

# Shrivenham Neighbourhood Development Plan

## Village Character Assessment

April 2018



**LEPUS** CONSULTING  
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY



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# Shrivenham Neighbourhood Development Plan

## Village Character Assessment

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Front cover: Allotments in Shrivenham by William Ewart

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# Abbreviations

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>AOD</b>  | Above Ordnance Datum                     |
| <b>AONB</b> | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty       |
| <b>DC</b>   | District Council                         |
| <b>GWCF</b> | Great Western Community Forest           |
| <b>km</b>   | Kilometres                               |
| <b>LCA</b>  | Landscape Character Area                 |
| <b>LNR</b>  | Local Nature Reserve                     |
| <b>LT</b>   | Landscape Type                           |
| <b>m</b>    | Metres                                   |
| <b>NCA</b>  | National Character Area                  |
| <b>NPPF</b> | National Planning Policy Framework       |
| <b>OWLS</b> | Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study |
| <b>SSSI</b> | Site of Special Scientific Interest      |
| <b>VoWH</b> | Vale of White Horse                      |
| <b>VCA</b>  | Village Character Area                   |

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# Executive summary

E1 This report comprises the Village Character Assessment for Shrivenham Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

## **What is a Village Character Assessment?**

E2 The process of undertaking a Village Character Assessment is defined in the Landscape Institute's Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note<sup>1</sup> as: *"a townscape character assessment may present a description of the townscape that is distinctive to that place, supported by materials such as maps, illustrations and photographs. It can provide an understanding of how a place has evolved and developed over time to respond to natural, social and economic drivers, and how this is reflected in the layout of streets, the architecture of buildings and the materials used."*

## **What is Townscape?**

E3 Townscape is defined in the Guidelines for Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment 3 (2013)<sup>2</sup> as "the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces."

## **How is this Village Character Assessment written?**

E4 This Village Character Assessment is written considering the latest and best guidance for conducting a Village Character Assessment. The methodology for this study has been derived from aspects of:

- Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note<sup>3</sup>;
- The Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

<sup>2</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) Abingdon: Routledge

<sup>3</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

- Guidelines for Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment 3 (2013)<sup>5</sup>; and
- Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment<sup>6</sup>.

### **What does this Village Character Assessment contain?**

E5 This Village Character Assessment divides the built-up area of the village of Shrivenham into Village Character Areas (VCAs). This Village Character Assessment is structured around the 9 VCAs in which guidelines to protect, manage and promote distinctive townscape character.

### **For whom is this Village Character Assessment written?**

E6 This Village Character Assessment is written to be included as part of the evidence base for the Shrivenham NDP.

The information included in this Village Character Assessment is for the use of a variety of stakeholders including planning applicants, developers, development management officers and neighbourhood development plan groups.

### **How should this Village Character Assessment be used?**

E7 This Village Character Assessment should be used to understand the townscape make up of an area to give context to scheme proposals. The prevailing character of the townscape will help to shape the design and layout of development.

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<sup>4</sup> Oxford City Council (no date) Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit. Accessed on 27/02/18. Available at: [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character\\_assessment\\_toolkit/878/character\\_assessment\\_toolkit](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character_assessment_toolkit/878/character_assessment_toolkit)

<sup>5</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) Abingdon: Routledge

<sup>6</sup> Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Accessed on 28/02/18. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscape-character-assessments-identify-and-describe-landscape-types>

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Appointment and scope of work

1.1.1 Lepus Consulting Ltd has been appointed by Shrivenham NDP Steering Group to undertake a Village Character Assessment for the built-up area of the village of Shrivenham.

1.1.2 Lepus Consulting is an environmental assessment practice specialising in landscape and ecological impact assessment. This report has been prepared by William Ewart (BSc) and Neil Davidson (BSc, MSc, CEnv, CIEEM, CMLI).

1.1.3 The outputs of this study are proportional to the aims of the NDP as well as providing a useful reference guide for development NDP area. We are aware of the importance of this work for the following reasons:

- The VCA will inform the neighbourhood plan and provide evidence for townscape and character policies;
- The VCA will identify the special qualities of the area to help ensure that new development proposals are of an appropriate design and complements the existing local character;
- The VCA can be used by developers and their architects to help them understand the local character.
- The VCA is also useful for development control officers to use when making decisions affecting planning applications;

## 1.2 Geographic context of Shrivenham

1.2.1 The village of Shrivenham is located to the east of the town of Swindon within the district of Vale of White Horse (VoWH). The VoWH is located within the county of Oxfordshire in the south east region of England. The VoWH comprises a high quality rural environment, with historic towns and villages. It has a high proportion of unspoilt and attractive countryside, a large area of which is nationally designated for its outstanding beauty, namely the North Wessex Downs AONB. A map showing the location of the NDP area in the context of the VoWH is presented in **Figure 1.1**.

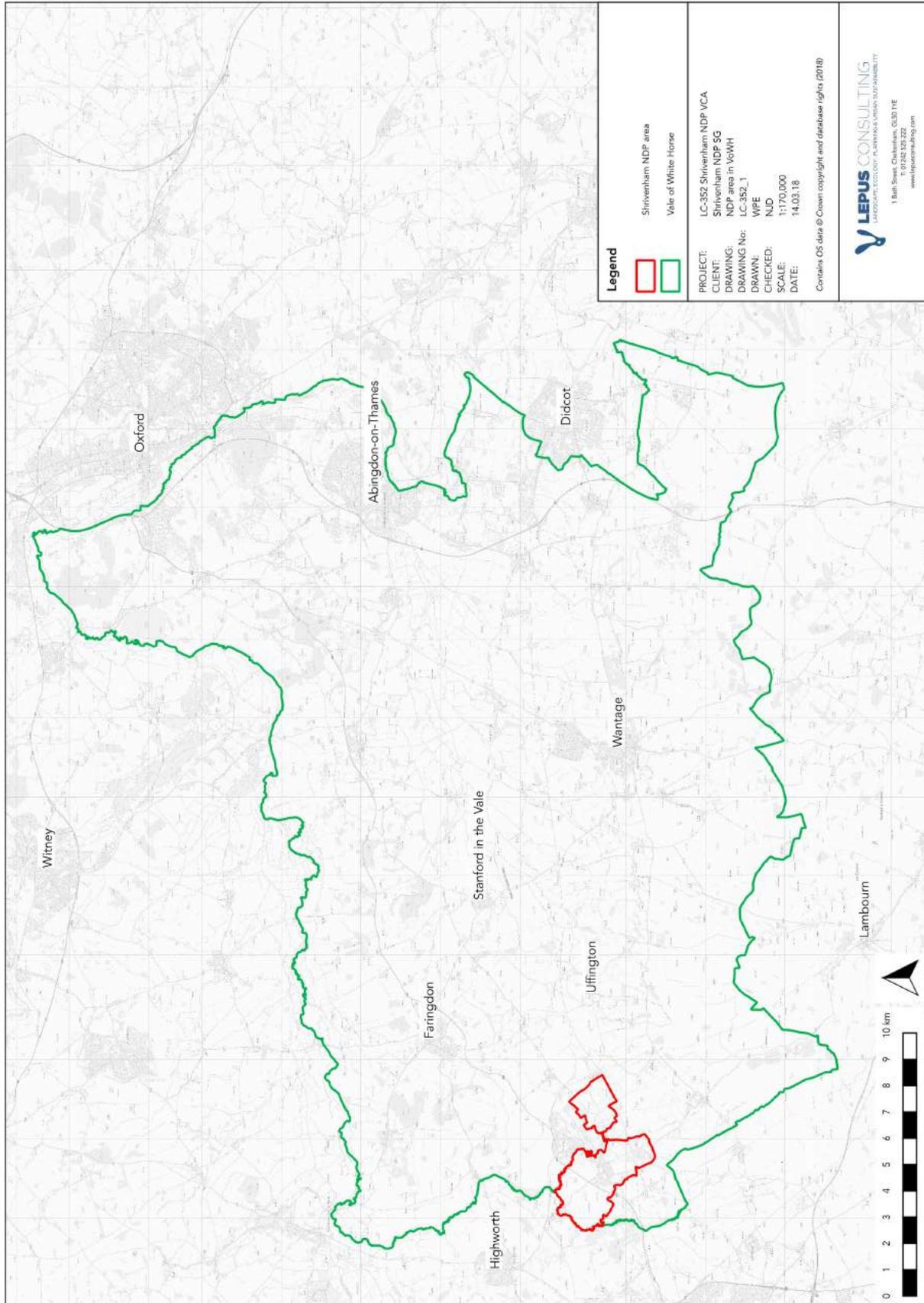


Figure 1.1: Shrivenham NDP area in context of VoWH

## 1.3 National landscape context

1.3.1 At a national level, Landscape Character Assessment has been defined by the assessment work of Natural England, which has divided England into areas of similar landscape called National Character Areas (NCAs)<sup>7</sup>. The village of Shrivenham is located within the Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA (No. 108)<sup>8</sup> as designated by Natural England. A description of settlement pattern of the Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA is as follows:

*“Springline settlements at the foot of the Chalk scarps on the southern boundary are characteristic and include historic and distinctive market towns. Elsewhere, flood risk has dictated settlement patterns so that valley bottoms are uninhabited except at river crossing points. Nucleated settlements are found on rising ground or raised gravel spreads above the rivers. In the wider landscape, settlement is isolated farmsteads dating back to parliamentary enclosure and country estates. Oxford, Dorchester, Abingdon and Wallingford are Thames crossing points. Dorchester’s modern day road network reflects Roman routes. Some villages have retained their early settlement layout and old buildings. To the south of the Midvale Ridge, villages on the gravels often surround distinctive greens. Otmoor remains devoid of settlement and is fringed by linear development of distinctive villages. Aylesbury is a growing large town and there is marked expansion of smaller settlements including Carterton, Witney and Faringdon, Bicester, Didcot, Abingdon and Benson. Development around Oxford and Swindon enters this NCA”.*

1.3.2 A description of local vernacular and building materials of the Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA is as follows:

*“To the north of the Midvale Ridge, local clay allowed construction of brickbuilt buildings and pan tiled roofs. There is a moderate occurrence of cruck buildings. Stone was sourced from the Cotswolds to the north and from the chalk hills to the south. Cotswold stone walls and slates are particularly evident in the Oxford Vale, whilst chalk blocks or ‘clunch’ have limited use near the Chilterns. To the south of the Midvale Ridge, traditional construction used ‘wichert’, a chalky marl mixed with straw or earth, to plaster walls which were then often colour-washed. Haddenham and Cuddington are examples. Timberframing and brick are typical building materials. Straw thatch for roofing is also characteristic. Villages located on the broad ledge of Greensand below the Chilterns were rarely built of the local sandstone.”*

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<sup>7</sup> Natural England (2014) National Character Area profiles: data for local decision making. Accessed on 18/08/17. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making>

<sup>8</sup> Natural England (2014) NCA Profile:108 Upper Thames Clay Vales (NE570). Accessed on 02/01/18. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5865554770395136?category=587130>

## 1.4 County Landscape Context

1.4.1 The current landscape character assessment for the county of Oxfordshire is the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS)<sup>9</sup>. The OWLS is an investigation of landscape character and biodiversity across the county. The OWLS was published in 2004. The village of Shrivenham is located within the Rolling Farmland Landscape Type (LT) from the OWLS<sup>10</sup>. Information on settlement pattern from this LT is as follows:

*“The settlement pattern is characterised by small to medium-sized villages. Originally, many of these would have been nucleated in shape but, as a result of more recent expansion, they have become linear and sprawling, particularly at Appleton and Wootton. The settlement pattern is also characterised by small hamlets and sparsely scattered farmhouses. The density of housing is higher along parts of the Midvale Ridge, especially between Buckland and Eaton and around Dry Sandford. In a few of the smaller villages, such as Eaton, Buckland, Mackney and Fernham, and in the centre of some others, including Great Coxwell, Shrivenham and Denton, the vernacular character of the buildings is strong. It is quite prominent in most of the villages at the foot of North Wessex Downs, where the nucleated character of the settlements is also better preserved. These particular villages were originally located at the foot of the Downs to take advantage of the springlines emerging at the junction of the chalk and clay. The choice of building materials varies throughout the landscape type. Within the Midvale Ridge there is limestone, or limestone with bricks framing the windows, and thatched roofs or clay tiles. In the Vale of White Horse and North Wessex Downs it is mainly red bricks and clay tiles whereas the older houses are often bricks and timber frames with thatched roofs. In villages at the foot of the Downs some of the houses are built of clunch, a hard type of chalk.”*

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<sup>9</sup> OWLS (2004) Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study. Accessed on 03/01/18. Available at: <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/>

<sup>10</sup> OWLS (2004) Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study. Accessed on 03/01/18. Available at: <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/Oxfordshire+Landscape+Types/>

## 1.5 District Landscape Context

1.5.1 The Vale of White Horse Landscape Character Assessment was published in September 2017<sup>11</sup> alongside the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. This study identifies 12 Landscape Types (LTs) which are further sub-divided into Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). The built-up area of the village of Shrivenham is located outside the LCA and LT boundaries.

