



South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council

## Sawston conservation area

Draft council policy (Ref: DCV 0050)



2007

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

**1.1** This document sets out the special architectural and historic interest of the Sawston conservation area and aims to fulfil the District Council's duty to 'draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of its conservation areas as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the commitment made by policy EN29 in the Local Plan (adopted February 2004). This document covers all the aspects set out by English Heritage in its August 2005 guidance on conservation area appraisals and management plans, including an analysis of the special character of the conservation area, and recommended actions for the management of the area in order to preserve and enhance its character.

**1.2** This paragraph will report on the public consultation exercise and confirm the status of the appraisal as Council Policy.

## 2.0 WHAT ARE CONSERVATION AREAS?

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

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

## 3.0 OVERVIEW OF THE AREA

**3.1** Sawston lies some 7 miles south of Cambridge, along a road that until recently formed the main north-south route from Cambridge and London via Saffron Walden. A bypass was built to the west of the village in 1968, relieving the village of through traffic. Local traffic remains substantial, in part because of the sheer size of the village (it is the

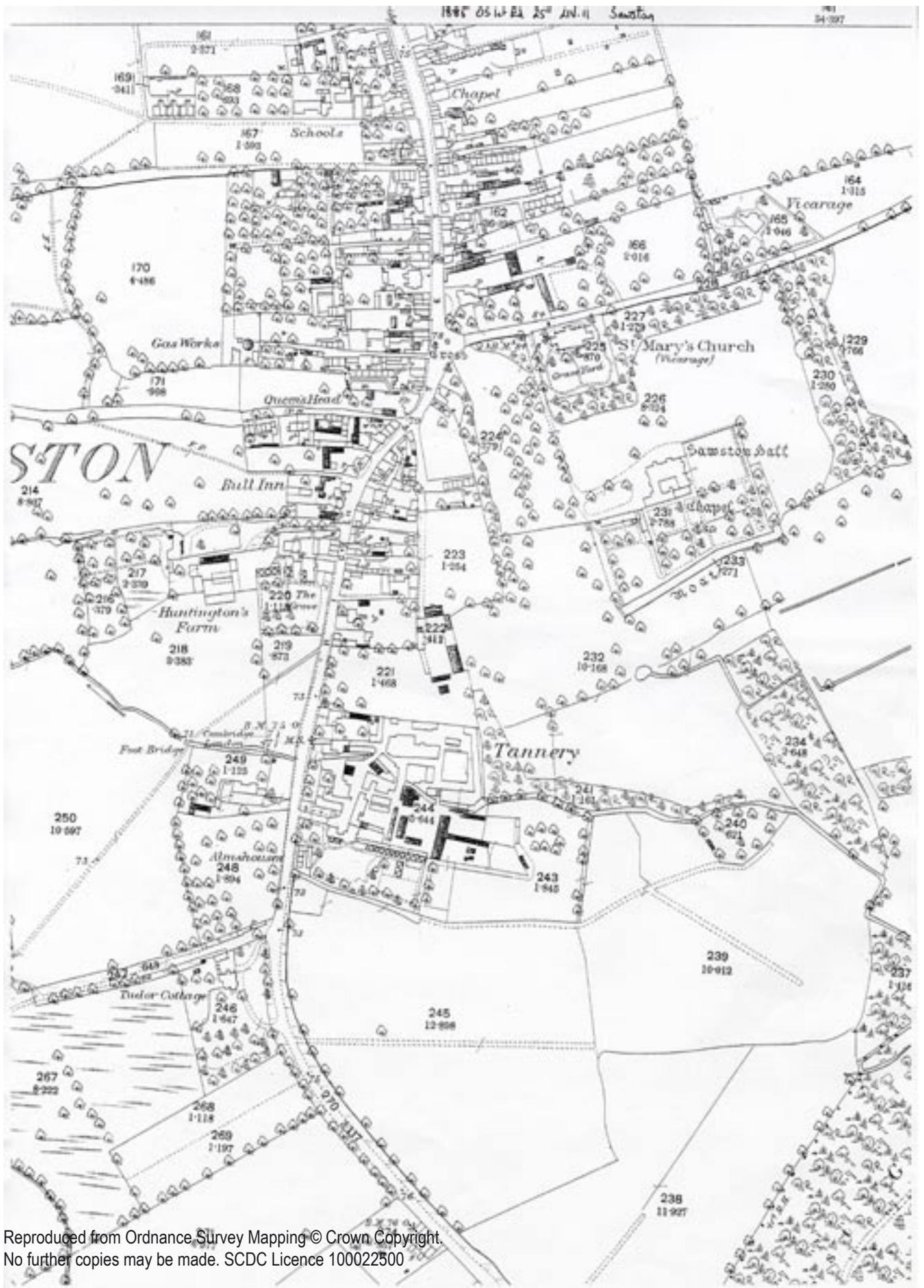
largest settlement in South Cambridgeshire, and is identified as a Rural Growth Centre in the 1980 Approved Structure Plan), and in part because it has thriving shops, schools, village college, organised sports, farms and industrial estates that attract visitors and locals from a wide catchment area. This traffic has a negative impact on the conservation area because many attractive historic roadside properties suffer the burden of road noise and pollution. The 20-mph speed limit through the village is not enforced and is almost universally ignored.



