

WATERBEACH

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



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INTRODUCTION.

This document is one of a series produced by the District Council which look individually at South Cambridgeshire's Conservation Areas.

The purpose of this appraisal is twofold;

- To act as a guide for development control in the Conservation Area.
- To identify the features which contribute to the special character of Waterbeach and those features which need to be enhanced.

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THE REASONS FOR THE CONSERVATION AREA.

The designation of a Conservation Area is recognition of the architectural quality and historic interest of the area.

The reasons for the designation of a Conservation Area include the quality of the buildings, the spaces in between them, the landscape, trees, and street furniture. All of these factors can affect, and combine to form the character of the area.

The following section is an analysis of these features showing why Waterbeach warrants its Conservation Area status. It will also identify areas where these features have been eroded, lost or replaced.

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT.

Waterbeach has always been a substantial settlement, partially due historically to the easy living to be had there through fishing, fowling and the use of the extensive areas of common land, which outweighed the recurrent problem of inundation by flooding.

Originally called simply "Beche", meaning stream, the "Water" was added in order to differentiate it from neighbouring Landbeach.

The original village of Waterbeach was probably situated at the southern end of the existing village, in the area around the church. It was here that the docks which gave access to the river cam were sited. Station Road at one time used to run directly south past the church through the old abbey site to the river, while the Cambridge Road ran in a direct north easterly direction, forming two sides of a large triangle which became the village green.

Waterbeach is today a large village which has for the most part retained its historic core in spite of recent expansion.

NOTE ON THE TEXT.

Within this document are descriptions of buildings under the heading, "Buildings of Special Note". This list is intended as a guide to buildings which exemplify the character of Waterbeach, but it is not exhaustive. Buildings not included in the list should not therefore be assumed to be without interest.

High Street.

The High Street runs north from the Green up to the junction with Bannold Road and Denny End Road. Its character changes along its length from the tightly grained southern end to the north where houses are more widely and randomly sited.

In the gardens of The Limes a row of pollarded lime trees forms a good answer to the trees in the gardens of Berry House, opposite. They together form a green canopy in the summer almost as an entrance to the conservation area.

Between 28 and 30 there is the access to Merton Park, a permanent caravan site. This is an discordant aspect of the street scene, with views of damaged outbuildings giving way to plastic mobile homes. The repair of these buildings and screening of the mobile homes to the street would be a significant enhancement.

At The Rookery, the streetscape begins to become more consistent. This house forms a group with Wiles Cottage, formerly the coachman's house to The Rookery, and nos. 18 and 16 High street, two gault brick villas. Wiles Cottage has a garden which borders the pavement for a small distance, and the hedge and trees, allied with those of no. 23 across the road, soften the street scene in a similar manner to those at Berry House.

Waddelow Road is an unfortunate modern break in the street frontage.

No. 14 with its associated barn sited hard on the street frontage are an important pair of buildings. This relationship is a layout recurrent in Waterbeach.

