




Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan
Local List of Assets and
proposed Area of Special Local Character

September 2020





CUMNOR PARISH LOCAL LIST OF HERITAGE ASSETS





This local list supplements heritage assets identified on the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record and features identified as being of local interest in the Cumnor Conservation Area Appraisal, 2011, Vale of White Horse District Council.





It has been compiled by Mary Gill, Tony Harker, Richard Whitlock, Kathryn Davies, Chris Davies, Vanessa Cheel, Judy Roberts and Philip Hawtin in consultation with other residents of Cumnor using the methodology set out for the Oxford Heritage Asset Register (see Appendix 1) and using criteria embodied in *Conservation Principles*, Historic England, 2008, Historic England Advice Note 7, *Local Heritage Listing*, 2016 and the NPPF, 2018.





Address	Description	
72 Cumnor Hill	Large two-and-a-half-storey house, of complex plan. Built by 1910 and originally called The Uplands. Render with plain tile roof. Planted on close-studded timber framing to central front gable and lateral stack, historic indicators of status. Evidence of early suburban development of Cumnor Hill. Architectural and historic interest.	
77 Cumnor Hill	Two-storey house, built soon after 1907. Rendered with plain tile roof of steep pitch. Storied porch. Designed by Clough Williams-Ellis, as gardener's cottage associated with Larkbeare (no. 85 Cumnor Hill). Displays good Arts and Crafts detailing (see EH listing report, 2012). Architectural and historic interest.	
Larkbeare, 85 Cumnor Hill	House, built in 1907, two storey, originally rectangular plan, now extended to form L-plan. Render and tile. Arts and Crafts style. Designed by Clough Williams-Ellis. (see EH listing report, 2012). Architectural and historic interest.	

Outbuilding, Larkbeare, 85 Cumnor Hill	Single storey outbuilding in render and plain tile, probably designed by Clough Williams-Ellis and built in 1924. Probably used as a music room. Architectural and historic interest.	
110 Cumnor Hill	Large two-storey house, built by 1910, originally called Ridgefield. Render with plain tile roof. Evidence of early suburban development of Cumnor Hill. Architectural and historic interest.	
112 Cumnor Hill	Large house, brick with hipped slate roof. Stone dressing to windows and door. Built by 1910. Large pane sash windows. Evidence of early suburban development of Cumnor Hill. Architectural and historic interest.	
113 Cumnor Hill	Large house, render with plain tiled roof. Built by 1910. Evidence of early suburban development of Cumnor Hill. Architectural and historic interest.	

<p>3 Colegrove Down</p>	<p>Large house of brick with plain tile roof. Built by 1910. Plan reminiscent of typical hall and crosswing. Distinctive six-over-two sash windows. Evidence of early suburban development of Cumnor Hill. Architectural and historic interest.</p>	
<p>24 and 26 Eynsham Road</p>	<p>A pair of semi-detached, brick- built houses with 1879 datestone. Built in English garden wall bond with red brick and buff brick corners. Plain tile roof. Extended to one end and has a front extension. Altered windows. Associated with Chawley brick works. Architectural and historic interest.</p>	
<p>Pound Cottage</p>	<p>One and a half storey L-shaped house. Painted rubble stone with plain tile roof. Possibly late 17th century origin. Architectural and historic interest.</p>	
<p>51 and 53 Eynsham Rd</p>	<p>Detached houses, render and plain tile, with some planted on timber. Bay windows, individual styles. Early examples of suburban development along Eynsham Road displaying detailing denoting high status. Architectural and historic interest.</p>	

