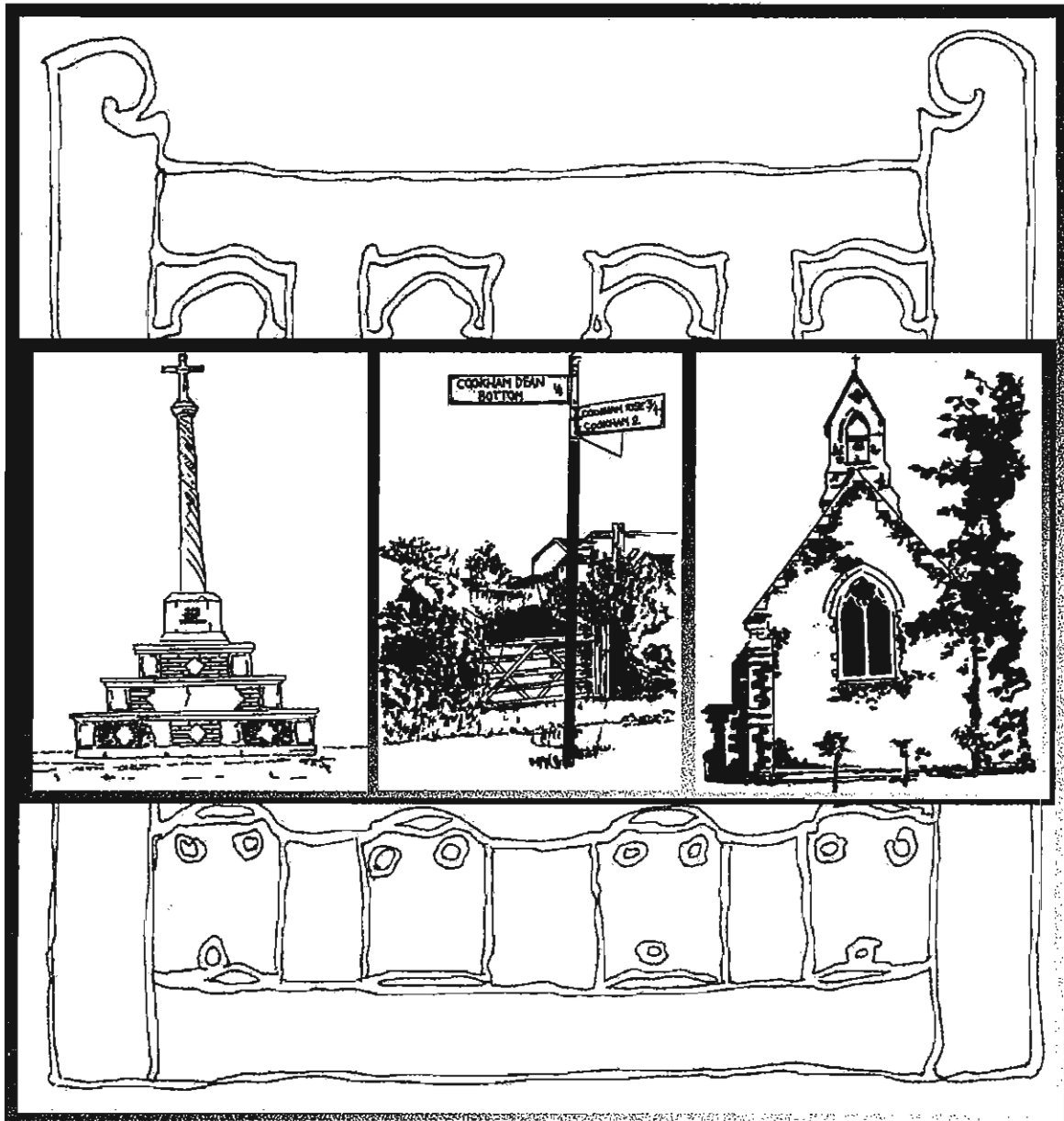


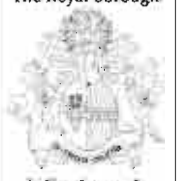
Conservation Area Statement

Cookham Dean



Planning Policy Manager
November 1998

The Royal Borough



Windsor &
Maidenhead

CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT

COOKHAM DEAN

Background

Cookham Dean Conservation Area was originally designated in 1969 by Berkshire County Council. During the review of the Borough's Conservation Areas in 1994, Cookham Dean was identified as one of the conservation areas that required some minor amendments including the addition of the area known as Cookham Dean Bottom, where there is a high density of 18th and 19th century dwelling houses. As a result of this review, this Conservation Area Statement was adopted by the Planning and Environment Board of The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, in November 1998, in order to describe the character and appearance of the conservation area for use in guiding future planning decisions in the area.

The contents of the statement and the associated maps are intended to highlight significant features but they should not be regarded as fully comprehensive and the omission of, or lack of reference to a particular building or feature should not be taken to imply that it is of no significance. This significance may only be fully identified at such time as a feature or building is subject to the rigorous assessment that an individual planning application necessitates.

Similarly, the controls that apply to elements vary and in some instances the items that have been identified as significant features cannot be fully protected by planning legislation. Further guidance on the controls that apply in conservation areas is given in the leaflet "Conservation Areas - what they are and what it means to live in one" available from the Planning and Environment Directorate's Offices, and advice on individual queries can be obtained from the Development Control Units or Conservation Section of the Directorate.

In preparing this report, the authors have made use of the following publications which are gratefully acknowledged:

- ♦ Pevsner N, (1966): The Buildings of England - Berkshire, Penguin Books.
- ♦ Over L, (1986): Domesday Revisited, Thames Valley Booksellers, Maidenhead
- ♦ Over L and Tyrrell C, (1994): The Royal Hundred of Cookham, Cliveden Press
- ♦ Department of Environment, (1987): List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest- Parish of Cookham.

In most instances, dates attributed to particular buildings will be derived from one of these sources but in other instances dates will be based on the external features of a building. The authors acknowledge that in such circumstances additional information such as internal features may suggest a different date or dates and in this respect the dates in this document are not considered to be definitive.

This description aims to highlight the main features of the area by giving a brief historical background and identifying some of the main architectural and landscape elements. This conservation area covers an area of approximately 90 hectares and is the largest rural conservation area in the Borough containing a number of small dispersed communities separated by tracts of agricultural land and woodland. Locally this area is affectionately known as "The Deans" comprising a number of quite distinctly different settlements. In order to simplify the task of defining the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area, it is considered appropriate to subdivide the area into small parts which possess their own individual characteristics:-

- Area A - Winter Hill**
- Area B - Cookham Dean Bottom**
- Area C - Dean Lane/Alleyns Lane**
- Area D - Hardings Green and Cricket Pitch**
- Area E - Cookham Dean around St John the Baptist Church.**

These sections follow after a general description of the history and topography of the area.



