



Aynho is a place of special character and historic interest.

This appraisal and management plan sets out the features that contribute to its distinctiveness and identifies opportunities for its protection and enhancement.



Aynho

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Draft for consultation - October 2014

**Comments are welcome by Friday 14th November.
Please see final page for contact details**

Summary

Summary of Special Interest

Aynho is a rural village with Anglo-Saxon origins, the first record of the manor dating back to 1043. The majority of the current buildings were constructed in the 18th century, built of local limestone in a vernacular style. There is a notable absence of brick housing.

Aynhoe Park, a Grade I listed house and Grade II listed park, lies to the south of the village. The evolution of the estate and village are closely interlinked. Former squires have owned large amounts of village property and land and have thus been able to control its development. From 1616 to the 1950s the Park was in the possession of the Cartwright family who were instrumental in informing how the village appears today.

The village lies in the extreme south west of the district on the edge of a limestone plateau. The east approach along the B4100 gives the impression of a spacious village with wide streets, offering little glimpses of the more intimate centre of the conservation area. The western and southern boundaries offer extensive open views over the Cherwell valley and Oxfordshire beyond.

Key Characteristics

Vernacular cottages and farmhouses built of local limestone dominate the conservation area. Many are two or three storey with slate or stone slate roofing and a few remaining examples of thatch. The ridge line varies across the streetscape indicating the different phases of development.

Towards the centre of the village there is a more intimate feel with restricted views and cottage dwellings sitting towards the front edge of their plot. From the central square, streets diverge to narrow lanes and alleyways, some of which are only accessible by foot.

Limestone boundary walls, traditionally dry stone, are an important feature of the area. Five miles of wall encompass the former boundaries of Aynhoe Park, much of which continues along the south periphery of the village. Similar smaller boundary walls are found within the village itself and play an important role in enclosing the streetscape and plots.

Located to the south, Aynhoe Park sits in close proximity to the village and highway. This is a strong indicator of the influence that former squires have had on the village and its development throughout the centuries.

Open and green spaces help define the village and inform its historic growth. Historically some have been meeting points including The Square and the green outside the Cartwright Hotel, thought to be the location of the medieval market.

Summary of Issues and Opportunities

Change is inevitable in most conservation areas and it is not the intention of the designation to prevent the continued evolution of places. The challenge within conservation areas is to manage change in a way that maintains, reinforces and enhances the special character and quality of the area.

This will owe much to the positive management of the conservation area. Therefore, in addition to the existing national statutory legislation and local planning controls the following opportunities for enhancement have been identified:

- Establish a list of locally significant buildings and policies for their protection.
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of surviving historic detail and the reinstatement of appropriately detailed fittings in buildings considered to be of significance to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The use of Article 4 Directions which remove the permitted development rights of dwelling houses will help to achieve this.

- Ensure that all new development is sustainable, high quality, well designed and responds to its context in terms of urban and architectural design.
- Promote the sympathetic management of open space within the conservation area, including verges, and to work with the highway authorities to avoid the insertion of inappropriate kerbing and footpaths which would have a harmful urbanising affect.

The Conservation Area Boundary

The conservation area was originally designated in 1968. This was reviewed in 1987 to exclude the new developments east of the village and again in 2004.

In 2014 the conservation area boundary was reviewed again. The proposed boundary will exclude the 1950s council houses to the east of the conservation area. Although these are well-designed social houses respecting the local material, they do not conform to the scale and form that predominates across the conservation area. The modern development to the rear of College Farm in the west will also be removed due to the lack of historic or architectural significance.

1. Introduction and Planning Policy Context

1.1 What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas were introduced under the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. That Act required Local Planning Authorities to identify areas, as opposed to individual buildings, of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas.

Since 1967 some 9,800 conservation areas have been designated in England, including 57 in the South Northamptonshire District to date. The Aynho Conservation Area is one of those 57 areas having originally been designated in 1968 and reviewed again in 1987 and 2004.

1.2 Planning Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the Act of Parliament which today provides legislation for the protection of the nation's heritage of buildings and places of architectural and historic interest.

Section 69 of the 1990 Act defines a conservation area as:

"an area of architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

The 1990 Act also places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to consider revisions to the boundaries of their conservation areas *"from time to time"*. It is now considered appropriate to review the Aynho Conservation Area in order to further define its key characteristics.

This document is an appraisal of the Aynho Conservation Area and is based on a standard format derived from advice contained within the English Heritage guidance *"Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management"* published in 2011.

By updating the conservation area appraisal for Aynho the special character and appearance of the area can continue to be identified and protected. The conservation area appraisal and management plan provide the basis for making informed, sustainable decisions in the positive management, protection and enhancement of the conservation area.

The appraisal provides a clear understanding of the special interest of Aynho by assessing how the settlement has developed, analysing its present day character and identifying opportunities for enhancements.

The appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive and omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is not of interest.

This appraisal should also be read in conjunction with the wider national and local planning policy and guidance including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) under which a conservation area is deemed to be a heritage asset.

The South Northamptonshire Local Plan was adopted in 1997 and resaved in part on 28 September 2007. It designates Aynho as a Restricted Infill Village with policy H5 of the plan restricting development within such villages to the infilling of a small gap in an otherwise built frontage; or a small group of dwellings; or the conversion of an existing building.

Policies EV10 and EV11 of the document continue and state that: *"The Council will seek to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of conservation areas,"* and that *"Planning permission will not be granted for any development proposals outside of a conservation area which have an adverse effect on the setting of the conservation area or any views into or out of the area."*

1.3 What does conservation area status mean?

Conservation area status provides the opportunity to promote the protection and enhancement of the special character of the area.

Designation confers a general control over development that could damage the area's character. The details are complex but can be summarised as:

- Most demolition requires permission and will be resisted if the building makes a positive contribution to the area.
- Some minor works are no longer "permitted development" and will require planning permission. Examples include extensions, external cladding and satellite antennas.
- Most works to trees have to be notified to the Local Planning Authority for its consideration.
- Generally higher standards of design apply for new buildings and alterations to existing ones.

2. Location, Topography and Geology

2.1 Location

Aynho is situated in the extreme south west of the South Northamptonshire district, close to the Oxfordshire border.

It is located on the B4100 road from Bicester to Banbury which sweeps around the village in an east to north westerly direction. Banbury is 11km (7 miles) to the north west and Brackley 12km (8 miles) to the north east.

There are significant open views to the west and south that look out onto the Cherwell Valley and Oxfordshire beyond. The M40 from Birmingham to London runs just 1km (3/4 mile) south of the settlement with the Oxford canal and railway 1.5km (1 mile) to the east.

Aynho has a population of approximately 650 people (Census 2011) with most commuting out of the village for work.

