Drayton Conservation Area Appraisal
October 2008

Planning, Housing and Economy
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1 Introduction

This document is an appraisal of the character and appearance of Drayton Conservation Area, a linear village lying in close proximity to the north western edge of Banbury. Drayton remains a relatively small village and although the focus has shifted towards the Banbury road the historic settlement is still legible. More recent development has detracted from the compact historic core which is just a minor part of what was once a far more extensive settlement.

The conservation of this village is key in continuing its separation from Banbury and ensuring that its distinctive character is not lost.

The Conservation Area was designated in February 1977. This appraisal provides a comprehensive review of the current character and appearance of the village of Drayton and the Conservation Area. It also provides a basis for providing informed judgements of its future conservation and management.
2 Planning Policy Context

The planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides legislation for the protection of the nation’s heritage of buildings and places of architectural and historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. However, it is the 1990 Act (Section 69) which places a duty upon local planning authorities to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest through an appraisal process and to designate them as Conservation Areas. Since 1967 some 8,000 Conservation Areas have been designated in England, including 54 in Cherwell District.

Drayton Conservation Area was the sixth Conservation Area to be designated in Cherwell District, in 1977. This reflected the importance placed on the value of Drayton’s historical, aesthetic and architectural character as well as the need to ensure that the boundary between the village and Banbury was not eroded.

Local planning authorities have a duty under the Act to consider boundary revisions to their Conservation Areas ‘from time to time’. The boundary of Drayton Conservation Area has not been reviewed since its designation in February 1977, nor has a full appraisal been undertaken.

This document is based on a standard recording format derived from advice contained in documents published by English Heritage (2005a). By writing a full Conservation Area appraisal for Drayton, the special character and appearance can be identified and protected by ensuring that any future development preserves or enhances that identified special character.

Figure 1: Location
3 Location and Topography

Drayton is a small linear village straddling the A422 Banbury to Stratford Road. The village lies two and a half miles north-west of Banbury town centre yet only one field west of the north western suburbs. The Conservation Area includes the entire village and its immediate setting. Its western boundary is defined by the Sor Brook - a tributary of the River Cherwell - thus also dividing it from the village and Conservation Area of Wroxton, lying 0.8 miles to the west. The northern and southern boundaries generally follow hedgerows approximately one field beyond the village envelope. This 2008 review extends the Conservation Area to fully encompass the Drayton Arch and to rationalise the southern boundary along identifiable features. The landscape context is characterised by open undulating agricultural land of fields and valleys lying within the 100 and 150m contours.

Although there are no extensive areas of woodland within the Conservation Area, there is a strong pattern of hedgerows dating from the inclosure period that extend up to the perimeter of the village. A parkland character is evident on the slopes between Park Farm and the boundary with Wroxton where a number of trees have been planted.

Drayton is in an area of ironstone hills and incised valleys. The geology in this area is complex; the rock bed is Marlstone, an iron-bearing limestone with sandy deposits overlain by Lias Group clay. This geology has given rise to iron rich clay soils. (Cobham Resource Consultants, 1995).

Figure 2: Landform
4 Archaeology

This section provides a brief history of the development of Drayton. A more detailed account is given in The Victoria County History: A history of Oxfordshire, Vol IX (Pugh, 1969). Other key sources can be found in the Bibliography.

4.1 Origins
4.1.1 The first element of the name Drayton probably derives from the old English ‘drag’. The village may therefore have acquired its name because of the necessity of pulling or ‘dragging’ corn from the mill and other goods up and down the steep valley sides. Another suggestion is that the name could have originated as Drytown—a reference to differing weather conditions between Banbury and the village.

4.2 Archaeology
4.2.1 The good water supply and sheltered slopes no doubt provided the attraction for early settlers. Roman remains in the form of a tessellated pavement from a villa as well as coins have been found near the church, located on the rising slopes above the stream. Hereabouts was the nucleus of the original village. The modern village is principally located on the upper slopes of the valley along the curving main road, although there are still three cottages in the valley to the south-west of the church where the mill was situated. This is characteristic of the changing morphology of the whole village which has moved from its historic core in the valley to a location that is now centred upon the A422 running through the centre of the village.

Figure 2 depicts the key archaeological sites and finds within and surrounding Drayton as well as placing them in the context of the Conservation Area boundary.

Figure 3: Archaeological sites

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5 Development

5.1 Although it is hard to believe now, at one time Drayton was reputedly called Little London on account of its large size. The settlement is thought to have been the subject of a major fire, with burnt stones being dug up even today. It is also possible that the village population was substantially reduced by plague, which could also explain the relocation of the medieval village, although no records of this remain. History tells us of two former manor houses, but evidence of its former size is, however, hard to find.

6 History

6.1 Historically, Drayton has been an agricultural community and two farms remain in the parish today. With the booming wool trade, the Banbury region was ranked a second richest in England in 1503. This resulted in a rise in the number of yeomen farmers, who built farmhouses in the area. However, the importance of the wool and plush trade and the resultant prosperity declined from the end of the 17th century, when Drayton was noted as being small and poor. The 1665 Hearth Tax records two farms with 5 and 7 hearths, the parsonage with 5, six small farm houses and an unknown number of cottages. This cycle of prosperity and decline has left Drayton with a small legacy of vernacular buildings dating from the 16th century that have survived remarkably undisturbed; others, sadly, have disappeared altogether.

6.2 The parish remained uninclosed until the early 19th century, with the Inclosure award of 1802 resulting in only 198 acres uninclosed at that time, lying to the north east near Banbury Road. Early inclosure for sheep and cattle farming was probably encouraged by the thriving Banbury cloth industry and the poverty of the village’s few inhabitants. In the 19th century the villagers were mostly farmers and labourers, including shepherds, with 4 families of weavers.

