

**NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN** FOR **APPLETON WITH EATON**

**Appendix 1
Village
Character
Assessment**

2020-2031



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Introduction

Apart from the centre of Appleton village, the Parish of Appleton with Eaton is designated Green Belt. The rural and agricultural setting and historic character define the two villages of Appleton and Eaton, which are two separate villages within the same Parish.

Appleton and Eaton both have very long histories. The place-name of Appleton first appears as Aepeltune in a charter of King Edgar 'the industrious' in AD 942. Earlier in AD 687 it had formed part of a much larger estate belonging to Abingdon Abbey called Aearomundeslee, which also included Eaton, Bessels Leigh and several other adjacent manors. This was probably an ancient estate centred on Marcham /Frilford dating from the Romano-British era or even the Iron Age. In the Domesday Book of 1086 it is recorded as Apletone, and thereafter in various similar forms such as Eppleton (1220) and Aspelton (1316). The name is believed to mean 'the orchard township'. Appleton Manor house is widely recognized as an 'amazing survival' of a late twelfth-century secular stone building, which has been more or less continuously occupied for over eight centuries making it the second oldest continually inhabited home in the country.

The topography of Appleton suggests that there may have been at least two focal points. The first around the church and Appleton Manor and the second at the junction of Netherton Road, Park Lane and Oaksmere. There is evidence to suggest that there was a large triangular green in the centre of the village, which has been distorted by later infilling. Such greens were often a feature of planned villages dating from the 12th and 13th centuries. The north side of Park Lane was incorporated into Manor Park, possibly in the 18th century or earlier. The overall shape of the community was altered in the 20th century when interwar ribbon development along the Eaton Road in the east and the Netherton Road in the west created the impression of an extended linear village.

Eaton (meaning land by a river) is mainly a farming hamlet. It received its Charter in 968 from King Edgar, and in 1968 enjoyable millennium celebrations took place in which all residents, their families and ex-residents took part. In 1554 Eaton Manor and lands were conveyed by Christopher and Catherine Ashton to Sir Thomas White, who founded St John's College, and so they became college property. Originally Eaton was sited lower down the hill towards Bablock Hythe and the Isis/Thames but moved to its present position, it is believed, due to the Black Death. Coal and goods were transported up from the river to the public house at one time. The hamlet was enclosed in 1828 to 1830 when the roads to Appleton and Cumnor were altered, and the road from the river curved round in front of The Eight Bells instead of Manor Farm.

The civil Parish of Appleton with Eaton was created in 1894 and in 1974, together with the rest of north Berkshire, the Parish was transferred to Oxfordshire.

Approach

For this assessment, the built-up area of the villages was divided into nine areas, taking into account natural boundaries between the areas and the amount of work that each small group would have to do.

The areas are as follows:

1. Netherton Road – end of Conservation Area from 13 Netherton Road to Millway House to include Cheers Farm, allotments and houses behind.
2. Millway Lane including riverbank houses adjoining the Thames east as far as but not including Appleton Landing.
3. Houses from Millway House to the end of Appleton Common, including the sportsfield and Field Farm.
4. Oaksmere leading to the end of the Parish/Horse Shoe Close/Fettiplace and houses leading to Tubney Manor Farm.
5. The part of Town Furlong/Badswell Lane not in Conservation Area and including bridleway to Appleton Landing, Jubilee Park and the tennis club.
6. Eaton Road – from Orchard House to the end of the village and Englands Lane outside the Conservation Area.
7. Park Lane outside the Conservation Area.
8. Eaton Village to include Eaton Straight, both farms and down to Bablock Hythe.
9. Appleton Conservation Area.

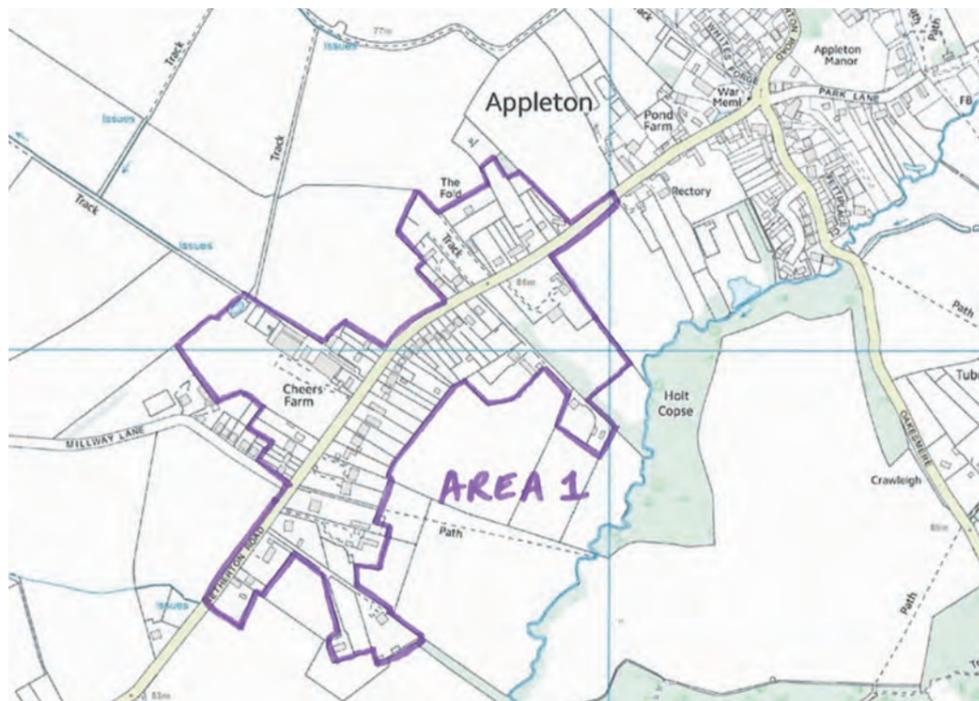
Each area was surveyed by local people using the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit, a recognised tool, which looks at all the elements that impact on the village character, whether positive or negative. This includes spaces, buildings, views, greenery and landscape features, light and dark shading, noise and smell. The full assessment for each area forms an appendix. The main report summarises the main points and our conclusions as to the significance of the features identified in each character area in accordance with English Heritage's Conservation Principles. The assessments were carried out on different dates and at different times of day. Therefore they reflect observations made at a particular point in time.

The conclusion section gives recommendations for protecting and enhancing significant features.

Area 1: Netherton Road from the end of the Conservation Area to Millway House

Map 1: Area 1
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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Netherton Road is the main road through the village from the Netherton direction (south-west) and is a two-way traffic thoroughfare. There is a pavement on one side of the road from Millway Lane to the Village Hall, which was constructed in circa 2005. The road is busy with large farm vehicles at key times in the agricultural year and with commuter traffic in the mornings and the evenings, including the school run. Children cycle to school and it is on a popular route for cycling clubs.

This end of Netherton Road can seem to be on the fringe of the village and there can be a suburban feel to some of the ribbon development of post-war houses. However, Cheers Farm exerts a strong presence reminding one that this is still a rural community.



Mid-20th century houses, Netherton Road



Millway House



Cheers Farm



Agricultural vehicle on Netherton Road

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- There is a mix of architectural types. All however are set back from the pavement/road. Extensions have been done sympathetically.
- All properties have front gardens, with clear boundary treatment in the form of either hedges or walls fronting the street scene.
- There is a variety of roof levels, but none stands out above the others.

Spaces

- Houses are well spaced, with clear boundaries between properties. Where houses are closer together, they are divided by hedges.
- To the northern side of the road there is a large and well used allotment site.

Views

- Views across the fields at both sides where hedge height permits.
- Spacing between properties offer important views of the rural area.

Landscaping

- Large and well used area of allotments on the northern side of the road add to the diversity of the landscape.
- Established hedgerows, chestnut trees. Woods on the south side add to the rural feel of the village.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- Light and open feel, it is possible to see sunset and sunrise from most gardens.
- Limited street lighting.
- Farm noises and the strong rural presence exerted by Cheers Farm.

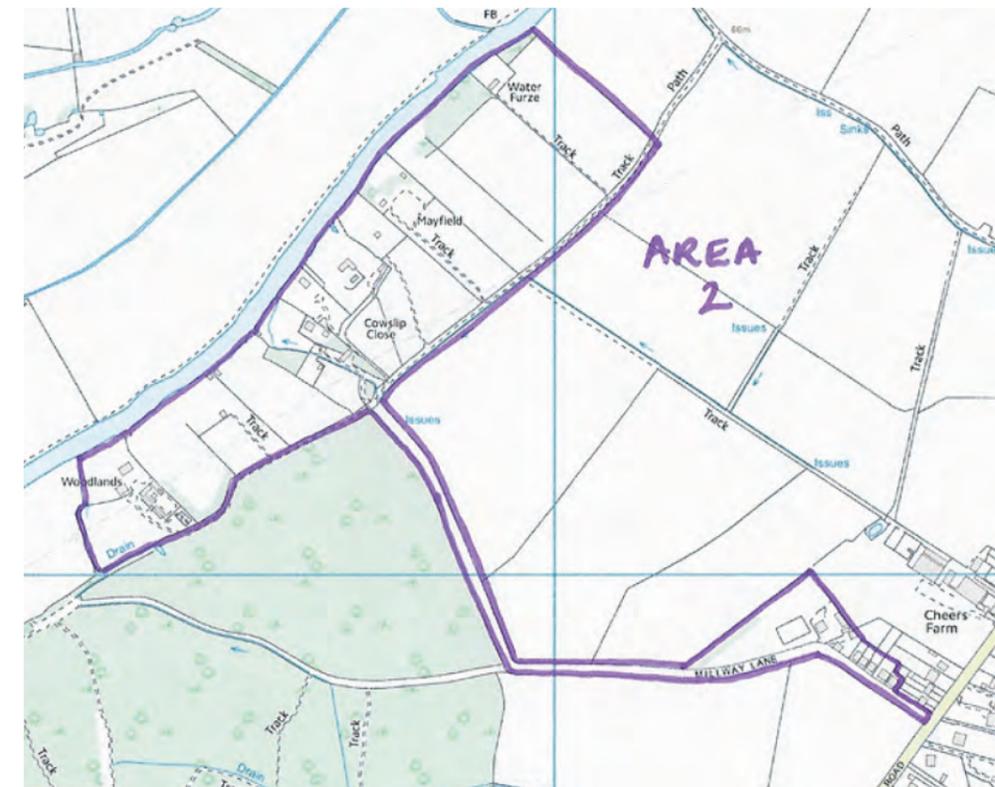
Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- Speed of traffic and traffic noise.
- Condition of road surface, i.e. potholes.
- Parking on pavements.
- Ribbon development.
- The suburban feel to post-war houses.

Area 2: Millway Lane

Millway Lane lies in the Green Belt and North Vale area of high landscape value. It is an unmade, single track bridleway and public footpath, used for access to farmland and a few residential properties. It runs for about 3 kilometres from the paved highway Netherton Road near the southwest end of the village towards the Thames where it forms a T-junction adjacent to and a short distance from the river. To the SW this ends at Lower Appleton Common leading into a footpath through the woods. A branch of this footpath emerges part way back up the lane, and the main path continues to the end of the common to join other footpath networks leading to the Thames National Footpath. To the northeast Millway Lane merges into Green Lane which forms part of the footpath network leading to Appleton Landing and the village.

The most significant features are the adjacent countryside providing peaceful surroundings, an abundance of wildlife and beautiful views of fields and woodlands. It is very popular with dog walkers, horse riders and especially ramblers, providing a choice of footpaths in different directions through woodland and around the village, including access to the Thames National Footpath and beyond. The footpaths sometimes become very muddy after heavy rain and are often impassable. The lane is always accessible despite its rough condition, and as a bridleway, it is in keeping with the character of the landscape.

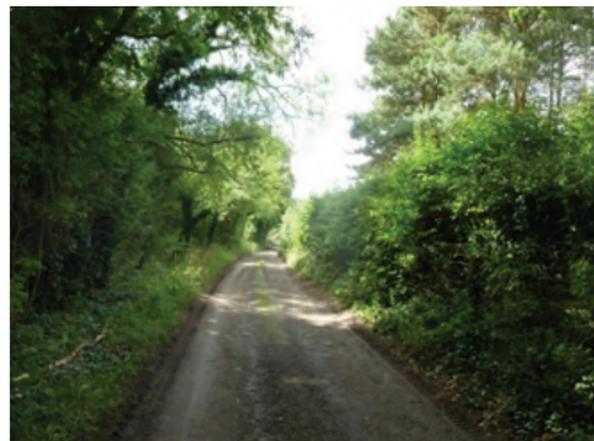


Map 2: Area 2
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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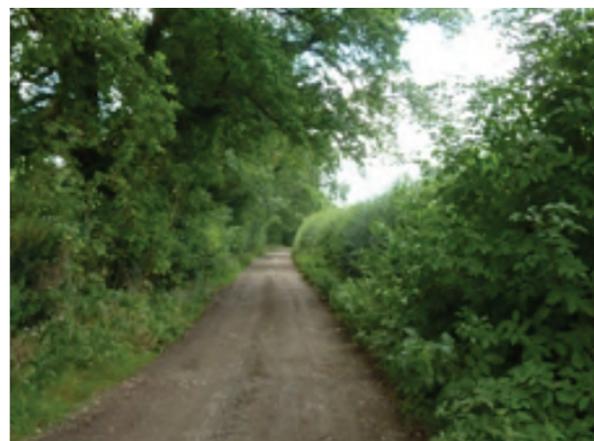
Houses on upper section of Millway Lane



Millway Lane Upper section



Millway Lane Views looking north



Millway Lane Upper section

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- There is a row of 7 detached bungalows, all residential and mainly single storey, along the upper section of the lane.
- Properties on the lower section of the lane, which run along the River Thames, were originally small dwellings but have mostly been developed into larger houses. Some smaller dwellings remain.
- All properties sit within their own site, each divided by hedge rows, or mature trees.

