

# **BROADCLYST**

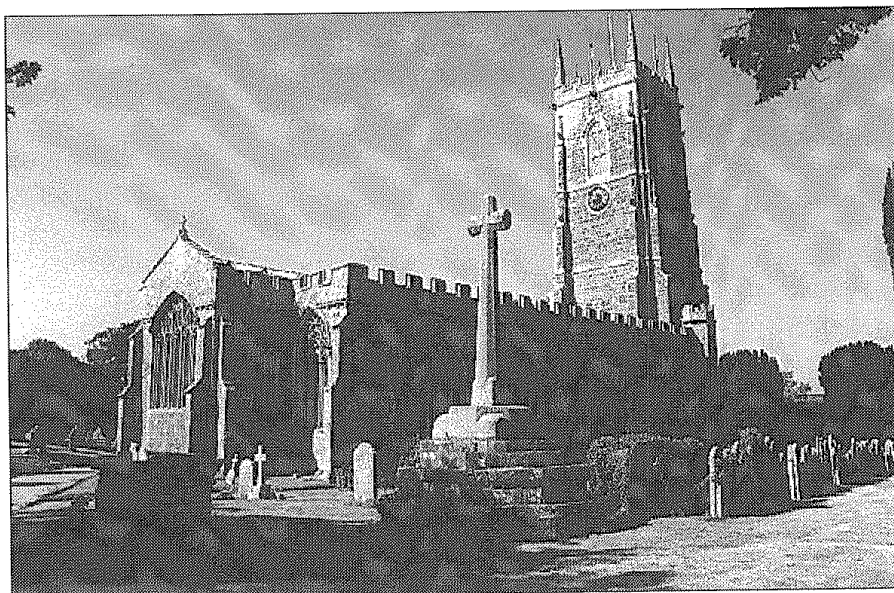
Prepared for East Devon District Council by John Fisher BA, MA, MRTPI  
with contributions from Town and Parish Councils and Amenity Societies in East Devon

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# BROADCLYST



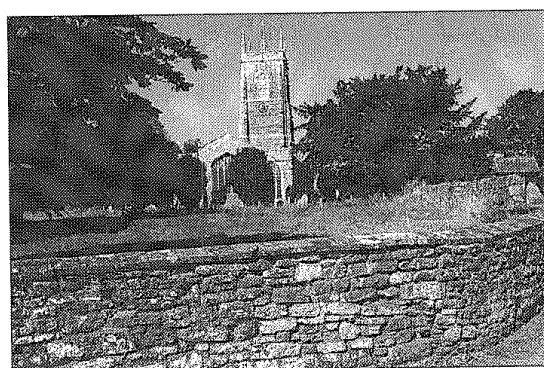
## 1 HISTORIC AND TOPOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1.1 For centuries an estate village, Broadclyst is now largely owned by the National Trust. It is a large parish of almost fifteen square miles and was formerly linked first with the Drewes then the Aclands at Columbjohn and Killerton from the sixteenth century to the present. Prior to that the Lords of the Manor were the Nonant, Chudleigh and Arundel families. "Apart from the village itself, the population is scattered in a few small hamlets and many isolated farmsteads, some dating from Domesday and before. One of these, Churchill, was the original home of the Churchill family"<sup>1</sup>

1.2 The estate of Columbjohn was sold to the Aclands by Thomas Drewe, son of Sir Edward, after his father's death and the Drewes moved to Grange at Broadhembury. The Aclands lived at Columbjohn until Sir Thomas rebuilt Killerton, a mile away, in the 18th century. Columbjohn became a garrison of the king during the Civil War, and in March 1646 was the headquarters of Fairfax whose army was then stationed at Silverton.

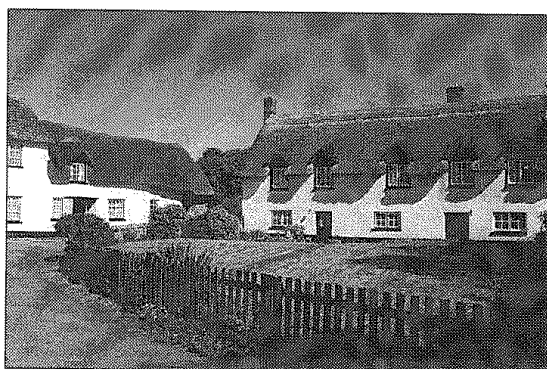
1.3 Columbjohn House was demolished when the Aclands moved to Killerton, but the Elizabethan Gateway survives. The Aclands still live at Killerton, but Sir Richard Acland handed over the House and Park to the National Trust in 1944.

1.4 Because of the Acland family influence, and now National Trust ownership, the village is one of the best preserved of the large Devon estates, with many typical village, hamlet and farm buildings, which have not been unduly compromised by development pressure.



*The fine 15th century Parish Church in a spacious setting. Sandstone wall in foreground has terracotta coping.*

<sup>1</sup> from the leaflet "The Church of St. John the Baptist, Broadclyst" by Anne Acland, 1974



*Typical cottage groups; cream limewashed cob on stone footings with black tar band. Note plain fencing and metal railings.*



*Excellent detail (including streetlamp) in early 20th century single-storey terrace; an attractive combination of stone garden walls, brick, plain tile, simple porches, plain casement windows.*

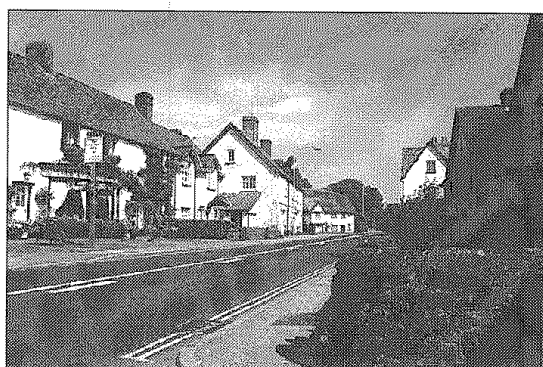
## 2 SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 Broadclyst Conservation Area is relatively small in relation to the village as a whole, and covers only the northern part which is largely owned by the National Trust as part of the Killerton Estate. As may be expected buildings are well maintained and in colours of cream and sepia brown widely used by the Trust and most conspicuous in the earlier buildings of cob and thatch. In combination with red brick, tile and local sandstone; often against a backcloth of evergreens

2.2 The conservation area was first designated by Devon County Council prior to local government reorganisation in 1974. It currently contains some 75 listed buildings covered by 30 list entries which are shown on Map 1

## 3 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Having long been an estate village, there is a measure of formality and uniformity in layout and building type in much of the village. This is enhanced by the extensive and harmonious use of traditional building materials assiduously maintained under National Trust patronage. The M5 motorway enabled the village to be by-passed in 1975, and although the former A38 (now the B3181 still carries considerable traffic, the virtual elimination of heavy goods vehicles has ensured that cottages adjoining the carriageway are all now of pristine appearance.