87 Eynsham Rd	House of two separate builds. Earliest fronting Pinnocks Way dating probably from late 16thc. Front range dating possibly from early 18c. Built of rubblestone with some timber-framing internally. Thatch roof to main bays of phase 1, plain tile roof over end bay of phase 1 and phase 2. Large stack internally, maybe a later insertion. Some roof timbers appear to have soot blackening. Good early timber-mullioned window with leaded lights. Similar blocked window in roofspace. Occupies site immediately opposite Dean Court Farmhouse. Archaeological, architectural and historic interest.	
8 Grange Court	Barn, Dean Court Farm, now residential. Dating from 18c. Described by John Blair in 1981 as <i>'An unaisled barn of 3 bays, its wall partly of stone and partly of timber, existed in 1808 but is probably much older.'</i> Archaeological, architectural and historic interest.	
7 Grange Court	Originally part of Dean Court farmhouse, described by John Blair in 1981 as <i>'a single-storey outshut'</i> and existing on the estate map of Cumnor in 1808. Archaeological, architectural and historic interest.	
Physic well, Long Leys Lane GR SP442044	Stone surround with step down into well. Sulphurous water. Four feet deep at time of photograph (Nov 19). On the main route from Cumnor to Bablock Hythe crossing of the Thames. May date to seventeenth century or earlier. Evidence of the importance of mineral waters in everyday life in early modern period. Archaeological and historic interest.	

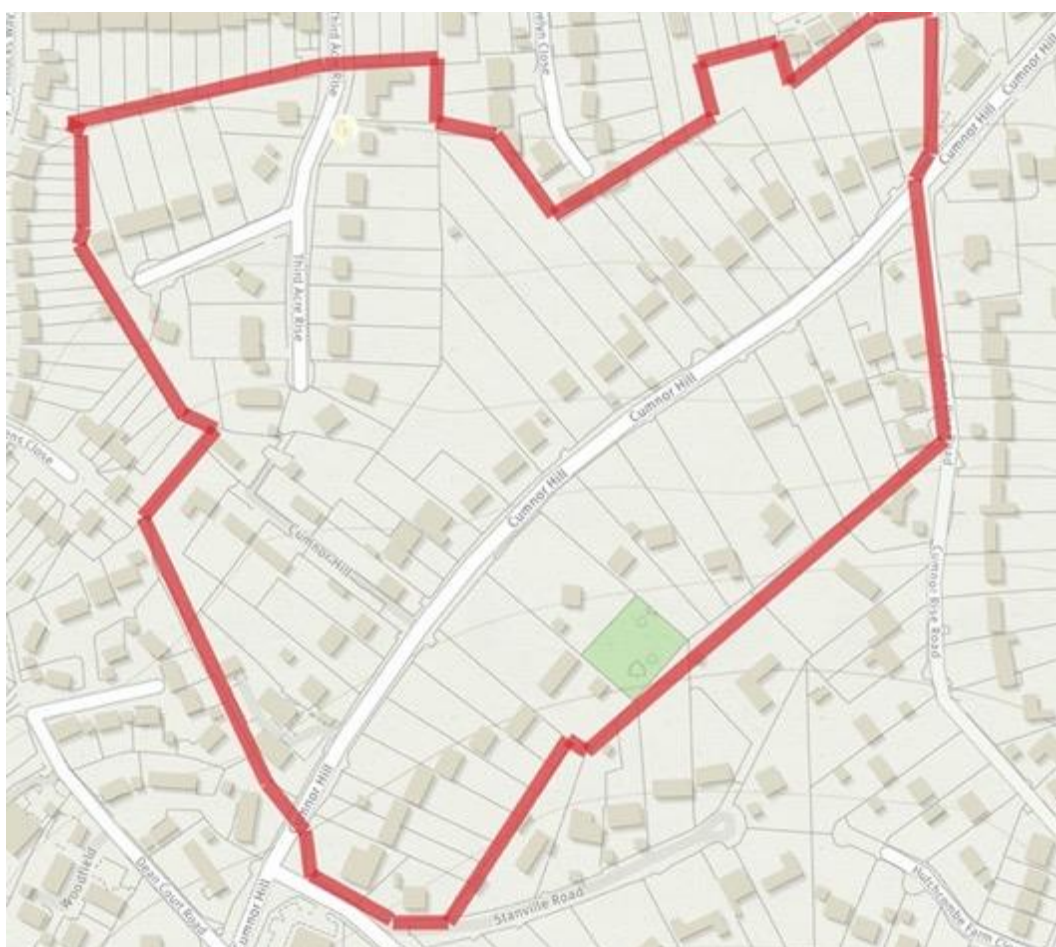
<p>Beacon basket, GR SP482048</p>	<p>Erected for the Millennium as part of the national Millennium celebrations. Historic interest.</p>	
<p>Ridge and furrow field, High Street. GR SP 049044</p>	<p>Lynchets survive which can be seen on the aerial photograph. This provides evidence of early agricultural practice dating probably from the medieval period. Archaeological and historic interest.</p>	
<p>Ridge and furrow field, Appleton Road. GR SP 458038</p>	<p>Lynchets visible on the ground. Evidence of early agricultural practice dating probably from the medieval period. Archaeological and historic interest.</p>	
<p>Sunken Lane from Dean Court to Chawley</p>	<p>Evidence from the rural past when Dean Court and Chawley were two farming settlements, before Oxford was developed to the west of the Thames. Historic interest</p>	

