



Shorton

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal



SHORTON

CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Revised

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TORBAY COUNCIL

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Paignton Tithe Map 1840

EARLY EDITION ORDNANCE SURVEY 1: 2500 MAPS (not to scale)

- Ordnance Survey County Series First Edition surveyed 1862
- Ordnance Survey County Series Third Edition surveyed 1933

APPRAISAL MAPS

- Map One: Historic Buildings
- Map Two: Age of Buildings
- Map Three: Building Materials - Roofs
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- Map Five: Important Features

1 LOCATION AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

- 1.1 Shorton is the smallest of the 24 designated conservation areas of Torbay, covering only 10 acres (4 ha). It consists in the main of a cluster of pre-20th century buildings located in a steep, and still, wooded valley. The surrounding woodland, remnants of extensive orchards, and narrow lanes all reinforce the feeling of a tranquil rural character. In stark contrast, the conservation area is completely surrounded by extensive mid-late 20th century development; this is most evident on the south and west. Paignton town centre lies 2 miles (2.5km) to the southeast.
- 1.2 The steep topography acts to some extent as natural barrier to development; the mix of lanes, walls, banks, orchard remnants and wood is one of the few remaining fragments of open landscape within the built-up area of Paignton.

2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT, ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 Shorton lies within the large pre-Conquest manor of Paignton, held by the Bishops of Exeter from 1050-1545. The hamlet probably has its origins as a post-conquest tenant settlement of the manor but the earliest known records are only 16th century, when the hamlet of *Shiraton* and its landholdings are recorded in the Pembroke Survey of 1567. The survey compiled for the Herbert family, Earls of Pembroke, was extensive and detailed: 14 named tenants held by free burgage, copyhold or indenture around 210 acres. Nine named tenants between them held four copyhold tenancies and 150 acres; each of these four tenancies had its own house, another farm outbuilding, and orchards, meadow and pasture, as well as its arable fields.
- 2.2 The small scale 1" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey of 1809 shows *Shortdown* to the north and east of the main settlement of Paignton. In 1840 the tithe map still shows Shorton to be the same tiny settlement it had been in 1567. Windmill Lane (Shorton Road), Sleepy Lane, Shorton Valley Road and a green lane north of the houses on the north side of Mariners Way give access to the hamlet from each cardinal direction. While the fields have undergone enclosure the house plots shown allow identification of at least three of the 1567 sites: Shorton Manor; Shorton Farmhouse/Haddiport Cottage; and a large farmhouse opposite Shorton Manor, whose footprint is now occupied by 48 Shorton Road and its curtilage, and part of No. 50. The fourth may have been on the site of Shorton Cottage, or on the site of the outbuildings on the east side of Sleepy Lane south of Haddiport Cottage; all of these locations have archaeological potential.
- 2.3 In 1861 the large scale 1:2500 OS First Edition County series was surveyed; this shows the same house sites and all what is now the designated conservation area to be either wooded or cultivated as orchard. By the time of the second edition survey in 1904 there had been little change; by the time of the third edition survey in 1933 White Cottage has appeared on the north side of Shorton Woods, with an outbuilding on its southwest side. A larger outbuilding or habitation is also present on the site of where Liana Cottage and

Jim Bobs are now. Additionally another L-shaped building is shown south of Lammas Lane, just outside the conservation area, where 21 and 23 Lammas Lane are situated today.

- 2.4 While Shorton Wood survives well only a much smaller remnant of the more extensive orchards does, and only in a paddock to the southeast of Shorton Farmhouse. In Sleepy Lane there is a small stone water feature and channel of uncertain date; this feature may relate to the meadow recorded in the Pembroke Survey called Meremeade alias Merepoole and held by Roger Vagge whose water was *super fluxum*. Today a watercourse still rises on the western edge of the designated area behind the block of 43-53 Mariners Way; it flows east forming ponds to cross Sleepy Lane south and behind Shorton Farmhouse and Haddiport Cottage, and continues east behind and south of Shorton Cottage, again forming ponds, until it sinks on the eastern edge of the conservation area west of 101 Shorton Valley Road – in all a distance of about 350m.

3 PLAN FORM AND BUILDINGS

- 3.1 The original settlement remains the informal and organic grouping of the hamlet at the convergence of the four narrow lanes, either walled or banked, that are shown in the title map. While the earliest surviving buildings are of 16th/17th century origin, and are built of the local red breccia rubble stone and cob, there are probably earlier medieval antecedents. Designation was deemed important to protect this small fragment of natural landscape and the scatter of early buildings in an otherwise extensive and unimpressive urban setting. There have been recent encroachments on the woodland areas such as those at 14-26 Lammas Lane, and larger ones between Shorton Valley Road, Rhodanthe Road and Barcombe Heights since 1933; but the wholesale parcelling up of the former fields which completely surrounded Shorton have transformed a rural area into an urban one with only the conservation area as its relict.

4 ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES

4.1 LISTED & OTHER KEY BUILDINGS

- 4.1.1 The conservation area has only 2 buildings listed (both grade II) as being of special architectural or historic importance; they are denoted here in bold. **Shorton Manor** has late 16th century or earlier origins, but was altered in the early 19th century and again around 1880; in 1919 it was bought by the Singers of Oldway with land that was later sold off for development. The main block is constructed of the local red breccia rubblestone and has a typical late-medieval cross-passage plan with three single-depth rooms; although a plank-and-muntin oak screen survives the position of the cross-passage is not certain. The earlier fireplace to the central room was discovered with a bread oven opening during earlier renovation. There are both lateral and end stacks of different periods. The earlier 19th century alteration was the rasing of the first floor

height and consequent change in the roof pitch. In about 1880 a three-storey tower with triple round-headed windows, typical of late Italianate Torquay villas, was added; fashionable in town, here it sits squatly and strangely on the earlier building. However, there have been less eclectic and more unfortunate 20th century additions and renovations.