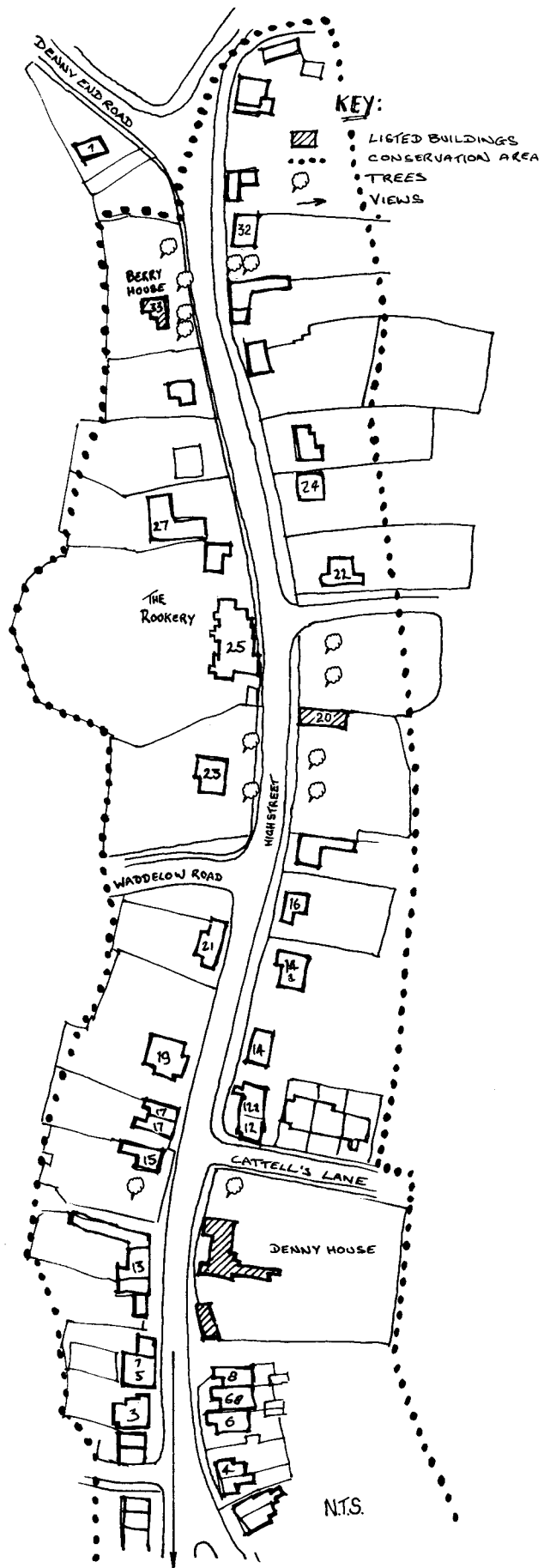


18 High Street.

No. 17 incorporates North's Bakery and Cooper's Hairdressers; traditional shop fronts here, contemporary with the rest of the building would be a considerable enhancement. The number of shops present in the village is an important part of the character of Waterbeach, showing it to have an economic existence separate to an extent from Cambridge.

At Cattells Lane the garden walls of Denny House are an important boundary. The large tree in the corner of the garden next to the road is a very important townscape feature, as is the Sequoia in the gardens of Rose Cottage opposite. Denny House, its garden wall, and the barn to the south form a good compact group. Opposite is a row of C19 cottages; at either end a shop has been added, probably in the inter war years. At the southern end is the post office, and to the north Bull's butchers. Both have in common the unusual motif of brown glazed brick shop fronts with bull nosed bricks around the doors. It would be unfortunate if these were lost.

At this point the grain of the development tightens noticeably and there are long views to the southern end of the Green where no. 12, the former bank forms a good visual stop. On the west side of the green the siting of houses changes to on or close to the back edge of the pavement. Nos. 3,5,7 and 9 form a good group.





The Rookery. A substantial house of C17, C18 and C19 date. Hall with cross-wings. Local brick with plain tile roof. Yard between the cross-wings roofed in with a C19 hall. The diagonally set stacks to the northern cross wing are C17. The garden wall to the street has an unusual gateway of large piers and a segmental arch. Arguably the most important unlisted building in the district

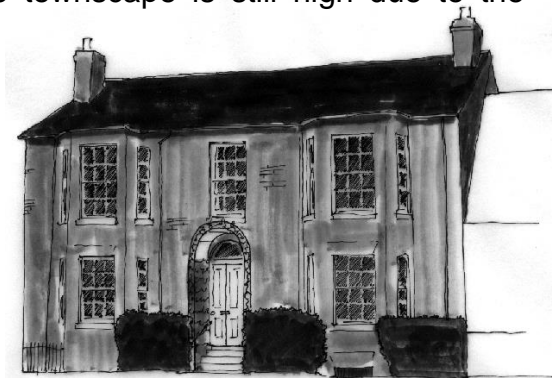
Buildings of Special Note.

