

**HOUGHTON AND BOSSINGTON**  
**Conservation Area Policy**

# HOUGHTON AND BOSSINGTON

## Conservation Area Policy

After a period of public consultation this policy was adopted by Test Valley Borough Council on 23 February 1990, the date of designation of the Houghton and Bossington Conservation Area.

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# Introduction

This policy document for Houghton and Bossington is part of the Borough Council's continuing programme, as approved in 1979, for conservation area designations throughout Test Valley. The study describes the village and its history and identifies the conservation area. It also explains the special planning controls which would result from designation.

Conservation of the environment is one of the most important functions of local planning authorities. To be successful it must be the concern of all of us who value our towns and villages which have evolved over centuries and contain many beautiful and historic areas. Their individual character is due to a highly diverse combination of buildings, trees and spaces.

Historic buildings are at the forefront of conservation, as a tangible record of our architectural and social history. Since 1947 the Secretary of State has compiled Lists of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for each locality. Buildings included on the Statutory List enjoy legal protection under the Town and Country Planning Acts and are classified into Grades I, II\* and II to show their relative importance. In recent years the Department of the Environment has been progressively revising the Lists throughout England and Wales. The revised List for Houghton and Bossington was approved by the Secretary of State in 1986 when the number of statutorily listed buildings in the village was increased substantially.

The concept of conservation areas is a more recent innovation. Prior to 1967 the emphasis was on the preservation of individual buildings as distinct from areas. The Civic Amenities Act 1967 imposed a duty on local planning authorities to "determine which parts of their areas were of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it was desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate such areas as conservation areas". These powers have been expanded and strengthened in subsequent Planning Acts and at present there are more than 6,000 conservation areas in England and Wales; of these 256 are in Hampshire and 32 in Test Valley.

In defining areas of special architectural or historic merit there can be no standard specification as naturally there will be many different kinds. The boundary of any conservation area reflects the factors which give a place its unique and "special" character. Thus, significant groups of buildings, architectural style, historic settlement pattern, spaces, trees, etc., all have to be taken into account following detailed surveys and an examination of historical records. The intention is to identify **core** areas of particular interest. This need not include every single historic building in the vicinity of the village and does not mean that occasional poorly designed or unsightly buildings are excluded if they lie within the core. Neither does it necessarily include all of a village or the surrounding countryside, as there are parallel planning policies which protect the countryside against inappropriate development.

Conservation policies are designed to complement rather than substitute for other planning policies. This document is not a village plan or a local plan and therefore is not concerned with the principle of whether development takes place. It will, however, have much to do with the form that any such development should take, including alterations or extensions to existing buildings. Particular attention is given to such matters as design, scale, location, use of materials and effect upon the street scene.

# The Character of the Villages

## Historical Background

Situated two miles south west of Stockbridge and about one mile north west of King's Somborne, the parishes of Houghton and Bossington cover an area of 1,746 hectares and had a population of 419 in 1988. The parishes lie along the west bank of the River Test, enjoying a high proportion of good arable land with a mixed soil of loam, chalk and peat; farming has traditionally been the basis of the local economy.

The name Houghton means "farm on the spur of the land" and has been in use for several centuries; previously the area was known as Horton. Bossington (meaning Bossa's farm) was previously called Bosintone (11th century), Bosutun (13th century), Bosyngton (14th century) and Bosington (16th century).

Evidence of settlement in the area goes back to the lower Palaeolithic period with four flint axes of Archeulian type made between 350,000 - 150,000 BC having been found in Horsebridge.

At Houghton Drayton a Neolithic burial mound dating from 3,500 - 2,500 BC has been discovered and a hoard of polished Neolithic flint axes was recovered in Bossington Park. Remnants of seven Bronze Age barrows also existed on Houghton Down until the early 20th century. Beech Barrow, on the Bossington Estate, is better preserved and now a scheduled Ancient Monument. Two Bronze Age swords were also unearthed in different parts of Houghton close to the river.

Roman remains are mostly linked to the line of the former road from Winchester to Old Sarum, which crosses the Test south of Bossington Park. Here a 156 lb. lead pig, cast during the reign of Emperor Nero, was found. Archaeological rescue work has also revealed a well-preserved Roman settlement dating from around 60 AD buried under more recent alluvium.