- 4.1.2 **Shorton Farmhouse** and Haddiport Cottage are historically one complex, as can be seen from the tithe map, with their origins in the 16th or 17th century but only the former is listed. Its two-storey T-shape probably originated as a 3-room plan but all internal partitions have been removed, only the lateral stack gives an indication of how the central room was heated; built of local red breccia rubble with some cob the house is now mostly rendered. Entirely gutted in the 20th century only a single 17th century ceiling beam with chamfered scroll-stops survives. All but one of the windows are casements of 1990, the exception being a late 19th century twelve-pane fixed window on the first floor. With so little of its character surviving – there is the bulge of a bread oven at the rear – it was essential that the replacement windows were not UPVc, and the recent re-roofing was in red clay tiles.
- 4.1.3 South of Haddiport Cottage, itself a converted farm building with inserted first floor gabled dormers, is a small group of outbuildings in local red breccia of similar but unknown date – both are present on the 1840 tithe map but little altered.
- 4.1.4 Shorton Cottage with its projecting wings is the only other substantial building in the conservation area; it is set into the slope adjoining Shorton Valley Road. Its origins are based on a pre-1840 building, again present on the tithe map, and incorporates the chimneys of that building, however it mainly dates from the early 20th century with some Arts and Crafts features, such as gabled roof dormers, and timber-framed gables. Roof dormers on the south elevation are jettied out over the windows and have deep-boarded eaves.

4.2 BUILDING MATERIALS

- 4.2.1 Although local red breccia and cob, mostly rendered, are the main building materials, both brick and plain tile are in evidence. The latter replacing the original thatch of Shorton Farm; similarly the thatch of Shorton Manor was replaced by slate, and then by asbestos. Some stone rubble boundary walls, for example those bordering Sleepy Lane, have so little mortar in them that they appear to be drystone; this appears to be a local peculiarity.

4.3 CONDITION of BUILDINGS

- 4.3.1 Most of the historic buildings are in good structural repair, but in some instances they have been subject to restoration using unsympathetic modern materials. Similarly most boundary walls are in a reasonable condition, although some masonry has become dislodged from the ‘drystone’ sections. The inappropriate use of hard mortar on the walls

has caused the rapid erosion of the soft sandstone breccias in some areas, this is most evident near the junction of Lammas Lane and Shorton Road.

5. GREEN LANDSCAPE AND TREES

- 5.1 Much of the conservation area is well-wooded, and includes the mainly deciduous Shorton Woods to the north of the Shorton Valley road where oak, beech and sycamore predominate. Elsewhere, important specimen trees or groups are present: Monterey pines (*pinus radiata*) near the junction of Sleepy Lane and Shorton Road; a tulip-tree (*lireodendron tulipifera*) in the grounds of Shorton Manor; and the Blue cedars (*cedrus atlantica glauca*) to the rear of Shorton Cottage. There are hedgerow English elms (*ulmus procera*) along the border of the conservation area in Lammas Lane, but several have been infected by a recurrence of Dutch Elm disease.

6 THE SETTING AND FEATURES OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

- 6.1 The overwhelming feature of the conservation area is the impact of its presence in an otherwise quite undistinguished part of Paignton, part of the mid-late 20th century sprawl; where the closest undeveloped space is either the woods of the Ocombe Valley to the north, or the formal gardens of Oldway to the south, both over ½km distant. In Shorton the presence of natural woodland cover, and other mature trees including specimens in private grounds engenders a feeling of seclusion, distinct from the otherwise overwhelming urban influence. The natural stone boundary walls, and the hedgerow banks are both also important elements of the historic built environment; its special character is out of all proportion to its 10-acre size.

7 EXTENT OF LOSS, DAMAGE AND INTRUSION

While the tranquility of the rural hamlet remains, little of its authentic agricultural character or cultivation survives. Both listed buildings have lost some of their original character and detail as a result of various phases of alteration and restoration, though one much more so than the other. There is obvious pressure for development along the Lammas Lane frontage where Nos 12 to 26 have encroached upon the historic landscape and disrupted its ancient boundaries.

8 SUMMARY

- 8.1 The conservation area contains an important remnant of early settlement and associated landscape within the extensive late-20th century suburbs of Paignton. Although there are few noteworthy buildings, its main quality derives from a surprising sense of remoteness provided by the steep wooded setting with several individual trees or groups, the narrow

access lanes with little through traffic, and the refuge it provides from the surrounding urban sprawl.

9 CONSERVATION AREA POLICIES

9.1 Conservation Area policies are addressed in the adopted local plan:

Policy BE5 - Development within or affecting a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of that area.

