

Great Houghton Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan



March 2018



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1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

A conservation area is “*an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*” (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 Section 69.

The Civic Amenities Act of 1967 introduced the concept of conservation areas and there are now 21 designated conservation areas in Northampton. Great Houghton Conservation Area was designated in April 1976 to include the historic core of the village to the north of the former railway line; it was last reviewed in 1989, when it was extended to include part of High Street south of the railway. The Conservation Area now covers an area of approximately 12 hectares, making it one of the smallest of Northampton’s conservation areas.

1.2 Summary of special interest

The special character and significance of Great Houghton Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- The location on rising ground to the south of the Nene valley on the edge of Northampton, affording extensive views across the Nene valley of the village and views from the village towards the town;
- A distinct village character, detached from the built-up area of Northampton;
- The village is self-contained, compact and has largely retained its historic plan form of a linear main street with side lanes and footpaths surrounded by fields. The loose knit, informal layout and the inter-relationship of buildings and open spaces combine with changes in level to create a distinct sense of place;
- A concentration of good quality stone and brick buildings - predominantly two-storey with some three-storey in height – that date from the 17th century onwards; a number of the buildings are listed as being of national architectural or historic importance;
- A variety of architectural styles, with thatched vernacular buildings, a Georgian church, nineteenth century houses and estate workers’ cottages unified by the predominant use of a limited range of building materials - sandy-coloured limestone, ironstone or red brick – creating visual harmony and reflecting the evolution of the village;
- Stone boundary walls are a significant feature which, combined with narrow lanes and buildings at the back of the highway, result in a distinctive village appearance;
- Mature trees, well maintained private gardens and areas of open space (notably the area adjoining the war memorial, the churchyard and the village green) combine to create a distinctly “green” appearance.

1.3 Summary of issues

Although Great Houghton Conservation Area has largely retained its historic village character, there are pressures which could erode the special character and appearance. These include:

- Development pressure to provide more housing and employment;
- Incremental changes to historic buildings, the public realm or the use of inappropriate materials;
- Loss of trees.

1.4 Opportunities for enhancement

Change is inevitable and it is not the purpose of a conservation area to prevent new development but to manage change in order to maintain, reinforce and enhance the special character and quality of the area that justifies its special status.

In addition to statutory legislative and local planning controls, the following opportunities for the enhancement have been identified:

- Encourage the preservation and reinstatement of historic detailing on buildings within the Conservation Area.
- Promote the sympathetic management of open space and the public realm.
- Establish a list of locally significant buildings.
- Promote retention of trees which contribute to the appearance of the area.

2 Introduction and Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Importance of Conservation Areas

“The contribution that historic areas make to our quality of life is widely recognised. They are a link to the past that can give us a sense of continuity and stability and they have the reassurance of the familiar which can provide a point of reference in a rapidly changing world. The way building traditions and settlement patterns are superimposed and survive over time will be unique to each area. This local distinctiveness can provide a catalyst for regeneration and inspire well designed new development which brings economic and social benefits. Change is inevitable.”

Historic England: “Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management”, February 2016

Conservation area status seeks to protect and enhance the special character of the designated area. The controls can be summarised as:

- Most demolition requires permission and will be resisted if the building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
- Some minor works to houses require planning permission. Examples are side extensions, dormer windows, cladding of buildings and the installation of satellite dishes on front elevation of houses.

- A higher standard of design applies for new buildings and for extensions and alterations to existing buildings.
- The Borough Council needs to be notified of most work to trees six weeks before the work is due to take place.

Local authorities are also required to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas and to periodically review them to ensure that the special status is justified.

2.2 The purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal

This appraisal, photographs and maps are intended to identify those elements which contribute to the special character and appearance of Great Houghton Conservation Area and which justify its special status. It will provide the basis for making informed, sustainable decisions about the positive management, protection and enhancement that will preserve and enhance the special character of the Conservation Area.

The appraisal will be a material consideration when Northampton Borough Council, as local planning authority, considers planning applications within the Conservation Area or which impact upon the appearance or setting of the area. The content is based on guidance contained in Historic England Advice Note No.1, "Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management", issued in February 2016.

2.3 Planning policy context

The appraisal fits within wider national legislation, regional and local planning policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

National policy

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to, "designate as conservation areas any area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

The Act also requires local planning authorities to review their conservation areas "from time to time" to assess whether new areas should be designated, boundaries revised or whether designation should be cancelled if an area no longer possesses special interest.

Section 72 of the Act requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas when considering planning applications.

National policy on the historic environment is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Conservation areas are defined as designated heritage assets and of particular relevance are the following paragraphs:

Paragraph 127: local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies conservation area status because of its special architectural or historic interest and that the concept is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

Paragraph 128: applicants for planning permission should describe the significance of any heritage asset affected.

Paragraph 131: in determining planning applications, the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets should be taken into account.

Paragraph 132: when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation; significance can be harmed through development within its setting.

Paragraph 133: substantial harm to a designated heritage asset should be refused consent unless necessary to achieve substantial public benefit.

Paragraph 134: less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Paragraph 135: the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account.

Paragraph 137: local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Paragraph 138: loss of a building that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a conservation area should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm, taking into account the significance of the building and its contribution to the conservation area.

Paragraph 141: local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment publicly accessible.

