

## 8.0 KEY CHARACTERISTICS

**8.1** The historic core of Sawston is essentially a small linear village built around the green that is now the site of the village war memorial, with houses set along both sides of the High Street, densely packed to the north, and south of the war memorial and larger, with generous grounds, to the south. Large areas of woodland and garden surround the church and manor to the east, while the houses south of the war memorial are backed by extensive areas of open pasture, which is a key component in the setting of the conservation area.

**8.2** Buildings in the village are generally of two or 2½ storeys. The earliest buildings are timber framed, but rendered or enclosed within later walls of painted brick, under roofs that were once thatched but that are now covered in plain clay pegtiles of variegated hue, from orange to pale yellow. The 19th-century buildings are slate roofed and of yellow gault brick. Dormer windows are found in 19th-century houses with mansard roofs and older buildings with pitched roofs.



*No. 149 High Street*



*Nos 103 High Street and 2 Shingay Lane*

**8.3** Roads are generally wide, with wide, tarmac-surfaced footpaths and modern street furniture. There is little evidence of historic paving in the conservation area, though there are some

traditional cast iron street name plates in Portobello Lane and on Camping Close. Although there is no historic street lighting, there are two tall columns of cast concrete that might have been installed as sewer gas lights on Church Lane (by the Old Vicarage) and in Shingay Lane.



*Portobello Lane, traditional cast-iron street sign*



*Camping Close, traditional cast-iron street sign*



*No. 12 Shingay Lane and cast concrete sewer gas lamp*



*Possible sewer-gas lamp stand of cast concrete outside the Old Vicarage, Church Lane*

## 9.0 THE BOUNDARIES TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

**9.1** The Conservation Area is centred on the war memorial, taking in the historic core of the village, which extends northwards and southwards along the High Street, as well as the church and Sawston Hall, with its extensive gardens. In effect the conservation area takes in most of the village as it was until expansion began in the late 19th-century. It excludes Huntingdon Farm and the northern extremity of the High Street, but in both cases, the historic buildings here are already protected because of their listed status.

**9.2** An extension to the conservation area boundary is proposed to take in the John Falkner Infants School, the area of the village known as the Baulks and the recreation ground on Mill Lane.



*Mill Lane Recreation Ground*



*Mill Lane, looking east*

**9.3** The justification for this is that Mill Lane and the Baulks form an integral part of the historic village core, and Mill Lane itself is one of the oldest of the four east-to-west routes through the village which led out to the common fields of the village and to the site of an Anglo-Saxon mill (now Spicer's paper factory).

**9.4** The lane is itself an attractive part of the village, with a raised footpath running along its northern edge, planted with some fifteen mature ornamental cherry trees, which form a continuous canopy above the path and that are at their finest when they flower in April. They are protected by tree preservation orders.



*Raised footpath lined by cherry trees, running along northern side of Mill Lane*

To the north of the path is a large green space called The Baulks, again bordered by mature trees (eighteen in total, mainly lime, with some sycamore and horse chestnut) and a low timber barrier, which provides a green buffer between the school and the road. The name of the Baulks might indicate deliberate construction of this raised terrace as a flood defence.



*The Baulks*

**9.5** The newly drawn boundary would take in a number of buildings along Mill Lane. No. 11 Mill Lane is an early 18th-century grade-II listed timber-framed and clay bat house. Nos 1 to 6 The Baulks (Crampton Terrace) is a typical 19th-century

Cambridgeshire terrace of gault brick and tile with canted ground floor bay windows built in 1882 by John Crampton, proprietor of the printing works in the High Street (see 7.19). The main building along the Baulks is the John Faulkner Infants School, originally built in 1866 as the National School for the village. This attractive group of neo-Gothic buildings is constructed in red brick with yellow brick ornamental details, buttressed walls, and large steep-pitched gables filled with large (originally timber) mullioned and transomed windows. In the school grounds is a grade-II listed 17th-century saddleback-roofed timber-framed dovecote.