## 1.6 Planning policy context

### National Planning Policy

1.6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) acts as guidance for local planning authorities and decision-makers, both in drawing up plans and formulating decisions about planning applications. The environmental role of the NPPF is:

*“...contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.”*

1.6.2 Paragraphs from the NPPF that offer guidance in relation to townscape include Paragraph 17:

*“Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should:*

- be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area. Plans should be kept up-to-date, and be based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues. They should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency;*
- not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding*

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<sup>11</sup> Vale of White Horse District Council (2017) Landscape Character Assessment. Accessed on 04/01/18. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=789122104&CODE=498F5A0A897C751630F233DEB1E72432&NAME=19.+Landscape+Character+Assessment&REF=Local%20Plan%202031%20Part%202:%20Publication%20Version%20Publicity%20Period>

- ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
- *proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;*
  - *always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
  - *take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*
  - *support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy); 6 | National Planning Policy Framework*
  - *contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;*
  - *encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;*
  - *promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production);*
  - *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;*
  - *actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and*
  - *take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural*

*facilities and services to meet local needs.”*

1.6.3 Paragraph 56 states that:

*“The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.”*

1.6.4 Paragraph 58 states that:

*“Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:*

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.”*

1.6.5 Paragraph 60 states that:

*“Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.”*

## 1.7 District Planning Policy

1.7.1 VoWh District Council (DC) is developing a new Local Plan<sup>12</sup>. The emerging Local Plan sets out a vision for VoWH up to the year 2031.

1.7.2 Regarding the Local Plan, VoWH DC states that:

*“Local Plan 2031 Part 1 was adopted in December 2016. The Part 1 plan sets out the 'spatial strategy' and strategic policies for the district to deliver sustainable development. It identifies the number of new homes and jobs to be provided in the area for the plan period up to 2031. It makes provision for retail, leisure and commercial development and for the infrastructure needed to support them”.*

*“The Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional Sites complements the Part 1 plan and sets out policies and locations for housing for the Vale's proportion of Oxford's housing need up to 2031, which cannot be met within the City boundaries. It contains policies for the part of Didcot Garden Town that lies within the Vale of White Horse District, and detailed development management policies to complement the Local Plan 2031 Part 1, which replace the saved policies of the Local Plan 2011. It also allocates additional development sites for housing”.*

1.7.3 Of particular relevance to this study are the following saved policies in the Local Plan 2011:

- NE10: Urban fringes and countryside gaps.
- NE11: Areas for landscape enhancement.
- NE12: Great Western Community Forest.
- L10: Safeguarding and improving public rights of way.

## 1.8 Vale of White Horse District Council Design Guide

1.8.1 A description of the VoWH DC Design Guide is as follows:

*“The Vale of White Horse Design Guide sets out clear design principles to guide future development within the District and to encourage a design-led approach to development.*

*The aim of this guide is to inspire designers to rise to the challenge to deliver high quality, well designed buildings, streets and spaces that are in keeping with their environment and respond to the challenge to deliver sustainable development.”<sup>13</sup>*

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<sup>12</sup> Vale of White Horse District Council (2017) The Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Accessed on 04/01/18. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

1.8.2 The Design Guide recognises the importance of geology in understanding the location, size and building materials in villages and towns. The Design Guide locates Shrivenham within the geological Zone 2 – Clay Vale which is subdivided into Zone 2A – Western Clay Vale. A description of Zone 2A is as follows:

*“Zone 2 is comprised of Kimmeridge and Gault Clays which originally would have been waterlogged marshy lands and thickly wooded areas. Settlements took shape on slightly higher ground as ‘islands’ which is denoted by the suffix ‘ey’, examples include Hanney and Goosey.”*

1.8.3 The Design Guide divides the district into character zones. Shrivenham is located Zone 1A – Golden Ridge and Wooded Estate Villages. The full details of Zone 1A is presented in **Appendix D**. The palette of materials in Zone 1A is reproduced below:

*“The defining building features include limestone, which helps create the distinctive character of the area. Steep pitched roofs, narrow gables and dormer windows are typical of the area.*

#### **Walls**

- *Random, uncoursed rubble, local corallian limestone with a variety of bed widths and colours;*
- *Ashlar limestone dressings;*
- *Coursed stone appears on later dwellings;*
- *Colour washed lime render often covers stone beneath;*
- *Berkshire orange brick - usually on smaller Victorian dwellings or on Georgian properties;*
- *Decorative brickwork - often blue or buff for chimneys, quoins, doors and window detailing;*
- *Timber frame with render or brick infill panels; and*
- *Weatherboard is restricted to conversions from agricultural or cottage industry uses.*

#### **Roofs**

- *There are three roofing materials that are equally dominant:*
- *Stone slates;*

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<sup>13</sup> Vale of White Horse (2016) Vale of White Horse Design Guide SPD. Accessed on 08/01/18. Available at: [http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/supplementar-2?utm\\_source=Vale%20Community&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=Design%20Guide%20consultation](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/supplementar-2?utm_source=Vale%20Community&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=Design%20Guide%20consultation)

- *Thatch was traditionally locally sourced long or wheat straw with flush ridges;*
- *Orange plain clay tiles, and*
- *Blue slates*

#### **Windows & Doors**

- *Timber sash and casement windows and iron leaded casement windows; and*
- *Timber doors.*

#### **Timber Finishes**

- *The paint colour palette is narrow, with white or similar pale colours. Estate colours in villages such as Buscot and Coleshill;*
- *Tar and pitch on barns and exposed timber frames; and*
- *Untreated oak."*

1.8.4 Recommendations to plan, manage and protect townscape qualities should refer to the guidelines presented in the VoWH Design Guide.

## 2 Method for Undertaking the Village Character Assessment

### 2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The process of undertaking a Village Character Assessment is defined in the Landscape Institute's Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note<sup>14</sup> as: "a townscape character assessment may present a description of the townscape that is distinctive to that place, supported by materials such as maps, illustrations and photographs. It can provide an understanding of how a place has evolved and developed over time to respond to natural, social and economic drivers, and how this is reflected in the layout of streets, the architecture of buildings and the materials used."

2.1.2 This technical note<sup>15</sup> also explains the difference between Landscape Character Assessment and Townscape Character Assessment. This explanation is reproduced below:

*"The process of defining the natural characteristics of the landscape, such as topography and hydrology, is well documented. However, there are some specific aspects of the urban environment which a landscape character assessment – depending upon scale - may not provide detail on. This includes cultural expressions and social aspects, such as the detailed historical development of the area, and physical elements, such as streets, blocks, buildings and other structures and open spaces. Documents, such as 'Shaping Neighbourhoods: Character and Context', which is a supplementary planning document to the London Plan, may provide useful information to help define what information needs to be considered in a townscape character assessment (GLA, 2014). Other local guidance may be available, such as urban design guides. The following information, which is not exhaustive and may not be relevant in every situation, is based on the range of aspects which practitioners typically consider in carrying out townscape character assessments."*

2.1.3 The methodology for this study has been derived from aspects of:

- Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note<sup>16</sup>;
- The Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

<sup>15</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

<sup>16</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

- Guidelines for Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment 3 (2013)<sup>18</sup>; and
- Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment<sup>19</sup>.

2.1.4 The methodology for this Village Character Assessment follows a four-stage approach as suggested in the Landscape Institute's Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note<sup>20</sup>. This four-stage approach is based on the methodology suggested in Natural England's 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014)'<sup>21</sup>.

- Step 1: Define purpose and scope of the project
- Step 2: Desk study
- Step 3: Field study; and
- Step 4: Classification and description.

2.1.5 The Landscape Institute's Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note<sup>22</sup> states that: *"the 'Five Key Principles for Landscape Assessment' set out in Natural England's 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' are applicable to townscape character assessment and are set out below.*

- *Principle 1: Landscape is everywhere and all landscape has character.*
- *Principle 2: Landscape occurs at all scales and the process of Landscape Character Assessment can be undertaken at any scale.*
- *Principle 3: The process of Landscape Character Assessment should involve an understanding of how the landscape is perceived and experienced by people.*
- *Principle 4: A Landscape Character Assessment can provide a landscape evidence base to inform a range of decisions and applications.*
- *Principle 5: A Landscape Character Assessment can provide an integrating spatial framework – a multitude of variables come together to give us our*

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<sup>17</sup> Oxford City Council (no date) Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit. Accessed on 27/02/18. Available at: [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character\\_assessment\\_toolkit/878/character\\_assessment\\_toolkit](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character_assessment_toolkit/878/character_assessment_toolkit)

<sup>18</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) Abingdon: Routledge

<sup>19</sup> Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Accessed on 28/02/18. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscape-character-assessments-identify-and-describe-landscape-types>

<sup>20</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

<sup>21</sup> Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Accessed on 28/02/18. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscape-character-assessments-identify-and-describe-landscape-types>

<sup>22</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

*distinctive landscapes.*"<sup>23</sup>

## 2.2 Step 1: Define purpose and scope of the project

2.2.1 Shrivenham NDP Steering Group requested a Village Character Assessment to be undertaken to form part of their NDP evidence base.

2.2.2 Upon commencement of the project, Lepus met with the Shrivenham NDP Steering Group to confirm the precise aims and objectives of the project, defining the scope of assessment.

## 2.3 Step 2: Desk study

2.3.1 The desktop study stage consists of an information gathering exercise to prepare a baseline review of natural, cultural and social aspects of Shrivenham. This relies largely on information from the following sources:

- Shrivenham Village Plan;
- Historical maps;
- Shrivenham Community Survey (2014);
- Shrivenham Ecological Survey (2012);
- Shrivenham Housing Needs Survey (2017);
- Tree Preservation Orders;
- Planning applications in the parish; and
- Listed buildings in Shrivenham.

2.3.2 Draft VCAs are defined during the desk study and are each assessed based on the detailed survey tool in the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit. This document has been reproduced in **Appendix C**. The VCAs are defined based on areas of the village that share similar characteristics. Each VCA is assessed based on factors including; spaces, buildings, views, greenery and landscape features, light/dark and perceptual and aesthetic factors. The townscape character within each of these areas is not entirely homogenous, there is overlap and variation across the areas. The 'area of search' for this study comprises the built-up area of the village of Shrivenham.

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<sup>23</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

## 2.4 Step 3: Field study

2.4.1 The field survey comprises a walk around the village noting initial thoughts/perceptions of the area to observe and understand how all the factors identified in the desk study interact and are perceived and experienced. Perceptual and aesthetic factors are also recorded alongside photographs of the village.

## 2.5 Step 4: Classification and description of Village Character Areas

2.5.1 The fourth stage of the townscape character assessment guidance deals with the final classification and description of the VCAs.