The Policy outlines the Council's strategy for Conservation Areas. It includes issues such as the control of demolition, alterations and extensions, boundary features and design aspects, as well as the control of development in adjacent areas which could impact significantly on the townscape and environmental qualities within Conservation Areas. (The Built Environment 14.9)

further it is recognised that:

Roof materials, chimneys, cornices and mouldings, original windows and shopfronts, railings and boundary walls can all make an important contribution to the character of a Conservation Area. The Council will introduce Article 4(2) Directions to bring such items under normal development control. (The Built Environment 14.56)

9.2 To frame specific policies within the Shorton conservation area:

- (1) All unlisted buildings identified as key buildings or groups of buildings that contribute to the historic built environment should be included within Article 4(2) Directions to control inappropriate changes to the principal elevations.
- (2) Protect from detrimental loss all those key local features of special importance, which need to be safeguarded or enhanced, when determining development proposals within the conservation area; and where in future, Conservation Area, or Article 4 consent may be required.
- (3) In tandem with Local Plan Policies, and other guidance issued by Torbay Council Give due consideration to other key local factors which make up the features of special importance, as set out in Section 6 when determining development proposals within the conservation area.

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Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011 Adopted Version Torbay Council April 2004

Guidance on the management of conservation areas English Heritage August 2005



PHOTOGRAPHS

Shorton Environs

1-4 Shorton is the smallest conservation area in Torbay, hardly 10 acres (4 ha), most of it woodland. It is surrounded on all sides by late 20th century urban development, but within the woods and the lanes the rural atmosphere is palpable:
Shorton Woods (1, 4); Sleepy Lane (2, 3) overleaf.



1.



2.



3.



4.

Houses

- 5 The late medieval/ early post-medieval antecedents of Shorton Manorhouse are somewhat obscured behind the prominent window architraves and late 19th century tower. The tower has none of the ornamentation of true belvederes found elsewhere in central Torquay nor the height.
- 6-9 Shorton Farmhouse is built of local red breccia rubble and some cob but is now mostly rendered. Entirely gutted in the 20th century with all internal partitions removed there is little to show of its historic antecedents; all but one of the windows are casements of 1990. Haddiport Cottage a converted farm building with inserted first floor gabled dormers, lies to the south on the right side of the picture (7). The cottage has added a full width conservatory to its eastern gable wall (8), A small group of outbuildings in local red breccia of unknown date lie further uphill Sleepy Lane and beyond the stream which seaparates them from Haddiport Cottage (9). (N.B 7,8 & 9 images are overleaf.)



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.

- 10-11 Shorton Cottage is in many ways the most attractive building in the conservation area, although based on a pre-1840 building whose chimneys it incorporates it is in the main early 20th century with some Arts and Crafts features, such as gabled roof dormers, and steep timber-framed gables. Roof dormers on the south elevation are jettied out over the windows and have deep-boarded eaves (10). Its aspect from the unnamed lane on the north side is essentially rural and organic (11).
- 12 12 Lammas Lane, one of the eight new houses built along the north side of the lane; such encroachment into the conservation area and Shorton Woods can only detract from the special character of the conservation area especially as the houses are set back in depth from the road, rather than flanking it laterally.



10.



11.



12.

Details

- 13 One of the earlier chimneys incorporated into Shorton Cottage (10, 11).
- 14 The roofscape of Shorton Manorhouse, Haddiport Cottage, and Shorton Farmhouse from Sleepy Lane.
- 15 The stream described as super fluxum in 1567 flowing in the Merepoole near Shorton Cottage.
- 16 Walling in Sleepy Lane.



13.



