

ODDINGTON CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT

Planning guidance
for owners,
occupiers and developers



Oddington lies in the gently undulating valley of the river Evenlode, and comprises two modest-sized villages. Lower Oddington, the larger and more built-up village, sits on a small rise of land. Upper Oddington, a quarter of a mile to the west, is tucked away in a valley below the higher wolds.

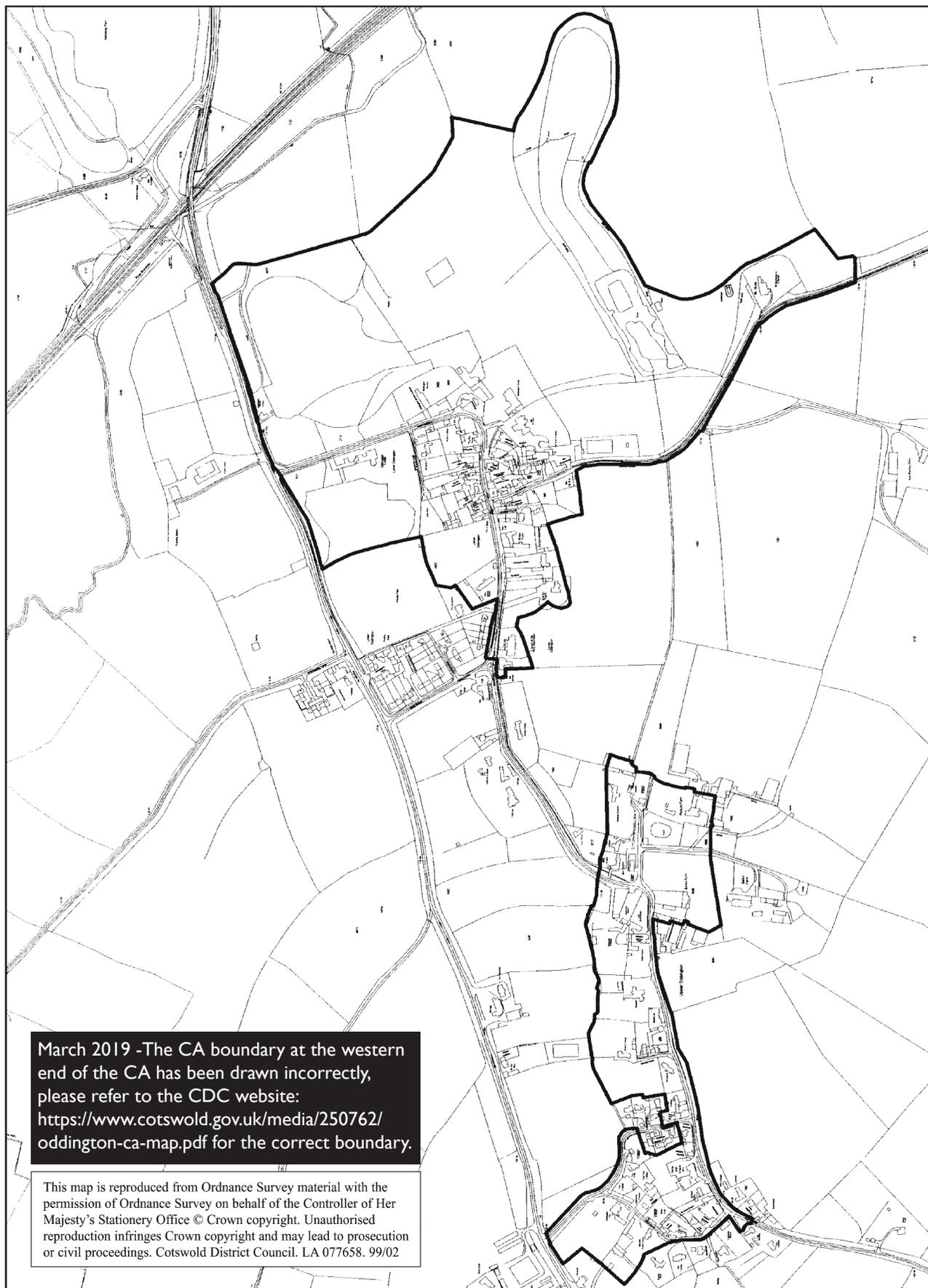
Neither village is affected by heavy traffic as the busy A436 passes to the north and, partly because of this, both retain a peaceful, rural character. The conservation areas of Lower and Upper Oddington include the oldest parts of the settlements, and the immediate landscape setting.



Cotswold District Council

June 2004

ODDINGTON CONSERVATION AREA





The closely-knit character of the High Street is relieved by a small green graced by a sycamore tree, providing the setting for the adjoining row of attractive terraced cottages.

Oddington Conservation Area was first designated on 1 June 1989, and the boundary was altered on 2 March 1999.

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* (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). This Statement provides guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the Oddington Conservation Area can be achieved.

Local planning authorities are required to *formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas* (Section 71 of the Act). This Statement fulfils this statutory duty.

In making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, *special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area* (Section 72 of the Act). While this should ensure that harmful change is not allowed, some changes, normally not requiring planning permission (known as permitted development), could still damage the

special qualities of the area. Local authorities have special powers to issue directions removing certain permitted development rights from properties if it can be shown that this is necessary. A direction to this effect has been made covering certain buildings within the Oddington Conservation Area.

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the most recently adopted versions of the *Cotswold District Local Plan*, the *Gloucestershire County Structure Plan*, and national planning policy guidance, especially Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) - 'Planning and the Historic Environment'.