*Milestone on the verge outside  
Tudor House, High Street*

**3.2** The growth of the village is restricted to the east by seasonal flooding in the low lying land bordering the Cam and to the west by the large landholdings of Sawston Hall, so the village has developed mainly to the north and south of its medieval core.

**3.3** The conservation area lies between these two areas of 20th-century development. The main focus of the conservation area is the junction between the sinuous High Street and the streets and lanes that run across it from east to west (Church Lane, Mill Lane and Common Lane). Historically these east to west routes are older than the north to south High Street, and they originally led to various fords across the River Cam (or Granta), which forms the western boundary of the parish.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Mapping © Crown Copyright.  
 No further copies may be made. SCDC Licence 100022500

Extract from 1885 Ordnance Survey

**3.4** This historic core of the village contains the parish church, Sawston Hall, a listed tannery complex and a number of historic pubs and dwellings. It is proposed that the existing boundary be extended to include the Victorian school. The conservation area takes in a number of public green spaces, and is sandwiched between the meadows of the Cam flood plain to the west and the designated Historic Park and Garden of Sawston Hall, along with meadows and woodland designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest to the east. These fields form an important physical separation between the villages of Whittlesford to the south west, Pampisford to the south east, Babraham to the east and Stapleford to the north

## 4.0 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE

**4.1** Sawston lies on one of the routes of the Icknield Way (the name being derived from the East Anglian Icenii tribe), one of England's oldest long distance trackways, having Iron Age (if not earlier) origins and linking East Anglia to other trade routes such as the Ridgeway in Wessex. Rather than consisting of a single track, the Icknield Way divided into a series of parallel east to west routes which crossed the River Cam at various points between Sawston and Great Chesterford. The Iron Age fort at Borough Hill, in the east of Sawston parish, lies close to one of these crossing points, and Roman enclosures following a similar alignment testify to continuity of use into the Roman period.

**4.2** These early tracks help to explain Sawston's early medieval settlement pattern, with centres of settlement and activity along Church Lane and Common Lane. The Domesday survey records Sawston as Salsitone, or 'Salse's Farm' – perhaps a reference to the manor that was known from the 11th to the 14th centuries as Pyratts, after the Pirot family, the post-Conquest owners of the estate, located somewhere in the vicinity of the church and Sawston Hall. Part of this manor was split off to form Dale or Deal Manor in the 12th century, with a moated manor whose site survives at Deal Farm, in the north of the parish. A third moated manor site, with pre-Conquest origins, survives at Huntingdon's Farm, south of Common Lane; like Pyratts, this has pre-Conquest origins. The resulting polyfocal arrangement is described by landscape historian Christopher Taylor as 'perhaps one of the most physically complicated medieval villages in Cambridgeshire' (Taylor, C 2006. 'Landscape History, Observation and Explanation: the missing houses in Cambridgeshire villages', in Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

Vol 95, ed Alison Taylor).

**4.3** Taylor goes on to argue that the area of settlement around the church and Pyratts Manor was deliberately cleared and the population relocated to a replacement settlement south of the small green where the war memorial now stands, in the flat-iron shaped block bounded by the High Street, Shingay Lane and Burnands Place. This clearance seems to have occurred in the late 12th-century as part of a policy of aggrandisement of the manor and church complex by the Pirot family, a trend for removing and relocating settlements from the church and manor vicinity that Taylor has traced elsewhere in South Cambridgeshire (namely at Little Shelford, Whittlesford, Harston, Pampisford, Knapwell, Swaffham Bulbeck and Balsham).