Regional policy

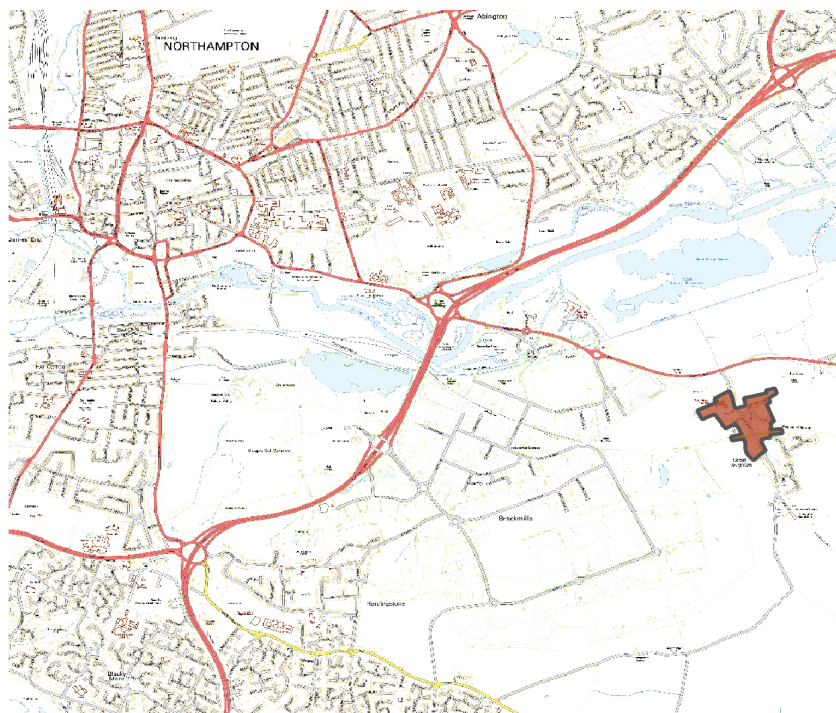
The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2014 sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the area until 2029, including strategic policies for steering and shaping development. Policy BN5 states:

Designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings and landscapes will be conserved and enhanced in recognition of their individual and cumulative significance and contribution to West Northamptonshire's local distinctiveness and sense of place.

Northampton Local Plan

Saved Policy E26 – new development to preserve or enhance character and appearance of conservation areas.

3 Location and plan form



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3.1 Location and topography

Great Houghton is located approximately three miles south-east of Northampton town centre, on the south side of the Nene valley. The village is situated on rising ground and has largely retained its separate identity, surrounded by open countryside. The village developed on the fertile southern slope of the Nene valley, above low lying land liable to flood and where the spring line provided wells with a reliable water supply.

The main street through the village climbs the ridge from a point approximately 60 metres above sea level at the north end of the village to 90 metres at the southern end. The higher south and southeast parts are on boulder-clay; the centre is on limestone and sands, while to the west and north there are extensive areas of clay. The village was bisected by the Northampton-Bedford railway line in the 1870s, which cut through the village in a deep cutting.

3.2 General character and plan form

Great Houghton is essentially a linear village that developed either side of the minor road running south from the Bedford road to Preston Deanery, with narrow back lanes and footpaths running off it. The Conservation Area comprises the nucleus of older buildings to the north of the former railway and an important group of buildings immediately to the south. Post war residential development along the east side of High Street at the north end of the village and to the south and east of the railway cutting is excluded from the Conservation Area. The village is loose knit, with many of the historically significant buildings on the west side of High Street being set within their own grounds.



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Great Houghton Conservation Area aerial plan