This Statement has been prepared by **Cotswold District Council** in close collaboration with **Oddington Parish Council**. A draft was circulated at a public meeting held on 19 January 1999 in Oddington, and any comments or suggestions were taken into account in the final published version. The Statement was adopted by Cotswold District Council as supplementary planning guidance on 2 March 1999.

THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

HISTORY



The Church of St Nicholas dates from the 12th Century when Oddington village became established on the woodland adjacent to the present church.

Oddington village first became established during the twelfth century when work started on the construction of the Church of St Nicholas. The present woodland area adjoining the church was the site of this earlier village. At around the middle of the sixteenth century, the village was rebuilt further north on a road running east, from Stow-on-the-Wold, towards Oxfordshire. This road became the primary route between Stow-on-the-Wold and Adlestrop and today is the Oddington village street. The main road, now the A436, was rebuilt further north under a Road Act of 1755.

By the end of the sixteenth century, Lower Oddington had developed into a compact settlement. Upper Oddington grew at about the same time a quarter of a mile to the west. The oldest surviving house at Upper Oddington (now known as Old Stone House), was converted in around 1900 from three late sixteenth-century cottages, the date of the other earlier cottages in the village.

The increasing wealth of the later seventeenth century brought with it larger houses, such as the Old Plough and Kitsbury Orchard in Upper Oddington. In Lower Oddington, two much larger houses were built: Oddington House and the

Rectory. These properties stand in the south-eastern corner of Lower Oddington a few yards from each other and are screened from the village street by other buildings. Green Farm and Rectory Farm in Lower Oddington were built during this period to support the growing agricultural industry.

The arrival of the railway, built by the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway Company in 1853 (known at the time as 'the old worse and worse'), and local road links, encouraged the further development of both villages during the latter part of the nineteenth century. The railway also brought about a greater range of available building materials, particularly brick and Welsh slate. A second railway, the Bourton-on-the-Water Railway, linking Banbury with Cheltenham, was constructed a mile to the south of the villages in 1862. The passing trade gave rise to the opening of two public houses in the villages: the Horse and Groom in Upper Oddington and the Fox Inn in Lower Oddington. During this period, two substantial houses were built at the extremities of each village: Oddington Lodge at Lower Oddington and Fern Bank (now known as Oddington Top), at Upper Oddington.

Later development such as the 1852 Church of the Holy Ascension, the school and, especially, the modern former council houses has extended Lower Oddington to the west, reducing the gap between the villages.

ODDINGTON IN THE LANDSCAPE

Oddington lies in the eastern Cotswolds, near Gloucestershire's boundary with Oxfordshire. Both villages are set in the gently undulating landscape of the Evenlode valley, nestling beneath the high wolds that climb steadily to the west. The landscape surrounding the villages is typical of the Cotswolds dip slope, which tapers slowly eastwards to the Thames valley in Oxfordshire. The countryside has a smooth, less rugged texture than that of the neighbouring high wolds.

Upper Oddington stretches along the valley of a small stream. The most tightly developed part of the village lies in a hollow, surrounded by a gently rising wold that peaks at Stow-on-the-Wold, two miles to the west. By contrast, the more linear village of Lower Oddington sits on a low tongue of land, which overlooks shallow valleys to east, south and north.

Dramatic hills are not a dominant feature in the landscape, although skylines are evident only a short distance away to the south, and in the north-eastern corner of Upper Oddington. One is also aware of the gentle ascent, paradoxically, to Lower Oddington. There are also distant views, eastwards, of the wolds around the Chipping Norton area.

The valleys around Oddington, especially that of the River Evenlode, are relatively broad and appear as rounded, shallow, indentations in the terrain. The watercourses are relatively slow flowing, which is characteristic of the Cotswold dip slope. Compared with most of the eastern

Cotswolds, arable farming is not particularly prevalent around Oddington, pasture being strongly in evidence.

Apart from belts of trees to the south east of Lower Oddington, in the vicinity of the isolated Church of St Nicholas, the area is not characterised by large tracts of woodland. However, hedgerows, small copses and individual trees are significant features in the landscape. They are also strongly evident, to varying degrees, in both villages; particularly in the north-eastern corner of Lower Oddington, where mature trees create a formal parkland character in the extensive, historic, grounds of Oddington House. Trees also make a significant contribution to the area between the two villages.

Hedgerows and fences are the main form of enclosure for the fields surrounding Oddington; traditional dry-stone walls being relatively scarce. The latter, however, are common within both villages.

Parts of both conservation areas can be glimpsed through hedgerows skirting the A436, which runs parallel to the main axis of the villages, a short distance to the north. Oddington, however, is not particularly prominent in the wider landscape. There are relatively few expansive views out of either village. The most notable one is obtained from an elevated vantage point south-westwards across the field adjacent to the Church of Holy Ascension, in Lower Oddington. A good, short distance, view is obtained of Upper Oddington when descending the hill from Lower Oddington. Apart from these, and limited views across the walled paddock next to Lower Oddington's Manor House, clear views of the surrounding countryside are not easily found in either village.



Upper Oddington stretches along the valley of a small stream, while the most tightly developed part of the village lies in a hollow surrounded by a gently rising wold.

ODDINGTON'S CHARACTER

The adjacent settlements of Upper and Lower Oddington are typical of many Cotswold villages, being fairly small, tranquil, and with relatively few facilities of their own. There is, however, a public house in each village, while Lower Oddington has a well-equipped hall and a shop-cum-post office. Although the parish boasts two churches, only one - the Church of Holy Ascension - is located within the settlements, standing at the western end of Lower Oddington. The primary school closed some time ago.

