

BRAMPFORD SPEKE

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with contributions from Town and Parish Councils and Amenity Societies in East Devon

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BRAMPFORD SPEKE



Typical cob cottage with tar band and plain thatch

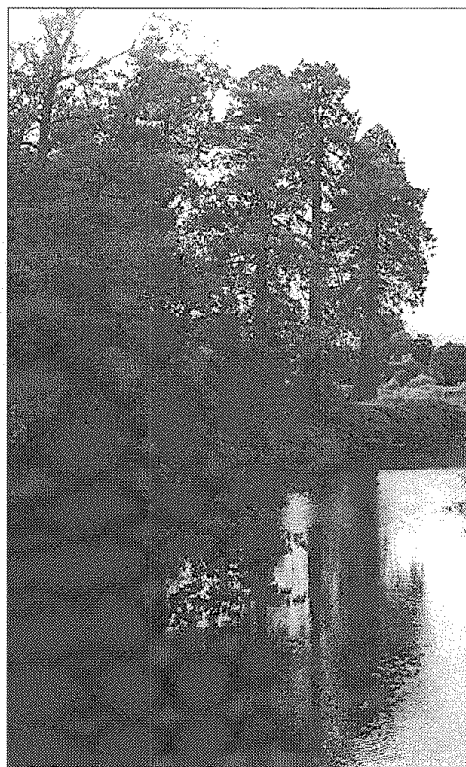
1 HISTORIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1.1 Brampford Speke is quietly situated on a low red sandstone cliff adjoining the River Exe, just four miles due north of the centre of Exeter, but with a sense of considerable rural isolation. It is an essentially linear village and attractively spacious. There is much loosely grouped vernacular building in cob and thatch from the late 16th to early 19th century, with inevitable and sometimes undistinguished later infill.

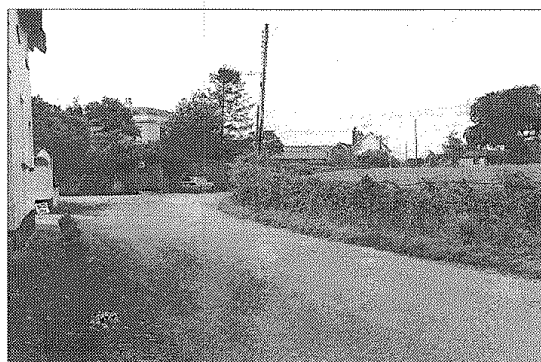
2 SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 The Conservation Area, roughly rectangular in shape, abuts the northern and eastern edge of the village where it is most dramatically sited on a landscaped spur with many mature trees where there is a steep bank adjoining the River Exe. Further south, the church and grave-yard form the southern boundary, whilst to the west the boundary extends into open countryside reflecting the association with the several farms whose holdings extend right into the village, most notably the large field to the east of Brampford House which virtually separates the village into two halves.

2.2 Brampford Speke Conservation Area was first designated in June 1976 and contains some 30 statutorily listed buildings covered by 25 list entries. These are shown on Map 1.



The River Exe and part of a Victorian landscape associated with Barnhill, probably much enlarged in the late 19th century from more modest origins.



Houses of different dates facing the main route through the village. Several overlook the open pasture to be found in the centre of the conservation area and which is clearly shown as now on the early 19th century map.

3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

3.1 The village is characterised by widely scattered groups of cottages and farmhouses in a pastoral setting, and mostly adjoining a lane running north-south through the village. There is evidence that some are of medieval origin. The dispersed layout has been somewhat compromised, though far from irreversibly damaged, by post 1945 infill which although quite extensive has been largely unobtrusively absorbed because of the historical low density and plentiful vegetation, although a small group of new houses southeast of the Parish Church are very prominent.

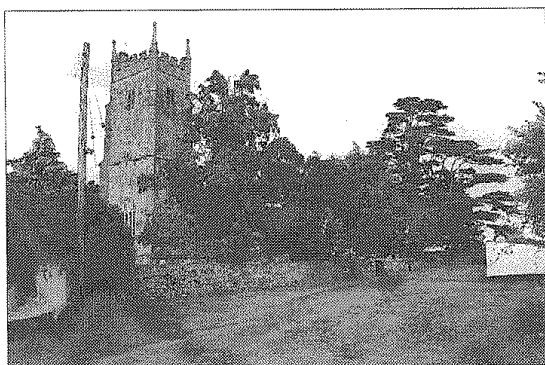
3.2 There is a quite well-defined focal point at the north end of the village centred on Chapel Road and characterised by a strong sense of enclosure. The spur above the River Exe on which the village stands, and the sudden descent towards the River Exe, is best appreciated when following the curving footpath which once provided an important link between the village centre and the railway station. This provides a stark contrast to the almost level plateau on which the entire village stands and from which extensive views to distant hills are sometimes glimpsed. A particular feature of the village is the extent of cob and stone capped either in pantiles or slate.

4 LANDSCAPE AND TREES

4.1 There are several groups of trees that are of great importance to the character of the conservation area. Among these are:

- the churchyard evergreens
- the avenue of lime trees east of Stooks
- the remnants of a planned Victorian landscape attached to Barnhill with typical dark foliage including Wellingtonias and Rhododendrons

4.2 Elsewhere hedgerow trees predominate, and a considerable number of elms are becoming re-established up to a height of 12 metres in places. There are a number of fine specimen trees scattered throughout the village including a good example of a Douglas Fir to the front of Brampford House and Copper Beech adjoining the Primary School.



Church and churchyard trees. Note generous grass verges and variety of evergreens

4.3 The large roughly rectangular field east of Brampford House fringed by trees including the prominent lime avenue to the south, imparts a particularly rural and spacious aspect to the geographical centre of the village. The boundary of the conservation area extends well to the west of the village and the 1906 plan indicates that almost all of this land was in orchard use at that time. The elongated field pattern extending well beyond the conservation area appears to suggest strip cultivation prior to establishment of the still familiar 18th century enclosure pattern which is clearly indicated on the 1805 map.



Typical cottages in Chapel Road; the northern focus of the village. Although not clearly visible in the photograph there is an extensive cobbled forecourt.

