

BEACH CONSERVATION AREA



Beach was designated as a Conservation Area on the 23rd October, 1989.

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

A Conservation Area is an area of "Special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance."

Designation is a recognition of the group value of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect, not just the individual buildings, but the character of the area as a whole. The special character usually derives from a combination of many features, such as - trees, hedgerows, walls, open spaces, groups of buildings, the degree of enclosure, the massing and detailing of buildings. Each area is unique.

WHAT CONTROLS APPLY?

Within the Borough's six Conservation Areas, a number of special controls apply. Planning policies seek to ensure that any development accords with the areas' special architectural or visual qualities. These are set out in Policies KLP.48-51 in the Kingswood Local Plan and further details are given in CONSERVATION AREA ADVICE NOTE NO.7. - available from the Council.

The emphasis is on preserving those buildings, spaces and features which gives each Conservation Area its special character. Where changes can be justified, great care must be exercised to ensure that there will be no adverse impact on this character.

PURPOSE OF THE LEAFLET

This leaflet sets out:-

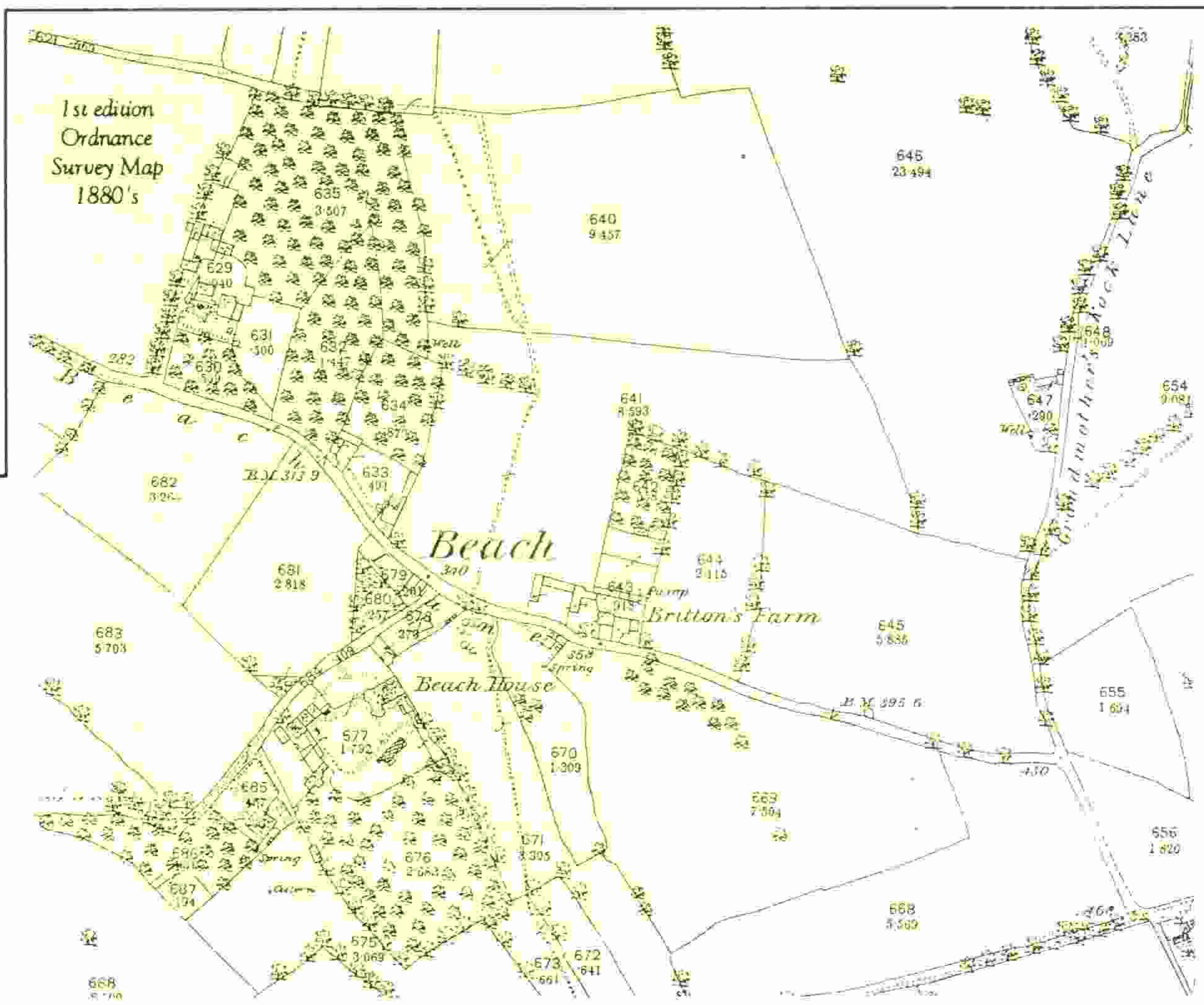
- (1) the boundary of the Conservation Area,
- (2) an assessment and analysis of the special character, so as to protect the essential qualities, and provide guidance for development proposals,
- (3) measures for enhancing the area.



