

Honiton 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 Honiton Conservation Area.

- Almost the whole of the conservation area is a shopping centre and this greatly affects the street scene. This manifests itself in an array of A-boards, shop signs, advertising placards etc. The recent ban on smoking in cafés has had the interesting effect of increasing the outdoor street life in this town centre, even on a cold day. This is particularly evident in Black Lion Court, in Lace Walk and outside the High Street bars and coffee shops. Black Lion Court has been very well renovated and is now an attractive shopping arcade, including a new wrought iron gate of original design.
- There is a lack of care for street furniture, its upkeep, design and placement. There are several very poor examples of neglect, including very many unused rusty signposts the length of the High Street. Pavement surfaces are in very poor condition in places, although care has been taken to replace historic paving in others. Poor repair work has been carried out on the historic iron conduit in places. No progress has been made in removing tarmac from cobbled and paved surfaces to reveal old finishes.
- The library in New Street represents the worst possible example of damage to a frontage and to the street scene. The forecourt has been covered with bollards and road paint to an unacceptable extent in a conservation area.
- Some cast iron features have disappeared. A traditional Victorian lamp-post has been removed from Chapel Street. The fingerpost sign pointing to Clapper Lane has lost its top and its fingers (cast iron, Royal Label Factory, Stratford on Avon).
- A commendable blue plaque scheme has been successfully introduced with explanatory plaques attached to buildings of historic interest throughout the town.

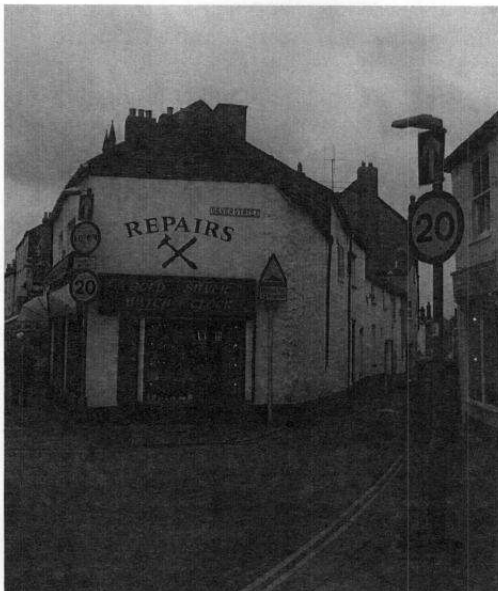


A clutter of signage in a very prominent position in the conservation area.



The blue plaque scheme has successfully been introduced into the town in recent years

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- The signage and road markings associated with the increase in traffic and parking are among the most significant visual changes in the past few years. The main street is wholly given over to car traffic, its control, direction and parking. Silver St has recently been made 20mph and has been visually blighted by the associated signage, unnecessary speed tables and double yellow lines. Silver Street is too narrow for parking but still has bright yellow double yellow lines painted down each side.
- PVCu replacement windows and doors have been fitted in key buildings, and unlawfully in some listed buildings. Where these can be controlled action should be taken to ensure their removal and reinstatement of traditional timber units.
- The museum has seen some renovation that has included some large blue plastic signs over the façade. There is now also a very large area of tarmac over what could have been a historically correct surface.
- Although relatively non-prominent from the principal thoroughfares there are numerous small new housing developments of varying quality in the backlands within and close to the conservation area. For instance the open land at the rear Newlands has been filled with a new housing development, Lamplighters.



A recent over-engineering of the junction of Silver Street and High Street with unnecessary double yellow lines and three post signs.



Angel Mews just north of the High Street is just one of a number of recent residential developments in the conservation area.

Potential review of conservation area boundary.

The existing conservation area boundary covers most of the historic area of the town, however the appraisal suggested extending the conservation area to Marwood House to the east to further protect the eastern approach to the town, the conduit runs the length of the proposed new area, there are some fine stone walls and three listed buildings as well as some key buildings.

There is a considerable development pressure for residential consisting of small houses and flats in the town centre, with developers favouring infill of the precious rear burgage plots and alleyways over re-use of empty upper buildings over shops. It is suggested that a further extension of the conservation area would be advisable to cover Queen Street and part of Orchard Way to

protect the artisans' cottages in this area, where some redevelopment is already occurring. These aspects of conservation area review will be fully considered during the consultation process.

Principle reasons for erosion or changes to conservation area character.

- Attempts at vehicle management by signage, road markings, yellow lines, speed tables and car parks, resulting in motor vehicles and their effects dominating the conservation area.
- Lack of control over shop fronts, shop signage, leading to misguided competition between shop owners to outdo one another with A-boards, shop signs, window signs, display awnings, hanging banners etc.
- Out of control installation of street furniture and signage, especially posts, with no coherence, a lack of maintenance, redundant furniture left in place and lack of care for historic street furniture and historic surfaces.
- Loss of historic features such as windows and doors from listed and key buildings as a result of permitted development rights and pressure and marketing by window companies.

HONITON

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

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HONITON



Approach to the conservation area from the east. Attractive and varied townscape, on a largely domestic scale.

1 HISTORIC AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Much of the historic centre of Honiton straddles just one long wide street of the former A 30 London to Exeter road which originally formed part of the Fosse Way, but now bypasses the town to the north.

1.2 One of the town's main functions over a long period was as a coaching stop, and several large inns remain, although some have now ceased their original function. Honiton was described as "a neatly built town" in the 1857 edition of Blacks Guide to England.

1.3 The original settlement of "Huna's Farm" may well have been on the hillside to the south of the town where the former parish church of St. Michaels now stands. It would have been one of the many large farmsteads which are scattered across the Otter Valley. Not far away are Coombhayes, Higher Blannicombe and Heathfield, all dating from c.1600 or earlier, and little altered.

1.4 Honiton's origins are much earlier however, and it is known that the Manor came to the Earls of Devon, and that William de Vernon, the 5th Earl, founded a borough here between 1194 and 1217. The town was governed until 1846 by

a portreeve, thereafter becoming incorporated and thus a mayoral town. It was a parliamentary borough between 1640 and 1868, and as such is said to have had an unsavoury reputation, although in what respect is not disclosed.



New Street, an attractive townscape with a gently curving alignment of two storey buildings, and glimpses of wooded countryside beyond.

1.5 Daniel Defoe in his topographical work¹ - "A Tour Through England and Wales" published in 1726 describes Honiton as follows:

".. a large and beautiful market town, very populous and well-built, and is so very remarkably paved with small pebbles..that it holds a small stream..with a little square dipping place left at every door, so that every family in the town has a clear clean running river, (as it may be call'd) just at their own door."

1.6 The two traditional industries established in the town were the manufacturing of serges and of lace. Honiton is the first settlement in Devon to have had a flourishing woollen industry (during the 17th and 18th centuries). Lace manufacture of fine quality is thought to have been introduced by Dutch refugees in Elizabethan times, reaching a peak of fame in the 19th century under royal patronage. Like many inland market towns of Devon the population of Honiton peaked in the 1840's and then declined gradually until recent decades. Fire devastated the town several times; in 1672, 1747, 1754 and 1765, when 115 houses were burned. This accounts for the present appearance of a late 18th or early 19th century town with a considerable amount of pleasant buildings of this date. The later plan is a medieval pattern with wide main street and back lanes; that on the south side still evident. There was formerly a central Shambles in the High Street, but this was removed in 1823.

1.7 Of local traditions still maintained, a colourful St Margaret's Day Fair in mid-July perpetuates several ancient customs.

1.8 To give an indication of the phases of development of the town; the population in 1851 was 3,427, had declined to 3,216 in 1891, and is currently over 6,000, reflecting the considerable residential expansion of the town, particularly since 1945.

2 SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

History and Extent

2.1 The present Honiton Conservation Area mainly comprises the two main frontages to High Street, and part of New Street towards the former Parish Church.

2.2 The special character of Honiton was recognised by both the Borough and County Councils in 1972 when the town was the subject of comprehensive study.² The report recommended designation of a Conservation Area which was formalised later that year.

2.3 Within the existing conservation area are 136 individually listed buildings, some in groups, giving 90 separate list entries, with an additional 51 individual buildings included on the local list, which is non-statutory. Both types are shown on Map 1.

Basic Form and Layout

2.4 High Street follows the alignment of the original Fosse Way between Exeter and Lincoln, and this established a continuing role in the subsequent importance of the town. It is not known for certain whether there was a Roman settlement of any consequence at this point. The present settlement pattern is fairly typical of a medieval town of the 13th century, laid out along both sides of the through road, with rear lanes set back a considerable distance. By the early 15th century a pattern of long narrow Burgage plots had become firmly established.

2.5 In the 17th century the manufacture of woollen cloth eclipsed the lace industry, placing Honiton at the forefront of the Devon cloth industry until large mechanised 19th century mills were built at Tiverton and Ottery St. Mary. Earlier housing in Honiton appears to have been densely built which no doubt accounted for the several disastrous fires that ravaged the town between 1672 and 1765. There are now only a few buildings that survive from that period, mainly towards the edge of the town centre.

