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1 Introduction

1.1 Conservation Areas are designated by local planning authorities under the Planning Acts. Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a Conservation Area as

‘an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

1.2 North Devon Council, as the local planning authority, has a duty to designate parts of the District it sees appropriate as Conservation Areas. There are currently 39 Conservation Areas in this District (excluding those within Exmoor National Park Authority area).

1.3 Carrying out a Conservation Area Character Appraisal is an important method for identifying the qualities and characteristics that such an area possesses and to provide a basic summary of the elements, which collectively contribute towards the special character and appearance of the conservation area. A clear and comprehensive appraisal of the Pilton Conservation Area provides a sound basis for development control decision-making, and assists the District Council in defending such decisions that are subject to appeal. Generally the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be preserved or enhanced through:

- Providing controls and regulating development through the planning system.
- Applying the extra controls that designation provides over demolition, minor development and the protection of trees.
- Environmental enhancement schemes and possibly providing financial assistance for the repair and restoration of specific buildings.
- Encouraging public bodies such as the local highways authority or utility companies to take opportunities to improve the street scene through the appropriate design and sensitive siting of street furniture (and retention of historic features of interest), or the removal of eyesores and street features that have a negative impact such as overhead wires.

1.4 The purpose of this character appraisal is to:

- Analyse the character of the designated area and identify the components and features of its special interest.
- To outline the planning policies and controls that apply to the Conservation Area.
- To identify opportunities for the future enhancement of the Conservation Area.

1.5 It should be noted that the omission of any particular building, structure, tree, wall or any other feature from being highlighted within this character appraisal does not imply that it is not of special interest, nor is there an implication in such an omission that it does not make a positive contribution, or conversely a negative contribution, to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Also the map is unable to identify accurately every tree of significance and value to the Conservation Area.

2 Background

- This appraisal for the Pilton Conservation Area was initiated in June 2008 and completed during 2009. The document, along with various proposed boundary changes, was adopted in May 2009
- The first designation of land found within the present conservation area boundary was by Devon County Council in 1992.

P1 - The churchyard retains its historic character through its cobbled surfaces, iron railings and green setting.



3 Facts and Figures about the Conservation Area

3.1 The conservation area covers an area of 17.1 hectares (42.2 acres) - compared to 13.3 hectares (32.8 acres) before the 2009 enlargement.

3.2 Of the buildings within the area there are 82 entries included on the List of buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (Listed Buildings).

| Listing Grade | Number of Buildings |
|---------------|---------------------|
| I | 2 |
| II* | 1 |
| II | 79 |

3.3 North Devon Council is also producing a 'List of Buildings of Local Significance' which will incorporate buildings within North Devon District which are not statutory listed buildings but are considered important on a local level, through landmark quality, historical associations or links to a famous or prolific architect. The list is being prepared and adopted on a ward by ward basis.

3.4 There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the Pilton Conservation Area, although the Long Stone at the junction of Bellaire and Under Minnow Road may be of prehistoric origin.

The full list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest located within the current conservation area boundary can be found in Appendix I and these buildings are highlighted on the map in Appendix 4(I)

4 Why is the Pilton Conservation Area Special

4.1 The conservation area in Pilton contains a mix of buildings spanning from the Medieval period to the present day, with the prehistoric Long Stone standing as testament to many thousands of years of unrecorded history on the site of the village.

4.2 Pilton stands out as being one of a tiny fraction (less than 1 percent) of English settlements the first known written reference to which predates Domesday Book, showing the high significance of the settlement in pre Norman conquest England.

4.3 The street layout records the medieval organisation of the village into burgage plots and the almshouses demonstrate the commitment of local peoples to the care of their poor, a continuation from the work of the medieval priory in caring for the sick and the poor.

Appendix 4(I) shows the existing boundary of the conservation area as well as the associated listed buildings.

5 Location & Geology

5.1 Pilton is situated on high ground in a defensible position at the head of the Taw estuary at a narrowing in the river, less than a kilometre (0.5 miles) to the north of the town of Barnstaple. Pilton was a burgh, an Anglo-Saxon defended settlement, through the late 9th and 10th centuries, and defence was clearly part of the reason for siting a settlement at Pilton.

5.2 From within Pilton views of the undeveloped green landscape of the Taw valley can be seen, as well as the town of Barnstaple spread on the lower ground around the river. The geology of North Devon provides a wide range of different stones suitable for use in construction, Barnstaple being sited on the Pilton Beds, mainly a blue/grey shade of slates with intrusions of limestone and sandstone. Bricks did not become widely used in and around Barnstaple until the 18th Century, with the majority of older buildings constructed from stone quarried from land within, or immediately surrounding, the town.

5.3 The village stands on an area of high ground between the River Yeo and Bradiford Water and is separated from Barnstaple by the River Yeo. The main crossing was historically at Pilton Causeway at the south of the Village, and the main bridge is still located here today.

6 Historic Events and Development

6.1 The evidence of prehistoric activity around Pilton survives in the form of the 'Longstone'. The stone was not always in its current position, as shown on the first series ordnance survey maps of the 1880's (shown in Appendix 1), but was moved from a position in a walled garden of Broadgate House in 1967, having already been moved and re-erected after falling in the 19th century.

6.2 The early historical record for Pilton is unusual within the context of English settlements of its size in that its first entry in the written record predates the Domesday book. The Anglo-Saxon 'Burghal Hidage' was a document that recorded the names of 30 'burhs' within the kingdom of Wessex (4 of which were in Devon, the others being Exeter, Lydford and Halwell) during the reign of Alfred the Great (849-899AD). The system of burghs was devised by Alfred to act as an in-depth defence against the Vikings, who at the time ruled most of England north of a line from Worcester to London. The burhs had many rights, including the right to mint coinage (although there is no evidence of a mint at Pilton) and they were arranged so that no one in all of Wessex lived more than a day's march from a fortified burh. At this time it was Pilton, and not Barnstaple (Barum), that was the principal settlement in the Taw valley.

6.3 When the need for defence declined Pilton was supplanted by Barnstaple, which was better placed to exploit the Taw for trading. It is unclear precisely when this occurred though some scholars feel that it was probably only a short time after the Burghal Hidage was written, perhaps around 930-950AD. The rateable value of land at Pilton fell from 40 shillings at the time of the Burghal Hidage to 30 shillings at Domesday in 1086. A similar pattern is seen in other burhs at Halwell, which was supplanted by Totnes. In Domesday Book Pilton is referred to as 'Pilland' or 'Pittona'

6.4 A Benedictine priory was founded in Pilton as a cell to Malmsbury Abbey during the 12th Century and remained active until the dissolution in 1536. This priory was located to the north of the parish church. The substantial medieval Bull House was built by a prior, William Worcester, in 1440 as his own residence, however the priory itself was never a wealthy foundation. The priory had associations with the running of a leper hospital which stood at the bottom of Pilton Street, on the site of what is now St. Margaret's Terrace, the hospital was also founded in the 12th century.

P2 - The Long Stone stands as evidence of prehistoric activity in the area.



