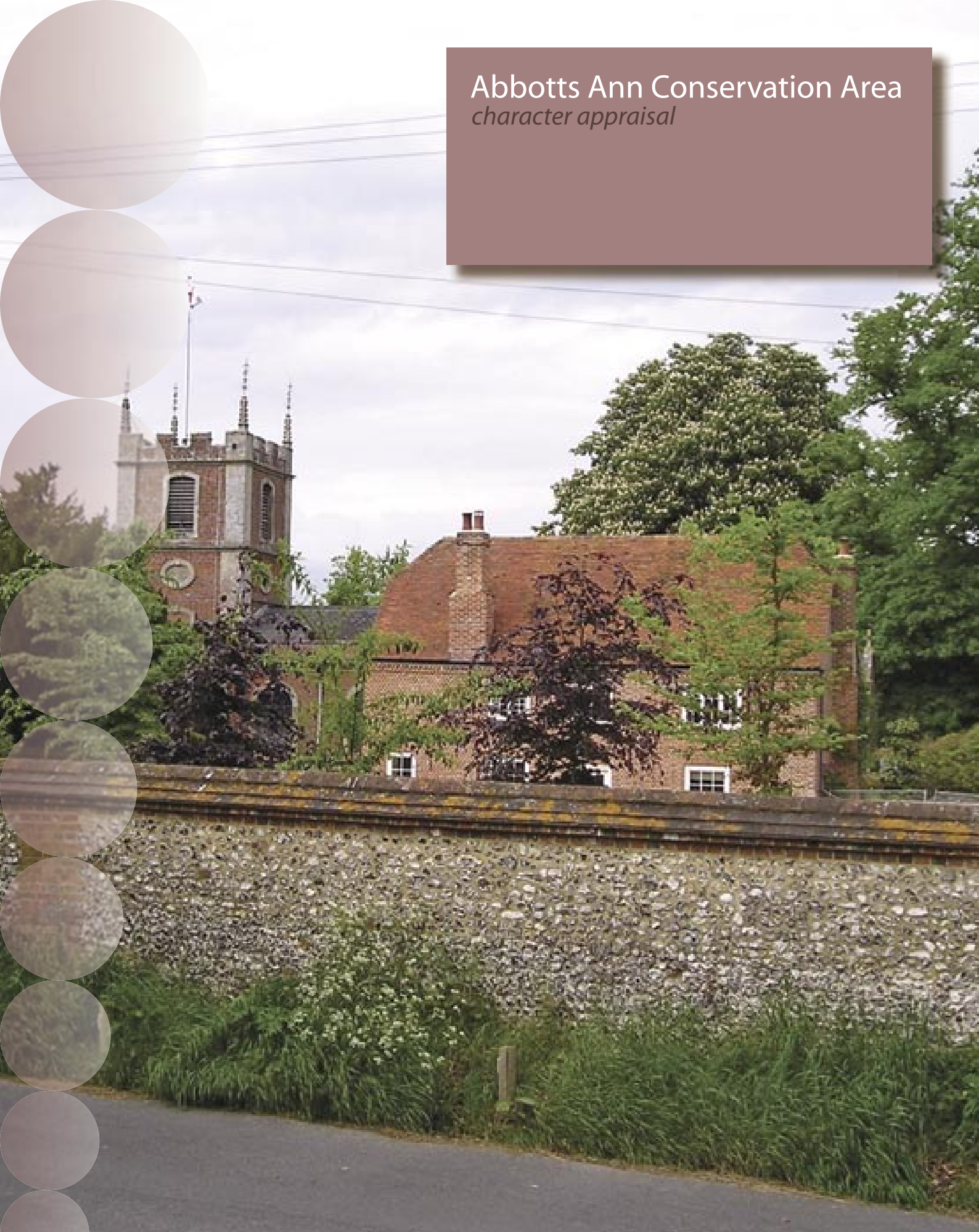


Abbots Ann Conservation Area

character appraisal



TEST VALLEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL

1 Introduction

Conservation Areas

A conservation area is an area designated by a local planning authority as one of special architectural or historic interest. Once designated, the local authority has a duty¹ to ensure that the character of a conservation area is preserved or enhanced, particularly when considering applications for development.

Purpose of Character Appraisals

Local authorities are now encouraged to prepare Character Appraisals, providing detailed assessments of their conservation areas. Appraisals enable the local authority to understand the elements that give each area its distinct and unique character, identifying special qualities and highlighting features of particular significance. Those elements include: historic development; landscape and topography; style, type and form of the buildings, and the spaces between buildings; materials, textures, colours and detailing; and less tangible aspects, such as sounds and smells, which can contribute to the special character of the area.

A Character Appraisal is intended as an overview, providing a framework within which individual planning applications can be assessed. It includes text, an appraisal plan, photographs and sketches. It is not realistic to refer to every building or feature within a conservation area – but the omission of any part does not mean that it is without significance.



Looking towards Spring Cottage from Church Lane

¹Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2 Abbots Ann Conservation Area

Context

Abbots Ann Conservation Area was originally designated by Test Valley Borough Council on 4th November 1981 in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest.

Local authorities have a duty to periodically review their conservation areas to ensure that they are still relevant and that boundaries are logical and could be defended if a planning appeal were made. The Abbots Ann Conservation Area included parts of Abbots Ann and Little Ann, the whole of the old village and the water meadows south of Cattle Lane. Test Valley Borough Council ('the Council') carried out a comprehensive review of the Abbots Ann Conservation Area in the summer of 2004 and the boundaries were formally amended by the Council's Executive on 9th March 2005. The Conservation Area now covers the historic core of the village and part of the water meadows to the north of Pillhill Brook around Mill House, Water Cottage and Brook Cottage, as shown on the appraisal plan at the back of this document.

The Character Appraisal will be a material consideration when future development proposals are considered in the Abbots Ann Conservation Area. It should be read in conjunction with the Council's leaflet 'Conservation Areas: an Introduction', and reference should also be made to policies within the Borough Local Plan.

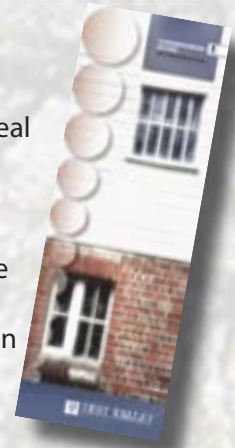
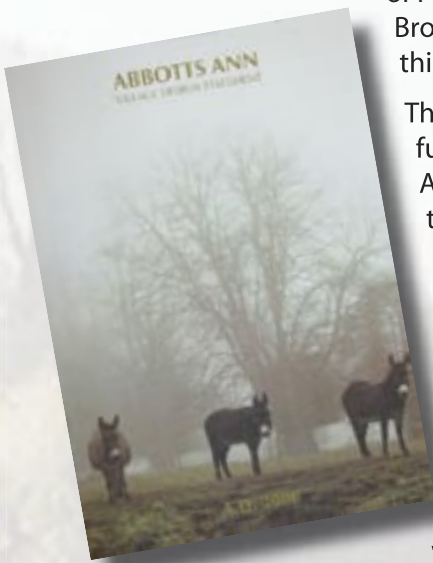
Please note that the Character Appraisal is a separate document from the Village Design Statement. While a Character Appraisal deals specifically with a conservation area and is produced by the Council, a Village Design Statement covers a whole village and is prepared by the local community. It is anticipated that both documents will work in tandem.

