

WYCHAVON

conservation area appraisal

Bretforton



Bretforton

The Bretforton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan were adopted by Wychavon District Council as a document for planning purposes. Minute x of the Executive Board meeting of x refers.

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PART 1.

BRETFORTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal

1.1

Conservation Areas were introduced in 1967 by the Civic Amenities Act as a response to the perception of the increasing erosion of historic areas through inappropriate new development.

1.2

Under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the statutory definition of a Conservation Area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. A Conservation Area may include historic town or village centres, historic parks and sites of industrial or transport interest, such as canals.

1.3

Conservation Areas create a framework within which the local authority safeguards the character of a whole area by recognising the contribution that individual buildings make to the historic townscape, together with spaces between and around buildings, street patterns, trees, views and other elements such as ground surfaces and boundary treatments.

1.4

The Bretforton Conservation Area was designated in November 1969 and amended in October 1982 with the inclusion of Bretforton Grange, the Close and the Recreation Ground. The boundary was reviewed again in 2018 during the preparation of this appraisal. This appraisal identifies the special interest and character of the Bretforton Conservation Area, and provides guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of its character or appearance can be achieved.

Planning Policy Framework

1.5

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with the [South Worcestershire Development Plan \(2016\)](#), and national planning policy as set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework \(2018\)](#).

The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), contains Historic Environment policies that set out a positive strategy for protecting and managing the historic environment

- The relevant SWDP policies are SWDP6 (Historic Environment) and SWDP24 (Management of the Historic Environment).

The NPPF sets out national policy regarding the protection and enhancement of the historic environment, which plays an important role in the delivery of sustainable development.

- NPPF paragraphs 184-202 set out the Government's planning policy on *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, and more specifically policy relating to conservation areas.

1.6

Broadly, these policies seek to ensure that the character and significance of a Conservation Area is preserved.

Guidelines for development specify:

- new development should respect its context in design, including scale, form, proportion and detailing
- the use of materials which are in accordance with those traditionally used in that particular part of the Conservation Area
- new development is to be located within sites in a manner which respects the general pattern of building in that part of the Conservation Area
- boundary walls, railings and hedges should be incorporated in the

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development in a way which is harmonious to those already in existence in that part of the Conservation Area, using similar materials and detailing, or species

- signs should respect the character of the buildings and quality of the historic environment in their siting, size, materials and design

Permission may be refused for:

- the demolition of any building or structure, if its loss would harm the character and/or appearance of the conservation area
- the extension or alteration of a building where the change would damage the area's character and/or appearance
- development which would be harmful to the setting, character or appearance of the area
- development which would adversely affect, or result in the loss of, historic plots, layouts and street pattern, important views, open spaces, tree cover or boundary features within the Conservation Area
- signage which would be harmful to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area

1.7

Wychavon's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2010) is relevant in the assessment of development proposals within Conservation Areas.

2. SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

2.1

Bretforton has considerable architectural and historic interest, with over a thousand years of settlement history and a range of historic buildings.

2.2

The historical prosperity of Bretforton is reflected in several substantial and high status houses throughout the village and the continuing presence of a considerable range of farm buildings is a tangible reminder of its agricultural history. Large gardens belonging to high status houses, large open spaces and numerous mature trees provide the setting of many historic buildings within the village. This combination makes a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

2.3

Bretforton has seen much 20th century expansion, but this has largely been to the north west of the historic core of the village. The result of this means that the core has retained a strong sense of historic character and there remains a tangible connection with its agricultural setting despite the overall increase in the size of the village.

2.4

The conservation area is focused on the historic core of the village.

The special interest of Bretforton that justifies its designation as a Conservation Area includes:

- **Its long history, still evident in the layout of the village and its buildings**
- **The survival of a legible historic social hierarchy within the village, evident in the size, design and siting of the buildings.**
- **The survival of the historic form and identity of the village, evident in buildings, plots and village layout**

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- The number and quality of historic buildings
- The survival of historic fabric and detailing
- The use of locally quarried stone in buildings and boundary walls
- The contribution of the natural environment in trees, gardens, open spaces, grass verges and hedges

The conservation area boundary is drawn to reflect this special interest.

3. ASSESSING SPECIAL INTEREST

Location

3.1

Bretforton is a village on the Evesham to Chipping Camden road, 4 miles east of Evesham and 5 miles west of Chipping Camden. It is close to the village of Badsey to its west and to its east is the county boundary with Gloucestershire and the scarp slope of the Cotswold Hills. It is in the Vale of Evesham, an area of rich agricultural land on the terraces of the River Avon.

Landscape Setting

3.2

The historic core of Bretforton is centred along Main Street and the village lies within an open and gently undulating landscape of large arable and grassland fields. It sits between two brooks that are tributaries of the River Avon, Bretforton Brook to the immediate south along Back Lane, and Cow Honeybourne Brook to the north.

3.3

The Vale of Evesham is a broad area of Lower Lias Clay with free draining base rich clay soils. The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment describes it as “an open rolling landscape characterised by a nucleated pattern of expanded rural villages, surrounded by large arable fields, often subdivided into a series of smaller plots. This is an intensively farmed landscape associated with fertile, free draining soils.... This is a landscape of contrasts, the intensely functional, yet often very open and empty character of the

farmland and the focused, communal density of the villages”¹.



3.4

The landscape setting is derived from the former large open field system that was in place before Enclosure at Bretforton in 1765. Remains of ridge and furrow exist in fields surrounding the village beyond Back Lane and south of Bretforton Grange. Bretforton largely conforms to the strongly nucleated form characteristic of settlements in this rich arable landscape, although there are large open spaces within the village.

3.5

The historic form of Bretforton with its farms, houses and church within the village is readily apparent along Main Street. The lanes leading off Main Street, the location and setting within rich farmland and the hedgerow and stream side tree cover are all important contributors to the characteristics of the conservation area.



¹ Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment, need to find page number

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Historical Development & Archaeology

Archaeology

3.6

Archaeological evidence suggests that there has been a long period of human settlement within the area of Bretforton, with the existence of various rectilinear enclosures of Roman or potentially Prehistoric date in the form of crop marks, visible in aerial photographs of the area. Proximity to the River Avon and the brooks, a mild climate and fertile soil are likely reasons for early settlement. There have been finds of Prehistoric or Roman pottery and coins.

Collectively the archaeological evidence within the Bretforton Conservation Area contributes to our understanding of the development of the area. While much of it is of regional interest its presence contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.7

There is evidence of Roman occupation in the area with a presumed site of a Roman villa to the east of Top Farm. The current location of the finds from the early 20th century discovery - dressed stone, an inhumation and pottery - are not known. Although there is not thought to be any direct connection between the founding of the village and the villa.

Recent investigations in the field known as The Paddock have revealed potential evidence of further Roman or even Post-Roman settlement activity in the area.

3.8

Other evidence of Roman activity in the area is from a transport route. Ryknild Street, a Roman Road leading north from the Fosse Way near Bourton on the Water through Alcester, runs to the east of the village.

3.9

To the west of the conservation area there are four compact groups of rectangular enclosures and strips of land visible as earthworks on aerial photographs.