Beach is a small Cotswolds hamlet situated on the slopes of Lansdown Hill just to the north-east of Upton Cheyney village. The hamlet nestles quietly in an attractive rural setting and consists of a small group of traditional stone buildings approached by a narrow winding lane and surrounded by fields bordered by mature hedgerows and stone walls. Designation is intended to protect the tranquil rural setting of the hamlet, the important tree groups, and the attractive buildings.

LOCAL HISTORY

It is thought that Beach derives its name from a Beech tree that once stood in the hamlet. The present settlement probably grew up around the springs and there is evidence of Roman remains in the area. During the English Civil War in 1643 the Battle of Lansdown was fought in fields surrounding the village.



CHARACTER ASSESSEMENT:

Beach comprises a group of about 8 individual traditional stone properties (5 of which are listed) scattered informally in a rural setting along Beach Lane.

RURAL SETTING

The hamlet is located in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty within a typical Cotswold landscape with open fields and stone walls. This "rural setting" is an essential ingredient of the character of Beach Conservation Area and the surrounding green fields, hedges, stone walls and tree groups contribute as much to this harmonious character as do the natural stone buildings which date from the late 17th and early 18th Century.

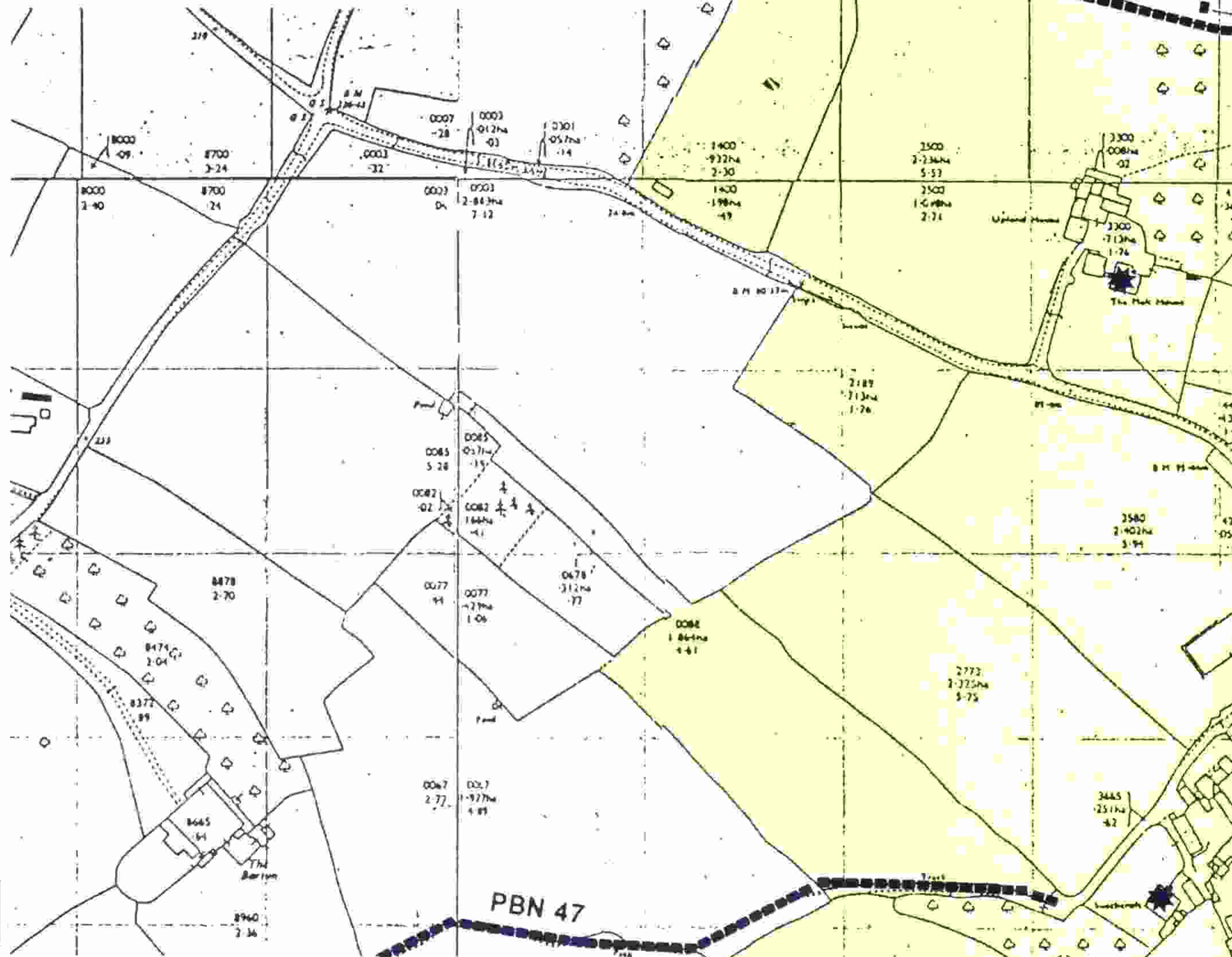
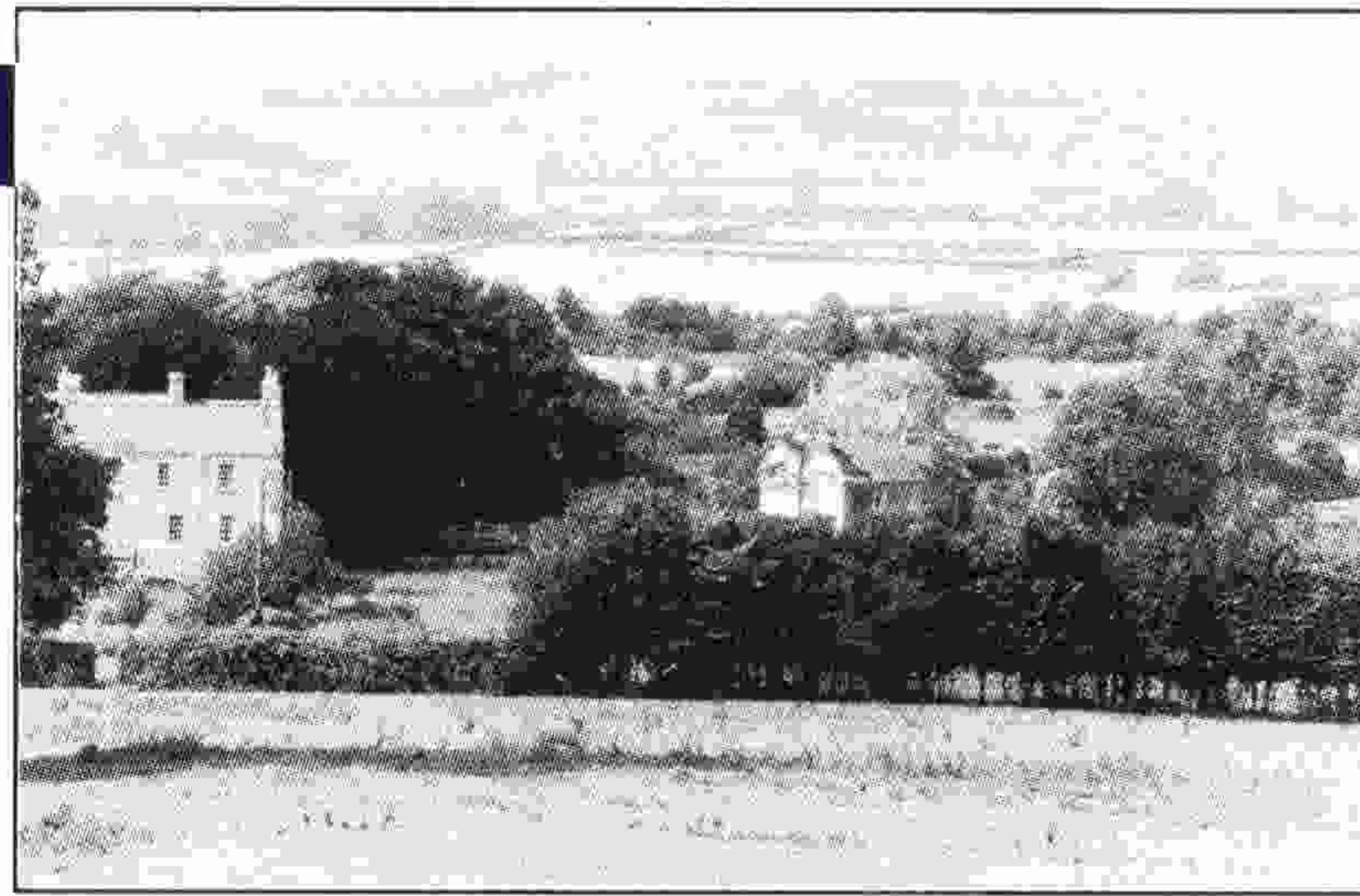
Good views of the 'rural setting' and the scattering of properties that make up Beach hamlet along with its trees, hedgerows and stone walls can be obtained from Wick Lane to the south-east. To the north there are views from public footpaths looking back towards Brittons Farm and also towards Bridgegate.

