



Brixworth Village Design Statement

Introduction

A Village Design Statement is a document produced by the village community to protect its environment by managing any changes that may affect it.

This statement describes Brixworth as it is now, highlighting those unique features of its design which residents value and would like to retain or enhance. It has been written by a steering group of villagers, with the support of the Parish Council and after several consultations with the community, which assisted with the road-by-road survey of both the built-up area and its outskirts. These findings are taken into account in this statement.

Although many major developments have already been completed in Brixworth, smaller changes to open spaces, paths, hedges, houses and gardens can also alter the look and feel of a village. It is important that these are managed for the maintenance and enhancement of the environment and those aspects of it valued by the community when future local planning decisions are made.

The Design Statement is, therefore, addressed to:

- Planners, developers, builders, architects, designers, engineers.
- Statutory bodies and public authorities.
- Householders and local businesses.
- Local community groups.

New building development and more minor changes will be expected to conform to the spirit of the Design Statement which was approved by Daventry District Council (DDC) Planning Committee in September 2004 as Supplementary Planning Guidance, in conjunction with the Daventry District Council Local Plan, adopted in June 1997. Design Statement recommendations will be taken into account when planning applications are first assessed, assisting the work of both Parish and District Councils.



Photo 1. All Saint's Church, Brixworth - reputed to be the most imposing architectural monument of the 7th century yet surviving north of the Alps

1.0 The Village Context

Brixworth lies some six miles north of Northampton and twelve miles east of Daventry. Market Harborough and Kettering are both twelve miles north of the village and Wellingborough some twelve miles east.

Excavations have found evidence of a Romano-British villa but Brixworth village developed from the Anglo-Saxon settlement associated with the magnificent Church and Monastery half a mile south of this. Little remains from this period, apart from the Church of All Saints. In mediaeval times, the village became a market centre on the main route from Northampton to Leicester. In the 16th century houses and farms were built to the south-east of the Church, linking with this route. They included Brixworth Hall and the Manor House. In the early 19th century the Pytchley Hunt Kennels, Brixworth Union Workhouse (serving 37 parishes in the area) followed by Brixworth LNER Station in 1859 were major developments in the village. Four years later, Brixworth Ironstone pits were opened. The village had become a busy centre and there was some housing development for the growing work force.

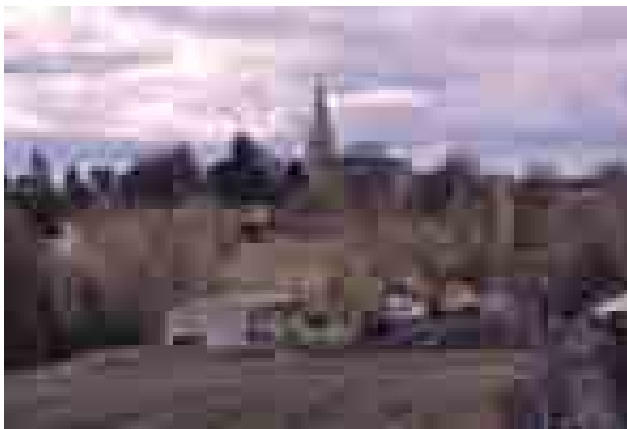


Photo 2. Brixworth Church from Froghall

The first half of the 20th century saw further residential development along both sides of Northampton Road and Spratton Road as well as the construction of Lesson Road, Eastfield Road and Broad Street on the east - a commuter estate for Northampton shoe workers. The village gained importance as the centre for the local Rural District Council in premises converted from the old Workhouse. In the mid century, the valley to the east of the village was flooded to form Pitsford Reservoir, the Pytchley Hunt moved to the western outskirts and Brixworth Hall was demolished, both leaving

land for in-fill development. Although the branch railway line and ironstone workings were then closed, a thriving village, with a small shopping centre emerged and Brixworth was designated a key-centre with an industrial site on the northern side. In 1974 the village became part of Daventry District Council and in 1979 part was designated a Conservation Area which was last revised in the year 2000.



Photo 3. High Street in the Conservation Area looking south

During the last twenty-five years the scale of growth has increased rapidly with the building of large housing estates on the eastern and southern borders of the village. This extensive and rapid expansion has placed heavy demands on existing local services.



Photo 4. The Old workhouse now QMP offices

2.0 Economy

2.1 Population

The latest estimates based on the electoral register and school rolls suggest a population figure for Brixworth approaching 5000 and approximately 2000 dwellings. The population profile is varied with a range of age groups. Many of the working population commute to areas outside the village such as London or surrounding towns. As Brixworth itself is now a centre of employment, it draws a substantial proportion of its workforce from elsewhere. These two factors have a combined effect on traffic levels, offsetting the effect of any increase in the number of people working from home.

2.2 Services

Amenities in the village include a variety of shops and offices, a post office, DDC's Information Office and a Fire and Rescue sub-station. There are three public houses, a restaurant and two petrol stations. In addition to various pre-school facilities, there is a large primary school, a range of accommodation for the elderly, a medical centre, a dentist, maternity services, a library, village hall and community rooms.

Meals-on-Wheels has a centre in the village and Age Concern holds a weekly club. Several leisure and interest groups use available accommodation during evenings and weekends. Sports facilities are inadequate for the size of the village but include two football pitches, a cricket pitch and a tennis court. There are two children's recreation areas. Land in the Ashway will provide another children's recreation area, a rugby pitch and junior football pitches to help alleviate the growing demand for more facilities.

The village has a daily bus service until the early evening, Northampton / Leicester coaches pass through the village during the day and there are services to local comprehensive and some independent schools. Services on Sundays are very restricted. A community mini-bus service is being developed to provide essential links to surrounding towns and villages and there is a weekly service, operated by volunteer drivers, for residents in other villages who require the amenities available in Brixworth but lack transport of their own. Constant activity throughout the day puts great pressure on road and parking provision.

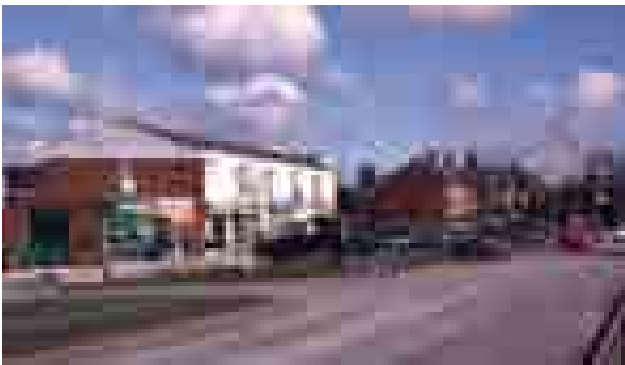


Photo 5. Hunters Way shops



Photo 7. Brixworth V C Church of England School



Photo 6. Brixworth Library

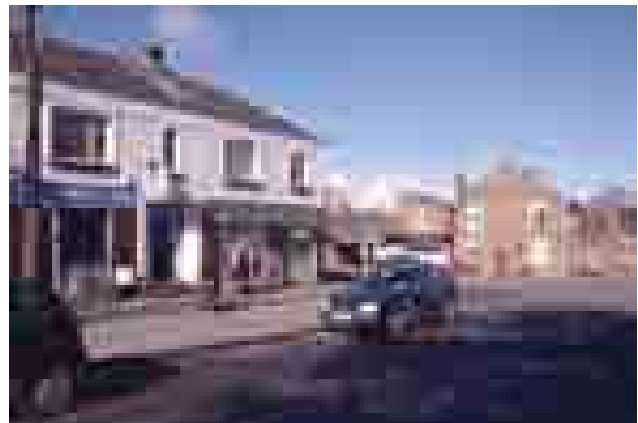


Photo 8. Northampton Road shops

2.3. Tourism

The presence of the Saxon Church brings a small but steady stream of national and international tourists. Pitsford Reservoir - a County Wildlife Site and an SSSI - Brixworth Country Park and the connections to the long distance path and National Cycle Network of Brampton Valley Way are important regional tourist attractions, also valued and used extensively by residents.

Local Economy Guidelines.

LEG.1 Commercial development should not be to the detriment of local residential properties. Where illuminated signs are adopted they should conform to the DDC Local Plan and should minimise their visibility to residential properties.

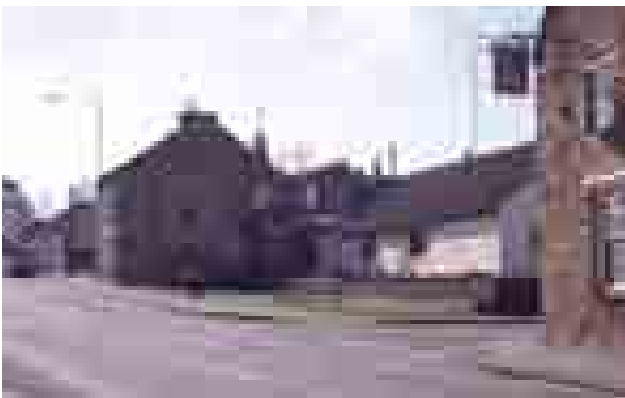


Photo 9. Road signs in Northampton Road that blend in with the surroundings

LEG.2 Commercial development should be designed to include appropriate planting schemes to soften its impact.