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4.0 Historic Development

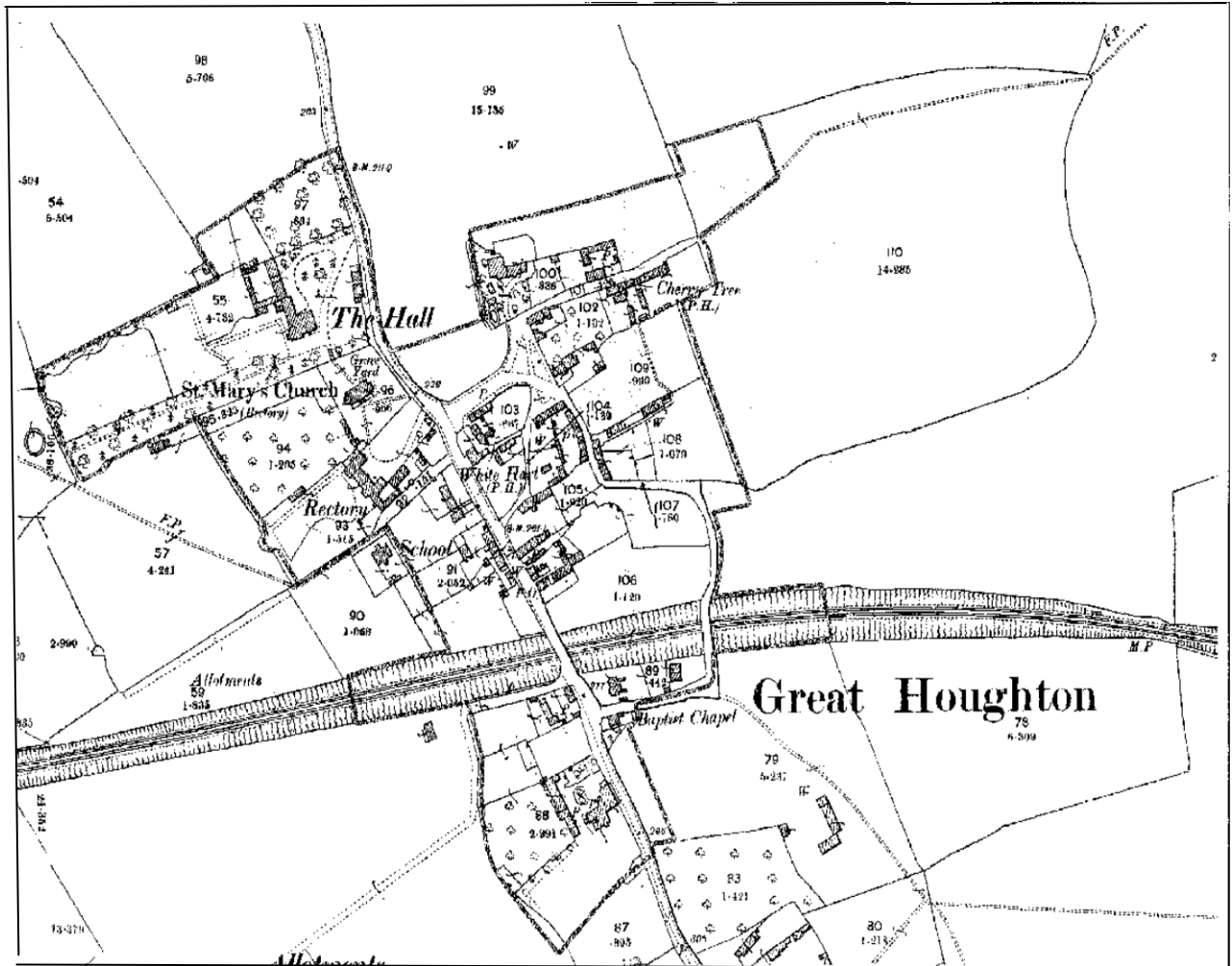
4.1 Although there is archaeological evidence of pre-historic and Roman settlement in the area, the village of Great Houghton has Saxon origins and was recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 as Hohton Magna – literally, a “tun or settlement on a hill”. The earliest settlement took advantage of the fertile Nene valley soils with a good water supply on the spring line and developed along either side of the main street, with back lanes forming a loop. The location also afforded extensive views across the Nene valley.

4.2 The land ownership was complex, with more than one major landowner and three manor houses recorded by the 17th century; this contrasts with other nearby villages such as Great Billing, where the estate and village was under the control of a single landowner. The open fields were enclosed by 1612, although medieval ridge and furrow patterns pre-dating enclosure and remains of a shrunken village are visible in some of the surrounding fields.

4.3 The most significant buildings within the village date from the late 17th and 18th centuries and indicate that Great Houghton shared in the economic prosperity that was seen throughout rural lowland Britain at that time. St Mary’s Church dates from 1754, when the previous church was found to be “greatly decayed” and was taken-down and re-built in ironstone. The highly distinctive Classical tower and steeple is a defining landmark of the village.



4.4 The earliest editions of the Ordnance Survey from the late 19th century show a small, self-contained village with buildings concentrated along High Street, The Cross, Cherry Tree Lane and parts of Willow Lane and surrounded by fields. The location of the principal buildings on the west side of High Street -- notably The Hall, St Mary's Church, The Rectory and the village school -- with individual farmhouses and rows of smaller cottages on the opposite side of the street and along the side lanes, is a notable feature. Footpaths linking the neighbouring villages are a historic feature.



Great Houghton in 1900 © Crown copyright

4.5 Comparison with the present day layout shows that there has been a considerable amount of infill development within the Conservation Area, whilst residential development to the south and east has disrupted the historic linear pattern of the village. However, although there has been some demolition within the village, particularly since the Second World War and replacement of cottages that were at the back of the highway with larger detached houses and bungalows, often set back from the road frontage, a distinct settlement pattern detached from the built-up area of Northampton has remained. The village was included within Northampton Borough following reorganisation of local government in 1974.

5. Assessment of Special Interest

5.1 Character of the Conservation Area

Although Great Houghton Conservation Area is of insufficient size and complexity to have clearly defined areas of different character, there are some distinctions within it. The following sections identify the key features that contribute to its character and appearance.

High Street

The main street through the village runs north-south as it climbs away from the Nene Valley, with lanes and historic footpaths running off-it. It comprises a wide variety of stone and brick buildings of varying ages but with the group on the west side comprising the former Hall, St Mary's Church and Rectory being particularly significant. The Conservation Area excludes a group of mainly 1960s houses at the north end of the village, with the boundary running along the centre of the carriageway. The road is narrow and the bend on the approach to the church as the road climbs the ridge, where the road is below the level of the footpath, creates visual interest as the view alternately closes and opens. Mature trees, particularly within the churchyard, are an important element in the attractive street scene.



Opposite the churchyard, the village war memorial and garden stand in an elevated position and, together with the adjoining area of open space, is a focal point. The war memorial has been cleaned by Great Houghton Parish Council and was listed by Historic England in 2016 as a historic monument, as part of a nationwide survey to commemorate the centenary of the First World War.



