



Blewbury Conservation Area Appraisal

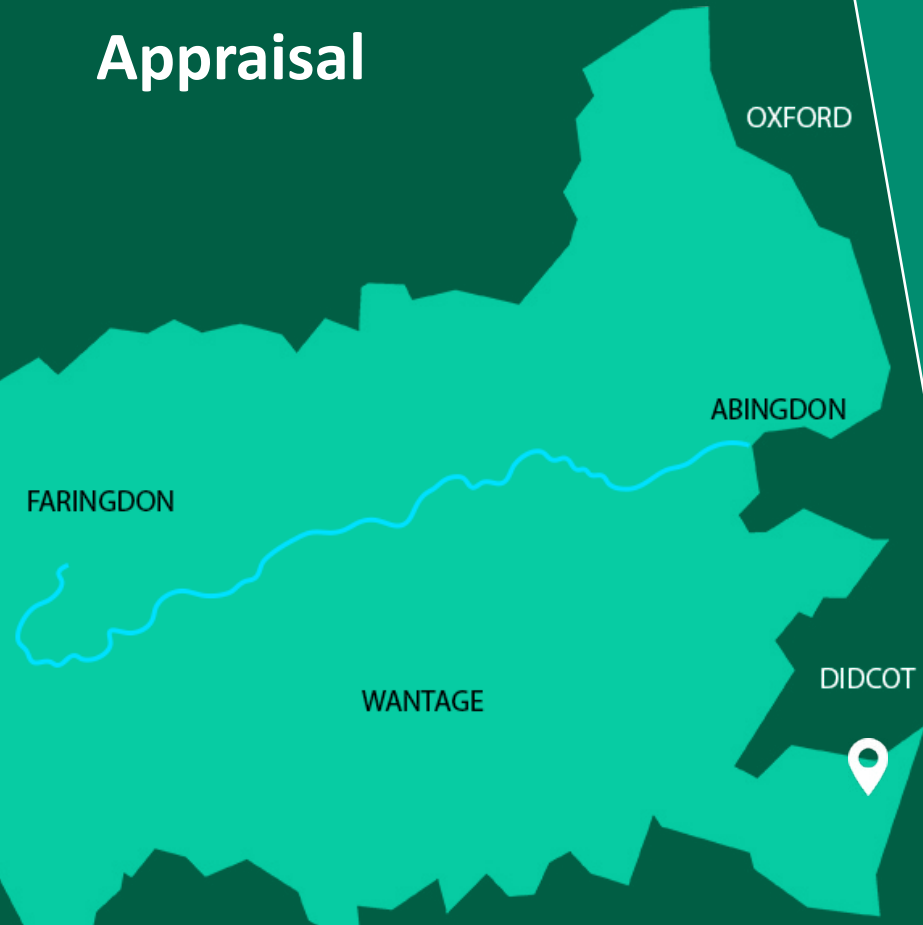


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Note

This appraisal seeks to provide a comprehensive assessment of the character and special historic interest of the conservation area. However, the reader should not assume that details which contribute to the character of the area, but are not mentioned here specifically, can be dismissed by reason of their omission.

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1.0 Introduction

What are conservation areas?

Areas of “special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” – in other words, they exist to protect the features and the characteristics that make a historic place unique and distinctive.

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area. In addition to statutory controls, both National Policy and the Local Authority policies in the Local Plan help preserve the special character and appearance of conservation areas and their setting where it contributes to its significance.

What is the purpose of a conservation area appraisal?

- Identify special architectural or historic interest and the changing needs of the conservation area;
- Define or redefine the conservation area boundaries;
- Increase public awareness and involvement in the preservation and enhancement of the area;
- Provide a framework for informed planning decisions;
- Guide controlled and positive management of change within the conservation area to minimise harm and encourage high quality, contextually responsive design.

How might living in a conservation area affect you?

- Most demolition works require planning permission from the local authority;

- Restrictions on permitted development and advertising;
- If you intend to cut down, top or lop any but the smallest trees you must notify the council so potential harm can be assessed.

For further information on conservation areas, how they are managed and how this might affect you, please see the Vale of White Horse District Council’s [website](#) and Historic England’s advice on [living in conservation areas](#).

Planning policy context

Blewbury Parish Council adopted a [neighbourhood plan](#) in October 2016. The wider district development plan currently sits within the [Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031](#). Other material planning considerations include the [National Planning Policy Framework 2021 \(NPPF\)](#), [Planning Practice Guidance \(PPG\)](#), and the emerging [Joint Local Plan 2041](#).

Methodology

This appraisal has been carried out following the advice in Historic England’s *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Second edition, Historic England Advice Note 1 Swindon (2019)*.

It is in two parts. The first is set out in accordance with the Vale’s advice, is based on the extensive character assessment undertaken throughout the conservation area in winter 2021/2022, and documentary research undertaken in the Bodleian Library and the Berkshire Record Office. The analysis of character and special interest is based on the full character assessment contained in the second part (*Section 8*).

This should be referred to for the detailed context of any specific part of this complex conservation area. Having subdivided the conservation area into broad character areas (see, page 12) these were analysed using the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit. This should be referred to for more detailed analysis of specific areas. *Appendix A* contains a series of historic maps which provide valuable information about the development of the village. These are referred to throughout the appraisal. Many of the buildings within the conservation area are statutorily listed (see, map on next page, also *Appendix C*).

The survey work was carried out during December 2021 and January 2022. The village was experienced at different times during the day and at night. However, in considering the green characteristics of the conservation area, it should be borne in mind that these will vary with the seasons and account should be taken of this accordingly.

Authorship

This heritage statement has been undertaken by Dr Kathryn Davies, BA(Hons), MA, DPhil (Oxon), Dip TP, FSA, MRTPI, IHBC. Dr Davies is a heritage consultant who has been a Chartered Town Planner and qualified in conservation for over 30 years. She is a founder member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation and is its immediate past Vice-Chair.

She has extensive experience of working in planning and conservation in local authorities and for Historic England. She is currently an independent consultant undertaking work in both the private and public sectors.

Dr Davies is a Visiting Fellow of Kellogg College, Oxford. She has lectured widely on conservation and her specific area of research, early modern, secular wall paintings, on which she has published a book and several papers.

Public Consultation

Following a first revision of the initial draft to add new maps, illustrations and formatting, the appraisal document was made available for public consultation starting July 5th 2023 and running for four weeks. This was extended for an additional four weeks to allow for additional comments by landowners who might be affected by the proposed boundary revision.

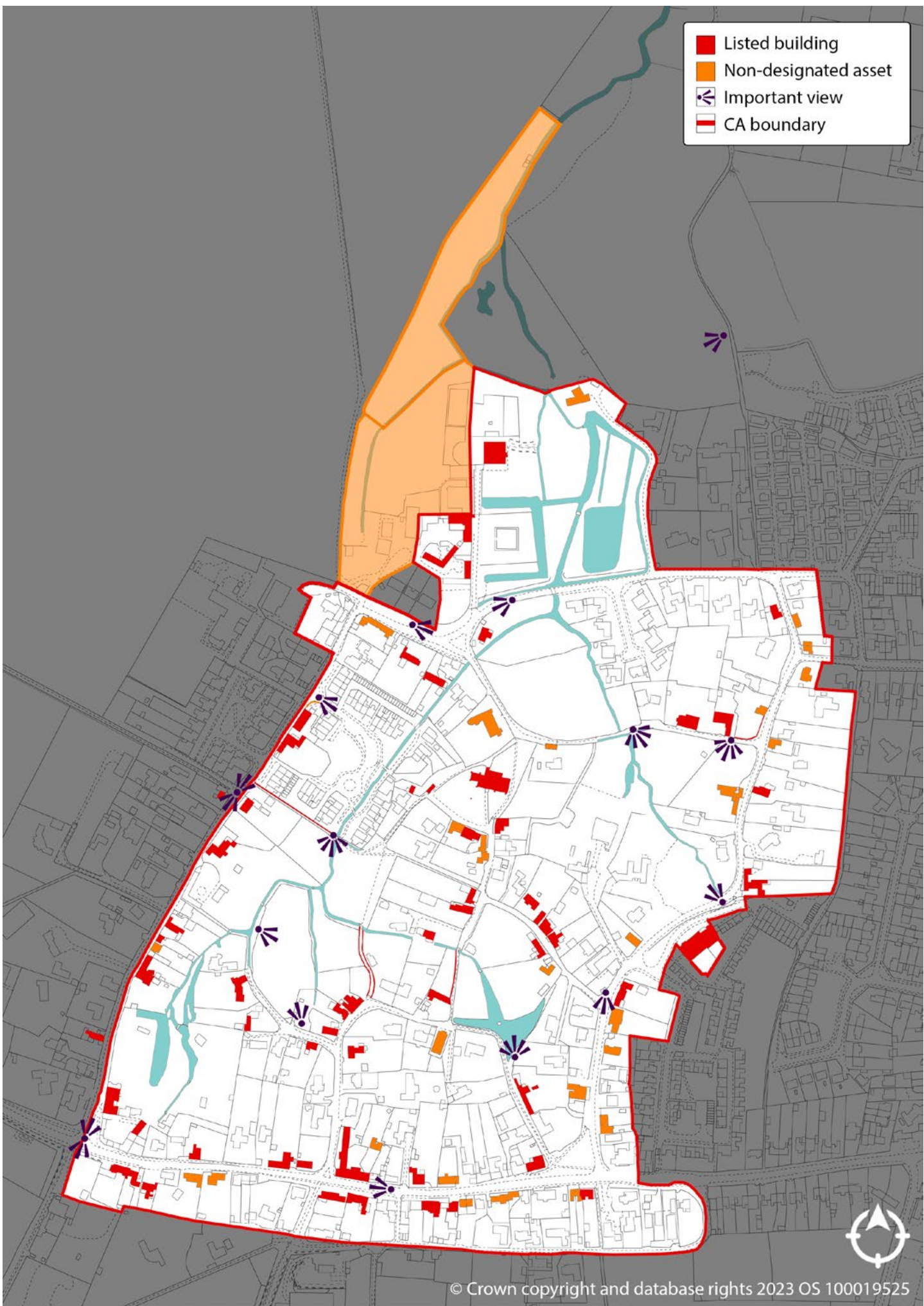
Comments submitted as part of the public consultation went on to inform the final version of the appraisal document. A full report of the results of the public consultation can be found on our consultation webpage: <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/get-in-touch/consultations/previous-consultations/>

Adoption

This document was adopted as the Blewbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD at a Cabinet meeting of Vale of White Horse District Council on 28 June 2024.

The revised boundary was also adopted and the designated boundary revised to that shown on page 5 of this document at the same meeting and is effective as of 28 June 2024.

- Listed building
- Non-designated asset
- Important view
- CA boundary



2.0 Summary of Special Interest

- Archaeological interest lies in the layout of the village, which dates to Anglo-Saxon times. The thatched or tiled cob walls lining the paths and tracks are likely to define early routes through the village
- The layout of the village also has historic interest in that it is still largely the same as that depicted on the earliest map, Rocque's Map of 1761 (see, *Appendix A*). It illustrates the economic functioning of the village from the medieval period onwards. The tracks to the open fields and onto the Downs where sheep were grazed are clearly discernible
- The chalk streams and drains within the conservation area determined the original layout and provide attractive landscape features
- Historic interest lies in extensive survival of historic buildings of all periods from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century which express changes in social and economic conditions and building technology
- The open spaces of the central area, which are survivals of the ancient closes associated with the early village plan, are of considerable historic interest and make a major contribution to character and appearance
- Related to this, historic interest lies in the high survival of ancient plot boundaries
- Artists and writers associated with houses within the conservation area contribute to historic interest
- Architectural embellishment of some of the historic buildings relates to display of status which has both architectural and historic interest.
- Low key highway engineering and lack of public street lighting contribute to high aesthetic value.

3.0 Historical Development

This section deals with the historical development of the village insofar as it is expressed in the built form of the village today. The purpose is to understand the significance of the different elements that make up the historic context of the village and contribute to its character and appearance.*

There is little published on the early development of the village itself, though there is plenty of evidence of early settlement, including Neolithic and Bronze Age barrows and the Iron Age camp in the surrounding area. A settlement on the site of the present village is thought to have been in existence by 500-600AD. The layout of the walled tracks which criss-cross the village is likely to date to this period. The network of watercourses which runs through the village determined its initial layout. The springs would have been the original reason for settling here and the expanse of water of The Cleve has considerable historical significance. However, much of the land around the water courses would be damp and boggy, especially in winter, so the paths connecting the most important elements of the village would probably always have been confined to the dry land. These ancient tracks, some of them bounded by cob walls capped with thatch or tiles, still dominate the layout of the village (right, *Fig 1*).



Fig 1. Cob walls with thatched cap defining ancient pathway

An archaeological investigation within the conservation area has revealed the foundations of an Anglo-Saxon house on the Ashbrook House site. Finds elsewhere in the area suggest that the village core may have been inhabited from the Neolithic period, giving the village considerable archaeological potential.

