



Bramerton

Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines

December 2018



Content

Introduction	3
Historical Development	4
Character Assessment	5
Conservation Management Guidelines	11
Appendix 1(i) - Listed Buildings in Bramerton Conservation Area	12
Appendix 1(ii) - Unlisted Buildings in Bramerton which are of townscape significance	12
Appendix 2 - Policy & Consultation	13
Appendix 3 - Conservation Area Boundary	14
Appendix 4 - Historic Map	15
Appendix 5 - Streetscape	16
Appendix 6 - Natural Character	17

Introduction

Bramerton has a conservation area of contrasting parts. To the north, the area is dominated by Bramerton Hall and its landscaped grounds, with The Grange, a similarly significant building, at the southern end having a more reserved impact. The Street, which meanders through the core of the village, connects the two. This part is more tightly defined by a variety of buildings, old and new, in a random arrangement that is typical of many rural villages. Trees, hedges, and key public and private open spaces reinforce the rural nature of the area.



The Street

Under the terms of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority is required to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate them as a Conservation Area. The 1990 Act also requires local authorities to prepare management guidance and proposals for conservation areas. The Bramerton Conservation Area was originally designated in 1975.

This document should be read in conjunction with the adopted Local Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework, and Planning Practice Guidance .

Key Characteristics

- Exceptional country houses at each end of the area
- Linear form of development with prominent trees and hedges, and subtle changes in street alignment
- The natural setting of the area, with the River Yare and Broads Authority to the north, enhanced by tree belts and lines of hedges
- Mix of dwellings and green spaces in the centre of the street, with a village pond, and in the north with the recreation ground.

Historical Development (also see historic map in Appendix 4 page 15)

Bramerton derives its name from the “tun” or homestead among the brambles. It was referred to as “Brambretuna” in the Domesday book of 1086. This records the parish as being 4 furlongs long and 2.5 broad and to belong in large part to the Bigot family. The modern parish is 12 furlongs by 10 in width at its widest point.

The church, dedicated to St Peter was rebuilt in 1462. A Victorian restoration in 1866 increased its capacity to accommodate 180 people. Bramerton Hall was the seat of the Cory family from 1400 to 1760 of whom Sir Thomas Cory was distinguished as Speaker of the House of Commons. The present hall dates from 1870.

Bramerton Grange of 17th century date, was at one time approached by an avenue of trees, considered at the time to be among the finest in the country. Bramerton is celebrated as the childhood home of Elizabeth Fry the prison reformer, who wrote in her journal that:
“My earliest recollections are, I think, soon after I was two years old, my father at the time had two houses, one in Norwich and one at Bramerton, a sweet country place, situated on a common near a pretty village”.

Much of the development of the parish appears to have taken place in the first half of the 19th century, when, between 1801 and 1851, the population rose from 138 to 227. During the past 120 years the population has fluctuated although the form of the village has changed only with infill development or conversions. In 1891 the population was 253 rising to 285 in 1951. By 1979 it was 331, although it had fallen to 301 at the 2011 census.

One of the contributing effects of this was the loss of the village Post Office in 1968 and the closure in 1978 of the Kirby Bedon school, to which many Bramerton children attended.

A much more comprehensive account of the history Bramerton can be enjoyed by the publication by The Bramerton Society in 1991, and of St Peter’s Church “Through the Lychgate” by Vivian “Bramerton” in 1995.

Character Assessment

(Also see Streetscape and Natural Character Map, Appendix 5 and 6, pages 16 and 17)

Bramerton and its setting

The landscape setting has been transformed since the 1800s. The common was enclosed so that modern Bramerton stands largely insulated from its surrounding arable landscape. Approaching the village from the Norwich road, an open field to the south affords only a view of the tree screened rear gardens of this part of the village. There are good views over the surrounding open farmland landscape from a few places along the street, at the north end of Surlingham Road, and from Framingham Road to the south. Conversely, there are views back to the conservation area especially from Kirby Bedon and Rockland St Mary.

The character of the village today is influenced by the trees and hedges, which both screen out views of the surroundings from the streets, but also soften the impact of the buildings in the landscape. Their contribution, with green spaces, to the appearance within the streets is also significant.

