

Eckington

Conservation Area



Adoption Statement

The Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted by Wychavon District Council as a document for planning purposes on..... Minute..... of the Executive Board meeting of..... refers.

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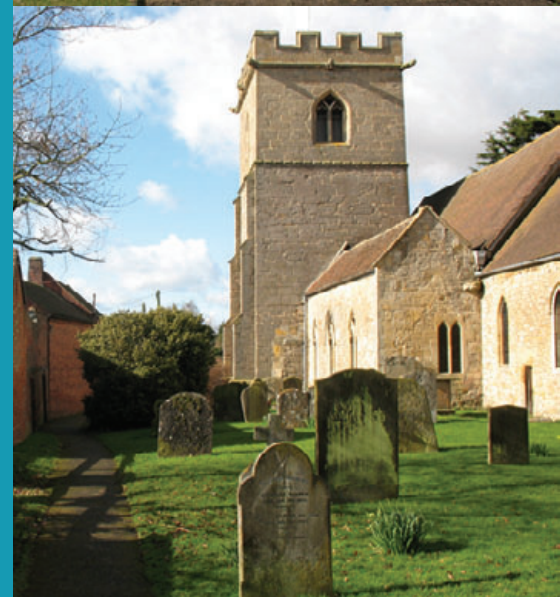
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What is this appraisal for?

1 Introduction

What is this Appraisal for?

1.1

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, usually the historic part of a town or village, where we wish to preserve or enhance its character or appearance. Part of Eckington is a conservation area.

1.2

Under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 we must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. This appraisal identifies the special interest and character of the Eckington Conservation Area, and provides guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of its character or appearance can be achieved. The first part of the appraisal identifies its special interest and character. The second part sets out management proposals for addressing the issues identified in the appraisal.

1.3

The Eckington Conservation Area was designated in October 1975. The boundary was reviewed in 2009/10 during the preparation of this appraisal. The current conservation area boundary is shown in the appraisal.

Planning Policy Framework

1.4

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with the national, regional and the local planning policy framework, particularly:

- Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) and Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide which set out Government policy and guidance, on the protection of conservation areas and other elements of the historic environment;
- Policies CTC19 and policy CTC20 of the adopted Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996-2011, which seek to protect and enhance conservation areas; and

- Policy ENV12 of the Wychavon District Local Plan (June 2006) which is intended to ensure that development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas.

1.5

Broadly, these policies seek to ensure that the conservation area is preserved by:

Refusing permission for:

- the demolition of any building or structure if its loss would damage its character or appearance
- the extension or alteration of a building where the change would damage its character or appearance
- development which would be harmful to its setting or character or appearance
- development which would adversely affect or result in the loss of historic plots, layouts and street pattern, important views, open spaces, tree cover or boundary features within the conservation area
- signage which would be harmful to the character or appearance of the conservation area

and requiring new development to:

- respect its context in design, including scale, form, proportion and detailing
- Use materials in accordance with those traditionally used in that particular part of the conservation area, and maintain a similar mix
- be located on their sites in a similar way to the general pattern of building in that part of the conservation area
- Boundary walls, railings and hedges should be incorporated in the development in a similar way to those already in existence in that part of the conservation area, and these should use similar materials and detailing, or species, and
- Signs to respect the character of the buildings and quality of the historic environment in their siting, size, materials and design.

1.6

In accordance with the new planning system introduced in 2004 we are preparing a Local Development Framework. This will contain

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conservation area policies that will supersede the Structure and Local Plan from 2012.

1.7

This appraisal supplements Structure Plan and Local Plan Policies CTC19, CTC20 and ENV12.

2 Summary of Special Interest

2.1

Eckington has more than a thousand years of settlement history. These early origins are still readily identifiable in its wealth of surviving historic buildings and its settlement form. The significance of agriculture, and later the railway, to Eckington's development is apparent in the clear phases of building that are still present in the village.

2.2

Each of these phases of development has left a wealth of historic buildings overlaying an historic settlement form with much evidence of its early origin and roles in history.

2.3

Eckington today is a sizeable village. Despite more recent modern development it retains much of its historic plan and building fabric, which, together with its open spaces, trees, local stone walls, narrow lanes with grass banks and verges, give the village a strong historic character and local identity.

2.4

The conservation area is focussed on the historic core of the village around Church Street, Manor Road, Boon Street, Jarvis Street and Pass Street.

The special interest of Eckington that justifies its designation as a conservation area includes:

- **Its long history, still evident in the layout of the village and its buildings**
- **The survival of the historic identity of the village, evident in its buildings and layout**
- **The number and quality of historic buildings**
- **The high survival of thatched roof coverings**
- **The survival of historic fabric and detailing**
- **The use of locally quarried stone in buildings,**

boundary walls and surfaces

- **The contribution of the natural environment in trees, gardens, open spaces, hedges, grass verges and banks**

The conservation area boundary is drawn to reflect this special interest.

3 Assessing Special Interest Location & Setting

Location

3.1

Eckington is located 4kms to the south-west of Pershore, on the B4080 road between Pershore and Tewkesbury. It sits in a loop of the River Avon, with the river to its north and west, and Bredon Hill to the south-east. It is one of a number of historic villages sited on the rich agricultural soils alongside the river.

Landscape Setting



An open farmed landscape against the backdrop of Bredon Hill

3.2

The village sits in a low lying, gently undulating and open landscape of large fields of arable and pasture, at the junction of the lower foothills of Bredon Hill with the River Avon floodplain. Bredon Hill is a prominent landscape feature, particularly in view from the west where it forms a striking backdrop to the village. This area has been classified as Principal Village Farmlands by the county Landscape Character Assessment, the key characteristics of which are predominantly medium to large scale hedged arable fields and a pattern of nucleated villages where the farmsteads

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are part of the village fabric and not isolated in the countryside. This is well illustrated in Eckington where Court Close, Manor, Beaconsfield and Lower End Farms are all integrated within the village framework.

3.3

Much of the northern, eastern and southern fringes of the historic core of Eckington have been extended by 20th century expansion so that the immediate relationship of the old village to its rural hinterland has been lost in part. Where it remains orchards and fields form its setting, and these features are important remains of its once wider rural setting. The western boundary of the conservation area still abuts farmland and orchards. The retention of this undeveloped setting to the conservation area is important to the preservation of its character.

Historical Development & Archaeology

The Origins & Development of Eckington

3.4

Evidence of pre-historic and Roman finds in and around the present day village suggest a long history of settlement activity in the area. Proximity to the River Avon, a mild climate and a fertile soil were likely reasons for early settlement.

