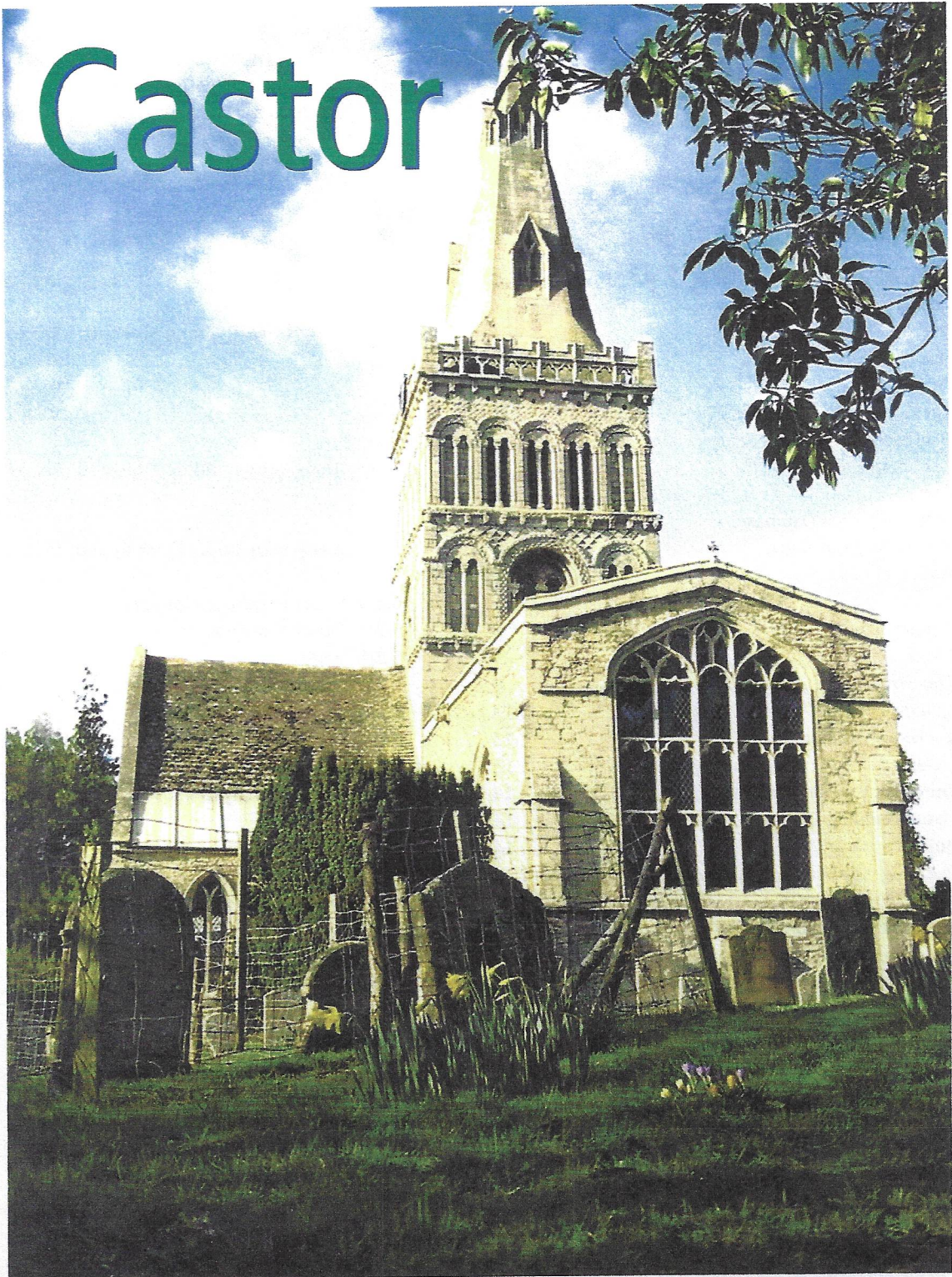


Castor



Built Environment Audit 2002/2004

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This is a Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) audit methodology, for which PECT retains the intellectual property rights. It was developed in association with Richard Donoyou MRICS, MRTPI, Veronica Thorne (Peterborough Civic Society), and Richard Brown (PECT). The Audit survey work was completed by the villagers. Richard Donoyou compiled the final report and produced the Townscape maps.

The contribution of Lin Last (PECT), in typing, producing charts, formatting and checking text and data cannot be overestimated.

Finally, the immense contributions of David Henderson, as leader of the Castor and Ailsworth Design Group/Project Co-ordinator, Carole Humphries, Joan Pickett, William Burke, David Shaw and Stephanie Bradshaw, who were instrumental in galvanising local enthusiasm and participation, ensured high quality research at all stages of the project.

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1.0 Summary

The Audit methodology has been successful in prompting a different way of thinking about the built environment. The surveys have involved a cross section of community interests and age groups, stimulating wider investigation of the buildings, walls and trees, which combine to create Castor's unique townscape.

The data captured has given new insights into the built environment and led to debate based on knowledge rather than conjecture.

The Audit has strongly informed the drafting of the Castor and Ailsworth Village Design Statement and gives a basis of understanding between Peterborough City Council, as the local planning authority and Castor Parish Council and local people.

In replacing intuition with method, the Audit's findings have challenged many long held preconceptions of Castor as, predominantly, a conservation village.

Of the three hundred and twenty primary buildings in Castor, most (two hundred and sixteen or 67%) were built during the last fifty years. Castor is thought of as a stone village and all surviving buildings originating before 1900 are built in local oolitic limestone. However, almost all twentieth century buildings are constructed in modern brick with concrete tiles.

The combination of the pre-twentieth century buildings, stone walls and forest trees planted in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and historic street pattern form the basis of Castor's attractive townscape. In contrast, twentieth century development has made almost no positive contribution to the village's character and appearance. It appears that no new substantial stone walls have been built since 1900, nor is it certain that modern plantings will effectively replace the large forest trees planted two to three hundred years ago and now reaching maturity.

There is some evidence that recent planning policies, reinforced by building conservation grants have been successful in conserving the basic historic fabric of the village. However, the evidence shows that new building makes little concession to traditional building forms, siting or materials and does not reinforce, enhance or continue the high quality built environment, which evolved up to 1900.

If new buildings are to contribute positively to Castor's built environment legacy, fundamental changes are needed to the repetitive and uniform estate-type development which prevailed throughout the twentieth century.

This is the challenge for the twenty first century.

2.0 Project Objectives

2.1 Village Design Statement

The community of Castor wishes to play an active role to protect and conserve its unique village environment. The Countryside Agency's Village Design Statement (VDS) initiative provides a mechanism through which local people can research and prepare plans and proposals for their communities.

Following a VDS workshop organised by the Countryside Agency at the village hall, Castor Parish Council resolved to prepare a 'Joint' Village Design Statement for Castor and the neighbouring village of Ailsworth. This document has, therefore, been prepared in parallel with an Ailsworth Built Environment Audit, led by Ailsworth Parish Council.

2.2 Objective Research

There was a view that planning issues often became contentious because some decisions appeared to be based on matters of opinion rather than established facts. To minimise subjectivity and provide a clear basis for future policy, it was considered that the VDS should, wherever possible, be based upon hard information and data. Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) was requested to consider developing a research methodology which would provide the hard built environment database and at the same time allow a wide spectrum of community interests to be actively involved.

The idea of an Audit was then developed with the prime objective being to produce a statistical picture of the village, which would be of intrinsic value as a historical document and at the same time, provide a sound database for other policies and projects.

Over a 10-year period, PECT has developed particular expertise in local environmental research and auditing with projects such as the Peterborough Natural Environment Audit and Peterborough Energy Audit receiving national recognition. The experience gained in these projects was applied to the built environment and a comprehensive audit methodology devised.

A Local Heritage Initiative grant was awarded to Castor Parish Council to enable the field testing of the new built environment methodology. Peterborough City Council confirmed that the results of the research could be used as the foundation for the Castor VDS.

2.3 A Community Project

Active participation of a wide range of groups and organisations, of varying ages and interests was considered essential. To achieve this, the large and complex task of researching and preparing a comprehensive built audit was broken down into a series of smaller, simpler tasks. Relatively straightforward field survey techniques assisted data capture and standard Excel spreadsheets were used for data recording and subsequently added to the Access database for further analysis.

Almost all communities include some people who have gained ICT skills to manage and manipulate spreadsheet data through their work and education. The computer based system also allowed several people to work and input into one or more survey tasks and for the data and results to be shared through floppy disks, CDs and email.

The survey method does not require assistance from built environment professionals such as town planners, architects or urban designers.

2.4 Measurability and Repeatability

The survey method established a measurable 2003-4 built environment baseline, and allows a subsequent re-survey as a whole or in selected parts so that changes over time can be identified and accurately measured.

2.5 Wider Applicability

Through the testing and refining of the concept of built environment auditing in the village of Castor (along with parallel projects in the villages of Ailsworth and Thorney), it was hoped that a robust and tested methodology would emerge. This could then be made available for use by other communities to help them understand and plan for the future of their towns and villages.

3.0 Working Method

Research methods were devised and field trials conducted to establish four databases:

- The Buildings Database
- Other Features Database
- The Townscape Database
- Other Factors and Influences Databases.

3.1 The Buildings Database

The total number of buildings was counted to establish a population of buildings. The units of this population were based upon Peterborough City Council's properties reference system. Thus, collections of related buildings on the same plot (for example, a house and garage or shop and detached rear store etc.), were taken as one unit. Similarly, buildings which had been separate in the past, but are now amalgamated, for example, two or three cottages converted into one large house, were also taken as a single unit.

This approach was necessary to establish a consistent and workable on-site survey method and a reasonably manageable database. Having established total numbers, the characteristics of the buildings population were recorded by on-site surveys and added to the database. Typical population characteristics included size, type and age, as well as more complex factors unique to the built environment.

The full Buildings Database comprised:

3.1.1 Size

Building floor plan areas (footprints), were recorded under the following categories:

- very small - <50m² footprint area
- small - 51-80m² footprint area (one or two bedrooms)
- medium - 81-110m² footprint area (three bedrooms)
- large - 111-150m² footprint area (four bedrooms)
- very large - >150m² footprint area (> four bedrooms)

After a number of field trials, categories based on domestic properties were selected, firstly, because the surveyors from the local community found it relatively easy to relate property size to bedrooms in comparison with other methods tested. Secondly, since the vast majority of properties are in residential use or are domestic in scale, there is logic in the size to bedroom relationship.

3.1.2 Storey Heights

Initially, it was thought that establishing the height of buildings could readily be related to the number of storeys. Bungalows, obviously, have one storey, but in a typical row of bungalows, some will have had loft conversions with dormer windows inserted, making them 1.5 storeys, even though the roof ridge is of an identical height to an adjoining unconverted property. Equally, a two storey modern house has considerably lower eaves and ridge than a two storey Georgian house with high ceilings and steeply pitched traditional roof.

These differences were resolved by recorders strictly adhering to the number of storeys of accommodation. So, a house or barn with a ground and first floor would be two storey, whilst a house with attic (ground floor, first floor and second floor within roof space) would be recorded as 2.5 storey.

A Buildings Key, with sketches of building types and corresponding storey heights was produced to assist community surveyors.

The categories recorded were:

- 1 - bungalow or single storey shed
- 1.5 - dormer bungalow or cottage with attic dormers within roof space
- 2 - buildings with a ground and first floor but floor to ceiling heights may vary
- 2.5 - buildings of two storeys plus dormer windowed attics within roof space
- 3 - three storeys
- >3 - more than three storeys.

3.1.3 Property Types

- detached
- semi-detached
- terrace
- flat or maisonette
- other

3.1.4 Ages

- <1600
- 1600 – 1700 (seventeenth century)
- 1700 – 1800 (eighteenth century)
- 1800 – 1900 (nineteenth century)
- 1900 – 1925 (twentieth century)
- 1925 – 1950 (twentieth century)
- 1950 – 1975 (twentieth century)
- 1975 – 2000 (twentieth century)
- >2000 (twenty first century)

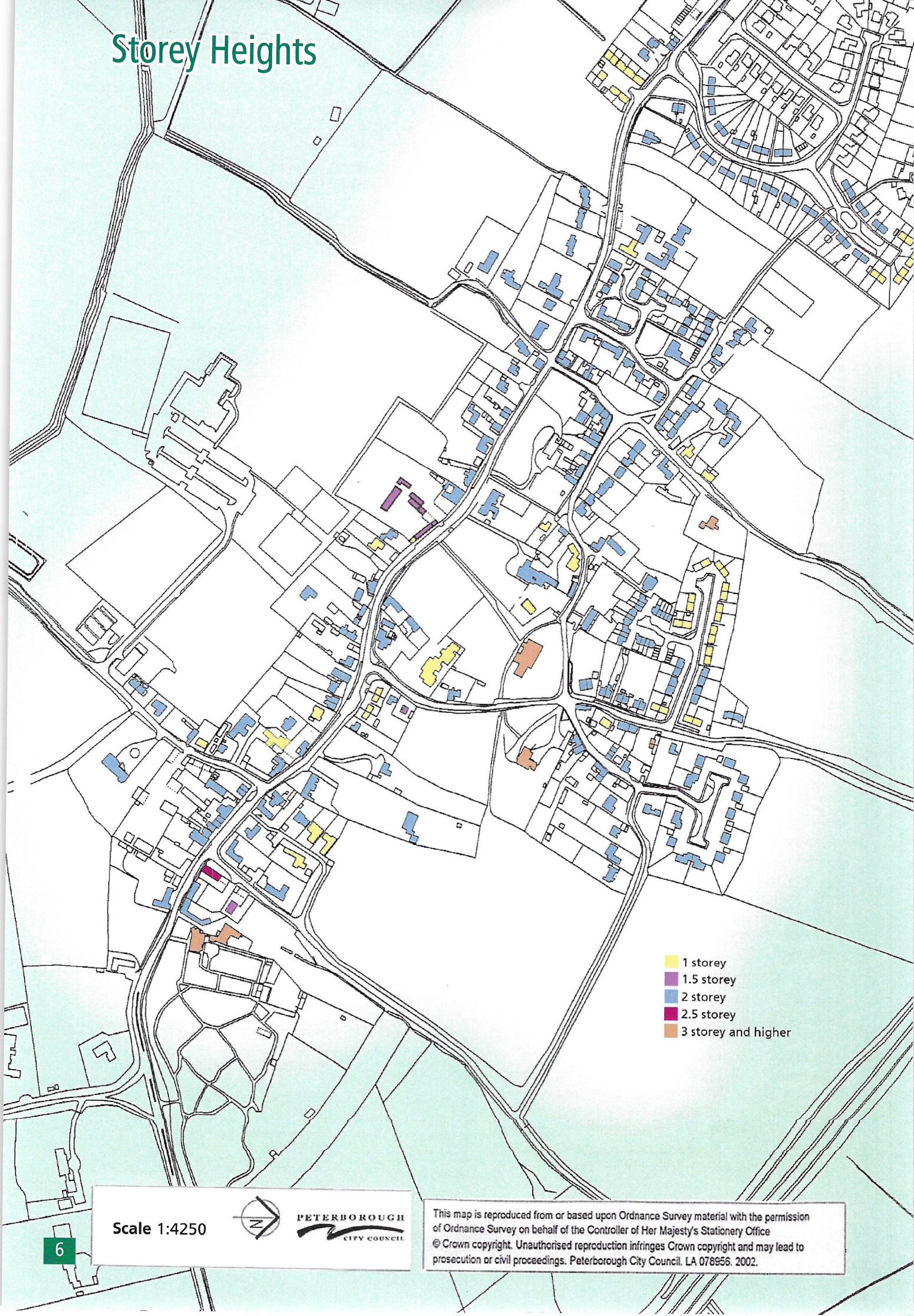
Where old buildings had been converted, the original date of the building was recorded, provided its origins were clear from its overall appearance. Thus, for example, a barn dating from 1659 but sensitively converted to a house in 2002 would be recorded as seventeenth century.