The northern end of the village has retained its landscape character best. The village hall and its accompanying park is significant while the mature landscape of Bramerton Hall with its tree belts and clumps, makes an impressive entrance to the village.

Conservation Area Boundary

The existing conservation area boundary reflects the linear nature of the village from the Hall, park and recreation ground in the north, limited to the frontage properties on both sides of the street as far as Grange Cottage in the south.

Changes proposed include some minor adjustments to take account of property boundaries.

Street Patterns and Historic Grain

On plan, the area is dominated by The Hall and its grounds, although on site, much of the hall is screened by its boundary hedges and trees. Beyond that, the historic grain generally follows a linear development pattern mostly on both sides of the street until the Grange.



The Street



The Street

Perambulation

At the northern end, the recreation ground is surrounded by hedgerows and good mature trees which shape the spaces that provide a car park, play areas, a bowling green and a pond.

The Village hall, which stands at the head of the conservation area, is not an unattractive example and acts as a focal point. The building is single storey, boarded and pantiled served by a generous gravel car park.

To the south, Hall farm house is of interest absorbed in the trees on this side of the road. Further south is a group of 19th century buildings, including an impressive barn conversion, that are of a traditional nature and of historic interest. The buildings, presumably once associated with the Hall, lie subordinately behind the Hall with an attractive outlook to the wider landscape to the north and east.

Although largely hidden from view, Bramerton Hall is an early nineteenth century house in gault brick, five bays with two storeys with dormers and low pitched slate roofs with an elegant classical porch. It is set properly within a wide park with enclosing hedges and earth mounds which restrict views of it even from the white painted gates at the main entrance.

The impressive village sign marks the entrance to the street. The east side is a continuation of the hedge boundary of the Hall, while opposite is a range of dwellings of various types, old and new, in a mix of materials set in a random arrangement, but softened by trees and hedges.

Beyond this point the buildings assume a more prominent role, with many built close to the street. Here, in many cases, the space behind is taken by a second dwelling. Some of these buildings or spaces were originally ancillary to the frontage house, but have since been converted or developed. In other cases, for example the Old Rectory, the main house has been set back behind its former stable range which runs along the edge of the street south of the church.



Village Hall



Bramerton Hall



White House



Old School House

The gable ends of buildings on both sides are placed end on to the street. Rosemary Cottage retains its warm brick gable detailing, while the Old School uses the gable as the main entrance with leaded windows, decorative brick drip moulds around the openings, with elegant metal railings on the road edge. Opposite, the painted gable of the Old Post Office, with its lighter brick and black tiled roof and stout chimneys, combined with the single storey gable range of Spooner Lodge, creates a more intimate atmosphere in this part of the street.

Orchard House has been transformed in recent times. Its previous modern windows have been replaced with narrower mullion style openings, with an entrance porch and other positive improvements that have restored the importance of this house and its contribution to the street scene.



Orchard House



Church of St. Peter

The White House similarly has been sensitively restored and enhanced with new sash windows that reflect the classical style and architecture of the house. The use of white painted walls and black tiled roofs is reflected in the more modest Church View Cottage. The driveway between looks bleak from the street, perhaps made worse by the loss of the hedge boundary to the cottage and its replacement by a timber fence. The drive leads to a range of converted farm buildings formerly associated with Church Farm, and latterly by a group of modern dwellings that lie outside the conservation area boundary. While these houses do not have a significant impact on the conservation area, they can be seen across the fields from the east where they are very dominant in the landscape.

The Church is the sole surviving mediaeval building in Bramerton. It is built in a mixture of flint and stones imported to the site, reflecting the proximity of the river Yare to the village. Its scale is modest and the use of render on its eastern wall, presenting to the village street, adds to this simplicity. The low pitched roofs of the church rise in succession to the tower furthest away from the street. The overall effect is of a modest and delightful rural parish church which properly takes its place at the core of the village and conservation area.

The Church Lych Gate is a good example of the late nineteenth and early twentieth taste for the revival of traditional craft building. It is constructed in true Arts and Crafts fashion. It is an important feature in the streetscape, standing hard upon it, and has been inserted within the length of the Churchyard Wall. This is of ancient construction and displays a series of rebuildings and variety of materials, some reused, in its fabric. with a good shaped brick coping for virtually its entire length.

