



Listening Learning Leading

Great Haseley Conservation Area Management Plan

May 2005

Great Haseley Conservation Area Management Plan

The Council first published the Great Haseley Conservation Area Management Plan in draft form in July 2004. Following a period of public consultation, including a public meeting held on 11th January 2005, the Council approved the Management Plan and the conservation area extensions on 16th June 2005.

Possible Areas for Enhancement

Great Haseley is an extremely attractive village which is well maintained and cared for by its residents and has a well-preserved historic character. Any new building in the village needs to be carefully considered so that it both protects and, where appropriate, enhances this character. In addition minor improvements could be made, both by residents to their own properties and in the treatment of public spaces.

The historical development of Great Haseley has defined the extent of the village in a way that is strongly evident in its character today. The whole eastern half of the conservation area is bounded by open fields (with the exception of modern building at Latchford Lane) and based around high ground that contains the Manor House, St Peter's Church and Church Farm. The northern part, behind Rectory Road, is defined by Backway, a track that primarily serves the garden plots of the houses on the road while the southern edge of the existing conservation area follows the grounds of houses and farms on the southern side of Rectory Road.

The village has today reached a point where the historic character is quite delicately poised in balance with the amount of new building that has already taken place. It is easy to see how recent building has already altered the village but so far this has mostly been absorbed without overwhelming its historic character. There are very few obvious opportunities for the construction of further dwellings in the village which would not adversely affect the character of the conservation area.

The fields to the north, south and east

of St Peter's Church and the Manor House are crucial to the setting of the village as a whole as well as to these individual buildings and Church Hill. No development should be permitted on these fields and their agricultural character, including trees, hedges and walls should be preserved. Apart from the groups of bungalows at Latchford Lane only one property, Elm Platt (the bungalow beside the road to the recreation ground, just outside the conservation area) has a real impact on this setting. Even here the single-storey form of the building and its attractive clay tile roof (the tiles are presumably re-used from another building) mean that the impact is not as severe as might be the case with a larger dwelling. Further development in this area (the eastern side of the northern end of Thame Road) should also be discouraged. While the tennis courts do not have a strong impact on the conservation area due to the screening trees any further development on the site, including improved facilities and lighting, needs to be very carefully considered.

Backway is an important historic boundary between gardens and fields that has clearly acted to restrict development behind the houses on the north side of Rectory Road and which should continue to be respected. Any additional development on the north side of Backway would dilute the historic integrity of the village and will be discouraged. This effect can already be seen where Piccadilly Farm, Sailview, Millstone and Jasmine House have extended beyond the village envelope. Jasmine House, in particular, is very prominent in the landscape when the village is seen from outside the conservation area. This impact is increased by the enclosure of land

around new houses with fences, the provision of vehicular access and the planting of screens of conifer trees quite alien to the landscape. The south side of Backway is also vulnerable. Although the eastern end is already somewhat spoiled by the proximity to the track of modern housing, the plots behind The Old Barn, The Orchard and Nos. 11 and 12 Mill Lane should not be subdivided or provided with increased access. Where parking areas have been increased in size or altered, such as at Whistler's Barn and Merrythought, the character of Backway has been subtly changed. Cumulative change of this sort could turn the track into a conventional village street and remove its character as a former agricultural access way.

There are several important open spaces within the village envelope. It is an important element of the historic character of the village that sizeable plots separate the houses, especially in the western part and where farmyards are found within the core of the village. Not only would modern infill development in these areas be intrusive but the loss of open spaces would dramatically affect the character of the existing buildings. Especially important are open spaces separate from houses, such as those beside Southview on Rectory Road, but large gardens attached to existing houses are also very valuable. Subdivision of gardens such as those belonging to Hallowell, Vine Cottage and No. 14 Mill Lane would not enhance the character of the conservation area. Even small areas need to be protected. For instance, the small open glade on the path between Mill Lane and Backway should not be disturbed by buildings in the adjacent gardens. It is to be hoped that The Farm remains an active and

successful agricultural concern but should a change of use be proposed this would need very careful consideration. This site is in a highly visible position, with a wide access road and raised ground which makes the present buildings very prominent in views to and from the conservation area.

There are several buildings and areas that could benefit from visual improvement in the village. The former Congregational Chapel on Backway (until recently used by the local horticultural society) presents an opportunity for an alternative use that would benefit the building. The prefabricated classroom in the school playground would certainly benefit from replacement with a better facility but this would have to be very sensitively designed owing to the high visibility of the site. Much could probably be done to improve the view into the modern portion of The Farm with judicious planting of native trees while the surfacing of the road could also be improved. Similarly, the surfacing of Backway, where it joins Rectory Road at its eastern end could be improved.

