to care for creation. By transitioning to sustainability, churches demonstrate that even historic and culturally significant buildings can embrace eco-friendly solutions while maintaining their heritage.

4.2 Benefits of Solar Energy for the Church & Community

• Energy Independence – Churches reduce reliance on external power sources, ensuring stable energy use and protection from rising utility costs.

• Cost Savings – PV panels cut electricity costs, allowing churches to redirect funds to outreach programs, community services, and charitable projects.

• Long-Term Financial Gains – Government schemes like the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) pay churches for surplus electricity sent to the grid.

• Educational Opportunities – Churches can use solar energy and infrastructure upgrades as teaching tools, raising awareness about renewable energy, sustainability, and climate action.

4.3 Infrastructure Enhancements for Sustainability & Comfort

• Security Improvements – An additional porch door provides an extra layer of protection, safeguarding historical artefacts and ensuring a secure entrance when locked

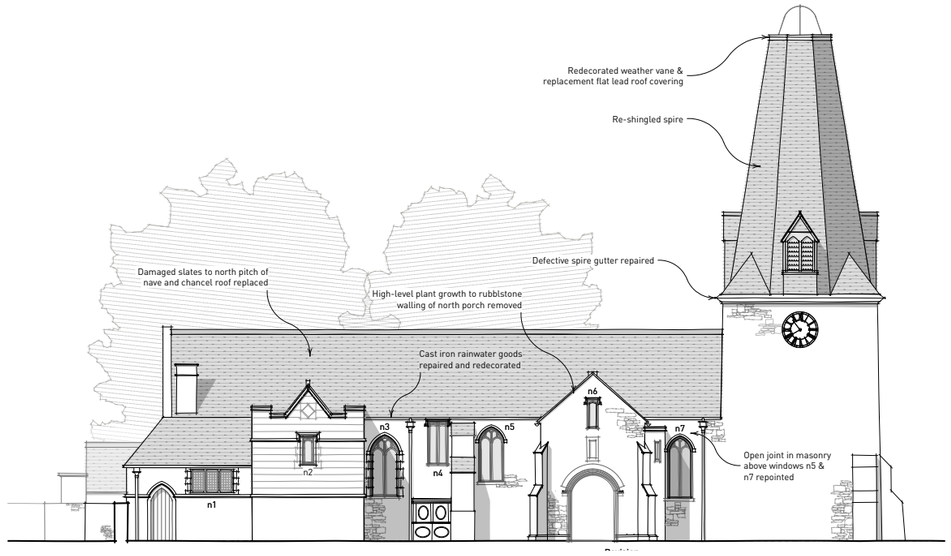
• Draft & Heat Loss Prevention – The porch door reduces cold air infiltration, helping maintain warmth and lower energy costs.

• Weather Shielding – This feature prevents wind, rain, and moisture intrusion, reducing environmental wear and ensuring long-term preservation.