Photo 10. Screening at the top of Silver Street would lessen the impact of the commercial Development



Photo 11. Successful screening on the Industrial Estate maintains a rural aspect at the edge of the village

LEG.3. Light industry is currently focussed on the designated industrial estate at the northern end of the village. While future industrial developments should be permitted for the health of the local economy, the buildings should be in keeping with the existing low-rise development and designed to a high architectural standard.

LEG.4. While working from home is encouraged in new design and conversion of properties, advice should be sought from the Local Planning Authority to ascertain whether planning permission is required.

LEG.5. Brixworth Country Park, Pitsford Reservoir and Nature Reserve and the Brampton Valley Way are important areas of the Parish. They are enjoyed by both residents and visitors and the footways and bridleway connections to them from the village need to maintain their rural aspect.

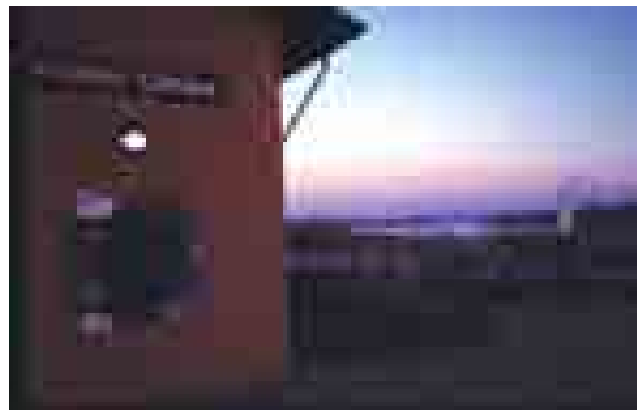


Photo 12. Brixworth Country Park

3.0 Landscape Setting

3.1 Visual Character of Surrounding Countryside

Old Brixworth is situated on one of the highest points of the Northamptonshire Uplands. A westward-facing scarp gives the village dominating views over Brampton brook and its tributaries, which drain into the River Nene. All Saints Church is on a hilltop site 130 metres above sea level and is clearly visible for many miles across the surrounding countryside. A stream and its headwaters has eroded the hill and deeply cut valley sides cause the steep inclines of Church Street, the High Street, Clay Hill and Frog Hall. The newer, southerly parts of the village extend along an ironstone ridge and frequent changes of level in fields surrounding the village are indications of extensive ironstone quarrying. Land north, south and west of the village was designated a Special Landscape Area and, to the east, Pitsford Reservoir is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and County Wildlife Site. Extensive new developments now obscure many views from the village but paths linking with the surrounding countryside are well used and valued by residents.

3.2. Buildings Seen in the Landscape

Impressive views of All Saints Church can be seen for many miles from due north and west of the village.

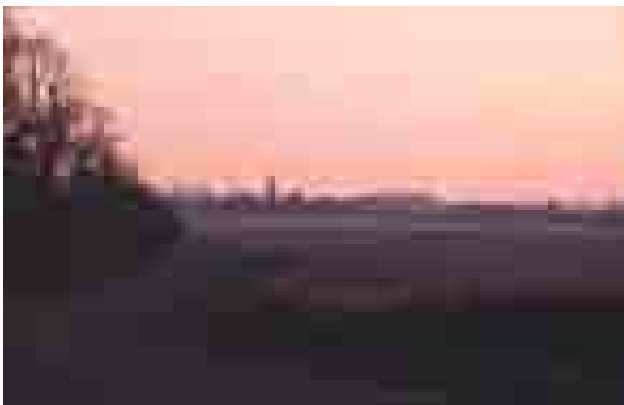


Photo 13. Brixworth from the north on the A508

In several directions, views of the village are dominated by new residential or industrial developments. From the southern approach road, the impact of a straight boundary to the built up area of the village, east of Northampton Road, together with the density of build on a hilltop location and lack of natural screening by trees or hedgerows is stark.

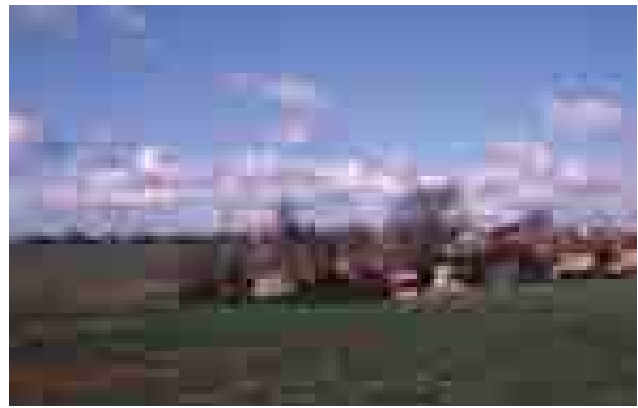


Photo 14. Some trees and hedges help to lessen the impact of the built up area west of Northampton Road, and similar screening is needed on the eastern side

Approaching from the north, hedges offer some screening for parts of the industrial estate but are in need of maintenance and additional planting. Some of the industrial buildings on the west of the A508 are so close to the road as to limit severely the use of any natural screening. While a need for some metal security railings is accepted, the visual effect would be improved if hedges were not cut away in places to expose them.

Developments outside the village confines but within the Parish boundaries affect the village setting and should be in keeping with its rural character. The A508 is an important approach from the south but the number and extent of commercial and industrial developments suggest a threat of creeping urbanisation. Approaching the village from the north -west along Station Road, the future of the disused Timber Yard in the vicinity of a small row of houses and the Hunt Kennels, has yet to be resolved.

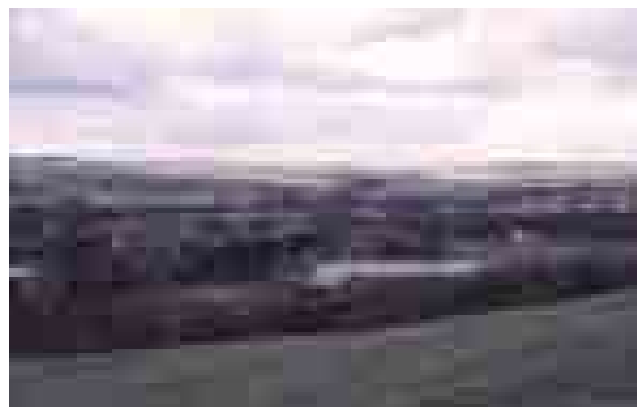
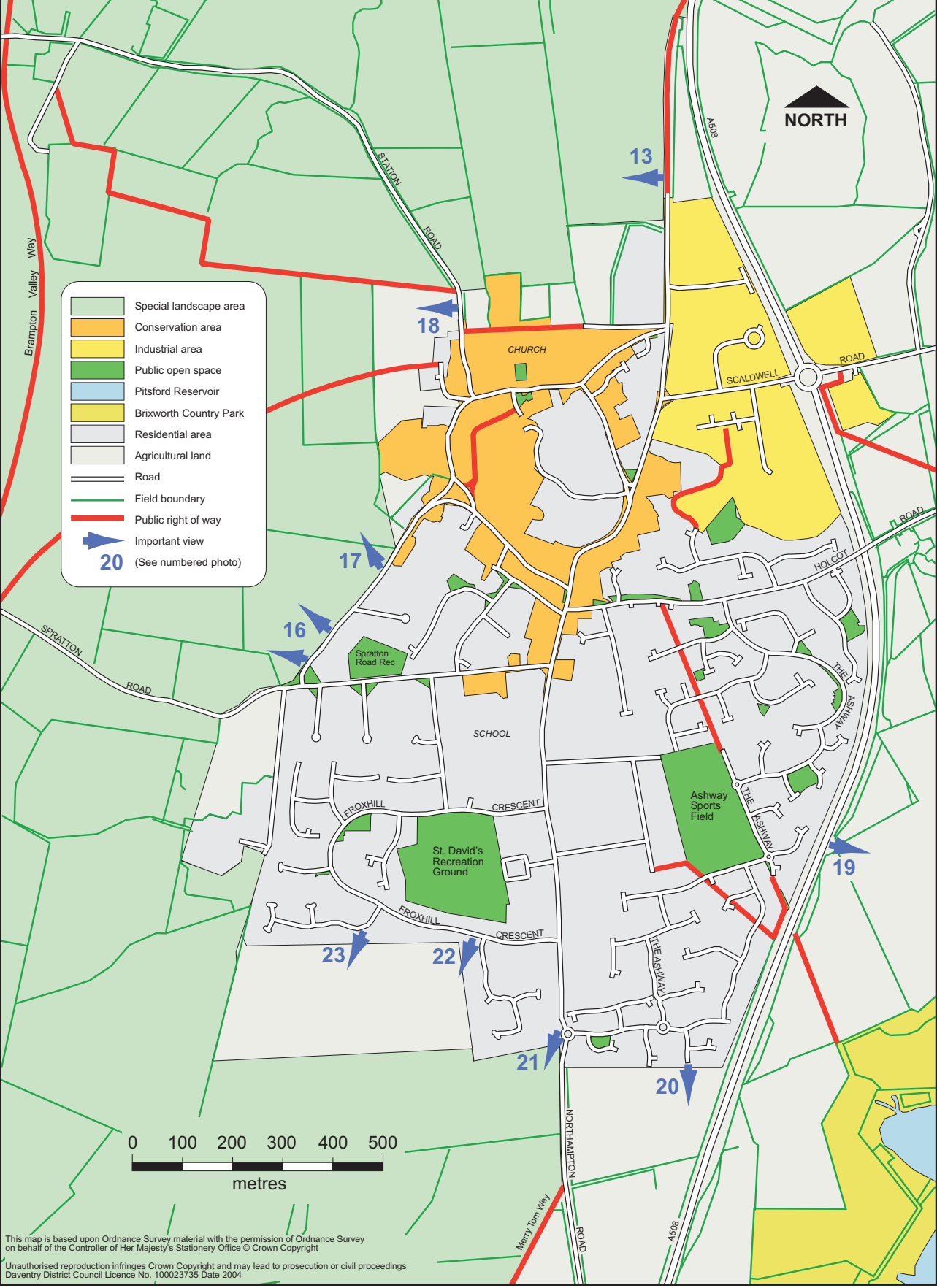