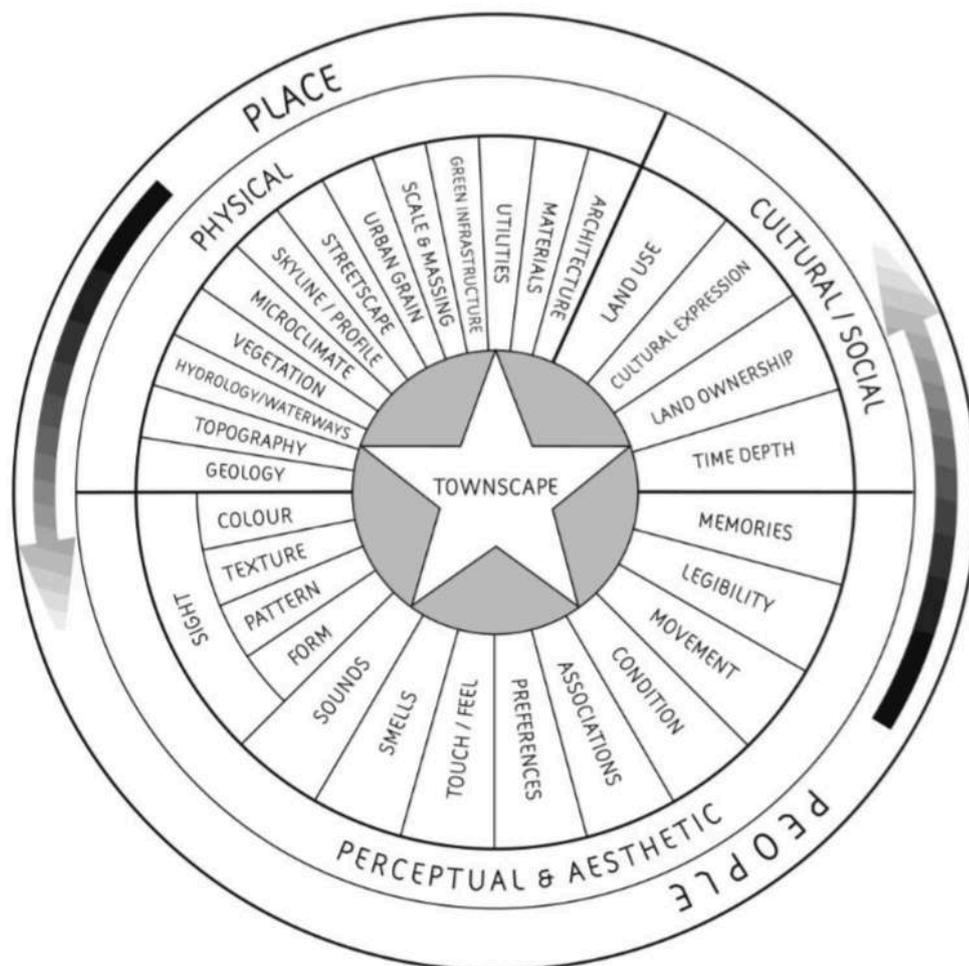


Figure 2.2: What is Townscape?<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

## 3 The Evolution of Shrivenham

### 3.1 Summary of village character

- 3.1.1 Shrivenham is located within a shallow valley between the chalk of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which rises sharply to the south of the NDP area and the limestone of the Corallian Ridge to the north. Distinctive field boundaries, with hedgerow trees, help mark out the network of fields, small and large, that surround the village.
- 3.1.2 In “The Place Names of Berkshire” (1974) by Margaret Gelling, she suggests that the meaning is “riverside meadow given to the church as a penance” with the first element derived from “scrifan” – ‘decree, allot, pass sentence on, impose penance’. The second is “hamm” – ‘riverside meadow’<sup>25</sup>.
- 3.1.3 Archeological proof shows that there has been a human settlement at Shrivenham from at least 400 BC, although some Mesolithic flints found locally suggest that the area has been lived in from as early as 4,000 BC<sup>26</sup>. The Domesday Book (1086) records that there was a substantial Anglo-Saxon settlement in the area in the “demesne” or personal estate of the king consisting of 46 hides or approximately 5,000 acres. Over the centuries Shrivenham remained a settled agricultural community until the Industrial Revolution and the expansion of Swindon following the introduction of Brunel’s Great Western Railway<sup>27</sup>.
- 3.1.4 The Conservation Area is located in the heart of the village which is centered around the High Street and the historic stocks from where the tree lined church walk leads to St Andrew’s Church<sup>28</sup>. A map showing the location of the Conservation Area is presented in **Appendix B**. The village has grown considerably since the 1940s with residential development surrounding the Conservation Area, particularly to the south and west.

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<sup>25</sup> Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (2009) Shrivenham Village Plan.

<sup>26</sup> Shrivenham Parish Council (no date) Our Village. Accessed on 28/02/18. Available at: <http://www.shrivenham.org/about-shrivenham/our-village/>

<sup>27</sup> Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (2009) Shrivenham Village Plan.

<sup>28</sup> Vale of White Horse (2016) Maps of conservation areas in the Vale. Accessed on 14/03/18. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/conservation-and-listed-buildings/conservation-areas/conse>

3.1.5 A variety of services are located on High Street which support the local community including Elm Tree Surgery, Post Office, Church of England Primary School, Methodist Church, pubs, the co-operative food, pharmacy, hardware store, newsagents, hair-dressers, Chinese take-away and Indian restaurants.

3.1.6 The village contains 34 Listed Buildings including one Grade I Listed Building (Church of St Andrew) and one Grade II\* Listed Building (Elm Tree House)<sup>29</sup>. The majority of these Listed Buildings are located within the Conservation Area. A map showing the location of these Listed Buildings is presented in **Figure 3.1**.

3.1.7 St Andrew's Church was constructed in the reign of Charles I on the site of an earlier church and the present font dates back to the late 12th century. Further details of St Andrew's Church as taken from Historic England are as follows:

*"Originally a c12 foundation, cruciform in plan whose central tower was rebuilt early in the C15. This Perp tower and 2 pilaster buttresses on the W wall were retained when the church was rebuilt at the expense of Lord Craven in 1638. The solution was to create a rectangular space on a line with the end walls of the nave, chancel and transepts. A W porch was added in the mid C18. The church is built of coursed rubble stone and stone dressings with dressed stone quoins and ashlar facing to the W porch. The central tower rises 3 storeys above the roofline and has diagonal buttresses with set-offs and carved figures, 2 light pointed bell openings with Somerset tracery and a final string course with gargoyles beneath a recently restored embattled parapet with corner pinnacles. The apexes of the original roofs on the cruciform church are clearly visible on all four sides. On the S face is a diamond shaped clock and on the roof is a weather vane. The body of the church has plain parapets to the N & S and pedimented parapets to E & W. It is lit by excessively tall 4 light cusped Perp style windows with flat heads linked by a continuous string course. The W front has a 5 light window above the centrally placed porch whose W wall has a pediment and whose N & S faces have 4 centred archways to the studded plank doors with hood moulds and curious scrolled label stops. The E end is a symmetrical composition with 2 three light windows flanking a central 5 light window and below the outer windows 2 doors similar to those on the W porch. On the SW corner are 2 sundials and below them the inscription: 'All these dials were made by Salem Pearse, 1720'. Inside the classicism glimpsed in the uniformity and symmetry of the exterior is achieved in the arcades of the 3 bay nave and 2 bay chancel which have bulbous Tuscan Doric piers with an entasis to the mid point supporting heavily moulded capitals and round arches. The tower arches were also rebuilt but in a markedly medieval manner with continuous mouldings to the pointed arches. The fan vault beneath the ringing stage is original. Also original is the rood loft newel staircase in the SW pier of the tower.*

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<sup>29</sup> Historic England (2018) Search the list. Accessed on 28/02/18. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

*The nave and chancel roofs are covered with simple late Perp tie beam timber structures with open panelling between the principal rafters. The side aisles have simple lean-to timber ceilings. All the windows have semi-circular rere arches and one above the W door has shafts with capitals of Transitional date. There are various interesting monuments in the church of which the most ancient is a C14 defaced effigy of a woman in the S aisle. Others include several large black slate tablets with armorial crests to the Barrington family of Beckett Hall set in the floor of the chancel, two mural tablets either side of the altar to John Wildman and John Shute of 1713 and 1734 respectively and a neo-classical urn a round plinth of 1793 on the NE corner of the tower facing the altar to William Wildman designed by James Wyatt and sculpted by Richard Westmacott. The chancel E window has 3 fine panes of armorial glass and hanging from the roof there are 3 brass chandeliers, the centre one bears the inscription: 'Ex douo Guillielmi Parson 1726'. The woodwork throughout is an exceptional survival of the period of rebuilding: a pulpit with tester whose panels have perspective decoration as too has a contemporary chair in the sanctuary, the pews under the tower and the pews to the nave, cut down in 1887 and the panelling on the aisle walls. The chancel screens are pseudo C17 of 1901. The late C12 font of Purbeck marble has an octagonal bowl with round arched blind panelling set on a round Stem with an octagonal base. The brass eagle lectern is of 1901. In the porch is an enormous benefactions board and a royal coat of arms dated 1764.'*<sup>30</sup>

- 3.1.8 A limited network of public rights of way (PRoW) cross through the village. As part of the Year 2000 celebrations, the Village Fete Committee constructed a circular walk around the village, named the 'Shrivenham Circular Walk'.
- 3.1.9 Historical maps of Shrivenham are presented in **Appendix A**. These maps range from the earliest recorded map of Shrivenham from 1726 to an Ordnance Survey map from 1938.

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<sup>30</sup> Historic England (2018) Church of St Andrew. Accessed on 28/02/18. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1284309>

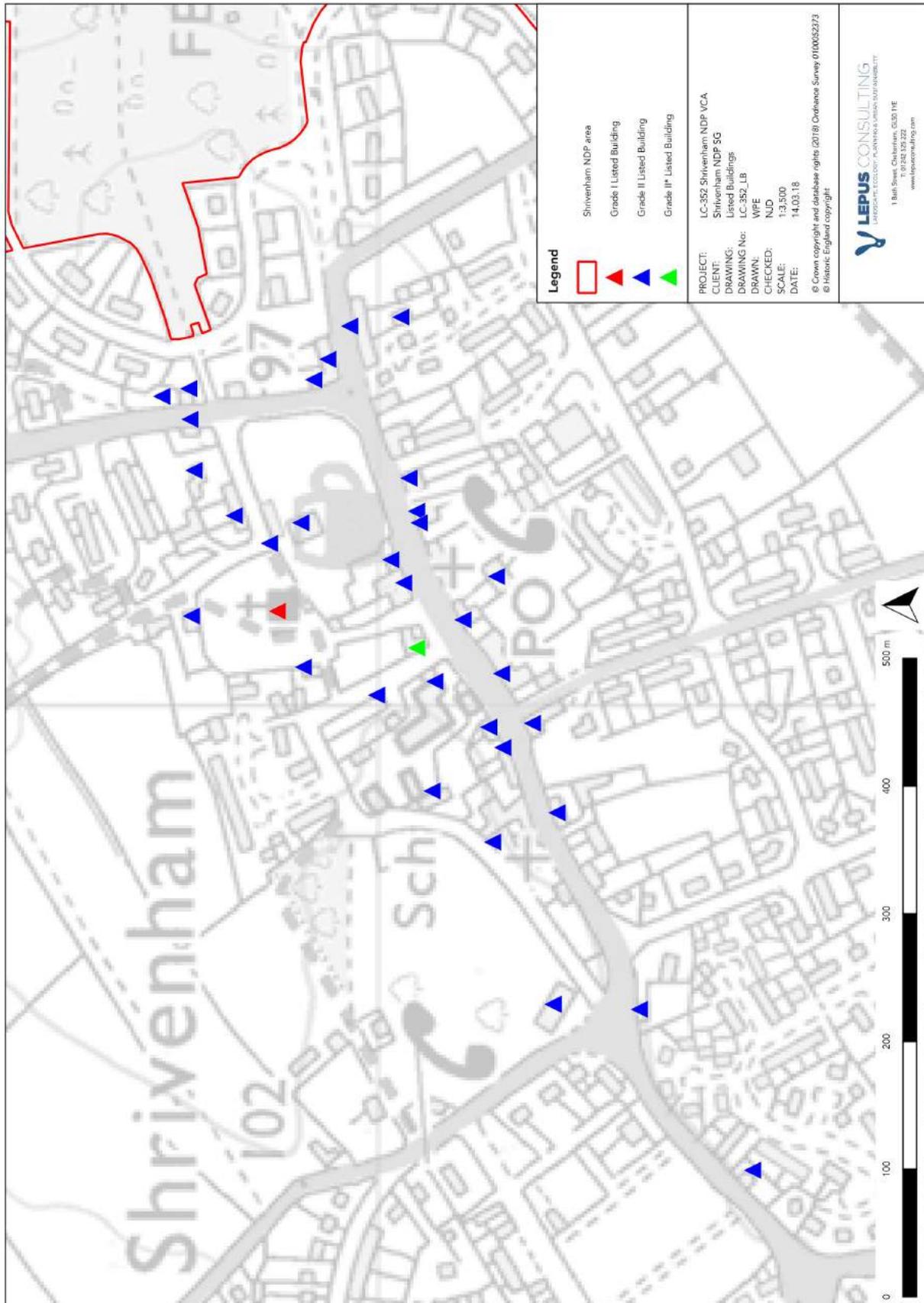


Figure 3.1: Listed Buildings in Shrivenham

## 4 Village Character Areas

### 4.1 Identification of Village Character Areas

4.1.1 The method for identifying VCAs is presented in **Chapter 2** and has been derived from aspects of:

- Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note<sup>31</sup>;
- The Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit<sup>32</sup>
- Guidelines for Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment 3 (2013)<sup>33</sup>; and
- Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment<sup>34</sup>.