Location and Population

Abbots Ann is situated about three miles south west of Andover and lies to the south of the A343 Salisbury trunk road.

The population of Abbots Ann is about 1802 (based on Hampshire County Council's Small Area Population Forecasts). The economy was formerly based on agriculture but today the village is predominantly residential, with the majority of people working in Andover, Basingstoke or further away. There is some light industry outside the village (such as Dell Engineering on the A343 and Andover Fencing/Siteweld at Manor Farm on the Monxton Road). Some farming is still carried out and there are a dwindling number of market garden units north of Cattle Lane.

The village offers a good range of community facilities including a shop, church, War Memorial Hall, two public houses, primary school, nursery and sports field.





Topography and Landscape

The settlement of Abbots Ann developed on the gravel shelf above the valley floor of the Pillhill Brook, a small tributary of the River Anton, which drains south eastwards into the valley of the River Test. It lies between 60 and 90 metres above sea level.

The village has a tranquil, pastoral character notably along the wetter valley floor where the water courses are lined with typical riparian vegetation such as Willow and Alder and lush meadow grassland. The character is changing in places, however, where the land is no longer managed in the traditional way.

Abbots Ann is a large, dispersed village served originally by a series of minor rural roads and lanes that meandered along the course of the valley bottom. The busy A343 road to the east of the Conservation Area intrudes in part on the quiet rural character of the village.



Sluice at Mill House

Historic Development of the Village

Archaeological evidence indicates early settlement in Abbots Ann. The Atrebates (a tribe from Normandy) settled in Abbots Ann around 50BC². The village grew during the Roman period, with construction of an important villa at the end of Dunkirt Lane (outside the Conservation Area).

There are numerous theories about the origins of the name. 'Ann' could refer to the Celtic word meaning 'Ash Tree Stream' (known today as the Pillhill Brook). Or the name could refer to Anna, Saxon king of East Anglia, who married King Alfred's daughter and received the valley manors as a part of the bride's dowry.

The 'Abbott' part of the name relates to the monastic connection with Hyde Abbey at Winchester. The Manor of Ann, together with the church, was a gift to the Abbey from Edward the Elder in 901, and remained in the Abbey's possession until the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The land was granted by the Crown to William Paulet (later Marquess of Winchester) in 1542, and the Manor was eventually sold to Thomas Pitt in 1710.

Thomas Pitt, an East India merchant, former Governor of Madras and grandfather of the future Prime Minister (William Pitt) brought prosperity to the village. He provided funds for construction of the church and the

²According to Alan Selby in *A Story of Abbots Ann*, 1977

Old Rectory. There was a significant amount of other development in the village at this time, possibly encouraged by Pitt's investment.

Thomas Tasker, a blacksmith from Wiltshire who established the 'Waterloo Iron Works' in Clatford Marsh in 1813, brought further prosperity and employment to the village. Tasker lived at no. 50 Duck Street and built the chapel next to his home and several workers' cottages.

There has been considerable expansion in the 20th century in and around the village. Land at Little Park Farm (to the north of Cattle Lane) was purchased by the Land Settlement Association³, a government-backed initiative offering unemployed miners the opportunity for a new start as smallholders. Tenants were offered a bungalow, a large greenhouse, pigsties and so on. The scheme became less regulated after World War II, when new tenants were required to invest more of their own money into the scheme. The smallholdings were eventually sold off. Many of the bungalows have been extended and very few of the smallholdings are now used for their former purpose.



Illustrations based upon Tithe map 1842 (Abbotts Ann on the left and Little Ann on the right)

Abbotts Ann also grew as a result of its close proximity to Andover, which is an overspill town for London. The Bulbery estate was developed by Andover Rural District Council in the late 1940s, 'ribbon development' extended along Salisbury and Monxton Roads and infill development extended along Dunkirt Lane and Little Ann. Development also happened in pockets, such as Manor Close (built in 1960), Abbotts Close, Abbotts Hill, St. Mary's Meadow, Church Close and Hillside (built in the latter part of the 20th century). Several barns have been converted to houses within the village (including Ash Barn and Pollyanna Cottage) and many of the smaller cottages have been altered and extended.

³From *Abbotts Ann in Hampshire* by Pamela King

⁴From the report commissioned by Bournemouth University for Hampshire County Council, and English Heritage, *Historic Rural Settlement in Basingstoke & Dean and Test Valley*, 1999.

Areas of Archaeological Potential

Settlements usually contain archaeological evidence, which helps to explain the origins and development of earlier inhabitants. An archaeological audit was prepared for Hampshire County Council (HCC) to inform the development control process. Most of the historic core of Abbotts Ann has been identified as an Area of Archaeological Potential⁴ (AAP), as shown on the Appraisals Map. This covers the historic core, and includes the most significant buildings within the village and the open space to the north of Church Lane.



Looking down West Hill towards St Mary's Church

Archaeological remains are likely to be found in the Abbots Ann AAP. Therefore, if works that include ground disturbance are proposed, an archaeological assessment is likely to be required. This may conclude that development is inappropriate or should be modified.

Form of the Village

The original settlement was long and linear and followed the Pillhill Brook, with most development one plot deep. Abbots Ann is essentially two settlements: Abbots Ann and Little Ann, and today it is a large, extended and rather spread-out village.

The densest development occurs to the west (along Duck Street up to the Bulbery Estate) and is separated from Little Ann by a scattering of lower-density development with tracts of open space around and within it. There has been a significant amount of infill development in the late 20th century (designed mainly in the form of cul-de-sacs), which has altered the form of the village.

The settlement now largely follows the drier land above the Pillhill Brook and water meadows. Abbots Ann appears to have grown as a collection of cottages and agricultural buildings, connected to the church and adjacent villages by a network of minor roads, lanes and footpaths. The network of public footpaths in and around Abbots Ann provide different views of the village.

The village is surrounded by countryside, where strict policies apply to contain development. The water meadows and floodplain restrict development to the north.