Tumbledown cottage	House and outbuilding. One and a half storeys. Lateral stack and end stack. Rubblestone with plain tile roof. Dating probably from the seventeenth century. It appears on the 1814 Enclosure Map. Architectural and historic interest.	
First World War Trenches, Hill End	Historic practice trenches dug in Wytham Woods during WW1. Historic interest.	
Brick Kiln Farmhouse	Multi-phase farmhouse of complex plan form. Rubblestone with plain tile roof. Dating from 18thc or earlier. It appears on the 1815 enclosure map. Chawley Brick Company based here from mid 19thc which continued until 1930s. Source of much local brick. Architectural and historic interest	
Hurst Lane Cottages	Terrace of workers houses, early 20thc. Brick and tile, with bricks probably from the nearby brickworks. Situated on the old turnpike road. Architectural and historic interest.	

Lower Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise proposed Area of Special Local Character

This area has a coherent architectural and historic character which illustrates the development of the area as a suburb of Oxford in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Map 1 below shows the proposed area of Special Local Character (see Policy DBC5). This is the area considered for Local Conservation Area status in 2007 – see Appendix 2 below



Map 1 Proposed Lower Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise Area of Special Local Character

The first development was along Lower Cumnor Hill characterised by large individually-designed houses set in generous plots. Mature trees in private gardens contribute to the suburban leafy character of the area.

Houses are all two-storey, and of a variety of styles, popular in the early twentieth century. An eclectic mix of detailing is typical of Edwardian architecture. Bay windows, storied porches, planted-on timbers are all in a contemporary style but are details borrowed from earlier times, see photos of Cumnor Hill Houses above.

The reference to antiquity in itself was a badge of status. Close-studded timber framing, bay windows and storied porches are all details found in Tudor houses which denoted status. Others in a classical style make reference to the classical country house. The borrowing of these details was intended to confer status on the owner and hence they became popular in suburban development. These 'mini country houses' were the aspiration of the élite moving out of Oxford.



View down Cumnor Hill with mature trees in front gardens contributing to the leafy suburban character

Third Acre Rise was developed a bit later, in the 1930s. Although the houses and plots are smaller, there was the same aspiration to status as on Cumnor Hill.

Here the development was planned in great detail. The land was sold by the Earl of Abingdon to a local developer with restrictive covenants requiring all houses to have at least one third of an acre, and prohibiting the use of any land for commercial purposes.

Houses were designed in several styles, though there is some repetition in design; they are not all individually designed. Some exhibit typical traditional features such as planted on timbers and bay windows but others express the modernity of the age in their art deco designs.

The war interrupted the development of the site and there are several plots developed in the second half of the twentieth century.



View along Third Acre Rise looking south Third Acre Rise looking north to countryside

Houses are sited comfortably in their plots and staggered so as to avoid any direct overlooking. They are set back from the road to allow for front gardens, many of which have mature trees which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. This is further enhanced by the horse chestnuts, planted as part of the original development which line the road. Combined with views out to open countryside these contribute to the semi-rural character of the development.

For a fuller account of the special architectural and historic interest please see the Council's report on a *Proposal for a Conservation Area, The lower Slopes of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise*, 2007 in Appendix 2.





The range of house styles found in Third Acre Rise

APPENDIX 1

Cumnor Register of Local Heritage Assets – nomination form

Welcome to the nominations form for the Cumnor Register of Local Heritage Assets.

What is a heritage asset?

The National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

The Cumnor Character Assessment explains in detail what is meant by significance and the heritage values that make up significance.

