



BRUNTON CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

October 2006

Planning Services



Development Control & Conservation

Forward Planning & Transportation

Building Control & Property Management

SUMMARY

Brunton was first designated a Conservation Area in 1994 in recognition of its architectural and historic character. Its special quality is summarised in the following way.

Brunton is an attractive and well-maintained, rural hamlet set in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a classic small-scale settlement on the edge of the downland with a high proportion of historic buildings. It consists of Brunton House, Brunton Farm, a number of well-spaced cottages and converted agricultural buildings, and just a few modern buildings. There are only about 40 properties within the Conservation Area and the presence of trees, hedges and other features of soft landscaping are important in maintaining its timeless atmosphere.

Some conservation areas are in a state of relative economic decline, and suffer from lack of investment. More often, the qualities that make conservation areas appealing also help to encourage over-investment and pressure for new development. Brunton however is in a reasonable state of equilibrium where the long established rural character survives and significant change in the future is not anticipated.

In the words of the parish Design Statement :

"It is the wish of residents of Collingbourne Kingston that the boundaries of the three settlements of our village, as defined by the present built environment, are maintained and that we may continue to enjoy the rich natural surroundings in which it is situated..... We urge the local authorities to respect the desire of the Villagers in applying planning criteria so that a sense of homogeneity and local downland identity be re-established through the particular and appropriate use of building materials, architectural styles and inherited custom."

Front cover : Brunton House from the south west

BRUNTON CONSERVATION AREA

1. INTRODUCTION

Historic areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well-being and quality of life. Public support for the conservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest is well established.

The government requires local planning authorities to determine which parts of its area are areas of special architectural or historic interest worthy of designation as Conservation Areas.

The Brunton Conservation Area was first designated on 20 January 1994.

Government policy stresses the need for authorities to define and record the special interest, character and appearance of all designated areas in their districts, and the Kennet Local Plan refers to the Council's intention to prepare up-to-date Designation Statements for each of 69 Conservation Areas within the District.

Change is inevitable in most conservation areas; the challenge is to manage change in ways that maintain and, if possible, reinforce an area's special qualities. The character of a conservation area is rarely static and is susceptible to incremental, as well as dramatic, change. Some areas are in a state of relative economic decline, and suffer from lack of investment. More often, the qualities that make Conservation Areas appealing also help to encourage over-investment and pressure for new development. English Heritage recommends that positive management is essential if such pressure for change, which tends to alter the very character that made the areas attractive in the first place, is to be limited.

The Council's performance in designating Conservation Areas, defining the special interest that warrants designation through up-to-date character appraisals, and publishing management proposals is now the subject of a three-part "Best Value Performance Indicator".

The Council has made some progress in defining the architectural and historic character of areas, and a Conservation Area Statement for Collingbourne Kingston village, in the same parish as Brunton, was adopted in 2004.

The following character appraisal and management proposals for Brunton are intended to replace a short Statement that was adopted by the Council at the time of the original designation in 1994.

The purpose of this document is to identify and record those special qualities of Brunton that make up its architectural and historic character. This is important in providing a sound basis for planning policies and decisions on development, as well as for the formulation of proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of the area. Beyond their use as planning tools, appraisals also have a wider application as educational and informative documents for the local community.

The document is intended for all those with an interest in Brunton, or undertaking work on the buildings, landscape, roads or public spaces. It is also essential reading for anyone contemplating new development within the area. By drawing attention to the distinctive features of Brunton it is

intended that its character will be protected and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations.

The remainder of the document is divided into three further main sections – the character appraisal, future management proposals, and community involvement.




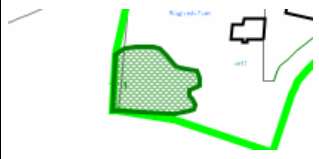



The survey work for the appraisal was carried out during the Spring of 2006. The character appraisal commences with a short description of the planning context and is followed by an analysis of Brunton's special architectural and historic interest. This represents the core of the appraisal.

The Conservation Area is complex and, although priority has been given to highlighting significant features, omission of items from the text or from illustrations should not be regarded as an indication that they are unimportant in terms of conserving the character of the area.

Photo 1 – Brunton in 1955



Key to Maps:

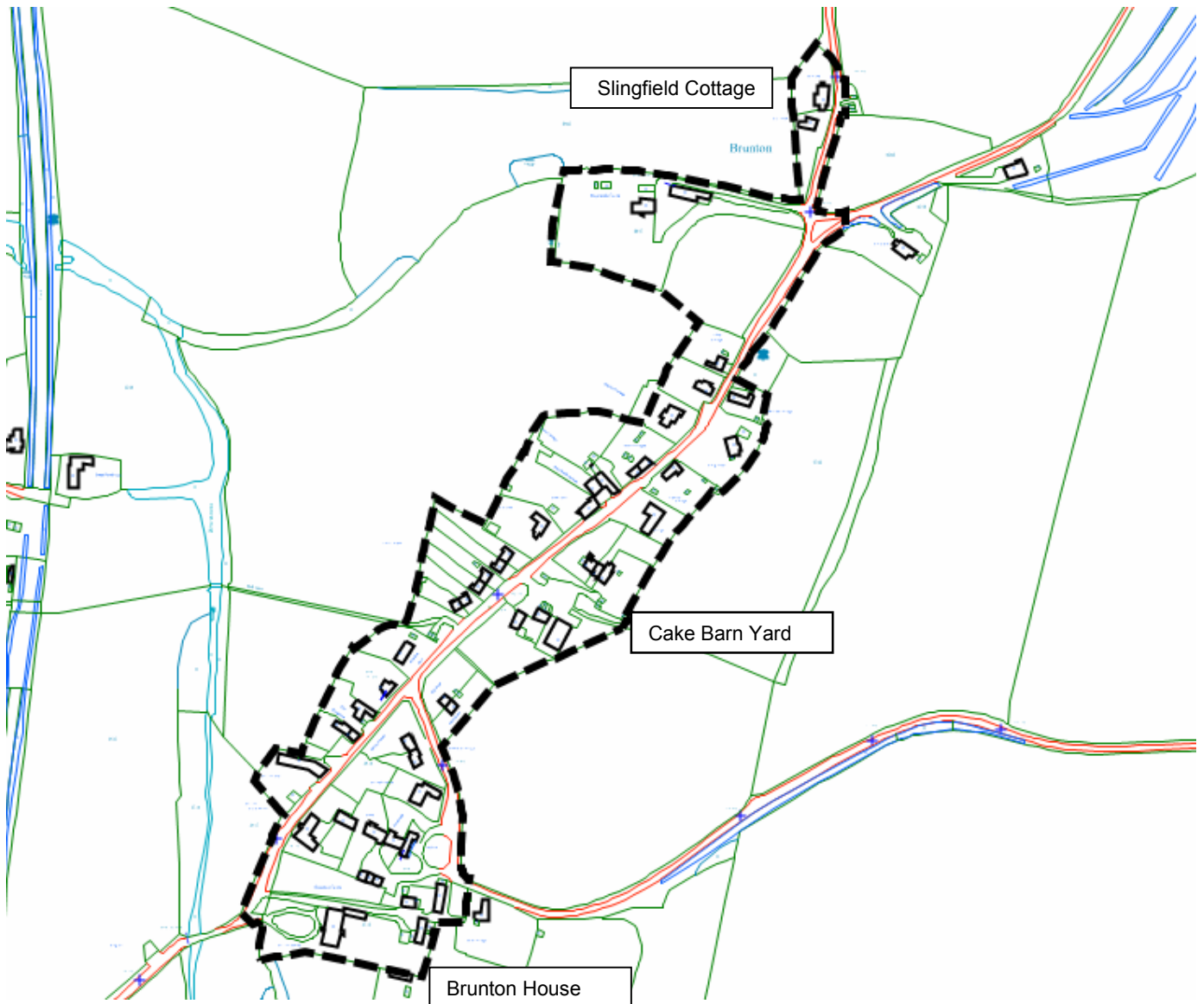
Conservation Area boundary		Groups of trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders	
Public Footpaths		Important trees and hedges	
Listed Buildings		Archaeological Alert Zone	
Unlisted buildings with townscape merit			