North porch

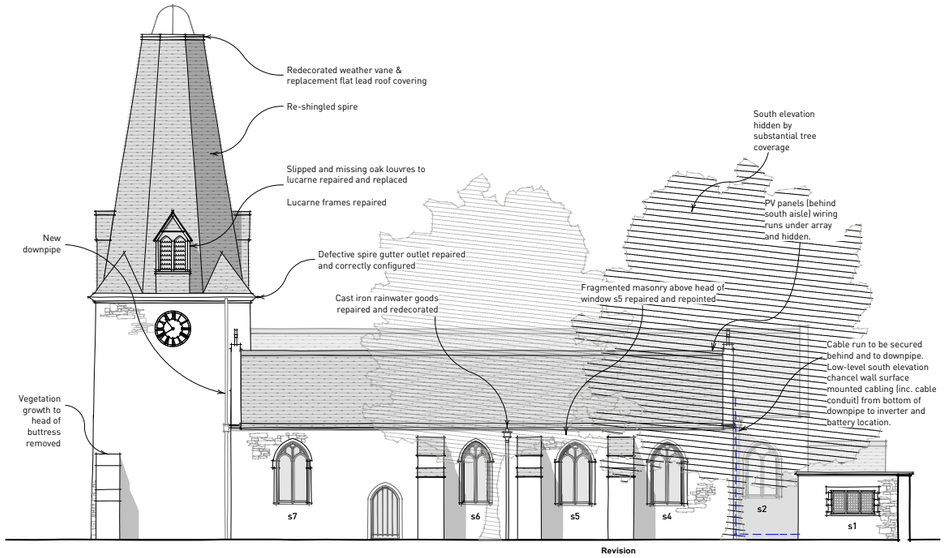
South elevation tree coverage

EXISTING NORTH ELEVATION



PROPOSED NORTH ELEVATION

EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION



PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION

5.0 PROPOSAL & IMPACT

The proposed installations will have an impact, but the level of harm is considered less than substantial, as most elements of the photovoltaic (PV) system and glass door are reversible. Some areas will require fixings for the PV mounts and the glass, but these are minimal and confined to small sections. Consequently, any harm is outweighed by the public benefits these enhancements will provide.

Further information is contained within the Statement of Need and the Statement of Significance.

5.1 PV System

As part of the broader renovation project, this section of the roof is being renewed due to nail sickness, providing an optimal opportunity to integrate photovoltaic (PV) panels in a manner that is both cost-effective and environmentally responsible compared to a standalone installation. The PV system will charge a battery and supply power to both the church and the new infrared heating system. The panels will be mounted slightly above the roof slate, ensuring minimal disruption to the building's architectural integrity. The roof covering will be replaced as part of the renovation, with intact existing slates carefully reused, and any necessary additional slates sourced locally to maintain consistency. Despite these enhancements, the roof's original design and character will remain unchanged, minimizing the visual and structural impact of the stand-off PV array. Furthermore, its placement within the valley ensures that the panels remain concealed from nearly all ground-level viewpoints.

5.2 Porch Door

~~The new glass doors are carefully considered addition that enhances accessibility while respecting the church's historic character. Mounted above the floor, it avoids altering the original structure. Designed to fit seamlessly within the existing opening, it maintains sight lines and preserves the aesthetic harmony of the architecture.~~

~~The glass ensures the space remains visually open while providing a discreet modern improvement in security and thermal comfort.~~

~~At present, the main timber door is kept closed to limit heat loss and draughts, which unfortunately reduces the welcoming appearance of the church. The glazed door will enable the timber door to remain open, improving visibility and openness to visitors while maintaining internal comfort and energy performance.~~

~~In exploring this element of the scheme, the PCC considered several alternatives, including:~~

- ~~A glazed lobby inside the church~~
- ~~A glazed lobby within the porch~~
- ~~The proposed solution, a glass screen fixed within the existing stone arch~~

~~Each option was assessed for its visual and physical impact on historic fabric. Fixing a glazed structure inside the church would have compromised the internal spatial character and required modification to a series of pews. A glass lobby within the porch would have caused harm to decorative carved features, such as the corbel at the head of the arch as well as the carved ribs on the ceiling.~~

~~The proposed solution, fixing the glazed screen to the flat internal face of the stone arch was considered the least harmful. This approach avoids interference with carved timberwork and stone monument and allows reversibility in line with best conservation practice. Fixings will be kept to a minimum and located within mortar beds where possible, this makes the intervention largely reversible except for the small number of fixings within the stone. The glazing will be proposed as Low-Iron Glass, which offers maximum clarity but minim glare, maintaining clear visibility~~ through the porch.