6.3 Today’s village straddles the Banbury – Stratford road and evidence of its former importance can be seen in the milestone indicated on the 1887 OS sheet London 75 Warwick 27, which is no longer in place. This road was once the main Banbury to Warwick road. A Drayton Lane turnpike committee met in 1753 under the chairmanship of Francis Earl of Guildford and in March 1754 Drayton Lane was levelled for the construction of the turnpike road through Wroxton and Upton. However prior to this, conditions were described as being dangerous for horsemen and almost impassable for carriages for several months of the year.
The oldest surviving building in the village is the parish Church of St Peter, dating mainly from the 14th century. It is, unusually, some distance from the village, in an unprominent location significantly lower down the valley side, barely visible from today’s village and it is interesting to speculate as to why this might be.

It would not be unusual for the Parish Church to be constructed conveniently close to the manor. In the middle ages the largest farm house in the village was the old manor house and this was believed to have been located to the south east of the Church of St Peter. Exactly where this was sited in relation to the current Park Farm buildings is not known.

This manor was the principal seat of the Ardens and, later in the 14th and 15th centuries, the Grevilles. We know that the building pre-dates 1329 because in that year Robert Arden was licensed to crenellate it. In 1565 the Grevilles were forced, by their “extravagant mode of life” to sell the manor to the wealthy yeoman Thomas Webb.

It would appear that disharmony remained, however, because, after Lewis Greville murdered Thomas Webb’s brother Richard, the manorial estate was split up and the village never again had a resident lord of the manor.

In 1819 there is a record of the remains of a house of some importance to the south east of the church being used as a Poor House, but by 1841 this had apparently entirely gone. So, whilst the raison d’être for the location of the Parish Church has disappeared, the Church remains in its relatively secluded location away from the village, enjoying a tranquil and picturesque setting.

Another important house associated with the Parish Church was the Parsonage, located on the site of the current Glebefields Nursing Home, above the church. This was occupied by a number of rectors in the 16th and 17th centuries who were leaders of the Puritan movement in the English church. It is recorded as having 5 hearths in the hearth tax of 1665, but was demolished in 1862 to enable the construction of the 19th rectory by architect A W Bloomfield, which has now been sympathetically extended to create a sizeable nursing home called Glebefields.
Drayton appears to have been a subsidiary neighbour to the wealthy Wroxton estate to the west. Lord North of Wroxton Abbey invited Sanderson Miller, local squire and amateur architect, to remodel his estate. Works undertaken between 1720 and 1748 resulted in long formal vistas, some stretching east towards Drayton. The artificial fish ponds, rides and plantations can still be seen, with one formal avenue terminating in a view focusing on the centre of Drayton village at Drayton Lodge, single storey thatched building in the picturesque style, more characteristic of Wroxton than the remaining buildings in Drayton. The borrowed landscape extended into Drayton, with the erection of a large castellated Gothic archway, with two thin round turrets supporting a ruined arch, which still stands in the fields above Park Farm.

A further curiosity is the location of the former mill, now Mill Cottage. This is built part way up the valley side, on the spring line, well off the natural course of the stream in the valley floor. The 1882 OS map shows the mill fed from the north by a stream that follows a rather artificial looking course, including sluice gates, and which then turns sharply west to rejoin the main water course. No millers were recorded in the village after 1851 and this stream is not shown on any later OS maps. One is left wondering whether the former mill could also have been a creation of this Sanderson Miller landscape for Wroxton Abbey.

When visiting Wroxton in the 1750s Horace Walpole described the created landscape. '[The] scene consists of a beautiful lake entirely shut in with wood; the head falls into a fine cascade, and that into a serpentine river, over which is a little Gothic seat like a round temple, lifted up by a shaggy mount. On an eminence in the park is an obelisk erected to the honour and at the expense of ... the late Prince of Wales.... There are several paltry Chinese buildings and bridges [but] ... at least they were of the very first.'

From: The Correspondence of the Hon. Horace Walpole, 1753.
Figure 4 : 1882 O.S map of Drayton
6.12 Examination of the route of the main road from its southern entrance to Drayton as far as Wroxton village reveals several sharp 90 degree bends in its alignment and this also encourages speculation as to whether the road itself was diverted around the northern perimeter of the Wroxton estate. Certainly the construction of the turnpike road is contemporary with the establishment of the Wroxton Abbey landscape. The existence of the Roebuck Inn at the northern end of the village, predating the turnpike, suggests that the road historically took its current route from the village. However it may once have cut across the park following the footpath line seen on the early maps and still visible on the ground.

It was not unusual for whole villages to be swept away to realise ambitious land owners dreams of the picturesque landscape of the period and this begs the question as to whether some buildings on the lower western slopes in Drayton were sacrificed to that end and, if so, whether this explains the reduction in the size of the village from medieval time to the 18th century.

Drayton school children in the 19th Century.

6.13 There had been no resident squire in the village since the incident between the Grevilles and the Webbs, but in the second half of the 18th century this place was taken by the Metcalfe family who, it is believed, lived at Drayton Lodge Farmhouse, a late 18th century house in the north of the parish outside the conservation area. It appears that this house was built on the site of an older property and there are indications that this was once a gentleman’s residence: the grounds have fine trees and there are Medieval fishponds nearby. The Metcalfes supported the village school and endowed a charity.

6.14 This day school, of which there is no record prior to 1800, was initially supported entirely by the rector but, despite the later support of Elizabeth Metcalfe, 1818 saw its closure, when a shortage of teachers occurred, with little interest from parents to aid its continuation.

6.15 Another day school was opened in 1821 in which children were taught at the expense of their parents. A free Sunday school was introduced, attended by 32 children in 1854. Only one of the day schools existed in 1855, with the average attendance being 35 pupils. The school rooms were given rent free by Lord and Lady de la Warr of Hanwell Castle.