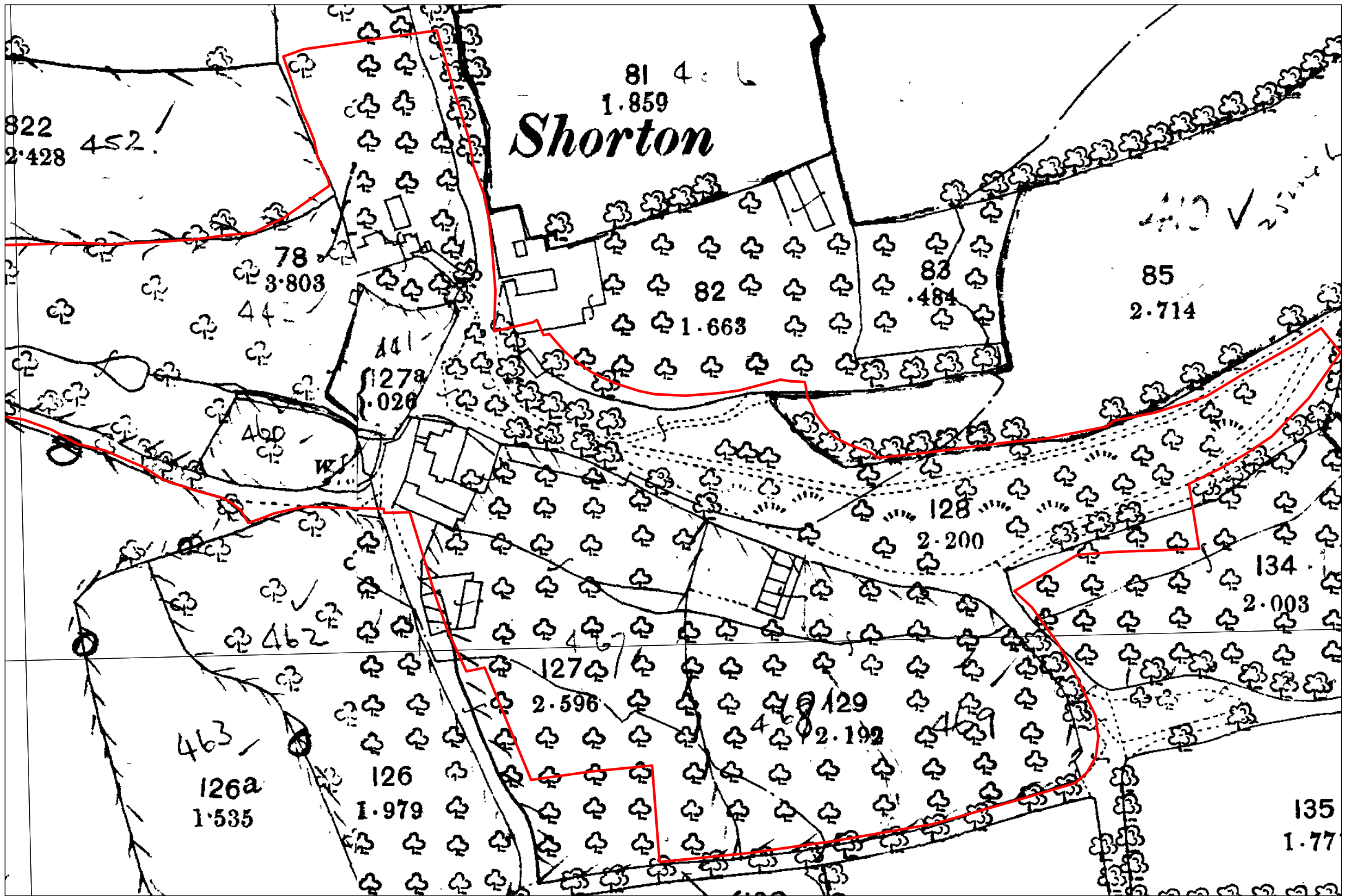
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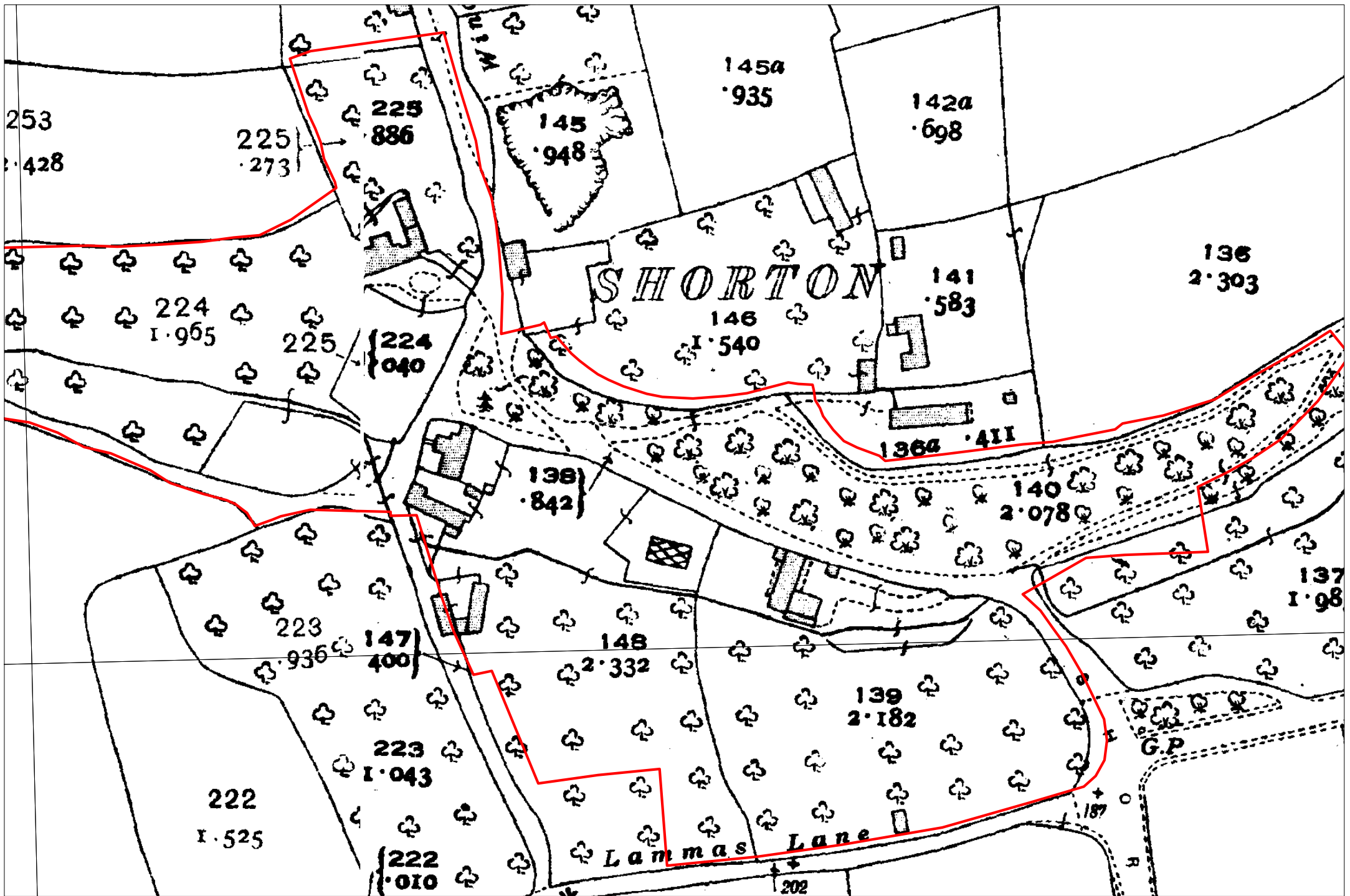


15.