4.1.2 It can be summarised as having four steps:

- Define purpose and scope of the project;
- Desk study;
- Field study; and
- Classification and description of Village Character Areas

### 4.2 Village Character Areas

4.2.1 Following careful analysis of village character Shrivenham, the following 9 VCAs have been identified. These are presented in **Figure 4.1** and are listed below:

- Conservation Area (VCA 1);
- East Shrivenham (VCA 2);
- South of Conservation Area (VCA 3);
- South of Charlbury Road (VCA 4);
- Surrounding Berens Road (VCA 5);
- West End Road (VCA 6);
- Chestnut Gardens and Maple Grove (VCA 7);
- Becketts Ridge (VCA 8); and
- Between Highworth Road and Townsend Road (VCA 9).

<sup>31</sup> Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape Character Assessment. Technical Information Note. Accessed on 26/02/18. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/>

<sup>32</sup> Oxford City Council (no date) Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit. Accessed on 27/02/18. Available at: [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character\\_assessment\\_toolkit/878/character\\_assessment\\_toolkit](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20193/character_assessment_toolkit/878/character_assessment_toolkit)

<sup>33</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) Abingdon: Routledge

<sup>34</sup> Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Accessed on 28/02/18. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscape-character-assessments-identify-and-describe-landscape-types>

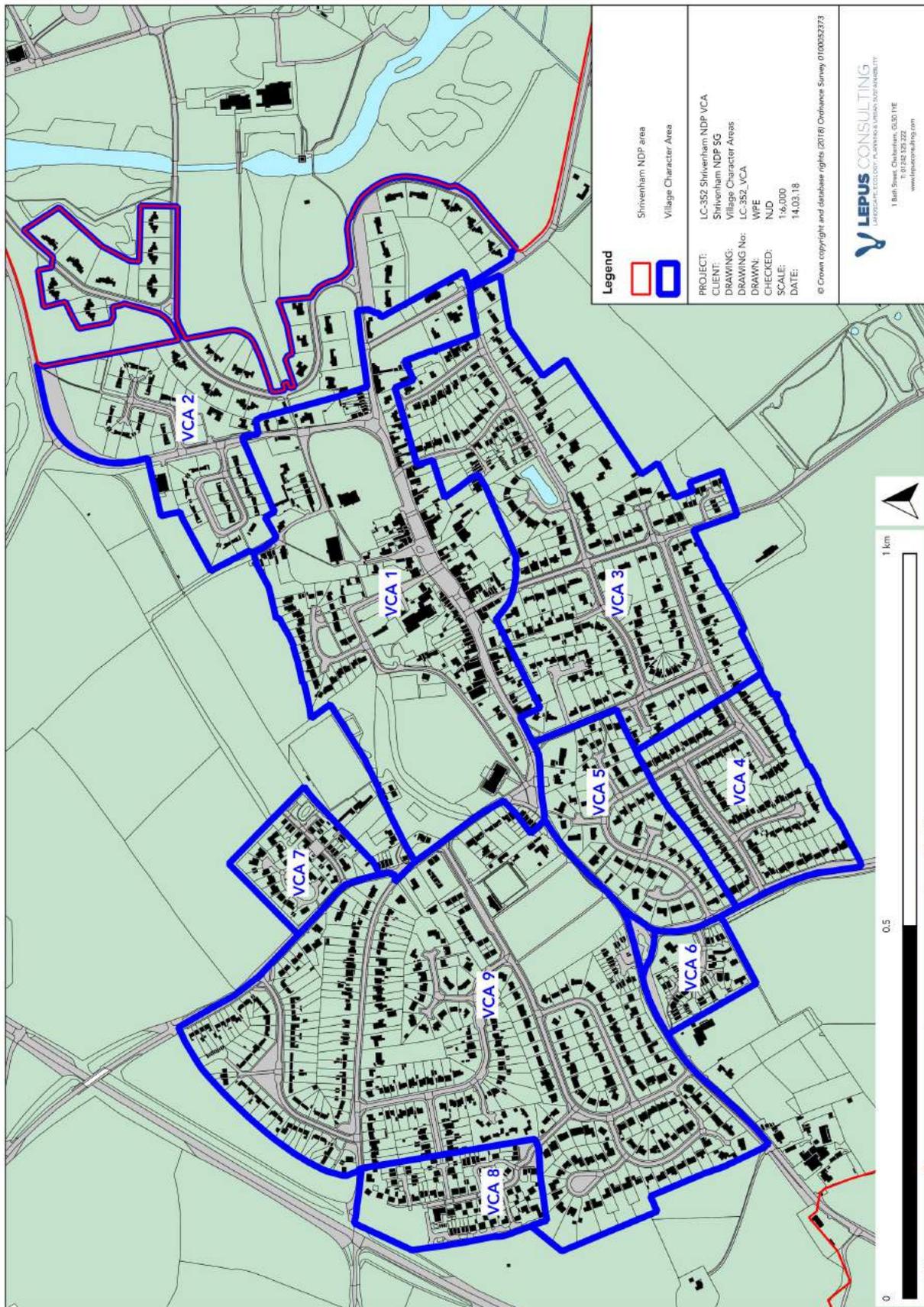


Figure 4.1: Village Character Areas

# 5 Conservation Area (VCA 1)



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## 5.1 Location and boundaries

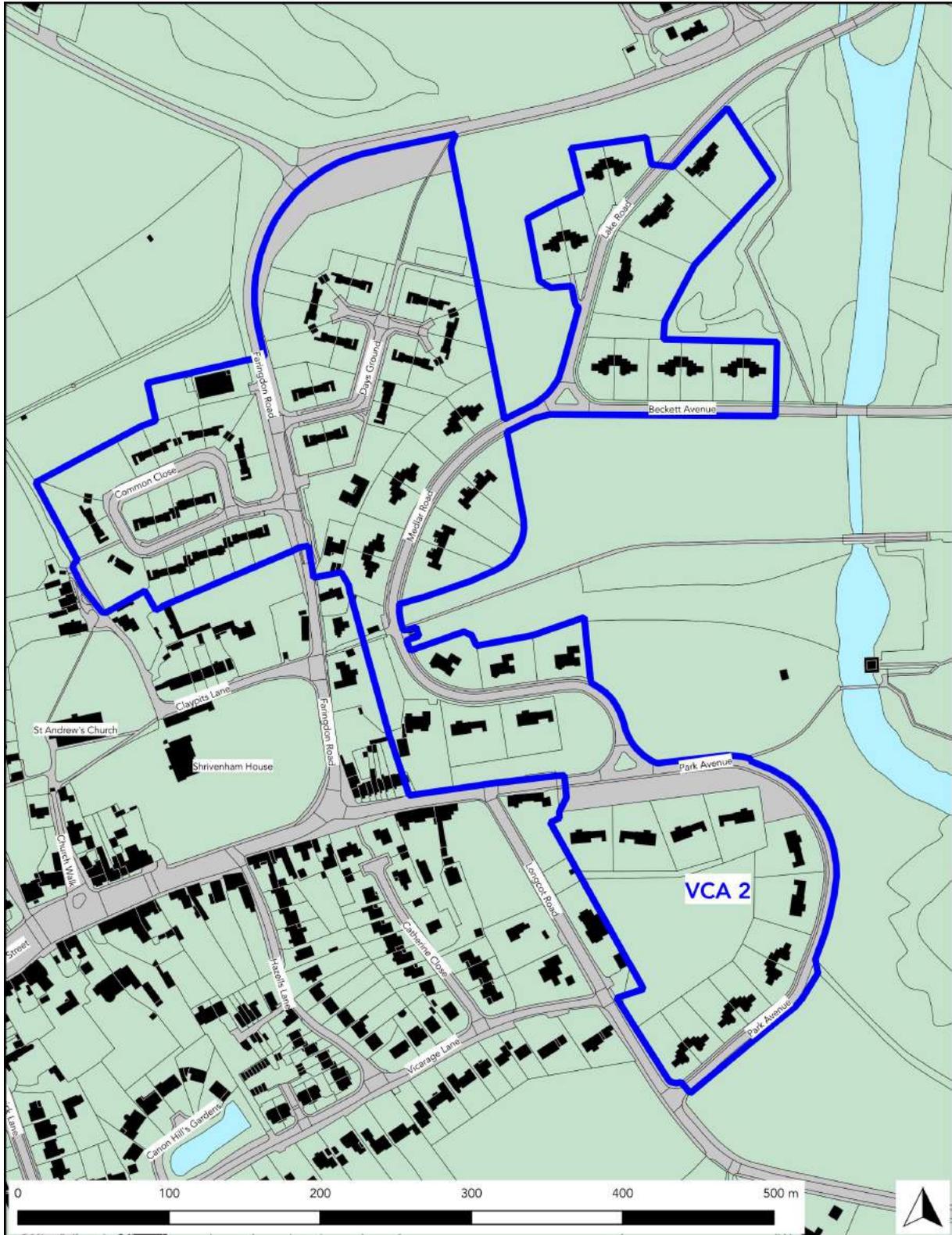
- 5.1.1 Conservation Area (VCA 1) comprises the Shrivenham Conservation Area which is located in the heart of the village.

## 5.2 Townscape appraisal

- 5.2.1 The recreation ground is a valued area of green space and a focal point in the village. The recreation ground comprises a cricket ground, tennis courts, a games court and a play area. The Shrivenham Memorial Hall is located adjacent to the ground. The cemetery associated with St Andrews Church surrounds the church and is bounded by residential properties to the north, west and south and by Claypits Lane to the east. Residential properties across this area are accompanied by private gardens.
- 5.2.2 Buildings in this area comprise a variety of ages, styles and buildings materials. Prominent non-residential buildings include St Andrew's Church and Shrivenham Memorial Hall. Thatched cottages are located in this area at Longcot Road, Faringdon Road, surrounding the Church and along High Street. A cul-de-sac of residential properties built in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century are located at Manor Close.
- 5.2.3 32 Listed Buildings are located within this area including St Andrew's Church (Grade I) and Elm Tree House (Grade II\*).
- 5.2.4 The brightest part of this area is the recreation ground which is a large and open area. Relatively darker parts of the area are those located on narrow lanes and are surrounded by built form and trees, notably along Claypits Lane.
- 5.2.5 The area contains good numbers of trees, particularly to the north of the recreation ground where there exists a small block of broadleaved woodland and surrounding the boundary of Shrivenham House. Trees are also scattered across the area within private gardens and adjacent to roads. Tree Preservation Orders are located in the area along the rear of residential properties at Manor Close and along Church Walk.
- 5.2.6 The High Street is a well-used area as the majority of services in the village are present along this road. These include; Elm Tree Surgery, Post Office, Church of England Primary School, Methodist Church, pubs, the co-operative food, pharmacy, hardware store, newsagents, hair-dressers, Chinese take-away and Indian restaurants.

- 5.2.7 Long distance views are restricted from the Conservation Area, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and relatively flat topography. There are numerous valuable historic views including across the recreation ground towards the Church, across the St Andrew's cemetery and, view towards the Lych Gate from Church Walk, view towards the Church from Claypits Lane and the view along High Street.