*No. 11 Mill Lane*



*Nos 1 to 6 Crampton Terrace, The Baulks*



*Nos 1 to 6 Crampton Terrace, The Baulks*



*Dovecote in the grounds of John Falkner County Infant School*



**9.6** The new boundary would run to the north of the school, along Hammonds Road, and would take in two listed properties along the High Street. No. 26 is an attractive grade-II listed 16th-century timber-framed house with later rear extensions, with exposed first floor studwork and corner braces. No. 28 is a grade-II listed 18th-century timber-framed and rendered house with a fine original reeded doorcase and reeded flush panelled door. Alongside the house, to the north, is a 19th-century hand pump set in a paved recess.



*John Falkner County Infant School*



*No.26 High Street*



*Post war school warning sign outside No.14 The baulks*  
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*18th-century door and doorcase at No.28 High Street*



*No.28 High Street*



*Water pump, north of No.28 High Street*

## 10.0 ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**10.1** Several buildings in the conservation area have been identified as being at risk because they are empty and/or boarded up.



*No.57/59 High Street*

Neglected buildings have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the owners of such properties should be encouraged to carry out maintenance and

necessary repairs (for which grants might be available: see 10.11 below) and seek to keep the buildings in viable economic use. In critical cases, action will need to be taken to ensure that repairs are carried out.



*No.68 High Street*

A particular problem relates to the historic buildings of the Hutchings and Harding's Old Yard tannery, where the drying sheds are now functionally redundant and in a poor state of repair. SCDC is working with English Heritage to try to secure their long term future but this is proving problematic.



*Hutchings and Harding Ltd, High Street, tannery works drying sheds*

**10.2** Traffic is a problem within the conservation area because of the effects of noise and exhaust pollution, and of vibrations on listed houses lining the area south of the war memorial. Attempts to combat noise and pollution have led to disfiguring alterations to some of the buildings, including double glazed window units and doors in non-traditional materials, and exterior render and paintwork that disguises the historic form of the house. Front gardens are not pleasant to sit in and so are neglected and weedy or paved over to form

hard standing for cars. Ultimately, the only solution is to reduce traffic to the minimum: current traffic calming measures, including a 20 mph speed limit, is almost universally ignored. Creating access to new housing development down Common Lane to the potential development site of Henry & Co, at the western end of Portobello Lane, as recommended in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (page 285) will only increase traffic on this blind bend and make matters worse.

**10.3** Again as a defence against noise and lack of privacy, boundary walls have been built in front of listed houses that detract from the conservation area because of their materials, and owners should be encouraged to consider replacements in the future of more sympathetic materials.

**10.4** Most of the shopfronts in Sawston are modern but are traditional in design. The few exceptions again represent an opportunity for improvement when ownership changes and new shop fascias are being designed, to overcome visual blight resulting from inappropriate design and signage.



*Nos. 119 and 121 High Street*



*Nos. 58 and 60 High Street*



*Nos 107 to 111 High Street*

**10.5** Some historic boundary walls are in a poor state of repair and need maintenance if they are to survive: this is particularly so in the case of the chalk walls surrounding the churchyard and the clay bat wall along Catley's Walk which, once they lose their render coat and are exposed to frost and rain, can deteriorate rapidly.



*No. 149 High Street*



*Catley's Walk, clunch wall*



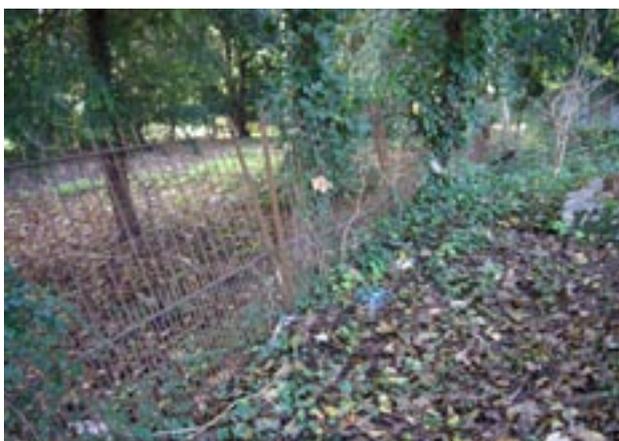
*St Mary's churchyard/Sawston Hall chalk and brick boundary wall*

The churchyard wall fronting onto Church Lane is also in a state where it could deteriorate without careful and sympathetic repair, including repointing – especially on the southern face, facing into the churchyard.