5 HARD SURFACES

5.1 In relation to most East Devon villages, Brampford Speke retains fairly extensive areas of stone cobbles, for example the courtyard of the Agricultural Inn, in front of Stooks and the row of cottages set back on the western side of Chapel Road.

6 BUILDING MATERIALS AND ORNAMENT

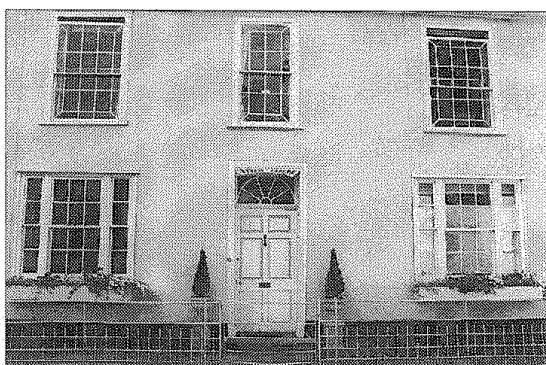
6.1 Much of the vernacular building is of cob on a stone base with roofs of thatch; some with early timber. There are several examples of smoke-blackening and jointed cruck construction. The stacks are mainly of brick and were usually added in the 17th and 18th centuries. There is stucco and good classical detailing in Brampford House and Bootham House immediately to the north. Plain red brick is used in some 19th century building, for example the School, The Lodge and Barnhill, the last mentioned an extensive Victorian house in its own landscaped grounds. This may contain the remains of an earlier house. The lantern on the northeast wing is a distinctive feature and one of the few buildings in the village visible from the river. Red sandstone and volcanic trap is also extensively used, particularly in boundary walls.

6.2 Another particular feature is the extensive and decorative use of wrought iron in railings, gates and gate piers. Most designs are quite plain but imaginative. Some is now in poor condition and in need of appropriate conservation and repair. There are good examples of ornament in fenestration and porches, mostly of late 18th and 19th century date.

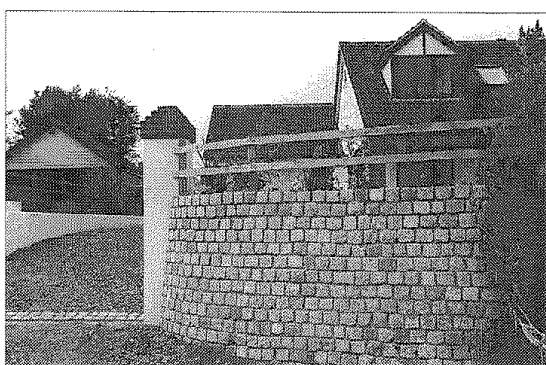
6.3 Although most recent development has little regard to local vernacular detail and ornament, a small group of houses at The Orchard does attempt to do so with pleasantly detailed slated hipped roofs, a tile-capped wall and creditable landscaping. Some individual infill dwellings are far less successful, and the village with its close proximity to Exeter appears to be under some threat in this respect.



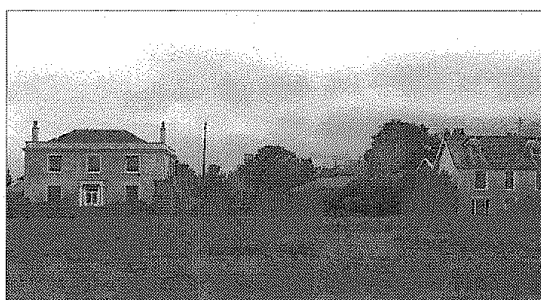
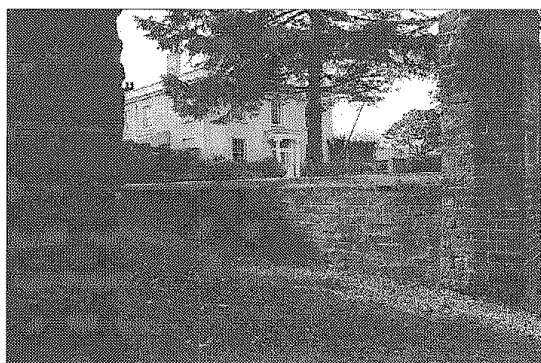
Example of local feature, several of which will in time require practical conservation measures to ensure their long-term survival.



Frontage detail, Bootham House. Note distinctive glazing bars and delicate wrought ironwork.



Examples of recent housing.



Brampford House and Bootham House; good examples of late 18th/early 19th century houses in stucco with classical detail.

7 STREET FURNITURE AND OTHER FEATURES

The village retains a K6 type red telephone kiosk with village notice board adjoining. At the south end of the village where a short lane leads to the church is a small triangular green with recently planted oak and seat with floral displays set against a hedge bank. Street lighting is minimal and quite unobtrusive; mostly attached to poles for overhead power lines.

8 SYNOPSIS OF LISTED BUILDINGS

8.1 **St. Peter's Church** is impressively sited above the river and was almost entirely rebuilt in 1852-53 except for the medieval west tower in a High Victorian manner. Strangely the rebuilding arose partly as a result of a doctrinal clash between the Vicar and the Bishop of Exeter around 1850. For reasons undisclosed the latter considered himself beaten, and was eventually to assist in the rebuilding with some of his own money.

8.2 There are several noteworthy 19th century public buildings in the village constructed of brick; the former **Vicarage**, **Chapel**, and the **Primary School**, which was built in 1867-8 by John Hayward in red and black brickwork. Also of 19th century date is **Brampford House**, having a three bay front with Ionic porch of incised pilasters.

8.3 There are several early houses, somewhat disguised. **Stooks** has an end cruck and smoke-blackened timbers. **Taylors** has a long thatched range and rear cross-wing. At the upper end

are three gabled dormers and jointed cruck roof trusses. The other end is lower with simple massive cross beams. **Home Living** is a medieval house displaying three bays of a former open hall roof and the remnant of an earlier jointed-cruck closed truss beneath. There are many 17th century fittings; two fireplaces, one with mouldings in Beer stone; a moulded plaster ceiling with thistle and oak leaf motifs. Another moulded ceiling has been dismantled and parts re-used throughout the house including a date plaque of 1656

Important Buildings Outside the Conservation Area

8.4 The former Railway Station c.1884 is now a private home, stone built with cream ashlar dressings, and decorative wooden bargeboards to end gables. There are bay windows onto the former platform and characteristic decorative crested ridge tiles. There is also a separate two-storey **Station Master's House**. This group is approached from the village square by a steep and curving path between walls to a wooden footbridge across the Exe and must have made an attractive means of entry into the village for visitors before the railway closed. Now it provides a useful crossing point to a network of footpaths from which the riverside setting of the village can be best appreciated.