**4.4** This new focus of settlement expanded southwards as the north-south route through the village up to Cambridge became more important than the older east-west routes. By 1279, the village had 125 households – perhaps 625 people – and the primacy of the High Street / Cambridge Road was confirmed when the Pirot family, as lords of the manor, laid out a new planned extension to the village in the 13th century on former open fields on the north eastern side of the High Street, north of today's war memorial.

**4.5** The Huddlestone family, who inherited the Pirot family estates by marriage, lived at Pyratts Manor House which, in the fifteenth century, was described as a hall with 32 other rooms, a gatehouse, dovecote and many outbuildings. On 6 July 1553, Mary Tudor was given shelter at the Manor by John Huddlestone (died 1557) in her flight from Norfolk to London at the death of Edward VI. Fleeing in disguise the next morning, she saw the house in flames, set alight by supporters of the Duke of Northumberland, who wanted to put Lady Jane Grey on the throne. When Queen Mary succeeded to the throne later that year, she knighted Huddlestone and granted him the right to take stone from Cambridge Castle for rebuilding Sawston Hall, which also incorporates remains of the older buildings.

**4.6** Water courses along the River Cam in the west of the parish have been used for driving mill machinery since pre-Conquest times and Spicer's paper factory (which lies outside the conservation area) occupies the site of a Saxon flour mill. Because of their high lime content, the local water attracted the establishment of a tannery in the 17th century, located on a prominent site in the

south of the conservation area, once known as the Old Yard Tannery, now Hutchings and Harding's leather factory. This is recorded as being in use as a tannery in 1649, but leather working is thought to have been established here at the end of the previous century.

**4.7** Parchment making was introduced to the site in the early 19th century and was established by the time that Thomas Evans bought the tanyard in 1844. His son and successor, Thomas Sutton Evans, greatly expanded the business from 1850, so that he was employing 250 people at the site by 1871. T S Evans also established the on-site brewery whose water tank survives at the site, demanding that his employees take part of their pay in beer. A quarrelsome and difficult man, he was prone to sacking employees on a whim, and this led to the creation of the Eastern Counties Leather Co Ltd, a rival tannery established in 1879 to provide employment for workers dismissed by T H Evans, located at the New Yard, Langford Arch, in the neighbouring parish of Pampisford.

**4.8** Another major employer was Edward Towgood (died 1889), employing 400 people at his paper mill on the western edge of the parish (acquired by H G Spicer in 1917, when it became Spicer's, the name by which it is known today. Towgood paid to have the National School built in 1866, which survives in Mill Lane (see Section 9 below).

**4.9** Together these factory enterprises gave Sawston an industrial character different from most villages in the area, and this was deliberately encouraged after World War II when the County Council designated Sawston as the site of a light-industrial estate in an attempt to keep Cambridge itself free from industrial development.

**4.10** The greater part of the historic core of the village is located within the conservation area, around the High Street / Church Street crossroads. More recent development in the village took place to the south, at 'the Spike', which was built from 1853 as a settlement for workers in T S Evans's tannery. The workers who were housed here resented living 'in banishment' so far from the village centre and nicknamed the new hamlet 'the Spike' after Spike Island, in Cork Harbour in Ireland, which was used as a penal colony from 1847 to 1883. What started as a nickname has since passed into official usage (Dicken M and Lambart A (eds), 2006; Sawston as Seen).

**4.11** The first Village College to be established in the county was built on the higher drier ground

(to 28m) of the High Street / New Road / Sawston Road crossroads in the north of the village in 1930. This became a new focus of development, and by the 1950s, the triangular plot to the south of the College, down to Mill Lane was developed. Estate development continued during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s to the east and south of the village, and Sawston was identified as a Rural Growth Centre in the Approved Structure Plan of 1980, being confirmed as such by the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan of 2004.

## 5.0 GEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

**5.1** Sawston's High Street sits the boundary between chalk soils to the east of the village, where the land is generally flat and lies at a height of 25m above sea level, and the gravels overlain by alluvium on ground to the east of the village, where the land falls to 20m to the banks of the River Cam, which forms the western boundary to the parish. Numerous streams and watercourses drain the fields of the parish, which have been subject to severe flooding in the past, but many of these are now dry. In particular, the stream that crosses the High Street and that forms the northern boundary of the Hutchings & Harding tannery, once described as a very beautiful river, is now dry, as are the drainage ditches marked on the Ordnance Survey map along Catley's Walk.