2.6 The town centre today presents the appearance of a late 18th and early 19th century market town. The importance of the textile and hostelry trades produced some elegant buildings on either side of the High Street, with a further more modest group on the east side of New Street. Within these continuous frontages are the several imposing former coaching inns. Towards the edge of the town centre are several detached villas in landscaped settings, some now containing recent housing developments of varying quality.

2.7 The High Street has suffered somewhat from the loss of historic shopfronts and some overbearing signage, but the overall scale and appearance of the town centre today remains largely unspoilt with only "a few jarring notes".³

¹ "A Tour Through England and Wales" published in two volumes 1724-26

² Published as the Honiton Report, Devon County Council, 1972

³ Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Second Edition*, 1989

3 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

3.1 The conservation area displays certain characteristics which can be broken down into separate areas which help to understand the different phases in the development of the town. These are briefly outlined below, and also indicated on Map 1. (Numbers in brackets refer to those indicated on the map).

3.2 (1) The Western Approaches

Characterised by groups of mainly early and mid 19th century villas in landscaped gardens, with some chert stone boundary walls. The houses range from expressive Gothic cottage to formal two-bay classical types.

3.3 (2) Gissage Brook

A steep dip to the west of High Street is created by the Gissage Brook. Buildings form tight, mainly two storey, street frontages of modest proportions. A small nucleus of thatched properties suggests the earlier mainly vernacular character that preceded the major conflagrations.

3.4 (3) High Street (west)

The commercial heart of the town with some residential accommodation over shops and behind the main frontage. The shops are punctuated by former coaching inns and 19th century banks. Several buildings have fine detailing, including carved stonework and ornamental ironwork. Some of the 18th and earlier 19th century buildings have had window bays and large paned sashes added. Within the extensive backland, a variety of buildings are accessed under upper floors or via narrow gaps running back from the main frontage. The practice of building short terraces of cottages on backland plots, (e.g. King's Terrace) persisted until the late 19th century. Swan's Yard is partly paved in stable tiles and forms the entrance to a proposed development site. Lee's Buildings has some original cobbles although most is covered in asphalt. This is a well-used footpath to the housing estates beyond.

3.5 (4) Dowell Street

A narrow street flanked by groups of modest terrace cottages, mainly rendered with slate roofs. The group is terminated by a substantial mid 19th century villa.

3.6 (5) High Street (east)

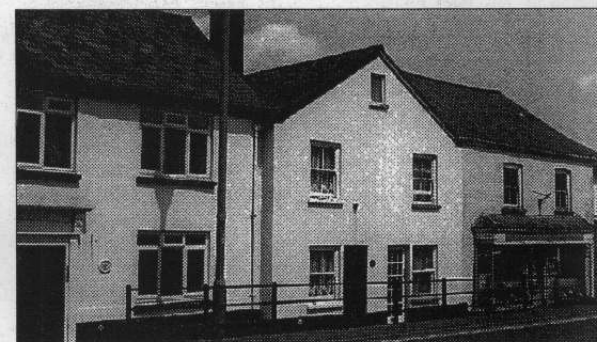
Also a largely continuous frontage, but punctuated by attractive open spaces surrounding the Parish Church and the Congregational Church, with fine trees forming an important visual break. The street layout, particularly to the rear of the north side is complex with short streets and further backland terraces in close-knit and modestly scaled domestic groups. Of special interest is Newlands, a small informally grouped later 19th/early 20th century development of industrial housing apparently associated with a former tannery. This part



Exeter Road: large stucco mid 19th century villas in a quite formal landscaped setting, mainly evergreens.



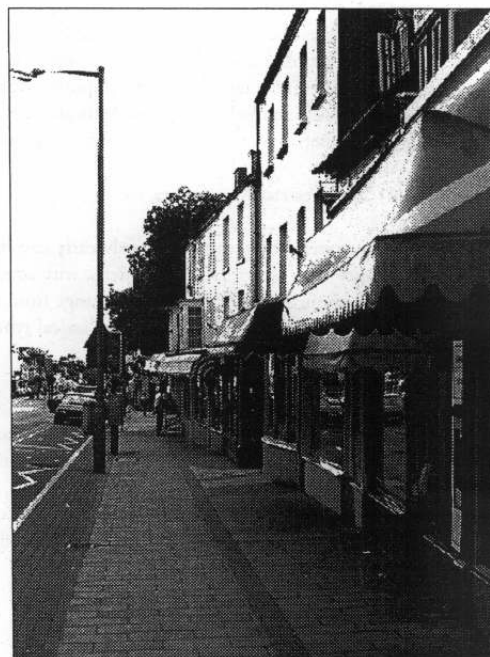
Former watermill in King Street. The mill wheel which still survives was manufactured at the Mickelburgh Foundry in Honiton



High Street (west) near Gissage Brook, an area of mixed housing and commercial development where some frontages are becoming compromised by modern replacements.



High Street, town centre; note iron balcony (No 68) on the left, churchyard trees on the right, and distant views beyond the town.



High Street: plastic blinds, especially on south and west facing buildings, tend to detract from otherwise attractive shopfronts.



High Street (east) south side. Frontages in this part of the town are pleasing and generally little compromised by modern replacements.

of the conservation area retains many chert stone walls within which are some pleasant undeveloped open spaces.

3.7 (6) New Street

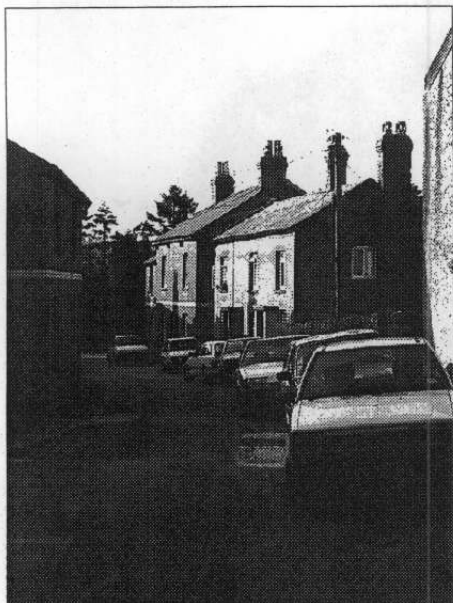
This secondary commercial street has modestly proportioned two storey buildings. The street broadens slightly near the junctions with King and Queen Streets. There are several good bay window frontages, and also here are glimpses of surrounding open countryside. Among pleasant original frontages and shopfronts are instances where plastic fascia and over-dominant lettering are evident. South of Queen Street are several modest Georgian buildings, once residences, now mainly in commercial use, and also one of the few surviving thatched buildings.

3.8 (7) Summerland Street/ south end of Queen Street

A small residential area containing robust early 19th century stuccoed houses. Nos 1 - 8 Summerland Street form a continuous frontage, and some of the earliest development in a formal arrangement set apart from the main routes into the town. Other adjoining mainly 19th century development in New Street, Queen Street and the large semi detached villas south of the railway extending towards St Michael's Church, although forming part of the 19th century extension of the town are not within the conservation area.



A fine cast iron gate entrance off New Street to No.8 Summerland.



A plain but interesting group of industrial housing built some 90 years ago for workers at the former adjoining tannery, the remaining buildings of which, latterly a builder's yard, are semi-derelict. Gardens and allotments (above right) still accounts for much open space within the old burgage plots.

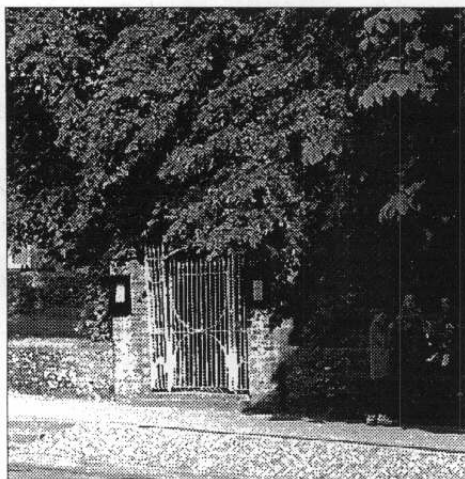
4 LANDSCAPE AND TREES

4.1 There is little evidence of formal landscaping within the conservation area, except at the western approaches, around the Parish Church and edging the large car park off Dowell Street. There are some fine specimen trees forming an important element of the townscape, especially the limes and horse chestnut in front of the Congregational Church.