- No. 34. A gault brick house of the C19, but the tile roof and tumbled gables point possibly to earlier origins. Unlisted.
- No 32. The Limes: a good 3 bay gault brick villa with end stacks is opposite Berry house, grade II listed.
- No.30 Three bay house. Has lost every original front window except the unusual semi circular arched sash on the first floor and a semi -circular gothick fan light survives above the front door. Internally the remains of the timber frames of a pair of cottages. Unlisted.
- Nos.29 and 31. A pair of gault brick houses which were possibly once one. The doorcase of no. 29 has a semi-circular fanlight and is deeply recessed, while the door of no.31 is plainer with a rectangular fanlight. No original windows survive on the front elevation.
- No. 24; a small three bay house in gault brick. Unlisted.
- Denny House. Formerly a farmhouse. Early C16, and C17 with C19 extensions and alternations. Timber framed, rough cast rendered and painted brick with gault brick rear extension. Plain tile roofs; local brick ridge stack, and C19 end stack to south, C16cross wing. Listed grade II.
- Small barn to the south of Denny House C17 with reused C16 timber frame. Local brick, weather boarded gable and pantile roof. Brick wall with straight joint. Listed grade II.

- 20 (Wiles Cottage). Cottage. Late C17 and early C19. Local brick and C19 gault brick, rear wall partly painted. Plain tile roof. One storey and attic extended one bay to east. A decorative brick band of vitrified bricks at head height. The cottage was formerly the coach mans house to The Rookery. Listed grade II.
- Berry House, (no.33). House. Early to mid C19. Gault brick, slate roof. Two storeys, symmetrical facade, L-plan. End stacks. Band at cill height. Three first floor recessed, twelve paned hung sash windows with stone cills and two similar ground floor windows. Architraved stone doorcase to main entrance with rectangular fan light and four panelled door. Listed grade II.
- No.28. A C19 house of three bay constructed of brick, which has been painted. The house retains the original sash windows on the ground floor, while the first floor has more recent casements.
- No. 21 is a small brick and timber framed cottage, somewhat altered. Unlisted
- No.18. A gault brick house of three bays with a good stone doorcase
- No.16. Mid C19 gault brick house with twelve pane sashes and a six panel door.
- No.3 is a C19 gault brick house with margin light sashes. Unlisted.

The Green.

The Green is a large triangular open space with a line of mature Lime trees around its perimeter, criss-crossed with a number of pathways. The Green is surrounded by Greenside, a road which flanks its east and west sides, and Chapel Street, which completes the triangle to the south, all of which have almost continuous built up frontages facing the Green. Inspection of old photographs reveals that a number of good houses have either been demolished or have been altered in a manner which has robbed them of much of their character, but the quality of the townscape is still high due to the layout of the area surrounding the green and the number of good C19 buildings that are left.



No.1 Greenside.



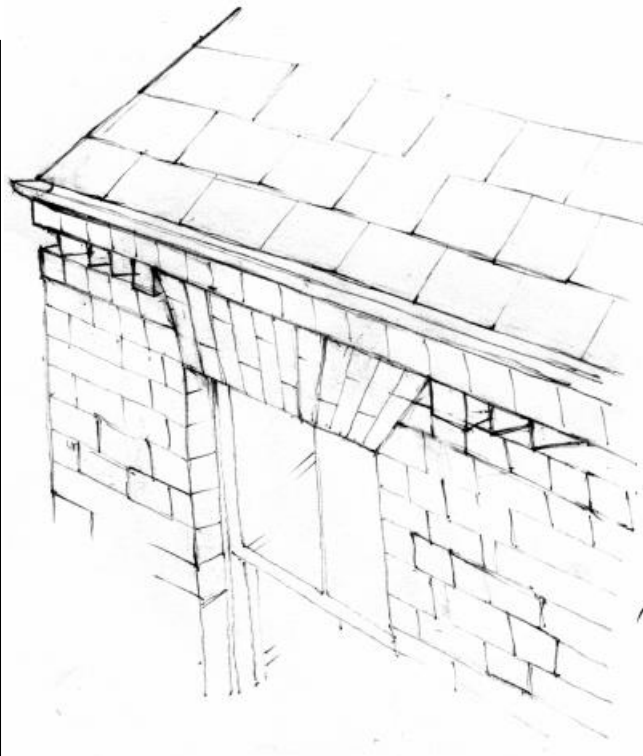
No.21 Greenside.

This is the most urban part of the village. The west side of The Green is different in character from the east, having older, larger houses which form a picturesque ensemble of varied styles and materials.

The south side of the Green contains a number of good buildings which contribute much to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

No. 16 is a substantial detached late C19 gault brick house with an unusual ornate door case and would have had two symmetrical crenellated stone bays, but for the removal of one to cut in a shop window. The reinstatement of this window to match that existing should be encouraged.