**5.2** Sawston lies within the Cambridge Green Belt, and is in the Area of Restraint South of Cambridge. The village lies in the East Anglian Chalk Landscape Character Area and Natural Area. The surrounding landscape consists of pasture in the immediate vicinity of the conservation area, with low trimmed hedges and hedgerow trees, giving way to mainly flat open farmland, consisting of fields enclosed from 1802 onwards, and mainly farmed for arable crops. To the north and east the village is bounded by high-quality grade 2 agricultural land.

**5.3** Important habitats for biodiversity exist to the west of the parish, north of Spicers' paper factory, where the Dernford Fen wetlands (OS grid ref 473505) have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and Dernford Farm grassland (OS grid ref 469505) as a county wildlife site, while in the east of the parish, within the conservation area, Sawston Hall Meadow (OS grid ref 491491) is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and Sawston Hall gardens and grounds are designated at Grade II in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England.

## 6.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

**6.1** The only archaeological finds to have come from the conservation area consist of Neolithic flint axes and the waste from flint tool manufacture, found near the Old Vicarage (Taylor, A 1998. The Archaeology of Cambridgeshire, Vol 2: South East Cambridgeshire and the Fen Edge). Within the wider parish, at least ten Bronze Age round barrows have been recorded. As with other fen-edge sites, there is evidence of Bronze Age ritual deposition of bronze axes and tools, as well as Late Bronze Age hoards typical of the sort of collection likely to have been hidden by travelling smiths along the Icknield Way that were never retrieved. An Iron Age fort with a double bank and ditch surrounding 8 ha of land exists at Borough Mill (OS grid ref 475495) though much damaged by later development and ploughing.

**6.2** Roman finds are sparse and limited to pottery scatters from Dernford Farm and rectangular enclosures on the Babraham side of the parish. A Roman cross roads was recently discovered near the junction of Babraham Road and Cambridge Road during the construction of the Police Station. A wealthy 6th-century Saxon grave was found by road builders in 1816 on the road to Cambridge at Huckeridge Hill, and there have been other Saxon finds, including an iron key from the late Saxon period.

**6.3** Two areas in the parish scheduled as ancient monuments (both being the sites of medieval moated manor houses) lie outside the conservation area, on the eastern side of Sutherland's Avenue and at Huntingdon's Farm. Sawston hall is designated as a Grade-I listed building, and it is surrounded by a designated Historic Park and Garden.

## 7.0 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

### Church Lane



*St Mary's Church, Church Lane*

**7.1** Church Lane is a wide and leafy, tree-lined road enclosed by traditional boundary walls varying in height from six to four feet in height that are mainly of flint framed by local pink and yellow brick, with triangular and semi-circular brick copings, but that sometimes have panels of attractively patched and repaired older soft red brick (bordering the churchyard). The once tranquil street now serves a 1970's housing estate.

**7.2** The southern side consists almost entirely of the grounds of Sawston Hall and the church and churchyard of St Mary. On the northern side, the conservation area boundary takes in the Old Vicarage, but excludes the modern bungalows and housing estates of Paddock Way and Orchard Road.

**7.3** The entrance to Church Lane is framed by mature beech trees and marked by a wide triangular traffic junction, site of a medieval green and market, made attractive by being enclosed by good historic flint and brick walls, which follow the curve of Church Lane and rise in height as the lane narrows, funnelling traffic and views along the lane.



*Church Lane looking east from the war memorial*



*The war memorial and No. 82 High Street*

**7.4** On the eastern side of the junction, the village war memorial forms a focal point for views. This consists of a medieval cross shaft embellished in

1919 with a new cross arm, sitting on a granite base inscribed with the names of the dead of the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. Though reused as a war memorial the cross occupies its original position, marking the centre of medieval Sawston (according to the Victoria County History (p 247), no market is recorded at Sawston, however). There is also a listed telephone box on this corner, and a 19th-century cast-iron water pump is preserved in a walled recess just to the south.