6 Historic Events and Development

6.5 There has not been a great deal of archaeological investigation around the site of the church, limited mainly to a dig carried out during the redevelopment of the area to the north of the churchyard. This demonstrated that the site had been occupied since the 11th century by way of unearthed building platforms. However the dig did not give any detailed understanding of the scale or layout of the priory.

6.6 The existing parish church was built to serve the priory in the 13th century and the, most likely on the site of an earlier church, with the south aisle added later in the 16th century. The woodwork and monuments within the church are high quality survivals, with the rood screen dated to 1420-50 and an Elizabethan altar rail and altar table.

6.7 A market is recorded in Pilton from 1344 when a 'Fair and Market charter' was granted by Edward III, showing that despite the proximity of the market town of Barnstaple there was sufficient demand for Pilton to retain a separate market.

6.8 Throughout the medieval period most of Pilton's wealth came from the cloth making industry and Bradiford Water at the western edge of Pilton provided power for several water mills, both for grinding corn and for fulling cloth. Fulling was a process by which oils, dirt and impurities were removed from cloth by washing and agitating or beating, a process that would also thicken the cloth.

6.9 There is documentary evidence that a windmill was built in Pilton by John Darke in 1594, 'At the higher end of Pilton East of the Priory'. It is unknown if the mill was ever completed or how long it may have operated and no evidence has ever been found to suggest exactly where the mill may have stood although the site is reputed to be at the junction of The Rock and Higher Raleigh Road.

6.10 The Civil War of the mid 17th century was felt in the village, and a plaque on the parish church records that the tower was "by force of arms pul'd down in ye late and unhappy Civel Wars" and later rebuilt in 1696.

P3 - Lion Mills is the last mill to operate in Bradiford and the buildings survive today, mainly converted into residential use.



P4 - Pilton Quay slipway survives today, although disused as it is no longer accessible to river traffic.



Pilton Causeway.

6.11 Although the loading and unloading of vessels had always taken place on the banks of the Taw and the Yeo to the south of Pilton this was not formalised until the construction of a proper quay and slipway just west of Pilton Bridge in 1711. Until the swing bridge at Rolle Quay was replaced Pilton Bridge was the furthest point to which boats could travel up the river.

6.12 The historic main route from Barnstaple to Ilfracombe was through Pilton and in 1828 the turnpike trust acquired the roads leading to Ashford, Marwood and Shirwell all of which went through Pilton. The earliest tollhouse for these routes was located on

6.13 Pilton Street remained a part of the main route from Barnstaple to Ilfracombe and Braunton until the 1930's. The construction of North Road and Braunton Road to take traffic to Ilfracombe and Braunton respectively effectively bypassed Pilton helping to save the historic character of the village and alleviate traffic issues along Pilton Street.

6.14 Pilton was incorporated into the borough of Barnstaple in 1894. Later development, after the First World War, followed a 'ribbon' pattern, with new housing being built along the roads radiating out from Barnstaple. This practise caused great concern and resulted in Barnstaple and Pilton apparently merging together. This type of development led to the adoption of 'green belt' policies in 1935 for London, with the 1947 Town and Country planning Act allowing local authorities to include green belt policies in their development plans. The idea of Green Belt policies was primarily to prevent the problems of Urban Sprawl and congestion associated with ribbon development. This was too late to prevent Pilton and Barnstaple becoming joined by a continual line of development, however Pilton has retained its individual distinctiveness and still has the appearance of a large Devon village.

7 Landscape and Streetscape

Key Streetscape features are shown on the map given in Appendix 4(II)

P5 - The eastern back lane now provides access to garages and houses built at the rear of plots; the western back lane is overgrown and almost totally inaccessible.



7.1 The principal street within the conservation area is the north – south ‘Pilton Street’ and along its length can be seen the Medieval burgage plot street pattern, with buildings constructed on long narrow plots running back from the street frontage. At the southern end of the street is the River Yeo, the quayside and the bridge to Barnstaple. At the north is the parish church. To the east and west, running parallel with Pilton Street are two surviving ‘back lanes’ which are the informal access routes that used to serve the workshops and yards at the rear of the Medieval burgage plots and now allow vehicular access to garages behind the buildings fronting Pilton Street.

7.2 Although the frontages of Pilton Street appear to be mainly Georgian and Victorian their oldest parts tend to be at the rear, with the frontages having been remodelled in the past to follow changing architectural fashions.

7.3 After the dissolution of the monasteries (from 1536-41) many more, smaller, properties began to be built in Pilton and these buildings were of increasing variety. Between 1575 and 1625 there was a significant increase in population and by 1664 the Hearth Tax returns showed 256 houses in Pilton. Economic crisis and plague crippled the population over the next 200 years so that by 1801 there were only 87 inhabited dwellings in Pilton. Within a decade this number had again doubled, the incoming population most likely refurbishing abandoned homes and giving them new, fashionable, Georgian frontages.

7.4 To the west of the conservation area the density of dwellings declines, with several large buildings set in expansive plots, often surrounded by walls or trees, sheltering them from public view. At the far west of the conservation area are the terraces of Bradiford, leading down to Bradiford bridge. Although a separate settlement Bradiford lies within Pilton parish and never had its own church and has always been somewhat subordinate to its larger neighbour. Although Pilton was the main trading point thanks to its access to the navigable Yeo, Bradiford utilised the flow of Bradiford water for industry and cloth fulling mills can be found within the hamlet. Bradiford was much smaller in 1818, being confined to the area around the stream. At about this time Lord Rolle leased land between Bradiford Hill and Chaddiford Lane to six separate people who agreed to build houses there. Most of historic Bradiford was built by 1860.

P6 - High walls dominate the Bellaire area, partly but not completely hiding the grand buildings beyond



Trees

7.5 Trees are an important feature within the conservation area. Not only do they contribute to the character of some of the narrow, shaded lanes around the churchyard but they are also an important resource in terms of their contribution to biodiversity within the conservation area.

7.6 Trees also form part of the environment as planting schemes within some of the larger grounds of buildings within the Bellaire region and serve as part of the setting of the buildings they sometimes partly obscure during summer.

7.7 Some trees also appear along Pilton Street, providing small areas of green space along the main street of the conservation area, most notably on the lawns of the Lower Alms Houses and providing shade along the main drive to Pilton House.

7.8 The back lanes also have a great number of trees, those on the eastern lane are well kept and add to the character of the rear access road, while those to the west are overgrown and almost completely hide the lane they are planted along from the ground. However on aerial photographs the line of trees helps to emphasise the lane as a landscape feature.

7.9 All trees within the conservation area are protected by legislation and notice must be given to North Devon Council six weeks in advance of any works being carried out to trees within the area.

Traffic and Parking

7.10 Pilton Street remains a busy main street to the present day, despite North Road and the new Braunton Road bypassing the village for much traffic to and from Ilfracombe and Braunton.

7.11 These bypass routes have alleviated the problem to the extent that no extreme intervention has been required, no unsightly traffic calming measures and no destructive road widening schemes have eroded the character of Pilton Street.

7.12 The on-street parking along Pilton Street has almost become part of the established character of the area, with the majority of cars being parked only for a short while for visits to some of the local shops. By allowing on-street parking the need for extensive road marking with double yellow lines and parking notices has been avoided. By not attempting to enforce a pay and display or meter system the need for intrusive parking infrastructure such as meters and ticket machines has also been avoided.