The Churchyard retains rows of its eighteenth century tombstones and a full succession of subsequent ones. Its war memorial has been added to the statutory list. The result is an authentic Norfolk churchyard of great charm. The street opens out to include the space of the churchyard set behind its low wall. A graveled car park has been laid discretely at the back of the church from where a view of Rectory Meadow can be enjoyed.



Lych Gate



Churchyard

The Old Rectory stands behind trees and its former stables, and dates from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. It is of two storeys with steeply pitched roof and gable end stacks. The principal facade has three bays of two storeys with a dormered attic. The properties to the east of the road are screened here from the street by the trees and shrubs of their front gardens. The range of former stables are prominent in the street scene and with the wall opposite, serves to narrow the view in both directions.



Old Rectory Stables



The Pond

At the pond, the view opens out although the space is shaped by the trees curving around its west side effectively screening the barn house from view. It does however provide an idyllic setting for the half timbered house of Meadow View.

The character changes here with the east side opening up behind a line of mature pine trees offering views of the houses on this side and beyond. On the west side the position of Grange Farm Cottage and the various buildings associated with the converted barns adjacent, have retained the built-up frontage. This group of buildings, especially number 1 Grange farm barns, with its red brick and clay tiled elevation on the road edge, are significant in the street shaping the views from all approaches at this end of the conservation area.

The tall evergreen hedge to Church farmhouse encloses the view in contrast to the open garden opposite. From the junction, the impressive Cedar tree at The Grange dominates the view along Framingham Road and of the Grange itself.



Spooner Lodge



Former building to The Grange and Cedar Tree

The Grange sits behind the trees and its front boundary wall and presents what was the rear side of its house to the road. The facade visible from Framingham Road has a large scale and is built in moulded Norfolk red bricks with a “blue tiled” roof. The impact of the converted barns and their close relationship is only glimpsed from the road.

Traditional Materials & Architectural Details

Bramerton displays a variety of building materials, many of them associated with south Norfolk. The majority of buildings within the conservation area are built of red brick, the best example probably at The Grange. Gault brick is seen at the Hall and the Rectory and is also used in the low wall fronting the White House.

Colour-washed Brickwork can be found at White House and adjacent Church View Cottages, the Old Rectory and Grange Cottage. An example of note can be seen in Grange Farm Cottage, north of the farm. Adjacent render can be seen in a twentieth century example at Meadow View where the first floor is half timbered.

The use of flint is restricted to the church and its immediate environs. At St Peters it is either mixed with brick and various imported stones or as a decorative infill between imported cut ashlar stones as “flushwork”. This can be seen on the outer faces of the buttresses to tower, porch nave and chancel.

Flint with brick, can be seen in the churchyard wall. Timber Frame is not well represented in Bramerton in historic buildings. The Old Rectory displays a section of framed wall in its rear elevation. Modern examples are better represented. The lychgate at St Peter’s churchyard is an early twentieth century example with pegged joints and wrought iron gate hinges of equal craftsmanship. The first floor at Meadow View is an example of twentieth century “mock” timber frame. A modern house next to the pond and the entrance to the Old Rectory has dark stained timber cladding to much of its exterior. A similar treatment has been given to the first floor addition to the house opposite Orchard House.



Wall to The Grange



Meadow View

At the village hall the entire building is constructed upon a timber frame.

Red and smut black clay pantiles are the most common local roofing material with plain tiles on Orchard House. Thatch in the form of Norfolk Reed was once the predominant roofing material in the area but is now only seen on the roofs of Grove Farm Cottage, Garden House and the churchyard lych gate. Window frames, door frames and joinery are in the majority of cases painted white .

Natural Character and open spaces



Village Hall and Recreation ground

Bramerton is a conservation area where the coherence of the whole depends more than usual upon the green elements of the village scene. The northern part of the area is structured around open spaces of the Hall park and the recreation ground.

The recreation ground is an attractive, well maintained and varied public space surrounded by hedgerows, while within this enclosure, mature trees add interest to the space and shelter the village hall.

The hall park is also lined with hedges with impressive specimen trees in the grounds of the Hall enhance the setting of the Hall itself.



Church of St. Peter

Along the street, the presence of hedges and trees make a significant natural contribution, by shaping or enclosing the views, screening or complementing the setting of buildings. These natural features need to be positively managed and replenished as needed to secure this character for the future.

