Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan
Character Appraisal and Design Code
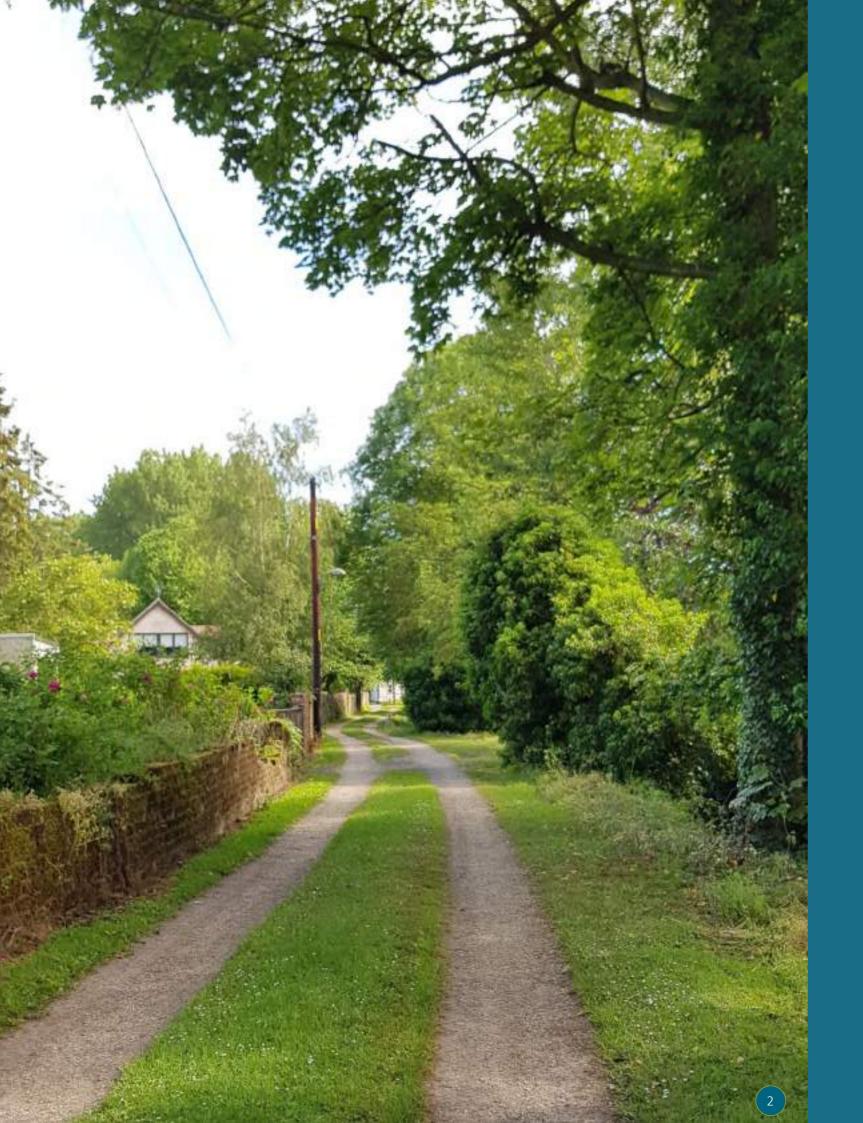
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BP
Bluestone Planning

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. What is a Design Guide

The Localism Act 2011 introduces the right for communities to shape their local areas by creating their own Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). Sutton Courtenay Parish Council is currently in the process of preparing the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan, which "*gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area*" (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2014).

This document seeks to support Neighbourhood Plan policies that guide the assessment of future development proposals and encourage high quality design.

In order to successfully plan for the future growth and development of the Neighbourhood Plan area it is imperative that there is a clear understanding of its character and what makes it unique.

The aim of this report is therefore to highlight the uniqueness of Sutton Courtenay's character, including its conservation area, listed buildings, landscape setting and network of roads, paths and green spaces, all of which combine to give Sutton Courtenay its strong identity. This report also examines the risks to this identity and how through guidance and clear design principles, the rich historic character of Sutton Coutenay can be protected whilst ensuring that positive, sustainable new development is encouraged.

1.2. Purpose of the Design Guide

The study has been produced for a number of reasons, but most importantly to inform the preparation of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

Identification of important issues will help shape the content and direction of that plan. In addition to the above, it could also be used as a development management tool to secure better quality development appropriate to its surroundings. Such a document can be used by residents and developers when preparing a planning application, or for anyone wishing to comment on a current planning application.

2. National and Local Policy and Guidance

2.1. National Policy Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted by the Government in March 2012 and revised in February, June 2019 and again in July 2021. All the policies in the NPPF constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice. One of the key dimensions of sustainability is that of design. This is supplemented by a second dimension of protecting and enhancing our historic environment. Development that fails to adhere to both the design and the historic environment policies is therefore not considered sustainable development.

The NPPF sets out how the Government intends to deliver sustainable development through the planning process. It expressly states that sustainable development is about achieving positive growth, balancing economic, environmental and social considerations.

Whilst there is a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development, the framework also recognises the finite nature and value of our built heritage and the natural environment.

Section 12 of the NPPF sets out the main policies in respect to the importance of design in the planning process:
- Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- Policies should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities presented by a site.
- Great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

The following approach is set out for the historic environment:
- There should be a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.
- When considering the impact of proposals on a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Substantial harm should be exceptional, whilst less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the development.

Section 15 seeks to protect and enhance valued landscapes by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and recognising the wider benefits including natural capital and ecosystem services.

2.2. The National Design Guide and National Model Design Code

The National Design Guide was published in 2019 and sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in principle and in practice. It supports the NPPF and is intended to be used by local authorities, applicants and local communities to establish the design expectations of the Government.

It identifies ten characteristics which underpin good design:

- Context.
- Identity.
- Built Form.
- Movement.
- Nature.
- Public Spaces.
- Uses.
- Homes and Buildings.
- Resources.
- Lifespan.

The National Model Design Code was published in July 2021. It provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design.

This appraisal and design code will draw on the principles of this National Design Guidance to help inform the recommendations.

2.3. Local Plan

The development plan for the Parish currently comprises the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (Dec 2016) and the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (Oct 2019). The Local Plan identifies a number of key challenges and opportunities that are faced by the district and these are focused around four thematic areas.

- *building healthy and sustainable communities,*
- *supporting economic prosperity,*
- *supporting sustainable transport and accessibility, and*
- *protecting the environment and responding to climate change.*

Core Policy 4: Meeting Our Housing Needs identifies the housing target for the Vale of White Horse and prescribes how that target will be achieved. 220 houses are allocated in Sutton Courtenay at Land East of Sutton Courtenay. Core Policy 4 also includes a presumption in favour of "*sustainable development within the existing built area of ....Larger Villages*", of which Sutton Courtenay is one.

Core Policy 6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs identifies land for future employment development. None of the strategic sites are within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary, however both Milton Park and the site of the former Didcot A power station immediately adjoin it.
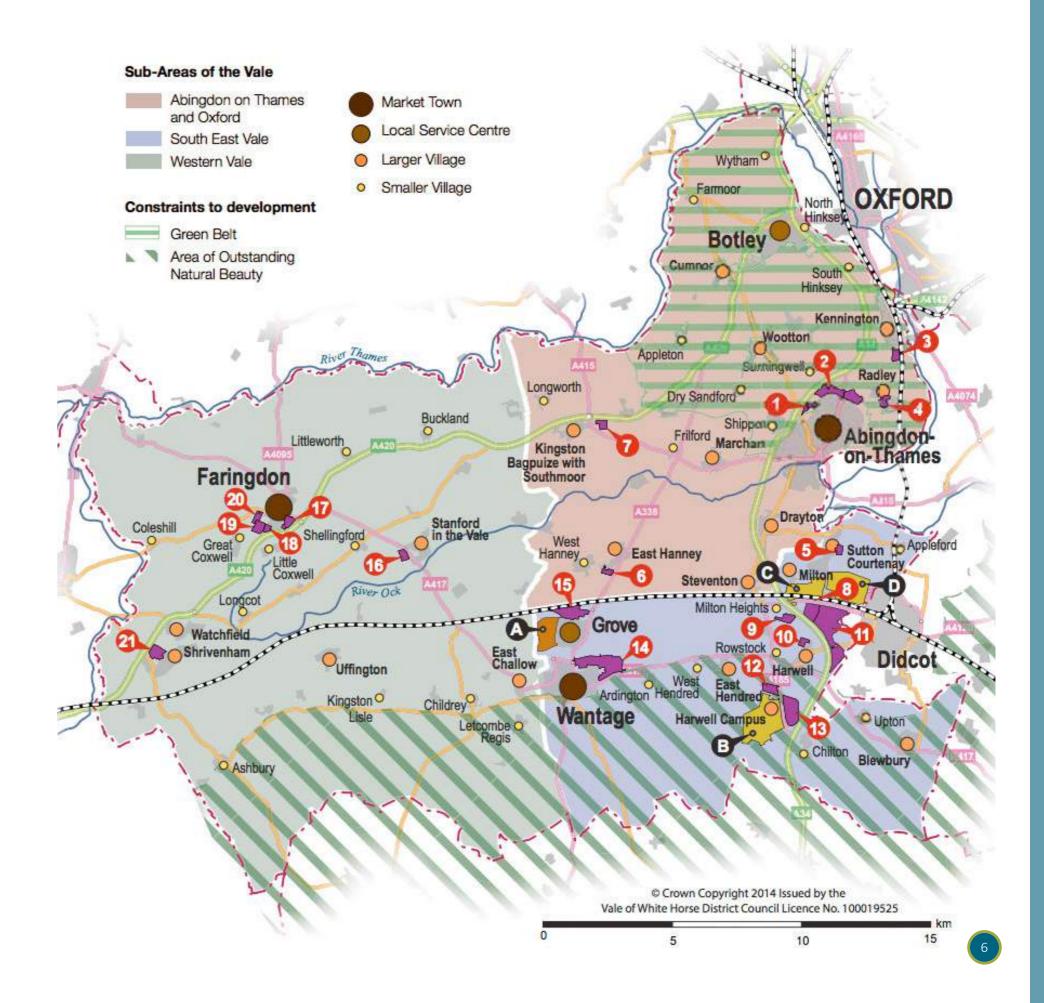
The Local Plan includes three Sub-Area Strategies, of which Sutton Courtenay falls within the South East Vale Sub-Area. The adjacent plan highlights the relevant allocations, designations and constraints affecting this sub-area. Further detail on the area specific policies is provided below:

Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy for the South East Vale Sub-Area reinforces the settlement hierarchy and development allocations identified above.

Core Policy 16: Didcot A Power Station prescribes that the former power station would be considered suitable for a "*high quality mixed-use development*" particularly "*employment (B1, B2 and B8) but also residential (C1, C2 and C3), ancillary retail, an element of bulky goods retail, leisure (D2) and community uses*".

Core Policy 16b: Didcot Garden Town requires proposals for development within the Didcot Garden Town to demonstrate how it can positively contribute to the achievement of the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan principles.

Core Policy 17: Transport Delivery for the South East Vale Sub-Area recognises the need to "*mitigate the impact of the planned growth across Science Vale*". As a consequence "*all development within the South East Vale Sub-Area will be required to contribute towards the infrastructure identified within the Science Vale Area Strategy*".

Sub-Areas of the Vale

- Abingdon on Thames and Oxford
- South East Vale
- Western Vale

- ● Market Town
- ● Local Service Centre
- ○ Larger Village
- ○ Smaller Village

Constraints to development

- Green Belt
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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Core Policy 18: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements safeguards land to support the delivery of the prescribed transport infrastructure schemes. Of relevance to Sutton Courtenay are:

- Science Bridge and A4130 re-routing through the Didcot A site.
- A4130 dualling between Milton Interchange and Science Bridge.
- A new Harwell Link Road between the B4493 and A417 and Southern Didcot Spine Road.
- A new strategic road connection between the A415 east of Abingdon-on-Thames and the A4130 north of Didcot, including a new crossing of the River Thames.
- Improvement of the strategic cycle network.

Paragraph 5.93 of the Local Plan also prescribes that land will be safeguarded "*to deliver a South Abingdon bypass crossing the Thames and connecting with the A415 and some junction improvement schemes*".

The Local Plan includes a number of District wide policies, which are also relevant to the sustainable development of Sutton Courtenay. A full list of those policies of relevance to Sutton Courtenay is provided at appendix A. A summary of those policies that specifically relate to the challenge of meeting the local community's needs whilst preserving its historic character and environment, is provided below.

Core Policy 35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking aims to achieve modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable modes of travel.

Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness requires proposals for new development to be of high quality design and sets out 12 criteria against which development will be assessed.
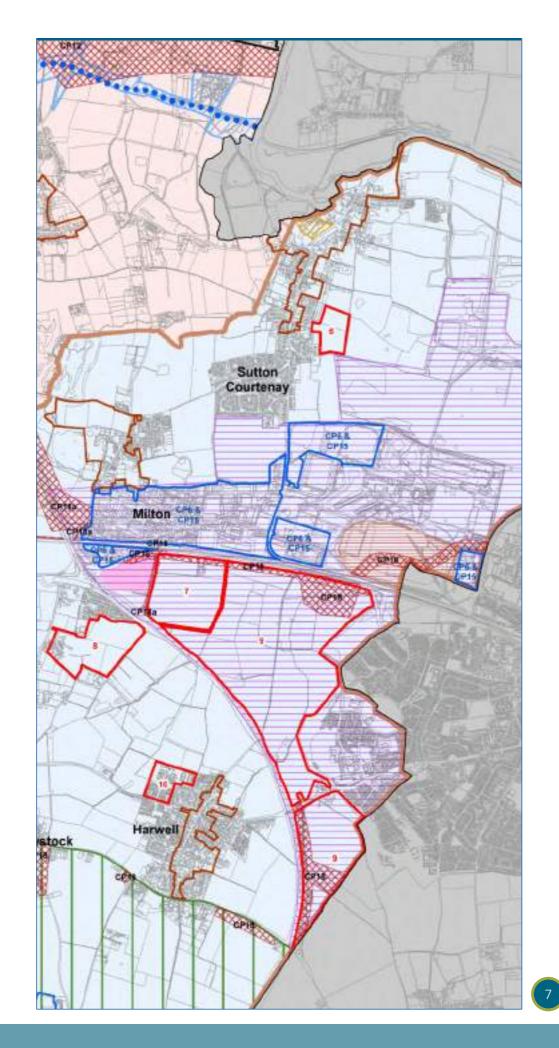
Core Policy 38: Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites requires that these design criteria be taken on board in master-planning for all strategic allocations.

Core Policy 39: The Historic Environment seeks to protect and enhance important townscape assets such as conservation areas and listed buildings.

Core Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction promotes a design led approach to tackling climate change.

Core Policy 44: Landscape seeks to protect the key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District's landscape, including trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and water bodies, important landscape settings, topographical features, areas or features of cultural and historic value, important views and tranquillity.

Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity seeks to "*conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in the district*".

2.4. Local Design Guidance

The Vale of White Horse Design Guide was published in 2015 as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), it was produced to provide guidance for new development on how to deliver high quality, well designed buildings that are in keeping with their environment and respond to the challenge to deliver sustainable development.

This has now been superseded by the Joint Design Guide, which is an online resource published in June 2022.

"The guide consists of sections covering specific subjects these are; place and setting, natural environment, movement and connectivity, space and layout, built form, and climate and sustainability. You need to consider all of these from the outset.

All applicants are required to examine their proposals against the lists of principles which we will use to assess the scheme. It is unlikely that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that do not demonstrate consistency with the principles set out in the design guide."

This document intends to add more locally specific detail to the Joint Guide.

3. Analysis of Local Context
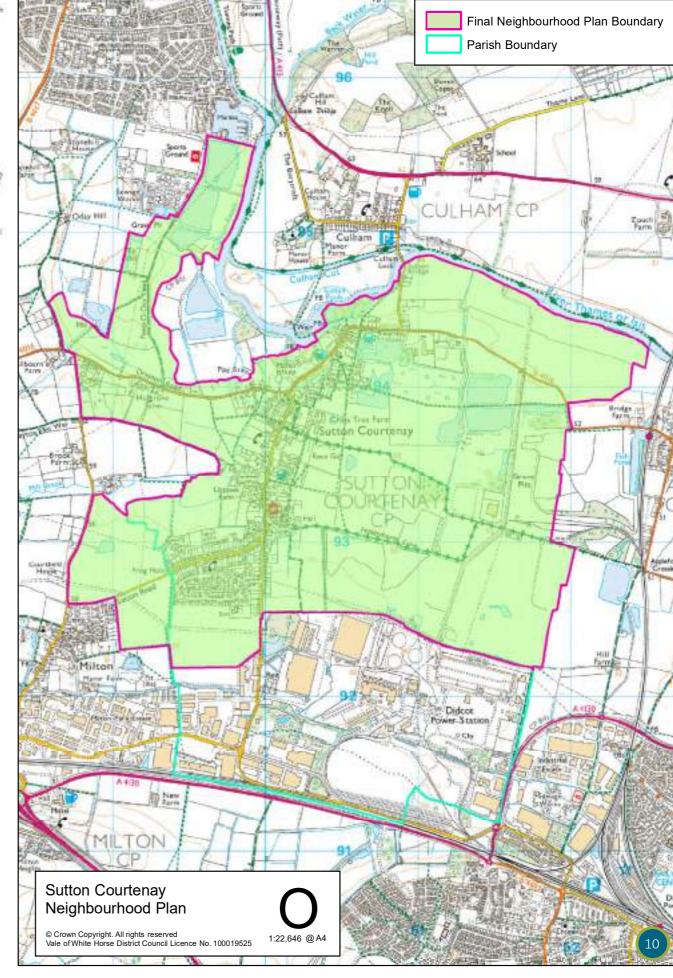
3.1. Location & Context

This Design Code is considered to be applicable across the entirety of the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Area. Figure 10 indicates the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan. It should however be noted that the study area extended beyond the Neighbourhood Plan Area to include land to the south of Sutton Courtenay village, which although not within the Neighbourhood Plan area, does form part of the parish boundary. This land was included in the study due the vulnerability of this area to the effect of development associated with Milton Park and Didcot Garden Town.

The neighbourhood plan area extends to approximately 670 hectares (1657.4 acres) in area. The neighbourhood plan area adjoins Abingdon, however the village itself is situated approximately 2.5 km to the south of Abingdon. The southern boundary of the parish aligns the Great Western main railway line and the parallel A4130, beyond which lies the town of Didcot. Immediately to the north of those routes and partially within the parish boundary (though not the neighbourhood plan area) are the site of the former Didcot A Power Station and Milton Park.

The eastern boundary of the parish runs broadly parallel with the Didcot to Oxford railway line. The land in this area has historically been used for both landfill and gravel extraction, which continues to this day, though with some tracts being restored in recent years. The western boundary of the parish extends to Milton Road at Windy Ridge and Gilbourn's Farm, while further north, it abuts Sutton Wick Nature Reserve, Abingdon Sewage Treatment Works and Abingdon Rugby Club. The land to the west of Sutton Courtenay is largely agricultural with floodplain further north, adjoining the River Thames.

The parish comprises a broadly flat tract of land between 50 and 60 metres above the ordnance datum. Typically, the southern boundary of the parish is significantly higher than the northern boundary, with the lowest points associated with the route of the River Thames. Similarly, land towards the western boundary is higher than that associated with the eastern boundary of the parish, though contours in this location may alter due to the ongoing landfill, gravel extraction and future restoration developments.

Final Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

Parish Boundary

Sutton Courtenay
Neighbourhood Plan

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3.2. Pattern of Development

There has been continuous settlement in the Sutton Courtenay area for over 8000 years evidenced by locally discovered Bronze Age and Iron Age artefacts. Similarly, archaeological evidence of Roman and Anglo Saxon settlers exists, most notably a Roman villa to the west of the village, with an Anglo-Saxon 'Great Hall' approximately 1.7km to the west of the village.

The first written record of the village was in AD688 when the king of Wessex, King Ine, endowed the new monastery of Abingdon with the Manor of Sutton, as the village was then known as "Sutton" a corruption of Sudtone or South Town, a town to the south of Abingdon. Sutton became known as Sutton Courtenay after the Courtenay family took residence at the Manor in the 1170s.

River trade grew during the 1600s and correspondingly so did the village. Sutton Paper Mill, which is denoted on a number of the historic maps, including Rocque's map of 1761 (reproduced from Sutton Courtenay Character Assessment, Dr Kathryn Davies, August 2019), produced special paper for printing banknotes for the Bank of England. The surrounding agricultural land, initially worked as open fields and latterly as enclosed landscape, supported employment and food production in the village. Gravel extraction, which was first documented at the end of the eighteenth century, expanded massively in the twentieth century, particularly to the east of the village, still continues today.

The arrival of the railways and the consequential easy transport of a bulky material enabled the development of the now demolished Didcot A power station, which was situated in the south of Sutton Courtenay parish. In the latter part of the 20th Century, the railway commenced its use to transport refuse to the gravel pits to be land-filled.