16.





SHORTON CONSERVATION AREA

Number 23 Designated: 25 July 1989

MAP ONE - HISTORIC BUILDINGS

— Conservation Area Boundary

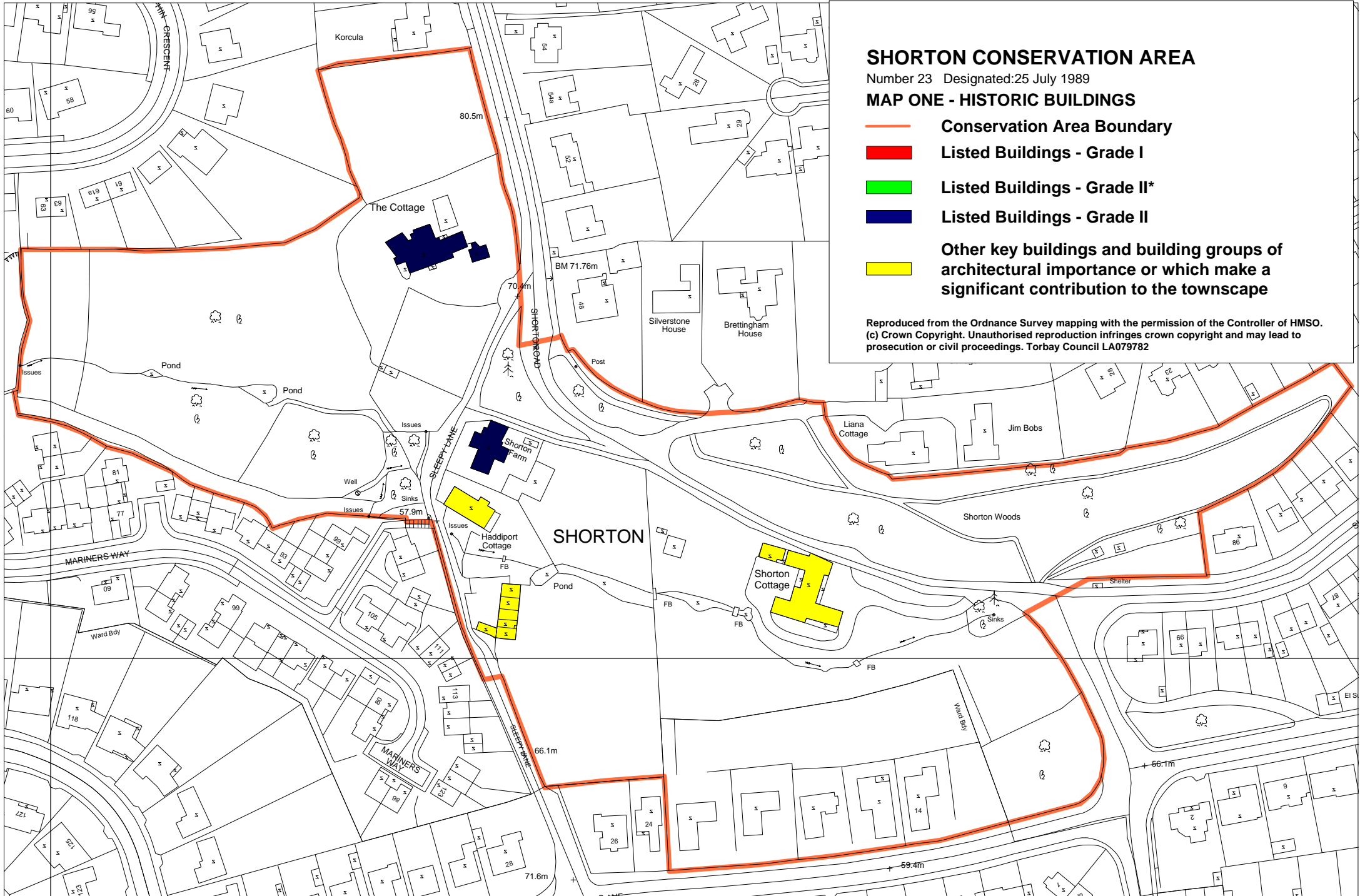
■ Listed Buildings - Grade I

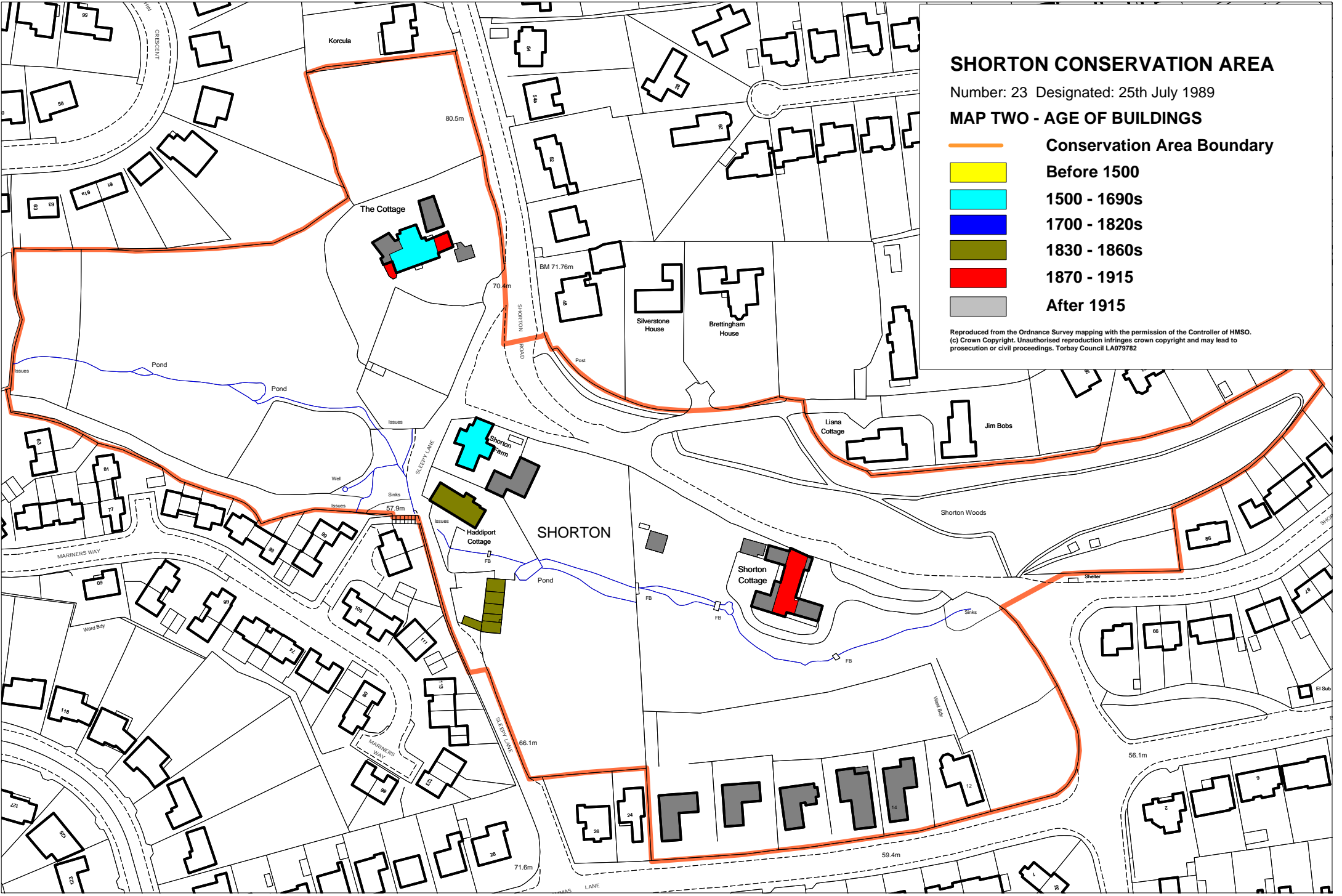
■ Listed Buildings - Grade II*

■ Listed Buildings - Grade II

■ Other key buildings and building groups of architectural importance or which make a significant contribution to the townscape