*The B3181 is the main route through the village and was until 1975 the A38 Exeter to Bristol trunk road.*

3.2 Many of the earlier houses within the conservation area and some just beyond, especially at Townend, are good examples of vernacular buildings. The layout is both spacious and compact; formally laid out in parts, delightfully informal in others. Large and small open spaces also add to the spatial complexity. The village is therefore difficult to comprehend as an entity but has many delightful corners and some fine building groups as well as several individual buildings of particular note.

## 4 LANDSCAPE AND TREES

4.1 The most prominent and noteworthy trees are to be found in a virtually continuous belt within the Churchyard; in the field immediately to the east; on a small traffic island in Church Close and on the Village Green situated immediately east of the B3181. The predominant species are evergreen, mostly Yew, Ilex and Firs with a few deciduous specimens such as Horse Chestnut. This extensive series of tree groups forms an important backdrop or

foreground to many of the buildings within the village including the dominant and exceptionally fine Parish Church in a very spacious churchyard.

4.2 Broadclyst is characterised by a large open field almost in the heart of the conservation area. It is mainly enclosed by a sandstone wall and of vital importance to the overall character of the northern half of the village.

## 5 HARD SURFACES

5.1 Some parts of the village have attractive ground surfaces using natural stone. In front of the Red Lion Inn is an extensive area of small setts randomly laid and thereby encouraging some limited grass growth between. Adjoining the west elevation of the almshouses is a particularly attractive pathway of roughly squared stone setts in a more formal arrangement. Elsewhere setts or cobbles are used as pathways or bordering frontages.

## 6 BUILDING MATERIALS AND ORNAMENT

6.1 Broadclyst is characterised by buildings of red sandstone and limewash - the use of the latter is widely endorsed by the National Trust. Many of these cottages are typified by low entrances with plain doorways; 2, 4 or 6 light casement windows. Roofs are of slate, plain tile or thatch with plain ridges. Thatched dormers and full or half-hipped gables are to be seen. The former are not a usual Devon feature. Stacks are mainly of brick, although stone shoulders are sometimes found as at the Almshouses. These are a particularly fine uniform group in the local red sandstone and slate, with ashlar dressings, corbelled upper chimney and metal-framed casement windows. The early 20th century brick and tiled single-storey cottages known simply as The Bungalows are an excellent example of unadorned building in a vernacular tradition, greatly enhanced by the low stone wall fronting them.



*At the south end of School Lane is an attractive group of stuccoed Regency houses enclosed by walled gardens and clipped hedges.*

6.2 At the south end of School Lane is an interesting group of slate and stucco early 19th century houses with modest classical ornament, enclosed by hedge-topped stone walls and stuccoed gate piers. An 18th century classical doorway at Gould's Cottages

is named after Benjamin Gould who is said to have made it in 1778.

6.3 Windows are mainly casements with glazing bars, some extraordinarily low and horizontal. New Buildings are a remarkably extensive group of about 30 semi-detached and terraced cottages fronting the east side of the B3181 with low stone walls enclosing attractive gardens. They were all built around 1870 by Sir Thomas Dyke Acland. Windows are mostly plain 3-light casements and doors are of planked timber, solid and unpretentious and these standard features give this part of the village a pleasing sense of order.



*The drinking fountain shadowed by one of the several ilex trees within the village centre.*

## 7 STREET FURNITURE AND SPECIAL FEATURES

7.1 The red sandstone drinking fountain opposite The Bungalows, probably dating from the late 19th century, is an excellent example of the traditional skills of the stone mason. In a slightly different context the lofty stone wall in School Lane follows a similar tradition which is in stark contrast to the ugly blockwork opposite, now so widely used for replacement where earlier stonework has become unstable. Retention and appro-

prate repair of free-standing boundary walls is becoming an increasingly necessary aspect of local conservation as many are now showing some signs of neglect.

7.2 The stone and thatch bus shelter is a welcome addition built in the 1920's which respects local traditional methods of building construction in a contemporary context.

## 8 SYNOPSIS OF LISTED BUILDINGS

8.1 The history of Broadclyst is reflected in the several monuments in **St John the Baptist's Church**. It has a fine 16th century tower of the Somerset type, and is said to have served as a model for Cullompton. The body of the church dates from the time of Bishop Stafford (1319-1419). A fine sedilia covers an effigy of a knight in armour, probably of Roger de Nonant, the last of the Nonant lords of Broadclyst, who died c.1340. There are good Renaissance monuments to Sir John Acland of Columbjohn (1620) and to Edward Drewe Esquire of Killerton (1622) the successful Elizabethan lawyer.

8.2 The **Red Lion** public house, although with a much altered 18th century and later interior, has an attractive tiled exterior, of estate character. **Broadclyst House** is a large mid 19th century house. **Estate cottages** and **almshouses** are loosely scattered around a green behind. The present 18th century **Clyston Mill** with miller's house and undershot waterwheel are probably on a much older site. Behind the Red Lion, **Queen's Square** is 17th and 18th century thatch with Gothick first floor detail, above what was probably a former squatter ground floor, perhaps as early as the 16th century. The **Jubilee School** and **Schoolmaster's House** c.1810, with inscription, has Gothic windows set in Killerton stone surrounds, which contrasts well with the predominant red sandstone.