The earliest documentary evidence is a 10th century charter which refers to lands in the parish which were subsequently given to Abingdon Abbey, and it is likely that a church was in existence in the village by this time or shortly after.

*This account is based principally on documents in the Berkshire Record Office including the Enclosure Award 1805, the Tithe Award 1848, and OS map series; published material on the village *This Venerable Village* by Peter Northeast; unpublished report by AHP on Chapmans, Blewbury; census material online; contemporary directories, and discussions with local residents.

The Domesday Book records a sizeable settlement here, with 89 households, a church and 4 mills; the population has been estimated at around 400. This would have been an extraordinarily large settlement for the time, a fact which reinforces the claim for a substantial Anglo-Saxon settlement here. The extent of the early medieval village could have been similar to that of the 19th century. The land was divided into 3 holdings, or manors, the exact areas of which are detailed in the 1805 Enclosure Award. Manorial records over the centuries tell the story of the village, and evidence for these manors is still expressed on the ground in the village today.

The earliest building in the village is the church, dating from 11th century, which, together with the land and all the tithes in the parish, formed the Prebendal Manor. The small tithes, i.e., wool, lambs, sheep, were set aside for the chaplain in the late 13th century, together with land for a house and curtilage next to the cemetery, thus establishing the vicarage. Although the present (old) vicarage dates from the late 19th century, the site may well be the original one. The estate of the Prebendal Manor was leased out to provide an income and the manor house was based on Parsonage Farm, although there is no evidence of the old house now. The manor was held briefly by Thomas Cromwell until his execution in 1540; soon after then the prebend was extinguished, and the land acquired by the Bishop of Salisbury.

The Great Manor, known as The Manor of Blewbury, covered the main part of the parish and is most likely to have always been based on the current Manor House. It belonged first to the king but was granted to the abbots of Reading who held it until the Dissolution, after which it reverted to the king. Usually held by an absentee landlord of high status, the lease of the manor was a highly lucrative asset. Land within

the manor was held by a number of copyholders and freeholders, and many of the house plots are still identifiable. The property belonging to the manor was sold in the early 20th century. The moat of the original Manor House still survives, as do other interesting man-made water features around the site.

The third manor holding, Nottingham Fee, is located either side of Watery Lane, with Hall Barn suggested as the manor house. This is sited on a large plot backing on to the watercourse and is an interesting, multiphase building. Also situated in Nottingham Fee is Ashbrook House, which must also have been an early high-status house based on the evidence of its plot size and the presence of fishponds, which could be the remnant of a moated medieval site. It is here that the foundations of an Anglo-Saxon house have been discovered. This also has been suggested as the manor house for Nottingham Fee.

An early nineteenth-century description records:

*The village is very ill built, the roads bad, and the enclosures constructed of mud, thatched on the top, give the whole a very mean appearance; indeed, the want of trees and hedgerows, so common in the neighbouring parishes, with the great extent of open downs, afford no inducement to strangers to settle here (Northeast, 2007).**

Early photographs confirm the openness of the village in contrast to the mature trees and hedges which are such a feature of the village today. In the early nineteenth century, the condition of roads between Blewbury and its neighbouring villages and towns was generally poor.

*Northeast, 2007, p.30



Fig 2. One of the many plots of undeveloped land in the heart of the village which form a key feature in the conservation area.

The road from Streatley to Harwell was improved when a turnpike trust for repairing and maintaining the road was established in 1803. This linked with existing turnpikes between Reading and Wantage in 1804 and allowed a regular coach service to pass through the village along the London Road. In 1826 the coach from London to Wantage travelled through Blewbury three times a week. Various local services to Abingdon, Wallingford and Didcot were provided by wagons. The number of village merchants, innkeepers and hostlers in the village increased in response to the new trade. Some of the properties along London Road express their former commercial function.

The 1801 census records Blewbury's population as 553, not much greater than the 11th century population of an estimated 400. Census returns show that in 1841, when around 650 people lived in the village, Blewbury was home to 11 farmers, seven blacksmiths, five wheelwrights, four carpenters, three publicans, three shoemakers, two grocers and various other professions including bricklayers, tailors, millers, drapers and glaziers.* Evidence for some of these is contained in the buildings they occupied.

The area's coaching trade was curtailed by the arrival of the Great Western Railway from London to Bristol, completed in 1841. It reached Didcot in June 1840. Although there was no station at Blewbury, the proximity of the new connection helped to alter the socio-economic make-up of the village.

In 1871 the village population was 659. By the latter part of the 19th century, nearly all the buildings fronting London Road were in some form of commercial use and this can still be read in many of the buildings today. The population was 746 in 1881, swelled by workers constructing the northern section of the Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Junction Railway. Finished in 1882, it ran through Blewbury parish with a halt at Upton, just west of Blewbury. It closed in 1962.

By the end of the 19th century Blewbury had attracted a small colony of artists, partly because the area provided enough peace for artistic endeavour but was close enough to London to court commissions. Among those who settled in Blewbury were the painters Blandford Fletcher (1866-1936), T.F.M. Sheard (1866-1921), Rowland Holyoake (1880-1924), Sir Luke Fildes (1843-1918) and Sir William Nicholson (1872-1949).

**ibid*, p.32

The village was also home to several notable writers during the first half of the twentieth century, including Nicholson's partner Marguerite Steen (1894-1975), Kenneth Grahame (1859-1932), Barbara Euphan Todd (1890-1976) and Dick Francis (1920-2010).*

With a population of 545 in 1901, the occupation of Blewbury's early twentieth century inhabitants remained almost entirely agricultural. Farms were mainly arable, with cherry orchards and watercress beds within the village.

Blewbury's population increased from the mid-20th century, partly due to post-war employment opportunities at the nearby Harwell Atomic Research Station and in Didcot, whose large power station was completed in 1968. The area also attracted London commuters. In 1971 the population was 1,455. The village was part of Berkshire until 1974. By 2001 there were 1,650 people living in Blewbury, some of whom were accommodated in new houses built around the edges of the old settlement. Evidence for economic activity is no longer primarily expressed in buildings, as several businesses today are run from home offices.**

One of the defining characteristics of the village is the number of plots of open land, or closes, within the heart of the village (see, *Fig 2*). Understanding the development and use of these helps in assessing their significance.

In common with most villages in the area, the economy was based on mixed farming with cereal crops in the open fields and the Downs used for common pasture. The smaller, irregular-shaped enclosures

*AHP, report on Chapmans

***ibid.*

within the village would have provided produce for the householder. These are referred to in the 1805 Enclosure Award as 'Old Enclosures', suggesting these may date back to at least the 16th century. The large, regular-shaped fields that surround the village are typical of the later, Parliamentary enclosures.

The barns and granaries within the village, some dating back to 17th century, give an indication of the extent of corn grown. Documentary sources provide evidence of the type of cereal crops, typically, wheat, oats and barley. These would have been grown on the two open fields, West Field and East Field. The open land of Church Moor provided 'grass' for the church and the charterholders*** in the village. The remaining open plots were invariably part of the house and tenement, and would have been used to provide produce for the household and some surplus for market.

What is striking about the 19th century maps of the village is the extent of orchards (see, *Appendix A*). Nearly all the small plots of land within the village, and a few on the edge of the village, appear to have been orchards. Documentation on the type of trees grown is limited. Certainly there were apple trees and cherries are recorded here as well as in the neighbouring village of Harwell. Harwell cherries were being sold in Abingdon in the 1610s and the tithe in Blewbury in 1772 records apples, pears, cherries and walnuts.****

In the tithe award of 1848 there are references to 50 orchards. These are generally on these small plots of land, usually combined with house and garden. There is reference to the orchards being also used for pasture.

***Freeholders of land who enjoyed special privileges, Northeast, 2007, p.14

****Northeast, 2007 p.24

It appears that the orchards expanded in the mid-18th century as there are disputes recorded relating to who should have the tithes dating from this period. The great tithes, i.e. corn crops and hay went to the rector, whilst the small tithes such as wool, lambs, chickens and fruit went to the vicar. In the mid 18th century there seems to have been a move from corn to fruit thereby increasing the tithe for the vicar and decreasing that for the rector.

Further evidence for the dating of orchards comes from John Wesley's account of his visit in 1746 in which he describes Blewbury's springs used to feed watercress beds. The water-table was also 'high enough to keep orchards green in time of drought' (quoted by Beckinsale, 1972).^{*} There is other documentary evidence for Blewbury of an orchard in 1762.^{**} Some ancient apple trees can still be found in the village today.

Conditions for farming seem always to have been favourable and this is reflected in the size and wealth of the houses by the 17th century, which can be worked out from the hearth tax returns. In 1664, 53 houses were liable for tax and 22 exempt because of poverty. Nearly half of these had three or more hearths, indicating that these were certainly not the houses of the poor. Three houses had 6 or more hearths, including Ashbrook House which had 10. These must have been large, wealthy houses.

Early Nonconformism is represented by the evidence of the Quaker Meeting House, which appears on the 1805 Enclosure Award Map, but had disappeared by the time of the 1848 Tithe Map (see, *Appendix A*). This was located in the north-west corner of the village and a stone now records the approximate site of this and the associated Quaker burial ground, though there is no other evidence of that. In the 19th century there was a Baptist Chapel and Primitive Methodist Chapel, as well as the Wesleyan Chapel.

The greatest change in the 20th century is seen in London Road which has changed from its predominantly commercial function to almost entirely residential. New build in the latter part of the 20th century has generally quite a low profile and, on the whole, sits fairly comfortably into the village streets. The well-planned, and very low-key Dibleys development is commendably sympathetic to its surroundings.

^{*}Quoted in AHP report on Chapmans

^{**}Berkshire Record Office, D/ESTE/8

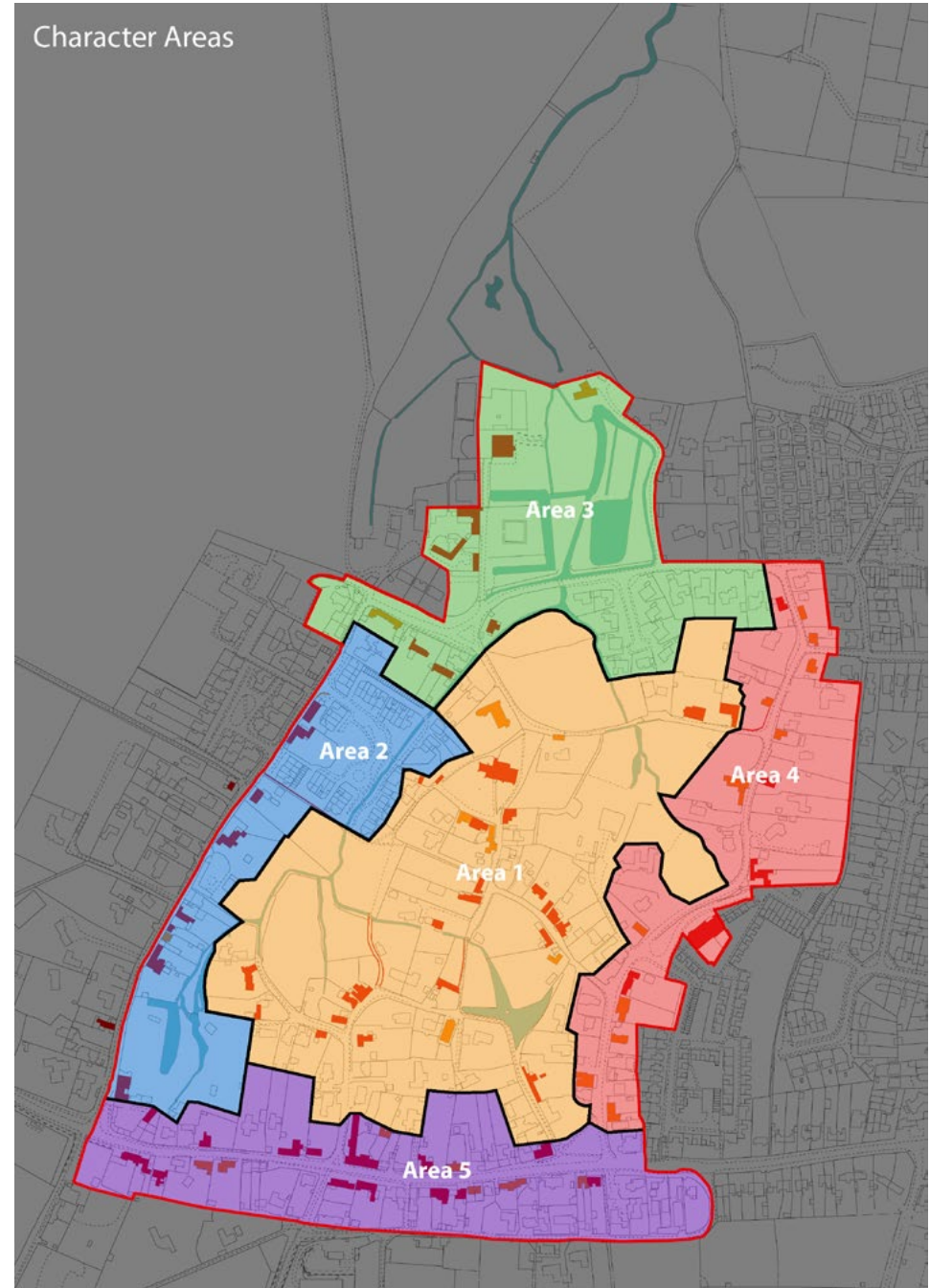
4.0 Character Assessment

The character of the conservation area varies considerably. Five main character areas have been identified although there are no hard boundaries between them (see right). There are common features between the character areas, as well as variations within them. The overall character is set out below. Section 8 of this appraisal has a more detailed assessment of the character of each area.