North is at the top of all maps

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2. BRUNTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Map 1 The Boundary of Brunton Conservation Area



2.1 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

2.1.1 Location and context

Brunton lies about a half a mile north east of Collingbourne Kingston village. The parish lies in a extensive area of countryside about 140m above sea level. Brunton itself lies at the junction of three large landscape zones. It is located on the chalk escarpment on the southern side of the Vale of Pewsey. However at this point the River Bourne breaks through the escarpment forming a north – south valley with Brunton located on the east side of the river. In truth the river is little more than a winterbourne at this point. The chalk downland rises steeply to the east of the settlement forming the edge of Chute Forest landscape character area whilst the chalk uplands of Salisbury Plain lie the south and west.

Along with many similar settlements Brunton's links with agriculture have probably never been weaker. Arable fields and pasture abound in the surrounding countryside but the farmyards now mainly lie outside the hamlet. Although it is comparatively remote from major service centres Brunton is carving out a new role for itself as a tranquil and attractive location to live. The Village Design Statement notes an increase of home ownership from 46% in 1984 to 79% in 2004, with over 50% of residents in the parish travelling over 20 miles for work or school – a place of choice rather than necessity.

A range of housing tenure – housing association, tied cottages and private dwellings – has ensured a balanced community that is not dominated by a particular age group or second home ownership.

Nearby Collingbourne Kingston is located on the main road from Marlborough to Salisbury, on the west side of the River Bourne. It has a pub and the parish church is located there. To a certain extent it is the mother village to Brunton. However, the number of households is comparable and together with nearby Aughton the three settlements form a triumvirate of communities enjoying similar status.

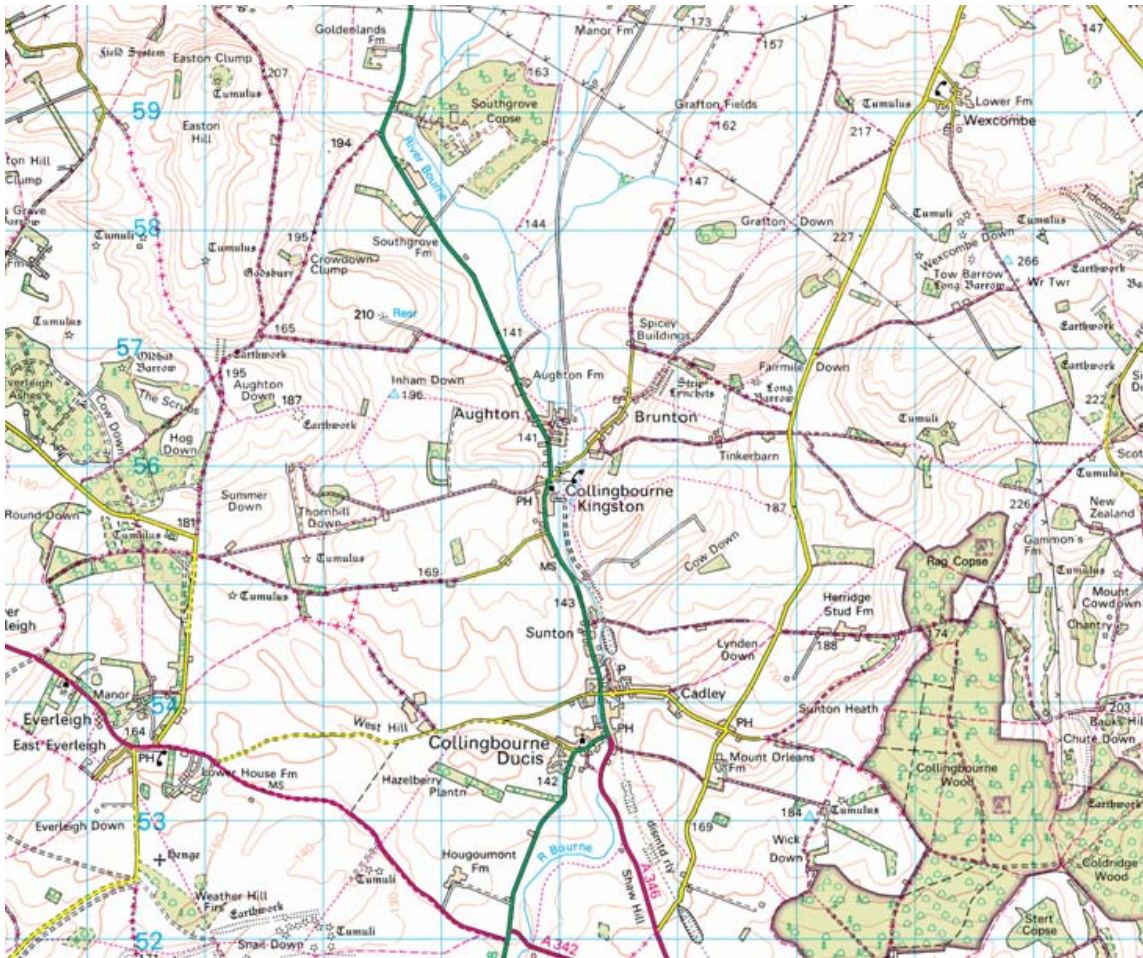
The landscape setting is an important part of the character of the Conservation Area. There are ever-present views of surrounding hills and downland are evident from the rear of most properties, and glimpses of the landscape from the village lane contribute significantly to the atmosphere of the place.

2.1.2 The boundary

The Conservation Area takes in almost the whole of the settlement with exception of one or two comparatively modern, outlying buildings. The boundary essentially follows the rear property boundaries on either side of the street. The boundary is closely drawn and there are no 'buffer zones' beyond the core of the hamlet. However, the surrounding areas of landscape are largely in agricultural use and are unlikely to be subject to development pressures.

Apart from the conversion of former agricultural buildings near Brunton Farmhouse there has been little significant change since the date of the original designation and it is considered the current boundary of the Conservation Area is appropriately drawn.