*Water pump, north of No.95 High Street*



*Sawston Hall*

**7.5** Flint walls continue along the southern boundary of Church Lane, giving way to a short stretch of 19th-century iron railing as a prelude to the 19th-century wrought-iron gates and stone gate piers with ball finials of Sawston Hall. Sawston

Hall itself is a Grade I listed building of immense importance, both for its architectural interest (the only Elizabethan house in the county built of clunch and the only surviving courtyard house in the county) but also for its historical interests (its association with the flight of Mary Tudor from Framlingham to be crowned queen of England in 1553, and its importance for Catholic heritage as a 'safe house' during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, closely associated with the martyrs St Nicholas Owen and St John Rigby).



*Sawston Hall listed gate and gate piers*

**7.6** The grounds of Sawston Hall are private and have not been surveyed as part of this appraisal. Screened by mature woodland, the hall and grounds are virtually invisible from most parts of the conservation area, even though they make up more than half of the land area included within the conservation area boundary. The grounds contain listed structures, and are designated both as a historic garden and as an SSSI (see section 5.3). The

Hall has been standing empty for a number of years but is now undergoing conversion to an hotel, which will provide it with a viable and sustainable use and ensure its future wellbeing.

**7.7** Next comes the parish church of St Mary, a Grade-I listed building of flint rubble and Barnack limestone, dating from 1180 with early 14th-century west tower and 15th-century north porch, aisle and clerestory.



*St Mary's Church, Church Lane*

There are several grade-II Listed tombstones in the churchyard, though these are now so eroded that the carvings and inscription described in the listings schedule are scarcely legible.



*Listed 18th-century headstones in Sawston Church Yard*

The churchyard has some fine mature trees (lime, yew and cedar of Lebanon), but has builder's debris, plastic bottles and rubbish piled around the boundaries. Sawston Hall can be glimpsed over the late-19th-century iron fence that forms the boundary between hall and churchyard, but this is broken in places and in need of repair, as are the stretches of clunch (or clay bat) and old red brick walls that form the south western boundary.



*St Mary's Churchyard/Sawston Hall boundary wall, chalk and brick wall.*

**7.8** Beyond the churchyard extension is Spring Close, a modern timber-framed and timber-clad Scandinavian-style building set in very generous wooded grounds on the edge of Sawston Hall. The building is very small in relation to its plot size.



*Spring Close, Church Lane*

**7.9** Alongside Spring Close is a vacant plot, currently overgrown with brambles and nettles.

**7.10** The Old Vicarage opposite is a large late 19th-century house set well back from the lane and virtually invisible from the lane because of a screening belt of trees.

**7.11** It is recommended that a slight adjustment be made to the conservation area boundary at this

point to take in the Victorian iron gates that now enclose the drive to the new vicarage (a modern house outside the conservation area) but might once have formed an entrance to the Old Vicarage.



*Church Lane , 19th-century iron gates, perhaps contemporary with the Old Vicarage*

High Street north of the war memorial: eastern side

**7.12** The High Street north of the war memorial is predominantly commercial in character, with a mix of modern purpose-built shops and older dwellings converted to retail or office use. The shops range in scale from a medium sized supermarket to traditional proprietor-owned butchers, bakers, café and hairdressers. The constant noise from passing traffic and the bustle of shoppers and delivery vans might explain why some private dwellings are now vacant or boarded up. In time, it is likely that this part of the High Street might become wholly commercial, completing the process whereby large rear gardens are converted to car parks and storage areas, and shop fascias dominate the street-level townscape. Even so, the townscape is lively and varied, with a mix of properties set back behind gardens and others built up to the pavement line, mainly of two- and 2½-storey buildings with steeply angled roofs, some parallel to and some at right angles to the road.



*Nos.67 to 85 High street, Sawston*

**7.13** From the war memorial, Nos 67 to 85, on 8

the north-eastern corner of Church Lane and the High Street, consist of a 1960s block with shopping arcade below and flats above.

A more recent single-storey row of shops has been built alongside in vernacular style (Nos 63 and 65), with black timber cladding under a red pantile roof, to resemble local agricultural buildings.



*Nos 63 to 65 High Street*

**7.14** No. 61 is a Grade-II listed 16th-century timber framed house clad with brick, part used as a shop with a traditional-style of shopfront, running parallel to the road.



*No.61 High Street*



*No. 57/59 High Street*



*No.57/59 High Street*

**7.15** Nos. 57 and 59 are the former Cross Keys pub, an Edwardian building with an attractive ground floor miniature oriel widow lighting the entrance hall. The buildings are deemed to be at risk because they are currently empty and unused.

