



Brampford Speke

Village Design Statement



Introduction

I have discovered a village called Brampford Speke on the Exe, which I seriously think is the most perfect I ever saw. One imagines some lord of the manor must exert himself to keep it in a picturesque state

George Gissing, 1891¹

What is this Village Design Statement (VDS)?²

Recommendations

These always appear in this colour and are given both in the body of the VDS where their context is presented and, for easy reference, as a complete list at the end.

However, it is important to note that the second part of the VDS, presenting local architectural precedents for modern design, also contains a series of recommendations in graphic form.

Preservation of the 'picturesque' appearance mentioned by Gissing is not easy in modern conditions, and would be undesirable if it led to our village becoming 'Brampford-in-aspic'. We hope to maintain its most valued, rural qualities whilst encouraging good modern design which, because it is good, takes account of its context. We greatly value the survivals from our village's past, but also acknowledge that change is a sign of life. Properly managed, change can both take account of tradition and create the traditions of the future.

Our VDS is the result of a communal effort to explore and explain what we treasure in Brampford Speke, and to see how any future physical changes might contribute to, rather than erode its character.² We have tried to follow the advice of the Countryside Agency's excellent advisory booklets on VDSs.

One of our main messages is that there no single, simple way of achieving good, appropriate design. We try to express a common understanding of how the village's natural features, spaces, buildings and materials fit together. A key point is that new buildings, additions or alterations should be considered in the context both of their immediate surroundings and of the village as a whole.

At the heart of the VDS is a centrefold aerial drawing of the village, explaining its intricate structure and highlighting three of its most important areas, where careful attention needs to be paid by planners to local characteristics,

as the three areas vary considerably in style and 'feel'. Some readers may wish to begin in the middle, with this drawing.

The section of the VDS before this centrefold describes the larger settings of the village, all of which are relevant to any Planning Applications. First we look very briefly at its temporal setting, from our prehistoric inhabitants to the passing of the village from the hands of the Speke family – for both have informed our landscape. Next we look at the landscape itself, which more than anything else determines the enduring quality of the village: the hills, river and lanes; the spaces, trees, walls and hedges which shape our environment and must be part of our own planning thoughts. Within this setting, development is somewhat controlled by the large number of our Listed Buildings and our large Conservation Area. We move then to buildings and spaces that for social or aesthetic reasons form focal points. These are also indicated on the centrefold aerial drawing.

After the centrefold, the emphasis of the VDS changes to specific guidance on matters important in Planning Applications: how building fit into or stand out from their surroundings; building materials and styles (perhaps the heart of this section); the question of scale; street furniture and significant architectural detailing, both of which have been sadly neglected of late.

Left: Section from the 1905 Ordnance Survey Map of Brampford Speke.

From left (clockwise): Chamberlains Cottage c.1950; Pynes Cottage c.1895 & The Agricultural Inn from the church tower c.1963.

Bramford Speke Parish Council welcomes and supports the Village Design Statement as a major contribution to the future development of our village. It will help ensure that any future development in the village maintains a balance between respect for the past and contemporary innovation.

Richard Tillett

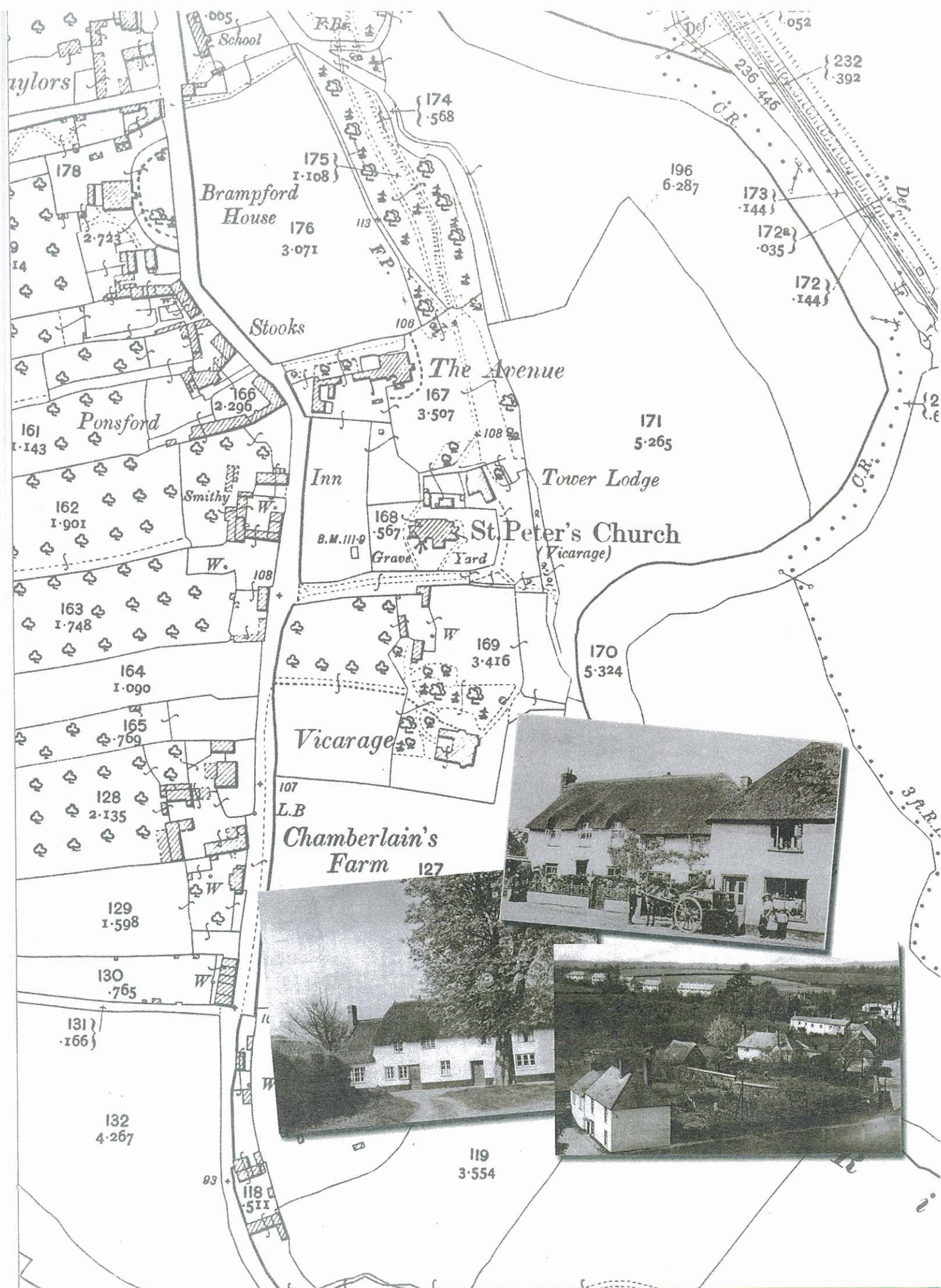
Chairman of the Parish Council

December 2003

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Brampford House

The Avenue

St. Peter's Church (Vicarage)

Chamberlain's Farm

Tower Lodge

Vicarage

Ponsford

Stooks

Smithy

Inn

aylors

School

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C.R.

C.R.

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Who is our VDS for?

Anyone considering a building alteration or development

We hope that the VDS will be seen as a framework and guide for all substantial physical changes in the village. The VDS will help those making planning applications, because

Where the design of a proposed development is consistent with relevant design policies and supplementary design guidance, planning permission should not be refused on design grounds unless there are exceptional circumstances. Design policies and guidance should focus on encouraging good design and should avoid stifling responsible innovation, originality or initiative. Such policies and guidance should recognise that the qualities of an outstanding scheme may exceptionally justify departing from them.³

East Devon District Council (the Planning Authority)

EDDC have adopted this VDS as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It will therefore help the Council to fulfil its planning responsibilities, which include protection of 'the natural and built environment' and rejection of poor designs in the light of 'supplementary design guidance agreed by the village and adopted by the local authority'; poor designs 'may include those inappropriate to their context, for example those clearly out of scale or incompatible with their surroundings.'⁴

The Village

The VDS will interest everyone who lives or has lived in the village, as a record of its inimitable charm and a statement of its desired direction.

What our VDS is not

We have followed guidelines for VDSs in not expressing firm views on

- The precise amount of additional development that should be permitted
- The line of the built-up area boundary
- Sites/areas of possible development
- Preferred types of development – affordable housing, executive housing, commercial premises etc.

Other issues have been raised but are outside the remit of the VDS:

- The overall social and economic future of the village (a 'Village Plan')
- 'Undergrounding' of obtrusive overhead wires (a major problem for the future)
- Traffic management – parking, speeds etc
- Provision of play spaces and other recreational facilities
- Provision of amenities such as Post Office and shop
- Tree planting.

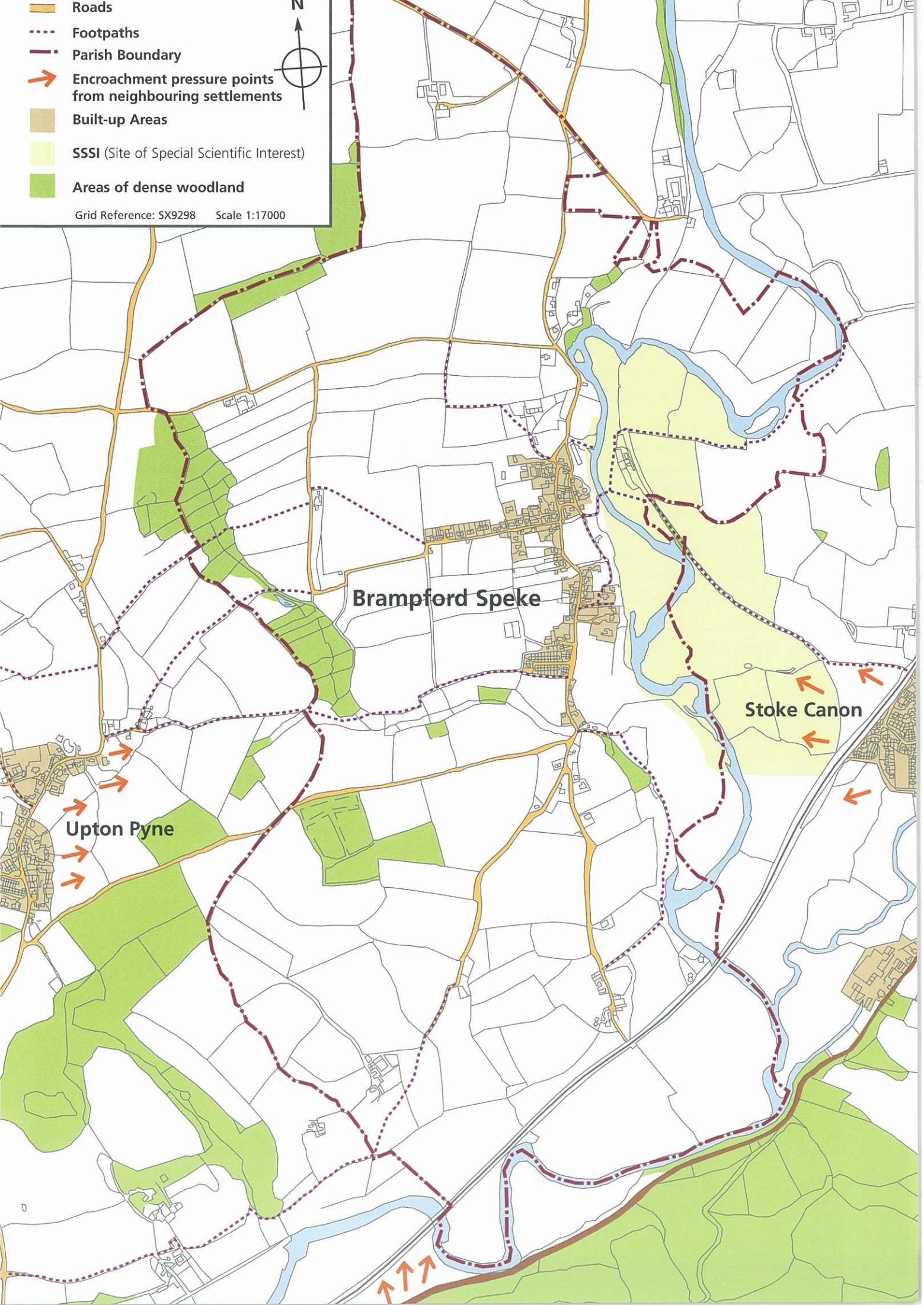
Villagers, working through the Parish Council, may want to take some or all of these issues forward.