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SHORTON CONSERVATION AREA

Number: 23 Designated: 25th July 1989

MAP TWO - AGE OF BUILDINGS

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Before 1500
- 1500 - 1690s
- 1700 - 1820s
- 1830 - 1860s
- 1870 - 1915
- After 1915

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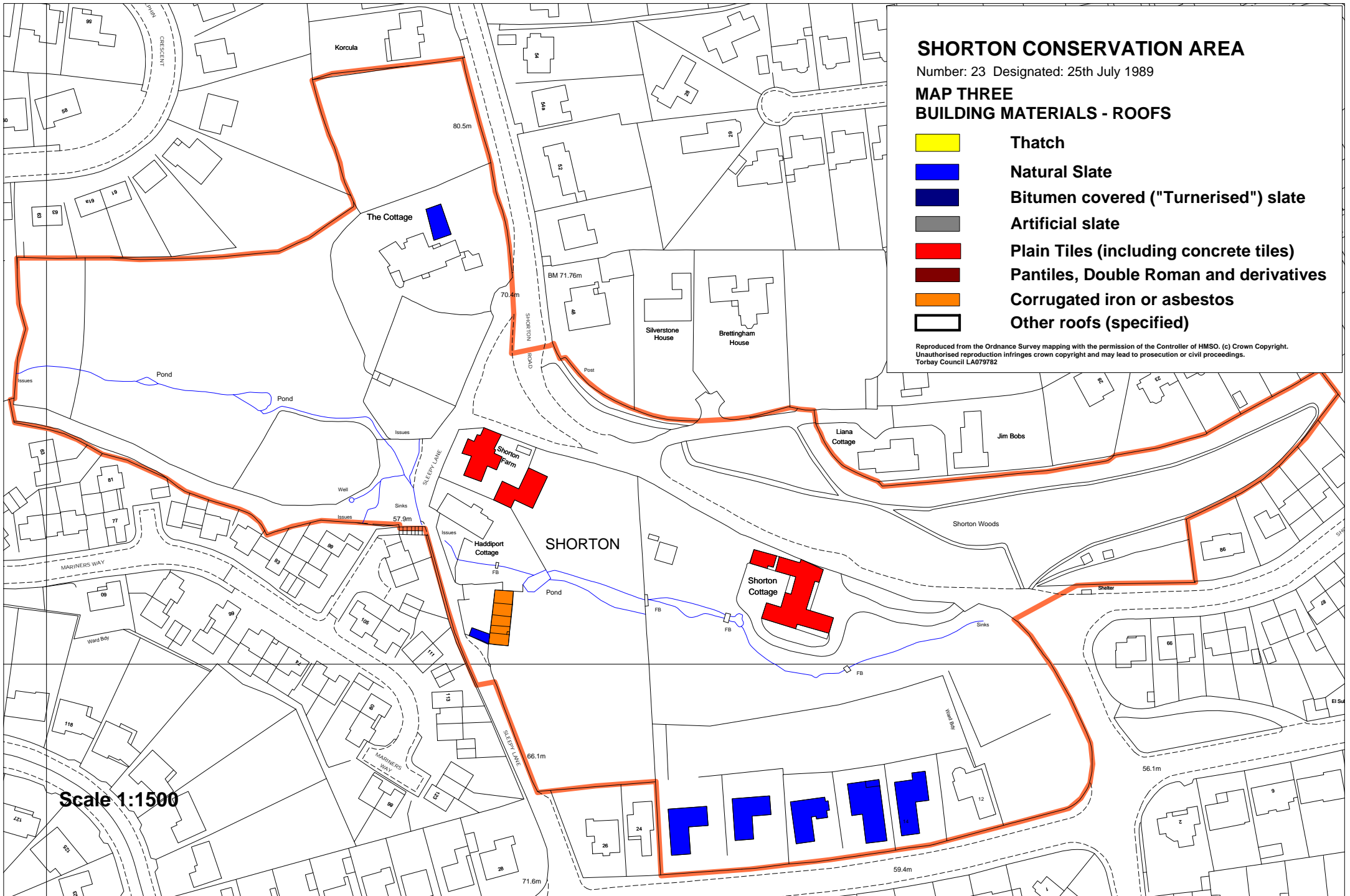
SHORTON CONSERVATION AREA

