



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Fen Ditton conservation area

Draft council policy (Ref: DCV 0029)



Willys Almshouses & War Memorial, Fen Ditton.

2005

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Fen Ditton Conservation Area was designated on 2 March 1973 and extended on 24 September 1991 to include the river frontage north of Field Lane to Wildfowl Cottage at Baits Bite Lock. This document aims to fulfil South Cambridgeshire District Council's duty to 'draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of these areas as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the commitment made by policy EN29 in the adopted Local Plan.

1.2 This section to report on public consultation and confirm the status of the appraisal as supplementary planning guidance / document.

2.0 WHAT ARE CONSERVATION AREAS?

2.1 Conservation Areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

2.2 When a Conservation Area has been designated, it increases the council's powers, with planning applications judged by their impact on the character and appearance of the area. Greater controls over the demolition of buildings and structures are imposed whilst the rights that owners have to do works to their properties without the prior need to obtain planning permission (known as 'permitted development rights') are reduced or may be taken away. Stricter controls are also exercised over the design of new buildings, and owners must give the council six weeks' notice of their intention to carry out works to trees. Planning applications affecting a Conservation Area must be advertised on site and in the local press to give people the opportunity to comment.

3.0 OVERVIEW OF THE AREA

3.1 Fen Ditton is an essentially linear village which has resulted in a very narrow, serpentine form with an almost complete absence of backland development, the only exceptions being a few modern houses.

3.2 The village has an unmistakably rural feel with its grass verges, large trees and its bucolic riverside setting. The riverside spaces are all open areas of grassland interspersed with very few buildings and some houseboats. This creates a very definite edge to the village and approaching from the west, the Church of St Mary the Virgin and the Old Rectory rise magnificently above the water meadows from behind a canopy of mature trees.

3.3 The high proportion of good quality buildings and spaces means that the streetscene and townscape is of exceptional quality even though the scale is modest. In particular, the rhythm of the gables and varying eaves lines and the canopies of large trees overhanging High Street are very picturesque.

3.4 The grouping of the church, Old Rectory and the grass island containing the war memorial, together with the enclosing trees and buildings and surrounding spaces, forms the focal point of the village. It is the only reasonably sized public space within the village itself and lies at the junction of the two 'arms' of the village – Church Street / Green End and High Street / High Ditch Road.

3.5 The village has two distinct character areas - Green End (the site of the original settlement) which stretched along the river between The Biggin and the church, and the expanded Medieval village which runs from High Ditch Road to the church.

3.6 Green End was, until the C20, separated from the main village by open fields and comprised a much lower density of development strung along



Meadows panorama

Green End Lane with intervening spaces between buildings. There may have been more houses along the road during the Medieval period, but of the surviving historic buildings only one dates from before the C17 and most buildings are C20 infill development.

3.7 In the expanded Medieval village which stretches between the church and High Ditch Road, the oldest buildings are farmhouses around which later (mostly C19) development has in filled

the street, creating the attractive rhythm of gables and juxtaposition of scales that characterises this part of the village.

4.0 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE

4.1 From a will made in 950 the village's name is believed to derive from 'Dittone' meaning 'the village by the (Fleam) ditch'. By the late C13 'Fen' had been added to differentiate it from Woodditton.



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Extract from 1886 Ordnance Survey

4.2 Although Fen Ditton has been a settlement since at least the C10, it is not mentioned in the Domesday Book or in the C13 Hundred Rolls. This is probably because it was considered as part of a larger parish with Horningsea and the two parishes were not separated until 1412.

4.3 The original settlement at Fen Ditton was principally a strip that ran parallel to the river, with Biggin Abbey at the north and the church at the extreme southern end. Much of the importance of Fen Ditton was due to the river traffic and wharves which were built between the River Cam and the village. The wharves were used for a wide range of goods, including wool, corn and victuals and some would have been sold at Stourbridge Fair. From the late C14 seaborne commerce declined. The Fen Ditton docks survived until 1845, but with the arrival of the London – Cambridge railway line they no longer served a commercial purpose.

4.4 Land in Fen Ditton was under the plough in 970 and in 1035 the manor provided food for Ely Abbey. By the mid C14 the land was used mainly for arable crops, particularly maslin and barley with some wheat. Some of it was used as pasture for sheep and by 1870 there were over 1000 grazing.

4.5 In the Middle Ages and during the C16 and C17 there was piecemeal enclosure, principally in the western half of Fen Ditton and probably associated with fenland drainage. (Fen Ditton fen was drained in the 1640s and 1650s by the digging of a main watercourse that connected to Bottisham Lode.) The enclosure of Fen Ditton parish was affected under an act of 1807, though by then 1155 acres had already been enclosed.

4.6 In 1109 the estates in Fen Ditton were bequeathed to Ely, and in the C12 they passed to the Bishop rather than the abbey and remained in his ownership until 1600 when they were taken by the Crown, which sold it 5 years later to Thomas Willys whose father had previously acquired Eye Manor in Horningsea in 1555. It stayed in the Willys family until 1732 when it was descended jointly to Sir Henry Willys' 6 daughters. The Fen Ditton Estate passed through several families until it was bought by Clement Francis in the early 1850s and has passed through several generations of the same family to the 1990s.

4.7 In the late Middle Ages the village expanded and moved to make use of the higher ground along the line of the filled in Fleam Dyke; the deserted plots of earlier settlements can be seen between the present village and Green End (as the northern end

of the village has been latterly known). The reason for the move has been attributed to the growing importance of the road between Cambridge and Newmarket which turned east near the church and ran along part of Fleam Dyke. By the C14 it was a substantial village with some 330 adults recorded.

4.8 A road, which existed in 1412 passed northwards, west of Fen Ditton Hall and the church through Green End to Horningsea, serving wharves along the river. By the C17 it had been diverted to the east side of the church and hall and was known as Ditton Lane in the C19. In the C18 a road was constructed on slightly higher ground linking Horningsea, Fen Ditton and Cambridge and was subsequently known as Horningsea Road. The road to Quy Mill follows the course of Fleam Dyke and by 1821 was known as High Ditch Road. The western end of the route forms the village High Street from which Church Street leads into Green End Lane. The Cambridge northern by-pass (now the A14) was completed in 1978.

4.9 There was much new building in the early C19 on the High Street and Horningsea Road and the number of houses increased from 49 in 1801 to 114 in 1831. Another 35 houses were added by 1891. In the late 1890s the limits of the village were marked by the Plough Inn at the end of Green Lane, by Home Farm at the eastern end of the High Street and by Fen Ditton Hall at the southern end of the village. Further houses were built along Green End between 1895 and 1925 and in the early C20 the village had several shops.

4.10 The earliest surviving houses in the village date mostly from the C17 – Mulberry House, Home Farm, Manor Farm and Flendyshe House. However, the much altered Biggin farmhouse (outside the Conservation Area) contains remains of C13 Biggin Abbey which was built by Hugh de Nothwold, Bishop of Ely as a residence where he undertook official business. Kings Henry III, Edward I and II were all entertained here. The Barn is a large timber-framed building that is thought to have originally been the village guildhall in the C16 and was later altered to serve as a barn. The village was bombed in 1940 and some of the more recent infill development replaced destroyed buildings.

5.0 GEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

5.1 Fen Ditton lies 2½ miles northeast of Cambridge on the east bank of the river Cam. It stands at an elevation of about 6m above sea level,

except for the causeway that follows the line of Fleam Dyke, with a maximum 13.5m above sea level.

5.2 The parish is bordered by the River Cam to the west and by fenland to the east; the railway line forms the south-western boundary. The land lies mainly on the lower chalk, with deposits of gault in the northwest and alluvium and river gravels along the banks of the river Cam. A narrow band of peat marks the parish boundary in the east.

5.3 The village lies in the Cambridge Green Belt and within the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands Landscape Character Area and the West Anglian Plain Natural Area. It is surrounded by good agricultural land with some very good land around Horningsea Road. Coprolite was extracted from pits during the second half of the C19.

5.4 Attractive water meadows lie between the village and the river and these, combined with the surrounding fields serve visually to separate the village from the city. This separation is enhanced by the boundary of the River Cam and the fields on the west bank. The low-lying land (Ditton Meadows) means that south-western village edge is clearly defined by the trees around the church and the Ditton Hall buildings on slightly higher ground.