John Rocque's map of 1761 and subsequent historic maps illustrate how the layout of the village has altered little through time, with development broadly limited to the infilling of gaps during the 19th and 20th centuries. Notable examples include the the almshouses, built in 1820 and the National School and Baptist Chapel built during the second half of the nineteenth century. The early twentieth century development also included new terraced and semi-detached houses along Drayton Road, a number of detached buildings between Drop Short (Hulgrove Farm) and Gilbourn's Farm and limited ribbon development along Milton Road and Sutton Courtenay Lane (Harwell Road).
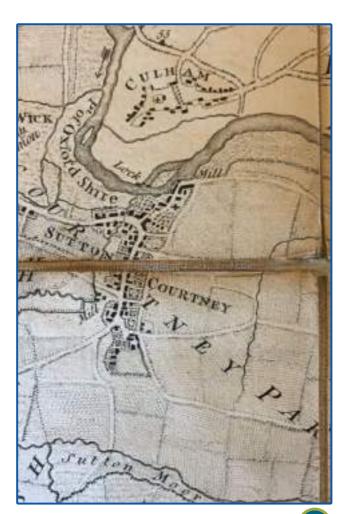

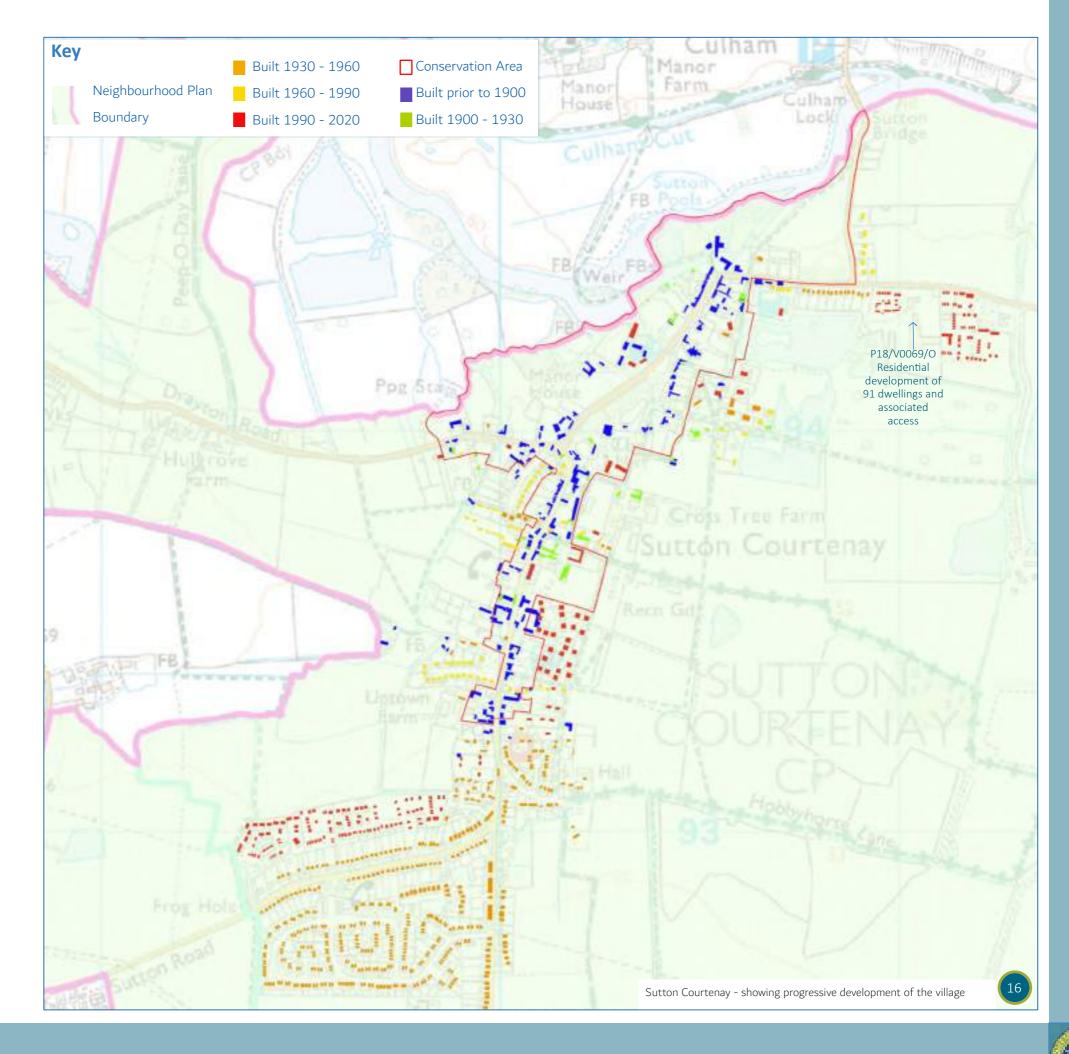Sutton Courtenay 1900   11

Sutton Courtenay 1912   12

Sutton Courtenay 1933   13

Rocque's map of 1761 (Bodleian Library)   14

Sutton Courtenay 1958   15

The most significant change to the built form occurs during the 1950s and 60s with new housing estates constructed along Milton Road and Harwell Road in response to post-war housing shortages. The 21st century sees additional housing constructed to the north of Milton Road and south of Appleford Road. Other development includes infilling of the back plots between High Street and Ginge Brook.

Both the historic and contemporary maps of Sutton Courtenay show a strong linear shape running south-north terminating at the River Thames however, the village functions as a poly-focal settlement, with two distinct cores divided by the predominately stone walls and mature landscaping that define both the Abbey and Manor House. This historic settlement pattern makes an important contribution to the character of Sutton Courtenay as the narrow form allows views from within the village to the surrounding countryside. The network footpaths and tracks leading out of the village reinforce the strong link between the village and the surrounding countryside.

Figure 16 highlights the evolution of the urban form of the settlement from the early 20th century to the present with a gradual infilling of plots in the streetscene. Towards the south of the village there are examples of infill and in-depth housing developments, which are of a generic style with little influence being derived from the local vernacular. Major development in recent years, including the urban extension to the north of Milton Road and south of Appleford Road have led to nearly 300 dwellings being constructed in estate form, and in designs which lack the variety and character of the historic core.

Key

- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- Built 1930 - 1960
- Built 1960 - 1990
- Built 1990 - 2020
- Conservation Area
- Built prior to 1900
- Built 1900 - 1930

P18/V0069/O Residential development of 91 dwellings and associated access

Sutton Courtenay - showing progressive development of the village
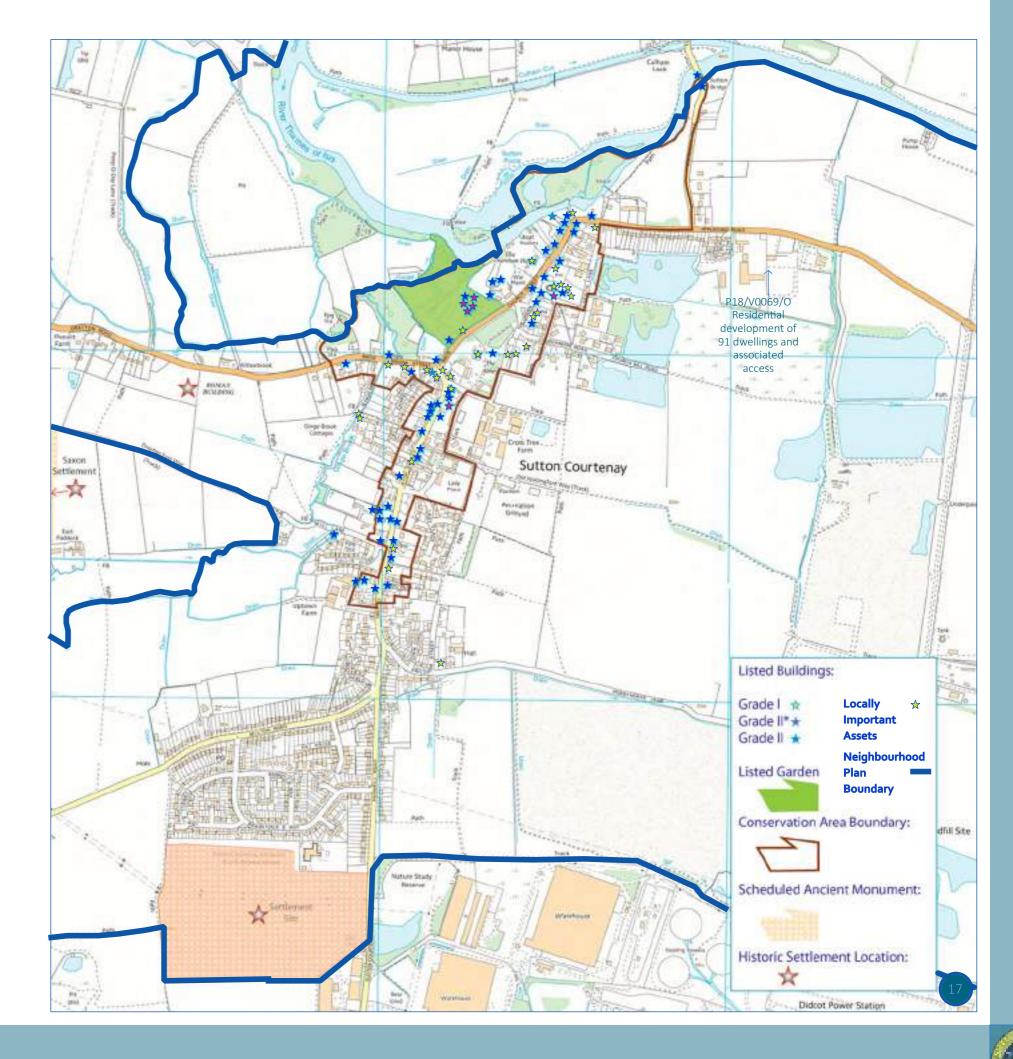
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3.3. Heritage Assets

The parish contains three Grade I listed buildings, six Grade II* listed buildings and 54 Grade II listed buildings. A full schedule of the listed buildings is provided at Appendix B, however the most notable Grade I listed buildings comprise:

- Norman Hall, Church Street- A 12th Century manor house, now house with later alterations.
- Church of All Saints, Church Street- Romanesque west tower and nave; 13th Century chancel; 14th Century north and south aisles, and clerestory and 15th Century south porch.
- The Abbey, Church Street- Rectory house, now religious education centre. Hall and solar range of c.1320; rear range probably 16th Century; south range probably early 17thCentury with later alterations.

In addition, there are many buildings of local importance that are not listed, but make a contribution to the character of the village. Notable examples include (A full list is provided at Appendix C), The Croft and the Independent Chapel at the junction of the High Street and Brook Street, The Plough former public house on High Street and The Swan public house. The Swan is notable in particular for its prominent position on The Green reflecting its importance both historically and today. The Green itself provides setting for several listed and locally important buildings, allowing them to be seen and appreciated from a distance.

Immediately opposite The Abbey is the location of the singular Grade II registered garden in the village, at Sutton Courtenay Manor. The gardens were created by the British garden designer Norah Bourke Lindsay, (1873-1948) in the 1920's whose home it was at that time. The garden is described as "*modern formal and wild gardens*", though only glimpses of this can be gained from Church Street. Instead, the most significant contribution of the gardens to the character of Sutton Courtenay is made by the significant number of mature tree species which align the eastern boundary wall of the Manor and which in addition to The Green and The Abbey give a highly landscaped feel to this part of the village and is at the core of the Sutton Courtenay conservation area. The 42.96 hectare conservation area which was designated by the Vale of White Horse District Council in 1969 encompasses the oldest part of the village and contains all except two of the parish's listed buildings.

There is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument (List Entry Number: 1004853, SM OX250) to the south of the village, immediately north of Milton Park Science and Technology Park. The monument "*comprises an area of extensive cropmarks*" which "*are at their most concentrated on the eastern side of the scheduled area, with outlying linear cropmarks to the west, described as being typical of later prehistoric to Anglo-Saxon period features*". The buried remains of the scheduled monument do not themselves make a visible contribution to the character of Sutton Courtenay village, however the open grassland use of the site and Kelaart's Field, which is a proposed local wildlife site and a priority grassland habitat, make an enormous contribution to the individual characters of both Sutton Courtenay and Milton villages.

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Listed Buildings:

Grade I ☆
Grade II* ★
Grade II ★

Locally Important Assets ☆

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary ▬

Listed Garden

Conservation Area Boundary:

Scheduled Ancient Monument:

Historic Settlement Location: ☆
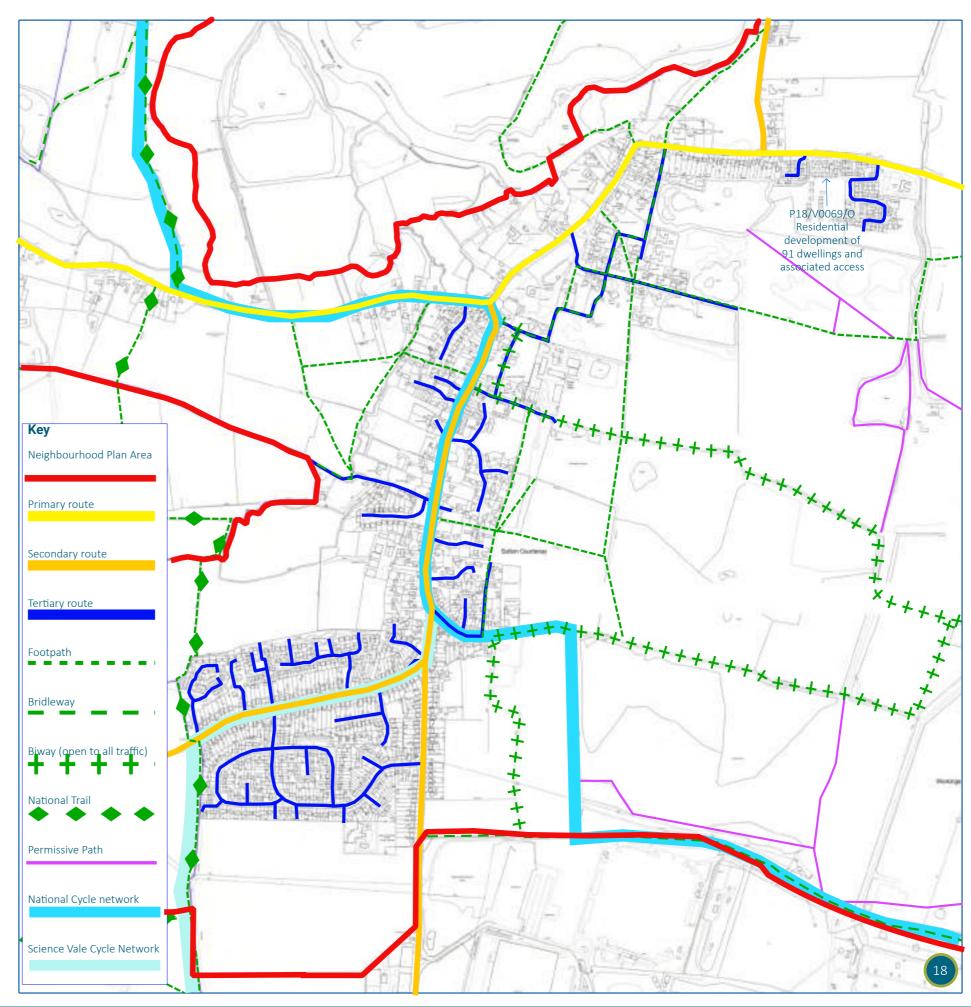
3.4. Street Patterns and Movement

The street pattern within Sutton Courtenay appears broadly unchanged since Rocque's map of 1761 (Bodleian Library), with a strong linear form defined by Church Street to the north leading into High Street and then Harwell Road to the south. These provide access to Abingdon to the north and Didcot to the South. The east-west streets of Brook Street, Appleford Road and Milton Road provide access to Appleford to the east and, Milton and Drayton to the west. The village is also well served by tertiary roads which link the historic core to the newer residential developments. Within the conservation area, these tertiary routes, are often represented by narrow historic lanes, while further south they are more often engineered cul-de-sacs, a type of street network that does not provide continuity in access or connectivity. This layout also does not have regard for alternative travel modes, which results in car-dominated neighbourhoods.
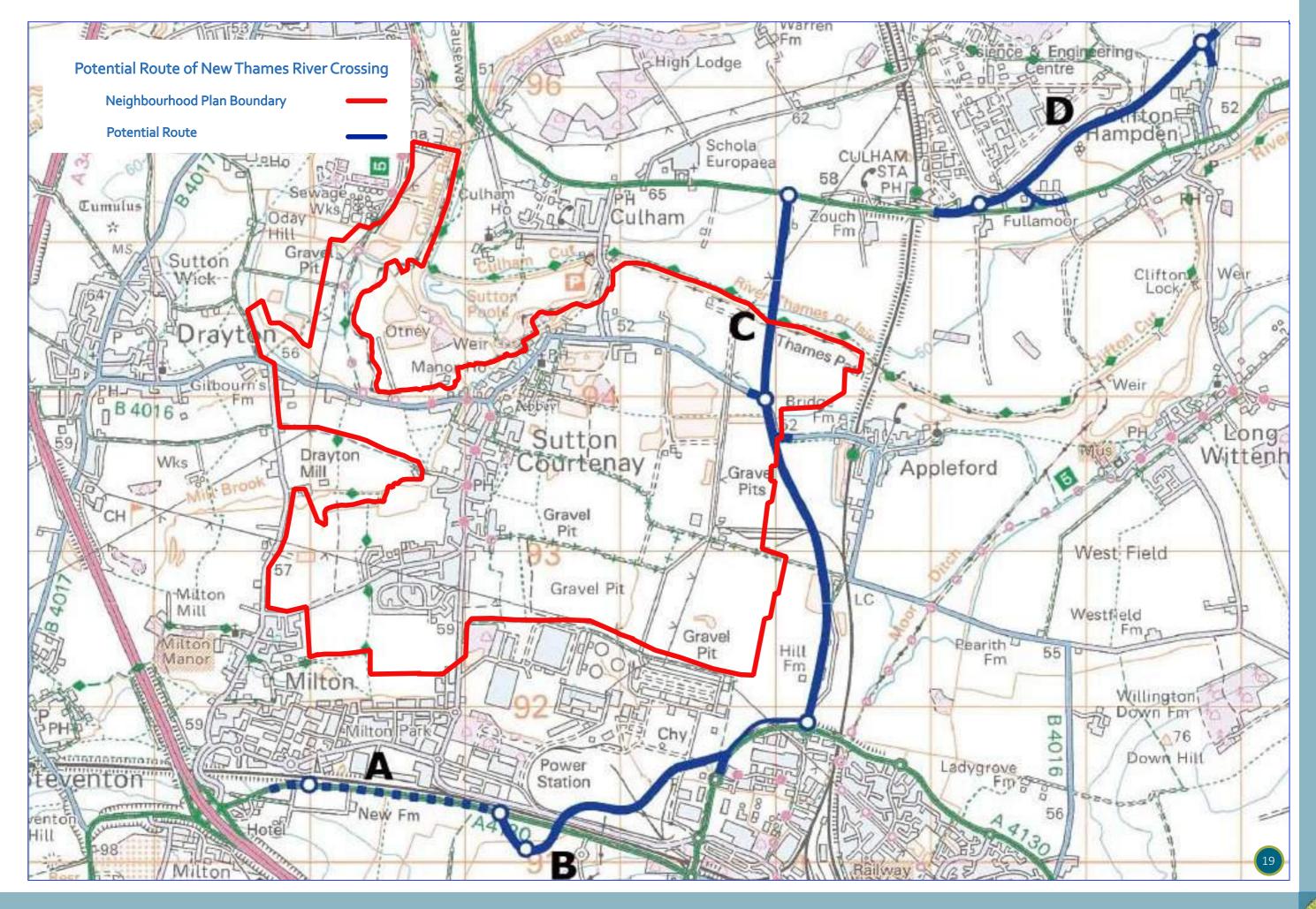
A number of roads within the village are considered to be operating above capacity, resulting in congestion and significant delays to road users at peak periods. In particular Sutton Bridge, Abingdon Road, Church Street, Tollgate Road and Appleford Road experience queuing at peak times resulting in the blocking of the bridge and adjacent junctions, including with the A415, which is an important corridor in the local highway network. In the long term the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan includes a new Thames River crossing which will relieve pressure on this part of the network. Figure 19 illustrates the preferred location for this crossing and other highway improvements.

There is a lack of well designed parking in parts of the village, in particular along High Street, where parking on the pavement and on grass verges can be observed. This can be a visually discordant feature in the conservation area, particularly where grass verges are undermined as a result. Grass verges have also been removed from some of the residential properties around The Green and The Swan public house to provide parking which similarly undermines the visual quality of the space.

In terms of public transport, the village is serviced by the no. 33 Thames Travel Connector which provides an hourly service (5:30am and 7:30 pm) between Abingdon and Wallingford, via Milton and Didcot. The nearest railway station is located in Appleford which is located approximately 2.5km driving distance from The Green. In addition, Didcot Parkway station is situated 6.3km from The Green.

Sutton Courtenay is well served by public rights of way (PRoW) and permissive paths, and these are an important part of life in the village, as well and being important in maintaining the strong historical connection between the village and the wider landscape. These paths and lanes give the village a highly connected structure and provide a layer of pedestrian permeability outside the main vehicular routes. The Thames Path National Trail, runs along the north bank of the River Thames. The National Cycle Network Route (NCN5) runs from Oxford to Didcot via Abingdon and Sutton Courtenay. This route, also known as Hanson Way runs through the centre of the village, but is off-road at Peep-o-Day Lane, where it uses a raised causeway leading north to Abingdon. A further cyclepath Route 3D (Abingdon to Milton Park) is one of 8 strategic routes/ corridors of Oxfordshire County Council's Science Vale Cycle Strategy. Routes 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8 are also easily accessible from Sutton Courtenay.

P18/V0069/O Residential development of 91 dwellings and associated access

Key

Neighbourhood Plan Area

Primary route

Secondary route

Tertiary route

Footpath

Bridleway

Biway (open to all traffic)

National Trail

Permissive Path

National Cycle network

Science Vale Cycle Network

Potential Route of New Thames River Crossing

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

Potential Route

3.5. Views and Landmarks

The village is characterised by a wide variety of views which reflect both the character of its conservation area and its strong connection to the surrounding Landscape. In addition, the Lowland Vale makes an important contribution to distant views from higher ground within the North Wessex Downs AONB to the south.

Within the conservation area, views are characterised by the historic and notable buildings. These views are often channelled by the strong landscape features and open spaces within the village. Similarly, the landscaping along the lanes that lead out from the conservation area provide a suggestion of the countryside beyond and reinforce that strong link to the landscape. Views from these lanes also offer glimpses into private gardens and reveal the rear elevations of the village properties.

At its closest point, the River Thames is within 25m of Church Street, however the river is not visible within the streetscene. Rather, a discrete PRoW at the junction of Church Street and Appleford Road (the site of the former wharf) provides access to the river. The footpath tracks the north side of the river from where there are attractive views over the river and into the mature gardens of the houses along Church Street. Numerous boathouses and pleasure craft highlight the value of the river as recreational resource. Further along the footpath views across Sutton Pools are of a heavily treed riverine landscape.

