## VERNHAM DEAN and UPTON Conservation Policy



TEST VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

# VERNHAM DEAN & UPTON Conservation Policy

This Policy was adopted by the Test Valley Borough Council on 4th March, 1983, the date of the designation of the Vernham Dean and Upton conservation areas.

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### Introduction

Test Valley Borough Council is currently undertaking a programme of conservation area designation throughout its area and this document sets out a policy for Upton and Vernham Dean. The study describes the villages and their history, includes the designation of two conservation areas and suggests a framework for action to enhance their special qualities.

Conservation policies are complementary to, rather than substitutes for, other planning measures. They do not attempt to be comprehensive and although the objectives and proposals they contain will have a clear bearing on such issues as the location and design of new development, they are not village plans and are not concerned with building programmes.

The towns and villages of our landscape have evolved over centuries and contain many beautiful and historic areas. Their unique character is due to a highly diverse collection of buildings, trees and spaces. For more than thirty years buildings of architectural or historic interest have been awarded special protection against demolition or alteration. The Vernham Dean and Upton area has few 'listed' buildings but the lists are currently being extended by the Department of the Environment, and it is likely that several other buildings will be included. The controls do, however, relate solely to the buildings themselves whereas it is often the surroundings that are an essential part of their character.

The rapid change of recent years has brought many benefits but in many instances the architectural heritage has been placed under considerable pressure. The historic buildings legislation proved to be an inadequate way of protecting the individuality of towns and villages and as a result the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 makes it a duty for all local planning authorities to identify those parts of their area that are of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as 'conservation areas', where special efforts may be given to the preservation and enhancement of such areas. At the present time there are more than 5,000 conservation areas in England and Wales; of these 180 are in Hampshire and 17 are in Test Valley.

## Location of the Villages

Vernham Dean and Upton are villages in north-west Hampshire, about seven miles north of Andover and nine miles south of Newbury and close to the Wiltshire border. Both villages lie on a minor road that runs south-east to join the A.343 at Hurstbourne Tarrant.

The villages lie in a valley of chalk downland that is within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

BERKSHIRE WILTSHIRE A Littledown Vernham Street St Mary's Church Vernham Dean Vernham Manor O Goudyses Gate WILTSHIRE Olupton Manor Upton

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## History of the Villages

#### VERNHAM DEAN

Anglo-Saxon sources from the eighth century record the village name as 'Fernham' which has been translated as 'home or enclosure against the bracken'. By 1410 the name had been extended to 'Fernhamsdene' - the 'dene' meaning a valley.

Habitation in the Vernham Dean and Upton area stretches back well beyond the Saxon period. Aerial photographs and ground surveys have revealed the sites of various Iron Age and Romano-British settlements. The best preserved of these is at Boats Copse, south of Woodside, consisting of a rectangular enclosure surrounded by an earth rampart.

At the time of William I's Domesday Survey in 1086 Vernham Dean was part of the neighbouring manor of Hurstbourne Tarrant ('Esseborne'), and did not receive a special mention. The Manor of Vernham Dean was granted by Henry II in about 1177 to one Henry de Bernevall and his heirs. The next hundred years were a period of instability and the Manor changed hands many times, moving in and out of the Bernevall family. In 1277, on the death of Gilbert de Bernevall, the Manor was finally divided into two 'moieties' - legal divisions - between Gilbert's daughter Cecily and his grandson, Gilbert de Cundy. By the end of the fourteenth century the Vernham Dean Manor that had been inherited by Cecily de Bernevall had passed into the hands of Winchester College. The College governors were to remain Lords of the Manor and principal landowners for the next six hundred years. The old manor house is thought to be on the same site as the present day Vernham Manor Farm, to the north of the village.

The other manor was sometimes known as West Vernham or Botes. A Romsey family held the Manor at the beginning of the fourteenth century, but it was to change hands no fewer than eighteen times between 1303 and 1575. At this latter date the purchasers were Thomas Larke, John Attwood and Robert Walton, who were probably trustees of Winchester College buying the manor as an investment. The two manors were thereby brought together once more under a single ownership.

There are few remaining vestiges of medieval Vernham Dean. The parish church stands on its own well away from the village, reflecting the division of the manors, and still has traces of its Norman origins. Vernham Manor, although later rebuilt, is thought to be of sixteenth century origin.