By the late Saxon period several manors were in existence and are mentioned in the Domesday Book. Houghton Drayton Manor belonged to the Church of Winchester by the grant of King Edgar in the tenth century and included four mills in the vicinity. Houghton Mill in the south of the parish probably marks the site of one, while another is possibly represented by Horsebridge Mill. The Church of All Saints dates from the 12th century.

The Port estate, which was afterwards called the Manor of North Houghton was held by the Ports until the 14th century. In 1485 Richard III granted the Manor of North Houghton to John Pole. There were two other estates in Houghton during the reign of Henry III - Denecourt, held by Richard de Dene and Houghton Edington held by John de Waleys. These were both absorbed into North Houghton Manor in the early 15th century. Tiebridge Farm was originally called Charity Farm when it was the estate of George Pemberton who in 1637 directed the Corporation of Winchester to pay from his estate £2. 6s. 8d. to be distributed to the poor of Houghton.

Bossington Manor lay further to the south, and its associated hamlet was situated close to the present St. James Church. The hamlet was abandoned in the early 19th century shortly before the Manor was acquired by John Meggot Elwes around 1834-5.

The early 19th century in Houghton was notable for the development of fishing as a sport. The Fishing Club was founded in 1822, and Houghton Lodge is an excellent example of a fishing lodge built around this time.

The presence of several separate estates accounts for the evolution of a dispersed settlement pattern, following the line of the Test from Bossington House to Houghton Lodge, whilst later infilling tends to emphasise its linear character.

Early buildings in the village were constructed from local materials; the lack of suitable building stone (other than flint) gave rise to a strong timber framed tradition. Oak was always the preferred material, with wattle and daub or lath and plaster being used for the infill panels. These panels were often later replaced with brick when brick and tile manufacturing became widespread at the end of the mediaeval period. Georgian buildings were commonly built of brick and tile. Chalk cob was also used until the early 20th century for walls and cottages. Small cottages were always traditionally thatched in long straw, or, occasionally water reed from the river valley.

## The Area Today

Approaching from Horsebridge the road runs through low-lying water meadows and crossing the Test passes by the 18th century Houghton Mill which stands on the left. It ceased to be a Corn Mill in 1897 but continued to be used to supply electricity to Bossington House, which lies to the west of the Mill. This small country house was built in 1834 by John Davies of yellow brick with Dutch gables, tall Elizabethan style chimneys and a symmetrical main facade. Davies was probably also responsible for the rebuilding of St. James Church within the grounds of Bossington Park in 1839. It is constructed of coursed flint, with stone dressings and stone tiled roof. There are also three mid-19th century lodges attached to the Bossington estate, built of flint with brick dressings and particularly ornate end barge boards. They too are embellished with moulded brick chimney stacks.

To the north the road is lined with hedgerows on each side. Houghton corner is a focal point, with the garage, old signpost, the 15th century thatched Corner Cottage and a small terrace of estate workers cottages. These are constructed of brick, with roughcast at first floor level, tiled roofs and some cast iron casements. This design is seen throughout the village.