Each of the villages contain areas of quite diverse character. The western end of Upper Oddington, the smaller of the two, is essentially a loop of tightly clustered development of various dates, which includes Back Lane. The rest of Upper Oddington stretches out eastwards along the village street at a much lower density, with gaps between buildings becoming



The area of open space in front of Chapel House and Old Stone House creates a soft foreground to the attractive buildings that front onto it.

much more evident. The surrounding countryside intermingles with the village to a greater extent here than elsewhere in the Oddingtons. The core of Lower Oddington is almost urban in character, the scene dominated by runs of two and three storey buildings, which abut tightly against the street's footways. This is in stark contrast to the Arcadian character of the large properties on the eastern side of Lower Oddington, and the suburban formality of the modern Home Court housing estate on the western side.

Despite the presence of dense development in places, the Oddingtons are basically rural in character, with no one building dominating the scene. Unusually, for a Cotswold village, there is no church tower or spire to provide a focal point.

Although there is an absence of panoramic views or steep hillsides, one is invariably conscious of the gentle countryside in which the villages are located. There are constant but subtle, reminders, glimpses and reference points. Of particular importance is the sparsely developed, well-timbered, area between the villages; the comparative lack of residential development along the southern side of the main

street through Upper Oddington; and the paddock next to the Manor House in Lower Oddington.

Both villages are served by a minor road, which links the A436 and the B4450. The road is not an obvious short-cut and, thus, is not used as a 'rat run'. Essentially, it is only used by local traffic. Largely because of this, the conservation areas have retained much of their tranquillity and traditional rural character. This is despite the busy A436 passing within earshot of both villages, a short distance to the north. What relatively little vehicular traffic exists, emanates largely from Banks Farm at Upper Oddington, or is generated by the public houses. There is a significant amount of horse riding in and around both villages.



Oddington's rural lanes are enjoyed by walkers and horse riders.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE VILLAGE

The settlements of Upper and Lower Oddington are characterised both by densely built-up and landscape-dominated areas. Four character areas have been identified:

1. The western end of Upper Oddington including Back Lane, the Horse and Groom public house and Oddington Top.
2. The eastern end of Upper Oddington from Kitsbury Orchard to Brans Cottage including the Old Plough.
3. The western and central parts of Lower Oddington including the Manor House, Green Farm and Rectory Farm.
4. The eastern end of Lower Oddington around the Old Rectory, Oddington House and Oddington Lodge, including the parkland to Oddington House and Church of St Nicholas.



The boundary wall enclosing Oddington Top is crowned by a fine yew hedge, which has been trimmed into ornamental shapes.

1: The western end of Upper Oddington including Back Lane, the Horse and Groom public house and Oddington Top.

Descending into Upper Oddington along the first of three lanes leading off the A436, the western part of the village can be seen ahead. The settlement nestles in a bowl, surrounded by higher ground. In the middle distance, a stark skyline defines the hillside, which rises behind clusters of houses, roofs and chimneys.

To the right, behind a dry-stone wall, are the tree-filled grounds of Oddington Top, an interesting house of several dates, architectural styles and materials, which holds a key location in this corner of the conservation area. The gated entrance to Oddington Top is impressive, without being grand; and it affords a glimpse of the brick-fronted house itself, with its pleasing proportions and shuttered windows. Beyond the entrance, the boundary comprises a fine, coped, dry-stone wall, which increases in height as the contours fall away. The wall, which turns the corner to follow Back Lane, is topped with a fine yew hedge, parts of which have been trimmed into interesting ornamental shapes.

After passing Back Lane, the roadside verges on the developed (southern) side of the road become well tended. Some fifty metres beyond Back Lane, set back from the road, is the intriguing Pear Tree Cottage, whose three storeys and relatively narrow frontage give the building a surprisingly tall appearance. Immediately after The Forge is Woodbine Cottage, built in the mid-nineteenth century and fronted with iron railings and gate.

A short distance beyond Woodbine Cottage, the lane turns abruptly to the right before climbing towards the village street. The sound of running water can be heard on the corner

as minor watercourses appear briefly before disappearing again to pass under the road in a culvert. (The watercourse continues eastwards to define the northern boundary of the conservation area). The remaining one hundred metres of the road, which rises up to a T-junction, is dominated by modern development on both sides.

Immediately behind the housing estate on the eastern side of the lane, and extending to Brans Lane, is an uncultivated field which has taken on the appearance of wasteland. The field, which can be seen from the A436, seems visually less related to the adjoining agricultural land than the village. An unsightly electricity pole stands on the eastern side, adjacent to Brans Lane. To the south of the field is a modern property named Woodhall which, like many houses in the village, is bounded by a low dry-stone wall. In this instance, additional screening has been provided by the erection of a panelled fence above the wall, behind which stands a hedge.

The village street, which passes west-east through Upper Oddington, has a strongly rural character. Moving westwards from Brans Lane, the first two hundred yards along the southern side is completely devoid of development, the lane dominated by a steep grass bank, topped with a hedge and the occasional semi-mature tree. Rising fields lie beyond the hedge. Further along the southern side of the street, grouped together, are a K6-type telephone kiosk, letter box, notice board and litter bin. Beyond these are a handful of houses of mixed dates and character, none of which lie within the conservation area, the boundary being defined by the highway boundary.

Returning to the northern side of the village street, the first property after Brans Lane, beyond Woodhall, is Ivy Cottage. This pleasing, predominantly stone-built cottage is adorned with vegetation that enhances its rustic character. Like many

properties throughout Oddington, Ivy Cottage has brick chimney stacks. On the other side of an extension, (built in red brick at right angles to the cottage), are converted stables and garages. These are largely concealed behind a high, dry-stone wall and wooden gates. After passing the lane that drops steeply towards the modern housing estate, is Bramley House, a modern house with two prominent silver birch trees in the garden frontage.