Map 2. The setting of Brunton in a rural hinterland



A small historic park belonging to Brunton House extended beyond the Conservation Area boundary to the south of the hamlet. However, this part of the property is separated by a ha-ha and now largely consists of grassland. Arguably properties adjacent the Area at Lynchetts, Greenlands, and Jacks could be included but given the nature of conservation area controls – essentially over demolition, the design of new development, and tree works – an extension to the boundary is not considered to be justified.

2.1.3 General character and plan form

Brunton is a linear settlement essentially located along on a lane running diagonally up from the bottom of the valley. The lane runs obliquely across the contours with the older buildings mainly located at the upper end. Slingfield Cottage (previously Slough Cottage) and Fair View however lie just over the crest of a ridge and are separated visually from most of the settlement.

The general layout is of widely spaced buildings mainly sited to face the lane. Although a smattering are orientated at right angles buildings have a clear relationship with the lane. This is particularly noticeable on the west side of the lane where there is no development in depth. There are no tall

buildings or structures and, other than Brunton House, there are no landmark structures. The overall character is mainly rural or rustic.

Brunton is in effect on a cul-de-sac and vehicular traffic is not a major problem. The lane has a quiet, rural atmosphere and for much of its length it is sunken, with soft verges and grassy banks. Some of the banks are topped by hedgerows which also contribute to the informal and bucolic nature of the lane. The absence of formal kerb lines and separate footways is also a key factor in defining the special character of the public realm.

The great majority of buildings are now in residential use and generally follow the line of the unclassified road. The 20th century semi-detached houses at South View provide something of a contrast with the remainder of the settlement but the absence of estate type development, or continuously built-up frontages, maintains an unpretentious character. The comparatively large spaces and gardens around most houses are as important as the buildings in defining the quality.

Photo 2. The lane – looking north east.



Apart from the architecture, the distinctiveness of Brunton is characterised by solitude and relative isolation. A walk through the hamlet during the colder months is characterized by occasional whiffs of wood smoke. There is no significant intrusion from traffic or other noise, apart from the occasional squawk of the rooks (no doubt, inhabitants of The Rookery wood just to the east of Brunton House).

2.1.4 The origins and historic development of the area

The name Brunton is thought to be a reduction of burh-hamtun “the homestead by the fortification”. Brunton developed as one of four tithings in Collingbourne Kingston (apart from Kingston and Aughton referred to above, the parish also included Sunton until 1934). Unlike the others Brunton did

not fall into the hands of Hyde Abbey at Winchester. It was owned by the Valence family in the 13th and 14th centuries and was identifiable as Collingbourne Valence in some early documents.

Both Brunton and Aughton appear to have suffered de-population during the medieval period. The physical extent of Brunton was reduced and buildings were probably cleared from the upper end of the settlement. Only Waglands Farm survives of buildings that once stood on both sides of the lane leading down to Aughton. Earthworks, and buried deposits, contribute directly to the sense of history evident in the present day-area. They also represent a potentially rich resource for future research, interpretation and education.

The hamlet developed as part of the Savernake Estate and fortunes picked up during the 17th and 18th centuries with the expansion of agriculture and a substantial proportion of buildings found to today originated in this period. To the south of the Conservation Area, the bridge linking with the outside world was not built until 1810 until which time a track following the stream bed may have served as the link to Kingston. The north-south route through the parish was improved in 1831 when the (A338) was turnpiked leaving Brunton on a quiet, no through road.

Photo 3 - The bridge over the winterbourne.



The Swindon, Marlborough and Andover Railway Company opened a railway line connecting Andover to Grafton via Brunton in 1882. This was soon amalgamated into the Midland and South-Western Junction Railway to facilitate links south to Southampton and north to the Cheltenham and beyond. A halt station was added near the bridge near Brunton to serve the parish in 1932. This remained open until the line closed for passengers in 1961. The railway followed the valley floor between Aughton and Brunton and the route of its line is still apparent today. Its presence serves to increase the impression of detachment felt at Brunton.

The Savernake Estate began to break up in the 1920s but whilst a range of new owners took responsibility for Brunton agriculture continued as the dominant activity.

Photo 4 - Undated image of the former railway halt



During the latter half of the 20th century, however, the proportion of residents involved in agriculture declined. In the past farm buildings would, no doubt, have been more commonplace than today. However, small traditional farm buildings survive at a small yard at the mid point in the lane. Also, former agricultural buildings can be found in the ensemble of converted buildings at Brunton Farm. This includes a former timber framed barn, and a rare example of a 5-bay combined granary and cart shed (now known as 'Swallow'). A further barn and staddle stone granary remains nearby.

Photo 5 - The former cart shed and first floor granary.



Apart from farm buildings half way down the lane there are no working farms remaining in the Conservation Area.

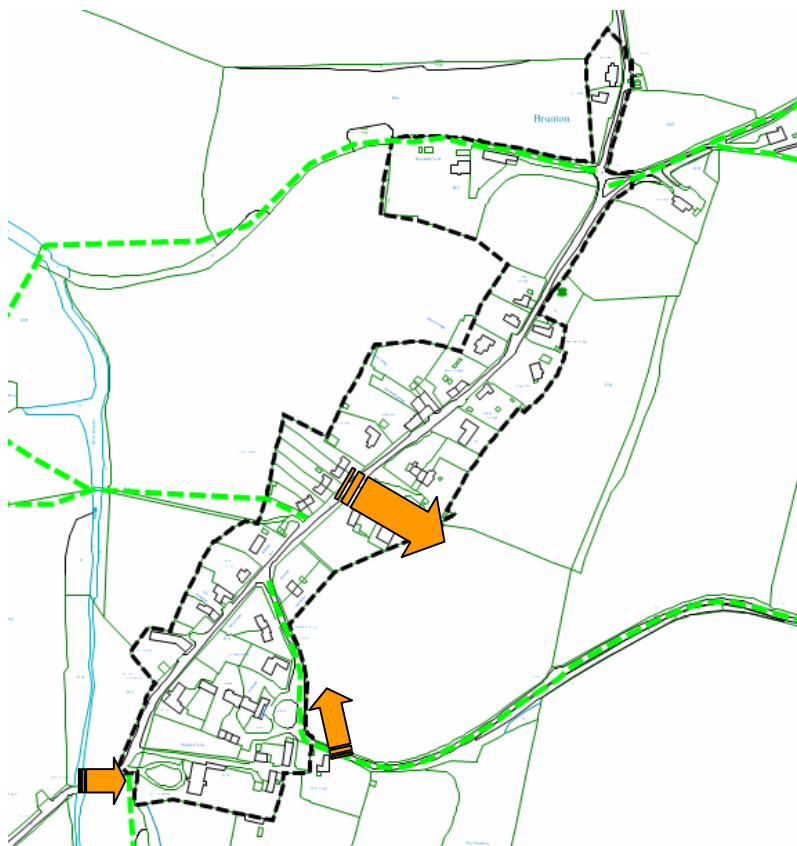
2.1.5 Key views and vistas

The panorama eastwards from the village street – from near the remaining farm buildings at Cake Barn Yard - across the fields towards the downs and The Rookery is particularly attractive. So too the return view from the track leading up to Tinkerbarn. Here the landscape of the North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty penetrates into the village street.