3.5

The first documentary evidence of Eckington is in the Saxon period, in a charter of King Edgar of AD972. It records land at Eckington belonging to Pershore Abbey, and the name of Eckington is derived from the Saxon name "Eccyngtune", believed to mean an enclosed settlement of a Saxon chieftan and his family. By the time of the Domesday survey in 1086 Eckington's lands are recorded in the ownership of the Abbey of Westminster and tenanted by 57 men from five different classes, indicating a large and well established settlement in the area by the beginning of the Norman period of some two to three hundred. This early settlement would most likely have comprised a number of scattered farmsteads of family groups farming independently and probably trading produce.

3.6

The church is the earliest surviving building in the village today. It dates from the late 12th century and was probably built by Westminster Abbey at the heart of the early medieval village. Although there are no other surviving buildings in the village from such early date, Eckington's Enclosure Plan of 1813 shows a wide linear main street (Church Street) lined with rectangular plots with the church at the centre. The layout apparent at this date suggests Church Street to be a planned element to the village, probably laid out by the Abbey along a pre-existing route between Pershore and Tewkesbury, and possibly originating from around the time of the construction of the church in the 12th century. Existing development at Eckington was likely consolidated as a farming community by Westminster Abbey and worked by tenants of the monastic estate to contribute to support of the Abbey. The land would have been cultivated in strips in large open areas of arable crops, probably with communal grazing and hay meadows next to the river. There is still evidence of this medieval farming system in the landscape near the village in the very distinctive patterns of "ridge and furrow" that have survived to the present day.








The church dates from the 12th century

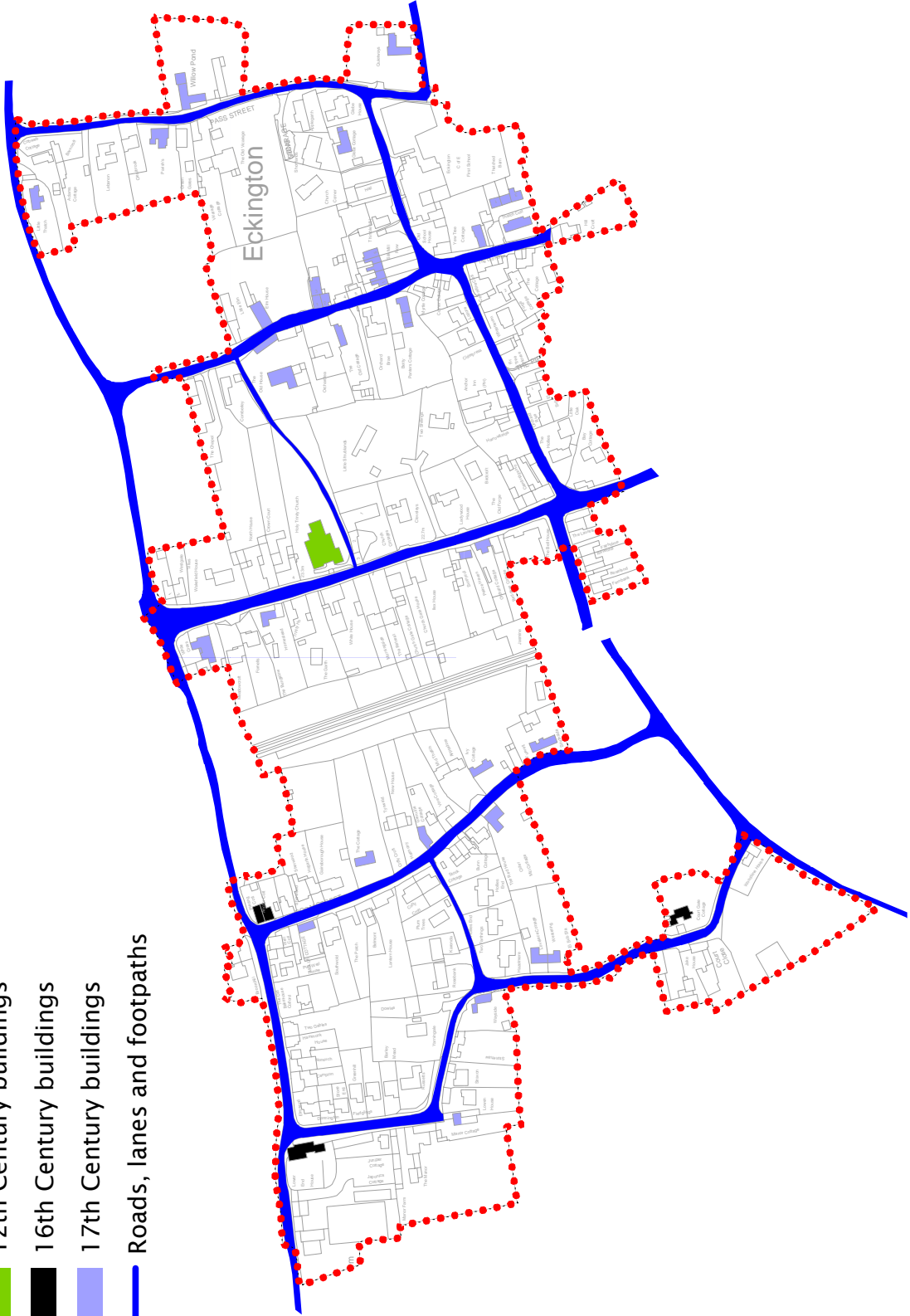
3.7

A medieval cross stands at the northern end of Church Street, at the crossroads of its two main through roads. This is believed to have originally stood to the south of the village and was moved to its present position in the 19th century. It may originally have been a wayside cross marking the meeting point of medieval roads.

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Early Surviving Buildings

-  Conservation Area boundary
-  12th Century buildings
-  16th Century buildings
-  17th Century buildings
-  Roads, lanes and footpaths



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Scale: Not to Scale

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Early timber framed cottages

3.8

The majority of early buildings in the village today are timber framed cottages and houses, dating from the 16th and 17th centuries. These are numerous and are scattered along all of its principal streets, indicating that the layout of its historic core was probably well established by this time, and that Eckington was already a substantial settlement by this date. Church Street appears in a document in 1542, Pass Street in 1582, Boon Street in the 16th century and Jarvis Street in 1601. Roads, lanes and paths branching to the north, south and west would have given access to the surrounding fields, Bredon Hill, the river, the mill and meadows beyond. Some of these old routes are still present today as footpaths and tracks.

3.9

There are numerous 18th and early 19th century buildings in the village, mainly substantial farmhouses at its fringe, and a concentration of smaller houses along its main street (Church Street). In 1756 The Tewkesbury Turnpike Company extended its road network to include Church Street as part of the turnpike road between Tewkesbury and Pershore. This would have significantly improved road travel between

the two neighbouring market towns, making dispersal of produce to market easier. Improvement of the road would also have lifted its status and made it more attractive to wealthy and fashion conscious residents. The concentration of 18th century buildings in this main thoroughfare suggests it to have been a desirable location in the village, where older buildings were replaced or updated in accordance with the new architectural fashion of the period. Several buildings still retain evidence of earlier timber framed buildings at the rear.