Between the next house, Sandles, and the Horse and Groom public house, is a fine view towards the northern part of Upper Oddington. Looking down across the pub's car park, a jumble of gables, roofs, dormers, chimneys and trees appear stacked up a gentle hillside in the middle distance. The Horse and Groom itself is a fine building, the original parts of which were built in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A short distance further along the village street is an equally unexpected and fine vista, between Gorbet and Orchard House. Here, the stepped terrace, Rose Walk is seen, climbing towards buildings located along the slightly higher Back Lane. Rising above these properties is the roof of a converted barn behind Old Mill Farm House. Continuing along The Street, just beyond Back Lane, is a small triangular green. Views beyond the green are punctuated by The Sheiling, a modern house which is not within the conservation area.

Dropping down into Back Lane, the narrow road is, at first, channelled between the flank walls of houses which abut both sides of the carriageway, the house to the left being particularly overbearing. Beyond the first one hundred metres, the conservation area boundary follows the dry-stone walls that run along the western side of Back Lane. The



The pleasing roofscape of the stepped terrace Rose Walk reflects the changing topography of this part of the village.

character of this part of the lane is one of contrasts. Fairly tight, generally older, development lies to the east, while a more open appearance is afforded by the modern houses (not within the conservation area), which are set back from the road on the western side.

After the road has taken a second gentle turn to the right, Back Lane takes on a different, more intimate character. The scene ahead is a typical example of a Cotswold village street, which is almost urban in character. The lane narrows further

and appears to snake its way between rows of stone buildings which tightly abut both sides of the carriageway. Superficially, it seems that little has changed over the last century. As one continues along the lane and the scene unfolds, gaps become evident on both sides. Good views open up, south-eastwards, towards the Horse and Groom. The only real blemish on the street scene is an unfortunate web of overhead wires. These radiate from a pole located outside The Cottage, a modern property set back on the southern side of the road.



In Back Lane buildings cling tightly to the roadside, creating an intimate streetscene.

On the northern side of Back Lane, a footpath climbs the hillside between Robins Nest and Old Mill Farm House. At the top of the short rise, it emerges from a narrow, dark passage into a field. From here, sympathetic conversions and other alterations to walls and buildings are visible.

Back Lane concludes with a complex of buildings at the rear of Oddington Top. The first of these, abutting the lane, includes a loft and hoist, together with small shuttered windows. Beyond this building is an opening into a courtyard, which is surrounded by an interesting complex of buildings, one of which incorporates a dovecote.

2: The eastern end of Upper Oddington from Kitsbury Orchard to Brans Cottage including the Old Plough.

Whilst the western half of Upper Oddington is characterised by tightly spaced buildings mostly facing immediately onto the road, the eastern half is less hilly and buildings are more generously spaced, set behind garden frontages with large areas of land to the sides and rear. Here, the landscape is of particular significance as it provides an important setting and backcloth to mainly traditional buildings.

As the village street gently dips and turns eastward, the more dramatic western half becomes less evident as buildings and trees screen its view. The eye is funnelled along the carriageway by dry-stone boundary walls on one side and a steep, grassy bank topped with a contiguous hedge-line on the other, creating a sense of intimate enclosure as they define the course of the road.

At the corner by Woodhall, is the short, gently descending, Brans Lane. The most noticeable feature here is a terrace of three humble cottages, fronting the narrow lane, separated only by a narrow grass margin. Opposite, hedges and semi-mature trees offer screening of more recent development which would otherwise intrude into this scene. At the foot of the lane is Brans Cottage, which may have formerly been a pair of cottages. The south facing gable end is all that is visible from the lane as the remainder is almost lost amongst the many well-established trees that surround it.



The lane linking the eastern and western parts of Upper Oddington is characterised by a gentle interface with the countryside on the south side and more formal dry stone walling enclosing the development to the north.

Proceeding eastwards, the terrace of cottages on Brans Lane is abutted, at the rear, by a much larger cluster of traditional buildings arranged in a courtyard surrounding private gardens. Little Barn has the appearance of a former school building with its principal elevation of pointed-arched windows and dormers. Partially concealing these buildings is a tall stone boundary wall under flat stone copings, with unusual bands of brick courses running along its length. Completing the group is a modest, brick-built outbuilding (now used as the garage for Milestones), with interestingly detailed dormer windows. The trees within the garden of Brans Cottage are an important backdrop to this group of buildings.

Next down the lane, is Milestones, a house which appears formerly to have been an agricultural building. Standing directly onto the road, it is a key feature at this location as the view eastwards is less dominated by buildings. An unfortunate alteration to this otherwise traditional building, is the recent insertion of plastic replacement windows.

Further along the road, the grassy bank becomes less steep and dominating. The lane has opened up as middle distance views become more apparent. These afford views of the modern farm buildings on this side of the otherwise traditional farmstead of Banks Farm.

Attractive stone boundary walls continue to define and contain the road on the northern side. Together with grassy verges, they ensure a pleasing rural atmosphere. The

spacious, open gardens which separate Benwell and Gate House allow middle distance views into open countryside, relieving the previously restrained village-scape. Mature trees continue to play an important role adding scale and texture to the scene.

Immediately opposite the modern farm buildings is a tightly packed cluster of historic buildings arranged in a courtyard comprising Gate House, The Plough Cottage and The Old Plough, with Blenheim House not yet in full view. The Old Plough is the more dominant and the earliest of the group. Worthy of note is a pair of decorative wrought iron gates hanging at its entrance. Historically, the group of buildings once formed The Plough, an old Coaching Inn.