*St Mary's churchyard, eastern extension*

**10.6** The churchyard is partly enclosed by attractive iron railings which are in some places broken and bent; elsewhere they are overgrown with ivy.



*St Mary's churchyard/Sawston Hall boundary railings*



*Cricket lovers' headstone in Sawston churchyard*

This boundary would be fit from maintenance and repair, as would the churchyard as a whole, especially to clear the rubbish that has accumulated along the southern boundary of the churchyard. As some of the listed churchyard headstones and tombs have clearly deteriorated since they were designated, a careful written and pictorial record of all the memorials in the churchyard might be undertaken.

**10.7** Large and mature trees and groups of trees make a major contribution to the character of the conservation area. Consideration should be given to registering all the mature trees in the conservation area (privately and publicly owned) and protecting them through tree preservation orders. In particular, there are many old apple and pear trees in gardens within the conservation area that should be identified for their possible rarity and conserved for their bio-diversity value.



*The Balks*

The Council might also consider the preparation of a tree management programme, with a regular system of tree inspection and maintenance. This is especially necessary if the conservation area is extended to take in The Balks, where the flowering cherries are in need of maintenance to free them from ivy and intrusive self-seeded

undergrowth, and to monitor the state of health of the horse chestnut trees to prevent the spread of chestnut canker. Timely new planting should be undertaken when necessary. Such new planting should reflect the essentially native rural species generally found and avoid the use of small ornamental varieties or imported varieties such as leylandii.



*Raised footpath lined by cherry trees, running along northern side of Mill Lane*

**10.8** There is an attractive milestone in the grass verge outside Tudor House. Consideration should be given to listing the milestone and ensuring that its location is known and registered as a protection against theft or future work by highways authorities that might cause damage.



*Milestone on verge outside Tudor House, High Street*

**10.9** Some houses in the conservation area that would have had thatched roofs now have roofs of concrete pantiles (eg Nos 115 (listed) and 111 High Street). These would be enhanced if they were reroofed in more sympathetic materials, preferably involving a return to thatch, or alternatively using clay pantiles.



*Nos 119 and 121 High Street*

**10.10** Where single family dwellings are concerned, alterations to doors, windows and boundary walls can normally be carried out without planning permission from the Council. Development of this kind is called 'Permitted Development' and falls into various classes which are listed in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.



*No. 5 Common Lane showing original door and side-sliding sashes*

Powers exist for the Council, known as Article 4(2) directions, to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interest of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area by encouraging owners to retain original features and protect these features from inappropriate alteration. Possible candidates for Article 4 (2) Directions are No. 5 Common

Lane, the central dwelling of three (Nos 3 to 7) in the terrace on the south side of the lane retain its original side-sliding sash windows and Nos 1 to 6 Crampton Terrace, all of which retain original doors, windows, boundary walls and chimneys.



*Nos. 1 to 6 Crampton Terraces, The Baulks*

**10.11** Subject to the availability of funding, the District Council may make discretionary grants available towards the repair of certain historic buildings and structures within the district. These grants are made to encourage the use of traditional materials and craft techniques and are generally targeted at listed buildings, though visually prominent non-listed buildings within Conservation Areas may also be eligible for grant aid. More specific advice on the availability of grants, as well as on appropriate materials and detailing, is available from the Conservation Section within the Planning Services Directorate at the District Council.

## 11.0 POLICIES TO PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA

**11.1** These policies should be read in conjunction with those in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted February 2004). Summaries of the relevant policies are provided in Appendix A, but it is advisable to consult the Local Plan itself.

**11.2** Opportunities for new dwellings within the boundaries of the proposed Conservation Area will be very limited (and possibly restricted to the replacement of existing dwellings that are marked on the appraisal map as being of neutral or negative architectural interest). In considering the design of new or replacement buildings, or extensions to existing ones, the Council will take into account the impact of proposals on the setting of Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Section 8 of this document sets out some of the key characteristics which need to be considered if a design is to fit comfortably with its neighbours. The following will also be important in determining whether a new development is acceptable.