8.3 In Townend and Townhill is a typical range of 15th to 19th century housing, with some early structures disguised by later detail. It has undergone sympathetic restoration by the National Trust and is now occasionally open to the public. **Gould's Cottages** at the corner of Church Lane is a terrace of four houses by Benjamin Gould in 1778. In Church Lane are **Burrough's Almshouses** originally dating from 1605, and reconstructed in 1883. Between Broadclyst village centre and Dog Village is the long range of **New Building**, which is eight blocks, rebuilt after a fire in 1870 and with interestingly varied detailing.

### Other Important Buildings outside the Conservation Area

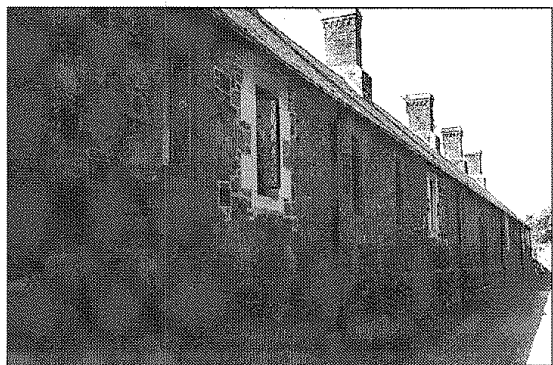
8.4 **Marker's Cottage** is a late medieval house, with polychromatic painted decoration on a screen. It has undergone sympathetic restoration by the National Trust and is occasionally open to the public. Adjoining is **Symes Cottage** and further down Townend is **Hackworthy Cottage** with projecting semicircular bread oven. The **College** in Burrow Road has a lateral stack, medieval roof and stud and panel screen with mural decoration.

8.5 It should be noted that apart from those mentioned above there are a large number of listed farms, cottages and other buildings within the parish, many forming part of the Killerton estate. Since the late 1980's The National Trust have been undertaking an extensive vernacular buildings survey of most of these buildings, a record of which is kept at the Killerton estate office.

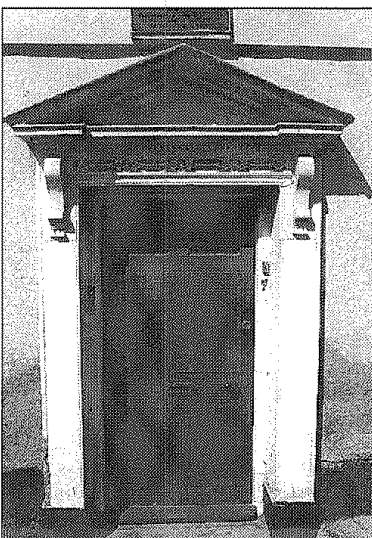
8.6 Cherry and Pevsner<sup>2</sup> state that "Broadclyst remains one of the least altered of the great estates of Devon, affording models of estate buildings proper around the great house at Killerton and a typical range of village, hamlet and farm buildings, all in a countryside remarkably (for its proximity to Exeter) uncompromised by modern development".



*Red Lion Inn with cobbled forecourt and tile hung jettied extension.*



*Almshouses; attractive mixture of local red sandstone; grey-green volcanic trap and dressings to openings, some recently restored, apparently in Beer Stone.*



*Classical detailing (late 18th century) to otherwise plain cottage group. A small unobtrusive plaque briefly charts historic details.*

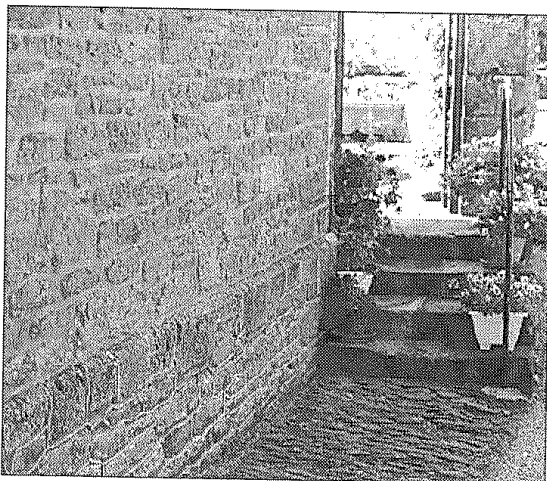
<sup>2</sup> *The Buildings of England : Devon; page 215*



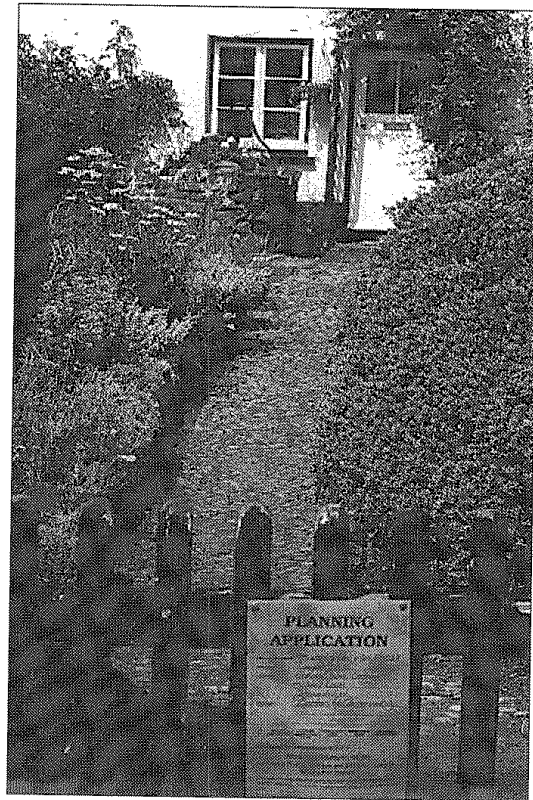
## 9 FEATURES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