Photo 15. The disused timber yard

Map 1



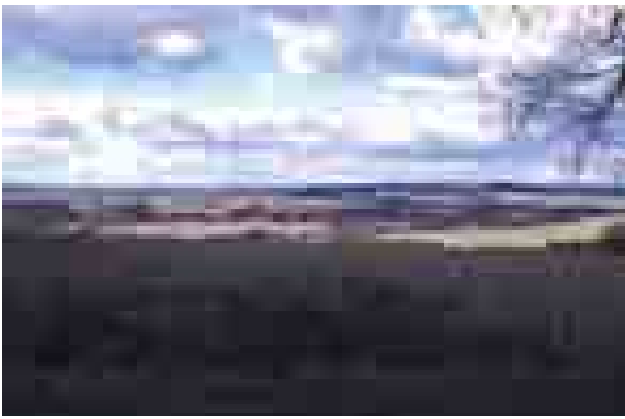


Photo 16. View from Woodsfield



Photo 20. View from Heronswood

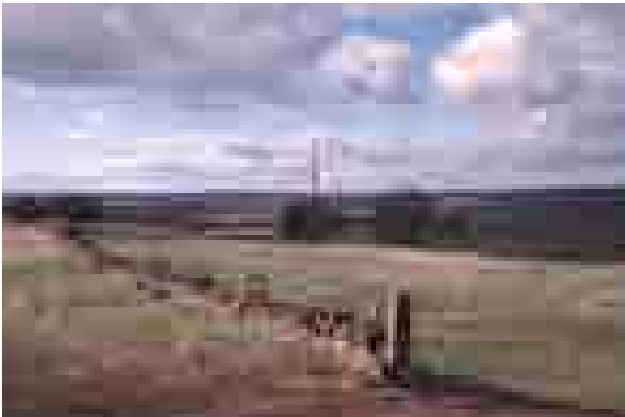


Photo 17. View from Frogshall

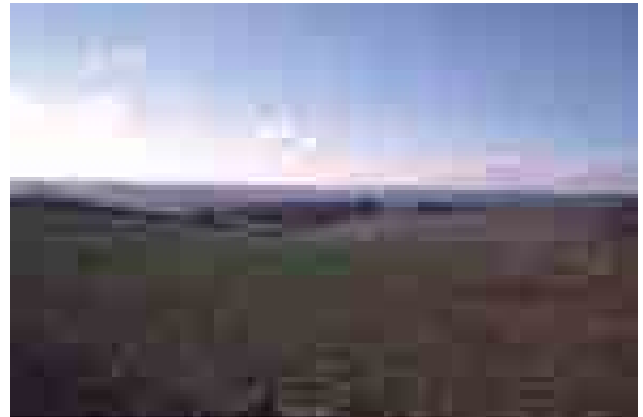


Photo 21. View from Northampton Road looking south

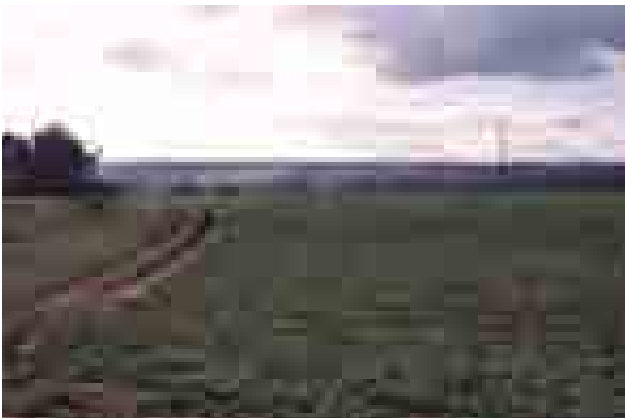


Photo 18. View from Creaton Road



Photo 22. View from Stonehill Way

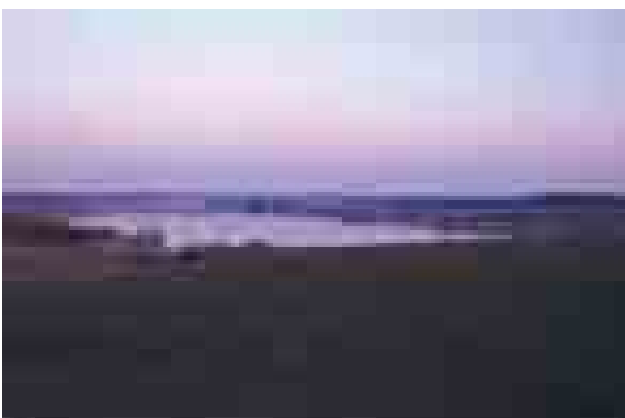


Photo 19. View of reservoir from bypass



Photo 23. View from Shelleycoates Road

LG. Landscape Guidelines

LG.1 Views identified by this design statement all need to be protected and enhanced and no future building extensions or infill development should be allowed to obscure them. The Saxon Church dominates the Brixworth skyline from many directions and views of the church both from within and from outside the village as identified on the Maps 1 and 2 need to be protected. The view of the village and the church approached from the north along the A508 is especially vulnerable and developments, particularly on the industrial estate, must proceed very sensitively to preserve this. Similarly, new build should not be allowed to obscure views from the village across the Brampton valley or towards Pitsford Reservoir. See Map 1.

LG.2 Developments and alterations on the industrial estate should be sympathetically landscaped, including both hard and soft landscaping, to make them more attractive.

LG.3 New commercial and industrial developments and alterations within the rest of the village should include appropriate hard and soft landscaping schemes.

LG.4 The height of buildings needs to be controlled so that views of the Church from within the village, identified on Map 2, are not destroyed and the varied and attractive roof lines identified on the map are not obscured.



Photo 24. Varied and attractive roof lines viewed from the Pound

LG.5 Owners of properties on the industrial estate and residents in the rest of the village should be encouraged to maintain and manage existing trees and hedges adjoining them. Trees and boundary hedgerows, which have been identified by this statement on Map 2, are in particular need of protection.

LG.6 Approaches to the village need to maintain a village atmosphere and identity.

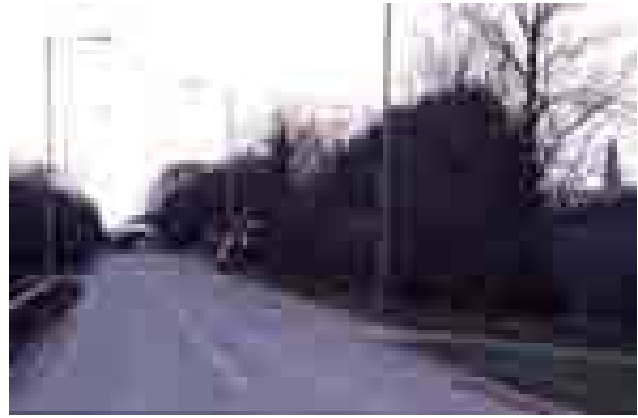


Photo 25. Except at the roundabout the approaches to the Industrial Estate from the Brixworth bypass (A508) are well screened, and these trees and hedges need to be retained in order to maintain a village atmosphere

LG.7 Village boundary developments should include landscaping or screening, particularly where such development abuts with open countryside. New housing development dominates views towards the village as seen from the south. Residents should be encouraged to provide landscaping to 'green' the boundary using native species such as oak, ash, field maples, hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, briar, spindle, crab and holly. In other parts of the village established green boundaries, identified on Map 2, should be preserved and enhanced.

LG.8 It is recommended that where development is proposed on rising ground, it should be ensured that neighbouring properties are not overpowered by them and designated vistas, as shown on the map, should not be affected.