View across the churchyard to The Cottage; foreground wall of stone, background wall cob and tiled; distant views beyond

9 FEATURES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

9.1 The elements of Brampford Speke conservation area which can be considered as most worthy of retention are as follows:

- the impression of remoteness and spaciousness in spite of proximity to Exeter
- rich variety of traditional building materials; walls in cob, brick, local volcanic conglomerate (trap), red sandstone; roofs in thatch, Bridgwater pantiles and slate
- extensive traditional boundary walls in cob and stone with capping in tiles or slate

- original natural paved or cobbled surfaces (e.g. The Agricultural Inn and cottages fronting the west side of Chapel Road

- several examples of early vernacular building

- some good classical detailing (e.g. Brampford House, Bootham House)

- attractive ironwork features, mainly gates and railings

- many fine specimen trees in an originally planned landscape bordering the River Exe, and an avenue of lime trees

- a network of attractive footpaths linking different parts of the village and crossing the Exe by a footbridge to the former railway station and surrounding countryside

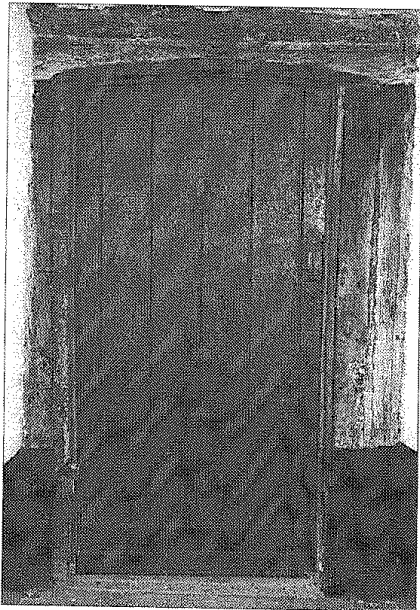
- open pasture land within the village



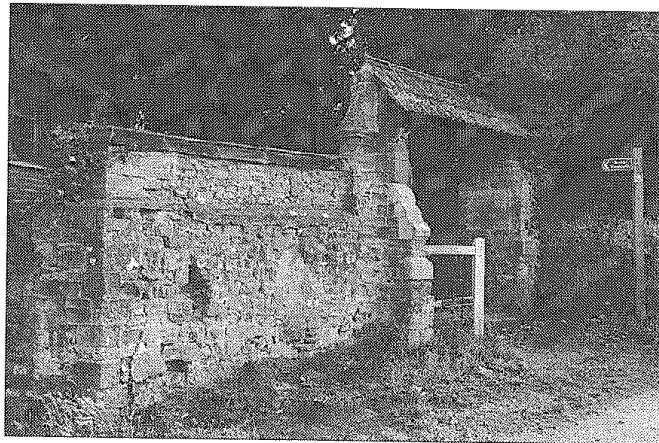
Cobbled forecourt at the Agricultural Inn



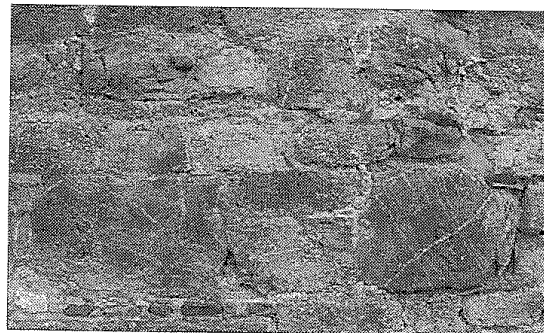
The Lodge, Chapel Road; note wrought iron gate and railings and cast iron detail to porch.



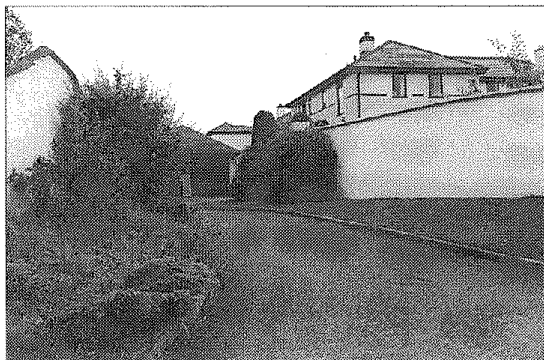
Typical cottages in Chapel Road; the northern focus of the village. The door frame is probably early 17th century.



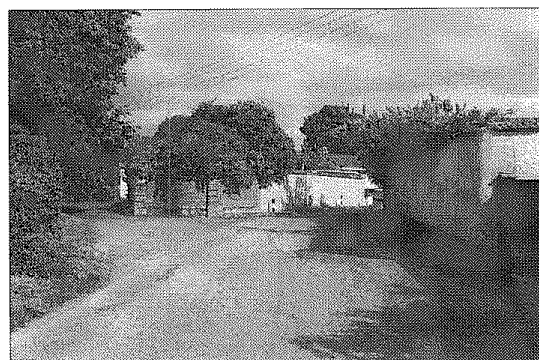
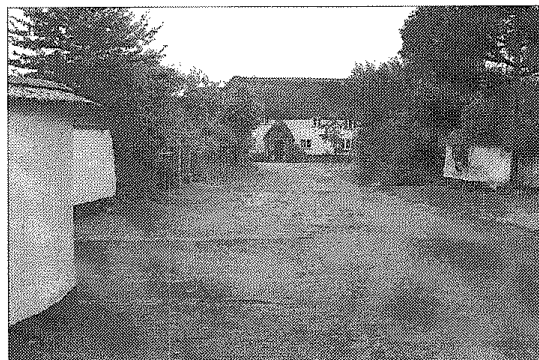
Examples of local features, several of which will in time require practical conservation measures to ensure their long-term survival.



