



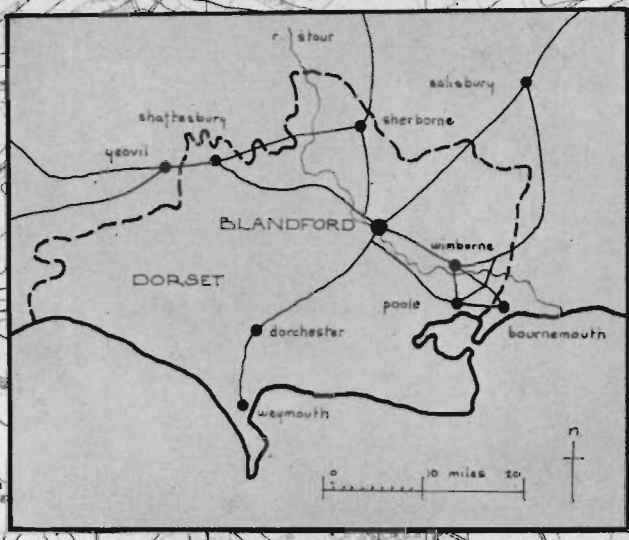
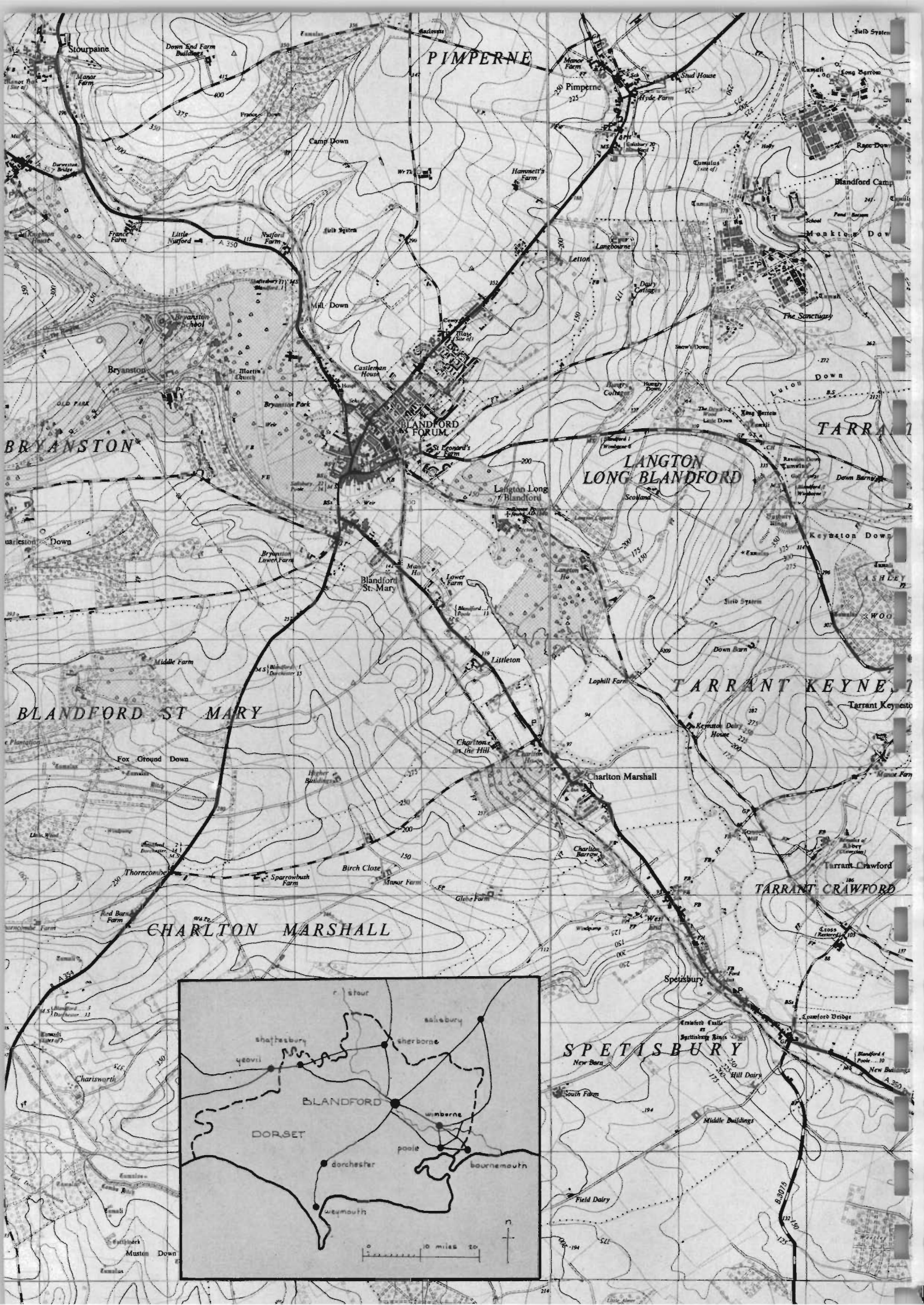
# BLANDFORD FORUM

CONSERVE & ENHANCE

DONALD W. INSALL and Associates  
Architects and Planning Consultants

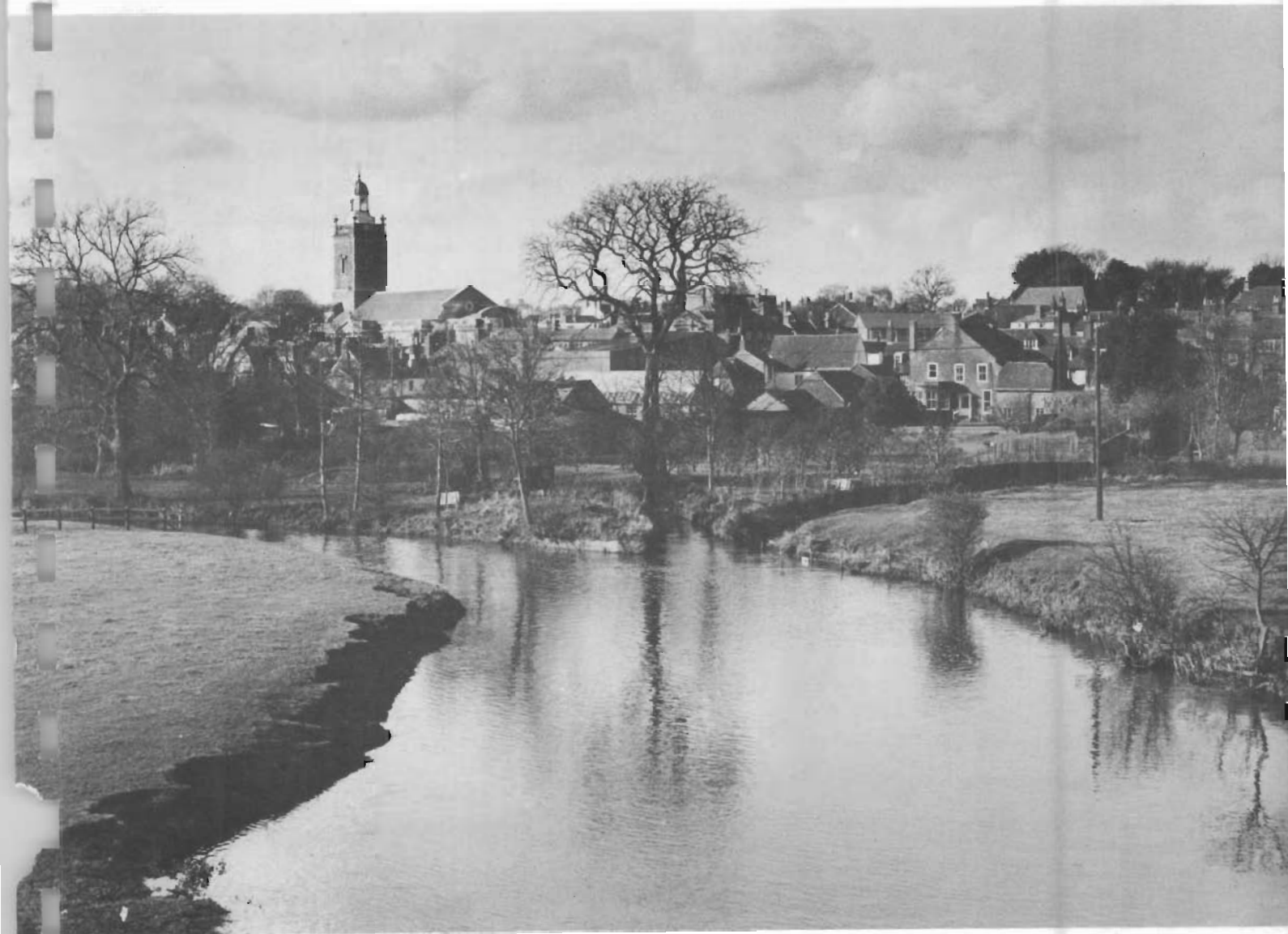








# BLANDFORD FORUM CONSERVE AND ENHANCE



Blandford Forum is an intensely attractive Dorset town set beside the River Stour and overlooked on all sides by rolling chalk downs. The town was almost completely burned down by a fire in 1731 and during the following thirty years was rebuilt. Most of this Georgian rebuilding remains. To conserve and to enhance these buildings and the urban spaces which they enclose is the prime concern of this Conservation Study.

The large volume of traffic passing through Blandford, the increased number of shoppers and the change in shopping pattern from family grocer to supermarket are the three insistent pressures for change in the town. The heart of Blandford, has as yet yielded little to these pressures, but they daily grow stronger.

At this crucial turning point in the development of Blandford as a market town, the consultants are privileged to have been asked to prepare for the County Planning Department of Dorset this preliminary Conservation Study of Blandford.

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

"The consultant is to prepare a general architectural assessment of the buildings and their environment at present comprising the Town Centre of Blandford, with special regard for their architectural and historical merit, and to recommend upon general guide lines towards the enhancement of the setting of these buildings and on the siting and design of future new developments in their particular context".



- 1 Mediaeval and 18th century Blandford -- Blandford fire and rebuilding -- The Bastard family -- Blandford since the Bastards.
  
- 2 Townscape and approaches -- From Blandford St Mary to the Market Place -- East Street to the Market Place -- From the Salisbury Road down Salisbury Street to the Market Place -- The Market Place -- The Church, Church Lane and Sheep Market Hill -- The Close, the Tabernacle and the Plocks -- White Cliff Mill Street -- Bryanston Street and Short's Lane -- Orchard Street, North Place and Dorset Street -- Park Road and Damory Street.
  
- 3 Population increase -- Changed trading pattern -- Supermarkets -- Service access -- Offices -- Housing -- Hotels -- Restaurants and public houses -- Public assembly -- River and public open space -- Clinics -- Industry -- Car trade -- Demolition and decay -- Pedestrians -- Traffic -- Public car parks -- Private car parks.
  
- 4 Boundary of the Conservation Area -- Additions to the list of buildings of architectural or historical interest -- Upgrading of existing listed buildings -- Buildings urgently needing attention -- Examples to be set by repairing and restoring certain buildings -- Pairs of buildings to be renovated together -- Some listed buildings noted as needing repair or close watch -- Building details -- Townscape details -- Trees and planting -- Blandford -- planning and development control -- Recommendations.



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ENHANCEMENT  
OF THE  
CONSERVATION AREA



1

THE MAKING  
OF  
BLANDFORD



"A faire Market Towne, pleafantlie seated upon the River, and neare unto the Downes, well inhabited, and of good Traffique; a Parte of which though it were burned in our time, yet its rifen up againe fairer built than before."

(Coker, Survey of Dorset, 1618-1629)

**BLANDFORD** has changed little in character since Coker's time. The mediaeval town grew up beside a ford across the River Stour. To this ford converged roads from Bournemouth and Dorchester at the south, and from Yeovil, Sherborne and Salisbury on the north and east. Set equidistant from these towns, Blandford gradually established for itself an important market trade.

Blandford was described as "Burgus" in 1219 and was represented in parliament in 1305 and 1329. Blandford Borough was incorporated in 1605. Of mediaeval Blandford the only survivals are the bridge, first mentioned in 1278, and St. Leonard's Chapel (possibly the remains of a leper hospital); but the plan of the centre of Blandford remains mediaeval.

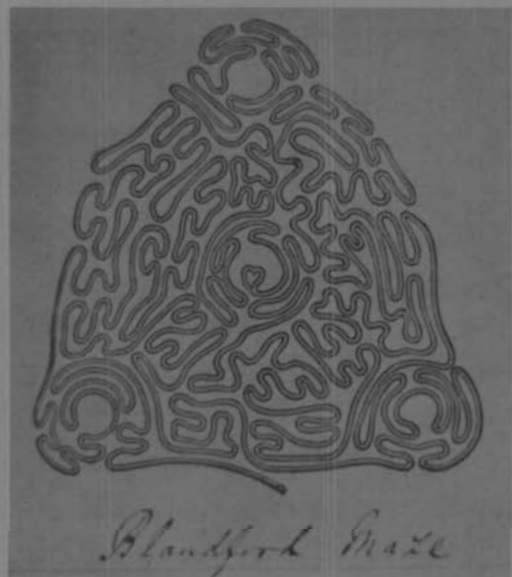
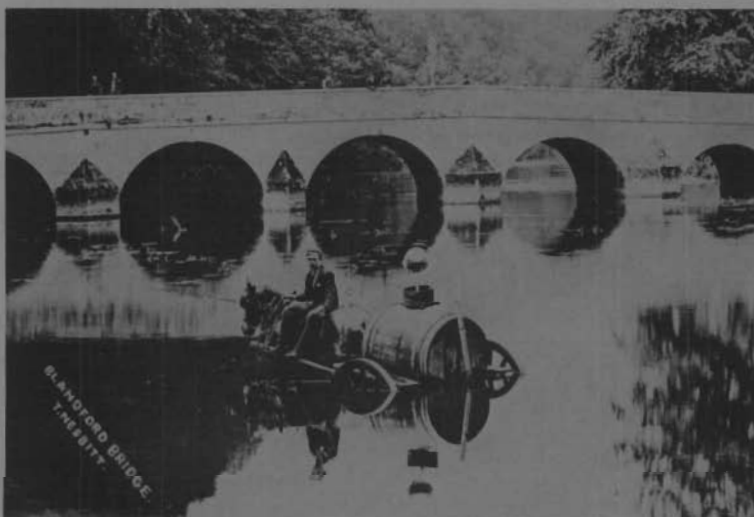
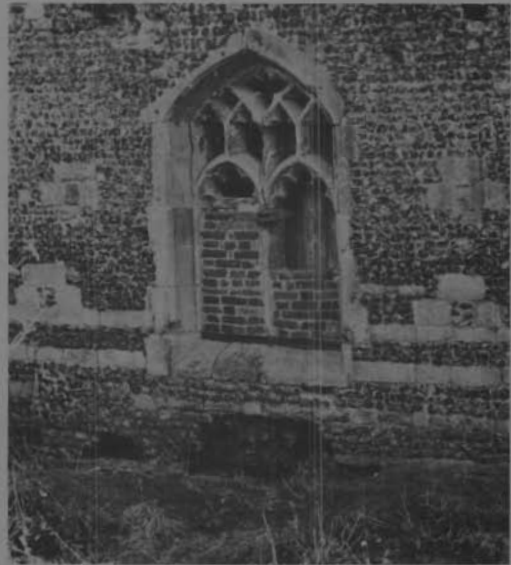
In the mid-17th century **Blandford Free-School** was "the most general school for the education of gentlemen in the West of England". Milton Abbas School, founded in 1521, moved to Blandford in 1775 and succeeded the Free-School. The poor depended on charity for their education. John Bastard left £500 from which the interest was to educate 35 poor children, who were probably the orphans from the 1731 fire. These children were given the surname of Blandford and "Blandford" families still live in Blandford.

**Nonconformism** has deep seated roots in Dorset. John Wesley's grandfather was gaoled in Blandford for nonconformity. In 1672 however he was licensed to hold Congregational services in Blandford. Langhorne's barn was the first nonconformist meeting house and on the site of the barn the "Old Meeting House" was built. Demolished in 1856, the present Wesleyan and Methodist Chapel was built on the same site in the Close.

Thomas Cox describes 18th century Blandford as "Now one of the most considerable Towns in the County for Buildings, the Concourse of the Gentry and Accommodation for Travellers." The famous Blandford Races were held on the downs at Tarrant Monkton four miles away. Permanent amusements in Blandford were the bowling green laid down in 1674 and a maze, formed of ridges of earth and stone 12"-18" high which covered nearly an acre on the site of the present cemetery.

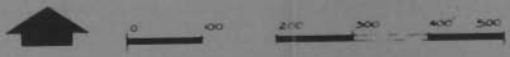
**Cottage industry** helped to make Blandford prosperous. Blandford was "chiefly famous for making the finest bonelace in England". Bandstrings were another cottage industry but after 1720 when thread and wire buttons were invented, buttons supplanted bandstrings. Hand knitted gloves were made in Blandford and there is still a small glove factory. Basket making survived into the early 20th century.

The turnpike road between Bridport, Dorchester and Blandford became a Mail Coach Route in 1784. In 1783 the bridge had been widened to take the increased traffic.









# BLANDFORD FORUM



## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

-  pre 1731 - mostly 1713-1731.
-  georgian - mostly 1731-1760.
-  victorian.
-  post victorian.

note the compact group of buildings 1713-1731 at the east end of east street.

note that the west side of dorset street and the

BLANDFORD ST MARY



BLANDFORD FIRE AND REBUILDING: THE BASTARD FAMILY

On June 14th 1731, a devastating fire burned down almost all of this prosperous market town. There had been earlier fires in this formerly timber and thatched town in 1576, 1677 and 1713, but this was the worst of them all. The fire started in a tallow chandler's shop at 2.0.p.m., at the junction of Salisbury Street and White Cliff Mill Street. There was a north wind and soon the fire had spread as far as Blandford St Mary. The church was the last building to catch fire but by next morning "ye poor remains were scarcely fit for a foundation."

16 persons lost their lives and 480 families were homeless. Barracks for the distressed poor were built and a "Tabernacle" temporarily replaced the church. Less than a year later "An Act for the Better and the More Early Rebuilding of Blandford"... was passed by parliament. The "Moore Early Rebuilding" was essential lest Blandford should lose the market trade to her old rival Sturminster Newton, only eight miles north.

Around Blandford in the early 18th century there was a boom in country house building. Riding that boom was the building firm of Thomas, John and William Bastard. A "list of Sufferers" shows how the Bastard firm of builders lost £3709 in the fire - more than anyone else. The Bastards not only grew rich on their building contracts but also gained much skill as designers. The many fine tradesman's houses in Blandford which they rebuilt after the fire show a degree of architectural finesse far beyond that which would normally be expected in any country market town.

There was very little replanning of the town after the fire partly because disputes over property delayed rebuilding. A bottleneck was removed in Salisbury Street but most important of all the Market Place and the Church precincts were created. There were no other major alterations to the town plan. John Parker, a chirurgeon, asked for permission to align his house with the street by advancing one end by 18". Miner resiting of this nature created the unbroken Blandford street facades.

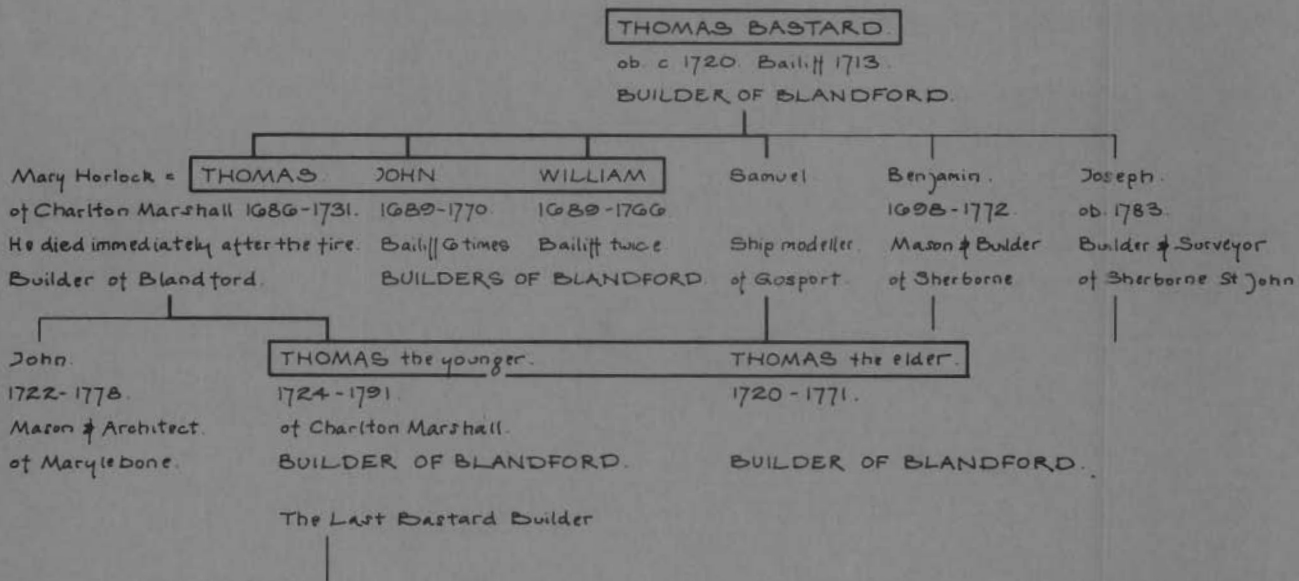
A comparison of the map of Blandford drawn by the Bastards after the fire with the modern ordnance survey map shows how much of this post-fire rebuilding survives. These buildings, probably thanks largely to the direction of John and William Bastard, are the charm and delight which is Georgian Blandford. These buildings are the prime concern of the Conservation Area.



The inturning volutes of a Bastard capital.