The road widens at the junction with The Cross, where the 17th century White Hart Inn is a landmark feature. Nineteenth century brick buildings on the east side of High Street, including the former post office, reflect the diversity of architectural styles and the evolution of the village. Beyond, the road further narrows to cross the railway bridge; Glebe Lane was provided by the Midland Railway to provide access to land severed by the construction of the line. The Conservation Area was extended in the previous review in 1989 to include part of High Street south of the railway cutting and notably Great Houghton House, on account of its contribution to the character and appearance of the area.



The view southwards from the Conservation Area; the boundary was extended to include Great Houghton House in 1989. The trees and vegetation on the opposite side of High Street and the grass verge contribute to the distinctly green appearance of the village.

The Cross

Named as historically the point where the lanes met, the informal positioning of buildings facing the open space and the village green and the change in ground level create a streetscene of considerable quality. The lime tree in the centre of the green is a prominent feature.



Willow Lane

This winding, narrow former farm lane is shown on the earliest plans and forms a loop from The Cross to High Street. It was originally lined with rows of small cottages, orchards and fields and, although most of the houses along it are now post war, the informal nature of the lane and surviving sections of stone walls are reminders of its historic origins. The entrance from The Cross, flanked by the Manor House and Hill Cottage and stone boundary walls, provides an attractive sense of enclosure.



Cherry Tree Lane

This narrow, informal lane runs from the green and ends adjacent to open fields and the cemetery, laid out in the early 20th century on the edge of the village. The absence of footpaths and buildings on the south side fronting directly onto the highway, notably the 16th century Cherry Tree Inn and the cottages at Nos. 2-4, are attractive features. The view from the end of the lane of open fields reinforces the rural location of the village.



The absence of footpaths, buildings directly fronting the highway and the stone boundary wall contribute to the informal character of Cherry Tree Lane.

5.2 Grain and Massing

Great Houghton Conservation Area is compact with the historic core along High Street, The Cross and Cherry Tree Lane unified by a harmony of buildings and materials, mainly limestone and two storey in height, but with an informal, generally higher density along the lanes. The high status buildings on High Street are often set back from the front, with smaller cottages fronting directly onto the road to create a sense of enclosure. Changes in ground level on the lanes off High Street create further interest.

5.3 Key views and vistas

Due to its elevated position, there are important distant views of Great Houghton across the Nene valley from Northampton. Views outwards from the village to the north and west are similarly across open land and the Nene valley and re-inforce the rural setting. To the east, the view is of open countryside along the valley towards Ecton and Earls Barton. Open views outwards from Cherry Tree Lane and Willow Lane also reflect the location and setting of the village.



The view northwards from High Street across the Nene valley towards the east side of Northampton



The view from Cherry Tree Lane towards fields re-inforces the rural location of the village.

Although the surroundings and context of the village have changed greatly since the Conservation Area was designated in 1976, principally through development of Brackmills Industrial Area, it is still possible to recognise the historic settlement pattern and individual identity of the village, detached from Northampton. The visual separation between Great Houghton and the built-up area makes a major contribution to the setting and to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

In views within the Conservation Area, the highly distinctive tower and steeple of the Georgian church is the single most visually and architecturally dominant element. The view outwards from the churchyard to the west across the grounds of the former rectory is also important and the open aspect contributes to the setting of the church.



5.4 Trees and Green Spaces

The most significant area of open space within the Conservation Area is the area adjoining the war memorial on The Cross (below). Together with the churchyard and the village green, it creates an attractive green appearance to the village; it is also important to the setting of the listed war memorial.



The appearance of the Conservation Area is also greatly enhanced by the large number of individual and groups of mature trees – notably the lime on the village green and the trees within the churchyard. A number of trees within the village are protected by Tree Preservation Order. Conservation Area status also affords protection to all other trees within the area, since 6-weeks notice must be given to the Borough Council of any proposed work; this gives the Council the opportunity to assess the appropriateness of the work and consider whether further Tree Preservation Orders are required.



The prominent lime tree and the village green are significant contributors to the attractive character.

There are also a number of incidental open spaces and well maintained private gardens which contribute to the appearance of the village. Vegetation within the railway cutting and the area of land to the east of High Street beyond the railway add to the overall green character.

5.5 Building materials and details

The following sections identify the traditional building materials and local details that contribute to the appearance of the Conservation Area and provide a guide for appropriate styles and new building.

Walls

There is a mixture of building materials within the Conservation Area but limestone and red brick are the predominant materials and result in a unity of appearance.

Early vernacular buildings dating from the 17th and 18th centuries along High Street and Cherry Tree Lane were generally built of locally available stone, primarily sandy-coloured Pendle limestone but with some subtle variations in colour where iron was present. The stone is usually in coursed rubble form on earlier buildings but with some dressed ironstone

used on Georgian houses, such as Great Houghton House, whilst quoins are often of a harder, more durable ironstone. Distinctive limestone/ironstone banding is a decorative feature of several buildings, such as the Manor House (below). Buildings dating from the 19th century are more likely to have been built in red brick. Some of the stone and brickwork, particularly where of poorer quality, has subsequently been rendered and painted.



Alternate limestone with narrow bands of ironstone is an attractive feature of a number of buildings, as seen here on the 17th century Manor House (listed grade II)*

The front elevation of traditional (ie pre-1800) buildings tend to have a simple, uncluttered appearance, with a larger proportion of solid masonry in relation to the size of openings; this reflected the limited span that was possible using timber lintels. Georgian and later 19th century houses show a greater emphasis towards symmetry in elevation.