View from Parson's St

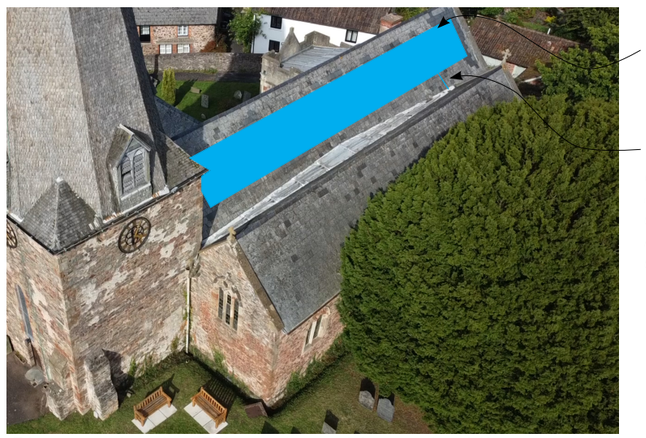
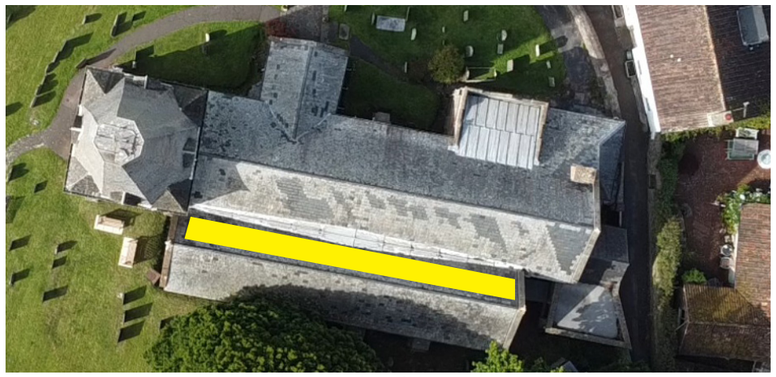


Diagram showing PV panels position and cabling route

5.3 Alternative PV locations

Alternative PV locations are highlighted in yellow below; this alternative location maintains a low visual impact however they do not have the optimal orientation for solar panels, any north-facing roof pitch significantly reduces their efficiency. Placing panels in highly visible areas would negatively affect the site's significance. The goal is to maximise sunlight exposure while minimising visual impact, making the proposed location the most suitable option.



Alternative PV location

5.4 Alternative sustainable energy solutions

Wind turbines: Visually intrusive and would affect both the building's significance and the Conservation Area.

Biomass: Presents several challenges, including the logistical difficulty of transporting materials to the village and the potential negative effects on air quality in a densely populated area. Additionally, access to suitable fuel storage and the high maintenance demands associated with biomass systems add to its drawbacks.

Ground source heat pump: The church is not suitable for a loop system due to the small and well used church yard surrounding the church. While boreholes could be an alternative, they would negatively impact the heavily used churchyard and incur significant, uncertain costs per borehole.

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

The current adopted National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), The Exmoor National Park Local Plan, together with Historic England's Advice Note 18 (HEAN 18) have informed the design decisions of this project. The proposal seeks to align itself with as many relevant policies and considerations as possible, which are outlined below.

6.1 Exmoor Local Plan 2011 - 2031- Adopted 5th July 2017

General policies:

- GP1 General Policy: Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development
- GP4 General Policy: The Efficient Use of Land and Buildings
- GP5 General Policy: Securing Planning Benefits - Planning Obligations

Conserving and enhancing exmoor:

- CE-S4 Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment
- CE-D3 Conserving Heritage Assets
- CE-S6 Design and Sustainable Construction Principles

Responding to climate change and managing resources:

