

7

ADVICE NOTE

Hambrook

CONSERVATION AREA

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 distinctive 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 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 the Local Plan and further details are given in the **CONSERVATION AREA ADVICE NOTE No.7** - available from the Council. The emphasis is on preserving those buildings, spaces and features which give 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

- 1 To provide a detailed appraisal of those buildings, features and spaces which characterise the Hambrook Conservation Area.
- 2 To set out a strategy for its preservation and enhancement.
- 3 To provide guidance for development proposals.

Hambrook was originally designated as a conservation area on 30th July 1975. Following an appraisal, the boundary was amended on the 9th December 1999 to protect more of the surrounding land to the west and in particular the parkland and trees to the south of Hambrook Grove which contributes to the rural setting.



Hambrook Conservation Area is located in a rural area on the northern fringes of Bristol. It is set alongside the Ham Brook just to the west of the River Frome and is surrounded by the M4 and M32 Motorways and the Avon Ring Road. Originally a Domesday settlement, today it comprises a mix of small cottages, farmsteads and larger houses mostly dating from the 17th and 18th centuries - some which are listed of special historic interest. Despite surrounding modern development and heavy traffic, it still retains its village character with its adjoining landscape of fields and parkland, trees, stone boundary walls and hedgerows. The conservation area designation seeks to protect the unique character and appearance of the area with its combination of traditional buildings and other features. The main elements include:-

- **The busy through route and village core** area with its cluster of small cottages, houses and green by the Public House.
- **The big houses** partially hidden from the road behind high boundary walls and set within their own landscaped grounds.
- **The Stream and Village Edge** - with the Ham Brook and the quieter rural lane with cottages, farmsteads and fields on the edge of the village.

The Historic Context

The settlement of Hambrook has a long history. To the north of the conservation area Roman burials have been found which may indicate a Roman settlement of some sort possibly within the area of the present village. In 1086 the area was recorded in the Domesday Book as 'Hambroc'. The original house at Hambrook Court was the manor court of Hambrook, and was probably occupied by some of those who held the manor under the lords of Winterbourne in the early days.

Although only the manor is mentioned in the Domesday Book there was almost certainly a settlement here in the 11th century and is likely to have been first settled in the late Saxon period. The village was principally involved in the wool trade and by 1712 Hambrook is recorded as a large hamlet containing 46 families.