4.1 Pattern and plotting

Enclosing the centre of the village are the vehicular roads, but none of these cross the centre of the village, meaning there is no through traffic here. Instead, a network of smaller paths and tracks criss-crosses the centre along routes determined centuries ago by the watercourses running throughout the area. There are tracks leading out from the centre to the open fields – where there was daily work to be done – and up to the downs, where sheep and cattle were grazed.

This layout of the village has probably changed very little since Anglo-Saxon times. The layout as shown on Rocque's map of 1761 is more or less the same as that found today. The consistency of the settlement pattern is confirmed by the enclosure map of 1805, the tithe map of 1848 and the series of 25 inch ordnance survey maps from the mid-1870s onwards (see, *Appendix A*). These latter maps are very useful in that they define plot boundaries. These ancient plot boundaries survive and can still be seen on the ground. Of particular interest are the large, open plots in the centre of the village which have never been developed.



The church lies in this central area, with the former school, almshouses and a group of houses close by. The layout of buildings generally is informal and irregular. On the vehicular routes around the centre, the majority of houses front directly on to the highway, though this pattern breaks down along Berry Lane and South Street. In the central area houses are more randomly sited within their plots.

Plot sizes vary throughout the conservation area. A significant proportion of the buildings are detached and set in their own grounds. Plots on the whole are quite large and, in some cases, very large, especially in the central area. Some of those along London Road have been subdivided to create separate building plots off Pilgrim's Way.

4.2 Activity and prevailing uses

Within the conservation area buildings are almost entirely in residential use. The many commercial activities historically found along London Road have long since vanished. The Red Lion Public House survives on Chapel Lane and there are some self-catering apartments to let within the conservation area. Otherwise, the only non-residential uses are the nursery and the church. Shops servicing the village lie outside the conservation area.

The open land within the conservation area is primarily within residential curtilages and is in domestic use. The exceptions are the Play Close, which is an important public open space much used for recreation, and Church Moor, which is an unmanaged area of land. Along with the other major open spaces within the conservation area, i.e., Parsonage Farm, Orchard Dene, Cochrane's Field and the Pound, these spaces are important historically within the conservation area.

4.3 Traffic and movement

The A417, London Road, is the main road running east-west across the southern part of the conservation area. This is the main road between Reading and Wantage and, as such, can be quite busy. Other roads in the conservation area have very little traffic. As there is no through traffic across the centre, much of the conservation area is very quiet and peaceful.

The perimeter roads of Westbrook Street, Church End/Berry Lane and South Street have relatively little traffic. In the central area, vehicular traffic has very restricted access, being limited by the narrow roads of Chapel Lane, Watery Lane, Watts Lane and Church Road. Car parking along these lanes can also restrict movement and traffic speeds are very low.

The level of pedestrian activity within the conservation area is striking. All the paths and tracks are very well used; where they join they create informal meeting hubs, such as at Play Close.

There is very little modern highway engineering, which helps reinforce the traditional village character. Only the bellmouth junctions of Grahame Close and Millbrook Close stand out as designed junctions.



Fig 3. Close studding on the front elevation and upper gable of Corrydon House. The less visually prominent gable is constructed on the less impressive small square panels

4.4 Materials and palette

The range of building materials and their varied use reflect the date, function and status of the buildings within the village. They also reflect the materials available at the time for vernacular buildings. Apart from the church, which is built of stone, the earliest buildings are timber-framed, dating from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Those with large panels are generally earlier than those of small square panelling. One example of close studding survives, on Corrydon House (above, Fig 3), where the front and rear elevations have this treatment but not the sides. This is entirely in accordance with the use of close studding as a display of status. Ancillary buildings and farm buildings are usually weatherboarded.

Brick becomes the more common material from the later seventeenth century onwards when timber framing became less fashionable and less practical. Sometimes brickwork incorporates flared or burnt headers, used either for decorative or utilitarian purposes. Brick was widely used for infill panels on timber-framed buildings when the original wattle and daub panels decayed. A brick on Great Tree, dated 1737 with the initials EH suggests that might be the date of the replacement of the original panels, although the existing panels look more modern.

Hall Barn is a notable example of the use of brick. An earlier cross wing of timber framing has a main range of painted brick. Of particular note is the use of giant Doric pilasters on the front elevation. These were clearly designed as a display of status. This house has been suggested as the former manor house of Nottingham Fee, (though Ashbrook House is also a contender for this) which would account for its higher status. Boham's House is notable for its use of flared headers (below, Fig 4). Here diamond patterns of flared headers have the centres inlaid with the Boham family initials.



Fig 4. Boham's House, showing decorative use of burnt headers

Tile hanging can be found on a number of buildings, usually in a decorative pattern and covering the upper part of a wall, such as a gable. Render was, and still is, used as a finish on inferior or decayed materials to give a more weatherproof finish. It has also been used to update old buildings by concealing its then old-fashioned timber framing.

Rubblestone and flint can also be found on some buildings, but mostly this is used on boundary walls. Some of the ancient paths have walls made of cob, which is deteriorating in places, despite its thatched capping (right, Fig 5).



Fig 5. Section of cob wall in poor condition

Roof materials also vary, with thatch being the earliest material, surviving on sixteenth/seventeenth century buildings (below, Fig 6).



Fig 6. Thatch on The Stocks, possibly the earliest house in the village as it has a base cruck truss

There are many examples on buildings as well as walls. Concomitant with the more widespread use of brick is the use of plain tiles for roofing. This is less combustible and more durable than thatch and is therefore the most common roofing material. Once the railway came to the area, slate became more readily available, but its use is not typical for Blewbury.

Despite the varying dates, houses generally are of a traditional form of one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half storeys under pitched or hipped roofs. The depth of plan, for the most part, relates to traditional building construction. The exceptions are some of the new houses, which have a much deeper plan form.

All the traditional houses have chimneys stacks, and all are built of brick. External end stacks are found on some of the earliest buildings – such as Hall Barn and the Dower House – indicating an early plan form (below, Fig 7).



Fig 7. External chimney stack on The Dower House, London Road (listed as Double Doors)

Ridge stacks off centre indicate a hall and cross passage plan, usually dating from the sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Central ridge stacks are associated with lobby entry houses dating from the early seventeenth century (below, *Fig 8*). Internal end stacks are generally later and indicate a shift away from the traditional plan form of principal hearth in the hall. Examples of all of these can be found in the area.



Fig 8. Ayres Cottage, London Road, showing a central stack in line with a central entrance, indicating a lobby entry plan

Building details are varied and accord with their respective dates. The earliest buildings, dating from the mid 16th century, have small case-ment windows with a horizontal emphasis, reflecting the low headroom of these early buildings and the costliness of glass. Some of these have had dormers inserted to give greater headroom and light to the attic storey. Later brick buildings have larger windows concomitant with increased storey height and also changing technology in glass production, which made it more affordable. By the eighteenth century, the double hung sash window was the most fashionable style, lighting rooms with much greater headroom.

This continued to be the favoured style of window throughout the nineteenth century. Development in the production of glass meant that larger sheets of glass could be more cheaply produced after the mid-nineteenth century, when the four-pane sash window became more widely used.

Over the centuries, some of the houses have had alterations which reflect their changing uses and improvements in building technology. The shops, workshops, farms and associated buildings have mostly lost their original use; many display alterations reflecting their conversion to domestic use.

The conservation area boundary more or less includes all of the historic village as shown on early maps. Four perimeter roads, roughly in a square, enclose a central core. Only Blewbury Manor House and associated land and buildings fall outside the perimeter roads. The core is penetrated by tracks and paths but there is no vehicular way through. Development is dispersed in an ad hoc manner along these routes.

5.0 Spatial Analysis

5.1 Open space assessment

A considerable proportion of the conservation area is open space which is, for the most part, in private ownership. Despite this, much of it is open to public view, creating pockets of attractive countryside throughout the conservation area (see, *Fig 2*). This is a notable characteristic of the conservation area. The open plots follow the same historic plot boundaries shown on the earliest maps of the village. Their survival is a valuable historic record on the ground. Their aesthetic value is considerable, and they make a substantial contribution both to the character of the area and its appearance.

Public footpaths and tracks run alongside many of the boundaries, and these are very well used by pedestrians. Several of these routes lead, not surprisingly, to the church. Here the churchyard is another open space – the churchyard is completely open, with no boundary. Church Moor, Orchard Dene, Parsonage Farm and Cochrane’s Field are all bounded by footpaths and are open to public view. Given the very low level of vehicular traffic within the conservation area these open areas can be readily enjoyed by local residents and visitors.

Water is another key feature of the conservation area which is an attractive element in the landscape. The large pool of The Cleve, Mill Brook and the numerous streams which feed into it are all open to public view and contribute to the unique character and appearance of the conservation area (right, *Fig 9*).



Fig 9. The stream running alongside Watery Lane

Much of the open space is in attractive garden use or grassed areas, and many gardens have mature trees along boundaries. Some retain remnants of ancient orchards. Along the public routes through the village most boundaries are visually permeable, allowing private land to make its contribution to the area (see, *Fig 10*). Trees and hedges enclose some plots fronting on to the highway; here, the natural vegetation contributes to the rural character of the area.

Designed public open spaces are limited. The main public open space in the conservation area is the Play Close. This grassed area has Mill Brook flowing through it, which is bordered by mature trees. Several public footpaths meet here and it is a very well used open space.



Fig 10. View from South Street across the grounds of Parsonage Farm



Fig 12. Public open space at the junction of Church End and Berry Lane, showing the circular seat around the stump of a felled tree and litter bin

The provision of several benches enhances its use. Other areas of public open space are limited to the junctions of lanes and roads where they widen out. Principal amongst these is Forty Cross, the former pound (left, Fig 11). This grassed area has a prominent group of fine mature trees and several well-used benches. At the junction of Church End and Berry Lane is a very attractive triangle of land, with a group of interesting historic houses addressing the space. Mature trees enhance this and there is a circular seat around the stump of a felled tree (above, Fig 12).

The absence of designed public realm is a major positive factor in the retention of the special character and appearance of this conservation area. Its low-key highway engineering and complete absence of street lighting allow its historic character to be appreciated.



Fig 11. View of Forty Cross public open space



Fig 13. View of the Downs from Pilgrim's Way showing an ancient track to the areas used for sheep grazing

5.2 Key views

Key views are shown on the conservation area character appraisal map (see, *Appendix A*). Generally, views within the conservation area are short to medium distance and all are informal. The exception to this is along Pilgrim's Way where stunning, expansive views over the Downs create a striking setting for this part of the conservation area (above, *Fig 13*). The Downs also feature in views along London Road looking west, which are channelled rather than expansive. Although not within the conservation area, they are an important element in the historical development and functioning of the village and its setting.



Fig 14. View from London Road down Nottingham Fee

From London Road there are glimpsed views to the south up the ancient tracks to the Downs and glimpsed views to the north into the rest of the village (above, *Fig 14*).

Within the village are very many attractive views as the disposition of paths, hedges and trees, gardens and historic buildings creates many picturesque compositions. These views are mostly short-distance, which are closed by buildings, winding paths and vegetation. There are a few glimpsed views of the church rising above houses when viewed from Westbrook St and Church End and within the central area. This reflects the dominance of the church in life of the village over the centuries. Unfolding views along narrow paths and lanes are characteristic of the whole of the conservation area. Views along the walled paths with thatched or tiled tops are particularly enticing.

Many of these views have fine mature trees as focal points terminating the view, such as the trees at Forty Cross, those outside Mockbeggars Hall and at the junction of Westbrook Street and London Road.

There are also expansive views in the core of the village over undeveloped land and garden areas, which are open to public view. Expansive views from the Play Close are particularly important, taking in all the key elements of the conservation area: tree-lined water course; open grassed area; attractive gardens open to public view; walled path; church tower and distant views of the Downs. Views from Watery Lane, Church Road and Watts Lane across open plots of land also encompass these key features of the conservation area. These make a considerable contribution to the overriding character of a very rural settlement with open countryside reaching into the heart of the village.

There are glimpsed views from Westbrook Street out to the farmland beyond, the former West Field. There are also distant views to the Downs in the south from Westbrook Street. These are of considerable historic importance as they provide a historical connection to former open field farming system which characterised the village for centuries.