1. History

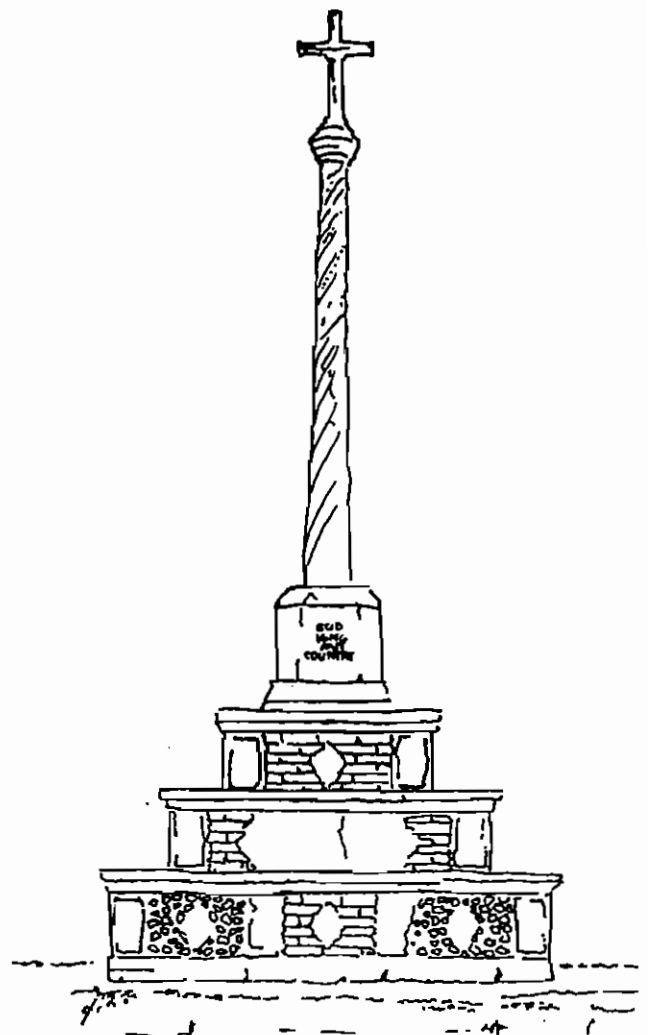
Cookham Dean has been a focus of human activity from as early as the prehistoric period with the good quality agricultural land and proximity of the Thames providing the raw materials for early farming activities. The Bronze Age cemetery comprising four round burial mounds at Cockmarsh, to the east of Winter Hill, proves the presence of early human activity in this area together with evidence of Bronze Age ditches and enclosures in the vicinity of the conservation area, identified on aerial photographs. The Thames itself is known to have been an important communications and trading route, a political boundary and possible ritual focus for early man indicated by stray artefacts found in the river. Archaeological finds from the Roman period are also recorded, indicating Roman occupation on the river gravels adjacent to the Thames.

Cookham Dean formed part of the manorial lands belonging to the Manor of Cookham at the time of the Domesday Survey, although there is no record of any settlement in its vicinity until the 14th century. It is believed that the earliest part of the settlement is likely to have been around Dean Farm at the convergence of Dean Lane and Alley's Lane, as there is a concentration of early buildings in this situation. It is likely that this is the original "Dean" which is described as such on Rocque's Map of 1761 and is generally accepted as meaning valley. Other indications of mediaeval activity in the area are the chalkpits within the Gibraltar Meadow and the Hillgrove Wood Areas. Chalk is known to have been quarried for use as a local building material, the most famous survival being Bisham Abbey.

Whilst the majority of development in Cookham Dean has taken place since the beginning of the 19th century, there is evidence of earlier buildings, mainly isolated farmsteads and cottages. It is possible that there was a strong link between the productive agricultural land and the activities of the monks at Bisham Abbey who owned much of the agricultural land to the south and east of Bisham. A property called

Stone House in the Winter Hill area, was reputed to have been constructed for the monks of Bisham Abbey; however there is no evidence on the site of the present Stone House to indicate if an older building ever existed.

A number of famous people, in more recent times, have been associated with Cookham Dean including Kenneth Grahame of "The Wind and The Willows" fame who lived just outside the southern boundary of the conservation area at the beginning of the century. Sir Stanley Spencer, the local artist born and bred in Cookham, used to be seen pushing his pram containing his equipment around the tracks and lanes of the 'Deans', painting local views some of which were painted from within the conservation area.



2. Topography and the Local Natural Environment

This part of Cookham is located on the chalk escarpment and valleys, initially steeply rising up from the Thames to a height of about 100m before gently forming softer rolling hills south from the river towards Maidenhead to the south. The area immediately to the south of the river is known as Winter Hill and although the conservation area takes in a number of residential properties built into the escarpment's banks, the majority of this area is woodland or open chalk land. Immediately to the east and west of the conservation area are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest; Cockmarsh is important for its chalk grassland and is grazed mainly by cattle and rabbits. The other area, Quarry Woods to the west, is a beech woodland, of ancient origins, a southern outlier to the Chiltern beech woods on the northern side of the Thames. It forms a dominant feature in the landscape despite suffering from a heavy loss of trees in recent gales. To the south of the area is predominantly agricultural land interspersed with clusters of settlements. The area was once rich in fruit orchards, most notable were the cherry trees which provided an attractive show of blossom in the spring, but very few of these survive today.

The area is overtly rural in appearance with much of the land presently in agricultural use either for crop growing or pasture for cattle and horses. Bands of trees, mature copses and small woods are dotted around and form pleasant backdrops to some of the small communities in particular Cookham Dean Bottom.

A particularly distinctive feature of the conservation area is the number of greens or commons often forming the central focus for groups of residential properties. Many of these greens survive from the common land practices of the mediaeval period and since 1934 have been in the care of the National Trust, which acquired lands believed to have once belonged to the Manor of Cookham.

Most of the greens are areas of open grassland often framed by a series of tracks or roads. Another characteristic of the conservation area is the network of country lanes, tracks and footpaths which thread their way through the area linking many of the tiny hamlets and individual farm groups. The main routes through the area are no higher in standard than "B" road status and generally have an east-west axis linking the main road from Marlow to Maidenhead to Cookham. There are three roads offering this route through the conservation area; to the north is Winter Hill, on top of the escarpment, in the valley is Dean Lane, centrally located in the area and to the south is Church Road and Hills Lane, providing access through the part of the village lying on top of the hill, around the local church. All these roads are connected by narrower lanes and a network of agricultural tracks and footpaths.