# 6 East Shrivenham (VCA 2)



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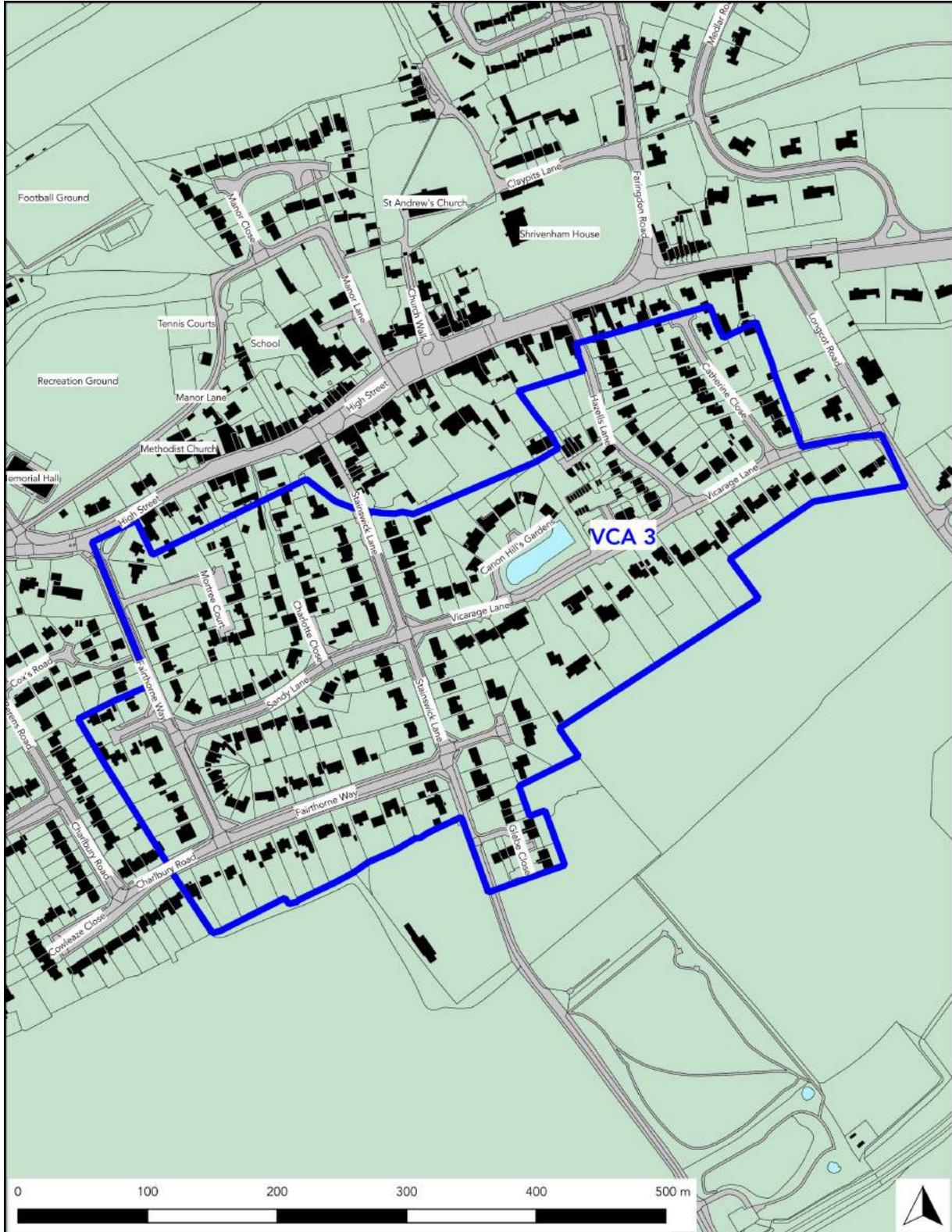
## 6.1 Location and boundaries

- 6.1.1 *East Shrivenham (VCA 2)* comprises residential properties located adjacent to Park Avenue, Medlar Road, Beckett Avenue, Lake Road, Faringdon Road, Days Ground and Common Close. The majority of housing in this area is located on private roads and is associated with the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom.

## 6.2 Townscape appraisal

- 6.2.1 Residential properties are well spaced across this area and are all surrounded by front and rear private gardens. The location of buildings follow the shape of the winding roads that cross through the area. Roads are lined with grass verges which are planted with occasional broadleaved tree species including beech, cherry and silver birch. Lampposts are also located on verges. Pavements are located adjacent to roads across the area and are located between front gardens and grass verges at Days Ground. The front gardens of properties meet pavements with hedgerows, wooden fencing or by with boundary features.
- 6.2.2 Residential properties in this area are generally homogenous and were built in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. The properties are mostly semi-detached, double storey buildings constructed with red bricks and contain chimneys. Properties at Common Close and Days Ground have associated single storey garages. Windows are framed with uPVC.
- 6.2.3 Long distance views are generally restricted from area, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and the relatively flat topography. Some residential properties at Common Close are likely to experience partial views across countryside to the north.
- 6.2.4 Traffic movements in this area are concentrated along Faringdon Road.

# 7 South of Conservation Area (VCA 3)



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## 7.1 Location and boundaries

- 7.1.1 *South of Conservation Area (VCA 3)* comprises development located between Fairthorne Way and Longcot Road to the south of the Conservation Area. Residential properties in this area are located adjacent to Fairthorne Way, Mortree Court, Sandy Lane, Charlotte Close, Stainswick Lane, Stonefield Close, Glebe Close, Vicarage Lane, Canon Hill's Gardens, Hazells Lane and Catherine Close.

## 7.2 Townscape appraisal

- 7.2.1 Building plots are generally uniform across the area and most houses have front and rear gardens. Grass verges are present adjacent to roads across most of the area. Lamp posts are located on grass verges and pavements. The front gardens of properties meet pavements with either no defining features, hedgerows or brick walls. Trees are present across the area, particularly within private gardens.
- 7.2.2 Residential properties across this area comprise a mixture of ages, building materials and styles. The majority of residential properties located in this area were constructed during the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. There also exists small areas of recent 21<sup>st</sup> century housing developments at Mortree Court, Charlotte Close and Glebe Close. The majority of properties in this area are two storey and semi-detached. The majority of houses have garages which are either built into the main structure of the house with a floor above or as a single storey unit. Some houses have associated garages which exist as a standalone building.
- 7.2.3 Long distance views from roads within the area are generally restricted, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and the relatively flat topography. Residential properties on the southern extent of the area are likely to experience views across countryside towards the North Wessex Downs AONB.

# 8 South of Charlbury Road (VCA 4)



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## 8.1 Location and boundaries

- 8.1.1 *South of Charlbury Road (VCA 4)* comprises residential development located to the south of Charlbury Road in the southern extent of the village. Residential properties in this area are surrounded by Charlbury Road, Chapelwick Close, Cowleaze Close and Station Road.

## 8.2 Townscape appraisal

- 8.2.1 Building plots are generally uniform across the area and most houses have front and rear gardens. Grass verges are present adjacent to roads across the area, between roads and pavements. Lamp posts are located on grass verges. The front gardens of properties meet pavements with no defining boundary features. Mature broadleaved oak trees are present at grass verges adjacent to Station Road. Trees are present across the area, particularly within rear private gardens.
- 8.2.2 Residential properties in this area are generally homogenous in terms of building materials and style and were constructed in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The majority of properties in this area are two storey semi-detached. There also exists two storey detached properties at Station Road and bungalows at Chapelwick Close and Cowleaze Close. Properties have off street parking. The majority of properties have their own separate single storey garages, some properties have two storey garages. Properties are constructed with red bricks and contain chimneys Windows are framed with white coloured uPVC. The majority of properties are fronted with uPVC cladding on the second storey between windows.
- 8.2.3 Long distance views from roads within the area are generally restricted, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and the relatively flat topography. Residential properties on the southern extent of Cowleaze Close and Chapelwick Close are likely to experience long distance views across open countryside towards the North Wessex Downs AONB.

# 9 Surrounding Berens Road (VCA 5)



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## 9.1 Location and boundaries

- 9.1.1 *Surrounding Berens Road (VCA 5)* comprises residential development to the south and east of Station Road (B4000), to the north of Charlbury Road and to the west of Fairthorne Way.

## 9.2 Townscape appraisal

- 9.2.1 Building plots are generally uniform across the area and most houses have front and rear gardens. Grass verges are present adjacent to roads across the area, between roads and pavements. Lamp posts are located adjacent to grass verges. The front gardens of the majority of properties meet pavements with no defining boundary features. The front gardens of some properties have been planted with hedges, shrubs and flowers. Trees are present across the area, particularly within rear private gardens. A small area of grassland planted with several broadleaved trees is located adjacent to Youghal Close and Berens Road.
- 9.2.2 The character of residential properties in this area are defined by late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing which are generally homogenous in terms of building materials and style. The majority of properties in this area are two storey and semi-detached. The majority of buildings in this area are constructed using bradstone. Two Listed Buildings are located in this area, these are 'The Cottage' (Grade II) and 'Village Pound approximately 30 metres west of junction with Fairthorne Way' (Grade II). These Listed Buildings are located in the northern part of the area adjacent to Station Road (B4000). Residential properties have off street parking. The majority of houses have garages which are built into the main structure of the house with a floor above. Most properties have chimneys and windows that are framed with uPVC.
- 9.2.3 Long distance views from roads within the area are generally restricted, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and the relatively flat topography.

# 10 West End Road (VCA 6)



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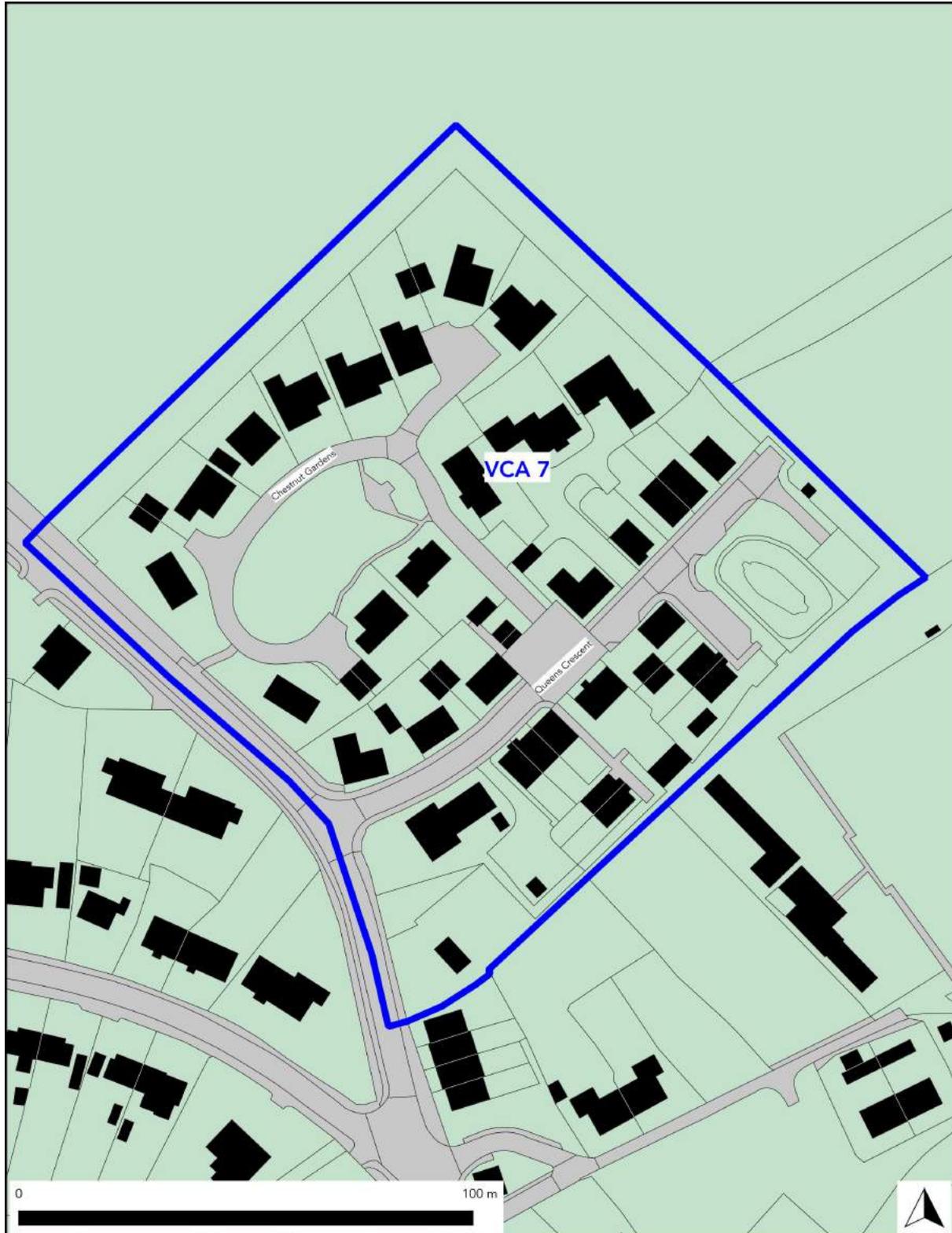
## 10.1 Location and boundaries

- 10.1.1 *West End Road (VCA 6)* comprises a 21<sup>st</sup> century residential development to the south of Townsend Road and to the west of Station Road.

## 10.2 Townscape appraisal

- 10.2.1 This area comprises a recent (21<sup>st</sup> century) housing development and a single thatched property and separate garage located in the north eastern corner of the area. The 21<sup>st</sup> century properties in this area are generally homogenous in terms of building materials and style. These recently developed detached and semi-detached properties have two storeys and are constructed using red bricks and bradstone, uPVC windows and doors with chimneys. Properties have private rear gardens. Grass verges are present adjacent to West End Road.
- 10.2.2 Long distance views from West End Road are generally restricted, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and the relatively flat topography. Houses at the southern extent of this area are likely to experience long distance views to the south across countryside towards the North Wessex Downs AONB.

# 11 Chestnut Gardens and Maple Grove (VCA 7)



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## 11.1 Location and boundaries

11.1.1 *Chestnut Gardens and Maple Grove (VCA 7)* comprises a 21<sup>st</sup> century housing development to the east of Highworth Road and to the north of the football ground.