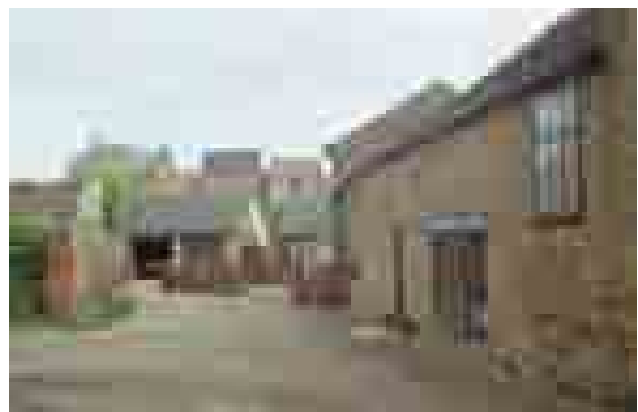


Photo 26. Tantree Lane where previous planning permissions allowed new development to overpower existing properties

4.0 Settlement Pattern Character

Brixworth is a village with an important history, both ancient and modern. Archaeological finds in the Parish include Stone, Bronze, Iron and Roman Age items. However, the settlement from which the present day community developed was Anglo-Saxon, although little remains of this period other than the Church of All Saints, built in the late 7th century. The earliest surviving houses, built in the 16th century and now part of the Conservation Area, preserve the original street plan and plot layout. Brixworth is unusual in that these houses cluster to the south east of the Church rather than focus on the Manor House, which had been constructed further east, in the 16th century. A network of narrow, hilly streets leads from the Church to the main Northampton/Leicester route with its coaching inns, following the perimeter stone walls of Brixworth Hall Park. There was some development south along the Leicester / Northampton route in the 19th and early 20th centuries but most of the present day village developed in the latter part of the 20th century.



Photo 27. Silver Street, in the Conservation Area

SG Settlement Guidelines

SG.1 The oldest parts of the village have been designated as a Conservation Area. Proposals for new development within this area require careful consideration and advice should be sought from the local Planning Authority.



Photo 28. Newlands, part of the Conservation Area

SG2. Present open spaces, identified on Map 2, should be preserved, with planting and fencing in keeping with the immediate environment

SG.3 This Statement has recognised changing architectural styles and street scenes as the village has developed through time. Future developments within them should not necessarily mimic the existing styles but should certainly be of a type sympathetic to the area.

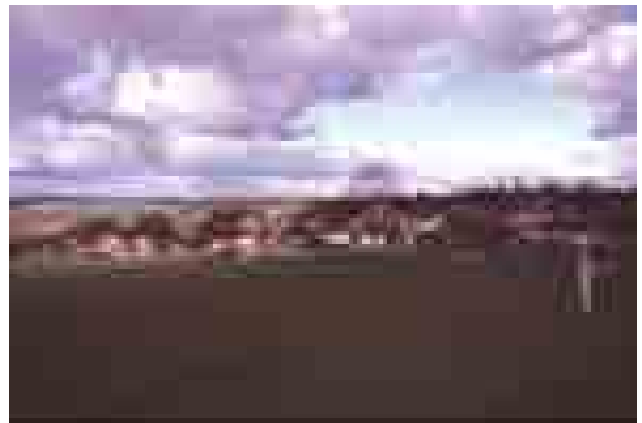


Photo 29. Spratton Road playing field



Photo 30. Broad Street

5.0 Buildings and Spaces in the Village

Buildings in Brixworth represent distinct phases of development which need individual consideration because they reflect differences in age, architectural style and function. The core village, which constitutes a large part of the Conservation Area, is predominantly stone, with roofs of thatch or slate. They include detached, semi-detached and terraced high density houses, some of which are sited directly on to the street or footpath with gardens to the rear, while others have their side aspect to the highway with gardens separating them from neighbours. Within the Conservation Area houses built in the 19th century, such as those in Northampton Road and former Hunt Cottage in Spratton Road, tend to have small front gardens and larger gardens to the rear.

Many houses in the Conservation Area are conversions from buildings that have had other functions, such as inns, a granary, a chapel, the old fire station, the old bake-house and the old Parish Hall. The Thomas Roe Building was the original school, built in 1811 but was bought by the Friends of All Saints and is now the Heritage Centre for exhibitions and meetings. The building opposite became the second school and is now used by the education department. The adjacent school building is now a Community Centre for pre-school and youth groups. The Workhouse has become offices.



Photo 31. Northampton Road cottages

Interesting new buildings include the Library and Community Centre in Spratton Road and the Ilmor-Mercedes new engineering laboratory and canteen/exhibition pyramid.

Froxhill and Brackenborough were the first large housing estates to be developed. Froxhill on the south-west boundary of the village, consists of semi-detached and detached houses with garages and parking on site and terraces with

garage blocks or parking bays. There are no chimneys but variations in housing design add interest without being obtrusive. Rear gardens are enclosed but all front gardens were to be open plan and the open style should be maintained. Brackenborough is on a site south of Holcot Road and includes a similar range of houses with the addition of some bungalows suitable for older people. The subsequent estates of The Ashway, The Ridings and Heronswood extend further the eastern and southern boundaries of the village and consist largely of detached houses, again designed originally on the open plan principle. The latest development is the Tantree Way estate, north of the Holcot Road and is exclusively detached houses and open plan.

The extent of recent developments, often without adequate consideration of their effects, has meant that many views within, from and of the village have been spoilt and easy access to

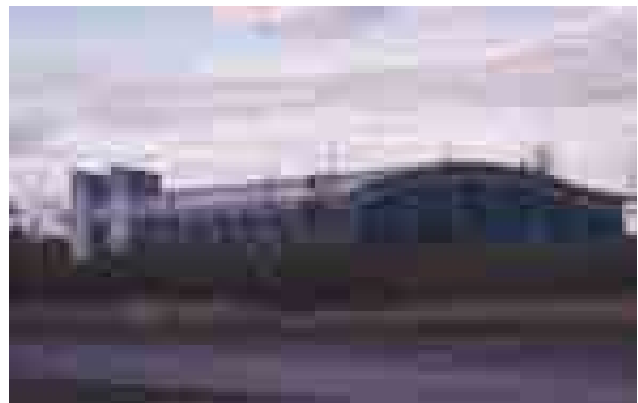


Photo 32. Ilmor-Mercedes engineering laboratory

open countryside has been lost. Existing open spaces in the village, therefore, increase in value but are vulnerable to in-fill development. The recreational value of these spaces must be recognised and access to open spaces beyond the village through the network of local footpaths maintained and developed. Valued public open spaces include the Churchyard; the Millennium Garden; the green round the Buttercross; the Pound; the green with its copper beech tree outside the Village Hall; the green on the Ashway estate; the pocket park in Tantree Way; children's play areas in Spratton Road and at Froxhill; St David's sports field and the site for the new sports field in the Ashway.

Private space within the village is provided by the gardens of individual houses and so is varied in character. The range includes the grounds of larger, detached houses; the rear

gardens of houses abutting the public footpaths; the very long narrow rear gardens of the older terraces; the richly wooded gardens of houses built in the grounds of the Hall Park and the smaller plots of the newer estates.



Photo 33. The Buttercross



Photo 34. Open plan building on Froxhill Estate

Trees are a vital part of the village environment. They soften the architectural scale, provide natural landscaping for industrial buildings and act as 'green' boundaries between new development and open countryside, improving views of the village from approach roads. Brixworth benefits from a great many mature trees, protected by Tree Preservation Orders, and one of the finest remaining vistas is of the Church spire among trees, seen from Spratton Road and Frog Hall. Froxhill has many attractive and maturing trees and these should be

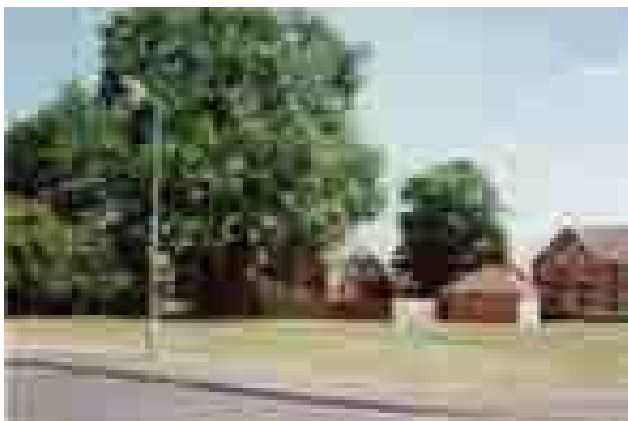


Photo 35. An open space and mature tree on the Ashway

maintained. Tree planting should be encouraged elsewhere. The Heronswood estate lacks mature trees and, although there is some planting of ornamental shrubs near the junction with Northampton Road, this does not blend easily with the entrance to the village on the west side of Northampton Road where mature trees have been retained. Tantree Way estate lacks mature trees on site but part of it benefits from the tree-scape beyond its northern boundary, which has a softening effect.

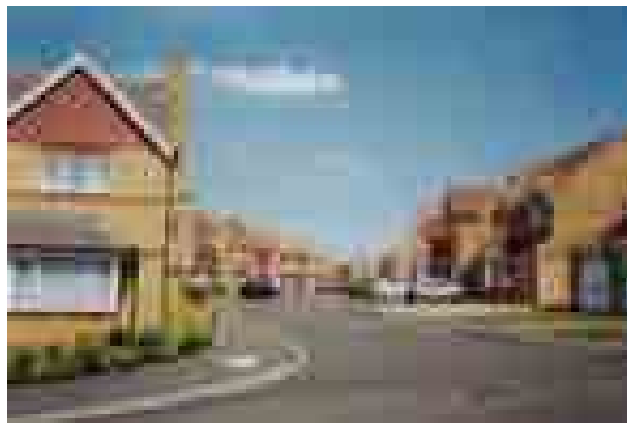


Photo 36. Heronswood estate. Trees would soften the architectural scale

5.1 Height, Scale and Density of Building

Houses in the Conservation Area are varied in style, scale and density but blend into the overall effect and contribute to many attractive roofscapes, seen when looking towards the Church from several directions. Houses range from terraces to larger properties, such as the Rookery, the Old Vicarage, the Manor House, the Grange and the Lodge, which stand in their own grounds and are a mix of two and three storey buildings, many also with cellars. The variation in size and style in a hilly context of gardens and mature trees provides interest and balances the effect of any density of building in this area.