7.13 Traffic and parking helps to remind us that Pilton was once on the main routes between Barnstaple and the north coast. Should some form of intervention be needed at a later date to alleviate traffic or parking problems then it will be important to ensure that such measures do not damage the character of the conservation area.

8 Views

The Key Views within the conservation area are shown on the map given in Appendix 4(III)

8.1 Views out of Pilton are possible from several locations, out over the valley floor, over the town of Barnstaple and to the green hills of the valley sides beyond. One such view is possible from the position occupied by the Long Stone at the west end of Bellaire as well as from the top end of Pilton Street. These views demonstrate Pilton's valley location and its connection with the River Yeo as well as the proximity of Barnstaple as its larger neighbour.

8.2 Internally views within Pilton vary widely. One key view is possible along the length of the wide space of Pilton Street taking in the parish church and the Feoffes Cottages, tunnelled by the undulating frontages of its burgage plot buildings. From the top of Pilton Street another view to the west takes in Bull House and the almshouses opposite.

P7 - Dark Lane, along with many other narrow lanes, forms a key part of the character of the area around the church.



8.3 Equally important are some of the views along the narrow lanes within the conservation area, for example that leading from the southern side of the churchyard past the old glove factory to the Lady Well, or that down the shady alley of Dark Lane.

8.4 Walls and building lines often lead the eye towards the distance within the conservation area, and a good example of this can be seen when walking along Under Minnow Road. The high brick walls surrounding Broadgate House and the other detached villa buildings nearby draw the eye around the gradual sweep of the road eventually ending at the triangle of lawn on which stands the prehistoric

Long Stone, which itself is a viewpoint for another key view out across Barnstaple.

8.5 To the west of the conservation area another key view is focused between the frontages of the terrace rows of Bradiford, again drawing the eye towards the distance and eventually to the detached buildings found on the other side of Bradiford Water.

8.6 Other views are possible along The Rock taking in the raised pavements and the natural rock outcrops on top of which the modest terrace is built. One final key view is along Priory Road, again tunnelled by the line of the terrace frontage with another terrace, Priory Gardens, visible beyond.

P8 - The continuous frontages of Bradiford's terraces draw the eye into the distance



9 Street Furniture

Important street furniture is shown on the map given as Appendix 4(II)

P9 - A streetlamp looms from behind the grade II listed telephone kiosk on Pilton Street



9.1 Much of the historic street furniture within Pilton Conservation area can be found along Pilton Street. A distinctive K6 telephone kiosk stands outside number 26 and is listed at grade II. This feature not only adds to the historic character of the buildings but also fits in with the historic street lamps which line Pilton Street. The telephone kiosk forms part of a small cluster of 'traditional' street furniture which includes a pillar box, bench and historic street lamp.

9.2 The street lamps along Pilton Street are all of high standard, with ladder bars and a historic appearance. Elsewhere within the conservation area standard concrete and steel lamps are used and these do not have the same contribution to make to the character of the area.

9.3 Bollards are found throughout the conservation area and are mostly of a single cast iron style. Some have been recently repainted while others have not showing an inconsistency in maintenance. One strikingly different set of bollards protect a crossing at the western end of Under Minnow Road. These are of a more modern design, introducing an unnecessarily different design into the area.

9.4 Two notable post boxes survive mounted into walls within the conservation area. An early 20th century (George V) example can be found beside the former post office (number 46) on Bradiford Road. An older Victorian example survives at the eastern end of Bellaire, opposite Bellaire Cottages. The first post boxes appeared during Queen Victoria's reign and Victorian post boxes are now rare survivals, and as such this example is of historic significance.

9.5 The historic quality of the streetscape in Pilton is directly linked to both the surviving facades of frontage buildings and also the high quality historic street furniture which remains to the present day.

9.6 Despite the generally high quality of street furniture within the conservation area there are examples of poor attention to detail. A prime example can be found at the south end of Pilton Street where a blue ceramic tile street sign is obscured behind a modern lamp post. There are only 2 such ceramic tiled signs in Pilton, but 25 remain throughout the Barnstaple area. They were manufactured by Craven, Dunhill and Co. in Shropshire which was established in 1874 and began producing alphabet tiles in 1875. Records of the Barnstaple Council Finance Committee show that payments were made in 1913 and early 1914 for 'blue letter tiles - £1 18s 6d and £1 8s 4d'

9.7 Overhead lines are also an issue within the conservation area, often spoiling key views within the conservation area. This is especially true to the west of the junction between Bellaire and Under Minnow Road.

P10 - The Victorian wall mounted post box on Bellaire is a rare survival.



P11 - A demonstration of how a high quality element of the streetscape which would typically add to the character of an area (Right) can have its character eroded by a thoughtless approach to engineering works (Left).



10 Architecture

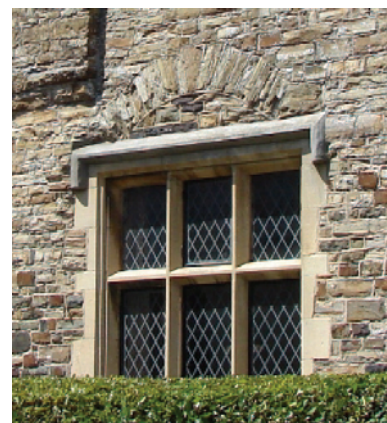
Appendix 4(II) gives the locations of buildings with decorated eaves features

10.1 Pilton has retained a great variety of architectural styles, reflecting many periods of its history and a road layout mostly inherited from the medieval period. Pilton Street reflects Medieval burgage plots in its layout but the buildings themselves span from that period right up until the 20th Century.

10.2 Georgian frontages with regency bow windows sit beside Victorian vernacular buildings and sweeping crescents of marland brick, while at the top of the street the medieval style of the church flows over into buildings of local stone with mullion and transom windows. When walking up Pilton Street from the river to the church the buildings take you slowly back in time from the more modern to the medieval.

10.3 The area around the parish church has the feel of a Cotswolds village with buildings of honey coloured local stone, with mullion and transom windows. The former School, now an art centre, to the west of the church continues this stone built, medieval styled theme that dominates the centre of the village. Even the former premises of the Pilton Glove factory of 1860 has its eastern, church facing, side built of this same local stone (the rest being of brick), either as a result of economy or deliberately to be sympathetic to the neighbouring buildings on that side.

P12 - A window at Bull House divided into smaller glazed areas by vertical stone Mullions and horizontal Transoms.



P13 - Buildings with bow frontages demonstrate the wealth of the area during the Regency Period



10.4 Half way along Pilton Street is a pleasant group of buildings all exhibiting bow fronts, with bow windows. These are found on both sides of the road and are uncommon to find in such numbers and in such a tight group. These projecting bows provide a little more interior space, as well as better views of the world outside. Clearly during the Regency period this part of Pilton was affluent enough for residents to remodel building frontages to the latest fashion. Again it must be remembered that in most cases existing buildings have been altered, sometimes drastically, and so some still retain masonry that may even be of medieval origin.

10.5 Pilton Street is described by Nikolaus Pevsner in his “Buildings of England – Devon” as ‘A well cared for sequence of cottages with Victorian fronts or Regency bows hiding older structures.