The geology of the area has dictated how the local vernacular built form has evolved with locally quarried flint, chalk and clay and harvested timber being used in the construction of houses in the area. Later properties of the 19/20th centuries display imported materials such as Welsh slate probably transported either on the river or by rail.

3. Area A- Winter Hill

3.1 Setting and Form of Development

This is an area that is dominated by the Thames itself. Topographically the land formation of steep sided chalk escarpment has been moulded by the presence of the river over many years. The visual quality of this landscape has encouraged people to settle and construct properties to take full advantage of the magnificent views northwards over the river to the distant Chilterns, despite the inherent physical difficulties of building on such a steep terrace. Many of these properties have well manicured lawns, colourful gardens and ornamental trees running down the escarpment to the river's edge, whilst others have boathouses and boats of different types and sizes moored to the banks. One particular property, Riverwood Heights, has its own cable platform lift which connects the house to its boathouse on the river bank. Much of the escarpment, is however, too steep for any building and remains wooded, giving a rural backdrop to these properties. Not all this area is in residential use, however. The presence of Woottens Boatyard at the far western side of Gibraltar Lane, a thriving boat repairing company, provides visual interest and a character of industrious activity in contrast to the sleepy air of the remaining parts of Gibraltar Lane. The ferry crossing the river at this point no longer operates but the previous traditional crossing point here is clearly demonstrated by the presence of footpaths terminating on the river bank either side of the Thames.

On top of the escarpment where Winter Hill Road runs along the summit, a large tract of land, is owned and managed by the National Trust and is famous locally for the stunning views towards Buckinghamshire to the north and a popular location for cyclists, walkers and day trippers with car parking at the meadow edge.

The majority of properties in this area are large detached residential 19th and 20th century dwellings which form a row of dwellings perched precariously into slopes

of the southern banks of the Thames escarpment to the north of Gibraltar Lane and Stone House Lane. Many of the larger individual properties in Gibraltar Lane are cannot be seen from the Buckinghamshire bank of the river because of the presence of two islands, Gibraltar Islands, in the centre of the river. The property called The Islands has a private footbridge over to one of these islands which are a famous habitat for the Loddon Lily - an unusual species in this area. More dispersed development mainly Victorian or earlier is found on the higher point of Winter Hill.

3.2 Principal Buildings and Materials

Most of the properties in this area have very individual styles and designs particularly the more modern ones. Some of the older properties are distinctive more for their scale and overall impact rather than for a particular architectural quality although they generally display good, functional brickwork and typical features of their era. **Chiltern Court and Winter Hill House** once one large house, now subdivided, face north to exploit the views beyond the Thames basin, and also gain a superb view south towards the rest of Cookham Dean. Built of bricks with clay tiled roofs these properties have a rotund tower and spherical turret on one side with a myriad of different chimney stacks and dormers in its array of different roof lines. The brick work has now been painted. Another property of similar construction, age and design is **High Ridge and Dean Croft**, at the junction of Winter Hill with Startins Lane. This is a particularly individual building in terms of style and forms an important landmark at the edge of the conservation area.

To the south of Winter Hill Lane is **Lea Barn**; comprising an old farmhouse and barn but no longer functioning as a farm. This is probably the oldest building in this part of the conservation area. The

farmhouse is constructed in traditional timber frame with the typical black and white appearance of the area and a clay tiled roof. It is likely to be 16th century in origin but has been altered and extended over time. The adjacent barn is a typical 3 bay barn weatherboarded onto an 18th century timber frame with a clay roof. This distinctive building can be seen in many views in and around the conservation area. A little further along Winter Hill Road is **Chimneys** a grand symmetrical Victorian farmhouse, built of brick with tall chimneys and unusual fleur-de-lis shaped barge boards at its eaves. Within its grounds are a series of barns that run parallel to the road pre-dating the main house by about a hundred years. Although no longer a farm, these agricultural buildings have been recently refurbished and still form a distinctive man-made feature on this stretch of the road.

Of the many properties off Gibraltar Lane, few make any direct impact on the conservation area itself when viewed from the lane, as they are generally well screened and set in large grounds whilst others are flat roofed reflecting their modern 1960's/70 design. From the Buckinghamshire side of the river, however, more impact is apparent from the number of roofs and chimneys springing up within the trees or on the immediate banks of the river. The group of utilitarian sheds associated with **Woottens** Boatyard are clearly visible from across the river, together with the paraphernalia of boats and jetties and activities associated with the boatyard. The original boathouse belonging to **Woottens** is a simple rendered structure with a large side chimney and is probably Edwardian in date and mock-Tudor in style. Private boathouses and areas of boat moorings are concentrated next to this part of the river in a haphazard mix of small inconspicuous sheds and larger boathouses with residential accommodation on the 1st floors. Some have been recently refurbished or constructed whilst others have a slightly distressed look being in need of repairs. The earliest of these is dated externally as 1881 and has a mock timber framed gable. The **footbridge** belonging to

The Islands is a modern structure that was constructed in 1961 and forms a delicate arch over the Thames to one of the Gibraltar Islands.

The other area of dwellings is off Stone House Lane, again no more than a single lane track. Although reference was made in the history section to the Stone House, owned by the monks of Bisham Abbey, nothing of this older building now remains and the present **Stone House** is a much more recent 19th century single storey dwelling. Now sub-divided into two private residences, **Stone House** lives up to its name being partially constructed in knapped flints, whilst the other half has been rendered. These properties still have a distinctive character by virtue of the low pitched Welsh slate roof.

3.3 Landmarks and Other Features

This area is dominated by the natural features of the dramatic escarpment of Winter Hill and the swathes of mature trees along its banks and the river Thames itself. The roads in this area are particularly narrow and in some cases no more than dirt tracks. Many footpaths link through to the river and other beauty spots such as Cockmarsh and Quarry Wood. Gibraltar Lane is an attractive track with trees from the escarpment bending over the track to form natural arches with trees from properties on the northern side. Boundaries to properties in this area are mainly rural in character formed from hedgerows, trees and some fencing. There is an exception with the brick and flint walls of Gibraltar House. Aside from the occasional noise from boats on the river, the little train that runs along the Buckinghamshire side of the river valley between Maidenhead and Marlow and the background drone of the road traffic on the A404 and M40, this is a tranquil area.

The wall to Chiltern Court and Winter Hill House, is an unusual patchwork of brickwork, whilst to the west on the edge of the conservation area boundary is the

striking gothic-style brick and flint wall belonging to High Ridge and Dean Croft. Formed into pointed arches this wall forms an important landmark to this part of the conservation area as well as to the setting of the buildings behind.