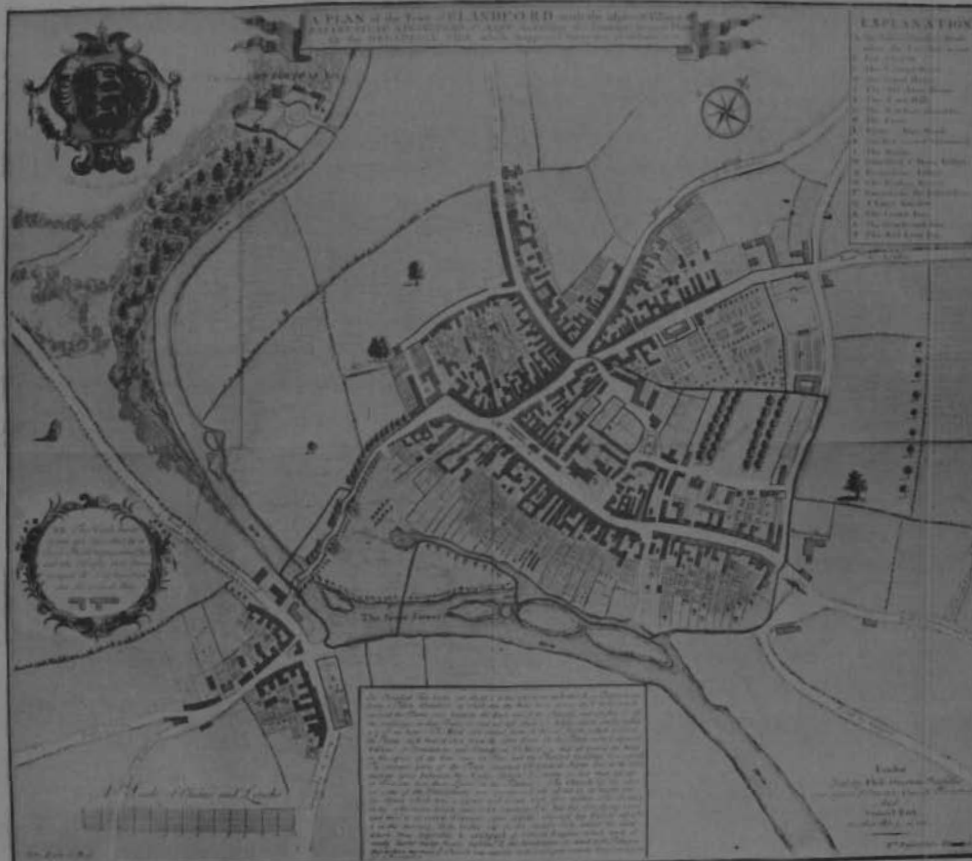


## THREE GENERATIONS OF BUILDERS THE BASTARDS OF BLANDFORD.



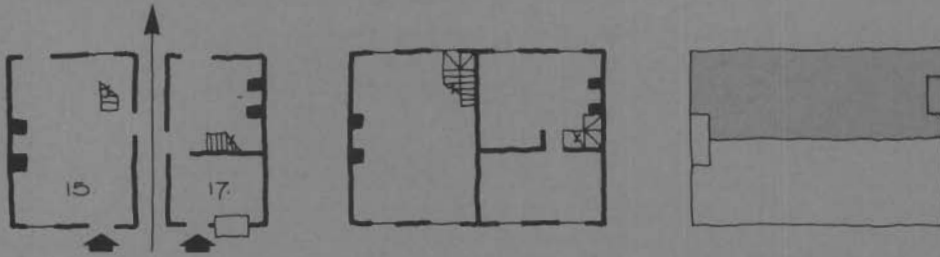
The Market Place and Churchyard before and after the 1731 fire. The Church remained in the same position but the Shambles, Guildhall and Middle Row were not rebuilt.

Blandford c. 1731.

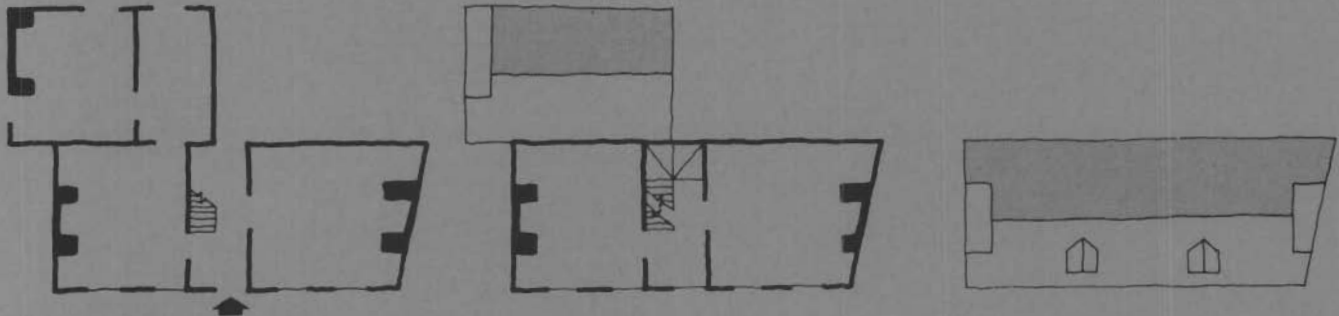
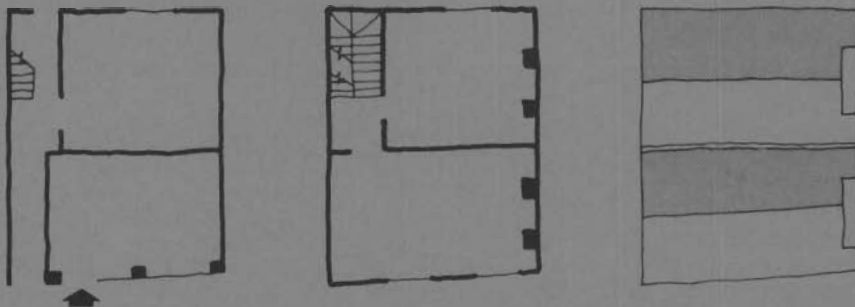




## 18th century house types in Blandford.



post 1713 fire... a pair of artisans cottages. 15 &amp; 17 east street.

post 1731 fire... a professional man's or leading merchant's house.  
lime tree house.

post 1731 fire... shopkeeper's house 12 west street



Nos. 15 and 17 East Street.



Lime Tree House.



No. 12 West Street.

## BLANDFORD SINCE THE BASTARDS

From 1801-1851 the population of Blandford grew from 2326 to 3948, slightly larger than the present population of the borough. The old road to Sherborne along Bryanston Street was closed by the formation of Bryanston Park and 19th century cheaper housing grew to the north east while wealthier houses were built along Salisbury Street and White Cliff Mill Street. Gas arrived in 1837 and the Dorset Central Railway in 1862. The present infants' school was founded in 1821 and Thomas Horlock Bastard founded the Grammar School in 1862. The Grammar School was superceded by the Blandford County Modern School, opened in 1955, while Bryanston boys' public school was founded in 1927.

The Bastards' Church was altered in 1837. Side galleries were added to seat a congregation of 1700 and in 1893 Robert Norman rolled back the apse to insert a new chancel. 1970 saw the removal of the galleries. The Roman Catholic church was built in 1934.

The open downs around Blandford and the nearness of Portland Harbour make Blandford a strategic mustering point for soldiers. Both Wolfe and Wellington reviewed troops on Blandford Downs. During the Seven Years War in the 1760's and in the 1800's at Bonaparte's expected invasion of England, Blandford was a mobilization point. 3600 men camped outside Blandford during the Boer War and two divisions of the Royal Naval Division trained there during the 1914-1918 war. At the outset of the 1939-1945 War Blandford was ringed with defences and was organized as a self-contained fortress. Defensive "Dragons' Teeth" remain at the river and railway bridges. Blandford camp is now the permanent depot of the Royal Signals, who are soon expected to have a total military and civilian population of about 3250 persons, which is as large as the Borough itself. Military patronage continues to be a profitable feature of Blandford Borough.

Blandford's first mentioned fair was in 1279 but no more fairs were held in Fairfield after the 1940's. Corn trade ceased on the Corn Exchange after 1930 and the railway has been closed. No more sheep were seen on Sheep Market Hill after 1822, but as late as 1908 Blandford and Dorchester were still the centres for the sale of Dorset Down draft ewes and lambs. An attempt in the early 1960's to re-establish the cattle market failed. Nearby Sturminster Newton now has the largest calf market in the world.

Today Blandford is above all else an important local centre for shopping - a town still mostly of shopkeepers and small businesses. The brewery in Blandford St. Mary, established in 1777, employs 250 persons and one engineering firm employs 49 persons; but other concerns have seldom a payroll of more than a dozen. New light industry is steadily expanding to the north of the town; and after its retail shops, Blandford's car trade is remarkably important, with as many as 18 garages around the town centre. Blandford Market no longer plays so important a part in local life. The market trade reinforces instead the shops in West Street, East Street, Salisbury Street and the Market Place.

Blandford provides for a steadily increasing population, and this and new trading trends are reflected in pronounced pressures on the fabric of the town, its streets and old buildings. It is the heart of this town, most of which still dates from the Bastards' rebuilding of the 1730's, which forms the present Conversation Area.



Blandford 1838.

**BLANDFORD.**  
**SEIZURE**  
OF  
**CHURCH RATES.**

The Churchwardens of this Parish, Mr. W. T. Elgar and Mr. Robert Lock, in the exercise of the Legal Authority which they possess to compel those who dissent from the CHURCH OF ENGLAND, to contribute towards the support of its worship, have caused to be seized

**TWO CARTS,**

from Mr. H. F. FISHER,  
in payment of £4. 2. 10, the amount of RATES demanded.

The Carts were disposed of in the Market Place, by Mr. Clarke, of Wimborne - the Auctioneers of this Town refusing to cooperate in such an unpopular undertaking. The amount realized was £5. 2. 6, the real value of the property being about £10.

It is unnecessary to comment on the unscriptural character of the above proceedings.

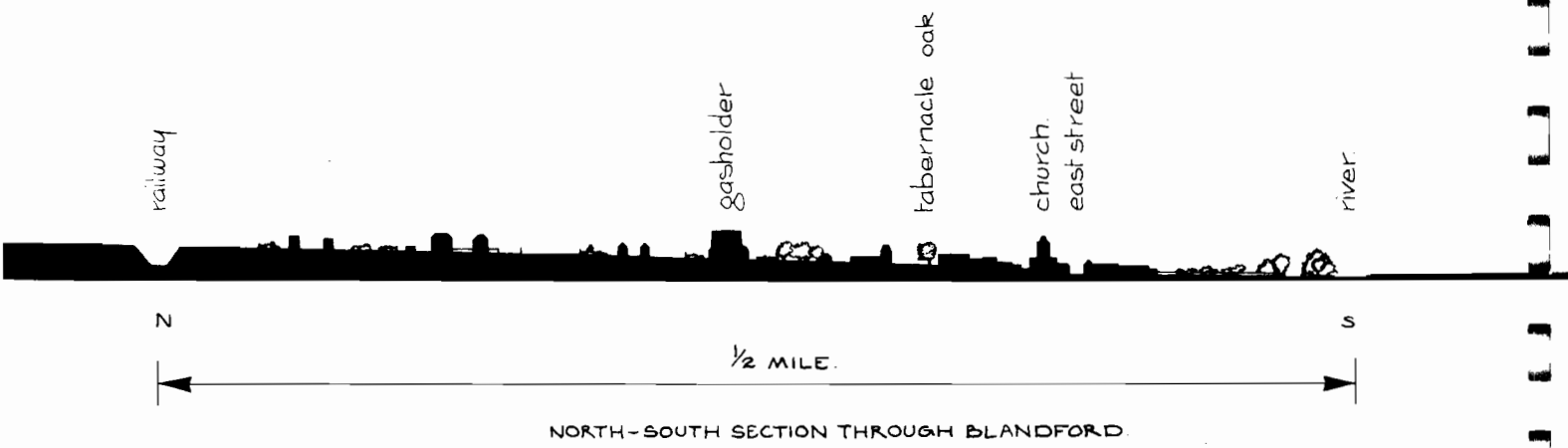
April 27th. 1859.





2

THE  
CHARACTER  
OF THE  
CONSERVATION  
AREA



NORTH-SOUTH SECTION THROUGH BLANDFORD





### IDENTITY

- an area of national importance
- areas of prime importance
- areas of secondary importance
- \* preserve & enhance the historic character of these areas

## BLANDFORD FORUM



### TOWNSCAPE

- especially good 18th century street facades
- good 19th century street facades
- buildings of important townscape value
- important garden walls
- \* good modern building or conversion of old building
- unsatisfactory frontage areas
- eye-sore

BLANDFORD ST MARY



- important town-  
scape views
- immensely  
important  
rural views

enclosed rural 18th century village



BRYANSTON PARK.

telephone exchange.

SHORTS LANE

18  
16  
14  
12  
10  
8  
6  
4  
9  
11  
15  
17  
21  
23  
25

CHURCH LANE

old bank house

town hall

MARKET PLACE.

crown hotel.

WEST STREET

phylvic lodge.

green house

red lion

bastards house

car park.

swimming bath.

THE HAM.

blandford bridge.

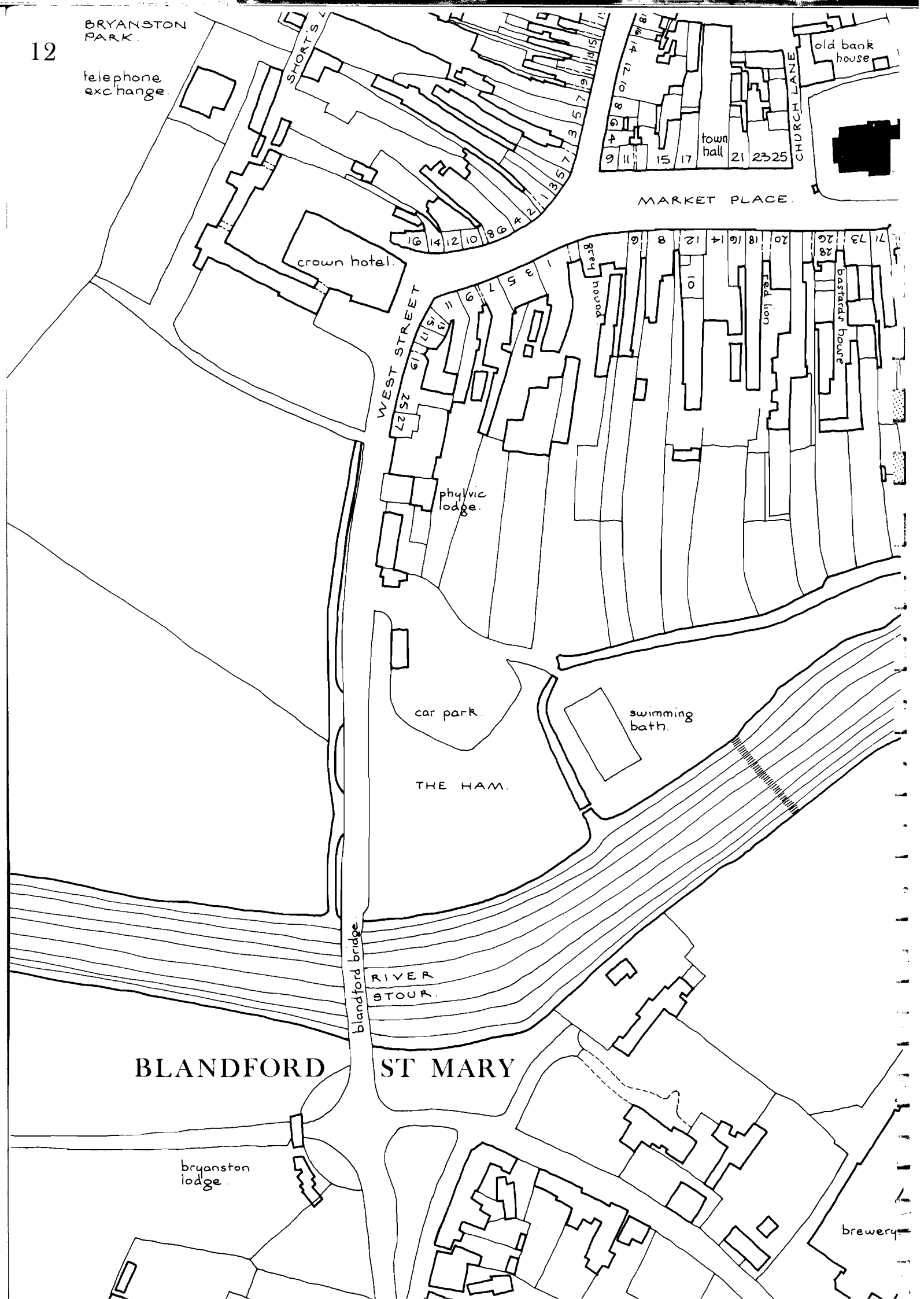
RIVER STOUR.

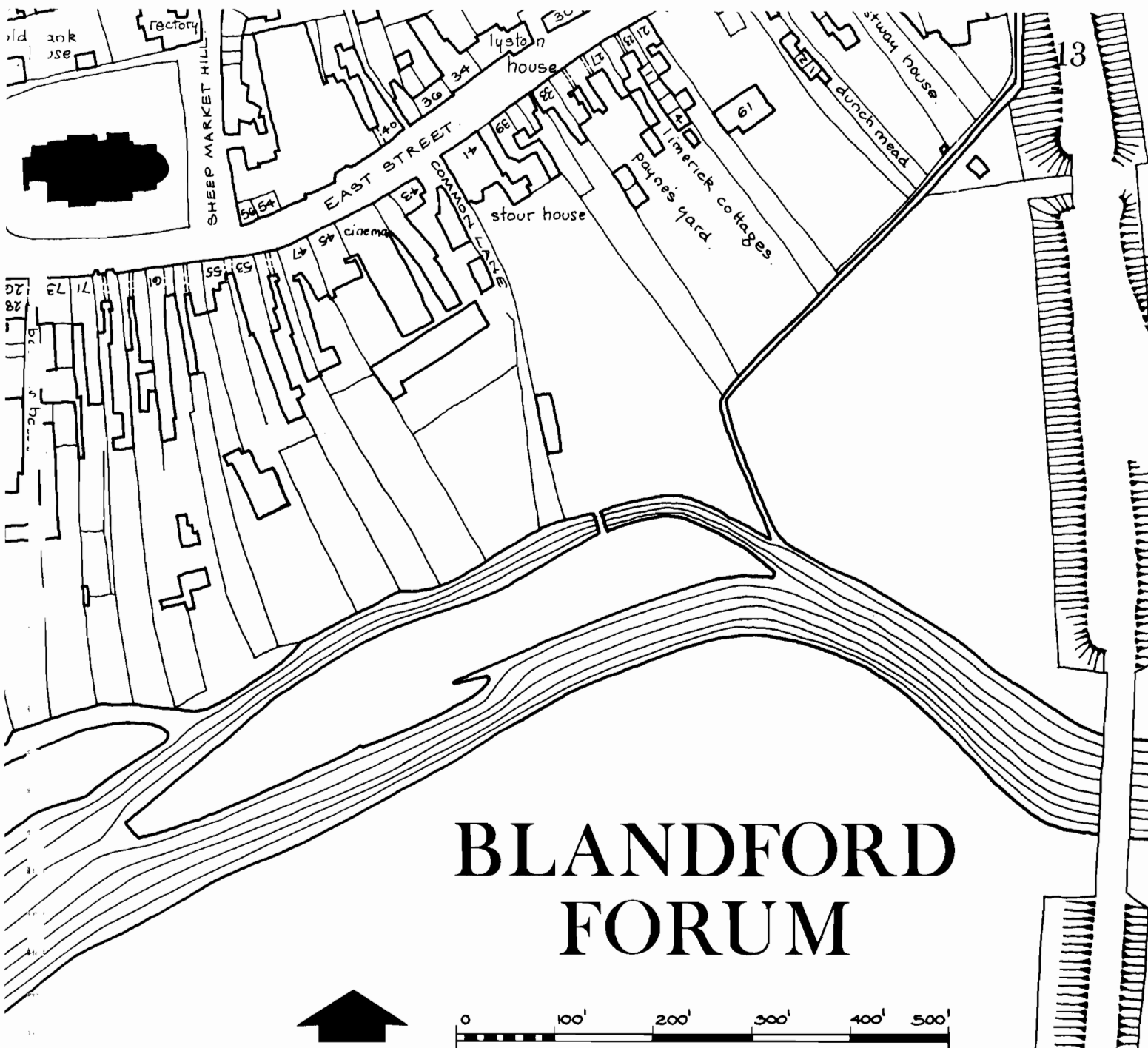
BLANDFORD

ST MARY

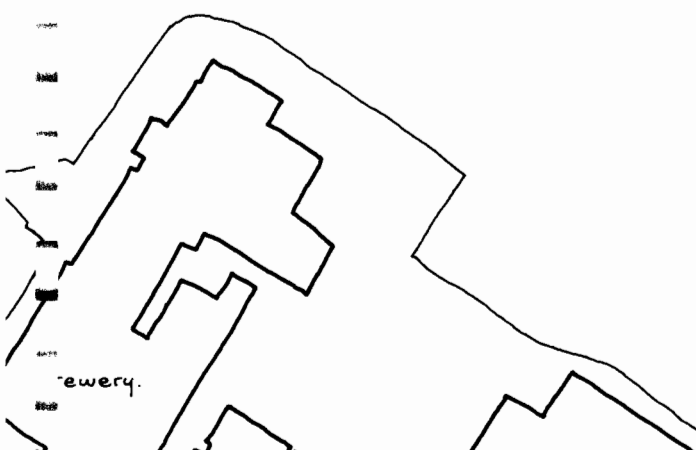
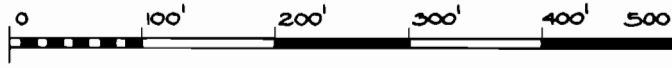
bryanston lodge.