Photo 6. Brunton from the south east.



Another key view point is from the bridge over the bourne looking east towards Brunton House. This is a landmark building located at the entrance to the settlement. This house was originally erected for Wm Vince in 1697 and its 7-bay façade of the property dominates lower end of the lane. The main view points are shown on Map 3.



Map 3. Key vistas and public footpaths

Photo 7 - The west facing façade of Brunton House.



2.1.6 Architectural Character

Most of the buildings in the conservation area, and their means of enclosure, help to shape its character in a positive way.

The built environment at Brunton is low rise. There are no structures greater than two stories in height. The cottage shapes the traditional and characteristic form of dwellinghouse. At Brunton a typical cottage has two stories but with a low eaves line, usually little more than 3.5m high. The ceilings of first floor accommodation are located in the attic space. The diminutive proportions of the cottages are accentuated by end, lean-to outshuts. These have the roof coverings, usually wheat thatch, swept over and down close to the ground. Roofs are normally simple, and dormers windows and other features (save chimney stacks), are not found typically.

The front to back span of buildings is also comparatively small, normally about 5m. Even the construction of larger traditional buildings is constrained by the limitations of available timber. Brunton House has the status of a manor house with a superficially large scale, but even here it is formed from a number of components each with a narrow span.

Most dwellings either face the lane, or are set at right angles with front door facing south.

The dominant architectural character is vernacular, based on the prevalent local building materials. At the lower end of the lane however Brunton House, and to a lesser extent Brunton Farmhouse, demonstrate the influence of national (and international) architectural styles upon the hamlet.

Photo 8 - a Dutch gable at Brunton Farmhouse.



Seven properties are listed as having national architectural or historic importance. These are shown on map 4. The list is now almost twenty years old and a number of additional buildings are close to meeting current day criteria for inclusion on the statutory list. In addition there are a number of other buildings be identified that make positive contributions to the character of the conservation area. In total twenty five structures or properties of particular townscape merit have been noted. These are also shown Map 4 and in Appendix 1. A typical case is Silver Cottage which is a good example of a well maintained property constructed of traditional materials that makes a positive contribution to the appearance of Brunton.

Photo 9 - Silver Cottage.



Map 4. Listed buildings and unlisted buildings with townscape merit.

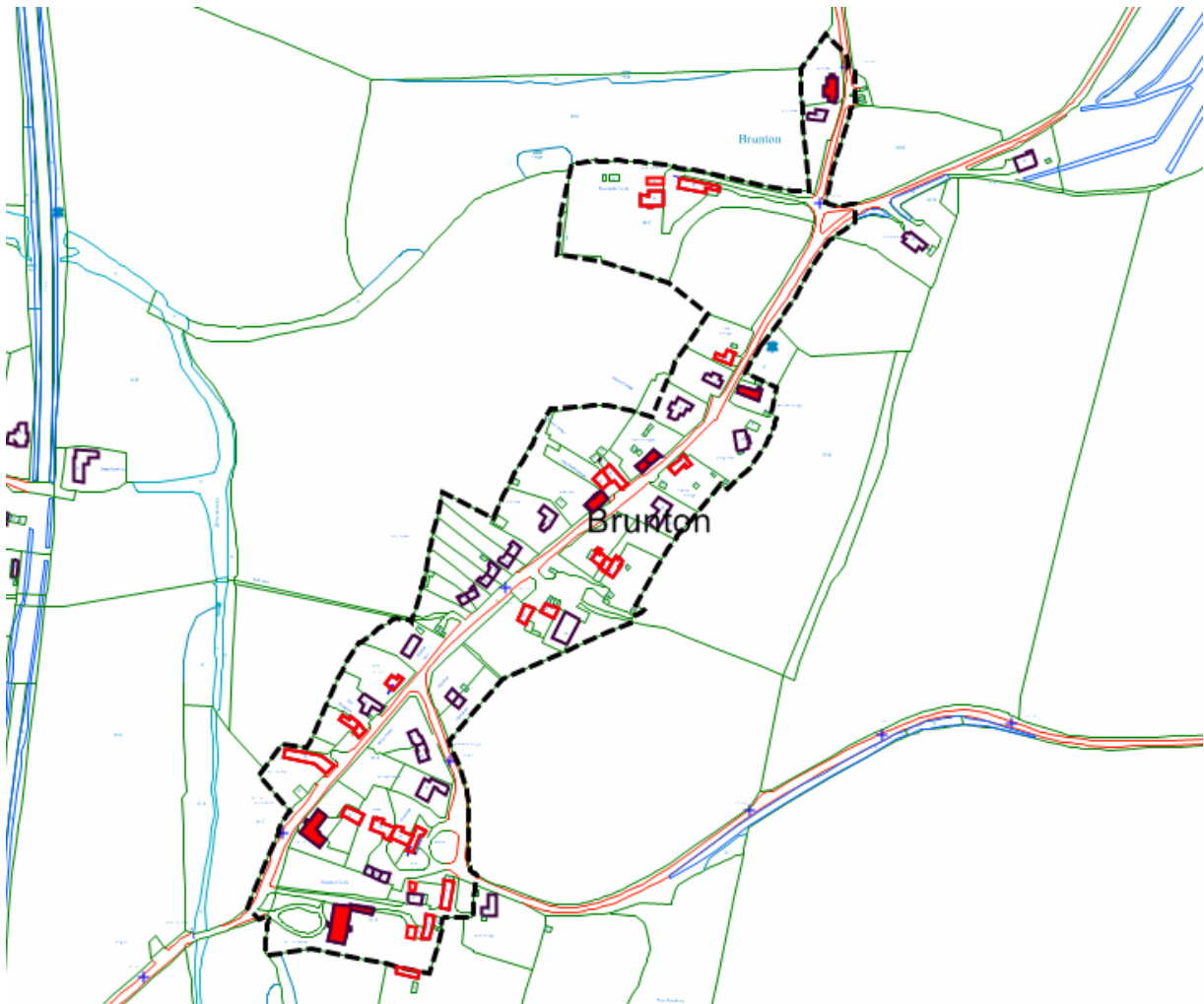


Photo 10. May's Cottage and Nellie's Cottage – one of the listed timber framed buildings.



The typical local characteristics of buildings are vernacular – that is to say in common with many buildings erected before 1900 they were built according to local traditions. Timber framing, and thatched roofs dominate. The upper end of the village has five listed thatched buildings plus at least two other thatched buildings.

Architectural ornamentation is usually simple; plank doors and flush fitting casement windows are important characteristics. The agricultural and former agricultural buildings are also important reminders of the origins and *raison d'être* for Brunton.