- Roads
- Footpaths
- Parish Boundary
- Encroachment pressure points from neighbouring settlements
- Built-up Areas
- SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)
- Areas of dense woodland



Grid Reference: SX9298 Scale 1:17000



Brampford Speke

Stoke Canon

Upton Pyne

The village then & now

Then

The rich land in and around Brampford Speke has been occupied since prehistoric times. The nearby so-called 'Upton Pyne Cemetery' of 1550-1400 B.C. holds some nineteen Bronze Age barrows, five within Brampford Speke parish boundary.⁵ The cemetery groupings suggest that 'several communities used the burying ground' with a 'track through the cemetery to the ford at Brampford Speke or at Fortescue'.⁶

In 944 Edmund King of Wessex sold 'Brentefordland beside the Exe' to Athelstan of East Anglia. Domesday Book tells us that 'Branfortune' (Branfor settlement) belonged before 1066 to Wulfnoth. After the Conquest it belonged to Normans. When Domesday was compiled it was owned by Geoffrey of Mowbray, Bishop of Coutances, with land for 8 ploughs, 60 acres of pasture, 8 of woodland, 10 villagers, 8 smallholders and 6 slaves, giving a population of about 120 including wives and children.⁷ In 1093 it passed to Geoffrey's nephew Robert, Earl of Northumberland, and then to Juhel, Lord of Totnes, and his descendants. The Lord of the Manor in the early twelfth century was their tenant Walter de Treminet, whose grand-daughter married Richard Espec or Speke between 1162 and 1165.⁸ In the thirteenth century the settlement became known as Brampford Speke. Apart from a brief fourteenth-century interlude, the Speke family held the estate until the early eighteenth century (but did not live here after the fifteenth). The ecclesiastical parish (about 1250 acres) is in Wonford Hundred in the Archdeaconry and Diocese of Exeter.⁹

Now

The small size of the village, some 150 households, informs its visual and social character. (The community's pleasure in this smallness is reflected in the local name *Round the World* for the rectangular walk up Sandy Lane, turning right until you are back where you started.) Anything other than very modest growth of the village would eventually alter its distinctive nature and strong social cohesion.

A sense of rural remoteness, remarkable in a village so close to Exeter, is created by the combination of small size, wide surrounding spaces, adjoining river, position on an escarpment, density of trees, and limited access by winding lanes, including a narrow bridge at the southern entrance to the village from Exeter.

The resident population is still partly rural (we have five farms) but inevitably most of us now work outside the village. Non-residents are attracted by the pub, School, Village Hall, Church and Exe Valley Way.

Recommendations

- 1 Preserve the village's rural setting and 'feel' (and the parish's prehistoric barrows).
- 2 Retain the village's small size as long as possible. Ideally the number of homes should not increase by more than the historic rate of roughly ten per decade.
- 3 The village's limits (roughly defined by existing buildings) should be retained. Any exceptions should be small-scale and of unusual merit or communal benefit.
- 4 The village's approaches (and their hedges) should be regarded as 'sensitive areas' and their rural nature preserved.
- 5 The rural quality of Brampford Speke should be preserved by resisting development originating elsewhere, but spreading towards the village.



Two views from the Church tower: looking South (top) and looking North West towards Broad Park.



Above: Looking down from the village over the river plain.

Above Right : Looking down on the village from Burr ridge Hill. The edge of the escarpment is just beyond the church.

Far Right: Approaches to the village 'pinch' before opening out: Lake Bridge at the southern approach.

Below: A panoramic view of the village which clearly illustrates its 'secret appearance'. Woodslea is pictured to the left and the houses of Broadpark to the far right.

Landscape, river, lanes

Brampford Speke's visual and physical relationship to surrounding landscape is possibly the most important aspect of its appeal, and may be the most enduring. The village is spectacularly sited on a 17-metre high bluff on the west side of the River Exe, which meanders back and forth across its eastern boundary some nine times (a changing number because the river often changes course). It is the changing meander of the Exe in this area which makes it an internationally significant site. The ford of 'Brampford' is at the northern end of the village, where access lanes dip to river level. At the southern end, a little lake (the Westcountry word for 'stream') gives its name to the narrow Lake Bridge.

East Devon Conservation Area Appraisal: Brampford Speke (EDCAABS) notes the village's 'soft edges',¹⁰ particularly but not exclusively to the west, where gardens gently give way to woodland and farmland between Brampford Speke and its twin village, Upton Pyne (the joint parish magazine being called *Speke Up*). This boundary extends into open countryside associated with the several farms whose holdings extend right into the village (see the aerial view overleaf).





EDCAABS observes that ‘views across or beyond the village are important’.¹¹ From within the village there are fine views over the Exe Valley to distant hills.

Two estates still partly in public ownership, Stooks Close, and Sandy Lane running into Broadpark, run at right-angles to the main line (and the main styles) of the village. They mostly enjoy good views to south and west, and to south and north, respectively. Varied, rural road approaches to the village are important to its nature and perception: they should not be seen as peripheral.

From the river plain, the view up to the village is important: the village’s ‘secret’ appearance and high situation make skyline properties particularly sensitive sites for development.

All the approaches ‘pinch’ space before revealing the inner open areas of the village (see centrefold): at Lake Bridge from the west and south; at Sandy Lane from the west, defined by its banks and walls; at two narrow climbs from the north; and from the east, across the river valley, over the river-bridge and up the steep path to the School.

Recommendations

- 6 In the interests of the village’s western ‘soft edge’, back development (along the line of Muddy Lane, or along the ends of the gardens to houses along Main Street) should be discouraged.
- 7 Public views from within the village, including those from Stooks Close and Sandy Lane, should be preserved by ensuring that any new properties or modifications do not obscure them.
- 8 In order to retain the ‘secret’ appearance of the village, skyline properties should be kept as low as possible, with unobtrusive profiles.
- 9 The characteristic ‘pinches’ formed by narrowness of lanes and Lake Bridge should be retained.
- 10 On the village periphery any new building should respect the local landscape of rolling fields and woodland.



Spaces

In 1850 White described Brampford Speke as ‘a pleasant scattered village’.¹² This spacious quality is easily lost: *EDCAABS* notes that the village with its close proximity to Exeter ‘appears to be under some threat’ from inappropriate infill.¹³ The dispersed layout has already been compromised by post-1945 infill.

Green fields and gardens within the village have three important functions. *EDCAABS* notes that the grazed 3-acre field known as The Green, east of and belonging to Brampford House, with Green Cottage at its north-western corner, gives an unusual air of rural space and activity to the geographical centre of the village.¹⁴ The community has long cherished this space as a ‘lung’. All the principal internal fields counterbalance adjacent areas of high building density. The Green and Chamberlains Field have served as venues for village gatherings (such as on the Queen’s Silver and Golden Jubilees).

The open spaces alter from open, agricultural fields to more concentrated, enclosed areas near the centre of the village. These enclosures give a ‘sense of place’; for example, the space of The Green is arguably a stronger feature than all the buildings surrounding and defining it. Similarly, Chapel Road can be seen as a space rather than a collection of buildings and walls. The space itself unifies the parts.



Recommendations

- 11 The village’s spacious, open quality should be maintained by discouraging inappropriate infill, including on green environs of existing properties (*EDCAABS* observes ‘Further infill of new housing in or near the conservation area should be avoided.’)
- 12 The spacious, open quality should be maintained by resisting over-extension of existing houses, resulting in cramping. (Subdivision of large properties into several dwellings is a different matter, though it too increases traffic).
- 13 Preserve the privately-owned Green and the glebe-land Chamberlain’s Field as green spaces, for their open aspect and occasional communal use.
- 14 The dense, enclosed nature of the socially important Chapel Road/School Lane area should be respected and improved. (The re-opening of a shop/PO would greatly contribute to this).

Left: Chamberlains field is regularly used for village gatherings such as the Queen’s Golden Jubilee celebrations.

Below Left: The space outside the school, by the memorial Red Oak at the southern end of Chapel Road, becomes a busy meeting place at either end of the school day. The space is defined by the former Post Office, the school hedge on the left and the tall wall on the right.





Marsh Field

The Green

The Splatt

Chamberlains Field

Trees

Several tree-groups are or were of great importance to the character of the village. EDCAABS notes that the village had ‘an originally planned landscape bordering the Exe’ and mentions ‘vestiges of a planned Victorian landscape at Barnhill, its typical dark foliage including Wellingtonias and Rhododendrons.’¹⁵ The planned landscape included the once-magnificent trees in the grounds of Milton Lodge. The former stand is eroding, and the latter was largely destroyed in the great 1989 gale. Both are vital to the view of the village from the river plain.

The Green is partly defined by the avenue of pollarded limes to the south leading to The Avenue; the limes also help to frame the approach to the village from the south. It is important that the original tree-framing of the Green on three sides should be maintained and developed – particularly the specimen trees in the Victorian planting along the escarpment.

Important specimen trees include a Douglas Fir in front of Brampford House, fine Copper Beeches and many Oaks behind Green Cottage, a young memorial Red Oak at the south end of Chapel Road and a young Oak at the entrance to Church Lane, replacing the ‘spreading Chestnut tree’ under which donations in aid of the church were traditionally collected during St Peter’s Week, turning the end of Church Lane into a social space. The evergreens by the Church have diminished in recent years. Although some small-scale commemorative planting has taken place, it is important that the ancient (and symbolic) tradition of large, long-lived trees in a churchyard be perpetuated.