brewery

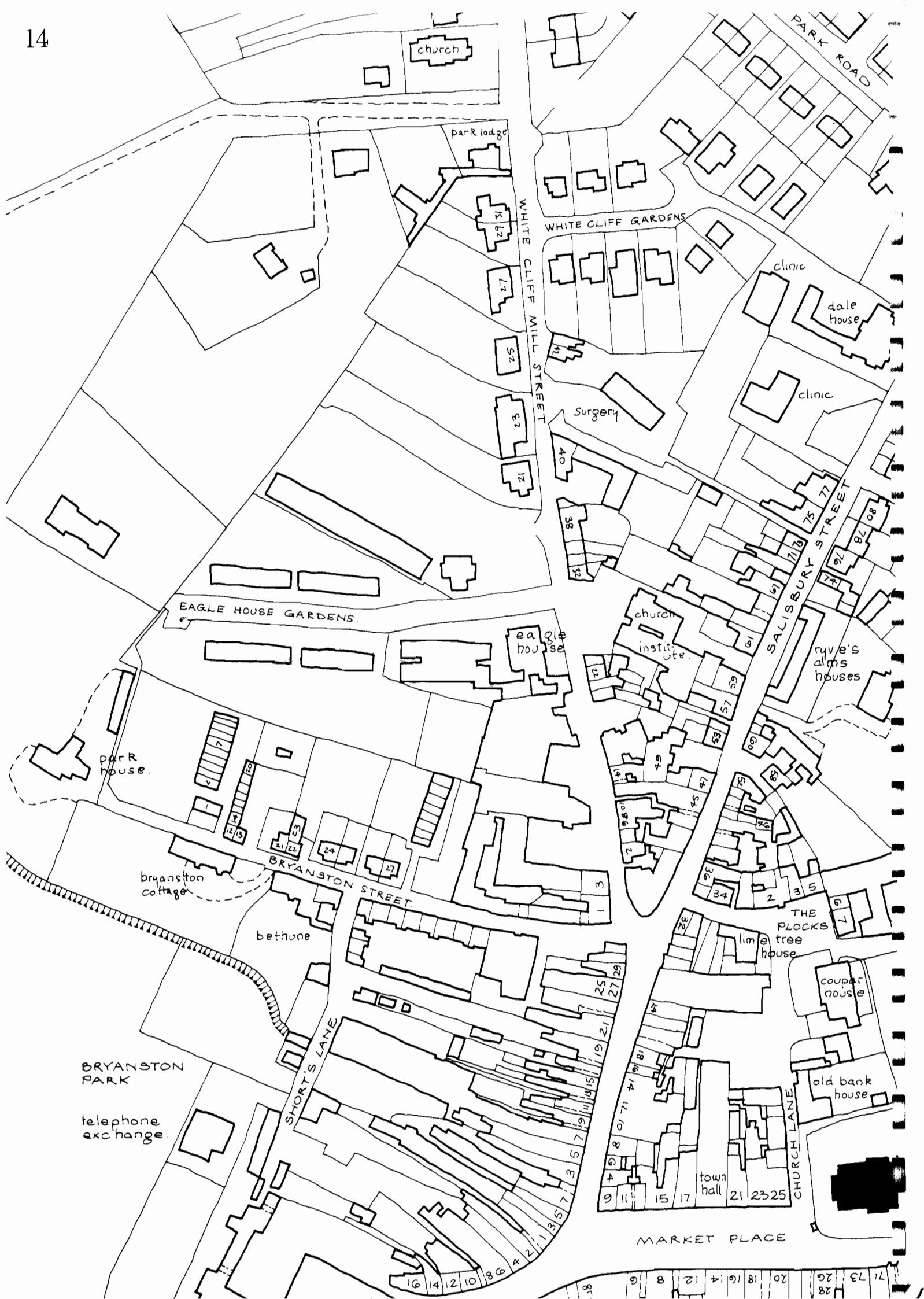




# BLANDFORD FORUM



ewery.







ARK ROAD

SALISBURY ROAD

bus depot.

dale house

nic

disused railway station.

RY 9 STREET

NORTH PLACE

infants school

ORCHARD STREET

OAKFIELD STREET

ruve's palms houses

fields oak house.

gas works.

old persons garden.

THE CLOSE

post office

chapel.

close house

fire stn

THE TABERNACLE

old house

coupar house

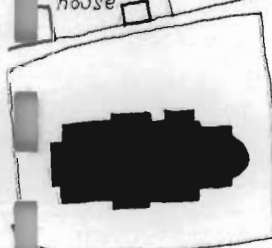
old bank house

factory

library

lystn house

eastway house



SHEEP MARKET HILL

EAST STREET

stour house

67

dunch mead

COMMON LANE

paule's yard  
limerick cottages.

cinema

TOWNSCAPE AND APPROACHES

Descending into Blandford from any one of the three major road approaches, from Salisbury, Dorchester or Wimborne, the town is seen spread out below beside the River Stour. The white-painted cupola on the church tower is the first conspicuous landmark. This tower rises above a charming muddle of soft red tiled roofs, mellow brickwork and long walled gardens running down to the river. The only other building to compete with it is a dominating gasholder, by whose loss the town would greatly gain. Beyond the old railway line and rising up to the east of the town are tiers of slate-roofed terraces, in stern contrast to the harmony of the earlier red-tiled roofs.

The prominence of the Church and gasholder emphasises the need for careful control over the height of new buildings within the town.

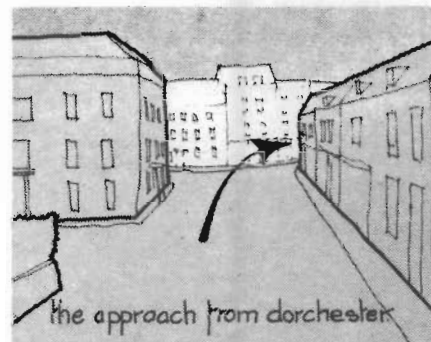


FROM BLANDFORD ST. MARY TO THE MARKET PLACE

From the Dorchester Road beyond Blandford St. Mary, the first glimpse is of slate roofs, but then the road bends to the west and aims straight at the church tower. From this narrow view a wider enclosure opens up before the bridge. The woods and lodges of Bryanston and a grove of trees opposite, masking a homely terrace of shops, pub and houses, combine to give a miniature preview of pleasures in store. The road itself narrows over Blandford Bridge, but the vista breaks open, revealing the town ahead. Sweeping pastures stretch up from the river beyond, from whose far bank rise steeply and gloriously Bryanston woods.

Entering Blandford from Blandford St. Mary, at the beginnings of West Street are the Ham car park and the shameful corrugated iron of the swimming bath, together with the car park cafe and the public lavatories. These are an eyesore and an unfortunate introduction to the town. A garage, the former Assembly Rooms, is festering with signs which should be removed, especially from the south facing wall. The long mansard range of Nos. 15-25 West Street flows up to the half timbered facade of the Crown and Anchor at the corner. The view ahead glances off the imposing facade of the Crown Hotel and is led along the finest 18th century group of facades in Blandford, (although at the moment scarred by a traffic accident and shored up), into the Market Place itself.

In contrast to the high quality of its west side, West Street displays a curious seediness along its east side, although with attention this side of the street could be made much more worthy in its role of introduction to the Market Place. Most of its houses are good 18th century buildings, but they suffer in detail from insensitive repairs to the facades. Above a mess of petrol pumps, in a dangerous and unsuitable position, the pretty oriel window of No. 1 West Street is obscured by ill-placed signs. Beyond when traffic permits, the Market Place is revealed in all its glory.





EAST STREET TO THE MARKET PLACE

East Street is mostly 18th century but of two distinct periods. The east end of the street was rebuilt after the earlier fire of 1713. Its buildings are slightly smaller in scale than their later brothers built after the later fire of 1731. This partly accidental expansion in scale as one passes along East Street is enjoyable and ends in a crescendo at the church by the Market Place.

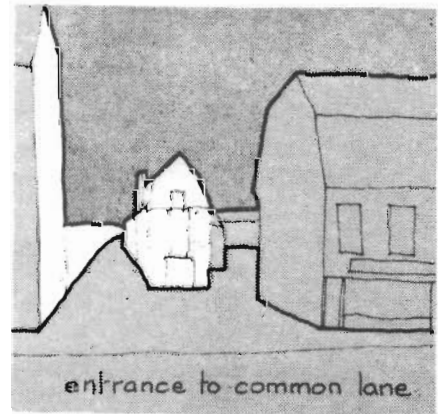
Entering from the Wimborne Road through the imposing railway arches, Nos. 1 & 3 and Nos. 2 & 4 East Street make most imposing stops to the street, but the two garages, W.C.'s and shabby condition of Nos. 1 & 3 make this an un-savoury introduction to the town. Next door to No. 3 is Eastway House, with a pretty facade, and urn-topped parapet wall. East Street is a long 'S' curve and Lyston House is well set at mid-point on that curve where it is visually important from both directions. No. 19 is a self-assured house, though the present gravel forecourt and suburban chain link fence do it no justice. Stour House stands solidly at one side of the entrance to Common Lane while on the other is a picturesque wedge-shaped cottage.

Casement windows are to be found amongst the post-1713 fire houses and some of the cornices are coved. A few of the cottages may be timber framed. They are often in poor condition and their roofs tend to sag. The facades are usually brick, but No. 24 has mathematical tiling and there are also pebbledash and rendered facades. These last sometimes have unfortunate imitation stone joints.

Past Common Lane and leading up to the Market Place, Blandford's scale gradually builds up. The larger houses are mostly in fair condition, often with good carved cornices.

The cinema is a typical example of 1930's brick-work. Because it is brick it fits into the street scene and not unhappily. No. 45's sombre green painted windows should be white and the beautiful cornice of 63 and 65 would be better painted all one colour. No. 71 has an admirable three-storeyed oriel window and next door, No. 73, is the Bastards' House where the Market Place properly begins.

The growth in scale from the pre-fire cottages to the large Market Place houses is important, while incidental contrast is given by the larger houses along East Street-Eastway House, Lyston House and Stour House. The long 'S' curve is pleasant, and then between No. 56 East Street and the Star Inn the road narrows withholding a flirtatious view of the church until the very last moment. Townscape must come before traffic here, and any new building on the site of 56 East Street should maintain this element of surprise.



East Street, south side.



FROM THE SALISBURY ROAD, DOWN SALISBURY STREET TO THE MARKET PLACE

Suburban sprawl lines the Salisbury Road, but against the magnificent backdrop of Bryanston woods unfold the tiled roofs and church tower beyond. At the traffic lights, a car salesroom heralds the approach of the town centre and the one-way system starts with its accompanying impedimenta of signs, islands and talkative tarmac.

Salisbury Street is a busy shopping street, growing in importance as it approaches the Market Place. Amidst the Victorian and modern shops are 18th century buildings which wherever possible must be retained to ensure the continuity of materials and scale from the Market Place.

No. 81 Salisbury Street and Dale House, dating from 1689, stand at the north end of Salisbury Street. A modern clinic is dominated by the tall tulip tree in the garden of Dale House.

From Nos. 57 to 77 and from Ryve's Almshouses to No. 88, Salisbury Street offers a good mixed bag of buildings. Large professional white stucco houses of the early 19th century face solidly built red brick houses of a century earlier. A pretty 'L' shaped group of small cottages leads up to the attractive pre-fire almshouses. 18th century No. 71 is in very bad condition but because of its two-storeyed oriel window is well worth repairing. No. 67, also 18th century, has a beautifully-worked brick niche above its front door, a perfect example of the Blandford bricklayers' art.

White-painted No. 49 is very attractive with a weeping willow in the front garden. Alfred Stevens was born in No. 38, one of the good header brickwork houses. Nos. 29-33 form an important group which very well closes the entrance to Salisbury from White Cliff Mill Street, but the new store next door is an unmitigated error, exemplifying how a street can be ruined by the loss of its roofline and by inserting an insensitive modern building. Above the arch between Nos. 18 and 20, though the whitewash should be removed from its panes, is an attractive oriel window. Modern Woolworths, Victorian Cherry's and 18th century, bow-fronted No. 6 are all part of the evolution of Blandford as a market town and help to make up the varied and lively character of Salisbury Street. At the bottom of the street the delicious coved plaster awning of No. 9 The Market Place leads the eye from Salisbury Street around to the Market Place at the heart of Blandford.



### THE MARKET PLACE

The Market Place was designed by the Bastards after the 1731 fire, as Blandford's "piece-de-resistance." They succeeded and still succeed. Ranks of white windows set in blue-header brickwork and crowned by white cornices and red tiled roofs encircle and enclose the Market Place. The church tower looks down upon but does not enclose the scene; East Street below the churchyard wall is visually part of the Market Place, stopped only by No. 56 East Street. The Bastards' monument to the fire, like a toy soldier's sentry box, symbolically guards the east end of the Market Place, but pushing it against the churchyard's west wall, double yellow lines uncomfortably shut it out of circulation. What has happened to the crest which used to spring from the pediment's apex?

All but two of the Market Place buildings were built immediately after the 1731 fire. The tall palatial stone facade of Lloyds Bank holds its own but the recent Neo-Blandford Midland Bank has an unfortunate flat roof which reveals too much of the flank wall of the Town Hall.

The Town Hall's triple arches and stone facade declare its civic importance. Its iron gates curve gracefully down, reflecting in reverse the arches above. This building deserves better than to be turned into a monumental public lavatory.

No. 9, on the corner of Salisbury Street, has one of Blandford's two surviving 18th century shop fronts. It is entirely charming but in poor condition and deserves early repair.

Three most important buildings handsomely master the south side of the Market Place; the Bastards' House, the Red Lion and the Greyhound Inn. The broken entablature, bold window surrounds and symmetrical facade make the Bastards' House a bold and powerful design. The Red Lion is its companion. By careful restoration, much could be made of these three buildings. Looking from Salisbury Street opposite, the stuccoed Greyhound Inn leads the eye either into the Market Place or on to West Street. Through the arch of the Greyhound is a view into the yard behind; but old posters, petrol signs and general seediness eke out of Conyer's garage. Among the modern shop-fronts Barclay's Bank has a good bold and clean-looking facade, although the dark brick piers are unrelated to the fenestration above.

At the west end of the Market Place is the finest group of street facades in Blandford. The curve of this facade leads the eye out of the Market Place up Salisbury Street, or continues into West Street. Sun sparkles on the blue header bricks but the structural condition of some of these houses causes concern. In addition to No. 10 West Street, recently destroyed by a lorry, sagging and bowing of facades may be serious. No. 1 The Market Place is in a supremely important position and is of very fine quality. The white Victorian iron cresting above the shop front enhances the effect. A new pent-house has been sympathetically built into the old roof of No. 4 West Street. This perhaps makes the building a little top heavy from a distance.

The Market Place is the heart of Blandford. Not even all the thronging traffic crowds out its charm. In a country town context, the buildings are grand but at the same time very human in scale. The proportion of the enclosed area to the height of the buildings seems perfect. All the entrances and conversely the exits to and from the Market Place are very subtle. From an enclosed central space, fleeting glimpses are allowed out through the archways on the south side. The Market Place is a brilliant masterpiece in which every element has its part.







DORCH  
ESTER

SALIS  
BURY

POOL  
SHAFTES  
BURY

STUR  
NEWTON

SLOW

DORCH SALIS  
ESTER BURY

POOL SHAFTES  
BURY

STUR  
NEWTON

BUS

### THE CHURCH, CHURCH LANE AND SHEEP MARKET HILL

The church is set upon a raised churchyard. From here the church watches life hurrying by on all sides. From this grassy platform is a splendid view of the Market Place which curves away to the southwest. There is a restful sense of enclosure around this church. The facades on the south present an impenetrable wall. Tall, narrow Church Lane is to the west, Old Bank House and the Rectory guard the entrances to the northwest and the northeast corners. To the east a stepped roofline descends the hill until No. 56 narrows with the southern impenetrable wall and guards the entrance to the Market Place from East Street.

The cliff-like wall of the Victorian warehouses west of the church emphasises the narrowness of Church Lane as one passes from the Church enclosure to the Church Lane car park. The present black corrugated-iron sheds on the south side of the car park are a disgrace. Across the road Coupar House grandly stands behind iron gates and urn-topped pillars.

Up Sheep Market Hill, past the row of cars tucked away neatly beneath the churchyard wall is the Rectory, which closes Sheep Market Hill by reaching out towards the row of Victorian cottages opposite.

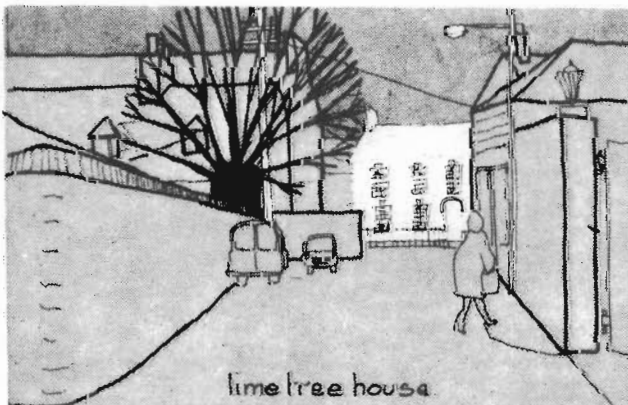
### THE CLOSE, THE TABERNACLE AND THE PLOCKS

At the west end of the Close, a builder's yard is all too visible through a chicken-wire fence. The car repairs opposite are luckily hidden behind walls. Past this industry, Close House with well-detailed cornice and header brickwork is one of Blandford's better houses; and at the bottom of Dorset Street is the Old House. This pre-fire house was built about 1660. Its powerfully rusticated brickwork, tall stone and tile roof and great shafted chimney stacks make it the building with the strongest character in Blandford.

The Wesleyan and Methodist Chapel comprises a family of three buildings diminishing in scale as they near the Tabernacle. Past the Chapel are three well placed seats facing south but the neighbouring male urinal is primitive. A topiary "Hall and Woodhouse" announces the donor of the attractive old age pensioners' garden. Over the garden wall Dorset Street's mansard roofs happily enclose the garden.

Past the handsome facade of Leslie House is the well-designed modern library which justly received a Civic Trust Award. From Sheep Market Hill the Tabernacle Oak fortunately obscures and softens the impact of the no-nonsense neo-georgian Post Office which now dominates the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle is generally untidy. The scruffy Tabernacle Oak has outgrown its railings, the corner of the Rector's garden wall needs repairing and the parking areas need replanning.

Trees overhanging from the Rector's garden only slightly mitigate the shabby corrugated iron at the back door of Coupar House. This narrow road from the Tabernacle to the Plocks reveals nothing until the jutting wall of Coupar House is passed. Exquisite Lime Tree House is then revealed. The Borough offices are good 18th century houses. The Plocks car park is reserved for Borough officers, but others manage to squeeze in. The road narrows at its end, where it joins Salisbury Street.



WHITE CLIFF MILL STREET

At the south end of White Cliff Mill Street are 18th century and early 19th century buildings. Eagle House is almost certainly by the Bastards. Eight houses are then an attractive example of a mid-19th century suburban style. Opposite this group are modern infilling bungalows. At the north end of the street are substantial Victorian and modern houses.

The north end of this street is marred by an array of traffic signs and islands. Surely these signs might be hung from one gantry?

The modern surgery with its expansive pitched roof is set beside a large car park. Overlooking the car park is the long tiled roof of No. 40 White Cliff Mill Street's flint and brick walled warehouse which originally belonged to a brewery. The delightful wall and roof of this building gives to the private car park a sense of enclosure and to the surgery itself a peaceful and reassuring character. No. 40 is listed Grade III and the warehouse should be listed too.

On the east side of the street some of the early houses are rather shabby. Where No. 30 has been demolished the scar on the north wall of No. 28 is very unsightly.

Eagle House opposite needs restoration. The bay window, porch and lavatory accretion on the north side are distressing and should be removed. The cornice on the facade has been badly repaired. This is a house worthy of attention.

The Eagle House workshops, the four blocks of modern flats beyond and the workshops behind the flats are one of the most drab and soulless parts of Blandford.

From Eagle House to the King's Arms, the west side of White Cliff Mill Street is devoted to the motor trade. Petrol signs and garage forecourts make this a most unattractive stretch of road. Artificial stone walling should be forbidden in Blandford. This is the only area of Blandford where modern pressures to develop have been allowed to erode seriously the character of part of the town. Five listed buildings have been demolished to create the garage forecourts. This must be a sombre example of what can happen without proper planning control.

The ground slopes down sharply at the end of White Cliff Mill Street and No. 33 Salisbury Street closes the street most effectively.





BRYANSTON STREET AND SHORT'S LANE

In contrast with the busy shopping streets of the town, Bryanston Street is a rural backwater.

After a garage and the maltings currently for sale, the street is bordered by cottages, cottage terraces and three very attractive larger houses: Park House, Bryanston Cottage and Bethune. This domestic character of Bryanston Street should be fostered in any new development. The three rows of mansard roofed cottages are enclosed by a high garden wall to the north, outside which are a good line of trees. Both wall and trees should be preserved. Trees around Park House close the west end of Bryanston Street.

Short's Lane now provides rear access to the back of Salisbury Street and West Street. The gravel surfaces of these access areas will soon go under tarmac. The new Telephone Exchange is satisfactorily tucked away behind a flint and brick building which gives directly onto Short's Lane. If Short's Lane is developed and opened up as a service road, this building risks demolition; but it has strong local character and it should be listed now, and its windows restored as soon as ever opportunity permits.



ORCHARD STREET, NORTH PLACE AND DORSET STREET

Orchard Street and Dorset Street both consist of terraces of 19th century houses. These two streets contain cheaper housing while the north end of White Cliff Mill Street presents a more expensive development of the middle 19th century.