The underlying geology of the locality is an important determinant of the essential character of the settlement. The surrounding chalk downs do not supply plentiful supplies of high quality building stone, and the good natural drainage historically limited the availability of water to support a big population or mill power. However, the downs have been suitable for the growing of cereals, and wheat straw has evolved as the main product for roofing. The chalk rock was also used to produce cob for walling – as at Slingfield Cottage - and thin layers of overlying clay contains flints which can produce a very durable, if hard to work, walling material. From the 17th century the overlying clay was also used for the manufacture of handmade bricks and plain tiles which also became prevalent building materials at Brunton. The presence of pale buff brickwork at Brunton is a reminder of the influence of the Savernake Estate during the 19th century, during which some buildings, for example Bakery and Rose-Bush Cottages, were re-roofed with Welsh slates.

Photo 11 - Flint nodules and uncoursed bricks at 26 Brunton.

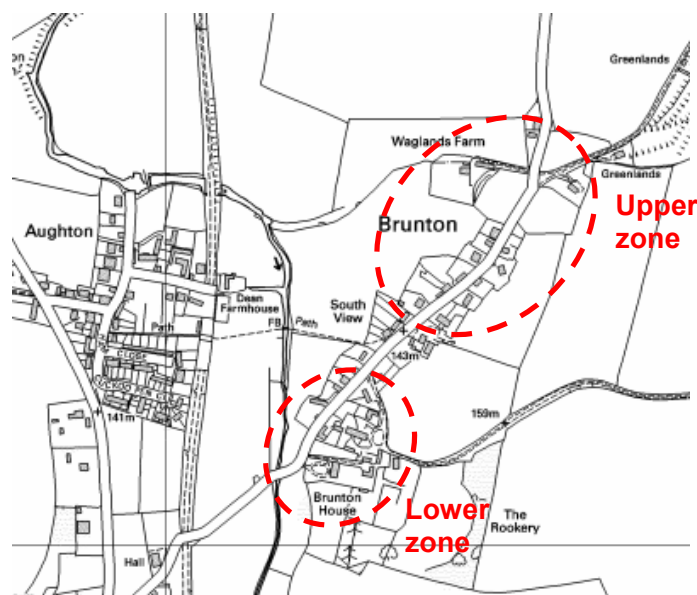


2.1.7 Identification of character zones

By linking historical development with the physical relationships found within the hamlet two main character sub-zones are identifiable. The upper end of the lane is characterised by the sunken lanes

and low cottages, several of which have thatched roofs. This zone represents the early core of the settlement where some buildings have been removed and others replaced. At the lower end, the lane is again sunken for much of its length but buildings are less vernacular in character. Brunton House and Brunton Farmhouse are consciously designed, and even the various original agricultural buildings appeared to have been laid out to pattern-book formats. The former farm buildings are set in an enclosed yard. Between the two, in the central area, the lane is less sunken and the character is more open. On the east side of the lane there is a substantial open space, interrupted only by agricultural buildings. As noted above, the wider landscape makes its way into settlement at this point whilst on the west side of the lane the gap was closed by development in the 1920s and 30s but here the boundary hedges are intermittent creating a less enclosed atmosphere.

Map 5. The main character zones



2.1.8 The contribution made by greenery, and green spaces

Due to the intensive nature of the agriculture surrounding Brunton, and the long term removal of hedges and hedgerow trees, the landscape around Brunton has become degraded over the years.

From outside, the settlement has a well-wooded appearance in a landscape where tree cover is relatively sparse, apart from along the river course, and this is enhanced by its relative isolation from Aughton and Collingbourne Kingston.

Within the settlement domestic gardens make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The trees at Brunton House, predominantly lime, sycamore and beech, but with horse chestnut in the rear garden, are a dominant feature when entering Brunton and contrast sharply with the wet pastures to the west. The downland to the rear of Brunton House is, at this point, well treed, whereas the majority of Brunton has a backdrop of steep pastures or arable land.

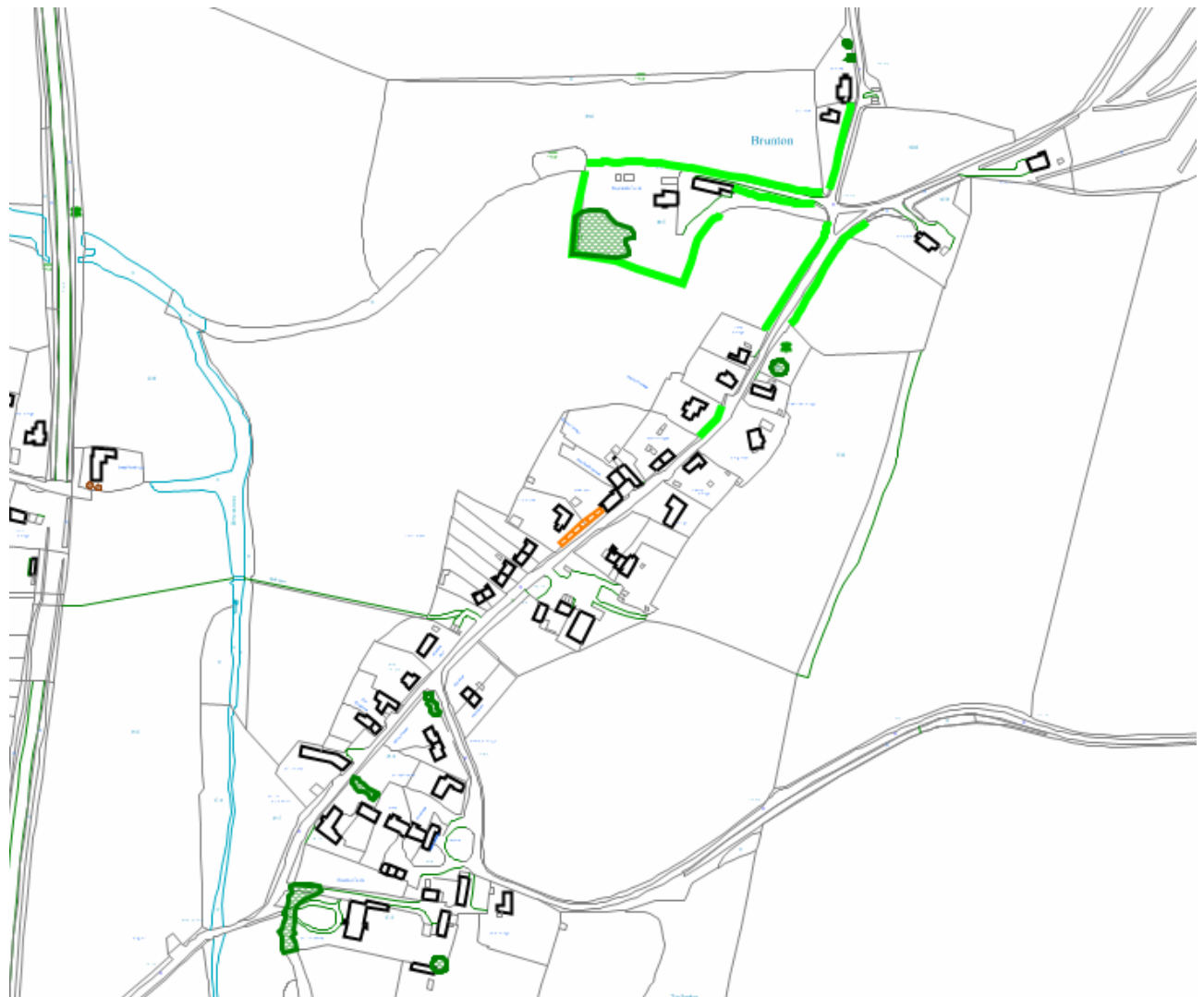
The lane through Brunton is generally sunken below the residential properties on either side and exhibits a mixture of boundary treatments including: walls, fences, trees and hedges. Of particular significance are the yew, sycamore and cherry at Brunton Farm House; the TPO yew trees fronting Maples and Downsvie (see Map 6); the box hedging at Garden Cottage, and the mature native hedging, which often contains large number of semi-mature ash and hornbeam trees, at the northern end of the lane before its junction, where it borders open fields.