It is important to ensure that the traditional open fields and hedgerows are retained - and not broken up by field subdivision, the erection of stables, and the other trappings of 'horsiculture' which has detracted from the traditional rural character of Golden Valley to the south.

THE LANE

Part of the attraction of Beach is the approach to the settlement along the narrow winding country lane which is enclosed by a combination of grass verges, hedgerows and stone walls. Most of the buildings are set back from the lane within their own grounds and are partially screened by boundary walls and hedgerows. The hamlet does not have the same strong sense of built enclosure found in the nearby village of Upton Cheyney but is more open in character.

There is nevertheless a sense of enclosure associated with the narrow approaches to the hamlet. Developments which would reduce the enclosure and harm the informal rural character provided by existing hedgerows and walls through the introduction of modern visibility splays will be resisted.



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A sense of enclosure to the lane is provided by a boundary of hedgerows and stone walls opposite Wilton Old farm.

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BUILDINGS AND MATERIALS

The hamlet is characterised by freestanding houses and an absence of small domestic scale cottages. The properties tend to be larger in scale and often of three stories in height. They include the substantial Beach House, the Malt House, Wilton Old Farm and a

number of farm houses with associated outbuildings.

Brittons Farm is one of the earliest buildings in Beach dating from the late 17th Century and is particularly attractive with its steeply pitched roof with 2 gable dormers.

Despite variations in the design and details of the buildings, they are mainly characterised by the use of local lias stone rubble walls with freestone quoins and steeply pitched slate or clay pantile roofs. Along with the use of traditional details and proportions, these provide an homogenous character within the Conservation Area.

It is important that any further development or alterations to properties use appropriate materials, design and detailing and are carefully sited so as not to dilute or detract from the area's 'special' character.

LANDSCAPING

Groups of mature large trees and hedgerows within and around Beach make an important contribution towards establishing the setting of the Conservation Area, and its informal rural character.



Brittons Farm located at right angles to the enclosed lane.