It is thought that they probably represent Medieval or Post Medieval fields and house plots.²

3.10

Medieval ridge and furrow survives in some of the fields surrounding the village, although ploughing activity since 1946 has partially levelled out some areas.

Historical Development

3.11

The earliest known record of the village is c.709 AD, when Bretforton was one of a number of estates in the Vale of Evesham given to the newly-founded Benedictine monastery at Evesham. This was the beginning of 800 years of ownership by the abbey that was to last until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th Century.

3.12

There is no separate entry for Bretforton in the Domesday survey in 1086, but instead it appears as one of two sub units administered by Offenham and Wickhamford. The number of estates in the Vale of Evesham that were granted to Evesham Abbey in the early 8th century suggests that Bretforton was part of one large Royal estate and it is thought it may have been administered from Offenham.

3.13

By the end of the 12th century, Bretforton was a separate manor with its own church. The Chronicle of Evesham Abbey recorded that Bretforton in 1206 had a church and that the village arable land amounted to 2 large fields. The church was re-consecrated by the Bishop of St Asaph in 1295 after a rebuilding of the chancel and it remains as the oldest surviving building in the village.

3.14

Bretforton was probably established as a farming community by Evesham Abbey and worked by tenants of the monastic estate to contribute to the support of the abbey. Bretforton Grange at the western end of the Conservation Area is a reminder of this ownership: a grange is a farm owned and run by a religious order.

² Monument no. 1431849. PastScape. Retrieved 1 November 2013

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3.15

The socio-economic character of the settlement was considerably altered by the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Evesham Abbey was surrendered to the King in 1540 and its estates were redistributed. Evidence would suggest that, in the case of Bretforton, the manor was sold to its tenants and the resulting prosperity is shown in surviving village buildings likely to have been built by these new yeomen.

3.16

The village was historically divided into 3 parts, Upper, Lower and The Cross and this division is still apparent in the layout of the village. The grounds of Bretforton Manor and next to Bretforton Hall separate the Lower End from The Cross. The Cross is the square on the south side of Main Street at the junction with Bridge Street that is overlooked by the church, St Leonard's. It is thought that there was a preaching cross at The Cross, but all trace of it had disappeared by the late 19th century.³ The distinct differentiation between parts of the village is still recognisable from the survival of 'Upper End' in some property names: Upper End Farmhouse (a property probably dating from the 16th century) is found at the eastern end of Main Street.

3.17

The village contains some substantial dwellings, such as Bretforton Manor, Bretforton House Farm and Bretforton Hall as well as Bretforton Grange. Bretforton Manor is believed to have been built around 1605, as were nearby cottages. Bretforton House has a mid-18th century Georgian Classical façade with grand Venetian windows and Bretforton Hall, dating from the late 18th/early 19th century, is a striking Gothic building complete with octagonal crenelated tower on one side, and acted as an evacuation home during the early part of WWII. Besides these, there are also high quality yeoman houses, such as the 15th century longhouse that is now the Fleece Inn.



³ The Story of our Ancient Village. W.H. Shawcross (1890)

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3.18

The construction of large, high quality buildings in the 14th, 15th, 17th and 18th centuries is an indicator of wealth and prosperity in the village during those periods, as is the growth in its population and households. In 1563, Bretforton contained 41 families which is thought to give a population of about 200. In 1801, the population was 413 with 81 houses.⁴ It had increased again by 1872, when the village population was stated to be 565 and the number of houses, 123.⁵ At the 2001 census, Bretforton's population was 1023 in 428 households. The increasing population is also reflected in the number of quality surviving 18th and 19th century buildings.

3.19

There were trades and other occupations in Bretforton beyond farmers and agricultural workers. Cassey's trade directory of 1860 shows that the village had a baker, barber, beer retailer, blacksmith, butcher, carpenter and joiner, gardeners and florists, 2 publicans, sculptor, shopkeeper, slater and plasterer.

3.20

A school was established in the village in 1846 and the present stone building dates from 1876.⁶

3.21

During the late 19th century and the 20th century there has been considerable further housing development in Bretforton - in largely ribbon form along New Street - and predominantly north of the Recreation Ground. There has also been some piecemeal infill development within the historic core of the village.

Plan Form

3.22

Bretforton's Main Street runs in a gently winding fashion north-west to south-east leading through the historic core of the village. Parallel, to its south,

runs Back Lane which is straighter than Main Street and which is linked to it by two lanes running largely north – south, Drinkwater Lane and Bridge Street. Bretforton Brook runs between Main Street and Back Lane, usually very close to Back Lane. To the north of Main Street is New Street, again running largely parallel to it and this may be the new road that W H Shawcross refers to as having been built in about 1845.⁷ Main Street curves at the east end to join New Street. The historic settlement lies largely in this 'rectangle', south of New Street and north of Back Lane. New Street takes the through traffic eastwards towards Chipping Camden.

3.23

The plan form of Bretforton is of a nucleated settlement, with a fine grain of built form punctuated by green spaces, with lanes meeting in a strong central core. Many of the buildings are built hard on the street edge and address the street with their front elevation, but there are some that present their end gable.



⁴ The Story of our Ancient Village. W.H. Shawcross (1890)

⁵ John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales 1870-2. Visionofbritain.org.uk retrieved 28 October 2013

⁶ Cassey's and school information. Bretforton Village History of the Church, Houses and Silver Band. Bruce Watson (1990)

⁷ The Story of our Ancient Village WH Shawcross p13

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3.24

Some houses are detached properties, but with the exception of the high status buildings, they are usually in small plots. Many more of the historic houses are built abutting each other and join up along the street. There are others that are semi-detached or built as a terrace. The density of the layout of buildings gives a fine tight grain to the village.

3.25

Where they exist, front gardens to historic properties are a minimal strip or in Lower End, the properties face a grass verge.

3.26

There are several old farms within the village and their subsidiary buildings, such as cart-sheds and barns were often set back from the main street in courtyards. The majority are no longer in use as farms and the subsidiary buildings have now often been converted to residential dwellings. The plan form of Bretforton therefore also comprises courtyards of former ancillary buildings behind the main frontage of the street. Other ancillary buildings are also found in plots behind the main frontage, notably dovecotes, of which there are 4 listed examples in the village.

Spaces

3.27

Although there is a nucleated form and fine grain to the historic part of Bretforton, there are also significant open spaces in the layout of the village that are an essential part of its character.

3.28

Fronting onto Main Street between The Cross and Lower End are the spacious grounds of Bretforton Manor on one side and Bretforton Hall on the other. The churchyard of St Leonard's is next to Bretforton Manor's grounds on Main Street and so this creates a lengthy green interlude in Main Street only broken by two 17th century stone cottages. The south side, with the Manor and churchyard, has extensive tree cover but on the north side, to the east of Bretforton Hall, there is a field of open pasture, with a few individual trees and then trees on the boundary with New Street, this land is known as The Butty and is regularly used for community events. The Main Street edge of the field is bounded by metal estate railings on a lias stone wall and it is at a slightly higher level than the street. This green punctuation in the street scene



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separates two areas of fine grain built form, Lower End from The Cross and Upper End.