**11.3** Scale – buildings should not exceed 2 or 2½ storeys in height. Roofs should be modestly pitched (ie 30 to 35 degrees) in slate or clay pan-tile, or more steeply pitched in plain-tile or thatch. Rooflights should only be located on less visible slopes and hipped or pitch-roofed dormers are to be preferred in mansard or steeply pitched roofs (eyebrow in thatch).

**11.4** Location on the plot – new buildings should respect established building lines and extensions should adhere to the principles of subordination, so that they do not undermine the architectural interest of the main building, while also seeking to preserve existing trees and hedgerows.



*Nos. 63 to 65 High Street*

**11.5** Materials and colours – Sawston's pallet of materials is set out in Section 8 of this document.

This pallet should be used as a guide for new development. In addition, stained weatherboard timber cladding may be considered appropriate for lesser structures, such as garages (as has been used for the retail units at Nos 63 to 65 High Street). [Sawston 84] Rendered walls should be painted either white or in pale pastel shades, while brickwork should generally be gault clay, though some limited use of red brick may be appropriate. Modern artificial materials (including concrete roof tiles and uPVC windows) should not be used.

**11.6 Boundaries** – these are very important to the character of the proposed Conservation Area. Positive boundaries identified on the map within this appraisal should be retained. Where new boundaries are proposed, care should be taken to ensure they use appropriate materials (such as timber picket fences). Overly formal or ornate gates and walls are not to be considered. Planted boundaries, including those to the sides and rear where they abut lanes or the wider countryside, will need to be appropriately treated so that existing vegetation of merit is retained and augmented as necessary with new native trees and hedges. Sufficient space must be allowed within site

layouts to enable this planting to be implemented in the short term and retained over the longer term. Close-boarded fences to open countryside will be resisted unless they can be adequately screened with appropriate planting.

**11.7 Street signs** – the District Council will encourage the Highway Authority and statutory undertakers to reduce the visual clutter and impact of plant, road signs and other street furniture. Where signs are needed, their size should be kept to the minimum allowable and, wherever possible, they should be fixed to existing features rather than being individually pole-mounted. Reflective yellow backgrounds to traffic signs are not appropriate in or adjacent to Conservation Areas and should be avoided. Where required, traffic calming measures should be specifically designed to complement the village and its setting, avoiding the introduction of alien urban features or standardised, inappropriate gateways. Well-designed street furniture in suitable colours will be encouraged, while necessary, but unattractive plant, should be appropriately screened.