6.16 The cottages comprising the school came into severe disrepair, despite several attempts at rebuilding. In 1899 a threat was made to withdraw government grants unless a separate room was found for the younger children. This was found the following year, raising the school accommodation to a total of 67. Lord North, the owner of the school, died in 1932 and, despite attempts by the local community to keep the school open, there was much pressure from the Education Authority to close it. In 1941 Trinity College, Oxford, bought the site and let it to managers. In 1948 the school finally closed and children were transferred to North Newington Primary and Banbury Secondary Schools. The school house remains in community use as the Village Hall. The 1974 OS map refers to a dwelling to the west of the Roebuck PH as Old School House.

6.17 Notable farms in the parish include Park Farm, to the south of the village, which formerly belonged to the North’s estate and dates back to 1665, Withycombe Farm, which also dates from the 17th century and Drayton Lodge Farm, built after the inclosure of the fields in 1802 (but with earlier origins), the latter two lie outside the conservation area.

6.18 The Roebuck Inn probably dates from the 16th century. Drayton was also home to a second inn, The Hare and Hounds, but this is not recorded after 1806, perhaps because the local population and the level of traffic on the road was insufficient to support two inns such a short distance from Banbury.
6.19
At the turn of the 19th century Methodism took root, and in 1802 there was a meeting house in Drayton attended by 30 Methodists, probably mainly from outside the parish. Three years later there were many more Methodists, with a teacher and a licensed meeting house. By 1866, however, the sect is believed to have died out in the village.

6.20
At the turn of the century a mineral railway was built immediately to the north of the village in connection with the ironstone works, at the time one of the primary sources of this building material in the country.

6.21
By 1900 the village comprised St Peter’s Church and rectory on the west facing slopes, the former mill in the valley floor, Park Farm to the south, a scattering of agricultural buildings on the west side of the main road and most buildings, including the school house and the inn strung out along the east side of the main road. By 1938 Banbury Rural District Council had erected ten semi-detached houses for rent at Arden Close. Further rented bungalows, this time for older people, were constructed at Queens Crescent and a small speculative estate at Metcalfe Close in the mid 20th century. Infill development west of the main road also dates from this period and includes some later barn conversions.

Figure 5: 1913 map showing the mineral railway
7 Architectural History

7.1 St Peter's Church, (grade II* listed) dating from the 14th century, consists of a chancel, nave, north and south aisles and a western tower. In 1808, however, the tower was rebuilt on a smaller scale having been declared to be in a ruinous condition. In 1813 the chancel too was in poor repair and in 1818 the roof also, this being repaired in 1822 followed by further repairs in 1877 by Edwin Dolby, architect. However his plan for a spire to be added was never carried out and the church retains its rather squat proportions with its truncated tower to this day.

7.2 The Roebuck Inn, (grade II listed) is a 16th century two storey building of coursed ironstone rubble, and retains some stone mullioned windows of two and three lights, with square moulded lintels and a doorway with a classical architrave and cornice.

7.3 Ivy Cottage, (grade II listed) was built in the mid 18th century. A coursed ironstone building it has a steeply pitched thatched roof. The entrance is flanked by 2 and 3 light casement windows with chamfered wood lintels. The interior displays 2 inglenook fireplaces with stop-chamfered bressumers, a stop-chamfered beam and chamfered joists.

7.4 Rectory Cottage, (grade II listed) is late 18th century or possibly early 19th century. The building has a hipped thatch roof with wide sofit eaves. The cottage is single storey and the entrance is flanked by 2 light windows with small opening casements with latticed lead cames.

7.5 The Cottage and Cottage abutting on left, (grade II listed) Early 18th century cottages in coursed ironstone with steeply pitched thatched roofs. Both cottages have 20th century alterations

7.6 Withycombe Farmhouse and attached stable, (grade II listed) lies outside the Conservation Area but within Drayton parish. Early to mid 17th century farmhouse with later alterations. The house has a 3-unit plan with 2 storeys plus attics and cellars. Entrance is flanked by pairs of 2-light flat faced mullioned windows with metal casements and wrought-iron casement fasteners. Internally inglenook fireplace with chamfered bressumer, chamfered beams, straight flight staircase with winder and balusters with heart shaped decoration. (Withycombe was settled in 1653 on Lord Saye and Sele's (of Broughton Castle) third son John Fiennes and his wife Susannah. The house is said to have been part of the dowry. VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol IX, p104-106
Figure 6: Designations

The Roebuck Inn
Ivy Cottage
The Cottage and abutting cottage to the left
The Lodge (formerly Rectory Cottage)
2 Chest tombs Evans and Webb
St Peter's Church
Park Farm and abutting barns

Conservation Area boundary
Grade II* listed buildings
Grade II listed buildings
Footpaths
Tree Preservation Orders

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A number of the buildings within the Conservation Area that make a significant positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area are described below. The retention of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area is preferable to demolition and redevelopment.

**Unlisted Buildings of Significance**

- **Park Farm**: This farm has historical importance within the village, dating back to the 14th century. Drayton is a village that was formed around such elements as the farm as well the Mill Cottages.

- **The Village Hall**: is half ironstone and half brick making it a distinctive building within the centre of the village. It also contains a number of attractive details such as the window surrounds.

- **The ‘Old House’**: is an important feature within the village and is in keeping with the traditional architectural style that needs to be preserved.

- **The Glebefields Nursing Home**: is a prominent feature on the skyline as the village is viewed from North Newington. Although not an original feature its materials are in keeping with the village.

- **The converted Mill Cottages**: are a direct link to the historic development of the village and need to be maintained including some of the Mill features that remain.

- **These Edwardian properties**: have earlier vernacular origins and a distinctive style, although not directly linked to the historic architecture of the village.
8. Character Areas
8.1 Western slopes character area

The location of the early village is believed to lie on the west facing slope of the valley, but all that remains today is the Church of St Peter, the former rectory and the former mill.