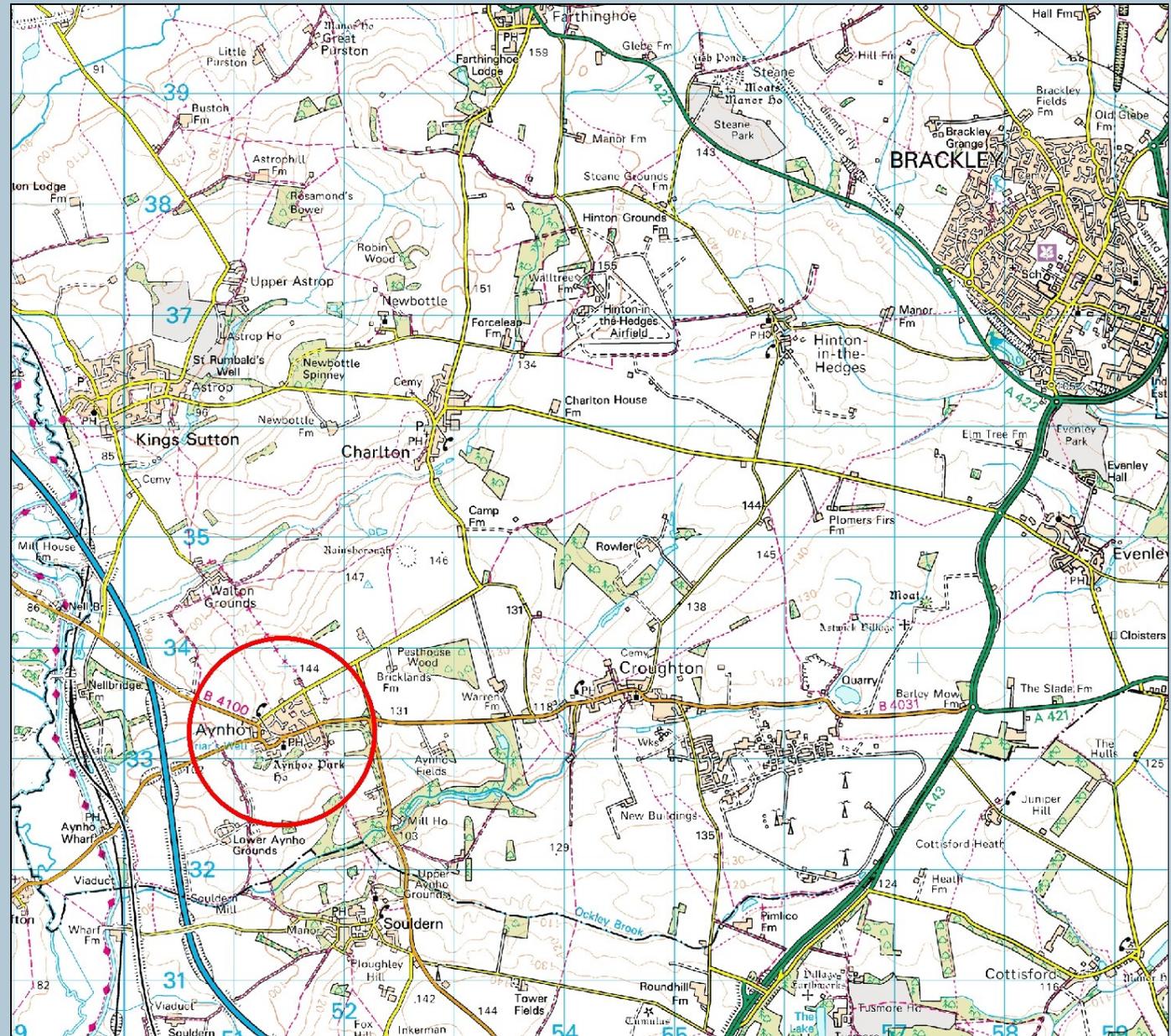


Figure 2: Location map of Aynho

2. Location, Topography and Geology

2.2 Topography and Geology

The Northamptonshire Environmental Character and Green Infrastructure Strategies were published by the River Nene Regional Park CIC in 2009. These strategies included environmental landscape and biodiversity character assessments for the county.

The settlement of Aynho is located within the Environmental Character Area of the West Northamptonshire Uplands. The area lies to the west of the county stretching from Aynho in the south to Wilbarston in the north. The terrain is an expansive and elevated landscape of hills and valleys that act as the major watershed between some of the region's principal river systems. The varied landscape character is an integral part of its distinctiveness.

There is a variation of geology throughout this area that has affected habitats and land use.

This varied landscape character is evident particularly to the south and west of the village with expansive views over to the Cherwell Valley and Cotswolds beyond.

Aynho has developed on a limestone plateau 145m above sea level. This has provided a strong unity between the natural and built environment with a prolific use of oolitic limestone used for the vernacular buildings and boundary walls.

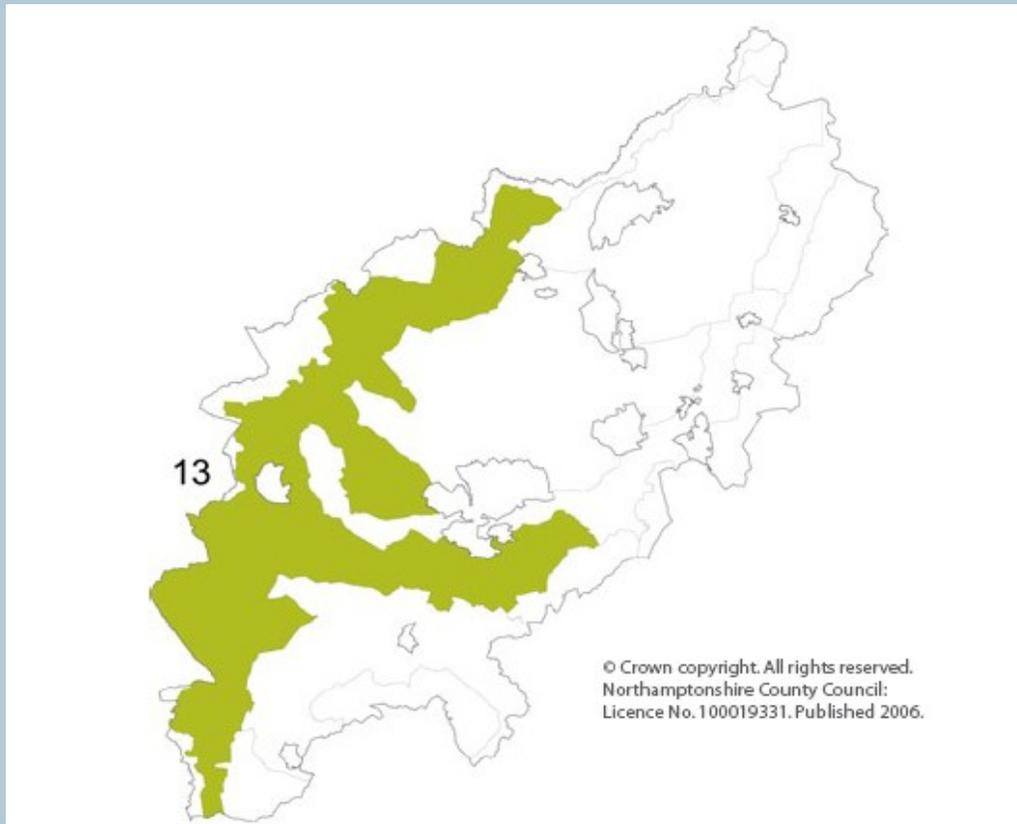


Figure 3: West Northamptonshire Catchment © Crown Copyright 2006. 1000019331



Figure 4: View from Charlton Road into Oxfordshire

3. History and Development

3.1 Background

The current layout of Aynho has remained largely unaltered since the 17th century with many of the houses dating from this time to the early 18th century. The history and development of the village has been inextricably linked with the owners of Aynhoe Park since the Norman period.

3.2 Pre-historic and Roman

Rainsborough Camp, an Iron-Age hill fort to the north of Aynho suggests early activity in the area. Aside from a possible pre-historic burial in the Park there is little evidence to suggest that the village itself was a permanent settlement during this period.

Roman artefacts have been found scattered across the village including bone and pottery fragments and spearheads found in the grounds of the Park.

3.3 Anglo-Saxon

The Manor of Aienho was first recorded in 1043 and was held by a Dane, Aega or Asgar the Stellar/Constable who acted as a royal standard-bearer to Edward the Confessor. The village name is of Saxon origin translated as 'hill spur of a man called Aega', referring to its elevated position in the landscape. Its value was then rated at £6 indicating a sizeable permanent settlement.

3.4 Medieval

After winning the Battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror granted the manor of Aienho to the French lord Geoffrey de Mandeville. By 1086 the Domesday Book cites Aienho as being worth £8 with a sizeable population of 150, larger than either the neighbouring Charlton or Croughton.

By the late 12th century the manor and associated lands had passed to the FitzRogers/FitzRichards and Claverling family. A pilgrim's hospital dedicated to St James and St John was built during this time for the relief of the poor, sick and infirm. It stood to the west of the village near the present site of College Farm, but was closed in 1485. The village was also granted the right to hold a four-day Michémas fair and weekly markets, possibly on the current junction of The Square.

The De Nevilles briefly held Aynho during the 14th century with the Lords of the manor collecting rent from 25 dwellings and 18 cottages. A large proportion of the village was in agricultural use, particularly on the periphery. St Michael's Church was rebuilt during this time, but only the tower now remains from this period.



Figure 5: St Michael's Church
14th century tower

No 6 Roundtown, a Grade II* listed cottage dates from the late 15th century. Although altered in later centuries the former thatch, uncoursed limestone cottage has an internal raised cruck construction and sooted rafters to indicate an earlier open hearth plan.



Figure 6: 15th century cottage

3.5 17th Century

In 1616, Richard Cartwright, the younger son of a Cheshire squire and wealthy lawyer purchased the manor of Aynho and associated estate lands. This included a large portion of village property and 200 acres of deer park to the south of the manor. This family would hold the estate for over 300 years.

During the Civil War Aynhoe was a centre of military action for both Parliamentarian and Royalist forces. After the Battle of Naseby in 1645, the Earl of Northampton's Royalist troops set fire to the manor and fled.

After the Restoration the Cartwrights were granted compensation for damages and in 1662 embarked on re-developing the site with Edward Marshall, the King's master mason. Little survives of this scheme due to subsequent alterations.