The street opens out to incorporate the churchyard, held by the low brick wall, and again by the pond where an open view of the buildings beyond.

Extensive views can be had from the approach roads both from within the area, and along the approach roads .

Street Furniture, Walls and railings

Bramerton does not have street lighting and thus remains traditionally rural in terms of its street furniture. A series of poles carries the main wired services through the village although in the most part, these are enveloped in the roadside trees and hedges. The red phone box has survived unaltered albeit in a different use while there are two traditional post boxes. The new village sign makes a positive contribution to the conservation area in a very prominent position on the green at the junction with Kirby Road. The importance of the war memorial has just been recognised by its grade 2 listed status.

There are good examples of brick boundary walls to the churchyard, The Old Rectory, The White House, The Grange and Orchard Cottage, with railings at Briar Hall (The Old School).



Post Box



Village Sign



Telephone Kiosk

Conservation Management Guidelines

Upgrading Windows and Doors

In some cases windows and doors have been replaced with different materials and/or in different styles.

Every effort should be taken to try and repair and retain windows and doors of historic interest. If they need to be replaced they should ideally be replaced in the original materials, in a traditional style and design. However, if different materials are chosen then the window style should still remain the same. The opportunity should be taken to reinstate traditional style windows where they have been unsympathetically replaced in the past.

Long term tree and hedge management

The contribution made by indigenous trees and hedges to the character of this conservation area is acknowledged but can easily be taken for granted. It is also easy, with all the good intentions, to plant trees and hedges of an alien type that can cause harm rather than enhance the special rural setting of the area.

Every encouragement should be given to support appropriate new planting in the area. Where trees or hedges have reached their natural limit or have to be removed as part of a development proposal, a scheme to replace them should be incorporated to help restore the natural appearance of the site and area as a whole.

It would also be worth supporting owners in planting the next generation of trees that could then be established and be more worthy replacements as the existing mature and specimen trees which are such a feature of the area expire.

Boundary treatment

Many of the original boundaries are of brick and flint, with some iron railings, as well as the indigenous hedges mentioned above. There has been a tendency to remove these where not protected under current legislation, by modern timber fences, leylandii type hedging, which are not sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area.

Advice can be given on the merits of maintaining the more traditional boundaries especially to the fronts of properties.

Appendix 1 (i)

Church of St. Peter	II*
War Memorial	II
Orchard House	II
The White House and coach house	II
The Grange	II
Grange Farm Cottage	II
The Old Rectory	II
Bramerton Hall	II
Icehouse NW of Bramerton Hall	II

Note that the listing of the above buildings would also include buildings in their curtilage and any boundary walls

Appendix 1 (ii)

Unlisted Buildings in the conservation area which are of Townscape Significance

The Village Hall
Hall Farm
Outbuildings to Bramerton Hall
Hall farm house, now The Baliff's House
The Barn, Bramerton Hall
The Hall Gates
Garden House
Rosemary Cottage

Briar Hall, now Old School House
The Old Post Office
Red Telephone Kiosk
Spooner Lodge
Idle Hour, now Yew Tree cottage
Church View cottage

Rectory Meadow
Churchyard Lych Gate and churchyard walls
The Old Rectory Stables
Meadow View

The Boxes
The Hayhouse
1-3 Grange Farm barns

Appendix 2

Policy

Policy background

In recent years, the approach to conservation area designation has changed considerably. It is now recognised that development plan policies, development control decisions, and proposals for the preservation or enhancement and the management of conservation areas, can best be achieved when there is a sound understanding of the special interest of the conservation area. This position is reinforced as follows:

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in section 66(1) makes it a duty of local authorities when considering applications to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. Under section 72 of the same Act, it is a duty with respect to any buildings or land in a conservation area, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Department for Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 Paragraphs 126 to 141 cover “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment”. Joint Core Strategy- Policy 2 : Promoting Good design South Norfolk Local Plan The South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies Document was adopted in 2015 and policy 4.10 covers Heritage Assets.

Public Consultation

An informal ‘walkabout’ of the area was organised with local residents and councillors on 23rd November 2017. This informed the proposed boundary changes and conservation management guidelines within the draft appraisal. The public consultation on the draft appraisal took place from 2nd to 29th July 2018.