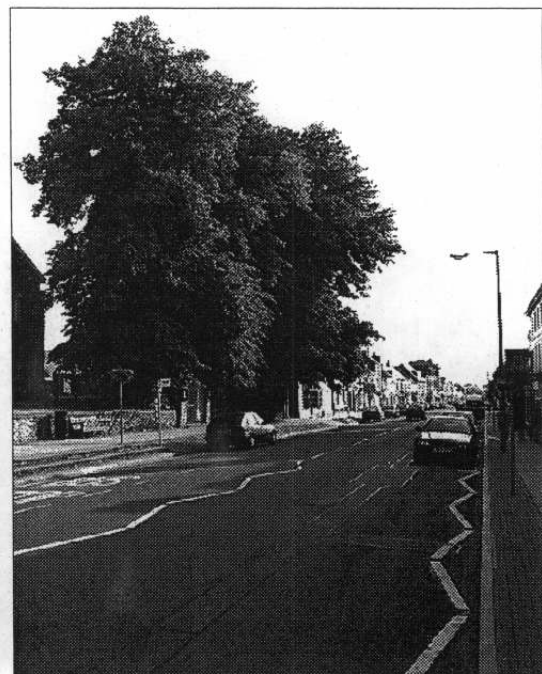
4.2 Several mature trees, mostly conifers, are particularly important visually on the western edge of the conservation area near and beyond Ernsborough Lodge. There is another group close to Marwood House, some distance beyond the present limit of the conservation area, but important in helping to close the view eastwards out of High Street. A further significant group, mostly willow and sycamore, extends north from High Street along The Gissage, then a group of oaks forming a narrow, but important strip of open space along the northern edge of the conversation area, and including the grounds of the large 19th century villa "Elmfield" where evergreen trees and shrubs again predominate.

4.3 Other individual trees, small groups, and lines following former hedgerows are to be found in the backland areas to the rear of High Street, most notably north of Rookwood House and Newlands. Apart from the two churches, other private open spaces which add significantly to the visual quality of the conservation area are somewhat limited and confined to small breaks in the otherwise largely continuous frontage, for example adjoining 53 High Street, and in front of the chapel immediately east of Manor House.

4.4 In terms of the quality of hard surfaces, there are a number of instances of the use of chert stone as small setts which in two particular instances have been used to considerable decorative effect. Round cobbles have also been used in more recent paving schemes in parts of High Street, especially on the south side. Remains of early natural stone surfaces, and also 19th century stable tiles - normally used on surfaces giving access to rear courts - still survive in places, although some are partially covered in asphalt. The condition and use of materials in pedestrian areas which provide access to the courtyard terraces is generally disappointing. There are instances where early material covered in asphalt might be exposed and restored to good effect, but it is suspected that much has been destroyed in laying of mains services, and has largely been lost.



A small area of public open space between Victoria Terrace and Gissage Brook, with an important group of mature oaks and forming the boundary between the conservation area and large areas of post 1945 housing.



High Street - Two exceptionally fine trees, a lime and a horse chestnut, within the Congregational Church grounds, that form an essential part of the townscape. Note the chert retaining wall, fine wrought iron gate between brick and stone piers, and recent cobbled areas abutting the carriageway.

5 BUILDING MATERIALS AND ORNAMENT

5.1 Honiton has a pleasing variety of traditional building materials, although these have been compromised by modern substitutes in many instances. As already mentioned few thatched buildings survive, but those that do provide an important contrast to the prevailing roofing material of slate or slate substitute, mainly asbestos or fibre cement.

5.2 The practice of bitumen coating or "Turnerising" roofs is fairly widespread, is rarely of good appearance and can cause additional problems in terms of long term repair or replacement. There are a few surviving instances of Cornish slate, usually on buildings up to the mid 19th century. Late 19th century buildings are normally of the darker Welsh slate. The use of plain tiles is relatively rare, although there are examples of the various patterns of red clay tiles manufactured in the Bridgwater area of Somerset up to the middle of the 20th century with double-Roman or plain pantiles predominating.

5.3 A few examples of decorative terracotta are to be found, some set within walls, for example in the large villas south of the railway station, and also used as paving, for example in front of the former Allhallows School. Chimneys are predominantly of brick, and often rendered. Pots are in many cases of 19th century terracotta, and a large proportion are of the pale cream variety with a few good decorative examples to be seen.

5.4 The predominant building material within the conservation area is either rendered cob or rubblestone, or brickwork much of which is painted white or in pale pastel colour. Most mid 19th century and later housing is in plain red brick, or with modest moulding or patterns, typical of the late 19th and early 20th century. Chert stone, the principal locally available natural building material is quite widely used, more usually in outbuildings, and especially in the long boundary walls to the rear of High Street where some are 3 metres in height. It is a very durable stone which shows very little sign of deterioration with age.

5.5 Timber, stone and cast iron are fairly extensively used as ornament, particularly in 18th and 19th century Classical and Victorian architecture. A modest distribution of coloured patterned glass survives, occasionally in shopfronts, as at the Honiton Dairy which also has an ornate tessellated shop floor. Decorative joinery is abundant, 18th century sash and bow windows, elegant recessed doorways with moulded or panelled doorcases; some with fanlights; 19th century bay windows and panelled doors. There has been a considerable loss of original joinery, doors and double hung sash windows in particular. It is not known how much of this replacement has been due to popular fashion or convenience rather than as a result of irreversible deterioration.

5.6 The appraisal has revealed a number of instances of decorative timber in poor condition where repair or replacement appears imminent. There is clearly some pressure for window replacement using sealed double glazing units, which has occurred mainly in New Street. High Street is remarkable for the extent of surviving or appropriately replaced fenestration particularly on upper floors. It was noted that plain external secondary glazing is sometimes in use as at Carlton House in High Street.

This has the advantage of not interfering with original fenestration, and also affording weather protection. It is arguable whether this method could be said to adversely affect the external appearance of the building, and offers a better solution than replacement with sealed double-glazed units, particularly as the former appears relatively easy to remove and replace as the need arises.

5.7 There are some good examples of decorative ironwork, although some has long been removed (e.g. from in front of the Congregational Church). Some wrought iron balconies, mainly in High Street, are very fine (e.g. T.D Hussey) but appear to require some repair or strengthening.



Stone detail, recently restored, on wall of parish church tower. It is mostly of chert with Beer Stone dressings, two of the most widely available local building stones.

6 STREET FURNITURE AND OTHER FEATURES

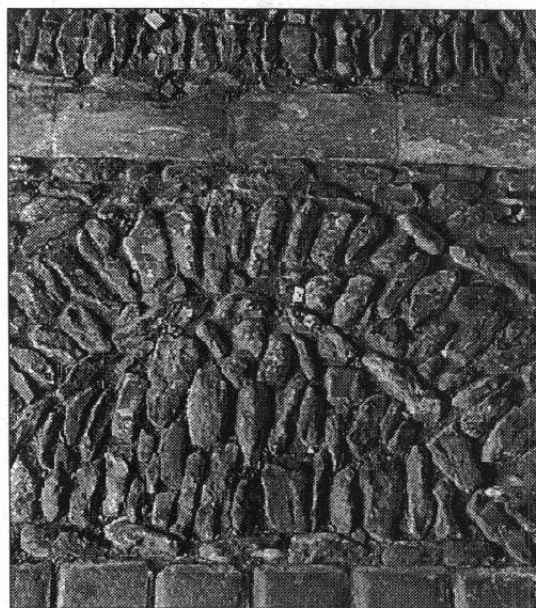
6.1 Many cast iron street nameplates have survived, others appear to have been removed, and the question arises whether a programme of replacement is advisable. Other street furniture using ironwork is sparse, but includes, a sewer vent in Clapper Lane with a fluted base, and rose motif ornament around the main column. Such artefacts are now considered to be worthy of listing in some instances.

6.2 Facing Clapper Lane in High Street is an apparently early finger post sign to "Combe Raleigh".

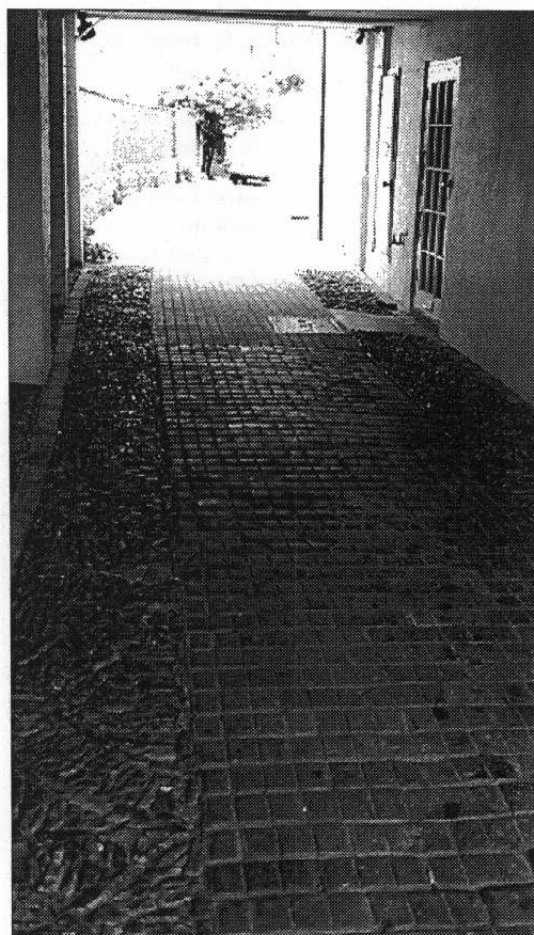
6.3 There is a significant survival of natural paved and cobbled surfaces, with two outstanding decorative examples, both at points of rear access under buildings fronting the main street. Other plainer examples are limited to narrow strips abutting frontages, mainly in High Street.