3.29

The exact extent of the grounds of Bretforton Manor, Bretforton Hall (and Bretforton Grange and its neighbouring property The Close at the west end of the Conservation Area) cannot be ascertained from the street, but their spaciousness in the street scene is a key component of the Conservation Area.



3.30

The Cross in Main Street is a square surrounded by historic buildings and although the central area is now largely given over to car parking, it still retains some greenery, including trees with good visual amenity. Also fronting onto The Cross are the school's field and grassy play area. The frontage has trees and shrubs, and so also provides a green interlude in the built form around The Cross.



3.31

The Fleece Inn on the south east side of The Cross has a large rear garden or orchard which leads down to the Bretforton Brook and Back Lane. There is little built form between the backs of the properties on the south side of Main Street and The Cross and Bretforton Brook. Again, the exact extent of this area cannot always be ascertained from the street, but its vegetation and trees provide a spacious green setting to the Conservation Area.



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3.32

In contrast, to the rear of the south side of Main Street, there are three large spaces on the north side of Main Street that have a very open character. These are located on the edge of the conservation area and are the village's Recreation Ground, a piece of agricultural land associated with Bretforton Hall known as The Butty and to the west of the conservation area known as The Paddock. The Recreation Ground has football and cricket pitches, children's play area and a pavilion, with a number of substantial trees lining the north east boundary- including two large horse chestnuts. On the south side is a row of large lime trees planted in commemoration of the men of the village who lost their lives in the two World Wars.

The Paddock retains a strong relationship between a number of listed former farm buildings and workers cottages. Although the land has been cut off from the surrounding agricultural landscape, it serves as a reminder that the village was once surrounded by open fields. In contrast to parts of the core of the village the western end still retains a sense of openness, in large part due to the open spaces of the Recreation Ground and The Paddock.

3.33

The preservation of the spaces that remain is essential to preserving the character of the conservation area.



Key Views & Vistas

3.34

The tower of St Leonard's church is a landmark in the village. There are views of the tower from various places in the lanes and along Main Street, the tower itself also allows views out across the Conservation Area and beyond.

3.35

A sense of the countryside beyond the conservation area is obtained looking south along Bridge Street. The countryside setting also becomes dominant moving south along Drinkwater Lane. In addition there are views out into the surrounding countryside looking west from the Recreation Ground.

3.36

There are views into the conservation area in its landscape setting from the fields and paths around the historic core, particularly looking north from Back Lane and west from the footpaths alongside Top Farm. This serves as a reminder of the rural

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settlement origins of the village and part of the appreciation of the village is in its rural hinterland.



3.37

Within the conservation area there are also significant views of buildings that act as focal points, for instance the view south along School Lane to St Leonard's and south along Shop Lane focused on 45 Main Street (which is also a listed building).



3.38

The gently curving line of Main Street also affords an unfolding sequential view of the village. Entering

the village from the west, glimpsed views of The Cross and church begin to form. From the east, the curve is marked by a high stone boundary wall on one side and street cottages on the other that opens out into The Cross. Approaching the village along Bridge Street from the south, the built form focuses on St Leonard's and the final curve reveals The Cross.



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3.39

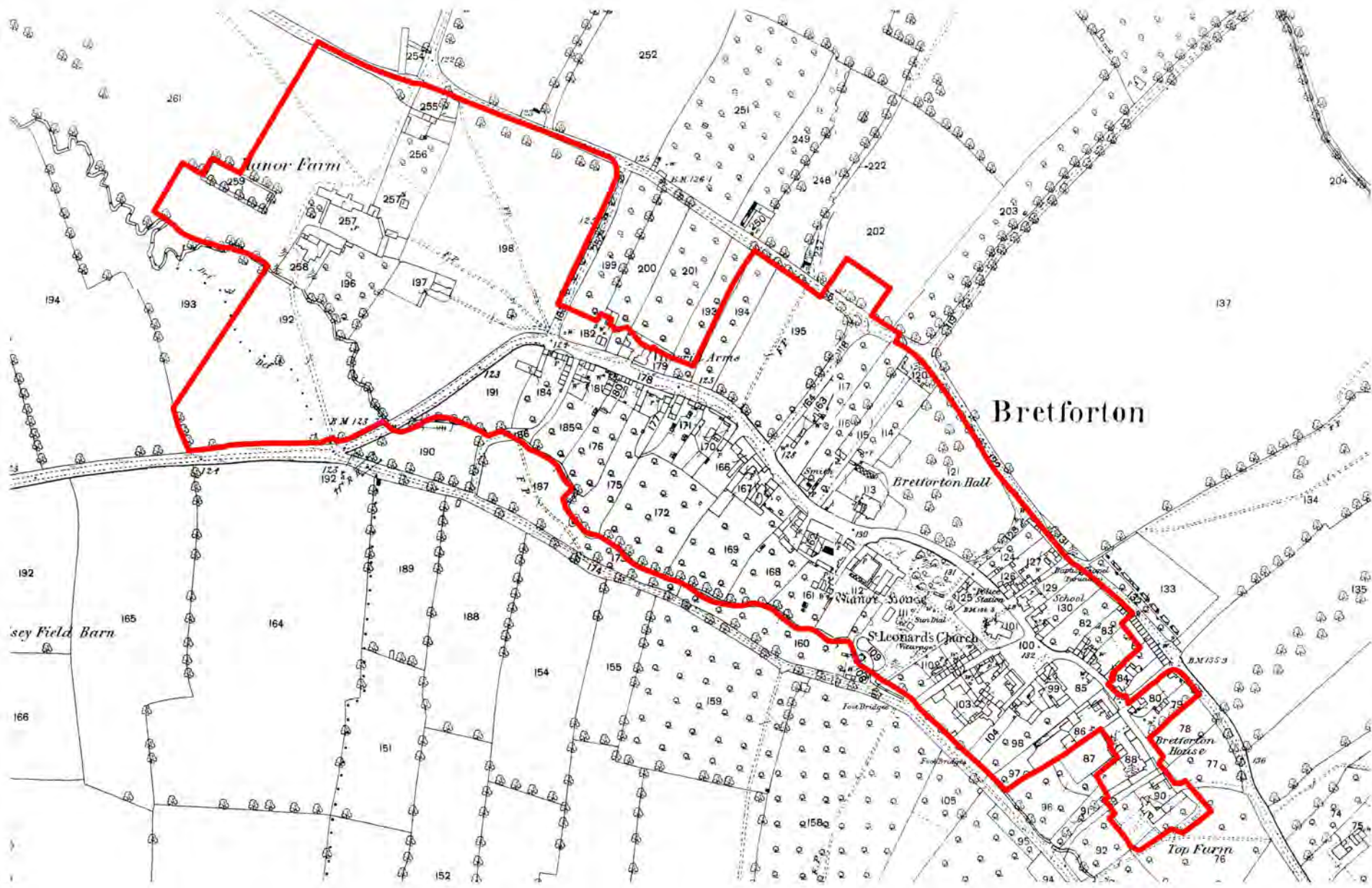
The field known as The Paddock at the west of the conservation area is a large open space that allows various views into the conservation area. It is boundaed on all sides by a mixture of metal railings, hedging and trees, and along station road there are two significant openings in the boundary. At various points around the field significant views are allowed of a number of important listed buildings.