As the road bends sharply northwards, a striking feeling of space emerges. Here, buildings are set well back from the roadside either behind low-walled gardens and orchards, or stood in areas of meadow. Worthy of particular attention at Banks Farm is the multi-functional range of farm buildings arranged in a continuous line with its gable end facing onto the road. Beyond this, past a large well-weathered Dutch barn, is the farmhouse standing well back behind a spacious garden contained by a stone wall with gate between formal gatepiers.

Orchards play an important part in the appearance of this part of the conservation area. A swathe of orchard sweeps into the village from the hillside around Banks Farm to the frontages of The Old Plough and Blenheim House. Perhaps more influential is the area of open space, which looks like a traditional village green. Not only does it provide a tranquil focus for village life but it also creates a pleasing, soft foreground to the attractive buildings that front onto it,



The Old Stone House defines the western edge of Upper Oddington.

namely Old Stone House and Chapel House. The former is a particularly attractive cottage, with gable end directly onto the green. The hedge-lined grassy fields north of the green and over the road, make an important contribution to this distinctly rural part of the village.

The former chapel, now Chapel House, stands on the corner of the entrance to a narrow, leafy lane leading off the main



Kitsbury Cottage, which dates from the early 19th Century, provides a focal feature which closes the view at the western end of this lane.

village road towards the east. Either side of the lane are wide verges, behind which hedgerows and dry-stone walls define boundaries. A narrow brook running along the boundary completes the scene. The composition of traditional cottages, trees and unspoilt setting is particularly attractive. The lane itself seems part of an orchard, and the buildings tend to be less dominant. Kitsbury Cottage closes the view at the end of the lane, its formal Georgian frontage contrasting with other, more traditional, cottages. Adjacent is a narrow, tunnel-like footpath which runs along the boundary with Pasture Farm and eventually leads out to a pleasant scene of meadows and field hedges.

Kitsbury Orchard is a large, detached, traditional house standing in well-tended and spacious gardens, stocked with a multitude of mature trees. The landscape provides an attractive setting and backcloth to the house. Within its grounds stands a selection of attractive, traditional, outbuildings which frame glimpsed views across the open countryside to the village church at the eastern end of Lower Oddington, only a short distance away.

A much narrower lane rises southwards alongside the western boundary of Pasture Farm. The character here is agricultural, with a rough gravel track lined by grassy verges and hedgerows. Occasional farm related activities contribute to this distinctly rural scene. Looking back down the hillside, the village's gently undulating landscape and the importance of trees is immediately apparent.

3: The western and central parts of Lower Oddington including the Manor House, Green Farm and Rectory Farm.

The western approach into the Lower Oddington part of the conservation area is dominated by the Church of Holy Ascension and the former council estate (the latter being outside the boundary). Dry-stone boundary walling is a

critical feature in the street scene, uniting the buildings. Opposite the church, on a pleasant roadside green, stands the war memorial which provides a focus for this area. On entering Lower Oddington the seventeenth-century Manor House is the first substantial house on the north side, angled back with smaller-scale outbuildings end on to the road.

Opposite, fronted by mature trees and between the church and



The density of this part of the High Street contrasts greatly with the more open grained development to the east.

the main part of Lower Oddington, is an open field. This brings the open countryside into the heart of the village, and affords views out towards Upper Oddington and beyond. The field contributes to the agricultural character of the area within which Green Farm and Manor Farm are situated. Green Farm, the older of the two, still functions as an active farm, whereas the farm buildings of Rectory Farm have been sympathetically converted to residential use. The majority of the barns and stables have Welsh slate roofs and, as a group, contribute significantly to the character of this part of the conservation area. Built amongst them is a recently



At the eastern end of the High Street the lane sweeps northwards as it leaves the village, passing the formal elevations of the house known as Brightwell.

constructed house which, because it resembles a farmhouse and uses natural materials and traditional detailing, contributes positively to the character and appearance of this part of the area.

The rural and agricultural character of this part of the village is further heightened by an additional open paddock opposite the farm buildings, allowing long distance views of the attractive open countryside to the north. This balance of open space and farm buildings is the key to the particular character of this part of the conservation area, and acts as a foil to the more densely built-up part of the High Street, a short distance to the east.

The character along this part of the High Street now changes dramatically from one of loosely distributed agricultural buildings, to a dense frontage of houses and cottages. These buildings are mainly two and three storey cottages, in groups or terraces built directly onto the road. The continuous frontage provides an enclosed and intimate atmosphere as the road sweeps gently through this part of the village. However, any monotony is avoided by the variation in the number of storeys and the interesting roofscape, the latter being further enhanced by a variation in chimney detailing. The majority of these dwellings are largely unaltered, and unspoilt by modern changes. However, in a few cases, the unfortunate replacement of older casement windows and doors with more modern plastic ones is spoiling the otherwise traditional appearance of this part of the conservation area. The closely-knit character of the High Street is relieved by a small green graced by a young sycamore tree, which provides a setting for the adjoining, and particularly attractive, row of terraced cottages. From here, there are glimpses, to the left, of the cottages and the rooftops of the Old Rectory and Oddington House.

From a T-junction in the High Street, Church Road leads south towards the Church of St Nicholas. Architecturally, the

character of this road is surprisingly varied, including a red-brick house and a few rendered buildings. Looking back towards the High Street, there are views of the roofscape and glimpses of the rear elevations, otherwise not visible. Just before the southern boundary of the conservation area is reached, a converted barn provides an interesting transition between the built-up element of the village and the countryside beyond. A number of important trees interspersed with the buildings contribute to this transition.

4: The eastern end of Lower Oddington around the Old Rectory, Oddington House and Oddington Lodge, including the parkland to Oddington House.