In Orchard Street Nos. 24-40 are a good group of two- and three-storeyed white stucco-fronted houses. No. 24 closes the view down the road between Orchard and Dorset Streets. Norris's corrugated iron is an eyesore. No. 2 North Place is a white stucco house with iron railings and basement which faces the entrance to North Place from White Cliff Mill Street.

All of the West side of Dorset Street is made up of very similar two-storeyed and mansard-roofed houses. The attractive way in which they step down the hill and the view of their roofs from the public garden by the Post Office make them a valuable piece of townscape. They should all be listed in Group III.

Between Nos. 28 and 30 is a builder's yard. The white painted horizontal boards and mansard roofs enclose the yard very happily.

Orchard Court is a modern block of houses, correct in scale, but which is unnecessarily set back from the road. If other sites in Orchard Street and Dorset Street are to be developed, one hopes the street frontage will be respected and that better bricks will be used. Nos. 15 and 17 Dorset Street very well answer to the line and character of the terrace. The terrible salmon-pink brindled bricks must surely be rendered or painted white.



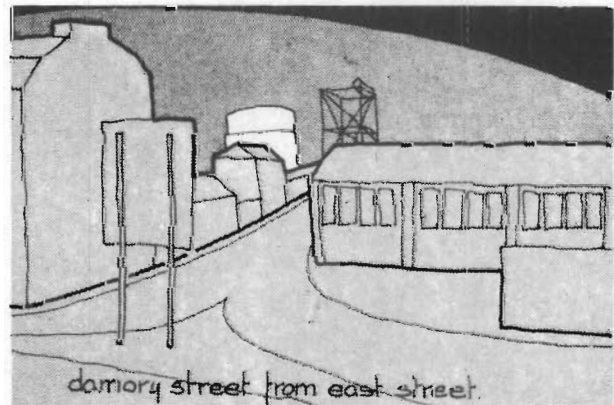
PARK ROAD AND DAMORY STREET

Park Road is mostly unremarkable. At the north end the hard roofline of the public lavatories is fortunately broken by a brace of fir trees. The Victorian school for girls has happy hooped railings but opposite is a grudging-looking terrace of Council housing.

At the traffic signalled junction with Salisbury Street and Damory Street, the sliced corner of Damory Street gives a good view of No. 81 Salisbury Street. Against the wall of the slice are dejected little flower beds and seats facing north across the tarmac triangle.

Despite the traffic rushing downhill, the gas works and the school site, which may soon become a housing estate, Damory Street is not without charm. The stepped line of mid-19th century houses on the east side of the street sometimes retain pretty awnings over their front doors; and at the corner of Damory Street and Oakfield Street is an attractive stucco terrace. On the other side of the street at the corner of the Close, No. 12 Damory Street also has a white stucco facade but the turning into the Close is sharp as the traffic scarred corner of No. 12 bears witness.

At the bottom of Damory Street, the fire station which is soon to move, more car sales, yellow lines and dragons' teeth within the first of the railway arches announce the tail end of Damory Street and another major road junction, at the conclusion of the Conservation Area.







the tabernacle oak was planted in 1905 to commemorate the tercentenary of the incorporation of blandford borough.

3

PRESSURES  
ON THE  
CONSERVATION  
AREA

Since 1731 the population has increased manyfold, the motor car has been invented and trading patterns have greatly changed. These are the three major pressures on the streets and buildings of Blandford Conservation Area. Since the rebuilding of the town after the 1731 fire the streets and buildings at the heart of the Conservation Area have remained virtually unaltered. This is the unique value of the heart of Blandford.

POPULATION. In 1881, the population of the parishes of Blandford and nearby Pimperne, Bryanston, Blandford St Mary and Langton Long Blandford was 5,000. This figure will have risen only to 6,700 in 1971. But the projected population of the same area in 1981 is 9,000. Added to this last figure must be the population of Blandford Camp, which including civilian employees, soldiers\* families and soldiers, is projected to be 3,250.

Thus Blandford served a population of 5,000 in 1881  
but will serve a population of 12,250 in 1981

SHOPS. The most important shops in the Town Centre are grouped along the continuous frontages of West Street, the Market Place, East Street and Salisbury Street. The market with its temporary stalls is picturesque but no longer very important, its place being taken by the shops. Modern shops in Salisbury Street have brought increased trade to the area, making it the most lively shopping area in Blandford.

Prosperous trading gives all its vitality to Blandford Conservation Area. Stagnant trading can create at best a lifeless museum piece. Conservation must not stifle but encourage trade by promoting Blandford's unique Georgian character and attraction.

How can modern trading trends be accommodated in Georgian houses? Modern trends are towards larger shop units and open-plan self-service areas. Storage is favoured on the same level as the shopping floor and service access is preferable away from the shopping front.

Supermarkets. In Blandford there is already a new Woolworths, and plans for a new supermarket development have been prepared. Proposals for two other supermarkets are very much in the air. Any increased trade in the town centre should be welcomed, especially around the Market Place which should remain the focal point for shoppers.

As a condition of any planning permission for supermarket development, this should be required to provide adequate rear access for servicing and adequate car parking for shoppers. Without these two requirements supermarkets will otherwise only cause greater traffic chaos in the town centre.

Supermarkets are large in scale in comparison with the 18th century buildings of the Market Place. Supermarket buildings must not overpower by their bulk. In new building the proportions of window to wall must harmonise with the window to wall proportions of the 18th century buildings. Facades should not float above long expanses of plate glass and the facades of the upper storeys must be seen to be supported. New development should be in sympathy with the domestic and human scale of the Georgian buildings.



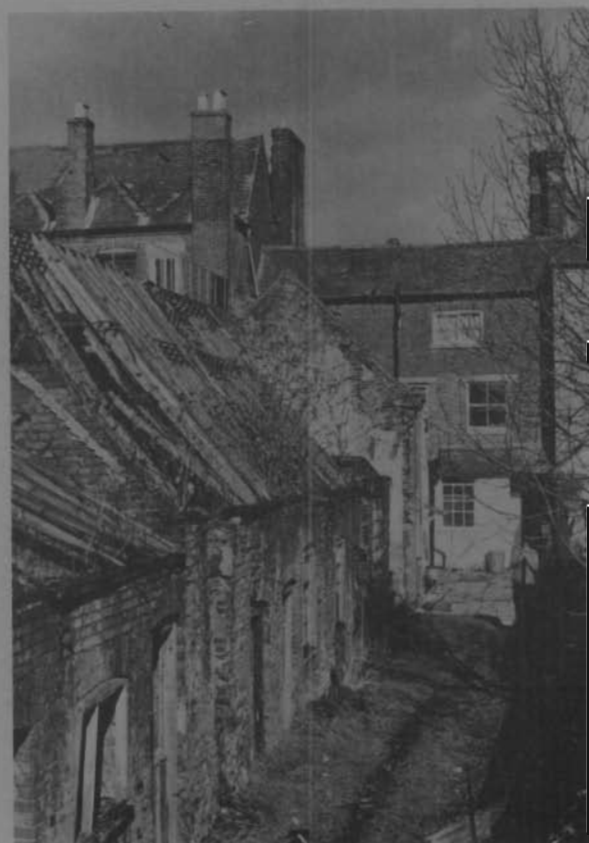
The Increasing Population.



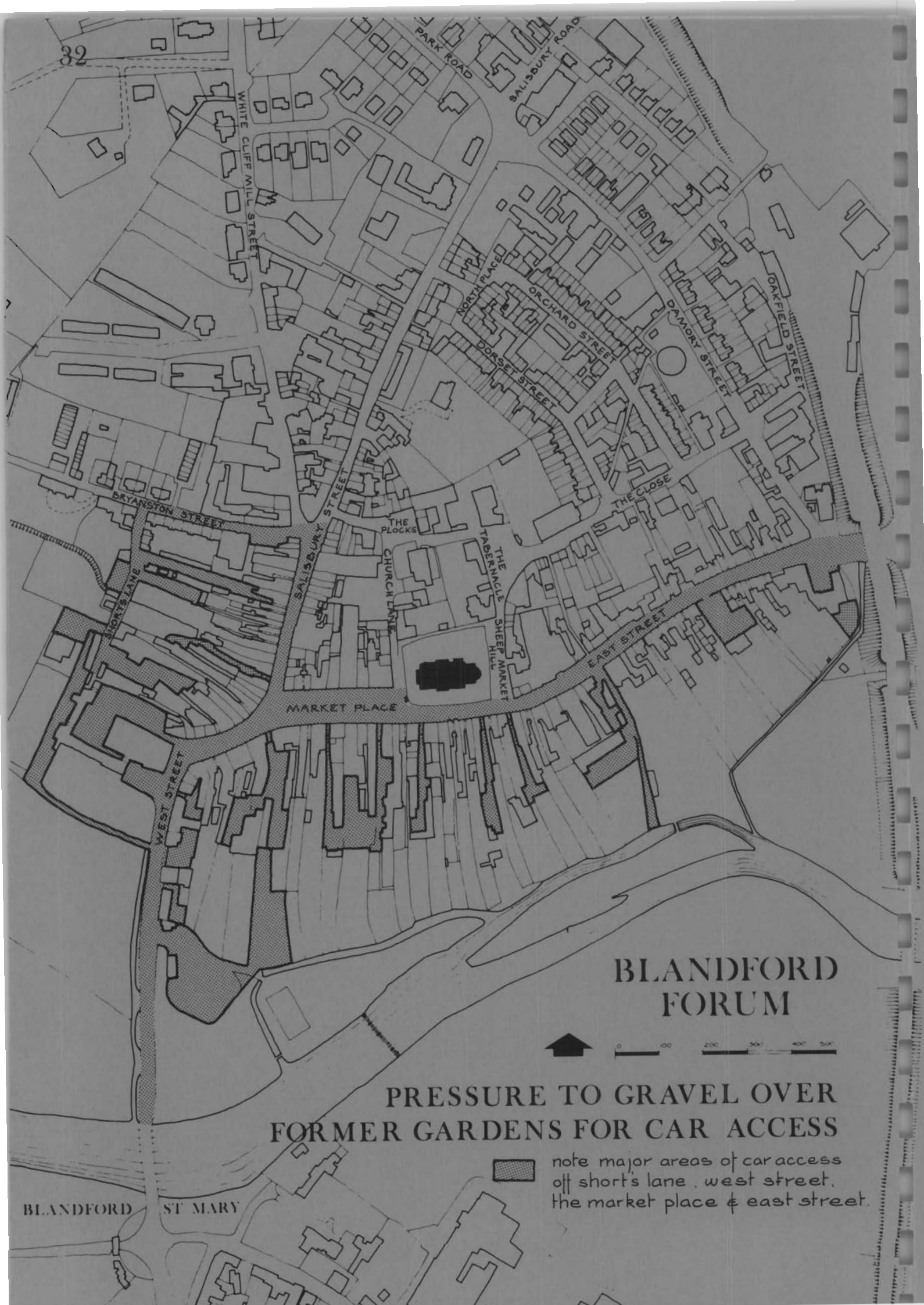
Woolworths Develops in Depth.



Cars Encroach on Gardens.




Decay.



# BLANDFORD FORUM



## PRESSURE TO GRAVEL OVER FORMER GARDENS FOR CAR ACCESS

 note major areas of car access off short's lane, west street, the market place & east street.

BLANDFORD ST MARY

SERVICE ACCESS. Rear access is only possible in a few cases from Short's Lane and in a growing number of cases from behind the south side of West Street, and Market Place and East Street.

In order to provide additional rear access to the shops in the centre of Blandford there is a growing pressure to provide access through the continuous street facades which are an essential element of Blandford's unique character. The continuous street facades must be preserved.

OUTBUILDINGS in Blandford are in a very varied state of use and condition. Between Salisbury Street and Church Lane outbuildings are thickly massed, in reasonable repair and certainly in good use. The same is true of the area between White Cliff Mill Street and Salisbury Street, south of the Congregational Church. Between Short's Lane and Salisbury Street many outbuildings have been demolished but those remaining are used for storage. Former gardens in this area have been gravelled over and serve as rear access for shops from Short's Lane.

South of West Street, the Market Place and East Street, some of the gardens have been partly gravelled over and serve for rear access to the shops, but in this area many more outbuildings also remain. Most of these 18th and 19th Century outbuildings are suitable only for storage, or where car access is possible as garages. Many are rat-infested and decayed beyond repair. However picturesque they may look from a distance, with their long gabled roofs running back from the street, many if not demolished will soon fall down of their own accord.

These rear areas clearly offer a tempting opportunity for development, and some of them are already becoming built up. Before these old garden areas by the river and off Short's Lane are all built over, it could be sensible to consider whether any continuous access lines should be retained to "filter off" the service traffic from Blandford's main streets.

OFFICES. Where car access is from a narrow one-way street and development back from the street is limited, as on the north side of East Street, there tend to be offices rather than shops at street level. Some upper floors of larger old houses in the Market Place are offices, but it is not always easy to obtain the required private access to the upper floors of the houses in the centre of the town.

Agents report a small but steady demand in Blandford for offices of around 1,000 to 1,500 sq. ft. which can be readily accommodated on the upper floors of larger old houses. Larger commercial office blocks, because of their likely height and bulk, would be better sited out of the Conservation Area.

HOUSING. Within the Conservation Area there is a demand for any available accommodation. For the Borough there is almost no land available to build houses to shorten its waiting list of 250 names. For private developers there are now three major sites within the Conservation Area which may become housing estates; the school site off Damory Street, the Field's Oak site off Salisbury Street and the Park House site off Bryanston Street. Few other comparable sites exist in the centre of Blandford. More people in new accommodation will reinforce the life of the town centre, but new housing must not be allowed in areas otherwise of great amenity value to those already living in Blandford; any new housing must enhance the Conservation Area. A better architectural quality is required than that of recent bungalows in White Cliff Gardens.

Above many of the shops are flats, but shopkeepers themselves often prefer to live out of the town. Where it is possible to provide private access to the upper floors of shops, some now unused areas might become useful flats.

Larger houses have almost all become clubs, offices or flats. Dale House, Coupar House and No. 19 East Street are now clubs. Eagle House and Coupar House are now offices. Close House and The Old House are divided into flats. Lime Tree House offers Bed and Breakfast. Old Bank House, the Rectory, Eastway House, Stour House and Bryanston Cottage are the best surviving private houses.



Access to rear of Market Place.

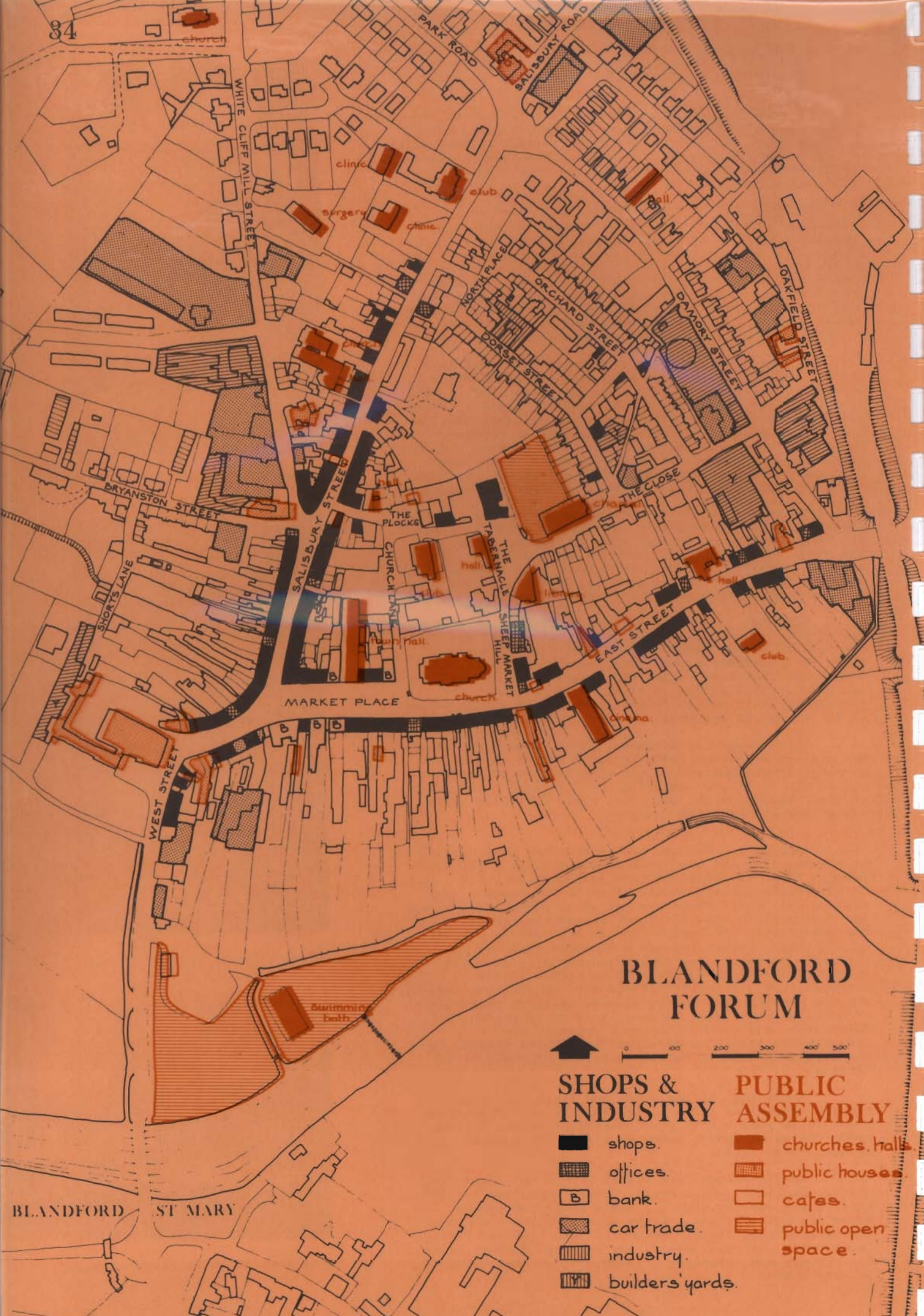


Private access to upper floor.

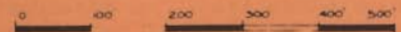


Bungalows in White Cliff Gardens.















# BLANDFORD FORUM



## SHOPS & INDUSTRY

-  shops.
-  offices.
-  bank.
-  car trade.
-  industry.
-  builders' yards.

## PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

-  churches, halls.
-  public houses.
-  cafes.
-  public open space.

BLANDFORD ST MARY



It is often difficult to repair small houses and cottages economically. Even with the protection of listing, and especially if this is in Grade III, these may be left to decay and demolition. But smaller cottages as well as larger houses are an essential part of the character of the centre of Blandford. Every opportunity, whether by the public authority or by private investment, should be taken to repair and make habitable. No. 71 Salisbury Street is for example unoccupied and in very poor condition, and this house should be saved.

HOTELS, RESTAURANTS AND PUBLIC HOUSES. Blandford is on an extremely busy seasonal route for holiday makers to the South East. This provides opportunity for a thriving hotel and bed and breakfast trade, much of it within the Conservation Area. The town is itself set in a rural area of great beauty and is a favourite base for sightseeing. If there were less traffic confusion in Blandford, this trade would do better, bringing more money to the town.

Within the centre of Blandford there are 12 public houses, ten of which are owned by one brewery.

Almost all the trade for the hotels, restaurants and public houses comes to Blandford by car. The more successful is the business the more car parking space is required.

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY. Bournemouth and Poole offer better public entertainment than Blandford can, and the Blandford cinema will soon be closed. Perhaps it is for the same reason that the hall behind the Town Hall is not put to such good purpose now as in the past. Blandford now, however, is quickly growing in size, and the hall may soon become a much more valuable civic amenity than it now appears to be. Before turning almost the entire entrance of this hall into public lavatories, some careful thought might be given for the future. Similarly the site of the Art Rooms in the Close, near the centre of the town, which is now for sale might become in the future a valuable civic asset.

THE RIVER AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE. The intensely urban quality of the town centre is marvellously enhanced by the rural beauty of Bryanston Park, the River Stour and Bryanston Woods. There is only one public open space where the general public can enjoy the river and this is the area known as the Ham. A quarter of this now serves as a car park, which in summer grows to include a grassed area along the river. The other part of the Ham is an island, carrying an open swimming bath. The river is one of Blandford's greatest but most underplayed assets. This asset should be exploited if the gardens behind the Market Place and East Street are opened up by the creation of a riverside service road. Despite occasional winter flooding, this is a delightful area full of opportunities for improvement and public enjoyment.

Certain of the road schemes currently canvassed would annihilate Bryanston Park, most of the Ham, the present recreation ground at the north end of White Cliff Mill Street and possibly also The Milldown. The only other public open space in Blandford is the agreeable garden for old persons by the Tabernacle. Entry is here discouraged to children and dogs. The chance to provide marvellous public open spaces so near to the town centre must not be lost to insufficiently considered road schemes.

CLINICS. The two clinics and the surgery between White Cliff Mill Street and Salisbury Street form a group of three medical buildings separated from each other by rough gardens. There are no direct public links between these three buildings, and despite their slightly different medical uses, the land between them and their necessary car parks should be planned as a single concept.



No. 71 Salisbury Street.