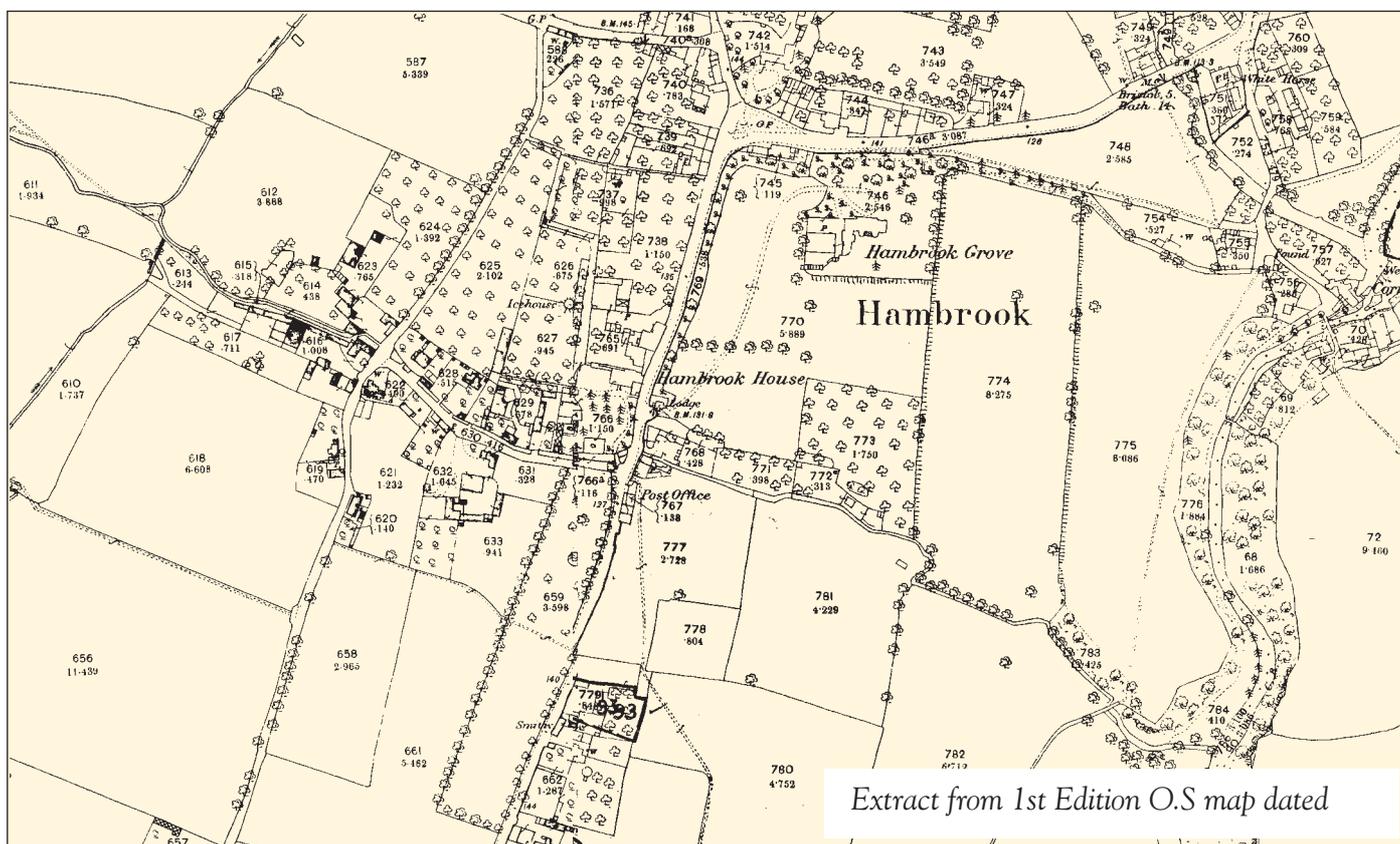
The rapid expansion of the nearby Bristol and Bath in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries meant there was a ready market for food production and thus the farmers in this area were prosperous. In addition to pastoral farming, the area had many orchards providing cider (or perry). The remains of some orchards can still be seen today in the grounds of Hambrook House and elsewhere in the village. The orchards also provided shelter for pigs which were fed the windfalls along with skimmed milk a waste by-product of cheese making. The author Daniel Defoe said this was wonderful for fattening pigs for bacon production.

The area had a good source of water and the nearby River Frome had a number of water mills that would have provided sources of employment. A corn grinding mill was located to the east of the settlement but its ruins largely disappeared when the M4 motorway was constructed. Other mills and works were located nearby further downstream at Frenchay.

Building stone was available locally in the many small quarries along the River Frome. This provided the distinctive reddish pennant stone used in the boundary walls and many of the buildings. The presence of coal in the area at nearby Westerleigh and Coalpit Heath also provided a readily available source of power and work.

With the increasing expansion and industrialisation of Bristol many of the rich middle classes moved out to more tranquil rural surroundings like Frenchay and Hambrook building for themselves large houses set within their own landscaped grounds such as Hambrook Grove and Hambrook Court. These large houses would also have provided employment for local people in domestic service working within the house and grounds.

Today, Hambrook is mainly a commuter settlement with its residents going elsewhere for employment and services. There is a pub and some small scale industrial workshops but the former general store, Post Office and Bakers have now gone. Although modern development has been limited many of the traditional farm buildings, and larger houses have been converted to new uses.



The Special Features

The Conservation Area includes many features that contribute to its special character and appearance. The main ones are set out below and shown on the insert plan 1.

- **The historic layout and plan form of the settlement** - including the village green, the grass verges, the road and footpath layout, the arrangement of plots, buildings, open spaces and boundary walls are an important element of the historic character.



- **Historic buildings** - The settlement contains many traditional buildings and structures (including 15 listed buildings) which contribute to the distinctive historic character.
- **Stone boundary walls** - of reddish pennant rubble are important features providing enclosure around properties and along the roads and delineating field boundaries.