5 Church Street - the former turnpike road

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3.10

The presence of new and re-modelled farmhouses from this date suggests prosperity in agriculture, probably fuelled by the naturally favourable growing conditions of the area, together with land and agricultural improvements, enclosure of the old open field system in 1813 and proximity to local markets at Pershore and Tewkesbury. And by the 18th century the River Avon was open to navigation to all who paid a toll, from Stratford-Upon-Avon to its confluence with the Severn at Tewkesbury, and on to Bristol, becoming a primary trade route. There was a wharf nearby at Eckington Bridge. Development of the river may have influenced development of Eckington by giving easier access for farm and market gardening produce to neighbouring markets and those further afield.

3.11

A population count around 1776 recorded a significant increase in the population of the village to 472 from a previous estimate of 200 in 1676.

3.12

The 1813 Enclosure Plan of Eckington shows it at this date to be a loosely knit village with farms, houses and cottages set in large plots. In the early 19th century many orchards were planted in and around the village and fruit growing became an important industry.

3.13

The arrival of the railway in 1840 saw a period of expansion and consolidation of the village into the early 20th century. The opening of a railway station at Eckington on the Birmingham to Bristol line meant that market gardening and fruit growing in the village was able to expand, with quick and easy access to the major city markets. By 1914 there were 21 fruit growers listed in Eckington. The first edition Ordnance Survey map from the mid-1880's shows much of the village and its surrounds planted with orchards. Commercial carriers were also operating on the Avon, providing a regular service to Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Worcester. Eckington thrived, with a buoyant market gardening and fruit growing industry, new housing, a new school, a church, a

chapel and a variety of shops and occupations, including butcher, shop keepers, grocers, draper, glove making, baker and tailors. Building materials were imported by rail and river, and this phase of development is still recognisable in the red brick Victorian and Edwardian houses and cottages scattered throughout the village. Many were built on farmyards, gardens and orchards, consolidating the earlier settlement pattern, while others replaced or incorporated existing buildings.

3.14

Eckington has seen much change in the latter part of the 20th century. Many of the remaining gardens, orchards and farmyards have been developed for housing, and in other places old buildings have been replaced with new, so that today the village is tightly packed with houses. Nevertheless the core of the village still retains its historic layout, several farm buildings, old houses and cottages, gardens and remnant orchards, so that its early origins as a rural village is still apparent.

Eckington Conservation Area

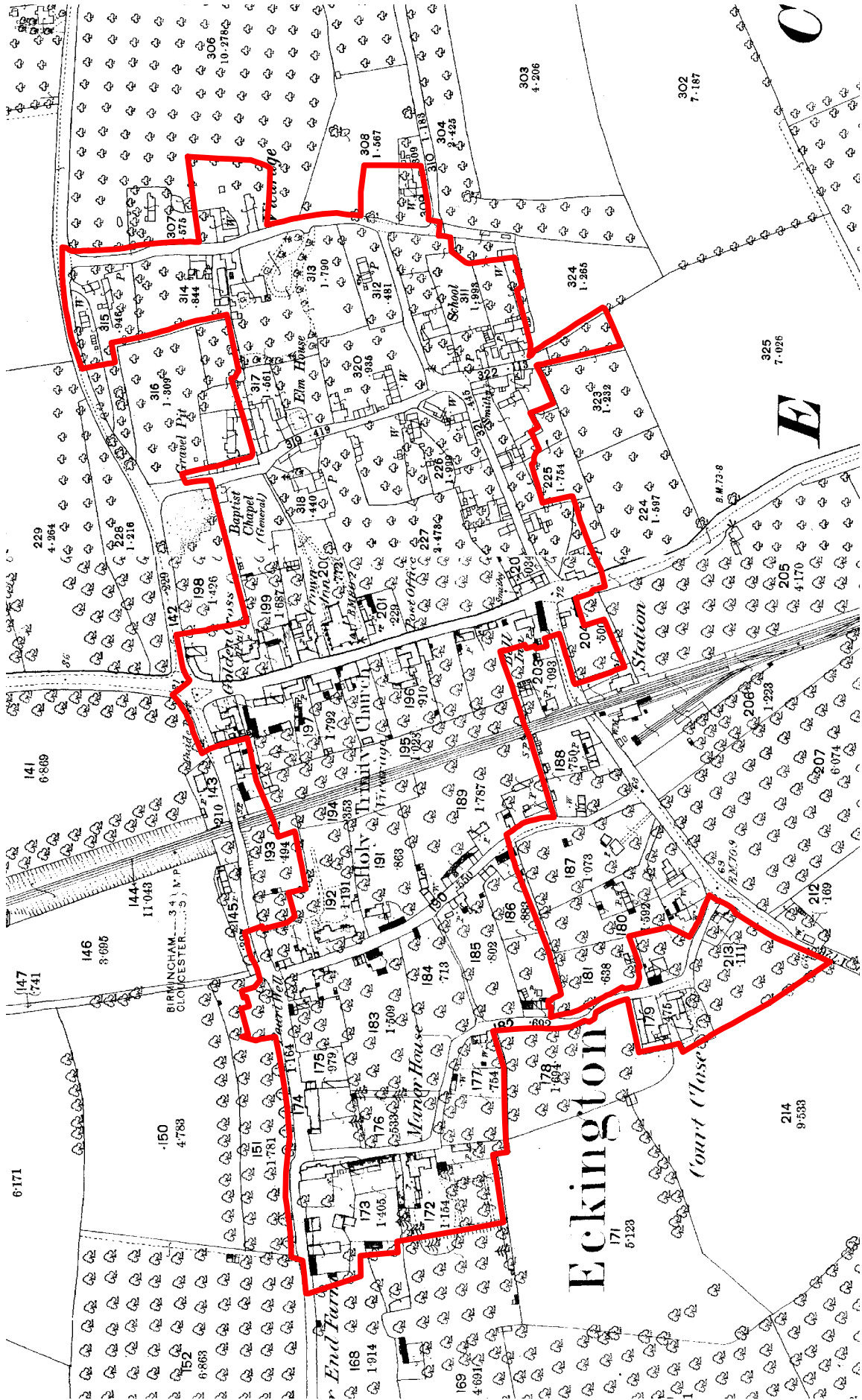


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Extract from Enclosure map c1813

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Extract from 1st Edition
Ordnance Survey map c1886

 Conservation Area boundary

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Settlement Development

-  Conservation Area boundary
-  12th Century buildings
-  16th and 17th Century buildings
-  18th Century buildings
-  19th to early 20th Century buildings
-  Mid to late 20th Century buildings
-  Roads, lanes and footpaths



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Archaeology

3.15

The Avon valley, with its gentle climate, fertile soils and river access, was a favoured area for early settlement. Cropmarks near the village of possible settlement sites, barrow sites, enclosures and pits from the Neolithic, Bronze, Iron Age and Roman periods, suggest a long period of settlement activity in the vicinity.