South east of the Green there are a further two grassed areas. The first is only small, but punctuates what would otherwise be a wide expanse of tarmac. The second forms an area similar to the green but is more informal, and is in the area between St Andrew's Hill and the northern end of Station Road. The area has a good number of mature trees, including oak and sycamore, and some cherry trees which have a particular impact on the character of this area when blossoming in spring. On the corner of Station Road and St Andrews Hill the old painted timber road sign is an unusual and characteristic element of the village which should be maintained. Nos. 1-4 St Andrews Hill form a good group of late C19 houses. Between nos. 2 and 3 a weatherboarded barn can be seen, adding to the group.



A typical eaves detail from a C19 Waterbeach terrace incorporating a saw tooth dentil course and flat arch constructed from gauged brick.

Nos. 1-1b Station Road are somewhat alien to the character of Waterbeach, and are sited prominently overlooking the green area of St. Andrews Hill. The

use of native climbing plants to soften the impact of these buildings would help to integrate them more effectively into the street scene.

This succession of green open spaces at its centre make Waterbeach exceptionally leafy, spacious and peaceful, as one can walk from one side to the other largely on footpaths which are not bordered by roads.

The conservation area has been extended to take in a number of buildings on Car Dyke Road, terminating in the Old School and nos. 18 – 28, the Waterbeach Almshouses, a notable group.



Buildings of Special Note.

Greenside.

- No. 1 is a very good substantial early C19 gault brick house of three storeys with basements and stone steps up to the front door. It has a

particularly good door surround fashioned from wrought iron, and prominent bay windows. This is a keynote house in the village and very important. Unlisted.

- No.8. A house of early C19 date, double piled, painted white with slate roof and red ridges. An interesting gothicised sash window. Unlisted
- No.9. A late C19 villa. Semi – circular fanlight over a six panel door between two bay windows. This house is attached to the old school, entered via a gothic entrance porch incorporating small leaded windows. Unlisted.
- Wellington House. Formerly the Wellington public house (as can be seen from the stained glass around the door). Unusually sited as several parallel ranges gable end on to the street. Unlisted.
- No.19 (The Gables). House. C16, and late C17 or early C18, with C19 alterations. Timber frame rendered, local C18 brick and C19 gault brick painted. Plain tile roof, ridge stack and side stack. Listed grade II.
- No.23. An early C19 house restored with period pattern windows and doors. Rendered with slate roof.
- No.25.(Beach House). A late C19 house, formerly with a bakers shop at one end. All of the four pane sash windows remain, as does the substantial six panel front door. Unlisted.
- Nos. 26 & 28. A pair of late C19 semi detached houses retaining original windows. Gault brick with red dressings. The windows are an unusual eight pane sash type. Unlisted.

Chapel Street.

- Nos. 12 and 14 are two, once three red and yellow brick cottages with twelve pane sashes and unusual lateral ridge stacks. Unlisted.
- Waterbeach Baptist Church. A large mid C19 chapel. Gable end on with pediment and dentil coursing. Central full height segmentally arched and recessed bay flanked by semi circular arched bays either side. Ornate cast iron porch. Forms an important group with its associated Sunday school behind.
- The Sun (P.H.). C18 with good local tiled roof and ridge stack. The ground floor has been extended at the front, but sashes are retained on the first floor. Unlisted.

Station Road.