Beyond the conservation area, to the south, the successful feeling of enclosure is lost, with a general reduction in the level of street-side landscaping and a slight broadening in the street width or building lines. There are fewer notable buildings and an increase in single storey dwellings, which reinforces the openness of the view, with glimpses from within the streetscene to less attractive features such as the pylons in the land immediately to the east. As the topography of the area is generally flat, views of the open fields beyond the street-scene are limited to glimpses through undeveloped plots, though some views of distant hedgerows can be seen from between houses.

Key Views:

View 1: **River Thames and Sutton Bridge from the flood meadow to north of Appleford Road and west of Abingdon Road -** The riverine landscape is a strong characteristic of Sutton Courtenay and flooded land, wetlands and watercourses on the village periphery are key to its identity.

View 2 **River Thames backwater and Church Street houses and gardens from footpath over weirs -** The riverine landscape forms a dynamic part of the village setting and character. The enclosure formed by wooded islands within the Thames, as well as the river itself, provide a strong character of the northern fringes of the village. The conservation area extends out to encompass large swathes of the wetland landscape. The river is close coupled to the northern village fringe with many listed buildings having gardens that run down to its southern banks.

View 3 **North over River Thames and flood meadows from weirs at Sutton Pools** - Another element of the riverine landscape rich in natural beauty and affording good opportunities for walking and informal recreation.

View 4 **Church St western side looking north from Courtenay Cottage** - PRoW runs close to the cottages and are an important feature of this part of the street. These semi -private/public spaces contribute much to the informality and intimate character of this rural scene.

View 5 **The Manor and Manor Grounds from meadow upstream from weirs on River Thames** - The grade 2* listed Manor is set back on the western side of Church Street with extensive river frontage to the rear of its designated gardens.

View 6 **North over meadow towards Sloven Copse and Culham Brake, part of the Oxford Green Belt from Appleford Road** - A tranquil rural image with distant rural views and the well treed course of the River Thames notable in the middle ground. This is interrupted by the ribbon development along Abingdon Road visible in the left of the image, which significantly reduces the gap between Sutton Courtenay and Culham.

View 7 **East towards Wittenham Clumps over agricultural land from Appleford Road as road exits Sutton Courtenay -** Wittenham Clumps are an important local site of recreation; long views have been lost at the southern end of the village by the height of the landfill.

View 8 **Views of water meadows to east and west from Peep-O-Day Lane -** This route is well used by commuters and recreational users and forms an important physical and visual separation between Sutton Coutenay and Abingdon.

View 9 **The Green and The Abbey grounds from the War Memorial -** The status of the Abbey is apparent by the stone pillars and gates directly facing The Green. Trees are a defining feature of the estate and their presence contributes significantly to the rural character of the village.

View 10 **North west towards the long (south) elevation of The Norman Hall across the adjacent paddock from the footpath on the western side of Church Street -** The paddock contributes to the sense of space, an important characteristic of the conservation area and to the setting of the listed building.

View 11 **All Saints' Church and churchyard from northern end of All Saints Lane** - This view reflects the importance of the Church in the village.

View 12 **North over The Green looking towards The Swan public house and All Saints' Church** - The Green is the physical and historic heart of the village. It is a key local open green space providing a setting for several important listed buildings, allowing them to be seen and appreciated from a distance.

View 13 **East along bridle path adjacent to the Millennium Common** - Enticing view along tree lined footpath/track to the south of the Millennium Common. This land is strongly integrated within the network of paths through the village.

View 14 **North along Church Street showing stone wall to the west and lime trees to the east -** The southern end of Church Street is marked by long stone walls on either side of the street associated with The Abbey and The Manor House estates. With wide verges, mature trees, and a simple footway, the street has a verdant, green character that looks as if it has changed very little over centuries.

View 15 **South towards The Triangle from Church St** - The Triangle is a focal point with a loose feel with buildings set back with informal parking at the road edge.

View 16 **Ginge Brook looking south from junction with Brook Street** - A lattice of secondary routes bisect the structures of Sutton Courtenay. These paths and lanes are extremely well used by local people for dog walking, local recreation and by children playing safely, away from the traffic on the village street.

Views and Landmarks (cont)

The footpaths and tracks leading out of the village have open views of the countryside. To the west, are the flat open fields mostly in agricultural use. The visual impact of development cannot however be overlooked with ribbon development associated with Drayton and Milton Roads including Drayton Highways Depot, edge of settlement development associated with Milton village and development at Drayton Mill, all having an urbanising effect on the otherwise rural setting of the village.

To the east views are of the degraded landscape expressed in water-filled pits, plant and machinery, exposed spoil and man-made bunds, which represent significant visual detractors to the landscape. Additional visual detractors include overhead electricity cables and pylons which stretch across the landscape from south to north as well as east to west along the southern boundary. Aesthetically, the main value lies in the openness of this land as the topography remains broadly flat and visually open, though some contour changes have occurred as a result of the operations on the land and the subsequent restoration works. These contour changes have resulted in the loss of long distance views towards Wittenham Clumps from the southern end of the village.

From the west of Sutton Courtenay, particularly on Milton Road, the flat topography and lack of landscaping provides clear views of both Milton and Sutton Courtenay, with a clear though small distinction between built-up area and open countryside. Further north on Drayton Road, views of the countryside are more glimpsed due to the presence of hedgerows.

From the east, the topography has the effect of visually concentrating the development with the result that views of the village are limited to glimpses of rooftops set within trees.

Key Views:

View 17 **North High Street from High Street** - Typical picturesque view obtained along the winding High Street with historic buildings in a variety of styles, dates and materials lining the street.

View 18 **East along Drayton East Way towards wooded boundary of village behind High Street** - Flat open, agricultural land with wide skies. The tops of some trees of the Abbey and Church Street are visible. This route crosses an important physical and visual separation between Sutton Coutenay and Drayton, especially the development at Drayton Road and Milton Road. The towers associated with the Didcot B power station are a visual detractor.

View 19 **Southfield Farm on West side of High Street from entrance to Lady Place** - Remnant farmhouses such as Southfield Farm reinforce the rurality of the scene and provides glimpse to the paddocks and small open fields that characterise the back land behind High Street.

View 20 **West from Mill Lane/Drayton East Way over farmland -** This route is well used by recreational users and crosses an important physical and visual separation between Sutton Courtenay and Drayton, especially the development at Drayton Road and Milton Road.

View 21 **Ginge Book** - Ginge Brook has a smaller, softer character than the Thames. Ginge Brook forms a strong boundary along the western village fringe.

View 22 **Views of old willows, ditches and brook on land north of Springfield Way -** This view introduces a softness to the high density development, though the contrast between the two areas is very apparent.

View 23 **View along Milton Road** - Milton Road looking west showing low density development, generous plots and mature trees lining the road.

View 24 **Barretts Way looking east showing communal front gardens to the north and tree lined grass verge to the south -** The green around the houses in the southern end of the village are locally very important.

View 25 **North towards The Village Hall over agricultural land lying to the east of Harwell Road -** This view forms an imporant physical and visual separation between between Sutton Coutenay and Didcot.

View 26 **West towards Milton over Kelaart's Field -** Kelaart's Field is a flat open pasture with permanent grasses with a wide expanse of sky.

V1 — 20

V2 — 21

V3 — 23

V4 — 22

Views and Landmarks (cont)

V5

V6

V7

V8

V9

Key Views

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary ——————

Viewpoint Location & Direction ◁

P18/V0069/O
Residential development
of 91 dwellings and
associated access

V16

V15

36

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V10

V11

V12

V13

V14

Views and Landmarks (cont)

V17 — 37

V18 — 38

V19 — 39

V20 — 40

V21 — 41

V26 — 46

V25 — 45

V24 — 44

V23 — 43 — 48

V22 — 42

Key Views

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary ———

Viewpoint Location & Direction

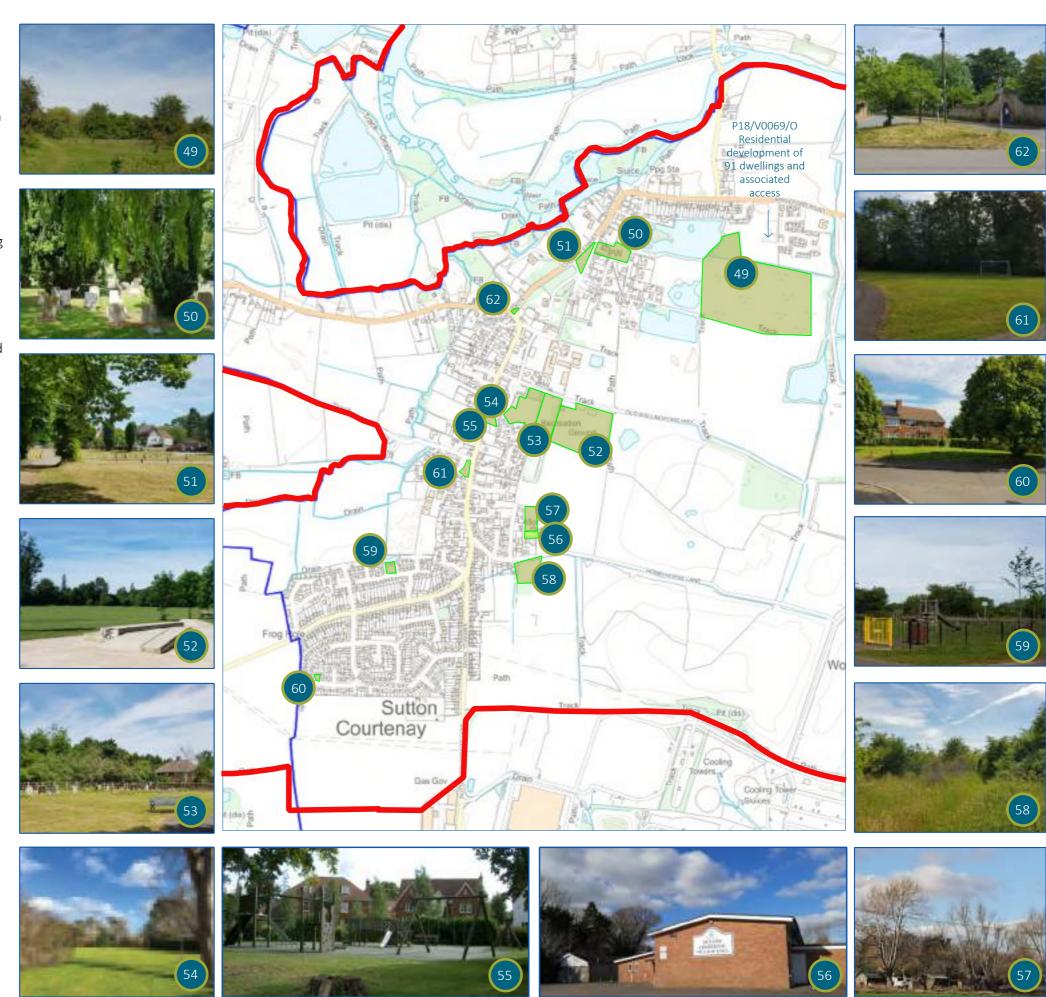© 2023 Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2023

3.6. Open Spaces

Open spaces play a vital role in creating a positive environment. These are places where the community comes together, thus creating lively places in the neighbourhood. Sutton Courtenay has a variety of green spaces, including formal and informal public spaces. These are listed below and the location is identified in figures 49- 62.

- Millennium Common (49)- 10.9 hectare restored gravel extraction site, specifically created for communal village use. The site includes a range of locally important habitats, including plantations, semi-improved grassland, species-rich and-poor hedges with trees, scrub and a tree-lined watercourse.
- All Saints' Churchyard (50)- 0.66 hectare high quality green space with mature landscaping.
- The Green, Church Street (51)- 0.26 hectare historic communal open space which lies at the heart of the conservation area and is highly valued within the community. The grassy space is subdivided by narrow roads, which follow key desire lines. Timber posts edge the cut grass to prevent parking. A line of pollarded Horse Chestnuts create a distinctive edge on the eastern side of The Green. The space is used for both community events and informal recreational activities. The village's war memorial is positioned at the apex of The Green immediately adjacent All Saints' Church.
- Old Wallingford Way Recreation Ground (52)- 3.06 hectare recreation ground which includes a 0.07 hectare Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP), a skate park, two football pitches and a cricket pitch.
- The Cemetery, Old Wallingford Way (53)- 0.85 hectare site serves All Saints' Church.
- Lady Place Communal Gardens (54) - 1.20 hectare communal garden for residents of Lady Place private road.
- Lady Place and High Street (55)- 0.29 hectare green space comprises a grassed area and a 0.07 hectare Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP).
- Sutton Courtenay Village Hall tennis court, Hobbyhorse Lane (56)- Fully open to community use and is managed by the Village Hall Management Committee.
- Allotments (57)-0.38 hectare site north of the Village Hall.
- Site of former catholic church (not accessible) (58)- 0.71 hectare semi-natural green space that is not presently accessible.

Smaller green spaces within the village centre such as those listed below also form important landscaped green spaces within an otherwise developed area:
- 0.07 ha LEAP in Asquith Park (59).
- Tyrrell's Way green space (60).
- Green space bordered by High St, Mill Lane and Tullis Close (61).
- Triangle at junction of Brook Street, Church Street and High Street (62).

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In addition to the above open spaces, there are a number of gardens and curtilages that make an enormous contribution to the landscaped character of the settlement, the gaps in the built frontage and the overall sense of space within the village. These include:

- The Norman Hall, Church Street (63).
- The Manor House, Church Street (64).
- Manor Cottage, Church Street (65).
- Houses to the east of the green (66).
- The Abbey, The Green (67).
- Prior's Court , Churchmere Road (68).
- Brook House, Brook Street (69).
- No. 1 Church Street (70).
- Buckridges, High Street (71).
- Southfield Farm, High Street (72).
- Long Barn, High Street (73).
- No. 72 High Street (74).

Historically, many of the houses and farms along the west side of High Street had long plots stretching as far as Ginge Brook, often described as allotments but many were planted as orchards. These small, open landscape units form a key part of the setting of the conservation area. While the quality of some of the field boundaries has been eroded, and former hedgerows have been replaced by post and wire fences- especially within the paddock area mentioned below- these enclosures reiterate the plot boundaries of the village core structure. Latterly, many of these open spaces have been infilled and developed for housing, except for a sizeable area north of Mill Lane that is retained in use as pony paddocks. There are also remnants of these former orchards behind Lady Place, south of Old Wallingford Way, where small scrubby fields form part of the amenity of local paths, cemeteries, recreation and sports fields.

Scheduled Monument reference OX250 is an extensive area of cropmarks located between Bradstock's Way and the southern NDP Boundary. Under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, there is a presumption that the site will be preserved as found. This field is identified as open space in the Didcot Delivery Plan. Additional information and photographs are provided in the Landscape and Biodiversity section below.

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3.7. Landscape & Biodiversity

159 National Character Areas (NCAs) have been developed for the varying landscapes in England. Sutton Courtenay is sited within NCA 108, the Upper Thames Clay Vales, which is a broad belt of open, gently undulating lowland farmland. It is a predominantly agricultural landscape, with arable fields, dairy herds, hedges and hedgerow trees and field trees. Industrial activities at Abingdon and Didcot (in particular the power station), visually dominate much of the open character of the Vale landscape.

The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) provides an investigation of landscape character and biodiversity across Oxfordshire county. The landscape character areas surrounding Sutton Courtenay are identified as River Meadowlands and Lowland Village Farmlands.
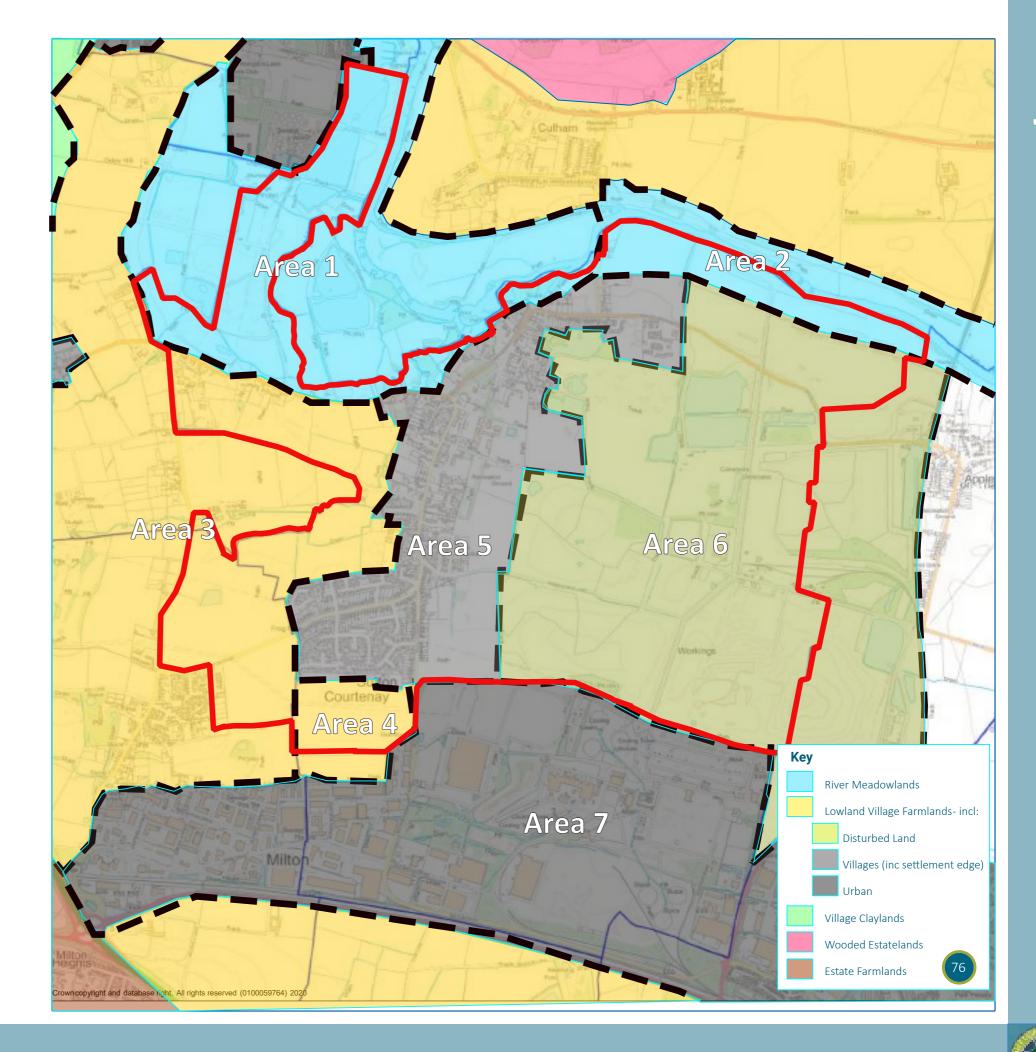
- River Meadowlands
- Lowland Village Farmlands-

The *Vale of White Horse Landscape Character Assessment, 2017* identified the different Landscape Character Types found within Sutton Courtenay parish. It identified the following two main types of landscape:

- Landscape Type RF- River Floodplain
- Landscape Type VL- Lower Vale Farmland

The *Sutton Courtenay Landscape Study, Steven Warnock*, 2019 provides a more in depth analysis of the two distinct types of landscape that occur within Sutton Courtenay Parish.

- River Meadowlands- *This is a low-lying, linear landscape associated with alluvial soils along the River Thames that are prone to seasonal flooding. Where there is regular flooding patches of wet grassland and marsh occur. Such features evoke a strong sense of naturalness and give these meadowland landscapes a special quality that is now rare in Oxfordshire. Woodland is largely restricted to secondary tree cover and scrub around flooded gravel pits, or associated with dense corridors of willow and ash bordering ditches and watercourses.*

- Lowland Village Farmlands- *To the north of Didcot this landscape is associated with recent fluvio-glacial drift which gives rise to the relatively flat, low lying terrain around Sutton Courtenay. Intensive arable production is a dominant feature in this landscape, resulting in a variable field pattern with many gappy/low cut hedgerows. Tree cover is limited, but many of the streamlines crossing the river terrace are well treed, often creating a strong sense of enclosure and scale in this flat landscape.*

These two landscape character areas are then further sub-divided into 7 separate local areas as described below:

Key
- River Meadowlands
- Lowland Village Farmlands- incl:
- Disturbed Land
- Villages (inc settlement edge)
- Urban
- Village Claylands
- Wooded Estatelands
- Estate Farmlands

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River Meadowlands:

Area 1   River Meadowlands /gravel pits to the north of Drayton Road and west of Sutton Bridge - *A mixed area of land use, including a series of flooded and restored gravel pits within a matrix of fields used for livestock grazing.*

Area 2   River Meadowlands to the east of Sutton Bridge - *A strip of fields along the alluvial floodplain, bounded by the river to the north and land affected by sand and gravel extraction to the south. This is an intensively managed arable landscape.*

Lowland Village Farmlands:

Area 3   Village Terrace Farmlands to the south of Drayton Road - *This is the main area of Village Terrace Farmlands within the parish and it links well with the adjoining areas of this landscape within the parishes of Drayton and Milton.*

Area 4   Village Terrace Farmlands to the south of the village - *A small area of Village Terrace Farmlands surrounded in part by residential development within the villages of Sutton Courtenay and Milton and a major area of commercial development to the south and east. Only to the west, beyond Sutton Road and the village of Milton, is there any link to the main area of this landscape type.*

Area 5   Sutton Courtenay village and adjoining eastern plots - *Sutton Courtenay, displays evidence of having been planned around a main street, with lanes enabling access to river meadows and arable land in former Medieval Open fields.*

Area 6   Disturbed land to the east of the village - *A former area of Village Terrace Farmlands extending into the neighbouring parish of Appleford. This area has been completely changed in character by extensive sand and gravel extraction and subsequent re-use as a large scale waste disposal site.*

Area 7   Urban area bordering Didcot to the south - *A former area of Village Terrace Farmlands, extending to the parish boundary along the railway line and beyond, that has been completely changed to an urban landscape - including the old Didcot power station and associated more recent commercial/industrial development.*

Area 1

Area 2

Area 3

Area 4

River Meadowlands

Area 1 has a good degree of visual enclosure where only glimpsed views can be gained from the densely vegetated field boundaries. Rocque's map of 1761 shows this land as Oday Common. The land was enclosed during the nineteenth century and parts of these historic field boundaries still persist. Today, the land is in agricultural use, though primarily for pasture, comprising rough grasslands. Where regular flooding occurs, patches of wet grassland and marsh can be observed. This river meadowland landscape is both rich in terms of its landscape and biodiversity interests.