3.16

Evidence of Roman settlement was found in the village during construction of the railway. Remains and finds including buildings, pottery, coins and wells, suggest established settlement within the present area of the village during Roman occupation.

3.17

Sites of two deserted medieval villages are recorded to the south-east of the village.

Plan Form

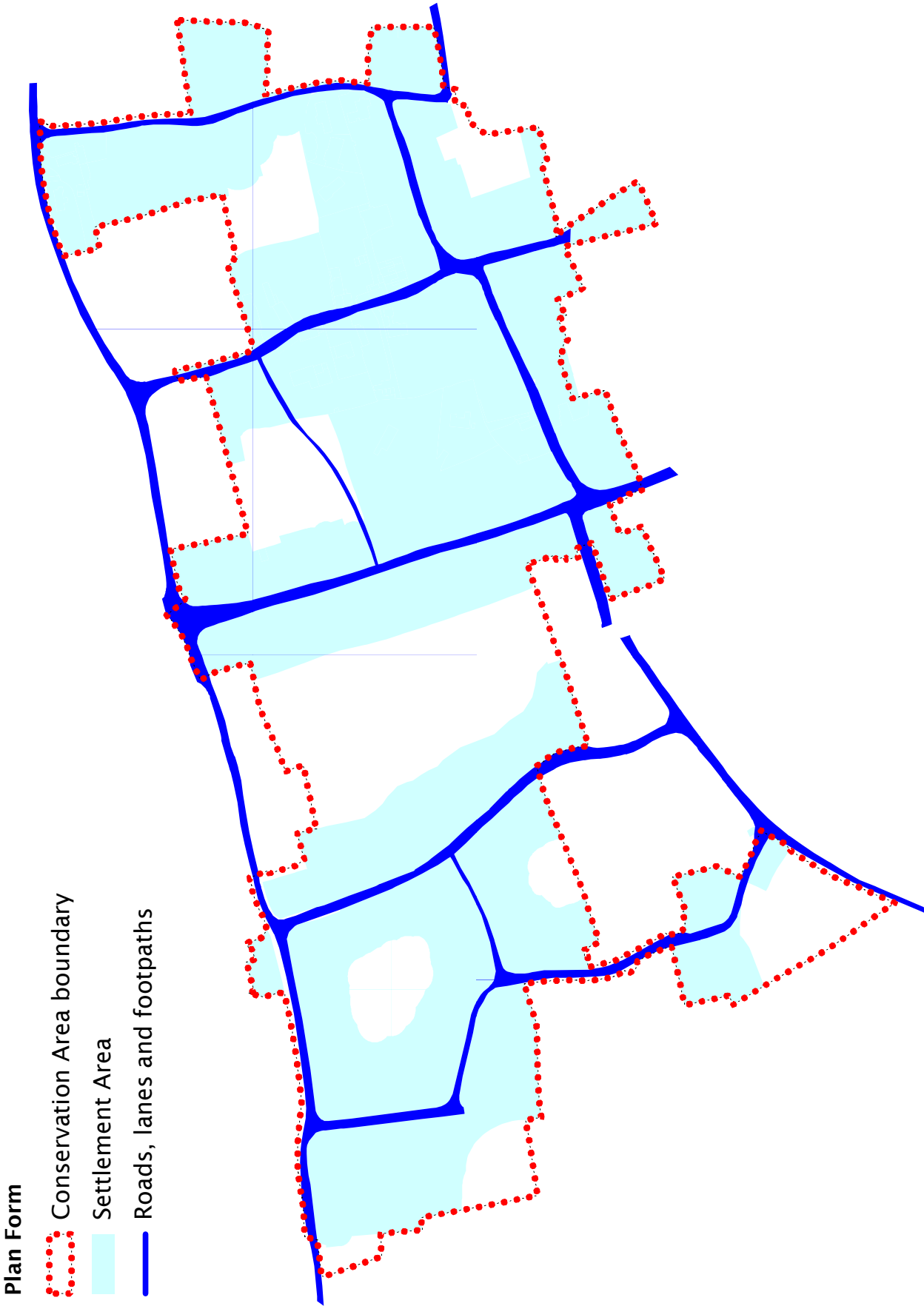
3.18

Eckington has a main straight north-south axis with two parallel narrow lanes to each side. Connecting east-west lanes link these north-south routes, forming a broadly rectangular settlement made up of a loose grid of main street and narrow secondary lanes. This framework of roads and lanes is likely to be medieval, or earlier, in origin and indicates Eckington to have been a sizeable settlement in its current form from early days.

3.19

Individual houses line both sides of the roads and lanes, with little uniformity in spacing between buildings or in their relationship to the road. Many of the older buildings are sited close to the roadside in sizeable plots with gardens extending to the side and rear. More recent buildings are frequently set back in smaller plots with gardens extending to the front, sides and rear.

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Spaces

3.20

Eckington has seen much encroachment by modern development on former gardens, orchard and farms. The preservation of the spaces that remain in the conservation area is essential to preserving its character and appearance.

3.21

There are several substantial gardens remaining, for example at The Old Vicarage, Quietways, North House, Crown Court and Elm House. While the full extent of gardens in the conservation area may not be entirely publicly visible, the lack of interruption by buildings and presence of planting contributes to an impression of space within the built up street frontage, appreciated from glimpses over boundaries and between buildings. These gardens are also important as the setting of some of Eckington's historic buildings.

Key Views & Vistas

3.22

There are limited views of the conservation area in its landscape setting. From New Road, Drakesbridge Road, Manor Road and Mill Lane there are views over orchard and farmland to the north and west, and from Mill Lane there are views back to the conservation area over farmland and paddock. These scarce views provide important visual links with the countryside and are a reminder of the rural settlement origins of the village and part of the appreciation of village in its rural hinterland.



View from Manor Road

3.23

Other notable views within the conservation area are the long vista along Church Street where the church and mature trees in the churchyard stand out as a focal point and backdrop to buildings, and the several views throughout the conservation area through gaps between buildings to side and rear gardens. In many cases these views between buildings are limited to narrow glimpses, but nevertheless are part of the cumulative appreciation of the way in which the village has developed and show that many buildings remain linked to substantial plots despite encroachment by modern development in more recent years.

3.24

The preservation of these key views is essential to the character of the conservation area.

4 Character Analysis

General

4.1

The character of the Eckington Conservation Area is that of an historic rural village comprising a series of houses, cottages, farm and outbuildings set within an earlier framework of plots and roads. The prominence of older buildings and the presence of farm buildings, open space, gardens, the village cross, large mature trees, local stone walls and narrow lanes with grass banks and verges, maintain the character of an historic rural village despite encroachment by modern development.