A distinct part of the conservation area runs from Oddington House to Oddington Lodge, two large detached houses in substantial parkland grounds, with boundaries mostly of dry-stone walling of varying heights and styles.

Leaving the High Street in the centre of Lower Oddington, a lane leads a short distance southwards to the two most imposing buildings: the Old Rectory and Oddington House. The former was originally the seventeenth-century manor house, now screened from the road by a large Corsican pine. Oddington House, which stands adjacent to the Old Rectory, is a country house built in the early part of the seventeenth century and remodelled in the classical style in the early nineteenth century. At the time, a park was created which now extends to the main Stow-on-the-Wold to Chipping Norton road. Also standing in these grounds is a stable block embellished by an ornate weather vane.

The lane leaves the village and, as it swings northwards, it passes the prominently located house called Brightwell, which forms a focal point. On the opposite side of the road, a low dry-stone wall forms the boundary of the Fox Inn car park, at the back of which is a well designed recent extension to the



Oddington Lodge and its associated parkland to the east, dominate the northern approach to Oddington.

building. After rounding the corner, the frontages of the Fox Inn and Rose Cottage can be seen with their contrasting roof heights. Beyond these, on the opposite side of the road, a formal walled garden surrounds the property known as Oddington Garden.

Continuing northwards, views back to the south through a break in the building line, allow glimpses of the rear roofscapes of buildings in the centre of the village. Beyond are some 1882 buildings (Lodge Cottages), and a dry-stone boundary wall broken by the entry to Sawpits Lane, a leafy track leading to some secluded detached houses. One, appropriately called Lane End, can also be seen from the western part of Lower Oddington. Views of Oddington Lodge emerge as one continues along the village street. This building of Victorian character dominates the eastern approach to Oddington and, along with its adjoining outbuilding, converted stable and grounds, marks the edge of the conservation area.

On the eastern side of the road, the landscape opens out into the park of Oddington House, across which can be viewed the early twentieth-century lodge, built next to a pair of fine early nineteenth-century ashlar gatepiers. This park has many mature specimen trees, which convey something of the character of an arboretum. The parkland is very extensive, stretching down to the site of the old village, just north of the Church of St Nicholas.

The church stands in isolation on a rise just above and beyond Pond Wood. On both sides of the churchyard, the countryside slopes gently away and good distant views are a particular feature here. The lane leading up to the church is narrow and meandering, with a screen of trees on the east, and open views to fields on the west. The church is simple in its architecture but its Norman origins are still very much apparent. Groups of historic gravestones occupy the attractive, wooded graveyard. At its eastern boundary, beyond the trees, fine open views form a contrast to the

intimate atmosphere of the graveyard.

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING MATERIALS

The distinctive, traditional Cotswold style, which gives villages such as Oddington a cohesive identity, is characterised by relatively simple unostentatious detailing. Many of the historic buildings in the villages have generally followed local vernacular traditions and have not been influenced by national styles. Larger classical houses, such as Oddington House, contrast sharply in style and scale. Throughout Oddington, houses, cottages and farm buildings have almost exclusively been built from locally produced Cotswold limestone, mostly from quarries within a short distance of the village. The freshly quarried stone is a pale cream colour but eventually mellows to a creamy, greyish-



Natural Cotswold stone roofs, elevations and surviving stone mullioned windows are distinctive features of many of the buildings in Oddington.



The geometric patterned brick gable end of Sedgely Cottage in Upper Oddington is an attractive curiosity.

brown tone. The masonry is mostly roughly dressed and squared rubble stone, creating a homogeneous texture which unifies the historic parts of the village. On grander buildings, dressed stone has been used for quoins and door and window dressings. At the top end of the scale, finely dressed ashlar stone is found on the principal façade of the classically styled Oddington House.

The survival of traditional roofing is fundamental to the special interest of Oddington, especially in Upper Oddington where the roofscape is more visible (a proposal to increase planning controls, in particular to protect these roofs, is detailed later). The Cotswold style is particularly characterised by steeply-pitched roofs, with features such as diminishing courses of stone slates, generous dripping eaves, and swept valleys. These features are found on many of the traditional buildings in the villages. Welsh slate arrived in the villages after the construction of the railway and allowed the use of lower pitched roofs. In some cases, the earlier stone slates were replaced by blue slate, such as on Gate House. Despite being very different, blue slate has, over time, blended with the more prevalent stone slate roofs.

A mid 17th Century ovolo moulded stone mullioned window with hood mould and later 19th Century re-glazing. Attractive 18th Century internal shutters can be glimpsed behind.



Akin to most villages in the Cotswolds, brick tends to be a secondary material in Oddington and, until recent years, stone continued as the main walling material. However, where it is used, it has not only been restricted to chimney stacks or small out-buildings, but has also been used quite extensively as a main walling material on larger buildings. For example, brick was used in the alterations to the Rectory in 1820. There are some stone-built, nineteenth-century cottages with brick facings to window and door openings, and brick quoins. The geometric patterned brick gable ends of Sedgely Cottage in Upper Oddington is a particular curiosity and an interesting contrast to the stone buildings that surround it.

Rough, random rubble stone is used for the majority of boundary and retaining walls in the village. These walls vary in height and are finished in either flat coping stones, for example, the boundary wall to Banks Farm, alternatively, large, rough ‘toppers’ have been used on end. These are often also called ‘combers’ and are generally found on the lower boundary walls in the more rural fringes of the villages. Railings enclose the front gardens of the more important houses, such as the fine Georgian Kitsbury Cottage. A mixture of stone and wrought iron work can be found on the front garden wall of Woodbine Cottage. Gates can be ordinary timber, but also very decorative, such as the wrought iron gates to the Old Plough. They can be unusual and add variety and interest to the scene, such as the gun-barrel shaped gate piers to Green Farm, which were apparently re-used from the toll pike on the main road.