10.6 Pilton Street may be the commercial heart of Pilton but the shopfronts here are all of good design, many being historic shopfronts dating from the late 19th and early 20th century. Some even retain costly curved glass display windows, 21 Pilton Street being an excellent example. Shop signs are also of good design, avoiding the use of plastic signage and illumination which is typical of modern shopping streets, but out of place in such a historic context.

10.7 Traditional hanging signs are also prominent in the streetscape of Pilton Street, and although the street does not have a large number of shops the majority of them do retain timber hanging signs which add to the historic character of the area and fit well with the surviving traditional shopfronts.

P14 - 21 Pilton Street is a particularly good example of the generally high quality of shopfronts throughout Pilton Street.



Appendix 4(IV) shows the external wall materials of buildings within the Pilton Conservation Area

10.8 Buildings throughout Pilton are of three prominent materials: local stone, rendered brick or exposed marland brick. A handful of buildings are of exposed red brick, (85/85a Pilton Street for example) but this is not a typical material within the conservation area.

10.9 Perhaps the most notable example of a red brick building within the conservation area is the arts and crafts style Fig Tree Cottage at the west end of Church Path. The building is well decorated, with keystones in its window and door arches emphasised by the use of moulded bricks. The windows themselves are 4 light casements arranged around a cross of mullion and transom, the upper lights being fixed and containing decorative stained glass, while the lower lights are opening lights of 6 panes of plain glass. The building's many gables have incised barge boards with drop pendulums at the apexes. The building is made more attractive by the colour co-ordination of the barge boards and rainwater goods of the building. The Lake Almshouses are another good example of a red brick building within Pilton.

10.10 Another notable local feature is the practice of applying a decorative finish to the eaves line of buildings. This is done in a variety of ways, including applied paintwork, moulded or patterned bricks or by leaving exposed beam and rafter ends. Decorated cast iron guttering can also be found on some buildings, again adding detail to the area around the eaves line.

10.11 Bellaire contains the largest of the buildings within Pilton, the largest of all being Bellaire House. All of these buildings are set within spacious plots, often at least partly hidden behind tall walls of brick and stone and this is what gives this area its prominent character. Most buildings can only be glimpsed through gateways or from more elevated vantage points. Longstone on the Southern edge of the conservation area is an unusual Bellaire building in that its principal facade faces out towards Barnstaple, hidden from all but long distance views and turning a much less elaborate back to Under Minnow Road. The 1880 and 1904 OS maps show that the original carriage approach to the building was a sweeping arc from the road to the north west to the south west corner of the building where a public footpath now runs.

10.12 The church and priory have had their influence in the architectural development of Pilton. The exposed natural stone of the buildings at the north end of Pilton Street reflect the material of the church and their architectural style is linked to the medieval period. Bull House is a true medieval building, associated with the former priory and a good survival of medieval domestic architecture. Various hospitals were run around the village in the medieval period, most associated with the church. While these are no longer in existence the care of the poor and the sick is still to be seen today. The Lower Almshouses of 1860 are again of exposed local stone and in a Tudor style, while the Lake Almshouses are of red brick with white stone decoration that are still representative of the gothic style.

P15 - The Grade I listed Bull House, on Bull Hill, is a good example of a medieval house which has survived to the present day retaining much of its character and appearance.



10.13 The Rock consists of a group of short stepped terraces, constructed in a mixture of the Georgian and Victorian period. What makes these buildings particularly special is their elevation above the road on outcrops of stone, with elevated pavements, each with steps and iron railings providing access. In places cavities have been excavated into the rock to provide passages beneath the buildings to rear gardens. While some of the buildings possess interesting architectural features in their own rights their main interest comes in the value as a group and their unusual elevated positions.

P16 - The elevated pavements and steps leading up to them, together with iron railings are a major part of the character of The Rock



10.14 Bradiford consists mainly of terraces that again find their value in their association and interaction as parts of a larger group. This means that even minor inappropriate alterations to a single building detracts from the length of the terrace. This is particularly true of the use of uPVC windows which fail to replicate the dimensions and character of the timber windows they replace. Many of the terraces within the Pilton conservation area show signs of such inappropriate and damaging alterations, however all of the terraces contain buildings which still retain their traditional features and as such this process of slow erosion of character has not yet reached the point where all traditional features have been irrecoverably lost.

10.15 There is a great continuity of building heights within Pilton, the overwhelming majority of buildings being of 2 storeys with only a handful of 3 storey buildings and single storey garages. The majority of 3 storey buildings can be found in the Bellaire region, while the Yeo Vale Hotel is one of the few Pilton Street buildings to break the trend. This continuity of building heights gives a regular flow of the roofline as it rises up the slopes of Pilton Street, The Rock and Bradiford Road. The roofing materials within the conservation area are almost always natural slate, with some minor appearances of clay pantiles protecting a cob wall fronting the road to the north west of Bradiford Bridge. Modern roofing materials such as concrete and fibre based tiles are not commonly found within the conservation area and would not add to the historic character of the area.

Boundary Treatments

10.16 The two most prominent boundary features within the Pilton conservation area are walls and railings. Pilton Street generally lacks either feature, its buildings fronting directly onto the pavements with no need for an enclosure or boundary feature at the front. There are however a few properties at the northern end of Pilton Street which are slightly set back and have areas at their fronts enclosed by railings. The entrances off Pilton Street to Pilton House and the Lower Alms Houses also have iron railings and gates.

10.17 Railings are the most widespread feature being found in The Rock, around the churchyard and Feoffes Cottages and some in Bradiford. The railings vary in design and quality from standard modern steel railings found in some parts of The Rock, cast iron railings of elaborate twisted patterns as found on the Yeo Dale Hotel, with the railings outside of Cedar Lodge north of Bradiford Bridge being a grade II listed structure in their own right. These railings are particularly elaborate mid 19th century examples with a design of linked circles below intertwined vines and grapes.

P17 - These railings to the east of Cedar Lodge are such a fine example of 19th Century cast iron railings that they are a grade II listed structure.



10.18 The churchyard has an interesting series of iron railings enclosing the graveyards and separating these areas from the cobbled paths that run through the churchyard to the south door of the church. The interaction of historic boundary treatments with an historic surface treatment gives the churchyard a distinctive historic character.

10.19 Modest boundary walls of brick or stone can be found throughout the conservation area but are most prominent in the Bellaire area where houses and gardens are sometimes hidden behind high boundary walls of coursed rubble stone. Broadgate House is the most obvious example, its gardens enclosed and hidden by rubble stone walls while the entrance gate through this wall is a more elaborate feature of brick once topped by ball finials, only one of which now remains.

P18 - Elaborate brick walling around the main entrance route to Broadgate House.



10.20 Walls along The Rock are typically of stone, sometimes topped with a course of rounded brick for decoration, and serve a dual purpose as boundary markers and as retaining walls for earth backed up to form the front gardens of properties. Some of these walls along the Rock are topped by iron railings while others are left unadorned.

Character Zones

The Boundaries of the following character zones are illustrated in Appendix 4(V)

10.21 Within the Pilton Conservation Area there can be identified 5 character zones, areas which have differing architectural character or development density. These character zones are identified in Appendix 4(4) and discussed individually below.