On the eastern edge of Area 1 is 0.15 hectares of land comprising three parcels of land abutting the weirs on the Thames that feed Sutton Pools. Each parcel is heavily treed, with public footpaths running within the tree cover and across the weirs. These paths are well used by walkers, as well as for fishing and informal recreation. Live-on boats and pleasure crafts are moored alongside these paths. The site is a priority area for Countryside Stewardship measures addressing habitat issues faced by lapwing, while the following species have been recorded or noted locally including corn bunting, curlew, grey partridge, redshank, heron, kingfisher, little egret, water vole, grebe, cormorant and shag.

Area 2 comprises a strip of intensively managed arable fields running east along the alluvial flootplain of the River Thames. Hedgerows in this location are fragmented affording a strong visual link between Area 2 and Area 6. Views of Area 2 from either the River Thames or the northern boundary of the river are intermittent due to dense tree and hedgerow cover that exists.

Lowland Village Farmlands

A large tract of land to the west of the village and continuing beyond to the parishes of Drayton and Milton is comprised of Lowland Village Farmlands (Area 3). This part of the parish is very visually open, particularly along Milton Road, with little to no trees or hedging. This coupled with the flat topography enables clear views of both Milton and Sutton Courtenay and has the effect of visually foreshortening the gap between the villages. The landuse is intensive arable and given the lack of hedgerows is likely to be of limited biodiversity interest.

In contrast, the adjoining Area 4, which is also very visually open, is managed as pasture and consequently is likely to be of greater biodiversity interest. It is immediately adjoining Kelaart's Field Local Wildlife Site "*a reasonably diverse, large semi-improved grassland area with some elements of lowland meadow habitat. Dominant grasses consist of red fescue, Yorkshire fog, creeping bent, false oat-grass, perennial rye-grass, meadow foxtail, sweet vernalgrass and crested dogs-tail. Other flowering plants include field scabious, wild carrot, black knapweed, lady's bedstraw, ox-eye daisy, creeping buttercup, self heal, bird's-foot trefoil, bush vetch, agrimony, white clover, red clover, yarrow, perforate, St. John's wort and common centaury*". The site has also been noted as supporting breeding waders or possessing a high potential to be restored for breeding waders.

Kelaart's Field is also being evaluated for its potential for invertebrates, with Phoenix fly Dorycera graminium recorded on the site in 2016 and 2017. The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) are awaiting additional surveys to establish the importance of the site before it is considered by the selection panel which will determine whether it is awarded Local Wildlife Site status.

Area 5 encompasses the built up area of Sutton Courtenay and the land immediately adjoining it. Historically, many of the houses and farms along the west side of High Street had long plots stretching west to Ginge Brook. These were historically used as paddocks and / or orchards. The patchwork of farm buildings, paddocks and orchards that remain close to or immediately behind the village core, are testament to the relationship of the village to the wider landscape. Many of these open spaces have been infilled and developed, however a significant area north of Mill Lane continues to be used as pony paddocks.

Remnants of these former orchards are also notable to the east of the village, where ancient fruit trees on land to the south of the cemetery, indicate a possible former orchard for Lady Place. To the south of Old Wallingford Way and west of the recreation ground, is an area of small scrubby fields, which includes hazel, ash, dogwood, field maple, blackthorn, oak, poplar, cherry, hawthorn and elder with bramble, traveller's joy and ivy trailing through. Prior to enclosure during the 19th Century, the tracks leading out of the village would connect the fields to farms within the settlement. These tracks remain an important part of life in the village. A number of the fields immediately adjacent to the village remain in mixed agricultural use and have retained their historic field boundaries.

Area 5 includes the proposed Local Plan Allocation for 220 houses. The site itself predominantly comprises an arable field bordered by narrow field margins, hedgerows / tree belt. Scattered bramble scrub is present along the southern boundary of the site. A public footpath runs through the centre of the site and along the westernmost boundary. The area has also been noted for species including lapwing, corn bunting, curlew, grey partridge and redshank. This area also contains the village hall, the recreation ground, sports facilities and cemetery. Towards the south of Area 5, immediately south of Hobbyhorse Lane are a series of agricultural fields, divided by stretches of hedgerow and towards the north includes a small woodland copse and the site of the former Catholic Church. This area has been noted for bird species including corn bunting, lapwing, skylark, redshank, curlew and grey partridge.

Area 6 is situated further east and north and whilst it would historically have been identified as Lowland Village Farmland, it has had its character significantly altered through extensive sand and gravel extraction and landfill. A number of the fields on the western side of Area 6 have been restored for agricultural use while in contrast the operational parts of the landfill, further east, are expressed in water-filled pits, plant and machinery, exposed spoil and

Area 5 - West

Area 5 - East

Area 6

Area 6 - Millennium Common

man-made bunds. Additional visual detractors within Area 6 include overhead electricity cables and pylons which stretch across the landscape from south to north. Aesthetically, the main value lies in the openness of this land as the topography remains broadly flat and visually open, though some contour changes have occurred as a result of the operations on the land and the subsequent restoration works.

Further north, accessed from Churchmere Road is a wooded area, which leads on to the Millennium Common, a former gravel workings which was restored to provide an additional amenity area for the village. This land offers optimal habitat for foraging bats comprising grassland with scattered scrub, woodland and numerous waterbodies. This area is also a resource for many varieties of wild flowers and grasses, including pyramidal orchid and grass vetchling.

Closer to the village and adjoining Millennium Common are three tree-lined water-bodies, which represent historic gravel extraction sites. Two of the water-bodies are accessed directly from Churchmere Road, while the northernmost lake is accessed via a fisherman's path at the northwest of Millennium Common as well as directly off All Saints Lane. These watercourses are predominately a leisure resource, particularly for walking and fishing for fishing club members.

Immediately north of the Millennium Common is an area of recent residential development fronting onto Appleford Road. Area 6 continues beyond this to east and north where it comprises the Bridge Farm sand and gravel workings. On its northern boundary, Appleford Road has little to no hedgerow affording clear views of the mining activity as well as other visually discordant features such as the pylons. The southern boundary of Appleford Road has more hedgerows, however glimpsed views south are provided through gaps in the hedgerow and and entrances. Part of the land in the Bridge Farm workings is being restored as waterbodies with the remainder planned to be restored similarly, with a mix of habitat including wet woodland, reedbeds, fens and flower rich meadow/pasture.

3.8. Sustainable Development

Water resources

The layout of the village is determined by its location adjacent to the River Thames, though there are numerous watercourses draining into the Thames, including Ginge Brook and Mill Brook. These watercourses have strong historical links to the village, with numerous mills recorded on historical maps of the village. To to the north of the village, adjoining Abingdon and to the east of the village are a number of waterbodies associated with historic and recently restored gravel extraction activities, including the Churchmere Pools, which adjoins the conservation area and the Bridge Farm (Hanson) gravel extraction site.

Today these watercourses are predominately a leisure resource, particularly for walking and fishing, but also in the case of the River Thames, for boating and other water-based recreation. They also offer a diversity of habitats within close proximity to the village, which when linked with the adjoining green spaces at All Saints Church, The Green, the gardens to The Abbey, The Normal Hall and The Manor House, provide excellent opportunity for flora and fauna to flourish at the core of the village.

The water resources are all vulnerable to elevated nitrate and phosphate associated with the use of fertilisers or poor wastewater management, which can cause a surge in algae levels and damage ecosystems. Industrial waste discharges can also contribute to poor water quality.
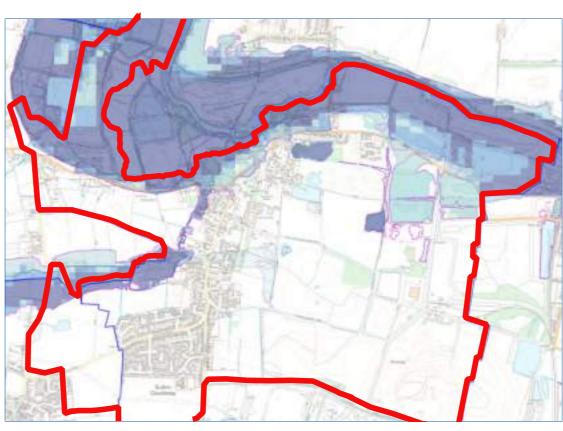
Flooding

The close proximity of the rivers to the village, coupled with the low lying topography of the area has resulted in a fluvial flood risk in parts of the village. Figure 85 highlights those parts of the village that are within Flood Zone 3, with a 1 in 100 chance of flooding each year and Flood Zone 2, with a 1 in 1000 chance of flooding each year.
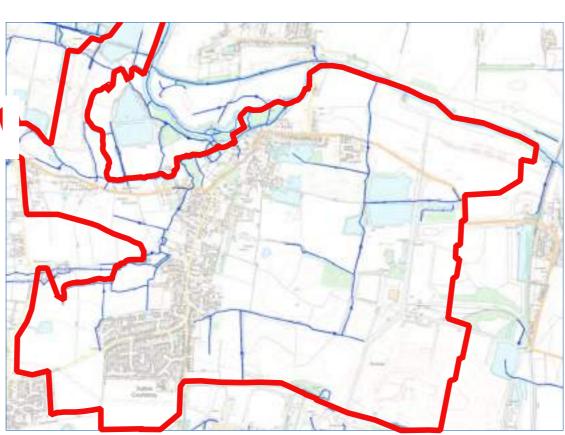
Odours

There are currently three waste developments within the parish of Sutton Courtenay. These comprise:

- Sutton Courtenay Composting Facility (Permit Ref: EPR/BP3295ET)
- Sutton Courtenay Landfill Site (Permit Ref: BV7001|K)
- Sutton Courtenay Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) and Waste Transfer Station (WTS) (Permit Ref: EPR/NP3890VV)

All three permitted sites have the potential to contribute to odour in the local area and there is a history of odour complaints in the Sutton Courtenay area, associated with waste activities. Other potential sources or odour emissions in the area include agricultural activities and road traffic.

Parish flood map with flood risk areas (outlined in pink) and historical extent of flooding (crosshatched)

Plan of watercourses across the parish

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Air Pollution

Landfill activities have the potential to produce both fine and coarse particulates, the make-up of which will depend on the activities undertaken on-site and the types of waste being handled.
Such activities include:

- Movement of waste on and off site.
- Handling storage and processing of waste.
- Plant traffic both on and off site.
- Plant used to burn landfill gas, including gas flare or engines.
- Dust generated from the erosion of the surface of the landfill.

Bridge Farm Quarry lies to the north of the B4016 between the villages of Appleford and Sutton Courtenay. The quarry and the access from the plant site to the highway network contain land in both parishes. A mineral processing plant is located 650 metres south of the quarry, south of the B4016 . This was historically connected to the extraction area by conveyor, which ran beneath the road, however this has now failed and the remaining stockpiled sand and gravel is transported by road. This latter activity has the potential to produce particulates in addition to other activities such as wind erosion of exposed areas, topsoil removal and cover activities and on going construction development.

Other potential sources of air pollution within Sutton Courtenay include industrial and domestic emissions as well as emissions from traffic sources. Parts of the existing road network are noted to be at or above capacity, including Culham Bridges, Abingdon Road, Tolllgate Road, Church Street and Appleford Road, with queuing occurring, particularly at peak times, which has potential to result in increased pollution levels locally. Air quality monitoring is undertaken by the Vale of White Horse at the junction of Appleford Road and Abingdon Road and at the junction of Church Street and Appleford Road.

Ground Gasses

There is potential for ground gasses, including methane, carbon dioxide and numerous trace gases associated the decomposition of organic material at both the operational and former landfill sites neighbouring Sutton Courtenay. The presence of such landfill gasses can be highly hazardous to human health and it is therefore vital that sources of such gasses are identified prior to any development and that measures are put in place to prevent a dangerous build-up of gas within buildings.

Energy Generation

The impact of energy generating industries on landscape and environment of Sutton Courtenay dates back to the construction of the Didcot A Power Station in 1964. Although cooling towers were demolished in 2019, the landscape continues to be affected by the towers of the Didcot B Station as well as pylons and electricity cables crossing land to the south of the village.
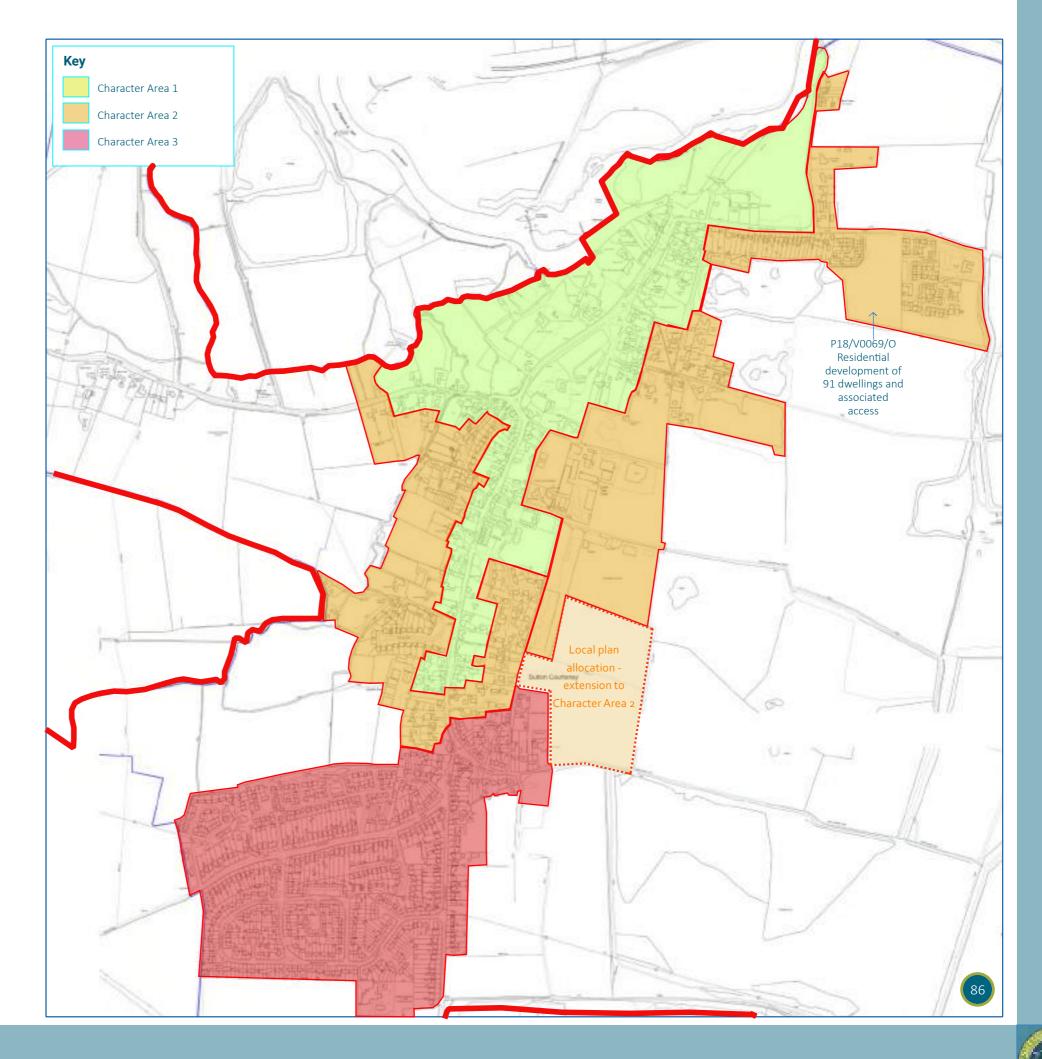
A number of concept proposals and an application (MW.0069/21) for solar farms associated with the regeneration of the Sutton Courtenay Landfill Site have been suggested. Low carbon energy generation is welcomed, however the impacts of any proposals on flora, fauna, recreation opportunities and landuse should be fully evaluated.

3.9. Character Areas

Following the detailed analysis above of streetscape, landscape, history, views and topography, Sutton Courtenay has been divided into three distinct Character Areas and one rural area outside the settlement boundary. The boundary of each character area is defined partly by the geographical features, but also taking into account the functional and historic links between the different areas.

Whilst this appraisal seeks to assess the area's special interest as comprehensively as possible, it cannot cover the minutiae of all issues. Consequently, any omission of a particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it has no value or interest. The appraisal is the starting point; any development proposals should fully consider the appraisal, having regard to national and local policies. Such proposals should be informed by an individual assessment commensurate with the scale of the project proposed.

Equally, where a character area covers open land, this does not denote that it is suitable for development, but merely that there are certain shared characteristics. This may relate to landscape features rather than built form.

Key
- Character Area 1
- Character Area 2
- Character Area 3

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Local plan allocation - extension to Character Area 2

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Character Areas 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

As described in Section 3.3 above, the Sutton Courtenay conservation area has great architectural and historic qualities that are distinct to its character. Character Area 1 is rich with heritage assets including all but two of the parish's listed buildings. The landscape character is typical of Lowland Village Farmlands being a relatively flat, low lying terrain. The landscape features within Character Area 1 include the Grade II registered garden at Sutton Courtenay Manor as well as the historically and communally important village green and Sutton Pools.

The focal point of this character area is The Green with a typical juxtaposition of church, inns and large houses set around it. The rubblestone Church of All Saints' with its squat tower is set in an attractive churchyard which stretches to All Saints Lane. Neighbouring properties, including the grade I listed Sutton Courtenay Manor, the Norman Hall on the west side of Church Street and The Abbey to the south of The Green, are all in exceptionally large plots with mature gardens which contribute to the attractive rural character of the centre of the village. Although these buildings are widely spaced due to their large gardens, this part of the village retains a strong sense of enclosure defined in parts by the mature boundary landscaping around those important buildings.

Further north, the sense of enclosure continues, though here it is defined by the narrower width of Church Street and the close proximity of the houses, which in places form a continuous run. There is an attractive mix of buildings, with a variety of dates, size, style and materials reflecting the organic development of the village over centuries.

Further south, on High Street the street has a similar mix of house types, size, styles and dates as Church Street, with properties from the seventeenth century through to the twenty-first century. The enclosure of Church Street is also continued by the houses which run almost continuously with any gaps bounded by rubble stone and or brick walls. Further south, the continuity of development ceases enabling views to the countryside to the west where plots are undeveloped. This semi-rural feel is reinforced by the well-planted gardens and the farms and farm buildings survive on High Street, including Uptown Farm and Southfield Farm. Traditional farm buildings continuing down the plot reinforce this character.
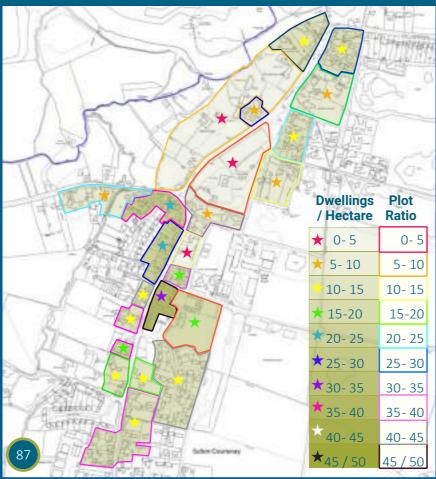
From the triangular Junction on at the top of High Street, Brook Street runs west towards Drayton Road. The northern edge of the road is formed against a high stone wall that curves along the street backed up by a row of pollarded and unpollarded Horse Chestnut trees. The few houses on Brook Street are detached and in generous plots, mostly set back from the road. At the western fringe of the conservation area, the village meets the countryside where there are views to the water meadows to the north. The south side of Brook Street has a mix of property ages with old workers' cottages and 20th century houses, interspersed with more recent infill development. The houses are set back in their plots, with well-established gardens and boundary planting.

Siting & Layout

Siting and layout varies within Character Area 1, with properties to the north of Church Street and High Street having a strongly defined building line, with minimal gaps between the properties forming clusters of continuous built form (88, 89). In contrast, the properties surrounding the green are set in large established gardens and are well back into their plots with expansive gaps between neighbouring properties (90). A further layout approach has been adopted in a number of farms and farm buildings that survive on High Street (91), where the primary frontage is perpendicular to the road and where farm buildings continue down the plot. This layout results in gaps in the developed frontage permitting views of the countryside beyond.

Density

The average densities of residential and mixed-use areas in Sutton Courtenay were calculated based on the average number dwellings per hectare (dph) and the plot ratio (the ratio between the size of the plot and the amount of space that buildings take up on it. Densities in Character Area 1 range from less than 5 to nearly 35 dph (figure 87). The lowest density areas correspond with the large detached properties at the centre of Church Street, which also benefit from a very low plot ratio, with buildings occupying less than 10% of the plot. The highest density occurs at the junction of High street and Old Wallingford Way at 33dph, where plot ratio is nearly 50%.

Dwellings / Hectare	Plot Ratio
0- 5	0- 5
5- 10	5- 10
10- 15	10- 15
15-20	15-20
20- 25	20- 25
25- 30	25- 30
30- 35	30- 35
35- 40	35- 40
40- 45	40- 45
45 / 50	45 / 50

Green Spaces

The Green is the most visible green space in this character area and is a highly valued resource (92). A green corridor (93) defined by the Manor House and the Abbey link The Green to the small triangular space at the north of High Street. Equally valuable, though not visible from the streetscene, despite the close physical link to the built-up area, is the River Thames (94, 95). A PRoW at the north end of Church Street leads on to the river at the site of the former wharf. The footpath provides riverside views of private gardens on the opposite bank. On the east side of the conservation area, the water-filled former gravel pits adjoin the edge of the built up area. Similarly, Ginge Brook has a strong historical and physical link to the village. The watercourse has a well-vegetated eastern boundary, which provides some screening to the Conservation Area from the wider agricultural land beyond.
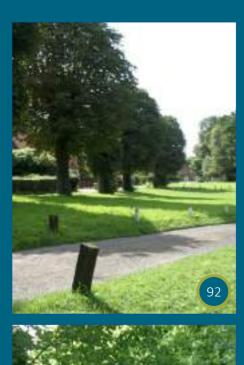
Building Typology

The Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area is comprised of a mix of terraced properties of a variety of styles (96, 97) and large detached properties set in large gardens with stone or brick boundary walls (98). There are very few examples of other building typologies, occasional semi-detached properties or sub-divisions of larger properties (99) do occur. Apartments are limited to sub-division of larger properties and occur rarely.