There are distant views into the conservation area from the Downs where the village forms part of the expansive views of the clay vale towards Didcot. Otherwise, because of the topography, views into the conservation area are limited. The footpath running north by the mobile home park offers views across an open field to the land Old Mill and Blewbury Manor House.

6.0 Management Plan

Under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local planning authorities have a statutory duty to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their districts from time to time. This management plan seeks to fulfil this duty

Any management plan should be widely disseminated within the local authority and should include the highway authority as well as utility companies and statutory undertakers.

There are very limited development opportunities within the conservation area. Any development must very carefully designed so as to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are a number of open spaces which would be inappropriate for development and these are particularly vulnerable.

Any proposals for development should, among other things, seek to:

- Retain and enhance open areas and views in the old core of the village
- Respect historic plot boundaries
- Respect traditional building plots, scale, form and materials including techniques and detailing
- Retain views within the village, as well as out of, and into, the village.
- Identify opportunities to enhance the significance of the village

Traditional detailing on buildings makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Minor works which could enhance the conservation area include:

- Better designed, and more sensitively sited litter bins
- Reinstatement of a tree in the centre of the tree seat at Church End
- Maintenance of historic thatch- and tile-capped walls
- Removal of overhead cables

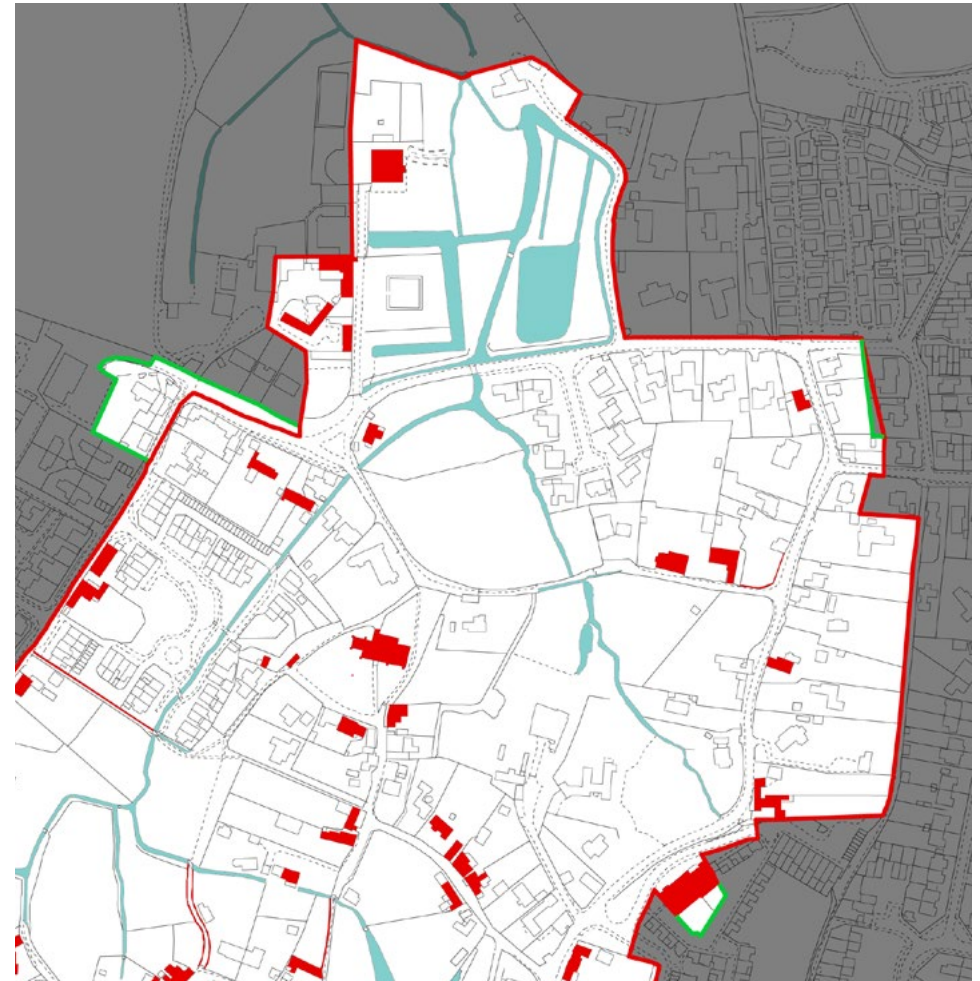
7.0 Boundary Revisions

The boundary as originally designated had considerable logic in that it encompassed nearly the whole of the historic village as shown on the 1876/7 OS map. The exceptions are on the west side of Westbrook Street, which is largely twentieth century development, and around Mockbeggars Hall and Farm.

An extension to the north and west of the conservation area was proposed during the consultation for this document. Following an assessment of public responses it is no longer proposed to include the twentieth-century dwellings on the north side of Church End which make a neutral contribution but are not sufficiently of architectural or historic interest to warrant conservation area designation. The areas of agricultural buildings and land associated with Mockbeggars Farm provide a valuable reference to the role of agricultural practise in local development but the buildings on the site are of limited architectural interest and so have also been removed from the boundary change proposal.

As an alternative to designation, the area of land immediately outside the boundary and still within the historic curtilage of Mockbeggars Farm is recognised as an Area of Special Local Character; a type of non-designated heritage asset. The paddock north of the farm is also proposed for this status for its contribution to our understanding of Quaker activity in the area. More details can be found at the end of Appendix D.

Church End widens by the entrance to Mockbeggars and Heather Way, which leads to the village hall. Mature trees here feature in views and a group of traditional houses create an attractive setting.



Conservation area map showing the revisions (green) to be adopted with this appraisal

These trees along with a short 19th century terrace and a further detached dwelling on Westbrook Street are proposed to be added for their positive contributions to the character of this part of the conservation area. Additionally, some minor corrections to the boundary on the east side of South Street at the rear property lines of Rustning Cottage, Bridus Cottage, Little Dibleys and Witherill's have been made to conform to property boundaries.

8.0 Character Areas

This part of the conservation area appraisal looks in more detail at the different character areas within the conservation area. Five broad character areas have been identified although there are no hard boundaries between them. There are common features between the character areas, as well as variations within them. The character areas are shown on page 12. The appraisal of individual character areas has been written so that they can be used on their own or in conjunction with the rest of the appraisal. There is, therefore, some repetition of detail – this is inescapable if the analysis of each sub-area is to function independently. The discussion focuses on the chief elements contributing to the special character and appearance of the conservation area so that any proposed development can be assessed against these to ensure that it preserves or enhances the conservation area’s character or appearance.

8.1 Area 1 – The central area

This area includes the historic core of the village encircled by the four principal roads within the conservation area. It is bounded by watercourses and the rear plots of properties fronting on to the principal roads. Several roads and tracks penetrate the area but none allow for vehicular through traffic. Church Road accessed off South Street, and Nottingham Fee are the principal roads, with Watt’s Lane, Chapel Lane, Church End and Watery Lane also allowing some vehicular access. These terminate in footpaths which form part of a more extensive network of paths linking across the centre of the village to the perimeter roads.

8.1.1 Key characteristics

- Large areas of open space and gardens open to public view
- Attractive rural character
- No through traffic
- Network of watercourses and informal tracks
- Paths enclosed by thatched or tiled-capped cob walls
- High survival of historic plot boundaries
- Attractive characteristics of The Cleve and the clear chalk streams which flow across the area
- Historic buildings of varying dates, styles, size and materials
- Picturesque views of buildings and their attractive gardens
- No streetlighting
- Lack of highway engineering



Fig 15. Open land within the heart of the village at Play Close

8.1.2 Special interest/significance

Large areas of undeveloped land are a key characteristic of this area, which is unusual for the centre of a village (previous page, *Fig 15*). These are mostly ancient closes, some of which have survived as very large garden plots, some consist of private but unmanaged open space and some are important public open space. Together they give a very rural character to the heart of the village. Some retain remains of former orchards, reflecting the predominant land use in the nineteenth century and the importance of orchards, predominantly cherries at that time, to the local economy.

The spaces are determined by the watercourses and tracks which criss-cross the area. The clear waters of several streams drain northwards towards The Old Mill. The main one, Mill Brook, flows from The Cleve, a large, very attractive pool with a footpath running alongside it (below, *Fig 16*).

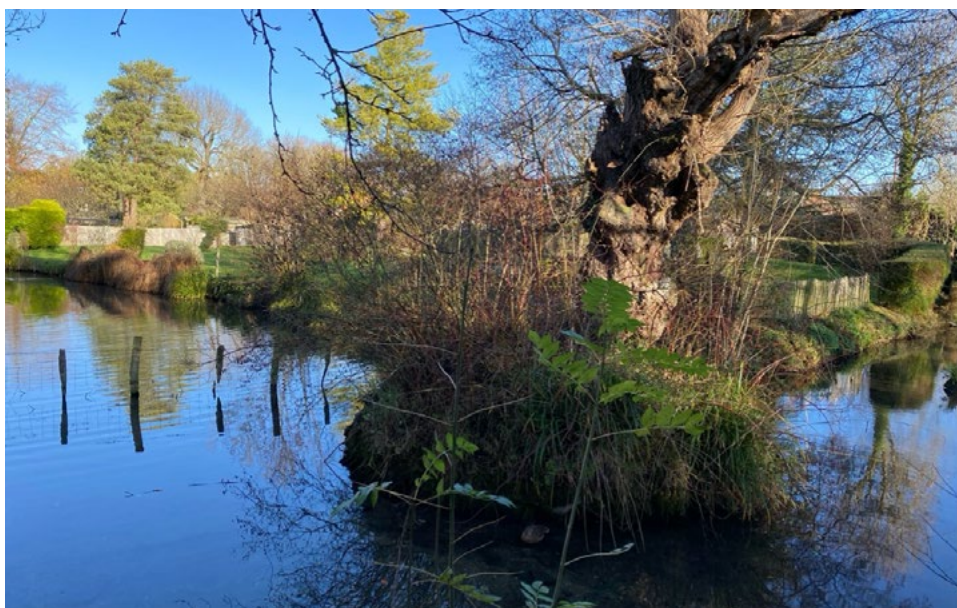


Fig 16. View across The Cleve



Fig 17. Cob walls with thatch capping lining footpath near Chapel Lane

The network of footpaths and tracks connect all parts of the area to the principal roads but, crucially, none of the tracks allow for through traffic – only access to houses, the pre-school and the church. This leaves this central area with the ambience of a historic village pre-motor vehicles. The pedestrian has priority in the centre of the village, again an unusual feature.

The paths and tracks are of historic and archaeological interest in themselves. Some are enclosed by ancient cob walls which are thatched or tiled (above, *Fig 17*). The layout probably dates back to the Saxon period when the population of the village is recorded in Domesday as around 400, which is extremely large for a village at that time. Other tracks are enclosed by hedges or fences. But many of the routes across the centre of the village are not enclosed at all and so offer views of the open plots, gardens and water bodies which characterise the area.



Fig 18. Public view across open space at Carramores as viewed from Church Road

Key open spaces are those of the Play Close, Cochrane's Paddock, Carramores, Orchard Dene, Church Moor and Parsonage Farm. Apart from the Play Close, these are not publicly accessible though they are very prominently open to view (above, Fig 18). Boundaries are visually permeable. It may be a watercourse, a post and rail fence or thin hedgerow just marking the boundary – all allowing full views of the open land. Each has a slightly different character, though mostly they comprise open grassed areas with tree-bordered watercourses. Church Moor looks more unmanaged, with overgrown scrub and some materials stored on it. This diminishes its aesthetic value. The Play Close is an open grassed area with several tracks crossing and is a very well used public footpath and meeting point in the village. It features significantly in historical records of the village. Historically, Church Moor and Play Close yielded £3 per annum for church purposes.*

*Kelly's Directory 1899, p.39

These unique open areas contribute considerably to the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole and, in particular, to this quiet, unspoilt rural heart of the village. In addition, many private gardens are fully open to view, creating picturesque views throughout the area. The only detracting feature is parked cars, which line several of the tracks.

Buildings are mostly historic including houses, farms, farm buildings and cottages, although there is some more modern development. Many of these are statutorily listed. Buildings primarily front onto the tracks that penetrate the centre, in a picturesque, ad hoc way. Density is generally very low, with some higher concentration on Church Road and around the church. However, nearly all houses are detached and set in generous plots, some of which are extraordinarily large. There is a very high survival of historic plot boundaries which can be seen on Maps 1-4 in *Appendix A*. Historically, many of these were economically productive as orchards and some of those with watercourses running through them had watercress beds. Apart from ancillary service buildings, there is no backland development.

The buildings range in date from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, apart from the church, the earliest building by far, dating from the 11th century. This is built of stone and its tower dominates views from within this central area. Other buildings are constructed of a variety of materials reflecting the range of building dates and materials available when they were constructed. They include timber framing, weatherboarding, red brick, including some with flared headers, flint and clunch. Some buildings are finished in render or tile hanging. Roofs are mostly plain tile but on some earlier buildings thatch survives. Slate is also found, having been introduced after the railway came to the area.