Where buildings have been extended or altered over several centuries, the general outward appearance of the buildings indicated the period recorded.

3.1.5 Wall Materials

- old bricks
- modern bricks
- render
- stone
- artificial stone
- other

Storey Heights



- 1 storey
- 1.5 storey
- 2 storey
- 2.5 storey
- 3 storey and higher

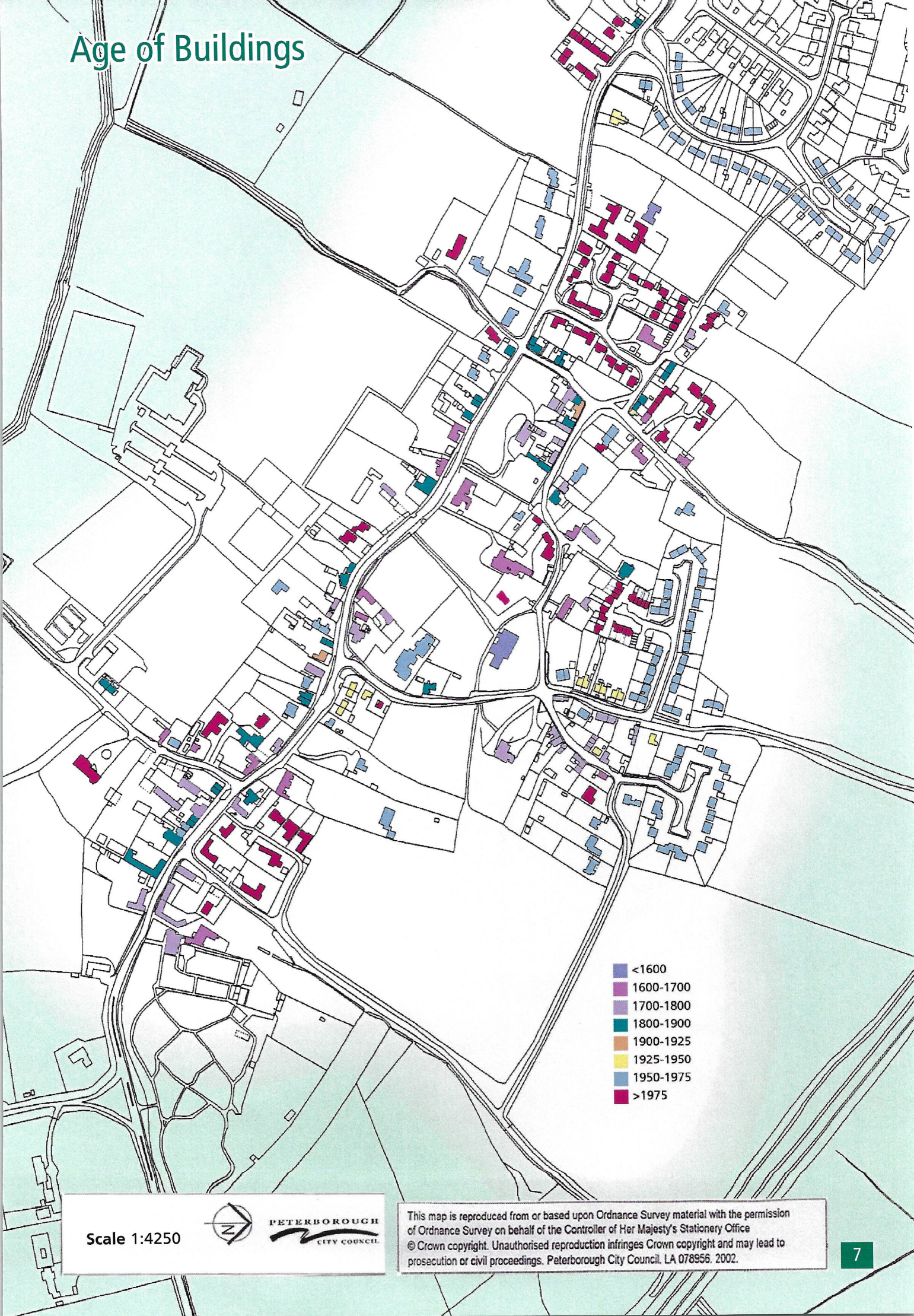
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Age of Buildings



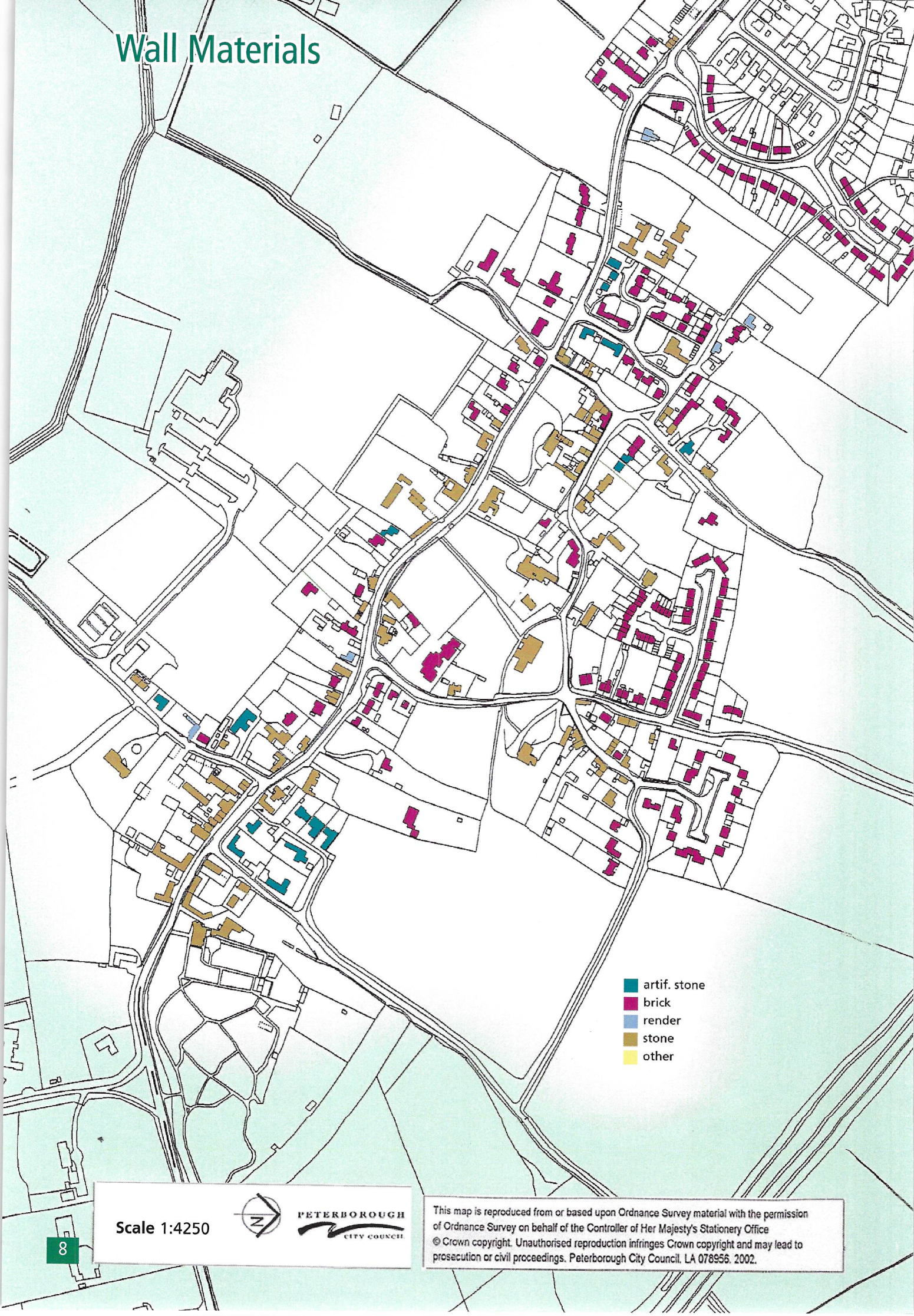
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Wall Materials



- artif. stone
- brick
- render
- stone
- other

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The objective of this survey was to identify old (pre-twentieth century) and new (1900 onwards) building materials. The field trials demonstrated that, with guidance and some practice, the community surveyors could readily identify the differences between old, locally made stock bricks and mass produced wire cut or sandfaced bricks. However, distinguishing between modern hand-made type bricks and the old bricks they were chosen to match, presented great difficulties.

Similar problems were encountered with the latest artificial stones, which convincingly replicate natural stone. Distinguishing between modern and traditional rendering was also difficult at times.

A colour photographic materials key proved of some help.

3.1.6 Roof Materials

Collyweston slate

Welsh slate

old pantiles

thatch

Welsh slate replica

red pantile replica

other modern tiles

Modern replications of Collyweston and Welsh slates and concrete and clay pantiles, presented similar difficulties to walling materials in defining "old" and "modern" materials.

3.1.7 Uses

A3 public houses, cafés, car salesrooms, petrol stations, launderettes

C2 residential schools, colleges, hospitals, nursing homes

C3 residential

D1 church, church hall, health centres, day nurseries

D2 cultural, sports and leisure facilities

police station/house

agriculture

The use recording and analysis was based on the Town and Country Planning Uses Classes Order.

3.2 Other Features Databases

3.2.1 Walls (Freestanding)

The character and appearance of Castor is strongly influenced by walls, built of local coursed stone. Some walls are known to originate from Roman times and are therefore of historic and townscape importance.

Walls were recorded on a property by property basis. However, it was quickly found that many walls span several property boundaries, therefore subsequent analysis on a property by property basis may be misleading.

The key point of the research was to establish the significance of walls as part of the street scene. The analysis of walls and townscape thus represents the most important area of research.

Research areas were:

3.2.2 Walls

height (<1m, 1m-2m, >2m)

materials (stone, brick, other)

3.2.3 Fences

A key to fence types was prepared. Only fences in the public view were included in the survey, thus side and rear garden fences were excluded unless they separated private spaces from a public road, footpath etc.

Fences height (<1m, 1m-2m)

type (close boarded, palisade, larch lap, picket, hit & miss)

3.2.4 Hedges

Hedges were surveyed using the same assumptions as for fences. A photo key sheet illustrated the following categories:

height (<1m, 1m-2m, >2m)

type (native, ornamental, leylandii)

3.2.5 Trees

Only trees affecting the street scene were included in the survey; these may include trees in front gardens or side gardens adjacent to roads, pavements and footpaths. A species identification chart including common native species (in leaf) was prepared and surveys undertaken on the following:

Trees height (<3m, 3m-8m, >8m)

type (non-native, native)

Heights could be gauged as follows:

<3m - about half way up the wall of a modern two storey house (first floor level)

3m-8m - between the first floor and roof ridge of a modern two storey house

>8m - the ridgelines of modern houses.

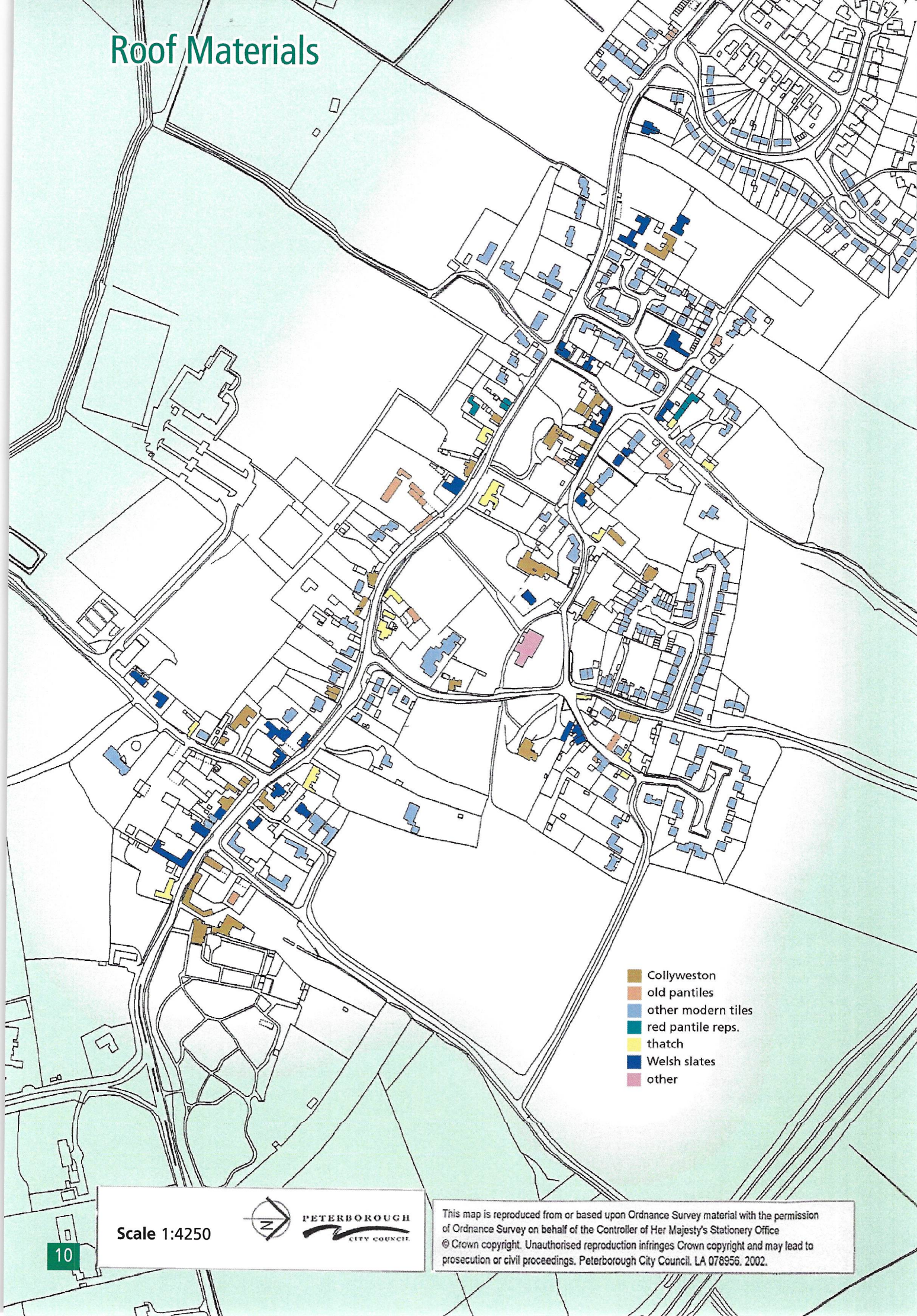
Modern two storey houses were taken as a height barometer because at least one is likely to be visible in all village streets.

3.3 The Townscape Assessment

The Buildings and Other Features Databases are *quantitative* assessments of Castor's built environment. The purpose of the Townscape Assessment is to provide a *qualitative* assessment. The principles of auditing demand a process, which is comprehensive, repeatable, measurable and objective. The project as funded under the Local Heritage Initiative, requires community participation and local ownership.

To ensure comprehensiveness, the survey considered townscape as spaces, enclosing elements and details as follows.