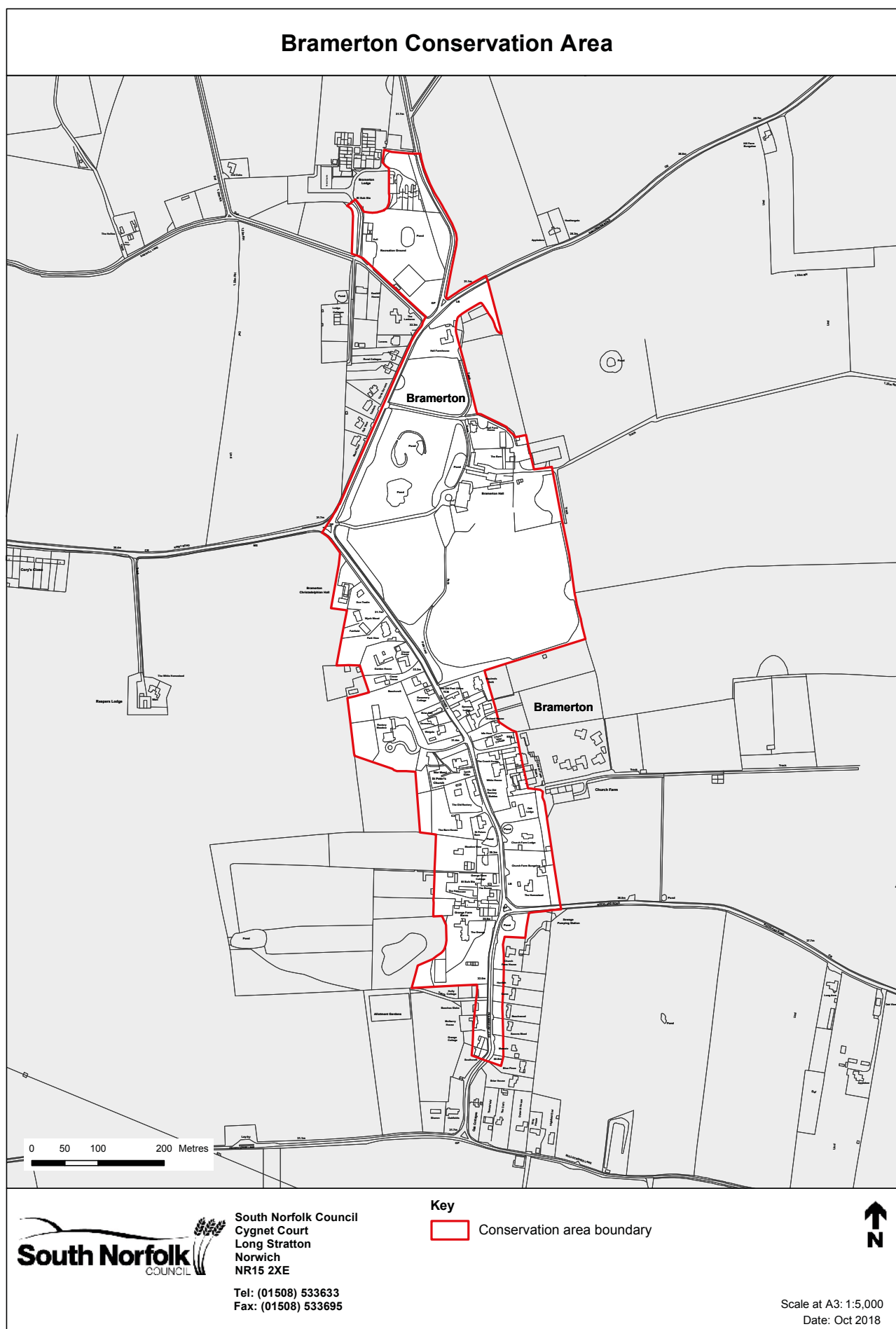
This included:

- A public exhibition held in village hall on 23rd July for three hours with an officer in attendance to answer any queries.
- Advert in village notice board and local publicity by the parish council
- The draft appraisal being available to view on the council’s website and at the reception desk.
- Emailing Ward Councillors, County Councillors, the Parish Council, and Historic England.
- A presentation made to the Parish Council on 23rd July.
- Contacting residents directly affected by the proposed boundary changes by letter informing them of the consequences of being included in the conservation area.