5.5 Approaching the village along Ditton Lane, the land rises perceptibly to the crossroads that is at the top of the filled in Fleam Dyke. High Street continues along the same raised line as High Ditch Road until the church where the land falls again to the river and surrounding water meadows. Church Street is also on the higher level, but at its junction with Green End, the level drops towards the site of the original settlement.

5.6 Fen Ditton is surprisingly well shielded from the A14 and its associated noise because of a slight dip in ground level at Green End, which means that the village nestles in the countryside beneath a scattered blanket of trees. Turning off the A14 and onto Horningsea Road, only Poplar Hall to the west is just visible from behind its tree screen. It is not until Musgrave Farm is reached on the west side of the road, that a sense of entering the village is gained.

6.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

6.1 Early prehistoric material including flints and tools have been found in fields at the margin of the parish near Quy Water and Black Ditch.

6.2 Although it is not known when Fleam Dyke was

built, the buried remains of Anglo-Saxon bodies (with swords, spears, shield bosses, brooches and other artefacts), dates it to considerably earlier than the C6, possibly Iron Age in common with other East Anglian defensive dykes. Immediately south of the dyke a large Iron Age settlement was excavated in 1996 and animal bones and pottery were found in 300 pits.

6.3 Fen Ditton has surprisingly little archaeology surviving from the Roman period in comparison with the neighbouring parishes, although a group of crop marks of enclosures at the south-eastern edge of the parish probably belong to this date. A few metal finds suggest a substantial building nearby.

6.4 Biggin Abbey, Little Ditton and Green End are all noted as Areas of Archaeological Interest. Biggin Abbey lies some way to the north of the village, beyond the A14 flyover. It dates to the mid C13 and has many royal connections and was also the summer residence of Bishops of Ely, though it was never occupied by monks. Its use declined to a manor house in C14 and the surviving building dates to this period and a remodelling in C17, although its external appearance has been much altered and modernised.

6.5 The deserted plots of the earlier settlement can be seen as earth works between the present village and Green End. One of the Medieval wharves built between the village and the River Cam can also still be seen between The Barn (Ditton Hall) and the river. Another, near the Plough Inn was used by coal barges until recent years.

6.6 Little Ditton is the area south of High Ditch Road which was Little Ditton Field and farmed as open-field arable in 1790. It contains part of the filled in Fleam Dyke which although Anglo-Saxon in its final phase of construction, may have been built upon Iron Age works. Parts of Fleam Dyke are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, but not that section that lies within the Fen Ditton Conservation Area.

7.0 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

7.1 The water meadows that border the Cam, enclose the village's western side where they are called Longreach Meadows and form a linear open space separating Fen Ditton from the river. The space opens up at the south-western end of the Conservation Area boundary and Ditton Meadows are very important to the setting of the Hall Farm

buildings. Views of moored houseboats and River Cottage are gained looking northwards, upstream.

7.2 The former buildings of Hall Farm were converted to residential use in the 1980s, but they retain their agricultural character. From the riverside, they have the appearance of a walled town as the remains of a Medieval wharf runs up to the buildings on the boundary of Ditton Meadows and gives them a defensive air.

High Street (south side)

7.3 High Street rises perceptibly from a small space at its west end adjoining the water meadows which border the Cam, towards what is now the hub of the village at the junction with Church Street, where a small obelisk shaped war memorial sits on a triangular grass island.



View towards High Street from river

7.4 The western green space is well defined by walls, dense shrubbery and, at its southeast corner, the massive black boarded barn (Grade II* Listed), sitting on a high stone and rubble plinth (map:1). The projecting first floor jetty on its north gable is thought to have been used for storage associated with Fen Ditton's trading activities, and as a village guildhall. It originates from the C15 or C16 when Fen Ditton was still engaged with commercial trade on the River Cam.



Gate in High Street wall to Ditton Hall

7.5 The western part of the street has an enclosed feel, imparted by the substantial (Grade II Listed) walls (map:2) on either side and reinforced by a belt of shrubs and small trees at the west end on the north side. The street here is more like a lane with a rough surface, but it has a rather formal appearance due not only to the walls but also the parallel verges, paths, and on the south side, a second verge next to the wall which is planted with large heavily pollarded lime trees. The wall on the south side which encloses the grounds of Ditton Hall is mainly about two metres in height, and is substantial enough to accommodate a gateway with arch above. It has buttresses and a heavy, well detailed coping which includes a string course of bricks laid in a saw-tooth pattern.



Ditton Hall

7.6 Behind the wall, and set in extensive gardens,

are Ditton Hall (map:3) and the buildings of Hall Farm (map:A). Ditton Hall is Grade II* Listed and is two storeys with large attics and a clay-tiled roof. Thomas Willys built much of the house in about 1635, although the timber-framed core is from the early C15 and is believed to be associated with William Muschet's Medieval manor house. The east and south garden elevations are red brick with a series of large Dutch gables; the other elevations were clad in gault brick in the C19, when the house was reduced in size.



No. 39 High Street

7.7 The setting of the hall is important as it is on rising ground overlooking Ditton Meadows, apparently isolated from the village and yet ultimately connected with High Street by its substantial garden walls. No. 39, a mid C20 timber-clad house with shingles on its roof adjoins the gardens of the hall. The presence of a boundary wall and drop in ground level means that it is only just visible from the street.



Wadloes Footpath

7.8 At this point High Street is joined by Church Street from the northeast in the space in front of the church gate. From here High Street follows the course of the former Fleam Dyke, running east to connect with High Ditch Road. Opposite the war memorial, Wadloes Footpath leads south to become a narrow, well treed passage that eventually connects with paths to the river. Soon after it leaves High Street there are views of the impressive gables of Ditton Hall and then some long views to the edge of Cambridge city across the fields.



View south from High Street by side of Wadloes Footpath

7.9 The green space immediately east of Wadloes Footpath is important in giving views direct from High Street south towards Fen Ditton Fields across the intervening green wedge of countryside. It is an important space as it is one of the few gaps in the street frontage that have not been filled in with buildings.



The Old Coach House to 29 High Street, with the modern bungalow of No 31 behind

7.10 After this field the boundary wall is succeeded by a fence, although the presence of a large horse chestnut tree and an adjoining tall lime tree partly

compensate for this loss of frontage enclosure. The grass verge continues behind the footpath and the street frontage steps backward to a late C20 bungalow in cream brick, which has been built in front of Highfield House (No. 31) - an unaltered late C19 house in gault brick with stone dressings and vertical sash windows under splayed brick arches beneath a large hipped slate roof (map:B). It is a pity that the bungalow has disrupted the visual relationship of the house with High Street. Its only link now is the white painted brick and slate building that appears to have been its coach house. Although only 1.5 storeys, this makes a strong visual contribution by presenting its gable end to the street, and with its distinctive louvered turret on the ridge.



Horse chestnut tree and traditional boarded cartshed, with No 27A behind

7.11 Set-back behind a large horse chestnut back is a low cart shed in black boarding with a clay pantile roof, and behind this is No. 27A, is a recent well proportioned two storey house that is only partly visible from the street. The overall composition works well.



Ashtree & Jasmine Cottages, Nos. 19-21 High Street

7.12 To the east, are two late C19 century gault brick houses with slate roofs (which comprise the former School House) project slightly forward (map:C). The former National School, next door is dated 1844 and is in the same materials but has large vertical sash windows and maintains the building line. These buildings are all two full storeys and of a larger scale and depth than Jasmine Cottage and Ashtree Cottage (Nos. 19-21, Grade II Listed) immediately to the east which together comprise a single storey timber-frame structure which has attic rooms under its straw thatch roof (map:4). The adjoining No. 17 has a mansard roof of clay tiles and walls in local stock bricks (map:D).



High Street Post Office with Listed telephone kiosk and No 17 beyond

7.13 Next east, the Post Office (currently closed) resumes the mid C19 theme of shallow pitched slate roofs above local gault brick elevations with vertical sashes in the 8/8 style as well as the more common 6/6. A Grade II listed K6 telephone box stands in front of the shop (map:5).

7.14 Immediately to the east is No. 11 High Street, a late C20 house. This is set back behind a low wall giving a feeling of openness that is at odds to the prevalent built form.