Roof Materials



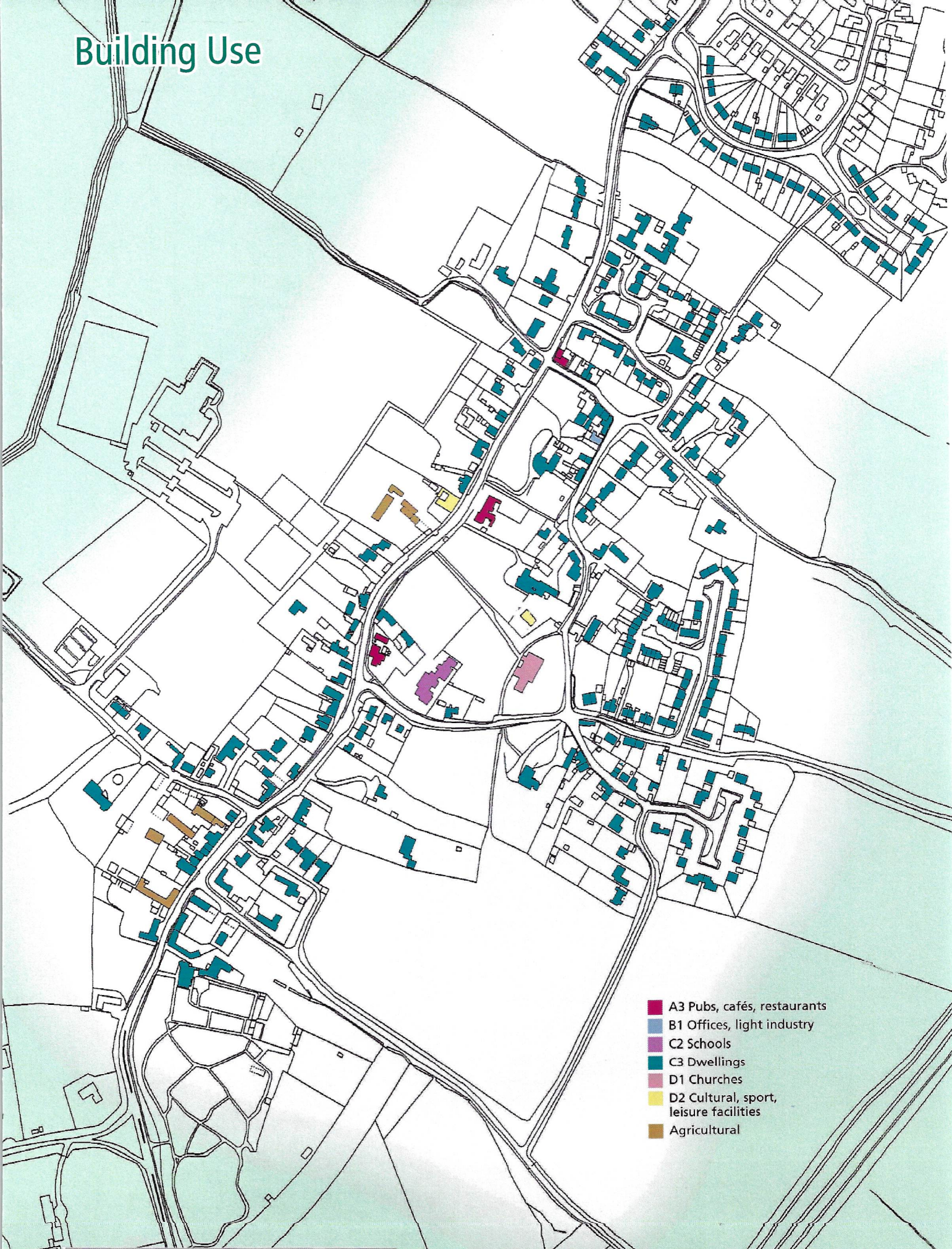
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Building Use



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The Townscape Assessment



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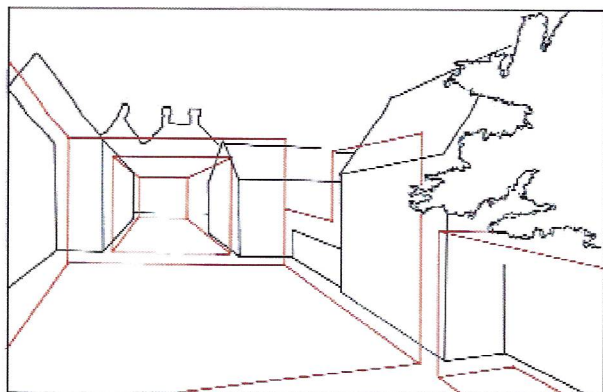
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3.3.1 Spaces

These are three-dimensional areas enclosed by the ground, buildings, trees, fences, etc. It is the size and arrangement of these spaces which make up the character of the area.



Each of the main components of townscape was further broken down as follows:

Spaces

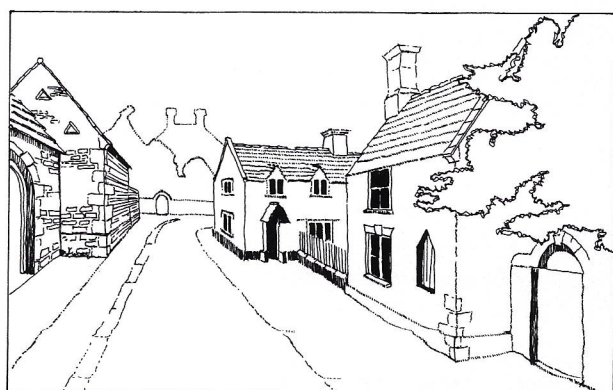
- Defined by Vertical enclosure - for example overhanging trees
- Static enclosure - walls, trees, buildings etc making strongly square shaped spaces
- Dynamic enclosure - walls, trees, buildings etc. making a strongly defined linear streetscape
- Changes in level - steps, retaining walls or even steep hills which strongly demarcate one definable space in a street scene from another
- Views and Vistas - Prominent features such as a major tree or church tower, or an alignment of buildings, walls, trees etc, which strongly draw the eye from one space to another.

The amount of enclosure is factually defined in the Buildings and Other Features assessments through storey height and tree, wall and hedge height surveys.

3.3.2 Enclosing Elements

These are the sides of the enclosed space, e.g. buildings, trees, walls, hedges etc.

Enclosing Elements were summarised as:



- Buildings - of any size, type or age, make a very positive contribution to the street scene or which clearly detract from it.
- Walls - stone, brick, block or other masonry walls.
- Fences/Railings -
- Trees -
- Other -

3.3.3 Details

These are the finer parts of the scene, e.g. architectural make-up, local building styles, materials, etc., which may brighten and enliven an area, giving it an individual identity, or an unsightly advertisement or road sign, which may spoil a street scene.



- Architectural - striking features of buildings such as decorative chimneys, or moulded door case, or alterations or features, which are obviously out of place in the street scene.
- Street furniture - street lights, bollards, benches etc.
- Advertisements - shop fronts, illuminated and non-illuminated projecting signs etc.
- Floorscape - tarmac, paving, cobbles or specially designed surfaces around trees or steps etc.
- Other -

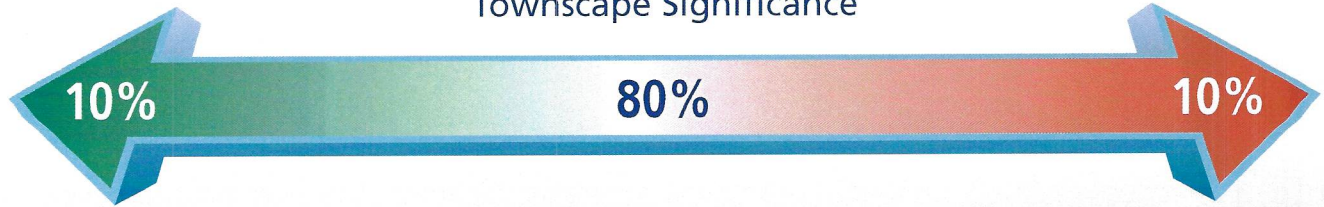
A more detailed explanation of all these components can be found in the Peterborough Built Environment Survey Pack, available from Peterborough Environment City Trust.

To ensure comprehensiveness, surveyors stopped in every street at approximately fifty metre intervals. At each stop they looked in front, behind and to both sides and systematically recorded the spaces, enclosing elements and details in turn, using the symbols supplied in the Pack.

To ensure objectivity, the only features that were recorded were those that *very obviously, positively* contributed to the street scene or *clearly detracted* from the street scene. Surveyors undertook the survey in pairs or threes. At each stopping point, the surveyors were required to ask themselves the question: "Would nine out of ten people conclude that this building, tree, wall, advert etc., *positively* contributes to Castor's built environment, or *clearly* detracts from it?" If all surveyors reached agreement, a symbol (red for negative features,

Base Data Sheet – Key to Townscape Symbols

Townscape Significance



Positive Townscape

SPACES

Vertical Enclosure	
Static Enclosure	
Dynamic Enclosure	
Changes in Level	
Views and Vistas	

ENCLOSING ELEMENTS

Buildings	
Walls	
Fences and Railings	
Trees	
Hedges	
Other	

Negative Townscape

DETAILS

Architectural	*
Street Furniture	X
Advertisements	A
Floorscape	////
Other	◇

green for positive) was drawn on an ordnance survey base. If surveyors were unsure, or could not reach agreement, NO NOTATION was made.

To ensure accuracy, two or three groups were asked to independently survey the same streets and subsequently compare their results. A rate of 80% consistency between the groups was considered acceptable. Ideally, the final database for spaces, enclosing elements and details would be on average taken from the results of two or three survey groups.

3.4 Other Factors and Influences

It is acknowledged that institutional factors may have considerable effects on the built environment. Some, such as general planning policies relating to design, siting or materials were found to be very difficult to quantify and measure.

Establishing hard information in other areas proved possible but required considerable research. The datasets that were assembled are given below.

3.4.1 Listed Building Grants

Two grant schemes have operated in Castor over the last fifteen years. These are the Collyweston Slating Scheme, jointly run by English Heritage and Peterborough City Council and the Listed Building Grant Scheme, financed solely by Peterborough City Council.

Comparison of the condition of buildings with data on availability and distribution of grants may help gauge the effectiveness of grants for the repair of historic buildings in maintaining the overall character and appearance of Castor.

Information on grants is a matter of public record.

However, it was considered that making public the amount of grant made available to specific properties, and hence owners, did not advance the analysis and could undermine community support for the overall project. Therefore, all information is presented in a general format which does not identify grants to properties.

3.4.2 Building Status

The level of protection and deeper consideration of alterations and extensions afforded by listed building status, whether Grade I, II* or II and through Article 4 Directions, was examined in conjunction with the Townscape and Buildings databases.

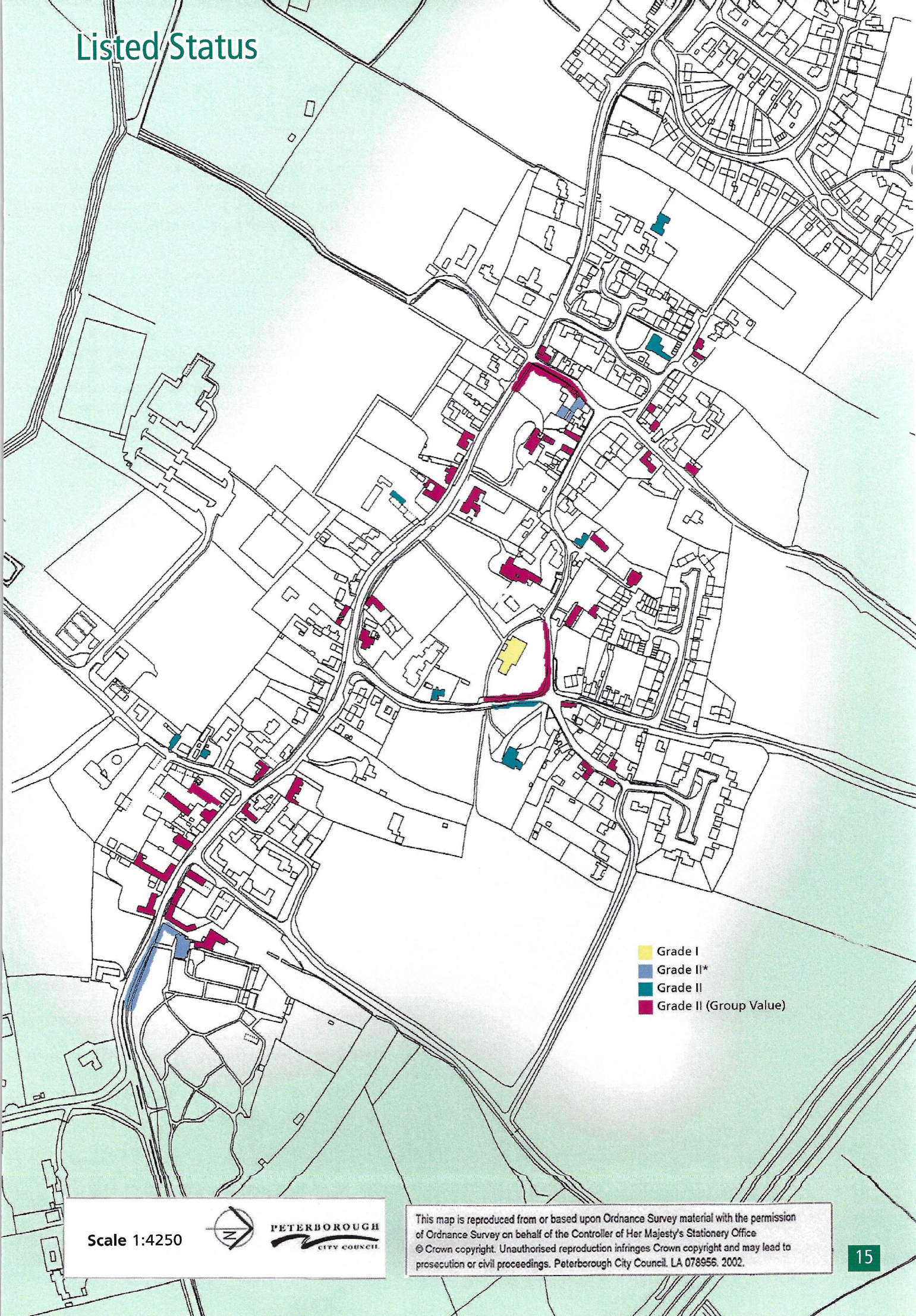
3.4.3 Planning Applications/Listed Building Consents

Analysis of the number, type, date and decision of planning applications and listed building consents would give some indication of the development pressures on the village. A deeper understanding of these processes would assist in formulating policies, through, for example, Village Design Statements to better respond to development pressures.

Analysis of the number, types and decisions on applications for planning and listed building consents, submitted since 1971 was undertaken. However, the number of applications was far greater than anticipated. The types of application, for new buildings, alterations, extensions, demolition etc., were also more complex than originally thought.

Therefore, the analysis was confined to the number of applications approved and refused in 10-year periods. This was a major data collection task but, even with the basic analysis undertaken, the results were significant.

Listed Status



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4.0 Summary of Findings

The table below presents a summary of the characteristics of Castor's buildings.