Recent infill development is inevitably built of modern materials, such as light coloured brick, but by choosing the right colour and texture, the effect has blended into the village scene.

Roofs

The predominant roofing material in the village is blue-grey Welsh slate, which became cheaply available with the coming of the railways from the 1850s onwards and quickly replaced traditional roofing materials such as thatch.

The steep pitch and gable parapet of many of the roofs in the village indicate buildings likely to have originally been thatched, which was the most common roofing material for medium and low status buildings until the mid 19th century. The original material is likely to have been long straw with a simple flush ridge, which was the traditional material and detail used in arable areas throughout the Midlands. There are a few remaining thatched roofs within the Conservation Area and the retention of the surviving examples in the traditional style and material is important to the character and appearance of the village. Some of the thatched roofs are now of combed wheat or water reed with a block cut ridge and tend to have a

flatter, more angular appearance than the softer outline of a straw roof. The thatched roof on the 17th century Cherry Tree Inn (below) was reinstated in 2004 and has enhanced the appearance of the village.



The Old Cherry Tree Inn - reed thatch replaced a corrugated iron roof



Traditional long straw thatch and plain ridge on the 17th century White Hart Inn

There are a limited number of plain clay tiled roofs within the village, usually as a replacement for earlier roofing material, such as the previously thatched listed building on Little Lane (below).



Chimneys

Chimney stacks are a prominent feature of many buildings. Those with 17th/18th century origins are likely to have the chimney at ridge height either side of the line of the original entrance; later buildings or alterations to earlier ones tend to have the chimneys on the gable end. The chimneys were often built or re-built in brick owing to its better heat resistance than stone. The chimneys create roofline interest and should be retained, even if no longer used. External stacks projecting from the gable end are not a traditional detail.

Eaves detailing

Roof and eaves heights vary, particularly along High Street, and create visual interest. The characteristic roof is a simple gable with plain eaves; hipped roofs were more costly to construct and are normally associated with higher status buildings.

Verges are often in the form of coped gable parapets - particularly where the building was thatched - although on smaller cottages the verge is more likely to be plain. Rain water goods are traditionally painted cast iron with the gutters supported on rise and fall brackets spiked directly into the wall. Fascia boards are not a common detail. Eaves level dormers are a feature of several cottages but dormers set at high level are more associated with high-status houses to provide staff accommodation or storage in the attic.

Windows

The style of window largely depends on the age and status of the property. Higher status properties are likely to have had stone mullioned windows beneath stone hood moulds, with the frames made of iron with small leaded panes. Early vernacular cottages generally have timber, horizontal side hung, two or three casement windows beneath simple timber lintels. Vertical sliding sash windows are a detail associated with Classical styles of building from

the late 18th century onwards. Brick lintels and window surrounds are found on some of the 19th century buildings. Top hung outward opening windows are not a traditional detail. There are some upvc windows within the Conservation Area, widespread introduction of which would be likely to harm the traditional appearance.

Doors

The type of door and door surround also varies according to the status and age of the building. The earliest doors are simple, solid timber, ledged and braced. Four or six panel timber doors with a fanlight are associated with Georgian and 19th century houses. Enclosed porches are not a common feature of traditional buildings within the village.

5.6 Boundary walls

Unbroken lengths of stone boundary wall, notably along High Street and Cherry Tree Lane, are an attractive feature of the village. The walls are of historic interest in their own right but also contribute to the high level of visual harmony. Most of the walls are capped by plain stone copings, although there are some examples of traditional cock and hen coping (where alternate long and short stones are placed on edge) which should be retained.



Stone boundary walls, seen here on High Street, are an important feature in the street scene; the wall to the White Hart has retained its traditional cock and hen coping.

5.7 Public realm

An attractive feature has been the installation of traditional-looking lanterns for street lighting; although the posts are tall to avoid vehicle damage, they complement the village scene. Where present, low height kerbs are usually made of concrete with tarmac footpaths, although there are some surviving granite kerbs. Grass verges provide an attractive and informal highway boundary but are susceptible to damage by traffic.

6. Buildings making a positive contribution

A number of buildings and structures within the Conservation Area are recognised as being of national architectural or historic importance by being included on the National Heritage List for England and are listed in the following grades:

Church of St Mary Blessed Virgin - grade A Group Value

The Old Rectory, Nos. 32A & 32B High Street – grade II Group Value

Dovecote, The Old Rectory - grade II Group Value

(The Church of St Mary, The Old Rectory and the Rectory Dovecote form a group)

Great Houghton War Memorial – grade II

Outbuilding, formerly stables of Great Houghton Hall - grade II

No.34 High Street – grade II

No.36 High Street – grade II

Great Houghton House, High Street – grade II* Group Value

Garden wall bordering road, Great Houghton House – grade II Group value

Outbuilding, formerly stables, Great Houghton House –grade II Group value

(Great Houghton House, Garden Wall and Outbuilding form a group)

The White Hart Inn, High Street, - grade II

No1 (Chartlands) Cherry Tree Lane – grade II

The Old Cherry Tree Inn, Cherry Tree Lane – grade II

The Manor House, The Cross – grade II* Group value

Hill Cottage, No.2 Willow Lane – grade II

No. 2 Lane End, Little Lane (includes Willow barn) – grade II

However, there are a number of other buildings which, although not of national significance, make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This contribution may be in one or more of the following ways:

- landmark buildings;
- those which provide evidence of the village's history and development;
- buildings of local architectural interest or local style;
- groups of buildings which make a positive contribution to the streetscene.