Houghton Mill



River Test

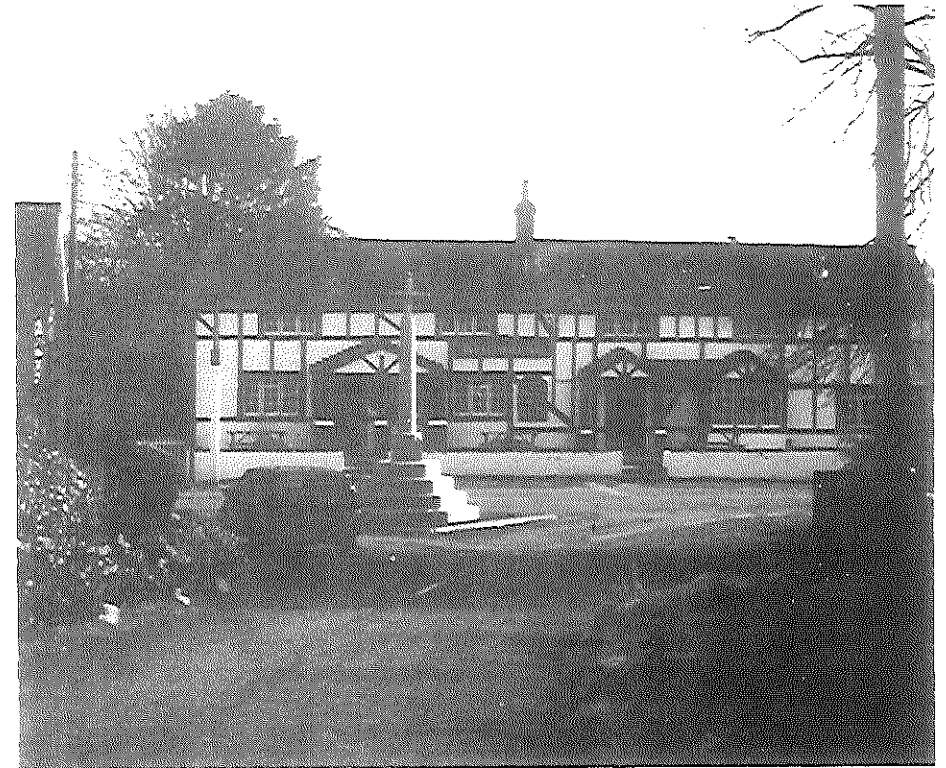
From here the road runs straight past Houghton Farm, with particularly important views to the river on the east side. On the far bank of the River Test is the old park pale of John of Gaunt's Deer Park, now a scheduled Ancient Monument. This dates from at least 1199 when a Royal Licence was granted to William de Briwere to enclose an area previously known as How Park.



The road then bends left to a second focal point at Marwin Cottage, originally two cottages now converted into one, the timber framed part having been one dwelling and the brick portion another. The bakery and smithy were also formerly located here. Other buildings of interest include The Anchorage, a 17th century cottage that was also originally a pair, and Hunters Cottage. All are similar in style - timber framed with brick infill panels and thatched roofs.



The Anchorage



The Boot Inn

At the junction with Church Lane is the Boot Inn, built in the 19th century and famous locally for its collection of boots. A high flint and brick wall on the north side of the lane shuts in the old Georgian rectory, which stands next door to the Church of All Saints. Built of flint with stone dressings, the church has a shingled bell turret with a later 19th century spire. Houghton Drayton Manor House, which dates from 1760, lies to the west. Church Lane also includes several other buildings of local interest, including the Old Schoolhouse and Snail Creep. From The Boot Inn, the main street runs past Wisteria Cottage and a small grotto doorway then uphill past Houghton Lodge. A fishing lodge designed in the Gothic cottage orné style (possibly by John Nash) around 1801, it occupies a beautiful position by the River Test, and is notable for its fine interior. From the lodge there is a fine view across the river to Marsh Court, a Grade I listed building designed by Edwin Lutyens 1901-4 and built of chalk ashlar.

## Boundaries

The Conservation Area extends from the site of the deserted hamlet at Bossington Park in the south, along the main village street to Houghton Lodge in the north. The area is contained to the east by the river and John of Gaunt's Deer Park Pale and by arable land to the west.

The key to maintaining the character of Houghton and Bossington Conservation Area and enhancing its environmental quality lies in retaining those features that contribute towards its unique identity and ensuring that any new development is sympathetic in character. Key features are :

- a dispersed linear settlement with hedgerows forming strong linking elements between groups of dwellings
- important open areas to the east adjacent to the river
- Church Lane as the main focal point of the village, with the church, manor house and rectory
- characteristic local estate cottages dispersed throughout the village.
- views eastwards across the valley of the Test and from footpaths on the western edge of the village

## References

- Victoria County History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight - ed. William Wright, 1911
- Kelly's Directory 1861, p. 205
- Buildings of England, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight - Nikolaus Pevsner and David Lloyd, 1976
- Department of the Environment List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, 1986
- Hampshire Treasures Survey, Volume 9, Test Valley South - Hampshire County Council, 1984

- Test Valley and Border, Anthology No. 9 - Andover Local Archives Committee
- Further Chronicles of Hampshire Fishing Club



Old Rectory, Church Lane

# Planning Policies and Controls

Planning policies for the Conservation Area will seek to preserve and enhance its special character. They are complementary to existing land use and countryside policies contained within the Mid Test Draft Local Plan and the Mid Hampshire Structure Plan. These two documents currently provide a detailed and up to date framework for development decisions affecting the area, although they will in due course be superseded by the Test Valley Borough Local Plan, currently in preparation. The designation of a Conservation Area automatically brings into effect certain additional planning controls which include :

- a) limits on normal permitted development tolerances;
- b) restrictions on demolition of buildings and structures; and
- c) restrictions on felling and other tree work.