Total Number of Buildings Surveyed in Castor: 320

NUMBER OF BUILDINGS:

By Age:	<1600	2	1900-1925	4
	1600-1700	23	1925-1950	15
	1700-1800	32	1950-1975	123
	1800-1900	28	>1975	93
By Size:	small	89	very large	17
	medium	121	other	1
	large	92		
By Type:	detached	154	semi-detached	121
	terrace	44	other	1
By Storey Height:	1	54	3	6
	1.5	3	>3	1
	2	253	other	1
	2.5	2		
By Condition:	good	314	other	1
	fair	5		
By Wall Materials:	artificial stone	19	stone	89
	brick	204	other	1
	render	6		
By Roof Materials:	Collyweston slate	33	thatch	13
	old pantiles	10	Welsh slate replica	5
	other modern tiles	224	Welsh slate	27
	red pantile replica	7	other	1
By Use:	A3	3	C3	309
	B1	1	D1	1
	C1	2	D2	1
	C2	1	other	2
By Listed Status:	Grade I	1	Grade II*	2
	Grade II	9	Non-listed	272
	Grade II			
	(Group Value)	32		

4.1 Buildings

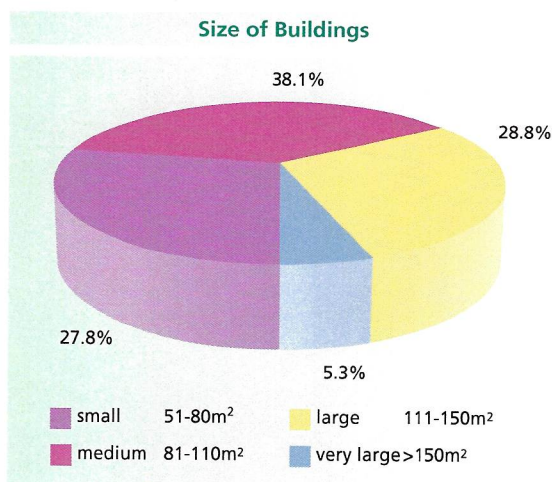
4.1.1 The Building Population

The total number of buildings, that is buildings individually identified on Peterborough City Council's property register, numbers three hundred and twenty. This figure includes buildings which, whilst under one ownership, for example in a farmyard group, can clearly be taken as individual buildings in their own right.

Structures such as garages, sheds etc., which are clearly associated with a main building, are not included in this total. It can readily be argued that these secondary structures can have a profound effect on the character and appearance of villages. For this reason, the townscape survey includes all buildings and structures. However, it was found that the level of complexity posed through analysis of the three hundred and twenty primary structures posed a considerable challenge. The additional work required through the inclusion of several hundred secondary buildings was not considered to add greatly to the overall levels of understanding of the village or audit process. They are, therefore, not included in this analysis.

4.1.2 Building Size

Total Number of Buildings – 320

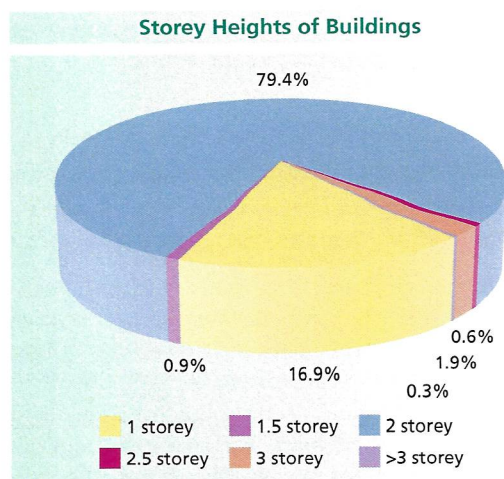


Over a third (38%) of all buildings are medium sized (with three bedrooms or equivalent), 29% of properties are large and a further 5% are very large. The remaining 28% of buildings are small, (having one or two bedrooms), with a ground floor footprint of 51-80m².

Modern estates give uniformly sized houses, medium and small, whilst the historic core has a varied distribution of sizes with large and very large buildings lying on or set back from the main village street. The buildings are grouped close to the core or, in the case of Village Farm and Castor House, positioned respectively at the west and east entrances to the historic village.

4.1.3 Storey Heights

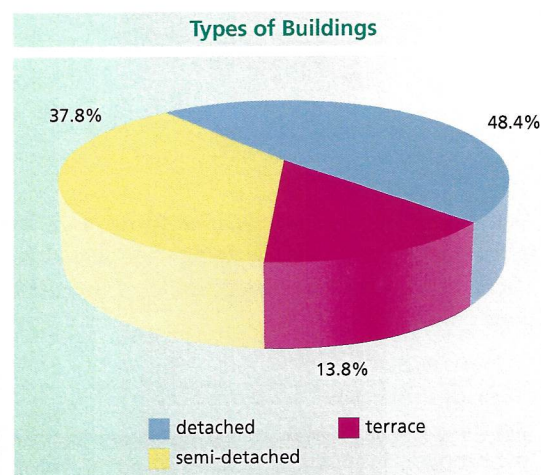
Total Number of Buildings - 320



The great majority of buildings (79%), have two storeys. This basic categorisation disguises the fact that two storey buildings from different periods have different room heights and hence verge levels, varying plan depths, roof pitches and ridgelines. There is, therefore, significant variation within this category, at least for buildings pre-dating the introduction of the Building Regulations and standardisation of floor to ceiling heights.

4.1.4 Property Types

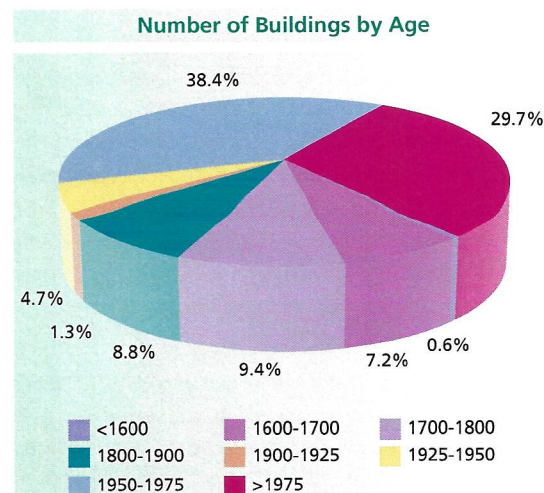
Total Number of Buildings - 320



Almost half the village's buildings are detached. There are two cottage terraces in Peterborough Road and Allotment Lane and modern terraces around St Kyneburgha Close. The semi-detached properties are almost all as a result of twentieth century estate developments in Sylvester Road and Benams Close, as is clearly illustrated on the map.

4.1.5 Ages of Buildings

Total Number of Buildings - 320



The majority of buildings in Castor date from the modern era, with a total of two hundred and thirty nine built in the twentieth century, two hundred and twenty of these from 1950-2000.

A total of eighty properties date from <1600-1900. Of these, a significant number (twenty four) date from 1600-1700 and twenty nine from between 1700 and 1800.

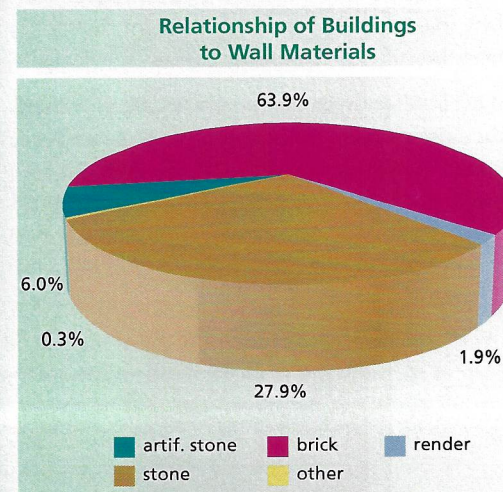
Between 1900 and 1950, very few buildings were erected.

The map demonstrates a clear concentration of pre-twentieth century buildings in the village centre with a linear historic distribution along Peterborough Road. The period 1700-1800 is well represented on Church Hill and High Street.

The map also graphically illustrates the major expansion during 1950-1975 when the Sylvester Road, Thorolds Way, Benams Close and Samworths Close estates were constructed. In contrast, the distribution of properties constructed between 1975 and 2000 is more patchy, representing housing infill, with barn conversions as well as estate-type development.

4.1.6 Wall Materials

Total Number of Buildings - 320



Although modern brick buildings are most numerous, over a quarter of all the buildings in Castor (28%) are built in stone

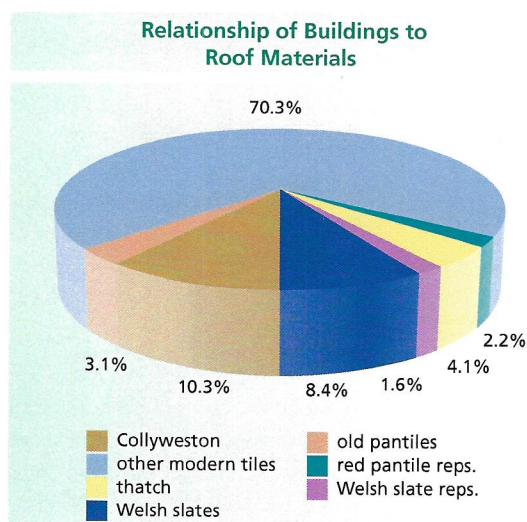
When wall materials are mapped it becomes easier to understand the character of the village, with the core and Peterborough Road dominated by stone buildings and the brick buildings generally situated on the settlement edges. There are very few rendered properties in the village. Numbers 52-54 Peterborough Road and 14 Allotment Lane are examples. Old brick buildings, similarly, are rare in the village, which is not surprising given the plentiful supply of stone throughout its history.

Artificial stone buildings occur in locations where it has been thought important to blend with natural stone in surrounding buildings, and in some cases where older properties have been renovated or converted.

The majority of the modern brick buildings are to be found in the modern estates of Samworths Close, Sylvester Road, Thorolds Way and Benams Close.

4.1.7 Roof Materials

Total Number of Buildings – 320



In total, seventy four buildings are roofed with traditional materials, eight with replicas and two hundred and twenty with modern tiles. Traditional roofing materials (in total), account for nearly a quarter of the total roofing materials within the village.

The distribution map demonstrates the close and predictable correlation between wall materials and roof materials, the stone buildings being roofed mostly with traditional materials. Buildings roofed with traditional materials follow the age distribution pattern, along Peterborough Road and the Church Hill, High Street core.

Welsh slate was probably introduced as a result of the coming of the railways from 1850-60 and the village's closeness to the old Peterborough/Northampton line.

As with wall materials, however, it is the presence of modern roofing materials that numerically dominates the village. Modern tiles are used extensively on the modern estates on the village edges and even on small infill developments nearer the centre.

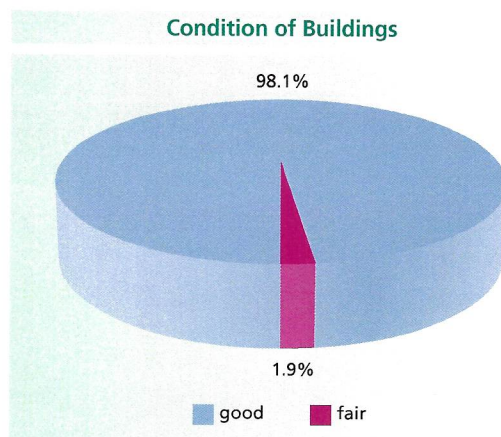
4.1.8 Use of Buildings

Castor is almost exclusively a residential village, with very little property within the village envelope being used primarily for business purposes. (Businesses operated from home are categorised as residential).

Buildings with uses other than residential, nearly all lie along Peterborough Road. Three are public houses, one is a guesthouse and there are two groups of farm buildings still in agricultural use. The only other significant buildings used for other than residential purposes are the church, the village hall and the school. An office occupies the Old Chapel building at 4 Church Hill.

4.1.9 Condition of Buildings

Total Number of Buildings – 320



As the chart clearly shows, the majority of the buildings in the village are classed as being in good condition. There are no buildings classed as being in a poor or very poor condition.

4.2 Other Features

4.2.1 Overall Findings

The three hundred and twenty buildings include seventy five property boundaries defined by stone walls, fifty three by fences and eighty four by hedge boundaries. Some properties have one boundary of stone, whilst a hedge forms another: others have boundaries made up of a wall or fence with a hedge behind. The basic statistics are set out in the table below.

Interrogation of this data has been restricted to fairly straightforward analysis.

Nonetheless, some telling conclusions can be drawn. A greater depth of analysis on the geographic distribution and visual importance of trees, hedges, walls and fences is contained in the Townscape sections.

WALL ANALYSIS: Total nos. of properties in Castor with wall boundaries: 75

Wall Heights	<1m	26	75
	1m-2m	46	
	>2m	3	
Wall Materials	stone	60	75
	brick	15	

FENCE ANALYSIS: Total nos. of properties in Castor with fence boundaries: 53

Fence Heights	<1m	16	53
	1m-2m	37	
	>2m	0	
Fence Types	vertical close boarded	7	53
	palisade	13	
	larch lap	13	
	hit & miss	1	
	other	19	

HEDGE ANALYSIS: Total nos. of properties in Castor with hedge boundaries: 84

Hedge Heights	<1m	17	84
	1m-2m	57	
	>2m	10	
Hedge Types	leylandii	12	84
	formal garden	29	
	informal garden	7	
	formal native	27	
	informal native	9	84
	leylandii >2m	4	
	informal/formal native >2m	6	

TREE ANALYSIS

Heights	Types		subtotals
	native	non-native	
<3m	50	73	123
3m-8m	159	99	258
>8m	93	62	155
sub totals	302	234	
Total			536

4.2.2 Walls

A total of seventy five properties have boundary walls in local coursed limestone. Most of these, 61%, are from 1m-2m high. Stone walls, therefore, make a very significant contribution to Castor's townscape. The distribution of walls is confined to the historic village,

no new walls having been built or old walls retained in the twentieth century housing estates. However, this general analysis does not reveal the full picture. Many walls are quite short, punctuated by house access drives. Other properties have long boundary walls and these have a stronger visual impact. The walls to Castor House and The Old Rectory are both over 3m high, 80m and 300m long respectively and are hugely influential on the townscape. Similarly, the extensive stone walls, (approximately 1.75m high), surrounding St Kyneburgha's Church and The Cedars, (the latter backed by mature tree belts), are irreplaceable components in Castor's historic character and appearance.

4.2.3 Fences

Fences demarcate fifty three property boundaries. Most, 70%, are from 1m-2m high. There is no dominant type but the "other" category makes up 36% of all recorded fences and may warrant further investigation and refinement.

4.2.4 Hedges

Numerically, there are more hedged property boundaries (eighty four), than wall boundaries (seventy five). Most hedges are 1m-2m high garden hedges or well clipped hedges of native species such as hawthorn, hornbeam etc. However, this analysis does not reveal firstly, that most hedges are relatively short in length and secondly, some significant street scenes include a hedge growing behind a stone wall or fence. The combination of walls and hedges is particularly influential on Church Hill.

The townscape analysis shows that the size and year round permanence of stone walls exert a greater influence than hedges on the overall appearance of Castor.

4.2.5 Trees

A total of five hundred and thirty six trees were recorded from public viewpoints within the Castor village envelope. Others may exist in rear gardens, which are not visible from streets or footpaths.

There are only a handful of trees within public open spaces, such as on the roadside verges and on the village green. Most of these are recently planted and immature or semi-mature specimens. The overwhelming majority of the trees, which influence Castor's character and appearance are, therefore, in private gardens. More than half (56%) of the trees recorded are of native species and almost a third of these are mature specimens over 8m in height, 50% are smaller species or semi-mature trees and 16% are saplings below 3m in height.

About 44% of all trees are non-native and over a quarter of these (25%), are over 8m in height. These include magnificent cedars, evergreen oaks and other ornamental species planted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the grounds of the larger houses, and twentieth century leylandii.

The relatively higher proportion of trees in the <3m and

3m-8m height categories, (30% and 42% of non-natives; 13% and 18% of all trees), represents the widening variety of smaller ornamental trees now favoured for garden and street planting.

4.3 Townscape

4.3.1 General Evaluation

The table below demonstrates that the townscape of Castor is overwhelmingly positive. However, the map shows that the distribution of positive elements is uneven, with the twentieth century estates of Samworths Close, Sylvester Road and Farm View making a minimal contribution to the character and appearance of the village.

