

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Oakington Conservation Area was designated on 28 August 1989. This document aims to fulfill South Cambridgeshire District Council's duty to 'draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of these areas as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the commitment made by policy EN29 in the adopted Local Plan. This document includes; a character appraisal, design guidance for new development, and policies for the management of the area in order to preserve its character.

1.2 This section to report on public consultation and confirm the status of the appraisal as supplementary planning guidance / document.

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 the prior need to obtain planning permission (known as 'permitted development rights') are reduced or may 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 Although there is a good deal of relatively recent housing within Oakington, the Conservation Area still retains a nucleus of tight-knit historic buildings grouped mostly around the church and the High Street.

3.2 The rural character of the village is maintained by a number of features comprising: the large area of paddocks in the centre of the village, views out into the surrounding countryside (particularly adjacent to the school and towards Westwick), a number of former agricultural buildings) now mostly

converted to residential use) and the narrow roads flanked by informal grass verges.

3.3 Trees are very important to the character of the village and there are some significant groups around the rectory and church, on Mill Road and the High Street. These are complemented by mature hedgerows along the lanes and in the paddock areas.

3.4 Earthworks visible in the fields to the south east of Water Lane are a reminder of the village's Medieval past and include house platforms, the line of old trackways and 'ridge and furrow' field markings.

3.5 Despite its proximity to the village, the airfield does not dominate and the tree belt behind Mill Road is the only feature visible within the village. There are no significant views over the airfield or open land from the High Street due in part to the more modern housing on its north west side which acts as a buffer.

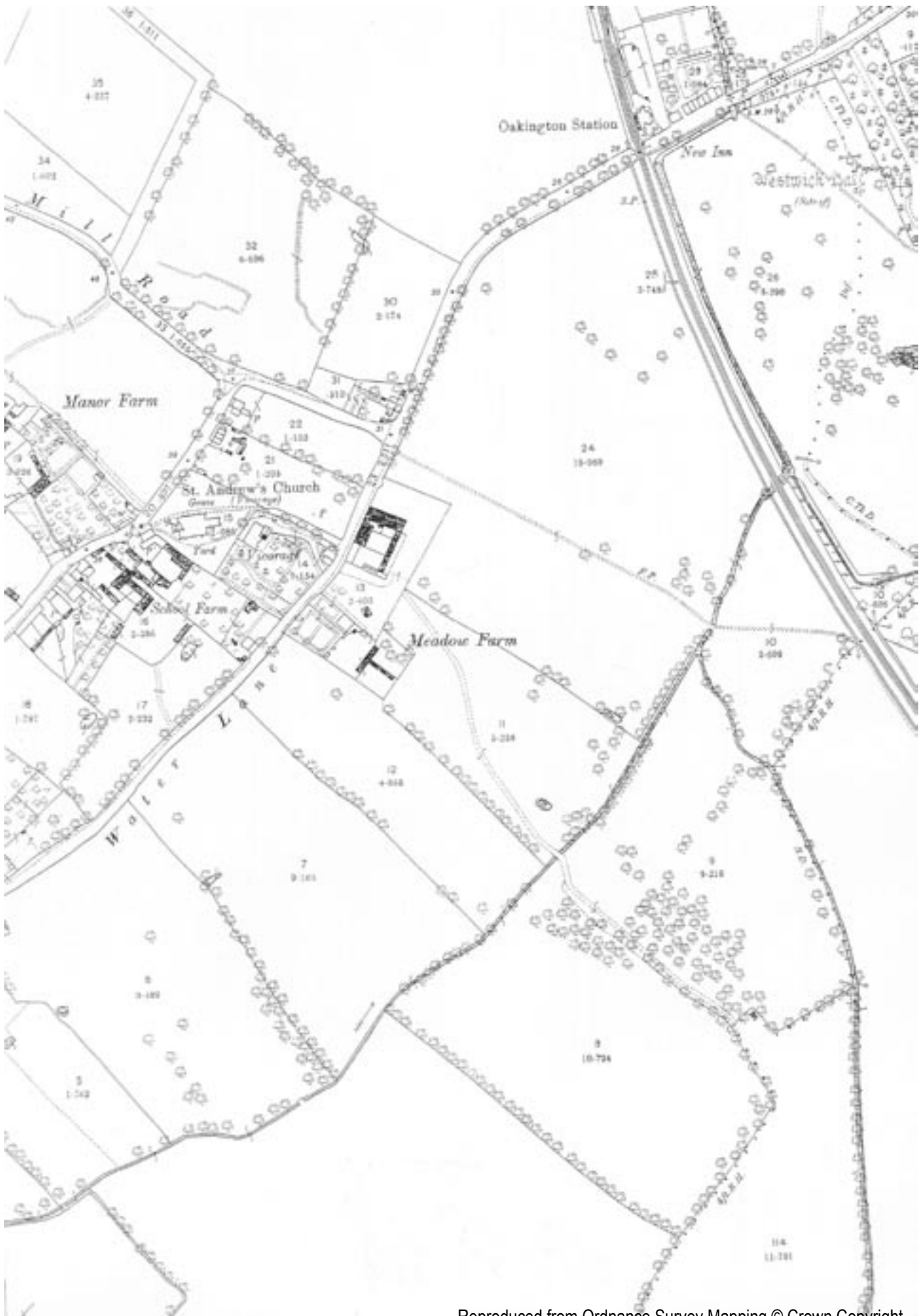
4.0 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE

4.1 There may have been settlement in the Oakington area since the Paeolithic era as hand axes have been found in the area. Certainly by Roman times, given the amount of pottery shards found in gardens and fields, it appears that the village was settled from the 2nd to the 4th century AD.

4.2 In 1938, an early Anglo-Saxon graveyard was discovered on what is now the recreation ground (south east of Water Lane, and on land surrounded by fields containing visible evidence of Medieval settlement). Excavations on the site in 1993 revealed evidence of 25 burials and a cremation.

4.3 Oakington was quite a large village in the Middle Ages with 55 residents counted in the Domesday Book and 100 by 1279. The Black Death decimated the population in the C14 wiping out half the tenants of the largest manor. By the C17 there were around 180 residents and the population steadily grew until the early C19 when it began to rise rapidly. However poverty and unemployment then took its toll with up to a third of the villagers leaving (some for Adelaide in Australia). The population stabilised at c425 by the 1890s and by 1950 there were around 500 inhabitants. Today the combined settlements of Oakington and Westwick have c1400 residents.

4.4 The main early settlement was around the church which dates from the C12. However, there



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were clearly also houses either side of Water Lane, with house platforms still discernible in the grass on the south east side of the road. There may have been other settlements around Alehouse Green (the junction of the Girton / Longstanton and Dry Drayton / Cottenham Roads and Sheep's Green (slightly further north on the Longstanton Road).

4.5 The manor had belonged to the Abbot of Crowland since Saxon times. By the C14 the house included a hall, chamber and kitchen. The current Manor Farm, which is a C19 building, stands on the site of the original house. Similarly there has been a rectory to the southeast of the church since 1198. In the C16 there was an absentee rector and the rectory fell into disrepair and was used as a smithy, barn and alehouse! It was rebuilt in the C18, again in the C19 and improved in 1922.

4.6 Oakington was for a long time a hot-bed of religious dissent, leading the Bishop to describe it as the most scandalous and vile parish in his Diocese in 1685. A Baptist Chapel was built in 1820. Although it burnt down in 1865, it was rebuilt the same year and the grand building survives today. There is also a Methodist Chapel, outside the Conservation Area close to Sheep's Green.

4.7 The village school, which originally operated from the church and then a site in Coles Lane, was replaced with a new school for 200 pupils on Water Lane in 1871. It has been subsequently extended and survives today.

4.8 The construction of the airfield in 1939 necessitated the purchase of around 540 acres of farmland to the north of the village. One casualty of the laying out of the runways was the windmill which had been rebuilt in 1863 after a fire destroyed its predecessor.

4.9 Since the war, the village has seen the construction of a large number of houses. These have included Local Authority and private houses mostly in small or medium-sized estates. Some of these lie within the Conservation Area.

5.0 GEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

5.1 The village is generally flat though the land rises slightly around the church and northern part of the High Street. Geologically, most of the village lies on a bed of gravel which continues beyond Longstanton. The southern part of the parish stands on the Lower Greensand which is generally overlaid with gault clay.

5.2 A small brook lies to the southeast of the village after rising by the Dry Drayton Road. This ultimately flows into the Beck Brook between Oakington and Westwick.

