



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of an **INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION** will be held at the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham on **TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 1.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Couldrick', written in a cursive style.

Andy Couldrick  
Chief Executive  
Published on 5 September 2016

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# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Our Vision**

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

## **Our Priorities**

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

## **The Underpinning Principles**

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

**For consideration by**

**Mark Ashwell, Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration**

**Officers Present**

**Ian Bailey, Service Manager, Operational Development Management**

**Arabella Yandle, Democratic Services Officer**

<b>IMD NO. 2016</b>	<b>WARD</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	
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**IMD32**

Sonning

**SONNING CONSERVATION AREA  
APPRAISAL**

**5 - 68**

To seek permission to consult for 6 weeks on the  
Sonning Conservation Area Appraisal

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# Agenda Item IMD32

## INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD: 2016/32

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Sonning Conservation Area Appraisal - Public Consultation</b>
<b>DECISION TO BE MADE BY</b>	Mark Ashwell, Executive Member Planning & Regeneration
<b>DATE AND TIME</b>	13 September 2016 at 1pm
<b>WARD</b>	Sonning
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment
<b>REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED ON</b>	5 September 2016
<b>VENUE</b>	Room SF1, Wokingham Borough Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham

### **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Adoption by the Council of a document which will assist in identifying, understanding and maintaining and enhancing the special historic and architectural character and appearance of Sonning Conservation Area.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive Member is asked to agree that:

- 1) the Draft Sonning Conservation Area Appraisal is made available for a 6 week period of public consultation;
- 2) the Draft Sonning Conservation Area Appraisal is amended in response to any comments received during consultation period. A further Individual Executive Member Decision will be required for the document to be adopted by the Council

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

Conservation areas (CA's) are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) have a duty to designate these areas under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. LPA's also have a duty, 'from time to time', to review their conservation areas to determine whether any part, or new part, should remain or become part of the conservation area.

Sonning CA was designated in September 1971 and revised in 1980 and in June 1996, Although the Parish Design Statement for Sonning was published in 2004, it has been 20 years since the CA itself was last formally appraised.

Officers have been working with the Parish Council and Sonning & Sonning Eye Society in the production of an appraisal document for Sonning CA. The Parish Council and

Sonning & Sonning Eye Society have carried out the research and produced the draft document. This has been now passed to the Council to finalise and potentially adopt. It would be a useful tool and as a material consideration in support of planning decision making (including Appeals).

This paper requests permission to undertake a public consultation prior to adopting and implementing this CA Appraisal.

## **Background**

Conservation areas (CA's) are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Since conservation areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act in 1967, over 10,000 CA's in the UK have been designated reflecting the popularity of this legislative tool in identifying and protecting our most valued historic places.

The original legislation has been superseded by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). This legislation places a duty on local planning authorities (LPA's) to designate these areas, from time to time to review them and formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.

Once designated, it gives the LPA additional controls over the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees, restricts some permitted development rights and tightens regulations on advertising. It also places a duty on LPA's to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of their conservation areas while undertaking their planning duties.

## **Analysis of Issues**

The Council has 16 CA's most designated in the 1970's or 1990's. Sonning CA was designated in September 1971 and revised in 1980 and in June 1996. The specific frequency of the duty to review and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of CA's is not set out in any legislation but since 1996 no further appraisal of the CA has been carried out and it has been 20 years since the CA itself was last formally appraised.

In 2012 the Council was approached by Sonning Parish Council and Sonning & Sonning Eye Society to consider the feasibility of the Council adopting a 'local community led' CA Appraisal for Sonning village. The Council and Historic England provided advice and guidance but the Parish Council and Sonning & Sonning Eye Society have organised and carried out the research and produced the draft document.

The draft appraisal assesses significance of the area through an illustration of historic development, archaeology and morphology of the settlement. It provides a spatial analysis through considering the layout and street pattern, open spaces, trees and landscape, focal points and important views. Important buildings are identified (both listed and unlisted) and characteristic building styles, materials and colours are noted. A number of buildings are highlighted as worthy of consideration for local or national listing. The character of the area is described in some detail by subdividing into distinct character areas. Important aspects of the natural environment are also considered and

noted. The appraisal summarises the overall significance of the CA and identifies both positive features and those which are considered to detract from its special interest of the area. It highlights vulnerabilities and opportunities for enhancement.

This has been now been passed to the Council to finalise and adopt. It will be a useful tool to inform development proposals and would be a material planning consideration in assessing applications that impact on the CA.

This local engagement and collaboration and appraisal methodology is consistent with guidance from Historic England ([Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management \(Historic England Advice Note 1\)](#)). It should also be noted that it does not propose any changes to the boundary or any additional planning controls.

This paper requests permission to undertake a public consultation prior to adopting and implementing this CA Appraisal as a future IEMD decision. The public consultation and further analysis of responses received will be undertaken in conjunction with Sonning Parish Council and Sonning & Sonning Eye Society and is likely to be a six-week period in September and October 2016.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	0	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	0	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	0	N/A	N/A

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

### Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including property and priorities?)

This decision would not significantly impact on any Council properties within the CA given it does not introduce or change the effect of the designation. It will however provide useful information if the Council, as property owner, were looking to make any future planning applications.

## SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

<b>Director – Finance and Resources</b>	No comment
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	No comment
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	Conservation areas (CA) are an important piece of planning framework within the

	borough. Its overarching aim for protection important areas is commendable. Therefore it is important to periodically review existing CA's to reflect the current position. I fully support this IEMD.
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<b>List of Background Papers</b>
<a href="#">Historic England Advice Note 1 - Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management</a>

<b>Contact</b> Ian Bailey	<b>Service</b> Operational Development Management
<b>Telephone No</b> 0118 974 6007	<b>Email</b> <a href="mailto:ian.bailey@wokingham.gov.uk">ian.bailey@wokingham.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date</b> 9/5/2016	<b>Version No.</b> 1



# Draft Sonning Conservation Area Appraisal 2016

## FOREWORD

## MAIN CONTENTS:-

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 What does a conservation area designation mean?
- 1.2 Purpose of the document
- 1.3 Status of the document
- 1.4 The Importance of Sonning Conservation Area.

### 2. LOCATION

- 2.1 Topography and Geology.
- 2.2 Designation and Boundaries.

### 3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 4. SPATIAL ANALYSIS

- 4.1 Layout and Street Pattern.
- 4.2 Open Space, Trees and Landscape.
- 4.3 Focal Points, Buildings, Views and Vistas.
- 4.4 Boundary Walls.
- 4.5 Public Realm.

### 5. THE BUILDINGS

- 5.1 Building Types.
- 5.2 Listed Buildings.
- 5.3 Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Positive Buildings Enhancing Character.
- 5.4 Building Styles, Materials and Colours.

### 6. CHARACTER AREAS

- 6.1 The River.

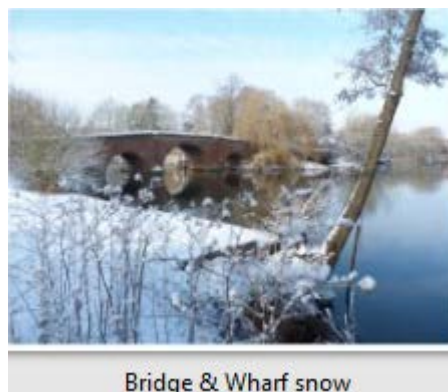
- 6.2 The Churchyard.
- 6.3 Thames Street.
- 6.4 High Street.
- 6.5 Pearson Road.
- 6.6 Sonning Lane.
- 6.7 Pound Lane.
- 6.8 Charvil Lane.
- 6.9 Green Boundary.

## **7. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

- 7.1 Vulnerability.
- 7.2 Enhancement Opportunities.

<b>APPENDIX I</b>	<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>
<b>APPENDIX II</b>	<b>LISTED BUILDINGS</b>
<b>APPENDIX III</b>	<b>BUILDINGS OF TRADITIONAL LOCAL CHARACTER AND POSITIVE BUILDINGS ENHANCING CHARACTER</b>
<b>APPENDIX IV</b>	<b>ARCHAEOLOGY</b>
<b>APPENDIX V</b>	<b>NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</b>
<b>APPENDIX VI</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>
<b>APPENDIX VII</b>	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>

**FOREWORD**



## 1. INTRODUCTION - Sonning Conservation Area

### 1.1 What does a conservation area designation mean?

The statutory definition of a conservation area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The power to designate conservation areas is given to councils through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 (Sections 69 to 78). Once designated, proposals within a conservation area become subject to policies outlined in part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as regional and local policies outlined in the Wokingham Borough Council local plan documents. The Council’s overarching duty which is set out in the Act is to preserve or enhance the historic or architectural character or appearance of the conservation area.

A conservation area appraisal defines the special historic and architectural character of an area. This document has been produced using the guidance set out by Historic England in their document, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011). This appraisal is a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

### 1.2 The Purpose of the document

A conservation area’s character is defined by a combination of architecture, materials and detailing as well as the relationship between buildings and their settings. Many other elements contribute to character such as the placement of buildings within their plots; views and vistas; the relationship between the street and the buildings and the presence of trees and green space.

The aims of this appraisal are to:

- define the historic and architectural character and appearance of the area
- identify what is worthy of conservation
- raise public interest and awareness of the objectives of the conservation area designation
- encourage public involvement in the protection of the area necessary to safeguard the character or special interest of the area
- identify opportunities for enhancement

The principal guardians of the conservation area are the residents and businesses who live and work there; they are responsible for maintaining the individual properties, which together contribute to the character of their conservation area. Designation also raises awareness of an area’s special attributes and can foster pride in the locality. Planning guidance stresses that our

built and natural heritage should be valued and protected for its own sake as a central part of our cultural heritage. The responsibility for environmental stewardship is shared by everyone. New development and change can take place in conservation areas, but designation should ensure that such proposals would not have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area

The preparation of this document involved the input and cooperation of a large number of local residents of Sonning. They are listed individually in Appendix VII.

### **1.3 The Status of the document**

This appraisal defines those key elements that contribute to and define the special character of the Sonning Conservation Area. An appreciation of this special character is essential in order to manage change within the conservation area. The legislation states that the local planning authority should, from time to time, formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. These are the subject of the proposed enhancement schemes set out in section 7.2

This draft Conservation Area Appraisal is intended for future adoption by the Council as a guidance document that should inform how development proposals should be designed. The appraisal is a tool that should be considered in assessing proposals against the planning policies in the Development Plan (DP), which for Wokingham Borough comprises the Core Strategy (January 2010) (CS) (Core Strategy Policies CP1: Sustainable development and CP3: General Principles of Development) and the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (February 2014) (MDD) (Policies TB24: Designated Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas); TB25: Archaeology; and TB26: Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character).

It supplements and provides clarity to policies contained in the Wokingham *Interactive Borough Design Guide* published in June 2012. When adopted, this document will be an important tool to be used by planning officers to inform planning decisions. The appraisal will act as a material consideration in the planning decision making process.

The CAA will be prepared in accordance with the statutory procedures, including a six-week public consultation period. Following consultation, the Council will analyse the responses and revisions will be made to the draft CAA wherever appropriate. The revised document will require adoption by an Executive Member of the Council prior to coming into force.

Other purposes include undertaking a review of the conservation area boundary in accordance with section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires local planning authorities "from time to time to determine whether any further parts of the area should be designated". The Appraisal also highlights particular issues and some of the principal elements that detract from the appearance or character of the Conservation Area. These provide the basis for potential future actions for improvement and highlights pitfalls to avoid.

### **1.4 The Importance of Sonning Conservation Area**

The historic core of the village of Sonning was designated a Conservation Area by Berkshire County Council in 1971. It was extended in 1980 and again in 1996. A Sonning Conservation Area Study was undertaken in 1996, which identified opportunities for enhancement and improvement within the Conservation Area.

Although the 1996 study was an informative and useful character study, the Sonning Design Statement (2004) proved a more successful and constructive tool for dealing with planning applications in the civil parish as a whole.

Since the publication of the Sonning Design Statement, extensive and rapid changes to planning legislation have been implemented nationally and it is timely and appropriate to re-evaluate our

Conservation Area. While it is intended that Wokingham Borough Council will consult on the document and adopt it the document has been produced largely through the combined efforts of Sonning Parish Council and the Sonning & Sonning Eye Society.

## 2. LOCATION

### 2.1 Topography and Geology



Aerial\_SonningBridge\_to\_StAndrews-6732

Sonning is situated on the River Thames, approximately 4.5 miles east from the centre of Reading, 2 miles west of Twyford and 6 miles south of Henley-on-Thames. It is located at the southern end of the Chilterns chalk escarpment, on the south bank of the River Thames. The village is situated on a gentle slope towards the river, with some parts of the core area sited on a low plateau of river gravels.

The accompanying map shows the physical layout of the settlement and its relationship to the River Thames, the Bridge and Sonning Eye. The key streets form an 'A' shape tipped 90° to the right with the B478 Thames Street and B4446 Pearson Road forming the vertices and High Street the cross-bar. Eastwards from the High Street onwards both roads run along higher ground with a shallow valley between them containing a stream that rises off Charvil Lane on University farmland.



PL view S 1



CL view W 1

The course and characteristic topographic dip and rise of the High Street is shaped by the westward-flowing stream that passes into a culvert beneath the road near the south-east corner of The Deanery and the village pump. The Environment Agency confirms there is no

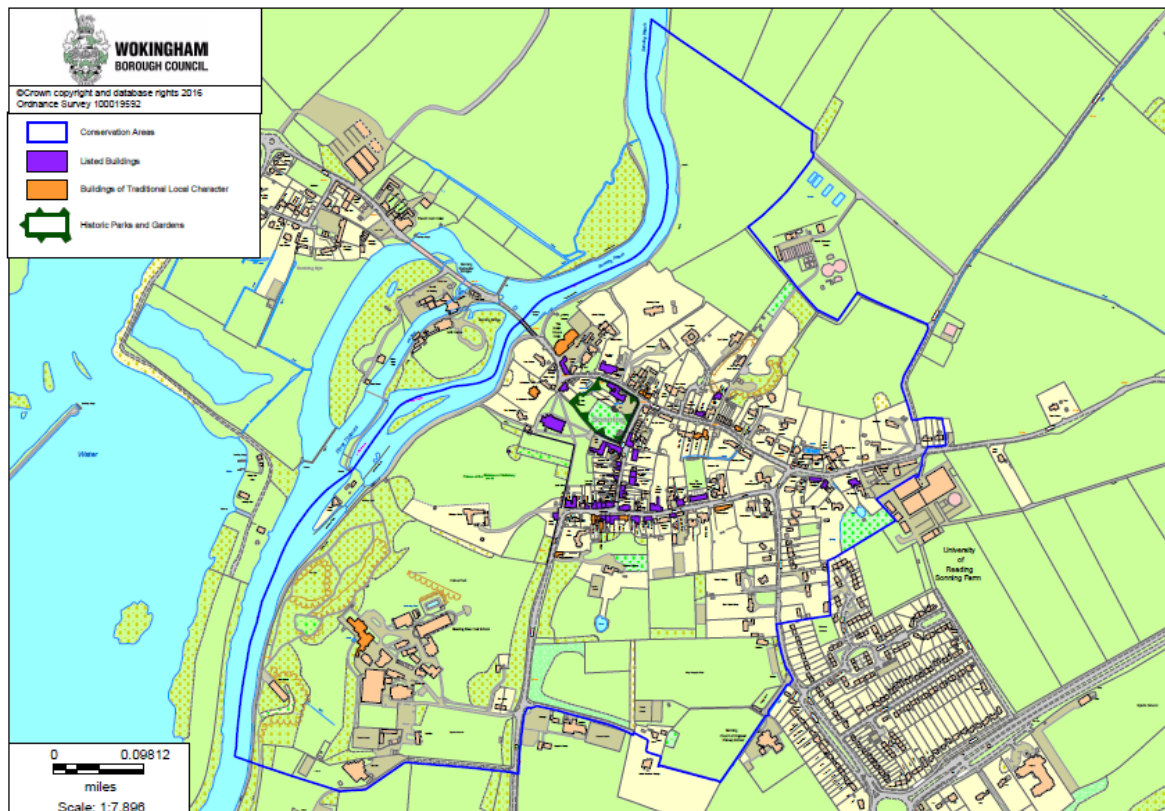


SL view N 2

risk of flooding in the village, save for a narrow strip of riparian land running along the banks of the River Thames that lies between 35-37m above ordnance datum (AOD). For reference the Thames Street/Pearson Road roundabout lies at 46m AOD and land rises to the east to 50m AOD where the eastern boundary of the conservation area crosses Charvil Lane.