*Above:
Vestiges of the planned Victorian landscape at Barnhill.*



A large new collection of specialist oaks and other trees in the grounds of Woodslea will eventually enrich that part of the landscape, especially from the public footpath across the estate and from the northern access to the village. The high bank below The Avenue has recently been replanted with a variety of trees, including noble trees, which will eventually contribute to restoration of this secret quality. Much more needs to be done elsewhere.

When fine trees outside the School and outside Home Living died some years ago, the loss altered the whole ambience of the north end of the village. More recently, the southern end was much diminished by loss to disease of the great Scots Pine in the front garden of St Crispin's. The churchyard evergreens, important to the skyline round the landmark of the church, have diminished.

EDCAABS notes how in public areas 'hedgerow trees predominate' though the claim that 'many elms are becoming re-established up to a height of 12 metres'¹⁶ seems to have been over-optimistic: Dutch Elm disease is still at work. As late as the early 20th century, the many orchards on the western side of the village were protected by an elm windbreak which must, like the trees on the east, have contributed to the sense of enclosure, though without destroying the merging of garden/orchard and field-landscape.

Recommendations

- 15 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) should be placed on major village trees currently outside the Conservation Area.
- 16 To recapture our diminished 'planned landscape' along the eastern side of the village, and other landmarks (perhaps including the western boundary's windbreak trees [recorded in the early map on the inside cover]), create a long-term programme of informed tree-planting.
- 17 Planting schedules, especially for major trees, should form part of the planning conditions of any new development.



Above:

The fine Copper Beech & Oaks behind Green Cottage.

Below: Looking north from the church tower; across The Avenue (its avenue of pollarded limes on the left), to Milton Lodge and Barnhill with their remaining specimen trees crowning the bluff which drops sharply to the (invisible) river. On the far right in the middle distance a newly important line of trees marks the disused railway line.

Opposite: The walls and hedges unify groups of buildings and lead the eye on a journey through the village (in Chapel Road, Main Street and Sandy Lane respectively).

Below Left: Hedgerows at the upper end of Sandy Lane unify groups of buildings and lead the eye through this intimately narrow space.

Below: The village is noted for unusually tall 'extensive traditional boundary walls in cob & stone with capping in tiles or slate'. The precedent was continued in elaborate Victorian brick.

Recommendations

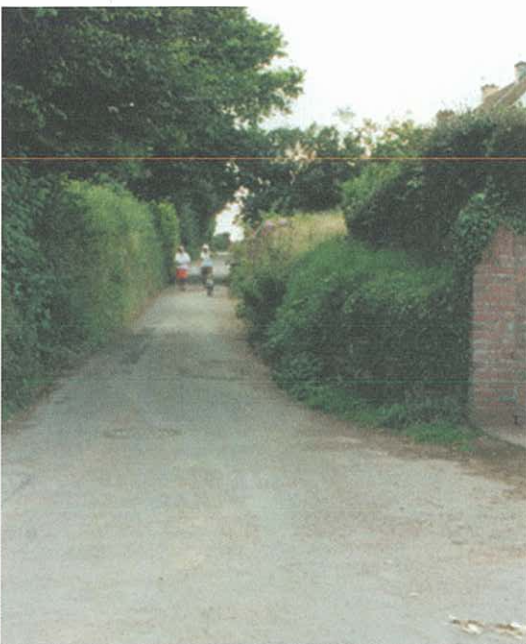
- 18 Preserve the high walls that we have (even Unlisted ones) and encourage inclusion of others in Planning Applications, particularly where walls front a road or lane and so contribute to visual continuity.
- 19 Also in the interests of visual continuity, ancient and other hedges should be properly maintained, and the creation of new hedges encouraged.
- 20 In the areas where spaces are defined by houses fronting a road or lane (as was the case in Main Street, and still is in Chapel Road and the lower end of Sandy Lane), this pattern should be retained in any Applications.

Boundary walls & hedges

The village is noted for unusually tall 'extensive traditional boundary walls in cob and stone with capping in tiles or slate', and in 'stone capped either in pantiles or slate'.¹⁷ Boundary walls help to enclose public spaces, as by the Agricultural Inn and the Church; they also form farmyards and gardens. Walls of rough texture, often rounded where they change direction, and finished with pantile and ridge tiles as copings, give a very solid, rooted sense of permanence.

The village and its environs hold many hedges so old that they are as much historical monuments as any cherished building. It has become clear that hedge removal could lead to our 'losing irreplaceable evidence for the history of the landscape'. Some Devon boundary hedges are from c. 650 A.D. (1341 years old).¹⁸ Many Brampford Speke hedges are at least 1000 years old.¹⁹

Garden walls and hedgerows unify groups of buildings and lead the eye on a journey through the village. Often, the closeness of walls and hedges to the roadway creates a sense of enclosure, very high walls and hedges often creating intimate spaces.







Recommendation

- 21 Buildings at focal points, whether visual or social, should be treated with particular sensitivity.

Buildings & spaces forming focal points

The Church

Its present appearance is 'disappointing. Except for the W[est] tower it was entirely rebuilt in 1852-3 and is dull'.²⁰ The main building was stripped of its medieval detail, and had a north aisle added.²¹ However, as is the way with churches, ours is a local landmark and a valued village focal point. Church Lane draws gatherings during weddings, funerals etc.

The Agricultural Inn

The 'Aggie' and its courtyard form a major 'social space' but one different from that in Church Lane. (It once housed the farrier and wheelwright, and later on, the petrol pump, which local tradition claims was occasionally connected to the cider barrels in error, and *vice versa*.) The Aggie attracts the outside world to the village, and offers a secular as opposed to a religious focal point.

The School

The Victorian School is different again, its formal decorated brickwork appropriate to its original, formal, educational function. The School also brings crowds into the village: its success is such that the influx of parents and children sometimes renders the 'secure area' dangerous.

The Vicarage, Barnhill & Taylors Farm

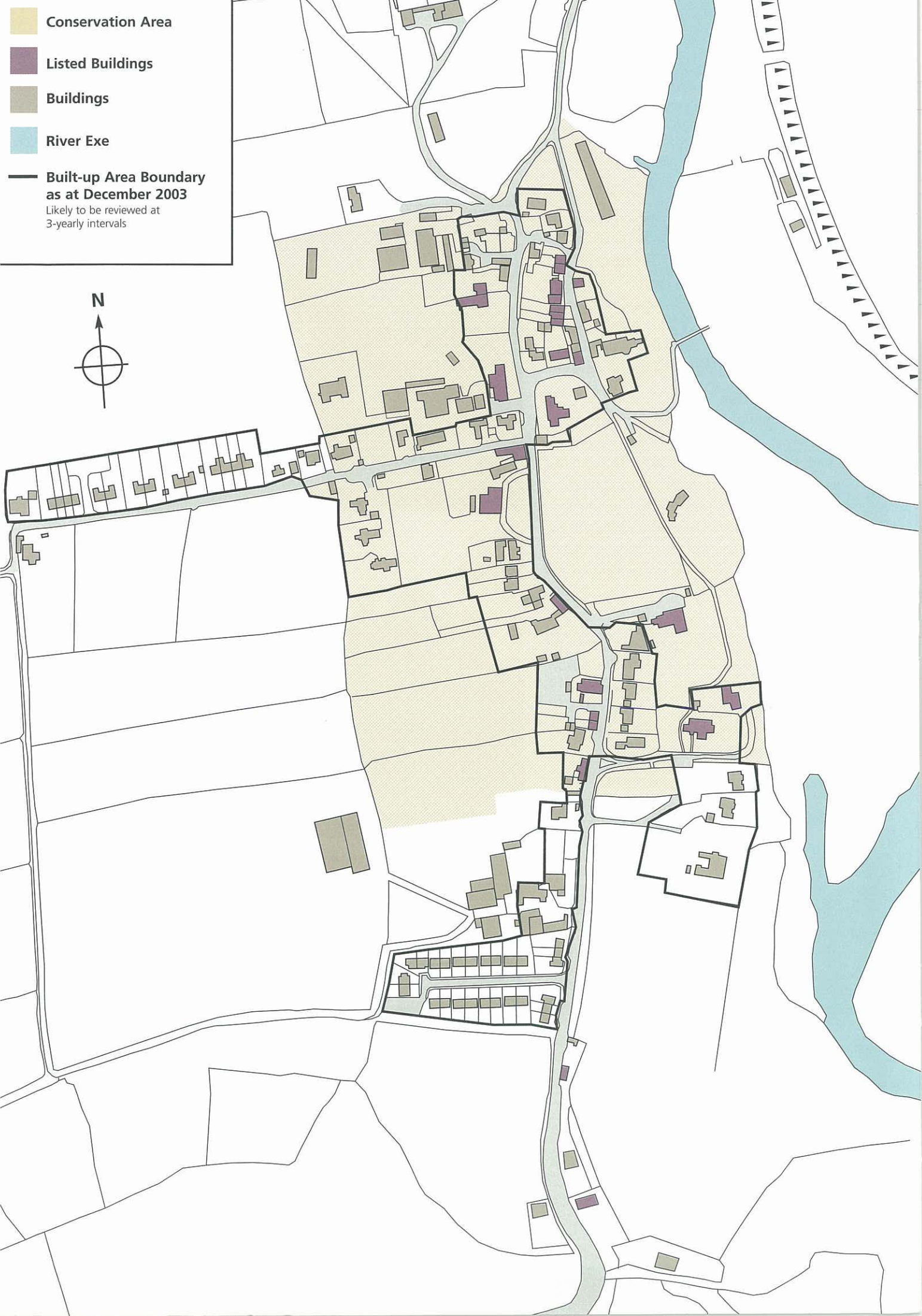
The Vicarage and Barnhill are imposing Victorian houses which in different ways inform the character of the village, particularly as seen from the river plain. They stand out in height, decorative brickwork and distinctive, gabled, Victorian style. Among the medieval houses, Taylors Farm forms a focal point by virtue of its length and location opposite the end of School Lane.



Main Picture: St Peter's Church.

From Top: The Agricultural Inn; St. Peter's Primary School and The Old Vicarage (the earlier vicarage is seen on the left of the front cover).

-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Buildings
-  Buildings
-  River Exe
-  Built-up Area Boundary
as at December 2003
Likely to be reviewed at
3-yearly intervals



Listed buildings in context

As the village boasts a high number of Listed buildings, note should be taken of the Government's 'The Setting of Listed Buildings':

... the desirability of preserving the setting of the building. The setting is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function.²²

In the past, gardens of our Listed buildings have been reduced, and inappropriate development has been permitted close by them. The same document also notes:

The setting of individual listed buildings very often owes its character to the harmony produced by a particular grouping of buildings (not necessarily all of great individual merit) and to the quality of spaces created between them. Such areas require careful appraisal when proposals for development are under consideration, *even if the redevelopment would only replace a building which is neither listed nor immediately adjacent to a listed building. Where a listed building forms an important visual element in a street it would probably be right to regard any development in the street as being within the setting of the building. A proposed high or bulky building might also affect the setting of a listed building some distance away, or alter views of a historic skyline.*²³

The Conservation Area

First designated in 1976, the Conservation Area (CA) is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Although there are similarities between the objectives of a VDS and of a CA, there are also differences: our VDS embraces the whole village not just a 'privileged' part of it; and it attempts to take a wider view of design and development issues than the CA.