Boundary wall in grey-green volcanic trap, sometimes found in an attractive combination with red sandstone.



Examples of recent housing. The example shown has some regard for local vernacular traditions.



Examples of the many walls and abundance of vegetation in a village where the density of development is generally low.

10 LOSS OF CHARACTER AND INTRUSION

10.1 The main elements within the conservation area which are considered to compromise its character are as follows:

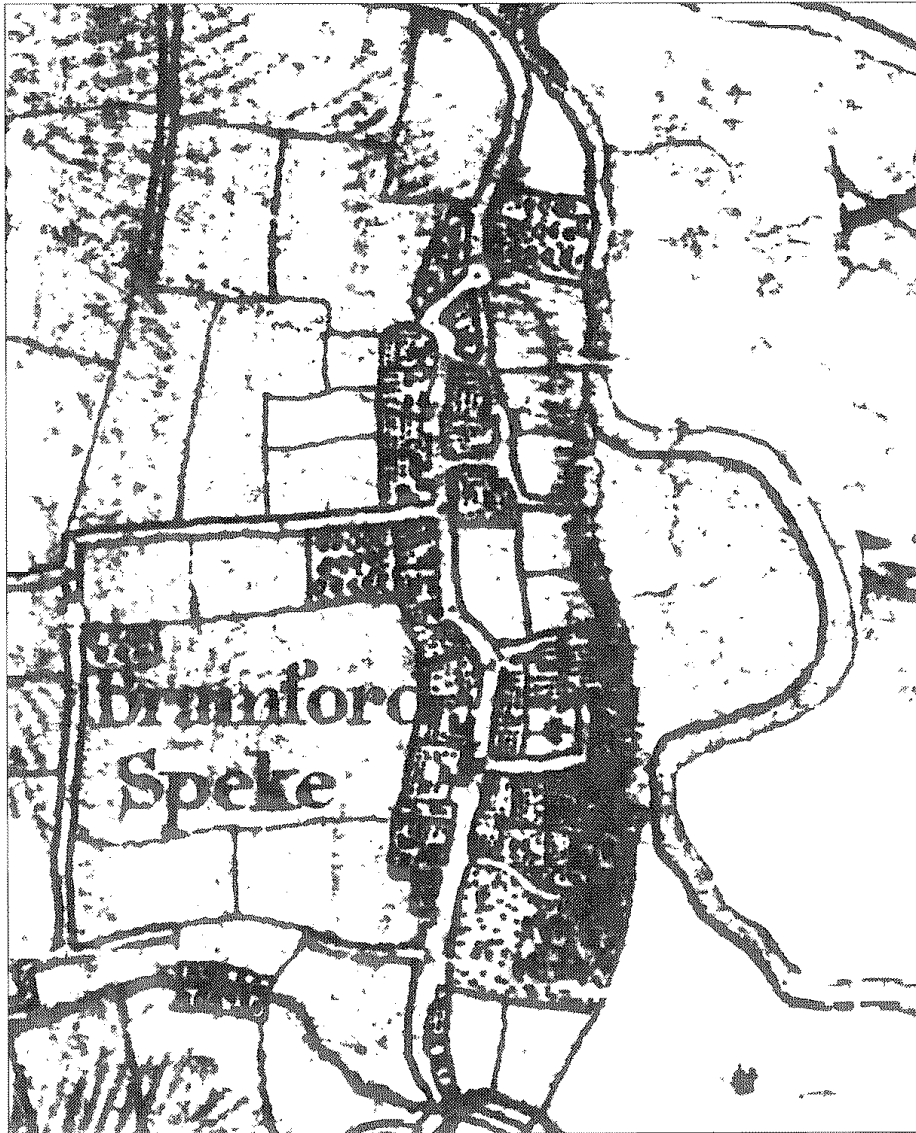
- prominent overhead power lines
- recent infill development, sometimes prominent, and lacking appropriate treatment of detail
- stonework and ironwork in poor or deteriorating condition
- some new agricultural buildings within or immediately adjoining the conservation area whose prominence may be lessened by careful landscaping using native tree species
- a gradual erosion of original detail, especially traditional carpentry to doors and windows, and inappropriate coating or repointing of earlier walls

11 SUMMARY

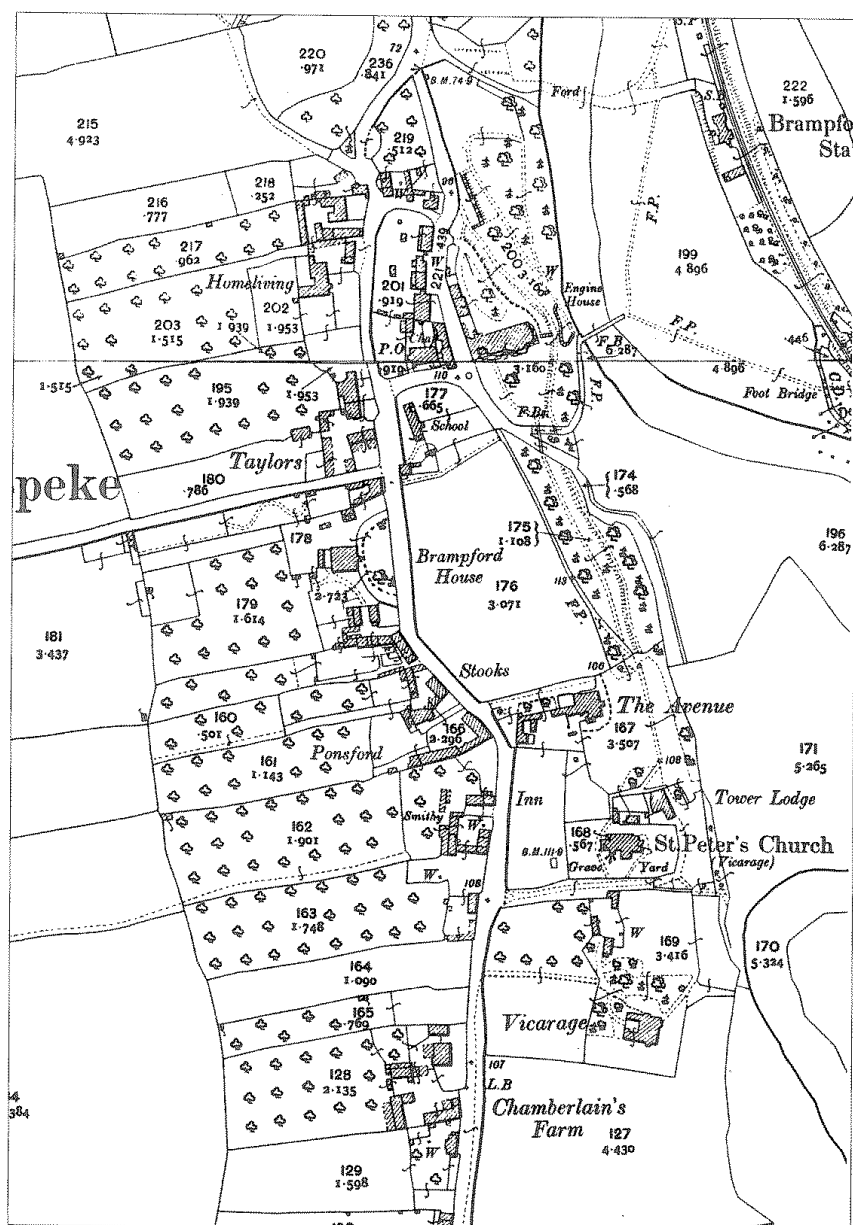
11.1 Brampford Speke retains its atmosphere of spaciousness and pastoral solitude adjoining the River Exe with some fine examples of vernacular and classical architecture which are clearly cherished. There is a danger that further infill of new housing within or adjoining the conservation area would erode its character especially in locations where views across or beyond the village are important.