8.1.1 Land use

The land use is mainly agricultural, with sheep grazing predominating, amongst parkland tree planting. A small enclosed church yard surrounds the Church of St Peter. The former rectory has been sympathetically extended to create Glebelands nursing home and commands fine, expansive westerly views. The former Mill, which was recorded as three cottages in 1900, is now one dwelling and the former fish ponds can still be seen. The area has a tranquil quality and a strong visual relationship with the Wroxton Abbey landscape to the west. There are also a couple of new dwellings and conversions behind the main street building line that also relate to this aspect, maximising the view for their own enjoyment but introducing uncharacteristic materials and scale, which, if this were to continue, could damage the prospect of Drayton when viewed from Wroxton conservation area to the west.

8.1.2 Street pattern, footpaths, mean of enclosure

This area is characterised by a number of unadopted tracks, paths and incised lanes climbing down the valley side to the former mill, the church and onwards to cross the watercourse. Some of these are bounded by mature hedgerows, which adds to the sense of enclosure and the informal nature of these routes adds to the rural quality. Vehicular access the St Peter’s Church is limited, and this has necessitated the creation of a small parking and turning area to the north of the churchyard which, at its present size and with its current gravel finish, does no harm to the setting.

The extensive grounds of the former mill have no obvious means of enclosure and this enables the building to blend well in to its context and the water course beyond; the introduction of alien fencing etc would be regrettable in this valley. The grounds of the former rectory have abundant dry stone walling of recent and careful construction that has yet to blend into the wider landscape. The introduction of various rather suburban styles of means of enclosure including railings and gates to properties on the north side of Mill Lane, however, is beginning to detract from the rural character.

Looking down the lane towards Glebe Barn

Looking down Mill Lane to Mill Cottages

Mill Lane

The boundary walls of Glebe Barn and Glebe-fields are impressive and contain ancient architectural features which enhance the conservation area.
8.1.3 Building age, type, style and materials

St Peter’s Church, grade II* listed, is the oldest building in the village, believed originally to date from the 11th century, however most of the existing fabric dates from the 14th century with substantial repairs during the 19th century. The building is constructed of ironstone and contains a number of impressive memorials including a 13th century stone slab carved with foliage and an incised slab featuring a 14th century knight. The north and east windows of the church are Decorated Gothic in style as is the Piscina and two seat Sedilia in the southern aisle. The capital of the north west pier is carved with heads and interlaced arms, a popular motif in north Oxfordshire.

Although the machinery has long gone the former mill can still be identified. It and its adjacent cottages have been sensitively converted to one dwelling. To the west there are traces of a structure alongside the stream that might have been connected to the working mill. Mill Lane is certainly an ancient route with high wooded banks on either side and it seems likely that a larger number of dwellings were once found in this area of the village.

The former rectory is typical of its period, but constructed in local ironstone. Built by A.W. Blomfield in 1862 it has been extended in the 20th century. To the south of the old rectory Glebe Barn has been converted using a variety of materials and architectural styles. Despite these conversions a number of older structures remain unaltered within this character area.

8.1.4 Scale and massing

Despite its small size, and truncated tower, the parish church dominates this area in lending to it the tranquil character. The former rectory, always an imposing building with commanding views, has recently been extensively but sympathetically extended to provide accommodation as a nursing home. The magnificent views westerly have been exploited for the enjoyment of the residents. The former mill nestles attractively towards the valley floor, still accompanied by its outbuildings.

8.1.5 Features of special interest

- The development of the church from what was probably an early chantry in the form of the southern aisle to its current form. Unusually elements of the original church were not destroyed by the Victorian restorations.
- The tombs in both the church yard and within the church. In particular the fascinating 1441 incised alabaster tomb of John Grenville.
- The structures associated with the Mill and traces of a possible artificial mill race crossing the fields from the main stream.
- The old paths, lanes and more temporary dwellings that this area almost certainly once contained.
8.1.6 Views

The expansive views across this area westwards the Wroxton Abbey landscape are the defining characteristic of this area. They are quite magnificent, particularly in low light. Similarly, views back from Wroxton towards Drayton pick up the key features of the designed landscape. More local views of the Church of St Peter against its rural backdrop are equally pleasing.

8.1.7 Threats

- The major threat to this area is intrusion into the expansive and attractive westerly views towards and over the Wroxton Abbey landscape from new buildings and means of enclosure but also inappropriate agricultural practice and management of the landscape. The pastoral scene could be destroyed by the introduction of extensive arable farming. Over mature trees will need selective felling and replanting and, fortunately, there is evidence that this is already taking place.

- Attempts to upgrade the tracks and lanes through resurfacing and removal of enclosing hedgerows would significantly change the rural character and any further necessary extension to the parking area to serve the church should continue to be in the current informal style, possibly also enclosed by hedging to reduce its visual impact.

- Further back land development and conversions in this area should be resisted due to the suburbanising influence, not only of the buildings themselves, but of their uncharacteristic means of enclosure, over-engineered driveways and attendant garden paraphernalia that inevitably comes with domestic properties and intrudes into long and medium distance views across the valley.

- Whilst the west facing gardens to Glebefields are, of necessity, designed with ease of access for the residents in mind, the extent of hard landscaping and retaining walls presents a rather raw edge to this property until the planting matures and the stone weathers. The planting of climbers around the periphery of the boundary walls could aid their early integration into the landscape.
8.2 Village street character area

8.2.1. Land use

Now exclusively residential, other than the Roe-buck Inn and the Village hall (former school house), there is no evidence that additional land uses other than the second inn, second school and Methodist hall ever existed. Although they may have existed, there is no record of workshops, forges, or shops that one might expect in a farming community.

8.2.2 Street pattern

Essentially, Drayton is, now, with a few later exceptions, a road side linear village, with properties gaining access from the main road, if not always fronting it. The Stratford Road, now A442, runs through the centre and clearly dominates the village with the level, noise and speed of traffic, despite the speed limit and the tight constrictions at both entry and exit of the village. The treeless grass verges are characteristic features, although becoming eroded by parked cars in parts.

8.2.3 Building age, type, style, materials, scale and massing

The street is lined with buildings from every century from the 16th to the 20th, predominantly two storeys and generally consistently of local coursed ironstone rubble, with later buildings in uncharacteristic brick, but a mixture of roofing materials.