Designation brings an assumption that the design of new development will be sympathetic to and enhance the character of the area; furthermore there will be extended opportunities for public comment on proposed development. You are strongly advised to consult the Planning Department before ANY works are undertaken to ANY building, structure or tree.

## 1. Demolition

All buildings including walls within a Conservation Area are protected by law from demolition. The only exceptions are certain very small or temporary buildings. Anyone intending to demolish all or part of a building within a Conservation Area must first apply for consent from the Borough Council.

## 2. Listed Buildings

Buildings which are statutorily listed as being of special architectural or historic interest by the Secretary of State are additionally protected, and it should be noted that this applies to interiors as well as exteriors. Prior listed building consent must be obtained from the Borough Council before any works to alter, extend or demolish any part of a listed building are commenced. Such works could include external redecoration, re-roofing, the alteration of doors and windows, or structural changes. Permission is also required for the erection of small buildings such as garden sheds within the grounds of a listed building, or for changes to gates, fences or walls enclosing it.

Some key points to note when considering repairs or alterations to listed buildings:

- Repair existing traditional windows, cast iron gutters etc. wherever possible. Avoid the use of non-traditional materials such as uPVC or aluminium windows, concrete tiles, artificial slates or plastic gutters in any proposals which would, in any case, require listed building consent.
- Retain original internal features such as doors, fireplaces, panelling and plasterwork.
- Do not use damaging cleaning techniques such as sandblasting on old timbers or brickwork.
- Ensure that new brickwork is a good match with existing and use lime mortar for careful compatible pointing.
- Do consult the Borough Council for advice.

## 3. New Development and Alterations to Non-Listed Buildings

Designation of an area as a conservation area does not preclude the possibility of new development within the area; what is important is that new developments should be designed in a sensitive manner having regard to the special character of the area.

Similar considerations apply where alterations or extensions are proposed to existing buildings of local interest or other non-listed properties in the area. Although a few minor works are regarded as "permitted development", and may be carried out without the need for planning permission, regulations have recently been strengthened in Conservation Areas and, in many cases, formal consent will be required. Owners should therefore check with the Planning Department at an early stage when considering works to their property.

Detailed applications will be required to show the relationship of any new proposal to its site and surroundings to ensure that new development "fits in" by reflecting traditional building forms and the use of local or compatible materials. Outline applications will not be accepted.



New development should positively enhance the Conservation Area's character by:

- reflecting traditional forms in terms of density, height, massing and scale;
- using local or traditional materials, colours and detailing;
- retaining and reinforcing local landscape features such as trees and hedgerows.

Where development involving building work is proposed, the Borough Council, mindful of the archaeological potential, will ensure that adequate time is allowed for excavation / investigation of selected sites before and during development and may attach conditions to planning permission, as appropriate.

#### 4. Opportunities to Comment on Proposed Developments

The Borough Council is required to advertise applications for development affecting a listed building or the character of a Conservation Area in order to allow opportunities for public comment. Notices are placed in the Romsey Advertiser and on or near the land to which the application relates. Twenty-one days are allowed for the public to inspect the details of the application and to make representations to the Borough Council.

#### 5. Trees and Landscape Features

In Conservation Areas trees are protected broadly as though they were subject to Tree Preservation Orders. The only exceptions are some very small specimens, such as garden fruit trees. The Borough Council must be notified at least six weeks before a tree is proposed to be felled, uprooted or pruned in any way (unless it is being done in connection with a previously approved development).

The retention of trees and hedgerows is generally encouraged, but where development proposals would involve their removal, this should be clearly indicated as part of any detailed planning application. A landscaping scheme should include an accurate survey of existing features showing their location, height, spread and species, together with any new planting.

