

ODIHAM CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Approved Document

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Odiham Conservation Area

The town of Odiham in north Hampshire contains one of most outstanding collections of historic buildings in the county, and with its neighbour, North Warnborough, it also encompasses a beautiful landscape comprising the valley of the river Whitewater, the Basingstoke Canal and an ancient deer park associated with both Saxon and Norman kings. The High Street is lined on both sides with a largely continuous group of listed buildings, mainly Georgian in appearance but often concealing much earlier buildings behind. Away from the shops and traffic, the tranquillity of The Bury and All Saints Churchyard provides a welcome contrast. The church, with origins as a minster site dating back to before the Conquest, owes its importance to the proximity of a royal palace (now ruined) which is located just outside North Warnborough. The development of the town from the 12th century onwards is reflected in the surviving medieval burgage plots, the long thin strips of land which stretch back from the High Street and which provide such a distinctive plot layout. Many of the secular buildings are also very earlier such as The Priory, with 15th century origins; The Vicarage of c1500; and The Old Church House (c1350).

The Odiham Conservation Area was designated in 1979 by Hart District Council and then covered the High Street, The Bury and West Street. In 1987 the boundary was greatly extended to include King John's Deer Park to the north, butting up to the Basingstoke Canal and its separate conservation area, and Crown Fields and the old chalk quarry off Alton Road to the south.

In March 2007 the public consultation draft of the Odiham Parish Village Design Statement (VDS) was published. The content of the VDS, and its relationship with this Odiham Character Appraisal, is discussed in greater detail in the Odiham *Management Proposals*.

1.2 Summary of key characteristics and recommendations

This **Character Appraisal** concludes that the key *positive* characteristics of the Odiham Conservation Area are:

- Location within an attractive landscaped area on undulating downland dropping down towards the valley of the river Whitewater;
- Survival of medieval Deer Park intact, cut by the Basingstoke Canal, on the northern edge;
- Many views into and out of the town, from the Deer Park and Crown Fields particularly;
- Wide, gently curving main street (High Street) with mixed uses, though residential predominates;
- Long medieval burgage plots survive on both the south and north sides, with frontage buildings facing the High Street;
- Narrow carriage openings or alleys lead through into the back yards or gardens;
- Almost continuous listed buildings along both sides, mainly domestic in scale;

- Many examples of prestigious family homes, usually with well detailed Georgian facades, and sometimes concealing earlier timber-framed structures;
- The west end of the High Street is far less intensively developed and is notable for its prestigious listed houses such as The Priory, listed grade II*, set behind high brick walls;
- The Bury is a pleasant former market place, informally laid out and providing an attractive setting to All Saints Church, listed grade I;
- Church Street and the eastern end of The Bury are lined with small scale listed cottages and modest town houses;
- King Street retains some buildings which are reminders of Odiham's industrial past, most notably the former brewery;
- Use of painted brick or stucco, red brick, and reddish/brown handmade clay roof or wall tiles;
- Individual or groups of trees make an important contribution to the special character of the whole conservation area.

The **Management Proposals** make the following Recommendations (summary):

General:

- Protect the landscape setting of Odiham;
- Protect views into and out of the town;
- Protect the conservation area from inappropriate new development;
- Protect the high quality townscape in Odiham, including unlisted *positive* buildings and mature garden trees;
- Encourage appropriate new businesses to the town centre but maintain residential uses.

Site specific:

- Review and re-launch the existing Article 4 Direction
- Prepare a Tree Management Plan;
- Review the existing Local List;
- Prepare a Management Plan for the brick wall at the Deer Park/Palace Gate Farm junction;
- Underground overhead wires in West Street.;
- Consider individual site improvements as and when funding permits.

1.3 The planning policy context

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. A conservation area is defined as "an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Odiham Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with English Heritage guidance as set out in "*Guidance on conservation area appraisals*" (August 2005) and "*Guidance on the management of conservation areas*" (August 2005). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within "*Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*" (PPG15).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Odiham Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of the "Character Appraisal");
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement (in the form of the "Management Proposals").

1.4 The local policy framework

These documents provide a firm basis on which applications for development within the Odiham Conservation Area can be assessed. The omission of any feature in either the appraisal or the management proposals does not imply that it is of no interest, and because both will be subject to regular review, it will be possible to amend any future documents accordingly.

It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework as set out in RPG9 – Regional Plan for the South East of England, The Hampshire County Structure Plan (Review) 1996-2011, adopted in March 200 and Hart District Council's Local Plan, adopted in December 2002.

In the Local Plan, the more general Proposals Map and Inset Map No. 24 confirm that the following policies apply to the whole settlement of Odiham, including the conservation area:

- There is a Settlement Boundary which is drawn fairly tightly around the built-up area of Odiham;
- Any development beyond the Settlement Boundary is controlled by policies within the Local Plan as follows:
 - General: Policies GEN 1-12;
 - Conservation: Policies CON 4-9,13
 - Rural economy: Policies RUR 2-38;
 - Transportation: Policies T1, 2, 5, 14 and 15.
- The Deer Park to the north of Odiham is a designated "Local Gap" (Policy CON21 – maintaining the separate identities of smaller settlements, providing their setting and preventing coalescence);
- An area of land to the west of Dunley's Hill is a "Specific Proposal Area" – Policy DEV 19 – this specifies that this land could be developed to provide public recreation and additional playing fields for the Robert Mays School, Odiham;

- Beyond the conservation area boundary to the north, the land is identified as the Basingstoke Canal, subject to Policies CON 19 and 20.

Odiham lies outside the area affected by the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) which is designated for its populations of nightjar, Dartford warbler and woodlark, and consequently, apart from the largest developments, is not a constraint on development in this area.

The 2002 Local Plan will shortly be replaced by a new *Local Development Framework*. This new planning system was established by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which abolishes Structure and Local Plans and replaces them with *Local Development Documents*. More information about this important change to the planning system can be found on the District Council's website: www.hart.gov.uk.

1.5 Article 4 Directions

An Article 4 Direction was served in 1970 in the original Odiham Conservation Area, covering properties in the High Street, King Street, around The Bury and the top of West Street, mainly affecting unlisted family dwelling houses. The aim of the Direction was to prevent the conservation area from being incrementally spoilt by unsympathetic changes which might otherwise have been allowed automatically under house owners' "Permitted Development" rights. The Direction means that planning permission is required for a variety of works as follows:

- Extensions, improvements or other alterations to a dwelling house;
- Alterations to existing boundaries, or the creation of new boundaries.

The Direction also imposed restrictions on alterations to existing agricultural and industrial buildings.

In 1998 a further Article 4 Direction was made, covering unlisted family dwellings in West Street. This brought under planning control the same changes listed above. A copy of both Article 4 Directions can be viewed at the Planning Department, Hart District Council, Fleet, and a more detailed summary of both Directions is included at Appendix 2.

As part of the Appraisal process, the existing Directions were examined and proposals for changes to the Direction are included in Part 2 of this document, the *Management Proposals*.

1.6 Community involvement

This document was initially drafted following a meeting with representatives from Odiham Parish Council and local historians on 27th February 2007, when the extent of the conservation area boundary was discussed, along with some of the main problems and issues which face the community. Following this meeting, a first draft was agreed with the District and the document was then put on the District Council's website on 15 May. A period of public consultation, including an exhibition and evening "surgery" with the Conservation Officer subsequently ran for six weeks. After the completion of this period of public consultation, the final draft was produced and the document illustrated and printed.

2 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

2.1 Location and activities

Odiham is a small town situated on the northern edge of the North Downs on the edge of the valley of the River Whitewater, about six miles east of Basingstoke and half a mile south-east of North Warnborough, with which it has strong historical links. The M3 motorway is just to the north, fortunately usually out of ear-shot, and the A287, built in 1982, now by-passes Odiham to the north-east, providing welcome relief from the busy through traffic which once plagued the town.

The conservation area boundary is generous, encompassing King John's Deer Park to the north, the town centre, the more residential areas to the west and south, and the open fields and chalk pit associated with Alton Road.

To the north (Character Area 1) the many public footpaths across the open fields associated with Old Deer Park and along the Basingstoke Canal provide an important local amenity, popular for dog walking. In Character Area 2 (the High Street) mixed uses provide a varied and interesting townscape of residential properties, small specialised shops and some offices. There are few "national" commercial concerns apart from the banks and a small Co-Op supermarket near to Church Street. The Old George is the principal public house with a popular café next door.