Most of the older buildings in the village and in Vernham Street date from around the eighteenth century, so this was probably an era of expansion or at least rebuilding — in the district. The Victorian period also saw the construction of additional houses in the village, as well as the school (1860) and the Methodist Chapel in Back Lane (1869). A few years previously in 1851 the parish church was almost completely rebuilt.

The twentieth century has been a period of rapid change for Vernham Dean. New housing has continued to be built, particularly since the village plan of 1966, and has resulted in a virtual doubling of the nineteenth century village. Most of the planned development has taken place and any further increase is likely to occur at a slower rate.



#### UPTON

It seems that Upton has always been a smaller village than Vernham Dean and its history is less well documented, but it earns a reference in the Domesday book. In the eleventh century 'Optune' formed part of the possessions of Edith, the queen of Edward the Confessor, and on her death in 1075 it passed to King William I. The estate remained with the Crown for a considerable time but like Vernham Dean it was eventually split into two portions. The eastern part is thought to have been granted with Hurstbourne to John de Lyons in 1198, whereas the western part was probably transferred with Vernham Dean by Henry II to Henry de Bernevall.

In 1312 Roger de Bernevall granted a grange with fourteen acres of land to the Abbot and convent of Beaulieu. The location of the grange has never been exactly established but one possible site lies a third of a mile due west of Upton Manor. At the time of the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century the grange or Manor of Upton was released for a term of thirty years to Ronald Layton and his wife Jan, on the understanding that they should destroy the old hall there and build a replacement of the same size. It is not known whether this agreement was ever carried out, for the Manor of Upton, together with other possessions of the Manor of Beaulieu, was shortly to be transferred to Thomas Lord Wriothesley. Within a few years the Bernevall estate in Upton had merged with the manor of Vernham Dean and passed into the possession of Winchester College. The division between the two landowners is marked today by the Vernhams Dean - Hurstbourne Tarrant parish boundary, which runs through the middle of Upton village.

Little is recorded of Upton in the eighteenth century, but a number of houses seem to date from this period. In 1775 one Richard Bunny

provided a bequest of £300 'to be applied to the relief of needy persons in the parish' and in placing out two children residing in that part of Upton which is within the parish to school'. This is taken to be the Hurstbourne side of the village.

Upton has never had its own Anglican church but an independent chapel was built south of Parsonage Farm. It is dated 1839. The School House and School Hill cottages were built on the southern side of the valley, looking down on the hamlet. Upton has not experienced the rapid growth of Vernham Dean although further development followed the School House at Hillside. The hamlet today is a peaceful rural community still dominated by its old farms.

## The Villages Today

#### VERNHAM DEAN

Vernham Dean is the first village in Hampshire after crossing the Wiltshire border below Haydown Hill. It is preceded by two pairs of houses at Woodside, which themselves mark the medieval county boundary at 'Goudyes Gate'. Closer to the village is Sargents Farm, with its square slateroofed farmhouse facing southwards across the valley.

and whitewashed. Flint nodules, which occur naturally in chalk deposits, are the only On entering the village from the west, the building stone readily available in the area main road forks and the view is squarely and were widely used until the twentieth censtopped by Edgington House and The Nook. tury. The flints were skilfully 'knapped' -Both houses have been rendered and altered or dressed - to produce a smooth and more over the years but still reveal their regular surface. West Dene is roofed in thatch coming down to a catslide at one end. From West Dene on the north side of the village is Ashton Cottage. It is another flint and David's Cottage

ancient past. The steeply pitched hipped roof of The Nook indicates that it was formerly

thatched. Fragments of a Doric porch remain at Edgington House, as well as the large sixteen-

light sash windows. In the past it has been a

similar to several houses in the village and

typical of Hampshire vernacular building. It

has flint-faced walls, reinforced with brick,

Less prominently situated is West Dene,

bakery and a shop.

brick house, now restored and extended. The segmental brick arches above the window heads are another traditional feature in the area, as are the small and simple casement windows. Beyond Ashton Cottage is a short terrace, probably late Victorian, with a slate roof. Yew Cottage at the western end of the group is of a slightly earlier date.