The majority of traditional buildings in this character area adopt a very simple form, with rectangular floorplans. Projections to the simple floorplan can occur as porches or bay windows.

Scale, Height & Massing

Most buildings in this Character Area are two stories in height (100, 101), typically in the range of 6-8m in height. There are examples of three storey buildings, including aligning the road at the north of High Street (102), the triangular junction of Brook Street and Church Street and the junction of Church Street and Appleford Road. Further three storey properties occur set back from the road frontage set within large gardens (98). These properties typically range from 8-11 m in height. Single storey buildings are less prominent, (less than 5m) occur at the Almshouses (103) on Church Street and outbuildings elsewhere in the conservation area.

Enclosure

The Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area has a strong sense of enclosure which is defined in part by the height of the buildings to the width of the street or space, and in other locations by the strong boundary planting, which frame parts of Church Street. Trees, hedges and walls also contribute towards creating a sense of enclosure elsewhere throughout the character area.

Ratios of between 1:1.5 and 1:3 (building height/street width) will generally create spaces with a strong sense of enclosure. Although there is significant variation in ratios within Character Area 1, the following ratios are observed:

• North of Church Street- Ratio (104)= 1:2.75
• Church Street at George & Dragon (105) - Ratio = 1: 1.56
• South of Church Street (106)- Ratio = 1: 0.54
• North of High Street (107)- Ratio 1: 1.8

The majority of the spaces within this character area fall within the 1:1.5 to 1:3 range and therein have a strong sense of enclosure. The space towards the southern end of Church Street has a ratio of 1: 0.54, which continues to be comfortable as it is defined by vegetation rather than by buildings. The overriding factor is that the space between buildings is a safe and pleasant place and does not feel oppressive.

The northern end of Church Street turing onto Appleford Road is more enclosed by features such as the high boundary wall of Mill House and by houses which are more closely spaced and forming a continuous frontage.

8m
27.5m
104

10m
17.2m
105

25m
13.5m
106

6m
13m
107

Appearance & Details

There is a wide variety of building dates and architectural styles throughout this character area (108- 115) reflecting the organic development of the village over centuries. Notable architectural styles include Elizabethan, Jacobean, Queen Anne, Georgian, Regency and Victorian buildings. Some more recent 20th and 21st century buildings do occur, though typically have been designed to reflect earlier styles.

Reflecting the variety of architectural styles, there is also a variety of architectural details, including brick chimneys, arched doorways, timber porches and painted dormers. The overall visual impression within the streetscene is therefore highly varied and detailed.

Roof Form

There is a variety of roof forms present in the streetscene (116- 123), including hipped roofs (110), half hipped, gables perpendicular to the street and a significant number of gable fronting dwellings (116, 117, 119, 121, 122). The latter are frequently steeply pitched with decorative barge-boards. Earlier properties often have more simple brick detailing under the gable. The majority have plain clay tiles. Prominent and decorative chimneys are a feature of the area.

Dormer windows are commonplace and can be set on the eaves line or wholly within the roof (118, 119, 123).

Materials

Across the conservation area there is a diverse mix of materials including:
- Red/ orange bricks (126).
- Red/ orange hanging tiles (124).
- Timber framing with brick or render infill (126, 128).
- Rubblestone (130).
- Timber clad barns on brick or stone plinths (130).
- Plain clay roof tiles (127).
- Slate.
- Thatch (128).
- Contrasting door and window surrounds (125).
- Painted render (125, 129) .
- Timber painted windows and doors (124- 128).

Windows and Doors

The predominant window type in this character area is timber casement (132, 133, 136, 139), though timber sash (137) and leaded casement windows also occur (135). Painted timber windows are typically white, though other neutral colours are also noted.

Doors are typically timber, often solid, though sometimes with simple glazed panels or small square fanlights above (135, 138). Dark paint colours predominate over lighter colours.

Gardens

Properties surrounding The Green are set in large plots, with dense landscaping aligning the boundaries (140). Elsewhere, on Church Street, properties often benefit from small front gardens or green spaces, with large rear gardens (141). On High Street where buildings align the road, buildings benefit from generous rear gardens.

Boundary Treatments

Landscaping is a defining feature of boundary treatments in the north of the conservation area, with stone or brick walls visible beneath (142). Further south, landscaping is less prominent and walls are more visible in the streetscene (143), particularly towards the south of Church Street, on Brook Street and interspersed throughout High Street.

Parking

Parking is a visually discordant feature throughout Character Area 1 with the loss of some front gardens to parking towards the north of High Street (145). In some instances this has been more successfully integrated with landscape screening. On-street parking has also caused the erosion of green verges at intervals throughout the character area (144).

Garages & Outbuildings

There are few garages or outbuildings within this character area. Those that occur are typically modest in scale and associated with larger properties or farm buildings. The latter structures are typically timber clad barns in natural colours with brick plinths (146, 147).

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

There are a number of narrow lanes that lead off the conservation area towards the countryside either east or west of the village. These tracks originally connected the village to its surrounding open fields and meadows. Some may date to the Anglo-Saxon period and may have connected the settlement to other Anglo-Saxon settlements along the Thames. Character Area 2 considers those parts of the lanes that fall outside the conservation area.

At the northern tip of the Church Street the road turns sharply eastwards towards Appleford. Development along Appleford Road is presented as either ribbon development that stretches for approximately 300m along Appleford Road, or more recently, as infill residential development.at Amey Close and Heritage Park. Both of these approaches have a distinct urban or sub-urban feel in contrast to much of the character of the northern part of the village. The design approach is incongrous with that typically found elsewhere in Character Area 2.

Leading off Church Street both Churchmere Road and All Saints Lane comprise quiet informally surfaced country lanes. They are often edged with wild vegetation, reinforcing the rural character of the village. These lanes have accommodated a reasonable amount of infill development which has been successfully integrated in places, such as the eastern edge of the All Saints Lane. Elsewhere the design of the buildings is incongruous with its proximity and strong historical links to the conservation area.
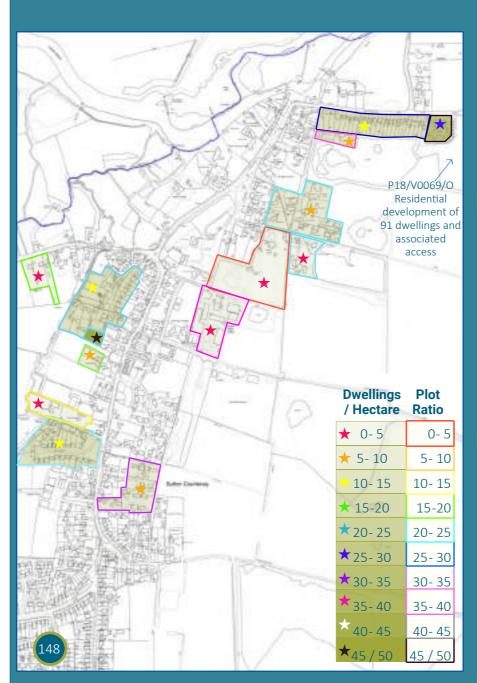
There are also a number of lanes leading off High Street which have accommodated infilling in rear plots. Despite the amount of development, in some lanes such as Hilliers Close houses do not dominate views because of the narrowness of the lane and the dense and encroaching vegetation, which is a prominent feature. In contrast other infill developments have been less successfully integrated, particularly where standard road widths and footways/footpaths have been adopted and where houses draw little reference to the character of the conservation area. Tullis Close and the recent developments to the south of Appleford Road are distinct examples of how this approach contrasts with the organic development of the conservation area.

Siting & Layout

Siting and layout within the northern part of Character Area 2 is dominated by detached properties set in their own plots with both front and rear gardens and boundaries defined with walls, fencing and domestic hedges (149, 150). Further south, infill developments including Lady Place (151) and Tullis Close (152) present more suburban layouts with dedicated parking bays and standard road widths.

Density

The lowest density area of Character Area 2 is Churchmere Road, which also benefit from a low plot ratio, with buildings on average occupying less than 25% of the plot. The highest density occurs on Amey Close at 28dph, where plot ratio is nearly 50%.

P18/V0069/O Residential development of 91 dwellings and associated access

Dwellings / Hectare	Plot Ratio
★ 0- 5	0- 5
★ 5- 10	5- 10
★ 10- 15	10- 15
★ 15-20	15-20
★ 20- 25	20- 25
★ 25- 30	25- 30
★ 30- 35	30- 35
★ 35- 40	35- 40
★ 40- 45	40- 45
★ 45 / 50	45 / 50

Green Spaces

The lanes that make up this character area make a big contribution to the feeling of open space within the village (153, 154). They are heavily vegetated and lead to the countryside and the network of PRoW beyond. The Millennium Common can be accessed from Churchmere Road.

This character area also includes a number of formal open spaces including Sutton Courtenay Recreation Ground, on Old Wallingford Way (155) and Lady Place communal gardens (156).
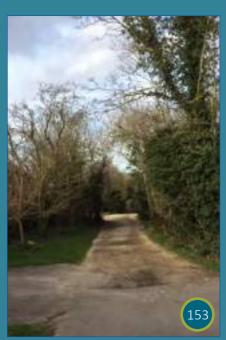
The lanes also provide access to Ginge Brook which as stated above has a strong historical and physical link to the village. The brook is well used by the community, with a PRoW running along the stream side and into adjoining fields.

Building Typology

The roads and lanes leading off the conservation area are predominately comprised of detached properties (157, 159) with both front and rear gardens and boundaries defined with walls, fencing and domestic hedges. There are few examples of other building typologies, though Lady Place (158) includes both terraced and apartment dwellings, while The Nursery includes terraced properties. The most recent developments off Appleford Road at Amey Close and Heritage Park also include a broad mix of typologies. Each of these examples is characterised by cul-de-sacs (160), which is incongruous with the historic core. These locations also include dedicated parking bays, and front gardens typical of suburban typologies.

Scale, Height & Massing

Most buildings in this Character Area are two stories in height, typically in the range of 6-8m in height (161, 162). There are very few examples of three storey buildings though some examples occur at Heritage Park and Lady Place (163) where the height range from approximately 10- 13m. Similarly there are few examples of single storey buildings, though examples occur at Churchmere Road, where dormer bungalows (164) also occur with heights ranging from 5- 7m. Elsewhere throughout the Character Area single storey buildings occur as outbuildings, with heights of less than 5m.

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Enclosure

Character area 2 has a strong sense of enclosure that is largely defined by landscaping. The lane-ways are typically very narrow which results in a highly "dynamic" space where movement either towards the conservation area or the countryside is the main characteristic.
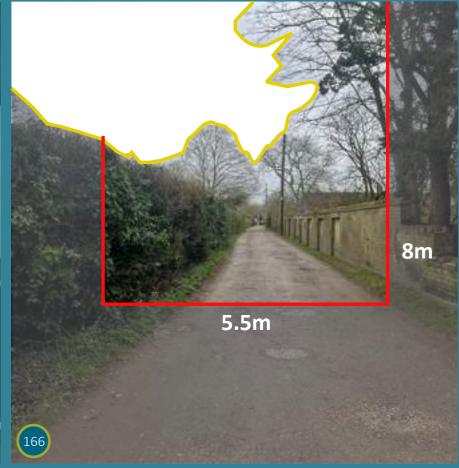
Ratios of between 1:1.5 and 1:3 (building height/street width) will generally create spaces with a strong sense of enclosure. Although there is significant variation in ratios within Character Area 2, the following ratios are observed:

- West end of Old Wallingford Way (165)- Ratio 1:0.64
- Churchmere Road (166) - Ratio = 1:0.68
- Chapel Lane (167)- Ratio = 1:1.4
- Courtenay Close (168) - Ratio = 1:2.3

The majority of the spaces within this character area fall below the 1:1.5 to 1:3 range, which could appear oppressive if that was predominately defined by buildings. However in the majority of instances the space is dominated by vegetation and therefore feels pleasant. The narrowness and enclosure also creates dynamic rather than static spaces, aiding the user to transit along them towards either the countryside or the main village streets.

Some more recent developments to the south of this character area have higher ratios, such as at Courtenay Close.

7m
4.5m
165

8m
5.5m
166

7m
10m
167

6.5m
15m
168

Appearance & Details

There is a narrower range of architectural styles in this character area, and there is only one listed building - Sutton Mill (169), a brick and timber clad structure on Mill Lane. The majority of buildings are of 20th and 21st century construction (170- 174) and where details occur, they are often designed to reflect those features found in the conservation area. Therein examples of brick detailing, timber porches, feature chimneys and decorative fascia can be found. There are a small number of examples of contemporary style developments within this character area (175 & 176).

Roof Form

There is a variety of roof forms present in the streetscene, including hipped roofs (184), half hipped (180), gables perpendicular to the street and a significant number of gable fronting dwellings (177, 178). The latter are frequently steeply pitched with simple un-decorated barge-boards or brick detailing under the gable. The majority have plain clay tiles. Chimneys are a feature of the area, though often they are built without decoration or detail (177, 180, 183).

Dormer windows are commonplace and usually set on the eaves line or wholly within the roof (177, 179, 181).

Materials

Character Area 2 has a narrower pallete of materials though still includes:
- Red/ orange bricks (185).
- Red/ orange hanging tiles (185).
- Painted render (187).
- Rubblestone (190).
- Plain clay roof tiles (188).
- Door and window surrounds with brick quoins (189).
- Timber painted windows and doors (188).
- Contemporary materials, including metal and large area of glazing (191, 192).

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Windows and Doors

The predominant window types in this character area are timber casement and timber sash (193, 194, 196, 197, 199). There are some examples of more contemporary window designs (200).
A number of less appropriate windows designs also occur, such as top hung casements (198).

Doors are typically timber, often solid, though sometimes with simple glazed panels. Dark paint colours predominate over lighter colours.
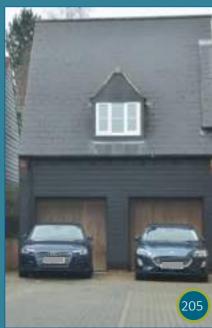

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Gardens

Properties in this character area often benefit from generous front and rear gardens, particularly towards the north of the area. Further south and off Appleford Road more formal layouts have reduced garden sizes as density has increased, particularly at Tullis Close, Lady Place and Heritage Park.

201

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Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments vary between lanes, with brick (203) and stone walls (204) evident as well as fencing. The most prominent boundary treatment is hedging and tree planting, which may be used in addition to other treatments, though often it is used on its own. Lady Place and Tullis Close are exceptions to this with open boundaries.

203

204

Parking

Parking is more successfully addressed in Character Area 2, though there are examples of inappropriate parking arrangements. In communal layouts, parking is provided in designated bays or within courtyard garages. In detached properties, parking is accommodated in integrated garages (205) or behind boundary treatments, the latter resulting in parking being less perceptible from the street frontage (206).

205

206

Garages & Outbuildings

Garages and outbuildings have in places been designed to reflect the design of traditional barns throughout Sutton Courtenay. These structures work best where they are modest in scale (207, 208).

207

208

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

The area to the south of the conservation area incorporates the southern part of High Street, Frilsham Street, Harwell Road, Milton Road and the numerous lanes leading off those roads. Development along the southern part of High Street and leading into Frilsham Street includes houses dating from the eighteenth century, nineteenth century, early twentieth century terraces, 1930s semi-detached houses and some later 20th and 21st century houses. Electricity pylons and supply lines are prominent features in some places within the streetscene. Parking particularly undermines the quality of the streetscene in this location, with evidence of parking on footpaths and green verges in addition to the loss of private front gardens to hardstanding. The end of Frilsham Street leads into Hobbyhorse Lane from where views are channelled towards the countryside to the east.

Further south and west is a densely-developed area of predominately residential properties. This development of both Milton Road and Harwell Road started as ribbon development in the 1930s-1950. This development originally comprised predominately bungalows, but now includes a mix of house types and styles due to extensions and modifications of the original dwellings. Most dwellings have reasonable plots with much mature vegetation. From the 1950s onwards in-depth development occurred including, a housing estate, shops and a school. The layout of this was typical of that period, with standard road widths and footpaths as well as standard set backs for the housing, resulting in a homogeneous character within the estate. Almost all are two-storey with pitched roofs and constructed of brick, though some examples of maisonnets do occur and Katchside is entirely comprised of bungalows. On-street parking is prominent and in places front gardens have been entirely lost to parking. The layout allows for some opening out of the verge to create small greens, which now have mature trees.
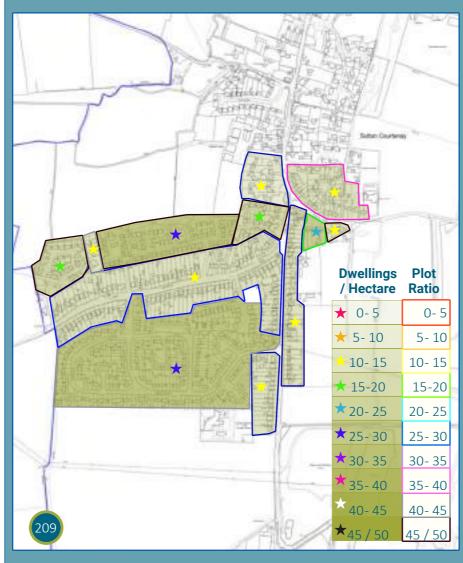
To the north of Milton Road, more recent residential development has occurred to the rear of the original ribbon development. Asquith Park provides a mix of detached and semi-detached houses, mostly 2 storeys high, with some 2 1⁄2 storeys, set in relatively small plots. The houses are arranged in a cul-de-sac and include a LEAP. Two other developments, Rye Gardens and Springfield Way have adopted a similar approach resulting in a significant increase in a type of development that is incongruous with the historic core.

Siting & Layout

Character Area 3 was developed initially as ribbon development along Harwell Road and Milton (Sutton Road) leading out from the older parts of the village. This is characterised by detached properties set in their own plots with both front and rear gardens and boundaries defined with low walls, fencing and domestic hedges. To the rear of this frontage development are a number of infill developments and development in estate form, such as Bradstocks Way (212), Tyrrells Way and Barretts Way, which present more suburban layouts with dedicated parking and standard road widths. To the north of Milton Road, more recent developments provide a mix of housing, closely spaced with formal layouts (213).

Density

This area of post-war developments including local authority housing and later infill developments by private developers range in density between 7dph and 25dph. The lowest density areas adjoin Character Area 1, the Sutton Courtenay conservation area, with significantly higher densities occurring along Bradstocks Way and on the recent developments at Asquith Park and Rye Gardens to the north of Milton (Sutton) Road, where plot ratios are nearly 50%.

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211

212

213

209

Dwellings / Hectare	Plot Ratio
★ 0 - 5	0 - 5
★ 5 - 10	5 - 10
★ 10 - 15	10 - 15
★ 15 - 20	15 - 20
★ 20 - 25	20 - 25
★ 25 - 30	25 - 30
★ 30 - 35	30 - 35
★ 35 - 40	35 - 40
★ 40 - 45	40 - 45
★ 45 / 50	45 / 50

Green Spaces

This character area has fewer open spaces in comparison to the others. To the rear of Sutton Courtenay Village Hall there is a tennis court, beyond which are some allotments. Milton Road includes a green corridor with mature trees. The recent Asquith Park development includes a LEAP (204), while Rye Gardens provides a small central green space.

There are few public green spaces in the Bradstocks Way/Tyrrells Way/ Barretts Way development (216). Spaces include green verges undeveloped corners and the Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary School includes an area of playing fields.

Immediately to the south of this is an area known as Kelaart's field (217), which is included in the Didcot Delivery Plan as a proposed open space. The area is well connected to the surrounding countryside by the PRoW network, to both the east and west.

Building Typology

The residential areas to the south of the conservation area have a mixed housing typology including semi-detached, detached and bungalows. This mix is however not evenly distributed, with a number of streets, notably Tyrrells Way and Barretts Way being dominated by semi-detached houses, while Katchside (219) is entirely dominated by detached bungalows. Bradstocks Way has a mix of semi-detached and terraced houses in addition to maisonettes. Both of these areas are characterised by cul-de-sacs with access off the main streets, dedicated parking bays, and front gardens typical of suburban typologies. Terraced houses (221) occur on Frilsham Street, Town Close, and the recently developed Spring Field Way, but are otherwise absent from this character area. Although rare, some apartments can be found in this area (218).

Scale, Height & Massing

Most buildings in this Character Area are two stories in height, typically in the range of 6-8m in height. Examples of occupation of a third floor occur as loft conversions (225) or as loft rooms in Asquith Park. Examples of single storey buildings (224), with a height of less than 5m occur throughout this Character Area, similarly there are examples of dormer bungalows with heights of approximately 7m (223).

Enclosure

Character area 3 has a much more open character, being defined by lower rise buildings and standard road widths. The space is typical of sub-urban cul-de-sacs, resulting in a scale that is more appropriate to cars rather than people.

Ratios of between 1:1.5 and 1:3 (building height/street width) will generally create spaces with a strong sense of enclosure. The following ratios are observed in Character Area 3:

- Bradstock Way Ratio = 1:4 (226)
- Southfield Drive Ratio = 1:3 (227)
- Asquith Park Ratio =1:2 (228)
- Harwell Road Ratio 1:4 (229)

The majority of the spaces within this character area fall above the 1:1.5 to 1:3 range, which could result in a poorly defined space that becomes dominated by the car. In places, the quality of the space has been improved through landscaping, including along private boundaries and within green verges. These trees and hedges help define spaces.

More recent developments to the north of Milton Road have adopted ratios that fall within the 1:1.5 to 1:3 range and therefore have a more successful degree of enclosure, however the absence of landscaping weakens this effect. In addition, the higher ratio coupled with the high density and high plot ratio has resulted in a building dominated space. As landscaping in communal spaces matures and gardens are planted, these spaces can be improved.

226 — 7m / 29.8m

227 — 7m / 23.6m

228 — 7.5m / 16m

229 — 5m / 20m

Appearance & Details

With a narrow range of architectural styles evident, there are few notable architectural details, though some decorative brickwork (230) and tile-hanging on dormers can be found (232).