Most of the buildings in Oddington have simple front-to-back pitched roofs and gabled ends. In the heart of both villages, and along most lanes leading out, cottages face directly onto the road or have narrow frontages. Further from the centre they tend to have more variety in their relationship with the road as buildings jockey for the best prospect across the valley. Throughout the villages, the types of buildings vary greatly. The majority of cottages are one storey with an attic,



There is a distinct architectural hierarchy in the buildings of Oddington and it is this that creates variety and interest in the conservation area.

the windows to the latter being dormers or windows in the gable ends. The more important houses are either two or three storey and some buildings along the High Street in Lower Oddington are as tall as three storeys with an attic. There is a distinct architectural hierarchy in the buildings of Oddington and it is this that creates variety and interest in the conservation area.

Chimneys are usually set on the ridge, many being rebuilt in brick. Even where cottages have been combined into larger houses, chimneys still serve to indicate the extent of each cottage and are therefore visually important, even if sometimes redundant. Traditionally, service accommodation, such as the wash house and pantry, was provided in a single-storey rear outhouse. This important feature can be appreciated from some of the high-level vantage points in Upper Oddington. Where more space exists, buildings have expanded in all directions, although the scale of these has usually not compromised the character of the original

building, and are harmonious in terms of materials and architectural detailing.

The earlier cottages, dating from between 1660 and 1730, have stone-mullioned windows, such as are found on Old Manor House. However, by the middle of the eighteenth century, wrought-iron leaded casement windows in timber frames predominate, usually under segmental stone arches. With the introduction of classically inspired Georgian architecture from the mid-eighteenth century, windows become more carefully proportioned, sliding sash windows being the most fashionable type. The Old Rectory is a good example of this historical development of window styles, typical of Oddington. Later timber casements are now the most common type of window to be found in village cottages, and outbuildings. Openings for these are formed with rough dressed quoins with either timber or stone lintels, and cut stone sills.

THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

PRESERVATION

It is the aim of the District and Parish Councils that the existing character and appearance of the Oddington Conservation Area should be preserved or enhanced.

Preservation will be achieved by refusing permission for the demolition of any building or structure if its loss would damage the character or appearance of the area. Extensions and alterations will be expected to follow the design guidance set out below.

Neglected buildings, where these spoil the character or appearance of Oddington, will be investigated. In critical cases, action will be taken to ensure that repairs are carried out. As part of a survey of all listed buildings in the District, those in the Oddington Conservation Area have been surveyed by the District Council, the work having been done during October 1996. No listed buildings in Oddington Conservation Area were found to be in such poor condition that they were considered at risk from neglect.



The Manor House, Lower Oddington is one of many listed buildings in Oddington. Changes to listed buildings need to be handled sensitively to protect their special character, or setting.

Some open spaces and trees have been identified as being crucial to the character of the place and should be preserved. The Cotswold District Local Plan includes a policy on Oddington for the protection of two open areas. These are:

- Garden land to the north of the Horse and Groom public house.
- Paddock at Lower Oddington opposite Green Farm.

These areas are also indicated on the map accompanying this Statement.

Oddington Conservation Area also falls within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Local Plan includes a policy intended to protect and enhance the landscape, and prevent any developments that could damage its character or appearance.



Although most of the important buildings in the village are listed, many other buildings of character can be protected through the use of an Article 4(2) Direction.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

The designation of the conservation area is not intended to prevent change, especially that which would enhance the character of the area, and ensure Oddington's continued desirability as a place to reside. However, the scope for new development within the conservation area is limited.

The general design guidance for any work requiring planning permission in the conservation area is that the character and appearance of the area should be preserved or enhanced. In particular:

- New buildings or extensions should reflect the general pattern of building in Oddington, especially in scale and proportion, although there is scope for some architectural invention provided that this echoes Oddington's architecture.
- Materials should be in accordance with those traditionally used in the particular part of the conservation area, and should maintain a similar mix. Extensions to buildings should be in materials that are sympathetic to the existing building.
- Any new building or extension should be located on its site in a similar way to the general pattern of building in that part of the area, for example, building directly onto the street as is the case with the terraces in Lower Oddington.

- Boundary walls and railings should be incorporated in the development in a similar way to those already in existence in that part of the area, and these should use similar materials and detailing.

LISTED BUILDINGS

Some historic buildings are 'listed' by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport because of their special architectural or historic interest. Listed building consent is required from the District Council for any work that would affect the special interest of a listed building, whether inside or outside. More information about listed buildings is available from the District Council.

There are 26 buildings in the Oddington Conservation Area that are listed and merit the tightest control over any changes to them. While the aim of the listed building legislation is to preserve these buildings for their own sake, any changes affecting them should also be considered in terms of the effect on the conservation area and the design guidance above.

THE PROTECTION OF OTHER BUILDINGS

There are several buildings and features within the conservation area which are not listed but which contribute to its character and appearance. While these are subject to some increased planning controls brought by the designation of the conservation area, changes could take place to them that would damage the character of the area.