### 2.2 Designation and Boundaries

The village of Sonning was designated a Conservation Area by Berkshire County Council in 1971. It was extended in 1980 and again in 1996. Its historic core is centred on the 'A' shaped Thames Street, Pearson Road and High Street road layout. In this central area there are many listed buildings dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The current boundaries of the conservation area are the river to the north and west, the University Farm (Sonning Farm) to the north and east. To the south the boundary is formed by King George's Field and Reading Blue Coat School.



### 3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Sonning's situation in the broad gravel plains of the Thames, with a shallower crossing of the river at this point and rising land to the east made it a natural place for settlement. Its name derives from the Saxon tribe or family of Sunna, reflected also in the names of Sunninghill and Sunningdale. During the 11<sup>th</sup> century an Anglo-Saxon bishop was occasionally referred to as the Bishop of Sonning. Following the Norman Conquest, church reorganisation located the cathedral at Sarum/Salisbury.

The link with Salisbury was maintained until 1846. Sonning was divided into two manors, one belonging to the Bishop of Salisbury and the other to the Dean and Chapter of the cathedral. The bishop maintained a palace on the edge of the village in the grounds of what was to become Holme Park at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The palace was excavated in 1910-12 and a plan can be viewed in the church while a model exists in Reading Museum.

The Dean and Chapter's Manor (the Rectory Manor) was located around The Bull Inn and the Deanery and to the north of Thames Street.

The crossing over the Thames had a profound influence on the layout of the village. From the bridge, Thames Street rises eastwards towards Twyford, Windsor and ultimately, London. The south-westward road to Reading must once have passed in a direct line through the churchyard from the bridge to Sonning Lane, as indicated by a footpath that now follows this route. At some time, perhaps with the enlargement of the church, this road was blocked off, producing the existing sharp bend.

At the corner of Sonning Lane and Pearson Road (formerly Sonning Street), west of the High Street lies a large plot of land, all historically in church control. This includes The Bull and its complex of buildings, the churchyard and between the church and the river a large plot of land allocated for a vicarage in 1220. To the south of the churchyard is the extensive park in which lay the Bishop's palace; to the north lies the Deanery

In Pearson Road a number of substantial late-medieval and Tudor houses indicate the presence of an affluent tenant class (e.g. The Old Cottage, Turpins/ Rich's Cottage, Dower House and Sonningdene). These houses would have stood within large enclosures (toft and croft) which have subsequently been infilled with later buildings.

The palace passed into royal ownership in 1574 and was sold in 1628 eventually being purchased by Thomas Rich in 1654. The Rectory Manor, also sold during the Commonwealth, was subsequently acquired in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the Palmers of Hurst. A map of 1783 shows village properties almost equally divided between the Rich and Palmer estates. In 1795 the Palmers purchased the Rich estate.

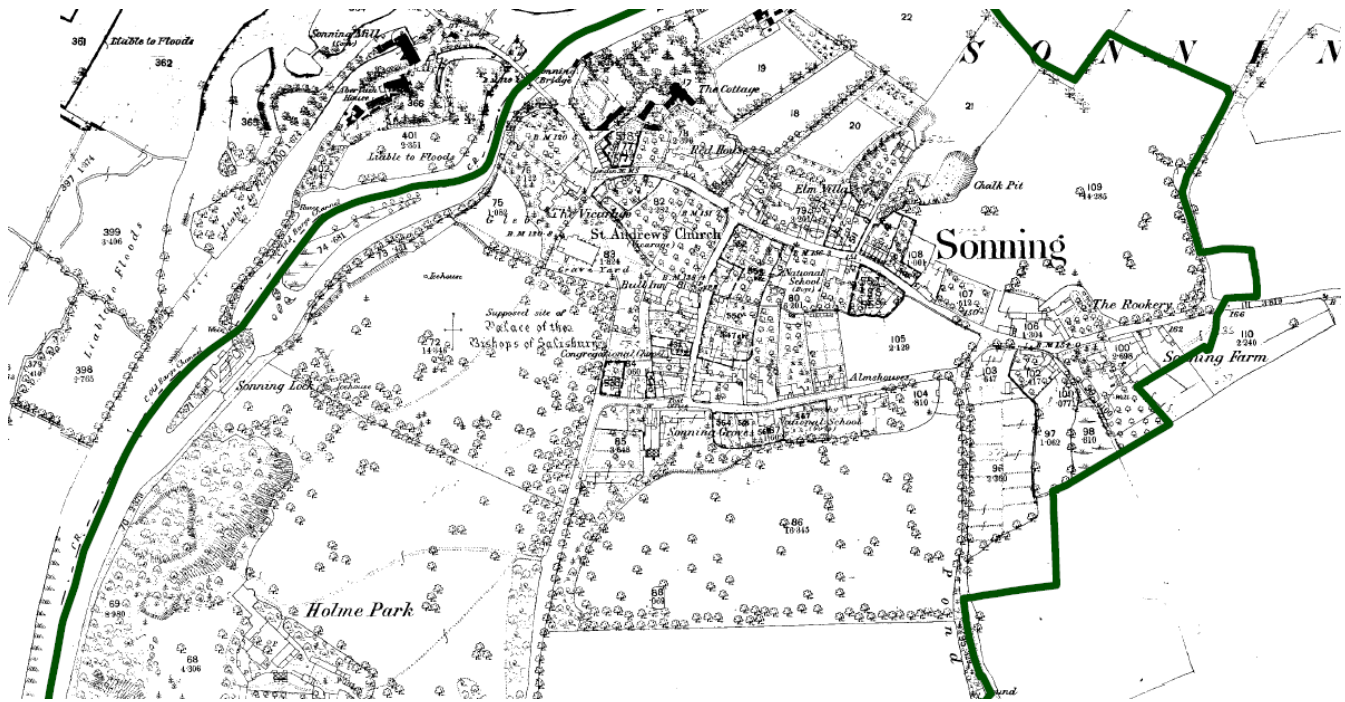
A number of timber-framed cottages survive from the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Pearson Road and the west side of the High Street; these often retain important original features such as leaded casements. In contrast, on the east side of the High Street stand two examples of metropolitan architecture of the Georgian period. This juxtaposition of polite and vernacular architecture is a characteristic of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century contributions to the village as can be seen particularly in Thames Street where substantial houses in ample grounds face terraces of former estate cottages.

The Palmers became the dominant influence throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They demolished the remnants of the Bishop's Palace/Rich family house and built a new 5-bay house on top of the 'escarpment' above the river, Holme Park. The lack of male heirs meant that this estate was finally broken up, first in 1910 and then again in 1934. With these sales substantial plots of land became available for development.

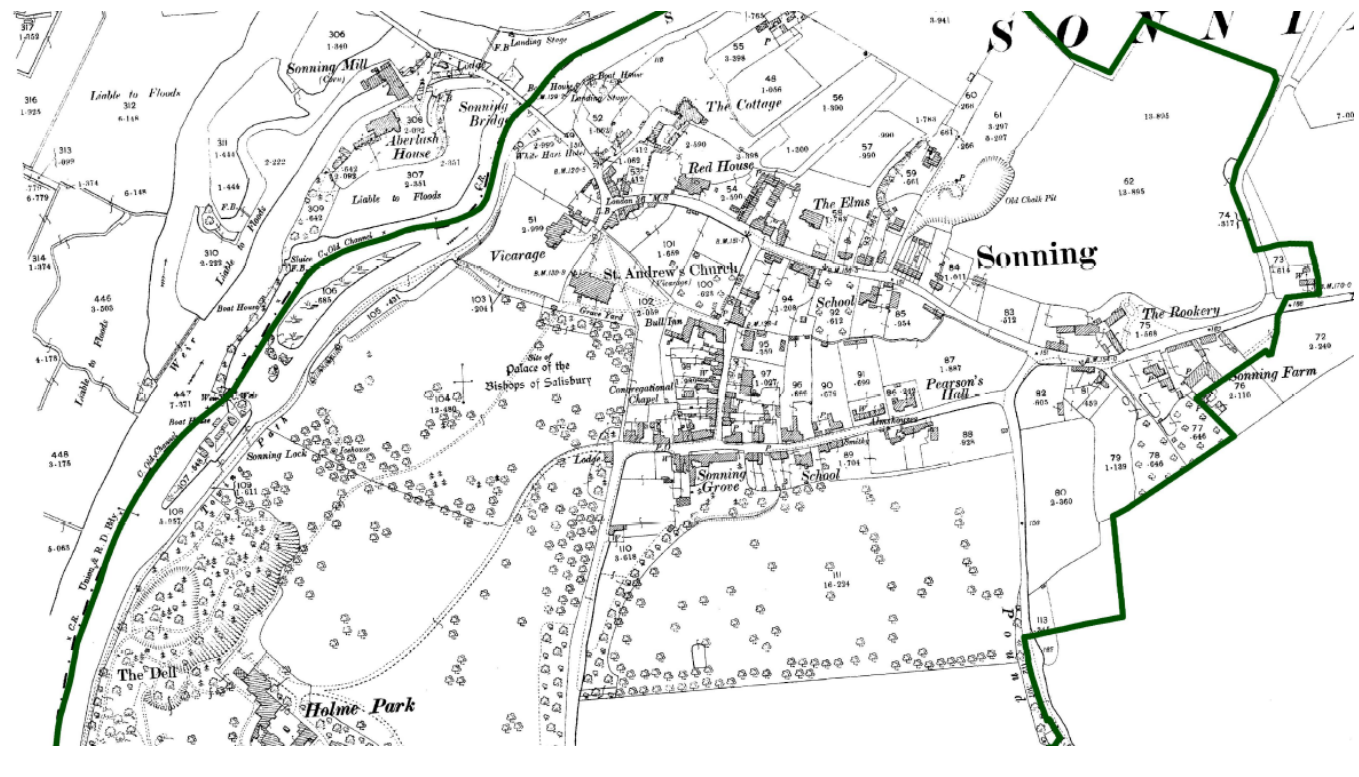
Until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century the development of the village was concentrated in the small area centred on the 'A' shaped core of High Street, Pearson Road and Thames Street. Consequently, this area constitutes the heart of the Conservation Area and is home to many listed buildings dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The village subsequently expanded southward along Pound Lane in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



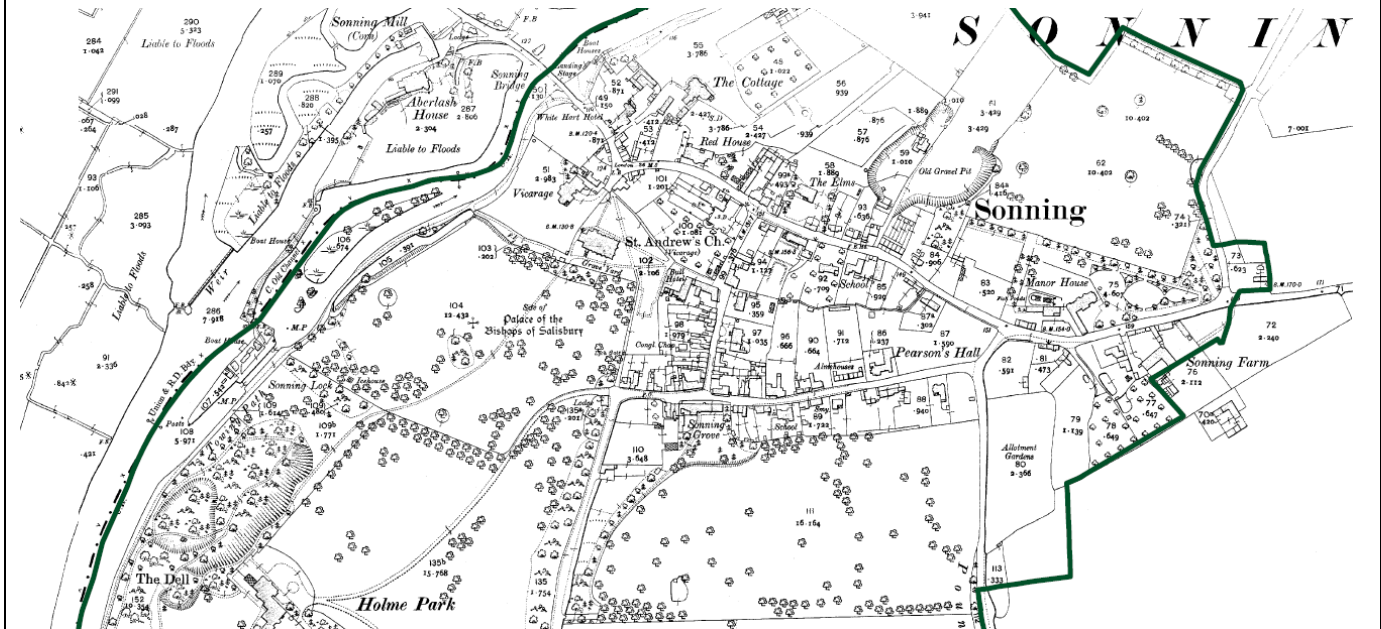
Historic map of Sonning dating 1875



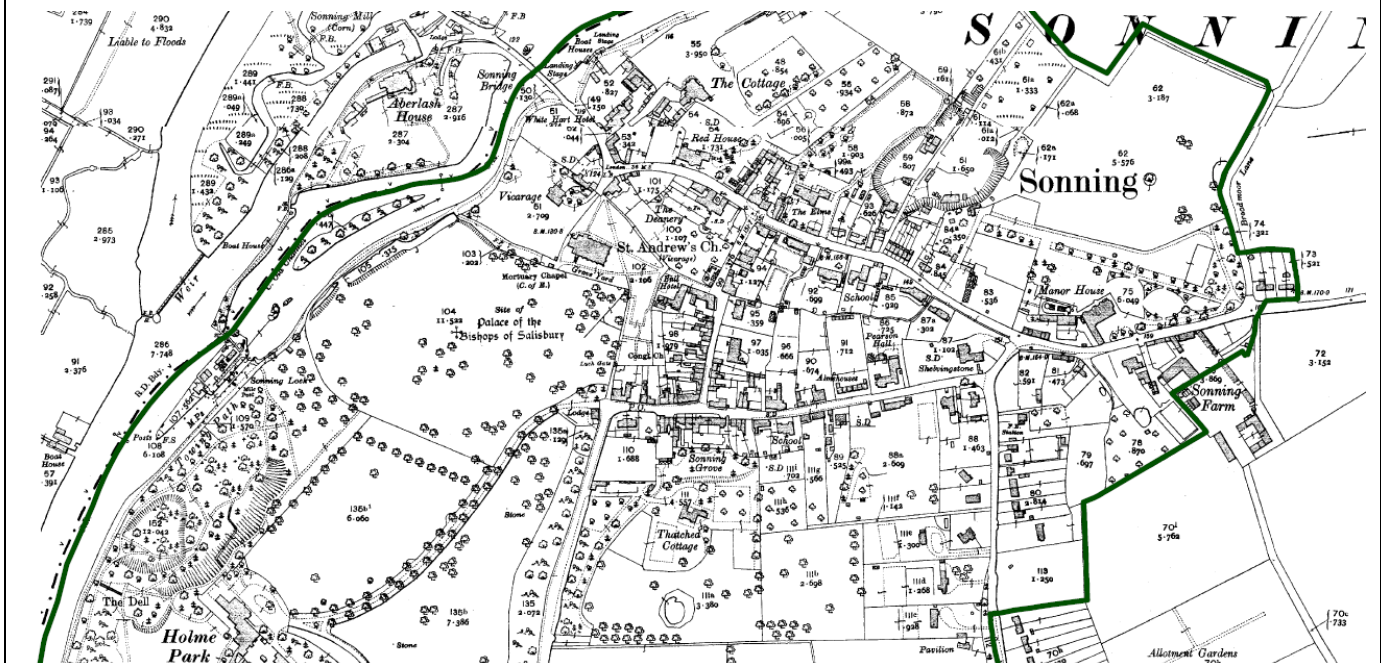
Historic map of Sonning dating 1899



Historic map of Sonning Dating 1911



Historic map of Sonning dating 1932



Apart from this development, change to the built fabric of the Conservation Area has been limited with occasional 20<sup>th</sup> century introductions, not all of which could be described as preserving or enhancing the Conservation Area.