By the late 17th century there were 81 houses in the village. Many of the vernacular dwellings were built between this time and the mid 18th century and still remain today, though often altered through subsequent centuries.

Finer local buildings in the 17th century belonged to yeoman farmers. 21 Blacksmiths Hill is a fine example. With coursed rubble limestone and ironstone detailing this distinctive building was built for Edward Jarvis in 1640, an indication of his wealth and status at the time.

3. History and Development



Figure 7: 21 Blacksmiths Row, built 1640.

The Grammar School (now Grammar House on Croughton Road) was built in 1663 at the request of Mary Cartwright. This was intended to provide a free education for the children of the farm labourers in the village.



Figure 8: The old grammar school, now The Grammar House, built 1663.

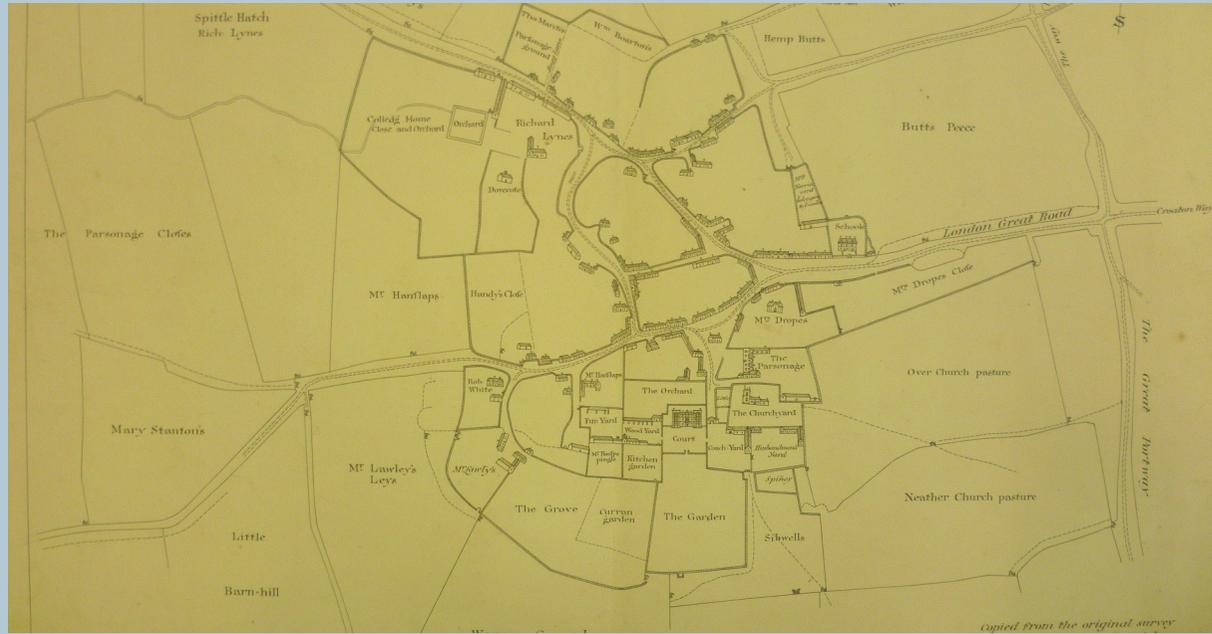


Figure 9: James Fish's Map of Aynho, 1696 (Northamptonshire Record Office)

3.5 18th Century

During the 18th century the House and Park began to develop a more formal layout. In the 1720s James Archer was commissioned to expand the house adding the office and stable wings on the north façade and heightening the south. Houses and the orchard were cleared from the north that looked to the village and a screen of trees planted to offer privacy. Within the park there was a formal garden layout with a double avenue of elm trees lining the south approach and a tree lined avenue to the east boundary. This was altered in the 1760s with the intervention of Capability

Brown who proposed a less formal parkland with open vistas, sweeping lawns and a ha-ha.



Figure 10: East wing of Aynhoe Park, north facade

St Michael's Church was constructed in 1723. The earlier medieval church was in ruins by this point and all was demolished apart from the tower that still remains. This was designed by local mason Edward Wing in a distinctive classical Grecian style intended to mimic the style of the adjacent House.

3. History and Development



Figure 11 - 1792 Enclosure Map of Aynho. The village layout is still distinguishable today. (Northamptonshire Record Office)

The layout of the current village started to take form during the latter part of the 18th century. William Cartwright acquired more land during the 1790s with the Turnpike and Enclosures Act. The parkland was extended towards the west re-routing the Deddington Road and demolishing the village houses around Friars Well. An extension of the Park to the east re-routed the south road to Souldern.

Those houses along the road opposite the House belonged to 'villagers of substance' including the apothecary and larger village farmers evident in the size of plot and building form.

The Square was the commercial centre with shopkeepers, butchers, bakers and inns. It lay on the route of the London to Birmingham road with coaches passing through Hollow Way to the former White Hart Inn and Cartwright Hotel. The raised pavement was probably built

during this time to prevent accidents between pedestrians and stagecoaches. Blacksmiths Hill was the site of many of the village tradesmen with the local masons, plasterers and blacksmiths located in this area.



Figure 12: The Square

Although the Oxford and Coventry Canal reached Aynho in 1787 it appears to have had a limited effect on the development of the village. This is due to the tight control the Cartwrights exercised over the development of the village.

3.6 19th Century

At the start of the 19th century further developments were undertaken at the House by John Soane. These improvements were mostly to the interior, but he also linked the two wings to the main house on the north façade.

Schemes for the Park were proposed by Humphrey Repton. Although there is no direct account of him having worked on

the gardens, the new corner Park Lodge and sweeping lime tree drive to the east are indicators that some of these ideas were adopted.



Figure 13: North façade of Aynhoe Park



Figure 14: South façade of Aynhoe Park

By 1821 the number of village inhabitants had reached 719, a fairly modest settlement largely comprising of farm labourers. Many of these workers would have shared the small cottage dwellings that were densely packed into the centre of the village. These one-up-one-down dwellings could have housed up to 7 individuals. The Almshouses

3. History and Development

were built a year later, endowed by the Oxford glazier John Baker. These self-contained private residences were built for up to 8 local or Oxford elderly individuals with a small weekly annuity, a rare occurrence during this period.



Figure 15: The Almshouses

Aynho has been referred to as the Apricot Village due to the trees that grow outside some of the houses. This may have been a planting scheme introduced by Thomas Cartwright, a keen horticulturist, in the late 19th century. There is no evidence to suggest rents were paid via choice pickings, but some houses still continue this tradition today.

The opening of the Great Western Oxford-Rugby Railway had little effect on the size of the village itself. The greatest impact of an improved infrastructure was the replacement of local thatch on many of the vernacular buildings with Welsh slate, which predominates today.