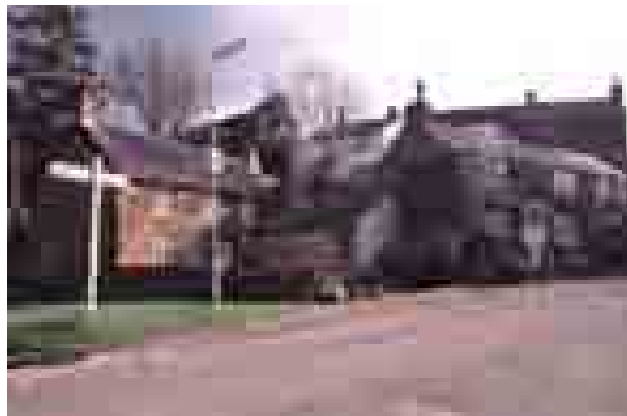
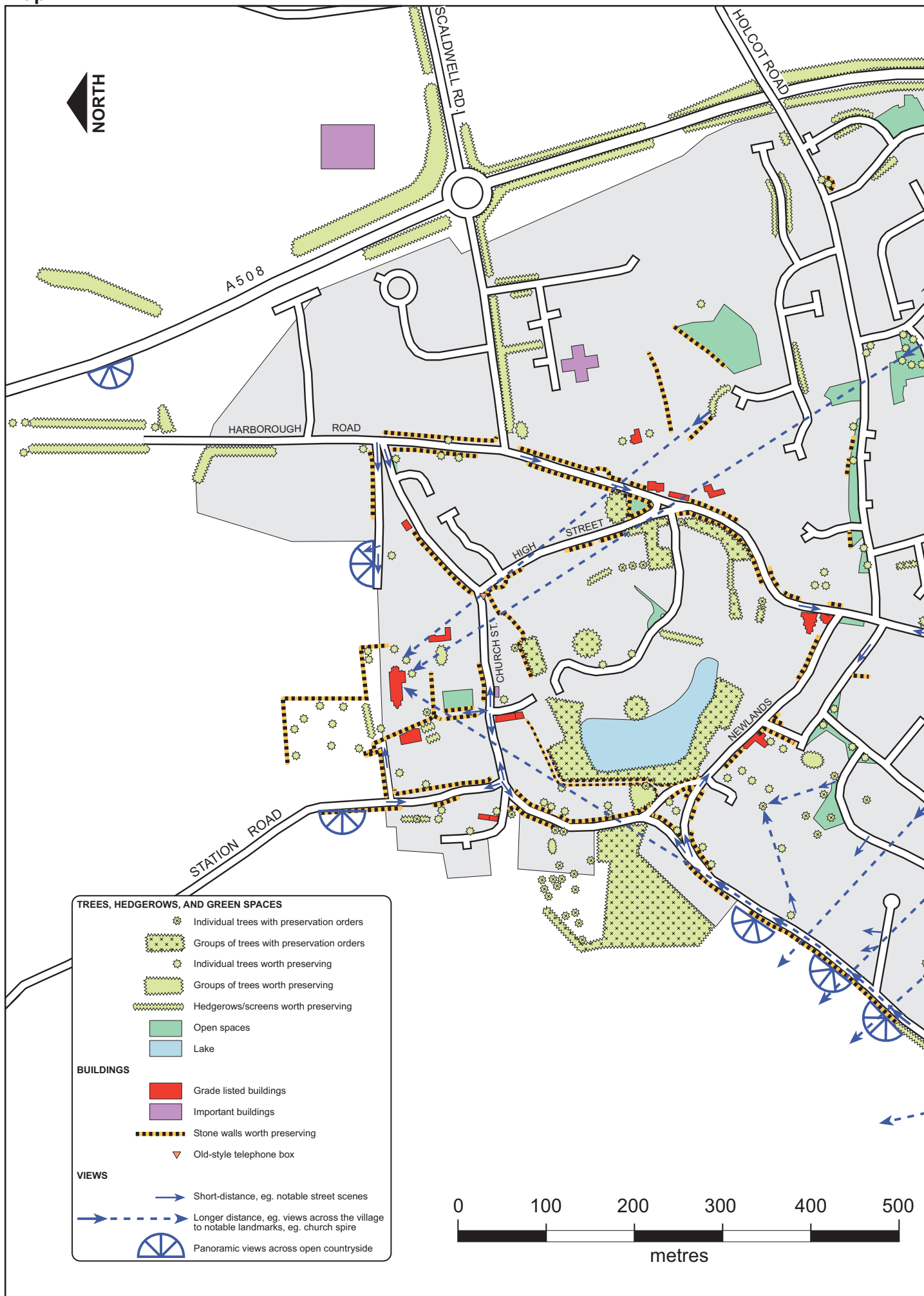
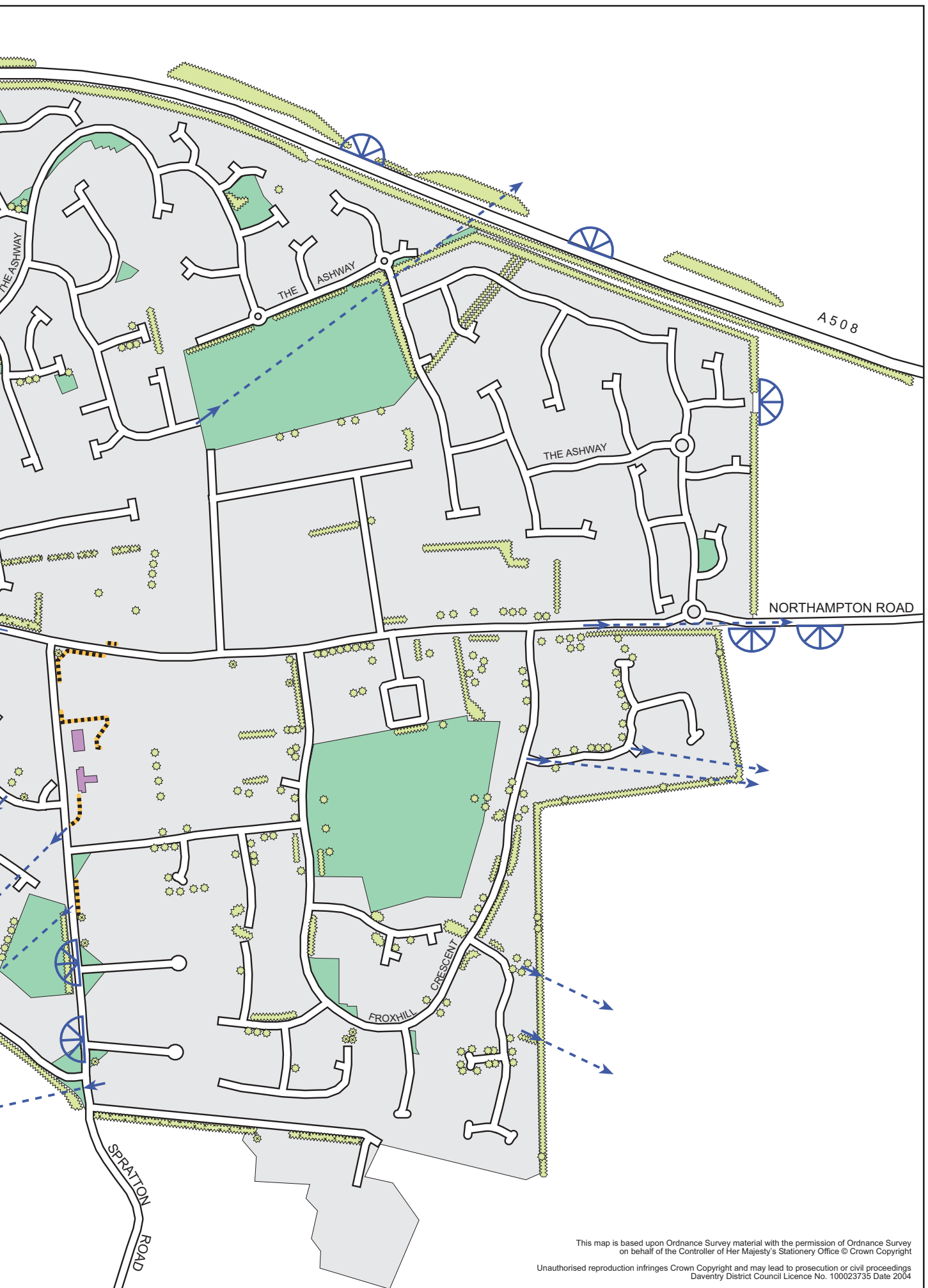


Photo 37. Tollard Down and old cottages

Houses built in the late 20th century tend to be taller than older properties and if the site is also on higher ground, as in Tantree Way and

Map 2





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Eaglehurst, can easily overpower well-established neighbours who, at the same time, have lost their out-look and views over open countryside. Houses on the Tantree Way estate vary in size but there is little space between them. The Heronswood estate consists of large houses, built very close together on comparatively small plots, with little apparent reference to a rural context and obscuring the views the village previously enjoyed over fields to the Pitsford Reservoir.