Spaces

- Millway Lane benefits from mostly having open countryside on either side, and this provides for a peaceful environment. The surrounding rural setting is home to a variety of wildlife, and provides beautiful views of fields and woodlands.
- The lane is enjoyed by local residents, as it provides a route for dog walkers, ramblers and horse riders. It is also a link to the River Thames and other walking routes.
- Millway Lane has no signage, lighting or pavements.
- By its nature it is a rural bridleway and should remain so.

Views

- Views opposite the houses in the upper section of lane are of farmland and fields which are mostly used for grazing sheep and cattle. Looking north there are wide reaching views over the countryside. From the lower part of the lane you can view the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated woodland. Through gaps in the hedge rows it is possible to glimpse willows along the Thames.
- The views from Millway Lane are varied and well established.

Landscaping

- The landscape is almost entirely rural, with the exception of a few gardens. The surrounding landscape sits within the Green Belt.
- Flooding is not normally an issue as properties sit above flood plain levels.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- Millway Lane is a peaceful rural lane, enjoyed by wildlife and residents.
- There is no street lighting, and some areas are shaded by woodland. Millway Lane does not suffer from light pollution.
- Sounds and smells are largely natural due to the lane's rural character. Traffic noise from the nearby road is minimal.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

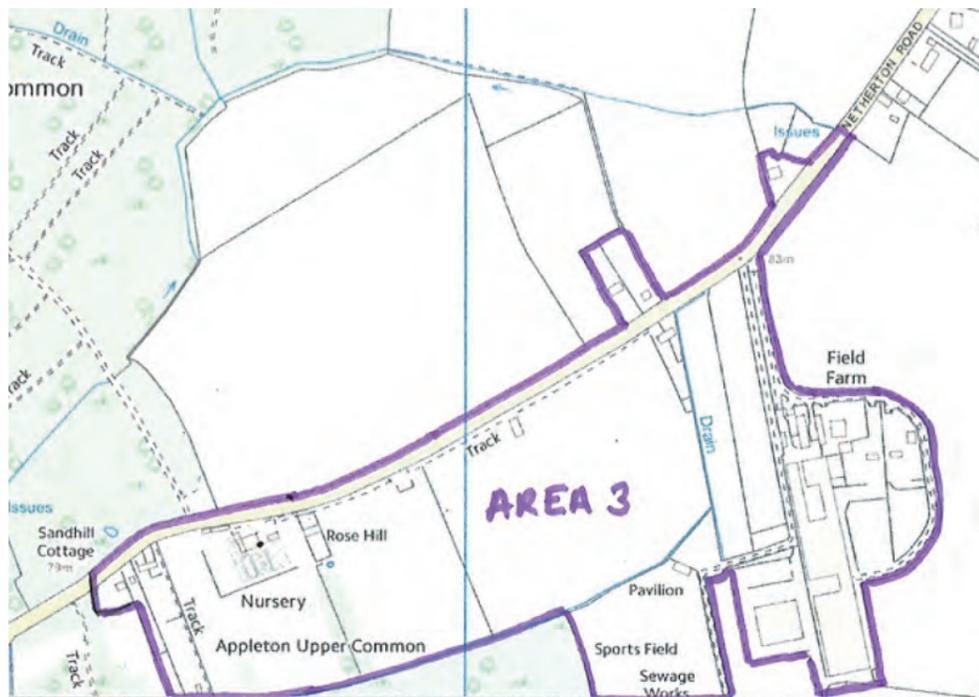
- Access at the north eastern end can become very muddy in inclement weather and adjacent footpaths such as the Green Lane and woodland paths can become waterlogged.
- The Netherton Road end is prone to flooding if ditches are not rigorously maintained.

Area 3: Netherton Road from Millway Lane to Appleton Common

Map 3: Area 3

(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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Netherton Road is the main thoroughfare from the west of Appleton towards Netherton and the A415. It lies within the Green Belt and North Vale area of high landscape value. This section includes one Grade 2 listed building and runs through farmland and alongside SSSI woodland.

Two public footpaths lead from the road, one to the south past Field Farm then between Appleton Upper Common and Tubney Woods to the A420, and a second path along the western edge of Appleton Lower Common leading to the Thames and the Thames path. A branch of this path through the woods links up with the lower end of Millway Lane, which itself merges into the Green Lane path network towards the river at Appleton Landing and the centre of the village.

The sense of being outside the core of the village is enhanced by the scenery and the quality of the rural landscape. This should be preserved. The area is sparsely populated; houses are well spaced and the buildings do not impact on the character of the open countryside. Land is mainly given over to agriculture. There is access to footpaths leading through deciduous woodland and a designated SSSI to the upper reaches of the Thames National Footpath and a network of paths round Appleton. These are well used but can become muddy and waterlogged after rain. The playing fields are popular across all age groups, providing a valuable amenity for the village.



Views to Appleton Lower Common



Views looking north



Netherton Road



Houses near Lower Common

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- Buildings (mostly detached) are sparsely scattered along this rural road. They do not, on the whole, impact on the character of the countryside.
- A Grade 2 listed building from the early to mid-18th century is situated within this area.
- Other properties are mainly brick built or rendered, in early to mid-century style.
- There are a number of agricultural and associated buildings including dwellings near to Appleton Sportsfield, which are visible from the road.
- Appleton Sportsfield Pavilion, built in 1993 through community enterprise, is visible from the road at certain times of the year.

Spaces

- It is mostly open to the countryside, buildings are sparse, residential and mostly detached. As there is limited development along this stretch of road, views to the open countryside are mostly uninterrupted.
- Two footpaths run off the road and give access to a designated SSSI.

Views

- For the most part there are wide vistas on both sides of the road across open countryside with beautiful views to the north over rolling farmland to the Thames Valley and beyond.
- Across rolling farmland Appleton Lower Common SSSI woodland is clearly visible to the north west as are the edges of Appleton Upper Common and Tubney Woods to the south.

Landscaping

- The landscape sits in the Green Belt and is entirely rural. The changing seasons bring a variety of colour especially in the deciduous woodlands.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- The sense of being outside the core of the village is enhanced by the scenery, the quality of the rural landscape, and the absence of light and noise pollution.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- The road is subject to the national speed limit despite there being a number of residential properties on it. This detracts from the quiet rural ambience.
- The road is narrow and there are no footpaths. The road provides the only access to the village sportsfield. Pedestrians often have to step onto the bank to avoid the traffic, particularly when large agricultural vehicles are using the road. There is space on the grassy verge to install an appropriately rural type of path – e.g. woodchip.
- At times there are smells from the Thames Water sewage treatment plant.

Area 4: Oaksmere

Oaksmere is the main road into the village from the A420 and ends at the T-Junction at the Village Hall/War Memorial. At the junction the road to the right leads to Eaton, the school, shop and church. Netherton Road to the left leads to Fyfield and the A415.

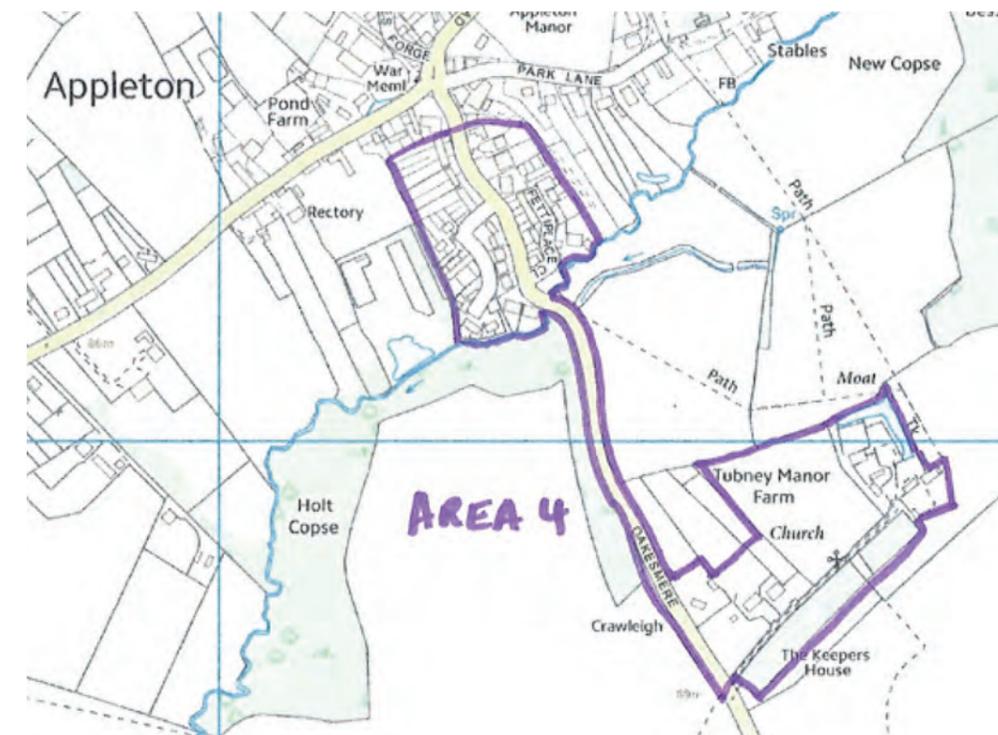
Oaksmere comprises an eclectic mix of property styles constructed over many centuries. Despite this, there is a coherence between the buildings at the northern end provided by the frequent use of stone with red brick decoration and the use of dormer windows. This is echoed in the more recently built Fettiplace Close with roof pitches higher than standard, some houses part rendered and brick edging around the windows.

Oaksmere is very green along its entire length as it contains many trees, hedges, shrubs and vegetation. The majority of houses have attractive front gardens which enhance the views and feeling of the area. The green ambience continues along the entire length of Oaksmere to the junction with the A420.

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- Fettiplace Close and Horseshoes Close provide some smaller homes for young families. The mix of architecture and different sized homes provide an eclectic but harmonious mix.



Map 4: Area 4
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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The Three Horseshoes was originally one of the village pubs and is now a private home



Houses in Fettiplace

Spaces

- Oaksmere is the southern access to the village from the main A420, which is the main road towards Oxford to the east and Swindon to the west. The north end has a safe pavement along half its length within the village envelope. This part is also well lit.

Views

- Views are limited because the area is on the whole built up but there are some Green Spaces, such as the many front gardens and the open green space at Osse Brook.

Landscaping

- The gardens on Oaksmere are well maintained with a mixture of shrubs, hedging flowers and trees.
- The Osse Brook flows under a bridge at the entrance to the village.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- Oaksmere comprises an eclectic mix of property styles constructed over many centuries. The majority of houses have attractive front gardens which enhance the views and feeling of the area.
- There is adequate lighting and minimal noise pollution.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- Since the bus service was removed in July 2016, Oaksmere has provided the only access to public transport (Bus Service S6). The road is a narrow single carriageway with blind corners, no pavement and very little usable verge. It is unsafe for walkers and cyclists at any time and in any weather but particularly at night because there is no street lighting. There are major concerns about the safety of pedestrians and cyclists particularly as the road is subject to the national speed limit
- The area where Osse Brook crosses the road in a culvert at the entrance to the village flooded badly in 2007. Major remedial works were undertaken in 2013 and there has been no repetition since, but the situation continues to be closely monitored.

Area 5: Badswell Lane, beyond the Conservation Area, and Town Furlong

Badswell Lane is a no-through-road, just wide enough for two cars to pass, with a pavement on the left side. There are houses on both sides. It leads to the Thames via a bridleway and also to the road to Northmoor Lock, the tennis club, Jubilee Park playground and another bridleway to the War Memorial.

Town Furlong branches off to the left at the end of Badswell Lane and is of similar width. It has pavements on both sides of the road.

The Thames bridleway, known to residents as Green Lane, has an ancient well part way down, once thought to have medicinal properties. It also has an area where goods for the village used to be landed from barges, and connects with Millway Lane and thus to Rainbow Bridge. It is very popular for walking.

Badswell Lane and Town Furlong are quiet, attractive and very pleasant places to live. There is a wide range of ages amongst their inhabitants, and a good community spirit. They are conveniently placed for access to the school, the church and the shop in one direction, and the Village Hall in the other. They have easy access to the playground and tennis courts and to the countryside via Green Lane for walks. Sadly, access to the lock, and the Thames towpath on the other side of the river, is now severely restricted.

Badswell Lane is much used by pedestrians. The narrowness of the road and parked cars cause traffic to slow and can present considerable problems to very large vehicles.



Map 5: Area 5
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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Appleton Tennis Club on Badswell Lane



Town Furlong - a cul-de-sac



Cars park in the road at the Eaton Road end of Badswell Lane



View looking north across the River Thames at Appleton Landing

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- There is a wide variety of housing which provides for families of all sizes and people living alone.
- Houses are built quite close together, creating a real village feel.

Spaces

- This cul-de-sac provides access to the tennis club which has its own car park and to the Jubilee Park playground to which children and all users are encouraged to walk. These are both very popular and well-used facilities.
- Not all properties have off-street car parking, which results in a high level of on-street parking. This encourages drivers to slow down and providing informal speed restrictions.

Views

- The view down Badswell Lane is mostly of houses and on occasion high hedges and low brick walls. The view along the lane opens onto tennis courts, open countryside and beyond to the Thames Valley.

Landscaping

- There are high hedges along parts of the lane, leading to large and established trees near to the tennis courts and playground. The playground is an open green space, that provides clear views down onto the Thames Valley.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- Badswell Lane is generally quiet, however it can at times become busy with farm traffic due to its proximity to farmland.
- There is a wide range of ages living in the area, which contributes to a good community spirit.