5.3 From the direction of Girton and Histon, the entrance to the village is across flat farmland. The ribbon development originally of farms but more recently of houses erodes Oakington's character as a free-standing village.

5.4 From Dry Drayton and the A14 (to the southwest), the open nature of the land with garden centres and fruit growers is more evident until much nearer to the cross roads within the village.

5.5 From Longstanton, the village is approached via the airfield road which is in theory closed to vehicular traffic. The open land, with its shelter belts of trees gives a definite and pleasant separation between the two villages.

5.6 From Cottenham (northeast), the village is entered after crossing agricultural land much used for fruit and flower growing. Beyond the northernmost houses of the main part of the village is an entrance to the airfield and a belt of tree and hedgerow planting. This separates the village from Westwick, a small hamlet that is part of the parish, and was the site of the railway station which opened in 1848 and closed in 1970.



Open land between Oakington and Westwick

5.7 In terms of the setting of the Conservation Area, the fields to the southeast of Water Lane are important in combining with the paddocks on the opposite side of the lane to give an open feel to the older part of the village. They also house the remains of much of the Medieval village.

5.8 The setting to the north of the village is less conspicuous from the Conservation Area. The belt of trees which hides the airfield is important, especially when looking northeast up the High Street.

6.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

6.1 The village recreation ground is on the site of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery. This was first realised in 1938 when four skeletons, one with a spear and shield were discovered. When excavation occurred in 1993 to site some play equipment, 25 burials and a cremation were found, eleven of them children. The grave goods found during the excavation, together with the height of the skeletons, indicates that the population was very wealthy.

6.2 On the playing fields between the school and Queens Way, there is evidence of a house platform and a track running from Water Lane towards the brook. Behind this, nearer the brook is a large area of 'ridge and furrow'.

6.3 Northeast of Queens Way is the former Council Depot site and in the adjacent fields of Meadow Farm, there is a great deal of evidence of Medieval house platforms, courtyards, banks and holloways (tracks). The Medieval field system can also be seen in the survival of more ridge and furrow markings and there is evidence of a large pond approximately 50 metres in diameter.

6.4 There is further evidence of earthworks of a similar age in the paddock area to the northwest of Water Lane.

7.0 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

High Street

7.1 The main historic building in the village is the C13 Church of St Andrew (map: I). At the west end of this Grade II* Listed Building is a four-stage tower with battlements that is prominent in several views within the village. The church is of various limestones, pebble- and pudding-stones and has a clay tiled roof.

7.2 The church has a pleasant setting in the middle of a substantial green. The roadside verge is lined with trees and visible between them are various sporadically placed graves. The church sits at 45 degrees to the road here and the north aisle with its C15 doorway is particularly visible. Adjacent to the road are some plastic bollards leaning at various angles. These bollards would be

best removed or replaced with ones of a more appropriate design and material. Similarly the streetlight which marks the end of the path to the church is rather utilitarian in appearance and could be improved upon.



St Andrew's Church



St Andrew's Churchyard

7.3 The northwest side of the High Street contains modern housing which, with the exception of the verge, contributes little to the character of the village. The southeast side has two pairs of pleasant C19 houses (map:A) of gault brick with Welsh slate roofs (Nos. 78 & 80 and 70 & 72 respectively). The later pair are, taller and with red brick dressings. In each case, the northern-most property in each pair has been extended in replica, though the bricks of one of the properties need to weather down before they will provide a suitable match to the original cottage.

7.4 To the west of the church is No. 68 High Street (map:2). This property (which is Grade II Listed) dates back to the C16 and originally comprised a hall with crosswing. The large chimney stack between the two elements of the building is particularly prominent. The property is built of timber frame and rendered, painted white. The building would be significantly enhanced if the concrete roof tiled and modern windows were replaced by more sympathetic components of traditional form. The concrete boundary wall to the road is similarly out of keeping with the historic origins of the site.



No. 68 High Street

7.5 On the opposite side of the road to the church path is a very attractive tree-lined avenue which runs to Manor Farm (map:B). This C19 house occupies the site of Crowland Abbey's manorial farmstead which comprised a hall and chamber in the C15 and boasted 9 hearths by the C17. The present building is not particularly visible from the High Street though its approach is a fine feature.