At this point the lane is narrow and intimate in character. All Ways and Meadow Cottages are further examples of traditional construction, each with interesting thatched roofs. The lane broadens out at the junction of the Dell, a group of houses built in recent years. Cheyney Cottage is another typical Hampshire building. Only a few feet in front of it stands the Primitive Methodist Chapel; its roundheaded windows and plain facade (the porch is a recent addition), are characteristic of many non-conformist chapels of the period.

The aptly named 'Long Thatch' joins Cheyney Cottage and is set back from the lane. The range of small casements at different levels lends considerable charm to the building. On the other side of the lane the Old Forge and the property at the back of the post office tightly abut the lane and create a sense of enclosure. This is contrasted when the road opens up beyond Vine Cottage, with its unusual decorative slate roof, and 'Gardia', to reach the heart of the village.

The facade of 'Masons' is typically Victorian with its raised first floor windows and sawtooth brick corbelling, however, it conceals the core of a much older building. Its white walls complement the horizontal bands of brick and flint at neighbouring 'Apple Thatch' which looks out across the triangular village green. The green is sunken and is a reminder that this was the site of the old village pond. Its cool and undulating appearance contrasts with the hard road surface and the parking area in front of the George Inn. A young chestnut tree at this point is already a prominent feature in the village. Trees in the northeast corner of the village provide an important

backdrop to the George and adjoining buildings. The pub has been largely rebuilt and has a superimposed front wall of flint, timber and brick, but the structural timbers can still be seen at the back of the building. The sweep of the tile roof over the upper windows confirms that the original cover was thatch.

The road to Vernham Street rises past The George up Bulpits Hill. Dean Cottage on the west side is seen behind a thick hedge, and has a similar roof shape to the pub, with structural members revealed at first floor level. Most of the other houses on Bulpits Hill are recent. Looking down towards the village centre, Pond Cottage and beyond it, Beeches Farm House, are seen in key positions with a screen of fine beeches on the slope beyond.

There are more flint and brick buildings in the eastern half of the village, close to the main road. On the south side at Haydown there is a thick cob wall with a coping of heavy concrete pantiles; a further reminder of the chalk subsoil. Other constructional uses of chalk are to be found, notably in the cob walls of David's Cottage at the west end of the village. A number of flint and brick houses in the area undoubtedly have cob cores, some of which may be older than their facing.

The houses on Shepherd's Rise are amongst the most recent additions to the village, marking the start of a group of twentieth century houses and buildings that lead to the eastern edge of the village and the road to Upton.

To the north of the village lie the Parish Church, Vernham Manor and Vernham Street. Vernham Street is a scattered line of houses and farms, a number of which are of individual merit and historic interest; it leads to a small cluster of dwellings at Littledown. St Mary's Church is still an important part of the community despite its isolated position and although it was almost entirely rebuilt in 1851 the building is still of great significance as a reminder of parish history. The thick west wall and the zigzag mouldings around the doorhead are typical of Norman work.

#### UPTON

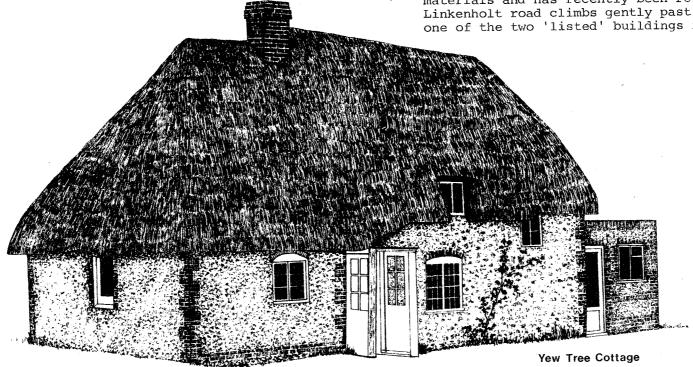
The village of Vernham Dean developed as a long, thin strip along a single road, and can thus be described as a 'linear' settlement. In contrast, Upton is a 'nucleated' settlement, having grown outwards from a central point - the crossroads. As a consequence, the two villages have an entirely different character. Four old farms - Upton, Parsonage, Sopers and Oriel College - have enclosed the crossroads and make up a considerable part of the village atmosphere.