In fact, the main advantage of a Conservation Area is largely theoretical. One of its intentions is that proposals for development within it are given 'special attention' by planning authorities, but our village's past experience is that this has not succeeded in ensuring that all such development is appropriate or informed.

The presence of a Conservation Area in a small village could result in differences of treatment between developments inside and outside the Area. We feel that all parts of our village merit the same degree of design consideration, and we are pleased to note that East Devon District Council are putting much more emphasis on design issues when considering planning applications.

Recommendation

- 22 Government guidelines on the care needed in development in the vicinity of Listed buildings (even in the same street) should be followed.



Above
Listed Buildings (from top) – Brampford House,
Home Living and The Lodge (much altered on two of the
other sides)

How buildings fit in or stand out

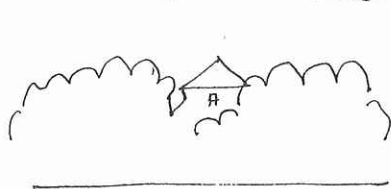
Recommendations

- 23 Any prominence of new buildings or modifications should be justified in terms of visual or social function.
- 24 Planning applications should be required to contain scaled drawings or montages showing the relationship of the building to its immediate surroundings, including any effect on neighbouring views, so that its effect may be fully understood.
- 25 The character of lanes defined by strong boundaries formed by hedges and walls should be respected.

Having looked at patterns and characteristics within the village, we now look at ways in which buildings conform to these or contradict them. 'Standing out' is of itself neither good nor bad. We can choose to embed a new building or modification into its surroundings or deliberately disconnect it from them. The effect of 'standing out' depends on the significance and quality of the building.

Focal points may be either visual or social. Visual focal points may occur because of prominent position (for example, Green Cottage, Cob End, Lake Bridge Cottage) or because they differ in style, size or material. Social focal points may be spaces or buildings—anywhere with a special atmosphere created by communal use. This section identifies some of the principal 'standing out' features of the village.

Three kinds of relationship of a building to surroundings



A building integrated with its surroundings



A building dominating its surroundings (this may be desirable if it is a church tower)



A building lacking connection to its surroundings, having no overlaps with nearby trees, the landscape element having been weakened

Boundaries as links

Buildings standing out and separate from their surroundings



Showing how walls and planting help to integrate buildings into their context



CONTINUOUS BOUNDARY THEME
OVERLAPS & LAYERS
BUILDINGS INTO SURROUNDINGS

ADD ON LINKS CONVEY
BUILDING TO SURROUNDINGS

Contrasting treatments of design on the same site: a narrow lane with strong boundaries formed by walls and banks



A building integrated with its surroundings



A building divorced from its surroundings

A digital mock-up: the boundary bank has been removed, contrary to the character of the lane, and retaining no overlap between the building and its surroundings. Even the style of the building is different from indigenous forms.

Building materials & style

Design considerations include scale, layout, building density, height, materials, outlines/shapes, and architectural styles. *EDCAABS* notes that the village shows a 'rich variety of traditional building materials: cob, brick, local volcanic trap, red sandstone, thatch, Bridgwater pantiles and natural slate'. All these go hand-in-hand with style. Unfortunately, this variety can all too easily seem to license stylistic chaos. Materials, elements of design, windows, doors, claddings and painted surfaces appropriate in conservation and development will vary in each of the varied areas of the village.

Stone

This is rare in the village as a major building material. The church is a special case. Station Halt (the former Railway Station, c. 1884) the two-storey Station House and the now destroyed railway bridges nearby were built in 'Great Western Railway' stone with a cavalier disregard of local materials. However, soft red sandstone ('Heavitree Red') and volcanic trap ('Thorverton Blue') were used extensively for boundary walls, as at The Old Stables (where the wall has had to be 'reconstructed'), and under render at the northern end of School Lane and elsewhere.

Brick

Less formal than the classical style are some impressive Victorian homes: The Vicarage, the School, Chamberlains, Barnhill and the early 20th-century (much-altered) The Lodge. The major brick buildings often show decorated string courses, corbelled brickwork, elaborate chimneys and ornamental arches. However, because this material is in a minority in the village, is not a local material, and because modern brick lacks Victorian quality and detailing, it is less appropriate than others.

Rendered Cob

Much of the vernacular building (medieval through 19th-century) is of cob on a rubble-stone plinth, with thatched roofs. The best medieval examples include Stooks, and 'Taylors and Home Living, an outstanding pair of late medieval farm houses'.²⁴ Conversion of, or construction to this style can be very effective, as in the street elevation of the Old Barn conversion at Chamberlains (see p.22), its predominance of wall area over window, irregular window-spacing and heavy wood detail retaining the massive quality of the original. Cob also sets a precedent for new building in its render's colour and surface; high ratio of wall to window; organic quality; uneven, deliberately sloped walls; buttresses and deep reveals—all giving a sense of weight and solidity.

Rendered Stone or Rendered Brick (Classical)

A number of our 19th-century buildings are in stucco over rubble stone, brick and occasionally other materials: The Avenue, Brampford House and Bootham House. Note how the latter lacks the deep reveals usual in the classical style because it is in fact a thin-walled timber-frame house; also, the small scale of the delicate dormers ensures that they do not dominate. From the river plain Fortescue (actually part of Netherexe parish), beautifully set in its landscape, is important.

Recommendation

- 26 In the interests of visual harmony, the use of brick (except under render) in any new buildings should be avoided.



Above (from top) – Chamberlains, Chapel Road Cottages and Bootham House from Main Street, Chapel Road and the end of Sandy Lane respectively.

The marriage of Cob & Classical as a precedent for modern design

The 'picturesque' quality of the village enjoyed by Gissing (see inside front cover fold-out) largely survives in the preservation and re-creation of thatch and cob. The identification of modern style elements sympathetic to this vernacular tradition has been one of our concerns. However, traditional cob and thatch no longer predominate in the village. On the contrary, even in the Conservation Area, our village now shows a deeply uneasy style mix and a careless proliferation of urban styles. As a result, only by careful planning can we hope to retain and create some stylistic harmony (though not aspiring to the narrow style-range typical of the loveliest towns and villages such as Bath, Bibury, Culross, Ludlow, Painswick).

Fortunately, we have a local precedent for unity. In the Conservation area, Cob and Classical once stood in surprising harmony: Chamberlains Cottage, Cobblestones, Daisy Cottage, Stooks, the L-shaped group of eight nineteenth-century cob on stone-plinth cottages, half of which fronted the cobbled street (where Swinburne and Bramblings now lie back, breaking the line of lane-fronting houses), the coach-house and loose-boxes of Brampford House (now 1 and 2 The Old Stables) and the early 19th-century classical Brampford House and Bootham House. Within this visual unity, variety was provided by the irregular size and placing of windows in cob, by the symmetrical regularity of apertures in the classical style, and by thatch contrasting with tiles.

Unfortunately, these two styles, once held in harmony by simple 'portrait' apertures and rendered surfaces, were badly parodied in places, for example by mock-Tudor detailing when there is no Tudor precedent at all in the village.



Above: Church View cottages (note the 3 front doors) and the Agricultural Inn, circa 1911. This clearly illustrates the visual harmony that exists between buildings in the cob and in the classical traditions.

The nature of that harmony may be a precedent for our future. The harmony is characterised by five elements:

1. Render. The plastering of cob or stone visually links buildings made in these two building materials and in the two otherwise very different styles associated with them: the medieval (or nineteenth-century) cob cottage and the contrasting, formal, 'classical' style. Render links not only houses but also terraces, barns, outbuildings, walls, etc., and embraces groups of buildings and spaces. Render creates large, untextured surfaces which unify both kinds of building and draw attention to the three following elements:

2. Large wall to window ratio. In both cob and classical, there is much more wall than window/door: the walls' solidity predominates.

3. Vertical apertures ('portrait' as opposed to 'landscape'). In both cob and classical, windows have a vertical rather than a horizontal emphasis. (This is often lost in modern replacements of early windows).

4. Deep reveals. Also often lost in modern replacements is the important sense of weight and solidity created by windows and doors being set back several inches and being in walls which have rounded corners.

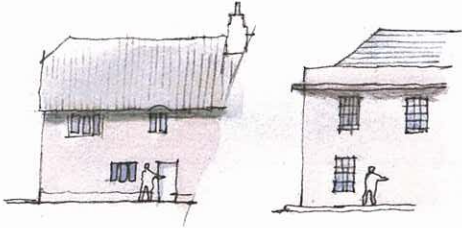
5. Steep roofs. These originate from thatch roofs requiring a pitch of at least 45°.

Recommendations

- 27 To maintain and develop architectural harmony, ill-informed parody of earlier styles and 'old' styles without local precedent should be avoided.
- 28 To maintain and develop visual harmony use render where possible.
- 29 To maintain and develop visual harmony, maintain a high proportion of wall to window where cob and classical conventions are prevalent.
- 30 To maintain and develop visual harmony, and the sense of solidity typical of our older buildings, use deep window and door reveals where possible.

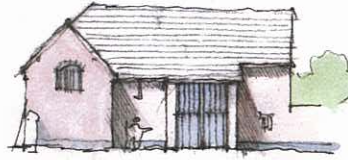
Wall to window ratio

TRADITIONAL

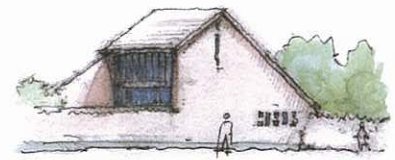


LARGE AREAS OF WALL RELATIVE TO WINDOW ON A SINGLE ELEVATION

POSSIBLE MODERN APPROACHES



LARGE AREAS OF WALL RELATIVE TO WINDOW ON A SINGLE ELEVATION



A LARGE AREA OF GLAZING SET IN LARGER AREAS OF WALL

Window shape

TRADITIONAL



VERTICAL WINDOW APERTURES IN CLASSICAL STYLE BUILDING

MODERN APPROACHES

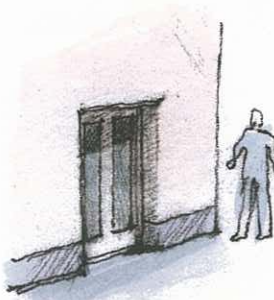


WINDOWS WHICH ARE INFACHT HORIZONTAL ARE GIVEN SOME VERTICAL EMPHASIS BY THE USE OF HEAVY MULLIONS (UPRIGHTS WITHIN THE WINDOW APERTURE).