Photo 38. Heronswood, view over reservoir

5.2 Building Materials

Different residential developments in the village use different materials. In the Conservation Area, the oldest buildings are of local limestone and ironstone. 19th century houses are of mellow red brick from the former brick-works in the village or Northampton red brick. One terrace of cottages in Kennel Terrace has been rendered and colour-washed, each in a different pastel shade.



Photo 39. 4 Spratton Road, formerly Hunt Cottage

Terraces in Newlands include stone, mature red brick, a white painted pebble dash and a white colour-washed extension to the stone built George Inn. When part of the original Hunt Kennels was developed into mews units for the elderly, the wall in the Newlands terrace was repaired with newer red brick and modern window frames and does not blend well with neighbouring properties. The front of this

building faces towards Kennel Terrace and is in dark red modern brick but screened by the remaining high stone wall to the courtyard. Roofing materials in the Conservation area are predominately slate but some thatch survives, for example Mint Cottage, the Pound House, the Coach and Horses and a barn at the Rookery. The George Inn and Home Farm House have roofs of corrugated iron as the result of previous renovations. Replacement window frames in various parts of the Conservation Area do not always blend appropriately with the buildings.

Houses built in the first half of the 20th century are a mix of red brick and pebble dash rendering with slate or tiled roofs. In the 1960s pale coloured bricks, partial dark cladding and dark pantiles were used for the in-fill housing on part of the old Hunt Kennels site. The style of the Froxhill estate development is mainly red brick, with occasional first floor rendering and cream colour wash and red or dark pantiles but no chimneys. The Brackenborough estate is in a paler brick and pantile, again without chimneys but houses in the Ashway are light red brick and pantile, some with chimneys. Each of these estates shows sufficient consistency of style and layout to have successfully developed a tradition of its own.

The Heronswood estate on the southern boundary of the village east of Northampton Road at present seems to lack this kind of cohesiveness. Houses are built of light, buff coloured or light red brick with red pantiles or dark flat tiles but are embellished with varied and extensive ornamentation, each in a different 'period' style. Although they are large, they are built close together with insufficient space for planting in between to soften the effect. Houses in the Tantree Way estate are of a yellowish brick and red pantile or dark flat tiles. At the end of Tantree Way there is a small development of larger dark red brick houses in styles and materials that appear unrelated to surrounding buildings.



Photo 40. Hall Park stone wall



Photo 41. Hedges on Holcot Road

5.3 Hedges, Walls and Fences

Boundary walls provide important links within settlements. A number of important examples in Brixworth have been included in the Conservation Area, such as those on entering the village from the north and west directions and that surrounding the Hall Park. There are others bordering the driveway up to the Church, around the Old Vicarage, in Church Street, Clay Hill, Kennel Terrace and Newlands. Outside the Conservation Area there are remaining stone walls in Spratton Road and parts of Holcot Road as well as low stone boundary walls to some surrounding agricultural land, as in Frog Hall.

Several houses on the Tantree Way estate have their side aspect to the Holcot Road boundary verge, with alternate lengths of high fence and light brick walls. This gives some privacy to residents' gardens and cul-de-sac ends but detracts from the street scene in Holcot Road. There is insufficient space between house and boundary for planting to soften the effect. The grass verge is wide enough, however, for shrubs or small trees. The Holcot Road is an area of mixed use and some commercial properties lack planting and screening to soften their appearance. Some hedges remain on the village outskirts such as the end of Spratton Road and Frog Hall, which have benefited from recent laying but screening hedges on the industrial estate seem to lack active management and additional planting.



Photo 44. A restored thatch roof

BG. Building Guidelines.

BG.1 Development in the Conservation Area should reflect the general character of existing buildings and be appropriate in scale. Advice about such development should be sought from the Local Planning Authority.



Photo 42. Pullman House, Church Street, was built to reflect the character of the existing buildings

BG.2 When alterations or development are considered, the opportunity should be taken to replace any previous unsympathetic design, both within and outside the Conservation Area.

BG.3 Any substantial new infill development should include affordable housing.

BG.4 Flat roofs should be avoided for residential buildings, garages and porches unless a pitched roof would obscure an important building or vista.

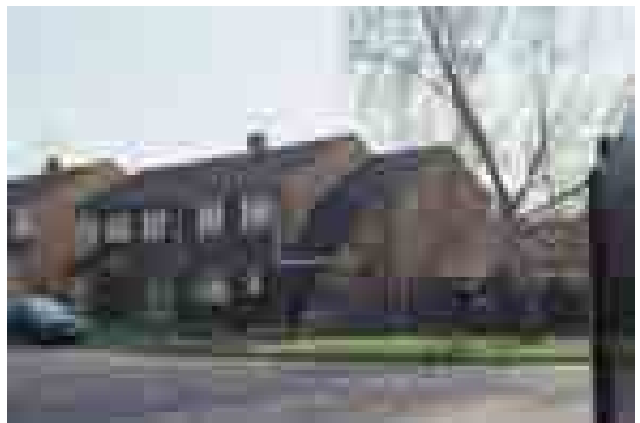


Photo 43. A sympathetic extension to a house in Hunt Close

BG.5 Existing thatch roofs should be retained. Where thatch has been replaced with corrugated iron, re-thatching should be recommended when re-roofing is next needed. Advice should be sought from the District Council on thatching policies.

BG.6 Stone built walls should be of simple dressed local limestone and ironstone, dressed finish and bond in style to match the surrounding area. Natural stone should be rubble stone (dressing) laid in courses of

stones of uniform height but varying length, with each course being random in height to the ones above and below. Joints should be pointed with lime-based mortar, slightly recessed with a brushed or rubbed finish exposing the aggregates. The stone and aggregate should be sourced locally if possible or be similar in colour and texture.



Photo 45. Hall Farm Close

BG.7 Stonework should not be painted or rendered unless it is of poor quality. Where rendering needs attention and the original stonework is sound, it should be restored.

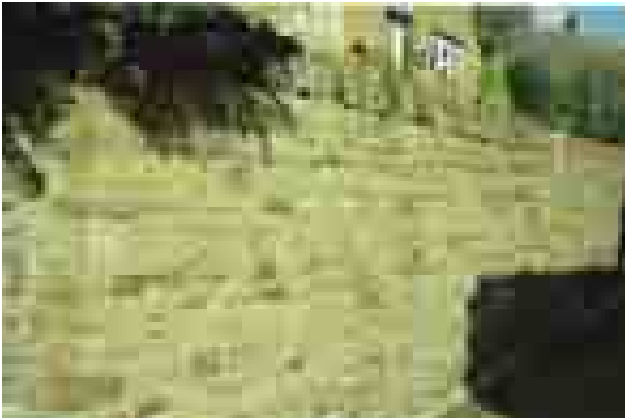


Photo 46. A well dressed and pointed stone wall

BG.8 Where brickwork is used, in particular along Northampton Road, this needs to be maintained in the same style and any future development in the vicinity should reflect the character of this construction. Cladding over brickwork should be avoided.



Photo 47. Houses in Northampton Road

BG.9 Brickwork for new development must be appropriate to the character of the vicinity in terms of colour, texture and design. In some areas the brickwork is of uniform style, in others a mixture of styles has been adopted and local development should mirror this.

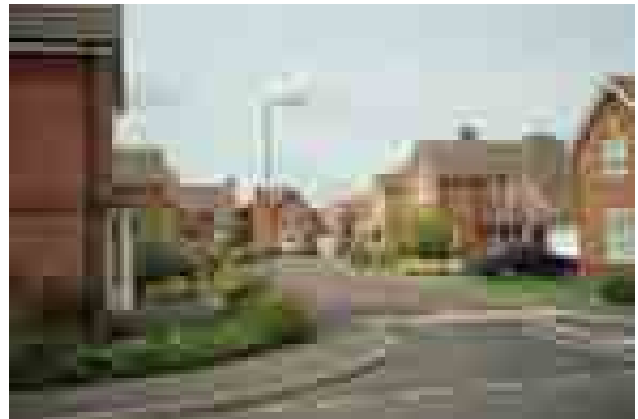


Photo 48. An area with uniform style brickwork

BG.10 Porches should be simple in design with lean-to or pitched canopies over the door to maintain the simple, uncluttered appearance of front elevations.



Photo 49. Kennel Terrace with simple pitched canopy porches

BG.11 New garages and car parking areas should not obscure house fronts. Rows of garages on communal sites adjacent to terraced housing should be avoided.

BG.12 Any planning application to convert existing garages for other purposes should be approved only when there is an adequate alternative for off road parking.

BG.13 Dormer windows should be appropriate to the type of roofing material used and should not be a dominant feature of the roof. Where



Photo 50. The Paddocks. The Dormer windows do not dominate the buildings

roof lights are incorporated they must be sympathetic in size and design and not be detrimental to the streetscape. Consideration should be given to siting roof lights at the rear of the building.

BG.14 The style and material used for replacement windows within the Conservation Area should match those of the original building and size should be of correct proportion to the façade.