9.1 Among the elements of Broadclyst conservation area which are considered to contribute to its character are:

- largely owned by the National Trust
- good examples of estate cottages and almshouses in local red sandstone, or coated in lime plaster
- a wide variety of traditional building materials, especially thatch and limewashed cob or rubblestone. Much exposed stone work is well maintained with appropriate use of mortars
- retention of much original vernacular/artisan detailing, especially plain timber doors and timber and metal framed windows and doors
- a particularly fine parish church in a spacious setting with good specimen trees (mainly Yew)
- a good network of quiet back lanes making for ease of servicing
- features of special local interest, for example, a former drinking fountain in red sandstone, stone cobbled areas, a thatched bus shelter built as a memorial to a well known local resident, and an impressive high stone wall close to the primary school, the purpose of which is unknown
- several fine specimen trees, especially Ilex within the more open landscape towards the north-west boundary of the conservation area
- a general feeling of spaciousness with attractive and accessible open spaces; the churchyard, village green, and open land and a wide street between the Royal Oak and main street



*Cobbled area adjoining west gable-end of almshouses*



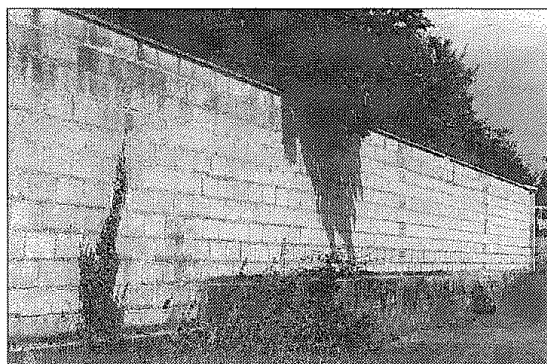
*A cobbled path to a cottage, in School Lane.*

## 10 LOSS OF CHARACTER AND INTRUSION

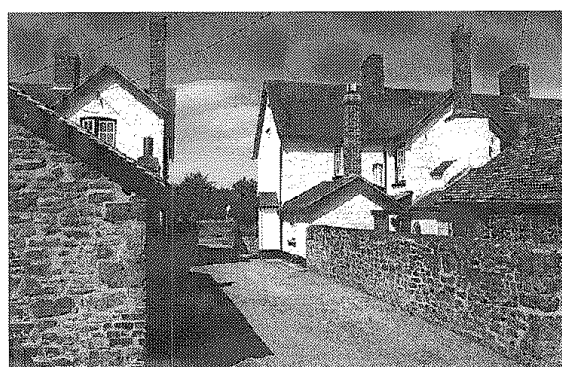
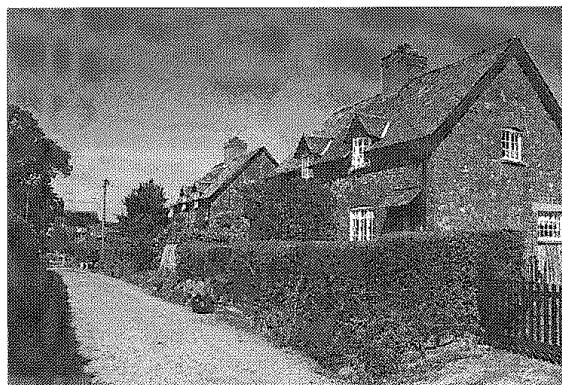
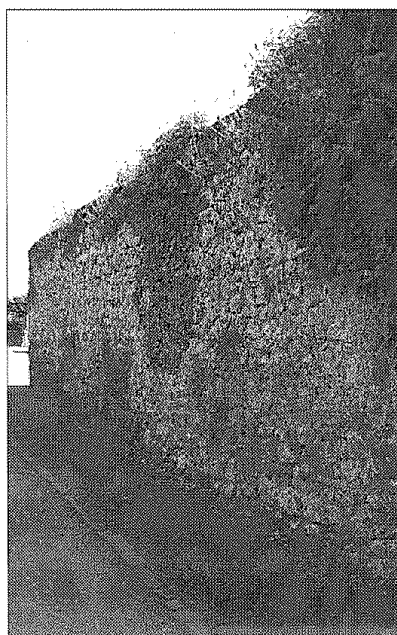
10.1 The main elements which are tending to intrude into or lead to a loss of character within or adjoining the conservation area are as follows:

- considerable traffic flows through the main street (B3181) (although not as severe as before the M5 opened, it nevertheless tends to divide the village with no obvious or safe crossing point)
- extensive suburban infill within or immediately adjoining the conservation area in several places
- the tall blockwork wall near the primary school
- locally intrusive overhead power lines

Apart from the parish church, the village appears to lack any obvious focal point visually, or have quiet corners with public seating where people can pause and meet informally.



*Contrasting  
walls in School  
Lane of  
matching scale  
but inappro-  
priate materials*



*Further views of Killerton Estate cottages, the lower is a rear view of New Buildings - the large late 19th century group.*



*Cottages at Townend outside the conservation area and including Marker's Cottage (foreground). This was recently researched and restored by the National Trust when early wall painting was uncovered, and is occasionally open for view to the public.*

## 11 SUMMARY

11.1 Broadclyst, a typical large estate village, is afforded a high level of protection as a result of National Trust ownership. The western part is beautifully and spaciouly laid out around the church. To the south are most of the estate cottages and almshouses including the remarkable range of New Buildings which must be one of the largest of such groups in Devon.

11.2 The eastern portion is more mixed and the impact of post 1945 development is more marked. Several good examples of vernacular buildings are found beyond the conservation area at Town End, including Marker's Cottage which has been carefully restored by the National Trust and has recently been upgraded to II\*. An extension to the existing conservation area is worthy of consideration in this part of the village.