## 11.2 Townscape appraisal

11.2.1 This area comprises two areas of residential properties at Chestnut Gardens and Maple Grove.

11.2.2 Chestnut Gardens are marketed as retirement homes and comprise well-spaced modern detached properties constructed using bradstone. The properties in this area are generally homogenous in terms of building materials and style. The houses surround an area of green space where there exists three mature oak trees that have been retained. The houses have chimneys and windows are framed with uPVC.

11.2.3 The residential properties at Maple Grove surround Queen's Crescent and comprise a mixture of modern detached and semi-detached houses. The properties in this area are generally homogenous in terms of building materials and style. The houses are constructed using bradstone and red bricks. The houses have chimneys and windows are framed with uPVC.

11.2.4 Long distance views are likely across countryside to the north from some properties located at Chestnut Gardens and Maple Grove.

# 12 Becketts Ridge (VCA 8)



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## 12.1 Location and boundaries

- 12.1.1 *Becketts Ridge (VCA 8)* comprises a 21<sup>st</sup> century housing development in the far western extent of the village, to the east of the A420.

## 12.2 Townscape appraisal

- 12.2.1 Becketts Ridge is a recent housing development comprising 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties as semi-detached and detached houses. The modern houses are constructed with red bricks and windows are framed with uPVC. The houses surround Roman Way which crosses through the centre of the development, Hadrian Close, Sywell Road, Constantine Close, Alexander Way and Trajan Road. An area of public open space and a play area is located in the north west part of the area. Large grass verges exist at the entrance to the development adjacent to Roman Way where silver birch trees have been planted.
- 12.2.2 Long distance views from this area are generally restricted, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and the relatively flat topography. The A420 road is lined with trees that restricts views to the north and west. Existing residential properties are located to the east and south.

# 13 Between Highworth Road and Townsend Road (VCA 9)



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## 13.1 Location and boundaries

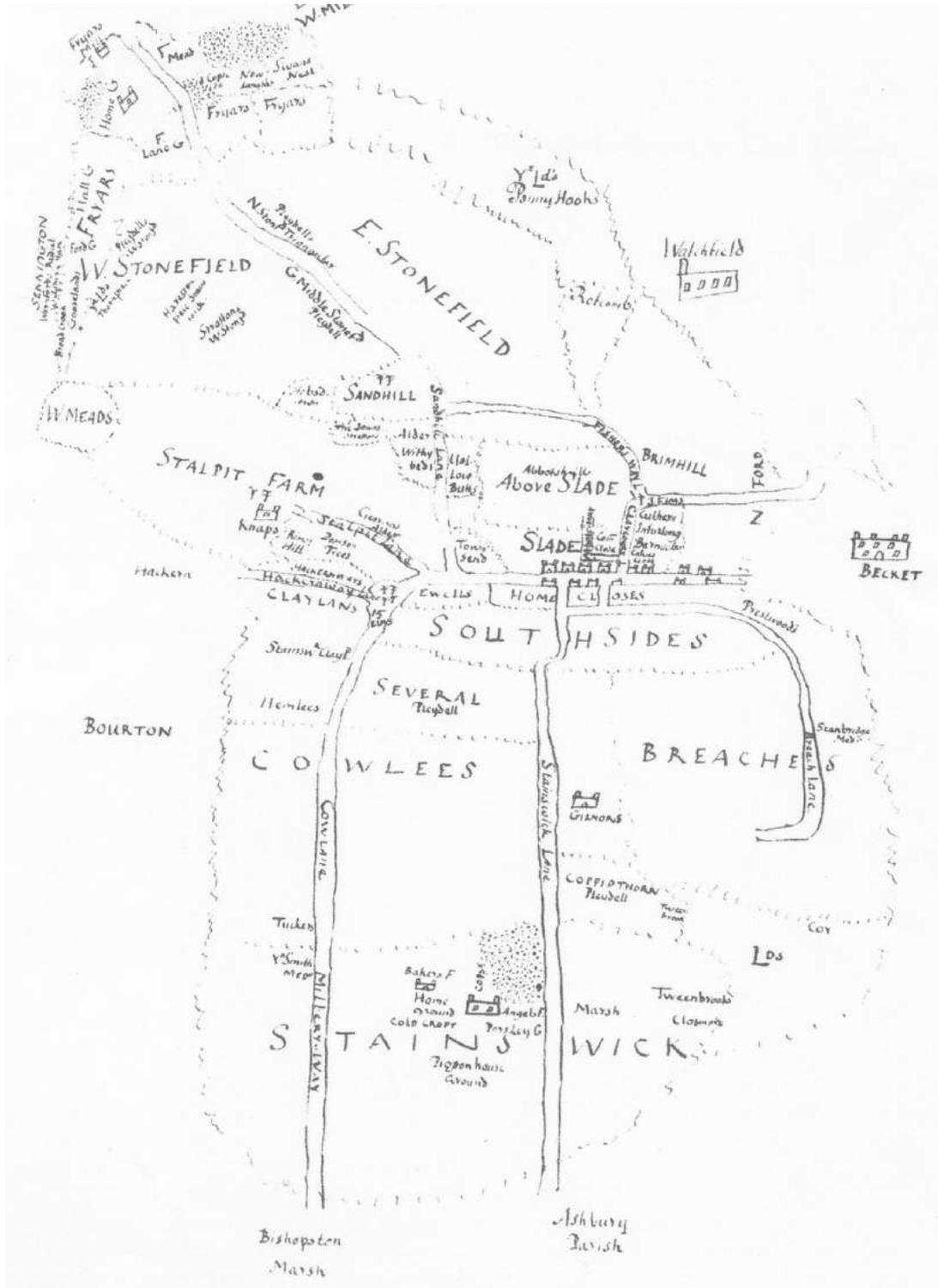
- 13.1.1 *Between Highworth Road and Townsend Road (VCA 9)* comprises development in the western extent of the village between Highworth Road in the north east to Townsend Road in the south.

## 13.2 Townscape appraisal

- 13.2.1 Building plots are generally uniform across the area and most houses have front and rear gardens. Grass verges are present adjacent to roads across most of the area, between roads and pavements. Lamp posts are located to grass verges or pavements. The front gardens of properties meet pavements with either no defining features, hedgerows or brick walls. Trees are present across the area, particularly within private gardens. The allotments and Shrivenham Bowls Club are located within the south eastern part of this area. Large grass verges are planted with broadleaved trees adjacent to Sand Hill.
- 13.2.2 The majority of residential properties in this area were constructed in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Houses across this area are generally homogenous in terms of building materials and style. The majority of properties in this area are two storey and semi-detached. Bungalows also exist along Damson Trees. Residential properties have off street parking. The majority of houses have garages which are either built into the main structure of the house with a floor above or as a single storey unit. Most properties have chimneys and windows that are framed with uPVC.
- 13.2.3 Long distance views from roads within the area are generally restricted, this is due to the presence of built form and green infrastructure that restricts views and the relatively flat topography. Residential properties on the outer edges of the area are likely to experience views across countryside particularly from houses adjacent to Highworth Road.