There are seven main entrances to the village, marking the transition from countryside to the built environment:

- Mill Lane - this narrow route into the village from the north via Cattle Lane crosses the floodplain and is enclosed on either side by trees and hedgerows;
- Duck Street and Red Rice Road – this is the main street within Abbots Ann and consists of the highest density of development within the village, with houses built close to and either side of the road;
- Monxton Road and West Hill – this route from the west descends into the village from undulating chalk downland, with arable fields either side enclosed by hedgerows;
- Dunkirt Lane (formerly known as Dung Cart Lane)- this is a narrow farm track;
- The Drove – this narrow un-metalled track with high banks lined by trees and hedgerows was formerly used to move sheep to the Weyhill Fair;
- Little Ann from the A343 Salisbury Road – this busy route into the village from the east travels past the water meadows and enters the village near the Poplar Farm Inn; and
- The Old Coach Road- this quiet route into the village from the south bordered by trees and hedgerows is an un-metalled track today but was previously an important route into the village from Salisbury (prior to construction of the A343 trunk road).

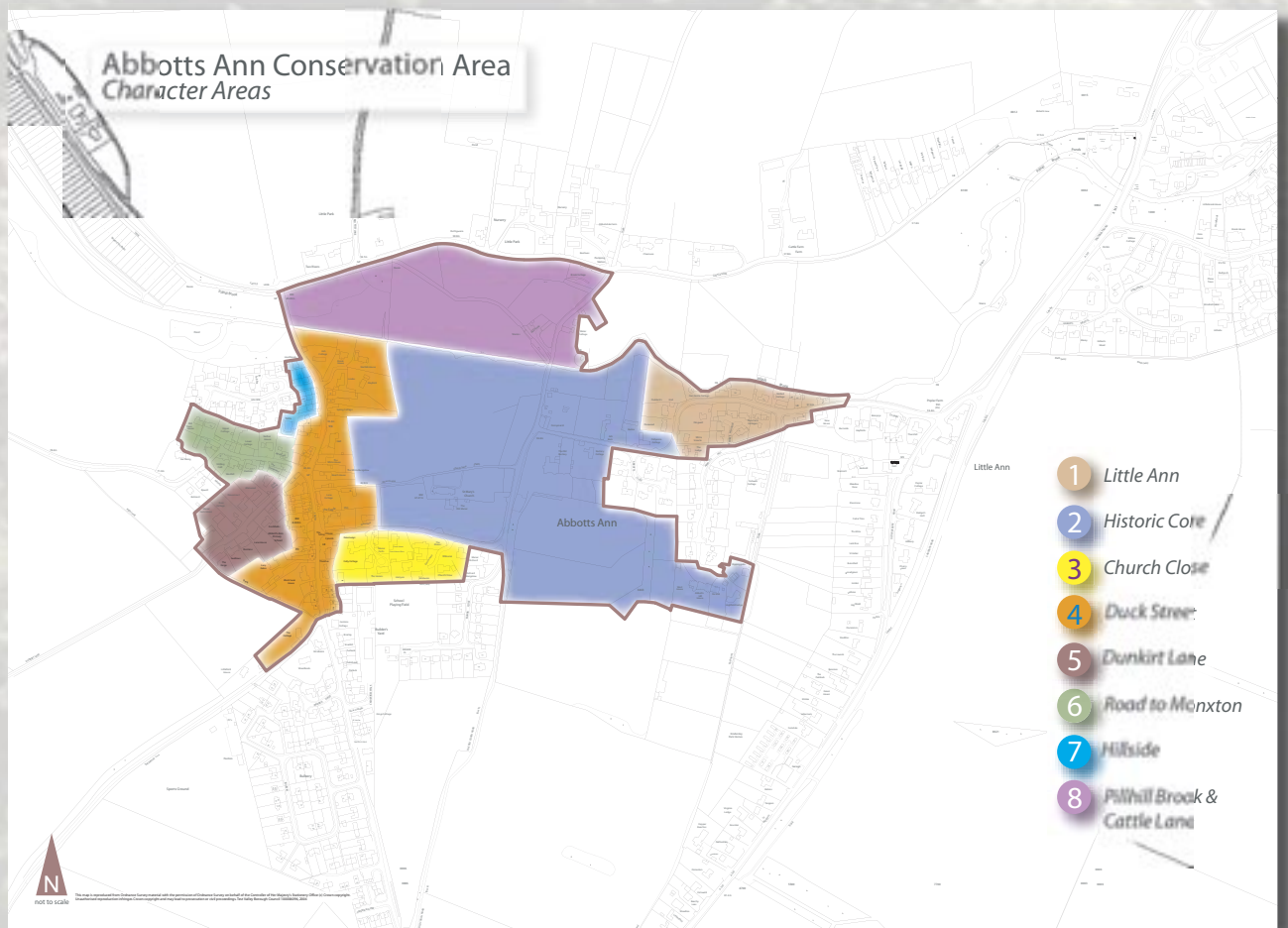


Constantia Cottage, Little Ann

3 An Appraisal of the Conservation Area

Key Characteristics of the Conservation Area

- Most buildings are in residential use.
- A high proportion of buildings are listed or of local interest.
- The majority of older houses were originally small, but many have been altered and extended or amalgamated.
- Older cottages are built to a long, low linear floor plan and are generally timber-framed with steeply pitched, largely unpunctuated thatched roofs with low eaves.
- Newer development tends to be larger and generally square in plan form, two storeys high, with slacker roof pitches.
- The majority of houses are one plot deep and are built close to the road.
- Newer development tends to be dispersed in small pockets designed around cul-de-sacs.



In the appraisal below, Abbots Ann is divided into eight character areas and these are described separately: Little Ann south of Pillhill Brook; historic core including the church, Old Manor, Old Rectory, Pennymarsh, Ash Barn and Pollyanna; from Church Close to Greenways and to the south of the Old Manor; Duck Street and Red Rice Road; Dunkirt Lane; road to Monxton; Hillside; and land between Pillhill Brook and Cattle Lane. The quality of their buildings, landscape and setting are then considered together.

i Little Ann south of Pillhill Brook

This area is linear in character, consisting of a mixture of properties of varying ages and styles built either side of the road, and includes seven listed buildings.

Properties on the north side of the road (from Constantia Cottage to no. 85 Rivermead) consist of an attractive group of cottages with traditional gardens. They are built close to the road and are all listed Grade II. These were originally modest agricultural workers' cottages built on small plots backing onto the Pillhill Brook. The cottages are mainly timber-

framed with panels of brick, or brick and flint. The majority are thatched but some include tile or slate roofs. Today, several of the cottages have been amalgamated and extended to form larger single dwellings with gardens extending over the brook. Open views to the water meadows are being progressively lost behind high hedges and fences.