Cast iron street nameplate, probably 19th century, found throughout the conservation area.



Decoratively patterned chert cobbles and stable tiles in a courtyard off King Street.



7 SYNOPSIS OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Distribution

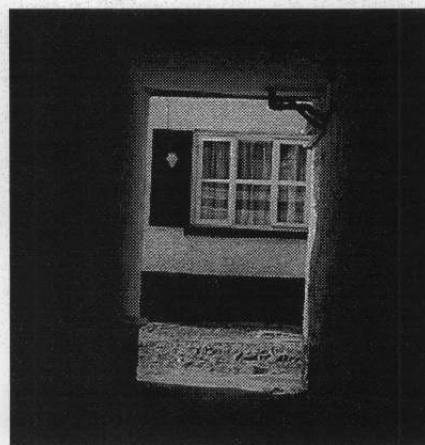
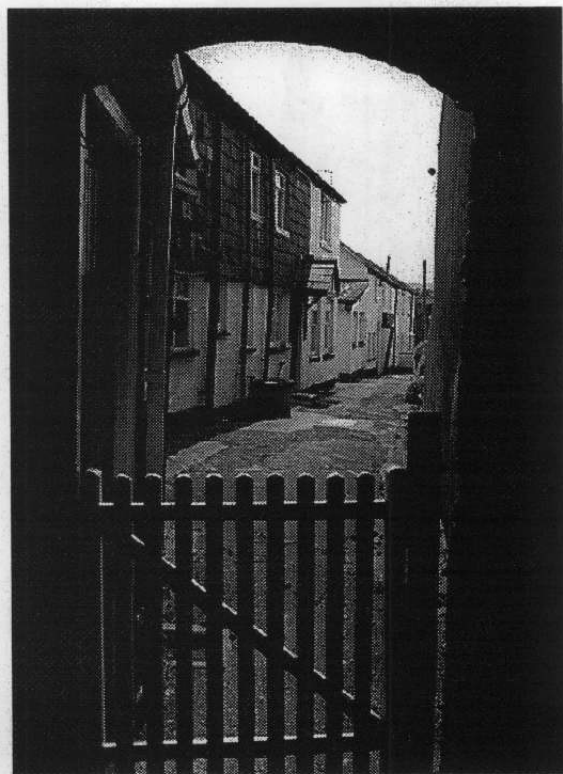
7.1 The large majority of listed buildings in Honiton are to be found in or to the rear of High Street, reflecting its particular architectural importance and high quality of townscape. The remainder are concentrated in Church Street, Dowell Street, Exeter Road, King's Road, New Street and Summerland Street (off New Street).

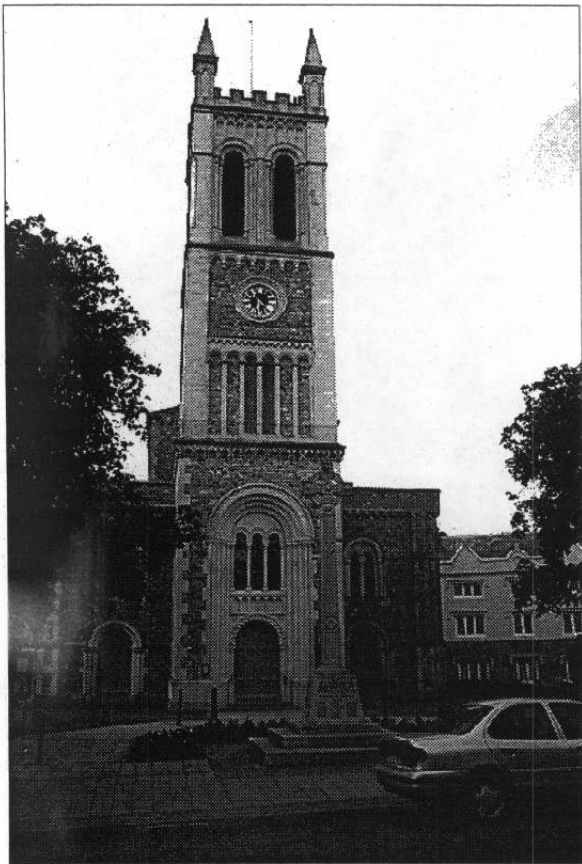
Summary of Townscape Quality and Important Buildings

7.2 The townscape of Honiton is modest in scale with plenty of evidence of the two or three storey rebuilding after the fires of 1747 and 1765. The several former coaching inns with their archways to rear courts and the considerable number of accesses from the main frontage to backland short terraces, creates great intricacy and spatial contrast. The following is a summary of the main buildings of note within the conservation area.



High Street (west). Examples of two courtyard terraces, approached beneath continuous frontages. The hardly noticeable access point to cottages shown (top right) can be seen in (centre right). Roadsigns tend to partially obscure otherwise good frontages. The need to put in services can have a bland or unsightly affect upon spaces or surfaces that could otherwise be attractive. Traditional paved or cobbled surfaces sometimes survive (right) but often need consolidation and repair, and sometimes complete reinstatement may be appropriate.





St. Paul's Parish Church 1838. Architect: Charles Fowler.

7.2.1 **St. Paul's Church**, with its lofty tower is a dominant landmark within the High Street and beyond. It was completed in 1838 and designed in a Romanesque style by Charles Fowler, architect, and unusually sited on a largely north-south axis. It was restored in 1849 after early failure of the roof structure, and recently cleaned and restored which shows to good effect the use of squared-off blocks of chert with Beer stone dressings.

7.2.2 In close proximity just off the main street is **Allhallows Chapel**, used for nearly 300 years as a schoolroom, and probably first built as a chapel of ease. It has some 15th century work, (e.g. east window) and a circular west window dated 1614. and is now used as a museum. Glimpsed from High Street between these two buildings is the former **Allhallows School**, founded in 1614 and which moved to Rousdon in 1938. The present building, now divided into flats is mainly 19th century.

7.2.3 The **Congregational Chapel** site dates from 1774. The present chapel, set back from the road in its own burial ground, was built in 1836 to replace the earlier Meeting House. Built in red brick with rendered quoins, and a two storey gabled porch added in 1862.

7.2.4 In **High Street**, the following buildings are worthy of particular note:

No 62 Good 18c red brick; 5 windows, stone quoins and keystones.

No 68 Handsome early 19c stucco; long iron balcony with Grecian motifs.

No 82 Imposing bank c.1870, polished granite columns carrying heavy sandstone pediments over two porches.

No 94 "Dignified banker's front of 1877 with rusticated pilasters".

No 53 18c town house, 5 bays, 3 storeys, stuccoed west parapet, contemporary features inside.

No 59 Plympton House; lower irregular front with late 18c pedimented doorcase.

No 95-99 good early 18c brick, overpainted.

Angel Hotel - Tall 3 storey Victorian frontage, archway and long ranges behind - a traditional large inn plan.

No 107 Grecian balcony above channelled stucco ground floor.

Pannier Market (1823) - assembly rooms over, modest stone front, former ground floor arcade, since filled in. Attractive cast iron balcony to tripartite centre window.

New Dolphin Hotel - early 19c coaching inn, character diminished by later modifications.

Central Place is perhaps the best example of the side alleys of 19th century cottages reached through an archway.

Manor House (No 143) was once the grandest house in the town centre with a good early 17th century stone front, altered in the early 19th century and compromised in the 1970's. There is a broad central entrance with Tuscan porch and two projecting full-height square bays with original hollow chamfered mullions.



New Street: the attractive bay window frontage to the Star Inn.

7.2.5 There are also some good small groups of listed buildings in **New Street**:

Nos 25-31 form an attractive group of 18th century buildings with some 19th century shopfronts.

Nos 39-41 are a small group of 17th century thatched cottages, probably the oldest of this type in the town, and retaining some early features.

Nos 44-46 are good examples of modest early 19th century town houses with attractive doorcases.

Buildings on the Local List

7.3 A considerable number of buildings, especially in High Street, are listed for the particular contribution they make within the overall townscape. Whilst not described in the Grade II list, or afforded the same statutory protection, they are referred to in the statutory list by virtue of their group value, the character of which it is important to retain.

Important Building Groups

7.4 The statutory list gives the following buildings as those which are regarded as forming particularly cohesive groups.