4.2

Notably, modern intrusion in the form of street lighting, signage and obtrusive road markings is largely absent from the conservation area.

Character Areas

4.3

There are three distinct character areas within the conservation area:

- Church Street
- Manor Road & Boon Street
- Jarvis Street & Pass Street

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Church Street

Church Street

4.4

This is the planned medieval street running through the heart of the village, with the church near its centre. Here rectilinear plots, characteristic of a medieval plan, are still well-defined, particularly on the west side of the street. Historic buildings are sited to the front of their plots tight against the back of the pavements with open space at the rear. This tight grain and distinctive relationship of building to plot and building to road is a characteristic feature of a medieval settlement plan, and is a key element of the character and special interest of this part of the conservation area. There are still examples of farm buildings and other ancillary buildings behind frontage buildings. These stretch from the main building, mostly with their roofs set at right angles to the frontage buildings and often defining a side boundary. These buildings are simple and subservient in form and design to the principal frontage building and are an essential part of the special interest and character of the conservation area.

4.5

Buildings date from the 12th century through to the present day, using a variety of building materials. 18th to 19th century buildings are

frequent, illustrating the development and status of the street in this period. Some of these overlay earlier buildings, with their earlier origins often identifiable in side and rear elevations. Many of the buildings are listed, reflecting the architectural and historic interest of this area.

4.6

The natural environment, with the churchyard, gardens, mature trees and hedges, is a feature of the area, providing green settings to buildings. In addition the gardens are important features as the open space characteristically found frontage buildings in a medieval planned settlement.



13 Orchard at the rear of Church Street

Eckington Conservation Area

4.7

As the main thoroughfare through the village this is a trafficked road with pavements and road markings, although the lack of street lighting and the prominence of trees, gardens and hedges help to maintain a village character.

4.8

More recent developments have broken the distinctive development pattern of this area, with new houses set back from the roadside or behind frontage buildings. Generous plots are vulnerable to further development pressure.

Manor Road & Boon Street

4.9

This is the area of the village to the west of Church Street, where the two parallel lanes of Manor Road and Boon Street form a rough grid with Drakesbridge Road, Pudding Alley and Mill Lane. Here buildings dating from the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries line the narrow lanes. Most are houses and cottages, with farms on the western periphery in Manor Road. Some are sited immediately onto the lane sides, while others are set back behind gardens and yards, with no overall settlement pattern prevailing. Historic buildings are timber frame or brick, characteristic of the traditional use of materials in the locality at their date of construction. Most of the older buildings are listed, reflecting the architectural and historic interest of this area.

4.10

The narrow lanes, farms, old houses and cottages, grass verges, hedges, gardens, remnant orchard/field in Manor Road, occasional trees and absence of road markings contribute much to the rural village character of this area.

4.11

This area has seen much new housing development on former orchards and gardens. These have introduced modern building designs, materials and development layouts that have not preserved the character of the conservation area.



Manor Road



Boon Street



Farm at the periphery of Manor Road

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Jarvis Street



Pass Street

Jarvis Street and Pass Street

4.12

This is the area of the village to the east of Church Street, where the two parallel lanes of Jarvis Street and Pass Street form a grid with New Road, Cotheridge Lane and School Lane. Here buildings from the 17th, 19th and 20th centuries line the narrow lanes. These are mainly a mix of houses, cottages and farm buildings. Some are sited immediately onto the lane sides, while others are set back behind gardens and yards, with no overall settlement pattern prevailing. Buildings are timber frame, brick, stone or faced in roughcast, characteristic of the traditional use of materials in the locality at their date of construction. Most of the older buildings are listed, reflecting the architectural and historic interest of this area.

4.13

This area shares many of the characteristics of that to the west of Church Street. Narrow lanes lined with farm buildings, old houses and cottages, grass verges and hedges, gardens, orchard, numerous trees and absence of road markings contribute much to its rural village character. There are still several large gardens, the large open space of the school playing field and numerous trees. The historic integrity of this area has been less affected by modern development, so that it retains more of its historic village layout and character.

4.14

This area has seen some new housing developments on former orchards and gardens.

These have introduced modern building designs, materials and development layouts that have not preserved the character of the conservation area. Generous plots are vulnerable to further development pressure.

Buildings

4.15

There is a range of building periods. Historic buildings share basic common design characteristic of the local vernacular, including:

- limited spans/plan depths dictated by historic building construction methods
- a simple main rectangular plan form, sometimes with one or more rear wings

4.16

Many of the buildings are listed for their special architectural or historic interest and are clearly of early origin. There are other historic buildings which, while not listed, are still built from local materials in the local style and are of architectural and historic interest to Eckington. The result is numerous historic buildings and a commonality of building characteristics despite the range of building periods.

4.17

The most prevalent building types are houses and cottages, with several farm buildings. Older buildings are constructed in the form and style typical of the local Worcestershire tradition of their respective periods and many remain fundamentally as originally built.

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Houses

4.18

Houses in Eckington date from the 16th century to modern, each reflecting in size and architectural style their status and period of construction.

4.19

Early houses from the 16th and 17th centuries are large farmhouses and more modest sized detached houses, reflecting the wealth and status of some village residents in this period of its history.

4.20

These houses are largely one storey with attic or two storey buildings, with simple rectangular, "T" or "L"-plans, steeply pitched roofs, ridge and wall chimneys and outside chimney stacks. Modest dormers light some attics. Fenestration is largely a random arrangement of casement windows with planked doors, occasionally with a simple porch. Barge and fascia boards are the exception and are likely later additions.

4.21

Later houses dating from the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries are typical in plan and style of their periods, reflecting the influence of Classical architecture in their design. These are mostly large to more modest detached and semi-detached buildings, two storey with a rectangular plan, occasionally with a rear wing. Roofs are a mix of steep and shallower pitches, usually plain double pitched with occasional hipped roofs. Dormers are occasionally present but are the exception. Fenestration is a careful arrangement of sash windows around a centrally placed panelled door with fanlights, occasionally with doorcases on earlier buildings. Doors are often framed with simple open porches, or simple canopies on brackets. Chimneys are largely end wall mounted. Barge and fascia boards are occasionally present on late 19th and early 20th century houses.



17th century house



18th century house



18th century house



19th century house

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4.22

Modern houses are a mix of bungalows and houses. They have a form and design that is often at variance with the established characteristics of older buildings in the village, with shallow roof pitches, large dormers, repetitive designs, large windows with a horizontal emphasis, doors set within enclosed porches, insignificant or no chimneys, and attached or integral garages.

Cottages

4.23

Cottages date from the 16th, 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries. These are detached and attached and are modest in scale, size and design, single storey with attic or two storey, a simple rectangular plan, usually with steeply pitched gabled roofs and frequently with small wall mounted dormers to light attics. Chimneys are prominent, usually end stacks, sometimes detached. Fenestration is simple with small casement windows and planked doors. Doors often have simple porches of pitched roof canopies on brackets. Barge and fascia boards are generally absent.