10.22 It should be noted that the boundaries between the character zones should not be seen as firm boundaries, as most character zones have a region of transition around their edges where buildings and features could reasonably be placed in either of the adjoining zones.

Pilton Street

10.23 Pilton Street is the principal street within Pilton and its conservation area and the northern end of this wide street was the site of the medieval market. The commercial tradition of Pilton is still alive and well with the commercial heart of the village still focused on Pilton Street. The majority of the facades of the buildings date from the 18th and 19th centuries, with medieval material surviving within the buildings away from the street front. Key architectural features found along the street include regularly arranged sash and bay windows, a group of full height bow windows halfway along the street, an unusual and interesting feature on several buildings clustered together halfway along the street. Also prominent on several buildings are a variety of decorative eaves typical of Pilton in general.

10.24 The building materials also vary along the length of Pilton Street, with the southern end of the street being dominated by bare Marland brick buildings of the 19th century, especially a sweeping terrace around the eastern corner topped by a slated turret. The curve of the terrace and the verticality of the turret attract the eye and then lead a view around the corner and up the length of the street. The upper parts of the street see a change to red brick and Georgian rendered buildings, as well as some rendered cob. The very northern end of the street gives way to the exposed stone of the Feoffes Cottages and parish church. The view of these stone buildings from further down Pilton Street is identified as a key view within the conservation area.

10.25 Behind these buildings rises the striking and dominant tower of the parish church at the top of Pilton Street, which links the area around the church with Pilton Street itself visually, the great arched gateway through Feoffes Cottages providing the main pedestrian link between these two areas.

10.26 The area around the parish church has the most irregular road layout of the entire conservation area with many narrow twisting lanes giving access to the various small terraces and groups of buildings. This irregular layout may be linked to the layout of the site when it formed part of the medieval priory. These winding narrow lanes allow for some impressive views of the dominant church tower as well as the old glove factory building.

10.27 Although many of the buildings in this area are modest it also contains some of the most impressive buildings in the conservation area. The medieval parish church dominates the settlement, but a rare surviving medieval building, Bull House, stands nearby along Bull Hill opposite the Victorian gothic Pilton Abbey.

10.28 Feoffes Cottages also stand within this character zone, having been endowed by the church and occupying a prominent position at the southern edge of the churchyard. Despite being included in the 'Church' character zone these buildings also form a key view from along Pilton Street, and thus make a significant contribution to that character zone too.

10.29 The former glove factory building stands to the west of the Old School House, now in use as an art gallery. The factory is now under used and in a poor state of repair. Formerly a tannery also operated within the surroundings of the Church, providing the leather needed by the glovers.

10.30 Also within this area is the Ladywell (grade II listed) and the impressive stone arched west gate to the churchyard.

10.31 Pilton Park is included in the Pilton Street character zone but despite this it is at odds with the character of that zone in being an area of public open space. However it does tie in well with the Rotary Gardens which were once part of the grounds of Pilton House and which are also included with the Pilton Street zone.

10.32 Together these two areas of public open space represent a large area of green space within the conservation area, both of which add to the character of the conservation area. The two parks could be considered to be a separate character zone in their own rights, a 'green space' zone, however the historic association of Rotary Gardens and Pilton House means that it is best to consider these areas as a part of the Pilton Street zone as features which form a key part of the setting and approaches to Pilton Street itself.

P19 - The former Glove Factory is largely vacant and in a poor state of repair, finding a long term use for the buildings may ensure they are cared for in the future



Bradiford

10.33 Bradiford is the hamlet which forms the westernmost part of the Pilton Conservation Area. This area is composed mainly of modest terraced cottages, some accessed via raised pavements and steps. The majority of the buildings are rendered and have slate roofs, which step down to follow the fall of the road, adding interest to the roofscape of this character zone. Bradiford is much more closely linked to Bradiford Water and the countryside to the west than Pilton is, and as such Bradiford has a more rural setting and character.

Bellaire

10.34 Bellaire is a spacious area of low development density, which acts to separate the terraces of Bradiford from the high-density terraces and burgage plots of Pilton to the east. The buildings are mainly set back from the roads and hidden behind walls or banked hedges and further shielded by planting of mature trees. This gives the buildings a very private and independent aspect. The Long Stone is a key landscape feature within this character zone, sitting in a triangle of green space to the west of Broadgate House. From here differing styles of stone walling can be seen which add to the visual interest at the road junction.

10.35 Bellaire is dominated by the residential use of its buildings, and their scale combines with their architectural quality to demonstrate that this is one of the more high status parts of the conservation area.

The Rock

10.36 To the east of Pilton Street and the church is The Rock, a residential street running to the north-east. Here rows of terraces sit high up on either side of the road with raised pavements and steps leading to their doors. As a result of its sunken position the road feels dominated by these modest dwellings.

10.37 The road passes Priory Road, where another long terrace runs at right angles to the main road, and becomes Littabourne. Here the buildings take on a grander character and become detached and semi-detached houses set in modest plots facing onto the modern developments of Beech Grove. Here the conservation area swings to the north to include a large Georgian building set in impressive grounds and sheltered by mature trees. This marks the north eastern edge of the conservation area and more modern developments occupy the surrounding area.

P20 - A grand Georgian building in the Palladian style stands over The Rock where it meets Higher Raleigh Road



11 Boundary Changes Adopted May 2009

These extensions and reductions of the conservation area were adopted in May 2009, the alterations are shown in Appendix 4 VI

11.1 It would appear that much has changed in and around Pilton since the conservation area was first designated. As is typical with many conservation areas nationally there are now buildings and areas around the edges of the conservation area which, as a result of changing attitudes toward the value of historic buildings of more recent periods, are deserving of being within the conservation area.

P21 - New developments to the north of the church are out of character with the established conservation area. Their use of modern materials, as well as their plan form, makes them particularly unsympathetic.



11.2 Equally there are areas formerly within the conservation area which had fallen victim to unsuitable and unsympathetic development. This is especially true in the area to the immediate North of the medieval church where a modern housing development has shown no respect to the established pattern of building within the area, forming instead horseshoe and rhythmically staggered building lines. It is concerning that such a development has been allowed so close to the historic core of Pilton, however the development is well hidden from views from the south.

11.3 As such these two areas were removed from the conservation area in 2009 following public consultation.

11.4 In contrast to these reductions of the conservation area there are also areas which warranted significant extensions of the area.

11.5 The first of these incorporates several features which were previously absent from the conservation area. These include the 17th century Pilton Bridge (grade II listed) at the southern end of Pilton Street, the eastern section of the bridge being a modern addition. Pilton Quay was an important part of the economy of the village and includes a range of 19th century stone warehouses, once used as malshouses. Some of these warehouses are still present, for example the building now in use as Kirkham Tyres. The slipway into the river would also be included in this extension. There have also been a series of new buildings along the quay including a block of apartments built in a sympathetic style. The buildings here are separated from Pilton Street by the main road and have a separate feel, being mainly free-standing utilitarian structures and the park provides a large area of public green space, retaining a degree of separation from the rest of Barnstaple.