Conservation Area status has generally helped to preserve the character of the village. In addition, the physical constraints of the river and the fact that the street frontages are so closely developed, has left little room for major change. The growth that has taken place has for the most part maintained the character of the village and has moulded well into its historic fabric.

#### 4. SPATIAL ANALYSIS



Bridge & Wharf May

#### 4.1 Layout and Street Pattern

The layout and street pattern of Sonning is to a large extent determined by the river crossing, and the sites of the Bishops' Palace and Deanery on either side of the stream running through the centre of the village from east to west. Three access roads into the village meet at the bridge – northwest from the Oxfordshire side of the river is the B478 Playhatch Road, eastwards from Twyford, Maidenhead and London is the B478 Thames Street/Charvil Lane and southwest from Reading and Wokingham are Sonning Lane and Pound Lane.

Approached from the east, **Thames Street** is characterised by tall trees and properties set back from the road, bounded by red brick walls on the north and a panelled wooden fence on the south. Most of the properties provide off-street parking avoiding some of the car-related problems encountered in the other main streets. West of its junction with High Street, Thames Street begins to slope gently down towards the river. This stretch of road is bounded to the south by the historic 16<sup>th</sup> century wall that encloses The Deanery. The dominant 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Red House is situated on the north side of the street. This descent is characterised by high red brick walls on both sides, tall mature trees and a narrow footpath on the north side only.

As the **High Street** steadily inclines southwards up to join Pearson Road it becomes significantly narrower. At the opposite northern end its junction with Thames Street is bounded to the west by the listed historic flint and brick wall of The Deanery.

In front of and to the east of The Grove, **Pearson Road** narrows into a pinch-point. To the west and east a number of buildings of various styles and periods front the roadside. Further from the centre the gaps between the buildings increase providing the viewer with glimpses of gardens beyond. Eastwards from The Grove the road widens and red brick buildings such as Old Forge Cottage and Sonning House predominate. Building plots become larger in this area, with gaps between buildings increasing and a mixture of properties both fronting the road and set back from the roadside provide a greater sense of openness.

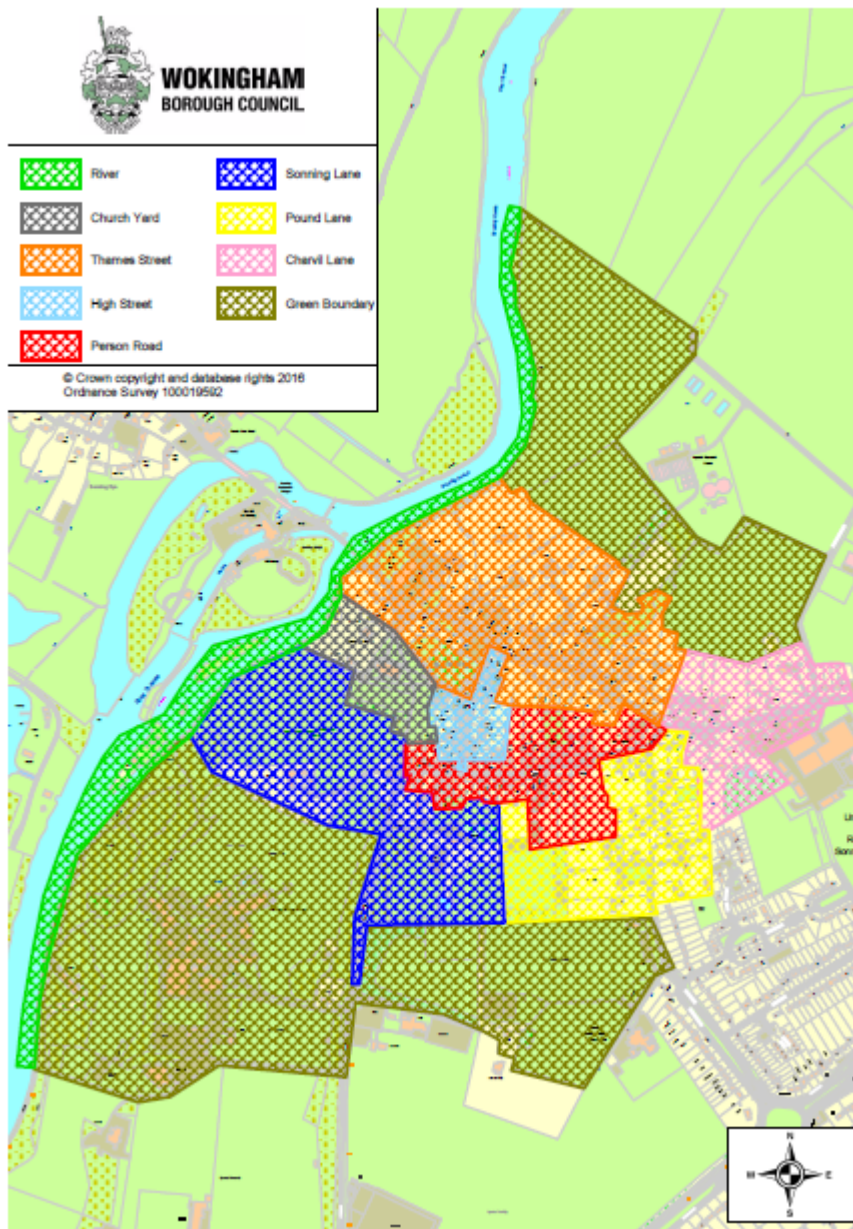
Lined by trees and hedges and with a notable 18<sup>th</sup> century brick and flint wall on the west side and an old brick wall on the east side, **Sonning Lane** has changed little since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and provides a pleasant rural and sylvan southern approach to the village. It probably once ran straight on following the present line of the footpath directly to the river crossing. However at some stage in the medieval period it was diverted to swing east into Pearson Road. The evidence for the change can be seen in the churchyard where there is a key 'cross roads' probably pre-dating the building of the current church.

**Pound Lane** is well landscaped and characterised by trees and large detached houses set back off the road on both sides, many of which are concealed from view. At the junction with Pearson Road, Rose Cottage and Vine Cottage provide an architectural boundary between the older dwellings in the historic core of the village, and the newer properties running south along Pound Lane.

In **Charvil Lane**, a red brick wall on the north side facing Spring Cottages encloses a number of buildings set back from the road. The street acts as a link between the rural location of Sonning and the historic core of the village's centre. Spring Cottages act as a 'gateway' to the Conservation Area since they are visible in long views entering the village from the east and close the westward vista along Charvil Lane.

#### 4.2 Open Space, Trees and Landscape

The village has been divided into 9 Character Areas (see section 6. and map for details). Where key open spaces lie in a particular character area this has been identified by number.



Key public open spaces in the Conservation Area are St. Andrews Churchyard (Character Area 2) and the allotments on the north side of Pearson Road behind the Robert Palmer Cottages that extend to the stream that runs through the middle of the village. Other notable private open spaces include the garden to The Deanery, the garden to the rear of Sonning Club (Character Area 5) and substantial gardens and paddocks on the south side of Pearson Road.

The Conservation Area is enhanced significantly by the river (Character Area 1) and the green boundary (Character Area 9) which provides four distinct open spaces: -

- 1) The University of Reading Sonning Farm with agricultural open space.
- 2) King George's Field, home to local sports clubs, a children's playground and other recreational facilities.
- 3) Ali's Pond Local Nature Reserve, an extension to King George's Field, and a successful habitat that stimulates biodiversity.
- 4) Reading Blue Coat School's sports pitches leading to the remnants of the formal gardens behind the School House and the steep wooded slopes down to the river frontage.

The Conservation Area is well-endowed with trees in all these open spaces, as well as in private gardens. These provide a variety of cover throughout the seasons as well as wildlife habitats such as the rookery in the trees around Shelvingstone. The trees on modest embankments at the northern end of Pound Lane overhang the road and are a reminder of the road's history as a drove road. Several trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders in addition to the protection from felling afforded by their location within the Conservation Area.

### 4.3 Focal Points, Buildings, Views and Vistas

#### Focal points

The focal points centre on the grouping and interrelationship of buildings in the various streetscapes as well as in the churchyard and along the river either side of the bridge, where there are long views from the towpath and the river itself.



Thames Street is characterised by frequent gaps between the buildings, as well as driveways and lanes providing glimpses of gardens and countryside beyond.



HS viewed from PR

The High Street viewed from the south presents a descending long view of frontage buildings, chimneystacks and tiled roofs with mature trees in the background, while the descending view from the north is dominated by large trees, tiled roofs and chimneystacks, and is visually terminated by the white washed timber framed Malt House complex.

Pearson Road viewed from the east funnels the eye towards the central pinch-point entry north into the High Street through large trees and high boundary fences and walls giving way to the roofs and chimney stacks that appear to rise towards The Grove. From the west there is a similar massing of roofs, chimney stacks with the buildings apparently subservient to the height of the front gables of The Grove.

On entering the village from Charvil Lane, 17<sup>th</sup> century Spring Cottages close the vista and provide a visual gateway and clear statement that the visitor is approaching the beginning of the historic core of the village.



### Focal buildings

**St Andrew's Church:** A particularly fine view of the east end of the church can be seen as one approaches from the High Street and past The Bull Inn and boundary trees. This view is enhanced by the breadth and uniform flint appearance of the chancel and chancel chapels of the church.  
**Little Deanery:** This 17<sup>th</sup> century building closes the vista and draws the eye on crossing the bridge in a southerly direction. Its gateway position emphasises a former fork in the road leading left up

Thames Street and right into the churchyard and originally through to Sonning Lane and the road to Reading.



Little Deanery & church tower



TS, Deanery street frontage

The Deanery: The street view of this Grade I listed building is modest as the principal elevations of the house are built away from perimeter wall to respect the scale of surrounding buildings.

The Hill, Hillside Cottage and The Dairy are three attractively gabled cottages in Thames Street situated in

an elevated position facing the north end of the High Street.

Turpins and Rich's Cottage: Approaching via Sonning Lane, the visitor comes across this attractive pair of buildings before the corner is turned and the vista of Pearson Road opens up.



Dairy & Hill cottages



PR viewed from SL



N Lodge

North Lodge and Gates: the impressive iron gates, iron 'bridge' above and adjacent lodge have architectural unity and formerly provided the village entrance to Holme Park.



Grove 4

The Grove has three impressive frontage gables and a commanding position above the south end of the High Street.

### Views and vistas

The well-treed village affords some unexpected views and vistas in addition to some of the classic focal points and buildings picked out above. For instance there are far-reaching and impressive views

across the river to the Oxfordshire side from the Conservation Area boundary on the northeast. In Thames Street the lane down to the old chalk-pit past the old school is framed by tall trees. The gates into Bishops' Close and North Lodge provide a view into the grounds and a glimpse of the contemporary glass residence beyond.



Rose Garden approach

### 4.4 Boundary Walls

Property boundaries are many and varied. In the densely built core of the village some dwellings front directly onto the street, for instance

the west side of the High Street, while others have narrow frontages as on the east side of the High Street, where iron railings can be found. The more substantial houses in the High Street are screened by brick walls (Brook House) or wooden fencing (White House).

This pattern is visible in both arms of Pearson Road, where means of enclosure, low in height, are typically built of brick. Fencing exists around Groveside as the only garden space is overlooked from the street and around Shelvingstone and the Garden House at the east end of the street. By



Pedestrian



Shelvingstone fence

contrast the houses in Thames Street, even the surviving old paired cottages, are generally well set back from the road.

#### 4.5 Public Realm

The public realm in Sonning comprises a number of buildings and facilities commonly

agreed to be community assets. These apart, the Conservation Area retains the character and atmosphere of a riverside village, developed from a tight-knit historic core and surrounded with more dispersed early 20<sup>th</sup> century development. Its buildings and features have been developed over time and in an organic way that on balance has enriched the character of the village.

#### Street lighting

The village has a modest public lighting scheme, relying for the most part on the provision of lamps outside private houses some of which are maintained by the Parish Council (for example the lamp outside North Lodge in Sonning Lane). Where public street lighting has been installed in the Conservation Area, the ubiquitous urban type, painted black, based on gas lamps, have been used, although not exclusively. In the absence of any type better suited to the character and atmosphere of a riverside village, these are considered to be acceptable. Any attempt to replace or expand the current provision of street lighting would need to be subject to close scrutiny so as to preserve or enhance character.

#### Footway and road surfaces

Road surfaces are generally in reasonable condition allowing two lanes of traffic in the three approach roads (except for the pinch-point in Thames Street). The single-track nature of the bridge and on-street parking in the High Street and Pearson Road can on occasion impede traffic flow as might be expected in a historic village. Along the southern section of High Street and the Pearson Road 'pinch-point' the public footpath is particularly narrow and inconsiderate parking of vehicles can compel wheelchair users and buggies to use the road as well as causing problems for partially sighted and blind persons. Sonning Bridge is designated as a 'weak bridge' with a limit of 7.5 tonnes mgw.

#### Street furniture

Traffic signs do not enhance the village but are nonetheless a safety requirement and an inevitable consequence of modern life. Their use should be kept to the minimum and road markings must be carried out to the less-intrusive Conservation Area specifications.

Attractive features adding to the character of the village are the brick and timber bus shelters designed by Sidney Paddick, of which only two now survive. They would benefit from additional care and attention to preserve them as part



CL signage

of the character of the village since they blend in sympathetically with its semi-rural character. Where replacements have been installed they have tended to be of high quality timberwork; the new shelter outside the old Fire Station is of similar construction.



HS Pump\_Deanery wall

The Grade II listed cast iron village pump dated 1846, recently sympathetically refurbished by the Parish



K6 telephone box



Post Box Thames St

Council, is a reminder of the village's heritage and reliance on natural sources of water for its day-to-day needs. The post box in Thames Street in the wall of Little Deanery dates to Queen Victoria's reign; others are later.

Outside the Pearson Hall is a K6 telephone box now maintained by the Parish Council and containing a publicly accessible defibrillator.

## 5. THE BUILDINGS

Today the village centre is still focused around the historic core and junction of the High Street and Pearson Road. Despite the alterations and extensions that a large number of the buildings here have undergone, primarily during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the old street pattern and grouping of houses has remained largely unaltered and thus the historic layout and fabric has been maintained. The architecture is varied and no single style dominates. It is through this diversity that the area gains its character and charm.