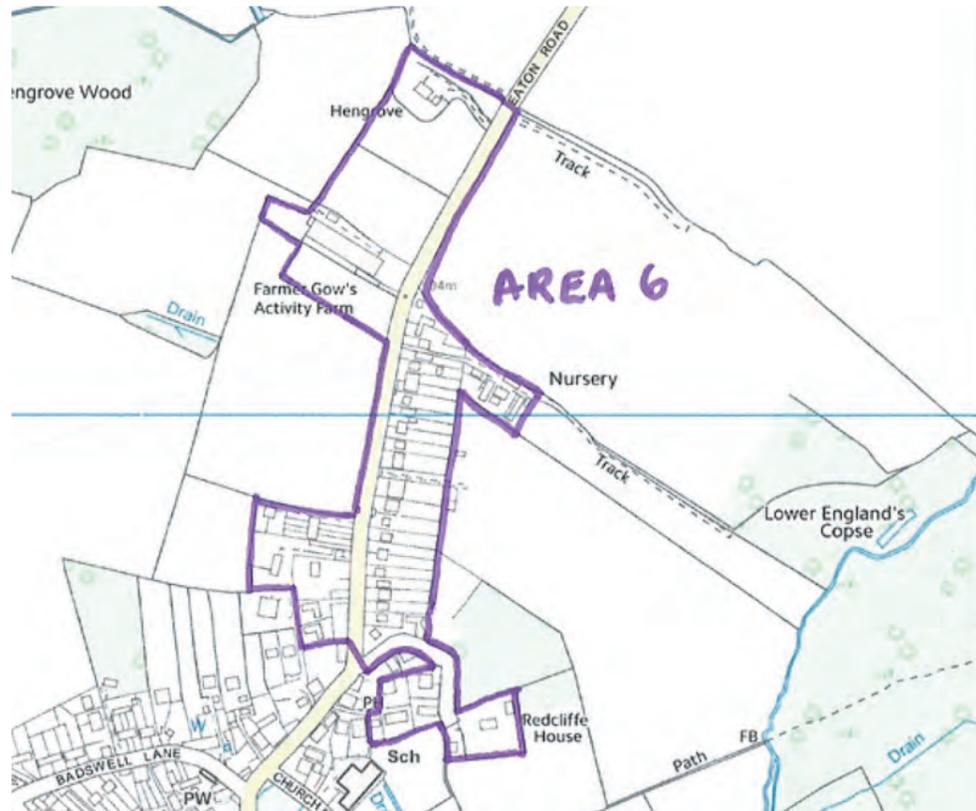
Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- The density of housing in this part of the village results in quite heavy traffic for the nature of the road.
- Many homes lack off-road parking. Vehicles are parked on the road as a result.
- Parents dropping or collecting children from the nearby primary school use this road for parking. As the only vehicular access to the campsite at the lock, the tennis club, the playing field at Jubilee Park and to adjacent farmland, significant traffic is generated at times and it can be quite noisy. This is particularly so when large agricultural contractors' vehicles and trailers use Badswell Lane to transport grain or silage, having to squeeze past parked cars and sometimes driving on the grass verges.
- The tarmac road leading from Badswell Lane to Northmoor Lock leads across fields to the lock keeper's house and has been used extensively by the village in the past as a pedestrian access to the river and to the Thames Path. However, access is now very limited and the gate is locked for the majority of the year. The Environment Agency has an access agreement with the landowner for operational access to Northmoor Lock and Weir. The Environment Agency is obliged to keep the roadway in good order as part of the agreement.
- Regular noise from military aircraft from Brize Norton, as is the case elsewhere in the village

Area 6: Eaton Road from Orchard House to the end of the village and the areas of Englands Lane that sit outside the Conservation Area

Map 6: Area 6
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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This section of Eaton Road is a single carriageway bordered mainly by individual dwellings and agricultural farmland, one of three main access routes to the village, providing access to and from Eaton and Cumnor.

Englands Lane is a relatively short, partly adopted, single no-through gravel track, providing access to a small number of individual dwellings.

A peaceful – despite being one of the main routes in and out of the village – and pleasant area. This section leads on into the village and provides a sense of the character of the village. There is a sense of it being a friendly and welcoming area, with a feeling of community. This is created by the individual character of the houses which appear to have grown up organically over the years. The pathway also contributes to this.

Whites of Appleton bellhangers and WG Carter Limited building contractors contribute to the sense of community because of their size and the way their character is embedded in the village.



Englands Lane - unmaded gravel road



Whites of Appleton - Church Bell Hangers premises



Eaton Road - 1930s ribbon development



Eaton Road-Looking towards the village centre

The presence of and access to open fields and countryside in general provides openness and a sense of being embedded in the countryside.

Englands Lane is more rural and quiet in ambience. Because the houses are more separated by the high hedges, there is more of a closed in feeling.

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- This part of Eaton Road is a peaceful and pleasant area with a mix of housing that has grown organically over the years. It provides a welcoming feel as one enters the village from the west.
- Houses are built on mainly similar size plots, set back from the road with driveways.

Spaces

- Eaton Road functions as one of the main routes into the village, and as such it has a footpath running along one side of it, providing a safe walking route for villagers.
- The spacing between buildings makes it possible to get glimpses of the rural landscape beyond.
- Englands Lane is an attractive but secluded and slightly hidden part of the village, sheltered by woodland.

Views

- There are a variety of views available along the Eaton Road. The road itself offers a mixture of hedgerows, agricultural land and established gardens, which enhance the countryside feel.
- Views beyond the village are also possible; looking across the Thames River Valley, across to Brize Norton on the edge of the Cotswolds.

Landscaping

- The gardens fronting Eaton Road are generally mature and well established with a mixture of different varieties of boundary hedging, some mature trees and a few walls.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- Ready access to open countryside and footpaths provides a sense of being embedded in the countryside. Sounds and smells of the country prevail. The presence of small businesses enhances the vibrancy of the area.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- Speeding traffic can be a problem.

Area 7: Park Lane

Park Lane is a narrow single-track cul-de-sac, with no pavement, running from Oaksmere to Long Close, a field with important rights of way leading to Besselsleigh Wood, St Laurence Churchyard and Tubney Manor Farm. It is one of the oldest roads in the village with houses originally built for agricultural labourers.

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- Housing along Park Lane is varied in design, and size, there is however a sense of coherence between them.

Spaces

- Park Lane is a quiet rural cul-de-sac used by walkers to access Long Close, Besselsleigh Woods and several rural footpaths to the south.
- Houses are built on mainly narrow plots, with front gardens and off-road parking.

Views

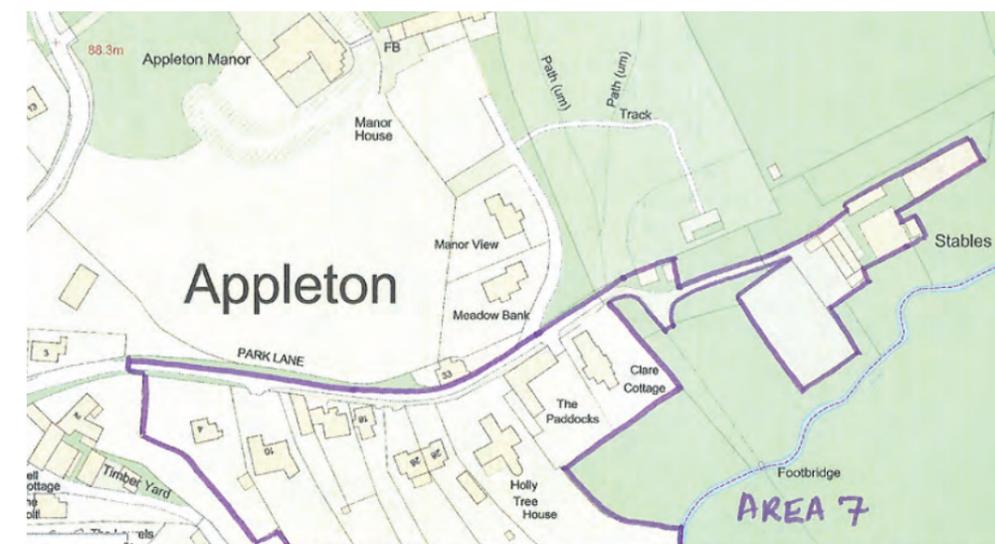
- The view along Park Lane is that of a narrow rural village lane, high hedges, mature trees and established gardens.

Landscaping

- Mature trees, hedges and gardens all add to the village feel providing a very rural setting.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- This a very attractive lane with a wide but harmonious variety of building styles and materials.
- Because of the quiet nature of the lane, it can be perceived as a pedestrian area.



Map 7: Area 7
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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View down Park Lane - low walls around front gardens



Park Lane showing high hedging and trees around Appleton Manor



View across Long Close showing footpaths to the church and Besselsleigh Woods

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- Large vehicles have difficulty accessing the narrow part of the road at the Oaksmere end and damage has been caused to the road edges as a result.

Area 8: Eaton

Eaton is an agricultural area enclosed by the Thames to the west, a stream to the east, ditches running from Hengrove (on the road from Appleton) to the Thames and the stream to the east, and another ditch flowing from Cutts' End to the Thames on the northern side.

The straight road from Appleton divides at a T-junction. Eaton village lies on the west-facing road which travels downhill through the village to Bablock Hythe, where there was a ferry for many centuries until it ceased operating in the 1970s.

Eaton is a well-structured hamlet with a mixture of dwellings providing accommodation for commuters, retirees and agricultural workers. The houses are generally built adjacent to the road on adequately sized plots without being too far apart. The Eight Bells public house is well used both by villagers and visitors and has its own parking.

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- 5 of the houses and 1 barn carry Grade 2 listed status. The older houses in the village and most of the garden walls are built from the local Corallian stone.
- New buildings have been designed sympathetically so as to not detract from or copy the existing much older stock.
- The Eight Bells is a very popular village public house.

Spaces

- The majority of houses are set back from the road, reasonably well spaced with garden frontages with low walls or boundary hedges.



Map 8: Area 8
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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Eaton Village T-Junction with Eaton Road

View to the Eight Bells garden from road through Eaton Village

Signpost pointing to Eaton Village from Eaton Road



View across the Thames from Bablock Hythe to the Ferryman Public House in Northmoor



View towards Bablock Hythe from Eaton Village

Views

- Eaton benefits from a variety of views from different vantage points. It is possible to see views towards Boars Hill, and the river valley.
- Farmland land can be seen throughout.

Landscaping

- Gardens in the village are mainly of a cottage style, well maintained with a variety of trees and shrubs.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- A very attractive ancient hamlet comprising mainly older properties with a few recent additions. There is direct access to the Thames at Bablock Hythe and to footpaths along the river.
- The Eight Bells is a very popular village public house.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- The ferry across the Thames from Bablock Hythe no longer runs and there is now no means of crossing the river.
- The road into the village is not particularly well maintained and there are no pedestrian footpaths.

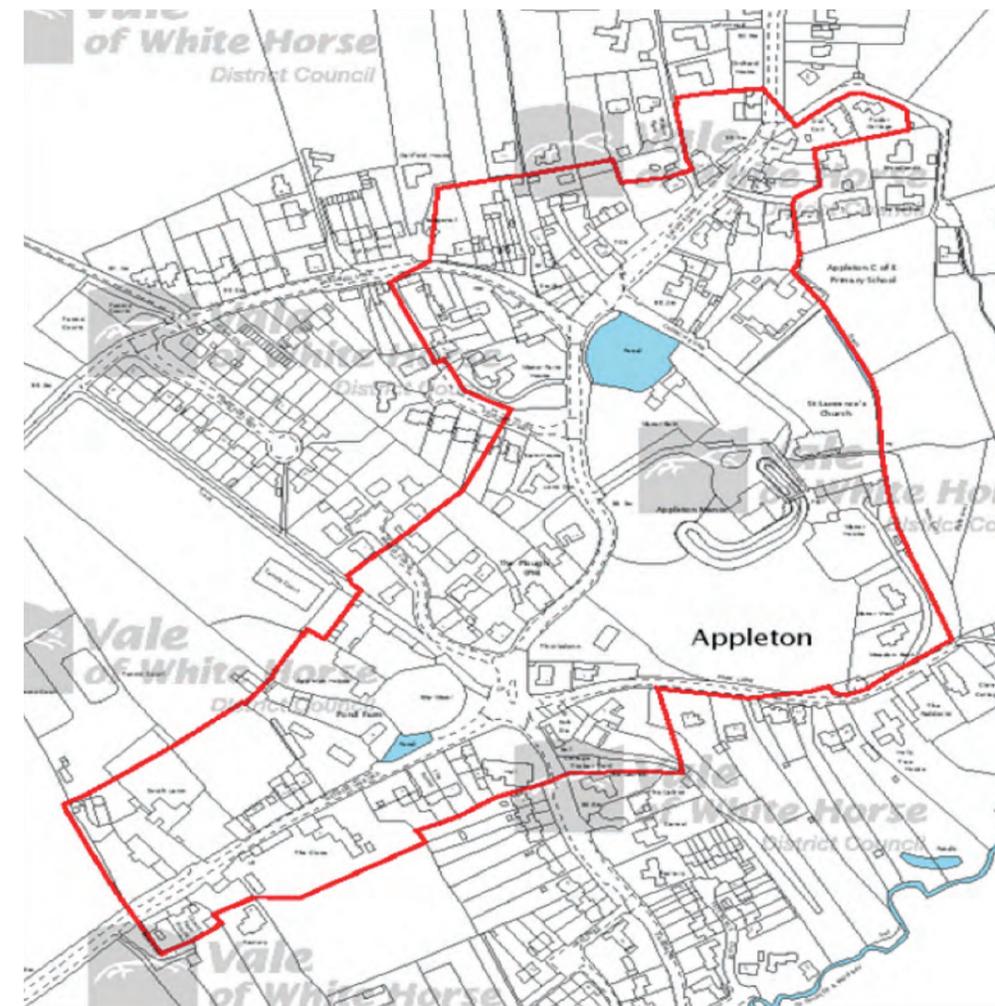
Area 9: Appleton Conservation Area

Introduction

Part of Appleton village is a designated Conservation Area as illustrated below.