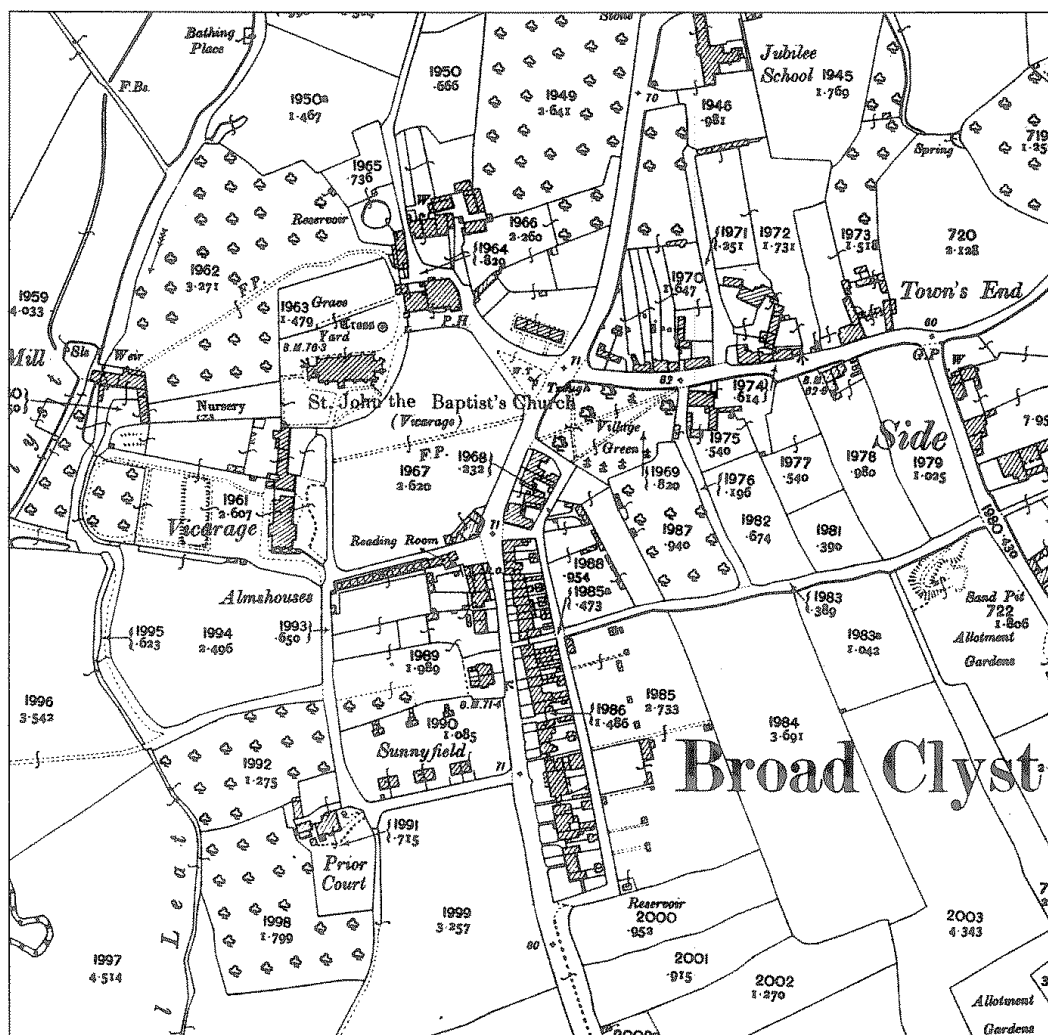


## HISTORIC MAPS

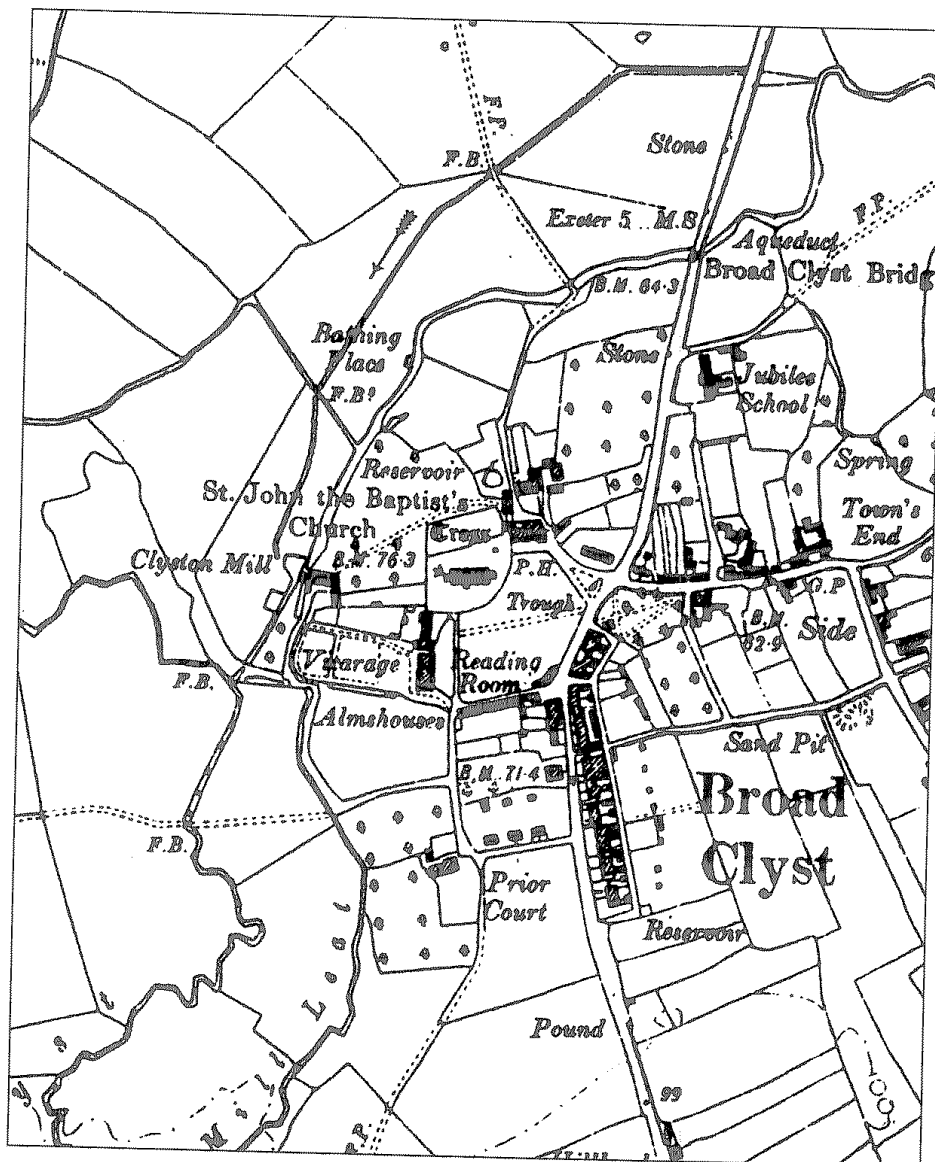


*1805 Devon County Survey:*

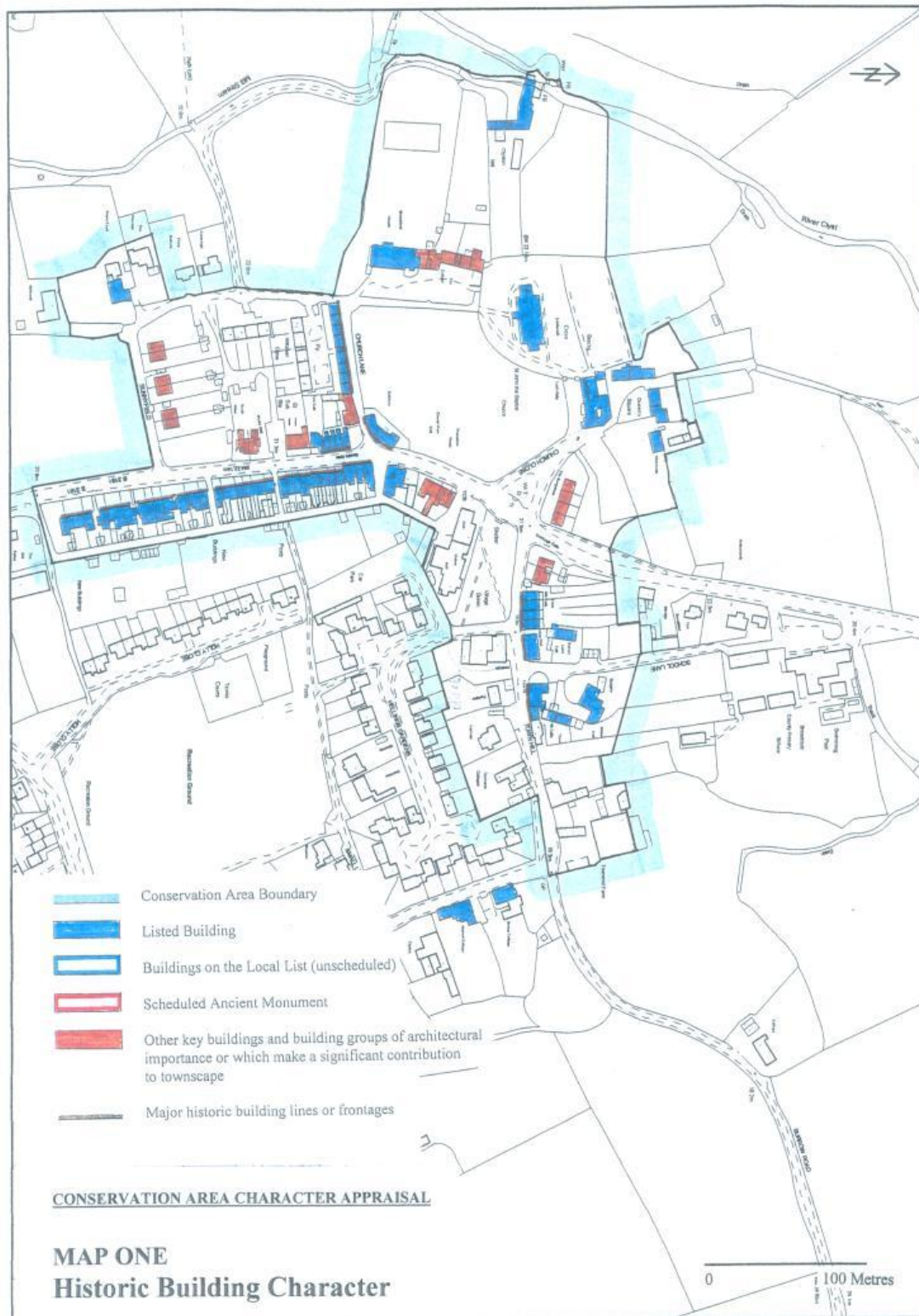
*Scale: originally 3 inches to the mile (scale may be altered for the purpose of the report)*



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)