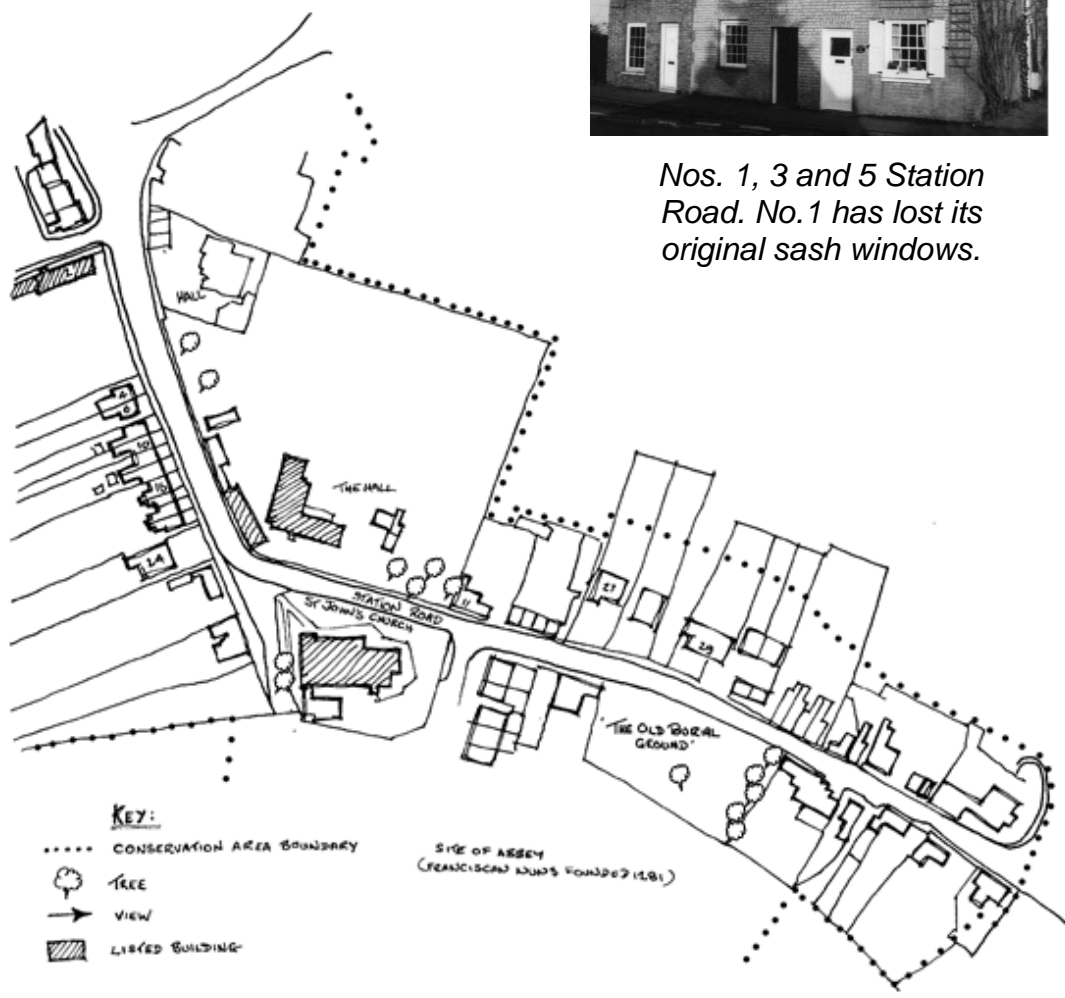
This is the original nucleus of the village, near to the site of the old abbey and to that of the old docks, which gave access to the river Cam. The character of Station Road is strongly influenced by two keynote buildings; Waterbeach Hall and St Johns Church. Both of these buildings are of exceptional architectural merit and set in their own grounds. As these buildings are situated opposite each other the result is a street scene which is of very high quality. The outbuildings, grounds and walls of the Hall extend over a considerable distance around the inside of the bend in the road. The variety of colours and textures in this boundary is wide; gault and local gault brick, rough cast, lined out render, local peg tile, slate, weather boarding and exposed timber frame along with broadleaf trees and Yew hedging. Opposite, the flint church and church yard form an important visual stop to the view south from the Green.

Elsewhere in Station Road there are other similarly important open spaces; the Old Burial Ground to the south east gives valuable views out to the open countryside beyond and is punctuated by a large copper beech tree, and bounded to the east by a row of pollarded lime trees.

The gardens of no.2, a listed cottage to the north west, provide an important break in the built-up frontage and are crucial to the setting of this listed house



Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Station Road. No.1 has lost its original sash windows.



There are a large number of terraced houses which occur in groups of various sizes and dates; many of these have lost their original doors and windows which has resulted in an erosion of character. The reinstatement of such features would significantly enhance the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.