VERTICAL WINDOW APERTURES IN MODERN BUILDING

Door and window reveals

TRADITIONAL



SOLIDITY CREATED BY WINDOWS AND DOORS BEING SET BACK SEVERAL INCHES IN WALLS

UNSATISFACTORY MODERN APPROACH



ABSENCE OF DEEP REVEAL DESTROYS THE SENSE OF SOLIDITY AND PERMANENCE

What not to do

Ignore all the above and you produce 'urban pattern-book' design totally 'out of keeping' with the village, i.e. features such as:

SHALLOW PITCHED ROOF
'LANDSCAPE' WINDOWS
SMALL WALL TO WINDOW RATIO



NO DEPTH OF REVEALS
INAPPROPRIATE MIX OF MATERIALS
MOCK-TUDOR DETAIL WITHOUT LOCAL PRECEDENT

Agricultural buildings as a precedent for modern design

Recommendations

- 31 Huddled agricultural outbuildings are a useful precedent in the design of small groups of (possibly 'affordable') dwellings.
- 32 Both heavy-weight barns and the contrasting, open-sided, wood-frame linhays may offer very different design precedents, under appropriate circumstances (i.e. linhays stand in relation to other buildings, not in isolation).



Agricultural buildings, like all historic buildings in the village, form an important precedent for new work.

There are essentially two kinds of agricultural precedent: that provided by barns and other farm buildings, and the quite different precedent provided by the linhay.

Barn Conversions

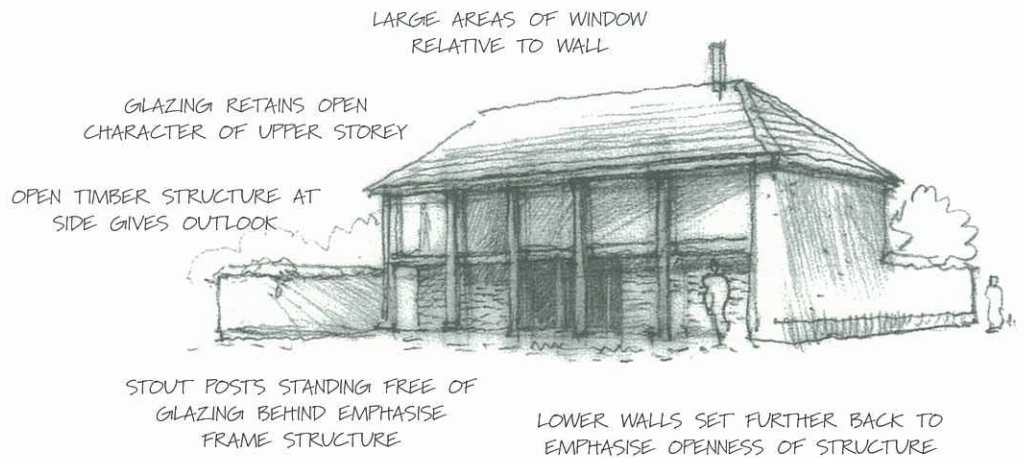
Barns, whether of cob or brick, offer two main design precedents:

1. **They often had large apertures** (double doors, tallets at first floor level) that may serve as precedents for large areas of glazing which, however, because of the large wall area of barns, do not disturb the overall high wall to window ratio.
 2. **Apertures were relatively random** (non-classical) in position, allowing great variety of possible aperture positions in modern buildings.
- We have an excellent example of an imaginative barn conversion in the village: The Old Oak Barn (converted in 1993).

The north side of The Old Oak Barn before and after conversion.

- The building was completely re-roofed with the original slates, preserving the roofline and pitch.
- Dark wooden sections echoed the original large, dark apertures and were set back, emphasising adjacent walls.
- An upper storey was added, with two dormers and a gable.
- An original lean-to (its abutment with the end wall on the left is visible in the top image) was echoed in the porch over the front door (behind the tree in the lower image).
- Skylights were added to bring light into what was the roof-space.
- This elevation and the one facing the road (above) but not the brick north and west sides were rendered, thus providing links both to the nearby brick farmhouse (Chamberlains) and to the predominant render fronting the rest of the nearby road.
- Walls were added to keep passing cattle out of the front garden.
- The conversion thus recalls and retains much of the character of its past while being transformed into a modern home.





The Linhay as an architectural precedent

Linhays were open-sided cattle-barns, with cattle at ground level and hay above: their exposed, timber framework of post and beams is a precedent for a more open, 'modern' structural type, not yet well-exploited in the village. (The 'barn' next to Chamberlain's Cottage replaces a linhay, and there is an unconverted linhay in the garden behind the cottages facing the School).

The linhay precedent is quite distinct in effect from those provided by the marriage of cob and classical, and by barns. It suggests the use of two quite different design elements:

- 1. emphasis not on walls, render and a sense of solidity** but on the exposure of a supporting structure of posts and beams.
- 2. large window to wall ratios** owing to the use of very large door apertures (possible double garages).

The grouping of small agricultural buildings as an architectural precedent



Agricultural buildings tend to occur within groups of domestic buildings to which they give variety. These groups often show a charmingly 'higgledy-piggledy' effect due to the group having grown 'organically' over a long period. These small, varied groups eventually define the adjoining space.

Such groups even offer possible precedent for inexpensive 'affordable housing' that is not urban, repetitive and cheap-looking.

There is need for single story buildings (if only for the aged and infirm) but the modern bungalow is essentially an urban concept, taking no account of rural design precedents.

The VDS does not specifically cover large, new farm buildings. Devon County Council's *New Farm Buildings in Devon: A Design Guide* (Exeter: Devon County Council in Association with DEFRA and the Rural Design and Build Association, 2003) may be consulted via the Parish Clerk or obtained from DCC.

Scale

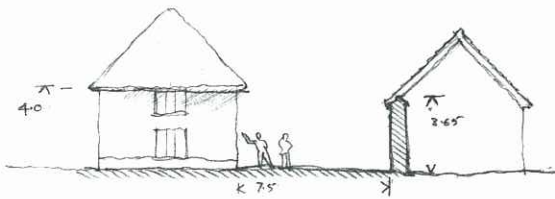
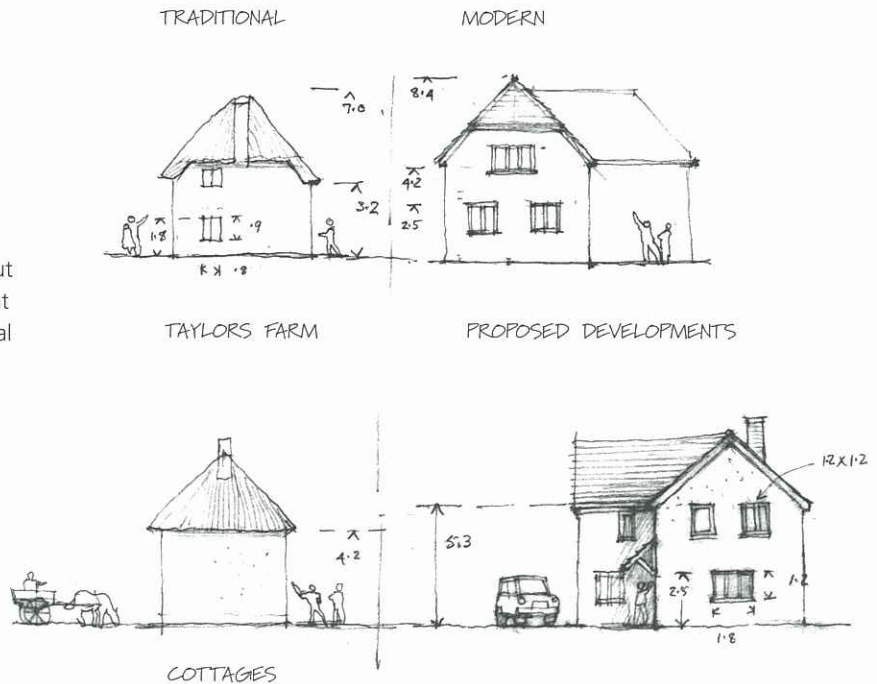
Recommendation

34 Respect the intimate scale of existing buildings and reduce height without creating gables and dormers inappropriate to established local building patterns.

- Standardisation of window and door heights produces a larger scale
- standardisation of floor heights produces a larger scale
- standardisation of roof heights produces a larger scale
- in modern buildings the shapes may be similar but the sizes relative to the human figure are different hence heights and sizes are less personal and rural in feel

The relatively low wall-height of many traditional cob and rubble-stone buildings gives an intimate, rural flavour even to nearby spaces.

Comparisons between traditional & modern scale



THE ENTRANCE TO CHAPEL ROAD HAS AN INTIMATE FEEL OWING TO THE RELATIVELY SMALL HEIGHTS OF THE WALLS & ROOFS

Reducing height

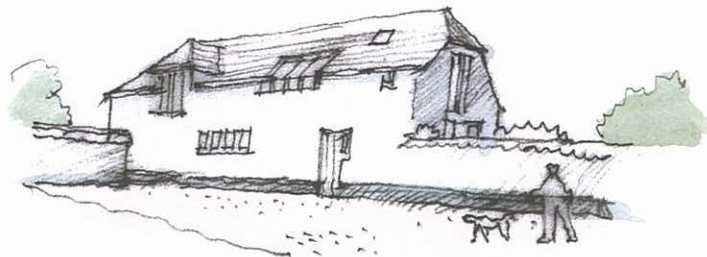
Unfortunately, the height of walls and openings in new buildings is usually much greater, losing the original human scale. Some new buildings in the village have been given low eaves and ridge-heights to reduce scale, but to compensate for this have also been given high gables and dormer windows.

UNSYMPATHETIC REDUCTION OF HEIGHT



OVER EMPHASISING DORMERS ON THE ROOF — ALL THE EMPHASIS IS AT A HIGH LEVEL

SYMPATHETIC REDUCTION OF HEIGHT



USE GABLE ENDS FOR LARGE OPENINGS AT UPPER LEVEL
 RAISE EAVES & LET THE DORMERS GROW OUT OF THE WALL
 USE A COMBINATION OF VERTICAL WINDOWS AND ROOF LIGHTS (NOTE ALSO HOW THE BUILDING GROWS OUT OF ADJOINING WALL)

Details

Detail – purposeful decoration, contrasts of texture, interesting shape – is not an unnecessary afterthought: it creates a sense of craftsmanship and quality. Original details deserve notice and may also serve as precedents for appropriate enrichment of modern buildings.

EDCAABS notes the ‘gradual erosion of original detail, especially traditional carpentry to door and windows, and inappropriate coating or repointing of earlier walls’.²⁵ A high standard of crafted detail is vital to the atmosphere of a building or space.

Recommendations

- 35 Accurate recognition, repair and replacement of notable details is essential, to avoid erosion of valuable early detailing (some noted by EDCAABS).
- 36 In order to avoid the loss of ‘texture’ which has previously occurred, preserve surviving cobbles; encourage re-instatement and new use of cobbles (preferably equivalent to the local flat river-bed pebbles).

Windows, doors and archways

PYNES COTTAGE

The uneven panes of early glass, poured rather than rolled, enliven the tiny window-panes on the right which itself contrasts with the large-paned window on the left.



THE CHAPEL

The Victorian features of the Baptist Chapel (built on to the base and end wall of an earlier stone building) include its ‘Gothick’ door and windows, strong ridge tiles and decorative finials.



CHAPEL ROAD

This early door retains the delightful simplicity of these unpretentious cottages. The door-frame is possibly 17th-century.

BOOTHAM HOUSE

A timber-frame house cannot accommodate deep window reveals; interest is instead supplied by delicately decorative window frames.