Ancient Shepherds Public House

7.15 The set back to the adjoining mid C19 brick house (No. 9) is less obvious (map:E), with garden wall, hedges and a yew tree providing visual enclosure, before the 1.5 storey Ancient Shepherd Public House comes forward to the back edge of the path. This is a Grade II Listed C18 timber-framed range that has been faced in brick that is now painted white with a black plinth. The long elevation and half-hipped plain tile roof are enlivened by a projecting canted bay on the ground floor, and gabled dormers to the attic rooms. A traditional sign on a white post makes a further positive contribution to the street scene.



View west along High Street from the cross roads

7.16 At this point looking back (west) along the street, the mature trees at the end towards the river block views of the church, but give a satisfactory sense of visual closure, with just the obelisk of the war memorial discernable against this backcloth. Moving further east to the crossroads, the view west into the village centre is framed by the Ancient Shepherd Public House and Musgrave Farmhouse on the north side.



No. 1 High Street

7.17 Next east is a C19 brick house with little

enclosure to its garden (map:F). It is much altered, especially with regard to its windows, which are modern casements. On the corner itself, is a modest two storey late C20 house in brick and slate (No 1 High St).

High Street (north side)



The Walled Cottage, No. 6 High Street

7.18 The space on the corner of High Street and Horningsea Road no longer has a building on it. The plain diagonal wall, a lack of trees and a rather municipal arrangement of seat, signs and other street furniture are disappointing. The first building, No. 6 (and No. 4) - The Walled Cottage, is of interest for the materials used on its front elevation (map:G). The lower of the two storeys is gault brick, but the upper is clunch interspersed with courses of brick, used to striking effect. The main roof is pantiled, as are the two latter lean-to additions at each gable end. The uPVC replacement windows are unfortunate.

7.19 No. 4 and 6 are sited on the back of the footpath, and an in-line wall helps to lead the eye along to No. 10 (Musgrave Farmhouse). Behind the wall is a late C20 house, in a modern pink brick.



Musgrave Farmhouse, No. 10 High Street

7.20 Musgrave Farmhouse is a timber-framed Grade II* Listed building dates from the late C16 (map:7). The plastered gable end of its cross wing, with its upper floor jetty, is a strong feature in the street scene. This elevation, which also includes a short brick faced addition to the east, is painted. Other elevations are cased in gault brick and the roofs are in local plain tiles, with a rebuilt stack on the main ridge.

7.21 Westward from No. 10, the boundary walls are especially important in containing the vista along the street. They are 1.5 metres high as far as Flendyshe House, and have gaps for access, but again, they help reduce the impact of the modern housing behind them.



Flendyshe House, High Street

7.22 Flendyshe House is Listed Grade II and is another timber-framed (map:8). It dates from the C17 and has been cased in brick. The multi-colours of the local bricks in a diaper pattern enliven the blank gable and are especially pleasing. The windows here are vertical sashes with 6/6 glazing, and there are sashes to the flat leaded dormers in the plain tiled roof which has some diagonal stacks. The six panelled door is partly glazed and sits beneath an arched cast-iron hood and the mix of details from the C17 through to the C19 show us how the house has been continuously altered in a thoughtful way. The house has some mature trees in its garden, emphasising the lack of trees to the east. The beech tree is of special importance in long views from both directions along the street. The late C17 wall to the east of Flendyshe House is listed Grade II in its own right.

7.23 Buildings in this central part of High Street exhibit the subtle changes of scale that co-exist in the Conservation Area. The high gable of Flendyshe House, which has two generous storeys

plus attics, forms a strong counter balance to the low vernacular buildings on the opposite side of the street.



Jubilee Cottages, High Street

7.24 The walls which continue westward to Jubilee Cottages run in front of two late C20 bungalows, and again are valuable as a screening device. These walls date from C18 and are listed Grade II. Jubilee Cottages (Nos. 26-32) are not listed, but are of great local value (map:H). They were built at the time of Queen Victoria's 1887 Jubilee and are sited tight to the back of the pavement. On the front elevation gault brick predominates, but a rich red brick is used for the ground floor window and door heads and the string band beneath the first floor windows. The first floor window-heads are in stone, which has also been used on keystones, some mullions and the date plaque. The steep roof is in Welsh slate. Small paned casement windows emphasise the vertical subdivisions of this group.



Nos. 38-48 High Street

7.25 The unlisted pair of cottages to the west (Nos. 34 and 36) have pantiled roofs above gault brick walls with simple segmental arches over small pane

timber windows (map:l). They are part of the two storey group that also includes Nos. 38-48 as well as Jubilee Cottages. Together they give enclosure to the street, close views from the lower part of High Street, west of the church, and carry the eye along towards the junction with Church Street. Nos. 38-48 have gault brick walls and plain tiled roof (map:j). The windows have segmental brick arches over, but most of the windows are modern. The pantiled lean-to addition on the west face of No. 48 is a strong visual feature.



Kings Head Public House, No. 50 High Street

7.26 The Kings Head Public House (No. 50) encloses the east side of the triangular space that is also bounded by the churchyard wall and gateway and contains the war memorial on a grass island (map:9). The Kings Head is Grade II Listed and has a two storey plastered C17 timber frame. The north end of the roof is hipped, with a small high gablet and the whole roof is clad in black painted corrugated iron. It would originally have been thatched. Adjoining the main entrance door is a remnant of a cornice and high level window. There is a lean-to outshut at the north end which echoes the hip, and gives on to a narrow set back which has a small unlisted cottage, No. 2 Church Street at its back edge.



No. 52 High Street with the church beyond

7.27 Moving west across the junction with Church Street and past the Church of St Mary Virgin, the next building is No. 52, a modern flat-roofed bungalow of buff brick and render. It is completely at odds with its surroundings and is an unfortunate intrusion into views of the church from the western end of High Street.



Former Old Rectory stables, No. 54 High Street

7.28 No. 54, the former stables to The Old Rectory on Church Street, is now a single residence. It is a white painted brick building of 1.5 storeys with a slate roof. It is sited gable-end on, and set back from the road behind a brick wall. The adaptation for residential use has included the addition of large dormers and modern windows.

High Ditch Road (south side)



Chimney detail, No. 6 High Ditch Road

7.29 Looking east from the crossroads on Horningsea Road, where High Street becomes High Ditch Road, a green field bounded by post and rail fences provides an important green space that enhances the setting for No. 6, Honeysuckle Cottage, which is the first house on the south side of the road (map:10). This C17 house is Grade II Listed and, from the west, appears to be single storey, with a longstraw thatch roof above its white plastered timber-frame walls. It is end on to the road, and its length is exaggerated by the contiguous lateral outbuilding range that is slightly lower and is weather-boarded with a pantiled roof. The east elevation has attic dormers, and at the street end an outshut suggesting an earlier bake oven has a tiled roof and picturesque leaning brick stack.

7.30 Nos. 8-10 High Ditch Road are a pair of modern houses that have a forward-set garage block set gable onto the road and sited on the back of the footpath. The main houses are two storeys high with rendered elevations under red plain tiled hipped roofs. Beyond is No. 12, a 1970s house with a double gable facing the street.



Nos. 8-10 High Ditch Road



Nos. 14-16 High Ditch Road

7.31 Further east, 14-16 High Ditch Road is similar to Honeysuckle Cottage, being 1 1/2 storeys under a thatch roof and set gable onto the road. It is Grade II Listed and dates from the C19 (map:11). Two new houses stand between it and Manor Farmhouse. No. 18 is brick, whilst No. 20 is rendered and presents a modern form of a jettied gable to the street. They are set well back, but the lack of high boundary walls gives prominence to the hard standing in front of each of them.



Manor Farmhouse, No. 22 High Ditch Road

7.32 Manor Farmhouse (No. 22) is Grade II Listed (map:12). It is an early C17 timber-framed building with plastered walls and has first floor jetties facing the street on both the main range and the cross wing; a later end bay has flint work. The roofs are of clay plain tiles and the cross wing gable has decorative timber barge boards. The elevations are distinctive with a mix of window types including horizontal and vertical sashes, some within a projecting bay on the ground floor. The surrounding low brick walls appear to incorporate former drinking troughs. A stone mounting block survives in the grass verge in front of the house.