**High Street north of the war memorial: western side**

**7.16** On the opposite side of the road, Nos 54 to 70 form an attractive group of seven properties illustrating the organic growth and change of the village High Street, with a mix of shops and dwellings, of properties set back behind front gardens and built to the pavement edge, with gables parallel and at right angles to the road. No.54 is one of the best houses in the group, a Grade-II listed early 19th-century timber-framed house under a mansard roof, external stacks and horizontal sliding sash windows in the attic floor, set back from the street.



*No.54 High Street*

It is partnered by No. 56, a simple single storey building with plate glass shop front and sweeping roof run as a café and with an evergreen holm oak growing alongside.



*Nos.56, 58 and 60 High Street*

**7.17** Nos 58 and 60 are a single grade-II listed late 18th-century house converted to two properties, both with traditional style shopfronts on the ground floor (a butcher and an estate agent).



*No.58 and 60 High Street*



*Clunch walling at No.64 High Street*

No. 66 is an opticians, with an overlarge and

uninspiring shopfront on a late 19th-century building of painted brick. One of the rear extensions is built of clunch, which might be reused from another earlier building, or might indicate that this traditional material, made of dried mud and straw, continued to be made and used into the early part of the twentieth century.

**7.18** No 68 is a large double pile house in yellow brick of late 19th-century date set back from street and deemed to be at risk because it is unoccupied and has boarded up doors and windows.



*No 68 High Street (above view to the rear )*



*No. 70 High Street*



*Nos 68 and 70 High Street*

It stands next to No. 70, the grade-II Listed Woolpack public house, which appears to be of 1930s date because of the front elevation of painted brick but which, according to the schedule, disguises a substantial early 16th-century timber-framed hall with cross wings, which might 'have been used for storage or as a trading hall'.

**7.19** Beyond the pub is a group of utilitarian modern buildings used as a restaurant and electrical retail store. The latter has three very large blue roller shutters, whose size and colour tends to dominate the street scene at this point.



*Nos 76 to 80 High Street*



*No. 82 High Street*

**7.20** At No 82 is one of the finest front elevations in the village: the right hand side of the property has a fine façade of red brick with stone dressings dated on the gable to 1900, rising to a Dutch-style bell gable.



*Nos 82 and 84 High Street*

This building, along with the long two-storey rear range of yellow brick with large tripartite upper floor windows and a large square chimney stack, was built as Crampton's Printing Works in 1900 by John Crampton (died 1910). The building continued in use as a print works until 1974, and has now been converted to the offices of a publishing company.



*No 82 High Street former mineral water bottling plant*



*The war memorial and No. 82 High Street*

The Dutch baroque façade is partnered by the older (c 1700) façade of a fine house with a good 18th-century doorcase in wood with rusticated jambs and fanned key block with pulvinated frieze and pediment.

**7.21** Together, these two buildings are the focal point of views from Church Lane, along with No. 84, a grade-II listed 17th-century timber framed building under a very steep tiled roof, and corbelled out side stack on the Portobello Lane elevation, now a tandoori restaurant.



*The war memorial and Nos 82 and 84 High Street*

The name 'Portobello Lane' appears on a traditional street sign on the side of the building.



*Portobello Lane, traditional cast-iron street sign*

This narrow lane leads to a site that has been identified in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (page 285) as a site for possible residential development. Any development that takes place on the site needs to respect the narrowness of Portobello Lane itself and the potential damage that might occur to Nos 82 and 84 High Street if large volumes of traffic passed this way. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 recommends that access should be made from Common Lane, though this too could increase traffic on a busy blind bend.

### **High Street south of the war memorial, western side**

**7.22** In *The Cambridgeshire Landscape* (1973), Christopher Taylor describes Sawston as 'one of

the least attractive of all Cambridgeshire villages (page 60). Such a statement could not be used about the short stretch of the High Street south of Church Lane, which is made very attractive by the sinuous course of the street itself, which curves in a westerly direction before straightening again and thus first hides then reveals the listed timber-frames houses that line both sides of the road at this point. Equally attractive is the way that two fine properties – No. 95 High Street (Ward’s House) and No.90 (the Queen’s Head public house) stand like gatehouses either side of the narrowest part of the High Street, where they are an important focal point for views from the northern stretch of the High Street looking south.