3.40


The preservation of these glimpses, unfolding views, focal views and long range views is essential to the character of the conservation area.



A series of views across The Paddock to various historic buildings



Extract from 1st Edition
Ordnance Survey map c1886

 Conservation Area boundary

N
Scale: Not to Scale

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4 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

General

4.1

The character of the Bretforton Conservation Area is that of an historic rural village of fine grain comprising a series of historic houses, cottages and former farmsteads set around the church and along older lanes. The prominence of historic buildings, together with areas of open space, gardens, trees and grass verges, contribute to its character as an historic rural village set within its agricultural landscape.

4.2

Notably, modern intrusion in the form of street lighting and obtrusive road signage is minimal in the conservation area.

Buildings

4.3

There are a range of building periods present within the conservation area. Most share basic common design characteristics of the local vernacular, including:

- limited spans/plan depths dictated by historic building construction methods
- a simple main rectangular plan form
- in many cases, carefully arranged fenestration on principal elevations
- roof detailing without barge or fascia boards

4.4

Many of the buildings in the conservation area are listed for their special architectural or historic interest and some are of early origin. There are other historic buildings which, while not listed, are still built from local materials in the local style and therefore contribute to the architectural and historic interest of Bretforton. The result is a wealth of historic buildings and a commonality of building characteristics despite the range of building periods.

4.5

The most prevalent building type in the conservation area is houses. Older buildings of all types are constructed in the form and style typical of the local Worcestershire tradition of their

respective periods and many remain discernible in the form in which they were originally built.

Early houses

4.6

The earliest houses in the conservation area are likely to date to the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries in origin though many were altered during the 17th century.

One of the earliest buildings in the conservation area is Bretforton Grange, formerly a monastic grange and now a house. The north - south range of probably dates from the early 14th century and was an open hall above an under-croft. It was subdivided and extended in the 17th century, and has some later 20th century alterations. The building is of lias stone with ashlar dressings and has a Cotswold stone and tiled roof. The complex also contains a large 15th century timber framed and weather-boarded barn on a lias stone plinth, and a dovecote, probably also dating to the 15th century.

The barn is one of the finest surviving examples built for Evesham Abbey⁸, and in the late 20th century was converted into a theatre and restaurant and is now known as Bretforton Theatrebarn.



Bretforton Grange

⁸ Bond, C. J. *The Estates of Evesham Abbey: a preliminary survey of their medieval topography*. Vale of Evesham Historical Society Research Papers, Vol 4. (1973) p.14

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The exterior and interior of the converted Theatrebarn, and the Dovecote to the rear of the barn

4.7

The Fleece Inn probably dates from the 15th century and has its origins as a longhouse (a dwelling which also housed livestock at one end). It is a five-bay timber framed building with square panels, typical of Worcestershire framing, rendered infill panels, and a clay tile roof. It was remodelled in the 17th century, including the flooring-over of the hall. The windows are an assortment of casement, dormer and stone mullion and are of varying ages. The Fleece became a licensed Inn in 1848, and the building is now owned by the National Trust although it is still run a public house.



4.8

Upper End Farm and Top Farm are thought to date from the 16th century. Upper End Farm has close studded timber framing above a rough cast ground storey and a large lias stone with ashlar quoins chimney stack topped with red brick. The roof is Cotswold stone slates. The rear of the building is lias stone with a clay tile roof. Top Farm is lias rubble and ashlar with a Cotswold stone and machine tile roof.



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4.9

Some of the earliest houses, such as The Fleece and Bretforton Grange, were altered in the 17th century and there are many houses in the conservation area that originate to the 17th century – indicative of a period of economic success, which funded rebuilding. Coursed lias stone is the main building material for these 17th century buildings, many of which have clay tile roofs. Although some timber framed buildings do survive and there are some with thatched roofs. The predominant form of window is metal lights glazed into stone mullions with opening lights or small painted timber casements.

Bretforton Manor is located in the heart of the conservation area along Main Street, although much of the house is not visible from the road, many of its outbuildings are prominent. Within the grounds of the manor there are a number of other historic structures such as a cider house, dovecote, aviary, apiary and a set of stocks thought to date to the C18.



Houses from the 18th century

4.10

There are fewer houses dating from the 18th century, but they are more varied in their materials. Bretforton House has a mid-18th century front elevation in red brick, with stone dressings, and it is likely to be the first example of a brick elevation in Bretforton; influenced by the Classical style of architecture. Bretforton Hall, (a striking example of a Gothic house) has stucco elevations. Both of these houses have a fenestration that is particular to their architectural style: timber Venetian windows at Bretforton House (although the current windows have a non-original opening pattern) and Bretforton Hall has timber casements with ogee arched heads.

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Bretforton Hall

The 18th century cottages are representative of the earlier vernacular materials and styles of the village: Church Cottage is lias stone with a Cotswold stone roof; 70 Main Street is roughcast and painted brick with a thatched roof, both featuring conventional casements.



Bretforton House

Houses from the 19th century

4.11

Fewer of the 19th century houses are statutorily listed, and their materials are less varied than those from the 18th century. There are examples of lias stone elevations to cottages from this date, but a number of them are red brick in Main Street, one with a slate roof, otherwise with clay tile roofs. This demonstrates the wider availability of building materials with the arrival of the railway, which made transporting goods easier. At this period painted timber double hung sliding sash windows are typically used for these cottages and the front elevations have symmetrical fenestrations.

Victoria Terrace on Station Road is a good example of a late 19th century row of terraces, constructed of red brick with side hung casement windows, featuring central glazing bars, and gauged brick arches over some windows as well as over the doors. The historic character has been largely retained within the terrace, with the retention of a number of original features and some relatively sympathetic modern replacements.

Modern Houses

4.12

Development from the 20th century onwards has infilled small plots within the historic core, with larger planned estates present to the edges of the conservation area as well as smaller planned development to the rear of historic properties, particularly along Main Street. Modern houses are a mix of bungalows and houses. They have a form and design that is often at variance with the established characteristics of older buildings in the village, some with spreading horizontal plan forms set behind large front gardens, large or bay windows, attached and integrated garages, hard landscaped drives, doors set within enclosed porches, roof pitches that are shallow and/or clad in modern concrete tiles, barge or fascia boards, overlarge dormers, insignificant or no chimneys or built in unsympathetic modern materials.

Farm Buildings

4.13

There were several farms within the village historically and there is still a working farm in the conservation area; Bretforton House Farm at the Upper End. Former farmhouses, barns and other ancillary buildings are still readily apparent in the street scene or glimpsed behind frontage buildings and many have been converted to residential use. They are of varying materials but are largely typical of the Worcestershire vernacular at the date of their construction, usually being simple rectangular plans with double pitched roofs.