The New Barn Manor Farm, High Ditch Road

7.33 The two storey farmyard complex immediately

to the east is of the C19 (map:L). Its size, position at the edge of the road and the use of gault brick with flint panels and slate roofs make it an imposing feature in the street. It has been converted to housing units with the full height central cart way giving access to an internal courtyard flanked by more flint and brick ranges with additional new units. The limited openings on the street elevations and retention of features such as wind-eyes in the brick gable have helped maintain the agricultural appearance.



The Loft, High Ditch Road

7.34 Some new brick houses to the east (The Loft) are set back from the road by varying degrees and as a result the rhythm of the street frontage is lost. There is a further new development, Shepherds Close that is reached by an access way immediately to the east. These houses have little visual relationship to High Ditch Road. It is not until the end gable of No. 30 steps forward to partly frame views to the open countryside at the end of the built-up street that a sense of enclosure is restored. No. 30 is a much altered two storey C19 house of gault brick with a concrete tiled roof (map:M).

High Ditch Road (north side)



Home Farm, High Ditch Road

7.35 Home Farm farmyard on the north side of the road contrasts with the enclosed farmyard buildings that served Manor Farm to the south. It is a large open area with low roadside hedges and then a brick wall on the back edge of the pavement, with large C20 farm buildings set well back into the site.



Home Farmhouse, No. 25 High Ditch Road



Dovecote and granary at rear of Home Farmhouse

7.36 No. 25, Home Farmhouse (Grade II Listed and, regrettably, currently uninhabited), is a long, C17 timber-framed range, clad in C19 gault brick with a return gable end-on to the street (map:13). The windows are all small paned horizontal sliding sashes. The plain tiled roof has bands of buff and red tiles and substantial chimneys. There are various rear extensions that are just visible

from the road, and are important in the context of the evolution of the house. To the rear is also a freestanding square, Grade II Listed, C18 brick dovecote and granary with a pyramid roof.



Francis Court, High Ditch Road

7.37 A 1.5 metre high brick wall, notable for the banded effect formed from use of alternating courses of pink and gault bricks, connects Home Farmhouse to a range of low brick outbuildings attached to Mulberry House. A modern barn-like office block in the form of an 'H' has been inserted into the yard behind (Francis Court). The elevations are clad in weatherboard and the roofs are pantiled giving an overall result that retains an appropriate agricultural appearance.



Mulberry House, No. 23 High Ditch Road

7.38 Mulberry House, No. 23, is a large Grade II Listed house of a double pile form that gives a distinctive "M" shaped gable end facing west (map:14). All of the elevations are clad in painted C19 brick but the core is C17 with timber-framed elements. The roof has unfortunately been recovered in concrete tiles.



Nos. 15-17 High Ditch Road

7.39 Mulberry House is on the back edge of the footpath with brick walls enclose the garden to the west and connect this frontage to Nos. 15-17 (Grade II listed) which are early C18 timber-framed and rendered under a thatched roof (map:15). This is a low, 1½ storey range, with attic dormers in the thatch that enliven the façade. The render is modern but it has been marked out in panels above the brick plinth in a traditional fashion.



Nos. 5-13 High Ditch Road

7.40 Immediately to the west contrasts, and contrasting with the listed neighbours, is a row of two storey C19 gault brick and slate houses (Nos. 5-13). This range is not only higher, but the houses have a deeper plan form. The windows have been mostly altered in an unsympathetic style, and lost their traditional sub-divisions. The chimneys and positions of doors and windows, however, retain something of the original rhythm of the group.



Nos. 1-3 High Ditch Road

7.41 Nos. 1-3 are also unlisted, but provide another contrast by returning to the 1½ storey form, with attic rooms lit by dormers (map:N). The windows are modern, and the building is of brick with a plain tiled roof. The large, truncated stack at the west end suggests that there is an older core within what appears to be a pair of predominantly C19 cottages. They are setback from the street, but minimal enclosure is given by the low walls and fence.

Church Street (east side)



No. 2 Church Street

7.42 The street begins at the modest but important central space in front of the church gateway that

contains the war memorial. The listed Kings Head Public House is actually in High Street but in visual terms it relates as much to Church Street. No. 2 is a small unlisted house that is set back in a narrow gap between the pub and the adjacent almshouses. It has a gault brick front with a slated roof, and has stained timber replacement windows. The humble façade is important to the continuity of the street frontage.



Willys Almshouses, Nos. 4-8 Church Street

7.43 The Willys Almshouses (Nos. 4-8 Church Street) are almost on the edge of the footpath, with a simple post and rail enclosing their front gardens (map:16). The current single storey cottages date from 1877, are Grade II Listed and replacing the original almshouse built by Sir Thomas Willys, of Ditton Hall in 1665. They have a simple form with plain tiled roofs that include extended overhangs to form shallow porches above the doorways. The walls are in gault brick with red detailing such as the under-eaves saw tooth brick course, and the chimney copings. They form a picturesque grouping, which are subservient to the church opposite and are in stark contrast to the 2½-storey Old Bakery adjacent to the north.



The Old Bakery, No. 16 Church Street

7.44 No. 16 Church Street (The Old Bakery) is dated 1828 on a brick in the south gable and is Grade II Listed (map:17). The gault brick front sits hard on the edge of the road, with a symmetrical arrangement of 6/6 sash windows, and rises to two full storeys, with above another half storey above containing blind openings; unfortunately the roof now has replacement concrete tiles, but would have originally be slated.



Nos. 18-18A Church Street

7.45 Travelling north, views along Church Street tend to focus in the distance on the gable end of Nos. 20 and 22 and on the impressive front of The Old Rectory. In between are two mid C20 houses (Nos. 18 and 18A) built in a very distinctive, modern style, but which nevertheless successfully integrate into the Conservation Area. The walls are of smooth white render, and rise in three separate elements to between one and two storeys. This group provides a low key linking element that is of interest in itself. Behind it, the new houses in Bakery Close are well positioned, but lack the confident detailing of the frontage buildings.



Nos. 20-22 Church Street

7.46 Nos. 20 and 22 follows the curve of the road, which is emphasised by the continuous first floor

jetty. They are timber-framed and plastered and Grade II Listed (map:18). The pitch of the slated roof appears too shallow for what is believed to be a late C16 or early C17 building, and may be the result of it being rebuilt at some stage. There is a variety of traditional windows, including some very small horizontal sashes.



Nos. 26-36 Church Street

7.47 The street has a different character as it veers slightly to the east. A terrace of unlisted Victorian cottages, Nos. 26-36, has been radically altered in the mid C20 with pivoting or vented windows, truncated chimneys and concrete tiles. The visual unity of the detailing, and overall white rendered finish, enables the terrace to still make a positive contribution to the townscape.

7.48 North of this point the view terminates on the green hedge adjoining the entrance to the southeast corner of the playing field. The houses on the east side have little to contribute in townscape terms, and range from late C19 cottages that have been drastically altered with new windows, through interwar bungalows and a pair of semi-detached houses until, just before the sharp bend in the street, the entrance to a cul-de-sac of late C20 houses creates a large gap in the frontage. This is Stanbury Close, which attempts to mimic vernacular building styles in an unconvincing fashion.



Cemetery at Green End

7.49 Next to the playing field entrance is the cemetery, which is entered by way of some well-made late C19 wrought iron gates with the maker's name "Allsop & Sons, Cambridge" pressed onto the cast iron gateposts.

Church Street (west side)

7.50 The west side of Church Street starts at the bend in the lane from Green End to the church. Three new houses have been inserted behind the original hedge line. These are all flat-roofed bungalows, obscured by profuse planting. No. 11 is completely hidden by a wall on the bend that has become overgrown with ivy and other plants.



Ditton Corner, No. 5 Church Street

7.51 The first traditionally proportioned house is No. 5 Ditton Corner, which sits back behind a formal garden (map:O). This unlisted double pile mid-Victorian house has white painted brick under a slate roof and sash windows. Its projecting central two storey porch has been remodelled in an individual manner with decorative leaded light glazing in the gable as well as in a door and upper window.