Central Place/ rear of High Street

Nos 1 to 4 Central Place; rears of 135, 135A High Street, 137, 137A High Street.

Exeter Road

St. Mary's Charity Almshouses and Chapel*

High Street

Nos 1 to 5 (odd) and Nos 13, 15, 23, and 25*

Nos 35, 39, 41, Nos 49-57 (odd) and No 61

Nos 73 to 91 (odd), 91A, and 93 to 101 (odd) together with Allhallows' Chapel (now Museum)

Nos 103 to 107 (odd), New Dolphin Hotel, Nos 111-115 (odd), Nos 119 to 125 (odd)

Nos 131 to 137 (odd)

Nos 143 to 157 (odd)

Nos 177 to 195 (odd)

Nos 207 to 213 (odd)

Nos 229 to 239 (odd)

Nos 38 to 62 (even)

Nos 68 to 78 (even)

Nos 92 to 116 (even)

Nos 128 to 138 (even) and Nos 142 to 184 (even) and Nos 188 to 200 (even)

New Street

Nos 15 to 31 (odd)

Premises occupied by Hoskins and 80 High Street

Nos 44 and 46

Summerland Street

Nos 1 to 8 (consec)

(* these groups are not within the existing conservation area)

Buildings at Risk

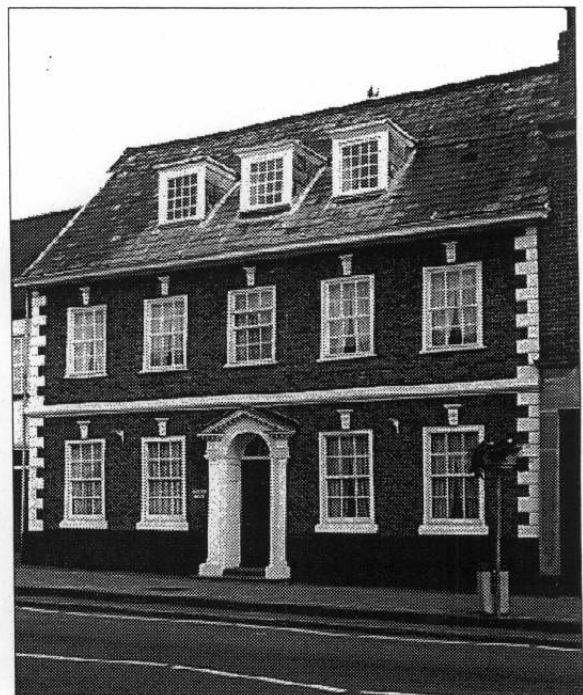
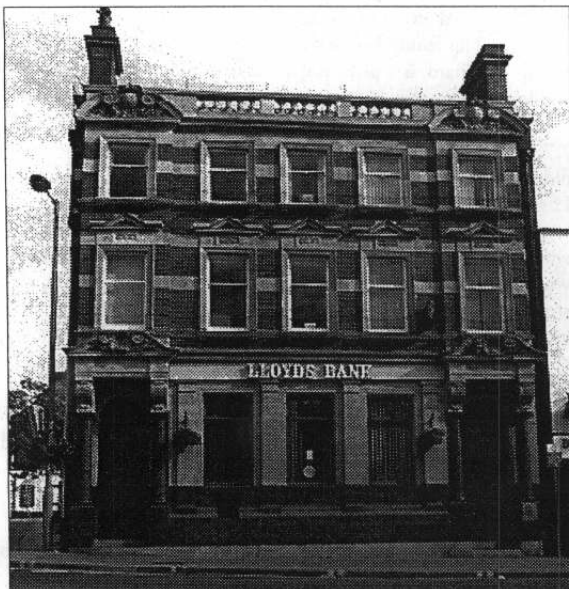
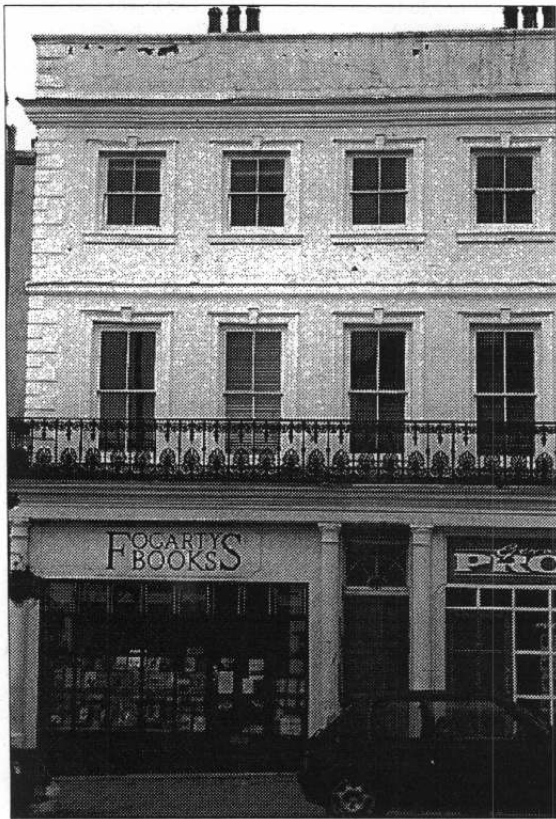
7.5 The Blackdown Hills Buildings at Risk Survey has identified 12 listed buildings in Honiton being at risk. All these buildings are identified as being in poor condition and normally only partly occupied; four commercial buildings had vacant ground floors. This condition can also be applied to a significant number of unlisted buildings in the historic core of the town.

Important Buildings outside the Conservation Area

7.6 Beyond the existing conservation area, and adjoining the Exeter Road, almost a mile southwest of the centre is **St. Margaret's Hospital**, founded as a leper hospital in the 14th century, and re-founded and rebuilt c.1530 by Thomas Chard, the last Abbot of Forde Abbey (1520-1539), as an almshouse. Some work from this period remains but the present appearance is of a thatched group of cottages with 19th century Gothic windows. The rebuilt hospital chapel, on the south side, also rebuilt by Chard, is a plain single cell with late Perpendicular windows.

7.7 Another important building in Honiton, and one of the oldest to survive is **Marwood House** at the northeast end of the High Street, built for John Marwood, physician. He was the second son of Thomas Marwood, physician to Queen Elizabeth, who enjoyed great fame after curing the Earl of Essex in 1592, where others had failed. It has a symmetrical three bay front with stone-framed windows, a central porch with four centred archway, and a fireplace dated 1619.

7.8 **St. Michael's Church**, the former Parish Church of Honiton, now a Chapel of Ease is well concealed among trees on an elevated site over half a mile to the south. It is a distinguished building of the late 15th to early 16th century. The chancel was rebuilt c.1500. The interior was gutted by fire in 1911 when a fine rood screen was lost. It contains the tomb of Thomas Marwood (d.1617). There are especially fine views over the town from this point.

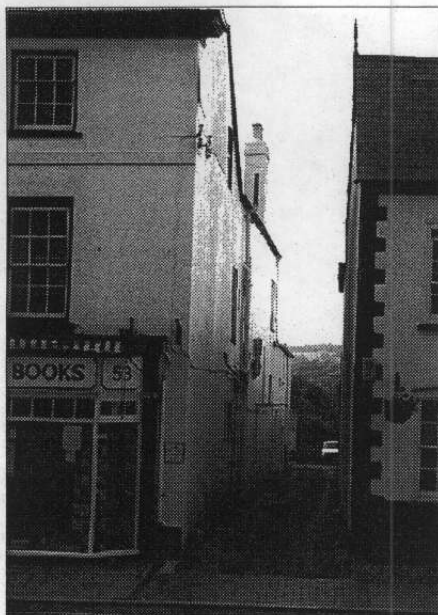


High Street: impressive 18th to late 19th century frontages.

8 FEATURES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

8.1 The main character elements in Honiton conservation area which may be considered as most worthy of retention are as follows:

- original panelled doors and double hung sash windows
- original shopfronts - nearly all examples are to be found in High Street and New Street
- well-preserved original vernacular and artisan features; brickwork and porches (e.g. cottages in Clapper Lane)
- pedestrian access ways where there are good examples of use of natural materials; patterned chert "setts" in particular. This raises the question of what should be retained, repaired, uncovered or imitated.
- visually important boundary walls, particularly those of some antiquity, and where locally available natural materials have been used
- ornamental ironwork, especially at first floor level in High Street
- cast iron street nameplates
- important mature trees, particularly within High Street, and those at the edges or just beyond the existing conservation area which have the affect of framing or enclosing the more distant views out of the town centre.
- largely unspoilt and sometimes intimate open spaces, especially gardens and allotments woven into the historic remains of the burgage plots.