3.4 Views and Relationship to Countryside

The popularity of this area is due to the views from Winter Hill north over Marlow and the Thames Valley towards the distant Chiltern Hills. Very little of the Thames itself can be seen from this vantage point, but occasional boats can be heard. Speed boats and other leisure activities on the gravel lakes on the Buckinghamshire bank can be seen and heard from Winter Hill. From the Buckinghamshire side of the river, Winter Hill is a commanding area, dominating the setting of the Thames and offering a beautiful tree lined backdrop with the occasional roof top or chimney poking above the tree canopy in direct contrast to the open fields of the north bank.

There is little visual relationship from Winter Hill towards the remaining conservation area to the south in the summer as the strong hedgerow and trees on the south side of Winter Hill screen views across to the other side of the valley. However, footpaths that run south past Winter Hill House, allow views of the southern part of the conservation area.

3.5 Enhancement Opportunities

- ♦ Improve levels and kerbing at the edge of road and car park at Winter Hill. Consideration of sensitive traffic calming measures may be appropriate.
- ♦ Litter- this can be a problem from picnickers and ice-cream vans - proper maintenance of these areas is required.
- ♦ Tree Surgery- the area around Winter Hill may need some tree management works to ensure that the better quality trees are retained and to ensure that views are preserved. Discussions with the National Trust and other interested bodies into the general management of this area may also be required.



4. Area B- Cookham Dean Bottom

4.1 Setting and Form of Development

This area to the south of Winter Hill has a high density of dwellings which are mainly grouped around the convergence of a number of roads and lanes, the principal of which are, Dean Lane, Kings Lane, Startins Lane and Popes Lane. There does not appear to be any real focus or centre for this community of mainly Victorian and later properties. The only public open space associated with this area is a disused quarry pit to the west and the agricultural land between Popes Lane and Warners Hill to the east. The random layout of property with a mixture of tightly packed groups of terraces and more spacious detached dwellings is an important characteristic of this part of the Conservation Area. An attractive characteristic of Cookham Dean Bottom is the number of trees that soften and screen the buildings. Another distinguishing feature of the area are the array of attractive private gardens, some of which are visible from the lanes and footpaths, particularly where the main gardens to individual properties are situated in front of the dwellings. Particularly notable are Cartlands Cottage and the neighbouring terraced cottages in Kings Lane and Lower Ventnor Cottages off Popes Lane.

Many of the houses may have been associated originally with agriculture as estate workers cottages. The only working farm surviving in the area is Kings Coppice Farm just outside the western boundary to the conservation area. Set within the valley bottom, this part of Cookham Dean has a propensity to flood in times of wet weather. Flood waters are now directed into channels in land to the north of Dean Lane between Cookham Dean Bottom and the Dean Lane settlement where there used to be another farmstead now demolished.

4.2 Principal Buildings and Materials

There are a number of 17th and 18th Century buildings, particularly along Kings

Lane which help to provide evidence of the earlier development of the area. **Cartlands Cottage** is the only listed building in the Bottom at present, believed to be 17th century it is timber framed with a clay tile roof and is well set back from Kings Lane forming a row with its neighbouring properties. Other properties such as **Devoncot, Old Pond Cottage, Bagsters Cottage** and **Chalk Pit Cottage** are 17th or 18th Century in date but have been added to and altered more recently. **Corner Cottage** on the corner with Wesson's Hill and Popes Lane is a timber frame property possibly 16th century in origin but its tall hedge obscures much of it from view.

From the late Victorian period, are a number of terraced properties, concentrated on the eastern side of Cookham Dean Bottom; **Upper and Lower Ventnor Cottages, Wells Cottages, Victoria Cottages** and **Dean Valley Cottages**. All portray the typical architectural features of this time; slate roofs probably imported from Wales brick constructed and, where they have not been painted, some decorative features such as use of different coloured bricks in bands or around openings. Windows are generally timber sashes and casements although some alterations to the fenestration have inevitably occurred. Many of these individual buildings or terraces have names and dates either painted onto their facades or inbuilt as datestones. The attraction of these terraced cottages lies in their uniformity and that they are an unusual stylistic form of housing in such a rural area, normally being associated with urban and suburban areas. They are an indication of more intensive development resulting in an increase in the population of this part of the settlement's community in the late 19th Century. Later property built in the twentieth century intersperses these earlier buildings so that there are few gaps or areas of open space between properties leading to a tight-knit community.

4.3 Landmarks and Other Features

The most characteristic feature of this area is the network of narrow lanes, tracks and footpaths which criss-cross the area forming little islands of land where dwellings have been constructed. Some of the properties have attractive brick and flint boundary walls to them whilst others have installed tall metal gates, or grown high hedgerows to their boundaries, thus providing visual as well as physical barriers to protect their privacy, at the same time breaking down the sense of community and intimacy which other properties such as the terraced groups provide.

There are no other uses associated with this area other than residential although it is still clearly rural with agricultural land surrounding the community to the east and west. A post box outside Dean Valley Cottages helps to provide some form of facility and there appears to be architectural evidence for a Post Office in the end cottage of this group, whilst the Chequers a listed building on the north side of Dean Lane, just outside the conservation area's boundaries, provides a local restaurant/bar. Clearly this community as a whole is very much dependant on the car for access to shops and as such cars are present in this area at all times parked in driveways and on the corners and pull-ins to lanes.

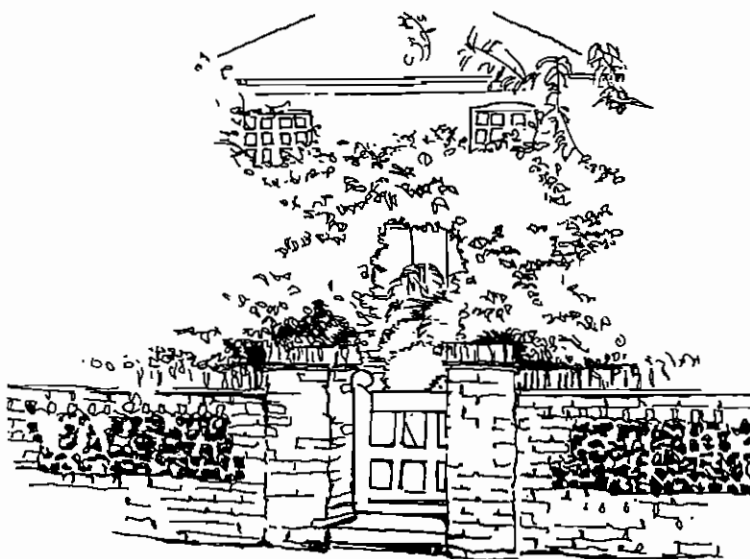
4.4 Views and Relationship to the Countryside

Although individually properties probably benefit from views particularly at 1st floor level over the neighbouring countryside, very few views are obtained from the public viewpoints as the buildings and trees in the valley bottom block any views out of the immediate area. Only Popes Lane going up the hill south towards Hardings Green, allows views across open agricultural land to the east and north so that there is a visual link between the summit of Winter Hill and this part of Cookham Dean. Views from Startins Lane, going north from Dean Lane towards Winter Hill itself are also impaired

mainly by individual property boundaries and thick tree and hedgerow screens. Glimpses of paddock and the orchard on the southern side of Winter Hill can however be seen.