For the purpose of this assessment, the Conservation Area was split into five separate sub-areas:

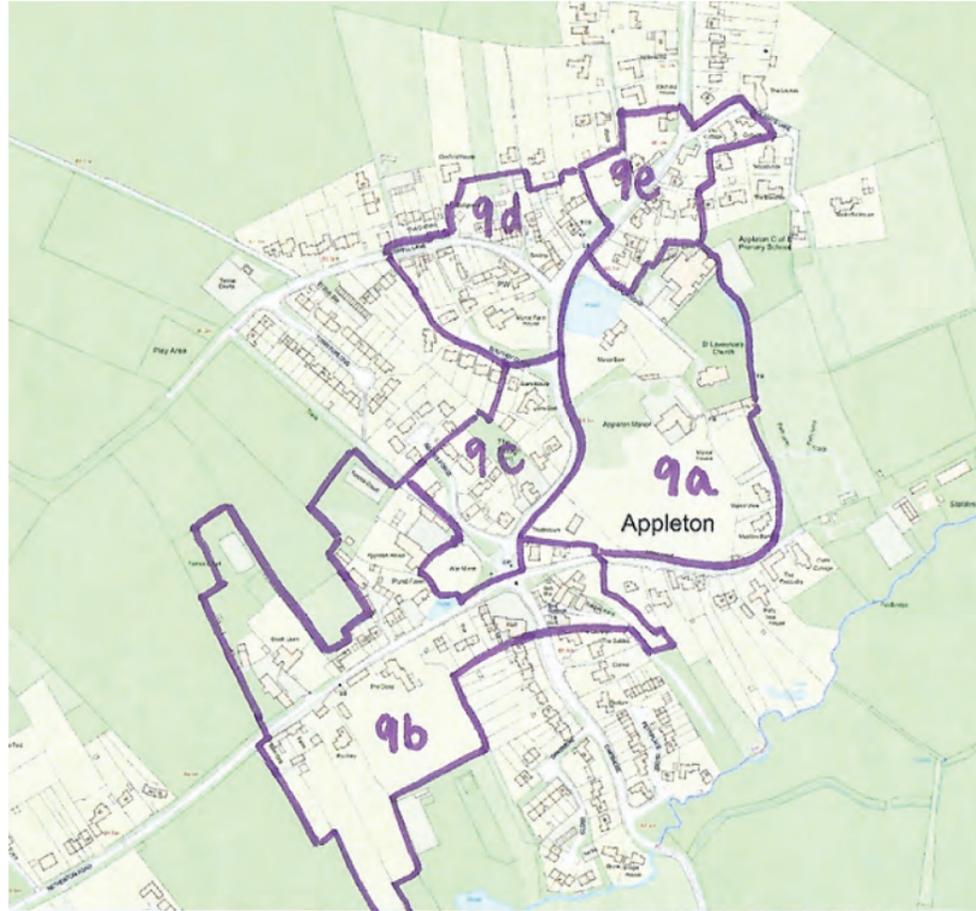
- Church Road to include the church and churchyard (excluding Long Close)/The Manor/Manor Barn/school.
- Netherton Road/Village Hall/beginning of Park Lane/Whites Forge up to South Lawn and barn on the north side and Charity Farm on the south side.
- Eaton Road from the War Memorial north to include Whites Forge, the Plough/Southby Close on both sides of the road.
- Start of Badswell Lane, central part of Eaton Road up to and including the almshouses.
- Englands Lane and the east end of the Conservation Area from the Great Green beyond the almshouses up to Orchard House.



Map 9: Appleton conservation Area
Source: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/09/appleton2.pdf

Map 10: Area 9
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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The results of these assessments are recorded in the appendix and summarised below.

Area 9a: Church Lane

The assessment covered Church Lane including the church and churchyard, the Manor, Manor Barn and the school (excluding Long Close).

The 12th Century Grade 2* listed Appleton Manor and Manor Barn lie at the heart of the Conservation Area. The Manor sits adjacent to the Norman church and the churchyard. Further manor land, including Long Close, lie to the east of the church, churchyard and school. Park Lane borders the southern boundary and Eaton Road lies on the northern boundary.

Church Road leads north from the church grounds, to join Eaton Road with the 1950s Church of England aided school and playground to the east, Manor and Manor Barn grounds and pond to the west.

There is a street light on the east side of Church Road. The road surface is in poor condition.

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- The 12th century Grade 2* listed Manor and Manor Barn along with the Norman church lie at the heart of the Conservation Area.
- Grade 2 listed St Lawrence Church with Norman tower and stone slate roof.
- The Church of England primary school adds a lively note. All in excellent condition.

Spaces

- The Grade 2* listed Manor is in the heart of the Conservation Area.
- The buildings in the part of the Conservation Area all sit within large plots with clear boundaries.

Views

- The views are of the historically important buildings of the Conservation Area. They can be clearly seen and enjoyed by all visiting the village.

Landscaping

- The boundaries are predominantly ivy-covered traditional stone walls. The area is green and leafy and there are a number of mature trees.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- The rural 12th century church, Manor and Manor Barn are the heart of the village. The beautiful and historically charged buildings underpin the overall warm character of the village.
- The church bells and clock ring out to all and the houses and farms have grown up and evolved around them.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- Parking associated with the primary school can be difficult.

Area 9b: Netherton Road/Village Hall/beginning of Park Lane

This area encompasses the War Memorial junction, Village Hall, the top end of Park Lane and Netherton Road to South Lawn. The small greens at the War Memorial border the road junction and a main pedestrian crossing-point in the village. The space is a natural meeting hub, from morning to evening, for those on their way to activities such as the playground, tennis, meetings or clubs in the Village Hall, school, the shop, The Plough Inn or just out walking.

The first 250 metres of Netherton Road leads to what was (from the 16th century to the early 20th century) the western boundary of the village. This short stretch contains the highest density of interesting ancient buildings anywhere in the village.

Map 11: Netherton Road/Village Hall/beginning of Park Lane



Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- Single-storey Village Hall with large gated car park.
- There are 10 listed buildings on this section of Netherton Road, all of which add to the historic character of Appleton village.
- There have been few recent additions to this area.

Spaces

- This area is largely within the Conservation Area.
- It also includes the busy main junction in the village.

Views

- There is a great variety of views from within this area, some of which are man-made like the War Memorial, and some more natural such as the green view along Pigeon Lane (also known as Doctor's Lane).

Landscaping

- There are a large number of mature trees throughout the area. There is also the voluntarily maintained flower bed alongside the War Memorial.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- The space is a natural meeting hub, from morning to evening, for those on their way to activities such as the playground, the tennis, club, meetings or clubs in the Village Hall, school, the shop, the Plough Inn or just out walking.
- This short stretch of road arguably contains the greatest density of interesting ancient buildings in the village.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- There is no safe crossing point over the road for pedestrians and traffic can be busy at this crossing point.



Open space at road junction, small greens, fingerpost, War Memorial, oak tree

Area 9c: Eaton Road/War Memorial/Whites Forge/The Plough Inn/Southby Close

Eaton Road forms part of the main route through the village – a narrow 2-way road with a pavement. The western end of this section of Eaton Road is the site of the original Appleton Green, and some of this open space remains around the War Memorial and on the triangle of grass outside 1 Park Lane.

This section of Eaton Road includes some of the older village buildings including the Manor and the only remaining pub (of the 3 that existed circa 25 years ago).

The two recent infill developments are Whites Forge and Southby Close, built in the 1970s.

The Plough Inn is an important village focal point with high historic and communal value. The pub (together with its car park) is registered as an Asset of Community Value. It is the only remaining public house in Appleton, two others having closed in recent years.

This stretch of Eaton Road forms part of the heart of the village and, although a variably busy thoroughfare, has a number of village landmarks and meeting places. It is well used by pedestrians, especially going to and from school, the church, the pub, the Village Hall and the village shop.

The use of stone as the main building material gives an attractive and coherent feel.

Both Whites Forge and Southby Close have the feel of a small community, generated by the fact that they are both cul-de-sacs.

The Plough Inn fronts directly onto Eaton Road in the heart of the Village Conservation Area.



Across all areas the predominance of green areas of lawn and mature trees and shrubs soften the streetscape, and make each area attractive.

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- The Plough Inn and its garden are an important village hub. The pub and its rear garden provide the only outdoor central venue for village events. The area is predominantly green.
- There is a variety of style and age of buildings, all however are detached.

Spaces

- Space along the road is limited along this narrow section of the road. Properties are set back within their own plots except The Plough Inn which is set on the roadside.

Views

- The view narrows as you travel along the road, enhanced with over hanging trees.
- This area of the village is tightly developed, so views are limited to the immediate vicinity.

Landscaping

- All areas of this part of the village have generous amounts of greenery.
- Eaton Road is flanked by large mature trees and shrubs.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- This section of Eaton Road forms part of the heart of the village.
- Each of the various streets running off Eaton Road has the feel of a small community, largely generated by the fact that they are cul-de-sacs.
- The use of complementary building materials gives the area an attractive and coherent feel.



A meeting in The Plough rear Garden.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- Visibility is restricted by the large bend in Eaton Road.
- Drivers can be impatient towards pedestrians or cyclists using the Oxfordshire Cycleway which runs through the village along Eaton Road and Netherton Road.
- Parking for The Plough Inn is limited and can spill out onto Eaton Road and adjacent streets.

Area 9d: Start of Badswell Lane, central part of Eaton Road up to Almshouses

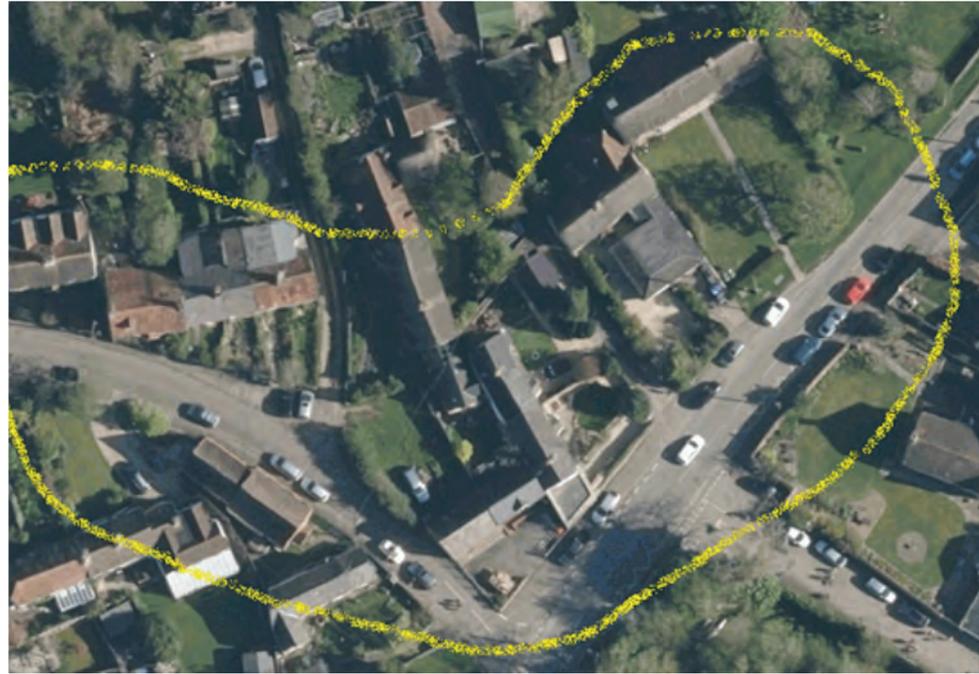
Badswell Lane is one of the oldest parts of the village. It leads to important village facilities, namely the tennis club, the Jubilee Park children's playground and the Bads Well, which has had numerous names over the years including Badgers' Well. The well lies on Green Lane, a public right of way to the Thames at Appleton Landing. Pedestrian access is sometimes granted to Northmoor Lock and the Thames Path along a narrow tarmac road which is maintained by the Environment Agency.

The central part of Eaton Road is the commercial centre of the village and houses the village community shop and some private commercial premises.

There are 7 listed buildings. Of note are Manor Farm, the Old Post Office built in 1690 and Badgewell Cottage which dates from 1706.

This part of the Conservation Area is an important and very active part of the core of the village. It is attractive with a wide but harmonious variety of building styles and materials.

Map 12: Start of Badswell Lane, central part of Eaton Road up to almshouses



Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- There is a variety of buildings, in terms of type, age and materials, providing a rich and diverse built environment.

Spaces

- Badswell Lane houses and cottages are built closely together forming a tight cluster with narrow paths and lanes leading to houses, which are largely outside the Conservation Area.

Views

- Badswell Lane curves dramatically, so views are constantly changing as you make your way along the lane.

Landscaping

- This part of Eaton Road is edged with high hedges, mature trees and some high stone walls.
- Remnants of the Great Green remain. The largest remnant lies to the east of the almshouses and has been restored as an attractive green area with seating.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- This part of Eaton Road is the commercial centre of the village. The very busy and well stocked community shop and post office is here.
- This part of the Conservation Area is a very active part of the core of the village. There is a wide but harmonious variety of building styles and materials.
- Badswell Lane is a closely built and narrow cul-de-sac where the atmosphere abruptly changes to that of peaceful countryside.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- Heavy vehicles cause difficulty and occasional damage to property in Badswell Lane.
- The village shop is partly hidden from the road which may well limit custom from passing trade. Parking is very restricted both for the shop and the village school.
- Not all properties have off-road parking.



Part of Badswell Lane in the Conservation Area with The Old Post Office and terrace of old cottages.



The Parish almshouses - between the Community Shop and a remnant of the Great Green.



Appleton Community Shop in Eaton Road - the heart of the village.