11.2 The survival of some peripheral historic features, walls, ironwork etc. is under threat due to deterioration and possible removal. Encouragement of appropriate conservation measures is considered important.

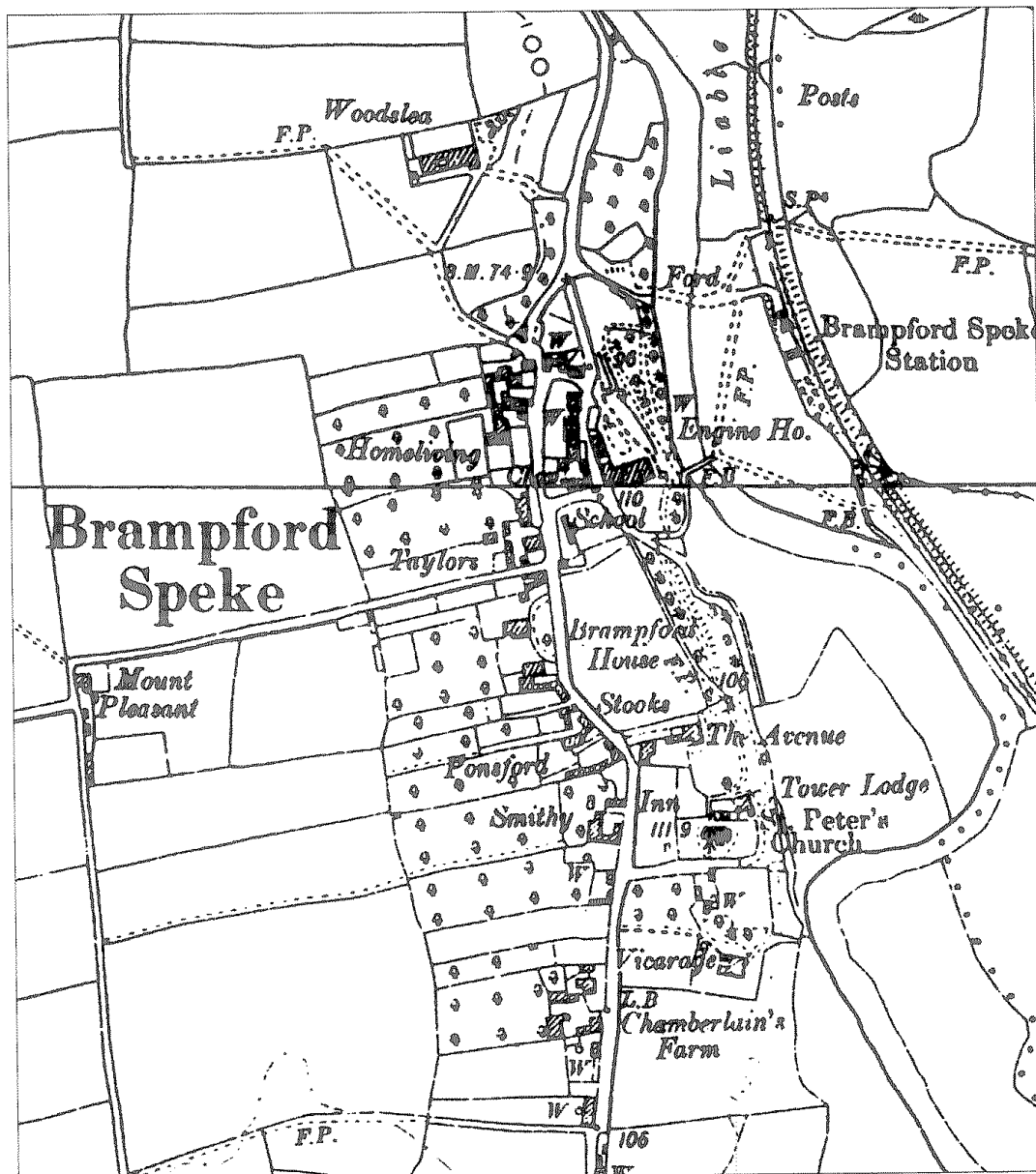
HISTORIC MAPS



1805 Devon County Survey: Scale: originally 3 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of the report)



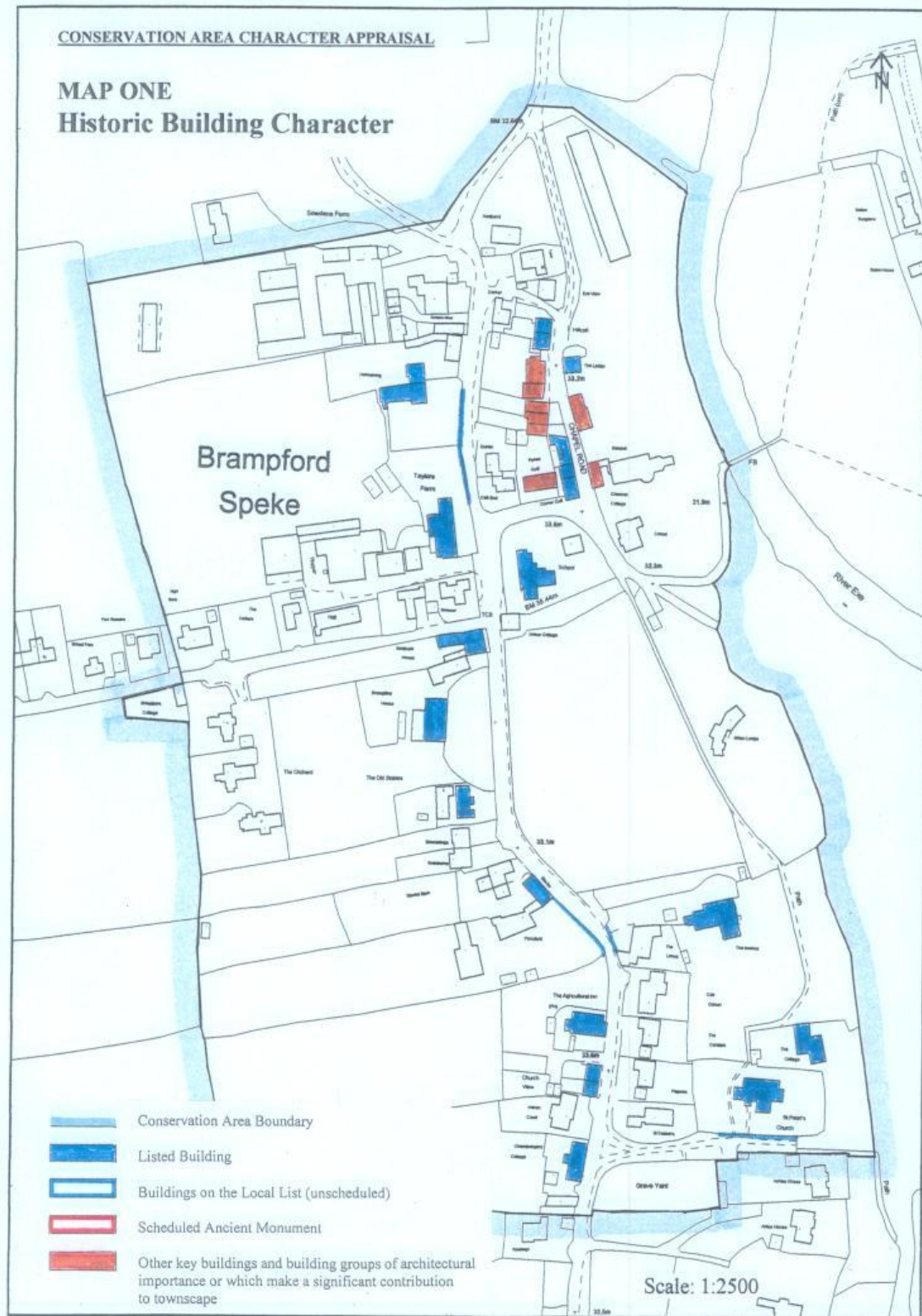
c.1905 Ordnance Survey Second Edition. Scale originally 25 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of fitting the report)



Early 20th Century Ordnance Survey Second Edition or Provisional Edition.
 Scale originally 6 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of fitting the report)

CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP ONE
Historic Building Character