- **Building Materials** - predominantly a mix of reddish rubble pennant stone or render with roofs of clay pantiles, double roman tiles and slate.
- **Traditional Street Furniture and Surfaces** - the stone bridges, stone stiles, steps, pennant paving and kerbs, the pump, the cast iron weight notice on the bridge and iron railings all add to the distinctive character.



- **Archaeology** - there are a number of sites on the Sites and Monuments Record reflecting the important history of the settlement.

- **Areas of open / green space** - both within and surrounding this loosely knit settlement make an important contribution to its rural character and setting.



- **Trees** - the mature trees and remnants of the former orchards contribute to the attractive character and provide evidence of the former agricultural and parkland land uses.
- **Field patterns** - the hedgerows and hedgebanks.
- **Water features** - the Ham Brook is an important feature which flows into the adjoining River Frome with its steep wooded valley.



- **Landmarks** - the larger houses such as the Hambrook Grove, Hambrook House and the Church Spire to the folly are visible in views.



- **Historic Gardens** - Hambrook House and Hambrook Grove retain evidence of former ornamental gardens.

The Through Route and Village Core

This area is characterised by the busy through routes of the Bristol Road and B4427 which are lined mainly by small cottages set close to the road with stone boundary and retaining walls enclosing fields on the village approaches. There are also occasional glimpses of the bigger houses that are set behind high boundary walls. However, the layout of the buildings and walls along the road gives an enclosed linear character restricting views to the open land beyond. It is also noisy and very busy with the large volume of passing through traffic which makes road crossing difficult and has an adverse impact on the village ambience.

At the bend in the Bristol Road adjoining the Crown Public House the character is more open with its areas of grass giving the feel of a village green. In the middle is a tree which provides an important focus. The area is enhanced further with its small cluster of surrounding buildings dating mostly from the 18th century which form a natural centre to the village. The short Georgian terrace, the detached house of Evan Coyd, the Public House and group of small stone cottages provide an attractive mix and architectural variety to the street scene.

The small 2 storey 18th Century Georgian terrace of 4 houses with its light rendered walls, sash windows and decorative fan light over front doors is a particularly attractive and distinctive feature. Set behind small front gardens the terrace has a genteel character that is more usual in larger settlements. It contrasts with the small rubble stone cottages and outbuildings located opposite and elsewhere in Hambrook, which are more typical of the local vernacular. Some recent modern development (particularly on B4427) and unsympathetic alterations to traditional properties has resulted in the dilution of the village character.

The grass verges and grassed area by the pub are important elements which contribute to the informal rural character and care needs to be taken to ensure the verges are not eroded further.

The trees are also important in the area providing an attractive green backdrop to many of the buildings. The single tree at the road junction is a prominent feature and the avenue of trees alongside the road enhances the approach to the village from the ring road.



The cluster of small cottages set close to the road give a feeling of enclosure



The trees and stone boundary walls alongside the approach road are important features and should be retained.



The grassed area and the trees make an important contribution to the village character. Care is needed to ensure that the grass edges are not eroded and that street signs are kept to a minimum.

Enhancement Strategy

- seek careful control over road signs and markings
- seek to restrict through traffic and encourage traffic calming measures that are sensitive to the historic character.
- retain informal grass verges and grassed area by pub and road junction
- retain existing trees and seek to develop a replacement tree planting strategy sensitive to the historic context.
- maintain enclosure to the road and along approaches.
- seek to remove overhead cables and place underground.
- ensure new development and alterations are in character and encourage the reinstatement of traditional details such as windows, doors, and chimneys etc.
- seek to reduce the number of signs to the industrial units, Hambrook Grove and Coach House whilst ensuring a sensitive design.

The Big Houses

The village contains a number of large impressive 3 storey houses, some of which are listed of historic interest. These buildings have played an important part in the history and development of the settlement and in shaping the surrounding landscape. Many of the houses appear to be typically 18th century Georgian houses with their small paned sash windows, parapets, render or stone facing. Some such as Hambrook Court and Hambrook Grove were built in the 18th Century to replace earlier buildings whilst Hambrook House which is of 17th century origin was merely refaced and remodelled in 1784 copying the latest Georgian style. Most of the big houses still remain in residential use. The exception is Hambrook Grove which is now used as a bed and breakfast establishment. The buildings and grounds have a rather neglected appearance and would benefit from a scheme of repairs and enhancements including the removal of a number of unsympathetic alterations and signs.