Conservation area status means that there should be a presumption in favour of the retention of buildings which make a positive contribution. The following buildings in Great Houghton are considered to fall within these categories and will be candidates for inclusion on a Local List of Buildings of Importance for Northampton that the Council is in the process of preparing. The list is not exhaustive and the absence of a particular building does not imply that it is not of significance to the Conservation Area.

High Street

Great Houghton Hall

The large, square, three-storey early 19th century Georgian house is built of rendered brick and stone and stands near the entrance to the village, immediately north of the church. It is set back from the road frontage in landscaped grounds and occupies the site of one of the original manor houses in Great Houghton. The building is important to the history of the village and was, until recently, a preparatory school. The adjacent 18th century stables are grade II listed in their own right.



Nos. 28 & 30 High Street



Pair of distinctive former estate workers' cottages fronting High Street, built in limestone with ironstone banding and with prominent front dormers, plain tiled roof and brick chimneys. They form an attractive entry point into the village.

Nos. 40 & 44 High Street

Pair of cottages that contribute to the streetscene. The limestone-ironstone banding on the front elevation of No. 40 (Stone Cottage) is a distinctive feature within the village.



No 63 High Street

Built as a Baptist chapel in the 1880s but closed in 1910, the building was subsequently used for village events before being converted to a house. The patterned brickwork and decorative bargeboards on the front elevation are attractive features and the building is of interest to the social history of the village.

Nos. 30 & 32 Willow Lane

Late 19th century pair of red brick semi-detached houses that, together with the former chapel, create an attractive entry into Willow Lane.



The former Baptist Chapel and the pair of 19th century houses on Willow Lane form an attractive group in the streetscene.

Nos. 2 & 4 Cherry Tree Lane

Low stone cottages with eaves level dormers directly facing the historic lane and forming an attractive entry point; the cottages are shown as being the village school on the 1883 Ordnance Survey sheet.



7. Neutral and Negative Features

There are few elements which detract from the overall quality of Great Houghton as a well maintained and attractive village. The last review of the Conservation Area in 1989 identified the garden of 20 Willow Lane as being used as a builders yard, but the site has since been developed.

Although there has been some loss of original details, such as doors and windows that have been replaced with upvc or the use of concrete roofing tiles, these do not detract from the overall appearance of buildings within the Conservation Area. However, more widespread loss of original features could cumulatively erode its special appearance.

In several parts of the Conservation Area, overhead power cables and poles are obtrusive and detract from the street scene.



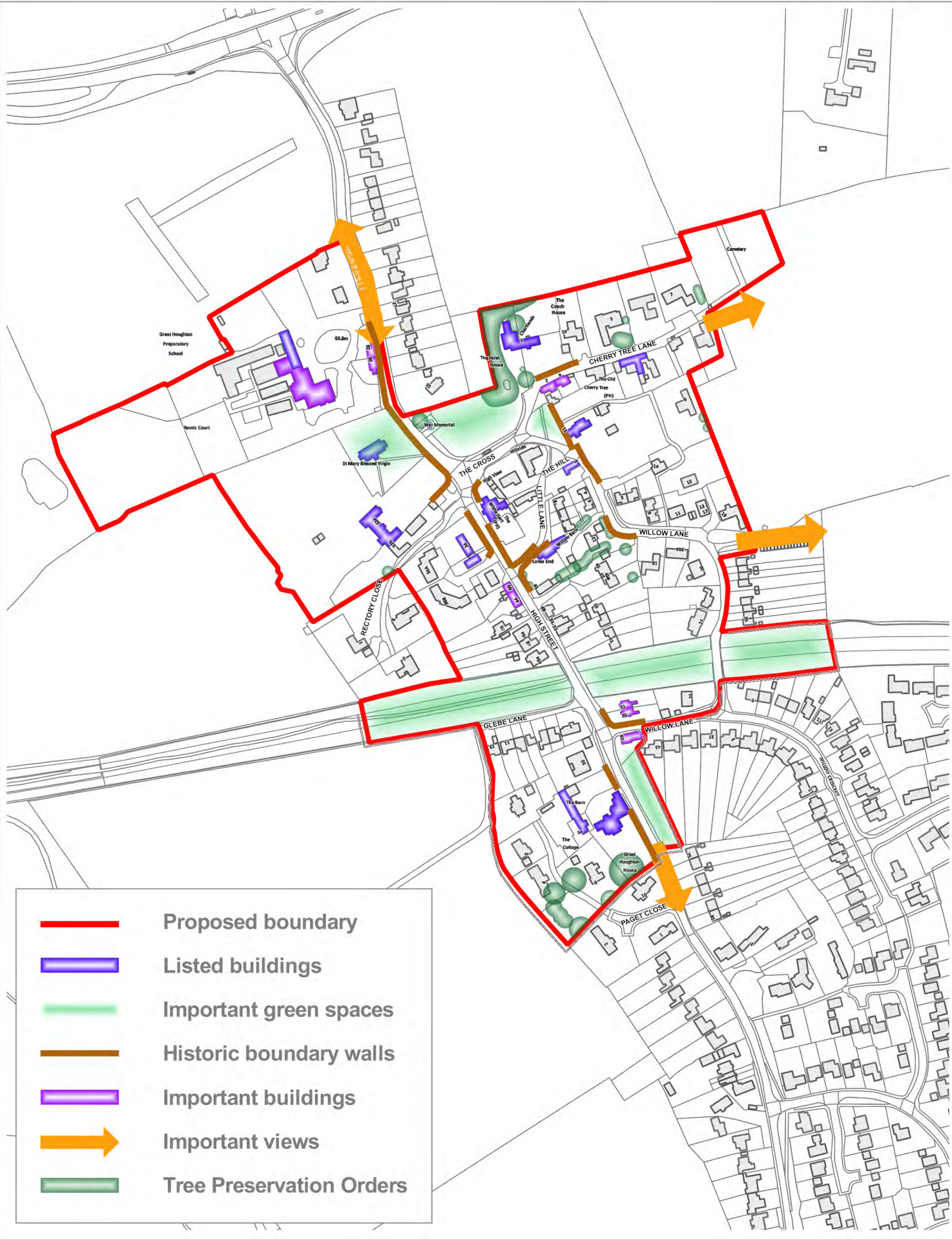
Overhead powerlines are one of the few features that detract from the Conservation Area; burial underground would enhance the appearance.