The earliest domestic building is likely Stocks in Nottingham Fee which has a base cruck and dates from the sixteenth century, (below, Fig 19).



Fig 19. Stocks, Nottingham Fee, possibly the earliest domestic

The ad hoc development of the village over centuries is expressed in the range of building size, form and function. Traditional houses range from large farmhouses of three or more units to single unit cottages. Most are two storeys, with some having an attic storey; others are more modest in scale. The alms houses close by the church, one dated 1738 and the other dated 1837, are typically small, one-and-a-half storey cottages. Cherry Patch on Church Road is typical of many of the eighteenth-century houses and is dated 1736. This scale has been maintained over time apart from some later twentieth century examples, where the height and plan depth of the houses is greater than normally found. These contrast with the historic character of the area.

Windows are generally smaller with a horizontal emphasis in earlier buildings reflecting the restricted headroom of these buildings and the expense of glass at the time of construction (below, Fig 20). The timber mullioned window at Cleve Cottage is probably the earliest window of any domestic building in area 1. As housing conditions improved, dormers were added to lofts to provide light and ventilation, making them more useable spaces. Some small window openings were enlarged to provide better living conditions, and over time larger window openings reflected greater storey heights and improvements in technology in glass production. From the eighteenth century, the double-hung, vertical sliding sash window was most fashionable. The increase in the size of panes is directly related to the development in more affordable glass.



Fig 20. Early side-hung casement window, Wayside, Westbrook Street

Chimney stacks are all in brick and variously sited according to the date of the building. The large external stack on Cherry Patch, Church Road, has a good example of tumbled brick work (right, *Fig 21*). Central ridge stacks of lobby entry houses indicate an early 17th century construction, such as Nottingham Fee House (below, *Fig 22*) and are very common, as are the later end stacks.



Fig 21. Chimney stack at Cherry Patch

The buildings are now almost entirely residential in use. Many former farm buildings have either been converted to houses or are in ancillary domestic use. However, most have kept their original features recording the primary use of the building and subsequent alterations. Non-residential buildings include the Red Lion, the Methodist Chapel, now converted to residential use, and the former Malthus School opposite the church. This fine early eighteenth-century building is dated 1709 and has also been converted to domestic use. The adjoining building is in use as a pre-school.

Another major factor contributing to the character and appearance of the area is the lack of highway engineering and street lighting. Tracks and paths are generally unmade, with informal surfacing of gravel, rough tarmac or earth. Although vehicles can penetrate into the centre, there is no through route for vehicles and little accommodation for vehicles apart from in private curtilages. There are no kerbs, footways, or traffic signs. There is an attractive blue brick path running from the church past the alms houses to the Play Close, but otherwise surfacing is very low key. This, combined with the complete lack of street lighting, reinforces its historic, traffic-free, ambience.

Views within this central area are generally short, unfolding views of considerable charm. Around every corner is another picturesque composition of historic houses, attractive gardens, green spaces and mature trees. Inviting glimpsed views along the walled paths are also an attractive and characteristic feature. In some views the church tower rising above the roofscape is a dominant element in the view, a reminder of the dominance of the church in village life for most of its existence. Also of considerable historic significance are the distant views of the Downs which can be seen in some places.



Fig 22. Central stack denoting lobby entry plan form, Nottingham Fee

This reinforces the ancient connection between the heart of the village and the grazing lands on the Downs that were part of the everyday life of villagers.

Overall, these characteristics combine to create a strikingly unique experience, suggesting what many villages might have looked like before motor traffic.

8.2 Area 2 - Westbrook Street

This area takes in the east side of Westbrook Street and includes Grahame Close. Westbrook Street runs approximately north south and forms the boundary of the conservation area. Properties here have curtilages that back onto the central area, some of them quite extensive.

8.2.1 Key Characteristics

- Narrow village street with footway on one side only
- Rural character determined by openness, mature trees and hedges, former farms and associated buildings
- Historic houses front directly onto the highway
- Variety of house styles, dates, materials, form and detailing
- Late twentieth century housing estate with modest presence on the street front
- Views to the Downs and glimpsed views to open farmland
- Mature trees marking both ends of Westbrook Street
- Lack of street lighting
- Low key highway engineering apart from the access to Grahame Close

8.2.2 Special interest/significance

The boundary of the conservation area runs along the centre of this narrow village street. It runs from the junction with Church End and Mockbeggars in the north to London Road to the south. Here it opens up to form a small public open space with a seat and a group of fine mature trees. At this junction is Ashbrook House and its extensive grounds and outbuildings, some of which are in commercial use. The site is an ancient one and contains the remains of fishponds. This is usually indicative of a medieval settlement, though in this case the site is likely to have been developed even earlier. This has been suggested as the manor house for Nottingham Fee. Relatively recent archaeological investigations revealed some Anglo-Saxon remains. The walled garden of Ashbrook House is a prominent feature in this part of the conservation area. Built in different bricks and stone, and rendered in part, it bounds the extensive gardens and former fishponds belonging to the house. Other plots which do not front directly onto the highway are enclosed by low walls and/or hedging. To the northern end of Westbrook Street, the wall is capped with tiles, indicating an early plot boundary.

The historic character of the village breaks down at Grahame Close, a 1960s development. In contrast to the historic development, the 1960s houses are set back from the road, with a grass verge and car parking bays separating them from the highway. The wide bellmouth of the access road to Grahame Close is an alien feature in the conservation area. The close itself is of quite dense housing set out informally around an attractive central landscaped area which has Mill Brook running through it.

Trees and shrubs are an important element in the streetscape and help this more modern development integrate into its surroundings. One detractor is the car parking, which lines the close. The church tower is visible above the vegetation. Curtoys Lane, a thatched walled path, running along one side leading on to Play Close connects this area to the central open spaces. This development contrasts significantly with the rest of Westbrook St where, although there has been some infill of historic plots, the feel of a historic village street is retained.

As with other parts of the village, houses vary considerably in date, size, form, materials and detailing. The earliest houses are timber-framed with small square panels and contemporary detailing. Brick is the more common material from the later seventeenth century onwards, with weatherboarding used for farm buildings and other ancillary buildings. Hall Barn is the most notable example of the use of brick. An earlier cross wing of timber framing has a main range of painted brick. Of note is the use of giant Doric pilasters on the front elevation (top right, *Fig 23*). These were clearly designed as a display of status. This house has been suggested as the former manor house of Nottingham Fee which would account for its higher status. There is some use of decorative flared headers, most notably on Boham's House, formerly Boham's Farm (middle right, *Fig 24*). Here diamonds of flared headers have the centres inlaid with the Boham family initials. Latterly the house was occupied by the writer Kenneth Grahame. The site retains a weatherboarded farm building, indicating its historic use.

Roof materials also vary, with thatch being the earliest material, surviving on sixteenth/seventeenth century buildings (bottom right, *Fig 25*) and plain tile found on later buildings. Slate, imported once the railway came to the area, is not so common.



Fig 23. Hall Barn showing Doric pilaster in brick. Also visible is the external stack of the earlier timber-framed wing



Fig 24. Boham's House showing decorative use of burnt headers



Fig 25. Wayside, late 16th century timber-framed house with thatched roof and inserted dormer

Despite the varying dates, houses generally are of traditional form of one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half storeys under pitched or hipped roofs. The depth of plan for the most part, relates to traditional building construction. The exceptions are new houses at the north end of Westbrook Street which have a much deeper plan form.

All the traditional houses have chimneys stacks, and all are built of brick. External end stacks are found on some of the earliest buildings, such as Hall Barn, and indicate an early plan form. Central stacks are associated with lobby entry houses dating from the early seventeenth century. Internal end stacks are generally later and indicate a shift away from the traditional plan form of principal hearth in the hall. Examples of all of these can be found in the area.

Building details are delightfully varied and accord with their varying dates. The earliest buildings, such as Wayside, dating from the late 16th century, have small casement windows with a horizontal emphasis reflecting the low headroom of these early buildings (see, *Fig 25*) and the costliness of glass. Later brick buildings have larger windows concomitant with increased storey height and changing technology in glass production which made it more affordable. By the eighteenth century, the double hung sash window was the most fashionable style, lighting rooms with much greater headroom, e.g., Curtoys (right, *Fig 26*).

Some of the houses have had alterations over the centuries which reflect their changing uses and improvements in building technology. The farm and associated buildings have all lost their original use, as has The Forge.



Fig 26. Curtoys, Westbrook Street, a typical early nineteenth-century house with two full storeys, hipped slate roof, double-hung sash windows and Doric open porch

The modern houses on Grahame Close have detailing typical of their period which is not traditional to the area. However, the scale, plan depth, pitched roofs and chimney stacks all fall within the parameters of traditional building in the area and therefore assist in integrating the houses into the street scene.

Views along the street are generally open with the slight bend in the road closing the views in both directions. Distant views of the Downs at the south end of the area provide a link to the historic use of the Downs for grazing sheep (below, *Fig 27*). There are glimpsed views to the west along footpaths to open farmland. These were the routes taken daily by the villagers to work in the West Field, part of the open field system. The gardens of the houses on the west side to the road contribute significantly to the green setting of the conservation area.



Fig 27. View of the Downs from London Road

Unlike the houses on the east side, within the conservation area, these mostly have front gardens. The openness of some of the area, and mature vegetation including trees, reinforce the rural character of the village street. Fine mature trees feature in the views at both end of the street.

As with other roads in the village, apart from London Road, there is relatively little traffic, and the area is quiet and peaceful. On-street parking detracts from its character to a minor degree. Overhead wires which are strung across the street servicing houses on both sides diminish the aesthetic quality of the street. Overall, the character is that of a quiet, historic village lane.

8.3 Area 3 - Church End and Berry Lane

This area includes the land belonging to those houses fronting on to Church End and Berry Lane and takes in the Manor House and all its grounds to the north, along with the Old Mill and the small development of Millbrook Close, off Berry Lane.

8.3.1 Key Characteristics

- Attractive country lane with mature woodland setting
- The prominent buildings are interesting historic buildings expressing key elements in the development of the village
- Picturesque composition of trees, houses and open space at the junction of Church End and Berry Lane
- Mill Brook and associated water bodies are major features of interest
- Gateway to The Manor House announces high status building
- Lack of street lighting
- Low key highway engineering apart from the access to Millbrook Close
- Untidy setting around Mockbeggars Hall diminishes the otherwise attractive rural setting

8.3.2 Special interest/significance

Church End and Berry Lane form part of the circuit of roads surrounding the village and it has the air of a country lane. There is very little traffic, and it is generally quiet and peaceful. For much of its length, the road has no footway.



Fig 28. Tile-capped wall at the junction of Westbrook Street and Church End

As Westbrook Street turns the corner into Church End, a tile-capped wall defines the bend (above, Fig 28). This narrow, winding road opens out at the junction of Church End and Berry Lane to create a triangle of attractive public open space (below, Fig 29). Church End continues as an unmade, no through road into the central area towards the Church and Watt's Lane.



Fig 29. Public open space at Church End with distant views of the church tower

The triangle of public open space has interesting historic buildings fronting on to it, with a fine group of mature trees and a circular seat around the trunk of a now-felled tree. The attractive historic buildings here reinforce the principal character of the conservation area, that of a historic rural village. The houses here are amongst the earliest in the village, which is to be expected given the proximity to the ancient church and the historic importance of land adjacent to it. Two of the buildings date from the sixteenth century and are constructed of timber framing with thatched roofs. Other houses are built of timber framing and brick with plain tile or slate roofs. Millbrook Cottage, dating from the early nineteenth century, addresses the open space well and is a key building in the street scene. It is entirely symmetrical with end stacks, a central open porch and arched-headed traceried casement windows.

The houses on the west end of Church End form a terrace and front directly onto the road. Adjacent to these is the former Methodist Chapel where Wesley preached. Houses on the rest of the road are generally set back, detached and in large plots.

Development on Berry Lane is relatively modern but not prominent. Trees and hedges line the road, so little of the houses is seen. The Millbrook Close development is single storey and unobtrusive, having a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

On the north side of Berry Lane, the gates to the Manor House announce the presence of a high-status building, though the Manor House itself can barely be seen from the public highway.

The ancillary historic farm buildings, now converted to other uses, can be seen lining the drive. Glimpses of the medieval moat can be had through the trees, and Mill Brook flows under the road to join the watercourses that drain the land here. At this junction, alongside the road, the watercourse widens to create a pool inhabited by a range of waterfowl. This is a very attractive feature in the street scene and reinforces the rural character of the area. The clear waters of the stream continue to flow alongside the road, separated from the road by a post and single rail fence. It turns north to run alongside the access road to the Old Mill, an extremely important element historically in the village (below, Fig 30). This access lane marks the boundary of the conservation area at this point.