Number: 23 Designated: 25th July 1989

MAP THREE BUILDING MATERIALS - ROOFS

- Thatch
- Natural Slate
- Bitumen covered ("Turnerised") slate
- Artificial slate
- Plain Tiles (including concrete tiles)
- Pantiles, Double Roman and derivatives
- Corrugated iron or asbestos
- Other roofs (specified)







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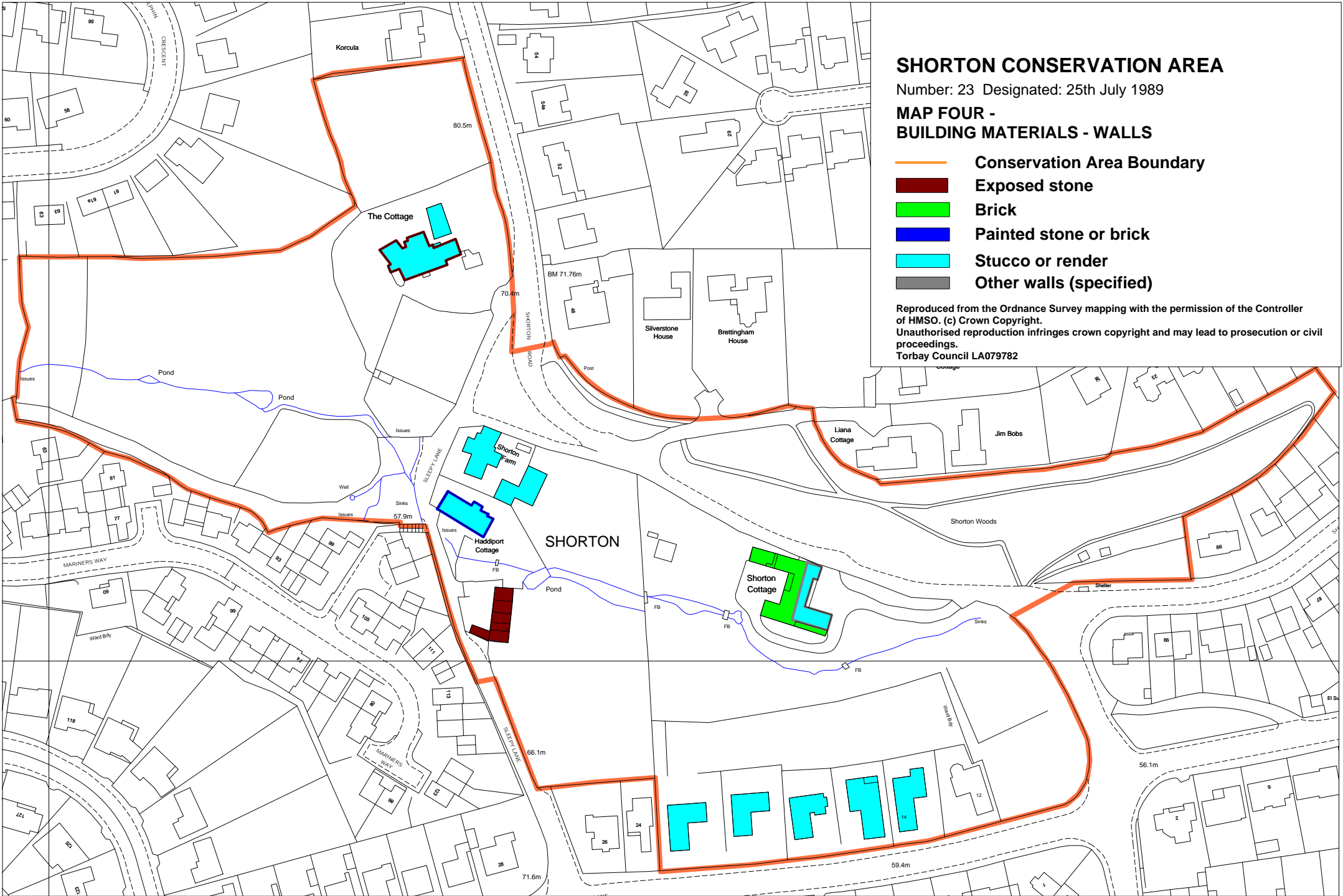
SHORTON CONSERVATION AREA