In the approach from the west the first building complex is Upton Farm, with its long flint and weatherboarded barn. This fine structure precedes the farmhouse, a square building with an attractive brick facade. On the opposite side of the road is 'Old Cottage', occupying a key position as the main road bends to the left.

The Crown Inn and the 'Old Forge' are nineteenth century slateroofed buildings. The Forge itself lies close to the road and is now a pair of garages. It still has a roof of plain clay tiles.

Oriel College Farm is notable for its flint-walled farmhouse with an attractive Georgian flat hooded doorcase. A tall weatherboarded barn stands to the rear of the house, near the Old Forge. South of the farmhouse is a long cob wall that runs up the hill towards School Hill Cottages and the School House, which are late nineteenth century buildings still in the local brick and flint tradition.

Looking back towards the centre of the village the importance of Rushdown House and its neighbours can be appreciated. Rushdown House itself is a worthy example of the use of local building materials and has recently been rethatched. The Linkenholt road climbs gently past The Cottage, one of the two 'listed' buildings in the village,



and the Independent Chapel to reach an open area by Parsonage Farm. There are several interesting barns and other agricultural buildings in this part of the village that complement the farmhouses and cottages. The Parsonage farmhouse has a steep clay tile roof and an attractive facade of diaper patterned brickwork. Nearer the ridge on the opposite side of the road is Wayside, a pleasant row of flintwalled houses with a hipped slate roof. The lattice casement windows are probably the Victorian originals. The houses are currently vacant and in need of repair.

'The Old Crook and Shears', in the centre of the village has undergone a dramatic transformation with a recent northern extension reshaping the old pub into an L-shaped house. The flint and brick facades of the older building can still be seen beneath the cream render.

'Upton Dean' to the west has also seen major change, but at an earlier period. It was once a pair of houses of which the southernmost has its original Georgian facade with large, sixteen light sash windows and a deep brick string course. The house is set back from the road and is bounded by a good brick and flint wall with round brick coping. This is similar to the breached wall around Sopers Farm.

Opposite 'Upton Dean' is an open field that provides an effective contrast with the cluster of buildings. It makes an important contribution to the character of the village. Upton House is a 'double pile' house with a recently thatched roof at the front and a slate roof over the later rear addition. Beyond Upton House is an important group of conifers. The road diverts southwards as it leaves the village, following the course of the River Swift. Blakes Cottage is an 'L' shaped group with new buildings to the south and west of the old house. The latter has the local banded brick and flint facade but also with delightful and unusual 'Gothick' double casement windows.

To the north of the village is Upton Manor, a restored Georgian Manor House with a symmetrical facade and elegant gauged brickwork over the window heads.

## The Proposed Conservation Areas

The approach to designating a conservation area is to identify the special architectural and historic qualities of the locality, and to recognise those areas with such qualities by including them within a specific boundary. The intention is not necessarily to include every historic building or to exclude individual buildings of an inappropriate or unsightly design; rather, it is to establish the broad character of the area. Equally it is not proposed to incorporate all the surrounding landscape into the conservation areas (although key areas of open space are included) as there are other complementary planning policies which protect the countryside against inappropriate development.

Two conservation areas have been designated, one in the centre of each village. The plans at the back of this document show the boundaries for Vernham Dean and Upton conservation areas.



Upton Dean

## **Development Control Policy**

The conservation area proposals are intended to complement existing planning policies by providing additional guidelines for development within the conservation areas. Policies to protect those areas adjacent to the conservation areas, including the countryside, are set out in the Mid-Hampshire Structure Plan (Hampshire County Council: approved 1980), and the Coast and Country Conservation Policy (Hampshire County Council: 3rd edition 1979). In the open countryside these policies preclude any new development unless it is essential for agriculture or other rural activities.

The Borough Council is currently preparing a local plan for Andover and the surrounding rural area which will provide the detailed framework for development decisions. Proposals for any development adjacent to a conservation area will need special consideration to ensure that they do not detract from its character or setting.