What the form is for

The nomination form asks you to demonstrate how your candidate asset meets the criteria for inclusion on Cumnor Heritage Assets Register. The criteria ensure registration as a heritage asset is the most appropriate means to manage your valued feature of the environment.

Registration does not mean an asset will be preserved in its current state in perpetuity. Planning policy allows change to heritage assets that conserves or better reveals their significance or, where change requires their loss, replaces the benefit to the public that they provide. The information provided in support of your nomination will help determine what forms of change might be acceptable. Saying “it’s important and must never change” won’t tell us what we need to know to manage your heritage asset in the future.

Tick or rank?

In answers to Questions 2 – 4 you can rank the interests, values and significance your candidate asset provides to show which you consider

the most and least important to its significance; i.e. 1st (most important) – 4th (least important).

What happens next?

We will prepare a list of candidate heritage assets, which will be presented to the public (including the owners of candidate heritage assets) for consultation.

The Criteria:

Registered Heritage Assets must meet all of the four following criteria:

Criterion 1. Be capable of meeting the government's definition of a heritage asset.

Demonstrate that your candidate is able to fall within the government's definition of a heritage asset; i.e. a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape.

Criterion 2. Possess heritage interest that can be conserved and enjoyed.

Identify the features of your candidate asset that need to be cared for as heritage – this is its *heritage interest*. This might include physical things like its appearance and materials, as well as associations with past people or events. Consider whether the physical features of the candidate asset help to illustrate its associations. The four types of heritage interest listed are recognised in national planning policy.

Criterion 3. Have a value for the neighbourhood or community beyond personal or family connections, or the interest of individual property owners because of its heritage interest

Tell us why or how the heritage interest you identified in your answer to Question 2 is of local value has - this is its *heritage value*. The types of

heritage value suggested on the nomination form are based on national guidance by Historic England.

Criterion 4. Have a level of significance that is greater than the general positive identified characteristics of the local area.

Tell us what raises your candidate's heritage value to a level that merits its consideration in planning. Many features of the historic environment are a valued part of local character that should be managed through policies in the local plan. Registered heritage assets should stand out as of greater significance than these features for their heritage value.

Name and location of your candidate heritage asset (please provide a photograph and a map showing its location):

1. Is it one of the following? WHAT IS IT?	Tick
a building or group of buildings	
a monument or site (a structure other than a building or an area of archaeological remains)	
a place (e.g. a street, park, garden or natural space)	
a landscape (an area defined by visual features or character, e.g. a city centre, village, suburb or field system)	

2. Is it interesting in any of the following ways? WHY IS IT INTERESTING?	Tick / Rank
Historic interest – a well documented association with a person, event, episode of history, or local industry	
Archaeological interest – firm evidence of potential to reveal more about the human past through further study	
Architectural interest – an example of an architectural style, a building of particular use, a technique of building, or use of materials	
Artistic interest – It includes artistic endeavour to communicate meaning or use of design (including landscape design) to enhance appearance	

What is it about the asset that provides this interest?

3. Is the interest of the asset **valued locally** for any of the following reasons?

Tick /
Rank

WHY IS IT LOCALLY VALUED?

Association: It connects us to people and events that shaped the identity or character of the area

Illustration: It illustrates an aspect of the area's past that makes an important contribution to its identity or character

Evidence: It is an important resource for understanding and learning about the area's history

Aesthetics: It makes an important contribution to the positive look of the area either by design or fortuitously

Communal: It is important to the identity, cohesion, spiritual life or memory of all or part of the community

How is the asset locally valued as heritage?

4. Do any of the following features make the heritage significance of the asset stand out above the surrounding environment? **WHAT MAKES ITS LOCAL VALUE SPECIAL?**

Tick

Age ... Is it particularly old, or of a date that is significant to the local area?

Rarity ... Is it unusual in the area or a rare survival of something that was once common?

Integrity ... Is it largely complete or in a near to original condition?	
Group value ... Is it part of a group that have a close historic, aesthetic or communal association?	
Cumnor's identity ... Is it important to the identity or character of the parish or a particular part of it?	
Other ... Is there another way you think it has special local value?	
How does this contribute to its value?	