ANALYSIS OF TOWNSCAPE EVALUATIONS

Townscape elements	Key	Positive Contributions	Negative Contributions
SPACES			
Vertical Enclosure		7	–
Static Enclosure		17	1
Dynamic Enclosure		43	–
Changes in Level		9	–
Views and Vistas		8	2
Sub Total		84	3
ENCLOSING ELEMENTS			
Buildings		68	3
Walls		35	1
Fences and Railings		1	6
Trees		52	–
Hedges		13	–
Other		–	–
Sub Total		169	10
DETAILS			
Architectural	*	5	3
Street Furniture		1	7
Advertisements	A	2	–
Floorscape		2	3
Other		–	1
Sub Total		10	14
TOTALS		263	27

4.3.2 Spaces

The spaces notations indicate a townscape of strong dynamic spaces which typify historic street patterns where buildings and other enclosing elements are close to the pavement edge. However, both the principal historic thoroughfares, Peterborough Road and Church Hill/High Street, comprise a series of well enclosed dynamic spaces, periodically interspersed with more subtle static spaces.

A description of a walk along Church Hill from The Green to the Stocks Hill junction illustrates these spatial forms.

The Green is a strongly static space, well enclosed by walls and buildings. On entering Church Hill, the street is immediately squeezed into a corridor defined by the former Methodist Chapel and adjoining buildings on the south pavement edge and the trees in the front garden of number 5. This dynamic enclosure is reinforced by the outbuildings and wall to Durobrivae House. At the elbow in the road, the widening space is contained by number 14 and the wall to the south and hedge and wall to the north. These create a small square or static space.

On progressing north, up the hill, the walls to numbers 11 and 18 funnel the view. However, on reaching the façade of number 11, the space opens out into a small square contained by number 11 and a garage, hedge and high bank on the north side, and to the south by a stone wall.

Progressing again up the hill, these elements converge, narrowing the road to form strongly dynamic space. The north entrance to St Kyneburgha's Church produces a further transition from dynamic to static, whereupon the combination of stone walls to the south and steep bank to the north, re-define a strongly linear space. The Stocks Hill crossroads form a further static space.

The combinations of walls and building façades on the pavement edge, open spaces and buildings at right angles to the pavement produce similar although less marked transitions from dynamic to static to dynamic spaces in Peterborough Road.

Changes in level formed by the steep valley side location of Castor and high banks to partially sunken roads are significant, especially in a district renowned for flat landscapes. The hill top setting of St Kyneburgha's Church provides an exceptionally strong vista, drawing the eye across the churchyard and adjoining green spaces to give a series of very positive views from several directions.

4.3.3 Enclosing Elements

Sixty eight or 21% of all buildings make a very positive contribution to Castor's townscape. Walls are also a strongly positive component in all historic streets but are not present in the twentieth century estates.

Trees are also a powerful influence on the character of the village. Whilst accurately recording two or three individual trees presented no difficulties, the sheer number of trees in locations including the grounds of The Cedars and The Elms could not readily be accurately estimated.

The townscape survey, therefore, records the visual influence of these as tree belts; wherever reasonably possible, individual trees have been recorded.

Hedges most influence townscape in the very narrow streets of Church Hill and High Street where, in combination with the buildings, they give a strong and continuous sense of enclosure.

4.3.4 Details

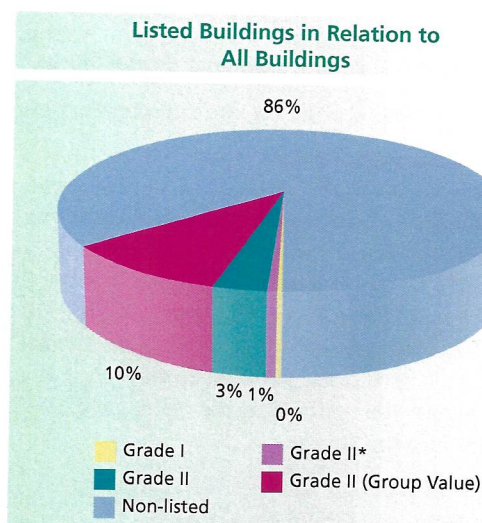
The relative lack of details recorded, either positive or negative, may indicate the relatively unfussy vernacular architecture which forms Castor's street scenes. Formally designed buildings such as The Elms, Durobrivae House, Castor House and The Cedars, which undoubtedly include more striking and ornate architectural detailing, are all set back from the road within their own grounds and can only be glimpsed from public viewpoints. The seven examples of negative street furniture are the rusty lamp standards and concrete bollards in Sylvester Road.

The floorscape notation does not individually record the village's grass verges. However, the collective contribution the verges make to the overall character and appearance of the village cannot be overestimated. For this reason, the principal verges are recorded on a separate plan on the basis that they should be fully retained and maintained as green space.

4.4 Other Factors and Influences

4.4.1 Building Status

Total Number of Buildings - 320



There is one Grade I listed building in Castor, the church, two Grade II*, "Durobrivae" on the east side of The Green and Castor House. Forty listed buildings are classed as Grade II. In addition, there are structures such as barns and outhouses, which are listed separately but in the Audit database are included in the same address as the main building, leading to an undercounting of the total of listed buildings. There are actually fifty two buildings within the village envelope listed separately. Castor also has some listed structures other than buildings, notably the base and remaining part of the shaft of a village cross on the triangle of land in Clay Lane, which is listed as Grade II, a pump at "Durobrivae", Grade II*, a mounting block at The Cedars, Grade II, and the Dovecote to the west of Village Farm, Grade II Group Value. Due to the difficulty of identifying these structures on the database, they were not included in the initial survey, important though they are.

The percentage of listed buildings and structures (14%), demonstrates the importance of the village as a historic settlement. The listed buildings are distributed throughout the old parts of the village.

4.4.2 Listed Building Grants

Over the twenty year period 1980-2000, thirty seven grants were made, totalling £45,829, an average spend of £2,300 per annum. However, grant activity increased significantly from 1990 with the introduction of the Collyweston Slating and Dry Stone Walling Schemes in partnership with English Heritage. In value, 99% of grant monies were given during this period.

Since 2000, Peterborough City Council has curtailed all financial assistance for historic building repairs and no grant awards have been made.

Roof and dry stone walling repairs amount to 60% numerically and 83% in monetary value of all grants given. Three of the thirteen thatched buildings (25%), and 16% of Collyweston slated buildings were brought into good repair with grant assistance, along with some of the village's principal stone walls.

ANALYSIS OF GRANTS FOR REPAIR OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND WALLS

Types of Work	Dates								Totals	
	1980-1985		1985-1990		1990-1995		1995-2000			
	Nos. of Grants	Total £	Nos. of Grants	Total £	Nos. of Grants	Total £	Nos. of Grants	Total £	Nos. Total	£
Stone wall repairs/ rebuilding	1	195			1	500	9	14519	11	15214
Roof – re-thatching					2	2000	1	1000	3	3000
Roof – Collyweston slating							4	16726	4	16726
Roof – re-pantiling & other					1	1000	3	1993	4	2993
Masonry repairs – walls, chimneys etc.			1	121	3	2425	4	2015	8	4561
Other – joinery & other repairs	1	194			2	1475	4	1666	7	3335
TOTAL GRANTS – £ by year groups	2	389	1	121	9	7400	25	37919	37	45829

5.0 The Audit

4.4.3 Planning Applications/Listing Building Consents

PLANNING APPLICATIONS & LISTED BUILDING CONSENTS DETERMINED

Dates	Planning		Listed Building	
	Approvals	Refusals	Consents	Refusals
1971 – 1980	70	6	3	1
1981 – 1990	131	4	35	0
1991 – 2000	148	5	39	1
>2001	37	2	8	1
TOTALS	386	17	85	3
TOTAL			491	

The number of planning and listed building consents applications demonstrate a strong and increasing pressure for change. In the 30-year period 1970-2000, there were far more applications for change (four hundred and forty four), than buildings (three hundred and twenty). Of course, it may be that some of these applications were for new buildings. However, given the fact that listed buildings cannot be created, the eighty eight applications for change on a total stock of forty four listed buildings, give an indication of the pressure for alterations and extensions.

The figures above, clearly indicate the increasing number of applications per decade, showing that the village can be expected to be subject to more pressures for change in the future.

5.1 Buildings

5.1.1 General Explanation

This section of the report looks at key relationships that exist between components of the built environment. The Audit examines links between the surveys and thereby builds up a picture of the village as it actually is. This is made possible by logging all data on Access database, the co-ordinates of which can then be interrogated.

For each relationship examined, the information is presented as a graph and also, where appropriate, on a map. This allows the survey information to be represented in the most effective manner possible, and by using maps, gives “on the ground” meaning to what is otherwise abstract information.

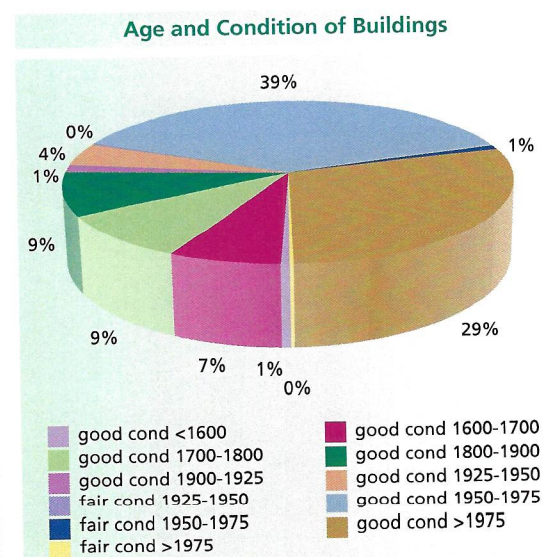
The thirty six key dual relationships are considered. These form the basis of the Audit process report. To avoid duplication and replication, a selective approach to the analysis has been adopted. For example, the relationship between Age and Condition would be the same whether it is written as “Age – Condition” or “Condition – Age”. Whichever way it is written, the underlying information is not going to change. As a result, when all the replication has been removed, the survey is left with thirty six dual relationships.

These are demonstrated in the table below right.

The relationships that are struck out are those that are replicated elsewhere in the table. For example, where “height-age” is struck through, it is because the relationship has already been examined in the query “age-height”. Changing the order of the words has no influence on the result of the query. Many of the queries, although important to carry out, reveal no significant relationships between the categories. Where this occurs, it is stated that the query gave no significant insight into the survey.

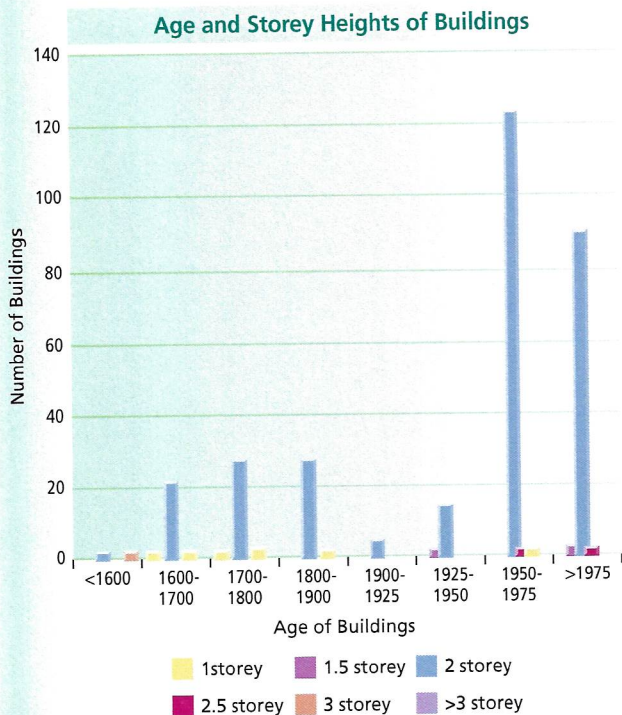
Analysis by Age and Condition

Total Number of Buildings – 320



The majority of buildings of all ages are classed as being in good condition. There are no buildings in poor condition or at risk from dilapidation or dereliction.

Analysis by Age and Storey Heights



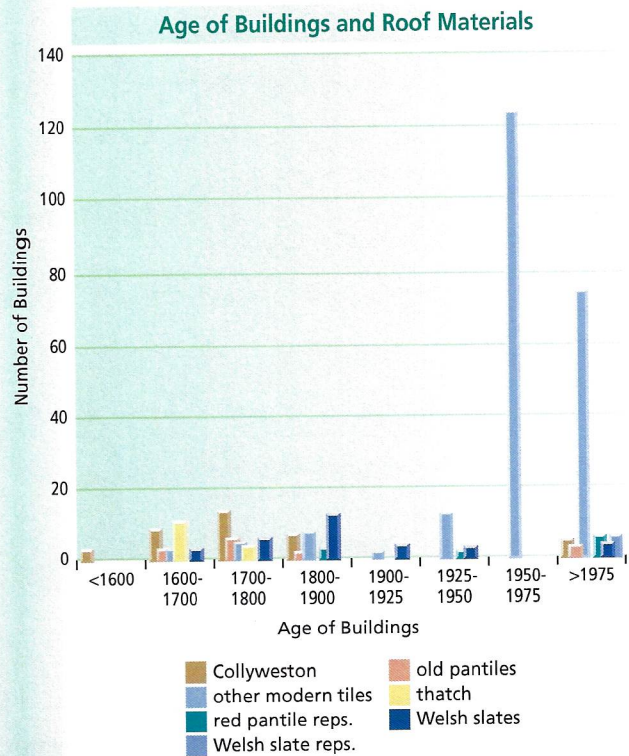
The majority of buildings are two storey and were built between 1950 and 2000.

Bungalows are only found in the 1925-2000 period.

The small number of buildings representing the 1900-1950 period and the major expansions of two storey housing between 1950 and 1975 and after 1975 are clearly demonstrated.

The analysis may disguise single storey buildings such as sheds and outhouses, which may have been, for example, converted into garages and subsumed within one property plot and reference.

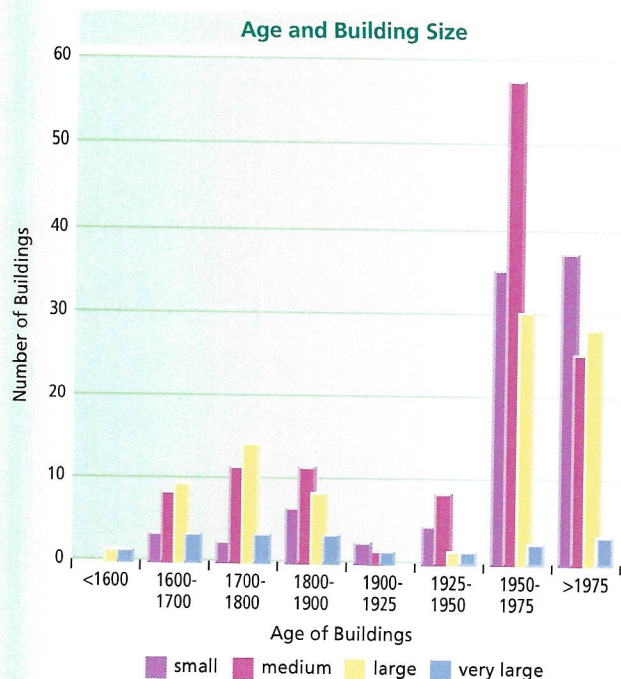
Analysis by Age and Roof Materials



The palette of natural roofing materials in the pre-twentieth century period is very striking and the overwhelming preponderance of modern concrete tiles after 1925 even more so. It is interesting and encouraging to see the return of traditional materials since 1975, probably as a result of greater emphasis on conservation and design following the introduction of the Department of the Environment Circular 23/77, *Planning and the Historic Environment*.