#### A : NEW BUILDING WORK

#### (i) Works requiring Planning Permission

The overriding aim is to ensure that new development accords with the architectural and visual qualities of the area. Open areas of special visual importance are identified on the plan and development of these areas will not normally be permitted. In areas where new development is appropriate, particular importance will be attached to the scale of new structures and their relationship with neighbouring buildings and the landscape. The significance of colours, building materials, fenestration, roof pitch and vertical emphasis should be given careful consideration; for this reason detailed plans containing such information will normally be required with each planning application. This

requirement may also apply to development adjoining or close to a conservation area if the proposal is likely to make an impact on its character.

#### (ii) <u>Listed Buildings</u>

More than eight hundred buildings in Test Valley have been included by the Secretary of State for the Environment on a schedule of buildings of 'special architectural or historic interest'. Buildings are graded according to their merit; most are 'Grade II', but a few particularly important buildings are graded 'I' or 'II\*'.

Although there are few listed buildings in the Vernham Dean and Upton area, the Secretary of State is currently revising the lists for the whole country and it is likely that many properties in this area will be included.

The consent of the Borough Council is required for any work likely to affect the character of a listed building; this would include such work as external redecoration, the replacement of doors or windows, or the removal of chimneys, internal walls or architectural features.

THE AUTHORITY EXERCISES A PRESUMPTION AGAINST ALL WORKS TO LISTED BUILDINGS THAT ARE LIKELY TO PREJUDICE THEIR SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC QUALITIES.

## (iii) Works not requiring Planning Permission: Unlisted Buildings

The great majority of buildings in the conservation areas are not listed and therefore do not require consent for alterations or minor additions. Nevertheless, advice on such works to 'buildings of local interest' will gladly be given. These buildings are shown on the maps.

Where particular features are to be restored or traditional materials employed in work that will make a beneficial contribution to the conservation area, grant aid may be available.

If it is intended to carry out work on a building in a conservation area (or on a listed building anywhere) owners are advised to contact the Borough Council to see whether consent is required and whether the intended work is eligible for a grant.

CONSENT IS REQUIRED FOR THE DEMOLITION OF ANY BUILDING IN A CONSERVATION AREA, WHETHER LISTED OR NOT.

The only exceptions are certain small or temporary structures - further details are available from the Borough Council Planning Department.

#### B : TREES AND LANDSCAPE

The map identifies open areas that form a vital part of the character of the villages. Because of their importance it is highly unlikely that the Borough Council will permit development in these areas, since it wishes to see them retained and well maintained.

Encouragement will be given to owners to fell and replace dead trees and to plant additional trees and hedges; where they make a significant visual contribution grant aid may be available.

ANYONE INTENDING TO TOP, LOP, UPROOT OR FELL A TREE IN A CONSERVATION AREA MUST GIVE THE BOROUGH COUNCIL SIX WEEKS NOTICE OF THEIR INTENTION.

Further details about trees in conservation areas are given at the Appendix.

#### C : ARCHAEOLOGY

Prior to any demolition or rehabilitation work affecting listed buildings, or other buildings and sites within the conservation areas, the Borough Council may notify the appropriate archaeological experts to enable survey and records and possibly excavation to be carried out if appropriate. A planning condition to this effect will be attached in appropriate circumstances.

### A Framework for Enhancement

With the introduction of conservation areas in the Civic Amenities Act in 1967, it was made clear that the designation should only be a prelude to action for enhancing an area's character and appearance. The following paragraphs indicate the range of suitable work and include the suggestions of Test Valley Borough Council for minor improvements in Vernham Dean and Upton. However, it is stressed that these suggestions are included solely to act as a basis for discussion in the hope of stimulating further ideas and determining priorities.

PROJECTS NEED NOT NECESSARILY BE LIMITED TO THE CONSERVATION AREAS.

In preparing proposals for enhancement it is important to recognise that the quality of the areas stem from their informality; contrast, surprise and variety are the key elements that need to be protected or developed.

#### 1. TREES AND HEDGES

Neither of the villages are in densely wooded settings but they both gain from the presence of a few mature and well positioned trees. The most important of these are shown on the plans, and every effort should be made to keep them. Where important trees are dying or diseased, they should be replaced wherever possible.

There are several fine groups of trees between Vernham Dean and Hurstbourne Tarrant. Consideration might be given to supplementing existing woodland with new trees in key locations.