The loss of the traditional telephone kiosk and its replacement with a modern one is a small but significant loss in the conservation area.

The use of traditional materials and detailing can have considerable positive effect in enhancing the character of a conservation area. The owners of historic and prominent properties are therefore encouraged to remove unsympathetic modern materials, such as concrete tiles, uPVC windows, soil pipes and plastic rainwater goods and to reinstate traditional materials such as red clay tiles, stone or red bricks, painted timber windows and cast iron guttering as

appropriate. Repair work should also be done in a fashion sympathetic to the character of the building. Re-pointing rubble stone walls can easily damage a building's appearance if not done with care. Variations in colour and the application of excessive amounts of mortar can both detract from stonework and obscure it. An unfortunate example of this can be seen at Highway House where areas of traditional pointing contrast with cement 'ribbon' pointing. A modern window can be quite out of place, especially if surrounded by traditional neighbours. Several buildings in the village could be enhanced by replacing unsuitable windows. Dark staining of timber windows is a largely modern technique and can look out of place, especially when seen adjacent to traditionally painted windows. Modern brick can contrast strongly with traditional material and may do so all the more because of the scarcity of brick in the village as a whole.

The owners of thatched buildings in the village are also encouraged to maintain their roofs in a traditional fashion, and to remove any block-cut ridges and reinstate plain flush ridges, which are part of the traditional thatching style of south Oxfordshire, when re-thatching becomes necessary. Block-cut ridges can be highly intrusive, especially when placed on large and prominent expanses of roof. Whilst there are several examples of this form of ridge in the village there are several other buildings, especially in Mill Lane where plain flush ridges have been reinstated in the last few years. Many of the tiled roofs in the village have a special character and are highly attractive because of the colour and texture lent them by the use of local materials and traditional tile manufacturing

techniques. Individual replacement tiles should always respect the existing material and new or replacement roofs should match the traditional local material to preserve the appearance of the village. Modern concrete tiles are of a colour, texture and size inappropriate to local buildings and should be avoided. A discordant effect can also result from the use of modern machine tiles on an old roof. Although slate would have become available to the village from the mid 19th century there is very little to be seen. Old School House is perhaps the chief example.

Great Haseley's traditional stone walls are an important part of the village scene and should be cherished. They are vulnerable to the effects of uncontrolled ivy growth and disturbance by tree roots, so management of vegetation is essential. While most walls seem traditionally to have been pointed in lime mortar, inappropriate modern techniques can also be seen, including capping the wall in mortar rather than stone, and pointing with cement-rich mortar. The latter can not only obscure the edges of the stone when poorly applied and give an unattractive finish, but will also hasten the weathering of the stone itself. The use of suitable stone for new and repaired walls is essential along with the replacement and retention of suitable coping. Lime mortars should always be used in repair work and cement mortars should be carefully raked out by hand before repointing takes place. The use of cast concrete blocks, even those which imitate the appearance of stone, is highly alien to the historic character of the village and should be avoided both in building and in walls. There are also opportunities to build stone walls as a way of enhancing the village, for instance at

Nos. 25-28 Rectory Road where low stone walls instead of fences would look attractive and in keeping with the village scene.

Grass banks are common in Great Haseley. Where pavements do exist their surfacing needs careful consideration. The use of a standard tarmac surface is widespread but there is ample scope for improvement to the surfaces along Thame Road opposite the Manor House and on Rectory Road where stone paving would complement the walls and buildings and traditional local stone and granite kerbs are already in place. However, if the use of natural traditional stone is not possible because of expense, imitation stone should always be avoided. Simple tarmac is an honest solution in these cases. The stone-on-edge path to the church is an interesting surface. It may very well have once been far more common in the village and is a suitable option if re-surfacing is considered. While Church Hill certainly benefits from being an unmade road such a stone-on-edge surface could in itself look extremely attractive. At the bottom of Church Hill the corner of the road is set with concrete kerbs. These look quite out of place, especially as the rest of the road has grass banks. It would be beneficial to the area to remove these kerbs; if kerbing is really necessary it should be of stone.