Fig 30. Access lane to the Old Mill, bordered by Mill Brook. This marks the boundary to the conservation area



Fig 31. The Manor House, showing various phases of development, set in attractive gardens

All the land to the north of this part of Berry Lane belongs to the Manor House and is interesting historically for its moat, lake and the drains that cross the area. The land is mainly wooded with land around the main house laid out in a series of gardens (above, Fig 31). At the very north part of this land is the Old Mill, situated immediately adjacent to Mill Brook.

Unlike Church End, the houses on Berry Lane are all relatively modern. There is the small development of Millbrook Close mentioned above which, with its neat arrangement of visually low-key houses set around a cul-de-sac it is not particularly prominent, though the bellmouth junction is. This is an alien feature typical of highway engineering in the latter part twentieth century.

Other houses fronting Berry Lane are detached, set back from the road mostly behind hedges, and do not feature significantly in the streetscape. They are of traditional form and scale but have contemporary materials and detailing. They make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. On the north side of Berry Lane here, outside the conservation area, are several detached houses in large plots, again mostly screened from the road. Adjacent to these is the entrance to a mobile home park, whose presence is barely discernible from the road. These have a neutral impact on the setting of the conservation area.

There are no distant views within this area as trees and hedges enclose the road. The most attractive view is that of the open area on Church End, where the informal layout of historic houses, mature trees and the grassed area create a picturesque composition. The church tower is visible in the middle distance. Approaching this area from the west, there is an enticing view along Church End into the central area of the village. The open land of Church Moor, with its line of mature trees along the boundary, is a key feature in this view.

Views westward along Church End terminate in the group of mature trees outside Mockbeggars Hall. Whilst this area is not within the conservation area the trees contribute positively to its setting. However, some untidy storage diminishes its contribution to setting. Similarly, the three detached houses on the north side of Church End here fall within its setting. These single-storey houses are set back from the road, are screened from it by mature vegetation and have a neutral impact on the conservation area.

In common with other parts of the conservation area, there is no public street lighting and highway engineering is low key.

Trees, mature hedges, the extensive grounds of Manor House and the very visible presence of water are key elements in the landscape of this part of the conservation area.

8.4 Area 4 - South Street

This area includes all the land belonging to properties on South Street. This road defines the eastern edge of the historic village. It is a winding lane running approximately north south. At its junction with London Road in the south is Forty Cross, a significant area of public open space.

8.4.1 Key Characteristics

- Peaceful rural village street
- Strong historic character given by a range of historic buildings
- More modern housing respects traditional building parameters
- Great variation in plot size, layout, building type, materials and detailing
- Mature trees and hedges form a strong element in the rural character
- Attractive private gardens create picturesque compositions
- Significant public open space at Forty Cross
- Lack of street lighting
- Low key highway engineering

8.4.2 Special interest/significance

As with the other roads around the centre of the village, South Street has the character of a historic, rural village street. For the most part it is quite narrow and has no footway. Despite this, the area seems much more open and spacious than the other perimeter roads. Development is sporadic and layout less regular. Some houses are sited right up to the highway edge, others are set well back, and some are gable-end onto the road. A range of plot sizes can be found and there are some large garden areas, formerly orchards. The land rises slightly from the road in places and buildings here are set well back from the road.

Just north of Church Road, the principal route into the heart of the village, buildings are set back both sides of the road allowing for an attractive landscaped island which separates South Street from the access road to the Dibleys development. It widens again at Forty Cross, formerly the pound, which is now an important public open space at the junction with London Road (below, *Fig 32*).



Fig 32. Forty Cross, formerly the pound



Fig 33. View From South Street across Parsonage Farm.

Walls, including a section of historic tile-capped wall, trees and hedges enclose some of the gardens but others, fronting directly onto the highway, are open to view.

At the south end of the street, most buildings are built close to the highway edge or are set back only slightly, mainly because of the change in levels. However, south of the junction with Church Road, layout is more sporadic and random, though here, too, historic houses mostly are sited directly onto the highway.

The former Parsonage Farm, thought to be the original manor house for the prebendal manor, has a major frontage here. Although there has been some relatively modern development in part of the grounds, this is set well back from the road and not prominent. The mature but thin boundary hedge allows views of ancient orchard trees. This site is an important part of the history of the village and its character and appearance make a significant contribution to this part of the conservation area (above, *Fig 33*).

Buildings are all in residential use now, with some showing evidence of former commercial use (top right, Fig 34). The former Load of Mischief public house is now in domestic use though its original use is clearly discernible. Whilst building dates, styles, materials, form and detailing are very varied, they are within traditional parameters. This results in pleasing diversity without diluting the historic character of the area.

Buildings range from single storey to two-and-a-half storeys, with most being two storeys. The earliest houses are timber framed, dating from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Later houses are built in brick, some with flared headers and some brickwork walls are painted. Rubblestone and flints have also been used in domestic buildings as well as for walls. Some weatherboarding can be found on former ancillary buildings and several twentieth century houses are rendered. Alterations and extensions can be clearly read on some buildings (middle and bottom right, Figs 35,36).

Roofs are mostly traditional pitched roofs covered with plain tile, though some have hips or half hips. A number of thatched roofs survive on the earliest buildings. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, after the arrival of the railway nearby, slate became more readily available, and this is found on a few buildings.

Brick chimney stacks are ubiquitous, even on most of the more modern buildings. On traditional houses they indicate the original plan form of the building which gives a clue to its date. Off-centre ridge stacks suggest a hall and cross passage plan form with the hearth backing on to the passage, such as is found on many sixteenth century houses. Prominent central ridge stacks indicate a lobby entry plan form dating from the early seventeenth century.



Fig 34. Rose Cottage and Lantern Cottage, expressing alterations to residential use



Fig 35. Bridus House, a multiphase house showing alterations over time in a range of materials



Fig 36. Holt House, showing alterations and extension clearly expressed

End stacks feature on many eighteenth century and later buildings, denoting the increase in comfort in traditional houses through the widespread use of hearths for heating rather than principally for cooking.

Building details also indicate the date of a building and these are the features most commonly upgraded to keep up with fashion and developments in technology. Small horizontal windows in early buildings reflect the restricted headroom of these buildings and the expense of glass in the sixteenth century. These windows provide limited light and ventilation. Over time many of these have been replaced by taller windows. Dormers were added to lofts to provide light and ventilation making them more useable spaces. From the eighteenth century, the double-hung, vertical sliding sash window was most fashionable. The increase in the size of panes is directly related to improvement in glass-making technology.

Whilst the area is quite open, views are generally limited to medium distance. The bends in the road close views in both directions. Views to the north are closed by Dragonwyke, a picturesque timber-framed and thatched house on the bend. Views to the south are terminated by the group of mature trees on Forty Cross. There are views along Church Road and Watts Lane into the central area and important views across the open land on Parsonage Farm (see, *Fig 33*).

Both public and private spaces contribute significantly to the attractive landscaping of the area. The grass and trees at Forty Cross and in front of Dibleys are important public spaces. Many private gardens are open to view, creating picturesque compositions all through the area. The orchard trees at Parsonage Farm, other garden trees and hedges bordering private gardens reinforce the historic rural character of the area.

The key characteristics of the area combine to create a peaceful, timeless rural village lane. There is some on-street car parking which detracts from this, and at times noise from London Road intrudes at the south end of the area.

8.5 Area 5 – London Road

Area 5 is based on London Road, the A417, which follows the line of the ancient Icknield Way. This is the only seriously busy road in the village. This linear area runs west-east. It encompasses the property fronting the road on either side and also takes in the back lane to the south, Pilgrim's Way, which runs parallel to it. The experience of being on the main road contrasts markedly from that of being on the back lane.

Traffic is heavy, though not continuous. Within this relatively small area there are marked differences in character, with the area fronting onto the noisy London Road being completely different in character from the land to the south.

8.5.1 Key characteristics

- High archaeological potential on the route of the pre-historic Icknield Way
- Buildings close to the highway edge reflecting the needs of former commercial uses
- Varied plots sizes and range of building dates, styles, size, materials reflecting the organic growth of the village
- Evidence of alterations to buildings indicating changing building technology and the loss of commercial activity
- Contrast between London Road and the back lane, Pilgrim's Way

- Ancient tracks crossing London Road leading up to the Downs comprise the vestiges of the medieval farming system
- The Downs to the south are a key element in the setting of the conservation area
- Open space of Forty Cross reflecting its earlier use as the pound
- Openness, countryside views and mature vegetation contribute to its rural character
- No street lighting

8.5.2 Special interest/significance

London Road follows the line of Icknield Way, one of England's oldest routes that probably has pre-historic origins. Some evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation has been found along its route.

Notwithstanding the traffic, London Road has the air of a historic rural village street which has developed organically over centuries. Although there are properties fronting the road along its entire length, no two buildings are alike. Plot sizes and shapes vary considerably, and the buildings display extraordinary variety in size, date, form, materials and detailing.

Whilst the main road is wide enough for two-way traffic, there is insufficient width for a footway along both sides of the road throughout its length. At its western end, where buildings come right up to the highway edge, there is no footway. For the rest, nearly all the historic buildings come very close to the highway boundary, leaving only a narrow area between the building and highway. Where there are small front areas to buildings, these are enclosed by a low brick wall, hedge or

railings. As this road has always been the main route through the village, many properties here were in some form of commercial use until the later 20th century. There were several inns, a smithy, a wheelwright and carpenter and several shops. A frontage directly onto the highway secured a prominent presence on the main road.



Fig 37. Stone of remembrance at the junction of Nottingham Fee and London Road

The road widens out at its junctions with Westbrook Street, Nottingham Fee and at Forty Cross. These are ancient routes which continue across London Road along tracks that lead up onto the Downs. These tracks have been used since at least the Middle Ages by villagers to access the Downs where sheep have been grazed for centuries. One of them leads to an old chalk pit. The junctions on these routes are acknowledged by some public use, i.e., seating, the war memorial (above, Fig 37) and at Forty Cross, the site of the former pound (see, Fig 32) there is an attractive and significant area of public open space with a group of mature trees and several benches.

The buildings fronting this main road date from the early 17th century onwards. Generally, buildings are modest in scale and range in height from single storey to two-and-a-half storey; most are two storeys. Turnpike House, sited at Forty Cross, is one of the largest and most prominent houses (below, *Fig 38*).



Fig 38. Turnpike House, London Road

The earliest buildings are timber framed, including both small and large square panelling and there is one example of close studding (see, *Fig 3*). This latter is usually associated with a display of wealth and aspiring status. As brick became more widely available, both plain brick and brick with decorative flared headers became popular. Some of this is now painted. On ancillary buildings and farm buildings, weatherboarding was the usual finish – this survives on Great Tree Farm Barn.

Most of the historic buildings have evidence of alterations recording changing housing technology and uses over time. As timber framing fell out of fashion, some timber-framed buildings were rendered over or encased in brick. Some buildings have evidence of their former commercial use, such as Cotterills.



Fig 39. Barn at Great Tree Farm with weatherboarding and thatched roof

Early buildings would originally have been roofed in thatch, though this has mostly been replaced with plain tile. Some remains, as at Great Tree Farm Barn (above, *Fig 39*). While the majority of roofs now are covered with plain tile, there is also some slate. Slate only became more available as a roofing material in the area after the opening of the railway, which facilitated cheap transport. Prior to this, most building materials were sourced locally. Some of the steeper pitched roofs have dormers. Chimney stacks survive on most buildings and are universally of brick. There are end stacks and ridge stacks expressing the plan form of the house and giving a clue as to its date.

Window details vary with the date and status of the building and with its function. Earlier buildings, with low eaves, have windows with a horizontal emphasis with side-hung casements such as Dower House (right, *Fig 40*) and later buildings with higher eaves have window openings with a vertical emphasis, such as King William House. Cotterills has a good example of an early 19th century shop window.

Views are channelled along the main road in both directions, with slight bends in the road closing views in the middle distance. There are views of the Downs to the south along the ancient tracks, and of the centre of the village along the roads to the north. The narrow, almost hidden, tracks from Pilgrim's Way to London Road offer inviting views (right, *Fig 41*). Fine, mature trees line the road leading into the village from the west, enhancing its rural character; a group of trees around Forty Cross reinforces this. Otherwise, greenery is provided by hedges and grass verges with limited contribution by private gardens.

In complete contrast to London Road is Pilgrim's Way, an unmade back lane which runs parallel just a few metres to the south. This marks the southern boundary of the conservation area. It originally served the rear of the London Road properties. Although accessible by vehicles, it has very little traffic. On one side, the north, a high hedge runs the length of the lane, enclosing the plots, whilst on the other side, outside the conservation area, the land is completely open and offers wide, open views of the Downs. This is a vitally important element in the setting of the conservation area. The Downs have been inextricably linked to the economic activity in the village for centuries.



Fig 40. Dower House, showing external stack, early windows of varying dates



Fig 41. Track between Pilgrim's Way and London Road

The land rises quite steeply, with the lower, and more accessible, slopes used for grazing and stabling horses. Some ancillary buildings servicing the land and temporary fencing are found here. The higher slopes are used, as they have been for centuries, for sheep grazing.