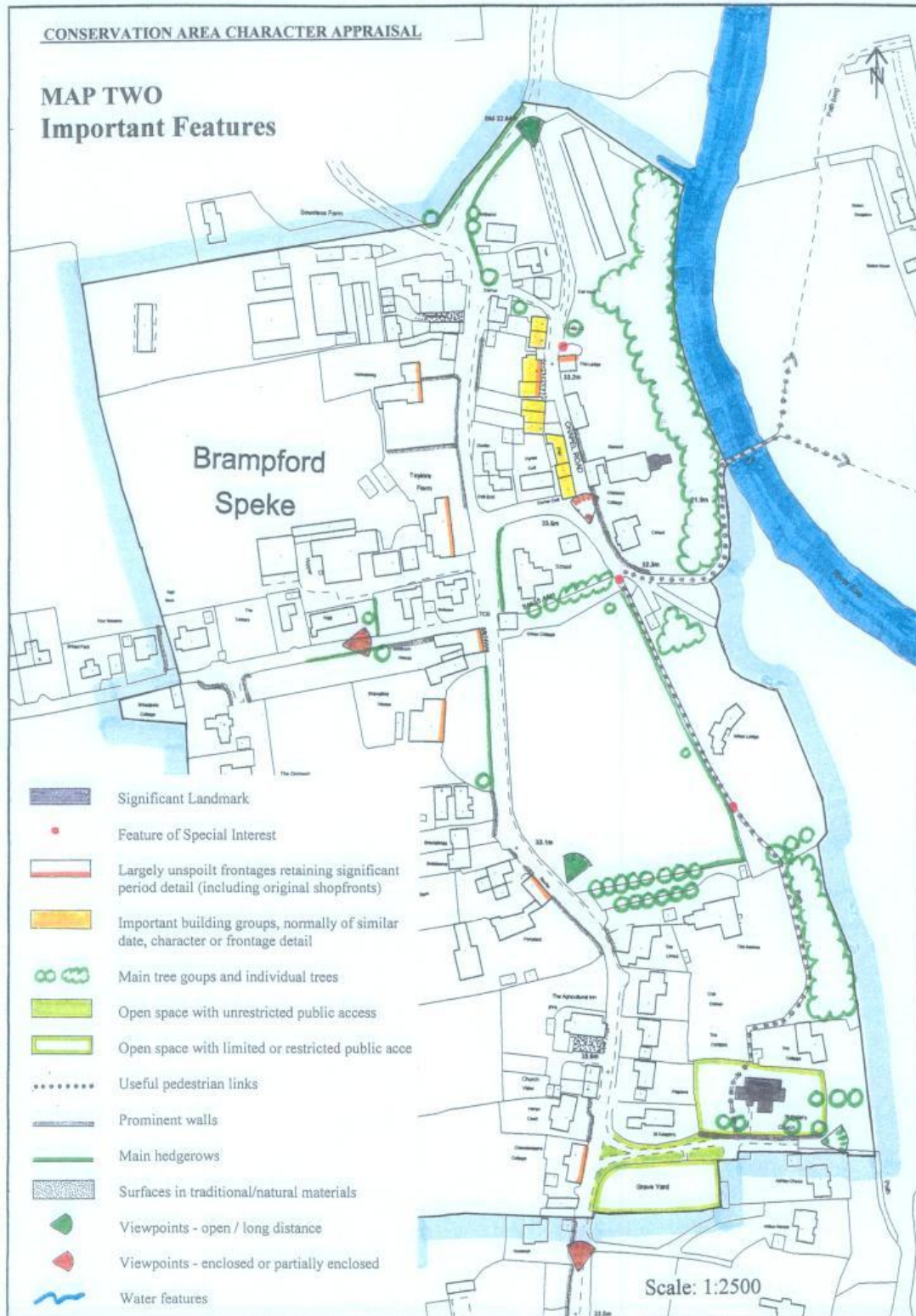
Brampford Speke Conservation Area

East Devon District Council

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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP TWO
Important Features



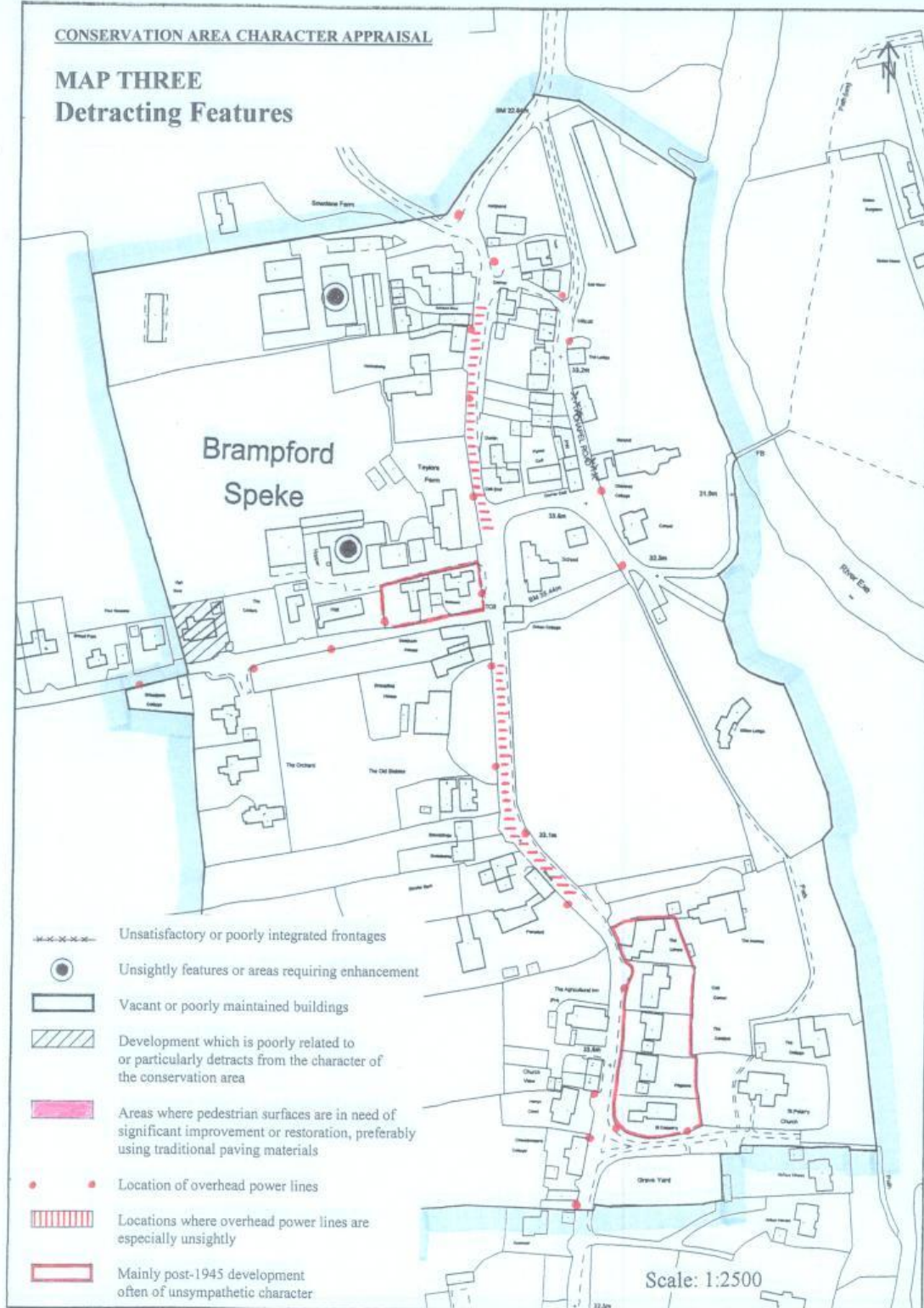
Brampford Speke Conservation Area
East Devon District Council

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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP THREE