**7.23** The Queen’s Head even emphasises the sinuosity of the road with its long jettied-out first floor supported on external brackets which not only curves round the bend horizontally, it also curves vertically, rising to a central point and falling away at each end of the main range. No lines in this late 15th-century building are straight: even the fixed light and casement windows are twisted from the perpendicular.



*No.95 High Street*



*The junction of High Street, Shingay Lane and Common Lane*

Ward’s House also leans attractively, and has exposed studwork and curving braces, whose pristine condition in the jettied out two-bay cross wing reflects the restoration work carried out in 1885 (date on gable) and again more recently.



*No. 90 High Street*



*Ward’s House, 95 High Street*



*The junction of High Street, Shingay Lane and Common Lane*

**7.24** Beyond this bend is a junction whose appeal is diminished by the alien appearance of Nos 92 and 94, whose crisp white walls and searing orange pantiles owe more to modern Spanish villas than south Cambridgeshire vernacular. Further round the bend, two eye-catching public houses, the White Lion and the Black Bull, stand alongside each other as reminders that this village once had no less than fourteen pubs (with a population of 1,882 in 1891). Both are listed grade II, date from the early 17th century and have an attractive range of steep roofs and tall chimney stacks that create a varied silhouette.



*Nos. 92 and 94 High Street*



*No.96 High Street*



*No.98 High Street*



*High Street Nos. 92-98 (left) and 119(right)*

**7.25** On the opposite side of the road, Nos 105 to 119 are all listed as well (except No. 111),

being a good group of 17th-century timber framed and rendered houses or cottages. Like all the properties from the Church Lane junction southwards, they suffer from their proximity to a busy road, which has the unfortunate effect of making the houses noisy to live in and dusty from traffic pollution.



*No 115 High Street*



*Nos. 119 and 121 High Street,*



*Nos 107 to 111 High Street*



*Nos 107 to 111 High Street and 105 High Street*

**7.26** Immediately south of the Black Bull, and within the property curtilage, is a timber garage that is described in a recent planning application (to convert the garage to an office) as a 'fire-engine shed'.



*No. 98 High Street - fire engine shed*

Just south, the entrance to the drive to Huntingdon Farm is marked by a short stretch of 19th-century iron railing on the northern side and flint wall to the south. Next comes No. 108 High Street, grade-II listed, 17th-century, with an original fixed light timber mullioned window and horizontal sliding sash windows, well restored with good modern

boarded doors.



*108 High Street*

**7.27** High yellow brick walls with an attractive Arts and Crafts garden gate surrounds the exuberant neo-Tudor house at No. 110 High Street.



*No. 110 High Street*

After a short stretch of modern housing, there

is another long stretch of historic wall, this time of red brick, with triangular brick coping above a single course of projecting brick, which extends along the frontage to Nos 138 to 152, three large houses set back in generous grounds and not visible from the road. No 138 (The Brook) is an early 17th-century grade-II listed timber-framed house with steep cat-slide roofs.

It is probably to this house (rather than to its modern neighbours, Nos 146 and 152) that the brick wall belongs: certainly, the good 17th-century planked door that survives in this wall, set in an arched and corniced gateway, leads into the gardens and orchards of this property.

**7.28** Catley's Walk, which begins where the brick wall ends, is a tarmac-paved public footpath that was once a ropewalk. Lining the northern side is a pair of very narrow and exuberant neo-Tudor lodge houses, with big chimneys, steep gables, boldly carved bargeboards and an ornamental wooden frieze of carved strapwork running across the front elevation between ground and first floor level.



*No 138 High Street*



*No.138 High Street, wall and garden*

*Catley's Walk, No.154 High Street*

Converted stables and carriage houses (one with an attractive rooftop lantern) line the southern side of the walk, along with an attractive stretch of clunch, brick and flint garden wall.



*Catley's Walk, clunch wall*

The boundary of the conservation area takes in all of Catley's Walk (named after a 19th-century rope-maker who used it as a rope walk for some twenty years) up to its junction with a private drive leading to Peace Cottage. Beyond this point, the road becomes a grass track, leading across the open fields south of Huntingdon Farm, which have numerous water courses, old willow trees and grass-covered earthworks of possibly medieval origin.