**Checklist:**

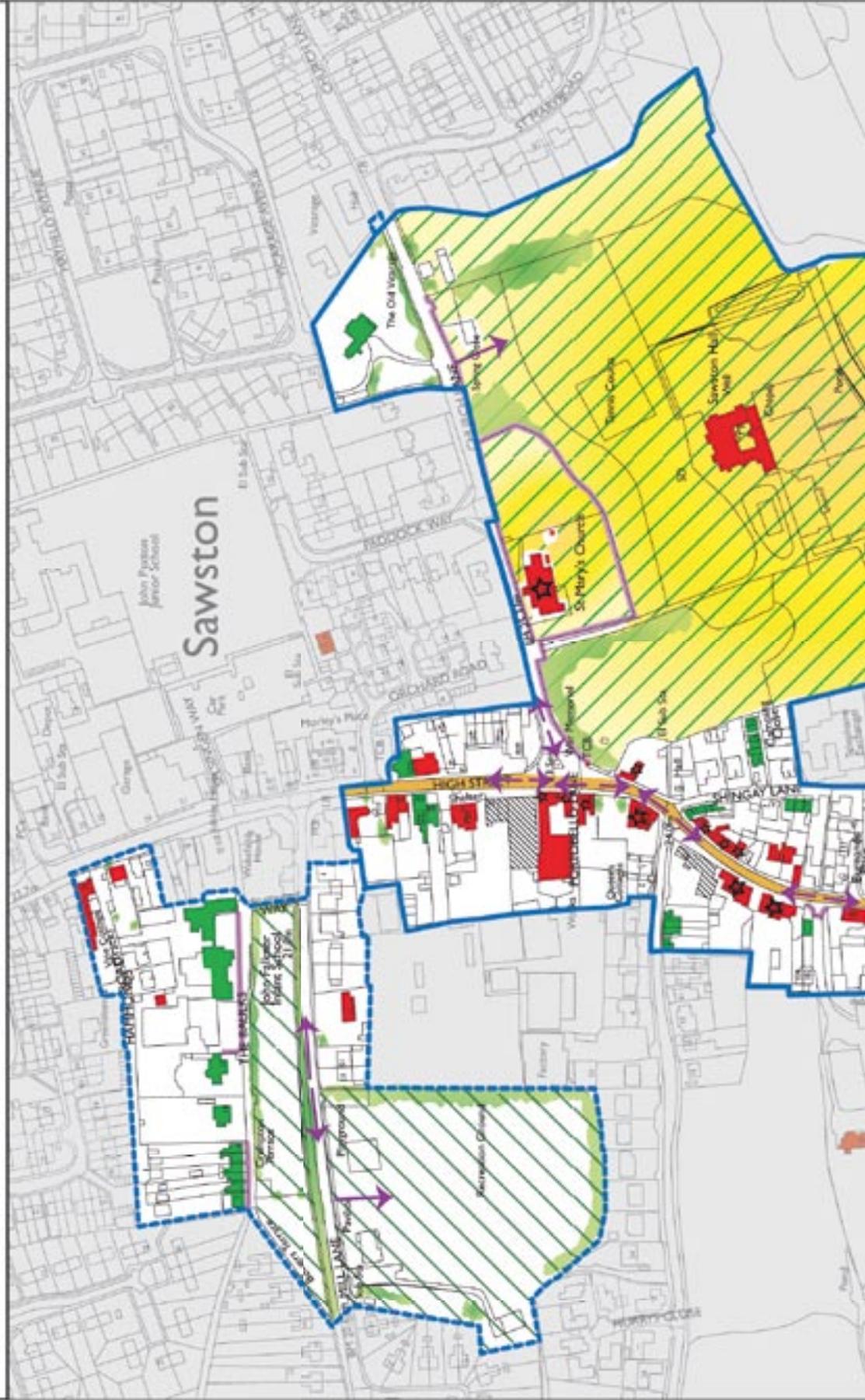
- Review of boundaries
- Origins and development of the topographic framework
- Archaeological significance and potential, including scheduled monuments
- Architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of the buildings, listed and unlisted, and the contribution they make to the character of the area
- Character and hierarchy of spaces and townscape quality
- Prevalent and traditional building materials
- The contribution made by greens, green spaces, hedges and other natural and cultivated elements to the character of the area
- The prevailing or former uses of the area, their historic patronage and the influence of these on plan form and building type
- Relationship of the built environment to the landscape or open countryside, including definition of significant landmarks, vistas, views and panoramas
- The extent of loss, intrusion or damage – ie negative factors
- The existence of any neutral areas
- Recommended actions and management proposals