Church Hall, Church Street

7.52 To the south of Ditton Corner, the enclosure

to the street is provided by No. 3, the single storey former church hall. This long gault brick building retains its original form, although the replacement windows beneath the red brick arched openings include large plate glass elements that somewhat detract from the original structure. The building is important in townscape as well as social history terms. Together with Nos. 20 and 22 on the opposite side, it emphasises the bend in Church Street and directs the eye towards views to the north. From the other direction, it directs views toward the slate-hung gable end and chimney of the Old Rectory; the interjection of a modern streetlight is unfortunate.



The Old Rectory, No. 1 Church Street

7.53 No. 1 Church Street, The Old Rectory is Grade II* Listed and although this large house ceased to be the rectory in 1939, it still relates visually to, and creates a notable group with, the church (map:19). The two buildings form a triangular space dominated mainly by the front of the house. Trees and walls are important in defining the private areas, but the overall arrangement allows the entire space to be generally visible to the public.

7.54 Most of The Old Rectory is of two storeys, but the taller, central, 5-bay, red brick range with its steeply pitched roof and attic dormers reads almost as three storeys. The complex is actually timber-framed behind its various brick facades and contains elements from the original C16 rectory though an additional wing and the gault facades (since painted) were added in the C19. There are a number of different roof forms mostly hung with clay plain tiles. The garden in front of the house is symmetrical with large wrought iron gates.



Church of St Mary Virgin

7.55 The Church of St. Mary Virgin is Grade II* Listed (map:20). In townscape terms this is the centrepiece of the village, although its visual dominance is somewhat reduced by the abundance of trees, and the apparent squatness and plainness of the west tower. The oldest parts of the building are the north aisle, and chancel dating from the C13, with much of the remaining structure from the C15. The church was restored by the Victorian architect J. L. Pearson, who rebuilt the tower in a C13 style. The walls are in limestone, flint, with some re-used Medieval stone and local clunch beneath lead covered roofs. The churchyard still contains an assortment of gravestones and some larger tombs and sits behind its high wall of flint, clunch and brick that gives it a sense of separation from the street. The yew tree at its main entrance is an important feature of the setting of the church and of the general townscape at the junction of Church Street and High Street.

Green End (east side)

7.56 Green End continues north from Church Street, and runs parallel to the River Cam. Although it is part of the ancient settlement of Fen Ditton, it has a very different character from the main village to the south. On the east side of the road, north from the playing field, the field hedges are still largely intact and provide a pleasant, soft edge to the long space.



April Cottage, No. 4 Green End

7.57 The first group of buildings centres on No. 4 Green End (April Cottage) which stands gable onto the road, facing north, from which direction it provides a degree of visual closure (map:21). The house is Grade II Listed, timber-framed and dates from the C17. Its original form and clay pantiled roof survive, but the central door has been blocked, windows renewed and the render is modern. Its immediate surroundings are built over with mid to late C20 houses and bungalows which are not included within the Conservation Area.



Ruby Cottage, No. 24 Green End

7.58 Because of the lateness of the development on this side of the road, the boundary continues to skirt along the edge of the highway until it comes to Ruby Cottage (No. 24) which, whilst not listed, is of a traditional single storey with mansard roof form, and is set tight to the back edge of the footpath (map:P). Although the windows have been replaced, it forms an attractive group with Lode Cottage and No. 45 on the opposite side of the road.

7.59 Northwards there is a generally suburban character to the area of bungalows and houses set

back from the road. Development stops at the junction with Field Lane, and Green End becomes a track running across the fields. The land rises slightly and there are pastoral views to the river, but also to the A14 trunk road and a line of pylons.



Red House Close, Horningsea Road

7.60 Red House Close is a small C19 cottage in gault brick with slate and pantiled roofs that still retains its original horizontal sash windows (map: Q). It is remotely sited adjacent to the footpath through the fields north of Green End. At the northern end of these fields, and partly screened by trees, is the Grade II Listed Poplar Hall sits comfortably in the landscape (map:22). It is an impressive two storey timber-framed farmhouse which dates from the C17. It has prominent gables, traditional casement windows, and a clay tiled roof with two large brick stacks which have an arcaded detail.

Green End (west side)

7.61 Returning along Green End, southwards, the road becomes metalled again at its junction with Field Lane. The first field on the west side of the road is still open grazing land, giving views to the river and beyond to the commercial development on the northern fringe of Cambridge. The Conservation Area runs to the river, and follows its course southwards.

7.62 The first house, which is setback slightly from the road, is Lode Cottage (Nos. 49 and 51) which is Grade II Listed (map:23). The long 1½-storey timber-framed, C19 cottage has been faced in brick, now painted, with a thatched roof over a narrow span and with hooded dormers to light the attic rooms.



Nos. 45-47 Green End and Nos. 49-51 (Lode Cottage)

7.63 The adjoining, unlisted, house to the south, Nos. 45-47, follows the same building line and also has a narrow span, with a tiled mansard roof (map: R). South of this group are a number or recent houses that all have wide span plan forms and higher roofs, and are set back from the building line established by the traditional cottages to the north, albeit partly behind modern walls.



Nos. 33-41 Green End, including No. 37 Harvest House

7.64 Three houses to the south restore the enclosed street frontage and have some historical references although none of them are listed. The centre building is now called Harvest House (No. 37), but in the C19 was the Harvestmen Public House, and is of a traditional form with a steeply pitched plain tiled roof, vertical sash windows and substantial chimney stacks (map:S).

7.65 The houses on either side (Nos. 33-35 and 39-41) are C19 brick houses that have modern replacement windows and roof materials. However, their form and relationship to the street is still appropriate to this area which at one time would have appeared as a hamlet in its own right

separated from the main village by green spaces. No. 4 on the east side of the street relates to this group and encloses views to the south.



No. 19 Green End and Grassey Cottage

7.66 A line of bungalows continue the built form along the west side of the road though they contribute little to the Conservation Area. South of these is No. 21, Grassey Cottage, a Grade II Listed cottage that stands at the edge of the roadway (map:24). Its C17 timber-frame has a gault brick front and weather boarded ends. The pantiled half hipped roof has a tall central ridge stack that contrasts with the low roof lines to the north and the wide span shallow pitch roof on the modern dwelling at No 19 to the south.

7.67 To the south of No. 19, a well treed track leads down to the riverside area which adjoins the extensive grounds of the Plough Inn. There are various pleasure-craft and some houseboats moored in this area, and the area has an informal yet working air to it, a reminder of when the river played a central role in village life. Looking back to the rear elevations of the houses in Green Road, their raised position on the north-south bluff becomes far more apparent.



The Plough Public House, Green End

7.68 The Plough Inn, in contrast, is sited below the road level, and relates more to the river. It is not listed but the core of the building is believed to date from the C17, and that it was used for village meetings and court sessions in the C18. Today it is a thriving public house which externally appears more akin to a red brick late Victorian villa with a hipped slate roof. Unfortunately its roadside elevation is rather untidy and includes a flat-roofed extension, although the impact of this and the car park is softened by the large trees and hedging which surround the site. From some points on the roadway there are views over the site to the northern fringe of Cambridge on the west side of the river.

7.69 The approach to The Plough Public House is on the corner of a track which gives access to a group of houses including Riverside Cottage (No. 7 Green End). Two of this group (Nos. 3 and 5) are a pair of unlisted C19 brick cottages (map:T), with slate roofs which help to enclose the space leading to No. 7. A small single storey outbuilding (known as The Barn and now converted to a dwelling) closes the main view from the road (map:U).



Riverside Cottage, Nos. 3-9 Green End

7.70 Offset to the side of The Barn is Riverside Cottage, a Grade II Listed property, the main range of which a noticeably wide roof span that is unusual for a timber-framed building (map:25). The reason for this is the origin of the house as a C14 aisled hall and therefore a building of very high status. The roof is thatched and externally the detailing is simple with rendered walls and recent casement windows. Although the area adjoining the river is well treed, Riverside Cottage features strongly in views upstream from Ditton Meadows to the south of the village.



No. 1 Green End

7.71 The bend to the east in Green End leads to the point where Church Street begins, just past No. 1 Green End, which is a late C20 house of a split level design set well back from the frontage but exposed behind a parking area and sweeping lawn. This open arrangement contrasts with the surviving hedgerow on the opposite side of the road and the enclosed gardens of the recent houses immediately to the east.