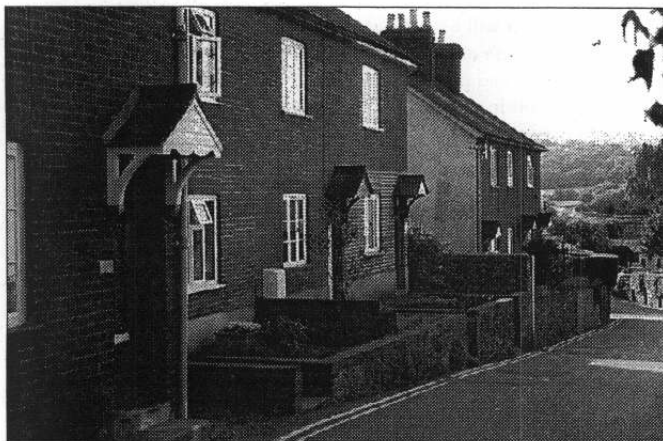
High Street (east) north side. An important frontage gap providing glimpses of open countryside.

8.2 It will be noted that the survival of historic boundary walls, the use of local stone, good vernacular and classical frontages, and much original detail which has not yet been lost is important in terms of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

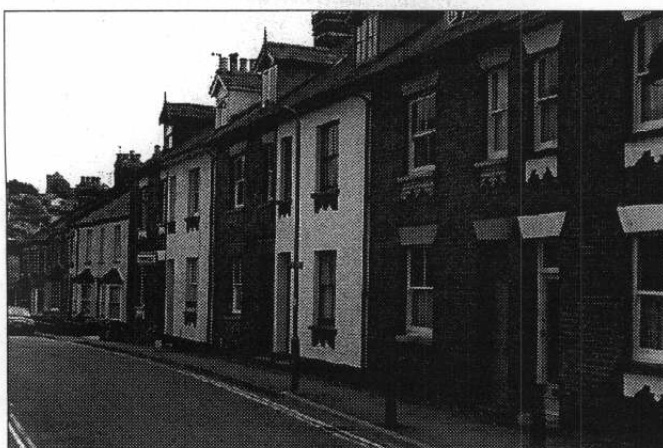
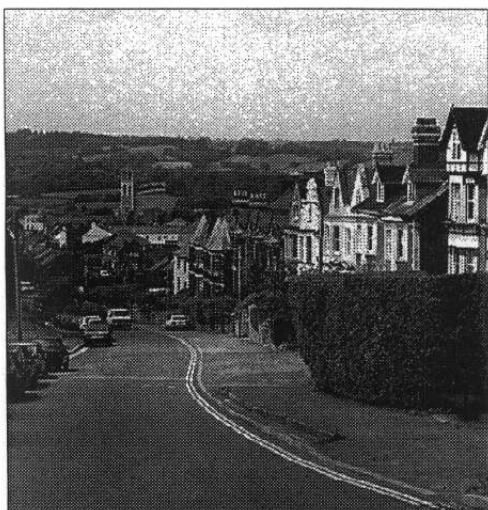
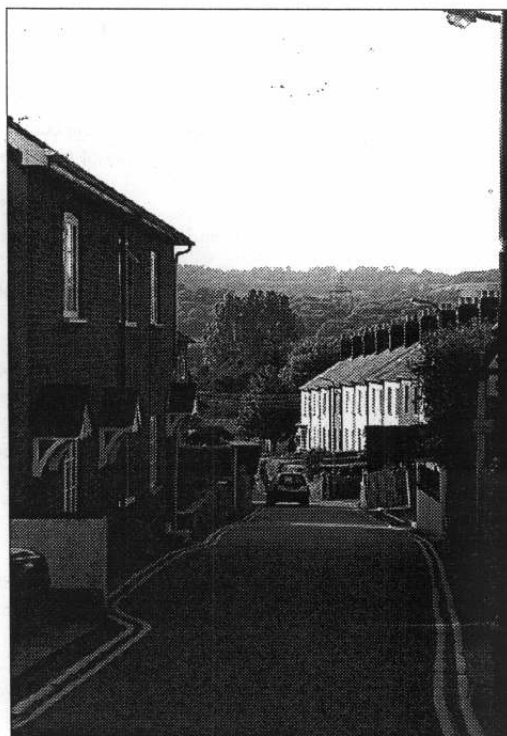
9 LOSS OF CHARACTER AND INTRUSION

9.1 The main elements in the conservation area which are resulting in loss of character and intrusion are as follows:

- removal of traditional shopfronts, replacement with plain fascia, large plate-glass windows, plastic internally illuminated signage, and plastic canopies. (This is a particular problem on the north side of High Street, which receives most direct sunlight).
- overhead power lines - a problem in part of King Street (which immediately adjoins the conservation area)
- large open car parks intruding into or immediately adjoining the conservation area with no sense of enclosure and minimal landscaping.
- prominent yet bland traffic islands in High Street with standardised features
- utilitarian streetlighting and signage on free standing columns unsympathetic to the character of the conservation area, particularly in High Street
- poorly surfaced areas, particularly several of the small pedestrian access ways to rear terraces, some of which are lacking a name plate.
- vacant buildings and those currently at risk in terms of outdated function or failing to have found a suitable alternative use.
- general dilapidation of parts of buildings which are under-used, or suffering as a result of lower levels of economic activity within the town centre.



Clapper lane, off High Street. (above and right) 19th century houses in a plain vernacular style. Loss of some original doors and windows is offset by complete survival of the minimal but visually attractive porches. The terrace of later 19th century houses (above) lies just beyond the existing conservation area.



19th century terrace houses and semi-detached villas on the approach to the conservation area between St Michael's Church and New Street. There is a good survival of original features, especially the terraced houses shown.





Allhallows Museum (right) also mainly built in chert. Beyond are the former Allhallows School buildings. Hard surfaces, mainly pedestrian, predominate in this part of the town.

10 SUMMARY

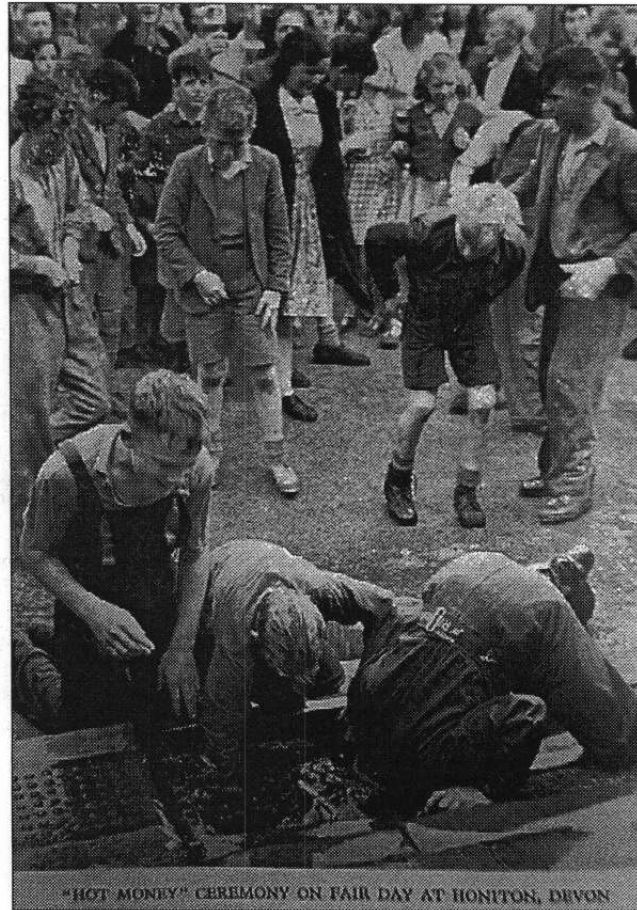
10.1 Honiton is a town of particular quality and character, and is one that many visiting tourists perceive as a suitable and agreeable first halt on the start of a tour within the West Country. The town is favoured for its largely unspoilt High Street, relatively wide pavements and ease of parking. The attractive grouping of buildings forms an important component of the townscape, and the parish church tower and several fine trees are especially important visual landmarks. Views or glimpses of distant landscape beyond from its spacious main streets, enhance the feeling of an essentially country town, and by contrast there remains in places a special intimacy as a result of the weaving in of the short terraces and small open spaces within the remains of the medieval burgage plots just behind the main street frontages.

10.2 There is also a significant amount of fine detailing which exhibits traditional craftsmanship, particularly in wood and iron, but some is beginning to require urgent treatment. There is also a good representation of local building materials, especially chert, which is similar to flint in substance and very durable. Mainly 19th century artisan detailing in window frames and glazing bars, doors and door-frames, and decorative brickwork is still slightly in the majority, although modern replacements appear to be making fairly rapid inroads, especially in the plainer terraces and commercial frontages that are not statutorily protected.

10.3 Apart from two well segregated small housing developments, just to the rear of High Street, most recent (post 1945) development within the conservation area is unduly dominant, has developed haphazardly as an ad hoc response to development pressure or tends to lack adequate design or compatible materials. Some parts of the town within the conservation area also lack the feeling of having adequate public open space or access to traffic-free areas of quiet enjoyment, whilst some large new car parks are bleak and featureless with minimal landscaping.