Badgewell Cottage - a listed house built in the late 17th Century.



Wisteria Cottage and Holly Tree Cottage with thatched roof on narrow track off Badswell Lane

Area 9e: Englands Lane, east end of Conservation Area, from Great Green to Orchard House

Englands Lane was historically the drovers' road to Oxford. Now a single track and gravelled cul-de-sac, the far end remains unadopted and is privately maintained. It has no road side parking or passing places. There are seven houses that use the lane, which is lined by very high hedges and mature trees. The first two houses in the lane lie within the Conservation Area.

This part of Eaton Road has mostly detached houses with gardens and has a sharp bend in it. There are four other small gravelled cul-de-sacs leading off the road.

There are 4 listed buildings. Tudor Cottage, The Thatched Tavern, which is a former public house, May Tree Cottage and Yew Tree Cottage.

This is a harmonious part of the village with a good range of mixed housing. Each of the lanes has created a small community of its own which then builds into the larger community of Appleton. Residents group together for some maintenance issues and have created a supportive environment. There is also a strong sense of community cohesion in this part of Eaton Road.



Former Pub – The Thatched Tavern is now a private house.



Yew Tree Cottage - a listed house in the Conservation Area.

Elements from this assessment that we consider enhance the village character are:

Existing buildings

- Listed former public house.
- Houses are built of a mixture of materials; timber, brick, stone, thatch and tile, which are all unique to the time they were built.
- Properties are well spaced with large frontages.

Spaces

- Properties are well spaced with a good degree of privacy.
- Small gravelled lanes run from Eaton Road.

Views

- Views of Englands Lane are of a dark narrow lane with attractive foliage.

Landscaping

- Eaton Road is mostly edged with high hedges and mature trees.
- Gardens are well maintained.

Ambience (Light/shade, noise, smell, spirit of place)

- Like the rest of Appleton there is an eclectic mix of property and building materials, but the organic nature of development means that there is a harmony and strong sense of community to the area.
- Residents appreciate the absence of powerful street lighting.

Elements that potentially detract from the village character are:

- There can be severe parking problems particularly associated with school drop off and pick up times. This can cause access issues for the small residential lanes off Eaton Road especially as there is a very sharp bend.

Conclusions

The features set out below have been identified as those that contribute positively to the character of Appleton with Eaton and to good design in keeping with the nature of the village.

- Future development should demonstrate that consideration has been given to, and responds to, the overall character of the area in terms of existing buildings, spaces, views, landscaping and ambience.
- All development must conserve and enhance the local characteristics of the area within which it is located.
- Views within, as well as out of and into, built up areas are very important to the character of both Appleton and Eaton. Of particular local importance are the views over the Green Belt:
 - a) Over fields at the entrance to the village from all three directions.
 - b) Towards the Thames and over the Thames Valley towards Brize Norton and the Cotswolds and beyond from Eaton Road, Badswell Lane and Millway Lane.
 - c) Over the SSSI at Appleton Common and Appleton Upper Common towards the north west from Millway.
 - d) Towards Tubney Woods to the south from the western end of Netherton Road and Millway Lane
 - e) From Eaton towards the Thames Valley to the north and towards Boars Hill to the south west.
- Retention of the character of the individual areas of the villages is important. Any development should respond to the existing built environment. Consideration must be given to style, density and materials.
- Retention of the character of village overall and conservation of the historic core of the village is important.
- Within, or adjacent to, the historic core of the village:
 - The materials used should complement the traditional materials used in the village and respect traditional building plots, scale, form and materials including techniques and detailing.
 - The variety of styles, design, materials and layout characteristic of the area should be maintained.
 - Buildings should not stand out amongst others and should not be conspicuous.
 - Colour schemes should be subdued and in keeping with surrounding properties.
 - Housing density should be varied and new builds should not press against established buildings.
 - The form and scale of the buildings should reflect the neighbouring properties.

- Plot size and spacing between buildings plots is important, adds to the character of the area and enables views of the adjoining countryside.
- Landscaping and plot boundaries play an important part in distinguishing between properties and the rural environment. Careful consideration should be given to boundary treatments.
- Access to any new development should not create a significant increase in traffic on village back roads.
- Street lights associated with any development should be in keeping with existing street light provision.
- The back roads of the village should be maintained as rural quiet roads with no burden of significant additional traffic due to development to detract from that rural ambience
- Provision of adequate parking: sufficient resident parking should be provided on-plot and should not add any on-street parking burden.
- Better connectivity is needed between the village and the A420 bus routes.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 places good design, the enhancement of local distinctiveness, landscape character and conservation of the natural and historic environment at the heart of sustainable development and good planning in rural areas. It also stresses the importance of retaining and enhancing local character and distinctiveness. The NPPF puts emphasis on the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all who contributed to the production of this document including the provision of photographs.

Appendix: Character assessment templates (Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit)*

* This section is unedited as it has been received from volunteers.

AREA 1

1. The Area

Netherton Road from the end of the Conservation Area to Millway House, including Cheers Farm, the Allotments and houses behind.

2. Context

Netherton Road is the main road through the village from the Netherton direction (southwest), and is a two-way traffic thoroughfare. There is a pavement on one side of the road from Millway Lane to the Village Hall, which was constructed in circa 2005. The road is busy with large farm vehicles at key times in the agricultural year and with commuter traffic in the mornings and the evenings, including the school run. Children cycle to school and it is on a popular route for cycling clubs.

3. Date of assessment

23rd August 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

The road is straight and then curves around Cheers Farm before straightening out again past Millway Lane travelling away from the village. The area is within the 30mph speed limit, but traffic tends to speed up past the Conservation Area, and there is a problem with vehicles travelling too fast. There is no speed limit sign to remind drivers of the 30mph limit as you drive west. There is a 30-mph speed limit sign as you approach the village from Millway Lane.

The road is potholed at the sides. There is limited street lighting, every 200 metres or so. Most houses have driveways and so there is little on-street parking. Where this occurs, cars and vans often park on the pavement, causing an obstruction to pedestrians.

The houses are well spaced out at first, with views across the fields at both sides where hedge height permits. Once past Osse Field, the houses are closer together, usually divided by hedges.

There is a large and well-used area of allotments on the northern side of the road.

b) Buildings

The buildings are varied and mostly post-war with some exceptions namely, Osse Field (a Lutyens house), Millway House (an original farmhouse) and a few Edwardian Villas. The bulk of the housing is ribbon development from the 50s and 60s consisting of bungalows and small detached or terraced houses. Many of these houses have been sympathetically extended in recent years.

The buildings are mostly in good condition and are in a mixture of architectural styles from brick, detached to new large Costwold stone houses, brick terraces and converted chalet/bungalows. Cheers Farm is the only remaining working farm on Netherton Road. It is a modern building with extensive farm buildings to the side and rear.

The frontages mainly face the road with front gardens bordered with hedges or walls. There are some houses set back from Netherton Road along small private access roads.

c) Views

The views across the fields to the north towards the Thames are limited by high hedges and impressive mature trees as well as the slight incline towards the ridge. There are some open views towards woodland to the south but these are largely limited to gaps between the houses. There are a variety of roof levels but none stands out above the others. This standard should be maintained.

d) Greenery & Landscape Features

In spring and summer, the hedgerows are particularly appealing and add to the rural feel of the village. There are some large and impressive horse chestnut trees at the western end. The woods on the southeast side offer colour all year round. Many front gardens have matured ornamental trees and shrubs along with hedges of varying height.

The allotments add to the diversity of the landscape with many well-tended.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

There is generally a light and open feel to Netherton Road and there is not much shade on a bright sunny day. It is possible to see the sunset and sunrise from most gardens.

Street lighting has been reduced and it can feel dark in winter at night.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

There is traffic noise from large agricultural vehicles, and from general traffic, especially in the mornings and evenings. Occasional planes landing at Brize Norton can be heard.

The rural feel of the village is enhanced by the sound of birdsong and farm animals from Cheers Farm. The church bells can be heard ringing.

Farm smells are a feature of rural life particularly during some seasons of the year.

g) Spirit of place

This end of Netherton Road can seem to be on the fringe of the village and there can be a suburban feel to some of the ribbon development of post-war houses. However, Cheers Farm exerts a strong presence reminding one that this is still a rural community.

AREA 2

1. The Area

Millway Lane

2. Context

Millway Lane, like all of the parish, lies in the Green Belt and North Vale area of high landscape value. It is an unmade single-track bridleway and public footpath, used for access to farmland and a few residential properties. It runs for about 3 kilometres from the paved highway Netherton Road near the southwest end of the village towards the Thames where it forms a T junction adjacent to and a short distance from the river. To the southwest this ends at Lower Appleton Common leading into a footpath through the woods. A branch of this footpath emerges part way back up the lane, and the main path continues to the end of the common to join other footpath networks leading to the Thames National Footpath. To the northeast Millway Lane merges into Green Lane which forms part of the footpath network leading to Appleton Landing and the village.

3. Date of assessment

2nd August 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

Millway Lane has no signage, lighting or pavements. Local residents maintain the surface and depend on the lane for access to their properties. Traffic is generally light, used only for access with occasional use by heavy vehicles required for building work. There are always puddles after rain, and dust clouds from vehicles in dry spells.

Building is sparse and in two sections: there is an upper straight stretch with a corner property fronting on Netherton Road, bordered on the lane by a high hedge and ditch and a few properties along the lane with open garden frontages. The lane gently dips for half a kilometre through countryside to a T-junction where a second lower section has detached properties with river frontages set well back in substantial individual grounds. A few are visible from the lane; all have borders of mature hedges and trees along the lane. Some are separated by fields and all have gravel driveways or soft track approaches.

b) Buildings

Along the upper section are 7 detached bungalows built in the 20th century. All are residential, mainly single storey and mostly brick built with one large recently redeveloped stone property. Garden frontages are open to the lane with off road parking. Buildings are well maintained. The brick built 1930s two-storey corner house which partly borders the lane by Netherton Road does not have direct access to the lane.

The properties in the lower section along the Thames were originally small dwellings. Most have been replaced with large individual stone or brick-built houses, all permanently occupied, but some smaller dwellings still remain and are used as temporary retreats. These are maintained to a standard which retains the original character and are in good repair.

c) Views

Views opposite the houses in the upper section of the lane are of farmland and fields which are mostly used for grazing sheep and cattle. Looking north there are wide-reaching views over the countryside. Continuing downhill from here the lane is bordered on both sides by mature native hedgerows and occasional trees, alongside more fields. Towards the T-junction, the lane is bordered on the west by Appleton Lower Common, a woodland SSSI and to the east by more hedgerows with views across farmland.

Along the lower section adjacent to the woodland, the grounds of the larger properties form the NW boundary between lane and riverside, some newly planted with native shrubs and trees, others more mature.

The smaller dwellings to the east are set back in more open fields, just visible through gaps in the hedgerows, and there are glimpses from the lane of the willows by the Thames. The lane continues eastwards with hedgerows and fields on both sides into Green Lane.

d) Greenery & landscape features

The landscape is entirely rural, within the Green Belt, varying from open farmland to more enclosed sections amongst hedgerows and deciduous and mixed woodland. The lane dips down towards the Thames and all the properties have well-maintained gardens or grounds in keeping with the natural surrounds. Although some houses were flooded in 2007, flooding is generally not a problem as the grounds of the riverside properties sit above the flood plain levels.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

There is no street lighting, and some sections are shaded by the woodland. Night skies are dark with no light pollution.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Sounds and smells are largely natural, typical of agricultural land and quite pungent at times. Sounds are often dominated by grazing animals, the calls of wildlife especially foxes, deer, game birds and birds of prey such as kites, buzzards and barn owls.

The lane is a bridleway and sounds of horses are often heard. Traffic noise from the nearby road is minimal and the lane is relatively peaceful.

g) Spirit of place

The most significant features are the adjacent countryside providing peaceful surroundings, an abundance of wildlife and beautiful views of fields and woodlands. It is very popular with dog walkers, horse riders and especially ramblers, providing a choice of footpaths in different directions through woodland and around the village, including access to the Thames National Footpath and beyond. The footpaths sometimes become very muddy and waterlogged after heavy rain. The lane is always accessible despite its rough condition, and as a bridleway, it is in keeping with the character of the landscape.

AREA 3

1. The Area

Netherton Road from Millway to Appleton Upper and Lower Common.

2. Context

Netherton Road is the main thoroughfare from the west of Appleton towards Netherton and the A415.

It lies within the Green Belt and North Vale area of high landscape value. This section includes one Grade 2 listed building and runs through farmland and alongside SSSI woodland.

Two public footpaths lead from the road, one to the south past Field Farm then between Appleton Upper Common and Tubney Woods to the A420, and a second path along the western edge of Appleton Lower Common leading to the Thames and the Thames Path. A branch of this path through the woods links up with the lower end of Millway Lane, which itself merges into the Green Lane path network towards the river at Appleton Landing and the centre of the village.

3. Date of assessment

2nd August 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

This section of Netherton Road is a straight, metalled two lane road with some grass verges and ditches but without pavements, signage or road markings. It is subject to national speed limits. The road provides the only access to Appleton Sportsfield. It is mostly open to the countryside and dips gently down at the western end of the village and winds between the woodlands of Appleton Upper and Lower Commons. Buildings are sparse, residential and mostly detached properties near the road with fields in between. All stand in their own grounds with open garden frontages or, mainly, low hedges; one is visible only when trees are devoid of leaves. A working farm is set back off the road and has paved driveway.

Traffic is generally for access other than when the road is used as a short cut if drivers wish to avoid the A420. Speeding can be a problem on the long straight stretch. There is substantial farm traffic at times.

b) Buildings

At the eastern end there are six properties, well spaced apart, including Millway, a Grade 2 listed house from the early to mid-18th century. It has a thatched roof, limestone walls and brick gable end stack along with sympathetic 20th century extensions. There is one large stone-built property while the others are mainly brick built or rendered in early to mid-20th century suburban style.