To the south of the High Street, Character Area 4 encompasses The Bury (the former market place), and All Saints Church with its associated almshouses. A library, community hall, primary school and cottage hospital are also located in this part of the town, but otherwise the uses are mainly residential. Finally in Character Area 5, beyond The Close towards the old chalk pit, uses are agricultural (grazing on Crown Fields) with a scattering of residential properties at the entrance to the former chalk pit.

2.2 Topography and geology

Odiham lies on the meeting of the flatter valley of the river Whitewater (to the north) and the undulating, hilly chalk downland of the Surrey/North Hampshire area (to the south). The curving line of the Basingstoke Canal, which marks the northern boundary of the conservation area, follows the line of the 85 metre contour, and beyond this the land falls gently towards the river valley, as it meanders through North Warnborough.

To the south, the land rises dramatically up Alton Road, providing good views over Odiham from public footpaths and Kings Barn Lane. There is a slight change of level from north to south, through the town, with similarly slight changes in the High Street, most noticeable at the western end where the road drops down quite steeply outside The Priory. The land therefore rises up King Street, leading southwards away from the High Street and up the northern face of the downland, but then drops down Cemetery Hill, which is currently outside the conservation area.

The geology below Odiham is mainly chalk, as is so clearly shown in the large chalk pit to the south. Further north, this chalk meets more mixed geology, including a mixture of

London Clays, particularly the Reading Beds, which form a thin band immediately at the edge of the chalk. This geology results in natural springs which appear in Odiham and no doubt provided an impetus for early settlement. Surface drainage is found in North Warnborough, whose history is bound up with water and with industries associated with it. The Whitewater, as it flows through North Warnborough, towards the Thames is a minor but classic Southern chalk-stream with a wild brown trout population. The chalk aquifers which feed the river also supply drinking water to the surrounding population. The need for increasing supply to meet growing population demands has had a detrimental effect on river flows and a three year study of the effects of abstraction on the river and its valley's hydrology and ecology is currently being pursued by Natural England, the Environment Agency, SE Water, Hampshire Wildlife Trust and the Whitewater Valley Preservation Society.

2.3 Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings

Odiham is surrounded by cultivated countryside noted for its agricultural value and landscape quality. To the north-west lies the valley of the river Whitewater, the principal natural feature of the North Warnborough Conservation Area, and the Basingstoke Canal. Beyond these is the M3 motorway which cuts through the woodland of Bartley Heath, Hook Common and Butter Wood. To the south of Odiham lie the undulating chalk hills of the Hampshire Downs, on the summit of which is located Odiham Airfield.

Odiham is connected to North Warnborough by Dunleys Hill road, and the two settlements have at this point just one field between them, a very significant open space on the west side of Dunleys Hill which must be protected from any future development. The Deer Park lies on the eastern side of Dunleys Hill, forming the eastern boundary to North Warnborough, and therefore providing yet another very important open green space. Most of this is used for grazing sheep. The park once continued further north but has been cut off from Odiham by the line of the Basingstoke Canal (with its own linear conservation area) and the Odiham by-pass. There are important views into and out of Odiham and North Warnborough along this northern boundary to the town, with a feeling of openness and space.

The Odiham Conservation Area encompasses the older parts of the town with more modern settlement to the west and east. To the west, lies a large comprehensive school (Robert Mays) and mainly 20th century housing. To the east, the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area and further mainly 20th century housing continue almost up to the modern by-pass.

To the south are the open chalk downlands which are characteristic of the North Downs, reached along Alton Road which leads through South Warnborough and eventually to Alton. The airfield, which lies above the 115 metre contour, encompasses mainly flattish ground with hardly any tree cover.

2.4 Biodiversity

There are no special designations for the natural environment in the Odiham Conservation Area apart from the adjoining Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area which is a designated SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), notable for its many special plant species including marsh orchids and the rare slender spike-rush. The Basingstoke Canal is owned by Hampshire and Surrey County Councils and managed by the

Basingstoke Canal Authority. The sluggish waters and continuity of habitat created by long term management have been utilised by many species.

Nearby in North Warnborough, the river Whitewater has been designated as a SINC for its high quality and the presence of BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) species. In addition North Warnborough Green is also a designated SSSI, and North Warnborough Green is an unimproved wet grassland, rich in flora. As well as being important botanically, it supports an outstanding variety of invertebrate species. The site is managed by the Hampshire Wildlife Trust.

Throughout North Warnborough the river and canal provide important ecological corridors for wildlife linking manmade and natural habitats and enabling them to survive increased house building. Management of the wetlands by Hampshire Wildlife Trust includes the reintroduction of grazing and scrub clearance. Similar designations are attached to the river valley in Greywell, slightly further to the west.

3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

3.1 Historic development

Celtic remains have been found locally as well as the remains of a Roman villa at Lodge Farm but the roots of Odiham's history are in Saxon Wessex. The name may derive from Anglo Saxon *Wudiham* meaning *Settlement on the edge of wooded land*. In the Domesday Book of 1086 Odiham, as a large royal manor, was the first entry in the Hampshire folio. At least two churches are recorded suggesting that Odiham was a former minster serving a much larger area. The core of the settlement would have been around All Saints Church and what is now The Bury.

It would appear from the Domesday entry that there may have already been a royal presence in Odiham, as the manor was a valuable holding, and there was a large and evidently prosperous community of tenants. As Odiham was half way between Winchester and Windsor it was a frequent stopping point for Norman kings, who enjoyed hunting in the adjoining forests. It would seem that Henry I had a residence here which he visited in 1116, and upon which repairs were made in 1130. The castle, however, of which the ruins now remain, was built by King John on a new site on land next to the river Whitewater which he took from Robert the Parker of Odiham. The exact date of its completion is not known but ditches were being made and buildings erected in 1207, and in 1213-14 repairs were made. Originally the castle probably consisted only of a great tower surrounded by a ditch. In many of the documents of the 13th century it is called the tower of Odiham, but in later records there are references to houses in the castle. A prison at Odiham Castle is mentioned in 1321 and again in 1324, and the men of Greywell were required to guard the prisoners every third night. King John was frequently at Odiham and he hunted in the deer park to the west of the castle which now forms part of the Odiham Conservation Area. The castle seems to have fallen into disrepair around the end of the 15th century or early in the 16th century, for it is not mentioned in a lease of the manor in 1545 and no notice of it appears in a survey of the manor in 1630, although its grounds are documented.

Odiham Park probably existed at a considerably earlier date than the castle, possibly in connection with an earlier royal residence to cater for the royal love of hunting. The earliest mention of the park occurs in 1216 when the manor was granted to Engelard de Cigoigny when the park and castle were retained for the king. The park stretched from the northern boundary of Odiham High Street to the line of the M3 and its western boundary still defines the eastern limit of North Warnborough. Although the deer park has been used for agriculture for at least 400 years its outline is still of vital importance in influencing the layout of settlement today. Judging by the number of grants of deer from the park to various persons it would seem that it was well stocked. Timber was brought from the royal property of Odiham to build Eton College. The park apparently remained in the hands of the king until 1299 when it was assigned with the manor to Margaret wife of Edward I.

Odiham was an important place at the time of the Domesday Survey, but it was probably not until King John began his castle there that there was any attempt to raise its status to anything beyond that of a royal manor. In 1204 however the manor of Odiham was granted to the men of Odiham at a fee-farm of £50. This grant may perhaps be looked upon as conferring upon the town the characteristics of a borough, such as would be expected in a town lying under the influence of a royal castle. But the men of Odiham do

not seem to have appreciated this opportunity and allowed their fee-farm rent to fall into arrears, whereupon the king in 1207 ordered the manor to be returned to the king's hand. At some stage during the 12th century, a new church was provided (All Saints Church) south of the market place in what is now The Bury. This was altered and extended in c1500 and again in early 19th century.