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Other Building Types

4.14

The parish church is late 12th century partially rebuilt in the late 13th century and re-consecrated in 1295. It was extended in the mid 14th century and 15th century and heavily restored in the 19th century. The west tower is 15th century and is of coursed ashlar. The rest of the church is built of coursed lias rubble stone with ashlar dressings and it has a Cotswold stone slate roof.



4.15

The frontage school building dates from 1876 and is in coursed lias stone with ashlar dressings. The front roof slope is Cotswold stone slates, the rear slope is tiled and the main ridge is surmounted by a small square plan leaded bell-cote or cupola. The school premises have been successively extended in red brick. School Cottage, a detached dwelling in roughcast and brick, dating from the early 20th century, sits at the corner of New Street and School Lane.



4.16

There are a number of dovecotes in the village. Most are set back behind main frontages and are not visible from the street, although that at the former Home Farm, Main Street, is built hard on the street edge.



4.17

There is a former forge in the conservation area, now known as Forge Cottage and the former smithy building is evident from the street due to the large wooden doors on the street frontage. The Bretforton Silver Band practice hall is in a former Strict Baptist Chapel which is a simple rectangular plan brick building. The Ark, a curios shop at The Cross, is again a simple rectangular plan brick building and is a former saddler's.⁹ Until recently there was a shop and post office at the Upper End of Main Street. The village's famed public house, The Fleece, owned by The National Trust, is a timber framed longhouse thought to date from the 15th century. The village hall is of local stone with a

⁹ Sales Particulars for auction July 30th 1928. The Ark formerly a Saddler's Shop and now used as stores situate in The Square Bretforton. Let to Mr Joseph Byrd

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Cotswold stone slate roof and dates from 1920. It is by the architect Sir Guy Dawber, who had many commissions in the Cotswolds and who, for a while, based his office in Bourton-on-the-Hill.



Listed Buildings

4.18

A number of the buildings in the Bretforton Conservation Area are listed for their architectural or historic interest. Other buildings and structures attached to, or forming part of the curtilage of these identified buildings and pre-dating 1st July 1948 are also listed by association. While the aim of the listed building legislation is to preserve these buildings for their own sake, any changes affecting them will also be considered in terms of the effect on the conservation area.

4.19

The Council's Heritage Team should be contacted for advice on whether a building or structure is listed by association ("curtilage listed") before any works are carried out as the summary above is not exhaustive.

Unlisted Buildings

4.20

There are other buildings, which, while not "listed", have qualities of age, style and materials that are locally important and which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Materials

4.21

Part of the character of the Bretforton Conservation Area derives from the materials used in its buildings

and boundaries. Lias stone is the predominant building material in the conservation area. The earliest residential buildings are lias stone with timber framed upper elements, or timber framed above a lias stone plinth. Some have thatched roofs. Later houses tend to be constructed in coursed lias stone with clay tiles or Cotswold stone slates. From the 19th century onwards brick and slate are more common, reflecting the increasing availability of materials from further afield and changing architectural fashions.

Walls

4.22

Buildings of varying periods in the conservation area are built of local lias stone. The church is built in coursed lias, as is Bretforton Manor and the main school building, all with ashlar Cotswold stone dressings. There is one ashlar stone building in the conservation area, the former Home Farm, dating from the 17th century, which is listed at grade II*. Other early buildings are timber framed, such as the Fleece Inn and the former Barn to Home Farm. Other cottages that have roughcast walls may have timber framed structures beneath.



4.23

There are examples of the use of brick in the Conservation Area for later 19th and 20th century buildings, although the frontage of Bretforton House farm is an 18th century brick elevation. The brick walls in the conservation area are usually the rich orange/red characteristic of the locality. Brick is also used for boundary walls, as at Bretforton Hall. More usually, boundary walls in the conservation area are constructed of lias stone.

Bretforton



Roofs

4.24

Some of the early timber framed buildings have thatched roofs, such as The Rookery and 1-3 Shop Lane while others, such as the Fleece Inn, have roofs of plain clay tile, of the red/brown hue characteristic of the area. There are also several examples of Cotswold stone slate roofs, such as at Church Cottage and Forge Cottage. The 19th and 20th century buildings usually have tiled roofs although there is some Welsh slate. Roof-lights are largely absent. The continued use of historic roofing materials adds to the special interest and character of the Conservation Area.



4.25

Many of the more recent buildings, or buildings reroofed in recent years, are roofed with concrete tiles. The use of this material is at variance with the use of traditional materials in the conservation

area, and is considered to be harmful to its special interest.

Windows

4.26

The materials used for windows are characteristic of their respective periods and materials of buildings. For instance, in the early stone buildings with stone window mullions and surrounds, metal lights are glazed directly in with opening lights of wrought iron. Some stone buildings have metal casements with side hung opening lights. In the timber framed cottages, single glazed 2 light painted timber casements are typical. Double hung vertically sliding sash painted timber windows are the typical window for a later period of construction, usually mid 19th century onwards and are seen in some of the late 19th/early 20th century houses. The depth of the reveal varies depending on the walling material and architectural style of the building, but generally windows in the conservation area are recessed rather than flush. The retention of these traditional materials and designs is important to the character and appearance of the conservation area.



4.27

Some of the windows in the Bretforton Conservation Area have been lost to modern replacements. Modern windows, whether in new materials, such as uPVC, altered finish, such as stained timber, changed design and opening or additional features such as trickle vents are not appropriate in the conservation area or for the quality of building. The materials, and much of the detailing of these replacement windows, are rarely able to replicate traditional windows and frequently

Bretforton

harm the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Doors

4.28

Typically, doors are timber and of varying design depending on the age of the building. The retention of historic fabric and detailing is important to the character of the conservation area.

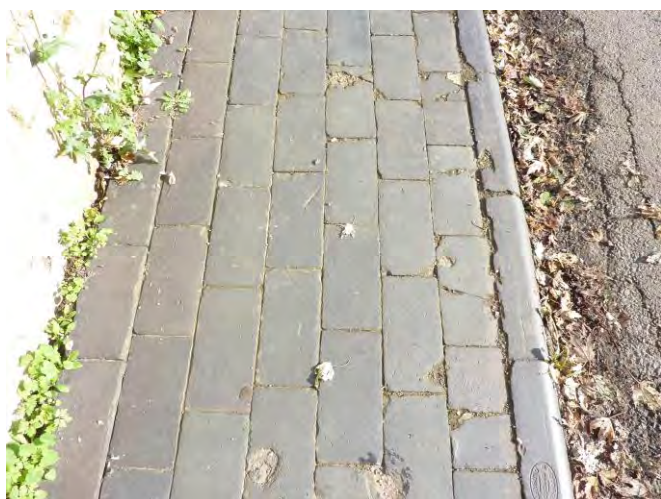
4.29

Where there are private drives many are surfaced in loose gravel, which gives a soft textured surface finish appropriate to a rural village conservation area and the setting of its historic buildings.