The later architecture of Thames Street is also diverse and varied. A range of red brick, timber framed and painted/rendered buildings lines the road and no single architectural style dominates. The buildings are more modern than those found in the historic core of the village and the plots tend to be larger.

Notable features of the buildings to be found through-out the Conservation Area include: -

- Predominant use of local brick.
- Timber framed buildings.
- Whitewashed and rendered buildings.
- Densely built historic core with many houses fronting directly onto the pavement or roadside.
- Low boundary walls/fences and small front gardens.
- Variety of window types.
- Old tiled roofs of varying pitches and some slate roofs.
- Tall red brick chimneys usually off-centre.
- Intricate architectural detailing: ornate porches, string courses, carved cornices, decorative brick work and a variety of windows and doors.
- Flint and brick walls.

### 5.1 Building Types

The village comprises a diverse and interesting range of building types, which can be categorised as community and public buildings, large houses built for wealthy owners, smaller properties originally built as farm and other worker cottages, and semi-detached properties for a growing affluent and mobile middle class. There are a few examples of



uniform terraced rows of houses in the village, the most prominent being the row of six almshouses built in 1850 in Pearson Road, known as the Robert Palmer Cottages.

### **Community and public buildings**

The most significant buildings in this category are St Andrew's Church and the St Sarik Room, Pearson Hall and Sonning Club, and Beech Lodge.

### **Large houses**

The most notable large house is The Deanery in Thames Street, with other significant houses including the old Vicarage (now St Andrew's Acre), Red House (also in Thames Street), Brook House and the White House in the High Street. Meanwhile in Pearson Road there are Shelvingstone, Greendown, Sonningdene, Sonning House, the Dower House, The Grove and both Turpins & Rich's Cottage (originally one large house). Additionally the list should include School House (formerly Holme Park), Thatched Cottage and Bishops' Close in Sonning Lane, as well as the Manor House (at one time known as The Rookery) and Little Court in Charvil Lane. Of all of these the Old Vicarage is undoubtedly the oldest. When viewed from the church tower its original medieval hall house plan is unmistakable.



### **Cottage properties**

Amongst the cottage properties there are examples of medieval hall houses, e.g. the old school house off Thames Street and the Old Cottage in Pearson Road. There are also a number of 'baffle-entry' or lobby-entry houses in the village, typified by Ivy Cottage, Green House and Old Forge Cottage in Pearson Road as well as a number of houses in the High Street.

The majority of the buildings are two-storey and lit by leaded casement windows with elaborate latches (particularly in the High Street), sash windows or gable fronted dormer windows. Most dwellings have attractive windows and doors which retain and enhance the historical character of the buildings. Some have ornate porches, first floor string courses and fine cornices. There is a range of terraced and detached house types which tend to front the pavement or road side. Alterations and extensions have been done sympathetically resulting in historical features being maintained.

Although there are three groups of terraced dwellings, detached houses still dominate Thames Street. Here buildings are set back from the road and bounded by red brick walls or fencing, many with small front gardens and drive ways.

### **Other property types**

Many of the cottages in the High Street were modified, particularly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to accommodate shops. As a result there are large frontage display windows and (as in The Ivy on the east side), evidence of the trade practiced – a butcher's shop complete with hooks for the hanging of game.

The Bull and The Great House (formerly White Hart) are evidence of a long tradition of hospitality. A number of other public houses previously existed including Cleavers in the High Street (formerly the Butchers' Arms) and Rosemary Cottage in Pearson Road, which internally still retains its former 'serving hatch' on the passage through the property.

In Pearson Road adjacent to Old Forge Cottage is the restored original forge of the village which served as headquarters for Sidney Paddick's building business for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Pearson Rd, Old Forge

## 5.2 Listed Buildings

The Sonning Conservation Area is enriched by the high number of listed buildings within it. There are a total of 47 in all. The Deanery by Edwin Lutyens is Grade I listed and therefore of outstanding national architectural and historic interest. The garden at the Deanery by Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll is a Grade II\* listed Historic Park and Garden, as are St Andrew's Church and The Bull. Accordingly they have particularly great importance to the nation's built heritage. The remaining 43 buildings are all Grade II Listed and whilst of lesser significance individually do exhibit in

several circumstances a high 'group value' due to their proximity to each other and the character that they add to the Conservation Area.

A brief description of each listed building is provided in Appendix II.

## 5.3 Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Positive Buildings Enhancing Character

'Local Listing' is a non-statutory designation that recognises the architectural and historic interest of buildings that are not significant enough on their own to warrant full national listing. The Council has a local list of buildings which are described as Buildings of Traditional Local Character (BTLC's) and subject to MDD Local Plan Policy TB26. A number of these exist within the Conservation Area. There are also a number of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Both locally listed buildings (BTLC's) and positive buildings considered to enhance the character of the area are listed separately in Appendix III.

## 5.4 Building Styles, Materials and Colours

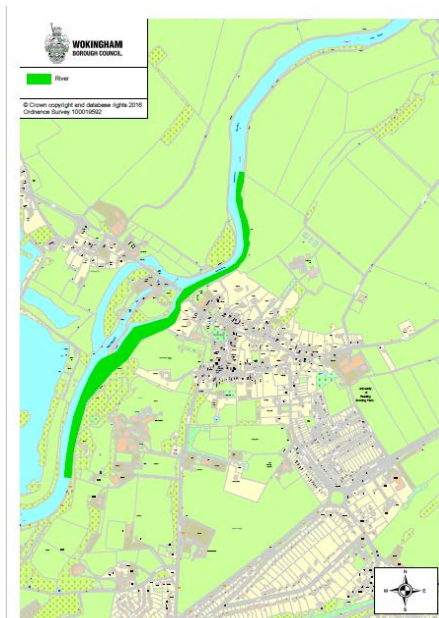
Although the village of Sonning is architecturally diverse the building materials used are similar throughout. Brick, timber framing with wattle and daub infill, render, tiled roofs and painted brick are the most common building materials. However the way these materials are used varies throughout the village. For example the use of brick ranges from solid red brick houses, timber framed buildings with painted brick infill, decorative brick or tile string courses and diamond pattern brick work. Further detail and examples can be found in Appendix I (Building Materials).

# 6. CHARACTER AREAS

To aid evaluation the Sonning Conservation Area has been divided into nine distinct Character Areas according to the particular nature of their boundaries, historical development, street pattern and layout, built form, and uses and activities. These are:

1. The River
2. The Churchyard
3. Thames Street
4. High Street
5. Pearson Road
6. Sonning Lane
7. Pound Lane
8. Charvil Lane
9. The 'Green' Boundary

The following individual appraisal of each Character Area concludes that the key positive and negative characteristics of each area, in relation to the Sonning Conservation Area, are as follows: -



## 6.1 The River

The Thames has long been an important feature of the village since the first settlement was founded here in Anglo-Saxon times. A considerable stretch of the river forms the north boundary of the Conservation Area from approximately 100 yards upstream of the Reading Blue Coat School Boat House along the towpath under Sonning Bridge to the edge of University farmland.



### Key positives

- Visitor traffic (walkers, cyclists, boating enthusiasts) is considerable at the Lock and a tearoom functions during the summer months.

School boathouse, a been decorated so as to surrounding natural

- Reading Blue Coat recent addition, has blend into the environment.

- Tranquillity characterises the area west of the lock with views across the river to the Oxford- shire bank that can be glimpsed through the trees.



- Towpath from the boathouse to the bridge, designated part of the Thames Path National Trail and a national cycle route, provides wide and well-maintained access that is used regularly by walkers, cyclists and runners.
- Riverbank is well tended by the Environment Agency and there is evidence of planting schemes in some places.
- Palings surrounding Bishops' Close and Reading Blue Coat School are distinctive and well maintained.
- East of the bridge a small public open grassed space,

The Wharf, with benches, provides a viewing 'platform' along the river's edge.

Originally the plot was where a ferryman operated a service. From here the eastern towpath is rough with pleasant views across the river and fields.

- The Great House Hotel forms an extensive backdrop to The Wharf. Its boundary hedge has recently been reduced in height, opening up the building and grounds to the river vista and allowing intervisibility.

### Key negative characteristics/issues

- The bridge experiences a large amount of vehicular traffic every day and the area can become congested at peak times. It is designated a 'weak bridge' and is subject to a 7.5T mgw weight restriction following a review of the safe loading that it can carry. Traffic is controlled by lights as the width of the bridge is only suitable for one lane of traffic and therefore queues can stretch back along Thames Street and its approach roads at times.
- An alternative river crossing is essential to allow vehicular traffic to by-pass the village.

- Health and safety requirements have led to a random and cluttered array of signs for both towpath users and boaters. These signs need to be rationalised and affixed in a more attractive manner.
- Moorings to the east of the bridge are in poor condition. They are less attractive than their equivalent west of the lock, where Environment Agency maintenance is evident.



## 6.2 The Churchyard

St Andrew's Churchyard lies at the heart of the village and can be accessed from four key locations: Thames Street, the High Street, the River and Pearson Road.

### Key positives

- St Andrew's Church dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century but was restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Woodyer. Although visually Victorian, it retains its medieval aisled plan, proportions and original high quality flintwork on the south aisle walls. The perpendicular tower is an important feature of the skyline and in its lower stages is of chequered flint and stone.
- The curtilage of the Church is well-maintained with a mixture of gravel and tarmac pathways. Tall mature trees provide

shade and there are a number of benches for visitors to enjoy quiet reflection. There are mowed lawns close to the church and some wilder areas in the wider graveyard.

- The south wall of the original churchyard is the boundary wall of the former Bishops' Palace. The wall is made of brick, some of which is 16<sup>th</sup> century. It incorporates an historic, arched opening salvaged from the London blitz and added in 1948 that provides



Church classic view 3



Churchyard from tower

access into the churchyard extension. Planning approval has been granted for the construction of a timber-framed building in this area for use by the church for parochial purposes.

- The burial place for Saxon skeletons discovered during works on the outside seating area of The Bull. The unmarked grave for the eight victims of the Sonning Cutting railway disaster of 1841. There are a large number of memorials to

local families surrounding the Church including the Mays, the Palmers and the Pearsons.

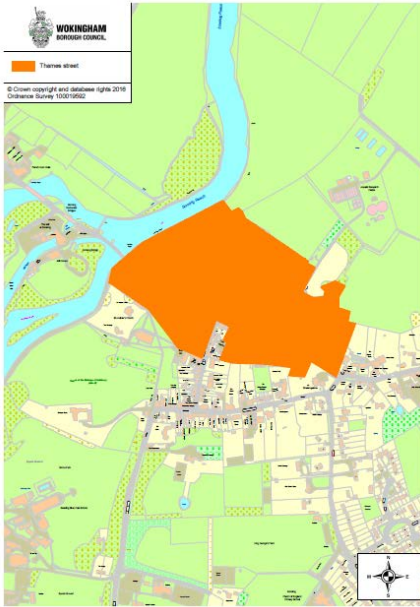
- The St Sarik Room in the southwest corner is an enlargement of a small mid-19<sup>th</sup> -century mortuary and a fine example of a 20<sup>th</sup> century construction that is proportionate and in full harmony with its surroundings.



Churchyard wall poor repairs 3

## Key negative characteristics/issues

- Vehicular access for visitors is only possible from the High Street. The limited disabled spaces near the High Street entrance are often used by patrons of The Bull and sometimes cause access and egress problems for visitors to the Church.
- Churchyard boundary walls need proper maintenance even where obscured from public view to avoid inappropriate repairs or additions by neighbours backing onto the churchyard. It is important to use appropriate repair materials and lime mortars.



### 6.3 Thames Street

The B478 Thames Street, formerly named Bridge Street, is the main traffic route through the village and connects with the single-track, weight restricted Sonning Bridge. It is located on the north side of the village and runs eastwards from Sonning Bridge to join Charvil Lane at the mini-roundabout. With a predominantly residential frontage it supports a wide range of properties dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are a small number of listed buildings located along the road (see Appendix II).

#### Key positives

- Building plots are quite large and a number of attractive small gardens provide a pleasant semi-rural feel to the area.
- Architecturally, no single style dominates. There is a range of flat fronted and gable fronted red brick, timber framed and rendered buildings spanning a broad period of time. Vernacular architectural features enhance the attractiveness and diversity of the area, including patterned brickwork, clay roof tiles and leaded windows.
- At the west end, adjoining the sharp bend leading to the river, the street-scene and architectural character changes considerably with white washed cottages with dormer windows predominating.
- The south side of the street west from the High Street to the bridge approaches is dominated by the massive presence of Lutyens' Deanery. The street elevation is characterised by few windows, pitched roofs and dark brickwork with a modest entrance door off the street leading to an inner courtyard. The service buildings are located on the opposite side of the street.



Thames Cottages (1)



Acre gate 1

- The Acre, now divided into two, was built as a country residence for the pre-raphaelite artist William Holman Hunt in 1901. Also of note is the old boys' school with attached schoolmaster's house of 1859 by Woodyer, now two properties: School Cottage and Masters.

- Of particular interest are the various groups of extant, mainly unlisted cottages hinting at the village's rural past. The three cottages facing the northern exit from the High Street include The Old Dairy, Elm Cottages, Greendown Cottages and Thames Terrace. Apart from the latter, these are brick-built with characteristic diaper patterns in the brickwork, and (in the case of The Old Dairy complex) in the roof tiles too.

**Key negative**

- Traffic intrusion, inappropriate principal negative to the character of are being raised in sense of semi-rural unfortunate sense of



TS aerials & dishes

**characteristics/issues**

highway safety and the use of materials on buildings are the issues. The other major threat this area is that boundary fences height thus negating the original openness and substituting an enclosure.



**6.4 High Street**

The High Street lies at the heart of the Conservation Area and runs north-west, joining Thames Street to Pearson Road. A westward-flowing stream causes the road to dip from both north and south. It runs into a culvert at the point of the dogleg in the road near the south-east corner of The Deanery and the village pump. The street acts as a conduit between the newer built fabric of Thames Street to the north and the historical buildings of Pearson Road to the south. Consequently, no single architectural style dominates, and it is this diversity that characterises the area. It provides access to The Bull and St Andrew's Churchyard.

**Key positives**

- 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings with frontages along the south part of this street.
- East side is home to a series of large rendered Georgian buildings set back from the road with low pitched roofs and large frontages (Brook House, the White House and White Lodge). Adjacent to the White House is the relatively small-scale flat red brick facade of St Anne's Cottage and the former butcher's shop.
- West side has smaller-scale timber framed buildings with painted white walls, gables and clay roof tiles fronting the narrow pavement.



Holmelea

- East side of the northern end is formed by a number of dwellings including the 18<sup>th</sup> century Cleavers Cottage, with its deep jetties, and Deanery Cottages. Closest to Thames Street is a small modern development, The Mews, composed of six terraced red brick buildings with tiled roofs and natural hardwood frames. It is a sympathetic modern contribution but lacks reference to the details of other properties in the vicinity.