A royal palace is also said to have existed in Odiham itself, and it is possible that a house for the accommodation of the royal household may have been built after Odiham Castle had fallen into ruins. In memoranda relating to the manor of Odiham in the 16th century, it is noted that Robert Wakefield, late bailiff of the Manor, pulled down a dwelling house called *the king's _____*, which stood upon the site of the manor house. However, another palace was soon built on the site which is visible on Will Godsons map of 1739, marked as *Odiham Place*. The map shows a many gabled mansion with an E-plan layout typical of the 16th century. Nothing now remains of the ancient palace above ground except a few old carved stones in a farm house called Palace Gate Farm. This house probably stands on the site of the entrance to the mansion which is described in 1630 as '*a fair gate house of brick, cornered and windowed with stone*'. Elizabeth I visited in 1569 and meetings of the Privy Council were held at Odiham in 1576 and 1591, suggesting a palace of some importance. The site of the manor, by which is probably meant the remains of the royal mansion, is mentioned in deeds of 1718 and 1723-4.

During the medieval period Odiham became a market town serving the surrounding villages, selling local produce including wool, timber, and hops, grown on the chalky uplands. Later, brick and tile making, and tanneries, were also evident. At some stage, probably in the early 13th century, the town was expanded beyond the original settlement around The Bury and All Saints Church, and the High Street was created with space for a large market. The characteristic medieval burgage plots, the long thin strips of land which stretch back on either side of the High Street, appear to date from this period of growth.

All the medieval houses were timber framed structures and some have been tree-ring dated. The oldest is Monk's Cottage, no. 111 High Street, dating from 1300, and The Church House in Church Street, dating to c1350. Odiham was sufficiently important to be invited to send men to parliament though they never seem to have done so. This was often the prelude to gaining borough status and so Odiham remained as a small market town, although the size of medieval Odiham is confirmed by the rebuilding and extension of All Saints Church which took place inc1500.

Insert historic maps

Medieval industrial activity was centred near the river in North Warnborough where there were mills for milling and fulling and where textiles were woven. There were also tan yards for curing leather. These activities were declining by 1780. Farming remained the principal activity until the enclosure of the open fields around Odiham and the beginning of more industrialisation in the 18th century, encouraged by the building of the Basingstoke Canal in 1794. The canal passes to the north of the town and is carried by an aqueduct over the river Whitewater near Odiham Castle. A former wharf is now disused but was once used to export chalk from the Alton Road chalk pit.

The almshouses next to All Saints Church were founded by Sir Edward More in 1623 and show a very early use of brick in Odiham. A grammar school was also founded in 1694 by Robert May, whose name lives on in the modern Comprehensive School. In the 17th century the only House of Correction in Hampshire was in Winchester. A great increase in the number of tramps and vagrants in the 18th century led to the building of two new Houses of Correction at Odiham and Gosport, and the former police station (Now The Bridewell Library) was probably the successor of the old gaol. The stocks and whipping post were moved to The Bury in 1905.

A map of 1739 shows a market hall in the centre of the High Street near the junction with King Street, confirming the importance of the town as a regional centre. During this period many of the medieval timber-framed houses in the High Street were re-fronted in brick – a local brickworks survived on Odiham Common until the early years of the 20th century. Further prestigious family houses followed in the early and mid-19th century. Odiham also thrived during the 18th century due to its location on the road from Guildford to Winchester, enabling it to become a popular stopover point for passing coaches. The short-lived Odiham Agricultural Society met at The George and in 1784 took the first steps to establish the veterinary profession in England.

The 19th century was a period of relative decline compared with neighbouring towns. Whilst Odiham's population grew by 82% from 1801 to 1901 the population of England grew by 287%. The main stage coach route bypassed Odiham, and the Basingstoke Canal was not a commercial success and was soon eclipsed by the railway which did not pass through the town. Agriculture continued to decline until the late 1930s. The establishment of the RAF station in 1938 was the first sign of a revival and since WW2 the growth of motor car usage and the opening of the M3 in 1971 have generated demand for housing and other facilities, including a large Comprehensive School, located in West Street just beyond the conservation area boundary.

Today Odiham is a busy town with an attractive and well cared for town centre. Close to The Bury, a local library, police station and community facilities are useful local amenities. A variety of mainly small, specialised shops provide a range of products although there is only one supermarket, the Co-Op, and some residents therefore travel out of the town to do their main food shopping. The Basingstoke Canal, the Deer Park, and the adjoining North Downs all provide opportunities for dog walking and recreational activities.

3.2 Archaeology

The availability of spring water in the Odiham area seems to have provided an impetus for early settlement. The HER (Historic Environment Record) for Hampshire, prepared by Hampshire County Council, lists a large number of finds in the Odiham area including artefacts from the early Bronze Age, as well as the early Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Other finds include Roman coins, burials and other artefacts; Saxon burials and pottery; medieval pottery; post-medieval brick-making sites; and WWII military remains. It also details a large number of existing historic buildings, now mainly listed.

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Layout and street pattern

The principal spatial features of the Odiham Conservation Area are the gently bending High Street with its medieval burgage plots; the former market square in front of All Saints Church (The Bury), leading to Church Street and through narrow lanes to King Street; and the open fields or parkland to the north and south of the town, mostly within the conservation area. Overall the High Street and The Bury contain the more concentrated built form, with the density of development reducing further away from the street frontages. Narrow carriageways and alleys are a notable feature of the townscape in the High Street area.

The High Street:

The High Street is lined with mainly listed houses and cottages which front the medieval burgage plots behind. These long thin plots survive particularly well on the northern side of the High Street, where they back onto the Deer Park, the boundary defined for much of its length by a very important high brick wall. These long plots are a survivor of a remarkable piece of medieval town planning. These plots would have been leased from the landowner, and date from the early 13th century when the centre of commercial life moved from the Bury to the High Street. Here, within the High Street there would have been a large market with pens for livestock and stalls for traders. The whole space would have been surrounded and enclosed by the houses of the more wealthy inhabitants, called "burgesses". The building plots which they had leased belonged to the lord and he would have fitted in as many as possible, hence the narrow street frontage and the long rear gardens and yards. These strips of land were used for gardens, workshops and sometimes additional cottages for the more lowly inhabitants of the town. This pattern of development continues today with many barns, sheds and workshops to the rear of the fine buildings which front onto the High Street. In Odiham, the boundary of the town's development in the Middle Ages is marked clearly to the north by the wall which backs onto the Deer Park. This wall is not listed (but probably should be) and marks a medieval boundary. It contains early bricks which may date to the 17th century. More research is needed into the history and development of this wall.

On the south side of the High Street, the plots between the main street and The Bury are shorter and more irregular. However, beyond King Street, and going eastwards, the plots deepen in depth and several of them stretch back to a boundary which lines through with Tudor Cottage in King Street. These large gardens, visible in part from the public footpath which connects the lane to the cemetery to the town, are a vital component of the character of the conservation area, providing green space and many mature trees. Recent development, off Reyntiens View and Archery Fields, has had an adverse effect on the rural, green qualities of these back gardens. To the west, The Close is a long straight footway which marks the extent of historic plots along the south-west end side of the High Street. Attractive views southwards over Crown Fields are an important aspect of this pathway.

The main High Street is wide, particularly at its eastern end where it divides into London Road and Farnham Road. Similarly wide grass verges add to the rural feel of this end of the High Street. The almost continuous lines of historic buildings on either side enclose the street, leading the eye along the street into the far distance.

The western end of the High Street also contains residential properties but here they are detached and sit in large gardens, usually set back from the street. High brick walls contain the street and reduce visibility into the private gardens from the public viewpoint. Palace Gate Farm retains some of the layout associated with the former agricultural use and despite most of the buildings being converted for other uses, and the alteration of some of the intermediate spaces into car parking, it is just possible to interpret how the group would have originally functioned.

The Bury:

This area retains the character of an early settlement with the irregularly shaped former market place (The Bury) sitting in front of the church. The narrow streets or lanes which lead into or out of The Bury add to its qualities, most noticeably on the eastern edge of the area where it abuts King Street. Here the buildings are arranged in an irregular fashion, without any formal layout, with more oddly shaped open spaces around and to the north of Church Street. Slight changes in level add to the charms of the streetscape, most markedly in front of the Victorian school, which sits back from Church Street with a small green in front of it. Buildings of various ages and uses, including modest cottages, a much larger former brewery and the old Assembly Rooms, add to the variety of the built form.