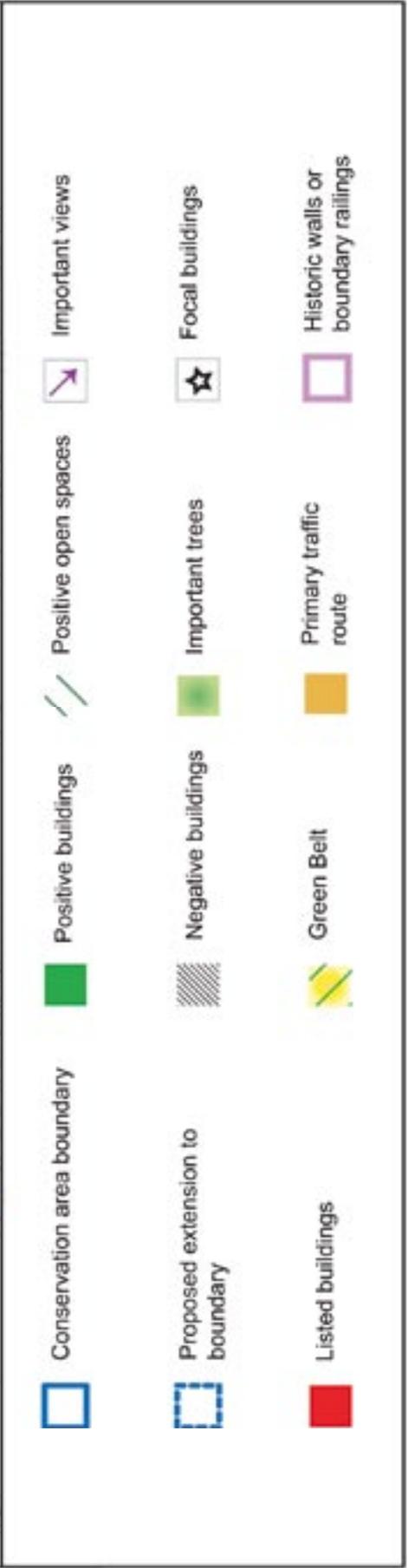
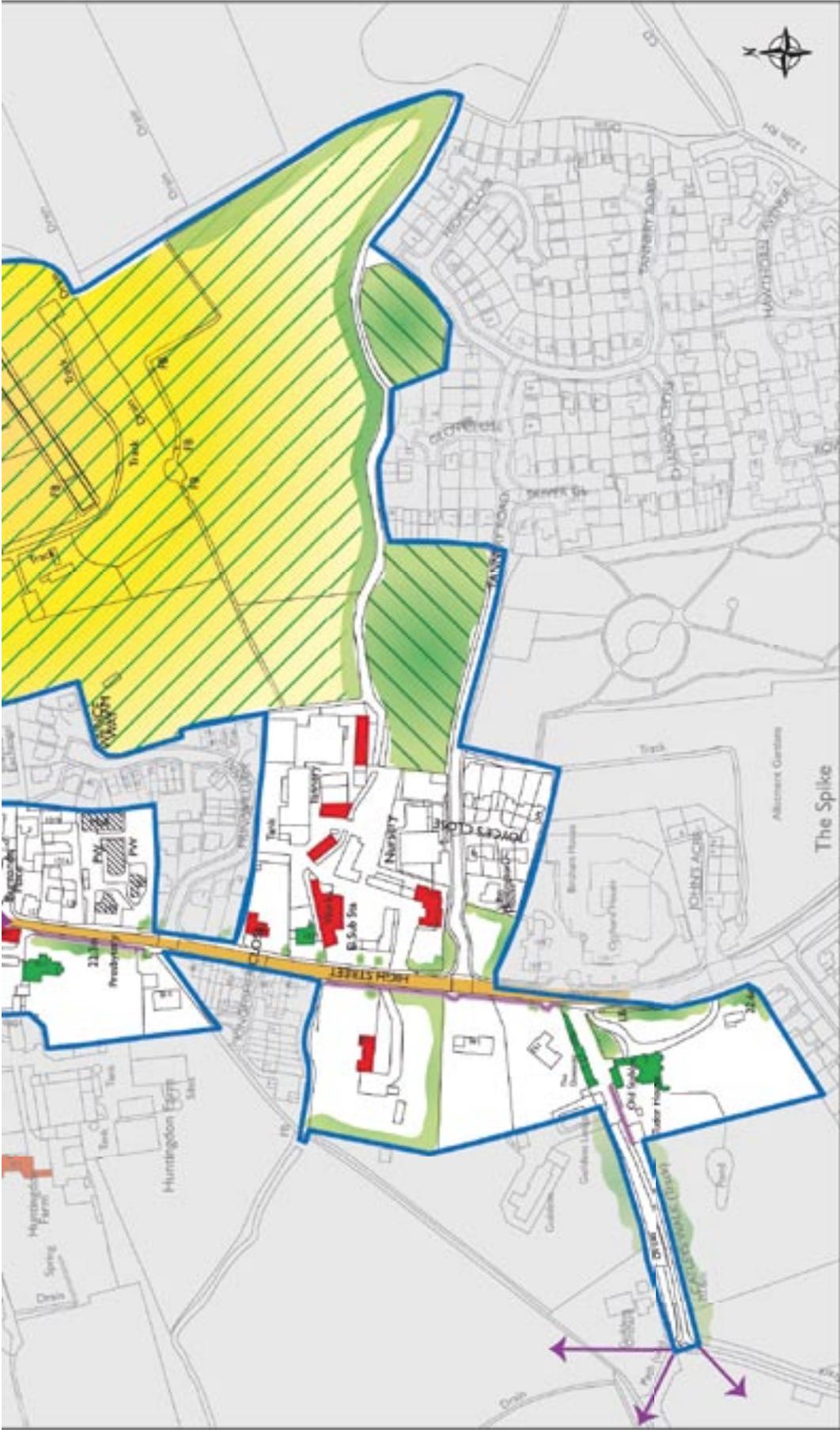
South Cambridgeshire District Council Conservation Area Appraisals