The southern side of the road is more disjointed, less rich architecturally, more suburban in character, and relates poorly to the historic core of the village. As a result, a lot of the properties formerly inside the Conservation Area have now been removed. The revised boundary includes no. 86 Rose Cottage, an attractive 18th-century cob and thatched cottage built close to the road.



Rivermead



The southern side is disjointed and less rich architecturally



Properties on the north side nos 92-136 Little Ann

The road opens up considerably from this point with wide visibility splays serving Abbots Hill (an estate of large detached houses lying just outside the Conservation Area) and the wide grass verges and ranch-style fencing around New Farm Cottages. This is in marked contrast with the more intimate character of the cottages opposite.

The continuity is eroded further by views of the rear elevations to St. Mary's Meadow (a cul-de-sac of modern houses off Abbotts Hill), built at variance with the older cottages opposite where the best elevations face the street. The road bends to the south at this point and consists of an eclectic mix of houses built from the early to late 20th century. The large corner plot is occupied by Dingwall, a detached house hidden from view behind high, mature trees. White Smocks, adjacent, is a modest brick bungalow (originally the tennis pavilion to St. John's, which is the large house at the top of Abbotts Hill and now subdivided into flats). Beyond this is Abbotts Hill Lodge (former lodge to St. John's), the most interesting building in the group. This red-brick lodge of local interest is partially obscured by mature trees, but provides an attractive focal point when looking down the street from Pennymarsh.

The area also includes two late-20th-century houses with detached garages (Paddock's End and Pinewood), which are set back from the road and bare little resemblance to the style, scale or form of older properties in this part of the village.

Key Characteristics

- A mixture of properties of varying ages and styles, a high proportion of which are listed.
- The north side includes a number of characteristic thatched cottages with long, low, linear floor plans. The cottages are built tight against the road with rear gardens backing onto Pillhill Brook.
- Properties on the south side are less distinguished architecturally.

ii Historic Core including the Church, Old Manor, Old Rectory, Pennymarsh, Ash Barn and Pollyanna

This area is within the historic core of the village and includes the most significant buildings, described below, in Abbotts Ann as well as the open space to the north of Church Lane. The character of this area is derived from the quality of the listed buildings, space around

the buildings, the number of mature trees (including pollarded Limes) to the front, and large parkland trees to the south of the Old Rectory.

The Church of St. Mary the Virgin (Grade I) built in 1716 in the Classical style and paid for by Thomas 'Diamond' Pitt. It reflects the influence of contemporary architects such as Nicholas Hawksmoor and Sir Christopher Wren, albeit in a more modest form. The Church is built of light brick with stone dressings and a slate roof. The square west tower is an important landmark visible from



The Church of St. Mary the Virgin

Pollyanna Cottage





Pennymarsh

a number of vantage points within the village. The churchyard includes several fine trees, and Church Lane is flanked by large, mature Horse Chestnut and Lime trees.

The Old Manor

(Grade II) occupies a large plot in the centre of the village close to the church, behind a high red-brick wall to the north and a brick and flint wall to the south. The original manor house was partially demolished in the mid-18th century and what remained was remodelled using existing materials (including medieval timbers) and converted into a bailiff's house. The road skirts around the Old Manor, and the mature trees on the eastern boundary (where the road narrows) form a dense, enclosed canopy across the road. The road bends sharply to the west; there is a brick and flint wall to the Old Manor on the northern side but the outlook is more open on the southern side.

The Old Rectory

(Grade II*) is contemporary with the church and was also paid for by 'Diamond' Pitt. It is an imposing, symmetrical, Classical red-brick two-storey Georgian house with attics, clay tile roof and central doorway. There is a high wall surrounding the former kitchen garden, which wraps around the corner with pollarded Limes adjacent to the road. The garden is open to the front with a fine view of the church. There is a ha-ha to the south of the house giving uninterrupted views across the parkland (former glebe land and now a paddock), which includes several specimen trees.

Rectory Cottage

(Grade II) is a large 18th-century house built of cob with a slate roof restored in the 20th century, and occupies a large plot. It is surrounded by high cob walling (to the northern and western boundaries), which is a characteristic feature of this part of the Conservation Area.

Pennymarsh

(Grade II*) is a three-bay, cruck-framed⁵ cottage originally constructed internally as a single open space, and is possibly the oldest property in the village. The cottage is thatched and timber-framed with brick infill panels; it includes timber 'Hampshire casement' windows, a simple boarded door and thatched hood on posts. There is a perimeter wall with tile copings on the southern boundary, which contributes to the enclosed character of this section of the lane. The northern boundary includes meadows managed in the traditional way and which back onto the Pillhill Brook.

The front elevation faces onto Mill Lane, a narrow country lane that overlooks the most important area of open space within the village. This consists of pastureland with a variety of indigenous trees and shrubs, as well as a line of statuesque Lime trees, which are believed to be among the oldest in England and appear on early maps of the village.

This part of the Conservation Area is very rural in character. The lane is narrow with mature trees either side and traditionally managed meadows. This area also includes several mature Horse Chestnut trees planted either side of Church Path. The open space provides an important backdrop to the church and houses along the main street. At the time of writing (in early summer), the cries of the cuckoo, rooks and mallard combined with other birdsong, donkeys grazing on the meadows and the chimes from

⁵Built with naturally curved, paired timbers that frame arches and support the roof and walls.



Pollyanna Cottage

the church all reinforce the tranquil character and atmosphere of this ancient but changing village.

Ash Barn

(Grade II), like Pennymarsh, is built at right angles to the road, and was originally constructed in the 18th century as an aisle-less timber-framed barn of six bays, although converted in the 20th century into a substantial house. It has rendered walls and a thatched roof and occupies a long plot (now all used as a domestic garden), which backs onto the Pillhill Brook. There is an extensive wall, also listed Grade II, to the front constructed of a mixture of cob, flint and brick.

Pollyanna Cottage

(Grade II) built parallel to the road in the early 19th century was also originally a barn constructed with plain rendered walls marked by spaced timber posts and a thatched roof. It has been successfully converted into an attractive dwelling with a traditional garden and white painted picket fencing.



Church Lane

The former St. Johns

(unlisted) is a large building of local interest, now subdivided to form three houses: Abbotts Hill House, West House and Far End. It is set at the top of Abbotts Hill, which is also in this character area (see above for details).

The character of this area is enhanced by the quality and variety of mature trees and also includes the belt of fine trees on the boundary (formerly lining the drive to St. John's, but now between Abbotts Close and Abbotts Hill). Mature planting within gardens and the quality of the perimeter walls constructed of brick and cob enclose the street on either side of this narrow lane.