Beyond the attractive churchyard, the 17th century almshouses are built to form a three-sided courtyard, the only such example of a “set piece” in the conservation area. Three further blocks of almshouses were added in the 1960s, all with well cared for landscaped gardens around them. A children’s playground and community tennis courts (Chamberlain Gardens) links the almshouses and churchyard with the green open spaces beyond. Again, there is the feeling of gradually reducing intensity of development, cascading down in scale as the greener perimeter of the town is reached.

King John’s Deer Park and the fields to the south of Odiham:

Both of these areas are open grassed fields, to the north principally used for grazing sheep. Mature trees mark boundaries but are not generally particularly dense in that there are no clumps of woodland. These open spaces contrast with the tightly concentrated town centre with its busy traffic, commercial uses, and constant activities.

4.2 Open spaces, trees and landscape

The principal open space in Odiham is The Bury, an irregularly shaped former market place in front of All Saints Church. This acts as the town “centre” although commercial activities are mainly located in the High Street. It has recently been repaved and other enhancements carried out. Views to All Saints Church, which marks its southern boundary, are of note. Other buildings of note include The Bell Public House and The Bury House, a large private residence which forms the western boundary of the area. The Close is a pretty pedestrian-only footway which leads from the side of the churchyard, along the back line of the medieval burgage plots, to Alton Road.

Trees are particularly important in Odiham, both within private gardens and in the more public spaces such as the Deer Park and the churchyard. Some of them are already additionally protected by Tree Preservation Orders. It is planned that a far more detailed survey of Odiham’s trees is undertaken by the local community. More details are enclosed in the Management Proposals.

The landscape setting of Odiham is notable for its variety, with two completely different types of landscape being located within the conservation area. To the north lies the gently undulating parkland of the Deer Park, with its large, relatively open fields used for sheep grazing and depressions which may be former quarries or fish ponds. The long, sinuous line of the Basingstoke Canal contains the parkland and provides an unusually robust boundary to the conservation area.

To the south, the rising chalk downland of the North Downs is bleaker and fields are mainly used for growing crops. Long views over the surrounding fields can be obtained, particularly from Alton Road which rises steeply from Odiham.

4.3 Focal points, focal buildings, views and vistas

Focal points

There are no particular focal points along the High Street, where the similarly scaled buildings do not individually stand out. However, the crossroads at the junction with West Street, and the similar junction with London Road and Farnham Road at the eastern end of the High Street, both create useful “end-stops” to the High Street, defining its length and providing some pleasing punctuation to the street scene.

Away from the High Street, The Bury and All Saints Church act as the focal point for the town, with attractive listed buildings and the green swath of the churchyard adding to the more tranquil atmosphere. Although hidden from The Bury, the listed almshouses on the south side of the church continue the high quality built environment and together they form an outstanding group.

Focal buildings

The majority of the buildings in the conservation area were built as residential houses or cottages, so the scale is mainly domestic and relatively modest, creating a homogenous whole, particularly along the length of the High Street. The focal buildings tend therefore to be those which have been built for other uses, such as religious, commercial or industrial, with the occasional residential building which is sensitively located, such as Tudor Cottages on the brow of the hill in King Street. They are all marked on the Townscape Appraisal map but the most significant are (from the west to east):

- Western House, High Street;
- The Cross Barn, Palace Gate;
- Bury House, The Bury;
- All Saints Church, The Bury;
- The almshouses next to the church;
- Mayhill Primary School;
- The former brewery, with its twin square oasts, King Street;
- Tudor Cottages, King Street.
- Marycourt;
- The White House

Views and vistas

Odiham is surrounded by attractive countryside on its northern and southern perimeters with many important views into and out of the town, the most notable of which are shown

on the Townscape Appraisal map. Of these, the most significant are (from the north southwards):

- Across the Deer Park, both into and out of the town;
- Along the tow path of the Basingstoke Canal;
- Along the High Street in both directions;
- North-westerly over the field to the west of Dunley's Hill;
- Southwards over the Recreation Ground at the end of West Street;
- Across Crown Fields in several directions, but particularly from The Close and towards All Saints Church from Alton Road;
- Across The Bury to All Saints Church;
- Across the cemetery off King Street;
- Along King Street, terminating in the brow of the hill and Tudor Cottages.

4.4 Boundaries

Because Odiham is located on chalk, as well as being close to plentiful supplies of brick-making clay, the town is particularly notable for its use of red brick and flint for its historic boundaries. These tend to be found away from the High Street, where the closely built-up urban form means that most of the buildings sit on the back, or very close to, the edge of the pavement. This results in there being very few front gardens and therefore hardly any opportunities for boundaries. Notable exceptions are mainly towards the eastern end of the street and include the beautifully clipped hedge in front of The White House (no. 36 High Street) and the almost comical hedge "balls" which mark the front boundary to no. 41 High Street.

Brick is therefore the predominant material for boundary walls and the conservation area provides many examples of high, brick walls, such as the listed walls along the western edge of the High Street (outside The Priory and adjacent to Wyeth House (no. 139). These walls, coupled with the mature trees and shrubbery, create an important "tunnel" effect on entering the conservation area. Another very important brick wall marks the northern edge of the burgage plots at Palace Gate Farm, facing the Deer Park. This is a dominant element in views into the town from the parkland. Within the town, high brick walls mark many of the garden boundaries and the alleys which run through the town, such as the one which connects the High Street to The Bury.

Flint is another local building material, although not nearly so well used as brick. Perhaps the best example is again outside The Priory, this time facing Dunley's Hill. This dates to the 19th century and is about 1.750 metres high and is finished with triangular brick copings with brick string courses tying the flintwork together. Another flint wall, clearly older, faces The Bury next to The Bell. It is nearly three metres high, very substantial with a brick modillion cornice and brick piers.

Marking part of the southern boundary of the historic plots at the western edge of the High Street, facing The Close pathway, is a very fine example of a cob wall made from chalk, flint and lime, with a substantial brick coping and the occasional brick pier. Cob is a traditional building material which is robust enough to withstand most weather as long as it is kept dry by some sort of protection, and in this case this is provided by three courses of brick and a small pitched "roof" covered by five courses of handmade clay tiles. A similar wall on the opposite side of the pathway has been covered in more

modern render – a regrettable feature which actually harms the original wall because it does not allow the wall to “breathe” and moisture can build up within the wall, causing damage in cold weather.

Further along The Close, 19th century wrought iron “parkland” railings mark the boundary to Crown Fields, and elsewhere in Odiham there are other examples of the use of cast iron (for decorative railings) and wrought iron (for handrails at principal entrances). Most of the cast iron railings are modern but reasonably well detailed. More traditional cast iron spear-headed railings on a plinth can be seen at the eastern end of West Street and around the churchyard.

Some earlier examples of wrought iron railings remain, such as the handrails either side of the slightly raised front entrance to Marycourt, no. 43 High Street. An example of the use of modern hoop railings on a brick retaining wall can be seen outside Horton Villas in King Street, and similar railings, but set directly into the ground, are located at Buryfield House in Buryfields.

Other materials and details are more appropriate to the rural edges of the town, closer to the countryside. These include a variety of hedges, such as the clipped beech hedge outside the modern vicarage near to Crown Fields, or the mature trees and shrubbery around the cemetery off King Street. Modern timber fencing also features in a variety of forms, most attractively in low palisade fence outside the almshouses. A modern, low post and rail timber fence marks the line of the modern driveway across Crown Fields.

Some boundaries are less appropriately detailed, both in terms of height, materials and details. Examples include the metal chain link fence between the almshouses and the school playing field; the very high close boarded timber fence outside the new development in Western Lane (which will admittedly mellow with time); modern decorative metal gates at the entrance to Bartons Court in West Street; and the strangely isolated gate brick gate piers and modern metal gates to St John’s House facing Alton Road.

4.5 Public realm

There are few if any examples of historic features in the streets of Odiham as much of the town centre appears to have been subject to incremental improvement schemes over the last 20 or so years. However, the overall effect is not particularly discordant although some improvements to individual sites (considered in the *Management Proposals*) would be welcome.

Street lighting

The street lighting in Odiham has been subject to a comprehensive scheme using traditional cast iron street lights in many places, most notably in the High Street, The Bury, All Saints Churchyard, and King Street. These are entirely appropriate and add greatly to the special character of the area. In the Palace Gate Farm area, modern steel light columns are simply detailed and unobtrusive.