- Formerly the village, High of listed the early 20<sup>th</sup> home to a businesses, The Ivy



Cleavers & Deanery Cottages

- Yorkshire sash Malt House, a number of buildings in Pearson Road.

main trading area of the Street contains a large number buildings (see Appendix II). By century, the High Street was number of shops and but none remain today except

windows are visible, e.g. on the frame type also employed in a



The Rookery

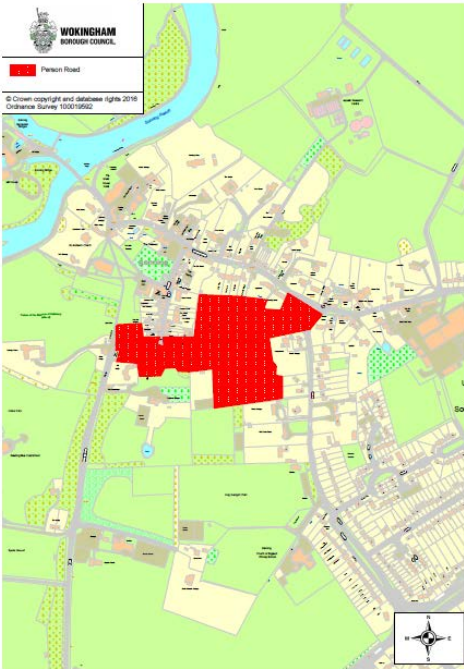
Key negative characteristics/issues

- The High Street suffers from the use of inappropriate external materials.
- The public footpath is particularly narrow and inconsiderate parking of vehicles can compel wheelchair users and buggies to use the road as well as

causing problems for partially sighted and blind persons.



HS, Cottages W at S end



## 6.5 Pearson Road

Pearson Road runs eastwards from its junction with Sonning Lane (adjoining North Lodge) to its mini-roundabout junction with Thames Street. It forms a major part of the historic centre of the village and has a very attractive character.

### Key positives

- Many fine buildings line this street, some dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and no single architectural style dominates. It is varied in its appearance and buildings range from two-storey dwellings with few gaps that front the road, to substantial detached properties set back from the road. This diversity gives the area its distinctive charm.
- A mixture of red brick and painted houses with old tiled roofs and tall chimneystacks line



Clandon, Yenton & Groveside 1

the western section of the street. Those on the north side front a narrow pavement and are smaller in scale than the properties on the south side, which are set back slightly from the road behind small gardens. The architectural diversity enhances the street scene when viewed from any direction.

- Along the south side are a series of very attractive 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century timber framed cottages including The Old Cottage, Sarum Cottage and York Cottage. They face larger 18<sup>th</sup> century brick built houses such as The Dower House.



PRd view S 1

- Robert Palmer Cottages built as Almshouses in 1850, are set back from the north side of Pearson Road. The Pearson Hall built in 1889, which is home to a Hair Salon, the Parish Office and Sonning Club, provides a social hub for the area. The group formed by the Robert Palmer Cottages (listed) and the Pearson Hall (unlisted) form an important reference point.
- Opposite the Pearson Hall is distinctive Sonningdene, an unlisted timber-framed building, which merits further historical and architectural analysis.
- The Grove and its ancillary buildings is

a major feature. It faces the High Street on either side of which are two key buildings with 18<sup>th</sup> century fronts: Green House to the west and Grove Cottage to the east.

The Dower House is another significant 16<sup>th</sup> century building with an 18<sup>th</sup> century facade, restored recently to the point that some of its original character has been lost.

- Various groups of cottages have group value recognised in the listing descriptions (see Appendix II).

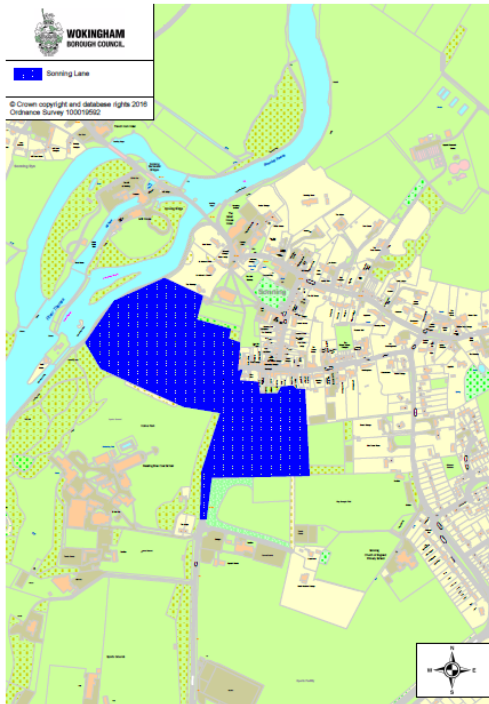


PRd scale of new buildings



## Key negative characteristics/issues

- In addition to the use of inappropriate materials on buildings, inconsiderate parking and traffic issues, the character of the street has been affected by out-of-scale and disproportionate developments.



## 6.6 Sonning Lane

Sonning Lane provides the south-westerly approach to the village from its 'T' junction with the A4 Maidenhead to Reading Road. The northerly section of the road slopes gently towards the core of the village, passing Reading Blue Coat School to the west and the grounds of the former Bishops' Palace before joining Pearson Road at a tight right hand bend adjoining the gates of North Lodge.

### Key positives

- North Lodge, gate piers and iron gates form a key focal point and closure of vista where Pearson Road running west turns south into Sonning Lane. The gates formerly provided the village entrance into Holme Park and are an original design by Woodyer.

- Bishops' Close, a recently completed modernist building, is

not easily seen from the 19<sup>th</sup> century gates, particularly when the large trees in the grounds are in full leaf and therefore does not compromise the historic character of the village.

- A significant part of the west side of the highway is bounded by an 18<sup>th</sup> century brick and flint wall, which encloses the grounds and forms part of North Lodge.
- Walls on the east side surround the former kitchen garden of The Grove in Pearson Road, and together with the Gatehouse have local significance as part of the service buildings for this dominant residence.



N Lodge gates & piers

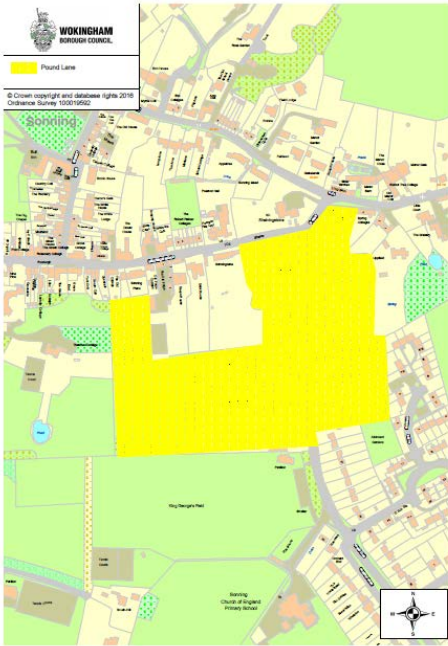
## Key negative characteristics/issues

- The northern section of the lane provides the only substantial visitor parking in the village, apart from such occasional vacant spaces as can be found in Pearson Road and the High Street. It is heavily used for mid-morning Sunday service and for other church/social events taking place in the heart of the village. Parking at busy times narrows the road down to a single lane and poses a threat to highway safety. Extensive school-time parking is a recent and growing temporary intrusion adjoining the school gates of Reading Blue Coat School.



Inglewood 1

- Although out of sight of passers-by, the informal 'industrial' area at Meade Park, at the western edge of the Conservation Area, is unattractive and in need of reorganisation and screen planting.



## 6.7 Pound Lane

Pound Lane forms the southern approach to Sonning from the A4 Maidenhead to Reading Road roundabout. It is one of the newer areas of the village with the majority of the properties being built in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Olde Tudor Place on the west side of road was the purpose-built home of Sidney Paddick, a builder who contributed significantly to the village through most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, restoring older properties and building new homes, chiefly in the council estate outside the Conservation Area. The stepped boundary of the Conservation Area lies on the lane approaching King George's Field, and from here Pound Lane slopes gently northwards towards the junction with Pearson Road.

### Key positives

- Houses are of polite suburban vernacular design and set back from the road behind driveways and well-kept front gardens. The majority are large two-storey buildings with a mixture of brick, half-timber and rendered construction under tiled roofs.
- Significance lies in the vestiges the street retains of its former function as a drove road, enabling cowherds to bring their cattle from grazing in what was rural Woodley to drink at the stream and at the pool that used to be at the bottom of the road. This 'custom' is commemorated through the maintenance by the Parish Council of a small nature reserve, The Pound, forming a natural barrier between the traffic and the recreational facilities of King George's Field. The Council also maintains the bank on the west side towards the north end of the street.
- The conversion of the Old Fire Station located on the east side of the road is welcome especially as the design recognises its historical context.



PL view E3

### Key negative characteristics/issues

- In addition to the use of inappropriate materials on buildings and 'rat-run' traffic issues, the closing of the view at the north-west end of the road with an extensive panelled wooden fence turns its back on the old drove road and detracts from the otherwise village character of the area.
- There are highway safety concerns about the effect of dropping-off young children at the Church of England Primary School.



## 6.8 Charvil Lane

Running west from the A4 Maidenhead to Reading Road roundabout the B478 Charvil Lane descends gently until it converges with Thames Street and Pearson Road at the mini-roundabout, forming the eastern approach to Sonning. There is a great sense of openness from this approach as the visitor passes through rural countryside to reach the built-up edge of the village. The University Farm is situated on either side of the road with a substantial complex of farm buildings on the south side of the road. Depending on wind direction farmyard smells can be detected throughout the village.

### Key positives

- One of the first buildings the visitor encounters is Little Court, a particularly attractive 18<sup>th</sup> century red brick building, with farm outbuildings once used as a University Office and now converted to form a range of high quality homes.

- The Manor House complex consists of a significant main house, cottages and various barns that formerly belonged to the Palmer family. The present configuration was the work of Paddick.
- Spring Cottages in their pairs of 1&2 and 3&4 have considerable group value in setting the 'tone' for Pearson Road. Their location on the outside of the bend makes them a visual 'gateway' to the village centre and establishes the character of the village.



Littlecourt extensions



No 1 & 2 Spring Cottages

- Within the Conservation Area, this is the only part of the village where its rural background is palpable with farm buildings and fields adjacent to the road.

### Key negative characteristics

- In addition to traffic pressure issues, the pavement on the south side of the road only extends as far as the entrance to the University Farm. As the most direct route to Charvil and Twyford for shops, transport connections and local schools, this

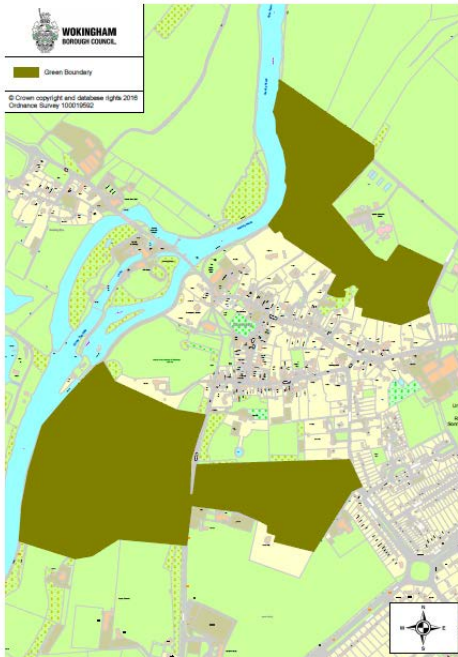
creates a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists who are exposed to traffic often travelling too fast on this winding road. There is no direct alternative public footpath route at present.

### Key Issues

- The 2014 planning approval for a 'barn-like' development opposite the farm complex has the potential to change the nature of this important semi-rural entrance to the village.
- The Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document (Local Plan) adopted 21 February 2014 identifies Land at Sonning Farm (off Glebe Gardens), Sonning as a reserve site in a limited development location for the delivery of around 25 dwellings (site ref. S0101). The visual impact of the development of the site on the Charvil Lane character

area must be assessed if the site is brought forward .

## 6.9 Green Boundary



Sonning Conservation Area is fortunate to include a 'green gap' to the north and south of the village bounded to the west by the Thames. Considered as an arc from northeast to southwest this belt comprises open agricultural land owned by the University of Reading, King George's Field on the western side of Pound Lane and the extensive grounds of Reading Blue Coat School which all contribute to the rural character of Sonning Lane.

### Key positives

- School House at Reading Blue Coat School is late 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century. Originally of five bays and remodelled in the Jacobethan style by Woodyer.
- Reading Blue Coat School, an independent secondary school with a long history going back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, moved to the former Holme Park in 1947. The site covers an area of approximately 20 hectares.
- Named after King George V and established in 1936, the large playing field of approximately 4 hectares provides Sonning with a valued, public recreational space. It is managed by the Sonning Parish Council and designated as a Field in Trust for sport, organised games and children's play.
- Extended by the Parish Council the Field now includes a designated Local Nature Reserve centred on Ali's Pond. This provides a peaceful green area near the centre of the village whilst simultaneously providing a valuable refuge for protected amphibian species, such as Great Crested Newts.
- The University Farm comprises an area of 180 hectares, which has belonged to the University since 1934. The land is used for growing crops and rearing young stock as well as educating students from the University.



RBCS School House 2



King Georges Field 4



Broadmoor Lane 1

### Key issues

- The Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document (Local Plan) adopted 21 February 2014 identifies Land at Sonning Farm (off Glebe Gardens), Sonning as a reserve site in a limited development location for the delivery of around 25 dwellings (site ref. S0101). The visual impact of development on the site on the green boundary

character area may need to be assessed if the site is brought forward for development.

- The disused sewage treatment works is just outside the Conservation Area on the north-west boundary. Any proposals to develop this isolated brownfield site should be the subject of close scrutiny since it will affect the character of the edge of the Conservation Area.



Sewage works

- Beyond the 'green gap' there are a number of privately run sports fields stretching from Pound Lane through to the escarpment above the river. Any intensification of use will need to be carefully considered as it may result in additional traffic flow through the conservation area. Poorly-designed floodlighting can cause light nuisance for residents whose homes back onto the edge of the 'green gap'.

## 7. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE



Aerial\_PearsonRoad\_ThamesSt\_CharvillLn-6728

The distinctive features of the Sonning Conservation Area include the following:

- Historic riverside village with a dense pattern of development made up of cottages and larger houses.
- Enclosed historic streets with limited public open areas other than the Churchyard and The Wharf.
- Several historically important buildings and plots relating to medieval ownership by the Bishop of

Salisbury and the Dean of Salisbury, due to geographic proximity and easy access to the Royal Court in Windsor.

- High quality 15<sup>th</sup> century and later buildings, reflecting a period of economic prosperity and investment.



HS view W 2



PR view from W

- 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings represent a later period of growth following improved access from London by rail for weekend and commuting.
- Dense development fronting onto narrow roads forms the historic core. Expansion after 1920 is confined to area outside the core, chiefly on the east side of Pound Lane.

- Materials are generally timber, brick and flint under tiled roofs providing coherence within the village despite construction over several hundred years.
- The buildings represent a broad range of local vernacular styles, as well as late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century alterations and additions to older buildings.
- Churchyard is large and centrally located providing an important open and airy space.
- Private long gardens to the rear of many houses, mostly hidden from public view.



PL view E 2

- Classic long street views and vistas that emphasise the village's rural origins.
- Green boundary defined by the river, the University Farm, King George's Field and other sports grounds that provides a buffer zone preventing urban creep from Reading and Wokingham towards the heart of the historic village.
- Historically the village provided a mix of residential development and commercial premises, including inns and shops, which served local needs and exploited passing trade. Apart from hotels, restaurants and a hairdresser none of these exist today. The Post Office closed in July 2005.

## 7.1 Vulnerability

The key threats to Sonning's character are:

1. Insensitive alterations and extensions to listed and unlisted properties that do not require planning permission introducing materials that are alien to the main ones in use: timber, brick, flint and tile. Inappropriate materials and finishes may include UPVC windows, hardwood doors and metal garage doors.
2. Pedestrian access is sometimes difficult in the south section of High Street and its junction with Pearson Road due to a combination of narrow pavements and inconsiderate parking. Buggies and wheelchairs are occasionally forced to use the highway with inevitable safety concerns.
3. Uncontrolled on street parking in the High Street, Pearson Road and Sonning Lane leads to narrowing of the available space for cars and pedestrians. This has a negative impact on the public transport system and affects those without their own transport, particularly the elderly.