Also towards the northern end of the Conservation Area the mature hedges and trees of the garden of Waglands Farm, which still retains the farm office, are of visual significance, as are the small trees on the road island at the minor road and byway junction.

Where the lane dips to the north hedges are dominant on the western side, and a large willow and mature sycamore in the grounds of Slingfield Cottage are of importance. To the east open views are characteristic, albeit over a group of unsightly garages just outside the Conservation Area.

Generally trees, boundary hedges and street greenery are vital elements. Similarly the steep verges and banks that characterise the lane for most of its length are important components. The absence of formalised footways and kerbs adds to the bucolic character of the settlement.

Map 6. Important trees and hedges



2.1.9 General condition

Due to its attractive rural location the settlement is relatively prosperous. The Collingbourne ward enjoys low (2%) unemployment rates and above average property values. Accordingly the physical condition of its historic buildings and other heritage assets is good. At the present time there are no buildings at risk, or in an obvious serious state of disrepair.

The condition of the surface of the lane also appears to be in good order.

2.1.10 The extent of intrusion or damage,

There are few negative factors. At the time of the original Designation Statement it was noted that conversion of the small barn opposite Brunton Farmhouse had ceased. Since that time the work, including a large amount of reconstruction, has been completed. The conversion of the farmyard buildings to the rear of the Farmhouse, together with the infilling of a new house, has also taken place.

The overhead wirescape of electricity and telegraph wires, however, detracts from the special character of the area at certain points along the lane.

Photo 12. Brunton Barn – converted since the designation of the Conservation Area.



2.1.11 Problems, pressures and capacity for change

In considering the future of the Conservation Area it is important to make an assessment of significance, and some analysis of how that significance is vulnerable to change. The character of Brunton as a traditional downland village still shines through but a small number of 20th century dwellings fail to harmonise with their surroundings. Minor alterations to these buildings are generally outside planning control and there has been an incremental loss of character.

Research of the listed buildings also reveals that at the time of listing five were thatched in the traditional long straw style whereas today each has been spar coated by the combed wheat method. Although the materials used are essentially similar there has been a loss of historic character. These works should have obtained listed building consent and are unusual in that the wider trend is towards more thatching in Long Straw.

National trends also suggest the future of remaining traditional agricultural buildings may be in some jeopardy. Obviously using them for their original purpose is likely to offer the best chance of retaining character. If this proves impossible then it will be particularly important to retain the buildings at Cake Barn Yard and to seek sympathetic new uses. Although the hamlet is reasonably well populated during daylight hours there is scope, and potential benefit, if any new uses contributed to daytime vitality. Planning permission has been granted for light industrial or office uses. Implementation may provide an opportunity to clear or improve the adjacent sectional garages, and at the time of writing works have just commenced.

Having regards to general planning policy there are unlikely to be any major changes to the Conservation Area in the foreseeable future but where in-filling, or replacement of non-descript existing buildings, is under consideration it will be important to ensure that designs have regard to their historic and physical contexts.

2.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The main sources of information used in the preparation of the appraisal :

Victory County History – Vol XVI

Marlborough and Eastern Wiltshire – John Chandler, Hobnob Press ISBN 0-946418-07-1

Midland & South Western Junction Railway – David Bartholemew, Wild Swan Publications ISBN 0 906867 08 8

Collingbourne Kingston Design Statement (2004)

Francis Frith Collection – old photographs can be ordered through www.francisfrith.com

The advice of Mr C Howard and Mr M Coker of Collingbourne Kingston Parish Council

Photo 13. 2006 - minor changes have occurred during the past 51 years!



APPENDIX 1 TO BRUNTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Locally important 'unlisted' buildings

3 no. outbuildings rear of Brunton House
Weatherboarded barn near Brunton House Cottage
Former granary at Brunton House Cottage
Dove
Corncrake
Swallow
Outbuilding rear of Brunton Farmhouse
Brunton Barn
No.s 26 and 27
No. 31
2 no. brick farm buildings opposite South View
No.s 32a, 32 and 33
Rose-Bush Cottage
Bakery Cottage
Yeoman Cottage
Silver Cottage
Waglands Farm
2 no. outbuildings at Waglands Farm

The location of these buildings is shown on Map 4

3. BRUNTON CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

3.1 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

For the designation of a Conservation Area to be effective it is important that consistent judgements are made in determining its special qualities and local distinctiveness, as well as its value to the local community. Such judgements should be based on a thorough understanding of the area in its wider historic and physical context.

The character appraisal should be regarded as the first step in a dynamic process, the aim of which is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the designated area - and to provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future through the development of management proposals.

Now that the appraisal has been drafted, proposals for the future management of the area will need to be developed. Logically these will take the form of a mid- to long-term strategy for preserving and enhancing the conservation area, addressing any issues arising from the appraisal and identifying any further or detailed work needed for their implementation.

The strategy needs to be realistic, bearing in mind the staff and financial resources likely to be available. At the present time the Council has no dedicated funds for grant aiding building repairs or enhancement work, although minor grants may be available for some tree planting schemes. Only a 'light touch' approach can be justified for most of the rural Conservation Areas within the District.

3.2 THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The procedures governing the protection of listed buildings are widely understood and mainly focus on the protection of individual structures. Conservation Area designation, however, is the main instrument to give effect to conservation policies for a particular *neighbourhood or settlement*. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of most buildings, and tree felling / surgery. The scale of extensions that may be added to existing dwellings as "permitted development" is also limited. Designation has some resource implications for the local authority and the owners and occupiers of property within the area, because of increased statutory controls and particular requirements for the repair or alteration of existing, and construction of new, buildings. For many owners, however, these implications may be outweighed by the cachet of designation, and the tendency of controls aimed at maintaining the character of the area to sustain, or enhance, the value of property within it. Designation also provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area's special interest.

The general planning policy for Brunton is currently set out in the Kennet Local Plan 2011. Brunton is defined (Chapter 2) as a settlement with limited facilities. Here new housing development will be restricted to infilling, the replacement of existing dwellings, or the re-use of existing buildings or the redevelopment of existing buildings provided that the development :

- a) is within the existing built up area of the village;
- b) does not consolidate an existing sporadic, loose knit area of development; and
- c) the development is in harmony with the village in terms of its scale and character.