- CC-S5 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Development

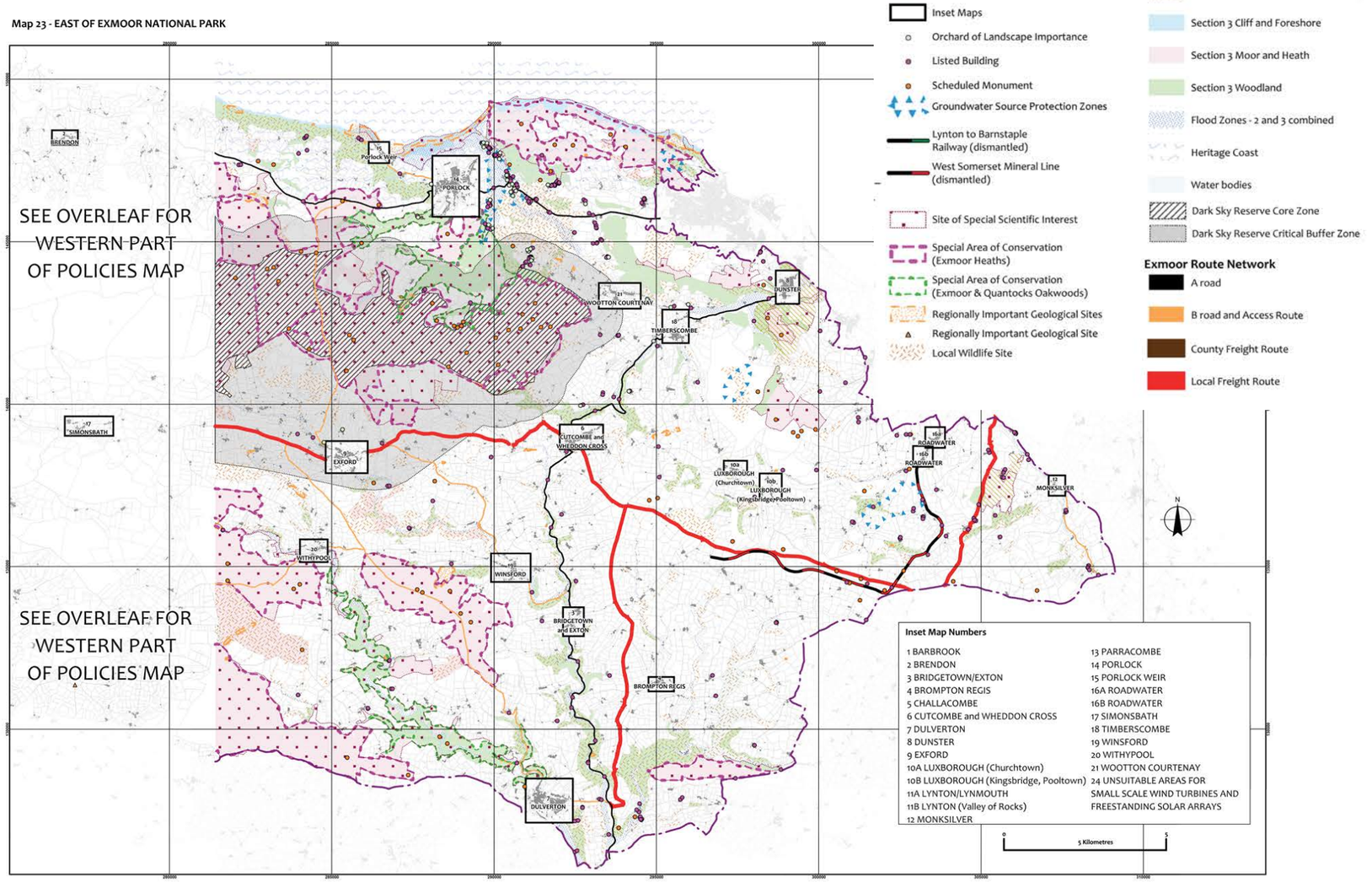
6.2 HISTORIC ENGLAND ADVICE NOTE 18

Point 96. Installation of photovoltaic and solar thermal panels will be acceptable in some cases.

- **Their installation can often be designed in a way that avoids harm to the special interest of listed buildings. Yet, they have the potential to be visually incongruous and harm building's architectural qualities. Care is required, especially in considering the aesthetic impact of panels on significant views of the building.**

Point 97. Installation of panels will generally be acceptable if hidden from view.

- **Locations which will normally have very minimal or no impact include valley roofs and behind parapets on flat or low pitched roofs.**



6.3 CE-S4 Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment.

The proposed development upholds Exmoor National Park's commitment to conserving and enhancing its local distinctiveness, cultural heritage, and historic environment. Additionally, the installation of solar panels has been designed so that they will not be easily visible from the surrounding area, minimising any potential impact on the setting of heritage assets. By ensuring that modern sustainable features do not detract from the aesthetic and historical significance of the location, the proposal carefully balances contemporary needs with the preservation of Exmoor's unique built heritage.