Paving

An environmental improvement scheme in the High Street was carried out in the 1980s which used a variety of modern paving materials to create new parking bays, pavements, and corner details at road junctions. For this work, concrete slabs and kerbing were used for the pavements, and concrete paviors laid in stretcher bond pattern were used for the crossovers. Some granite setts were used for details, such as on the corner of High Street and London Road. These materials have generally weathered well and the pavements particularly do not appear to have suffered from vehicle overrun. The 'sea' of concrete paviors on the private land which surrounds the new offices in Palace Gate Farm are a regrettable feature.

Some good quality granite setts can be seen at the eastern end of West Street, presumably dating to 1978 when the road was closed to through traffic.

In most of the other streets, pathways and back alleys, black tarmacadam is used, which being reasonably neutral in its impact accords reasonably well with the more rural qualities of these areas.

The Bury

In 2006/7 another more expensive environmental improvement scheme was carried out in The Bury, using resin-bonded gravel for the road surface. Low planters have been built using red brick in front of the churchyard and next to the village stocks, and knapped flint has been used to infill some of the nearby spaces. A special timber bench seat has been provided just outside the lychgate to the church, inscribed 'The Bury'. A visitors' Information Panel, 'Historic Odiham' is also located at this point. The dual use of the road for both pedestrians and vehicles is a deliberate act to slow down the traffic and create a more people-friendly environment. Outside Odiham Bridewell, new red brick paviors create a small parking area, and just around the corner, in the eastern end of The Bury, small areas of flint and red brick paving (which appear older) can be seen outside some of the listed cottages.

Street furniture (seating, signage)

There is a great variety of public seating in the conservation area. Outside Cromwells (no. 100/102) in the High Street is a simple painted timber two person seat, and outside no. 15 High Street is a three person metal seat, painted dark green, which appears to be the 'town' colour. A concrete 1930s-style seat can be seen in the churchyard, and another concrete seat at the junction of West Street and Alton Road..

Street signage is provided by traditional street signs, using black lettering on a white background, which are generally fixed to low timber posts. Less attractive are the various examples of County Council Highways signs, such as the ones on the High Street/Dunley's Hill roundabout.

In the High Street, bus stops are marked by plain black steel shelters, thankfully devoid of advertising, with timber bench seats. Litter bins are modern and well detailed, using black plastic with gold lettering. There are no telegraph poles in the High Street or in The Bury area, where the lines have presumably been undergrounded, but they are obtrusive in West Street.

Traditional style 'kissing gates' made from steel mark some of the footpaths, such as the end of the pathway from Palace Gate Farm where it leads onto the Deer Park.

5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 Building types

The Odiham Conservation Area is notable for its many historic buildings which line the High Street, and for its great church, All Saints, which dominates The Bury, where further important historic buildings can be found. Most of the buildings were constructed as family houses and overall the whole town retains a domestic scale which is one of its unique characteristics. The only 'larger' buildings are All Saints Church; the former brewery in King Street and the neighbouring former Assembly Rooms; and The Cross Barn, now in community use. The early 19th century Independent Chapel, now used as a house, sits back from the High Street behind no.11 and is therefore not easily visible.

Most of these buildings are statutorily listed, but there are also a number of 'Locally Listed' buildings as well as interesting buildings, mainly of the 19th century, which have been assessed as part of this appraisal process as making a *positive* contribution to the special character of the conservation area. These include the more modest houses and cottages which can be found on the south side of West Street.

5.2 Listed buildings

There are approximately 128 listed buildings or structures in the conservation area, of which one (All Saints Church) is listed grade I and eight more are listed grade II*. The remainder are all listed grade II. Apart from a variety of houses, barns and religious buildings, the listed buildings of Odiham include a number of boundary walls and other features such as the stocks which are located in The Bury. Many of the buildings are timber-framed, with this form of construction being used (particularly for the modest properties) well into the 18th century. Of special note is the survival of a high number of secular (non-religious) buildings dating from the 14th century onwards.

All Saints Church is the most important of the listed buildings and is listed grade I. Building of the church appears to have started in the 12th century but it probably replaced an earlier Saxon building on the same site. Of this initial stage, only the chancel and the base of the west tower remain, as there was a major rebuilding in c1500 which provided the nave and the north and south chapels. It is interesting to speculate whether this rebuilding was the result of population growth in the locality, instigated by the expansion of Odiham beyond The Bury into what is now the High Street. At some stage in the 17th century the tower was rebuilt, possibly coinciding with the endowment of new almshouses to the south of the church by Sir Edward More in 1623. Whilst the church is mainly built from flint with stone or brick dressings, the almshouses are completely brick and provide an early example of the use of this material in the conservation area. They are listed grade II*, and the adjoining Pest House, listed Grade II, is a small building where local people and travellers suffering from infectious diseases were accommodated. Many such "isolation hospitals" were built in this period but Odiham's Pest House is one of only five surviving in the country. It was restored in 1981 by the Odiham Society to form a mini heritage centre.

Odiham is particularly well provided with a number of very early houses, mostly dating to the 14th or 15th centuries which started as double-height halls, often with one or two cross wings. The Priory (listed grade II*), at the western end of the High Street and the conservation area's most prestigious private house, is a good example with fabric dating to the 15th, 16th, 18th and late 19th centuries. Its use of malmstone with flint as a walling material is one of many interesting features. Other houses of similar date (but largely timber-framed) are listed grade II* - Old Church House, dating to the 14th and 18th centuries; The Old Vicarage, part of which is dated 1396, and The George Hotel, no. 100 High Street, dating to the 15th, 16th and 18th centuries. Several other examples are also early but only listed grade II: Manisty Cottage, no.19 High Street of c1400; nos. 27 and 29 High Street, dating to the 15th century; and no. 76 High Street, dating to the 15th, 16th and 19th centuries.

However, by far the majority of listed buildings in the conservation area date to the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries, with many examples of both timber-framed and brick houses, barns and cottages. Several of the most prestigious Georgian houses are listed grade II* - no. 129 High Street, of c1780; The White House (no. 36 High Street), dated 1812; The Old House, no. 48 High Street (late 18th century with a 16th century core); and Marycourt, no. 43 High Street. These all retain good quality Georgian details with symmetrical frontages facing the High Street, denoting high social status and wealth.

There are also many examples of more modest houses and cottages, often with exposed timber framing, especially in The Bury and at the eastern end of the High Street. Tudor Cottages, in King Street, provides a particularly notable example of an early 16th century timber-framed range of cottages, relatively unaltered. Unlike many of the timber-framed buildings in the High Street, which were refronted in brick in the late 18th or 19th centuries, this building retains its exposed timber-framing although the original wattle and daub infill panels have been replaced with brick.

Of note are the group of former agricultural buildings in Palace Gate Farm, the earliest of which is The Cross Barn, dating to 1532 and as such the earliest brick barn in Hampshire. Close by are later timber-framed barns or granaries (also listed grade II), with weather-boarded elevations, which have provided the inspiration for the new sheltered housing which was built in the late 1980s on the adjoining land.

Other listed properties in the conservation area relate to Odiham's industrial past including the former oast houses in King Street, listed grade II, and the adjoining warehouse on the opposite side of the road which is now used as offices. The cemetery, also in King Street, was provided in the mid-19th century when presumably the population was growing and the entrance lodge and chapels, all dated 1860, are listed grade II. The former Parish Room, in The Bury, dates to c1900 but is listed as a good example of a hardly altered building of its type.

Finally the list includes three important walls which are particularly significant in views along each street. These are the two walls to The Priory facing Dunley's Hill and the High Street, and the front boundary wall to Wyeth House, also facing the High Street.

5.3 Locally Listed buildings

The District Council has produced a short list of locally significant buildings within Odiham Parish of which three lie within the conservation area and are marked on the Townscape Analysis map. Two are former barns (Waytes Barn behind no. 27 High Street and Stoney Barn in The Bury) and there is one residential property, Rose Cottage, also in The Bury. Odiham Library (The Bridewell) in The Bury was formerly Locally Listed, but has now been added to the statutory list.