The Local Plan also sets out (Chapter 6) a range of generic policies relating to new development proposals within Conservation Areas. Brunton lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Natural Resources (Chapter 5) policies wash over the whole area. The Landscape Conservation Strategy is also relevant as supplementary planning guidance.

It should also be noted that earlier proposals to provide a by-pass road for the Collingbournes has been dropped by the highway authorities. Thus, from the point of view of Brunton, a potential threat to historic character has faded. Also, there are no planned traffic management schemes affecting the Conservation Area.

The government has recently introduced a new kind of planning system in which the focus is on flexibility, sustainability, and the use of evidence to underpin the core strategies. Local planning authorities will in future produce local development frameworks consisting of a portfolio of local development documents. It is unlikely that the fundamental planning policy for Brunton will change significantly under the new regime.

It is probable that a new core strategy will be supported by supplementary planning documents (SPD) giving greater specific guidance, for example on development control matters relating to Conservation Areas. The legislation relating to Conservation Areas runs parallel with general planning legislation and there will be a need to ensure that appropriate linkages are in place. It is anticipated that this will be achieved by new Heritage SPD which will in turn be supported by adopted and published character appraisals and management proposals for individual Conservation Areas. This is where this document fits in.

The intention is that a clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of the area, on which applications for planning permission can be considered.

A local authority's reasoning for designating a conservation area, as set out in a formal character appraisal published in support of a supplementary planning document, will be taken into account by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Planning Inspectorate in considering related planning appeals.

3.3 GENERAL APPROACH OF THE COUNCIL TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

In addition to the usual need to obtain planning permission for most forms of new development there is a requirement for applications to be made for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of unlisted buildings, and notifications to be submitted for the felling or lopping of trees need to be notified.

In exercising its planning powers, the Council has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

For most proposals in the Conservation Area the Council will require detailed plans and drawings of new development, including elevations which show the proposed development in its setting, before considering a planning application.

The Council will advertise all applications for planning permission for development that would affect the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

3.4 GENERAL APPROACH OF THE COUNCIL TOWARDS CONSERVATION AREAS

The Council's general planning policies towards development is set out in Policies HH4 (Historic Landscapes), HH5 (Development in Conservation Areas), and HH6 (Demolition in Conservation Areas).

It is also essential that a flexible approach is taken to the requirements of the Building Regulations and Fire Precautions Act and that rigorous application of general planning and highway policies should be relaxed where they would be in conflict with the preservation or enhancement of the area's character or appearance.

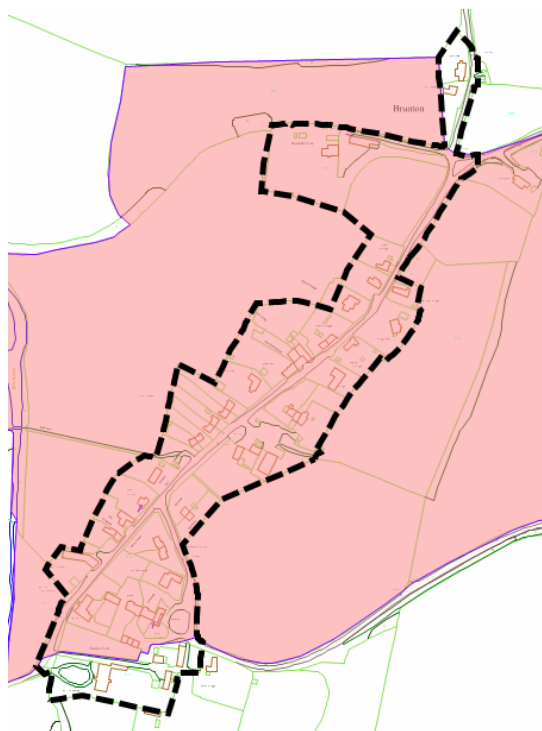
3.5 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AT BRUNTON

Applications for planning permission, conservation area consent, and tree works will be assessed with reference to the Conservation Area Appraisal. *There will be a presumption in favour of conserving key unlisted buildings, trees and hedges and views that have been identified.*

Following on from the above, at Brunton the preferred policy of conservation will lie with the preservation of the established 'status quo' rather than specific proposals for change. Where proposals for change occur the intention is to provide a framework to allow this to be carefully considered and managed in a positive way to reinforce the existing character and appearance of the area.

3.5.1 Archaeology

As noted in the appraisal there are signs of earlier clearances. The County Archaeology Service, in conjunction with the Council, has prepared archaeological zone maps for the district. These zones have been established following an analytical procedure for identifying and scoring archaeological sites and landscapes. Virtually the whole of Brunton (except small areas at the north and south ends - see Map 6) and surrounding countryside is included within an archaeological alert zone. This indicates a high degree of archaeological potential and the Council will take archaeological advice on schemes involving below ground works. Preliminary consultation with the Archaeology Service is therefore recommended for prospective developers within the zone.



Map 7 Archaeological Alert Zone

3.5.2 Infilling and Redevelopment

At Brunton large-scale, comprehensive or 'estate' forms of development is unlikely to be acceptable. New building development proposals are therefore likely to be in the form of individual proposals for infilling or replacement buildings. The appraisal noted that a small number of properties are not in harmony with the historic and physical context of the Conservation Area. The Council therefore encourages the sympathetic redevelopment of those sites which currently detract from the character or appearance of the area. Where redevelopment does take place it will be important to maintain generous spacing between building blocks, and to avoid destroying the verges, banks and hedges fronting onto the lane.

3.5.3 Design of New Buildings in the Conservation Area

Although the Village Design Statement did not go into detail in respect of design issues it strongly advocated a policy towards new development which over a period of time would bring some harmonious local identity to the parish through the use of material, scale and proportion of recognisable local or regional appearance and vernacular architectural style.

New development in the conservation area should aspire to a quality of design and execution, related to its context, which may be valued in the future. This in itself does not imply or preclude working in traditional or new ways, but will normally involve respecting values established through assessment of the significance of the area. The aim of design guidance therefore is to encourage new development that complements the established grain or settlement pattern, whilst representing the time in which it is built and the culture it accommodates. When considering proposals for new development, the local planning authority's principal concern will be the appropriateness of the overall mass or volume of the building, its scale (the expression of size indicated by the windows, doors, floor/ceiling heights, and other identifiable units), and its relationship to its context - whether it sits comfortably on its site. A new building should be in harmony with, or complementary to, its neighbours. The footprint of new buildings should fit into the existing building pattern or grain. The use of materials generally matching in appearance or complementary to those that are historically dominant in the area is important, as is ensuring that materials, detailing and finishes are all of high quality. Within these criteria, new development should aim to achieve creative design solutions, whether contemporary or traditional in style.

Photo 14. Burfield House- a "sympathetically considered" ¶ recent addition built of pale brickwork that fits comfortably into the lower part of Brunton. ¶ Village Design Statement



In designing proposals owners and their architects are therefore advised to look carefully how their proposal will fit into its physical and historic context. Where construction work is involved particular care should be taken in the choice of building materials.