P22 - Various warehouses along Pilton Quay could benefit from repair works. Some vacant buildings should be put to new use to ensure their future survival.



P23 - The Rotary Gardens were once the formal gardens of Pilton House before they became a public park



11.6 A second extension incorporates the back lane running to the east of Pilton Street and typical of the kind of informal rear access routes found in association with burgage plot street layouts. This area also includes the riverside path and parkland to the south of Pilton House. This land was once part of the gardens of the neo-classical Pilton House. However the grounds were split up to provide smaller private gardens for Pilton House, which is now a nursing home, and a public park. This extension re-unites Pilton House with its former grounds by including both within the conservation area. It also provides protection to the trees and landscape features within the park. This area forms a key element of the wider setting for Pilton Street and of the infrastructure that served its buildings.

11.7 A third extension is covers the area to the west of the pervious conservation area, bringing more of the settlement of Bradiford within the boundary. Here the Grade II listed bridge, which may in part date to the medieval period, and a nearby Grade II listed milestone are now included. Lion House is an impressive building of Marland brick with timber verandas. It is the largest building within Bradiford and situated so as to overlook the river and bridge, as well as Lion Mills to the North West, which is also included within this extension. The mill has been mostly converted into residential use, with some light industrial units remaining, but this has been done sympathetically and will ensure the long-term future of these buildings. Bradiford is closely tied to the historic development of Pilton, and the two settlements have always been closely associated even sharing communal facilities like the church. Although Bradiford forms an area of distinct and separate character within the Pilton Conservation Area the physical proximity and interactions of the two settlements lends itself to having a single conservation area, rather than a separate one for Bradiford.

P24 - Lion House dominates the area around Bradiford Bridge and its high quality architecture reflects that found in the Bellaire region of the conservation area.



12 Development Pressures

12.1 The greatest pressure for development within the Pilton Conservation Area is in the Bellaire character zone. The nature of this zone with large detached properties within large plots of land leads to a pressure for infill development. Infill development can have a detrimental effect on the character of an area of large detached housing. It changes the relationship between buildings and their surrounding plots, and also results in increased demands for amenities, with many of the plots being surrounded by walls that may lead to the demolition of wall sections to create new access. Again this would have a detrimental effect on the character of the area.

12.2 A similar issue exists to the north of the conservation area around 'Northfield'. Although not within the conservation area the region shares the same layout and feel as the Bellaire character zone, though lacking some of the architectural and spatial quality of the Bellaire zone, (which is why it is not proposed for inclusion in the extensions of the Conservation Area) and again is sensitive to infill development.

12.3 One other major issue is the piecemeal demand for development of the backland areas of the Pilton Street burgage plots. Most of these applications are for small-scale alterations or extensions, but several such developments when seen together can have a cumulative effect which detracts from the character of the area. It should be noted that the back lanes do allow the rears of properties to be visible from the public realm and any applications affecting the rears of plots should take this into consideration. At the same time it should be remembered that the rear of the plots were historically workshops and as such the introduction of garages is not a significant change from historic functions.

12.4 Perhaps the biggest development threat facing conservation areas nation-wide is that of alterations carried out to dwelling houses which do not need planning permission. Such alterations may have only a minor impact on the character of the wider conservation area when viewed in isolation, however they can have a cumulative effect which can lead to major degradation of the historic character of the conservation area. Traditionally the largest such threat has come from the removal of timber sashes and casements in favour of the installation of uPVC windows.

12.5 A similar issue has been the installation of satellite dishes, especially on prominent street frontages, where they can be visually intrusive and have a negative impact on the appearance of a historic streetscene. With the switch to digital television due in 2009 there may be added pressure for the installation of satellite dishes on an increasing number of properties, exacerbating the issue.

12.6 As of 6th April 2008 the provision of some sources of renewable energy can be, under certain circumstances, a permitted development, which does not require planning permission or conservation area consent. The rules covering when the

installation of, for example solar panels, is a permitted development depend on the location of the panels, their size and height, as well as the area they cover. As such advice should be sought from the planning office, as not all installations will be considered to be permitted without planning permission. The problem caused by this is that there will be no immediate control over such alterations within conservation areas, and as such there is potential for unsympathetic alterations to damage the character of the area.

13 The Future

13.1 The aim of this character assessment has been to identify what buildings, open spaces, and features from Pilton's past and present survive to contribute towards its special character.

13.2 The character Appraisal has also aimed to identify potential development pressures the area is likely to face in the near future and to identify areas within the designation which may be suitable for development or enhancement schemes.

13.3 What this document does not aim to achieve is to propose the means and methods by which the identified character is to be safeguarded, or enhanced, for the future. This will be the subject of a subsequent management plan for the conservation area. The aim of such a document will be to propose the ways in which the characteristics identified within this character appraisal can be protected from unsympathetic alterations and future developments, or enhanced by positive and well planned schemes. This will also ensure that all future planning decisions that affect the conservation area and its setting are treated in a consistent manner.

1 Appendix 1 - Listed Buildings Within the Pilton Conservation Area

Listed Buildings in the Pilton Conservation Area

| Bellaire | Listing Grade |
|---|----------------------|
| Wynards including front garden wall and railings and gate | II |
| Bellaire Cottage (2 Bellaire) | II |
| #3 | II |
| Bellaire House | II |
| Broadgate House | II |
| Fairfield and Fairmead | II |
| Pilton Long Stone | II |

| Bull Hill | Listing Grade |
|--|----------------------|
| Abbey Cottage | II |
| Feoffee Cottages and Church Cottage (1-10) | II |
| Medina | II |
| Pilton Abbey | II |
| Walls and Gate Piers to Pilton Abbey | II |
| Bull House | I |

| Dark Lane | Listing Grade |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Lake Cottage | II |
| Lake Cottages (1-4) | II |
| Medelpad | II |

| Dark Lane | Listing Grade |
|---|----------------------|
| Garden walls and gate piers and gates to Medelpad | II |
| Pilton Cottage | II |
| Walls and gate piers and gates to Pilton Cottage | II |

| Ladywell | Listing Grade |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| The Old School | II |

| Northfield Lane | Listing Grade |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Carlyon House | II |
| Gate piers and gate to Carlyon House | II |

| Pilton Causeway | Listing Grade |
|--|-------------------------|
| Pilton Bridge and causeway south of Pilton Quay including gates and piers to Pilton Park | II (Proposed Extension) |
| Warehouse including premises of The Sheepskin Shop | II |

| Pilton Street | Listing Grade |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 9 and 10 | II |
| 12 | II |
| 17 | II |
| 18 and 19 | II |
| 20 - Willesden House | II |
| 21 and 22 | II |
| 24 | II |
| 25 - Bryan House | II |

| Pilton Street | Listing Grade |
|---|----------------------|
| K6 Telephone Kiosk outside of #25 | II |
| 26 | II |
| 27 | II |
| 28 - Chichester Arms Public House | II |
| 29 | II |
| 30 | II |
| 32 | II |
| 33 | II |
| 35 - Churchill House | II |
| 36 | II* |
| 37 | II |
| 40 | II |
| The Rock and attached terrace and garden walls (50,51 and 52) | II |
| The Rock - 53 | II |
| The Rock - 74 | II |
| Rock House - 77 The Rock | II |
| The Rock - 98 & 79 | II |
| 80 | II |
| 81, 81a & 82 | II |
| Pilton Church Hall | II |
| 86 | II |