**Broadclyst Conservation Area**  
**East Devon District Council**

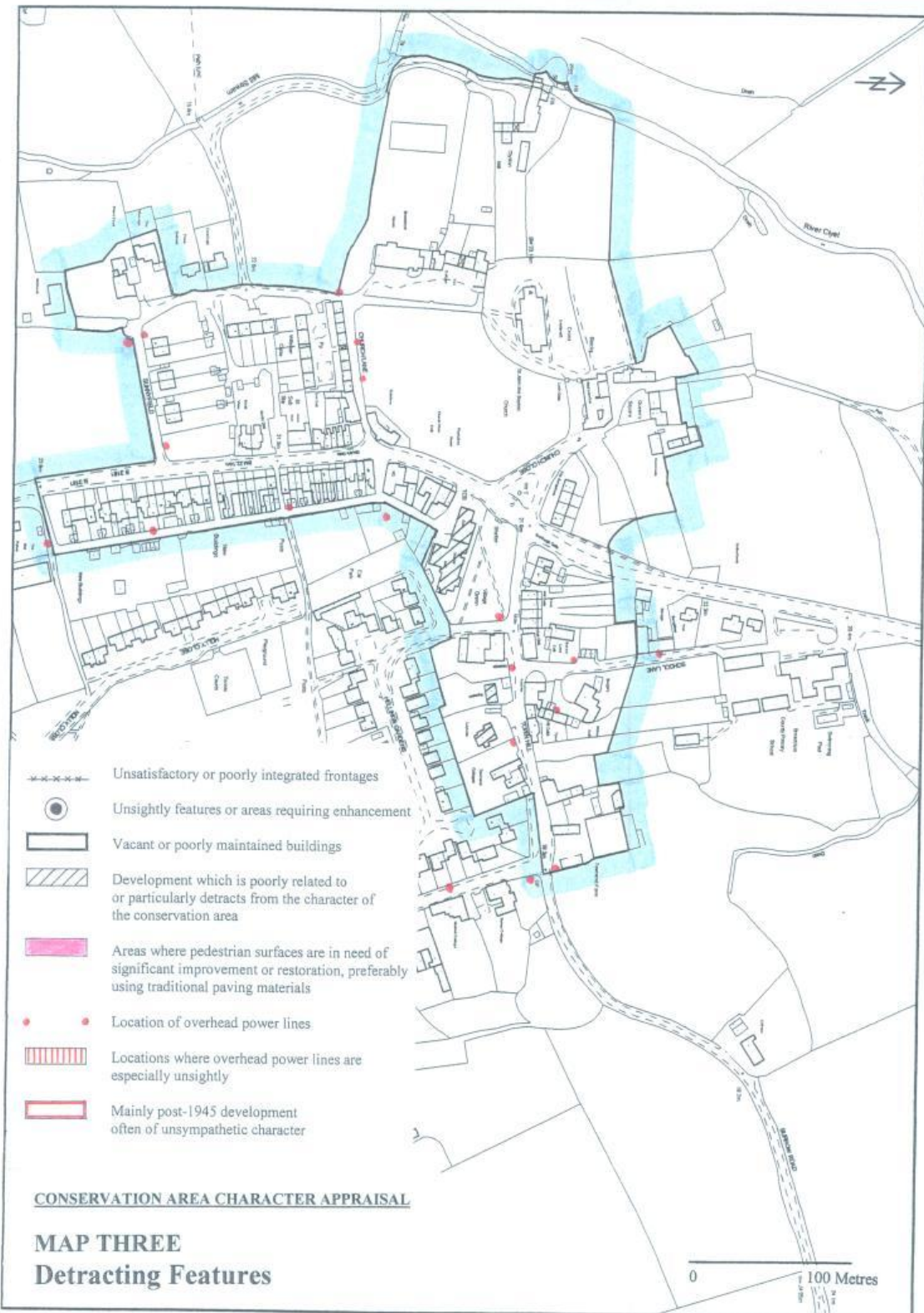
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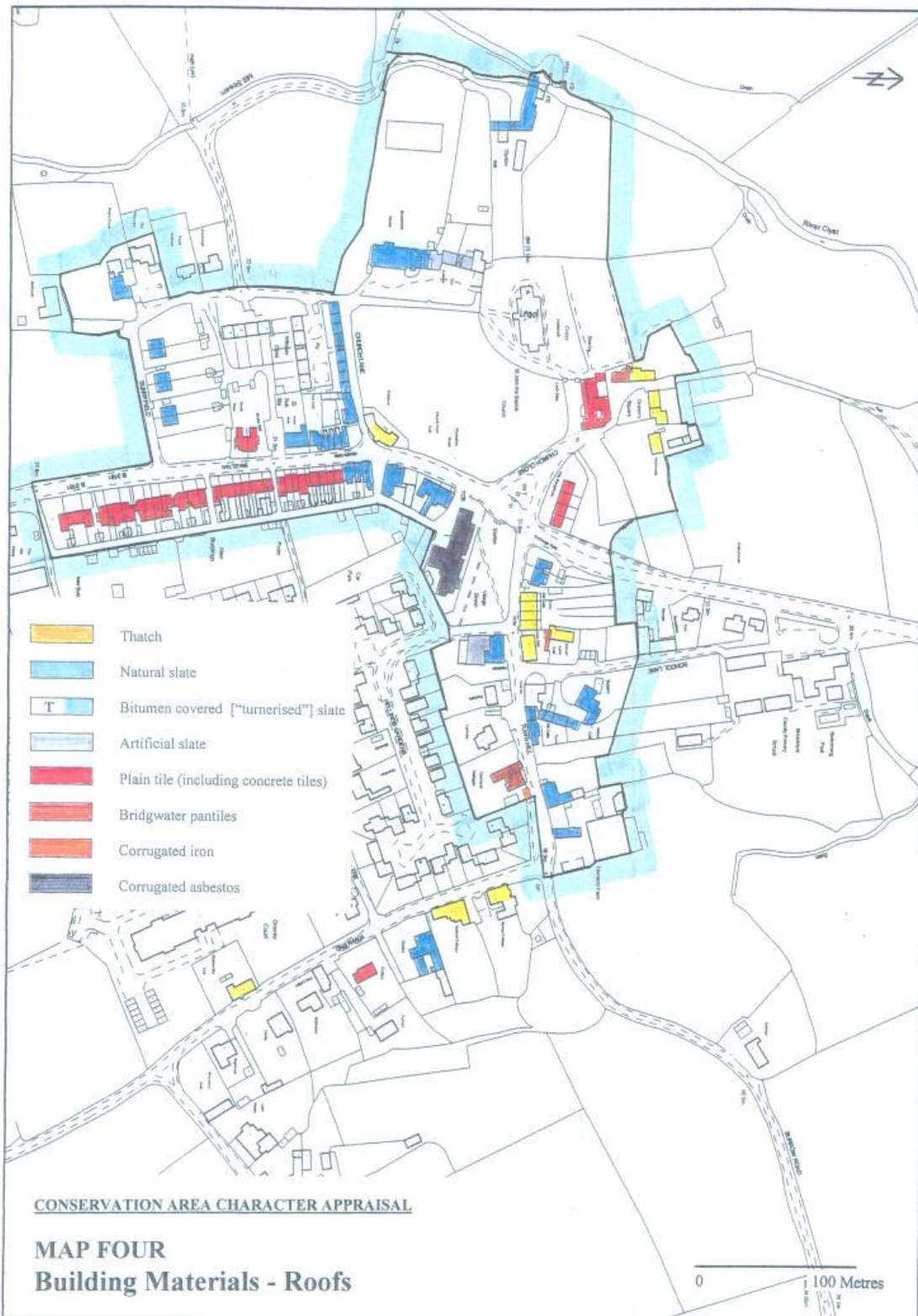