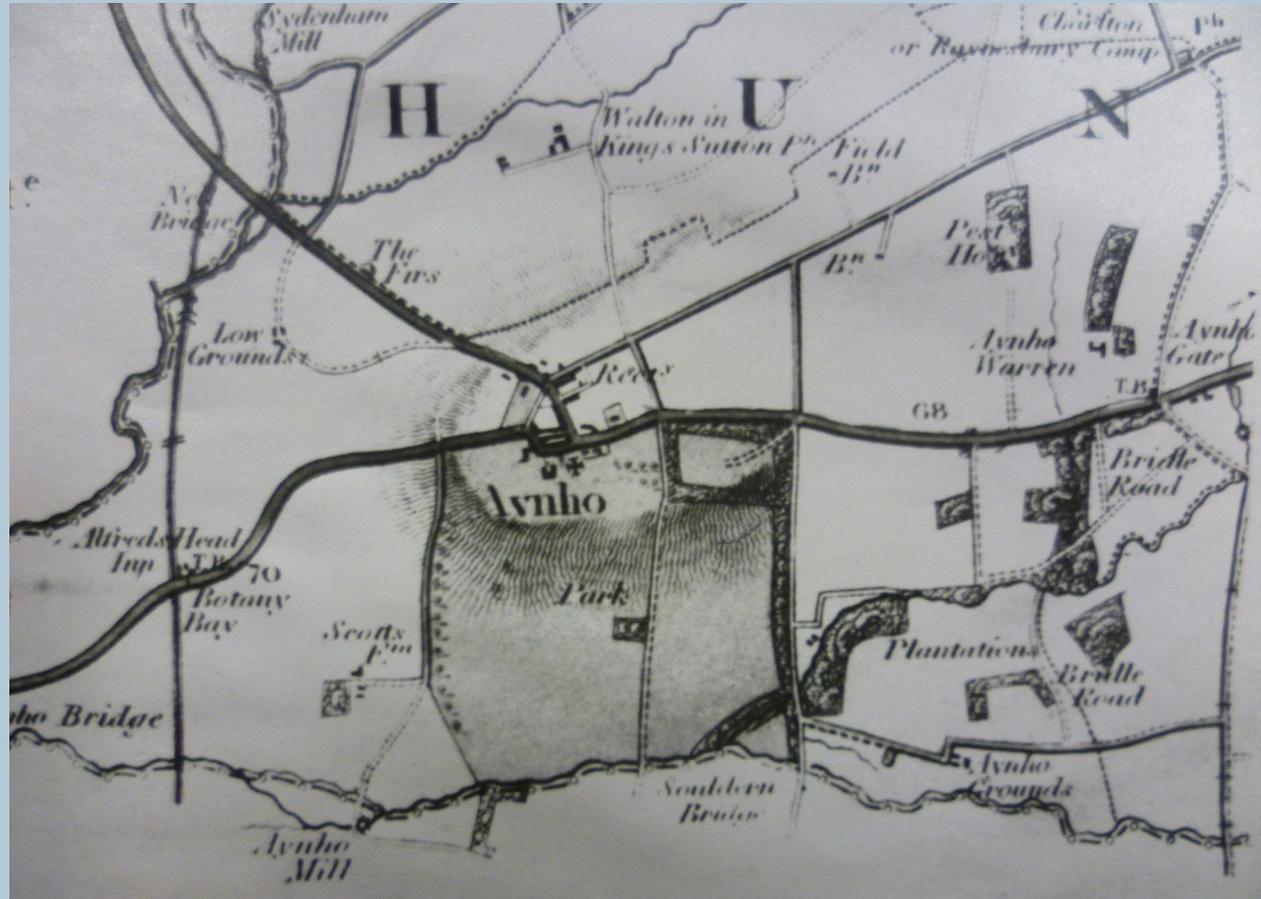


Figure 16: Bryants 1827 Map of Aynho (Northamptonshire Records Office)

3.7 20th Century onwards

During World War II Aynhoe Park was used as a fuel dump with Nissen huts, bunkers and concrete roads constructed by the Army. Today, only sections of the road remain to indicate the former site.

In 1954 a tragic car accident killed Richard Cartwright and his son Edward,

resulting in the division and sale of the Park.

The village itself saw major development and expansion during the latter part of the 20th century. To the east of the conservation area the footprint of the village virtually doubled with local authority and private housing being built.

The Pediment along Croughton Road, was built in 1956-57 by the eminent architect Raymond Erith. Originally a small house with the later expansion of the gardens, The Pediment is a unique example of classical Georgian architectural features and design from the 20th century.

3. History and Development

3.8 Archaeological

There has been limited archaeological evidence uncovered in the area. Despite the Iron-Age Rainsborough Camp hill fort to the north of the village pre-historic remains have not been abundant. There has been Roman evidence uncovered in the area, but this has not been extensive enough to suggest permanent settlement. With a high proportion of the land having been in agricultural use archaeological evidence may have been lost or unrecorded.

Further opportunities to increase our understanding of Aynho's past should be taken when sites for research opportunities and/or development are recognised and brought forward.

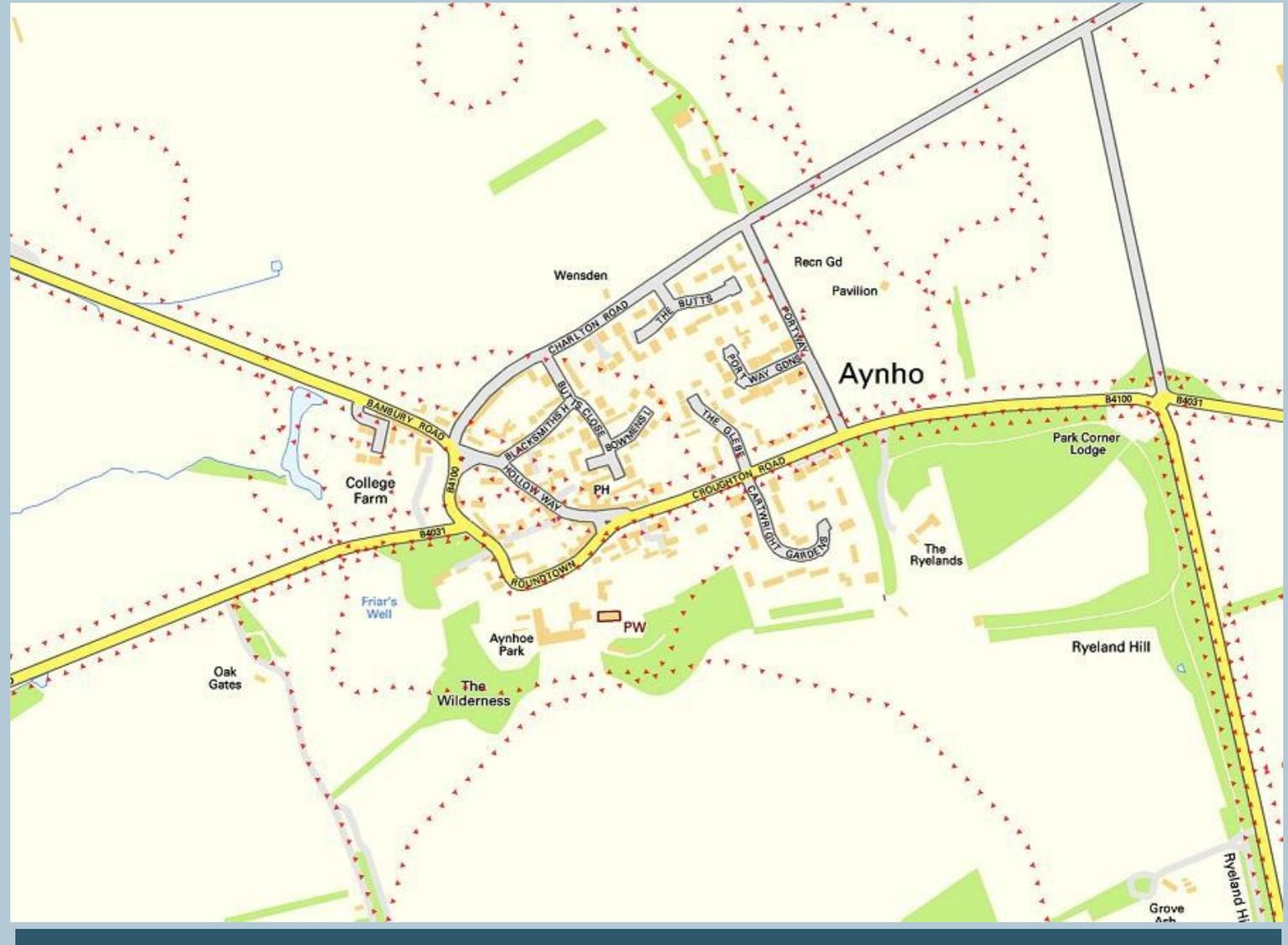


Figure 17: Archaeological finds in Aynho

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4. Spatial Analysis

4.1 Land Use

The village is predominantly in residential use with the exception of the Cartwright Hotel, the village hall and St Michael's Church. Aynhoe Park although a private residence does open its doors to the public for pre-organised events.

4.2 Settlement Form

The settlement of the village has been greatly dictated by the layout of the highways with many of the buildings sitting in close proximity to the road. Aynho has organically grown with its topography. Roads follow the formation of the land with steep inclines within the small village itself, this is noticeable on Charlton Road and Blacksmiths Hill where the cottages are stepped up the incline.

The B4100 road from Bicester to Banbury runs down and through the conservation area from Croughton Road in the east, through Roundtown and out again to the north west on the Banbury Road. The approach along Croughton Road gives the impression of wide open streets with grass verges. Past the Grammar House the road splits at the small green known as The Square to either enter the heart of the village or continue along the main road.



Figure 18: East approach to village along Croughton Road.

Along the main highway stand buildings of historically higher status. Predominantly 17th and 18th century dwellings run along the north side in close proximity to the road. To the south many of the buildings are set back including St Michael's Church, not directly visible from the street.

At a sharp bend Aynhoe Park can be seen from the highway, the turn a result of road rerouting to expand the Park during the late 18th century. This entrance was not the original one and up until the early/mid 20th century it would have been shielded by trees.

Continuing along this road the view to the west opens out across the Cherwell valley with the concentration of buildings giving way to larger agricultural dwellings and open fields.