A very important group: the Church, barn and behind it can be glimpsed the Hall

The views south through gaps in the built-up frontage are onto open fields which include the site of a Franciscan Abbey, a scheduled ancient monument. One such gap is between the church and no.28 past a large barn. These views are of special interest as they are the last part of Waterbeach where an appreciation of the old village giving way to countryside can still be had. Development which adversely affects the quality of these views will be resisted.



No.2 and its associated barn. An important thatched group.

No.2. Cottage. Late C17. Local gault brick gables, C19 gault brick casing to timber frame partly rendered. Longstraw thatch roof. One storey and attic. Listed grade II.

Barn to the south west of no.2. Early C17. Timber framed and weather boarded. Hipped long straw thatched roof. Aisle to south west, central double entrance facing north east. Three bays with side purlin queen strut roof. Listed grade II.

Buildings of Special Note.

- No.30. A C19 gault brick house. There is a tree growing up the front elevation which is an unusual but nevertheless picturesque element in the street scene. Effectively contains the open space of the old burial ground. Good rebuilt stacks. Unlisted.
- No. 49. A C19 gault brick villa extended on the front with a single storey e.C20 extension to front with unusual detail of bull-nosed corner bricks. Very noticeable as one enters Waterbeach from the east. Unlisted.

Summary.

Important Open Spaces.

- The churchyard.
- The Old Burial Ground.
- The grounds of The Hall.
- The Green.
- St. Andrews Hill.
- The garden of no.2 Station Road
- The gardens of nos. 20, 23, 25 and 33 High Street.
- The gardens of Denny House.
- The grounds of Waterbeach County Primary School adjacent to no. 20 High Street.

The Scale of Buildings.

Almost all of the buildings in Waterbeach are of one and a half to two storeys in height. The spans of individual elements in the buildings are generally between four and six metres.

Style.

There are a number of types of building construction and style in Waterbeach, ranging from rendered timber frame buildings through to the terraces and larger brick villas of the C19. By far the most prevalent are C19 brick buildings, either as a double fronted house or villa, semi-detached or as part of a terrace.

The earlier C19 brick houses are generally constructed of plain gault brick, possibly with stone dressings, while those constructed in the latter part of the century and in the early C20 are constructed of either red or yellow (gault) brick with contrasting brick and/or stone dressings.

Detail.

Features which characterise the timber framed buildings include:

- High pitched roofs.
- Clay peg or pantile, or longstraw thatch.
- These buildings have sometimes been encased in brick in the C18-C19, but are for the most part rendered.
- Exposed rafter feet or sprocketed eaves.
- Typically timber side opening casement windows or horizontally sliding sashes, set flush with the outside walls.
- Drip boards set in the gable ends and over the windows.
- Four or six panel, or planked doors.
- Chimneys sited laterally on the ridge of the roof.

Features which characterise the C19 brick houses include:

- Low pitched slate roofs; the oldest ones have steeper pitched peg tile roofs.
- Sliding sash windows set in reveal,
- Four or six panelled doors,
- Simple classical door cases incorporating rectangular fan-lights.
- Gauged or segmental brick arched lintols.
- Shallow stone sills.
- Dentil or saw-toothed cornices.
- Chimney stacks incorporated within the building, at the gables.

Features which characterise the later C19 terraced and semi – detached houses include:

- Saw tooth dentil courses at the eaves.
- Four or twelve pane, vertically sliding, sash windows.
- Four panel doors, some with the top two glazed, occasionally with leaded stained glass.
- Contrasting brick dressings.
- Chimneys stacks sited at the gables, flush with the gable walls.

Materials.

Walls - Rendered timber frame, black tarred weather board, red brick, local gault brick, gault brick, flint.

Roofs - Clay pan-tiles, clay peg tiles, slate, thatch.

Siting.

In the High Street and on Greenside most buildings tend to be sited either on the back edge of the pavement or set back from the pavement edge with small front gardens. In Station Road there is greater variety, but towards the eastern end most houses are sited on the back edge of the footway.

Trees.

Trees are a very important part of the special character of Waterbeach. There are notable individual trees and groups of trees in every part of the conservation area which variously give emphasis, structure and seasonal ambience to the street scene.

A recurrent feature in the street scene are rows of pollarded lime trees, often on property boundaries next to the street.

One of the most important characteristics of the centre of Waterbeach is the canopy of mature trees which covers much of the green and surrounding area.

-END -