APPENDIX 2

Proposal by Vale of White Horse District for a conservation area on Lower Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise, 2007

Proposal for a Conservation Area

The lower slopes of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise

In the Parish of Cumnor



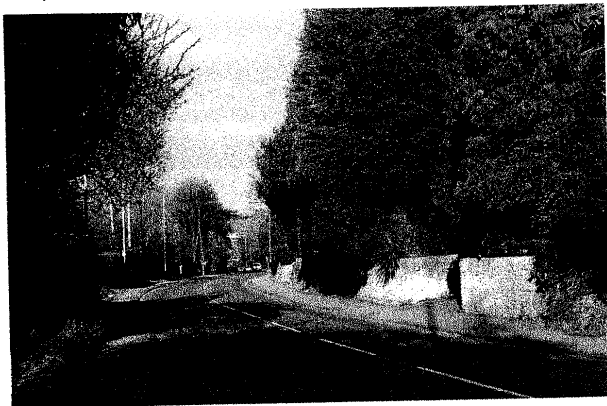
April 2007

Proposal for a Conservation Area

Lower slopes of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise

Introduction

The proposed Conservation Area covers the lower part of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise as shown on the plan at pages 4 and 5. The area is predominantly one of large Edwardian, 1920s and 1930s housing, with a distinctive spacious character. The houses are generally sited in extensive gardens with many trees, often hidden from the road, and with the original layout undisturbed. On Cumnor Hill, the street scene is largely enclosed by high stone walls, hedges, or trees, and the houses set behind long front gardens. Third Acre Rise is a rare surviving 1930s development on plots of



1/3 acre. The whole area has, to date, managed to escape most of the damage caused by redevelopment and intensification and has a special character and appearance which it is desirable to protect, preserve and enhance.

History and types of buildings

Set at the foot of Matthew Arnold's "green-muffled hills", the proposed conservation area lies in an area of outstanding landscape value. Facing north, the sloping fields and ancient woodland were, for many centuries, given to mixed farming. Development did not begin until the early 20th century, when the

Earl of Abingdon and other landowners began to sell plots for building. "More new villas here", wrote Oxford photographer Henry Taunt, in 1912, in his Rambles with Matthew Arnold.

Cumnor Hill then began to acquire its distinctive sylvan character, as substantial Edwardian villas rose in large, wooded plots. Also distinctive was the homogenous community of middle-class businessmen and their families, as successful Oxford tradesmen and artisans sought an attractive environment here as an alternative to North Oxford.

In 1930, the Regional Survey of Oxfordshire (Earl of Mayo et al) expressed concern at Oxford's urban growth. "In the best residential areas", the Survey observed, "building should be restricted to one house to a minimum of three acres". Cumnor Hill was described as one of the best residential areas and it broadly met their criteria. The Survey regarded the southern slopes of Wytham/Seacourt Hill, facing Cumnor Hill, as "by far the most beautiful and dramatic site in the Oxford area". Development on Cumnor Hill should not detract from that landscape.



33, Cumnor Hill

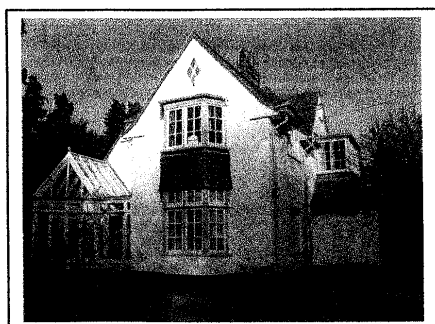
Proposal for a Conservation Area

Lower slopes of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise

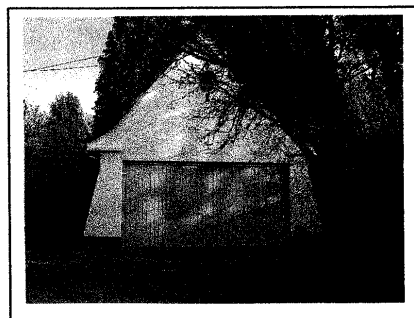
1900 -1914. The Earl of Abingdon, the main land-owner in the area, began to sell plots on lower Cumnor Hill for building in the first decade of the twentieth century. By this time the Victorian suburbs of north, south, and east Oxford had been largely completed, but there was pressure for further development. Cumnor Hill afforded an elevated location, in the favoured west of the City, with fresher air, countryside, and open views, yet close to the City Centre. The intention from the beginning was that the houses would be substantial and sited in large plots, and covenants were imposed to ensure this.