Two of the earliest buildings, the Roebuck Inn and Ivy Cottage, dating from the 16th century and listed grade II, are located at the northern edge of the village street in a prominent position when seen from both directions. These coursed ironstone buildings were both formerly thatched and, although now only Ivy Cottage retains its thatch, their steep pitches retain the characteristic proportions of the local vernacular.

Two other Grade II listed buildings, the semi-detached The Cottage and Wilan Cottage, are also of coursed ironstone and thatch, set back from the building line above the road and are fine examples of the local vernacular. Wilan Cottage has been sympathetically extended, although with UPVC double glazing that is to be replaced, but the contents of the garden, the garage, parking area and front wall, rebuilt with rather a severe capping, capture one’s attention before the delightful building.

The Lodge, also Grade II listed, on the west side of the main road at the entrance to the lane leading to the church and the former rectory, is a single storey thatched building with leaded metal casement windows with gothic head and drip mould and a central studded plank door, reminiscent of Wroxtton architecture, and with a high quality clearly subservient extension that does not compete with the original building.
There is a strong building line on the east side of the road running south from the Village Hall to Wood View cottage and this group is set back from the road behind a pleasing grass verge. The enclosure continues south as far as Manor House, by virtue of a combination of front and gable elevations, boundary walls and strong evergreen hedges. Sheasby Cottage and Woodside present an interesting pair of ironstone gables to the highway, symmetrical in all but scale, with simple timber casements and timber lintels. Manor House, an unlisted ironstone building of unknown age, occupies a prominent location opposite Mill Lane, but has been unfortunately re-fenestrated with large Upvc windows.

On the western side of the road there is a selection of dwellings that make a neutral contribution to the conservation area as they are set back in their often highly vegetated plots and, although of little historic or architectural interest and not usually in the locally distinctive ironstone, generally respect the local palette of materials to a greater or lesser extent. Some, such as The Old House and Ardens Bold / Avon Cottage, appear on the earliest OS maps but cannot readily be seen from the public domain.

Of more interest is the terrace of four houses on the north side of Stratford road at the eastern entrance to the village. Again of coursed ironstone, the small scale of Crickle Cottage, the two and a half storey symmetrical Corinium and South View and the rather more imposing double fronted Sundial House make a pleasing composition as a group and serve to constrict visibility at the tight bend entering the village. Of particular note are the retained timber sash windows, plank stable doors and terracotta tiled paths to the front doors.

To the east of this group lies a bungalow and associated garaging that makes a negative contribution to the conservation area but, with its recent sale, there is the opportunity for significant enhancement here.
8.2.4 Means of enclosure, trees, hedges, verges and open space

Front boundary walls are almost invariably of ironstone, often supplemented by hedges or other garden vegetation. This is important in assisting with the continuation of the building line and the enclosure of the otherwise open plots on the west side of the road. Of particular note is the evergreen hedge to Shirley Cottage.

Evergreen hedge to Shirley Cottage assists in continuing the strong building line

There are two trees protected by TPOs to the north of The Lodge, but other trees make a significant contribution to the streetscape, for example: the two trees immediately to their north, the tree outside the village hall, which is prominent in views up the main street; the two sycamores in the garden of Briar Post, prominent at the eastern entrance to the village; the evergreen in the grounds of the Old School House, which assists with enclosure at the western entrance to the village; but, most significantly, the line of trees between Stratford Road and Arden Close, which are prominent on the inside of the bend in the road and effectively contain Arden Close visually.

As previously mentioned, the grass verges, particularly on the east side of Stratford Road where they raise the frontage higher than the road, make a positive contribution, with attractive occasional stepping stone type pedestrian crossings to curtilages, but regrettably also a little erosion from parked cars.
8.2.5 Key views

- The linear space enjoys enclosed views both north and south down the village street, terminated strongly at the northern end by Ivy Cottage. Manor House and Crickle Cottage terminate views from Mill Lane and Park Farm respectively.

- There are few vantage points or glimpse views from which to enjoy the vista west towards Wroxton, with the exception of the junction of Arden Close.

- From the northern end of the village street there are uncontained views into the rear gardens of Queens Crescent across the entrance to Metcalfe close and, for the sake of the privacy and amenity of residents and also the visual containment of the conservation area, the planting of a hedge along the southern boundary of Queens Crescent would be beneficial.

- The car park and signage associated with the Roebuck Inn is necessary commercially, but care is needed to ensure that further adornments do not detract from the quality of the building.

8.2.6 Features of special interest

- The tight 90 degree corners each end of the village street effectively demarcate the entrance and exit from the village.

- The grass verges that contribute to the strong building line on the east side which are reminiscent of the village’s rural legacy.

- The former school, still in community use as the Village Hall

- The Lodge, with its gothic style of architecture, relating to buildings in Wroxton.

8.2.7 Threats

- Erosion of the grass verges

- Felling of unprotected trees that make a positive contribution to the character of the area

- Loss of thatch

- Replacement of traditional timber windows with clumsy UPvc double glazed units in unlisted buildings.
8.3 Park Farm character area

Park Farm is distinguished from the Western Slopes by being a relatively self contained inward looking farm holding in the process of creating its own agricultural landscape, particularly to the north and east, although there is a visual connection to the Church of St Peter to the north west.

5.3.1 Land use

Park Farm is the last remaining historic farms within the conservation area, with a farm house and Grade II listed fold yard to its east, other older agricultural outbuildings to the north and a modern agricultural building to the south.

5.3.2 Building age, type, style, materials, scale and massing

Park Farm is believed to date from 1665. The farmhouse itself is a three bay house of two storeys plus attic in regular coursed ironstone with a tiled roof. It faces east west with a further wing to the south. The timber casement and fan light windows are deep and have strong stone lintols.

The enclosing barns are Grade II listed and are one and two storeys in height, of brick and ironstone construction, with both tile and asbestos roofs. The grouping is most attractive.