An open fronted driveway leads south from the road signed to Field Farm and next to it a rough surfaced single-track road leads to Appleton Sportsfield. A cluster of substantial houses associated with agriculture is visible from the road, as is the Thames Water treatment works. Appleton Sportsfield Pavilion, built in 1993 through a community enterprise, sits on the edge of well-used playing fields and is visible from the road at

certain times of the year depending on crop height and tree foliage. There is one small isolated barn in a field near the road.

At the west end of the Parish is a small cluster of 20th century brick-built houses originally used to accommodate workers at a nearby plant nursery. The former nursery premises are currently being redeveloped for housing.

All properties appear well maintained, some with extensions built in a style and using materials sympathetic with the original.

c) Views

For the most part, there are wide vistas on both sides of the road across open countryside with beautiful views to the north over rolling farmland to the Thames Valley and beyond to wooded estate land in the far distance. Fields are used for both arable farming and grazing. There are well tended boundary verges and hedges with occasional mature trees. Across rolling farmland Appleton Lower Common SSSI woodland is clearly visible to the northwest as are the edges of Appleton Upper Common and Tubney woods to the southeast.

d) Greenery & landscape features

This landscape sits in Green Belt and is entirely rural. All houses have sizeable gardens, many with open frontages, well maintained and informal with a variety of shrubs and trees which are in keeping with the natural surrounds. The road is mainly open to farmland with a more shaded section within woodland at the eastern end near the village. The changing seasons bring a variety of colour especially in the deciduous woodlands.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

Apart from the edge of the village, which is shaded by woodland, the road is mainly open. There is no street lighting and night skies are largely dark with little light pollution.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Sounds and smells are largely natural and typical of agricultural land and grazing animals. Sounds of wildlife include calls of deer, foxes, game birds and birds of prey including kites, buzzards and barn owls.

There is some traffic noise from the A420, depending on wind direction and especially when the trees are dormant in winter.

Sounds also carry from village cricket and football matches with cheering and clapping from supporters. Occasional passing horse riders can be heard.

Smells from Thames Water sewage treatment works.

g) Spirit of place

The sense of being outside the core of the village is enhanced by the scenery and the quality of the rural landscape. This should be preserved. The area is sparsely populated, houses are well spaced and the buildings do not impact on the character of the open countryside. Land is mainly given over to agriculture. There is access to footpaths leading through deciduous woodland and a designated SSSI to the Upper reaches of the Thames National Footpath and a network of paths round Appleton. These are well used and can become muddy and waterlogged after rain. The playing fields are popular across all age groups, providing a valuable amenity for the village

AREA 4

1. The Area

Oaksmere leading to the end of the parish including Horseshoe Close and Fettiplace and houses leading to Tubney Manor Farm.

2. Context

Oaksmere is the main road into the village from the A420 and ends at the T-junction at the village hall/War Memorial. At the junction the road to the right leads to Eaton, the school, shop and church. Netherton Road to the left leads to Fyfield and the A415.

3. Date of assessment

15th and 16th August 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

This assessment considers the area in four sections: The upper section, Horseshoe Close, Fettiplace Close and the Tubney Manor Farm area. The upper section of Oaksmere runs from the village hall to the bridge crossing the Osse Brook. Horseshoe Close is a small late 20th century housing development leading from the western side of the road. Fettiplace Close, a 1980s development, faces the brook. The final section comprises four properties and outbuildings at the edge of the Parish which is referred to as the Tubney Manor Farm area.

There is pavement in the upper section, in Fettiplace Close and in Horseshoe Close but it finishes at the bridge. From there on there is no pavement. Being the main road into the village from the A420, there are reasonable volumes of traffic accessing the school, shop and church. The road is narrow and largely devoid of road markings. There is only room for one vehicle at the bridge over the Osse Brook. The road is especially busy at school arrival and collection times.

Beginning the assessment in the upper area; on the western side the houses are mainly a mix of 20th century, detached and semi-detached properties, some set back from the road behind a wide parking area and pavement. There is one stone property, which was converted from the Three Horseshoes public house in the 1990s. Most properties have garden frontages with hedge or low wall boundaries. On the other side of the road the houses are detached with garden frontages, walls and/or hedges but there is no pavement on this side of the road for most of its length. Parking is all off road.

Horseshoe Close and Fettiplace Close are both quiet cul-de-sacs, with a variety of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties. All have front gardens and largely off-road parking.

Oaksmere continues over the bridge spanning Osse Brook through farmland to the left and a wooded area to the right. Approximately 400m from the bridge on the left is the start of the Tubney Manor Farm area. This comprises four properties, two dating from the 17th century and all of which all have off-street parking.

From the bridge to the Tubney Manor Farm area and continuing to the only village bus stop (66) on the A420, there is no pavement. The road has a national speed limit and is dangerous for pedestrians.

b) Buildings

The houses in the upper section of Oaksmere are largely a mix of 20th century styles. The newer properties are mainly detached, stone with some decorative

red brickwork and with tiled roofs. They have dormer windows complementing the design of the properties in the Conservation Area. The older, semi-detached houses date from the 1930s when they were built by the local authority in the style of the time. They are rendered white with tiled roofs. The former Three Horseshoes public house is stone built. It is unchanged in appearance since its days as a pub and retains the framework of the hanging public house sign.

Houses in the lower part of Oaksmere, Fettiplace Close and Horseshoe Close were built by developers and each area has a distinct but harmonious style of 20th century architecture. There are echoes of architectural design in the Conservation Area, such as the use of dormer windows.

Houses in Horseshoe Close were built by SOHA (South Oxfordshire Housing Association) in the style prevalent at that time.

The four properties in the Tubney Manor Farm area consist of 2 three-storey stone houses dating from the 17th century, and these are similar in style to other properties in the village (Bell Cottage in the Conservation Area and Park Cottage in Park Lane). There are also two newer properties and all sit in substantial plots and many have outbuildings.

c) Views

Within the village, Oaksmere is spacious, light and open helped by the large parking area on one side and open driveways opposite, providing considerable space between the houses on either side of the road. Roofs are at a consistent height and the effect is of a village scene. Views are limited because the area is built up but there are some Green Spaces particularly near the Osse Brook.

The road from the bridge and the entrance to the village towards Tubney Manor Farm and the A420 has hedge and woodland boundaries with narrow grass verges. There are glimpsed views over farmland to the east and into woodland to the west.

d) Greenery & landscape features

The gardens on Oaksmere are well maintained with a mixture of shrubs, hedging, flowers and trees. The Osse Brook flows under a bridge at the entrance to the village. Flood control work has been carried out in recent years.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

There is adequate street lighting in the Upper section of Oaksmere, Fettiplace Close and Horseshoe Close. There is no lighting after the bridge.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

There is noise from traffic using Oaksmere along the upper section. Noise from the A420 can be heard if the wind is in a certain direction, most noticeable in the Tubney Manor Farm area.

There are no noticeable smells within the main housing area of Oaksmere. However, the properties leading to Tubney Manor Farm are sometimes subject to farmyard smells.

g) Spirit of place

Oaksmere comprises an eclectic mix of property styles constructed over many centuries. Despite this, there is a coherence between the buildings provided by the frequent use of stone with red brick decoration and the use of dormer windows.

The road is very green as it contains many trees, hedges, shrubs and vegetation. The majority of houses have attractive front gardens which enhance the views and feeling of the area.

AREA 5

1. The Area

Badswell Lane, beyond the Conservation Area, and Town Furlong.

2. Context

Badswell Lane is a no through road, just wide enough for two cars to pass, with a pavement on the left side. There are houses on both sides. It leads to the Thames via a bridleway and also to the road to Northmoor Lock, the Tennis Club, Jubilee Park playground and another bridleway to the War Memorial.

Town Furlong branches off to the left at the end of Badswell Lane and is of similar width. It has pavements on both sides of the road.

The Thames bridleway, now known as Green Lane, has an ancient well part way down, once thought to have medicinal properties. It also has an area where goods for the village used to be landed from barges, and connects with Millway Lane and thus to Rainbow Bridge. It is very popular for walking.

3. Date of assessment

7th August 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

Badswell Lane is a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached houses, mostly built in the 20th century. There are no gaps.

Town Furlong is a cul-de-sac comprising 27 semi-detached houses and flats built by the local authority in 1962. They are now mostly owner-occupied and many have been extended in a style and using materials sympathetic with the original.

Some houses in both roads have driveways and garden sizes are varied. There is a row of 14 garages backing onto Town Furlong. However, there is much on-road parking in both roads leading to considerable congestion.

The Jubilee Park and the Tennis Club sit next to one another at the end of Badswell Lane. Both are very well used.

b) Buildings

The houses in Badswell Lane are mainly conventional two-storey houses in a mixture of brick, stone and artificial stone and varied styles. There are also three bungalows. They were largely built as a series of small developments over the 20th century. The Orchard, one of these developments, is partially hidden behind a high beech hedge. Vehicular access to the 5 houses in the Orchard and to three other houses is via a common driveway to the rear.

Town Furlong is all built with the same type of brick, in vernacular local authority style of the time and nearly all are semi-detached with some flats. However, they have diverged in style somewhat as extensions have been added. The front gardens of some have been turned into driveways.

c) Views

The view down Badswell Lane is of houses on the left and high hedges on the right. As you go down the lane you can see driveways and well-maintained gardens. At the end of the lane you can see the tennis courts.

Beyond them the lane becomes a bridleway and you see the playground and just beyond that, from a gateway, you can see right across the Thames Valley.

The view of Town Furlong from the end of Badswell Lane is of low brick walls with hedges, shrubs, small trees and fairly densely packed houses.

Occasional public access is allowed to the private road leading to Northmoor Lock and the Thames Path, from which wonderful views across the Thames Valley can be seen. You can also make out the Berkshire Downs and White Horse Hill.

d) Greenery & landscape features

There is green verge on the right of side of Badswell Lane with hedges. Some of the hedges have grown into small trees. There are also some larger trees. In front of the tennis courts there are two very large handsome mature trees.

Town Furlong has a small area of grass with two small trees. Many houses have hedges and there are shrubs and small trees. The bridleway running parallel with it, known as Pigeon Lane, is bounded on the other side by many tall mature trees.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

Badswell Lane runs East to West, and having few large trees, has little shade. Street lighting is adequate and operates until midnight.

Town Furlong also has little shade and adequate street lighting until midnight. Pigeon Lane is mostly shaded by the tall trees and is largely unlit.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Badswell Lane is generally quiet. As the only vehicular access to the campsite at the Lock, the Tennis Club, the playing field and to adjacent farmland, significant traffic is generated at times and it can be quite noisy. This is particularly so when large agricultural contractors' vehicles and trailers use Badswell Lane carting grain or silage, having to squeeze past parked cars and sometimes driving on the grass verges. Sometimes the road gets splattered with mud from tractor tyres, and slurry carting can be rather smelly!

There is regular noise from military aircraft from Brize Norton.

g) Spirit of place

Badswell Lane and Town Furlong are quite attractive and very pleasant places to live. There is a wide range of ages amongst their inhabitants, and a good community spirit. They are conveniently placed for access to the school, the church and the shop in one direction, and the village hall in the other. They have easy access to the playground and tennis courts, and to the countryside via Green Lane for walks. Sadly, access to the lock, and the Thames towpath on the other side of the river, is now severely restricted.

Badswell Lane is much used by pedestrians. The narrowness of the road and parked cars cause traffic to slow and can present considerable problems to very large vehicles.

Parking problems in Town Furlong and Badswell Lane are often caused by visitors to Jubilee Park and junior tennis club coaching at the Tennis Club.

AREA 6

1. The Area

Eaton Road from Orchard House to the end of the village and the areas of Englands Lane that sit outside the Conservation Area.

2. Context

This section of Eaton Road is a single carriageway bordered mainly by individual dwellings and agricultural farmland, one of three main access routes to the village, providing access to and from Eaton and Cumnor. Englands Lane is a relatively short, partly adopted, single no-through gravel track, providing access to a small number of individual dwellings.

3. Date of assessment

August 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

While Eaton Road is one of the main routes into and out of the village, traffic is not particularly problematical in terms of volume or noise; this is a reflection of the generally quiet and residential nature of the area. White's Bellhangers and WG Carter Limited necessitate deliveries or collections by large lorries, but the frequency is low.

The eastern side of this section of Eaton Road is a continuous ribbon development at the eastern end of the village, consisting of mainly detached two- and single-storey dwellings on regular and uniformly sized plots. The roadway is bordered with grass verges with a footpath and properties are set well back from the roadway with a variety of well-established front gardens, with mature boundary hedges. There is a small, gated access to agricultural land set behind the houses. Open fields and woods can be seen through the gaps between the houses

The low impact of traffic, the footpath and its verge make this side of the road safe for pedestrians, including children, who are able to walk along this side of Eaton Road to school, the shop and the church.

The western side of the road is bordered for about half the length of this section by hedges and a drainage ditch with gated access to farm buildings at the edge of the village. The remainder of the western side has a mixture of business (White's Bellhangers & WG Carter Limited Builders) and residential buildings. White's Bellhangers is fronted by a hardstanding space for car and lorry parking; WG Carter Limited is accessed via a gravel lane bordered by residential buildings. Houses have large, well-established front gardens. Again, rural landscapes can be glimpsed between buildings. Beyond the houses at the end of Eaton Road there are farm buildings and, at a further distance, a modern detached house standing in its own ground some 200m from other buildings.