4.5 Enhancement Opportunities

- ♦ There is a need for terraced houses to maintain original features and details because of the importance of maintaining the uniformity of these units. Changes such as replacement windows and doors can have a fundamental impact on the visual appearance of these properties.
- ♦ Where changes have occurred there are opportunities to reinstate original features such as roof coverings, forms of windows, and boundary walls or fences.
- ♦ The issue of car parking needs to be addressed, without jeopardising the characteristic features of this area.



C- Dean Lane/Alleyns Lane

5.1 Setting and Form of Development

The group of buildings centred on the convergence of Dean Lane, Alleyns Lane and Warners Hill are historically and architecturally the most important part of the Cookham Dean Conservation Area. They are formed around a small green in the valley bottom which was originally a pond that was infilled at the turn of the century and formed into a small village green. A lime tree on the green was planted in 1901 by a local man, Mr Jordan and is a dominating feature of this area. Although the farm group at Dean Farm is no longer in use, agricultural land again dominates the landscape on the hills to both north and south-west of this community. Unusually a group of 4 dwellings, developed this century, have been constructed off their own private track on the northern side of Dean Lane half way up the hillside but are well screened by trees and do not disturb the general rural appearance of the area.

Apart from the cluster of historic buildings along Dean Lane there is an elongated ribbon of development on the rising land along both Warners Hill and Alleyns Lane which helps to provide a visual link to the remaining parts of the conservation area when taken into views from vantage points like the allotments.

5.2 Principal Buildings

In total there are 8 listed buildings within this small area:-

Old Solomans, Dean Lane
Oak Beams, Warners Hill
Forge Cottage, Dean Lane
Forge House and Forge, Dean Lane
Dean Farm, Dean Lane
Redaways Cottage, Dean Lane
Cromwell Cottage, Alleyns Lane
Telford Cottage, Alleyns Lane

All of them have 16th century origins and are Grade II.

Dean Farm is the earliest and probably the most important survival of this group which originally had an animal byre to one end of the building. This part is built in timber frame with brick infill panels with some unusual diamond patterning of vitrified header bricks whilst the remainder of the farmhouse is constructed in brick. Two of the bricks close to the front porch have the date 1801 carved onto them which can probably be attributed to this section of the building when it was extended. To the east and rear of the site is a timber framed barn presently clad in metal sheeting, which runs up the hill towards the allotments. Although not listed in its own right, this is an important building both in reflecting the original use of Dean Farm and in providing an atmosphere of a rural settlement to Dean Farmhouse. A further timber framed building, of this same group, runs parallel to Alleyns Lane and forms the setting to Cromwell and Telford Cottages. The space formed between these three Dean Farm buildings is important in providing evidence of the original farmyard and reads as open space in views from the north of the group.

Some distance to the north of Dean Farm is an isolated **field barn** of unusual dimensions, weatherboarded with a tin sheet roof. It is not clear whether this building used to form part of the Dean Farm group, but it is a very distinctive building in the landscape with its half hipped roof visible from a number of local footpaths and it may have been a fruit store used in connection with the local orchards.

The remaining listed buildings are all residential in use apart from the **Forge** which is purported to have existed since Queen Elizabeth I reign and has certainly been in the same family for generations. The Forge is still the only private blacksmiths in the area and it appears to be a thriving business with the number of horse owners in the locality.

All these listed buildings are constructed from traditional materials of the area. Structurally formed from timber frame, they may have originally been infilled with wattle and daub long since replaced with locally made bricks. It is likely they may have had thatched roofs, although only **Cromwell** and **Telford Cottages** retain this roof covering which provides a softer, lower ridge line to this long building than would a clay tiled roof. All of these houses have a mixture of leaded lights and timber casement windows with attractive features, like the carved timber gate to the front door of **Redaways Cottage**.

Of the non-listed buildings in this area, the oldest and most distinctive is **Old Well Cottage**, off Alleyns Lane.

5.3 Landmarks and other Features

The garage with its sign and cars parked in front provides local colour and vitality to this otherwise tranquil hamlet location. The noise of car repairs and horse shoeing from the Forge opposite are reminders of how the old and modern forms of transportation require maintenance.

The tree on the green in front of Redaways Cottage is a massive specimen rising high above any of the buildings in the vicinity. To the north east of the settlement is Hillgrove Wood which provides an attractive backdrop to this part of the Conservation Area and block any views towards Cookham Rise.

The allotment gardens to the north of the Dean Lane area are well used, providing a leisure activity for the locals and open space and views. From this area the jumble of thatched, clay and tin roofs of the properties in the valley below provide a unusual landscape of man-made roof sculptures.

5.4 Views and Relationship to the Countryside

Like Cookham Dean Bottom, the majority of properties other than those in Alleyns Lane and Warners Hill are in the valley bottom so that views are not easy to gain apart from to the west along the valley bottom towards Cookham Dean Bottom. There are views of the cluster of historic buildings from a number of vantage points from the footpaths on the southern side of Winter Hill and from Warners Hill and Alleyns Lane.

Views are gained from Alleyns Lane and in particular from the allotments both of the immediate community fronting onto Dean Lane and of the distant hill of Cookham Dean where the bellcote of St John the Baptist can clearly be distinguished amongst the trees.

The area is surrounded by agricultural land and with larger more dispersed development within mature grounds, the feeling of rural settlement is emphasised. Vestiges of orchard trees still survive in small groups in some of the larger fields.

5.5 Enhancement Opportunities

- ◆ Ensure that the local footpaths are clearly marked and that the finger-post directional sign could be substituted for an older type sign more appropriate to the area.
- ◆ The signage of the garage needs to be controlled to avoid being too intrusive in the area.