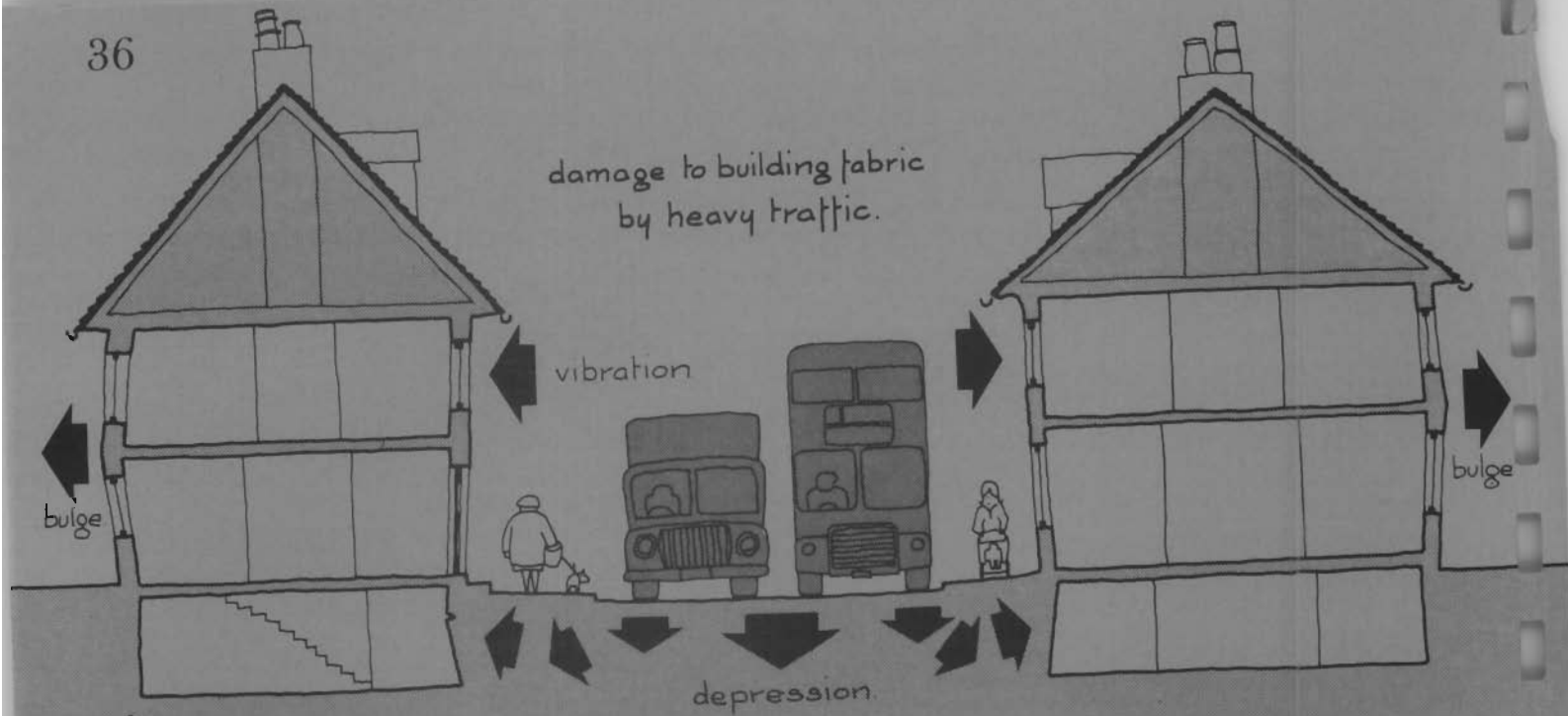
Tourism.



Cinema.



damage to building fabric  
by heavy traffic.



The effect of heavy lorries on basement front walls is damaging. A basement on either side of the road makes the road into an island. This island is slowly depressed by the weight of the traffic and forces the basement walls inwards. The basement walls of No. 26 East Street are 2"-3" off vertical and begin to threaten the safety of the building.





LIGHT INDUSTRY. Future industrial expansion is rightly planned away from the centre of the town, on a site near the cemetery; but there are two centres of light industry within the Conservation Area. The gas works group is walled off beside Damory Street and would be inconspicuous were it not for a fat and assertive gasholder. The industrial agglomeration in White Cliff Mill Street is desperately unsightly and requires better screening. The old maltings site in Bryanston Street would be better suited for housing than for its erstwhile industrial use.

THE CAR TRADE. The car trade is a major industry in Blandford. Including repair and petrol stations there are 18 garages in the centre of the town. Of these, six have car salerooms. There are four insurance offices in Blandford, and the garages cater both for the tourist traffic and for the surrounding rural district.

At every approach to the town are car sales and petrol pumps. The garages at the south end of White Cliff Mill Street must bite no further into the centre of the town. The bus garage at the east end of East Street is in a far from ideal position. The car trade should not be allowed to come any closer to the town centre. Only one garage is actually in a dangerous position. Petrol pumps outside No.1 West Street should not be allowed at the busiest traffic corner in Blandford and at the end of a vital pedestrian right-of-way. In such instances, the Planning Authority may wish to consider whether a discontinuance order should be served.

#### DEMOLITION AND DECAY

Since November 1950, when the Ministry of Town and Country Planning deposited with the Dorset County Council the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest in Blandford, one Grade II and 18 Grade III buildings have been demolished, as follows:

##### Grade II (Statutory)

Salisbury House at the north end of Salisbury Street was on the site of the now defunct Grammar School.

##### Grade III (Supplementary)

- 2, 3 & 5 The Tabernacle were demolished to make a site for the new library.
- 7 & 9 The Close are now part of a builder's yard.
- 1 Oakfield Street was demolished when Damory Street was widened.
- 5, 11, 13, 15 & 17 White Cliff Mill Street are now garage forecourts.
- 4, 6, 8 & 10 White Cliff Mill Street, opposite the garage forecourts above, are a car saleroom.
- 30 White Cliff Mill Street is now used as a car park.
- 28 Salisbury Street and the George Inn are now shops and Woolworths.

The demolition of 1 Oakfield Street was essential to the Damory Street road widening scheme. Only when the Tabernacle cottages were recently replaced by the new library has a really satisfactory use been made of the sites of demolished listed buildings. Note the large number of buildings in White Cliff Mill Street which have been demolished in favour of the car trade.

This tendency to demolish mostly small cottages in favour of a larger scale of development erodes the character of the Conservation Area and this trend is unfortunate. Feasibility studies should be made on the conservation of such buildings likely to be demolished. This is particularly relevant to the east end of East East Street where development pressures are likely to be strong.



White Cliff Mill Street.

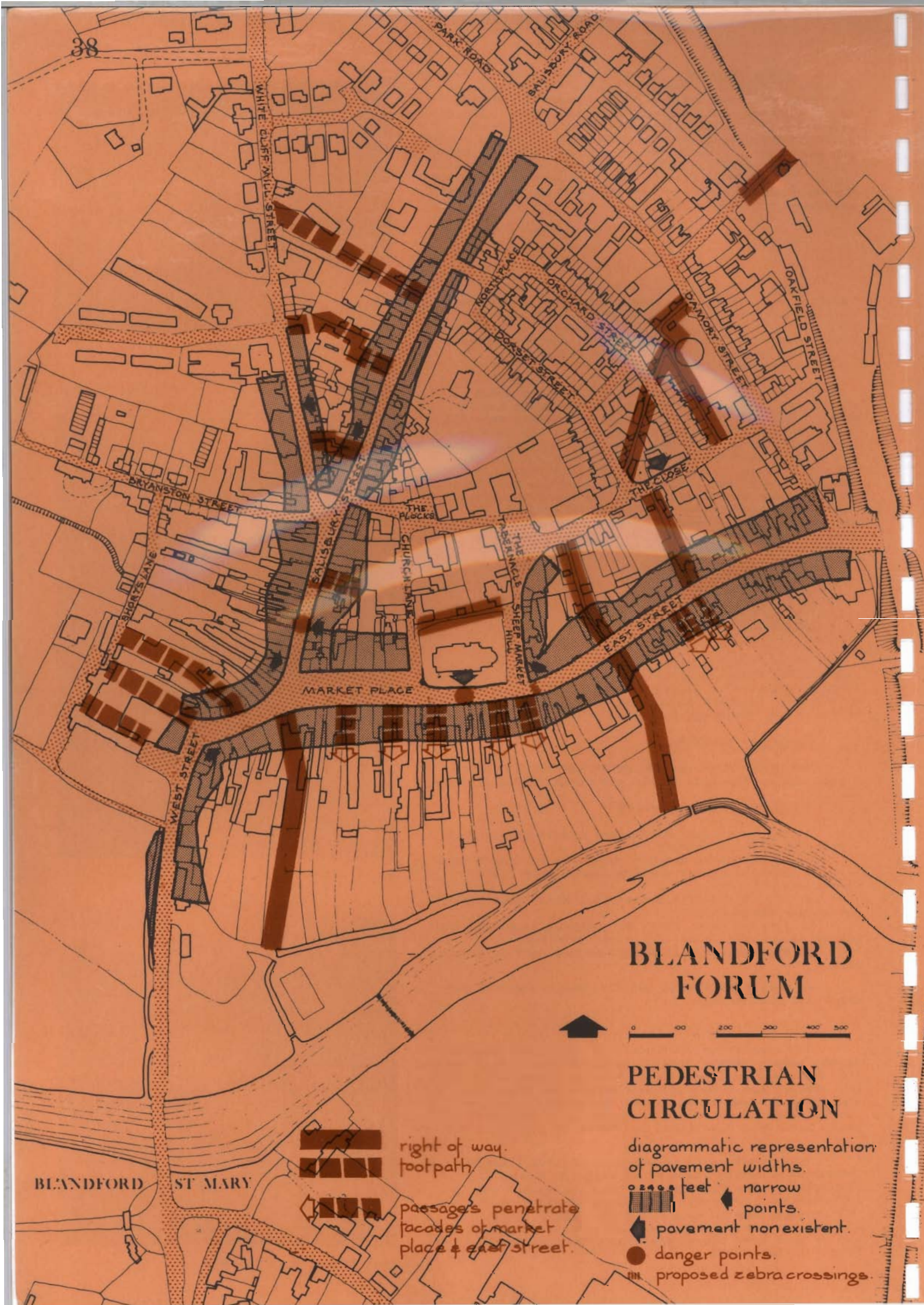


No. 1 West Street.



East End of East Street.





# BLANDFORD FORUM



## PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

diagrammatic representation of pavement widths.

- ○ ○ ○ feet narrow points.
- ▤ pavement non-existent.
- danger points.
- ▤▤▤ proposed zebra crossings.

- ▤ right of way.
- ▤▤▤ footpath.
- ▤▤▤ passages penetrate facades of market place & east street.

BLANDFORD ST MARY



**PEDESTRIANS.** An increasing number of pedestrians heavily crowd the pavements of the town centre, while at the same time the main pedestrian areas, the shopping streets (East, West and Salisbury Streets and the Market Place) are all part of a one-way traffic system. Pedestrian shoppers are greatly harrassed by the fumes and noise, which makes shopping hazardous and at times almost unbearable.

The pavements are narrow. In the Market Place they are on average seven feet wide, allowing one pram to pass another but forcing the extra pedestrian flat against a shop window or into the road. Car doors suddenly thrown open are a constant threat. When a pavement reaches a corner it inevitably narrows in favour of traffic lines, at the expense of the pedestrian. Outside the raised churchyard there is no pavement along the north side of the road. To reach this side of East Street from the same side of the Market Place is dangerous. A way up at either end of the churchyard and a path between would be most welcome.

There are at present no zebra crossings in Blandford, but one is planned for East Street and another for Salisbury Street.

Narrow streets are always good for business, allowing shoppers to see the contents of shops on the other side of the road. The continuous and unbroken line of shops in Blandford's main streets is ideal for trade. Most shop fronts are flush with the pavement, and passers-by can easily see the goods on display, but cannot enjoy prolonged undisturbed window gazing. New shopping tends to be designed in greater depth.

Shopping will be agreeable again in central Blandford when the heavy through traffic is removed, but to pedestrianise the main shopping streets would be a mistake in the other extreme. Goods will still need to be delivered to the shops, and controlled local traffic is a normal part of the vivacity of this busy area.

Blandford possesses a supremely important pedestrian circulation system of short cuts through the town. The town rises to the North but the gradients of these passages are always slight.

The pedestrian bridge over the railway line at the north end of Oakfield Street is a major link for residents east of the railway line who wish to shop in the centre of Blandford. Joining this route, the passage north of the gas works leads to Orchard Street and continues to the Close. Two further passages cross from the Close to East Street. The way from Salisbury Street to Church Lane is perfectly placed for the Church Lane car park. Between Salisbury Street and White Cliff Mill Street is a passage past the furniture showrooms. Another passes the Congregational Church and a third passes the surgery but its gate is sometimes sadly padlocked. There is a link between Short's Lane and the Crown Hotel car park and so to West Street. Between numbers 8 and 10 West Street another passage leads to Short's Lane.

A pedestrian way from Salisbury Street along the south wall of Field's Oak garden and out to the Tabernacle from behind the Post Office would usefully continue the pedestrian path past the Congregational Church.

The most important pedestrian short cut of all is the way through from the Ham car park past the Greyhound public house to the Market Place. Without it the Ham car park would be almost useless. Should a future service road be made behind East Street and the Market Place, a ready-made through pattern of passages exists, but many of these routes are privately owned. It would be of inestimable value for Blandford if the Borough Council could purchase public rights-of-way through the most important of them.



Narrow pavement.



Dangerous lack of pavement.



Narrow pavement.



Pedestrian bridge over railway.



to sharnesbury & sherborne

to sharnesbury & sherborne

to salisbury

SALISBURY ROAD

OXFORD STREET

# ONE WAY TRAFFIC

sharp corner

bus depot to winterborne

petrol pumps

bus stop

bus stop

bus stop

## BLANDFORD FORUM



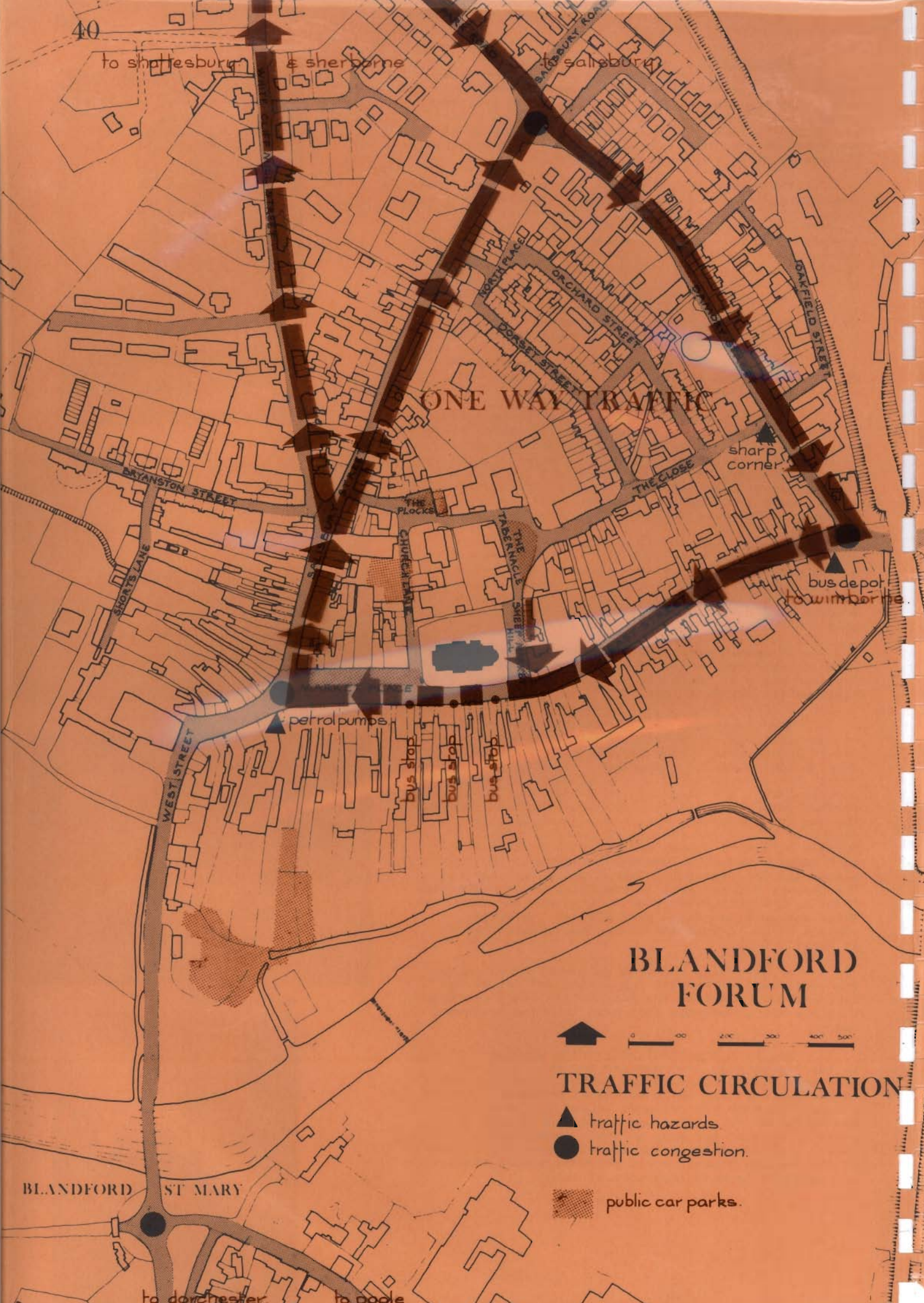
### TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

- ▲ traffic hazards
- traffic congestion.
- ▨ public car parks.

BLANDFORD ST MARY

to dorchester

to poole





**TRAFFIC.** At Blandford meet two major through traffic routes, one from the South West and Dorchester to Salisbury, and the other from Yeovil and Sherborne to Poole and Bournemouth. All the main streets of the town are at present organised as a one-way system to cope with this heavy traffic. All the routes converge across Blandford Bridge and through Blandford St. Mary. It seems essential that a thorough and sophisticated traffic survey should now be prepared so as to resolve the present uncertainty about the routing of major traffic proposals. Only then can definite road schemes be prepared.

On summer weekends meanwhile, traffic comes to a solid standstill from the railway bridge as far as Blandford Bridge. All the year round, heavy lorries roar along the one-way system making shopping unsafe and intolerable, and threatening the lives of residents and buildings alike. Almost all the listed buildings are on the one-way system. The increased traffic speed allowed by a one-way system shakes the buildings, and No.10 West Street has recently been destroyed by a lorry entering the shop.

To conserve both life and buildings in Blandford, heavy traffic must be removed from its town centre.

When considering new road schemes, there are two major points of importance. The first is that Blandford St Mary is integral with Blandford, and an important introduction to the town proper - it was mostly itself rebuilt after 1731 fire. Blandford St Mary contains many similarly attractive buildings, like Bryanston School's Wyatt Lodge gates, and should rightly be part of Blandford's Conservation Area. Yet with Blandford Bridge it is a serious bottleneck.

The second consideration is how best to separate service traffic from through traffic. One suggestion is a riverside route behind East Street, either for through traffic, or for commercial servicing. But heavy through traffic, in particular, would crucify any possibility of a public enjoyment of the riverside; and there is no point in any scheme which merely serves to deliver traffic more directly into a bottleneck at the middle of Blandford St Mary.

The importance of the open meadows to the south west of the town, in the way they enhance the setting of the town, cannot be too highly stressed. Should both a trunk road and a service road be built in this area strict control of likely development along the service road must be maintained.

The open meadows near to the town where they are not water sodden in winter, are also ideal as recreation space. Thoughtlessly placed road schemes would disturb these areas reducing possible public recreation spaces to areas of grass bounded by motorways.

The use of the railway line as a trunk road or in the immediate future as a bypass to take a one way stream of traffic past the town should be very seriously considered.



Damory Street.

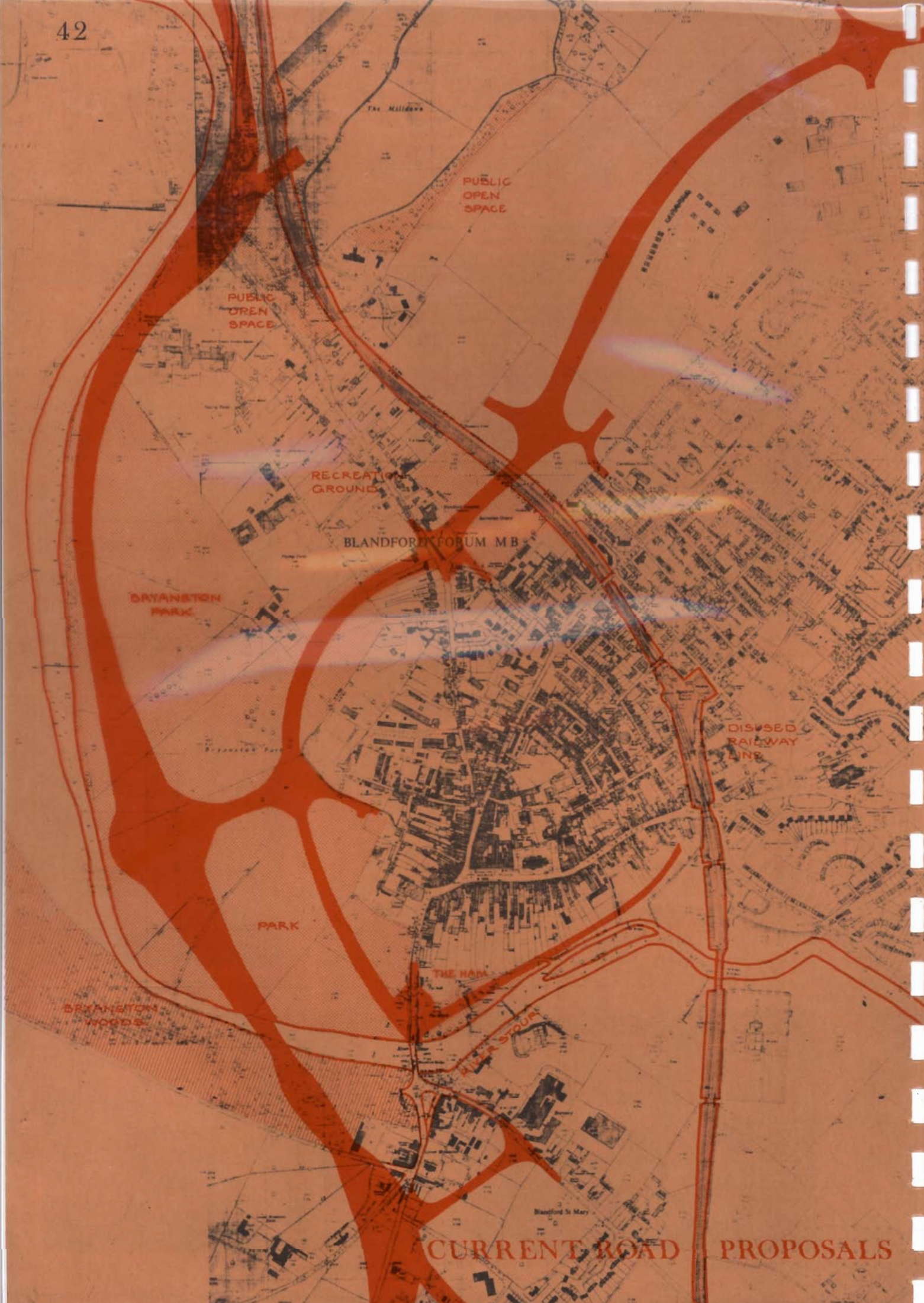


Salisbury Street.