# APPENDIX A

## Historical maps



Earliest recorded map of Shrivenham from 1726



Map from 1750



Section of map of Berkshire by John Rocque from 1761

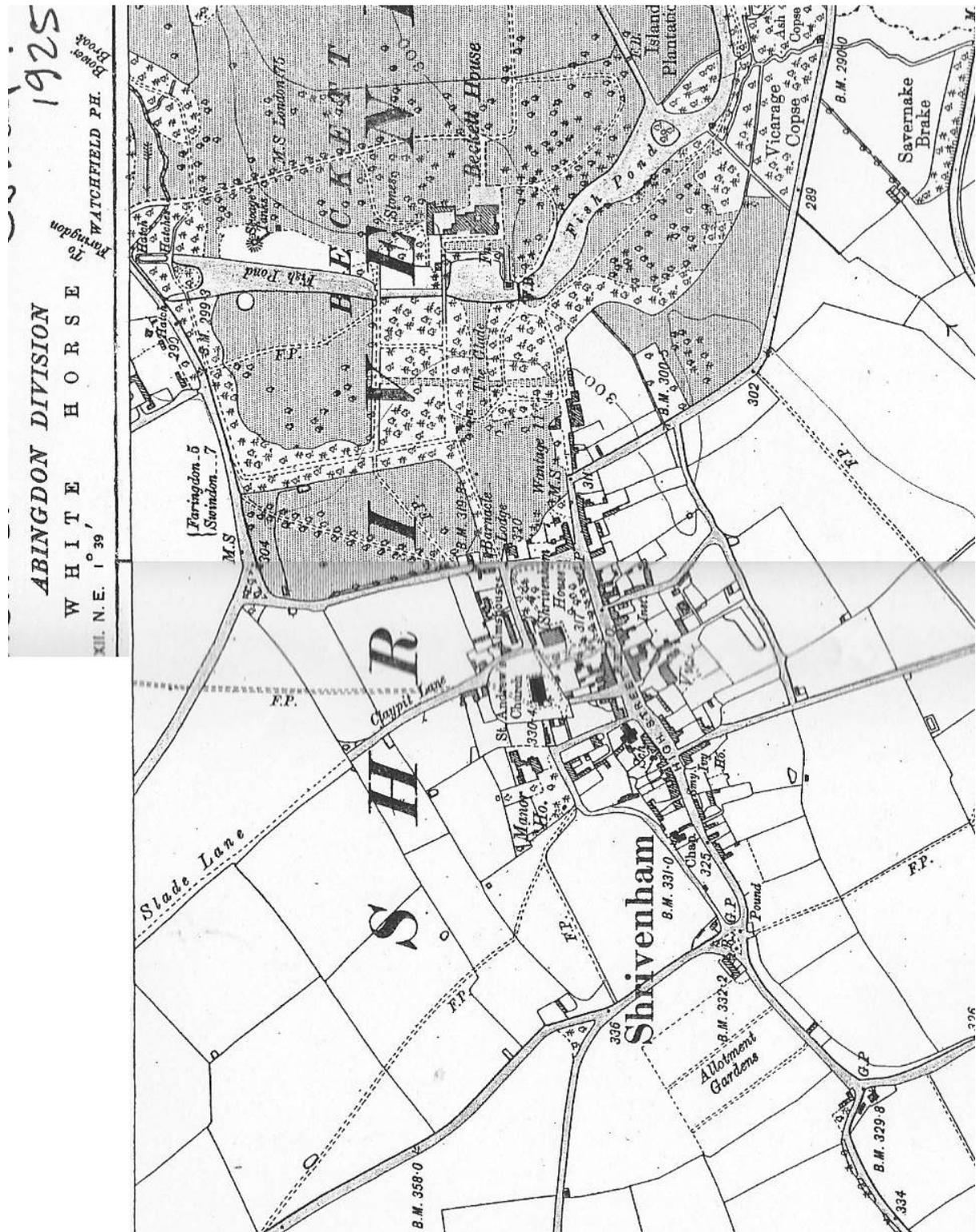


Map from 1843

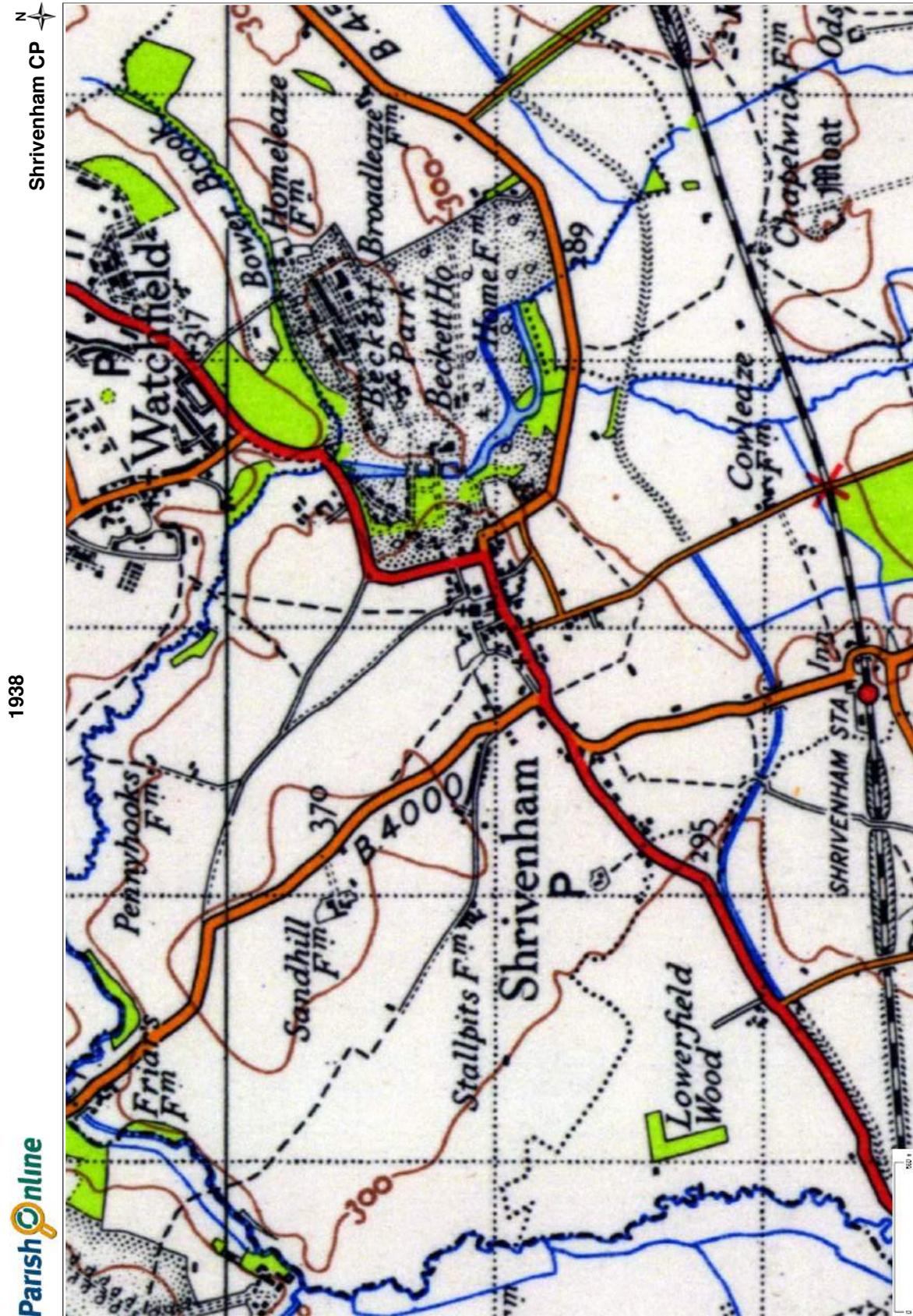




Titling map from 1844



Ordnance Survey map from 1925



1938

ParishOnline

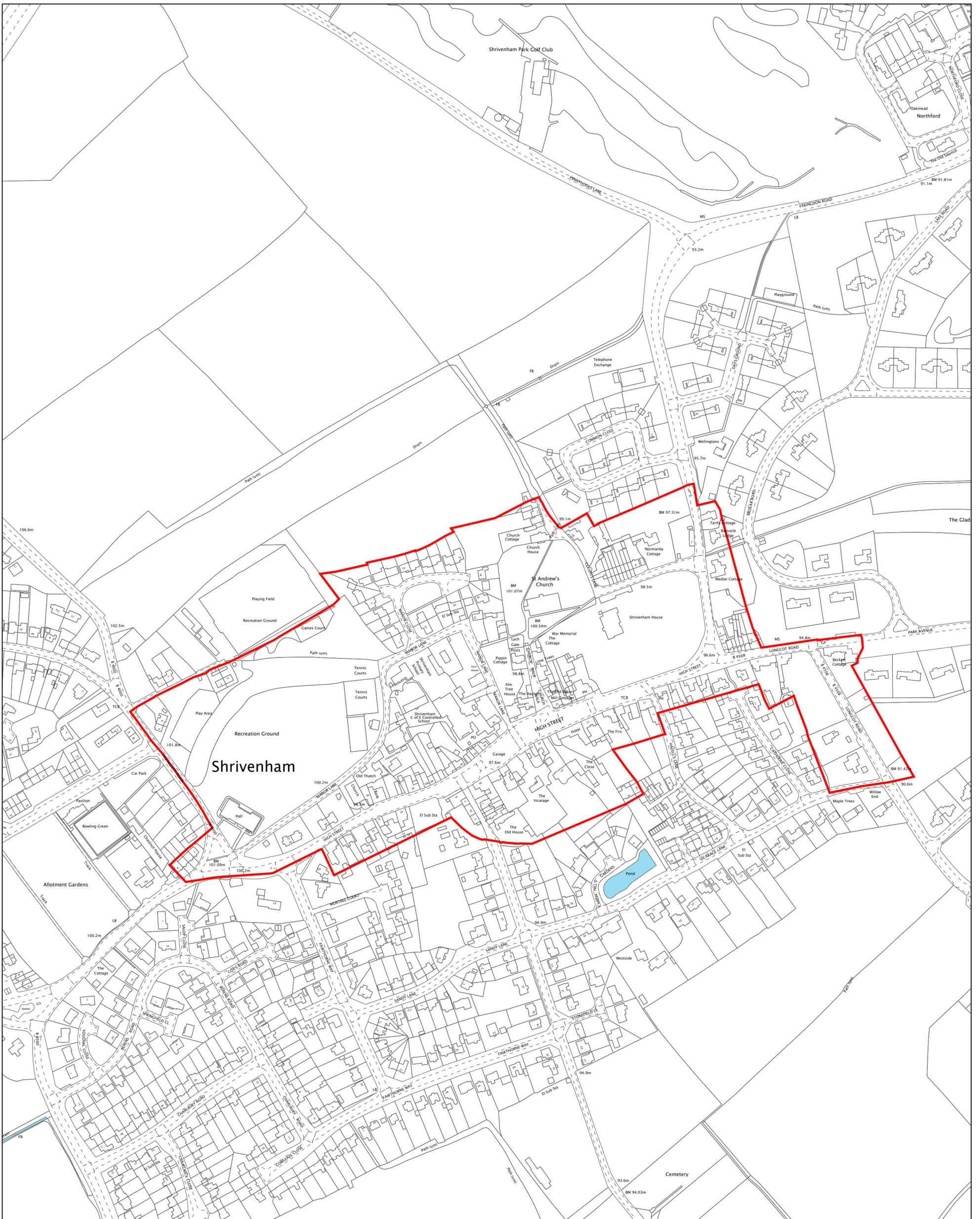
Shrivenham CP

Date Created: 28-2-2018 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 423886 / 189018 | Scale: 1:17687 |

Ordnance Survey map from 1938

# APPENDIX B

## Shrivenham Conservation Area



# Conservation Area

## Shrivensham

Map Number: 41

Date of Designation: 03.02.71

Date of Amendment:

Area: 16.69 ha

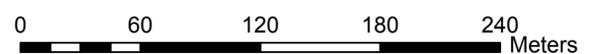


Data supplied by  
Vale of White Horse District Council  
[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)



May 2009

1:2500 @ A2



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# APPENDIX C

## Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit: Detailed Character Assessment

# OXFORD CHARACTER ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT

## DETAILED CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

[www.oxford.gov.uk](http://www.oxford.gov.uk)



OXFORD  
PRESERVATION  
TRUST



ENGLISH HERITAGE

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## INTRODUCTION

This character assessment toolkit is designed to help you examine the character of areas, buildings and places in areas of Oxford to identify the features that contribute to their distinctiveness, interest and amenity. It also provides opportunities to identify features or issues that detract from the character of areas, spaces and buildings.

### How the toolkit will be used

The historic environment makes an important contribution to the character of the city as a distinctive, interesting and special place. The buildings, spaces, associations and history that combine to create places mean different things to different people. The toolkit should help people to analyse the character of areas, spaces and buildings in a structured way. This should help to identify, define and understand the significance and value of different features of the environment that contribute to its character and distinctiveness.

While there is an accepted need for change to occur within many places in the city, proposals for change should be measured against their existing significance to ensure that their present values are not eroded. This should help to ensure that change enhances and sustains the value of the historic environment to the city for ourselves and future generations. The evidence and understanding provided by the process will enable management of change in an effective and positive manner.



### What makes up character?

Elements of character include both the uses of an area and its physical features, such as styles of building, construction materials, architectural details or green landscape features. Others elements of character may be more emotional or personal perceptions of a place, such as historical or cultural associations with a place or building. Others may be relatively ephemeral or transitory, such as the smells and sounds associated with particular activities, which may occur only at certain times of the day or year. The features, listed in the Survey Sheets below, are common components of character, but the list is not exhaustive.



---

# HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

## Undertaking your character assessment

In undertaking your assessment it is important to visit the area/building/space to complete a visual survey. In pilot studies, people have found they prefer to take photos and make brief notes whilst in the area, giving them time to examining the surroundings. They then make more detailed notes on the questionnaire, once they have completed the survey. Although there is no prescribed method for carrying out an assessment, the following structure may be helpful:

- It works best on a street by street basis. If you wish to assess a larger area it will be worth surveying each street individually and putting together an overall picture after all the surveys are finished.
- Take an initial walk around your survey area. Use this opportunity to note your initial thoughts/perceptions of the area and assign a score (see below) to the broad character features.
- Taking photographs is strongly recommended as they can illustrate and visually explain any comments you make on the questionnaire. They are also useful to look back over after you have completed the survey.
- Annotating a street plan/map is also a useful way to explain certain features e.g. direction of views, location of key buildings, spaces, etc.
- Make comments using the explanation of terms to prompt your thoughts.
- Give a score to each feature based on your opinion of its negative or positive contribution to the space.
- It is also worth noting how the building/space/area being assessed relates to its wider context e.g. how a building sits within a street or a street within an area. The setting and interrelationships between the single element, such as a building, and the wider context, such as the street, are just as important as the quality of the buildings themselves.

The tool kit is divided into a series of themed questionnaires that will prompt you to consider the contribution of different features that might contribute to the character of the area/building/space. The features listed are the main components of character but the list is not exhaustive. Depending upon the asset being assessed e.g. a building, street, space etc, not every feature in the list may be relevant and a comment should be entered only where applicable.

Each feature requires a brief comment of how you feel it contributes to the character and value of the area. The option is provided to assign a numerical score to reflect your perception of the significance of each feature to the character of the asset. The 'scores' given may vary from one individual to another. However, trends will be seen when comparing different surveys of the same asset.



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## Initial Reaction to an Area

The initial reaction is a summary of what you see and feel when you first enter the area being assessed.

## Survey

In the main body of the toolkit, the character features outlined in the 'Initial Reaction' section are broken down into individual questionnaires. These prompt a finer level of analysis of each of the broader character themes. Again, not every feature in the list may be relevant and a comment and a numerical value should be entered only where applicable.

## Final Reaction

This prompts a reassessment of your initial reactions. It allows you to see if your perception of the asset's character has changed as a result of the in-depth study. Try placing the nine character groups in an order of preference, with '1' being the feature you feel the most important contribution to its character and '9' the least.

## Spirit of Place

This is an open question allowing you to articulate what you feel about the place and how it influences all your senses

## Need more help?

A guidance document is available to view on the Character Assessment Toolkit Website. This includes explanations of some of the terms used in the questionnaires and some prompts to help you think about the contribution of different types of features to the character of the area. If you feel there is an additional feature, feel free to make a note of that separately in the comments box at the end of the questionnaire. Not every feature in the list may be relevant and you need only enter a comment where you feel it is applicable.

A visual study may only take you so far in understanding what is special about an area. By researching its history you may develop a better understanding of how the buildings and spaces reflect its evolution and its unique character. You may wish to focus this research on how the physical characteristics reflect the process of its development, such as the formal design of a landscape, the functional and artistic elements of a building that reflect its use, or the social and economic processes that have influenced the evolution of a settlement. The Character Assessment Toolkit website includes a Research Area with tips and links to help you get started with your research. Some of the information may be readily accessible as online resources, whilst others may require visiting the local studies library, record office or other archives.

## Assigning numerical values to features

Assigning a numerical value or score provides a mechanism for analysing and interpreting results over a wider area. Without scoring consistent interpretation and evaluation of text and written comments can be difficult

- +1 to +5: Positive features that add to the character or special nature of an area. This ranges from +1, slightly adds to the character, to +5, that significantly adds to the character.
- 0: Neutral features that are neutral. They neither detract nor add from/to the character of the area.
- -5 to -1: Negative features that detract/take away from the area. This ranges from -5, significantly detract, to -1, slightly detract.