Photo 51. Replacement windows in High Street

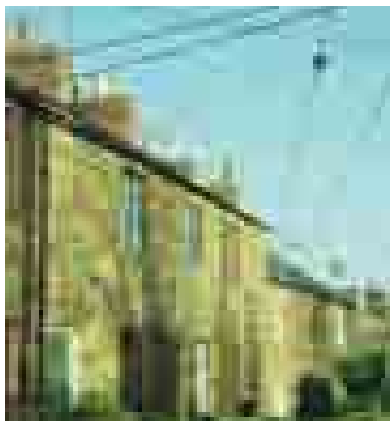


Photo 52. Satellite dishes and overhead cables detract from the street scene in Northampton Road

BG.15 Wherever possible satellite dishes should not be erected on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting the highway. Advice should be sought from the Local Planning Authority about the need for planning permissions.

BG.16 Private security lighting should be carefully sited and aligned down on to



Photo 53. The Old Bakery, a successful conversion

pathways and entrances rather than reflecting upwards.

BG.17 The conversion of older buildings to alternative use should keep existing openings to provide access and light rather than introduce additional openings which would compromise the utilitarian symmetry of the building.

BG.18 Where properties are being altered, care



Photo 54 Newlands where alterations to properties have not spoiled the spatial effect

should be taken not to alter existing building lines without consideration of the resulting spatial effect.

BG.19 Where open plan frontages were part of



Photo. 55 Open plan design in Froxhill

the original architectural style, this should be continued. It is important that plot partition and in-fill is not permitted to the detriment of the original overall style.

BG.20 There are parts of the village where there is scope for possible use of back-land with potential for development. Imaginative use of such areas with good links to existing development may be possible. In such cases the existing design of the frontages should not be affected and there should be no loss of public open space.

BG.21 The scale of new buildings should respect that of neighbouring properties, the spaces between them, the street scene and vista.

6.0 Highways and Traffic

6.1 Characteristics of Local Roads and Streets

Roads in the Conservation Area are narrow and hilly with footways mainly on one side only and directly against house or boundary walls. Silver Street has no footways at all and is a one-way street. Other roads in the village take two-way traffic, have footpaths on both sides and many have grass verges either between path and road or between path and garden boundary. There are some exceptions in the vicinity of the Holcot crossroads, parts of Northampton Road and the Lesson Road/Broad Street area. Road junctions in 20th century residential developments have triangular grassed areas each side, many planted with a single tree.

Road design on the new estates is on the principle of a spine road with cul-de-sacs and longer no-through roads leading off. The spine road for the Froxhill estate is a clearly defined crescent, linking at each end with Northampton Road and, as such, is subject to excessive speeds. The Ashway is the spine road for the south-eastern estates and designed to reduce speeds by its use of T-junctions, combined with the siting of cul-de-sacs. Tantree Way is the spine road for the Tantree estate but is a cul-de-sac.



Photo 56. Congestion on Northampton Road

Various traffic calming measures have been adopted in the village, including chicanes in the Holcot Road, giving priority to traffic coming into the village and in Spratton Road, with priority to traffic leaving the village.

There is one pedestrian crossing which is in Spratton Road in the vicinity of the shops, library, flats for the elderly and an access to the school.

There is a mini-roundabout at the junction of Northampton Road and Froxhill Crescent near the school, and a large roundabout at the

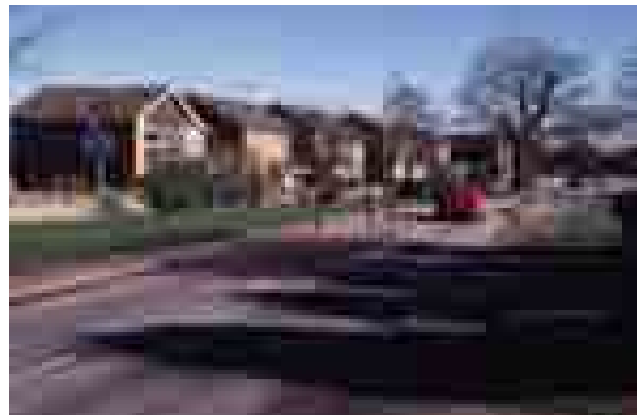


Photo 57. Traffic calming on Holcot Road

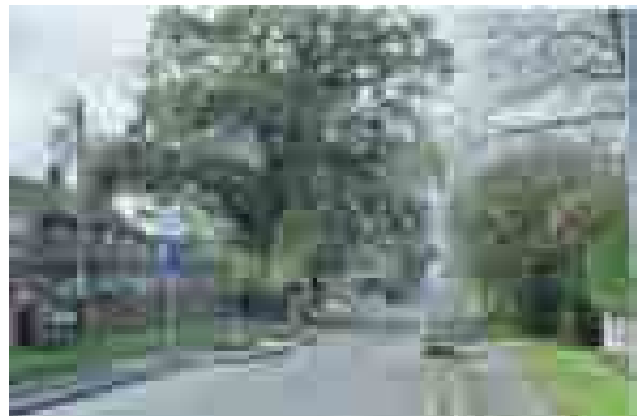


Photo 58. Traffic calming on Spratton Road

Northampton Road/The Ashway junction. The speed table in Knightons Way and changes in road priorities at Spratton Road/Northampton Road and The Ashway/Holcot Road are also aimed at traffic calming. These changed priorities slow traffic in one direction but involve difficult right hand turns into the minor roads.

There are parking problems in most of the older parts of the village, resulting in damage to footways and verges and creating a number of hazardous areas.

6.2 Footways and Cycle Paths

There are no cycle ways in the village but a shared pedestrian / cycle path runs from Brixworth Country Park to the Northampton Road / Ashway roundabout. This passes the

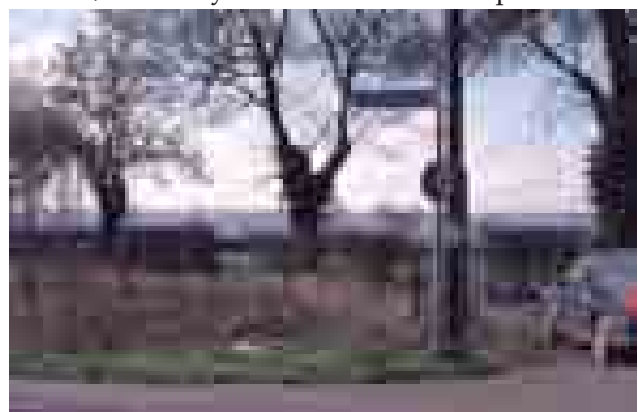


Photo 59. Merry Tom Lane

access to Merry Tom Lane, a highly valued footpath, cycle path and bridleway and the link lane to the National Cycle Network and bridleway in Brampton Valley Way.

The only other bridleway in the village is Lynch Lane off Creton Road, a stretch of only 500yards leading to public footpaths. Pond Close is a path from Church Street, via Cross Hill, to Newlands, alongside the south perimeter wall of the Hall Park. This path is of some historical interest and reputedly haunted. Footpaths leading from the village to open countryside, such as the original field path from Eastfield Road to the Pitsford Reservoir, now go through built-up areas to the A508. The footpath to the old ironstone workings now runs alongside a car park on the industrial estate.

However, a new permitted path, parallel to Spratton Road, leading down to Brampton Valley Way is highly valued, as is the field path from Holcot Road to the Reservoir. Other short footways within the village provide useful

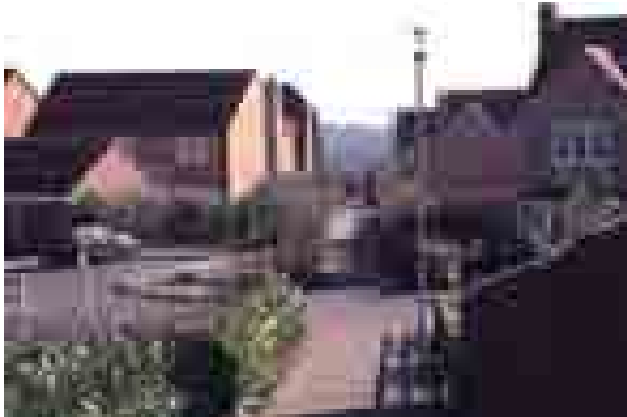


Photo 60. Heronswood footway

shortcuts to houses, such as Lesson Road to Brackenborough, Holcot Road to the Slip and Brackenborough, and Holcot Road to Eaglehurst.



Photo 61. Footpath to Brixworth Country Park

6.3 Street Furniture, Utilities and Services

The street survey identified concern over the visual impact of tall metal street light columns in Northampton Road but the recent change from

yellow to white light in some areas has softened the effect after dark. Overhead electricity and telephone cables in Northampton Road, Newlands and Frog Hall are also detrimental to the street scene and to views of the Church from Woodsfield. The water-tower, sited in Broad Street, remains an unattractive feature which is difficult to improve. Restriction on illuminated shop signs is welcome but security lighting in both private and public areas can be obtrusive due to positioning and brightness. The one remaining red telephone box in Church Street is regarded as an asset to be retained and the solid wooden or wood and metal seats in Spratton Road and Northampton Road fit into their surroundings appropriately and are well used. However, the seat in Station Road has lapsed into a poor state of repair.

Direction signs in the village have an acceptable conformity but traffic warning signs have increased, particularly with changes in road priorities, and would benefit from regular reviews before the addition of further signs. The use of coloured road surfaces and on-road warnings, if properly maintained, could be explored as a suitable alternative in some instances, particularly in the Conservation Area.