Several rear gardens have been developed for separate dwellings. Houses here for the most part are not of historic interest. They are generally screened by hedges and fences. Some plots remain as the rear gardens of property fronting London Road and contribute to the rural character of the area.

There is generally little activity here and the area is quiet and peaceful. The Downs are of considerable historic and archaeological interest as well as providing a very attractive setting.

In common with the rest of the village, there is no street lighting



Fig 42. View along Pilgrim's Way with the Downs to the right, providing the setting for the conservation area

9.0 References

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Northeast, P. (1964) This Venerable Village: some notes on Blewbury, Blewbury Local History Group. Republished in 2007.

Appendix A: Historic Maps



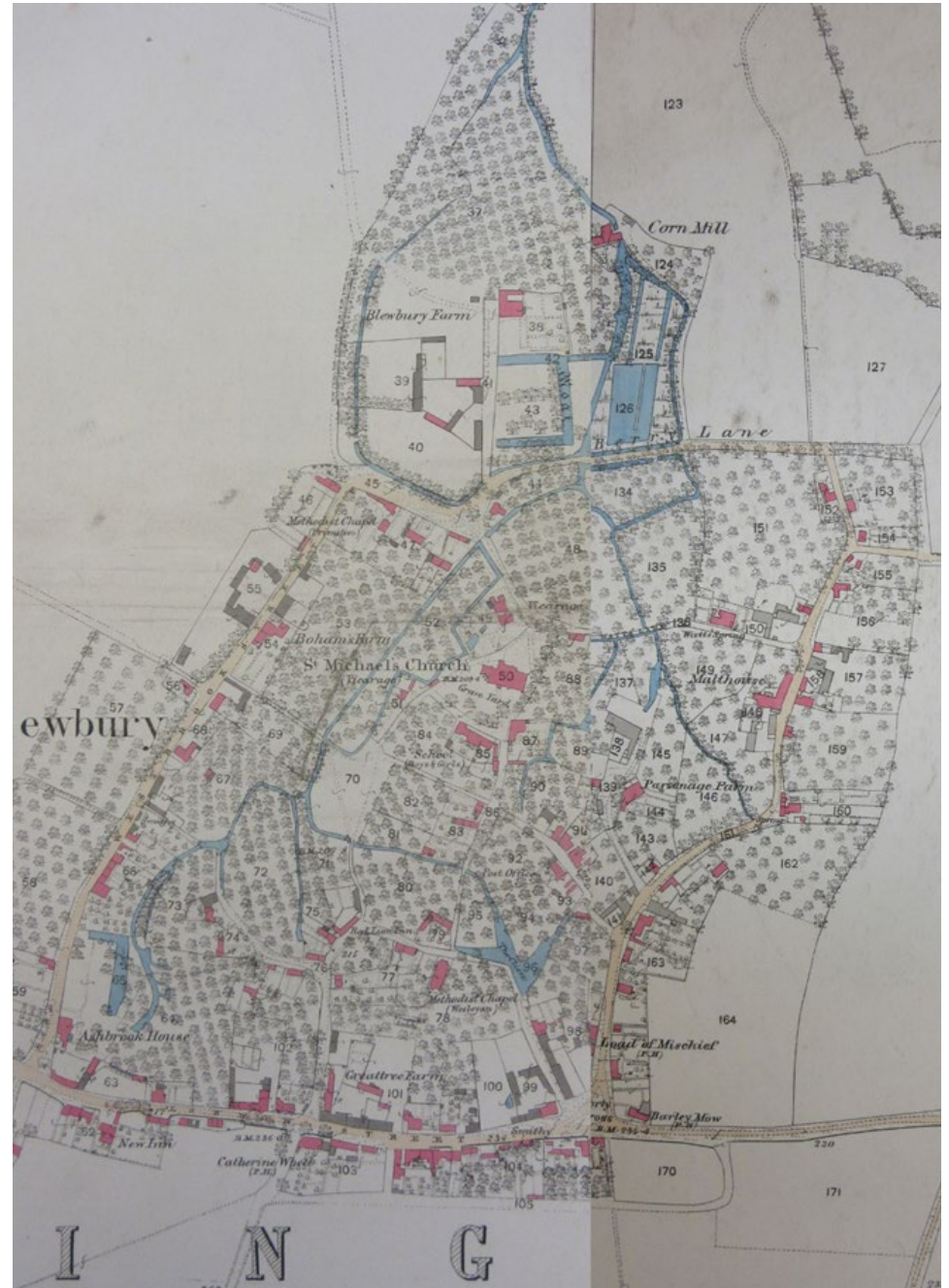
Map 1: Rocque's Map of 1761 (Cockerell and Kay, 2006)



Map 2: 1805 Enclosure award map (Berkshire Record Office)



Map 3 - 1848 Tithe map (Berkshire Record Office) - This has been flipped to orient north



Map 4 - First edition OS map 25 inch, 1876/77 (Bodleian Library)

Appendix B: Historic Environment Record Summary

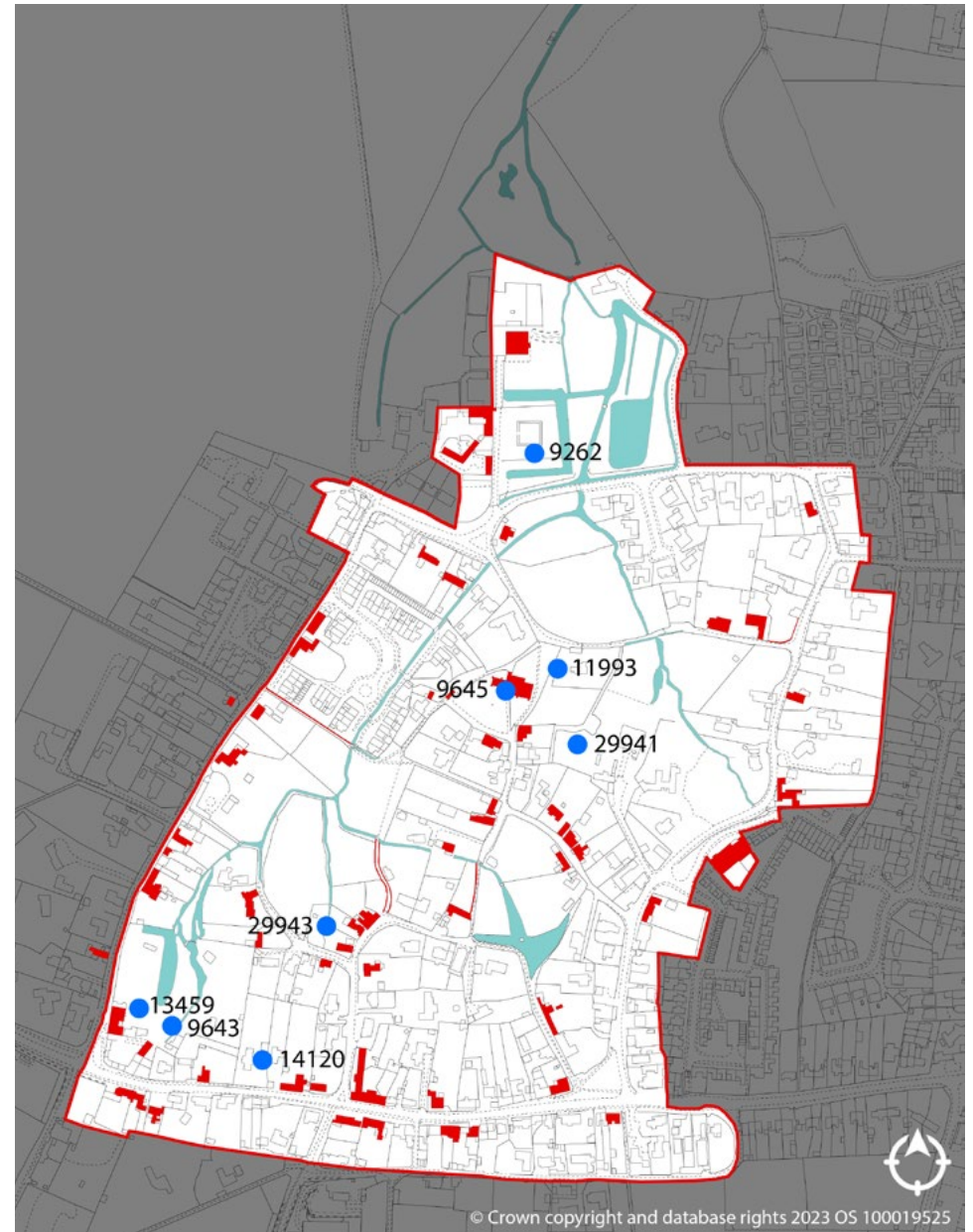
The following was produced on request by the Historic Environment Record (HER) team at Oxfordshire County Council to capture in greater detail the archaeological interest of the Blewbury conservation area. Records cited in the text may be cross-referenced with the map, right, where they fall within the conservation area.

Archaeological understanding

Development within the conservation area during the late C20th and early C21st has been limited to small-scale projects only, resulting in no large-scale archaeological investigations to enhance our understanding of Blewbury's past. A programme of local society test pitting within back gardens did however successfully indicate settlement from the Saxon period to the present day.

Prehistoric to Roman

The evidence on the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) supports the findings of the test pitting. While settlement is known nearby, there is no evidence to suggest settlement within the conservation area during the Prehistoric to Roman periods. The earliest evidence dates to the late Neolithic period. Two contemporary pits containing an assemblage of knapping debris, flint tools, pottery and animal bone were found adjacent to Farnworth House (PRN14120). This is likely to represent a nomadic lithic working site. A barrow (now levelled) was also reported within the conservation area at Ashbrook House (PRN13459), but nearby finds and its location close to the Icknield Way make a later, Anglo-Saxon, date more likely.



To the south of the conservation area a Bronze Age funerary landscape is indicated by the presence of bowl barrows (Scheduled monument 1018715/PRN7616; PRN9661; PRN27907; PRN27908) with a linear boundary extending westwards for c.2.5km (PRN27711). A range of neolithic to Bronze Age flints were recovered from Blewburton Hill Iron Age hillfort c.1km to the east (Scheduled monument 1006301; PRN7609) and indicate an early phase of occupation. The stockaded camp was constructed c. 6-7 BCE and replaced by a univallate hillfort c.6-5 BCE before abandonment c. 1 BCE. The current area of the village probably formed part of an agricultural hinterland to the fortified settlement and continued in use during the Roman period, as evidenced by cropmarks to the north (PRN27883-7), west (PRN27881; 27890) and south (PRN27912; 27914; 27932) of the conservation area, interpreted as probable Iron Age to Roman field boundaries and field systems. An additional cropmark to the north (PRN27882) is interpreted as a possible Roman farmstead.

Early Medieval

The test pitting programme found a range of high status pottery and finds, including a bone comb and bronze brooch, believed to date from around the 6th century and probably associated with a sunken feature building (PRN29943) at Hall Barn Close. Further pottery sherds of early/mid Saxon organic tempered ware found at a number of test pits located around the village (PRN29941). A Saxon axe and comb was also found in 1895 in a watercourse at Ashbrook House (PRN9643). The lack of earlier material suggests that settlement at Blewbury dates therefore from the Saxon period.

Without the conservation area, Saxon evidence recovered to date relates to burial activities only. A 6th-7th century inhumation with grave

goods was found during a pipeline excavation c.750m to the east of the conservation area (PRN26042), and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery of 22 inhumations and 1 cremation was found at Blewburton Hill (PRN7609).

Medieval

The hundred of Blewbury dates to 944 and was later divided between three manors- the Great Manor and the smaller Nottingham Fee and Prebendal Manors. Hall Barn Close was the site of the farm at the centre of Nottingham Fee Manor. The seat of the Prebendal Manor was Parsonage Farm and St. Michael's Church is included within its estate. The Church of St. Michael (PRN9645) originated in the 11th Century and is noted in the Domesday book in 1086. The settlement had a recorded population of 89 households; among the largest 20% of settlements recorded at the time. Three fragments of medieval pottery and the human remains of a minimum of five individuals were found outside the present church graveyard during construction of the new vicarage in 1979 (PRN11993). Either they were buried purposely in un-consecrated ground, or the burial ground has contracted in size. A moat is present to the south of Blewbury Manor (PRN9262) but no evidence has yet been recovered to prove or disprove a medieval or post medieval date for this feature. Outside the conservation area, evidence is limited to earthworks representing agricultural activity (PRN27882, 27887, 27893).

Post Medieval to modern

Settlement expanded through the 16th-19th Centuries, with many of the present houses originating during this period. The Harwell to Stratley road, which was turnpiked in 1803 until the late 19th century, runs through the village providing transport links to Reading and beyond. The land surrounding the village has remained in predominantly enclosed agricultural use to the present day.

Appendix C: Listed Buildings

The Blewbury conservation area does not contain any scheduled monuments, nor does it contain any Grade II* listed buildings.