#### 2. OPEN SPACES AND FOOTPATHS

The beautiful landscape setting of Vernham Dean and Upton has been referred to elsewhere in this study and particularly important open areas that contribute to the character of the villages have been identified on the maps. It is essential to protect the most important views in and out of the villages. The footpath network around the villages is comprehensive and well used, but

there may be opportunities for the clearance of undergrowth or improvements to stiles, signs or fences.

#### 3. BUILDINGS AND WALLS

The importance of traditional buildings to the character of the villages has been described in some detail. It is essential that these should continue to be well maintained and that where alterations are necessary they respect the character of the building. It is therefore essential that the correct materials and techniques are used.

There are a number of important boundary walls in the area, including several cob walls. It is essential that these are carefully maintained by keeping the coping and plinths intact to minimise damp penetration.

Advice to the owners of old buildings is available from the Planning Department, Test Valley Borough Council, Duttons Road, Romsey (Tel.Romsey 515117). The Planning Department is also able to advise on the availability and sources of grant aid for repairs to historic buildings.

## Implementation

The success of any enhancement work will depend primarily on the initiatives of landowners and parish councils, but the co-ordination of volunteer labour and the availability of grant aid will also be necessary. The part to be played by the different agencies is outlined below.

#### Test Valley Borough Council

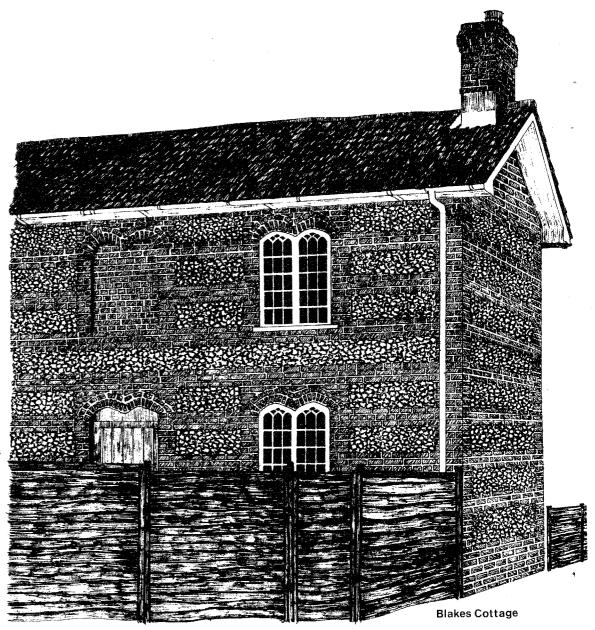
The Borough Council is the body responsible for the designation of the conservation areas; for the granting of planning permission; for the granting of consent for alterations to listed buildings and for the demolition of other buildings; and for the control of tree felling (other than Forestry Commission schemes). With regard to enhancement proposals, officers of the Borough Council may be able to co-ordinate enhancement schemes, working with the agent carrying out the work (parish council, landowner, or amenity group) and the specialist advisors (Hampshire County Council, Test Valley Archaeological Committee, Countryside Commission). The Borough Council can also provide information about grants, including those from its own environmental enhancement fund, for which an explanatory leaflet is available.

#### Parish Councils

Vernhams Dean and Hurstbourne Tarrant Parish Councils could be responsible for preparing and carrying out an enhancement programme. The Parish Councils may wish to consider proposals for improvements and to work out the programming details. The Councils might also recruit a volunteer workforce and liaise with landowners about schemes.

#### Individuals

Landowners will be responsible for deciding whether a scheme takes place. Without their consent there is no question of the work progressing but it is hoped that they will adopt a positive approach to any suggestions forwarded. All local people, whether interested parties or not, are asked to come forward with suitable schemes.



## 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 council a final opportunity to serve a tree preservation order (TPO), where appropriate, before work is carried out. TPOs may be served where it appears to the council that it is 'expedient in the interests of amenity'. Permission must be sought from the council before any 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, Junction Road, Andover.

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 authority 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 all tree preservation or conservation area controls; these are summarised below.

#### Main Exemptions

- (ii) Trees cultivated for fruit production, growing or standing in an orchard or garden;
- (iii) Trees cut down in accordance with a forestry dedication covenant or Forestry Commission plan;
- (v) Trees which need to be felled to enable development to be carried out following the granting of planning permission.