Chimneys, where they do occur are typically of brick construction and not elaborated (231, 233).

There are examples of poor architectural detailing and features within this character area.

Roof Form

Gable roofs are the dominant roof form in this character area, particularly along Bradstocks Way (238), Tyrrells Way and Barretts Way where it is almost uniformly applied on semi-detached houses. Hipped roofs (241, 244) and half hipped roofs (242, 243) are also very commonplace within the streetscene, notably on Katchside, Milton Road and Harwell Road. The latter street however offers the greatest variety of roof forms within this character area, reflecting the fact that it has developed more organically than other streets in this character area.

Dormer windows are an occasional feature of the roofscape (240, 242), often flat roof and sometimes dominating of the overall roof design.

Materials

This character area has a narrower palette of materials compared to the other character areas, comprising:

- A variety of brick colours including red/ orange bricks (247, 249).
- Painted render in white or neutral colours (248, 250).
- Plain clay roof tiles (251).
- Interlocking roof tiles (252).
- White UPVc windows and doors (253).
- Occasional instances of decorative brick banding (250).
- Occasional instances of tile hanging (242).

Windows and Doors

The predominant window types in this character area are white UPVc casements (254, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260), though darker framed UPVc are also noted.

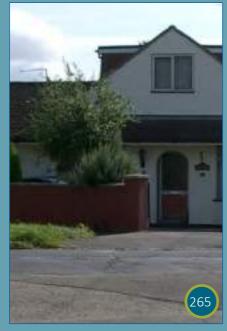A number of inappropriate windows designs also occur, such as top hung casement and leaded UPVc (256). Doors are also typically UPVc in white or wood colour to coordinate with windows.

There are occasional examples of infills or refurbishments where a more contemporary approach has been adopted successfully.

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Gardens

Properties in this character area frequently benefit from back gardens, The ribbon development along Harwell Road and Milton (Sutton) Road often includes front gardens (262), though these are either absent or significantly reduced in the residential development behind these properties (263).
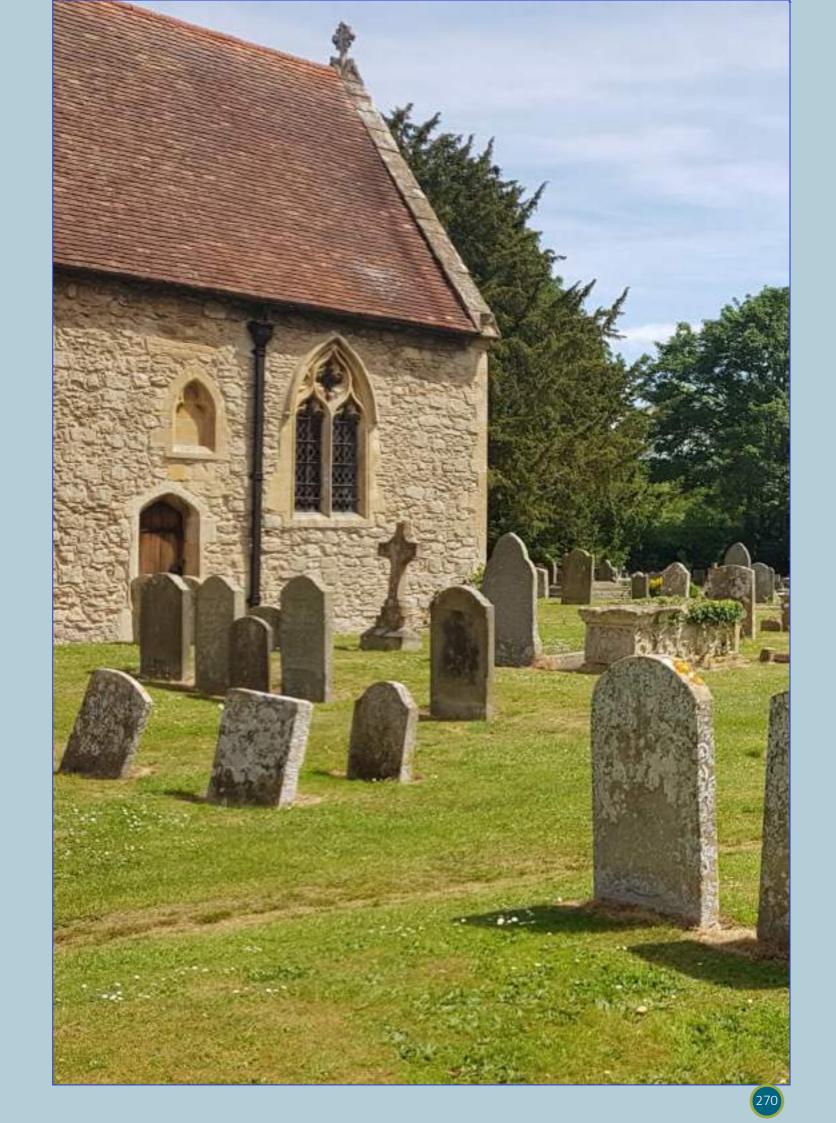

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Boundary Treatments

Properties frequently include fencing or low boundary walls (265), which are typically in brick, though examples of less appropriate materials also occur. Hedging is also used as a boundary feature either in association with other boundary treatments or on its own (264).

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Parking

Parking is a visually discordant feature throughout Character Area 3 with the loss of many front gardens to parking (266, 267). On-street parking has also caused the erosion of green verges at intervals throughout the character area.

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Garages & Outbuildings

There are few garages or outbuildings within this character area. Those that occur are typically modest in scale or integrated within the building (268, 269). Garages occur more frequently in the recent Asquith Park development and are typically integrated to the larger detached properties.

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4. Design Code

4.1. Pattern of Development

CODE 1: A well designed development should create a place with a locally inspired or distinctive sense of character. The layout of streets should respond to the site and context appraisal. The following principles serve as general guidelines that should be considered for achieving a satisfactory pattern of development.

Respecting Character & Creating Identity

- Developments should demonstrate locally responsive design or distinctive qualities that are appropriate to their context.
- Developments should respect the particular building and open space patterns of Sutton Courtenay to contribute positively to its character.
- Developments should use historic street patterns where appropriate to form the basis for proposed streets to help strengthen the identity of a new scheme.
- New developments should demonstrate an understanding of the scale, building orientation, enclosure, and facade rhythm of the surrounding built environment to respect its character.

Housing variety

- Generic housing styles should be avoided.
- New properties should show a variety of types. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety and interest in the streetscape.

HomeZones

- Residential streets and spaces should be designed to promote pedestrian movement and activity over motor vehicles.

Location and connections

- The edges of a development should create outward looking schemes that visually and physically connect to their surroundings.
- Developments should protect or enhance the strong links between Sutton Courtenay and the surrounding countryside, which is achieved through its linear layout settlement pattern in addition to the extensive network of PRoW.

Public spaces

- A variety of public spaces that are desirable, safe, attractive, functional and usable should be provided and maintained. These spaces should cater for all ages.
- Building facades should always front onto streets and public spaces such as parks, pedestrian and cycle routes.

Place, hierarchy and way-finding

- Buildings at the end of street should be designed to turn corners and terminate views.
- Proposals should provide a hierarchy of buildings and spaces to emphasise key locations within the layout and contribute to the character and legibility of the place.

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4.2. Heritage Assets

CODE 2: A well designed development should preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Sutton Courtenay, including its listed buildings, conservation area and important open spaces. The following principles serve as general guidelines that should be considered in order to protect Sutton Courtenay's Heritage Assets.
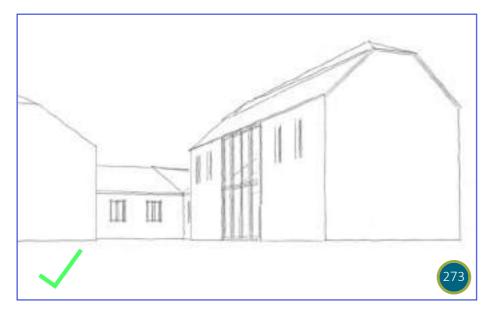
Restoration & redevelopment

- Restoration of existing buildings in the conservation area is preferable to the demolition and replacement of buildings. Where buildings are modernised, existing proportions of doors and windows should be maintained (273).
- The spaces around buildings in the conservation area should be protected for the contribution they make to the conservation area.

Conversions

- Conversions of old agricultural buildings should reference age, design, form, materials used, roof structure and the presence of any architectural detailing. The introduction of conspicuous domestic features and additional window or door openings should be avoided. Retention of existing features and a simple design approach is usually most appropriate.
- Conversions of chapels, churches and schools should ensure their defining characteristics are retained and enhanced. Compromises to residential provision may be required to retain characteristic features. The introduction of conspicuous domestic features and/or additional window or door openings tend to be out character. Existing window openings, window detailing and ecclesiastical features should be retained and refurbished.
- Large extensions or ancillary buildings are not usually appropriate for conversions.
- Landscaping and boundary treatments need careful attention and should be designed to be as informal and simple as possible.

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4.3. Street Patterns and Movement

CODE 3: A well connected development should be well integrated with the surrounding area both physically and visually in order to prioritise sustainable development. The following principles should be considered.

Hierarchy of Streets
- Developments should establish a hierarchy of streets and places with principal features and focal points such as landmarks, squares, nodes and street corners designed within an overall concept to give visual identity (279).

Pedestrian Priority
- Developments should avoid car-dependent layouts arranged along cul-de-sac and loop roads. A connected layout, with some cul-de-sacs can balance sustainability and security aims in a walk-able neighbourhood.
- Developments should create a 'walk-able neighbourhood' where streets are connected and routes link places together. A familiar and recognisable environment makes it easier for people to find their way around. Buildings which are located at corners, crossroads or along a main road could play a significant role in navigation. At a local level, landmark elements could be a distinctive house, public art, or a landscaping feature.
- Streets should be designed to prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists (278).
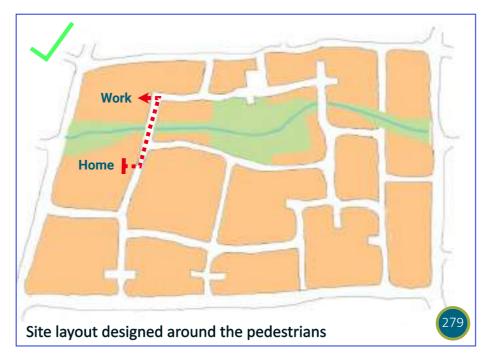
Garages & Cycle Stores
- Garages and cycle stores should be included as an integral part of the overall design of a new development. The buildings should be in a locally appropriate design and sub-ordinate to the main development.
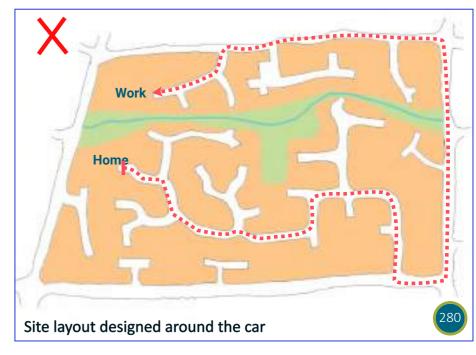
Security & Accessibility
- Connected streets must provide a safe and pleasant environment. The Police Secured by Design Guidelines should be referenced (281).
- Design features such as barriers to vehicle movement or gates to new developments should be avoided wherever possible.
- Footpaths between high fences should be avoided (282).
- Level changes of pedestrian walkway should be avoided.

Site layout designed around the pedestrians — 279

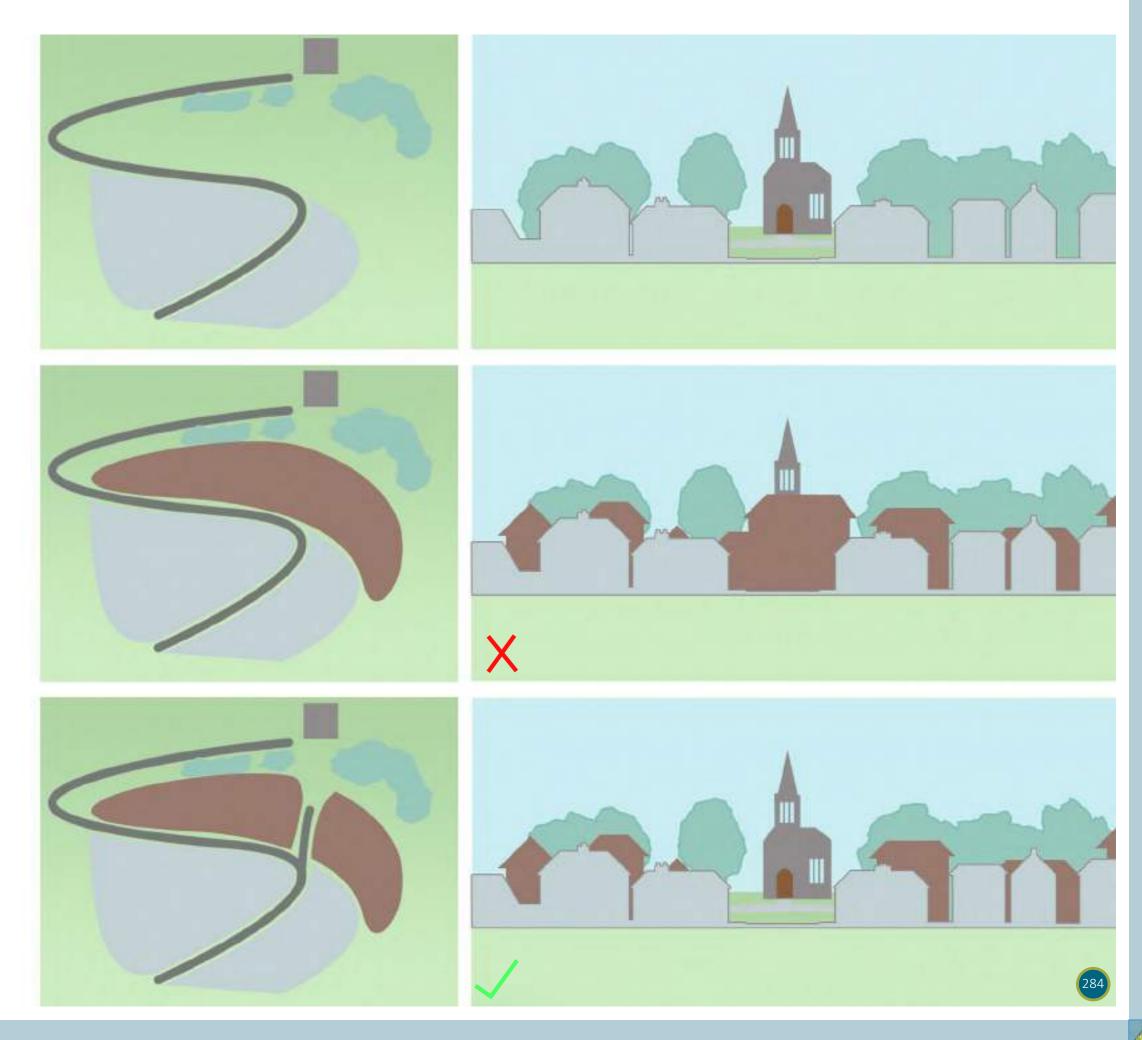Site layout designed around the car — 280

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4.4. Important Views and Landmarks

CODE 4: A sensitive development should retain and improve important views such as of listed buildings or other heritage assets or of the surrounding countryside. The following principles should be considered.

Views & Vistas

- Development should enhance and/or create new views and vistas. Where appropriate, development could frame locally important views through the creation of boulevards or carefully placed gaps.
- New developments and buildings should be designed to respond to existing view corridors or reinforce views of existing landmarks.
- New trees should be added to strengthen vistas, focal points, and movement corridors whist not undermining road safety.
- New views and landmarks should be designed to create a linked series of features and public spaces. This approach will draw the eye from one feature to the next and allow people to visually plan their journey from place to place.

4.5. Open Spaces

CODE 5: Developments should have a strong relationship with green and open spaces. The following principles should be considered.

Public Open Spaces
- Open spaces should be developed as a community resource that is in keeping with the character of the village (288).
- New and existing landscapes and open spaces should be located within walking distance from their intended users (286, 287).
- Open spaces should offer a variety of spaces that can host a diverse range of activities and accommodate different users (290).
- Small open spaces should be set within any new developments for local people and wildlife to enjoy. Existing undeveloped green spaces could also be developed into "pocket parks", which would provide local landmarks for way-finding, as well as places for resting, a space for informal play or to create visual interest.
- Green spaces should be linked to form connected green networks, it may be appropriate to link these together through green routes, shared surfaces and streets. Tree lined avenues can achieve a visual and physical connection to open space (289).
- Building facades should always front onto streets and public spaces such as parks, pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Play spaces should be accessible to all children. Reference should be made to existing national guidance on inclusive play.
- Open spaces should provide for all users and encourage healthier lifestyles. For example, outdoor gym equipment, productive gardens, vertical gardens, allotments, etc.
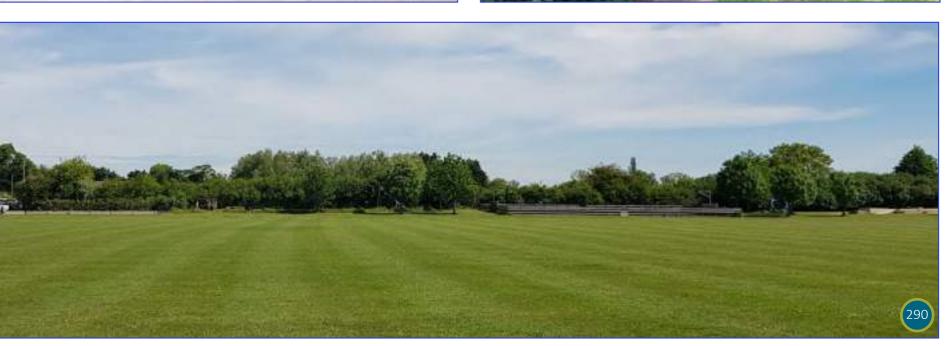
Private Green Spaces
- New properties should aim to provide rear and front gardens. Where the provision of a front garden is not possible, small buffers to the public sphere such as planting strips should be provided (285).

4.6. Landscape & Biodiversity

CODE 6: Developments should enhance the existing strong relationship between Sutton Courtenay and the surrounding countryside. Opportunities to further enhance biodiversity should be taken. The following principles should be considered.

Landscape
- Any new development in Sutton Courtenay should be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts on the landscape being appropriately sited, landscaped and of an appropriate scale (295).

Trees
- Existing trees should be preserved wherever possible. Existing mature trees can be incorporated into new landscape design and used as landmarks where appropriate (293).
- New trees should be integrated into the design of new developments from the outset (292).
- New trees should be planted to reinforce the existing canopy and support biodiversity by creating green links.
- Consider canopy size when locating trees; it may be more appropriate to have fewer large trees.
- Planting details must be carefully considered so that the species being introduced are appropriate to the neighbouring habitats.

Biodiversity
- Developments should not result in any net loss of habitat, instead site features such as woodlands, mature trees, pastures, hedgerows, ponds, ditches and streams should be retained and protected as they make an important contribution to the ecological diversity of the area.
- Wildlife habitats should be created throughout development proposals and should include strategies for maintenance (291).
- Innovative designs, such as green roofs planted with sedum, grasses or wildflowers, can also encourage habitat creation.
- Linking habitat areas can create increased ecological diversity and allow wildlife to move between habitats. Opportunities, therefore, should be taken to link new open spaces to existing spaces and to the countryside adjoining a new development (294).

4.7. Sustainable Development

CODE 7: Developments should promote high levels of sustainability which can reduce carbon emission, increase energy efficiency, reduce flood risk and lead to healthier and happier communities.

SuDS and blue infrastructure
- Development proposals should seek to minimise flood risk. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be used to ensure that surface water is dealt with efficiently and sustainably (298, 299).
- Developments should have regard to the future climate change implications, i.e. flooding and drought.
- Existing garden space should be retained wherever possible and replacement with impermeable surfaces should be avoided.
- Opportunities to introduce rainwater harvesting into existing and new buildings should be promoted.

Fabric first
- Opportunities to maximise solar gain should be taken through building orientation and positioning of fenestration to maximise the benefits of passive solar gain.
- The layout of new development should optimise the benefits of day-lighting and passive solar gains as this can significantly reduce energy consumption.
- Developments should seek to maximise insulation and air-tightness standards to ensure heat loss is reduced from the building fabric.
- Opportunities should be taken to improve the energy performance of existing buildings during renovations, extensions or upgrades.
- Innovative and green materials should be considered such as green roofs and living walls (296).

Renewable technologies
- New residential developments should incorporate technologies that generate, store and distribute electricity sustainably, or reduce the amount of resources a dwelling requires (297).
- Opportunities should be taken to retrofit existing properties with renewable technologies.
- The impact of any large scale low carbon energy generation proposals, particularly on biodiversity and landuse should be fully evaluated.
-
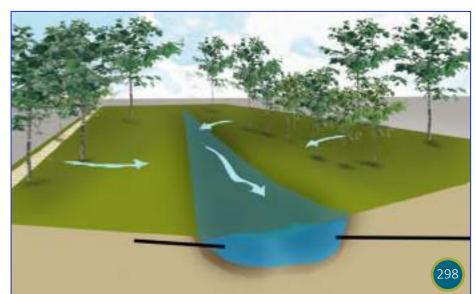
Pollution & Contamination
- New developments should fully investigate the potential contamination and pollution of existing land, water or air which could lead to an impact on human health.
- The risk of pollution from the operation of neighbouring developments and the impact of that on human health should be fully investigated.
- The remediation of a site affected by contamination should secure the removal of unacceptable risk and make the site suitable for its new use.
- The generation of additional pollution from road traffic should be considered as part of any development proposals, provision should be made for electric cars as well as alternative modes of travel.

Natural Resources
- The use of natural resources and the discharges to the environment associated with any proposed development should also be minimised.

4.8. Character Areas

Following the detailed analysis of those characteristics that define each of the three character areas, the following codes have been set out to inform development proposals within each area. These codes should be considered as a starting point; any development proposals should also address all relevant local, district and national policies. Such proposals should be informed by an individual assessment of each site and should consider the appropriateness of a proposal for the site.