In Oddington there are many unlisted buildings which have retained much of their historic character through the survival of original, or appropriate installation of replacement, window and door designs. Stone walling remains unspoilt by modern renders or cladding, and other changes that could damage the conservation area have not taken place. This is a credit to the owners of these properties. Normally, on dwellings, many such changes could be made without the need for planning permission. With the support of the local community, a Direction has been issued removing permitted development rights from such buildings in Lower Oddington, allowing control over changes to front elevations, boundaries, and any part of the building facing a public open space. A list of these properties is attached to this statement. On these properties, planning permission would be required for:

- Any extension or enlargement facing the highway.
- Formation of any new window or door openings.
- Removal or replacement of existing windows and doors.
- The replacement of painted finishes with stains on any woodwork or joinery.
- The addition or removal of render or claddings.
- Painting previously unpainted stonework.

- Installation of satellite dish antennae.
- Addition of porches, car ports and sheds.
- Changes of roofing materials (front roof slope only).
- Installation of rooflights (front roof slope only).
- Demolition of, or alteration to, front boundary walls or railings.

In addition to the above Direction, the District Council will seek the approval of the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions for a different Direction, removing permitted development rights from buildings within a defined area of Upper Oddington where this appears to warrants this special protection.

ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

Inevitably, there are a number of areas or features in the Oddington Conservation Area which do not conform to the character of the area, and whose replacement or improvement would be beneficial.

This Statement lists the scope for improvement as a series of proposals for enhancement, although no timescale has been set on when they will be achieved. As most involve utilities or local authorities, the District Council will take the lead in encouraging their implementation.

The District Council has a grant scheme which is designed to assist with enhancement projects of the kind listed below.

1 - Restriction on permitted development within the Upper Oddington part of the conservation area.

Through Article 4 Directions, certain works that are currently classed as 'permitted development' may be brought within the remit of planning controls. One form of control that may be issued is an Article 4(2) Direction, which would relate to works fronting public rights of way, and a Direction to this effect has been issued covering several properties in Lower Oddington. In Upper Oddington, with its extensive network of lanes and public footpaths, and open landscape setting, the sides and rear of properties are frequently just as prominent and important as the front.

Alterations to the roofscape are potentially the more visually damaging than any other, especially in Upper Oddington where buildings are at various levels. The re-roofing of unlisted properties in unsympathetic artificial materials, and the incorporation of dormer windows and rooflights, are items that should be singled out for specific control.

To protect the Upper Oddington part of the conservation area adequately, the District Council will seek permission for an Article 4(1) Direction on the key parts of the area. The District Council will involve representatives of the Parish Council in these negotiations, seeking their support for any measures before they are put into effect.

2 - Removal of overhead wires in High Street, Lower Oddington, the green opposite Old Stone House, and Back Lane, Upper Oddington.

Overhead wires are often one of the most unsightly modern contributions to the street scene and they look completely out of place in the otherwise historic character of Oddington. Increasingly, the various utilities are placing their cabling underground and this would be of great benefit to the above locations in the conservation area.

3 - The improvement or replacement of unsympathetic highway signs at the junctions at either end of Back Lane, Upper Oddington.

Whilst providing useful identification or information, highway signs and statutory undertaker's apparatus can so often intrude into sensitive areas such as Oddington. If they cannot be removed altogether, it may be possible to reduce their size or move them to less prominent locations. In particular, the signs at these two locations appear excessive and spoil the appearance of the place.

4 - Removal of pedestrian railings opposite junction at the village stores, Lower Oddington.

These railings were presumably installed as a means of protection for people leaving by the front door and facing directly this junction in the road. Traffic here does not appear to be particularly heavy and, therefore, the railings seem to be redundant as well as rather ugly.

5 - Replacing the tarmac area adjacent to the car park to the Fox Inn, Lower Oddington, and screening the car park.

Although this is a particularly attractive part of Lower Oddington, the wide pavement seems rather out of place. A simple improvement would be to replace the surface with an informal grassed area as on the opposite side of the road. Also, if the boundary wall to the car park were to be raised to the same height as other boundary walls in this part of the village, the parked cars would be screened from view without obscuring the buildings. The combined effect of these two improvements would result in a considerably enhanced street-scene.

PROPERTIES COVERED BY THE ARTICLE 4(2) DIRECTION, REMOVING CERTAIN PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

HIGH STREET (NORTH SIDE)

The Cottage
The Odd House
Quags
Harts Cottage
Foden House
Foden Lodge
Foden Cottage
Sunnyside
The Old Forge

HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE)

Rose Cottage
No 1, Church Place
Old Corner Cottage
Post Office
Green Farm Cottage
Old Forge Barn
Old Bakehouse

ROAD FROM UPPER ODDINGTON TO LOWER ODDINGTON (SOUTH SIDE)

The School House

ROAD FROM LOWER ODDINGTON TO A436 (WEST SIDE)

Nos 1 and 2, Lodge Cottages
Oddington Lodge

CHURCH ROAD, LOWER ODDINGTON (EAST SIDE)

The Cottage

CHURCH ROAD, LOWER ODDINGTON (WEST SIDE)

Brewhouse Cottage

FURTHER READING

Planning policy

Gloucestershire County Structure Plan, copies available from Environment Department, Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2TH.

Cotswold District Local Plan, copies available from Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos GL7 1PX.

Government guidance

PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment, copies available from branches of HMSO.

Guidance on procedures

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, copies available FREE OF CHARGE from Cotswold District Council.

Protected Trees, published by the Department of the Environment, copies available FREE OF CHARGE from Cotswold District Council.

Design guidance

Traditional Casement Windows, Traditional Dormer Windows, Traditional Cotswold Chimneys, Stone Slate Roofing, Porches and The Cotswold Design Code, copies available FREE OF CHARGE from Cotswold District Council.

Village history

The most authoritative source on the village is the relevant volume in *The Victoria History of Gloucestershire*, the section written by C R Elrington and Kathleen Morgan. This is best consulted in major libraries.

Further guidance leaflets are to be published by the District Council.

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