6. Area D- Hardings Green & Cricket Pitch

6.1 Setting & Form of Development

The two areas of common land - Hardings Green and the Cricket pitch green, form the foci of this area. They both lie on high ground on the hills immediately above Dean Valley bottom and are therefore quite exposed areas of open grassland save for the occasional mature tree. (The views from the old cricket pitch are particularly notable and on windy days people can be seen using this area for flying kites.) Bounding each of the greens is the main road through this area which connects with Church Road and the main section of the village to the west and Warners Hill and Hills Lane to the east. There are tracks and footpaths serving residential properties around the perimeters of both greens and forming links to other parts of the Dean. Most of the properties in this area are detached cottages and houses forming enclaves of development around the commons and facing onto the common. Generally these all have spacious grounds which contribute towards the feeling of intimate domesticity within a rural landscape. This is further emphasised by the large tracts of agricultural land between Popes Lane and Warners Hill, to the south at the rear of properties facing onto Hardings Green and to the west of the cricket green and the Inn on the Green.

6.2 Principal Building Materials

This is a very similar area to Cookham Dean Bottom in terms of materials used and types of buildings constructed. There are no listed buildings in this part of the Dean, most of the buildings dating from the late 19th and 20th centuries. There are however, a few earlier 18th century cottages with more distinctive architecture, some retaining original features. **Old Daniels and Wisteria Cottage** on Popes Lane are good examples from this era displaying leaded light windows, and use of flint in a decorative form within the brickwork as well as old clay tile roofs, brick chimneys. They are relatively unaltered by modern additions.

Uncle Tom's Cabin, a public house facing the junction with Warners Hill and Hills Lane, is also 18th century with possible earlier origins.

Moving on into the 19th century, there are a number of typical good quality buildings from this period, the most notable being **Hope Cottage** on Hardings Green, with its low pitched slate roof, white rendered walls and traditional sash windows and **Thornbury Cottage** facing onto the old cricket pitch sporting a clay tiled roof with through-eave dormers, tile hanging and barge boards, and bay windows on the ground floor front elevation. The simple wooden picket fence around its garden completes the visual impression of rural domesticity. Another building from the 1880's is less conspicuous, being found to the north of the cricket pitch off Chalkpit Lane the track leading to Cookham Dean Bottom. The **Methodist Chapel** now known as **Chapel House** was built in 1889 and is believed to have been constructed on the site of an earlier chapel. The chapel fell into disuse in the 1970's and was converted to a house. The burial ground around the chapel was relaid to form a garden, however, many of the gravestones and memorials were retained in a small walled enclosure of brick and flint to the front of the garden, fronting onto the lane forming an eccentric feature in this part of the settlement. The chapel itself has retained the shape of its original window openings despite its change of use.

On the edge of the cricket pitch are a group of semi detached cottages dating from the beginning of the 20th century called **Royal Cottages**. These are characterised by large gabled low pitch roofs with a mixture of render and mock timberframe on the 1st floor and brick with voussoir arched windows and doors on the ground floor. The most striking character of this group of 6 units is their symmetrical composition forming a balanced group visually. They are

also united by a low brick and flint front garden wall. Next to this group is the **cricket pavilion** of indeterminate age probably 1930 in date. Whilst relatively low and inconspicuous this building is important in providing the clue to the use of this particular green and also portrays the use of timber for cladding and roofing. Hidden some distance off the Green to the west is the **Inn on the Green**, once known as the Hare and Hounds, it is an Edwardian building featuring mock timber frame and jetties on the gables at 1st floor and use of a combination of brick and green glazed tiles on the ground floor. Some of the original stained glass is still retained about the front door. Recent extensions and alterations to an old coach house have been carried out and the whole building enjoys a large area of garden to the rear.

Most of the other properties in this part of the conservation area are large detached dwellings of no particular historic merit, however a number do have visual interest. **Timbers**, to the rear of Hardings Green, is made from timber with timber shingles on the roof and hung on the elevations. Next door is a single storey property of indeterminate age but may be an 18th century lodge known as **Elm Lodge**, which still retains most of its external features.

6.3 Landmarks and Other features

To the south of the Green adjacent to the main road is the local war memorial, a tall stone cross on top of a slender column of stone with twisted rope decoration. This stands on a podium of 3 steps formed from stone, brick and flint and the whole piece is within a circular paved area of flint and cobbles. It is unusual both for the number of different materials used in creating it and for its position being set on the highest part of the Green, therefore, dominating much of the area and forming an important landmark. This is also located close to the "village" hall on the opposite side of the road. There is a small copse of mature trees to the north of the war memorial which allows for some screening between the east and west sides

of the green. At the junction of the main road and Popes Lane is a triangular piece of land with a finger post on it. This is unusual in that it is the traditional timber direction sign that has survived modern day changes.

6.4 Views and Relationship to the Countryside

On a clear day the views from the old cricket pitch, near to the war memorial, (and no doubt from many of the residential properties in the area!) can go as far east as the striking presence of Cliveden on the steep escarpment above the Thames. To the north, the rise of Winter Hill can be made out with the barn at Lea Farm reminding the viewer of the agricultural heritage of the area. Equally as prominent are the areas of agricultural land, woodland and orchards which dominate the landscape.

From the footpath that runs east from Hardings Green there are views of the distant settlement of Cookham with the tower of Holy Trinity Church clearly visible.

6.5 Enhancement Opportunities

- ♦ Ensure that any erosion of the greens from cars parking on the edges is prevented.

7. Area E- Cookham Dean around St John the Baptist Church.

7.1 Setting and Form of Development

Surrounded by agricultural land, mainly arable or pasture, this is the most recognisably village-like part of the conservation area and contains a mix of uses and community facilities. The whole of this area is situated on a high flat hill top, the highest point being where the Church of St John the Baptist is situated. From this high point the Church commands a prominent position, with most development spaced around it at respectful intervals. In the centre immediately adjacent to the Church, is a small area of National Trust land which provides a village green from which tracks and roads emanate.

Church Road is the main road running through this part of Cookham Dean, with other small lanes, like School Lane and Bigfrith Lane running off it. Church Road itself links this part of the conservation area to Pinkneys Green to the west and Hardings Green to the east. To the east of the Church is a small and well established orchard which forms an attractive backdrop to the churchyard.

7.2 Principal Buildings

At the centre of the village, **St John the Baptist** church is not only the most important building architecturally but also historically. As a listed building it has been recognised for its importance to the local area and is attributed to R C Carpenter who designed it in early 14th Century church style. The church is built of flint and is simple stylistically with a plain slate roof and tall bellcote to one end. The actual date for its construction is 1844 although it was consecrated the following year. It is noted for its pure white interior and some stained glass windows. The individual behind the foundation of the church was a Revd. George Hudson, who considered that this area was in need of a church because of the high incidence of lawlessness of local people and sought to single mindedly cleanse and

educate the local population. He was also responsible for founding the local school originally located where the present School Cottage and Garage buildings are on the north side of Church Lane in the 1890's although it has since been relocated.