Pavements

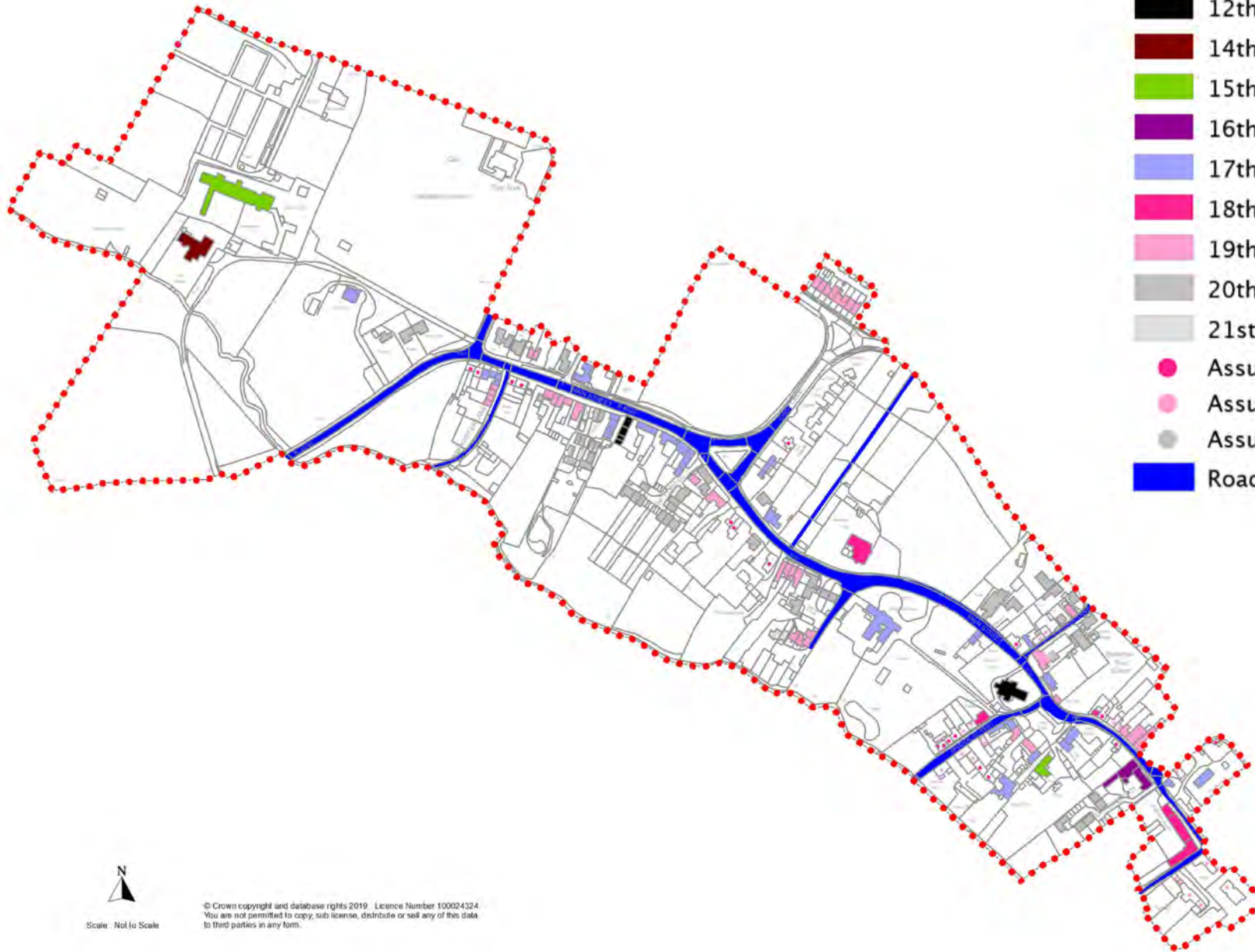
4.30

A distinctive feature of the Conservation Area is the historic pavement design and materials that survive in School Lane, Bridge Street, The Cross and Main Street. They are dark blue/grey bricks and tiles of an engineering type, laid parallel or at right angles to the street with a kerb detail of the same material. Smaller sizes are used to mark crossovers. The maker's stamp mark on the kerbs is G Wood & Sons, Brades, Oldbury



Settlement Development

-  Conservation Area boundary
-  12th Century buildings
-  14th Century buildings
-  15th Century buildings
-  16th Century buildings
-  17th Century buildings
-  18th Century buildings
-  19th Century buildings
-  20th Century buildings
-  21st Century buildings
-  Assumed 18th Century
-  Assumed 19th Century
-  Assumed 20th Century
-  Roads, lanes and footpaths



Scale: Not to Scale

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Bretforton

Local Details

4.31

There are local building details and other features in the Bretforton Conservation Area which contribute to its character and special interest and which are important to retain. These include:

- extensive use of lias stone, for whole elevations, boundary walls and plinths especially for timber frame buildings.
- Cotswold stone slate roofs laid in diminishing courses
- Thatched roofs, some with little thatch figures and animals on the ridge line.
- Label moulds over windows in stone buildings
- Individual details such as the circular slatted metal seat around a tree at The Cross, the cupola on the school roof and the old stamp machines and post box in the wall of the former Post Office.
- Timber frame construction with white infill panels.
- Prominent chimney stacks
- Pavements of blue/grey engineering bricks with crossovers in smaller unit sizes.



Boundaries

4.32

Many properties front directly onto the street; some are slightly set back behind a strip of land or small front garden. However, there are some boundary walls, often where rear or side gardens meet the street. There is also a wall around the churchyard. Most of the boundary walls in the conservation area are of lias stone, with a variety of terminal treatments – stone on edge for some, or a brick capping in the case of the boundary wall to the side of Upper End Farm. There are a few red brick boundary walls, as at Bretforton Hall, or in School Lane. There are very few vehicular entrance gates.

Although not universally present, boundary features do make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

Natural Environment

4.33

The natural environment makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Bretforton conservation area.

4.34

The most obvious features are the large open spaces within the conservation area, the field to the east of Bretforton Hall known locally as The Butty, the Recreation Ground, the school playing field and playground and the agricultural field bounded by Main Street, Shop Lane and Station Road, known as The Paddock. There are also other important green interludes either part of the public realm, or visible gardens and private amenity space.

Bretforton

4.35

Bretforton Brook for part of its course is within the conservation area and there is a strong sense of the inter-relationship with the countryside on this southern boundary of the conservation area.

4.36

There are many trees in the conservation area that have significant visual amenity: for example the trees in the churchyard, the numerous mature trees in the grounds of Bretforton Manor and the trees at The Cross. The natural environment is a prominent characteristic within the conservation area and is a continual reminder of the village's rural setting. The retention of the natural environment is essential to the preservation of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.37

All trees over a certain size are protected in the conservation area. Written notification must be given to the Council before carrying out any works to these trees. Some trees are individually protected by Tree Preservation Orders and consent is needed from us before any works to them are carried out.

Our Landscape Team can advise on which trees are protected, the type of works which would need to be notified or need consent, the procedures and the likelihood of getting consent for the works. The contribution of the tree to the character and appearance of the conservation area will be a factor in the consideration of a notification or application.