**7.29** The southern edge of the conservation area takes in the large Edwardian brick house called Tudor House, set in spacious gardens and screened from the road by large and mature beech, lime and Scot's pine; trees on both sides of the High Street at this point give a leafy and rural feel to this southern edge of the village.

### **High Street south of the war memorial, eastern side**

**7.30** Returning north, the dominant property on

the eastern side of the High Street is the listed tannery works of Hutchings and Harding Ltd. This site includes Brooklands (No. 163), an early 19th-century Regency style house, listed Grade II, now used as offices, with an original half-domed glass and cast-iron conservatory running along its southern side, and a south facing shallow-curved east bay with two full-height sash windows on the ground and first floor.



163 High Street

Within the tannery complex is a range of unusual and striking industrial buildings, reflecting the history of this site, which was used from 1649 as a tannery. Many of the surviving buildings represent

the investment made after Thomas Evans bought the yard in 1844, and introduced steam power: they include an engine house (possibly for a beam engine) and water tank, former brewery buildings and a number of yellow brick and timber-framed and louvred drying sheds.



*Hutchings and Harding Ltd, High Street, engine house and former brewery water tank*

Many of these buildings are now redundant and in a dangerous state, with collapsed walls, internal floors and roofs. Photographs exist from the late 19th-century showing the processes that went into the manufacture of parchment in these buildings (the District Council has copies of these).



*Hutchings and Harding Ltd. High Street, tannery works drying sheds*



*Hutchings and Harding Ltd tannery works engine house, drying sheds*



*Hutchings and Harding Ltd tannery works and corner dovecote*

**7.31** Land and fields to the south and west of the tannery have been developed for housing in recent years, but large areas of open space have been left as wildlife reserves and for recreational use, including a reserve planted with deciduous trees that follows the course of a former brook that once flowed through the tannery. The brook is now dry for part of the year and the sluices broken.



*Wildlife reserve, Tannery Road*



*No. 149 High Street*



*Hutchings and Harding Ltd, High Street, seasonally dry bed of brook and broken weir at eastern edge of tannery works*

**7.33** Beyond the farmhouse is a modern housing estate followed by a plot that contains Catholic church, presbytery, hall and caretaker's cottage, all of undistinguished mid 20th-century character, that are due to be redeveloped for housing.



*Nos 133 and 135 High Street*



*No 153 High Street*

**7.32** Immediately north of the tannery is No 153, a 19th-century cottage of yellow brick, and No. 149, a handsome grade-II listed red brick house (Gosling's Farmhouse) with gauged brick arches to the windows and a moulded string and dentil eaves cornice. This handsome house is fronted by a rather dominant modern wall of white rendered panels framed by brick.



*Catholic church and church hall to rear of 133/135 High Street*



*Catholic church and No.137 (caretaker's cottage)  
High Street*

### **Shingay Lane and Camping Close**

**7.34** Reference has already been made (see 4.3) to Christopher Taylor's conclusion that this flat-iron shaped plot represents late 12th-century relocation of houses from the vicinity of the church and manor. If so, nothing survives from this date:

Instead, this is an area of humble cottages of late 19th century date (Nos 8 to 12 Shingay Lane are dated 1883 on the front elevation, and the nearby row of 1 to 11 Camping Close are of similar style and date. The narrow entrance to Shingay Lane is enclosed by No. 103 High Street, a late 19th century yellow brick house with mansard roof, and the corrugated iron church hall at 101 High Street which now houses a snooker club.



*Nos 1 to 11 Camping Close*



*Nos 8 and 12 Shingay Lane and cast concrete sewer gas lamp*



*Nos 103 High Street and 2 Shingay Lane*



*The junction of High Street and Shingay Lane*



village. On the southern side there is a row of three late 19th-century yellow brick cottages, one of which has original side-sliding sash windows. Opposite Nos 1 and 2 Queen's Cottages are an example of good modern design that respects local vernacular tradition, with brick chimneys, steep clay-tiled roofs with deep overhangs and exposed rafter ends, simple door canopies and pitch-roofed car ports.



*No. 101 High Street*



*No.9 Common Lane*



*No.5 Common Lane, showing original door and side-sliding sashes*

**Common Lane**



*Nos. 3 to 7 Common Lane*



*Queens Cottages, Common Lane*

**7.35** As the name suggests, Common Lane leads out to what were once the common fields of the 20