Key Characteristics

- This character area includes the most important historic buildings in Abbotts Ann.
- The character is derived from the quality of the listed buildings, open space around the buildings and the number of mature trees.
- There are a number of boundary walls which contribute to the character of the area, built from a variety of materials including cob, brick and flint, and brick.

iii From Church Close to Greenways and to the south of the Old Manor

The road bends sharply to the west with a high brick and flint wall serving the Old Manor on the northern side. This sense of enclosure is breached, however, in several places on the southern side. Church Close (a small development of modern red-brick bungalows on an elevated site overlooking the Old Manor and the church) is very open with wide visibility splays, kerbs and a tarmac road – features more reminiscent of development in an urban location.



Old Manor

The most significant buildings in this area include:

The Manor and East House

(Grade II) are two properties dating from the late 18th/early 19th centuries, built of brick and render with slate and tile roofing.

Manor Cottages

(Grade II) are a pair of early 19th century thatched cottages with rendered walls.

Key Characteristics

- This area consists of a mixture of buildings of varying ages and styles.
- There are four listed buildings in this area but the majority of buildings are unlisted.
- The high brick and flint wall surrounding the Old Manor is a distinctive feature.
- Mature trees contribute to the character of this area.

iv Duck Street and Red Rice Road

This area includes Abbotts Ann's main street, known from Cattle Lane to the Jubilee Oak as Duck Street and, beyond this, as Red Rice Road.

Approaching Abbotts Ann from the north from Cattle Lane, this area starts after the Pillhill Brook and extends from Ash Cottage in the north to The Cottage in the south. This is the heart of the village within the historic core and includes 21 listed buildings including the school, shop, village hall and public house.

The first house is Ash Cottage, a late-18th-century brick and flint cottage with a thatched roof. The rear garden includes an old cob wall and then slopes gently down to the brook. Ash Cottage, with its traditional garden and the backdrop of mature trees, provides an attractive focal point when looking down the main street.

Next to Ash Cottage is a small development of late-20th-century houses and bungalows, which back onto the brook and meadow. They have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area as they are set well back.



Lane Cottage

Moving south to the centre of the village, the character is derived from the number of small-scale cottages mostly built close to the road. The first group is a terrace of unlisted, white rendered cottages. No. 35 still retains the original metal small-paned casement windows that are a characteristic feature of the local area, possibly manufactured at the Waterloo Works.

No. 32 Spring Cottage, adjacent, is a late-18th-century cob and thatched cottage (with 20th-century additions) built close to the road. The road then curves and the dominant feature at this point is a large mature Horse Chestnut tree outside no. 38.



Ash Cottage

The simple rhythm of the building line (formed up to this point by small cottages built close to the road) is broken around the village hall and telephone exchange, both of which are set back from the road. The village hall is a modest red-brick building with mature trees to the rear.



Jubilee Oak Cottage

This area includes three buildings of significance. No. 40 Lupin Cottage is a single-storey 18th-century cob cottage with attic and thatched roof and built at right angles to the road. Nos. 41 and 42 are a similar pair of modest late-18th-century cottages with painted brick walls and thatched roofs and also built close to the road. These include additional windows at attic level providing extra light to the bedrooms (a local detail copied elsewhere in the village).

Jubilee Oak, situated at the centre of the village, is an early-19th-century cob cottage with slate roof, cast-iron casement windows, central door with open-framed porch, painted white timber-picket fence and traditional cottage garden. It takes its name from the Oak tree in the centre of the road.



The Eagle Public House

There are a mixture of houses of varying ages around the centre, including the shop, which was built in 2000 of brick and flint. It was designed to fit in with local buildings, and includes new housing to the rear.

The large Beech tree to the front of Beech House is an important feature contributing to the character of this part of the Conservation Area. Lane Cottage, adjacent to the church footpath, is an attractive late-18th-century brick and flint cottage with 20th-century additions. It has a thatched roof and narrow cottage garden to the front.

The Eagle public house beyond is a red-brick 19th-century building of local interest and is set back from the road with former stabling built of red brick with a pantile roof.

Looking up the hill, Badgers Corner (formerly known as Fylands) built on the corner is a 20th-century bungalow of standard design and contributes little to the character of the Conservation Area.

Beyond this is Thatches (formerly two cottages nos. 26 and 27), a detached 18th-century thatched, brick and flint cottage with 20th-century additions. No. 26, a modern house of contemporary design set back from the road (with garaging beneath and a balcony at first-floor level), is not in keeping with the small-scale traditional thatched cottages that are a characteristic feature of this part of the Conservation Area. Nos. 23, 24 and 25 comprise an L-shaped block of small late-18th-century single-storey cottages with attics and built of a mixture of cob, brick and flint. Two cottages (Nos. 23a and 23b) constructed recently of brick and flint with thatched roofs to imitate the style and form of the original cottages mark the southern boundary of the Conservation Area.



Looking South up Red Rice Road



Black Swan House



23-25 Red Rice Road

The Cottage opposite, a late-18th-century timber-framed cottage extended in the 20th century, is constructed of brick and flint (now painted) with a steep tiled roof (formerly of thatch). Partially hidden by a high hedge, it is built along The Drove (an ancient, narrow, sunken track with trees and hedgerows either side, and used in the past to drive flocks of sheep to the Weyhill Fair).

Looking back down the hill towards the centre of the village, the character is derived from an attractive collection of low brick and flint, thatched cottages, which are mainly painted white and built close to the road (nos. 64, 63 and 61). Black Swan House (no. 60) consists of a range of three-storey houses, which are now one dwelling. It is set further back from the road and is constructed of brick and flint and cob, with painted rendered walls. The roof to the south cross wing is thatched, with the rest of the roof covered in clay tiles.

The next block (nos. 59 to 57) consists of a terrace of late-18th-century thatched flint and brick cottages (including the former Post Office, now converted to a house) built close to the road.

Beyond this is the picturesque School House (no.56), formerly three thatched cottages dating back to the late 18th century. This timber-framed property in Tudor cottage orné⁶ style with herringbone brick infill panels, oriel windows at first-floor level and decorative porch is listed Grade II. It is one of the most distinctive buildings in this character area. The primary school to the rear and side of the School House is a key community facility within the heart of the village.

This is followed by an attractive terrace of unlisted 19th-century white rendered cottages with slate roofs and built close to the footway. This area includes a further two listed buildings. No. 50 is an imposing late-18th-century house built of bands of brick with brick quoins and knapped flint. It has a slate roof, including a small cast-iron casement and old leaded casements on the first floor and timber 'Hampshire casements' on the ground floor. No. 49, a small, early-19th-century single-storey brick and cob cottage (extended in the 20th century) has cast-iron casement windows and thatched roof lowered at the front to form a porch. The cottage with its attractive, traditional cottage garden, turns the corner onto Dunkirt Lane.