As a result of the consultation areas along Framingham Lane suggested for being taken out remained included in the conservation area. Some minor changes and corrections were made to the draft text and fixing the boundary around curtilages.

Appendix 3

Boundary Map

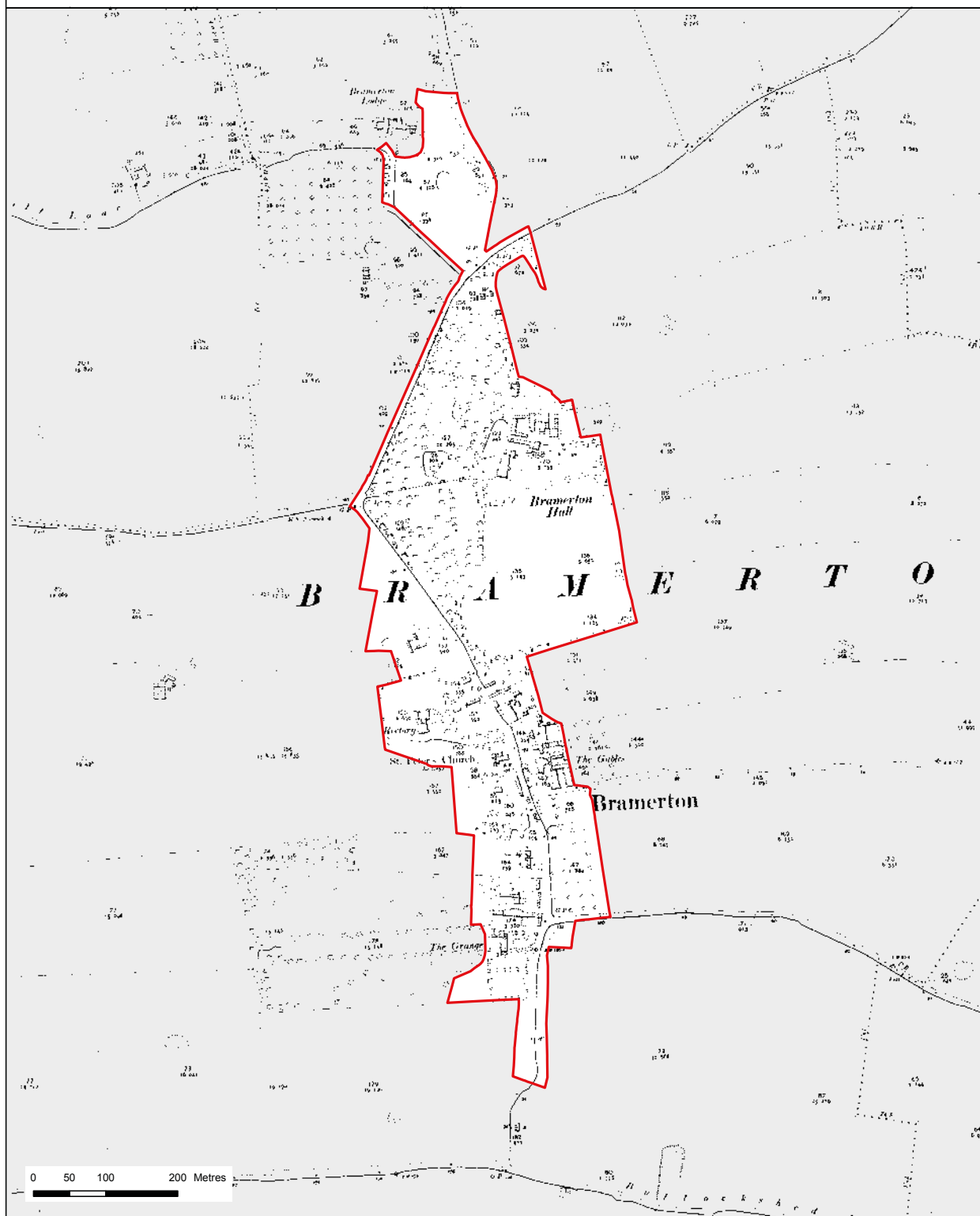


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Appendix 4

Historic Map

Bramerton Conservation Area, Historic Map 1906 - 1914



South Norfolk Council
Cygnets Court
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE
Tel: (01508) 533633
Fax: (01508) 533695