Detracting Features



Brampford Speke Conservation Area

East Devon District Council

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MAP FOUR

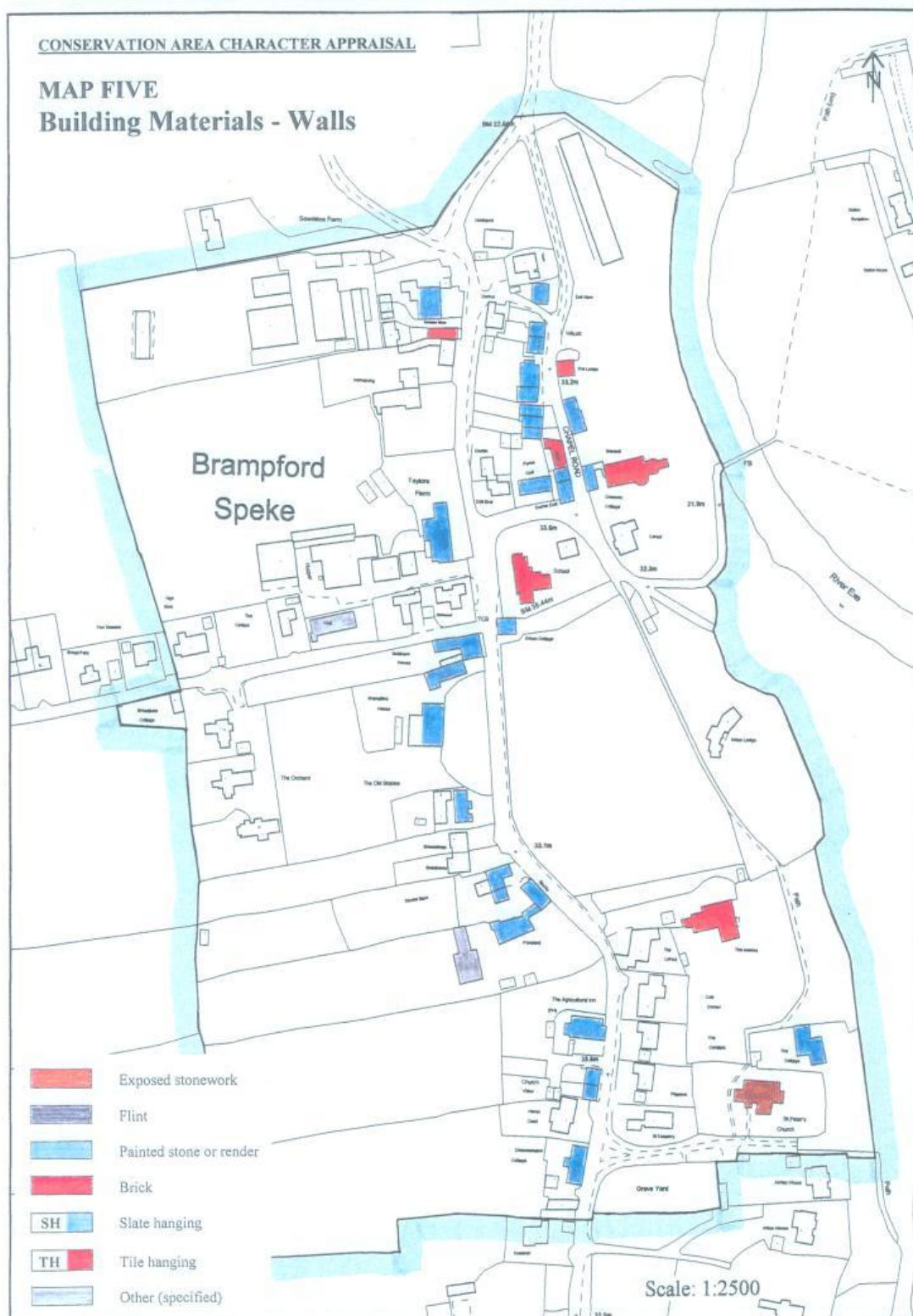
Building Materials - Roofs



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MAP FIVE

Building Materials - Walls



Bramford Speke Conservation Area
East Devon District Council

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Brampford Speke Interim Conservation Area Review

Purpose of the Review

There is a requirement under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 of all local authorities to review their conservation areas and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. Reviews must be carried out every five years as the character and appearance of a conservation area can change over even small periods of time. The purpose of this interim review is to identify the principal changes since the publication of the Conservation Area Appraisal and to outline potential changes to the conservation area boundary which will form part of a full consultation exercise when the draft Management Plan is produced.

Key recent changes in the Brampford Speke Conservation Area

- Brampford Speke is a very well maintained village conservation area which is obviously valued by its residents. Remoteness and spaciousness are still significant features that have not been eroded. And planning policies seem to have been adhered to. The excellent Village Design Statement provides protection and firm guidelines and must help engender a sense of community responsibility for the built environment within the village.
- There is some development pressure on the village resulting in a few new buildings and many significant alterations and extensions, some of which are good and some not as successful. There has been a sympathetic new development at Brampford House.



New buildings at Brampford House



The recent extension to Green Cottage is prominent within the centre of the village.

- Several barns within the village have been converted into dwellings with mixed results and there have been significant extensions to both listed and unlisted buildings.
- The open pasture which is a feature of the village remains, although a small dwelling, Green Cottage, has been extended and is now a prominent feature and focal point of a long view on entering the village.
- There have been relatively recent alterations and extensions at North End within the conservation area. The stained timber dormers are quite dominant within the conservation area.
- Street furniture is minimal but a very suitable timber bus shelter, containing a community

noticeboard, has been placed at the south entrance to the village.

- Cobbled areas have been preserved, particularly the cobbled courtyard of The Old Farmhouse and the cobbled areas in front of 2 Hillcott and number 6 Chapel Road.
- Above all there is virtually no road paint and the only significant road markings are at the school. The new 20mph zone has been subtly signed and there are no yellow lines and almost no stop lines on the roads.
- Little has yet been done about overhead power and telephone lines.

Potential review of Conservation Area boundary

The existing CA boundary covers the historic core area of the village. Development outside the boundary is mainly modern and does not meet criteria for inclusion. There are very few undeveloped areas within Built up Area Boundary which would benefit from Conservation area designation and therefore there appears to be no reason to extend the conservation area or to omit existing areas due to eroded character. This aspect of conservation area review will be fully considered during the consultation process.

Principal reasons for erosion or changes to Conservation Area character

- There is considerable development pressure to alter and convert barns and other significant buildings within and just outside the conservation area.
- There has been recent pressure to extend quite modest properties quite significantly and should this continue the cumulative impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area would be significant.