Enhancement Opportunities

4.38

There are features that compromise or detract from the character and appearance of the Bretforton Conservation Area. These include:

- **Replacement of doors and windows**
Properties have had replacement windows and/or doors, including uPVC, stained timber and double glazed units. Window and door replacements with new ones of a different design and opening pattern, materials or finish, erodes local building detail which is an essential part of the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area.

- **Replacement roof coverings**
In concrete tiles which are a poor substitute for natural materials
- **Insertion of roof-lights**
A few roof-lights have been inserted into historic roofs to the detriment of the historic roof-scape
- **Building maintenance.** It is important for the continued preservation or enhancement of the conservation area's character and appearance that buildings and features are appropriately maintained.
- **New buildings**
Some developments integrate better into the historic environment than others. Some exhibit design characteristics that are different to the established characteristics of the area. The purpose of highlighting these buildings is not necessarily to aim at their redevelopment, but to guard against them becoming too dominant through future additions or alterations. These buildings will not be regarded by the Council as a guide or precedent for future development proposals.

We would welcome the opportunity of discussing the scope for improving these features.

Neutral Areas

4.39

There are some parts of the conservation area which, in their present form, neither enhance nor detract from its character or appearance. We will be careful, however, to guard against these properties and areas becoming too dominant through future additions or alterations.

Threats

4.40

Bretforton has seen much 20th century development and is sensitive to further change. In particular:

- **Development.** The identification of Bretforton as a Category 2 Village in the South Worcestershire Development Plan could bring new development pressure which could diminish its setting and open spaces.

Bretforton

- **Incremental erosion of character** through cumulative small changes, such as insertion of roof-lights, replacement windows, doors and roof coverings, loss of gravel drives to other materials and laying of pavements in materials or bricks other than the historic blue/grey type of brick historically in use. Bretforton has been affected by such changes. These have diminished the quality of buildings and their setting and their contribution to the conservation area. Buildings remain vulnerable to change.

5. ISSUES

5.1

The appraisal has highlighted the following problems and pressures in the Bretforton conservation area.

- Design of new buildings and possible intrusion of new development
- Loss of architectural features and materials on historic buildings and inappropriate replacements or insertion of roof-lights
- Introduction of modern paving materials
- Building maintenance & repair

5.2

The Management Proposals at Section 2 consider how these might be addressed to ensure the continuing preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

NOTE

Although it is intended that this appraisal should highlight significant features of the conservation area which are important to its character or appearance, omission of a particular feature should not be taken as an indication that it is without merit and unimportant in conservation and planning terms.

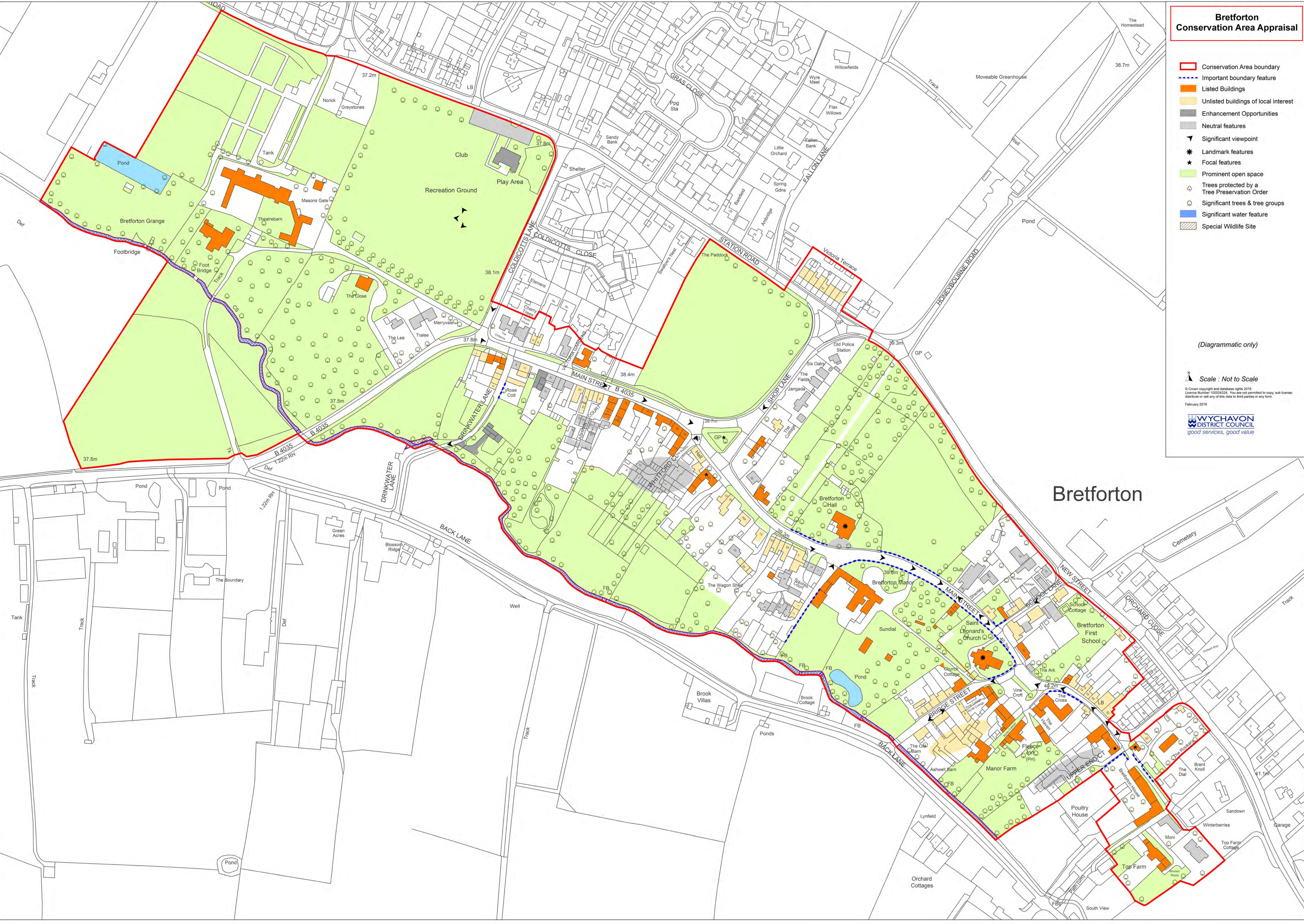
Bretforton Conservation Area Appraisal

- Conservation Area boundary
- Important boundary feature
- Listed Buildings
- Unlisted buildings of local interest
- Enhancement Opportunities
- Neutral features
- Significant viewpoint
- ★ Landmark features
- ★ Focal features
- Prominent open space
- Trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order
- Significant trees & tree groups
- Significant water feature
- Special Wildlife Site

(Diagrammatic only)

Scale : Not to Scale

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 February 2019



Bretforton

Cemetery

Bretforton First School

Manor Farm

Poultry House

Top Farm

South View

Tank

Track

Track

Pond

Def

Pond

Pond

Green Acres

The Boundary

1.22m Rn

Def

1.22m Rn

DRINKWATER LANE

Blossom Ridge

BACK LANE

Well

Track

37.8m

B 4035

DRINKWATER LANE

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PART 2. BRETFORTON CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

1 Introduction

What are these Management Proposals for?