Beach House

Conservation Area

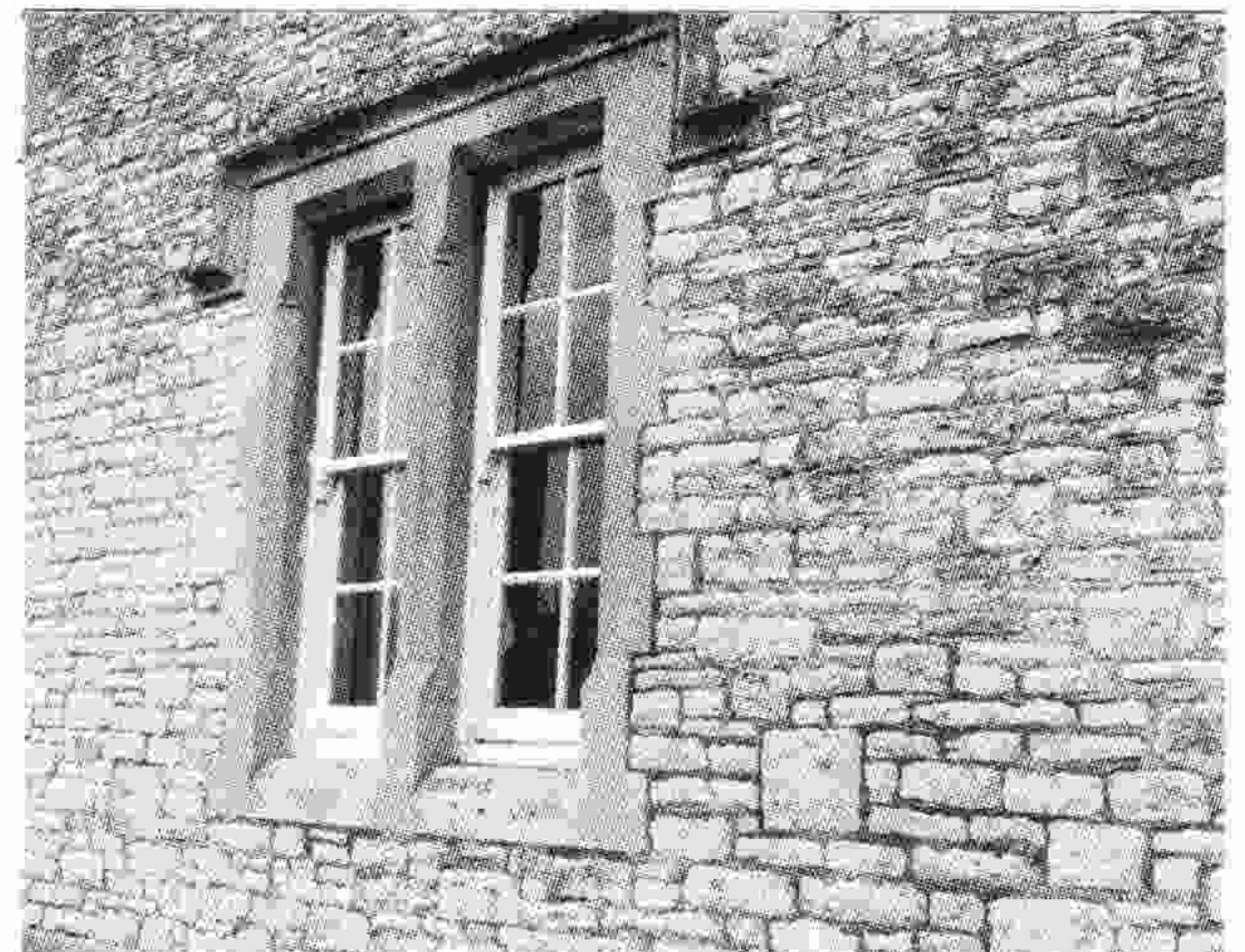
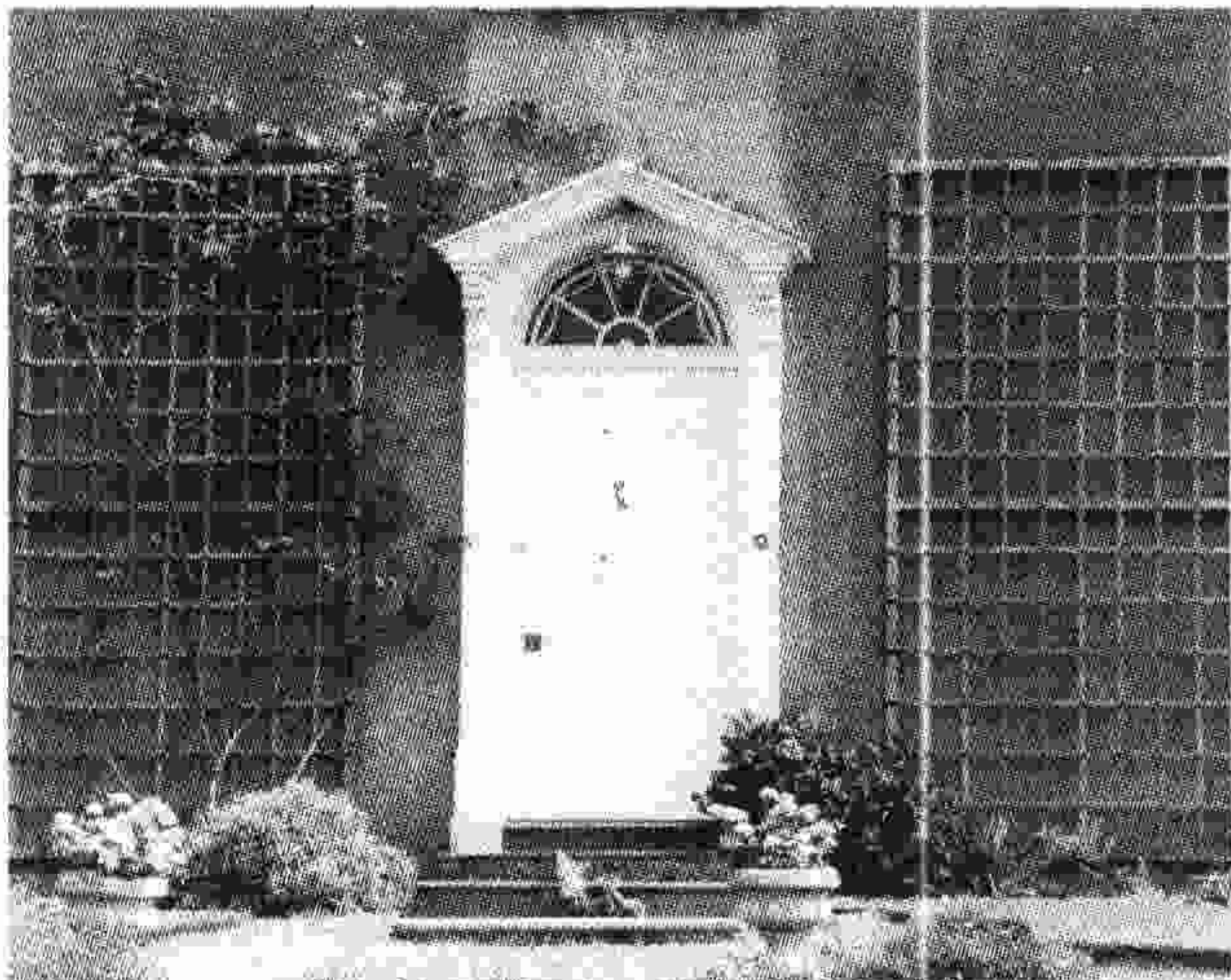
Public Footpaths