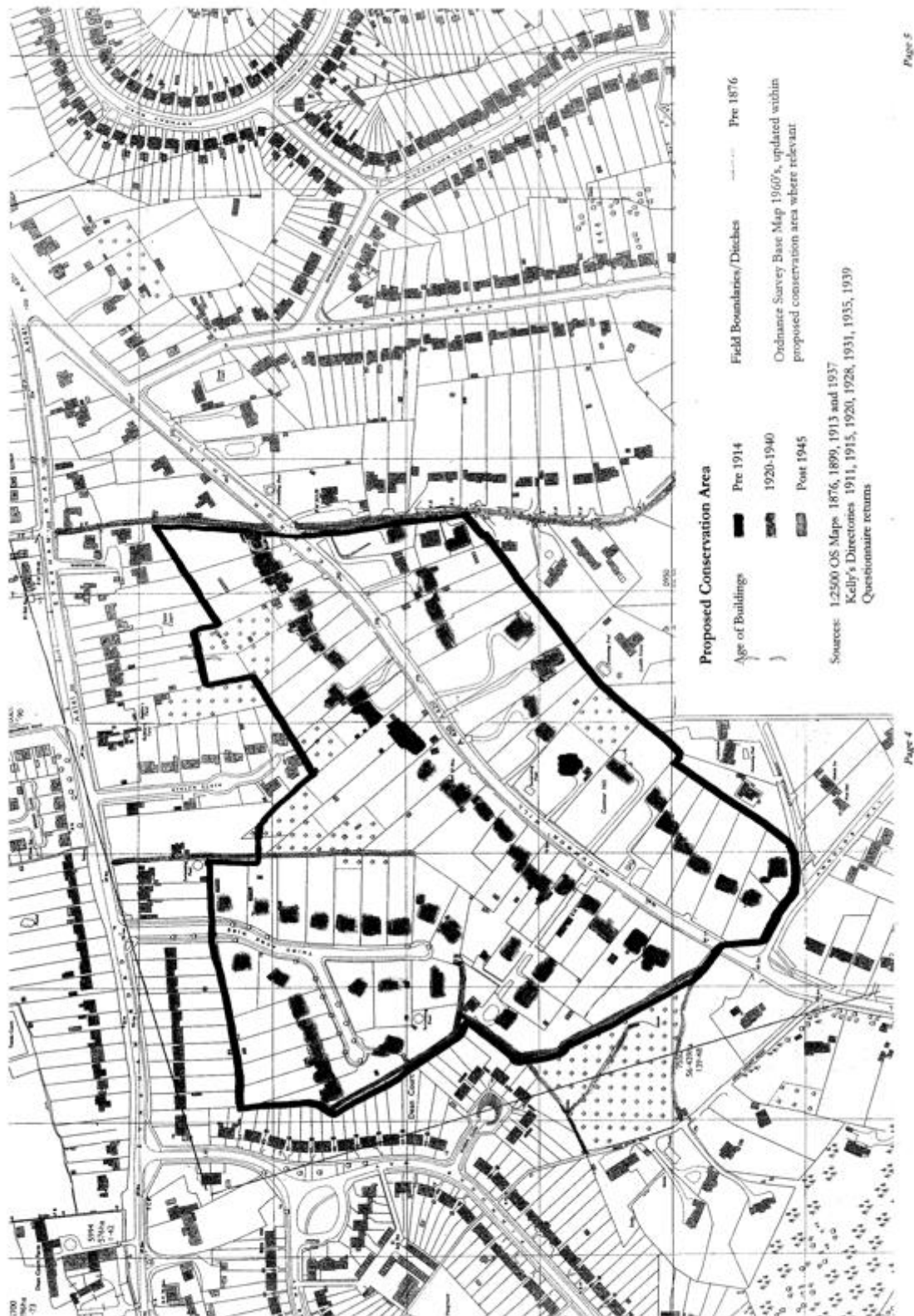
There are six houses within the proposed Conservation Area which date from before the First World War. These Edwardian houses were influenced either by the Victorian villa, such as no.64, or by the Arts and Crafts movement, such as no.32 dating from 1910. A nearby house of the same period, no. 28, (*see photograph on page 7*) is a distinctive and impressive design, thought to be by a Swiss architect. No.43, formerly called “Stanville”, was built in 1913: designed by Harry Smith, it shows the distinct influence of CFA Voysey. Harry Smith’s most well-known building is now the Oxford Crown and County Court in St. Aldates, Oxford.