16th century cottage

Farm Buildings

4.24

There is a range of farm buildings at Eckington, including barns, cowsheds, stables and cartshed. These are grouped around yards close to their respective houses and are typical of the Worcestershire vernacular at the date of their construction, with simple rectangular plans, simple plain gabled or half-hipped roofs and walls with minimal openings.

4.25

Only a few have been converted to residential use, and still retain their simple plan and appearance with minimal external change, so that their former identity and role in the village is still apparent.

4.26

Eckington is fortunate in retaining numerous farm buildings. Their presence relates some of the history of the village and they are an essential element of its special interest and character.



Barns in Jarvis Street



Early 19th century cottage



Barns in Manor Road

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Other Building Types

4.27

The church shows significant phases of construction and alterations dating from the 12th to 19th centuries. Other buildings include former stables and coach houses, bakery, smithy and storage buildings. These are simple in form with minimal openings reflecting their former functions in design. These buildings are all part of the history of Eckington and are important to the special interest and character of the conservation area.

Listed Buildings

4.28

Many buildings in the Eckington Conservation Area are “listed” for their architectural or historic interest. Other buildings and structures attached to, or pre-dating 1st July 1948 and forming part of the curtilage of, these identified buildings are also listed by association. While the aim of the listed building legislation is to preserve these buildings for their own sake, any changes affecting them will also be considered in terms of the effect on the conservation area.

4.29

Buildings and structures that are listed by association with those buildings included in the list are shown on the appraisal map where they have been able to be identified. The information shown on the map is not definitive. The Council’s Heritage Team should be contacted for advice on whether a building or structure is listed by association (“curtilage listed”) before any works are carried out to potentially listed buildings or structures.

Unlisted Buildings

4.30

There are many other buildings, which, while not “listed”, have qualities of age, style and materials that are locally important and which make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.



Unlisted buildings make a valuable contribution

4.31

That many of these properties retain much of their original character and appearance is to the credit of those owners who have carefully preserved them. There is, however, no guarantee as to their future and these properties are vulnerable to future change. The Management Proposals at Part 2 include a proposal for consideration of Article 4(2) Directions to provide long-term protection against unsympathetic alterations. The effect of a Direction would be that certain alterations which formerly did not require planning permission would need permission in future, but only where the change affects those parts of a property fronting a highway or public open space.

Materials

4.32

Much of the character of Eckington comes from the materials used in its buildings and boundaries. The earliest buildings are timber frame and thatch, sometimes incorporating Cotswold stone, typical of the South Worcestershire vernacular. From the 18th and 19th centuries onwards brick and tile is more common, reflecting the increasing availability of materials from further afield and changing architectural fashions.

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Timber frame and thatch on Cotswold stone plinth in early buildings



Brick and tile in later buildings

4.33

Walls

Early buildings are timber framed, sometimes incorporating walls, plinths and chimneys of squared and coursed Cotswold limestone rubble. Farm buildings incorporate timber feather and waney edge board cladding. The use of stone reflects the local availability of a material that would normally have been reserved for high status buildings. Dressed and coursed or random rubble Cotswold stone is also commonly used for boundary walls.

4.34

Later 18th, 19th and early 20th century buildings are brick, of the rich orange/red characteristic of the locality, or occasionally finished with stucco or roughcast in the architectural fashion of the day, notably more frequent in Church Street.

4.35

More recent buildings are constructed in brick. Some of the brick colours and textures are at variance with the characteristic mellow orange/red and smooth bricks typically found in the conservation area.

4.36

Roofs

Most buildings are roofed in plain clay tile, of the red/brown hue characteristic of the area. In many cases these are 19th and 20th century replacement coverings, probably for thatch or handmade clay tile. There are still many buildings with thatched roofs and occasional surviving

handmade clay tile. These remaining roofs of

earlier materials are valuable survivors as evidence of early roofing materials on buildings and contributing much to the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are a few examples of Welsh slate on 18th and 19th century buildings, or buildings that have been re-roofed in this period, reflecting the new architectural fashion and the increasing availability of Welsh slate on arrival of the railway.

4.37

This pattern of roofing is typical of the South Worcestershire vernacular.

4.38

Many of the more recent buildings, and some of the older buildings re-roofed in recent years, are roofed with plain or interlocking concrete tiles. The use of this material is at variance with the use of traditional materials in the conservation area.

4.39

Windows

Casement and sash windows are characteristic of the conservation area. Casement windows are wrought iron and painted timber, with plain glazing and occasional leaded lights. Sash windows are painted timber. The materials used in windows is characteristic of their respective periods of buildings. The retention of these traditional materials is important to the character of the conservation area.

Eckington Conservation Area

4.40

Some of Eckington's historic windows have been lost to modern replacements. There are several examples of replacement windows in uPVC and stained timber. The design of replacement windows often incorporates top-hung hinged opening lights in lieu of side hung casements and sliding sashes. Some replacements are in painted timber to reflect the character of the conservation area, but to different designs and with details that are not always appropriate to the conservation area or the quality of building, such as thicker glazing bars, double glazed units, or "storm" casements.

4.41

The materials, finishes and much of the detailing of these replacement windows, are inconsistent with traditional window design, detail and finish in the conservation area, and are harmful to its character.

4.42

Doors are mainly painted timber.

4.43

There is a good survival of cast iron gutters and downpipes.

4.44

There are still stretches of natural granite, stone and brick kerbs in the conservation area. They survive around the war memorial, at the junction of Boon Street with Hammock Road, outside Lowen House in Manor Road, at the corner of Church Street with Cotheridge Lane, in Church Street, along the length of Pass Street and at the corner of School Lane with Pass Street. The materials of these old kerbs have a patina and quality which is more appropriate to the historic environment than concrete replacements. Their retention is important to the character of the conservation area.

4.45

Some private drives and yards are surfaced in loose gravel or clay bricks. These surface materials give a softer textured surface finish appropriate to a rural village conservation area. Others are surfaced in tarmac and concrete pavements, which are less appropriate to the

character of the conservation area and the setting of its historic buildings.

4.46

The retention of historic fabric in buildings and surfaces is important to the character of the conservation area.

Local Details

4.47

There are local building details and other features in the Eckington Conservation Area which contribute to its character and special interest and which are important to retain. These include

- dentilled eaves detailing in brick buildings
- local stone and brick kerbs
- local stone boundary walls
- thatched roofs
- village cross and war memorial



Village cross & war memorial

Boundaries

4.48

Boundaries are mainly dressed and coursed Cotswold stone rubble walls, brick walls, hedges and occasional iron railings.