| Pilton Street | Listing Grade |
|---|----------------------|
| 87 | II |
| 88 and 89 and attached wall at 88 and 89 | II |
| 90 and 91 | II |
| 92 and 93 | II |
| 94 | II |
| 95 | II |
| 98 | II |
| 99 and 100 | II |
| 101 | II |
| 106 and 107 | II |
| 110 and 111 | II |
| 112-121 (Inclusive) | II |
| 122 and 123 | II |
| 124 - Yeo Dale Hotel | II |
| 125 - Bridge House | II |
| Lower Almshouses including front garden wall and gate piers | II |
| Pilton House | II |
| Gate Piers and walls to Pilton House | II |

| St. Mary's Churchyard | Listing Grade |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Parish Church of St. Mary The Virgin | I |
| Lady Well | II |
| Lychgate and walls | II |

| St. Mary's Churchyard | Listing Grade |
|---|----------------------|
| Railings and wall to the Old School to west of south porch of Church of St Mary | II |
| Railings to south of Churchyard path | II |
| Railings and lamp and gates to north of churchyard path | II |
| Under Minnow Road | Listing Grade |
| Lake Almshouses | II14 |

2 Appendix 2 - Glossary

Applied Polychromy : A building where materials of regular appearance in terms of colour have been utilised, either as a result of availability or economy, and then different colours have been applied by way of paints, dyes or washes is said to have 'Applied Polychromy'

Arts and Crafts Style : An architectural style popularised by the likes of William Morris and inspired by the works of John Ruskin. The style was popular from the mid 1870's until the early 1920's. Its emphasis was on quality craftsmanship in all building components and the concept that a building should be designed around its function and use and not to compromise this efficiency to provide features like symmetrical elevations. The style also emphasised 'honest' architecture where materials and structural features were left on display rather than being hidden.

Ashlar : Finished and dressed stone laid in courses with fine and regular mortar joints.

Barge-boards : Timber boards fixed to the gables of a building, beneath slates or tiles and covering the ends of timber roof structures, such as purlins. Sometimes known as gable-boards or verge-boards.

Burgage-Plots : Long narrow plots running at right angles to streets, representative of towns the layout of which dates to medieval times. These plots were rented by freemen and traders for cash rents instead of feudal service as had previously been the case.

Facade : The principal elevation of a building, often being its grandest and most lavishly decorated. Sometimes a facade can be remodelled to give the impression of a more modern, or grander, building than that which relay lies behind it.

Gothic : An Architectural style associated with the mediaeval period, incorporating windows with pointed heads and in some cases decorated tracery.

Mullion and Transom : A window form associated with the medieval and Tudor periods, enjoying a revival in the Victorian period, where the window is separated into smaller glazed areas by vertical Mullions and horizontal Transoms, often of stone.

Revival Architecture : The Victorian era saw architects seeking inspiration from past architectural styles and developing techniques by which to replicate their grandeur to varying degrees of success, Classical, Gothic, and Egyptian architecture enjoyed revivals during this period.

Roofscape : The levels, pitches and variety of coverings and decorative elements, such as chimney stacks and barge-boards, which combine to create a view across a 'landscape' of building roofs.

Street Clutter : Street Furniture which has a negative impact on the street scene, either through the generic nature of its appearance, its inappropriate positioning, the excessive use of similar items (such as excessive numbers of road signs) or its poor condition or initial design quality.

Street Furniture : Any object within the streetscape that is not a building, for example street-lamps, signs, benches, litter bins. The term is usually used in the manner that it excludes features that could be better described as 'Street Clutter'.

Streetscape : The layout, pattern of development, scale of buildings, degree of enclosure, views and a series of other features and factors which combine to create a street of unique interest and character.

Surface Treatment : The material and/or finish used to form the surface of a road, pavement, footpath, driveways or any other ground surface.

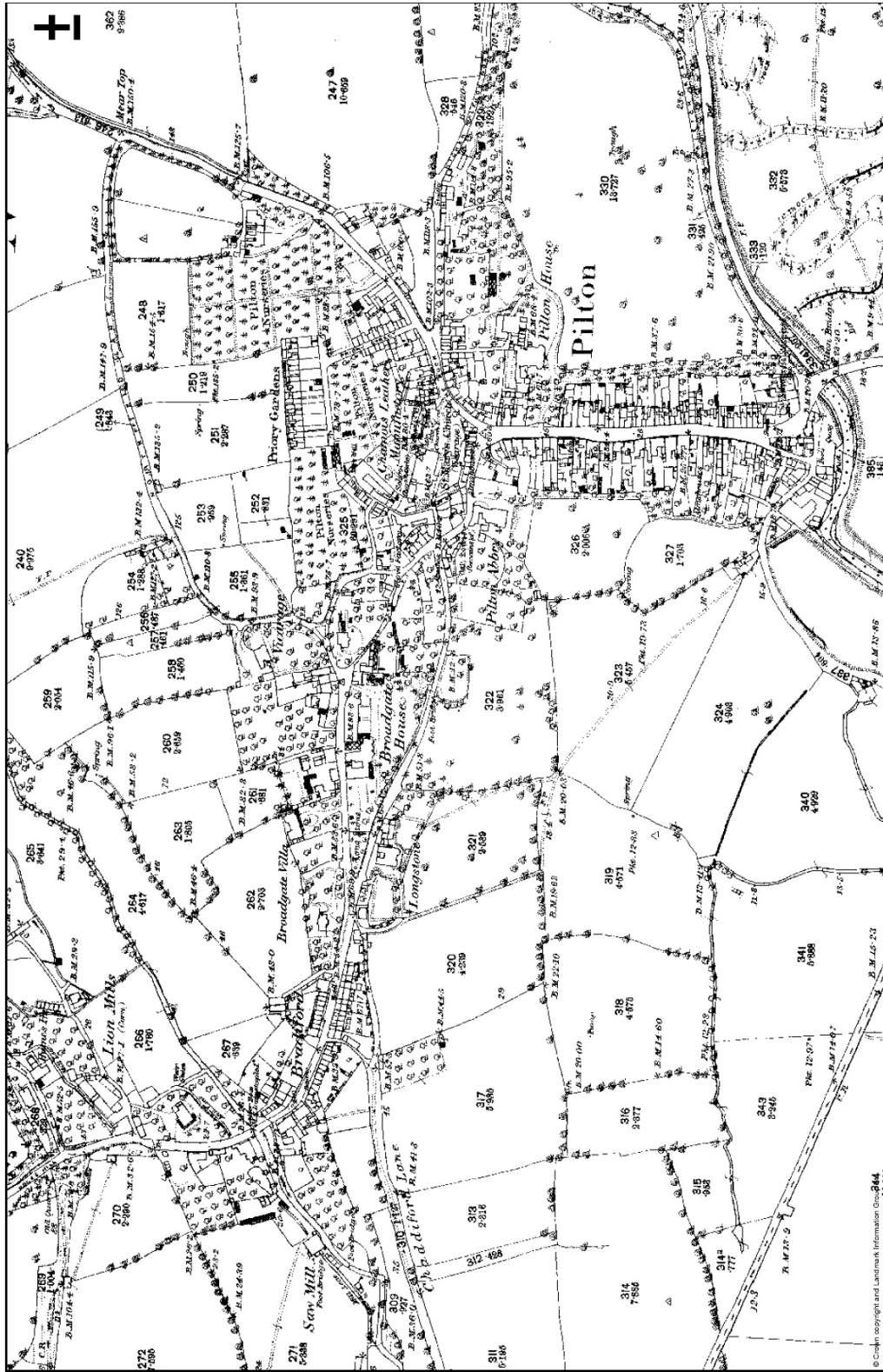
Vousoir : A shaped stone or brick, usually wedge shaped, which forms a part of an arch or vault.