Drive to the Manor House

7.6 Immediately south of the driveway to Manor Farm is No. 69 High Street (map:3), an attractive one-and-a-half storey early C18 cottage with eyebrow dormers, that is a Grade II Listed Building. The cottage is thatched and mostly timber framed covered with white painted render. The majority of the windows are modern. This cottage and No. 68 opposite are an attractive pair at a key area within the village.



No. 69 High Street

7.7 Further down the High Street, on the south side, is No. 56 which is also known as Church Farmhouse and is a Grade II Listed Building (map:4). It dates back to the C15 and had a similar hall and crosswing plan to No. 68. The house is of two full storeys and has simple casement windows and a prominent chimney stack on the gable facing the road. It is one of a group of historic Listed Buildings within the core of the village. The C19 brick and slate property opposite helps produce a pinch-point in the street which emphasises the importance of the historic properties to the character of the village (map:C).



No. 56 High Street

7.8 Infilling between this group of historic buildings are a series of late C20 houses set back from the road. None of these have the character of the traditional buildings in the village, though the gambrel roof of No. 64 is an unusual feature on a modern dwelling. The unsympathetic concrete boundary wall to No. 68 continues in front of No. 66 (suggesting that this dwelling was built within the garden of No. 68). Behind this property is a low key commercial building, which nonetheless is out of keeping with the historic core of the village.



Modern houses on the High Street

7.9 No. 54 (map:D), located to the south of No. 56, is a very fine C19 house set back from the road beyond a lawn containing a pair of mature trees and with a low brick boundary wall to the street. The house is built of gault brick with red brick detailing under a Welsh slate roof. Two bays face the road, each containing French windows, and between the bays is a simple Classical doorcase. The windows are plate glass sashes.



No.54 High Street

7.10 Beside this substantial house is a series of single storey outbuildings of gault and pink brick known as Maris Barn (map:E). The smallest, nearest the house has a hipped slate roof, whilst the larger range which lines the footpath edge has triple-roll pantiles. These converted buildings neatly define the street and form a pleasant group with the main house and trees.



7.11 At this point there is virtually an archway of trees over the road and the rural feel of the village is consolidated by the grass verge on the north side of the street, though most of the housing in this area is again late C20 and lacks the character of the traditional properties. Most of the dwellings on Manor Farm Close lie outside the boundaries of the Conservation Area, but the stepped group of 1970s houses on the south side of Manor Farm Close are within and have a strong suburban feel. The grass verge in front of these houses is potentially an attractive feature, but is mostly lost to car parking, whilst the high white painted timber fence to No. 35 is very intrusive. The impact of this fence could be moderated through planting, and would be further improved if stained or painted a darker colour.



No. 35 High Street

7.12 Opposite these houses is a large area of open paddocks which is vital to the character of the village. Although the boundary fence is poor, the views across the open land, with its grazing horses and tree belts, are a defining characteristic of the village.



Paddocks

7.13 On the opposite side of the road is a weatherboarded barn with a thatched roof which has been converted to a house (map:F). This stands gable end to the road and complements the agricultural feel of this part of the village. A smaller outbuilding, also weatherboarded but with a pantiled roof lines the road with a C19 house of painted brick and slate beyond.



Converted barn, High Street

7.14 Nos. 25 and 27 are a pair of C17 / C18 cottages with rendered walls under a thatched roof with four gabled dormers (map:5). The cottages are Grade II Listed and are set back from the road behind a hedge. On the corner of Coles Lane is a pleasant C19 house that once incorporated a bakery and shop (map:G). The building is of two storeys with gault brick walls under a slate roof and was modernised in 2004 when much of the single storey corner and adjacent gable end were rebuilt. The windows are 2 over 2 plate glass sashes.



Nos. 25 & 27 High Street

7.15 On the opposite corner of Coles Lane is No. 19 High Street (map:H), a thatched property of similar age and character to Nos. 25 and 27 High Street (though not listed). This dwelling has walls of white painted render under a thatch roof that incorporates three gabled dormers with clay-tiled roofs. Adjoining this is a C19 wing with similar painted rendered walls and a Welsh slate roof. The building sits behind a hedge that turns the corner from High Street into Coles Lane.