Key

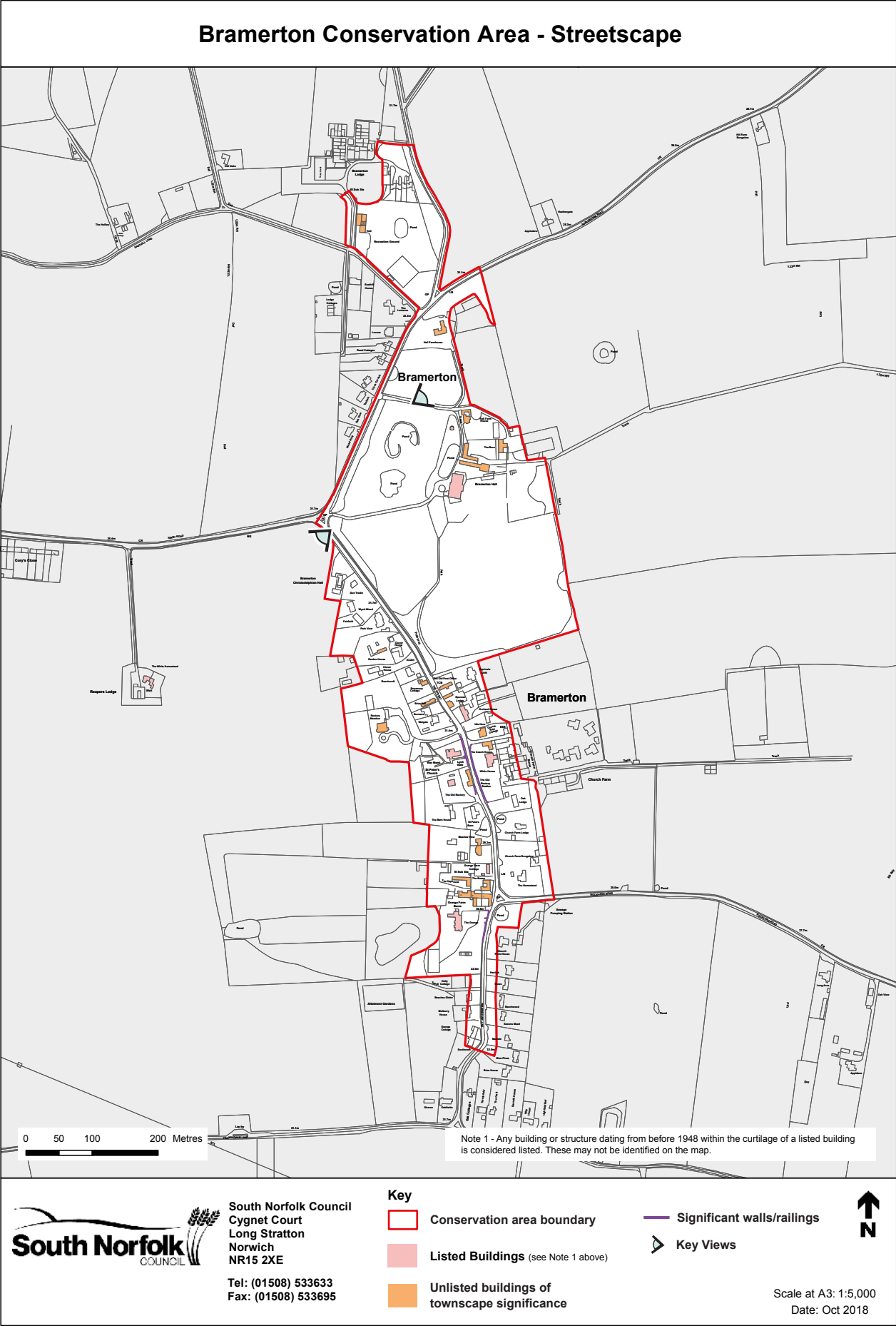
Conservation area boundary



Scale at A3: 1:5,000
Date: Oct 2018

Appendix 5

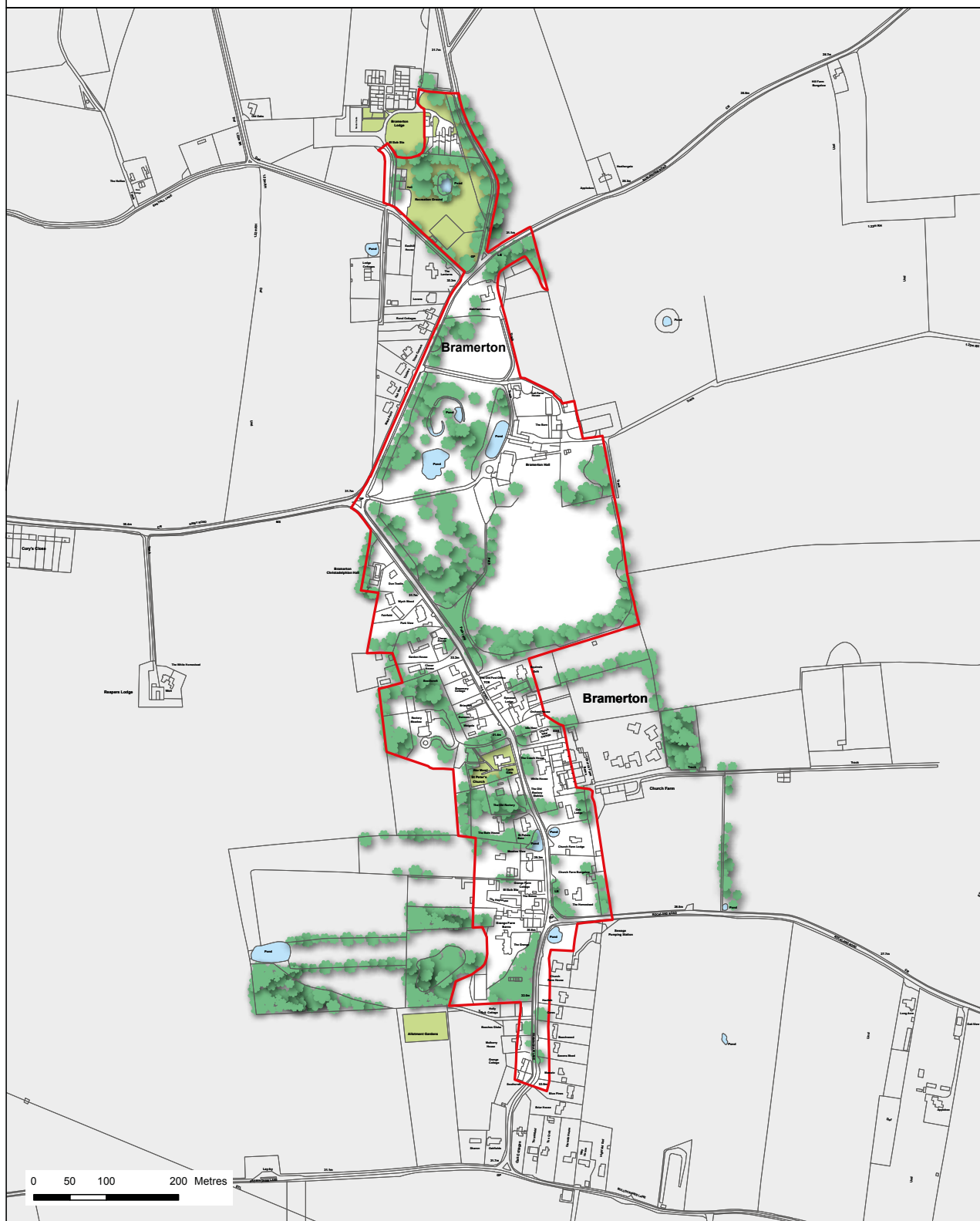
Streetscape



Appendix 6

Natural Character

Bramerton Conservation Area - Natural Character



South Norfolk Council
Cynet Court
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE

Tel: (01508) 533633
Fax: (01508) 533695

Key

Conservation area boundary

Open Space

● Trees



Scale at A3: 1:5,000
Date: Oct 2018