Key characteristics

- This is the heart of the village and consists of a mixture of small-scale houses and cottages constructed from the 17th to 20th centuries, a high proportion of which are listed.
- Most properties are built close to the road, the older ones having long, low, linear floor plans, and constructed of cob and brick and flint. Several of these properties are painted white.
- Many of the older properties are thatched and one and a half storeys high, with the upper floor contained within the attic producing a low eaves line.
- The majority of buildings are timber-framed or rendered, with mainly thatched, slate or clay tile roofs.

⁶Cottages ornés were the result of the picturesque movement of the late-18th/early-19th centuries. The term usually refers to small houses built in a 'rustic' style, often characterised by thatch and timber features.

v Dunkirt Lane

This area was originally a quiet country lane serving the farm and agricultural workers' cottages. It has been developed progressively in the 20th century, with construction of a further nine houses and bungalows either side of the lane. The most significant buildings (which are listed Grade II) include:

Chalk House

an early 19th century symmetrical chalk house with a slate roof, sash windows and plain front door.

Rose Cottage

a 17th century cob and thatch cottage.

Manor Farm House

a brick two-storey house with a tiled roof, dated 1738.

Key characteristics

- This area consists of a mixture of houses, cottages and modern bungalows of varying ages and styles built from the 17th to the 20th centuries.



Dunkirt Lane

vi Road to Monxton

This area is also rather mixed, including six listed buildings (all Grade II) and several 20th-century infill houses. The most significant listed buildings are:

The Old Bakery

a range of three late-18th-century timber-framed cottages, which are now one house. Constructed of cob and brick and mostly thatched (with a partly tiled roof), it is built close to the road and curves around the corner.

Westhill

an early-18th-century house constructed of blue brick headers with flush red dressings and quoins and clay tile roof.



No.s 45 & 46, Shilling Cottage

Shilling Cottage

a late-17th-century house (restored in the 20th century) with exposed timber-framing, brick infilling and flint and brick dressings at ground-floor level, irregular fenestration and a clay tile roof.

An early 19th century timber framed barn (west of nos. 43 and 44) with a thatched roof.

Faircroft

nos. 43 and 44 were formerly two early-19th-century cottages, now converted to one, of brick and flint with a clay tile roof.

Lower Cottage

a mid-19th-century brick and flint house built by a local builder for himself 'in the local idiom'⁷.

The remaining houses, mainly constructed in the 20th century on infill plots, are less interesting architecturally and fail to reflect the local building style.

Key characteristics

- An area of mixed development consisting of a variety of houses, cottages and a barn of different ages and styles, half of which are listed.



⁷According to the statutory listing description.

View up the road

vii Hillside

This is a late-20th-century housing development, consisting of a mixture of brick and render, detached and semi-detached houses. Houses on the main street are within the Conservation Area for the contribution they make to the street scene. They have been carefully designed with good simple detailing (such as traditional porches, timber casement windows and a mixture of roof coverings) and fit in well with the style, form and scale of existing properties at this end of the Conservation Area.

Modern cottages on the main street

Parking is provided at the back of the houses. Houses to the rear are no longer in the Conservation Area: their design is less successful as more emphasis has been placed on accommodating the car. Features such as a wide tarmac road, concrete kerbs and footways make the layout more urban in character than properties to the front.

Key characteristics

- A modern, late-20th-century housing development built of brick. The properties to the front were designed carefully to reflect the style, form and scale of older properties within Duck Street.

viii Land between Pillhill Brook and Cattle Lane

This section, which lies between Pillhill Brook and Cattle Lane, is the least built-up part of the Conservation Area. It consists of traditionally grazed water meadows between the two branches of the Pillhill Brook, and the following buildings (which are all Grade II listed):

Brook Cottage

originally a small, late-18th-century cottage (which was restored and extended in the 20th century), built of cob with a tiled roof. The house, which is built close to the road, offers occasional glimpses of the brook but these are largely obscured by the high cob perimeter wall (with tiled coping) and the high hedge on the Water Lane boundary.

Water Cottage

originally a modest cob cottage with a thatched roof, it has also been extended considerably over recent years with construction of a detached garage, swimming pool and tennis court. The garden has also been extended with planting of non-native species of trees and hedging, which is gradually altering the character of the original water meadow.

Mill House

occupies an attractive setting on the brook with good views across the water meadows towards the village. It is a small, two-storey red-brick house with tiled roof, dating back in part to the 15th century but most of the building we see today was constructed in the 19th century. The mill has been demolished, but the mill race still exists.

Key characteristics

- This part of the Conservation Area is more rural in character than other parts of the Conservation Area and consists of a scattering of buildings (such as the Mill and former agricultural workers' cottages), built close to the brook for functional reasons. The cottages have been altered and extended to create large detached properties.
- Trees and hedgerows contribute to the character of this part of the conservation area.
- The brook and traditionally managed water meadows contribute to the character and setting of the Conservation Area. The character is being eroded, however, in places where the land is no longer managed in a traditional way.



Mill House



Materials, Textures, Colours and Detailing

Introduction

By necessity, builders in the past used materials that were available locally, such as timber, cob and thatch. There are several fine examples of buildings dating from the 17th and 18th centuries in Abbotts Ann displaying traditional construction techniques and good architectural detailing. With improved transport and more advanced manufacturing techniques from the 19th century onwards, a wider choice of materials, such as Welsh roof slates and stock bricks, became available to builders.



Brick and Flint detail at 'Faircroft'



Timber-framing at Shilling Cottage



Lane Cottage

Walls

Older properties are generally timber-framed with a variety of materials used for the infill panels, including wattle and daub, cob, brick, and brick and flint (e.g. Shilling Cottage). Later buildings were constructed of brick and flint, and several of these were rendered or painted. Paint colours are generally restricted to subtle shades of cream and off-white.

There is a variety of brickwork in the village, including simple red brickwork, walls with blue headers with red flush dressings (such as at Manor Farmhouse), painted brickwork and details such as rubbed flat brick arches.

The combination of brick and flint is a distinctive feature in the Conservation Area. Where walls have been painted, it is still possible to discern the materials beneath by their shape. Most walls in the village are constructed of random boulder flint work but there are also examples of horizontal coursed bands of knapped flint with brick quoins where the flint has been split and squared off to produce a finer, more regular finish (for example, at no. 50).

Roofs

A high proportion of roofs in Abbotts Ann are thatched with Combed Wheat Reed, Long Straw or Water Reed⁸. Evidence (i.e. documentary, through investigation and on-going research) indicates that long straw was the prevailing thatching material in the area. Since the middle of last century, combed wheat reed has assumed greater prominence and is now the main thatching material in the village. The practice when re-thatching is to 'spar coat', i.e. place a new layer of long straw onto the roof rather than replace the weathered thatch. Hence, in the majority of cases, the base layers are a century or more old. This historic base layer is an invaluable archaeological resource and should not be disturbed.