10.4 Since the present conservation area was originally designated in 1972, perceptions have changed and it is considered that some of the Victorian terraces and villas to the south of the town centre, and also the High Street frontages as far east as Marwood House should be considered suitable for inclusion within a possible future extension to the conservation area.

HISTORIC PICTURES

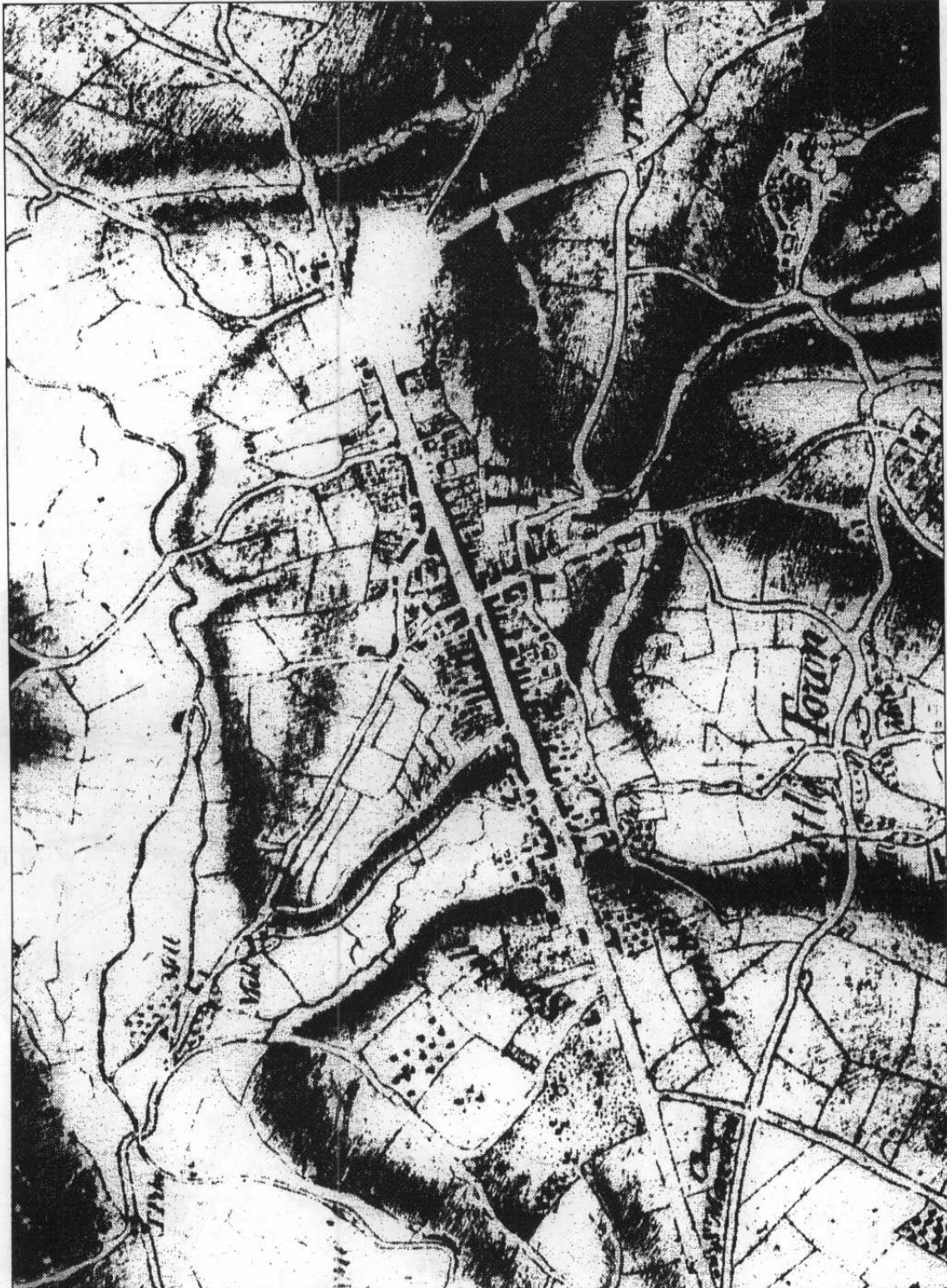


"HOT MONEY" CEREMONY ON FAIR DAY AT HONITON, DEVON

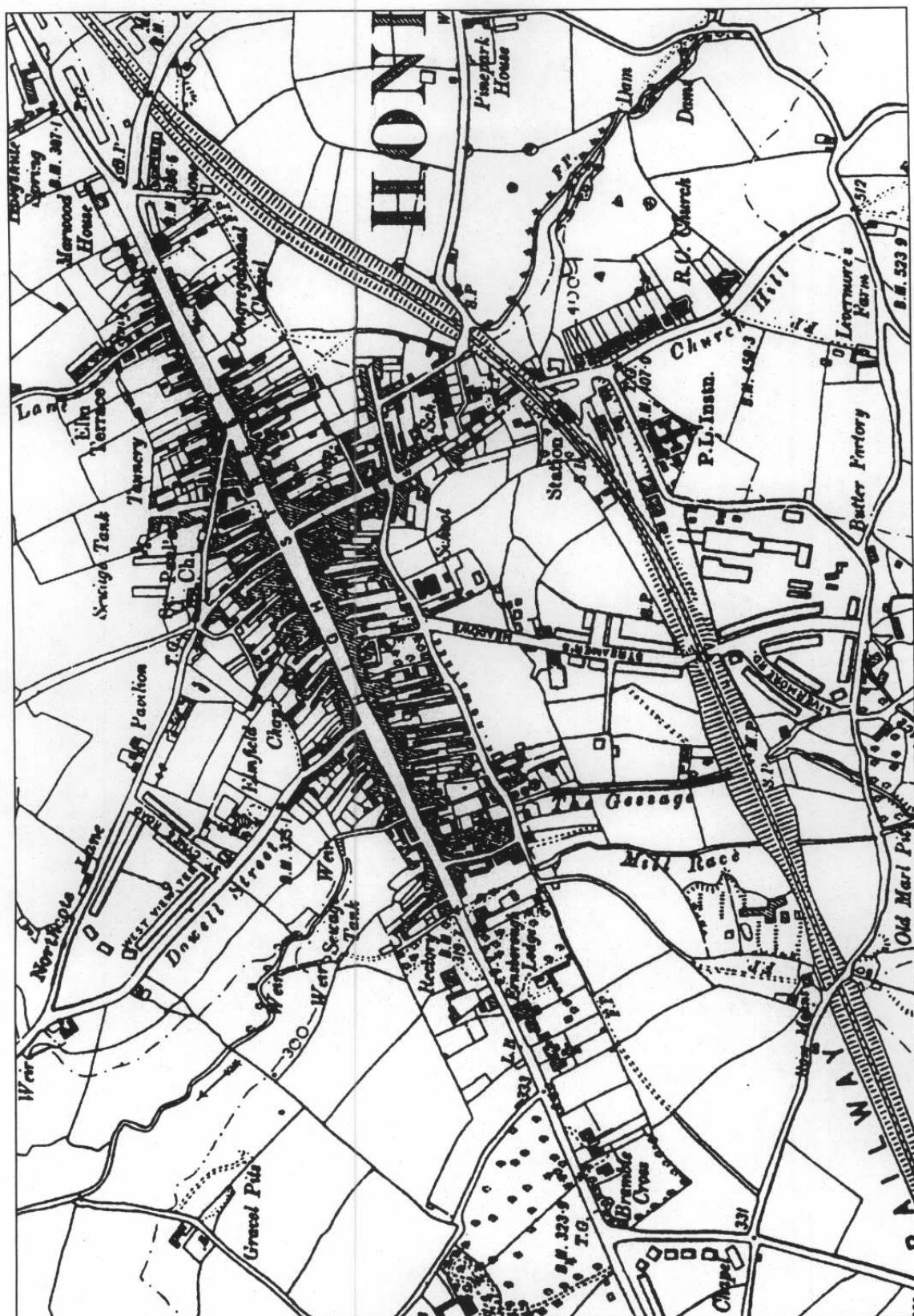


Allhallows Chapel now the Museum

HISTORIC MAPS









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

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Listed Building
-  sub-divisions
-  Buildings on the Local List (unscheduled)
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  Other key buildings and building groups of architectural importance or which make a significant contribution to townscape