Listed Building

Locally Listed Buildings

INTERESTING FEATURES IN BEACH

Other interesting features which make a valuable contribution to the unique character of Beach.



It is important that these interesting features are carefully looked after.

ENHANCEMENT SCHEMES

The Council wishes to encourage schemes which will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and a number of enhancement ideas have been subject to public consultation. The key objective is to encourage the repair and retention of features of interest and to reinforce the special character of the area.

Financial Grants (up to 50%) and other forms of assistance may be available to individuals and local organisations towards enhancement schemes. The Council is particularly keen to encourage the following enhancements:-

- repairs to footpaths/ stiles/ gates
- repairs and maintenance to traditional buildings, stone walls, gates and gate posts.
- tree and hedgerow planting and management
- removal of poles and overhead wires
- landscape improvements to screen electricity sub-stations or other intrusive structures and buildings
- prevent the sub-division of the open fields around the hamlet for horticulture etc.

..... HOW CAN YOU HELP?

As most of the land is privately owned, we will need your support to achieve many of these enhancements . You can also help by:-

- telling us what needs to be done and notifying us when problems occur;
- ensuring that any proposed alterations to your property and land respect the special character of the area, eg by using the correct materials and details.

FURTHER ADVICE

For further information please Contact the Conservation Section PTSE Directorate, Kingswood Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, BS15 2TR T: 01454 863579 www.southglos.gov.uk

This leaflet was originally published by Kingswood Council after public consultation. It was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by South Gloucestershire Council in April 1996 and reaffirmed in March 2002

Grants and assistance with woodland, tree and hedgerow planting and management is also available from :-
 The Community Forest Team, Tel: (0117) 9290170
 The Forestry Commission, Tel: (0117) 9869481
 The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Committee / Avon County Council, Tel: (0117) 9226528

This is one of a series of leaflets aimed at encouraging good practice in the design and layout of new development. The advice supplements the policies of the Local Plan and the Council will bear the guidelines in mind when assessing the merits of planning applications. This leaflet takes into account the Good Practice Guide from English Heritage. Ref.CPO/D.7E OCT 1994
 Endorsed by SGC in April 1996 and March 2002. On-line file -Spring 2003

This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the CONSERVATION AREA ADVICE NOTE which gives general advice & details of special controls and policies which apply in Conservation Areas. See also national guidance -PPG.15