A modern agricultural building of significant size has been constructed to the south requiring some remodelling of the natural slope to accommodate it.

5.3.3 Street pattern, trees, hedges, verges

Historically the approach to Park Farm was by way of the track to the east of the former rectory garden. Recently a new access for agricultural machinery, and on to the pumping station to the west, has been created further east, associated with new tree plantations. This ensures that the character of the older lane is not harmed by large scale machinery.

The original lane is contained by a mixture of attractive lichen covered dry stone walls and timber fencing. The fold yard is now grassed and contains three fine trees, creating a particularly attractive space. Hedgerow trees enclose the south western boundaries of the west facing garden to the farmhouse.

5.3.4 Views

- The original approach to the farm affords attractive views both towards the farm group and west over the parkland landscape and the more local view of the Church of St Peter.
- The new approach focuses on the modern agricultural building but is also enclosed by new tree plantations.
- Several public rights of way meet at the bridge at the south western corner of the conservation area near Keeper’s Lodge and, from these, attractive views towards Park Farm and the Church of St Peter may be enjoyed. An historic avenue of trees that runs due south from Park Farm partly screens the visual impact of the modern agricultural building from the south west.

5.3.5 Threats

As with any working farm, the introduction of new buildings to meet the needs of modern agricultural practice renders the traditional fold yard buildings potentially redundant and this can often lead to their physical decline. This is not the case here at present and, due to the grade II listing attached to the buildings, a duty exists to ensure their good repair. Alternative uses can be found for such buildings to ensure their productive future use. There are also a number of Public Rights of way crossing Park Farm’s land that have become overgrown, the legibility of these historic routes are important in retaining the character of the village’s landscape setting.

The landscape to the west of Park Farm. The owner declined permission for photographs of Park Farm to be included in this document.
8.4 Arden Close character area

This small crescent of semi-detached houses was built by Banbury Rural District Council in the 1930s in common with many similar developments in the villages around Banbury. These developments were of a particularly distinctive appearance, characterised by their crescent shape set back from the main road, often behind a service road. They exhibit a range of styles, but usually display a dominant roof, often hipped.

All this is the case here. But, unusually here, the buildings are not identical and also contain one group of semis set back from the main frontage. They have all been much altered and all have lost their original symmetry and would not normally justify conservation area status, were it not for their interest in terms of social history and for completeness of the whole village being within the conservation area.

8.5 Estate character area

The same statement is true of the mid 20th century estate development at Queens Crescent and Metcalfe Close. These bungalows, built for older people, and the speculative housing estate, respectively, reflect nothing of the local distinctiveness of the area, neither in terms of their layout nor in terms of their materials. However, for the sake of completeness and because these developments are now an integral part of the village, they were included within the 1977 designation and it is not proposed here to specifically exclude them.
8.6 The setting of the village

A generous area of surrounding countryside was included in the conservation area at its designation in 1977. The reasons for this was that to the west and south west the landscape is absolutely integral to the character of the Western Slopes and Park Farm character areas of the conservation area, providing some magnificent views. The boundary has been extended slightly to the south of the Conservation Area to rationalise the southern boundary and include an area that is deemed to be of significance in the Wroxton Abbey created landscape. To the north the allotments gardens are an intrinsic part of the social history of the village and the woodland provides a backdrop and visual containment to the village. To the north east the boundary runs adjacent to the western development of Banbury, and to the south east just one field away, emphasising just how close the town has expanded towards the village. Any further westwards growth of Banbury would need to be extremely limited to avoid encroaching visually on the setting of the Conservation Area and disturbing its independent rural identity.

The surrounding landscape contains a number of public rights of way, which are well maintained and well used, emphasising the proximity of the urban area. Whilst this opens up attractive views into and from the village in the west and south, it also provides less attractive views towards the urban edge in the east and to the eastern boundary of Drayton village, which is a raw edge, poorly integrated into the landscape. Heavily used public rights of way bring other difficulties for farmers related to stock control, security and the threat of trespass. However, it does serve to emphasis how important to the population of the town the availability of high quality rural landscape is.
Figure 9: Visual analysis
Figure 10: Materials and Details
Figure 11: Old Photographs

1900-1960s

- View towards The Roebuck Inn
- Arden Close
- View south past Ferndale and Wood View
- Looking west past Hillside Cottages

2008

- Same view now showing retention of essential character but loss of thatch
- Arden Close showing increase in car numbers
- View today shows loss of thatch and one dwelling
- Same view showing loss of grass verge
The Conservation Area designated in 1977 was a generous one, including the setting of the village in every direction, extending to the built up limits of Banbury in the east and abutting Wroxton Conservation Area in the west. With the exception of a small extension to rationalise the southern boundary, further extension is not considered necessary or justified.

The designated area includes mid 20th century residential development that is not, of itself, normally worthy of designation. However since it has been included for over 30 years and for the sake of completeness in including the entire settlement it is not proposed to de-designate any areas.
10 Management Plan

Policy context

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. In line with English Heritage guidance (2005b) Conservation Area Management Proposals are to be published as part of the process of area designation or review. Their aim is to provide guidance through policy statements to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area.

The main threat to the character and appearance of any Conservation Area is the potential for westward expansion of Banbury. The Conservation Area appraisal attempts to define the special character and appearance of the settlement and its setting, its key views and vistas that should be protected. The distance from Banbury is a small one and the rural context of Drayton to the east is a fragile one. The easterly views of the close western suburbs are readily evident from the village. Any further expansion of the western suburbs needs to be carefully considered in relation to landscape, topography, vegetation and landscape character.

Another threat to the Conservation Area is the cumulative impact of numerous alterations, some quite small in themselves, to the traditional but unlisted buildings within the area. These changes include such works as the replacement of traditional window casements, usually with uPVC double-glazing, replacement of original doors, additions such as non-traditional porches and erection of satellite dishes on the front elevations of properties.