32, Cumnor Hill



43, Cumnor Hill





Proposal for a Conservation Area

Lower slopes of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise

1920s and 30s. After the First World War, development continued throughout the 1920s and 30s. The majority of the houses in the proposed area date from this inter-war period. On Cumnor Hill the architectural styles of these houses generally reflect the Vernacular Revival which was popular at the time, with brick or rough-rendered walls and clay-tiled roofs, but in Third Acre Rise a number of the houses were designed in the International or Modernist Style. Dating



36, Cumnor Hill

from the late 1930s these houses, with flat roofs, horizontally-barred metal-framed windows, white-painted smooth-rendered walls, and with extensive use of concrete in their construction, contrast markedly with the more traditional housing of the inter-war period. Of these houses, No. 8 (*see below*) has not been extended and has retained its original plan form.



Post-war. The proposed area also has a few later houses, from the 1950s and 60s, of varied styles generally typical of the period. These are also sited on large plots and do not detract from the overall attractive character of the area.

Topography and open spaces

The topography of the area plays a large part in its character. The land slopes markedly from the south east to the north west (i.e. across Cumnor Hill), and from the south west to the north east (i.e. down the Hill). Most of the houses on the upper, south-east, side of Cumnor Hill are sited well back on their plots in elevated positions enjoying distant views, with long and well-treed front gardens. A number of these houses (*the odd numbers*) have retaining banks or stone walls on their frontages to the road, with dense tree or hedge screening, and these form important elements in the street scene. On the north-west side of Cumnor Hill the houses (*with the even numbers*) are generally at a lower level than the



road, with long back gardens which fall away to the north west. Frontage screening with hedges and trees is also a feature, but open views towards Wytham Woods can be seen in places, adding to the road's attractive character. Third Acre Rise is at a lower level than the houses on Cumnor Hill, but also slopes from south to north and this contributes to its visual character. On both Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise the roads have sinuous curves which contain views and add interest and variety to the streetscape.

30, Cumnor Hill

Proposal for a Conservation Area

Lower slopes of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise

Throughout the area, the large gardens contain many trees, hedges, and other planting which gives a distinctive spacious and "green" setting for the houses and the suburb. The many trees in particular are a vital part of the area's character. The large gardens provide a rich habitat for wild-life, with badgers, foxes, deer, and many birds, and the long gardens on the north-west side of Cumnor Hill form an important wild-life corridor. A recent independent ornithological survey (2007) has shown that there is an above average population of threatened species of birds in the proposed conservation area.

English Heritage advice

The importance of twentieth-century architecture and suburbs is recognised by English Heritage in the documents it has produced on Conservation Area Appraisals, the Modern House and Housing Selection Guide, and the Suburban and Country Houses Selection Guide. The following are quotes from these documents.

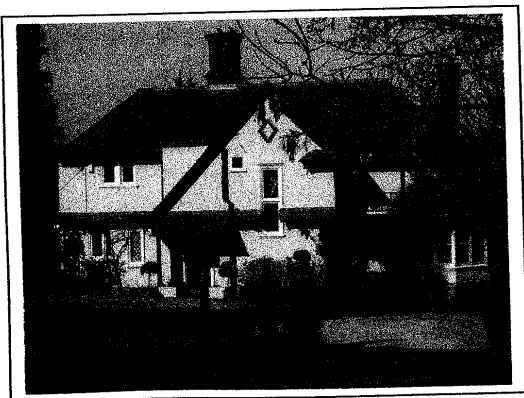
"The twentieth century is often the most under-valued and vulnerable period of building and it will be important.....to recognise the contribution made by twentieth-century buildings, regardless of their style (many of which are currently being reviewed)."