East Street.





CURRENT ROAD PROPOSALS



PUBLIC CAR PARKS IN CENTRAL BLANDFORD.

More public car parks are required. At present there are no available areas for this purpose, but should there be a riverside service road, car parks could be planned off it.

Central Blandford has six car parks, with spaces for 263 cars, all conveniently sited as follows :

The Ham	150 cars
The Market Place	23 cars
Sheep Market Hill	19 cars
The Tabernacle	25 cars
Church Lane	38 cars
The Plocks	8 cars
	263 cars

The Ham car park is well-placed, with direct pedestrian access to the Market Place. The Ham is used not only by visitors' cars, but also by stopping lorries. It also serves as a bus station and the cafe is busy. In summer, parking overflows beyond the bleak expanse of tarmac along the grass beside the river.

Parking in The Market Place is 'utilitarian' and does the Market Place no credit. Carefully planned and with attention to detail, this car park need mar the Market Place much less than it does.

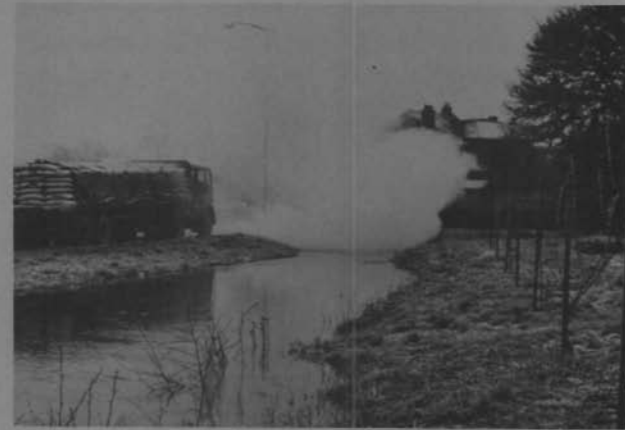
The Sheep Market Hill car park and the forecourt of the post office are both untidy and unsightly. Both need to be defined, marked into incisive parking spaces. The footpath along the Rectory wall is unnecessary but, by retaining a wooden bar at the north end of this car park, cars could then park against the wall and more cars might be accommodated.

The Church Lane car park is perfectly sited for shoppers visiting Salisbury Street. Black corrugated iron sheds to the South of the car park are conspicuously unsightly.

The Plocks car park is reserved for Borough officers, but others manage to squeeze in. This parking area could again be better defined, possibly by differential surfacing.

The Tabernacle car park and the forecourt of the post office are both untidy and unsightly. Both need to be marked into incisive parking spaces. The footpath along the Rectory wall is unnecessary but by retaining a wooden bar at the north end of this car park, cars could then park against the wall, and more cars might be accommodated.

PRIVATE CAR PARKS. Most hotels, public houses, garages and places of public assembly have their own car parks. These private car parks are often unsightly. They should preferably be as much as possible out of sight. Trees have been well planted around the large car park at the surgery; similar planting outside the Salisbury Street Clinic would hide the open expanse of tarmac. Cars are parked behind the Constitutional Club, but the large expanse of gravelled parking in front of the Chestnut Club should be screened. The Gospel Hall in East Street has no car park. Parking in East Street during the day is always difficult, making the Gospel Hall conveniently usable only when the shops are closed and the kerbsides cleared. At the west end of the Congregational Church and the Institute a house has been demolished. This ugly site is crammed with cars during the day. The temptation to demolish more houses to accommodate cars must be soundly resisted as harmful to Blandford.



The Ham.



The Market Place.



Sheep Market Hill.



The Tabernacle.

4

THE FUTURE  
AND  
ENHANCEMENT  
OF THE  
CONSERVATION  
AREA

THE CONSERVATION AREA

Blandford, whose Georgian core was rebuilt in one period, 1731 - 1760, is the most complete and cohesive surviving example of a Georgian country town in England. The Conservation Area must include all the outstanding groups of Georgian buildings. The striking Georgian quality of Blandford is apparent not only from within the town but also from outside, from the hills which encircle the town. Modern development immediately next to this Georgian core must not be allowed to swamp the distant view.

Although Blandford as a market town reached its peak of prosperity in the 18th Century, Blandford has been an important market town since the 14th Century to the present day. Important examples of the town's post-Georgian development are included in the proposed Conservation Area.

Both to safeguard the distant view of Georgian Blandford and to include examples of later development, the Conservation Area should include an area around the core, and over this a strict planning control should be exercised.

Six areas should be added to the draft Conservation Area.

1. Bryanston Street and Short's Lane, adjoining the Georgian core. An area of high townscape value with buildings of the 18th Century and 19th Centuries.
2. White Cliff Mill Street. Some 18th and an important group of mid 19th Century buildings.
3. Salisbury Street, north end. Dale House of the 17th Century, and mid 19th Century buildings.
4. Orchard Street and Dorset Street. Early and mid 19th Century buildings of high townscape value.
5. The River, The Ham, Market Place gardens and East Street gardens. An area of high townscape value, in close proximity to the Georgian core.
6. Blandford St. Mary Georgian buildings comprise an area of very high townscape value. Blandford St. Mary was once called Blandford Parva. The bridge unites Blandford Forum with Blandford St. Mary, an integral part of a larger Blandford Forum.

LISTED BUILDINGS IN BLANDFORD CONSERVATION  
AREA

The Council for British Archaeology lists 324 towns of historic interest in England, Scotland and Wales. Of these 324 towns, the Council urges that 51 towns should be the direct concern of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. One of the 51 towns in Blandford.

Blandford has 145 listed buildings and 14 groups of listed buildings, as shown on the plan.

The totals are:-

<u>Individual Listed Buildings</u>	A	I
Grade I	7	
Grade II	74	
Grade III	65	

Listed Building Groups

Grade I	1
Grade II	5
Grade III	8

From our inspection for the County Council, we agree almost entirely with these listings and have noted only occasional suggestions for the consideration in any future revision by the Minister.





## BLANDFORD FORUM CONSERVATION AREA

- the proposed conservation area boundary within which strict planning control should be exercised.
- - - the present conservation area boundary which excludes Blandford St Mary, victorian development of high architectural & historical importance and which also excludes areas immediately next to the georgian core in which modern development must not be allowed to swamp the distant view of Blandford.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIST OF BUILDINGS OF  
ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORICAL INTEREST.

Bryanston Street

No. 22. A mid 19th Century house continuing the local tradition of header brickwork in Blandford.

Bryanston Cottage. An 18th Century house altered in the 19th Century but the south facade displays header brickwork.

Park House. This house dates partly from before the 1731 fire but is essentially of the 18th Century. There are good sash windows with crown glass on the garden front.

Dorset Street.

\*Nos. 1 - 57 odd, (all of the west side of the street), should be listed in Grade III. Some of these houses appear on the 1838 Tithe map and so are early 19th Century. The townscape value of the long roofline of mansard roofs is great, especially from the Tabernacle garden.

East Street.

\*The gazebo in the garden of No. 5, Eastway House, should be listed in Grade II together with the house.

Behind the Bastards' House. No. 73A, together with a row of outhouses further down and on the other side of the passage should all be Grade III.

\*No. 1. The outhouse south of and attached to No. 1 should also be Grade II.

\*No. 2. This solid Victorian building with mansard roof, occupies an important position at the east end of the north side of East Street.

Market Place.

\*Behind the Greyhound Inn. The present Greyhound public house was listed in Grade III. The outbuildings attached to the south end of this building and a line of outhouses opposite on the other side of the pedestrian footpath should be listed Grade III too.

\*Behind the Red Lion. The present Red Lion public house and the row of outbuildings attached to the south end of this building should be listed Grade III.

Orchard Street.

\*Nos. 42 - 56, an extension of the mid 19th Century white stucco terrace Nos. 24 - 40 itself listed Grade III, rates a similar listing.

Short's Lane.

A flint and brick warehouse. Buildings in this local vernacular in Blandford are rare and this building has good townscape qualities.

White Cliff Mill Street.

A flint and brick warehouse at the back of No. 40. This was formerly used by a brewery and the building has a good cellar. The roof and walls are of great townscape value in enclosing the surgery forecourt.

\*No. 21 should be statutorily listed to join the mid 19th Century Grade II group.

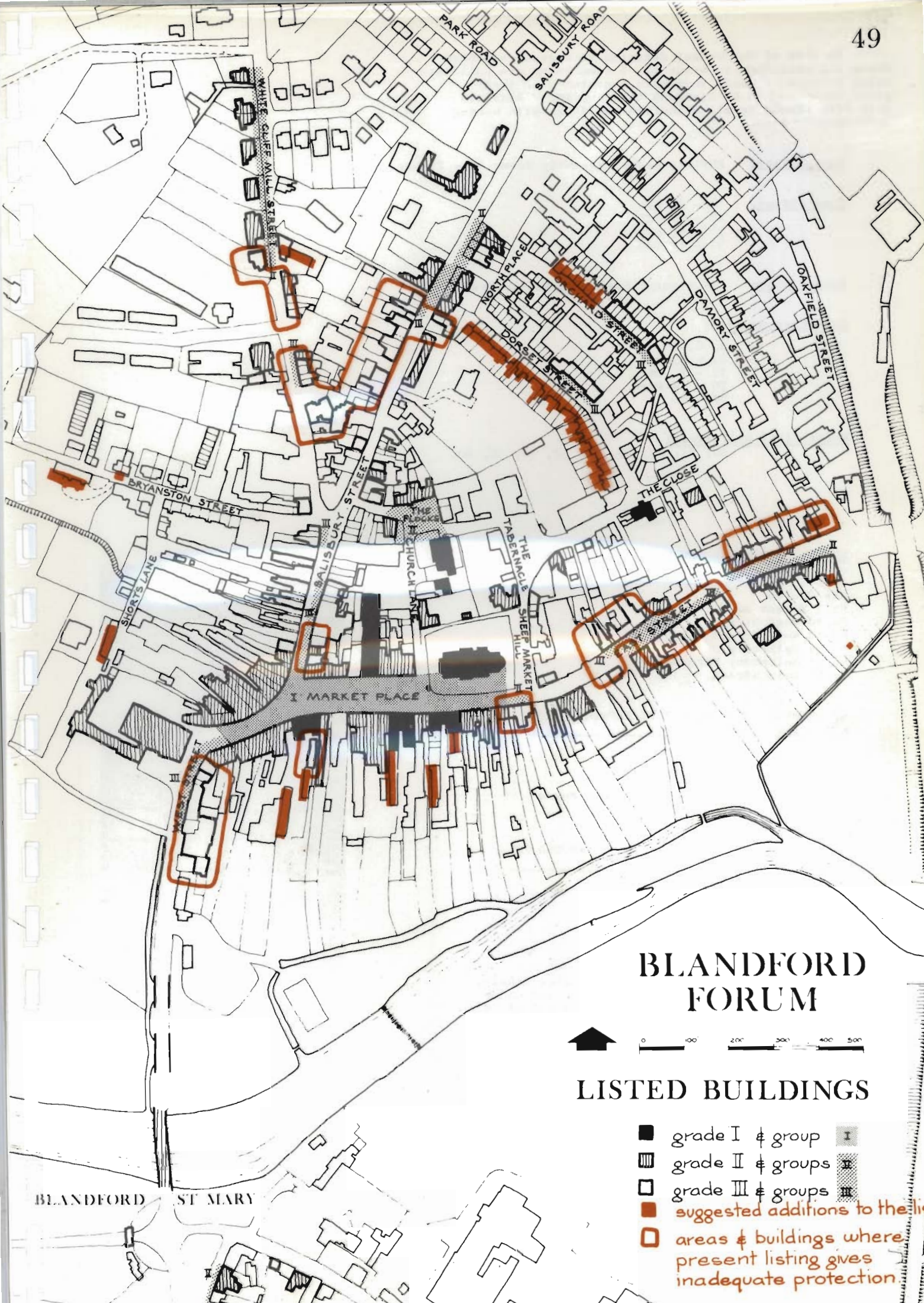
Outhouses.

Certain outhouses behind the Market Place have been listed. These outhouses are beside passages through from the Market Place. If a new riverside road were made, these buildings would add much to the character of these potential pedestrian footpaths, which would link the Market Place to the new riverside road.

Note:

In view of the recent decision to upgrade certain Grade III buildings, the buildings marked \* because they are adjoining important groups of buildings or are attached to existing Grade II buildings, should be listed Grade II.





# BLANDFORD FORUM



## LISTED BUILDINGS

- grade I & group I
- ▨ grade II & groups II
- grade III & groups III
- suggested additions to the list
- areas & buildings where present listing gives inadequate protection

BLANDFORD ST MARY



In view of the recent decision to upgrade selected Grade III buildings to Grade II, listed below are buildings which because of their intrinsic importance or their group value should be upgraded to Group II. Added to this list should be all Blandford buildings with header brickbond facades.

West Street. Phylvic Lodge, Assembly Rooms 17 - 27 odd

East Street. 14 - 20 Even  
21 - 39 Odd  
34 - 40 Even  
55 - 59 Odd

Market Place The present Greyhound Public House

Salisbury Street

4, 6, 10  
29 - 33 Odd  
57 - 73 Odd  
70 - 74 Even  
82 - 84

White Cliff Mill Street.

20, 21, 22, 24, 28, 32, 34, 36, 40.

BUILDINGS NEEDING URGENT ATTENTION NOW.

The Church

No.1 Market Place

No.10 West Street

No.12 West Street

No.34 Salisbury Street

No.71 Salisbury Street

No.26 East Street.

AN EXAMPLE COULD BE SET BY REPAIRING AND RESTORING THESE BUILDINGS:

Market Place. The Red Lion

Market Place. No.9

White Cliff Mill Street. Eagle House

Salisbury Street. No.71

THE FOLLOWING PAIRS OF BUILDINGS SHOULD BE RENOVATED TOGETHER:

East Street. 1 & 3

East Street. 15 & 17

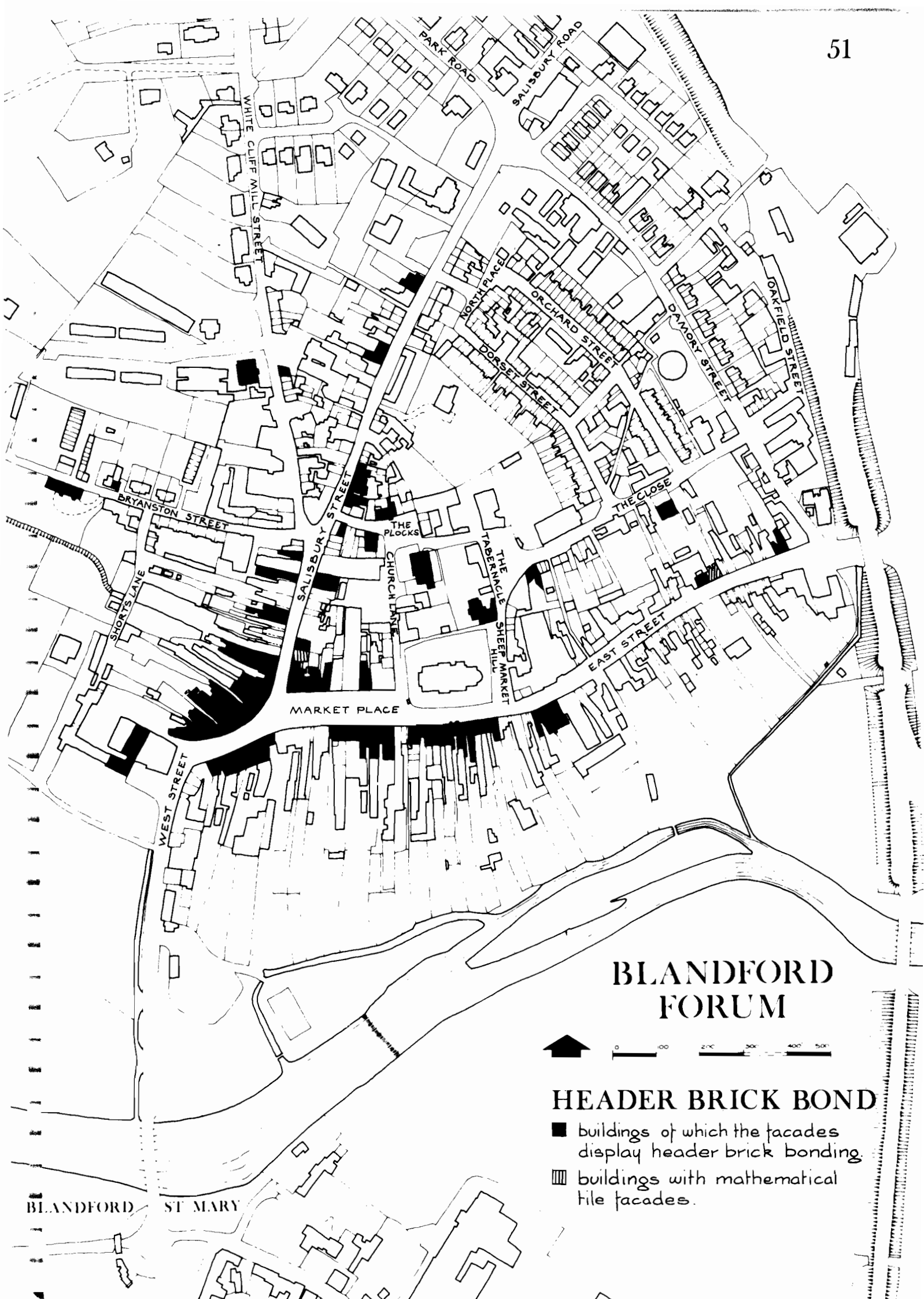
East Street. 67 & 69

West Street. 7 & 9

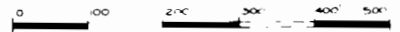
Some of these buildings seem especially likely, on their own merits, to be worthy of grant aid under the Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act of 1962.



Header Brick Bond.



# BLANDFORD FORUM



## HEADER BRICK BOND

- buildings of which the facades display header brick bonding.
- ▨ buildings with mathematical tile facades.

BLANDFORD ST MARY

SOME LISTED BUILDINGS NOTED AS NEEDING  
REPAIR OR CLOSE WATCH

- The Church. The stonework is in bad condition. Current removal of added galleries will be a great improvement.
- No. 1 The Market Place. The first and second floors are bowing.
- No. 9 The Market Place. An original 18th (?) century shop front whose joinery needs repair.
- No. 15 The Market Place. The original rainwater head needs more positive fixing than the single strand of wire.
- Nos. 16-18 The Market Place. The Red Lion Inn. A Bastard building which is very shabby and worthy of thorough repair and restoration.
- The Almshouse Entrance at the north side of the Church. The stonework is in bad condition.
- West Street, the former Assembly Rooms. Serious bulge in south flank wall.
- No. 1 West Street. The window heads need proper attention unlike the attention received by No. 5 West Street.
- Nos. 7 & 9 West Street. These two houses are a pair whose unity should be restored.
- No. 10 West Street. Facade has been destroyed by a lorry and must be rebuilt under expert architectural supervision, together with
- No. 12 West Street. Repair or rebuilding of facade.
- No. 14 West Street. A badly sagging facade.
- Nos. 1 & 3 East Street. This single building in very shabby condition possesses a fine doorway and original windows, some complete with crown glass.
- No. 26 East Street. Inwards bulging of basement. The facade of the original house must remain unaltered while the entrance addition of the Gospel Hall could well be demolished.
- No. 5 Salisbury Street. An original shop front. In shabby condition overall. Bow windows and original external shutters. This house should at all costs be preserved.
- No. 34 Salisbury Street. The east end wall of this building is being supported by the hall next door. Must be repaired and not demolished.
- No. 71 Salisbury Street. A cottage with a two-storeyed oriel window. Every attempt must be made to save this building, now empty and in very poor condition.
- Dale House. The stonework of the facade is in bad condition.
- Eagle House. This building urgently needs restoration - inappropriate additions, a bay window and porch in front and lavatories on the north need tidying away.