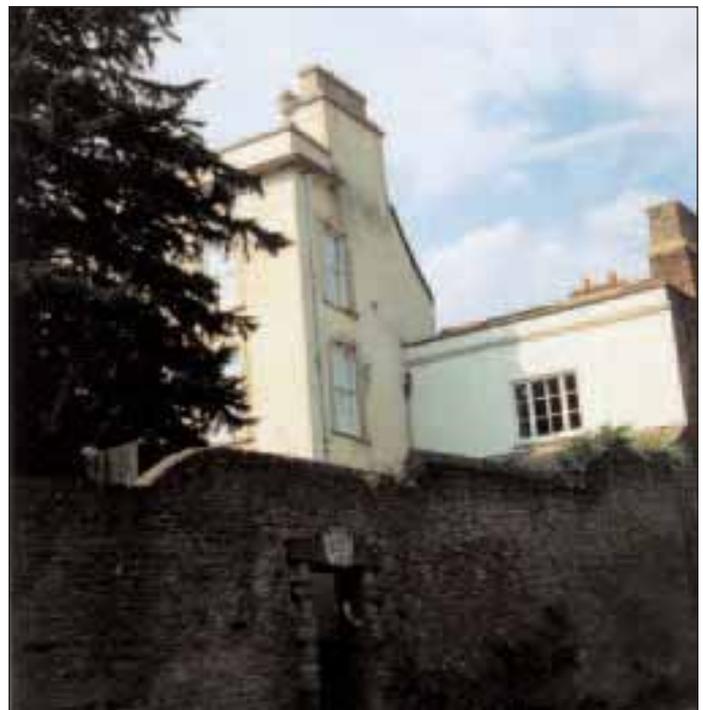
The buildings are generally set back from the road and partially hidden behind high stone boundary walls within their own landscaped grounds. The glimpses of these grand buildings provide visual interest and with their wooded grounds make a significant contribution to the surrounding landscape and character of the conservation area.

The land to the south of Hambrook Grove shows evidence of the remains of a late 18th century early 19th century garden. There was originally a farm connected with this property but when the manor house was rebuilt in late 18th century the gardens were laid out with ornamental walks extending over the Ham Brook on an elegant bridge (only the bridge buttresses now remain). Other typical features include the layout of garden buildings, ha-ha, specimen plantings and iron -rail edged screen plantings along the edge of the main roads skirting the property.

On a smaller scale, the grounds adjoining Hambrook House contain the remains of an ancient pear and apple orchard enclosed by high stone walls. Set within the orchard is an unusual domed stone structure sunken into the ground and surmounted by a spire. It is not certain whether this was originally a fruit store or ice-house. The spire came from Winterbourne Church after being damaged by lightning in 1871 and is visible from certain parts of the village rising above the trees. Within the grounds of the houses are a number of barns and outbuildings. These are a legacy of past farming operations and some have been converted to new uses such as the Coach house adjoining Hambrook Grove and barn adjoining Hambrook Court. However, care is needed to ensure that alterations are sensitive to the historic context.



It is important that any alterations do not harm the historic character



Hambrook House - partially hidden behind trees and boundary walls

Enhancement Strategy

- seek to secure repairs and reinstatement of traditional details and removal of unsympathetic elements particularly at Hambrook Grove.
- ensure any development or alterations do not harm the historic character or appearance of the buildings or their setting.
- seek to retain existing trees and consider a replacement planting strategy. New planting should recognise the historic context by using appropriate species, layout and scale.
- seek to protect and enhance important historic garden features and layouts.
- restrict development or changes in land-uses that could harm the historic character of gardens and parkland.

The Stream and Village Edge

Away from the busy main roads the settlement has a more informal and rural character. It consists of the group of houses in The Stream and clusters of small cottages and farm buildings dotted along the narrow, enclosed country lane and adjoining fields on the village edge. The Ham Brook is also an important feature as are a number of hidden paths.