"Domestic architecture of the twentieth century can claim particular significance. Houses and housing developments of the period rank among the masterpieces of English architecture."

"In addition to the great names (of the Arts and Crafts movement) there were many local architects who designed exceptional buildings that make a distinctive contribution to Edwardian towns and suburbs."

"Given the redevelopment pressures on (twentieth-century) detached houses, this area of the built environment is particularly under threat. Their architectural quality was not always fully appreciated when many of the lists - especially in the south east - were prepared in the 1970s and early 1980s."

"Houses built outside of town centres share certain characteristics. They can take advantage of more spacious ground plots and be laid out with more freedom.....they can possess a repose and a detachment that makes for special architectural interest....."



28, Cumnor Hill



29, Cumnor Hill

"The Vernacular Revival could be used to good effect on smaller houses; the simple roughcast type was widely used in garden suburbs in the early twentieth century and the best preserved merit listing."

"Greater respect is now accorded to the suburban house."

Proposal for a Conservation Area

Lower slopes of Cumnor Hill and Third Acre Rise

"Suburban houses in particular are now subject to enormous pressures that include both conversion (into flats or offices), and that of new development in the gardens or grounds, sometimes calling for the demolition of the original house. The latter is particularly significant because, where they remain substantially intact, suburban houses show not only great architectural ingenuity and invention in terms of style, materials and plan form, they were often carefully designed in relation to their garden, street layout and neighbouring plots. Setting may be an important factor in assessing their special interest."

"For enclaves of (twentieth century) housing, Conservation Area designation may sometimes be a more appropriate response than the listing of individual houses...."

Most recently (during the preparation of this document) English Heritage has issued two publications on the dangers facing suburbs in the face of increasing pressures for change. These documents - *The Heritage of Historic Suburbs* and *Suburbs and the Historic Environment* (March 2007) - emphasise the importance of many pre and inter-war suburban housing developments and the need for local authorities to protect their character. They say;

"A number of demographic trends, changes to national planning policies and housing market conditions have combined to mean that relatively spacious, low density suburban areas (the archetypal leafy suburbs) are coming under increasing development pressure. As a result, successive waves of new development, together with small-scale incremental change, is in places gradually putting local character and distinctiveness at risk. Failure to address specific suburban issues on the part of local planning authorities could mean that many suburbs soon reach a tipping point beyond which it will be extremely difficult to bring about a renaissance."

"Given their relatively spacious nature and low density, certain suburbs have been identified by local authorities as being suitable for infill development. This is not a new phenomenon, but current levels of change against a background of higher acceptable densities increases the potential for local distinctiveness and historically significant features to be lost."

"Where the assessment of the authority's historic suburbs indicates that a neighbourhood is of significant historic or architectural interest, the local authority should give consideration to designation as a conservation area. This step will not prevent modernisation or updating of buildings within the conservation area, but will help ensure that new development or alterations respect and respond to their surroundings."

Conclusion

The proposed Conservation Area has managed to retain its distinctive early and mid-twentieth century character as a low density suburb of Oxford, with large individual houses, a number of which are significant in their architecture and setting. **Pressures for conversion and intensification have so far been resisted, but there is concern that the area's qualities are not sufficiently recognised by the planning authority, and that the character of the area will be lost over the next few years unless immediate action is taken.** Conservation Area status would give recognition to the importance of protecting and enhancing the area's unique history, architecture and visual quality and we would urge the Vale of White Horse Council to designate the area.

Acknowledgements

District Councillors Harry Dickinson and Derek Rawson have initiated this proposal in response to concerns expressed by their constituents about recent development proposals in the proposed conservation area. They formed a working group with the support of, and including representatives from, Cumnor Parish Council and the information included in this proposal was obtained from a questionnaire sent to 71 households in the proposed area in February 2007, 46 of which were returned (with all but 3 in favour of the proposal). A wider consultation has also taken place through an article in the February edition of Cumnor Parish News. The working group considered this information along with its own research and special thanks are due to Richard Whitlock and John Hanson for writing the text and to Peter Bowell, Janet Craven and Dr Philip Hawtin for their interest and support.