Age	Height	Size	Type	Materials (Walls)
Age - Condition	Height - Age	Size - Age	Type - Age	Walls - Age
Age - Height	Height - Condition	Size - Condition	Type - Condition	Walls - Condition
Age - Roofs	Height - Roofs	Size - Height	Type - Height	Walls - Height
Age - Size	Height - Size	Size - Roofs	Type - Roofs	Walls - Roofs
Age - Status	Height - Status	Size - Status	Type - Size	Walls - Size
Age - Type	Height - Type	Size - Type	Type - Status	Walls - Status
Age - Use	Height - Use	Size - Use	Type - Use	Walls - Type
Age - Walls	Height - Walls	Size - Walls	Type - Walls	Walls - Use
Materials (Roofs) Use	Status	Condition		
Roofs - Age	Use - Age	Status - Age	Condition - Age	
Roofs - Condition	Use - Condition	Status - Condition	Condition - Height	
Roofs - Height	Use - Height	Status - Height	Condition - Roofs	
Roofs - Size	Use - Roofs	Status - Roofs	Condition - Size	
Roofs - Status	Use - Size	Status - Size	Condition - Status	
Roofs - Type	Use - Status	Status - Type	Condition - Type	
Roofs - Use	Use - Type	Status - Use	Condition - Use	
Roofs - Walls	Use - Walls	Status - Walls	Condition - Walls	

Analysis by Age and Size



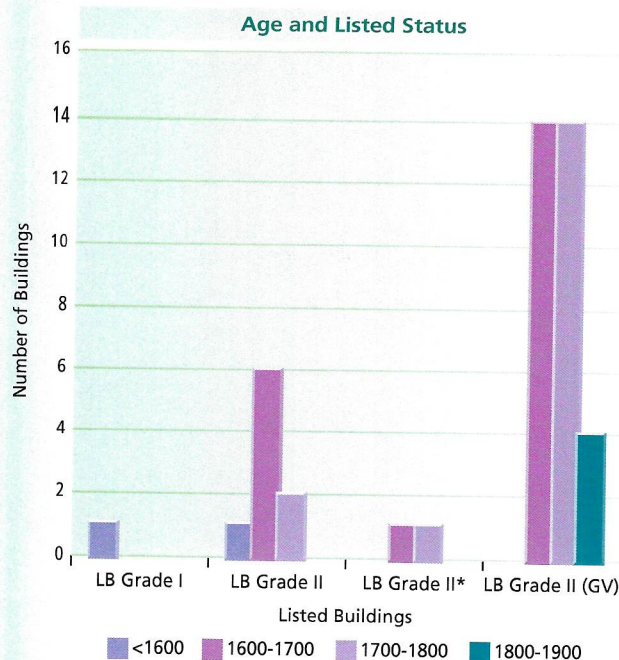
For the purpose of this graph, size is taken as the building footprint. The distribution of buildings clearly shows the post 1950 building boom. Between 1950 and 2000, two hundred and sixteen properties (of all sizes) were built in Castor – the busiest period of construction by far.

The chart shows that medium sized buildings are now the largest category, but it is only recently that they have become so. Before 1800, there appeared to be more large buildings.

Interestingly, there are no 'very small' buildings in the village from any period of history. It is likely that small pre-eighteenth century dwellings for labourers etc., have not survived. It is known that the population in Victorian times was similar to today, but occupied far fewer buildings. Therefore, buildings in multiple occupancy, historically, and/or dwellings which were once small, appear to have been amalgamated to form much larger single occupancy homes.

Analysis by Age and Status

Total Number of listed buildings – 44



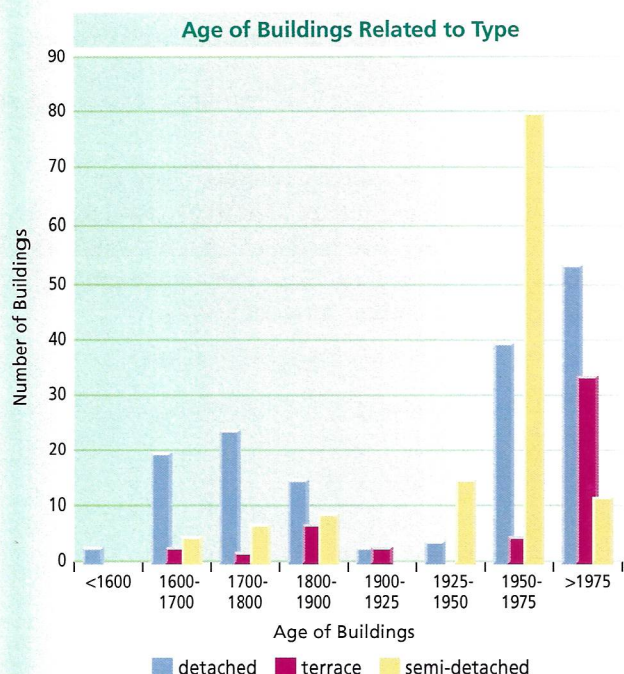
The church is the only Grade I listed building.

There are two Grade II* buildings, "Durobrivae", and Castor House, the gates of which are separately listed as Grade II* but not counted as a building in the Audit statistics.

The village has a fairly large population of listed property from all periods, with twenty one Grade II listed buildings dated 1600-1700 and twenty two Grade II listed buildings dated 1700-1800. This contrasts with settlements such as Thorney, where a high proportion of listed buildings (and properties subject to Article 4 Directions) are derived from one particular period.

There are no listed buildings from the twentieth century, which reflects the current listing criteria. No properties in Castor are subject to Article 4 Directions.

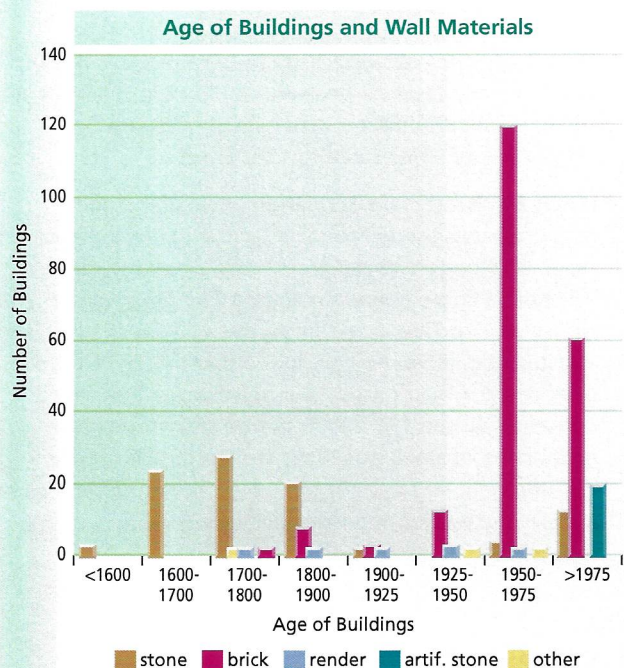
Analysis by Age and Type



Detached properties are the dominant built form in Castor. 45% of all houses are detached, the most prominent form in all periods.

Semi-detached properties are mostly attributable to the period 1950-1975, (24% of all buildings). This is the largest figure for any type of property built within any one period and reflects the 1960-1970s estate housing boom.

Analysis by Age and Wall Materials



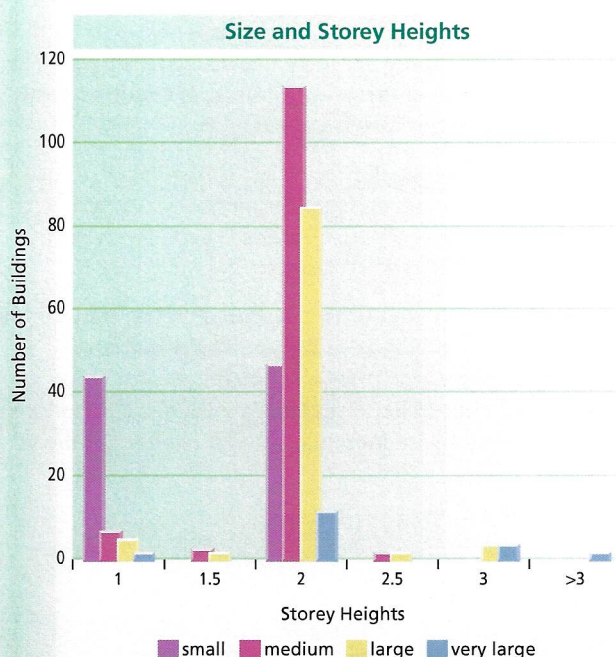
The major housing growth of the village took place between 1950 and 1975, with one hundred and sixteen properties constructed almost entirely in modern brick. In the same period, only three properties were built of stone, one from re-used old bricks and one rendered.

Until the 1900s, stone was the material of choice. There is one stone building, excluding the church, that predates 1600. Between 1600 and 1700, twenty one stone buildings were built, twenty three between 1700 and 1800 and fourteen between 1800 and 1900.

Stone has only recently made a come-back, with six stone properties being built between 1975 and 2000; thirteen artificial stone buildings were also constructed but despite conservation policies, brick continued to dominate, being the material used on sixty three new properties.

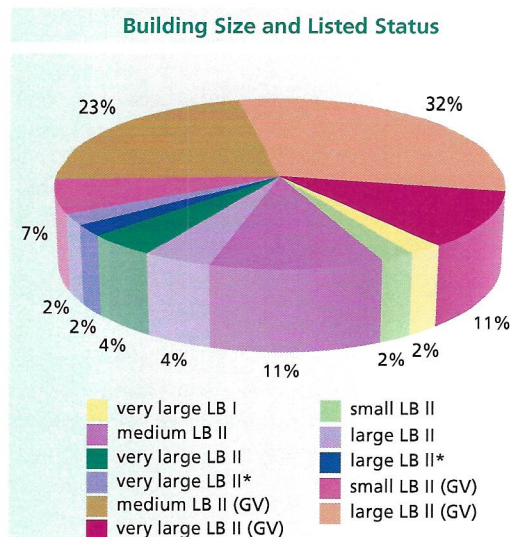
Although Castor has many stone buildings of all ages (sixty six in total), there are many more modern brick buildings (one hundred and ninety two). Visually, however, the impression of Castor is as a stone village.

Analysis by Building Size and Storey Heights



The above analysis confirms that two storey buildings are by far the most dominant form with small single storey buildings, mainly comprising the twenty bungalows on Sylvester Road, the next largest group.

Analysis by Size and Status

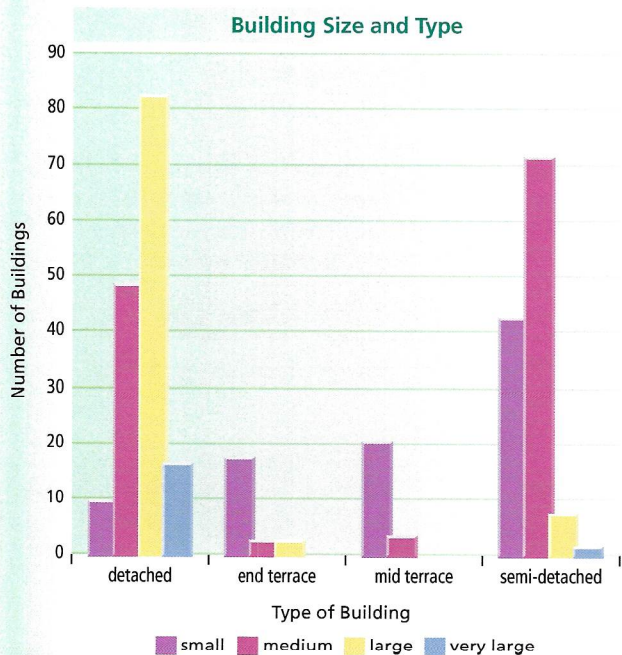


Within Castor there are forty four listed buildings of all sizes. Only one of these, the church, is Grade I Listed and this is in the 'very large' category.

There are three small properties, eleven medium sized properties, seventeen large properties and seven very large properties that are Grade II Listed. Two large properties are Grade II* Listed.

All sizes of buildings are represented on the statutory list of protected buildings. However, larger buildings predominate. Large houses reflecting wealth were generally built of better materials with more decorative features and so are more likely to be eligible for listed status.

Analysis by Size and Type

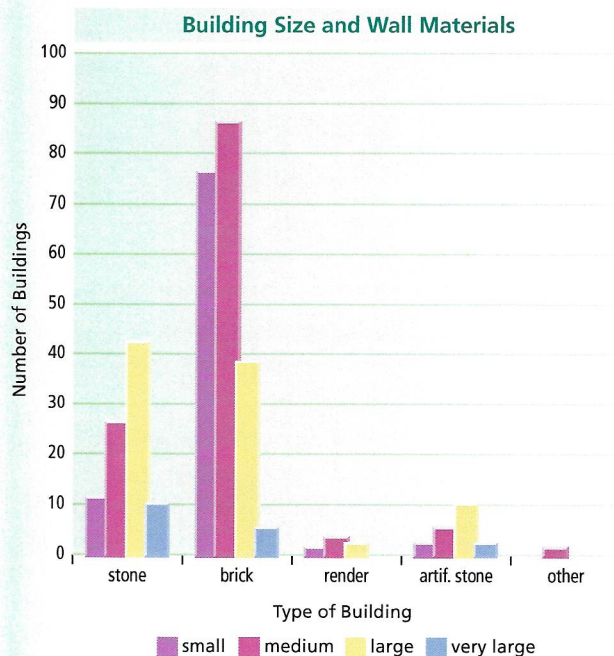


Castor is clearly characterised by the presence of large and very large detached houses (eighty one properties), which account for one hundred and fifty one of the total number of buildings.

There are seventy one medium sized semi-detached houses; semi-detached properties account for one hundred and nine, (32.4%) of the total. There is one very large semi-detached property, seven large semi-detached properties and forty two small semi-detached properties.

There are fewer terraced properties. There are seventeen small end terrace and twenty small mid terrace properties, two medium end terrace and three medium mid terrace, two large end terrace and unsurprisingly, no large terraced houses.

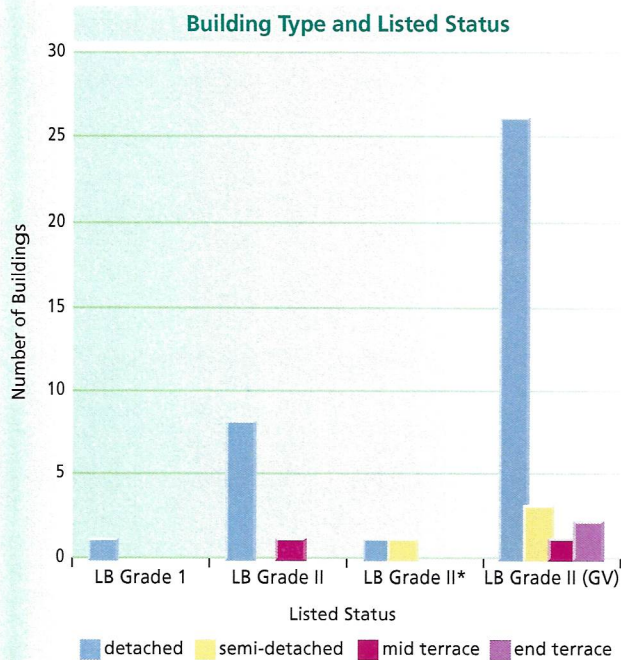
Analysis by Size and Wall Materials



Most properties of all sizes are built of modern brick. However, the greatest proportion of brick buildings are small and medium sized, whereas the greatest proportion of stone buildings are large.