---

## Further Research

## SURVEY DETAILS

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>STREET/BUILDING/<br/>AREA NAME</b> |  |
| <b>DATE</b>                           |  |
| <b>TIME</b>                           |  |
| <b>WEATHER</b>                        |  |

**1: INITIAL REACTION:** What do you first see as making the most important contribution to the character of the area? Is the area's character defined by the public or private spaces, groups of buildings or particular views, the presence of particular materials or its trees and greenery? Do these reflect particular aspects of the area's history? Are less tangible features, such as the activity, noises and smells of the area significant? Please provide a few brief reasons for your choices.

| <b>FEATURE</b>          | <b>COMMENTS</b> | <b>VALUE<br/>-5 TO +5</b> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| SPACES                  |                 |                           |
| BUILDINGS               |                 |                           |
| VIEWS                   |                 |                           |
| LIGHT/DARK              |                 |                           |
| SURFACES                |                 |                           |
| GREENERY &<br>LANDSCAPE |                 |                           |
| USES AND ACTIVITY       |                 |                           |
| NOISES AND<br>SMELLS    |                 |                           |
| GENERAL<br>COMMENTS     |                 |                           |

**2: SPACES:** A 'space' is normally the gap between buildings and other features. They may be formally designed or develop informally over time. They may be enclosed by surrounding buildings, trees and foliage, have structure created by the alignment and spacing of surrounding buildings or property boundaries, and be narrow or wide and open. The character of areas can depend on their uses and vibrancy, as well as the choice of paving, kerbs, seating, telephone or post boxes or the presence of formal planting or other greenery.

| <b>FEATURE</b>  | <b>COMMENTS</b> | <b>VALUE<br/>-5 TO +5</b> |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|
| FORMAL / INFORMAL SPACES                              |                 |                           |
| GAPS BETWEEN BUILDINGS                                |                 |                           |
| MEANS OF ENCLOSURE                                    |                 |                           |
| BUILDING PLOTS  |                 |                           |
| WIDE/OPEN SPACES                                      |                 |                           |
| NARROW / ENCLOSED SPACES                              |                 |                           |
| WINDING / STRAIGHT SPACES                             |                 |                           |
| RELATIONSHIP OF THE SPACE TO BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES |                 |                           |
| USES AND ACTIVITY                                     |                 |                           |
| PAVING MATERIALS                                      |                 |                           |
| STREET FURNITURE                                      |                 |                           |
| IMPACT OF VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC                        |                 |                           |
| USABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF THE SPACE              |                 |                           |

**3.0 BUILDINGS:** Do buildings make an important contribution to the character of the area and if so what features are significant to their contribution? Do buildings reflect an important period in the area's history and is this reflected in their past or current use? Do buildings share a uniform scale and size, or is there a high degree of variation that is visually attractive? Are the buildings very old or do they form a single development with shared or similar architectural detailing? Do styles of windows, doors or other features add to the visual interest of the buildings, reflect their origins and use, or form part of a designed scheme? What condition are the buildings in? Have changes increased or reduced their interest, or have they lost important features?

| <b>FEATURE</b>                               | <b>COMMENTS</b> | <b>VALUE<br/>-5 TO +5</b> |
|--|-----------------|---------------------------|
| CONTRIBUTION OF BUILDINGS TO THE SPACE       |                 |                           |
| SIZE/SCALE                                   |                 |                           |
| AGE  |                 |                           |
| MATERIALS                                    |                 |                           |
| WINDOWS                                      |                 |                           |
| DOORS  |                 |                           |
| ROOFS / CHIMNEYS / GABLES                    |                 |                           |
| USES (PAST AND PRESENT)                      |                 |                           |
| CAN YOU TELL IF A BUILDING HAS BEEN ALTERED? |                 |                           |
| CONDITION                                    |                 |                           |

**4.0 VIEWS:** Are there views of interest and distinction? Is a view well known because of a historical event, painting, prose or poetry, or is it popular with local residents as a part of a public place? Are views glimpsed through gaps between buildings, channelled by lines of trees or buildings, or open and expansive? Does the shape of a street create a series of views, or is a single viewing point particularly important? What features of the view contribute to its interest? Does a landmark, such as a building or group of trees, form a focal point? Does the view include an attractive frontage or roofscape? Is the view urban or rural in character? Do background features like the city's rural setting contribute to the view's attractiveness?

| <b>FEATURE</b>  | <b>COMMENTS</b> | <b>VALUE<br/>-5 TO +5</b> |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|
| HISTORIC / POPULAR VIEWS  |                 |                           |
| FORM OF VIEW:<br>SHORT OR LONG,<br>UNFOLDING,<br>GLIMPSED, CHANNELLED<br>OR WIDE AND OPEN |                 |                           |
| FOCAL POINTS  |                 |                           |
| STREETSCAPE   |                 |                           |
| ROOFSCAPE   |                 |                           |
| URBAN/RURAL VIEWS   |                 |                           |
| VIEWS OUT OF THE SPACE  |                 |                           |

**5.0 LANDSCAPE:** What landscape features contribute to the area's character and how do they affect it? Do hedgerows or grass verges create a rural feel or do street trees provide a leafy suburban character. What hard surfaces are present, are they attractively designed or do they use materials that are out of keeping with the area? Does their maintenance affect their contribution? Is a river or canal a significant feature in the area? Does it have scenic or wildlife value?

| <b>FEATURE</b>                            | <b>COMMENTS</b> | <b>VALUE<br/>-5 TO +5</b> |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|
| LEAFY AND/OR GREEN IMAGE                  |                 |                           |
| HARD URBAN LANDSCAPE                      |                 |                           |
| PUBLIC/PRIVATE GREENERY                   |                 |                           |
| DOES WATER FORM A KEY FEATURE OF THE AREA |                 |                           |
| TOPOGRAPHY                                |                 |                           |

**6.0 AMBIENCE:** Many less tangible features, such as activity, changes in light during the day, shadows and reflections affect reaction to an area. How does the area change between day and night? Do dark corners or alleyways feel unsafe at night time? What smells and noises are you aware of and is the area busy or tranquil? What affect, if any, does vehicle traffic have on character?

| <b>FEATURE</b>           | <b>COMMENTS</b> | <b>VALUE<br/>-5 TO +5</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| ACTIVITIES               |                 |                           |
| LEVEL OF ACTIVITY        |                 |                           |
| TRAFFIC                  |                 |                           |
| DARK, SHADY, LIGHT, AIRY |                 |                           |
| DAY AND NIGHT            |                 |                           |
| SMELLS                   |                 |                           |
| NOISES                   |                 |                           |

**7.0: FINAL REACTION:** Take a moment to consider the notes and scores that you made, in your initial reactions survey sheet and the subsequent pages. Are there any features that you would now rate as having a greater positive or negative value, or are there particular aspects of these features that you would highlight as having a high significance to the character of the area? Try ranking the features in order of their relative importance in forming the area's character and appearance.

*RANK IN ORDER OF CONTRIBUTION BETWEEN 1 (HIGH) AND 9 (LOW)*

| <b>FEATURE</b>                | <b>EXAMPLE</b> | <b>YOUR HIERARCHY</b> |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| BUILDINGS                     | 1              |                       |
| SPACES                        | 5              |                       |
| LONG/SHORT VIEWS              | 2              |                       |
| LIGHT/DARK                    | 4              |                       |
| SURFACES                      | 3              |                       |
| GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES | 6              |                       |
| NOISE, SMELL AND TRAFFIC      | 7              |                       |

**8.0 SPIRIT OF PLACE:** Having undertaken the survey and scoring now try to sum up the character of the area in a few brief sentences, picking out the most significant positive and negative features of its character and appearance.

# APPENDIX D

## VoWH Design Guide: Zone 1a

## E.2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

E.2.1 Although geology has a very strong influence on the character of a settlement, other factors such as local traditions, history and technology can also influence the evolution and appearance of a settlement. Image 21 below divides the Vale into separate character zones, taking into account geology, landscape and a physical assessment of individual settlements in each zone.

E.2.2 The following sections provide an overview of the character of each of the zones.

E.2.3 It should be noted that the individual character of the five largest settlements in the District, Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Wantage and Grove, is more varied because of their size and history. These settlements do not therefore fit comfortably into the individual character zones and, therefore, they are described separately.

### Zone 1 - Thames Valley and Corralian Ridge

- Zone 1 A - Golden Ridge and Wooded Estate Villages
- Zone 1 B - Eastern Thames

### Zone 2 - Clay Vale

- Zone 2 A - Western Vale Villages
- Zone 2 B - Central Alluvial Island villages
- Zone 2 C - Lowland Villages

### Zone 3 - Rolling Farmland Villages

- Zone 4 - Chalk Villages
- Zone 5 - Upper Chalk Downs

- Significant Hilltops
- Rivers and Streams
- Settlements



# E Vale of White Horse character

## Zone 1: Thames Valley and Corallian Ridge

E.2.4 Zone 1 covers approximately one third of the land area of the Vale. The area follows the path of the River Thames, which bounds the District to the north and east. Here, the landscape is a mixture of water meadows and pasture on slightly higher ground.

E.2.5 To the south is the Corallian or Golden Ridge, a higher area of land along the crest of which lie various settlements.

E.2.6 The zone contains many areas of deciduous woodland, including some ancient woodlands, particularly along the Corallian Ridge and in the north-eastern corner of the Vale.

E.2.7 In the east, the proximity to Oxford allowed for a wide variety of building materials to be transported into the District. In the west, until the railway connected into Faringdon, materials were restricted to those that were available locally. This meant less influence by external factors and fashions in favour of traditional materials such as limestone, stone slates and thatch.

E.2.8 Zone 1 is subdivided into two separate sub-zones to the east and the west of the Vale. These subzones are appraised below:

- Zone 1A - Corallian Ridge and Wooded Estate Villages
- Zone 1B - Eastern Thames



# E Vale of White Horse character

## Zone 1A: Corallian Ridge & Wooded Estate Villages

### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

E.2.9 The northernmost part of the Vale abuts the River Thames and contains soft Oxford Clays covered by gravels and alluvium. The landscape combines a diverse mix of water meadows, small woodlands, pasture, with willows along the river banks and hedgerows. The Corallian Ridge runs the length of the District and beyond in either direction. In the west the ridge, also known as the Golden Ridge, is bisected by streams, which have formed steep slopes. In the Faringdon area, this is evident in the form of Badbury Hill and Faringdon Folly Hill. Much of the ridge is characterised by woodland, including a significant area of ancient woodland.

### BUILT ENVIRONMENT CHARACTER

E.2.10 The majority of the settlements are set back from the river on higher ground along the ridge line. Settlements here are often based around country estates and large manor houses with gardens designed to look out over the north-facing scarp.

E.2.11 Settlements are typically limestone villages built of locally sourced, hard Corallian Ragstone, and their elevated position often provides spectacular expansive views.



# E Vale of White Horse character

## Zone 1A: Palette of Materials

**E.2.12** The defining building features include limestone, which helps create the distinctive character of the area. Steep pitched roofs, narrow gables and dormer windows are typical of the area.

### E.2.13 Walls:

- Random, uncoursed rubble, local corallian limestone with a variety of bed widths and colours;
- Ashlar limestone dressings;
- Coursed stone appears on later dwellings;
- Colour washed lime render often covers stone beneath;
- Berkshire orange brick - usually on smaller Victorian dwellings or on Georgian properties;
- Decorative brickwork - often blue or buff for chimneys, quoins, doors and window detailing;
- Timber frame with render or brick infill panels; and
- Weatherboard is restricted to conversions from agricultural or cottage industry uses.

### E.2.14 Roofs:

- There are three roofing materials that are equally dominant:
- Stone slates;
- Thatch was traditionally locally sourced long or wheat straw with flush ridges;
- Orange plain clay tiles, and
- Blue slates

### E.2.15 Windows & Doors:

- Timber sash and casement windows and iron leaded casement windows; and
- Timber doors.

### E.2.16 Timber Finishes:

- The paint colour palette is narrow, with white or similar pale colours. Estate colours in villages such as Buscot and Coleshill;
- Tar and pitch on barns and exposed timber frames; and
- Untreated oak.

## Roofs



36 Stone slates



37 Blue slate



38 Typical thatched roof with dormer



39 Local orange plain clay tiles

## Timber Finishes



40 White painted timber windows



41 Buscot estate paint colours

## Walls



32 A variety of shades of coursed and uncoursed limestone



33 Colour washed Render



34 Berkshire orange brick with blue headers



35 Natural and stained weatherboard - traditional and modern

# E Vale of White Horse character

## Zone 1A: Settlements with distinct character

E.2.17 The larger settlements in the Vale have individual characteristics which do not always accord with the character zone in which they are located. Whilst Faringdon is influenced by the character of Zone 1, it has developed its individual character because of its history, location and size.

E.2.18 Faringdon is the largest settlement in Zone 1A, and has panoramic views across the Thames Valley from its perch on the Golden Ridge. There is a relatively broad spectrum of building materials influenced by the arrival of the canal and railway, including brick, stone and limewashed and painted renders. The predominant roofing materials are blue and stone slates.



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Ecological Services

Green Infrastructure

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Character Assessment

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Sustainability Appraisal

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