Ditton Lane (east side)

7.72 The open green areas immediately to the west of No. 6 High Ditch Road (Honeysuckle Cottage) extend to the south along the east side of Ditton Lane, until ribbon development of C20 housing takes over. The space performs an important townscape function, helping to preserve the separateness of the original village, and stopping it from becoming totally subsumed in the outer suburbs and contributing to the overall setting of the buildings on the south side of the Conservation Area.

Ditton Lane (west side)

7.73 The Conservation Area at present extends to immediately south of No. 102 Ditton Lane (Coronation House). Between this house and No. 1 High Street, a large 1970s detached house has been inserted. No. 100 is of buff brick with concrete tiles and flush aluminium frame windows. It has a very open parking area of tarmac with a sunken basement garage; this creates an unwelcome and unattractive break in the street enclosure. No. 102, in contrast, is partially obscured from the road by a hedge (map:V). It is a late C19 detached house that is modest in terms of detail, and has replacement windows that are not sympathetic in terms of details or materials, although its overall form is largely unchanged.



No. 102 Ditton Lane



No. 106 Ditton Lane

7.74 The adjoining No. 104 is from the mid C20 with concrete tiles and to the south, No. 106 is a large Victorian villa with many original features including plain tiled roof, gault brick facades and original timber windows (map:W). It sits well in its landscaped garden, and yet relates to the road and the green space on the opposite side of Ditton lane. It is suggested that the boundary of the Conservation Area be extended to include these properties together with the open field opposite.

Horningsea Road (east side)

7.75 The only building within the Conservation Area on the east side of the road is at the crossroads with High Ditch Road. No. 2, the Blue Lion Public House sits on the corner, set well back

behind a large car park. The building is from the mid C20 with a clay plain tiled roof but few other traditional details.



Blue Lion Public House

Horningsea Road (west side)



The Barn, Musgrave Farm

7.76 Starting at the northern end of the road is Musgrave Farm, a small collection of agricultural buildings which once formed part of a working farm with No. 10 High Street (Musgrave Farmhouse). These C19 gault brick buildings have now been converted into offices.



Nos. 9-11 Horningsea Road

7.77 Nos. 7A and 13 are modern detached houses which seek to replicate the C19 semi-detached pair (Nos. 9 & 11) which sits between them (map: X), although much of the detailing is lost and the absence of a chimney on No. 7A is noticeable. The original pair is built of gault brick with a tiled roof whilst the modern pair is of buff brick with slate roof. All four properties are partially screened from the road behind a hedge and the modern properties are unobtrusive.

7.78 The next pair of dwellings has a plaque between the first floor windows inscribed with 'Diamond Jubilee Cottages 1897'. They are of gault brick with a slate roof and both have uPVC replacement windows; the window openings have also been altered on No. 5.



Nos. 1-3 Horningsea Road

7.79 No. 3 is a modern detached dwelling which sits well back from the footpath in contrast to Nos. 1, 5 & 7 which all sit on the back of the footpath. No. 1 appears to be from the C19, but the only traditional details remaining are the gault brick chimneystack and slate roof. The walls have been rendered and the window openings resized with replacement uPVC windows inserted.

8.0 KEY CHARACTERISTICS

8.1 Scale: A mix of scales co-exist e.g. higher Victorian two storeys next to single storey. Only the grander buildings such as St Mary Virgin Church, Ditton Hall and The Old Rectory rise to 2½ storeys. Otherwise the tallest domestic buildings in the village are two storeys including C19 houses and cottages and the most substantial timber-framed structures such as the King's Head Public House. Other buildings in the village are generally 1½ storeys.

8.2 Walling Materials: Early traditional buildings are timber-framed and plastered. Fen Ditton Hall

is built from a C17 red brick. Later traditional buildings are of red brick and gault brick which were commonly used until the early C19 when a local stock (gault) brick was introduced. In many cases this covers earlier timber-framed structures, and occasionally the bricks are painted. Weatherboarding is very common in the village for agricultural buildings, outbuildings and occasionally on the gable ends of houses.

8.3 Roofing Materials: Traditional buildings are thatched or have local plain-tile roofs. The oldest domestic buildings in the village have (or had) thatched roofs in the local tradition of long straw. Some have been replaced by corrugated iron sheet or clay peg tiles. The latter originally were of plain buff colour, but due to repairs over the centuries, most roofs are now in the attractive 'Cambridgeshire mix' combination of buff, brown and red tiles, and are attractive in their own right. Some later replacements are in machine-made new tiles which lack the variation in colour and texture of the traditional hand-made tiles. Welsh slate roofs are common on the C19 buildings in the village. Red and buff pantiles are commonly found on outbuildings and to a lesser extent on a few older dwellings.

8.4 Roof forms: There are a variety of roof forms in the village, but pitched structures are dominant and include gambrel, half hipped, hipped, mansard forms and lean-to additions. Many roofs have half dormers, but there are also full dormers (usually gabled) and catslides on several houses. The earliest vernacular buildings have steeply pitched roofs usually to accommodate thatch, whilst some of the lower pitched roofs in the village are on C19 buildings and are covered with Welsh slate.

8.5 Location on the plot: Buildings are often set gable end to the street creating positive breaks in the streetscene, and containing views. Whilst this gives considerable interest to the street scene, it means that the 'backs' as well as the 'fronts' of properties are easily visible. Several properties have side or rear service wings. Most other properties sit parallel with the street either directly on the back of the footway or more often behind small front gardens. Only the largest properties (such as The Old Rectory and Ditton Hall) are some distance from the road in extensive grounds.

8.6 Windows and doors: Traditional window details especially 'Yorkshire sliders' (horizontal sashes) survive on many properties, typically the more modest houses. Sash windows and more common casement windows are also evident on

both grand and smaller houses, although several houses have been disfigured by the insertion of modern windows and doors.

8.7 Boundary walls, verges and paths have a strong linear role in the village, particularly along High Street. Walls tend to be constructed of the same materials as the buildings which they border and in the majority of cases, this is gault brick. The exceptions are walls to grander properties such as Home Farmhouse (pink and gault brick) and Ditton Hall and Flendyshe House (red and gault brick). Throughout the village, buildings or walls come close to the back of the footpath and retained older boundary walls serve to screen much of the new infill development. Hedges also have an important townscape function in the village, particularly in Green End where some of the traditional field hedges are still intact.

8.8 The agricultural character of the village is very important especially at the western end of the village, along High Ditch Road, where (converted) barns line the road and there are views of the fine groups of farm buildings. The linear nature of much of the village also means that views out into the open fields surrounding Fen Ditton can be seen from many parts of the village.

8.9 Vistas of the river can be glimpsed from the northern end of the Green End and from the western end of High Street whilst views of the open countryside can be seen behind many properties throughout the village and from the small breaks in the building line such as along the High Street between Highfield House and Wadloes Footpath.

8.10 The village is well provided with mature trees and shrubs which provide punctuation and enclosure. Some of the trees have considerable scale and provide a backcloth for the traditional buildings in the village. The key group is around the church and The Old Rectory at the western end of the High Street.

8.11 Spaces: The linear nature of the village means that there are no formal spaces, although the war memorial in its grass island and adjacent parking area together with the space at the junction of High Street and Horningsea Road hint at municipal spaces. The churchyard, is of a reasonable scale and the Plough Inn has extensive riverside grounds. The main public open spaces are, however, the water meadows on the bank of the River Cam.

9.0 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

Additions

9.1 Nos. 104 and 106 Ditton Lane (west side) are the most southerly, and last, properties of the original village before the ribbon development of C20 Local Authority housing. Although No. 104 is not in itself of sufficient quality to warrant inclusion, No. 106 is a substantial late C19 house with many surviving original features and which relates well to the road and the open green space on the opposite side of the road. Both properties are part of the history of Fen Ditton and effectively form the end of the original village.



Paddock adjacent to No. 6 High Ditch Road

9.2 The open field on the corner of Ditton Lane and High Ditch Road is very important to the setting of Honeysuckle Cottage and contributes to the setting of the properties on the west side of Ditton Lane. The space also creates a definite stop in the street, helping to preserve the separateness of the original village from the suburbs which extend to Cambridge city. It is therefore proposed that the whole of this field and Nos. 104 and 106 Ditton Lane be included within the Conservation Area boundary.