The Square has been the heart of the village, around which many commercial properties were focused. This includes a



Figure 19: View west across to Oxfordshire

butcher, baker, brewer and inn, all sitting in close proximity to the road. A number of roads diverge from here including Little Lane, a narrow alleyway to Roundtown and Skittle Alley which leads onto Blacksmiths Hill both only accessible on foot.



Figure 20: View up Little Lane

The road down Hollow Way is narrow with a raised footpath and limited development on either side due to the steep incline.



Figure 21: Grade II raised pavement up Hollow Way

Less regulated plot division and alignment is evident on Blacksmiths Hill where many of the properties sit back within their boundaries, elevated on the south side and towards the lower part of the road. The ridgeline along the north indicates that the road has been realigned towards the top end at Butts Close.

Across the village examples can be seen of dwellings that fit into irregular plots from different building phases. In some instances houses were built behind one another or on a different alignment to fit within the boundary.

4. Spatial Analysis

Newer properties have been built within the conservation area. Generally these have been built of a similar material and conform to the division of plots via boundary walls to blend with the historic core of the village. Care should be taken when informing future development on the recommendation of materials and appropriate roofscapes and windows for new properties to ensure a more homogenous integration.

4.3 Street pattern, footpaths and means of enclosure

The B4100 that loops through the conservation area is a busy through road carrying a large volume of traffic. The streets here are wide and benefit from a wider pavement than elsewhere in the village, paved in tarmac with small grass verges.

A forked junction diverges off the main road and onto The Square into the heart of the village. The pavement becomes noticeably narrower here with the road also narrowing into the one-way system down Hollow Way. Skittle Alley and Little Lane can only be accessed on foot, contributing to the more intimate and sheltered nature of the village centre with the built-up core restricting open vistas.



Figure 22: View up Skittle Alley

The more traditional vernacular buildings are set in closer proximity to the road, separated by either boundary walls or narrow pavements and verges. This form is particularly evident along The Square and Croughton Road where houses tend to run parallel with the road and sit at the front edge of their plot. Charlton Road on the periphery has this front facing parallel form of cottages, but with open vistas on its north side giving a more spacious feel. Few of the traditional dwellings have extensive front gardens with many growing plants along their front façade, including some remaining examples of apricot trees.



Figure 23: Cottages along Croughton Road with apricot trees growing on the front.

The larger dwellings built by the former wealthier residents of the village sit further back from the road or behind higher boundary walls. Examples include the Grammar House, the Almshouses, College Farm and more recently The Pediment.



Figure 24 (above): College Farm, a large farmhouse property on the village periphery

St Michael's Church and the former Rectory are completely shielded from view behind boundary walls and can only be accessed via a small cobbled street that formerly served as the entrance to the courtyard for the Park. Aynhoe Park itself has altered its principal entrance through many centuries of development. Although the north, and now principal entrance, is set back from the highway it is still in close proximity to the village.

Paving varies across the conservation area and detracts from the visual unity provided by the rest of the streetscape. Distinctive stone slabs are used along the road edge to access the properties, particularly along Croughton Road. There is a mix of tarmac, gravel and flagstones and in some cases these are in poor condition.

4. Spatial Analysis

There are two Grade II listed raised pavements on the corner of Hollow Way constructed of dry, coursed limestone and still in use.

Historic cobbles can still be seen at the two inns – at the coach entrance of the Cartwright Hotel and to the entrance of the Old Posting House on The Square (formerly the White Hart Inn.) Cobbles line the entrance between the church and the Park house, but these are of a later date.



Figure 25: Historic cobbles outside the Cartwright Hotel leading from the road to the former stables

Aynho is mostly accessed via road routes, but there are a few public rights of way that lead into and through the village. At the top of Charlton Road a path leads north west to Walton Grounds. At the top of Croughton Road a path leads south to Souldern and offers views of the south façade of Aynhoe Park House and the church tower.

Boundary walls are a key feature of the conservation area. Built of local limestone they offer a sense of homogeneity and unity across the streetscape, blending with the buildings they enclose. There are extensive lengths of boundary wall around the former Park enclosure with distinctive flat raised coping (up to five miles in length), although these have now been interrupted by later developments and entrances. This 6ft high boundary runs around the south perimeter of the village and along the road. Smaller boundary walls with discreet gated entrances are found within the village to denote separate dwellings and boundaries. They are a prominent feature and contribute greatly to the streetscape and unity of the area.

Figures 26-28 (opposite): Examples of boundary walls throughout the conservation area.



Overhead wires are present within the village, but don't generally detract from its aesthetic. Street lighting tends to vary across the streetscape. Larger modern lampposts line the main highway with smaller discreet wall-mounted lights used in the centre of the village.



Figure 29: Wall-mounted street lighting reduces street clutter.

Signage plays an important part in the village layout, particularly road names, which are clearly denoted throughout the village. This aids in navigating the streets that often run in to one another. These names also provide a glimpse into the historic nature of the town – Butts Close and Bowmens Lea are thought to be named after the area where the villagers were required by law to practice their archery skills. Blacksmiths Hill was the street of trades and craftsmen and The Square was the commercial centre of the village. Road signs are visible along the main B4100 and tend to cluster together at pinch points and junctions. Although these do not blend with the area, they are necessary for navigation and road safety.

4. Spatial Analysis



Figure 30: Map showing public rights of way in Aynho © Crown Copyright and database right 2014. Ordnance Survey 100022487

4. Spatial Analysis

4.4 Open spaces, trees and hedges

Open spaces, albeit modest in size, form an important part of the conservation area, even when these spaces may be associated with private dwellings and vistas beyond.

The east end of the conservation area provides open space, despite the presence of boundary walls. This is due to the wide road and pavement along the main road which provide this top end of the conservation area with more of an open feel.

At the top of The Square, outside the Cartwright Hotel, the green is thought to have once been the site for the weekly medieval market. It now sits on a forked junction with a number of houses running along it. The green acts as a centre point with the dwellings orientated to face it. The Square provides an open space within the heart of the village, the centre from which other roads diverge. This central focus has played an important role in village life as the commercial hub and continues to be the centre of village activity and festivals as it has done for centuries.

Another space is found at the bottom of Hollow Way and Blacksmiths Hill. With a tree at its centre this open space offers a contrast to the enclosed narrow lane of Hollow Way.



Figure 31: The junction at the bottom of Hollow Way

The north entrance to Aynhoe Park is a tree-fronted courtyard. This formal open space at the front of the house offers a commanding view of the north façade from the main road. The south side opens out to the valley beyond with extensive uninterrupted views indicating the vast nature of the former estate holding.

A tree preservation order or a TPO is a form of legal protection that can be placed on important trees by the Local Planning Authority. This protection means that before any works are carried out to the tree, for example, pruning or felling, permission from the Local Planning Authority must be sought. Two single trees have a TPO with one down on Hollow Way and the other at the top of The Square, both within the boundaries of private residences. Apricot trees are an important distinctive historic feature of the village and should be protected and retained where possible.

4.5 Scale and massing

Most of the buildings are principally of two or three storey height with some having additional dormer windows to the attic space. They tend to run parallel with the road and sit at the edge or to the front of their plots. There are some exceptions with developments taking place further back in the plot and at a different alignment to the road. The ridgeline varies due to different phases of development and the topography of the village.

Along south side of the village, on Croughton Road and Roundtown are the larger properties and later developments. These have more spacious plots and the buildings tend to sit back within them with their associated land. Some buildings here sit behind others, although not necessarily in close proximity and not always parallel to the road.



Figure 32: One of the more spacious plots off the highway around Roundtown.

The former rectory and St Michael's Church are not visible from the highway due to boundary walls and plot alignment.



Figure 33: The former rectory.

A mix of two and three storey properties line the north of Roundtown often abounding each another. These three storey dwellings are unique in the district to Aynho



Figure 34: Properties around the lower part of Roundtown, similar in scale and alignment.

4. Spatial Analysis

Along Blacksmiths Hill and around School End the houses are predominantly two storeys. The alignment and ridgeline varies, particularly along Blacksmiths Hill due to the topography of the road. Later realignment of the road may also explain why the houses at the bottom of the Hill are in a different alignment to those at the top. Buildings tend to sit back slightly within their plot, particularly towards the top of the Hill and around School End.



Figure 35: Varying ridgeline along Blacksmiths Hill

Charlton Road is dominated by a row of two storey terraced cottages all sitting parallel to the road and at the front of the plot. The ridgeline varies again along here due to the steep nature of the road. The lack of development on the north side offers extensive views out to the valley beyond.