The church has got two **lych gates**, unusually one recently constructed, both in the local vernacular materials of timber, flint and brick with clay tiles and decorative ridge tiles. The more recent of the two has clay ridge finials designed in the shape of farm animals. A long flint and brick wall rebuilt in the 1970's surrounds the churchyard fronting onto the Green and pulls the church group together as an architectural piece.

Although there are no other listed buildings in this area, there are a number of important non-listed buildings. The property now known as **Mulberry House** used to be the vicarage, is a large brick built building in attractive grounds immediately to the north-east of the Church. It is particularly distinctive with its alternating rows of plain and scalloped tiles on its roof and decorative brick features including a cross picked out in yellow headed bricks. Opposite the church is the **Jolly Farmer Public House**, the local pub, likely to be 18th Century in origin with an unusual facade partly clad in stone and flint nodules. Down a track to one side of the pub is a small thatched cottage called **Old Gardener's Cottage**. This is the only remaining thatched building in this part of the Deans. A group of terraced cottages, called Albion Cottages are also down this track, and have been substantially altered.

To the south of the church is land which once belonged to a large house called Sterlings. Although none of this now remains, its lodge, **Sterlings Lodge**, still survives off Kennel Lane, a 2 storey house with scalloped tile hanging on some of its

gabled elevations. A small brick-built coach house now converted to a garage stands opposite it. Within the site of the large house, an estate of modern detached properties have been constructed, although one of them, Lime Trees, still has a large timber-framed **barn** clad in metal sheeting within its grounds, evidence of an earlier farm in this part of the Dean. Adjacent to the barn and fronting onto Church Road, is Car-Mon-Ta a small building which used to house the village bakery but has been closed for some years now.

A number of larger Victorian properties, such as **Orchard Leigh** (renamed) and High Meadows are interspersed by smaller scale dwellings fronting onto Church Road and Bigfrith Lane. **Cookham Dean Church of England School** in Bigfrith Lane is a typical example of an Edwardian building, single storey in height with a low pitched slate roof, London Stock bricks with red brick surrounds and timber sash windows, neatly tucked behind a laurel hedge. More modern extensions to this have been constructed on the opposite side of the lane. Further to the east along Bigfrith Lane is an unusually high 3 storey building which used to be known as "Deanery Antiques"(1, **Bigfrith Lane**). This towers over the adjacent properties including the local Post Office and can be seen from some distance across fields to the north and east. It has a half hipped roof (again unusual in this area) and is constructed in red brick with terracotta decoration around window openings. Of particular note is the shopfront (although this was built as a shop with residential accommodation above the whole building is now a single dwelling) which still retains its original terracotta pilasters and console brackets to each side of the shopfront now converted to windows to form a residential property.

7.3 Landmarks and Other Features

The bellcote of St John the Baptist Church is a strong feature in the landscape seen from many views to the north and east of this part of Cookham Dean and provides an important visual link to the remaining area.

In front of the church on the village green is a fine tree which towers above the church, blocking views of it from the west during the summer. The wall which surrounds the churchyard runs along Church Road linking into the wall belonging to the old vicarage and also the WI Hall and providing a formal edge to this side of the road contrasting with the area of open space opposite. Another interesting wall forms the curtilage to the development to the south of the church in Sterlings Field. The wall is a mixture of brick and flint and has a datestone of 1881 in it. In School Lane, a very narrow track which loops around back onto Bigfrith Lane, the effect of a series of walls and garden hedges creates a feeling of enclosures tempting an individual to go further to see what is waiting around the corner!

This part of Cookham Dean is particularly busy because of the location of the post office and shop in Bigfrith Lane which has a steady flow of customers, usually arriving by car. A small hairdressers next door adds to the ambience of a busy village community.

The garage facing onto Church Road and Bigfrith Lane, has had several owners in recent years, but is now a showroom and attracts a number of visitors during the day whilst the school, pub and Church also have a number of visitors adding to the ebb and flow of traffic in the village.

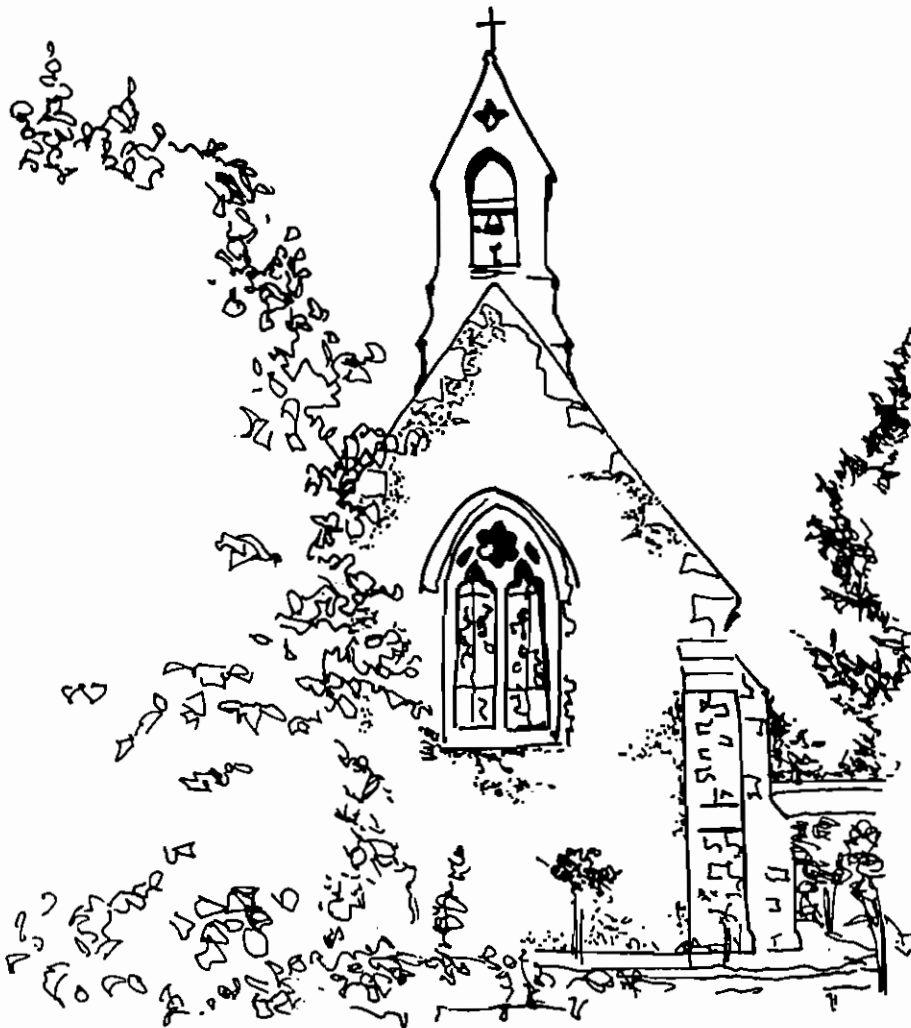
7.4 Views and relationship to the Countryside