Removals

9.3 Shepherds Close (at the eastern end of High Ditch Road) appears to have been built on land which originally formed part of Manor Farm. However, now that the land has been built upon with residential properties, its character has changed and no longer has any relationship with the remainder of the Manor Farm buildings. The boundary can be modified to exclude them without compromising any other parts of the Conservation Area.

9.4 Stanbury Close is a modern housing development at the Church Street / Green End bend. Although some attempt has been made to convey a traditional building style on the frontage properties, the lack of authentic vernacular details and the blander style of the properties further into the close, is unconvincing and has created a large gap in the building line of Church Street. These properties do not contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area and should be removed. The boundary can be modified to exclude them without compromising any other parts of the Conservation Area.

9.5 Wildfowl Cottage (Baits Bite Lock), although of historic interest and an attractive building, does not really relate to the rest of the village. Instead, it is proposed that Wildfowl Cottage and the adjacent riverside frontage north of the A14 be included in an extended Baits Bite Lock Conservation Area.

10.0 ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

10.1 Many properties in the village have had their original timber windows and doors replaced in modern materials such as uPVC or in modern styles, often changing the vertical / horizontal emphasis of the buildings' elevations in the process. Owners of these properties should be encouraged to reinstate traditional fenestration patterns and materials. The District Council may seek to make 'Article 4 Directions' to retain traditional detailing on the exterior of non-listed buildings within the Conservation Area, where such details have not already been lost.

10.2 The junction of the four main roads running through the village (Ditton Lane, High Ditch Road, High Street and Horningsea Road) is jumble of signs, bollards and street crossing paraphernalia. By rationalising the street clutter, the townscape of this area could be significantly improved.



Street clutter at B1047 junction

10.3 Improving the landscaping of the green space adjacent to the road junction would help to create an attractive entrance to the village because at present, the rather non-descript area does not reflect the high quality townscape the village offers. The space is not a place to linger in, although a bench is provided; the plinth of the village sign could also be constructed in more sympathetic materials.



Green space at B1047 junction

10.4 At the dog-leg bend along Green End / Church Street, and screening No. 11 Church Street, there is some non-indigenous planting which although not unattractive in its own right, appears out of place in this location. Replacement of this landscaping with more appropriate indigenous species could be considered.

10.5 Although fairly well-screened from the road, the side elevation of the Plough Inn Public House and its car parking area could be tidied up. The roadside elevation of the pub has air conditioning units attached and a slightly run down appearance from the road; the slate roof of the car park canopy building needs an overhaul. Better screening of the pub building with an appropriate hedge or shrub boundary may be the best solution.

10.6 Subject to the availability of funding, the District Council may make discretionary grants available towards the repair of certain historic buildings and structures within the district. These grants are made to encourage the use of traditional materials and craft techniques and are generally targeted at Listed Buildings, though visually prominent non-listed buildings within Conservation Areas may also be eligible for grant aid. More specific advice on the availability of grants, as well as on appropriate materials and detailing, is available from the Conservation Section within

Development Services Directorate at the District Council.

11.0 POLICIES TO PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA

11.1 These policies should be read in conjunction with those in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. Summaries of relevant policies are provided in Appendix A, but it is advisable to consult the Local Plan itself.

11.2 In considering the design of new buildings or extensions to existing ones, the council will take into account the impact of the proposal on the setting of Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Section 8 of this document sets out some of the key characteristics which need to be considered if a design is to fit comfortably with its neighbours. The following will also be important in determining whether a new development is acceptable:-

Scale - buildings should relate to the scale of adjacent buildings and not exceed two and a half storeys in height. Steeply-pitched roof forms are the norm for vernacular buildings in the area, but care must be taken to ensure that the roof proportion is appropriate for the building and location. Any dormers, etc. should be appropriately detailed and scaled and rooflights ideally only provided on less visible slopes.

Location on the plot - buildings should respect established building lines unless there are good reasons for setting back further within the plot to maintain frontage trees or hedgelines.

Materials – Fen Ditton has a limited palette of materials illustrated in part 8 of this report. This palette should be used as a guide for new development, though care should be taken to ensure that, for example, high status materials are not used for low-key building styles.

Colours - traditional subdued earthy tones of paint and render are still used in the village. Encouragement should be given to ensure that very strident colours are not used in new developments to avoid them over-dominating the traditional buildings of the village.

Archaeology - due regard should be given to the archaeological sensitivity and importance of Fleam Dyke, Little Ditton and Green End areas.

11.3 Boundaries, in particular the walls along High Street, are very important to the character of the

village and those identified in this report should be repaired and retained. When new buildings are being considered, or new walls or fences erected to surround existing buildings, it is important to ensure that the style and material chosen is appropriate for the type of building and its location within the village.

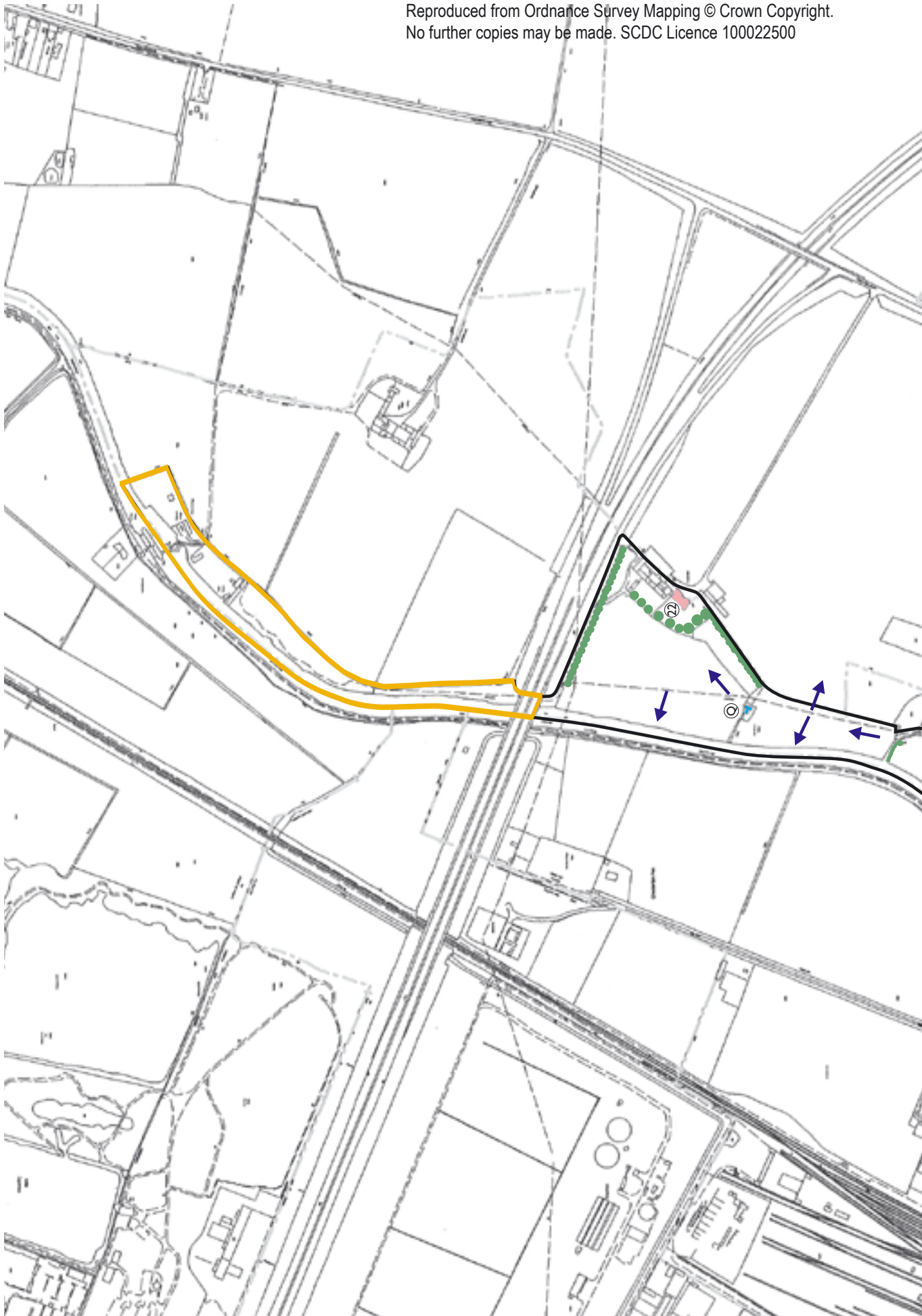
11.4 The grass verges are especially important to the character of the village in establishing a rural setting to the street. The District Council will work with the Parish Council to encourage the Highway Authority and statutory undertakers to ensure verges are not removed or damaged.