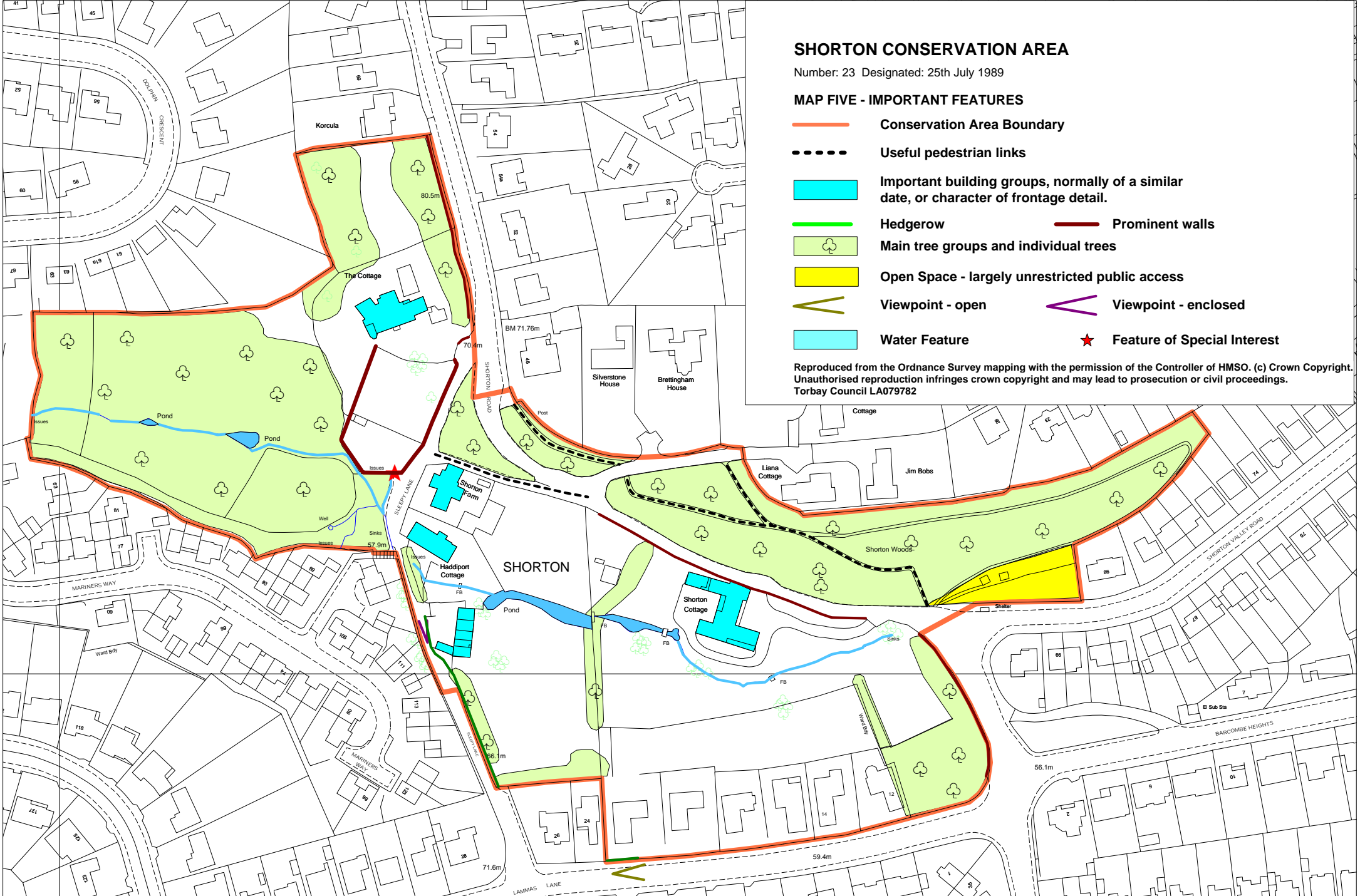
Number: 23 Designated: 25th July 1989

MAP FOUR - BUILDING MATERIALS - WALLS

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Exposed stone
-  Brick
-  Painted stone or brick
-  Stucco or render
-  Other walls (specified)

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SHORTON CONSERVATION AREA

Number: 23 Designated: 25th July 1989

MAP FIVE - IMPORTANT FEATURES

- Conservation Area Boundary
- - - - Useful pedestrian links
- Important building groups, normally of a similar date, or character of frontage detail.
- Hedgerow
- ☛ Main tree groups and individual trees
- Open Space - largely unrestricted public access
- Viewpoint - open
- Viewpoint - enclosed
- Water Feature
- Prominent walls
- ★ Feature of Special Interest

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