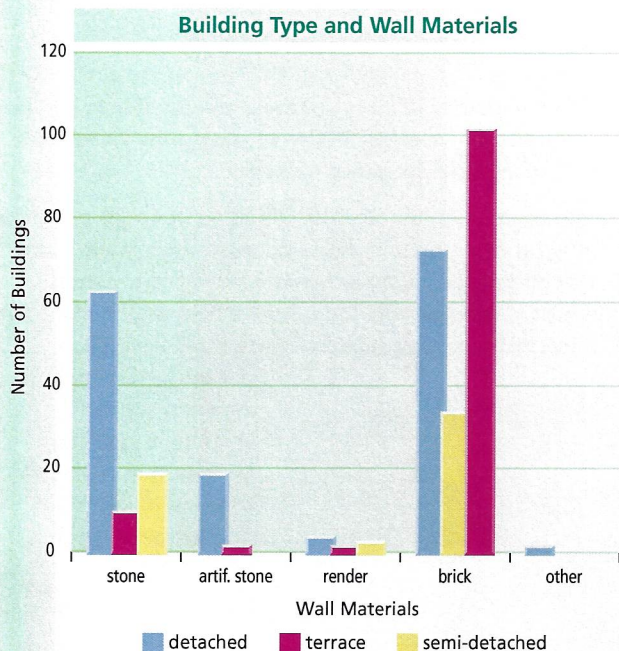
It may be that the amalgamation of smaller stone properties has tended to increase the general size of stone dwellings. Nevertheless, Castor has a number of substantial stone houses including The Elms, Durobrivae House, Castor House etc. From the analysis of property size and age, it can be concluded that the 1950-1975 period saw a high proportion of brick medium sized houses built; the 1975-2000 period shows a higher proportion of small dwellings (reflecting affordable housing policies) and larger houses, denoting the rise of four to five bedroom properties with en suites, utility rooms etc.

Analysis by Building Type and Status



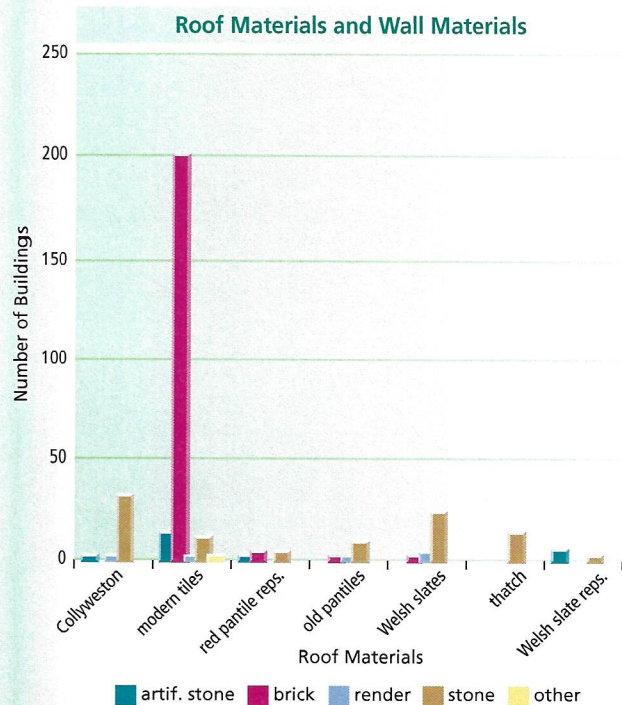
Most listed buildings in Castor are detached properties. Of the few properties that are not detached, only four listed buildings are semi-detached, two are end terrace properties and one is mid terrace.

Analysis by Type and Wall Materials



Semi-detached properties built of modern brick are the largest category of buildings in Castor. The second largest sector is accounted for by detached buildings made of stone. Modern building materials account for a much greater proportion of the properties in the village than old materials.

Analysis by Roof Materials and Wall Materials



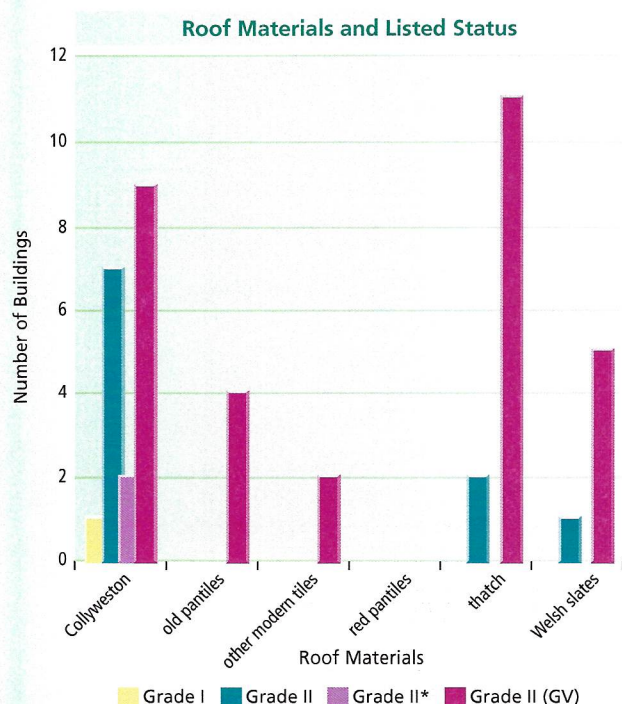
The overwhelming majority of properties in Castor are made of modern brick and are roofed with modern tiles. This combination of materials accounts for one hundred and ninety nine properties in the village.

Stone properties with Collyweston slate roofs account for thirty one properties, while a further twenty three stone properties have Welsh slate roofs. There are thirteen stone properties with thatched roofs.

Artificial stone buildings with modern tiled roofs account for thirteen properties.

As can be seen from the graph, none of the other combinations of wall materials and roofing materials make a significant numerical impact on the village.

Analysis by Roof Materials and Building Status



The most prominent roofing materials on the listed properties are Collyweston slate and thatch – both traditional materials, and materials which particularly define the character of Castor.

Old pantiles are used on four Grade II listed buildings. Other modern tiles are used on two Grade II listed properties. Thatch is used on thirteen Grade II listed properties and one Grade II* property. Welsh slates are used on five Grade II listed properties and one Grade I listed building.

The appearance of modern tiles on two listed properties is slightly surprising; in general the prevailing historic materials on protected buildings has been adhered to.

5.1.2 Other Buildings Findings

Wall Materials Related to Listed Status

Unsurprisingly, listed buildings in the village are all built from traditional local materials. Coursed stone rubble is the most characteristic wall construction material, but there are also examples of the use of ashlar (“Durobrivae”) and render (fronts of Castor House and The Cedars).

Other Possible Correlations

The remaining possible correlations listed below were examined and no significant relationship was found, as detailed in the table below.

SPREADSHEET DATASETS

FINDINGS

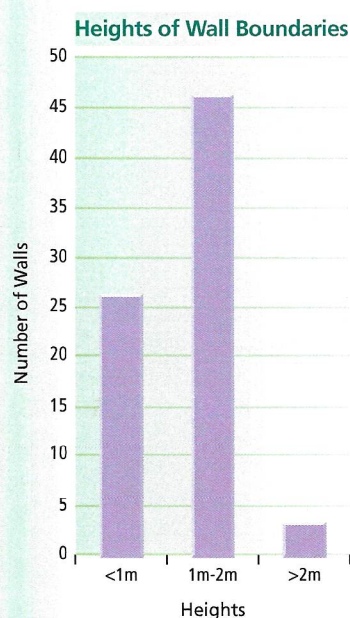
Age and Building Use	No significant relationships found.
Storey Heights and Condition	No significant relationships found.
Roofing Materials	
Property Size	
Building Status	
Property Type	
Use	
Wall Materials	
Condition	
Property Size and Condition	No significant relationships found.
Roofing Materials	
Use	
Property Type and Roofing	No significant relationships found.
Materials	
Use	
Wall Materials and Condition	No significant relationships found.
Use	
Roof Materials and Condition	No significant relationships found.
Use	
Use and Condition	No significant relationships found.
Building Status	
Building Status and Condition	No significant relationships found.

5.2 Other Features

5.2.1 Walls

About a quarter of all properties, seventy five in all, have a boundary to a public highway marked by a wall and 80% of all walls are made of stone.

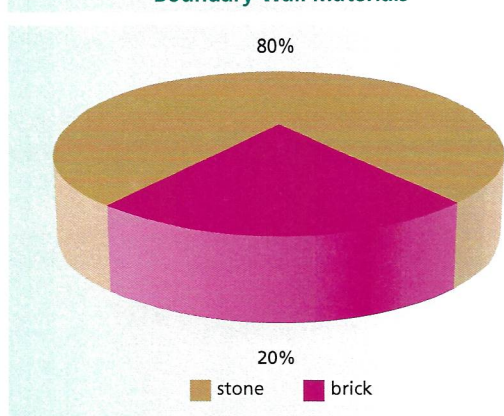
The actual number of walls which relate to properties is difficult to accurately assess because some walls span several property boundaries but are relatively short, whilst others are very long, have a big visual impact and only relate to one property. Many walls have been



punctuated by new access ways and sections which have been rebuilt. This has resulted in different heights, styles and relationships to properties.

Nevertheless, it can be concluded that walls, and in particular stone walls are statistically significant. Their contribution to the townscape of Castor cannot be underestimated and is further analysed and discussed under Section 5.3 Townscape.

Boundary Wall Materials



5.2.2 Fences

Fifty three properties, or 16% of all key buildings have a public boundary marked by a fence and most of these (70%), are between 1m and 2m in height.

There is no dominant fence type; the other category may warrant further examination to better identify the group's characteristics.

As with walls, this analysis does not account for the length and visual impacts of each fence and it may be that one or two long fences of almost 2m in height have a disproportionate influence on the character of the village in relation to the rest of the fence groups.

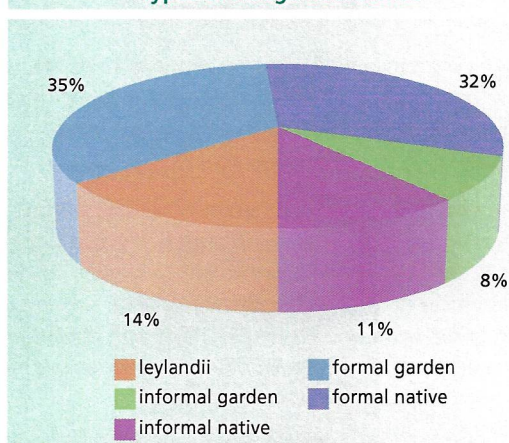
The visual impact of fences is further assessed in Section 5.3 Townscape.

5.2.3 Hedges

Over a quarter, 26% of all properties, have a public boundary marked by a hedge. Of the eighty four hedge boundaries, 68% are hedges between 1m and 2m in height.

Hedge types are varied but formal clipped garden hedges (34%), and maintained hedges of native species (32%), form the great majority of all hedge boundaries.

Types of Hedge Boundaries



5.2.4 Trees

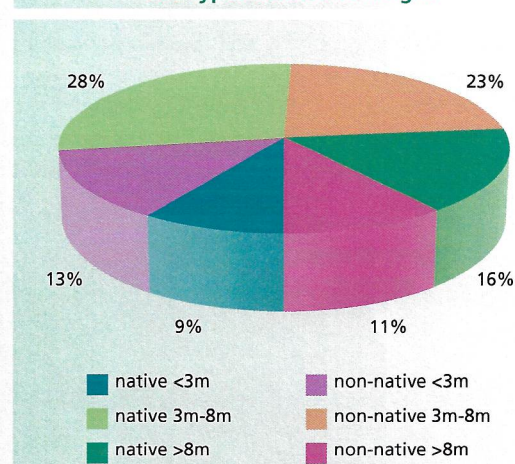
A total of five hundred and fifty one trees are visible from public roads and footpaths. Just over half (53%), are regarded as native species including oak, ash, hawthorn, birch, beech and horse chestnut. Correspondingly, 47% are non-native. In addition to modern exotic species, non-natives include cedar trees and tall conifers.

Large trees above 8m in height of both native and non-native species make up well over a quarter, 27% of all trees recorded. Many of these are within the grounds of older houses, which are named after the trees, for example, (The Elms, The Cedars), make a considerable contribution to the visual quality of the village.

The majority of trees (50%), are within the 3m-8m height category and of these, more than half are native species. It is not known if these are smaller species such as hawthorn, field maple, elder etc., which have reached maturity or forest type trees which will grow on to a height of 8m or more.

There are more smaller sized, (<3m) non-native trees than native, probably reflecting exotic species specifically chosen as suitable for small garden locations.

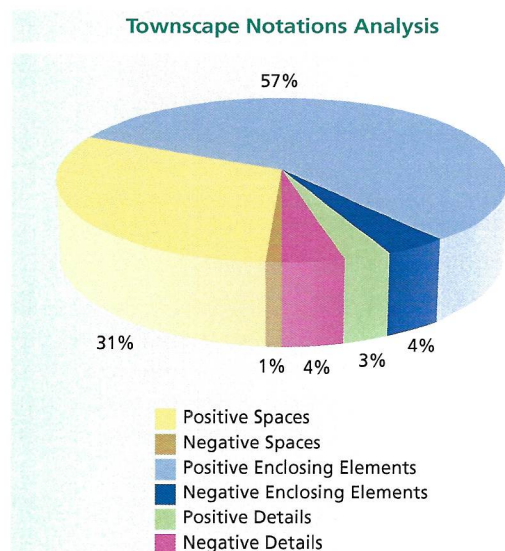
Tree Types Related to Height



5.3 Townscape

5.3.1 General Analysis

The townscape of Castor is overwhelmingly positive. A total of two hundred and sixty three positive and only twenty seven negative townscape contributions were recorded with a breakdown as follows:



The table below provides a detailed record of the relative contributions of each element of townscape. It gives an indication of the relationship between dynamic and static spaces, with further spatial definition provided by vertical enclosures and changes in level. The description of a walk from The Green, up Church Hill to the Stocks Hill crossroads in section 4.3 further illustrates these interrelationships.

Analysis of Spaces

Relationship of Spaces and Enclosing Elements

Section 4.3 gives a general analysis of the forms of spaces within the village streets.

The table below sets out all the elements of townscape, which have been identified as positively enclosing space.

Townscape Elements (which enclose space)	Type of Space Enclosed		
	Static	Dynamic	Vertical
Buildings	9	34	–
Walls	3	30	–
Individual Trees	2	18	2
Tree Belts	4	5	5
Hedges	2	9	–
Sub Totals	37	79	7
TOTAL			123

Buildings and walls are the main elements, which positively enclose the village streets and spaces. However, the numbers alone do not give a complete picture. The walls, enclosing the north/south rights of way between Peterborough Road and Church Hill and surrounding the churchyard, are long and are the dominant townscape influence. In contrast, there are buildings, which primarily enclose Peterborough Road within the village envelope, with short walls between them.

The combination of walls with trees behind, presents a dramatic visual impact. The mature trees and walls around The Cedars and The Limes are good examples. On Stocks Hill, the combination of earth bank, wall and trees also provides strong spatial definition. In all the above examples and on Church Hill, overhanging horizontal branches of mature trees lend a powerful sense of vertical enclosure, framing views beyond.

In the narrow, small-scale confines of High Street, the low eaved cottages and hedges give a sense of space which would not be apparent in wider streets, as, for example, in Peterborough Road.

The very strong sense of spatial enclosure which has been defined in the historic streets has not been replicated in the twentieth century estates, with the exception of St Kyneburgha Close. The sloping ground, the bungalows set out in a V-shape and the wide turning area at the end of Sylvester Road combine to give the only example of negative enclosure.

Spatial Enclosure and Storey Heights

It may be expected that the higher buildings have the strongest influence on spatial enclosure. However, in reality, the few buildings of three storeys or more are set in their own grounds and so do not relate to the general street scene. The church, although isolated within its own grounds (the churchyard), presents a powerful backdrop or vista at the convergence of the historic street pattern.

Analysis of Enclosing Elements

TOWNSCAPE AND BUILDING PERIODS

Building Periods	Number of Buildings contributing to Townscape		Total Number of Buildings in Period	Percentage of Buildings giving Positive & (negative contributions)
	Positively	Negatively		
<1600	2	–	2	100%
1600-1700	17	–	23	74%
1700-1800	27	–	30	90%
1800-1900	20	–	28	71%
1900-2004	2	3	235	0.8% (1.28%)

In all periods before the twentieth century, most buildings have been judged to make a positive contribution to the built environment. In the twentieth century the vast majority of buildings (98%), make no particular impact on townscape either positive or negative.