The majority of thatched buildings in the Conservation Area are listed. A change from one thatch material to another or a change in style of the thatch will inevitably change the character of the building, and so requires listed building consent. The Planning Authority resists the loss of indigenous types of thatch materials, and would need compelling evidence in support of such a change.

Thatch was originally a cheap and readily available material, and was patched regularly as labour resources allowed. Today, compared with other more enduring materials, it is expensive to maintain and is the

⁸According to an unpublished Thatching Survey undertaken by Hampshire County Council from 2000-2003, which covers several parishes in Test Valley including Abbotts Ann.



Small-paned metal window



Triangular-shaped windows at eaves level



Window at the School House

prerogative of skilled thatchers. It is now more common to thatch an entire slope or the whole roof on a cyclical basis.

Thatchers take great pride in their work and their individual skills are to be respected. While allowing scope for individuality, it is also important to maintain local distinctiveness if the special character of the area is to be preserved. Historically, thatched roofs in Test Valley have adopted a simple profile with minimal punctuation by dormer windows and other adornment. The appropriate ridge for a long straw roof is termed 'flush and wrapover' (i.e. it sits flush with the main roof slope). Combed wheat reed on the other hand often has a block ridge (one that stands proud), which can be plain or decorated. In the interests of maintaining the simplicity and distinctiveness of the local tradition, the Council encourages the use of flush and wrapover ridge on both long straw and combed wheat reed roofs.

Clay tiles (mainly handmade) are also commonly used in the village, with natural slate used from the 19th century onwards and some later use of concrete tiles.

Traditional details such as plain and decorative bargeboards, overhanging eaves, dormer windows and porches of various designs are characteristic features of the village and should be retained.

Windows

Windows are a critical element of a building's design and even subtle changes can significantly alter the character. The predominant style is commonly termed the 'Hampshire casement'. This is a well-proportioned, single-glazed timber window with a single horizontal glazing bar equally dividing the panes. As distinct from their modern counterparts, traditional windows found in older properties are designed with the sub-frame and opening or fixed light flush, as opposed to the cruder design found in storm-proofed windows. This produces a more harmonised design. Likewise, the position of the window in the wall, whether flush or set in a reveal, and the form of the glazing bars affect the play of light and shade, again significantly affecting the visual appearance.

The majority of windows in Abbots Ann are of a reasonable standard of design. Fortunately the use of non-traditional materials, such as uPVC is not too widespread. While aspirations to improve thermal insulation are understood, wholesale replacement of well-designed traditional windows can rarely be achieved satisfactorily using sealed double-glazed units. A more appropriate solution is likely to be through proprietary draught stripping and secondary glazing. Existing windows should be retained, repaired or remade to a design appropriate to the period and design of the property.

There are a number of cottages within the village that include small-paned metal windows. These may have been made by the Waterloo Works at Clatford Marsh⁹: the Works produced a range of agricultural ironmongery, and these windows are found in workers' cottages built by Tasker in the village. These are an important feature that should be retained.

There are also a number of thatched cottages in the village, such as nos. 59,

⁹Test Valley Borough Council Abbots Ann Conservation Policy June 1982



Simple Picket fencing at
Lupin Cottage



Cob walling, Rectory
Cottage



Junction at Hillside

41 and 42, and The Thatches with additional triangular shaped windows at eaves level (presumably designed to allow more light to the bedrooms), which is another distinctive, local feature.

Garden walls, fences and other means of enclosure

These are important components contributing to the character of the village including simple, traditionally designed timber picket fencing, traditional metal estate fencing, brick, flint and cob walls (with either a thatch or tile capping), timber and metal gates.

Before carrying out any repairs or considering extending or altering historic buildings, the original method of construction should be studied, understood and followed.

Key characteristics

- Most of the older buildings are constructed from locally sourced materials.
- Walls are predominantly built of brick, stone or cob.
- A high proportion of properties have thatched roofs.
- Windows and doors are generally traditionally designed and made of timber, with some examples of small-paned metal casements.
- Garden walls, fences and hedges are important features contributing to the character of the Conservation Area.

The contribution of trees, and open spaces

A significant part of the character of Abbots Ann is derived from the contribution made by trees, hedges, open spaces and other natural elements contained within it.

Trees

It would be unrealistic to identify all trees that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The most significant trees and groups of trees are referred to above and are shown on the Character Appraisal map. Abbots Ann has a number of trees that define the built form of the village, and the most significant are:

- on the approach roads and lanes into the village;
- within gardens;
- around the Churchyard;
- on and around the open space between Church Lane, Pillhill Brook and Water Lane; and
- on former glebe land, now the parkland to the south of the Old Rectory.



Junction of West Hill and Duck Street showing the importance of trees in this part of the Conservation Area

Open spaces

Open spaces around the Conservation Area are described above. The rest of the Conservation Area is very compact. Other important spaces within the village are:

The junction of Monxton Road and Duck Street around the Jubilee Oak
The road drops down here onto the main street. The charm of the space relies on:

- the quality and configuration of the surrounding buildings,
- the presence of the Jubilee Oak, which is an important feature within the street,
- views up and down Duck Street, and
- views further up Monxton Road looking back towards the Church.

Looking down from the Old Manor towards Duck Street

This is an important view framed on either side by the high brick and flint wall to the Old Manor, and with mature trees on the southern side of the road. Factors contributing to the quality of this space include:

- the quality of the buildings;
- the way the walls and mature trees frame, contain and enclose the space;
- the dip of the road and the way the buildings and street conform to the lie of the land; and
- the view of the School House, with its ornate timber-framing and herringbone brickwork, which provides a focal point and terminus to the view.

Important Views

There are several important views looking into and out of the Conservation Area, which contribute to its character and setting. Care should be taken to ensure these are not lost or compromised by inappropriate development or poorly sited services.

4 Summary

Character

Abbotts Ann is a large village that has grown significantly in the 20th century. It is built mainly along the river valley with rolling chalk downland beyond, and is predominantly quiet and residential in character. Although the economy was formerly dependent upon agriculture, now the majority of people work away from the village.

Abbotts Ann evolved slowly as two small villages: Little Ann, an elongated hamlet consisting mainly of one- and two-storey houses and cottages built to the south of the Pillhill Brook; and Abbotts Ann, a small, nucleated village built around the church and mainly along Duck Street. Buildings date from the 16th to the 20th centuries, and the most significant are the Old Manor, the Old Rectory and the church.