There is some limited street lighting and one post box. There is little on-street parking as all dwellings and the businesses have adequate off-street driveways. At the edge of the village the road is crossed by overhead power lines, with a pylon only 10 metres from the roadway – unusually this is sited within the garden of the last property on the east side of Eaton Road. Englands Lane partly borders the Conservation Area and is a gravel track bordered by mature deciduous and conifer trees leading to small

number of larger detached properties set behind Eaton Road. Views are limited due to the tall hedges. It provides on-foot access to a field owned by Appleton Manor. There is no street lighting.

b) Buildings

Most houses appear to have been built in the mid-20th century on generous and mainly uniformly-sized plots with tiled roofs with a mixture of brick and render walls. They have established gardens and driveways that mean houses are set back from the road. A notable characteristic is that all houses are individual in style; the buildings along the road having been built up over time, with no two houses the same. Extensions and renovations have been in character with original properties.

Two long standing family businesses – White's of Appleton Bellhangers (established 1824) and WG Carter Limited Builders (established 1947) occupy sites on the west side of Eaton Road (WG Carter Limited is set back behind other houses). Each business occupies buildings built in sympathetic materials (stone with tiled roofs) and are on a scale that do not dominate. Both businesses are long standing and while small, offer employment and training opportunities; White's undertake work all over the country for both small and large clients (e.g. St Paul's Cathedral)

Two new houses adjacent to WG Carter Limited have been constructed with high quality materials that blend in quite well with existing development. They are on a larger scale than others on Eaton Road.

Englands Lane: there are a small number of detached properties outside the Conservation Area – again of individual style. One house was completed in recent years in sympathetic materials and of very modern design set in mature grounds; other earlier, mainly 20th century, properties here have tiled roofs with brick or rendered walls.

c) Views

Looking to the north towards Eaton, this section of Eaton Road is largely straight before it bends to the right by the farm at the exit from the village. Visibility along the road itself is good and with a mixture of hedgerows, agricultural land and established property, it has an attractive countryside feel.

From the other end of this section, looking to the south, the view leads into the village and gives a good sense of the character of the place.

Views over the fields can be glimpsed through the farm access gates. To the western side the agricultural land dips away towards the River Thames and, when the hedgerow is cut back and there are no crops, views are possible across to Brize Norton on the edge of the Cotswolds.

While Englands Lane is bordered by hedges, there are some more open sections with views of woodland.

d) Greenery & landscape features

The gardens fronting Eaton Road are generally mature and well established with a mixture of different varieties of boundary hedging, some mature trees and a few walls. Grass verges are well maintained.

The hedgerow that borders the agricultural land on the eastern side is well established.

Englands Lane is bordered by mature mixed hedging and very tall mature deciduous trees.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

On Eaton Road, there is an open feel as properties are set well back from the roadway, with no light restrictions and an even balance of light and shade throughout the day. Street lighting is very limited so at night there is a lot of natural darkness.

On Englands Lane the hedging and very tall trees provide a high degree of shade to parts of this narrow lane, even on well sunlit days. With no street lighting it is quite dark at night time.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Hedgerows, woodland, trees and agricultural land give rise to a large amount of natural countryside noise – birdsong, wind in the trees, wildlife noise, particularly at night.

Traffic noise is generally light - the low traffic flow makes this an extremely popular route for local cycling clubs. There is occasional farm machinery traffic at planting and harvest time. There is frequent but non-intrusive domestic noise such as lawn mowers and hedge-cutters.

There are occasional agricultural smells, and occasional bonfires.

There is no disturbance from the bell hangers' workshop or the builders.

g) Spirit of place

A peaceful (despite being one of the main routes in and out of the village) and pleasant area. This section leads on into the village and provides a sense of the character of the village. There is a sense of it being a friendly and welcoming area with a feeling of community. This is created by the individual character of the houses and that they have grown up organically over the years. The pathway also contributes to this.

The businesses contribute to the sense of community because of their size and the way their character is embedded in the village.

The presence of and access to open fields and countryside in general provides openness and a sense of being embedded in the countryside.

Englands Lane is more rural and quiet; because the houses are more separated by the high hedges, there is more of a closed in feeling.

AREA 7

Park Lane

1. The Area

Park Lane is a narrow single-track cul-de-sac, with no pavement, running from Oaksmere to Long Close, a field with important rights of way leading to Besselsleigh Wood, St Laurence Churchyard and Tubney Manor Farm. It is one of the oldest roads in the village with houses originally built for agricultural labourers.

2. Context

10th July 2017

3. Date of assessment

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

Houses are mainly two- or three-storey, detached and built within quite narrow plots with little space between them. They mostly have front gardens and driveways so that cars are mainly off road.

No bins are visible. Street lighting is very limited; there is one street light half way down the lane. There is no signage and there are no road markings on the lane. There is little traffic other than for access and the ambience is very quiet along the whole length of the lane.

4. Relevant elements

b) Buildings

Houses are built in a variety of architectural styles and in a mix of timber, brick and stone.

The oldest houses date back to the 17th Century and there is a house built in nearly every decade over the past century. The agricultural heritage is preserved with old farm buildings at the end of the lane. There is one very modern and eco-friendly house completed in 2016. High quality building materials predominate. One old cottage sits within the Conservation Area.

The houses have few visible alterations. Many have been modernised and extended using materials sympathetic to the original building.

c) Views

Park Lane curves gently to the east along the southern edge of the Conservation Area skirting the southern boundary of the Manor grounds.

The view unfolds as one walks down the gentle incline.

The lane ends in Long Close, pastureland which is owned and maintained by the Manor and planted with heritage fruit trees. Long Close gives onto Besselsleigh Woods and public footpaths run across it to the woods, St Laurence's Churchyard and Tubney Manor Farm.

d) Greenery & landscape features

The Lane has green edges; it is bounded by trees, high hedges and garden walls. Gardens are in a traditional cottage garden style.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

Much of one edge is formed of green verges, mixed hedging and large established trees which provide shade in parts of the lane. Other parts are brighter and more sunlit. The effect is one of a pleasant, quiet country village lane.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Background sounds are largely natural: wind in the trees and birdsong. There is some traffic noise from the A420 if the wind is in the wrong direction.

g) Spirit of place

This is a very attractive lane with a wide but harmonious variety of building styles and materials.

There is certain coherence of style. Some of the boundary walls adjoining the lane are formed of the remains of earlier buildings and are built of local stone.

The houses are built quite close together and the sense of community is enhanced by the mainly low front walls.

AREA 8

Eaton is a hamlet based on the Charter of 968 AD awarding the land and Manor to Abingdon Abbey.

1. The Area

Eaton is an agricultural area enclosed within the Thames to the west, a stream to the east, ditches running from Hengrove, to the Thames and the stream to the east and another ditch flowing from Cuts' End to the Thames on the northern side.

2. Context

The straight road from Appleton divides at a T-junction. Eaton village lies on the west facing road which travels downhill through the village to Bablock Hythe where there was a ferry for many centuries until it ceased in the 1970s.

28th August 2017

3. Date of assessment

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

The hamlet of Eaton comprises 2 farmhouses, 1 public house (the Eight Bells), 14 semi-detached and 10 detached properties. Most houses are set back from the road and reasonably well spaced with garden frontages with low walls or boundary hedges. There is a Cotswold stone bus shelter but no bus service. Most houses have off-street parking and bins are not generally visible.

4. Relevant elements

The road through the village is narrow and subject to a 30mph speed limit. There is no pedestrian footway and there are limited grass verges.

b) Buildings

5 of the houses and 1 barn carry Grade 2 listed status. The older houses and most of the garden walls are built of Corallian stone (Cumnor Rag) with some decorative red brick features. The more recently built properties are mainly rendered.

c) Views

The view along the straight road from Appleton is of high hedges on both sides with glimpses of extensive views towards Boars Hill to the east and the river valley to the west. Village houses on the north side of the road have extensive views towards the Cotswolds.

In Eaton the road gently slopes down through the village around some winding bends before meandering down to the Thames where hedges border grassland fields on each side. There are National Grid pylons and wires between the village and the river.

d) Greenery & landscape features

Gardens in the village are mainly of a cottage style, well maintained with a variety of trees and shrubs. At the T-junction there is an area of allotments of which about half appear cultivated.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

The commemorative trees planted on the south side of the road coming into the village bring character but do not encroach upon the road. They cut some sunlight to the road during the winter. Street lighting is limited and the night sky is quite dark.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Background sounds are mainly natural but there is noise associated with agriculture and low flying aircraft at times.

There can be agricultural smells from the dairy herd at Manor Farm.

g) Spirit of place

Eaton is a well-structured hamlet with a mixture of dwellings providing accommodation for commuters, retirees and agricultural workers. The houses are generally built adjacent to the road within adequately sized plots without being too far apart. The Eight Bells is well used both by villagers and visitors and has its own parking.

AREA 9A

Church Lane include church and churchyard, (excluding Long Close)/the Manor/Manor Barn/school

1. The Area

This is the heart of the Conservation Area.

2. Context

September 2017

3. Date of assessment

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

The 12th century Grade 2* listed Manor and Manor Barn lie at the heart of the village in the Conservation Area. The Manor sits adjacent to the Norman Church and churchyard. Further Manor land, including Long Close, lies to the east of the church, churchyard and school. Park Lane borders the southern boundary and Eaton Road lies on the northern boundary.

4. Relevant elements

Church Lane leads north from the Church grounds to join Eaton Road with the 1950s Church of England aided school and playground to the east and Manor and Manor Barn grounds and pond to the west.

There is a street light on the east side of Church Lane. The road surface is in poor condition.

b) Buildings

The 12th century Grade 2* listed Manor is an important and well documented historical building constructed of traditional stone and stone slate roof. Manor Barn, now a house restored from the remaining half of the old village tythe barn and Manor cottages are of the same traditional stone with red slate rooves.

The Grade 2 listed St Laurence Church is constructed of the same 12th century stone with Norman tower and stone slate roof to the north and more recently restored red tile roof to the south linking to the 19th century red slates of the Manor cottages.

The school and garages to the east of Church Lane are mid-20th century with more recent, early 21st century additions which have been built in former Manor land. The traditional old stone walls continue to act as a link bordering the school, the churchyard, Manor Barn grounds and Manor grounds around Church Lane and Eaton road evoking the old footprint of the ancient medieval Manor.

The school is set back.

Red brick additions have raised the height of the walls on the west side of Church Lane and this wall height is picked up in the 20th century wall at the northern end of Church Lane where there lies a 20th century house on the corner of Eaton Road and Church Lane with a high red brick boundary wall and modern garages.

All buildings are in excellent condition.

The predominance of the boundaries are traditional stone walls covered in ivy and green and leafy with mature trees and shrubs.

c) Views

The Church sits within its churchyard at the south end of Church Lane with its 12th century tower and clock, a landmark of the village next to the ancient Manor and Manor cottages. The northern churchyard boundary abuts the school playground.

The Manor vegetable garden walls lie to the west of Church Lane affording glimpses of the Manor. The remains of the fallen part of the old tythe barn and Manor Barn grounds can be spied through the shrubs. To the east, the school and churchyard are open to view across the walls.

d) Greenery & landscape features

There are many mature trees in the Manor grounds and Manor Barn garden which give a leafy, green, rural character to the centre of the village. The old village pond is visible through the shrubbery. The imposing mature Irish Yew on the eastern side of the churchyard forms a border to Long Close.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

The trees umbrella over Eaton Road giving shade and atmosphere and there are a number of mature trees across the churchyard. The northeastern side of Church Lane has no shade.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

The sounds of children playing can be caught daily from the school during term time. The church clock chiming on the half and full hour and the 10 bells ringing for services and practises and visiting peals provide a heartbeat to the village.

Occasional odours from farming fertilisers can be detected.

g) Spirit of place

The rural 12th century Church and Manor and Manor barn are the heart of the village. The beautiful and historically charged buildings underpin the overall warm character of the village with their Cotswold stone and stone slate roof tiles.

It is a hub of activity with the modern school sitting alongside and altogether they provide a strong central, treasured core to the community. The church clock and bells ring out to all, and the houses and farms have grown up and evolved around them.

AREA 9B

War Memorial junction, Village Hall, top end Park Lane, Netherton Road to South Lawn.

1. The Area

One of the two “centres” of the village.

2. Context

2nd August 2017

3. Date of assessment

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

This area lies largely within the Conservation Area. It includes the village’s main road junction, 5 metalled roads and a green lane.

The junction occupies a large open space - formerly the commercial centre of the village, which had the bakery, grocer’s, blacksmith, petrol station/workshop and woodyard. That space is now occupied by the Village Hall, the War Memorial with a memorial oak, a duckpond and a small green with a fingerpost.

Netherton Road leads southwest towards Appleton Common, Netherton and Fyfield. Eaton Road leads northeast to pub, village shop, church, Eaton and Cumnor. Oaksmere is the main access from the village south to the A420 trunk road.

b) Buildings

The single-storey Village Hall (1980s) is fronted by a large, gated car park behind a low stone wall.

There are ten listed buildings on this section of Netherton Road: Appleton House (an 18th century Rectory) and nine other residential properties (16th – 18th century) and timber-framed barns. All have been extensively renovated and modernised in recent years in a style and using materials compatible with their listed status.

Since early 20th century, the only new buildings in the area have been: 3 detached houses of artificial stone (1970s - artificial stone) at the top of Park Lane on the site of the old bakery and grocery store, a re-build of the Village Hall following a fire in 1980s, a group of rendered houses built by the local authority in the mid-20th century and a group of 4 brick houses (2010s - brick) on a former farmyard.

c) Views

There is a great variety of man-made and natural structures: vertical surfaces of natural stone, artificial stone, painted render, timber-frame and red brick. Roofs are mostly of stone, concrete or clay slates. Netherton Road has a small group of thatched cottages and barns on both sides.

There is unrestricted on-street parking. Not all properties have off-road parking available. Road edges are of unkerbed grass, kerbed pedestrian pavement (which changes side twice on Netherton/Eaton Roads), high and low stone walls and a railed-off duck pond. No bins are visible.

4. Relevant elements

A much-used green lane, Pigeon Lane leads to the Jubilee Park children's playground and bridleway access to river Thames.