4.6 Views

Views play a significant part in understanding and appreciating the conservation area and the wider areas beyond. The east approach along the B4100 provides an open view of what appears to be a built up area. However, this changes as the route and topography of the village progresses.

The view through The Square offers a glimpse of the heart of the village. This is more akin to what is traditionally associated with a rural village layout with a cluster of houses formed around a central meeting place. Intimate glimpses down narrow alleys can be seen through Little Lane and Skittle Alley.

A tantalising view of Aynhoe Park can be seen when approaching from the north along Roundtown, the tight bend disguising the House from the opposite approach. With a northerly approach the scale and form of the House can be truly appreciated due to its unusually close proximity to the highway. Views from the south façade of the House offer an impressive vista across the former parkland and out onto the Oxfordshire landscape beyond. The M40 runs approximately 1 mile from the settlement and can be seen within this view.

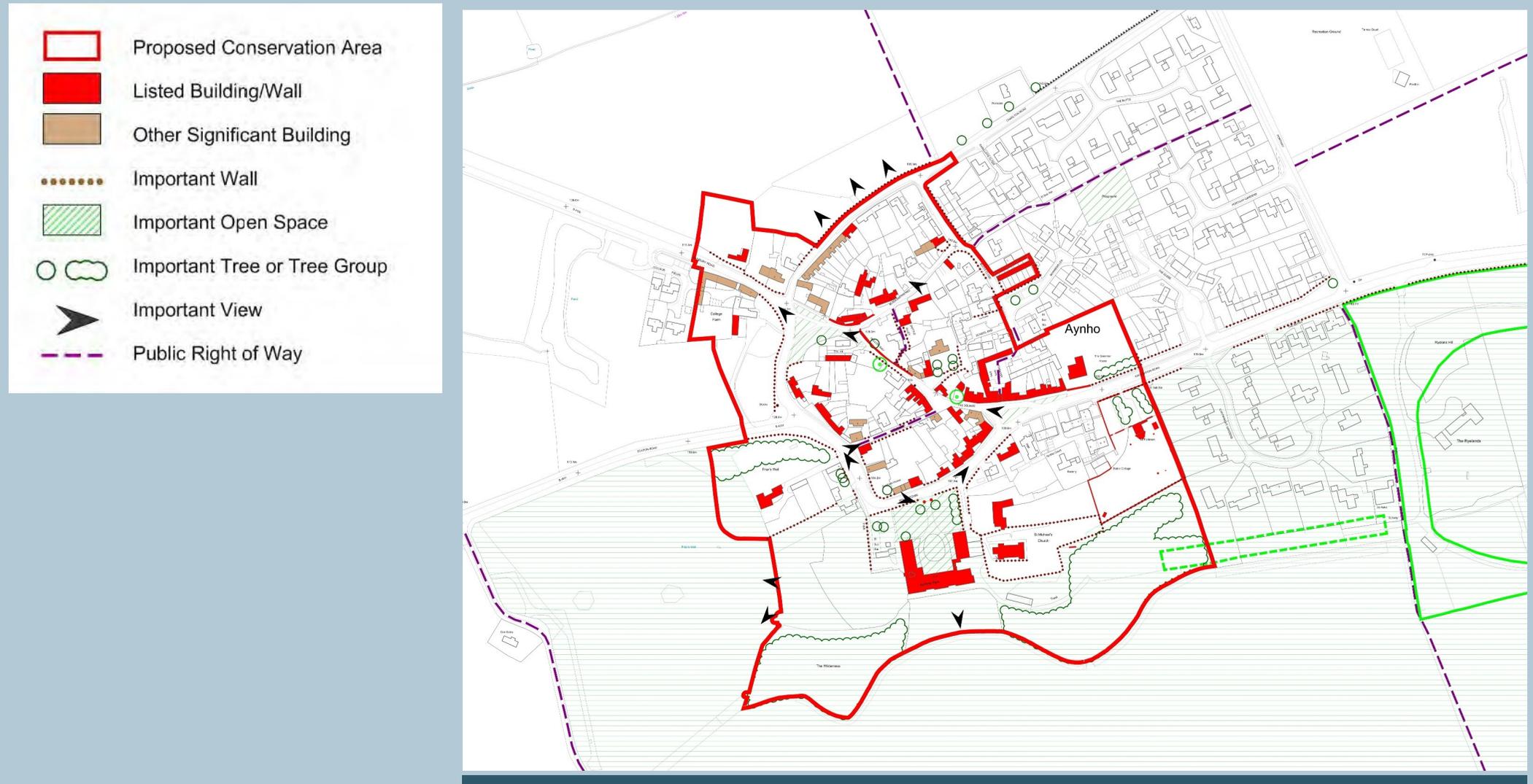
Figures 36-38: Key vistas across the conservation area looking out to the west.

Due to the elevated nature of Aynho and its position at the edge of a plateau there are extensive vistas as the topography changes on the west side of the village. Descending down into Roundtown and out along the Banbury Road the landscape opens up to provide extensive vistas of the rural landscape beyond into the Cherwell Valley. This is also aided as the cluster of village dwellings open out into more spacious and larger dwellings. The undeveloped north side of Charlton Road offers views to Banbury and beyond across agricultural landscape, particularly towards the top of the incline. A similar position on Blacksmiths Hill offers views to the north west between the roofscape and out to Banbury beyond.



4. Spatial Analysis

Figure 39: Important spatial features in the proposed Aynho conservation area.
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5. Architectural Analysis

5.1 Building age, type and style

There is a mix of different styles and building periods within the village although the majority date from between 1650-1750 with subsequent alterations.

The vast majority of the population within Aynho would have been farm labourers and trades people reflected in the vernacular architecture within the heart of the village. These dwellings often favour function over form. The terrace of cottages along Charlton Road built for farm labourers, are a fine example of worker's cottages with a simple one-up-one-down layout.

The terrace and adjoining cottages provide continuity with the use of local materials and repeated plan. This was probably due to the single ownership of the dwellings by the Cartwrights who expended little on design and features for farm labourers.

Two of the inns of the village are still distinguishable. The Cartwright Hotel, formerly the Red Lion still remains a public house on The Square with its distinctive coach entrance and associated stabling to the rear. The White Hart Inn, now the Old Posting House still retains its coach entrance and cobbled pavement.



Figure 40: Workers cottages



Figure 41: The Cartwright Hotel with existing coach entrance

Most of the buildings that run along Roundtown close to the Park have a polite formal style with classical detailing. These larger houses possess elements of early Georgian form reflecting the architectural fashion and estate influence over local masons. As the road heads out towards Banbury the buildings have a closer association with the farms. A striking example is the large, polite Georgian farmhouse at College Farm.



Figure 42: College Farm

Aynhoe Park has had three main phases of development between 1662-1805. Since its last phase in the early 19th century the exterior of the House has remained largely unaltered. This classical style of architecture is mimicked in the adjacent church. Built in 1723, St Michael's Church was constructed to complement the House in a distinctive classic Grecian style (aside from the earlier medieval tower).



Figure 43: St Michaels Church showing the unusual classical detailing to reflect the style of the adjacent House.

Other buildings associated with the Park and church reflect a more formal style including the former rectory and grammar school.

5. Architectural Analysis

5.2 Materials



Figure 44: Cottages along Roundtown showing the uniformity of limestone as building material



The dominant building material used in Aynho is limestone. The buildings are a mixture of coursed and uncoursed limestone rubble from local sources. Ironstone is mostly used for detailing on the larger, more formal buildings including the Grammar House and 21 Blacksmiths Hill. The distinctive colour stone is used for quoins and fenestration to offer variance across the façade.

The more formal use of ashlar limestone can be found on the north and south façade of the House, St Michael’s Church and the later Pediment. It is also used for gate pier entrances through boundary walls.

There is a notable absence of brick buildings in the village. Unlike many villages the introduction of the canal and railway to Aynho did not result in an influx of building in this material. This is again probably due to the control that the Cartwrights exercised over much of the village land and property.



Figure 45-47: Examples of building materials and forms found across the village with the use of limestone and ironstone.

Limestone is also used for the boundary walls across the village (including the five miles around the former estate boundaries). This use of material in both the dwellings and boundaries offers a distinctive aesthetic across the conservation area and creates a visual unity across the streetscape.

5.3 Roofscape

Aynho is dominated by two forms of roofing materials, Welsh slate and stone slate.



Figure 48: Difference in roofing materials along Roundtown.

Originally many of the properties would have been thatched; evident in the steep pitch of some of the roofs. Now only a few examples remain. Much of the thatch would have been replaced during the late 18th and 19th century with the coming of the new transport infrastructure via canal and then railway.