Locally Listed buildings are mainly 19th or early 20th century structures which provide well detailed facades, and they are Locally Listed to provide them with a degree of additional protection. Policies for their preservation are included in the Hart Local Plan, adopted in December 2002. Further information is provided in the *Management Proposals*.

5.4 Positive buildings

In addition to the Listed and Locally Listed buildings, a further number of unlisted buildings have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal map as being *positive* buildings of townscape merit. Buildings identified as being *positive* will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a *positive* contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Where a building has been heavily altered, and restoration would be impractical, they are excluded. Examples include:

- The former malthouse at Palace Gate Farm, now used as offices. Dating to the 19th century, it is built from red brick with a red clay tiled roof;
- The Old School in London Road, a late 19th century building formerly in educational use;
- Odiham Cottage Hospital in Buryfields, dating to 1910;
- Paired and detached late 19th or early 20th century houses along the west side of King Street e.g. Alpine Cottage.

Other “positive” buildings are marked on the appraisal map.

Government guidance in PPG15 '*Planning and the historic environment*' advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area (paragraph 4.27). The guidance note states that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. Again, further information is provided in the *Management Proposals*.

5.5 Building styles, materials and colours

On entering Odiham along the High Street the overall effect is of painted brick or stucco, usually using white or cream coloured paint. These buildings contrast with the dark red local brick also found on many properties, which links to the similarly hued handmade clay roof tiles, now darkened to a brown colour by age and weathering. This is the result of fashions changing in the 18th century when the old timber-framed structures, with their jettied fronts, exposed timbers, and wattle and daub infill panels, were either demolished and replaced, or alternatively refronted using brick or handmade tiles on timber battens.

Most of the roofs are steeply pitched and may once have been thatched but there are no examples of this material in the conservation area today.

Because many of the buildings were built as houses the conservation area generally has a low key, domestic scale, with varied eaves heights and a strong roofscape interrupted by a variety of chimney stacks, some of them very substantial, such as the one on the west side of Queensmead, no. 140 High Street. These contribute greatly to the views along the High Street.

For the more prestigious 18th century houses, where a complete rebuild had been undertaken (such as Marycourt, no. 43 High Street) red brick fronts are decorated with stone string cornices and cills, and a deep moulded modillion cornice made from timber. Other embellishments include elaborate doorcases (again, as at Marycourt but also seen The White House, no 36 High Street. Nos. 46 and 48 High Street (Queen Anne House and The Old House) are a good example of a wealthy merchant's house of c1500, built from timber and jettied, which was divided into two in the 18th century when the present brick façade and attractive doorcases were added. Many of these prestigious houses also have their original six panelled front doors, often with semi-circular fanlights above, as well as large, multi-paned sash windows.

Because of all the rebuilding which went on in Odiham in the 18th and 19th centuries, there are few obvious examples of early timber-framed structures as they have mainly been subsumed within later alterations. Tudor Cottage on King Street retains its exposed timber-frame, its original wattle and daub panels now infilled with brick, but a more prestigious building is no. 65 High Street, on the corner with King Street. This was built as a merchant's house in the early 16th century and despite alterations to the ground floor in the 1950s, the first floor retains its highly decorative ogee bracing and its second floor jetty. The infill panels are now made up with bricks recovered from an Elizabethan wall at Palace Gate Farm. Of a similar date, The Cross Barn at Palace Gate Farm is dated 1532 and is timber-framed with original brick infill panels.

Away from the High Street, these colours and materials continue apart from The Bury, where All Saints Church provides different grey and light brown colours due to the use of flint and stone for its walls, although the largely 17th century tower is brick. The almshouses to the south of the church use a similar long and thin 17th century red brick, with prominent chimneys and drip moulds over the leaded light casement windows.

Also very close to the church, The Mayhill Primary School (1876) is a good example of a Victorian Gothic building, built from red brick with stone dressings and drip moulds. A tall conical slated roof marks the main entrance. The twin oasts of the former brewery building in nearby King Street add to this interesting roofscape.

Apart from the church, flint is not found as a walling material (apart from some boundary walls) as often as might be expected, but it is used to great effect on the lodge and chapels in Odiham Cemetery, all listed grade II.

5.6 Shopfronts

There are a large number of historic shopfronts in the High Street, mainly in listed buildings so rigorous controls already exist to protect and preserve them. More information can be found in The Odiham Society's book *Odiham High Street*.

6 CHARACTER AREAS

6.1 Introduction to the Character Areas

Odiham divides neatly into five Character Areas according to historical development; street pattern and layout; built form; and uses and activities. These are:

- The Basingstoke Canal and Old Deer Park
- The High Street
- The Bury and All Saints Church
- West of the High Street and West Street
- Alton Road, Crown Fields and the old chalk quarry

This Character Appraisal concludes that the key *positive* and *negative* characteristics of the Odiham Conservation Area are:

Character Area 1: The Basingstoke Canal and Old Deer Park

Key positives:

- The medieval Deer Park survives almost intact apart from the Basingstoke canal, the farm and the bypass;
- Attractive landscaped area on undulating land dropping down towards the valley of the river Whitewater;
- Basingstoke Canal provides pleasant walks along the canal edge with views across and along the water;
- Groups of trees or low hedges create the field boundaries;
- Large, open fields towards Odiham, mainly used for sheep grazing;
- Surviving old quarries and former fish ponds;
- Only one building, on eastern edge of the park (Valentine Farm);
- The northern boundary of the park to the town is mainly defined by a very important brick wall which marks the end of the medieval burgage plots;
- Views into the rear gardens and of rooftops and trees, of the High Street properties from the park are very significant.

Key negative characteristics/issues:

- Brick boundary wall to Palace Gate Farm is not protected and in poor condition;
- Views into Odiham and threatened by potential developments in rear gardens;
- There has already been some loss of character due to new development being allowed very close to the northern boundary facing Deer Park.

Character Area 2: The High Street

Key positives:

- Vibrant town centre with mixed uses, though residential predominates;
- Long, curving main street, widens and narrows;
- Long medieval burgage plots survive on both the south and north sides;
- High concentration of historic buildings, with almost continuous listed buildings along both sides, mainly domestic in scale;
- Gaps between the buildings provide glimpses of gardens, trees and the surrounding countryside;
- Buildings usually sit on the back of the pavement or have small front gardens;
- Eastern end is more rural with wide grass verges and terraces of pretty cottages;
- Many examples of prestigious family homes, usually with well detailed Georgian facades;
- Some early buildings, usually timber-framed, hidden by 18th or 19th century refronting;
- Narrow carriage openings or alleys lead through into the back yards or gardens;
- Commercial uses mainly in the stretch between King Street and Church Street;
- Attractive views along the street in many locations but tightly-knit urban form means that, from close range, views into the rear gardens or yards are restricted.
- Attractive views from the High Street into King Street and along King Street. Here the buildings front directly onto the road to create a tight and cohesive townscape.

Key negative characteristics/issues:

- Threat of new development in back gardens and erosion of historic plot boundaries;
- The Article 4 Direction is out of date and needs to be reconsidered;
- Significant trees need to be recorded and a Tree Management Plan produced (this is common to all of the Character Areas);
- Car parking in short supply, despite the provision of the new car park on the north side of the high Street;
- Some dominant/poor quality street signage;
- BMW garage is a non-conforming use in the High Street;
- Shops have closed and there are potential problems with economic vitality.

Character Area 3: The Bury and All Saints Church

Key positives:

- The Bury is a pleasant former market place, informally laid out and providing an attractive setting to All Saints Church, listed grade I;
- The churchyard connects directly into the countryside via Chamberlain Gardens;
- To the south are an old Pest House (II) and 17th century brick almshouses (II*);
- 20th century almshouses lie beyond, close to the early 20th century Cottage Hospital;
- Next to the churchyard is The Bridewell, built in the 18th century as a House of Correction, and Mayhill Primary School, a neo-Gothic building of 1876;
- Church Street and the eastern end of The Bury are lined with small scale listed cottages and modest town houses;

- King Street retains some buildings which are reminders of Odiham's industrial path, most notably the former brewery;
- King Street retains a number of well detailed Edwardian houses and to the south, a group of early timber-framed cottages, including Tudor Cottages, dating to the mid-16th century;
- The form of development in King Street is compact and tight. Here the buildings front directly onto the highway to form a cohesive townscape;
- To the east, the large gardens and trees to the houses facing the High Street, visible from the public footpath, reinforces the rural qualities of the conservation area;
- The cemetery off King Street, with its listed chapels and caretaker's cottage, create a link between the gardens to the north and the open countryside to the south.