No. 19 High Street

7.16 Continuing down to the junction with Water Lane are a row of C19 houses (Nos. 9-13 High Street) with painted brick walls and Welsh slate roofs (map:I). This is a pleasant two-storey terrace sited on the back edge of the pavement, though the loss of the original sash windows and chimneys has diminished its character. Beyond the terrace, the penultimate house within the Conservation Area is No. 5 which is again C19 and of gault brick with a slate roof (map:J).



Nos. 9-13 High Street

7.17 The character of the east side of the High Street is much less positive with a series of 1960s bungalows between the paddock and the lane to the chapel, and two-storey slightly later properties between the lane and the Water Lane junction. The latter are mostly hidden behind a mature hedge.

7.18 No. 14 has a boundary formed of the original hooped railings of the chapel. These are an attractive survival. No. 12, the property on the northern corner of the chapel lane, has a monopitch roof with blue boarding. Next to this house is an attractive triangular grassed area with mature trees that leads down a short pedestrian lane to the Baptist Chapel.



Hooped railings at No. 14 High Street



No. 12 High Street

7.19 Oakington was once a hot-bed for religious dissent and this has resulted in a substantial and imposing Baptist Chapel (map:K). The present chapel dates from 1865, when it was re-built following a fire. It stands gable end onto the lane and is built of gault brick under a Welsh slate roof. Although quite plain, the front elevation has a restrained dignity with a simple pediment supported on brick pilasters, arched headed windows to the first floor and blind windows with flat brick arches of rubbed bricks on the ground floor. An adjoining single storey building to the southeast was originally the schoolroom and is dated 1877. This is also of gault brick with a slate roof and has 6 over 6 sash windows. The simple gabled porch has the names of the trustees carved into the brickwork. The original hoped-topped railings survive on the northwest side of the chapel, but to the southeast they have been replaced by a modern timber fence, with only the original gate remaining.



Baptist Chapel



Chapel School

7.20 Tucked in between the church and the Water Lane properties is a modest single storey flat roofed house (No. 10 High Street) which dates from the 1960s. Although the building is of a contrasting form to the traditional buildings in the village, it is a modest and unassuming contemporary structure with white-painted walls and a well-maintained garden.



No. 10 High Street

Water Lane

7.21 On the north side of Water Lane, the first properties are a pair of C19 cottages followed by a detached house of similar age (Nos. 41-45). The one nearest the junction has rendered walls and a concrete tiled roof and modern windows, its neighbour has gault brick walls and original sash windows, whilst the detached property has rendered walls modern windows and a slate roof. All are sited behind substantial hedges (map:L).



South end of Water Lane

7.22 At the bottom of the lane to the chapel is a modern bungalow of brick with a concrete pantiled roof which is very prominent from the southeast. The close boarded fence, crossing lights and grey cabinet all give a suburban feel to the road here.

7.23 The School House, which is located on the southeast side of Water Lane, is outside the boundaries of the current Conservation Area, but is a substantial property that complements the setting of the Conservation Area (map:M). It is built of gault clay brickwork with red brick detailing under a Welsh slate roof and was built in 1871. Unfortunately it no longer retains its original sash windows, but it remains a building of some character. To the rear are more modern single storey extensions.



School House

7.24 The space around the school is quite important to the character of the village and it is therefore proposed that some of this land be included within the Conservation Area. Southwest of the school is a mature chestnut tree, whilst northeast of it are more trees, a hedge line and vistas out into open countryside across the area of archaeological interest. These features add to the townscape interest of the village and its historic character.



Land to northeast of the school

7.25 On the north side of the road, is a mixture of relatively modern properties; three bungalows and two, two-storey houses. One of the latter is 1950s red brick in contrast to the mostly buff brick of its neighbours. The adjacent property has a weatherboarded gable. All the properties are partly hidden by well-maintained hedges except for the eastern-most bungalow which has a low wall.



Water Lane

7.26 The south side of the road, which includes the 1950s estates of Local Authority housing and the former Council depot site (now being developed for housing) are not within the Conservation Area. The north side is included however and comprises the open paddocks which are so important to the character of the village. An excellent vista across to the church is possible, a view framed by the hedge line and occasional mature trees. The undulating ground also suggests some archaeological remains.