6.4 CE-D3 Conserving Heritage Assets

The proposals for incorporating solar panels into the church's structure represent a thoughtful approach to conserving this heritage asset and its setting while enhancing community access, education, and appreciation of West Somerset's historic environment. By adapting the church to include renewable energy sources, we ensure that its character remains intact, thus preserving its historical significance. The installation of PV panels not only promotes environmental stewardship but also creates educational opportunities for the community.

6.5 CE-S6 Design and Sustainable Construction Principles

The materials and design elements of a new building or conversion of an existing building, should complement the local context through the use of traditional and natural sustainable building materials. The use of locally-sourced sustainable building materials will be encouraged.

The use and activity of the development should not detrimentally affect the amenities of surrounding properties and occupiers including overlooking, loss of daylight, overbearing appearance, or other adverse environmental impacts.

Proposals that reduce carbon emissions further than required by Building Regulations, including through improving energy efficiency or through renewable and low carbon technologies, will be encouraged.

6.6 CC-S5 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Development

As stated in the "Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011-2031" Development proposals for small scale renewable energy schemes that assist in contributing towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving towards a carbon neutral National Park will be permitted where they:

1. Contribute towards meeting domestic, community or business energy needs within the National Park;

2. Are compatible with the landscape and seascape character of the locality and avoid the most sensitive landscapes;

3. Do not compromise the natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage or historic environment of the National Park, or lessen the enjoyment of its special qualities, either on their own, or in a combination with other schemes;

4. Do not adversely affect habitat quality or the maintenance of wildlife populations;

5. Provide environmental enhancement or community benefits wherever possible;

6. Conserve the amenity of the area including in relation to landscape and visual impact, tranquillity, access and recreation, air and water quality, noise, dust, odour and traffic generation;

7. And make provision for the removal of the facilities and reinstatement of the site, should it cease to be operational.

7.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

7.1 Flood Risk Assessment

Although in flood zone 3 the nature of the application only refers to new PV panels and glass doors so it is not a material consideration

7.2 Wildlife and Ecology

The PRA survey confirms the potential presence of brown long-eared bats and pipisrelle bats at St Dubricious. Refer to Helix ecology's report appended.

The first emergence survey was undertaken on 19th May 2025 and the second on 16th June

In general, the mitigation approach taken will be as follows:

- Erect bat boxes (one per species or genus) on site to accommodate any bats uncovered during works
- Reinstate existing roosts and access points (as determined by further survey) on a like-for-like or improved basis
- Remedial work to improve existing bat access in the spire interior

7.3 Agricultural Worker / Forestry Worker / Rural Business Dwelling
The application is not for a dwelling for an agricultural worker / forest worker or a rural business dwelling.

7.4 Air quality Assessment
It is considered that the proposals will not impact on air quality.

7.5 Arboricultural Implications Assessment
The existing trees and hedges on the site will not be affected by the works. See existing site plan

7.6 Community Involvement Statement
The application does not relate to a major development.

7.7 Contamination Report
Previous uses of the land are not likely to have resulted in contamination.

7.8 Crime & Disorder Statement
The application does not relate to a major development or creation of more than 5 dwellings.

7.9 Environmental Statement
The proposal does not fall within Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 of the Town and country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999

7.10 Dependent Relative's Annexe
The application does not relate to the creation of a dependent relative's annexe.

7.11 Financial Viability Assessment
The proposals do not require an economic viability assessment.

7.12 Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment
The application does not relate to a major development.

7.13 Lighting Scheme
The application does not include external lighting.

7.14 Noise Impact Assessment
It is not believed that the proposed development raises issues of disturbance.

7.15 Statement for Overcoming Reasons for Refusal
The application does not form a re-submission of a proposal that has already been refused.

7.16 Planning Obligations / Section 106 Agreement
The application does not relate to a major development.

7.17 Regeneration Statement
The application is not for a major development relating to a site identified by the Council as a priority site for regeneration.

7.18 Renewable Energy Statement
The application does not relate to a development of a significant size.

7.19 Retail Impact Assessment
The application does not relate to retail proposals.

7.20 Road Safety Audit (Stage 1)
The application does not include alterations to the highway.

7.21 Sewerage Statement
The application does not relate to major infrastructure works.

8.0 APPENDIX (INSET MAP)