Key negative characteristics/issues:

- Potential loss of back gardens to redevelopment;
- Need to maintain the open green spaces and the rural qualities of the backland;
- Need to protect views into and out of the conservation area;
- Modern buildings associated with Mayhill Primary School are unattractive;
- Car parking area off Church Street – further improvements needed;
- Some traditional paving, such as brick paviors, might be acceptable in certain locations.
- High volumes of traffic, including large commercial and farm vehicles pose a threat to pedestrians and the historic buildings on the roadside.

Character Area 4: West of the High Street and West Street

Key positives:

- The west end of the High Street is far less intensively developed and is notable for its prestigious listed houses behind high brick walls;
- These have large gardens largely hidden from the High Street, though the garden to The Priory is partially visible from the Deer Park ;
- Palace Gate Farm was developed in the late 1980s with new housing and offices, retaining the listed farmhouse and barn, which is now a Community Hall;
- West Street is a narrow lane with buildings mainly along side;
- Most of these are cottages which are unlisted but date to the 19th century;
- From Western Lane there are notable views over the fields towards North Warnborough.

Key negative characteristics/issues:

- Despite the Article 4 Direction, many of the buildings have poorly designed modern windows and doors;
- New development in Palace Gate Farm and at the Health Centre is out of scale, dominant in views from the Deer Park, and too close to the boundary with the park;
- Overhead telephone cables and telegraph poles dominate views along the street.

Character Area 5 Alton Road, Crown Fields and the old chalk quarry

Key positives

- Rural qualities on rising chalk downland;
- Alton Road is a busy main road with good views westwards over open fields;
- Crown Fields is an important open green space in agricultural use;
- Good views across Crown Fields both into and out of the town, focussing on the church;
- Banks of trees make an important contribution;
- Chamberlain Gardens provide a children's' play area and tennis courts closer to the town;
- The old chalk quarry is very large but surprisingly not easily seen from Alton Road due to vegetation;
- A number of interesting historic buildings survive at its entrance.

Key negative characteristics/issues:

- Modern driveway across Crown Fields is regrettable;
- Open spaces, trees and views all need special protection;
- Busy traffic along Alton Road.

7 ISSUES

7.1 Summary of Issues

Based on the Key Negatives/Issues summarised in Chapter 6, and on comments made during the initial public consultation/walkabout, the following are considered to be the most important Issues for the Odiham Conservation Area at this point in time:

Odiham and its setting

- The protection of the setting of Odiham;
- Long and short views – these need to be protected, particularly from the Deer Park and across Crown Fields, from the downland to the south and from Hatchwood Hill;
- Deer Park wall – requires repairs and protection.
- Tree Management Plan required.

New development

- Pressure for new development, particularly housing on backland sites;
- The protection of the existing historic plots and historic boundaries from new development;
- Scale and form of development needs to reflect historic precedent.

Town Centre

- The protection of the town's economic vitality and the encouragement of appropriate new businesses;
- Street signage should be appropriately designed;
- Maintain mixed uses in the High Street.
- parking

Buildings

- The continued protection of the high quality townscape;
- Article 4 Directions – a thorough review is needed;
- The control of unlisted positive buildings;
- Review Local List.

Site specific

- Underground overhead wires in West Street.;
- Further improvements needed to other sites such as the public car park off Church Lane.

THE MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

8 INTRODUCTION

8.1 Format of the Management Proposals

Part 1 of this document, the *Character Appraisal*, has identified the special positive qualities of the Odiham Conservation Area which make the conservation area unique. Part 2 of this document, the *Management Proposals*, builds upon the negative features which have also been identified, to provide a series of Issues and Recommendations for improvement and change. Most, but not all, will be the responsibility of the Hart District Council, Odiham Parish Council or Hampshire County Council.

The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2005). Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis, as set out in Chapter 10.

9 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Odiham and its setting

9.1.1 The protection of the setting of Odiham

The landscape around Odiham is notable for its attractive downland to the south and for the Deer Park, leading towards the Basingstoke Canal and Odiham Common, to the north. In the Local Plan this land is already protected by a number of policies, as set out in section 1.4 *The local policy framework*. However there may be potential threats from new development on the edges of the conservation area or from changes to buildings or sites which lie within the conservation area but close to the boundaries.

Recommendation:

- The District Council will continue to protect the setting of Odiham through the strict enforcement of policies contained within the Local Plan and will resist applications for change which would have a detrimental effect on the land adjoining, or on the edges of, the conservation area.

9.1.2 Views into and out of the town

Because of the location of the town on a slightly north-facing slope, largely surrounded by countryside, the views into and out of the town to this rural setting, with its many mature trees, are a major component in the positive features which contribute to Odiham's special character. The areas round the Deer Park and Crown Fields are particularly sensitive and the protection of the rural qualities of Odiham's immediate surroundings, which in places "infiltrate" into the town centre (such as Chamberlain Gardens and the churchyard), is therefore extremely important.

Recommendation:

- The District Council will protect the views into and out of Odiham, particularly the views shown on the Townscape Appraisal map. Proposals for new development which would impinge on these views will be resisted.

9.1.3 Deer Park wall

The substantial brick wall which separates the Deer Park from Palace Gate Farm marks the end of the medieval burgage plots and the wall is therefore of great archaeological importance. Whilst clearly of several different building periods, some of the bricks appear to be late 17th or early 18th century in date and may once have been part of Odiham Place, marked on Will Godsons map of 1739, and demolished at some stage in the 18th century. The wall is owned by Hart District Council, and is currently in a poor state of repair.

Recommendation:

- Research should be carried out into the history of the wall and, if appropriate, the wall should be recommended for statutory listing. If this is not achieved, the wall should be locally listed. A programme of repairs should also be agreed and some emergency work, including careful repointing using the appropriate lime mortar, carried out.

9.1.4 Tree Management Plan

Trees make an important contribution to the special character of the Odiham Conservation Area. Some are already specifically protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), although the coverage of this protection is somewhat haphazard. Most of the important trees are in private ownership, and although the gardens can only be glimpsed over high walls or other planting, the trees stand out above the roofs and are widely visible across the whole conservation area.. The trees which are visible from the Deer Park in the gardens of the houses to the north of the High Street are particularly significant, as are the trees around The Priory and around Crown Fields.

Because of the number of trees, and the difficulty of obtaining access onto private land, a full tree survey was not carried out at the time of the appraisal survey and the Townscape Appraisal map therefore does not include details of significant trees. A local group (the Odiham Biodiversity Group) has offered to take over this task, and to work towards preparing a Tree Management Plan for the conservation area which could include the identification of species as well as individual trees which may need tree surgery. Recommendations for additional TPOs and further tree planting could also be made. A Town Trail based on the trees of Odiham (as has been done very successfully in Chichester) is another possible outcome of this work.

Recommendation:

- Prepare a Tree Management Plan for the Odiham Conservation Area as detailed above.

9.2 New development in Odiham

Since the last conservation area appraisal was written in 1988, there have been a number of major housing developments in Odiham including Palace Gate Farm and two new areas of housing off Reyntiens View. These last two are recommended for removal from the conservation area. There is undoubted pressure for more development, mostly on backland sites including land to the north-west of the cemetery and gardens to the north of the High Street.

A draft Village Design Statement (VDS) has recently been produced for the parish of Odiham including North Warnborough which sets out standards for new development. The document, which is currently out to public consultation (May 2007) also considers some of the elements which contribute to the special character of Odiham including footpaths and woodlands. The VDS is aimed at ensuring that local distinctiveness is maintained and it is anticipated that it will be useful to both householders and developers when considering new development in the parish. Its recommendations are both succinct and relevant to the particular problems and issues within Odiham, and therefore these Management Proposals do not include any specific design advice as this is adequately covered in the VDS.