Advertising placards on footpaths and posters on telegraph poles are not acceptable. Although there are a number of litter bins, particularly in the vicinity of shops, they are no longer adequate for the amount of litter generated and there is a need for more, or for larger ones, in an attempt to reduce litter on the streets.



Photo.62 Litter outside the shops in Spratton Road

HG. Highway Guidelines

HG1 The recent growth of the village and the commensurate growth in service demand has placed great pressure on roads and parking provision. Any commercial and retail development should provide adequate off highway parking provision and have regard to the parking needs of adjoining premises.

HG2 Better walkways and footway links from new and existing developments to the village centre, particularly the school and shops, are required to encourage reduced car use.

HG4 Any development should have regard to the pedestrian needs within the vicinity with improvements on the highway frontage and to the links to existing provision if required.

HG5 Improvements to the footway and cycleway links to the Country Park and the Brampton Valley Way would benefit the village and visitors. Where these improvements are carried out in open countryside they should be done sensitively.

HG6 The footway linking the village to Brixworth Country Park should be surfaced with unbound material and a safer crossing over the A508 provided.

HG7 Traffic calming measures are required to deter use and improve safety on rat-runs within the village. Examples of this are Froxhall Crescent (particularly in the vicinity of the school), Brampton Way, Pytchley Way and Silver Street.



Photo 63. Froxhill Crescent needs traffic calming measures

HG8 The use of existing rear access to terraces for parking, where suitable, should be encouraged and parking bays in Northampton Road between Spratton Road and Froxhill Crescent would alleviate damage to verges.

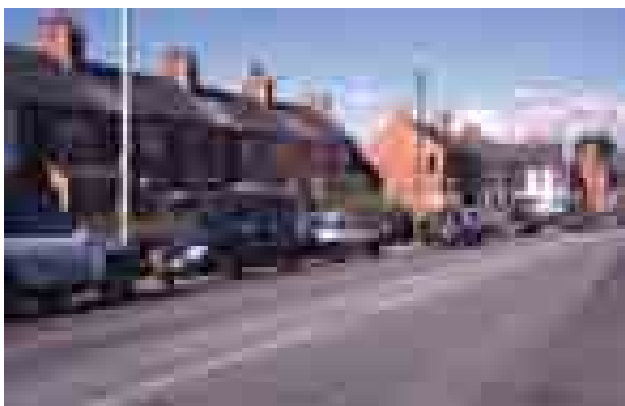


Photo 64. Parking on Northampton Road

HG9 Improved reliability and frequency of bus services during peak hours could help reduce car use.

SFG Street Furniture Guidelines

SFG1 Encouragement should be given to developers to underground existing overhead services in the vicinity of their developments.

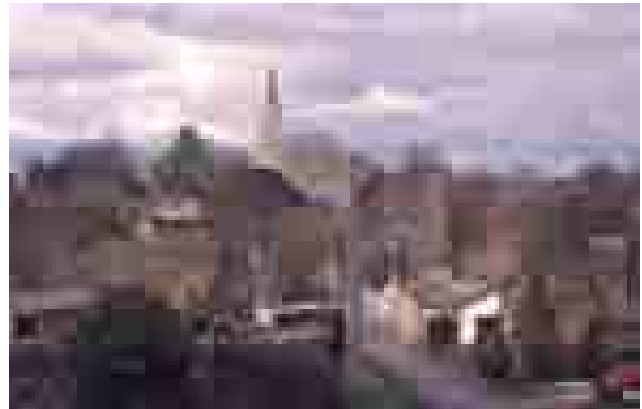


Photo 65. Froghall where overhead power lines mar a beautiful view



Photo 66. Old style finger direction posts

SFG2 The Red telephone box should be retained and listed by English Heritage.

SFG3 Regulatory and other signs within the Conservation Area should be of minimum size to reduce their visual effects.

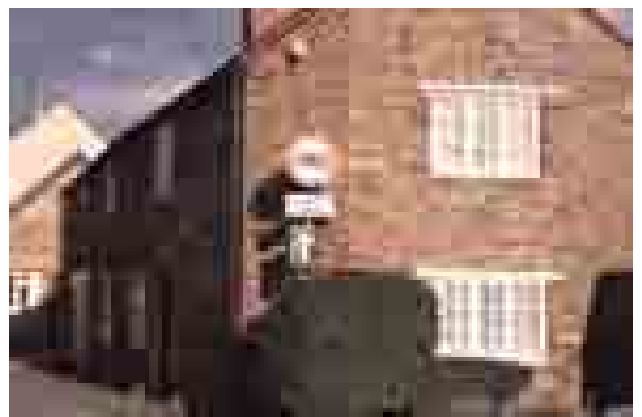


Photo 67. Regulatory signs in the Conservation Area

SFG4 Street lighting throughout the village should be reviewed with an extension of the use of white light and appropriate replacements for the tall concrete or metal

lamp posts more suitable to a rural setting and to reduce light pollution.

SFG5 Signs and their posts should be of minimum permitted size and if possible sited on buildings or walls, unless these are listed. Old style village direction signposts should be retained.

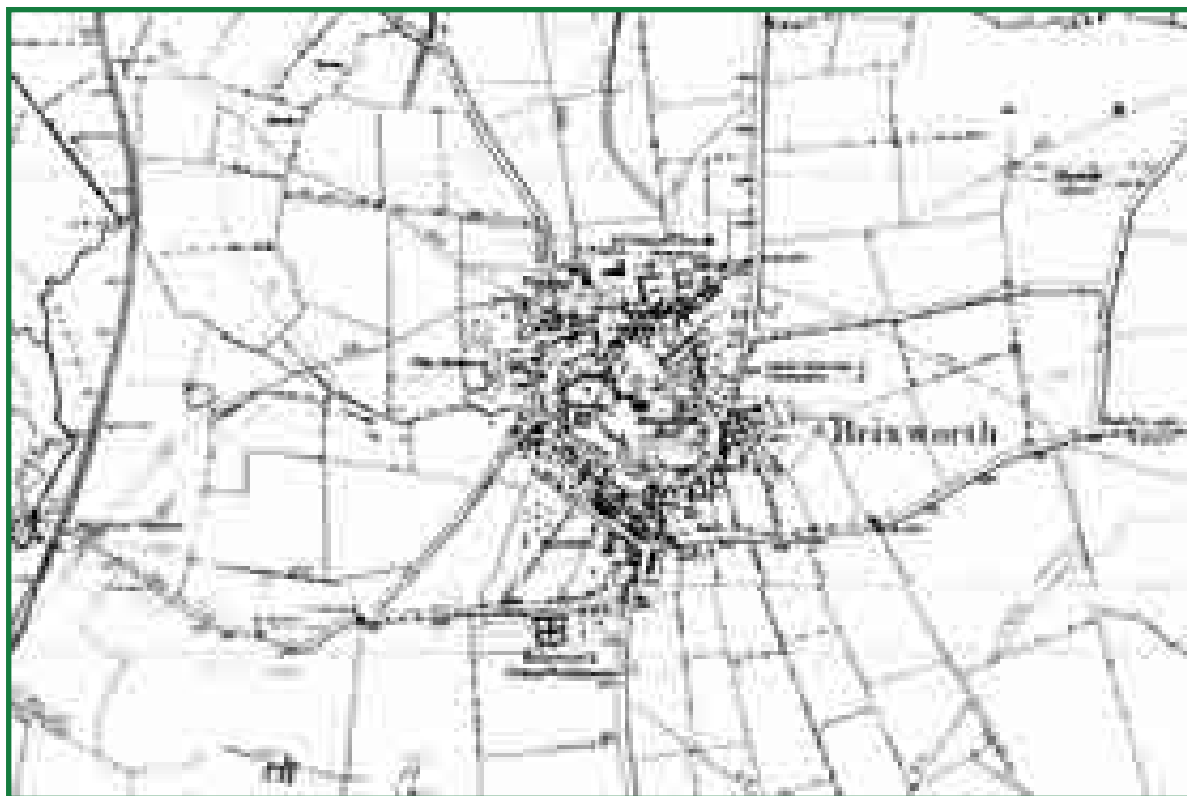
Conclusion

Brixworth is an important key centre village, surrounded by attractive countryside. It has seen many changes since the foundation of the Anglo-Saxon Church, through mediaeval times until, in the 19th century, it became an important

ironstone mining centre. More recently, it has seen rapid and extensive industrial and residential development. Any future development within the village should now reflect present trends in housing needs, such as low occupancy households, affordable housing and working from home. The village retains a strong sense of community and would welcome reassurance that its present boundaries can be maintained since it values its remaining views, spaces, trees and recreational facilities. Design has a direct impact on the visual environment but also has implications for social issues such as community cohesion. Good design will have a beneficial influence on the community.



Photo 68. Permitted path signs to Brampton Valley Way



Credits and Acknowledgements

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Steering Group

Paula Jones (Chairman), Audrey Charlton, Bob Chattaway, Gabriel Leeming
Mike Lewis, Peter Oliver, Keith Parrott, John Ruch, Liz Wiig, John Dawkins
Honorary member of group - Mike Nice

Editing - Audrey Charlton
Village Survey - Mike Lewis, John Ruch, Residents of Brixworth
Photography - Keith Parrott
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