The Stream

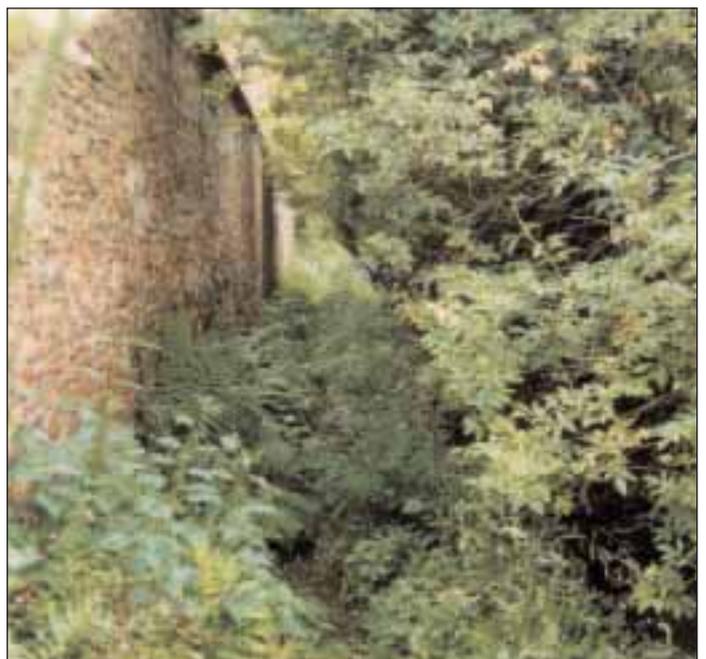
The Stream is more tranquil with a mix of traditional and more modern houses set well back from the lane with substantial tree coverage and high boundary walls. This area is characterised by the picturesque Ham Brook set alongside the road where distinctive white boundary railings enclose the stream in an unusual manner. A series of small stone bridges allow access across the brook to individual properties. It is important that the appearance of the brook is retained and enhanced by ensuring accesses are not widened which would result in the brook becoming less visible. The railings also need to be maintained and repaired as does the pump - another special feature. At the end of the road the 17th Century Faber Farm and Hambrook Farm (both listed buildings) are prominent, their imposing size and gabled features adding variety to the streetscape.

The Ham Brook

The brook, a tributary of the River Frome, is a distinctive feature within the conservation area and in the past it would have provided an important source of water for local people and farming activities. Today, it is important that its course is protected, and where possible enhanced. The character of the stream varies along its length as it winds its way through the area and under bridges on the Old Gloucester and Bristol Roads. To the west of the Old Gloucester Road, the brook is largely hidden and has a more natural appearance winding amongst trees and vegetation alongside the high boundary wall to Faber's Farm. This results in a great sense of enclosure and gives a secret character to this part of the area. Adjoining the road and houses in The Stream the brook is more visible and has a more managed and formal appearance enclosed by railings. To the east of the Bristol Road, after passing cottages, it again regains a more natural appearance south of Hambrook Grove. It is an important landscape feature and is set below the level of the surrounding landscape of grassland, clumps of trees and former parkland to Hambrook Grove. The remains of former walls and buttresses to a bridge are visible alongside and demonstrate the importance of the brook as a feature of the historic landscape.



The Stream, with its distinctive railings has a picturesque character.



The Ham Brook, a tributary of the River Frome, with its adjoining hidden path should be protected and enhanced.

The Village Edge

On the edges are the farms and a small scattering of individual cottages set along the Old Gloucester Road and hidden away by Sunnyside Lane. The small traditional cottages have an attractive character and most are rendered. However care is needed over details such as windows and doors and other alterations if the traditional character is to be maintained. The grouping of traditional farm buildings at Faber's Farm and the informal character of the narrow lane bounded by grass verges, hedges, hedgebanks and stone walls adds to the rural appearance of this part of the village. The enclosed nature of the lane and differences in land levels means that views out over adjoining fields are restricted resulting in many 'hidden' areas of open space. Some of these were former orchards but today they are grass and provide an attractive setting for adjoining buildings. The 'secret' character of this area is reinforced by a number of hidden paths such as between Old Gloucester Road and Sunnyside Lane. Another feature of many of the paths is the distinctive Gloucester stone



The 'hidden' fields provide an attractive setting for adjoining buildings.