8. The Conservation Area boundary

8.1 Section 69 of the Listed Buildings Act requires the local authority to consider whether an area still retains sufficient architectural or historic interest to justify its special status as a conservation area or whether cancellation of the designation, or extension to the boundary, is appropriate.

8.2 Great Houghton Conservation Area was designated in 1976 and was extended in 1989 to include, primarily, Great Houghton House. Although there has been some infill and new development within and adjacent to the Conservation Area since the original designation, the preceding sections indicate that the historic core of the village remains an area of special character and appearance. It is not, therefore, proposed to cancel the designation.

8.3 It is also considered that the existing conservation area boundary encapsulates the area that is of special interest and it is not proposed to alter the boundary. The Conservation Area is shown on the map on the following page



	Proposed boundary
	Listed buildings
	Important green spaces
	Historic boundary walls
	Important buildings
	Important views
	Tree Preservation Orders

9. Management Plan

9.1 Threats and Vulnerabilities

The character and appearance of Great Houghton Conservation Area is vulnerable and could potentially be harmed by a number of factors. The following section identifies potential threats and suggests possible management proposals (*italics*)

9.2 Opportunities for Management and Enhancement

New development in the Conservation Area

Due to its proximity to Northampton and the quality of the environment, Great Houghton is a popular village. Where infill development is proposed, it is important that the design, scale and proposed materials are sensitive to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting and do not harm important views.

Successful new development should:

- Relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land
- Reflect the context of existing development
- Respect important views
- Respect the scale and setting of neighbouring buildings
- Use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings and respect the existing materials palette.

New development will be expected to respond sensitively and creatively to the historic environment.

Retain original features

There is a high quality of historic buildings within the Conservation Area, but due to the relatively few buildings with statutory protection, there has been some loss of traditional architectural detailing. Minor alterations to non-listed buildings is permitted development and does not require planning permission but could gradually erode the special appearance and character of the area. Such changes include replacing windows and doors with non-traditional materials or styles, replacing roof materials, re-pointing with hard cement mortar, adding satellite dishes or painting brick or stone walls. Owners of all buildings in the Conservation Area are encouraged to use appropriate materials and methods, and where possible reverse any previous inappropriate replacements.

Original window frames can often be repaired and upgraded and do not always require replacement. Double glazed units can often be fitted into existing timber sash or casement frames. Where windows are beyond repair, like-for-like replacement will help to conserve the appearance of the property. Secondary glazing can often be a cheaper and less intrusive alternative. Original, slightly distorted glass should be retained wherever possible.

Where original doors survive, these should be retained and when proposing new doors they should be appropriate to the age and style of the building. Retention, repair or like-for-like replacement of original features can help to preserve the appearance of the Conservation Area and make a very positive contribution.

Possible Article 4 Direction

In six conservation areas in Northampton, householder permitted development rights have been removed. This means that planning permission is required to alter the external appearance of houses where the alteration is visible from public areas, such as changing windows or doors from timber to upvc, changing the roof material, adding a porch or paving front gardens'. This allows the impact of the alteration on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area to be assessed.

Ascertain through the public consultation on the appraisal whether there is support in principle for an Article 4 direction within Great Houghton Conservation Area. If there is support, formal consultation would then be undertaken.

Renewable energy sources

Whilst the Council is supportive of the sustainable energy agenda it also recognises that many sources of renewable energy and micro-generation has the potential to harm the character and appearance of a conservation area. Within a conservation area, solar panels require planning permission when placed on a wall (but not a roof slope) facing the street. Care therefore needs to be taken to balance the needs of climate change with the preservation of the historic environment.

Where consent is needed, encourage the sympathetic location of solar panels to inconspicuous building elevations where they will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Public realm

Where possible, opportunities should be taken to enhance areas of paving and surfacing. Street furniture and signs affect the appearance of the Conservation Area; unnecessary clutter would have an adverse effect on the character and should be resisted. Railings and lamp posts should be painted black. Any opportunity to have overhead cables placed underground would be welcome.