5. Architectural Analysis



Figure 49: An example of thatch

Croughton Road. In Blacksmiths Hill and Charlton Road the varying ridgeline is dictated by the topography of the village.

Most houses sit parallel to the road presenting a roofscape that varies slightly in height with some having the addition of dormer windows. Due to the irregular nature of plot division in parts of the village some properties sit gable end on.

The ridgeline of the village varies. Different phases of building can be detected through the height and pitch difference along Roundtown and

A rare example of a surviving dovecote can be found on the end of No 15 Blacksmiths Hill.



Figure 50: Varying ridgeline along Blacksmiths Hill



Figure 51: Surviving dovecote on a gable end

Due to its elevated position this can be glimpsed from the bottom of Roundtown through the varied roofscape.

Roofs tend to be uncluttered with simple brick chimney stacks. Most houses have central or gable end stacks. Some have multiple stacks to indicate their former division into more than one dwelling. The Cartwright Hotel has a number of chimneys with its historic provision of accommodation for travellers. Stone chimneys are less common although evident on the larger houses. Aynhoe Park has multiple stacks denoting its wealth and status.

5.4 Windows

Windows vary across the conservation area.

The smaller vernacular cottages have pre-dominantly 2 or 3-light iron casement windows with leaded glazing in a 2-up, 2-down arrangement. Many of these retain their original narrow timber lintels. Those that are painted are done so in white, with a few unpainted and others painted to complement the fenestration across the house façade.

5. Architectural Analysis



Figure 52: Adjacent properties with different windows. The one on the left retains the original iron casement with the one on the right replaced with uPVC.

A number of windows have been replaced with modern uPVC alternatives and leaded double glazing. This detracts from the traditional slim line appearance of the original windows with the insertion of larger frames and storm-proofing. More sympathetic secondary glazing has been used in some instances not affecting the exterior appearance of the conservation area.



Figure 53: Example of secondary glazing

The larger properties predominantly around Roundtown have larger sash windows due to their historic higher status. With timber frames and glazing bars some of these have timber lintels, whilst others have a stone surround with keystone detailing.



Figure 54: Sash window and detailing

The largest proportion of sash windows are found at Aynhoe Park. These large stone framed windows vary between 12 and 18 panes with the central windows on the north façade having additional pediment detailing.



Figure 55: Windows of wing at Aynhoe Park

Some examples of stone mullioned windows with leaded lights remain in the conservation area. These are found on 21 Blacksmiths Hill and The Grammar House, the latter with the addition of a continuous hood mould along the front façade.

5.5 Doors and porches

The style of doors varies across the conservation area, but most are wooden planked with timber lintels. These are found on the cottage dwellings with some later versions having the addition of a glazed panel toward the top. Although these are not identical the use of traditional material provides a visual unity across the streetscape.



Figure 56: Examples of timber doors

Some traditional doors have been replaced with modern alternatives including uPVC. These are unsympathetic to the character of the village and detract from the aesthetic.

Some of the thatched properties extend the material to provide a small thatch porch above the front door. These tend to be simple in form and style and don't detract from the front elevation or surrounding character area. Some of the larger properties have projecting stone hood moulds above their doors, but none with a porch entrance.



Figure 57:

Example of thatch porch

6. Boundary Justification

6.1 Background

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to designate as conservation areas any "areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

It is the quality of the area rather than the individual buildings which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. It is also important that the concept is not devalued by designating areas lacking any special interest.

Aynho Conservation Area was first designated in 1968. This was revised in 1987 to exclude the new development along the eastern boundary and again in 2004. The boundary was reviewed again in July 2014 with the proposed amendments:

- The removal of the council houses on The Glebe to the east - although these are built of the local limestone material the scale, form and design is not in keeping with the rest of the character of the conservation area.
- The removal of the modern development to the rear of College Farm which does not contribute to the historic and architectural character of the area.

The proposed boundary is as follows:

6.2 Northern Boundary

The northern boundary runs down Charlton Road following the line of the road and following the plot boundary around the properties of Banbury Road up to and including No 6, Rose Cottage. The boundary here turns south to College Farm and the western boundary.

6.3 Southern Boundary

The southern boundary follows the line of the former estate. It starts at the extreme western edge of Cartwright Gardens (not included) and runs along the ha-ha until terminating at the western edge of The Wilderness and turning north to join the western boundary.

6.4 Western Boundary

The western boundary runs from The Wilderness and along the current Park boundary. It heads further west to incorporate the plot of Friars Well until it turns in a easterly direction to exclude much of Station Road up until the junction. The boundary then heads north along the bottom of Roundtown to incorporate College Farm (not including the modern development) before turning east to join the northern boundary at Banbury Road.

6.5 Eastern Boundary

The eastern boundary descends along Butts Close, following the road before it heads further east to incorporate just the Almshouses at Bowmans Lea, skirting the modern development. It continues south along the eastern perimeter of Butts Close, past School

End before turning east. Here the boundary runs along the side of No 21 and to the rear of the Grammar House. At the Grammar House boundary edge it turns south east across Croughton Road and continues in this direction, skirting the Cartwright Gardens development until it meets the southern boundary edge.

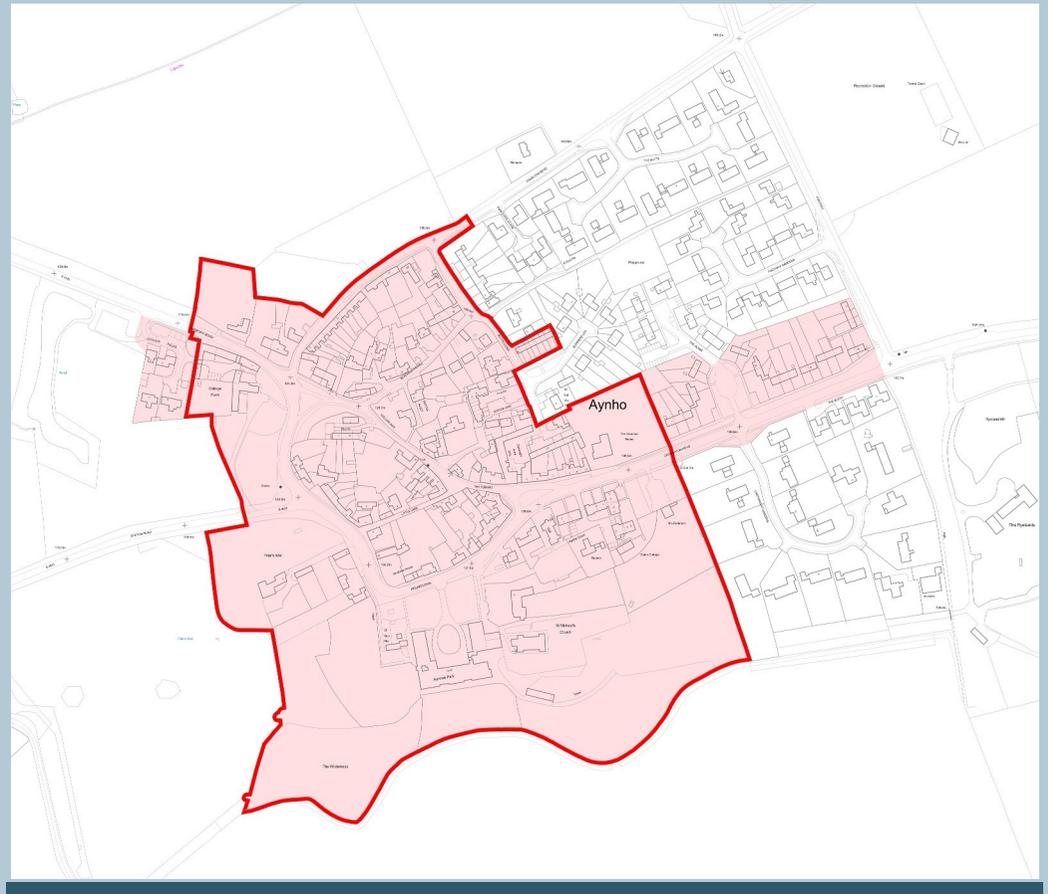


Figure 59: Proposed changes to Aynho conservation area boundary.
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7. Management Plan

7.1 Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas. Conservation area management proposals should be published as part of the process of area designation and review. Their aim is to provide guidance through policy statements to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

7.2 Threats

Aynho is an attractive rural village. However, there are a number of threats and issues arising which have the potential to detract from the character of Aynho. Addressing these now, offers the opportunity to enhance the conservation area. Positive conservation management will ensure the ongoing protection to preserve and enhance the village's special character.