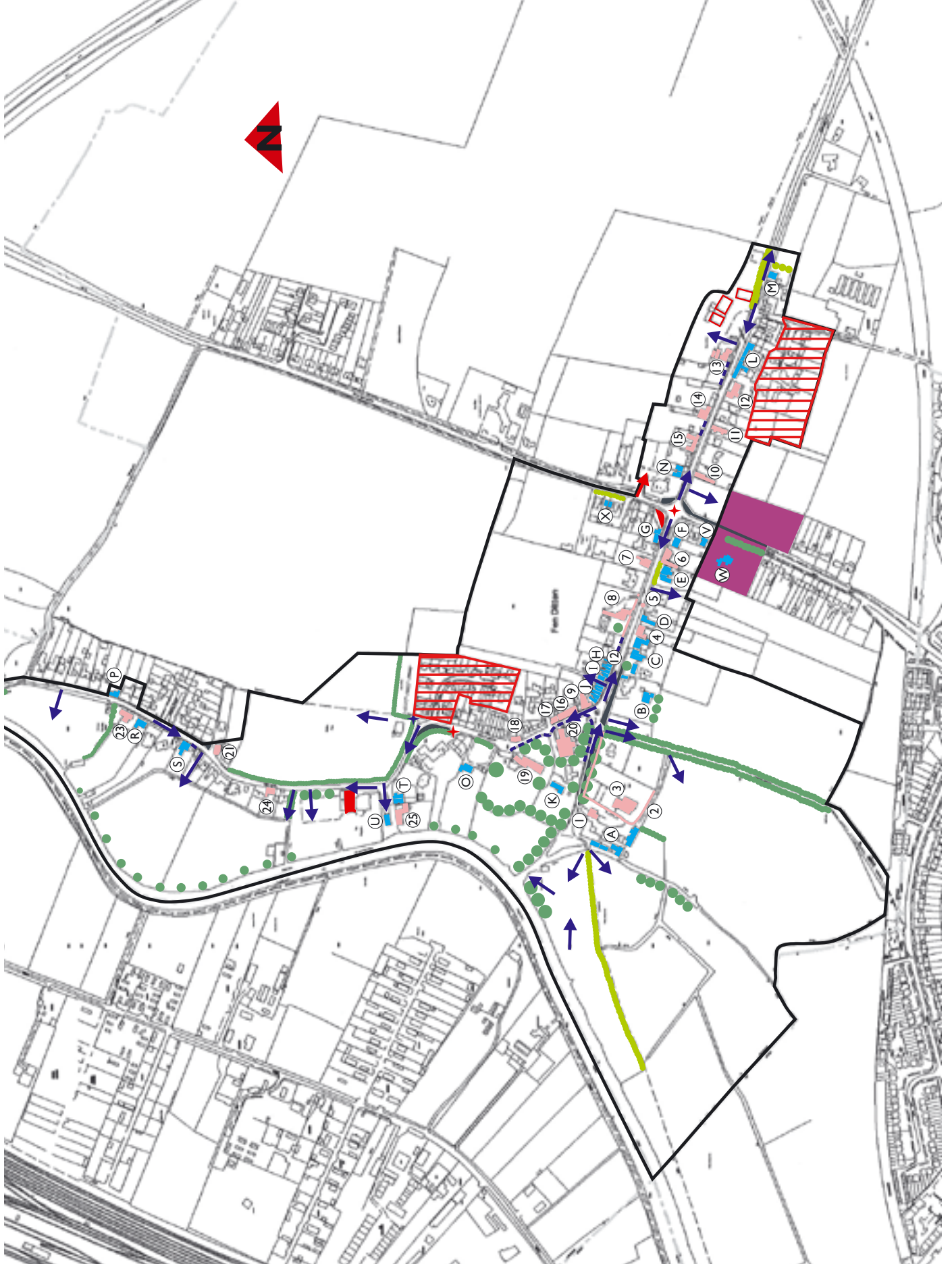
11.5 Trees are an important feature of the village's character and therefore trees should not be removed when they contribute positively to the

character of the village generally or the setting of specific buildings or groups. Where such trees have to be removed for safety reasons replanting with appropriate species should take place.

11.6 The District Council will encourage the Highway Authority and statutory undertakers to reduce the visual clutter and impact of plant, road signs and other street furniture. Where signs are needed, their size should be kept to the minimum allowable and, wherever possible, they should be fixed to existing features rather than being individually pole-mounted. Appropriate designs and colours for street furniture will be encouraged and necessary but unattractive plant should be appropriately screened.

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I.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

Cambridgeshire Structure Plan (adopted October 2003)

PI/2 Protection of sites of archaeological, historical or architectural value.

P7/6 Local authorities will protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted February 2004)

This section summarises the main Local Plan policies that are relevant to Conservation Areas.

SE10 Protected Village Amenity Areas

HG10 The design and layout of residential schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape.

HG12 Extensions and alterations to dwellings should be in keeping with local character.

EM6 Small scale employment in villages.

SH6 Resistance to loss of shops in villages.

CS7 Utility companies to be urged to place pipes, fibres, wire and cables underground where this would not have unacceptable environmental impacts.

CS8 Location of telecommunications installations to minimise visual impact.

CS9 Protection of village pubs and recreational facilities.

EN1 Importance of maintaining character and distinctiveness.

EN4 Protection of the historic landscape, whether or not they are statutorily designated.

EN5 Retention of trees and hedges in new developments.

EN15 Protection, preservation and enhancement of known and suspected sites of archaeological importance.

EN16 Public access to archaeological sites and records.

EN17 Building preservation notices and spot listing of buildings of archaeological or historic interest to protect unlisted buildings.

EN18 Presumption against demolition of Listed Buildings.

EN19 Recording and salvage if consent for demolition is granted.

EN20 Unsympathetic extensions to Listed Buildings.

EN21 Preservation or salvage (including public record) of fabric or features of Listed Buildings where consent for extensions or alterations is granted.

EN22 Imposition of conditions to protect the fabric and character of buildings.

EN23 Preservation of the character of roofs of Listed Buildings, in particular long straw and gault clay roofs.

EN24 Use of planning powers to secure the sound repair of Listed Buildings.

EN25 Maintenance of register of 'buildings at risk'.

EN26 Considerations to be applied when considering the conversion of Listed Buildings to new uses.

EN27 Applications for planning permission and Listed Building consent will not be considered separately. Requirement for the consideration of Listed Building applications and planning applications, including the need to consider the full effects of proposals on the building and its setting.

EN28 Requirement to submit illustrative and technical material to allow the impact of proposals affecting a Listed Building, its curtilage and wider setting.

- EN30 Requirement for applications for planning permission in Conservation Areas to be accompanied by sufficient details to allow their impact to be assessed.
- EN31 High quality of design, planting and materials connected with landscaping of developments in Conservation Areas.
- EN32 Controls over consent for demolition of buildings in a Conservation Area.
- EN33 Salvage of materials and pictorial record if consent for demolition in a Conservation Area is granted.
- EN34 Retention of the character, materials, features and details of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas.
- EN35 Restrictions of permitted development rights to safeguard elements of the character of Conservation Areas.
- EN36 Control over external cladding which affect the character of Conservation Areas.
- EN37 Control over location and design of meter boxes on Listed Buildings.
- EN38 Need to retain traditional shopfronts and their details.
- EN39 Controls over design of advertisements and signs on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas.
- EN40 Controls over design of advertisements and outside Conservation Areas. Area of Special Control is in place.
- EN41 Coordination of planning permissions and consent for demolition or felling of trees in Conservation Areas.
- EN42 Promotion of enhancement schemes in Conservation Areas.
- EN43 Statutory undertakers and utility companies should consult and seek to agree works in Conservation Areas.

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