**Sawston Conservation Area**

Townscape Appraisal Map

(Not to scale)





## APPENDIX A: RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

### Cambridgeshire Structure Plan (adopted October 2003)

- P1/2 Protection of sites of archaeological, historical or architectural value.
- P7/6 Local authorities will protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the historic built environment.

### South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted February 2004)

This section summarises the main Local Plan policies that are relevant to Conservation Areas.

- SE10 Protected Village Amenity Areas.
- HG10 The design and layout of residential schemes should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape.
- HG12 Extensions and alterations to dwellings should be in keeping with local character.
- EM6 Small scale employment in villages.
- SH6 Resistance to loss of shops in villages.
- CS7 Utility companies to be urged to place pipes, fibres, wire and cables underground where this would not have unacceptable environmental impacts.
- CS8 Location of telecommunications installations to minimise visual impact.
- CS9 Protection of village pubs and recreational facilities.
- EN1 Importance of maintaining character and distinctiveness.
- EN4 Protection of the historic landscape, whether or not they are statutorily designated.
- EN5 Retention of trees and hedges in new developments.
- EN15 Protection, preservation and enhancement of known and suspected sites of archaeological importance.
- EN16 Public access to archaeological sites and records.
- EN17 Building preservation notices and spot listing of buildings of archaeological or historic interest to protect unlisted buildings.
- EN18 Presumption against demolition of Listed Buildings.
- EN19 Recording and salvage if consent for demolition is granted.
- EN20 Unsympathetic extensions to Listed Buildings.
- EN21 Preservation or salvage (including public record) of fabric or features of Listed Buildings where consent for extensions or alterations is granted.
- EN22 Imposition of conditions to protect the fabric and character of buildings.
- EN23 Preservation of the character of roofs of Listed Buildings, in particular long straw and gault clay roofs.
- EN24 Use of planning powers to secure the sound repair of Listed Buildings.
- EN25 Maintenance of register of 'buildings at risk'.
- EN26 Considerations to be applied when considering the conversion of Listed Buildings to new uses.

- EN27 Applications for planning permission and Listed Building consent will not be considered separately. Requirement for the consideration of Listed Building applications and planning applications, including the need to consider the full effects of proposals on the building and its setting.
- EN28 Requirement to submit illustrative and technical material to allow the impact of proposals affecting a Listed Building, its curtilage and wider setting.
- EN30 Requirement for applications for planning permission in Conservation Areas to be accompanied by sufficient details to allow their impact to be assessed.
- EN31 High quality of design, planting and materials connected with landscaping of developments in Conservation Areas.
- EN32 Controls over consent for demolition of buildings in a Conservation Area.
- EN33 Salvage of materials and pictorial record if consent for demolition in a Conservation Area is granted.
- EN34 Retention of the character, materials, features and details of unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas.
- EN35 Restrictions of permitted development rights to safeguard elements of the character of Conservation Areas.
- EN36 Control over external cladding which affect the character of Conservation Areas.
- EN37 Control over location and design of meter boxes on Listed Buildings.
- EN38 Need to retain traditional shopfronts and their details.
- EN39 Controls over design of advertisements and signs on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas.
- EN40 Controls over design of advertisements and outside Conservation Areas. Area of Special Control is in place.
- EN41 Coordination of planning permissions and consent for demolition or felling of trees in Conservation Areas.
- EN42 Promotion of enhancement schemes in Conservation Areas.
- EN43 Statutory undertakers and utility companies should consult and seek to agree works in Conservation Areas.

Conservation and Design  
Planning Services  
South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridgeshire CB23 6EA

t: 08450 450 500

[www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)