Great Haseley is largely without street lighting, which benefits the conservation area by reducing clutter on the main streets in the form of lamp standards and cabling. Private lighting can also have an adverse effect on the character of the area by illuminating individual structures or areas of paving and throwing light pollution into the surroundings. Residents should be considerate, therefore, when installing

domestic security and access lighting, both to other residents and to the appearance of the area. Lamps, cabling and lamp posts can detract from an otherwise well-preserved building and stand out obtrusively because of their modern nature. Laying underground of existing overhead wires and cables would also greatly improve the appearance of the village. This is particularly so at the junction of Thame Road and Rectory Road and near the school and The Farm on Rectory Road. The secluded glade on the footpath from Mill Lane to Backway is also ill served by a telephone pole, which is quite intrusive in such a small space. Other items of street furniture which would benefit from replacement include the standard County Council signpost at the junction of Thame Road and Rectory Road- a traditional wooden fingerpost would be more appropriate here- and the concrete posts at the top of Church Hill. Although these have weathered, timber or cast iron would be more appropriate to the character of the area.

Trees make a significant contribution to the village and landowners should continue to manage existing trees sensitively. Consideration of important views into and out of the conservation area should also be borne in mind when planting or deciding to lop trees, as should the setting of historic buildings. Views out of the village from Backway should not be obscured by trees and owners of properties on Thame Road, Church Hill, the western end of Rectory Road (as well as some points on that road mentioned elsewhere in this document) should be aware of the position of their properties in important views. An important part of the character of the churchyard is its open aspect so planting of new trees

should be carefully considered, as should management of hedges. Conifer trees, being both alien to the landscape and capable of creating an intense visual impact, are usually ill advised in conservation areas. Hedges and trees need to be kept in check and it is hoped that the conifers by the Miss Cross Field will not grow to present a similar sight. The hedge in front of the school would be much better in beech rather than conifer.

Proposed extensions *

The proposed extensions to the conservation area have been referred to in Part 1 and include the allotments and an area to the south-west of Greystones. If these proposals are adopted, it is anticipated that these areas will remain essentially as existing. In the area of the village allotments the Council has significantly improved the appearance of the area through the carefully managed tree planting of the Millenium Wood. At the same time a limited number of allotments has been retained to meet demand.

Great Haseley contains several buildings that have been included on the plan of the conservation area as buildings of local note because they make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, although they have not yet been considered to be of sufficient importance to meet the current criteria for statutory listing. Buildings of local note range from substantially intact but altered examples of cottages, like the isolated example on the road to Little Haseley and Nos. 34-36 Thame Road, to Victorian houses like The Old School House and Dame's Bank. Other houses have been included because they form important parts of attractive

groups alongside listed buildings. In this category are Nos. 40 and 41 Thame Road and No. 12 Mill Lane. Not only private houses but former farm buildings (like The Old Barn and Whistler's Barn) and buildings which are important social elements of the village have also been identified. The latter category includes the village hall and the war memorial. Although some walls, like buildings, are listed in their own right (such as those around the Manor House) many others play a crucial part in the village's character. Important walls have therefore been identified on the map.

* These are shown on the accompanying map

Design Guidance for new development

It has already been noted that there are few development opportunities within the Great Haseley Conservation Area. However, some improvement or enlargement of the existing buildings may be possible subject to very rigorous controls and there may be rare occasions where completely new development is acceptable.

Scale is the combination of a building's height and bulk when related to its surroundings. The scale of any development should respect surrounding development. The applicant must provide accurate elevations of the surrounding buildings, showing how the new development will relate to them.

The emphasis in any new development or alterations must always be on the need to provide a high quality of design. This can be innovative modern design, providing a dramatic contemporary statement, or in some locations, a more traditional design. Positive change in historic setting can provide vitality and interest to the streetscape and designation as a conservation area and the presence of listed buildings should not stifle well thought out, modern design. However, any new development in the Great Haseley Conservation Area should carefully consider the prevailing form of existing development, taking into account scale, density, height and massing. These elements may be used to set out the basic form of the new building or extension, including roof shape, roof pitch, height, depth of plan and, most importantly, the relationship of the new building to existing surrounding buildings and to the street. Once this basic framework has been

established and the general form and siting of the building agreed, the actual appearance of any new building may be either traditional or modern, providing some opportunities for a good designer to experiment with new materials and details. In all cases, a design statement should be submitted.

Where a more traditional approach is appropriate, the Council will expect new building designed in a traditional form within the conservation area to be detailed in a manner appropriate to the historic setting. Roofs should be pitched and covered in handmade clay tiles or, where appropriate, natural slate. Local features such as full or half hips may be suitable. Dormers and rooflights should be avoided, unless modestly sized and away from the public viewpoint. Chimneys may sometimes be required in certain locations.

Walls will usually be brick, tile-hung or weather-boarded with traditional feather-edged boarding (not modern ship-lap). This can be painted or stained an appropriate colour. Painted brick or render are more modern alternatives which are rarely appropriate. The inclusion of small decorative details, such as string courses, shaped cills or lintels, recessed panels and other features can add interest and a sense of place but must be based on local precedent and used correctly.