The palette of established materials at Brunton include :

Roof coverings - Wheat thatch, plain clay tiles

Walling - Timber framing, flint, chalk cob, pale and brown soft brickwork

Photo 15 – a new cottage built with flint and long straw thatch at nearby Collingbourne Ducis that could also provide a model for harmonious design at the upper end of Brunton.



3.5.4 Extensions

Relatively small proposals can cumulatively alter the character of the Conservation Area. It is important therefore that extensions to buildings do not dominate the host building. Generic advice on the considerations to be taken into account in designing an extension is set out in a *Residential Extension Design Guide*. This is available free of charge from the Planning Services Unit at Kennet District Council.

3.5.5 Traditional Farm Buildings

The appraisal noted the important contribution of farm buildings such as the barn near Brunton House Cottage, and the simple brick structures opposite South View. The Council has generic advice on the maintenance of this endangered category of buildings which might prove useful and will therefore

send copies of the literature to the relevant owners. The *Historic Farm Buildings* advice leaflet is also available on-line in the Conservation pages of www.kennet.gov.uk.

As no other building have been noted as being at risk from decay action under the Urgent Works or Repairs Notices procedures is not considered to be necessary.

3.5.6 Rethatching

An unfortunate loss of authentic historic character to a number of historic thatched roofs has been noted. The Council has published Supplementary Planning Guidance on *Rethatching* which is available on-line in the Conservation pages of www.kennet.gov.uk. This Guidance is due to be updated following public consultation during 2006 and the Council will send copies of the revised guidance when available to the relevant owners.

3.5.7 Additional Controls

In certain circumstances, the Council can apply additional controls to bring minor developments under restraint. This is particularly useful in cases of terraced development where thoughtless alterations can disrupt the harmony of adjacent properties. However, this has resource implications, is difficult to manage, and restricts the usual freedoms for house owners. In view of the individual nature of most properties at Brunton, and the above factors, it is considered that additional planning controls are not warranted. Similarly, additional control in respect of outdoor advertisements is not considered to be necessary at this location.

3.5.8 Care with Maintenance and Minor Alterations

Listed buildings are already subject to additional controls, but in order to maintain the character of the Conservation Area the Council will also encourage the owners of unlisted properties to take with maintenance and minor alterations. In particular the Council encourages the repair rather than replacement of original features. Where replacement of key architectural features including windows and doors is unavoidable then care should be taken to accurately copy original styles and details.

Similarly the Council encourages the long term maintenance of trees, shrubs and hedges identified in the appraisal. The planting of non-indigenous evergreen hedges and trees or close-boarded fencing in prominent positions is however discouraged.

3.5.9 Enhancement of the Public Realm

Where resources are limited, balances will obviously need to be struck and priority given to key issues. There are only limited problems at Brunton. The biggest issue noted in the appraisal was the adverse visual impact of overhead telegraph and electricity wires in some parts of the hamlet. The Council is unable to make a commitment to deal with this issue directly but would encourage landowners to seek careful routing, preferably underground, when issuing wayleaves to public utility companies. Also attention is drawn to external sources of funding, such the Local Heritage Initiative, which are potentially available for community-led projects. This has the potential to provide funding for the implementation of ideas that emerge beyond the scope of the normal planning system.

3.5.10 Landscape Enhancement

Due to the intensive nature of the agriculture surrounding Brunton, and the long term removal of hedges and hedgerow trees the landscape around Brunton has become degraded over the years.

and its restoration is a Council priority. Much work has been done in the past few years to reinstate hedges, field margins, ponds and trees in the area, particularly on land belonging to Waglands Farm. Throughout the Conservation Area the strengthening of the boundaries between the settlement and the countryside is an enhancement which would be extremely beneficial. This work accords with the landscape enhancement recommendations of the Council's Landscape Conservation Strategy and discretionary grant aid may be available for suitable projects.

The central part of Brunton is very open with the ex-local authority housing to the west providing a visually dominant but incongruous development form in the centre of the settlement. The softening of the impact of the buildings on here, and the garage forecourt opposite side, through new planting to provide a context for the buildings, and a green linkage through the settlement would also be desirable.

4. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND REVIEW

4.1 CONSULTATIONS

Involving the community and raising public awareness is an integral part of the appraisal process. Publicity provides an opportunity to test and consolidate public support. However, with limited resources and 69 Conservation Areas (at the time of writing) within its remit, the Council has to strike a balance. Lengthy public participation can be very expensive and create delays in the adoption of appropriate controls, policies and guidance. The Council's priority is the provision of these elements within a short timescale. In view of the magnitude of the overall project, and the relatively short period for completion, the Council adopted the following model.

Initial notification of the Conservation Area review was sent to community representatives (including the Collingbourne Kingston Parish Council), statutory organisations, and relevant amenity groups with an offer to attend a meeting if desired. A discussion was held with representatives of the Parish Council on 26th May 2006.

Copies of a Draft Appraisal and Management Proposals document were sent to the same consultees together with a feedback form on 13th June. A copy of the Draft document has also been placed on the Council's publicly accessible web site, a press release issued, and a poster placed on the Brunton notice board. Opinions were particularly canvassed on whether the boundary still adequately reflected the area of special interest, whether the appraisal contains any inaccuracies or omissions in respect of the character of the historic environment, and whether the management proposals are suitable and appropriate for the conservation of Brunton. The Consultative Draft was placed on deposit for six weeks.

A number of written responses were received. These are summarised in a separate document available upon request from the Council. Although a number adjustments have been made to the Consultative Draft as a result of the responses it was not considered that any amendments were of major or strategic importance and the revisions were not re-advertised.

4.2 ADOPTION

The revised document was finally formally adopted on 5th October 2006 by the Planning Policy Executive Committee on behalf of the District Council as its strategy for the Brunton Conservation Area. The document is intended to particularly provide additional information on the interpretation and implementation of policies and proposals contained in the Development Plan. The character appraisal in particular will form an important role as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, and for the purposes of Development Control.

The final document has been published and distributed to consultees, and placed permanently on the Council's web site. It is also being made available for viewing on the Parish Council's web page. Hard copies of the document may also be purchased from the address given below.

4.3 IMPLEMENTATION

The need for reference to the Character Appraisal will be on-going. The implementation of the management strategy, however, requires a number of one-off positive actions which the Council will undertake at the earliest opportunity commencing from October 2006. The adoption of the document is thus not intended to be the end of the story. In addition to its use in exercising its planning functions the Council will also try to influence other agencies in the protection of the Area.

4.4 REVIEW

Now that Appraisal and Management Plan has been adopted there will be a need to keep it up to date and relevant. The Council will therefore aim to ensure that 75% of all Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans have been reviewed within the past five years.

This booklet is one in a series of Conservation Statements, and Appraisals and Managements Plans, and other general policy, technical and information leaflets produced by the Conservation Team at Kennet District Council. For an up to date list, please contact :

The Conservation Section. Planning Services, Kennet District Council, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes,
SN10 2AT

Tel : 01380 724911

Email : conserve@kennet.gov.uk

www.kennet.gov.uk

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