The Village Setting

The rural setting and boundaries to the edge of the settlement with its landscape of open fields, hedgerows, stone boundary walls and clumps of trees have an important impact on the character of the settlement. Although surrounded by fields the village setting is far from tranquil due its location on the busy urban fringe and adjoining major motorway routes. The area would benefit from woodland planting to reduce the impact of traffic and other modern development such as the telecom aerial. Recent housing development would also benefit from better boundary treatment and screening particularly where they adjoin open fields. To the west, better control is needed where the landscape has been adversely affected by the loss of hedgerows, the erection of poorly designed and sited industrial type farm buildings and storage uses in connection with the commercial car repairs operation.



The adjoining cottages, narrow lanes, stone boundary walls, hedgerows, trees and grass verges all contribute to the attractive informal character and give a sense of enclosure.



The open fields and trees contribute to the setting - but tree planting to screen the adjoining motorway would enhance

Enhancement Strategy

- seek to encourage new planting on edges of the settlement alongside major roads to help screen and reduce the adverse impact of traffic and associated motorway signs and other modern development.
- consider a strategy to reduce the volume and impact of traffic both passing through and around the settlement.
- seek to protect and enhance the course of the Ham Brook.
- seek to repair railings and retain visibility of the stream by resisting widening or alterations to accesses which would harm its character.
- protect open areas from development which are an important part of the village character.
- retain and reinstate stone walls, hedges and grass verges.
- ensure alterations and new development is sensitive to the historic context.
- the restoration or planting of new traditional orchards will be encouraged.

Architectural Details

Details are very important - retaining the original materials and architectural details - windows, doors, roof materials, chimneys etc are all essential to keeping the period character. In Hambrook buildings are generally of pennant stone or render though on the more important buildings the render is often lined to look like ashlar with the use of freestone dressings. Roofs traditionally are of natural clay pantiles or double roman tiles or natural slate.

Windows - traditionally these are painted timber either of Georgian small paned sashes or casements with openings flush with the frame. Today however, many of the unlisted buildings have unsympathetic replacement windows using the wrong proportions or materials, which detracts from the appearance of the conservation area. Owners will be encouraged to reinstate these with more appropriate windows sensitive to the traditional character.

Boundaries are also important and typically consist of the distinctive reddish pennant stone walls (usually with flat pennant or 'cock and hen' type coping) or hedgerows and hedgebanks. The use of modern ornate type railings or larch lap fencing is generally not in character and should be avoided.



Preservation & Enhancement Strategy

The main objective is to preserve and enhance the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area, its historic buildings, features and their setting as follows and as shown on the insert plan 2:-

1) To preserve and reinforce the historic character.

By encouraging repairs and ensuring that any works to both the listed and unlisted buildings, features and surroundings are considered in relation to the historic context and use appropriate materials and detailing.

2) Minimise the impact of modern development.

The historic area is surrounded by modern development and roads which impinges on the historic character and setting. Enhancement proposals will seek to reduce this impact by protecting important views and using tree planting and hedge restoration where appropriate, to screen and soften the impact of obtrusive features.

3) Ensure that any new development (or alterations) is sensitive to the historic context.

Any new development needs to be small scale and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is important that it does not adversely harm the setting of the existing historic features, views, or harm the underground archaeological resource.

4) To preserve and reinforce the historic landscape.

By encouraging the retention of trees, hedges, stonewalls, field patterns and other landscape features.