Windows should be timber, painted not stained. Their design should reflect local styles, usually simple side-hung casements or vertically sliding sashes. If windows are to be double glazed, then these must be carefully designed. Avoidance of glazing bars can assist in achieving a satisfactory solution. 'Stick-on' glazing bars should be avoided at all costs. Consideration should be

given to alternative ways of complying with Building Regulations if traditional windows are to be used. In all cases joinery details must be submitted with planning applications. Modern top-hung lights and modern materials, such as uPVC or aluminium, are always unacceptable. Front doors should also be painted timber, again reflecting local historic styles.

Boundary treatments.

Traditionally, most boundaries in the conservation area are defined by stone walls, with trees and soft hedging on the outskirts of the village. For new development it is important that similar stone and detailing are used. New boundaries following this historic precedent will help development to fit in to its context. Modern alternatives, such as concrete blocks, ranch-style timber fencing, or post-and-rail type fencing are not acceptable.

4. Existing Conservation Policies

South Oxfordshire Local Plan adopted by Council, April 1997

LISTED BUILDINGS

POLICY CON 1

Proposals for the demolition of any building included on the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest will not be permitted except in most exceptional circumstances.

POLICY CON 2

The council will make full use of its powers to serve repairs notices to prevent the wilful neglect of listed buildings.

ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS

POLICY CON 3

The use of modern materials such as aluminium and UPVC will not normally be permitted for the doors or windows of listed buildings. Sealed double-glazed timber windows will not normally be permitted unless their mouldings precisely match those of traditional windows. The use of secondary glazing will normally be acceptable.

POLICY CON 4

Listed building consent will not normally be granted for proposals which involve the use of cement-rich mortars, abrasive cleaning methods and chemically-based sealants, nor for the painting of unpainted brickwork and stone or the use of unsuitable colour schemes on listed buildings.

POLICY CON 5

The alteration or removal of historic internal features in buildings included on the statutory list of buildings of

special architectural or historic interest will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

CHANGES OF USE AND EXTENSIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS

POLICY CON 6

Any change of use of a listed building must be appropriate to its character, and any extension must be sympathetic to the original structure in design, scale and materials and must not dominate or overwhelm it.

THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS

POLICY CON 7

Proposals for development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will normally be refused.

CONSERVATION AREAS

POLICY CON 8

The council will use all its powers under the relevant acts to ensure that the character of individual Conservation Areas is preserved or enhanced.

POLICY CON 9

Consent to demolish a building in a Conservation Area will normally only be granted if the loss of the building would not adversely affect the character of the area, and if there are detailed and acceptable plans for the redevelopment of the site.

POLICY CON 10

When considering proposals for development in Conservation Areas, the council will require:-

- (i) the design and scale of new work to be in sympathy with the established character of the area;
- (ii) the use of traditional materials, whenever this is appropriate to the

character of the area;

- (iii) the retention of existing walls, hedges, or any other features which contribute to the character of the area.

THATCHING STYLE

POLICY CON 11

In order to protect the traditional thatching style of South Oxfordshire the District Council will generally promote the use of long straw and resist the introduction of patterned block-cut ridges on thatched buildings.

ADVERTISEMENTS IN CONSERVATION AREAS AND ON LISTED BUILDINGS

POLICY CON 12

The council will not normally permit the display of signs on a listed building or in a Conservation Area which are in any way harmful to the character and appearance of the building or area. Where it is accepted that a sign is needed, its design and materials should reflect the best traditional practice.

POLICY CON 13

The installation of blinds or canopies of untraditional form or materials on buildings within Conservation Areas will not normally be permitted.

BURGAGE PLOTS

POLICY CON 14

In the historic towns of Henley, Thame and Wallingford the burgage plots to the rear of the principal streets will generally be protected from amalgamation and from development which would diminish their historic interest and value.

PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

POLICY CON 15

In Conservation Areas, the council will take all available steps to ensure:

- (i) that the introduction or intensification of uses which conflict with the special character of the area is resisted;
- (ii) that existing walls, buildings, trees, hedges, open spaces and important views are retained, where they contribute to the character of the area;
- (iii) that whenever the opportunity arises, unsightly overhead wires and unnecessary signs are removed. The statutory undertakers will be urged to site their services underground;
- (iv) that where necessary, improvements are made to the visual quality of the floorspace, street furniture, lighting and signs; and
- (v) that development outside a Conservation Area would not have a detrimental effect on the Conservation Area.