HS parking

Other threats are:

- A possible proliferation of duplicate and unnecessary road signs.
- Proliferation of poorly-designed street furniture inappropriate to the riverside village character of the village.

## 7.2 Enhancement Opportunities

Where enhancement opportunities are unique to a particular character area, they are described in the appropriate section. However a number of generic enhancement

opportunities exist across the Conservation Area as a whole and are outlined below:



PRd boundaries

- Appropriate scaling of extensions or new building as well as attention to suitable matching building materials and replacement windows, doors and other fixtures and fittings. (Character areas 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).
  - Where appropriate, planted property boundaries (using appropriate hedging and shrubs) to eliminate the need for harsh and visually inappropriate materials (e.g. panelled wooden fencing, brick). (Character areas 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).
- The provision of wider and more even pavements, or shared-surface/traffic-calmed areas, particularly where parking can be dense, or pedestrian movement is hampered by

inconsiderate parking. The needs of wheelchair and buggy users should be considered. (Character areas 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).

# APPENDIX I BUILDING MATERIALS

All areas in the country have their own style of buildings often based upon locally sourced or vernacular materials. This applies particularly to buildings over 60-70 years old before building materials became stereotypical and nationally mass produced. The improvement in transportation of building materials made standardised building material available all over the country and therefore encouraged the loss of vernacular style and locally-sourced materials.

Despite this reality many vernacular styles are sustained by maintaining the use of local materials (recycled or otherwise). There is therefore a careful balance to be achieved in building design between keeping a local style without simply copying or making a pastiche.

## Brick

The Conservation Area derives its style and character in part from the local traditional materials. Most common are locally made red brick walls, often using bricks sourced from local kilns within a 20 mile radius. Because of local river clays there were many local brick



Berkshire bricks



N Lodge Bishops Close piers



Special brickwork

producers in and around the Reading-Maidenhead area producing bricks and tiles. The colour and texture of these bricks resulted from a combination of the particular local clay and the way in which they were fired. In many cases there is a multi-red



Patterned brickwork



Groveside extension

bricks mix. The same applies to tiles used both for roofing and for wall hanging, again often produced in the same brick works.

## Flint

Flint is another locally sourced building material which is commonly used on many buildings in the Conservation

Area including house walls & garden walls. By far the most prominent flint building is the local Church of St. Andrews, which is flint faced with stone dressings. Flints are found with chalk and are a type of mineral quartz. They are often cut into uniform shapes and knapped for use in buildings. This can be a highly skilled procedure.



St Sarik Room



Flint and stone



## ***Timber-framing***

The village has many timber framed buildings with original wattle and daub now infilled with panels of brick, flint, plaster and timber. There are also many converted barns in the area with walls finished in similar materials including feather edged boarding. The types of timber-frame used are set out in the description attached to each statutorily listed building (see Appendix II).



Timber framing 2



Timber framing

many years. Originally imported from Wales, slate is often used where shallow pitched roofs are necessary and this material can be found side by side with clay tiled roofs in the area. Although not predominant, slate roofs are found on many buildings in the Conservation Area.

## ***Slate***

Slate as a roofing material has been used locally over







peg tiles

## ***Future buildings in the Conservation Area***

It is difficult to be prescriptive either about the design of new buildings in the Conservation Area or their building materials. However guidance is available in the form of the Sonning Design Statement and the Wokingham 'Interactive Borough Design Guide'.

Detached buildings may be in a very modern style using new materials, indeed innovative design is to be encouraged where appropriate. If buildings are extended then materials matching the existing building are necessary in most cases (and the Council will ensure this by condition). In some cases, of innovative design, carefully considered contrasting materials may be appropriate. New bricks tiles and slates can now be successfully matched from further afield or by recycling of original materials. The materials and finish of a building can either make or break a good design and the approval of building materials for all new developments in the Conservation Area should be scrutinised particularly thoroughly.

## APPENDIX II LISTED BUILDINGS

List Entry Name and Description	Grade	Image
<p>SPRING COTTAGES, 1 AND 2 CHARVIL LANE (south side) SONNING            SU 7675 SONNING CHARVIL LANE (south side) Spring Cottages 15/4 Nos. 1 and 2. GV II Cottage, C17, altered and modernised, 2 storeys, timber framed with painted brick infill, old tile roof. North west gable has one bay of early C19 wood 3-light casements and C19 addition in painted brick with timber framing to right hand. Large C20 timber framed extension to rear of cottage and at right angles.</p>	2	
<p>SPRING COTTAGES, 3 AND 4 CHARVIL LANE (south side) SONNING            SU 7675 SONNING CHARVIL LANE (south side) Spring Cottages 15/5 Nos. 3 and 4. GV II Cottage, C17, modernised, 2 storeys timber framed with painted brick infill, old tile roof, irregular chimneys. North front has 4 bays of 3-light C20 leaded casement windows and 2 ledged doors near outer corners, each with flat moulded hood. C18 extension to left hand and later single storey extension with old tile roof to right hand.</p>	2	
<p>LITTLE COURT, CHARVIL LANE (south side) SONNING            SU 7675 SONNING CHARVIL LANE (south side) 15/3 Little Court II Farmhouse, now University office. Late C18, altered C19. 2 storeys painted brick dentil eaves, hipped old tile roof. North west front has 3 bays double hung sash windows with glazing bars plain reveals and cills, half glazed central door under wide flat hood and C20 half glazed door to right hand of centre. 2 storey angular bay on south west front and extension of one bay set back on north east end.</p>	2	
<p>THE BULL HOTEL, CHURCH APPROACH (south side) SONNING            SU 7575 SONNING CHURCH APPROACH (south side) 14/1 The Bull Hotel 26.1.67 GV II* Inn. Late C16 with C19-C20 addition projecting in front and at right angles on right hand. 2 storeys, timber framed with painted brick infill, colour washed brick ground floor front, old tile roof, gabled, irregular brick chimneys. West front has 5 irregular bays, in the first, second and fourth bays from left hand is upper projecting bay with gabled head. Second bay has cill supported on central bracket. 3-light early C19 wood casement windows left hand bay is over 3-light wood casement with door adjoining, the second over a similar 4-light window flanked</p>	2*	

by doors. The right hand half has a chimney with lean-to over lower part, and gabled bay to right hand. Interior has timber frame almost complete with all floor beams and joists chamfered and stopped with exception of service end. First floor casements are positioned in original openings, with original shutter grooves. Original window opening, now blocked but with diamond mullions, remains ground floor left hand rear north end. Queen post roof with clasped purlins, original rafters and large curved windbraces. B.O.E. Berkshire p.221. V.C.H. Vol III, p.210.

THE MALT HOUSE, CHURCH APPROACH (south side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING CHURCH APPROACH (south side) 14/2 The Maltings And The Malt House 26.1.67 GV II Malt House, now part house, part shop, C16 or earlier. Long one and a half storey building with later floor added. Timber framed with painted brick infill, part painted brick with rendered plinth. Old tile roof with one early C19 brick chimney offset on ridge, hipped east end, 7 modern casements of various sizes on first floor, 2-light leaded timber framed windows to east on first floor, 3 irregularly spaced windows with diamond mullions on ground floor with 2 modern wood doors. East corner jettied first floor, brick ground floor returning on to High Street with small braced and battened loading door. Interior has many original timber framed members visible.



DEANERY COTTAGE, 1 HIGH STREET (east side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (east side) 14/16 Deanery Cottage No. 1. Deanery Cottage No. 2. And Cleavers GV II 3 Cottages. Main part C18, 2 storeys, chequer brick, hipped old tile roof. South front has 2 dormers each 3-light casements, 2 doors under flat hoods in centre ground floor with 4-light casement to right hand under brick arch and C20 3-light window on corner left hand C17. Timber framed gable to right oversailing on large timber brackets, early 2-light casement window beneath. West front 4 bays of two, 3 and 4-light casements with glazing bars 4 C20 dormers breaking eaves. 3 chimneys, one central on ridge others offset. One later bay to left end recessed.



BROOK HOUSE, HIGH STREET (east side) SONNING 2  
 SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (east side)  
 14/15 Brook House 26.1.67 II GV House. Late  
 C18, 2 storeys painted brick, flat eaves on  
 widely spaced cut brackets, low pitched old  
 tile roof, flanking chimneys. Front elevation of  
 3 bays, vertical sliding sash windows with  
 glazing bars, plain reveals, cills. Angular bay  
 to right hand on ground floor with hipped lead  
 roof. 6 panelled central door around radiating  
 fanlight, flanked by reeded pilasters  
 supporting arched architrave. On left hand a  
 service wing of painted brick, 2 storeys,  
 contemporary with main building but re-  
 fronted.



COUNTRY COTTAGE, HIGH STREET (west side) 2  
 SONNING  
 SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (west side)  
 14/9 Country Cottage 26.1.67 GV II  
 Cottage. C16-C17 altered, timber framed  
 painted brick infill 2 storeys old tile roof, 2  
 framed bay crosswing, gabled on right hand  
 with one bay of leaded casement  
 windows, C20 panelled door in left hand  
 corner. One frame bay on left hand with  
 gablet breaking eaves.



HOMELEA, HIGH STREET (west side) SONNING 2  
 SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (west side)  
 14/10 Homelea GV II Cottage. C16-C17  
 altered, 2 storeys, 2 bay timber framed with  
 painted brick infill in upper part, ground floor  
 colour washed brick, old tile roof. 2 bays of  
 leaded casement windows, 2-light over 3-  
 light, and ledged central door. Interior: - much  
 of the original timber frame visible.



MIDLAND BANK, HIGH STREET (east side) SONNING 2  
 SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (east side)  
 14/12 Midland Bank, St. Anne's Cottage  
 17.7.81 And Sonning Butchers GV II Row of 3  
 houses now one house, shop and bank. Late  
 C17, early C18 altered, 2 storeys and attic,  
 brick plinth. First floor string, old tile roof, 2  
 rectangular brick chimneys with offset heads  
 in centre and left of centre. Front elevation has  
 one gabled dormer window, 5 upper 3-light  
 casement windows, 2 leaded, the remainder  
 C19, and 2 single upper lights. C19 shop and  
 door to left hand on ground floor, a 6-light  
 wood mullioned and transomed window, C19  
 lights under brick drip mould, a 4 panelled  
 door (St. Anne's) a similar window, a C20  
 door, a 3-light leaded casement in wood  
 frame, and a modern bow to right (The  
 Midland Bank).



PUMP, SOUTH END OF DEANERY WALL, HIGH STREET (west side) SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (west side)  
14/7 Pump, South End Of Deanery Wall GV II  
Pump, C19 cast-iron, with cast-iron trough  
surround. Inscribed - "The gift of D.Palmer  
Esq. MDCCCXLVI'.



THE OLD EXCHANGE, HIGH STREET (west side) SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (west side)  
14/11 The Old Exchange GV II House. C19  
front to older building, altered. 2 storeys,  
stucco on timber framing, old-tile roof. 2  
casement windows on first floor, vertical  
sliding sash with glazing bars left hand ground  
floor, former shop window to right hand and a  
2 panelled door between. Back of building  
timber framed with plaster infill.



THE THRIFT SHOP, HIGH STREET (west side) SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (west side)  
14/8 The Thrift Shop GV II House now part  
shop. C17 altered, 2 storeys, painted brick,  
some timber framing, old tile roof. Timber  
framed gable bay to left hand with original  
moulded barge board, large 2-light upper  
sliding casement window with glazing bars  
over C19 angular bay with hipped old tile roof,  
sliding casement with glazing bars in front. To  
right hand are 2 bays of similar upper  
casement windows, one similar to left hand on  
ground floor. Segmental headed 4 panelled  
central door under C19 gabled hood, and  
small later shop window 3-light to right hand.



THE WHITE HOUSE, HIGH STREET (east side) SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (east side)  
14/14 The White House 26.1.67 GV II House.  
Early C19, 2 storeys, painted brick, wide  
eaves cornice, hipped slate roof. 3 bay west  
front divided by panelled pilasters the whole  
height, with bed mould of cornice carried  
round to form a cap, panelled string at first  
floor level between pilasters. Vertical sliding  
sash windows with glazing bars in plain  
reveals, cills first floor, similar but taller on  
ground floor and 4 panelled central door,  
rectangular fanlight with diamond pattern



glazing under flat hood on square posts with incised lines. Door approached by a flight of stone steps with outward curving dwarf walls. B.O.E. Berkshire p.221.

THE WHITE LODGE, HIGH STREET (east side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (east side)  
14/13 The White Lodge 26.1.67 GV II Former stables of the White House, now house. C19, 2 storeys, colour washed brick, hipped slate roof. Front elevation has 4 bays vertical sliding sash and casement windows all with glazing bars and plain reveals. Coach door and door with radiating fanlight in right hand corner. Included for group value.



WALL TO THE DEANERY, HIGH STREET (west side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING HIGH STREET (west side)  
14/6 Wall To The Deanery GV II Wall. C16, brick, deep brick weather coping on toothed string. Encloses the garden to The Deanery on the north, east and part south sides.



FORGE COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (south side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (south side)  
14/28 Forge Cottage GV II House. C17, early C18 'baffle entry' house, altered, 2 storeys, brick, timber framing and Queen post roof visible in gable ends. Old tile roof, central chimney. 2-bay north front, Left hand bay 3-light leaded casement windows, ground floor segmental headed, a similar upper window to right hand. Ledged central door under flat hood on cut brackets. Outshut to rear and 2 storey brick gabled C19 extension. A 4-light C20 leaded window on ground floor west gable.



SARUM COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (south side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (south side) 14/30 Glendale, Sarum Cottage and 26.1.67 York Cottage GV II 3 Cottages. C16 and C17, altered, 2 storeys and attic, lower part timber framed with colour washed brick infilling, upper part rendered and colour washed, old tile roof, one chimney to east of centre and one at west end with C17 brick base, later brickwork above. First floor oversails on plain brackets. North front has 3 upper 3-light leaded casement windows over rectangular bays on ground floor, 3-light leaded casements in front and narrow side lights in wood frames, small cornice heads. 2 doors grouped in centre, 2-panelled right and ledged to left. East gable end has central attic light, irregular leaded casements and door below. West gable has small 3-light diamond mullioned window ground floor. C17 extension to left, known as Glendale, 2 storeys, colour washed brick, old tile roof. One bay of 2-light leaded segmental headed casements on ground floor with shutters and one blocked upper window to left and blocked doorway below.



GREEN COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (north side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/22 Green Cottage GV II Cottage. Late C17 early C18, 2 storeys painted brick front on older timber framed building, framing visible at rear. Old tile roof, chimney central on ridge. 2 bays of casement windows 4-light to right hand and 3-light to left. Half glazed door under flat hood on cut brackets, left hand corner.



GREEN HOUSE, PEARSON ROAD (north side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/23 Green House GV II House. C18 refronting of earlier building, 2 storeys, painted brick, old tile roof, 3 irregular bays, plain parapet. Vertical sliding sash windows with glazing bars and reveals, stone cills and 6 panelled door to left of centre, door under moulded hood on cut brackets. Interior: - has timber panelling throughout main portion, left hand part timber framed. Brick cellar.



GROVE COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (north side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/24 Grove Cottage GV II Cottage. Early C18, much altered, 2 storeys, painted brick, first floor string, painted moulded and bracketted eaves cornice, hipped old tile roof, central chimney with offset head and pilasters. South front originally had 5 bays, the centre upper window a narrow 2-pane sash, remainder 3 panes wide, second from right blocked, and outer windows also. All windows have segmental heads. Centre 3 bays on ground floor covered by early C19 closed stucco porch, altered, originally with 4 slender columns and entablature, now filled in with brickwork, 6 panelled central door, small lights in outer panels. Insurance plaque on front elevation. Altered service wing to left. Interior some timber panelling on ground floor.