Aynho was designated as a Restricted Infill Village in the South Northamptonshire Local Plan adopted 1997. Policy H5 of that plan (resaved on 28 September 2007) restricts development within such villages to the infilling of a small gap in an otherwise built frontage; or a small group of dwellings; or the conversion of existing buildings.

Such development and the incremental urbanisation and extension of existing properties could, if not handled sensitively, pose a significant threat to the character and appearance of the Aynho conservation area, one which could lead to the erosion of its special character.

The main threat to the area is the cumulative effect of the numerous and often small scale alterations that occur to unlisted buildings and walls within the village. These changes include the replacement of traditional windows, doors, roofing materials, inappropriate wall repairs and pointing with unsympathetic modern alternatives, which can result in the erosion of character and appearance of the conservation area.

Such alternations to unlisted residential properties are for the most part permitted development and out of the local planning authority's control with planning permission not being required.

Figures 60 and 61 show how altering the windows in a property and replacing them with modern uPVC alternatives can change the character of a property substantially. It is often the small elements, such as the increase in thickness of the frame, the change of opening mechanism and the lack of functioning glazing bars that alter the character of the property substantially.



Figures 60-61: Contrast between traditional iron casement window (left) and modern uPVC window and double glazing.

The character of the area can therefore quickly be eroded through the use of unsympathetic materials, designs and loss of original features.

It is not just inappropriate alterations to private dwellings which pose a threat. Ill-considered alterations and poor maintenance in the public realm can also result in the loss of an areas special character and appearance. Signage, street furniture, parked cars and public utilities can have a cumulative and sometimes detrimental effect on the quality of the streetscape.

The aim of the management proposal is not to prevent changes but to ensure that any such changes are sympathetic to and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.



Figure 62: Unsympathetic repair with traditional limestone boundary wall replaced with modern breezeblock.

7. Management Plan

7.3 Management Proposals

1. Sensitive new development in the conservation area

To be successful any future development within the conservation area needs to be mindful of the local character as appraised above, whilst at the same time being distinctly of the 21st century and addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability. Successful new development in historic areas should:

- Relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land
- Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it
- Respect important views
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings
- Use material and building methods which are as high in quality as those used on existing buildings
- Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting

Action 1:
New development must respond sensitively and creatively to the historic environment.

2. Protect surviving historic architectural forms

As a result of the quality of buildings within the village and the limited number of buildings that are subject to statutory protection, there has been an incremental loss of traditional architectural detailing in the conservation area. The replacement of traditional windows, doors and roofing with inappropriate materials and designs is a negative feature that affects both the individual buildings and the wider area.

Owners of significant properties, not just those that are listed, should be encouraged to maintain the traditional materials and buildings that are found within Aynho. Owners are also encouraged to replace inappropriate features with traditional materials.

The establishment of a list of locally significant buildings and policies for their protection within the forthcoming Local Development Framework would also assist in the protection of the conservation area.

Action 2:
Consider the imposition of Article 4 Directions on buildings of significance across the conservation area to ensure that positive architectural features are retained and any alterations do not harm the character of the conservation area.

Action 3:
Establish a list of locally significant buildings and policies for their preservation as part of the forthcoming Local Plan.

3. Boundary walls

Boundary walls are a significant element of the character of Aynho. Any new boundaries should be constructed of suitable stone and be of appropriate height, coursing and coping to fit well with existing walls. Any new or existing development that is set back from the highway should create strong boundary treatments to maintain and enhance the sense of enclosure and built form seen in the conservation area.

Action 4:
Boundary walls which make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area will be retained. New boundary treatments should fit with the character of existing boundary walls.

Action 5:
Any new or existing development that is set back from the street should be encouraged to create strong boundary treatments to maintain a sense of enclosure.

4. Paving, surfacing and street furniture.

Opportunities should be taken to enhance areas of paving and surfacing whenever possible. Careful design and sensitive use of materials will be expected in any future resurfacing works that take place in Aynho.

Street furniture and signage affect the appearance of the conservation area. Unnecessary clutter will have an adverse effect on the character and should be resisted.

Action 6:
Encourage statutory undertakers to rationalise and remove unnecessary clutter within the conservation area and replace with appropriate solutions.

To work with the highway's authorities to improve surfacing and avoid the insertion of inappropriate kerbing and footpaths which would have a harmful urbanising affect.

5. Traffic

The flow of traffic and street parking affects the appearance of a conservation area. Aynho is situated on a main through road with limited off-road parking so traffic and street parking is common place, detracting from the conservation area.

7. Management Plan

Action 7:
Encourage schemes and works that would aim to assist in reducing the impact of traffic and parking within the conservation area, where appropriate.

6. Open spaces

Open spaces are an important feature within Aynho conservation area. Opportunities should be taken to preserve and where possible enhance the character and appearance of these spaces.

Action 8:
Promote the sympathetic management of areas of open space within the conservation area, including verges and banks.

7. Renewable energy sources

Whilst the council is supportive of the sustainable energy agenda it also recognises that many sources of renewable energy and micro generation have the potential to harm the character and appearance of a conservation area. Care therefore needs to be taken to balance the needs of climate change with the preservation of the historic environment.

Action 9:
Encourage the sympathetic location of solar panels, wind turbines etc to

inconspicuous roofslopes and building elevations where they will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

8. Satellite antennas

Satellite and radio antennas are non traditional features which have the potential to disfigure the appearance of traditional buildings. Care must be taken to ensure that they are located where they will not have an impact on the significance of the heritage assets and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Action 10:
Require the location of satellite antennas in inconspicuous sites to prevent harm to the historic character and visual appearance of the area. Planning permission is required to install a satellite dish or other microwave antennas if they are to be sited on a chimney stack, wall or roof slope that faces onto or is visible from a highway.

9. Telegraph poles, lamp standards and overhead cables

The visual impact of overhead wires, telegraph poles and lamp standards has the potential to dominate and disfigure

the character and appearance of the conservation area. Action is needed to ensure that this situation does not occur.

Action 11:
Encourage the replacement of inappropriate street lighting and undergrounding of cables to reduce the visual impact caused by overhead lines and their supporting structures within the conservation area.

10. Tree management

Conservation area designation affords protection to trees from unauthorised felling or lopping.

Action 12:
Large mature trees should be retained wherever possible in order to preserve the character of the conservation area.

11. Development affecting the setting of a conservation area

It is important that development around the conservation area does not harm its setting. Any development in or around Aynho which affects the setting of the conservation area should have regards to views in and out of the conservation area, the setting of positive buildings and the character of the landscape. Appropriate design and materials should

be used in development adjacent to the conservation area.

Action 13:
The impact of development on the character and appearance of the conservation area should be considered. This applies equally to development outside the conservation area if it is likely to affect the setting of the conservation area.

12. Protect archaeological remains

Aynho has been inhabited for centuries and buried evidence of occupation may survive in the village. Development proposals should take into account the potential for remains of archaeological interest. Professional advice should be sought and appropriate assessment undertaken.

Action 14:
Development which involves below-ground excavation must have regard to the potential for remains of archaeological interest.

8. Sources of Further Information

8.1 Sources

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8.2 Internet sources

- www.aynho.org.uk
- www.british-history.ac.uk
- www.english-heritage.org.uk - National Heritage List for England

8.3 Acknowledgements

With thanks to Peter Cole of Aynho Historical Society, James Perkins at Aynhoe Park and the Parish Council for their time and help in the research of this document.

8.4 Further information

Further information on the local history of Northamptonshire can be found at:

- Northamptonshire Records Office
- Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire Libraries

South Northamptonshire Council have also produced some guidance notes on conservation areas which provides further information on what designation means. This can be found at the following address:

www.southnorthants.gov.uk/3891.htm

There are also a wide range of national societies devoted to the study and conservation of historic areas and buildings, a few are listed below.

Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)

www.spab.org.uk

A good source of practical information about looking after buildings of all periods.

Ancient Monuments Society

www.ams.org.uk

Devoted to the study and conservation of ancient monuments, historic buildings and fine old craftsmanship, with a particular interest in church buildings.

Georgian Group

www.georgiangroup.org.uk

Interested in the study and conservation of 18th and early 19th-century buildings.

Victorian Society

www.victoriansociety.org.uk

Interested in the appreciation and conservation of 19th and early 20th century buildings of all types.

The following websites are a useful source of local history information:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk> - historic public records online

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/> - digital library of local history resources.

8.5 Copyright

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8.6 Community involvement and adoption

This appraisal will be subject to public consultation. Once adopted by South Northamptonshire Council it will be viewed as material consideration in the determining of planning applications within the conservation area and its setting and other decision-making processes.

The appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is not of interest.

