

## 6. HARDWICK

The main characteristics of this character area are;

- The landmark Trinity Church tower is a focal point in many views
- Large detached and semi-detached houses with glimpsed views between of local landmarks
- Long panoramic views looking north from the brow of the hill at Holker Road and Hardwick Square South
- Tree-lined avenues

The early development of this area comprised mainly villa housing surrounding an open green, edged with railings, and was known as Hardwick Terrace and **Hardwick Street**. Large trees now dominate this space and it no longer functions as a public green. The character has also changed with the loss of several of the villas. The trees now mask the modern buildings of Haddon Court. Along Hardwick Street commercial buildings line the street following a gentle curve, leading on to Spring Gardens. Even the commercial buildings have the character of villa housing and may have been designed with upper floor lodgings in mind as an additional income. There are two particularly distinct groups of buildings on Hardwick Street – one group which straddles Spring Gardens, built from pink gritstone with buff stone dressings, white, bracketed timber eaves and upper storey bay windows, and another group facing the green that has a very unusual alliance of pink gritstone with yellow (Gault) brick dressings. Sadly, one of these has been completely degraded by painting in brown masonry paint. A few slightly older buildings sit alongside these.

Within the area surrounding **Hardwick Square**, the streets were quite narrow, compared with others laid out in the town at the same date. Avenues of street trees along the east and west sides of the street have grown to envelope many views of the buildings and the area is characterised by confined views dominated by the tree canopy and glimpses between the buildings of landmarks, to the west in Higher Buxton – the Town Hall, Buxton Museum & Art Gallery and the Catholic Church, to the east - the tower of Trinity Church.

The villas have some very subtle differences such as half-hipped roofs (Bank House) and wide overhanging bracketed eaves (Trinity Parsonage) but there is no single designer or builder that marks them out. They are unified by the use of stone and the consistent boundaries. The detached and semi-detached villas largely retain their original boundaries, with entrances marked by carved gritstone gateposts.



*Glimpses of landmarks - ▲ The Town Hall & Roman Catholic Church*

*▼ Trinity Church Tower*



At the bottom of Hardwick Square East the side flank of 4 Hardwick Mount is a focal point in the street, but is notable for the unsightly array of satellite dishes.

The area also has a large number of semi-public buildings, which were probably established here because it is a strategic location, roughly midway between the upper and lower areas of the town, although their original uses have changed; namely, Buxton Community Nursery (former Congregational Sunday School of 1881), St. Anne's Community Centre, and Buxton Infant School and the Register Office.

**Holker Road** follows an almost straight route from Hardwick Square down to Spring Gardens. By contrast, most of the other streets in the Hardwick area accommodated the steep changes in level with subtle changes of direction in the roads and changes in the direction and layout of the house plots. The land falls away steeply down to Spring Gardens. The buildings are striking for their prominence, particularly when viewed from Spring Gardens, where they sweep up the curve of the hill and are a picturesque group, with the landmark tower of Trinity Church rising behind them. On the west side of the road, the houses are set up high above the road and drop down the hill in pairs. To the east, a large stone outcrop defines the edge of the road, and above and beyond this sit the later post-war housing development of Kedleston Road and Curzon Road, which are only just visible from Holker Road. Houses are mainly detached or semi-detached (there is only one terrace). The gaps between the houses, the gradient of the hill, the gable frontages and the stepped boundary walls that are



▲ *Holker Road & Trinity Church*



▲ *Panoramic view of Combs Moss from Holker Road*

uniformly treated, make a staccato and interesting street frontage. From the crest of the hill there are wide-ranging views across the Wye valley to Combs Moss, only spoilt by the looming presence of the industrial units within the old railway sidings in the middle distance.

The south side of **Hardwick Square South** was developed shortly after Hardwick Square East and West and was fully developed by 1897. The long terraces of houses, with multiple two-storey timber bay windows have a strong cohesive character. The gable dormers and the rhythm of two-storey bay windows throughout punctuate and enliven the street. Much of the original timber eaves detail survives – scalloped eaves boards, decorative bargeboards, and timber bracketed cornice. They were lower status houses than their neighbours on Hardwick Square East and West, but they are typical of Buxton's Victorian architecture. They are well preserved and complete the fourth side of the square, complemented by street trees.

The little church that stands on its own, on the corner of Darwin Avenue (The Gospel Hall), was built by The Catholic Apostolic Church in 1896, mainly appealing to the upper classes, and designed by W. R. Bryden. The principles of the church, in attempting to return to the fundamental tenets of the early Christian church, were matched by the choice of Early English architecture. It has a graduated Westmoreland slate roof and apsidal chancel end, and is a simple design, and one of the best preserved surviving chapels in Buxton.