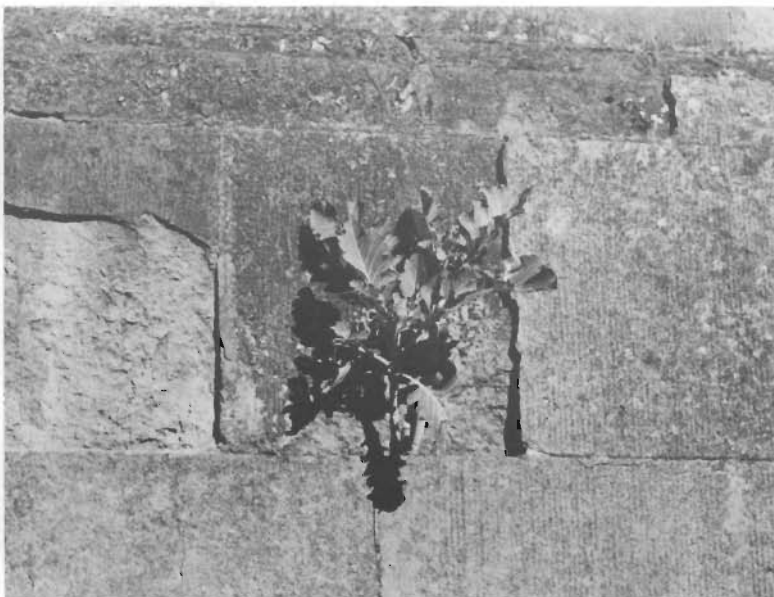


## CONDITION

Sagging facade of No. 14 West Street.



West Street window heads need careful repair.



Decaying stonework of the church.



Boards deserve attention.

BUILDING DETAILS

It is the harmonious uniformity of all its Georgian buildings which makes Blandford so pre-eminently important a Georgian town. This quality is achieved by the survival of almost all of the buildings rebuilt after the fire of 1731. They include most of those in West Street, East Street, Salisbury Street and the Market Place. The east end of East Street was rebuilt after an earlier fire in 1713, and the houses here are slightly smaller in scale than those rebuilt after 1731.

Not only have so many Georgian Buildings survived in Blandford, but they possess a remarkable harmony and uniformity of materials, with roofs of handmade tile, facades of beautiful and careful brickwork, and good white-painted joinery.

Despite this uniformity every house has its own separate identity, and the variations in scale and importance only help to underline their collective strength and unity of character.

ROOFS

The roofs are here mostly either mansard or pitched. The mansard roofs usually cover the whole depth of the building but the pitched roofs often do not. A continuous flow of roofline is maintained by outer slopes following the facades below, but behind these is often a double or even treble roof. Sometimes these additional pitched roofs are not parallel with the street but run back at right angles from the street.

After 1732, by Act of Parliament, roofs had to be covered with lead, slate or tile. Almost every listed building in this Conservation Area has a roof of tiles. The pre-fire 'Old House' has diminishing courses of stone with tile above, and the Almshouses' roof and many others have tiling above stone or slate verges. These gain an extra span for the lowest roof course and so brings the water satisfactorily to the forward gutter.

Hand-made tiles encourage the growth of moss and lichens. Modern concrete tiles (e.g. 67 and 69 East Street) refuse to grow moss and will never acquire the mossy patina of hand made tiles. The concrete tiling will never match hand made tiles even apart from their harder and more mechanical shape. The roofs of listed buildings on the street front must in every possible instance be repaired only with clay tiles. A reserve supply of these could well be gathered from, and possibly in, some of Blandford's many derelict outbuildings.

Exposed gable and flank walls are in some cases tile-hung. No.40 Salisbury Street is painted black and looks well. New buildings in a street often 'master' the old ones, and in considering planning applications, care must be taken with the exposed flank walls, details and materials of which should be shown in application drawings. In street perspective, they may be more dominant even than the actual facade.



# REPAIR



No. 1 East Street.

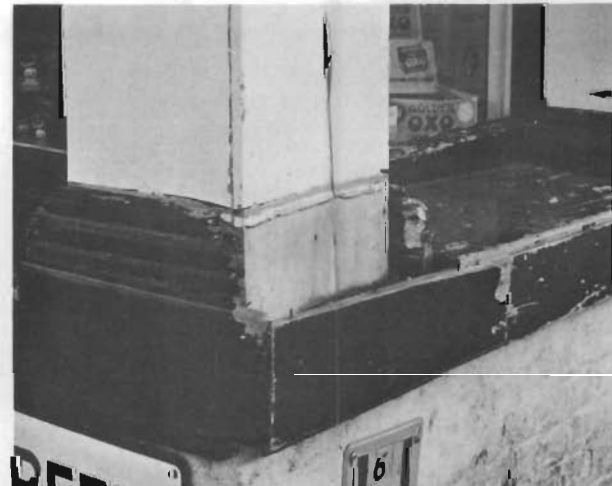


Nos. 15 and 17 East Street.



Eagle House, White Cliff Mill Street.

No. 9 Market Place.





### RAINWATER DISPOSAL

Valley gutters between and within double pitched roofs need regular and careful maintenance. So do gutters behind parapet walls, of which Blandford has fortunately few. Defective eaves gutters, out of fall and full of healthy-looking weeds are too common (e.g. the Bastards' House, 71 Salisbury Street and 26 East Street). Some of the original rainwater heads and downpipes survive, and are worth retaining. Some are loose and require attention (e.g. a rainwater head on 15 Market Place. Its downpipe leaks as does the downpipe on 73a Market Place, behind the Bastards' House). There is today, little excuse for nineteenth-century self-conscious displays of external plumbing. The facade of Close House is spoiled by the parade of black downpipes. The festoons of white-painted pipes on the Crown Hotel proclaim "basins in every room".

### STREET FACADES AND BRICKWORK

Every bricklayer's apprentice should study the facades of Blandford, both for their skill in design and in execution. The fashionable Flemish bond was generally used in post-fire buildings, but in many, a special effect was obtained by using only 'headers'. These headers are often glazed and sparkle in the sunlight, but they may have been used to save money because it enabled the builder to use broken bricks.

Header brickwork was in fashion in the middle of the 18th Century. Because there are so many buildings in Blandford displaying header brickwork bonding, these buildings form a very good example of this fashion and they are a vital part of the character of the 18th Century buildings in the town. Every building displaying this Georgian header brickwork bonding in the Conservation Area, without exception, must be preserved as an essential element of Blandford.

Dark red bricks are used to outline openings and quoins. Window heads were defined by using finely pointed pale red 'rubbed' bricks contrasting with the darker bricks of the facade. Many Blandford facades are also distinguished by the use of a vertical 'chainage' of brickwork of contrasting colour articulating the facades by linking the openings of one storey with those of the next. The exquisite Lime Tree House has examples of all these devices, the white painted key stones of the windows strongly contrasting with the dark blue header bricks of the facade.

The facades of many buildings in Blandford carry traces of false brick pointing of unknown date, applied in white paint to the wall face. These false 'perpends' are mostly faded and never significant enough to disfigure the facades. Examples of this are the Three Choughs, and 16 West Street. This false pointing is gradually disappearing and no deliberate removal is necessary.

Unfortunately and despite the care taken with the actual facades, many buildings are structurally insecure. Insufficient care was sometimes taken to tie back the facades to the cross walls of the building behind, and in some instances the timbers bridging the two may have rotted away. A serious outward bowing of the first floor of one or two buildings, (like No. 1. Market Place and the south flank wall of the former Assembly Rooms in West Street) call for remedy at once.

The repair and rebuilding of certain of these important facades is a matter for special care. Walling can almost always be carried out in the original bricks, or in matching ones from elsewhere. The unattractive result of rebuilding the parapet wall in non-matching bricks can be seen in an example at Nos. 1 and 3 West Street.

When shop fronts are altered, and as so often now, are widened, special care must be taken to ensure that enough support is provided for the facade above. The facade of 10 West Street fell 4" at and above first floor level when the ground floor support was removed. The window cills, window heads and cornice from the first floor level upwards of 14 West Street all dip appreciably in the centre of the facade. Facade movement of this kind causes cracks at the weakest points, usually at window cills and heads. Concrete lintels have sometimes to be inserted in place of earlier window arches; when neatly done this is a useful remedy, but some have been less efficiently painted in black and purple to represent brickwork. It is much better to remove the arches and rebuild them, if possible in old bricks, and reinforced when necessary.

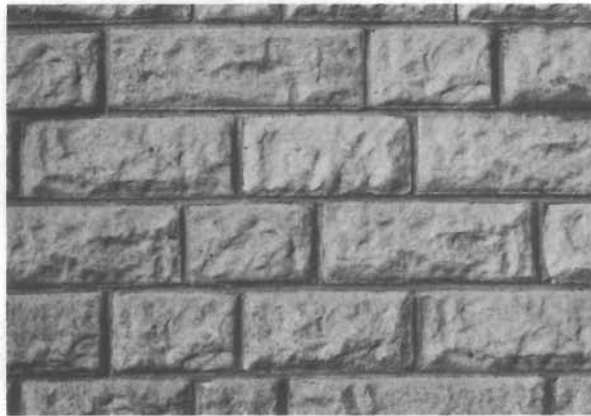


# WALLS



Old and new brickwork.

Rusticated artificial stone should be forbidden in the Conservation Area.



Bad pointing.

Good pointing.



A badly pointed brick and flint wall - as it should be.



Brick elevations rarely lend themselves to painting. Half of 19-25 West Street is now dingy white, the other half is of Flemish bond with blue headers. No. 15 Market Place has a white painted band between the first and the second floor windows, perhaps intended for a name. Normal maintenance should be negligible on good brickwork.

In brickwork of high quality, extreme care must be taken when repointing, and mortar should always be softer than the brickwork and never 'battered' around the joints. Grey Portland cement is best avoided like the plague. In Blandford's Conservation Area there is remarkably little bad pointing. Some exceptions are at Nos. 1 and 3 West Street, and Wedge Cottage in East Street, 21 and 22 Sheep Market Hill and the west wall of Old Bank House.

The two examples of mathematical tile facades at 8 Salisbury Street and 24 East Street are the only examples in Blandford, and should be repaired soon.

### STONEMWORK

Blandford is mostly of brick. There is very little stonework, but what exists needs attention. The Portland stone dressings on the facade of Coupar House are in good condition, but the dressings of Dale House are crumbling away. The Town Hall was faced in Portland stone ashlar and now looks shabby - so does the monument to the fire. Regular washing would be useful, as well as a longer term programme of gradual replacement and repair.

Different seams of stone from the same quarry vary in texture and colour but new stone should be taken from the same quarry wherever possible. This new stone is then likely to weather in with the old. The entrance to the old Almshouse on the north side of the churchyard is crumbling away. The Church is in most urgent need of repair. Its walls are of Greensand ashlar with dressings of Portland and Ham Hill stone. Both are in a parlous state, and sections of balustrading from the parapet walls are falling away.

The chunchyard retaining wall is of the entertaining local flint and stone 'chequer' pattern. The wall is black from traffic exhaust and is again worth cleaning.

### WINDOWS

Many roofs have dormer windows. No.59 Salisbury Street has even two tiers of dormer windows in a particularly high and deep mansard roof. These windows frequently need weather-proofing, and when the timber is rotten the original design must be repeated - especially in the glazing bars.

Applications to enlarge dormer windows within listed buildings should require careful consideration. Original dormer windows facing back from the street might be altered.

The sash window was normal around 1731, but since then, the original glazing bars have often been lost. Those of the Rectory remain at first floor but not on the ground floor. In this importantly placed building it would be well worth replacing the lost bars. Similarly in an attached pair of houses, the original glazing bars remain at 69 East Street but at 67 are missing and call for replacement. In one instance at 33 East Street, lost sash windows have been renewed with no glazing bars at all, and with remarkably successful results. White painted windows look best - contrast No.11 with the sombre green of No.45.

The oriel window above the passage between Nos.8 and 10 Market Place has lost the glazing bars in its lower half. These should be reinstated. 71 East Street has a fine three-storeyed oriel window. The two-storeyed oriel of 71 Salisbury Street is more modest but deserves protection.

The only two surviving examples of good early shop fronts are at 6 Salisbury Street and 9 Market Place, the former bow window still has its shutters. Both fronts need attention. Original examples are a valuable feature, but care must be taken to avoid a rash of new bow windows on the shopping street fronts.





# WINDOWS



Dormer.



Note lost glazing bars above "SUSETTE".



Sash and crown glass.



Oriel.

Casement and covered cornice.



Thick glazing bars of early sash window and mathematical tiles.



Shuttered bay windows and mathematical tiles.



Crown glass still remains in many windows in Blandford to which it lends glitter and life. This should be preserved wherever possible as it is now virtually impossible to obtain.

Casement windows, which are probably pre-fire, are to be found at the east end of East Street (in Nos.6,7,8 and 22) and at 70 and 72 Salisbury Street. A further peculiarity of these possibly pre-fire buildings is their coved cornice as at 27 - 29 and 15 - 17 East Street. Queen Anne and early glazing bars were generally thick, and this type remains at both 11 West Street, the Crown and Anchor Public House and 45 East Street.

#### CORNICES AND PEDIMENTS

The better of the post-fire houses all have carved cornices, many of extremely fine workmanship. Good examples are at 40 Salisbury Street, 15 Market Place, 65 East Street and at Stour House. Together with the carved cornices belong the pedimented door surrounds like fine examples at Lime Tree House, Old Bank House and 10 Market Place. The Bastard firm were primarily joiners and it is no surprise to find a high standard of joinery in Blandford.

#### PARTY WALLS

"This is a party wall, 1732". proclaims an inscription at ground floor level on the east wall of 21 Market Place. During rebuilding after the fire there were many disputes about party wall ownership. Perhaps because of this some party walls are minimal, and merely of thin brickwork or timber studwork. Often one building then relies very much on the support of the next. When one building is demolished, extreme caution must be exercised to preserve its next door neighbour. Conditions should be made in town-planning consents to this effect.

#### INTERIORS

A few good interiors survive in their 18th century condition. The hall plasterwork and the carved stair brackets of Coupar House are noteworthy. In Eastway House and in the Bastards' House is more good plasterwork. A survey of the interiors of listed buildings should be made to list any other interior features which may survive.

#### THE BASEMENTS

The basement storey of Old Bank House is pre-fire and 2 The Plocks has pre-fire basement walls of chalk and flint set in mud. Most of the post-fire buildings have basements, and all those in East and West Streets are liable to flood, if only to 2"-3" deep, whenever the water-table rises, at high river. These damp and low ceilinged basements now serve little purpose except to ventilate the ground floor timbers.

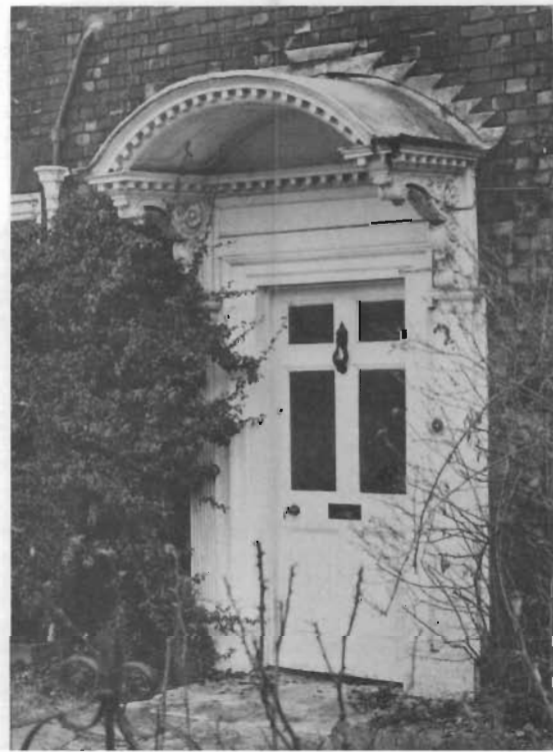


Pump dated 1817.

The Mayor's seat in the church.



INTERIORS, CORNICES AND DOORS.





TOWNSCAPE DETAILS

THE MOST CHARACTERISTIC AND IMPORTANT SINGLE FEATURE OF BLANDFORD CONSERVATION AREA IS THE CONTINUITY OF THE STREET FACADES AND OF THE PITCHED ROOFS.

The bites taken out of the southern end of White Cliff Mill Street are the most blatant examples of a discontinued street line.

The skyline gap above the white painted and banal upper walling of the new International Store is an object lesson of how not to try to continue the roofline but the roof of the new library is an example of how a roof should continue the roof line.

Flank walls exposed by new buildings need careful attention. Often in the past they were attractively tile hung, but the west flank wall of the Town Hall is overexposed by the lack of pitched roof over the Midland Bank.

GARDEN WALLS

Garden walls of brick or brick and flint are part of Blandford's character. They must always be retained if possible. Specially important are the garden walls of Coupar House, the Rectory and Old Bank House. Stour House's western garden wall compactly defines Common Lane and the brick wall to the north of the Bryanston Street cottage terraces encloses this area of housing.

Where brick walls have been severed, the only respectable material for a newly exposed end is brick from the demolished wall and never new bricks.

New walls in front of old houses should be in old brick. The modern brick wall in front of Dale House ill compares with the fine 17th century brickwork of the house's facade.

Artificial stone walling is always inappropriate and mechanical-looking, as well as weathering differently, and the repetitive and "patterned" appearance of artificially-rusticated types should especially be forbidden in the Conservation Area.

Corrugated iron fences are ugly and should be replaced by timber fences or brick walls.

PAVEMENTS

Too many tarmac surfaces all over Blandford are drab. Their grey monotony would be relieved by paving stones, flints at strategic points or bricks on edge. These materials would harmonise with older building materials. Pedestrian passages particularly need attention and if rights-of-way were to be acquired by the Borough this would allow a comprehensive scheme of resurfacing. At present the passages are often gravelled or muddy and puddle-pitted with open gutters along the edge. The gutter should be buried, and all well-used pedestrian passages paved. The main shopping pavements are already paved, but a few are of patchy tarmac; these in turn should be repaired or replaced by paving stones.

STREET FURNITURE

LITTER BASKETS should be placed where they are not only used but also emptied.

More SEATS could well be provided. The town is set on a south-facing slope and there are sunny opportunities. The three seats in the Tabernacle are well placed as would be a circular bench around the Tabernacle Oak. The south wall of the church overlooking the Market Place offers a marvellous position for seats. There are two seats on the Ham but many more are required. The seat on Blandford Bridge appears perfectly placed for a traffic count, but it must be a welcome resting spot for aged shoppers from Blandford St. Mary.



White Cliff Mill Street.



The International Store.



The Midland Bank.



# PAVEMENTS AND WALLS



Wheel worn paving.



Rusticated artificial stone walling should be forbidden in the Conservation Area.



Gleaming bollards but worn surface.



Severed walls should be properly finished off.

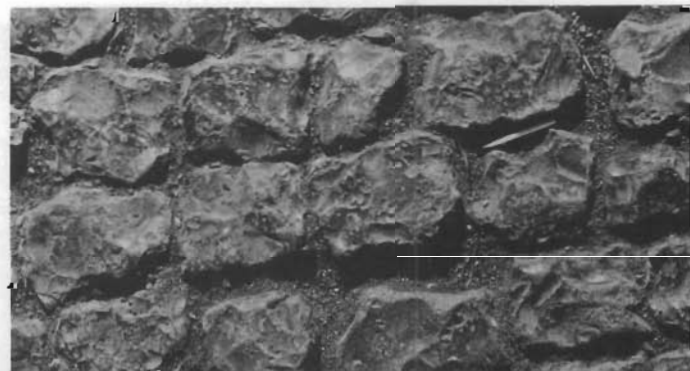


Bury the gutters and pave.

Setts.



Knapped flint.



METALWORK

Little of Blandford's metalwork survived the melting-pots of the second world war. The Church-yard has lost its railings, possibly to no great detriment except in the loneliness of the fire monument. Amidst the semi-derelict gardens are some railings which could be collected together and used to better advantage. Quite a few are tottering at the river's edge and unless rescued, will before long be lost in the river. Replacement railings look best in the local vernacular, and not in light pseudo-Spanish bentwork.

Hooped RAILINGS outside the Park Road girls' school, the gas works infants' school and in Church Lane are fun. The tubular metal pedestrian CRASH BARRIERS are not, especially at the Market Place bus stops. Oak posts and rail would be infinitely better, nor need these posts be painted for they would soon acquire a shiny patina. The hinged wooden bar at the Salisbury Street end of the furniture passage is a competent solution to the problem of children rushing blindly into the road.

IRON GATES at the Salisbury Street entrance to the Church Lane car park similar to those at the Town Hall should not be lost. The LAMPS at the west entrance to the church are fine and deserve new glass. Genuine period fittings where they survive should be cherished. The three Rectory BOLLARDS gleam blackly - cannot the two bollards at either end of the north Market Place pavement be made as powerful a feature ?

Attached to many facades are flag pole brackets, perhaps relics of the tercentenary celebrations. Flags may fly from them again, there is no reason why they should be removed.

Not surprisingly, Blandford's property owners were very fire-conscious after 1731. This is apparent in the number of fire-insurance plaques still to be seen on the facades of the town's principal buildings. 21 Market Place was insured with the Sun Insurance Office and also with the Phoenix Insurance Office in the evident hope that if one fire engine did not arrive the other would. These insurance plaques are a part of the town's history and make less sense in any antique shop than on the buildings to which they were fixed. It is an offence to remove these insurance plaques from a statutory listed building.

NOTICES

The visitor is told twice that he is entering Blandford, once that it is 16 miles from Dorchester and then that Blandford is "An interesting Georgian Town". Traffic signs proliferate at all traffic junctions. One gantry if properly positioned at any junction should be sufficient. While writing on the road surface is invisible if there is much traffic, and all too visible when there is none, verbose tarmac is like a chattering carpet. Traffic directions need condensing and repositioning. Some shopfront notices especially those which rise above the first floor window cill level need changing. Most of the notices mentioned simply need removing.

A multitude of signs and advertising at every garage is an irritation. The 'TOILETS' sign mars the facade of the Town Hall, and the 'PALACE' sign on 45 East Street will, presumably be removed when the cinema closes. The Arts Club notice by Conyer's Garage is broken, as is another at the Music Schools. A third is now useless at the foot of the Tabernacle Oak. If they are unused, all would be better removed.

The white plastic Hall and Woodhouse brewery lettering on the fronts of pubs is good. The absence of lettering on the white band above Frisby's in the Market Place is disconcerting. Can one either write 'Frisby' or else remove the band?