BOOTHAM HOUSE decorative porch and door



FORTESCUE

Superb brick archway into its farmyard. Fortescue, almost on the parish boundary, is technically in Netherexce but it is important to Brampford Speke’s river plain landscape.



LOWER WOODROW

A remarkable group of bare cob barns on deep stone bases. The barns define a superb space and hold irregular, different-sized openings with deep reveals.



BARNHILL

This gate, its arch inset with black bricks, once gave garden access from the river bridge.

The new joining the old

FORTESCUE

Part of the splendid Victorian, quadrangular, brick-built farmyard incorporating an earlier stone section with wooden lintels, on the left. Note the extensive cobbled courtyard.



CHAMBERLAINS FARM BARN

Farm out-buildings acquire an interesting mix of materials and textures over the years: roof tiles, brick, corrugated iron, complete with window, boarding and capping tiles. In an agricultural setting this mix might form a precedent.



STOOKS BARN

The original barn door has become a 'threshold' to the modern house behind.



THE CHAPEL

The Victorian Chapel incorporates part of an earlier stone building.



ST. PETER'S SCHOOL

A modern glass feature neatly echoes the original Victorian roof pitch.

SANDY LANE: PIKE'S COTTAGE

The original brick building has been extended in the same scale to create an imaginative mix of materials, textures and vertical apertures echoing the variety of agricultural grouped buildings. The successful approach to extending a building has been to separate the new from the old by means of a recessed link.

FORTESCUE

A rich variety of cobbles includes unusually massive ones on the heavy-traffic entrance to the farmyard.

DRIVEWAY TO SOWDEN'S MEWS

Drained farmyard cobbles survived conversion of farm buildings.

Cobbles

Cobbles recall a time when road-surface was not determined by traffic. Their texture is quite unlike impersonal, urban tarmac. More cobbles survive here than in most East Devon villages.²⁶



CHAMBERLAINS
Fine Victorian brick corbelling

THE LODGE
The ornate porch enlivens an otherwise plain front.

THE PUMP
Surrounding cobbles mark a once important public space.



Architectural details

BOOTHAM HOUSE
The bell on the north side, under barge-boards with a gentle, wavy irregularity often crudely parodied in modern building. The small bell's purpose is uncertain.



BROADPARK
Tiled corbels enliven walls under eaves and on porches in this house and others nearby.



BARNHILL
The imposing Victorian lantern or gazebo lets light into the space below and makes an impressive statement, especially from river level.

MAIN STREET
This modern house's tall, projecting window with discreet decorative flashing is an elegant focal point on a sympathetically low-scale building with high wall to window ratio.

MAIN STREET
The decorative wrought-iron fence, now sadly decayed, along the western side of 'The Green', is hand-forged without welding: scroll-tips are delicately flattened rather than chopped off. The fence, not tall or strong enough to restrain cattle, may have marked the social importance of a once-public space.

SPLATT STEPS
Fine cast, rather than wrought, iron gate on the path from Church Lane down to 'The Splatt' at river level.

BEER DAIRY BARN
This wall shows two quite different builds, in two different kinds of stone. The lower build, just above the brick arches, is remarkably fine. The build above is of mixed stone (including 'Thorverton Blue') and is less regular in construction.

MAIN STREET
Volcanic trap in a wall by Bootham House. The stones are tightly packed in random form, the mortar recessed.

Walls

The exciting texture of early stone walls is due to varied relationships between stone size, position, colour, surface and to the narrowness and recessing of mortar.



The designs on this spread do not show buildings that follow our usual recommendations except insofar as they are exciting and excellent in their own right and in their sensitivity to context. The imaginative circular building, for example, might be a public building such as a chapel, village hall, recreation area, youth club or even a car-park. Who knows what our village might need in 2050?

Visions of good design

Recommendation

- 37 We should avoid stifling responsible innovation, originality or initiative with regard to high quality future development.

This VDS began with a quotation from Gissing expressing a romantic delight in a village largely ‘unspoiled’ by development even in 1891 so that it displayed a visual harmony that suggested manorial control of design. That quotation is highly relevant to our VDS because many of us are, like Gissing, romantics at heart, hoping to preserve a rural visual past so that we may all (except our farmers) live a fantasy rural idyll, without the introduction of new building, modern style or modern materials. Whether we wish for this or not, the simple truth is that it is impossible. Planning applications will continue to be made by land- and property-owners. We cannot prevent new houses, rebuilds, extensions and modifications, and as we know to our cost, regulations covering Conservation Areas do not prevent the use of inappropriate styles and materials, including urban ‘pattern-book’ designs.

Much damage has indeed been done to the harmonious whole that Gissing saw. However, this is not the result of development as such: it is the result of uninformed development – the result of a woolly notion that anything new should be ‘in keeping’ even if no one could define what ‘in keeping’ meant.

The VDS is an effort to bridge the gap between our desire to avoid change and the need to accept some change and manage it intelligently – not as latter-day Lords of the Manor but in consultation, developing informed views on what ‘in keeping’ might mean in our village, in an attempt to help ourselves, designers and planners to understand and respect the unique and complex qualities of Brampford Speke.

We recommend specific criteria with regard to architectural styles that draw on tradition without mimicking the past, for ‘good design stems from principles and standards which can be described in terms of size, shape, scale and materials.’²⁷

Our buildings should be good of their kind, even becoming 22nd-century conservation objects of the future: with care, excellent, ultra-modern housing might be harmoniously incorporated into the village, coming to represent the best of the future styles.

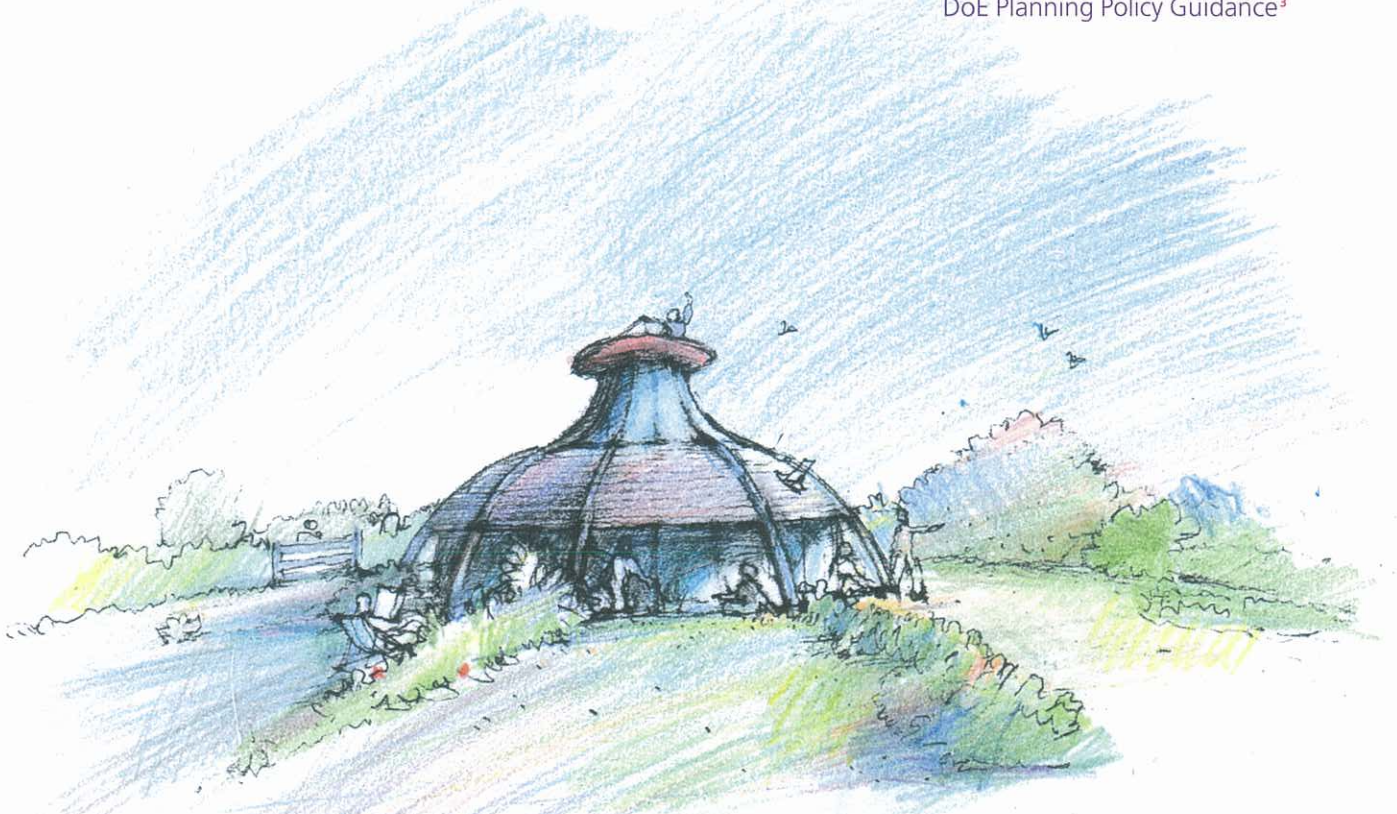
A BUILDING MIGHT BE WITHIN A MOUND OR CONTOUR THAT IS A FEATURE OF THE LANDSCAPE.



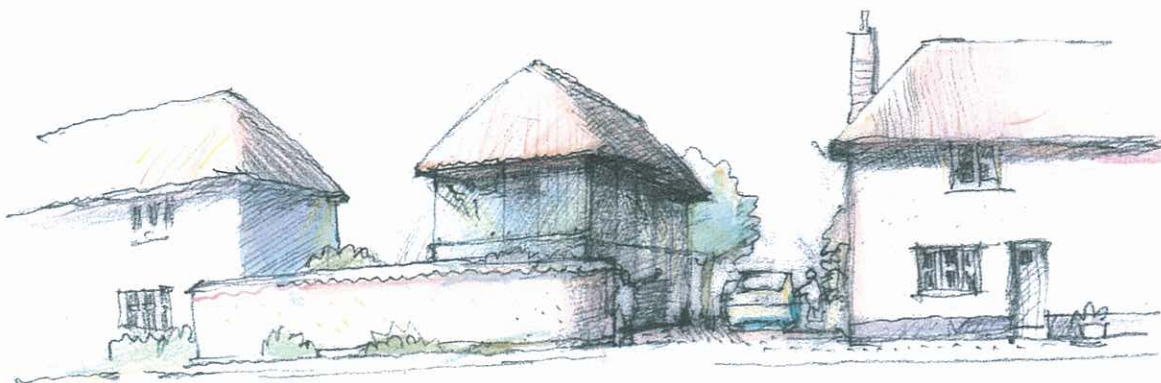
Where the design of a proposed development is consistent with relevant design policies and supplementary design guidance, planning permission should not be refused on design grounds unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Design policies and guidance should focus on encouraging good design and should avoid stifling responsible innovation, originality or initiative. Such policies and guidance should recognise that the qualities of an outstanding scheme may exceptionally justify departing from them.