Eckington Conservation Area

The type of boundary often relates to the date of buildings. Older buildings are mostly bounded by stone walls, while many 19th century buildings have brick walls. With very few exceptions boundaries are low, permitting views of buildings and gardens. The retention of old stone walls and use of new stone walls in some more modern developments helps to integrate new development into its historic context. The use of the same local Cotswold stone for many walls throughout the conservation area is a unifying thread amongst buildings of various ages and styles and is a characteristic feature of the conservation area.

4.49

Most gates are low and of timber or wrought iron, permitting views of buildings and gardens. Many are five-bar gates which are appropriate in design to the rural village character of the conservation area.

Natural Environment

4.50

The natural environment makes a significant contribution to the character of the Eckington Conservation Area.

4.51

The most obvious features are gardens, orchard, numerous large mature trees, and the grass banks and verges in Jarvis Street, Pass Street, Cotheridge Lane, School Lane, New Road and Manor Road. The historic core of Eckington has seen much of its immediate rural hinterland developed and many of its gardens and orchards infilled with new housing. The banks, verges, trees and remaining gardens and orchard are notable features in the old village core, and their retention is essential to the preservation of the character of the conservation area.

4.52

Less apparent, but just as important, are private gardens behind the street frontages. These remain largely undeveloped and continue in use as gardens. While their full extent may not always be entirely publicly visible, the lack of interruption by buildings and presence of planting contributes to an impression of openness appreciated from glimpses over boundaries and between buildings. Many of these green spaces are also important to the setting of historic buildings.



Cotswold stone wall boundaries are common



The church yard



Brick walls & grass verges in Manor Road



Orchard at the rear of Church Street

Eckington Conservation Area

4.53

Trees of particular note are the cedars, yews, firs and hollies in the churchyard, the yews at Fir Tree House in Cotheridge Lane, the beech at Silk Mill Row in School Lane, and the several mature trees at the school, Quietways, Cobweb Cottage and the Old Rectory in Pass Street.

4.54

All trees over a certain size are protected in the conservation area. Written notification must be given to the Council before carrying out any works to these trees. Some trees are individually protected by Tree Preservation Orders and consent is needed from us before any works to them are carried out. Our Landscape Team can advise on which trees are protected, the type of works which would need to be notified or need consent, the procedures and the likelihood of getting consent for the works. The contribution of the tree to the character and appearance of the conservation area will be a factor in the consideration of a notification or application.

Enhancement Opportunities

4.55

There are features that compromise or detract from the character of the Eckington Conservation Area. These include:

- **New buildings.** Some new buildings integrate better with the historic environment than others. Most exhibit design characteristics that are quite different to the established characteristics of the area. The purpose of highlighting these buildings is not necessarily to aim at their re-development, but to guard against them becoming too dominant through future additions or alterations. These buildings will not be regarded by the Council as a guide or precedent for future development proposals
- **New development** within the conservation area and at its fringes is often inconsistent in density and layout with the historic pattern of development. This is intrusive in places and has diminished the setting and character of the conservation area.

- **Loss of gardens to car parking.**

Some gardens have been lost to car parking, to the detriment of the quality of the streetscene and the setting of individual buildings

- **Replacement doors and windows.**

Some properties have had uPVC replacement windows and/or doors of a different design, detail, materials or finish. These erode local building detail, which is an essential part of the character of the conservation area

- **Replacement roof coverings** in concrete tiles, which are a poor substitute for natural materials

- **Fences.** Occasional properties have modern timber panelled or boarded fences which are inconsistent with the prevailing boundary treatments and character of the conservation area

- **Surfaces.** Several properties have drives and hardstandings of tarmac and concrete pavements. These are not always appropriate to the character of the conservation area and the setting of its historic buildings

- **Loss of grass bank** outside the school. This has been hard paved to the detriment of the character of the conservation area

- **The car parks at the Anchor Inn and The Bell.** These areas of hard surfaced spaces are prominent in the conservation area and harmful to the settings of buildings and the character of the conservation area

We would welcome the opportunity of discussing the scope for improving these features.

Neutral Areas

4.56

There are some parts of the conservation area which, in their present form, neither enhance nor detract from its character. Some of the new houses are set in gardens with boundaries of stone walls which softens their appearance and helps to integrate them into the historic environment.

Eckington Conservation Area

4.57

We will be careful, however, to guard against these properties and areas becoming too dominant through future additions or alterations.

Threats

4.58

Eckington has been much affected by 20th century development and is sensitive to further change. In particular:

- **Development.** Most of the conservation area coincides with the defined Local Plan development boundary (Policy GD1), which may bring pressure for further infill development or re-development. The identification of Eckington as a Category 2 Village in the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy could bring new development pressure.
- **Loss of gardens and boundaries to car parking.** Gardens are vulnerable to replacement with hard surfacing for car parking, with associated loss of important boundary walls and hedges
- **Loss of historic materials and architectural features.** The retention of historic features such as doors and windows, materials and appropriate details is important to the character and appearance of the conservation area. These remain vulnerable to change as buildings are altered and features such as windows and doors are replaced, materials are changed and buildings are altered.

5 ISSUES

5.1

The appraisal has highlighted the following problems and pressures in the Eckington Conservation Area.

- **Design quality of new buildings**
- **Intrusion of new development**
- **Loss of gardens to car parking**

- **Loss of architectural features and materials**

- **Introduction of modern paving materials and timber panelled fences**

5.2

The Management Proposals at Section 2 consider how these might be addressed to ensure the continuing preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

NOTE

Although it is intended that this appraisal should highlight significant features of the conservation area which are important to its character or appearance, omission of a particular feature should not be taken as an indication that it is without merit and unimportant in conservation and planning terms.

Sources

Victoria County History: Worcestershire Volume 4

Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment, Worcestershire County Council, 1999

Post Office Directory of Worcestershire, 1876

Kelly's Directory of Worcestershire, 1896

Noake's Guide to Worcestershire 1868

Eckington Inclosure Map 1813

Ordnance Survey mapping 1880's to present day

English Heritage "Pastscape"

A History of Eckington, N. Wilkes, 1996

Eckington Village Design Statement, 2008

Eckington Conservation Area

Further Information

For further guidance and information please contact:

The Heritage Section
Planning Services
Wychavon District Council
Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Pershore
Worcs. WR10 1PT

Tel. 01386 565565
e.mail: planning@wychavon.gov.uk
web: www.wychavon.gov.uk

The following websites contain information relating to conservation areas:

Wychavon District Council at
www.wychavon.gov.uk

English Heritage at
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal

- Conservation Area boundary
- Important boundary feature
- Listed Buildings
- Unlisted buildings of local interest
- Enhancement Opportunities
- Neutral features
- Significant views
- Focal features
- Prominent open space
- Trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order
- Significant trees & tree groups



(Diagrammatic only)

Scale : Not to Scale

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Management Proposals

1 Introduction

What are these Management Proposals for?