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area	Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area	Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area
CODE 8: Development within Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area should be based on an understanding of the character and uniqueness of the area and should be sensitively designed to protect and enhance the conservation area.	**CODE 9: Development within Character Area 2 should reflect the rural character of these lanes and roads. New development should be sensitively designed reflecting the importance of this area as a transition between the conservation area and countryside.**	**CODE 10: Development within Character Area 3 should seek to visually reconnect the area to the historic core of Sutton Courtenay. New development should also recognise the location as an interface between the existing settlement and the countryside and therefore must be carefully designed to integrate new and existing communities.**
Infill plots can alter the character of the settlement if not carefully designed. There is limited scope within Sutton Courtenay for infill development due to continuous built frontage in parts of the conservation area and to the high value that is attributed to the undeveloped gaps. There may however be limited opportunities for replacement dwellings or scope for extensions. Where any development opportunity exists the following factors should be taken into account.	Infill plots can be more successfully developed in this character area due to the density of the landscaping and the generous spaces typically between properties. Land to the north of Hobbyhorse Lane is allocated as a strategic housing site. All developments should protect and enhance the permeability of the village recognising the role that these lanes play as connection between the village and the countryside. Where development opportunities exist the following factors should be taken into account.	There is little opportunity for infill development in this location due to the density of development and the relatively small plot sizes. Similarly opportunities for urban extension are constrained by the narrow gap that exists between settlements. There may be opportunities for replacement dwellings, redevelopment and extensions. Where any development opportunity exists the following factors should be taken into account.
Siting & Layout	**Siting & Layout**	**Siting & Layout**
New development should be built to respond to the existing building line along each particular street or rural lane. In order to add coherence to the street scene, dwellings should not be set in front of the existing building line nor should they be behind the neighbours' building line. Where dwellings are accessed directly off the street, front entrance areas should be clearly identified. Doorways can be recessed to help provide a more private entrance.

Where appropriate, extensions should set back from the primary building to appear subordinate and therein not visually dominate. Set backs should be incorporated to offer a buffer between public and private realms. The smallest setback can help privacy and security as well as provide practical storage areas for cycles or refuse. | New development should respect and reflect the rural character and avoid having an overtly urbanising effect in this location. This can be achieved through the appropriate scale and design, including screening. The layout and height of proposed buildings should accommodate views out onto the 'green horizons'.

New development should maximise links into the existing movement network, but also by opening up new routes, particularly for sustainable transport modes. Larger developments should create distinctive character for individual streets- on larger schemes, streets need to be distinguishable from each other

New development should identify building lines that relate to the character of the area and the proposed development. Set backs should also offer a buffer between public and private realms. The smallest setback can help privacy and security as well as provide practical storage areas for cycles or refuse. Where appropriate extensions should set back from the primary building to appear subordinate and therein not visually dominate. Footpaths should be designed to follow the building line. | New developments should respect and reflect the rural character and avoid having an overtly urbanising effect in this location. Larger developments should create distinctive character for individual streets- on larger schemes, streets need to be distinguishable from each other. The layout and height of proposed buildings should accommodate views out onto the 'green horizons.

New development should take opportunities to reestablish physical and visual links between Character Area 3 and the historic core of Sutton Courtenay. This could be done by maximising links into the existing movement network, but also by opening up new routes, particularly for sustainable transport modes. Improved landscaping and greening of these routes would also help to connect spaces within the village.

New development should identify building lines that relate to the character of the area and the proposed development. Set backs should also offer a buffer between public and private realms. The smallest setback can help privacy and security as well as provide practical storage areas for cycles or refuse. Where appropriate extensions should set back from the primary building to appear subordinate and therein not visually dominate. Footpaths should be designed to follow the building line. |

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Density

Proposals should complement their context by making use of the surrounding built and natural environment to inform the layout and massing of a scheme. The density of any new developments should be determined by considering the density of neighbouring sites in addition to the ratio of built form to plot size. Other factors such as topography, landscaping and constraints of the site should also inform the overall density.

The density level of this character area ranges from a low of less than 5 dwellings per hectare to a high of over 30 dwellings per hectare, such densities should be respected. A higher density may be accommodated, but only where buildings can be successfully subdivided without appearing too dense and discordant. A property giving the appearance of a single dwelling, could be dividing internally into apartment blocks for example. The key to successful development in this regard is to examine the context and use it to inform the proposed development.

	Dwellings / Hectare	Plot Ratio
★	0- 5	0- 5
★	5- 10	5- 10
★	10- 15	10- 15
★	15-20	15-20
★	20- 25	20- 25
★	25- 30	25- 30
★	30- 35	30- 35
★	35- 40	35- 40
★	40- 45	40- 45
★	45 / 50	45 / 50

300

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Density

The density of new development should be informed by the site's context and the adopted Local Plan Policies. When determining the most appropriate density for new developments, dwellings per hectare (DPH) as well as plot ratio, (the ratio between the size of the plot and the amount of space that buildings take up on it) should be taken into account. This latter calculation is particularly important when considering how the new development will compliment the neighbouring developments. For example, as the majority of lanes are characterised by buildings set in large landscaped grounds (i.e. a low plot ratio), a single large building which occupies the majority of the plot (i.e. a high plot ratio) would be likely to look out of character irrespective of the number of dwellings it provides.
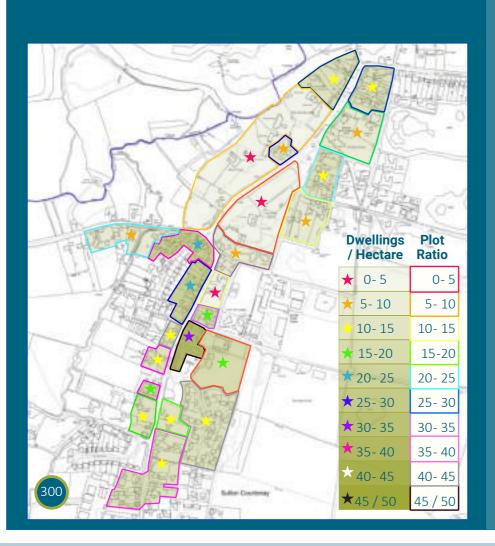
Larger sites in this location should consider low density peripheries with higher density core & focal areas. Development should reflect village density and not be of suburban character.
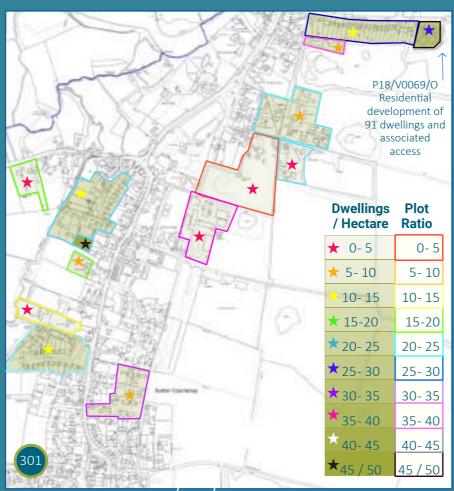

P18/V0069/O Residential development of 91 dwellings and associated access

	Dwellings / Hectare	Plot Ratio
★	0- 5	0- 5
★	5- 10	5- 10
★	10- 15	10- 15
★	15-20	15-20
★	20- 25	20- 25
★	25- 30	25- 30
★	30- 35	30- 35
★	35- 40	35- 40
★	40- 45	40- 45
★	45 / 50	45 / 50

301

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area
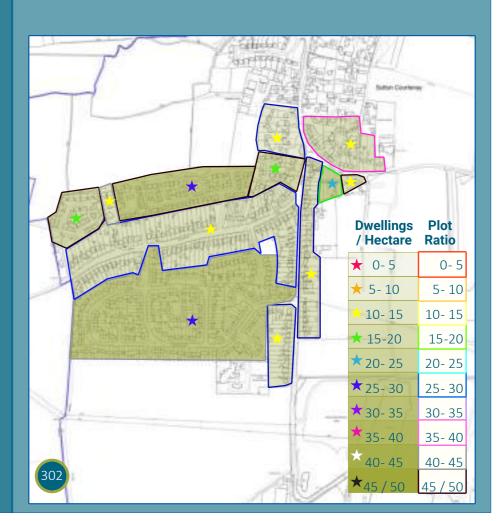
Density

The density of new development should be informed by the site's context and the Council's Adopted Policies.

When determining the most appropriate density for new developments, dwellings per hectare (DPH) as well as plot ratio, (the ratio between the size of the plot and the amount of space that buildings take up on it) should be taken into account.

Larger sites in this location should consider low density peripheries with higher density core & focal areas.
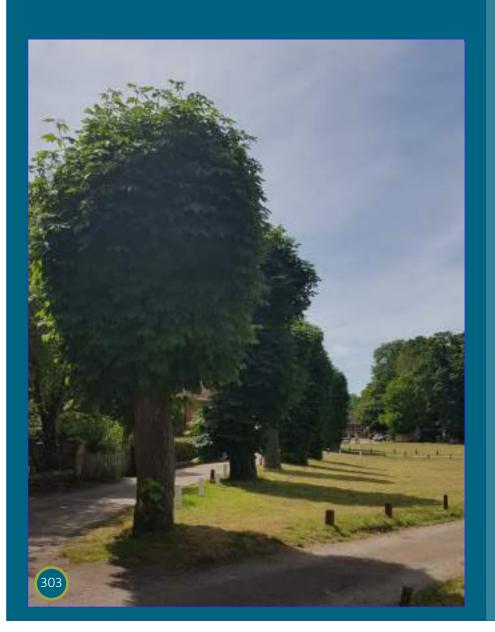

	Dwellings / Hectare	Plot Ratio
★	0- 5	0- 5
★	5- 10	5- 10
★	10- 15	10- 15
★	15-20	15-20
★	20- 25	20- 25
★	25- 30	25- 30
★	30- 35	30- 35
★	35- 40	35- 40
★	40- 45	40- 45
★	45 / 50	45 / 50

302

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Green Space

Development proposals should protect and enhance the existing strong relationship with The Green and other open spaces within the character area, including views and vistas, connectivity and access to the open countryside. Opportunities should be taken to further improve the green linkages between open spaces and the countryside, in addition to between other open spaces within the village.

Public realm or communal green space should be provided in development plots to contribute to the provision or enhancement of green space in the area.

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Green Space

Character Area 2 provides access to a number of open spaces within Sutton Courtenay, development proposals should protect and enhance these spaces and provide opportunities to further improve views and vistas, connectivity and access to the them and to the open countryside.

Public realm or communal green space should be provided in development plots to contribute to the provision or enhancement of green space in the area. These spaces should be well designed and accessible.

Low boundary features such as hedges, fences, walls and/or changes of surface treatment should be used to separate public footpaths from the frontages of dwellings.

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Green Space

Development proposals within Character Area 3 should seek to improve access to the existing open space resources within Sutton Courtenay. Opportunities to provide green corridors connecting spaces within the village should be taken. Opportunities should also be taken to improve views and vistas, connectivity and access to the open countryside from this character area.

Public realm or communal green space should be provided in development plots to contribute to the provision or enhancement of green space in the area. These spaces should be well designed and accessible. Low boundary features such as hedges, fences, walls and/or changes of surface treatment should be used to separate public footpaths from the frontages of dwellings.

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Building Typology

New properties should show a variety of types to reflect the variety in the conservation area. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety and interest in the streetscape.

Scale, Height and Massing

New developments in existing streetscapes should take reference from surrounding building heights (306), being no taller than the tallest and no shorter than the shortest. Similarly the plot widths and scale and massing should be respected and referenced. This will help to maintain and enhance the rhythm of the streetscape.

Where more than one house is proposed as infill, each property should provide an individual response to the surroundings, therein avoiding repetition and reflecting the character of the existing streetscene.

Where an extension is proposed it should remain visually subordinate to the original building.

Modern generic house types are generally not appropriate in this setting as they do not accord with the traditional form of buildings within the area unless these reflect the plan form of surrounding dwellings

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Building Typology

New properties should show a variety of types to reflect the variety in the character area and elsewhere in Sutton Courtenay. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety and interest in the streetscape.

Scale, Height and Massing

New houses and developments should take reference from surrounding building heights, being no taller than the tallest and no shorter than the shortest. Image 307 illustrates an appropriate building height for the location. Subtle variations in height can be used to add visual interest. This can be achieved with differing ridge and eaves heights, as commonly found in the historic core of Sutton Courtenay. Similarly, variations in frontage widths and plan forms can add further interest to the street scene. This will help to maintain and enhance the rhythm of the streetscape. In the case of terraced buildings, it is recommended that a variety of plot widths and small setbacks should be considered to create an attractive townscape without undermining the sense of continuity.

Where flats are the main dwelling type, the scale of the buildings can be noticeably larger than existing buildings in the area. A design solution is to break up the mass of the development by dividing the building into visually distinct elements comprising a hierarchy of simple elements each with its own pitched roof.

Noticeably taller buildings can be acceptable where they are designed as a landmark in the street scene. Such buildings can also be used to aid legibility where individual taller landmark buildings can help people navigate through that space. Similarly the scale, heights and positioning of proposed buildings should retain and enhance views to the open countryside and to the village centre.

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Building Typology

New properties should show a variety of types to help improve the variety in the character area. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety and interest in the streetscape.

Scale, Height and Massing

New development will be more likely to integrate successfully with the character area if the scale, height and massing of new buildings demonstrates consideration for the context, however opportunities should be taken to add visual interest with subtle variations in ridge and or eaves heights. Similarly, variations in frontage widths and plan forms can add further interest to the street scene. This will help to maintain and enhance the rhythm of the streetscape. In the case of terraced buildings, it is recommended that a variety of plot widths and small setbacks should be considered to create an attractive townscape without undermining the sense of continuity.

Where flats are the main dwelling type, the scale of the buildings can be noticeably larger than existing buildings in the area. A design solution is to break up the mass of the development by dividing the building into visually distinct elements comprising a hierarchy of simple elements each with its own pitched roof.

The legibility of this character area could also be improved by the appropriate introduction of landmarks, which could be feature buildings or landscaping. For example, the existing undeveloped green spaces could be developed into "pocket parks", which would provide local landmarks for way-finding, as well as places for resting, a space for informal play or to create visual interest. The scale, heights and positioning of proposed buildings should retain and enhance views to the open countryside and to the village centre. Image 308 illustrates an uncessful sharp transition between urban edge and countryside.

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Enclosure

Character Area 1 has a strong sense of enclosure ithroughout, in part defined by the relationship of the buildings to the streets and elsewhere defined by the dense landscaping (309). This enclosure is a defining characteristic of the conservation area and should be retained where possible.

There are periodic interruptions to the continuity of development within the conservation area, however the sense of enclosure is retained as by the use of stone and brick boundary walls (310, 311), which help to maintain the comfortable residential environment. These undeveloped gaps have become an intrinsic part of the character of the village and they and their boundary treatments should be retained where-ever possible.

309

310

311

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Enclosure

The majority of Character Area 2 has a strong sense of enclosure defined by the dense landscaping aligning the majority of the lane-ways. Trees, hedges, and other landscaping features can help create a more enclosed streetscape, which could feel oppressive if replaced with buildings due to the narrowness of most of the lanes, its is therefore important that the landscaping is retained where-ever possible.

A significant challenge for new residential developments is to provide a scale that is appropriate to people rather than cars. When buildings are set close to the street it is important to ensure they relate to the human scale. When buildings are set back from the street, it is important to ensure that roads and parking areas do not dominate the street scene.

New developments should create clearly defined spaces to help to achieve an appropriate sense of enclosure, which is a prominent feature of the historic core. Reference should also be made to this character area where enclosure is achieved by boundary treatments including walls (312), landscaping and paving. Visual continuity should be achieved by linking buildings and defining public and private spaces. When designing building setbacks, facades should have an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height, The overriding objective is that the space between buildings is a safe and pleasant place and does not feel oppressive.

312

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Enclosure

Parts of Character Area 3 have achieved a scale that may be considered more appropriate to cars rather than people, with standard road widths, footpaths and parking bays. Where these streets have matured, landscaping has in places improved the sense of enclosure (313) and where possible, opportunities should be taken to reinforce this. The prominence of cars within the street-scene could similarly be addressed by careful landscaping. Existing undeveloped green spaces could be developed into "pocket parks", which would provide local landmarks for way-finding, as well as places for resting, a space for informal play or to create visual interest.

New developments should take reference on how enclosure is achieved in the conservation area, including the use of stone walls where there are gaps between the buildings. The overriding objective is that the space between buildings is a safe and pleasant place and does not feel oppressive.

313

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Appearance & Details

Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area is rich with a variety of different styles and decoration used (314, 315). This existing period detailing should be retained and the covering over or removal of such elements should be discouraged.

The design of extensions and new buildings should reflect the local vernacular, including the amount and type of decoration and functional elements such as the position and type of doors and windows, flues, chimneys, gutters and flashings. The inclusion of details should be undertaken with care as overly detailed elevations can appear fussy and historic detailing can appear like a caricature of the original.

Wherever possible, external service pipes and other apparatus should be grouped together and discretely located. Rainwater goods should also be located as unobtrusively as possible and discretely coloured to reduce their visual impact. Painted metal rainwater goods are most appropriate.

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Appearance & Details

Buildings should not be designed in isolation. Whether they are of traditional or contemporary design, buildings or development sites should adopt a design concept. New buildings that share and reflect the characteristics of the local area will reinforce local identity. However, directly replicating existing designs is not always appropriate. A full analysis of the area should highlight its characteristic features and how these can be reinterpreted and used in a successful modern and innovative design incorporating high quality and energy efficient materials.

Wherever possible, external service pipes and other apparatus should be grouped together and discretely located. Rainwater goods should also be located as unobtrusively as possible and discretely coloured to reduce their visual impact. Painted metal rainwater goods are most appropriate.

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Appearance & Details

Buildings should not be designed in isolation. Whether they are of traditional or contemporary design, buildings or development sites should adopt a design concept. New buildings that share and reflect the characteristics of the local area will reinforce local identity. However, directly replicating existing designs is not always appropriate. A full analysis of the village should highlight its characteristic features and how these can be reinterpreted and used in a successful modern and innovative design incorporating high quality and energy efficient materials.

Wherever possible, external service pipes and other apparatus should be grouped together and discretely located. Rainwater goods should also be located as unobtrusively as possible and discretely coloured to reduce their visual impact. Painted metal rainwater goods are most appropriate.

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Roof Form

Developments should be designed to reflect the street-scene both in terms of the pitch and form of existing roofscape. In general a simple roof form is preferred. Careful attention should also be paid to roofing materials, eaves and verge details.

Chimneys are a traditional feature which significantly contribute to the street scene. The position, scale and detail of chimney stacks or other features that project above the ridge line should be carefully considered.

Similarly, the presence, position and size of dormer windows should be considered as part of the overall roof design. Dormer windows should be a feature that provide light and ventilation to roof spaces and should not just be used as a means of generating additional headroom. Dormers can cut through the eaves, however if poorly designed, they can lead to an unsightly proliferation of down-pipes. Gabled dormers normally need steep pitched roofs, and all dormers should be designed with narrow cheek walls.

Locally appropriate roof forms:

Ⓐ Gabled roof - commonly occurring parallel and perpendicular to street

Ⓑ Hipped roof- commonly occurs

Ⓓ Hipped roof with gablet- occurs rarely

Ⓒ Half hipped roof- commonly occurs

Ⓔ L-shaped roof with gables parallel and perpendicular to street

Ⓕ 'M' shaped double gable- repeating gables are a common feature

Ⓖ 'M' shaped double gable behind standard gable roof

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Roof Form

Developments should be designed to reflect the street-scene both in terms of the pitch and form of existing roofscape. In general a simple roof form is preferred, but the design should form part of the overall design concept. Careful attention should also be paid to roofing materials, eaves and verge details.

Chimneys are a traditional feature which significantly contribute to the street scene. Chimneys on new buildings, therefore, can be a positive design feature, but should be addressed as part of the overall design strategy.

Similarly, the presence, position and size of dormer windows should be considered as part of the overall roof design. Dormer windows should be a feature that provide light and ventilation to roofspaces and should not just be used as a means of generating additional headroom. Dormers should sit comfortably in the roof, usually back from the eaves and well below the ridge line. Dormers can cut through the eaves, however if poorly designed, they can lead to an unsightly proliferation of downpipes. Gabled dormers normally need steep pitched roofs, and all dormers should be designed with narrow cheek walls.

In contemporary buildings, flat or mono-pitch roofs may be appropriate, but only where they are a fundamental part of the overall design concept. Contemporary buildings also provide the opportunity for the introduction of alternative roofing materials such as zinc, profiled steel and green roofs.

Large floorplan buildings, such as flats, can present a challenge to provide a roof form that does not dominate the building or the surrounding area. A design solution is to break up the mass of the development by dividing the building into visually distinct elements comprising a hierarchy of simple elements each with its own pitched roof.

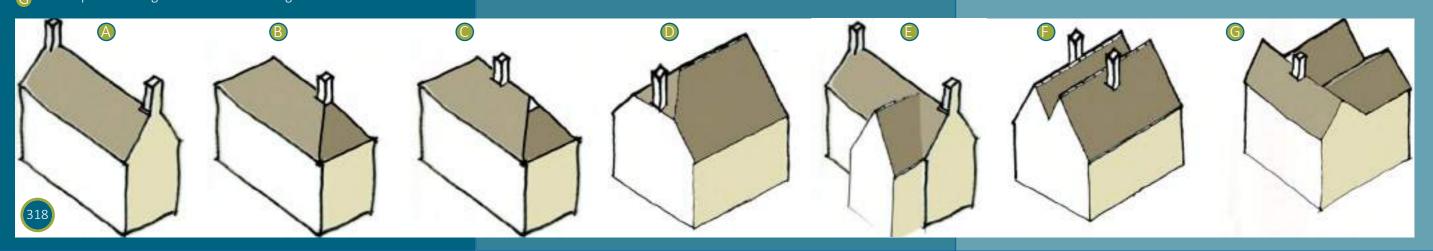## Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Roof Form

Developments should be designed to reflect the street-scene both in terms of the pitch and form of existing roofscape. In general a simple roof form is preferred, but the design should form part of the overall design concept. Careful attention should also be paid to roofing materials, eaves and verge details.