View of church from Water Lane

7.27 Heading northeast, there is a C19 cottage with painted brick walls and a slate roof and a 1960s brick two storey house next to it. In front of both are mature trees which together with those in the grounds of the vicarage are extremely important to the character of the street.



Trees on Water Lane

7.28 The trees are complemented by the strong hedge in front of the vicarage, where a gap in the trees allows a glimpse of this C19 gault brick building with its Welsh slate roof and sash windows (map:N). The beautifully maintained box hedges in the garden to the vicarage provide a pleasant contrast with the more natural hawthorn hedges elsewhere in the village. Beyond the entrance to the vicarage is a small coach house of brick and slate with a brick wall turning the corner and defining the lane to the church (map:O).



Coach house to the vicarage

Vicarage Close

7.29 Vicarage Close is a small development of chalet bungalows that date from the latter part of the C20. Whilst well-maintained, the development has little in common with the traditional buildings and street-pattern of the more historic parts of the village.



Vicarage Close

Mill Road

7.30 From the corner of Mill Road, there is a good view east over the surrounding countryside which divides the village from Westwick. A neat hedge defines the corner from Water Lane into Mill Road. In summer, none of the houses along Mill Road are readily visible due to the hedges and trees, combined with the buildings being set back from the road. This gives the road a very attractive rural feel, even though none of the houses are of particular historic interest.



Mill Road

7.31 The density of the shelter planting on the end of the airfield is apparent as the corner is turned at the end of the lane. On the south corner of the street is a very mature tree which is extremely important in streetscape terms.

7.32 Both stretches of Mill Road have grass verges at the side of the narrow road. This softens the impact of the roadway, leads into the major green space outside the church and provides the space for occasional tree planting. This all contributes to the rural feel of this part of the village.

7.33 In common with many villages, the presence of telegraph and electricity poles supporting spiders-webs of overhead wires occasionally diminishes from the gently varied skyline of the village, whilst street lights are often rather utilitarian with galvanised columns. In one place on Water Lane, two streetlights, one old, one new stand beside each other.



Mill Road looking southwest

8.0 KEY CHARACTERISTICS

8.1 Within the Conservation Area, with the exception of the church and chapel, no building exceeds two domestic storeys in height. This modest scale of building, coupled with the flat topography, means that the sky dominates in most views. The scale of residential buildings also means that the ecclesiastical buildings are visually prominent within the village.

8.2 The traditional domestic buildings within the village generally fall into two categories. The earlier buildings, which date from the C15 to C18, tend to be of timber framed construction covered with render and originally under a thatch roof (though these may have since been replaced by tiles). Windows on these earlier buildings would originally have been simple casements or horizontal sliding 'Yorkshire sliders', though few remain today. Oakington is fortunate in having two early buildings of hall and cross-wing plan still surviving. The typical C19 houses are constructed of gault clay brickwork under Welsh slate roofs (slate for roofs follows the opening of the railway, which facilitated transportation of heavy building materials). Some slightly later C19 buildings have contrasting red brick or stone detailing used in conjunction with the gault brick. Windows on these C19 houses were almost always sashes, with larger panes of plate glass on the later properties. Agricultural buildings tend to be of brick or weatherboarding, often with pantiled roofs.



High Street

8.3 The vast majority of traditional buildings within the Conservation Area sit parallel with the street. The oldest buildings tend to be on the footpath edge or with very small front gardens. Most of the C20 housing within the Conservation Area ignores this and has staggered building lines or is set back some distance from the street. Although this does

in some instances allow for grass verges and tree planting, it reduces the impression of an 'active' street frontage.

8.4 Similarly, the position of clusters of historic buildings close to the road emphasises the tight, intimate scale of the original village. The newer housing within the village generally fails to respect this.

8.5 Open spaces are extremely important to the character of the village. The key space is the area of paddocks right at the heart of the village which contributes a rural character and allows some attractive views across to the church from Water Lane. The graveyard around the church is equally important and gives a suitable setting to this fine building. The garden of the vicarage contributes to the open space and augments the wealth of trees around the church. The area of open land next to the school allows long vistas into the open countryside. Similarly vistas from the corner of Mill Road over the land between the village and Westwick provide an attractive breathing-space between the two settlements.



Paddocks

8.6 Smaller areas of grass such as those at the top of the Chapel Lane and the roadside verges within the village all add to the rural feel and allow space for mature trees.