Within the centre of this part of the conservation area there are few long distance views, apart from glimpses through the churchyard towards the east and the hills above the Thames in Buckinghamshire. The footpath, known as Kennel Lane, which runs down part the southern boundary to the churchyard provides attractive views of this area of the Chilterns with Cookham Rise and the tower of Holy Trinity Church in Cookham in the middle distance. Sir Stanley Spencer painted the view from this

area called "Cookham from Cookham Dean". The war memorial on Cookham Dean Green is clearly visible in views westwards along Church Road. At the western extremity of the conservation area, in Bigfrith Lane, there are some other attractive views over the agricultural landscape towards properties on the other side of the valley on Grubwood Lane with the trees of Quarry Wood spreading out along the skyline.

7.5 Enhancement Opportunities

- ♦ Infill pot holes in tracks around green.
- ♦ Repair benches on the green.
- ♦ The grassed open space in front of wall to the Sterlings Field development could be better managed.



8. Boundaries

North

The boundary follows the south bank of the River Thames immediately to the west of the old boathouse of Wootten's Boatyard and runs east up to the eastern boundary of Copper Beech Cottage in Stone House Lane.

East

The boundary then turns south running along the centre of the footpath to the east of the boundary to Copper Beech Cottage, to the south east corner of Badgers Wood where it turns due south up the steep escarpment across 2 tracks before following the line of a track to Winter Hill Road. It then follows a bend in the road to the entrance to the farm where it crosses the road and continues along the line of the footpath. After a short distance, the boundary turns through 90° and goes west along a line at the rear of the farm buildings and Chimneys. On reaching a private track it turns south again past Winter Hill Cottage and Lea Barn before linking up with another footpath. After running along this footpath the boundary turns east along the southern edge of the field north of Round Copse. Another 90 degree turn takes the boundary south running down the eastern edge of fields before coming out in Alleyns Lane. It then goes across the road and runs along the northern boundary of Old Well Cottage and Old Barton before kinking around to run south along the rear of Satis and then turns south west to run along the boundary of Reddaways before coming onto Dean Lane.

From Reddaways the north side of the boundary runs north west along Dean Lane to the junction with the drive to Langland House including Langland House, to the rear (eastern) boundaries of the houses fronting onto Warners Hill continuing along these boundaries to their junction with Hills Lane. The boundary then runs east along the north side of Hills Lane to the eastern boundary of Hills Cottage where it turns to run south along the length of the eastern boundary of

Hills Cottage to its junction with the footpath. It then continues west along the centre of the path to the eastern boundary of Elm Cottage where it continues south to its southern corner.

The boundary then runs north west along the rear boundaries of Elm Cottage and Timber House and then turns west along the rear boundary of High Hedges, Hillcrest, Hope Cottage, Philbies and The Bungalow on Hardings Green. The boundary then runs south along the access to Hardings Farm for the length of the side boundary of Byways before turning west along the rear boundary of Byways and Tars Cottage to its junction with the east side of the field to the rear of the Vicarage. It runs south east along the outer edge of this field to its junction with Kennel Lane and then turns west along the south side of Kennel Lane to the eastern side of Meadowcroft, and turns south along the eastern boundary of Meadowcroft, York House and All Seasons to the southern corner of All Seasons.

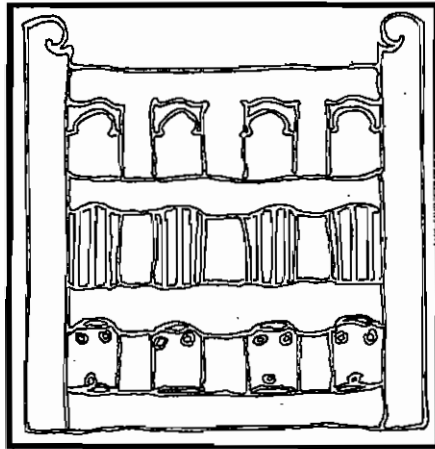
South

The boundary continues west along the rear boundary of All Seasons, Sterlings, Siskins, Chubbers and Dyars to the junction with the east boundary of High Meadow when it turns south along its rear boundary and then turns west along the western boundary to meet Church Road. It then continues south along the eastern edge of Church Road to the access drive to Woodlands Farm Cottages when it turns north west across the road to follow the eastern edge of the track running north from Church Road to Bigfrith Lane. At Bigfrith Lane the boundary turns south west to follow the southern edge of Bigfrith Lane to the western boundary of the Post Office. It then continues along the outside of the western boundaries of the Post Office, Four Winds, Spindles and Rufus Rest and returns north and then east to enclose the north eastern boundaries of Rufus Rest and Spindles.

West

The boundary runs west along the rear of Oddpots, Over Dean and the Infant School and turns north and then west to follow the rear of properties in School Lane as far as the eastern boundary of Woodward's. Here the boundary turns to run due north along the west side of the boundaries at the rear of Tynron and The Jolly Farmer Public House continuing to meet the footpath running west from The Inn on the Green. From this point the boundary follows the western edge of the open area north of The Inn on the Green continuing to the rear of Hollyhocks and Thornbury Cottage to the junction with Royal Cottages where the boundary turns to follow the west and north boundary of the Cottages. At this point the boundary turns to run north west along the western edge of the Quarry area to the junction with Kings Lane and continues along the west side of King's Lane to the northern boundary of King's Lodge and Queens Gate. Here it turns east and then

south to follow the boundary of these properties to the rear boundaries of Devoncot. It then continues along the rear of the properties in Kings Lane as far as the eastern side of Cliff Cottage where it turns north along the western boundary of Old Pond Cottage to the junction with Dean Lane where it turns east to follow the south side of the road to the junction with Startins Lane. It then turns to follow the western edge of Startins Lane to the entrance to Deancroft where it turns west to enclose the entrance wall and front building line of Deancroft and continues along the boundary wall of the entrance to High Ridge to meet Winter Hill. It then returns along the south side of Winter Hill to the western edge of the footpath running north towards the Thames as far as the old boathouse to Wootten's Boatyard where it turns to enclose the boathouse before returning to the river bank.



Illustrations by Jane Aldrich November 1998