DoE Planning Policy Guidance³



A LEGUME-LIKE 'VEGETABLE' THEME: A FORM, SET IN A FIELD, THAT APPEARS TO EMERGE FROM THE GROUND



A LOW-SCALE, GLASS-FACED BUILDING WITH A STEEP THATCH ROOF, SET BEHIND WALLS THAT FIT THE NEIGHBOURING PATTERN, COULD FEEL COMFORTABLE. IT PLAYS WITH THE TRADITIONAL IDEA OF THICK, HEAVY WALLS WHILE RETAINING VISUAL CONSISTENCY WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS

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Several buildings in the village, although not mentioned in the document above, are of either social, architectural or historical importance. The Chapel (below) is a religious and social focal point for many people in the village.



Woodrow Barton is a fine, largely classical house on an early medieval site just above the river.



Cherry & Pevsner observe that Stooks had an internally 'smoke-blackened roof and end cruck' proving that it was once a single-storey medieval hall with an open central fire.



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- "The purpose of a VDS is to manage change"; a VDS "describes the physical qualities and characteristics that local people value in their village and its surroundings", and which they would like to see respected when future development or conversion is being considered. (Countryside Commission, *Village Design: Making Local Character Count in New Development*, Part 1, (Cheltenham: Countryside Commission, 1996), p. 6.
- Great Britain, Department of the Environment and Welsh Office, *Planning Policy Guidance*, PPG1 "General Policy & Principles" (London: HMSO, Feb. 1997), Introduction, para. 19.
- Great Britain, Department of the Environment and Welsh Office, *Planning Policy Guidance*, PPG1 "General Policy & Principles" (London: HMSO, Feb. 1997), Introduction, para. 17.
- L. V. Grinsell, "The Barrows of South and East Devon." *Devon Archaeological Society Proceedings* 41 (1983): 5-46. The five Brampford barrows are:
 - SW of Long Plantation SX 91429897 (Pollard's Round Barrow 248b).
 - W of Long Plantation SX 91479906 (diameter 40m) on the Upton Pyne boundary, crossed by a hedge bank and ploughed away.
 - In Long Plantation SX 91759916 diameter 27m; southern edge plough-damaged
 - In Long Plantation SX 91829920 diameter 27m; southern edge plough-damaged
 - W of Brampford Speke SX 92159874 cropmark of Round Barrow.
 Numbers 2-4, in fields N-W of Red Rock Lane, are known as "The Three Barrows". Round Barrow SW of The Long Plantation (Grinsell, Brampford Speke 1), excavated in 1967, is still clearly visible; artefacts from it are in Exeter Royal Albert Museum (H. M. Pollard and P. M. G. Russell. "Excavation of Round Barrow 248b, Upton Pyne, Exeter", where p. 50 shows the positions of the Upton Pyne Cemetery barrows among thirty in the area. (Note that Mrs Pollard's "Upton Pyne" barrows are in Brampford Speke parish).
- A. Fox, "The Upton Pyne Cemetery." *Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Exploration Society* 27 (1969): 75-78. The cemetery extends northwards towards Thorverton and over to the east side of the river (for example, one barrow is just north-east of the Brampford Speke ford).
- Domesday Book*, 9: Devon, Part 1, ed. C. Thorn, and F. Thorn, History from the Sources (Chichester: Phillimore, 1985): section 3/67. This edition is a transcript of the 1086 Exeter Dean and Chapter MS 3500, the Exon Domesday (Liber Exoniensis), with a translation opposite.
- Burke's Landed Gentry*, 18th edn, 3 vols (London: Burke's Peerage Ltd., 1965-1972), Vol. 3, 843-44.
- This brief history is drawn from Nicholas Orme, "The History of Brampford Speke," *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* 121 (1989): 53-86.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 2.1.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 11.1.
- W. White, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devonshire and the City and County of Exeter . . . and the Diocese of Exeter seats of the Nobility and Gentry, Magistrates and Public Officers . . .* (Sheffield: Simpkin, Marshall, 1850), reprinted as *White's Devon* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1968), p. 183.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), paras. 6.3, 11.1.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 4.3.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 4.1.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 4.2.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 9.1.
- W. G. Hoskins, *English Landscapes: How to Read the Man-Made Scenery of England* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1973), pp. 39-40. His work on hedges was based on that of Dr Max Hooper of Nature Conservancy who developed a technique for estimating the date of hedges by the number of different species of shrub in sample lengths.
- Professor John Harper, of the village, is an expert in the field.
- W. G. Hoskins, *Devon*, A New Survey of England, new edn. (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1972), p. 344.
- The drastic rebuild was due, in a sense, to a famous ecclesiastical scandal. In 1847 the Lord Chancellor appointed the Rev. George Cornelius Gorham, B.D. to the benefice; the Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter refused to institute him to the living, as Gorham did not believe the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. As Hoskins observes: "The bishop was finally beaten. The vicar was instituted and his first act was to rebuild the old church, Bishop Phillpotts assisting him with some of his own money." Exeter's WestCountry Studies Library holds a collection of printed, separately paginated letters (not a published book) with the spine title "Letters Concerning the Case of the Appointment of George Cornelius Gorham to the Living of Brampford Speke, 1850, by Henry Philpotts [sic], Bishop of Exeter, and Others." It includes Phillpotts's "A Letter to the Church Wardens of the Parish of Brampford Speke" (London, J. Murray, 1850) repudiating the Judicial Committee's decision and condemning Gorham's heretical doctrines.
- Great Britain, Department of the Environment, Department of National Heritage, *Planning Policy Guidance Notes*, PPG15 "Planning and the Historic Environment" (London: HMSO, 1994), para. 2.16.
- Great Britain, Department of the Environment, Department of National Heritage, *Planning Policy Guidance Notes*, PPG15 "Planning and the Historic Environment" (London: HMSO, 1994), para. 2.17; (italics ours).
- B. Cherry, J. Nairn and N. Pevsner. *Devon*. 2nd edn. The Buildings of England (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1989), pp. 203-4.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 10.1.
- East Devon District Council, *East Devon Conservation Area Appraisals: Brampford Speke*, ed. John Fisher (Sidmouth: The Department, 1999), para. 5.1.
- Countryside Commission, *Village Design, Making Local Character Count in New Development*, Part 1 (Cheltenham: Countryside Commission 1996), p. 6.

Cherry & Pevsner also observe that Taylor's Farm 'presents an exceptionally long thatched range to the street, with rear cross-wing, the upper end with three gabled dormers and jointed-cruck roof trusses beneath, the other end significantly lower, with simple massive cross-beams'.



Chamberlains Cottage was once several homes for workers at the farm – hence the converted 'Linbay' next door once being much larger, one arm of its L-shape fronting Main Street (see map on inside cover).



Recommendations

The village then and now

- 1 Preserve the village's rural setting and 'feel' (and the parish's prehistoric barrows).
- 2 Retain the village's small size as long as possible. Ideally the number of homes should not increase by more than the historic rate of roughly 10 per decade.
- 3 The village's limits (roughly defined by existing buildings) should be retained. Any exceptions should be small-scale and of unusual merit or communal benefit.
- 4 The village's approaches (and their hedges) should be regarded as 'sensitive areas' and their rural nature preserved.
- 5 The rural quality of Brampford Speke should be preserved by resisting development originating elsewhere, but spreading towards the village.

Landscape, River, Lanes

- 6 In the interests of the village's western 'soft edge', back development (along the line of Muddy Lane, or along the ends of the gardens to houses along Main Street) should be discouraged.
- 7 Public views from within the village, including those from Stooks Close and Sandy Lane, should be preserved by ensuring that any new properties or modifications do not obscure them.
- 8 In order to retain the 'secret' appearance of the village, skyline properties should be kept as low as possible, with unobtrusive profiles.
- 9 The characteristic 'pinches' formed by narrowness of lanes and Lake Bridge should be retained.
- 10 On the village periphery any new building should respect the local landscape of rolling fields and woodland.

Spaces

- 11 The village's spacious, open quality should be maintained by discouraging inappropriate infill, including on green environs of existing properties (EDCAABS observes 'Further infill of new housing in or near the conservation area should be avoided.')
- 12 The spacious, open quality should be maintained by resisting over-extension of existing houses, resulting in cramping. (Subdivision of large properties into several dwellings is a different matter, though it too increases traffic).
- 13 Preserve the privately-owned Green and the glebe-land Chamberlain's Field as green spaces, for their open aspect and occasional communal use.
- 14 The dense, enclosed nature of the socially important Chapel Road/School Lane area should be respected and improved. (The re-opening of a shop/PO would greatly contribute to this).

Trees

- 15 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) should be placed on major village trees currently outside the Conservation Area.
- 16 To recapture our diminished 'planned landscape' along the eastern side of the village, and other landmarks (perhaps including the western boundary's windbreak trees [recorded in the early map on the inside cover]), create a long-term programme of informed tree-planting.
- 17 Planting schedules, especially for major trees, should form part of the planning conditions of any new development.



Boundary walls and hedges

- 18 Preserve the high walls that we have (even Unlisted ones) and encourage inclusion of others in Planning Applications, particularly where walls front a road or lane and so contribute to visual continuity.
- 19 Also in the interests of visual continuity, ancient and other hedges should be properly maintained, and the creation of new hedges encouraged.
- 20 In the areas where spaces are defined by houses fronting a road or lane (as was the case in Main Street, and still is in Chapel Road and the lower end of Sandy Lane), this pattern should be retained in any Applications.

Buildings and spaces forming focal points

- 21 Buildings at focal points, whether visual or social, should be treated with particular sensitivity.

Listed buildings in context

- 22 Government guide-lines on the care needed in development in the vicinity of Listed buildings (even in the same street) should be followed.

How buildings fit in or stand out

- 23 Any prominence of new buildings or modifications should be justified in terms of visual or social function.
- 24 Planning applications should be required to contain scaled drawings or montages showing the relationship of the building to its immediate surroundings, including any effect on neighbouring views, so that its effect may be fully understood.
- 25 The character of lanes defined by strong boundaries formed by hedges and walls should be respected.

Building materials and style

- 26 In the interests of visual harmony, the use of brick (except under render) in any new buildings should be avoided.

Marriage of Cob & Classical as a precedent for modern design

- 27 To maintain and develop architectural harmony, ill-informed parody of earlier styles and 'old' styles without local precedent should be avoided.
- 28 To maintain and develop visual harmony, use render where possible.
- 29 To maintain and develop visual harmony, maintain a high proportion of wall to window where cob and classical conventions are prevalent.
- 30 To maintain and develop visual harmony, and the sense of solidity typical of our older buildings, use deep window and door reveals where possible.

Agricultural buildings as a precedent for modern design

- 31 Huddled agricultural out-buildings are a useful precedent in the design of small groups of (possibly 'affordable') dwellings.
- 32 Both heavy-weight barns and the contrasting, open-sided, wood-frame linhays may offer very different design precedents, under appropriate circumstances (i.e. linhays stand in relation to other buildings, not in isolation).

Scale

- 34 Respect the intimate scale of existing buildings and reduce height without creating gables and dormers inappropriate to established local building patterns.