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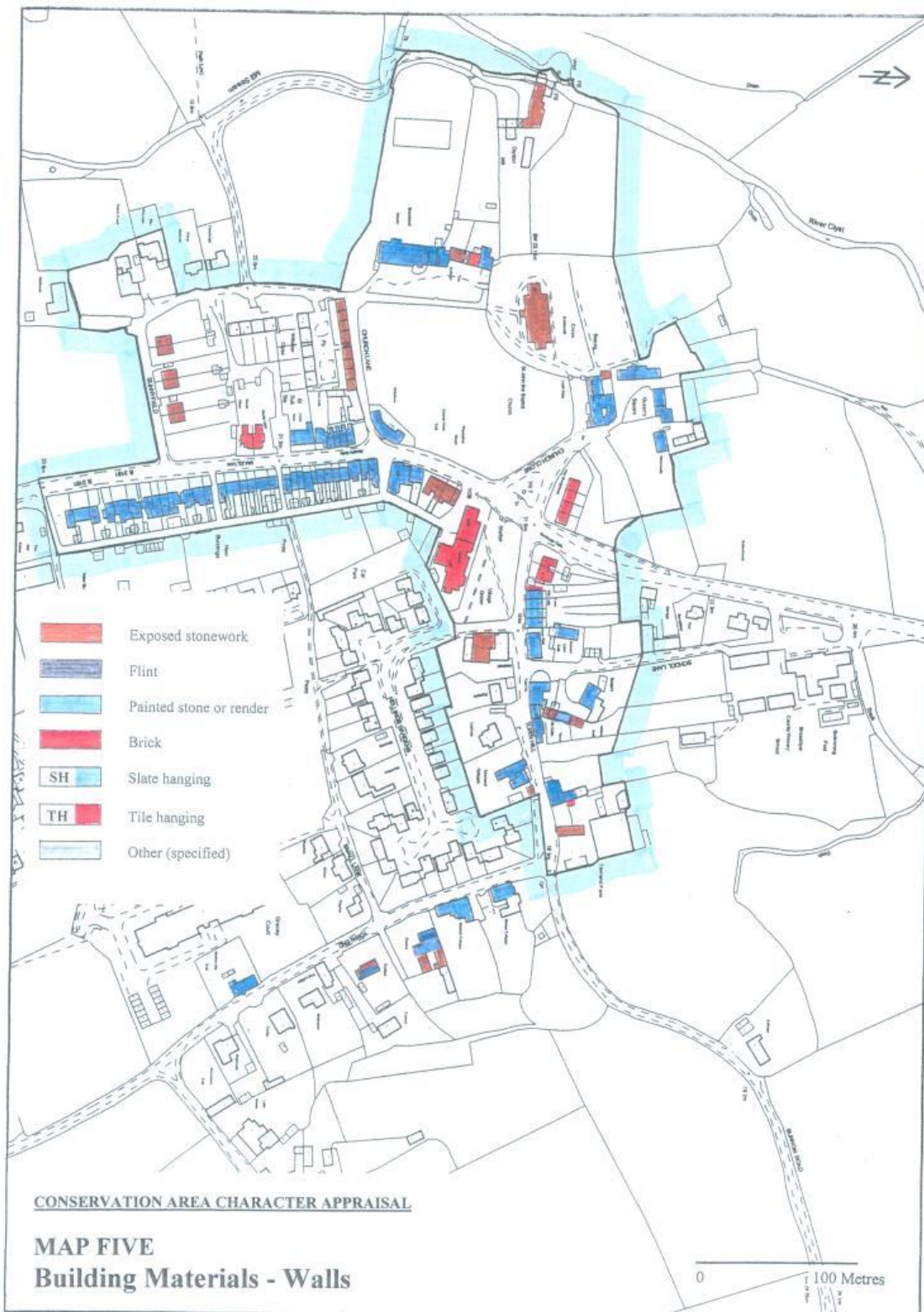
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### Purpose of the Review