8.7 Trees are very important to the character of the village. Key groups include those around the vicarage, around the church and on Mill Road, along the avenue to the Manor House, on the High Street and at the top of the Chapel Lane. In addition the belts of trees visible across the areas of open land contribute much to the village. The rural character is enhanced by the numerous natural hedges, whilst the well-maintained hedges within the vicarage garden are a feature in themselves.



Top of Chapel Lane

8.8 High Street and Mill Road have very little street clutter such as road signs and markings and this helps ensure a rural feel to the village. Water Lane, as a popular route between the A14 and villages such as Cottenham, is different with road signs and other paraphernalia. Obviously a pedestrian crossing point close to the school is important but it shows how dominant the necessary traffic lights can be on a narrow road.

9.0 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

Additions

9.1 The area of land adjacent to the school is important to the history of the village and allows some pleasant views out into the surrounding farmland. This is a positive characteristic of the village and it is therefore proposed to include it within the Conservation Area. The original part of the school is a good C19 building right on the roadside. This too is proposed to be included together with the tree to the west of the school buildings. See the Oakington Conservation Area map.

Removals

9.2 None.

10.0 ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

10.1 The area around the church is very important to the character of the village. It is important that street lights, bollards and other necessary street furniture is carefully sited and of appropriate design so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. The existing streetlight and the leaning bollards could therefore be replaced with more suitable designs.

10.2 Property and field boundaries in the village are in some cases of poor design or becoming very ramshackle. Encouraging property owners to provide more suitable fences or walls or hedges would improve the appearance of several key areas in the village. In appropriate cases, grant aid could be considered where lost features are being faithfully reinstated based on sound documentary evidence.

10.3 A major enhancement opportunity would be the removal of telegraph poles and overhead wires. If wires could be run underground, this would significantly enhance the rural character of the village and remove skyline clutter.

10.4 The District Council may seek to make 'Article 4 Directions' to retain traditional detailing on the exterior of non-listed buildings within the Conservation Area, where such details have not already been lost.

10.5 The District Council may make discretionary grants available towards the repair of certain historic buildings and structures within the district. These grants are made to encourage the use of traditional materials and craft techniques and are generally targeted at Listed Buildings, though visually prominent non-listed buildings within Conservation Areas may also be eligible for grant aid. More specific advice on the availability of grants, as well as on appropriate materials and detailing, is available from the Conservation Section within Development Services Directorate at the District Council.

11.0 POLICIES TO PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA

11.1 These policies should be read in conjunction with those in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. Summaries of relevant policies are provided in Appendix A, but it is advisable to consult the Local Plan itself.

11.2 In considering the design of new buildings or extensions to existing ones, the Council will take into account the impact of the proposal on the setting of Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Section 8 of this document sets out some of the key characteristics which need to be considered if a design is to fit comfortably with its neighbours. The following will also be important in determining whether a new development is acceptable:-

Location on the plot - buildings should respect established building lines unless there are good reasons for setting back further within the plot to maintain frontage trees or hedgelines.

Materials - Oakington has a limited palette of materials illustrated in part 8 of this report. This palette should be used as a guide for new development, though care should be taken to ensure that, for example, high status materials are not used for low-key building styles.

Colours - traditional colours for paint and render in the village would have been subdued earthy tones though today the majority of buildings are painted white. Encouragement should be given to ensure that very strident colours are not used in new developments to avoid them over-dominating the traditional buildings of the village.

11.3 The village has a hierarchy of traditional buildings with only the church, vicarage, chapel and larger houses having formal boundaries. On new properties the use of boundaries of an appropriate

rural character should be encouraged.

11.4 The grass verges are especially important to the character particularly in the northern part of the village. The District Council will work with the Parish Council to encourage the Highway Authority and statutory undertakers to ensure verges are not removed or damaged. Where private drives cross over grass verges, owners will be encouraged to use bound gravel or other visually 'softer' materials rather than formal block paving or setts.

11.5 The District Council will encourage the Highway Authority and statutory undertakers to reduce the visual clutter and impact of plant, road signs and other street furniture. Where signs are needed, their size should be kept to the minimum allowable and, wherever possible, they should be fixed to existing features rather than being individually pole-mounted. Appropriate designs and colours for street furniture will be encouraged and necessary but unattractive plant should be appropriately screened.