An orchard is visible behind houses to north-west of Netherton Road. Further along, the first view of open countryside is pasture west of South Lawn's barn. Other vistas nearby are down Oaksmere, Park Lane and Pigeon Lane (also known as Doctor's Lane)

d) Greenery & landscape features

Many large mature trees are visible throughout the area, on-road verges or private land behind walls and fences. As in the rest of the village, the area is lavishly decorated with overhead electricity cables.

Flowerbeds are voluntarily maintained at the War Memorial and the adjacent site of the former bus stop.

Low, winter sunsets are often visible along the Netherton Road.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

All public pedestrian spaces in the area, except Pigeon Lane, are adequately lit day and night in all weathers.

Netherton and Eaton Roads are part of Oxfordshire Cycleway. The road surface is very poorly maintained and full of deep cracks and potholes, invisible to cyclists in poor weather and at night.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

The area is generally quiet except for distant traffic noise from the A420. There is a moderate increase in traffic during commuter hours, particularly in term time.

In certain seasons, large agricultural vehicles pass through the area, sometimes at incautious speeds.

This area and village as a whole lie directly in line with the main runway at Oxford Airport and close to Brize Norton. Current developments may increase the number of overhead flights.

g) Spirit of place

The small greens at the War Memorial border the road junction and a main pedestrian crossing point in the village. The space is a natural meeting hub, from morning to evening, for those on their way to activities such as playground, tennis, pre-school, meetings or clubs in the village hall, school, the shop, the Plough or just out walking.

The first 250 metres of Netherton Road lead to what was (16th – early 20th century) the western boundary of the village. This short stretch arguably contains the highest density of interesting ancient buildings anywhere in the village.

AREA 9C

Eaton Road - War memorial to Southby Close, including Whites Forge and The Plough.

1. The Area

Eaton Road forms part of the main route through the village – a narrow 2-way road with a pavement. The western end of this section of Eaton Road is the site of the original Appleton Green, and some of this open space remains around the war memorial and on the triangle of grass outside 1 Park Lane.

2. Context

This section of Eaton Road includes some of the older village buildings including the Manor and the only remaining pub (of the 3 that had existed circa 25 years ago).

The two recent infill developments are Whites Forge and Southby Close, built in the 1970s.

The Plough Inn is an important village focal point.

21st and 25th August 2017

3. Date of assessment

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

Eaton Road – The start of Eaton Road has an “open” feeling, with remnants of the Green and the junctions with Oaksmere, Pigeon Lane (Doctor's Lane) and Whites Forge. It narrows as it progresses and bends quite sharply to the left as it approaches Southby Close.

4. Relevant elements

Eaton Road - North side. Apart from the house fronting on to the beginning of Eaton Road (actually 1 Park lane) which is enclosed by a new stone wall, the entire length of this side of Eaton Road consists of old stone wall, backed by mature trees and shrubs. There is one break in the wall, with attractive large wooden gates at the Manor driveway. Most of this wall encloses the Manor grounds and a house whose driveway is on Park Lane (and is barely visible from road, being set well back). The old wall continues beyond the Manor drive up to the gates for Manor Barn.

Eaton Road – South side. Progressing along Eaton Road there are a number of detached buildings, surrounded by medium-sized gardens, and bordered by stone wall, hedge and metal post and rail fence.

The Plough Inn public house borders directly onto the pavement, with a small garden to the front, a large garden and play area to the rear and a small tarmac area with quite limited parking to one side.

A good pavement runs along this side of the road, but narrows considerably on the bend.

Street lighting on Eaton Road is only “adequate” but perhaps suitably so for the village location.

Traffic along this stretch of road is variable, but can be very busy during certain times of the day, or if there is a jam on the parallel A420.

Parking along this stretch of road is not generally a problem, except when there is a major event at the school, or (more frequently) overflow from the pub car park at busy times.

Whites Forge - A wide and open entrance to this cul-de-sac is flanked on one side by a grassed area with trees. Most of the houses are not visible from Eaton Road, and can only be seen on rounding the bend into the development. The buildings are attractive, detached houses built in modern stone, fronted by open, grassy front gardens. A pavement runs around the cul-de-sac. Traffic is limited.

Southby Close - Similar to Whites Forge, the entrance is flanked by a small Green Space. Detached houses with open front gardens run up the south and west sides of the cul-de-sac, whilst the northern side mainly forms the boundary with Manor Farmhouse and is fenced with mature trees and shrubs behind and in front. There is a pavement on the side with houses and traffic is limited.

b) Buildings

The south side of Eaton Road has a variety of buildings of various ages built of stone and brick. All are detached. Three notable buildings are clearly visible from the road:

3 Eaton Road has a 3 storey, early 19th century, façade with sash windows.

The Plough Inn public house, built of stone, looks barely changed from centuries ago – although modernised internally, there have been few external alterations. Within the pub grounds, forming part of the boundary with the adjacent house, is a line of stone and wood outhouses, housing the loos and accommodation.

The house on the bend of Eaton Road is unusual for a house of that age in this area, being built of brick.

The houses in Whites Forge are architecturally similar, all but one having been built by a single developer in the 1970s. They are constructed from stone, with casement windows.

One house in Whites Forge is converted from a small barn, constructed of stone and timber boarding. Southby Close, also built by a single developer, has houses mainly of similar style and chiefly of brick construction.

c) Views

At the start of Eaton Road there is an open vista with a view of the surrounding buildings and the War Memorial. The view narrows as you travel along the road with trees overhanging, with new buildings appearing as you round the bend beyond the pub.

The view into Whites Forge from Eaton Road gives little indication of the extent of housing. Most of Southby Close can be seen from Eaton Road.

This area of the village is built up and so views are limited to the immediate vicinity.

d) Greenery & landscape features

All areas of this part of the village have generous amounts of “greenery”. Eaton Road is flanked by large mature trees and shrubs on the one side and gardens on the other.

The Plough Inn has a small lawned garden at the front, and a much larger garden at the rear with play area used by families and for village events.

Whites Forge and Southby Close have a number of trees and all the houses have open garden frontages. The entrance to Whites Forge is flanked on one side by an area of grass and trees.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

In the late morning, on a sunny day, some shade is provided on Eaton Road by the mature trees in the Manor grounds.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

There is a huge variation in the noise levels during the course of the day. At quiet times, when there is little traffic, the predominant noise is birdsong. During “rush hour” or when Eaton Road is being used as a short cut for the A420 there can be significant traffic noise, especially at the junction of Eaton Road and Oaksmere. During harvest, there can be significant noise from fleets of tractors running through the village.

There is intermittent, but often very intrusive, noise from air traffic in and out of Brize Norton.

Smells are as you would expect from a village surrounded by cultivated farmland – sometimes a little pungent!

g) Spirit of place

This stretch of Eaton Road forms part of the heart of the village and, although a variably busy thoroughfare, has a number of village landmarks and meeting places. It is well used by pedestrians, especially going to and from school, the church or the village shop.

The use of stone as the main building material gives an attractive and coherent feel.

Both Whites Forge and Southby Close have the feel of a small community, generated by the fact that they are cul-de-sacs.

Across all areas the predominance of green areas of lawn and mature trees and shrubs soften the streetscape and make each area attractive.

AREA 9D

1. The Area

The northwest corner of the Appleton Conservation Area encompassing the lower part of Badswell Lane and the central part of Eaton Road.

2. Context

Badswell Lane is one of the oldest parts of the village. It leads to important village facilities, namely the Tennis Club, the Jubilee Park children's playground and the Roman Badgers' Well which lies in the Green Lane, a public right of way to the Thames at Appleton Landing. There is also an occasional permissive footpath to the Northmoor Lock along a narrow tarmac road which is maintained by the Environment Agency.

The central part of Eaton Road is the commercial centre of the village and houses the village community shop and some private commercial premises.

There are 7 listed buildings. Of note are Manor Farmhouse, the Old Post Office built in 1690 and Badswell Cottage which dates from 1706.

3. Date of assessment

17th July 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

In Badswell Lane houses and cottages are built closely together forming a tight cluster with narrow paths and lanes leading to houses behind which are largely outside the Conservation Area. Frontages are either open or have low stone wall boundaries with flower filled cottage gardens. There is a variety of buildings, some very old, some newer, some thatched and some tiled with nothing that detracts from the cohesive whole. This should continue to be the case.

Badswell Lane is narrow - slightly wider than single track. There is limited off-street parking so the Lane can be crowded with parked cars. There is considerable farm traffic and also vehicles associated with the campsite, particularly in the summer.

The part of Eaton Road covered here has a more open aspect. Properties are more widely spaced with larger frontages. The houses are of mixed vintage ranging from the almshouses built in the 16th century to late 20th century development.

There is a lot of activity around the community shop and post office which sells local produce and everyday essentials welcoming customers from near and far. Thames river boaters and campers are welcome visitors.

b) Buildings

Houses in Badswell Lane and this part of Eaton Road are built of a mix of materials - timber, brick, stone, thatch and tile. Houses are in a good state of repair with most having been extended and modernised. This has been done in ways which are sympathetic with the style and materials used in the original building

c) Views

Badswell Lane curves fairly sharply and access can be difficult owing to the sharpness of the bend and narrow or no pavements. Access and parking can be problematic at times.

The area of Eaton Road covered here forms part of the main thoroughfare through the village and traffic can be quite heavy during busy periods in the morning and evening particularly coinciding with school times. Parking can be difficult. The Oxford Cycle Route runs through the village using Eaton Road and Netherton Road.

d) Greenery & landscape features

This part of Eaton Road is edged with high hedges, mature trees and some high stone walls. There are seasonal views of Manor Barn. Houses are largely obscured from the road except the historic almshouses which are clearly visible behind a low hedge.

Remnants of the Great Green remain. The largest remnant lies to the east of the almshouses and has been restored as an attractive green area with seating. Badswell Lane has an uneven building line which is an essential part of its charm. The dominant features are its narrowness and the cottage gardens

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day in both areas. There is standard street lighting in this part of the village, which is turned off in the late evening. This contributes to the dark sky, which is valued by residents.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Badswell Lane is a cul-de-sac with no through access apart from farming vehicles and occasional access to a local campsite. Other than during occasional periods of very heavy traffic the atmosphere is peaceful and birdsong is often heard. Eaton Road is the main thoroughfare for traffic through the village. It is also busy with pedestrians walking to and from the village shop, school and church.

g) Spirit of place

This part of the Conservation Area is an important and very active part of the core of the village. It is attractive with a wide but harmonious variety of building styles and materials

AREA 9E

1. The Area

The northeast corner of the Appleton Conservation Area encompassing Englands Lane (within the Conservation Area) and the central/eastern end of Eaton Road.

2. Context

Englands Lane was historically the drovers' road to Oxford. Now a single track and gravelled cul-de-sac, the far end remains unadopted and privately maintained. It has no road side parking or passing places. There are seven houses that use the lane, which is lined by very high hedges and mature trees. The first two houses in the lane lie within the Conservation Area.

This part of Eaton Road has mostly detached houses with gardens and has a sharp bend in it. There are four other small gravelled cul-de-sacs leading off the Road.

There are 4 listed buildings. Tudor Cottage, Thatched Tavern House which is a former public house, May Tree Cottage and Yew Tree Cottage.

3. Date of assessment

21st August 2017

4. Relevant elements

a) Spaces: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

In Englands Lane houses and cottages are well spaced, two properties are 17th century and in the Conservation Area, one is listed.

The part of Eaton Road covered here has a more open aspect. Properties are more widely spaced with larger frontages. The houses are of mixed vintage ranging from the listed former pub and two 17th century cottages to late 20th century development. Running off this part of Eaton Road are four small gravelled lanes which lead to 20th century developments each of three or four houses.

There are severe problems with parking in this area, particularly at school times. There are problems maintaining access to the lanes at these times and they present traffic dangers, especially as the bend in Eaton Road is sharp.

b) Buildings

Houses in the Conservation Area of Englands Lane and this part of Eaton Road are built of a mix of materials: timber, brick, stone, thatch and tile. Houses are generally in a good state of repair and most have been extended and modernised. This has been done in ways which are sympathetic with the style and materials used in the original building. On Englands Lane each house is a good architectural example of the era in which was built.

c) Views

Englands Lane is a narrow dark lane with very attractive foliage, which meets overhead in part of it. Access can be problematic at times. The other access lanes off Eaton Road are also narrow, but have less mature trees. There is no street lighting on any of these lanes.

This area of Eaton Road forms part of the main thoroughfare through the village and traffic can be quite heavy during busy periods in the morning and evening particularly coinciding with school times. Parking can be difficult. The Oxford Cycle Route runs through the village using Eaton Road and Netherton Road.

d) Greenery & landscape features

This part of Eaton Road is mostly edged with high hedges, and has mature trees. There are many mature and well-tended gardens with a variety of roses and other shrubs. Most houses have a good degree of privacy. Englands Lane and the other lanes have high hedges, mature trees and well-tended large gardens.

e) Light/dark: shading, time of day/night

There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day in Eaton Road and most lanes. Half of Englands Lane is very shady, which adds to its considerable charm and character. There are two standard street lights on this section of Eaton Road which are turned off in the late evening. The lanes are dark, but the residents appreciate this.

f) Noise & smell: man made or natural

Englands Lane and other access lanes are all cul-de-sacs with no through access. Their atmosphere is peaceful and birdsong is often heard. There is also the sound of church bells and the school children.

Eaton Road is the main thoroughfare for traffic through the village. It is also busy with pedestrians walking to and from the village shop, school and church and has some agricultural traffic.

g) Spirit of place

This is a harmonious part of the village with a good range of mixed housing. Each of the lanes has created a small community of its own which then build into the larger community of Appleton. Residents group together for some maintenance issues and have created a supportive environment. There is also a strong sense of community cohesion in this part of Eaton Road.