3 Appendix 3 - Historic Mapping

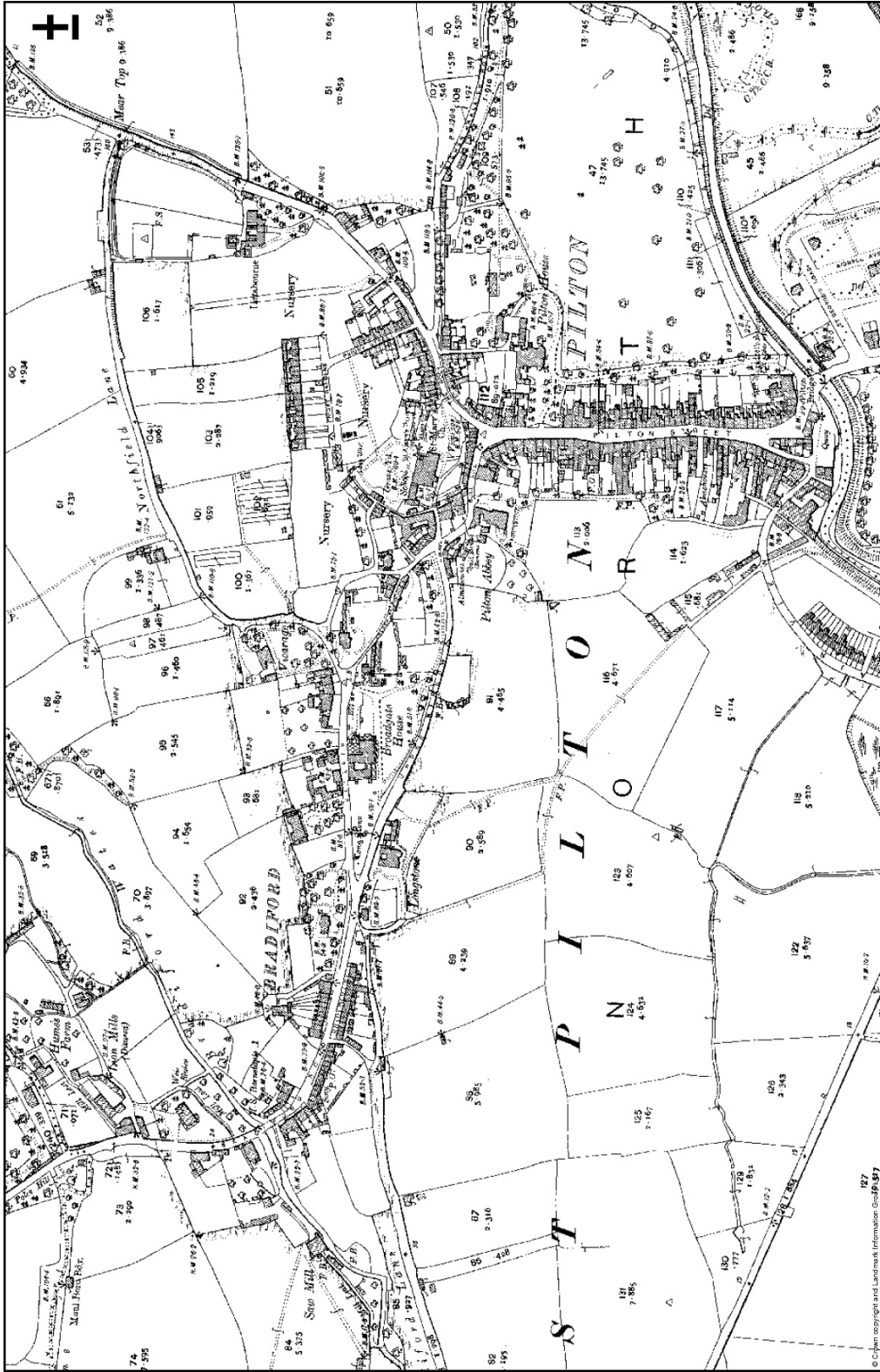
I - 1880's 1st Series Ordnance Survey Map

II - 1904/06 Ordnance Survey Map

I - 1880's OS Map



II - 1904/06 OS Map



4 Appendix 4 - Conservation Area Mapping

Key To Mapping

I - Existing Boundary, Listed Buildings & Public Green Space

II - Streetscape Features

III - Key Views

IV - External Wall Materials

V - Character Zones

VI - Boundary Changes Made During The Appraisal Process

Key To Mapping

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | Grade I Listed Building | | Road & Building Plot Outline |
| | Grade II* Listed Building | | Building Outline |
| | Grade II Listed Building | | Existing Conservation Area Boundary |
| | Single Storey Building | | Wall With Slate Hanging |
| | 2 Storey Building | | External Views |
| | 3 Storey Building | | Internal Views |
| | 4+ Storey Building | | Morte Slate Boundary Wall |
| | Area To Be Added To Conservation area | | Morte Slate & White Spar Boundary Wall |
| | Area To Be Removed From Conservation Area | | Focal Point Of Views |
| | Building With uPVC Windows | | Prominent Bay Window |
| | Building With Timber Windows | | Prominent Bow Window |
| | Building With A Mix Of Windows | | Negative / Positive Public Seating |
| | Building With Rendered Walls | | Positive / Negative Bollard |
| | Building With Bare or Limewashed / Painted Walls | | Decorated Barge Boards |
| | Building With Slate Window Sills | | Negative / Positive Street Lighting |
| | Public Green Space | | Memorial - ie. War Memorial |
| | Building In Poor Condition | | Scheduled Ancient Monument |
| | Area For Potential Redevelopment | | Mosaic Feature |
| | Building With Decorated Eaves | | Important Tree / Tree With Tree Preservation Order |
| | Character Zone 1 | | Miscellaneous Feature (Labled) |
| | Character Zone 2 | | Miscellaneous Linear Feature (Labled) |
| | Character Zone 3 | | Railings As A Positive Streetscape Feature |
| | Character Zone 4 | | Railings As A Negative Streetscape Feature |
| | Character Zone 5 | | River / Aquatic Feature |
| | Historic Door | | Public Right of Way |
| | Historic Bridge | | Focal Streetscape Feature |
| | Intrusive Overhead Lines | | Negative / Positive Signage Feature |
| | Historic Post Box | | Historic Telephone Kiosk |