GRANTS AND FURTHER ADVICE

Financial support (up to 50%) and other forms of assistance may be available towards conservation area enhancement works. It is also within the Community Forest area where tree planting is particularly encouraged. For information and advice please contact **The Director Planning, Transportation & Strategic Environment, Planning & Environment Section**, Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, South Gloucestershire BS15 9TR. Tel: 01454 863579 www.southglos.gov.uk

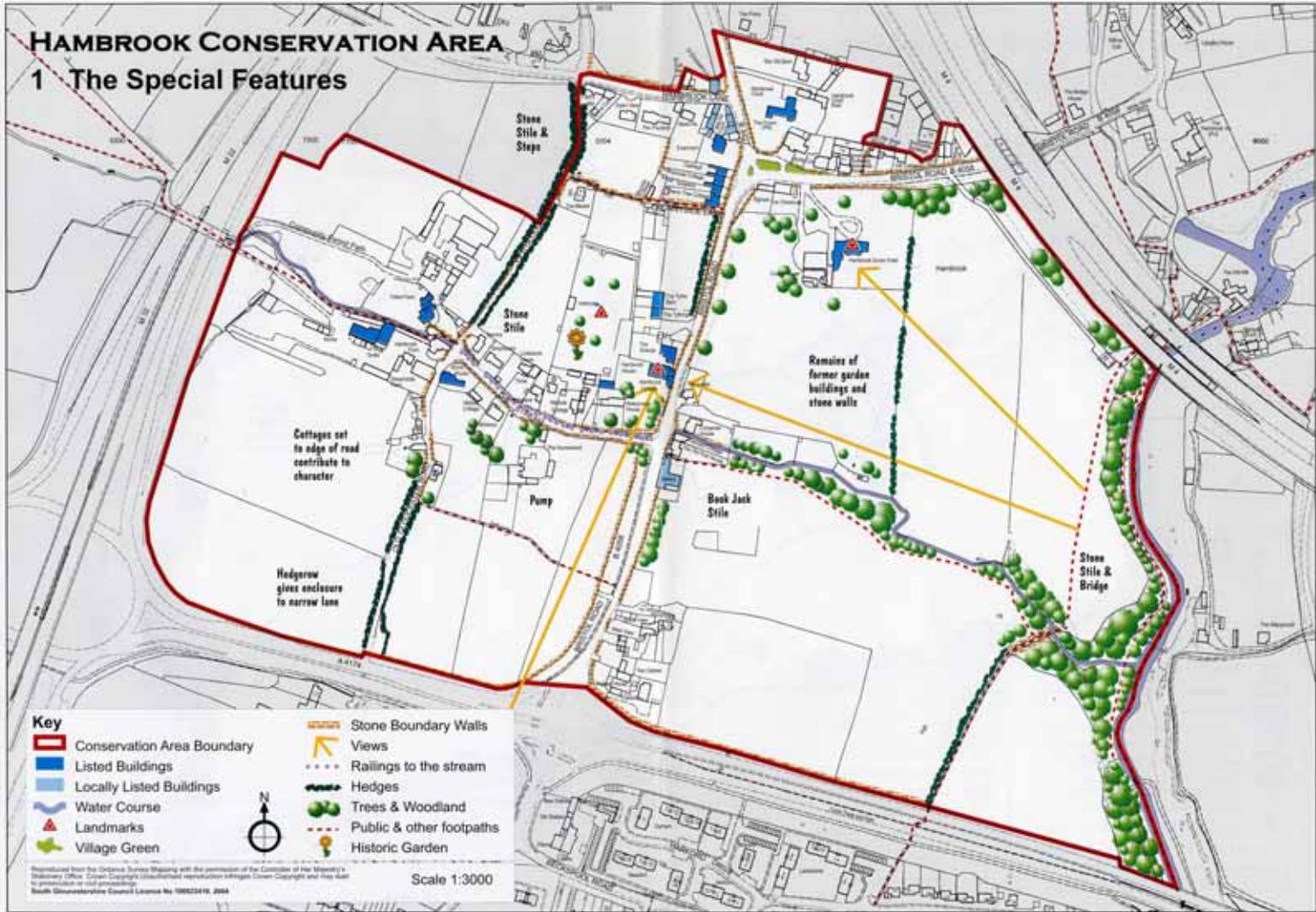
This advice note was adopted by Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 27/5/02 following consultation with local people and other interested parties. It will supplement the policies of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan. The guidelines will be used in assessing the merits of planning applications.

The leaflet takes into account the Good Practice Guide on Conservation Areas from English Heritage & PPG 15.

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.

HAMBROOK CONSERVATION AREA

1 The Special Features



HAMBROOK CONSERVATION AREA

2 Preservation & Enhancement Strategy