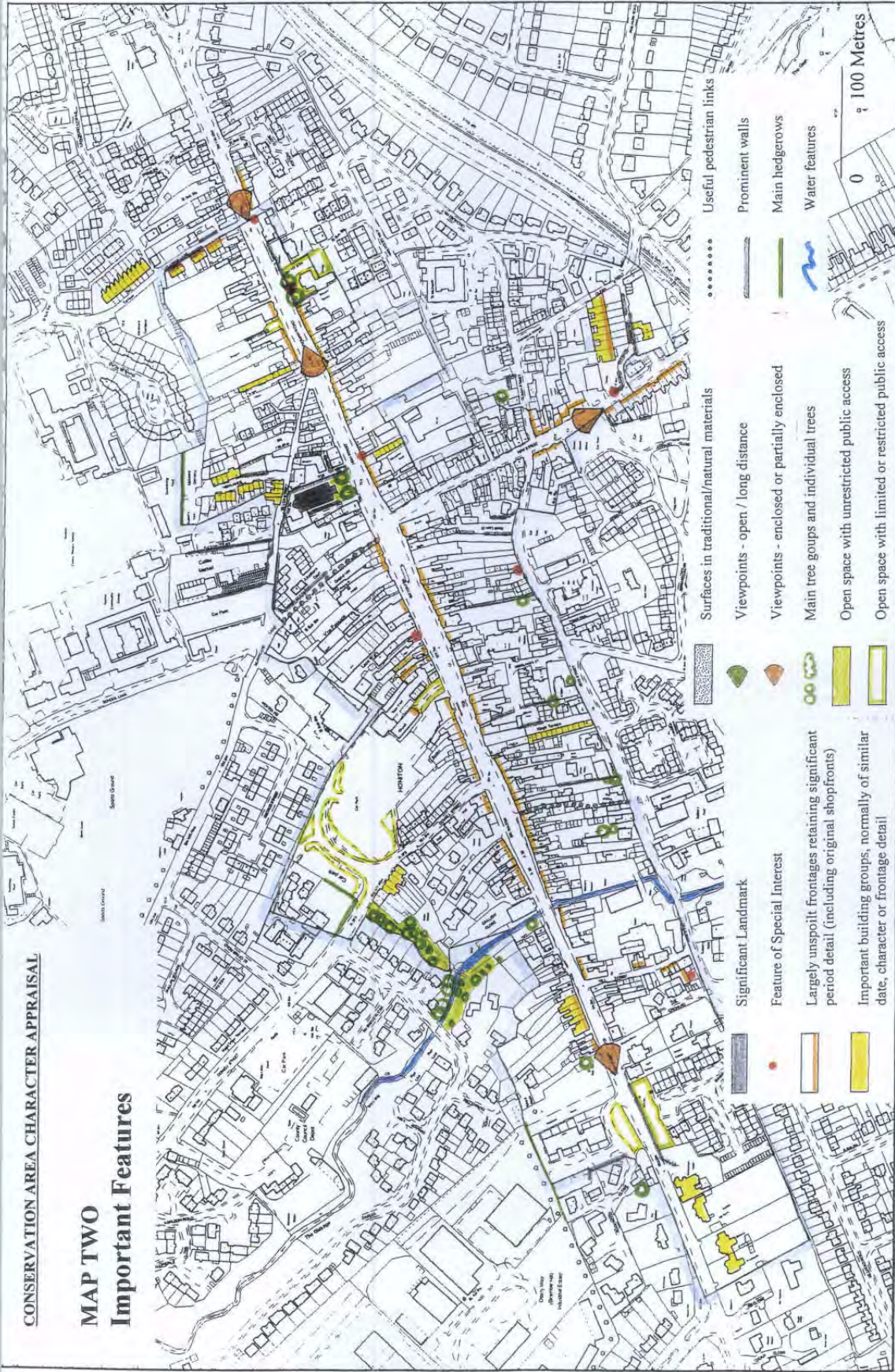
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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP TWO Important Features



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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP THREE

Detracting Features

- Location of overhead power lines
- ▨ Locations where overhead power lines are especially unsightly
- ▨ Mainly post-1945 development often of unsympathetic character

- ***** Unsatisfactory or poorly integrated frontages
- Unsightly features or areas requiring enhancement
- ▨ Vacant or poorly maintained buildings
- ▨ Development which is poorly related to or particularly detracts from the character of the conservation area
- ▨ Areas where pedestrian surfaces are in need of significant improvement or restoration, preferably using traditional paving materials



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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP FOUR

Main off-street access ways

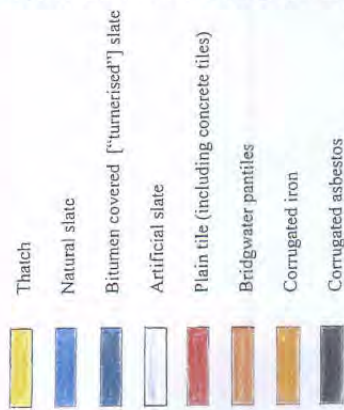


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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP FIVE Building Materials - Roofs



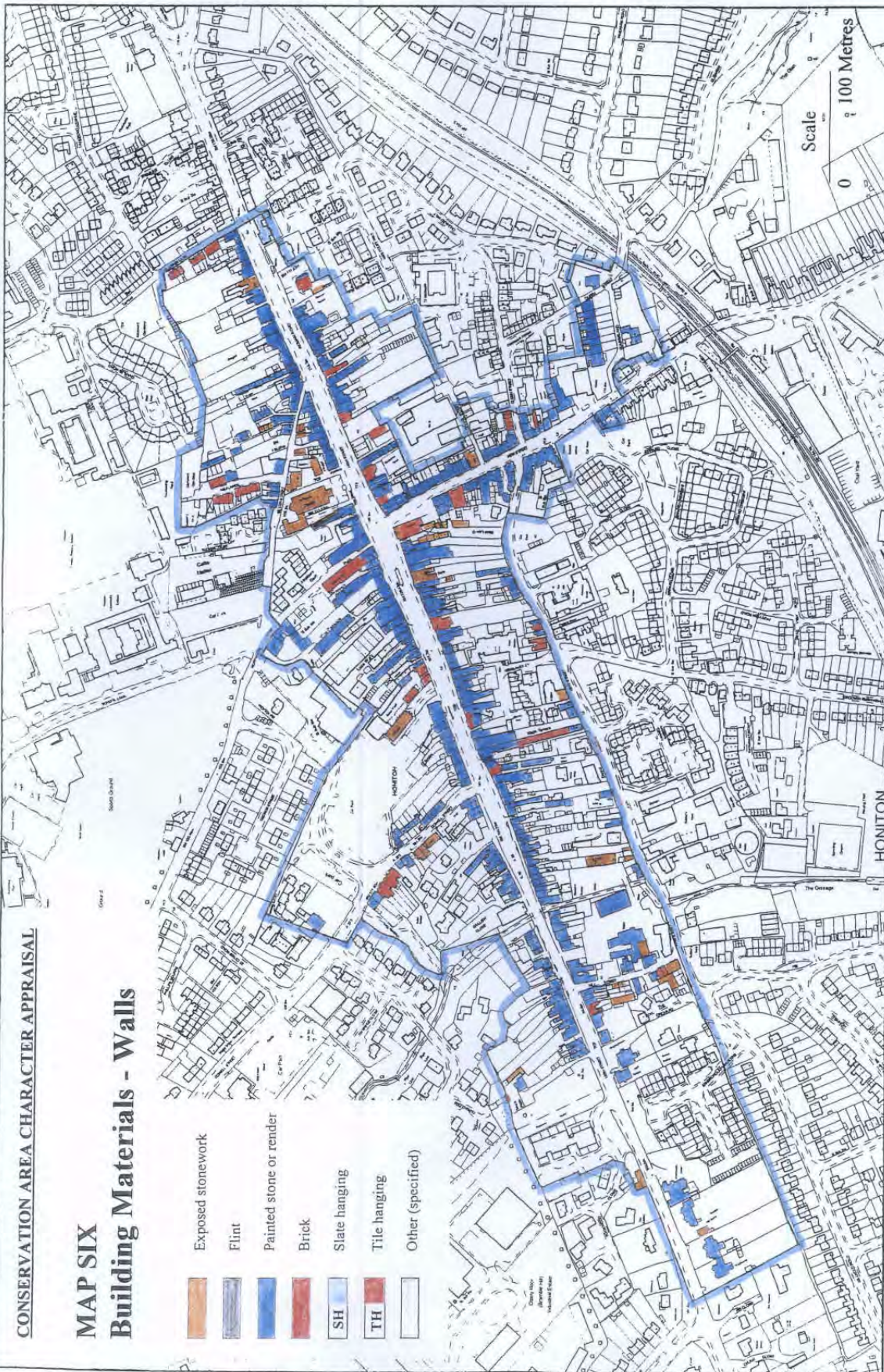
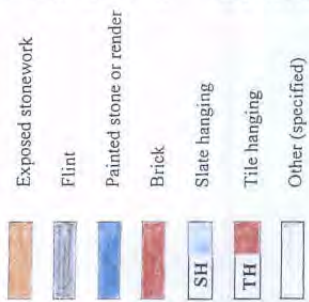
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CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

MAP SIX
Building Materials - Walls



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