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 Broadclyst Conservation Area.

- There have been very few changes within the conservation area over the past ten years apart from the addition of a very prominent new thatched property adjacent the B3181 and a new day care centre, also in the centre of the village. Architecturally, these are partially successful although the overriding identity and character of Broadclyst can accommodate some change without having a marked impact.



*Suburban fences in School Lane detract from the character of the conservation area.*



*A recently constructed thatched property in the centre of the historic village.*

- There have been various alterations to existing properties to various degrees. The cumulative impact of inappropriate window replacements and suburban boundary treatments such as fences can have a significant impact particularly where the streetscene is unsympathetically affected.
- Although outside the conservation area boundary it is worth mentioning that Broadclyst Primary School has extended in recent years with a new classroom block and planning permission now exists for a further new block and extension to the listed school buildings.



### Potential review of conservation area boundary.

The existing conservation area boundary covers the majority of the historic core of the settlement. However Town End east of the existing conservation area is a historically significant part of the village with good surviving medieval and later vernacular properties including Markers Cottage which is grade II\* on account of its multi-phased joinery and fifteenth century painted screen. The setting of these properties and the spaces between them are important in historic streetscape terms and should be considered for inclusion in the conservation area.

To the rear of New Buildings is an open area of gardens and allotments which appear to be quite historic and appear on the 1890 OS map. These add considerable character and diversity to the setting of the listed groups of buildings in the conservation area. While the National Trust may well have protective controls in place over any development in this area it is certainly an aspect of the village that is worthy of preservation and warrants inclusion in the conservation area. Any proposed extensions to the conservation area will involve a full public consultation exercise.



*Medieval cottages set prominently against the roadside in Town End.*

### Principle reasons for erosion or changes to conservation area character.

- The 1999 survey highlighted several aspects that contributed to the loss of character including prominent overhead power lines and unsympathetic suburban infill immediately adjacent the conservation area boundary. Great care must be taken to ensure that future residential development in particular takes full account of the distinct character of the conservation area and makes a positive response in terms of massing, proportions and materials. A future Management Plan will look at the ways in which these matters may be addressed in the future.
- While there is no statutory control over replacement windows in many unlisted buildings the pressure to replace traditional timber windows with PVCu alternatives remains. While Broadclyst appears to have escaped from the extent of PVCu window replacement experienced in other East Devon settlements the removal of traditional windows is the single most apparent change to the conservation area in recent years. There is greater awareness of the environmental impact of PVCu production and waste and while it is hoped that timber replacement windows are seen as the more sustainable option the marketing drives of the major PVCu window companies continue. In the light of this it is anticipated that a proposal to serve an Article 4 Direction to control replacement windows would form part of a future public consultation exercise.