# METALWORK AND NOTICES

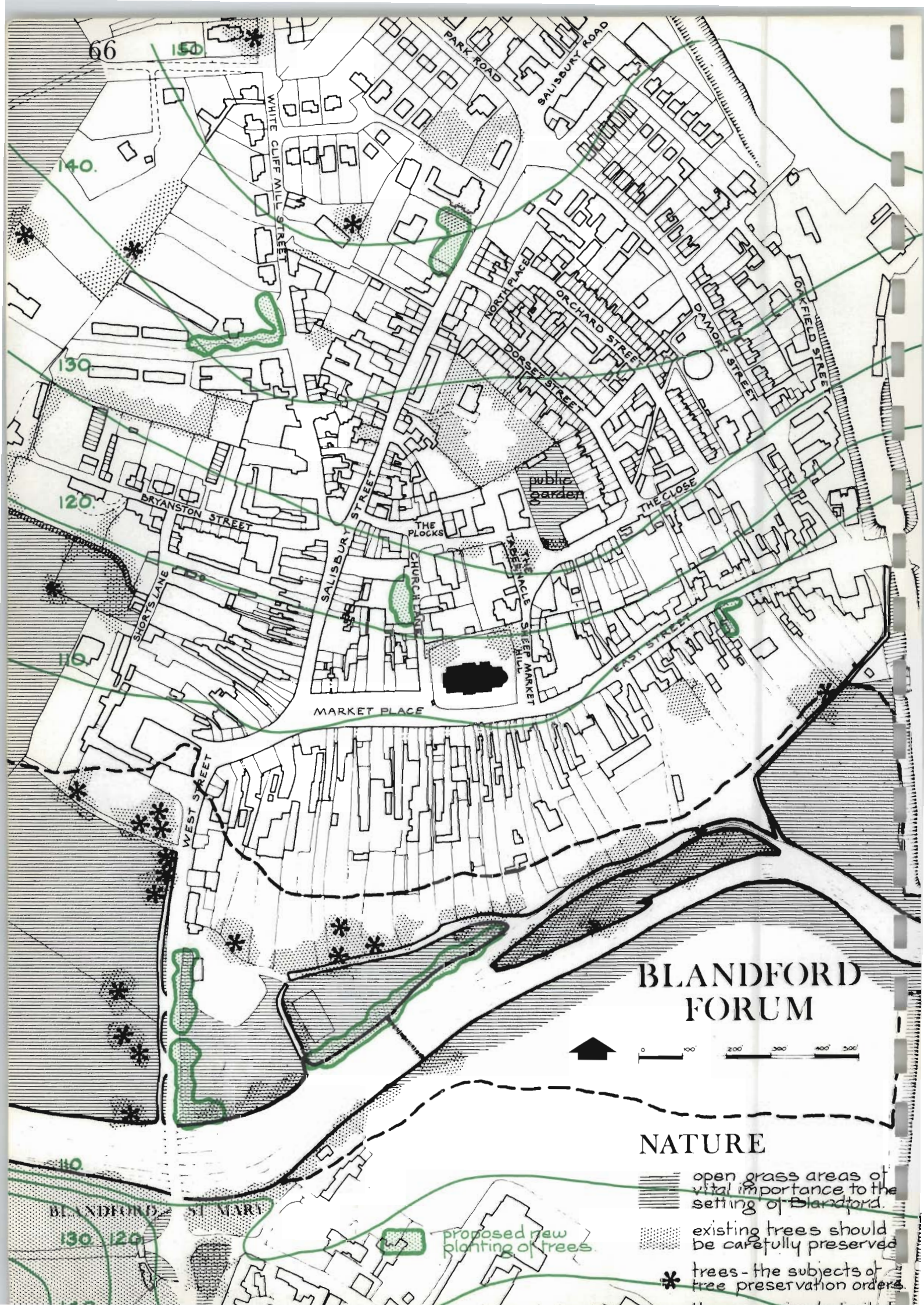


Is there still a Blandford Arts Club ? Railings old and new.

Where has the Monument's iron lamp holder gone ?










# BLANDFORD FORUM



## NATURE

-  open grass areas of vital importance to the setting of Blandford.
-  existing trees should be carefully preserved
-  trees - the subjects of tree preservation orders

proposed new planting of trees



# METALWORK AND NOTICES



Is there still a Blandford Arts Club ? Railings old and new.  
 Where has the Monument's iron lamp holder gone ?





## TREES AND PLANTING

Trees play an important role at two entrances to Blandford. From the Wimborne Road a group of trees stress something of a "promontory" into the centre of the town. Perhaps this was once all wooded. The trees help to form a visual break between the grey slates to the east and the red tiles to the west. Much nearer at hand beside the road from Blandford Camp, new housing looks raw and could be softened by trees along the road. The island between the two roads looks ripe for development: in anticipation of this, trees could now, with marvellous advantage, be planted along the Wimborne road to give something of an "avenue" approach into the town. The long lines of St Leonard's chicken farm sheds at the bottom of the Wimborne road could be greatly softened by planting.

At the Bridge approach into Blandford, Bryanston woods are a national heritage which must never be destroyed. The trees dotted about the park add scale to wide meadows. East of Blandford Bridge are good trees along the river bank, and these could now be continued along the island to the swimming pool, to which newly-planted trees are already beginning to give shelter. The present bleak expanse of tarmac over the car park could again be shielded by trees.

The existing trees at the bottom of the riverside gardens are important, and any schemes in this area must respect them. The two cedars are grand, and the tree set between the Ham and the Greyhound car park serves to define the access link through here.

In the gardens off Bryantston Street, trees north of the garden wall enclosing the cottage terraces, and others along the west side of Short's Lane make this a peaceful rural area in contrast to the utter urbanity of the shopping streets.

In White Cliff Mill Street a group of trees on the scrub forecourt of the garage would set off the agricultural machinery and at the same time help to fill a long roadside gap. The planting opposite the surgery forecourt is good and the oak behind the surgery is magnificent. The lone tulip tree in Dale House garden is very fine, and more planting in front of the clinic would better enclose the tarmac forecourt. The street facade along the approach from the Market Place is continuous until this point and planting would soften the abrupt halt.

The dense trees around Fields Oak garden are curiously hidden from the surrounding streets, but one hopes that in any new development, and for its sake, they will be saved. In the centre of the garden is a pretty weeping willow. Another willow in the garden of 49 Salisbury Street rises above the garden wall, while at the west end of the Congregational Church is a third willow tree. Who planted them all so close together in this part of the town?

Two large churchyard yews survive. Perhaps the church is monumental enough not to call for shielding by trees, although yews on the south side of the church used to form a visual 'stop' to the Market Place.

Trees planted to continue the street line along Church Lane car park would hide the appalling black corrugated iron on its south side from Coupar House. They would look well from the Market Place too. Trees from the rectory garden already attractively overhang the road from the Plocks to the Tabernacle.

The topiary of the Hall and Woodhouse gardens and a general lack of large trees in the public gardens, adds a quality of openness which is good. The Tabernacle oak at the top of Sheep Market Hill gives a "focus" to the whole area.

The major break in the street facade at number 19 East Street might again lend itself to planting to hide the dreary expanse of gravel. A tree-lined high brick wall against the pavement, with great solid double timber doors, would re-introduce the element of privacy by allowing only a fleeting glimpse of goings-on within. Rising up behind this wall, trees would spread into East Street and veil the barren end walls of numbers 17 and 21, and others along the west wall



68

market place.

arch

wall

greyhound public house

ENCLOSED YARD

PRESERVE

PRESERVE

right of way

wall

north



1:500

the yard of the greyhound public house is part of the vital right of way from the ham car park to the market place. the conservation of the surrounding outbuildings would preserve the human scale and charm of this part of this important pedestrian link.

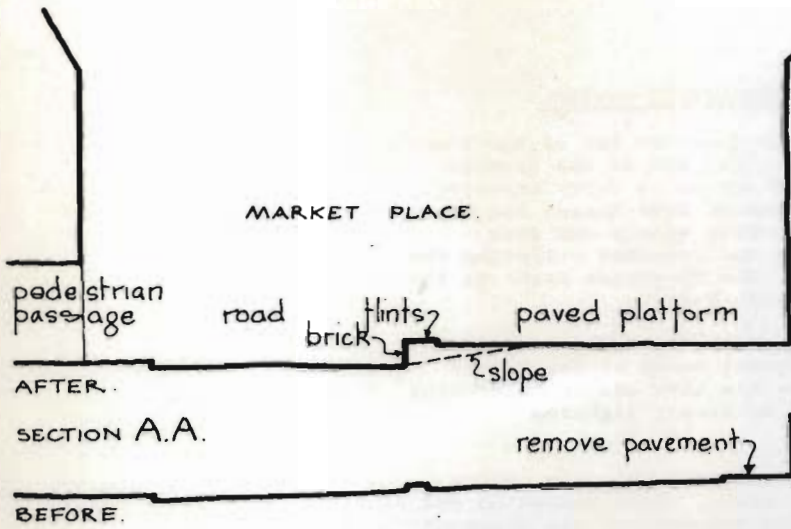
car park.

ham car park.

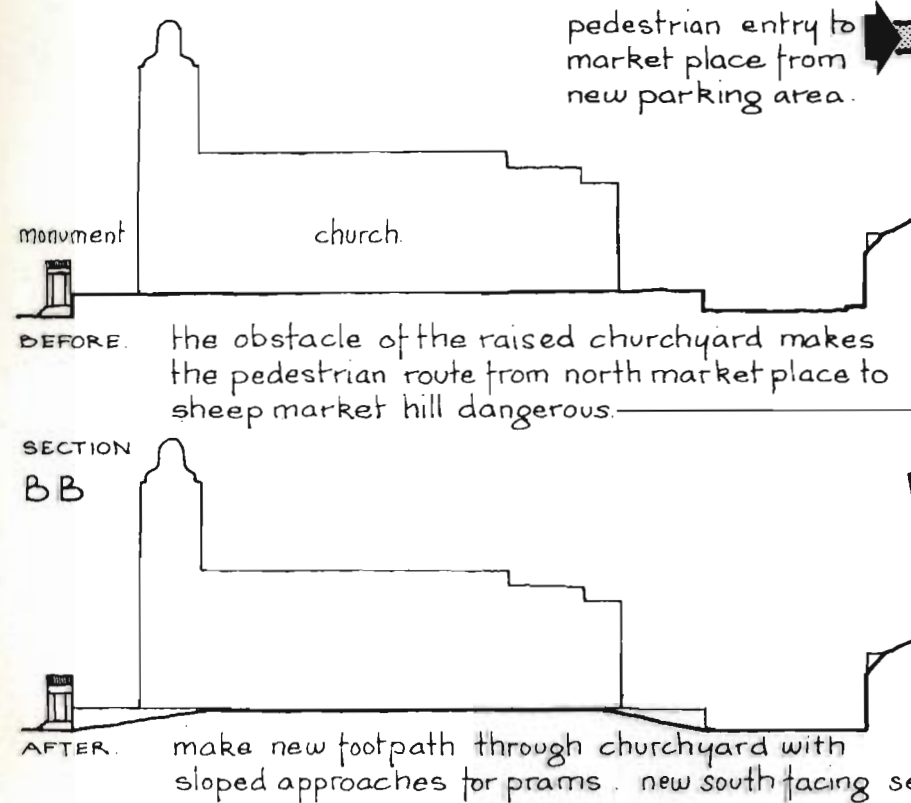




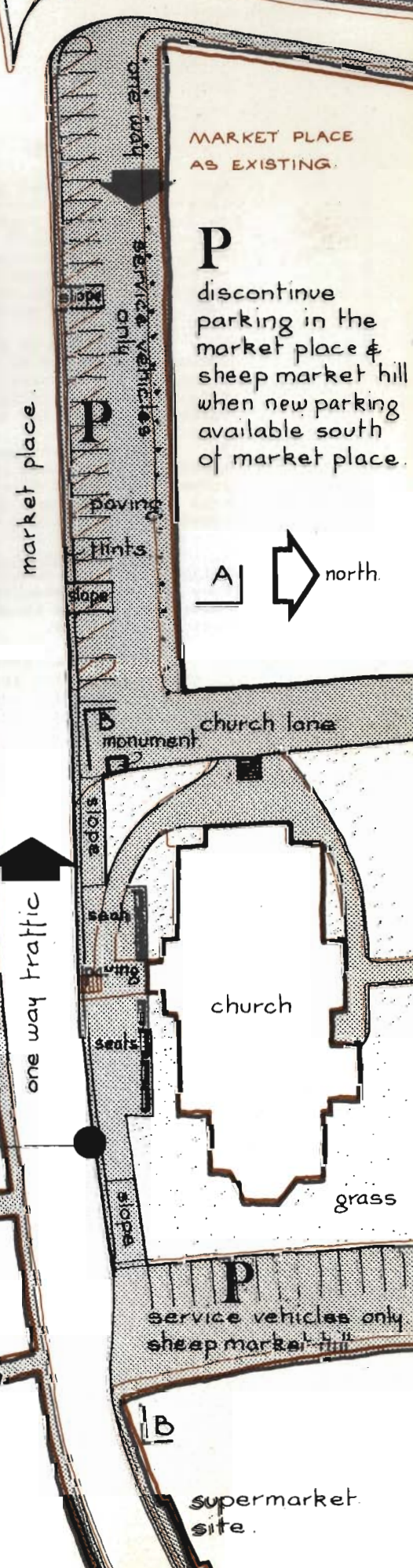
see page 41 for pedestrian pressures in the market place.



from south to north across the market place the ground rises considerably. make north half of market place for pedestrians & service vehicles only. make this area a raised platform separate from the road.



### PROPOSED TRAFFIC - PEDESTRIAN SEGREGATION IN THE MARKET PLACE.





BLANDFORD: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

1. Heavy through traffic should be diverted out of the town centre and out of Blandford St. Mary. The use of the disused railway line as a possible major road should be fully explored. A service road should be considered behind East Street and the Market Place, providing additional parking spaces and rear servicing, with ready footpath access and possibly relieving the Market Place of bus stop congestion. The riverside might at the same time be made accessible as a public park.
2. The system of pedestrian ways should be retained and extended, especially in any new development south of the Market Place and East Street. Wherever possible they should be brought into Borough ownership, and improved by street lighting and re-surfacing for public use.
3. The present function of Blandford as a shopping centre should be reinforced by all possible means. Development in and around the Market Place will place the emphasis of the shopping area firmly here and check any tendency to sprawl outwards at the expense of the Market Place.
4. Maximum use of the upper floors of listed buildings especially around the Market Place, should be encouraged wherever possible, they may lend themselves either as flats or offices; large scale commercial office block development should not be allowed in the Conservation Area.
5. Any further growth of light industry should be discouraged in the Conservation Area. Garages and petrol pumps should not be allowed to approach any closer to the busy and restricted Market Place than they now do, nor in particular to face onto the Market Place itself.
6. Residential Development. Infill housing schemes should be encouraged in the Conservation Area but the architectural quality of the schemes must be of the highest order, and appropriate to their respective sites.
7. Within the Conservation Area encouragement should be given to hotels and restaurants and any other schemes which will promote Blandford's tourist trade.
8. Any town expansion to the south and south west must be carefully limited and defined and the limits enforced.





# BLANDFORD FORUM



## DEVELOPMENT & OPPORTUNITY

- ▬▬▬ major areas of development for which planning permission has been given.
- A B C is being sought.
- C has been discussed.
- major areas of opportunity.

BLANDFORD ST MARY



## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A live Exhibition of Blandford's past and future should be organised and maintained by the Borough Council in collaboration with the Civic Society, in the Town Hall. A model of the Town Centre would form a valuable focus of this Exhibition, and would aid in considering detailed planning applications. A qualified information officer should be periodically in attendance, to give technical advice and details about grants, improvement orders and the like.
2. Photographic Record. The exhibition should contain a full photographic record of every street and building in the Blandford Conservation Area. Advice in this could be sought from the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and The County Council might seek the technical assistance of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments and the National Monuments Record. The photographic record should be kept periodically up to date and copies of all photographs should be lodged with the planning officers to assist in development control.
3. Exemplary Conversion Schemes. The County Council, together with the Borough Council should take in hand individual buildings and by grant aid to the owners should make public examples of what can be achieved. Photographs of these buildings both before and after attention should be displayed in the Exhibition. In certain cases the County Council together with the Borough Council should investigate the possibility of purchasing a building in deteriorating condition and then, applying its powers under the Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act 1962, finance its conversion for resale or lease, as a model and inspiration to others.
4. Repair Grants. The Borough Council should make application to the Historic Buildings Council for England for a possible block Town Grant for Blandford. Subject to negotiation with the Ministry, this might take the form of an annual fund, administered by the Borough Council, to assist individual owners in carrying out essential repairs to listed buildings.
5. Eyesores. The Civic Society should instigate a campaign to remedy unsightly features of townscape and to persuade private owners to remove eyesores.
6. Traffic Signs. The traffic authorities should initiate a concerted campaign to tidy, co-ordinate and simplify all traffic signs.
7. Nuisance Uses. The possibility of submitting discontinuance orders in certain instances should be examined, where a use otherwise permitted is in fact against the public interest.
8. Byelaws. The officers of the Borough Council should take full advantage of their increased powers under the Building Regulations 1965, to dispense with or relax the strict application of the Regulations to listed buildings and ensure a realistic attitude to older properties.
9. Surveys. as follows should be completed:-
  - Traffic. A thorough and sophisticated traffic survey should now be prepared so as to resolve the present uncertainty about the routing of major traffic proposals. Only then can definite road schemes be prepared.
  - Shopping. A shopping survey should be prepared to determine what scale of shopping development can be supported by the town.
  - Buildings. A survey of all the listed building should be made, determining their use, ownership, available accommodation on all floors, condition and architectural features, both interior and exterior. This should define those buildings in a dilapidated condition and the economic feasibility of their repair.
10. Planning Application. Fuller information than required by the present application forms should be required in support of planning applications within the Conservation Area. The Town and Country Planning Acts generally require applicants to supply only sufficient drawings "to indicate" each scheme. In view of the particular importance of Blandford, with its 147 listed buildings, the following additional information is necessary to guide the local planning authority in giving its decisions and should now be insisted upon in all applications within the Conservation Area.



(a) Exact Survey information on each site and building "as existing". This should include for new sites and for alterations within the meaning of the Act, accurate  $\frac{1}{8}$ " survey drawings, plans and all elevations including adjoining buildings, with full information on materials. In the case of listed brick-faced buildings, half-inch brickwork details, showing bonding, window heads, window surrounds, doors, doorways, cornices and mouldings etc. should also be submitted.

(b) Proposal drawings should be  $\frac{1}{8}$ " scale with all architectural details e.g. fenestration and glazing bar details, at  $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale. Proposal drawings should include information on ancillaries such as fascia and shop front details in the case of shops and external plumbing.

(c) Applications should include details of brick types, brick bond and pointing proposed; if necessary the consent issued should be subject to only approved materials and bonding being used.

(d) In any application for renewal, alteration or replacement of a listed building full half-inch drawings of the street frontage and facades, including the roof detail, should be required.

(e) Major applications should where possible include perspectives and models, showing the inter-relation between proposals and existing buildings.

(f) Information should be supplied on existing materials on the site, such as glazed header bricks and hand made tiles, which are re-usable either in the work proposed or elsewhere in the Conservation Area.

11. Additional Planning Control In the interest of securing additional powers of planning control within the Blandford Conservation Area, the County Council should prepare for Ministry approval, a direction under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, 1963. Its effect should be that no development of Class I specified in the First Schedule of the General Development Order should be allowed unless express planning permission has first been granted.

12. Listing of Buildings. The County Council should collaborate with the Minister of Housing in considering minor revisions in the "Listing" of buildings, as recommended in this Report. This will enable the local planning authority to keep up to date in controlling applications affecting all buildings of architectural and historic importance.

13. The Restoration of important listed buildings should be under skilled architectural day-to-day supervision.

14. Height Control. In development proposals within the Conservation Area, the effect of height upon the character of the town is of paramount importance. Special attention to the heights of buildings should be given by the planning authority in all applications.

15. Infill Buildings. Individual infilling buildings in a street facade must build up to the facade line, continue the roof line and be designed with respect to each neighbour, and to the perspective view of the street.

16. Screen Walls. As a condition of planning consent, certain sites should be permanently screened.

17. The use of rusticated artificial stone should be forbidden in the Conservation Area and the use of other artificial stonework should be most carefully controlled in the Conservation Area.

18. Clay roofing tiles should be used on all roofs facing onto West Street, East Street, the Market Place and Salisbury Street., old tiles where possible should be used and old tiles rescued from demolished buildings could be stored in otherwise unused outhouses.

19. The use of similar building materials within a street will ensure continuity of materials even if the building itself is new.

20. Trees. The Borough Council and the Rural District Council should combine in preparing and carrying out a Tree Planting Scheme, with special attention to the riverside area and the road approaches into the town.

21. Architectural Character of future development. In considering future applications for alterations and new buildings in Blandford, the planning authority should adopt a policy of encouraging sensitive and progressive modern design in the best style of the day, discouraging further imitative work of pseudo-historical character. Any new building ought to be designed with the intention that it will be a strong contender for a Civic Trust Award.

Copies of this Report may be obtained, price  
£2. 0. 0. (exclusive of postage and packing) from:

The County Planning Officer,  
The County Planning Department,  
County Hall,  
Dorchester,  
Dorset.

The views expressed in this Study are the Authors' own and not necessarily those of the County. Every care has been taken in compilation, but no responsibility is accepted by the Authors or the County Council for any errors or omission either in fact or opinion.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our thanks to everyone who has helped us undertake this Survey, especially the people of Blandford and the officers, both of the Dorset County Council and the Blandford Borough Council.

We are most grateful for permission to reproduce photographs and for the help given by the Dorset County Museum, Country Life and the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments.

I would like to record my own gratitude, to Mr. Gerald Dalby, for his observant and painstaking care in preparing and presenting the foregoing material.



FLOODLIGHT THE CUPOLA OF THE CHURCH