Grade I

Church of St. Michael

Grade II

Abners

Ashbrook House

Barn 10m NW of Abners

1-6 Ashbrook Mews

Ayres Cottage

Blewbury Manor

Two Cow Houses approx 120m SW of Blewbury Manor

Sheltershed approx 100m SW of Blewbury Manor

Stable, House, and Sheltershed approx 75m SW of Blewbury Manor

Blueberry Inn Public House

Blue Haze

Boham's House

Barn approx 10m NE of Boham's House

Borlase Gallery

Brookside

Carpenters Cottage

Carramores

Chapmans and attached Barn

Cleeve Cottage and attached Cob Wall

The Cleve

Granary approx 2m NE of The Cleve

Corrydon House

The Cottage and End Cottage

Cottrills (formerly known as Highcleve)

Curtoys

Cob Wall Curtoys Lane

Dibleys House

Double Doors

Dragonwyke and Winding Way Cottage

East Brook

Farnley Tyas

The Forge House

Fron Deg

Great Tree and Ilburys

Great Tree Farm Barn and attached Covered Gateway

Hall Barn

Hall Barn Close

Healmwic Cottage and Church End Cottage

Humphreys

Greenbushes

Laurences

2 London Road

3 London Road

Malthus Schoolhouse

Meers Parcel

Millbrook Cottage

Nayles Bridge Cottage

New Inn Cottage and Felixstowe Cottage

Nottingham Fee House

Orchard Dene House

Clunch Wall approx 35m east of Orchard Dene House

Barn and outbuilding approx 30m east of Orchard Dene House

Plentys

The Red Lion Public House

Cob Wall 42m length approx 35m north/NE of the Red Lion Pub

Cob wall 81m length approx 10m NE of the Red Lion Pub

Spring Cottage

St. Michaels (note this is a dwelling near the church)

Three headstones approx 20m south of St. Michael's church tower

Almshouse approx 30m west of St. Michael's church

Almshouse approx 40m west of St. Michael's church

Stocks

1 Treble House Terrace

Tudor Cottage

Turkeys

Turnpike House

Wayside Cottage

1 and 2 Westbrook Street

Yew Tree

Appendix D: Non-designated Heritage Assets

This list of non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) has been compiled using the following criteria for selection as informed by [paragraph 197 of the NPPF \(2012\)](#) and [paragraph 40 of the Historic Environment government guidance \(2019\)](#), along with advice published by Historic England in [Advice Note 7 \(2nd Edition, 2021\)](#) on local heritage listing.

The criteria are:

1. The decision to include a heritage asset on this list must be based on sound evidence of their significance. This significance may be defined by age, rarity, architectural and artistic interest, group value, archaeological interest, historic interest, or landmark status;
2. The heritage asset must make a positive contribution to the communities sustainability and economic vitality; and
3. The presence of a heritage asset on this list must not prevent them from being put to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

Please note: A building identified as an NDHA is a material planning consideration, however, permitted development rights for NDHA's are no different than those of other non-statutorily listed buildings inside or outside of a conservation area.

What follows is a photographic record of each identified NDHA within the conservation area along with captioned summaries of their significance and justification for their inclusion. These are marked **orange** on the map on page 5.



Church End House, Church End

Large Victorian house, set in large plot, adjacent to the church. Formerly vicarage on the site of original vicarage. Two and a half storeys, complex plan. Buff brick with red brick bands; slate roof with decorative ridge tiles. Quatrefoil window to gable. Pointed arch heads to other windows. Architectural and historic interest.



Bridus House, South Street

House, 17th century with later alterations. Two and a half storeys. Lobby entry. Right-hand bay has timber framing to ground floor, tile hanging to first floor and inserted dormer. Left-hand bay painted brick with render above plat band to first floor left half bay. Bays separately roofed in plain tile, that to left is hipped. Casement windows. Historic and architectural interest.



Holly Tree Cottage, South Street

House, dated 1838 with initials. Brick with slate roof. Two-unit, two storeys, with central entrance and end stacks, that to left is external and not a ridge stack. Extension to right. Architectural and historic interest.



Holt Cottage, South Street

House, late 18th century. Brick with flared bricks to plat band and upper courses below eaves. Plain tile roof with decorative ridge tiles. Central door blocked with flint. Two-unit plus extension, two storey. Originally end stack. Modern windows in original openings. Architectural and historic interest



Orchard Dene Cottage, South Street

House, single storey, probably 17th century. Brick, timber framing with thatched roof. Unknown plan. Architectural and historic interest.



Malthouse, South Street

House, former malthouse. 17th century with datestone of 1784 and initials RBM referring to some extension or event. Timber frame and brick with plain tile roof. Complex plan. Large central stack. Modern windows in original openings. Interior likely to be of interest. Architectural and historic interest.



Vine Cottage and Corner Cottage, South Street

Vine Cottage and Corner Cottage, South Street Semi-detached cottages, late 18th century. Painted brick with slate roof. Probably direct entry plan. One and a half units. End stacks. Architectural and historic interest.



Manor Farm Cottage, South Street

House, late 18th century. Part rubblestone, with brick detailing and later extension rendered. One and a half storeys. Originally probably single unit. End stack. Casement windows and dormers to roof. Architectural and historic interest.



Gilmore Cottage, South Street

House, 17th century. Timber frame and brick with thatched roof. Complex plan. Two and a half storeys. Casements windows with raking dormer to rear range. Architectural and historic interest.



Norreys House, South Street

House, 18th century with 19th century extension. Brick with plain tile roof, part hipped. Two storey, complex plan. Casement windows to early bay, six-over six sash windows to nineteenth century part. Architectural and historic interest.



Lantern Cottage, South Street

House, formerly commercial. 17th century. Timber framing with brick under plain tile roof. Two-unit, one and a half storeys. Original plan not known. Left hand bay probably an extension. Dormer window. Architectural and historic interest.



Rose Cottage, South Street

House, formerly commercial. 17th century. Timber framing with brick and render under plain tile roof. Extension to right with large dormer. Architectural and historic interest.



Load of Mischeif

House, former public house. 18th century. Brick with flared brick plat band. Hipped slate roof. Symmetrical plan. Four steps up to front entrance. Eight-over-eight sash windows. Morland Brewery sign by entrance. Architectural and historic interest.



Pound Cottages, London Road

Pair of cottages, probably 19th century. Flared bricks in header bond with red brick detailing. Plain tile, half-hipped roof. Single unit, two storey. Central stack. Casement windows. Architectural and historic interest.



Fieldside, London Road

House, early 20th century. Rendered brick. Hipped slate roof to main range with pitched slate roof to west range. Two-storey. Entrance on return of main range up flight of steps. Bay windows to ground floor. Architectural and historic interest.



Little Fieldside, London Road

Cottage, probably late 19th century. Render with plain tile roof. Arch head entrance to left, case-ment windows with circular window to right of door. Architectural and historic interest.



Wildwood and Red Cottage, London Road

Pair of houses, early 19th century. Brick with flared headers and plain tile roof. End stacks. Bay window to right and 20th century porch off centre. Architectural and historic interest.



The Old Wheelwrights, London Road

House, formerly commercial. Possibly 18th century. Render with plain tile roof. Two storeys. Entrance to right. Complex plan. Interesting fenestrations with some early glass. Architectural and historic interest.



Gatehouse Studio, London Road

House, possibly 18th century. Brick with hipped, plain tile roof. One and a half storeys. Door slightly off centre with porch and dormer above. Architectural and historic interest.



Laurel Bank, London Road

House, possibly 19th century. Render to ground floor with tile hanging to first floor and slate roof. Two storeys, three-unit plan with rear range. End stacks. Casement windows with one eight-over-eight sash window. Architectural and historic interest.



Farthingdown, London Road

Pair of cottages, formerly commercial, Possibly 18th century. Brick with bands of stone and plain tile roof. Dormers. Extension to right under monopitch roof. Alteration to left, suggesting former commercial use. Architectural and historic interest.



Martins, Westbrook Street

House, probably 18th century. Render with slate roof. One and a half storeys. Two unit with rear range. Entrance to right end. Off-centre ridge stack. Casement windows and dormers. Architectural and historic interest.



Wall at the corner of Westbrook Street and Church End

Boundary wall, rubblestone with tile capping. Curves around junction. Architectural and historic interest.



Springhead, Church Road

House, probably 17th century. Brick and render with dentil eaves. Plain tile roof with hipped dormers. Now three-unit with rear range. Casement windows. Architectural and historic interest.



Cherry Patch, Church Road

House, dated 1736 on gable but may have earlier core. Brick with flared headers and dentil eaves. Plan tile roof. Two unit with external end stack with tumbled in brickwork. Casement windows and dormers. Architectural and historic interest.



Swallows, Church Road

House, formerly clubhouse or working men's club. Date not known. Date on chimney stack 1680. Victorian alterations. It appears on the 1805 enclosure map. Brick with flared headers and weatherboarding with plain tile, half-hipped roof. Gable and decorative stone 3-light window with mullions and transoms and trefoil heads. Modern front extension. Architectural and historic interest.



Pre-school playgroup

School hall, now nursery school. 18th century. Brick with flared headers with plain tile roof. Large window to gable. Architectural and historic interest.



Methodist Chapel, Chapel Lane

Former Methodist Chapel, now house. 19th century. Brick with decorative details in blue brick. Gable onto lane. Steps up to porch with arched headed door and windows. Arched headed windows to ground floor with circular window in apex.



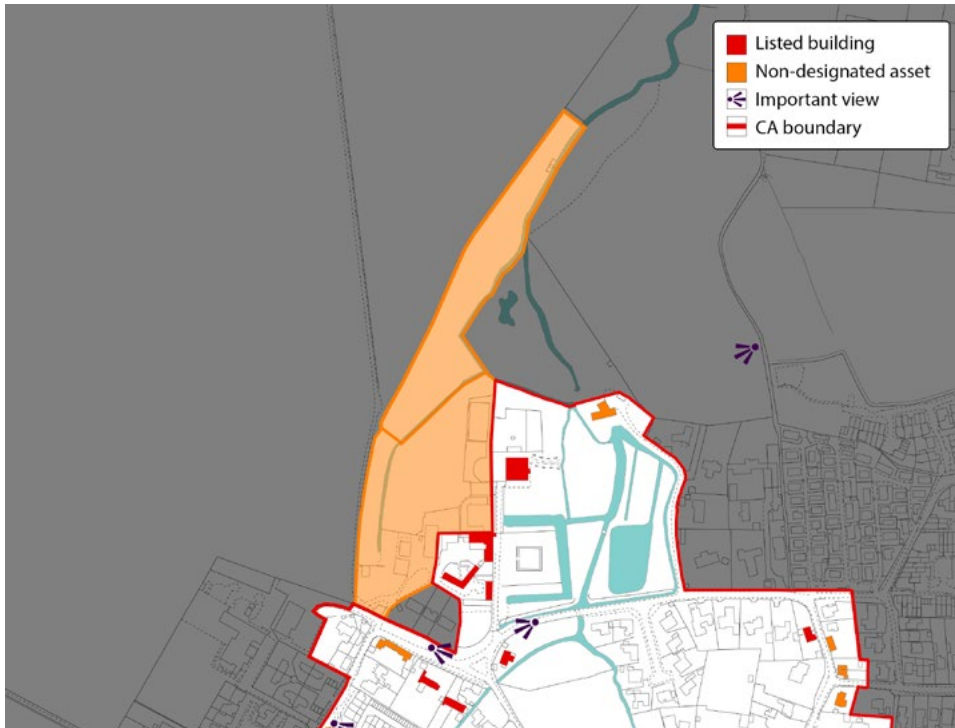
Church Benefice Centre, Church End

Office, original function not known. Brick with hipped slate roof. Two arched openings to south elevation. Modern windows/doors. Historic interest.



Priors Chapel, Church End

Former primitive Methodist Chapel, now house. Two storeys, brick with slate roof. much altered front elevation. Small projecting porch. Wesley is recorded as having preached here. Historic interest



Historic Blewbury Farm Curtilage and Quaker Burial Ground

These two areas, adjacent to the northern boundary of the designated conservation area, were identified in the course of drafting this appraisal and are here acknowledged as Areas of Special Local Character for historic and archaeological interest.

The first is an area of land immediately adjacent to Mockbeggars Farm and Blewbury Manor which defines the extent of the immediate historic curtilage of Blewbury Farm as seen on early maps (see, Appendix A). While this area does not contain structures of particular historic interest, the area is nonetheless worthy of recognition as a non-designated asset due to its land-use association with the historic farm and wider village.

The second is a field to the north which contains several Quaker burials and archaeological evidence suggests the former presence of a Quaker meeting house. These burials were uncovered by chance during works by the Thames Conservancy in 1995. A report by the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group published in May 2023 uncovered further evidence of the former meeting house*. This area should be recognised as a non-designated heritage asset for its archaeological and evidential value.

*Carless, David. "SOAG Completed Projects," South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group, accessed 16th January, 2024. <https://www.soagarch.org.uk/projectscompleted.html>

For further information and advice on Conservation Areas please contact:

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