However, there are some issues concerning new development which are of special relevance to the conservation area and the recommendations below therefore contain specific policies which relate to the issues identified in the Character Appraisal:

Recommendations:

- New development in or on the edges of the conservation area should respect existing plot boundaries, plot ratios, and historic forms of development;
- Where backland sites are developed, the existing open character of private gardens should be maintained by low densities of development, set within spacious plots;
- Development should reduce in scale from the main streets, following historic precedent;
- New development should respect the historic grain of development established by plot boundaries and existing historic buildings, particularly in relation to development in back gardens;
- New development should not impinge on views into or out of the town, and should be carefully sited to minimise any visual impact, lessons should be learnt from recent developments which have failed to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, e.g. the health centre and Mildmay Court;
- Existing open green space, including private gardens and trees, should be protected from unsympathetic development where this would have an adverse impact on the spacious character of the existing site and area.

9.3 Town Centre

Although Odiham is an extremely popular location for its residents, and a generally affluent area, the facilities of the town centre have suffered because of competition from larger towns such as Guildford and Farnham. Many residents drive to Hook, Fleet, Farnham or even Basingstoke for supermarket shopping and there is only one modestly-sized supermarket in Odiham (the Co-Op). Otherwise the shops tend to be smaller, family-run businesses, a few of which have closed in the last couple of years.

To help maintain a vibrant local economy, the Council started funding a Town Centre Manager in 2003, and a partnership has been established between the District Council, Parish Council and the local Retail Forum. Drawing from these and other organisations, as well as residents, the Odiham Town Centre Management Group has been set up with the aim of ensuring a sustainable and vibrant retail and commercial community in the parish of Odiham.

Recommendations:

- The District Council will continue to protect the town's economic vitality and will encourage appropriate new businesses, whilst maintaining mixed uses in the High Street;
- Working in partnership with Hampshire County Council, the District Council will ensure that street signage in Odiham is well designed and sited.

9.4 Buildings

9.4.1 The continued protection of the high quality townscape

Odiham is notable for the very high quality of its townscape and for the high concentration of listed buildings in the conservation area. Whilst there are already policies in the Local Plan to protect all conservation areas and listed buildings in the District, constant vigilance is needed to ensure that incrementally relatively small changes do not occur which could adversely affect the special interest of the area.

Recommendation:

- The District council will continue to accept only the highest quality development in the Odiham Conservation Area, and will protect existing open spaces including private gardens from inappropriate new development.

9.4.2 Article 4 Directions

The existing Article 4 Directions in Odiham are out of date and appear to be largely ineffectual, as indicated by the large number of inappropriate modern windows in unlisted houses in West Street. A thorough review is needed, including the consideration of removing the existing Article 4 Directions, and serving a new "blanket" Article 4(2) Direction on the whole conservation area to cover all of the unlisted family dwellings.

Recommendation:

- The existing Article 4 Directions should be reviewed and consideration given to serving a new Article 4(2) Direction for the whole conservation area and the project relented.

9.4.3 The control of unlisted positive buildings

As part of the appraisal process, and as recommended by English Heritage and in PPG 15, "positive" buildings have been identified and are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map for Odiham. Generally, these are individual or groups of buildings which retain all or a high proportion of their original architectural detailing and which add

interest and vitality to the appearance of the conservation area. Most of them date to the 19th century, but some may be early 20th century. Where they have been too heavily altered, and restoration is not easily achievable, they are excluded.

As with listed buildings, there is a general presumption in favour of their retention. Any application for the demolition of a positive building will therefore need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification as to why the building cannot be retained, similar to that required for a listed building. The owner must also have made positive efforts to market the building, or to find a suitable new use, before an application can be determined.

Recommendation:

- The District Council will consider applications for change to “positive” buildings extremely carefully and will refuse any which adversely affect their architectural or historic interest.
- Applications to demolish “positive” buildings will generally be refused.

9.4.4 Local List

There are a few locally listed buildings in the conservation area but no review has been carried out in recent years. Additions may include some of the “positive” buildings identified as part of the appraisal process.

Recommendation:

- The Local List for Odiham should be reviewed, possibly in partnership with the Parish Council.

9.5 **Site specific**

9.5.1 Overhead wires and telegraph poles

Much of Odiham has already had telephone wires etc undergrounded, but no such scheme has been undertaken for West Street, where they are particularly noticeable.

Recommendation:

- Inform the utility companies of the desirability of removing the overhead wires and telegraph poles in West Street.

9.5.2 Enhancement sites

A small number of sites in the centre of Odiham would benefit from minor improvements to surface finishes, pavements and boundaries. These include the public car park off Church Lane and parts of the High Street where some of the existing paving would benefit from replacement.

Recommendation:

- Working with the Parish Council, and funding permitting, a programme of further enhancements to the town centre could be agreed.

9.6 Conservation area boundary review

A thorough review of the existing conservation area boundary was carried out as part of the appraisal process, and the following recommendations for change are suggested:

9.6.1 Add Buryfields Infants School and playing fields

Buryfields Infants School was built in 1898 to alleviate overcrowding in the National School (demolished in the late 1960s) which had been built on land presented by Lady Mildmay (the Lady of the manor) in 1841. It is a good example of its type and retains many original features. Local Listing, if not statutory listing, would be appropriate. The neighbouring playing fields are important in views out of Odiham from the public footpath and contribute to the setting of the conservation area.

9.6.2 Add properties along Cemetery Hill

This ancient lane leads out of Odiham down a steep hill cut into the side of the downs. There are three unlisted late 18th or 19th century cottages (Kingsdean, Butts Cottages, and Butts End), and one 20th century house (St Helens) all of which are considered to be "positive". Beyond Butts End is a small roadside pond, shown on 19th century maps. It is also proposed to include the garden to Butts End, which has at some stage been extended as far as the public footpath across the fields, and the cricket ground, which now marks the beginning of the town on the way in from Alton.

9.6.3 Delete modern development off Reyntiens Way

Two areas of new housing have been added in the 1990s on the eastern edge of the conservation area. It is suggested that they are deleted from the conservation area as clearly they make no contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the town.

10 MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1 As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption by Hart District Council. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging Local Development Framework and government policy generally. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publicity and advertising;

It is possible that this review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the District Council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Townscape Appraisal map
- Appendix 2 Article 4 Directions
- Appendix 3 Bibliography
- Appendix 4 Contact details

APPENDIX 1 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS MAP

APPENDIX 2 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

Details of the existing Article 4 Directions

Odiham Town Centre – High Street and The Bury

Article 4 Direction served 19th January 1970

This Article 4 Direction covers both the back and side elevations of all unlisted family dwellings, as well as the fronts.

Alterations to dwelling houses - classes of development which are currently controlled are as follows:

- Class I – Development within the curtilage of a dwelling house including any enlargement, improvements or other alteration of the original dwelling house; erection, construction or placing and maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any building or enclosure within the curtilage of a dwelling house;
- Class II – Sundry minor operations, including the erection or construction of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure; and of their maintenance, improvement or other alteration;
- Class VI – Agricultural buildings, works and uses including the carrying out of building or engineering operations requisite for the purposes of agriculture; and

Class VIII – Development for industrial purposes including the installation or erection of plant or machinery and the exterior alteration of buildings.

Odiham West Street

Article 4 Direction served 28th September 1998 – covers the following types of development:

Class A The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of the frontage* of a dwelling or building within the curtilage of a dwelling, including works affecting a frontage* roof slope (*In respect of side extensions, these are covered where they are in front of the rear wall of the dwelling*);

Class B The erection, construction, alteration or demolition of a porch on the frontage* of a dwelling;

Class C The erection, alteration or removal of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure to the frontage* of a dwelling;

Class D The exterior painting of any part of the frontage* of a dwelling or building within the curtilage of a dwelling (*This requires consent where it involves either a painting scheme dramatically different from the existing or involves areas of the building not previously painted*);

Class E The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney or building within the curtilage of a dwelling;

***Frontage** refers to the elevations or roof slope of the dwelling which face a highway, a footpath, a bridleway, a waterway or a public open space. In respect of side extensions, these need permission where they would be forward of the rear wall of the dwelling.

The **curtilage** is the contained area around the dwelling.

APPENDIX 3 BIBLIOGRAPHY

<i>The Parish of Odiham</i>	Sheila Millard
<i>The Church in The Bury</i>	Derek Spruce
<i>Odiham High Street</i>	The Odiham Society

APPENDIX 4 CONTACT DETAILS

For further information, please contact the following;

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