Chimneys are a traditional feature which significantly contribute to the street scene. Chimneys on new buildings, therefore, can be a positive design feature, but should be addressed as part of the overall design strategy.

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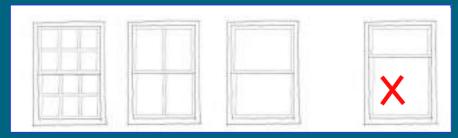

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318

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Windows and Doors

Windows frames should be constructed of timber and should be painted white, black or neutral colours and preferably include multi-paned glazing. Windows should be positioned on elevations to reflect the local character and should include window reveals. Bay windows can be used to add interest to elevations and create attractive features on buildings.

Replacement doors in existing buildings should reflect the period of the property and be of a size which fits in the existing frame. The choice of paint colour for doors can have a dramatic effect on the appearance of a building. Paint colours should reflect that typically found in the streetscene.

Porches and canopies can add interest to an elevation. If porches and canopies are to be included on buildings, they should be appropriate to the style of the building and should reflect the character of the area in terms of scale, details and material.

319 **Locally appropriate and inappropriate window designs**

322 323 324

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Windows and Doors

The choice of window design should be determined by the overall design approach. Buildings of traditional design should have rectangular windows, usually constructed of timber, with the emphasis on either the horizontal or vertical axis. Modern buildings can have a variety of window designs provided they are part of an overall design concept.

Porches and canopies can add interest to an elevation. If porches and canopies are to be included on buildings, they should be appropriate to the style of the building and should reflect the character of the area in terms of scale, details and materials.
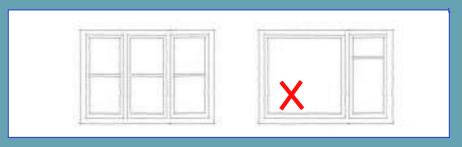
320 **Locally appropriate and inappropriate window designs**

325 326 327

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Windows and Doors

The choice of window design should be determined by the overall design approach. Buildings of traditional design should have rectangular windows, usually constructed of timber, with the emphasis on either the horizontal or vertical axis. Modern buildings can have a variety of window designs provided they are part of an overall design concept.

Porches and canopies can add interest to an elevation. If porches and canopies are to be included on buildings, they should be appropriate to the style of the building and should reflect the character of the area in terms of scale, details and materials.

321 **Locally appropriate and inappropriate window designs**

328 329 330

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Materials

Any future development proposals should be based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment and demonstrate the local palette of colours and materials. It is therefore important that the materials used in proposed developments are of a high quality and reinforce local distinctiveness. Any new materials should be durable and sourced from eco-friendly, recycled and sustainable supplies when possible.

Where modern materials and designs are proposed, both the design and materials should be of an extremely high quality and for extensions should be clearly distinctive from the older parts of the building. Reference to historical forms or colours should be considered to ensure harmony between traditional and contemporary built forms.

Figures 331- 345 provide examples of historically appropriate materials, figures 346- 348 provide examples of contemporary interpretations.

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Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Materials

Any future development proposals should be based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment and demonstrate the local palette of colours and materials. It is therefore important that the materials used in proposed developments are of a high quality and reinforce local distinctiveness. Any new materials should be durable, sourced from eco-friendly, recycled and sustainable supplies when possible.

Where modern materials are proposed, both the design and materials should be of an extremely high quality and should be justified as part of a comprehensive design concept, particularly in sensitive historic areas.
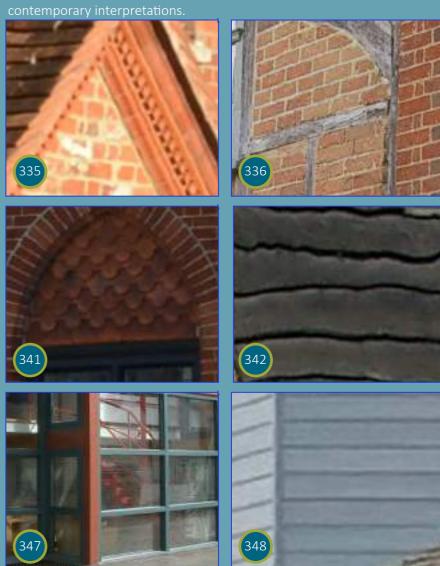
Figures 331- 345 provide examples of historically appropriate materials, figures 346- 348 provide examples of contemporary interpretations.

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Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Materials

Any future development proposals should be based on an understanding of the built environment of Sutton Courtenay and demonstrate the historic local palette of colours and materials. It is therefore important that the materials used in proposed developments are of a high quality and reinforce local distinctiveness. Any new materials should, where possible be durable, and sourced from eco-friendly, recycled and sustainable supplies. Opportunities should be taken to re-establish visual links between this character area and the historic core, this can be achieved with subtle material references.

Where modern materials are proposed, both the design and materials should be of an extremely high quality and should be justified as part of a comprehensive design concept. Figures 331- 345 provide examples of historically appropriate materials, figures 346- 348 provide examples of contemporary interpretations.

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Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Gardens & Landscaping

Gardens and the vegetation within them should be retained to ensure that each building has an attractive, verdant setting. Proposals that affect the front of properties should be accompanied by detailed plans which show a commitment to retaining and enhancing attractive, well-vegetated gardens.

Vegetation planting in private front gardens should be informal to complement the rural context of the settlement. Vegetation and trees should be retained or proposed to screen bins, cycle stores or existing parking bays in view of the street. Where front gardens have been lost to parking or where no front gardens exist, opportunities should be taken to reinstate or establish native planting to help better define the separation between public and private spaces and to visually enhance the character area.

Proposals that provide SuDS solutions and permeable paving are preferable to impermeable surfaces.

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Gardens & Landscaping

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The landscape design for new development sites should take into account existing landscape features. Landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and the site's topography should be seen as an opportunity to add character to a development. For example, existing hedgerows and trees can be used to line a new road or footpath, ponds can be used as focal features and groups of trees can be used as a buffer between the new development and its surroundings.

Trees and shrubs can make an important contribution to the character of an area by adding visual interest, giving structure and form to public and private spaces, and improving the legibility of a place. Deciduous varieties offer shade in the summer, but maximise solar gain in winter. Trees and shrubs, therefore, should be included in all new residential development as part of the scheme's overall design, with native trees selected wherever possible.

New developments, should be designed to include secure private or communal gardens as gardens offer significant amenity value as well as benefits for biodiversity. Garden space at the front of properties can be used to increase privacy in front facing rooms. Front gardens should not be dominated by car parking. Where sufficient space exists they should be incorporate native planting and only small areas of hard surfacing either aggregate or paving. Where hard-surfacing for car parking in front gardens is necessary, it should be screened from view of the street. Proposals that provide SuDS solutions and permeable paving are preferable. Planting within the setting of private front gardens should be in keeping with the rural context of the character area.

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Gardens & Landscaping

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Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments are important both to maintain privacy and to demarcate the change from public to private space.

Boundary treatments should respect surrounding properties and look to traditional precedents. Green boundaries or a combination of green boundaries with stone or brick walls are encouraged to contribute to the rural village character of Sutton Courtenay.

Clashes in boundary treatment material or scale should be avoided, therefore the predominant boundary treatment found in close proximity should be used a design driver. High quality materials should be used, that can help to reinforce local identity. The colour of the mortar, the type pointing and the capping should reflect Character Area 1.

Large blank surfaces at an inhuman scale should be avoided. The boundary heights should be in keeping with that of neighbouring properties. Close-boarded or panel fencing is not considered appropriate in prominent locations, such as road frontages. Simple post and rail and picket fencing is more appropriate.

The appropriateness and design of gates should be determined by the context. Traditional timber gates fit well with the former agricultural buildings. Overly decorative metal gates can suit Victorian properties, but not agricultural settings. Gates which do not offer a view through into a site, can often be oppressive and overbearing to pedestrians.

Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments are important both to maintain privacy and to demarcate the change from public to private space.

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Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

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Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Parking

Where possible, the unregulated on-street parking (such as on green verges and kerbs) should be designed out by the arrangements of paving, soft verges, planting and carriageway.

The loss of front gardens to parking should be discouraged, where it has already been lost, opportunities should be taken to establish or reinforce planting to act as a screen to parked cars, whilst ensuring that highway safety is not undermined.

Extensions to existing properties should not result in the loss of parking resulting in increased on-street parking. Development proposals should provide parking for all dwellings on plot and should be located to the side or the rear of properties to reduce the visual impact of vehicles on the street. Where appropriate, parking can be integrated to the dwelling (357) or can be accommodated within a successfully designed outbuilding or courtyard reflecting the surrounding agricultural character.

New development should seek to provide electric vehicle charging points in all types of car parking areas.

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Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Parking

Car parking is rarely aesthetically pleasing. The impact of parked cars on the street scene should be minimised by carefully considering the location of parking spaces and by the use of appropriate hard and soft landscaping. Soft verges are preferred to concrete curbs as it reflects the historic core.

If parking is provided within a building plot, it should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape. The aim should be to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of dwellings by means of walls, hedging, planting, and use of differentiated quality paving materials (359).

For larger developments one or a number of smaller courtyards may be more appropriate. Entrances should be carefully designed to create a semi-private space that is well overlooked by neighbouring dwellings to provide surveillance and security.

Lines of on street parking should be broken up into blocks of a maximum of 5 bays separated by kerb build-outs which can be landscaped to minimise the visual impact of the parking.

Parking areas should be surfaced using a permeable material to provide adequate natural drainage (360).

New development should seek to provide electric vehicle charging points in all types of car parking areas.

Wherever possible, cycle storage should be accommodated within each plot, such as within a garage or outbuilding or within secure and convenient cycle storage (358).

359

Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

Parking

Car parking is rarely aesthetically pleasing. The impact of parked cars on the street scene should be minimised by carefully considering the location of parking spaces and by the use of appropriate hard and soft landscaping. Soft verges are preferred to concrete curbs as it reflects the historic core.

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Wherever possible, cycle storage should be accommodated within each plot, such as within a garage or outbuilding or within secure and convenient cycle storage (358).

360

Character Area 1: Sutton Courtenay Conservation Area

Garages & Outbuildings

Garages, cycle stores and bin stores are a feature of modern living, and should be included as an integral part of the overall design of new developments from the outset. Outbuildings and bin storage should be designed to be subordinate to the dwellings. Where possible, the design should reference the historical design approach to outbuildings within Sutton Courtenay.

Figures 361- 366 provide examples of appropriate outbuilding designs.

361

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Character Area 2: Roads/Lanes leading from the Conservation Area

Garages & Outbuildings

Where garages are integrated into dwellings they should be designed as subordinate features and set back from the front facade of the dwelling (357). Garages should have sufficient space for keeping cycles or for storage purposes.

Separate garages can be accommodated in one or a number of small courtyards. Entrances should be carefully designed to create a semi-private space that is well overlooked by neighbouring dwellings to provide surveillance and security.

Sufficient covered external space should be provided to house containers for refuse and recycling. Such structures should be conveniently located for residents and accessible for refuse collection vehicles.

Figures 361- 366 provide examples of appropriate outbuilding designs.

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Character Area 3: South of Conservation Area

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Core Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Core Policy 2: Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire.
Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy
Core Policy 4: Meeting Our Housing Needs
Core Policy 5: Housing Supply Ring-Fence
Core Policy 6: Meeting Business and Employment Needs
Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services
Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area..
Core Policy 16: Didcot A Power Station
Core Policy 17: Delivery of Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area
Core Policy 18: Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the South East Vale Sub-Area
Core Policy 23: Housing Density
Core Policy 24: Affordable Housing
Core Policy 25: Rural Exception Sites
Core Policy 26: Accommodating Current and Future Needs of the Ageing Population
Core Policy 27: Meeting the housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People
Core Policy 28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites
Core Policy 29: Change of Use of Existing Employment Land and Premises
Core Policy 31: Development to Support the Visitor Economy
Core Policy 32: Retail Development and other Main Town Centre Uses
Core Policy 33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
Core Policy 35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking
Core Policy 36: Electronic Communications
Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness
Core Policy 38: Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites
Core Policy 39: The Historic Environment
Core Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction
Core Policy 41: Renewable Energy
Core Policy 42: Flood Risk
Core Policy 43: Natural Resources
Core Policy 44: Landscape
Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure
Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
Core Policy 16b: Didcot Garden Town
Core Policy 18a: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area
Core Policy 47a: Delivery and Contingency
Core Policy 4a: Meeting our Housing Needs
Development Policy 1: Self and Custom-Build
Development Policy 2: Space Standards
Development Policy 3: Sub-Division of Dwellings
Development Policy 4: Residential Annexes
Development Policy 5: Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside
Development Policy 6: Rural Workers' Dwellings
Development Policy 7: Re-use, Conversion and Extension of Buildings for Dwellings in the Open Countryside
Development Policy 8: Community Services and Facilities
Development Policy 9: Public Houses
Development Policy 10: Ancillary Uses on Employment Land
Development Policy 11: Community Employment Plans
Development Policy 12: Rural Diversification and Equestrian Development
Development Policy 13: Change of Use of Retail Units to Other Uses
Development Policy 14: Village and Local Shops
Development Policy 16: Access
Development Policy 17: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
Development Policy 18: Public Car Parking in Settlements

Development Policy 20: Public Art
Development Policy 21: External Lighting
Development Policy 22: Advertisements
Development Policy 23: Impact of Development on Amenity
Development Policy 24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments
Development Policy 25: Noise Pollution
Development Policy 26: Air Quality
Development Policy 27: Land Affected by Contamination
Development Policy 28: Waste Collection and Recycling
Development Policy 29: Settlement Character and Gaps
Development Policy 30: Watercourses
Development Policy 31: Protection of Public Rights of Way, National Trails and Open Access Areas
Development Policy 33: Open Space
Development Policy 34: Leisure and Sports Facilities
Development Policy 35: New Countryside Recreation Facilities
Development Policy 36: Heritage Assets
Development Policy 37: Conservation Areas
Development Policy 38: Listed Buildings
Development Policy 39: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments

Grade I 🔴

- Church of All Saints
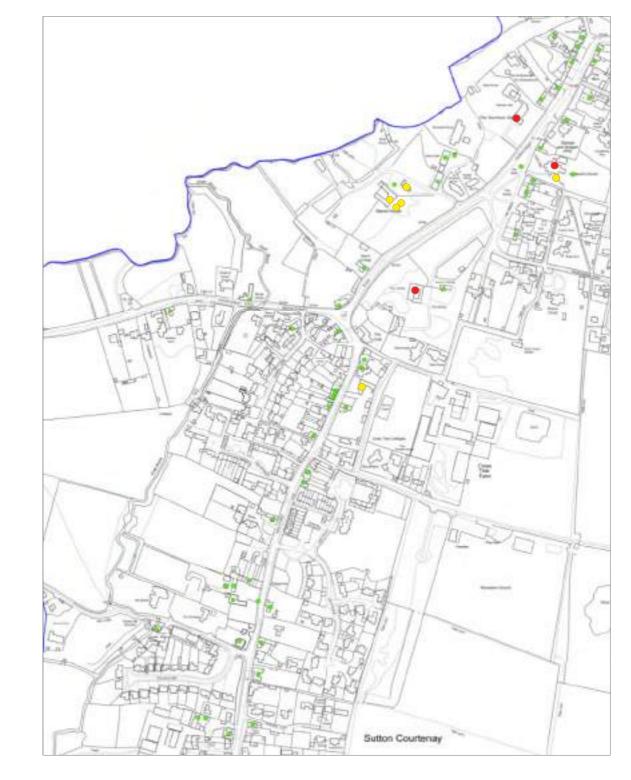- The Norman Hall
- The Abbey

Grade II* 🟡

- West Gate pier Approximately 20 Metres South East of the Manor House
- The Manor House
- Outbuilding Approximately 15 Metres North East of the Manor House
- East Gatepier Approximately 20 Metres South East of the Manor House
- Buckridges
- Chest Tomb Approximately 10 Metres South of Chancel of Church of All Saints

Grade II 🟢

- 1, Church Street
- 18, High Street
- 2, The Green
- 20 and 22, Church Street
- 20, High Street
- 33 and 35, High Street
- 37 and 39, High Street
- 4 and 5, The Green
- 4, Brook Street
- 44, High Street
- 49, High Street
- 5, High Street
- 76, High Street
- 8, 9 and 10, The Green
- Barn Approximately 25 Metres South South West of Number 13 (Buckeridges)
- Barn Approximately 45 Metres West North West of Number 96 (Uptown Farmhouse)
- Barn Approximately 50 Metres East North East of the Manor House
- Barn Approximately 70 Metres North East of the Manor House
- Chest Tomb to Thomas Dalby Approximately 15 Metres East of Chancel of Church of All Saints
- Courtenay Lodge
- Cross Trees Cottage
- Dovecote Approximately 100 Metres North East of the Manor House
- East Boundary Walls to No 72
- Ramseys
- Garden Cottage at No 72
- Howes Cottage
- Little Chemscote
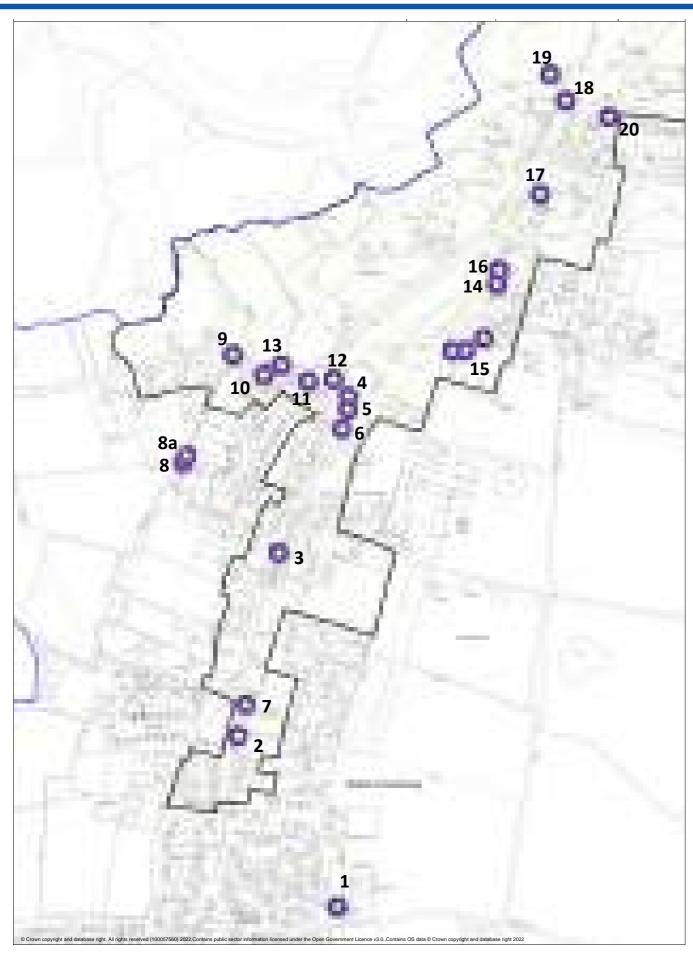- Long Barn
- Manor Cottage
- Mill House

- No. 1 Abbey Cottages
- Number 3 Goslings
- Number 53 (Pull Croft) and Railings to Front
- Old House
- River Cottage
- Shelter Shed Approximately 40 Metres West North West of Number 96 (Uptown Farmhouse)
- Southfield Farmhouse
- Stable at No 72
- Sundial Approximately 10 Metres North East of the Manor House
- Sutton Bridge and Causeways
- Sutton Courtenay War Memorial
- Sutton Mill

- Thatched Cottage
- The Almshouses and Attached Walls and Gate
- The George and Dragon Public House
- The Old School House
- The Retreat
- The Wharf
- Tudor Cottage
- Uptown Farmhouse
- Walton House
- Wharf Barn
- Wharf Cottage

Sutton Courtenay

Figure 17 also illustrates the locations of Listed Buildings

Non Designated Heritage Assets

1. Glebe House, Hobbyhorse Lane- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
2. Sutton Courtenay House, High Street- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
3. Brick wall, formerly bounding the vegetable garden of the original Lady Place house, High Street
4. The Croft, High Street- *(A), (GV), (LHV), (CS)*
5. 3 High Street- *(GV), (LHV), (CS)*
6. The Old School, High Street-- *(A), (GV), (LHV), (CS)*
7. Former public house, The Plough - *(LHV), (CS)*
8. 1 & 3 Ginge Brook including the footbridge (8a)- *(GV), (LHV), (CS)*
9. Brook House, Brook Street- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
10. East and West Wilden, Brook Street- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
11. Halls Garage, Brook Street- *(LHV)*
12. Stone wall and gateways to The Abbey orchard, The Triangle- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
13. Stone wall (virtually uninterrupted) running from Brook House, Brook Street to The Almshouses, Church Street- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
14. Bekynton House and Cottage, The Green- *(LHV), (CS)*
15. 15,16 &18 The Green- *(A), (GV), (LHV), (CS)*
16. The Swan Public House, The Green- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
17. The Old Vicarage, Church Street- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
18. Remains of the brick elevation of the former paper mill and wooden footbridge, Thames backwater, Church Street *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
19. The historic causeway which separates the higher level of the Thames from the lower Sutton Pools linking the four weirs with Church Street- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*
20. The Fish Public House, Appleford Road- *(A), (LHV), (CS)*

Conservation Area Boundary

Reasons for inclusion:

(A) Age

(GV) Group Value

(LHV) Local Historic Value

(CS) Contribution to the setting of the area

Figure 17 illustrates the locations of Listed Buildings

Localism Act 2011, The Stationery Office Limited, 2011

Neighbourhood Planning Guidance, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2014, updated 25 September 2020

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2021.

National Design Guide, 30 January 2021

The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Dec 2016.

The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2, Oct 2019.

The Vale of White Horse Design Guide, 2015.

Sutton Courtenay Character Assessment, Dr Kathryn Davies, August 2019

Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031, 2015

Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan, October 2017

National Character Areas – defining England's natural boundaries, Natural England, 2014

The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), 2004

The Vale of White Horse Landscape Character Assessment, 2017

Sutton Courtenay Landscape Study, Steven Warnock, 2019