Such alterations to unlisted residential properties are for the most part permitted development and therefore do not require planning permission. Unauthorised alterations and additions are also a cause for concern and are often detrimental to the appearance of a property. Both unsympathetic permitted development and unauthorised development cumulatively result in the erosion of the historic character and appearance of the conservation area.

The aim of management proposals is not to prevent changes but to ensure that any such changes are both sympathetic to the individual property, sympathetic to the streetscape and overall enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The principal policies covering alterations and development of the historic built environment are given in Appendix 1.
Generic Guidance

The Council Will:

1. Not permit the use of UVPC double glazing in listed buildings and where unauthorised work is carried out enforcement action will be taken.

2. Promote a policy of repair rather than replacement of traditional architectural details. Where repairs are not economically viable then the promotion of bespoke sympathetic replacement is encouraged. This is particularly the case for windows when sympathetic re-fenestration is important in preserving the appearance of the building in the design and materials.

3. Actively promote the use of traditional building and roofing materials in new building work, extensions and repair. It is vital the ironstone remains the predominant building material in the village.

4. Encourage owners of historic properties replace inappropriate modern with the appropriate traditional materials, for example wood or metal casements. Materials such as uPVC and concrete tiles look out of place in a Conservation Area and their use is discouraged.

5. Expect the scale, massing, proportions and height of new buildings to reflect those of the existing built environment of the immediate context or of the wider Conservation Area context. Layouts, boundary treatments and landscaping schemes will also be expected to make clear visual reference to those traditionally found within in the area.

6. Strive to ensure that the conversion of traditional buildings to alternative uses will be achieved with minimal intervention and without the destruction of original character. Features and equipment pertinent to the building’s original function where they exist (e.g. grinding machinery, chutes and races in mills) should be retained as part of any conversion.

7. Promote the distinctiveness of the local thatching tradition. Historically thatch was a ubiquitous roofing material across the district. This prevalence has been reduced to small pockets of buildings. Local style and traditions in thatch are to be promoted to enhance the importance of the few thatched properties that remain. There are a number of thatched properties within Drayton and these should be retained and maintained. When possible any block-cut ridges should be returned to the traditional plain flush ridges which are more appropriate to the area.

8. Exercise a presumption against artificial cladding material, including render on the front elevations of buildings.
Encourage the location of solar panels on rear roof slopes or on outbuildings within rear gardens.

Require the location of satellite dishes on rear elevations or within rear gardens to prevent harm to the historic character and visual appearance of the area.

Discourage disfiguring alterations such as unsympathetic extensions, altering the dimensions of window openings and the removal of chimneys.

Investigate whether appropriate planning permission or listed building consent has been obtained for an alteration. Unauthorised alterations to a listed building is a criminal offence and if necessary the council will enforce against this.

Promote traditional styles of pointing. The type of pointing in stone or brickwork is integral to the appearance of the wall or structure. It is therefore of great importance that only appropriate pointing is used in the repointing of stone or brickwork. Repointing work should be discrete to the point of being inseparable from the original. ‘Ribbon’ pointing and similar is considered a totally inappropriate style of pointing for this district.

Promote the use of lime mortar in the construction and repointing of stone and brickwork. This traditional building material is strongly advocated and its use is beneficial to traditional buildings. This is in contrast to hard cementaceous mortars often used in modern construction, which can accelerate the weathering of the local soft building stone.

Promote the use of sympathetic materials for garage doors. Vertical timber boarded side hung doors are preferable to metal or fibreglass versions which can have a negative impact on the street scene.

Actively promote the harmonisation of appearance within pairs of properties.

Generally encourage the good maintenance of properties including boundary walls.

Support new buildings on infill plots where this would enhance the character and appearance to replace building that does not currently make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Create a dialogue with service providers to encourage underground power cables to reduce the visual pollution caused by the overhead lines and their supporting poles within the village.

Encourage the sympathetic location of both amenity and private security lighting to limit light ‘pollution’. Lighting within the village can have an adverse effect on the semi-rural character of the area. The material and design of the fittings and their position on the building should be carefully considered.

Promote the repair or replacement of lost or inappropriate boundary treatments with traditional walling or hedging in a style appropriate to the location.

Promote the use of a suitable style of boundary for the position within the village, for example the use of simple post fencing for properties backing onto open ground and stone walls in the village centre.

Promote the retention of historic footpaths within the conservation area and work with bodies such as the Parish Council and Oxford County Council to prevent these being lost. The informality of these paths should be preserved and attempts to add hard surfaces or extensive signage should be resisted. The footpaths within this Conservation Area are key to the character of the landscape, some of them following ancient routes joining local villages.
Management and protection of important green spaces

The Council will:

1. Promote positive management of vegetation. Trees and hedges make an important contribution to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. Planting of exotic imports or inappropriate varieties, such as Leylandii, are to be strongly discouraged, as these trees grow fast and can alter or block important views as well being uncharacteristic of the area. The trees and hedges within and around Drayton play a key role in the character of the Conservation Area, particularly in the setting of the village. Advance notice needs to be given to the Council of the intention to top, lop or fell trees over a certain girth within the conservation area. Two trees also have specific Tree Preservation Orders attached to them.

2. Promote the sympathetic management of open areas within the Conservation Area such as the allotments and the churchyard, but without over cultivation.

3. Seek to preserve the rural character of verges by working with the Highway Authority to avoid the insertion of inappropriate kerbing which would have an urbanising effect whilst seeking solutions that prevent harm to verges by parked cars.

4. Encourage the retention and good maintenance of garden walls and boundary hedges.

5. Resist development that would adversely affect the setting of the village by extending ribbon development or impinging further into the landscape of the western slopes.
11 Appendix 1

There are a number of policy documents which contain policies pertaining to the historic built environment. The main policies are summarised in this section. Other policies of a more general nature are also of some relevance. These are not listed here but can be found elsewhere in the specific documents mentioned below.

**Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016**

**EN4** The fabric and setting of listed buildings including Blenheim Palace and Park, a World Heritage Site, will be preserved and the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings will be preserved or enhanced. Other elements of the historic environment, including historic parks and gardens, battlefields and historic landscapes will also be protected from harmful development.

**EN6** There will be a presumption in favour of preserving in situ nationally and internationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings. Development affecting other archaeological remains should include measures to secure their preservation in situ or where this is not feasible, their recording or removal to another site.

**Cherwell Local Plan 1996**

**H12** New housing in the rural areas of the district will be permitted within existing settlements in accordance with policies H13, H14 and H15. Schemes which meet a specific and identified local housing need will be permitted in accordance with policies H5 and H6.

**H13** Residential development within the villages of Adderbury, Ambrosden, Bloxham, Bodicote, Chesterton, Cropredy, Deddington, Finmere, Fringford, Fritwell, Hook Norton, Kirtlington, Launton, Mollington, Steeple Aston, Shenington, Sibford Gower and Sibford Ferris will be restricted to: (i) infilling; (ii) minor development comprising small groups of dwellings on sites within the built-up area of the settlement; (iii) the conversion of non-residential buildings in accordance with policy H21. In each instance development proposals will be subject to the other policies in the plan.

**H5** Where there is a demonstrable lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, the District Council will negotiate with developers to secure an element of affordable housing in substantial new residential development schemes. The District Council will need to be satisfied that such affordable housing: (i) is economically viable in terms of its ability to meet the need identified (ii) will be available to meet local needs long term through secure arrangements being made to restrict the occupancy of the development (iii) is compatible with the other policies in this plan.

**H19** Proposals for the conversion of a rural building, whose form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings to a dwelling in a location beyond the built-up limits of a settlement will be favourably considered provided: (i) the building can be converted without major rebuilding or extension and without inappropriate alteration to its form and character; (ii) the proposal would not cause significant harm to the character of the countryside or the immediate setting of the building; (iii) the proposal would not harm the special character and interest of a building of architectural or historic significance; (iv) the proposal meets the requirements of the other policies in the plan.

**H21** Within settlements the conversion of suitable buildings to dwellings will be favourably considered unless conversion to a residential use would be detrimental to the special character and interest of a building of architectural and historic significance. In all instances proposals will be subject to the other policies in this plan.

**C18** In determining an application for listed building consent the Council will have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. The Council will normally only approve internal and external alterations or extensions to a listed building which are minor and sympathetic to the architectural and historic character of the building.
C23 There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, walls, trees or other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

C27 Development proposals in villages will be expected to respect their historic settlement pattern.

C30 Design control will be exercised to ensure: (i) that new housing development is compatible with the appearance, character, layout, scale and density of existing dwellings in the vicinity; (ii) that any proposal to extend an existing dwelling (in cases where planning permission is required) is compatible with the scale of the existing dwelling, its curtilage and the character of the street scene; (iii) that new housing development or any proposal for the extension (in cases where planning permission is required) or conversion of an existing dwelling provides standards of amenity and privacy acceptable to the local planning authority.

C36 In considering applications in Conservation Areas the Council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

Non-statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011

EN34 The council will seek to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape through the control of development. Proposals will not be permitted if they would: (i) cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside; (ii) cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography; (iii) be inconsistent with local character; (iv) harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features; (v) harm the historic value of the landscape.

EN35 The Council will seek to retain woodlands, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features which are important to the character or appearance of the local landscape as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value. Proposals which would result in the loss of such features will not be permitted unless their loss can be justified by appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures to the satisfaction of the Council.

EN39 Development should preserve listed buildings, their features and settings, and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas, as defined on the proposals map. Development that conflicts with these objectives will not be permitted.

EN40 In a Conservation Area, or an area that makes an important contribution to its setting, planning control will be exercised to ensure, inter alia, that the character or appearance of the area so designated is preserved or enhanced. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, walls, trees or other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. A new development should understand and respect the sense of place and architectural language of the existing but should seek to avoid pastiche development except where this is shown to be clearly the most appropriate.

EN42 Sympathetic consideration will be given to proposals for the change of use of a listed building, provided that the new use minimises damage to the character, fabric, interior or setting of the building, and does not adversely affect the reasons for its statutory listing.

EN43 Proposals that would result in the total or substantial demolition of a Listed Building, or any significant part of it, will not be permitted in the absence of clear and convincing evidence that the market testing set out in pg15 paragraphs 3.16 to 3.19 has been thoroughly followed with no success.

EN45 Before determination of an application for planning permission requiring the alteration, extension or partial demolition of a Listed Building, applicants will required to provide sufficient information to enable an assessment of the likely impact of the proposals on the special architectural or historic interest of the structure, its setting or special features.
The Council will promote sustainability of the historic environment through conservation, protection and enhancement of the archaeological heritage and its interpretation and presentation to the public. In particular it will: (i) seek to ensure that scheduled ancient monuments and other unscheduled sites of national and regional importance and their settings are permanently preserved; (ii) ensure that development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desk-top study, and where appropriate a field evaluation; (iii) not permit development that would adversely affect archaeological remains and their settings unless the applicant can demonstrate that the archaeological resource will be physically preserved in-situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals; (iv) ensure that where physical preservation in-situ is neither practical nor desirable and sites are not scheduled or of national importance, the developer will be responsible for making appropriate provision for a programme of archaeological Investigation, recording, analysis and publication that will ensure the site is preserved by record prior to destruction. Such measures will be secured either by a planning agreement or by a suitable planning condition.

Development that would damage the character, appearance, setting or features of designed historic landscapes (parks and gardens) and battlefields will be refused.

In considering applications for advertisements in Conservation Areas the Council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.
12 Bibliography

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Recommendation of the Executive

Delegate authority to portfolio holder

Further recommended changes to the document

Proposed change—minor alterations to figure 1 & 3 and minor amendments in response to local member comments.

Amended document approved by

Portfolio holder: Planning, Housing & Economy

Date approved

3 November 08