Encourage statutory undertakers to rationalise and remove unnecessary clutter within the Conservation Area and replace with appropriate solutions. Work with the highway authority to improve surfacing and avoid the insertion of inappropriate kerbing and footpaths which would have a harmful urbanising effect.

Tree management

There a number of mature trees which contribute to the appearance of Great Houghton but this element of the character of the village is vulnerable. A number of the trees are protected by Tree Preservation Order, whilst designation as a conservation area affords protection to all trees since 6 weeks' notice has to be given to the Borough Council of any work to a tree with a diameter of more than 75mm at a point 1.5 metres above ground; this then allows the Council to consider whether a Tree Preservation Order should be made. It is an offence to undertake unauthorised work to a protected tree within a conservation area

Large mature trees should be retained wherever possible in order to preserve the character of the Conservation Area. Opportunities should be taken as appropriate to plant young trees in order to ensure the continued existence of mature trees in the future. Applications for planning permission which affect trees need to be supported by a tree survey. The Council will consider the making of a Tree Preservation Order if a tree which contributes to the visual amenity of the village and is of good quality and condition is found to be under threat.

Satellite antennae

Satellite dishes and antenna are not traditional features and could harm the appearance of buildings within the Conservation Area. Satellite dishes require planning permission where facing onto and visible from the street

Where consent is needed, satellite dishes or antennae should be located in an inconspicuous position to prevent harm to the historic character and visual appearance of the Conservation Area.

Infill development

Some properties in Great Houghton have space behind or alongside which may be considered suitable for infill development. Infill development which would result in the loss of important views or open spaces or harm the relationship between existing buildings and the spaces around them should be avoided. The scale, massing and proportion of buildings, the setting of historic buildings and the spaces between buildings are important in retaining the distinctive character of the Conservation Area, particularly when such scale and massing is a characteristic feature of the host property and street scene. Intensification of development which would not be in keeping with the character of the area should be resisted.

Any development proposing the infill of a site, or the subdivision of a plot, should reflect the scale, massing and layout within the Conservation Area and the street scene and should not harm important views or the setting of historic buildings.

Development affecting the setting of the Conservation Area

Although within Northampton Borough, Great Houghton has retained its separate and individual identity. It is important that new development within, or in proximity to, the Conservation Area respects the setting of the village and has regard to views into and out of the Conservation Area.

The impact of development on the setting of the Conservation Area is a material planning consideration. This applies equally to development outside the Conservation Area if it is likely to harm the setting.

Boundary walls

Stone boundary walls are a significant contributor to the character of the Conservation Area. Walls more than one metre in height next to a highway and two metres elsewhere in a Conservation Area are protected from demolition. Lower walls which contribute to the character should also be protected where possible. New boundary walls, particularly those in prominent locations and fronting highways should be constructed from similar stone to those existing and be appropriate in the massing and coursing to fit the current character.

Boundary walls which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and their copings should be retained. New boundary treatments should fit with the character of existing boundary walls.

9.3 Buildings of Local Importance

Section 6 of the Appraisal identifies a number of buildings which, although not statutorily listed, are important to the character and appearance of Great Houghton Conservation Area. The general presumption will be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution and they will receive special scrutiny if major changes requiring planning permission are proposed. The list is not exhaustive and the absence of any particular building or feature does not imply that it is not of significance within the Conservation Area. :

The buildings will also be considered for inclusion on a proposed Local Heritage List for Northampton.

9.4 Enforcement Strategy

Where there is clear evidence of a breach of planning law, national and local policy will be enforced. In cases where it is necessary, it will be carried out in a fair, clear and consistent manner. Information and advice will be available before any formal action is taken and an opportunity provided to discuss the circumstances of the case and an opportunity will be given to resolve problems.

Please report possible unauthorised works to the Borough Council's Planning Enforcement Team.

9.5 Generic Guidance

Northampton Borough Council publishes guidance on conservation areas, listed buildings and Tree Preservation Orders and is available on the Council's web site www.northampton.gov.uk or from the Planning Policy & Conservation Section.

Anyone wishing to make changes to buildings within the Conservation Area or affecting its setting is strongly advised to contact the Planning section at the earliest opportunity to discuss their proposals and establish any requirements for formal consent, at:

Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning, Northampton Borough Council, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE, Tel. 0300 330 7000 Email: planning@northampton.gov.uk

Please note that a charge may be made for some pre-application advice.

10. References and Contact Details

10.1 References

Bailey, Bruce, Pevsner, Nikolaus, Cherry, Bridget, the Buildings of England: Northamptonshire (2013)

Gover JEB Place Names of Northamptonshire

Sutherland, D S Northamptonshire Stone (2003)

10.2 Internet sources

<http://www.familyhistorynorthants.co.uk/>

British History Online: Great Houghton

Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: (2016) [http/ www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning)

For further information on historic buildings and local history Northampton Abington Street Library and Northamptonshire Records Office has a local history collection which includes books on historic buildings.

10.3 Sources of further information

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) www.spab.org.uk

Ancient Monuments Society www.ams.org.uk

Georgian Group www.georgiangroup.org.uk

Victorian Society www.victoriansociety.org.uk

10.4 Community involvement

A draft version of this appraisal was subject to public consultation with Great Houghton Parish Council and local residents from 30th October -10th December 2017 and comments received, wherever possible, have been incorporated in the adopted version.