IVY COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (north side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSOR ROAD (north side) 14/20 Ivy Cottage GV II Cottage. C17 timber framed, 2 storey, old tile gabled roof. Front recently restored with rendered infill and false timbers on lines of original beneath. 2 bays of 3-light leaded casements in flood frames, 4 panelled central door under flat hood. Chimney central on ridge, smaller on gable end. Interior: - timber framing evident throughout building, including arch braces and Queen posts in roof. Ground floor joists chamfered and stopped.



K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK OUTSIDE PEARSONS HALL,  
PEARSON ROAD (north side) SONNING

2

SU 7475-7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/49 K6 telephone kiosk outside Pearsons Hall GV II Telephone kiosk. Type K6. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by various contractors. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door.





LILAC COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (south side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (south side) 14/32 Lilac Cottage GV II Former service wing of The Grove together with Roxburgh and Corner Cottage (qv) now house. C17/C18 2 storeys, painted brick, old tile roof, lattice porch with concave lead roof and small windows to right, 4-light leaded casement to left. First floor 3-light vertical sliding sashes to left and 2-light casement above porch.



TURPINS, PEARSON ROAD SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/18 Turpins & Riches 26.1.67 (Formerly listed as GV Turpins) II House, now 2 houses. Late C16 with some modern additions, two storeys brick, old tile gabled roof. South front is triple gabled with one chimney on ridge between 2 left hand gables, and one at right hand end, both rectangular with diagonal pilasters, offset heads carried round heads of pilasters. 2 right hand gables have first floor string. Each gable has one bay with additional bay between the right and centre gables. Windows are 3-light leaded, those on ground floor in painted moulded wood frames, some lights have original fastenings. Plain shutters to ground floor windows on left and centre. East front has timber framed gable with brick infilling to left, a central timber framed gable projecting and a C20 extension to right. C20 lean-to porch across ground floor to left hand, rendered. Original building was T- shaped, the gabled wing at rear taller. West front has hipped end of main block to right, a C20 entrance at angle and C20 extension to left. Interior, many timbers of original frame exposed, chamfers and stops to joists on ground floor and central first floor room.



ROSEMARY COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (north side)  
SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/21 Rosemary Cottage And Sunnyside GV II 2 Cottages. C18 front on older building, 2 storeys painted brick, first floor string. Old tile roof. Rosemary Cottage has one bay of 2-light leaded casement windows, ground floor with shutters and half glazed door under flat hood in right hand corner. Sunnyside has one bay of 2-light sliding casements with glazing bars and C20 door in left corner. Timber frame with brick infill visible at rear.



CORNER COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (south side) 2  
SONNING

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (south side) 14/33 Roxburgh And Corner Cottage GV II Former part service wing to The Grove, now house. Late C17 early C18 altered, 2 storeys, colour washed brick, old tile roof. Projecting timbered gable to right with 3 light leaded casements on first floor and 4-light casement ground floor. Battened door under flat hood to extreme right. Left hand 3-light leaded casement on ground floor, 3-light vertical sliding sash above.



HAMMERING HOUSE, PEARSON ROAD (north side) 2  
SONNING,

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/26 Sonning House And Hammering House 30.7.75 GV II One house now 2 houses. Late C18, 3 storeys, brick, offset eaves, hipped old tile roof, flanking chimneys. South front has 3 bays, outer upper large 4-pane sash windows, segmental headed, 3-light wood casements on ground floor. Centre bay has upper blocked vitreous panels over 6 panelled central door, upper panels glazed, architrave frame, cut brackets and cornice hood. Set back from road, late C18 wrought iron railings with gate across front. C20 2 storey extensions to left and right.



THE DOWER HOUSE, PEARSON ROAD (north side) 2  
SONNING

SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/25 The Dower House 1.8.52 GV II House. Early C18 refronting of older building. 2 storeys and attic, chequer brick with red dressing and quoins, moulded first floor string, moulded and bracketted, painted wood cornice, hipped old tile roof, large chimneys to east and to north west. South front has 3 C19 gabled dormers and 5 bays, vertical sliding sash windows with glazing bars in architrave frames, the upper with sun-blind cases, 4-panelled central door in shallow panelled reveals, doorcase of fluted Doric pilasters, supporting entablature with triglyph frieze. Adjoining section to east refronted C18, altered timber frame at back, 2 storeys brick, first floor string hipped old tile roof. 3 bays upper sash windows with architrave frames, ground floor 2-light casements with lattice leading.



THE SONNING GROVE, PEARSON ROAD SONNING 2  
SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (south side) 14/31 The Grove (Formerly listed as 26.1.67 The Sonning Grove) GV II House. Early C17, 2 storeys and attic, painted stucco on timber frame. Old tile roof, flanking chimneys, left hand with 3 diagonal shafts rebuilt on original base. North front has 3 flush gables with tympana slightly projecting and a 2-light early C19 sliding casement with glazing bars in each gable. Outer gables have 2 bays below, sash windows with heavy glazing bars in architrave frames. Central gable has 2 similar upper windows and 6-panelled central door in moulded architrave surround under entablature hood with carved foliage in frieze and carved drops at corners. V.C.H. Vol.111.page 210.



THE OLD COTTAGE, PEARSON ROAD (south side) SONNING 2  
SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (south side) 14/29 The Old Cottage 26.1.67 GV II House. Early C15 hall house altered, 2 storeys, timber framed, painted brick infilling, old tile roof, central chimney inserted C17, and later chimney to east end. North front has gable to left, one bay of 4-light leaded windows, one irregular bay of 3-light leaded casements to right of gable, a small C20 single light and to right hand coupled 3-light leaded upper casements over a 3-light window on ground floor and C20 door in right corner. Large C20 extension to rear. Smaller gabled extension to east in painted brick. Interior: - most of timber frame visible including large roof purlins and wind braces heavily sooted. Large scissor brace truss in roof. Ground floor room right contains old carved heads and a carved panel, reputedly from the former Bishops Palace.



THE ROBERT PALMER COTTAGES, PEARSON ROAD (north side) SONNING 2  
SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/27 The Robert Palmer Cottages GV II Almshouses. 1850. One storey and attic, brick, tile roof, with projecting central gabled entrance flanked by 3 bays of gabled dormers over 4-light stone mullioned windows. 6 tall brick chimneys central on ridge with diagonal shafts. Small C20 extension at rear. V.C.H. Vol.111. p.225.



WISTERIA, PEARSON ROAD (north side) SONNING 2  
SU 7575 SONNING PEARSON ROAD (north side) 14/19 Wisteria GV II Cottage. C18, one storey, chequerbrick with red dressings, old tile roof hipped to right hand. South front originally of 4 bays, 2-light leaded casement windows in segmental headed wood frames with shutters and 6 panelled door in moulded wood frame in second bay from left. Later extension to left hand.



GATES AND PIERS TO NORTH LODGE, SONNING 2  
LANE (west side) SONNING  
SU 7575 SONNING SONNING LANE (west side) 14/42 Gates And Piers To North Lodge GV II Gates. A pair of wrought-iron entrance gates with decorative ironwork over with date 1381 in centre panel. Small side gate to match on left under elliptical brick arch. Wrought-iron lantern on left hand gate pier contemporary with gates. Large brick gate piers with dentil course and large pyramidal brick caps. Built within and part of wall to right enclosing Bishops Close. The whole with North Lodge forms a picturesque group.



NORTH LODGE, SONNING LANE (west side) 2  
SONNING  
SU 7575 SONNING SONNING LANE (west side) 14/41 North Lodge GV II Lodge now cottage. C19. One storey and attic, late Victorian lodge in Gothick style. Irregular on plan, brick walls with flint decorative courses. Leaded casement windows, stone mullions and transomes, stone dressings. Dormer windows on side elevations, stair turret to rear. Tile roof. East front is part of and a continuation of old brick and flint wall bounding Bishops Close. 6-light casement window with stone drip mould and label hood, upper 4-light oriel window. Toothed brick course at top of wall under shaped coping bricks. Square fluted multiple shaft central chimney. Stone copings on gable ends with stone finials. C20 extension to left.



WALL SOUTH OF NORTH LODGE, SONNING LANE (west side) SONNING 2

SU 7575 SONNING SONNING LANE (west side) 14/48 Wall South Of North Lodge GV II Wall. C18 brick and flint wall 2 metres high approximately 80 metres long. Brick on edge coping. Included for group value.



OLD SCHOOL HOUSE (WEST OF TRACK AND 45 METRES NORTH OF THAMES STREET), THAMES STREET (north side) SONNING 2

SU 7575 SONNING THAMES STREET (north side) 14/34 Old School House (West Of Track And 45 Metres North Of Thames Street) - II House. Early C16 much altered and modernised. A 2 framed bay 'hall house' with one framed bay service wing at rear. Large C19 extension to right. The hall house of one and a half storeys has been refaced on south front in modern times in brick with two 3-light dormers breaking eaves, tile hung gablets and one 2-light door to left, Two 3-light casements on ground floor with brick soldier courses over. C20 lean-to extension on left with tile roof. C16 timber frame of good quality visible on east gable with brick infill. Old service wing of 2 storeys and a lower ground floor, with old tile roof. Re-faced C17 with brick on old flint base and large chimney added centrally on ridge, 3 course brick plat band at first floor level. Windows 3-light leaded casements. Interior timber frame of good quality visible with large old timber joists over lower ground floor. Later joists at first floor. Said to have been used as a school house in Elizabethan times.



PILGRIMS, THAMES STREET (north side) SONNING 2

SU 7575 SONNING THAMES STREET (north side) 14/35 Pilgrims GV II 2 Cottages now one house. C17 or earlier, one storey and attic, part timber framed, part brick, old tile roof, large chimney to right of centre. South front has 3 irregular bays, gabled dormer windows over 3-light casements all leaded and half glazed C20 door between left and centre bays. Small stair window at rear and timber framing. Much altered and with large C20 extension at rear.



RESTAURANT AND ANNEX TO WHITE HART, THAMES STREET (north side) SONNING 2

SU 7575 SONNING THAMES STREET (north side) 14/37 Restaurant And Annex To White Hart GV II Cottages, now restaurant and bedroom annex to hotel. C17-C18 much altered, 2 storeys colour washed brick and roughcast, old tile roof. West front has 5 tile hung gabled bays and 5 doors. North front has irregular windows and 2 doors. All windows leaded casements. Included for group value.



SONNING BRIDGE (THE PART WITHIN WOKINGHAM DISTRICT, BERKSHIRE), THAMES STREET (north side) SONNING 2

SU 7575 SONNING THAMES STREET (north side) 14/38 Sonning Bridge (The Part Within 1.8.52 Wokingham District, Berkshire) GV II Road bridge. Built 1780-1790 and sketched in 1792 by Samuel Ireland. Brick, plain parapet. Large arch roughly in centre flanked by flat brick band and pilasters. 4 lower arches divided by cut-waters on the Oxfordshire side. 4 similar arches on Berkshire side. B.O.E.Berkshire p.220. V.C.H. Vol.111.p.210.



THE DEANERY, THAMES STREET (south side), SONNING 1

SU 7575 SONNING THAMES STREET (south side) 14/40 The Deanery 1.8.52 GV I Built in 1901 for Edward Hudson the owner of County Life by Sir Edwin Lutyens. Gardens laid out by Gertrude Jekyll. Behind and incorporating the massive C16 brick wall listed separately (See High Street wall to The Deanery). 2 storey brick with some exposed timbers. Clay tile roofs with wide overhanging eaves. Built round inner courtyard, with main block to south and wings reaching back to old wall. Garden front to south has large, full height, square glazed timber framed bay with hipped roof, semi-circular arched door and feature chimney stack set forward of main wall with 3 grouped diamond shafts above, casement windows immediately below eaves and mullioned and transomed casements in ground floor. Other large grouped stack on ridge and to rear. B.O.E.Berkshire p.220.



THE LITTLE DEANERY, THAMES STREET (south side) 2  
SONNING

SU 7575 SONNING THAMES STREET (south side) 14/39 The Little Deanery 26.1.67 II Cottage. C16 or earlier altered early C19, 2 storeys and cellar, timber framed, rough cast on north west front, old tile roof half hipped to north east flanking chimneys. North west front has 4 bays of large 2-light sliding wood casements, each light 3 panes wide by 4 panes high, right hand ground floor bay a small rectangular bay with similar glazing. Door in arched lattice porch with flat roof roughly in centre. North east has timber framing exposed. Interior most timber frames visible with diagonal bracing in flank walls.



THE RED HOUSE, THAMES STREET (north side) 2  
SONNING

SU 7575 SONNING THAMES STREET (north side) 14/36 The Red House 1.8.52 GV II House. Late C18 with C19 addition. 2 storeys, brick, cornice string, parapet with brick coping, hipped old tile roof. Original build to west. South front has 3 bays of sash windows in reveals with glazing bars, those on ground floor later C19. 6 panelled door in arched panelled reveal, radiating wreathed wrought-iron and cast lead fanlight, plain arched surround. West front has 3 bays, sash windows and one storey angular bay to left on ground floor with C19 windows. C19 addition to east. South front has wide angular bay whole height and 2 bays of sash windows to right. The addition is similar in character to main part of the house. V.C.H. Vol. 111.p.210.



CHURCH OF ST ANDREW, SONNING 2\*

SU 7575 SONNING 14/43 Church Of 26.1.67 St. Andrew GV II\* Church. Originally Norman. Flint with stone dressings and tile roof. Exterior almost entirely re-built. Perpendicular tower of cheque flint and stone has 3 stages and battlemented parapet. South door has a roll mould surround, over it a Norman window, 2 lancets in an arched surround with a shell shape in tympanum. Completely restored in 1853, further restorations between 1870-1890. Furnishings almost entirely C19. Original choir screen remains, now used as an organ screen. Delicate tracery at head of each bay and there is a late Perpendicular archway between chancel and the north chapel. Early English nave arcades with rebuilt clerestory. East window decorated. MONUMENTS North Aisle. Monument to Anne Clark wife of Sir John Clark of Walford Co. Warwick. 1653. A bust in a circular niche with architrave surround, side swags, flanking pilasters, broken entablature, segmental pediment with central cartouche of arms, carved base. Adjoining are 2 carved stone armorial



monuments. Hidden by the organ is a monument with barley sugar columns. South Aisle. A kneeling figure in niche with drapery, flanking columns on scroll corbels, and arched head. Katherine, Lady Lidcott, 1620. On south wall are some figures from a C16 tomb found during the 1853 restoration. Under the tower - The Rich monument. 4 white marble cherubs carrying a black marble table on which stand 2 large carved urns with inscriptions. Under the table is carved heaped drapery and a cartouche of arms lying flat: Other monuments include one to William Barker of Sonning, 1758 by Westmacott, brasses to the Barker family, C15, C16 and C17 and one to Lord Stowell, 1836. B.O.E. Berkshire p.219-220 V.C.H. Vol.111. p.219-222.

ICE HOUSE APPROXIMATELY 80 METRES SOUTH WEST OF CHURCH ON SITE OF FORMER PALACE OF BISHOPS OF SALISBURY, SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING 14/45 Ice House  
Approximately 80 Metres South West Of Church On Site Of Former Palace Of Bishops Of Salisbury - II Ice House. C18 brick conical structure located below ground for ice storage to former Bishops Palace. Included for historical interest.



WALL BETWEEN SITE OF FORMER PALACE OF BISHOPS OF SALISBURY AND CHURCHYARD, SONNING

2

SU 7575 SONNING 14/44 Wall Between Site 26.1.67 Of Former Palace Of Bishops Of Salisbury And Churchyard GV II Wall. Brick, part C16 brickwork, deep weathered coping on dentil string. New large central brick arched opening added 1948.