Clearly, if new development is intended to add to the high quality of Castor's townscape, considerable thought needs to be given to siting, design materials and associated features, including walls, trees, fences and hedges.

Townscape and Walls

The most substantial walls, which exert the greatest influence on the townscape, may span several property boundaries. Therefore, database analysis related to the unique property reference system would be inconsistent with other analyses. With hindsight, the best approach may have been to conduct a separate walls survey.

However, in the Analysis of Spaces (section 5.3.1), the Relationship of Spaces and Enclosing Elements, demonstrates the fundamental importance of the local coursed limestone walls to Castor's built environment. A separate wall survey may have included the prominent walls on the east and west village approaches along Peterborough Road, further emphasising the visual contribution of stone walls.

Interestingly, the one imitation stone concrete block wall was considered detrimental to the street scene. Some effort has clearly been made to maintain and periodically rebuild sections of wall in the local style.

Townscape and Fences

Three prominent fences were definitely considered to detract from the village's appearance. One large fence, freshly creosoted, did draw attention to itself but will mellow in time. However, in a settlement where high quality stone walls are the norm, even close-boarded fences do appear an inferior alternative.

Townscape and Building Status

The relationship between listed buildings and positive townscape is very similar to that of Townscape and Building Periods.

Townscape and Property Types

There is no discernible relationship between property types and townscape; the blandness of twentieth century semi-detached and detached forms of development may be a combination of architectural style and building types.

Townscape and Building Use

The age of properties appears to be a stronger influence on their visual appearance than their use.

All three public houses are seen as strongly positive in townscape terms; interestingly, the remaining buildings in agricultural use have also been judged as important in the street scene, even though they are not maintained to the same exacting standards as the majority of residential properties.

Townscape and Trees

Trees provide almost 30% of recorded elements, which enclose space and are all examples of vertical enclosure.

The difficulties of recording individual trees within tree belts situated on private property mean that the database analysis cannot empirically relate tree size and species to the townscape surveys. However, it can be verified that the large, (over 8m high), mature trees of both native and non-native species make the greatest positive townscape impacts.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The Methodology

The basic objectives of the Castor Built Environment Audit were to devise a methodology which allowed local people to compile accurate quantitative and qualitative assessments of their local built environment, which can then be used as an agreed and authoritative basis for a Castor Village Design Statement.

As this report illustrates, the task of assembling a comprehensive and authoritative built environment benchmark has been accomplished. However, it is also of importance to note the main problems and difficulties, which are inevitable with the involvement of many people in a complex project.

6.1.1 Community Involvement

The two villages of Castor and Ailsworth are very close together. While they retain their individual character and Parish Councils, they are as one for community purposes.

Ailsworth prepared a proposal for an Audit at the same time as Castor and both villages obtained Local Heritage Initiative funding for their respective Audits. A Built Audit Group, drawn from both villages led the project and co-ordinated community involvement.

Organisations and individuals involved in the preparation of this Audit, a total of seventy six people, included:

Castor Parish Council, Ailsworth Parish Council, the Guides and Brownies led by Mandy Ireland and their parents, the Tennis Club, the Women's Institute and St Kyneburgha's Church, Castor and Ailsworth Society of Arts (CASA), who jointly produced the illustrations for the Boards. Castor, Ailsworth and District Gardeners' Society was also involved and Vincent and Rosalind Brierley provided a photocopying service.

Given the wide variety of age groups and backgrounds, it was felt advisable to carry out sample accuracy checks on the information collected; once all the supporting information was available, surveys were found to be generally consistent and accurate.

6.1.2 The Surveys

Whilst the concept of each individual survey seemed straightforward, it quickly became clear that supporting information was needed to enable community surveyors to make accurate records. Subject areas which caused problems included dating buildings, distinguishing between old (pre-twentieth century) and modern building materials and identifying native and non-native trees and hedgerow shrubs.

These difficulties were resolved by compiling illustrated colour guides using published tree identification charts and building material photographs provided by Peterborough City Council's Planning Department.

Building dates were sourced by reference to the Statutory List, the Royal Commission of Historic Monuments Record of Peterborough, Pevsner and professional guidance.

As data collection progressed, it became clear that consistency and selectivity were required if the information gathered was to be manageable and usable. Therefore, the principal buildings on each site only, were recorded. In most instances, this was the main dwelling house, with garages, sheds, greenhouses etc., omitted.

It also became clear that not all information related to a single property, for example, the stone walls or hedges spanned several property boundaries; in these cases the existence of a wall or hedge was recorded for each property.

Finally, individual trees within groups of trees behind garden fences or walls could not always be individually distinguished and identified. On the house-based surveys, a best estimate was made of species and numbers, surveyed from public vantage points. On the townscape assessment, collections of trees were, where necessary, noted as groups on the basis that it was their collective contribution, which made the strongest townscape impact.

The townscape assessment methodology was designed to provide a basis to consistently record the qualitative aspects of the built environment's visual impact. In practice, the data collected by two groups of community surveyors was compared to a survey independently conducted by PECT's professional support. When the databases were compared there was an 80% consistency between the three, with the major differences relating to the perception in the views/vistas category. It can, therefore, be concluded that the townscape assessment forms a consistent benchmarking database and, provided subsequent assessments strictly adhere to the methodology, changes over time in built environment quality can be accurately measured and monitored.

6.1.3 Data Capture

When the surveys were underway, large amounts of data in a variety of paper formats were quickly assembled. It soon became clear that the volume of information gathered and the need for consistency and accuracy in transferring paper records to the Access Database could not reasonably be undertaken on a volunteer basis. Furthermore, due to widely varying computing abilities, electronic sharing of this task was not practical. Therefore, data capture from hand written survey records to computerised format was undertaken by a PECT member of staff.

6.2 Key Findings

Castor is regarded as a historic conservation village. However, in numerical terms it is very different. Most buildings, 75% date from the twentieth century and 60% of all buildings have been built in the last fifty years. Most buildings are two storey, detached and built of modern bricks and tiles. The largest single property group is made up of twentieth century, two storey, semi-detached houses with modern brick walls and concrete roof tiles.

Most twentieth century buildings have repetitive plan forms, and are set back from the highway and uniformly spaced along estate roads and cul-de-sacs. In contrast, buildings dating from before 1900 have a wide variety of footprint shapes and sizes.

Almost all buildings are sited with a façade or gable directly onto or very close to the pavement edge, with a few larger buildings set well back behind stone walls in grounds planted with forest trees, now mature and reaching 30m-40m in height. Buildings from all periods appear in sound structural condition.

Nearly 25% of all properties have stone walls, just over a quarter (26%) have hedge boundaries and 16% have fences. Whilst the vast majority of walls, hedges and fences are 1m-2m high, the numerically few enclosures over 3m high are invariably long and make a big visual impact.

Castor has five hundred and thirty six trees with 56% of native species and half the total population between 3m and 8m in height. However, visually, the most significant part of the tree population are the 30% mature forest trees, which were mainly planted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is not known if modern plantings, currently 3m high, will eventually grow to replace currently mature trees or if naturally small species have been chosen.

Visually, twentieth century development makes almost no contribution to the character and appearance of Castor. In contrast, in the old street areas, the stone buildings, stone walls, hedges, mature trees and changes in level, all combine to enclose the streets. Together, they form sequences of varied human scale spaces, which make a built environment of outstanding quality. The townscape map graphically illustrates firstly, the fundamental difference between modern and historic forms of development and secondly, how the various townscape components combine to create a visually strong and cohesive streetscape.

6.2.1 Planning Policies

Planning policies, reinforced by grant schemes appear to have been successful in conserving the historic environment that existed in 1974, when conservation became a key part of town and country planning legislation. However, the great majority of twentieth century buildings within the village envelope and the conservation area, are built in modern brick and concrete tiles. In addition, most are medium to large in size, so provision of affordable dwellings to meet local needs can only partially account for the choice of materials.

Post 1975, stronger conservation policies may have resulted in greater use of stone and artificial stone, (nineteen properties), but modern brick has remained the primary building material, used on sixty properties over the same period.

The pressures for change, as demonstrated by the numbers of planning applications, increase year on year.

The number of applications for listed building consent, demonstrates a powerful trend to make changes over increasingly short time periods, to buildings which have remained largely unaltered for two to three hundred years or more. Careful management of the listed building stock is clearly required to avoid loss of the historic fabric through alterations and modernisation.

6.2.2 Green Spaces

The paddock south of The Old Rectory, the pastures either side of Peterborough Road at the western edge of the village and churchyard/school field, contrast with and contribute to the setting of the strongly urban village form. The green wedge immediately west of Village Farm, provides a natural break in the built environment, affording valuable rural views from Peterborough Road and Allotment Lane, whilst the combination of walls, green space and mature trees form an outstanding setting for St Kyneburgha's Church on its elevated platform site.

The reinforcement of existing and the creation of new grass verges with the post by-pass traffic calming scheme is also a profound visual influence. Whilst any one verge does not have sufficient individual significance to be recorded as outstanding in the townscape survey, the aggregation of all the verges make a very significant contribution to Castor's character and appearance.

6.3 Recommendations

Recommendations are considered within the following priorities:

Conservation

Enhancement

Improvements

The Future Built Environment.

6.3.1 Conservation

Retaining the fabric, which underpins the character and appearance of Castor's built environment is the fundamental first priority. It may be considered within the framework of the townscape survey as follows.

6.3.2 Spaces

This Audit identifies the key spaces, which form the character of Castor. These spaces need to be retained and reinforced. Gradual erosion by, for example, allowing part demolition of walls to accommodate a new dwelling, driveway or highway "improvements", which straighten roads and introduce standardised pavements and concrete kerbs, should be strongly resisted.

The townscape survey graphically demonstrates that the dog-legs and kinks in the historic street patterns create combinations of well defined and interesting static and dynamic spaces. The contrast between these and the dull, uniform and lifeless modern estate roads could not be more marked.

6.3.3 Enclosing Elements

Buildings are the key enclosing elements but walls, mature trees and hedges are also important. To maintain townscape, the pre-twentieth century buildings, which are the foundation stones of the built environment, must be retained without exception, maintained using the original natural building materials and unsympathetic extensions and alterations resisted.

Similarly, the village's stone walls need to be retained, kept in good repair and further breaches to create new access drives etc. strongly opposed. No new stone walls appear to have been built in the twentieth century. There are situations where new walls would enhance spatial enclosure or improve townscape by replacing wooden fences, which are less positive in the street scene.

Mature forest trees planted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, close to pavements or footpaths, are now an outstanding feature of Castor's environment. It may be that twentieth century planting is not conceived on such a grand scale and does not include forest trees which will reach more than 30m high on maturity and, for good reasons, should be kept well away from walls and buildings.

However, it would make sense to plan and act now to firstly, replace trees which are now at maturity and to consider areas of less positive townscape where space exists, to accommodate ambitious forest tree planting schemes. Sylvester Road and Thorolds Way may present such opportunities.

Hedges, which contribute to Castor's townscape, are generally short in length and planted within the last hundred years. There is no need for additional hedge planting to further enclose space within the historic village. However, hedge planting in the twentieth century estates, especially in Sylvester Road, (in combination with local tree planting), would significantly improve spatial organisation and visual appearance.

6.3.4 Details

The application of planning powers combined with financial incentives have been influential in retaining buildings and walls and so maintaining the fabric of the built environment. The availability of grants for the repair of walls and buildings from Peterborough City Council was curtailed in 2000. This Audit presents compelling evidence to conclude that the grants system was influential in maintaining built fabric on a long term basis. There is, therefore, a strong argument for the re-introduction of grants for historic building and stone wall repair.

The Audit reveals a number of significant townscape details, which enliven the built environment and give Castor its unique sense of place. These include the stone piers and gates to major houses, the floorscape at the church entrance, hanging signs and cast iron railings. Details that detract, include the decaying bus shelter in Peterborough Road and street lights and concrete bollards in Sylvester Road.

Until 2000, a system of grants was available to assist with the costs of periodic repair of most of the details, which are important in the public street scene. Many of the negative details are the responsibility of the public authorities, the Sylvester Road street lights being the responsibility of Peterborough City Council and the bus shelter, Castor Parish Council.

6.3.5 Enhancements

Townscape enhancement is the process of maintaining and adding to features which are already positive. The analysis of planning applications shows that almost every opportunity within the village envelope for infill development has either been exploited or planning consent given. Further intensification of development would result in a loss of environmental quality.

However, trees are less permanent than buildings and there is evidence to conclude that the group of trees which is most influential in environmental terms, the mature forest specimens, may have the shortest potential lifespan. There is, therefore, a case to make plans now to begin planting a new generation of large forest trees. These should be set in positions which will have a real townscape impact in forming spaces and maintain the strong sense of enclosure formed by existing trees.

It is likely that the costs of drawing up and implementing such a far sighted tree planting programme would attract grant and sponsorship assistance from lottery and other sources.

6.3.6 Improvements

The townscape assessment identified a number of areas and features where relatively simple and inexpensive improvements would have a significant visual effect. Many could be partly achieved through community effort and exploiting opportunities through initiatives such as National Tree Week.

Area/feature	Proposed improvement	Ownership/ responsibility	Approximate order of costs and possible funding sources
Sylvester Road - spatial organisation	plant hedge (beech/holly) at back edge of footpath incorporating trees at turning head and St Kyneburgha Close junction	Peterborough City Council/ Castor Parish Council	£3.5 from grants and sponsorships
lamp posts and bollards	repaint rusting light columns in gloss black and replace concrete bollards with black cast iron	Peterborough City Council	£1.5 - l.a. maintenance budgets
Peterborough Road bus shelter	replace	Castor Parish Council	£2.5k-25k depending on design, construction and materials
Stocks Hill School fences	plant hedges with trees behind fences to form ready made replacement enclosure when fence rots and enhance views to Church Hill	School Governors	£2.5 - grants, sponsorships, community effort
Thorolds Way	plant hedge to rear gardens east side	not known	£5k – grants, sponsorships, community effort

6.3.7 The Future Built Environment

Castor is designated as a Limited Rural Growth Settlement in the *Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) 2002*, and a site of 1.67 hectares has been allocated for housing off Clay Lane. Development can be expected to introduce an additional nineteen houses plus garages etc. into the village, adding a further 8% to the building stock. Road access is likely to be off Clay Lane, so additional traffic will be generated in the historic streets of Clay Lane, The Green and possibly Manor Farm Lane.

It is important that the new development does not result in proposals for “highway improvements” resulting in modern alignments, kerbs and materials being superimposed to undermine spatial organisation and detailing in these historic streets.

Regarding the form of the housing itself, a key decision needs to be made to determine if the development will continue the huge divergence between twentieth century and historic Castor. Will it reject past forms of modern development in favour of buildings and layouts, which are more akin to that which evolved to form the village up until the nineteenth century?

If the latter is the case, new development will need to:

- i Vary the width and alignment of road carriageways incorporating sharp turns and avoiding regular and standardised T-junctions, kerb radii etc.
- ii Create sequences of human scale dynamic and static spaces by
 - siting combinations of building façades, gables and freestanding stone walls at the back edge of pavements, with a few set further back
 - reinforcing the spatial organisation by exploiting (or introducing) changes in level by, for example, raising banks and creating vertical enclosure by planting large forest trees close to the pavement edge
 - incorporating alleys and cuts, strongly enclosed by walls, hedges and trees and opening out into larger spaces at either end, physically linking the new

development with the existing village

- incorporating green space as an *integral part* of spatial organisation.
- iii Include some buildings of varying sizes and heights in addition to the three to four bedroom, two storey norm. Buildings should include subtle variations in plan forms, verge and ridge heights etc., and
 - be constructed in local coursed stone (or a good quality, coursed stone replica with Collyweston replica, clay pantile or Welsh slate roofs
 - be visually and physically linked with hedge planting and stone walls
 - incorporate some instances of architectural detailing, which create a positive psychological response, a sense of place and association with the historic Castor.

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