Not only are there important groups of trees within and adjacent to the Conservation Area, but there are certain open spaces which contribute significantly to the character of the villages, especially areas adjacent to the River Test. Because of this it is improbable that any development will be permitted on them. The Borough Council would therefore wish to see them retained and enhanced accordingly. The river valley of the Test has been designated an Environmentally Sensitive Area and the interests of nature conservation are of paramount importance in this area.

#### 6. Advertisements

Due to the predominantly residential and agricultural nature of Houghton and Bossington, there are relatively few business signs in the area. Signage should continue to be kept to a minimum and strict controls concerning the display of outdoor advertising will be applied within the Conservation Area, similar to those operating in other rural areas of the Borough.



Fir Tree Cottage

# Environmental Enhancement

In addition to the legal consequences of designation of a Conservation Area, it is also important that action is taken to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. It is not just the buildings which are important. A number of more general improvements to footpaths, bridleways, open areas or tree planting may contribute to the overall attractiveness of a place. Special financial assistance is sometimes available from central government but in the case of Houghton and Bossington the source of any grant aid is likely to be the Borough and / or the County Councils and is summarised below:

## 1) Historic Building Grants

Under the Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act 1962 both the Borough Council and the County Council are empowered to contribute towards the cost of essential repairs to historic buildings. The offer of grant-aid is discretionary and the amount of grant will be related to the nature and extent of repairs to be carried out. Routine maintenance works are not eligible.

## 2) Environmental Enhancement Grants

The Borough Council and the County Council have funds for environmental enhancement projects, which may be initiated by Parish Councils, voluntary groups or individuals. Such work is not limited to only the Conservation Area, but projects within the village centre are certainly encouraged. Suitable works include tree and shrub planting, the removal of eyesores, the provision of appropriate surfacing and street furniture and clearance of waterways and footpaths.

## Further Information

Advice and information on legal requirements and development matters can be obtained from the Planning Department, Council Offices, Duttons Road, Romsey (Tel: Romsey 515117). Advice on building work, repair and details of grants and landscape matters is available from the Design and Conservation Section at the same address.



Houghton Lodge from the River Test

## Appendix : Trees in Conservation Areas

The Town and Country Planning Act 1971 (Section 61A) requires anyone who proposes to "top, lop, uproot or wilfully damage or destroy" a tree in a conservation area to give six weeks notice to their district council (in this area, Test Valley Borough Council). This requirement is intended to give the district council a final opportunity to serve a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) before work is commenced. Work may not be commenced within the six week period without consent.

If the work to a tree in a conservation area is begun without the six weeks notice, the person carrying out the work becomes liable for penalties similar to those for contraventions of a tree preservation order and a similar duty to replant. If the authorised work is not completed within two years of giving notice of consent, further notice must be given. The particulars of a notice are recorded by the council in a register open to public inspection. "Notice" forms are available from the Planning Department, Test Valley Borough Council, Duttons Road, Romsey.

The six weeks rule does not apply to trees that are dying, dead or dangerous, or where works are necessary for the prevention or abatement of a nuisance. Except in an emergency, however, a minimum of five days should be given to the Borough Council to decide whether to dispense with a requirement to replant with a tree of appropriate size or species.

There are certain categories of trees that are exempt from most tree preservation or conservation area controls; these are summarised below.

### Main exemptions

- i) Trees of less than 75mm in diameter, 1.5m above ground level or 100mm where the act is carried out to improve the growth of other trees (except Woodland Tree Preservation Orders);
- ii) Trees cultivated for fruit production that are growing or standing in an orchard or garden;
- iii) Trees cut down in accordance with a forestry dedication covenant or Forestry Commission plan;

iv) Trees cut down by a statutory undertaker (such as British Telecom or river authority); and

v) Trees which need to be felled to enable development to be carried out following the granting of planning permission.



# HOUGHTON AND BOSSINGTON

## Conservation Area

Designated 23 February 1990

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Listed Building / Wall
- Building / Wall of Local Interest
- Important Tree and Group of Trees
- Important Hedgerow
- Important Open Area
- Important View
- Focal Point
- Sites of Archaeological Interest

Scale 1:5,000



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