1.1

These management proposals are a mid- to long-term strategy for preserving and enhancing the Eckington Conservation Area, addressing the issues arising from the appraisal.

1.2

These proposals are prepared in accordance with our duty under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of our conservation areas.

2 Management Proposals

1. Design quality of new buildings

Some new buildings exhibit design characteristics that are quite different to the established characteristics of the area and which fail to preserve or enhance the conservation area. Others are let down by poor attention to detail and materials.

Action

We will

- seek improvements to buildings where opportunities arise through development proposals
- assess new proposals against PPS5, our Local Plan Policies on design, conservation areas, listed buildings, our forthcoming supplementary planning guidance on design and the Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal

2. Intrusion of new development

The character of the conservation area is vulnerable to continued encroachment of new development.

Action

We will

- Assess new development proposals against the Eckington Conservation Area Character Appraisal in addition to PPS5 and our Local Plan Policies on conservation areas

3. Loss of gardens to car parking

Gardens are vulnerable to replacement with hard surfacing for car parking, with associated loss of boundary walls, fences and hedges, to the detriment of the character of the conservation area

Action

We will

- Seek improvements to existing sites where opportunity arises through discussion with site owners
- consider the need for Article 4(2) Directions to bring hardstandings under planning control
- address unauthorised development through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our Enforcement Policy
- assess new proposals against PPS5, our Local Plan Policies on preserving and enhancing the conservation area and the Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal

4. Loss of architectural features and materials

Several buildings have been adversely affected by the use of inappropriate modern materials, detailing or replacement of original doors and windows with poor quality substitutes, such as uPVC or stained timber

Action

We will

- consider the need for Article 4(2) Directions to bring such works under planning control, to ensure that the special qualities of unlisted buildings of local significance are protected

Management Proposals

- advise owners/occupiers of buildings of appropriate use of materials and detailing where opportunities arise, and the need for prior consent for works, where relevant
- seek retention of historic fabric where opportunities arise through development proposals
- address unauthorised alterations to buildings through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our Enforcement Policy

5. Introduction of modern paving materials and timber panelled fences

These materials and features undermine the quality of the historic environment.

Action

We will

- seek improvements to sites where opportunities arise through development proposals
- consider the need for Article 4(2) Directions to bring such works under planning control, to ensure that the special character of the area is protected
- assess new proposals against PPS5, our Local Plan Policies on design and on preserving and enhancing the conservation area, preserving the setting of listed buildings, our forthcoming supplementary planning guidance on design and the Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal

Article 4(2) Directions

3 Article 4(2) Directions

What is an Article 4(2) Direction?

3.1

An Article 4(2) Direction is an Order that the District Council can make to provide long-term protection against unsympathetic alterations to unlisted dwellings in conservation areas by restricting certain “permitted development” rights. This means that alterations that formerly did not require planning permission would need permission in the future. This would only apply to elevations or parts of a property which front public roads, rights of way or public open spaces. It would not normally affect the rear of a property or the rear garden, and does not affect interior alterations.

Why consider them for Eckington?

3.2

The conservation area at Eckington has been designated in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest and a desire to preserve its character and appearance.

3.3

Although many alterations to all types of buildings can be controlled in a conservation area by planning permission, changes can still take place to unlisted dwellings and their sites that can damage the character and appearance of the conservation area, but which are “permitted development”, i.e. they do not require planning permission.

3.4

There are many buildings in the Eckington Conservation Area which, although not listed, have qualities of age, style and materials which are locally distinct and which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. That many of these properties retain much of their original character and appearance is to the credit of those owners who have carefully preserved them. There is, however, no guarantee as to their future and these properties are vulnerable to future change.

3.5

The Management Proposals for the Eckington Conservation Area include Article 4(2) Directions. This does not mean that the works included would not be allowed. It means that planning permission would be required to carry out these particular changes in future. We would check to see if what was proposed would harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. If not, permission would usually be granted. There would be no planning fee for any planning application required as a result of a Direction.

3.6

Those properties potentially affected would be separately consulted and all views expressed would be taken into account in making the decision on whether to proceed with the direction.

Statement of Community Involvement

Introduction

1.1

This statement is a summary of community involvement and public consultation undertaken by Wychavon District Council in respect of the Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and proposed changes to the Eckington Conservation Area boundary.

Background

1.2

A report to the Council's Development Control (Policy) Committee on 22nd April 2010 explains the reasons for preparing a character appraisal and management plan for the Eckington Conservation Area. Specifically, the character appraisal and plan is drafted in accordance with the requirements on Wychavon District Council imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to:

- keep its conservation areas under review;
- prepare policies and proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of its conservation areas; and
- pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in exercising its planning functions.

1.3

The preparation and publication of conservation area character appraisals and management proposals is a key step in the Council fulfilling these duties.

Community Involvement

1.4

Community involvement has taken the form of:

- a briefing session with the Parish Council
- a public meeting at Eckington Village Hall on the evening of 28th June 2010
- letter to residents affected by the review of the Eckington Conservation Area on 14th June and 24th August 2010

Consultation

1.5

The consultation period began on 14th June and ended on 9th August 2010

Consultation was by:

- A public meeting held at Village Hall on the evening of 28th June 2010
- Publication of the draft appraisal, management proposals & proposed conservation area boundary changes on the Wychavon District Council and Eckington Village websites, accompanied by an electronic feedback form
- Placing of the same documents for public inspection during the consultation period at:
 - Planning Reception, Wychavon District Council, Civic Centre, Pershore
 - Pershore public library
 - Village Hall, Eckington
- Letters to Eckington residents affected by the review of the conservation area, Parish Council, Worcestershire Archaeological Unit, English Heritage, Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire County Highways,

Consultees

1.6

The following were consulted on the draft appraisal and management plan:

- Eckington Parish Council
- Eckington residents affected by the conservation area review
- Worcestershire County Archaeological Service
- Worcestershire County Council
- Worcestershire County Highways
- English Heritage

Statement of Community Involvement

Publicity

1.7

Notice of the public meeting and consultation was given by way of:

- Posters placed in Eckington Village, Eckington Village Hall and at Pershore Civic Centre
- Letters to residents affected by the conservation area review on 14th June and 24th August 2010
- A public meeting held at Eckington Village Hall on 28th June 2010
- Information item on the Eckington Village website, Eckington Village Newsletter, "News Focus" on Wychavon Council website during the consultation period
- Notice placed with the documents at the Civic Centre, Pershore public library, Eckington Village Hall and on the Council's website
- Information forwarded to consultees

Community input

1.8

Public consultation brought one response. This was reported to the Council's Development Control Committee on 16th September 2010, with Officer comment and recommendation for suggested change to the appraisal in response. The appraisal has been amended to take into account suggested change at paragraph 3.2 to refer to the Worcestershire County Landscape Character Assessment.

October 2010