Street furniture, details and texture

- 35 Accurate recognition, repair and replacement of notable details is essential, to avoid erosion of valuable early detailing noted by EDCAABS.
- 36 In order to avoid the loss of 'texture' which has previously occurred, preserve surviving cobbles; encourage re-instatement and new use of cobbles (preferably equivalent to the local flat river-bed pebbles).

Visions of good design for the future

- 37 We should avoid stifling responsible innovation, originality or initiative with regard to high quality future development.





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Printing: Ashley House Printers

Sandy Lane/Broadpark

- Walls and banks, trees and hedgerows forming roadside boundaries create the narrow continuity of this lane. (Some walls of individual buildings come right up to the roadside and become a part of the enclosure.) Making large openings in these boundaries disrupts the intimate, enclosing character of the space and draws too much attention to buildings as individual events.
- Building heights are related to the scale of hedgerows
- Templar's Field, opposite, is a foil for the line of dwellings.
- Roof pitches are generally steep
- Rendered walls form the dominant surface material, followed by brick
- There is a dominance of vertical emphasis in fenestration
- Building styles are mainly 20th century



Chapel Road

- Continuity of enclosing high wall surfaces and hedges and of surface materials, eg. render
- Relationship of road width to wall heights giving a particular proportion to the enclosure of the space
- Closeness of wall surface to road surface
- The small scale, in terms of height of the wall surfaces and roofs
- Informal arrangement of windows and doors
- Large areas of solid wall punctuated by small openings
- Vertical emphasis in all openings
- Small front gardens



NARROW ENTRY UPHILL
FORMS NORTHERN
THRESHOLD TO VILLAGE

TIGHTLY ENCLOSED SMALL
SCALE GIVES A SENSE OF
ARRIVAL AT THE VILLAGE

SANDY LANE, A NARROW AND
ENCLOSED APPROACH TO THE
VILLAGE FROM THE WEST

RIVER BRIDGE GIVES
NARROW ENCLOSED
ENTRY TO VILLAGE
FROM EAST

MARSH FIELD: A SPACE
FORMED ALONG THE
RIVERSIDE BOARDED BY
LINES OF TREES -
A VILLAGE SPACE

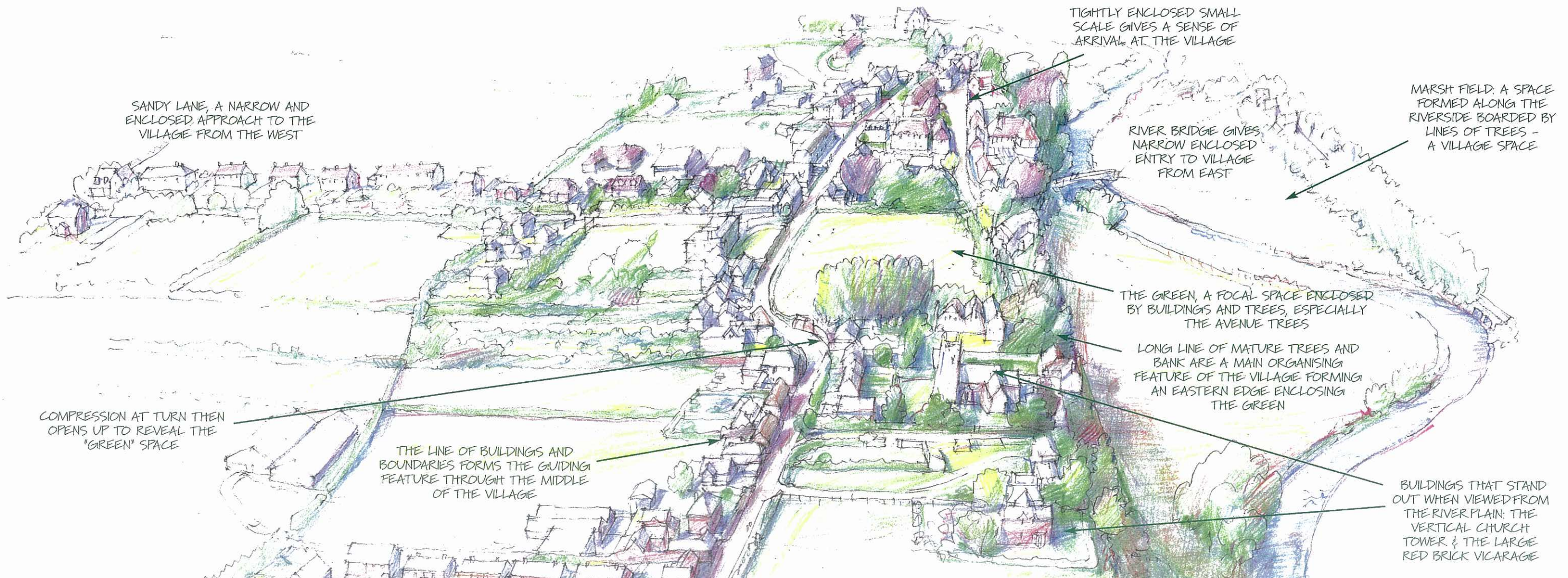
COMPRESSION AT TURN THEN
OPENS UP TO REVEAL THE
"GREEN" SPACE

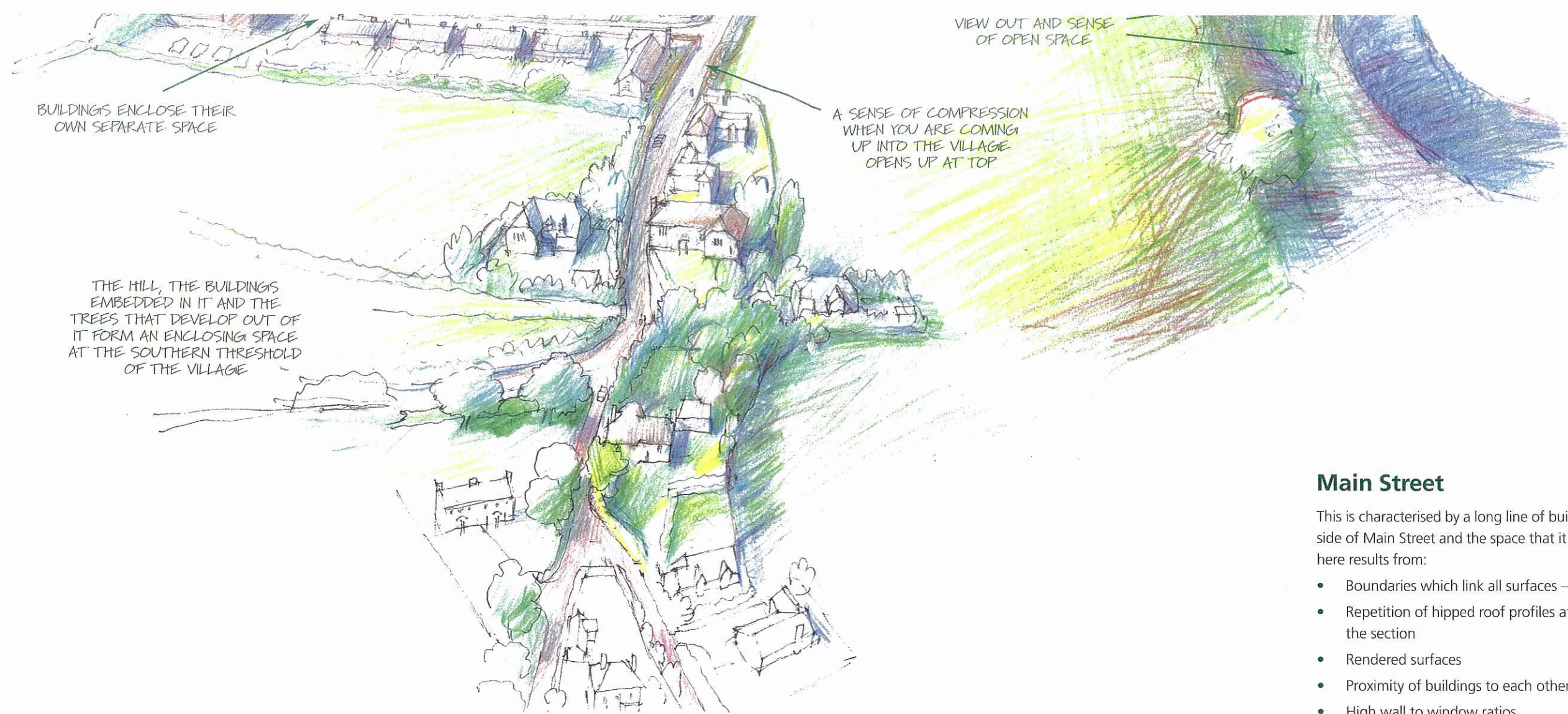
THE LINE OF BUILDINGS AND
BOUNDARIES FORMS THE GUIDING
FEATURE THROUGH THE MIDDLE
OF THE VILLAGE

THE GREEN, A FOCAL SPACE ENCLOSED
BY BUILDINGS AND TREES, ESPECIALLY
THE AVENUE TREES

LONG LINE OF MATURE TREES AND
BANK ARE A MAIN ORGANISING
FEATURE OF THE VILLAGE FORMING
AN EASTERN EDGE ENCLOSING
THE GREEN

BUILDINGS THAT STAND
OUT WHEN VIEWED FROM
THE RIVER PLAIN: THE
VERTICAL CHURCH
TOWER & THE LARGE
RED BRICK VICARAGE





The Village Map

As paragraph 14 in the Department For Transport, Local Government and the Regions's Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General Policy And Principles observes:

Design should be taken to mean the relationship between different buildings; the relationship between buildings and streets, squares, parks, waterways and other spaces which make up the public domain; the nature and quality of the public domain itself; the relationship of one part of a village, town or city with other parts; and the patterns of movement and activity which are thereby established: in short, the complex relationships between all the spaces between and around buildings is often of comparable importance to the design of the buildings themselves.

In other words, buildings may be thought of individually, in terms of their style, construction, shape detail and, period etc., but within a village setting it is not just the design of individual buildings that is significant. These buildings – to a greater or lesser degree – become elements within the broader features that make up the shape of the village. At times they may be subservient to these features and other times they may be more individual and separate. Each feature has its own particular set of characteristics and pattern, which give it individuality.

With this in mind, the centrefold shows the importance of accesses to, and patterns within the village, and the way in which they interact. It reveals key elements, visual and social focal points, significant buildings and groups of buildings, walls, patches of green, trees, etc. It also reveals a series of contrasts created by these elements: constriction and expansion; containments provided by high walls and hedges next to wide spaces; tall tree-stands and different kinds of building-groups – some flanking the lanes, some set back.

Main Street

This is characterised by a long line of buildings on the west side of Main Street and the space that it faces. Continuity here results from:

- Boundaries which link all surfaces – walls, hedges, etc.
- Repetition of hipped roof profiles at the northern end of the section
- Rendered surfaces
- Proximity of buildings to each other
- High wall to window ratios
- Vertical emphasis in doors and windows
- Wide spaces opposite the main line of buildings