# APPENDIX III BUILDINGS OF TRADITIONAL LOCAL CHARACTER AND POSITIVE BUILDINGS ENHANCING CHARACTER

In Table 1 below are buildings that are currently locally listed as Buildings of Traditional Local Character and subject to MDD Local Plan Policy TB26.

In Table 2 below is a separate list of buildings which are not subject to MDD Local Plan Policy TB26 but are nevertheless considered to be Positive Buildings Enhancing Character.

**Table 1 – Buildings of Traditional Local Character (subject to MDD policy TB26)**

Character Area	Building Name and Description	Image
CHURCHYARD	<p><b>ST ANDREW'S ACRE (FORMER VICARAGE, RESTORED WOODYER)</b></p> <p>Core dates back to at least C 16<sup>th</sup>, possibly an open hall, later floored. Repairs and substantial alterations in 1858 by Woodyer include hung tiling which conceals the earlier timber frame. A vicarage has stood on the land between the church and river since the C 12<sup>th</sup>.</p>	
THAMES STREET	<p><b>THE GREAT HOUSE HOTEL</b></p> <p>Oldest part facing road is 2 storey timber framed and probably 17<sup>th</sup> century. Roof form is complex comprising hipped and gabled sections to 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century additions with flat roof to single storey 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century additions facing river and to the north. Occupies a prominent location at the river crossing. Formerly The White Hart Hotel.</p>	
	<p><b>GREENDOWN COTTAGES (GROUP VALUE)</b></p> <p>Probably 19<sup>th</sup> century estate cottages, one and a half storeys with gabled windows within clay-tiled roof. Brick with evidence of diaper work using burnt headers for decoration. Enlarged unevenly in 20th century.</p>	

**THE HILL, HILL COTTAGE, THE OLD DAIRY  
(GROUP VALUE)**

Row of three probably 19<sup>th</sup> century two-storey cottages with prominent gables, with brick coping. Brick with evidence of diaper work using burnt headers for decoration. Diaper pattern also in the clay roof tiles, uneven in appearance due to asymmetry of the gables. Tiled canopies to the two Thames Street entrances. Windows all renewed with uPVC.



**MASTERS & SCHOOL COTTAGE  
(WOODYER)**

Built 1859 by Woodyer as a Schoolroom (now School Cottage) and house for the Master (now Masters). 1.5 storey with steeply pitched clay tiled gabled roof and walls of lively polychrome brickwork. Upper storey lit via steeply pitched gabled dormers. Roofline punctuated by spikey bell-cote. Functioned as school until 1965 when it was converted to two dwellings by Sidney Paddick.



PEARSON  
ROAD

**CLANDON, YENTON & GROVESIDE (GROUP  
VALUE)**

Row of three late 19<sup>th</sup> century two-storey cottages at one stage believed to have been built by H Woodyer. Steep gables to the street, with timber-frame detail and tumbled, gauged brickwork at apex, simple barge boards and distinctive pendants of turned timber. Brick richly decorated with diaper patterns. Casement windows part renewed. Groveside sensitively extended.



**LAUNDRY COTTAGE**

18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century two-storey brick dwelling originally one of the service buildings for The Grove, providing a laundry. Internally principal room timber-framed and lofty as it was the drying area. Former wash-room, now the kitchen, accessed via steep stairs beside fireplace. Original casement windows to front.



#### GROVE END

18<sup>th</sup> century brick, one and a half storey, dwelling adjoining (east of) The Grove. Two ground storey timber leaded casements flanking a half glazed 20<sup>th</sup> century porch with hipped tiled roof. Two flat roofed dormers with timber leaded casements. To the east is a prominent hipped corner dormer with leaded casements. Clay tiled roof with large stack to east gable.



#### SONNINGDENE

16<sup>th</sup> century, or later, two-storey timber-framed dwelling, extended. Clay tile roofs. Mix of casement and sash windows. Detailed analysis would be useful to establish development.



#### SONNING LANE

#### THE GATEHOUSE

19<sup>th</sup> century, single storey, red brick with hipped old tiled roof. Distinctive chimney with two angular shafts. Timber casement windows. Canted oriel window to south elevation. 19<sup>th</sup> century maps indicate this building was associated with Sonning Grove.



#### GREEN BOUNDARY

#### SCHOOL HOUSE, READING BLUECOAT SCHOOL (FORMER HOLME PARK)

Large house now private school. Originally a symmetrical 2.5 storey, C 18<sup>th</sup>, 7 bay building in yellow-grey stock brickwork, refurbished and remodeled during the C 19<sup>th</sup> by Woodyer. Seven bays of north front now articulated by projecting gables and porch of knapped flint with stone window dressings and red brick. South elevation in typical Woodyer style with turrets, rainwater heads and range of window styles – mullioned, gothic, oriel and dormer. Chapel in projecting wing has 3 gothic windows under squared heads. Service wing projects forward to southeast with first floor oriels to west and south elevations.



**Table 2 – Positive Buildings Enhancing Character (Not subject to MDD Policy TB26)**

Character Area	Building Name and Description	Image
RIVER	<p><b>LOCK-KEEPERS HOUSE</b>                      1916, three-bay one and a half-storey dwelling with central gable to the front, bearing date-stone. Brick with clay-tile roof. Replacement windows and doors.</p>	
	<p><b>ST SARIK ROOM</b>                      2000 by Nicholas Whiteley. Sensitive extension and adaptation of existing mortuary chapel. Single-storey. Flint with stone quoins and dressings, barge board detailing prominent throughout. Clay tile roofs with terracotta finials.</p>	
THAMES STREET	<p><b>THE ACRE &amp; LONG ACRE (GROUP VALUE)</b>                      c.1901 by W G A Hambling. House built for use of William Holman Hunt, whose country 'cottage' this was until his death in 1910. Two-storey house with long, unpretentious frontage. Assorted gables fit in with vernacular of the street. Rendered in colour-washed pebbledash, clay-tiled roofs. Arched gateway, stone arch with spheres above brick piers, wrought iron gate with squirrel feature. Divided into two dwellings in 20<sup>th</sup> century.</p>	
	<p><b>Elm Cottages (GROUP VALUE)</b>                      Probably 19<sup>th</sup> century estate cottages, one and a half storeys with (modern?) gabled windows within clay-tiled roof. Brick with evidence of diaper work using burnt headers for decoration. Substantially enlarged in 20<sup>th</sup> century.</p>	
	<p><b>POOL COURT</b>                      c. 1957 by Francis Pollard, Single</p>	

storey brick, with deep clay-tile roofs

PEARSON  
ROAD

THE OLD FORGE

18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century single storey brick-faced building adjacent to Old Forge Cottage. Steeply pitched clay-tile roofs. Leaded casement windows part of 1953 refurbishment by Sidney Paddick, who used the building and the yard behind as the HQ for his building firm.



PEARSON HALL AND COTTAGE

1889, built by public subscription in gothic style. Fine brickwork with tumbling on buttresses and chimneys. Hood moulds in brick around gothic windows, decorated with fine terracotta panels. Clay tile roofs with asymmetrical gables of varying dimensions.



SONNING  
LANE

THATCHED COTTAGE

c. 1920, Arts & Crafts style house, rendered in colour-washed pebble-dash. Irregular fenestration. Thatched.



CHARVIL  
LANE

MANOR GATE, MANOR CLOSE, OLD  
MANOR COTTAGE AND MANOR BARN

Complex of late medieval (or later) domestic dwellings and farm buildings, much modified by Sidney Paddick in 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mostly rendered in colour-washed pebbledash, clay tile roofs. Garden at Manor Barn has Jekyll-inspired features, water features in particular.



## APPENDIX IV

## ARCHAEOLOGY

The village of Sonning lies on the east bank of the River Thames. Like most of the Thames Valley, a focus for settlement and exploitation through the millennia, there is evidence of activity on the Valley Gravels in Prehistoric times. This includes Mesolithic and Neolithic stone tools, Bronze Age metalwork and Iron Age pottery. Many of these finds have been dredged from the River Thames. Stray finds of pottery and a coin also indicate a Roman presence in the area.

Sonning is an Anglo-Saxon place name, indicating the settlement of Sunna's people. Documentary evidence for a settlement at Sonning is recorded in a charter dated AD 964. Saxon activity includes spearheads and a brooch dredged from the nearby river and archaeological investigations at St Andrew's Vicarage have revealed a ditch containing Saxon pottery. During an archaeological salvage excavation at The Bull Inn an inhumation cemetery dating to the Late Saxon period was revealed. The presence of intact Saxon burials clearly demonstrates that the site was previously part of a formal cemetery in use for some time. These burials may relate to pilgrims, clergy or monks. Sonning was an important Saxon religious centre, being a see in itself. Documentary evidence refers to a shrine to St. Sarik at Sonning in 1220. The antiquity of the shrine is not known, but it is possible that there was an important shrine to St. Sarik at Sonning during the Saxon period. It is also possible that the Saxon Minster church was located on, or very close to the site where the burials were found, or that the Minster church was beneath the present Church of St Andrew. No trace now remains of the Saxon Minster church and it is possible that evidence of Saxon origins was lost at the time of the heavy restoration work on the originally Norman Church of St Andrew in 1853.

Archaeological investigations have revealed evidence of medieval occupation at a number of sites within the village. Investigations at St Andrew's Vicarage revealed a concentration of 'rubbish' pits and other features containing pottery and animal bone representing several phases of use from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century. The artefacts are indicative of occupation of a fairly high status establishment somewhere nearby. It is suggested that the site may relate to a medieval vicarage mentioned in an undated deed, with the boundary of the medieval vicarage approximately equating with the modern property.

Two medieval parallel gullies, one containing pottery sherds and animal bone were excavated at Old Walls, Sonning. Investigations at the Bull Hotel revealed a ditch-type feature, two pits and a substantial hearth, containing late 12<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> century medieval pottery all indicating either domestic or industrial use of the area. At Greendown, Pearson Road a medieval pit was found and a ditch, pits and gullies at Bishops Close.

From the 11<sup>th</sup> century to 1574 the manor of Sonning belonged to the Bishops of Salisbury, who maintained a residence there. The former medieval 'Palace of the Bishops of Salisbury' is located to west of the present village, beside the River Thames. It dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and was enlarged in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. When the manor of Sonning and Eye was given to the crown in 1574, the palace seems to have been allowed to fall into decay and a new house built using the old materials. This was demolished by 1760. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century excavations recorded the well preserved foundations of a complex of buildings centred on a courtyard and a forecourt to the west with a gatehouse, defended by a moat on three sides and by the river on the north. From the excavation report it would appear that the remains were recorded in-situ and then re-covered, so should still be present below ground. The full extent of this important high status episcopal settlement has not been fully established; however its below-ground remains must be considered a heritage asset of at least regional and probably national importance. An undated ditch and chalk rubble wall, observed in a foundation trench for an extension to Bishop's Close, are thought to be associated with the palace, which may be indicative of its scale.

Located to the south of this is 'Holme Park'. During the 12<sup>th</sup> century reign of Henry II a park seems to have been created (or perhaps extended) and then later was split into East Park and Holme or (Home) Park.

The historic core of the village around The High Street, Thames Street and Pearson Road is lined with listed buildings of 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The Deanery built in 1901, by Lutyens is Grade I listed with its Grade II\* listed garden. Reflecting more recent history is the World War II brick built Anderson shelter located below ground in Pound Lane.

Based on the results of the archaeological investigations, and the documentary evidence, it must be assumed that there is a high potential for archaeological deposits to survive in many locations within the conservation area and that any features or finds can provide important evidence for the development of the village of Sonning. Groundworks within much of the conservation area would be likely to have an impact on archaeological remains, therefore redevelopment proposals would attract scrutiny and those involving groundworks would be required to demonstrate that the impact on heritage assets has been considered. In line with national and local planning policy, archaeological mitigation is likely to be required where a negative impact is anticipated.



## APPENDIX V NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Sonning lies along the south bank of the River Thames at the southern end of the Chilterns chalk escarpment. The majority of the Conservation Area in Sonning is situated on a low plateau of river gravels overlying chalk bedrock. In the floodplain areas along the northern boundary, alluvial soils predominate.

The Conservation Area contains several areas of importance for wildlife, including the ponds, meadows and hedgerows of Ali's Pond Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and the adjoining Reading Blue Coat School "Sonning Field" extension, the woods within the Blue Coat School grounds, the many large and well established private gardens, and the River Thames and its diverse riverbank habitats.



Ali's Pond LNR is a small 0.4 hectare site created in 1997, managed by the Friends of Ali's Pond and owned by Sonning Parish Council. The reserve consists of a large pond surrounded by a wildflower meadow and native tree and shrub planting. Since its establishment, the site has become home to a wide variety of wildlife including rare or declining species such as Great Crested Newt and Stag Beetle. The nature reserve field adjacent to Ali's Pond is known as Sonning Field and was created out of rough grassland in 2007 when Reading Blue Coat School acquired the land. As with Ali's Pond this site contains a rich mixture of meadow, hedgerow and pond habitats. Both fields are now of high

value for wildlife and for outdoor education for local schools and Baden Powell groups. When Ali's Pond was designated as a Local Nature Reserve back in 2001 it was only the third LNR to be designated by a Parish Council in the UK.

There is a significant block of woodland along the escarpment overlooking the Thames in the south-western corner of the Conservation Area. Although this is not ancient woodland, it is of significant wildlife interest, with woodland indicator species such as Bluebell, Yellow Archangel and Dog's Mercury present in small quantities. Recent breeding birds include Tawny Owl, Buzzard and Mandarin Duck.



The large number of medium-sized and large gardens within the Conservation Area provide excellent habitats in their own right and serve as a network of corridors for wildlife to move from one site to another. England Biodiversity Strategy priority species such as Pipistrelle Bat, Song Thrush, Great Crested Newt and Stag Beetle all thrive in these gardens and others such as Hedgehog, Roe Deer, Great-spotted Woodpecker, Little Owl and Tawny Owl are regular visitors which give great pleasure to local residents. Particularly notable gardens include Bishop's Close with its extensive areas of recently created wildflower meadows which are a rich nectar source for insects, and Thatched Cottage with its wide variety of trees and shrubs, pasture and spring-fed pond. The latter was the original source of the Great Crested Newt population which now occurs in at least 8 ponds throughout the central southern block of the Conservation Area in an area bounded by Sonning Lane, Pearson Rd and Pound Lane.





The River Thames and its immediate environs form the northern boundary of the Conservation Area with the western third bordered by the wooded slopes of the chalk escarpment mentioned above, the central third mainly bordered by gardens and the eastern third running through open floodplain grassland which has been agriculturally improved. The towpath runs along the southern bank of the Thames throughout the Conservation Area, so this bank is more intensively managed than the opposite bank, but the river as a whole is nevertheless rich in wildlife at this point with many species of aquatic and wetland wildlife regularly seen by visitors.



River traffic



Bridge & Wharf frost

One species which is very rarely seen but known to be present from recent surveys, is the Otter, which has returned to the middle and lower reaches of the Thames in the last decade or so. Wooded and uninhabited instream islands, one of which lies within the Conservation Area, are likely to be valuable daytime refuges for this shy, yet charismatic species.

Finally, some of the old buildings and walls within the Conservation Area have some intrinsic

wildlife value themselves. For example some of the properties in Pearson Road have supported House Martin nests under the eaves (a species which has suffered a rapid decline in the UK in recent years) and many support Pipistrelle bat roosts. The high walls in Sonning Churchyard sustain several interesting plants including Ivy-leaved Toadflax, Pellitory-of-the-Wall and Reflexed Stonecrop.



Palace wall 4

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