1.1

These management proposals are a mid- to long-term strategy for preserving and enhancing the Bretforton Conservation Area, addressing the highlighted in section 5.1 of the appraisal.

1.2

These proposals are prepared in accordance with our duty under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of our conservation areas.

2 Management Proposals

1. Design of new buildings and Intrusion of new development

The character of the conservation area is vulnerable to continued encroachment of new development.

Action

We will:

- Assess new development proposals against the Bretforton Conservation Area Character Appraisal in addition to our Local Plan Policies on conservation areas and design and our Residential Design Guide SPD.

2. Loss of architectural features and materials and inappropriate replacements

Some buildings have been adversely affected by the use of inappropriate modern materials or replacement of historic doors and windows with poor quality substitutes such as uPVC or stained timber.

Action

We will:

- consider the need for Article 4 directions to bring such works under planning control, to

ensure that the special qualities of unlisted buildings of local significance are protected.

- seek retention of historic fabric where opportunities arise through development proposals
- address unauthorised works to buildings through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our Enforcement Policy.

3. Introduction of modern paving materials

These materials undermine the quality of the historic environment.

Action

We will:

- seek improvements to sites where opportunities arise through development proposals
- assess new proposals against our Local Plan Policies on design and on preserving and enhancing the conservation area, preserving the setting of listed buildings, the Bretforton conservation area Character Appraisal and our Residential Design Guide SPD
- liaise with WCC Highways to ensure better understanding of the significance and sensitivity of the Bretforton Conservation Area

4. Building maintenance & repair

The neglect of historic buildings and features undermines the quality of individual buildings and the area.

Action

We will:

- advise owners/occupiers of buildings of appropriate repair where opportunities arise, and the need for prior consent for works, where relevant
- seek retention of historic fabric where opportunities arise through development proposals
- address unauthorised works to buildings through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our Enforcement Policy

2. Article 4 Directions

What is an Article 4 Direction?

2.1

An Article 4 Direction is an Order that the District Council can make to provide long-term protection against unsympathetic alterations to unlisted dwellings in conservation areas by restricting certain "permitted development" rights. This means that alterations that formerly did not require planning permission would need permission in the future, although there is currently no fee for such an application required under a Direction. A Direction would only apply to elevations or parts of a property which front public roads, rights of way or public open spaces. It would not normally affect the rear of a property or the rear garden, and does not affect interior alterations.

Why consider them for Bretforton?

2.2

The conservation area at Bretforton has been designated in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest and a desire to preserve its character and appearance.

2.3

Although many alterations to all types of buildings can be controlled in a conservation area by planning permission, changes can still take place to unlisted dwellings and their sites that can damage the character and appearance of the conservation area, but which are "permitted development", i.e. they do not require planning permission.

2.4

There are many buildings in the Bretforton conservation area which, although not listed, have qualities of age, style and materials which are locally distinct and which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. That many of these properties retain much of their original character and appearance is to the credit of those owners who have carefully preserved them. There is, however, no guarantee as to their future and these properties are vulnerable to future change.

2.5

The Management Proposals for the Bretforton Conservation Area include an Article 4 direction.

This does not mean that the works included would not be allowed. It means that planning permission would be required to carry out these particular changes in future. We would assess to see whether what was proposed would harm the character or appearance of the conservation area. If not, permission would usually be granted. There would be no planning fee for any application required solely as a result of a Direction.

2.6

Those properties potentially affected would be separately consulted and all views expressed would be taken into account in making the decision on whether to proceed with the Direction.

APPENDIX 01

Statement of Community Involvement

Introduction

1.1

This statement is a summary of community involvement and public consultation undertaken by Wychavon District Council in respect of the Bretforton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals and proposed changes to the Bretforton Conservation Area boundary.

Background

1.2

A report to the Council's Planning Committee on 15 November 2018 explains the reasons for preparing a character appraisal and management plan for the Bretforton Conservation Area. Specifically, the character appraisal and plan is drafted in accordance with the requirements on Wychavon District Council imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to:

- keep its conservation areas under review;
- prepare policies and proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of its conservation areas; and
- pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in exercising its planning functions.

1.3

The preparation and publication of conservation area character appraisals and management proposals is a key step in the Council fulfilling these duties.

Community Involvement

1.4

Community involvement has taken the form of:

- briefing sessions with the Bretforton Parish Council and District Council Member for Bretforton Ward
- a public meeting at The Fleece Inn, Bretforton on the evening of 13 December 2018

Consultation

1.5

The consultation period began on 10 December 2018 and ended on 25 January 2018

Consultation was by:

- A public meeting held at The Fleece Inn, Bretforton on the evening of 13 December 2018
- Publication of the draft appraisal, management proposals & proposed conservation area boundary changes on the Wychavon District Council website, accompanied by an electronic feedback form
- Placing of the same documents for public inspection during the consultation period at:
 - Reception at The Civic Centre, Pershore
 - Evesham and Broadway public libraries
- Letters to Bretforton residents affected by the review of the conservation area, Bretforton Parish Council, Worcestershire Archaeological Unit, Historic England, Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire County Highways, Vale of Evesham Civic Society

Consultees

1.6

The following were consulted on the draft appraisal and management plan:

- Bretforton Parish Council
- District Council Member for Bretforton Ward
- Bretforton residents affected by the conservation area review
- Worcestershire County Archaeological Service
- Worcestershire County Council
- Worcestershire County Highways
- Historic England
- Vale of Evesham Civic Society

Publicity

1.7

Notice of the public meeting and consultation was given by way of:

- Posters placed in Bretforton village
- Letters to residents affected by the conservation area review on 29th November 2018
- A public meeting held at The Fleece Inn, Bretforton on 13th December 2018

Bretforton

- Notice placed with the documents at the Civic Centre, Evesham and Broadway public libraries and on the Council's website
- Information forwarded to consultees

Bretforton

APPENDIX 02

Sources & Further Information

Ordnance Survey mapping 1880s to present day

The Story of Our Ancient Village or Historical Memorials of the Parish of Bretforton.
W.H.Shawcross (1890)

The Domesday Geography of Midland England. H.C. Darby & I.B. Terrett (Eds) (2nd edtn 1971)

Victoria County History A history of the County of Worcester volume 2 (1906)

Historic England "Pastscape"

John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales 1870-1872 accessed through visionofbritain.org.uk retrieved 28 October 2013

The Buildings of England: Worcestershire Alan Brooks and Nikolaus Pevsner (2007)

Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment, Worcestershire County Council, 1999

Village Sales Particulars in boxes 705:273/7775/28 and 29 at Worcestershire County Archives

Further Information

For further guidance and information please contact:

The Heritage Section
Planning Services
Wychavon District Council
Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Persore
Worcs. WR10 1PT

Tel. 01386 565565
email: planning@wychavon.gov.uk
web: www.wychavon.gov.uk

The following websites contain information relating to conservation areas:

Wychavon District Council at
www.wychavon.gov.uk

Historic England at
<https://historicengland.org.uk/>