Reasons for Designation

Abbotts Ann consists of a mixture of buildings, of varying ages and styles but is known for its many timber-framed, thatched cottages. Other distinctive architectural features include brick, flint and cob walls, clay tile roofs, traditional timber doors and windows (notably the 'Hampshire casement' and the small-paned metal casements), porches of varying designs and simple picket fencing and gates.

These features contribute to the special character of the Conservation Area, and it is desirable to preserve or enhance them.

Boundary Review

A comprehensive review of the Conservation Area was carried out in the summer of 2004. The first stage was to check that the boundaries were still relevant and could be defended. Care was taken to include areas of architectural and historic interest and to avoid duplication with other land use policies and designations. Newer housing that did not meet the criteria for inclusion was excluded in most cases from the Conservation Area.

The northern boundary initially follows Cattle Lane to include traditionally managed water meadows, Brook Cottage and Mill House. The boundary then moves south incorporating Water Cottage, then follows the northern bank of the Pillhill Brook to take in seven listed cottages in Little Ann before terminating at Rivermead (no. 85). The boundary then crosses the road to no. 98 (Rose Cottage) and incorporates the historic core of the village.

The southern boundary includes the parkland to the south of The Old Rectory. It moves north up the Old Coach Road, to the rear of Church Close and then follows the footpath to the north of the school playing field and nos. 23, 24 and 25 before projecting westwards to include The Cottage.

The boundary then follows the footpath to Dunkirt Lane, passing to the rear of Manor Farm House and the rear of selected properties fronting onto Monxton Road.



The Lodge



135 Little Ann

Conclusions

Abbotts Ann is a prosperous and popular village that has developed considerably since the Conservation Area was designated in 1981. Despite these changes, the historic core of the village is of significant architectural and historic interest and still clearly warrants designation.

The character of Abbotts Ann is derived from a combination of factors, which have been identified in this appraisal. These factors include the village's setting, layout, historic associations, architectural styles, materials and detailing. When considering new development in the village, it is crucial to understand, be aware of and work with these features if the special character of the Conservation Area is to be preserved or enhanced.



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Appraisal Map





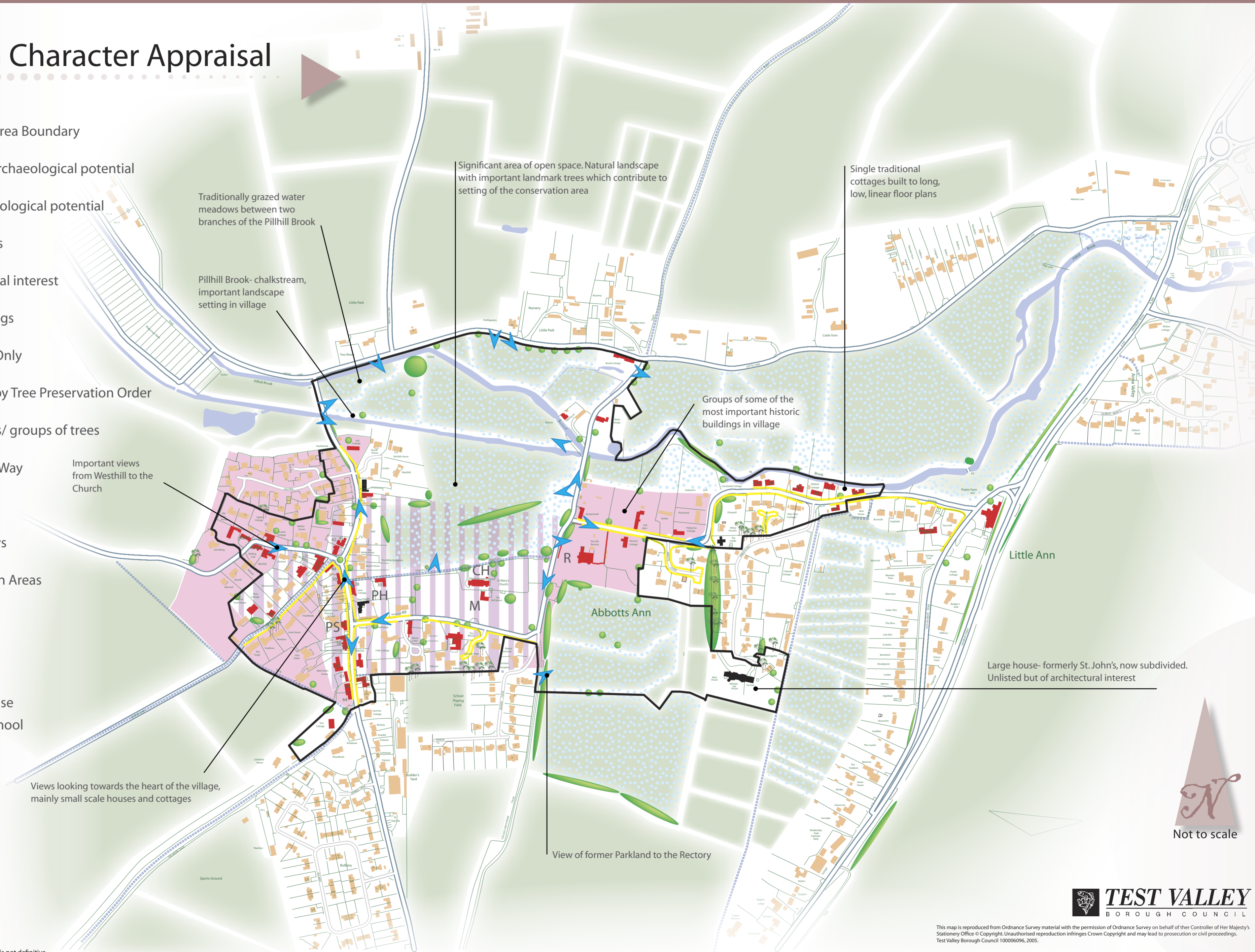
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Abbots Ann Character Appraisal

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Areas of high archaeological potential
-  Areas of archaeological potential
-  Listed buildings
-  Buildings of local interest
-  General buildings
-  Frontage Infill Only
-  Trees covered by Tree Preservation Order
-  Important trees/ groups of trees
-  Public Right of Way
-  River
-  Important Views
-  Important Open Areas
- Key buildings:
 R - Rectory
 M - Old Manor
 CH - Church
 PH - Public House
 PS - Primary School



Views looking towards the heart of the village, mainly small scale houses and cottages

Significant area of open space. Natural landscape with important landmark trees which contribute to setting of the conservation area

Single traditional cottages built to long, low, linear floor plans

Groups of some of the most important historic buildings in village

Important views from Westhill to the Church

Large house - formerly St. John's, now subdivided. Unlisted but of architectural interest

View of former Parkland to the Rectory