ARCHAEOLOGY

POLICY CON 16

The council will not normally permit development which would adversely affect the sites or settings of nationally-important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, or those of monuments of special local importance.

POLICY CON 17

Before the determination of an application for development which may affect a site of archaeological interest or potentially of archaeological importance, prospective developers will be required, where necessary, to make provision for

an archaeological field evaluation, in order to enable an informed and reasoned planning decision to be made.

POLICY CON 18

Wherever practicable and desirable, developments affecting sites of archaeological interest should be designed to achieve physical preservation in situ of archaeological deposits. Where this is not practicable or desirable, the district planning authority will impose conditions on planning permissions, or seek legal obligations, which will require the developer to provide an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation, recording and publication by a professionally qualified body acceptable to the district planning authority.

PARKS AND GARDENS OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST

POLICY CON 19

Proposals which would damage the character, setting or amenities of a park or garden of special historic interest, especially those contained in the English Heritage Register, will not normally be permitted.

COMMON LAND

POLICY CON 20

Proposals for development on or affecting common land, village greens and other important spaces within settlements will not normally be permitted.

2011 Second Deposit Draft Local Plan

Demolition of Listed Buildings

Policy CON1

Proposals for the demolition of any listed building will not be permitted.

Alterations and extensions to listed buildings

Policy CON4

Any extension to a listed building must be appropriate to its character, must be sympathetic to the original structure in design, scale and materials and must not dominate or overwhelm it.

Policy CON5

Any alteration to a listed building must respect its established character and not diminish the special historical or architectural qualities which make it worthy of inclusion on the statutory list.

Policy CON6

A change of use of part or the whole of a listed building will be permitted only if its character and features of special architectural or historic interest would be protected. Proposals for a change of use should incorporate details of all intended alterations to the building and its curtilage, to demonstrate their impact on its appearance, character and setting.

Policy CON7

Proposals for development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will be refused.

CONSERVATION AREAS

Proposals affecting a conservation area

Policy CON9

Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only if the loss of the building would not

adversely affect the character of the area and, where appropriate, if there are detailed and acceptable plans for the redevelopment of the site.

Policy CON10

The Council will not grant permission for development which would harm the character or appearance of a conservation area. When considering proposals for development in conservation areas, the Council will require:

- (i) the design and scale of new work to be in sympathy with the established character of the area; and
- (ii) the use of traditional materials, whenever this is appropriate to the character of the area.

The Council will also take account of the contribution made to a conservation area by existing walls, buildings, trees, hedges, open spaces and important views. Proposals for development outside a conservation area which would have a harmful effect on the conservation area will not be permitted.

Advertisements in conservation areas and on listed buildings

Policy CON13

The Council will not grant consent for the display of signs on a listed building or in a conservation area which are in any way harmful to the character and appearance of the building or area. Where it is accepted that a sign is needed, it should generally be non-illuminated, made of natural materials and to a design and scale reflecting the best traditional practice.

Blinds and canopies in conservation areas

Policy CON14

The Council will not grant permission for the installation of blinds or canopies

of nontraditional form or materials on buildings within conservation areas.

Burgage plots

Policy CON15

In the historic towns of Henley, Thame and Wallingford the burgage plots to the rear of the principal streets will generally be protected from amalgamation and from development which by its nature would detract from their historic interest, amenity and nature conservation value.

Archaeology and historic building analysis and recording

Policy CON16

The Council will not permit development which would adversely affect the sites or settings of nationally-important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, or those of monuments of special local importance.

Policy CON17

Before the determination of an application for development which may affect a site of archaeological interest or potentially of archaeological importance, prospective developers will be required, where necessary, to make provision for an archaeological field evaluation, in order to enable an informed and reasoned planning decision to be made.

Policy CON18

Wherever practicable and desirable, developments affecting sites of archaeological interest should be designed to achieve physical preservation in situ of archaeological deposits. Where this is not practicable or desirable, the Council will impose conditions on planning permissions, or seek planning obligations, which will require the developer to provide an

appropriate programme of archaeological investigation, recording and publication by a professionally-qualified body acceptable to the Council.

Policy CON19

Before the determination of an application which affects a building of archaeological or historic interest, applicants will be required, where necessary, to submit a detailed record survey and analysis of the building. In some circumstances, further survey and analysis will be made a condition of consent.

Historic battlefields, parks, gardens and landscapes

Policy CON20

Proposals which would damage the character, setting or amenities of a battlefield, park or garden of special historic interest, especially those contained in the English Heritage Registers, will not be permitted.

Common land

Policy CON21

Proposals for development on or affecting common land, village greens and other important spaces within settlements will not be permitted.

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